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**LAND AND PEOPLE: EUROPEAN LAND SETTLEMENT IN
THE SOUTH EAST OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA,
1840-1940.**

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A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements of
the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the
Department of History of the
University of Adelaide.

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ABBREVIATIONS

<u>ABD</u>	Australian Biographical Dictionary.
<u>ABL</u>	Archives of Business and Labour, Australian National University.
<u>ADB</u>	Australian Dictionary of Biography
<u>APR</u>	<u>Australian Pastoralists' Review.</u>
<u>ASALB</u>	<u>Acquired Soldiers Agreement Ledger Book.</u>
<u>AOT</u>	Archives Office of Tasmania.
<u>AUT</u>	Archives of University of Tasmania.
<u>BRG</u>	Business Record Group.
<u>BW</u>	<u>The Border Watch.</u>
<u>CALB</u>	<u>Credit Agreement Ledger Book</u>
<u>CSALB</u>	<u>Closer Settlement Agreement Ledger Book.</u>
<u>CT</u>	Certificate of Title.
<u>DL</u>	Department of Lands.
<u>EIS</u>	<u>Environmental Impact Study on the Effect of Drainage in the South East of South Australia.</u>
<u>GRG</u>	Government Record Group.
<u>GRO</u>	General Registry Office.
<u>HA</u>	House of Assembly.
<u>HLB</u>	Homestead Lease Book.
<u>LGB</u>	Land Grant Book.
<u>LC</u>	Legislative Council.
<u>LTC, SLV</u>	La Trobe Collection, State Library of Victoria.
<u>LTO</u>	Lands Title Office.
<u>MRG</u>	Municipal Record Group.
<u>MBS</u>	<u>Mount Gambier Standard.</u>
<u>NH</u>	<u>The Naracoorte Herald.</u>
<u>RPLB</u>	Right to Purchase Lease Book.
<u>PG</u>	<u>The Portland Guardian.</u>
<u>PRG</u>	Private Record Group.
<u>SAA</u>	South Australian Archives.
<u>SAG</u>	<u>South Australian Gazette and Colonial Register.</u>
<u>SAGG</u>	<u>South Australian Government Gazette.</u>
<u>SAJA</u>	<u>South Australian Journal of Agriculture.</u>
<u>SAPD</u>	<u>South Australian Parliamentary Debate.</u>
<u>SAPP</u>	<u>South Australian Parliamentary Paper.</u>
<u>SAR</u>	<u>South Australian Register.</u>
<u>SES</u>	<u>The South-Eastern Star.</u>
<u>SET</u>	<u>The South Eastern Times.</u>
<u>SRG</u>	Society Record Group.
<u>SRSA</u>	Statistical Register of South Australia.

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"Land and People: European Land Settlement in the
South East of South Australia, 1840-1940."

For centuries the yeomen of England were considered exemplars of essential social virtues. These small landowning farmers were seen as sturdy, self-reliant and dependable, as upholders of an ordered and stable society. By the early nineteenth century, they were seen as something more. As industrialisation and urbanisation disrupted the accepted order, and when many of their number had vanished into the factories, yeomen were idealised as the symbol of man's capacity to civilise his environment and as models of enlightenment, stability and permanence. The yeomen's intensive farming represented the most efficient use of land; their production ensured a supply of wheat, the European staff of life; their small holdings meant that concentration of population which was necessary for a truly civilised society; their thrift, enterprise and toil epitomised improvement, progress and prosperity.

The colonisers of South Australia were inspired by the vision of transplanting this yeoman ideal to the new colony. Theirs was a great dream but they compromised it. To raise finance, they sold very large tracts of land to capitalists who saw their future in wool, which meant dispersed settlement, a small population, wealth for a few, and no stable centres of civilisation. Both the compromise and the dream were to persist in South Australia for 150 years. This thesis outlines the results of the conflict as Europeans attempted both to make the country pay and to impose ideals of European civilisation on non-European land in the South East district of South Australia.

The founders had not reckoned with the nature of the land in this area whose soil, seasons, vegetation and sources of water were very different from those of Europe. From the earliest days of the colony,

DECLARATION

This thesis contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any University, and to the best of my knowledge and belief, it contains no material previously published or written by another person, except when due reference is made in the text.

Leith G. MacGillivray

INTRODUCTION

"It came on to blow with so much sea" during the night of 2 December 1800 that Lieutenant James Grant was "much preoccupied" with the safety of his 60-ton surveying brig, the Lady Nelson. Not until the squalls ceased at dawn did he dare make full sail. Four hours later he sighted what appeared to be four islands, but on closer approach turned out to be two capes and two mountains.¹

As first known European to sight this stretch of land, Lieutenant Grant put the mark of British civilisation upon it. He named the capes Banks and Northumberland and the mountains Schanck and Gambier, to commemorate men to whom he or his country owed a debt.² By noon on 3 December he judged his position to be 38 degrees 10 minutes south and 142 degrees 30 minutes east. From this point the heavy growth of trees on the mountains and on "the low flat plains which stretched as far as the eye could see" caught his attention. He wrote "Woody" across his chart.³

The 28-year-old Highlander wrote nothing about any possible significance in his discovery, but continued east "to search for the Strait which separates Van Diemen's Land from New Holland".⁴ From the coast he sighted more wooded areas with large fires plainly visible between them.⁵

1. J. Grant, The Narrative of a Voyage of Discovery, London, 1802, p 67.

2. Grant owed his command to the influence of Sir Joseph Banks and Admiral John Schanck. Schanck also designed the sliding keel which equipped the Lady Nelson to survey in shallow waters. For further details, ADB, Vol. 1, Sydney, 1949, pp 468-9; PG, 20 August 1842; L.R. Hill, Mount Gambier: The City Around a Cave, Adelaide, 1972, pp 9-10. This thesis uses the spelling 'Schanck' as do the current directors of 'Mt Schanck Pastoral Company'. 'Schank' is also commonly used. For the reasons in variation, L.R. Hill, p 30.

3. By his sightings, his bearing was in fact 38° 10" S., 140° 45" E., J. Grant, pp 68-9; Map 2.

4. Grant reached Sydney via Bass Strait in December 1800, having left Portsmouth on 17 March 1800. A shortage of water and provisions prevented him from examining the coastline closely. ABD, Vol. 1, p 468.

5. J. Grant, p 69.

In writing, at least, he did not speculate about the people who had lit those huge fires and who hunted their totemic brothers among those wooded mountains and plains. Yet the few observations he did make foreshadowed the major assumptions of those who came after him. Like Grant, other Europeans were soon to attempt to print their civilisation on this south-eastern portion of Australia and to ignore those who already owned it.

Thirty-six years after Grant's voyage, the first official European colonists came to South Australia fired with the vision of "transplanting another England in another hemisphere".⁶ They realised this "heroic work" would involve converting "a desert into the abode of civilized society", but the depressed conditions of their homeland urged them to meet such a challenge.⁷ Industrialisation had scarred their landscape, swelled the numbers of urban and rural poor and created a dissatisfied "middling class".⁸ In their search for a society worth transposing to a new land, Englishmen looked to their past. They evoked an idealised image of pre-industrial rural England whose "memorial to a lost age" was the sturdy and prosperous yeoman in a stable and contented agricultural paradise.⁹

Although the yeoman farmer was fast disappearing from nineteenth-century England, as early as the sixteenth century he had become a model of essential English virtues. As "a free man and small property-holder

6. R. Torrens in SAG, 18 June 1836.

7. South Australia: Outline of the Plan of a Proposed Colony to be founded on the South Coast of Australia with an account of the Soil, Climate, Rivers, etc. (hereafter South Australia: Outline of the Plan of a Proposed Colony), London, 1834. Reprint, Adelaide, 1978, p. 3.

8. D. Pike, Paradise of Dissent: South Australia 1829-1857, Melbourne, 1967, p 7.

9. C. Lansbury, Arcady in Australia: The Evocation of Australia in Nineteenth-Century English Literature, Melbourne, 1970, pp 31-8.

he had a certain pre-eminence over labourers and artificers"; "by industry and enterprise he often attained to the land of unthrifty gentlemen". His forethought ensured a prosperous future for his sons "on sufficient land where they might live and work without labour".¹⁰ By the seventeenth century, "emancipated and upgraded by social and economic conditions" the yeoman did not merely signify progress and productivity; he had become symbolic as the mainstay of the European social order.¹¹ He ploughed and sowed and produced from the soil the staff of European life - wheat. His work was "ennobling as well as arduous", for he worked in close communion with Nature away from cities where life was unhealthy and vicious. Nineteenth-century social philosophers pointed to him as the epitome of social and political harmony. At the head of a large and happy family, settled in his smiling homestead and supporting himself from the modest surplus of his field and garden, the archetypal yeoman symbolised permanence, order, self-sufficiency and pride in ownership.¹²

The colonisers came to South Australia under the spell of this myth.¹³ "Believed myth impels action no less than discoverable truths",¹⁴ and the founding fathers had based on this myth a great dream - to plant the yeoman ideal in South Australia and to make the Australian bush conform to the rural idyll of old England. This dream would be realized, they confidently believed, by implementing in South Australia assumptions about the proper use of land which held good in Europe.

10. Sir Thomas Smith, De Republica Anglorum, London, 1583, quoted in The English Experience, No. 219, 1970, p 30.

11. D.W. Meinig, On the Margins of the Good Earth: The South Australian Wheat Frontier 1869-1884, Adelaide, 1962, pp 120-1. See also D.B. Waterson, Selector, Squatter and Storekeeper, Sydney, 1968, pp 103-6.

12. D.B. Waterson, "Land Selection in the Colonies 1860-1890: A Few Comments", Journal of History for Senior Students, Victorian Historical Association, Vol. 7, No. 3, September 1976, pp 98-9. See also C. Lansbury, pp 31-3; J.M. Powell, Images of Australia, 1788-1914, Monash Publications in Geography, No. 3, Melbourne, 1972, pp 12-3.

13. C. Lansbury, pp 34-44 and 158; E. Williams, A Way of Life - The Pastoral Families of the Central Hill Country of South Australia, Adelaide, 1980, p 1.

14. D. Pike, p 7.

The colonisers assumed that Europeans used land to its fullest capacity because they cultivated it. Since Aborigines in South Australia used land only for hunting and fishing, Europeans assumed they were not using it efficiently. South Australia was a wilderness; the land was lying waste. British law justified the dispossession of its occupiers, gave the Crown the right to become absolute owner and to dispense the land to those who would develop it.¹⁵

Development would bring wealth as well as civilisation. When cultivators successfully converted the land to European uses and created a garden from the wilderness, they would not merely subsist in South Australia as the Aborigines did. Tilling the land would firstly provide employment for the poor. Indeed there would be no poor; landless labourers would soon save enough to become freeholding yeomen, and a landowning, middle-class gentry would aspire to the status of a European landed aristocracy.¹⁶ With the wealth they wrested from the land they would create an ordered society "suffused with a maximum of happiness for all".¹⁷ The yeoman ideal, in other words, inspired a system of colonisation.

This system thus assumed rested upon another assumption: that the South Australian environment was either like Europe or could be made so. The seasons in South Australia were the reverse of their own, but the climate, the colonisers claimed, was not only "less subject to droughts than that of New South Wales but was also confessedly one of the most healthy and delightful in the world".¹⁸ They knew nothing about the land except from

15. G.R.Y. Radcliffe and Sir Geoffrey Cross, English Legal System, London, 1971, p 20, in M. O'Loughlin, Law Honours Thesis, The History of the Disposal of South Australian Lands Until 1880, University of Adelaide, 1976, p 3. See also B. Gammage, Man and Land, Adelaide 1978, p 7.

16. R. Gouger to C. Tennyson, 27 January 1831, A372/A3, SAA; C. Lansbury, p 43, 49-51 and 113-4; D. Pike, pp 6-7.

17. R. Gouger, First Paper Relative to the Formation of a Colony on Gulf St Vincent or its Vicinity, c 20 January 1832, A354/A3, SAA; R. Torrens in SAG, 18 June 1836; E. Williams, p 2.

18. South Australia: Outline of the Plan of a Proposed Colony, p 9.

the reports of coastal explorers and navigators who had declared that soil on Kangaroo Island, near Port Lincoln and in the vicinity of Gulf St Vincent was "of the richest kind", but there was no reason to doubt that this land was "a fair extension of that to be found in the interior".¹⁹ There was also "every reason to believe that the whole of sub-tropical Australia was free from endemic disease".²⁰ "Coal and iron, machine and energy" had conferred a technical superiority on Britain, and with this advanced technology allied to British capital, industry and livestock, there could be no doubt that even if the land did prove difficult to farm, before long Englishmen would make South Australian land conform to the known and tested practices of European agriculture.²¹

Edward Gibbon Wakefield was pre-eminent among those who influenced the founders of South Australia. Many aspects of his theory concerning "the true principles of systematic colonisation" supplied a framework for their assumptions.²² Wakefield maintained that land should not be granted but should be sold at a fairly high minimum price after being surveyed into 80 acre sections. Proceeds from the sale of land should be used to pay the passage of emigrant labourers to South Australia. Given the correct minimum price, Wakefield claimed that thrifty labourers might, in three years, save enough from their wages to purchase their own land, which in turn would finance that fresh supply of labour which they as employers would need.²³

19. R. Torrens in SAG, 18 June 1836; R. Gouger, First Paper Relative to the Formation of a Colony in Gulf St Vincent or its Vicinity, c. 20 January 1831, A354/A3, SAA.

20. South Australia: Outline of the Plan of a Proposed Colony, p 9.

21. R. Torrens in SAG, 18 June 1836. See also M. Williams, The Making of the South Australian Landscape: A Study in the Historical Geography of South Australia, London, 1974, pp 5-14; J.M. Powell, p 1; B. Gammage, p 5.

22. R. Torrens in SAG, 18 June 1836. See also Pike's discussion on "finding the founder" of South Australia, p 74.

23. E.G. Wakefield, A Letter from Sydney and Other Writings, London, 1929, pp 163 and 334-5; E.G. Wakefield, Letter to Colonisation Commissioners, 2 June 1835, in Appendix to Minutes of Evidence before the Select Committee on South Australia, 1841, pp 333-4, SAA; M. Williams, p 98; W. Oldham, The Land Policy of South Australia from 1830-1842, Adelaide, 1917, pp 14-5.

The success of Wakefield's system depended on fixing the sale of land at a "sufficient price", a price which would maintain a balance between the amount of land purchased and the number of labourers necessary to develop it. Wakefield emphasised that the price should not be too high because this would discourage investment and cause a labour shortage. A few large purchasers would be able to accumulate more land than they could cultivate. These "squatters" would then "get a few crops from the virgin soil" before moving on to do the same thing again. But where a "sufficient price" ensured a regular supply of labour, Wakefield believed "the motive of squatterdom would entirely cease".²⁴ On the other hand, the price should not be too low, as this would also create a labour shortage by allowing "labourers to become landowners too soon".²⁵

Wakefield declined to specify a "sufficient price", declaring that it "would vary according to peculiar, natural and other circumstances".²⁶ As one of "the greatest merits of the plan" consisted in its "self-regulating action", Wakefield claimed that experience and "a wise government" would best determine the price necessary to preserve an even proportion between land, labour and capital.²⁷ When this was achieved everyone who worked hard could buy land but nobody could buy too much. In this way "the nameless desert" that was South Australia would be democratically owned and cultivated by "a desirable concentration" of yeoman proprietors.²⁸

24. E.G. Wakefield, A Letter from Sydney, pp 158-9.

25. E.G. Wakefield, A View of the Art of Colonisation, London, 1849, p 347; E.G. Wakefield, A Letter from Sydney, pp 148-9; E.G. Wakefield, Letter to the Colonisation Commissioners, p 337; D. Pike, pp 77-83; W. Oldham, pp 14-5.

26. M.F. Lloyd (ed.), The Collected Works of Edward Gibbon Wakefield, London, 1968, p 939, in C. Nance, "From Labour to Capitalism", Australia 1888, Bulletin No. 2, August 1979, p 33.

27. [E.G. Wakefield], England and America: A Comparison of the Social and Political State of Both Nations, New York, 1967, p 297; E.G. Wakefield, A Letter from Sydney, p 77; S.H. Roberts, History of Australian Land Settlement: 1788-1920, London, 1969, pp 84-5.

28. E.G. Wakefield, A View of the Art of Colonisation, p 46; R. Gouger to C. Tennyson, 27 January 1831, A372/A3, SAA.

Wakefield and his followers argued that such a concentration was beneficial in two ways. Concentration ensured "those advantages which a social enjoys over a savage life".²⁹ "A small body of civilised people" living in near isolation "in an extensive and uninhabited country inevitably fell back into what had been called a primitive state." But when "hurtful dispersion" was avoided, a concentrated population would demand and enjoy "those facilities for society and education which could only be enjoyed by communities."³⁰

Settling the land more closely - or "closer settlement" as it would later be called - was a profitable as well as a civilising venture because it gave "full play to the principles of population".³¹ In new countries "prosperity bore some proportion to the numbers", because population "enhanced the value of land" and "population growth resulted in an increase of capital".³² It was therefore particularly desirable that the new colony of South Australia should enjoy a large and closely-settled population in order to guarantee "a prospect of real independence and comfort for all".³³

Gentry as well as yeomen were to be drawn to South Australia, for the squire was an integral element of the great dream. "An educated and wealthy colonial gentry" would bring those English arts, manners and refinements which would soon make the colony "an extension, though distant, of Britain herself".³⁴ With land available at a "sufficient price" they would also bring capital to invest. This, Wakefield and his followers claimed, was "an excellent employment of capital" which converted public

29. R. Torrens in SAG, 18 June 1836.

30. South Australia: Outline of the Plan of a Proposed Colony, p 14; E.G. Wakefield, A Letter from Sydney, p 146.

31. [E.G. Wakefield], England and America: A Comparison of the Social and Political State of Both Nations, p 256.

32. South Australia: Outline of the Plan of a Proposed Colony, pp 16 and 7.

33. R. Torrens in SAG, 18 June 1836.

34. E.G. Wakefield, A Letter from Sydney, pp 134 and 86; E. Williams, p 2.

into private property and "greatly augmented the wealth and population of the world".³⁵ Furthermore, capitalists would be purchasing not only land, which however materially rich "was not worth a farthing until possessed by labourers to cultivate the soil", but labour, and labour of the right kind.³⁶ By encouraging "young marriageable persons" to emigrate, capitalists could hope to obtain labourers who were respectable, reliable and stable - qualities which would fit them to become yeomen from whose labour "wealth would be produced and civilization and good government secured". The children of such emigrants would in turn be a regular supply of labour without additional cost.³⁷

The colonisers argued that South Australia would be particularly dependent on such a continued supply. In other Australian colonies the advantages of "good selection and judicious management of sheep" had provided "an article of exchangeable value". But the founding fathers insisted that South Australians were "grievously" mistaken" if they thought they could prosper from wool alone, or even from wool mainly. With a sufficient price permitting "a large proportion of people to be engaged in agriculture", they were optimistic that the new colony's production of wheat and flour would soon outstrip that of Van Diemen's Land. In time South Australia would produce as well tobacco, wine, hemp, silk and flax, and these agricultural pursuits would demand a larger labour supply than that of the pastoral industry.³⁸

35. E.G. Wakefield, A View of the Art of Colonisation, pp 41 and 64; A Letter from Sydney, p 134; E. Williams, p 1.

36. R. Torrens in SAG, 18 June 1836. .

37. Letter from R. Gouger to C. Tennyson, 27 January 1832, A372/A3, SAA; South Australia: Outline of the Plan of a Proposed Colony, p 15.

38. R. Gouger, First Paper Relative to the formation of a Colony on Gulf St Vincent or its Vicinity, c. 20 January 1831, A354/A3, SAA; E.G. Wakefield, A Letter from Sydney, p 145.

The founders claimed that the new colony might also be "expected to prove exceedingly attractive" to the labourer, for in South Australia a thrifty, hard-working man might soon possess his own land.³⁹ One labourer who declared he knew "all about agriculture" wrote of his expectation of doing so. He urged those of his friends "with skill and industry and possessed of some capital" to seize the opportunity to emigrate. In England, he claimed, many a farm labourer was obeying the injunction "to labour by the sweat of his brow" without inheriting the blessing of eating bread. But South Australia was a land of opportunity. There every frugal man who laboured "long and hard" would soon become a "happy, prosperous and contented" owner of land. There "every honest man might rise above his present degraded position" in England and "procure by his exertions a comfortable livelihood".⁴⁰

As early as 1835 the great dream was challenged. The founders had to abandon "the true principles of colonization" to raise money. The Act of 1834, which had established South Australia as a British province and had appointed a Board of Commissioners to execute the Act, stipulated that £35,000 had to be invested in land within the colony prior to settlement "to ensure the mother country against any pecuniary liability".⁴¹ But by 24 June 1835 sales amounted to only £2,500.⁴² Regulations were passed which allowed the Commissioners to tamper with Wakefield's ideals of a "sufficient price" and small holdings. The price of land was lowered from

39. South Australia: Outline of the Plan of a Proposed Colony, p 15; E.G. Wakefield, A View of the Art of Colonisation, p 65.

40. "An appeal to small farmers and others, advertising the merits of the future colony of South Australia", July 1835. Writer unknown. GRG 56/36, SAA.

41. On 15 August 1834, Act 4 and 5, William IV, C. 95, the Act "to empower His Majesty to erect South Australia into a British province or provinces and to provide for the colonisation and government thereof" gained Royal sanction. For further details of the Act, W. Oldham, pp 10-11 and 20; T. Playford, Land Systems Past and Present, Adelaide 1880, p 5.

42. W. Oldham, p 12.

£1 to 12/- an acre.⁴³ In this way the Commissioners raised the necessary capital, but on the other hand, purchasers gained an absolute priority in buying the best land cheaply and in leasing large tracts of pasture land for three years with a right of renewal at 10/- per year.⁴⁴ On 1 October 1835 other regulations allowed those who advanced £4,000 or more the right of a Special Survey of 15,000 acres of any compact district with a pre-emptive right of purchase of 4,000 acres for every advance of £4,000.⁴⁵ These departures from the democratic ideal of self-sufficient cultivators on 80 acre sections had been, the Commissioners argued, an unfortunate, but temporary necessity. In fact abandoning the yeoman ideal by selling land to raise money was to characterize land dealings in South Australia for the next 150 years.

Despite their compromise, in 1836 the colonisers confidently began to test their theories and assumptions about land. As men "proceeding from a civilised country, possessing capital, divided into classes, skilful and accustomed to law and order, they were bent on exertion and full of high hopes."⁴⁶ They would accomplish what had never been accomplished before. They would establish "the first colony ever to be established with any intelligent perception of the ends of colonisation".⁴⁷ Not only was "an extensive and uninhabited country" waiting to be subdued;

43. Between 15 July 1835 and 31 May 1836, 437 purchasers of Preliminary Land Orders for 81 acres subsequently obtained 135 acres each at the new price. For details of the modified regulations, and the sale of 58,995 acres under Preliminary Land Orders for £34,397, T. Playford, p 5; D. Pike, pp 120-1.

44. A proprietor was allowed one square mile of pasturage for every acre of freehold. T. Playford, p 6; W. Oldham, pp 26-7.

45. For details of the purchases made under Special Surveys, T. Playford, p 6; W. Oldham, pp 27 and 89.

46. R. Gouger to C. Tennyson, 27 January 1831, A372/A3, SAA.

47. R. Torrens in SAG, 18 June 1836.

prosperity was waiting to be had.⁴⁸ In South Australia they would plant a colony which would "prosper from the beginning", "peopled by a flourishing and happy race" surrounded by "comfort and wealth."⁴⁹

This was a great dream but it carried within it the seeds of a conflict between tradition and circumstance. For the next century and a half, Europeans in South Australia were to discover painfully and reluctantly, that they could make only a small amount of South Australian land behave like European land. There were also to discover that they could not settle the land democratically and pursue profit at the same time.

This thesis traces, in particular, the persistent attempts and repeated failures of the colonisers and their successors to impose these conflicting European ideals on that part of South Australian land which Grant first reported in December 1800 — the South East of South Australia.⁵⁰

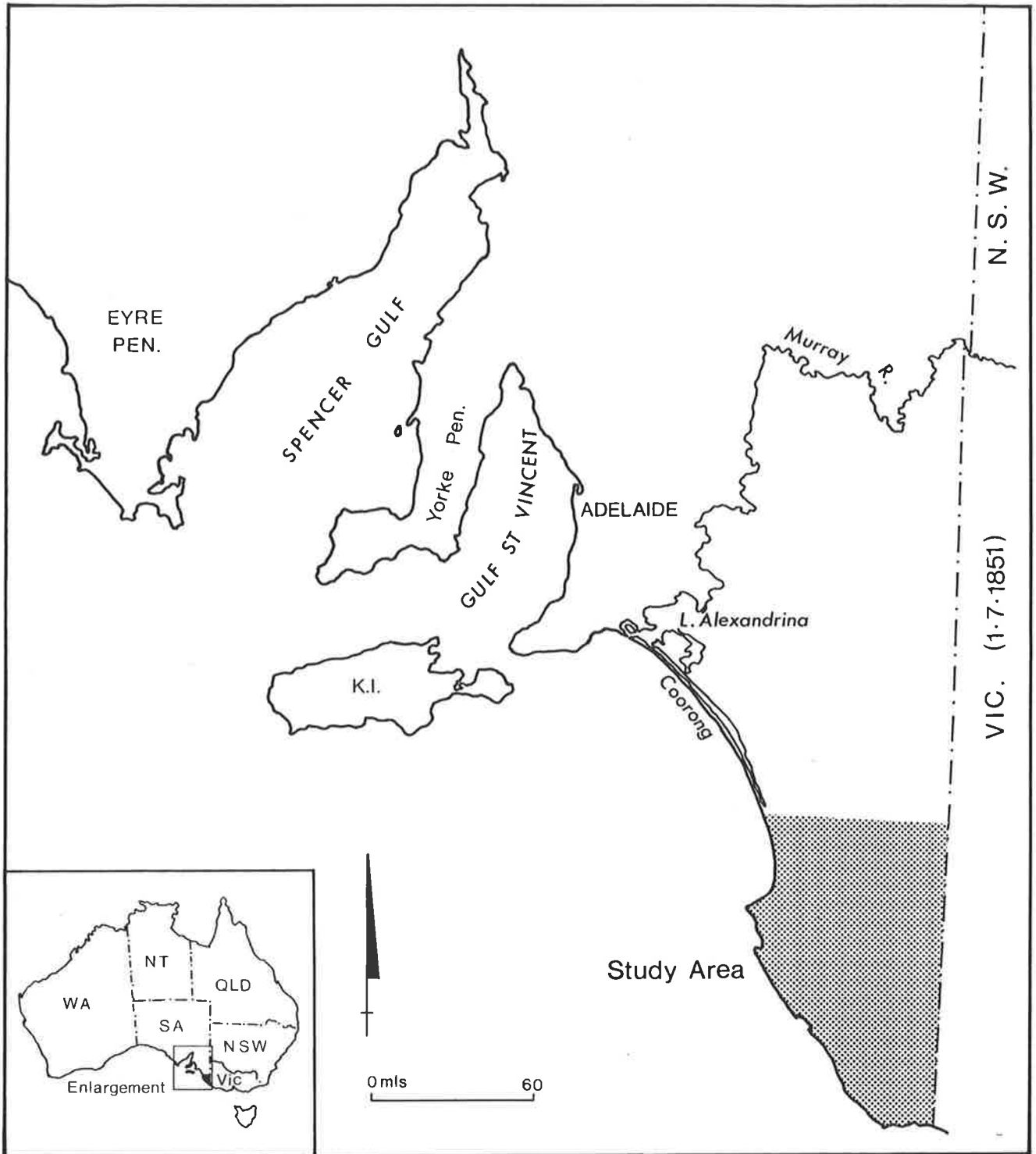
48. E.G. Wakefield, Letter to Colonisation Commissioners, p 333.

49. R. Gouger to C. Tennyson, 27 January 1831, A372/A3, SAA.

50. Map 1. Throughout this thesis, except in direct quotation, the spelling 'South East', rather than 'South-East', has been used.

MAP 1

Southern South Australia, showing location of study area.



CHAPTER 1

By 1838, two years after the settlement of South Australia, there was no hint of a happy Wakefieldian conjunction of land, labour and capital. In that year 48,040 acres of land, equal to almost three quarters of the total sold during the previous three years, had sold at fl per acre; but those who invested capital, as Wakefield had urged, were mainly absentee speculators who bought large areas.¹ There was little likelihood that this land would soon be closely populated by cultivators for the owners were interested in grazing livestock rather than in tilling.² Yet even the pastoral industry was at a low ebb because for fifteen months landowners had been dependent on the costly and hazardous importation of cattle and sheep by sea.

Then, on 3 April 1838, the colonists of South Australia celebrated "a momentous incident".³ Joseph Hawdon, pastoralist and explorer, walked into Adelaide and announced that he had left his friend Charles Bonney on the banks of the Onkaparinga River with 355 cattle "in excellent health and condition" after an overlanding trip of a thousand miles in ten weeks.⁴ Stock-hungry landowners and land-agents gave way to "unrestrained rejoicing". The arrival of the overlanders had provided "a stimulating fillip" to the beef industry.⁵

1. Between 1835-7, 64,626 acres were sold. SAPP 37 of 1871 (n.d.). See also T. Playford, p 6; W. Oldham, p 54.

2. In 1839, 443 acres lay under cultivation. W. Oldham, pp 43, 55 and 68-9.

3. SAR, 3 April 1928.

4. For Hawdon's account of his journey, SAG, 7 April 1838. See also G. Williams, South Australian Exploration to 1856, Adelaide, 1919, p 44; J.W. Bull, Early Experiences of Life in South Australia, Adelaide, 1884, p 80. For biographical details of Hawdon, ADB, Vol. 1, pp 524-5 and R. Cockburn, Pastoral Pioneers of South Australia, Adelaide, 1925, Vol. 1, pp 12-13, Research Note 129, SAA. For biographical details of Bonney, ADB, Vol. 3, pp 188-90; G.E. Loyau, Notable South Australians, Adelaide, 1885, p 87; R. Cockburn, Vol. 1, pp 12-13, Vol. 2, p 148; The Observer, 7 July 1894; The Advertiser, 16 March 1897; 1047/57, 839/M and Research Note 130, SAA.

5. SAG, 7 April 1838; SAR, 3 April 1928 and 29 July 1887.

Several similarly momentous incidents followed as overlanders continued to trek in, supplying precious British livestock. At the end of February 1839, Edward John Eyre, on his second overlanding expedition, brought not only 600 prime cattle but a thousand sheep as well. His arrival was hailed as the most important occasion since the formation of the colony.⁶ With Britain offering a ready market for Australian wool, thoughts turned almost magically to the prospects of South Australia's pastoral industry.⁷ In 1839 almost four times as much land was sold as in 1838, much of it in the form of Special Surveys.⁸ Almost twice as many free and assisted immigrants arrived as in the previous year.⁹ The overlanders had played a significant role in making 1839 a year of optimism and speculation.¹⁰

Robert Rowland Leake, pastoralist from Van Diemen's Land and former stock manager for the South Australian Company, did not share the general rejoicing in Adelaide at the coming of the overlanders, although he knew only too well the risk of transporting stock across the straits.¹¹ On one

6. SAG, 2 March 1839. Eyre travelled 955 miles in 21 weeks in a party of 16 with losses of about 1%. See also W. Bull, p 80. For biographical details of Eyre, G. Dutton, The Hero as Murderer: The Life of Edward John Eyre, Australian Explorer and Governor of Jamaica 1815-1901, London, 1967, pp 56-7; R. Cockburn, Vol. 1, pp 121 and 178, and ADB, Vol. 1, pp 362-3. For accounts of other overlanding expeditions see, for example, SAG, 14 July and 25 August 1838; 2 March and 24 August 1839. By the end of 1839, 4,200 cattle, 130 horses, and 35,000 sheep had been overlanded. The Royal South Australian Almanack and General Directory for 1840, Adelaide, 1840, p 135.

7. S.H. Roberts, The Squatting Age in Australia: 1835-1847, Melbourne, 1964, pp 44-7.

8. In 1838, 48,040 acres of land were sold; in 1839, 170,841, 122,000 of which were in Special Surveys. For further details of the Surveys, T. Playford, p 6. See also SAPP 37 of 1871 (n.d.).

9. In 1838, free and assisted immigration totalled 3,154; in 1839, 5,320. D. Pike, p 180.

10. S.H. Roberts, p 45.

11. For details of Robert Leake's experiences as stock manager for the South Australian Company, E.M. Yelland, The Baron of the Frontier, Melbourne, 1973, pp 10-11. For biographical details, R. Cockburn, Vol. 1, pp 104-5, Vol. 2, pp 61 and 143; SAR, 2 March 1839; Reports of the Historical Manuscripts of Tasmania, No. 3, Revised edition, compiled by J. McRae; (hereafter P 21/5), AUT.

five-and-a-half day crossing in 1838 alone he had lost 81 of his 600 sheep.¹² But the progeny of his father's fine-woolled Saxon Merinos had been in great demand in South Australia.¹³ On 23 February 1839 Leake wrote to his father telling him that he now feared an end to the profits he had made from shipping stock by sea. His flocks had increased rapidly since 1837 but as few men with capital had arrived in South Australia in 1838, Leake had declined to sell his ewes for only £2.10 per head.¹⁴ He had been sceptical "that sheep would or could come overland from Port Phillip or New South Wales",¹⁵ but with Eyre's arrival his market disappeared. To make matters worse his younger brother, Edward, had outlaid £150 to freight 300 ewes from their father's 'Rosedale' stud.¹⁶

Leake was harassed not only because his "speculation would not turn out as well as it would have done if the sheep had all come by water".¹⁷ By 1839 he had moved to Coromandel Valley in the Adelaide hills. There a large fire had burned the only bit of old grass he had left.¹⁸ He had also to contend with "the awful prospect" that his land might be bought at any time.¹⁹ The only solution was "to keep on moving about not stoping (sic)

12. Both Leake and his shepherd had been sea-sick; the cattle they were transporting were too confined, broke their pens and trod down at least 20 sheep; the sheep had become costive and were too fat and heavy with wool to swim ashore safely. Robert Leake to John Leake, 4 April 1838 (hereafter L 1/1/4) in Leake family papers, AUT.

13. By 1833 John Leake had "become prosperous beyond all his own expectations". For a map of his holdings in Van Diemen's Land in 1847 and a description of his sheep-breeding activities, P21/5, pp 52-3.

14. L 1/1/4, 5 April 1838.

15. L 1/1/4, 26 February 1838, 5 and 29 April 1838, and 22 March 1841.

16. For details of other goods and stock which John Leake was sending with Edward, E.M. Yelland, p 20.

17. L 1/1/4, 22 March 1841.

18. L 1/1/4, 23 February 1839.

19. Leased land could be resumed at two months' notice and sold by sealed tender. T. Playford, pp 5-6, W. Oldham, pp 21 and 48.

more than two months in one place".²⁰ Since he was twelve, Robert Leake had obeyed the stern command of his father "never to let the sheep out of his eye".²¹ He was now 28, grossly fat, much less educated than his younger brothers, and far more at home with sheep than with "the ladies of South Australia", who were "always having picknicks, parties, etc."²² "With a mind possessed by moving" for the safety of his flocks he set out again, settling by March 1841 in a "poor tent-hut", at 'White Hills', near Mt Pleasant.²³

The overlanders had brought more than livestock to nourish the hopes of Adelaide's capitalists. They had confirmed that European man might find a way through the bush by exhibiting to the full those British qualities of energy, enterprise and endurance. Evelyn Pitfield Shirley Sturt was among the first of many young, well-educated, middle-class sons of displaced England gentry who did so.²⁴ His account is typical.

As 21-year-old "Boy Commissioner" in the Riverina and northern Victoria, Sturt was "seized with an overland fit because of the effect of the example of others". With two companions and an Aborigine from New South Wales, he hugged the favoured overlanding route along the Murray. He endured long hours of tedious travelling on short provisions, crossed stock and drays over rivers of uncertain depths and battled delirium in 110° heat. But such ordeals served only to add, Sturt declared in retrospect, "zest to my labours".²⁵

20. L 1/1/4, 18 August 1838.

21. P 21/5, p 41.

22. Leake to his crippled sister, Sarah, enclosed with the letter to his father. L 1/1/4, 18 August 1838.

23. L 1/1/4, 12 April 1841.

24. For biographical details of E.P.S. Sturt, R. Cockburn, Vol. 1, pp 185 and 190; Vol. 2, pp 32-3; R. Boldrewood, Old Melbourne Memories, Melbourne, 1844, pp 147-8; T.F. Bride, Letters from Victorian Pioneers, Melbourne, 1898, p 363. For displaced gentry, D. Pike, p 5.

25. For Sturt's account, T.F. Bride, pp 369-73. See also SAG, 27 July 1839.

Although overlanders from the east had shown skill and endurance in carving a passage through the wilderness from Port Phillip, they hankered after a shorter route to South Australia. Charles Bonney determined to find it. On 26 February 1839 he set out from Hughes Creek near the Goulburn River, with "ten working men, two natives, 300 cattle and a few horses". By 18 March 1839 he reached Stephen Henty's out-station, 'Muntham Downs', at the junction of the rivers Glenelg and Wannon. "Lest his object be frustrated", he ignored the warning that the country between Adelaide and Portland Bay was impenetrable to stock and "plunged into an impassable desert".²⁶ He crossed it safely. The summer of 1839 was severe, but Bonney found extensive swamps west of the Glenelg. When he approached the coast of South Australia he turned north. He passed a lake which he named Lake Hawdon after his friend, and Mt Muirhead and Mt Benson after two of his stock-men. North-west of Lacepede Bay Bonney's troubles began when his journey became a desperate search for water. He did find water at a depth of a few inches, but digging trenches was fruitless. The thirsty cattle rushed in and "destroyed the work of hours in a few minutes". He persevered for six more days, following the flat land parallel to the coast, and digging wells at night to provide water for his men and cattle. Water along the Coorong was "as salt as brine", but it "never occurred to him to search for fresh water between the camp and salt water tea-trees". He realised only later that had he done so, he would have found fresh water springs. He reached Lake Alexandrina on 5 April 1839, nineteen days after leaving the Wannon. He had taken a quarter of the time demanded by the old route and had opened up a new

26. John Hart gave this warning to Bonney. Hart had set out from Portland with 500 head of cattle belonging to Francis Dutton, explored west of the River Glenelg for a week, but found little water in the harsh summer of 1839. He decided to return to the Hentys' station, 'Muntham Downs'. He then proceeded north and finally followed the Murray. For details of his journey, T.F. Bride, p 55. For biographical details of J. Hart, G.E. Loyau, p 130.

MAP 2

Early European Exploration in the South East

In the 1840s the first overlanders and explorers assessed the vegetation, soil and water supply of the South East with European eyes. They claimed few areas would be suitable for European agriculture. For the next 150 years settlers confirmed this judgement but most politicians persistently refused to accept it.

(J. Grant, p 69; SAG, 27 April and 17 August (Bonney and Hawdon); R. Henty (frontispiece); Journal of the Royal Geographical Society, Vol. 15, 1845, p 174 (Grey); G. Hamilton, pp 3-42)

grassy flat

extensive plain

low Casuarina range

Wattle.Gum
Blackwood

Tufa
Teatree

marshy boggy

Teatree
Horeysuckle
Sheoak

well grassed forest

Heath

caves

limestone ridge

well grassed forest

thickly wooded sandy

good grassy country

Stringy Bark
Banksia

very good land

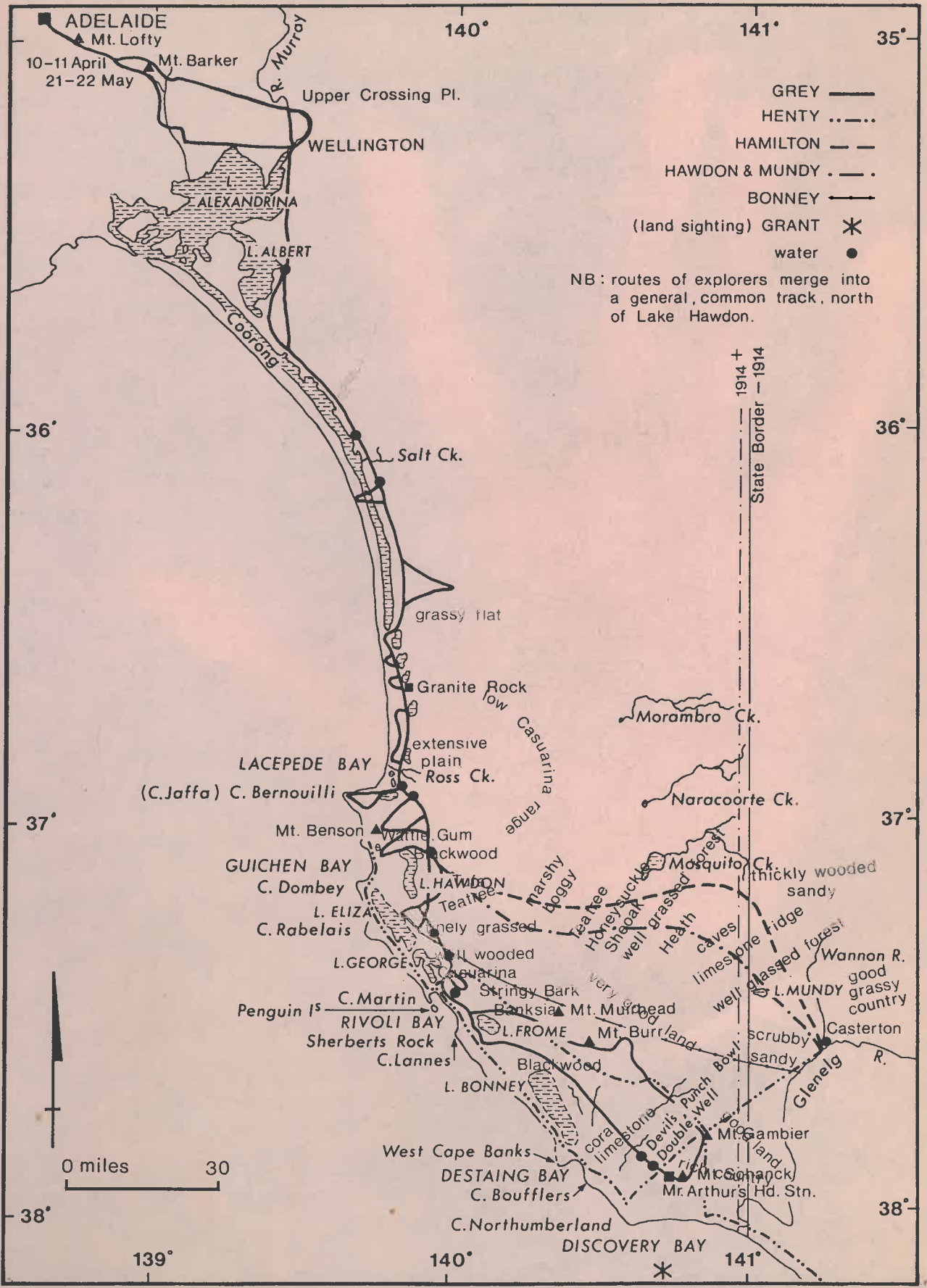
Blackwood

scrubby sandy

coral limestone

good land

rich country



overlanding track through the south-eastern portion of the province.²⁷ His feat was extolled in the press and considered of such importance that Governor Gawler named 'Bonnesia' "... all that territory included between the southern part of the eastern boundary of the province, the Murray, Lake Alexandrina and the sea".²⁸

Bonney had lost many stock and very nearly his own life. Yet he claimed that, "on careful examination", he was confident a safe and well-watered route would be found by which it would be "practicable" to bring stock and sheep to South Australia in "all seasons of the year". Other Europeans in the colony were as optimistic as Bonney that the disastrous season he had encountered was a phenomenon. Shipping from Melbourne and Port Phillip ceased, and cattle and sheep poured into South Australia by the new route.²⁹

Joseph Hawdon, "that most enterprising and indefatigable of all colonists", with two overlanding firsts to his credit, soon followed Bonney's tracks.³⁰ He left Melbourne on 12 July 1839 with Lieutenant Alfred Mundy, future Chief Secretary for South Australia, and a servant, John Bourke, and experienced the freedom and novelty of travelling by tandem with no stock.³¹ Like Bonney, they too looked with European eyes at this unfamiliar landscape. By 25 July 1839 they arrived at 'Muntham Downs'. Hawdon, widely travelled in Australia, echoed previous and future explorers in thinking the country east of the Glenelg "the richest yet"

27. Map 2. For Bonney's account, Proceedings of the Royal Geographical Society (SA Branch), Vol. 5, pp 82-102. See also SAG, 27 April 1839 and Southern Australia, 8 May 1839; 839/M and Research Note 130, SAA; G. Williams, South Australian Exploration to 1856, Adelaide, 1969, pp 73-4.

28. SAGG, 24 October 1839.

29. SAG, 27 April 1839. For the network of roads which developed from Bonney's route, M.C. Grant (B.A. Hons. Geography thesis), The Influences of Differences in Legislation Upon Settlement Patterns in Victoria and South Australia, University of Adelaide, 1971, pp 76-8 and Figure 13 (facing p 2).

30. For an account of Hawdon's 'first' in overlanding to Port Phillip District, The Melbourne Age, 9 February 1935.

31. For biographical details of A. Mundy, 839/M, SAA.

seen in Australia". But as he went west during the next month, Hawdon was struck by the variations in the terrain he crossed. Travelling north-north-west from the Hentys' station, he first struck a stretch of inferior, sandy, scrubby country, but on 27 July he came upon a fresh-water lake about nine miles square, "perfectly alive" with undisturbed wild fowl and "bordered by luxuriant grasses". This he named Lake Mundy after his travelling companion. From then on the country began to show frequent changes. Beyond the lake lay ten miles of open, flat country with generally poor soil, threaded through with well-grassed patches. Beyond these grasslands lay a stretch of "moors" covered mainly by heath, low bush, and forests of she-oak and honeysuckle. Between this lay patches of wretched sandy scrub, stunted eucalypt and grass trees. Throughout there were springs of excellent water, from one of which Hawdon drew 50 gallons in a day. The terrain was cut by a series of alternative flats and limestone ridges, threaded with caves "numerous with bandicoots". Hawdon had encountered the oldest of a succession of former coastal dunes left as the sea had retreated and advanced regularly over the past million years. These ridges impeded drainage to the sea.³² In the winter of 1839 the flats

32. For geographical and ecological details of this region, Agricultural Research in the South East of South Australia and Adjacent Areas of Victoria, CSIRO Bulletin, Adelaide, 1968, Ch. 2; R.L. Crocker, "A Study of Ecology", Transactions of The Royal Society of South Australia, Vol. 68 (1), 28 July 1944, pp 144-72, especially Figure 1a, p 145; South Eastern Drainage Board, EIS, Adelaide, 1979, Appendix I; P.S. Hossfeldt, "The Late Cainozoic History of the South East of South Australia", Transactions of the Royal Society of South Australia, Vol. 73 (2), 8 June 1950, pp 232-79; R.C. Sprigg, "The Geology of the South-East Province, South Australia, with special reference to the Quarternary Coast-Line of Migrations and Modern Beach Developments", Bulletin 29, Geological Survey of South Australia, Department of Mines, Adelaide, 1952; J.R. Dodson, "Pre-Settlement Vegetation of the Mt Gambier Area, South Australia", Transcript of the Royal Society of South Australia, 99 (2), pp 89-92, 30 May 1975; G. Blackburn, "Soils of County Grey, South Australia", Soils and Land Use Series, CSIRO, Bulletin 33, Melbourne, 1959, pp 8-9; M. Williams, The Lower South East of South Australia: The Historical Geography of an Artificial Drainage System, an extract from Australian Geographical Studies, Melbourne (n.d.), pp 87-8; Margaret Marker, The Lower South East of South Australia: A Karst Province, Occasional Paper 13, Department of Geography and Environmental Studies, University of Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, 1975. Alexander Tolmer, Inspector of Police, experienced similar difficulties in the same area in July 1847. A. Tolmer, Reminiscences of an Adventurous and Chequered Career at Home and the Antipodes, Adelaide, 1884, Vol. 2, p 583, 148/379, SAA.

were inundated. The party drove over sandy waste bordered by reed-covered marshes, but were forced to turn their tandem and change course when the horses plunged into water up to their bellies. Hawdon turned north-east when the marsh "extended as far as the eye could see", and by-passed the lake which Bonney had named after him in the previous March. He fell in with Bonney's tracks by 2 August but had no need of the wells Bonney had dug.

When he reached Adelaide Hawdon did not give a particularly favourable account of the country he had crossed. He reported that water was readily available by sinking wells, but there was no "single course". For the most part, he judged, the country from the Glenelg to the Murray was one bed of limestone, alternatively covered with sand, swamp, and a few strips of alluvial deposit. There were several scattered areas of grass-land suitable for pasturing stock, but Hawdon considered he had passed only one small area which was suitable for agriculture.³³ Such an assessment did not bode well for the settlement of "a desirable concentration" of yeoman farmers in the South East.

In July and August 1839, 26-year-old George Hamilton, future Police Commissioner of South Australia, became the third recorded European to cross this south-eastern region when he overlanded 300 head of mixed cattle from Port Phillip to Adelaide.³⁴ Hamilton was also entertained by the Hentys "in their fairy-like habitation in the wilderness". He, too, next entered the same "barren waterless tract of country" which Bonney and Hawdon had commented upon. He crossed into South Australia further north than they had, and entered country which was "thickly wooded and apparently waterless". Hamilton found this area "gloomy beyond description". He turned abruptly south until he found "numerous waterholes in open gum-tree

33. Map 2. For Hawdon's account of his journey, SAG, 17 and 24 August 1839. See also The Royal South Australian Almanack and General Directory for 1840, Adelaide, 1840, pp 119-25.

34. For biographical details of George Hamilton, Newspaper cuttings, Vol. 3, p 137, SAA; The Observer, 4 August 1883; G.E. Loyau, p 123.

forest", and then proceeded west until he met the coast at Cape Bernouilli. Here the sight of the sea recalled to him those navigators whose discoveries had turned "the eyes of civilisation to Australia" when Britishers "had embarked upon the colonisation of the savages' domain". Hamilton then turned inland, and proceeded northward through melaleuca scrub forest. His drays went axle-deep in water; his herd splashed and floundered through the submerged land. He reached Adelaide on 1 October 1839 with memories of a "misty, muddy, boggy, splashy, swampy country".³⁵

Exploration in South Australia in 1839 added much to the pastoralists' knowledge of the coast and interior of the colony.³⁶ The observations of Bonney, Hawdon, Mundy and Hamilton of the south-eastern portion jointly suggested that "for the most part, the country was of an unpromising character". While searching for a shorter route they had kept in mind traditional needs of pasture and water, and in their estimation the western coastline had limited fresh water in summer, and the central area was excessively wet in winter. The most attractive feature was a few stretches of good pasture land. There was no single, vital waterway. By contrast, the park-like country of 'Australia Felix', the nearby western districts of New South Wales, remained "the Eden of the whole" of south-eastern Australia.³⁷

In June 1839, a young man astute in the appraisal of land set out from that Eden. He left his family's flocks on the rolling plains of the Wannon and with two companions and compass in hand, he steered a direct

35. Map 2. G. Hamilton, Experiences of a Colonist Forty Years Ago: A Journey from Port Phillip to South Australia in 1839 and a Voyage from Port Phillip to Adelaide in 1846, Adelaide, 1880, pp 3-42.

36. The Progress of Discovery of South Australia During the Year 1839, in The Royal South Australian Almanack and General Directory for 1840, Adelaide, 1840, pp 88-9.

37. T.F. Bride, p 322. For "idealised images" and "visual prejudices" of terrain, seen through "preferred and accustomed spectacles", D. Lowenthal and H. Prince, "Landscape Tastes", Geographical Review, Vol. 55, 1965, pp 186-222.

course for two days until he reached the mountain Grant had named Gambier. He ascended it by a very gentle slope on the north-east side. He reached the rim and saw before him the wonderful sight of an enormous lake. Nearby there were three other chasms, each about 1000' square. He declared this was a sight he could never forget, "quite beyond his powers of description". He then looked long at the very old volcanoes to the north, and south across the timbered plains which stretched to the sea and which Grant had sighted from the coast 39 years previously. To make sure of being the first European to explore this "beautiful country" he determined to push on further. He and his brother Edward spent the next month examining the coast as far as Cape Bernouilli. On his chart he wrote "apparently good land" to describe the eastern side of the Bluff range inland from the coast which he did not have time to explore before returning to Portland. By 1840 he and his brothers had formed their station on the slope of Gambier's mountain. Stephen George Henty thus discovered that good land and accessible water which previous explorers had missed and became the first of the settlers from the east to steal a march on the men from South Australia.³⁸

By 1841 Henty had erected a stock-keeper's hut beside the lake at the bottom of the mountain slope. Under the highest peak he built his stock yards. From there his stock-keeper protected his Merino flocks from roaming packs of wild dogs and the resentful owners of the land, spending his spare time harvesting the skins of native cats to sell in Portland twice a year for 9 shillings a dozen. He had luxuriant grass on the mountain slopes and abundant surface water.³⁹ Henty had found that land ideally like European land for which the overlanders had sought in vain.

38. Map 2, T.F. Bride, p 125.

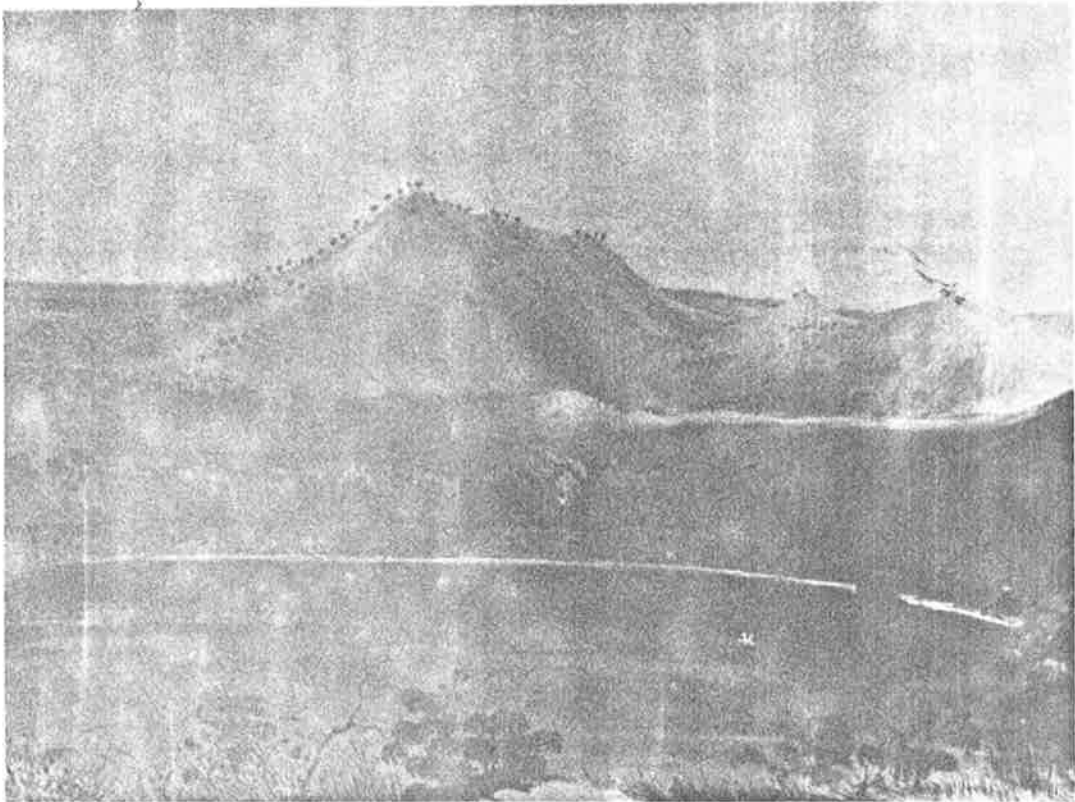
39. For further details of Henty's station, G.F. Angas, Savage Life and Scenes in Australia and New Zealand: Being an Artist's Impressions of Countries and People at the Antipodes with Numerous Illustrations, London, 1847, pp 170-2. For the extinction of the native cat, South Eastern Drainage Board: EIS, Appendix 8, p 96. BW, 11 February 1891; 1364/377, pp 250-1, SAA.

Charles Bonney (1813-1897)
(SAA)

Bonney's connection with the South East was long and varied. He was the first to overland in 1839; he settled boundary disputes there from 1852-3 and was Inspector of Credit Agreement holdings from 1871-80.

"Mt Gambier with one of its Volcanic Lakes."
(J.W. Giles, after G.F. Angas, 1844;
National Art Gallery of South Australia)

In 1839 Stephen Henty looked from the summit of Mt Gambier across the wooded plains James Grant had first described from the coast in 1800. Henty claimed the land near the mountain was the finest he had seen; the lakes provided abundant water. Europeans who followed Henty agreed that this area was more like Europe than other parts of the South East. By 1858, a decade before the first experiment in closer settlement, pastoralists had secured it in fee-simple.



By the early 1840s many other squatters began to travel westward from the Port Phillip district in search of land.⁴⁰ On 31 January 1843, with nine helpers and 4,000 sheep, Edward Arthur and his brother Fortescue left their station at Salt Water on the extreme limit of stations, ten miles from Port Phillip.⁴¹ Three hundred miles and 32 days later they received very kind information from the Henty family on the Wannon "about the Glenelg and Adelaide country". So the Arthurs continued south-west rather than north as the overlanders had done until, on Friday 10 March, they came upon the European idyll of water and flats of clear land between open forest. They found a water-hole eight miles from Mt Gambier. By 12 February 1843 they were also feasting their eyes upon that same magnificent view which Stephen Henty had seen from the summit. Before them lay "to the north a vast flat of forest land ... to the east a similar expanse ... to the south ... the seas ... to the west ... the Bluff Ranges". After exploring briefly they decided the land along those Bluff Ranges "did not answer to their expectations". Mts Schanck and Gambier, however, were "delighting in land of the finest description" where kangaroo, emu, opossum and wombat abounded amongst "most luxuriant swards of grass". Mt Schanck was hollow, but, unlike Mt Gambier, it was without water. So they followed a flight of cockatoos three miles west of the mountain to a water-hole. Here a pool 20 feet below the surface of the ground contained water "of the clearest and best description to the depth of nearly 30 fathoms".

40. For pastoral expansion around Port Phillip, J.M. Powell, "The Squatting Occupation of Victoria, 1834-1860" in J.M. Powell (ed.), The Making of Rural Australia: Environment, Society and Economy: Geographical Readings, Melbourne, 1974, pp` 25-38; James Bonwick, The Discovery and Settlement of Port Phillip, Melbourne, 1856.

41. E. and F. Arthur, A Journal of Events: From Melbourne, Pt Phillip to Mt Schanck, in The District of Adelaide, New Holland, a Distance of 400 miles, undertaken in 1843 by Messrs Edward and Fortescue Arthur, Sons of Capt. Arthur, R.N., with a Flock of 4,000 sheep and also an Account of the Difficulties they experienced during a Sojourn of Twenty Months, which ended in the Total Failure of their Enterprise (hereafter, A Journal of Events), p 5.

This discovery immediately "fixed their destination".⁴² From the limestone about them, they fashioned their utensils and their sheepwash, as well as their huts which they roofed with bark.⁴³ The Arthurs, like the Hentys before them, squatted without authority on South Australian soil. With the arrival of these men the pastoral occupation of the South East district had begun.

While Henty and Arthur were establishing their runs, settlement three hundred miles to their north had begun to spread dramatically along the plains and coastal basins of Adelaide, along the eastern slopes of the Mt Lofty Ranges and southwards to the Murray mouth.⁴⁴ But the boom and recession of 1839-42 had severely jolted the colonisers' ideals. Land had not always been sold in 80 acre sections; nor was the price uniform throughout the colony, nor at £1 per acre.⁴⁵ The Government determined to control the pace and direction of settlement more closely. Under an Act to regulate the disposal of waste lands, surveys were to precede sales. As funds from land sales and rent could not be used to defray public expenditure, the Government also legislated under the same Act to raise revenue by "imposing a yearly assessment on stock" and by charging those who wished "to form stations on Crown Lands".⁴⁶ Yet the 1842 Act, like the Act of 1834, exposed the difference between rhetoric and reality. The founding fathers had extolled the ideal of settling "a numerous yeomanry" but a Government in need of money had no desire to cramp squatters. On the contrary, since the pastoral industry was its main source of revenue, it wished "to foster the energies and enterprise of those who rendered

42. E. and F. Arthur, A Journal of Events, pp 31-7. The Arthur brothers had established their run at the water-hole known as Ela-Elap; their nearby woolwash was Wurwurlooloo; Maps 2 and 9.

43. G.F. Angas, p 76.

44. M. Williams, p 37.

45. W. Oldham, p 69.

46. "An Act for the Disposal of Crown Lands", assented to 22 June 1842, came into operation on 23 January 1843. For further details of the Act, T. Playford, pp 6-7; W. Oldham, p 70.

productive lands which would otherwise be valueless for years to come".⁴⁷ Hence squatters needed to pay only "the moderate sum" of £5 annually for an Occupation Licence, which entitled them to an unlimited amount of land. Sheep were assessed at only 1d per head, cattle at 6d and horses at 2/6. The Government did retain ownership of the land. Pre-occupation provided security in territorial disputes with another squatter, but at any time the Government might give six months' notice, resume the squatter's land and put it up for sale.⁴⁸

This insecurity of tenure was a constant source of resentment to Robert Leake and fellow pastoralists. In 1841 he had moved from Mt Pleasant to Greenock in the Barossa Valley, but as he was again on Special Survey land which could mean "orders to pack up and march any day", he moved once more in 1842 to Belvidere, near Kapunda, "never putting up more buildings than he could help".⁴⁹ By this time his flock of 4,100 sheep and 2,200 lambs was the fourth largest in South Australia.⁵⁰ Yet he had found no land he considered fit for a station. The rivers he had seen in South Australia did not run all the year and their water was generally brackish.⁵¹ Being constantly on the move was interfering with his health which was deteriorating from exposure to all weather. His frame had also shrunk from living on nothing but meat and bad flour.⁵² He feared he would soon have to move yet again. "So much," he wrote in 1842, "for the South Australian speculation."⁵³

47. Introduction, footnote 41; SAGG, 8 December 1842.

48. For regulations of sale, SAGG, 15 August 1842; for assessment of stock, SAGG, 8 December 1842.

49. L 1/1/4, 15 August 1841, 9 June 1842.

50. R. Cockburn, Vol. 1, p 104.

51. L 1/1/4, 3 April 1841.

52. L 1/1/4, 4 March 1841.

53. L 1/1/4, 9 June 1842.

Leake's letters to his father showed he cared little about transplanting British civilisation in South Australia; the "South Australian speculation" had been his sole concern. Yet after four years of "toiling and suffering and breaking down" by 9 June 1842 he had "made about 10%".⁵⁴ He had, too, been cheated of advance payment on 1,100 pounds of washed wool and 10,333 pounds of wool in the grease which he had sent to the London sales in December 1842.⁵⁵ He was further annoyed that the Government was so short-sighted "in putting its money and faith into newly-discovered minerals". It did not seem to realise "a sheep man needed six to eight thousand sheep clear of scab to make a decent livelihood".⁵⁶ His old sheep were scabby and he estimated he would need £100 to £150 to cure them.⁵⁷ By 1843 he had been in South Australia for six years, "enduring every privation that man could endure and making nothing by it".⁵⁸ "All in all," he concluded to his father on 24 January 1844, "it is a horrible life, that of a squatter."⁵⁹

Yet Leake was sure he could succeed if he could get good land and there remained one hope of this. Reports from New South Wales told of a stretch in the south-eastern portion of South Australia. This was "a splendid tract of country ... 90 miles in length by 30 miles across, stretching along the western bank of the Glenelg River, and extending westward as far as Rivoli Bay". The whole area resembled "a nobleman's park on a large scale and was well-watered".⁶⁰ This sounded like good European land. Leake gathered up his flocks of 7,000 sheep and, with his invaluable

54. L 1/1/4, 9 June 1842.

55. L 1/1/4, 19 December 1842.

56. L 1/1/4, 12 April 1841.

57. L 1/1/4, 9 June 1841.

58. L 1/1/4, 13 July 1842.

59. L 1/1/4, 24 January 1844.

60. Southern Australian, 2 August 1842.

overseer, John McIntyre, set out once more.⁶¹ Shortly after 29 January 1844, "with the seas behind and the deserts before", Robert Leake crossed the Murray on his way to the south-eastern district.⁶²

Unforeseen by Leake, South Australia's economic contraction was lessening even while he was on his way south in search of land. The mineral discoveries, about which he had been so bitter, and an influx of immigrants had made capital and labour available again. This had in turn stimulated the pastoral industry and capitalists were clamouring for land.⁶³ Governor George Grey looked to land in the South East to satisfy their demands. He mounted an official expedition which set out on 10 April 1844 "to ascertain the capabilities of the district".⁶⁴ Grey invited his young friend, George French Angas, naturalist and artist, who had recently arrived from England, to accompany him.⁶⁵ To make certain "that exploration might be rendered as effective as possible", he took Royal Sappers and Miners to chart the bays. He also took Charles Bonney, now Commissioner of Public Lands, and Thomas Burr, Deputy Surveyor-General, men trained in the observation of European land, who were now to judge how well land in the South East measured up to their European expectations.

61. For biographical details of John McIntyre, R. Cockburn, Vol. 1, p 104. See also Robert Leake's acknowledgement of his worth, L 1/1/4, 22 August 1844.

62 L 1/1/4, 9 June 1842.

63. For discussion on the economic crisis, G.H. Pitt, "The Crisis of 1841: Its Causes and Consequences", South Australiana, Vol. 11, No. 2, September 1972, pp 43-80. For increased demand for land following rise in population after discovery of copper at Kapunda, S.H. Roberts, p 139; E. M. Dunn, A Man's Reach: The Story of Kingston, S.E., and the Surrounding District, Millicent, 1969, pp 10-11; R. Harris, History Honours Thesis, Out of Sight: Out of Mind — Interaction and Attitudes Arising from the Isolation of the South East of South Australia and Melbourne 1860-1887, University of Adelaide, 1969, p 34.

64. Letter from Governor Grey to Lord Stanley, 26 June 1844, GRG 2/1/1844/67, SAA. See also F. Dutton, South Australia and its Mines, London, 1846, pp 94-6. For biographical details of Governor George Grey, ADB, Vol. 1, pp 476-80.

65. For further details of George French Angas, ADB, Vol. 1, pp 18-19; of T. Burr, Research Note 130, SAA.

The party spent almost three months in the district between April and June 1844, generally following the coastline and making occasional forays inland.⁶⁶ They saw Aborigines at close range several times. They acknowledged that these "miserable creatures" were friendly people, ingenious hunters and skilled craftsmen.⁶⁷ Yet it was obvious to the party that they were not utilising the land in an effective way. Since the land varied a great deal in potential, some would not be suitable for Europeans either. Beyond Lake Hawdon and Mt Benson were low-lying flats, covered in part by shallow water saturated with lime, and strewn with biscuit-like tufa. This was not at all comparable with good European land. The south-west corner was even less so. This was a large tract of "vile scrub" full of "deep pits and chasms".⁶⁸

There was, however, much land which Europeans could put to good use. Immediately beyond Lacepede Bay were grassy flats dotted with banksia, casuarina, honeysuckle and stringy bark. This, Grey and his party estimated, would make good cattle country.⁶⁹ Further south, casuarina and banksia still flourished but were now threaded by chains of tea-tree

66. Map 2.

67. G.F. Angas, p 174. For other accounts of the Aborigines of the South East, Notebook kept by Duncan Stewart, 1853-4, D2609(L), SAA; Research Note 64, SAA; GRG 5/151/1, SAA; T.D. Campbell, "Notes of the Aborigines of the South East of South Australia", Transactions of the Royal Society of South Australia, Vol. 58, 1934, pp 22-32 and Vol. 63, 1939, pp 27-35; R.A. Leubbers, "Ancient Boomerangs Discovered in South Australia", Nature, Vol. 253, 3 January 1975, p 39; T. McCourt, Aboriginal Artefacts, Adelaide, 1975; T. McCourt, Two Notable South Australians: Captain Emmanuel Underwood (1806-88) and Duncan Stewart (1834-1913), Beachport, 1977, pp 53-101; N.B. Tindale, "Native Songs of the South East of South Australia", Transactions of the Royal Society of South Australia, Vol. 61, 1937, pp 107-20 and Vol. 65, 1947, pp 233-43; J.B. Cleland, T.D. Campbell, and P.S. Hossfeldt, Aborigines of the Lower South East of South Australia, Records of South Australian Museum, Vol. 7, No. 3, June 1946, pp 445-502; Mrs James Smith, The Booandik Tribe of South Australian Aborigines: A Sketch of their Habits, Customs, Legends and Language, Adelaide, 1880.

68. Southern Australian, 18 June 1844; A222/B3, SAA. See also T. Burr, "Extract of a Journey", from Journal of the Royal Geographical Society, Vol. 15, 1845; p 174.

69. T. Burr, p 170.

swamps. Beneath these swamps lay "exceedingly rich dark soil". They also explored the land to the east of the Bluff Ranges and there endorsed the judgement Stephen Henty had made five years earlier. This was splendid country. Indeed it seemed to Angas that "nothing could exceed the freshness of the vegetation and the luxuriant character of the soil" in this part of the region.

Around Mt Gambier and Mt Schanck they discovered land which was even better. Here lay "extensive and beautiful country, covered with luxuriant grass", and studded with blackwood, wattle and gum trees. This was land "of the richest dark brown soil, beautiful beyond description". To Angas, newly-arrived from England, it was reminiscent of "a nobleman's park ... stretching as far as the eye could see toward the mouth of the Glenelg and the district of Australia Felix". "Here is country," wrote Angas, "fresh from the hand of Nature and complete in its native loveliness with green pastures, shady trees and wells of pure and limpid water." The presence of Edward Arthur completed the idyllic scene. "In this beautiful fairy-tale land," in his rude dwelling with its small vegetable garden, surrounded by his dogs and tame magpies, Edward Arthur's situation epitomised for Angas "that feeling of freedom and independence which one could never know in England". Indeed, this was the ideal spot to transplant all that was worth preserving from pre-industrial England.⁷⁰

Grey and his men not only made a glowing report of the district which the overlanders had dismissed as inferior; they also dispelled the overlanders' apprehensions about a lack of fresh water.⁷¹ They sighted and named five great lakes of fresh water along the coast. A hard white coral surface ran between the stringy bark and blackwood forest which Grant had

70. G.F. Angas, pp 166-72.

71. This apprehension was held not only by overlanders but by at least one other pastoralist seeking land in 1840. See Thomas Chirnside's account in T.F. Bride, p 332. For the nomenclature of capes and bays, Research Note 184, SAA.

first observed and water lay in the hollows formed by the pointed outcrops of this limestone. A seemingly endless supply of water ran through the caverns beneath the limestone. There was also an abundance of wells. One which they named 'the Devil's Punchbowl' was filled with perfectly clear water 130 feet deep.⁷² Completely different in form from the traditional European "single water course" which overlanders had sought further to the north, Grey's party had discovered that the south-eastern corner of the region contained an inexhaustible supply of water.

Although the Deputy Surveyor-General had been favourably impressed with the little that he had seen in this area, commonly known as the Rivoli Bay district, he declared that "much more required to be explored" before he would venture to give any decisive opinion about its potential for settlement.⁷³ If Governor Grey had similar reservations, he did not voice them. Land was needed beyond the settled districts. Because of the publicity the South East region had received in the New South Wales press, squatters were already pouring in to settle. The Governor was consequently lavish in praising the area to Lord Stanley, the Secretary of the Colonies. "In the South East," he wrote on 26 June 1844, "there lies an almost uninterrupted tract of good country between the rivers Murray and Glenelg." Grey did admit that in some places this line of good country "thinned off to a narrow belt", but in other portions, and in particular near the border of New South Wales, he declared that it formed "one of the most extensive and continuous tracts of good country which was known to exist within the limits of South Australia". There were also three good bays along the coast and Rivoli Bay already offered "good

72. Map 2. In this area there abounded crab-holes "large enough to trap horses". SAR, 2 October 1847. See also the comment of J.W. Cole who journeyed through the area in 1847. "In one place we could distinctly hear, as the wheels of our carts jolted along, subdued echoings and in other parts openings in the earth presented their unsightly aspects like yawning sepulchres." D3019/2(L), SAA.

73. T. Burr, p 182.

"Limestone Cave in the Township of Mt Gambier, 1858."

(Eugen Von Guerard (1811-1901);

National Gallery of Victoria)

Because they did not find water in the traditional form of "surface water courses", some of the first European travellers through the South East were sceptical of the district's potential. Settlers near Mt Gambier found the underground water supply and volcanic soil made the area equally ideal for pastoralism or agriculture, but because wool paid better, pastoralism prevailed even here.



anchorage to small vessels". He was confident the country "could be traversed in nearly all directions by drays and carts without the slightest difficulty". The land belonged to the Crown. If it were opened up, Grey argued, revenue from land sales would be used to defray the expenses of immigration. An increase in population would follow. This would be "most advantageous", he concluded, "both for the inhabitants of this colony and for the commercial interest of the mother country".⁷⁴

By the time Grey's expedition had returned to Adelaide, Robert Leake had found at last the kind of land he had been seeking for eight years. He had travelled south through "dreary country", nearly 140 miles of which was "desert and scrub", and had dug every night for "not always good water". Near the end of April he and McIntyre arrived at a hill "80 miles from Portland Bay and 10 miles from Rivoli Bay".⁷⁵ They climbed to the top. Below lay a lake teeming with wild fowl and surrounded by grassy flats. On the following day they came upon a lagoon also surrounded by richly grassed plains. Leake named the hill Mt McIntyre, and the lake, Leake. Near Lake Leake he established the 'Inverary' run, and six miles to the south, his head station of 'Glencoe', named in honour of McIntyre's birthplace in Scotland. Tarqua Lagoon was to become his sheep-wash. Although his land was "rather thick of trees" it was, as Leake wrote to his father on 4 May 1844, "the best country I have seen in a journey of 300 miles".⁷⁶ Leake had chosen that land east of the Bluff Ranges which Henty had praised so highly in 1839, and which Governor Grey's expedition had pronounced "splendid".⁷⁷ He immediately occupied it.

74. GRG 2/1/1844/67, SAA. See also F. Dutton, pp 94-6.

75. L 1/1/4, 4 May 1844.

76. L 1/1/4, 4 May 1844. Map 8.

77. For a description of the fertility of this volcanic region, of earlier dating than that near Mt Gambier, G. Blackburn, p 8.

Leake's move had cost £200, but only 20 of his 7,000 sheep had died on the way, of which Aborigines had speared 12. For such a large flock he needed a lot of land and here he found he could take out "any quantity". By 1844 his letters to his father were full of news about the profit he hoped to make from his venture. He took up a large tract in anticipation of forming six stations and keeping 12,000 sheep. His clip for that year was 60 bales, averaging 290 to 300lbs. each, and he sold 200 wethers. He told his father he was "perfectly satisfied he would prosper if he could always get his wool up".⁷⁸ By January 1845, on a run of 176 square miles, he was pasturing 10,000 sheep and 4,000 lambs. By June his ewes were dropping 200 lambs a day.⁷⁹ By November his flock had increased to 16,000 head, and he was running 180 cattle and 20 horses. That year his clip averaged "3lb. clean wool off 4 year ewes with some as high as four and three quarters of a pound of clean, fine, long, staple". He proudly wrote that he was marking his bales "Leake" for the first time and Ed was taking them to Portland. He expected he would make even more money in 1846. He estimated he would get 50,000lbs. of good washed wool which he asked his father to insure at 1/10 per lb. on £4,500 security.⁸⁰

Although Leake was pleased with the progress of his flock and the money he hoped to make, he had problems. He wrote to his father that he was continually annoyed at losing sheep to the blacks. Once 60 to 70 of them attacked and took 40 sheep. On another occasion he lost 14 rams in one night.⁸¹ In 1845 he lost 1,000 sheep. By 1846 he also "had 41 souls to feed" and wages were too high for his liking. He had to pay shepherds £25-£30 a year, with rations.⁸² Although he had "certainly a splendid piece

78. L 1/1/4, 20 May 1844.

79. L 1/1/4, 1 June 1845.

80. L 1/1/4, 6 November 1845. The average weight of fleece for the colony at this time was 3½lbs. D. Pike, p 320.

81. L 1/1/4, 25 June 1845. See also A. Tolmer, p 499.

82. L 1/1/4, 9 March 1846.

of country for grass", his land was "too covered in timber and too wet for his liking". He wondered if he might find less wooded country for his sheep if he ventured 100 miles or so to the north. He told his father his land, unlike that in Van Diemen's Land, needed "draining rather than irrigating".⁸³ Yet there was always a chance he would not find new land as good as he had and it had been "quite a venture to take up new country". He finally decided it was better to stay put. Taming the wilderness had taken more effort than the colonisers had acknowledged. "We have suffered much," he told his father on 24 December 1845, "and it appears to me [we have] a good deal more to suffer."⁸⁴

By August 1844 Edward and Fortescue Arthur decided they had suffered enough. They had tried "to conquer the country at their cost".⁸⁵ But "after 18 months in this part of the World", they told their uncle, Sir George Arthur, on 12 June 1844, "we are yearly finding ourselves retrograding instead of progressing". Expenses had increased beyond their means. Stock prices were depressed. They held out no hope of recovery. Sheep had fallen "from £2 a head to as many shillings".⁸⁶ Labour had been "extremely difficult to obtain and too high in proportion". In 1844, when Fortescue journeyed to Portland to sell their 1843 clip, Edward was left with one stock-keeper for 3,000 sheep. Natives in formidable numbers had speared their horses, raided their sheep and attacked their huts. The season had also been harsher than they had anticipated. The winter of 1843 had been so severe that at one time their men had not gone to bed dry for a fortnight and the sheep had died in hundreds. Scab had also made fatal inroads.

83. L 1/1/4, 24 May 1845. Robert Leake's father, John Leake, was an irrigator in Van Diemen's Land in the 1840s. See P. Brown (ed.), Clyde Company Papers, Vol. 4, p 405.

84. L 1/1/4, 24 December, 1845.

85. PG, 27 May 1843 and 10 August 1844.

86. For further references which bear out the Arthurs' experience of low sheep prices in 1843, Thomas Bates Jnr, History of the Ups and Downs of the Bates family in Australia and Tasmania, MS 11266, LTC, SLV (hereafter MS 11266); A. Tolmer, p 499.

They considered it was perfectly useless to continue sheep farming and losing £200-£300 per annum as they had done for the past three years. "We have been," they claimed, "beset by fortunes over which we have no control."⁸⁷ By 1844 they were convinced "utter ruin must be the inevitable fate of all those who are compelled to locate so far in the bush".⁸⁸ The only solution was to sell. In August 1844 Robert Leake secured a bargain by purchasing "Mr Arthur's sheep station for £300 with 3,700 sheep, four horses, nine bullocks, etc. etc. and 3 rams".⁸⁹ The Arthurs' experience in an alien environment had been in direct contrast to Angas's romantic notions. Turning the wilderness into "an abode of civilisation" had proved to them, as well as to Robert Leake, more challenging than the founders of South Australia had predicted.

Leake secured his land in the Rivoli Bay district only a short time ahead of waves of land-seekers from both Port Phillip and South Australia.⁹⁰ On 24 August 1845 he wrote to his father, "Four or five persons at once are looking for lands", and by December he could say, "We are getting a great many neighbours ... crowding one another too fast".⁹¹ By 1846 Leake declared the district "had filled up so fast many squatters were obliged to take out bad land".⁹² Applicants rode post haste to Adelaide to secure their runs. From the several expeditions he had encountered on his way south with Governor Grey, and from these applications, Charles Bonney, Commissioner of Crown Lands, was also aware of the rush for land beyond the settled districts. Under new regulations of the Waste

87. Letter of Edward Arthur to his uncle, Sir George Arthur, on receipt of a gift of £200, 12 June 1844, A990/B4, SAA. See also E. and F. Arthur, Journal of Events, pp 38-46.

88. E. and F. Arthur, Journal of Events, p 46; A990/B4, SAA.

89. L 1/1/4, 27 August 1844.

90. "That intensive and fertile country is now becoming thickly studded with stations of some of our most wealthy squatters", PG, 10 August 1844.

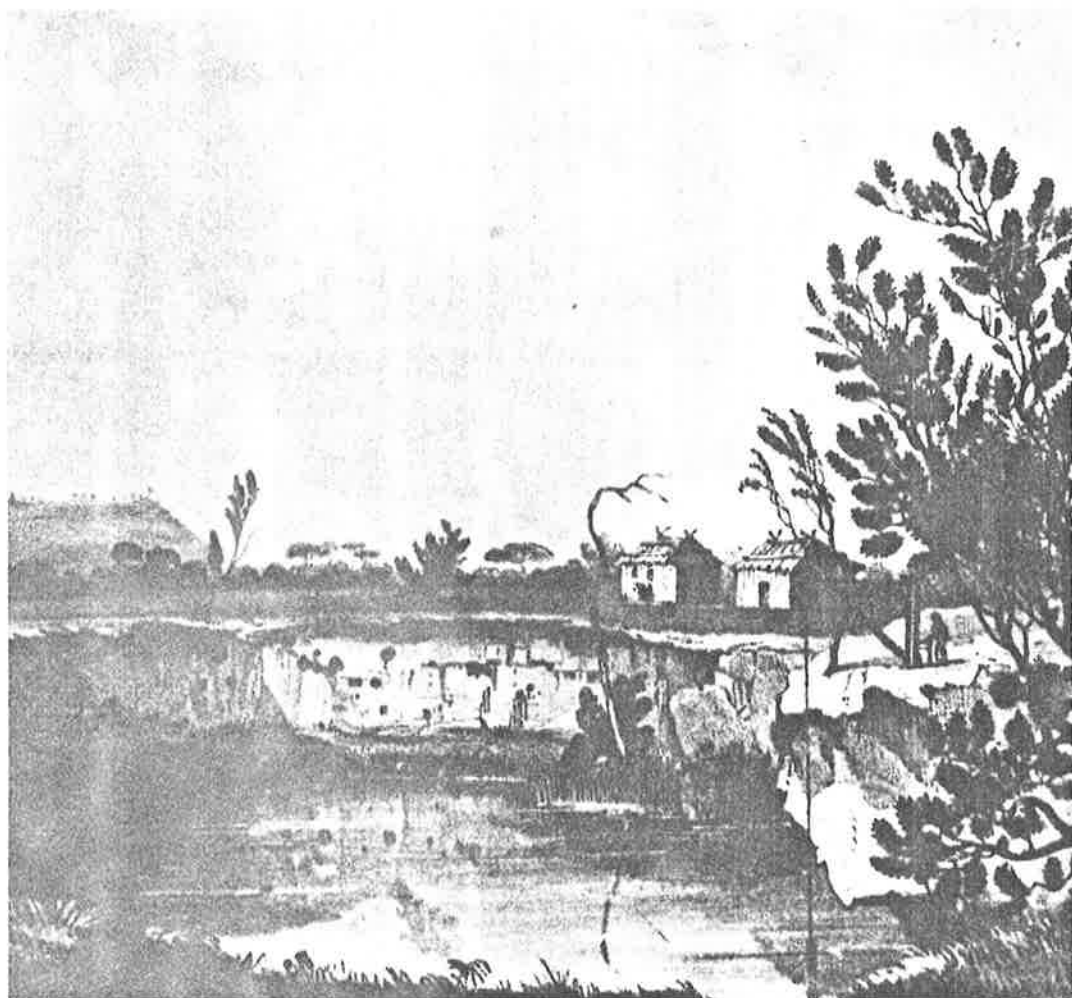
91. L 1/1/4, 24 August and 8 December 1845.

92. L 1/1/4, 9 February 1846.

*"Messrs Arthurs' Sheepstation with
one of the Volcanic Wells."*

*(J.W. Giles, after G.F. Angas, 1844;
National Art Gallery of South Australia)*

In 1843, on grassy flats about three miles west of Mt Schanck at Elap-Elap, Edward and Fortescue Arthur settled their flocks and fashioned their home and sheep wash from the limestone around them. Harassed by the owners of the land, frustrated by economic recession and beaten by the un-European nature of the climate and most of their land, the brothers left in 1844.



Lands Protection Act, legislators attempted to keep an eye on this spread of settlement. Applicants for Occupation Licences now had to lodge a description of the exterior boundaries of their runs. If these were not naturally formed by watercourses or trees, licensees had to mark them with posts at regular intervals.⁹³

By 1847 Bonney was very disturbed that contrary to those Wakefieldian ideals which he supported, "hurtful dispersion" persisted in spite of legislation. Land was unpopulated and "insufficiently stocked", and many squatters were claiming country "on pure speculation". He considered they were debarring genuine farmers who would have examined the land carefully before taking it up and who were now "in want". Bonney hoped the regulations gazetted in 1847 would remedy these "great evils of the system".⁹⁴ Stock numbers, which had to be declared, determined the extent of land which could be held under licence. An occupant was allowed one square mile for every hundred head of sheep and six square miles for every hundred head of cattle. Secondly, stocking the land rather than pre-occupancy, now gave prior entitlement to a licence.⁹⁵

The returns for applications for land show that the rush for the best land in the South East was over in three years. In 1845 nineteen runs were taken up; in 1846, thirty; and in 1847, a further twenty. Licensees had settled on 2,204 square miles of the best land in the district.⁹⁶ They favoured the fertile, well-watered land in the Mt Gambier area, central land to the east of that inundated by the coastal swamps, and a spine of

93. Regulations in SAGG, 11 April 1844. See also GRG 35/2/1849/80, SAA. Like their counterparts throughout the colony, South East squatters had neglected to renew their licences annually, a continued source of irritation to Bonney. See, for example, notices in the SAGG of 4 January 1844, 1 February 1844, 7 March 1844, 13 June 1844 and 11 July 1844.

94. Charles Bonney, Commissioner of Crown Lands to the Colonial Secretary, 3 December 1847. GRG 24/6/1847/1545, SAA.

95. Regulations SAGG, 15 December 1847, Clauses 3 and 6.

96. Appendix 1. The total area of Counties Grey, McDonnell and Robe is 5,851 square miles. This number includes the run vacated by the Arthur brothers by 1844, and the runs, not gazetted, taken up by John Meredith and Stephen Henty.

MAP 3

Land under Occupation Licence, 1847.

From 1844-7 pastoralists took up over 2,000 square miles, or half the South East, under Occupation Licence. Licensees confirmed the judgement of earlier explorers: the best land lay inland from the coastal swamps, along a spine running north of Mt Gambier and in the south-east corner of the district (see Maps 5 and 10). This was land which might have supported cultivation (see Map 11) but within six years of occupation contained a quarter of the colony's sheep (see Appendix 5).

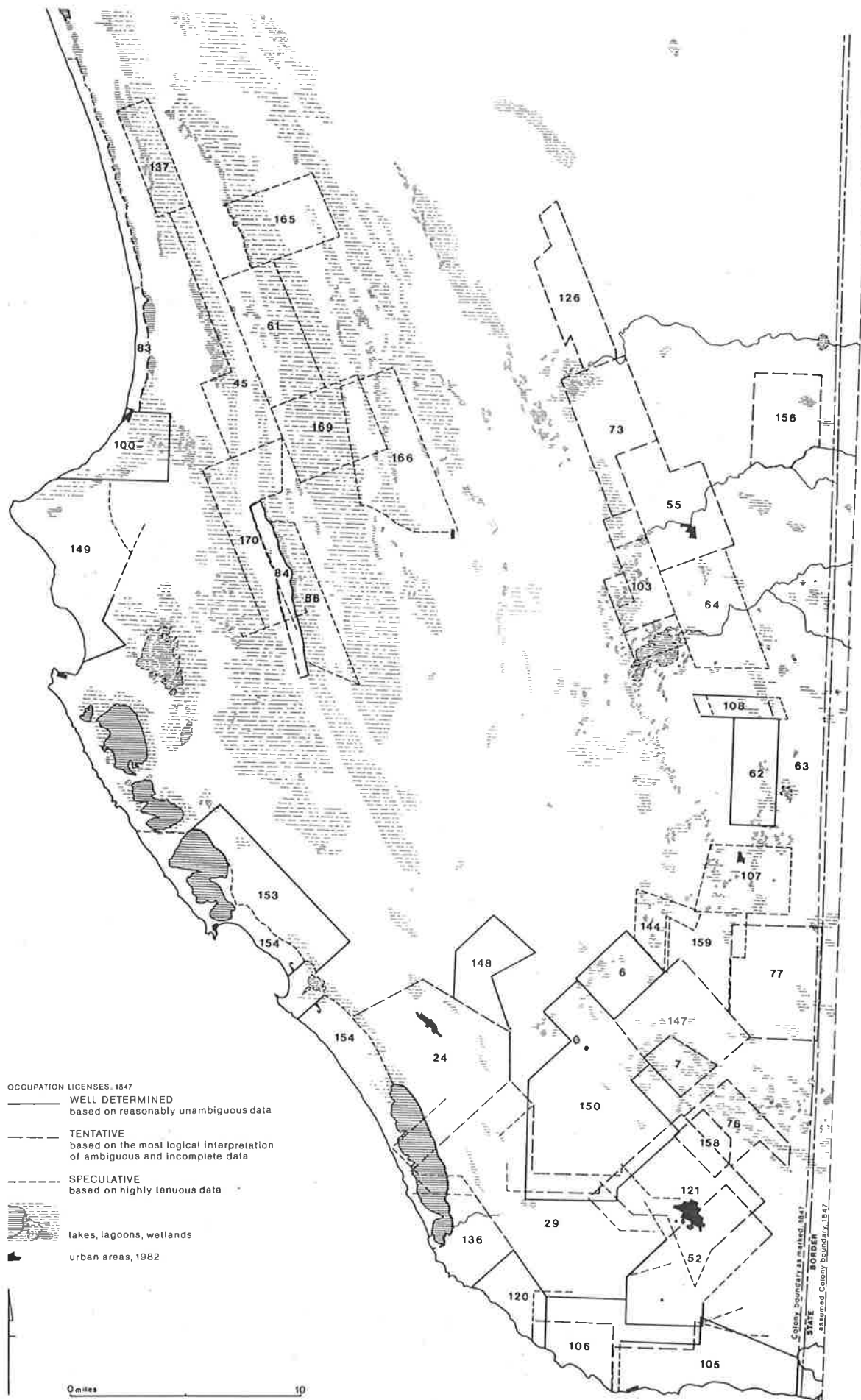
(GRG 24/6/1847/329, 508, 731, 972, 1115, 1529, SAA)

This map was plotted from sparse and often inaccurate data. Squatters lodged false returns to secure as much land as possible. Surveyors may have acted for the squatters rather than the Government (GRG 35/249). Surveyors were also working in difficult and unfamiliar terrain and often estimated distances and angles rather than taking firm measurements. The description of locations is often indefinite; names of physical features may have been originally identified inaccurately or have since changed. The map is not compatible with official sources (see Appendices 1 and 3) which suggests other contemporary maps may have been later rationalised.

Occupation Licences: 1847
(original spelling retained)

No. of Licences	Licensee	Approx. Extent in Sq. Miles	No. of License	Licensee	Approx. Extent in Sq. Miles
6	Duncan McFARLANE of Mt Barker	30	121	Evelyn Pitfield Shirley STURT of Mt Gambier	100
7	Duncan McFARLANE of Mt Barker	16	126	Robert LAWSON of Moscheto	45
24	Samuel DAVENPORT of Macclesfield	100	137	William TILLEY of Miserable Creek	30
29	William GILES of Adelaide on behalf of SA Company	180	144	James BRUCE, Joseph POLSON and Charles George DOUGHTY of County Grey	22
36	Walter MITCHELL of County Grey	50	147	James Arthur Carr HUNTER of Kalangadoo in the County of Grey	60
45	James BAKER of Tarlemoor	65	148	Archibald JOHNSON of Mt Muirhead	36
52	Robert Rowland LEAKE and Edward John LEAKE	8	149	Francis GROTE of McLaren Vale and Edward STIRLING of Strathalbyn	120
55	George ORMEROD of Mosquito Plains	62	150	Robert Roland LEAKE and Edward John LEAKE both of Lake Leake	150
61	Josiah COLE of the Avenue Flat near Reedy Creek	60	153	James HOPE and George HOPE both of Geelong in the District of Port Phillip situated near Rivoli Bay	64
62	Duncan CAMERON of the Moscheto Plains	38	154	William RIPPEN of Rivoli Bay situated near Rivoli Bay	80
63	Duncan CAMERON of the Moscheto Plains	16	156	Edward TOWNSEND of the South-Eastern District	48
64	William and John ROBERTSON of Mosquito Creek	60	158	Owen CURRAN of the Limestone Ridge in the County of Grey	16
73	Benjamin SANDERS of the Morambro Creek	58	159	Thomas LANG, Gideon Scot LANG and William LANG of the Reedy Lagoon	?
76	Lachlan McKINNON of Mt Fyans	33	165	Archibald BROWN and James BROWN of Encounter Bay	48
77	Charles Farquhar McKINNON	79	166	Thomas CHIRNSIDE of the Wannon	60
83	Arthur Forbes LLOYD of Glenville	30	169	Isaiah COLE of the Avenue Flat in the County of Robe	56
84	Lachlan McBEAN of Adelaide	16	170	John HINDMARSH, Captain in the Royal Navy and Henry MORRIS of Encounter Bay	72
86	James BAKER of Tarlemoor	45			
100	George KENDLE of Maria Creek	24			
103	Alexander STEWART of Moscheto Plains	40			
105	Niel BLACK of County Grey	70			
106	Donald BLACK of Country Grey	30			
107	Alexander CAMERON	45			
108	Donald MACARTHUR	12			
120	Archibald Johnson of Mt Muirhead	30			

Sources: GRG 24/6/1846/329, 508, 731, 972, 1115, 1529, SAA; SAGG, 1847.



land parallel to the eastern boundary which offered grasslands between open forests.⁹⁷ As "empirical testers of the environment", the capitalist pastoralists confirmed that this was the land most like European land: those who came later would have to be content with second best. Some of their land might have supported cultivation, but by 1847 the pastoralists had made it quite clear they intended to use it for sheep.⁹⁸

Among the early arrivals the Scots predominated; almost three times as many land-seekers came from New South Wales as from South Australia until those excluded from pastoral land near the settled districts began to travel south in 1846.⁹⁹

Among the latter groups were John and Matthew Colville, 25- and 23-year-old Irish agricultural labourers who exemplified the colonisers' vision. The Colville brothers arrived as assisted immigrants in 1839, landless but industrious and enthusiastic farmers, equipped to farm the lands of South Australia. Among other material in their thirteen casks of cargo, they brought a bag of ironmongery, a plough, six cartwheels and three axes.¹⁰⁰ By 1840 they had erected a good pisé house and sheep pens and opened a slate quarry at Willunga, but they had not enclosed or cultivated land.¹⁰¹ By 1846 they had struck out for the South East and taken up the Woakwine run, inferior country on the coast near Rivoli Bay. The Leake brothers knew this land well and had kept away from it. They declared that the small portion of it which was dry in summer was sandy and thinly-grassed; in winter it was, Charles Leake said, "all swamp and so wet and

97. Map 3.

98. The settlement of the South East was one indicator of the general clamour for land throughout the state when population increased by 64% from 1844-8. S.H. Roberts, p 139; E.M. Dunn, pp 10-11.

99. Appendix 1.

100. Register of Emigrant Labourers, 1529, SAA.

101. This was on Section 276, named 'Moy', near Willunga. Copy of a despatch from Governor Grey to Lord John Russell, 7 October 1841, in Official Statistical Returns Relative to the Progress of the Colony of South Australia at the Termination of 1840, London, 1843. (hereafter Papers Relative to South Australia), p 88, SAA.

boggy you could not ride upon it".¹⁰² William Purbrick, overseer for the South Australian Company's station near Mt Gambier, also thought the country was not all adapted for sheep. It was too near the coast where sheep died of a mysterious disease.¹⁰³ The Stirling brothers were only a few miles from the Colvilles and on this "unhealthy land" they lost 2,000 of their 4,000 sheep in 1846.¹⁰⁴ Within a year the Colvilles' hopes of becoming successful landowners were dashed. Like their neighbours, the Spicers, the Giffords, and the Bates, they left.¹⁰⁵ Land in the South East was turning out to be not so evenly fertile nor so remarkably free of disease as enthusiastic colonisers had declared the whole of South Australia would be. On such poor land the Colvilles, although well-intentioned and experienced in European farming, met their match.

George Sanders, son of an English Quaker country gentleman whose shipping business became insolvent between 1827 and 1828, also set out for the South East in 1846. "Alluring descriptions" persuaded Sanders that he had the chance of a brighter future in South Australia, where "the climate was delightful and the soil was fertile". With a title to land and a year's provisions, he arrived in South Australia with his family on Christmas

102. Charles Leake, while on a visit to his brothers, Robert and Edward, appraised the land around their runs in this way in a letter to his father. L 1/1/2, 30 November 1845, AUT. Map 4(b).

103. William Purbrick to William Giles, Manager of the South Australian Company, 3 November 1849, BRG 42, SAA.

104. Samuel Davenport to his father George, 17 June 1846, in Davenport papers, comprising letters of Samuel Davenport, chiefly to his father, George Davenport, 1842-9, and his brothers, Robert and John. PRG 40, SAA. For biographical details of Samuel, later Sir Samuel, Davenport, ADB, Vol. 4, pp 24-5; R. Cockburn, Vol. 1, pp 78-9. See also B.A. Cocker, Special Surveys of the Wakefield Theory, History Honours Thesis, University of Adelaide, 1967; T.C. Borrow, The Davenport Family and Colonial History, D3527(T), SAA. The letters of Samuel Davenport have also been edited by B. Baldwin and published in the following issues of South Australiana: Vol. 6, 1967, pp 17-56 and 71-116; Vol. 7, 1968, pp 59-83; Vol. 9, 1970, pp 1-49; Vol. 10, 1971, pp 43-77; Vol. 16, 1977, pp 127-70; Vol. 19, 1980, pp 16-73.

105. H. Carthew, Rivoli Bay, Millicent, 1974, p 65. Map 4(b).

Eve, 1839.¹⁰⁶ His first farming venture at Echunga Creek did not prosper. In 1840 the nine acres he had sown yielded "indifferent maize", "very poor potatoes", "smutty wheat" and "bad quality oats".¹⁰⁷ Perhaps with the help of Jacob Hagen, landowner and politician, for whom he became an agent in 1858, Sanders determined to try again. He struck out for the wilderness of the South East with his son, Benjamin and R. Pepperell in 1844.¹⁰⁸ He took up 'Morambro' in the central northern area of the district and by 1850 was running 10,000 sheep on 127 square miles. The Sanders were a highly-motivated and industrious family who probably had more capital and certainly better land than the Colville brothers. One can only speculate why they found the going too difficult but their main want was experience of any kind. The former wholesale and retail grocer from England and newcomer to South Australia had admitted he "knew nothing about land, good or bad".¹⁰⁹ Yet he was trying to run sheep on a vast tract of land about which no European knew anything. Sometime before 1852, less than six years after their arrival, the Sanders decided the wilderness of the South East was best left for others to tame.

106. Reminiscences of Miss Jane Sanders, 1830 - 14 June 1909, only daughter of George Sanders, pp 1-111, 1208/M, SAA. Sanders' ideas about South Australia had been formed in his correspondence with John Hack, farmer and merchant, and fellow-Quaker in South Australia, and reports from James Backhouse who had returned "from a religious tour of the colonies".

107. This was on 'The Three Brothers' Special Survey. 1841 Census, 407 and Papers Relative to South Australia, p 95, SAA.

108. On the Grey expedition in 1844, Burr passed Sanders and Pepperell, searching for a sheep run. Pepperell committed suicide within a year of being at Rivoli Bay. The reason why was not known but the Magistrate assumed he could not have "performed so rash an act because a few sheep had caught scab". SAR, 11 October 1845. Benjamin Sanders, son of George Sanders, born 17 February 1829, appears to have remained on the run, although he was only 15 years old. He died at Echunga, a retired farmer, on 16 December 1916. SRG, 103/6, SAA. For biographical details of Jacob Hagen, ADB, Vol. 1, pp 498-9. For Hagen's employment of George Sanders, "Outgoing Letter Book of George Sanders of Echunga Creek", 3 October 1855 - 29 October 1857, 1300/M, SAA.

109. 1208/M, SAA; Appendix 1.

The Colvilles, Sanders and other unsuccessful licensees in the South East lacked either capital, experience or good land. Scots with firm connections with Port Phillip and Van Diemen's Land had these necessities.¹¹⁰ In the South East it was they who were most successful in making a fortune from the land they determined to subdue.

Sanders' land fell to Donald Cameron, also "a beginner to sheep farming".¹¹¹ But Cameron bought good land with money from "the best-kept hotel in Portland",¹¹² and had fine sheep bred in the western districts of New South Wales.¹¹³ What he lacked in experience, was supplied by relatives who had also established their runs on some of the best land in the South East.

The Camerons and their neighbours from Scotland, the McArthurs, took up their runs early in the 1840s. In 1833 John Cameron had seen little future for his 23-year-old shepherd son, Alexander, in the Scottish highlands where sheep were replacing people. He wrote to his brother, Duncan, in Parramatta, on 5 May 1833, telling him, "Alexander my son is determined to go to that place next year if you will give him every encouragement to ... I want your opinion of my son's going to that place as soon as this comes to your hand". Duncan Cameron's reply is not known, and five years were to elapse before Alexander "King" Cameron left for Australia.

110. For licensees who had left before 1851 and for details on early Scottish pastoralists, Appendix 1; S.F. Macklin, History Honours Thesis, Pastoral Pioneers of South Australia: A Quantitative Analysis, Flinders University, 1978, Table 19, p 66. This table shows that from a group of 259 pioneers examined, the highest percentage (32.50) of Scots settled in the South East. Macklin argues (p 24) that these Scots were successful because they occupied the best lands earliest, rather than because of particular national traits.

111. Letter from Donald Cameron to Niel Black, 18 March 1847. Black papers, MS 8996, LTC, SLV (hereafter MS8996).

112. William Moodie, "Reminiscences of Pioneering Days in Victoria", p 20. MS 1957, LTC, SLV. See also J.A. Palmer (ed.), William Moodie: A Pioneer of Western Victoria, Maryborough, 1973, p 29.

113. Cameron had bought his sheep from Niel Black. Letter from D. Cameron to N. Black, 18 March 1847, MS8996.

By this time his two uncles, Duncan and Alexander, or "Black Sandy" Cameron, had left Van Diemen's Land, and were slowly but surely putting down roots on the mainland. In 1838 "King" Cameron joined them on their rich tracts of land west of Port Phillip. By 1844 he had struck out for fresh lands across the border with £9,500 borrowed from his uncle, Duncan Cameron. According to oral tradition an Aborigine guided "King" Cameron across the border to those well-grassed flats near Lake Mundy which had excited Hawdon five years before. Here Cameron established the 'Penola' run. He must have sent encouraging reports back to his uncles, for by 1846 they, too, began to move westward to settle on these rich limestone plains of the South East. Some time before 1846 "King" Cameron built an inn which he named the 'Royal Oak' and by 1851 he offered land he had privately surveyed around the inn for the Penola township, designating areas for markets, shops and a Catholic church. He had begun building a 15-roomed home from stringy-bark on the banks of a very large lagoon.¹¹⁴ This was to become a home which befitted the head of a family which, in Scotland twenty years previously, might have held 100 acres between them on tenuous lease, but who now held over a quarter of a million acres of the richest land in the South East.¹¹⁵

John Robertson was another Scot with previous experience of Australian land who prospered in the South East. Robertson had been a botanist and naturalist with an Indian expedition for two years. In 1831 he arrived in Van Diemen's Land with only "a brave heart and a light

114. For details of Alexander Cameron and his family, I am grateful to V. Feehan of Victoria for permission to quote from his unpublished dissertation, Alexander Cameron: A Biographical Sketch, 1979. See also E. Richards, Highland Migrants to Australia in the Nineteenth Century, Unpublished manuscript, 1974, Ch. 1; P. Rymill, Penola Primary School: Centenary History, Penola, 1979, p 3; BW, 2 November 1935; R. Cockburn, Vol. 1, p 170. For further details of 'The Royal Oak', Hotels Index, 1195, SAA.

115. For the holdings of the Cameron family, Appendix 1 and Maps 3, 5 and 6.

purse", and spent seven of his nine years there managing 'Formosa Farm' for the botanist, W.E. Lawrence.¹¹⁶ By 1840 he had saved £3,000, but land in Van Diemen's Land was too highly priced for Robertson's liking. He bought 1,000 ewes for £100, a team of six working bullocks, two cows and a horse for £195; freight, store and tools for £312, and with four men costing him £175 in wages, he arrived in Portland Bay in February 1840. In May he settled on a run of 11,338 acres, sixteen miles north-east of Casterton, which he named 'Wando Vale', a property adjoining 'Merino Downs', occupied by the Henty brothers. In 1841 boundary disputes broke out. Robertson temporarily lost the security of his home station and 10,000 acres. Rather than face future insecurity, in 1844 he and his brother, William, journeyed westward in search of unoccupied land. They came upon Mosquito Creek - one of the three permanent waterways which spill on rich land in the South East which the earlier overlanders and explorers had sought but missed in travelling too far south.¹¹⁷ In 1844 the Robertson brothers took up 135 square miles of land. On the banks of Mosquito Creek they established their head station 'Struan', and from here for the next century, they and their descendants commanded the surrounding fertile plains.¹¹⁸

About twenty miles to the north-east of 'Struan' and about ten miles west of the border with New South Wales, another Scot, Adam Smith, settled in 1845. Smith was born of farming stock in Jedburgh in 1815. When he was 24 he emigrated to Australia with his wife, Janet, and infant

116. For biographical details of W.E. Lawrence, ADB, Vol. 2, pp 93-4

117. For details of the Robertson brothers, T.F. Bride, pp 154-7; E. Richards, Ch. 1; M. Kiddle, Men of Yesterday, Melbourne, 1961, pp 23, 45, 49, 176 and 280; J. Murdoch and H. Parker, History of Naracoorte, Naracoorte, 1963, pp 49-51 and 56; R. Cockburn, Vol. 1, pp 166-7 and 202; C.M.H. Clark, A History of Australia, Vol. 3, Melbourne, 1978, p 180. For the apt naming of Mosquito Creek, O. Ragless, "Diary of a journey from Gawler to the Victorian Goldfields, 1852", D6299(L), SAA. On his journey Ragless reached 'Struan' on 6 February 1852, and commented, "Mosquatters hear have longer legs than the ones in Adelaide and bit a good deal sharper they are round me as thick i cannot wright for them."

118. Appendix 1; Maps 3, 5 and 6.

son, Robert, arriving in Sydney in 1839. Port Phillip first attracted Smith, and he journeyed in a spring cart with a party overlanding to this "new country". After being in partnership at Deep Creek for five years, he joined John Oliver, also from Scotland, and William Brown. These men preceded Smith to South Australia, and established 'Broadmeadows'. Shortly after their arrival Brown was killed by Aborigines, and in 1846 John Oliver and Smith, who now had three sons, bought out Brown's share.¹¹⁹ By 1850 they were leasing sixty square miles and running 10,005 sheep and 78 cattle on it.¹²⁰

Apart from being an absentee landowner, Niel Black also typified the successful Scottish squatter in the South East. Black was a well-established pastoralist at 'Glenormiston' in the Port Phillip district.¹²¹ In 1845, at the age of 41, he decided to enlarge his herd of imported Durham cattle, and sent his experienced and astute overseer, John Thompson, and a probable relative, Donald Black, to find "another Port Phillip" in the west.¹²¹ At the end of April 1845, Black and Thompson "fell in with the Mount Gambier and Adelaide road" until they arrived at Henty's station at the foot of Mt Gambier. On the next day they climbed to the top of the mountain. "Never in this colony", wrote Thompson to Black, "did I feast my eyes on a more beautiful view". The surrounding country "was equal to the finest description of land he had seen in Port Phillip"¹²²

119. A. Henderson (ed.), Early Pioneer Families of Victoria and Riverina: A Genealogical and Biographical Record, Melbourne, 1936, pp 303-38; J. Murdoch and W. Parker, pp 52-3; R. Cockburn, Vol. 1, p 198. For biographical details of John Oliver, A. Henderson, Henderson's Australian Families, Melbourne, 1941, pp 209-21.

120. Although he submitted estimates of his acreage and stock returns, the land Smith held under licence and lease is not demarcated on early maps. Appendix 1; Maps 3, 5 and 6.

121. For biographical details of Niel Black, ADB, Vol. 3, pp 171-2; R. Cockburn, Vol. 2, pp 234-5; for references in M. Kiddle, Index, pp 565-6.

122. The relationship between Thompson and Black has not been identified. Thompson writes to Black as an equal, and sometimes signs himself "Your sincere friend" (e.g. 9 June 1849). Donald Black's letters show that he probably had little education. He was obviously under some obligation to Niel Black. When Niel Black asked about the possibility of his going home to Scotland, Donald Black replied he was unable to do so until he had paid off his debt, probably financial, to Niel Black (18 September 1849). Blackpapers, MS8996.

From Henty's stock-keeper at Mt Gambier Thompson and Black learned that all the country south of Mt Gambier to the sea coast and east to the Glenelg was unoccupied, but only two months previously the South Australian Company had placed 9,000 sheep on a run, 25 miles by 10 miles, south-west of Mt Gambier. The land-seekers quickly decided to explore to the south. They also soon discovered the abundance of underground water. There was only one creek between the River Glenelg and Mt Gambier but water was plentiful in craters and in caverns about 30 feet below the surface. They found one large limestone cave about four miles west of the Glenelg and one and a half miles from the sea, in the shape of a tureen, 420 feet wide, 22 feet to the surface and 32 feet deep. Thompson's shepherds soon found other similar caves. Thompson declared he would have expected the water to run away because "the great extent of surface drank in the rain like a sponge", but he was surprised to find there were quite a few fresh springs in the area.¹²³

Keeping Niel Black informed of their discoveries as they "knocked about the country between Cape Northumberland and the Glenelg", Thompson and Donald Black next explored around Mt Schanck. In this area, after they had "left the hill about six miles behind, the soil began to change gradually to a sandy nature, but it still preserved the same undulating surface and continued to be well grassed although becoming more thickly timbered". Of the land nearer the coast he wrote in glowing terms. This land was "rich with a coating of grass not to be surpassed by the best of Glenormiston". Thompson had only one objection. Like Leake, he felt the country was "rather too thick in the timber". But he was confident that when Europeans settled "that would go away in time". They returned for the sheep which they had left at the Glenelg and brought back another overseer, William Swan. After "six days of hard driving" they arrived

123. For Eight Mile Creek and springs, Map 9. John Thompson to Niel Black, 15 May 1845, MS8996. For drainage through porous coral limestone, G. Blackburn, p 6.

at the land they had occupied which, much to Thompson's delight, "pleased Swan beyond his expectations". "This is country if you were to see for yourself," Thompson wrote, "I am sure you would not let slip through your fingers. I can only conclude that it is my most ardent wish that you should take all pains to secure the land which is in truth, another Glenormiston in the west."¹²⁴ Black was not likely to let such land slip through his fingers. Through Stephen Henty's agent in Adelaide, William Younghusband, he secured 151 square miles, 109 of which were on the South Australian side of the border.¹²⁵ By 1850 he was pasturing 1,309 sheep and 1,732 cattle at 'Warreanga', his head station, in the lee of Mt Schanck.¹²⁶

As well as Scots, English gentlemen were intent upon imposing European civilisation and making money from the South East. George Meredith, pastoralist in Van Diemen's Land, was one. Socially and politically established by the 1840s, and in his late 60s, George Meredith had no wish to leave his home at 'Cambria', but he did wish to see his sons provided for and to put to good use "capital now lying idle".¹²⁷ To this end he established his fourth son, John, at 'Oaklands' and 'Murrawâ', runs of 75 square miles in the lower South East close to the New South Wales border.¹²⁸ By allowing his son to superintend and to

124. John Thompson to Niel Black, 9 June 1845, MS8996. For William Swan's rise from overseer to private landowner, E. Richards, Ch. 3, pp 1 and 30. For personal details of Swan, J.A. Palmer (ed.), pp 39, 42, 94 and 95.

125. For further information on William Younghusband, E. Richards, "William Younghusband and the Overseas Trade, South Australia", South Australiana, Vol. 17, pp 151-93, 1978; R. Cockburn, Vol. 1, pp 142-3.

126. "Statistical Register of all the Land Bought by Niel Black and Co. in the Australian Colonies by 1 July 1864", MS8996. Appendix 1; Maps 3, 5, 6 and 9.

127. For biographical details of George Meredith, ADB, Vol. 2, pp 224-6.

128. For personal characteristics of John Meredith, R. Boldrewood, p. 152. There is no documentation in Government Gazettes or Lands Department manuscripts that John Meredith held his land under an Occupation Licence. There are gaps in the Meredith correspondence, but George Meredith refers to a dispute, still unsettled (2 September 1847) and to the fact that his son appears to have "no just title" (22 July 1847). There is documentation for Meredith's lease by 1851. Appendix 2; Maps 3, 5 and 6.

have "an agreed percentage over the annual proceeds of land and stock and above actual expenses and disbursements", George Meredith hoped he would find "a beneficial interest in his own good management and exertion".¹²⁹

With his father's permission to draw on £2,000 over the next three years, John Meredith was to see the land was always well stocked "with ewes in lamb or lambs at their side".¹³⁰ Breeding was "always a certainty as long as he had an abundance of spare pasturage and wool would always be a stable produce and should never slip in value". With this in mind John was to secure "trustworthy labour" to run his sheep station and to protect it from the attacks of the natives, which George Meredith had heard were "of the worst Tribes". Not only his son's life but "a large amount of property was at stake".¹³¹

Meredith had hopes that his son would not only make a good profit from wool; he was most concerned that he should be a harbinger of British civilisation in the Australian bush. John was at all times to conduct himself as an English gentleman. His father knew this would not be easy as his son would be "living alone without any fitting companion and remote from social intercourse", where he would be "mixing only with that class of beings calculated to have an injurious influence upon his habits and manners". He took comfort in the thought that his son possessed "the sure foundation of moral rectitude and sound principles", but he advised him to take great care that "the persons he met with did not have an undesirable effect upon his deportment and manners as a gentleman". John was also to make sure that his command over others did not "beget an authoritative-opinionative bearing, unusual in genteel society". He was further

129. George Meredith to his son John Meredith, 26 February 1847, in Meredith papers, NS 123/2, AOT (hereafter NS 123/2). See also PRG 133, SAA.

130. NS 123/2, 8 June 1847.

131. NS 123/2, 25 June 1847.

to make a solemn pledge never to smoke, a habit which was one of the "first steps to degeneration in the colonies". Flute-playing, on the other hand, was a habit to cultivate. Not only would this pastime "beguile many a weary hour" but it would also "induce many pleasing associations". "In your retirement to the wilderness," George Meredith concluded, "your conduct as an Englishman will depend upon yourself."¹³²

John Meredith welcomed his father's challenge to carve culture and profit from the bush. As he wrote to his fiancée, Maria Hammond, "My determination was always to be the founder of my own independence, happiness and future Home".¹³³ Yet there were difficulties from the beginning. All his labourers, except one, deserted him. As he had no written agreement to act upon, he was left with one gentleman assistant whom he paid £50 a year. The seasons were also far more extreme and severe than he had anticipated. The swamps were never so low as in 1846, but local settlers could not recollect so much rain as in the winter of 1847.¹³⁴ Meredith lost 500 sheep from the cold in one week.¹³⁵ As one visitor commented, the country might be "very beautiful", but he doubted it was adapted to sheep, being "far too cold and wet".¹³⁶ Meredith's wool in 1847 was in such a dirty and disgraceful state that his father was "wholly at a loss to account for such a sad contrast to the usual Meredith clip which had stood well in the London market". He had no

132. NS 123/2, 25 June 1947.

133. John Meredith to Maria Hammond, 25 June 1847, Meredith papers, NS 123/46 (hereafter NS 123/46), AOT. Maria Hammond was an orphan, fostered by James Grant of 'Tullochgorum', Fingal, Van Diemen's Land. Preface to NS 123/46.

134. SES, 8 January 1878. See also GRG 24/6/1847/964, SAA. The Coorong also rose to an unprecedented height strewn the coast with dead fish. SAR, 7 August 1847. Thomas Bates also recalled how he rode forty miles in one day in that winter and "only crossed two limestone ridges, say 2 miles, the remainder being covered with water over the horse's fetlocks and sometimes half way up the girth". MS 11266.

135. John Meredith to his father, 2 September 1847, NS 123/45 (hereafter NS 123/45), AOT.

136. A. Tolmer, p 583.

advice to offer his son on how to cope with the irregularities of the seasons, but he warned him to gain from "the lesson of experience".¹³⁷

To ease his loneliness and to compensate for difficulties in making his large run of strange land conform to European management, Meredith found great solace in preparing a European home and garden. His roomy house, made from split and adzed boards, had been set up in Van Diemen's Land and brought across the straits. After erecting it, Meredith began plastering the bedroom, laying the floor and making the furniture from native wood.¹³⁸ "However limited in size, however humble in external appearance" he determined he would not lose sight of his father's admonition "always to remember his was the residence of an English gentleman".¹³⁹ Around his home he planted "two bundles of young fruit tree stocks, cherry suckers, three score of seedling apples and two kinds of grape vine cuttings" which his father had sent from Van Diemen's Land, "well secured in netting with moss at the roots".¹⁴⁰

Evelyn Sturt was another young English gentleman who sought to subdue the wilderness of the South East.¹⁴¹ By August 1844 he took out a licence to occupy the land to which Stephen Henty had not gained official right, and by 1846 he was "crowing a little" in the confidence that he would purchase this ahead of the South Australian Company.¹⁴²

137. NS 123/2, 9 November 1848.

138. BW, 19 February 1903; J.H. Sheppard, History of Mt Gambier and the South-Eastern District, p 251, SAA.

139. NS 123/2, 27 August 1848.

140. NS 123/46, 11 November 1847.

141. PG, 10 August 1844. See also G.N. Sturt, Life of Charles Sturt, London, 1899, pp 118 and 229.

142. Henty declared he was "deprived of his stations ... by the chicanery of some unprincipled individuals". Not realising his true location, he had applied to New South Wales, rather than South Australia, for a license. T.F. Bride, p 125. Henty also applied unsuccessfully for licenses for his brother, John, and for himself to Charles Sturt, Commissioner of Crown Lands, on 3 February 1842, GRG 35/2/1842/54, SAA. In a letter to William Giles, Manager of the South Australian Company, Andrew Madder, overseer of the Company's run near Mt Gambier, claimed Sturt had no right to the best land he was occupying (Sections 1100, 1101, 1102 and 1103) and hoped to purchase. Andrew Madder to William Giles, 26 May 1846, BRG 42, SAA; Maps 3 and 5.

On this land, the "most splendid portion of the country in the finest part of the colony", he formed 'Compton', and ran 6,000 sheep he had brought from New South Wales. He found surface water in only a few tea-tree streams, but soon realised the whole country was cavernous, "and absolute streams and rivers abounded within a few feet of the surface". He built a fine house and started his garden. After two years his seeds and plants were doing well. He warded off "inimical natives ... with a good rifle and a correct eye" and "after gaining their respect through fear, gained their confidence through kindness".

Despite good land, abundant water and little fear of trouble from Aborigines, Sturt still had difficulties. "For the relief of pretended friends in the ruinous years of 1842 and 3," he had "liberally scribbled his autograph." He had consequently taken up his land "without a shilling in the world". Like that other English gentleman, Meredith, he was also deserted by all hands except one. In 1845 he relied on two of his gentlemen friends to bring in the first clip and cart it to Port Fairy, sixty miles across the New South Wales border. He found Aborigines 'useful but indolent' shepherds. By 1846 he was paying £30 a year with double rations for a man and his wife.¹⁴³ In 1847 bleak, wet weather took his sheep as it had Meredith's, and because of low prices some of his "very good sheep" fetched only ten shillings.¹⁴⁴ By this time Evelyn Sturt, "aristocratic, athletic, adventurous pioneer and explorer" was finding that conquering the South East bush was far more demanding than the colonisers of South Australia had anticipated.¹⁴⁵

143. D. Madder to W. Giles, 14 April 1846, BRG 42, SAA.

144. P. Brown (ed.), Clyde Company Papers, Vol. 4, p 163.

145. For Sturt's description of his early days in the South East, T.F. Bride, pp 247-9. For detail on 'Compton', Research Note 472, SAA.

Another English gentleman, Samuel Davenport, ventured south from Adelaide to take up a run in the Rivoli Bay district. At 29, with family capital and helpful connections, by 1846 Davenport was already the urbane squire of Macclesfield in the Adelaide hills, only three years after his arrival from England.¹⁴⁶ He declared he "knew nothing about sheep", and was more interested in growing almonds and vines as he had seen practised in France. Yet he felt it was too early to attempt agriculture in the Rivoli Bay area, although, as he told his brother in England, the district was "most abundant with good soil".¹⁴⁷ On the other hand wool paid, and cattle were also realising good prices "because of the demands made by mining".¹⁴⁸ Making the distant South East "an abode of civilization" did not appeal to Davenport; he declared he would have preferred taking out land close to the Adelaide hills. But he was intent on becoming a successful sheep-farmer and as all the runs of the colony considered suitable for sheep were full, he set out reluctantly in December 1845 on his first 300 mile journey to the little-known Rivoli Bay District.¹⁴⁹

As he wrote to his father, there was "no doubting the popularity of the area for sheep men". He took 4,000 sheep, his travelling companion, Duncan McFarlane, took 10,000 and the latter's nephew had 3,000. There were 8,000 sheep ahead of him; 20,000 had crossed the Murray just previously, and 45,000 followed.¹⁵⁰ They ferried their sheep over the river on rafts, a few at a time. Crossing the sheep this way took a fortnight, but it allowed the party to pasture many sheep longer on the east bank and avoid scabby ground on the west bank where the South

146. Samuel Davenport was the fourth son of George Davenport, banker, of Oxford, and steward to the Earl of Macclesfield. George Davenport was agent to the South Australian Company, Director of the South Australian Banking Company and responsible for the Special Survey of Macclesfield. ADB, Vol. 1, pp 217-8.

147. Samuel Davenport to his father, George, PRG 40, 29 April and 1 August 1846.

148. PRG 40, 17 June 1846.

149. PRG 40, 29 April 1846.

150. PRG 40, 8 December 1845; 24 January 1846.

Australian Company had gone before them. The "arduous crossing" could not have been accomplished "without the aid, experience and industry of that class" which Davenport did not expect his father "to understand at Home". These were his "old hands" - convicts "who alone would venture to outposts when first located".¹⁵¹ "They might pawn the clothes off their backs to get drink," but because of them, "delayed, part idle, part wet, dirty and fagged by the labour", they got all but six of his 4,000 sheep safely over. They pushed on, averaging seven to eight miles a day, until Davenport reached his run. His sheep arrived much fatter than when they left, and he proudly informed his father he had not lost a single one on the road.¹⁵² He established his run, marked his boundaries, and returned to Adelaide.¹⁵³

On 5 May 1846 Davenport set out again for Rivoli Bay with Charles Bonney, Commissioner of Crown Lands, to settle a boundary dispute, returning to civilisation six weeks later, on 10 June. He was relieved to be back after so many weeks in the wet bush night and day.¹⁵⁴ He had travelled 1,200 miles in the past six months. After such experiences Davenport was even less enthusiastic about the virtues of civilising the wilderness. He was more than ever convinced that life in the bush was meant for young, unmarried men. As a married man he could not be expected to live too far from "a market, stores, port and communications".¹⁵⁵ But he had not given away his hopes of making money in the South East. He was pleased to leave the management of his run to George Glen, a relative by marriage, who had had some farming experience with his cousins in West Lothian, Scotland. At 18, only three weeks after his arrival in South Australia, Glen

151. PRG 40, 8 December 1845; 24 January 1846.

152. PRG 40, 29 April 1846.

153. See Map 4(a), a sketch in letter of 1 August 1846, PRG 40.

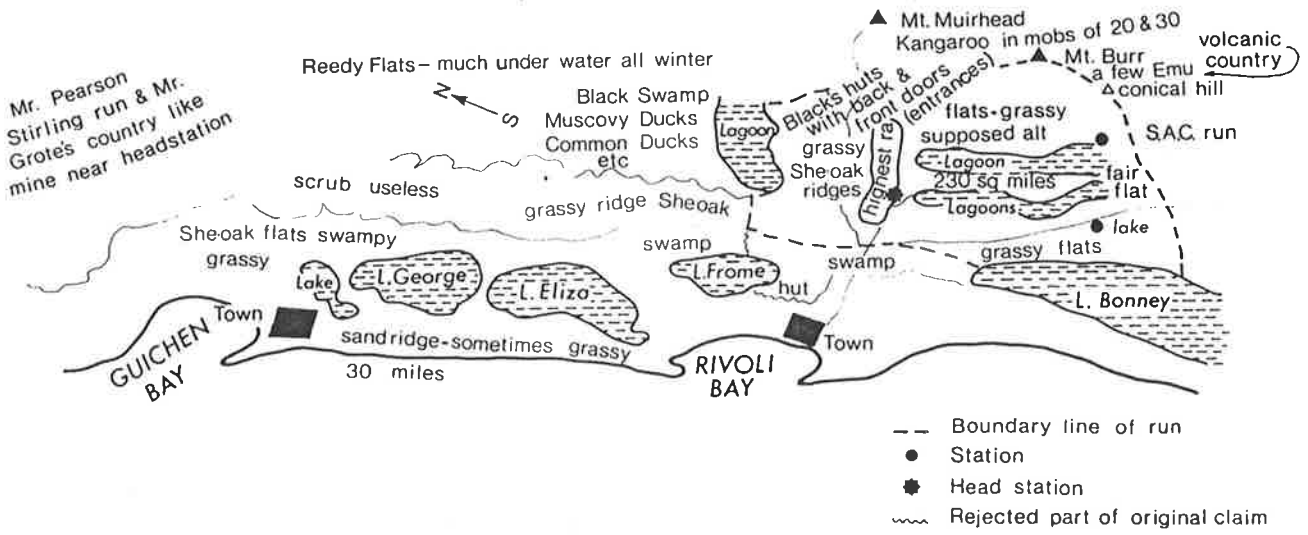
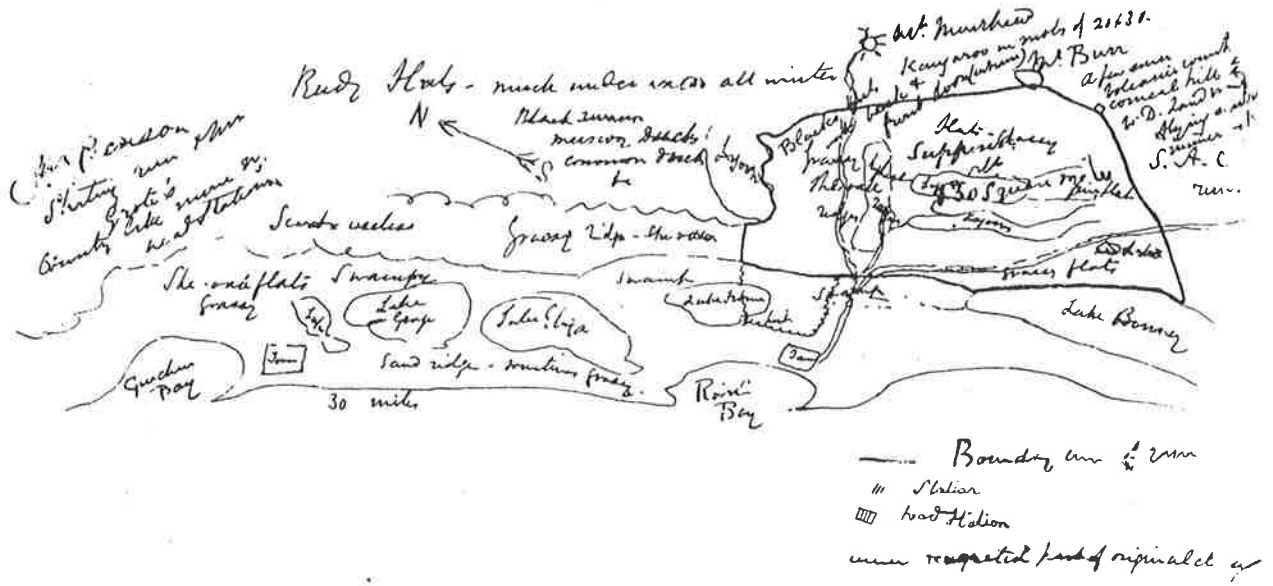
154. PRG 40, 17 June 1846.

155. PRG 40, 17 June 1846.

MAP 4
'Mayurra', 1846.

(a) Samuel Davenport's sketch shows his water-logged run in winter (see also Maps 12 and 13). He obviously could not use this land for agriculture. To run sheep he claimed more land than he was entitled to, and shifted his stock from the ridges in winter to the flats in summer.

(PRG 40, 1 August 1846, SAA).



had made his first journey to Rivoli Bay and had "enjoyed it immensely". The journey had given him a lasting impression of what "roughing it in the bush" meant.¹⁵⁶ Two years later, Davenport decided Glen should "gain a practical knowledge of stock and management of men" by working on the run. "Young George," he reasoned, would become "much wiser in the bush than if left to idle about town." After all, "bushing was the best life" and George ensuring a profitable return from sheep while he was taking on the responsibilities of a gentleman, and preparing for life as a recently-appointed nominee to the Legislative Council.¹⁵⁷

For Davenport this meant legislating for "a new, thriving and mixed community". He looked forward to reading "the latest approved books on political economy and judiciously selected periodicals" which he asked to be sent immediately from England.¹⁵⁸ Land legislation, he wrote to his father, interested him greatly. In his opinion, landowners were unfairly burdened. The assessment on their stock was too heavy. They also took a gamble in outlaying for runs at a great distance from Adelaide, and holding on until they were amply compensated. Their tenure was too insecure for them to be able to do this without anxiety. Moreover, if land were opened up and sold too quickly, the Government ran the risk of "setting a parcel of speculating gamblers loose upon the country". There was no doubt in Davenport's mind that when land was put up for competitive auction, the Government acquired revenue "at real individual

156. PRG 40, 8 December 1846; 18 February 1846; George Glen, Indidents and Memoranda in connection with my life in papers of Bishop Augustus Short and family, PRG 160, Series 32 (hereafter PRG 160/32). The Short papers include letters and diaries of George Glen and his wife Millecent, the daughter of Bishop Short. George Glen's relationship by marriage to Samuel Davenport was complicated. Glen's sister, Elizabeth, married the brother of Samuel Davenport's wife, Margaret (née Cleland). This made Glen a brother-in-law to Davenport. As well, Davenport's mother-in-law, Mrs William Lennox Cleland, remarried. She was the third wife of George Glen's father, and hence his stepmother. For biographical details of George Glen, R. Cockburn, Vol. 2, pp 76-7.

