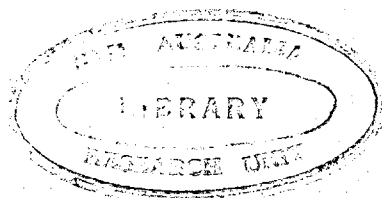


A survey
of the Kimberley Pastoral Industry
from 1885 to the Present.



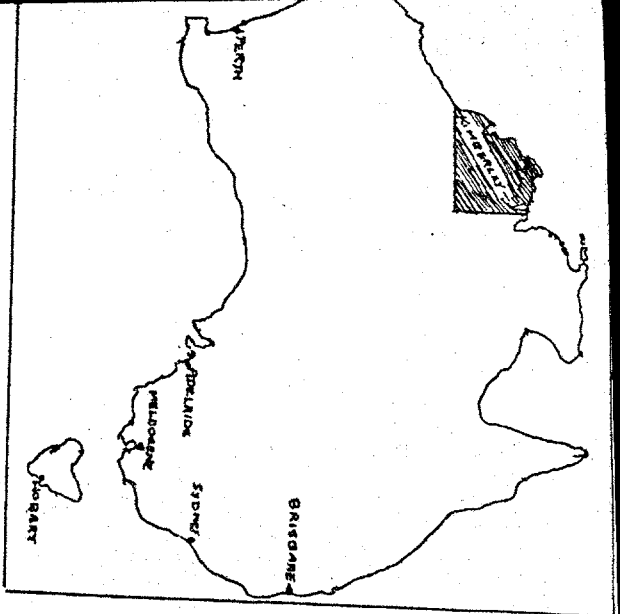
Thesis presented for the degree
of Master of Arts, October 1953.

Department of History,
University of Western Australia.

G. C. Bolton.