157. PRG 40, 10 June 1846.

158. PRG 40, 17 June 1846.

suffering". He thought the fairest solution was for present occupiers of runs to be allowed leasehold of up to twenty-one years at a fixed rate per square mile with runs classified as first, second or third grade. This would give security to those who were burdened by the expense of "opening up new country" at the same time as it would be useful "in raising money for the revenue".¹⁵⁹ Wakefield's vision had clearly made little impression on Davenport; while the use of large tracts of land for sheep meant money for pastoralist and government, he was willing to follow the precedent established by the colonisers in 1835.

Although relieved to be back among civilising influences near Adelaide, Davenport wrote home about the many unsolved problems attached to his Rivoli Bay venture. Finance was one of these. "Only those," he wrote his father, "who have tried settling stock in newly-discovered areas could possibly understand the trouble, risks and expense of the movement."¹⁶⁰ His own move had cost him £585.10.¹⁶¹ He regretted that he had

159. PRG 40, 1 August 1846.

160. PRG 40, 10 June 1846.

161. Davenport had estimated the cost of establishing a run at Rivoli Bay as:

Costs of establishment	£	s	d	
overseer	50	0	0	per annum and ration
5 shepherds @ £32.10.0	162	10	0	
2 hutkeepers @ £26	52	0	0	
1 bullockdriver, hutbuilder etc.	32	10	0	
And one man armed on horseback whose duty night and day as required is to watch the blacks and visit each flock daily				
	<u>329</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>0</u>	
	<u>156</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	
	<u>485</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>0</u>	

Certain expenses of keep - besides expense of now going
down and two horses and perhaps heavy scab
Washing and shearing, say £100 = £585.10.0

PRG 40, 24 January 1846.

continued/...

"to drain" his father for £460.¹⁶² He feared he would not be able to make the profit he had hoped for if wages continued high. Labourers were not prepared to go so far away from civilisation, and shepherds at Rivoli Bay in 1846 were demanding £60 per year.¹⁶³ He had to pay his hut-keepers eight shillings to ten shillings a week with rations. What irked Davenport most was that he was "paying for impudence rather than civility" from his labourers. Thankfully, his faithful ex-convict overseer, William Capon, was competent and trustworthy.¹⁶⁴ Fortunately, too, his own sheep were fairly free of scab, although the South Australian Company flocks adjoining his were scabby, and "too close for comfort".¹⁶⁵ Numerous flocks of scabby sheep were also continually passing between New South Wales and the Tatiara District.¹⁶⁶ He assured his father he did not take any

Actual costs were:

Overseer	50	0	0
Bullock driver post and hurdlebuilder	31	4	0
Four shepherds at £31.4 each	124	16	0
Two hutkeepers at £26 each	52	0	0
A guard mounted £31.4	31	4	0
An additional hand during lambing, say,	12	0	0
Total common wage	301	4	0
Washing and shearing, say	60	0	0
Rations at 7/- per head, say	230	0	0
	591	4	0

PRG 40, 12 March 1846.

162. PRG 40, 8 December 1845; 10 June 1846.

163. Closer to Adelaide the rate was £50. D. Pike, p 325.

164. PRG 40, 8 December 1845.

165. PRG 40, 17 June 1846.

166. SAR, 7 August 1847.

chances. He both dipped and spotted his flocks regularly.¹⁶⁷

Davenport had also been forced to cut four square miles "of his best sheep piece" from his run. To get this piece he had included "about 20 square miles of useless intervening swamp and water" in his claim for 160 square miles. But his stock numbers did not allow this much. He had "manoeuvred" his stock to justify even 156 square miles and finally got himself "out of the mess" by making up his numbers with 450 cattle, of which he purchased 350 quiet dairy cattle with four first-rate bulls for £1,130, and "borrowing" fifty cattle from his neighbour at Macclesfield and fifty from his stockman. This venture he negotiated "at 6 shillings per head for twelve months with losses for sheep crossing the Murray and speared by Aborigines not chargeable".¹⁶⁸ He hoped he might recoup some of his outlay by allowing pastoralists from New South Wales to depasture on his run on their way to Adelaide.¹⁶⁹

Davenport also told his father that South East land was not all he would have liked it to be. Some parts were "grassy with plenty of water" and his run was "preferable to any" but other flats were fit only for summer feed and he had to use his sandy ridges for the sheep in winter.¹⁷⁰ He was also terribly afraid of the "rot" because of "the wet nature of

167. PRG 40, 10 June 1846. For dipping Davenport advocated "3 ozs of sublimate to 5 gallons of water. To the water when boiled add 1lb of soda to 32 gallons with soft soap sufficient to create a good lather. The sublimate is pounded fine and dissolved in boiling water with, or rather by, one third of its weight of sal ammonia. To the above mixture a glass or two of rectified spirits of tar is added - well stirred about in it before the sheep dipping begins. The mixture is always used at blood heat, the sores and spots having been well rubbed up and scarified beforehand." Spotting is "always done at the overhauling of the sheep, if necessary, after the dipping. The sheep are overhauled at first week after the dipping, then at least once a fortnight until the disease disappears. The stuff is always used hot and the shepherds required to have and use bottles of it should they see the least sign of disease. 2ozs sublimate to the gallon of water (or if very bad 3ozs ditto). The water always prepared with soft soap and put on hot." PRG 40, 28 February 1847.

168. PRG 40, 29 April 1846; 10 and 17 June 1846; 1 August 1846; Map 4(a).

169. PRG 40, 29 April 1846.

170. PRG 40, 1 August 1846.

the country".¹⁷¹ He was also perilously close to the swampy flats where the Stirling brothers and Edward Spicer had lost so many sheep from a mysterious disease.¹⁷² The sheep "fell away declining and died with rotten livers". Yet their livers were without flukes. Post-mortem evidence sometimes showed "the stomach was mortified, the lung inflamed and [there was] running at the eyes". If his sheep should be similarly stricken, Davenport declared he would either boil his sheep down in big iron whale blubber pots, or take them to Port Phillip district and exchange them for lean cattle which he could fatten. In the meantime he told his father his stock was doing well, although lambing was delayed and erratic as the rams had remained with the mob while travelling down and while the drafting yards were erected. The ewes were still lambing in June and might be for two more months. Only 700 out of an expected 2,300 had been dropped.

With an eye to profit, Davenport often thought seriously of changing completely from sheep to cattle. He was certain he could quite profitably supply the growing mineral industry with both beef and working bullocks.¹⁷⁴ AS he and George Glen had discovered, although natives frightened the cattle and rushed them into the boggy swamps before spearing them, cattle were still less vulnerable than sheep at their hands.¹⁷⁵ Although he regretted to tell his father so, there was now open hostility between the whites and the natives. He had sent nine double-barrelled guns and some single guns, with cartridges, balls, lead and swan shot to his overseer who already had pistols. But the natives had learned only too well the distance a pistol could fire. "They are," he wrote, "no cowards. They can stand the shot when pushed as well as any white fellow." Police were

171. PRG 40, 22 August 1846.

172. PRG 40, 17 June 1846.

173. PRG 40, 22 August 1846.

174. PRG 40, 17 June and 1 August 1846.

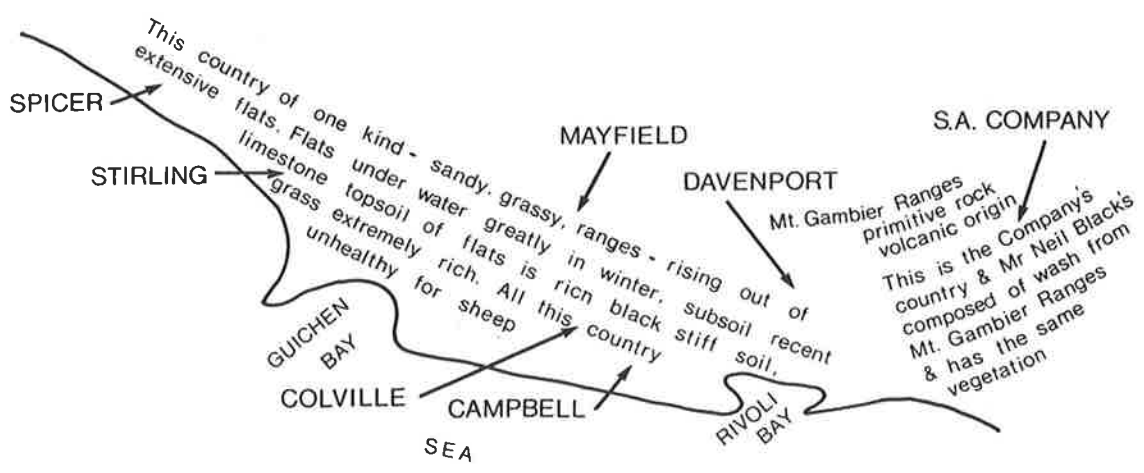
175. PRG 160/32 (n.d.).

MAP 4

'Mayurra', 1846.

(b) Davenport and his neighbours had to contend with disease as well as poor land. By 1850 many had left the Rivoli Bay district, beaten by the terrain, climate and diseases of their un-European environment.

(PRG 40, 7 November 1846, SAA)



thirty miles away, and "useless without blacks to help them track". There was no doubt that "natives were shot". Some of them were very fine men. Yet Davenport could see no way out of the dilemma. White men could not teach blacks as they did not know their language. Nor could they trust them because they lived "by treachery and murder". "There was little joy," he concluded to his father, "in taking up and opening the way to others in a wild country".¹⁷⁶

George Glen, and his younger brother, Tom, stayed on the run to look after the cattle. They pitched their tent at the inland end of a headland almost two and a half miles long and half a mile wide which made a convenient cattle paddock until the animals were familiar with their new territory.¹⁷⁷ But in September the disease which Davenport had so dreaded broke out among his sheep. He lost 11 ewes and 23 lambs when they were crossing a wet swamp in frosty weather. Davenport put this down to the cold, wet climate at first, but between 15 and 19 September, 50 to 100 of the clean sheep died each night.¹⁷⁸ Davenport then determined "to relieve himself of further losses and risk". He ordered the instant removal of the sheep. Many died on the road travelling back to Macclesfield. "Like a defeated army they looked wretched." In the confusion of dead and dying, clean and scabby sheep became mixed. "It was heart-rending to see them," he wrote, "and enough to make the hardest man cry." He lost 2,350 sheep.¹⁷⁹ In February 1847, when they were clean, he sold 1,000

176. PRG 40, 8 December 1845; 24 January, 18 February, 29 April and 1 August 1846 (Davenport's underlining).

177. PRG 40, 22 August 1846. Map 4(b).

178.

Deaths amongst lambs before leaving the run	1,200
Deaths amongst old sheep	150
Deaths amongst lambs on road back	200 supposed
Deaths amongst old sheep on road back	800
	<u>2,350</u>

PRG 40, 9 September and 7 November 1846.

179. PRG 40, 22 September 1846.

of the 3000 which returned for 7/6 per head.¹⁸⁰ Yet he was able to view the outcome of his Rivoli Bay sheep-farming venture with more equanimity than others who had already been beaten by South East land, disease and seasons. His cattle were doing "exceedingly well" under George's "attentive eye". He still had his father's financial backing and his land at Macclesfield. Only men of capital rather than yeomen of small means could survive "the wild country" of the Rivoli Bay district with Davenport's dispassionate avowal - "If adversity sometimes pinches us, we must be thankful".¹⁸¹

After the sheep had gone, Glen stayed on in the huts of the sheepmen with a stock-keeper and a hut-keeper. In the winter of 1848 he took three weeks to bring his first mob of fat cattle to Adelaide where he sold them all for 50/- a head. In the same year he inherited £1,000 from his grandmother.¹⁸² Davenport promoted Glen to partner on a quarter share basis and a former curate, William Vansittart, "an Eton and Christchurch man with good private means", bought another quarter share.¹⁸³ By 1850 Davenport had decided that his sheep farming in the South East had reached "a point within which all of man's exertions would be fruitless and his labour lost".¹⁸⁴ If Rivoli Bay had been healthy he felt it could not have been finer sheep country. But it was not. He had long since given up on civilising such rugged country; now he was not even making money from it. He sold his final half share to Vansittart and Glen, who, by 1850, were running 2,000 cattle on 100 square miles of the run which Glen named 'Mayurra'.¹⁸⁵

By 1847, despite Davenport's qualms about living far from amenities, some civilising European influences were finding their way into the South

180. PRG 40, 28 February 1847.

181. PRG 40, 29 April and 7 November 1846.

182. PRG 160/32 (n.d.).

183. PRG 160/32 (n.d.). See also R. Cockburn, Vol. 2, pp 76-7.

185. Appendix 1; Maps 3 and 6.

East. Settlers were becoming less cut off from outside news. Private entrepreneurs had set up a chain of stores and pubs between Mt Gambier and Portland. Robert Leake no longer had occasion to sleep in the bush while travelling. He told his father in March 1847 he could "now make an Inn every 30 miles".¹⁸⁶ In 1846 Evelyn Sturt, in a letter to John Robertson of 'Struan', had complained, "I have not had a letter or a newspaper for an age and know not what is going on in the world".¹⁸⁷ But in the following year, a more reliable overland mail route between Adelaide and Sydney supplemented the existing carriage of mail by sea. Mt Gambier lay on this route. Couriers passed by Leake's door, so that in October 1847 he told his father, "I do not feel so much out of the way of hearing news as when we first settled. We get four different papers weekly, some are published twice a week."¹⁸⁸

Settlers still had to care for their own health, however, as the nearest doctors were at Portland or Guichen Bay.¹⁸⁹ Ed Leake suffered very much from rheumatic gout and a burning pain in his left side. Holloway's pills brought him no relief.¹⁹⁰ George Meredith frequently sent his son medical supplies and advice. He recommended "Dr. Buchan's work; calomel, in cases of necessity from four to ten grains; five to thirty grains of pecacuanah as being the simplest emetic; rhubarb for pains in the stomach, for bile, and to carry off purging; 15-40 grains of julep as a purging medicine; Peruvian Bark, as a tonic, a Teaspoonful in a glass of wine daily."¹⁹¹

186. L 1/1/4, 23 March 1847. For descriptions of Portland in the 1840s, T.F. Bride, p 182; G. Hamilton, pp 20-2. For inns, 1195, SAA; M.C. Grant, pp 87-8.

187. Evelyn Sturt to John Robertson, 24 September 1846, D6315/1(L), SAA.

188. L 1/1/4, 10 October 1847. For proposals, investigations, and stopping places for overland mail route between Adelaide and Sydney, first suggested in 1842 and finally adopted in March 1847, Research Note 219 and GRG 24/6/1847/964, SAA.

189. Laurence Healey was appointed 2 November 1846. GRG 24/4/15, p 144, SAA.

190. L 1/1/4, 22 December 1849.

191. NS 123/2, 8 June 1847.

Settlers had also to ease their isolation as best they could. Adelaide was not only a dreaded journey of over three hundred miles away, but an unattractive town - at least to Robert Leake and John Meredith. Leake thought it had "no sentiment in it for a European". The climate was arid and unhealthy and the food "had a bad want of nutriment". Furthermore, Adelaide was "a slow place to do business in ... a wretched place to live in and nothing but drinking".¹⁹² Meredith held a similar low opinion. He saw no point in going to Adelaide to "rub off the rural rust" as his father recommended he should do. To Meredith, Adelaide was merely a place of materialists and minerals. As he wrote his fiancée, "Its chief importations are Spirits, beer and Tobacco - Germans, Orphans and harpies - its chief export consists of wool (dirty) hides, Tallow, Grain and Copper; the latter abounds in such quantities that nearly all the people deal in it and have brazen Faces - and copper throats which enables them to swallow an immense amount of alcohol - and convert their mouths into chimneys for the consuming of Tobacco."¹⁹³

Reading and talking with friends were the most available and favoured pastimes. Meredith and other squatters around Mt Gambier formed a book club. To Meredith this was the most delightful way of passing a lonely night "in the house that Jack built".¹⁹⁴ Sturt always had several gentlemen residing with him.¹⁹⁵ Yet compatible company was not always available. Leake complained to his father that he had "no society in the

192. L 1/1/4, 13 April 1849.

193. NS 123/46, 7 May 1851.

194. Evelyn Sturt, Alfred and Edward Bates, George Doughty, David Minnitt, Alexander Hunter, William Mitchell, Gideon and Thomas Lang, and John Meredith are members mentioned by Thomas Bates, Jnr. Members sent £70 to London for the latest works and passed a certain number around to each station within thirty miles of Mt Gambier. "This worked well and was a great boon in the backblocks." T. Bates, MS 11266.

195. e.g. Francis Brodribb (SAR, 27 July 1839; R. Cockburn, Vol. 2, pp 32-3); James Stein (ADB, Vol. 3, pp 237-9; R. Cockburn, Vol. 1, p 191); and Edward R. White, Assistant Surveyor of South East border. For history of disputed South Australian-Victorian border, D.I. Wright, "SA-Vic Boundary Dispute", South Australiana, Vol. 14, 1975, pp 20-33; Map 5.

bush". "Those around us are only overseers, men that have sprung from labourers and we have only the society of one true gentleman within one hundred miles," he wrote. He was particularly concerned that rather than Ed's civilising the bush, the bush was having a detrimental effect on his brother who spent "more than half his time talking to his men and the blacks". He seemed to have forgotten, Robert wrote, that "familiarity breeds contempt".¹⁹⁶ "In consequence," he continued, "Ed has got into low habits and is careless about his person - in fact he has left off smoking and got so fat that he is a burden to himself."¹⁹⁷

South East settlers in the early 1840s also complained constantly that the district was without law and order. Davenport complained that "the country was so far from the courts and magistrates or any other power" that he had little security from unprincipled vagabonds".¹⁹⁸ George Ormerod, on the 'Narracoorte' run, decided to take justice into his own hands in dealing "with bad characters from over the border". He built three prison huts for offenders, the smallest of which was only 7 feet by 6 feet, but sturdy enough to cost him £30.¹⁹⁹ But lawlessness generally meant that squatters suffered great losses from the attacks of Aborigines without speedy recourse to British justice. In 1844 Alexander Tolmer, Sub-Inspector of Mounted Police, enquired into several raids on stock by Aborigines. In 1845 several affrays were reported in the city press by the South Australian Superintendent of Police in the South East district.²⁰⁰ One settler who took measures of his own had a long tiger gun carrying 2oz. balls put in front of his hut on a swivel, as a means

196. L 1/1/4, 9 December 1846.

197. L 1/1/4, 22 December 1849.

198. PRG 40, 1 August 1846.

199. Research Note 278, SAA. For biographical details of George Ormerod, R. Cockburn, Vol. 1, p 67; Vol. 2, p 210; G.E. Loyau, p 259.

200. Research Note 217, SAA.

of retaliation when Aborigines set fire to his huts by putting lighted stringy bark on the end of their spears.²⁰¹ Another chained culprits up to a tree for a few hours "by means of strong handcuffs on their ankles passed through the loops of a bullock chain around a tree".²⁰²

Yet slowly civilised law came to the district. In 1846 a police station was established on Evelyn Sturt's land, and Sturt was made a Stipendiary Magistrate.²⁰³ In the same year police stations were established at Guichen Bay and Rivoli Bay. Mail officers acted as intelligence officers to settlers in reporting "the number, habits, manners and persons of Aborigines".²⁰⁴ As a result, by the late 1840s several settlers were reporting they had less need of guns than formerly, as the Aborigines had been giving less trouble. James Smith, postmaster and missionary at Greytown on Rivoli Bay, reported that he and his wife were endeavouring to instruct Aborigines "in their duties to each other and to Europeans".²⁰⁵ In 1848, his 14-year-old stepson, Duncan Stewart, who knew the Booandik language, was appointed interpreter at Rivoli Bay at a salary of £33.6.8 a year.²⁰⁶ Smith reported to Moorhouse, the Protector of Aborigines, "There is one thing the natives are sadly in need of, viz, education". Smith added that, to his great horror, "it may be truly said of them that 'No man careth for their souls'".²⁰⁷

Despite improved communications, facilities were primitive and settlers still had no legally proclaimed harbour. After Grey had returned

210. Alfred Bates at Lake Hawdon. Thomas Bates, MS 11266.

202. Derwas Owen Jones of 'Binnun-Binnun' from Reminiscences of Squatting Life in the 40s and 50s, MS 11268, LTC, SLV.

203. Research Note 217, SAA; GRG 24/6/1846/192; GRG 24/5/1846/116, SAA. Sturt had first applied to Governor Grey for the position of Magistrate on 9 December 1844. 223/A2, SAA.

204. GRG 24/6/1847/964, SAA.

205. Mrs James Smith, pp 34-5.

206. GRG 24/6/1848/375, SAA.

207. H. Carthew, pp 53-9; T. McCourt, pp 53-96; Mrs James Smith, p 34; SES, 2 May 1893.

from the South East in 1844, he commissioned Captain Emanuel Underwood, who traded regularly between the colonies in his ketch the Governor Gawler, to survey the coast from Cape Northumberland to Cape Jaffa. In 1845 Underwood reported that Rivoli Bay and its port of Greytown, or Southend, offered the best shelter from south-eastern gales between Encounter Bay and Portland Bay. Rivoli Bay harbour then enjoyed a brief heyday until the dreaded "coast" disease caused so many settlers to desert their runs, and a brief revival in the late forties when wool prices fell and Evelyn Sturt and Walter Mitchell established boiling-down works at Greytown.²⁰⁸ In February 1846 Governor Robe, accompanied by a surveying team including Captain Lipson, the harbour-master at Port Adelaide, favoured Guichen Bay and its port of Robe. In Lipson's opinion, the harbour "was accessible from all parts of the interior".²⁰⁹ Captain G.V. Butler was appointed Resident Commissioner there in September 1846 and Port Robe was proclaimed the legal port of Guichen Bay on 18 February 1847.²¹⁰ In 1849, twenty-five prominent squatters who "occupied a large portion of the district bounded by the eastern border of the province", brought pressure to bear on Governor Young to make Robe a safe deep-sea port. They had upwards of 150,000 sheep, besides cattle, and they claimed that with increased commerce, the importation of excisable goods and a squatter trade which was currently patronising Portland, the Government of South Australia was suffering manifest loss of profits.²¹¹ But the

208. SAGG, 17 February 1846. For biographical details of Governor Robe, ADB, Vol. 2, pp 382-3. For further information on Captain Underwood, T. McCourt, pp 6-51; G.F. Loyau, p.271, and on Captain Lipson, G.E. Loyau, p 160.

209. The port of Rivoli Bay later became known as Beachport. H. Carthew, pp 68-9. See also W. Purbrick to William Giles on 12 February 1849, BRG 42, SAA; Map 15.

210. SAGG, 9 September 1846; 8 February 1847, p 296; Research Note 192, SAA; Map 15.

211. SAR, 19 and 27 June 1849; Research Note 192, SAA.

Government took no action. Squatters continued to favour Portland, despite its remoteness. "Bluenose" made quite clear in a letter to the Adelaide press that "They would be donkeys to pay double charge and quadruple carriage for goods at any other harbour when they could obtain them so reasonably at Portland."²¹²

A continuing trial for South East squatters throughout the forties was a scarcity of labour which they blamed on their isolation and the attraction of good wages in Adelaide. A labour shortage was difficult for those who kept mainly cattle because these were inclined to stray in the thick timber. Niel Black had no stockyards by 1850. One of his stockmen spent seven weeks looking for stragglers, travelling as far as 75 miles, near Grange.²¹³ In the muster of 1849 only 86 branded calves from a herd of 700 cattle could be found; many had been seen unbranded. Donald Black estimated Niel Black should carry one-third more cattle per square mile than he did at 'Glenormiston' to make up for the number continually being lost in the thick timber.²¹⁴

Scarcity of labour was even more difficult for those who ran sheep. As one South East squatter put it, "Sheep had to be watched from sunrise to sunset because of wild dogs and blacks, then slept beside in a watchbox six feet by three feet, on short legs or wheels so that it could be moved alongside the yard each day. No matter what the weather was, storm or tempest, wet or dry, you must be with your sheep, no Sunday, no holiday, one continual keep-always-at-it."²¹⁵ Shepherding was difficult in runs that were thickly timbered. Continually guarding against or curing disease required regular labour and shepherds had to watch constantly for wild dogs. In one fortnight in June 1849 Purbrick lost forty lambs

212. SAR, 30 May 1849.

213. Donald to Niel Black, 11 August 1850, MS 8996. Grange is the former name for Hamilton.

214. Donald to Niel Black, 4 July 1849 and 17 June 1850, MS 8996.

215. T. Bates, MS 11266.

on the South Australian Company's run. Footrot was a problem and Purbrick employed two men "solely for footrotting".²¹⁶ But, as every squatter testified, scab was "the incubus which kept squatters under the hammer". Eradicating scab was continuous work for, "with the slightest neglect, where sheep were folded, it spread very fast".²¹⁷ Davenport favoured the New South Wales method of ridding scab by contracting to cure at so much per head per sheep, but the practice did not spread to South Australia.

Squatters tried various ways to overcome a shortage of labour. Davenport constantly employed "old hands" whom he felt "were worth every penny" he paid them.²¹⁸ Purbrick of the South Australian Company agreed. He got men "up from the Wannon", and even if they cost a little more, he thought the difference was made up in losing less sheep at the hands of newcomers who took a long time to become acquainted with their duty. Moreover he found "'old hands' hunted men below average away".²¹⁹ Leake, on the other hand, scorned what he called "the scrapings of manufacturing towns", but while Lord John Russell sent immigrants to Canada he had to make do with this "convict class".²²⁰ In November 1845 when men were "much wanted", he went to Portland to compete with the equally labour-starved pastoralists of the Western Districts for four hundred "Penton Villains" who were expected to arrive there.²²¹ Niel Black's stock-keeper, Alexander Mitchell, complained bitterly about the useless stock men he

216. W. Purbrick to William Giles, 15 January and 13 August 1849, BRG 42, SAA.

217. Thomas Bates, MS 11266.

218. PRG 40, 10 December 1845.

219. W. Purbrick to Williams Giles, 15 January 1849, BRG 42, SAA.

220. L 1/1/4, 5 August 1847.

221. L 1/1/4, 30 November 1845.

had to contend with. He found his "black fellow a much better stock holder than any others under his supervision".²²²

While labour remained scarce, wages were always high. In 1847 labourers earned 10/- to 12/-, and even up to fl a week, with rations. In 1847 Leake complained of paying 15/- per hundred for very bad shearing and 4/- for washing.²²³ In spite of these wages, labourers were continually breaking their engagements. Squatters had to travel three hundred miles to Adelaide to make sure absconding labourers received any light penalty which they might have to undergo. Leake decided to "make do with Blacks".²²⁴ By 1880 he estimated 20,000 of his sheep were "herded by Blacks". "I don't know what we should do without them," he wrote to his father, "although they are rather troublesome sometimes with their wars."²²⁵ No pay seems to have been given to Aborigines, but they were allowed to have the offal from the boiling-down works at Rivoli Bay. Settlers sometimes gave them a bag or two of flour, and a dozen sheep or ewes to enable them to make merry at night.²²⁶ Along with the whisky he imported from Scotland, Leake imported blankets which he had stitched with his brand for the Aborigines he employed on 'Glencoe'.²²⁷

222. Alexander Mitchell to Niel Black, 2 April 1850, MS 8996. "McLeod," wrote Mitchell "was bad enough, but Currie is no more adapted for stock-taking than I am for a Parson." For biographical details on Alexander Mitchell, L.R. Hill, Mt. Gambier: City Around a Cave, Mt Gambier, 1972, pp 46, 225 and 318.

223. L 1/1/4, 9 October 1847.

224. L/1/1/4, 31 October 1848.

225. L 1/1/4, 18 November 1850.

226. Mrs James Smith, p 4.

227. BW, 26 August 1903.

The squatters' most abiding grievance was insecurity of tenure. Leake felt squatters ought to have at least fourteen years' tenure as the squatters had in New South Wales; squatters might as well have "the lease of a run on the moon" as be in constant fear of resumption.²²⁸ Davenport considered terms which did not exceed twenty-one years "were injurious in the extreme".²²⁹

The only way to overcome insecurity was to purchase. South East squatters had little cause for anxiety because distance from Adelaide left them free from city buyers and speculators. But rather than risk losing the best land in the district to their squatting neighbours, they began to freehold their best land in the forties. In 1845 Leake had thought "he would defer as long as possible" because it would "not pay to give a high price for grazing nor yet agricultural land".²³⁰ But by July 1846 he felt too insecure to delay any longer. He paid £40 to have 230 square miles of his land surveyed and travelled to Adelaide to secure 800 acres at £1 an acre - "the pick of all his runs".²³¹ In 1847 twenty-one more sections were sold. The South Australian Company purchased 313 acres of fertile land;²³² Evelyn Sturt secured 'Compton' and four outstations on the fertile slopes of Mt Gambier which Stephen Henty had climbed eight years previously.²³³ Leake's purchases were likewise judicious. He secured his head station, 'Glencoe', land by the woolwash at Tarqua Lagoon, and surrounding well-watered pastures.²³⁴ Ed Leake had

228. L 1/1/4, 5 August 1847.

229. PRG 40, 1 August 1846.

230. L 1/1/4, 8 December 1845.

231. L 1/1/4, 25 June 1846.

232. The Company purchased Sections 500 and 501, 1000 and 1001 in the later Hundred of Blanche, LGB, County Grey; E.M. Yelland, p 70; Map 13.

233. E.P.S. Sturt, 317 acres, comprising Sections 1100, 1101, 1102, 1103 in the later Hundred of Blanche, LGB, County Grey; Map 13.

234. Maps 9 and 13.

called this "cultivating land". But he and Robert cultivated "only a small piece for Horses because it would be too much trouble learning to cultivate it properly".²³⁵ In 1847, only two years after the declaration of counties Grey and Robe, and eleven years before the declaration of the first Agricultural Hundred, 1,664 acres of land most like European land in the South East had already passed into the hands of pastoralists, beyond the reach of any aspiring yeoman farmer.

Within three years other pastoralists purchased choice land. In 1851 "King" Cameron and William McIntosh purchased for £1 per acre the land on which they founded the private townships of Penola and Kincaig.²³⁶ Among those who secured head stations equally cheaply were Alexander Hunter of 'Kalangadoo', Archibald Johnston of 'Mt Graham', the Robertson brothers of 'Struan', George Ormerod of 'Narracoorte' and Dr James Dickson of 'Maaoupe'.²³⁷ Other pastoralists clustered around those sections near Mt Gambier which Evelyn Sturt had purchased in 1847, favouring the fertile slopes and plains of volcanic ash which would have supported European crops, but had now slipped beyond the reach of any aspiring cultivators.²³⁸

235. L 1/1/4, 25 June 1846, 30 March 1847.

236. A. Cameron, 4 April 1850, Sections 3 and 4, Hundred of Penola, Memorial Number 428, Book 59, GRO (hereafter GRO 428/69); W. McIntosh, 16 March 1850, Section 5, Hundred of Naracoorte, GRO 439/21. On Sections 5 and 6, Hundred of Naracoorte, William McIntosh established 'Kincaig', named after his birthplace in Scotland. GRO plan 310/1860, LTO. 1324/85, SAA. For the growth of a Government town on this private town, J.H. Sheppard, p 85, SAA; J. Murdoch and H. Parker, pp 14-5; M. Williams, South Australia from the Air, Adelaide, 1969, p 50; M. Williams, The Making of the South Australian Landscape, pp 339 and 379; N.V. Wallace, Bush Lawyer, Adelaide, 1979, pp 8-12.

237. A. Hunter, 11 June 1850, Section 19, Hundred of Grey, GRO 59/23; A. Johnston, 12 August 1850, Sections 23 and 24, Hundred of Riddoch, GRO 36/27; W. and J. Robertson, 16 March 1850, Section 9, Hundred of Robertson, GRO 451/21; G. Ormerod, 1 November 1850, Sections 1, 3 and 4, Hundred of Naracoorte, GRO 35/27; J. Dickson, 4 April 1850, Sections 11 and 11a, Hundred of Killanoola, GRO 438/21. Map 13.

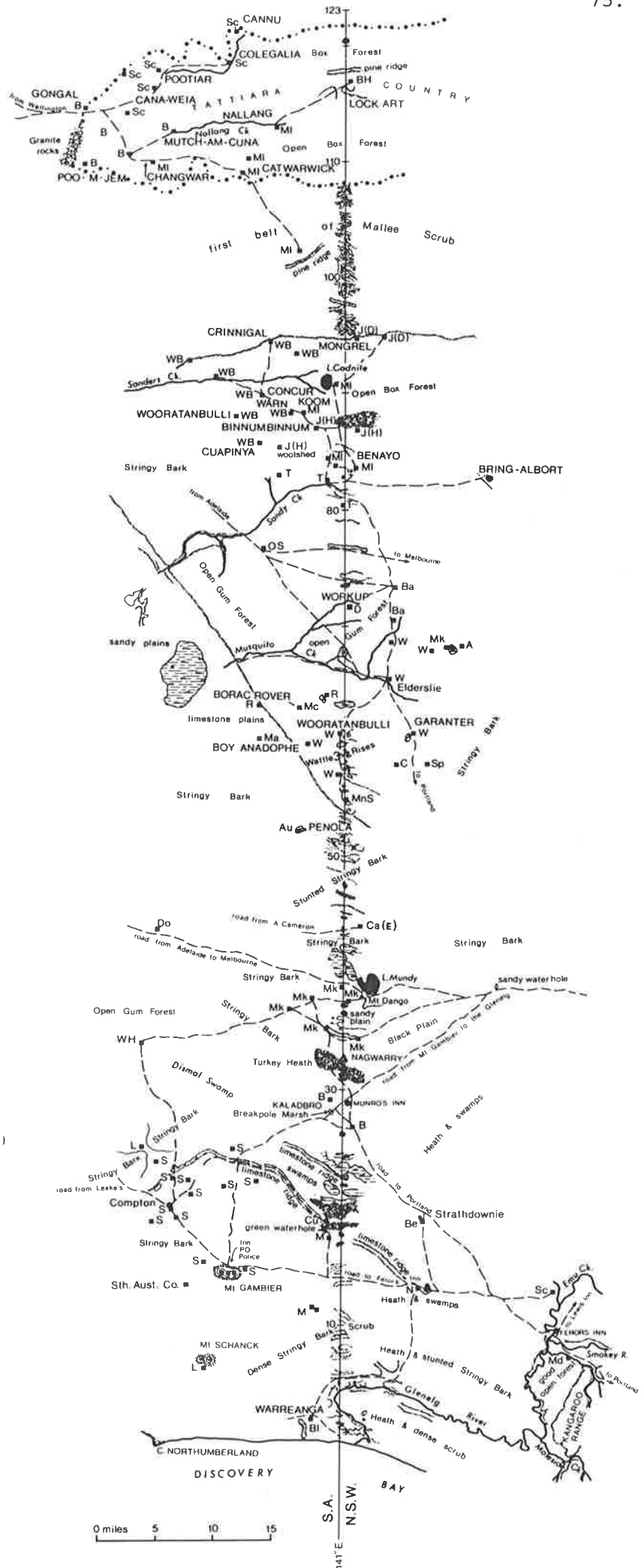
238. W. Mitchell, 11 June 1850, Sections 5 and 6, Hundred of Blanche, GRO 58/23; C. Hayes, 11 June 1850, Section 7, Hundred of Blanche, GRO 320/116; W. Vansittart, 11 June 1850, Section 9, Hundred of Blanche, GRO 57/23. Map 13.

MAP 5






Runs in the South Australian-New South Wales Border Area, 1848.

Because of disputes over South Australia's eastern boundary, Henry Wade was appointed from New South Wales to survey the area in 1848. His plan gives the first known European record of Aboriginal nomenclature (see Appendix 2). By 1847 the area had attracted squatters from across the border in New South Wales and from Van Diemen's Land who occupied the South East ahead of settlers from South Australia (Appendix 1).

(Compiled from C 130, Exhibit 46, SAA)



- A Armitage
- Au Austin
- B Bates
- BH Baird & Hodgkinson
- Ba Ballantyne
- Be Beilby
- Bi Binnie
- Bl Black & Co.
- C Carr
- Ca Cameron (A-Alex E-Ewen)
- Cu Curran
- D Dixon
- Do Doughty
- GM Glass & McConnell
- J James
- Jo Jones (H-Henry D-Derwas)
- L Leake
- M Meredith
- Ma McArthur
- Mc McConnell
- Md Macdonald
- Mk Mackinnon
- Mi McLeod
- MS McNicol & Smith
- N Nolan
- OS Oliver & Smith
- R Robertson
- S Sturt
- Sc Scott
- Sp Splatt
- T Townsend
- W Wallace
- WB Williamson & Blow
- WH Watson & Hunter

-  ridge
-  swamp
-  lake
-  heath
-  tracks
-  creeks
-  buildings, outstations
-  Tatiara Country boundary

0 miles 5 10 15

141°E

By 1850 Europeans had occupied the South East district for eleven years. How successfully had they transformed an alien environment into "another England"? They had built townships at Robe, Grey, Mt Gambier, Penola and Naracoorte.²³⁹ Squatters had cleared timber for their homes and yards, planted their gardens with exotics, and harnessed water. New tracks crossed the surface of the land.²⁴⁰ Sheep had trodden down the native pastures.²⁴¹ Yet there was no indication that the area might one day be settled by "a numerous yeomanry" By 1850 the South East was the sheep-walk of a few pastoralists. On 4,758 square miles of land held under license and almost 2,000 acres of purchased land, they were running approximately one half of the colony's sheep.²⁴²

Those who were opening up this wilderness had found the challenge daunting. To them it was already obvious that this part of South Australia was not the Utopian ideal of the planners. The owners had fiercely resisted a European invasion of their land. Squatters had tried to cope with disease but scab, "coast", burr and footrot had taken their toll. The climate was far from ideal. Wet winters made passage impossible, flooded the land, and took off stock. Much land was wetter than anyone had expected and too thickly timbered for pasture.

239. For survey and settlement of Robe and Penola, 439/M, SAA; M. Williams, South Australia from the Air, p 38. As 'Naracoorte' became the accepted spelling for the township and run of 'Narracoorte' by the 50s, the former is used hereafter in this thesis.

240. Map 5.

241. For an estimation of change to the structure of vegetation made by the early pastoralists, M. Grant, pp 18-9.

242. Maps 5 and 13. Sheep in South Australia, 975,679; in South East, 394,995. Extent of leased land and stock numbers are approximate as stated in GRG 24/6/1851/2844, SAA. State population for 1851, 66,000. SRSA. Population figures for the South East are not available but are estimated at a little less than 1,000 by 1851; South-East Drainage Board, EIS, p 82; Appendix 2.

Robert Leake, longest in the district, had brought a little of Europe to his area. He did not have "as handsome a house as Mr. Sturt", but he had begun building. He was intending to buy a town allotment in Rivoli Bay as well.²⁴³ Since 1845 he had enjoyed the "luxury of a good stock of vegetables".²⁴⁴ By 1846 he had planted 100 fruit trees which blossomed after only two years and promised to bear in the third. What Leake had excelled in was making money from wool, far beyond the colonisers' expectations of "a comfortable existence". Despite fluctuations in fortune, he had prospered on good land with ready capital and well-bred flocks. He was continually improving these ever-increasing flocks and by 1846, owner of 28,000 sheep and 200 cattle, he was listed among the nine largest sheepowners in the colony.²⁴⁵ In July 1849 he bought 60 pure Saxons from the South Australian Company for £72.²⁴⁶ A wool screw was at work making "tolerable bales"²⁴⁷ and he employed a "first rate wool-classer" who adopted the latest fashions in combing wool.²⁴⁸ By 1849 he held 30,000 sheep, including 4,000 wethers for which he could expect 8/-, 1,234 cattle and an anticipated wool clip of 110,000lbs. at 8d a pound. He asked his father for an advance of £2,000 to save paying the 20% interest rate which prevailed in Adelaide.²⁴⁹ There was no need to be "uneasy about security", he wrote in February 1849, "because double the amount is now in the wool shed as security to the amount of £14,000".²⁵⁰

He had also added to his land. In 1849 he purchased a further 480 acres "of the best land in an area of 200 miles" at £1 per acre.²⁵¹ "You

243. L 1/1/4, 26 April 1851.

244. L 1/1/4, 26 August 1845.

245. L 1/1/4, 25 June 1846; 5 August 1847.

246. F. Dutton, p 248.

247. L 1/1/4, 9 October 1847.

248. L 1/1/4, 2 December 1850.

249. L 1/1/4, 24 February 1849.

250. L 1/1/4, 3 December 1849.

251. L 1/1/4, 28 August 1849. Map 8.

have," he told his father, "nothing like the land I have."²⁵² In October 1849, Leake and McIntyre made an estimate of the value of the stock and clip for 1850. This amounted to £9,800. He felt quite justified at such an accumulation of wealth. He had the right to make a fortune, he told his father, if he had "to live in such a wilderness". "I may say," he added, "I have spent the best of my days in one."²⁵³

But the god of Mammon had exacted his due. In 1850 Leake was almost 40 years old, and although his constitution had been "tolerable over the last 23 years", he confessed to his father, "I and Ed are not the hardy men we ought to be for the works we have undertaken, it wants the soundest men for it".²⁵⁴ A lump on his neck had grown and begun to bleed very much.²²⁵ He had had it removed but since then he had not had the proper use of his left arm and he suffered a great deal of pain about the shoulder. "Rubbing Holloway and taking his pills" had not helped at all.²⁵⁶ Ed was not in good health either. His eyes were always sore, his gout was no better, and he was still grossly stout.²⁵⁷

Just before Christmas Day, 1849, Leake wrote saying how unhappy he was with his harsh life in the South East wilderness. He was thinking of "selling off in a year" for "I am tired" he wrote, "of living in the

252. L 1/1/4, 28 August 1849.

253.	120,000 to wool @ 7/-	6,000
	6,000 wedders @ 7/-	2,100
	2,000 ewes @ 5/-	500
	200 fat cattle @ £3.10	700
		<u>9,300</u>
	With proceeds of last clip	500
		<u>9,800</u>

L 1/1/4, 6 October 1849.

254. L 1/1/4, 25 June 1846.

255. L 1/1/4, 25 April 1847.

256. L 1/1/4, 22 December 1849.

257. L 1/1/4, 22 May 1850.

bush". Moreover, "it wanted men with families to inherit lands" and he and Ed had "no issue". As he no longer had "the energy to endure privation and run risks", he told his father he should like to go home to Europe or to America "and let some other person have thirty years of slaving over a wilderness". The "Baron of the Frontier" was "tired of fighting against every difficulty, conquering and settling a country". "I have had enough of misery," he wrote. "Settling a district" had brought nothing but "violence, anger, anxiety, trouble and privation."²⁵⁸ The founders had dreamed from afar of transplanting an old world in a new. Less than twenty years later, from first-hand experience, Robert Leake seriously "doubted if New Holland was a fit place for the Caucasian race".²⁵⁹

258. L 1/1/4, 22 December 1849.

259. L 1/1/4, 12 May 1851.

CHAPTER 2

On Thursday 7 February 1851, settlers in the South East received a warning that they had not merely to tame a wilderness but to live in a land where "Nature might undo all of man's achievements at a single stroke".¹ On that day a great fire ravaged the bush. It caught James Hamilton, aged 14, on his father's property at Bringalbert, about 20 miles east of Naracoorte. Panic-stricken by the onrushing flames, "cut off from all places of safety and help", he ran hither and thither trying to find a patch where the grass still grew half green. At last he came upon a great swamp, hurried his flock there, and stayed until the danger was over. At about three in the afternoon a thunderstorm "came in with a heavy downpour of rain". He "lay down flat on the ground, opened his shirt, and let the rain pour down his naked breast". On other runs close to the New South Wales border thousands of sheep and cattle died and by evening there was scarcely a blade of grass for many miles.²

Near Mt Gambier John Meredith and his neighbours suffered less, and although in February they had been, as Meredith confided to his fiancée, "left gloomy beyond calculation", by May he could write of gentle, life-giving rains which brought "a wonderful alteration everywhere". Stock "no longer pined and died" for the country was turning "quite green and affording sufficient food for their maintenance". Meredith "thanked Providence" that his district "was a happy exception to everything except loss through Fires".³ "I have abundance," he wrote, "and so have my neighbours adjoining here, nor need we be the least apprehensive of water."⁴

1. NS 123/46, 7 May 1851.

2. J.C. Hamilton, Pioneering Days in Western Victoria: A Narrative of Early Station Life, p 36. For biographical details of James Hamilton, A. Henderson, Henderson's Early Families, pp 357-9. For further references to "Black Thursday", J. Murdoch and H. Parker, p 15; NS 123/46, 7 May 1851 and 123/45, 24 May 1851; Map 5.

3. NS 123/46, 7 May 1851.

4. NS 123/46, 24 May 1851.

Yet the disasters of "Black Thursday" impressed upon Meredith man's impotence in this untried and alien environment. He had had a salutary reminder, he told Maria, that "although man is able to fill his store with goods and his pastures with stock, the faith he places in these places of safety is insufficient to secure them".⁵ John Meredith was gradually becoming aware that toil alone did not guarantee material success in a land where Nature could be so capricious and cruel.

Only in that little plot where he had successfully transplanted England - his garden - could Meredith "purge himself of all melancholy reflections". On 24 May 1851 he told Maria he could not collect the seeds of native plants because the fires had destroyed them "in every direction", but everything else was growing, just as in spring. There had been only one frost and that was before the rain. The cape gooseberries were still in full flowering and plants were ripening every day.⁶ In June he enthusiastically "resumed the propagation of his vegetables", planting "Parsnip, Carrot, Turnip, Radish seed then put some onions and carrots for seed, tied the raspberry bushes and chrysanthemums". He was particularly pleased that the potato plants he had brought from Van Diemen's Land had grown a foot since May.⁷

After four years of living "in and out of all kinds of places - the open canopy of Heaven, a Miamia, tarpaulin and slab hut, neither wind or water proof"- Meredith was also delighted that he would soon move into his cottage. Near this he would plant, he wrote his fiancée, "your vine" and then some "Cape Sydney Acacia, together with other trees and shrubs and English grass all over the lawns". Working on his home and garden put from his mind the ravages of the fire and the loneliness he anticipated when his gentleman companion left for Van Diemen's Land. He predicted he would become "a perfect hermit" especially since he

5. NS 123/46, 7 May 1851.

6. NS 123/46, 24 May 1851.

7. NS 123/466, 24 June 1851.

now had no books whatsoever. Until Mr Mitchell returned from Melbourne they were "un-come-atable - a serious privation in the long evenings".⁸

In any case the wilderness would not allow Meredith a mental retreat. He had always experienced a shortage of labour, but by the end of June he was "beginning to feel the effect of the desertion of labourers to the gold diggings". The working classes had become "gold mad", and "large parties were proceeding overland, some with Bullock Drays, Hay Carts, on Horseback or on Foot". Men were "absconding in every direction leaving the sheep in their folds, the Teams and Plough in the field". Thousands of sheep were deserted, and he "entertained the most serious fears for the ensuing shearing and harvest".⁹

So John Meredith, "gentleman accustomed to better things", was forced to become his own labourer. He had helped his stockman erect cattle yards and a pig sty and in June 1851 he assisted with the branding which was "hard work and very dirty" in the wet weather.¹⁰ In December he was again compelled to work, "contrary to his inclination" as single men were asking from 12 to 20 shillings per week, and "many refused to engage even upon those terms". Two days before Christmas, before breakfast, he began mowing, raking and carting hay to build his first haystack. It was "rather like one of Punch's caricatures of Lord John Russell - being more head or roof than body, but, most assuredly, when he put on the hat, no rain would get into the side".¹¹ Although he made light of his labours to his father, John Meredith had already confessed to his brother, Charles, that

8. NS 123/46, 24 May 1851. William Mitchell had bought part of Sturt's 'Compton' run. He was a "sensitive, educated man", who later moved to Langi Willi, at Shipton, on Emu Creek, where he gave sympathetic encouragement to the novelist Henry Kingsley. R. Boldrewood, Old Melbourne Memories, pp 148-50, L.R. Hill, p 28.

9. John Meredith to his brother, Charles. NS 123/47, AOT (hereafter NS 123/47). For further information on Charles Meredith, ADB, Vol. 1, p 244; Clyde Company Papers, Vol. 4, p 16.

10. NS 123/46, 24 June 1851.

11. NS 123/45, 23 December 1851.

*John Meredith to his fiancée, Maria Hammond,
24 June 1852.*



The above will convey to you some idea of the manner in which I have been employed during the past week, and I have no alternative, for I cannot get anyone bold enough to take my place, and as it requires two persons to hold the work inside the yard, I am compelled to assist the Stockman, there is only one more day's work of the above kind to complete the work, and I shall not repeat when it is finished, it is hard work and very dry for this wet weather, Montague has been assisting me his work was to keep a good fire, and attend to the branding iron, so much for cattle branding - I promised to send you a sketch of the Street Kitchen, when I did so, I relied upon Ernest's assistance, for keep your innocent heart I could not draw a Pig Steer. Montague however is going to send Harry a sketch of them, and I don't get from him, nor will he be able to obtain a plan, if not a copy, but if not, it will not be much loss, there is nothing at present very interesting about them, when they have undergone repair I doubt not they will look respectable enough, and even you would not know them by name so well I shall leave this in your hands until the next time in a week or two.

he had had enough of the lonely and precarious life of a squatter. He had "suffered too much from the roguery of overseers" to trust them to manage his stations, and he intended to sell.¹² Before the end of 1851, he put 'Murrawâ', with 9,000 sheep and 2,000 lambs, up for sale.¹³

Further inland Robert Leake found other solutions to the scarcity of workmen. His mainstay was still Aborigines. Twenty thousand of his sheep were "herded by blacks". Only Aborigines were employed in washing his sheep at the beautiful red-gum watering place, Tarqua Lagoon.¹⁴ With 10,000 sheep to shear in 1852, Leake thought of employing German women from Adelaide, but finally brought twenty shearers from Van Diemen's land, paying them "17 shillings per 100 sheep, plus rations and £2 for expenses and passage over".¹⁵ He and neighbouring sheep owners were also coping with a want of shepherds by letting their sheep run free, as there was no scab in their area and "the wild dog was all but exterminated".¹⁶

On the other hand the pastoralists won a round in their battle for tenure. Squatters were in the majority in the Legislative Council and under regulations to the Waste Lands Act of 1850, Occupation Licences, renewable annually, were replaced by leases, which could be held for fourteen years on payment of an annual rental.¹⁷ Charles Bonney, Commissioner of Crown

12. NS 123/47, 17 June 1851.

13. NS 123/47, 11 November 1851.

14. BW, 22 July 1903. By 1860 Leake was employing 120 Aborigines; R. Leake to his brother, Charles, L 1/9/1, AUT (hereafter L1/9/1), 23 February 1860.

15. L 1/1/4, 11 June 1852.

16. SAR, 4 February 1853. Duncan Stewart described the wild dog as being "little larger than a sheepdog, covered with rough yellow hair and with stiff ears. They sleep mostly during the day time and skulk about after sundown - then woe be to the stray sheep that falls in the way. They generally wander about in 2's or 3's howling (I never heard of them barking) similar to a dog that has lost his master." D. Stewart, Notebook, 1853-4. D2609(L), SAA.

17. A.P. Keain, Honours History Thesis, The Legislative Council of South Australia, 1857-1957, University of Adelaide, 1957, Appendix G; "An Act to amend an Act for regulating the Sale of Waste Lands"; Act 9 and 10 Vic, 1850.

Lands, had hoped for a high rental which might curb monopolists,¹⁸ but as the regulations set no limit to the amount of land which could be held, and as the highest rent was only fl per square mile annually, the regulations allowed wealthy squatters almost unlimited land.¹⁹ An established surrender continued. To raise revenue the Legislative Council let squatters acquire vast tracts. Yet they were not to let their land lay waste. In theory at least, each square mile had to be stocked with sixteen cattle or a hundred sheep.²⁰ Even so the squatters complained that fourteen years was insufficient to recoup the heavy outlays necessary to establish and stock their runs.

The regulations differed from previous legislation in two ways. First, pastoralists were now to pay a rental of 20, 15, or 10 shillings per square mile, according to whether their land was classed 'A', 'B' or 'C'.²¹ Classifying land, however nominally, broke with an assumption implicit in Wakefield's theory of selling all land at a "sufficient price". The Council was acknowledging that land in the colony was not evenly productive. Second, lessees now had to show the natural features of their land, as well as their boundaries, on a plan drawn to a scale of not less than half an inch to a mile. The Governor, Sir Henry Young, wished to have more information about land beyond the settled districts, and from these rudimentary plans he aimed to draw a master plan of country areas.²²

18. C. Bonney, Autobiographical Notes, 1047/57, SAA.

19. SAGG, 7 November 1850.

20. SAGG, 7 November 1850.

21. The regulations stated no criteria for classification, but the potential lessee, as well as the Commissioner of Crown Lands or his nominee, undertook to assess the worth of the land. Both parties could refer to an agreed impartial referee if either considered a valuation unjust.

22. GRG 35/2/1851/152, SAA.

Squatters throughout the colony resented the regulations. They had now less chance of understocking their land or of holding more than they declared. South East squatters responded by claiming as much land as they hoped they could get away with; Charles Bonney was forced to spend eighteen months in the district settling boundary disputes among forty-four pastoralists.²³ As soon as he had departed the squatters began jostling for position again. In 1854 one hundred South East residents petitioned the Legislative Council for a Stipendiary Magistrate at Penola "in view of the uncertain state from contemplated changes of proprietors on several stations". Andrew Watson, of 'Kilbride', "a gentleman possessing the entire confidence of the residents" was appointed on a salary of £250 per year, but friction between squatters over boundaries abated only temporarily.²⁴

The 1850 Act made only one concession to agriculturalists. Pastoralists might lease large areas to carry stock, but were not to compete with agriculturalists by cultivating more than was necessary for domestic use. Yet the concession was token for the Act made no land readily available to agriculturalists with a little capital who aspired to own and cultivate a small block. They could purchase land only if an Agricultural Hundred were declared, surveyed, sub-divided and auctioned. Should this occur, occupying pastoralists were given six months' notice, compensation for improvements, and allowed a lower rental for land resumed but not purchased. An expropriated lessee might bid for his land if it were put up for public auction.²⁵ "Agriculture," a city editor reminded his readers, "was not only the surest basis of national prosperity, but that interest

23. C. Bonney, Notes on the Boundaries of Runs in the South Eastern District: 17 December 1852-14 June 1853, 1522, SAA. Squatters throughout South Australia considered that Bonney acted so judiciously in settling their disputes that they contributed £2,000 as a testimonial "assured that not a settler in the whole of South Australia would not gladly join in testifying approval". Andrew Watson of 'Kilbride' to Niel Black, 7 October 1853, MS 8996. Of this, squatters in the South East contributed £700. ADB, Vol. 3, p. 190.

24. GRG 24/6/1854/2068, SAA.

25. SAGG, 7 November 1850.

MAP 6

Pastoral Leases, c. 1856

Most pastoralists converted their tenure from licensee to lessee in 1851 (see Map 3; Appendix 3). They held vast tracts which contained some good land, but also much that was inferior. They quickly alienated their good land (see Map 10). They made few improvements on their poor land, but rented it cheaply and used it for alternative grazing. This was the land which politicians expected agriculturalists to cultivate when they legislated to settle the land more closely in the 1870s.

W.W. Pitts, surveyor, probably drew this pastoral lease map after August 1856 when he was appointed to work in the Adelaide office (GRG 35/249). Boundaries of the first six Agricultural Hundreds declared in 1858 (see Map 7) were probably added later, as indicated by the inclusion of the southern boundary of the Hundred of Mingbool (1867). Holdings do not tally with other official records (see Appendix 3). Adam Smith's lease, for example, is not shown.

(C 21+ (Temp.), Sheet 5, SAA)



which socially and politically must take precedence over every other."²⁶ But legislators, clearly unwilling to offend the pastoralists on whose capital and industry they depended, ignored such reminders of the yeoman ideal.

By 1 July 1851, 229 leases had been granted for 13,525 square miles beyond the Agricultural Hundreds in South Australia.²⁷ In the South East 4,617 square miles, approximately two-thirds of the district and a third of the leasehold of the entire colony, became the property of eighty-three pastoralists.²⁸ Almost all had taken up land earlier, and were now converting their Occupation Licences to leases.²⁹ Twelve held over 100 square miles of land each – land well suited to growing European crops. In 1852 John Meredith made hay from a crop of self-sown oats and within six weeks the regrowth yielded a good crop of seed. He counted 128 stalks "bearing an abundance of grain" on one plant alone.³⁰ Robert Leake grew a splendid crop of oats on 30 acres which yielded three tons an acre.³¹ Around 'Glencoe' and Mt Gambier land of the best quality had, by 1853, raised "five successive crops of potatoes on one spot without the aid of manure".³² But by taking up large areas under lease, South East squatters showed how determined they were that their district should remain a sheep-walk for as long as they could keep it so.

26. SAR, 9 January 1851.

27. SRSA 1854, No. 22, SAA.

28. Appendix 3; Map 6.

29. Compare Appendices 1 and 3.

30. NS 123/45, 13 February 1852.

31. L 1/9/1, 7 December 1859.

32. D. Stewart, June 1853, D2609(L), SAA.

In 1851 the Chief Secretary, Charles Sturt, wished to raise £90,000 from sales of land for the service of the Commissariat.³³ The Government looked to the South East where little land had been sold. A survey in that district became a high priority. The Surveyor-General, Captain Freeling, regretted that the nature of the country was "such as to render the process of triangulation nearly impracticable".³⁴ Nevertheless, Eugene Bellairs, surveyor, spent between February 1851 and March 1852 attempting the feat. In those thirteen months Bellairs had only two hundred feasible working days. He had to contend with "knocked up bullocks and impassable roads". He had to survey land on flats that were completely submerged and in areas so heavily timbered that he was forced "to confine his observations to the immediate neighbourhood". For his labours in the South East bush he received £395.4/- and returned from his ordeal with chronic ophthalmia.³⁵

South East pastoralists did not buy much land in 1851. They knew their runs were liable to resumption and purchase if an Agricultural Hundred were declared. They also knew city democrats were declaring "large flocks with hundreds of square miles of pasturage should give way to numerable small flocks which might yield collectively an increased quantity of wool. This was the experience in settled and civilised countries. So it should be in South Australia".³⁶ But South East squatters relied on remoteness from Adelaide to protect their runs. They judged rightly; only a little land was sold.

33. Letter from Charles Sturt, Chief Secretary to the Surveyor-General, Captain Freeling, 11 January 1851, GRG 24/4/1851/93 and 94, SAA.

34. GRG 35/2/1851/16, SAA.

35. GRG 35/2/1851/46, 64, 78, 120 and 263, SAA; GRG 24/6/1851/2059, 2625 and 1852/948, SAA.

36. SAR, 11 January 1851.

Among the few purchasers was Jacob Hagen, Adelaide merchant and politician, who bought 160 acres in the future Hundred of Murrabinna, and transferred it to James Baker of 'Blackford'.³⁷ Carl Blume, Mt Torrens landowner, who had been successful at the diggings, also purchased two fertile 80 acre sections on the slopes of Mt Gambier.³⁸ The other main buyers were South East residents. Among these were the Mt Gambier doctor, Johann Wehl, and Anthony Sutton, who had arrived from New South Wales to settle at Dismal Swamp in 1845, both of whom purchased rich land adjoining Evelyn Sturt's at the foot of Mt Gambier.³⁹ Sixty miles to the north the Robertson brothers extended their interests along Mosquito Creek and William McIntosh purchased more land in Kinraig.⁴⁰ Although South East pastoralists had not bought extensively, a growing number of fertile 80 acre sections, freeholded at fl an acre, were beginning to dot the vast stretches of leasehold throughout the district.^{41.}

Only one of the ten who purchased in 1851 did not describe himself as a pastoralist or sheep farmer. This was Thomas Rock, shepherd. As there

37. Sections 500 and 501, Hundred of Murrabinna; Map 13.

38. Sections 17 and 18, Hundred of Blanche, GRO 395/39, 13 October 1851, and GRO 395/39, 13 November 1851. For biographical details of Carl Blume, L.R. Hill, p 32; W. Frederic Morrison, The Aldine History of South Australia, Vol. 2, Adelaide, 1890, p 532; Map 13.

39. On 12 June 1851 Dr J.D. Wehl, in partnership with William Morgan, purchased Section 10, Hundred of Blanche, GRO 292/33. For biographical details of Dr Wehl, L.R. Hill, p 7. On 8 May 1851 and 15 July 1851, Anthony Sutton purchased Sections 8 and 11, Hundred of Blanche, GRO 270/40 and GRO 271/40. For biographical details of A. Sutton, Mrs A.F. Sutton, Notes on the Life of Anthony Sutton (n.d.), 1047/30, SAA; The South Australian Advertiser, 11 August 1860; Map 13.

40. On 2 April 1851 William and John Robertson purchased Sections 9 and 10, Hundred of Robertson, GRO 157/34; on 14 August 1851 John McIntosh, Section 6, Hundred of Naracoorte, GRO 74/37, Map 13.

41. Other purchasers in 1851 within the Hundred of Blanche were: William Vansittart, 28 May 1851, Section 11, GRO 292/33; Alfred Bates, 17 October 1851, Section 13, GRO 197/62; William McGregor (Boneyong), 1 September 1851, Section 20, GRO 307/40; Robert Leake, 17 October 1851, Section 20, GRO 200/42.

is no record that Rock arrived in South Australia as either a free or assisted immigrant, he probably entered the South East from New South Wales. On 28 May 1851 he paid £80 for an 80 acre section next to those of Blume and Sutton.⁴² This was land which Stephen Henty had called "magnificent". Two years later Rock sold six acres of his land for £15. On 15 June 1855 he sold the remainder to different buyers for a total of £493, making a profit of £428 in four years.⁴³ In 1859 he bought another 80 acre section of good land nearby which had originally been part of Evelyn Sturt's 'Compton' run, also for £1 per acre. By 1866 he had sold this for a profit of £130.⁴⁴ It is not possible to discover if, or how, Rock used his land, either for himself or for others. With no prohibition on the transfer of land, and with capitalists eager to aggregate, Thomas Rock was the first of many future owners of good land near Mt Gambier who found speculation more attractive than "honest tillage". Thomas Rock, shepherd, may have typified Wakefield's potential yeoman. If so, where money was to be made, he was not above flaunting those ideas designed to establish his kind.

Among those who did not buy in 1851 was Evelyn Sturt. In 1847 he had secured "extensive and fertile country" which he considered was "the finest land in the colony".⁴⁵ He was "the very fine fleur of the squatter type".⁴⁶ Yet South East land had beaten him. Why Sturt failed is a matter of speculation, although in retrospect he laid most blame upon lack of

42. Section 15, Hundred of Blanche, GRO 393/34.

43. On 6 July 1853, Rock sold 6 acres to A.P. Young for £15 (GRO 411/55); On 15 June 1855, Rock sold an area 700 x 1,400 chains to M. Lambert for £80 (GRO 247/87); about 30-40 acres to D. Potter for £190 (GRO 248/87); 20 acres to A.P. Young for £115 (GRO 251/87); and 14 acres to L. Jones for £100 (GRO 252/87).

44. Section 674, Hundred of Blanche, CT Vol. 7, folio 98, LTO (hereafter 7/98). On 25 May 1861 Rock sold 40 acres to Robert Peters for £60, CT 26/99. On 8 February 1866 he sold the remaining 40 acres to A.P. Young for £150, CT 31/166.

45. PG, 10 August 1844; R. Boldrewood, p 147.

46. T.F. Bride, p 237.

capital. He had contended with extremes in the seasons, a shortage of labour, "distance from markets and uncongenial conditions". "He had been rich, he had been poor. He had driven his own bullocks." One admirer considered in all these hardships no one looked upon Evelyn Sturt "without its being strongly borne in upon his mind that he saw a gentleman of high degree".⁴⁷ However much Sturt may have been consoled by this recommendation, the qualities of an English gentleman had not made him equal to the task of civilising the South East bush. By 1849 Sturt had left 'Compton' and by April 1853 had become Police Magistrate in Melbourne.⁴⁸

John Meredith was another who did not purchase in 1851. He had also failed to sell 'Murrawâ' but in 1852 he felt less disconsolate about pioneering a wilderness. He could only marvel at "the prodigious fertility" of his land. In January he had burnt a portion of his run. By February the growth of the new grass was "truly astonishing". It had grown six inches in fourteen days. Within a month a shoot from the stem of a peach tree also grew six feet and was covered with branches some ten inches long. In a fortnight his melons had grown as large as Chinese preserving jars.⁴⁹ He was also feeling happier since his bride Maria had joined him at 'Oaklands'. Although frequently forced to be separated from her, her arrival temporarily lessened the overwhelming sense of isolation he had so often felt in the bush.⁵⁰

So did the company of neighbouring squatters. In April 1853 Meredith and his wife were caught in a "rare giddy round of social activity", as they sought to entertain in a manner befitting English country gentry.

47. R. Boldrewood, p 148.

48. T.F. Bride, p 363.

49. NS 123/45, 13 February 1852.

50. When they were expecting their first child in June, July and August 1852, Meredith was away taking cattle to Melbourne for sale. The journey took three weeks. He sent Maria accounts of the difficulties he experienced and his estimations of the country he passed through from Emu Creek, Hopkins River, Wardy Yallock and Melbourne. NS 123/46, 6, 12, 18 and 28 June 1852.

He was sure his father had heard of the "famous Penola races and the gaities attending the same". The occasion meant visitors practically every day of the week, picnics at the Naracoorte caves, and parties at the lakes in Mt Gambier. To entertain sixteen squatters at 'Oaklands', Meredith enclosed thirty feet of verandah with calico to improvise a banquet room and lit this with candles set inside the "handsomest variegated melons". Dancing, tea, cake, sandwiches and vine grapes preceded dinner. Dancing followed until 4 a.m. On the following day he and his guests rested, read and danced again during the evening. "Such, dear father," wrote Meredith of his attempts to create the social life he missed so much, "is the way we have been amusing ourselves in the backwoods."⁵¹

Before the end of 1853, however, Meredith's sense of isolation increased when Maria returned to Van Diemen's Land while he remained to manage his stations until they were sold. His garden now served only to remind him of Maria's absence. Peaches, apples and grapes were growing in abundance. So were the white, yellow and crimson chrysanthemums which were so large that he "could not insert one in a tumbler without its touching the sides". The geraniums and lavender had also grown well. Only the roses at the verandah post had suffered in the heat.

Labour was still in short supply and wages were becoming higher every day. He begrudged paying £60 a year for "useless dirty Irish creatures". Shepherds were asking £3.10 a week. In December he expected to pay 20 shillings a day for harvesters. In that month he received an offer of £16,000 for 'Murrawâ', but he had put over £1,000 worth of improvements on each station, and was running 11,000 sheep and 2,000

51. NS 123/45, 24 May 1853. For details of Penola Racing Club events from 1852-5, A1058/C1, SAA; C. Fetherstonehaugh, After Many Days, Sydney, 1918, pp 128-32.

cattle. He thought 'Murrawâ' worth £20,000.⁵² He stayed, but toward the end of 1854 he decided to wait no longer for a sale, rented his stations, and became a Senior Magistrate in Swansea, Van Diemen's Land.⁵³

Meredith had made an English garden bloom on alien soil, but on land more like European land than most other in the district he failed to achieve the colonisers' hopes of transplanting "a little England". In his sojourn "in the wilderness" Meredith had always tried to obey his father's earlier injunctions "to maintain the ornamental super structure and embellishment of an English gentleman".⁵⁴ But these qualities had not been sufficient to combat low markets, labour problems, and isolation. Without making his fortune or civilising an alien land, Meredith, like that other English gentleman, Evelyn Sturt, left the South East where, he confessed to Maria, he had "long since felt a wanderer, cut off from all that he held dear in this world".⁵⁵

The South East was also trying the mettle of two other English gentlemen. Thirty miles north of 'Oaklands' the Austin brothers quit their shingle-roofed, six-roomed stone cottage on the 'Yallum' run without purchasing any of their land.⁵⁶ Some time before 1856, after the death of their brother Solomon in 1853, Thomas and Josiah Austin transferred

52. NS 123/46, 22 December 1853. The offer was from Hastings Cunningham, founder of the private township of Gambierton. For biographical notes on H. Cunningham, R. Cockburn, Vol. 1, pp 185 and 191; L.R. Hill, p 34.

53. From 1 November 1854, F. Brodribb and J. Carter leased 'Murrawâ' at 10/- per square mile from John Meredith until its resumption, GRO 93/90. On 20 October 1857, 'Oaklands', an area of 36 square miles plus freehold Section 200, 3,000 sheep and 12 horses were assigned to Richard Hale Budd, Victorian Minister of Education, Melbourne, for £17,000, GRO 335/128..

54. NS 123/2, 25 February 1847.

55. NS 123/46, 7 May 1851.

56. G. and G. Clifford, The Grass is Green: The Story of Yallum Park, Adelaide, 1980, pp 6-7. For biographical details of the Austin brothers, J. Marjorie Butler, Settler by Succession, James Austin, 1810-1896, Melbourne, 1979; A. Henderson, pp 418-27; ADB, Vol. 1, pp 43-4.

the 'Yallum' run and their stud Merino flocks to their managers, Henry and Thomas Wells, and concentrated on building an empire at Winchelsea on the banks of the Barwon in the Port Phillip district. The Wells brothers, now in their late forties, were among those early colonists of New South Wales who had lived at Parramatta and had been accommodated by Chaplain Marsden. They had taken up land in New South Wales but had "suffered the malady of fortune falling against them".⁵⁷ At 'Yallum' they began again. Scab decimated their flocks and they were soon in financial difficulties once more. Like Sturt and Meredith they continued to bear "the unmistakable carriage of gentlemen", but a hostile environment was pushing them hard.⁵⁸

In 1854 South Australia was enjoying a buoyant post-gold economy. Land sales boomed.⁵⁹ These sales were particularly significant in the South East for they set a precedent of future transactions in the district for the next 130 years. South East squatters had had one battle with city-based legislators; now they faced a second challenge from city investors willing to pay high prices for good land. Some city purchasers bought only one or two 80 acre sections and either did not reside or remain in the district, but their brief speculation ran prices up to as much as £2 per acre. Among these were an accountant, a solicitor, some gentlemen, a

57. The Observer, 1 November 1890.

58. S. Leighton, "A Visit to South Australia, 1868", Journal of the Historical Society of South Australia, No. 5, 1978, p 28.

59. Sales reached an unprecedented total of 213,925 acres, swelling the land and emigration fund by £377,303.11.3. SAPP 37 of 1871 (n.d.).

merchant, and a storekeeper, all from Adelaide, farmers from Salisbury, and a Strathalbyn miner.⁶⁰

Other city agents, speculators and merchants ran prices up even higher. Among these Isaac Solomon Henry, Peter Prankerd and Robert Stuckey in partnership, and Frederick Beck, John Hallett and Joseph Stilling in partnership, bought large areas, forcing local squatters to pay heavily.⁶¹ In 1855 Anthony Sutton purchased land near Mt Gambier and

60.	Purchaser	Hundred	Sections	Area in Acres	Price	Date
					£	
	John Hector, accountant, Adelaide	Blanche	259, 261	156	202	8 June 1854
	Charles Fenn, solicitor Adelaide	Blanche	365	80	135	8 July 1854
	Joseph Broadstock, farmer, Salisbury	Blanche	362, 378	225	356	14 June 1854
	Alfred Heath, gentleman Adelaide	Gambier	11300	330	366.6	10 July 1854
	George Morphett, gentleman, Adelaide	Gambier	314, 1125	163	186	11 July 1854
	Joseph Louis, merchant Adelaide	Gambier	1183	316	415	8 June 1854
	William Peacock, gentleman, Hackney	Gambier	1110	330	405	8 June 1854
	James Munro Linklater	Gambier	1153, 1154 1155	236	366	8 June 1854
	Charles Smith, miner, Strathalbyn	Gambier	1071	102	231	8 June 1854

Memorial Register Books, GRO; LGB, County Grey.

61.

Purchaser	Amount in Acres	Price	GRO Reference
		£	
Isaac Solomon Henry	1,091	1,492	438-447/72
P. Prankerd and R. Stuckey	880	1,667	393-398/72 401-404/72
Frederick Beck, John Hallett and Joseph Stilling	3,489	4,470	395-399/74 400-407/74

For biographical details of John Hallett, R. Cockburn, Vol. 1, p 53 and Vol. 2, p 109; for Joseph Stilling, R. Cockburn, Vol. 1, p 129.

paid Beck double his purchase price of one year earlier.⁶² Hastings Cunningham, wanting to consolidate in rich country on the Kalangadoo plains, allowed Prankerd and Stuckey £170 profit on a 200 acre section within three months of the original sale.⁶³

Even those who bought directly from the Crown often paid more than £2 per acre. Dr Alexander Gunning paid £121 for an 80 acre section in the township of Kincaig;⁶⁴ Duncan Cameron paid £200 for 89 acres in the future Hundred of Comaum;⁶⁵ and Carl Blume consolidated further by acquiring a 78 acre block for which he was willing to bid to £295.⁶⁶

Robert Leake was hard pressed by the 1854 sales, but he bought judiciously. By 1852 he had purchased, or held under lease, 244 square miles, 200 of which he estimated would carry a sheep to 1.5 acres.⁶⁷ On 8 June 1854 he purchased 5,272 acres of the best land on 'Glencoe' in the Hundreds of Hindmarsh and Grey for £11,855.⁶⁸ On 8 July 1854 Beck, Hallett and Stilling bought land on the Kalangadoo Plains which Leake dearly wanted. They sold to him at a profit of over £200 within two months.⁶⁹ To consolidate this part of his run,

62. John Beck, Sections 1180 and 1207, Hundred of Gambier, £228 on 8 July 1854, GRO 397-398/74; conveyed to Anthony Sutton for £560 on 20 November 1855, GRO 331/93.

63. P. Prankerd, Section 376, Hundred of Blanche, 200 acres for £670, on 7 July 1854, GRO 393/72; conveyed to Hastings Cunningham for £480 on 13 October 1854, GRO 65/76.

64. Section 8, Hundred of Naracoorte, 6 July 1854, GRO 590/113.

65. Section 200, 6 July 1854, GRO 391/73.

66. Section 295, Hundred of Blanche, 8 June 1854, GRO 499/60.

67. L 1/1/4, 20 May 1852.

68. GRO 311-312/127; LGB County Grey; Map 8.

69. Sections 2424, 2468, 2248, 492, totalling 313 acres in the Hundreds of Hindmarsh and Grey, purchased for £680 and transferred for £892.15 on 28 September 1854. GRO 271/75; Map 8.

he needed Section 479, a 640 acre block. On 26 August 1854 he paid John Scott of Kalangadoo £1,920 for this land which Scott had bought for £1,285 one month earlier.⁷⁰ Beyond the north-west fringe of Leake's land stood the "Bush Inn" and store on an 81 acre section. Leake paid Samuel Palmer, proprietor, £5 an acre for land and store.⁷¹ His purchases of 1854 had run him up to an average of £2.5 per acre, which he told his father was "very high for this district".⁷² But he had freeholded the best land on his runs, carved a strategic passage of outstations from Guichen Bay to his land across the Victorian border, and made his 35,000 sheep and 1,000 cattle safe from predatory neighbours, city speculators or future yeoman farmers.⁷³ If Robert Leake had to toil in a wilderness, he was clearly determined to make his fortune there.

There were two other main categories of purchaser at the 1854 land sales. A few large investors such as Thomas Magarey, miller of Hindmarsh, began to lay the foundations of a future estate in the district. Magarey paid £615 for 483 acres of fertile land near Mt Gambier. By 1861 he purchased more land to the north, and became the owner of the 'Naracoorte' run, formerly held by George Ormerod and John McIntosh.⁷⁴ A few who intended to farm also bought good land near Mt

70. GRO 271/75, 408/74, 472/73; RPA Search 122; LGB, County Grey; Map 13.

71. Section 2020, Hundred of Riddoch, conveyed from Samuel Palmer on 26 November 1853 for £301. On this "parcel of land" there was the "Mt Burr Hotel", shoe-making apartments, a blacksmith's shop, stables, a store, three stock-yards, a cultivation paddock and a horse paddock. GRO 60/72 and 342/102; Map 8.

72. L 1/1/4, 20 March 1855.

73. In May 1851 Robert and Edward Leake purchased the Kentbruch and Lake Monibeong runs, a total of 198,000 acres. The runs, formerly known as Cuthrie and Mombong, extended from the east bank of the Glenelg to Cape Bridgewater. E.M. Yelland, p 77.

74. GRO 300-305/72. On 11 July 1861 McIntosh assigned lease 165, 87 square miles, to Magarey for £27,636; GRO 12/176. For biographical details of T. Magarey, R. Cockburn, Vol. 1, p 167; Vol. 2, pp 20, 38 and 169. For details of W. McIntosh, B. Durman, A History of the Baker's Range Settlement, Naracoorte, 1971, p 9; N.V. Wallace, pp 9-10.

Gambier in 1854, but very few could have been typical Wakefieldian yeomen: most were not assisted emigrants and those who were did not purchase land with savings after three years' labouring but with money made from commercial interests or working their own land.

Among these were Alexander Mitchell, Niel Black's former overseer, who ran the Mt Gambier Hotel.⁷⁵ Robert Cock, agent for the Gold Company and brewer and maltster, bought land with money made on his property at Balhannah and at the diggings.⁷⁶ Gottlieb Lindner had been a blacksmith at Hahndorf before he became one of the first German farmers to settle in the South East.⁷⁷ William and Ebenezer Boneham had made money from their mixed farm at Nairne.⁷⁸ William Sinclair was more representative of Wakefield's yeoman class. Sinclair had come to South Australia as an indentured labourer in 1839 when he was 38. But he purchased land not from his labourer's wage but with money made on the gold diggings and he had had to wait fifteen years before he became a landowner.⁷⁹ Over the next decade these men accumulated large holdings of good land near Mt Gambier. One other significant feature distinguished them from the colonisers' ideal. They did not use their land primarily for cultivation. Like the pastoralists they ran sheep: their arrival in 1854 marked the emergence of the farmer-grazier in the South East district.

75. Alexander Mitchell purchased Sections 420, 369 and 425 in the Hundred of Blanche, a total of 231 acres for £675 on 6 July 1854. GRO 384-386/73. See also L.R. Hill, pp 46 and 224-5.

76. SAR, 1 April 1871; 1047/12, SAA; L.R. Hill, p 34; Research Note 262, SAA. See Ch. 3, footnote 103.

77. Gottlieb Lindner purchased Section 1152, 130 acres in the Hundred of Gambier for £315 on 8 June 1854. LGB, Country Grey. See also L.R. Hill, p 70.

78. William and Ebenezer Boneham purchased Sections 497, 535 and 553, Hundred of Grey, 240 acres for £516 on 8 June 1854. LGB, Country Grey.

79. William Sinclair of 'Loudon Hill' purchased Section 1316, 83 acres in the Hundred of Gambier for £135 on 8 June 1854. LGB, Country Grey; 39/48B, 1529, SAA; L.R. Hill, p 52. See Ch. 3, footnote 76.

Among the 1854 purchasers there were a few intending agriculturalists, some of whom were assisted emigrants who paid large amounts for a few acres. Among the buyers were nine men of such varied occupations as carpenter, shoemaker, horsebreaker and yeoman who bought as little as five acres from that "shrewd, energetic, upright man of business", Richard Colley.⁸⁰ On 20 September 1854, for £180, Colley purchased 82 acres of fertile land, formerly part of Evelyn Sturt's run on the north-western slopes of Mt Gambier; by 1856 he had divided this into twenty-four sections and sold it for £340.⁸¹ But if these buyers hoped to become self-sufficient farmers by working small plots as productively as similar European holdings, they were mistaken. Their small farms were too small. Only George Avey established himself as a farmer and he needed more than his initial 15 acres. He bought 15 more from his neighbours, and in 1859, a further 65. He may have also relied upon his earnings as a carpenter to make his land pay. Within ten years the other eight purchasers did what

80. For biographical details of R.B. Colley, SAR, 1 June 1875. Because of gaps in shipping lists and because the same names recur, it is sometimes difficult to establish assisted emigrant status. It would seem likely, however, that the following are the same persons who bought land from Colley: George Avey, carpenter from Suffolk, 33, arrived with his wife, Phoebe and three children on 31 December 1854; Charles Smith, butcher, gardener and sheep-shearer, arrived on 7 November 1839; William Orchard, 37, shoemaker from Cornwall, arrived with his wife, 42, and two children on 31 March 1850; William Peacock, 34, husbandman from Leeds, arrived with his wife, 33, on 19 December 1838 and lived first at Encounter Bay; George Brown, boot and shoemaker, 20, arrived from Dover on 10 July 1839. See 1529, 313, 1048 and 407, SAA.

81. This was Section 377, Hundred of Blanche, GRO Plan 369 of 1854; GRO 100/78; 273/76; 393/89; 148/91; 274/76; 108/97; 109/97; 252/105; 253/105. In 1851, David Power bought this part of Sturt's run from William Mitchell. In 1862 the run was held by Drs W.J. and J.H. Browne who also purchased Lots 21 and 22. For biographical details of D. Power, R. Cockburn, Vol. 1, pp 31, 33 and 139; B. Durman, p 6; L.R. Hill, p 8. For biographical details of the Browne brothers, ADB, Vol. 3, p 270; R. Cockburn, Vol. 1, pp 30 and 161; Vol. 2, p 137; L.R. Hill, pp 28-9; E. Williams, p 14; Our Pastoral Industry, Adelaide, 1910, pp 137-156; PRG 260 and Research Note 6, SAA.

was to become common practice in the South East. They sold their land to large farmers and pastoralists.⁸²

The 1854 land sales had also made the relationship between capitalist, government and South East land clear. To secure the best land, capitalists had bought one-tenth of all land sold at auction in the colony for an average of £2.3.6 per acre — above average of that paid in the colony and more than twice the upset price.⁸³ A mere 800 acres lay under cultivation. On the rest they were running 34,000 cattle, 1,000 horses, and 470,000 sheep — one-third of the colony's total.⁸⁴ For their part, by selling to moneyed pastoralists in the South East, legislators could be sure of revenue from land and wool.

82. Sections	Area in Acres	Purchaser	Price £	Transferred to
9,10	10	T. Little	80	Messrs Bradshaw and Young, 7 Nov. 1860, Application 1947.
23,24	10	T. Little		
11,12	10	A. McKinnon	40	George Avey, 13 Oct. 1860, 274/169
13	5	W. Peacock	20	George Avey, 2 Feb. 1864, 134/94.
14,15,16	15	G. Avey, Carpenter	60	
17	5	D. O'Brien	25	J. Newton, 26 Mar. 1869, 142/238.
18,19	10	S. Leete	50	Dr Wehl, 23 Oct. 1854, 313/245
20	5	G. Brown Shoemaker	25	Drs Browne of Moorak, 1 Oct. 1863, 293/190.
21	5	W. Orchard	20	Drs Browne of Moorak, 1 Oct. 1863, 293/190.
22	5	C. Smith Yeoman	20	D. O'Brien and Michael Shanahan, 20 Jan. 1868, 236/227, 92/171.

George Avey bought Section 373, Hundred of Gambier and Lot 17 of 1101, Hundred of Blanche on 17 March 1859. GRO 4/124 and 27/183. Avey obviously was making money from building. He assisted in the erection of the Court House, completed in 1860. L. Hill, p 31.

83. J.H. Sheppard, p 39, SAA; data checked against LGB for Counties Grey, Robe and McDonnell. In 1854, 173,974 acres were sold at auction for £333,327; the total sold at auction and at fixed price was 213,925 acres for £377,303, SAPP 37 of 1871 (n.d.).

84. SAR, 4 February 1853; Royal South Australian Almanack 1854, Adelaide, 1854.

Compromising an ideal for profit was not unique to the South East but as land sales there in 1854 had returned £37,073, politicians looked to that area for revenue again in 1858 and prepared to declare six Agricultural Hundreds.⁸⁵ The government was supposed to declare Hundreds when it received sufficient applications from potential farmers to make it worthwhile to open up this much land for agriculture. But, as a Select Committee of Enquiry reported, "Government and squatters corrupted the system". Squatters often called for land to be opened up so that they might purchase the best land before the agriculturalists; governments in need of revenue complied with squatter requests.⁸⁶ George Young, Niel Black's agent with helpful connections at the Land Office, informed Black, "Whatever the intention, it is always the practice here to declare Hundreds not merely where land has been applied for, but also where the Government thinks application for land would be encouraged by such a declaration".⁸⁷ Since 1855 revenue had been falling short of expenditure and by 1858 the land fund surplus from the 1854 sales was

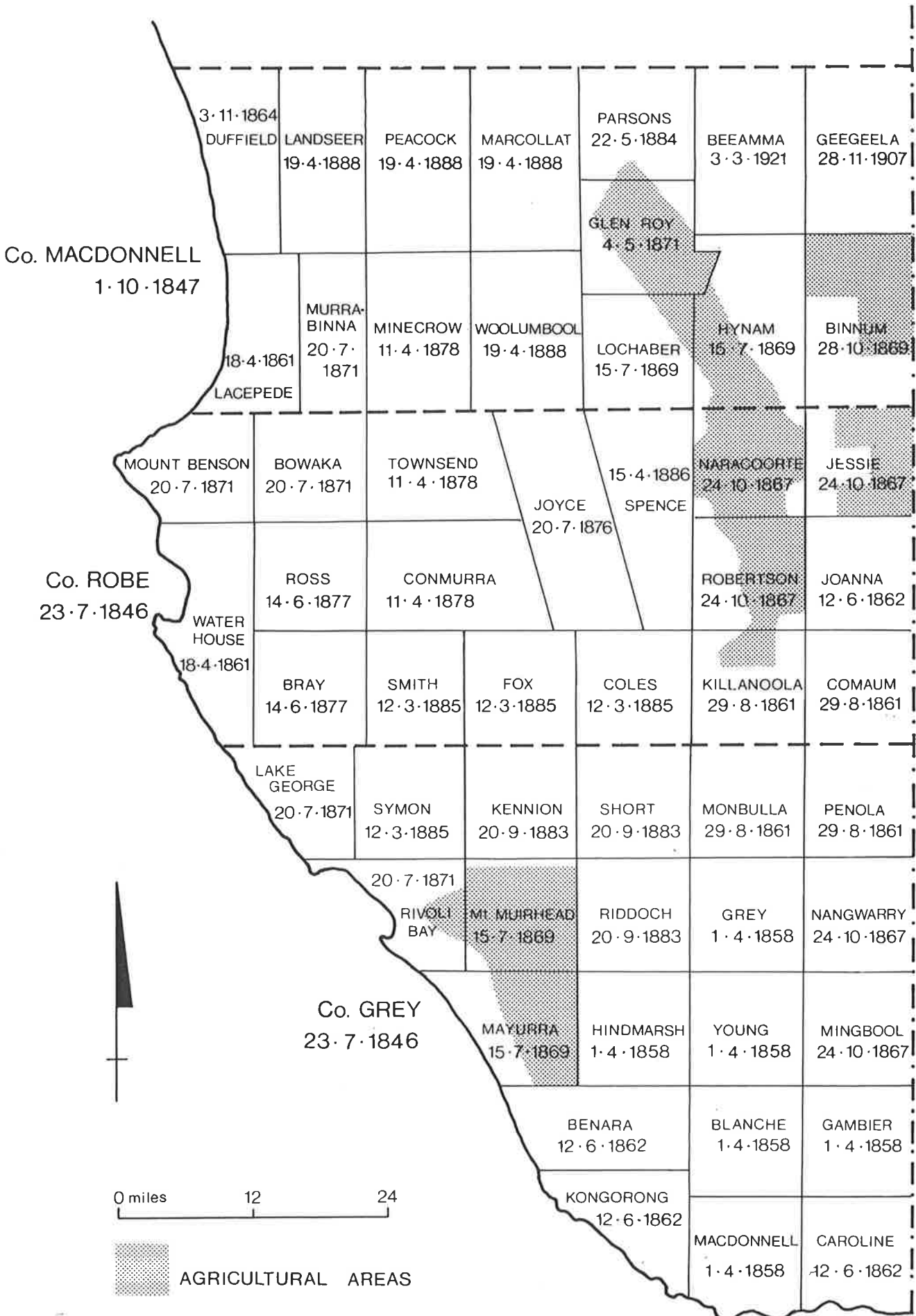
85. See footnote 25. Blanche, Gambier, Grey, Hindmarsh, Young and MacDonnell were declared on 1 April 1858. SAGG, 1 April 1858; Map 7.

86. SAPP 73 of 1865, HA, 25 July 1865. For the origin of the Hundred, M. Williams, pp 74-5.

87. George Young to Niel Black, 12 January 1860, MS8996. In 1855 George Young became connected with the firm of William Younghusband. He was a Trustee of the Adelaide Club, a Trustee of the Savings Bank of South Australia (1853) and Director of the South Australian Banking Company (1867). By 1866 he was operating in Gilbert Place as a merchant. All91/A6, SAA. See also The South Australian Advertiser, 16 March 1897.

MAP 7

Counties, Agricultural Hundreds and Agricultural Areas.



running out.⁸⁸ To prepare for the declaration of Agricultural Hundreds in the South East, M. Smith and R. Edmonds, civil surveyors, whose previous experience had been detailed surveys of Great Britain and Ireland, set out to survey the difficult and unfamiliar terrain.⁸⁹

South East pastoralists showed they could exploit politicians in need of finance rather than be exploited by them. Between 1856-58 they applied for surveys of their best land. Robert Leake informed the Commissioner of Crown Lands that as the squatters of the district were the biggest purchasers of land, their applications should be given priority. "Eighty acre sections are of little use to us," he declared.⁹⁰ He applied for 15,280 acres to be surveyed in twenty-four blocks.⁹¹ John Ellis of 'Benara' asked for a survey of 20,000 acres which would "leave out the hilly or very scrubby country".⁹² George Glen requested a survey of almost 5,000 acres, "in blocks of 640 acres or such large blocks as will profitably allow".⁹³ In 1855, "since Ed would not have it", Robert Leake had transferred land near Mt Schanck and 10,000 sheep to McIntyre, his faithful overseer.⁹⁴ When McIntyre heard that square mile blocks on 'Mt Schanck' were to be cut up into 80 acre sections, he declared this would "completely upset his arrangements". As persons in other districts could have what they applied for, he could not see why the South East

88.

Public Revenue and Expenditure 1855-1857

	Revenue		Total	Expenditure	
	Customs	Land		Public Works	Total
	£	£	£	£	£
1855	129,501	272,316	453,641	173,376	689,696
1856	152,135	274,967	479,977	180,568	579,926
1857	151,667	243,440	455,210	214,190	538,212

From K.R. Bowes, Land Settlement in South Australia: 1857-1890, Adelaide, 1968, p 117.

89. The salary for civil surveyors was £280 per annum. GRG 35/20/1858/598, SAA.

90. GRG 35/2/1858/329, SAA.

91. GRG 35/467/31, SAA.

92. GRG 35/2/1857/462, SAA. For biographical details of John Ellis, R. Cockburn, Vol. 1, pp 70-1; G.E. Loyau, Notable South Australians, Adelaide, 1885, p 270; A. Henderson, pp 149-50.

93. GRG 35/467/32, SAA.

94. L 1/1/4, 18 October 1860. For transfer of land from Leake to McIntyre, GRO 163/152, GRO 163/52 and GRO 167/62; GRO plan 526 of 1858 and 528 of 1888; Map 9.

should be an exception. He applied for 15,000 acres to be surveyed.⁹⁵ Niel and Donald Black asked for 3,000 and 2,640 acres respectively; David Power required the survey of 7,000.⁹⁶ The squatters' requests met with a stock, open-ended reply that the surveying of such large blocks "depended entirely on the nature of the land". If the land was "adapted to agricultural purposes, the 80 acre system would be adhered to"; if not "the request of the parties might be complied with to a certain extent".⁹⁷ In fact, because revenue was needed the squatters had their large blocks surveyed and before the declaration of the first Hundreds they had purchased their best land.

John MacIntyre purchased "a few acres of niggling land on one end of his run three miles of which was of little use to anyone, except for grazing".⁹⁸ George Glen secured 4,877 acres on 'Mayurra' because they were "indispensable as a dry winter run for his sheep";⁹⁹ Donald Black purchased the best land on the 'Dunans' run, and Niel Black freeholded his head station, 'Warreanga'.¹⁰⁰ Robert Leake's purchases were prodigious. In 1858 he bought over 14,000 acres for £18,000; before the end of 1859 he had added a further 12,215 freehold acres to his estate for £13,500.¹⁰¹ Although there was no imminent likelihood of an Agricultural Hundred in his area, Adam Smith took the precaution of securing 625 acres of 'Hynam' head station land at £3 an acre.¹⁰²

95. GRG 35/467/32, SAA.

96. GRG 35/2/1857/1906, SAA.

97. GRG 35/2/1859/1528, SAA. See also report by Commissioner of Crown Lands relative to surveying of large blocks, SAPP 135 of 1857, HA, 23 September 1857.

98. Application 28050, GRO 346/192; LGB, County Grey.

99. GRO 14/47, 13/17, 14/10; LGB, County Grey.

100. GRO 672/58, 7/177; LGB, County Grey; Map 9.

101. LGB, County Grey; Map 8.

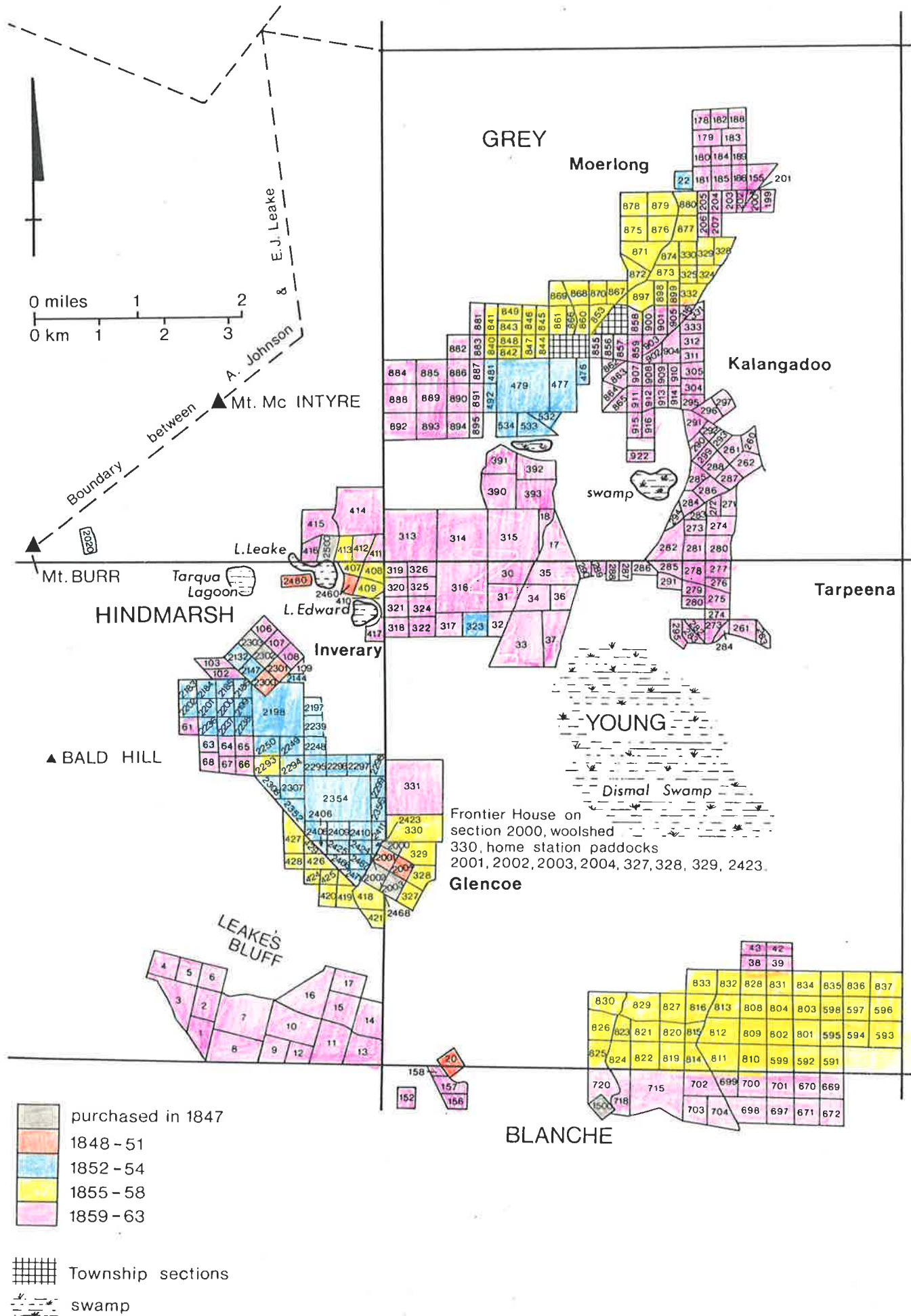
102. GRO 9/20; LGB, County McDonnell; Map 14.

MAP 8

'Glencoe', 1847-1863

In addition to his leasehold, by the 1860s, Robert Leake, "Baron of the Frontier", had carved out an empire of over 40,000 acres of the best agricultural land in the South East (see Maps 8, 11 and 10). His purchases kept him safe from legislation for Agricultural Hundreds, ensured water, protected his boundaries and provided easy passage to holdings in Victoria. Contrary to the colonisers' vision he cultivated scarcely any land, employed few labourers and amassed a fortune from wool.

*(Leake papers, Memorial Register Books,
LGB, County Grey)*



Purchases in 1858 had once more not only excluded men of little means but had also renewed rivalry between squatters. Robert Leake, for example, told his father, "I have to buy land from a neighbour of mine, he's put up £10,000 acres - a Mr David Powers [sic] of Mount Graham. He is a little greedy Irish man". But he added, "I cannot blame him too much as I bought some of his run when it was put up for sale".¹⁰³ George Young informed Niel Black that John Ellis's application for 20,000 acres in the Mt Schanck area to be divided into 80 acre sections was meant "to injure his neighbours", but warned Black that Ellis could not be frustrated by the usual methods.

"If he were a poor man," Young advised, "you might stop the survey by calling upon him to pay a deposit of a tenth of the purchase money, which he would forfeit if the land was not sold - say £2,000. But Ellis has ample means. Any such move might cause him to run up the price of every section he wanted to buy until he saw the £2,000 covered - or at any rate purchase for himself sections just to your annoyance under the pretext of pasturing rights. Any opposition might embolden him to take further measures." 104

Niel Black did not take this risk, and John Ellis got his 20,000 acres on the 'Benara' run.¹⁰⁵

Although the most fertile land in the district had gone before the declaration of the first Agricultural Hundreds, farmers determined to get the best of what was left. Some with capital found they could prevail upon the government as the squatters had done. In 1858 John Bowden was ready to invest his takings from the 'Royal Oak' hotel at Penola.¹⁰⁶ His bold affirmation — "We are ready not only with our purses but our ploughs to develop this fine country" — struck a

103. L 1/1/4, 26 March 1859.

104. George Young to Niel Black, 5 May 1858, MS 8996. By regulation a deposit of 5% was to be made on an application for survey. This deposit was to be forfeited if land was not bought when first put up for auction. GRG 38/2/1850/1119, SAA.

105. LGB, County Grey, particularly the Hundred of Benara.

106. Hotels Index, 1195, SAA.

responsive chord with the Commissioner of Crown Lands.¹⁰⁷ The Surveyor-General was ordered to bring forward sales "so that a whole year's crop would not be lost", and Bowden bought 110 acres near Lake Hawdon, 30 of which cost him £120.¹⁰⁸

Near Mt Gambier a group of predominantly German settlers, including Gottlieb Lindner, now owner of 161 acres, and William Sinclair, who had purchased over 300 acres, complained to the Commissioner of Crown Lands in November 1857.¹⁰⁹ They had heard that

"On the Shank run surveyors is goeng to remove from this destrict without cuting up some of the large blocks that have been Surveyed in four hundred and six hundred acres which is some of the best land in this Destrict. We have seen some Squire Miles Cut up into eight sections without any Roads accept around the Squire Mile." 110

The Surveyor-General replied that large blocks in the Mt Gambier district would be sub-divided "as the surveyors found time".¹¹¹ For Sinclair, Lindner and some other small capitalists the surveyors soon "found time"; those who could not afford high prices crossed the border into Victoria.¹¹²

Other farmers challenged the complicity of government and squatter. Joseph Smith, assisted emigrant from Cornwall to South Australia in 1837, and James Cock, son of Robert Cock, acted as co-chairmen of a farmers'

107. GRG 35/2/1856/631, SAA.

108. GRG 35/20/1856/897, SAA. On 10 July 1856, Bowden paid £201.10 for Sections 203 and 204 in the Hundred of Bray. LGB, County Robe.

109. See footnotes 77 and 79. On 8 September 1854 Lindner purchased 31 acres of Section 370 in the Hundred of Blanche, from R.B. Colley, GRO 68/77. On 24 January 1855, William Sinclair purchased Sections 476, 477 and Lot 45 of Section 1101 in the Hundred of Blanche. LGB, County Grey.

110. Other successful petitioners in this correspondence were John and Peter McArthur, Frederick Hirth, Carl Lindner, August Hieselbach, C. Hofman, J. Burge, and W. Leigh. GRG 35/2/1857/950, SAA; LGB, County Grey.

111. GRG 35/2/1857/1148, SAA.

112. See footnote 396.

public meeting at Mt Gambier on 2 March 1858.¹¹³ As a result the farmers succeeded in getting Mt Schanck land cut into 80 acre sections, by exposing the collaboration of Robert Edmonds, surveyor, with the squatters. They claimed Edmonds had left "thousands of acres of good agricultural land wrapped up in large blocks so as to be entirely beyond the reach of small capitalists".¹¹⁴ They also claimed in the city press that they were in a better position than surveyors to judge the fitness of land for agriculture. Moreover, they were running a few stock and "even if a few acres were unfit for the plough, farmers needed grass as well as cultivation paddocks", and they were prepared to pay up to £2 an acre.¹¹⁵ The Surveyor-General issued orders for a thousand acres to be cut up by the first surveyor in the neighbourhood, "to avoid further controversy".¹¹⁶ The farmers got their land and the government its revenue.

The South East showed a record return of £85,386.11 from the 1858 land sales, almost double the return of the previous year.¹¹⁷ The declaration of Agricultural Hundreds had far from "killed the squatter"; with government complicity many South East land barons founded their estates. They purchased 25,458 acres in the Agricultural Hundreds before the Hundreds were declared; by claiming their land was not fit for

113. There are three emigrants named Joseph Smith who could conceivably be the Joseph Smith at Mt Gambier (1529, 39/23B, 49A and 37, SAA). It seems more likely that the fifteen-year-old labourer from Cornwall (1529/37, SAA) who first farmed at Meadows (407, SAA) is the farmer who bought land at Mt Gambier twenty-one years later. See L.R. Hill, p 52. For further details of Robert Cock, footnote 76.

114 Sections 334, 475, 422, 435, 479 and 480 under question were on the 'Mt Schanck' run in the Hundred of Gambier. This was the land which had first excited the Arthur brothers. The Surveyor-General was at first willing to comply only if the land "justified the expense of re-surveying". GRG 35/2/1858/204, SAA.

115. The Observer, 1 May 1858.

116. GRG 35/20/1858/498, SAA.

117. SAPP 102 of 1863, LC, 18 August 1863. State total: £229,732.4.0 from SAPP 37 of 1871 (n.d.).

agricultural purposes they purchased a further 98,925 acres made available at declaration.¹¹⁸ But then, as one member of the Legislative Council observed, "No squatter ever found good agricultural land on his run until he obtained his land in fee simple".¹¹⁹ Since revenue rather than the fulfilment of an ideal had continued to motivate government practice, large farmers and squatters had excluded the yeoman farmer whom Agricultural Hundreds were professedly meant to serve.

These purchases brought several immediate benefits. Every five acres purchased entitled depasturing rights for one head of cattle and six sheep in 1859 and, by 1862, to twice that amount.¹²⁰ The Poundage Act of 1858 increased penalties for trespass on freehold land against lax or encroaching neighbours.¹²¹ Nor did freeholding limit leasing; along with the land they owned, purchasers could still lease up to 200 square miles for fourteen years.¹²²

In 1858 revenue from land sales was not sufficient to ward off a financial crisis provoked by over-optimistic expenditure on public works. A proposal to introduce income tax was overwhelmingly rejected.¹²³ With the passing of the Stock Assessment Act of 24 December 1858, legislators were once more looking to the pastoral industry for revenue. The Stock Assessment Act provided for an annual assessment charge, in addition to

118. Landholders who had purchased large amounts before, and in the first six months following, the declaration of the first Hundreds, included Messrs Black, Cameron, Ellis, Glen, Hunter, Leake, Morris, Power, Robertson, Seymour and Wells. Messrs Umpherston, Livingston and McArthur were notable among the more recently arrived large farmers. LGB, Counties Robe, Grey and McDonnell; return of land sold 1848-59, SAPP 19 of 1861, HA, 26 April 1861.

119. SAPD, 27 September 1860, p 962.

120. SAPP 102 of 1859, HA, 24 June 1859. Waste Lands Act of 1862. For regulations, BW, 9 May 1862.

121. Act 8 of 1858, assented to 24 December 1858.

122. Act 5 of 1857, assented to 9 November 1857.

123. For details on public expenditure see K.R. Bowes, pp 334-5. Select Committee on Taxation: Report and Evidence, SAPP 88 of 1858, HA, 22 December 1858.

rental, of twopence per sheep. As freehold was exempt from assessment, pastoralists who had purchased now had another benefit. They were less affected because assessment was calculated on the carrying capacity of leasehold only, as determined by officials of the Department of Crown Lands. Minimum carrying capacity was estimated at 100 sheep per square mile; maximum capacity at 240.¹²⁴ Because much of their inferior leasehold was under-stocked, pastoralists would have preferred an assessment on the actual number of sheep carried. But, since squatters had under-declared on previous occasions and since the government was determined to get as much revenue as possible, assessment was to be on capacity.¹²⁵ In taking this approach legislators were also re-affirming that South Australian land was not evenly productive.¹²⁶

In the debates which preceded the Stock Assessment Act an ambitious and politically aspiring bourgeoisie once more challenged the squatters.¹²⁷ The Select Committee appointed to enquire on assessment was composed of pastoralists and political conservatives who were unanimous that an assessment would unjustly tax the squatter.¹²⁸ The squatter's financial position, the Committee claimed, was precarious. Mr Hawker, pastoralist speaker of the House, and member for the South East electorate of Victoria, reminded his colleagues how in one day a squatter might lose £500 through scab because of a neighbour's negligence.¹²⁹ Mr Strangways, member for Encounter Bay, pointed out that the squatter had no control over sheep or wool prices and that the burden of an assessment would ultimately fall on the labouring man. The pastoral industry, he added,

124. Act 20 of 1858, assented to 24 December 1858.

125. See footnote 20.

126. See footnote 22.

127. K.R. Bowes, Appendix D, Occupations of the Members of the SA House of Assembly 1857-1890, p 286.

128. SAPP 95 of 1858, LC, 3 November 1858.

129. SAPD, 29 September 1858, p 61. For biographical details of G.C. Hawker, ADB, Vol. 6, pp 122-3; E. Williams, pp 13 and 15.

employed far more labourers than many supposed.¹³⁰ Most abhorrent of all, Mr Strangways claimed, this was legislation directed against that class which had "raised the produce, improved the land, manured it with their flocks and propagated its grasses".¹³¹ Other conservatives agreed. There were "gentlemen who made fortunes in Hindley and Rundle Streets and spent their riotous living at home". There were farmers "treading closely on the heels of the squatters". It was nothing short of a "breach of faith" that such groups should "cut at the productive energy" of a class "who had prepared the interior for the habitation of civilised man".¹³²

The conservatives' rhetoric of profit had challenged the Wakefieldian ideal of establishing many small farmers. Members of the newly-elected House of Assembly, where the largest single element was the city commercial interest, were more likely to profit from the settlement of agriculturalists. They showed they had no intention of surrendering to squatter interests.¹³³ Mr Hawker proposed a compromise. Squatters would pay the assessment in return for security. They would surrender their current fourteen-year leases, seven years of which had expired, in return for leases renewable every five years, with valuation for rental only at the end of each fifth year.¹³⁴ The squatter faction had made an astute move. Over the next six years they amended the Act even more in their favour. Sheep-carrying capacity was first reassessed between the lower and upper limits of 50 and 400 sheep per square mile. Then assessment was made on the actual number of sheep carried. Finally squatters gained the right to appeal to the Commissioner of Crown Lands if they considered an assessment unjust. By 1864 only pastoralists on land

130. SAPD, 29 September 1858, p 61. For biographical details on H.B.T. Strangways, ADB, Vol. 6, p 204.

131. SAPD, 29 September 1858, p 648.

132. SAPD, 30 September 1858, p 62.

133. K.R. Bowes, Appendix D, p 286.

134. SAPD, 24 November 1858, p 684.

classified as "A" grade had to pay full assessment.¹³⁵ Short-term acquiescence had led to long-term gains - a tactic the squatters did not forget.

The "onerous, responsible and laborious" task of assessment fell to H.T. Morris, Chief Inspector of Sheep. His findings revealed how squatters had circumvented or used legislation to accumulate the wealth which had exposed them to the hostility of all but a dependent banking interest. Squatters had invariably "taken out the best parts or secured most of the water". They had also used inferior or inaccessible leasehold to "square the lines or check encroaching neighbours". In some instances this leased land was "useless to anyone except the owner of the purchased land".¹³⁶

In his assessment Morris acknowledged that land in the South East was very varied, but also confirmed what landowners there had long since recognised. Because cool summers kept the grass greener than in most parts of the colony, this was sheep country. As far as weight and quality were concerned, South East pastoralists grew the best wool in the colony which, Morris declared, said much for the fertility of their purchased land.¹³⁷ In assessing the carrying capacity of pastoral leases, Morris did not take distance from ports into consideration, but, after allowing for variables in vegetation and water supply, he considered all runs in the district were understocked although none was carrying less than 200 sheep to the square mile.¹³⁸

135. Act 16 of 1862, assented to 21 October 1862; Act 22 of 1862, assented to 21 October 1862; Act 13 of 1863, assented to 12 November 1863; Act 8 of 1864, assented to 3 November 1864.

136. SAPP 101 of 1861, HA, 9 July 1861. See also SAPP 117 of 1861, HA, 24 July 1861.

137. SAPP 95 of 1858, HA, 3 November 1858, questions 616-8.

138. SAPP 101 of 1861, HA, 9 July 1861.

At 'Hynam', in the north-east of the district, Adam Smith held 63 square miles of open, grassy flats, assessed as capable of carrying 255 sheep per square mile, or 16,065 in all. In fact Smith was carrying only 180 fewer. His main difficulty was in obtaining surface water. Water lay in abundance in the swamps in winter, but in summer several wells were needed to reach water at 30 to 60 feet below the surface. The water was raised by horsepower and stored in 15,000 to 20,000 gallon tanks. Smith paid £48 rent in 1858; in 1859 his rent and stock assessment amounted to £173.5 a year.¹³⁹

Much of the 94 square miles of the coastal run of 'Mayurra', leased by George Glen in partnership with William Vansittart, was a large, well-grassed limestone plain, inundated with swamps in winter. The low ranges on the western side were thickly timbered with gum and sheoak. Water was available at a moderate depth and the run bordered the fresh waters of Lake Bonney. Morris estimated a carrying capacity of 220 sheep to the square mile, despite the prevalence of "coast" disease. This was 1,800 fewer than the run was carrying. Glen's payments more than quintupled from £55 for rent in 1858 to £203.13 for rent and assessment in 1859.¹⁴⁰

The Leake brothers held 24 square miles under lease in the centre and the south-eastern portion of the district, much of which was covered with low ranges of stringy bark and tea-tree swamps with an estimated carrying capacity of only 200 sheep per square mile. Yet because he had purchased his best land and because he kept his leasehold fully stocked, Leake's rent and assessment was only £65.8.9 in 1859, compared with a rent of £140.10 in 1851.¹⁴¹

139. SAPP 98 of 1864, HA, 11 August 1864; Appendix 3; Map 6.

140. SAPP 98 of 1864, HA, 11 August 1864; Appendix 3; Map 6.

141. SAPP 98 of 1864, HA, 11 August 1864; Appendix 3; Maps 6 and 8.

'Yallum' lay in the central northern part of the district, occupying 109 square miles of generally flat land, bordered by large swamps on the western side. Large areas in the centre were covered with heath, stringy bark, scrub gum, sheoak, honeysuckle and blackwood. Morris judged the run capable of carrying 245 sheep to the square mile and estimated that the run was understocked by 2,625 sheep. The Wells brothers now faced a payment of £270.19.5 in 1859, whereas the rent until 1858 had been only £81.15.¹⁴²

In 1859, the first year of operation of the Act, South East pastoralists returned £6,428.15.10 in revenue from stock assessment. In the first five years of their new leases, from 1859-64, they paid £27,598.7.10 on assessments alone.¹⁴³ Yet their runs were large and their best freehold land was exempt from assessment. Only a few properties in the South East changed hands, and evidence does not suggest that transfers took place only because squatters could not meet their payments. In 1864 the district was carrying 760,000 more sheep than in 1857, the highest increase for any district in the colony.¹⁴⁴ Wool prices remained high and steady and in 1861 a record 2,067,240 lbs of wool were exported from the South East through Guichen Bay and Port MacDonnell.¹⁴⁵ The large and prosperous wool-growers of the South East had survived yet another challenge from city democrats.

142. SAPP 98 of 1864, HA, 11 August 1864; Appendix 3; Map 6.

143. SAPP 102 of 1863, LC, 18 August 1863.

144. The location of the sheep industry

	1857	1864	Increase
Mid-North	710,000	1,200,000	490,000
South East	440,000	1,200,000	760,000
Eyre Peninsula	120,000	290,000	170,000
Yorke Peninsula	90,000	130,000	40,000
Far North	-	41,000	41,000
Upper Murray	-	53,000	53,000
Streaky Bay	-	92,000	92,000

K.R. Bowes, pp 118 and 142. See also SRSA, 1861.

145. E. Ward, The Souther-Eastern District of South Australia: Its Resources and Requirements, Adelaide, 1869, p 4.

The situation of the few men who had tried to grow wheat on small holdings in the South East was in stark contrast to that of the pastoralists. In March 1855, under a pub verandah, Bishop Augustus Short, first Bishop of Adelaide, accompanied by his future son-in-law George Glen, spoke to some of them when he brought the civilising influence of religion to Mt Gambier. They were "a harum-scarum devil-may-care lot, dressed in blue and red serge suits, mole trousers and cabbage tree hats". They declared that as cockatoos "they were normally looked on with contempt as the minions of squatterdom". They were delighted that His Grace wished to take to Adelaide a sample of the first wheat grown in the district and to hear him remark to Mr Glen that "it was as honourable to grow wheat as keep sheep or cattle".¹⁴⁶

But the first annual ploughing match held at Mt Gambier in 1853 — an event which should have been the highlight of the year for small farmers and their sons — typified the failure of small-scale agriculturalists in the South East and set the tone for future years. Farmers competed with borrowed ploughs. The match was held in Carl Blume's paddocks and Robert Cook was the winner. Neither of these men was a small independent agriculturalist — by 1855 both were principally running sheep on large holdings.¹⁴⁷

Most "cockatoos" were discovering that the main reason for their failure was the unsuitability of their land for cultivating European crops. George Woodruffe Goyder, Surveyor-General in 1861, stated this bluntly. After an expedition to gauge the fitness of the district for agriculture, like the overlanders before him, he judged there were "only two isolated areas of agricultural land of the finest description in the South East". This was the land close to Kalangadoo and Mt Gambier, which squatters and large farmers had already alienated. Between Robe and Mt Gambier limestone ridges alternated with swampy flats. Here was grass herbage suitable for

146. SES, 20 March 1883. For biographical details of Bishop Short, ADB, Vol. 6, pp 122-3.

147. SES, 6 March 1883. Footnotes 38, 66 and 76.

pasture between low stringy-bark and honey-suckle, but in Goyder's opinion, the rocky character and poor sandy soil of the flats rendered them unfit for tillage. In the Reedy Creek - Mt Burr area the soil improved, but the land was too thickly timbered for agriculture. Goyder judged clearing would cost £7-£8 per acre before the land could be made fit for agriculture. Land toward the coast, near McDonnell Bay, was also thickly timbered and not open enough for cultivation. The Mosquito Plains gave the appearance of being like European land: it seemed "all that could be desired by an agriculturalist", but the soil was very shallow, with a bedding of hard limestone only about six inches below the surface. Goyder questioned whether grain would ripen in such a depth. Even if grain should spring up rapidly, he considered it would be scorched by the heat before maturity. In short, Goyder warned of the deceptiveness of the South East with regard to agriculture. He declared he could not guarantee that any amount of cost and toil could successfully transform pastoral to agricultural land, but "as a pastoral district", he concluded, "the South East was probably surpassed by few".¹⁴⁸

The editor of the conservative Mt Gambier paper, The Border Watch, established in 1861, agreed that the natural environment in the South East prohibited agriculturalists from making a living. "It is clear," he declared, "that in the South East small-scale farms will not pay - or at least they cannot be depended upon to pay." He considered cultivation on small farms might have an advantage over large ones where the soil and climate were favourable, but these areas were rare in the South East, and by the fifties the squatters had either purchased or had depasturing rights over these.¹⁴⁹ On the inferior land that was left, the editor

148. GRG 35/20/1861/83, SAA. For biographical details of G.W. Goyder, ADB, Vol. 4, pp 278-80. See also K.R. Bowes, pp 107-13.

149. For depasturing rights see footnote 118. In the Hundred of Gambier, for example, only 14,460 acres out of 64,000 were left unsold by 1865. After the freeholders exercised depasturing rights, farmers were entitled to only 4,400 acres. BW, 18 March 1865.

concluded, farmers were spending their strength for nothing when they might be more profitably employed under others.¹⁵⁰

Despite a want of land and capital, many still aspired to own a small plot. Throughout the sixties they continuously applied to the Commissioner of Crown Lands for land in the South East only to find their way blocked by government officials and squatters. John Blackmore was a typically persistent applicant. Between February and December 1860, he made six unsuccessful applications for inferior land which squatters had left in the northern portion of the district. Each of Blackmore's applications was similar to the one sent from the 'Inverness Hotel', Glenroy, about twelve miles north of Penola, on 23 October 1860.

"If you please sir," he wrote, "I want to by land on Mr Weles Run about 5 miles outside penola close by the adelaide Road joining that What is survade Sir Plase to let me know how long it Will be survade". 151

The Commissioner of Crown Lands refused all Blackmore's applications, replying that the land was either "not vacant", or "already leased", or "taken up", or "insufficiently described to fix the position".¹⁵²

On the other hand, the Commissioner was prepared to meet the requests of local capitalists. In 1860, George Byng Scott, Police Inspector for the South East and Stipendiary Magistrate for Naracoorte, and informed the Commissioner there was "good agricultural land around the north of Penola" which could be brought on the market if a Hundred were declared.¹⁵³ Captain Freeling, Surveyor-General, presumably considered local squatters had been asked to pay enough to secure their land and that John Blackmore and other applicants for small holdings did not, in Freeling's opinion, constitute an agricultural class. He tried to dissuade the Commissioner from declaring a Hundred. He reminded the Commissioner

150. BW, 16 May 1862.

151. GRG 35/2/1860/1386, SAA.

152. GRG 35/20/1860/184, 391, 871, 1737, 1766 and 2188, SAA.

153. For biographical details of G.B. Scott, BW and The Observer, 20 February 1886; S. Leighton, p 39.

that Messrs Wells and Cameron had already purchased 6,200 acres in the area and that a further 50,000 acres were to be offered in the Hundreds of Grey, Young, Gambier and McDonnell before the end of the financial year. To bring another 100,000 acres on to the market, Freeling suggested, would be "tantamount to extracting a large sum of money from the lessees of the Crown without the excuse of the demand for land made by an Agricultural class".¹⁵⁴ George Byng Scott continued to speak out strongly. His requests, together with the prospect of revenue "before the close of the financial year",¹⁵⁵ led the Commissioner to declare the four new Hundreds of Killanoola, Comaum, Penola and Monbulla on 29 August 1861.¹⁵⁶ The main purchasers were not small cultivators like John Blackmore, but pastoralists. Among these was Thomas Pynsent Scott, Stipendiary Magistrate for Penola, and brother of George Byng Scott, who had first called for the survey.¹⁵⁷ Men like John Blackmore were caught between officials, who each in his own way was sympathetic to capitalists and prepared to ignore the yeoman ideal in the less fertile north of the district as much as in the fertile south.

Men of little capital were also excluded from agricultural land because they had little hope of competing at auctions with squatters who either bid higher or were in league with auctioneers. One farmer almost competed against Niel Black. George Young told his employer about the incident.

"Just before the land sale," he wrote, "a small farmer applied to secure the three sections next to those you formerly bought. It required a little management on the part

154. GRG 35/20/1860/1844, SAA.

155. R. Edmonds, surveyor, was sent post haste from his work in the south-eastern portion of the district to survey in the Penola area. GRG 35/20/1860/1970, SAA.

156. SAGG, 1860, p 207; Map 7.

157. LGB, County Robe. See also GRG 35/228, Vol. 1, SAA.

of both of us to set his affections on another property - which I am glad to say he got unopposed. 158

Pastoralists also kept farmers from land and the amenities which might be established on it by purchasing areas intended for townships. Robert Leake bought land designated for the township of Kalangadoo.¹⁵⁹ Niel and Donald Black owned or leased so much land between Mt Gambier and Port MacDonnell that the only possible site for the township survey would have been the volcanic core of Mt Schanck.¹⁶⁰ To contain their sheep and to block farmers, squatters also ran fences across roads. When they closed the direct route to Port MacDonnell in this way, farmers claimed the extra four or five miles cost them a further £20-£30 a year for cartage.¹⁶¹ Some angry farmers "wilfully and maliciously" cut down the restrictive fences.¹⁶² Others hoped they might get roads if a District Council were proclaimed. They petitioned for one at Mt Gambier to encompass 1,000 square miles.¹⁶³ Pastoralists again foiled the farmers by protesting that such a large area was not "for the benefit of the district but for the selfish purposes of a few small land-holders".¹⁶⁴

158. George Young to Niel Black, 2 July 1861, MS 8996.

159. In particular, Sections 479 and 492 - the former a 640 acre block, Hundred of Grey; Map 8. For eventual development of Kalangadoo, Research Note 639, SAA. For details of four towns which failed - Kalangadoo, Mil Lel and West Strathdownie, M.C. Grant, pp 9-12. For the government's policy to establish a town per Hundred, M. Williams, pp 334 and 378-9.

160. LGB, County Grey; M. Williams, pp 345-6.

161. GRG 35/20/1860/1476, SAA; BW, 15 August 1860 and 11 October 1861.

162. BW, 12 July 1861.

163. SAGG, 31 January 1861. Among the farmers who petitioned for a council were Joseph Smith, William Sinclair and James Cock.

164. SAGG, 11 April 1861. George Young confessed to Niel Black that he "never dreamed of the farmers having the impudence to ask that the Council should include so extraordinary an area". As Black lived further from Mt. Gambier, Young added he was "less likely to be taxed as much as other landowners, such as C.B. Fisher and Leake, whose funds would be chiefly applied to making roads in and out of the township for the benefit of the "cockatoos". George Young to Niel Black, 27 July 1861; MS 8996.

When the District Councils of Mt Gambier East and West were declared on 22 December 1864, this covered only 392 square miles.¹⁶⁵

Small farmers without capital to fall back on were also particularly vulnerable to low prices and glutted markets. In the early sixties local farmers estimated they needed a steady 8/6 to 10/6 per bushel to make farming pay on a 20 acre block.¹⁶⁶ In 1861 South Australia exported some of her surplus over over a million bushels to New Zealand and Victoria but competition from Chile and California lowered prices to 3/- and 2/11 per bushel.¹⁶⁷ At the same time crops yielded over a quarter more than the previous year.¹⁶⁸ John Perkins, who described himself as "one of those unfortunate creatures that inhabit a small patch of land" complained of low prices in the local press. He had scraped together his savings to commission an agent to buy land at the remote Adelaide sales. He had advanced the interest of the money. "Then," declared Perkins, when prices fell, "came the ruination."¹⁶⁹ Other cockatoos were also living "under a cloud of gloom".¹⁷⁰ The cry went up, "What shall we do with our surplus?"¹⁷¹ Farmers had two alternatives; to grind their wheat at 3/-

165. Mt Gambier East: 206 square miles (Hundreds of Blanche, Caroline, Gambier, McDonnell and Mingbol, Mt Gambier West: 186 square miles (Hundreds of Blanche and Young). SAGG, 14 November 1864.

166. BW, 1 November 1861.

167. BW, 8 November 1861. Between 1851-60 prices fluctuated between 4/10 and 9/4 per bushel.

168. BW, 29 July 1861.

169. BW, 9 February 1861. Interest rates in Mt Gambier were generally 10%.

170. BW, 1 November 1861.

171. BW, 8 November 1861.

per bushel and then sell flour to England, or change from wheat to potato farming.¹⁷² In the long term the latter was the more attractive. Since John Meredith had introduced the potato in the early 1840s it had flourished in Mt Gambier soil and climate. By the sixties crops were yielding an average of 40 hundredweight per acre, and prices were holding at 40 shillings a ton.¹⁷³

Without capital small farmers could afford neither machinery nor labour. In 1854 not only was the ground too hard for fence posts, but "there was not a crowbar to be seen". Ploughing that year cost 40 shillings an acre; reaping 25 to 30 shillings.¹⁷⁴ A decade later most farming implements were still beyond the pocket of the small man. Mt Gambier had three wheelwrights, but farmers complained they used their time for repairs and "rarely turned out a new vehicle". Rather than manufacture locally, wheelwrights brought by steamer from Adelaide such machinery as "Young and Gray's best two-horse ploughs and Howard's two-wheel ploughs"¹⁷⁵ and the first-rate winnowing machine which Thomas Mitchell, manager of 'Moorak', guaranteed could thrash and dress 100 bushels an hour.¹⁷⁶ But this technology was available only for the few who could afford Adelaide prices of at least £600, "plus carriage to the port, freight insurance costs, costs of breakages en route and all other charges to Port McDonnell."¹⁷⁷

172. BW, 1 November 1861; SES, 6 March 1883. For biographical details of Dr Wehl, BW, 12 February 1876; L.R. Hill, p 56. See also Pike's comment on the English market as a last resort because of difficulties and fluctuating prices. D. Pike, p 328.

173. BW, 1 November 1861. The State average yield was 35 cwt per acre. SRSA, 1866-7.

174. SES, 6 March 1883.

175. BW, 10 May 1861.

176. BW, 14 February 1862. For biographical details of Thomas Edwards, L.R. Hill, p 36.

177. BW, 9 May 1862.

Small agriculturalists were also hampered by a lack of political representation at local and colonial level. In 1861 an Agricultural and Pastoral Association was formed. The patron of the society was the Governor, Sir Richard Graves MacDonnell; the Chairman was James Umpherston, JP, large farmer and grazier; membership fees were 10/6 per annum. Such features suggested that the society was concerned with the encouragement of pastoral rather than agricultural pursuits.¹⁷⁸ Squatters also continued to predominate in Parliament. "Our member for the new council is a Republican chosen [sic] by the lower order £10 voters", wrote Robert Leake of John Hart in 1851.¹⁷⁹ By 1857 Leake was member for Victoria in the House of Assembly.¹⁸⁰ His 300-mile journey to Adelaide across sand and scrub gave him "some shaking up coming and going". He once rode sixty miles in a day, which he considered was "no light task for a 17 stone man".¹⁸¹ Yet he uttered not a word in Parliament before retiring in December of the same year in which he was elected.¹⁸²

178. BW, 21 and 28 June 1861. Umpherston was a ploughman from Glasgow who came as an assisted emigrant to South Australia in 1839. He first worked as a contractor at Port Adelaide and was Chairman of the District Council of Munno Para by 1853, where he was a farmer and grazier. GRG 24/6/1853/2283, SAA; 1529, SAA; W.F. Morrison, Vol. 2, p 544. By 1865, James Umpherston of 'Cadzow Park' had bought 4,875 acres for £8,471 near Mt Gambier. LGB, County Grey. In 1866 Umpherston succeeded Adam Lindsay Gordon as member for Victoria, SAPP 98 of 1971, HA, Standing Order No. 253. For further details of James Umpherston, L.R. Hill, p 54; SAPP 73 of 1865, HA, 25 July 1865, question 1670; L.R. Hill, p 54.

179. RL 1/1/4, 15 July 1851.

180. Under the Imperial Enabling Act of 1851, the composition of the Legislative Council was as follows: 16 elected representatives of colonists; 8 crown nominees, plus Government representatives of the Crown. In 1855 under an independent Legislature of plenary power, South Australia had a three estates Parliamentary model where the House of Assembly contained elected representatives, and the Legislative Council contained members elected on a restricted franchise, and Government representatives of the Crown.

181. L 1/1/4, 28 April 1859.

182. SAR, 16 December 1857.

To redress the imbalance of city representation, under the Electoral Act of 1861, the South East became entitled to elect two members.¹⁸³ Farmers asserted in The Border Watch that the interests "of the pastoral north and the agricultural south" of the district could not be adequately represented by one man. The editor of The Border Watch disagreed. He maintained that "agricultural interests and pastoral interests were distinct but not conflicting".¹⁸⁴ George Hawker, northern pastoralist, assured his South East electorate this was true. Hawker admitted he was a squatter, but declared that was not a barrier to looking after the interests of storekeepers and farmers. To judge by his platform, he obviously meant large farmer-graziers. He was "against land tax"; could not see "any benefit in legislating against capitalism", and "opposed any alteration to the existing franchise". Hawker "hunted in couple" with Mr Randolph Isham Stow, city candidate, who completely agreed with him.¹⁸⁵ In 1862 they were elected unopposed; the squatter interest was safe.¹⁸⁶

183. Act 20 of 1861, 29 November 1861.

184. BW, 27 September 1861.

185. BW, 5 November 1862. For biographical details of Randolph Isham Stow, ADB, Vol. 6, pp 201-2.

186. One rhymster had misgivings:

Our trust in Hawker, fortune's child,
Whom Honor's star has quite beguiled,
Who eyes with rising hope and fear
The vision which his heart holds dear
Is but a dream.
And trust in Stow is empty joy,
He grasps ambition's gilded toy,
And scarce looks from his craggy height,
Within the Assembly's splendid light,
Upon our dreams.

BW, 24 November 1862.

Public facilities for squatters and farmers also came slowly. By 1857 revenue from land sales in the South East amounted to £158,911.2, but the government, loth to embark upon the provision of amenities without a guaranteed return from agriculture, had spent only £10,343 on public works.¹⁸⁷ Roads remained inadequate. In the Mt Gambier district as much as eleven inches of rain could fall in December and two inches a day in winter.¹⁸⁸ At such times roads were "a hissing and a reproach to any civilised community".¹⁸⁹ Roads to ports were often "a Siberian bog".¹⁹⁰ In 1859, the Chief Engineer recommended that a horse-power railway be constructed between Mt Gambier and Guichen Bay near Mt Burr. No action was taken.¹⁹¹ Because of the small annual vote, the government decided to continue "improving the boggy pieces of road" to make them passable. Sand and limestone roads would have to be left for the present.¹⁹²

The district also suffered from having no safe harbour, because the government considered none of the four potential sites worth investing in.¹⁹³ Almost all South East pastoralists and some Victorian squatters near the border patronised the financial and shipping agency of the former Naracoorte pastoralist, George Ormerod, at Guichen Bay,¹⁹⁴ although with freight costs at a minimum of 1/- per ton per mile in 1861, profits

187. SAPP 69 of 1860, HA, 13 June 1860.

188. For twenty-four days in July 1861, 1862 and 1863, the average rainfall was 6.635, 8.425 and 8.16 inches respectively. GRG 35/20/1868/1162, SAA.

189. BW, 19 July 1861.

190. BW, 17 July 1863.

191. SAPP 38 of 1859, HA, 10 May 1859.

192. SAPP 41 of 1863, HA, 28 April 1863.

193. Rivoli Bay; Guichen Bay; Port MacDonnell and Lacedepe Bay. R. Harris, History Honours Thesis, Out of Sight: Out of Mind. Interaction and Attitudes Arising from the Isolation of the South East of South Australia and Melbourne, 1860-1877, University of Adelaide, 1969, p 95.

194. Between 1856 and 1865, the value of exports which passed through Ormerod's hands was £1,096,065; £837,884 of this was South Australian produce and £258,181 Victorian. R. Cockburn, Vol. 2, p 21. Ormerod's ledgers of 1865-7 are a roll-call of wool barons in the South East. Among his clients were Messrs Jones, Kelly, Lawson, Laidlaw, McLeod, McArthur, McInnes, Morris, Riddoch, Smith, Seymour, Glen, Magarey, McIntosh, Wells, Hutchinson, Dunn, Gall and Guthrie. BRG 49, SAA.

were affected by distance from Guichen Bay.¹⁹⁵ Yet Ormerod continued as "reigning monarch" because he offered rates which were a quarter less than those at Adelaide, and despatched wool by steamer or clipper either directly to London or to Port Phillip and then to London, where Port Phillip wool had a good reputation.¹⁹⁶

When the government, "hitherto so remiss in its duty", proclaimed Port MacDonnell on 4 April 1860, the farmers near Mt Gambier hoped they might "take courage and go on without having to cart their wheat to Portland or be under the necessity of turning their farms into sheep runs".¹⁹⁷ Yet the harbour proved no boon for either squatter or farmer. Despite the fact that the government had been enriched by £25,000 from land sales in the district by 1861, no moorings were laid for over a year. Ships did not frequent the unsafe harbour, and "thousands of bushels of the finest wheat that ever entered a colonial market lay uselessly on hand".¹⁹⁸

Two decades after Europeans had come to the district there was no evidence to suggest that Wakefieldian vision of a populous agricultural community would be fulfilled in the South East. As the editor of The Border Watch lamented, "the desire to possess one's own land - to be one's own master - had placed small farmers on the land", but, without sufficient capital, they were "struggling in vain".¹⁹⁹ By 1860 a little over a half of the district's 4 million odd acres had been purchased.

195. SAPP 102 of 1861, HA, 9 July 1861. See also R. Harris, p 96; SAPD, 12 and 22 April 1861.

196. R. Cockburn, Vol. 2, p 21.

197. SAGG, 5 April 1860; BW, 14 June 1861.

198. BW, 3 May 1861. See also M. Williams, p 31; B.A. Ferguson, MA Thesis, How the South East was Held: Aspects of Quadrapartite Interaction of Mt Gambier, Portland, Adelaide and Melbourne, 1860-1917, Melbourne, 1977, p 115.

199. BW, 26 September 1862.

Only 7,681 of these were cultivated, and some, at least, by squatters. Over a third of the colony's sheep grazed on the rest.²⁰⁰ By either legislating in their own interests, or by circumventing legislation inimical to their interests, the pastoralists had successfully excluded the small farmer from the best land, supportive amenities, and a voice in government.

In 1862 the editor of The Border Watch suggested a remedy for the absence of agriculture in the district. He looked forward to the establishment of an Agricultural College and Farmers' Club in Mt Gambier. Local agriculturalists could then enjoy "the advantages of those associations which embodied the agricultural mind and diffused ideas, facts, theories and practical results". The editor was sure Mt Gambier residents "wanted the young and rising community of settlers to be well-educated Englishmen, to be conversant with English literature and to have a good knowledge of their fatherland". Agricultural colleges would provide this knowledge, but farmers in Mt Gambier also had their part to play. Without the virtues of their English counterparts they could not possibly hope to be successful. The English farmer was currently "battling bravely and successfully with high rents, heavy taxes and universal competition". If Mt Gambier farmers were to "exercise the same high qualities, industry and intelligence", the editor declared they would be "equally potent in establishing a permanent and prosperous interest in their highly favoured part of the province".²⁰¹ Being told to read books was scant comfort to men struggling to stay alive. In 1862 a cockatoo claimed he and his friends "were all wondering desperately if they could hold out much

200. Total area of district: 4,044,160 acres; area purchased: 2,226,043 acres; under cultivation: 7,681 acres; number of sheep: 622,968; sheep in South Australia: 1,704,049. SRSA, 1860.

201. BW, 10 and 24 October 1862.

longer":²⁰² in 1864 those who had remained were "in the mire of poverty".²⁰³

Two English gentlemen who had not fared so well were the Wells brothers. Because of an extravagant life-style, mismanagement and scab, by 31 October 1861 they were on the move again. They took up John Meredith's former station, and sold the 'Yallum' run to a newcomer to the South East.²⁰⁴ This was John Riddoch, a 33-year-old Scot, who purchased "valuable household furniture, a superior phaeton and silver-mounted harness" and the run for £30,000.²⁰⁵ Formerly a draper in Scotland, Riddoch had made his fortune as a store-keeper on the gold fields of Beechworth.²⁰⁶ He now brought a keen business acumen to squatting. He took a calculated risk and became the second largest debtor of Gibbs Ronald and Company. He borrowed £23,000 and put his money to good effect.²⁰⁷ When the Hundreds of Penola, Comaum, Monbulla and Killanoola were declared in August 1861, Riddoch purchased heavily.²⁰⁸ Much of this land lay under water during winter, but Riddoch made sure he compensated in quantity for what he lacked in quality. Between 1863-5 he called for surveys of up to 4,000 acres and bought so promptly and judiciously that, by 1868, with the exception of a few acres, he owned the Hundred of Monbulla.²⁰⁹

202. BW, 2 May 1862.

203. BW, 29 January 1864.

204. GRO 84/215.

205. BW, 31 October 1861. See also W.G. Milne, D4802(L), SAA.

206. For biographical details of John Riddoch, G. and G. Clifford, pp 9-11; R. Cockburn, Vol. 1, pp 150-1; Our Pastoral Industry, pp 317-36; C.M.H. Clark, A History of Australia, Vol. 4, Melbourne, 1978, pp 180 and 310.

207. J.D. Bailey, A Hundred Years of Pastoral Banking: A History of the Australian Mercantile Land and Finance Company, 1863-1963, Oxford, 1960, p 20.

208. LGB, County Robe; GRO 7/19.

209. GRG 35/467 No. 32, SAA. T.P. Scott was the other main purchaser in the Hundred of Monbulla. See footnote 157.

Most squatters who had spent a decade conquering the South East wilderness were now rich men. Only a few took their fortunes Home. Among these was John McIntyre, Leake's faithful superintendent, who had carved from South East land a life very different from that of a clergyman which his father had intended.²¹⁰ In 1860 he returned to his native 'Glencoe' with £20,000 and £290 per annum which, mused Leake to his father, was "quite a good thing in 15 years".²¹¹ Donald Black of 'Dunans' and David Power of 'Benara' left with McIntyre and Leake gave a farewell at 'Glencoe'.²¹² Aborigines staged a corroboree in their honour. Because of their dwindling numbers, this was now a rare event. That the dance was a ritual, performed by the few survivors of those whom he and other Europeans had dispossessed of the land from which they had made their wealth, seemed not to occur to Leake. The corroboree was nothing more than a "wild tum-tum by firelight and all painted".²¹³ As Duncan Stewart, interpreter, observed, "Europeans pay no respect to the right the Aborigines have to the country they possess. To make money is the only thing adventurers have in view".²¹⁴

Those squatters who did not go Home in the fifties determined to transplant Home in the South East bush. Few were absentee landlords. They built homes, established churches, organised civic affairs, and entertained in a manner befitting an English country gentry.

210. In preparation for the ministry, McIntyre had completed an Arts and Divinity degree at Edinburgh University. R. Cockburn, Vol. 2, p 142.

211. L 1/1/4, 18 October 1860. After returning to his native land, McIntyre purchased two or three small estates in Argyleshire. He died sometime before 17 June 1882, aged 82, at No. 2 Western Villa, Bridge of Allen, four miles from Stirling. BW, 12 August 1882.

212. Among the invited guests were the Cherryble brothers from Mosquito Plains; John and William, the McIntosh cousins from Naracoorte; Alexander Cameron ("Baron Sandy") of Penola; William Robertson, Laird of 'Wando Vale'; James Stein and the Wells brothers. E.M. Yelland, p 58.

213. L 1/1/4, 23 February 1860.

214. For details of Duncan Stewart and his work, T. McCourt and H. Mincham, Two Notable South Australians, Beachport, 1977, pp 55-61.

Within three years of his arrival in the district, Riddoch took up the civic responsibilities of an English squire. He laid the foundation stone of the new Temperance Hall in Penola, with Father Julian Woods was Co-Vice-President of the Mechanics Institute, Vice-President of the Pastoral, Agricultural and Horticultural Society, and donor of £1,000 to the Mt Gambier Institute.²¹⁵

Some time in 1851 Robert Leake married Ruth Hickmer, recently arrived "emigrant daughter of his housekeeper".²¹⁶ At his wife's instigation Leake began building a home which reflected the wealth of the 'Baron of the Frontier'. In 1856 he engaged the district architect, W.T. Gore, to build 'Frontier House' on the rise where his hut and garden had stood. But his new home - a bullet-proof, fort-like edifice, equipped with slits for fusillades - showed he knew he was still a European in an alien land. So did a ceremony he performed. On the brow of the hill Leake set up a cannon. Each year, whenever he mustered all hands on the station, they sang a verse of the national anthem and fired a royal salute of 21 guns in honour of the Queen of England.²¹⁷ Under the foundation stone of 'Frontier House' he placed a testimony to his first years as a stranger in the South East bush. "This building - Frontier House - was built in the reign of a great Queen of England, Victoria First, in the Year of Christ 1856. It was built by R.R. Leake a squatter the first to enter and take possession of the surrounding wilderness - April, 1844, introducing domestic animals - sheep, cattle and horses, and seeds."²¹⁸

215. BW, 21 February 1862, 25 March 1864 and 1 April 1864. See also R. Cockburn, Vol. 1, p 150.

216. Leake papers, NS 251/1, AOT.

217. L 1/1/4, 9 April 1856.

218. The testimony continued as follows: "Also producing wool largely which was sent to England to be manufactured. The Superintendent who followed R.R. Leake was John McIntyre. First Superintendent - Johnny McIntyre - and Andrew Brown, Second Superintendent - with thirteen white men - they came from White Hills 40 miles south of Adelaide. Edward John Leake, brother of Robert, assisted to occupy the land Robert and his brother hold 30,000 sheep, 4,000 cattle, and 150 horses in the Country of 'Glencoe' and Mo-Long, brand and seal, L (reversed) L - R.R. Leake in the year of Jesus Christ, April 9 1856." E.M. Yelland, p 121.

R.R. Leake (1811-1860)

(SAA)

In 1856 Leake began building a home which reflected how successfully a man from the old world had begun to tame the wilderness of the new. Yet his home was a fortress for Leake realised he still needed to protect his property from the original owners of the land he determined to subdue.

'Frontier House', before 1926.

(SAA)



While Robert Leake continued to possess the surrounding wilderness, his brother Ed became more idle and dissolute. Robert told his father he was disgusted that Ed did not help. Known locally as "the Black Protector", Ed engaged in neither squatting nor farming but spent his days in near isolation "like a melancholy sage reflecting on things".²¹⁹ In desperation, Robert pensioned him off for a thousand pounds a year, and Ed went to Portland.²²⁰ Some time in 1858, although he declared he "was no friend to the Catholics being as a body miserable poor, and always would be so", Ed married a beautiful, wayward, Irish immigrant girl.²²¹ At Portland he built a house especially adapted for his twenty-stone frame. It cost £600,²²² - a sum Robert considered far too expensive for a loafing brother and his extravagant wife.²²³

After the death of his partner, William Vansittart, in 1856, George Glen stayed on at 'Mayurra'.²²⁴ In 1857 he spent £1,200 on a home for his new wife, Millicent, daughter of Bishop Short.²²⁵ Glen's benefactor, Sir Samuel Davenport, prayed for the blessing of God upon George's and Millicent's marriage, exhorting the couple to remember that "the contemplation of things spiritual would help to make their married life successful

219. L 1/1/4, 4 September 1860.

220. L/1/1/4, 29 January 1857.

221. L 1/1/9, 29 December 1862. Edward Leake married Amanda Laetitia Clarke (née Hand), wife of "Bullocky" Clarke, who had chosen her when she arrived at Belfast (Port Fairy) on a ship carrying Irish female immigrants. Leake's marriage, probably bigamous, was performed by Rev. John Anderson of Strathalbyn for the unusual high cost of £25. NS 251/1, AOT. Laetitia's brother, Michael Hand, was drowned in Kalangadoo swamp on 13 July 1861. BW, 19 July 1861.

222. NS 251/1, AOT. His house, 'Sebastopal' in Gawler St, had a passage large enough to drive his buggy through so that four men could lift him in and out of his carriage.

223. L 1/1/4, 4 September 1860.

224. L.R. Hill, p 54; B. Towers, Early Millicent, Millicent, 1974, p 4.

225. On the walls of a general store kept by W.A. Crouch in Greytown (Beachport), there was inscribed "The workmen for building a house for George Glen, Esqu., at Mayurra, arrived here by the Kangaroo, 16th February, 1857, sixteen days out from Adelaide." E. Ward, p 64.

far more than any pursuit of things material".²²⁶ As an English lady in the South East bush, Millecent Glen recorded in her diary her thoughts about things both spiritual and material. At the front she listed those verses of the New Testament which inspired a readiness for Christ's second coming. Then she listed those items necessary to keep up their life as English gentry in the backwoods. In May 1858 she itemised the cost of equipping her servants Maryanne and Catherine, salaried at £30 and £25 per year, in black dresses, bonnets, boots, woollen jackets, galoshes, stays and calico. This amount was appreciably less than her husband's wine expenses for the same month.²²⁷ She further entered the provisions she needed that month from Guichen Bay - not forgetting her dress and gloves for the Penola races,²²⁸ as she was one of those South East "ladies who proved they had not forgotten the paraphernalia necessary to make a distinguished appearance in the bush".²²⁹

Millecent Glen's friend, Mrs St Asaph, wrote from England anxious that Millecent should record in her diary "all she knew about the natives".²³⁰ But either because she was uninterested, or because she was unaware, Millecent's reference to Aborigines were minimal and prosaic. "Black Harry died and was burried [sic]" she wrote on 8 June 1858.²³¹

226. Samuel Davenport to George and Millecent Glen, 11 November 1857, PRG 160/25, SAA.

227. George Glen's wine expenses for May-June amounted to £45; the servants' outfits, £8.17.2. PRG 160/25.

228. Among the items included were 3½ chests of tea; a box of candles; 2 bags of moist sugar; 5 gallons of vinegar; 3 cases bottled fruit; 1 case of pickles; 14 pounds of split peas; 2 bags onions; 2 tins mustard; 20 pounds raisins; 24 pounds currents; 8 pounds starch; 28 pounds soda; 4 pounds of glue; 6 bath bricks; 1 tin ginger nuts; 2 tins biscuits; 8 bags ration sugar; 4 bottles curry powder; 12 boxes sardines; 6 tins salmon; 6 tins lobster; 1 ton flour; 6 pounds hops; 28 pounds dried apples. Entry for May 1858, PRG 160/25.

229. S. Leighton, p 28.

230. PRG 160/25, 7 November 1858.

231. PRG 160/25, 8 June 1858.

Millecent Glen's father, Bishop Short, had more to say about the matter. From his trip to the South East in 1860 he was satisfied many were "clean, intelligent, orderly and almost civilised ... and as good a servant as you might find anywhere". This was especially so on stations where settlers "took a real interest".²³² Yet by 1865, as well as Black Harry, "poor blacks were dying in all directions without care or shelter" in the South East.²³³ One writer to The Border Watch was indignant at European treatment. "The introduction of our boasted civilisation," he claimed, "has led only to the indulgence of intoxicating liquor".²³⁴ Another visitor observed the spread of fever and whooping cough.²³⁵ Of 42 Aborigines who had been treated over a period of three months in 1865, "11 had succumbed to an affliction of the lungs, 4 to syphilis, 4 to rheumatism, 1 to heart disease, 1 to chronic infection of the liver and 21 to wounds and contusions".²³⁶ By 1867 there were only 237 Aborigines left.²³⁷ Of these, 15 were enjoying "the boon of civilised life and institution" and others were enjoying only "the present of an occasional bundle of cast-off clothes".²³⁸ In the same year, Jemmy McIntyre, oldest son of the chief of the Mt Schanck tribe, died at about the age of 32. Mrs Christina Smith, who had laboured most of all among the Aborigines, declared that "commingling with whites had ruined them every way". In her opinion "they were lost altogether".²³⁹

232. SAPP 165 of 1860, LC, 16 October 1860.

233. BW, 11 March 1865.

234. SES, 20 March 1863.

235. E. Ward, p 81.

236. BW, 11 March 1865.

237. SAPP 8 of 1866-7, p 12.

238. BW, 25 September 1867.

239. Mrs Smith made this comment to James Bonwick in 1857 when he visited her school in Mt Gambier, funded by Miss A.G. Burdett-Coutts. From C.E. Sayers, Western Victoria, quoted by E.M. Yelland, p 168.

Although Millecent Glen had nothing to say about Aborigines in the South East, she did record how she and her husband had responded to her father's influence and Mrs St Asaph's second exhortation. The Glens were "to do what the Patriarchs did - wherever Abraham came, he built an Altar to the Lord." Placed as Millicent was "in the Wilderness", Mrs Asaph encouraged her to realise "that Providence had imposed this duty of civilising upon her". "In the Old Country there were many opportunities of conversation upon Biblical subjects", but, as Millecent and George lived "in an infant country", Mrs St Asaph urged them to see it as "special duty to set a religious tone".²⁴⁰ Millecent was pleased to say that George had begun reading services in their home from the first Sunday in Lent, 1858, an event certain to make the Sabbath at 'Mayurra' pass more profitably.²⁴¹

Mrs St Asaph also encouraged Millecent to record the details of everyday life in South Australia. She could easily "fancy how attractive those details would be fifty or one hundred years hence when Australia had assumed the manner and customs of the daily life of England". But Millecent had to confess to a lack of compatible society. Mrs St Asaph had assumed correctly that those who visited Millecent's home "to assist in matters pertaining to stock and cattle" were "a rough set".²⁴² Millecent also found it very difficult to be friendly with some of her neighbours. Mrs Robert Leake was "an ignorant servant girl" who was "most dreadfully affected".²⁴³ Indeed she was always glad when her visits to the Leake brothers, whom her brother called "the Viscount of Glencoe" and "the Baron of Beef" were over.²⁴⁴ She found their society "neither edifying nor agreeable".²⁴⁵ Reading English newspapers and listening "to a great deal

240. PRG 160/15, 7 November 1858.

241. PRG 160/15, 21 February 1858.

242. PRG 160/15, 7 November 1858.

243. PRG 160/15, 24 June 1858.

244. PRG 160/15, 7 November 1858.

245. PRG 160/15, 9 January 1858.

of music in the evenings" were much more pleasant pastimes.²⁴⁶ She was also spending her time "establishing an English garden, planting almond trees, violets and other flowers".²⁴⁷

Happily, social events which resembled life in England relieved the monotony of her life in the bush. Millecent enjoyed herself "excessively" at the Penola Race Meeting in January 1858. She and her husband had breakfasted at half-past five to reach Kalangadoo by ten o'clock. At Penola they stayed in a delightful cottage. She danced all evening with local squatters and presented the Ladies' Bag she had made.²⁴⁸

Four years after his marriage, in 1862, George Glen, now 35, was prosperous enough to do more than read about England. He made his first trip Home in eighteen years. He and Millecent experienced at first hand such delights as seeing the Crystal Palace, Mr and Mrs Gladstone and Lord Palmerston walking in the gardens, and Charles Kean and Mrs Kean in "Henry VIII". Then they made a Grand Tour of Europe where George kept all the Europeans he met "in fits of laughter by dancing a 'corobery'".²⁴⁹

Adam Smith was also carving out a more prosperous and genteel life in the South East bush than he could have done in his native Scotland. He was 40 in 1855 when he decided to sever his partnership with John Oliver after a decade's pioneering. He became the sole lessee of 'Broadmeadows' which he renamed 'Hynam', a run 63 square miles on the Mosquito Plains. In 1865 Smith also acquired 37,120 acres of 'Talleigera', and in 1868 'Kadnook', both Victorian runs, as he now had to provide for seven growing sons. His wife, Jane, tutored their sons before they went to St Peter's College in Adelaide or Scotch College in Melbourne, kept the station books, and helped class the wool. By 1868 Smith decided his ever-increasing

246. PRG 160/15, diary entries from 4 April to 21 July 1862.

247. PRG 160/15, 24 July 1858.

248. PRG 160/15, diary entries from 25 to 27 February 1858.

249. PRG 160/15, diary entries from 4 April to 21 July 1862.

prosperity and family warranted a new home.²⁵⁰ He built 'Hynam House', not far from the Robertson brothers at 'Struan', the Seymours at 'Kil-lanoola', James Affleck at 'Kybybolite' and quite close to Henry Jones at 'Binnum-Binnum' whose "gabled building was of some architectural pretension".²⁵¹ Each edifice testified to the prosperity of the pastoral north centred at Naracoorte. As life here was also to be an extension of Europe, he gave generously to the Naracoorte Presbyterian Church and was active on the committee of the Pastoral and Agricultural Association in Apsley.²⁵² He also saw to it that Naracoorte boasted one of the first coursing clubs in Australia, run on the same lines as the Great English National Coursing Club.²⁵³

On 4 September 1860, Robert Leake told his father of an "obstinate cough". "This has bothered me," he wrote, "in this climate of the southern part of New Holland which I do not like." He also told his father he had recently made his will. "Life is uncertain," he said, "and I am the master of 33,000 sheep, 600 cattle, and 250 horses as well as a goodly estate of 40,000 acres."²⁵⁴ Yet building this empire had left Leake a weary man. "I must give up my business," he had written in 1855, "for I can not carry it on many years." He had thought then of selling his stock and letting his lands - "some for pastoral - some for agriculture".²⁵⁵ But he had not done so while there was money to be made from wool. Now he was "utterly

250. A. Henderson, pp 303-4. For John Oliver's lease on 'Morambro', see Appendix 2. See also J. Murdoch and F. Parker, p 57.

251. S. Leighton, pp 38-9. For a description of 'Binnum-Binnum', J. Murdoch and F. Parker, pp 60-1; Mrs Henry Jones, Broad Outlines of Long Years in Australia, London, 1878.

252. Among Smith's donations were £40 to the establishment of the Naracoorte Presbyterian Church and £30 for a new pulpit. BW, 4 July 1862, 25 March 1863, 1 April 1864.

253. SAR, 24 June 1868; J. Murdoch and F. Parker, pp 144-5.

254. L 1/1/4, 4 September 1860.

255. L 1/1/4, 7 March 1855.

tired" or working his land and "was sick of straining every nerve to keep things going right".²⁵⁶ Robert Leake was not only weary - he was disillusioned. He had never come to love the land from which he had made his fortune. It was not like Europe. "I do not like its soils," he wrote, "lots of pasture but nothing sweet about it. I can only sum it up that this is a land which has not seed within itself."²⁵⁷ Thousands of his sheep and cattle had trodden the land and eaten its grasses. Leake had noticed the decreasing fertility, but the stranger from Europe did nothing to replenish the goodness. In the week after he made his will, on 14 September 1860, Robert Leake, "Baron of the Frontier", died.²⁵⁸ The colonisers had dreamt of cultivating the waste lands and turning them into "the abode of civilized society". Robert Leake's land had not seen a "desirable concentration" of settlement. He had made a fortune from sheep, but he had "neither built houses, planted orchards or vineyards". He had long since decided it was not worth "producing them in such a wilderness".²⁵⁹

Three months after Leake's death, on 6 December 1860, the first land sales beyond Adelaide were held in the Mt Gambier courthouse.²⁶⁰ Local farmers who hoped the venue might give them an advantage soon saw their hopes dashed for the sales attracted land-hungry capitalists and expansionists from South Australia and Victoria. South East squatters now faced

256. L 1/1/4, 4 September 1860.

257. L 1/1/4, 7 March 1855.

258. This was reported as being from "a disease of the heart". BW, 19 September 1860; PG, 24 September 1860. Beneficiaries under Leake's will were his brother, Edward, who inherited "his land, goods and chattles"; his wife Ruth Leake, and his sister-in-law, Naomi Hickmer, who were bequeathed annuities of £500 and £200 respectively; and Henry Hickmer, his brother-in-law, who was bequeathed £2,000. His widow remarried to become Mrs Thirkell of Port Lincoln and then Mrs Giles of Hamilton. Executors were Samuel Tomkinson, Charles Leake, and Thomas Must of Portland. Witnesses were John McLachlan, John McIntyre, and T.P. Scott. Probate Book 4, Public Trustees Office. See also NS 251/1; GRO 276/168, Application 23115; E.M. Yelland, pp 163-4.

259. L 1/1/4, 7 March 1855.

260. BW, 22 July 1903. See also GRG 35/2/1860/1290, SAA; SAGG, 1860, pp 966-7.

their third major challenge in a decade — this time from men whose tactics in land dealing were as shrewd as their own.

Among the buyers from South Australia was Charles Brown Fisher, 42, second son of the former Resident Commissioner.²⁶¹ Fisher had made an unsuccessful bid for 'Glencoe' in 1859.²⁶² He now determined to get his hands on other attractive South East land. His most likely rival was Niel Black. But Black had told his agent, George Young, that "he had not the slightest wish to buy land as a permanent investment" in the South East. The soil on his head station 'Warreanga' was "fair medium quality, and rather light for agricultural purposes", but as leased land it was ideal for him to fatten his cattle.²⁶³ George Young warned Black that this policy left him vulnerable in three ways. The government might declare an Agricultural Hundred and resume his leasehold at any time; Fisher or other capitalists could then purchase; and large land purchasers might be granted enough pastorage rights to run their herds over Black's land. "Under the new Commissioner the Land and Survey office is not in the same good order as it was under our friend Milne," Young also warned. Should Black decide to purchase, however, Young assured him he need not be dependent on Government surveyors, but might employ one of the many private surveyors operating in the South East.²⁶⁴

261. For biographical details of C.B. Fisher, G.C. Morphett, C.B. Fisher, Pastoralist, Studmaster and Sportsman: An Epic of Pioneering, Adelaide, 1945; ADB, Vol. 4, pp 171-2; R. Cockburn, Vol. 1, pp 16-7, and Vol. 2, pp 61 and 89.

262. He had offered Robert Leake £140,000 for 35,000 acres of purchased land, upwards of 30,000 sheep and 5,000 head of cattle with all buildings and improvements. PG, 14 December 1859.

263. Niel Black to George Young, 14 July 1859, MS 8996.

264. George Young to Niel Black, 21 August 1860, MS 8966. J.T. Bagot had replaced W. Milne as the Commissioner of Crown Lands. SAPP 253 of 1871. Young had also written that "the Government would leave Black to deal with defining boundaries of any lease whether annual or for 14 years". 7 August 1860. Black also maintained a close friendship with the Governor, Sir Richard Graves McDonnell. Young informed Black, "Sir Richard told me not to select any wine for you as he intended to do so himself." Among the surveyors who advertised at regular intervals through the local press were H.G. Catternach, Adam Smith's son-in-law, BW, from 11 October 1861; William Harvey, Green and Wadham, and M. O'Reilly, BW, from 1 April 1864.

Yet Black decided he would make only minimal purchases. Because he was an experienced land-dealer, could depend on Young to be his eyes and ears at the Land Office and had an added measure of good luck, his gamble paid off.

Before the sale he made a gentleman's agreement with Fisher and purchased only 937 acres.²⁶⁵ Fisher and his partner, Benjamin Rochfort,²⁶⁶ waited until a few local farmers "ran nearly every section up to what was considered a high price". Fisher then bought over 10,000 acres by bidding 5 shillings over that, thus securing the runs of John MacIntyre, Donald Black and David Power.²⁶⁷ These purchases entitled him to extensive pasturing rights over Black's land, but because Black had not competed with him, Fisher waived these for a year.²⁶⁸

Then Black had a stroke of good fortune. In 1860 a Select Committee was established to enquire into the practice of declaring Hundreds.²⁶⁹ As George Young explained, Sir Henry Young and successive Governors had followed the course of declaring Hundreds if land were likely to be sold. This system, he wrote, was "not without complaint but was without serious opposition even by those whose interests were being affected until recently".²⁷⁰ Until the Committee reported, there was to be a moratorium on land sales. Young further informed Black that the government then intended to declare Hundreds in the north of the district, away from Black's vulnerable south-east corner. "This intention," Young confided, "is not publicly known. If it were, it would probably 'astonish some of

265. Sections 689, 690, 693 and 694, Hundred of McDonnell for £941, GRO 7/177. See also "Statistical Report of all the Land Bought by Niel Black and Co. in the Colonies", MS 8996; Map 8.

266. For biographical details of B. Rochfort, R. Cockburn, Vol. 1, p 179, Vol. 2, pp 61 and 177.

267. BW, 21 January 1861; PG, 26 December 1860. Fisher bought 10,382 acres for £14,438.3, LGB, County Grey; GRO 174/206; 140/171; 262/186; 364/192 and 263/186.

268. Black offered to pay 1/6 for each head of cattle on this land. George Young to Niel Black, 23 February 1861, MS 8996.

269. Report of the Select Committee on Declaration of Hundreds. SAPP 158 of 1860, HA, 15 October 1860.

270. George Young to Niel Black, 12 November 1860 and 3 January 1861, MS 8996.

the squatters in the locality. At least," Young continued, "it should be the means of allowing you to escape for a time. I suppose you will not object."²⁷¹

Black's third stroke of luck was Fisher's "failing fortunes". In 1861 Young wrote of how the Fisher brothers were being "terrible~~y~~ worked by the Government - having made large purchases every month both in the north and the South East". One had gone to Victoria. They had sold 'Moorak', formerly David Power's station, to Dr Browne - "at a profit it is true," Young added, "but it is the first station they have ever parted with."²⁷² When Fisher informed Young he would not bid for land on the 11,400 acres of Black's lease which was gazetted for sale, Young thanked Fisher on Black's behalf,²⁷³ and Black made his second purchase in seventeen years "with trifling competition", securing over a thousand acres at £1 per acre.²⁷⁴

Fisher's fortunes continued to decline and on 17 January 1862 he advertised 47,000 acres in the Mt Schanck area for sale "on easy cash or non-credit terms to suit purchasers".²⁷⁵ W.J.T. Clarke, the once penniless yeoman farmer's son from Somerset, who had become one of the largest landholders in Van Diemen's Land, New South Wales, Victoria and New

271. George Young to Niel Black, 3 January 1860, MS 8996. These were the Hundreds of Killanoola, Comaum, Penola and Monbulla which were proclaimed on 4 April 1861 at the urging of C.B. Scott. See footnote 154; Map 10.

272. George Young to Niel Black, 31 May 1861, MS 8996.

273. George Young to Niel Black, 27 June 1861, MS 8996.

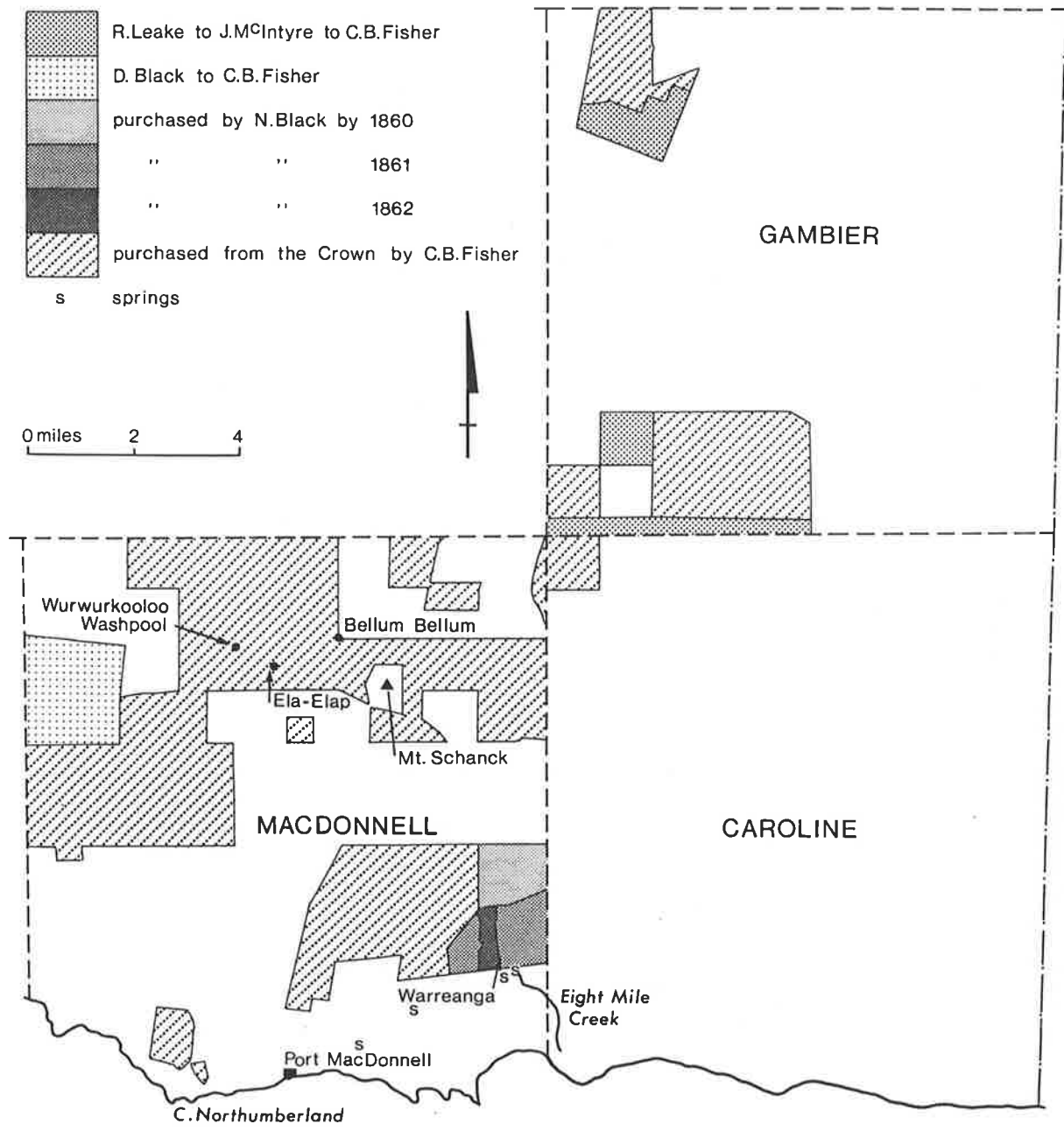
274. Sections 361 and 407-422, Hundred of McDonnell, a total of 1,140 acres for £1,145.10. GRO 23/57. George Young to Niel Black, 27 June 1861. See also "Statistical Report of all the land bought by Niel Black and Co. in the Colonies", MS 8996; Map 8.

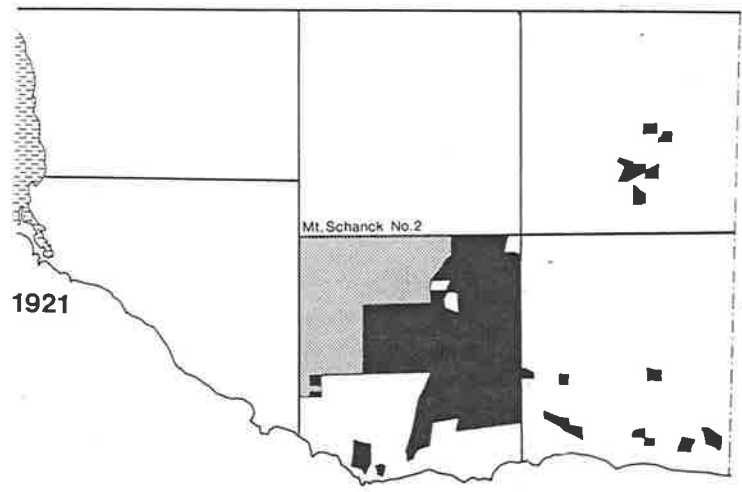
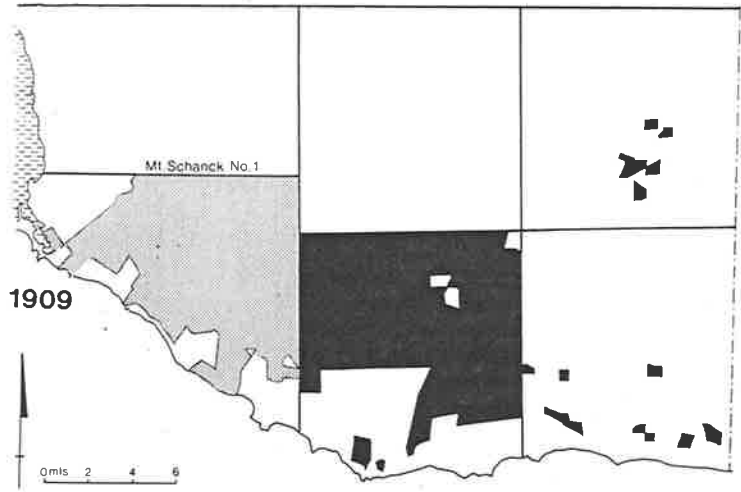
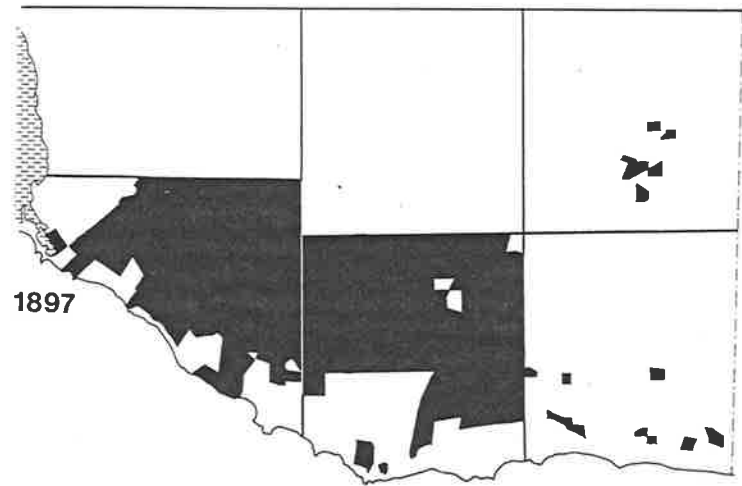
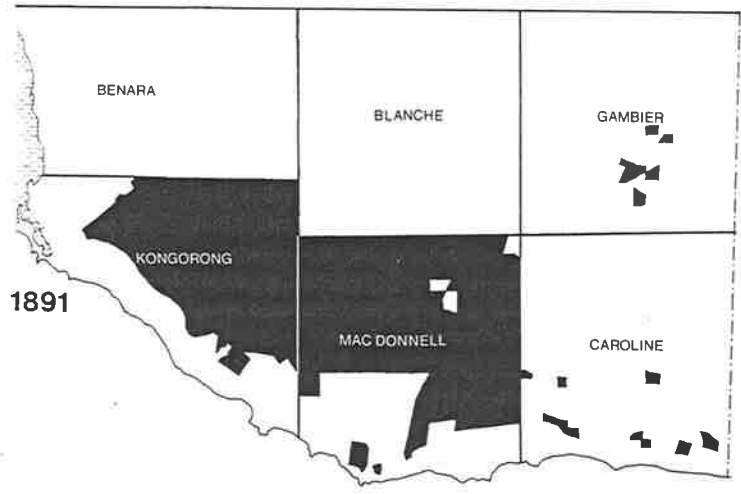
275. BW, 17 January 1862. By April 1862, Fisher's creditors met and a committee was appointed to realise as much of the estate as was necessary to liquidate claims against him. Fisher's assets were declared at £310,000; his secured creditors at £160,000, and unsecured at £100,000. The Hon. J. Ayres, R.B. Smith and S. Tomkinson were appointed as Committee to realise as much of the estate as necessary to liquidate claims. BW, 11 April 1862.

MAP 9

The Evolution of 'Mt Schanck', c. 1850-1921.

Squatters in the South East consolidated in the sixties. C.B. Fisher and Niel Black were rivals for the best land on 'The Schanck' until "Big" Clarke finally bought both men out. By the nineties his son, Joseph Clarke, had made this estate the largest in the district. In the twentieth century "Big" Clarke's descendants sold the poorest land on the run for closer settlement and were able to ensure a comfortable living on land purchased by "Big" Clarke fifty years previously.





Zealand bought the Mt Schanck run. Clarke took over his newest property "immediately and in person".²⁷⁶

The purchase of 'Mt Schanck' was one of Clarke's less astute land deals. On close examination he found that not all of the estate was good land.²⁷⁷ The soil was shallow in many parts; the limestone cropped out where trees had been overturned. One fire had made havoc, readily burning the exposed roots, destroying many gums and peppermints.²⁷⁸ Much land was too wet for sheep, as the Arthur brothers had discovered twenty years previously. In the cold, wet winter of 1862 footrot raged among Clarke's flocks and huge mobs of kangaroos, without feed in the scrublands, ruined his sheep pastures. Clarke devoted his time and energy to these problems, missing his September Parliamentary election in Melbourne in 1862 to do so. At the same time, he continued to extend 'Mt Schanck'.²⁷⁹

When the Hundred of Caroline was declared on 12 June 1862, Clarke visited Adelaide for two days and bought all the gazetted land. This entitled him to depasturing rights over 32 square miles, and he dispossessed John Livingston of an annual lease of 40 square miles.²⁸⁰ Niel Black was soon likely to be in the same predicament as Livingston. In May 1862 he had taken the precaution of buying the homestead blocks of 'Warreanga'.²⁸¹ When Clarke continued to purchase, Black did not take the advice of Young who suggested, "Act on the defensive by

276. For biographical details of W.J.T. Clarke, M. Clarke, Big Clarke, Melbourne, 1980. See also ADB, Vol. 1, pp 228-9; R. Cockburn, Vol. 2, pp 60, 135 and 235; F. Clarke, The Clarke Clan in Australia, 1946; Annals of the Clarke Family, 1830-1926, LTC, SLV. For Clarke's activities in Western Victoria, M. Kiddle.

277. M. Clarke, pp 190-1.

278. W.G. Milne, D4802(L), .SAA.

279. M. Clarke, p 191.

280. George Young to Niel Black, 24 June 1863, MS 9886; Map 6.

281.. Sections 406, 414 and 418, Hundred of MacDonnell, comprising 280 acres for £302.15. GRO 31/73. Improvements were valued at £500. See also "Statistical Report of all the land bought by Niel Black and Co. in the Colonies", MS 8996; Map 9.

purchasing sections on your northern boundary where you will be unable to fence Government roads, although," he added, "judicious surveying might reduce that evil to a minimum."²⁸² By the late spring of 1863, Clarke had purchased a further 4,259 acres and was leasing 9,000 acres.²⁸³ Although he had purchased only 2,357 acres, for almost twenty years the astute Black had run cattle on South East land, some of which, in 1846 John Thompson had likened to "another Glenormiston". Now he withdrew, selling his purchased land and the right to 'Warreanga' to Clarke for 25 shillings an acre.²⁸⁴

In January 1863 Clarke returned to Melbourne for parliamentary duty, leaving in charge his inexperienced 20-year-old nephew by marriage, Reginald Dowling.²⁸⁵ Clarke returned in haste to 'The Schanck' in September 1863 when he heard that farmers, angry at his monopoly, were stealing his stock, cutting down his fences and burning shepherds' huts.²⁸⁶ His presence ensured "his property was well treated with respect", but he stayed to clear up other difficulties. The remoteness of his run from a safe port entailed heavy transport costs which eroded profits. Clarke determined to eliminate this expense and in December 1863 he chartered, with Dr Browne of 'Moorak', the barque 'Verulam' of 510 tons

282. George Young to Neil Black, 24 June 1863, MS 8996.

283. M. Clarke, p 191.

284. By 1 July 1864, Black had purchased 2,357 acres, at an average cost of £1.3.4 per acre, and valued by 1864, at £2.2 per acre. The total cost was £2,517.4.2.

Land	2,389. 5. 0
Commission	102. 0. 7
Crown Grants	12. 0.10
Exchange	<u>14.17. 9</u>
	2,517,14. 2

Total cost for land in South Australia and close to the border on Victoria amounted to £70,948.17.7, "Statistical report of all land bought by Niel Black and Co. in the Australian Colonies to 1 July 1864", MS 8996.

285. M. Clarke, p 191.

286. BW, 12 July 1861, 1 January 1864.

to load wool at Port McDonnell for direct shipment to London. On 14 January 1864 she sailed safely with a cargo of 1,174 bales. Clarke decided to charter a vessel on his own account in 1865. He had overcome another obstacle. His shrewd management was turning "'Mt Schanck' into a profitable enterprise".²⁸⁷

Like Power and Fisher before him, Clarke cast envious eyes at 'Glencoe' which yielded a better supply of surface water than 'Mt Schanck', and "had no need of pumps in the summer".²⁸⁸ Robert Leake's purchases almost two decades previously had made the run secure: Clarke could acquire 'Glencoe' only by persuading Ed Leake to sell. Ed had great confidence in Clarke as an energetic and knowledgeable sheepman, but less confidence in him as an honest dealer in land.²⁸⁹ Yet, because he was lazy and uninterested, Ed was several times tempted "to let him have 'Glencoe'".²⁹⁰ On one occasion Clarke made an offer of £4 an acre. Ed came close to selling,²⁹¹ but the wool returns of 1864 changed his mind.²⁹² Ed also felt victimised by Samuel Tomkinson, Manager of the Bank of Australasia, which held a lien over 'Glencoe' wool until 1865.²⁹³ To rid himself of Tomkinson, Ed was often tempted to borrow

287. Fisher had previously loaded 'Mt Schanck' wool on flat barges which conveyed it to ships off the coast from where it was transported to either Melbourne or Adelaide, before being transhipped to England. M. Clarke, p 191.

288. L 1/9/1, 29 December 1862.

289. "He is considered one of the best in the colonies," he wrote to his brother, Charles. "Although he must be 60 or 70 he is better than any shearer he has got." L 1/9/1, 10 August 1863; 19 November 1864.

290. L 1/9/1, 29 December 1862, 6 July 1863; 2 November 1864.

291. L 1/9/1, 10 September 1864.

292. His flock of 47,500 sheep returned £8,368 from 429 bales averaging 350 lbs in 1864. L 1/9/1, 19 November 1864.

293. Ed's letters to Charles show his constant annoyance that Tomkinson controlled his transactions. See especially, L 1/9/1, 12 October and 2 November 1864. The mortgage to secure repayment of £10,000 at 8% interest on 19 March 1865 is made in the name of John Leake, 'Rosedale', Tasmania. Sections held under mortgage are itemised. GRO 89/194.

from Clarke.²⁹⁴ Clarke was always ready to lend at 10%. But then Ed would hesitate "lest he should want it back at any time" and because, as he told his brother Charles, "He knows too much for me".²⁹⁵ Charles rescued 'Glencoe' by lending Ed £10,000 to pay off the mortgage. Even so, by 1865 "Big" Clarke was by far the largest owner and held the widest grazing rights in the South East district.²⁹⁶ Only his failure to get 'Glencoe' excluded him from owning what would have been the most fertile third of the entire South East. After January 1868, the 63-year-old Clarke ceased to visit 'Mt Schanck'. Robert Gardiner, who had worked Clarke's 'Bolinda Vale' station, now rented the vast estate which stretched from the river Glenelg in the east to Carpenter's Rocks in the west, for £10,000 a year.²⁹⁷

By the sixties South East squatters had made it clear that theirs was sheep country, not only because of the number of sheep they ran but also because of their quality. This made them foremost in experiment and innovation. The newcomer Riddoch modestly protested he did not have any knowledge of sheep, but judging by the improvements he made in 1868 he had every intention of holding his own with other sheep men in the South East. At a cost of several hundred pounds he erected an elaborate sheep-wash which could employ twenty men. The wash was fitted with a twelve horse-power engine which worked a centrifugal pump capable of raising 2,000 gallons of water a minute. He also built a sixteen-stand shearing shed, shelter for 800 sheep, and a two-storeyed stone dwelling which could accommodate eighty hands.²⁹⁸

294. L 1/9/1, 19 June 1863, 1 and 8 March 1865.

295. L 1/9/1, 29 December 1862.

296. BW, 18 March 1865.

297. For biographical details of Robert Gardiner, R. Cockburn, Vol. 2, pp 134-5; M. Helpman, The Helpman Family Story, 1796-1964, Adelaide, 1967. In 1873 Gardiner also purchased 7,300 acres of 'Nangwarry' from H. L'Estrange, with 150 cattle and 35 horses. BW, 29 March 1873.

298. G. and G. Gifford, pp 37-40; BW, 30 October 1868; MGS, 12 October 1868.

Riddoch and other South East pastoralists were also improving their flocks by selective breeding. Because they had guaranteed feed and experienced managers they were able to breed sheep compatible with both market demands and the idiosyncracies of their locality. They had favoured Merinos at first, but their experiments in cross-breeding produced heavily-framed sheep for meat without undue loss of wool density or length of staple. In 1862 Riddoch began mating his finest Merino ewes with Negretti rams bought from the 'Jellalabad' stud in Victoria and the famous 'Belle Vue' stud in Tasmania. He produced a thick-set sheep with short and sturdy legs whose dense and long-stapled fleece won first and champion prizes locally, and gold and silver medals at the South Australian Agricultural and Horticultural Show in 1867.²⁹⁹ Dr Browne of 'Moorak' crossed Merino ewes with Lincoln rams personally selected while he was in England, one of which shorn 25 pounds of wool.³⁰⁰ At 'Mt Schanck' Clarke concentrated on a Merino and Lincoln cross to produce long-legged sheep which suited his land.³⁰¹ In the north Adam Smith favoured pure Camden Merinos until 1862 when he imported three Steiger rams for £100 and two Negretti rams for £96. He mated these with Merinos to produce sheep "with density and covering, brightness and length", which won second prize for wool in Goldsbrough's, Melbourne. Samples of Smith's wool were sent to the Great Exhibition in London. By 1865 the South East had strengthened its reputation as a sheep district; cross-breeding had assured that sheep there were known not only for their "fineness of fleece" but also for their "combination of bone and muscle".³⁰²

299. G.A. Brown, Sheep-breeding in Australia, Melbourne, 1890, pp 463-5; C. McIvor, The History and Development of Sheep Farming from Antiquity to Modern Times, Sydney, 1893. For 'Jellalabad' stud, A. Henderson, pp 489-93.

300. E. Ward, p 79.

301. R. Cockburn, Vol. 1, p 251.

302. BW, 5 September 1862, 1 January 1864.

Fencing was essential to selective breeding; it was costly but worth it for it also contained scab and increased the lambing rate for most South East flocks from 80% to 90% by 1861.³⁰³ Fencing also stopped sheep from wandering over uncleared undergrowth which tore wool off their undersides and bellies,³⁰⁴ and from the continually "kneading down" grassy areas at waterholes.³⁰⁵ Most importantly pastoralists estimated that fencing increased their carrying capacity by a quarter to a third.³⁰⁶ In 1864 Henry Jones of 'Binnum-Binnum' claimed, probably exaggeratedly, he needed as many boundary riders at £65 per year as he did shepherds at £40 to care for the greater number of sheep his fenced land would carry.³⁰⁷ For these reasons and possibly because of their early connections with Victoria, South East pastoralists were the first in South Australia to fence their runs.³⁰⁸ In 1853 Meredith had declared that most South East settlers found fencing "the most economical system of management".³⁰⁹ When Robert Leake purchased his runs in Victoria in 1859, they were fenced for ninety miles;³¹⁰ by 1865 all of 'Glencoe' was fenced.³¹¹ In that year 1,730,664 acres - almost half the State's total of fenced land - were enclosed in the South East.³¹²

303. When post and rail fences began to replace inflammable brush in the late sixties, one pastoralist calculated the cost at £115 per mile. J.C. Hamilton, p 16. See also W. Milne, D4802(L), SAA; L 1/1/4, 12 January 1867.

304. BW, 7 August 1861, 26 December 1862; SAR, 12 August 1867.

305. L 1/1/4, 7 December 1859.

306. SAPP 101 of 1861, HA, 9 July 1861; L 1/1/4, 7 December 1859.

307. Jones's claim was intended to show how unjust Goyder's valuations were when squatters made large outlays on improvements. H. Jones, The New Valuations, Adelaide, 1864, p 9.

308. SRSA 1862; SAPP 9 of 1865, HA, 13 May 1865; E.M. Dunn, p 22.

309. NS 123/47, 31 May 1853.

310. L 1/9/1, 7 December 1859.

311. L 1/1/9, 8 March 1865.

312. H. Jones, p 9; SAPP 9 of 1865, HA, 13 May 1865.

Squatters also had to protect their sheep pastures from the ravages of kangaroos which multiplied as the Aborigines died or were killed. Pastoralists judged that two kangaroos ate as much grass as three sheep. On 'Glencoe' there was always a splendid pack of kangaroo dogs and frequent kangaroo drives trapped as many as 600-800 kangaroos a drive. Aborigines on the station earned up to £4 per week from a kangaroo bounty of a shilling per head.³¹³ Dr Wehl of Mt Gambier made a profitable business of curing and tanning kangaroo skins at 7 shillings a dozen.³¹⁴ In 1863 one visitor to 'Mayurra' estimated he saw 20,000 kangaroos - as many as the sheep Glen was running.³¹⁵ Kangaroos were shot in scores of thousands on 'Mt Schanck' and in 1869 Robert Gardiner, Manager, exported 54,000 selected skins to England but cleared only his expenses. By the end of the decade areas of the South East were still "alive with kangaroos".³¹⁶

South East stockowners also continued to battle with disease. A few cattle-owners in the late fifties complained of a disease among their stock which suggested pleuropneumonia.³¹⁷ But as more sheep were run in the South East than cattle, the Chief Inspector of Sheep, H.T. Morris, considered it would be "impolitic to neglect sheep" by employing special staff to clear suspected pleuropneumonia while scab remained prevalent in the district.³¹⁸

313. BW, 26 May 1903.

314. E. Ward, p 19.

315. E. Ward, p 12.

316. M Helpman, p 13; R. Cockburn, Vol. 1, p 135.

317. According to Robert Leake, symptoms included "a swelling in the glands of the throat, a sort of consumption and then a falling away of flesh before death", e.g. L 1/1/4, 28 June 1858.

318. One dose for curing pleuropneumonia recommended by the Chief Inspector of Sheep was as follows: 12 or 16ozs of salts, loz of nitre, loz of ground ginger, 2ozs of sulphur. Mix with a pint of boiling water. Stir well. Add a pint of raw linseed oil. Put into 2 quart bottles. Administer every two hours. GRG 25/38/1872/49, SAA.

John Hensley was one South East pastoralist who had difficulty in eradicating scab. In 1853 he purchased the 'Cairnbank' run in the central north of the district with 4,000 sheep. Hensley thought the previous owner had led "a godless and indolent life". Wild dogs and scab were rampant. Hensley killed the dogs with strychnine and spent three years fighting scab. He let the sheep run free for several months of the year on that part of the run surrounded by water. He dipped and spotted regularly. When his run was paid for and free from scab in 1859 Hensley gave "a thank offering to God" of £150.³¹⁹

Unlike Hensley, squatters nearer the Victorian border were renowned for their carelessness over scab. They either allowed unclean flocks to enter South Australia, or did not watch their own flocks carefully when their runs straddled the border.³²⁰ But Morris policed this area so strictly that by 1863 he declared there was not "a single scabby sheep" in South Australia, except for a quarantine area near Mt Gambier.³²¹

Sheep still died of the mysterious "coast" disease. Some attributed the disease to noxious gas from stagnant water; others to poisonous plants which grew on the extensive swamps.³²² In 1863 William Milne, Commissioner of Public Works, observed that where the ground was ploughed and new grass sprang up, the sheep could feed with impunity.³²³ Ferdinand Müller, the noted botanist, inspected "coasty" areas in the South East in 1862. He considered that the sheep must have swallowed more of the first green

319. John Hensley, "An Autographical Sketch, affectionately dedicated to the members of his family, 1855"; 1131, SAA.

320. Squatters who were continually castigated included Messrs McKinnon, Livingston, Hunter, Sutton, Wells, Doughty and Magarey. GRG 35/38/1866/2, 12, 13, 29 and 511, SAA.

321. For his "strict vigilance" and "arduous efforts", Morris was given a purse of golden sovereigns by grateful pastoralists, on 30 April 1863. Papers of Clement Sabine, 1833-1903, pastoral manager, PRG 57, SAA.

322. E. Ward, p 19.

323. W.G. Milne, 9 January 1863, D4802(L), SAA.

feed than their digestive organs could assimilate as the disease seemed most severe from August to November when the feed grew quickly after the rains.³²⁴ Cattle and horses were also affected; they staggered, dropped and ultimately died. With no proven cause and no known cure, "coast" remained an "insidious and mysterious malady" in the South East district.³²⁵

By the 1860s the flock-masters of the South East had been manipulating their environment for two decades "to suit their sheep. They had cleared vast tracts of land to get rid of "useless timber which cumbered the ground, soured the better class of herbs and grasses and encouraged the ranker sorts".³²⁶ This was a cause of alarm for some. One school of thought considered Mt Gambier owed her moist and salubrious climate to the thirty miles of forest which lay on the Mosquito Plains to the north. As trees arrested clouds which might otherwise travel inland, clearing the Plains was sure to be harmful. One writer to The Border Watch challenged any who would dare say "there was nothing to fear if this work of destruction continued at the same rate for 20 or 30 years to come".³²⁷

324. BW, 8 May 1862. See also R. Cockburn, Vol. 2, pp 76-7. Müller's two sisters, Mesdames C. Doughty and J. Wehl, had married South East pastoralists and lived in the district.

325. E. Ward, p 12. See also BW, 11 April 1862.

326. Timber licences to clear unspecified amounts were originally issued for £1 per year with Occupation Licences in 1846. By 1851 the power to issue licences was in the hands of the Police, but this did not curb clearing. Control of clearing was then given to the Commissioner of Crown Lands who supervised it with the help of Crown Rangers. As the Rangers could be responsible for as much as 4,000-8,000 square miles, they had little control over the loss of timber. In 1855, 21 sawyers and splitters were employed in County Grey, the third highest number for the State. By 1860 timber licences cost £5 per year. In an effort to check the denuding of the land, the government could withhold licences if waste lands were deemed "injuriously affected" by clearing. But clearing continued apace in the South East. SAPP 82 of 1867, HA, 14 July 1867; SAR, 17 January 1851; M. Williams, pp 131-2; Census returns, 1855; SAPP 144 of 1859, HA, 29 July 1859.

327. BW, 15 January 1870.

By the sixties thousands of imported stock had been trampling down and eating out the native grasses of the South East for two decades. To Europeans in Australia the remedy lay in importing and experimenting with tried English pastures. Dr Wehl demonstrated the resistance of Yorkshire fog grass to South East frost, and the adaptability of flax to the region. He also planted white clover, rye grass and prairie grass in clay sub-soil, and cocksfoot, sweet vernal and Timpanella on more porous sub-soil.³²⁸ In 1862, on part of what had been Evelyn Sturt's run on the slopes of Mt Gambier, Dr Browne of 'Moorak' sowed clover and Californian lucerne using Niel Black's improved cultivator which "answered wonderfully well and created quite a sensation among the farmers".³²⁹ By 1865 Browne was carrying five large sheep to the acre on this fertile land.³³⁰ In appreciation he sent Black a packet of Californian grass and lucerne seeds with the caution to watch for the small thistle seed, "no longer than the tip of the finger but an enemy to be despised".³³¹

By the 1860s pastoralists and farmers began to admit that they had exhausted much of the soil. They were confident that fertilisers would regenerate it but the fertiliser they wanted most was unobtainable. Visitors to the South East and local landowners applied persistently for the "earthy deposits" of accumulated bird and bat manure in the caves on John Robertson's 'Struan' run. The Surveyor-General refused, claiming the bags could not be lowered through the cave openings without jeopardising the beauty of the caves, and landowners had to rely on animal manure.³³²

328. BW, 17 July 1863; E. Ward, p 79.

329. Dr W.J. Browne to Niel Black, 20 April 1862. MS 8996.

330. W.G. Milne, 18 January 1863, D4082(L), SAA.

331. Dr W.J. Browne to Niel Black, 13 March 1865, MS 8996.

332. Among those who applied were Caleb Fidler of Mt Gambier and Joseph Horwood of Adelaide. On 23 September, 2 October and 26 December 1867, Caleb Fidler was refused; on 16 March 1868 Horwood was refused. GRG 35/1/1867/1082; GRG 35/1/1868/225, SAA.

In 1863 the squatters faced yet another challenge from the city. Five years had passed since they had taken up new leases under the Stock Assessment Act of 1853 and valuations were due.³³³ The Department of Lands hurriedly set about revaluing properties. Charles Bonney declined to act as valuer. From past experience he rightly suspected that although they had no legal grounds for doing so, "the squatters expected only a slight increase", with a right to continuous renewal every five years.³³⁴ The valuation of runs fell to Goyder, the Surveyor-General, "a task besides which" as one member claimed, "the labours of Hercules was child's play".³³⁵ To arrive at his assessment, Goyder crossed and re-crossed the country, "sketching the natural features", "minutely noting the character and vegetation", calculating the different qualities of land and carrying capabilities, and making due allowance for vicinity to stock routes, markets, ports and different weight of clips.³³⁶ He acted on the same principle as Bonney claimed he would have done - assessment "at full value, at proposed considerable increases". Goyder then tabled his valuations, listing an actual annual value of the run against a value of the run with improvements deducted at the rate of one-fifth of rent per annum.³³⁷

333. See footnote 134.

334. Charles Bonney, Autographical notes, 1047/57, SAA.

335. SAPD, 6 June 1865, col. 430.

336. SAPP 105A of 1864, HA, 20 September 1864; 105B of 1864, HA, 4 October 1864; 105C of 1864, HA, 6 October 1864.

337. SAPP 8 of 1864, HA, 3 November 1864; Appendix 3.

The large increases in value outraged the squatters. They claimed that they had acted "on faith" in 1858; the valuations would drive them from their runs. They admitted they had accepted an assessment on stock in exchange for new leases "on the understanding" that their leases would be renewed every five years for a fair rental. They agreed that the letter of the Act allowed for public auctions of runs with improvements, but they had been so confident of their contribution to the country's wealth and development that they expected the spirit of the Act to be followed. They had not "even countenanced that the law would actually drive out existing lessees who had occupied and resurveyed at their own cost".³³⁸ They challenged Goyder's description of their runs and disputed his assessment of their value. Goyder refused to alter his valuations.³³⁹ Their improved runs were suddenly at risk. The squatters united. In September 1864 they formed "The Pastoral Association" whose direct aim was "to protect the squatters' interests".³⁴⁰

Within two months "The South East Pastoral Association" called its inaugural meeting at Penola. Forty influential squatters attended. Their main grievance, they said, was not the financial stringency the valuations might cause. More importantly, "property and rights" were under attack. Those who knew best how to manage the land were no longer

338. Select Committee of Legislative Council on Pastoral Lease Valuations. SAPP 213 of 1864, LC, 30 November 1863; 7, 9 and 12 December 1863, Question 128.

339. SAPP 153 of 1864, HA, 5 October 1864.

340. Papers of Clement Sabine, Secretary of the Pastoralists' Association, 31 September 1864; PRG 57, SAA.

protected by legislation. The judgement of one valuer could not possibly be acceptable. An accurate assessment of the value of South East runs could be made only after visits in at least two distinctly different seasons. They were being denied "the right of appeal accorded to British subjects". If they could take their case to the English courts there would be some hope for them but colonial legislation had shown "a wanton forgetfulness of the ideals and status of those who represented the British overseas". If squatters were penalised the labouring classes would again bear the burden. Above all, valuations were a singular affront to those who had "gained their wealth through industry". Squatters had been foremost in subduing the country. They had used it "to produce food, to feed the hungry and to clothe the naked". If they had not improved their land, they would have acted "contrary to the principles of the British constitution and contrary to God's law, as well as human law".³⁴¹

The editor of The Border Watch commiserated with the squatters. He hoped that "not every sheep had been sacrificed on the altar of the patriotism of demagogues advocating a levelling policy". Universal suffrage had led to this instability of property and institutions because enfranchisement meant a disproportionate representation of property. The South East district was allowed to return only two members while "places near Adelaide without one twentieth of the property" were privileged to return the same number. Yet city democrats in the House of Assembly were not fit to deal with the great squatter question. They had forgotten it was "the squatters' money which kept their stores and workshops open".³⁴²

341. BW, 12 November 1864. Among the squatters who attended were Messrs Jones, Riddoch, Watson, Affleck, Smith, Ormerod, Robertson, the Wells brothers, Hunter, Hensley and Johnston.

342. BW, 24 September 1864.

"Lord Harry" Jones of Binnum, the most vocal of the South East squatters, agreed completely. "The fact of the matter," he declared, "is that squatters are capitalists in the power of a legislature elected by universal suffrage which represents the unmonied classes."³⁴³

The South East Branch of the Pastoral Association was in the healthiest financial position of all the branches. Members were not caught in a drought as the northern squatters were, and they had paid a levy of £1 per thousand sheep to raise funds. Samuel Tomkinson, prominent member of the Pastoral Association, prevailed upon Henry Jones to keep these funds to defray the costs of a planned case against the government's valuations.³⁴⁴ In the meantime squatters throughout the colony united to protect their interests through Parliament. They exploited to the full their balance of power in the House. Ministries rose and fell according to the numbers who were either 'for' or 'against' the squatters. Those who staunchly defended them were labelled as men who would "sell the country to the squatters". Those

343. H. Jones, The New Valuations, p 9. Henry Jones had little to complain about. Improvements valued at £2,175 reduced his rent from £450 to £15 per annum.

344. "It was understood when your association formed that we should stand by each other," Tomkinson wrote. "We have only a few hundred pounds in hand to go on with, and may have to ask you to lend us a hand, so many of the northern squatters being ruined." Members of the South Australian Pastoral Association generally contributed only £3.3 each. Tomkinson also took into account that fifteen South East members of the city branch were about to change their affiliations to the district branch of the Association. Samuel Tomkinson to Henry Jones, 27 March 1865, PRG 57, SAA. Only one upper South East pastoralist, H. McLeod, had applied for drought relief and this had been refused. G.L. Buxton, South Australian Land Acts, 1869-1865, Adelaide, 1866, pp 5-6. (Contrast with E. Ward, p 34.) The droughts had been so disastrous that Charles Sturt heard of them in Westborne, England. He observed that "for some unknown reason, the seasons in Australia seem to be changing." Sturt continued that he had heard of heavy gales bringing the sand out of the interior in dense clouds to the Southern coasts and to Mt Gambier, where "it fell like a shower of mud". This had not happened in his time. Letter of Charles Sturt, 11 January 1866, in N.G. Sturt, Life of Charles Sturt, London, 1899, p 357.

who criticised squatters were accused of "sacrificing squatters to the popular demand". Either way, a partisan stance earned the name "place-hunter". Hostility thus became directed at politicians as power-seekers, rather than at the squatters, who thereby managed to escape a great deal of public probium.³⁴⁵ After the 1865 elections, as one squatter declared, they could "only be fairly asked to admit to a loss of 3 or 4 in the Lower House". Of eight vacancies in the Legislative Council, "three of their choosing got in, the fourth belonged to them, and the anti-squatters were all moderate men".³⁴⁸

But their legal appeal failed and the squatters had to pay the new valuations. Yet they remembered their lesson of 1858, and soon used their political power to gain concessions against the "Goyderations". By 1864 pastoralists were legally entitled to appeal against what they considered an unjust rent. By 1867 they had gained a further concession when legislation allowed fencing as a deductible improvement, and a final reprieve when overall valuations were replaced by valuations based on a classification of grazing lands.³⁴⁷ The squatters had again shown what a "large and important portion of the community they comprised", and had once more confirmed that governments could be prevailed upon to allow concessions in return for revenue.³⁴⁸

345. SAR, 8 June 1864. For details of the struggles which followed Goyder's valuations, K.R. Bowes, pp 131-6; G.L. Buxton, p 4. J. Riddoch and A.L. Gordon replaced G. Hawker and R. Stow in the South East electorate, thus maintaining squatting interests. SAPP 98 of 1971.

346. W.R.L. Lawson, Our Wool Staple; or A History of Squatting in South Australia, Adelaide, 1865, p 43.

347. Act 13 of 1863, assented to 12 November 1863; Act 8 of 1864, assented to 3 November 1864; Act 21 of 1867, assented to 11 January 1867. See also M. O'Loughlin, pp 54-5.

348. Henry Jones, John Riddoch and Dr W.J. Browne to members of South East Pastoral Association, 7 October 1864 in papers of Mrs Anne Cameron (1817?-1904), widow of Ewen Cameron, relating to Wattle Range Station, South East, PRG 85, SAA.

South East squatters who had improved and fenced their properties were best able to pay the increased payments following the valuations.³⁴⁹ The annual value of George Glen's 'Mayurra' run was estimated at £500. Because Glen had improved to the value of £160, £32 was deductible each year before assessment. Adam Smith fared even better. With improvements on 'Hynam' assessed at £1,980, Smith could claim a reduction of £378 annually before assessment.³⁵⁰ There is no evidence to suggest that valuations were a great burden to South East pastoralists.³⁵¹ Between 1861 and 1866 sheep numbers increased from 819,104 to 1,300,786 – a quarter of the colony's sheep; wool exports through Guichen Bay and Port MacDonnell increased from 2,067,240lbs to 2,537,250lbs.³⁵² The pastoral stronghold of the South East had survived yet another challenge from city legislation.

Ed Leake was burdened by the valuations. His payments more than tripled because he had done little to improve 'Glencoe' apart from completing the woolshed Robert Leake had begun.³⁵³ This stone building, 140' x 50', with galvanised iron roof and room to shear 200 sheep a day, had cost £1,400, but it was Ed's one great pride.³⁵⁴ On 19 November 1863 he

349. See footnote 337.

350. Detailed description and Valuation of Runs, Compiled by G.W. Goyder, Surveyor-General, 1864, 1439, SAA. The Surveyor-General's descriptions are accompanied by sketch maps. For 'Hynam', pp 113-6; for 'Mayurra', pp 114-8.

351. Only seven out of sixty-nine South East pastoralists paid more than £500 per year. The following Parliamentary Papers show that South East pastoralists applied for renewal of their runs and did not appeal against Goyder's valuations:

SAPP 98 of 1864, HA, 16 August 1864; SAPP 27 of 1866-7, HA, 22 June 1866; SAPP 74 of 1866-7, HA, 25 September 1866; SAPP 87 of 1866-7, HA, 5 October 1866. See also: A Collection of Parliamentary Papers relating to the detailed valuation of runs, 1864-66, with annotations by G.W. Goyder, Surveyor-General, 1440, SAA.

352. E. Ward, p 4; SRSA, 1861 and 1866.

353. Appendix 3.

354. L 1/9/1, 19 June 1863; 3 June 1864.

gave a grand supper and ball for 200 workmen and contractors to mark its opening.³⁵⁵ But apart from this festivity, Ed hoarded his wealth and like his brother before him, his legacy to the South East was neither civilisation nor settlement. He had plundered some of the finest land in the district and in his letters to the family from whom he had so long been separated, he wrote endlessly only of the money he had made, and of how he stood in constant fear of being cheated of it. On 27 April 1867 he died, a lonely and neurotic miser.³⁵⁶

Arthur Leake came from Tasmania to wind up his brother's estate. In December 1867 he superintended the last Leake shearing of 45,000 sheep. He wrote of Ed's mismanagement with dismay. Even the famous 'Glencoe' woolshed was, to Arthur, "a perfect mistake, situated in the distant and most inaccessible part of the run". The wool was "very clean but light and rather grey". 'Glencoe' sheep were now "a miserable lot, all aged and poor". They needed "good blood" for the place "could never be carried on except by a total change of new stock". The clip was 400 bales that year, but 40 bales of samples fetched only $\frac{1}{4}$ d per lb. in Melbourne.³⁵⁷

355. The woolshed was decorated with evergreens and in front of the wool presses facing the entrance was an illuminated device with the words "Prosper Glencoe" and "Success to the Woolshed". Two sheep were shorn, Mr Leake's health was toasted, and the shed declared open. BW, 27 November 1863.

356. His obituary stated the cause of death as "water on the chest". BW, 4 April 1867. William McIntosh, of Naracoorte, then 76, managed for 17 months before Thomas Tilley of Tilley's Swamp, and then Captain Lindsay. Edward Leake's daughter, Laetitia Sarah Elizabeth, born 28 May 1859, was named after her mother and Ed's sister and mother. She was baptised by Father Julian E.T. Woods on 9 July 1859. Local people declared she was the daughter of McIntyre of 'The Punt' and that her half-brother Samuel John Clarke Leake was the son of Thomas Tilley. Because Samuel Leake refused to become a Protestant he was left out of the will, much to Father Woods' annoyance. Edward Leake left his widow £150 per annum, and his brothers Charles and Arthur, his executors, £1,000 each. Arthur adopted Laetitia Leake, who was to inherit at the age of 21. Ed Leake's widow married "Dick the Devil" who lived near Naracoorte. Laetitia married Charles Billyard, a Sydney solicitor, who then took the name of Billyard-Leake. NS 251/11, AOT, Probate Register. R. Cockburn, Vol. 1, p. 105; and Baptismal Certificate 189, Roman Catholic Archives, West Terrace, Adelaide.

357. Arthur to Charles Leake, 28 November 1867; 5, 12 and 27 December 1868.

Before he returned to Tasmania, Arthur went to the only place "where he could obtain relief". "From the top of the highest of the little hills on the Bluff",³⁵⁸ he looked out over that same land which a quarter of a century before Robert Leake and John MacIntyre had hailed with the exultant "We have found our Paradise".³⁵⁹ Now signs of decay and a quarter of a century's exploitation were visible everywhere. Robert and Edward Leake had not transformed 'Glencoe' into "another England". According to Arthur, much of it was now "a place for nothing but reptiles".³⁶⁰

The government did little more in the sixties than it had in the previous decade to provide public facilities. By 1863 it had spent only £38,729.2.3 on public works - less than the revenue returned from assessment and rent.³⁶¹ In that year W.G. Milne, Commissioner of Public Works, travelled 320 miles over what he called "undefined and unsafe roads", two-thirds of which were unfit for use from sand in summer and bog in winter.³⁶² A Report on Public Works in the following year recommended that "as much money as could be afforded should be voted for roads and drainage".³⁶³ Communication with Adelaide took twice as long as with Melbourne. Locals complained that if the government did not recognise "the rising importance of the place", the region "might well become Victorian in all but name only".³⁶⁴ But the government took no action and in 1864 wealthy farmers

358. Arthur to Charles Leake, 27 December 1868.

359. R. Cockburn, Vol. 1, p 104.

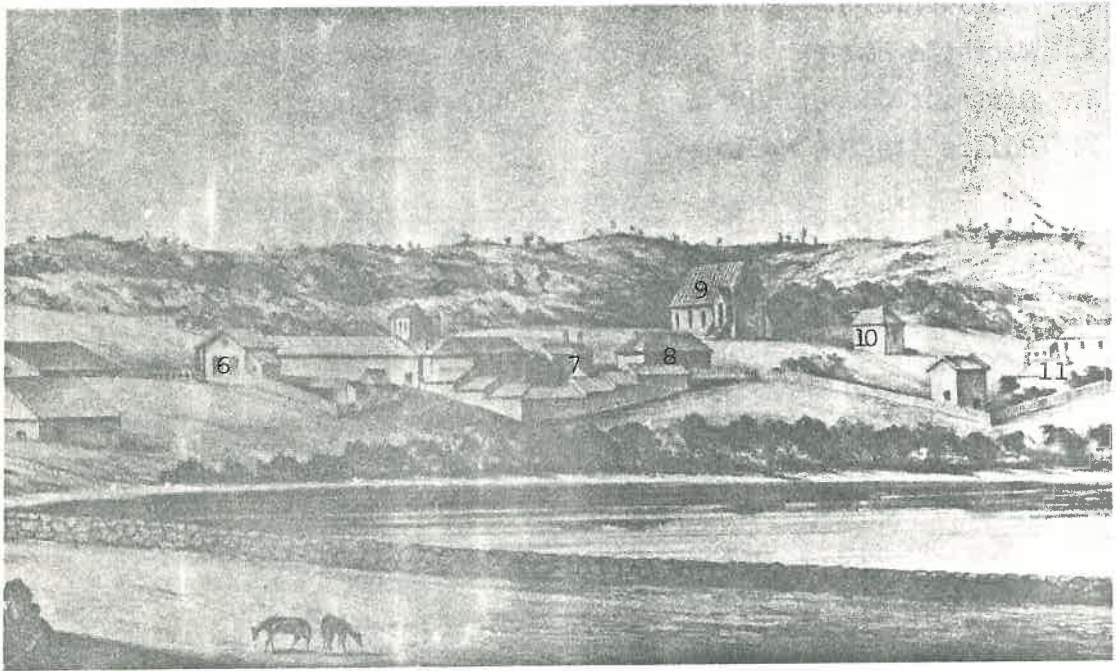
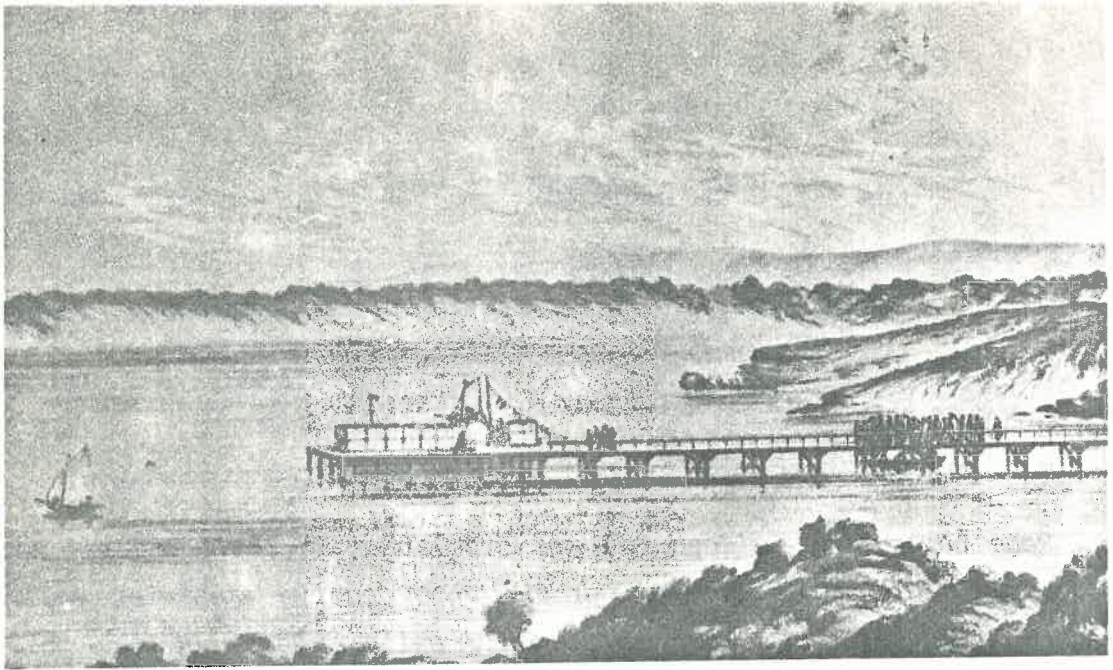
360. Arthur to Charles Leake, 27 December 1868. In 1868 Captain Lindsay, friend of Captain Gardiner of 'The Schanck', leased the purchased land on 'Glencoe' for fourteen years at £4,000 a year and ran the station's 50,000 sheep.

361. SAPP 102 of 1863, LC, 18 August 1863. See also South-Eastern Drainage Board: EIS, pp 152-3.

362. W.G. Milne, D4802(L), SAA.

363. In 1861 communication with Adelaide took five days, with Melbourne 4½; by 1866, with Adelaide 4½ days, with Melbourne 2½ days. Adelaide was reached more quickly by going via Melbourne unless the traveller rode or drove his own horses. R. Harris, p 60.

364. SAPP 48 of 1864; HA, 31 May 1864.

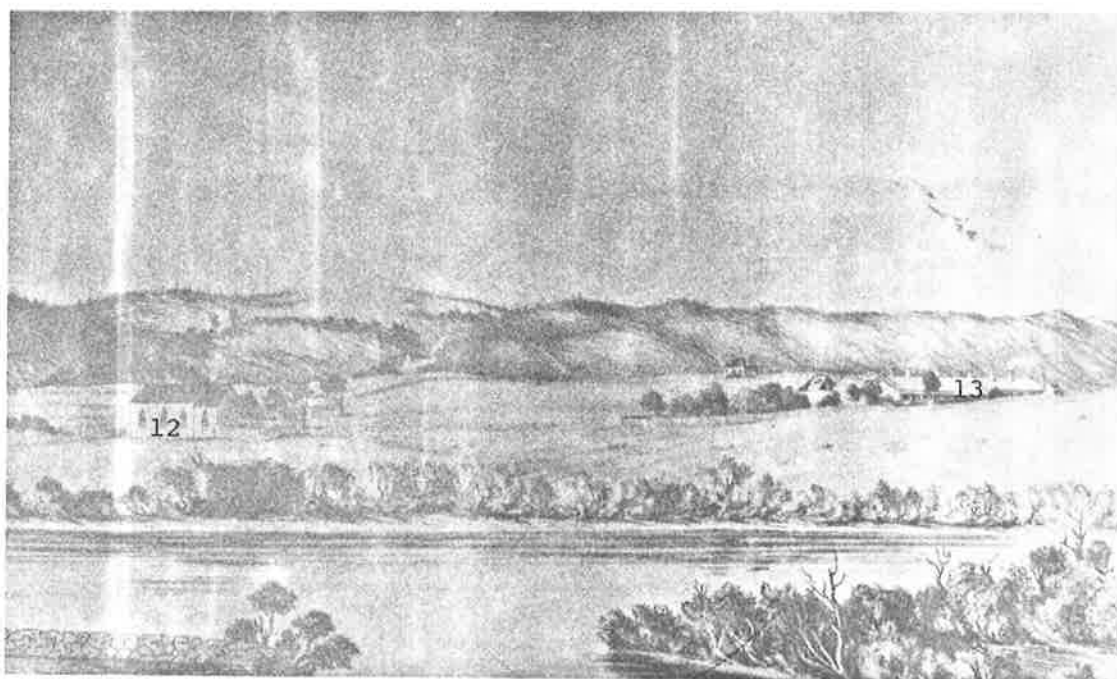
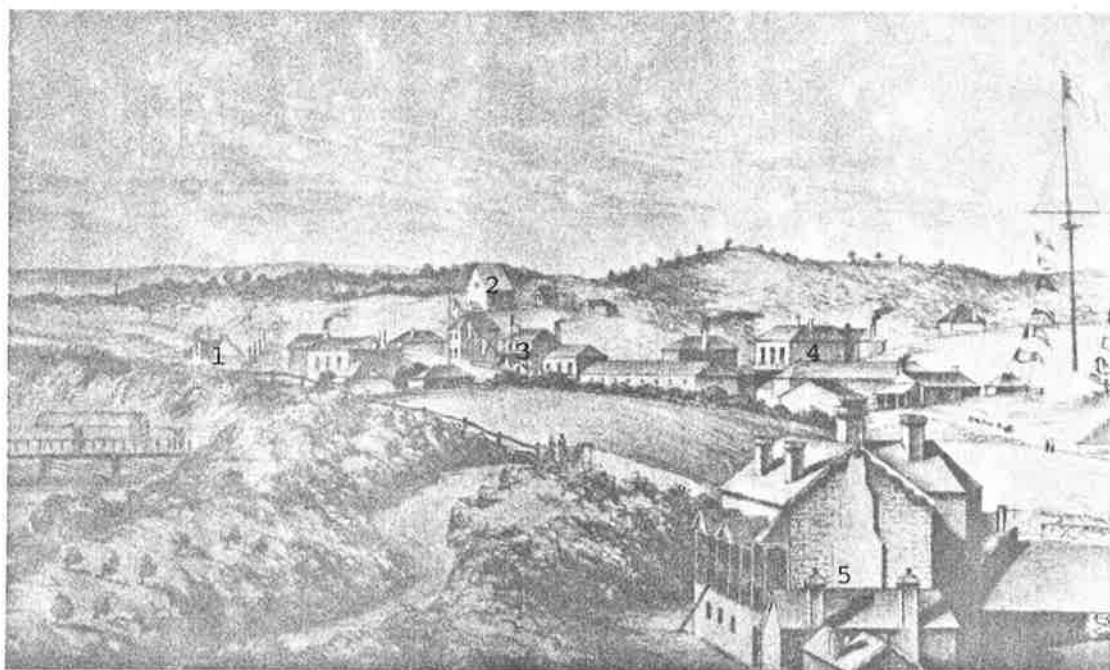


*"Robe Town at the Embarkation of His Excellency
Sir James Fergusson, Bart, 12 June 1869."
(Drawn by A. Tolmer; SAA)*

Robe harbour at Guichen Bay was proclaimed in 1847. Because successive Governments insisted that the provision of public amenities would follow rather than precede closer settlement, neither Robe nor the three other potential harbours in the South East (see Map 15) received consistent Government support and finance.

Key:

- | | |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. Caledonian Hotel | 8. Court House |
| 2. Methodist Church | 9. St Peter's Church |
| 3. Criterion Hotel | 10. Sunday School |
| 4. Post Office | 11. Government Resident's House |
| 5. Karratta House | 12. Roman Catholic Church |
| 6. District Council Offices | 13. Rectory |
| 7. Police Station House | |



took the initiative. With the progressive James Umpherston as their President, they formed a Farmers' Club which established an agency at Port MacDonnell for receiving and shipping wheat, and another in Melbourne for storing and selling. In this way they reduced freight and shipping charges which "as good as raised wheat 6d to 8d per bushel".³⁶⁵

In 1866-7 Squire Riddoch chaired the third Committee in a decade to enquire into South East improvements. The Committee reported there was "no better way of facilitating settlement in the South East district" than by providing drainage, ports and iron roads. The Committee favoured Port MacDonnell over Lacepede Bay as a harbour; recommended a road or tramway from Port MacDonnell to Mt Gambier; a road from Naracoorte to Mt Gambier via Penola and branch roads between Penola, Robe and Mt Gambier. Such recommendations would have suited Chairman Riddoch and other pastoralists of the central eastern portion of the region. But a government reluctant to act before schemes were assured, once more ignored recommendations.³⁶⁶

Neither did the government initiate a comprehensive drainage system, although from the first days of exploration and settlement, no one had questioned that this was the main way South East land could be made more like European land. The district had a high and regular rainfall, ridges which impeded the natural drainage, and a vast underground water system.³⁶⁷

The country from Lacepede Bay to Port MacDonnell, "an area nearly as large

365. BW, 8 January 1864.

366. Report of Select Committee of HA on South-Eastern District improvements, SAPP 65 of 1866-7, HA, 5 December 1866. See also B. Ferguson, p 3.

367. Mt Gambier has a 98% reliable rainfall during June, July and August. In almost a century of recording, the township had only one year of "drought" when 18 inches fell. K.R. Bowes, p 13. See also M. Williams, pp 180-3; R. Harris, p 8; CSIRO, Agricultural Research in the South-East of South Australia and Adjacent Areas of Victoria, Melbourne, 1968, pp 7-12.

as Denmark", was often a great lake "with only Mt Gambier and minor ranges looking up as oases amid a watery waste".³⁶⁸ But the complex system of drainage necessary to make vast stretches of inundated land fit for tillage was a costly undertaking which the government was not prepared to initiate unless sure of recouping the outlay. Because government anticipated some minor drainage operations would "increase productivity, population and subsequent revenue", and would also prevent the South East, which felt sorely neglected by the government, from joining with the equally disaffected Western Districts of Victoria,³⁶⁹ in 1863 it did drain a large swamp at the back of Port MacDonnell township and made an experimental cut from the coastal swamp lands into Lake Bonney at Narrow Neck.³⁷⁰

But this left small farmers in other parts of the district in a hopeless situation. In 1862, "Charles the Londoner" of Section 500, 'Duckhole', declared in the local press he was ready with boat, plumb line and diving apparatus for the service of surveyors then working on John Ellis's 'Benara' run.³⁷¹ "German Jack" also begged to inform land agents and the public that he had procured first-class diving apparatus and a punt. He was prepared to undertake a submarine survey by remaining underwater for eight days at a time "giving a true and correct report of roads and numbers of allotments" if employers would provide rations for a week.³⁷²

Most pastoralists declared they would gladly drain at their own expenses provided they were assured of leases for ten years to come, but

368. BW, March 1864; Map 12.

369. South-Eastern Drainage Board, EIS, pp 20-4. For disaffection and succession movements, R. Harris, Chs 1-4, passim, H. Williams, pp 184-5.

370. Map 11.

371. BW, 25 July 1862.

372. BW, 1 August 1862.

they "would not dream of doing so when their runs were not safe for a single year from the declaration of Hundreds and land sales".³⁷³ A few wealthy pastoralists did drain. Among these was Henry Seymour of 'Killanoola' who drained a large tract of his land into Bool Lagoon.³⁷⁴ John Riddoch and his brother, who owned much low-lying land in the centre of the district, also began to cut private drains in the sixties, but not so as to render the land fit for agriculture and break their pastoral monopoly.³⁷⁵ George Glen did not drain although his coastal land lay inundated for several months of every year. Because the cost would have been prohibitive and because he held 94 square miles of land, Glen continued to shift his flocks regularly between the higher and drier ridges in winter and the moist flats in summer.³⁷⁶

Towards the end of the sixties, there was no evidence to suggest the South East would yet be a district settled by "a numerous yeomanry". Between 1861-6 the area under cultivation in the district had increased threefold, but this statistic was misleading: consistent increase took place only in the fertile parts of County Grey. By 1866 the area under wheat in a district of over 4 million acres amounted to only 13,623 acres, and much of this was being carried on, not by self-sufficient farmers, but by tenant labourers or pastoralists experimenting in agriculture.³⁷⁷ As early as 1861, 45,000 acres of "the finest farming land in the colonies"

373. BW, 3 June 1864.

374. South Eastern Drainage Board, EIS, p 13.

375. SAPP 41 of 1863, HA, 28 April 1863.

376. George Glen's sheep books from 1859-60 record how his shepherds continually moved his flocks. These books were seen by kind permission of Mr B.J. Towers, Millicent.

377.

	31 March 1861		31 March 1866	
	Cultivation	Wheat	Cultivation	Wheat
MacDonnell	370	170	783	44
Robe	555	47	712	8
Grey	<u>6,576</u>	<u>4,236</u>	<u>21,420</u>	<u>13,571</u>
	7,501	4,453	22,915	13,623

SRSA, 1866; Appendix 6.

were advertised "to be let on long leases in Farms" on 'Mt Schanck' and Clarke had made available to local farmers 70 acres of experimental farming.³⁷⁸ Squire Riddoch had 1,200 acres under crop at 'Yallum' by 1868; his neighbours were leasing land at 10/- an acre with right of purchase at £5 per acre.³⁷⁹ In 1868 Dr Browne of 'Moorak' added a further 1,000 acres for ploughing to those already let to a "numerous tenantry".³⁸⁰

Nor was the increase in population in the district as encouraging as the figures suggested. Between 1861-6 numbers rose from 5,466 to 8,875, but again the increase was confined to County Grey, which almost doubled its population in those five years.³⁸¹ The average population for the district as a whole was less than 1½ persons per square mile, and the district's "capacious maw for labour" remained unsatisfied.³⁸²

378. BW, 21 June 1861; M. Clarke, pp 191-2.

379. E. Ward, p 70.

380. E. Ward, p 78; The Autobiography of Hugh McCallum, in Proceedings of the Royal Geographical Society of Australasia (SA Branch), Vol. 31, 1929-30, p 57.

381.

County	1861	1866
MacDonnell	652	618
Robe	1,477	1,470
Grey	<u>3,337</u>	<u>6,517</u>
Total	5,466	8,875
State Increase:	1861: 126,830	1866: 163,452

SRSA, 1866; Appendix 4.

382. BW, 1 January 1864. See also SAPP 58 of 1865, HA, 14 November 1865, in which 188 South East landowners complained of the cramped state of labour in the district, and petitioned (unsuccessfully) that the next batch of immigrants should be landed at Port McDonnell.

Only the area near Mt Gambier approached the colonisers' dreams of "concentrated settlement" and even here "the goodly number of farmers" depended on sheep as much as cultivation.³⁸³ Mt Gambier was the only town in the district which manifested those civilising influences associated with a closely-settled agricultural community. Here by 1861, a government township was grafted on to the private township established by Hastings Cunningham. In that year a school was established at Gambier East,³⁸⁴ and in 1862 a night school for boys employed during the day and for "young men of neglected education". A large and well-selected library urged "young men to intellectual culture".³⁸⁵ In 1861, a Literary Society and a Mutual Improvement Society had strong support and a local newspaper was established. By 1862 Mt Gambier was the centre for the Circuit Court.³⁸⁶ Visiting entertainers ranged from necromancers to dramatic polyphonists.³⁸⁷ The farmers of the town held a ball each month; every Tuesday evening enthusiasts might dance the quadrille. Other "benevolent principles of helpful association" were evident in the Oddfellows Lodge, Ancient Foresters, a Temperance Society, a Mutual Benefit Society, and a Band of Hope.³⁸⁸ With two steam mills puffing, a blacksmith and a farrier "chinking merrily", stores, pubs, banks and a Building Society doing well, two dentists, a baker, a shoemaker, four doctors and two brewers, the town was "a symptom of bustle if not of progress". All that Mt Gambier needed in 1861, according to one visitor, was a "knight of the pole and razer and a Benevolent Asylum".³⁸⁹

383. BW, 8 May 1867.

384. M. Williams, p 339; J.H. Sheppard, p 125, SAA; L.R. Hill, pp 15-7. The school was erected on the south-east corner of a section owned by D. McIntyre on the Portland Road. BW, 28 June 1861.

385. BW, 2 May and 1 August 1862.

386. BW, 29 January and 7 February 1862.

387. BW, 16 May and 18 October 1861.

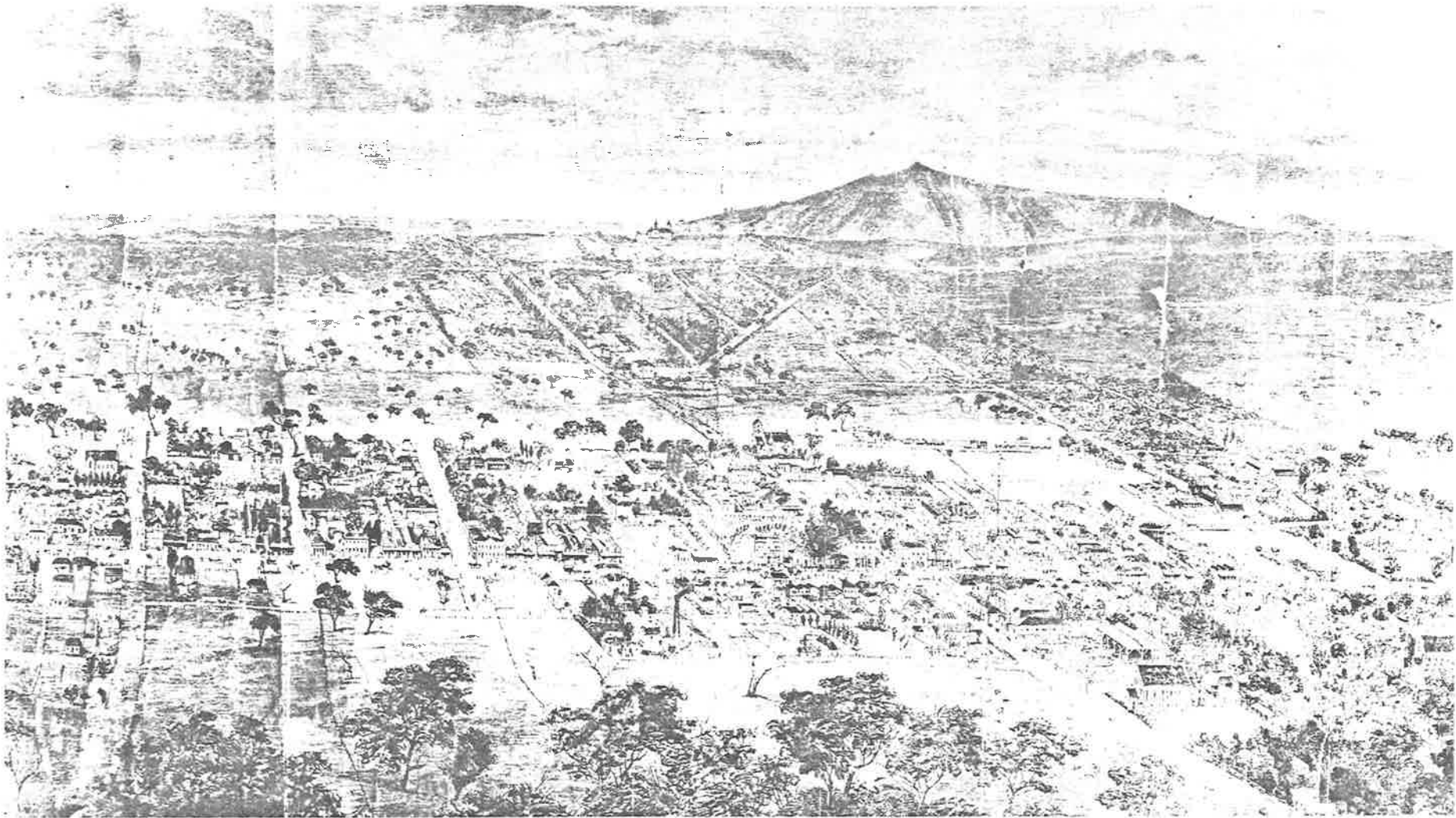
388. BW, 27 May and 25 October 1861.

389. BW, 7 and 28 June, 25 October and 1 November 1861.

*Mt Gambier, 1882, from the South
side of Commercial Street.*

(SAA)

Only the immediate vicinity of Mt Gambier approached the founding fathers' dream of concentrated settlement. Even here farmers depended on sheep as much as cultivation, but their prosperity made Mt Gambier the epitome of a thriving agricultural town.



Naracoorte and Penola, on the other hand, showed how much of the district was run by squatters. Naracoorte was the unchallenged squatters' town in the north; in the sparsely-populated centre, Penola belonged to the gentry. Here the celebrated race meetings remained the social highlight of the district, and in the stronghold of Highland Presbyterianism and Catholicism, from the wealth they had made in the new land, Scots were mindful of the destitute at Home.³⁹⁰

The fifties and sixties had been decades of challenge to South East pastoralists. They had battled the law, the land, and each other, but those who survived had consolidated. They had excluded Aborigines and small farmers from land which they now shared only with a few large farmer-graziers. To some this was a matter of concern. Earlier in the decade the editor of The Border Watch had commented upon the fact that "run after run and farm after farm was being absorbed in a few gigantic properties". But he did not think "the serious evil" could be stopped by legislation. It was always too difficult, the editor observed, "to prevent a man from doing what he liked with his own", and although it was "the duty of capitalists to encourage population, the law could not compel them to be public-spirited". Capital would assert its influence one way or another.³⁹¹ But by the turn of the decade even the usually conservative and pro-squatter editor was dismayed that the Farmers' Club was collapsing for lack of support. Farmers were suffering, he said, because "at an early date, before its value to the agriculturalist was known, much of the finest soil had passed into the hands of private individuals who now held it as a monopoly". The editor now began to declare the only way to remedy the

390. The stewards at the 1864 Race Meeting were, for example, well-known squatters of the district. They were Messrs Riddoch, Cameron, McArthur, Seymour, E.J. Leake, Robertson, McLeod and H.E. Wells. BW, 8 January 1864. For money raised for the Highland Destitute Fund, BW, 14 August 1863.

391. BW, 3 December 1863.

situation was to legislate for land reform.³⁹² The three candidates, Riddoch, Hughes and West, who stood for election in the South East district in 1868, professed this was their policy too, but all seemed more likely to uphold the interests of squatters at the expense of farmers. Squire Riddoch of 'Yallum' and the city candidate, H. Kent Hughes, advocated land offices, making maps of the country accessible to farmers, and easy means of transfer "to encourage population and thus produce wealth" without the intervention of land-jobbers.³⁹³ The third candidate, W.A. Erskine West, a "new chum" who had arrived in South Australia from Ireland only seven years previously, campaigned as "The Farmers' Friend". But his platform differed little from Riddoch and Hughes and earlier in the year West had been entertained, "along with squatters and their wives and all young ladies who could be mustered from far and near", by Henry Jones of 'Binnum-Binnum'.³⁹⁴

Yet land reform was in the air. In the debate in 1865 which preceded an Enquiry into the System of Selling Waste Land, city democrats had again spoken forcibly of "breaking an exclusive territorial oligarchy". This they claimed, was the only way of settling "the greatest amount of population".³⁹⁵ There were rumours of a dreaded exodus to the eastern states where more liberal land laws were enticing small farmers away from South Australia. Such talk fanned the fear of depopulation.³⁹⁶ Twenty-five dissatisfied families, mainly sturdy German farmers, had left the Mt Gambier district in 1867. To prevent such a loss of population and

392. BW, 6 January 1869.

393. Riddoch and Hughes had been nominated by George Ormerod, former pastoralist, reigning "Lord of Guichen Bay". BW, 22 April 1868.

394. BW, 25 April 1868; S. Leighton, p 39.

395. SAPD, 18 May 1865, pp 259 and 276.

396. BW, 16 June 1867. See also G.L. Buxton, p 9.

consequent loss of wealth, and to ensure the founding fathers' great dream of settling an independent yeomanry, members argued that

"five, or six, or 10, or 20 families must be helped to go out and take up land and settle upon it. They would be able to build a church, a school, found a township and have all the facilities of settlement around them." 397

Wakefield's theory of achieving this had already been modified. Land throughout the colony had been recognised as unevenly productive and unequal in value. Some land in the South East had brought more than £14 per acre. Since 1862 revenue from land sales had been no longer devoted entirely to migration.³⁹⁸ As W.G. Milne, Chief Secretary, observed, "Eighty acre sections were a thing of the past". Farmers' holdings averaged 25 acres.³⁹⁹ The editor of The Border Watch also declared it was time to accept "the violence done to feelings" if Wakefieldian theory were further modified as it was absurd to proclaim for the theory "a perpetuity which its principles did not admit of". Small farmers had made little headway because of a lack of capital. Wakefield's system should not have "grafted upon it a system of deferred payments". "It is a necessity of the time," the editor concluded, "that the government should act in the capacity of land agent."⁴⁰⁰

Some saw little hope of small farmers gaining self-sufficiency on the land, even under such a system. Charles Bonney, former Commissioner of Crown Lands, declared that it would have been better for South Australia if not pastoral land had been sold, but, as it was, "a territorial

397. SAPD, 28 August 1867, p 475.

398. Act 17 of 1862, assented to 21 October 1862. Two-thirds was used for Public Works; one-third for revenue.

399. SAPP 8 of 1871, prefatory report, 30 January 1871.

400. BW, 1 June 1867. On 8 May 1867, Thomas Hinckley of Naracoorte, suggested farmers should lease land at 5% interest on purchase money, with right of purchase after three years if bona fide occupation and improvements had been complied with. For details of Thomas Hinckley, J. Murdoch and F. Parker, pp 64-5.

oligarchy" was already established.⁴⁰¹ George Goyder, Surveyor-General who claimed he had "a tolerable acquaintance of the Colony", declared a system of deferred payments would not promote settlement anywhere in the Colony. In his opinion such a system was "most pernicious".⁴⁰² There were conservatives in Parliament who claimed that the government "might as well legislate to make every person in the colony religious as attempt to keep property out of the hands of capitalists".⁴⁰³ They claimed the current Waste Lands Amendment Reform Bill was totally unfitted for the country. It would "have the effect of inflicting injury upon the very persons it professed to serve - those persons who fancied that possession of land was independence no matter how that land might be encumbered."⁴⁰⁴

But a majority still hoped to realise the founders' great dream. The duty of the government, they argued, was not "to sell land merely for revenue purposes, but to secure the greatest amount of population, and thereby, wealth".⁴⁰⁵ South Australia would yet become the home of democratic settlement, supporting "a population where every man could sit under his own vine and fig tree".⁴⁰⁶ This was particularly necessary in the South East where most of the colony's large estates lay. Farmers who had long wanted land there agreed. On land which was now "undisturbed except for the bleating of a few sheep" they hoped the district would soon support "an industrious population of thousands".⁴⁰⁷ For two decades the great

401. The Report of the Select Committee on the Selling of Crown Lands, SAPP 73 of 1865, HA, 25 July 1865, questions 1202 and 1206.

402. SAPP 73 of 1865, HA, 25 July 1865, question 2153.

403. SAPD, 18 May 1865, p 259.

404. SAPD, 18 January 1869, p 144.

405. SAPD, 18 May 1865, p 267.

406. SAPD, 12 May 1865, p 196.

407. MGS, 3 May 1866; BW, 8 May 1867.

pastoralists of the South East had shown that "theirs was the frontier: there would be no other".⁴⁰⁸ But under legislation which allowed land on credit terms, men from Europe were still confident that in the South East "amid smiling orchards, numerous and prosperous yeomen would farm their own freeholds".⁴⁰⁹

408. J.M. Powell, "Gamblers by Act of Parliament", Victorian Historical Magazine, 154th Issue, Vol. 39, No. 4, November 1968, p 214.

409. MGS, 3 May 1866.

CHAPTER 3

While men in Adelaide were discussing the necessity of breaking up large estates in the South East, Ebenezer Ward, outspoken advocate of land reform, visited the district early in 1868 to investigate "the opportunities it offered for the prosperous settlement of a far larger population".¹ The landscape near Mt Gambier delighted him. "Scattered patches of green fences and gardens enclosed snug cottages or farm homesteads ... cheerful-looking buildings nestled in the valley ... and white houses peeped through the timber on the adjacent hillslopes." Three decades of European settlement had transformed the two densely-wooded mountain and the plains Lieutenant Grant had sighted into a "picture of rural beauty" which Ward thought "worthy of comparison with the noble highways of Old England".² The scene kindled in him a nostalgia for the childhood landscape he and others from England cherished so much, and an enthusiasm for the pre-industrial yeoman who had brought such landscapes into existence.

Yet as a whole the South East did not present a "European vista of ordered nature" created by yeomen. Farms did dot the landscape from Mt Gambier to Port MacDonnell, but even here, as Ward observed, 'Big Clarke's' purchases ensured "the iron heel of the 'Mt Schanck' estate stamped out the better purpose".⁴ Near Penola, Squire Riddoch was chief

1. E. Ward, p 2. The month of March is mentioned (p 41) and other indications suggest Ward was in the district during February and March. For biographical details of Ward, ADB, Vol. 6, pp 351-2; A.P. Keain, Appendix A, p 155; G.E. Loyau, p 83; SAR, 28 April and 6 May 1880; J.B. Hirst, Adelaide and the Country, 1870-1917, Their Social and Political Relationship, Melbourne, 1973, pp 82-3. For Ward's involvement in land reform policies, J.B. Hirst, pp 71-2 and 82-94.

2. E. Ward, p 73.

3. D.B. Waterson, "Land Selection in the Colonies, 1860-1900: a Few Comments", Journal of History, for Senior Students, Victorian Historical Association, Vol. 7, No. 3, September 1976, p 98.

4. E. Ward, p 77.

among those pastoralists "with a long purse" who had "clapped his paw on the waste lands near Mt Gambier".⁵ "One poor dwelling of a small farmer" broke the sway of "territorial nabobs" on the red gum flats between Penola and Naracoorte.⁶ Further north-east, Adam Smith and his fellow-squatters commanded the red loam and limestone country of the Mosquito Plains.⁷ Coastal squatters, like George Glen, monopolised land sufficient to graze their flocks on the ridges in winter and the flats in summer. In 1868 almost 1½ million sheep, 21,000 cattle and 11,000 horses grazed on the district's 4,000,000 acres which constituted one-tenth of the Colony's settled areas.⁸ By 1869 wool exports from South East ports totalled over 3,000,000 lbs and comprised one-sixth of the Colony's revenue from wool.⁹ A mere 36,312 acres, most of it near Mt Gambier, lay under cultivation.¹⁰

5. BW, 19 September 1866.

6. S. Leighton, p 31.

7. Here the following had alienated or leased almost 100,000 acres: William Robertson of 'Moy Hall', 12,000 acres; Thomas Magarey of 'Naracoorte', 18,000 acres; Adam Smith of 'Hynam', 20,000 acres; James Affleck of 'Binnum', 8,000 acres; Thomas Guthrie of 'Morambro', 20,000 acres; Dr James Dickson of 'Maaoupe', 20,000 acres. SAPD, 13 October 1871, col. 617.

8. SRSA 1868-9; Appendices 5 and 6.

9. SRSA 1870-1. By 1869 wool exported from Port MacDonnell and Port Caroline totalled 3,170,849 lbs, which returned £183,042. State revenue from 27,022,671 lbs amounted to £1,008,669. Wool exports, in lbs, from the South East from 1866-8 was as follows:

	<u>1866</u>	<u>1867</u>	<u>1868</u>
Port MacDonnell	1,423,919	1,059,285	1,927,369
Port Caroline	266,793	249,442	359,288
Total for South			
East:	1,690,712	1,308,727	2,286,657
Total for State:	19,739,523	19,350,195	28,889,190

In 1868 the South East was running 1,449,646 sheep, or 150,000 more than the whole of the pastoral districts outside of the Counties; the total for the State was 4,987,024. In Counties Grey and Robe there was one sheep for every three acres. SRSA 1868-9, Paper 7, pp 7 and 10.

10. SRSA 1869-70. Of 36,312 acres under cultivation, 26,976 were sown with wheat; 1,427 with potatoes.

This area had long been known as "the garden of the colony", but the garden was very small indeed. In Ward's opinion, a pastoral monopoly had been sustained where domestic agricultural settlement should have been flourishing long since.¹¹

South East farmers shared Ward's dismay at the lack of agricultural progress. From 1866-8 both the increase in area under wheat cultivation and in yield per acre had been minimal.¹² The editor of The Border Watch had declared this was because rust and grub were not controlled, sorrel was not eradicated and the soil was becoming "foul and exhausted". The answer, he said, was for farmers to diversify by growing oats, beet, flax, barley and tobacco.¹³ The editor of the newly-founded Mt Gambier Standard, voice of the South East agriculturalists, said agriculture was depressed because farmers did not have enough capital and could not get good land.¹⁴ Pastoralists had earlier excluded farmers and as land reform became imminent, had hastened to increase their monopoly. Prominent among purchasers in 1866-7 was Squire Riddoch who bought 8,375 acres before campaigning for the elections in April 1868 on a platform of land reform.¹⁵ In 1868 a government facing a deficit of £143,600 continued its practice of selling land to the highest bidder.¹⁶ In that year the largest

11. E. Ward, p 82. For a description of the area as the garden of the colony, see, e.g. E. Ward, p 72; A. Molineux, Articles on the South East, in The Observer (c. December 1882-March 1883), 10 February 1883, p 249; C. Proud, The South-Eastern District of South Australia in 1880, Adelaide, 1881, p 58.

12. From March 1886-8 the area under wheat increased from 13,623 to 18,738 acres with a corresponding increase in yield from 246,097 to 271,967 bushels of wheat. As only about half of the total area under cultivation was sown with wheat, most of the rest must have been hay which the squatters were using. SRSA, Appendix 7.

13. BW, 1 and 29 January 1864 and 9 September 1865.

14. MGS, 15 September 1868. The first edition was produced on 3 May 1866.

15. IGB, County Grey and Robe; MGS, 15 September 1868.

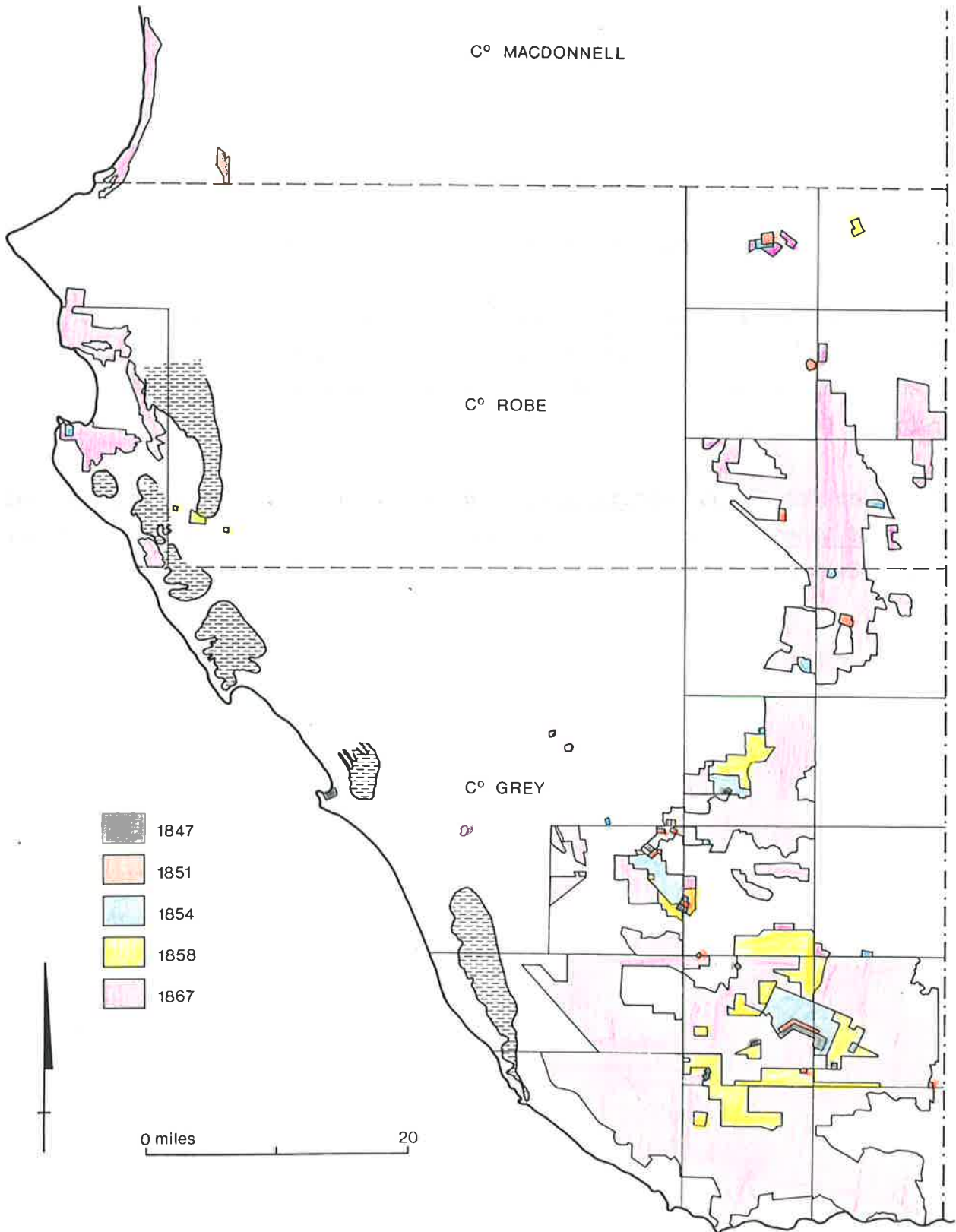
16. SAPP 87 of 1869-70, HA, 15 September 1869.

MAP 10

The Moving Frontier: Alienation from 1847-67

Threatened by encroaching neighbours, city speculators, the declaration of Agricultural Hundreds and Strangways Act, the pastoralists freeholded. By 1868 the best land was alienated (see Maps 10 and 12). Thereafter political experiments to settle the land democratically failed for want of good agricultural land.

(Memorial Register Books;
LGB, Counties Grey, Robe and MacDonnell)

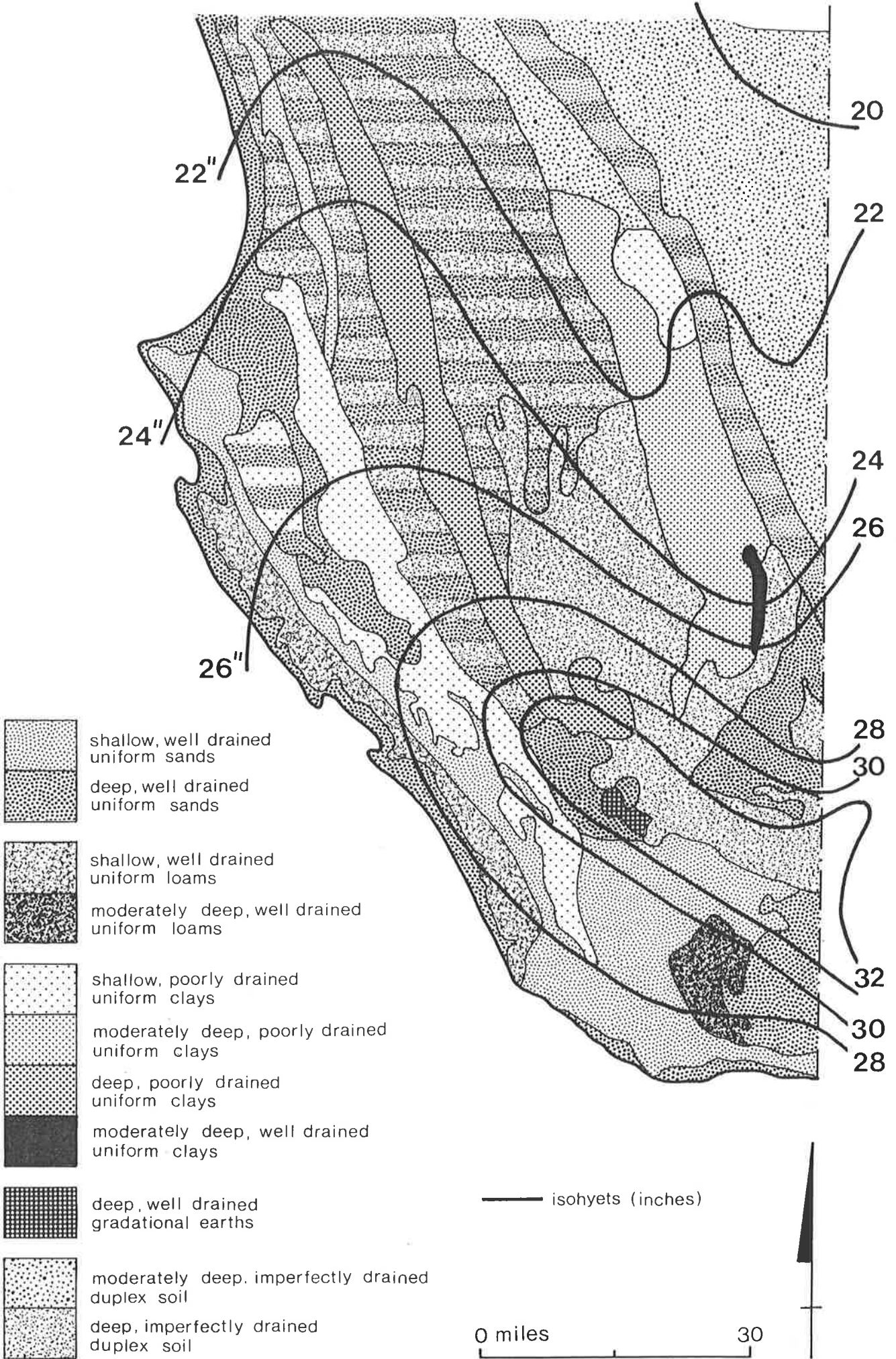


MAP 11

Soils and Rainfall of the South East.

Governments from 1840-1940 claimed the well-watered South East was ideal for agriculture, but within the first decade of settlement pastoralists had occupied those areas which combined good agricultural soil with a steady rainfall (Maps 3 and 10).

(Compiled from CSIRO, Agricultural Research in the S.E. of S.A. and adjacent areas of Victoria, Melbourne, 1968; Landsaat, Environmental Regions of S.A., No. 1, Canberra, 1977)



area of land to date was surveyed; a large amount was offered at auction, and more land changed hands at private sales than in any other year.¹⁷

This land did not go to yeomen but to land-agents and pastoralists. On 21 April 1868, at the district land sales held at Mt Gambier, two "outsiders" who "sought to procure a couple of lots might as well have attempted to procure a fee simple on the moon". Over 15,000 acres in the Hundred of Joanna fell at the upset price of £1 per acre to agents, one of whom paid £150 to secure a promise from a competitor not to bid.¹⁸ One pastoralist who purchased heavily in this north-east part of the district was Adam Smith of 'Hynam'. As his land had not been endangered by the declaration of Hundreds, Smith had purchased only his homestead block of 625 acres by 1868.¹⁹ Now, because an Agricultural Hundred might soon be declared in his area, Smith bought 8,602 acres for £11,326.9.²⁰

Irate local farmers protested that South East squatters had committed another "act of legalised robbery".²¹ They determined this would be their last. Three days after the sales, on 27 April 1868, over six hundred farmers gathered in the Oddfellows' Hall for "the largest, most demonstrative and most turbulent meeting" yet held in Mt Gambier. The farmers protested they had been "swindled out of the last good land in the district". Remaining land was "almost worthless". Immediate action was needed. Pastoral and

17. 879,546 acres were surveyed, of which 269,700 acres were offered at auction, the fourth largest amount to date. Private sales totalled almost 94,000 acres which would suggest capitalists were buying from land agents, or buying out smaller men willing to sell. SAPP 60 of 1890, HA, 1 July 1890, Appendix C. See also GRG 35/20/1868/132; SAA.

18. Well-known land agents who purchased included Messrs Prankherd, Green, Wadham, Gleeson and Hannaford who bought 15,646 acres for £15,695, with no competition, in the Hundred of Joanna. BW, 26 April 1868; SAR, 22 April 1868. See also M. Dunn, p 70.

19. Ch. 2, footnote 102.

20. Hynam Station Ledger, BRG 89, SAA; LGB, County Grey; Map 14.

21. BW, 25 April 1868.

agricultural interests the farmers asserted, were not only different but in direct conflict. They formed the Mt Gambier Agricultural Society and "made sure of not wedding it to the Pastoral Society".²² In a memorial to the Government they protested at the continued sale of land while land reform was an issue. As a consequence, in June the Government halted land sales until legislation for land reform was enacted.²³

A growing number throughout South Australia were also incensed that squatters with capital and political influence should continue to get the best land. Land reformers in Parliament reminded South Australia of an earlier vision. The squatters' achievements, they alleged, could be equalled, if not surpassed, by a settled yeomanry. Some squatters accused others of their kind of not improving their land. They had not begun to use the land as efficiently as Europeans could. They were letting it remain "as useless as when the black fellow had it for the kangaroo".²⁴ Farmers would provide tangible evidence of greater mastery over the land than wool-growers, by clearing, ploughing and cultivating wheat, the European staff of life. Nor were squatters in "patriarchial isolation" attracting population. They employed little labour in proportion to their vast extent of valuable territory. Their monopoly was arguably the cause of migration to the eastern colonies, "the worst calamity which could befall a colony".²⁵ A countryside "covered with smiling homesteads and prosperous farms" would, on the other hand, be held by a "numerous population".²⁶ The editor of the Mt Gambier Standard, the

22. BW, 2 May 1868. The Penola Agricultural Society was formed five months later. MGS, 15 September 1868.

23. SAR, 22 April, 2 May, 6 and 24 June, 1868. See also G.L. Buxton, p 9.

24. SAPD, 3 December 1868, col. 1021.

25. BW, 16 February 1870. See also SAPD, 26 January 1870, col. 1480; 10 September 1870, col. 515; K.R. Bowes, p 186; G.L. Buxton, p 9.

26. E. Ward, p 43.

was also sure that the civilising influences which pastoralists had brought would be extended by farmers. He claimed that "now the rough work of turning a wilderness into human habitation had been accomplished, the elegances of human life were sure to follow for fine arts ever succeeded the axe and the plough". The establishment of an Amateur Dramatic Society and the publication of the first locally-written anthology of verse at Mt Gambier had proved that was so in the South East.²⁷

Some politicians argued that establishing "a thriving and contented yeomanry" was not only ideologically justified but economically necessary.²⁸ Those who represented metropolitan commercial interests argued that in the current economic depression, agriculture in the settled districts would prove far more conducive to city trade than pastoralism.²⁹ To Ward and like-minded reformers the very progress of the colony was dependent upon "the development of the wealth of the soil".³⁰ That was the birth-right and responsibility of the yeoman farmer in South Australia as in England. By favouring the pastoral industry in return for revenue the government had forsaken the ideal upon which the ideology was founded. The time had now come to ensure its fulfilment. New legislation would guarantee that South Australia would see "the extraction of the full value of the soil [and] the sustenance of the largest and most productive population from which the greatest measure of material wealth and permanent prosperity would flow".³¹

27. MGS, 15 September 1868.

28. SAPD, 2 September 1869, col. 208.

29. For metropolitan representation and agitation, K.R. Bowes, Appendix A, pp 286-7; J.B. Hirst, p 80. The current economic depression was attributed to drought, a drop in copper and wool prices, the closing of the Burra mines, and the European money crisis. R. Harris, p 54; G.L. Buxton, pp 8-9; K.R. Bowes, pp 157-8; D.R. Beer, "Land Reform and the Ministerial Crises of 1868 in South Australia", Journal of Australian Studies, No. 5, November, 1979, p 18.

30. SAPD, 3 December 1868, col. 1011.

31. E. Ward, pp 41-2. See also J.B. Hirst, p 81; K.R. Bowes, p 165.

On 3 December 1868, after the second reading of the Waste Lands Amendment Bill, politicians began a long-awaited debate on the purchase of land under a credit system, first mooted in Parliament in 1861.³² All members of the 1868 House of Assembly professed themselves in favour of land reform in one way or another. But the debate was to highlight the differing interests of the consistent champions of land reform and the pastoralists who were supported by speculators and bankers.³³ This group feared that cheap land and cheap credit would lead to a fall in land value, a consequent loss of revenue and, ultimately, taxation. They therefore opposed "violent change". They claimed that South Australia's land laws were not only "better than other colonies ... but with South Australia's limited population there was more produce from the same proportion of population than in any part of the world".³⁴ To safeguard the economy, to prevent "demagogues going from place to place endeavouring to stir up the people", all that was necessary was "moderate change and reasonable concessions without depreciating large and valuable estates".³⁵ To transfer rights from those who had "pioneered and evolved a great industry" to agriculturalists whom they considered "under-capitalised, unskilled, uncouth, and uncivilised" would be an act of gross foolishness.³⁶

32. SAPD, 26 June 1861, col. 304 and 3 July 1861, col. 344. The idea was proposed by J.T. Bagot, Commissioner of Crown Lands, after his visit to Victoria to examine settlement there under Duffey's Act of 1860. See also SAPP 60 of 1890, HA, 1 July 1890, p 16; K.R. Bowes, p 182.

33. In his discussion of the controversial Land Bill, Hirst nominates Ward, Mann, Bright, Carr, Cheriton, Pearce and Playford as genuine reformers. J.B. Hirst, pp 82-4, 240.

34. SAPD, 3 December 1868, col. 1013. See also K.R. Bowes, p 164.

35. SAPD, 3 December 1868, col. 1011.

36. D.B. Waterson, p 98.

But even while conservative politicians urged caution, they were aware that they could retain power on a popular policy of land reform. From the numerous proposals put forth, the proposal of H.B. Strangways "caught the ear of the country".³⁷ The Waste Lands Amendment Act, which gained assent on 30 January 1869, thus took its popular name of "Strangways Act" from one who had declared himself against liberal land reform, but who had found it politically expedient to come almost volte-face.³⁸ The editor of The Mt Gambier Standard declared he took kindly to the scheme, although he was distrustful of its author.³⁹ The editor did well to be sceptical. Strangways Act did not reflect the original idealism of the land reformers: it was an expedient consensus of conflicting opinions which brought a government to power via a series of Ministerial crises.⁴⁰

Despite its conservatism, Strangways Act did make some provision for men with a little capital to select land. Within the Hundreds selectors could now purchase on credit by paying a deposit of 20% on the purchase money which was regarded as interest. Purchase was to be completed after four years. In homage to the Wakefieldian ideal of settling numerous stable, productive agriculturalists, a selector was entitled to purchase only after he had resided on his land and improved it annually

37. D.R. Beer, p 29.

38. SAR, 4 April 1868. For biographical details of H.B.T. Strangways, ADB, Vol. 6, p 204. Strangways did not escape the criticism of his colleagues for his opportunism. See, for example, Colton's attack: "Honourable members did not believe that he meant what he said unless it was to suit his purpose. He had told them that his great point was to scramble into office anyhow; honestly or otherwise he would get there if he could." SAPD, 28 October 1868, col. 691.

39. MGS, 9 February 1869.

40. D.R. Beer, p 17. For detailed discussion of the background to Strangways Act and for a description of the passage of the Bill, K.R. Bowes, Ch. 7; D. Meinig, Ch. 2; G.L. Buxton, Ch. 1; J.B. Hirst, pp 78 -86. For a detailed analysis of the Ministerial crises, D.R. Beer, pp 17-37. For the composition of the Ministries between September and November, SAPP 98 of 1871, p 98.

to the extent of 12/6 per acre. Minimum price was still £1 per acre but, as experience had shown 80 acres was too small a holding to be profitable, a selector could now hold 640 acres.⁴¹ As a further help to the small man, legislation to prevent frauds at auction was framed concurrently with Strangways Act.⁴²

Yet no Act repealed Act 5, of 1857: land within the Hundreds remained open for sale on cash at auction. Nor was there any limit to the amount which could be purchased at auction. Legislation continued to be biased in favour of those with ready capital who could boost the colony's revenue. Capitalists did not hesitate to seize their opportunity. In the six months after Strangways Act was passed a pattern of sale was established. Twelve times as much land was sold in South Australia by auction at a higher average price than was purchased on credit.⁴³ Purchasing in the South East followed this trend. Only nine purchases, significantly within the fertile County Grey, were made on credit between February and August 1869, but pastoralists continued to buy large amounts at auction.⁴⁴ Among these was

41. Act 14 of 1868-9 was assented to on 30 January 1869 and came into operation on 2 March 1869. For further details of the regulations of the Act, T. Playford, p 8; G.L. Buxton, p 11; K.R. Bowes, pp 192-4; J.B. Hirst, pp 12, 78-9; D. Meinig, pp 24-8; SAPP 60 of 1890, HA, 1 July 1890, p 16.

42. Act 12 of 1868-9, assented to 30 January 1869. For further details see K.R. Bowes, p 192.

43. Sales for South Australia from 3 March - 31 August 1869. Cash: 126,619 acres for £153,928.12 = £1.9 average. Credit: 12,898 acres for £14,187.8 = £1.2 average. SAPP, 2 September 1869, col. 297. Sales for South Australia for the first two years of operations of Strangways Act from 6 September 1869 to 28 August 1871. Cash: (i.e. by auction and private contract) 259,971 acres for £303,300. Credit: 324,138 acres for £39,065.16.6 - interest £54,927.7.3. SAPP 125 of 1871, LC, 10 September 1871.

Adam Smith who bought 6,975 acres in March 1869, and a further 3,566 acres on 9 December 1869.⁴⁵

Strangways Act ostensibly gave specific advantages to agriculturists of small means by creating Agricultural Areas in which land could be purchased only on credit. Land within Agricultural Areas was first offered at the value of the best land in the district before being reduced either until it was sold or reached £1 per acre. Application to purchase was made in writing and simultaneous applications for the same sections were determined by lot. The total amount of land which could be purchased on credit was limited to 640 acres.⁴⁶ But as there was no prohibition as to who might buy, the Government was able to continue the established practice of selling agricultural land on credit to those who could best afford it.

Many South East squatters must have agreed with Squire Riddoch's assessment of the legislation. He observed that the proclamation of Agricultural Areas would be, of course, a drawback to him. He had no doubt that the South East would be adapted for agriculture sooner or later, but he was content to bide his time.⁴⁷ Strangways Act had offered little hope to farmers that this adaptation would be sooner rather than later.

44. In South East land sales from 3 March - 31 August 1869, nine applicants bought 1,528 acres on credit for £3,221.6.0. SAPP 58 of 1869-70, HA, 24 August 1869. See also MGS, 9 February 1869; G.L. Buxton, pp 17-18.

45. At a total cost of £14,064.19.5, Smith was paying an average of £1.5 per acre. Adam Smith's Ledger, BRG 89, SAA, Map 14. For other large purchases, see LGB for Counties Robe, Grey and McDonnell; Map 13. As a further example of the continuing sale of land to agents and speculators, land sold by auction and private contract in the South East for the three months from 1 January 1871 to 4 August 1871 totalled 29,575 acres. Prominent among purchasers were the land agents Messrs Prankerd, Hannaford, Wadham, Gleeson and Young. Among Prankerd's purchases was 1,437 acres in the Agricultural Area of Naracoorte. SAPP 66 of 1872, HA, 29 August 1871.

46. See footnote 41. As a further concession to pastoralists, land not purchased on credit agreement after two years could be sold at auction for cash or credit; if left, land could be leased at 6d per acre for ten years. T. Playford, p 8. This regulation was, however, not acted upon. SAPP 60 of 1890, 1 July 1890, p 3.

47. BW, 6 January 1869.

Strangways Act was not only conservative: it was unrealistic. As the first major political endeavour to settle "a numerous yeomanry", the Act embodied a fallacy which was to characterise every successive attempt to do likewise. It hoped to plant a European ideal in an environment which was simply not European. The yeoman ideal was based upon "a rich heritage of a deeply-rooted European peasantry", but the South Australia farmer had not yet forged emotional links with his alien environment. He had not inherited his land. He was purchasing it. His land was not a legacy but an investment. His land was not yet his "home", but his "capital". He was not a member of a "stabilised, localised society" but a member of "a world-wide dynamic, competitive society".⁴⁸ He had to farm it so that it would pay.

He had also to deal with the realities of South Australian climate, on relatively inferior land, for as the Surveyor-General regularly pointed out, and as Strangways himself admitted, the best agricultural land had been alienated before the Act.⁴⁹

Under these conditions regulations such as personal residence and annual cultivation and improvement designed to settle stable, self-sufficient cultivators who would pass land on to their children were often to have exactly the opposite effect. As Charles Bonney observed, personal residence in the flooded areas of the South East was impossible "unless legislators were prepared to drown the selector".⁵⁰ Nor did prescribing cultivation allow for the vagaries of the seasons or the unsuitability

48. D. Meinig, pp 120-2.

49. SAPP 60 of 1890, 1 July 1890, p 16; SAPD, 3 December 1868, col. 1010.

50. SAPD, 11 June 1972, col. 207.

of the land for agriculture. To outlay on improvements often went against the selector's immediate need to improve by ploughing first to catch the season. Selectors handicapped beyond endurance by these regulations either evaded them or abandoned their holdings.

This involved Government and landowner in serious financial loss. As "letting agent" for land purchased on credit, the Government could not afford to let responsibility toward the landowner lapse as it did when land was purchased by sale at auction. It was now even more incumbent upon the Government to make its investment in land and landowner pay. To realise returns when difficulties arose the Government allowed concessions as it had done with pastoralists. However, the government was no longer dealing with wealthy lessees, but with small men taking grave risks with the environment, prices, markets and capital. To help men struggling against these odds Strangways Act was to undergo a continual "patching on patching" as amendment after amendment was passed to allow concessions. These concessions most often hampered the small man at the same time as they helped pastoralists and large farmers with good land and capital to aggregate.

Charles Bonney, Inspector of Credit Agreement holdings, considered the "personal residence" regulation was "the only practical utility in preventing the evasion of Strangways Act".⁵¹ When this clause was relaxed to allow "substitute residence", farmer-graziers and pastoralists with capital quickly aggregated.⁵² When a selector could take up 1,000 rather than 640 acres the increased amount meant increased payments which the small

51. GRG 35/1/1871/825 and 958a, SAA.

52. Under substitute residence, a landholder might put a male relative or a manservant [sic] to reside for at least nine months of the year on land purchased under credit agreement. Act 18 of 1872, assented to 14 August 1872.

man was not always able to meet.⁵³ As the best land had gone first, the selector could not expect this extra land to be better than his original selection. The concession was no compensation for him, but it did allow pastoralists and graziers to aggregate. When cultivation regulations became minimal, they used this inferior land for alternative pasturing.⁵⁴ This gave capitalists a further opportunity to aggregate. Continually extending terms of credit and interest did not help the small man either; the increase in payments was often only another millstone.⁵⁶ By 1884, fifteen years of continually amended legislation had failed to foster a numerous yeomanry "whose dearest associations and family ties were bound up with the land and who hoped to live and die upon it".⁵⁷ The

53. Act 86 of 1877, assented to 21 December 1877.

54. Act 18 of 1872, assented to 14 August 1872.

55. Limited transfer, which became generally more liberal, was available from Act 18 of 1872.

56.

Act under which Selections were made	Method of Sale	Term of Credit (years)	Deposit (per cent)	Period
14 of 1868-9	Simultaneous applications decided by lot	4	20	2 March 1869 to 8 February 1870
14 of 1868-9, and 4 of 1869-70	Simultaneous applications decided by lot	5, and 3 years' extension if required	20	9 February 1870 to 12 January 1871
14 of 1868-9, 4 of 1869-70, and 27 of 1870-71	Simultaneous applications decided by lot	5, and 3 years' extension if required	10	13 January 1871 to 14 August 1872
Waste Lands Alienation Act, 18 of 1872	Limited auction	6, and 4 years' extension of half purchase-money if required	10	15 August 1872 to 14 January 1878
Crown Lands Consolidation Act 86 of 1877	Right of choice offered at auction	6, and 3 years' extension for three-quarters purchase-money	10	15 January 1878 to 24 October 1879
Crown Lands Consolidation Act, amended by Act 157 of 1879	Sections offered at auction in order fixed by Surveyor-General	6, and 3 years' extension for three-quarters purchase-money	10	25 October 1879 to 31 December 1880

From T. Playford, p 12.

57. SAPD, 10 September 1879, col. 909.

liberalisations of Strangways Act merely put the capitalist landowners of the South East in a better position than they had enjoyed before its passing.

This was particularly evident in areas established especially to settle agriculturalists. The government proclaimed six Agricultural Areas in the South East where the rainfall was known to be reliable.⁵⁸ This was a quarter of the total proclaimed for the colony, but as politicians knew, most land in these areas not already alienated by pastoralists was unsuitable for agriculture. Optimists were confident that this land, known for three decades to be water-logged in winter, could be made to behave like European land if it were drained.⁵⁹ A brief examination of the settlement of the Agricultural Areas of Mt Muirhead and Mayurra shows how entirely unfounded this assumption was. A decade of legislation and man's labour established a few large local farmers, but "a numerous yeomanry" was not attracted to the district and drained land was not made to conform to growing the European mainstay of wheat.

In 1864 the government provided funds for a limited drainage scheme in those Areas not primarily to promote agriculture, but to prevent the the South East from seceding to Victoria.¹⁰ At noon on 27 August 1867, experimental cuts were opened at Milne's and English's gaps through the narrow coastal ranges which separated the Mt Muirhead flats and the Waokwine, Wyrrie and German Swamps from Lake Bonney and

58. SAPP 161 of 1868-9, HA, 21 December 1868. Map 7.

59. Map 12.

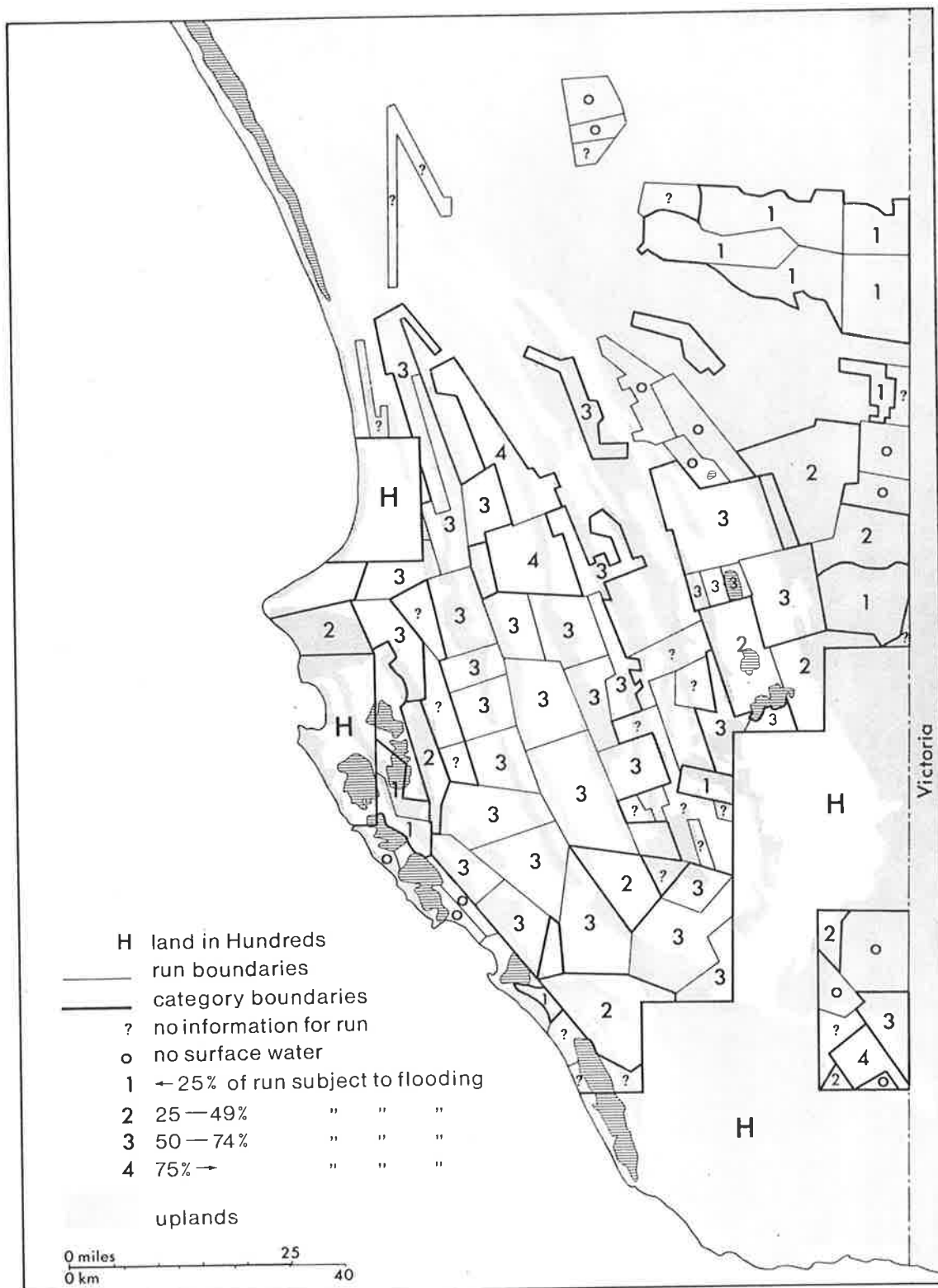
60. Ch. 2, footnote 367. See also SAPP 60 of 1890, p 20. The drainage works also provided work for unemployed labourers from Adelaide and from the South East at 16/- per day. MGS, 22 September 1868; SAPP 107 of 1870, HA, 2 September 1872, HA, 30 May 1872; G.L. Buxton, p 25; a map of the proposed new state in Mitchell Library: No. M2/806/fax/1862 in M. Williams, p 223, footnote 7.

MAP 12

Land Subject to Flooding

Because the South East was 'well-watered' in contrast with the dry north of South Australia, politicians continually claimed the area ideal for closer settlement. Yet much of the district was so often flooded that it was unsuitable for either agriculture or pastoralism.

(M. Williams, The Making of the South Australian
Landscape, p 198)



Frome.⁶¹ The cuts were a spectacular success. Within four hours 190,000 tons of water had passed into Lake Bonney at five miles per hour, lowering the water level on the swamps as much as two feet.⁶² The cuts were no longer "experimental fore-runners". The government was confident that the land, when drained, would "sustain a greater population and provide greater wealth with its consequent benefits for the community at large."⁶³ There were doubts. The Surveyor-General considered the land best suited to growing potatoes;⁶⁴ the Surveyor-General frequently insisted that drainage would make pastoral land and not agricultural land available.⁶⁵ Some local settlers with previous experience of the English marshlands said the salts would rise and the crops die.⁶⁶ By November 1869, when the scheme had cost £14,652.2.10, a report on the drainage works declared that it had uncovered little land suitable for agricultural purposes. To render 2,000 acres fit for agriculture would cost a further £1,000 per mile of drainage.⁶⁷

Despite these warnings, without either "scientifically assessing the potential of the swamps for agriculture" or "making a careful and

61. Map 13. For a detailed account of drainage in the South East from 1864-1968, M. Williams, The Making of the South Australian Landscape, Ch. 5 and M. Williams, "The Historical Geography of an Artificial Drainage System: The Lower South East of South Australia", Australian Geographical Studies, Vol. 2, October 1964, pp 87-102. See also B.J. Towers, Early Millicent, pp 10-13.

62. The Observer, 4 September 1880. The surface east of Milne's gap was lowered from 12'6" to 10'6"; east of English's gap the surface fell from 7' to 6'6".

63. South-Eastern Drainage Board, EIS, p 30.

64. SAPP 88 of 69-70, LC, 14 September 1869.

65. SAPP 60 of 1890, 1 July 1890, p 20.

66. B.J. Towers, p 12.

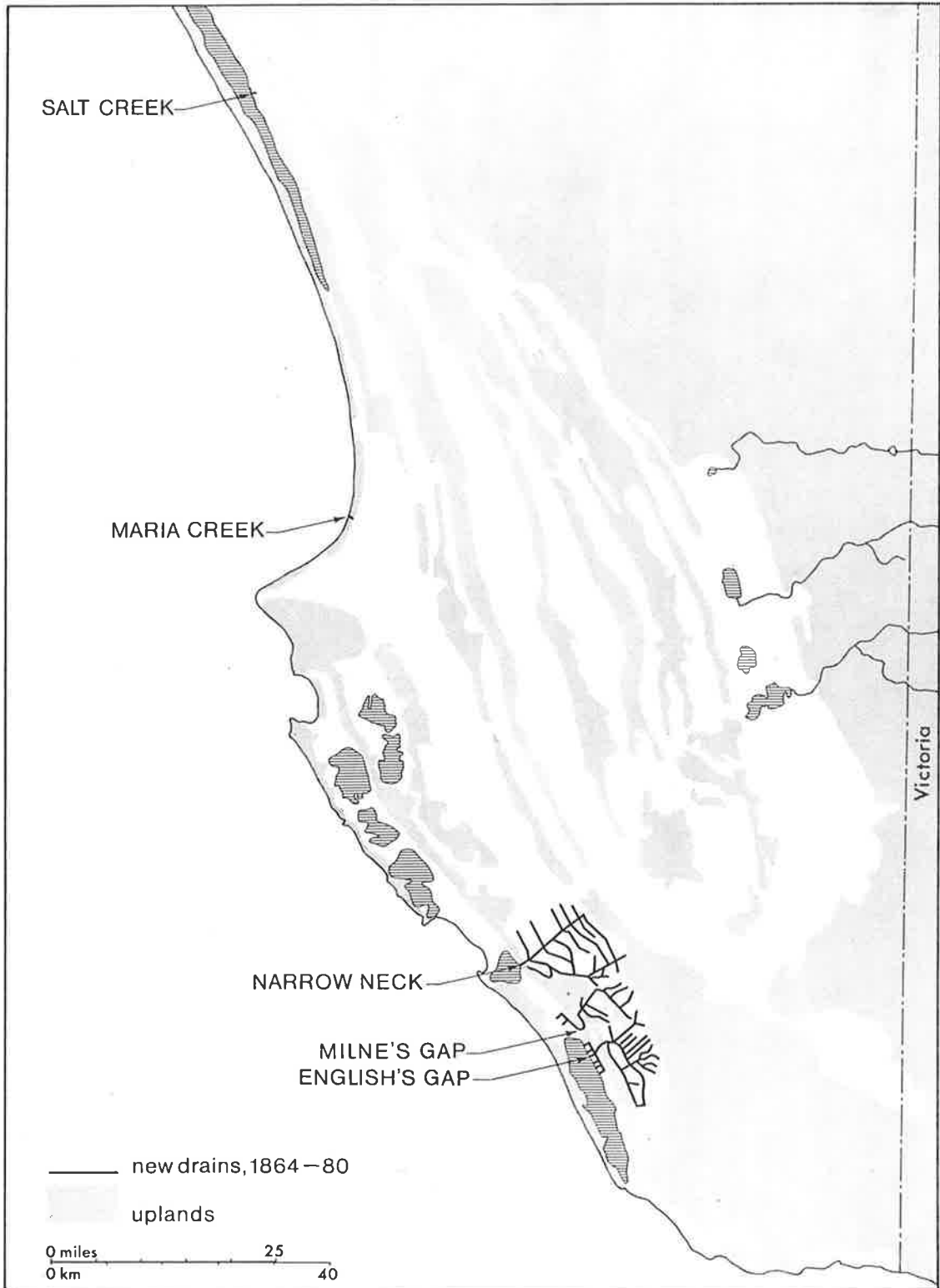
67. SAPP 88 of 1869-70, LC, 14 September 1869; SAPP 88A of 1869-70, LC, 4 November 1869. Between 21 August 1867 and 31 July 1864, excavating 351,746 cubic yards at 10/- per cubic yard under Mt Butte, Superintendent, cost £14,652.2.10. SAPP 88A of 1869-70, LC, 4 November 1869.

MAP 13

South East Drainage, 1864-80

In 1864 the Government began an experimental drainage scheme, both to make South East land more like European land and to prevent the region from seceding to Victoria. Almost twenty years later, although Governments had extended the scheme at great cost, the land was supporting a few large mixed farmers rather than a population of small cultivators.

(M. Williams, The Making of the South Australian Landscape, p 188)



professional estimate of the cost",⁶⁸ the government prepared to extend a scheme which "compared with the Lincolnshire Fens, or all the drainage areas of England (except the Great Bedford Level) sank into insignificance",⁶⁹ confident in the assumption that a scheme implemented "in a small country with a reliable climate and investigated environment" could be safely and beneficially transplanted to an almost untried environment on the other side of the world.⁷⁰

On 21 December 1868 the Government proclaimed the often flooded Agricultural Areas of Mayurra and Mt Muirhead, declaring they offered "soil mostly of a rich character ... at a moderate cost".⁷¹ But by July 1869 the land was still not in a "tillable condition". Sixty-seven more miles needed draining before it could be opened without a loss of revenue "or offering illusory advantages to intending settlers".⁷² In a rush to get land on to the market, because overland parties "having the appearance of men the colony could ill afford to lose" were crossing the border into Victoria, the Surveyor-General's plan for a comprehensive drainage scheme was adopted in only a limited way while he was absent

68. Report of the Select Committee on Drainage Works in the South East, SAPP 43, HA, 30 May 1872.

69. C. Proud, The South Eastern District of South Australia in 1880, Adelaide, 1880, p 6.

70. D.B. Waterson, "Land Selection in the Colonies 1860-1890: A Few Comments", Journal of History for Senior Students, Victorian Historical Association, Vol. 7, No. 3, September 1976, p 101.

71. SAPP 161 of 1868-9, HA, 21 December 1868.

72. SAR, 17 July 1869.

from South Australia.⁷³ On 26 June 1871, 23,800 acres in the Mt Muirhead and Mayurra areas were thrown open for selection. In the two and a half years since the proclamation of the Areas drainage had proved a costly undertaking. By June 1870, £46,727 had been spent, £31,000 above that voted by Parliament.⁷⁴ In a bid to recoup its outlay for land ostensibly for men of small means, on 2 July 1871, the government declared an upset price of £6 per acre.⁷⁵

As an examination of sections taken up between 26 June and 31 December 1871 shows, such a price was well beyond landless labourers. George Glen, local sheepfarmer of 'Mayurra', bought a homestead block of 101 acres at £6 per acre; the area also attracted two storekeepers and established farmers from the Mt Gambier district seeking land for themselves or their sons.⁷⁶ These were industrious and capable farmers with enough capital to select the sections described

73. In February 1870 a resident near Bordertown, in the north of the South East, counted forty parties crossing to Victoria, BW, 16 February 1870. See also SAPD, 26 January 1870, col. 1480. For the quarter ending 30 June 1870, South Australia had 515 immigrants and 1,130 emigrants, 615 of whom went to Victoria, BW, 10 September 1870. For Goyder's comments on the perfunctory nature of drainage works executed while he was in the Northern Territory and recuperating from illness in England, SAPP 60 of 1890, 1 July 1890. See also ADB, Vol. 4, pp 279-80; K.R. Bowes, pp 110-1; M. Williams, The Historical Geography of an Artificial Drainage System, pp 91-2; M. Williams, The Making of the South Australian Landscape, pp 185-6.

74. The Observer, 4 September 1880. See also SAPD, 13 October 1871, cols 745-6.

75. SAPP 31 and 32 of 1871, HA, 25 May 1871.

76. Of 41 Credit Agreements taken up on Mayurra and Mt Muirhead in the first six months after the land was open, the pattern of selection was as follows:

	<u>Townsmen</u>	<u>Farmer</u>	<u>Labourer</u>
Mt Gambier	2	26	4
Millicent	-	2	3
Non-local	-	3	1

CALB, DL. Mt Gambier farmers were established men such as the brothers John and James Paris, William Sinclair and his son Peter, John McArthur and his sons. For biographical details of these and other early selectors, L.R. Hill, pp 47, 49, 52 and 53; Rendelsham Centenary Committee, Rendelsham, p 80; C.J. Melano, Walking Tall: History of Millicent, 1973, pp 69-74.

as "rich and arable", and to purchase without needing concessions of time or credit.⁷⁷

Typical of these was Louis Spehr, a Mt Gambier farmer who had purchased 380 acres at £6 per acre by 31 August 1871.⁷⁸ In the first two years of cultivation, Spehr found his wheat crops averaged over 30 bushels per acre, and his reclaimed land continued to improve with working. In 1874 Spehr reaped 4,430 bushels of wheat from 191 acres which he sold at 5/- per bushel. By 1875 he had more land and looked forward to a much higher yield from a 400 acre crop over five feet high, "as thick as it could stand, and perfectly level throughout". But Spehr was not only cultivating. On 100 acres he was growing a luxuriant crop of rye and prairie grass on which he was pasturing "a large flock of superior long-woolled sheep".⁷⁹ By October 1871 other established farmers had taken up 2,710 acres of drained land at an average of £4.5 per acre "with grazing in view".⁸⁰ A familiar situation had arisen in the Agricultural Areas of Mt Muirhead and Mayurra. The landless labourer had been effectively excluded from the most expensive and therefore the best land which, as so often in the past, had fallen into the hands of bourgeois investors and farmer-graziers who were using their land for pastoral more than agricultural pursuits.

77. CALB, DL; SAPP 66 of 1871, HA, 22 August 1871; Rendelsham, 1880-1980, p 6.

78. Sections 585, 589 and 591 in Mt Muirhead; 549 and 542 in Mayurra; a total of 604 acres for £3,040.15. For details of the Spehr family and their widespread farming activities, L. Hill, p 53; W. Frederic Morrison, The Aldine History of South Australia, Vol: 2, Adelaide, 1890, p 542; H.T. Burgess (ed.), The Cyclopoedia of South Australia, Vol. 2, Adelaide, 1907-9, p 994; The Sunday Mail, Industries of the South East, Adelaide, 1930, pp 166-8. Discussion with E.G. Spehr, Seaview Downs, on 15 February 1982. Analysis of Credit Agreement holdings from CALB, DL.

79. J.L. Dow, Agriculture in South Australia, Melbourne, 1874, p 53. Dow was Special Reporter of the "Farm Section" of The Leader. See also BW, 1 March 1873.

80. BW, 25 October 1871. Average for land sold on credit in the colony at this time was £1.5.6 per acre, T. Playford, p 12.

By 1872 Strangways Act had been in operation for three years. The population of the colony had increased by 19,000 to 195,000, but obviously not many of this number had become small wheat-cultivating proprietors. The average acreage per head had increased by $3\frac{1}{2}$ acres to 25 acres but the average per head under cultivation had risen by only $1\frac{1}{4}$ acres to 6 acres.⁸¹ The South East had shown a larger proportionate increase in population than the colony as a whole, growing from 8,875 to 12,631 between 1866-71, but this increase was still limited to County Grey, where Mt Gambier remained the only early settled country town in South Australia to show a steady increase in population.⁸² In Counties Robe and McDonnell some settlers on undrained land and remained "sanguine of a fair yield" although "the water in their wells was on a level with the surface of the ground"; some had ploughed but were unable to sow because their land was flooded; others had "quietly flitted over the border".⁸³ The area under cultivation in the South East had been extended by 14,000 acres to 50,635 acres, but the Chief Secretary, the Honourable William Milne, admitted that nine-tenths of this was devoted to pasturage as the district still ran almost one quarter of the colony's sheep.⁸⁴ Faced with this disappointing attempt to settle small wheat farmers, and urged by a clamour for land from farmers in drought-stricken areas north of Adelaide,

81. T. Playford, p 9.

82. SRSA, 1872. See also Appendix 4. Mt Gambier's population continued to grow as follows: 1871, 2,369; 1876, 2,500; 1881, 2,636; 1891, 3,276; 1901, 4,160; 1911, 4,531. J.B. Hirst, Appendix, Table 3, p 229.

83. SAPP 172 of 1872, HA, 16 August 1872.

84. The South East was running 977,445 sheep; the total for the colony was 4,412,055. SRSA 1871, Prefatory Report to Paper III, 30 January 1871. See also G.L. Buxton, p 30.

in 1872 the Government amended Strangways Act for the third time in three years.⁸⁵

Under the comprehensive Crown Lands Consolidation Act of 1872 all land inside "Goyder's Line" became available for selection.⁸⁶ The concept of Agricultural Areas was abandoned, but as the government paid heavily to reclaim land in the South East which had been open for only fourteen months, the areas of Mt Muirhead and Mayurra were to remain as Agricultural Areas for two more years. "Cultivation" was redefined to include cereals, hemp, flax, pulse, root crops, orchards and olives. Credit concessions could be extended for ten years. Personal residence gave way to substitute residence, but those who personally resided could purchase after five rather than six years. Pastoralists had the right to lease for ten years, at not less than 6d per acre, up to 3,000 acres of land open for agriculture but not sold after five years - conditions which confirmed the inferiority of much of the land offered for agriculture.⁸⁷ By allowing large areas to be held under minimal cultivation and substitute residence, politicians were also admitting that land which the pastoralists had not alienated was land incompatible with the founders' ideals.

Yet many selectors hoped to succeed under the new regulations. Among these was Robert Smith Jnr who selected 351 acres in Sections 387, 388 and 377 in the Hundred of Mayurra for £702 under Credit Agreement 2370. Smith had tried farming poor land at Woods Wells on the Coorong

85. Act 18 of 1872, assented to 14 August 1872. Act 4 of 1869-70 and Act 27 of 1871 allowed extensions of time and credit. See footnote 56. By 1876, 1,678 selections, averaging 278 acres in area, or a total of 602,771 acres, had been taken up. T. Playford, p 12.

86. Goyder had originally drawn his famous line to assess the southern limit of the effects of the 1864-6 drought on northern pastoralists. By 1872 the line was prescribed as the limit of agricultural settlement. For further details and map, G.L. Buxton, pp 39-41; J.B. Hirst, pp 12-3; M. Williams, p 42; D. Meinig, pp 45-6.

87. Regulations of Act 18 of 1872. For further details, G.L. Buxton, pp 37-41.

before moving to O.B. Flat about four miles from Mt Gambier. The newly-drained area around Millicent attracted him as it did many others from the Mt Gambier district, and on 25 August 1872 he took up land on the shores of Lake Bonney, formerly part of Samuel Davenport's and George Glen's leasehold.⁸⁸ One can only speculate why Robert Smith failed to become a freeholding yeoman. He was a healthy young man of 23; his acreage was about average for the colony, and 100 acres above the amount which the 1879 Select Committee Report on the Selling of Crown Lands considered should be enough "to furnish a livelihood".⁸⁹ Smith may have found it difficult to get the necessary capital to work and hold his land. Farmers were borrowing from local and Mt Gambier storekeepers at 15% - "a security risky and perishable".⁹⁰ It is more likely that Smith's land was his downfall. It was alternating ridge and open flat country with short rushes and limestone cropping out.⁹¹ Although his ridge lands had served George Glen well for winter pasturing, they were decidedly unfit for agriculture, and Goyder had originally intended the ridges as homestead land for settlers.⁹²

88. Robert Smith formerly held Sections 29 and 30 in the Hundred of Glyde; CT 85/22, and Sections 10-14 in the Hundred of Caroline; CT 88/24, LTO. For details of Smith's holdings at Mayurra, CALB, DL, Department of Lands. Robert Smith's brother, John, purchased the adjoining section 386 of 111 acres under Credit Agreement 2369 on 7 September 1879, and another brother, Thomas, had his Agreement on Section 135 revoked on 11 February 1874. CALB, DL. I am indebted to Mr Bob Wilson of Millicent, great-nephew of Robert Smith, for providing personal details of Smith's family in and interview on 8 February 1982. See also C.J. Melano, p 75.

89. SAPP 71 of 1879 HA 16 September 1879. The Report found holdings of less than 250 acres were often transferred because they were too small to furnish a livelihood. An analysis of holdings in Mt Muirhead and Mayurra between 1871-9 shows that of 58 holdings of less than 150 acres, 13 were transferred; of 4 holdings of 250-400 acres none was transferred; of 4 holdings of more than 400 acres, none was transferred. CALB, DL.

90. SAPP 71 of 1879, HA, 16 September 1879, question 12. Interest rates on loans varied from 12½-30% with stores charging not less than 10%. See also SAPP 10 September 1879, col. 909, where the common rate suggested was 15%.

91. Diagram book, Hundred of Mayurra, p 23, DL.

92. SAPP 55 of 1874, HA, 19 May 1874.

It is not known how Smith used his land but if he attempted wheat growing, his experience may well have been similar to his neighbours. In the winter of 1871 they shod their horses with leather and ploughed double-banked, but the horses still floundered through the mire on soil "reduced to the consistency of gruel", completely useless for cropping.⁹³ By August a few remained hopeful of crops, "notwithstanding their submergence".⁹⁴ If Smith tried to grow cereals other than wheat, he may have had difficulties similar to those of one farmer who found his ground so boggy that his horses' legs sank over their knees in the mud and whose account of his first year of settlement ran thus: "Wheat harvest nil, potato crop ditto, the only return was through a kindly trespass committed by a neighbour's cattle 'ere yet the wheat had shrivelled up and died". In his second year the caterpillars came "in myriads" and devoured his wheat and barley; his only source of profit was from a few acres of rape which did well. "Year number 3, frosts came and nipped cereals, so that besides costs, lost £500 in trying to fulfil cultivation clauses."⁹⁵

Smith, like these struggling selectors, also lacked public amenities. There was no railway; roads to the undeclared port of Rivoli Bay twelve miles away were like "glue pots in winter and yawning chasms in summer".⁹⁶ Selectors were not given agricultural advice. A small piece of swamp flat and ridge land near the cottage and stables of Mr Bütte, Superintendent of Drainage, was all that served as a model farm for selectors battling without prior experience on reclaimed South Australian land.⁹⁷

93. BW, 29 July 1871.

94. BW, 12 August 1871.

95. The Observer, 4 September 1880.

96. BW, 16 October 1878.

97. SAPP 107 of 1870-1, HA, 2 September 1870 and LC, 6 September 1870.

After three years it was clear to Smith and other selectors that Mayurra was not "the agricultural El Dorado" politicians had claimed it would be.⁹⁸ Pests, bad seasons and wet land made the Area "agricultural" in name only. In 1875, when many others also transferred, Smith left his land and became a fisherman at Beachport.⁹⁹

Some fared better than Smith. Those with capital and on the best land gained a further advantage when they were allowed additional land under substitute residence and relaxed conditions for cultivation. Among these were Louis Spehr of Mt Gambier, first selector in the Mt Muirhead area. In 1876, by buying from other selectors soon after they completed purchase, he acquired a further 723 acres for £1,450.5 under suspicious circumstances, which he used for grazing.¹⁰⁰ William Hay, Mt Gambier farmer and merchant, also found the new regulations advantageous. Hay had experimented with planting rye, trefoil, rib and cocksfoot on his holdings in that district.¹⁰¹ By 1879, under substitute residence, he completed the purchase of 579 acres to the north of the drainage area which he put under pasture.¹⁰² James Cock, son of Robert Cock, brewer, maltster, land agent, and early Mt Gambier district landholder, also purchased 629 acres in the Mayurra

98. The Observer, 22 March 1873.

99. Between 1873-9, 27 conditional transfers were granted on Mayurra; 7 selectors transferred their holdings in 1875. Analysis of holdings in CALB, DL. After living principally as a fisherman for the next 21 years, Robert Smith was drowned when his boat capsized. BW, 23 January 1896.

100. SAPP 41 of 1877, HA, 4 December 1877.

101. BW, 16 October 1878. For biographical details of William Hay, Rendelsham, 1880-1980, p 67.

102. Sections 211, 224, 133, 134, 225, 132, 135, 334 and 355, Hundred of Mayurra. CALB, DL.

district under the benefits of the 1872 Act.¹⁰³ Michael Whelan, the local butcher and hotel keeper, similarly accumulated 382 acres.¹⁰⁴ Once again liberalised legislation had helped those with capital and experience rather than the small and struggling farmer.

Under the Waste Lands Alienation Act of 1872 agriculture surged ahead in the north of South Australia,¹⁰⁵ but the South East presented a totally different picture. The Crown Lands Ranger, J. Singleton, reported that the farmers in the district were "in a deplorable state".¹⁰⁶ Population was declining; the area under cultivation was static; sheep numbers were increasing.¹⁰⁷ Yet politicians responded to the urgent and persistent demand for land from

103. Sections 226, 178, 179, 180, 181, 182, Hundred of Mayurra. CALB, DL. By 1875 Cock also owned 29,000 acres on the Glenelg River. BW, 16 June 1875.

104. Sections 201, 128, 129, Hundred of Mayurra; Sections 562, 563, 567, Hundred of Mt Muirhead. CALB, DL.

105. From 1872-7, 7,399 selections were made; the average area selected was 336 acres, and the amount selected was 2,491,639½ acres for £3,508,980.11.6 which was an average of £1.8.1 per acre. D. Meinig, pp 46-56; G.L. Buxton, p 39; T. Playford, p 11.

106. Land under cultivation in the Northern Hundreds of the South East in 1872

<u>Hundred</u>	<u>Acres</u>		<u>Yield*</u>		<u>Acres</u>		<u>Yield</u>	
	<u>Wheat</u>				<u>Oats</u>		<u>Barley</u>	
Naracoorte	2,803	11½	39	17	96	9½		
Hynam	1,433	10½	27	10	62	6.3/4		
Lochaber	nil		nil		nil			
Glenroy	36	10	2	14	nil			
Jessie	330	8½	nil		42	8½		
Robertson	7	- 17	nil		nil			
Joanna	nil		nil		nil			
Binnun	nil		nil		nil			

* in bushels per acre.

SAPP 122 of 1872, HA, 16 August 1872.

107. Appendices 4 and 5. Between 1872-5 the number of sheep in the colony grew from 4,412,055 to 6,120,211; in the South East from 977,445 to 1,291,459. Land brought under cultivation in the colony increased from 1,164,846 to 1,330,484 acres; in the South East from 49,823 to 53,822 acres, but this marked a decline from 58,988 acres in 1874. County Grey still had the greatest number of sheep and the largest area under cultivation. SRSA 1879, Paper 3, p 10.

northern farmers, confident that the agricultural progress in the previous two years of good rainfall there could be sustained, despite Goyder's "adamant stand" against the high risk of farming "beyond the reliable limit of sufficient rainfall".¹⁰⁸

On 26 November 1874 the Government passed an Act which set at nought earlier aspirations of concentrated agricultural settlement.¹⁰⁹

Goyder's line was abolished. An agriculturalist might now obtain land, after survey, "anywhere within the limits of South Australia".¹¹⁰ But so could the pastoralist large farmer, "dummy" and speculator. The Government had again forsaken the colonisers' ideal, upheld again as essential before the passing of Strangways Act, of a balance between land, labour, revenue and immigration.¹¹¹ One land law applied to the whole colony. As the Government had abrogated the responsibility of distinguishing, even nominally, between "pastoral" and "agricultural" land, capitalists in the South East and elsewhere now had more opportunity to accumulate land and to use it in a way best suited to making it pay.

When this "liberating" Act came into operation, 11,268 acres in the Agricultural Areas of Mt Muirhead and Mayurra were still not been selected.¹¹² George Florence McCarthy, of Allendale near Mt Schanck, may well have thought land in Mayurra would be easier to work than the barren limestone land, riddled with rocky outcrops, in his area. McCarthy joined a growing number of Irish settlers near Millicent, by-passed closer land open for selection, and under Agreement 2370, on 25 October

108. G.L. Buxton, p 41; SAPP 60 of 1890, HA, 1 July 1890, p 16.

109. Act 22 of 1874, assented to 26 November 1874.

110. T. Playford, p 10.

111. SAPD, 3 December 1868, p 1018.

112. By 30 June 1874, 18,583 acres had been selected at an average of £2.16.9¼ per acre. SAPP 144 of 1874, HA, 8 July 1874.

1875, took up 237 acres which Robert Smith had vacated.¹¹³ McCarthy purchased Section 114 in the Hundred of Mayurra on 8 November 1878, but only on 25 January 1883, after annual concessions, was he able to purchase Sections 387 and 388 at £2 per acre.¹¹⁴ How McCarthy managed to do so, despite obvious difficulty, is unknown, but by 1882 he was at least faring better than the majority of his neighbours who had failed to meet their payments.¹¹⁵ Some looked to the legislation of 1882 for rescue. This allowed selectors to surrender their original agreement in anticipation of obtaining a better selection.¹¹⁶ The Act was passed primarily to help drought-stricken farmers in the north of the

113. Application 855, Transfer 6653/75, CALB, DL. Only a little information about George McCarthy has been discovered. On 2 January 1869, while at Allendale, he advertised in The Border Watch in conjunction with F. Wallace for a steam thrasher to thrash his wheat. Perhaps he was sharefarming at this stage. By 1881 Registers of the Pompoon School, near Millicent, show he had a 13-year-old son, George, attending that school. The Registers were read with the permission of B.J. Towers, Millicent, on 8 June 1976. George McCarthy served on the Farmers' Club and Drainage Board Council in Millicent. Mrs R. Willshire, Mt Gambier Road, Millicent, grand-daughter of George McCarthy, said in an interview on 9 June 1976 that her grandfather had probably come either from Ireland or from Slaman, Wales. A George McCarthy, probably McCarthy's son, also purchased on 24 June 1898 Section 653 in the Hundred of Mayurra, a 132 acre block for £165 on Right to Purchase Lease 2111, with minimum residence conditions. RPLB, DL.

114. Application 306/78; CT 413/65; LTO. See also LGB, County Grey.

115. By comparison with Lochaber, Naracoorte and Binnun, more selectors on Mayurra and Mt Muirhead had been unable to meet their payments.

Hundred	Amount of Principal owing	Amount of Interest owing	Total
	£	£	£
Lochaber	437. 8. 0	517. 4. 5	954.12. 5
Naracoorte	93.10. 0	50.17. 7	144. 7. 7
Binnun	1,007. 0. 0	133.13. 2	1,140.13. 2
Mayurra	5,568. 7. 0	684. 2.10	6,252. 9.10
Mt Muirhead	4,235. 7. 9	221.15.10	4,457. 3. 7

From SAPP 81 of 1882, HA, 20 July 1882.

116. Crown Lands Amendment Act No. 275 of 1882, assented to 17 November 1882. For further details, G.L. Buxton, pp 67-72; The Observer, 4 September 1880.

colony but selectors in the drainage areas took advantage of it.¹¹⁷ They thus became mobile speculators, the antithesis of the stable yeoman, leaving behind impoverished soil which could be revived only by settlers with enough capital to buy expensive guano, now legally obtainable from the Naracoorte and Millicent caves, seaweed from Kingston, or crushed bone from the boiling-down works at Robe.¹¹⁸

Selectors with a quick eye for profit seized the opportunity the 1882 Act offered "to outwit the government". As they could transfer the original amount of purchase-money and value of improvements as part payments of the cost of a new selection, some took up a second selection and "gave their exhausted farms a rest", before finally surrendering the selection which was proving less profitable.¹¹⁹ Others selected, sold at a profit, and again selected, hoping to "repeat so profitable a proceeding".¹²⁰ These selectors did not see themselves as the stable, industrious yeomen of Europe; they were looking to make money.¹²¹ Their exploitation of the Act "to a great extent defeated the object of fixing a population upon the land". Their land "dropped out of cultivation

117. SAPD, 11 July 1882, col. 303.

118. BW, 4 July 1878; SAPP 52 of 1880, 27 May 1880; MGS, 2 February 1869; The South Australian Advertiser, 12 October 1875.

119. The legislation aimed to reduce the debt of the farmer who stayed on his selection, as there was a tacit understanding that a selector might bid unopposed for the surrendered land. But as Meinig comments, the provisions of the Act allowed "a subsidised retreat from the most hopeless areas". D. Meinig, p 90.

120. SAPP 60 of 1890, HA, 1 July 1890, p 16.

121. D. Meinig, p 121.

and went to swell large estates".¹²² Once again legislation had brought about the opposite of its intention.

Some in Mayurra and Mt Muirhead stayed on their land, but farmers on reclaimed swamps soon found the black peaty soil, which had seemed to Angas and Burr thirty years previously to hold exciting prospects for farming, too rich for wheat. Tests from the nearly Experimental Farm, established 2½ miles from Millicent in 1875, confirmed this.¹²³ In their efforts to manipulate the land to grow other European crops, selectors adopted "a rough and ready method of doing in one season what should have been acquired by four to five years' cultivation". They ploughed shallow and roughly, burned and ploughed again as soon as the land cooled.¹²⁴ Their method of hastening the "sweetening" of the reclaimed land impoverished the lower levels of the peat and added to the fire risk. The peat, "four to eight feet deep, of the blackest and richest mould, and as nearly like coal as could be" sometimes burned spontaneously, "setting the swamps all ablaze". At other times accidental fires, like those of January 1879 and 1880, "caused the peat to smoulder for days in underground tunnels of fire", leaving the land practically useless for agriculture and "sweeping away the labour of years of toil and anxiety".¹²⁵

122. SAPP 60 of 1890, 1 July 1890, p 16.

123. The farm experimented with 27 varieties of wheat, but was not "on the whole a conspicuous success". Wallabies, "in whole battalions", destroyed the nursery. Oats were attacked by caterpillars. Thirty acres under grasses, however, "grew strongly". Comments of A. Molineux, in The Observer, 10 February 1883, -1254/M, SAA. Albert Molineux (1832-1909), farm editor and promoter of agriculture, became the first editor of Garden and Field, and from 1888-1902, Secretary of the Central Bureau of Agriculture. For further details, ADB, Vol. 5, pp 265-6.

124. A. Molineux in The Observer, 10 February 1883, 1254/M, SAA.

125. Rendelsham, p 2.

Some selectors tried other methods. They added lime to the peat and sowed rape. Samuel Stuckey, selector in the Hundred of Mayurra, began with a $\frac{1}{4}$ lb of rape seed which, after three years, yielded five tons and sold at £25 per ton in 1877. Then in the following year aphids attacked his crop and rape became "a precarious proposition".¹²⁶ Other selectors concentrated on chicory. This crop grew successfully but in 1883 the market collapsed.¹²⁷ Most found the soil was best suited to potatoes, as the Deputy Surveyor-General had predicted. After the "Snowflake" variety was introduced in 1878, crops produced as much as six tons to the acre by 1880. Yet potato crops were often destroyed by frost.¹²⁸ Other selectors followed the example of workers on the Experimental Farm and sowed rye, cocksfoot, Yorkshire fog, trefoil, black prairie grass, and red and white clover. Paddocks on Mayurra swamp land, belonging to George Glen, "worthy pioneer of the art of grass growing", were well laid down with rye grass by 1878.¹²⁹ In 1880 one Adelaide observer was confident that "a good lot of money would yet be made" by the sowing of these grasses for the fattening of stock.¹³⁰ From his first-hand experience with stock, Samuel Stuckey was less confident. He had secured his property with a heavy mortgage by 1880, but was rarely making sufficient to pay the interest. He declared he was keeping the land, rather than the land keeping him.¹³¹

126. Reminiscences of Samuel Joseph Stuckey, A1083/A5, SAA. For biographical details of Stuckey, H.T. Burgess (ed.) Cyclopaedia of South Australia, Vol. 2, p 996.

127. Rendelsham, pp 17-8.

128. By 1876, County Grey produced 18,729 tons of potatoes, SRSA. See also Rendelsham, p 17; Reminiscences of S.J. Stuckey, A1083/A5, SAA and for frost damage GRG 35/442, p 179.

129. BW, 12 January and 16 October 1878.

130. The Observer, 4 September 1880.

131. Reminiscences of S.J. Stuckey, A1083/A5, SAA. The disillusioned Stuckey further declared he was "willing to bow in submission to the dispensation of Providence but not to the injustice of men".

Selectors were not only trying to find European crops best suited to soil, climate and markets, but also to cope with an inadequate drainage system which certainly had not "converted a dreary waste of water into a very paradise of profitable settlement and national prosperity".¹³² The drains were too shallow to run off the stagnant water which remained around the roots of the plants. In 1880 some settlers suffered a double loss when two seedings in that year rotted.¹³³ The drains also needed widening as well as deepening, both to carry off water from the flats and to cope with water from the ancillary drains which spilled their banks when the large drains filled. Desperate farmers petitioned the Government because their land was inundated, their crops ruined, their huts flooded, their animals drowned and roads were "unfit for the carriage of loaded goods". They declared they had tried to make a home at Mt Muirhead and had failed. Unless the Government acted speedily, they would be "compelled to throw up their holdings and select elsewhere", like many who had already left for Victoria.¹³⁴

The government's response was to apportion blame and devolve responsibility. The Commissioner of Crown Lands had no sympathy for yeomen who failed. "The Departments of Lands," he declared, "surveyed land that was fit and unfit for cultivation. The fault was the farmer's if he took up land not fit for agriculture."¹³⁵ The Surveyor-General declared that if "the same quality of land had been occupied by people in the fens in England or in Germany where they understood how to till the land, a hundred families might have been kept instead of one". But South East

132. BW, 19 January 1881.

133. SAPP 189 of 1880, HA, 15-September 1880.

134. SAPP 129 of 1882, 22 August 1882.

135. SAPD, 11 July 1882, col. 302.

farmers seemed "utterly ignorant of the proper mode of tilling the land". Yet politicians remained confident that one day farmers would learn to make drained land behave like European land, at less cost to the Government than in the past.¹³⁶ After 1881 drainage would not be implemented by direct and costly cuts across the ranges to the sea, but by improving the south-east to north-west flow along the natural water courses.¹³⁷ In future users were to be primarily the payers. By a series of Drainage Acts in the eighties the "care, control and management" of drainage rested with locally appointed Boards.¹³⁸

Four miles east of Smith's and McCarthy's land, on 24 August 1874, under Credit Agreement 4204, Thomas Ryan selected 153 acres of Section 340 in the Hundred of Hindmarsh for £401.12.6.¹³⁹ Ryan's land was decidedly better than Smith's and McCarthy's. It was well grassed, away from the frequently inundated flats, with good black soil, and it bordered the main road between Mt Gambier and Rivoli Bay.¹⁴⁰ Ryan was then a 29-year-old labourer who had come to South Australia from County Tipperary in 1868.¹⁴¹ He was "a very successful farmer" who kept cattle and probably indulged in a little agriculture as well.¹⁴² Although he mortgaged

136. SAPP 71 of 1879, HA, 16 September 1879.

137. M. Williams, The Historical Geography of an Artificial Drainage System, p 94.

138. Act 21 of 1875. For details of successive Acts and boundaries of Drainage Districts, C.J. Melano, pp 76-82; M. Williams, pp 208-9. Map 16.

139. Application 514, CALB, DL.

140. Diagram Book, Hundred of Hindmarsh, p 21, DL.

141. SET, 21 January 1910. On shipping lists there are three passengers named Thomas Ryan from Ireland, any of whom could be the Thomas Ryan in question 1529 and 313, SAA.

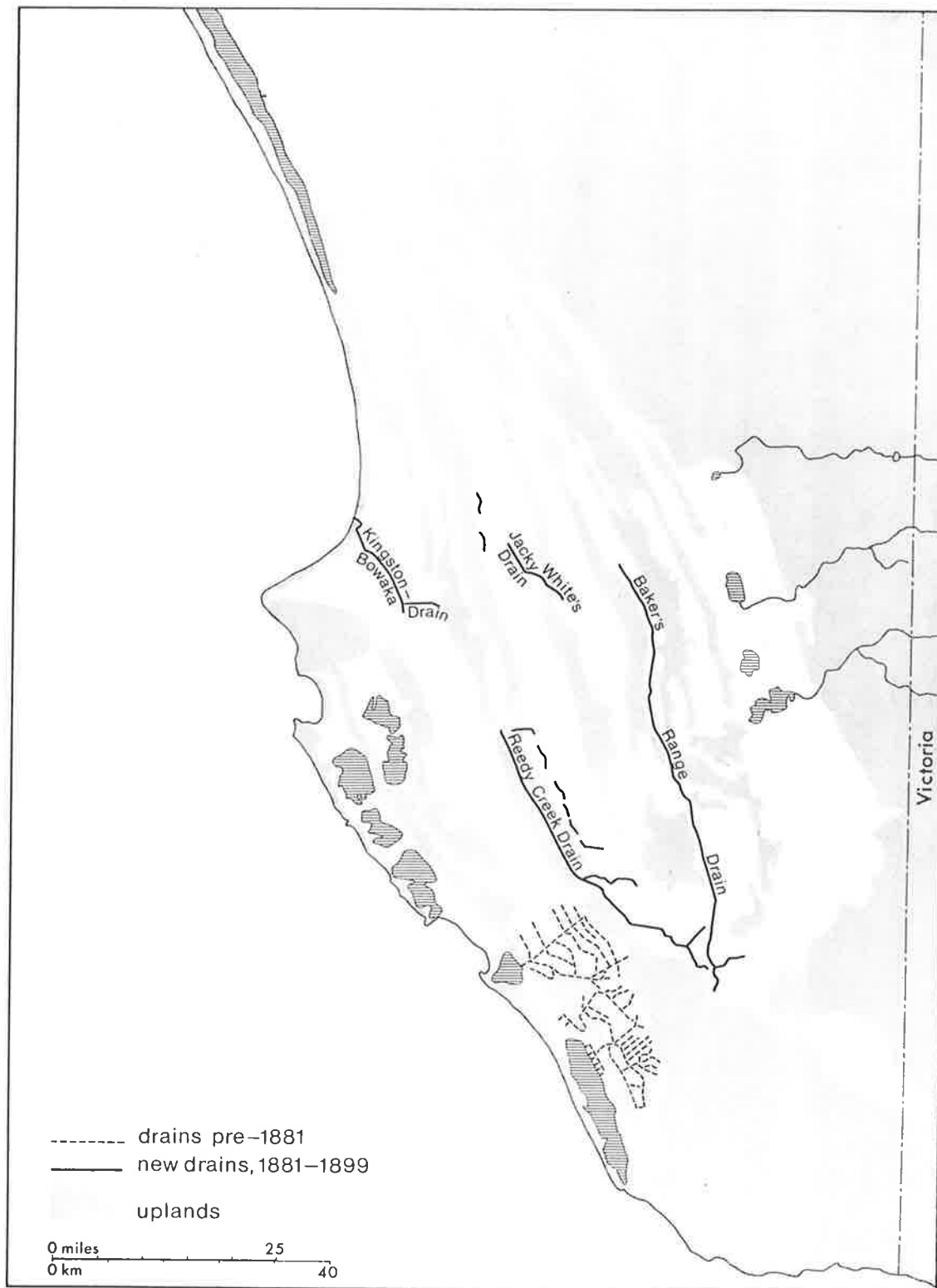
142. SET, 2 January 1920; GRG 35/116/1891/3872, SAA.

MAP 14

South East Drainage, 1881-99

Agricultural leasehold was not supported by adequate drainage. Governments considered the agricultural potential of the northern inland flats was low and promoted a cheap drainage scheme which improved the flow of water along the natural water courses but did not prevent frequent flooding.

(M. Williams, The Making of the South Australian Landscape, p 201)



heavily, Ryan completed the purchase of his section on 3 May 1880.¹⁴³ It is not possible to know how much his success was because of better management or farming techniques but Ryan's good land would have stood significantly in his favour. Even so, Ryan declared 153 acres was not sufficient to support him and his family of eight. After applying for additional land unsuccessfully on several occasions, in 1891, when he was 52, Ryan finally obtained the lease of a further 23 acres in the neighbouring Hundred of Benara at an annual rental of 8d per acre.¹⁴⁴ In many ways Ryan represented Wakefield's ideal of an industrious immigrant labourer who would become a yeoman after three years' labouring. But Ryan also epitomised the failure of attempting to transplant an agrarian ideal. Despite fertile land, Ryan became a landowner not after three years of wheat farming on 80 acres, but after almost twenty years of mixed farming on four times that area, the major part of which he held under lease.

By 1880 "the civilising influences" and increasing population of Millicent and outlying townships offered some compensation for failure to settle an agricultural yeomanry in the drainage areas of Mt Muirhead and Mayurra. From a canvas settlement on the swamp lands, accommodating up to 200 drainage labourers earning 8/- per day, Millicent burgeoned to a township where $\frac{1}{4}$ acre allotments brought as much as £225 by 1877.¹⁴⁵ Millicent North was surveyed in 1878; Rendelsham was established five miles to the north-east by 1880.¹⁴⁶ In 1881, a European community in

143. Application 300/8; CT 335/110; LGB, County Grey.

144. GRG 35/116/1891/3872, SAA.

145. Millicent was surveyed in 1870 on a narrow ridge of limestone which rose 10' to 15' above the swamps on either side. For its growth, C.J. Melano, pp 36 and 84-91; M. Williams, South Australia from the Air, pp 58-9; BW, 1 and 17 March 1873.

146. SES, 4 January 1878; Rendelsham, p 8. In 1876 there were 860 inhabitants in the 93 square miles of the district of Millicent; in 1881, Millicent proper had 689 residents and Rendelsham 63. Census return, SRSA, 1882.

Millicent, "marrying and giving in marriage to any extent", had grown to 752.¹⁴⁷ Churches and schools in the district signified the possibility that this was a "moral and religious community", although their nights were occasionally "made hideous by the visitation of drunken natives", supplied with money by police-tracker, Lanky Cana, one of 32 who remained of the Booandik tribe by 1881.¹⁴⁸

Yet "propagators of a rural idyll" faced the unwelcome fact that the Millicent district was not peopled primarily by a newly-settled "race of farmers with the sun's tan on their faces and ploughed lands at their heels".¹⁴⁹ The majority of successful selectors on the drained lands of Mayurra and Mt Muirhead had been established farmers before they took up land there.¹⁵⁰ On areas as large as 600 acres, they were engaged either

147. SAPD, 14 June 1879, col. 62.

148. BW, 14 August 1874. Of these Aborigines, 5 were in County MacDonnell; 3 in County Robe; 24 in County Grey. Only 5 were employed. Census Returns, RSA, 1882.

149. SAPD, 10 September 1879, col. 912.

150. An analysis of credit agreements between 1871-9 shows the most successful group of first holders of a selection to purchase their land were farmers from Mt Gambier:

Mayurra: 37 first holders of 55 Agreements who purchased their land comprised:

	<u>Townsmen</u>	<u>Farmer</u>	<u>Labourer</u>
Mt Gambier	-	22	1
Millicent area	-	9	1
Non-local	1	3	-

Mt Muirhead: 28 first holders of 56 Agreements who purchased their land comprised:

	<u>Townsmen</u>	<u>Farmer</u>	<u>Labourer</u>
Mt Gambier	3	4	2
Millicent area	3	3	6
Non-local	1	3	3

CALB, DL.

in dairying, mixed farming, or sowing artificial grasses for fattening livestock on land at an average cost of almost £3 per acre, twice the average sum spent by pastoralists thirty years previously for the finest land in the South East.¹⁵¹ Neither land legislation nor a drainage system had succeeded in recouping revenue or in changing an alien environment to settle "that class of small farmers which could do more than any other class to advance the interests of a nation".¹⁵²

Pastoralists in the South East found Strangways Act and its amendments helped them, even more than it did large farmers, accumulate land. When the personal residence regulation was amended to allow substitute residence in 1872, the district became notorious for "dummying".¹⁵³ Pastoralists in the central and northern Hundreds of Lochaber, Binnum, Naracoorte, Monbulla and Robertson dummied heavily on undrained, crabhole land, manifestly unsuitable for agriculture. Among these was "Lord Harry" Jones of 'Binnum-Binnum', who, with his principal selector, "dummied" 24,000 acres. But Jones, "the swell squatter", over-reached himself and was sold up by his creditors. He returned to England an old and broken man.¹⁵⁴ Others were much more successful. In the Hundred of Jessie Adam Smith astutely placed his employees and relatives, one of

151. The Observer, 4 September 1880; J.L. Dow, pp 52-4. By 1880, 86,000 acres had been alienated for £212,481, an average of £2.18 per acre. The average price of ridge land on Mt Muirhead was £2.19 per acre; on Mayurra £2.13; drained land averaged almost £3 per acre. C. Proud, p 57. By 1884, only 19,583 acres were under cultivation, of which 5,884 acres were under wheat. SRSA, 1884.

152. SAPD, 10 September 1879, col. 912. By 1880 purchase had not been completed on 44,694 acres out of 86,000 which left £132,597 owing in purchase-money. C. Proud, p 57.

153. Act 18 of 1872. See footnote 116. For references to dummying in the South East, G.L. Buxton, pp 45-9; J.B. Hirst, p 17; K.R. Bowes, p 220; M. Williams, Delimiting the Spread of Settlement, p 348, SAPD, 14 June 1881, col. 81; 15 June 1862, col. 133; BW, 6 December 1873; GRG 35/1/1873/1287, SAA.

154. C. Fetherstonehaugh, After Many Days, p 129; J. Murdoch and F. Parker, p 62.

them blind from birth, on land he had leased unchallenged since 1844.¹⁵⁵ Although now sixty, and nearing the end of his life, in steady hand Adam Smith kept a meticulous account of the finance due on 7,209 dummied acres and of the improvements he made upon them. These included a two-roomed stone cottage on each holding for £50, several miles of six-wire fencing at £82 per mile, water holes dug at 1/- per cubic yard, a dam of 1,626 cubic yards costing £81.6, a well for £140 and four-rail sheep yards for £100.¹⁵⁶

Among the relatives who acted as Adam Smith's "selectors" were Thomas Hope and his family. Hope had emigrated from Scotland in 1856 and settled in the Hynam-Edenhope region to be near his brother-in-law, Adam Smith, and his cousins at Lake Wallace.¹⁵⁷ His daughter Margaret Hope dummied 640 acres for her uncle, including 192 acres of Section 135S under Credit Agreement 292 in the Hundred of Jessie.¹⁵⁸ Under the terms of agreement Smith began improving and paying off this section at an average cost

155. On 28 May 1870 Smith took up 640 acres under Credit Agreement. On the same date his sons held the following acreages: William Smith, 627; Gideon Smith, 596; Thomas Smith, 640; Robert Smith, 640; H.C.J. Cattanach, his son-in-law, 640; Margaret Hope, 640; Thomas Hope, 557; David Hope, 640; Thomas Hope (Jnr), 640; Christina Cattanach, 637; Robert Hope, 239. Adam Smith's workmen, William Waugh and Jabez Baker selected 640 and 104 acres respectively. I am grateful to Mr and Mrs Robert Smith of 'Hynam House' for access to Adam Smith's station management books and ledgers, copies of which are now located in SAA (BRG 89). Map 14.

156. Adam Smith's Ledger pp 9-20, BRG 89, SAA.

157. For information on the Hope family I am grateful for the correspondence of a descendant, Mr Keith Hope of Cumberland Park, Adelaide, who is currently tracing his family history. For biographical details on the Hope brothers of 'Darriwill', Thomas Hope's cousins, A. Henderson, pp 267-74.

158. CALB, DL; Adam Smith's Ledger, BRG 89, SAA.

of almost 10/5 an acre.¹⁵⁹ The section did not contain particularly promising land as the soil was loose, sandy and covered with ferns, but it was close to water and part of a border tract which Smith's sons and nephews were dummies, and which enclosed the valuable sections of good, loamy soil in the well-grassed, red gum country Smith had hastened to freehold before 1869.¹⁶⁰ The purchase of Section 135S for £960 was completed on 18 July 1875, in Margaret Hope's name. Four months later the land was transferred to Adam Smith.¹⁶¹ He was not so fortunate with all his dummied land: agreements on 2,616 acres were revoked because of non-compliance with cultivation and residence regulations.¹⁶² But by 1875 he could survey a fee-simple empire of 35,959 acres, bought at an average price of £2.2.9 per acre, 27,357 of which he had obtained by legal and illegal purchasing in the first six years after Strangways Act. Instead of promoting democratic settlement, legislation had once more allowed squatters to aggregate.¹⁶³

159. Adam Smith itemised improvements and expenditure on the holding as follows:

To excavating waterhole containing 1,105 cubic yards at 1/- per yard:

£	s.	d.
55.	5.	0

To excavating waterhole containing 1,280 cubic yards at 1/- per yard:

£	s.	d.
64.	0.	0

Two-roomed cottage

50.	0.	0
-----	----	---

74 chains, 6 wire fencing @ £74 per mile:

69.	7.	6
-----	----	---

Total improvements = 7/5 per acre:

238.	12.	6
------	-----	---

Interest:

192.	0.	0
------	----	---

Total cost to date:

430.	12.	6
------	-----	---

To 20 chains 50 links six wire fencing @

£82 per mile:

21.	0.	0
-----	----	---

Total improvements to date 8/1½' per acre. By 71

chains 13 yards six wire fencing @ £82 per mile:

73.	7.	6
-----	----	---

Total improvements £333.0.0 = 10/4.3/4 per acre.

Capital £960 to pay 28th June.

Adam Smith's Ledger, p 15, BRG 89, SAA.

160. Diagram Book, Hundred of Jessie, p 30, DL. For Smith's purchases, Map 14.

161. Transfer No. 59773, CT 211/89.

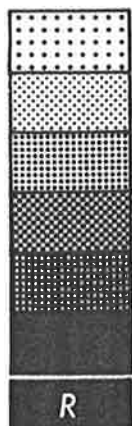
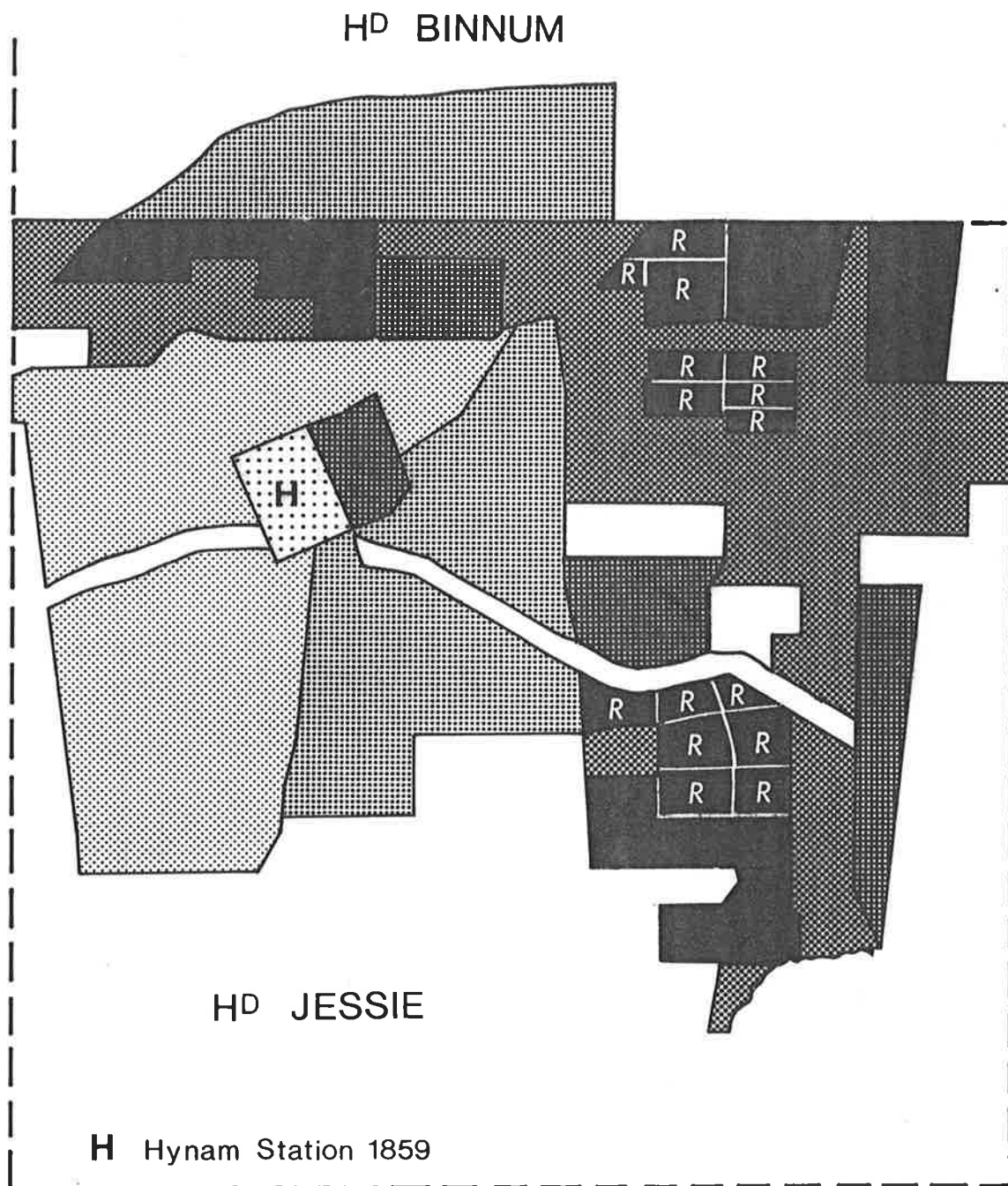
162. SAGG, 30 May and 11 July 1870; 19 December 1872; 22 January 1873; 31 July and 2 September 1875.

163. For grand total and average price, Ledger, pp 30-1, BRG 89, SAA; Map 15.

MAP 15
'Hynam' Estate, 1878

Because Governments were prepared to sell land for revenue and capitalists were prepared to buy, legislation for democratic settlement remained token in the South East. Before Agricultural Hundreds were declared Adam Smith purchased his head station; in 1868-9 he secured land before legislation for land reform; in 1872-4 he added more land during the operation of Strangways Act. Under the concession of "substitute residence", an amendment ostensibly for the small farmer, he aggregated further. Other squatters' purchases followed a similar pattern.

(BRG 89, SAA; SAGG; LGB, Counties Robe and MacDonnell)



Purchased before 1859

" in 1868

" " 1869

" " 1872

" " 1874

dummied under substitute residence

revoked under substitute residence

0 mls 2



Squire Riddoch also took quick advantage of the relaxed conditions of personal residence. He strategically deployed "agents" who did not always reside or cultivate, but whose agreements were not revoked until the eighties. His wife, Elizabeth, illegally held 1,000 acres; to the east, beyond Penola, he dummed well-watered country convenient for border crossings; in a crescent swathe around the homestead sections of 'Yallum Park' he put workmen on 6,000 acres.¹⁶⁴ A fertile stretch in the Hundred of Monbulla three miles to the north of 'Yallum', lay near this area. A former employee at 'Yallum', W. Harvey, "put the word around that the land was worthless".¹⁶⁵ Squire Riddoch also persuaded the Surveyor-General and the Commissioner of Crown Lands, John Catt, his guests during the Christmas season, that "it was useless to open up the land before it was drained".¹⁶⁶ Yet on 21 November 1876, Riddoch's overseer, J.H. Moor, tied up much of it by purchasing to the extent of £15,000 in Adelaide.¹⁶⁷

On 4 December 1876 thirty-seven angry neighbours protested to Charles Bonney, Inspector of Credit Holdings, at what they called Squire Riddoch's latest escapade in "flagrant dummyism". They declared he had used men who were "struggling to keep large families on small salaries". These men, they said, could not possibly have raised the necessary 10% deposit of £1,500, "nor even as many shillings". The petitioners urged Bonney to halt Riddoch's "bonefaced attempt to set the law at defiance". Unless the lands were opened up, they warned that bona fide selectors would cross into Victoria, "as many had already been obliged to do". Bonney

164. SAGG, 6 April 1882; 17 January and 27 March 1884.

165. GRG 35/1/1876/1885, SAA. Among the dummies mentioned were Anthony McElroy, labourer, formerly of 'Nalang', property of John Riddoch's brother, George, near Bordertown; Thomas McDonald, boundary rider for John Riddoch at £1 per week; William Hill and Adam Rutherford of 'Monbulla'; Robert Rutherford, knockabout employee; Margaret Rutherford, daughter of Adam, not employed.

166. BW, 5 January 1876.

167. GRG 35/1/1876/1885, SAA.

replied that the agents would be "carefully watched".¹⁶⁸ Four of the six agreements were revoked in 1876, the land was withdrawn, and "tremendous pressure" followed to get the land on the market again in time for cropping in 1878.¹⁶⁹ Among the purchasers was Squire Riddoch who bought at £8.1.6 per acre when the average price in the colony was £1.9.11.¹⁷⁰

Another selector was James Clarke, who with his land-owning brother, Matthew, ran a saddlery in Penola.¹⁷¹ Clarke kept to the east of a tract of "cold" country in the Hundred of Monbulla, as had Squire Riddoch and his overseer and under Credit Agreements 11417 and 10121, on 13 April 1878, selected the maximum 1,000 acres, among which were 260 acres of Section 185E for which he paid £3.4 per acre.¹⁷² As Hawdon and Mundy had observed one hundred and forty years previously, land in this area varied greatly in quality.¹⁷³ Clarke's land must have lain idle because in 1882 he was

168. GRG 35/1/1876/1885, SAA. Under Victorian legislation, selectors in the Wimmera, where South Australian selectors "flocked like diggers to the gold rush", paid 1/- to 2/- per acre annually over ten years, with the right to purchase in three years if regulations were observed. M. Dunn, p 113.

169. BW, 8 and 12 June 1878. See also P. Rymill, p 12.

170. BW, 4 September 1878; T. Playford, p 12.

171. James Clarke's application for land gives his occupation as "saddler". He appears often as sponsor for children at their baptisms (Marriage records for Penola, 19 April 1857-11 July 1883, Catholic Church Archives, West Terrace) but he seems to have lived in the shadow of his brother, Matthew. By 1 January 1864 Matthew Clarke was advertising in The Border Watch as a saddler and harness-maker, opposite the 'Royal Oak Hotel'. A photograph of this shop is in the possession of Mr Glen Clifford of 'Yallum Park'. By 1869 Matthew Clarke had bought several allotments in the township of Penola. By 1884, two years after his death on 19 March 1882, 1,992 acres had been purchased in the Hundreds of Penola, Killanoola and Joanna in his name and in the name of his widow (née Bridget Hyland of Hamilton). Penola District Council Assessment Books, MRG 49, SAA; LGB, County Robe.

172. Application 379, Credit Agreement 14417, Application 588, Credit Agreement 10121. Under Credit Agreement 11418, Richard Clarke, also a saddler of Penola, held 1,000 acres adjoining James Clarke's land. It is possible that investment in land at this time was a family concern. CALB, LD. A discussion on 18 October 1978 with Mr Gilbert Skeer of Penola, current owner of the best of Clarke's land, confirmed the stark contrast in fertility between adjoining areas of land in this area. See also Diagram Book, Hundred of Monbulla, p 24, DL.

173. Ch. 1, footnote 33.

liable to forfeiture for not having improved it.¹⁷⁴ But like speculators in the nearby Drainage Areas, Clarke was quick to take advantage of the legislation in that year and under Act 275 he surrendered his agreement and on 4 November 1883 took up the land under Agreement 16740 at 25/- per acre, less than half the price he had paid five years previously.¹⁷⁵ In the following year Clarke again benefitted from legislation which allowed transfer of land.¹⁷⁶ He sold his Monbulla holding to Archibald Hay, a successful sheepfarmer in his forties who had arrived in Mt Gambier in 1867. Hay intended to put 20 of the 1,000 acres he had purchased under crop, and to use the remainder of his freehold and 200 acres of leasehold for running 1,000 sheep and with cattle and horses.¹⁷⁷ By 1884 Section 185E had been first part of Squire Riddoch's monopoly, then a townsman's speculation, and finally part of an established farmer's consolidation. There seemed little chance that it might one day belong to a yeoman farmer – one of that "numerous population" whom politicians still saw as "enjoying that state of existence described in the Scriptures as neither poverty nor riches but who held and tilled the land as a moral, upright, religious community spreading happiness around them".¹⁷⁸

The establishment of the yeoman farmer failed in the South East not only because legislation had unrealistically attempted to promote European agriculture in an alien environment but also because legislators had failed to provide public facilities. Unlike their counterparts in the north,

174. SAGG , 6 July 1882.

175. Act 275 of 1882. See footnote 117. Application 588, Credit Agreement 16740. CALB, DL. See also GRG 35/2/1882/5168, SAA.

176. Act 318 of 1884, assented to 14 November 1884.

177. GRG 35/2/1844/7230; 1885/1714; 1886/1987, SAA. For further details of Archibald Hay, W.F. Morrison, p 548.

178. SAPD, 14 June 1877, col. 64.

South East settlers were denied a railway system and safe harbours.¹⁷⁹ The government pleaded a lack of revenue and continued to shelve the recommendations of commissions. Squatters with political influence often opposed railways because they feared losing land to the railways or to the settlers whom the railways might bring. George Ormerod, former owner of the 'Naracoorte' run, but by the 1860s the squatters' storekeeper, shipper and general agent at Robe, successfully frustrated the building of a railway to that port.¹⁸⁰ J.P.D. Laurie, member for the electorate of Victoria and large landholder to the north of Naracoorte, insisted in 1871 that Naracoorte was not ready for a railway.¹⁸¹ Laurie was less successful in frustrating farmers because the government hoped it might tap the trade of north-west Victoria and the first railway was opened between Naracoorte and Kingston in 1877.¹⁸² Port Caroline at Kingston then captured trade from Robe and Port MacDonnell in the early 1880s.¹⁸³ Squire Riddoch, who had tenants on his agricultural land and large farmers near Mt Gambier in his electorate, offered to pay the interest on £50,000 to fund a railway linking his territory around Penola with Naracoorte, Mt Gambier and Port MacDonnell. He resigned from Parliament, "unable to get justice for the South East", when a line was built between Mt Gambier and Beachport

179. D. Meinig, pp 60-1, 73-4, 144-5 and 214-5; J.B. Hirst, pp 95-105; M. Williams, pp 44-5; K.R. Bowes, p 85.

180. MGS, 11 September 1868, E. Ward, pp 86-8; The Observer, 27 November 1880; R. Harris, p 124; M. Dunn, pp 175-8.

181. SAPD, 14 October 1871, cols 471-2, 617. Laurie was member from 27 May 1870 to 23 November 1871, and 29 May 1873 to 14 January 1875. For biographical details of Laurie, H.T. Burgess (ed.), Vol. 2, p 974.

182. The railway was six years in construction and encouraged the premature opening of the undrained Hundreds of Joyce, Minecrow, Townsend, Ross, Conmurra and Bray. M. Williams, p 45. Map 15. By 1880 the line was running at a loss of £11,211. The Observer, 31 July and 27 November 1880.

183. A. Molineux in The Observer, 24 February 1883, 1524/M, SAA; C. Proud, pp 40-2; R. Harris, p 125; E. Ward, p 88.

MAP 16

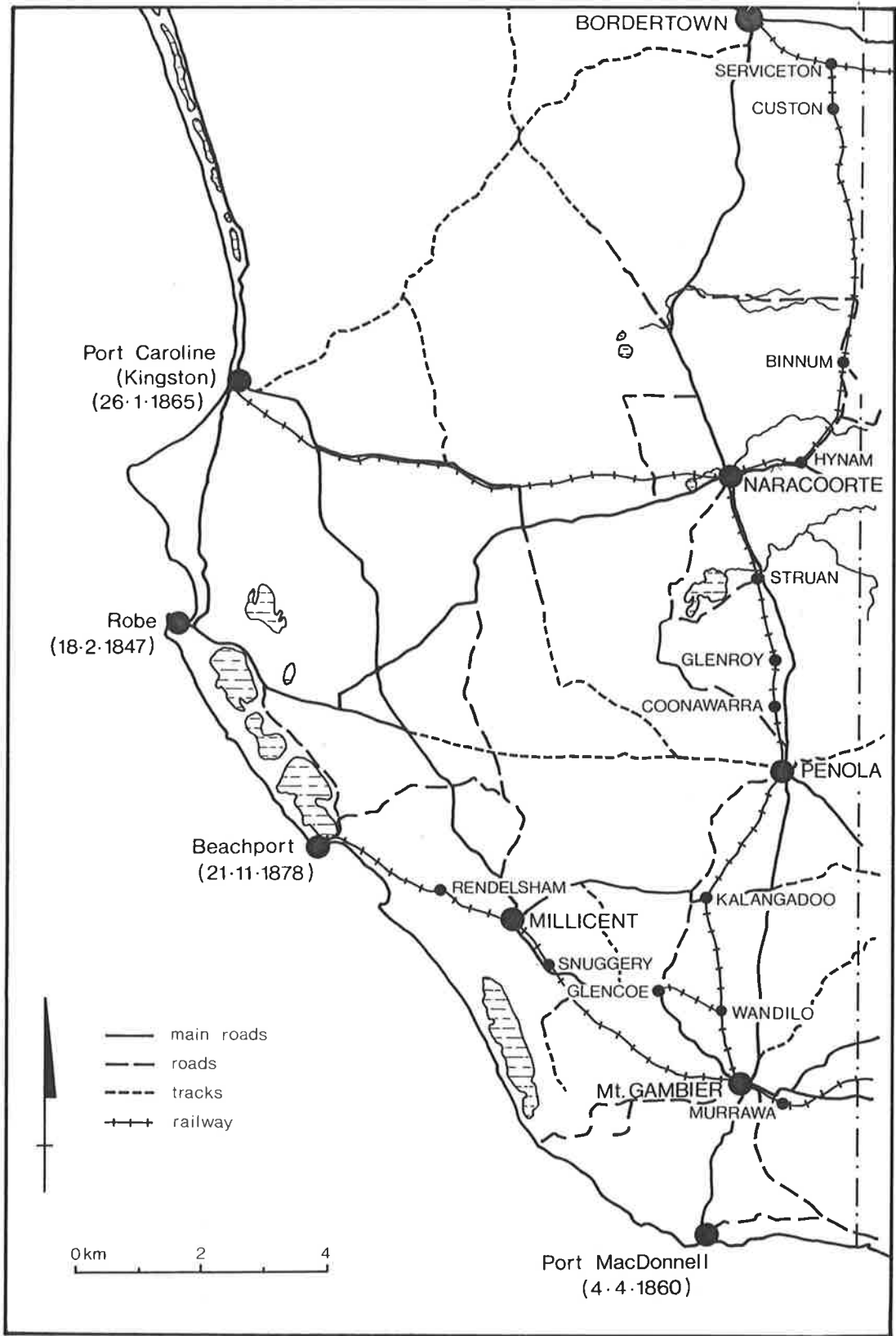
Roads, Railways and Harbours

Because Governments were reluctant to provide public facilities for farmers until assured of financial return, the district remained without a deep-sea port and railways were too few and too late to help closer settlement schemes.

Railways:

Kingston to Naracoorte (52 m) 1876; Mt Gambier to Beachport (51 m) 1879; Naracoorte to Wolseley (48 m) 1883; Naracoorte to Mt Gambier (64 m) 1887; Wandilo to Glencoe (9 m) 1904; Mt Gambier to Victorian border (12 m broad gauge) 1917.

(SAGG).



in 1879.¹⁸⁴ After a brief prominence in the early eighties, Port Caroline lost the South East coastal trade to Adelaide when the government centralised trade by linking Mt Gambier, Naracoorte, Wolsely and Adelaide in 1887.¹⁸⁵ Although recognising four harbours in the South East the government nurtured none; by providing only two belated railways in the late seventies it benefitted neither the early settlers nor put many within the stated ideal of a fifteen mile radius of a railway.¹⁸⁶

The squatters in the central and northern part of the district were not so successful in limiting Council areas as squatters in the Mt Gambier district had been, but they still paid only nominal rates for roads.¹⁸⁷ By 1873 £12,038.11.5 had been spent on the construction and maintenance of South East roads.¹⁸⁸ Road freights were generally four times as high as rail, but this hurt the farmer more than the wool-grower. In 1871 the freight for potatoes was 30/- per ton, while pastoralists paid 21/- per ton for the cartage of wool.¹⁸⁹ The small cultivator remained the worst off. Many wheat farmers were paying high freights over long distances but receiving only "ruinously low prices". Those few wheat farmers who remained in the central area in the seventies were hardest hit. After the Penola mill closed, farmers sent their wheat over thirty miles to Mt

184. SAPD, 11 December 1868, cols 1127-9. For details of Riddoch's opposition, J.B. Hirst, pp 97-8. Tenders for the fifty mile railway were first called for in SAGG, 25 October 1877. The line was completed in 1879.

185. R. Harris, p 96; M. Dunn, p 177; SAPP 22 of 1875, HA, 3 August 1875, pp 147-158; K.R. Bowes, p 327. Map 16.

186. For details of the decline and fall of the four potential ports of the South East, R. Harris, pp 95-6, 124-5; J.B. Hirst, p 24; SAPP 22 of 1875, HA, 3 August 1875. For dates of proclamation of harbours. Map 16.

187. A. Molineux in The Observer, 17 February 1883, 1534/M, SAA; C. Proud, p 23; E. Ward, pp 86-8.

188. The cost of roads was as follows: Between McDonnell Bay and Penola £8,174.15.10; between Penola and Naracoorte £409.2.8; between Robe and Naracoorte £165; between Kingston and Naracoorte £167.2.6 and between Kingston and Salt Creek £841.6.10. BW, 29 January 1873.

189. Freights in 1871 were 6d per bushel for wheat by road and 1½d by rail. C. Proud, p 23; M. Dunn, p 6; BW, 18 October 1871; PRG 85, 3 December 1872. SAA.

thirty miles to Mt Gambier to be grist rather than pay Victorian duties of up to £2 per ton, but at Mt Gambier Dr Wehl held a monopoly and paid 1/- less than Adelaide prices.¹⁹⁰

Selectors still had to cope with a non-European environment as well as with inadequate legislation. The climate was still neither so predictable nor the seasons so regular in comparison with the Old Country as the colonisers had claimed they would be, and this annual uncertainty remained a sore trial. Heavy winter rains often "woefully inconvenienced settlers" and they always feared that excessively wet season would be the first in "a cycle of repeatedly wet seasons which the South East with intervals of a few dry seasons seemed subject to".¹⁹¹ Frost or rain could attack in the South East "summers" of January. In January 1876 unexpectedly heavy rainfalls caused stacked and unstacked wheat to sprout, "turned hay to manure, set peas sprouting in their pods, and put potatoes going to tops".¹⁹² In 1878, on almost the same date, the weather was so fiercely hot that it reached 143° in the sun and 106° in the shade.¹⁹³

People took to arguing about whether man might be interfering with the climate. Some alleged that drainage made the climate drier.¹⁹⁴ An increasing number argued that the continuing destruction of trees had had an adverse effect upon rainfall.¹⁹⁵ By 1875, "millions of dead trees" were

190. C. Proud, pp 23 and 61; BW, 25 April 1877.

191. The Observer, 11 September 1880.

192. BW, 8 January 1876. On 27 and 28 January 1877 and 27 November 1878, severe frosts destroyed almost all the potato crop. GRG 35/422 p 179, SAA.

193. BW, 9 and 16 January 1878.

194. The Observer, 4 September 1880.

195. BW, 8 January 1876. See also K.R. Bowes, p 53; D. Meinig, pp 70-2.

visible over great tracts of country either because squatters had ring-barked them to make their grass grow more sweetly and richly or because of wasteful methods of stripping the wattles of their bark.¹⁹⁶

With hot summers and "dry grass gone off almost to a tinder", fires ravaged almost annually.¹⁹⁷ They hit pastoralists and farmer alike but neither found means of controlling the devastation. Pastoralists offered rewards of £50 for information of fires deliberately lit, or penalised suspected arsonists with fines.¹⁹⁸ Farmers insisted on safety matches. When the destruction was too great, tenant farmers left their "ruined country and bewailing landlords and absconded over the border".¹⁹⁹

Settlers also had to combat pests and weeds. Grasshoppers could descend "like a heavy fall of snow", grubs attacked the barley, and red rust ruined the wheat.²⁰⁰ Nostalgic, or perhaps shrewd, Scottish pastoralists failed to eradicate the Scotch thistle which ruined farmers' crops. In 1883 one visitor to Naracoorte noticed a magnificent crop of thistles "just about to break into bloom which would furnish enough seed to cover thousands of acres of soil the following year".²⁰¹ Farmers considered a Government team of forty employed to eradicate thistles was not only a "mere bagatelle" when fifteen men could have been fruitfully employed on one section of a squatter's estate alone, but also "favouritism to a

196. The South Australian Advertiser, 12 October 1875; The Observer, 10 February 1883, GRG 35/257/1872/10, SAA. See also The Observer, 22 March 1873; SAR, 3 March 1875.

197. e.g. BW, 18 March 1871; 4 March 1874; 24 February 1875; 16 and 18 January, 13 March 1878; 29 March 1879; SES, 29 January 1878.

198. BW, 16 June 1875.

199. BW, 2 March 1881.

200. e.g. MGS, 9 April 1872; BW, 17 December and 1 March 1873; 16 January 1878; GRG 35/442 p 202, SAA.

201. The Observer, 13 January 1883.

class well able to protect themselves while the unfortunate farmer was left to contend with blight, take-all, rust, caterpillars and other evils".²⁰²

Agricultural settlement had improved communications and lessened the feeling of isolation and neglect among South East residents, but this did not mean farmers were better guided in agricultural affairs.²⁰³ The newspapers which sprang up with agricultural settlement devoted columns to agricultural advice but many farmers could neither afford papers nor read.²⁰⁴ For those who could, the advice came from England and strengthened an imitation of English farming.²⁰⁵ A commission which enquired into the best means of providing agricultural and technical education advocated the establishment of a Department of Agriculture, a Professor of Agriculture at the University of Adelaide and experimental farms in country areas. The government took no action.²⁰⁶ The editor of The Mt Gambier Standard championed the need for technical education provided by a local Agricultural College, claiming that South East farmers had "no examples or illustration of high class farming" and "not even the advice which a farmer's boy possesses in the Old Country".²⁰⁷ But following the failure of the Experimental Farm near Millicent, farmers tended to

202. BW, 29 March, 2 September and 18 October 1871; 17 January 1874; MGS, 27 February 1872.

203. A coach travelled overland three times per week and a steamer called at South East ports once a fortnight in 1869. By 1883 a steamer was visiting the South East three times a week and a coach travelled overland daily. E. Ward, p 5; The Observer, 13 January 1883.

204. The South East Star began in 1877; The Naracoorte Herald in 1875; The Tatiara Mail in 1880. See also R. Harris, p 56.

205. e.g. Articles on 'Barren Land', 'Soil Exhaustion', 'American versus English Implements' and 'The Judging of Stock' appeared in issues of BW, 29 March and 16 April 1873; 7 April 1874; 5 January 1878.

206. SAPP 79 of 1875, HA, 21 July 1875; SAPD, 1879, col. 1005. See also J.B. Hirst, pp 50-3; A. Molineux in The Observer, 13 January 1883, 1534/M, SAA.

207. MGS, 13 May 1872.

distrust the advice of experts. They had had "enough of model farming". As far as agriculture was concerned the Experimental Farm "was not worthy of the name given it".²⁰⁸

Small farmers were also still poorly represented at local and colonial level. They could not afford to stand for Parliament while members were not paid. The South Australia Farmers' Covenant and Mutual Association, which campaigned "for all political questions affecting farming interests", primarily protected the large farmer and was most active in the north of the colony.²⁰⁹ The Border Watch urged local residents "who knew the requirements and capabilities of farmers intimately" to stand for Parliament. Although the editor hoped "they might come yet", by 1881 farmer candidates "were still not forthcoming" from the South East.²¹⁰ George Hawker, northern squatter resident in Adelaide, was the main representative of the South East electorate of Victoria from 1878-84; other representatives included local squatters, large landholders who served for short terms, and absentee city members.²¹¹

208. See footnote 123; BW, 4 September 1880.

209. A102/D1, SAA. See also obituary of William Copley, President of the Farmers' Association and member of the Pastoral Association, The News, 16 September 1825; A.P. Keain, Appendix A, p 39; J.B. Hirst, pp 66-7 and 112-9.

210. BW, 2 February 1881.

211. This lack of representation was typical in South Australia. Of the 66 members elected to the Legislative Council between 1857-82 only ten were resident in the country. J.B. Hirst, p 66. In the House of Assembly, metropolitan electorates in 1882 returned 14 members in the House of 52, which was 27% of the membership although electorates had grown to contain 36% of the voters. J.B. Hirst, p 68. See also A.P. Keain, p 132.

Members for the Electoral Districts of Victoria and Albert in the House of Assembly: 1870-1884:

continued/...

Despite ineffective legislation, the exigencies of "Providence" and lack of representation, in one area of the South East the colonisers' vision of a self-sufficient yeomanry on small holdings might have succeeded. This was within a six-mile radius of Mt Gambier where there lay, as James Dow, agricultural journalist for The Leader declared in November 1874, "unquestionably the richest bit of agricultural soil in South Australia".²¹² This was the land which Stephen Henty had described as "magnificent" four decades previously; this was the land

211 (continued)

Electoral District and No. of MPs	No. and Duration of Parliament	Members' Names
Victoria 2	5th (2 sessions) 31 July 1868-2 March 1870	J. Riddoch H.K. Hughes
Victoria 2	6th (2 sessions) 27 May 1870-23 November 1871	J.P.D. Laurie W. Paltridge resigned 28 July 1871 and succeeded by N. Blyth elected 24 August 1871.
Victoria 2	7th (3 sessions)	J. Riddoch resigned 28 April 1873 and succeeded by J.P.D. Laurie elected 29 May 1873. E.H. Derrington resigned 6 May 1873 and succeeded by T.W. Boothby elected 17 June 1873.
Victoria 2	8th (4 sessions) 6 May 1875-13 March 1878	G.C. Hawker J. Ingleby resigned 11 April 1877 and succeeded by L. Glyde elected 17 May 1877.
Albert 2 (see Act No. 27, 1872)		M.L. Conner resigned 23 June 1875, and succeeded by W.R. Wigley elected 12 July 1875 but resigned 5 March 1878 (and no new writ issued). A. Hardy.
Victoria 2	9th (4 sessions) 31 May 1878-19 March 1881	G.C. Hawker L. Glyde
Albert 2		A. Hardy R.W.E. Henning
Victoria 2	10th (3 sessions) 2 June 1881-19 March 1884	G.C. Hawker resigned 11 May 1883 and succeeded by W. Whinham elected 15 June 1883. L. Glyde.
Albert SAPP 98 of 1971, HA, Standing Order No. 253.		A. Hardy. R.W.E. Henning.

212. J.L. Dow, Agriculture in South Australia, Melbourne, 1874, p 49.

which John Meredith had found "rich beyond his imagination"; this was "the garden of colony" which Ebenezer Ward had so admired in 1869. In 1880 Cornelius Proud, journalist recently arrived from England, also delighted in the area as "the most English-like country" he recollected having seen in the colony.²¹³ Although this land could consistently produce 50 bushels of wheat to an acre, even here the European staff of life was not grown. Here the land could also grow 25 tons of mangolds and 13 tons of potatoes to the acre, without manure. In this area white clover and trefoil grew "with a rank luxuriance". Here was country which could easily support five sheep to the acre, and after spring graze fifteen large Lincoln sheep an acre for four months.²¹⁴ While wool held at 11d per lb, here as elsewhere in the district landowners found it more profitable "to sow grasses and fatten sheep rather than spend time and labour on cultivation and ingathering of wheat".²¹⁵ Most farmers were not on small holdings. There were some small farms "with smaller fields distinctly portioned out and with occasional hedgerows of hawthorn and of broom to complete the picture",²¹⁶ but "individual holdings ran from 100 to 400 acres in extent, 300, 350 and 460 acre farms being the most numerous". Here "subdivision admitted to a variety of crops including wheat, barley, peas, rye and oats alternate with the potatoes and the rich clover pastures, carrying from October to January from 10 to 20 large Lincoln sheep to the acre ... and specimens of pure shorthorn up to their eyes in clover pastures". Numerous

213. C. Proud, The South-Eastern District of South Australia in 1880, Adelaide, SAR, 1881, p 38.

214. On 'Moorak' estate 28,000 sheep could fatten on 6,000 acres. J.L. Dow, pp 49-50.

215. C. Proud, p 58. Between 1873-9 wool prices were 12, 12½, 14, 11½ and 11 pence per lb. SRSA 1883-4.

216. C. Proud, p 38.

hop gardens, varying in size from small plots of half an acre to gardens from 10 to 16 acres also intermixed with these "superior farm standings". Dow was more realistic about this situation than politicians who declared that the area should be settled by small farmers. Mixed farming for profit on large areas was acceptable to him. In fact, he said those who had established themselves as large farmer-graziers close to Mt Gambier since the 1850s deserved the name of "real farmers" more than those he had visited in any other portion of the colony.²¹⁷

In 1877 Parliament passed the Crown Lands Consolidation Act,²¹⁸ legislation admirably suited to a colony in debt.²¹⁹ The Act changed the method of land auction to allow the highest bidder right of choice of selection; the area which could be selected was increased from 640 to 1,000 acres; credit terms were further liberalised.²²⁰ The way was open for capitalists to aggregate more land and pastoralists did not hesitate to do so. By December 1877 credit selection returns for the South East were in stark contrast to those for the rest of the colony. Pastoralists had bought more than three-fifths of the land available; a little over one-fifth was

217. J.L. Dow, pp 49-50. The decreasing number of small holdings and increasing numbers of large holdings for the South East is tabled as follows:

	51-100 acres		100-500 acres		500 acres		Total
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
1870	260	33	411	53	112	14	783
1886	152	10	914	56	550	34	1,616

K.R. Bowes, p 56.

218. Act 86 of 1877, assented to 21 December 1877.

219. SAPD, 1877, col. 1270.

220. For further details of the Act, G.L. Buxton, pp 60-1.

held by original purchasers.²²¹ Squire Riddoch and other squatters had obviously done well "to bide their time". Agricultural settlement was so "strangled by the cold embrace of pastoralists" that the Surveyor-General admitted that in the South East there were much larger estates in the hands of a few people than there were in any other part of South Australia.²²²

Although the Acts had helped most capitalists in the South East to aggregate, George Glen's monopoly was curbed. Except for his homestead section and some freehold land in the Hundred of Hindmarsh, Glen had held vast tracts of undrained land under lease.²²³ When the Agricultural Areas of Mayurra and Mt Muirhead were declared, this land was resumed. Glen could no longer run as many sheep as he had been accustomed because he no longer had sufficient area to keep on shifting them when his flat land became inundated.²²⁴ By 1880 he was running 12,000 sheep on 8,000 acres. This was sheep farming on a smaller scale than formerly, but Glen was accepting "the inevitable with becoming grace".²²⁵

221. SAPP 41 of 1877, HA, 5 December 1877.

South East District

Acres sold to Pastoral Lessees	49,541
Acres sold to Others	10,087
Acres held by Original Purchasers	<u>17,596½</u>
Total	<u>77,224½</u>

Portions of the Province not included in the South East District

Acres sold to Pastoral Lessees	44,294
Acres sold to Others	86,490
Acres held by Original Purchasers	<u>168,327</u>
Total	<u>299,111</u>

222. SAPP 51 of 1879, HA, 16 September 1879.

223. Sections 22, 24, 25 and 31 in the Hundred of Hindmarsh amounted to 5,050 acres, purchased for £5,053.5 on 29 March and 3 May 1860. LGB, County Grey. See also C.J. Melano, p 74.

224. For purchases under Credit Agreement, footnote 76; C.J. Melano, pp 72-3.

225. C. Proud, p 56.

In December 1879 a Select Committee summed up the situation with regard to the selling of Crown Land a decade after the passing of Strangers Act. The object of land legislation in all the Australian colonies had been, the Committee reported, "the substitution of a numerous yeomanry owning agricultural holdings for a few pastoral lessees on large tracts of land let by the State". To this end the selection Acts in South Australia "if not an unqualified success", had proven no failure, for settlement had taken place in such a way as contemplated by the legislature.²²⁶

Judged by statistical returns the Committee's assessment was sanguine. It was true that both population and land brought under cultivation in general, and under wheat in particular, had increased. Yet capitalists had also clearly aggregated land without bringing it under cultivation since the average size of holdings under credit agreement, and the amount of land enclosed but not cultivated, was almost four times as much as in 1869.²²⁷

226. SAPP 51 of 1879, HA, 16 September 1879. Charles Bonney was not so optimistic in his assessment of selection legislation. In 1870, when offered the position of Inspector of Lands taken up on Credit, he had "unfortunately accepted". In his opinion, the "unsure legislation" made the system very complicated. The granting of concessions had made his work so onerous that by 1879 his health gave way. After twelve months' leave of absence he resigned but symptoms of "a sort of nervous affliction returned". After being blind and bed-ridden for two years, Charles Bonney, the first European to open up the South East, died on 15 March 1897. 839/M, SAA. For one squatter's response to the Selection Acts, Appendix 12.

227.

South Australia

	Population	Land under Cultivation	Wheat	Average area selected	Enclosed, not under cultivation
1869 (as at 26 March 1871)	185,626	808,234	533,035	263	4,833,238
1879 (as at 3 April 1881)	279,865	2,010,641	1,305,851	421	16,965,996

SRSA; T. Playford, p 12.

The Committee did make passing mention that in some Hundreds in the colony, and in the South East, settlement had not been so successful as the Legislature desired. The South East deserved more than passing mention. In their efforts to make it European, men had ploughed, burned, dug, trenched, drained, sown, scarred and built upon the land. Such manipulations had almost doubled the amount of land under cultivation but this still amounted to only 70,000 acres. More enclosed land was being used for cultivation, but clearly for grasses rather than wheat. A mere 2,236 people came to the district in a decade; the average area alienated per head grew from only 54 to 70 acres and sheep numbers kept up.²²⁸ Under the Selection Acts large farmers and pastoralists had continued to use for grazing land long since freeholded and few newcomers had become independent wheat farmers. In 1885 cultivation conditions were relaxed for 82,597 acres "considered unfit for agriculture" in the South East — more than half the number of acres on which conditions were relaxed for the whole colony.²²⁹ This was land where artificial grasses flourished, but cultivating in the South East had proved to be, as one member had predicted, "trying to cultivate land against Nature herself".²³⁰ No "numerous yeomanry" had settled in the central and northern counties of

228.

South East

	Population	Land under cultivation	Wheat	Alienated	Enclosed, not under cultivation
1869 (as at 26 March 1871)	12,631	36,312	26,978	680,779 ^a	2,287,743
1879 (as at 3 April 1881)	14,867	63,195	22,941	1,064,828	1,863,918

SRSA. 1880. Appendices 4. and 6.

229. SAPP 68 of 1885, HA, 2 July 1885.

230. SAPD, 11 July 1882, col. 306. The proportion of cultivated land to the total in the country was, in 1880, about 1 in 10 acres in County Grey, 1 in 16 in County MacDonnell, and 1 in 25 in County Robe. C. Proud, p 8.

Robe and MacDonnell where twelve years after the passing of the Strangways Act the population had increased by only 1,400.²³¹ Many potential farmers had gone to Horsham in Victoria, where the hope of obtaining land in fee simple for ten annual payments of 2/- per acre was a more attractive proposition than either "the privilege of clearing and ploughing the land for Mr Riddoch's grass seeds" or of accepting his "liberal offer of land at £5 per acre which had cost the magnanimous tenderer only £1".²³² Those who remained were "not a race of independent freeholders" attached to the soil, but "a race of slaves bound to unproductive land".²³³

Although the Selection Acts had helped the pastoralists and farmer-graziers rather than a sturdy race of small farmers, sheep men in the South East were still battling with their environment. Fluke and liver rot flourished in the swampy environment.²³⁴ There was still no solution to "coast". Archibald Johnson of 'Gran-Gran', George Glen's neighbour, could leave his flocks on the hundred square miles of pasture he leased near the coast for only eight weeks of the year. Despite this precaution, he lost 4,000 sheep in 1871.²³⁵ Wild dogs decimated

231.

	1871	1876	1881
MacDonnell	779	1,054	1,330
Robe	2,407	2,303	3,256
Grey	9,445	8,895	10,281
Total	12,631	12,252	14,867

1881 Census Returns. Appendix 4.

232. J.L. Dow, p 48.

233. SAPP 12 September 1877, col. 935.

234. BW, 14 August 1874.

235. SAPP 43 of 1872, 30 May 1872, p 33. For biographical details of A. Johnson, B.J. Towers, p. 6.

flocks.²³⁶ The Surveyor-General admitted the Rabbit Suppression Acts of 1879 and 1882 had failed. The Treasury had outlaid more in payment for scalps than had been collected in rates from Rabbit Districts.²³⁷ Land-owners had tried trapping, ferreting, suffocating and poisoning rabbits with biosulphate and phosphorised grain but they had failed to arrest their spread.²³⁸ After 1879 the government became responsible for destroying rabbits on private land and Crown land outside the District Council limits, but by 1884 £97,376.0.3 had been fruitlessly spent on rabbit destruction.²³⁹ The Surveyor-General reported that rabbits were still "migrating westerly after every shower", finding refuge "on oases", and continuing "to come in from the scrub like sheep".²⁴⁰

Despite these problems, the South East pastoralists did not cease to make an alien environment as hospitable as possible for their valuable flocks. In County Grey they sowed artificial grasses which amounted to eleven-twelfths of those sown for the colony.²⁴¹ To sweeten these grasses they continued to ring-bark. Dead trees dotted the landscape like "gaunt

236. The South Australian Advertiser, 21 March 1875; The Observer, 13 January 1883. In 1886 Goyder estimated that the area around Millicent in the South East could carry 30,000 more sheep if the dogs were not so troublesome. On one property, the forester had killed 21 dogs and 50 more had been destroyed. Some station owners (Messrs Tims and Baker) were paying £1 for a scalp. GRG 35/256 pp 91-9, SAA.

237. The Surveyor-General to the Under-Secretary for Public Lands, Victoria, and to the Premier of Queensland, 9 October 1884. GRG 35/173/1884/3175, SAA.

238. BW, 14 July 1880.

239. Act 139 of 1879, assented to 2 September 1879 and Vermin Destruction Act 252 of 1882, assented to 17 November 1882. In 1878-84 the Treasury outlaid £97,763.0.3 in the South East on rabbit, dingo and wild dog scalps, paying per scalp, 2/-, 10/- and 10/- respectively. SAPD, 8 July 1884, col. 208. See also N.P. Newland, Vermin Control and Legislation in South Australia: An Historical Account of Legislative Efforts to Control Animals Defined as "Vermin", DL, Adelaide, 1871.

240. GRG 35/256/17 p 139, SAA.

241. In County Grey 22,418 acres were under sown grasses. The total for the colony was 24,000. SRSA. C. Proud, p 59.

sentinels".²⁴² By 1883 Adam Smith had destroyed trees on 23,339 acres.²⁴³ The squatters also culled and improved their studs. In 1876 Clarke on 'Mt Schanck' introduced pedigree bulls of the Butterfly family.²⁴⁴ Wool-growers imported mainly from Tasmania. In 1872 John Riddoch bought the ram "Sir Thomas" from James Gibson's famous 'Belle Vue' stud.²⁴⁵ In 1876, Adam Smith purchased "King Tom" and other rams, for as much as 145 guineas each, from the same source.²⁴⁶ Riddoch also bought Merinos from Kermod's 'Mona Vale' stud in Tasmania and "Sir Roger" from Messrs T. Dowling and Son, a ram with a strong strain of 'Belle Vue' blood which, at ten years of age, was still shearing 11.3/4 lbs of clean, white wool, light in grease. In 1869 Dr Browne of 'Moorak' personally selected ten pure Lincolns which he imported from England and he began crossing these with Merinos to produce a sheep good for wool and carcase.²⁴⁷

By running sheep on the fertile land they had freeholded thirty years previously, South East pastoralists had prospered greatly by the 1880s. Surveying the wealth and comfort they had carved from the land, many would have had good reason to agree with James Hunter of 'Kalangadoo'.

"I have," he wrote in March 1872, "already spent thousands in imagination making up accounts and building more castles. I am at home with a house full of nice people and a stable

242. The Observer, 22 March 1873; BW, 12 October 1875; GRG 35/257/1872/10, SAA.

243. Adam Smith's Ledger, BRG 89, SAA.

244. BW, 8 April 1876.

245. George A. Brown, Sheep-breeding in Australia, 1890, p 465. Riddoch also bought at the same time "100 best ewes, and 2 rams of extra quality from Mona Vale, Tasmania". In 1876 he bought a further 5 rams from the Gibson Stud, paying 175 guineas for 1; 27 guineas each for 2, and 20 guineas each for 2. BW, 2 September 1876.

246. BW, 2 September 1876; George A. Brown, pp 464-5.

247. C. McIvor, The History and Development of Sheep Farming from Antiquity to Modern Times, Sydney, 1893, p 392. By 1870 Browne's greasy fleece was fetching 1/8 to 1/2 per lb. E. Ward, p 79.

full of big hunters. All my friends are provided for and everything is jolly." 248

The estates and life-style of his neighbours reflected similar "needs and tastes of gentlemen of fortune".²⁴⁹

In October 1875, six years before his death, John Robertson of 'Struan' put the finishing touches to a "palatial residence" which cost £20,000. From the tower of 'Struan House' Robertson was "monarch of all he surveyed, to the extent of upwards of 200,000 acres". With one other pastoralist he shared 22 miles of fine grazing country alternating with rich chocolate loam, which would have established many small agriculturalists, but which, apart from shearing time, employed "in the aggregate, about nine men and six black boys".²⁵⁰

John Riddoch's affluence was also reflected in a property which extended without interruption for 30 miles. In 1881 he had purchased 57,000 acres of the formerly rich 'Glencoe' run and with his 'Monbulla' and 'Yallum' runs Riddoch now had safe provision for 110,000 sheep and over 3,000 cattle on 49 square miles of leased land, and 92,000 acres of freehold — as much as had been purchased under credit agreement in the whole of County Grey.²⁵¹

248. Diary of James Arthur Carr Hunter of Kalangadoo, 29 March 1872, D2864(L), SAA.

249. The South Australian Advertiser, 12 October 1875.

250. J.L. Dow, p 48. See also J. Murdoch and F. Parker, p 50; D.I. Stone and D.S. Garden, Squatters and Selectors, Sydney, 1978, p 142.

251. C. Proud, pp 53-7; LGB for Counties Grey and Robe.

Within three miles of Penola, Squire Riddoch built a two-storeyed, twenty-roomed Italianate mansion worthy of his wealth and position. He lined the drive from his home to Penola with an imposing avenue of gums, elms, poplars and pines; gums, cyprus, oaks and strawberry trees bordered the last half mile within his own garden which surrounded his home like a nobleman's park. Here he planted forty varieties of conifers, shrubs, ornamental plants, an orchard and a vineyard.²⁵² A 40 acre deer park completed the residence of a Scottish gentleman who could name among his guests Lieutenant-Governors Jervois and Musgrave of South Australia, Governor Bowen of Victoria, the Princes Edward and George, and the novelist Anthony Trollope.²⁵³

With all the land in the centre and north of the district under the sway of pastoralists like Robertson and Riddoch, Naracoorte, where the talk was "whisky and wool", and Penola, where the talk was "wool and whisky", remained "the squatters' townships".²⁵⁴ Penola housed the third largest library in South Australia; here the Hunt Club meeting attracted up to 600 spectators; and, "since the drudgery of agriculture was avoided, young bloods could get rid of their superfluous energy at balls and race meetings which might sometimes last as long as a week".²⁵⁵

252. G. and G. Clifford, pp 20-9; Australian Council of National Trust, Historic Homesteads of Australia, 1969-76, pp 126-32.

253. BW, 24 February 1875; 19 January 1878; 22 June 1881 and MGS, 13 May 1872.

254. J.L. Dow, p 48.

255. J.L. Dow, p 48; BW, 16 April 1873; E. Ward, p 71; SAR, 3 March 1928.

Thirty-five miles to the south "Big" Clarke had consolidated on 'Mt Schanck'. His estate boasted "the largest, most complete and convenient woolshed in Australia", with a capacity to house 6,000 sheep overnight in bad weather.²⁵⁶ When he died in January 1874, reputedly the wealthiest man in Australia, he left his third son, Joseph, then forty years old, not only one of the "princes of the island of Tasmania", but richer in South Australia by 98,000 freehold acres, 100,000 sheep and 1,600 cattle on 'The Schanck', valued at £1¼ million.²⁵⁷

Many of the pioneers "who had come over from Victoria to spy out the land and were so pleased with it that they remained" died in the fifteen years following Strangways Act.²⁵⁸ Most died wealthy men. Apart from seasons in Melbourne, and perhaps a trip Home, they lived on their properties and passed on to their families a goodly heritage.

Among them was Adam Smith of 'Hynam'. When he died on 17 March 1876, Smith bequeathed 600,000 leased acres and 130,000 sheep on the Lachlan to his two oldest sons and 37,000 acres of purchased land and 20,000 sheep on 'Hynam' to his three youngest sons, while his third son on

256. This was a shingle-roofed shed, built 5' above the ground, 200' x 50', housing a 40' table, a fly-wheel bale presser, which pressed up to fifty bales a day, stands for 42 shearers and receiving pens for 3,000 sheep. BW, 16 June 1875.

257. Big Clarke died at Roseneath, Essendon, on 3 January 1874. Robert Gardiner, at 'The Schanck' homestead, and his son, Abram, at Mt Salt, six miles to the west, continued to manage the property, while Joseph Clarke lived either at 'Mandeville', in the Derwent Valley, or 'Mandeville Hall' in Toorak, Melbourne. R. Cockburn, pp 60-1; Annals of the Clarke Family; M. Helpman, p 10; BW, 13 and 17 February 1874; CT 169/276, LTO.

258. C. Proud, p 57. These included George Ormerod (10 April 1872); Robert Lawson (February 1876); John Robertson (31 March 1881); Alexander Cameron (2 September 1881); Archibald Johnson (4 October 1881); James Affleck (24 February 1875); David Power (18 April 1854); Lachlan McKinnon (March 1888); John Oliver (3 June 1874); Henry Jones (27 July 1876); Henry Seymour (16 December 1869); James Arthur Carr Hunter (19 December 1889).

'Binnum' was already master of 15,000 purchased acres, 62,000 leased acres and 22,000 sheep, with a lambing average of 88%.²⁵⁹

One visitor to the district did not doubt that squatters of the South East, except for a few "vulgar, purseproud, bucolic parvenus, were gentlemen" about whom most people spoke "with the greatest respect". Others, however, spoke of them with some misgivings.²⁶⁰ Their pre-eminence suggested a pessimistic future for agriculture. To speak "of the pastoral lands of the South East was to speak of the whole district".²⁶¹ Another visitor there in 1883 waxed nostalgic at the rare sight of "a dear old prosperous eighty-acre section which meant real farming".²⁶²

Others were more optimistic that the great dream of the founding fathers would yet come true. The editor of The Border Watch found assurance in the confidence that "settling a new country seemed a very simple one to the English race".²⁶³ Admittedly, the best land in the district had gone. Admittedly credit agreement had failed. But selectors under that scheme had had neither sufficient capital to begin with, nor time to acquire it. Leasing land rather than buying it would overcome this difficulty. South East farmers had been suggesting this for several years.²⁶⁴ One Victorian visitor observed that "a more liberal atmosphere was beginning to permeate the legislative body".²⁶⁵ Should members

259. BW, 18 March 1876; NH, 18 March 1876; A. Henderson, pp 303-4; Probate Book 19; C. Proud, pp 53-4. Smith's actual estate was listed at 35,859 acres, 22,100 sheep, 82 cattle, 20 horses at the reading of the will by Hepburn, Leonard and Rowe in the Menzies Hotel, Melbourne. BW, 25 July 1877.

260. J.L. Dow, p 47.

261. A. Molineux in The Observer, 10 February 1883, 1354/M, SAA.

262. C. Proud, p 51.

263. BW, 1 January 1878.

264. The Farmers' Mutual Association had made this a "cardinal point" of their platform in 1881. The South East farmers were in full agreement. BW, 2 March 1881.

265. J.L. Dow, p 57.

countenance leasing rather than purchasing, small farmers could be readily settled in the South East. He was sure that under leasehold tenure the bad influence of squatting would be done away with.²⁶⁶ Then "25 individuals would no longer spread themselves over a million acres of rich arable land", for here was land "capable of supporting 2,000 families in affluence".²⁶⁷ It was clear that the failure of Strangways Act had not shaken the confidence of the men from Europe. Under new legislation they were determined that they would yet fulfil their great dream of planting a European concept of agriculture in the alien land of the South East.

266. J.L. Dow, p 56.

267. A. Molineux in The Observer, 17 February 1883, 1354/M, SAA.

CHAPTER 4

By the eighties it was obvious that the Selection Acts had failed to establish a numerous yeomanry, not only in the South East but in South Australia. As the Surveyor-General testified, many farmers, especially in the drought-stricken north, "were clinging to the land with the utmost fortitude, enduring every species of privation, hope of better things their only solace".¹ Farmers caught between legislation on the one hand and the land and climate on the other, looked increasingly to leasehold tenure for rescue. Although there was no good agricultural land unalienated, they hoped an annual rental on leased land might allow them sufficient time and money to develop inferior land and accommodate adverse seasons.

Even many large farmer-graziers in the South East who had capital and a regular rainfall were arguing for leasehold because the land had not lived up to their expectations. One of these was William Hay. Hay claimed "he knew what land was" and in the mid-seventies he had paid up to £6 an acre for 700 acres of drained land near Millicent because it was "the best he had ever seen". Before long he said, "I knew I had been deceived". His land was not like European land. It would not fatten stock although he had let it lie fallow to sweeten. He could grow rape shoulder high on the peaty country but his sheep and cattle scoured on it. Grain crops were a complete failure. They grew to a certain height and then stood still. Artificial grasses grew well but for some reason his stock became "coasty" on these. Hay could get by only because he had enough land

1. G.L. Buxton, pp 88-94; SAPP 60 of 1890, HA, 1 July 1890, pp 16-17.

to shift his flocks frequently. After five years with no returns and trying everything he could name, he declared bitterly that it would have been better if he had not seen the country at all.²

Hay had "a good bit of money" and 2,500 acres of freehold near Bordertown to fall back on. Yet he had done "only middling". Others in the Millicent area were not so fortunate. Some of Hay's neighbours had found dairying paid well in the seventies, but butter was down to 4d and 5d a pound by 1888. The Millicent Dairy Cooperative closed in that same year and butter sent to Adelaide and Melbourne arrived in unsaleable condition.³ Although one city commentator confidently asserted that "the English farmer would be much more at home in dealing with that land than with any other in the colony",⁴ the development of reclaimed land in the South East was proving "a work of time and of very gradual improvement" as the Surveyor-General had consistently warned it would.⁵ Those who were actually working it were struggling. They campaigned with distressed farmers throughout South Australia, claiming that leasehold tenure was "an absolute necessity for survival".⁶

Although legislators had long supported the assumption that men on the land "fulfilled their true function only as cultivators", conservatives among them argued that freehold tenure was the best means of achieving this ideal.⁷ They argued that freehold title went hand in hand with social

2. Report of the Commission on the Land Laws of South Australia, SAPP 28 of 1888, HA, 28 June 1888, questions 2666-764.

3. Ch. 3, footnotes 101-2. Evidence of William Hay on 20 March 1888 to the Commission on the Land Laws of South Australia, SAPP 28 of 1888, questions 2654 and 2693.

4. J.P. Stow, South Australia: Its History, Productions and Natural Resources, Adelaide 1883, p 87.

5. For Goyder's retrospective comment, SAPP 60 of 1890, HA, 1 July 1890, p 20.

6. SAPP 84 of 1880, HA, 30 June 1880.

7. SAPD, 9 May 1872, col. 854.

and political stability. Richard Chaffey Baker, lawyer and pastoralist, was principal spokesman. He claimed that if members agreed to farmers' demands for leasehold, they courted political demoralisation then and in the future. If a few farmers in 1884 could "force legislation for their benefit", as the farmers' numbers grew so would their power. He considered that they would eventually elect members who would "vote that no more rent at all should be paid". That was as certain as sparks fly upwards.⁸

Baker and other pastoralists also put forward economic reasons for retaining only freehold tenure on agricultural land. They argued that selling land was the surest way of getting revenue to fund irrigation and public works, pay off a debt to Britain and offset the money lost by the surrender of agreements under the 1882 Act. They declared that leasehold would reduce the value of land and they feared they would suffer most if land were taxed to compensate for this.⁹

Worst of all, according to Baker, leasing meant State ownership of land. That was contrary to the British principle of private ownership, and only if a man owned his land would he settle on it, maintain it, and improve it for himself and his children. Freehold thus guaranteed a settled population and the population of the country was its capital. Improving the land was also the way to ensure that the colony was civilised and "British forever" as the founding fathers had meant it to be. Baker concluded by quoting a celebrated writer on this theme. "Show me a nation of leaseholders," he said, "and I'll show you a howling wilderness. Show me a nation of freeholders and I'll show you a garden of Eden".

8. SAPD, 7 November 1883, cols 1500-2. For biographical details of R.C. Baker, ADB, Vol. 7, pp 152-3.

9. Act 275 of 1882. See Ch. 3, footnotes 117 and 175. Original purchase money amounted to £565,719.14.6; the new purchase money to £211,518.5.3. SAPP 83 of 1883-4, HA, 4 July 1883.

10. SAPD, 7 November 1883, col. 1502.

Farmers with capital and some chance of getting the best of the land not yet alienated, also favoured freehold. A few near Millicent spoke out strongly. The government had singled out 1,200,000 acres in the drainage area considered "beneficially affected by works at public cost".¹¹ With the intention of recouping future outlays on an ongoing and costly drainage scheme, the government classified the lands as drainage, first and second class, and "land reserved for leasing".¹² In 1883 established farmers and their representatives petitioned for the land to be thrown open for purchase, arguing that the area was too large for "average persons" and that "an inability to secure freehold would tend to drive farmers away from that part of the country". In 1884 legislation granted farmers a right to purchase.¹³

Members of the Land Nationalisation Society strongly opposed the claims of conservative politicians and the requests of wealthy farmers. They championed the arguments of contemporary British land reformers such as J.S. Mill and Herbert Spencer, alleging that the first colonisers of South Australia had brought with them the bias of English institutions. Britain had come to regard private property in land as a natural arrangement, and freeholding land in South Australia had led to the same monopoly as existed in the Old Country. That was wrong, they said. "No man had made the land". Land was "the original inheritance of the whole species". The founders of South Australia, they continued,

11. SAPP 87 of 1883, HA, 4 June 1883.

12. SAPP 45 of 1884, HA, 10 July 1884; SAPP 60 of 1890, 1 July 1890, p 3. Under the regulations of Act 318 of 1884, which gained assent on 14 November 1884, the leases were for sale by auction; first and second class lands were available on a 7 year lease with renewal after valuation for a further 7 years. Drainage lands were held on a lease of 14 years with the opportunity of renewal for a further 14 years after valuation which took into account the increase of value through works carried out at public cost. For a delineation of this area, see Schedule B of the Act.

13. SAPP 152 of 1883-4: A Petition Against the Crown Lands (Agricultural) Bill, 22 August 1883. Footnotes 20 and 21.

had made a great mistake in selling land from the outset. The true significance of that error was only beginning to be understood, but State ownership and leasing land, which ensured "the greatest good of the greatest number" would rectify it.¹⁴ Another parliamentarian urged his colleagues to look to the Land Tenure Reform League in Victoria, which was based on the British model, and to the essays of the Cobden Club as guides to South Australian land reform.¹⁵

Some more cautious politicians did not "like the idea of going in opposition to the dearest wish of the Englishman to possess some land of his own".¹⁶ Yet they could suggest no alternative other than leasehold to ensure farmers instead of sheep were settled on "one and a quarter million acres of splendid agricultural soil".¹⁷ They also consoled themselves that when men occupied and improved the land and paid their rent regularly, "leasehold would become to all intents and purposes like freehold".¹⁸

Between 1880-83, years of debt and drought, decreasing yields and falling land sales, the campaign for leasehold grew.¹⁹ In an attempt to promote agricultural settlement and recoup revenue, on 14 November 1884 the government passed the Agricultural Crown Land Amendment Act.²⁰

Although land sales at auction continued, leasehold tenure for agricultural purposes was introduced for the first time in South

14. The Manifesto of the South Australian Land Nationalisation Society, Adelaide, 1884; pp 3, 4, 7 and 10. See also J.B. Hirst, History Honours thesis, G.W. Cotton and the Working Men's Blocks, University of Adelaide, 1963, pp 9-10; D.B. Waterson, Squatter, Selector and Storekeeper, Sydney 1968, pp 109-10; Lord Ernle, English Farming Past and Present, London, 1936, pp 291-382.

15. SAPD, 9 May 1872, cols 855, 856 and 859.

16. SAPD, 28 July 1881, col. 419.

17. William Webster, A Lay Sermon on the Land, Adelaide, 1884, p 18.

18. SAPD, 9 May 1872, col. 856.

19. J.B. Hirst, G.W. Cotton and the Working Men's Blocks, p 9. See also G.L. Buxton, pp 66-73, and Appendix G; D. Meinig, pp 78-92.

20. Act 318 of 1884, assented to 14 November 1884.

Australia. Settlers could take up land under a right to purchase lease at an annual rent of not less than 2d per acre, which was either convertible to freehold within 6 years or renewable after 21 years for a further 21 years. Selectors under credit agreement could surrender their agreements to purchase for a right to purchase lease with all payments since 1879 credited. Improvements were not assessed in valuing rent for a lease for renewal, but were credited if a selector wished to surrender his agreement for a lease. The lessee did not have to reside on his block, and planting one-fifth with wattle was deemed sufficient "cultivation". On lands in the Millicent area "reserved for leasing", 640 acres was considered equivalent to 1,000 acres elsewhere. Otherwise a lessee could hold as much as 3,000 acres and he could transfer his land.²¹

The Act showed how far South Australia had moved from early ideals of concentrated settlements of small, self-sufficient wheat cultivators. Farmers now had the advantages of time and cheap rent which pastoralists had so long enjoyed. Legislators had conceded what landowners had learned from experience. Only by mixed agricultural and grazing on relatively large sections might the South Australian farmer on poor agricultural land have any hope of succeeding.

With the introduction of right to purchase leasehold the large landowners' fears of taxation were realised. On 14 November 1884, the same day on which the Agricultural Amendment Act was assented to, a tax on land was for the first time on the colony's statute books.²² Pastoralists objected both to the tax and its implications. Property was under attack and any future increase in taxation might conceivably result in the need

21. Regulations 1-23 of Act 318 of 1884.

22. Act 323 of 1884, assented to 14 November 1884.

to diminish estates. But because of a State debit balance of over £660,000, and because "land was a source from which the State might fairly expect to raise a large amount of revenue", large landowners had to accept taxation on land "not graciously, but because necessity stared them in the face".²³ Legislators who agreed with Henry George's policy of a single tax on the unimproved value of land were few in South Australia. Most favoured a general land tax because, they believed, in the long term annual rentals would not be unlike a perpetual land tax which would give "a moderate, regular income to the State instead of a large sum at one time and then sudden cessation".²⁴ The Land Tax Act of 1884 therefore incorporated a "less violent Georgian principle" by levying 1/2d in the £ on the unimproved value of freehold land.²⁵

Owners of the large and well-developed estates of the South East had little ground for complaint. With improvements to the value of £24,198 on his 9,418 acres at 'Mayurra', valued at £43,034, George Glen paid only £39.4.10 annual taxation.²⁶ On the 'Mt Schanck' run of 77,000 acres, valued at £154,944, only £9,000 worth of improvements had been made. Yet Joseph Clarke paid only £310.11.2 in land tax.²⁷ On 38,025 acres at 'Hynam', worth almost £2.10 per acre, the Smith brothers paid £166.3.4 in tax.²⁸ The Riddoch brothers' holdings on 'Yallum' and 'Glencoe' amounted to 86,238 acres. Over £60,000 worth of improvements on these properties valued at £224,786.13.1 reduced taxation to £342.14 a year.²⁹

23. SAPD, 4 November 1884, cols 1530 and 1532 and 5 November cols 1566 and 1571.

24. SAPD, 28 July 1881, col. 419.

25. E. Hodder, Vol. 2, pp 98-9. See also Regulations 8, 11, 15 and 36 of Act 323 of 1884.

26. GRG 21/1/Reel 15, frame 52, SAA.

27. GRG 21/1/Reel 33, frame 45, SAA.

28. GRG 21/1/Reel 60, frame 789, SAA.

29. GRG 21/1/Reel 60, frame 789, SAA.

However much the Agricultural Act of 1884 had compromised the ideal of settling small farmers, legislation in 1885 to establish working men's blocks showed it had not been forgotten.³⁰ The concept of working men's blocks was promoted by G.W. Cotton, son of an efficient farmer in Kent, and land agent, storekeeper, and politician in South Australia.³¹ The intention of the 1885 Act was to put men on ten to twenty acres of land where they could "build themselves a habitation, plant a garden for vegetable or fruit trees, [and] keep fowls, a pig or horse."³² Thus blockers would receive "their daily bread, or a portion of it, straight from the earth" to supplement a living derived from employment on nearby farms or stations.³³

Cotton saw no reason to accept that small holdings would be inferior in production to large, but even if this proved to be so, he declared that the "social and moral superiority" of the small farmer justified the risk.³⁴ There were other advantages. Cotton agreed with many before him that agricultural settlement was counter to the evils of city unemployment and "a great stimulus to the development of manhood". Cotton, self-styled "progressive colonial", favoured freehold tenure. This was a means, he believed, of "capturing the vote of the rural worker" since a man who had a "stake in the country" was sure to be stable and contented.³⁵ Under the initial Act of 1885 blockers took up their land under a 21 year right to purchase lease with an option of renewal for a further 21 years and a

30. Act 363 of 1885, assented to 11 December 1885.

31. For further details of G.W. Cotton, ADB, Vol. 3, pp 469-70; J.B. Hirst, G.W. Cotton and the Working Men's Blocks, passim.

32. SAPD, 27 July 1884, col. 769.

33. The Observer, 5 April 1884.

34. From A.R. Wallace, Land Nationalisation - Its Necessity and Aims, London, 1882. Quoted by J.B. Hirst in G.W. Cotton and the Working Men's Blocks, p. 11.

35. J.B. Hirst, G.W. Cotton and the Working Men's Blocks, p 8.

right to purchase at any time during this second term.³⁶ Legislation made opportunities for freehold increasingly available to blockers. By 1886 working men were granted right to purchase within 10 years and by 1887 within 6 years, as well as the continued right to renew their lease for 21 years.³⁷ In 1893 blockers in the South East, as elsewhere, were still showing an overwhelming preference for leases with a right to purchase.³⁸ The blockers' insistence on freehold and the politicians' willingness to allow it after brief tenure for exactly the same reasons as their predecessors, showed the ideal of establishing a numerous yeomanry in South Australia had not faded with the introduction of agricultural leasehold.

Within four years of the passing of the 1884 Agricultural Act, farmers eking out an existence on poor land had realised that 6 years on low rent on a right to purchase lease would still allow insufficient time and capital for development. In the north seasons had not improved; farmers there were experiencing "one of the most severe droughts since first settlement".³⁹ They argued that perpetual leases were the only solution. Some

36. Act 363 of 1885, Regulations 32-7.

37. Act 393 of 1886, assented to 17 November 1886; Act 420 of 1887, assented to 9 December 1887.

38. In 1890 blocks held under right of purchase totalled 4,356.3/4 acres; rent £208.6.6; block under perpetual lease 56½ acres; rent £2.1.2. SAPP 60 of 1890, 1 July 1890, Appendix H. In the South East 1,834½ acres were held under right to purchase leases for a rent of £92.13.5; 41½ acres were held under perpetual lease for £1.6.2. An inspection of 1,567 leases in 1891 showed that the bulk of leases in South Australia were held by: labourers, 1,174; artisans, 99; men in business, 77; farmers, 48; farmers' children, 91; ex-farmers, 23. W. Epps, p 132. In 1893 2,375 leases were held under right of purchase at an annual rental of £2,555; 112 perpetual leases were held at an annual rental of £335. W. Epps, p 132.

39. The rainfall in Adelaide was 14.547", 6" below the mean. Between latitudes 26° and 33°S, four stations had less than 1"; 85 out of 167 stations with records over the previous 8 years had totals less than in any other year. In the South East, on the other hand, Millicent registered 29.12" (mean over previous 11 years 27.71), Mt Gambier 30.81" (mean over previous 27 years 31.45), Naracoorte 19.22" (mean over previous 20 years 21.92) and Penola 21.13" (mean over previous 27 years 27.72). Charles Todd, Rainfall of South Australia and Northern Territory during 1888, SAPP 31 of 1889 (n.d.).

settlers in the South East also petitioned for perpetual leases. On 29 May 1886 members at a special meeting of the Millicent Farmers' and Graziers' Union unanimously resolved that short term leases should be extended to 99 years. Because of the great depression in the products of the land, the low price of wool and the fact that livestock were almost unsaleable, their "resources were at a low ebb". Unless they were granted perpetual leases, "there was no encouragement to form a permanent home".⁴⁰ At a South East District Conference in 1887, farmers who occupied the generally inferior agricultural land in the northern part of the district advocated perpetual leasehold of areas up to 3,000 acres without conditions of compulsory residence or cultivation. Those from the more fertile southern portion advocated selections of up to 1,000 acres at £1 per acre on right to purchase leases. The final Conference note preserved these conflicting interests: first class land should be available for purchase under lease; second class land should be held under perpetual leasehold.⁴¹

While farmers divided along predictable lines of self-interest according to their means and the potential of their land, a government about to legislate had to face several unwelcome realities. Unemployment was running high; wheat and wool prices were down.⁴² Politicians were again concerned that South Australia had "the soil and the sunshine but only partially the people"⁴³ because farmers were still migrating to the Wimmera

40. SAPP 58 of 1886, HA, 17 June 1886.

41. SAR, 30 June 1887.

42. In 1888 wheat had fallen by a third of 1883 values. Wool returns from 1885-88 were down by one-fifth of the returns from 1879-84. R.L. Heathcote, M. McCaskill and T. Stevenson, "South Australia 1888: A Geographical View"; Australia 1888, Bulletin No. 5, September 1980, p 91. See also G.L. Buxton, pp 89-92 and Appendix G.

43. SAPD, 8 June 1887, col. 92.

wheatlands of Victoria where the law demanded no initial deposit, freights were cheaper and storing houses were provided at railway stations.⁴⁴ On 28 June 1888, a Commission on 'The Land Laws of South Australia' admitted that because of "unwise land legislation" as well as "the settlers' own mistaken estimate of the country", many farmers, despite their toil and industry, were facing destitution.⁴⁵ An unusually unanimous legislature responded to the Commission's recommendations, the economic recession and pleas from farmers in desperate circumstances: no agricultural land was brought onto the market, but existing land laws were repealed and an Act was passed which embodied sweeping changes in South Australian land legislation.⁴⁶

On 8 December 1888, under the Crown Land Amendment Act, land sales by auction were abolished for the first time in the history of the colony and perpetual leasehold was introduced. Rents on perpetual leases were to be paid in advance for 14 years and were to be revalued every subsequent 14 years. As all former types of agreements could be surrendered, any selector could now rent up to 1,000 acres of land for as little as 2d per year on perpetual lease. But the legislation had not entirely abandoned those who clung strongly to the principle of freehold. Right to purchase leases were maintained. These could be held for a term of 21 years, with a right of renewal for a further term of 21 years, or with a right of purchase at any time after 6 years. The minimum price of land under a right to purchase lease fell from the almost sacrosanct £1 upset price per acre to 5s per acre. Cultivation and personal residence were no

44. SAPD, 19 September 1889, cols 92-6. In evidence on 20 March 1888, W. Killmier, a farmer from Bordertown, stated he had counted no less than 6 or 7 waggons going to Victoria in one week in March 1888. SAPP 28 of 1888, HA, 28 June 1888. See also Heathcote, McCaskill and Stevenson, p 93.

45. SAPP 28 of 1888, HA, 28 June 1888.

46. For comments on the Act, K.R. Bowes, pp 250-1; Heathcote, McCaskill and Stevenson, p 105; G.L. Buxton, pp 91-2; S. Roberts, p 263.

longer compulsory.⁴⁷ In half a century the land tenure system could hardly have moved further from that advocated by the founders of South Australia.

The Act contained another novel and far-reaching feature. The farmers' long-standing complaint that officials and parliamentarians from the city did not or could not judge the varying potential of land and the subtleties of the seasons, was driven home to the itinerant members of the 1888 Land Commission. The Commissioner of Crown Lands, Mr Jenkin Coles, professed he was "struck with the different capabilities of the soil in the South East" as well as with the realisation that "land there varied from the richest in the colony to land scarcely fit for carrying stock".⁴⁸ Mr Strawbridge, Deputy Surveyor-General, admitted that "scarcely any single land law could be framed adequate to differences in land and climate within the Colony".⁴⁹ To legislators the most expedient way to overcome the problem was to classify the land according to regional differences. This classification was to be carried out by land boards based on the model of the South East Land Board which had been operating for a year in the area "reserved for leasing".⁵⁰

The introduction of land boards in 1888 marked a break with a strong tradition of centralised power. Despite safeguards to ensure "control would not be taken out of the hands of Parliament", the boards were virtually autonomous because of a remarkable delegation of respons-

47. Regulations under Act 444 of 1888, assented to 8 December 1888. See also SAPP 60 of 1890, 1 July 1890, pp 6-12.

48. SAPP 28 of 1888, HA, 28 June 1888, question 381.

49. SAPP 28 of 1888, HA, 28 June 1888, questions 108 and 1767-8.

50. SAPP 28 of 1888, HA, 28 June 1888, questions 109-10, 387, 2323. The South East Land Board had been established under Act 420 of 1887. The Board had a membership of five, two of whom were to be resident in the South East. An officer of the Land Office attended each meeting as secretary. Meetings were open to the public. See also discussion for the formation of the Board in SAPD, 26 October 1886, col. 1397 and SAPD, 5 November 1887, col. 1477.

ibility.⁵¹ In districts "as homogeneous as possible" represented by three local residents, the boards were to classify land, fix the area, rent and price of blocks, consider applications, and decide appeals.⁵²

The major Land Acts of 1884 and 1888 thus implemented radical changes in the disposal, tenure and administration of land. Yet they signified no change in basic European attitudes. Europeans in South Australia had merely changed the means of achieving an ideal; they had not forsaken the great dream itself. Under new legislation they would yet see "a contented people settled permanently on the land and loving to remain there and make it homes of successive generations".⁵³ Owning land ensured social and political stability, manly strength and material prosperity. Petitions from landowners and debates among legislators continued to reflect the belief that "whoever monopolises land has the power of life and death over his fellows".⁵⁴ Above all, no matter how changed the method of achieving closer settlement, the veneer of radicalism would not hide the most conservative feature of the Acts. There remained an abiding optimism that changed legislation rather than the provision of suitable agricultural land would remedy the weaknesses of the credit agreement system.

After fourteen months of onerous and frustrating work, Charles Gell, Chairman of the South East Land Board, attempted to dispel this illusion. In his first major report, on 25 June 1890, Gell complained that before the Board was formed, "nearly all the agricultural and the greater part of the best grazing land in the district had been alienated from the Crown". The land which had come under the jurisdiction of the Board was

51. SAPD, 12 October 1881, col. 1070-1; SAPD, 30 October 1888, col. 1535; K.R. Bowes, pp 248-52; M. Grant, p 27; Heathcote, McCaskill and Stevenson, p 105.

52. For further details of the Board's powers, SAPP 60 of 1890, 1 July 1890, p 7. See also SAPP 28 of 1888, HA, 28 June 1888, questions 109-10.

53. SAPP 28 of 1888, 28 June 1888, question 388.

54. Manifesto of Land Nationalisation Society, p 10.

"very wet, flukey, coasty, and a large area of poor scrub [was] infested with wild dogs and rabbits". In the Chairman's opinion, "for the settling of a large population of small graziers and farmers in the district, the Board was quite a quarter of a century too late".⁵⁵ Members of the Board not only lacked good land: like previous administrations they had to make sure land was a paying proposition. Exactly the same situation obtained as that prior to the passing of Strangways Act and therefore the Board's decisions produced the same outcome. The farmer and grazier with capital stood to benefit as before. Because he could pay for it he was more certain of getting the best land available and he also could benefit from concessions meant for men of lesser means.

Under the Board's jurisdiction farmers with money were enabled to aggregate. Intending settlers from outside the district favoured the land near Millicent which had been "reserved for leasing" but under the 1888 Act had become available on right to purchase lease. Yet the Board considered its first duty was to increase the holdings of "the existing population so that they might carry sufficient stock to enable [them] to remain and procure a livelihood".⁵⁶ As the Deputy Surveyor-General had warned, this land fell into the hands of capitalists and became large farmers' holdings.⁵⁷ The Board also abetted aggregation by allowing the transfer of land. The Chairman declared he had discouraged jobbery, but as he had no good agricultural land to offer he claimed that after poor settlers had struggled for six years on inferior land and "incurred nothing

55. GRG 35/112/1890/536, SAA.

56. Chairman's comments on "Land population and settlement", GRG 35/112/1890/536, SAA.

57. SAPP 28 of 1888, 28 June 1888, questions 80-5.

but hardship and loss", it was justifiable to allow transfer "for any cause".⁵⁸

Although Chinese gardeners in the district were "making fortunes" from growing tobacco on well-irrigated and manured plots of ten acres, those who looked to Europe as a model continued to find that the land would not accommodate the intense cultivation of wheat.⁵⁹ For them "the safer and more remunerative work of sheep-keeping, dairying, wine and fruit-growing" on large areas remained the preferred method of land use.⁶⁰ One visiting Adelaide politician declared he had to agree that the Board seemed to be "pandering to monopolists" by allowing them to aggregate. Yet he felt replacing three small farmers with one large farmer was justifiable because, on the undrained Hundreds north of Millicent, a farmer needed 6-8,000 acres of land "to make a bare living".⁶¹ The Land Board was not so expansive in its allocations, but by 12 April 1889, 556 applicants had been allotted an average of 780 acres of land.⁶² By 1897 the size of the average holding in the South East allocated by the Board was 1,760 acres, almost 250 acres more than for the rest of the colony and twenty times the amount once envisaged to ensure the passage of labourer to proprietor.⁶³

58. Chairman's comments on Act 444 of 1888, section 24 in GRG 35/112/1890/536, SAA. The underlining is his. By 1897 103 in the South East and 774 in the colony had transferred land. SAPP 10 of 1897, HA, 12 August 1897.

59. SAPP 28 of 1888, 28 June 1888, questions 2586, 3244, 3373-8.

60. SAPP 63 of 1891, tabled before both houses, 31 March 1891.

61. South Australian Advertiser, 31 March 1892.

62. Report of Chairman on land allotted under Act 444 of 1888 from 12 April 1889-26 June 1890. Average rental was 13/4 per acre. GRG 35/112/1890/537, SAA.

63. The average size of holdings for the colony increased from 626 to 792 acres between 1888 and 1894. W. Epps, p 130. By 30 June 1897 the Board had allotted 91,572 acres to 52 allottees in the South East and 960,058 acres to 633 allottees in South Australia. SAPP 10 of 1897, HA, 12 August 1897.

Yet neither at State level nor in the South East was increased average size accompanied by an increase in land brought under cultivation. Between 1885 and 1891, even in the fertile county of Grey, the area under cultivation decreased for the first time.⁶⁴ The large holdings did not attract population to the district: between 1881 and 1891 this fell by 450.⁶⁵ As sheep numbers decreased only slightly, the Land Board had not settled a numerous yeomanry but had merely continued a well-established South East practice of allowing large farmers to cultivate a little while they maintained themselves by running sheep.⁶⁶

The Board also showed little commitment to the yeoman ideal when it favoured the moneyed farmer and grazier in determining rents and reductions of rent. All the land in the district was bearing "loss rents", but the Board placed the same rental on both right of purchase and perpetual leases claiming that "with a fair purchase price the land tax was quite sufficient to counterbalance the superiority of the land to purchase lease over the perpetual lease".⁶⁷ The less affluent lessee thus continued

64. Land under cultivation in the colony fell from 2,573,904 acres in 1885 to 2,568,000 acres in 1891. South East:

	<u>1885</u>	<u>1891</u>
Grey	47,846	44,071
Robe	2,844	2,097
MacDonnell	6,757	4,530
	<u>57,447</u>	<u>50,698</u>

SRSA; Appendix 7; W. Epps, p 131.

	<u>1881</u>	<u>1891</u>
65. <u>Population</u>		
County Grey	10,281	10,943
Robe	3,256	3,009
MacDonnell	1,330	465
	<u>14,867</u>	<u>14,417</u>

SRSA, 1892; Appendix 4.

Heathcote, McCaskill and Stevenson comment that South East population increase was never dramatic. In 1888 the region contained 5% of the State's population, the same share as in 1861. At the same time the South East accounted for 22% of the South Australian sheep flock, 70% of the potato crop but only 1.6% of the wheat. Heathcote, McCaskill and Stevenson, pp 96 and 105.

66. Between 1889 and 1891 sheep numbers for the South East decreased from 1,448,327 to 1,388,614. SAPP 63 of 1891, tabled before both Houses 31 March 1891.

67. The Chairman's report on fixing rentals for right of purchase and perpetual leases under Act 444 of 1888. GRG 35/112/1890/536, SAA.

to rent his land without the satisfaction either of ownership or of being able to invest all his capital in improvement, while the large farmer with capital enjoyed the freehold of his land under a taxation system which was certainly not burdensome.

Although Land Boards were established to cope with variations in land potential within a district, the South East Land Board soon discovered that variations even within a holding of 1,000 acres made decisions extremely difficult. The lessee with ready money was again in the most advantageous position. In the interests of revenue, the Board decided the most profitable solution was to favour the right to purchase lessee rather than the perpetual lessee. If the Board considered the land was suffering "under various disabilities which might be overcome with time", a low rent was allowed, but at the same time a compensatory higher purchase price, which only the wealthy could afford, was fixed. A worthless block with one small valuable portion posed another problem since the Board did not know in advance "what part or what quantity" the lessee might eventually purchase. Valuing the whole block at the value of one small but good portion, according to the general prevailing principle, imposed a double burden on the purchaser, who paid both a high rent and land tax. The Board was in a dilemma, but urged the Commissioner that future potential purchasers would receive "fairer treatment" if they defined and applied for their chosen portion within a short time of taking up their lease.⁶⁸ In short, with the Land Board's sanction, right to purchase lessees would enjoy the same benefits of "peacocking" which the squatters had enjoyed before them.

Settlers without capital were further disadvantaged by the Board's handling of rent reductions. Contrary to the Act's aim to settle the small man, the Board's basis of decision was "the worth of the land, rather than

68. The Chairman's report on fixing rates of rent and purchase money. GRG 35/112/1890/536, SAA.

the circumstances of the applicant".⁶⁹ Men of small means claimed it was they who would make up the difference when rent on land, which would carry ten sheep to the acre, was reduced from £1,000 to £300, or when the owner of 50,000 acres had his rent reduced to a quarter of its original valuation. As far as they were concerned the machinations of the Land Board manifested continuing injustice, where "the man that [sic] made the most plausible statement was the most successful", and where the poor were taxed to help the rich.⁷⁰

Henry Hart was one farmer in the Millicent area who accumulated under right to purchase tenure. As a boy Hart had worked a flour mill on his uncle's farm in Hertfordshire. He arrived in South Australia in 1865 and after working in flour mills at Reynella and Port Noarlunga, moved to Mt Gambier in 1866 to try his fortune. As both mills there were idle, Hart worked as a blacksmith for 30/- a week until 1872, when he moved north to the newly-opened drained lands three miles south of Millicent. Here Hart worked Millicent's only flour mill on land given him expressly for that purpose by the Mt Gambier merchants, Fidler and Webb, who had been among the first townsmen to invest in land in the Millicent area.⁷¹ By 1879, from the proceeds of the mill, Hart had purchased a modest homestead block of 68 acres, and by October 1881 had

69. The Chairman's report on reduction of rents. GRG 35/112/1890/536, SAA.

70. The South Australian Advertiser, 28 February 1892. See also SAPD, 27 October 1891, col. 1723. By 1897 the Board had allowed 84 reductions in rent in the South East and 495 in the colony. SAPP of 1897, HA, 12 August 1897.

71. SET, 1 November 1938. This information was confirmed in an interview with Henry Hart's grand-daughter, Mrs G.W. Watson of Millicent, on 10 June 1978. See also C.J. Melano, p 44.

secured a further 111 acres under credit agreement in the Hundred of Mayurra.⁷²

Hart soon began to show how "in everything he undertook he was steps ahead of his competitors in progressive methods". He was the first local farmer to use a drill. In a home-made machine he ground into dust "mountains of bone as high as the ceiling" and pioneered the fertilising of the reclaimed Wyrie swamp for the production of mangolds, swedes and artificial grasses. He cleared a 38 acre block of flat, drained land and sandy ridges covered with bracken where he planted 1,500 pine trees. He supervised his sons in planting orchards, made his own cider press, and kept bees.⁷³

Times were not always easy, but by the early nineties Hart had taken up 501 acres in several small lots under right to purchase lease.⁷⁴ In 1898, with local baker, farming associate and co-executor of George McCarthy's will, James Lannan, Hart managed sections 387 and 388 in the Hundred of Mayurra. This was the land George McCarthy had bought from Robert Smith Jnr in 1875, and leased first to a nephew who pre-deceased him, and then for one year to James Guley, who had been unable to

72. Hart completed purchase of Section 192E of 68 acres for £136 on 13 October 1879 under Credit Agreement 3183 and Section 608 of 111 acres for £222 on 30 October 1881 under Credit Agreement 3531. LGB, County Grey.

73. Interview with Mrs G.W. Watson of Millicent on 10 June 1978. The Sunday Mail, Industries of the South East, Adelaide, 1930, pp 160-3.

74. <u>Right to Purchase Agreement</u>	<u>Sections</u>	<u>Acreage</u>	<u>Cost</u>	<u>Hundred</u>
6510	596,597,598	38	£132	Mayurra
7199	183,184	228	£199.10	"
7200	187	118	£103.5	"
7201	186	117	£323.6.6	"

GRG 35/2/1915/4055, SAA. See also LGB, County Grey.

*Henry Hart's cider press and
bone-crushing machine*

In the 1880s and 90s the large mixed farmer with capital benefitted from agricultural leasehold tenure and the spread of scientific farming methods. "Daddy" Hart, of Millicent, was one progressive farmer who either bought machinery or devised his own.

(National Trust, Millicent)



purchase land under credit agreement.⁷⁵ Probably Hart used McCarthy's land to extend his own mixed farming practices.

Hart was an aspiring 29-year-old miller and farmer when he arrived in Millicent. By 1915, at 72, the energetic and enterprising agriculturalist, pastoralist, horticulturalist and miller had converted to freehold several small holdings amounting to 680 acres held under right to purchase lease, and was still giving freely of "his time, brains and money to advance the interests of his community".⁷⁶ But this passage from landless immigrant to landowner was not according to the Wakefield ideal. Not from wheat cultivation on one or two small sections over a short period of time, but only with business capital, diversified agriculture on several sections, the benefits of leasehold tenure and after 42 years, did 'Daddy' Hart become a freehold farmer.

Hart was a progressive farmer typical of those who not only benefitted from a right to purchase leasing system but also had the capital to use the technology which was becoming more available in the South East by the eighties. Farmers could buy locally reapers, binders, single,

75. GRG 35/2/1899/648, SAA. James Lannan and his brother Dyer came to Millicent from Robe. While his brother managed the bakery, James managed grazing land about 2½ miles from Millicent on the Penola Road. He ran some sheep and cattle and at times sharefarmed the drier areas. I am grateful to Mr A.H. Millhouse of Millicent for this information and other personal details of James Lannan. Mr Millhouse also recalls "roaming miles with other boys gathering bones for Henry Hart's miniature mountain". Letter from Mr A.H. Millhouse, Millicent, 12 March 1982. For other details on James Lannan's wife and family see SET, 27 October 1894. For land transactions of Sections 387 and 388, CT 413/65, Transfers 252490 and 378504 and Applications 294483 and 335766. James Guley was one of Isaac Guley's four children attending Pompoon School in 1885. School registers held by B. Towers, Millicent. An Isaac Gueley [sic] is mentioned as holding Section 229 and 96 acres in the Adelaide district in 1840. Papers Relative to South Australia No. 17, SAA. Isaac Guley, farmer, from Mt Gambier, completed purchase of Section 161 of 40 acres for £80 on 18 March 1882 under Credit Agreement 2631. He transferred this land under Right to Purchase lease No. 332401 to James Guley. CT 385/221, Transfer 193047. Prior to this James Guley had held 56 acres of Section 162, bought at £2 per acre. His agreement was revoked on 22 July 1875. SAGG, 1875, p 1382.

76. LGB, County Grey. Industries of the South-East, p 161.

double and treble ploughs, hand, horse, and steam-powered chaff-cutters and broadcast seed-sowers. Windmills, pumps, weed-skimming machines and potato-raisers were manufactured locally.⁷⁷ Farmers on stony land remaind confident that "the State which had produced the stump-jump plough would yet produce a stone-clearing machine".⁷⁸

The progressive farmer also had access to new ideas and techniques in agriculture through local branches of the Bureau of Agriculture, established in 1888.⁷⁹ By 1897 The Naracoorte Herald was pleased to report that the cry of "Educate the farmer" had not been raised in vain.⁸⁰ By 1891 scholarships were available in the South East to a farmer who could not afford £50 to send his son to Roseworthy Agricultural College, established since 1882 under Professor J.D. Custance.⁸¹

The progressive and wealthy farmer converted these new ideas into practice. He used sheltered salt troughs for his sheep.⁸² He fostered an

77. BW, 7 January, 11 and 29 April 1891.

78. SAPD, 19 September 1889, col. 965.

79. SAPP 96 of 1889, HA, 17 September 1889. The first report of the Central Bureau of Agriculture stated its aim was "to provide information of every kind calculated to prove beneficial to colonists engaged in agriculture, horticulture, pastoral and other pursuits connected with cultivation of the soil". See also J.B. Hirst, pp 54-6; M. Williams, pp 280-3.

80. Within 9 years the Bureau had 99 branches and 1,200 members. NH, 14 December 1897. Committee members of the first District Bureau in Millicent, established on 6 June 1888 were George Glen, SM (Chairman); J. Rogers, JP; H. Hart, JP; S.J. Stuckey, JP. The Mt Gambier Branch was established on 5 October 1888 with a Committee comprised of James Umpherston, JP (Chairman); W. Paltridge, JP; John Watson, JP; James Pick, JP; Thomas Williams, JP; David Norman Jnr; Johan Carl Ruwoldt; Edmund Lewis; Charles Holloway. Committee members of the Naracoorte Branch, established 6 April 1889, were Andrew Attiwell, JP (Chairman); James Magarey; Alex Johnston; Henry Smith; Oliver Hunt; John Thomson; John Blackwell; John Williams; James Gilchrist. SAPP 96 of 1889, HA, 17 September 1889.

81. BW, 4 March 1891. Professor J.D. Custance had been Assistant Professor of Agriculture at the Royal Agricultural College of Cirencester and then Professor of Agriculture to the Imperial Government of Japan. Roseworthy College opened on 3 February 1885. H.J. Scott, South Australia in 1887, Adelaide, 1887. For further details on Professor Custance see G.E. Loyau, Representative Men, p 84; SAR, 15 December 1923 and 1047/144, SAA.

82. The South Australian Advertiser, 31 March 1892.

awareness of the need to fertilise exhausted land and especially drained land, which he found would not bear prolonged wheat cropping. He also planted gums more systematically in the belief that this would help drainage.⁸³ When the Forestry Department and the Board of Agriculture followed the American practice of "clothing the treeless plains with useful and beautiful timber" and promoted Arbor Day from 1890, South East farmers and graziers responded on 16 July of that year by planting "tens of thousands of hardy gums" around the Valley Lake at Mt Gambier.⁸⁴

Although Henry Hart and his enterprising contemporaries benefitted from leasehold tenure, improved technology and their own inventive reforms, they still battled hard against pests, diseases and weeds - in many cases introduced from Europe. The South Australian Journal of Agriculture warned against the dangers of acclimatisation, claiming that the introduction of some birds and animals should be restricted by law "as creatures useful in their native habitat were proving pests in South Australia".⁸⁵ The twittering of sparrows had earlier made Mt Gambier seem like an English village to a nostalgic visitor. By the 1890s rewards for sparrows' heads and eggs testified to the widespread damage "this common enemy" was doing to fruit and cereal crops.⁸⁶ Starlings were also increasing far beyond expectations.⁸⁷ The

83. BW, 3 January 1891.

84. For number, species and position of trees planted around the Valley Lake, C292, SAA. For the names of the planters, their occupation, and date of arrival in the colony, A515/B7, SAA. See also The South Australian Advertiser, 31 March 1892; J.P. Stow, pp 89-91.

85. SAJA, Vol. 3, August 1899, p 14.

86. By 1891 the provisions of the Sparrow Destruction Act applied and, in Lucindale, for example, by 1894 the Council was paying 1/6 per hundred for dried sparrow heads and 1/- per hundred eggs. B. Durman, p 23. In Mt Gambier between 17 January and 11 February 1891, 4,250 eggs and 530 heads were handed in. BW, 11 February 1891. For further details on the introduction of sparrows, Research Note 60, SAA.

87. SAJA, Vol. 3, August 1899, p 15.

Planting trees at Valley Lake, Arbor Day, 16 July 1890
(SAA)

From the eighties men began to plant trees to restore the damage done by clearing.

Compton Rabbit Preserving Factory, 1898
(SAA)

No one was able to overcome the devastation made by one European import - the rabbit - but in times of depression rabbits often provided a more regular income than sheep or agriculture.



poppy, "a blaze of red and green" ruined the hay.⁸⁸ Buttercups had to be burned because they gave a bad flavour to cows' milk. Crickets and caterpillars, "the veritable larrikin among creeping things", devastated potatoes and destroyed thousands of acres of oats.⁸⁹ Grasshoppers "could strip a garden in a day" or pile dead several inches high along the beaches.⁹⁰ "Take-all" lived up to its name despite treatment with blue-stone solution. Codlin moth destroyed the fruit.⁹¹ Fumigating fruit cases with tobacco had not got rid of aphids.⁹² In the eighties star thistle, sorrel, wire weed and the Jeffrey burr were a curse throughout the South East and by 1896 the apple of Sardon and the Canadian thistle were classed as noxious weeds.⁹³

Despite pronouncements about the virtues of closer settlement, governments had not supported the ideal by providing adequate drainage. Land on the inland northern and western flats was still inundated in wet winters. Goyder pointed out how the inefficient system could not cope with a moderate flow of water, let alone take off flood waters from the high rainfall areas to the east and south.⁹⁴ Drainage from the Penola District Council's excavations to the west and the Riddoch brothers' private drains were also aggravating the situation.⁹⁵ An efficient but

88. BW, 7 January 1891.

89. BW, 3 and 7 January 1891.

90. BW, 17 January 1891.

91. BW, 18 February 1891.

92. SAJA, Vol. 3, November 1899, p 98.

93. B. Durman, pp 22-3.

94. M. Williams, The Making of the South Australian Landscape, p 204. See also M. Williams, The Historical Geography of an Artificial Drainage System, pp 94-5.

95. SAPP 149 of 1893, HA, 5 December 1893 and SAPP 32 of 1894, HA, 26 June 1894. On 30 January 1890 D. Balnaves reported to the Surveyor-General that his land "behind 'Yallum' was wetter because Mr Riddoch's drain discharged on to his section". GRG 35/256/23, Notebook 41, SAA. At a meeting in Lucindale on 23 January 1890, farmers declared they had never seen so much water on the flats before. They blamed John Riddoch's large drains which sent water "travelling over Penola, Maoupe and Killanoola". GRG 35/256/23, Notebook 41, SAA.

costly plan devised by Goyder in 1890 was rejected by a government which preferred to implement less costly and less effective changes recommended by a Royal Commission in 1892.⁹⁶ Another Royal Commission in 1899 reconsidered the problem and recommended a "modified and economic form" of drainage but the Government took no action. By 1900 the state of the South East drainage scheme was "little better than it had been forty years previously". "Inept laws and inadequate financing" had left many settlers trying to farm on land "with sheets of water stretching further than one could see "a...monument to the inactivity of nearly twenty years and a standing reproach to the government".⁹⁷

Any advantages from leasehold did not offset the low prices and glutted markets which characterised the depressed nineties in eastern Australia. Farmers needed cash incomes to make their farms pay, but Mt Gambier farmers were losing on every ton of potatoes they cultivated. They tried extracting starch from their crops, but generally found it more profitable "to plough the lot up and turn a flock of wethers in".⁹⁸ Despite the fact that wheat-growing had failed so often on the wet lands of the South East, some farmers were still trying to cultivate a little but a dramatic fall in prices because of competition from the Argentine in the eighties made wheat cultivation even more pointless.⁹⁹ By 1891 glutted markets for dairy produce had caused the closure of the Mt Gambier Cheese and Butter Factory and the Millicent Dairy Cooperative.¹⁰⁰

96. SAPP 35 of 1892, HA, 13 May 1892. Goyder's estimate for his plan was £971,477. SAPP 64 of 1890, HA, 10 July 1890. See also EIS, pp 42-3 and for details of the drainage scheme between 1881 and 1900, M. Williams, pp 200-10.

97. M. Williams, p 210; Map 12.

98. Potatoes were costing £1.5 per ton to cultivate and sold at £1.2.6 per ton. The Observer, 10 February 1893; The South Australian Advertiser, 31 March 1892.

99. D.J. Gordon, Does Wheat-growing Pay?, Adelaide, 1894, pp 3-5.

100. BW, 2 May 1891.

The fat stock business also waned under low prices and Victorian border tariffs were "a regular death blow to the small grazier".¹⁰¹ A butter bonus in 1893, relief under the State Advances Act in 1894, and the establishment of a Produce Export Department in 1895 were signs that even the progressive mixed farmer of means "was having much ado to make ends meet". Poor farmers had "long since sold out or gone elsewhere".¹⁰²

Legislation for agricultural leasehold helped the pastoralist just as credit agreement had done. The pastoralist had little desire to freehold the generally inferior land which remained by the eighties but this land was useful for alternative grazing, especially where so much land was flooded in winter. What happened in the Hundred of Monbulla is a good example of pastoralist accumulation under leasehold.

Situated in the central northern portion of the district, Monbulla averaged a good rainfall of 26" per year, but more than half the soil was "sandy and of low fertility". The south-east corner was "very heavily textured" with only a portion of the higher land east of the railway fit

101. The highest prices for fat sheep and cattle between 1893-7 were as follows:

	<u>Fat wethers</u>	<u>Cattle</u>
1893	16/-	9/10
1894	12/6	6/-
1895	12/6	5/-
1896	16/-	9/-
1897	18/-	10/-

SRSA, 1898.

Tariff rates were 3/- per head for sheep and lambs, £2 for cattle and £4 for horses. BW, 29 February 1892.

102. For details on the State Produce Export Department and butter bonus, D.J. Gordon, Official Year Book of South Australia, Adelaide, 1912-13, pp 167-9; W. Reeves, p 383; SAPD, 1893, cols 1041 and 1197. BW, 17 November 1894 and 12 January 1895. For details of the State Advances Act, W. Reeves, p 334.

for farming.¹⁰³ Consequently Monbulla had been leasehold rather than freehold. To secure the fertile central crescent of the vast leasehold run which he had acquired from the Wells' brothers, John Riddoch purchased one-tenth of the Hundred before 1868. Under credit agreement and conversion to right to purchase leases, others freehold only a further quarter by 1922, and another 334 acres by 1925.¹⁰⁴ Even this small amount of freeholding had been fraught with forfeiture, revocations and transfers, an indication of the futility of trying to farm on poor quality land.

One pastoralist who took up land under the Agricultural Leasehold Act of 1888 was Thomas Morris, descendant of one of the earliest and largest South East land barons, Thomas Hindmarsh Morris. In the 1870s Morris moved west from Bowaka, near Kingston, to take up land near Penola and Kalangadoo. By 1885 his holdings in the Hundreds of Penola and Grey were rivalled only by those of his son-in-law, Thomas Skene of 'Krongart', and the Riddoch brothers.¹⁰⁵ Under right to purchase and perpetual lease agreements he began to add leasehold to purchased land in the Hundred of Monbulla. In 1898, after Archibald Hay's death, Morris paid £1,250 for 1,000 acres containing the 260 acres of fertile Section 185E, selected in 1878 by the Penola saddler, James Clarke.¹⁰⁶ On 9 August 1890, under Perpetual Lease 1051, Morris took up 695 acres in Sections 257 and 258, three miles east of his purchased 1,000 acres at an annual rent of

103. SAPP 71 of 1925, HA, 17 December 1925; Maps 7 and 11.

104. The Hundred of Monbulla contained 2,720 acres. By 1868, 9,690 acres had been purchased of which John Riddoch held 6,183 acres, land agents 507 acres, and T.P. Scott 3,000 acres. LGB, County Robe. Ch. 2, footnotes 155 and 208.

105. By 1885 Morris held 1,591 acres in the Hundred of Penola and 2,945 acres in the Hundred of Grey for which he had paid £1 per acre. For biographical details of Thomas Morris, R. Cockburn, Vol. 2, p 87; B. Durman, p 7; BW, 29 March 1871; The Observer, 26 May 1894. A genealogy of the Morris family is held by N. Hunt, Kalangadoo. For biographical details of Thomas Skene, A. Henderson, p 83.

106. GRG 35/2/1890/660 and 3262, SAA; LGB County Robe; Ch. 3, footnote 172.

£8.13.9.¹⁰⁷ Although legislation had envisaged this land would be developed for agriculture, Morris applied successfully on three occasions for reductions in rent because of "the scrubby nature of his land", and by 1902 he was renting it for £5.1.4 a year, retrospective from 1894, and using it as a change for his sheep.¹⁰⁸

Morris had a little more difficulty in getting block "L", a 95 acre block on the former stock route from Robe to Penola. This land was first taken up under Right to Purchase Lease 59 by a local horsebreaker, Cornelius Connell, on 1 April 1889 at 6d an acre, after it had been open for a year.¹⁰⁹ It was a scrubby block with a quarter lying swampy most of the year. Three years after allotment Connell had fenced it on three sides with a post and four-wire fence because his neighbour's cattle were trespassing, but he made no further improvements. In 1895, when his own holdings had reached the permissible maximum of 1,000 acres, Morris tried to buy the block in his wife's name so that she could depasture 1,000 sheep, seven horses and forty cattle there. The proposed transfer made Morris's neighbours, and especially Donald McKay, an applicant for the same block, very angry. McKay demanded that the Chairman of the Land Board look into the matter of "who had paid the rent, erected and paid for the fencing, and whose sheep were grazing on the land". Morris admitted that Connell was under mortgage to him, owed him "£10 for mutton and a cow", and that he had paid for the fencing and the rental of the block. McKay demanded the Board cancel the lease unless "it wished to be seen as increasing large estates and keeping the poor man from obtaining any land". Connell was willing to transfer the lease held under

107. GRG 35/2/1890/2394, SAA.

108. GRG 35/2/1896/9931 and 1902/7458, SAA.

109. GRG 35/2/1896/1378, SAA. For details of Grazing and Cultivation Leases, clauses 49 and 50 of Crown Land Consolidation Act 393 of 1886 which came into operation on 17 November 1886. See also SAPP 60 of 1890, HA, 1 July 1890, p 3.

his name to anyone. Authorising fellow-Irishman and local publican, John Reilly, to look after his "business affairs", he quit horse-breaking and dummies and sought his fortune on the Kalgoorlie goldfields. On 19 August 1896 Morris got the land in the name of his wife, Lucy,¹¹⁰ and used it in conjunction with 6,468 acres of fee simple on the fertile Kalangadoo plains - land which Stephen Henty had praised so highly sixty years previously and for which Robert Leake had been willing to pay so much.¹¹¹

Connell's friend, Reilly, had lived in South Australia for 26 years, working "on farm and station pursuits" before becoming a licensed victualler in Penola. In 1889 he had five sons and three daughters to provide for and told the Land Board he was "desirous for his health's sake to take up pastoral pursuits". He declared he was financially able to improve and to stock his land. On 1 April 1888, under Grazing and Cultivation Lease 53, he took up 1,180 acres of Sections 259, 260 and 261 in the Hundred of Monbulla adjoining Morris's latest acquisition at an annual rent of £37.9.6. But he made no improvements and within one year sold to Squire Riddoch.¹¹²

In these direct and indirect ways Morris, Riddoch and Skene had tied up practically the whole of the Hundred of Monbulla. The Land Acts of the eighties had been ineffective against a pastoral monopoly of leasehold. Land had gradually merged into large holdings devoted to pastoral pursuits, "slowly but surely depopulating the country and strangling the

110. Correspondence between the Chairman of the Land Board, T.H. Morris and D. McKay from 27 March to 19 August 1896. GRG 35/2/1896/1378, SAA.

111. LGB, County Grey. See Ch. 2, footnotes 68-70. Map 8.

112. GRG 35/2/1888/2297; GRG 35/2/1889/605, SAA.

townships".¹¹³ In this respect, at least, the prediction that leasehold would "become to all intents and purposes like freehold" had proved only too true as once again the man of capital and the un-European nature of second-rate South East land had defeated the yeoman ideal.¹¹⁴

Pastoralists like Riddoch and Morris could use inferior land for alternative grazing; homestead blockers on equally poor land in the Hundred of Monbulla were supposed to use their 15-20 acres for agriculture.

113.

Size of holdings acres	No. of holdings		Freeholds		Leaseholds		Total area	
	1885	1891	1885	1891	1885	1891	1885	1891
			acres	acres	acres	acres	acres	acres
1 to 5	2,278	2,231	3,712	3,061	1,524	1,469	5,236	4,530
6 to 100	3,885	4,573	106,122	96,034	60,831	82,879	166,953	178,913
101 to 250	3,150	2,869	309,538	265,008	236,780	236,316	546,318	501,324
251 to 500	4,271	3,882	704,957	587,026	881,973	876,569	1,586,910	1,463,595
501 to 1,000	4,292	3,867	1,154,072	970,897	1,923,214	1,775,244	3,077,286	2,746,141
1,001 to 2,000	1,045	1,650	685,206	843,537	753,491	1,498,408	1,438,408	2,641,945
2,001 to 5,000	420	744	589,056	594,087	659,869	1,687,905	1,248,925	2,281,992
5,001 to 10,000	133	298	499,537	487,913	460,514	1,678,083	960,051	2,165,996
10,001 to 20,000	76	183	508,027	609,249	566,112	1,962,008	1,074,139	2,571,257
20,000 to 40,000	41	44	663,841	679,803	503,545	501,129	1,167,386	1,180,932
40,001 and upwds	17	14	415,989	373,674	596,934	420,389	1,012,923	794,063
	19,608	20,355	5,640,037	5,540,289	6,644,787	10,720,399	12,284,535	16,230,668

"With respect to the country held under lease in larger areas the figures are somewhat startling. The leaseholds of from 1,000 to 2,000 acres in extent were almost doubled, those from 2,000 to 5,000 nearly trebled, and those from 5,000 to 10,000 and 10,000 to 20,000 acres have increased pretty well fourfold. The official figures do not show separately the number of leaseholders or freeholders for the years given, but there are sufficient data available to prove beyond doubt that the cultivable lands of the colony are rapidly merging into fewer holdings and being less cultivated. Out of a total of 747 holders — both freeholders and leaseholders — between the years 1885 and 1891, about 650 possess areas ranging between 6 and 20 acres (presumably for the most part working men's blocks), while the total area held under both tenures has increased by about 4,000,000 acres. In other words, only about one hundred additional people have taken up land under the ordinary conditions of selection, but those who already hold land have increased their holdings by that immense area."

W. Epps, pp 129-30. See also W. Reeves, p 257.

114. See footnote 18.

Not only was this impossible, but in the depression of the nineties most blockers could not find seasonal work close enough to home to fulfil the condition to reside on their blocks for nine months each year.¹¹⁵ Thomas Moynahan, who held Section 291, a 19 acre block about four miles east of Morris's land on the outskirts of Penola, was one of these.¹¹⁶ When he worked with his team and dray on the drains near Millicent he had to live there in a tent to care for his horses. Carting and shearing also took him away from home, and his wife could not reside alone on the block because she was "a sufferer of the disease of the kidneys". Moynahan's personal residence conditions were relaxed four times between March 1897 and April 1898, but he could not hold on, and transferred in 1904.¹¹⁷ Many others looking for work were not residing on their blocks. In April 1897 Mrs Helen McElroy complained to the Land Board that five of her neighbours were not doing so. As a result two settlers had their residence conditions relaxed, one settler had his agreement cancelled, and one decided to transfer. One later purchased his block.¹¹⁸

By 1890, only five years after legislation to establish working men on blocks, 39 of the original 1,019 blockers in the South East had

115. This was the main reason given for forfeiture in the South East. SAPP 149 of 1890, LC, 30 September 1890.

116. HLB, No. 31, DL.

117. GRG 35/2/1897/2481, SAA. Relaxations were granted on 20 March, 15 September and 20 December 1897 and 26 April 1898. In 1904 Moynahan transferred to Matthew Hossatz, a labourer from near Penola. HLB, No. 31, DL.

118. GRG 35/2/1897/247, SAA.

forfeited.¹¹⁹ Yet politicians remained convinced of the value of the scheme because the small man had contributed to the political stability of the colony. They declared the small man was "the salvation of the country, for men who might be inclined when they had no property to vote against the interests of property would, when they had land, vote otherwise".¹²⁰ Politicians also remained optimistic about the future of the blocker. They did not consider he "was to be counted among the landless, homeless and unemployed". He would yet become a man "with his own home, his own fireside, and his own garden."¹²¹ Mr Eusibius Wilson, the Inspector of Homestead Blocks, declared that even in times of precarious employment, the blocker could support his family on the produce from his block alone if he improved the quality of his land rather than increase the size of his block. The distinctive feature of the blockers' cultivation was to be its intensity. To achieve this the blockers' emblem should be, Wilson declared, not even the four-furrow plough, but the spade.¹²² Four of the original 25 settlers in the Hundred of Monbulla,

119.

Area	No. of Original settlers	Acres held	Forfeitures	Acres forfeited
Binum	7	101	2	27
Glenroy	12	174	-	-
Grey	15	147	-	-
Hindmarsh	8	137	3	51
Jessie	29	482	1	20
Joyce	106	1,094	1	14
Kennion	8	153	-	-
McDonnell	112	800	-	-
Mingbool	67	741	1	20
Monbulla	25	426	5	89
Mount Muirhead	346	24,722	10	1,502
Naracoorte	196	3,211	15	217
Rivoli Bay	83	467	1	13
Townsend	5	41	-	-

SAPP 149 of 190, LC, 30 September 1890.

120. J.B. Hirst, p 52.

121. SAPP 85 of 1898, HA, 7 September 1898.

122. Report of Inspector Wilson in SAPP 85 of 1898, HA, 7 September 1898.

had purchased their land after leasing it for ten years, but none did so by following Wilson's advice. They had fenced, sunk waterholes and wells, put up two-roomed homes and cleared the noxious weeds. But they had not resided on their blocks, destroyed the rabbits, or engaged in agriculture. Each was using his inferior land as the pastoralists in the area did - for alternative grazing. Sheep had once again saved the small South East settler from "poverty and pauperism".¹²³

In 1893 one writer declared that the current agricultural depression had been caused by "the lack of a sufficient available area of arable land" because in the early days of the colony "vested rights were created

123.

	<u>William Hill</u> (Sect 298 and 299) (36 acres)	<u>Thomas McDonald</u> (Sect. 289) (18 acres)	<u>Thomas Spillet</u> (Sect. 303) (17 acres)
Resides once a week	Yes	No	No
Destroys rabbits	No	No	No
Destroys noxious weeds	Yes	Yes	Yes
Has fenced boundary	Yes	Yes	Yes
Cultivates	Yes	18 acres grazing	17 acres grazing
	$\frac{1}{4}$ acre under fruit trees		
	2 horses 4 cattle, sheep, pigs, goats	23 sheep	12 cattle
	water-hole and well £3	£1	£3
	2-roomed weather- board house with iron roof £10	2-roomed iron and bark £5	building material on ground £5
	fencing £ 8	£10	£8
Total	<u>£21</u>	<u>£16</u>	<u>£16</u>

Thomas Marks also completed purchase on 6 January 1898. GRG 35/2/1897/247, SAA; HLB, No. 31, DL.

through the necessity to sell large areas for cash to meet the exigencies of the public revenue". He considered the problems of the nineties lay not so much in the absence of a proper land system, as in the want of suitable land.¹²⁴ Others refused to accept this. They continued to maintain that "agriculture remained the basis of all civilisation", but what was now needed were different forms of agriculture, more compatible with South Australia's soil and climate, and guaranteed markets. In 1887, Albert Molineux, editor of The Garden and Field, looked enthusiastically to horticulture and viticulture as practised in Mediterranean countries. He saw "in the conversion of wheat fields to one vast vineyard", the promise of intense culture as well as commercial profit.¹²⁵

In one small area in the South East there was a gleam of hope that Molineux' hopes might be fulfilled. Only about ten miles from poor country in the Hundred of Monbulla on the northern tip of 'Yallum Park', there was an area which W. Catton Grasby, horticulturist, considered "unsurpassed in the wide world for healthiness, fertility, freedom and those attributes which go to make a place a desirable home".¹²⁶ At Coonawarra, about nine miles north of Penola, there existed a tract of land three miles wide and nine miles long which possessed that happy conjunction of rare terra rosa soil above calcareous formation, an average annual rainfall of 28 inches, and a permanent water level less than eight feet from the surface, all so necessary for viticulture.¹²⁷

124. W. Epps, p 128.

125. SAPP 90 of 1887, Report of Select Committee of Legislative Council on Vegetable Products, LC, 29 November 1887. For biographical details of A. Molineux, J.B. Hirst, pp 54-6.

126. W. Catton Grasby, The Coonawarra Fruit Colony and Yallum Estate reprinted from The Garden and Field, Adelaide, May 1889, p 12. For biographical details of W.C. Grasby, F. Johns, ABD, p 145; The Observer, 27 October 1930.

127. W.C. Grasby, p 18. See also Australian and New Zealand Complete Book of Wines, Sydney, 1973, pp 126-32; Maps 11 and 24.

Mr Thomas Hardy and Mons. H. Foureur, visiting vignerons from Adelaide and France, considered "not even the irrigated vines of Spain offered a more productive spot". They found themselves "fairly astonished" at the luxuriant growth of a one acre garden established by William Wilson near Penola forty years previously.¹²⁸ Equally amazing was Squire Riddoch's English-style garden at 'Yallum', and his fruit blocks and nursery at 'Katnook'. 'Yallum' orchard was planted on a meadow orchard system with land cut in blocks and kept perfectly clean. Land at the base of the trees was laid down in permanent English meadow grasses, kept closely cut with the edges neatly trimmed, "reminding one forcibly of old England".

Grasby was also pleased to note that Riddoch was engaged in the "praiseworthy venture" of throwing open 1,960 acres of blocks from 10 to 80 acres for closer settlement at Coonawarra, leasing them at £10 per acre with an agreement to purchase after ten years. Grasby was convinced that if this land were under intense culture it could be made to support a large population. By 1891 thirteen colonists had selected 261 acres and were busily preparing the soil for 10,000 fruit trees, vegetables of many kinds and 95,000 vines for champagne, claret and light wines. Here, under a co-operative system, Grasby claimed, the foundation members of the Coonawarra Fruit Colony were not feeling that "gloom of depression" which hung over the rest of the colony. They had township allotments laid out, a commodious, well-built school and a cooperative store. With "that amount of isolation precious to the average Britisher's nature" but still "within reach of the pleasures and benefits of society" they were enjoying "a

128. BW, 7 and 14 January 1891. William Wilson was born in Scotland in 1819. He worked as a gardener in the Fife area. While stationed with the 42nd Regiment at Corfu, Zante and Cephalonia he acquired the knowledge of viticulture he later brought to his "garden of Eden" near Penola in 1850. He purchased his land with money made on the diggings and advised John Riddoch as to the most appropriate spot for the Coonawarra Fruit Colony. Wilson died in 1896 but his descendants, the Redman family, have fulfilled his dream of wine-making at Coonawarra. Vantage: A Definitive View of South Australia, Vol. 1, No. 4, Winter 1979, pp 38-9.

healthy rural life with all its pleasures of social intercourse."¹²⁹ In 1898. Squire Riddoch appointed as manager of the Fruit Colony the twenty-nine-year-old Roseworthy gold medallist, Ewen McBain, former assistant to Professor Perkins, Government Viticulturalist and graduate of Montpellier.¹³⁰ McBain used his specialised training in viticulture to supervise the 318 acres of Shiraz, Cabernet-Sauvignon, Malbec and Pinot vines which were producing two to three tons of grapes to the acre by 1898. In the same year he completed building imposing limestone cellars about a half a mile from the Coonawarra Railway Station, and erected a distillery where 200,000 gallons of wine could be stored. With the pledge of "ample capital" from Squire Riddoch, the advice of a knowledgeable manager and a splendid rainfall, Grasby declared that "if a novice could go into fruit and vine-growing with safety anywhere, he could do so at Coonawarra". He confidently expected a future population of a family on every 25 acres, with additional families working for wages bringing prosperity to "a total population of at least 200 to every thousand acres".¹³¹

129. Among the fruit and vegetables planted were parsnips, peas, French beans, tomatoes, rhubarb, cabbages, carrots, khol rabi, turnips, marrows, cucumbers, passion fruit, lemons, peaches, pears, apricots, apples, plums, loquats, figs, mulberries, oranges, filberts, gooseberries, raspberries, nectarines, walnuts, quinces and grapes.

Vines planted were Shiraz, Cabernet-Sauvignon, Malbec and Pinot. W.C. Grasby, pp 7, 9, 12, 13 and 20. For details of 'Katnook', Research Note 311, SAA.

130. Ewen Ferguson McBain was born in 1869 at Milang and educated locally before becoming gold medallist at Roseworthy Agricultural College in 1894. He was Superintendent of the Experimental Blocks near Millicent for two years before becoming Assistant to Professor Perkins at Roseworthy. In June 1898 McBain became Manager of the Coonawarra Fruit Colony. Interview with Mr McBain's daughter, Mrs David Dean, of Penola, 16 August 1978, and correspondence with Mr J. Daniel, Agricultural Historian, Roseworthy, 26 February 1980. See also, H. Burgess, Vol. 2, p 972. For personal details of A. Perkins, Ch. 5, footnote 22.

131. W.C. Grasby, pp 26-7. See also D.J. Gordon, Shall We Hold the South East?, Adelaide, 1902, pp 22-4.

In 1891 a Commission appointed to enquire into the pastoral industry claimed that South Australia had made a "conspicuous advance in viticulture", but that the pastoral industry was drastically declining, particularly in the north and in the interior of the colony. In these parts many pastoralists had been ruined because of low prices, vermin, distance from markets, and competition from colonies with a higher rainfall. Insufficient legislation for water provision had also brought many pastoralists to the point of bankruptcy.¹³² Under Act 442 of 1887 pastoralists who had invested heavily in searching for water were not to be compensated for these costs when their leases were resumed in 1888. Conditions for pastoralists were liberalised in 1893 when, following the recommendation of the Pastoral Commission Report, a Pastoral Board was established, outgoing lessees were paid the value of improvements by incoming lessees, auction for leases was abandoned and pastoralists were allowed tenure for 21 years with right of renewal for a further 21 years after revaluation.¹³³

Pastoralists in the South East were not in this desperate situation. Theirs was a district in which "drought was a word which had lost its terror",¹³⁴ and more importantly, a district in which pastoralists had long held the best land in fee simple.¹³⁵ In this small portion of the

132. Report of the Pastoral Lands Commission, SAPP 33 of 1891, HA, 9 June 1891. W. Epps gave a more succinct summation. "The reason for this state of things may be traced to three causes - defective legislation, want of water and rabbits." W. Epps, p 132.

133. For area of land held and type of lease falling in by 1888, SAR, 22 August 1884; SAPP 93 of 1885, HA, 11 September 1885; SAPP 28 of 1888, HA, 25 June 1888, question 86; E. Hodder, Vol. 2, p 102; S. Roberts, p 322. For details of the clash and resolution between pastoralists and parliamentarians over payment made for improvement on leases, K.R. Bowes, pp 270-8; SAPP 60 of 1890, HA, 1 July 1890, pp 6-8; The Observer, 27 April 1895; SAPP 49 of 1889-9, HA, 12 June 1889. For the establishment of the Pastoral Board, Act 585 of 1893, assented to 23 December 1893.

134. SAPP 33 of 1891, HA, 9 June 1891.

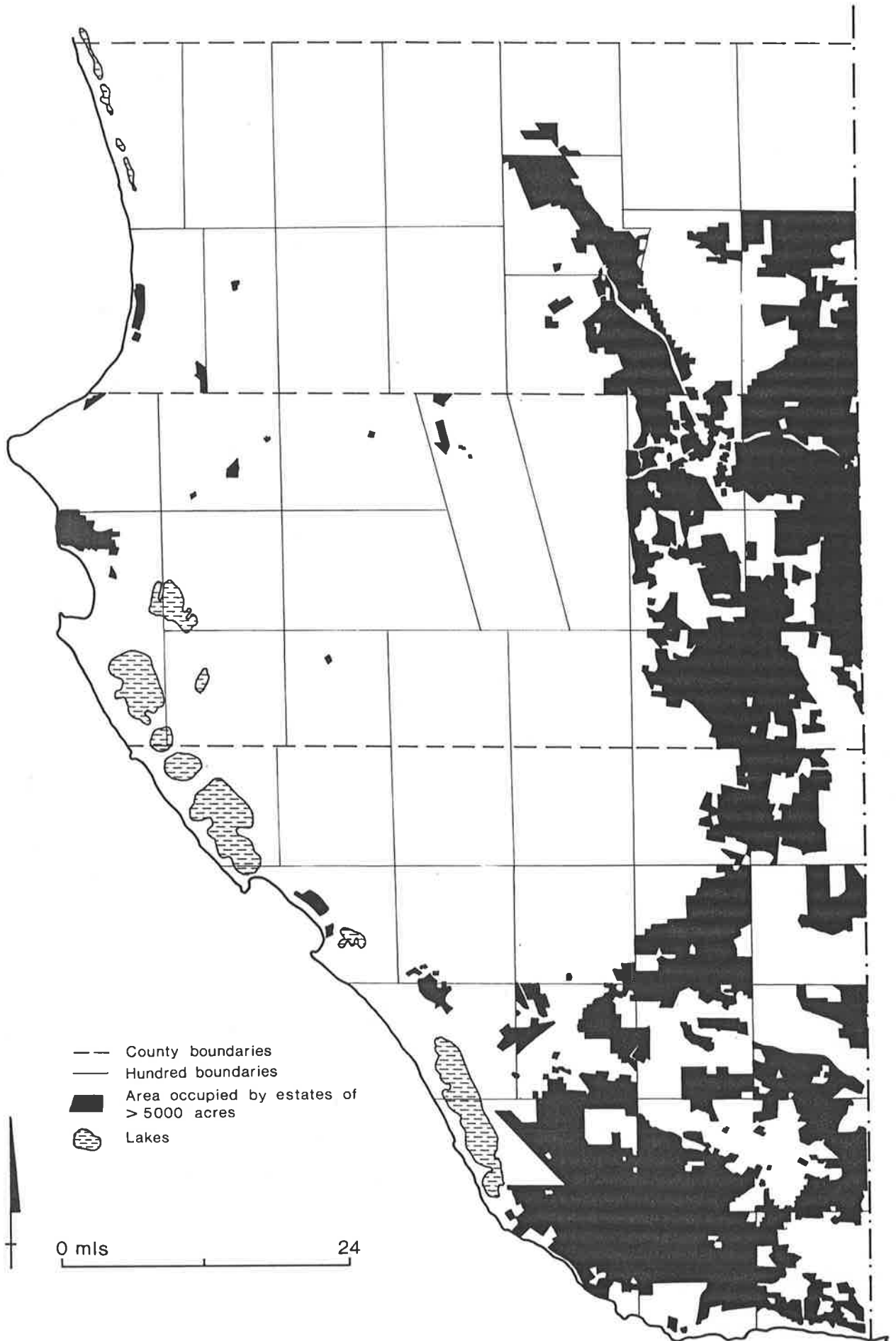
135. Counties Grey, Robe and MacDonnell comprised an area of 3,744,610 acres. Of these 1,119,834 acres were alienated or in the process of alienation by 1891. Of these 916,864 acres were freehold, 710,193 acres of which were held by 31 owners with estates of over 5,000 acres. SRSA, 1891; Map 17. Appendix 8.

MAP 17

Area occupied by estates of over 5,000 acres, 1891

Legislation for agricultural leasehold did not settle many small farmers but allowed pastoralists and large farmer-graziers to purchase land suitable for depasturing which they used in conjunction with the good land they had alienated earlier (see Map 13). For owners of estates, see Appendix 8.

(Compiled from GRG 35/251, SAA; SAPP 53 of 1891)



colony, there lived more than a quarter of those who owned estates of over 5,000 acres.¹³⁶ In this year only three South East pastoralists who had not purchased enough land similar to European land were faring badly.¹³⁷ One was George Glen of 'Mayurra'. Glen had purchased only 9,464 acres, a modest amount by South East standards, and most of this was stony ridges or flats, waterlogged in winter. Only 1,000 acres was good open land and this was not enough for his 8,300 sheep, 307 cattle and 40 horses as drainage had not done away with the necessity of constantly moving stock.¹³⁸ The drain banks also provided a perfect harbour for rabbits, and Glen's land was "burrowed all through by thousands and thousands of those destructive creatures".¹³⁹ Poisoned apples placed in ploughed furrows had not prevented their spread. The grasses Glen had grown on

136. The total area for South Australia was 578,361,600 acres. By 1891, 9,090,906 acres had been alienated. Of these 2,636,644 had been alienated by 129 owners who held estates of over 5,000 acres.

Acreage	Distribution of owners of estates of over 5,000 acres	
	South Australia	South East
5-10,000	54	12
10-15,000	19	2
15-20,000	9	3
20-25,000	13	4
25-30,000	10	4
30-40,000	8	3
40-50,000	3	-
50-60,000	4	-
60-70,000	2	-
70-80,000	4	2
80-90,000	2	1
90-100,358	1	-

SAPP 53 of 1891, HA, 16 June 1891.

137. SAPP 77 of 1898, HA, 23 June 1898.

138. GRG 35/251/Vol.6/folio 251, SAA.

139. BW, 11 April 1891.

reclaimed swamps were gradually becoming eaten out. The great bush-fire of 1891 which ravaged the South East from Naracoorte, the 'City of the Plains', through 'Glencoe' to 'Mt Schanck' also took its toll on 'Mayurra'.¹⁴⁰

Despite his straitened circumstances, Glen did not diminish his church or civic responsibilities or his social round. As he recorded in his diary in April 1892, tea, tennis and mushrooming parties remained "l'ordre du jour" with "the élite of Millicent". By indulging in a visit "to the old native land" in 1894 "the old pioneer", now 67, was spared the ignominy of facing the bank's foreclosure on his land. Although concerned that he was becoming "a great invalid" and increasingly reliant upon opium, Glen went twice in his new invalid chair to see the Queen pass on her way to Buckingham Palace. The young George Glen, who at 17 had made South Australia his adopted home, had always longed for news from "the Old Country". In England, in bad health and near bankruptcy, his greatest delight was now his Australian letters and visits. It was to this home of over half a century that he returned to enjoy a social life befitting a retired country gentleman in Mt Gambier. From 1894-5 'Mayurra' was advertised for sale but no purchaser came forward. In 1897, property which Glen's benefactor, Samuel Davenport, had first staked out fifty years previously, became rented land.¹⁴¹

140. This was described as "one of the most sensational and disastrous fires ever experienced in the South East". Nine thousand acres of grass country were burned on 'Glencoe'; on 'Moorak' station 40,000 trees were destroyed. BW, 11 February 1891, 7, 11 and 21 March 1891.

141. Diary of George Glen, 11 and 27 April, 24 May, 14 and 24 June, 2 and 9 July 1893; 6, 15 and 19 January, 3, 6, 19 and 26 February, 24 April 1894 (Glen's underlinings). PRG 160/26, SAA. In his retirement Glen served as the Chairman of the District Council, Chief of the Caledonian Society and President of the Institute Committee. He died at Mt Gambier on 15 March 1908. On 2 June 1893 'Mayurra' was passed in at £2.2 per acre, and lay vacant for three years, when an offer by R. McDonald, P. Sutherland and M. Hogan was refused by the Savings Bank. BW, 12 January 1895. In March 1897, 'Mayurra' was leased to T. Edwards of 'Mt Schanck' for 5 years for grazing. C.J. Melano, pp 82-4.

*George and Millecent Glen and family at
Glen's original hut on 'Mayurra', c. 1889.*

(SAA)

*Mr and Mrs George Glen, with
Mrs Frank Davison (nee Emma Glen)
Mrs Tom Langhorne (nee Carrie Glen, later Mrs Hamilton)
Mrs C. Corbin (nee Ethel Glen)
Mayura Glen
Augustus Glen
Aleck Glen
Ronald Glen
Dr Tom Langhorne and Mr Gendy*

*When Samuel Davenport took his coast-stricken sheep from 'Mayurra',
George Glen first ran cattle there. He later ran sheep as well but by the
nineties he had been beaten by poorly-drained land, fires and rabbits.*



"An Enquiry into Estates of over 5,000 acres" in 1891 showed how the South East pastoralists had converted the wilderness "to another England". Like Glen, they had journeyed between two worlds, drawing their wealth from the new and their ideas for pastoralism, their values and their life-style from the old. All properties were bound by sheep-proof fences, equipped with amenities for either irrigation or drainage and provided with prominent woolsheds surrounded with substantial stock and drafting yards. The mansions and well-tended gardens displayed affluence and social prestige, a testimony to their owners' love of all things European and a statement of their intention that their heirs should remain pre-eminent country gentlemen for generations to come.¹⁴²

'Yallum Park' and 'Mt Schanck' were typical of the grand estates of the South East. 'Yallum Park' drew the admiration of all. One visitor declared it was "exquisite in its loveliness". He considered the driveway to 'Yallum' would attract as much attention as the entrance to a lovely mansion in England. He had travelled miles to see famous parks in that country which had not impressed him as being more beautiful than the park at 'Yallum' with its beautiful specimens of graceful deer.¹⁴³ 'The Schanck' was another South East show place. In 1901, six years after the death of his father, Joseph Clarke, who had "never but once paid a visit to his property", "Big" Clarke's grandson, William, came newly-graduated from Law at Oxford to take up his inheritance of 80,797 acres. Only two days previously a disastrous fire had swept through his land; Clarke began replanting his garden with many miles of imported tulips and daffodils which he watered regularly by hand each Sunday.¹⁴⁴

142. SAPP 33 of 1891, HA, 9 June 1891. Details of land, stock and improvement for all estates over 5,000 acres in the South East are given in GRG 351/251, SAA. See also E. Williams, "Through Eastern Eyes", Australian Economic History Review, Vol. 17, No. 1, March 1977, pp 47-56.

143. W.C. Grasby, pp 7-8.

144. BW, 12 January 1895; GRG 35/251/Vol.4/folio 169, SAA; Annals of the Clarke Family, pp 31-3. Capt. Robert Gardiner, who had managed 'Mt Schanck' for Joseph Clarke, died in January 1895. Robert Gardiner and his sons bought 5,537 acres of 'Mt Schanck' and owned 'Nangwarry'. GRG 35/251/Vol.7, Sheets 6 and 7; GRG 35/116/1889/505, SAA. For further details of R. Gardiner and his family, M. Helpman, The Helpman Family Story, Adelaide, 1967.

J. Riddoch (1828-1901)

"Yallum Kitty" and "Yallum Yacky", c. 1890.
(G. and G. Clifford)

'Yallum Park', c. 1900.
(SAA)

By the 1870s John Riddoch had transplanted an image of England to 'Yallum Park' different from that which the founders had envisaged. From the profits of running sheep for a decade, he was Squire of Penola, owner of 90,000 acres, and employer of tenant labourers. By the 1890s only a few of the original inhabitants survived.



By the 1890s Riddoch and Clarke were among those who had excluded numerous independent small farmers and had planted an English squirearchy on South East soil. Around their mansions were set their overseers' homes, workmen's cottages, shops and schoolrooms. On 'Mt Schanck' Clarke built a church and post office as well,¹⁴⁵ and presided over this community, "Anglican and hierarchical", as Squire Riddoch did at 'Yallum'. Here an obedient tenantry enjoyed opportunities for moral improvement through the famed Penola library, and a leisure which involved competing in ploughing matches or watching from a distance Squire Riddoch's popular annual deer hunt which could draw as many as four hundred horsemen and sixty buggies.¹⁴⁶

As well as tending 21,400 sheep, 48 cattle and 55 horses on 'Yallum's' 34,034 acres, the Riddoch brothers were giving special attention to developing 'Glencoe'.¹⁴⁷ After selling his Tatiara property, 'Nalang', in 1878, George Riddoch had joined his brother John at 'Yallum' and together they set about to restore the property which Ed Leake had exploited and neglected.¹⁴⁸ In a single year George Riddoch cleared 8,000 acres of timber and rank bracken. He spent thousands of pounds on a network of drains, and by 1889 had sown 6,000 acres of sowed land with imported grasses. He ran a Hereford herd and in the mid-eighties began breeding large-framed robust Lincolns and Comebacks, suitable both for the wet climate and an expanding fat stock market.¹⁴⁹ The 'Glencoe' woolshed housed 800 sheep in a specially constructed drying shed; provided excellent accommodation for shearers in twelve rooms on either side of

145. GRG 35/251/Vol.4/folio 169, SAA.

146. BW, 22, 28 and 29 September 1888.

147. GRG 35/251/Vol.3/folio 149; GRG 35/251/Vol.7, Sheet 15; GRG 35/251/Vol.3/folio 114; GRG 35/251/Vol.7, Sheet 14, SAA.

148. For a description of 'Nalang' estate and sale, E. Ward, p 33; C. Proud, p 16; BW, 5 February 1878; SAGG, 2 October 1879, p 1146.

149. Our Pastoral Industry, p 327. For a copy of a map of drains built by George Riddoch on 'Glencoe' before 1883, I am grateful to Mr N. Hunt of Kalangadoo.

the dining-room, and was "elegantly furnished with books, magazines, newspapers and amusements galore".¹⁵⁰ In 1891, 3,000 of 'Glencoe's' 50,986 acres were let for cultivation on shares; on the remainder George Riddoch was running 55,095 sheep, 1,099 cattle and 120 horses.¹⁵¹

Although the pastoralists of the South East had prospered and consolidated by the nineties, they nevertheless felt the impact of the financial depression and industrial unrest common to eastern Australia for most of that decade. Wool prices fell to 6½d per lb in 1892 and remained low. Fat lamb prices did not pick up to 1/8 per lb until 1897.¹⁵² Squire Riddoch's attempt in 1895 to establish a South East District Frozen Meat Company failed¹⁵³ and before the extension of freezing works at Port Adelaide to accommodate the fat lamb industry, South East pastoralists had to pay high tariff rates to send their fattened stock to Portland.¹⁵⁴

Hard times were reflected in station management. At 'Hynam', William Smith maintained the high standard of his father's flocks by purchasing

150. NH, 14 December 1897.

151. GRG 35/251/Vol.3/folio 149; GRG 35/251/Vol.7, Sheet 15; GRG 35/251/Vol.3/folio 114; GRG 35/251/Vol.7, Sheet 14, SAA.

152. Prices for fat Merino wethers

1893	16/-
1894	12/6
1895	12/6
1896	16/-
1897	18/-

Average pence per lb. for greasy wool in London

1888	9
1889	11
1890	10
1891	8
1892	6
1893	7
1894	7
1895	7
1896	8
1897	7

SRSA, 1896.

153. SAPD, 22 November 1893, col. 2957; M. Helpman, p 13; BW, 17 November 1894, 2 January 1895.

154. D.J. Gordon, p 168; B. Ferguson, p 89.

stud rams renowned for their wool and constitution, but he otherwise kept a tight rein on company affairs by holding wages and extra costs steady.

Apart from draining Groker swamp, he made only minimal improvements.¹⁵⁵

In 1896 both Smith and Clarke of 'The Schanck' had mortgages on their properties for £30,000.¹⁵⁶

In 1899 Clarke sold 1,579 acres of his land at an average of £2 per acre to former tenants, and others in the South East also diminished their holdings.¹⁵⁷

On 13 January 1891 the Riddoch

155. R. Cockburn, Vol. 1, p 198; C. McIvor, pp 392-3. In 1889 Smith cleared land at a cost of £241.19.5; in 1890 he spent £19.7.6 on fencing; in 1891 his only listed improvement was a waterhole dug for a cost of £15.

Sheep Management

Year	Sheep and lambs	Bales produced	Weight in lbs
1890	21,220 sheep	406 bales	135,449
	6,650 lambs	36 bales	9,258
1891	20,809 sheep	343 bales	114,603
	6,000 lambs	35 bales	7,772
(In 1892 Smith did not sell his wool.)			
1893	18,802 sheep	363 bales	123,863
	5,581 lambs		
1894	20,800 sheep	390 bales	n.a.
	6,780 lambs		
1895	21,562 sheep	442 bales	n.a.
	6,596 lambs		

His profit and loss account

Estate Account

Dec. 1888	£ 9,808,11.10	£104,976,15. 9
1889	£10,935,15. 5	£105,253.18. 9
1890	£10,835. 0.11	£105,438. 9. 8
1891	£ 7,289. 6.11	£105,426. 9. 8

Wages and Salaries paid from

Jan. 1888 - Dec. 1888	£757.16.12
Jan. 1889 - Dec. 1889	£645.14. 1
Jan. 1890 - Dec. 1890	£418. 9. 5
Jan. 1891 - Sept. 1891	£432. 5. 0

Cash Book and Ledger, BRG 89, SAA.

156. Smith's mortgage to George Ramsden is recorded from 10 September 1890 for five years at 5¼% and again on 10 September 1895 at 5½% for £35,000. BRG 89, SAA. W.J.T. Clarke borrowed £30,000 from Robert Barr-Smith of Adelaide on 15 September 1896 at 5½%, repayable on 4 September 1903. CT, 209/428, LTO.

157. On 5 March, 8, 19, 28 May, 23 August and 15 October 1899 Clarke sold 330, 308, 265, 210, 365 and 101 acres to B. Vorwerk, A. Kilsby, J. Kilsby, G. Telford, C. Blume and S. Earle respectively, on terms of 10% deposit and 5% annual payments. 'Mt Schanck' Ledgers, sighted with permission of Mr R. Hayman, Manager, 'Mt Schanck'.

brothers put up for sale almost 8,000 acres "of far-famed 'Glencoe'", 3,100 acres of the rich 'Compton' land once run by Evelyn Sturt, and 1,818 acres on the Kalangadoo plains. At this "most important private sale of land, fitted equally for agriculture, fattening stock, dairying, fruitgrowing and grazing", land was too highly priced for small men and was passed in at auction, but some large farmer-graziers on small estates bought by private negotiation.¹⁵⁸ In 1897 the Riddochs offered 15,285 acres in the same area where "climatic conditions were perfect for agricultural or horticultural pursuits, and grazing land could carry four sheep to the acre". Two million pounds sterling was in the same room awaiting investment by Mt Gambier farmers "in a good financial position and in need of land to give their sons a start". Land priced at £11 and £12 again fell to wealthy farmer-graziers who increased their small estates.¹⁵⁹

In the nineties pastoralists contended not only with diminishing profits but also with new and serious challenges to their political power. The founding of the Labour Party in 1891 questioned to what extent pastoralists could assume that their was a stable and continuing society.¹⁶⁰ The election in 1891 of the conservative pastoralist, Richard Chaffey Baker, as one representative to the Legislative Council for the Southern Districts, provided some safeguard for the South East pastoralists' interests. But other Legislative Council candidates, whom the editor of The Border Watch declared were either "extreme radicals if not actually socialistic", polled well, and the election of A.A. Kirkpatrick as First Trades and

158. These were Sections 476, 481, 492, 532-4, 891, 895, 477 and 479, Hundred of Grey, and Sections 669-72, 697-704, 715, 718 and 720, Hundred of Blanche. GRG 35/256, SAA. See also BW, 3 and 14 January 1891.

159. SAPD, 12 October 1897; NH, 30 November 1897.

160. For details of the Labour Party, J.B. Hirst, pp 154-6.

Labour Council delegate and second member for the district from 1891-7, signalled changing times ahead from that quarter.¹⁶¹

In the late eighties South East pastoralists faced their first united challenges from industrial labour when Union shearers demanded higher rates. In October 1888 shearers asked for 16/- per hundred rather than 15/- as they had been paid in the previous year.¹⁶² When this was refused fifty shearers struck and camped at Penola; sheds in the district began short-handed. The Border Watch was pleased to report that most of the Unionists behaved in a sober and orderly manner, but some threw stones at Riddoch's non-Union shearers at 'Glencoe' and enticed five men away. When other stockholders in the district applied for protection two police constables were sent from Adelaide.¹⁶³ By 31 October the Union flag was still flying over the Penola encampment but the editor of The Border Watch pronounced the shearers' case "hopeless". The district had filled up so rapidly with men from the Adelaide Labour Office that there were enough for all the sheds. By 2 November "shearing was going along famously" at 'The Schanck'; the constables returned to Adelaide, and on 15 November local Police Inspector Woodcock reported that shearing "was being completed in a very orderly manner throughout the South East".¹⁶⁴

161. The results of the 1891 election for the electorate of Victoria were as follows:

	Baker	Hay	Kirkpatrick	Mackie	Solomon	Informal	Voted	On Roll
Mt Gambier	172	109	174	81	196	34	387	513
Tarpeena	9	7	3	2	4	0	13	18
Port								
MacDonnell	39	27	18	14	37	1	70	103
Penola	22	24	44	37	22	1	76	117
Millicent	46	28	96	22	114	1	158	230
Beachport	5	7	10	11	1	0	17	23
Tantanoola	4	7	24	2	23	0	30	40
For the South-	297	209	369	169	397	7	751	1044
ern Districts	2,478	1,871	2,325	1,484	206			

BW, 29 April 1891; SAR, 19 May 1891.

162. BW, 20 and 27 October 1888.

163. GRG 5/2/1888/744, SAA.

164. BW, 31 October and 2 November 1888; GRG 5/2/1888/744, SAA.

After shearers struck in Queensland in August 1890, forty-five influential pastoralists in South Australia formed the Pastoralists' Union on 9 October 1890 to confront "troublesome times ahead". George Riddoch was initial proposer and first South East member. The Union aimed "to secure to its members all the advantages of unanimity of action and the protection of pastoralists generally in all matters affecting the occupation and development of land for stock-farming and grazing purposes".¹⁶⁵ By 12 November the Union had voted support for shipping firms prepared to carry wool shorn by Union or non-Union labour, drawn up shearers' agreements and certificates, merged with the Stockbreeders' Association, and established shearing agents in country districts. Plans were also made to start shearing a week or two earlier in the north, to fill southern sheds later, to incorporate 10-20% of learners with each shearing team and to recruit 1,200 sheep owners as members.¹⁶⁶

But in meetings with W.G. Spence at the Shearers' Conference in Adelaide in February 1891, the Pastoralists' Union adopted "a conciliatory tone". Shearers made temporary gains when pastoralists agreed upon a rate of not less than 20/- per hundred for ewes and wethers, and not less than 40/- for rams.¹⁶⁷

165. George Riddoch served as Executive Committee Member, President, and was four times delegate to the Federal Pastoralists' Union meetings from 1891-4. Annual subscriptions to the Union were 10/6 for owners of not more than 2,000 sheep, £1.1 for not more than 5,000; and a further £1.1 for every additional 5,000 sheep or part thereof. Minute Book of Pastoralists' Union of South Australia, Vol. 1, 9 September 1890, in Records of the Stockowners' Associations of South Australia, SRG 207, SAA.

166. Mr Peacock of Mt Gambier and Mr T. Farmer of Naracoorte were South East agents. By 1901 Mr B. Daniel, Land and Commission Agent in Mt Gambier, was South East representative. The Union estimated 86 sheep owners had over 20,000 sheep; 49 had 10-20,000; 269 had 2-10,000; 295 from 1-2,000 and 5,111 between 500-1,000. Minutes of Meetings of Pastoralists' Union in South Australia, Vol. 1, 16 and 23 September, 28 October, 12 and 21 November, 10 and 12 December and 6 and 21 January 1890, SRG 207, SAA.

167. Mr Stirling of the Pastoralists' Union proposed a vote of thanks to W.G. Spence of the Australian Shearers' Union. BW, 7 January, 11, 18 and 21 February 1891.

Shearers in the South East however, remained in a precarious position because the supply of labour in the district was always greater than the demand and because Union shearers belonged to the Victorian branches of the Australian Shearers' Union which allowed lower rates. In May 1894 the Pastoralists' Union fixed new rates. Because of "similarity with Victoria", South East shearers were to be paid 3/- less per hundred than the rest of South Australia. At the same time the Union was willing to allow pastoralists "the latitude of paying up to 1/6 per hundred extra "because of the heavy crossbreeds in the district."¹⁶⁸

On 27 October 1894 George Riddoch brought to 'Glencoe' sixteen non-Union shearers, accompanied by two Adelaide police, from his 'Weinteriga' run on the Darling. Under verbal agreement Riddoch engaged them to shear "gigantic Lincolns as fat as butter" at the pre-1894 rate. Because of high unemployment in the district, The Border Watch feared local disturbances at the sight of men from "abroad", but when shearing began at 'Glencoe', the shed was soon filled with more than twenty locals, and could have been filled several times over". All but two other sheds in the district also shored under verbal agreement at the higher rate, but because of their close association with the Pastoralists' Union, the Riddoch brothers felt obliged to resign.¹⁶⁹ They were immediately reinstated and the Pastoralists' Union promised to reconsider rates for the South East.¹⁷⁰ But as many men had had "their first job in

168. Rates for South East and Port Lincoln shearers were 15/- per hundred for hand shears; 14/- per hundred for machine shearing. If pastoralists provided rations, rates were 13/- and 12/-; in the rest of the colony, 18/- and 16/8, 16/- and 14/8 respectively. Minutes, Vol. 2, 8 May 1892, SRG, 207, SAA.

169. The stations were 'Bringalbert' and 'Mudurra' where the employment of non-Union labour was accompanied "by booing and yelling at the so-called scabs". BW, 27 and 31 October, 3 and 14 November 1894.

170. Minutes of Pastoralists' Association, Vol. 2, 9 March 1895, SRG 207, SAA.

six months and did not know where to look for another".¹⁷¹ From 1895 rates for the South East were fixed at 15/- per hundred for hand-shearing and 14/- for machine, with a possible advance of not more than 1/6 per hundred.¹⁷² The shearers' victory had been temporary and with a plentiful supply of labour continuing to guarantee industrial peace in the colony, by the mid-nineties the Pastoralists' Association devoted its energy to securing legislative benefits for pastoralists, particularly in the arid north, through its Land and Parliamentary Committee.¹⁷³

This emphasis was necessary in the nineties as liberals posed a greater threat to conservatives than the embryonic Labour movement. In 1890 the Cockburn Government introduced a Progressive Land Tax Bill and Land Repurchase Bill with the aim of "bursting up" large estates because they were carrying "thousands of sheep instead of thousands of people".¹⁷⁴ South East pastoralists were particularly reprehensible in this regard. Their sheep numbers fluctuated only a little throughout the decade but the district added only 2,714 inhabitants between 1891 and 1901.¹⁷⁵ On 'The Schanck' Clarke employed only 28 full-time workers on a run of

171. BW, 3 and 14 November 1894.

172. Minutes, Vol. 2, 9 March 1895, SRG 207, SAA.

173. Items on the agendas of meetings in 1893 and 1894 included discussion of all legislation affecting pastoralists and, in particular, the Pastoral Act of 1893, the feasibility of boiling-down works, the Fencing Act of 1892 and the Vermin Bill and Meat Export Bill of 1893. In 1896 the Lands and Parliamentary Committee held 26 meetings. Minutes of Pastoral Association, Vol. 2, for 1895-7.

174. SAPD, 27 October 1891, cols 1724 and 1730; J.B. Hirst, p 161.

175. In 1900 the South East was carrying 1,999,945 sheep which was still approximately one-sixth of the colony's total of 6,323,933 sheep. SRSA, 1900. Population figures for the South East were:

County	1891	1901
Grey	10,943	12,613
Robe	3,009	3,410
McDonnell	465	1,108
	<u>14,417</u>	<u>17,131</u>

SRSA, 1901. See also Appendices 4 and 5.

81,000 acres with 80 additional hands at shearing.¹⁷⁶ John and George Riddoch normally employed an extra 60 men at shearing, but during the year only 50 employees worked on 85,000 acres at 'Glencoe' and 'Yallum'.¹⁷⁷ Yet pastoralists in the South East and elsewhere were outraged at measures to redress such imbalances in population and land. George Hawker claimed the breaking up of large estates would mean South Australia's stud farms would be deprived of their "best blood".¹⁷⁸ Richard Baker, Member of the Legislative Council for the Southern districts, declared "such wild socialistic proposals" not only kept foreign capital out of the country, but when "socialists tasted blood they were not likely to stop at what they called big estates". Although a staunch advocate that a man should own his land, Baker had forgotten another aspect of the yeoman ideal. He predicted socialists would soon be saying "the original eighty acres was enough for any man".¹⁷⁹ In 1891 both Cockburn's Government and the Bill were defeated.

In the April 1893 elections for the House of Assembly, South East conservatives faced their most formidable challenge to date when large farmer-graziers emerged as a vocal liberal force. George Riddoch found himself contesting the seat of Victoria against the combined strength of Francis Davison, lawyer and landowner, and John Osman, James Cock, and James Pick — established farmer-graziers who had been accumulating wealth and power since they had first settled good land near Mt Gambier in the fifties.¹⁸⁰ Although the editor of The Border Watch was confident "Mr Riddoch had an excellent prospect of being elected", he nevertheless felt it incumbent upon him to warn people not to be "led away by the plausible

176. GRG 35/251/Vol.4/folio 169, SAA.

177. GRG 35/251/Vol.3/folios 149 and 114, SAA.

178. SAPD, 27 October 1891, col. 1716.

179. The South Australian Advertiser, 24 April 1891. See also R.C. Baker, Miscellaneous papers and correspondence, PRG 38, SAA.

180. For biographical details of these candidates, L.R. Hill, pp 34 and 49; Ch. 5, footnotes 37 and 91.

but impractical theories of the distribution of wealth and other such crudities" which the new race of politicians might put forward. That was, he declared, "nothing but legalised socialism - a wild and impractical dream". Only "thrift and individualism would make things hum again" and the surest way to achieve this was the same as it had always been - the closer settlement of the land. Nine-tenths of the land still belonged to the nation and no adequate effort, the editor claimed, had yet been made to put people on it. It was in the country's interest to transfer more of the country's population from the offices to the fields. The cultivation of the soil would stimulate employment and only "the wilfully idle and professional loafers" would remain unemployed. Then South Australia would see an end to "an undescrivable stagnation in business, a feeling of insecurity and speculation mania."¹⁸¹

Liberal candidates agreed that "thinning out the cities and filling up the country" was the best way of counteracting times of "doleful depression" in the colony. But to a packed audience of 600 in the Mt Gambier Institute on 28 March 1893, they suggested specific ways of achieving this. They were in favour "of breaking up the Brownes, the Clarkes and the Riddochs of the South East". One way of doing this was to institute Cockburn's progressive Land Tax. Big estates would then pay a fairer share and they could "put their children on the soil and let them produce wealth from it". As it was, the profits of 'Moorak' went to England and of 'Mt Schanck' to Melbourne. Mr Pick bluntly stated the problem which had existed for fifty years. He declared much land that should be carrying men, women and children, was carrying sheep - on the finest land in the district "there might be only two boundary riders' huts". Only around Mt Gambier was the countryside "dotted with comfortable homesteads and supporting a thriving and numerous population".¹⁸²

181. BW, 4 March 1893.

182. BW, 1 April 1893.

For his part Mr Riddoch favoured Federation and inter-colonial Free Trade but certainly not increased taxation on land - "that was already ruinous enough". He promised he would not pass legislation for one class but for the whole community so that the confidence of capital was restored. He was also for settling men on the land but he had no sympathy with Socialist ideas. "As it was the will of the Supreme Being that men should not be made equal, mentally or physically," he declared, "they should not be made so by Act of Parliament." He had noticed, he said, a very much better feeling existed for people like himself who had "more of this world's goods than the majority" - although he had worked hard for them.¹⁸³

Riddoch had little cause to be so confident. He and James Cock were elected but the announcement of his victory was greeted by boos and jeers - behaviour so "un-English like" he would not have believed it; James Cock, on the other hand, was drawn triumphantly in a buggy up and down Commercial Street.¹⁸⁴

In 1894 a government led by Charles Kingston, and supported by Labour members, legislated not only for a progressive income tax, but for an absentee land tax and an additional tax for owners of estates of over

183. BW, 29 March 1893

184. BW, 19 April 1893. Returns were as follows:

	<u>Cock</u>	<u>Davidson</u>	<u>Osman</u>	<u>Pick</u>	<u>Riddoch</u>
Mt Gambier	632	149	346	442	453
Penola	749	163	426	467	545
Tarpena	756	166	437	473	559
Port MacDonnell	846	177	479	575	616
Millicent	984	200	731	616	754
Beachport	1,001	204	748	625	770
Tantanoola	1,039	204	794	635	794
Furner	1,045	204	822	635	824

2,402 on roll; 1,936 voted.

5,000 acres.¹⁸⁵ These taxes could not have been onerous to South East pastoralists.¹⁸⁶ Yet their introduction, together with the availability of loans to farmers at reasonable rates of interest in 1895 and the provision of a butter bonus, showed that liberal governments though there were enough votes in the country to offer "land, money and markets" to farmer-graziers at the expense of the pastoralists.¹⁸⁷

One major problem which the South East pastoralists shared with landowners throughout Australia was the loss caused by the most destructive of all animals - the English rabbit. By reducing the cost of gun licences and offering rewards for scalps, district councils tried to ensure that landowners did their best to prevent the spread of the vermin, and that rabbiters did not fail to kill rabbits in order to keep themselves employed at 15/- per week.¹⁸⁸ Several methods of eradication were tried. Fumigation destroyed "thousands of kittens" and phosphorised grain could destroy "millions of rabbits on three to four acres". One visitor to the South East remarked how estates and selections "were literally furrowed with plough and drill" along which the phosphorised grain was scattered.¹⁸⁹ An enterprising Naracoorte farmer invented a "stump-jumping, rabbit-poison, grain-distributor". In 1893 he sold 127 for six guineas each.¹⁹⁰

185. J.B. Hirst, p 161. Under the Taxation Act of 1894 land tax was increased from $\frac{1}{2}$ d to 1d for every £1 of total assessed unimproved value over £5,000. An absentee land tax of 20% was payable in respect of land owned by absentees. Income tax stood at $4\frac{1}{2}$ d in £1 for incomes up to £500, and 6d in £1 for incomes under this amount. For produce from property, tax was levied at 9d for every £1 sterling up to £800 and 1/- for every £1 above £800. Taxation Act Amendment Act 604 of 1894, assented to 21 December 1894.

186. Taxation figures are not available but isolated records show that W.J.T. Clarke, absentee and largest landholder in the South East, was paying only £307.16 land tax and £356 income tax in May 1896 and April 1899 respectively and an absentee land tax of £128.5.1 in 1895. Records of 'Mt Schanck' held by R. Hayman, Manager.

187. Loans to farmers were made under the State Advances Act of 1895. For further details, J.B. Hirst, pp 160-1.

188. SAPP 59 of 1893, HA, 19 July 1893, question 1062. One recipe recommended by the Lucindale Council was 100lbs wheat, 1lb phosphorous, loz oil rhodium and 1 lb sugar. B. Durman, pp 22-3.

189. The South Australian Advertiser, 31 March 1892; SAPP 59 of 1893, HA, 19 July 1893, question 118.

190. SAPP 59 of 1893, HA, 19 July 1893, questions 1480-94.

Government and private campaigns alike were costly but ineffective.¹⁹¹ Rabbits "which could swim like a dog, climb like a cat and were industrious cultivators" continued to pour in from the east through the badly-maintained boundary fence. Immune to most disease they multiplied in their thousands along the drain banks, reducing cleared land to half its value and its sheep-carrying capacity by nine-tenths. In 1889 John Gall of 'Cantara', a coastal run, had to shift a thousand horses because rabbits had eaten out their grass for that year. In 1891 the imported European pest destroyed all the indigenous trees planted at the Lakes on Arbor Day.¹⁹²

Wild dogs did less damage than rabbits but were still a source of great destruction. In 1891 in the north of the South East, pastoralists and farmers formed the Border Wild Dog Club, each member subscribing 5/- per thousand sheep. The first £50 raised was spent on buying seven dogs to replace those killed by wild dogs within the first month.¹⁹³ Dogs in the Mt Gambier area reduced one man's 4,000 wethers to 600 in one year, in spite of a wire-netting fence topped by two barbed strands.¹⁹⁴

191. Between January and August 72 men employed in parties destroyed 53,685 rabbits at a cost of £5,382.17.7. SAPP 136 of 1886, HA, 26 October 1886. On 18 December 1886 William Smith paid £45.1.6 to one rabbitier for destroying 8,196 rabbits; on 2 February 1887 he paid £28.17.6 for the destruction of 2,310 rabbits and between February-March 1887 a further 10,506 rabbits were destroyed. Between August and December, F.W. Bulmer, rabbitier, was paid 2d per scalp for 7,025 rabbits. BRG 89, SAA. See also SAPP 116 of 1886, HA, 29 September 1886.

At the Royal Commission of Enquiry into Schemes for Extermination of Rabbits in Australasia, held in Sydney on 16 April 1888, South Australia was represented by Edward Stirling and Alex Paterson. C.J. Valentine and L. Miller gave evidence on the South East which they considered to be one of the three worst districts in South Australia. The Commission found no evidence to warrant the belief that any known disease could be so employed as to exterminate rabbits. The Royal Commission, pp 100-3.

192. BW, 16 January 1889 and 28 February 1891. See also The South Australian Advertiser, 31 March 1892; SAPP 59 of 1893, questions 1138, 1080 and 1090; BW, 15 September 1888. Coast killed kangaroos but not rabbits. BW, 16 January 1889.

193. BW, 14 February and 4 March 1891.

194. SAPP 59 of 1893, questions 1167-9.

Pastoralists on the coastal lands were still combatting the mysterious 'coast' disease. Beasts "just pined away very much like a man in a consumption, lay down and were too weak to get up again". The only consolation was that cultivation appeared to be taking the coastiness out of the land.¹⁹⁵

In 1897 "the worst drought experienced to that time" prevailed over the north of the colony.¹⁹⁶ South Australia's "oldest colonists ... who knew all about the development of the country" were declaring that times were economically more disastrous than even the fearful drought years of the 60s.¹⁹⁷ In 1898 the Pastoral Lands Commission reported that the pastoral industry was in an extremely depressed and unsatisfactory condition.¹⁹⁸ Pastoralists in the north had abandoned 30,206 square miles of land since 1888.¹⁹⁹ Profit from wool was down and stock numbers had declined.²⁰⁰ By 1897 arrears in rent and interest on purchase money in agricultural holdings amounted to £112,998.²⁰¹

195. SAPP 25 of 1888, HA, 27 June 1888, question 2866; The South Australian Advertiser, 28 February 1892.

196. J.C. Foley, p 163. See also SAPP 75 of 1897, tabled before both Houses (n.d.); SAPP 31 of 1898-9, HA, 14 July 1898.

197. SAPD, 7 October 1897, col. 561.

198. SAPP 77 of 1898, HA, 23 June 1898.

199. The value of the land when abandoned was £66,488; by 1896 it had fallen to £30,000. Eight caretakers were maintaining the land at an average monthly cost of £65. SAPP 115 of 1896, LC, 17 November 1896.

200.

	<u>Excess of Export over Importing Wool</u>	<u>Sheep</u>	<u>Cattle</u>	<u>Horses</u>
1891	£1,540,079	7,745,541	676,933	202,296
1897	£ 963,930	5,092,078	540,149	179,792

T.A. Coghlan, Statistics of the Seven Colonies of Australiana, 1861-1897, Sydney, 1898, p 9.

201. SAPP 10 of 1897, 12 August 1897.

Not only was pastoral and agricultural depression contributing to a rising public debt, but South Australia was again contending with unemployment and a feared loss of population.²⁰² Some colonists were being lured to the gold fields of Western Australia; others of the "State's best colonists" were settling on repurchased lands in Queensland.²⁰³ For the first time in the State's history, by 1901 there were more people living in the city than in the country, and many of these were unemployed.²⁰⁴ For these problems politicians urged a remedy familiar since the days of the first colonisers — closer settlement. Once again it had become "imperative to increase the population and maintain upon the land the bone and sinew that had made South Australia what it was".²⁰⁵

Both the champions of the working class and the conservatives agreed that this was the solution. For the former, land offered not only an answer to unemployment, but promised much more regular and satisfying employment than could be found in the city. On the land men produced "not material from imported articles but material itself from labour in the good earth".²⁰⁶ No longer need there be "a senseless parading about in

202.

Public Debt

1881	£11,196,800
1891	£22,347,125
1898	£24,309,035

T.A. Coghlan, p 9.

Between 1881 and 1911 South Australia as a whole lost population. J.B. Hirst, pp 5-6. Between 1890 and 1897 the population grew from 319,414 to 363,044. T. Coghlan, p 8.

203. SAPD, 19 August 1897, col. 468.

204. Between 1881 and 1901 the percentage of inhabitants in Adelaide rose from 38% to 46%. SAPD 1897, col. 566. Between 1891 and 1897 Adelaide's population rose from 133,252 to 146,125. T.A. Coghlan, p 8. See also J.B. Hirst, pp 1-2; J.F. Conigrave, South Australia - A Sketch of its History and Resources, London, 1886, Ch. 6. For details of unemployment, The Observer, 25 August 1888; SAPD, 8 June 1897, col. 47; SAPD, 5 October 1887, cols. 541-3.

205. SAPD, 8 June 1897, p 47.

206. SAPD, 19 September 1889, col. 964. For the growth in manufacturing industries in Adelaide between 1885-91, K.R. Bowes, MA Thesis, The 1890 Maritime Strike in South Australia, University of Adelaide, 1957, p 11.

overgrown cities" for in that land beyond the city, organised labour would recreate for the working man "a paradise on earth".²⁰⁷

Conservatives also saw the land as a place of regeneration, but a regeneration from a "nasty socialistic spirit". They declared the last ten years in Australia had seen "a terrible change in the outlook of young men. The feeling that everybody who chose to work could get on had passed away. Only toiling on the land could redeem such a lack of energy, enterprise, discontent and slackening of tone."²⁰⁸

Conservatives and liberals were in less agreement, however, as to the form of legislation which would best achieve this ideal of closer settlement. Legislators under the liberal Kingston Government maintained no scheme for agricultural settlement would succeed without the provision of suitable land. More land was badly needed if they wished "to retain the population of the colony and not lose the best men of a class they could find anywhere".²⁰⁹ In 1897 they re-introduced a Land Repurchase Bill in the House of Assembly, declaring that was the way "to repair the disaster which had arisen in connection with the agricultural industry, for if the Government desired to enlarge agricultural areas there was no other way of doing it other than by repurchasing land".²¹⁰ This was especially necessary in the South East where big estates should be burst up. Hardly any cultivation was carried on there. In fact, only 59,669 acres were

207. H. Tucker, The New Arcadia: An Australian Story, London, 1894, p 22. See also J.M. Powell, Images of Australia, p 9.

208. APR, Vol. 12, 15 December 1902, p 681.

209. SAPD, 12 October 1897, p 578.

210. SAPD, 13 October 1897, p 583.

being cultivated in the whole district.²¹¹ Such pastoral monopoly was detrimental to the success of any country. It had always been so. It was even better to have "a struggling and striving population" than big estates. "Land should be given back [sic] to the plough immediately." Only in this way could farmers help their sons who had little inducement to settle in the colony.²¹²

Liberals also supported leasing, as landowners had "no more right to title of land in South Australia than Tommy Walker, the Aboriginal, if priority was any claim at all".²¹³ Yet the "magnificent patrimony given to South Australia had been squandered in the short course of sixty years and the entail of a nation had been cut off".²¹⁴ The Land Repurchase Bill would get back what should never have been sold in the first place. If the British value of freehold was upheld politicians would again be tempted "to play the role of land agents" and sell land belonging to their constituents. As in the past farmers would buy and transfer and "in a very short time much of the land would get back into the hands of a few and the country would be no better off".²¹⁵

Conservatives, on the other hand, resisted the idea of repurchasing any land while some remained unsold, and were outrightly opposed to compulsory repurchase. They declared that the principle of property was at stake. Landowners of South Australia "should not be dragged through

211. SRSA, 1899. The South East did indeed provide a glaring example of Goyder's dictum that cultivation was disproportionate to the area held by individuals. In County Grey 219 holders of from 100 to 250 acres cultivated a quarter of their land, 78 holders from 5,000 to 10,000 acres cultivated 1/60, whilst 4 owners of from 20,000 to 30,000 did not cultivate any land beyond a few acres for garden purposes. SAPD, 14 October 1897, p 601. William Smith of 'Hynam', for example, cultivated only 3 of his 38,000 acres. GRG 35/251/Vol.2/folio 75.

212. SAPD, 5 October 1897, p 541; 14 October 1897, p 601.

213. SAPD, 12 October 1897, p 572.

214. SAPD, 5 October 1897, p 540.

215. SAPD, 12 October 1897, p 573; 2 November 1897, p 707.

the mire by any measure of confiscation".²¹⁶ There were also economic reasons for rejecting compulsory purchase. Conservatives said men might gain access to too much land. That was uneconomic. One member declared that in the past many small farmers had had too much. He claimed that if they had got less they would have worked it better.²¹⁷ Conservatives were convinced that failure to grant freehold, "that grand old principle upon which the colony was founded", would be economically disastrous. One member pointed to the danger of the government being forced to pay vast sums for the purchase of land. If land were leased, rent would have to cover the outlay. He claimed the population "might decrease or remain stationary" and as population was an "important element in connection with the economy of the colony", that could mean charging 5% interest on purchase money. To assume only 3% would be sufficient was foolish. That might be harder on the selector but why, he asked, should the State "do the thing as a charity?"²¹⁸ Moreover the sale of land provided "the wherewithal to erect public buildings, railroads, bridges and other necessities".²¹⁹ Indeed, "the security of a nation - its very existence as such - depended largely upon the number of people having an inalienable interest in the soil".²²⁰ Furthermore, there was still "a principle in the Briton's breast which could only be satisfied with possession".²²¹ Another member declared that "State landlordism" and "nationalising the

216. SAPD, 12 October 1897, p 578.

217. SAPD, 13 October 1897, p 883; 14 October 1897, p 601.

218. SAPD, 16 November 1897, p 268.

219. SAPD, 16 November 1897, p 268.

220. SAPD, 5 October 1897, p 540.

221. SAPD, 5 October 1897, p 543.

public estate" were certainly "not acceptable to the British community he desired to see established in South Australia".²²²

On 2 November 1897, the Land Repurchase Bill was passed 31 votes to 9 in the House of Assembly and gained assent as the Closer Settlement Act on 11 December 1897.²²³ Conservatives gained two victories under the Act. Land was not to be compulsorily acquired; details of land to be repurchased had to be presented before both Houses. Liberals won the day in determining the means of establishing "the prosperous settlement of individuals on the land". Land was available only on perpetual lease at an annual rental of 4% to lessees who could not own land worth more than £1,000. Transfer was permitted only with the recommendation of the Land Board and the consent of the Commissioner.²²⁴ Yet, as one member declared, the Act was "not a poor man's measure".²²⁵ On application the lessee had to pay a deposit equal to one quarter of the first year's rent, one-twentieth of the value of the improvements, and the balance of the first year's rent within 28 days after allotment. He also had to improve to the value of 6% annually and purchase, within 21 years, any existing improvements at an interest rate of 4% within 21 years.²²⁶ The government's need to recoup the cost of purchasing might well, as one member predicted, "bind upon the people for generations to come fiscal burdens grievous to be borne".²²⁷

The legislation was indeed "full of suggestiveness of the past".²²⁸ The small man was being offered land on terms no less difficult to meet

222. SAPD, 5 October 1897, p 543.

223. Act 688 of 1897, assented to 11 December 1897.

224. Regulations of Act 688 of 1897, p 573.

225. SAPD, 12 October 1897, p 573.

226. SAPD, 12 October 1897, p 573.

227. Regulations of Act 688 of 1897.

228. SAPD, 5 October 1897, p 540.

than those under the Selection Acts. Current legislation did not offset low prices, inadequate markets and irregular seasons. Most importantly, as South Australia had "got to the end of its tether as far as agricultural land was concerned", and since under the Act the Crown could not repurchase good European land compulsorily, the agriculturalist was less certain than ever of obtaining good land. If the Crown wanted good land, those who held it now had the opportunity to sell it or to get rid of inferior land on their own terms.²²⁹

Politicians who realised this admitted their current endeavour to settle men on the land was "a risky experiment" although they hoped it would be a successful one. Some even conceded they might be "courting failure to make the experiment at all as they could be committing farmers to lives of drudgery".²³⁰

But the majority were confident that the well-watered South East was one area where the experiment would not fail.²³¹ The drought of 1896-7 had not touched that district.²³² Admittedly the land needed draining but the district had an untold quantity of good land which could thereby be made fit for agricultural and grazing purposes.²³³

229. SAPD, 7 October 1897, p 569.

230. SAPD, 12 October 1897, pp 573 and 583.

231. SAPD, 7 October 1897, p 564; 12 October 1897, pp 574-5 and p 577.

232. Departures from normal rainfall 1880-1916:

<u>Lower South East</u>	
1895	+ 2.00 inches
1896	- 1.70
1897	+ 4.19
1898	- 1.60

GRG 35/442, p 19, SAA. See also SAPP 75 of 1897, both Houses (n.d.); SAPP 31 of 1898-9, HA, 14 July 1898.

233. SAPD, 5 October 1897, p 543.

Not all politicians agreed. Mr Handyside, member for the district and a squatter's man, declared there were not large estates in the South East fit for agriculture.²³⁴ In his opinion the South East was "not a wheat-growing district at all". Even the Experimental Farm at Millicent which had aimed to show people how to grow cereals had failed. He reminded his colleagues that in the early seventies many German farmers had left Mt Gambier for Victoria, and others had followed them over the years. Mr Handyside contended that small farmers could not prosper in the South East.²³⁵ Most of his hearers were unconvinced. They insisted that the South East not only had a good rainfall but land "on which, with scientific cultivation, a farmer might retain his sons".²³⁶ They declared that in fact "Nature was offering it to the government of the country".²³⁷

The men from Europe were ready for a third major attempt to fulfil the great agrarian dream of their colonising forefathers. In the South East they would yet establish "that young yeomanry who in every age had formed the source of prosperity of a country".²³⁸

234. Duncan Handyside was born in East Lothian in 1835, emigrated to Victoria in 1853 and engaged in pastoral pursuits in Victoria and NSW before settling in South Australia in 1868. P. Mennell, pp 213 and 533.

235. SAPD, 12 October 1897, p 574.

236. SAPD, 5 October 1897, p 543.

237. SAPD, 12 October 1897, p 581.

238. SAPD, 5 October 1897, p 581.

CHAPTER 5

In the summer of 1902, five years after the passing of the Closer Settlement Act, D.J. Gordon, farmer, journalist and politician, travelled throughout the South East on a mission similar to that of Ebenezer Ward three decades previously.¹ South Australia was once more in danger of losing South East trade to Victoria:² Gordon was to assess the district's potential and report on ways of fostering its development.³

Ward's vision of the South East settled by a contented yeomanry had not come to pass.⁴ As Gordon observed, only a small fraction of the district lay under cultivation; elsewhere a pastoral monopoly still existed. This was most obvious between Penola and Mt Gambier where the landscape was, as Gordon commented, "one continuous park dotted with as many homesteads as you could count on the fingers of your hand".⁵ Across these wide estates there still roamed over 1¼ million fine-woolled sheep, fetching prices well above State average.⁶

1. Ch. 3, footnote 1. For biographical details of D.J. Gordon, A.P. Keain, Appendix 2, p 140; The Australian Encyclopaedia, Vol. 4, p 339.

2. Ch. 2, footnotes 364 and 369

3. D.J. Gordon, Shall We Hold the South East? A Question for Electors, Adelaide, 1902, p 1.

4. Ch. 3, footnote 11.

5. D.J. Gordon, p 8.

6. State average prices per lb for wool sold in London in 1902-3 were 9½d and 8d respectively; wool in the South East was fetching at least 14d per lb. SAPP 43 of 1907-8, HA, 24 November 1908; BW, 4 February 1903. In 1902 County Grey was running 671,950 sheep; County MacDonnell, 231,550; County Robe, 410,157; the total for South Australia was 4,880,540. SAPP 20 of 1906, HA, 20 July 1906, Appendices D and N; Appendix 5.

At the same time it was obvious to Gordon that South East pastoralists were diversifying in the wake of the 1890's depression. On 'Glencoe' George Riddoch was combining wool-growing with dairying by leasing the north-west of the run on halves.⁷ Other pastoralists were crossing Merinos with Shropshires, Lincolns and Border Leicesters to produce stronger and longer wool and lambs which fattened quickly on lucerne.⁸ In 1903 Clarke of 'The Schanck' sold on the property 3,000 Shropshires which had thrived on the homestead paddocks. In other years he and neighbouring pastoralists counted on exporting 3-4,000 lambs each to a revived London market for sale at 9/- to 10/- per head.⁹

Like the pastoralists, farmer-graziers in the South East, as Gordon noted, still relied upon sheep although they grew cash crops to guard against the insecurity of internal markets.¹⁰ In high rainfall areas they favoured barley or oats: Mt Gambier farmers were producing 35-60 bushels of Chevalier oats to the acre and farmers on drained land near Millicent 45-70 bushels of Algerian oats. "The Millicent meadow," Gordon claimed, "grew rape and lucerne up to your knees ... and hay stooks tall enough to hide an army."¹¹ County Grey still produced almost all of the State's potatoes.¹² Dairying was also popular. More than half the

7. D.J. Gordon, p 15; APR, Vol. 13, 17 August 1903, p 391.

8. D.J. Gordon, p 10; BW, 14 February 1903; APR, Vol. 10, 15 December 1900, p 654.

9. D.J. Gordon, pp 10 and 20; SAPD, 2 October 1900, col. 586; SAJA, Vol. 3, October 1899, pp 225-6; SAPP 20 of 1906, HA, 20 July 1906, questions 7596-9; APR, Vol. 12, 16 February 1903. In 1903 'Moorak' fat lambs were selling at 12-14/- each. Letter from Dr J.H. Browne to his brother-in-law, John Gilbert of Pewsey Vale, 11 October 1903, PRG 260, SAA.

10. SAJA, 1 August 1904, p 3; SAJA, Vol. 9, 1 April 1906, pp 389 and 576.

11. D.J. Gordon, p 20. See also, Industries of the South East, pp 118-21.

12. 7,763 acres were under potatoes in South Australia; 5,852 of these were in the South East. SRSA, 1902.

Blade Shearers, 'Mt Schanck', 1899

(APR)

In 1899 'The Schanck' was running 100,000 sheep: these men took a fortnight to blade shear them.

Back Row

L to R: A. Ashby, G. Winterfield, D. McIntyre, R. Telford, A. White, A. Hastings, (---), (---), A. Livingston, J. Butler.

Second Row

H. Kuhl, - Gorton (hand on hip), J. Potter, W. Brice, A. Gamble, J. Lewis, H. McLaughlin, C.L. Orchard, J. Earle, J. Winterfield, J. Thomas, W. Baker, A. Butler, J. Ferguson, W. Goldner, W. Cutting, A. Hastings (Snr), (---).

Standing

J. Ryan, J. Lock, - Gorton, R. Laslett, J. Hennessy (Snr), J. Bigham, J. Kemp, J. Robinson, C. Long, J. Marthen, R.F. White, J. Fletcher (Boss of Board).

Sitting

J. Buckingham, R. Manser, H. McDougall, C. Pudney, (---), A. Cutting, A. Howe, (---), (---), H. Hastings, J. Concannon, A. Galpin, W. Butler, F. Perry, R. Hammond.

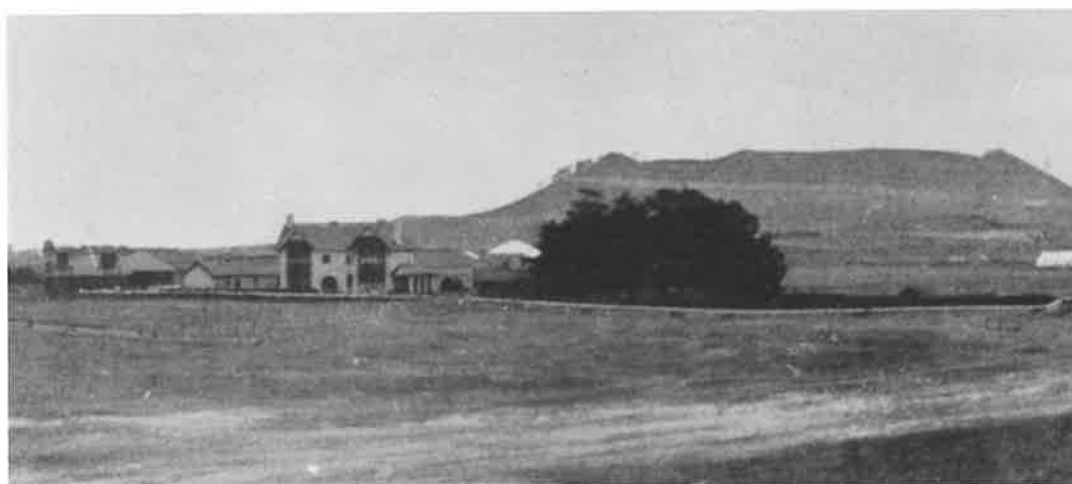
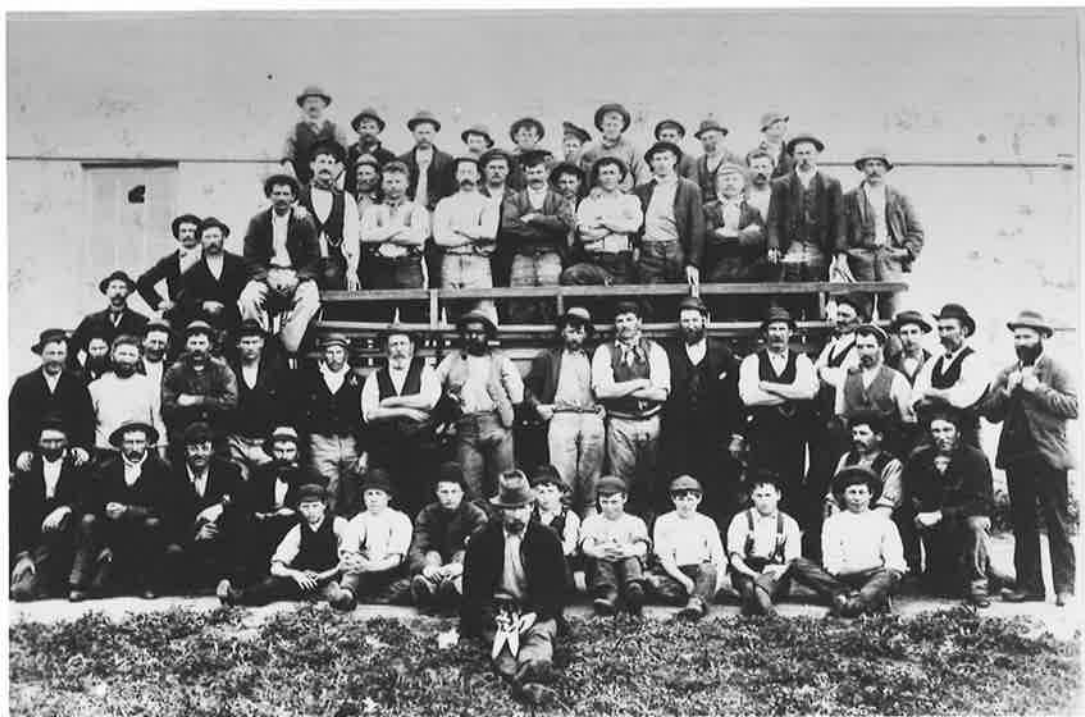
Front

J. Cartin.

'Mt Schanck' Homestead, c. 1900

(APR)

Less than fifty years after the Arthur brothers had left, "Big" Clarke and his son had cleared the land Niel Black once considered too thickly-timbered for cattle. On the best of it they sowed grasses, ran sheep and fattened lambs. None of this part of the district yet supported self-sufficient farmers.



State's butter and cheese factories were in the South East and farmers had begun to adopt more scientific methods of breeding using government-sponsored pedigree Jersey, Ayrshire and Holstein bulls.¹³

Yet, in Gordon's opinion, the South East was capable of much closer settlement. Because the government had not provided adequate facilities for farmers, Gordon declared it must take much of the blame that more intensive farming had not already come about.¹⁴

The district still lacked a first-class port. This was checking the expansion of dairying.¹⁵ So was an inadequate railway system. It was true that the South East enjoyed freight rates lower than the rest of the State but no extension or conversion had been made to 215 miles of narrow gauge railway in the past fifteen years.¹⁶ This put the transport of perishable dairy products at grave risk.

Gordon believed drainage was another facility the government should provide. "In the direction of O.B. Flat, Yahl, north towards Penola, and out Glencoe and Compton way", he claimed, "there is land which is more

13. There were factories at Naracoorte, Penola, Kalangadoo, Glencoe, two near Tantanoola and at Millicent, and eleven in the Mt Gambier district. D.J. Gordon, pp 14-5. See also L.R. Hill, p 73; SAPD, 4 October 1900, col. 604; SAJA, Vol. 3, August 1899, p 73, October 1899, p 224 and December 1899, p 481.

14. D.J. Gordon, pp 26-7.

15. D.J. Gordon, p 15. See also SAJA, Vol. 3, January 1900, p 532.

16. In 1895, eight years after Mt Gambier had been connected with Adelaide, Railway Commissioners instituted a system of differential goods rates with the object of competing with the coastal boats trading between the South Eastern ports and Melbourne. For example, class 1 goods were charged 50/- per ton from Adelaide to Bordertown, a distance of 183 miles, but from stations from Glenroy to Beachport, 356 miles from Adelaide, the charge was only 27/6 per ton. For further details of differential freight rates, see SAPP 64 of 1918, HA, 27 August 1918.

productive than any other in South Australia".¹⁷ With drainage, areas inhabited only "by a few wild ducks and shags" would be rendered equally as fit "for the progress of the plough".¹⁸ Such drainage, he stressed, ought to be carried out immediately, because, as graziers well knew, drained land could take twenty-five years to become "sweet and responsive".¹⁹

To Gordon, "the man on the land remained the measure of national prosperity".²⁰ He feared that unless the government provided facilities for closer settlement in the South East, South Australia would lose her commercial hold over the district to Victoria. But with government support the region would not only achieve "the greater production and larger population" of which it was capable, but would "be able to put nearly the whole of the population of Australasia in the South East".²¹

There were a few experts more cautious about the potential of the district. Professor Arthur Perkins, Director of Roseworthy Agricultural College, questioned whether this was an appropriate time to promote intensive settlement in the South East. He observed that "despite climatic advantages", between 1896 and 1903 not more than 1.78% of the region had been under cultivation, and claimed that "the bulk of the land from an agricultural standpoint was comparatively poor, although relieved by tracts

17. D.J. Gordon, p 9. See also BW, 25 February 1903: "O.B. Flat is the most fertile spot in a most wonderfully fertile country ... with soil varying from rich chocolate to light loamy."

18. D.J. Gordon, pp 17-8 and 21-2.

19. SAPD, 4 October, 1900, col. 603; SAJA, Vol. 3, April 1900, p 768. George Riddoch also commented, "It takes years for the land to get up to its full carrying capacity, or to be made fit for agricultural purposes. In connection with some drains I was making twenty-five years ago, I may mention the country is still benefitting. Year after year I see the soil is sweetening, the grass getting thicker and the land more suitable for agriculture." SAPP 19 of 1899, HA, 26 October 1899.

20. D.J. Gordon, Conquering the Desert: Conservation - Reclamation - Immigration: A National policy for Progressive People, Adelaide, 1907, p 5.

21. D.J. Gordon, Shall We Hold the South East?, pp 28-9.

of exceptional fertility". Perkins wondered whether it might be as well for the future of the South East to continue to support roaming sheep until such time as the inexorable trend of economic conditions would force a better and more perfect utilisation of the soil. On the other hand, he did not wish to imply that agriculture was likely to be unprofitable or that the present sheep-walk solitude should remain a permanent and natural feature. To reason thus, he concluded "would be an error far more serious than over-estimating the agricultural potential".²²

Most were more enthusiastic than Perkins. They agreed with Gordon's panegyric on the potential of the district. A writer to The Australian Pastoralists' Review considered the South East the most favourable region in South Australia for the settlement of "sons of lawyers, doctors, clergymen and other city folk with a college education, who were now paying more attention to rural pursuits".²³ Some claimed the small farmers close to Mt Gambier were "worthy of comparison with the peasant proprietors of Europe". Others were convinced that this "garden of the State" could be extended to embrace the whole of the district. Sixty years of toil and legislation had failed to accomplish this, but there was no lessening of confidence that the prospect would yet be fulfilled. In the opinion of those who continued to urge that the settlement of "a numerous yeomanry" would bring prosperity to South Australia, the South East was a district "ripe for closer settlement" and that "ideal state of society which only closer settlement could bring".²⁴

22. APR, Vol. 13, 16 June 1903, p 227.

23. Arthur Perkins was born in Alexandria and studied at the Montpellier School of Agriculture before becoming a farm-manager in Tunis. In 1892 Perkins became the Deputy Professor of Viticulture in South Australia, was Secretary for Agriculture in 1903, and Director of Agriculture in 1914. For further details of Perkins, Australian Encyclopaedia, Vol. 7, p 67; The Observer, 30 May 1903 and 21 February 1925; The South Australian Advertiser, 24 June 1944.

24. APR, Vol. 9, 15 December 1899, p 588; Vol. 12, 15 September 1902.

In 1902 South Australia faced financial recession and entered its eighth year of drought.²⁵ A government in economic difficulties was prepared to outlay on facilities for closer settlement only if those who stood to benefit most directly were prepared to share the cost. Fifty to sixty prosperous farmers at 'Glencoe' agreed to do this and petitioned for nine miles of railway from Wandilo, off the existing Beachport to Mt Gambier line.²⁶

In the north of the State the drought had "turned the country into a desert".²⁷ But 'Glencoe' lay in a district not "circumscribed to a horizon under which a scanty rainfall dominated all other features".²⁸ With this rainfall and good soil a 'Glencoe' farmer could pay off an 82 acre block at £16 an acre in four years: and twenty average farmers could produce 7,000 tons of potatoes and 2,000 tons of various grain crops in a year.²⁹ Furthermore the Laird of 'Glencoe', George Riddoch, member of the Legislative Council for the Southern Districts, had agreed to underwrite any losses. Riddoch told his parliamentary colleagues he would have

25. Politicians were feeling "the strain and stress of a financial position" in which railway revenue had fallen off by £200,000 between 1900-2. Federation had cost £60,000, seed wheat and village settlements were £10,000 per annum each in debt and £10,000 was required to pay off the sinking fund in 1903. SAPD, 22 October 1902, p 745; SAPD, 29 October 1902, p 403. For details of the 1902 drought, J.C. Foley, p 163. For further comments, APR, Vol. 12, 15 March 1902, p 9; 15 May 1902, p 144; letter from J.ñ. Browne to W. Gilbert, 27 June 1902, PRG 260, SAA.

26. SAPD, 27 October 1903, p 687; SAPP 90 and 90A of 1903, HA, 21 and 27 October 1903.

27. D.J. Gordon, pp 28-9.

28. SAJA, Vol. 1, August 1904, p 1. In 1902, County Grey, where 'Glencoe' was situated, had 25.27 inches of rain which was the highest recorded for the State; County McDonnell had 17.99 and County Robe 19.16. In 1903 rainfall for these counties was 33.93, 26.3, and 27.02 inches respectively, which made the wettest South East summer on record. SAPP 31 of 1905, HA, 17 August 1905.

29. D.J. Gordon, p 10; SAPD, 27 October 1903, pp 683-7.

preferred the line to cross the fertile Kalangadoo plain, where it would touch four or five miles of his property, but as either line meant money in his pocket, he had discreetly refrained from speaking to the Bill until called upon.³⁰ On an exploratory journey to the South East in early October 1903, the Governor, Sir George Le Hunte, and the Railways Commissioner lunched with the laird before driving through 'Glencoe' estate.³¹ On 30 October Parliament passed the first of many 'Glencoe' Railways Acts. The government agreed to pay £17,700 to build nine miles of railway; settlers agreed to pay three and a half times the average freight rate for the district to insure against loss.³² While the government pursued its 'user pays' policy, those at 'Glencoe' with good land and assured capital had been able to promote legislation in their favour; less wealthy and influential settlers in the district remained without an adequate railway system.

Drainage was another facility which the government was prepared to provide only if those who benefitted shared the cost. Members of the 1899 South East Drainage Commission pointed out that the government was already losing revenue on drained lands held under lease as legislation did not allow revaluation which would increase revenue. The Commission was certain further revenue would be forthcoming when the South East was more extensively

30. SAPD, 20 October 1903, pp 323-4.

31. BW, 7 October 1903. The Governor's entourage included the Railways Commissioner and prominent member of the Pastoralists' Association, Sir Lancelot Stirling, the Chief Mechanical Engineer, the General Transport Manager and the Engineer-in-Chief. NH, 17 November 1903.

32. SAPP 90 and 90A of 1903, HA, 21 October 1903. The South Australian freight rate was 10½d per ton; settlers at 'Glencoe' were willing to pay 3/6. SAPD, 29 October 1903, p 323. The narrow gauge line was opened on 22 August 1904. Subsequent Wandilo and Glencoe Railway Acts before 1914 were Act 843 of 1903; 941 of 1907; 942 of 1907; 984 of 1909; 1016 and 1017 of 1910; 1113 of 1913.

drained. There were, they reported, many areas which could become like the thriving communities of Tantanoola and Millicent, and the district as a whole would be capable of supporting a much larger population.³³ Following the Commission's recommendations, on the receipt of a petition from a majority of landholders representing three quarters of the land likely to benefit under the Drainage Act of 1900, the government agreed to advance the cost of constructing a drain at 4% interest over forty-two years.³⁴ The resultant "Petition Drains" were few. Landholders were unprepared or unable to construct subsidiary drains because there were insufficient major drains into which Petition Drains could be satisfactorily led. Those drains which were constructed under this scheme between 1905-11 failed to cope with the excessively wet winters of those years. Another attempt to make South East land behave like European land failed and once again government policy to provide essential developmental services after, rather than before closer settlement benefitted neither landholder nor government.³⁵

By 1902 the government had purchased only 35,154 acres on the 'Mt Benson' and 'Naracoorte' runs to provide for closer settlement in the South East.³⁶ This was not because landowners in the South East had been

33. SAPP 90 19 of 1899, HA, 20 October 1899.

34. The South East Drainage Amendment Act, Act 737 of 1900, was assented to 5 December 1900 and administered by a Drainage Assessment Board, composed of the Superintendent Surveyor, the Deputy Surveyor-General and the Chairman of the South East Land Board.

35. Map 19. For details of Petition Drains, M. Williams, pp 211-15.

36. For details of these purchases, Appendices 9(a) and 9(b). See also J. Marsden, History Hons Thesis, Closer Settlement in the South East, University of Adelaide, 1964; Map 18. By 1901, 3½ years after the Closer Settlement Act, the government had purchased elsewhere in the State, 39,000 acres of £81,367. These had been leased for £2,916 with expected yearly returns in rent and purchase improvements amounting to £3,378 by 30 June 1901. W. Reeves, p 296.

unwilling to sell. Land values rose when the government entered the market, and owners had seen an opportunity for quick profit. By 1902 the government had rejected eight offers because the land was either "too highly priced" or "unsuitable for closer settlement".³⁷ From Land Board

37.

Owner and Estate	Date of Offer	Hundred	Area in acres	Price per acre at which offered	Reason for Refusal
				£	
John Riddoch (part of 'Glencoe')	15. 2.00	Hindmarsh	2,116	3. 3. 0	Price too high
John Riddoch (part 'Glencoe')	15. 8.00	Hindmarsh	13,195	7. 4. 4	Price too high
D. Norman, Jr	28.11.00	Gambier	636	11. 0. 0	Too small; price too high
E. Hannaford	25. 3.01	Joanna	1,559	1.17. 6	Not suitable
P.J. Browne	11. 9.01	Kongorong	3,736	2.10. 0	Unsuitable
J. Watson and others (Executors of late J. Riddoch)	27. 5.02	Blanche	(3,706 (2,680)	3. 0. 0 1.10. 0	Considerably too high
J. Watson	4. 8.02	Blanche	2,009	1. 5. 0	Not recommended
W.J.T. & G. Clarke ('Mt Schanck')	25. 8.02	Kongorong	40,373	2. 5. 0	Not then considered suitable
Estate of late Robert Stuckey	16. 7.03	Joanna	2,800	1. 0. 0	Not suitable for subdivision
J.C. Sutton ('Pleasant Park')	15.12.03	Mingbool	3,425	3.10.0	Not suitable
J.C. Sutton ('Pleasant Park')	15.12.03	Mingbool	707	2. 0. 0	Not suitable
Queensland Investment Co. (Combin)	10. 5.04	Mayurra	655	4. 0. 0	Too small for closer settlement
M. & A. Gardiner ('Nangwarry')	25. 5.04	Nangwarry	12,636	2. 5. 0	Not suitable
Francis Davison	2. 9.04	Caroline	1,206	3. 0. 0	Not suitable for closer settlement
D. McArthur	6. 9.04	Hindmarsh	288	22. 0. 0	Not recommended
D. McArthur	6. 9.04	Hindmarsh	287	24. 0. 0	Not required for experimental farming
Robert Rymill (Penola Station)	26. 6.05	Penola	18,400	3. 0. 0	Not suitable for closer settlement
W. & H. Bickford (Burnside)	20. 7.05	Hynam	44,420	49,590 (estate)	Price too high
W. & H. Bickford (Burnside)	20. 7.05	Hynam	29,634	3.15. 0	Price too high
G.L. Dickson (Maaoupe)	12. 5.04	Killanoola, Comaum and Penola	9,902	6. 0. 0	Price too high
Late W. Allen Crouch ('Lowan')	3. 1.06	Grey	9,100	3. 5. 0	Not suitable for closer settlement
H.F.L. Holzgreffe	28. 5.06	Rivoli Bay	586	4.10. 0	Not recommended
Trustees of late W. Robertson ('Moyhall')	6. 3.07	Robertson, Naracoorte	20,780	-	Unsuitable; subject to inundation
J. Watson	6. 5.07	Blanche (Lochaber,	3,706	3.12. 6	Not suitable
J.W. Davy Denning	30. 5.07	(Glenroy and Woolumbool	(1,179 (6.600)	2.10.0 5. 0	Not suitable
J. Lawson	26. 3.08	Blanche	763	2.15. 0.	Not suitable

From SAPP 76 of 1908, HA, 9 December 1908.

reports and evidence to various committees, government officials had long known that great variations in the quality of land existed in the South East. Some "was worth £8 an acre"; in other areas "it took a good many acres to feed a snake".³⁸ Purchasing either extreme put a government "labouring under the stern limits of finance" at grave risk when settlers took up land under the perpetual lease provisions of the 1897 Closer Settlement Act, because perpetual lease meant a slow return either for a large outlay on highly-priced estates or during the development of cheap but inferior land.³⁹ The government knew that the varied quality of land put the agriculturalist of small means at risk as well: paying for good land and improvements was a financial burden he could not bear; attempting to change second-rate grazing land into agricultural land had proved both costly and ineffective.

Parts of 'Glencoe' and 'Mt Schanck' offered to the government in 1902 typified both the extreme variations of South East land, and the government's reluctance to purchase. That part of the 'Mt Schanck' estate in the Hundred of Kongorong which William Clarke offered to the government in 1902 was typical of poor South East land. Parts were unfit even for grazing. Over-stocking and rabbit deprecation had left bare patches several acres in extent and drifting surface soil had exposed many oddly-shaped limestone outcrops. "It would be many years," claimed The Border Watch, "before the rocks were covered with soil - if indeed, they ever would be."⁴⁰ In 1902 the government rejected this land as unsuitable for closer settlement.⁴¹

38. SAPP 20 of 1906, 20 July 1906, questions 2377-9; SAPD, 19 August 1902, p 60.

39. W. Reeves, p 297.

40. BW, 25 February 1903, maps 9 and 18.

41. Footnote 37.

Parts of 'Glencoe' offered for closer settlement were, on the other hand, among the most fertile and consequently most costly in the South East. The government could not afford such highly-priced land, but large farmers with capital again seized their opportunity. Between 1888-9 John and George Riddoch sold portions of 'Glencoe' in the Hundred of Hindmarsh for as much as £15 an acre.⁴² In 1899 the Riddoch brothers severed their joint partnership of 'Glencoe' and 'Yallum' and in 1900 John Riddoch offered the government 15,311 acres of 'Glencoe' at over £5 per acre. When the government refused, Squire Riddoch again sold privately.⁴³ Between 1902-6 George Riddoch also sold fertile land in the Hundreds of Hindmarsh and Young. Once more there was no shortage of private purchasers. The Riddoch brothers sold small but fertile sections on which an agriculturalist might soon become self-supporting, but as these were fetching as much as £15.10 per acre neither the government nor the small man purchased, and the land fell, as so often in the

42.

Date	Hundred of Hindmarsh	Area in acres	Consideration £	Transfer	Purchaser
Jan 1898	Pt 2198	229	3,561. 2. 6	324566	J., P. and W. Mitchell
Mar 1898	Pt 2198	229	2,865.12. 6	325850	A. Gladigau
Mar 1898	2293	126	1,890	326487	W. (the younger) and A. Umpherston
Apr 1898	2144	63	315	327450	J. Riddoch
June 1898	2301	80	1,040	329517	W. Bodey
July 1898	Pt 2198	77	930	330542	R. Jelbart
July 1898	61 and 2202	148	1,330	330540	E. McCourt
Jan 1899	2300 Pt 2198	161	2,261	336277	G. Bodey

History Book, Vol. 10, folio 54, DL.

43. Footnote 37.

past, to large and wealthy South East farmers who had risen to prominence in the sixties.⁴⁴

Transactions between the Morris and Kilsby families in the Hundred of Monbulla also show how large mixed farmers accumulated more land by purchasing privately from pastoralists. Monbulla land varied a great deal. Like other large landholders in this area, Thomas Morris and his wife, Lucy, of 'Kalangadoo', held small portions of good land under freehold title and leased large areas fit only for

44.

Date	Section	Area in acres	Price	Transfer	Purchaser
		<u>Hindmarsh</u>	£		
1902	2307	128	1,856	383817	A. Dow
1902	2201	80	1,120	383818	P. Spehr
1902	2250	126	2,047.10. 0	384203	A. and H. Ruwoldt,
1902	2294	126	2,079	384289	W. Mitchell
1902	2294	126	1,827	383134	A. Mott
1902	2200	80	1,160	385102	G. Ferguson
1902	2199	80	1,080	385104	L. Ferguson
1902	2508	78	1,131	386949	M. Cameron
1902	2236	80	800	387329	M. Corcoran
1902	2425	96	1,315	382761	W. Hillyer
1902	2471	77	693	383820	G. Northen
1902	2299	91	1,456	383767	W. Lehmann
1903	Pt 2411	40	513. 3. 9	391062	J. Byrne
1903	Pt 2411	40	695. 7.10	391063	W. Young
1903	Pt 2554	87	1,356. 5. 0	393738	A. Spehr
1903	Pt 2354	88	1,593	393817	S. Maney
1903	2409, Pt 2410	141	2,813. 5. 0	393108	T. Kennedy
1903	2356	90	1,620	396571	J. Cameron
1905	2406	93	1,504	428939	D. McCallum
		<u>Young</u>			
1903	Pt 328, 329	25	425	392932	E. Case
1903	Pt 2005	39	678. 6. 0	391304	B. Pearson
1903	Pt 328	25	150	393156	H. Blackmore
1904	Pt 328	76	1,344.17. 6	406266	W. Widdison
1904	Pt 329, 2000/1/4	33	8,310. 6. 3	414003	M. Crouch
1905	2002	79	1,276.10. 0	429651	E. Roesler
1906	Pt 328, Pt 329	39	719. 8. 9	438582	W. Childs
1906	Pt 2003	39	678.12. 6	439097	J. Cram
1901	2147	80	1,240	374541	G. Bodey
1905	2186	80	1,160	425237	I. Bodey
1905	2184	80	1,000	425238	M. Pegler
1906	2302	80	1,680	436858	A. Umpherston
1906	2132	80	1,680	437162	A. Spehr
1906	2303	79	1,619	437791	W. Umpherston (the younger)

History Book, Vol. 10, folio 54, DL. LGB, County Grey shows land purchases made by these graziers; reference in BW, L.R. Hill and C.J. Melano testify to their commitments and influence in civic affairs.

depasturing. In 1901 because of ill health, the Morrises decided to sell some of the 15,640 acres of "rough country" they leased at Sheoak Range, about six miles west of Penola. Block L, which Lucy Morris held under Right to Purchase Lease 59, was in this area. On 11 October 1901 Emily Kilsby, wife of Frederick Kilsby who had moved from Glenburnie three miles east of Mt Gambier, to 'Glenmore' near Penola, applied to the Land Board for Block L, declaring she would work it in conjunction with her husband as alternative grazing land.⁴⁵ Since Lucy Morris had purchased the leasehold from Cornelius Connell for £10 in 1896, her husband had spent £57.10 on improving the block with a five-wired, 3'6" sheep-proof fence and a good waterhole. On 23 January 1902 Messrs Morris and Kilsby acted as proxies for their wives and the Land Board approved of the transfer of Block L for £20 plus the cost of improvements.⁴⁶ Kilsby used the land for depasturing but when he sold 'Glenmore' on 7 December 1907, he transferred the leasehold of the 95 acre block L to his 25-year-old brother, Percy, and his wife Isabella, for £50 and they purchased it on 5 March 1910 for £1 an acre.⁴⁷

The 695 acres of Sections 257 and 258 which Thomas Morris held under Perpetual Lease 1051, were only a mile from Block L. This was virtually useless land: 500 acres were covered with very rough stringybark and high fern; the rest was "poor heath with one poor reedy swamp of twenty acres which would not carry more than 100 sheep, and was not fit for horses or cattle".⁴⁸ The Land Board had allowed Thomas Morris several retrospective reductions in rent after first allotting it to him on 9 August

45. GRG 35/2/1901/5565 and 5567, SAA.

46. RPLB 94/51, DL; GRG 35/2/1896/1378, SAA; GRG 35/2/1901/5665, SAA; Transfer 338835, LTO.

47. Transfer 390545, LTO; GRG 35/2/1907/7792, SAA; LGB County Robe, Ch. 4 footnote 111.

48. GRG 35/2/1897/527; GRG 35/2/1902/7458, SAA.

1890, but he had not even bothered to keep up payments. On 17 August 1905 the lease was surrendered and cancelled and the land gazetted as open.⁴⁹ Nathan Blackmore, Penola dealer and grazier, rented it at 2/- per acre under Perpetual Lease 9643 from 10 January 1907, but on 16 August 1913 he transferred the lease to Isabella Kilsby.⁵⁰

Included in the fertile land Thomas Morris had freeholded in Monbulla was 260 acres on Section 185E. This was a superior block containing "good heavy, dark grey soil" which saddler James Clarke had first selected under Credit Agreement 1021 on 18 April 1878, and which Morris had purchased for £1.5 an acre under Credit Agreement 16740 on 16 February 1898.⁵¹ When Frederick Kilsby purchased it from Morris in 1902, he paid £14 an acre, but he sold it to his brother Percy for £9 an acre in December 1907.⁵² By this time Percy and Isabella Kilsby had built up a sizeable holding: they owned 462 acres of the best land in Monbulla and leased 3,799 acres of inferior land.⁵³ South East land had passed once more from pastoralist to large farmer-grazier but the pattern of tenure had significantly remained the same since the declaration of the Hundred of Monbulla in 1861 for landholders there knew that this was not country

49. SAGG, 17 August 1905, p 338; GRG 35/2/1897/527, SAA. For details of reductions in rent, 35/2/1902/7458, SAA; GRG 35/116/1890/2394, SAA; Ch. 4, footnotes 107 and 108.

50. PLB 161/28, DL. Among Nathan Blackmore's other land was Section 252, Hundred of Grey under Perpetual Lease 5386; Sections 151, 158 and 147, Hundred of Penola, purchased under Credit Agreements 11428 and 16059 between 1884 and 1902. LGB, County Robe.

51. CALB Application 588, DL; LGB County Robe; Ch. 3, footnote 172; Ch. 4, footnote 106.

52. CT, 780/79; Transfers 376378 and 466551, LTO.

53. For details of land holdings, GRG 35/2/1907/7792, SAA; GRG 35/104/1920/4018, SAA.

which could support "a desirable concentration" of small self-sufficient farmers, but country which was useful only in large blocks as a change for sheep.

The government faced yet another familiar problem in 1902. Not only was there a State deficit and a shortage of suitably-priced agricultural land for closer settlement, but once more "industrious and thrifty farmers" were leaving South Australia at a disturbing rate. Politicians were alarmed that other States were "straining every nerve to secure population" and South Australia's "best citizens" were being enticed as far away as South Africa.⁵⁴ To this loss of population politicians proposed a solution which had not changed since the days of colonisation. More men must be settled on the land. Conservatives saw an opportunity to put forward a case for closer settlement under freehold. They declared the government would recoup revenue as well as settle a "willing yeomanry" only if perpetual lease gave way to agreement to purchase.⁵⁵ They also argued that revenue from land sold for closer settlement could be used to purchase more land for further closer settlement, and that the government would cease to be at the mercy of tenants constantly demanding rent reductions. These had cost £268,778 since 1899,⁵⁶ which was "bad security".⁵⁷ Perpetual lease, they concluded, was "nothing but a delusion and a snare".⁵⁸ Although freehold advocates had to admit that in the past covenants to purchase had meant "glorious days for land jobbers" in the South East, they insisted there was a way to avoid these grievous features in the future.⁵⁹

54. SAPD, 15 July 1902, col. 59 and 24 September 1902, col. 136.

55. SAPD, 7 October 1902, col. 282.

56. SAPD, 16 July 1902, col. 75.

57. SAPD, 23 July 1902, col. 112.

58. SAPD, 16 September 1902, col. 194.

59. SAPD, 24 September 1902, cols 135-6.

It was true, they said, that South East farmers should be able to exist on smaller areas than in most other parts of the State because of an assured rainfall. Nevertheless many had failed in the past and to ensure this did not happen again, settlers in the South East should be allotted large areas with a right to purchase and small annual commitments. They would then remain permanently on their land, the population would increase, a greater demand for land would follow, and a few men would not be able to accumulate.⁶⁰

In the face of such arguments for class legislation, one member voiced the democratic ideal. He reminded his colleagues that the land belonged to the people. He condemned "the wickedness of a government which made land a commodity". He insisted that this was the "chief cause of social irregularities which beset a civilised nation"⁶¹ Yet he and others who supported leasehold had to admit that closer settlement had failed under this form of tenure as well. When challenged they too had only a well-tryed palliative to offer. As many men might be going on land that was grazing rather than agricultural land, they proposed settlers should be allowed plenty of time and capital to develop their land.⁶²

The resultant legislation was once more a compromise. Under Act 805 of 1902, a closer settler could take up land to the value of £2,000, or if it was considered pastoral, to £4,000 on a thirty-year right to purchase lease with sixty half-yearly instalments at 4% of the purchase price.⁶³ But "the right of a Britisher to buy at any time" and the desire of the government to get ready revenue from a cash sale were protected.⁶⁴ If a settler

60. SAPD, 23 July 1902, col. 113.

61. SAPD, 14 November 1902, col. 256.

62. SAPD, 16 July 1902, cols 77-8.

63. The Closer Settlement Act of 1902, assented to 13 November 1902.

64. SAPD, 24 September 1902, col. 138.

fulfilled his obligations to improve annually at 3% of his purchase money each year for the first five years of tenure, he could purchase in the sixth year.⁶⁵

Legislative compromise over tenure was familiar; so was another measure embodied in the Act. Decisions regarding the allotment, price and transfer of land were to be once more under the control of a central Land Board. Politicians claimed this return to the situation which had obtained under credit agreement legislation would save expenses. In one instance land eventually let for £35 had cost the government £300 for members of the Land Board to evaluate. Under the current legislation only one Board member needed to go to any place to gather evidence. Yet the government was aware from past experience that such a responsibility might put a Board member "in a difficult position if he represented a farming district". Thus in future rents and instalments were to be collected by an officer appointed by the Governor and employed in the Crown Lands Department "to remove as far as possible the remission of rents from political influence."⁶⁶

While the Act was under debate one member had pointed out that its proposed regulations were very similar to those of the Selection Acts.⁶⁷ His comment was apt. Since the Act did not make good European land available and could not ensure a regular European climate, legislators were still trying to impose European practices on a non-European environment. Caught between his environment and such legislation, the small man had never survived in the past, no matter what form of tenure or concessions he laboured under.

65. Regulations of Act 805 of 1902. See also SAPD, 5 August 1902, col. 169.

66. Regulations of Act 805 of 1902; SAPD, 16 July 1902, col. 78 and 9 September 1902, col. 169.

67. SAPD, 16 July 1902, col. 78.

The realities of South East land had exposed the incompatibility between legislation and environment. Legislators could not hope both to settle a numerous yeomanry and simultaneously run land as a commercial proposition. Not knowing how much South Australian land was necessary to ensure a decent living, unable to gauge prices and markets, and still attempting to ensure a profit, legislators were merely continuing to offer those concessions of time, capital and larger areas which had failed to settle small men but had served the interests of established capitalists.

For two years following the Act, faced with increased taxation and hoping to take advantage of high ruling prices, South East landholders continued to offer their estates.⁶⁸ Most continued to be rejected as unsuitable, but by early 1905 the government had purchased three more estates - 'Kalangadoo', 'Kybybolite' and 'Moorak No. 1'.⁶⁹

'Moorak No. 1' was a small estate of 777 acres, improved to the value of £6,161, containing rich volcanic soil 12"-24" in depth and lying within "the garden of the State". On 19 April 1905 it was offered to 21 allottees.⁷⁰ This was land which the Booandiks had once described to Europeans as "well-forested, full of birds, flowers and animals and with a good climate",⁷¹ and which successive occupiers - Henty, Sturt, Power, Fisher and the Browne brothers - had acclaimed as among the finest in the colony. A hard-working labourer could expect to make a comfortable

68. For details on taxation, footnote 101.

69. Footnote 37; Appendices 9(c) (d) and (e); Map 18.

70. For details of 'Moorak No. 1', Appendix 10; J. Marsden, p 35; SAPP 38 of 1905, HA, 10 August 1905; BW, 25 February 1903. Land tax on 'Moorak' was assessed at £16 per acre. SAPP 38 of 1905, HA, 10 August 1905.

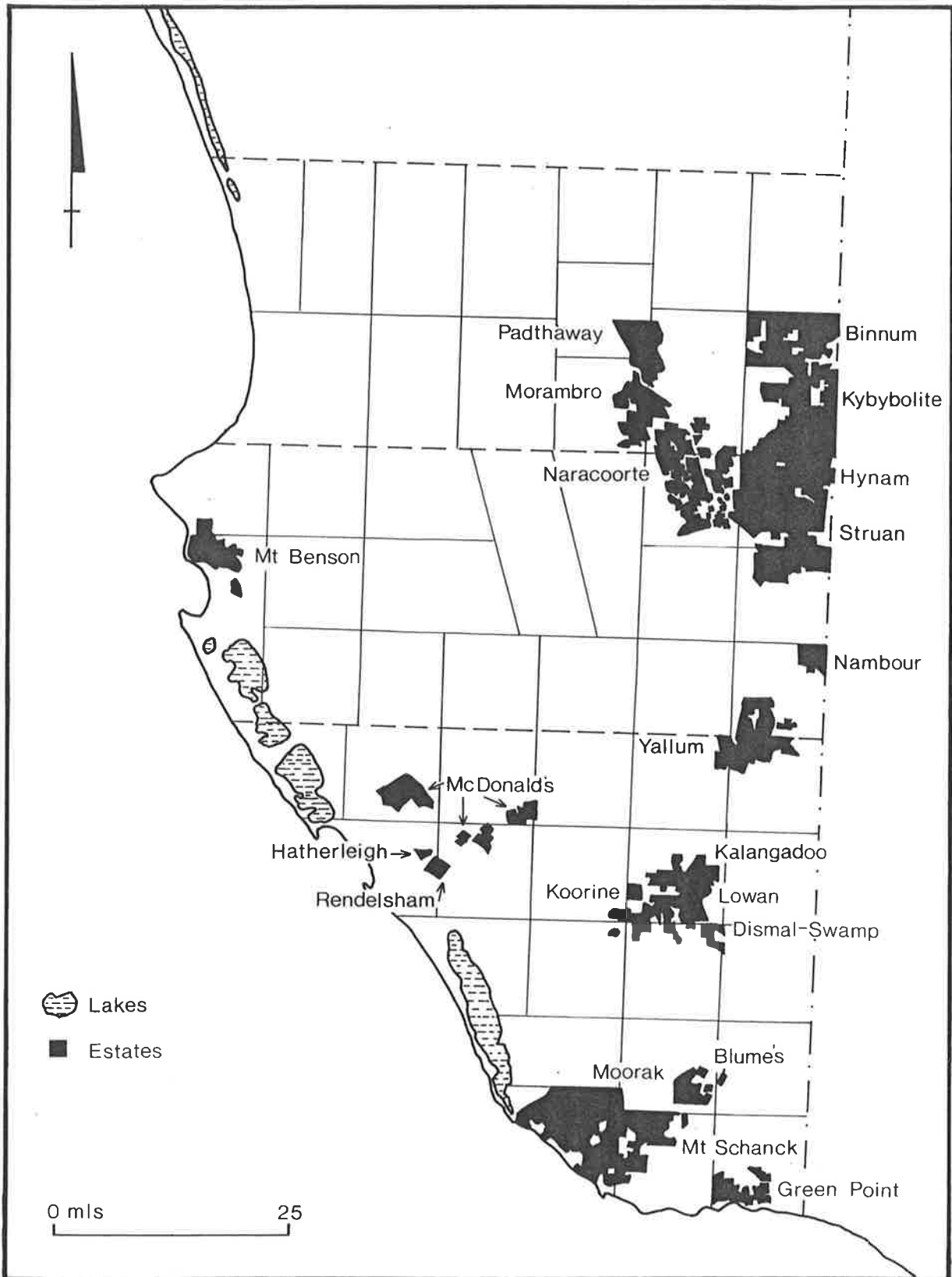
71. Dame Mary Gilmore in The Sydney Morning Herald, 8 January 1957, recounting conversations her father had held with Aborigines in the district in about 1870.

MAP 18

Land Repurchased from Estates, 1936

In the twentieth century estate owners took advantage of the high prices created by closer settlement legislation to sell some of their land. But generally they retained the best, none of which was compulsorily acquired. Thus over half a century of legislation did not make available sufficient, reasonably-priced European land - the basic essential for achieving the great dream of settling a race of self-sufficient farmers. (Compare with Maps 3, 10 and 17).

(Compiled from SAPP 10 of 1936)



living from such land and eventually to own it. But the government sold it at £26 an acre, a price which the Surveyor-General, William Strawbridge, admitted was "quite high for closer settlement when the low prices of staple products in the locality was taken into consideration".⁷² To make sure of recouping a costly outlay of over £20,000, the government also decided "to take into consideration the financial position of the applicants".⁷³ Thus European notions of profit which had shaped land legislation for the past sixty-five years continued to exclude the small man in favour of the wealthy. And in the year that 'Moorak' was purchased, Lanky Cana, last of the Boandiks - another people with a different vision of land whom Europeans had long since excluded - died near Beachport.⁷⁴

On 15 July 1901 Squire John Riddoch died. On that day Freemason flags flew at half mast in the township of Penola in honour of a man whose "removal made a big blank in the South East".⁷⁵ Squire Riddoch left his three daughters comfortably provided for, and his son, John Alexander Riddoch, established on 1,400 acres of fine homestead land at 'Yallum'.⁵⁶ George Riddoch, Laird of 'Glencoe', left his nephew to manage the estate and began building an imposing residence of South East limestone in the style of a Scottish lodge in the heart of the fertile

72. SAPP 38 of 1905, HA, 10 August 1905.

73. SAPP 38 of 1905, HA, 10 August 1905.

74. H. Carthew, p 72; T. McCourt, pp 70-1.

75. "Writing the history of Mr Riddoch's career," The Border Watch declared, "would be tantamount to writing the history of the South East." Squire Riddoch had been Member of Parliament, Chairman of the District Council, Member of the Road Board, founder and chief of the Caledonian Society, benefactor of the Mt Gambier Institute, President of the Racing Club, elder of the Presbyterian Church, JP, founder of the Coonawarra Fruit Colony and gave a prize of £150 annually for the best kept farm in the district. Squire Riddoch died of capillary apoplexy; his funeral was the largest ever seen in Penola. BW, 17 July 1901. See also APR, Vol. 11, 15 August 1901, p 398.

76. Executors were John Watson of Mt Gambier and Robert Whiting and James Aitken of Melbourne. Probate Registry.

Kalangadoo plains. In 1905, by the time the Laird had returned from a trip to America and Europe, his home was complete. He named it 'Koorine'. surrounded it with a deer park, and beautified it with flowers which grew "in luxuriant profusion" in a garden of six acres.⁷⁷

On 22 November 1905 the government sold 16,800 acres of the 17,182 acres purchased from the executors of the late Squire Riddoch's 'Yallum' estate. Prior to the sale the Land Board had met for the "long, difficult and responsible work" of choosing from 268 applicants for 80 blocks which lay to the north of the Robe road but excluding the Coonawarra Fruit Colony.⁷⁸

One spectator at these meetings declared he was certain that very few applicants had passed the practical portals of agriculture. From their manner, speech, and dress they were unmistakably established graziers seeking land for their sons. He considered the sale of 'Yallum Park' for closer settlement was only a repetition of sales of other estates in the South East. 'Yallum' blocks did not go "to the poor man with no socks and £16 in the Star-Bowkett Society, who had sent £5 with his application and a promise of £6 or £7 coming in wages", but to those who already owned substantial properties and who clearly had no higher call for the land than merely to graze it. It was his final judgement that the government might as well have retained pastoralists on the land.⁷⁹

77. BW, 3 January 1903; APR, Vol. 13, 17 August 1903, p 391; Industries of the South East, pp 92-3.

78. GRG 35/2/1902/2251 and 7430; GRG 35/2/1905/1151 and 1319; GRG 35/2/1906/123, SAA; SAPP 38 of 1905, HA, 10 August 1905. SAPP 62 of 1906, HA, 30 August 1906; APR, Vol. 13, 17 November 1903, p 619; Appendix 9(f), Map 18.

79. BW, 22 November 1905.

By 1908 settlers who had tried cultivating on the repurchased estates of 'Binnum', 'Kybybolite' and 'Naracoorte' were struggling. Consistently wet winters had drowned their crops; most settlers had lost heart' a good few had left, and some were only biding their time for a good price.⁸⁰ But Surveyor-General Strawbridge remained confident that things would turn out differently on the neighbouring estate of 'Hynam', because 'Hynam', he thought, was one of the best all-round properties for sub-division that had been under offer. The estate was well improved without being too expensive; three-quarters could be drained, fenced and cultivated. As long as the blocks were not too small, Strawbridge was convinced that 'Hynam' was well adapted for closer settlement purposes.⁸¹ Members of the Land Board agreed. Consequently on 4 August 1908 the government purchased 38,035 acres of the late Adam Smith's estate for closer settlement at £3.3 per acre and divided it into blocks averaging 550 acres.⁸²

Before the end of the year anticipation was running high among potential purchasers. At 10.30 am on 8 December, special inspection trains left Naracoorte for the five-mile journey to the estate; prospective buyers also came from the Tatiara and Victoria, and Adam Smith came from Gippsland to take a last look at the famous Merino flock his father had taken sixty years to build up, now "to be scattered to the four winds".⁸³ On 23 February 1909, the Land Board met in the Naracoorte

80. For details of the purchases for closer settlement; Appendix 10; SAPP 38 of 1905, HA, 10 August 1905; SAPP 76 of 1908, HA, 9 December 1908. For a review of the situation on these estates, SAPP 20 of 1910, HA, 2 November 1910.

81. SAPP 10 of 1908, HA, 18 August 1908.

82. J. Marsden, p 35; Appendix 9(i); Map 18.

83. NH, 8 and 10 December 1908. In 1907, sheep management records at 'Hynam' showed

grown sheep shorn	19,522	346 bales, 114,020 lbs. average 5 lbs 12.7/8 oz
lambs shorn	4,157	20 bales, 7,227 lbs average 1 lb 11.3/4 oz
	<u>23,679</u>	

Institute Hall to process 157 applicants who made 665 applications for the 68 blocks offered on 'Hynam'; 24,871 sheep were also put up for sale. The Commissioner of Crown Lands bought 6,000 of these "to enable the settlers on 'Hynam' to start with first-class Merino sheep".⁸⁴ In the Commissioner's opinion, at least, closer settlement did not exclude sheep farming.

Heinrich Koth from Yorketown was one of the twenty-two settlers who arrived from the dry north to try their fortune in the well-watered South East. Of nine applicants for Section 626 on 'Hynam', Koth was successful. Although the only improvements which successive owners of 'Hynam' had made in thirty-five years was £28 worth of fencing, the block was one of the largest and dearest and Koth paid £2,919 for 973 acres. Under Closer Settlement Agreement 958 he was granted his block on 3 March 1909 and, according to the regulations of the 1903 Closer Settlement Act, was committed to annual instalments of £215.3.4. Koth put up five miles of fencing for £175 and erected sheds and a house for a further £150. He cleared 350 acres, sowed 250 of these with barley and ran 315 sheep and 11 horses on the rest.⁸⁵

There were only two contenders for Section 407 on 'Hynam'.⁸⁶ Since 1878, when Adam Smith had bought it from his niece and "dummy", Margaret Hope, he had added only £6 worth of fencing. The sandy land, covered with yakka and bracken was now amalgamated with similarly poor contiguous blocks which Margaret Hope's brothers had dummied, to comprise 1,039 acres. On 3 March 1909, under Closer Settlement Agreement 936, Benjamin Garnett, another northerner from Yednalue

84. NH, 23 and 26 February 1909.

85. Ten half-yearly instalments at 4% on land and improvements amounted to £123.4.4 per annum and Koth was committed to expending £91.19 on improvements annually. CSALB, 5/158; GRG 35/2/1912/1982, SAA.

86. NH, 26 February 1909.

near Hawker, purchased the block for £2,597, incurring an annual commitment of £182.0.4. Although his block was "all gone to rabbits and ferns", Garnett set about growing wheat, the crop he knew best.⁸⁷

In 1902 the government had rejected W.J.T. Clarke's offer of 40,379 acres on 'The Schanck' because the land was "unsuitable for cultivation" and politicians had then been quite firm that "closer settlement" did not mean small sheep stations".⁸⁸ In July 1909, under suspicion of ministerial corruption, the government purchased the same land and divided it into 68 allotments at an average of £2.15 per acre.⁸⁹ In the intervening years nothing had been done to make the land more suitable for cultivation, to curb the spread of rabbits or prevent soil erosion. Such transactions highlighted the gap which had always existed between political rhetoric and reality. Although politicians declared that the purpose of closer settlement was "to place a population upon the land so that each occupant might be able to earn a living and utilise it to its fullest extent in a most productive manner", they were making available land which was not fit even for alternative grazing.⁹⁰

In the first decade of the century expansionist farmers in the South East not only added to their estates by acquiring land under closer settlement legislation, but had also become a political threat to pastoralists. On 20 August 1904, influential and prosperous farmers in the
 87. Ten half-yearly instalments at 4% for land and improvements amounted to £104.2.4 annually and Garnett had to expend £77.18 on improvements annually. CSALB, 5/136; GRG 35/2/1909/7665 and 798, SAA. Mrs Wray, 86, of 'Longridge', Naracoorte, whose father was a boundary rider on 'Hynam' recalled Garnett as being a widower with six grown-up children and his block as being "the poorest on 'Hynam'". Interview with Mrs Wray, on 21 June 1978.

88. SAPD, 19 August 1902, p 60; footnotes 37 and 40.

89. Appendix 9(j); Map 19. The Treasurer, Richard Butler, was a partner in the firm handling the sale. Butler denied insinuations and the matter was not carried further. SAPD, 30 August 1910, pp 407-8.

90. SAPP 10 of 1906, HA, 7 December 1906.

district banded behind 69-year-old James Pick,⁹¹ "one of the strongest men in the South East" at the foundation meeting of the Farmers and Producers Political Union in Mt Gambier.⁹² In 1902 the editor of The Australian Pastoralists Review declared farmers were strong in nature and character, brought wealth to a nation and had more right to govern than any Labour party. He urged pastoralists to unite with farmers to combat "those evidences of nasty, jealous, socialistic spirit" which were pervading the nation.⁹³ But wealthy farmers of the South East, like their counterparts throughout the State, showed no inclination to unite with pastoralists. The FPPU had the capital and organising ability to decentralise, and branches functioned strongly and independently within each electorate to represent farmers' interests in Parliament. James Pick and his "army of sympathisers" campaigned so effectively in the South East that they recruited members from both the National

91. James Pick was born in London in 1835 and arrived in the South East in the early 1860s. He first worked for Edward Leake at 'Glencoe' before holding land at 'The Springs', and purchasing 'Summer Hill' at Caroline. By 1904 Pick held 4,591 acres of land, with a total unimproved value of £7,970. SAPP 102 of 1904, HA, 23 November 1904. Pick stood for Parliament in 1893, 1896 and 1899 but was not elected. Ch. 4, footnote 184. When he died at the age of 71 on 21 December 1906, Pick had been President of the Agricultural and Horticultural Association for five years. The Observer, 14 March 1908. See also L.R. Hill, p 49.

92. The Observer, 28 August 1904. The entrance fee was 1/6; subscription fees 2/6. At the inaugural meeting James Pick was elected President, and E.J. Locke, Vice-President. The following substantial South East farmers were members of the Committee: E. Unger, J. Buchanan, G.E. Holdin, H. Woodall, J. Bigham, D.W. Berkefield, G. Bodey, F. Pegler, J.P.L. Schinckel, T. Preece and A. McArthur. The main policies of the FPPU were to open up closer settlement, to promote a more vigorous railway construction policy, to promote the State Bank's control and management of land purchased for closer settlement and homestead blocks, to educate electors in the principles of political economy, and to formulate Commonwealth election campaign policies and national planks in State election platforms. T.H. Burgess, Vol. 1, p 168. For further details on the formation, policies, growth and final amalgamation with the National Defence League to form the Liberal Union, J.B. Hirst, pp 179-87.

93. APR, Vol. 12, 15 December 1902, p 681.

Defence League and the Freeholders' Association, well-endowed organisations representing the pastoral interest.⁹⁴ After lobbying energetically and donating liberally at local and State level, in 1908 the South East branch of the FPPU rejoiced in the election of Joseph Vardon to the Senate - "a sympathetic member worth £1,000 to them".⁹⁵

The FPPU did, however, share two basic concerns with the pastoralists. The first was a fear of growing industrial unrest. In 1903 Mt Gambier members of the FPPU declared that if an Arbitration Act legislated for minimum wages and shorter hours for workers, they might as well sell their ploughs.⁹⁶ Pastoralists also had to contend with militant shearers who disagreed over terms "as soon as the wool began to grow on the sheep's back".⁹⁷ But when the labour shortage which had "always hung like a nightmare over the South East" began to be "fanned by the insidious breath of the professional agitator" farmer-graziers and pastoralists often imported labour.⁹⁸

94. In the digest of his diaries, Hawker records that only five attended a meeting of the Freehold Landowners' Society at Mt Gambier on 14 September 1905. On 9 September 1904 Hawker records that 24 "smaller men" from the South East declared they would join the National Defence League. On 8 November 1904 "a good meeting" was held at Naracoorte after George Riddoch had provided the recruiting agent, Hartley Williams, with a horse and a trap to canvas the district. On 29 November 1905, Messrs W. Clarke, J.W. Browne and G. Riddoch contributed £25, £50 and £50 respectively to the League. On 13 March 1906, Hawker records "difficulties in the South East because of FPPU" and by 15 May 1906 Williams had great difficulty in the district because "some favourable eyes" had been cast on the FPPU. E.W. Hawker, Council Digest of Diaries (1867-1908) D2624(L), SAA.

95. The South East Union contributed £100 toward the election. The Observer, 14 March 1908. For biographical details of Joseph Vardon, A.P. Keain, p 125.

96. BW, 14 March 1903.

97. APR, 15 December 1913, p 1187.

98. D.J. Gordon, p 8; APR, Vol. 12, 15 December 1902, p 665.

In 1902, when shearers at 'Koorine' struck rather than shear wet sheep, the Pastoralists' Association sent in "a team of free labourers who carried the work through satisfactorily".⁹⁹ In 1903 South East pastoralists were still offering to pay only 15/- per hundred if shearers did not supply their own rations. The shearers protested. They claimed South East crossbreds were heavier to shear. They also declared pastoralists in that district were better able to pay because they got higher prices for their wool than the rest of the State and were not affected by drought. The shearers demanded 16/- per hundred. All but three or four South East pastoralists agreed but managers on 'Moorak' and 'Mt Schanck' declined and engaged a contractor from Melbourne to shear by machinery.¹⁰⁰

Well-established farmers and pastoralists were also united in their opposition to increased land and income taxation, but in 1902 and again in 1905, when a coalition Labour government was in office for the first time in South Australia, their protests failed. As land tax in 1902 represented a 50% increase for those with less than £8,000 worth of land and 25% increase to those with over that value, wealthy farmers and pastoralists did not have as much ground for complaint as smaller

99. APR, Vol. 12, 15 December 1902, pp 665 and 736.

100. Wool from the South East was fetching at least 14d per lb. SAPP 43 of 1907-8, HA, 24 November 1908. NH, 13 and 20 October 1903; BW, 14 and 21 October 1903; letter from Dr J.H. Browne to William Gilbert, his brother-in-law, of Pewsey Vale, 19 November 1903, PRG 260, SAA.

farmers.¹⁰¹ An estimate of lands liable to taxation at 1/- per £1,000 of unimproved value in 1904 shows that owners of large estates in the South East, in the light of years of accumulated wealth, were not burdened by taxation.¹⁰² But landowners continued to claim their main objection to taxation was one of principle: private property was under attack, and taxation was always one dangerous step nearer to the nationalisation of land and other sources of wealth.¹⁰³

101. SAPD, 15 July 1902, p 61. See also SAPP 35 of 1902; HA, 15 October 1902. Revenue from taxation on farmers and sheepfarmers was as follows

	1900		1901		1903	
	Number	Amount £	Number	Amount £	Number	Amount £
<u>Farmers</u>	716	2,942	724	2,163	1,867	7,307
<u>Sheepfarmers</u>	278	7,236	234	6,741	455	14,763

SAPP 57 of 1902, HA, 10 September 1902 and SAPP 62 of 1904, HA, 31 August 1904. From 1903-8 income tax was 4½d in £ for incomes of £150-800; and 7d in £ above £800 if wealth was earned from personal exertion; 9d in £ for incomes up to £800 and 13d in £ above £800 if wealth came from produce. Act 861 of 1904, assented to 24 November 1904; Act 969 of 1908, assented to 23 December 1908. See also SAPD, 14 November 1905, p 260. For further details of land and income tax, D.J. Gordon, Handbook of South Australia, Adelaide, 1908, p 168; SAGG 1904, p 1205; 1908, p 1207; 1910, p 1064; and 1914, p 1267.

102. The estimate also shows that W.J.T. Clarke and his wife, Gertrude, owned and leased the largest amount of land, although not the most improved land, in South Australia.

Name	Total freehold and leasehold liable to land tax	Total unimproved value £
Gertrude Clarke	9,678 acres	14,766
W.J.T. Clarke	76,214 acres	159,557
Other large South East landowners were:		
George Riddoch	24,947 acres	61,462
Adam, Andrew, John and William Smith	38,035 acres	76,070
Executors of John Riddoch	34,052 acres	52,770

SAPP 102 of 1904, HA, 23 November 1904.

103. SAPD, 29 November 1902, p 56.

On the vexed question of compulsory repurchase, mooted by Labour in 1905, farmers strongly opposed pastoralists. As the acquisition of estates for closer settlement made good land available, wealthy farmers argued that compulsory repurchase was the only way to retain "the young yeomanry", among whom they included their sons,¹⁰⁴ but to pastoralists compulsory acquisition was an even more formidable attack on private property than "iniquitous taxation". George Riddoch, who feared he would be among "the proposed victims", was very vocal. "I need not make any excuse for saying," he declared, "such a measure is the most immoral piece of legislation I have seen or heard of. It is nothing less than confiscation." Indeed the proposal was of such a criminal nature that even in "socialistic New Zealand" nothing so drastic had been proposed. He predicted that the bursting up of established estates would go on indefinitely "until farms were no bigger than cottage gardens".¹⁰⁵

In 1905 Riddoch and fellow-conservatives in the Legislative Council blocked a Bill to acquire land compulsorily. Five years later a Labour government again proposed the measure. To conservatives it remained the most iniquitous they had heard of; it put private property in jeopardy; and it was nothing less than a break of covenant between government and people, especially as the pastoral industry had brought more wealth than any other to the State.¹⁰⁶

Those who advocated compulsory repurchase disagreed. They argued the measure was a means of establishing "an independent yeomanry". They would be able to put on the land men who were "of a sound and constructive

104. The Observer, 14 March 1908.

105. SAPD, 8 November 1905, cols 245, 252, 255 and 256.

106. SAPD, 8 November 1910, pp 391-2.

character". They would be able to settle "the right class of people with capital enough to give them a start in life". Settling the land, they claimed, would "open up avenues of employment by encouraging the youth of the country to take an interest in agricultural pursuits and so prevent so many from becoming wastrels in the city". At the same time as they made necessary room for this small farming class, they would attract a larger population to the State. One member reminded his colleagues forcibly of the dream which had not died since Wakefield proposed a plan for the settlement of South Australia. If a man worked on the land and lived quietly for three or four years, he declared, he could save enough to start out for himself. A colleague asked whether in South Australia they had 750,000 acres of arable land fit for repurchase, but the vision of the founding colonisers had been so warmly evoked that his question went unanswered.¹⁰⁷

In 1909 compulsory repurchase was the main issue separating the FPPU and the National Defence League, a body of merchants, Adelaide squatters, landowners and professional men, founded in 1891 in opposition to the Labour Party. Although compulsory repurchase remained "an affront to the sacredness of private property", the National League's fear of a Labour victory was stronger. It conceded the issue to the FPPU, on condition that it be subject to "fair conditions". In 1910 the main non-Labour factions sank their differences to form the Liberal Union.¹⁰⁸ The Union was not successful in preventing the first Labour government coming to office in June 1910, but pastoralists from the National Defence League in the Upper House made sure the Compulsory Repurchase Bill was hedged with safeguards which protected their

107. SAPD, 8 November 1910, pp 398 and 406.

108. For details of the founding of the National Defence League, the FPPU and the Liberal and Democratic Union, J.B. Hirst, pp 156, 187-91.

George Riddoch (1842-1920)

The Farmers' and Producers' Political Union held the first ball in the New Institute Hall, Mt Gambier, 1907.

L to R: Sir J.L. Stirling, Mrs E. Paltridge, J.P.L. Schinckel, G. Riddoch, Mrs B.J. Daniel, J. Livingston, Mrs Schinckel, R. Sassanowsky.

(SAA)

By the 1890s legislation to settle a numerous yeomanry had been successful only in establishing the large farmer-grazier in the South East. By the turn of the century these farmers were a political challenge to the pastoralists but by the end of the decade they had joined forces with them to combat the threat of the Labour movement.



interests. Under Act 1013 of 1910, an owner had two years' notice before his land could be acquired; he could retain land to the value of £20,000; and if he desired he could demand that all, rather than select portions of his estate should be repurchased.¹⁰⁹

The Act was not once invoked: South Australian and South East pastoralists in particular, had little to fear from the legislation. They could choose which land they wished to sell and which they wished to retain. They avoided progressive State and Federal land tax by selling good land and getting rid of inferior at high ruling prices, while their fertile fee-simple land, from which they had carved their wealth for the past half a century, remained a bulwark of security for them and their heirs.

Changes in government during the first decade of the century had brought no change in policy regarding the provision of public facilities. Politicians refused to finance them until closer settlement proved profitable: meanwhile landowners were to share costs. This policy, like legislative concessions, inherently guaranteed advantages for those with capital.

Under this policy Petition Drains failed but as no one yet questioned that drainage would make South East land more like European land, whether used by agriculturalist or pastoralist, in 1911 the government instituted a Scheme Drain System to establish the main lines of drainage so that local landowners could then construct subsidiary drains. Scheme drains constructed between 1911 and 1915 relieved settlers on the flooded coastal areas, but as small landowners could not afford subsidiary drains, the system again failed to promote agriculture widely. The main effect of the drains was to re-orient the established pattern of

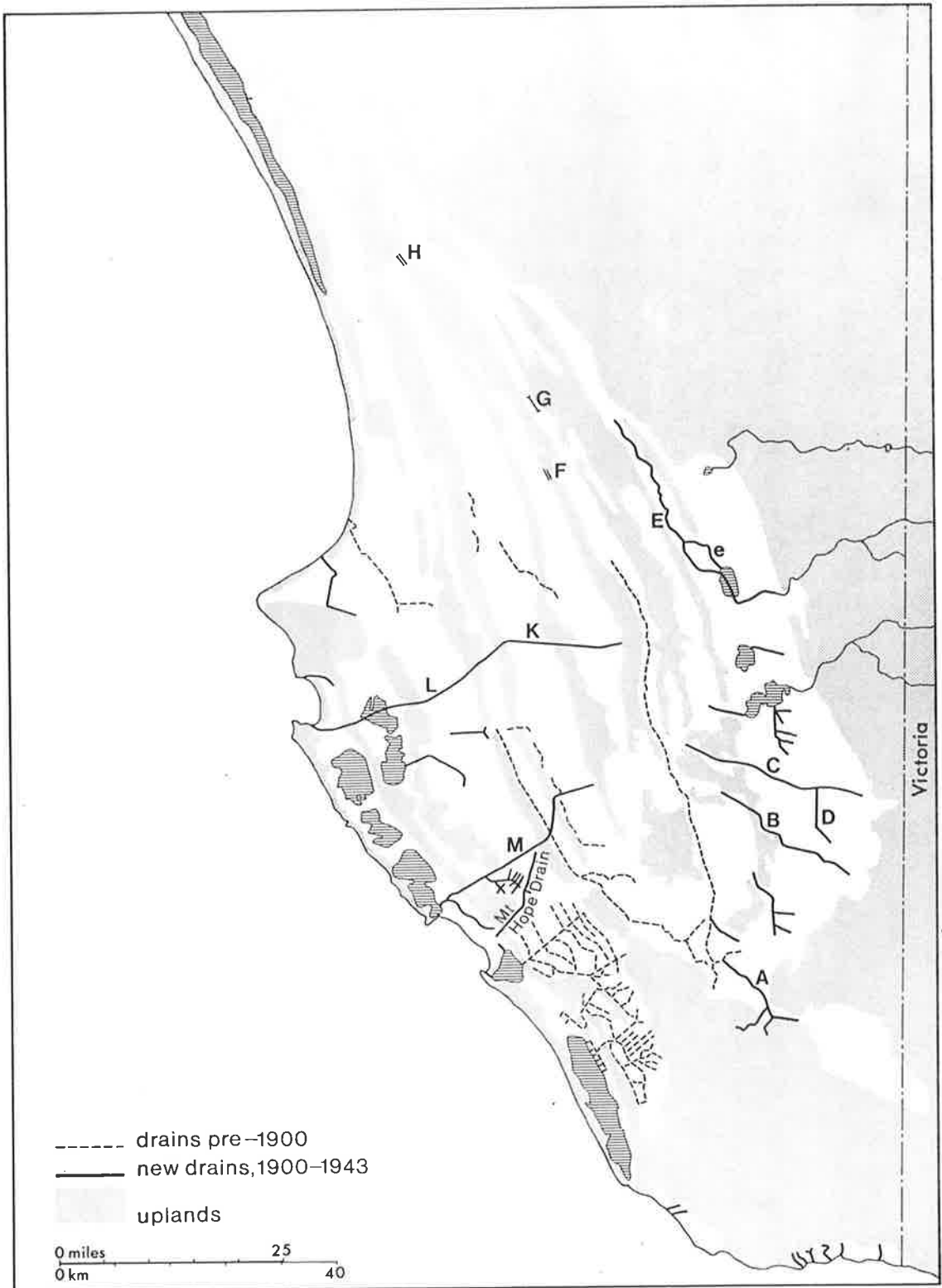
109. Crown Lands Act 1013 of 1910, assented to 7 December 1910.

drainage. The South East was now basically divided into two drainage areas on either side of Baker's Range; to the east of the Range the water flowed in a natural north-west direction the sea; to the west, water was carried westwards the sea. Yet altering the landscape so radically provided only an extended pasture grazing season which once more benefitted graziers and pastoralists rather than small landowners whom the government always professed to support.¹¹⁰

By providing railways in fertile areas where pastoralists and wealthy farmers would make them a paying proposition, the government further disadvantaged those on smaller or less fertile holdings. Dairy producers on coastal lands and inland flats unfit for pastoralism were the worst off. As they had no deep-sea port from which they could export directly, they sent their produce to Adelaide. With only three narrow gauge lines in the whole district, and because of the delay caused by changing from narrow to broad gauge at Wolsely, their produce often became unsaleable. Yet an enquiry in 1904 reported that conversion to broad gauge in the South East was not warranted until the traffic increased.¹¹¹ In 1906 another enquiry into improved facilities for trade in the South East recommended that Robe should be converted into a deep-sea port, lines should connect Lucindale and Millicent with Robe, and freezing works should be established at Robe, at a total cost of £472,000. The report also countenanced lines from Kingston and Beachport to Robe if landholders whose land would thereby increase in value paid one-third of any loss in interest and working expenses, but recommended that conversion to broad gauge, although certainly desirable in the South East, was too costly for the government to

110. Map 19. For details of the nature and result of Scheme Drains, M. Williams, pp 211-5.

111. SAPP 20 of 1904, HA, 15 November 1904; Map 15.



implement. The Commissioners declared they were impressed by the possibility of extensive development in agricultural and kindred pursuits, and by the suitability of the district for the successful settlement of a much larger population. They were also aware that following the removal of border tariffs after Federation, enterprising Victorian merchants had increased their trade with the more thickly-populated part of the South East. The Commissioners also regretted that settlement had not progressed more rapidly throughout the rest of the district. As giving assistance to projected schemes for facilities without this progress would not be immediately remunerative, the government once again took no action.¹¹²

In 1910, however, Victoria and South Australia agreed to share the cost and revenue of a line to link Mt Gambier with Heywood, which was connected to Portland where freezing works were established. This favoured the pastoralists and large farmer-graziers along the fertile spine near the Victorian border and on the good land in the lower south-east of the district. Pastoralists had long since sold their wool in Melbourne rather than direct to London, as this meant access to bigger and better markets without competition from the finer wools of central northern South Australia. Barley and fat lambs could also now be despatched to Melbourne from Portland. But farmers on the less fertile inland plains and dairy farmers near the coast remained "shut out" from both Adelaide and Melbourne, with neither a deep-sea port nor a quick railway connection. By providing facilities in the wake of, rather than prior to, closer settlement, the government had continued to pay

112. SAPP 20 of 1906, HA, 20 July 1906.

lip-service to one ideal - establishing small men - at the same time as it tried to fulfil another - running land at a profit.¹¹³

In 1909 and 1910 the South East experienced two extremely wet winters.¹¹⁴ Graziers on 'Yallum' survived this well, but those who had tried to cultivate on low-lying, undrained land failed miserably. In 1907 and 1908 only the highest land east of the Penola railway had yielded any crop at all; in 1910, following "torrential rains", even this land was deluged as far north as Coonawarra. Farmers were struggling to keep up payments. They declared that unless the land was drained or the seasons changed they would have to sell.¹¹⁵

Forty odd miles to the north, settlers on 'Binnum', 'Kybybolite' and 'Hynam' were in a similar plight. In 1909 crops on 'Hynam' had been small but returns were as high as 18 bushels to an acre.¹¹⁶ In September 1910 five inches of rain fell and crops were "almost a total failure".¹¹⁷ Most settlers had used their land for grazing, but even then those with only a little capital were "starved out".¹¹⁸ They petitioned the government for reductions.¹¹⁹ Some remained hopeful of

113. The Interstate Royal Commission on the Mt Gambier Border Railway, SAPP 87 of 1911, HA, 27 September 1911. Some of the large farmers in the lower south-east of the district who testified they would benefit by the railway were J. Parish, J.P.L. Schinckel, H. Pick, C. Spehr and G.H. Kilsby. Questions 638-776. Among the disgruntled coastal farmers were W. Sutherland, H. Holzgreffe and F.R. Sassanowsky. Questions 1583-7, 1633 and 1650-6.

114. In 1909 rainfall for the district was 7.36" above the normal average; in 1910, 8.09". GRG 35/442, p 19.

115. Inspector's Report in SAPD, 4 November 1910, p 906.

116. SAPD, 4 November 1910, p 905.

117. SAPP 20 of 1910, HA, 2 November 1910.

118. SAPD, 15 November 1910, p 1029.

119. GRG 35/1/1910/725, SAA.

better seasons but most had lost heart and intended to sell as soon as they could find a buyer. Only those who held other land, had a little more capital or were receiving assistance from their relatives had any hope of surviving.¹²⁰

In 1911 the Surveyor-General reviewed the progress of closer settlement in South Australia. Judging by the excellent manner in which payments had been made by settlers, he concluded the scheme could be considered a success.¹²¹ His assessment had familiar overtones. In 1879 a Select Committee had claimed that closer settlement under credit agreement, "if not an unqualified success", had certainly been no failure.¹²² The Surveyor-General's report contained another familiar feature: the closer settlement scheme, as the credit agreement system before it, had been least successful in the South East.¹²³

120. SAPP 20 of 1910, HA, 2 November 1910. By estimating gross cash income for wheat and barley at export prices; from cattle as the equivalent of the income from six sheep, each cutting 6lb average, with wool at export prices, and deducting average yearly instalments at £55 and £50 for the first five year period for 'Kybybolite' and 'Yallum' respectively, D. Penny estimated the gross cash income available to meet costs of production and living expenses would have been approximately as follows:

	1906-7	1907-8	1908-9	1909-10	1913-4
'Kybybolite'	£65	65	85	55	90
'Yallum'	£60	110	180	150	75

and less when commitments increased. D.H. Penny, M.Ec. The Role of Government in the Economic Development of South Australia, University of Adelaide, 1957, pp 90-1.

121. The annual payment for rent, instalments and interest amounted to £58,402.18 while arrears at 30 June were only £5,184.1.1. SAPP 10 of 1911-2, HA,

122. Ch. 3, footnote 226.

123. Almost all of the arrears of £5,184.1.1 were due from 'Kybybolite', 'Binnam' and 'Hynam' estates. SAPP 10 of 1910-1, HA, 17 October 1911.

Legislation between 1905-11 which allowed concessions of time, payment of interest and advances to settlers, admitted that closer settlement settlers generally had not been so successful as the Surveyor-General claimed, but there was no doubt that South East settlers "were suffering the most hardship".¹²⁴ In 1910, Donald Campbell, member for the South East, claimed that closer settlement had broken down. Crawford Vaughan, the Commissioner of Crown Lands, admitted that it would have been better if some of the estates there had not been acquired.¹²⁵ Closer settlement had been successful only on 'Moorak'. Because established Mt Gambier farmers here had capital and rich volcanic soil, they had cultivated small holdings successfully. Elsewhere the great dream had not come to pass. "Clusters of farms and homesteads pleasing to look upon" had not broken "the pastoral solitude" of the South East district.¹²⁶

In their attempts to explain the failure of closer settlement in the South East, politicians declared the reasons were complex, but confessed that the basic problem remained the unsuitability of land for agriculture. Successive governments had bought unsuitable land for closer settlement above its market value. "Everyone knew," one member declared, "this was land on which in wet seasons it was difficult to get rid of water." Yet, compelled by the traditions of Europe, politicians had insisted that in this water men attempt to grow wheat. Even those who

124. In 1905, closer settlement agreements were extended from five to thirty-five years; in 1910, interest was reduced from 4% to 2% for five years in cases of hardship. Act 899 of 1905, assented to 9 December 1905; Act 1032 of 1910, assented to 7 December 1910. In 1911, the Advances to Settlers Act, which when passed in 1908 had specifically excluded closer settlement blocks, was extended to include them. Act 1052 of 1911, assented to 7 December 1911.

125. SAPD, 15 November 1910, pp 1029-30.

126. SAPD, 15 November 1910, p 1029; W. Reeves, p 297; Appendix 10.

ignored the original aims of closer settlement and ran sheep had found much of the land unfit even for this. Another member declared that a further mistake had been to cut the land up into such small blocks. In his opinion a man in the South East needed 2,000 acres to run 1,000-1,500 sheep, and even that amount would not grant "a fat living".¹²⁷ Those most concerned with recouping revenue declared the settlers should be allowed to sell out. Their blocks could then be amalgamated and sold as grazing land to those with ready money.¹²⁸ Those who could not countenance such a flagrant denial of the great dream put forward the well-tried remedy of change of tenure: agreement to purchase should be replaced by a perpetual lease system. Others suggested familiar concessions. Settlers should be allowed reductions and given an extension of time to pay off their purchase money and interest. Others agreed additional land as well as more time and capital would help.¹²⁹ Some who were confident that the seasons would become as regular as those in Europe and who still believed South East land could be made like European land, suggested drainage would solve the problem.¹³⁰ No one suggested making good agricultural land available. On one point all agreed. Because closer settlement had failed so miserably in the South East, settlers there should be granted greater concessions than those elsewhere in South Australia.

The Crown Lands Further Amendment Act of 1911 incorporated all proposals for relief. Settlers on 'Yallum', 'Kybybolite', 'Binnun' and 'Hynam' might continue under an agreement to purchase with a reduction

127. SAPD, 15 November 1910, p 1029.

128. SAPD, 15 November 1910, p 1030.

129. SAPD, 15 November 1910, p 904.

130. SAPD, 15 November 1910, p 1030.

in purchase money or might surrender their agreement for a perpetual lease. A settler might hold land, if it were considered 'pastoral', up to an unimproved value of £8,000. Although it had been shown so often in the South East that concessions benefitted only the large and established, politicians were once more prepared to allow the small man to battle on under new legislation. Further mindful that so many similar attempts to settle a yeomanry had cost governments dearly, the Act allowed those under hardship the right to transfer. In the interests of revenue the means of aggregation were once more open to men of capital.¹³¹

Benjamin Garnett and Heinrich Koth of 'Hynam' did not wait for the new legislation. Garnett had spent £200 on improvements but his wheat yields had been so poor he could not meet his payments. On 29 August 1912 his agreement was cancelled.¹³² Koth decided three years of growing barley had made his land "peter out".¹³³ By 1912 both men and others from the dry north had left, "thoroughly frightened" by heavy South East rain-falls and no longer able to stand the sight of country where "wild ducks and swans swam ... and bullfrogs croaked among the wheat".¹³⁴

On 18 November 1912 Edward Miles, of Dinyarrack near Kaniva in Victoria, applied to rent Garnett's block at 3/4 per head per week to agist 200 sheep. The Chairman of the Land Board agreed on condition that Miles "keep down the rabbits" because he considered it better to get some revenue from the place than allow it to go to ruin as

113. Act 1068 of 1911, assented to 4 January 1912.

132. GRG 35/2/1912/5441, SAA; SAGG, 29 August 1912, p 530.

133. GRG 35/2/1912/1982, SAA.

134. SAPD, 4 November 1910, p 905.

it undoubtedly would if left unoccupied. Gazettals to relet in 1913 and 1914 attracted no applicants; by 1915 the vacant block was "a walking mass of rabbits".¹³⁵

On 3 September 1913, 22-year-old Harry Schinckel left the neighbouring section where he had been tenant in common with his older brother Edward, and under Closer Settlement Agreement 958 took up Section 262, formerly Koth's block. Harry was the son and grandson of established farmers, and his uncle, Simon Schinckel, was managing Kybybolite Research Station nearby.¹³⁶ Like most settlers on 'Hynam', Schinckel preferred to hold his land under purchase agreement, with reductions, rather than on perpetual lease. The chairman of the Land Board granted financial concessions "in view of the big load he had undertaken", and because "the Schinckel brothers were excellent farmers and an acquisition to the district". With annual commitments amounting to £189.2.6, from 3 March 1914, Harry set about "improving and developing his farm into what he was trying to make it - the best in the district".¹³⁷

135. Correspondence between Edward Miles and the chairman of the Land Board on 18 November and 9 December 1912; 4 January, 5 February and 12 October 1915; Section 407 was gazetted as being open until 9 February 1915, but no applications were received by 15 February 1915. GRG 35/2/1912/8353, SAA.

136. For obituary of P.L. Schinckel, grandfather of Harry Schinckel, NH, 13 October 1903. For a description of his brother's property 'Mullana', Industries of the South East, pp 62-5.

137. CSALB 5/158 and 1A/86; correspondence between Harry Schinckel and Thomas Porter, chairman of the Land Board on 16 May and 18 July, 1913; GRG 35/2/1912/1982, SAA. CT178/15; Transfer 636142, LTO. Two half-yearly instalments amounted to £97.3.6; annual expenditure on improvements was £91.19. The chairman decided he could not recommend reductions in purchase money but extended time to purchase to 49 years, as from 3 March 1914. He also divided payment of instalments as follows: first 7 years at 2½%; second 7 years at 4%; third and fourth years at 4½%; fifth and sixth years at 5%; seventh year at 5½%. The 4% was to be made up over the 49 years. The amount paid was to be credited to principal for each seven-year term and was to be deducted before starting the new term. GRG 35/2/1912/1982, SAA; Maps 20 and 21.

The years 1911-3 were kinder to George Riddoch on 'Koorine' than they were to closer settlers battling with inferior land on repurchased estates. But despite thirty years' experience in the South East, Riddoch was also still coming to terms with land which remained stubbornly un-European. One way he had done this was to breed selectively. Riddoch knew Angas were beautiful cattle; he had begun with Shorthorns, but by 1913 he "nourished a dream" of seeing how Herefords would go in his "bleak, cold country". Several times he had bought the champion Hereford bull of Victoria; some of his stud had pedigrees to the beginning of the previous century. As he wrote to his friend, Edward Van Senden, wool broker and manager of Dalgety's in Adelaide, by 1913 he could boast one of the purest herds of Herefords in Australia; every time his Herefords had beaten Shorthorns in size and condition.¹³⁸

Riddoch also continued to experiment in cross-breeding sheep. Along with many others, he told Van Senden, he hated giving up "the good old Merino breed", but he had become more and more favourably impressed with crossbreeds, and Comebacks in particular. They retained much of the Merino type wool and cut good heavy fleeces while their large frame made them more suitable for his cold, wet country. After putting Lincoln and Romney rams to cross-bred Merino ewes, he concluded "Romneys were best".¹³⁹ In 1912, when war seemed likely in Europe and prices remained remarkably high in Australia, Riddoch decided to risk selling his wool in Melbourne rather than in London for

138. G. Riddoch, to E.W. Van Senden, 100/7/95, 14 July 1913, ABL (hereafter 100/7/95). For biographical details of E.W. Van Senden, F.W. Morrison, Vol. 2, p 791; H.T. Burgess, Vol. 1, p 575; The Sunday Mail, 12 January 1918.

139. 23 August 1911, 10 January 1913, 100/7/95. Riddoch also recounted how his overseer, Mr Kennedy, had put Merino rams with a small flock of crossbreed ewes. One of Riddoch's Romney rams broke in and got many lambs, all of which lived, while all the lambs from the Merino rams died. Riddoch thought the situation seemed incredible, but also felt it justified his concentrating on cross-breeds to a great extent. 100/7/95, 10 January 1913.

the first time. His fleeces that year look a good 1d per lb better than his 1911 clip; they were larger and brighter, probably, he thought, because of an unusual dry winter in his generally wet district. Although he did not think his car served him as well "as his good old horses and buggy", in January 1913 he travelled to Melbourne by motor for the sale. He was pleased to inform Van Senden that his motor behaved splendidly. He had taken a day to cover 265 miles to Ballarat by a roundabout road; from there he had caught the 7 o'clock train and arrived in Melbourne by 10.30 pm. He spent four days in searing heat which reached 104° but had the satisfaction of seeing his wool realise an average of a shade under 1/1½ per lb which was more than the values he had put on it. He calculated he had made £500 more than he would have on the London market.¹⁴⁰

In March, bushfires again broke out on 'Koorine' and burned 2,500 acres of grass. Riddoch wrote to Van Senden that he did not see that as a great concern: he could expect rain at any time; the grass would soon be as green as ever, and he would not even feel the loss. His major problem was labour. Advertisements in the local paper for a manager had brought forth no suitable replies. A manager without experience in wet country was no good to him. An excess of moisture meant contending with all sorts of pests, applying all kinds of remedy and shifting sheep frequently. He finally promoted one of his overseers to manager but he broke down under the strain and Riddoch, almost 71 and in ill health,

140. 100/7/95, 4 and 25 November 1912; 17 January 1913. Riddoch estimated his London average over the past seven years at 11.6/10d per lb.; his Melbourne average at 1s2/5d, making a difference of 8/10d. 16 August 1913, 100/7/95. On 25 November 1912 he gave his prices for Koorine wool in London as follows:

	<u>1909</u>	<u>1910</u>	<u>1911</u>	<u>1912</u>
Super combing	16½d	15d	15d	14d
1st combing	16½d	14½d	14½d	14d
2nd combing	16d	14½d	13½d	12½d
Necks	14d	14d	13d	12½d
1st pieces	13d	13d	12½d	12d
2nd pieces	11½d	12d	11d	10½d
Bellies	11½d	11½d	11d	10d

was forced to manage himself. For thirty years he had scoured his wool in the beautifully soft waters of Lake Edward as Robert Leake had done before him, but in 1913 he decided the labour question made scouring too difficult to continue.¹⁴¹

In that year he also complained to Van Senden of an unjust burden of tax. He expected 'Koorine' would bring a profit of £5,390 but £1,500 was due on Federal Land Tax, State Land and Income Tax and District Council Rates. He wrote in July and August 1913 that he had eased the tax burden by selling 2,300 acres; 900 of which were very good land on 'Moerlong', the most northerly part of his run which he had not intended to part with but had finally sold to sons of a former employee who now owned the adjoining land. By 1913 he was busy calculating how to reduce his stock without reducing his outgoings proportionately.¹⁴²

141. 100/7/95, 7 March 1913.

142. Riddoch sold this land to the McCorquindale brothers. 100/7/95; 25, 28 January, 5 July and 14 August 1913. On 25 January 1913, Riddoch estimated his financial position as follows:

Estimate of Financial Position in Near future

Incomings

By Sale of Wool	£7,500	
" Cash for Stock Feed to Chas. Cameron) 800	
Payable on 6th July)	
" Land payments March and April) 540	
" Sale of Sheep and Cattle about May) 2,000	
" Payment due by Mr Flooray on 1st Oct.) 2,750	
	<u> </u>	£13,590.0.0

Outgoings

Overdraft National Bank	£ 700.0.0	
D ^o Dalgety's Adelaide	4,750.0.0	
Federal and State Land and Income Taxes) 1,500.0.0	
Other outgoings for say 8 Months) 1,250.0.0	
	<u> </u>	£ 8,200.0.0
		£ 5,390.0.0

About twenty miles to the north of 'Koorine', on that part of the 'Yallum' estate on which John Riddoch had established the Coonawarra Fruit Colony, settlers were finding the progress of the Colony not as assured as Grasby and Gordon had so optimistically predicted.¹⁴³ In 1903 The Border Watch was pleased to report that the Colony had the heaviest vintage to date; the manager, Ewen McBain, had put through 80,000 gallons and the Colonists had greatly improved their homes and orchards. There were 22 children attending the Coonawarra school, and there was every reason to hope the population would continue to grow steadily.¹⁴⁴ By 1906, however, hard times had hit the Colony. Prices plummeted when wine tastes in Europe changed dramatically. Coonawarra claret, famous for its "good body, fine colour, delicate bouquet and low alcoholic strength" was no longer in demand in London.¹⁴⁵ Grapes which had fetched £7.10 a ton in 1902 "were hardly worth the picking" at £2.10 a ton in 1906.¹⁴⁶ The best European training in viticulture was no insurance against depressed markets. Local district inspector, Rodney Fowler, Vansittart Scholarship holder and Roseworthy graduate, saw his profits on a 20 acre block fall from £120-£130 to £45-£50.¹⁴⁷ With Squire Riddoch's death a guaranteed source of capital had disappeared. The Colonists were forced to distill their grapes into brandy. William Henry Lear chose this time to come from Balmoral, near Harrow, about forty

143. Ch. 4, footnote 131; D.J. Gordon, pp 22-4.

144. BW, 7 February 1903.

145. SAPP 20 of 1906, HA, 11 July 1906. These were the words of Harold B.H. Richardson, Roseworthy-trained owner orchardist and vigneron, son of the owner of 'Pyrus' orchards, Mr Henry Richardson. See also Industries of the South East, pp 91-3.

146. SAPP 20 of 1906, HA, 11 July 1906.

147. For Vansittart Scholarship, PRG 160/32, SAA; for Fowler's Award, PRG 160/30/frame 3. Besides being South East District Orchard Inspector and Secretary to the Coonawarra Fruitgrowers' Association, Rodney Fowler and his brother, John Oliver Fowler, ran 'Bedford Leigh' at Coonawarra. For further biographical details, H. Burgess, Vol. 2, p 972.

miles over the Victorian border, to take up Block 459 in the Colony, in the Hundred of Comaum. On 22 May 1906 under Closer Settlement Agreement 554, Lear paid £195 for his 47 acre block, one of the largest in the Colony. Lear's annual instalments were £13.11.2, and his brother Oliver "earned a little money to keep the pot boiling" while he built a two-roomed house and concentrated on bringing his apricots and vineyards into bearing.¹⁴⁸

Lear and other Coonawarra Colonists were soon facing difficulties additional to lack of capital and falling prices. Those European viticulturalists who had once confidently asserted that Coonawarra would have "mild winters" and that late spring frosts were "a remote possibility" were wrong.¹⁴⁹ Large landowners had dug drains to make the land more European but many Coonawarra settlers considered these drains were lowering the temperatures to frost level. They banded into a Vigilante Committee to warn when temperatures fell below 36° F.¹⁵⁰ As well, by 1910, orchards were no longer "happily free" of pests and diseases. The fruit inspector had to prescribe remedies for codlin moth, apricot scab, shothole, curl leaf, woolly aphis and the most destructive curculio beetle. Although all produce was sent and all goods received through the Coonawarra Railway Station and returned empty fruit cases were scalded, another Committee had been formed to make sure diseases were "stamped out".¹⁵¹

148. Lear was committed to ten half-yearly instalments of £3.17.7 which was 4% of his purchase money of £194. As the block was unimproved he had no instalments to pay on improvements, but he was to expend £5.16 annually on improving. CS ALB 3/154; GRG 35/2/1906/4107, SAA. For a detailed description of the varieties of fruit grown and for some of the Colonist's holdings, D.J. Gordon, p 22.

149. W.C. Grasby, pp 14, 15 and 26.

150. Interview with Mr Charles Skinner, First Street, Wirrabara, formerly of Coonawarra Fruit Colony, on 30 November 1978. See also Industries of the South East, p 92.

151. Correspondence with C. Skinner, 8 December 1981. Red oil and nicotine were used against woolly aphis, Bordeaux mixture against fungus disease and arsenate of lead and scalding of fruit cases were to destroy codlin cocoons. SAPP 43 of 1910, HA, 1 December 1910.

By 20 December 1909 Ewen McBain was running sheep as well as managing the Fruit Colony. As well as land he held at Coonawarra, McBain was leasing 1,184 acres of Sections 259, 260 and 261 in the Hundred of Monbulla under Perpetual Lease 11297 for £14.16 a year. This adjoined land which the Kilsbys had bought from Thomas Morris and which John Reilly had held for a year before transferring to Squire Riddoch in 1889.¹⁵² Those Colonists who, unlike McBain, did not have a supplementary income from sheep, the common standby in the South East, continued their struggle against "a general lack of available working capital". They had difficulty in working their land, let alone in commanding the capital to force higher returns from it. Like others in South Australia engaged in vine-growing and wine-making, they were discovering that the industry "absorbed far more capital than the average agriculturalist could hope to command".¹⁵³

As large farmers in the South East could afford the high prices which followed the sale of estates, they stood to benefit as much from closer settlement legislation as from previous experiments to settle "a numerous yeomanry".¹⁵⁴ Ebenezer Frank Rivett Bonehame and his wife Jane accumulated land in this way. In the big land sales of 1854 which followed the gold rush, Ebenezer Boneham's father, also Ebenezer, had left Nairne in the Adelaide hills and purchased good

152. Ewen McBain took up this land under what was formerly part of Grazing and Cultivation Lease 53. CT 29/45 and 299/20 LTO. He also held 547 acres of Sections 455 and 457 at Coonawarra in the Hundred of Comaum which he purchased under Closer Settlement Agreements 550 and 552 for £2,413.19.6 on 31 October 1922. GRG 35/2/1922/6629; LGB, County Robe. Ch. 4, footnote 112.

153. SAJA, 1 August 1904, p 8.

154. SAPD, 30 August 1910, p 409, 8 November 1910, p 398. For the willingness of large landholders throughout Australia to sell so that State repurchase schemes solved the dilemma of redistribution to the satisfaction of the pastoralists, their creditors and the farmers, D.B. Waterson, p 113.

land in the Kalangadoo area.¹⁵⁵ By 1876 he had moved his family to 'Monrovia', a grazing property near Millicent on which he ran sheep and thoroughbred racing stock. His death in 1896 found his son well provided for.¹⁵⁶ In 1905 Ebenezer married Jane Agnew, also from a land-owning family, and on 21 May 1914 Jane Boneham purchased Sections 387 and 388 in the Hundred of Mayurra from George McCarthy's nephew, John McCarthy, who had run the land, probably with sheep, since Henry Hart's death. On 10 March 1902 McCarthy had paid £645.16 for this land; in 1914 Jane Boneham paid almost double this price.¹⁵⁷ Ebenezer Boneham claimed his success as a farmer was attributable to "turning every crop he grew into money".¹⁵⁸ His wife may well have taken his advice for as the Bonehams prospered they continued to accumulate land and then to invest in real estate. By 1914 Sections 387 and 388 of Mayurra were still not the property of yeoman cultivators but remained in the hands of wealthy and socially prominent landowners, typical of progressive farmers in the South East.¹⁵⁹

155. On 7 July 1854 Ebenezer Boneham of Nairne purchased 80 acres in Section 553 in the Hundred of Grey for £190; William Boneham of Nairne purchased 160 acres of Section 497 and 535 in the Hundred of Grey for £326. LGB, Country Grey; Ch. 2, footnote 78.

156. SET, 1 December 1944.

157. On 10 March 1902 Henry Hart and John Lannan transferred Sections 387 and 388 to John McCarthy of Tantanoola for £645.16. CT 413/65; Transfer 378504. On 21 May 1914, McCarthy transferred the above section and Section 386 to Jane Boneham for £1,218, CT 413/65; Transfer 615462. Rising land values in the Millicent area at this time were also reflected in the sale of 'Hatherleigh' and 'Rendelsham' estates which were about ten miles from Boneham's land. State average price for closer settlement land in 1914 was £3.2.5; 'Hatherleigh' and 'Rendelsham' sold at £10 and £6.10 per acre respectively. SAPP 10 of 1913-4, HA, 4 November 1914. Appendices 9(l) and 9(m); Map 18.

158. SAJA, Vol. 9, 1 October 1905, p 238.

159. The Bonehams owned numerous houses as well as the two-storeyed "Smith's building" in Millicent. They were a particularly philanthropic couple. In memory of their only child, a daughter who died at the age of 3 years and 8 months, they provided the Thyne Memorial Hospital at Millicent with milk. As well as donations to the Salvation Army, Trust for the Blind, Deaf and Dumb Society Inc. and the Adelaide Children's Hospital, the Bonehams also provided annuities of £600 and £1,000 for the Thyne Memorial Hospital garden and general maintenance respectively, as well as establishing three four-roomed cottages for "males and females of necessitous circumstances". SET, 1 December 1944.

Farmers like Ebenezer Boneham continued to be the mainstay of experiment and innovation in the South East. The large farmer was still learning through mutual exchange and instruction at local and State conferences of the Agricultural Bureau; by 1891 the Bureau's journal, The South Australian Journal of Agriculture was available for 1/- a year. Yet what the farmer learned remained European in origin. Writers and speakers continued to compare Australian land and experience with that of small but densely-populated European countries with a thousand years of agricultural experience. They claimed South Australia contained only a few people who used land extravagantly, but as the best agricultural land had gone, farmers were exhorted to use what they had more intensively.¹⁶⁰

One way to intensify was to fertilise. It was quite a mistake, the farmer was told, to think the application of fertiliser exhausted the land by stimulating it.¹⁶¹ As forage crops exhausted the land more than cereals, as potatoes were two or three times more exhaustive than wheat, and as peaty land was easily run out, the South East farmer was encouraged to use at least 50 lbs of super phosphate to the acre.¹⁶² In 1906 Mr Oberlander, a farmer near Millicent who applied one hundredweight of super and one hundredweight of sulphate of iron per acre, made a significant discovery: his stock remained free from "coast" which had stricken his neighbour's.¹⁶³ South East farmers were also

160. NH, 4 December 1908; SAJA, Vol. 9, June 1906, p 749; Vol. 3, October 1899, p 200; Vol. 9, 1 February 1906, p 443, 1 April 1906, p 575, 1 May 1906, pp 632-3, 1 June 1906, p 78.

161. SAJA, Vol. 9, 1 May 1906, p 633.

162. SAJA, Vol. 3, April 1900, p 200; Vol. 9, 1 June 1906, p 78. Within South Australia the percentage of manured crop increased from 11.6% to 67% between 1898 and 1908. SAPP 43 of 1907-8, HA, 24 November 1908.

163. SAJA, 9, 1 April 1906, p 588. See also M. Williams, pp 283-5 and 297.

encouraged to intensify by growing leguminous crops to fix nitrate and to conserve fodder for silage during the district's bleak winters.¹⁶⁴

South East farmers and graziers also adopted some practices engendered by local observation and experience. Imported European pastures claimed their attention as much as pastoralist'. At Bureau meetings they talked about the spread of strawberry clover on roads travelled by sheep. Although this clover did not produce so much growth as others, they noticed it grew well on wet land and flooding did not appear to injure it.¹⁶⁵ They were also reading about "a valuable weed", subterranean clover, introduced by chance in the 1880s and which Amos Howard had begun harvesting at Blakiston, near Mt Baker, in about 1905.¹⁶⁶ William Rogers, overseer on 'Koorine', was so impressed by what he read about the new fodder plant that he made a note of its capabilities in his daily work journal in 1906.¹⁶⁷

Whether he learned from others or his own experience, the South East farmer still worked hard to make his land European. At the same time he was beginning to ask a "delicate question" - which pests, including those imported from Europe, did more harm or good?¹⁶⁸ Parrots were

164. SAJA, Vol. 9, 1 April 1906, p 588. See also SAPP 43 of 1918, HA, 20 November 1918.

165. At a meeting in Mt Gambier, W.J.T. Clarke of 'Mt Schanck', for example, discussed the nutritive qualities and soils suitable to the growth of 24 samples of grasses imported from England. SAJA, Vol. 9, 1 May 1906, pp 632-3; Vol. 3, July 1900, p 1030; Vol. 9, 1 February 1906, p 443.

166. M. Williams, pp 313-4.

167. Entry in day-book (n.d.) of William Henry Rogers who "entered Mr Riddoch's employ on 3 January 1882, and who became overseer on 'Koorine' on 20 January 1899". William Roger's day-book was read with the permission of his grandson, Mr B.F. Rogers, of Kalangadoo, on 17 October 1978.

168. SAJA, Vol. 9, 1 October 1905, p 185.

orchards and crops, but other birds did good by eating insects.¹⁶⁹ The fox was a menace in the South East but where pastoralists successfully destroyed foxes with strychnine baits, rabbits were more numerous.¹⁷⁰ The farmer was sceptical that clearing made grass grow more thickly, but he was convinced that the disappearance of trees had been followed by extremes in weather not known before "the order of Nature was interfered with".¹⁷¹ He planted natives and exotics, both to compensate for zealous clearing and to provide shelter from the winds which blew across the low-lying South East plains with "tornado-like vehemence".¹⁷²

One problem still bedevilled landowners large and small in the South East, and no legislation had proved effective against it.¹⁷³ In 1884 two European rabbits had been displayed as a novelty in a butcher's shop in Mt Gambier; by the turn of the century the district was "literally swarming" with "exceptionally large and well-furred rabbits" which devastated the land.¹⁷⁴ To ensure their future employment and because London buyers purchased only full-grown carcasses,¹⁷⁵ many rabbiters were suspected of deliberately leaving does with young. One visitor in 1899 wondered why there was not a rabbit factory at every half-mile post for it was impossible to find a patch three feet in diameter which had not been burrowed. He was incredulous at the "industry" of rabbits which had

169. SAJA, Vol. 3, April 1900, p 766.

170. SAPP 10 of 1902, HA, 30 September 1902. SAJA, Vol. 3, August 1899, p 65; 6 October 1899, p 73; Vol. 9, 1 October 1905, p 181; 1 June 1906, p 727.

171. BW, 7 February 1903.

172. SAJA, Vol. 3, April 1900, pp 765 and 768; June 1900, p 950; Vol. 9, 1 September 1906, p 113; 1 November 1905, p 242. In 1918 the total area of forest reserves in the State was 153,935 acres; in the South East 64,548 acres. SAPP 85 of 1918, HA, 19 November 1918.

173. The main Vermin Acts passed between 1905-13 were Act 905 of 1905, 2419 of 1910 and 2317 of 1913.

174. L.R. Hill, Mt Gambier on the Move, Adelaide, 1974, p 41; SAPP 10 of 1902, HA, 30 September 1902.

175. BW, 20 February 1901; The Observer, 10 February 1906, p 269.

penetrated the "rabbit-proof" fences and left the country "bare and black ... with no grass the sheep could bite".¹⁷⁶ By 1903 the Empire Preserving Company at Naracoorte was employing forty hands to process 2,000 pairs of rabbits a week at 3d per pair.¹⁷⁷ At Compton, about four miles from Mt Gambier, on land which Evelyn Sturt had once declared was "of the finest description", the Border Preserving Works now stood as testament to the transplantation of things European to South Australia. Here 450 men were employed during the busy season of 1902. In the electrically-lit and steam-powered factory rabbits were preserved in two pound tins and crated for export to London through the Export Produce Department;¹⁷⁸ 196,479 rabbits were preserved in one fortnight in February 1904 and 21,628 crates containing 524,874 rabbits between August 1904 and 30 June 1905.¹⁷⁹ By 1906 patent poison carts were saving both labour and cost, but rabbits were only being thinned and not eradicated.¹⁸⁰ In 1913 George Riddoch considered the dry year had made rabbits even more numerous than usual on 'Koorine'. In spite of poisoning, trapping and fumigating he could only conclude getting rid of rabbits would be "a slow process". in June of the following year he thought of wire-netting all his boundaries,

176. APR, Vol. 9, 15 December 1899, p 589.

177. BW, 14 January 1903.

178. For further details of the rabbit factory in 1902, D.J. Gordon, pp 12-4.

179. APR, Vol. 13, 16 February 1904, p 844.

180. The Observer, 3 February 1906. William Rogers noted in his day-book for 1913 that "for 24 days previous to June 7 1913 Ted Thompson trapped 1400 pair of Rabbits and Fyfe 600 1/2 in 16 days. Total of 2000 1/2 Rabbits". In another undated entry in 1913, Rogers noted that "1600 tons of Rabbit were sent from Mt Gambier from Jan 1st 1913 to Aug. 30th of same year". In 1909 W. Clarke of 'The Schanck' paid £1,920.7.3 for rabbit destruction; his outlay on fencing for the same year was £1,026.3.3. From Station Management Records in possession of R. Hayman, Manager, 'Mt Schanck'. See also SAJA, Vol. 9, June 1906, p. 749.

but decided not to when his neighbours "emphatically declined" to contribute.¹⁸¹ In the same month rabbit exports from Mt Gambier and Compton amounted to 8% of the total exports, including livestock, for 1914.¹⁸² In the 1880s pastoralists had searched for a contagious disease to exterminate the pest, but two decades later South East landowners were conceding - "Rabbits, we shall doubtless have always with us".¹⁸³

By 30 June 1914, seventeen years after the first Closer Settlement Act, it was clear that the most recent political experiment to settle a "numerous yeomanry" had once more failed in the South East. The attempts had been costly. Almost one-third of the land purchased for closer settlement had been purchased in the South East, and for these 242,149 acres successive governments had paid £837,333.12.4. Yet the land and the seasons had once again defied man's attempt to make them fit for European agriculture and a mere 23,844 lay under cultivation. The district was still a sheep-walk. As only 1,978 adults had settled, the concept of closer settlement existed in name only. No sturdy race of yeomen had dislodged the pastoralists from the good land they had alienated before Strangways Act.¹⁸⁴

181. 8 August 1913, 100/7/95, 9 June 1914.

182. BW, 7 July 1914; J. Marsden, p 45.

183. SAJA, Vol. 9, June 1906, p 749.

184. Appendix 10.

In 1914 South Australia was not only witnessing another failure in closer settlement, but was caught in a drought "without parallel in the history of the State".¹⁸⁵ There was "a great falling off in land sales and revenue".¹⁸⁶ Between 1913-4 the area under cultivation rose minimally but wheat yields averaged only 7½ bushels to the acre. Wool exports were down. In 1908 South Australian settlers had applied for £275,18.3 in advances from the government; in 1913-4 they asked for £111,426.3.6. Because they were finding it almost impossible to get private financial assistance, settlers under right of purchase leases were accepting renewals rather than purchasing.¹⁸⁷ Even the South East experienced its driest season on record.¹⁸⁸ Not until the end of May did the drought break there, although then, within a couple of months, the district was covered with "a beautiful green carpet".¹⁸⁹

In August 1914 South Australia was fighting a war as well as a drought. Politicians were soon confidently predicting this would help them achieve what they had failed to achieve in peace. Because of the war they would settle "a numerous yeomanry" in South Australia. Opening up the

185. 1914 was the driest year on record for 215 out of 315 stations with fifteen-year records. The agricultural season from April to October was the worst ever experienced; the average yield was 1.41 bushels per acre. GRG 35/442, p 67, SAA. See also J.C. Foley, p 165.

186. The estimates for cash from sales was £97,000 but only £66,071.2.11 was forthcoming. General revenue was estimated at £331,846 but only £299,315.4.5 was received. SAPP 10 of 1914, HA, 4 November 1914.

187. In 1913-4, 48,035,906 lbs of wool were exported; in 1912-3 13,351,956,831 lbs. In 1912-3 2,079,663 acres were under cultivation; in 1913-4 2,267,851 acres. The average yield per acre in 1912-3 was 10.34 bushels per acre; in 1913-4, 7.47 bushels. SAPP 10 of 1913-4, HA, 4 November 1914. See also APR, Vol. 14, 16 October 1914, p 1008.

188. The South East recorded -10.26" or 50% below normal. GRG 35/442, pp 19 and 67, SAA. See also J.C. Foley, p 165. N. Janeway spoke of his father's plight in 1914 and L. Talbot recalled the drought as being the only one which affected the South East. Interviews with N. Janeway and L. Talbot, formerly farmers on 'Moorak' and O.B. Flat on 12 June 1978.

189. Such heavy rains fell on 'Glencoe' that in about half an hour the country was flooded. Mt Gambier had 60 points between 3-9 pm on 20 April; rain fell "in torrents" in Naracoorte. BW, 22 April 1914.

land to settle returned soldiers would in fact serve a dual purpose: it "would fulfil a national obligation to those who had fought so gallantly",¹⁹⁰ and it would increase the rural population which would "add materially to the State's wealth".¹⁹¹ Other benefits would follow. With almost half her population in Adelaide, South Australia had the most crowded capital in Australia. One parliamentarian declared it was well-known that ancient civilisations had declined when people "neglected the fields and glorified the city",¹⁹² but that calamity need not happen in South Australia because men who had exchanged an urban life for the open-air life of a soldier would be only too ready to take up life on the land.¹⁹³ Politicians admitted that they had no precedent on which to base accurate forecasts of after-war experiences, but war was already stimulating rural enterprise.¹⁹⁴ Moreover, "severe difficulties were not insurmountable to the Australian" and Australian soldiers were men of the right calibre to settle the land.¹⁹⁵ It had not proved so easy as once anticipated to conquer the South Australian bush and make it like European land, but if men had to battle to make land conform in the future, one member was sure soldiers would show "the same pluck and courage in subduing the soil as they showed in subduing the foreign foe at the Dardanelles".¹⁹⁶ Faith in the power of the land to promote employment, prosperity, manliness and civilisation - and in man's power to make it do so - had not been shaken by eighty years of failure.

190. SAPD, 7 November 1917, p 1108.

191. SAPD, 10 December 1915, p 3028; 7 November 1917, p 1107.

192. "Metropolitan aggregation" for South Australia was 45.68%; the average for the Commonwealth was 38.8%. D.J. Gordon, The Aftermath, Adelaide, 1916, p 4.

193. SAPD, 10 December 1915, p 3028.

194. The 1915-6 wheat harvest was bountiful throughout Australia. Britain bought the whole crop because of a reduction in supply of imported wheat from Russia and the likelihood of failure of the North American harvest. In August 1915 the wheat pool and the Wheat Board were established. Britain also bought the whole refrigerated beef and mutton supply and the whole of Australian and New Zealand wool clips for the duration of the war. D.J. Gordon, The Aftermath, Adelaide, 1916, p 2.

195. SAPD, 10 December 1915, p 3028.

196. SAPD, 10 December 1915, p 3027.

Despite the fact that no previous government had successfully introduced closer settlement, the settlement of a soldier yeomanry was seen in 1915 only as a legitimate continuance of previous experiments. In December 1915 politicians hastily devised minimal legislation at the end of the Parliamentary session. They did not regard returned soldiers as a group with particular needs or problems "to be segregated from the rest of the community", nor did they ensure they would have good agricultural land.¹⁹⁷ The Returned Soldiers Settlement Act of 1915 merely defined "discharged soldier" and provided for land to be set apart, although not specifically acquired, for soldiers. It had only one item of preferential treatment for soldiers. Because returned men would have "only the capital of energy and desire", the regulations allowed advances in the early years to assist applicants in clearing, building, draining and fencing, and to purchase stock and seed. As security against these advances the Commissioner of Crown Lands held first mortgage.¹⁹⁸

In other respects legislation for soldier settlement was incorporated with that for closer settlement under the Crown Lands Act of 1915.¹⁹⁹ Soldiers returning to the land in 1915 and 1916, who had already paid instalments under Closer Settlement Agreements, continued under these agreements and applied for the advances to which they were entitled under the Returned Soldiers Settlement Act. As soldier and civilian closer settlers still bore the image of the self-sufficient, stable and productive yeoman, they were to purchase their land within 35 years, reside on it for nine months of the year and improve it annually for the first five years to the value of 3% of purchase money.

197. SAPD, 14 December 1915, Vol. 2, p 3050.

198. Act 1226 of 1915, assented to 23 December 1915.

199. Crown Lands Act 1199 of 1915, assented to 28 October 1915.

The Act featured familiar concessions: a settler could apply to extend his agreement to 64 years, surrender his agreement to purchase for a lease and request a reduction in his purchase money. He could also take up land to the value of £4,000, or even to £5,000 if the land was considered pastoral. Settlers on 'Yallum', 'Kybybolite', 'Hynam', 'Binnum' and now 'Mt Schanck', still trying to cope with wet seasons on inferior and undrained land, had additional financial concessions not available elsewhere in the State. The Act also catered for those with ready capital. If a settler had fulfilled his obligations to improve, and paid interest in the aggregate to 4%, he could purchase after nine or six years under an agreement to purchase within 35 or 64 years respectively. Land could be transferred.²⁰⁰ In short, a familiar situation obtained: the wealthy farmer stood to benefit because a government needing to recoup arrears from closer settlement aimed "to secure the beneficial allotment of any repurchased land".²⁰¹

Although legislation for civilian closer settlement provided for the disposal and tenure of land for returned soldiers, the continual changing of soldier settler legislation from 1915-18 reflected how unprepared both State and Federal Governments were to administer and finance a scheme which each year became more popular and costly than anticipated.

200. For those on 35 year agreements, the first ten half-yearly instalments were to be paid at 4%; the final sixty half-yearly instalments at £2.16.5 per £100. Settlers who held 64-year agreements paid £1.11.5 per £100 of purchase money half-yearly for the first 8 years and £2.8.4 per £100 of purchase money half-yearly in the final 56 years. Act 1199 of 1915; Regulations under Part 10. See also SAGG, 23 December 1915, p 1683.

201. SAPD, 14 December 1915, p 3050.

By 1916 as an understaffed Department of Crown Lands could not cope with both administering finance and preparing land for settlement, the Returned Soldiers Amendment Act of 1916 established a Returned Soldiers Settlement Advisory Committee to make recommendations to the Land Board, and a Land Settlement Advisory Committee to advise on finance.²⁰² Rapid changes in portfolios under three successive ministries in 1917 caused further bureaucratic congestion.²⁰³ The Returned Soldiers Settlement Act of 1917 transferred all the administration of soldier settlement to the Minister of Repatriation and created the position of Superintendent of Soldier Settlement, responsible to the Minister for allotting properties and establishing settlers after occupation.²⁰⁴ In 1918, with only 300 men settled but 200 waiting impatiently, legislation was again amended. The government acted on the recommendations of a Select Committee of the Legislative Council and replaced the Returned Soldiers Settlement Advisory Committee with a reconstituted Land Board with power to inspect, value and acquire land, and to decide on allotment, tenure and eligibility for concessions.²⁰⁵

202. SAPD, 21 September 1916, p 1141; Act 1264 of 1916, assented to 16 November 1916.

203. In the Crawford Vaughan administration C. Goode held the portfolios of Lands, Immigration and Agriculture until 14 July 1917; in the Peake administration D.J. Gordon held the portfolio of Lands and Education until 27 August 1917; under the succeeding Coalition Ministry, Lands was held by H. Jackson, Repatriation, Agriculture and Industry by R.P. Blundell. For further details, H. Le Lacheur, M.A. Thesis, War Service Land Settlement in South Australia, University of Adelaide, 1968, pp 15-16.

204. H. Le Lacheur, pp 24-5.

205. SAPP 81 of 1918, LC, 19 November 1918; Discharged Soldiers Settlement Act Amendment Act, No. 1346 of 1918, assented to 5 December 1918. See also SAPD, 20 November 1918, pp 1379-80.

Although this piecemeal legislation eased administrative difficulties, the perennial problem of financing yet another scheme to settle the small man remained a source of anxiety. The Federal Government agreed that the acquisition and allotment of land should remain a State right but undertook to help financially in two ways. Under the Australian Soldiers Repatriation Fund Act of 1916 it agreed to provide loans to the State of £500 maximum to each soldier to assist the purchase of stock, plant and seed,²⁰⁶ and in 1916 it agreed to share equally with the States the heavy losses anticipated from allowing financial concessions to soldiers.²⁰⁷ In spite of Federal guarantees, one South Australian parliamentarian still "trembled to think" how South Australia would find the money for her share of the scheme.²⁰⁸

In 1918 prices for stock and plant had risen steeply. Horses cost £237.16 each on average; cows cost £44.5. Galvanised iron, wire netting and phosphorous were procurable rarely or only at prohibitive prices. The cost of new machinery was rising every month; supplies of second-hand implements were running out.²⁰⁹ The problem of high costs was temporarily eased in May 1918 when initial advances to soldiers were increased from £500 to £625, but the general problem remained.²¹⁰ In 1917 Professor Perkins, now Director of Agriculture, estimated the cost of settling an anticipated 15,000 soldiers in South Australia £12,050,000. After allowing for only half this number, the Minister of

206. H. Le Lacheur, pp 20-1.

207. H. Le Lacheur, p 18.

208. SAPP 81 of 1918, LC, 19 November 1918, p 54.

209. Evidence to the Select Committee of the Legislative Council on the Settlement of Soldiers and the Repatriation Department, SAPP 81 of 1918, LC, 19 November 1918, p 9. See also SAPP 10 of 1917-8, HA, 30 June 1918.

210. H. Le Lacheur, pp 22-3.

Repatriation, still faced with a cost of £6,000,000, was declaring "the question of providing money was certainly not one that could be passed over".²¹¹

The government was faced with another problem as familiar as lack of finance. There was a shortage of good agricultural land.²¹² The Crown Lands Act of 1915 provided for acquisition of closer settlement land in three ways. The Crown could purchase from owners of large estates provided owners could retain land to the value of £20,000 and had two years' notice; the Crown could also resume small holdings, or purchase leased land.²¹³

Clearly these regulations were token. Leased land had long since been recognised as inferior, fit only for grazing, and too costly for soldiers to improve; wealthy farmer-graziers had bought the best of the land offered under closer settlement agreement; owners of the choicest land, freeholded in the 1850s and 1860s, were asking prices too high for soldiers. Furthermore no regulations specified criteria for assessing the quality of the land. That was left to the Land Board, which led one politician to claim that "the whole success of soldier settlement depended on the personnel of the Land Board". Since there was nothing new about the Board except the number of members, he claimed there was "no guarantee they would exercise better judgement" than in the past.²¹⁴

211. For dairying 400,000 acres at £8 per acre with advances of £500 to 5,000 settlers and an expenditure on factories at £300,000 (£6,000,000); 20,000 acres at £15 per acre for fruitgrowers with advances of £500 to 1,000 settlers (£800,00); advances for 9,000 general farmers at £500 (£4,500,000); repurchase of 500,000 acres (£2,500,00); 1,500 houses on repurchased land (£300,000); clearing and fencing of mallee blocks (£9,000,000); houses and water on mallee blocks (£1,150); less £900,000 as value of mallee blocks repayable in instalments; £11,150,000. Grand aggregate £17,950,000. SAPD, 7 November 1917, pp 1105-6.

212. Acquiring land for soldiers under closer settlement regulations was "a roundabout method, but it was the only one available". Act 1199 of 1915; Part 10.

213. SAPD, 20 November 1918, p 1379; SAPP 81 of 1918, LC, 19 November 1918, p 48.

214. SAPD, 21 November 1918, p 1399.

In April 1916 George Riddoch considered offering over 3,500 acres near the Kalangadoo railway station within a mile of 'Koorine' home-
stead to promote the settlement of returned soldiers.²¹⁵ This was first-
rate agricultural land. Robert Leake had alienated it sixty years
previously; Riddoch had cleared and cultivated it for the past thirty

215. Particulars of land in Hundred of Grey to be offered for sale

Sections		Area in acres	Total acreage	Price per acre	Total price
				£	£
875,876,878 879	Moerlong Grass Paddock	160,155,160 188	663	6	3,978. 0.0
877,880, Part 200,	Moerlong	160,133, 21,			
201,202,203, 204,205,206, 207,208	Cultivation Paddock	40,86½,80, 80,80,79, 79,103	941½	9.10.0	8,944. 5.0
874,328,329, 330	Pearson's Paddock	97,66,82, 92	339	10	3,390.
316,324, 325,332,871, 872,873,897, 898,899	Gum Flat Paddock	35.3/4,81½, 92,94¼,168, 114,128,163, 80,80	1,036½	6.10.0	6,737. 0.0
858,859,900, 901,902,903, 904, part 905	Quarry Paddock	67,84,72, 80,73,77, 44,60.3/4	557.3/4	6.10.0	3,623. 2.6
	Total		3,537.3/4		26,672. 7.6

Memo from G. Riddoch to E. Van Senden concerning 'Koorine' land in Moer-
long, Gum Flat and other paddocks to be offered for sale.

Good water in unlimited quantity can be got by sinking from twelve (12) to twenty (20) feet all over the Block.

The depth of alluvial soil, and clay before striking water, is as stated twelve to twenty feet, and that is better than the conditions that prevail North and West of this, where the water is got at less than half the depth, and sometimes rises through the porous limestone and floods a considerable area.

It may be considered that the clay sub-soil will retain the water on the surface and flood the land, but it has been found by numerous tests, that besides getting rid of the water by drains it can be removed by sinking a shaft or putting down a bore in the lowest part of the flooded area, and leading the water into it. This was done in a number of places last year, and the rush of water was so great as to be heard some distance away.

100/7/97, 24 April 1916.

years. But Riddoch's gesture of patriotism soon waned, as in 1914 when he had considered sending livestock to Belgium.²¹⁶ By November 1916 he was not inclined "to sacrifice". His land was worth £7 an acre. "Besides," he declared, "I know of no other land in the district of equal quality." He realised he might be expected to take bonds rather than cash or bills, but he hoped that was "a matter which could be arranged". He also anticipated a 5% interest rate. When he learned that a block of land, inferior to his, away from the railway, had sold for £11 an acre and that he had to take bonds at 4½% interests in perpetuity, he withdrew his offer. "I dislike," he wrote Van Senden, "such terms."²¹⁷

In 1916 Riddoch was also vexed when his employees asked for higher wages. He had left them money in his will and now he thought of telling them so, "if only to shame them", but thankfully, by 23 November, they were causing no further trouble. Shearing was next delayed because he had only 12 instead of 24 men, but then 6 more turned up and he made a start. He considered his clip for that year was "the best ever". It was "sound and not over much yolk, averaging 8lbs 10oz per sheep, including lambs, and looked dazzling white in the bins". He had hoped there would be auction sales of wool suitable for soldiers' clothing in Australia. When the British authorities commandeered wool, he consoled himself that at least wool prices might be high because of the previous year's shortage and increased competition due to the war. In old age and ill health one

216. After rallying other stockowners in the South East he had decided against the project because of low prices and transfer difficulties. 100/7/96, 12 October 1914.

217. Employees were to inherit a sum proportionate to the wages they were receiving and the time they had been in his employ. 100/7/97, 3 and 22 April and 23 November 1916; Ch. 6, footnote 58.

other thought comforted him. In November there was the thickest sward of grass in the country he had ever seen. "By degrees," he wrote, "I have made my holding from one of the most undesirable in South Australia to something very different."²¹⁸

Another feature familiar to previous closer settlement schemes persisted with soldier settlement. The government remained reluctant to provide public facilities. In 1918 a Parliamentary Standing Committee on Railways enquired into "the best means of catering for the trade of the South East and fostering its development".²¹⁹ This was the fourth such enquiry in twelve years. Before making its recommendations, the Committee surveyed forty-six years of attempts to establish agriculture in the South East since the construction of the first railway and the first drainage system. The review was bleak. The production of wheat had increased in County MacDonnell but had fallen off in Counties Grey and Robe; the potato industry had declined seriously; the number of sheep had decreased by 25%.²²⁰ The population in each county had increased by only

218. 100/7/97, 5 April, 23 and 26 November 1916.

219. SAPP 64 of 1918, HA, 27 August 1918.

220. Forty-six years of closer settlement in the South East

	Grey		Robe		McDonnell		Total	
	1871	1917	1871	1917	1871	1917	1871	1917
Areas (acres)	1308160	1308160	1255680	1255680	1180800	1180800	3744640	3744640
Area cultivated (acres)	41158	63149	5924	26331	2922	17865	50004	107345
Population	9445	13693	2407	3561	779	1293	12634	18547
Wheat (acreage)	28922	4329	2673	13149	1690	10679	33285	28157
Wheat (bushels)	318545	67356	23866	193003	14981	148848	357392	409207
Barley (acreage)	727	17171	72	952	78	259	877	18382
Barley (bushels)	9428	386678	1013	17720	658	4494	11099	409342
Oats (acreage)	2110	11002	72	1692	75	1018	2257	13712
Oats (bushels)	24400	231166	1149	27828	1040	18514	26589	277508
Hay (acreage)	2449	12231	1763	5037	531	2636	4743	19904
Hay (tons)	2837	17092	1709	6203	518	2933	5064	26228
Potatoes (acreage)	1002	2706	47	16	4	4	1053	2726
Potatoes (tons)	2299	10703	75	47	14	9	2388	10759
Dairy cattle	-	11025	-	1673	-	661	-	13359
Total cattle	13978	21631	5060	2975	1825	1135	20863	25741
Horses	6090	10563	3792	3874	1543	2209	11425	16646
Sheep	494777	424247	349347	265864	264542	105758	1108666	795869
Pigs	5895	5835	538	717	118	366	6551	6918
Butter made (lbs)	-	240993	-	69470	-	22726	-	333189
Cheese made (lbs)	-	2044695	-	32316	-	-	-	2077011

SAPP 64 of 1918, HA, 27 August 1918, p 6.

50%. More telling still, in drainage areas where so much toil and money had been spent to convert South East land to European land, there had been "no progress whatever from the point of population".²²¹ Members of the Committee declared they could not understand why so little progress in closer settlement had been made in a district where over £900,000 had been spent to repurchase estates, to say nothing of the expenditure on drainage.²²²

Yet witnesses to their enquiry had given the reasons. Landowners in the South East were more concerned with making a profit than pursuing an ideal. They would not "go to the trouble of working their land", witnesses admitted, if they could "make a better living by grazing it".²²³ In 1846 Samuel Davenport had spoken highly of the virtues of cultivation, but he had kept sheep in the South East because wool paid there.²²⁴ Little had changed in the intervening years. Both "agricultural" land near the railway lines was being used for pastoral purposes and the bulk of the remainder, held in large blocks under perpetual lease without revaluation, was also used for grazing. In the light of this situation, "despite glowing accounts of the possibilities of the South East for agriculture", the Committee brought down its recommendations.²²⁵ As the Committee had "no guarantee that the land would be used for the agricultural purposes for which it was most suited, the construction of further railways was not an expedient measure".²²⁶ Government policy remained unaltered even for soldiers. The provision of public amenities would not precede closer settlement, but follow only when closer settlement had proved a paying proposition.

221. SAPP 64 of 1918, HA, 27 August 1918, p 7.

222. At this stage government expenditure was estimated as follows: Railways, £92,653; Harbours, £828,764; Repurchase of estates, £931,923; Drainage: £828,764, £253,963 of which to be repaid. SAPP 64 of 1918, 27 August 1918.

223. SAPP 64 of 1918, HA, 27 August 1918, p 10.

224. Ch. 1, footnotes 147-9.

225. SAPP 64 of 1918, HA, 27 August 1918, pp 7-8.

226. SAPP 64 of 1918, HA, 27 August 1918, p 12.

By the end of 1918 it was evident that soldier settlement would take place under conditions similar to previous experiments to settle a yeomanry. There was a shortage of usable land, a lack of facilities, and legislation based on assumptions which had been proved wrong since the first experiment in closer settlement fifty years previously. Legislators were still attempting to transplant European legislation into a non-European environment. Legislation which allowed special financial concessions and reductions perpetuated the fallacy that capital and time would promote the successful settlement of the small man on South East land. Legislation still failed to take into account the important variables of prices and markets.

Under these constraints, and in the very wet winter of 1918, William Albert Smythe took up land in the South East. Smythe had been a plasterer before he enlisted in Adelaide in 1916 and served with the 30th Infantry Battalion for two years.²²⁷ As a result of trench feet Smythe was an amputee. He was twenty-four when he took up Section 407 on 'Hynam' on 1 May under Closer Settlement Agreement 1909 with soldier settler entitlements. This was the block on which Benjamin Garnett had tried unsuccessfully to grow wheat, and which had then been rented as grazing land before lying vacant for three years.²²⁸ Smythe had originally intended to go dairying in the South East with his brother who finally decided against it because of the climate; so Smythe "changed to grazing". Under the financial concessions allowed by the 1918 Act, Smythe paid only £1,402.13 for his land, half the amount paid by his predecessor and this committed to yearly instalments of £130.5.6. With advances from the Minister of Repatriation and a mortgage to the Union Bank, he fenced his land and ran it with 108 five-year-old Merinos and 119 mixed sheep which

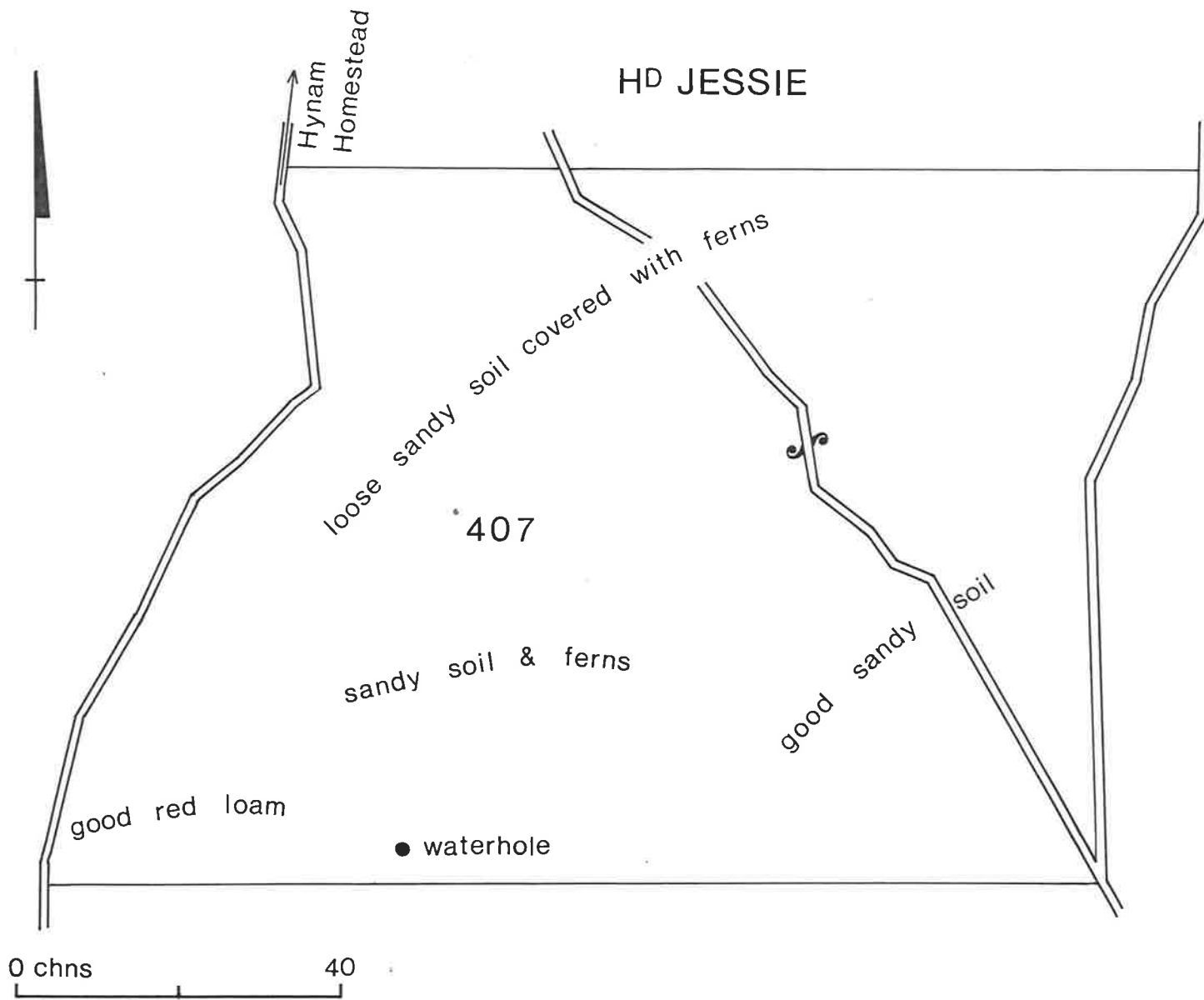
227. Appendix 11.

228. Footnotes 87 and 132.

MAP 20

W. Smythe's block, Hynam

(Diagram Book, Hundred of Jessie; CSALB, DL)



cost him £179.8.6. On his meagre 50 acres of arable red loam he sowed oats. He built himself a four-roomed, galvanised iron house, a shed, sheep yards and a fowl-house. He spent £175 of his deferred pay on a few horses, cows and poultry. He put down bores, and began tackling the major task of fumigating the rabbits which had overrun the land during the three years the block was unoccupied.²²⁹

In 1918 a minority of politicians was beginning to question the suitability of the soldier settlement scheme. As many soldiers had "little or no means and about as much experience", they thought it was ridiculous "to expect the State to make a farmer out of a soldier in twelve months".²³⁰ They were asking "impossible things" of them. One member suggested that if "they got fifty per cent of successful farmers they would be doing well".²³¹ But the majority of parliamentarians disagreed. They were sure soldiers would be settled "without having to pay for it after the costly and crippling fashion of the ordinary settler".²³² The Governor, Sir Henry Galway, was also certain everything possible was being done for "those who had gone to assist in the struggle for freedom and who continued to cover themselves with fresh and imperishable glory".²³³

By 1918 as more discharged soldiers either went on to training farms, sharefarmed while waiting for their land, or took up occupation, some politicians began to ask questions about the men as well as the scheme.

229. GRG 35/176/1918/890, SAA. Smythe's half-yearly instalments at 2½% on land and improvements amounted to £68.8.6 per year. Smythe had to improve to the value of £62.7 annually. CSLB 10/109; GRG 35/2/1918/1689 and 1690, SAA; Maps 20 and 22.

230. SAPD, 20 November 1918, p 1427.

231. SAPD, 20 November 1918, p 1432.

232. SAPD, 20 November 1918, p 1427.

233. Speech before opening of Parliament, HA, 25 July 1918.

They thought that many were "nervous wrecks after the terrible experiences they had been through", and that many had not had enough experience on the land to ensure "a reasonable chance of success". Some seemed to work well enough under supervision but were completely unreliable when on their own. They were all "restless spirits who had got back to normal citizenship and were finding it difficult to settle down to any occupation".²³⁴ Other politicians questioned whether too much fuss was being made of returned soldiers. In November 1918 one said that there were men who would have preferred to go to the war but had stuck to their farms because of huge debts to storekeepers and others. These men, he claimed, had had "to battle against greater difficulties at home than soldiers at the front".²³⁵

There was another problem, even more disquieting than the suitability of either the men or the scheme intended to turn them into self-supporting farmers. The area under agriculture had decreased drastically since 1915. The Director of Agriculture felt that a very "serious and retrograde step in the new community intent on developing its agricultural patrimony". He declared South Australia was "only half conquered for agricultural purposes". As the State was still "primarily dependent on the produce of tilled land, stagnation was always dangerous".²³⁶

234. SAPP 81 of 1918, LC, 19 November 1918, pp 3 and 6.

235. SAPD, 20 November 1918, p 1427.

236. In 1918, 4.4% of the land had been alienated; 1.2% was in the process of alienation; 46.5% was held under lease; and 47.4% was unoccupied. From The Commonwealth Year Book for 1901-19 in J.M. Powell, "The Mapping of Soldier Settlement: A note for Victoria, 1917-29". Journal of Australian Studies, No. 3, June 1978, p 45.

<u>Total area under crop for South Australia</u>		<u>South East District</u>	
1915-6	3,763,570 acres		
1916-7	3,627,477 acres	1916-7	469,210 acres
1917-8	3,059,052 acres	1917-8	373,446 acres
	(estimate)		

SAPP 43 of 1918, HA, 20 November 1918.

Politicians agreed with the Director. The government had to look to its primary products. "Farmers must get two bushels of wheat where one grew before or two gallons of milk where they had formerly got one".²³⁷ Talk of repaying a "debt of honour" became fused with seeing returned soldiers as the means of achieving this increased production. With a soldier yeomanry "dotted over the countryside" politicians claimed they would "accomplish something in the way of developing agriculture, dairying and such industries that the State would never have known otherwise in fifty years".²³⁸ Some did question whether these new settlers could be expected to succeed "where generations of pioneers, well-meaning administrators and political idealists had already failed".²³⁹ They realised that "going on the land" was one thing in imagination: another in reality".²⁴⁰ But the majority of South Australian politicians were ready to try again, for the same reasons and under the same conditions which had characterised every previous experiment to settle a "Government-created peasantry".²⁴¹ The great dream brought from Europe eighty years previously still held firm.

237. SAPP 81 of 1918, LC, 19 November 1918, pp 56-7.

238. SAPD, 7 November 1917, p 1106.

239. J.M. Powell, p 7.

240. B. Fitzpatrick, The British Empire in Australia: An Economic History, Melbourne, 1949, p 280.

241. SAPD, Vol. 2, 14 December 1915, p 3053.

CHAPTER 6

By 30 June 1919, with 390 soldiers settled on the land, 2,688 registered, 199 in training and 1,315 approved and waiting for land, South Australia's fourth attempt to establish "a numerous and contented yeomanry"¹ was well under way. Like their predecessors, politicians were confident that as primary production increased, so would the State's wealth.² In 1919 they looked to that wealth to pay "the tremendous debts incurred during the war",³ and like their forebears they claimed that agriculture was the only progressive way to use land and to raise this wealth. Yet they had to face "the disturbing fact" that the area under cultivation had actually declined over the previous decade. South Australia still had 123 estates of between 10 to 15,000 acres and 118 estates of over 15,000 acres, and pastoralists were not putting this land to its best economic use.⁴ Pastoralists "fenced and destroyed vermin, but they grew nothing".⁵ Even small holders were making more money from sheep than from "the esteemed use of the plough".⁶ Politicians also had to admit that failures among primary producers accounted for most insolvencies in 1918, but they argued that the only democratic and efficient way to overcome falling agricultural production was to redouble efforts to place every available person on the land. When primary production increased, prosperity would return.⁷ When men were settled on the land

1. SAPP 10 of 1919-20, HA, 16 November 1920.

2. SAPD, 23 October 1919, p 1360.

3. SAPD, 2 September 1919, p 597.

4. SAPD, 9 September 1919, p 669.

5. SAPD, 16 September 1919, p 846.

6. SAPD, 28 October 1919, p 1401.

7. SAPD, 23 October 1919, pp 1360-1.

"the deserts of South Australia would be made to blossom as the rose, inhospitable places would be transformed into veritable gardens of Eden and ... happy citizens would be reared under pleastant and favourable conditions".⁸

The great dream was supported by all the old arguments. Land was still the place to breed men of "bone and sinew" and it remained the answer to unemployment.⁹ As these were times of high unemployment and economic stress, it was the government's duty to find employment by opening up new land for production.¹⁰ One member claimed that with 52% of the State's population within ten miles of the GPO, it was "a lamentable thing" that South Australia "had the largest percentage of population living within the metropolitan area anywhere in the world".¹¹ "Some of the finest men in Adelaide," he said, "are walking about doing nothing."¹² The wool industry employed only 5,000 men in 1919, and if South Australia did not make provision for her unemployed on the land, Queensland and New South Wales would. Those States had any amount of land and were offering "big inducements to settlers".¹³ If South Australia did not wake up there was the alarming possibility that she would "lose men of pluck and stamina, for nowhere were such men more likely to be bred than on the wheat lands of South Australia".¹⁴

8. D.J. Gordon, Conquering the Desert: A National Policy for Progressive People, Adelaide, 1907, p 5.

9. SAPD, 21 October 1919, p 1281.

10. SAPD, 9 September 1919, p 680.

11. SAPD, 9 September 1919, p 628; 23 October 1919, p 1369.

12. SAPD, 21 October 1919, p 1312.

13. SAPD, 9 September 1919, p 498.

14. SAPD, 16 September 1919, p 846.

One member expressed the misgivings of a few of his more sceptical colleagues when he cautioned that the big scheme for settling soldiers would not be the unqualified success that most of its political champions claimed it would be. He anticipated a lot of failures which he did not consider would be the fault of the men. Land prices were high; soldiers did not have much capital. He ventured to prophesy that the State would have to come to the aid of the soldiers to a very great extent. Yet he admitted that he had no alternative to suggest. Even if settling soldiers lost money, he thought it was worthwhile to add 2,000 to the ranks of primary producers because "if two primary producers were placed where one was today, the country must benefit". Only with increased primary production would prosperity return.¹⁵ The great dream had not grown dim.

This latest political experiment in closer settlement faced exactly the same problems as its predecessors. There was firstly and most importantly simply not enough agricultural land "to redeem the promises to those who had gone away" and to cater for civilians as well. In 1915 the government had anticipated 1,700 soldiers would want to go on the land; by 1919 it was expecting 2,700. Even if the government had bought all the 2,441 offers of land made between 1916 and 1919, it estimated 600 men would still be unprovided for. Yet as there were still 241 estates in South Australia aggregating 2,500,000 acres, the possibility of compulsory acquisition once more became a subject for heated debate.¹⁶ Conservatives continued to hold such interference with private property "unreasonable, unfair and undemocratic".¹⁷ They protested that "every Britisher thought when he bought land in Australia it was his for all time",¹⁸ and they argued that the resumption of freehold land would result in a loss of income tax which was one certain source of revenue.¹⁹ Advocates for

15. 23 October 1919, pp 1365-6.

16. SAPD, 16 September 1919, pp 846-7.

17. SAPD, 7 October 1919, p 1149.

18. SAPD, 23 October 1919, p 1362.

19. SAPD, 23 October 1919, p 1364.

compulsory repurchase of estates argued that returned soldiers should have the same advantages as civilians.²⁰ Compulsory repurchase for closer settlement, although not once invoked, had been on the statute books since 1910. There was an eventual grudging acceptance of this argument, but the final Act provided stronger protective measures for large landowners and their sons than had corresponding legislation for the repurchase of land for closer settlement.²¹

The merits of freehold and leasehold were also debated again. Defenders of leasehold argued that a perpetual lease was "best and safest" for the small man. The soldier was limited to £3,000 of land, stock and plant which he held under 100% mortgage to the Minister of Repatriation.²² He should not be saddled with the responsibility of keeping up payments and purchasing within ten years while leaseholders on large areas under closer settlement legislation had the time and opportunity to improve and to diversify. But sales of land meant revenue, and as usual the State was very short of money.²³ An amendment for leasehold tenure was consequently defeated and under the Discharged Soldiers Settlement Act Further Amendment Act of 1919 soldiers took up their land under an agreement to purchase.²⁴

20. SAPD, 23 October 1919, pp 1361-2.

21. Discharged Soldiers Settlement Act Further Amendment Act, No. 1388 of 1919, assented to 20 November 1919. Estates could be acquired only if the owner or owners held other land to the unimproved value of £15,000; if the estate in question was capable of being readily subdivided, and only after all land being offered voluntarily had been reported upon to the Land Board. Owners were to be given six months' notice and could demand that the whole of their estate should be taken. The price was to be determined by arbitration failing agreement between Government and vendor. An owner could appeal to a Special Appeal Board against compulsory acquisition. If the owner of the estate was a returned soldier he could reserve land to the value of £10,000 for himself, and £10,000 for each son who had seen active service.

22. SAPD, 11 September 1919, p 726.

23. The Public Debt was £44,788,625. SAPP 4 of 1919, HA, 9 October 1919.

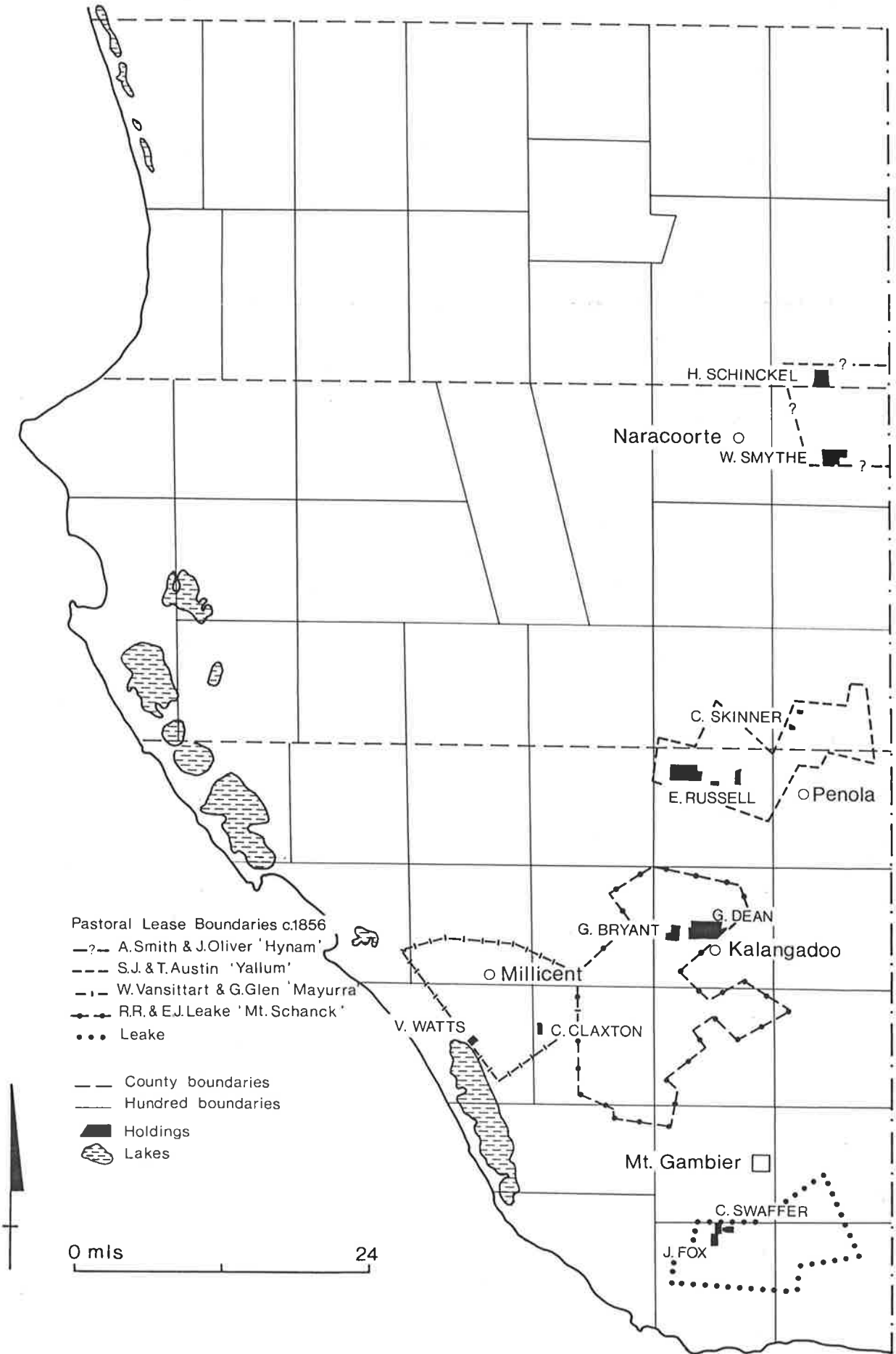
24. Act 1388 of 1919, assented to 20 November 1919.

MAP 21

Closer and Soldier Settlement Location Map

Despite fifty years of legislative failure to promote agriculture, politicians tried once again after World War I. Settlers were once more expected to cultivate small holdings which had been part of large sheep runs for the past seventy years.

(CSLB and ASALB, DL)



In their search for areas suitable for soldier settlement, members looked yet again to the South East where, they claimed, "some of the best land in the State lay".²⁵ One member knew of 20,000 acres of good agricultural land there, held on perpetual lease and lying idle.²⁶ Those who remembered that closer settlement "had not met with conspicuous success" in this area were apprehensive.²⁷ They insisted that the land needed draining, the district lacked transport facilities and was situated far from suitable domestic or world markets.²⁸ But the doubters were a minority; the majority was still confident that South East land could be transformed for European agriculture. Irrigation on the high lands of the South East would lead to increased cereal production in summer. A comprehensive drainage scheme which employed soldier labour would convert swamp land into "half a dozen Millicents".²⁹ Population had admittedly increased only in County Grey but the South East would yet become the home of a contented and prosperous yeomanry.³⁰

Harry Schinckel returned from the war at the time of these confident predictions. After two years in France with the 7th Field Ambulance, in June 1920, Harry with his English war bride, Elizabeth, resumed his 973 acre block at Hynam which had been caretaken while he was at the war. With concessions under the Act of 1919 he now had 65 rather than 49 years to pay for his property and his purchase price was reduced from £3,065 to £2,919 which brought annual instalments to £149.9.10.³¹ As a baby was soon

25. SAPD, 16 September 1919, p 35.

26. SAPD, 16 September 1919, p 845.

27. SAPD, 4 September 1919, p 655.

28. SAPD, 21 October 1919, p 1361.

29. SAPD, 4 September 1919, p 60.

30.

	<u>1911</u>	<u>1921</u>	<u>Percentage Increase</u>
Grey	13,693	15,186	10.9
MacDonnell	1,293	1,281	-.93
Robe	3,561	3,758	5.53

SRSA 1930-1.

31. CSALB 5/158 and IA/86, DL; GRG 35/104/1914/6353, SAA.

Adam Smith (1816-1876)
(SAA)

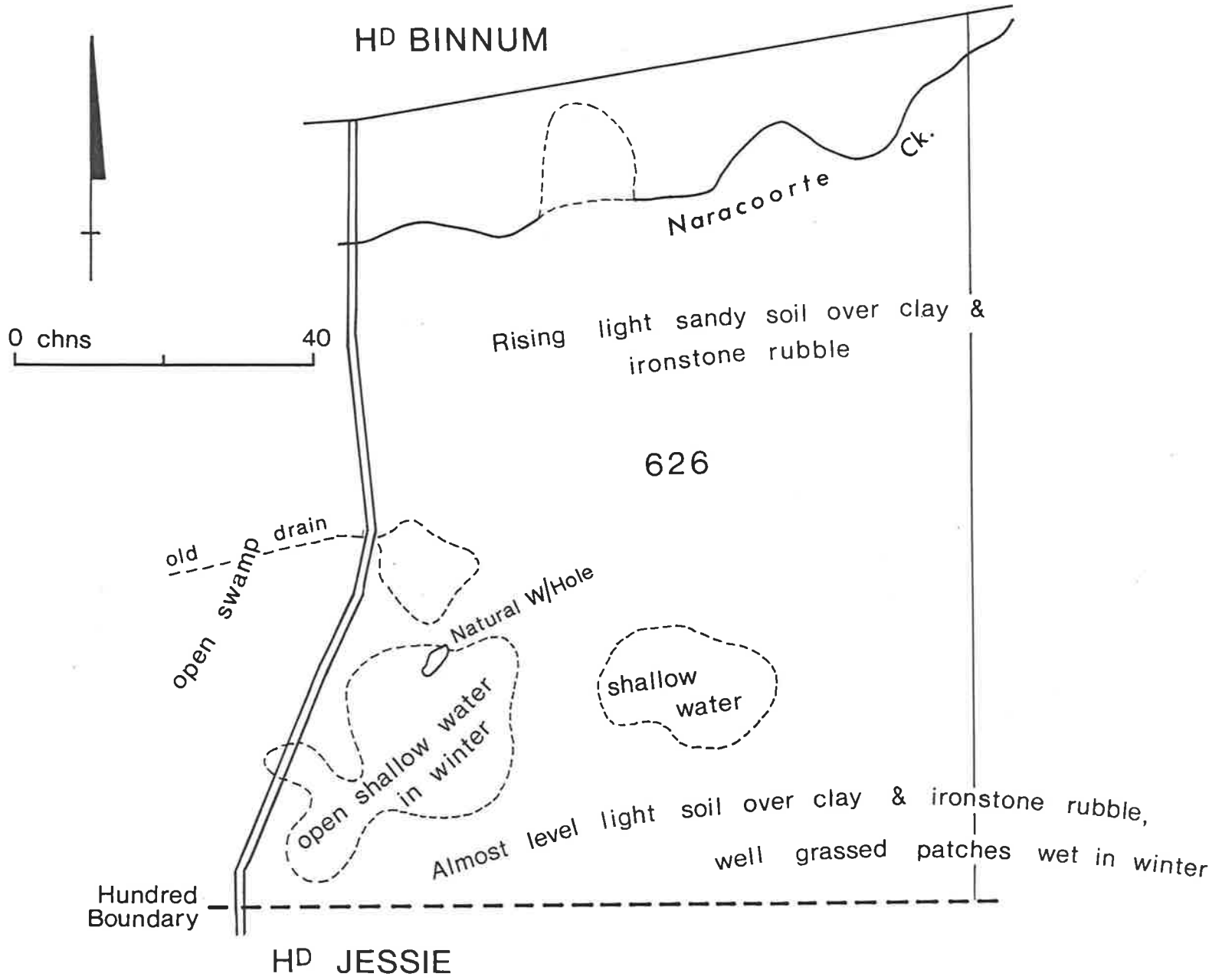
Harry Schinckel (189-1979)
(B. Staude)



MAP 22

H. Schinckel's land, Hynam

(Diagram Books, Hundreds of Binnum and Jessie; CSALB, DL; Interviews and correspondence with H. Schinckel.



on the way, to ease his wife's sense of isolation, one of the first things Schinckel did was to help provide a telephone by making poles cut from trees in nearby Mullinger's Swamp.³² With further concessions in 1921 and with a new home being built, Schinckel "looked forward to times of hard work and prosperity".³³

Schinckel was only three miles from William Smythe but his land was much better. About three quarters was well-grassed red gum country; the remainder was sandy soil over ironstone rubble. Water was readily available.³⁴ Yet Schinckel did not cultivate. Not only had his predecessor from the north, Koth, failed miserably with barley, but as an experienced farmer in the district, he was well aware that although the redzina soil would carry heavy crops of wheat on occasion, "the climatic conditions were all wrong". Winters at Hynam were too wet and "the summers were not hot enough to develop the grain". This was "definitely sheep country" and he was "definitely a sheep man". He subdivided his block into ten paddocks and fenced them. He decided against the superfine Tasmanian Merinos Adam Smith and his descendants had run on this land, and "went for Riverina blood" which he felt suited the wetter climate.³⁵ At the same time he kept his eye on the nearby Kybybolite Experimental Farm which in 1917 had reported an increase in its wheat yield by seven bushels an acre with the application of superphosphate. By 1919 the farm carried out its first permanent experiment in top-dressing natural pastures.³⁶ In the same year, Schinckel's brother, Ted, and his neighbour,

32. Interview with H.B. Schinckel, 22 October 1978; NH, 11 June 1979; Appendix 11; Maps 20 and 21.

33. By 3 September 1921 Schinckel's instalments were reduced again to £141.1.8 annually. CSALB 5/158, DL. Interview with H.B. Schinckel, 20 October 1978.

34. Diagram Book, Hundred of Jessie, p 30; Report of Chairman, Closer Settlement Committee, 8 August 1933, DL; Maps 20 and 21.

35. Interview with H.B. Schinckel, 20 October 1978. Correspondence with John Schinckel, son of H.B. Schinckel, 12 December 1981.

36. Department of Agriculture and Fisheries, Research Centre Branch, Kybybolite Visitors' Guide, Adelaide, 1973, p 7.

Sydney Shepherd, of 'Mullinger Park', successfully established subterranean clover.³⁷

Schinckel was one of many returned men interested in the land. In 1919 the number of applicants had been unexpectedly high; soldiers were complaining of high prices and long delays in obtaining land. The work of the Land Board came under review once more. Many legislators who felt the Board had too much power argued that "more power should be given to local valuers to bargain and parley on the spot".³⁸ Accordingly, under the Act of 1919, inspectors and a district valuer were appointed; and the decision to acquire land, value, allot, and give advances could be made by any two members of the Land Board and a district valuer.³⁹ With a decentralised Board, the same situation obtained as under the Selection Acts: settlers were again dependent on the judgement of local personnel.

Under this new arrangement, by 1920 arrears of work were caught up and the government made available 619,087 acres purchased for £2,157,042.3.1.⁴⁰ The Superintendent of Soldier Settlement, Frank Grace, was confident that if drought conditions did not prevail, the percentage of failures on farming lands would be very small. As drought was not likely in the South East he anticipated that of the 130 soldiers settled there by 1920, "all but possibly three would make good".⁴¹

37. For details of Syd Shepherd's and Ted Schinckel's properties, Industries of the South East, pp 62-5 and 66-70.

38. SAPD, 21 October 1919, p 1312.

39. Act 1388 of 1919, assented to 20 November 1919. See also SAPP 10 of 1918-9.

40. By 30 June 1920, 1,273 soldiers had been settled, 5,360 were registered, 2,641 approved and 778 in training. SAPP 10 of 1919-20, HA, 16 November 1920.

41. SAPP 10 of 1919-20, HA, 16 November 1920.

William Smythe's position suggested otherwise. By October 1921, after three years on his Hynam block, Smythe had been able to send only £5.6.7 above his expenditure to pay off the £507.5.1 he then owed. His wool clip for 1921 was only four bales. A large amount of land had not compensated for poor quality and had proved "far too much" for an amputee to manage. Smythe still suffered from severe pain in his feet, even when he walked slowly with a stick, and he had to be away from his block for long periods to get shoes made in Adelaide. He bought a buggy to get around his block, but the Inspector considered he was "a hopeless cripple". In 1924 Dr Pavey of Naracoorte pronounced him "permanently incapacitated". In this year Smythe owed £108.18 and the Inspector estimated his financial position "was getting more acute every day".⁴²

Smythe's situation was in fact not unusual, and by 1923 the Superintendent of Soldiers Settlement had changed his mind about the future of some soldier settlers in the South East. He claimed that there was "a certain class of men who would never make good". He considered it necessary "to weed out this class and to place good men in their stead".⁴³ On 20 June 1924 a transaction with a long history in the South East took place. Smythe's agreement was cancelled. The Land Board approved of the transfer of his block to a neighbour who had been accumulating land since his first

42. By 30 November 1919 Smythe's outlay was as follows:

108 5-year Merinos, £93.3; 119 mixed sheep, £86.5.6; 3½ tons wire, £99.15; 1,200 posts, £30; erecting posts, £21.5; providing and erecting Metters windmill, and fittings, tanks and troughs, £123.10; putting down bore lined with casing, £20.12.6; ½ ton wire on 12 February 1920, £14.5; cost of a buggy on 29 February 1920, £32.10.

Correspondence between W.A. Smythe, Inspector Humphris, F.C. Grace, Superintendent of Soldier Settlement, Inspector D.J. Bice, Inspector A.V. Galvin, and P.S. Messent, Secretary for Lands on 17 April 1917, 18 October 1919, 2 September, 10 October, 1921, 3, 4, 9 July 1922; 4, 5 February, 4, 13 March, 10 July, 7 21 August, 24 and 26 October 1923; 19 May, 7 July, 9 December 1924; 1 April, 4, 8 May, 16 June, 22 October, 27 November 1925; 3 August, 26 October 1926; 8 August 1929; 24 February, 4 June, 13 July 1938, GRG 176/1918/29 and GRG 35/104/1922/4968, DL; interview with Mr Neil Wray of Naracoorte and Hynam, 21 June 1978.

43. SAPP 10 of 1923-4, HA, 29 October 1924.

purchase at the break-up of Hynam Estate.⁴⁴ Smythe had brought to the land little in capital, experience or physical fitness. He had also been allotted inferior land which had been unproductive. It was not surprising under these circumstances that legislation to establish a sturdy independent farmer on his own land had once again been futile

Soldier settler Erlston Russell was also in difficulty by the early twenties. After he had served for a year in France with the 6th Field Artillery Brigade, Russell was discharged medically unfit in 1918 because of a wound to his knee, but by 1919 he was in good health. He had been a mixed farmer before the war and looked forward to returning to the land.⁴⁵

Russell was initially disappointed at not being able to secure the land of his choice. He made six applications for land in the Barossa Valley north of Adelaide near relatives and friends so that he could further his pre-war experience and interest in fruit-growing, dairying, and pig-raising. The Land Board considered each of these sections too highly priced. But on 16 September 1920 Russell was allotted a large area, 2,179 acres, in the Hundred of Monbulla, under Acquired Soldiers Agreement 645 and his hopes of becoming a successful mixed farmer rose. In 1921 he had to pay £176.11 in instalments but he was a fit 26-year-old with £200 of his own and £300 of his father's. He was "much taken with his property

44. Smythe's land was transferred to William James Waugh on 9 December 1924 for £500; Waugh also bought Smythe's house for £250. In 1938, two decades after he had taken up his land, the Superintendent of Soldier Settlement agreed that Smythe's Bad and Doubtful Debt should be written off. CSALB 10/609, DL; GRG 35/104/1922/4968, DL.

45. Appendix 11; ASALB 1A/75. In 1919 Russell went into partnership with J.McD. Hutchins on land in the Hundred of Monbulla valued at £6,050, but by mutual consent, and with the recommendation of H.J. Darwent, Inspector of Lands, Russell and Hutchins severed their partnership in 1921. GRG 35/176/1919/777, SAA.

and its capabilities". "I would like to say," he wrote to his father on 20 August 1921, "that I am certain I can make a success of this property."⁴⁶

Russell's land varied greatly in quality, however. James Clarke, first owner of Section 185E, selected it for £3.4 an acre in 1878. Successive owners, Thomas Morris and the Kilsby family, had made sure of retaining freehold title over the rich dark grey soil. In 1920 Russell paid £11 an acre for these 205 acres, cropped them, and lived on them in a galvanised iron hut which cost him £30.⁴⁷ In 1921 his "barley and oats were looking magnificent". He told his father that he had "no hesitation in saying there was no feed like his in the district". He also intended to grow peas, potatoes and lucerne on this block.⁴⁸ Another section of Russell's land, Block L, had been freehold since Morris purchased it in 1898 for £1 per acre, but only about one half of this land had ever been fair grazing land. The rest of the 94 acres was "cold" red gum country interspersed with scrub and stringy-bark quite unsuitable for cultivation. Russell judged he could manage Sections 185E and L, but he was also carrying 1,880 acres of inferior land which previous owners Reilly, Riddoch, Connell, Morris, Kilsby and McBain had held under lease. None of these lessees had considered the land worth converting to freehold

46. Correspondence between E. Russell and his father, 20 August 1921 and E. Russell and Minister of Repatriation, H.J. Darwent, Inspector of Lands, and L.A. Wells, the Chairman of the Land Board, 31 January, 22 March, 4, 15 May, 18 July 1923 in GRG 35/176/1919/777, SAA. Maps 20 and 23.

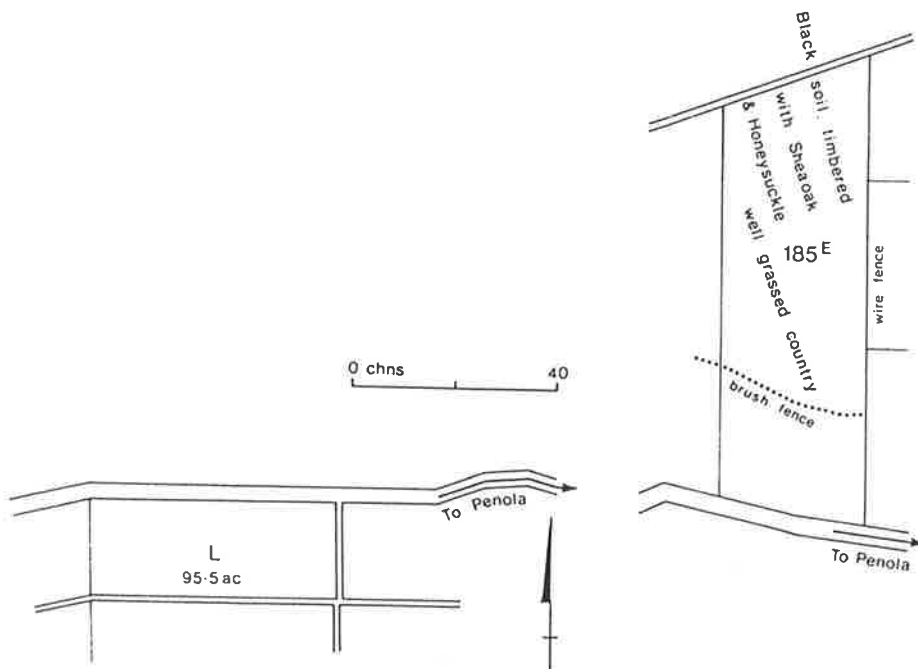
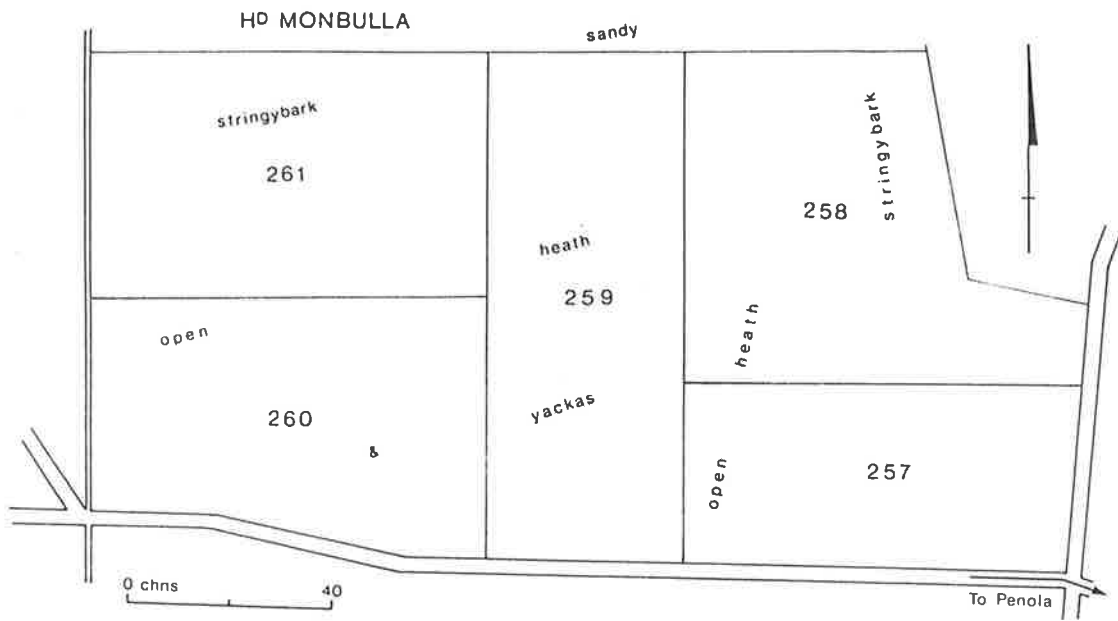
47. Russell's half-yearly instalments were £85.11; he had to expend £19.10 on improvements for the first five years. ASALB 1A/75, DL. Russell's land was valued as follows: Section 185E: Land £2,052.10; fencing £190.4.9; improvements £105.11.3; crop £12 = £2,360.18. Block L: Land £116.17.6; fencing £47.10.6 = £164.8. Sections 257, 258, 259, 260 and 261: Goodwill of land, £430.15; fencing £88 = £518.15 with survey charges making a total of £3,081.9.11. GRG 35/176/1919/777 SAA. For details of previous occupants, Ch. 3, footnote 172; Ch. 4, footnote 106, and Ch. 5, footnotes 51 and 52.

48. Correspondence between E. Russell and his father, 20 August 1921, and Russell and the Superintendent of Soldier Settlement, 24 July; 16, 29 September; 28 November 1919; 13 February, 21 April, 5 May, 3 and 4 June, and 6 August 1920 in GRG 35/176/1919/777, SAA.

MAP 23

E. Russell's land, Monbulla

(Diagram Book, Hundred of Monbulla; CSALB, DL; Interview with G. Skeer)



tenure. Russell also declared the land was absolutely useless and spoiling his opportunity of making a success. Yet the 1919 Act stipulated that he must hold it under an agreement to purchase.⁴⁹

Russell protested on several occasions. His claim that there would be no difficulty in disposing of the leasehold to persons in the district was borne out by evidence. In 1925 local landholders still held more than half of the Hundred of Monbulla under lease.⁵⁰ Despite support for his request from his local member, Peter Reidy, the District Agricultural Adviser, J. Spafford, and the confirmation of land valuers, J. Darwent and J.W. Bourne that the land would certainly be "useless for any purpose other than grazing", legislation intent on establishing self-sufficient yeomen and simultaneously recouping revenue demanded that Russell should purchase his land. In the excessively wet winter of 1923 Russell's crops were ruined. His knee had also begun to "play up" again. The government remained adamant that all his land should be freehold tenure under agreement to purchase, but allowed a dispirited Russell to surrender. Declaring that "for three years he had tried hard to do his level best to make a success of the property", Russell went share-farming.

In 1928 the Minister of Repatriation accepted the highest of four offers for his land. By selling at £600 the government had suffered a

49. Act 1388 of 1919, Regulations 26, 3(b); Ch. 4, footnotes 107, 108, 111 and 112; Ch. 5, footnotes 47, 50, 53 and 152.

50. Of 62,720 acres in Monbulla, 30,699 were held under perpetual lease in 1925. SAPP 71 of 1925, HA, 17 December 1925.

loss of £229 in two years.⁵¹ Legislation intent upon establishing freehold agriculturalists despite the unsuitability of South East land for growing European crops had yet again undermined its purpose. Russell had been trapped between old-world values and the reality of his un-European land and in 1928 South Australia lost the former enthusiastic farmer Erlston Russell to Western Australia. His "poor, heathy, stony" country was once again used for alternative pasturing, as it had been for the past seventy years since "King" Cameron and the Austin brothers had first driven their flocks into the area.

Ten miles north of Russell, on part of the original Coonawarra Fruit Colony, was Charles Skinner, one of six returned soldiers combining viticulture and fruit-growing. After service with the 17th Infantry Battalion in the Middle East and France from 1915-18, and winning the Military Medal at Mont St Quentin, 26-year-old Skinner returned to the land - "the only thing he knew".⁵² In 1923, by investing all his war

51. Correspondence between E. Russell and Minister of Repatriation, Peter Reidy, Member for Victoria, Inspector A.J. Galvin, F. Grace, Superintendent of Soldier Settlement, and P.S. Messent, Secretary of Lands, 14, 20, 21, 23 August, 20 September, 14 November, 3 December 1923; 26 January 1924; 23 February, 12 March, 16 July, 22 and 25 October 1925. Russell's land was reallocated on 9 May 1928 under Surplus Lands Agreements 77 and 211 to J.T. and S.V. Carter and W.J. Rogers.

Comparative values

Acquired Soldiers Agreement 645	Land	Improvements	Total
	£	£	£
	2,638	432	3,070
	412	-	412
Total	3,050	432	3,482
Surplus Lands Agreement 77 and 211	2,372	251	2,653
	131	51	188
	412	-	412
Total	2,915	338	3,253
Less on resale	135	94	229

Agent's Commission £22.10.

Total Loss £251.10.

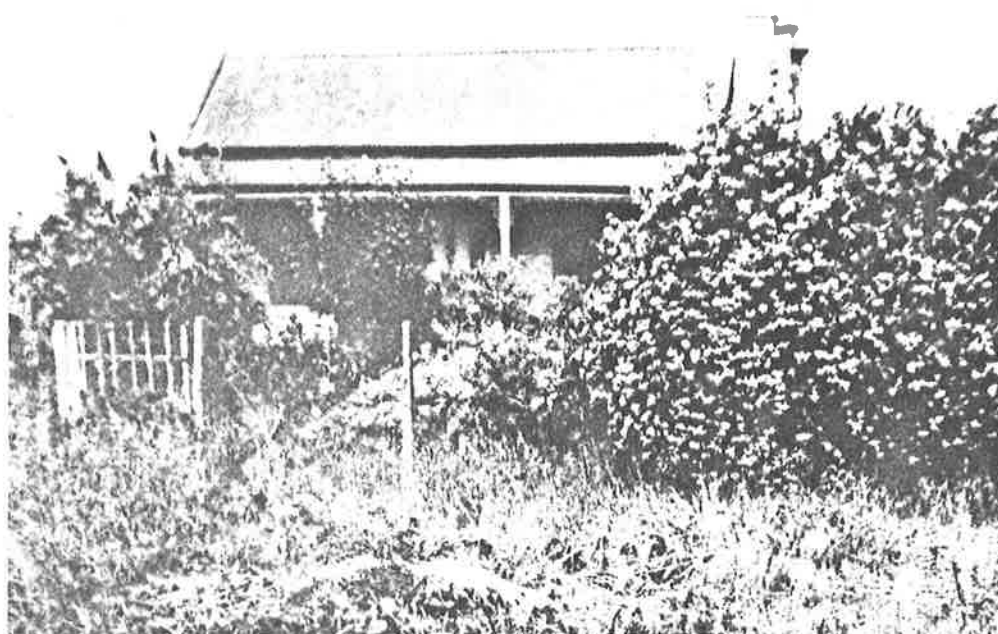
GRG 35/176/1919/777, SAA.

52. Appendix 11. The other returned soldiers were R. Skinner, B. Butt, C. Alder, A. Horton and P. Childs. Letter from C. Skinner, 18 October 1981. Maps 20 and 24.

Charles Skinner (b. 1893)
17th Infantry Battalion.
(C. Skinner)

In 1923, Charles Skinner took up 47 acres, originally part of the Coonawarra Fruit Colony, which Squire Riddoch had established as an agricultural experiment with tenant farmers in 1891. Holdings were small, prices low and the seasons often adverse. After the Depression hit, Skinner was the only soldier settler who survived but he did so as a tenant to the Government and not as an independent yeoman farmer.

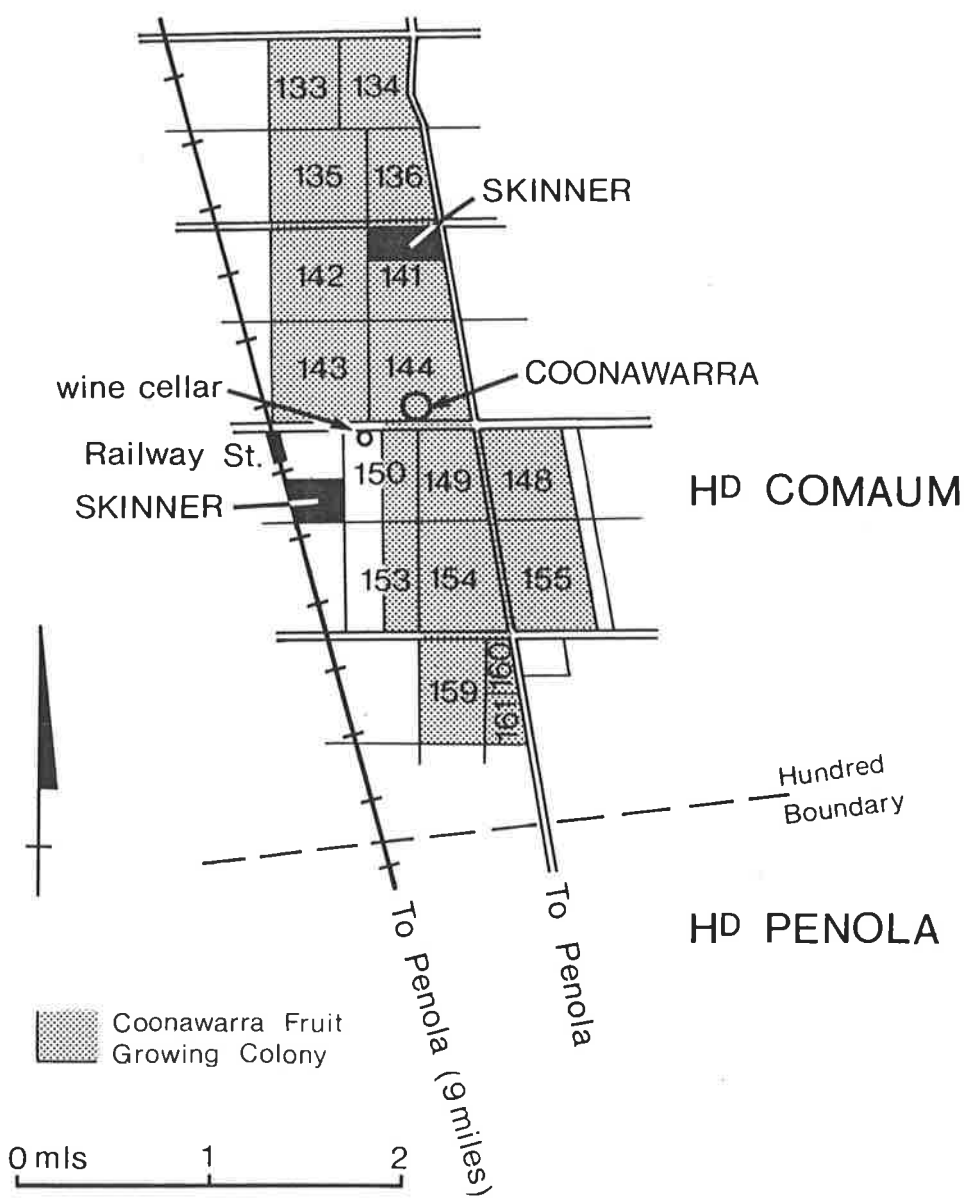
Charles Skinner's Home



MAP 24

C. Skinner's blocks on the Coonawarra Fruit Colony.

(GRG 35/251, SAA; Interviews and correspondence with C. Skinner)



gratuity of £300 and by taking out a mortgage to the Minister of Repatriation for £932, he purchased a 10 acre vine and fruit block. In 1925 Skinner and his brother broke a four-year partnership on another block and, on 7 May 1925, under Closer Settlement Agreement 514 with soldier settlement entitlements, Skinner took up Section 459 in the Hundred of Comaum under an annual commitment of £16.14.10. This was a block of 47 acres originally bought by John Riddoch as part of the Yallum Estate for £1 per acre in 1863 and vacated by the Lear brothers in 1923.⁵³ Charles Skinner and his wife, Inez, settled on this block in the six-roomed house, now worth £150, which the Lears had built. By 1925 the value of the land had risen to £4.2.6 an acre. Five acres of Shiraz and one acre of Doradilloes had been planted in 1918; the remaining 41 acres were open grassland able to carry less than one sheep to the acre.⁵⁴

Skinner found difficulty in coping with a legacy of European attitudes applied to Australian land. Many of the fruit trees planted on the 3 acres of his 10 acre freehold block had been "expected to last forever according to European custom", but were classified as "useless" by 1933.⁵⁵ Skinner and other Coonawarra fruit-growers also followed the European custom of pruning heavily, "keeping the block clear of weeds and cultivating a fine tilth", but Skinner's gun-shot wound in his left arm

53. Charles and his brother, Rod, also held Block 194, originally purchased from Rodney Fowler, as tenants-in-common until 1925. CT 78/23 and 110/25, LTO. For John Riddoch's purchase, CT 39/56, LTO. Skinner's half-yearly instalments were £10.18.10; expenditure on improvements was £5.16. DL. Correspondence with C. Skinner, 31 January 1980; interview, 20 November 1977.

54. The Lears had begun with two rooms, and then added two more on two further occasions. For the Lear family's occupancy, Ch. 5, footnote 148; CSALB 3/154 DL; GRG 35/104/1927/737, DL.

55. On this block Skinner had 130 Moorpark apricot trees of which 86 were termed "useful"; 25 peach, 36 pear, 22 prune and plum and 14 mixed trees judged "useless"; 4 fig, 7 almond and 6 orange trees considered "useful". Report of W.J. Colebatch, Chairman of Soldier Settlement Committee, 8 September 1933.

made it difficult for him to prune. Deep drainage in the Coonawarra area had tapped the natural springs, which in turn "made the frosts more severe so that the size and quality of the fruit deteriorated". Vigilante groups took turns to burn white ants' nests with straw or oil, although at sixty pots of oil to the acre the latter was uneconomical, and not always successful anyway.⁵⁶ In 1924 frost killed two-thirds of Skinner's grapes. He had "to thank his wife", he told the Superintendent of Soldier Settlement, who, like those of other settlers, "kept the food up with the aid of a couple of cows, a few hens and a vegetable garden". In that year he also wrote to the Department that he was finding it "hard to meet an account which would become each year increasingly bigger" as the benefits allowed to soldiers in their early years of settlement gradually diminished.⁵⁷

Settlers Smythe, Schinckel, Russell and Skinner were typical of most soldiers in South Australia in purchasing individual holdings. In April 1920 George Riddoch, "last of the old South East colonists", died and the government purchased almost 20,000 acres of 'Koorine', formerly part of 'Glencoe', the first estate in the South East, which Robert Leake had established almost eighty years previously.⁵⁸ The estate had been highly improved by its successive owners and land which Leake had purchased for £1.2.6 an acre in 1859 brought £5.15.0 an acre in 1920. 'Koorine' was subdivided into forty holdings; twenty of the largest of

56. Letter from Charles Skinner, 25 October 1977; interview with Charles Skinner, 20 November 1977.

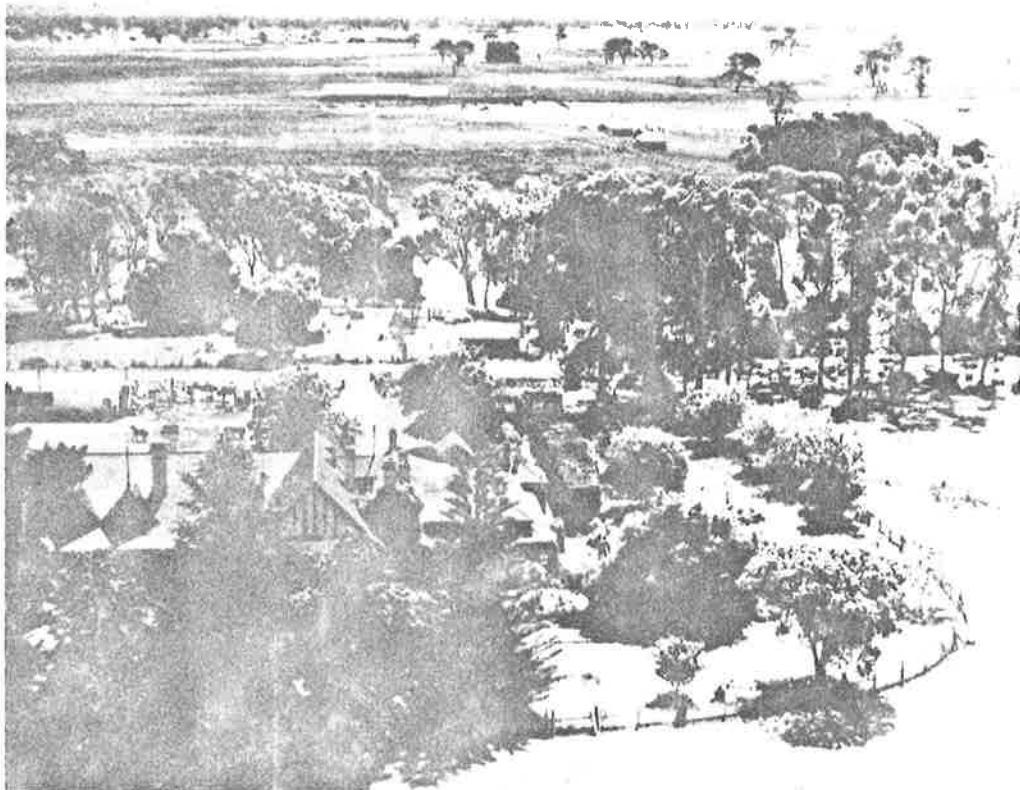
57. Letter from Charles Skinner, 25 October 1977; GRG 35/104/1927/737, DL.

58. The Advertiser, 24 April 1919; BW, 25 April 1919; SAR, 24 April 1919. Among the beneficiaries of Riddoch's will were his former employees. Ch. 5, footnote 217. Those who had served him for 25 years or more were bequeathed annuities of £10; for 15-25 years, £8; 10-15 years, £7; 2-10 years, £5. Employees on active service were given £25. Probate Registry.

G.L. Dean (1896-1968)
5th Field Artillery Brigade
(D. Dean)

In 1920, "Skipper" Dean took up 2,149 homestead acres on 'Koorine', land which the Leake brothers had purchased but neglected and George Riddoch, Laird of 'Glencoe', had restored. Because he had much good land, machinery, capital and ran sheep, Dean became an independent farmer-grazier after nearly twenty years. Settlers without these advantages could not hope to succeed.

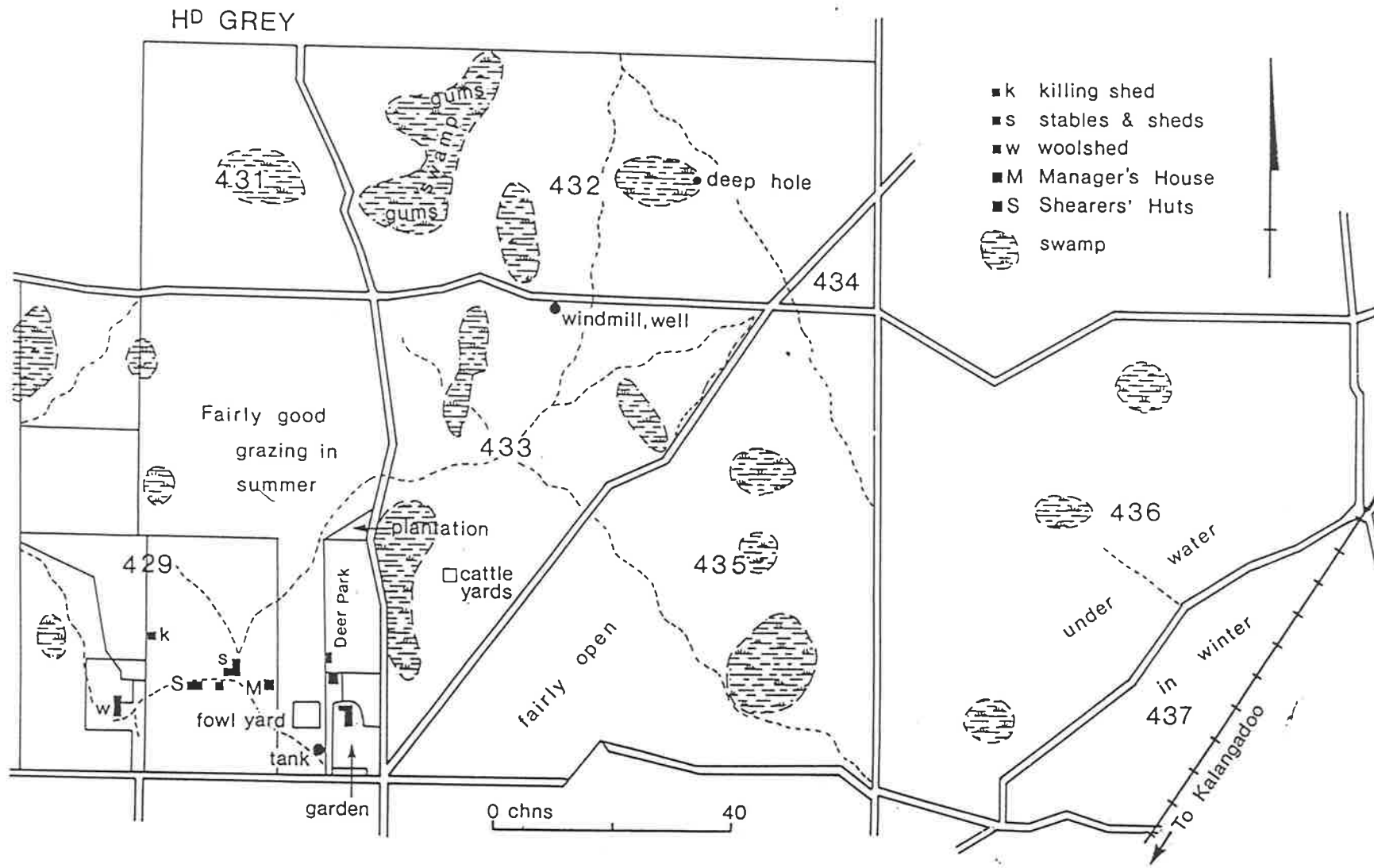
'Koorine', c. 1930.
(D. Dean)



MAP 25

G.L. Dean's Property, 'Koorine', Kalangadoo.

(Diagram Book, Hundred of Grey; CSALB, DL; Interview and correspondence with D. Dean)



these were taken up under Closer Settlement Agreements, and 20 with holdings averaging 350 acres were reserved for soldier settlers.⁵⁹

In 1919 Captain George Dean sold his 2,000 acre grazing property at Linton about forty miles from Ballarat in Victoria, and on 10 September 1920 took up the 13 acre homestead block of 'Koorine' and 2,136 acres of land under Closer Settlement Agreements 1999 and 1999A, as the total purchase price of £16,575 exceeded the £3,000 limit permissible under Acquired Soldiers Agreement. By 1921, to meet this price and to pay annual commitments and expenditure amounting to £825.12.10, "Skipper" Dean took out two substantial mortgages from a land agent.⁶⁰

About three miles west of Dean, on 1 June 1920 under Acquired Soldiers Agreement 380, former gardener Captain Harry Bryant, aged 38, also took up land which Robert Leake had once held on the Kalangadoo portion of 'Glencoe'. Between 1915 and 1918 Bryant had fought at Gallipoli and in the Middle East, and after his discharge in 1919 he and his war bride, Jessie, from Torquay, settled on 297 acres of Section 425 in the Hundred of Grey on land now worth almost £8 per acre. The block had been improved with a house, sheds, well, windmill, tanks, trough, piggery and

59. 19,741 acres of 'Koorine' were purchased for £113,513.7.6. Of this 7,144 acres, costing £51,968.10.1 were set aside for soldiers. SAPP 10 of 1920-1, HA, 9 November 1921. Ch. 2, footnote 101; Map 8. 'Koorine' sold at 25/- per acre less than George Riddoch had hoped for in 1916. Ch. 5, footnote 217.

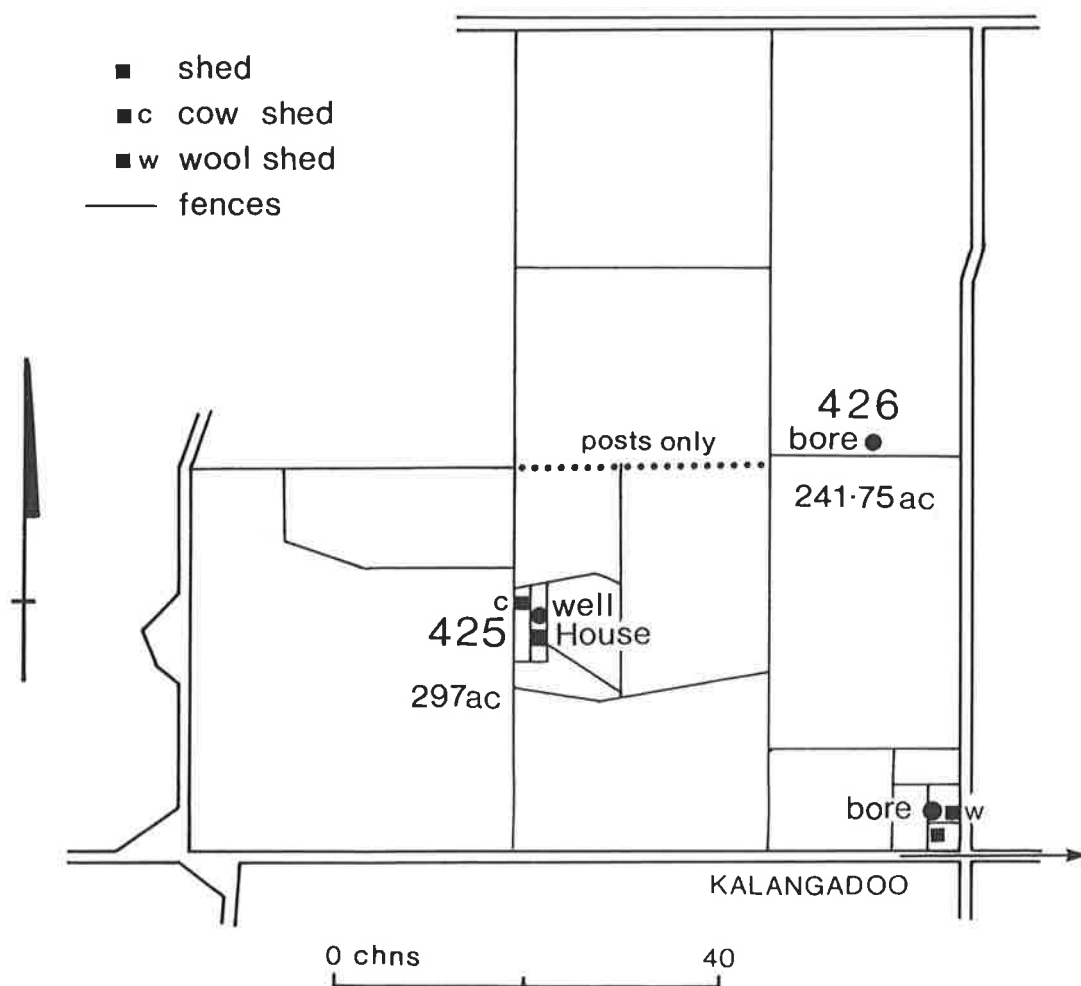
60. Appendix 10; CT 542/87 and 8/51, LTO; SAPP 33 of 1940, HA, 11 July 1940, question 932; interview with Mr David Dean, son of "Skipper" Dean, at 'Coomooroo', Penola, 18 June 1978. Dean paid £13,575 for his land and £3,000 for improvements. His instalments and expenditure were originally £927.19.8 but as in December 1920 Dean paid for his improvements in cash, his account was recast. Half-yearly instalments then became £422.6.10; expenditure on improvements, £403.6.8. CSALB 10/199 and 205-6, DL.

MAP 26

G.H. Bryant's holding, Kalangadoo.

(Diagram Book, Hundred of Grey: ASALB, DL; Interview with B. Rogers)

HD GREY



fencing valued at £600. Bryant had to improve further to the value of £50.3 annually, and to pay yearly instalments of £56.15.6.⁶¹

Part of Bryant's and Dean's land was boggy, unsuitable for cultivation and able to carry only one sheep or less to the acre. Dean's larger area and ready capital allowed him to compensate for this. He divided his holding into twenty-one paddocks. To ensure a constant water supply for each, he installed six bores and six wells, finding water only 20 feet below the surface. On red loam soil he cultivated a variety of fodder crops including maize, sunflowers, Sudan grass, chou molier, kiku grasses, kale and rape. Approximately one half of his land was timbered with red gum. He contracted 500 tons of this timber for posts to the Mt Gambier Corporation for three years. He ran a thousand sheep on country where kangaroo and other tenacious native grasses persisted, or where George Riddoch had sown English varieties. He put 250 acres under wheat and oats and sowed a little barley. "Returns were assured, living conditions picturesque, and the climate among the most delightful in the State." Dean's holding was well on the way to becoming one "that anybody would be happy to possess".⁶²

On 4 April 1921 another estate in the South East became available for closer settlement. Clarke of 'The Schanck' kept a quarter of the Hundred of MacDonnell and sold 18,003 acres at an average of £5.14, land which his grandfather had purchased for £1.1.10 per acre in 1862.⁶³

61. On 9 July 1859, Leake had purchased 361 acres of Sections 811, 882 and 883 which contained the newly-numbered Section 425, for £1,402. CT 7/29, LTO. See also Map 8; Appendix 11; ASALB, 2/180, DL; SAGG, 6 May 1920, p 1179; Maps 20 and 25.

62. Industries of the South East, pp 136-41.

63. CT 35/29; 18,000 acres of 'Mt Schanck No. 2' were purchased for £103,278.10. Of this, 5,608 acres valued at £48,688.10.7 were set aside for soldiers. SAPP 10 of 1920-1, HA, 9 November 1921. In 1925 the Clarke family owned 15,319 acres in the Hundred of MacDonnell, an area of 66,560 acres. SAPP 71 of 1925, HA, 17 December 1925; Map 9.

Among the twenty settlers who took up 12,395 acres available under Closer Settlement Agreements on this land was a local dairy farmer, James Fox. On 30 August 1921, under Closer Settlement Agreement 2023, Fox paid £2,697 for 333 acres of Section 755 with annual instalments of £165.12.8.⁶⁴ About 66 acres of Fox's land was good, dark arable soil suitable for cropping. But other parts of the "splendid luxuriant sward" which had attracted Edward and Arthur Fortescue in 1841, had degenerated with eighty years of European use. It was not only pitted with wombat-holes, but so eroded by over-grazing and rabbits that the soil varied in depth from 12 to a mere 3 inches.⁶⁵

About three miles from Fox, Cedric Swaffer took up one of the blocks on the 5,608 acres of 'Mt Schanck No. 2' set aside for soldiers. Swaffer had fought with the 9th Light Horse in the Middle East from 1917-19.⁶⁶ After his discharge on 26 December 1919, he put in his first application for land near his home area of Port Lincoln. This was land he had sharefarmed before the war; his wife was the daughter of a local farmer, and Swaffer knew he could have his brother's help and full assistance with machinery. While he waited for land, Swaffer bought seed and ordered super. Ten months later his application was rejected, with no reason given. On 14 May 1920 Swaffer wrote impatiently to the Superintendent that he was still waiting and homeless. He applied four more times for land over

64. Half-yearly instalments came to £84.14.8; expenditure on improvements £50.18. CSALB 23/651, DL; interview with Mrs R. Parish, daughter of James Fox, 13 June 1978. Fox was not "a returned man from Europe". He had "got too many cracks on the race course" as an apprentice jockey, and "all he could boast of was being a reject although he did serve in the South African War". Letter to Minister of Repatriation, 7 July 1927, GRG 35/176/1921/1333, SAA; Appendix 11; Maps 20 and 27.

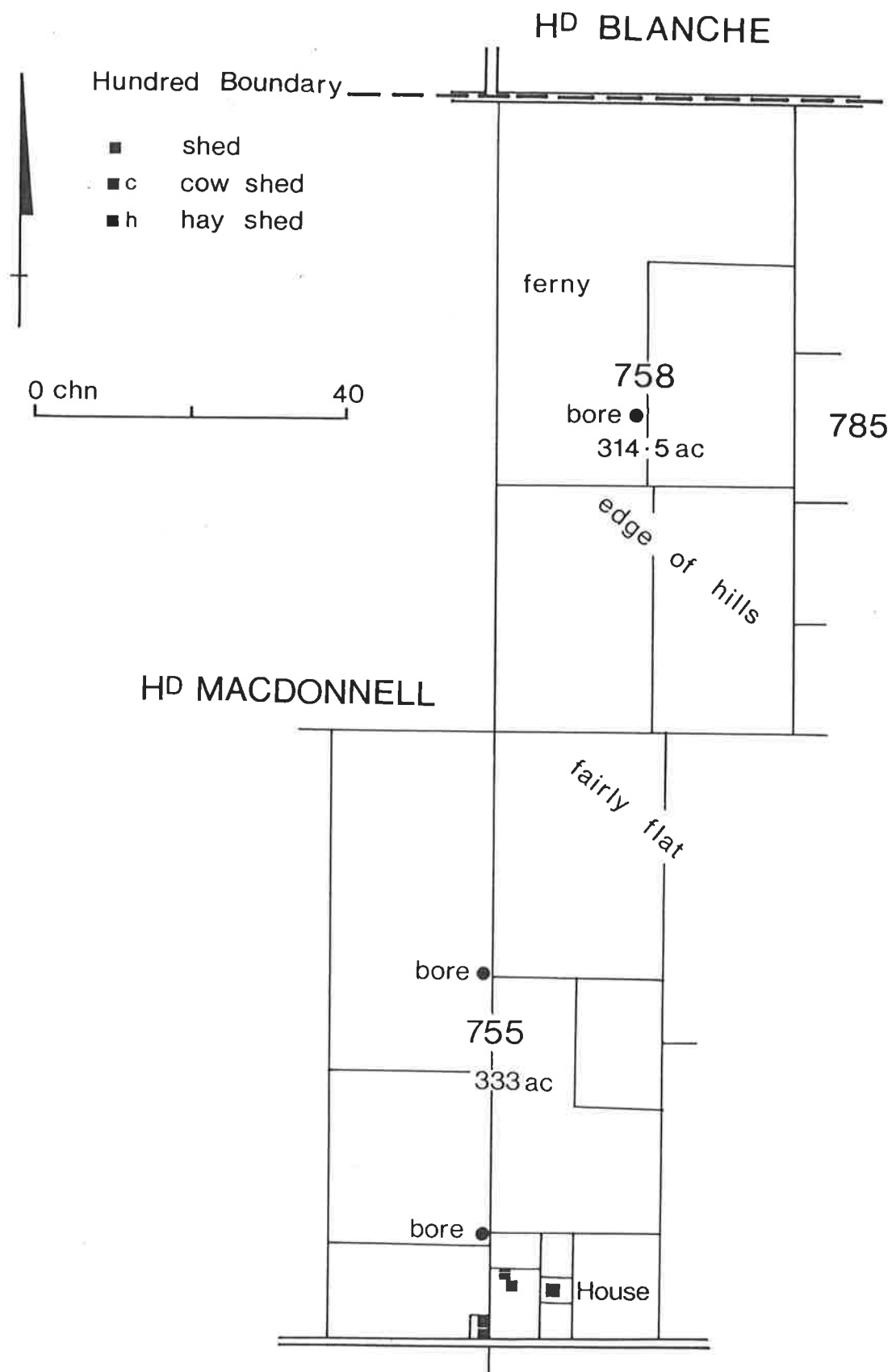
65. Inspector's Report, 3 March 1932, DL.

66. Appendix 11.

MAP 27

J. Fox's land, Mt Schanck No. 2.

(Diagram Books, Hundreds of MacDonnell and Blanche; CSALB, DL; Interview with Mrs R. Parish)



the next two years, and grew more dejected with each refusal. "I am toiling," he wrote to the Superintendent of Soldier Settlement a year later, on 11 August 1921, "from daylight until dark every day for other people when I should be working up a place of my own." Not until 1 September 1922 was Swaffer finally allotted land in the South East. This was in a climate and country different from that which he knew well and far from his farming family.⁶⁷ But because of his great urgency to get on the land, he paid £1,626 for 155 acres of unimproved land on Section 761 in the Hundred of MacDonnell under Acquired Soldiers Agreement 825, with commitments totalling £89.9 a year by 1923.

Swaffer considered about 30 acres of his land not worth £1 an acre. The remaining two-thirds was rough, stony, ferny and "seething with rabbits".⁶⁸ But Swaffer and his wife, Laura, set to, built a two-roomed wooden hut with an earthen floor, and began clearing the 2-foot-high bracken fern and fumigating the rabbits.⁶⁹ On 6 January 1922 Swaffer made two requests to the Superintendent of Soldier Settlement. He asked for a road which would save two miles cartage "travelling over dangerous places full of huge rabbit burrows" to the main road which led to Mt Gambier eleven miles away. This was refused. Government policy had not changed. A Federal Road Grant of £22,000 for roads in South Australia was to be used "only in productive areas". Swaffer was informed that a central road leading into and running through 'Mt Schanck No. 2' had to be considered before attention could be given to subsidiary roads.

67. Correspondence between C. Swaffer and Superintendent of Soldier Settlement, and Mr Mosely, MP, 26 December 1919; 12 April; 4, 5 May; 10 June; 6 September; 28 October; 30 November 1920; 5 May; 4, 15 June; 4, 26 July; 11 August 1921, GRG 35/176/1919/2828, SAA; Maps 20 and 28.

68. Half-yearly instalments amounted to £40.13; £48.16 had to be spent on improvements. ASALB 4/151, DL.

69. Interview with Mrs Laura Swaffer, widow of C. Swaffer, 14 September 1976.

Cedric Swaffer (1892-1959)

9th Light Horse

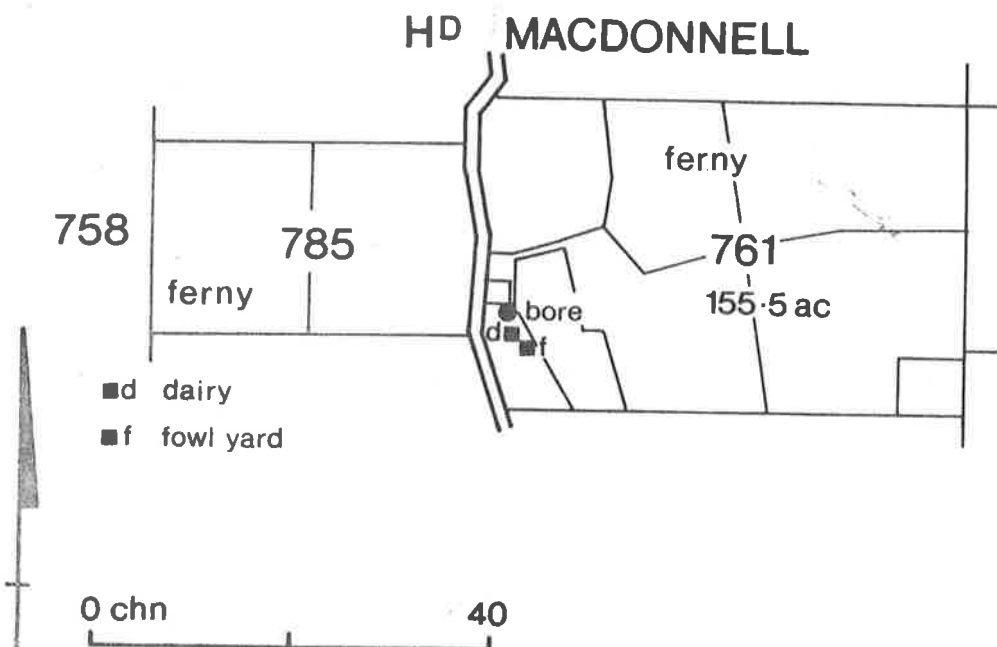
(L. Swaffer)

From the 1920s C. Swaffer and J. Fox were expected to farm 'Mt Schanck' land which the Arthur brothers had abandoned and the Clarke family had used for sixty years as alternative grazing country. They ran sheep and cows but were able to pull through only when World War II stimulated the economy.

MAP 28

C. Swaffer's land, Mt Schanck No. 2.

(Diagram Book, Hundred of MacDonnell; ASALB, DL; Interviews with L. and K. Swaffer)



Swaffer also applied for more land to keep his horse teams and a few cows he was not milking. On 4 February 1922 he asked for Section 759, a nearby vacant soldier settlement block which had become "a harbour for rabbits". When rumour had it that "neither a farmer nor a farmer's son" was purchasing Section 759, Swaffer appealed on grounds which politicians had proclaimed so often were their motivating ideals of closer settlement. "Do you want speculators or settlers to live on their blocks and make it their home and everything and battle on as us that has had to on coming on to these rough blocks?" he asked.⁷⁰ On 4 September 1924 this request was also refused. The Swaffers battled on. By 1925 they were running 25 head of cattle, had purchased four horses, a plough and harrows, had surplus hay from a 26 acre crop and six tons of late potato seed. They had "farmed successfully and had good crops". They had no liabilities beyond their usual half-yearly payment of £20.6.6. But in 1925 markets were low and Swaffer could not meet his instalments. "Well, we have had a pretty rough time this season," he wrote on 15 April 1925. "Poor markets for our produce. Good stacks of hay I have and cannot dispose of, price of milk ruling only 4½d av. this last 9 months has made things rather hard." Despite such disappointing returns, Swaffer declared he continued "to look forward to a better future for himself and his children".⁷¹

By 1924 many settlers in South Australia were unwilling to live on deferred hopes as Swaffer was. Total government spending on post-war closer settlement had now reached £9,179,075, but almost a quarter of the settlers had abandoned, surrendered or transferred their blocks. In his

70. Correspondence between C. Swaffer and the Superintendent of Soldier Settlement and Peter Reidy, MP, 6 January; 4 February; 19, 24 April 1922; 23 June; 4 September; 17 October 1924, GRG 35/176/1919/2828, SAA.

71. Correspondence between C. Swaffer and the Superintendent of Soldier Settlement, 17 January; 7 March; 15 April 1925, GRG 35/176/1919/2828, SAA.

annual report the Superintendent of Soldier Settlement singled out settlers in the South East as living "in a most unenviable position".⁷²

Settlers here were confronting pests and diseases, many of them introduced from Europe. Rabbits spread more widely than ever as land vacated by unsuccessful settlers offered undisturbed breeding grounds. Of the 1,400 schemes proposed to the 1891 Royal Commission to eradicate rabbits, "fencing, poisoning, fumigating with sulphur and cocky chaff and ploughing in burrows" remained after 1918 those remedies most favoured in the South East, but none proved an effective means of destruction.⁷³ As wild dogs were still rampant, the South East Wild Dog Association employed a full-time labourer to trap and lay poison. In 1924 his tally was 22 dogs and 69 foxes in one small recognised breeding area alone.⁷⁴ The heavy rains of 1923 resulted not only in crop destruction, but also increased the incidence of fruit mildew. The potato moth still ravaged.⁷⁵ Barley grubs "destroyed crops over night". Spraying with Paris green killed one grub, "but ten came to his funeral".⁷⁶ Crops in 1922 returned little more than the seed.⁷⁷

72. Gross expenditure amounted to £9,179,075; receipts, £1,352,690. The Commonwealth had advanced £2,857,789. Position of settlement at 30 June 1924 - Soldiers settled:

Mixed farming and grazing, 1,819; Sharefarming, 77; Dairying, 116; Fruit growing and market gardening, 322; Miscellaneous, 17; Total 2,351. Registered, not settled, 2,427; Training, 10; Deferred and waiting, 47; Blocks surrendered or transferred, 552; Applications "not proceeded with", 1,358. SAPP 16 of 1923-4, HA, 29 October 1924.

73. SAJA, Vol. 34, 1930-1, 15 June 1931, p 1217.

74. SAPP 10 of 1923-4, HA, 29 October 1924.

75. SAPP 10 of 1923-4, HA, 29 October 1924.

76. Interviews with N. Janeway of 'Moorak', 13 September 1976, and G.S. Laslett of O.B. Flat, 11 September 1976.

77. SAPP 10 of 1922-3, HA, 7 November 1923.

John Bice, newly-appointed in 1923 as Superintendent of Soldier Settlement, granted that the soldiers' predicament was acute, but was pleased to record that in spite of so many setbacks their spirits remained buoyant. In his opinion, reverses appeared only to have stimulated them to greater efforts in primary production and the State was to be congratulated upon having men of such grit and perseverance who, favoured with a few good seasons, would make a success of their holdings and contribute to their country's wealth.⁷⁸

Yet by 1925 such pronouncements had a hollow ring. Only 33 soldiers in South Australia had purchased a total of 2,300 acres under their Agreements and 720 had surrendered or transferred.⁷⁹ The Director of Agriculture, Professor Perkins, was a little more realistic than the Superintendent of Soldier Settlement. He was prepared to admit that the wheels of progress were temporarily clogged. This was a sad state of affairs, he declared, because the State was thwart with peril if rural production did not expand. It had to be admitted, he continued, that as a community, South Australia could not yet be said to have emerged from the pioneering stage. There were still vast areas awaiting the plough, and of those already broken the greater part must ultimately be submitted to more intensive forms of agriculture. The Director also had to admit that there had been a depopulation of rural workers over the last decade as well as a gradual disappearance of small farms and a reduction in the number of individual holdings. He attributed this to higher labour costs. These had almost doubled since 1913, to a minimum wage of 13/8 in 1925, although improved technology had increased the working efficiency of the farm land. The Director further declared that Australians had to ask themselves if this thinning out of the countryside were an altogether

78. SAPP 10 of 1923-4, HA, 29 October 1924. F. Grace resigned from the position of Superintendent in 1923 to take up "commercial pursuits". SAPP 10 of 1922-3, HA, 7 November 1923.

79. SAPP 10 of 1924-5, HA, 17 November 1925.

desirable national ideal for a young country with unimportant secondary industries, wanting to swell its population with suitable British immigrants. The remedy for the present situation, he concluded, lay in aiming at maximum production, in taking precautions against disease, and making an intelligent advantage of every feature in the season. If this were done profitably, he was sure South Australia would soon hear less of dwindling country populations and more of auxiliary cottages erected on present day one-house farms, more overflowing country schools, improved country social conditions, greater national wealth, and, one might hope, a greater ^{need} meed of individual contentment and happiness.⁸⁰ The ideals of the founding fathers echoed clearly in the twentieth century.

In fact the spirits of South East settlers were far from buoyant, and unlike the Director of Agriculture they did not consider their financial straits were the result of paying high wages or purchasing new machinery. Most were totally reliant on their wives and children for labour. If they were fortunate to have relatives or generous, affluent neighbours, they borrowed machinery rather than bought it. They claimed they were suffering most from lack of capital. They had long since exhausted their own savings. Their blocks were over-capitalised; low prices prevailed. This combination was the main cause of their desperate situation.⁸¹

80. SAJA, Vol. 19, 1925-6, 15 September 1925, p 103.

81. Women were often the farm book-keepers, and helped with spreading super, fencing, lumping potatoes and stooking hay as well as running a home and growing fruit and vegetables. Women and children were always responsible for most of the milking. A make of milking machine, "M.D.K." (Mum, Dad and the kids") was often referred to. All soldier settlers interviewed spontaneously paid tribute to the work and moral support given by their wives; they regretted that many of their children were deprived of a secondary education because they were needed as labour to work the farm or to provide a supplementary income by working elsewhere. (Interviews with soldier and closer settlers and their families, generally on cassette, in possession of writer.) Appendix 14.

In 1924 dissatisfied soldiers near Mt Gambier organised a special meeting at the 'Bellum Bellum' hotel on Mt Schanck. They resolved that a special commission along the lines of the Renmark Commission, which the Returned Soldiers League had gained for settlers on irrigation blocks, be appointed "to investigate into the living and working conditions of soldier settlers in the South East", with a view to "reducing the capital value of the settlers' blocks" as well as "extending their time of payment of principal and advances". In a circular to their "comrades" in all sub-branches in the South East, the RSL urged cooperation to recruit "public attention through a movement in Parliament". "Soldiers votes counted", they declared, and they were numerically strong enough to make their demands important. They called upon soldier settlers throughout the district to "present their cases for relief in bald outstanding facts" to the Mt Gambier RSL Secretary, R.H. Howland, so that delegates to RSL headquarters might act on the returned soldier's principle "all for one and one for all".⁸²

In the same year the Returned Soldiers Primary Producers Association also advocated revaluation. It placed "great confidence" in an Anzac dinner speech in 1924 by John Gunn, Premier and Minister for Repatriation. The Premier had stated that he had no doubt a very considerable amount would have to be written off the capital cost of soldiers' blocks, and agreed that extensions of payment benefitted only graziers and were of no assistance whatever to small farmers. On 24 June 1924 the RSPPA called upon its members to support a press campaign for legislation to guarantee "immediate relief" rather than extensions of time for payment of instalments. The Association further argued that revaluation was surely more

82. Their underlining. Copy of a circular, 11 October 1924, from W.E. Pyne, Vice-President of Mt Gambier RSL Sub-Branch to other sub-branches within the South East, in possession of the writer, used with permission of C. Skinner.

preferable for the government as well, for if soldiers abandoned their holdings the government had to resell, probably to a civilian, and always at a loss.⁸³

Before any relief came, on 5 July 1925, Vasey Charlton Watts, formerly of the 32nd Infantry Battalion, who had fought in France from 1916-19, took up Sections 387 and 388 in the Hundred of Mayurra under Acquired Soldiers Agreement 1465. This land had known half a century of European occupation since Robert Smith had first settled it as "drained land" at £2 an acre in 1872. In 1925 the government paid Ebenezer Boneham's widow £3.10 per acre for these 236 acres and Watts, according to an illegal but common practice in the South East, paid £802 for his block and improvements and then a further £500 to secure his block. Watts, then 31, had worked for the six years since his discharge as a farm labourer, as he had done before his enlistment. Like his predecessors on this land he used it for mixed farming but, as dairying suited the area better, he concentrated on this rather than cropping and began building up a herd of pure Jerseys by buying fifteen cows, bull calves at £25 each, and a pedigree bull.⁸⁴

In 1925 Christopher Claxton also took up land about eight miles east of Watts. Claxton had enlisted with the 9th Light Horse in 1915 and spent three and a half years in Egypt and Palestine. For most of his civilian life he had been an apprentice jockey, a miner at Broken Hill,

83. Copy of a letter 24 June 1925 of RSPPA to all sub-branches, from D. Fulton, President and J. Hilton Brown, Secretary of RSL in possession of writer, used with permission of C. Skinner.

84. For Robert Smith's occupancy, Ch. 3, footnote 82. Watts paid £712 for his block and £90 for improvements. In 1926 he was committed to an annual payment of £41.8 and in 1927 to £49.8.4. CSALB 7/24, DL; Appendix 11; Maps 20 and 29. Interview with Mrs Caroline Watts, widow of Vasey Watts of Lake Bonney, 15 September 1976. Like Watts, many soldiers anxious because of delays in procuring land, paid in excess of the Land Board valuation. As early as 1920, the government had issued a press report that no assistance would be given to discharged mortgages to the Minister of Repatriation if soldiers purchased properties in excess of the Land Board's valuation. SAPP 10 of 1920-1, HA, 7 November 1921.

Chris Claxton (1884-1965)

9th Light Horse

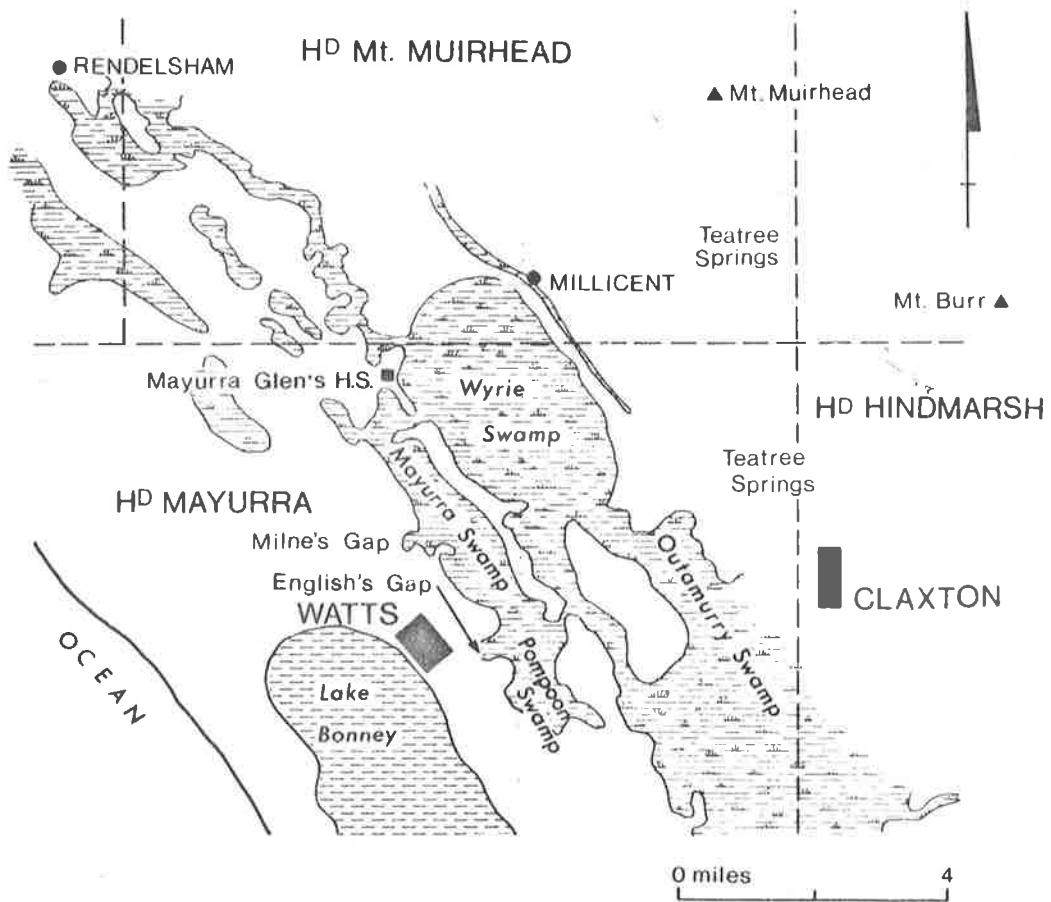
(C.V. Claxton)

In 1925, Chris Claxton took up 153 acres of good agricultural land which had formerly been part of 'Mayurra'. Battling the land called for physical stamina. By 1927, because of an illness incurred during the war, Claxton was forced to surrender his block.

MAP 29

Holdings of V. Watts and C. Claxton, near Millicent.

(Diagram Books, Hundreds of Hindmarsh and Mt Muirhead; ASALB, DL; Interviews and correspondence with Mrs C. Watts and C.V. Claxton)



and a boiler-maker's assistant at Islington. He was an active member of the Labor party in Adelaide and a councillor for Hindmarsh. After his discharge in 1919 on a pension of 21/- a week because of malarial fever, he gained a little experience in farming while living with his wife's family at Mil Lel near Mt Gambier. In August 1924 with his wife and 4-year-old son he moved north to Snuggery, seven miles from Millicent where his wife's brothers, the Hunts, were farming successfully. Here he settled in a good house on 153 acres of Section 340 in the Hundred of Hindmarsh under Acquired Soldiers Agreement 1388.⁸⁵ Thomas Ryan had first purchased this land in 1880 under Credit Agreement 4204 for £401.12.6. After Ryan's death in 1910, his widow, Honora Ryan, had maintained the land with the help of several mortgages. In 1923 she sold the block to the Crown for £19 an acre.⁸⁶

To meet his commitments and instalments which would rise to to £61.9 in 1928, Claxton took out a mortgage for £1,550. His block was well-drained, fenced, and of good black soil, half a mile from his brother-in-law and the loan of some family equipment, "the farm started to prosper".⁸⁸ Claxton sowed 60 acres of barley and continued dairying with the stock he had bought at Mt Gambier with his gratuity and some of his wife's money.⁸⁹ They sold their milk to the cheese factory three quarters of a mile away, their eggs to the Tantanoola store and even sold fruit

85. Appendix 11. C.V. Claxton, son of Christopher Claxton, supplied further personal details on 8 November 1978 and 17 January 1982, and in a letter on 2 December 1981. Maps 20, 29 and 15.

86. Application 513972, Transfer 578428 and 866052, CT 335/110; SET, 21 January 1910; for Ryan's purchase, Ch. 3, footnote 143.

87. ASALB 6/162, DL; GRG 35/176/1921/246, SAA. The block was valued at £2,256.15; fencing at £51.10; water and appliances at £40 and fixed improvements at £555. Letter from H.J. Darwent, Inspector of Lands, J.W. Bourne, valuator, and the Chairman of the Land Board, F.C. Grace, 18 May 1923, GRG 35/104/1923/2338, SAA. Letter to John Bice, Superintendent of Soldier Settlement, 26 August 1924, GRG 35/104/1923/2338, SAA.

88. Letter from C.V. Claxton, 2 December 1981.

89. GRG 35/104/1923/2338, SAA.

"to balance the family budget".⁹⁰ But in 1926 Claxton's health failed, and he spent a year at Bedford Park Sanatorium suffering from tuberculosis. In his absence his wife and brothers-in-law ran the farm but their small profits were eroded by having to pay 30/- a week for a 16-year-old boy to help. Claxton was discharged from hospital in May 1926, two and a half stone heavier but too late to put in crop for that year. After another wet winter in the South East his health failed again, and he was "financially up against it". The doctor declared him unfit to live in the South East climate, and he moved to Angorichina hostel in the Flinders Ranges. The Minister of Repatriation granted a forfeit without prejudice so that he might find "employment of a lighter nature in the drier north", and after intercession by the AGWU, Claxton received a pension of £6 per week.⁹¹

There was keen competition for his "splendid and desirable property" which had been let at peppercorn rental. Applicants ranged from dummies for local land agents, large farmers in the district and "outside" civilians willing to pay £25 per acre. Because the failure of many farmers in the area had involved the government in a loss the Land Board was tempted by a cash offer of £3,060. The best land seemed once more about to pass to the highest bidder, but returned soldiers protested. In 1927, after a year's wrangling and indecision, "one of the best dairy and

90. Letter from C.V. Claxton, 2 December 1981.

91. Letter from H.E. Winterbottom, Secretary of South Australian Soldiers' Fund, to the Superintendent of Soldier Settlement, 18 August 1925; Transcript of interview between W. Cosh, and C. Claxton, 26 May 1926; Letter from C. Claxton to J. Cosh, 22 November and 29 December 1926; Letter to Hon. W.J. Denny, Attorney-General, from F.K. Niess, General Secretary of Australian Government Workers' Union, 8 December 1926; GRG 35/104/1923/2338, SAA.

agricultural properties in the district" went to a returned soldier for £18.10 an acre.⁹²

The 1925 Parliament recognised that "drastic action" was necessary to rescue both soldiers and State. By 30 June settling soldiers on 1,562,371 acres had meant a net expenditure of £8,319,160, but most soldiers had little hope of staying on their blocks let alone returning a profit from such an outlay.⁹³ In their desire to settle numerous independent small farmers and provide revenue at the same time, politicians were reaping the familiar results of compromise. They had over-capitalised the land; only a few soldiers had been able to purchase. The rest were "in a hopeless position". Worse, legislators had once again not allowed for market and price fluctuations, nor assessed accurately how much land was needed to provide a living. The soldiers, like thousands of other small men in the past, were caught between a political dream, economic realities and the South Australian environment. The consequent battle, one politician declared, "was proving more difficult than defending the Empire".⁹⁴

92. Potential buyers included R.A. Skitch (returned soldier), S.J. Stuckey and Sons, Millicent, T.H. Telford, Mt Gambier, P. Aitken and Co., Millicent, M.W. Scanlon, and James McLaughlin. Correspondence between 6 January and 15 November 1927, GRG 35/104/1923/2338, SAA. On 15 November 1927 the Minister of Repatriation accepted R.A. Skitch's offer of £2,830.10, and Claxton's land was taken up under Surplus Lands Agreement 210. For details of transaction, ASALB 6/162, DL; GRG 35/104/1923/2338, SAA. L.J. Laslett, soldier settler and South East delegate to the RSL Lands Settlement Committee from 1929-1935, wrote of Chris Claxton: "One of my earliest associates and friends in the Mt Gambier`Sub-Branch RSL. He was one who helped to keep the sub-branch alive under the inspiring leadership of W.E. Pyne. One of his favourite expressions was 'the fizzing thing'. When I first knew him he lived out Mil Lel way and drove his horse and buggy into meetings while I rode my bike from the opposite direction. I knew his property at Snuggery. He left it for health reasons and worked as Employment Officer at RSL headquarters in Adelaide. In later years his physical condition suffered very severely."

93. SAPP 10 of 1924-5, HA, 17 November 1925.

94. SAPD, 24 November 1925, p 2121.

In their attempts "to grapple with a big problem" politicians proposed only solutions which had failed so often in the past. Pragmatists declared it would be far better for the men and the State if abandoned holdings were transferred to men with capital and experience. Others objected to this as a betrayal of principle: it would allow the wealthy to traffic in land at the expense of a settled yeomanry.⁹⁵ They suggested instead various kinds of financial reconstruction. The member for Victoria, Peter Reidy, argued strongly against remission, claiming that extensions were merely extending injustice.⁹⁶ He advocated "an alteration of contract" which would allow the Land Board "to revalue on annual productivity". If this did not happen, he declared that settlers on 'Koorine' and 'Mt Schanck' "would be driven off their holdings". But a government already owing £70 million at 3% interest would not countenance this form of revaluation.⁹⁷ The newly-appointed Minister of Repatriation, William Denny, reminded his colleagues of the power vested in him under the 1917 Act to remit the whole or part of the purchase money or interest, and to extend the period of payment of interest or advances in approved cases. The immediate past Commissioner of Crown Lands and Minister of Repatriation, George Laffer, was also against revaluing, but he did concede the need to give some relief to soldier settlers engaged in dairying in the South East.⁹⁸

The Relief Act of 1925 offered relief for settlers on River Murray irrigation blocks but did not help soldiers in the South East.⁹⁹ The single

95. SAPD, 24 November 1925, p 2121.

96. SAPD, 24 November 1925, p 2121.

97. SAPD, 24 November 1925, p 2117.

98. SAPD, 24 November 1925, p 2355.

99. Discharged Soldier Settlers (Relief) Act, No. 1721 of 1925, assented to 6 January 1926.

concession to them was that a soldier might surrender his fee-simple for an agreement to purchase and thus capitalise his liability.¹⁰⁰ At the same time the government proclaimed a moratorium on purchasing land, restricted allowances for stock and plant to "actual necessity" and declined advances for discharging mortgages.¹⁰¹ As always government officials were confident that new legislation was the answer. The Superintendent of Soldier Settlement, for example, declared he was sure that "the legislation would provide for stability and progress and usher in a new era".¹⁰²

On 16 and 17 December 1925, during the final stages of debate on the Relief Bill, two reports tabled in the House presented evidence which flew in the face of the continued optimism of politicians and the sanguine hopes of the Superintendent of Soldier Settlement. Both the findings of a Royal Commission on Rural Settlement and the Classification and Report on South-Eastern Lands made it obvious that attempts at closer settlement in the South East had failed again.¹⁰³ County Grey had always been the most productive of the three counties in the district, and yet statistics for the years 1909-25 showed that in an area of almost 1½ million acres, the number of holdings had risen from 1901 to 2,905, and that except for areas around Millicent and Mt Gambier the country remained sparsely settled. Barley for malting had replaced wheat, but total cultivation had

100. If the Crown had vested a soldier in land in fee-simple under a mortgage to the Minister, the Minister could, if he thought the soldier had worked the land in a proper and satisfactory manner, allow the soldier to surrender his fee-simple for an agreement to purchase, dating from the time of original purchase and incorporating in the purchase money the principal owing by the discharged soldier, and at the Minister's discretion, advances made, and arrears of interest due. See also SAPP 10 of 1925-6, HA, 9 November 1926.

101. SAPD, 24 November 1925, p 2117; SAPP 10 of 1925-6, HA, 9 November 1926.

102. SAPD, 3 December 1925, p 1950.

103. SAPP 64 of 1925, HA, 16 December 1925; SAPP 71 of 1925, HA 17 December 1925.

not increased. Because of erratic prices the annual potato crop had fallen from an average of 18,480 tons to 8,608 tons per year. Members of the Commission considered this particularly deplorable as potato growing was labour intensive.¹⁰⁴

Despite "a favourable climate" and "an extent of fertile land", both enquiries reported that there was no reason to believe that future prospects for closer settlement in the South East would improve. Land suitable for agriculture had long since been alienated, and there was no way, save resumption, of overcoming a barrier to closer settlement which had persisted for eighty years. There were no unallotted Crown Lands suitable for subdivision. Closer settlement depended upon how ready owners were to subdivide or sell at reasonable prices, but neither legislation nor circumstance had ever encouraged offers at reasonable prices in the past. The Report therefore made a familiar recommendation: the best solution was to transform inferior land into good agricultural European land. The Commissioners were confident that drainage would achieve this. They declared that 71,000 acres of land, currently inundated, could be made at least as good as land in the Millicent district. When drainage was supplemented by improved road and rail facilities, the South East would support closer settlement. But again the government could not afford it, and again politicians were unwilling to risk such investment until legislation assured profitable returns through the sale of land. So once more the government asked men to settle on the land as it was before pre-conditions for their success existed.

As these new settlers would be without facilities helpful to agriculture, the Commission once again tampered with the original concept of closer settlement. It proposed to broaden the interpretation often given the term "closer settlement" - "small holdings worked on some system of farming that implied cultivation of the land and crops" - so that it

104. SAPP 64 of 1925, HA, 16 December 1925.

covered "all forms of land settlement leading to increased rural production calculated to give more remunerative returns per acre". W.J. Colebatch, Chairman of the Commission, claimed that in the South East it had been recognised that sheep-breeding and wool-growing could form the basis of closer settlement.¹⁰⁵ This meant that once again, and temporarily of course, the agrarian dream would need to be modified in this district.

Many mixed farmers were already running sheep as a sideline, but sheep-farming in the South East needed not only larger holdings than those possible under soldier settlement, but also land to which a farmer could shift his sheep in wet winters. The small-scale farmer was trapped in a familiar vortex. If land was obtained, he could afford only inferior land, which demanded capital improvement over a long period, which in turn added to his repayments. Moreover, by 1925 the main source of land was that abandoned by unsuccessful soldiers and offered under Surplus Lands Agreement. This was mostly second-rate land in any case, but after forfeiture or abandonment it deteriorated further, either because it had lain vacant or had been rented on a casual basis.¹⁰⁶ In short, in the same week in which clear evidence was given of the failure of previous closer settlement policies, the government proposed to repeat them exactly.

Yet in 1928 James Fox on 'Mt Schanck No. 2' was one of many South East settlers prepared to take the risk of buying more land to run sheep. In that year he was shearing 900 sheep and 500 lambs. On 1 March, under Surplus Lands Agreement 222 he paid £2,936 for 314½ acres of land, vacated by neighbouring soldier settlers and "overrun with rabbits". Fox now had

105. SAPP 71 of 1925, HA, 17 December 1925.

106. "Lands acquired for soldier settlement and afterwards abandoned and found to be unsuitable for soldier settlement and not required for purposes of State Government were to be dealt with as surplus lands and might be disposed of in any way approved by the Minister of Repatriation." SAPP 10 of 1923-4, HA, 29 October 1924.

647½ acres of land on which he could run sheep and dairy cows. At the same time he had committed himself to finding an extra £135.19.6 per year for rent alone.¹⁰⁷

In 1925 Cedric Swaffer gave up hope of getting Section 759 for which he had been applying consistently between 1922 and 1924. The abandoned land was by that time "alive with rabbits" and the fences were down. The windmill had been left turned on in gales so that the troughs were knocked down, the tank was empty and "the water was like a lake everywhere". On 12 March 1926, under Acquired Soldiers Agreement 1549, Swaffer secured 62 acres of Section 785, originally held by a soldier settler, now subdivided into four lots. The land cost £8.6.9 an acre. He now had 217½ acres but his annual commitments amounted to £143.3.4.¹⁰⁸

In 1926 Harry Bryant was running 599 ewes and 450 lambs when he purchased under Acquired Soldiers Agreement 1652 an extra 145.3/4 acres on 'Koorine', land two previous soldier settlers had abandoned. Bryant then had 570.3/4 acres, but an additional £54.6.6 to pay each year.¹⁰⁹

In 1926 and 1927, when the grapes failed because of mould, and 40 acres of barley returned only two bags to the acre, Charles Skinner at Coonawarra also applied for land to run a few more sheep. His only return had been from 41 ewes which had fetched 30/-, and he intended increasing

107. This land had formerly been occupied by H.F. and H.L. Habner as tenants in common under Acquired Soldiers Agreement 822, CSALB 23/651, DL; correspondence between J. Fox and P. Reidy, 7 July 1927; J. Fox and Inspector H.S. Bayly, 20 March 1928, GRG 35/176/1921/1333, SAA.

108. CSALB 7/71, DL; correspondence between C. Swaffer and Superintendent of Soldier Settlement on 7 March 1925, 27 March 1926, GRG 35/176/1919/2828, SAA; 28 October 1929, GRG 35/104/1928/4149, SAA.

109. This was section 341 in the Hundred of Young which had been held by A.E. Allchin under Agreement 1652. These sections, formerly 278 and 279, had been owned respectively by William Younghusband (1861); Samuel Tomkinson and Randolph Stow (1869); Charles and Arthur Leake (1870); Letitia Leake (1870); John and George Riddoch (1882); George Riddoch (1899). For full details, CT 18/2441, 126/66, and 519/125, LTO. Bryant's instalments amounted to £26.6.6; £28.10 had to be spent on improvements. For his first allotment, Section 425, £79.15.2 was due in annual instalments by 1926, but under Advances to Soldier Settlers Act of 1924 and the Soldier Settler Relief Act of 1925 amounts due and becoming due by 30 November 1926 were to be postponed until 1 May 1929. ASALB, 7/138, DL.

his sheep numbers to 70. But Skinner's financial situation was so bad that the Department refused his request.¹¹⁰

With access to capital and a run of good wool prices, Harry Schinckel at 'Hynam' invested in more land and sheep. In 1920 he was running 640 sheep which shored 17 bales at an average of 16d per lb, averaging approximately £20 per bale; by 1922, 24½ bales from 872 sheep averaged £30.5 per bale.¹¹¹ In 1923, with the offer of a bank overdraft of up to £5,000, under an Agreement to Purchase, he took up 326 acres at £2.12.6 per acre at Moy Hall. As this was within two days' travelling from his home block, he could control footrot by shifting his sheep from his wet land. By 1928 Schinckel was running 1,225 sheep which were yielding 46 bales at an average price of £23.11 per bale.¹¹²

Besides urging settlers to run sheep, the 1925 Royal Commission encouraged a second famillier and failed practice to meet the lack of agricultural land. Land-holders were to boost primary production by farming more intensively. To encourage scientific farming additional instruction and demonstration were to be made available.¹¹³ The Commission also recommended irrigation for the growth of summer fodder crops, improved breeding of livestock, and planting trees to provide shelter and windbreaks in the bleak winters. Above all, for the South East, scientific farming

110. GRG 35/104/1927/733, DL.

111. Schinckel always sold his wool through Strachan, Murray and Shannon of Geelong. "Wool clip records 1919-51 and various other records particularly in latter years with regard to wool yields and descriptions", Day Book kept by H.B. Schinckel, read on 13 September 1978.

112. In 1977 this land sold for £240 per acre. Interview with H.B. Schinckel, 21 June 1978.

113. Settlers interviewed felt that instructors who came from the city in the twenties could teach them very little. They also declared that they did not have the time to spare for meetings or the money to put suggestions into practice.

meant using phosphates and establishing pastures, particularly subterranean clover. Subterranean clover retained water, a great asset in a district with such vast inundated areas, and was also useful in the South East's sandy areas as it stopped drift and arrested the spread of sorrel and ferns.¹¹⁴

A few farmers in the South East had mixed reactions to super. Some thought "forcing the land" beyond its inherent productivity "unnatural". They said "the last state of the land would be worse than the first".¹¹⁵ Others questioned the assumption that subterranean clover would suit all types of soil in the district. When Skinner was given advances for four tons of super and 150 lbs of sub clover for 47 acres of land in 1929, he "accepted with pleasure" but he did question "whether strawberry clover, Dutch or white clover or rye grass might not be more suitable grasses for his heavy black soil at Coonawarra".¹¹⁶ Most farmers were, however, enthusiastic about the combination of super and subterranean clover. In 1926, when Cedric Swaffer received advances for five tons of super and 160 lbs of sub clover, he was optimistic that the introduction of super

114. See, for example, Second Progress Report of Royal Commission on Rural Settlement, County Grey, in SAPP 71 of 1925, HA, 17 December 1925. See also the main address by the Agricultural Instructor in the South East on "Improvements of Pastures" before a gathering of 200 farmers at Kybybolite Research Farm on Visiting Day, 1930, in SAPP 43 of 1929-30, LC, 7 November 1930.

	<u>Areas dressed with phosphate</u>	<u>Tons</u>	<u>Per acre</u>
1924-5	67,124	4,080	136
1925-6	123,657	7,380	134
1926-7	162,355	9,110	126
1927-8	209,992	11,393	122
1928-9	250,413	30,029	117
1929-30	302,114	15,701	116

SAPP 43 of 1929-30, LC, 7 November 1930.

For the scientific investigation of "coast", which led to a solution of the disease by 1938 by remedying trace element deficiencies through the application of cobalt and copper, M. Williams, p 322.

115. Comments from interviews with South East soldier settlers, G.S. Laslett, N. Janeway, and L. Talbot, 11-13 September 1976.

116. C. Skinner to the Superintendent of Soldier Settlement, 22 August 1929, GRG 35/176/1929/362, DL.

and suitable seed would be the salvation of poor land on 'The Schanck' where, as another settler in the area claimed, "You could chase a mouse all over and never lose sight of it".¹¹⁷

But scientific methods demanded money, and only farmers with capital could afford to employ them. By the early twenties Schinckel could see his brother's and a neighbour's land covered with a rich growth of subterranean clover. He had seen top-dressing with lime in Cornwall while on leave during the war. He decided he would run a cheap experiment. For £5 he bought an old seed-broadcaster from May and Miller, machinery manufacturers at Horsham, and began spreading super rather than drilling it in. This made the clover really "put its head up". After such success Schinckel decided to use these enriched pastures more intensively. In 1925 he crossed his Merino ewes with Dorset rams and became the first in the northern part of the district to produce fat lambs for the Portland market. As there was enough feed for cattle as well as sheep, by the mid-twenties he was also breeding red Polls and selling vealers as a sideline. Subterranean clover and super "had done the trick". By the end of the twenties Schinckel could survey a diverse and prospering farm.¹¹⁸

Dean was another with enough capital to indulge in scientific farming. His experiments "were nothing short of an object lesson". So generous was the growth of subterranean clover on 1,200 acres of 'Koorine' in 1929 that Dean harvested, installed a seed-cleaning machine, and sold seed in large quantities. With the advent of sub and super Dean, like Schinckel, bred with an eye to the fat lamb industry. He crossed his Merinos with Romney Marsh and hard-footed, early-maturing Ryelands to produce lambs less susceptible to foot-rot and ready for market at only five months.¹¹⁹

117. C. Swaffer to Minister of Repatriation, 27 March 1926, GRG 35/176/1919/2828, SAA; G.S. Laslett, O.B. Flat, interviewed 11 September 1976.

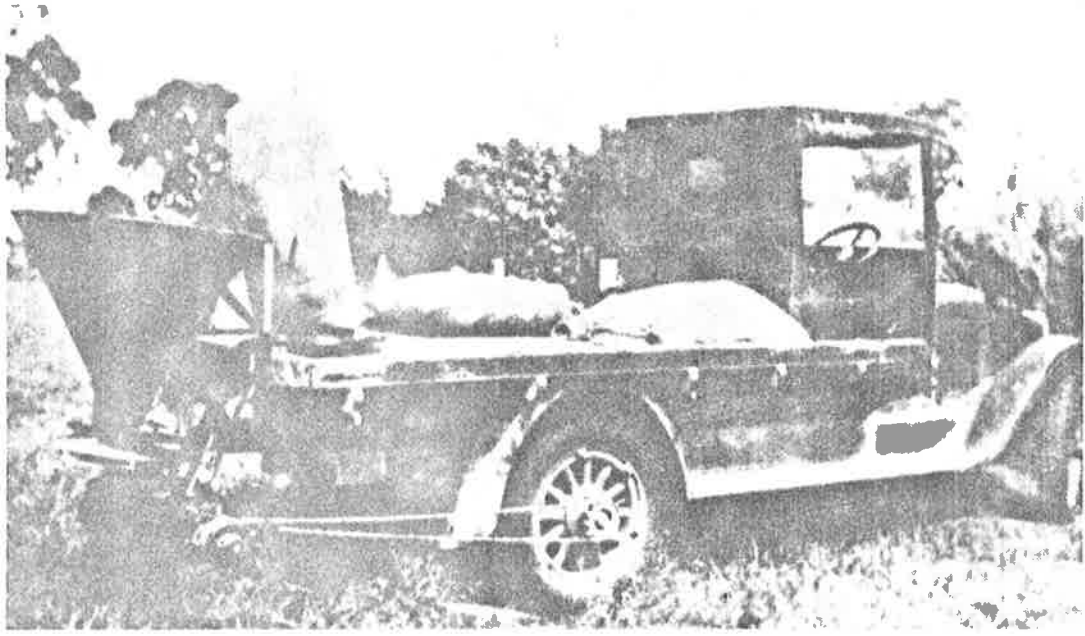
118. Interview with H.B. Schinckel, 21 June 1978.

119. Industries of the South East, pp 139 and 141-3.

*The super-spreader devised by Harry Schinckel and his neighbour,
Syd Shepherd.*

Like Adam Smith before him, Harry Schinckel knew 'Hynam' was sheep country. By the mid-twenties Schinckel was improving the land by sowing subterranean clover and spreading super from an improvised broadcaster. By the 1930s, Schinckel had shown that in the north of the South East successful "closer settlement" was possible only through scientific sheep and pasture management on large holdings.

Sheep fattening on strawberry clover on 'Hynam' country.



But by 30 June 1927 the majority of settlers in South Australia were in a less fortunate position than Schinckel and Dean. Since 1915 more than half the roughly 1.2 million acres purchased for closer settlement in South Australia had been set aside for soldiers at an average cost of £2.14 per acre. Yet only 1,967 soldiers had been settled; 421 had applied for relief under the 1925 Act, and only 82 had completed the purchase of a mere 76,964 acres. This most recent experiment in creating yeomen farmers had again involved the State in severe financial loss. In 1927 this loss reached £2,587,902; returns from instalments paid on principal and interest had been only £412,292. The government continued its moratorium on purchasing land and giving advances to pay mortgages.

In 1927 the Superintendent of Soldier Settlement observed that one of the main advantages of the operation of the Relief Act had been "to bring him in personal touch with the settlers". This had allowed him to see "evidence of difficulties which confronted each man".¹²⁰ These difficulties were not confined to South Australia. By 1927 71% of soldier settlers in Australia had failed, and State Governments had lost £23,500,000. South Australia joined other States in seeking Commonwealth assistance. The Commonwealth had no legal obligation, but appointed Mr Justice Pike to chair a Commission of Enquiry into "Losses due to Soldier Settlement".

After two years of investigation Mr Justice Pike reported on 24 August 1929. The causes of failure he outlined in the latest experiment in settling a yeomanry had characterised every previous experiment to force European values on to non-European land. Settlers had lacked experience "with the uncertain climatic conditions"; legislators had not been able to judge how much land or capital was necessary to ensure "a decent living". European markets had failed. The position had become "an

120. 562,599 acres of freehold and 640,041 acres of leasehold had been purchased for £3,862,322.3.11. SAPP 10 of 1926-7, HA, 18 October 1927.

impossible one for settlers and Governments alike". By lending money to soldiers at a rate below which the government could borrow, and by allowing financial concessions to the extent of £1,775,164 the Pike Commission estimated South Australia had suffered a total loss of £3,565,829 in fifteen years. Nor did the Report mention any evidence which suggested that the money spent and the toil exerted had made the land more fit for agriculture than it had been since the first Act to establish a soldier settler yeomanry.¹²¹

While the Commission was gathering evidence, seasons in the north of South Australia failed again. Very light rains in the winter of 1927 made it one of the worst years since 1914. State wheat yields dropped by 32% and overall agricultural output declined by 23%. Only high yields from the Lower North and the small area under cultivation in the South East prevented the figures looking much worse. In an attempt to compensate for drought losses farmers increased their acreage under grain, but apart from the South East which enjoyed "three favourable seasons", the drought persisted until 1929 and yields remained low.¹²² When the drought broke in 1930 farmers rallied to a Commonwealth appeal to "GROW MORE WHEAT". A glut resulted and wheat was "thrown onto the market for what it could fetch". Prices fell from 4/11½ to 2/1½ per bushel between 1930 and 1931.¹²³

121. Report on Losses Due to Soldier Settlement, by Justice Pike, presented by command to the Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia, 24 August 1929.

122. SAPP 43 of 1930, LC, 7 November 1930. Average rainfall for the South East in 1929 was 22.88"; the mean was 24.71". See also the comments of the Superintendent of Soldier Settlement on "one of the worst seasons since the drought of 1914", in SAPP 10 of 1927-8, HA, 2 October 1928.

123. S.W. Dyer, M.A. Thesis, Farmers and the Depression: Government Farm Relief in South Australia, 1929-39, University of Adelaide, 1974, p 21.

In 1929 wool prices also fell dramatically, and South Australia's revenue deficit was six times larger than two years previously.¹²⁴

Low prices hit the South East as elsewhere. In 1929-30 fat lambs were down to 5/- per head and wool prices plummeted by 40-60%.¹²⁵ Men were battling to survive even on the most productive land. Practical and experienced farmers like Dean and Schinckel found intensive holdings were no guarantee against debt. As they had used their profits from sheep husbandry to improve their holdings they could not meet the high instalments on their valuable land. Dean's net income for 1930 was £93.18.5; by 1931, to live and finance the working of his property his mortgagees restricted him to £31 per month.¹²⁶ "Scientific farming" had to go. He decreased his use of superphosphate. In 1930 he spread ninety tons; in 1931 he could afford only eight tons of this "lifeblood of the South East". In that year the Minister of Repatriation waived Dean's payments for a year because he and his wife expected capital from relatives.¹²⁷

124. Deficits in Revenue Account: 1927-8, £274,931.3.6; 1928-9, £930,858.13; 1929-30, £1,625,822.10.1.

Speech of Governor, Sir Alexander Hore-Ruthven, at the opening of 2nd session of 27th Parliament, 12 March 1931, SAPP 1 of 1931, HA, 12 March 1931.

125. SAPP 10 of 1929-30, HA, 23 September 1930.

126. Annual amount due to Repatriation Department, £965.3.8; arrears, £2,716.18.5; Liability to Goldsborough Mort at 31 March 1931, £9,973.9.6; 1930-31 Expenditure, £1,874.12.7; Interest on mortgage to Goldsborough Mort, £675.16.11; Total, £2,550.9.6; Income, £2,644.7.11; Credit balance £93.18.5.

Report of Chairman of Soldier Settlement Committee, 9 August 1932, DL.

127. SAPP 33 of 1940, HA, 11 July 1940, question 954.

By 1931 Harry Schinckel had put £1,244.14.6 into improving his property.¹²⁸ But when the average price of wool per bale from his 1,650 sheep fell from £15.8 in 1929 to £10.4 in 1932, Schinckel owed the Minister of Repatriation £282.17.3. He applied for a reduction of interest which the Minister refused. With help from his brothers and £1,000 overdraft from the National Bank he managed to stay on his block.¹²⁹

Large farmers needed luck and capital to survive; small farmers on poor land were "labouring under impossible conditions". Soldier and closer settlers in the South East became the antithesis of the self-supporting stable yeoman. They quit their land to search for work while their families, if they were lucky, made day-to-day living expenses by dairying, as milk still held at 7d to 9d per gallon.¹³⁰ Harry Bryant and a neighbour bought a two-stand shearing machine for £102 to earn money by carting super and shearing, but this sort of work vanished with the Depression. By 1931 even after liquidation of previous arrears, Bryant owed the Department £729.15.7.¹³¹ Swaffer's income to June 1931 was £515, and his expenditure £303. That difference of £200 was just enough to meet his payments. He hoped to find £125 from his cows which the Minister of Repatriation, on a salary of about £1,000 considered would be more than sufficient to support his wife and four children. By 21 August Swaffer was writing to the Superintendent of Soldier Settlement promising he would

128. Valuation of improvements was as follows: Buildings, £580; water, £145; clearing, £353.12; fencing, £166.2.6. Report of Chairman of Closer Settlement Committee, 15 April 1932 and 8 August 1933, DL.

129. Day Book of H.B. Schinckel; interview with H.B. Schinckel, 28 June 1978.

130. Among the jobs mentioned by interviewees were clearing drains, trapping rabbits, quarrying stone, erecting telephone lines, building roads, shearing, spreading super, wood cutting and carting, and general labour for farmers who could afford to pay them.

131. Report of J.W. Colebatch, Chairman of Soldier Settlement Committee, 9 August 1932, DL.

try to reduce domestic expenditure by £15 to £20 per year to be sure of meeting commitments.¹³²

With other vignerons and horticulturalists, Charles Skinner at Coonawarra was in an even worse position than the small mixed farmer. Between 1924 and 1928 his expenditure exceeded returns by £390.¹³³ Frost and mould had attacked his grapes and fruit; super had increased his yield but reduced the sugar content of his grapes. In 1929 the Minister of Repatriation allowed relief but Skinner wondered if he were only "prolonging the agony without easing the all-round feeling of hopelessness" by staying on his block.¹³⁴ In 1930 his own old vines and neighbours' vines planted under government exhortation bore well, but the export market for grapes failed, and the local market glutted. Bound to one firm, Milne and Co., growers had the choice of selling their grapes at £2 a ton, leaving them to rot on the vines, or processing them at 1½d per gallon in back-yard distilleries. They tried to raise £5,000 by organising deputations to the Premier, State and Federal members, the Minister of Local Government, J.

132. GRG 35/104/1934/2940, SAA. From 1921 under the Ministerial Salaries Act 6 Ministers were to receive £7,750 to be divided among them; under the Ministerial Salaries Reductions Act of 1930 this amount was reduced by 15% for one year; under the Financial Emergency Act of 1931, the amount was reduced by 20% for one year.

133. <u>Wages and Working Expenses</u>		<u>Net Income</u>
1924	£124	£101
1925	209	85 out of pocket
1926	98	112
1927	248	119
1928	292	174

Letter of application for relief under Amending Discharged Soldier Settlement Relief Act on 2 April 1929, GRG 35/176/1929/362, DL. Under the Frost Relief Act, 1829 of 1927, assented to 23 December 1927, settlers at Coonawarra were eligible to apply for relief to the State Bank and repay the amount in 10 equal instalments by 1 July 1929, with interest at 6-1/2%.

134. Correspondence between C. Skinner and J.W. Cosh, Superintendent of Soldier Settlement, in March (n.d.), 11 June, 22 June, 1927; 16 July, 1928; 7 March, 14 June, 1929, GRG 35/104/1927/737; DL; 2 April, 15 July, 8 August and 22 August 1929, GRG 35/176/1929/362, DL. Other letters during this period give itemised details of expenditure, returns and relief allowed. Interview with C. Skinner, 30 November 1977. For effect of fertiliser on grapes see also SAPP 10 of 1930-1, HA, 12 November 1931.

Tilley, and the Minister of Agriculture, S.R. Whitford. These resulted in visits from the Chief Inspector of Excise, R.M. Gollan, the Chairman of a Royal Commission of Enquiry, and the Costing Clerk of the Prime Minister's Department in January 1931 - but nothing else. Neither State nor Federal Government had money to offer. Growers were exhorted to "hope for the best".¹³⁵ Skinner was granted further concessions, but these, he considered, "only made the misery drag on and did nothing to put food or hope in the hands of settlers". To meet his 100% mortgage he now had to "flog the land" even more and giving it super was proving to be "like giving whisky to a tired man".¹³⁶

Through the desperate years of 1930-31 small farmers in the South East continued to lobby. In June 1929 soldier settlers petitioned Parliament through their delegates to the State Council of the RSL. They admitted that although some returned men were not "suitable settlers", settlers as a whole were not to blame for their plight. Rather, they claimed that their plight "was eloquent of the fact that something had gone wrong with the soldier settler scheme ever since its inception". Their land was not good agricultural land; what they had was too little and over-priced. This situation had only been aggravated through the tremendous fall in prices. They claimed the government was also to blame as its officials had bought land on the advice of "so-called experts on

135. Correspondence between C. Skinner, Messrs J. Redman and Sons, P. Reidy, MP, J. Shepherd, MP, L.S. Smith, the Acting Secretary for the Minister of Agriculture, Senator O'Halloran, P.M. Forde, Acting Minister for Trade and Customs, J. Lawry, Acting Inspector of Excise, M.D. Cameron, MHR, R.M. Gollan, A.H. Dalziel, State Secretary of the RSL, between 4 June 1930 and 28 January 1931, in possession of the writer, with permission to use from C. Skinner.

136. Letter from C. Skinner, 21 October 1977.

the Land Board at prices which even in good times were inflationary".¹³⁷
 They were battling; they could not keep going "in face of constant annual loss"; they were up against "an impossible proposition".¹³⁸

Settlers under both Closer and Soldier Settlement Agreements on 'Mt Schanck No. 2' were also particularly vocal. On 9 February 1931 they petitioned R.S. Richards, the Commissioner of Crown Lands, for financial relief and on 20 February they sent a delegation to discuss their desperate financial situation. As in 1925, they demanded a revaluation of their blocks. Without this revaluation they insisted they could not cope with stock diseases, vermin, rust and a disparity between Adelaide and local prices. They were lucky if they could sell a ton of "Snowflake" potatoes locally for £1.7.6, but in Adelaide growers were getting £4.5.6. All they were asking, they told the Commissioner, was "to make a living and to pay their local debts". The Commissioner professed sympathy with their situation, but felt he must remind them that "affairs of State could not be run by sympathy alone".^{139.}

Four months later, on 11 June 1931, the Commissioner visited the South East and confronted a gathering of angry men at the 'Bellum Bellum' Hotel near 'Mt Schanck'. Again they told him that the only measure which

137. Copy of letter held by C. Skinner, Secretary of Coonawarra RSL Sub-Branch, to the Premier, 28 January 1931. At the meeting of the State Council of the R.S.L. on 10 March 1932 a tribute was paid to the work Peter Reidy had done on behalf of the Diggers. Item 22, State Council Minutes, 10 March 1932. Interviewees also praised Peter Reidy's work on their behalf. He was born in County Clare, Ireland, in 1874, and from 1900-14 was a policeman in Mt Gambier. He was called to the city where he did not gain promotion as he anticipated, but was assigned to beat duty. In 1914 he canvassed the electorate of Victoria, added 1800 names to the roll and won the seat as a Labor candidate from the then Premier, A.H. Peake, in 1915. Reidy refused to obey the Labor Party "who took charge of the movement" during the war and remained outspoken on conscription. When he was expelled from the Party he remained for a time as an Independent Laborite, but gradually associated with the Liberals. He held the seat for 17 unbroken years, died at Glenelg in 1932, and by request was buried at Mt Gambier. For further details The Advertiser, 28 January 1932.

138. Letter from C. Skinner, 21 October 1977.

139. Date of petition, with 34 signatures, 9 February 1931, GRG 35/104/1931/838, SAA. Members of the deputation were P. Reidy, MP, D.J. Shepherd, MP, K. Macrow and C.T. Atkin.

would relief their plight was a revaluation of land from the date of allotment. Temporary relief only created a further burden. Neither was there any point in appointing to Mt Gambier three instructors from the Department of Agriculture. Farmers lacked the capital to make a living, let alone to take advantage of scientific farming advice and methods. Furthermore, their land was grazing land pure and simple which they could not attempt to cultivate. The land drifted when they tried. Only revaluation would given them a chance. It would, they hoped, put them on an equal footing with 'Mt Schanck No. 1' settlers across the road, who had a hall, a church and other things intended under closer settlement. Keeping men on the land like this was surely the aim of closer settlement and revaluation was the only way of ensuring this when their eight-year financial concession period expired and their repayments increased in 1932.

The Commissioner granted that closer settlement could never be a success until the Crown had the power to acquire land at a reasonable price. He admitted that, with regard to soldier settlement, it might be an unpopular thing to say but governments had gone mad after the war and paid prices that were too high. He told South East farmers that their problems were common not only throughout South Australia but throughout the world. Greater productivity apparently no longer ensured greater prosperity. Never before was the State producing so much, he declared, and yet never before had the State been so poor. The Commissioner had admitted the false assumptions underlying every experiment in closer settlement.

The Commissioner did not question, however, the effectiveness of solutions with an equally long history of failure. He agreed that 'Mt Schanck No. 1' settlers had borrowed at a lower rate while 'Mt Schanck No. 2' had been purchased at a boom time. He thought the answer was an alteration to the tenure of title. He knew financial institutions did not like perpetual lease but this form of tenure demanded interest only on

purchase price. "Despite all difficulties," he claimed, "the man with a block of land where he can grow something for himself and have some means of keeping himself is infinitely better off than the man on the dole who might be sleeping in the park." Too many were trying to obtain a living in secondary industry. "It would be much better," he concluded, "to establish a peasantry and put more men on land which is not being utilised to its full capacity." The Commissioner's final remarks showed the cold comfort to be got from a familiar ideal. He left the South East with no offer of help other than a promise of an investigation by the Land Board.¹⁴⁰

The Leader of the Opposition, Richard Butler, was another who did not question long-standing assumptions, although by June 1930 only 141 of 1,700 soldier settlers had purchased their land and most were finding "it took a lot of hard scratching" even to keep up payments.¹⁴¹ He did not think there should be any slackening in effort to increase agricultural production. As he saw it, South Australia's prosperity still depended on the expansion of agriculture. A move in population from the cities back to the land offered the best hope for permanent prosperity. He admitted that during the last few years the man on the land had had a bad time. High rates of production, inflated land values and reduced prices for primary products had all acted as a deterrent to success and tested the

140. Transcript of account of meeting at the 'Bellum Bellum', GRG 35/104/1931/383, SAA. In the first eight years of closer settlement agreements interest was charged at 2½% and for the remainder at 3½%. "When the interest rate was capitalised the effect of the early interest concession rate ultimately raised the interest rate." GRG 35/104/1931/838, SAA.

141. By 30 June 1930, the situation was as follows:

Soldiers settled: Mixed farming and grazing, 1,363; Sharefarming, 59; Dairying, 54; Fruit growing and market gardening, 207; Lucerne growing, poultry keeping and pig-raising, 17; Total 1,700.

Resumé of applications: Men settled, 1,700; Approved, not settled, 2,365; Deferred and awaiting assistance, 24; Withdrawn and cancelled applications, 231; Surrendered, 284; Transferred, 306; Cancellations, 287; Advances repaid, 274; Completed purchase, 141; Applications not proceeded with, 1,388; Applications not approved, 89; Total 7,089.

SAPP 10 of 1929-30, HA, 23 September 1930.

calibre of settlers to the limit. But in his estimation the position was not by any means hopeless, providing that South Australia learnt from the lessons of the past. With scientific farming, the return of good seasons, and a gradual improvement in prices, the Leader of the Opposition predicted that stability would return. This would give young people, especially farmers' sons, the opportunity to take up land. Success depended, he concluded, not upon the State, but upon personal industry, initiative and thrift.¹⁴²

The Professor of Agriculture at Adelaide University, A. Richardson, not only agreed but echoed those many previous optimists who had seen the South East as the only portion of the State left for the development of wheat farming. In that district, he declared, there was some of the most fertile land in the State. The South East also enjoyed the highest rainfall. He was sure the South East was destined to be a prime centre for dairy produce, fat lambs, and fodder crops. However, the Professor urged that this development did depend on the provision of adequate drainage facilities at a cost of several million pounds and a satisfactory scheme for land acquisition.¹⁴³

The government had heard that before, but by 1930 it had lost £945,743.11.8 on South East drainage schemes. The Chairman of the Committee of Enquiry into South East Drainage in that year advised against incurring further loss. After examining 1,344 holdings totalling 2,664,838 acres, and after making an engineering survey of 2 million acres, he reported to the Commissioner of Crown Lands in similar vein to every previous report. It would be uneconomical to drain South Eastern land further unless a land purchase scheme ensured the whole cost of drainage and improvements would be borne by those who occupied it. This could not be satisfactorily accomplished by treaty or negotiation under existing

142. The Advertiser, 18 May 931.

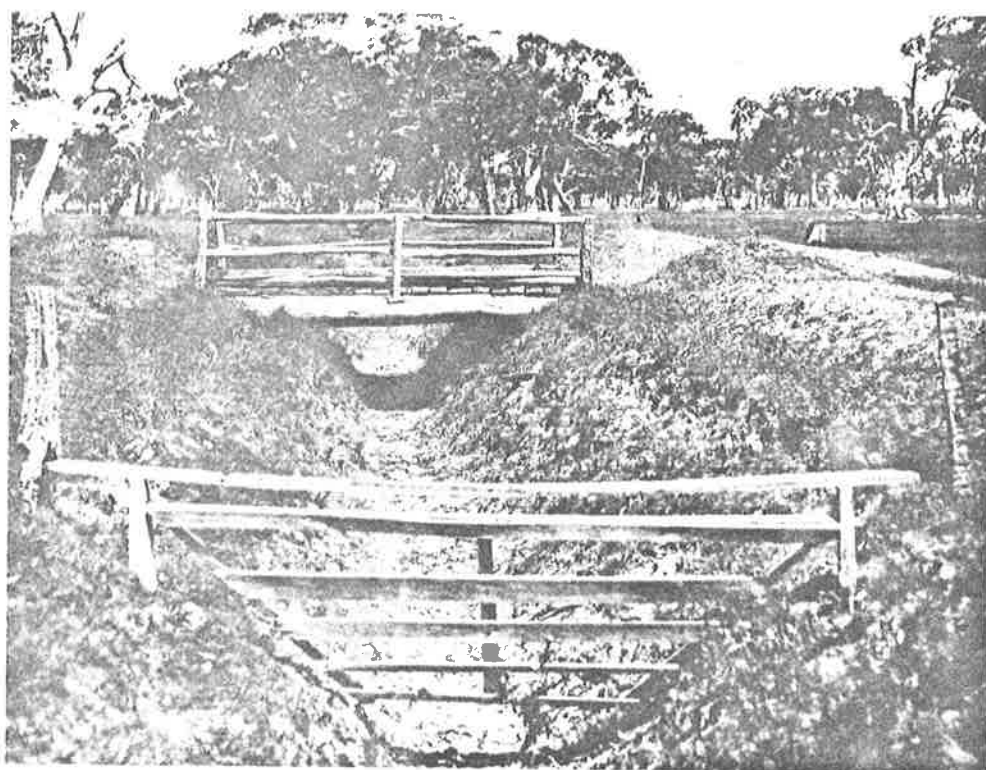
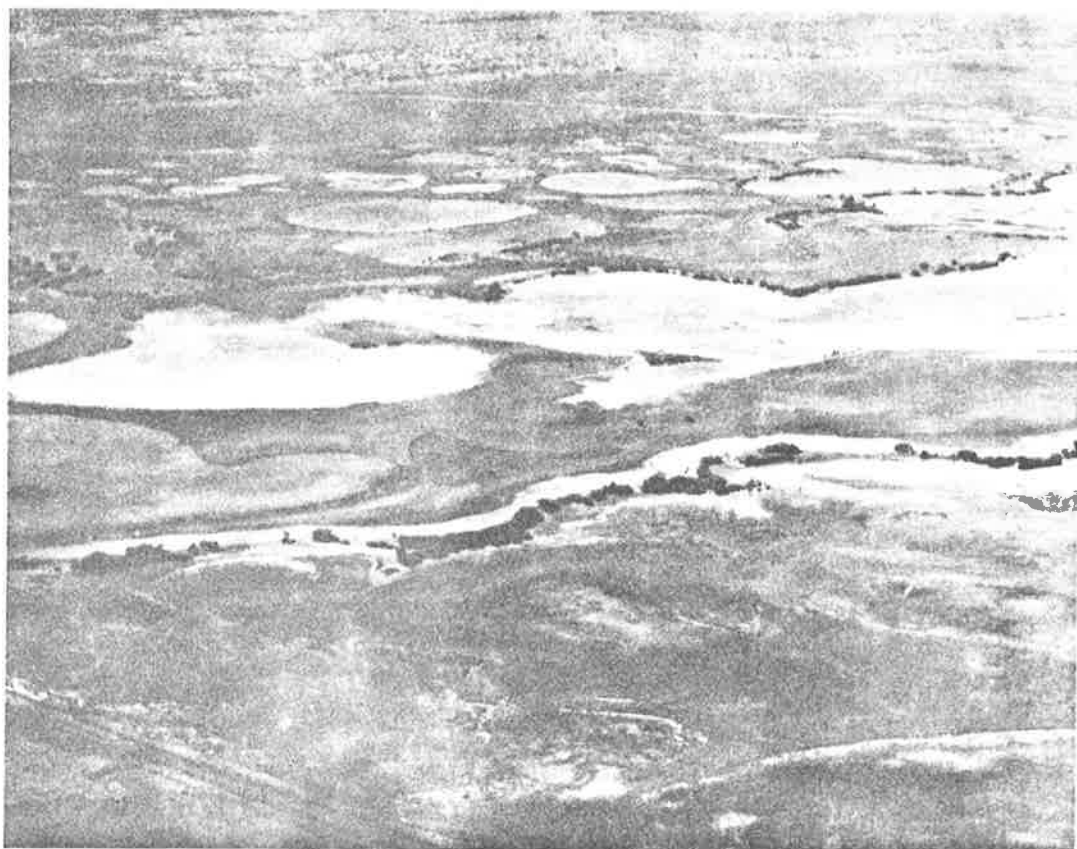
143. SAPP 71 of 1931, LC, 23 November 1931.

Flooded area around Lake Hawdon, late 1970s.

(P. Laut, CSIRO)

Landowners and legislators believed they could make land in the South East behave like European land if they drained it. To this end, they spent heavily. Yet after a century some land, in wet winters, remained as "muddy, boggy, splashy and as swampy" as when Europeans first encountered it.

One of George Riddoch's private drains on Gum Flat, 'Koorine'.



legislation, nor was the government ready to finance such a scheme. As "the difficult question of finance overshadowed all other considerations", no drainage legislation was enacted.¹⁴⁴

Farmers were not only without facilities but a spate of legislation following the Land Board's investigations in 1931 offered not revaluation from the date of allotment, but the familiar concessions of a reduction in purchase money and extensions of time and capital.¹⁴⁵ As these concessions were now available only to those with no outside creditor except the State Bank, large farmers who had cleared their debts stood to benefit and the small farmer still faced ruin.¹⁴⁶

In 1931 politicians also offered another palliative with a long history. Although "common sense men preferred to feel the land was their own", and although perpetual lease had been "a cause of heart break and ill-health to the settler", as well as "a bane and a bug bear to Governments", legislation once more gave settlers the choice of freehold or perpetual lease tenure.¹⁴⁷ Soldiers and closer settlers throughout South Australia were also put on an equal footing with payments at 5%.¹⁴⁸

144. SAPP 52 of 1929-30, LC, 4 November 1930.

145. The Debt Adjustment Act, 1930, had been assented to on 20 November 1930. Under Act 2058 of 1931, the Discharged Soldiers Settlement Act, 1931, assented to 9 December 1931, the Minister might wholly or in part, remit money due on principal or interest, or postpone the date of payment. The Minister might also reduce rent and capitalise interest, or extend the term of any agreement up to 64 years. See also SAPP 10 of 1932, HA, 8 November 1932.

146. On 3 October 1932, the Chairman of the Land Board, W.J. Colebatch and members of the Board, C.M. Hambridge and M. Fraser, pointed out that although additional powers for relief had been enacted recently, they could not be implemented because of outside mortgages. "When the Crown was not the only creditor any relief afforded would have the effect of improving others at expense of the general taxpayer. Except where the mortgage was held by the State Bank as security for assistance, the Board would make no recommendation for the reduction of purchase money but only for an extension of term." GRG 35/104/1931/838, SAA. James Fox was one of the few small men in the South East who did not hold an outside mortgage, and was given a reduction of 2½% on purchase money from £2,697 to £2,265.8. This correspondingly reduced his instalments from £216.6.6 to £185.13.4 per annum. CSALB, 11/23.

147. SAPP, 19 November 1931, p 2687. Surrender of agreement for perpetual lease was enacted in Act 2058 of 1931, assented to 9 December 1931.

148. Closer Settlement Agreements had originally been at 6% but under the Financial Emergency Act Extension Act, Act 2039, of 1931, assented to 2 December 1931, all rates of interest under Discharged Soldiers' Settlement Acts or Closer Settlement Acts were reduced to 5%. See also GRG 35/104/1931/838, SAA.

By 1933 these concessions were not proving sufficient to sustain most farmers in the South East. Their land had refused to be agriculturally productive. Their blocks were neither large nor fertile enough to support mixed farming, and overseas and local markets remained low. The position of Vasey Watts and James Fox was typical of the smaller settler. In 1932 Watts owed the Department only £178.4.1 and had no outside debts other than a cultivator worth £32.¹⁴⁹ But on 3 December 1934 he told the Department, "There is nothing in milking cows". He sent his cream cheque as payment. He declared he could get no more if he made it into butter and sold it at 6d per lb. He was making "more out of rabbits" than out of the pure Jersey herd he had built up. Nor would he cultivate again. One year, because of rust, he got only four bags at 2/2 a bushel off 75 acres. Then he sowed 100 acres with oats "but grubs took the lot". In 1933 barley was "practically worthless" as it was fetching only 1/5 a bushel.¹⁵⁰

In 1931 Fox got only a little more than a ton of oats to the acre; his wheat, which averaged eight bushels to the acre, represented a loss of £1 per acre; his barley had to be cut "on the green side" because of barley grubs, and he was offered only 2/- for "decent ewes". By 1932 he was £940.10.6 in arrears; by 1933 he owed £1,399.17.6.¹⁵¹

Grape-growers at Coonawarra remained the worst off. Charles Skinner was one soldier granted an extension of term on his principal, mortgage and arrears in 1933. But his fruit trees were 44 years old and "run out". His average net income after expenditure during the last eleven years had

149. Report of W.J. Colebatch, Chairman of Soldier Settlement Committee, 29 August 1932, DL.

150. Correspondence from V. Watts to Superintendent of Soldier Settlement 3 December 1934, GRG 35/175/1925/4440, SAA.

151. Inspector's report, 3 March 1932, DL; correspondence between J. Fox, Inspector Richardson, and Superintendent of Soldier Settlement, 24 February, 10 September 1931; 13 October 1932; 2 June, 10 November 1933, GRG 35/104/1928/4149, SAA. For details of expenditure and reductions, GRG 35/104/1932/2302, SAA.

averaged £99. He declared his situation remained quite impossible.¹⁵² "I cannot pay anything," he wrote to the Superintendent of Soldier Settlement on 21 June 1933, "as I have nothing to pay with unless I sell the cows and that is all along with a bit of a pension, 14/- a fortnight, that we have to live on."¹⁵³ In 1934 the Fruit Colonists picked their grapes for the first time in four years. But after paying expenses and outstanding debts, Skinner had only £57.10.11 left of his income of £124.17.9. He had sold his insurance policy which was his last negotiable security. It was quite clear to Skinner that without reliable overseas markets even a freehold proprietor could not be safely established on South Australian land. "You will see quite well that as conditions are today," he wrote in October 1934, "if I owned the place we would be barely existing." In the interests of his wife and two children, Skinner was advised either to earn money away from his block or to increase his holding and go in for mixed farming but he decided he would try to stick it out a bit longer.¹⁵⁴ There were others as badly off at Coonawarra as he was. After investigation in 1934, the District Inspector of Lands satisfied the Department of Repatriation that Coonawarra would best be abandoned as a fruit-growing area. The Inspector recommended that vines be destroyed and any available land in the district added to holdings to make them "agricultural propositions".¹⁵⁵

152. The repayment of the balance of principal on mortgage was extended to 65 years from 21 May 1923; agreement to purchase was extended from 35 to 55 years; and extension of time for repayment of arrears to 31 March 1934. Report of J.W. Colebatch, Chairman of Soldier Settlement Committee, 8 September 1933. At this date Skinner had received £1,063.19.11 in advances, £224.14.7 was due in interest, and instalments due amounted to £652.12.4. GRG 35/104/1927/737, DL.

153. Correspondence between Charles Skinner and J.W. Cosh, 21 June, 20 September 1933; 18 and 23 June, 2 July, 17 August and 25 October 1934. This correspondence also gives details on items of expenditure, prices of grapes, returns and arrears. GRG 35/104/1933/6581, DL.

154. Correspondence between Charles Skinner and J.W. Cosh, 17 April and 24 November 1930; 28 March, 14 April, 6, 12 and 14 May, 4 and 19 September 1931, GRG 35/104/1927/737, DL; Letter from Charles Skinner, 19 October 1931.

155. GRG 35/104/1927/737, DL.

By 1933 some legislators were saying that the current attempt to settle the South East, like every other "in that direction" for the past seventy years, was a "muddle, blunder and disaster".¹⁵⁶ Yet for others the great dream brought from the old world was still alive. In 1933 they ignored what closer settlers on the land said so strongly, clearly and frequently about their desperate battle to survive, and proposed a scheme to develop the South East which varied little from that proposed by the founding fathers a century previously. A chartered company and the Governments of Britain and South Australia negotiated for men caught in the Depression in England to settle in the South East land. This would bring prosperity and wealth for all. Sir Henry Barwell, Agent-General in London, was sure that a scheme to develop the South East was safe in the hands of a British firm which had financed similar agricultural development schemes in South America and elsewhere. He called the plan "sound, practical and statesmanlike" for he was convinced the district was one part of South Australia where "increased productivity would lead to increased population and to increased prosperity for the State as a whole".¹⁵⁷ Former Premier, Lionel Hill, was another who did not doubt that such a scheme was financially and commercially sound although he recognised financiers naturally would not consider the proposition unless sure of government backing.¹⁵⁸ In 1933 in a report on the development of the South

156. SAPD 23 November 1933, p 2337.

157. Correspondence between Sir Henry Barwell and R.L. Butler, Premier, 16 November 1933. GRG 35/351, SAA.

158. Correspondence between Lionel Hill and Sir E.J. Harding, Under-Secretary of State for the Dominions and representatives of Montagu Stanley and Company, on 10 and 23 October 1933. Under the Scheme, pending draining operations on 500,000-1,000,000 acres in the South East, the chartered company working in cooperation with the British government would require two thirds of the settlers to be British, would find markets for produce, and would limit profits to approximately 7%. Federal Land Tax would be remitted during sub-division of the South East unless the unimproved value of the holdings exceeded £5,000. GRG 35/351, SAA.

W.J. Colebatch, Assistant Director of Lands, did not give the government good grounds for supporting the scheme. He pointed out that many areas still needed draining, transport facilities should be improved, only a quarter of settlers under closer settlement agreements since 1914 had purchased their land, and closer settlement in the South East would always involve lamb-breeding and dairying more than wheat-growing. That had to be so because, the Chairman reported, the best agricultural land there still lay in the hands of a few individuals.¹⁵⁹

Members in the Legislative Council clearly stated the feelings of these few individuals. The possible acquisition of their land for a South East Development Scheme would mean nothing less, one member said, than "bludgeoning hundreds of old established settlers off their holdings and handing three quarters of a valuable district over to the tender mercies of an overseas chartered company". The majority of landowners in the South East, he continued, were "sons, grandsons and great-grandsons" of the original selectors. Because of them "the wilderness had vanished". The State lived off the sheep's back and they supplied a quarter of the wool clip of South Australia. They would be "very dismayed to think they had contributed to the return of a present Liberal Government which now threatened them with compulsory acquisition".¹⁶⁰ Another parliamentarian said that neither the Roman, Norman or other invasions compared with "such an invasion against the liberties and rights of a people" as the contemplated acquisition of South East land. The subject should be dropped and the people in occupation be "allowed to work out their own destiny". Slowly, but nevertheless surely, big estates in the South East were "melting". Other members of the Legislative Council agreed: the resolution was withdrawn. Sir Henry Barwell considered this outcome a sheer disaster,

159. W. Colebatch summarised the closer settlement situation as follows: Repurchased Estates: 301,110 acres; total price paid, £1,093,860; agreements and leases, 750; number completed, 182. Average price per acre, £3.12.7; average area per holding, 323 acres; average cost per holding, £1,174. Report on Development of South East, 29 July 1933, GRG 35/351, SAA.

160. SAPD, 21 November 1933, pp 2337-8.

but "a few individuals" in the South East had once more shown, as they had for almost a century, that their land was safe from potential agriculturalists and that they could "live and die in the belief that title to their land was indefeasible and safe from political brigandage".¹⁶¹

In November 1933 while the government was considering putting more men on South East land, settlers at 'Mt Schanck' appealed again to the Commissioner of Crown Lands. They declared they were "in the position of a body of men striking". They reminded the present government that, whatever its policy, it would be in power for only four years - "or perhaps even less".¹⁶² South East delegates to the State Council of the RSL also pressured the League to take further action on their behalf. They declared the government's "open-door" policy for reduction for individual cases was not enough.¹⁶³ Now that prices had reached bedrock "men were living under conditions equivalent, if not worse, than Russian conditions".¹⁶⁴ It was time not to seek for causes but solutions. There were men who had been under the Debt Adjustment Act for four years who "had not received a penny for the whole of their produce". Under the Financial Emergency Act men were getting £6 a month "for absolutely everything, including clothing, medicinal purposes and dental treatment". There were cases where the Land Board had stated that settlers should vacate their blocks. Was this a fair result, they asked, of seventeen years' legislation and years of labour? Relief measures benefitted neither government nor lessee. Economic reconstruction of the State was needed to put primary production on a sound basis. Their only real hope for the future lay in revaluation.¹⁶⁵

Revaluation was not forthcoming. The Land Board enquired into the financial position of 543 closer settlers and 188 soldier settlers in the

161. SAPD, 23 November 1933, pp 2339 and 2342.

162. C.T. Takins, South East representative to R.W.R. Hunt, Member for Victoria, 18 November 1933, GRG 35/104/1931/838, SAA.

163. Minutes of the State Council of the RSL; 8th item, 10 March 1932.

164. Minutes of the State Council of the RSL; Item 32, 21 March 1934.

165. Minutes of the State Council of the RSL; Item 32, 21 March 1934.

South East and by 1934 was willing to grant a further reduction of 16% on capital value to settlers on 'Mt Schanck No. 2' and 'Koorine'. The Board argued that these estates had been settled at a time when the general level of land values was relatively high. If this reduction was not granted, the Board foresaw the blocks would be thrown back on the hands of the Department of Lands, and would have to be disposed of at reduced values.¹⁶⁶ The resultant concessions were considerable but provided only temporary relief while prices remained low. Cedric Swaffer, for example, had his arrears written off and was granted a 16% adjustment to his annual commitments, but "with milk at 4d a gallon" in 1934, he still wondered how he would find £90 to pay instalments due within a few months.¹⁶⁷

166. The Board reckoned as follows: The principal points of difference between soldiers and civilians had been

- (1) Soldiers had had advances for stock, plant and buildings.
- (2) Soldiers had originally paid interest at 5% and closer settlers at 6%; both were paying 5% by 31 August 1931.
- (3) accumulated interest had been written off in the case of some soldiers but not in the case of civilians.

6% compound interest over 5 years amounted to £344.6.2 per £1000 which represented an appreciable percentage of the original capital value of the holding. If the Board reduced interest from 6 - 4% during a concession period, the amount of accumulated interest would be lowered from £344.6.2 to £136.8.7 per £1000. The same result would be gained by reducing present annual commitments by about 16%. Land Board Report, 9 March 1934, GRG 35/104/1931/8381, SAA.

167. Report of W.J. Colebatch, Chairman of Soldier Settlement Committee, 5 September 1932, DL; correspondence from C. Swaffer to Superintendent of Soldier Settlement, GRG 35/176/1919/2828, SAA. Swaffer was allowed reductions as follows:

	<u>Purchase Money</u>	<u>Arrears</u>	<u>Annual Commitments</u>
Under original terms and conditions	£536	£170.11.8	£28. 5. 6.
After reduction of purchase money by 16%	£450.4.10	£143. 6. 0	£23.15. 0.

(excluding expenditure
on improvements)

For further details, GRG 35/104/1934/2940, SAA.

By June 1935 land purchased for soldier and closer settlement had cost £3,863,572.3.11; arrears on closer and soldier settlement stood at £1,219,748.1.6.¹⁶⁸ Such sustained losses in the primary sector were at last persuading the government "to alter its economic bases and to industrialise".¹⁶⁹ Adelaide now held 67% of the State's population, but this fact was not causing the usual sense of alarm.¹⁷⁰ Nor was yet another Committee of Enquiry into the development of the South East in 1934 as enthusiastic as usual in reporting on the agricultural potential of draining and subdividing 700,000 acres. The Chairman, W.J. Colebatch, declared that the government must consider economic conditions. Almost £1,000,000 had been spent on drainage schemes. Drainage and subdivision would increase productivity and promote employment, but would involve the government in impractical loss. The Committee feared that if thousands of inexperienced

168. SAPP 10 of 1934-5, HA, 19 November 1935. Arrears of rent and instalment were as follows:

Closer Settlement Lands

Leases, rents, license fees etc.	£ 2,575.14.10.
Agreements to purchase - instalments	£138,302. 9. 3.

Soldier Settlement Lands

Soldiers' Agreements - instalments	£ 542.106.10. 0.
Surplus Lands Agreements - instalments	£ 49,904. 8.10.
Advances - instalments	£ 485,858.12. 7.
	<u>£1,219,748. 1. 6.</u>
Total arrears for State on all non-irrigation lands amounted to	£1,528,771. 1. 2.

Gross loss on settlement of discharged soldiers up to 30 June 1934 was £5,161,953. The Commonwealth Government had paid £381,634 in interest; £27,841 in training expenses; and £567,000 in contributions towards loss; a total of £976,475. The net loss to the State was thus £4,185,478. From this there could be deducted provision from the national debt sinking fund of £244,156; less revenue losses, £1,039,063; totalling £1,283,219 leaving a loan loss still to be met of £2,902,259. The Advertiser, 15 February 1934.

169. M. Williams, p 299. See also M.J. Thompson, M.A. Thesis, The Government in Depression, Flinders University, 1972, Chs 1 and 2.

170. SRSA, 1935.

settlers with limited financial resources were placed on South East closer settlement farms, within a period of three or four years the State would be involved in a disaster similar to that which followed the hastily-conceived soldier settlement schemes embarked upon immediately following the Great War. Land would cost an average of £5.17.5 an acre without improvements. Who would be willing to buy 400 acres at £6 per acre? Moreover, existing marketing difficulties made dairying and cereal production unprofitable. A Government Committee had finally come to that same conclusion South East landowners had known for years. Except for small areas long since freeholded, the district was suitable only for sheep and fat lambs.¹⁷¹

By 1935 the Director of Agriculture, Professor Perkins, was also questioning the high price paid in attempts to realise the great dream. In seven successive seasons since 1928, he declared, there had been no single instance of an average farmer in South Australia reaping nine bushels to the acre and realising £500 at seaports for produce from 250 acres of wheat. How then, he asked, was the average farmer able to continue in occupation? The farmer who had stayed on the land in defiance of bad seasons and low prices had foregone interest in personal capital, postponed indefinitely upkeep and replacement of wasting farm assets, and accepted for himself and family remuneration which would be rejected by the average unskilled labourer. That was nothing less than wasted human effort without perceptible aim or object. It was part attributable to the mistaken policy of persisting with wheat in localities in which years of experience

171. Expenditure on drainage to 30 June 1933 as estimated by the Committee.

National Drains	£210,000 (not recoverable)
Petition Drains	£ 48,490 (repayable in 42 years with interest at 4%)
Scheme Drains	£440,000 (partly recoverable)
Millicent and Tantanoola Drains	£154,000 (not recoverable)
	<u>£852,490</u>

GRG 35/301. See also SAPP 10 of 1939-40, HA, 1 November 1939; The Advertiser, 19 January 1980.

had shown that wheat could not be grown to advantage. What was to be done? Agricultural holdings should be declared unsuitable; owners should be assisted to become sheep-farmers. In this way the Director was sure the State would return to that condition of prosperity of which its earliest pioneers had caught some prophetic glimpse.¹⁷²

Only well-established farmers on large developed pasture lands could hope to realise enough profit from sheep and lambs to recover sufficiently from the Depression to purchase. Yet even large farmers were not always self-reliant. After several years of good returns from fat lambs and wool, in March 1941 Dean was finally to purchase his property but only with family help and further government reductions.¹⁷³ Schinckel's average wool

172. Wheat returns from 1928-35:

<u>Season</u>	<u>Mean yield per average bushel</u>	<u>Mean price per bushel</u>	<u>Mean gross return for 250 acre farm</u>
1928-9	7-79	4/8.3/4	461
1929-30	6.40	4/4	347
1930-1	8-34	2/3½	239
1931-2	11-81	3/2	467
1932-3	10.43	2/9.3/4	367
1934-5	9.26	2/7½	307
Mean	9.02	3/1.3/4	355

SAPP 43 of 1935, LC, 11 December 1935.

173. "Skipper" Dean's father, Brigadier General Dean, presented his son's case to the Land Board as "Skipper" Dean's two sons were serving in the Second AIF, and as "Skipper" Dean found it so difficult to obtain labour that he could not leave his holding. By March 1941, Dean had paid the government £12,404 in interest alone. He still owed £11,250 - almost the original cost of his property. Dean also owed £6,000 to Goldsborough Mort and large amounts to other outside creditors. As Dean had taken up his land under Closer Settlement Agreement, there was "no legal or moral right" for a reduction in purchase because he was a returned soldier. But the Board considered that "in view of the settler's financial position and the fact that soldier settlers had had large sums written off their accounts, it would be good policy and good business to accept a reduced price". The amount required to complete purchase was settled at £11,250, after a reduction in interest to 3% for the first eight years of the Agreement and portion of arrears of interest were written off. Correspondence between the Land Board and the Director of Lands, 27 March and 7 April 1941, GRG 35/20/1941/259, SAA.

prices rose to £16.6 and £16.14 for 98 bales in 1936 and 1937, but he still needed to find an extra £2,672.16.8 to complete his purchase. He had "stuck to sheep and sheep had stuck to him", but only with bank credit was he able to complete the purchase of his property on 12 December 1937.¹⁷⁴

With a combination of good 'Koorine' land, and frequent financial concessions, Bryant was one small holder who did find a temporary respite from debt and an entry into scientific farming through returns from sheep.¹⁷⁵ On 1 March 1933 he bought a further 241½ acres on 'Koorine' from a neighbouring soldier settler who had forfeited.¹⁷⁶ As butter prices were low and mammitis were prevalent, he changed to sheep.¹⁷⁷ From 21 bales in 1933 he paid off £112.11.5 to the Minister of Repatriation, and borrowed £60 from Goldsborough Mort and Co. to purchase 200 ewes. He bought a sheep-shearing press and a wool plant. In July 1934 he culled his flocks, sold the old sheep, and carried 700 sheep on 539 acres of land top-dressed with 8 tons of super. In his desire to "carry out the methods advised by the Department of Agriculture", he completed the purchase of farm equipment,

174. Day Book of H.B. Schinckel; interview with H.B. Schinckel; GRG 35/104/1933/983 and 1487, SAA.

175. On 6 January 1933 Bryant surrendered his Agreement 1652 on Section 341 and was relieved of all responsibilities. This land, under Agreement 1828, passed to a neighbouring soldier settler, Arthur Medhurst, the only settler in the area who was not in arrears. ASALB 8/188; GRG 35/104/1933/1849, SAA. For Section 426 Bryant paid £1,813, with interest due at 2½, 3½, and 5% for first and second, third and fourth years respectively and on purchase money and interest at 120 half-yearly instalments of 5% thereafter. A reduction of 12½% in purchase payments was allowed in retrospect from 3 September 1935, and on 23 September 1940, Bryant surrendered his Agreement for Acquired Soldiers Perpetual Lease 265 with rent in perpetuity at £125.19.5. For full details of other concessions, ASALB 8/188; GRG 35/104/1931/5949, 1933/849 and 1937/2630, SAA.

176. Report of W.J. Colebatch of Soldiers Settler Committee, 9 August 1932, held at Department of Lands.

177. This was Section 426 in the Hundred of Grey, formerly held by James O. Jones whose Agreement 352 had been cancelled with his death. Previous owners were R. Leake (1858); Samuel Tomkinson (1860); Charles and Arthur Leake (1881); Letitia Leake (1881); John and George Riddoch (1882); George Riddoch (1899) and his executors J.R. Baker (Adelaide), W.J.T. Clarke (Mt Schanck) and R.H. McFarlane ('Pleasant Park', Mt Gambier). For full details CT 2/187; 774/199 and 1086/91.

tractor, bought Romney rams and increased his daily herd with an Ayreshire pedigree bull from Kybybolite Farm. In May 1938, 1,158 sheep returned 28 bales of wool for £375. In the same year the Inspector of Lands valued the improvements Bryant and his son had made at £4,073.18. "I am sure if the World doesn't go any more mad than at present and sheep keep up", Bryant wrote confidently, "I shall be able to meet all my commitments." But the land had one last toll to exact. Six years later a fire burnt Bryant's home to the ground and killed him.¹⁷⁸

Although sustained good prices for wool sometimes brought a measure of financial stability to some small sheep farmers, they remained no less vulnerable to an alien environment than their predecessors. In 1936 James Fox was 55 years old when profits from wool and lambs enabled him to meet his full year's commitment of £260 for the first time. But in 1937 he suffered that same shortage of labour and bleak, wet weather conditions which almost a century previously had ruined Edward and Fortescue Arthur, first European owners of the land he now occupied. Fox lost 330 ewes and

178. Correspondence between G. Bryant and K. Richardson, Inspector of Lands in Mt Gambier to J.W. Cosh and H.H. Harvey, Superintendent of Soldier Settlement, 9 February and 2 March 1933; 7 April and 9 July 1934; 27 August 1935, 8 November 1936, 19 April, 3, 6 October and 23 November 1937; 17 and 21 February, 4 May, 26 and 30 August 1938, 11 June 1940, 30 May and 21 June 1944; GRG 35/104/1933/1849 and 1144, 1937/2630 and 1944/1820, SAA. Bryant purchased a Farm-all Tractor for £294, a grass cutter for £50, a McKay pasture cultivator for £100; 4 May 1938, GRG 35/104/1937/2630, SAA. For details of the fire which left "a desolate sight", BW, 14 June 1950. Mrs Jessie Bryant, widow of Captain Bryant, with further financial concessions and help from neighbours and the RSL, carried on the farm and completed purchase for £7,914.2.1 on 8 August 1966, almost fifty years after she had first come as a war bride from England. GRG 35/104/1933/1144, SAA.

A personal note on Harry Bryant from L.J. Laslett reads: "Here was stark tragedy. Mr Bryant was a Captain in the AIF. My brother George served under him for a time and thought highly of him. I met this soldier settler at least once on his property. He was a likeable man. One day he was boiling some tar on an open fire outside, preparatory to doing some pavement work. The tar boiled over. The method employed in an endeavour to extinguish the rapidly-spreading flames merely caused them to spread still more and Mr Bryant was engulfed in flames. He sustained shocking burns and was admitted to the Mt Gambier Hospital still conscious but in a hopeless condition. He was a professed unbeliever and was stated to have said he would show how an atheist could die. His fortitude and courage was said to have amazed the hospital staff. One cannot help feel that had this settler lived his qualities of determination and initiative would probably have ensured his success on his property.

100 lambs. In 1939, because he had averaged only 40% of his commitments due since first allotment in 1921, and because men in Adelaide considered that he was not improving 'Mt Schanck' as well as he might, Fox was given only an Annual Lease which could be terminated at one month's notice "to put him on his mettle".¹⁷⁹ To small farmers on poor land, however, running more sheep revived familiar contradictions between European ideas and South East land - running more sheep necessitated more land and more capital.

Swaffer was running 180 sheep by 1938, but returns were not sufficient to ensure financial stability or security of tenure. In 1939 he was granted the insecure tenure of a Miscellaneous Lease for five years. On 31 March 1939 he asked John Fletcher, MP to intercede for him and the other two returned soldiers who had remained from the original nine "at his end of the Schanck". "All I ask for," he wrote, "is a reasonable chance in the future instead of being like convicts as the saying is after sixteen years of hard life with a good wife, rearing a family of four children, two yet small." Reductions were granted, but Swaffer still had "to find the large amount of £124 by May next", as he wrote on 17 July 1939. This would be difficult as milking instalments cost £35 a year; cows were "not at all in profit" and working expenses from 1935-8 had averaged £368 a year. In 1941 Swaffer was still asking for something more secure than a lease. "It is nearly 20 years," he wrote on 16 October 1941 when he was 49, "since I took up this place rough and unimproved when returning from the Great War 1921 and gone through hard times. Now as one

179. Correspondence between J. Fox, Inspector K. Richardson, H. Harvey, J. Fletcher, MP, 9 December 1935; 25 March, 17 September, 12 October 1936; 12, 29 July, 27, 29 September 1937; 6 February, 22 April, 21 and 25 July 1939; 24 April 1940. GRG 35/104/1928/4149, SAA; 7 February, 14 March, 24 November 1928; 9 March, 17 November 1939, GRG 35/104/1939/3735, DL. These dockets also itemise details of Fox's wool clip, grazing operations, expenditure and reductions allowed. On 21 September 1949, Fox was able to freehold the land he "had known and held practically speaking for about 28 years" for £3,485.9.3. For details, GRG 35/104/1939/3735, DL; Maps 2 and 9.

is getting up in years after all the hard graft is past one is not having the health as in the past especially after war service." Swaffer's request was refused. To officials in Adelaide it was not good policy "to put settlers of this type too soon on permanent tenure as it only generally led to their falling again in arrears". For Swaffer as for many others, in the South East, the ideal of becoming a self-sufficient proprietor had not become a reality and in 1944, with two sons at the Second World War, and aged 52, Swaffer was finally allotted his land under Surplus Lands Perpetual Lease 103, at an annual rental of £64.¹⁸⁰

Yet running more sheep and legislative concessions did not ultimately help most South East settlers. Those who had survived long enough were saved instead by the stimulation World War II gave to the State's economy. Vasey Watts was one who benefitted. Under Surplus Lands Agreement 378 in 1936 Watts bought 145 acres of Sections 11 and 12 in the Hundred of Mayurra, 145 acres at £8 per acre, less than half the price paid by the two previous soldier settler occupants who had failed. Watts ran 280 sheep on it. He now held more than twice the land he had in 1925, but he had to find £85.3 a year.¹⁸¹ His commitments continued to rise disproportionately to his returns until "the War came" and he, like many other

180. Itemised details of reductions and Swaffer's expenditure are given in correspondence between Swaffer, J. Fletcher, MP, H. Harvey, Superintendent of Soldier Settlement, and the Chairman of the Land Board, 31 March, 14 June, 17 and 28 July 1939; 16 October 1941; 23 February, 3 May, 3 July, 21 October 1944, GRG 35/104/1934/2940, DL.

181. Correspondence between V. Watts and the Land Board, 30 August, 28 September 1935; 11 April 1936, GRG 35/176/1925/4440, SAA. Sections 11 and 12 in the Hundred of Mayurra had been first allotted to H.H. and A.L. McCallum under Acquired Soldiers Agreement 1263 at £3,751. After the McCallum brothers' agreement was cancelled the land was gazetted at £3,609 but not allotted. W.I.J. Pyecroft then took up the land for £3,000 and when his agreement was cancelled on 2 May 1934, liabilities amounted to £3,269.6.9. Until Vasey Watts took up the land, W.J. Gordon rented it from 26 September 1934 at 7/6 per acre. GRG 35/176/1925/4440, SAA.

South Australian farmers, "turned the corner nicely after twenty years of battling".¹⁸²

The war was also the salvation of Coonawarra Fruit Colonists. In 1936 Charles Skinner paid £9.12.3, the proceeds of his 1935-6 grape crop, and anticipated he could get £32 for his grapes and 500 lbs of dried apricots that year. By then he was the only soldier left at Coonawarra on land taken up under the soldier settlement scheme. His vines were "practically useless"; many of his neighbours on larger holdings had grubbed theirs out and were running sheep. Skinner surrendered his block, without penalty, and sold his furniture to pay a deposit on an 11½ acre fruit block at Heathfield in the Adelaide Hills. Two years later in 1938, with proceeds from this block and a loan from the Union Bank, he was granted permission to purchase his former block at Coonawarra for £250. He knew this was "too inferior for dairying and too small for sheep"; he also knew "all of it must be made to produce", and he had to rely on his fruit. But his letter to the Department on 27 October 1938 was in familiar vein. "I have to advise you," he wrote, "that frost on the 5th and 6th knocked the vines and apricots and another one last night completed the job. There will be," he added, "very little taken off the place this year."¹⁸³ In 1943 another severe frost hit the Coonawarra Fruit Colony, but in this year all the dried fruit was sold to the

182. Interview with Mrs Caroline Watts, 15 September 1976. See also S.W. Dyer, "Cramped and Hedged: Depression, the State and Farming in South Australia", Journal of Australian Studies, No. 2, November 1977, p 47. Dyer's comment - "Those six years of stable, profitable prices and rationalisation of farms in the marginal lands did what Government action had failed to do by 1939 - end the Depression."

183. Correspondence between Charles Skinner, H. Richardson and J.W. Cosh, 25 March, 31 July, 11 and 25 September; 15, 16, 24 October, 25 November, 10 December 1935; 1 April, 18 May, 8, 16 June, 14 September, 19 and 28 October 1936; GRG 35/104/1933/6581, DL.

military, with some fetching as much as £150 per ton, and Skinner was "put on his feet" after 25 years.¹⁸⁴

Three years before the outbreak of war, in June 1936, yet another Committee of Enquiry had reported that expenditure on drainage in the South East could not be justified. Many landowners were also sceptical of benefits to be had by draining the land.¹⁸⁵

But since the war had begun "to stimulate production in a way which 25 years of legislation had failed to do",¹⁸⁶ the South East began to show an appreciable increase in agricultural production, livestock numbers rose, the application of superphosphate trebled, and the timber industry burgeoned.¹⁸⁷ In view of this progress, on 1 July 1940 a Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works reported that it was "practical and desirable" that the drainage and subdivision of South East land should proceed. The government was also now willing to provide transport facilities. Half a century after the last public line had been laid, the Committee recommended a broadening of the gauge between Wolseley and Mt Gambier.¹⁸⁸ Yet apart from the fillip war had given to production between

184. Correspondence between Charles Skinner and H. Harvey, Superintendent of Soldier Settlement, 1 and 2 March, 12 October, 17 December 1937; 28 February, 14 March 1938, GRG 35/104/1933/6581 and 1943/3382, DL. Other letters in the same source details Skinner's employment and disablement following war injuries, his wife's ill health, and expenditure and returns. Charles Skinner finishes his own story: "Re my holding - I surrendered it and the 47 acres was attached to another grazier soldier settler to keep him viable. The 10 acres with residence I rented for a year and then as a civilian I purchased it and in time a part of my neighbour's. This more than provided for our needs and enabled me to be at home caring for my wife who was an invalid with a sickness no doubt aggravated by the lost struggling years. Finally I took her to Adelaide for an operation and specialist treatment. She died. I returned - and land values being then on the up and up, I sold part to Laira Winery and part to Owen Redman's Winery and retired on a soldier's pension." Letter from Charles Skinner, 19 October 1981.

185. One farmer, Aitchison Grieve, from Lucindale, declared "any drain smaller than the Suez Canal would not affect me". SAPP 32 of 1936, HA, 30 June 1936, question 1871.

186. S.W. Dyer, p 47.

187. SAPP 33 of 1940, HA, 11 July 1940, p 5.

188. SAPP 33 of 1940, HA, 11 July 1940; Map 15.

Looking south from Mt Gambier to Port MacDonnell.

(P. Laut, CSIRO)

After 130 years of legislation and occupation, Europeans had transformed only one small area of the South East into "another England in another hemisphere".



1938-40, a 23 year survey of primary production and population since the first Closer Settlement Act of 1897, revealed a disappointing picture. Attempts to promote "honest and effective tillage" had failed.

The area under crop in the South East was only 53,000 acres, a mere 20,000 more than before Strangways Act of 1869. Four times this amount was sown with pasture. Settling the South East had not eased unemployment or justified the claim of being able to absorb "the whole population of Australia". In 1940 twice as many were employed in the pastoral industry as in agriculture and dairying combined.¹⁸⁹ The "garden of the State" was still confined to a small area of mixed farming around Mt Gambier. The rest of the South East was sheep country still: eighty years of legislation and the "wasted years of men's lives" had not succeeded either in settling a numerous and contented yeomanry or in transforming the South East into European farmland.¹⁹⁰ This district was not the paradise of the independent yeoman, but the bastion of the great flock-masters of South Australia.¹⁹¹

189.

<u>County</u>	<u>No. of holdings</u>	<u>Total area of holdings</u>	<u>Occupied as owner incl. agreement to purchase</u>	<u>Leased and licensed</u>	<u>Occupied as tenant</u>
Grey	1,972	1,148,916	604,316	484,175	60,425
McDonnell	299	1,161,907	240,874	913,006	8,027
Robe	717	1,158,588	333,687	801,068	18,833
	<u>2,988</u>	<u>3,469,411</u>	<u>1,183,877</u>	<u>2,198,249</u>	<u>87,285</u>

<u>County</u>	<u>Total area under all kinds of crops</u>	<u>Under permanent artificially sown grasses</u>	<u>Hands regularly employed</u>					
			<u>Cultivation</u>		<u>dairying</u>		<u>pastoral</u>	
			<u>Male/female</u>		<u>M/F</u>		<u>M/F</u>	
Grey	28,424	60,292	257	-	900	296	1929	296
McDonnell	13,591	67,781	46	-	30	20	318	20
Robe	11,282	78,973	71	-	59	36	668	36
	<u>53,297</u>	<u>207,046</u>	<u>374</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>989</u>	<u>352</u>	<u>2915</u>	<u>352</u>

SAPP 3 of 1960, Part 5; Production.

190. Letter from Charles Skinner, 21 October 1977; Appendix 12.

191. In the South East 41 flock-masters, the highest proportion for the State, held between 5-10,000 sheep; 10 flock-masters between 10-20,000 sheep. The South East was running 1,896,803 sheep; only the Central division, with 2,026,822 ran more. SRSA, 1940.

As one visitor to the district had commented in 1880 after the failure of the first major experiment to settle a numerous yeomanry - "So it had been at the beginning of the chapter and so it would be to the end".¹⁹²

192. C. Proud, p 51.

EPILOGUE

Towards the end of World War II politicians once more began to speak in visionary terms about planting the agrarian civilisation of old Europe in South Australia. One member declared that land was "the root necessity of human beings". He believed "the problems which vexed humanity were the result of the increasing divorce between man and the land", and closer settlement would be as profitable as it was civilising for greater productivity inevitably meant greater prosperity for all.¹ Politicians saw returned soldiers as the best men to translate these ideals into reality. Settling soldiers would benefit the soldiers as well as the community at large. The Premier, Thomas Playford, declared that it was, in fact, "a sacred obligation to see returned men settled satisfactorily on the land". He was certain all politicians would "bend their energies to that task and do all they could to implement that, or indeed, any other settlement scheme, irrespective of party of creed".²

Politicians were, of course, anxious to avoid the painful mistakes connected with soldier settlement schemes after the first World War. They were confident they could do this through changes in legislation affecting both the scheme and the men. The Commonwealth was to play a more positive role in providing finance and creating international markets; soldiers would be selected only if they satisfied a classifying authority of their eligibility, suitability and qualifications, and settlers were to be given guidance and supervision.

1. SAPD, 21 September 1944, p 397. R.S. Richards was quoting from Alfred Hook, The Social and Industrial Problem, London: Cassell, 1921.

2. SAPD, 14 November 1944, p 933.

The provision and tenure of suitable land were seriously debated. The government would make available farms sufficiently large to ensure a reasonable living with enough improvements to guarantee an income of at least sustenance level. Perpetual lease tenure would limit transfer and hence re-aggregation, and would guard the settler from having to use his capital to convert to freehold.³

When one member asked whether soldiers would be given good agricultural land, thoughts turned yet again to the South East. The Premier declared that if there was any part of the State which offered opportunity for successful land settlement, it was undoubtedly the good rainfall area of the South East.⁴ Others agreed. "So far," they said, "the development of the South East has only been nibbled at; the region can be developed into an entirely new province."⁵

Members had not considered closely the nature of South East land. The best had been freeholded for a century; in view of past experience the prospect of obtaining anything like good or sufficient land at a fair price by voluntary negotiation was remote. What was left was by no means of good quality. The Commissioner of Crown Lands, Reginald Rudall, did remind his colleagues of this uncomfortable fact.⁶ Most ignored him: they were optimistic that the situation would be rectified when excessively wet land in the South East was drained. The district would then be able to support 5,700 extra settlers. When the whole of the South East was improved,

3. For further details and an analysis of the reports of the Rural Construction Commission of 1944, H. Le Lacheur, pp 44-52.

4. SAPD, 14 November 1944, p 933.

5. Annual Report of the Auditor-General for year ended 30 June 1940, HA, 17 September 1940.

6. SAPD, 14 November 1944, p 940; The South Australian Advertiser, 15 November 1944.

holdings would be increased from the current 3,000 to 12,000 and production would rise from the £1,500,000 of pre-war days to £6,000,000.⁷

Thus in 1945 politicians embarked upon their fifth major experiment to settle "a numerous yeomanry" in the South East. The failure of previous experiments had not released them from the dream of old Europe: the vice of the realities of un-European land and their desire to run land at a profit held them still.

In 1950 the Land Board conducted an exhaustive survey of the South East and "exploited every avenue for which purchases seemed likely to eventuate". But the prospect of securing good land on private estates at a reasonable price was not promising. The tendency had become more pronounced, the Board reported, for landowners to take advantage of the opportunities presented by an uncontrolled market, and to sell quickly to private buyers rather than wait on Government decisions.⁸ As these lagged behind rapidly rising land prices, the government was putting soldier settlers on land which no one else would buy.

By 1965, a third of the soldiers established in South Australia after World War II were settled in the South East.⁹ Their settlement resulted in no dramatic increase in either population or cultivation for like their counterparts before them, while wool paid they did not engage in "honest

7. SAPD, 14 November 1944, p 933. A.P. Blesing was quoting from SAJA, Vol. 46, No. 11, June 1943, pp 292-3.

8. SAPP 10 of 1950, HA, 22 November 1950.

9. 393 soldiers from a total of 1,100 were placed on holdings from the inception of the scheme to 30 June 1965. SAPP 10 of 1965, 2 December 1965, pp 3-4.

tillage" on poor land.¹⁰ Holdings in Counties Robe and MacDonnell increased in number and decreased in size,¹¹ but these holdings, twenty-six times as large as once deemed necessary for closer settlement, were neither sown with wheat nor covered with smiling homesteads of self-sufficient proprietors. Apart from the closely settled areas near Millicent and Mt Gambier, the South East was a sheep-walk still.¹²

In the nineteen sixties and seventies some became disturbed that this sheep country was showing the signs of strain in the struggle between European ideas and Australian land. Some even said future generations would

10.	Under cultivation	Wheat	Sheep
	acres	acres	
Grey	64,571	959	1,450,768
MacDonnell	46,862	7,614	917,917
Robe	43,155	3,024	1,513,804

SRSA, 1967-8; Appendices 5 and 7.

Population: 1961, 46,061; 1966, 48,731. SRSA, 1966; Appendix 4.

11. Percentage change in number of rural holdings between 1953-4 and 1973-4: Grey, -2, MacDonnell, +14, Robe, +62. Percentage change in average size of rural holdings between 1953-4 and 1973-4: Grey, 13, Robe, 0.3, MacDonnell, -24. M. Williams, "Rural planning is not so simple", Royal Planning Institute Journal, July-October 1976, pp 22-6; Figs 2 and 3; M. Williams, The Making of the South Australian Landscape, p 60.

12.	No. of holdings	Acres
Grey	1,903	1,186,657
MacDonnell	567	1,169,612
Robe	992	1,175,404

SRSA, 1966.

The average size of holdings in County MacDonnell was 2,087 acres by 1965. M. Williams, p 60.

	Owners, Lessees Sharefarmers		Relatives not working for wages		Employees working for wages		Total	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Grey	1,446	61	59	4	428	11	1,933	76
MacDonnell	455	5	22	-	245	2	722	7
Robe	767	11	35	2	350	17	1,152	30

As at 31 March 1966 from SRSA, 1968-9. The South East was running 3,882,489 sheep; the State 5,889,145.

pay for what men had done to the land.¹³ To grow pastures for their sheep graziers had spread fertiliser and drained the flat lands; by the eighties the land was "super sick" and the water-table lowered by as much as three metres.¹⁴ A growing number of stock on land developed for grazing had further encouraged disease and pests and threatened the trees.¹⁵ Those on small holdings who had grown cash crops to make the land pay were caught in a familiar cycle. To farm intensively they borrowed to buy machinery. This led not only to more intensive and continuous cropping to meet commitments, but to a consequent "mining out" and degradation of the soil.¹⁶

After almost a century and a half of experience in the South East, a few Australians were beginning to accept their land was different from that of Europe. But during that time generations of little men, battling the land against impossible odds, had come to know the bitterness of disaster and defeat. They, most of all, might have understood why the men of Gallipoli were considered heroes, but even they had rarely abandoned the great dream, and the planners and politicians clung to it persistently. Yet, in the end as in the beginning, an ancient land defied Europeans' attempts to make it yield to alien traditions.

Yeomen may yet be put on South East land; profit will certainly be made from it. But to hope for both at once, as the Booandiks well knew, is not a dream, but an illusion.

13. The Advertiser, 18 June 1982.

14. The Advertiser, 19 January 1980. See also South Eastern Drainage Board, EIS, pp 147-9.

15. For example, CSIRO researchers and a spokesman for the Woods and Forest Department claimed that although the problem was nationwide, the areas worst hit with "eucalypt dieback" in South Australia were Naracoorte, Keith and Lucindale. The Advertiser, 25 May 1982.

16. The Advertiser, 30 April and 18 June 1982.

The South East, from Space

Land use in the South East in the seventies confirmed the judgements of landowners for the previous 140 years. Except in the volcanic areas around Gambier (light blue) and the cereal-growing areas near Millicent (red), the South East was not agricultural country, but sheep country still (green).

(Native scrub and mallee are dark blue; pine forests are blue, with recent plantings showing as reddish purple.)

*(The Lower South East, December, 1975,
from J. Douglas, South Australia from Space.)*



Appendix 1: Occupation of the South East District, 1843-50.

Licensee	Place of Birth	Experience in Australia Prior to South East District	Resident [R] or Non-Resident [N]	Date of Gazettal of First Occupation Licence	Description of Locality in SAGG	Area in Square Miles Held in 1850	Stock in 1850	Sheep	Cattle
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8a)	(8b)	
Alexander ANDERSON 1801-1848	n.a.	To Pt Phillip Nov 1836; Emu Creek 1840, Baangal 1845-1874.	N	1 Jul 1847	Mosquito Plains	14	2000	5	
Josiah AUSTIN n.a. Solomon AUSTIN 1810-1896 Thomas AUSTIN 1815-1871	Baltonsborough, Somerset, England	To Van Diemen's Land 1825; 'Barwon Park', Winchelsea; 1838 Werribee Plains; 1840 Warrambeet; 1842 Yeo; 1846 Barunah Plains.	R	18 Mar 1846	Rivoli Bay District near Lake Mundi	15	-	250	
Edward ARTHUR 1801-1848 and his brother Fortescue ARTHUR n.a.	Plymouth, England	Arthur's Creek 1838; Diamond Creek; Mt Macedon.	R		n.a.	122	17000	255	
James BAKER	n.a.	Possibly to SA on <u>Isabella Watson</u> , 8 Apr 1845.	n.a.	5 Aug 1846	West of Reedy Creek Sanders Overland Road	12	1500	-	
Robert BALLANTYNE	n.a.	Portland Bay 1840; Western Port 1841; 'Newlands' near Apsley, 1845.	R	22 Jul 1847	South-East District	163	20500	550	

continued/-

Appendix 1 (cont'd)

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8a)	(8b)
Alfred Henry BATES John Edward BATES Michael BATES	England	To Van Diemen's Land on <u>Deveron</u> , 1829; 'Batesford' <u>Moorabool River</u> ; 'Wooringa- look'; 'Duck Ponds' 1840; 'Kaladbro' 1845.	R	8 Apr 1846	North of Mt Gambier and Lake Eliza	28	2064	-
John Wood BEILBY b. 1818	Edinburgh, Scotland.	To Pt Phillip 1841; Gardiner's Creek 1841-2; Woodstock 1842; King Parrot Creek 1843.	R	22 Jan 1846	East Boundary of Province near Mt Gambier	54	5700	10
Donald BLACK	Cowrill, Argylleshire Scotland.	To Pt Phillip 1839; Eddington 1841.	R	25 Sep 1845	Near Cape Northumber- land Rivoli Bay	30	-	655
Niel BLACK 26 Aug 1804- 15 May 1880	Kilbride-more, Argylleshire, Scotland.	Adelaide on <u>Ariadne</u> Jul 1839; 'Glenormiston' 1840; 'The Sisters' 1844.	N	25 Sep 1845	Mouth of Glenelg; Rivoli Bay	93	1309	1732
Archibald BROWN James BROWN 1818-7 Feb 1890		To SA on <u>Fairfield</u> , 4 May 1839; <u>Farming at Encounter Bay</u> .	R	19 Feb 1846	20 miles SE from the head of the Coorong	78	6000	80
Gerald Villiers BUTLER		Capt. 96th Regiment. Arrived on <u>Eurdora</u> from Hobart on 19 Oct 1841. Appointed Govt Resident at Robe 3 Sep 1846.	R	19 Aug 1846	Guichen Bay	Left by 1850		
Francis BRYAN	n.a.		R	22 Jul 1847	SE District E of runs of Mssrs White, Cole & Brown.	Left by 1850		

continued/-

Appendix 1 (cont'd)

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8a)	(8b)
Alexander CAMERON c. 18 Aug 1810- 11 Sep 1881	Lochaber, Scotland.	To Sydney on <u>The Boyne</u> , 2 Jan 1839; Pt Phillip; 'Mt Sturgeon Plains' 1841; 'Morgiana' 1842.	R	17 Jan 1844	Rivoli Bay District	60	10005	307
Donald CAMERON	Lochaber, Scotland.	Avoca 1840; Portland 1840.	R	3 Jun 1847	County Robe 3m. from Duncan Cameron	22	4601	26
Duncan CAMERON	Lochaber, Scotland.	To Van Diemen's Land on <u>Harvey</u> , 2 May 1825.	R	26 Jun 1845	Rivoli Bay; Limestone Ridge; County Robe.	10	4650	329
Ewen CAMERON	Lochaber, Scotland.		R	22 Apr 1847	Lake Mundi	n.a.		
Kenneth CAMPBELL	n.a.	Port Phillip 1838.	R	30 Sep 1847	County Grey	Left by 1850		
Thomas CHIRNSIDE 1815-25 Jun 1887	Berwickshire, Scotland.	To SA on <u>Bardasten</u> , 22 Jan 1839; overlanded from Goulburn to Mt William 1839; Loddon 1840; Mt William 1842.	N	5 Feb 1846	Reedy Creek County Grey 5m. NE of the Avenue at Adelaide Road	120	-	1812
Isaiah COLE d. 24 Jan 1870	n.a.		N	13 Jan 1846	Rivoli Bay	140	6560	12
Josiah COLE								
John COLVILLE and his brother Matthew COLVILLE	Ballygroggan, Ireland.	Emigrated as agricultural labourers on <u>Ariadne</u> , 9 Sep 1839; Onkaparinga 1841.	R	14 May 1846	Near Rivoli Bay			
Owen CURRAN	n.a.	n.a.	R	16 Apr 1846	Limestone Ridge	20	5300	102

Appendix 1 (cont'd)

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8a)	(8b)	
George DAVENPORT 30 Mar 1806- 8 Apr 1843 and his brother Samuel DAVENPORT 5 Mar 1818- 3 Sep 1906	Shirburn, England Shirburn, England	To Adelaide from Hobart 14 Feb 1843; Macclesfield.	N	4 Feb 1846	Rivoli Bay	Under management of William Vansittart and George Glen by 1850	100	n.a.	2017
Dr James DICKSON	Scotland	Rubicon Creek 1840; Eildon 1844.	R	5 Aug 1846	12m. SW of Mosquito Creek, South side Maria Creek, County Robe.	43	6000	590	
William GILES Manager of SA Co. 27 Dec 1791- 11 May 1862	Surrey, England	To SA 16 Oct 1837 on Hartley, Kangaroo Island; Manager of SA Co. from 1841; With J. Murray at Mt Crawford.	N	12 Jun 1845	Rivoli Bay District	238	23800	407	
Hugh GLASS 1817-15 May 1871 James McCONNELL 1813-1902	Ireland Ireland	Pt Phillip 1841.	N	30 Sep 1847	West of Mosquito Creek	Left by 1850			
Robert GREEN and Charles WILSON (b) 1816, d.c. 1900	n.a. Ballycloughran, Antrim, Ireland.	To NSW in 1839; overlanded 1839. Won Creek 1841; Pt Phillip 1842; Richardson River 1844; Woodbourne No. 2 1844.		16 Apr 1846	Mt Gambier Glenelg River	Left by 1850			

continued/-

Appendix 1 (cont'd)

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8a)	(8b)
Francis GROTE Edward Charles STIRLING 1804-2 Feb 1873		To SA on <u>Lady Bute</u> , 18 Jun 1839; <u>Willunga District</u> 1841; Mt Lofty; Lake Alexandrina.	R	12 Jun 1845	Mt Benson Ross Creek	91	7584	1572
Jacob HAGEN 1805-24 Jan 1870	England	To SA on <u>William Barrass</u> , 20 Dec 1839; Whaling at Encounter Bay.	N	4 Nov 1847	Lake Hawdon	Left by 1850		
William HARPER Dougal McD.	n.a.	Tenant of Niel Black 1842.	R	3 Sep 1846	Granite Rocks South East	Left by 1850		
Andrew HARRIOTT	n.a.	Lodged in Currie St by 1841.	R	5 Aug 1846	Rivoli Bay District between Lakes Bonney and George	45	7000	50
John HART 25 Feb 1809- 28 Jan 1873	Devon, England.	Schooner master & sealer, Launceston 1832; Westernport 1836; overlanded 1839; Whaling 1842-43; settled Adelaide 1840; stockowner; land agent.	N	22 Apr 1847	County Robe	Left by 1850		
Edward HENTY 1810-1878 and his brother John HENTY 1813-1868(?)	Sussex, England.	Swan River; Van Diemen's Land; Portland by 1834; 'Muntham Downs'.	N	18 Feb 1846	13m. NE by E from Eastern Bluff Range	Left by 1844		

continued/-

Appendix 1 (cont'd)

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8a)	(8b)
John HINDMARSH and his nephew Henry Thomas MORRIS 1822-20 Oct 1911	Gravesend, England	To SA on <u>Buffalo</u> , 17 Dec 1836; <u>Encounter Bay</u> 1843.	R	22 Apr 1847	County Robe	90	n.a.	n.a.
James HOPE 10 Nov 1810-? George HOPE 1811-1846	Roxburgshire Scotland.	To Sydney, 18 Apr 1839 on <u>Christine</u> ; Grant 1840; <u>Moorabool River</u> 1845.	N	22 Jan 1846	Sander's Creek	Left by 1850		
Joseph HOLLOWAY	n.a.	Pt Phillip 1839; Bull's Station, after overlanding, 24 Aug 1839.	n.a.	22 Jul 1847	Guichen Bay	Left by 1850		
James Arthur Carr HUNTER 30.6.1824- 19.12.1889	Edinburgh, Scotland	To Sydney 1840; Mimamaluke 1841; Tarwin Meadows 1844.	R	22 Jan 1846	NW of Mt Gambier	60	1373	
Margaret HUTCHINSON d. 1878	Edinburgh, Scotland	To Pt. Phillip on <u>St</u> <u>Mongo</u> , 24 Dec 1839; Moonee Ponds 1843; 'Ganyon-Ganyon', Edenhope.	R	4 Nov 1847	County Robe	60		860
Joseph JEWETT	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	1 Jul 1847	About 12m. NE of Mr Chirnside's station	36	2428	9
Archibald JOHNSON 1808-4.10.81	Argyle, Scotland	To SA 18 Sep 1839 on <u>Glenswilly</u> ; overseer to Duncan McFarlane.	R	24 Jul 1844	Mt Muirhead, Rivoli Bay District	75		1070

continued/-

Appendix 1 (cont'd)

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8a)	(8b)
Derwas Owen JONES Henry JONES	England	To Pt Phillip on <u>Aden</u> , Oct 1842; Kilmore 1842; 'Tallageira' 1844.	R	18 Feb 1846	SE District, McKinnon's Creek, Lake Cadnite	63	6520	658
Joseph JONES George GARVIE	n.a.	n.a.	R	4 Nov 1847	Mosquito Plains	10	15000	9
George KENDLE	n.a.			25 Nov 1846	Maria Creek	45	850	560
William KIPPEN	n.a.	'Bochara' 1846.	n.a.	1 Jul 1847	Near Rivoli Bay	Left by 1850		
Thomas LANG Gideon Scott LANG 1819-1880 William LANG	Selkirk, Scotland.	To SA 1839. To SA 1841. To SA 1839.	R	5 Feb 1846	Salt Creek Coorong, 8m. west of Lake Mundi, Reedy Lagoon, South East.	Left by 1850		
Robert LAWSON 1846-Feb 1876	Ayrshire, Scotland	To SA on <u>Superb</u> , 30 Oct 1839; Mt Barker district 1841.	R	17 Jan 1844	Rivoli Bay Tatiara	52	6000	30
Robert LEAKE 21 Aug 1811- 14 Sep 1860 and his brother Edward LEAKE 29 Dec 1812- 27 Apr 1867		To Van Diemen's Land 5 May 1823 on <u>Andromeda</u> ; stock manager to SA Co. 1839; Coromandel Valley 1839; Mt Pleasant 1840; Barossa 1841; Kapunda 1843.	R	6 Mar 1844	Mt Schank, NW of Mt Gambier, County Grey	256	35000	950

continued/-

Appendix 1 (cont'd)

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8a)	(8b)
Arthur Forbes LLOYD	n.a.	To Pt Phillip 1839; District of Melbourne and Geelong 1840.	R	7 Jan 1847	Rivoli Bay District, Biscuit Flat SE near Sheoak Wells	Left by 1850		
Donald McARTHUR	Inverroy, Scotland	To Sydney on <u>Boyne</u> , 1838.	R	5 Jun 1846	Limestone Ridge SE District	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Lachlan McBEAN 1800-19 Jan 1894	Inverness, Scotland	To SA on <u>Catherine Jamieson</u> , 7 Dec 1838; 'Baldon', Truro, Roonka-Roonka.	N	17 Jan 1844	County Robe	Left by 1850		
Archibald JAFFRAY			R					
Duncan McFARLANE c. 1793-27 Oct 1856	n.a.	Overlanded with Capt. Finnis 1840; Mt Barker 1842.	R	6 Mar 1844	Rivoli Bay District Lake Leake	22	4601	26
Lachlan McKINNON 1817-Mar 1888	Kilbride, Scotland	Overlanded 1838; Tarrengower 1839; Ovens River 1841; Mt Fyans 1841;	R	8 Apr 1846	12m. NNE of Mt Gambier	100	2300	912
Charles Farquhar McKINNON	Isle of Skye, Scotland	Loudon River 1840.			23m. NNE of Mt Gambier			
Duncan McKINNON	Scotland	Westernport 1842-43.	N	4 Nov 1847	Near Lake Mundi	70	7500	70
John McNICOL 1819-2 Feb 1903 and his cousin John SMITH	Argylleshire, Scotland	To Pt Phillip 1836; 'Nariel' 1838-1841; 'Barongorong' 1843-1868.	R	4 Feb 1845	NNW of Lake Mundi	7	1000	-
Robert McREDIE d. 10 Feb 1859		Buninyong 1841; Avoca and Wycheproof 1846.	R	19 Feb 1846	NW of Tatiara Creek 3m. W of Lake Cadnite	Left by 1850		

continued/466.

Appendix 1 (cont'd)

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8a)	(8b)
Michael MARTIN	n.a.	Farming at Onkaparinga	R	25 Nov 1846	SE District	100	1802	95
John MEREDITH c. 1824		With father George Meredith at 'Cambria', Van Diemen's Land.	R	c. 1844	-	74	4348	506
Walter MITCHELL Son of William MITCHELL	England	To SA on <u>Dorset</u> , 21 Mar 1839.	R	5 Feb 1846	Rivoli Bay	50	3220	6
Allan McFARLANE	Scotland	To SA in <u>Superb</u> , 1839.	R	7 Jan 1847	Tatiara Country	33	3542	34
John OLIVER Adam SMITH 15 Aug 1816- 17 Mar 1876	Swinside, near Jedburgh, Scotland	Sydney 1839; Melbourne 1840; Bank Vale; Deep Creek 1845.	R	6 Mar 1844	Blind Creek, Rivoli Bay District	60	10005	78
George ORMEROD 1822-10 Apr 1872	Rochdale, Lancashire, England.	To NSW 1842.	R	22 Apr 1846	Mosquito Plains	83	3000	50
David POWER (Snr) 1815-18 Aug 1894	Ireland	Westernport Bay 1844; 'Wando Vale' 1844; 'Weandron' 1845.	R	8 Apr 1846	SE of Mt Muirhead	170	-	1950
John ROBERTSON 1809-31 Mar 1881 and his cousin William ROBERTSON 11 Nov 1880- 28 May 1897	Alvie, Inverness Shire, Scotland. Alvie, Inverness Shire, Scotland.	To Van Diemen's Land 1831; NSW 1838; Portland 1840; 'Wando Vale' 1843.	R R	17 Jan 1844	Rivoli Bay, Mosquito Creek	125	11500	134

Appendix 1 (cont'd)

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8a)	(8b)
George SANDERS and his son Benjamin SANDERS	England	To SA 20 Dec 1839 on <u>Delhi</u> ; Echunga Creek 1839-40.	R	27 Apr 1844	30m NNW of Lake Mundi 50m. E of Biscuit Flat, Morambro Creek, Bald Hill. Rivoli Bay District.	127	10000	10
William Spence PETER and Alexander Lang ELDER 1815-15 Sep 1855	Kirkaldy, Scotland	Trading between Adelaide and Launceston.	N	12 Aug 1847	n.a.	150	7000	159
Henry SEYMOUR 1799-16 Dec 1869	Ireland	To SA on <u>Siam</u> on 25 Apr 1841; Mt Barker, Blakiston.	R	18 Mar 1846	Rivoli Bay District, Mosquito Plains.	50	4502	609
Edward SPICER 1 Jan 1817- 7 May 1906	England	To SA on <u>Winchester</u> , 23 Sep 1838; Edwardstown; Willunga Port Elliot.	R	5 Mar 1846	Coorong, near Mt Muirhead	60	5450	3
Thomas A.A. SPRIGG	Wales	Morphett Vale Area 1841; Orange Grove 1844.	R	25 Nov 1846	Near Lake Hawdon	n.a.		
Alexander STEWART 1820-25 Dec 1902	n.a.	To Adelaide on <u>Fairfield</u> , 4 May 1839; Govt Surveyor.		22 Apr 1846	Rivoli Bay	68	6200	125
Evelyn Pitfield Shirley STURT 1816-1886	Dorset, England	1836 Liverpool, NSW Com- missioner of Crown Lands; Murray 1837; overlanded 17 Jul 1839; Meadows, Mt Lofty.	R	6 Mar 1844	NNW and NW of Mt Gambier	78	11005	692

continued/-

Appendix 1 (cont'd)

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8a)	(8b)
Anthony SUTTON 14 Apr 1810- 24 Oct 1879	Wicklow, Ireland	To Hobson's Bay on <u>Agricola</u> , 1841; Portland by 27 Oct 1841; with Stephen Henty 1842- 1844; Dismal Swamp.	R	28 Aug 1846	Rivoli Bay, Mt Gambier	65	1400	34
John TAYLOR 1823-1865		Ryelands, Kapunda.	R	2 Jul 1846	Maria Creek	22	6652	256
William TILLEY	n.a.	n.a.	R	22 Apr 1847	South-East	30	3170	8
Edward TOWNSEND	n.a.	Overlanded 1839; on SA boundary 1844-45.	R	11 Mar 1847	Cadnite Creek, SE District	Left by 1850		
William WALLACE	Scotland	To Port Phillip; 'Elderslie' by 1843; Hotel at Coleraine.	R	4 Feb 1846	40m NE of Mt Gambier	52	11006	28
Dr David WARK 1807-1841 Thomas MAYFIELD (Manager)	Ayrshire, Scotland. Dogdike, Lancashire, England	Land and medical practice at Encounter Bay 1841. To SA on <u>Prince Regent</u> 26 Sep 1839.	R	19 Aug 1846	East of Lake Hawdon swamp	40	5000	2
John F. WHITE 1790-Dec 1860	England	To SA on <u>Tam O'Shanter</u> , 14 Dec 1836, Fulham.	R	23 Apr 1846	East of Ross Creek, Guichen Bay	172	4044	1530

Appendix 1 (cont'd)

There are no descriptions of the areas held under licence by the following settlers. Stock returns show that by 1848 they had taken up land in the South-East District.

Licensee	Area in Square Miles	Sheep	Cattle
James ALLEN	56	4700	10
Peter BEGG	45	700	205
Richard BELL	20	3500	1
Arthur BLAKESLEY	34	8012	10
James BRUCE and Charles DOUGHTY	28	5850	13
Ronald CAMPION	36	4000	10
John ELLIS	234	25218	207
Donald MCKINNON	84	3000	50
David MINNITT	36	5016	58
Peter MELVILLE	28	20000	11
John MCKELLAR	100	2300	912
The returns also feature the following licencees holding livestock in partnership in 1850.			
Alexander CAMERON and John McARTHUR	33	3700	230
Alexander CAMERON and Alexander CAMERON	60	10008	307
Charles MCKINNON and Andrew WATSON	70	7500	70

Source: GRG 24/6/1851/2844, SAA.

Primary Sources

SAA

Register of Emigrant Labourers (1529); Index to Pioneers (1048); Abbott Index; Papers Relative to South Australia; 1841 Census (407); Stock returns in GRG 24/6/1851/2844.

Newspapers and Periodicals

Port Phillip Gazette; PG; SAG; Southern Australian.

Private Papers

Black, Davenport, Leake and Meredith correspondence; the reminiscences of Thomas Bates Jnr, Derwas Jones, the Hunter brothers and William Moodie.

DL

Manuscript of Occupation Licences checked against SAGG in collaboration with Dr Peter Verco.

Cemeteries

Naracoorte; Penola; Millicent; Robe; Mt Gambier.

Correspondence with AOT, LTC, SLV and the Mitchell Library.

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C.J. Melano, Walking Tall: History of Millicent.
J. Murdoch and H. Parker, History of Naracoorte.
J.H. Sheppard, History of Mt Gambier and the South East District.
H.C. Talbot, The Early History of the South East District, South Australia.
B.J. Towers, Early Millicent.
N.V. Wallace, Bush Lawyer.
E.M. Yelland, The Baron of the Frontier.

Appendix 2

Geographic II	International Phonetic	Location	Meaning	Spelling of H. Wade, Surveyor
Baringialport	[Barinjalpɔ:t]	Lake Bringalbert, Vic. Marditjali tribal area.	Based on Baringial, a Marditjali ancestral giant being who made the country in which they and surrounding tribes lived, and [pɔ:tari] clever man.	Bring-albort
Benaio	[Benaio]	1km E of SA/Vic. border near Wallapoona Waterhole (Section 635, Hundred of Binnum), in Vic. Marditjali tribal territory.	Not known.	Benayo
Burakruwa	[Burakruwa]	Section 289, Hundred of Comaum or close to it, SA. Bungaditj tribal area.	'Burak grass country'. [burak] grass for mat-making.	Borac rover
Dango	[Dango]	Sections 170 and 172, Hundred of Nangwarry	Perhaps has meaning of standing up or elevated place. Compare [fanulun] standing in Jarildekald Tr.	Dango
Garanta	[Garanta]	About 6m E of SA/Vic. border near Woorantan bulli. Buganditj tribal area.	'Water well there' probably a phrase	Garanter
Kanaweia	[Kanaweia]	Water Reserve 24 beside Section 228, Hundred of Wirrega, now known as Cannawigara. Potaruwutj tribal area.	[weia] young woman.	Cana-weia
Kannu	[Kan:u]	c. 3m N of Bordertown, at or near Section 443, Hundred of Tatiara, SA. Potaruwutj tribal area.	[kan:u] axe-stone (place). Whether axe stone occurs there has not been ascertained but enquiries are being made.	Cannu

Appendix 2 (Cont'd)

Geographic II	International Phonetic	Location	Meaning	Spelling of H. Wade, Surveyor
Karingigal	[Kariŋigal]	Crinogle Lagoon, Section 576, Hundred of Binnun.	A place where the dead were exposed; where the dead were exposed on frameworks over water; as such were forbidden places.	Crinnigal
Katawawik	[Kaṭawa:wik]	Section 397, Hundred of Tatiara, now called Catawarick. 9m S by E of Bordertown, SA. Potaruwutj tribal area.	[Kaṭawa:wi] scorpion; <u>hence</u> , 'Scorpion place'.	Catwarwick
Kolekarlaia	[Kolekarlaia]	Peck Waterhole, Water Reserve No. 3, Hundred of Tatiara, 2.5km (1.5m) NE of Bordertown, SA. Potaruwutj tribal area.	'Many she-oaks'. [kole] she-oak; [karlaia] many	Colegalia
Kongal	[Kɔŋal]	Darwent's Waterhole, Section 24, Hundred of Willalooka; 39km (24m) W by S from Bordertown. Potaruwutj tribal area.	Deriv. [kɔŋal] water mallee (<u>Eucalyptus dumosa</u>).	Gongal
Konkoro	[Konkoro]	Conkar Lagoon, Section 594, Hundred of Binnun, 9.5km (6m) W by S from Frances, SA. Marditjali tribal area.	Deriv. [konkoro], fresh water crayfish; <u>hence</u> 'Crayfish Lagoon'.	Concur
Kuum	[Ku:m]	Section 643, Hundred of Binnun, 4.6m SW of Frances. Marditjali tribal area.	Wash place.	Koom
Kuarpindja	[Kuwarpinda]	Quarpena Swamp, Section 679, Hundred of Binnun, SA. Marditjali tribal area.	'Wood duck egg place' from [kuwar] and [pinda] eggs	Cuapinya

Appendix 2 (Cont'd)

Geographic II	International Phonetic	Location	Meaning	Spelling of H. Wade, Surveyor
Lokart	[Lokart]	Servicetown (close vicinity of), Vic. Potaruwutj tribal area.	No recognised meaning.	Lockart
Munggal	[Munggal]	Mungal Lagoon, Section 577, Hundred of Binnun, SA. Marditjali tribal area.	Deriv. [munggal] fresh water.	Mongrel
Mutjanggunya	[Mutjanɡunja]	Moot Yang Gunya Water Reserve No. 12, just N of Mundulla, Hundred of Wirrega, SA. Potaruwutj tribal area.	[mutjan] strange, anything unusual [kunja] fire (both Ngarkat words).	Mutch-am-cuna
Ngalang	[Njalɑŋ]	Nalang Creek, Bordertown and Homestead at 826, Hundred of Tatiara, SA. Also Potaruwutj tribal area near to Ngarkat boundary.	Deriv. [njalaŋ] limit or boundary.	Nallang
Ngarangwari	[ŋɑraŋwari]	Section 177, Hundred of Nangwarry Nangwarry	[ŋɑraŋ] cold cave, cave, wari, cold	Nagwarry
Penola	[Panola]	Water Reserve No. 2 close to Section 18, Hundred of Comaum, SA. Now known as Penola Swamp. Bungaditj tribal area.	[pano] earthy, <u>hence</u> 'earthy place'.	Penola
Penampenam	[Penampanam]	Section 541, Hundred of Binnun, SA or close vicinity. Marditjali tribal area. (On maps as Binnun Railroad Station.)	Deriv. [penambol] forest, timbered country; in the Mt Gambier area [pena] is usually applied to the red gum, <u>Eucalyptus camaldulensis</u> .	Binnumbinnun
Poanyadappa	[Poanjadap:a]	Section 359, Hundred of Joanna, SA or close to it; 5km (3m) E by S from Struan. Marditjali tribal area.	'bat hole'. [poanja] bat and [dap:a] hole or cave opening.	Boy-anadophe

Appendix 2 (Cont'd)

Geographic II	International Phonetic	Location	Meaning	Spelling of H. Wade, Surveyor
Puindjem	[Puindjem]	Now Poomgum Waterhole, Water Reserve No. 17, Hundred of Wirrega, SA. Poturuwutj tribal area.		Poo-m-jem
Putiar	[Put:iar]	Water Reserve No. 3, Section 12, Hundred of Tatiara, SA. 8km (5m) W of Bordertown. Potaruwutj tribal area.		Pootiar
Tjangwa	[Tjanwa:]	16km (10m) SW of Bordertown, SA. Vicinity of Section 379, Hundred of Wirrega, SA. Potaruwutj tribal area.	No meaning known.	Changwar
Warn	[Warn]	7km (4.4m) SW of Frances, SA. Section 641, Hundred of Binnun, SA. Marditjali tribal area.	[w̥arnap] firewood, fire. [w̥arn] spear. [w̥arna] fire	Warn
Warreanga	[War:eánda]	Section 319, Hundred of Caroline or close to it. Bungaditj tribal area.		Warreanga
Workap	[Workap] or ? [Warkabo]	Vic., 12km SW by W from Apsley, Marditjali tribal area.	[w̥orkabo] three; significance unknown.	Workup
Wuratambali	[Wuratambali]	Near, or at, Section 452, Hundred of Binnun, as located by H. Wade, Surveyor. It is in Marditjali tribal territory; "Marchfly Plain". There is another place of same name in Bungaditj tribal country further S at Joanna, known today as Wrattontully. "Marchfly Plain".	[w̥ura] - [w̥ora] plain country [tambali] - [tambali] march fly.	Wooratanbulli

Appendix 2 (Cont'd)

Geographic II	International Phonetic	Location	Meaning	Spelling by H. Wade, Surveyor
Waratambali	[wuraʃambali]	Section 67, Hundred of Joanna, SA, in Bungaditj tribal area, 32km (20m) SE of Naracoorte, SA.	"March Fly Plain".	

Appendix 3: Pastoral Leasehold, 1851-65.

No. of Lease (1)	Lessee (2)	Head Station (3)	Hundred (4)	1 July 1851		1859			1865			
				Area in Square Miles (5a)	Rent (5b)	Area (6a)	Rent (6b)	Assessment (6c)	Area (7a)	Rent including improvements (7b)	Rent deducting 1/5 value of improvements (7c)	
				£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
152	Loudon Hastings McLEOD	Nalang	Geegeela	70	35. 0. 0	70	35. 0. 0	116.13. 4	70	1135. 8. 0	1200. 0. 0	
153	James ALLEN Patrick KELLY	Swede's Flat	Parsons	23	11.10. 0	23	11.10	19. 3. 4	23	200. 0. 0	105. 8. 0	
154	Bryan CUSSEN and James ALLEN Bryan CUSSEN Bryan CUSSEN	Bangham	Geegeela	30	17. 0. 0	30	15. 0	37.10. 0	30	270. 0. 0	56. 0. 0	
155	James JEFFREY Alexander McARTHUR Alexander McARTHUR	Marcollat	Marcollat	30	15. 0. 0	30	15. 0	25. 0. 0	30	185. 0. 0	164. 4. 0	
156	Rowland CAMPION Robert LAWSON	Padthaway N.	Marcollat, Parsons and Glenroy	34	17. 0. 0	34	17. 0	56.13. 4	34	335. 0. 0	301.12. 0	
157	Robert LAWSON	Padthaway	Glenroy	45	33.15. 0	45	33.10. 4	90. 0. 0	45	950. 0. 0	885. 0. 0	
158	Ewen CAMERON Ronald McDONALD Walter LAIDLAW	Lake Roy	Glenroy	17	12.15. 0	17	12.15. 0	28. 6. 8	17	278. 0. 0	126.16. 0	

continued/-

Appendix 3 (cont'd)

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5a)	(5b)			(6a)			(6b)			(6c)			(7a)			(7b)			(7c)		
					£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
176	James DICKSON	Maaoupe	Killanoola	45	33.15.	0				Resumed															
177	Duncan CAMERON		Comaum	22	16.10	0				Resumed															
178	John MacNICOL and John SMITH		Comaum	10	5.	0.	0			Resumed															
179	Josiah, Solomon and Thomas AUSTIN Thomas Allan WELLS and Henry Edmund WELLS (new lease 1.6.56)	Yallum	Monbulla	109	81.15.	0																			
								109	78.	9.	5	192.10.	0	Resumed	1861										
180	Alexander CAMERON Snr and Alexander CAMERON Jr.	Penola	Penola	58	43.10.	0				Resumed	June	1861													
181	David Fletcher MINNITT Ewen CAMERON	Krongart	Nangwarry	36	18.	0.	0																		
								12½	13.10.	0	54.	0.	0	12½	100.	0.	0						100.	0.	0
182	Charles MACKINNON and Andrew WATSON Andrew WATSON Andrew WATSON (new lease 11.1.57)	Nangwarry	Nangwarry	60	45.	0.	0																		
								62	51.	0.	0	136.	0.	0											
														62	500.	0.	0						253.	0.	0
183	Robert ROWLAND and Edward John LEAKE Edward John LEAKE	Inverary Tarpeena	Hindmarsh	194	140.10.	0		24	20.	8.	9	45.	0.	0											
														24	220.	0.	0						217.	0.	0

continued/-

Appendix 3 (cont'd)

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5a)	(5b)			(6a)			(6b)			(6c)			(7a)			(7b)			(7c)		
					£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
195	Peter BEGG George ORMEROD, Thomas TILLEY and Ann CAMERON	Coonunda	Mayurra	23	11.10.	0	20	11.10.	0	28.15.	0							20	100.	0.	0	60.	0.	0	
195A	Thomas PETHER		Mayurra				20	11.10.	0	28.15.	0														
195B	John ELLIS		Mayurra															13	65.	0.	0	47.	8.	0	
196	John GIFFORD Assigned to Benjamin ROCHFORD and Thomas SEYMOUR 1854 Thomas Drought SEYMOUR	Mt Benson	Mt Benson	70	35.	0.	0																		
								61	28.10.	0	78.	6.	0	47	320.	0.	0					268.	12.	0	
197	Andrew DUNN Edward STOCKDALE and George ORMEROD	Woolmit	Bowaka	58	29.	0.	0																		
								58	28.10.	0	95.	0.	0	56	300.	0.	0					274.	16.	0	
198	George KENDLE and Thomas WOOD Donald GOLLAN Donald GOLAN, Andrew DUNN	Murrabinna	Lacapede	44	22.	0.	0																		
								40	22.	0.	0	73.	6.	0											
														16	300.	0.	0					130.	12.	0	
199	William TILLEY James BROWN	Tilley's Swamp	Duffield	59	29.10.	0																			
								59	29.10.	0	73.15.	0	52	220.	0.	0						138.	0.	0	

Appendix 3 (cont'd)

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5a)	(5b)			(6a)			(6b)			(6c)			(7a)			(7b)			(7c)		
					£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
200	James BROWN	Avenue Range	Peacock	69	34.10.	0	69	34.10.	0	115.00.	0	69	500.00.	0	270.10.	0									
201	Stephen JEFFREY	Callendale	Coles	36	18.00.	0	36	12.10.	0	45.00.	0	36	225.00.	0	18.00.	0									
202	Isaiah COLE	Mount Scott	Minecrow	36	18.00.	0																			
	William McINTOSH, George ORMEROD Alexander McLACHLAN						36	18.00.	0	45.00.	0	36	185.00.	0	93.16.	0									
203	Alexander STEWART	Cairn Bank	Minecrow	79	39.10.	0																			
	John HENSLEY						79	39.10.	0	98.15.	0	79	475.00.	0	40.00.	0									
204	Charles George DOUGHTY	Monbulla	Monbulla	29	14.10.	0																			
	T. P. SCOTT						25	12.10.	0	50.00.	0		Resumed 1861												
205	John Edward BATES	Kaladbro	Mingbool	31	15.10.	0																			
	Donald and Malcolm McKINNON						31	15.10.	0	45.40.	0	31	225.00.	0	124.40.	0									
206	Anthony SUTTON	Dismal Swamp	Young	9	4.10.	0																			
207	John MEREDITH	Murrawa	Gambier	39	19.10.	0																			
208	John MEREDITH	Oaklands	Mingbool	36	18.00.	0	35	17.15.	0	70.00.	0	35	380.00.	0	289.00.	0									
209	Arthur BLAKESLEY	Mil Lel	Gambier	38	28.10.	0																			
	Donald McKINNON						6	2.12.	6	5.00.	0														
	Richard Hale BUDD											3	22.00.	0	22.00.	0									

continued/-
483.

Appendix 3 (cont'd)

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5a)	(5b)			(6a)			(6b)			(6c)			(7a)			(7b)			(7c)		
					£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
210	Hastings CUNNINGHAM David POWER New lease 29.9.57		Young	79	51.10.	0				Resumed Nov 1858															
211	Archibald JOHNSON	Mt. Muirhead	Riddoch	77	38.10.	0	75	38.13.	0	126.16.	0	75	480.0.	0									388.8.	0	
212	Ewen CAMERON Ann CAMERON	Wattle Range	Short	26	13.0.	0	26	13.0.	0	48.6.	0	26	190.0.	0									38.16.	0	
213	Duncan MacKINNON Stephen JEFFREY	Sheoak Range	Short	29	14.10.	0	29	14.10.	0	24.3.	0	29	155.0.	0									144.8.	0	
214	Duncan MacKINNON and Archibald JOHNSON Archibald JOHNSON New Lease 17.5.57		Riddoch	17	8.10.	0	15	8.10.	0	14.3.	0	17	70.0.	0									64.8.	0	
215	Edward STOCKDALE	Lake Hawdon	Short	70	35.0.	0	65½	34.11.	3	101.1.	0	13	85.0.	0									82.4.	0	
215A	Thomas MAGAREY	Lake Hawdon	Short									37	230.0.	0									70.0.	0	
216	Alexander PEARSON	Reedy Creek	Smith	37	18.10.	0	47	18.18.	2	48.5.	0	37	250.0.	0									226.0.	0	
217	Francis COLE John McINNES William McINNES, Malcolm McINNES	Crower	Conmurra	80	40.0.	0	80	40.0.	0	133.6.	0	80	525.0.	0									193.8.	0	

continued/-

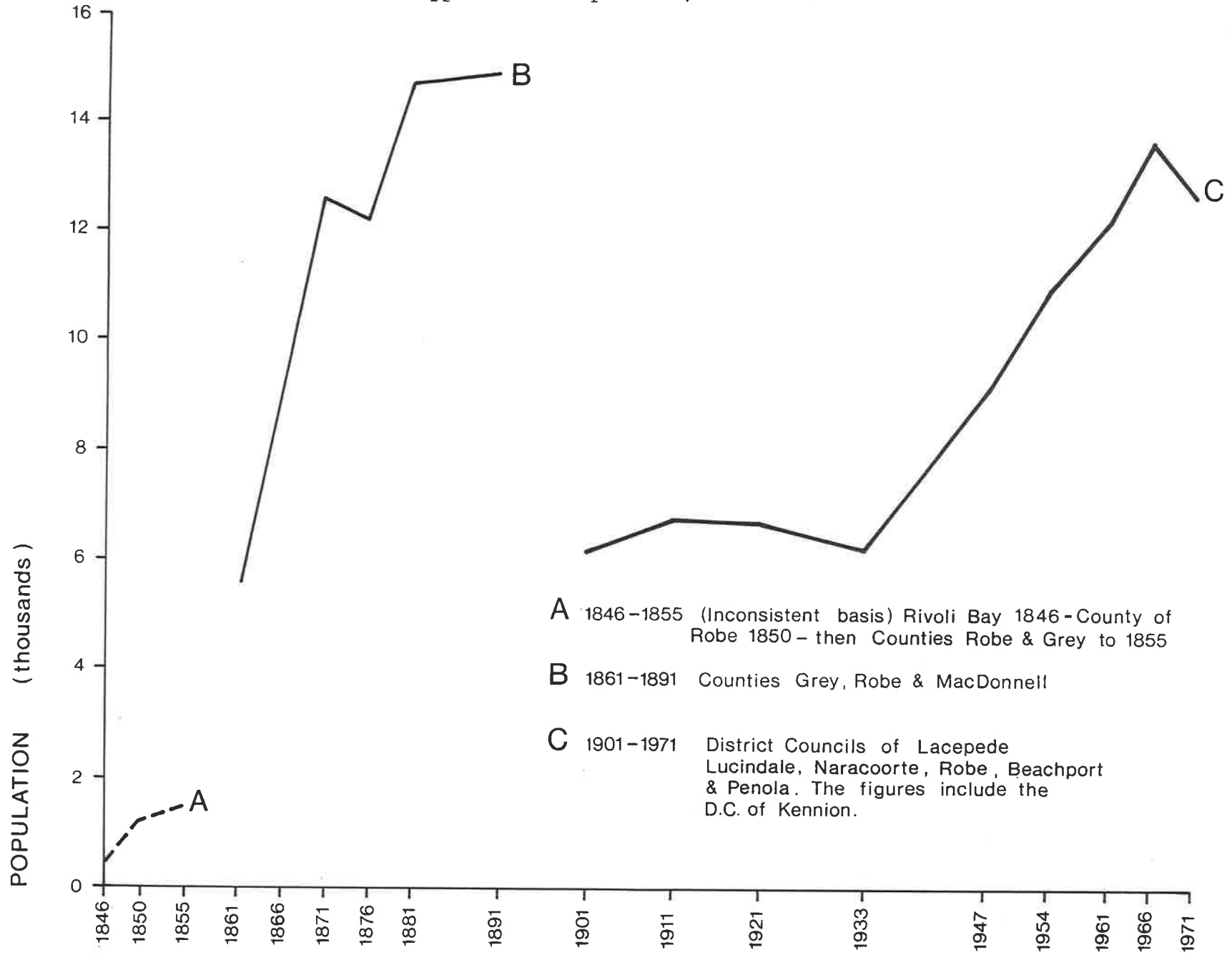
Appendix 3 (cont'd)

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5a)	(5b)	(6a)	(6b)	(6c)	(7a)	(7b)	(7c)
					£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.
599	Henry JONES	Conkar	Binum	10	5. 0. 0		Resumed Jan 1858				
604	Peter BEGG		Mayurra	10	5. 0. 0		Resumed 1857				
	John ELLIS and Thomas PECHER, Thomas TILLEY and George ORMEROD			7	4.19. 9		Resumed 1858				

Sources: Pastoral Lease Book, DL (checked against Memorial Register Books in collaboration with Dr P. Verco).

SAPP 98A of 1865, 30A of 1865 and 126 of 1866.

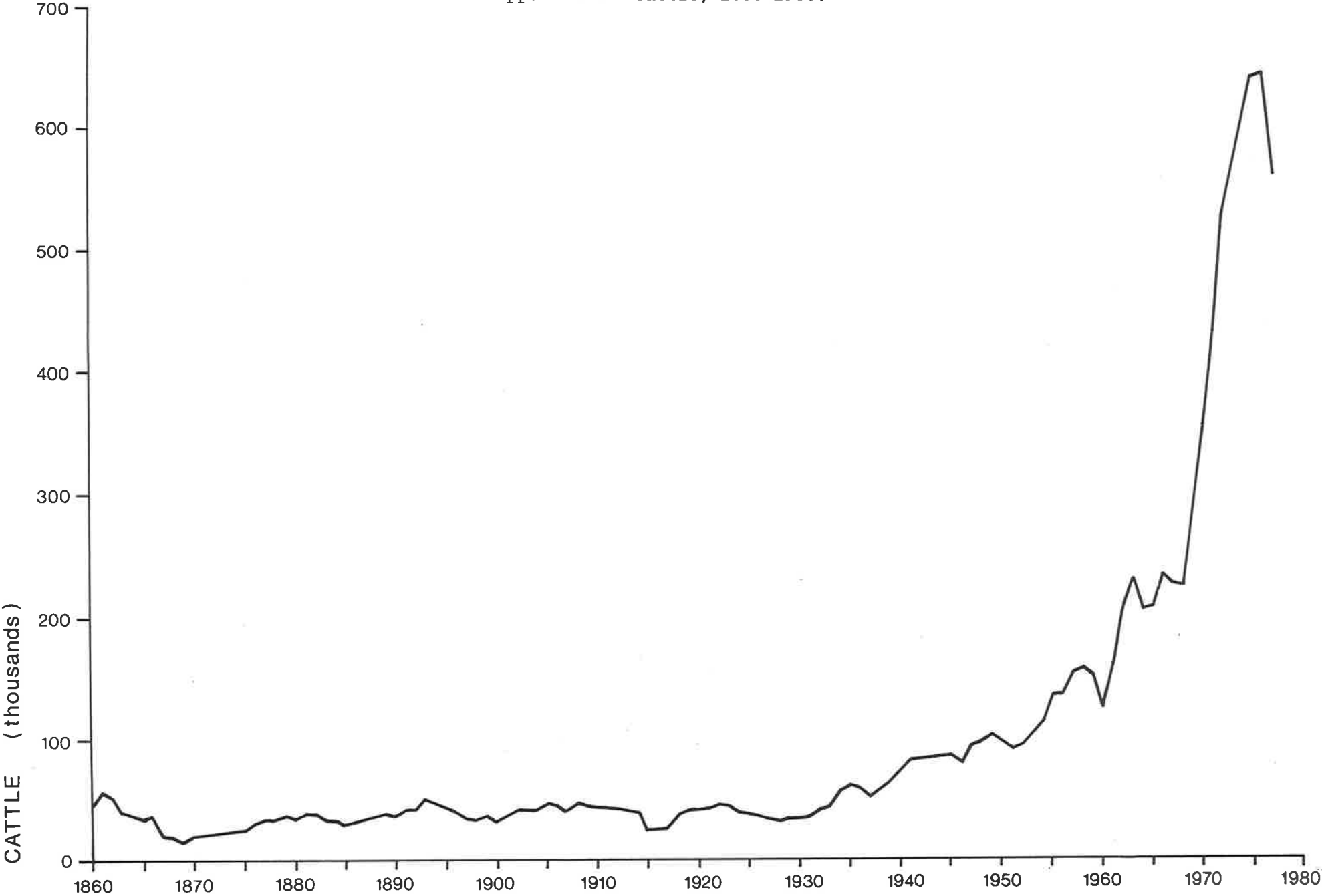
Appendix 4: Population, 1846-1971.



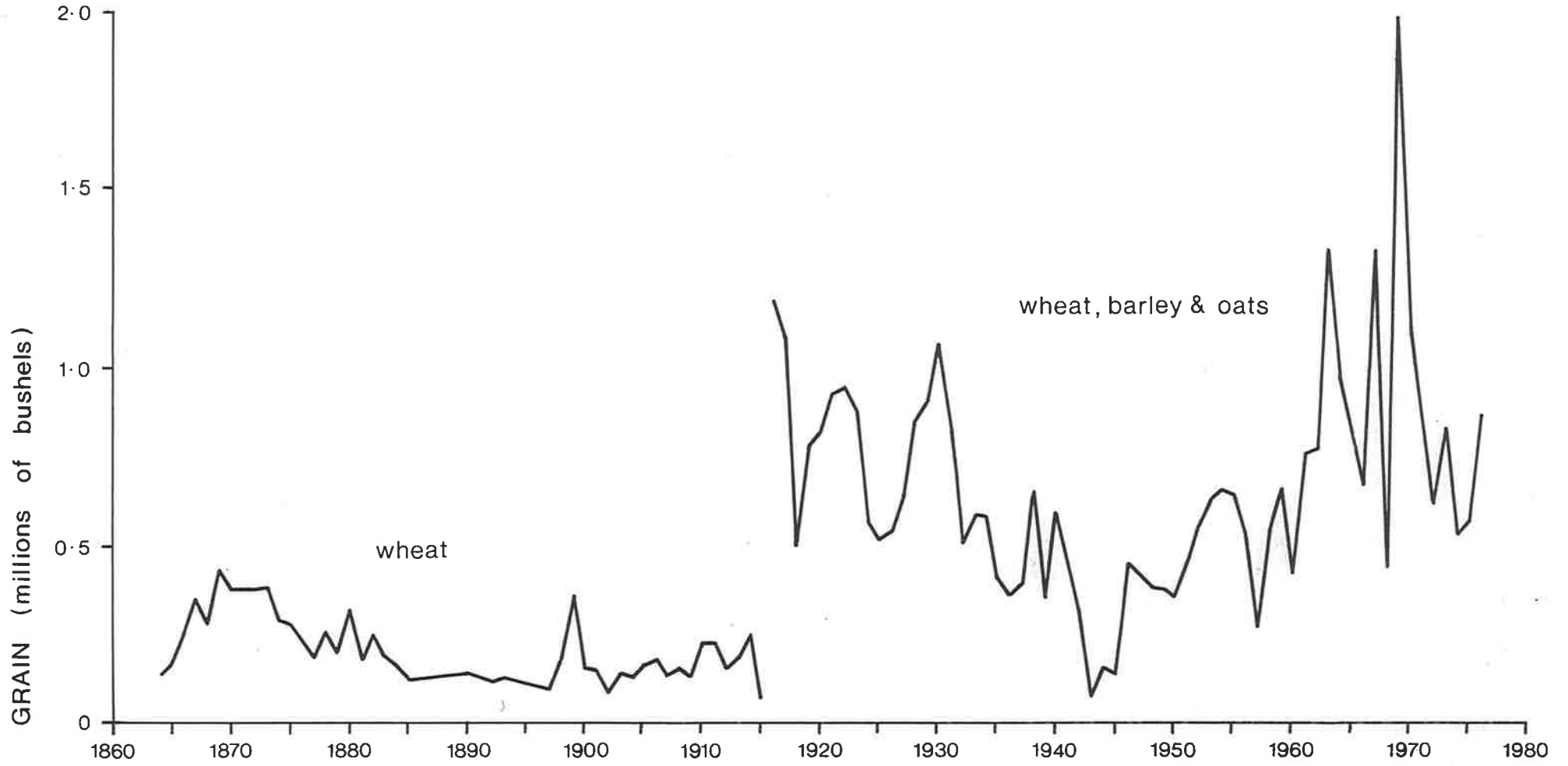
Appendix 5: Sheep, 1860-1980.



Appendix 6: Cattle, 1860-1980.



Appendix 7: Wheat, 1860-1915; Grain, 1915-80.



Appendix 8:
Estates of more than 5,000 acres at 1891

Owner	Extent in acres	Hundred	Total
J. CLARKE	33,310	Kongorong	80,797
	45,103	McDonnell	
	1,113	Gamber	
	1,271	Caroline	
J. and G. RIDDOCH	11,781	Monbulla	75,020
	1,123	Riddoch	
	18,281	Grey	
	9,599	Lomaum	
	5,779	Young	
	11,188	Penola	
	1,466	Killanoola	
J. and W. ROBERTSON	849	Blanche	74,162
	14,954	Hindmarsh	
	21,277	Robertson	
	38,803	Joanna	
A. SMITH	4,871	Comaum	38,035
	9,211	Jessie	
	34,469	Jessie	
Drs W.J. and J.H. BROWNE	3,566	Binum	36,394
	10,037	Caroline	
	3,567		
	12,336	Gambier	
	3,145	Kongorong	
J.C. ELLIS	5,993	Benara	35,416
	1,307	Joyce	
	25,600	Benara	
	9,816	Blanche	

Owner	Extent in acres	Hundred	Total
A. HUTCHISON and A. DUNN	12,965	Lochaber	29,089
	10,528	Hynam	
	2,027	Naracoorte	
	166	Murrabinna	
	63	Bowaka	
	1,088	Lacapede Bay	
G.L. DICKSON	2,187	Glenroy	28,857
	65	Townsend	
	23,193	Killanoola	
	5,469	Comaum	
R. KIDDLE	195	Penola	26,903
W. LAIDLAW and J. AFFLECK	26,903	Binum	26,903
T. MAGAREY	26,593	Binum	26,597
M. and A. GARDINER	16,845	Naracoorte	24,952
	7,035	Hynam	
	1,072	Jessie	
E. LAWSON	12,636	Nangwarry	24,646
	12,010	Blanche	
T. MORRIS	22,109	Glenroy	23,410
E. KIRBY	1,301	Parsons	23,202
	17,931	Penola	
Mrs McKINNON	5,271	Grey	19,200
	13,038	Mingbool	
	6,162	Gambier	16,876
	16,876	Mingbool	16,876

Appendix 8 (cont'd)

Owner	Extent in acres	Hundred	Total
SEYMOUR Bros.	11,742	Millanceia	15,680
	3,932	Robertson	
J. KENNEDY	5,837	Young	
	4,276	Mingbool	12,190
	1,810	Gambier	
	267	Grey	
S.A. LAND CO.	10,447	Comaum	10,447
T. VAUSE	394	Blanche	
	458	Young	9,609
	178	Riddoch	
	8,076	Caroline	
	503	Hindmarsh	
S. DAVENPORT and G. GLEN	3,615	Mayurra	
	456	Mt Muirhead	9,464
	5,393	Hindmarsh	
H. BICKFORD	9,141	Hynam	9,141
A. DUNN	868	Bowaka	9,046
	8,178	Lake George	
W. CROUCH	8,048	Grey	8,048
T. SKENE	5,464	Grey	
	1,492	Nangwarry	7,696
	740	Monbulla	

Owner	Extent in acres	Hundred	Total
SIMPSON and Sons	3,658	Comaum	
	910	Robertson	7,080
	1,729	Joanna	
	783	Killanoola	
C. BLUME	552	Gambier	
	5,836	Caroline	6,486
	98	Blanche	
R. GARDINER	5,537	Kongorong	5,537
A.F. TELFER	1,720	Rivoli Bay	
	36	Mayurra	5,530
	3,774	Hindmarsh	
J. LAURIE	5,491	Jessie	5,491
G.A. PRITCHARD	5,472	Gambier	5,472

Sources: SAPP 53 of 1891; GRG 35/251, SAA.

Appendix 9: Repurchased Estates

9 (a)

'Mt Benson' Estate

Purchased from J.F. Ryder and R. McDonald.

Date allotted: 27 June 1901

Blocks	Hundred	Allottee	Area in acres	Blocks	Hundred	Allottee	Area in acres
90,498	Waterhouse	DAWSON, W.	696	459,462	Waterhouse	McBAIN, G.J.	272
236	"	FLINT, H.D.	199	463/4	"	DODGE, W.J.	139
259,277, 489	Waterhouse and Mt Benson	McINNES, A.	371	469,470	"	DUNNE, L.E.	139
291, 466/7	Waterhouse	COMAN, P.F.	229	471	"	OWEN, F.	65
465	"	MARTIN, G.F.	65	479	"	SNEATH, C.H. Jnr	54
468	"	HOLLAMBY, R.B.	58	480	"	SNEATH, E.A.	63
472	"	FLAVEL, E.A.	70	485,487	"	BROWN, J.	429
477/8	"	MARTIN, J.T.	303	484	"	RAMSAY, W.	624
481	"	SNEATH, H.J.	158	473,476	"	GIBSON, G.	485
486	"	VEARING, J.H.	88	482	"	YELLAND, E.H.	541
491	Mt Benson	LING, A.B.	281	488	"	LLOYD, F.T.	241
495	Waterhouse	DIBDIN, H.O.	414	497	"	COOPER, C.	250
496	"	BIRD, G.	448	494	Mt Benson	ENGLAND, W.	324
490	Waterhouse and Mt Benson	RYDER, W.F.	727	492	"	WRIGHT, A.J.	434
				493	Waterhouse	BANKS, J.	1,547

'Naracoorte' Estate

Purchased from the Executors of Thos. Magarey. Date allotted: 13 May 1903

Blocks	Hundred	Allottee	Area in acres	Blocks	Hundred	Allottee	Area in acres
1	Naracoorte	DUNN, H.S.	58	44	Naracoorte	POOLE, C.H.	8
2	"	ANDERSON, J.B.	5	45n	"	DENING, A.	3
3	"	SYMES, J.A.	39	45s	"	WENNERBOM, A.	3
4	"	YOUNG, H.F.	34	46	"	DAVISON, J.L.	7
5	"	FORSTER, H.A. and A.O.	248	47	"	WYNES, J. Jnr	10
6	"	CAMERON, W.	139	48	"	YOUNG, S.J.	14
8	"	GRIFFEN, C.	158	49	"	CHILDS, W.H.	7
9,10	"	WILSON, W.A.	360	50	"	CAMERON, A.	39
12	"	BRADY, M.J.	125	51	"	CHAPLIN, A.W.	29
14	"	DUNN, L.G.	122	52	"	ANDERSON, J.A.	145
15	"	BARCLAY, A.	60	53	"	STEVENSON, G.M.	16
16	"	PLATE, F.W.	20	54	"	COE, E.	238
17	"	McCARTHY, D.	20	55	"	GOULD, W.	229
18	"	STEVENS, W.	215	56	"	BOSTON, T.	41
19	"	STEWART, F.B.	69	57	"	WRIGHT, G.	205
20	"	BLACKSELL, C.	19	58	"	BURDON, R.	150
21	"	MUNRO, W.	33	59	"	BELL, J.	320
22	"	MUDGE, A.J.	96	60	"	FORSTER, A.E.M.	129
23	"	KAY, D.P.	104	61	"	LAMB, S.	38
24	"	SCOWN, W.H.	159	62	"	LOBBAN, J.	21
25	"	ATTIWILL, A.J.	116	63	"	TRENTER, H.	21
26	"	CORNER, J.	31	64	"	MUNRO, W.E.	23
27	"	HEUCHAN, G.W.	16	65	Naracoorte and Jessie	LANGELUDECKE, A.	389
28	"	BARCLAY, T.	14	66	"	HAYES, J.	438
29	"	BARCLAY, J.	14	67	"	BRAY, C.	467
30	"	McPHEE, D.	14	68	Naracoorte	FISHER, R.E.	287
31	"	RACKHAM, G.E.	15	69	"	TALBOT, R.E.	92
32	"	COE, E.P.	8	70	"	SHOEBRIDGE, W.	23
33	"	HITCHCOCK, C.	23	71	"	Naracoorte Racing Club and Naracoorte Rifles	115
41	"	Naracoorte Pastoral and Agricultural Society	10	72	"	WOOFFENDEN, W.	185
34	"	BARCLAY, G.H.	12	73	"	LEITCH, R.	65
42	"	PETRIE, J.	6	74	"	GARE, R.L.	307
43	"	BARRETT, J.T.	7				

Blocks	Hundred	Allottee	Area in acres
75	Naracoorte	BURFORD, S.	456
76	"	PINKERTON, J.	28
77	"	MARCUS, D.	28
79	"	CAMERON, D.	493
80	"	READ, M.	457
81	"	CLAYFIELD, J.	278
82	"	LIGHT, J.J.	169
83	"	FINLAYSON, E.C.	309
84	"	FOGARTY, P.	134
85	"	LUDWIG, E.R.	179
86	"	KETTELT, A.	304
87	"	WELCOME, A.J.	365
88	"	GERKE, J.S., C.F. and L.F.	560
89	"	KENNEDY, E.J.	320
90	"	DUCKFORD, G.	615
91	"	HINZE, C.	665
92	"	PRICE, J.	472
93	"	BROGAN, N.	808
94	"	GRIFFIN, W.	304
95	"	DILLON, J.	324

Blocks	Hundred	Allottee	Area in acres
96	Naracoorte	BRENNAN, R.	285
97	"	BUTLER, W.	835
98	"	EASTHER, E.	1,250
99	Hynam	MUNN, T.	1,154
100	Naracoorte and Hynam	GAMMON, P.F.W.	439
101	Hynam	WILLIAMS, T.	642
102	"	MCDONALD, J.	1,066
103	"	TOLMER, R.D.	554
104	"	GREEN, J.	588
105	"	HYNES, T.	957
106	"	GARTNER, J.E.	878
108	"	TOLMER, J.	673
109	Jessie	McLEAN, A.	147
110	"	STONE, J.A.	73
7	Naracoorte	DONOGHUE, J.J.	80
11,13	"	EDWARDS, P.J.	290
78	"	BENNETT, W.P.	321
107	Hynam	TOLMER, J.D.	293
111	Jessie	PEAKE, H.	194

'Moorak No. 1' Estate Hundred of Blanche
Purchased from Colonel P.J. Browne, CB.
Date allotted: 12 April 1905

Block	Allottee	Area in acres
12	KIESELBACH, E.J.A.	43
13	KORNER, H.	43
14	KILSBY, E.J.	48
54	KILSBY, V.H.C.	47
55	BYASS, G.A.	44
56	NICHOLLS, J.	46
58	CORBELL, T.B.	40
60	STEEL, J.	29
61	MYERS, W.H.	19
62	HOWARD, A.W.	23
63	HYDE, J.	26
64	FLETT, J.	30
65	HILL, R.J.	36
66	STAFFORD, J.	23
67	MURPHY, J.W.	20
68	HAMILTON, J.A.	20
69	MATHER, A.H.	20
70	MELLER, T.	20
71	THOMSON, J.	20
72	JONES, W.F.	30
73	GURRY, R.	30
74	BOWMAN, W.	30
75	WHITEHEAD, J.W.	30
76	HAIG, T.	30
77	ELLIS, J.	24

'Kalangadoo' Estate

Purchased from the Executors of T.H. Morris. Date allotted: 18 April 1905

Blocks	Allottee	Purchase money £	Area in acres
81	WEBER, M.	1,729	414
82	KIRK, A.G.	1,567	363
83	MORRIS, T.H.	4,500	710
84	SPEHR, W.E.	1,274	305
85	DEAN, H.	386	94
86	DAVIES, L.R.	359	81
87	McDONALD, J.S.	330	73
88	DREWITT, W.	827	209
89	SPEHR, C.G.	1,864	461
90	HEMMINGS, A.F.G. and W.J. Jnr	1,907	577
91	MATHERSON, J. and A.	462	188
92	ROGERS, W.	426	230
93	LEWIS, W.J.	160	38
94	CLARK, J.	179	39½
95	ANDERSON, C.	203	40
96	McCALL, N.	1,297	270

Blocks	Allottee	Purchase money £	Area in acres
97	RAKE, A.	1,761	314
98	HANSFORD, B.	216	40½
99	COTTER, T.	126	20
100	HETHERINGTON, W.R.	122	20
101	GUERIN, M.M.	115	18.3/4
102	WILLIAMS, L.	116	19
103	INGHAM, W.N.	100	19
190	BUDDLE, J.	105	20
369	DREWITT, G. and MEDHURST, G.	1,739	459
370	THOMPSON, B.	1,634	443
371	VORWERK, A.C. and W.E.	1,826	409
372	OSBORNE, W.F.	1,551	406
373	MOTT, J.	202	40
374	EY, C.G.	181	40
375	LOWE, G.	170	40
377	Trustees Kalangadoo Recreation Ground	360	80

'Kybybolite' Estate

Hundred of Binnum

Purchased from R. Kiddle.

Blocks	Allottee	Area in acres	Date of Allotment
493	BODDINGTON Bros.	1,073	12.6.05
496	DOHERTY, L. and J.	638	"
497	McINNES, N.	559	"
498	BALDOCK, T.	805	"
501	GLASSENbury, E.	132	"
506	BILLING, S.J.	287	"
509	WILLS, J.W.	963	"
515	HAHN, G.H.	558	"
516	LACEY, F.C.	603	"
524	BAIL, H.	592	"
525	TIDY, A.H.	719	"
526,557	BRADLEY, A.	743	"
528,529	SCHLODDER, M.	587	"
531	GODDARD, G.H.	534	"
532	KEALY, P.	512	"
533	SHEPHERD, S.	789	"
534	BARTRAM, J.W.	712	"
535	FARROW, T.	712	"
537	SCHOLZ, K.F.H.	204	"
551,552	LAMBERT, J.	98	"
553	BEATON, W.	40	"
554	BARRETT, G.	40	"
555,556	JOHNSON, W.J.	63	"
558,559	WHEELER, J.	49	"
504,507S	McINNES, L.	852	"
505E,507N	KEALY, A.T.	817	20.6.05
502	GLASSENbury, E.	17	"
503	BEARD, C.A.	27	"
512	PACKER, H.A.	296	"

Blocks	Allottee	Area in acres	Date of Allotment
514	ST PIER, E.H.	455	20.6.05
520	WELSH, P.	869	"
527	LAURIE, J.P.D.	516	"
536	SCHOLZ, A.R.	445	"
513	MAY, R.A.	632	30.6.05
505W	BEARD, N.	137	8.7.05
518	GIBBS, A.	639	"
510	BILLING, E.	833	5.9.05
500	McINNES, H.D.	772	19.7.05
494N	KEALY, P.	418	2.11.05
494S	McLAY, W.	434	"
495	McLAY, E.	550	"
522	McLAY, J.	646	"
521	WRIGHT, C.M.	519	20.11.05
523	WRIGHT, M.E.	586	"
499,511	Leased to Dept of Agriculture for Experimental Farm	1,255	1.9.07
530,550	" " " "	1,001	1.7.05
499,511 were resumed in 1923 and allotted as under:			
499	SARGENT, R.J. and DAVIE, H.L.	504	13.2.25
511	DAVIE, L.S.	751	"

'Yallum' Estate

Purchased from Executors of John Riddoch.

Date allotted: 22 May 1906

Blocks	Hundred	Allottee	Purchase Area in	
			money	acres
			£	
435	Comaum	BLACK, R.	2,066	515
436	"	ALLEN, A.	1,222	390
437	"	WALKER, J.A. and V.W.	884	299
438	"	MONAGHAN, R.W.	2,180	708
439	"	POUNSETT, R.S.	127	30
440	"	SENIOR, W.	136	30
441	"	FOWLER, R.S.	116	30
442	"	CASE, G.A.	116	30
443	"	TOWERS, T. and H.H.	116	30
444	"	SKINNER, J.	126	30
445	"	DRURY, C.	1,216	348
446	"	BARKER, D.E.	1,186	360
447	"	McDONALD, L.E.	1,759	566
448	"	EY, E.R. and W.H.	1,603	561
449	"	LYNCH, H.P. and P.J.	1,961	504
450	"	McBAIN, J.N.	1,140	253
451	"	WALLACE, J.E.	100	25
452	"	WRIGHT, H.	174	41
453	"	GERAGHTY, M.	1,131	248
454	"	TILLY, F.	899	223
455	"	McBAIN, E.F.	435	98
456	"	COONAWARRA RECREATION ASS.	438	101
457	"	O'LOUGHLIN, D.	2,032	450
458	"	LEAR, R.C.	207	46
459	"	LEAR, W.H.	194	47
460	"	HISCOCK, A.J.	202	50
461	"	JOHNSON, W.B.	174	41
462	"	BOURNE, J.T.	178	41
463	"	WORTHINGTON, E.J.	198	46
464	"	DARWENT, H.J.	168	42
465	"	O'CONNOR, E.	164	42
466	"	NORMAN, S.L.	1,368	342
467	"	CLAYFIELD, P.L. and J.L.	1,335	330
468	"	FOWLER, F.	257	64

Blocks	Hundred	Allottee	Purchase Area in	
			money	acres
			£	
469	Comaum	REDMAN, J.	257	64
470	"	SHARAM, R.F.	304	58
471	"	DARWENT, J.	311	70
472	"	RICHARDSON, H.	113	26
473	"	BLIGHT, A.S.	76	20
474	"	CHILDS, J.	676	166
475	Penola	ROBINSON, T.W.	4,000	865
476	"	SHARAM, J.	1,251	331
477	"	HINZE, E.R.D.	1,473	415
478	Monbulla	McWATERS, S.	1,542	459
479	"	KINLEY, W.H.	1,799	454
480	"	REILLY, J.D., T.F. and A.	1,647	375
481	"	McADAM, G.W.	172	39
482	"	O'CONNOR, P.	281	86
483	Penola	O'CONNOR, J.W.	1,151	362
484,485	"	PINCHESS, W.W.	1,748	544
486	"	CRAFTER, P.G.	505	125
487	"	RACKHAM, F.W.	575	113
488	"	SEAL, A.	956	255
489	"	TRAVER, D.J.	465	102
490	"	HARRIS, W.T.A.	480	105
491	"	STRONG, A.H.	1,196	314
492	"	PATTERSON, H.J.	1,257	352
493	"	WARNER, J.	1,665	415
494	"	DREWITT, E.J.	891	205
495	"	DUNNING, M.	149	28
496	"	KELLY, T., T. and D.	286	70
497	"	STUART, F.E. & STABLETON, E.C.	1,644	400
498	"	ADAMSON, D.	1,744	303
499	"	RICKETTS, R.H. and A.J.	1,813	642
500	"	DAVIS, S., W.A. and P.A.	1,689	493
501,503	"	McDONNELL, M. and P.	1,050	285
502	"	PENOLA RACING CLUB	411	95
504	"	GRAY, A.	1,292	592

Continued/...

Blocks	Hundred	Allottee	Purchase Area in	
			money	acres
			£	
505	Penola	KAIN, C.P.	934	459
511	"	MARKS, T. Jr	220	40
512	"	JONES, G.	217	40
513	"	McELROY, S.F.	217	40
514	"	KENT, G.A. Jr	228	40
515	"	SPARROW, F.R.J.	197	33
516	"	ROBINSON, O.D.	194	33
517	"	BALNAVES, E.	204	40
518	"	McELROY, A.S.	207	40
519	"	LAMONT, A.	206	38
520	"	SMITH, D.	193	38
521	"	KIDMAN, J.	142	28

'Glenmore' Estate

Hundred of Monbulla

Sold by Public Auction on account of Mr F.W. Kilsby.

Date allotted: 13 November 1907

Blocks	Purchaser	Area in acres	Price per acre
			£
187	DAVIDSON, J.	233	4.18. 6
139	DAVIDSON, J.	138	5. 6. 0
140	RICKETTS, H.	140	7. 0. 0
185	KILSBY, P.H.	260	9. 0. 0
146	KILSBY, P.H.	163	9. 0. 0

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'Binnum' Estate

Purchased from A.G. and J.G. Laidlaw.

Blocks	Allottee	Area in acres
539	McDONALD, J.N.	1,396
540	FLAVEL, D.	822
541	VINCENT, R.	1,638
542	CARTER, J.A. and W.L.	1,008
543	JOHNSON, A.J.	1,025
544	COATS, W.H.T.	2,012
545	O'BRIEN, T.J.	1,388
546	FEINELER, B.F. and J. Jr	985
547	HEROLD, L.E.	806
548	VALENTINE, S.M.	942
549	McLEAN, J.	581
567	McGILLIVRAY, J.	879
568	BARRETT, E.A.	235
570	PFITZNER, F.H.G.	511
571	REDMAN, V.	647
572	FORSTER, W.J. and A.A.	836
573	HACKETT, H.A.	1,006
574E	PYCROFT, W.I.J.	548
574W	WATTS, M.	839

Hundred of Binnum

Date allotted: 14 March 1908

Blocks	Allottee	Area in acres
575	PENNY, S. and D.	2,017
576	ATKINSON, E.L.	1,493
577	MEEHAN, S.	1,313
579	RYAN, D. and M.	1,045
580	RYAN, T. and J.	874
581	TOWNSEND, J.	846
582,586	SMITH, H.	44
583	VINCENT, R. (as chairman of trustees proposed recreation reserve)	128
584	BALDOCK, A.J.	607
585	FLYNN, M.	22
587	CARTWRIGHT, G.	24
588,589	KIRBY, R.	40
590	JOHNSON, H.	20
591	KERNKE, C.F.L.	20
592,593	JOHNSON, S.J.H.	25
569	SMITH, D.J.	24
578	FORSTER, J.G. and A.E.	1,285

Purchased from William Smith and Co.

Date allotted: 3 March 1909

Blocks	Hundred	Allottee	Area in acres	-Blocks	Hundred	Allottee	Area in acres
370	Jessie	LAMBERT, H.	817	407	Jessie	GARNETT, B.	1,039
372	"	HEFFERNAN, P.J.	654	409	"	GREGORY, C.W.	356
373	"	ELLIOTT, J.	743	411	"	MUNN, T.	64
374	"	LLOYD, A.	849	412	"	McLEAN, M.E.	63
375	"	GLYNN, P.	836	413	"	ROCHOW, W.J.	61
376	"	STEPHENS, J.W.	1,216	414	"	SMITH, A.	1,013
378	"	LYNCH, E.T. and C.A.	1,248	415	"	NOLAN, J.B.	638
379	"	WALPOLE, J.B. Jr	264	416	"	NOLAN, J.B.	550
380	"	GAFFNEY, B.	862	417	"	HENNIG, G.A.	500
381	"	SMITH, W.R.	975	418	"	BUCK, W.C.	1,041
382	"	HANSFORD, B.C.J.	219	419	"	TOLMER, J.D.	834
383	"	SKUSE, F.	383	420	"	ROGERS, W.E.	907
384	"	BAKER, J.T.	69	421	"	BUTLER, G. and A.H.	914
385	"	KELLY, P.	66	422	"	LANGELUDECKE, A. and W.A.	347
386	"	BLACKSELL, W.	67	423	"	BRAY, C. and A.E.	392
387	"	PATCHING, J.	65	424	"	BIGGINS, S.R.	276
388	"	MUNN, Henry	65	425	"	BARCLAY, A.	318
389	"	SMITH, W.	1,022	430	"	HUGHES, A.	342
390	"	PICKER, M.	73	431	"	HOLLIDAY, J.E.	313
391	"	SPENCE, J.P.	68	432	"	HAHN, G.H.	309
392	"	McKAY, C.G.	72	433	"	RADFORD, R.A.	319
393	"	BLACKSELL, J.	74	624	Binum and Jessie	STEVENS, A.J.	515
394	"	BERKIN, F.J.	74	626	Binum	KOTH, H.M.	973
395	"	GIBBS, A. Jr	177	627	Binum and Jessie	SCOTT, D.G.	1,019
396	"	PALLANT, A.	813	371	Jessie	McGILLIVRAY, J.	295
397	"	JENKINS, R.A.	1,096	377	"	POLNER, C.H.	1,315
398	"	HANLIN, F.	880	408	"	SMITH, W.H.	852
399	"	WAUGH, T.	378	410	"	HAYES, J.	64
400	"	KIDMAN, A.S. and F.J.	1,091	426	"	KENNEDY, E.J.	377
401	"	GRESSLE, J.H.	969	427	"	McPHEE, N.M.J.	410
402	"	KEMPE, R.A.	1,008	428	"	MOORE, F.R.	339
403	"	DANIELL, F.J.H. and T.B. Jr	751	429	"	O'CONNOR, T.F.	417
404	"	MOLONEY, P.T. and J.M.	855	625	Binum and Jessie	SMITH, H.D.	1,088
405	"	WRAY, J.M.	685				
406	"	WOHLERS, H.A.	1,007				

'Mt Schanck No. 1' Estate Hundred of Kongorong
Purchased from W.J.T. and Mrs G. Clarke.

Blocks	Allottee	Area in acres	Date of Allotment	Purchase money £
415,433, 443	McLEAN, C.S.	1,875	26.4.10	3,924
418	WINTERFIELD, J.	475	"	952
419	GORDON, M.A.	482	"	967
420	CARLIN, C.	710	"	1,070
424	WALLACE, R.	505	"	1,775
428	HAYWOOD, W.C.	284	"	1,025
432	CONCANNON, A.	385	"	1,546
434	ASHBY, A.J.	342	"	1,768
435	GUST, R.A.T. and A.C.J.	328	"	1,724
436	KIESELBACH, E.J.A.	306	"	1,610
437	ANDERSON, W.J.	282	"	1,587
438	McEGAN, P.H.F.	454	"	2,047
440	HAY, W. and J.	282	"	1,556
441	SPEHR, O.H.	322	"	1,773
446,481	ATKIN, C.T.	1,064	"	3,440
447	ANDERSON, R.J.	329	"	2,307
448	DIXON, T.	129	"	968
449	KEMP, C. and HYDE, J.	125	"	1,000
450,495	ASLIN, F.A. and W.A.	680	"	2,526
452,490, 499	COLLINS, F.W.	1,249	"	3,916
453,470	SPORER, O.J.	1,061	"	3,180
455	WHITE, A. Jnr	326	"	1,242
456,478	UPHILL, W.J.B.	1,068	"	3,313
457	CLARK, A.	157	"	942
458	JONES, W.F.	281	"	1,159
459	HILL, G.A.	306	"	1,262
460	MORRIS, W. and F.	311	"	1,400
463,466	WILKE, C.G.	770	"	3,658
467	CHANT, M.L.	510	"	1,658
471	JOHNS, S.	400	"	1,200

Blocks	Allottee	Area in acres	Date of Allotment	Purchase money £
472	SPEHR, O.F.	424	"	1,593
474	PLAYER, C.H.	728	"	1,003
480	SPEHR, P.T.	376	"	1,600
483	WHEELER, C.T.	350	"	613
484	WHITE, R.F.	968	"	1,244
485	CHANT, L.A.	723	"	1,182
486	HOUSTON, N.J.	519	"	786
496	SMITH, W.T.	635	"	1,367
502-506	STANKE, C.	6 $\frac{1}{2}$	"	67
414	WINTERFIELD, C. and G.	658	14.5.10	1,001
416	KILSBY, A.R.	849	"	866
417	KILSBY, A.R.	921	"	1,274
421	CARRISON, G.A.	445	"	838
423	COX, W.	720	"	1,440
426	PASCOE, B.B.	523	"	1,700
430	KIESELBACH, E.J.A.	344	"	1,466
439	DREWITT, A.	369	"	1,476
442	COLLINS, R.J.	336	"	1,633
445	KILSBY, H.W.	335	"	504.10.0
451	BUTLER, M.M.	273	"	1,575
454	COLLINS, M.	315	"	1,260
461	MORRIS, W. and H.	312	"	1,638
462	KEMP, F.D. and THOMPSON, F.W.	284	"	1,704
464	HILL, A.E. and H.E.	300	"	1,500
465	GADEN, A.H.A.	320	"	1,520
473	PERKINS, F.W.	334	"	760

Purchased from the Trustees of Colonel P.J. Browne.

Date allotted: 12 October 1911

Blocks	Allottee	Purchase money £	Area in acres
598	MELLER, T. on behalf of Provisional Committee of Co-operative Cheese and Butter Factory proposed company		5
619	CHAMBERLAIN, H.	929	70
620	MADELEY, G.F.	836	59
622	LAMOND, J. and P.	1,438	59
625	TAYLOR, R.S.	1,110	29
626	WHITEHEAD, J.F.	1,136	29
627	MOLES, M.A. and E.	1,112	29
630A	HAMILTON, J.A.	625.10.0	14
630B	MATHER, A.H.	625.10.0	14
631	CHAMBERS, A.	1,061	24
632	STAFFORD, J.	1,092	27
633	REINECKE, G.A.	976	22
634	NEWTON, J.H.	1,131	29
635	JONES, R.J.	1,136	29
636	TELFORD, R.	1,139	29
639	DICKSON, G.I. and W.H.	1,072	29
640	ROESLER, J.A.	1,013	29
641	JOHNSTON, F.L.	1,725	59
642	CLARK, A.	1,611	72
731	KILSBY, A.H.	1,686	59
732	SPEHR, P.J.	1,806	64
733	BROWN, A.L.	2,178	64
734	FERGUSON, A.; SUTHERLAND, A.; JAMES, R. and ALEXANDER, R.	2,039	60
735	HITCHCOCK, W.C.	1,659	43
736	GRANEY, P.E.	1,712	44
737	LAND, R.W.	1,769	46
738	WALTERS, G.H.	1,435	46
739	HAY, W.	800	29

Blocks	Allottee	Purchase money £	Area in acres
740	JANEWAY, T.W.	863	31
741	HORRIGAN, D.	885	35
742	ORCHARD, C.L.	1,235	56
743	FLETT, R.	1,632	62
744	McGRATH, M.	2,111	64
745	LEGGETT, E.E.	1,676	64
746	TALBOT, C.J.	1,613	64
747	NICHOLLS, J.F.	2,050	64
748	CRENNAN, F.W.	1,735	62
749	HOWARD, J.C.	1,277	58
750	CONNELL, J.M.	966	35
751	McGILLIVRAY, D.	1,570	36
752	YEATES, E.F.	1,649	39
754	McKINNON, D.A. and W.	1,458	63
755	SUTTON, W.J.	1,503	65
756	PALAMOUNTAIN, W.A.	1,953	65
757	TILLEY, F.	1,624	69
758	GLYNN, P.	932	49
759	BARRY, T.	980	57
760	KUHL, J.H.	1,545	77
761	McINTOSH, K.	1,402	60
762	NICHOLLS, G.T. and J.C.	1,413	70
763	HINTON, G.W. Jnr	2,998	85
764	SHEPPARD, J.H.	1,351	49
765	O'NEIL, M.J.	1,718	49
767	BRUHN, E.A.	867	21
768	LYNCH, W. and W. Jnr	870	21
769	JONES, W.F.	1,389	38
770	TOLLNER, C.G.	697	20
771	LOCK, J.	1,050	45
772	BAILEY, G.	989	47
773	STRATFORD, R.	1,148	71

Blocks	Allottee	Purchase money £	Area in acres
774	SMITH, J.A.	931	71
775	KNIGHT, H. Jnr	805	71
776	McEACHERN, J.A.	1,101	98
777	ACHLETER, J.H.	1,220	71
778	JOHNSTON, T.J.	915	48
779	THOMAS, J.	1,025	48
780	CUTTING, W.S.J.T.	1,108	32
781	CUTTING, O.J. and CRAFTER, C.	656	19
782	CRYNE, J.	656	19
783	O'DONNELL, F.J.	1,011	24
766	BAILEY, S.	930	16
787	MARKS, S.G.	610	11
792	DAY, A.	56	1
793	HERBERT, C.T.	55	1
796/7	KNIGHT, F.	108	1
801	WARREN, E.A.	60	1
813	McMILLAN, S.H.	75	1
821	HANNAGAN, M.J.	83	1
822	WALTERS, T.R.	78	1
823	HEAVER, J.L.	534	4
824	BERTRAM, W.C.	500	1
827	MENZIES, J.A.	699	1
830	KAIN, M.T.	760	10
831	KIESELBACH, D.A.	867	11
832	HOLMES, A.L.	364	4
833	MICHAEL, A.	377	4
834	CLARK, A.	320	4
835	CRAFTER, P.	172	2
837	RYAN, M.		2
840, 838/9	TRUMAN, G.E.	282	3
843/4	WENDELBORN, E.R.	108	1
900	JACQUIER, W.H.	1,016	29
901	GIBSON, J.	1,046	29
902	WHITEHEAD, J. Jnr	1,213	33

Blocks	Allottee	Purchase money £	Area in acres
904	TARRANT, H.S.	1,112	29
905	HOLLAND, W.H.L. and BUTLER, W.J.	1,108	29
906	FAHY, M.P.	1,113	30
907	MURPHY, J.W. and T.J.	1,114	29
908	LASLETT, G.	1,114	29
909	SEINEMEIER, C.R.	1,117	29
923	TELFORD, P.S.	2,115	69
624	COX, W.H.	1,217	30
628	MILLHOUSE, R.V.M. and A.R.F.	1,077	24
629	McMUTRIE, W.	1,073	24
637	YEATES, A.	1,479	29
638	HENNINGSEN, W.	1,108	31
754	LEGGETT, J.	1,350	37
783	LEGGETT, W.	793	19
784	POLGLASE, D.D.	1,072	33
790	BROWN, J.	750	8
794	HERBERT, C.T.	45	1
795	ASHBY, A.W.	48	1
800	LAWRENCE, H.J.V.	58	1
802	WARREN, E.A.	55	1
804	GAVENS, F.	63	1
805	PUDNEY, J. Jnr	65	1
808, 809	TOLLNER, E.D.	138	1
812	McMILLAN, S.H.	73	1
815	TELFER, J.R.	73	1
817	HANNAGAN, M.J.	80	1
903	UPHILL, D.W.	1,143	29
910	LAWSON, A.F.	1,163	30
1B	VON STANKE, H.	62	1
2A	EGAN, J.	45	1
3A	SCHONFELDT, A.	45	1
4	GIBSON, M.J.	45	1
5A	MARKS, W.H.	45	1
6A	CALLANDER, M.R.	45	1

Blocks	Allottee	Purchase money £	Area in acres
7A	SIMPSON, J.	38	1
8A	GABRIEL, J.	45	1
9A	HOUSTON, R.	45	1
10A	BRAMMER, C.H.	45	1
11A	LEWIS, E.A.	45	1
12,17/8	TOPHAM, J.E.	158	1
18A			
13a,14a			
15a,16a			
23s	BATTYE, W.	206	2
21,22,23n	TUCKER, G.S.	141	1
24	SMITH, J.	60	1
26a,27a	WHITEHEAD, T.L.	123	1
29a	McPHEE, D.	63	1
35a	REINECKE, J.C.S.	68	1
37a,38a	MOLONY, J.	81	1
39a	McNAMARA, D.J.	43	1
40a,41a,48a	McNAMARA, D.J.	175	1
45a	CHESTER, A.T.	63	1
49a	GLASS, W.K.	63	1
50a	MELDRUM, J.C.	50	1
51a	ANDERSON, J.	50	1
52a	ANDERSON, W.J.	50	1
53	STEELE, E.B.	40	1
54a	GOLDING, H.	40	1
55a	GOLLEY, J.F.	40	1
61a	TRUMAN, A.R.	45	1
621	NEWTON, J.F.	1,498	59
789	TWARTZ, A.	1,035	13
814,820	TELFER, J.R.	145	1
816	CREEK, A.	78	1
847	TILLEY, G.H.	640	13
848	TRUMAN, G.E.	729	15
850	WHITEHEAD, W.J.	574	11
851/2	KNIGHT, H. Snr	951	16

Blocks	Allottee	Purchase money £	Area in acres
19,20a	TUCKER, G.S.	110	1
30a	McPHEE, D.	65	1
33a	BOND, P.P.	59	1
36a	DUGGAN, J.	70	1
42a	McNAMARA, D.J.	56	1
44a	BOND, H.A.	56	1
46a	McNAMARA, M.	63	1
798/9	NUNAN, W.H.	103	1
828/9	HIGGS, S.E.	1,570	21
32a	EWANS, W.H.	65	a
48a	HOLMAN, E.M.	63	1
766	DAY, W.J.	909	20
825	GLANVILLE, T.	702	7
849	HARRIS, C.J.	579	11
803,806	DUNN, C.J.	118	1
807,810	HASTINGS, H.J.McL.	128	1
811	CORBELL, G.T.	68	1
791	BIRD, J.T.	506	5
826	McINTOSH, J.K.	727	7
788	BRICE, A.A. and Co. Ltd	76	14
846	WENDELBORN, E.R.	660	12
842	NORRIS, E.H.M.	56	1
845	NORRIS, S.J.	56	1
643	WALTERS, J.C.	56	1
854,855	SUTHERLAND, H.	3,821	73

'Hatherleigh' Estate Hundred of Rivoli Bay
Purchased from R. McDonald.

Blocks	Allottee	Date of Allotment	Area in acres	Purchase money
				£
313	CROWE, J.F.	14.7.15	52	714
314	CAMPBELL, A. and C.	"	55	779
321	ORCHARD, E.A.	"	75	675
322	RUWOLDT, A.M.C.	"	68	478
318	FARMER, W.A.	20.4.16	49	601
319	LESTER, W.J.	"	51	642
320	BEVERLEY, R.G.	8.6.20	48	395
317	SMITH, V.A.	5.7.20	66	740
315,323	BRADSHAW, M.L. and GREEN, W.S.	8.9.20	123	1,146
316	GALWEY, W.S.E.	17.1.22	56	616

'Rendelsham' Estate
Purchased from M. and M.M. White.

Blocks	Hundred	Allottee	Area in acres	Date of Allotment	Purchase money £
272	Rivoli Bay	WATSON, E.W.	5	14.7.15	67.5
273	"	WYNN, A.E.	5	"	67.15
274	"	POOLE, C.H.	6	"	79.15
276	"	SMITH, S.S.M.	3	"	42.15
278	"	McGINTY, S.M.	4	"	63.15
279	"	McGINTY, S.M.	4	14.8.15	63.15
282	"	SMITH, S.S.M.	4	16.9.15	56.15
411 326	Mt Muirhead Rivoli Bay	GARD, F.J.	221	25.10.28	1,425.10
324,325	Rivoli Bay	WILSON, G.	472	3.5.19	3,374.10
275,277,) 280,281,) 328,329,) 415)	" Mt Muirhead	GEERIN, M.A. NILLSON, J.A.H.	17 382	15.5.17 11.10.21	209.0 1,484.5
414,327	Rivoli Bay	DONLON, J.J.	229	19.3.26	1,355.15

'Koorine' Estate

Purchased from the Executors of George Riddoch.

Blocks	Hundred	Allottee	Purchase Area in money £	acres	Date of allotment	Blocks	Hundred	Allottee	Purchase Area in money £	acres	Date of allotment
421,422	Grey	MILLS, F.J.		388	5.6.20	445	Grey	BOYCE, R.J.	2,954	452	"
423,424	"	ROGERS, L.F.	3.12/pa	1,135	"	446,447,	"	HOGGARTH, J.L.	3,464	474	"
438,439,	"	YEATES, G.T. &	2,147	459	"	448,449	"				
440	"	T.H.M.				463	Grey)	WAUGH, J.R.	2,100	407	"
441,442	"	ELLISON, W.G.	2,482	502	"	186,187	Young)				
443	"	REDFORD, G.R. & H.V.	2,728	664	"	372	Hindmarsh	SINCLAIR, R.A.J.	1,977	459	"
450	"	SUTTON, J.P.	2,640	626	"	375,376	Hindmarsh)	BAIRD, D.S.	2,411	332	"
451,452	"	KENNEDY, M.C.	2,552	634	"	198	Young				
453,454	"	HOUSTON, N.	2,919	619	"	373,374	Hindmarsh)	CAIN, F.	2,898	504	"
461	"	CAMPBELL, C. & A.	3,174	488	"	199	Young				
464	"	HILL, E.C. & J.L.	4,280	713	"	179	Riddoch	FWLLES, K.H.	1,957	230	"
465	"	RIDDOCH, J.	3,236	650	"	171,172	Young	MESSENGER, R.G.	2,197	325	"
466	"	LAMEY, D.F.	3,154	634	"	175,176	"	McINTOSH, H.R.	1,106	184	"
456,457	"	CLARK, A.	2,919	553	"	184,185	Young)	DOWDELL, H.V.	2,335	352	"
170	Young					458	Grey)				
177,178	Riddoch	CAMERON, A.M.	4,961	902	"	179,180,	Young	ALLCHIN, E.L.	2,823	469	"
183	Young	DREWITT, E.J.		15	"	181,182	Young				
194	"	TELFER, J.E.	4.15/pa	146	"	177,178	"	EVANS, W.J.	1,356	226	1.7.20
195	"	CROWE, W.L.	4.15/pa	310	"	426	Grey	JONES, J.Q.	2,111	241	1.6.20
196,197	"	McARTHUR, C.N.	4.15/pa	450	"	190,	Young	McKINNON, G.O.	2,895	514	1.8.20
220	"	MEDHURST, G.		6	"	191/3	Young				
462	Grey	BRENNAN, J.R. & J.T.	3,507	539	"	425	Grey	BRYANT, G.H.	1,671	297	1.6.20
420,459,	"	ALTSCHWAGER, B.W.		291	1.6.20	188/9	Young	RICKETTS, T.J.	3,100	459	1.8.20
460	"					173/4	"	ALLCHIN, A.E.	2,317	356	1.11.20
427	"	BOTT, P.E.	2,102	240	"	439/37,	Grey	DEAN, G.L.		2,149	10.9.20
428	"	GARVIE, R.G.	2,008	270	"	455					
444	"	KILSBY, A.J.	3,429	452	"						

Sources for Appendix 9: J.H. Sheppard, Vol. 2; CSALB and ASALB, DL.

Appendix 10: Lands Repurchased Under Closer Settlement Acts, as on 30 June 1914.

Estate	Purchase completed	Area purchased in acres	Purchase-money Paid by Government		Total Cost	
			£	s. d.	£	s. d.
Binum						
Leasehold	9 Dec 1907	{ 26,576.1.18	69,098.	10.10	70,830.	4. 7
Closed road	20 Feb 1911	1,248.3. 0	122.	4. 0		
		47.0. 0				
Burnside	13 Oct 1903	16,193.3.19	64,775.	9. 6	67,847.	3. 7
Closed road	19 Nov 1903	34.0. 0	102.	17. 0		
Green Point	30 Aug 1909	5,505.0. 0	14,272.	6. 0	14,531.	15. 8
Hatherleigh	30 Jun 1914	662.0. 0	6,620.	0. 0	6,620.	0. 0
Hynam)						
Leasehold)	4 Aug 1908	38,035.2.17	119,812.	3. 2	120,630.	8. 3
Closed road	20 Feb 1911	583.0. 0	267.	15. 0		
		85.0. 0				
Kalangadoo	1 Mar 1905	6,468.1.17	26,843.	13. 6	27,974.	15.10
Kybybolite	1 Apr 1905	26,736.1. 9	63,498.	14. 7	66,438.	17. 3
Closed road		16.0. 0	38.	0. 0		
Closed road		8.2. 0	20.	3. 9		
Moorak No. 1	19 Apr 1905	777.2.27	20,219.	7. 9	20,830.	5. 4
Moorak No. 2	3 May 1911	4,608.1.12	145,036.	4. 9	150,792.	18. 9
Closed road		8.1.28	265.	7. 9		
Mount Benson	17 Apr 1901	9,719.2. 0	10,691.	9. 0	11,658.	6. 6

continued/-

Appendix 10 (cont'd)

Estate	Date completed	Area purchased in acres	Purchase-money paid by Government			Total Cost		
			£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
Mount Schanck	30 Jul 1909	40,379.3. 0	111,044.	6.	3			
Agreement to Purchase	22 Sep 1909	110.0. 0	110.	0.	6	113,594.	17.	11
Closed road	28 Oct 1910	308.0. 0	847.	0.	0			
Naracoorte	19 Dec 1902	24,435.3.20	45,000.	0.	0	48,719.	11.	11
Closed road	20 Feb 1911	0.2. 0	0.	18.	5			
Struan	31 Jan 1911	22,431.0. 9	78,508.	13.	11	81,287.	4.	4
Yallum	1 Mar 1906	17,182.1.23	60,138.	7.	2	63,136.	0.	6
Total for South East		242,149	837,333.	12.	4	864,892.	10.	5
Total for SA		682,715	1,973,919.	14.	1	2,044,219.	2.	9

Appendix 10 (cont'd): Land Repurchased Under Closer Settlement Acts as on 30 June 1914.

Estate	Agreements to Purchase			Land sold		Arrears of rent, purchase-money and interest
	No. of Agreements	Area in acres	Purchase-money	Area in acres	Purchase-money	
Binum	39	27,931	72,242. 0. 0	-	-	639.12. 8
Burnside Closed road	63	11,668	47,206. 7. 6	4,686	20,579.12. 6	174.17. 2
Green Point	6	3,734	9,572. 0. 0	-	-	1. 1.11
Hynam	67	37,712	118,385. 0. 0	11	219.16. 3	269.18. 2
Kalangadoo	31	6,173	25,041.10. 0	309	1,208.10. 0	-
Kybybolite	48	24,491	57,842. 0. 0	3	27. 2. 6	92. 7. 9
Moorak No. 1	21	640	17,087. 0. 0	137	3,607. 0. 0	-
Moorak No. 2	192	4,418	141,814. 0. 0	98	4,794. 0. 0	132. 7. 5
Mount Benson	2	510	819. 0. 0	448	370. 0. 0	0.11. 4
Mount Schank	68	28,059	89,318.15. 0	5	40. 0. 0	40. 1. 8

continued/-

Appendix 10 (cont'd)

Estate	Agreements to Purchase			Land sold		Arrears of rent, purchase-money and interest		
	No. of Agreements	Area in acres	Purchase-money		Area in acres		Purchase-money	
			£	s. d.			£	s. d.
Naracoorte	65	17,024	32,733.	1. 4	7,520	17,159.	4.11	22. 5. 2
Struan	27	20,356	74,666.	0. 0	-	-		374.12.10
Yallum	80	17,162	61,461.	19. 6	11	44.19.	3	144.15. 8
Total for South East	709	199,878	748,188.	13. 4	13,228	48,050.	5. 5	1,892.11. 9
Total for SA	441	478,993	1,638,125.	14. 0	59,715	115,509.	2. 2	2,352.12. 3

Appendix 10 (cont'd)

Estate	Horses	Cattle	Sheep	Population (adults)	Wheat (acres reaped)
Binum	170	80	12,681	45	976
Burnside	450	395	2,472	139	1,115
Green Point	13	103	1,410	3	-
Hynam	433	278	15,057	111	4,081
Kalangadoo	159	229	2,171	48	10
Kybybolite	229	110	9,214	79	1,740
Moorak No. 1	74	126	235	41	-
Moorak No. 2	329	933	675	211	-
Mt Benson	100	72	1,634	30	-
Mt Schanck	268	518	6,723	74	111
Naracoorte	307	197	8,019	103	539
Struan	106	52	6,066	33	941
Yallum	371	184	9,470	127	427
Total for South East	3,009	3,277	75,827	1,044	9,940
Total for South Australia	9,703	8,117	113,562	2,908	72,431

Source: SAPP 10 of 1914.

Appendix 11: Biographical Details of Closer and Soldier Settlement

Name	Occupation	Married (M) or Single (S)	Date of Enlistment	Age on Enlistment	Unit	Rank Attained	Term of Service	Served	Discharged
George Harry BRYANT	Gardener	M	24 Mar 1915	23	11th LH/ 1 and 4 Machine Gun Squadron	Captain	25 Aug 1915- 30 Mar 1918	Gallipoli and Middle East	10 Oct 1919
Christopher Berkley CLAXTON	Labourer	M	20 Dec 1915	31	9th LH	Lance Corporal	18 Apr 1916- 22 Mar 1919	Middle East	19 Jun 1919
George Lancelot DEAN	Grazier	M	13 Aug 1915	29	5th Field Artillery Brigade	Captain	21 Dec 1915- 1 Apr 1919	Middle East France and England	8 Jul 1919
Erlston Leslie RUSSELL	Farmer	S	27 Apr 1916	21	6th Field Artillery Brigade	Private	29 Jan 1917- 1 Feb 1919	England and France	8 Apr 1918
Harold Bismark SCHINCKEL	Farmer	S	17 Apr 1916	25	7th Field Ambulance	Lance Corporal	10 Feb 1917- 2 Mar 1919	England and France	28 May 1919
Charles SKINNER	Orchardist	M	9 Aug 1915	22	17th Inf. Battalion	Lance Corporal	Dec 1915- 25 Dec 1918	Middle East and France	27 Apr 1919
William John SMYTHE	Plasterer	S	15 Nov 1915	21	30th Inf. Battalion	Private	3 Apr 1916- 23 Aug 1917	Middle East, England and France	22 Feb 1918

continued/-

Appendix 11 (cont'd)

Name	Occupation	Married (M) or Single (S)	Date of Enlistment	Age on Enlistment	Unit	Rank Attained	Term of Service	Served	Discharged
Cedric SWAFFER	Commercial Traveller	S	4 Oct 1917	25	9th LH	Private	21 Dec 1917- 4 Mar 1919	Middle East	5 Jun 1919
Vasey Charlton WATTS	Labourer	S	9 Mar 1916	22	32nd Inf. Battalion	Private	24 Aug 1916- 19 Jan 1919	England and France	29 Jun 1919

Appendix 12:
THE SQUATTER'S ELEGY

With listless weary eye, and heavily-laden heart,
The Squatter stood at his Woolshed door,
And watched the Cocky's cart:
Stood in the same old shed where he'd pressed his first wool bale,
And tuned his cracked and wavering notes,
To the following dismal wail.

Work! Work! Work through many toilsome years:
And work, work, work, midst struggling hopes and fears,
And now with the run all fenced, well stocked, no longer dry,
"Resume! Resume! for Selectors Room!" is the universal cry.

What waste of money and strength in fencing and scooping Dams,
In killing rabbits and wild-dogs off,
In breeding first class Rams:
In culling the fairest flocks that ever shearer shore,
If I'm stripped of all when my head is grey,
And must shoulder my swag once more.

Oh, for a tenure sure, for longer terms of lease,
Security based on honour and truth, some chance of living in peace.
To know that the Government's word is as good as the Government's bond,
That your lease contains no legal clause, whereby you may be wronged.

Wheat! Wheat! Wheat, still the Cocky sings,
Wheat! Wheat! Wheat, no matter what price it brings,
What odds if it grows at all if we turn the Squatters out,
So long as those blasted Pastoral lords are sent to the right-about.

A few more years shall roll and the Cocky's turn will come,
And they'll clear him out, as they're clearing me,
And resume for Chinaman John.
And John on bunny will live,
And bunny on John will thrive,
For only those two in the dusty North will the Government leave alive!

L.G.B.

Written by Leonard Gilbert Browne, son of Dr W.J. Browne who owned runs in the north as well as in the South East. PRG 260, SAA.

Appendix 13:

THE PASSER-BY

He passed today
 Marching along in the same old way,
 In place of a pack - he carried a swag,
 The haversack's changed to a tucker bag
 But you couldn't mistake that typical stride,
 Tho' 'twas a billy that trailed at his side
 "Whither away - old cobber?" said I,
 "Are you hitting the high spots, to somewhere, bye and bye,
 Or just aimlessly treading the earth for a spell?
 And what's your battalion? Why, I knew it well.
 I knew them in Egypt, in Flanders, in France,
 Where they kept up their end in the madman's big dance.
 They were good cobbers all - for a beer or a brawl.
 'Gainst the Turk or the Boche, or the red caps and all.
 And now here you are making marks on the track,
 On that endless old track, with a swag on your back.
 And here am I, helpless, leg-chained to the sod.
 Returned soldier settled by patriot mob.
 The mob who yelled out, 'We must help these brave lads,
 We must take them and place them, where soft are the pads,
 No more must they tread along pathways that are rough,
 Up the land a few quid 'till it's quite good enough.'
 Politicians were waiting to lend us a hand;
 To feather our nest to the blare of a band.
 We'd been four years away and so couldn't know,
 How the dice was well loaded when they take a throw.
 Come - tell me, I say, how you missed the Repat?"
 "I didn't," said he. "Now my home is my hat.
 I took on a block - along with the rest,
 Bought at boom prices, as good as the best,
 For years then I struggled to make both ends meet,
 With cows and with pigs, with fruit and with wheat,
 With most things I struggled - but what did I find,
 For every step forward, I slipped six behind,
 With rates and with taxes on all that you need,
 With interest and principle eating your feed,

Appendix 13 (cont'd)

Everything hopeless - no sign of a win,
So in disgust - I aimed the joint in."
To the heads - I had given them proof in galore,
And reasons why I could not pay any more,
The land was too dear, by far and away,
There was need for reductions before I could stay.
But no - such tricks as that, they don't do,
The plan is too simple, brains needed too few.
They'd appoint a committee or two to enquire,
A committee that farms alongside of a fire.
And after they've wasted a month or a year,
There's a new party in and the plans disappear.
Then the same old procedure goes on again -
In the meantime the settler goes out in the rain.
Then what do you find? Why in less than a trice,
A cold-footer gets it at half of the price.
'Twas just what they wanted or so it appears,
They keep them on hand for a chap in arrears.
So now here am I out on the track,
Envyng mates who never came back.
Would I go again? No - so help me, Bob,
But well - I don't know - Just think of the mob.
The mob who never did let a mate down.
How many miles did you say to the town?"

Bonne Bouche

With permission of C. Skinner.

Appendix 14

Interviews

The following soldier settlers and soldier settlers' wives or widows were interviewed. Cassette tapes are held by the writer.

	<u>Interviewed at</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Held Land at</u>
Mr H. Banks	Kingston	24 Aug 1977	Kingston
Mr and Mrs S. Butler	Port MacDonnell	11 Sep 1976	Mt Schanck
Mrs E. Clayfield	Comaum	17 Sep 1976	Comaum
Mr D. Gilmore	Mt Gambier	12 Sep 1976	Moorak
Mrs G. Janeway	Mt Gambier	12 Sep 1976	Moorak
Mr N. Janeway	Moorak	13 Sep 1976	Moorak
Mr G.S. Laslett	O.B. Flat	1 Sep 1976	O.B. Flat
Mr L.J. Laslett	Victor Harbour	26 Oct 1976 and 9 Mar 1977	O.B. Flat
Mrs D. MacGillivray	Norwood	12 Mar 1977	Coonawarra
Mr P. McKay	Mt Gambier	11 Sep 1976	Mt Gambier
Mrs A. Possingham	Joanna	18 Sep 1976	Joanna
Mrs L. Rogers	Penola	19 Sep 1976	Monbulla
Mr and Mrs D.R. Rowe	Naracoorte	19 Sep 1976	Hynam
Mr H.B. Schinckel	Naracoorte	21 Jun 1978	Hynam
Mr C. Skinner	Wirrabara	20 Nov 1977	Coonawarra
Mrs L. Swaffer	Mt Gambier	14 Sep 1976	Mt Schanck
Mr Lindsay Talbot	Mt Gambier	11 Sep 1976	Mt Schanck
Mrs Lucy Talbot	Mt Gambier	11 Sep 1976	Millicent
Mr and Mrs A. Tye	Mt Gambier	10 Sep 1976	O.B. Flat
Mrs C. Watts	Lake Bonney	15 Sep 1976	Lake Bonney

The following were also interviewed

Mr H.T. Black, Superintendent of Drainage Works in the South East, 1930-47, 2 Mar 1977.

Mr L. McCarter, Principal, Wingfield Training Centre, 11 Mar 1977.

Lieut-Col. C.V. Claxton, son of C.B. Claxton, Adelaide, 19 Jan 1982.

Mr R. Clezy, Land agent and Auctioneer, Mt Gambier, 12 Sep 1976.

Mr D. Dean, grazier, son of Captain G.L. Dean, Penola, 12 Sep 1976.

Mrs M. Dean, daughter of Ewen McBain, Penola, 12 Sep 1976.

Appendix 14 (cont'd)

Mr L. De Garis, Land agent and landowner, Naracoorte, 19 Sep 1976.

Mr R. De Garis, Landowner, Millicent, 25 Aug 1977.

Mrs R. Parish, daughter of James Fox, Mt Schanck, 13 Jun 1978.

Mr G. Skeer, grazier, owner of Erlston Russell's land, Monbulla, 25 Aug 1977.

Mrs R. Willshire, grand-daughter of George McCarthy, Millicent, 9 Jun 1976.

Mrs Wray, whose father was a boundary rider on Hynam, Naracoorte, 2 Jun 1978.

Mr R. Wilson, great-nephew of Robert Smith Jnr, Millicent, 9 Feb 1982.

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 Acquired Soldiers Agreement Ledger Books.
 Diagram Books.
 Withdrawn Plans of Hundreds and Counties.

Lands Title Office

Memorial Register Books.
 General Registry Office Plans.
 Register Books containing Certificates of Title and other Instruments.
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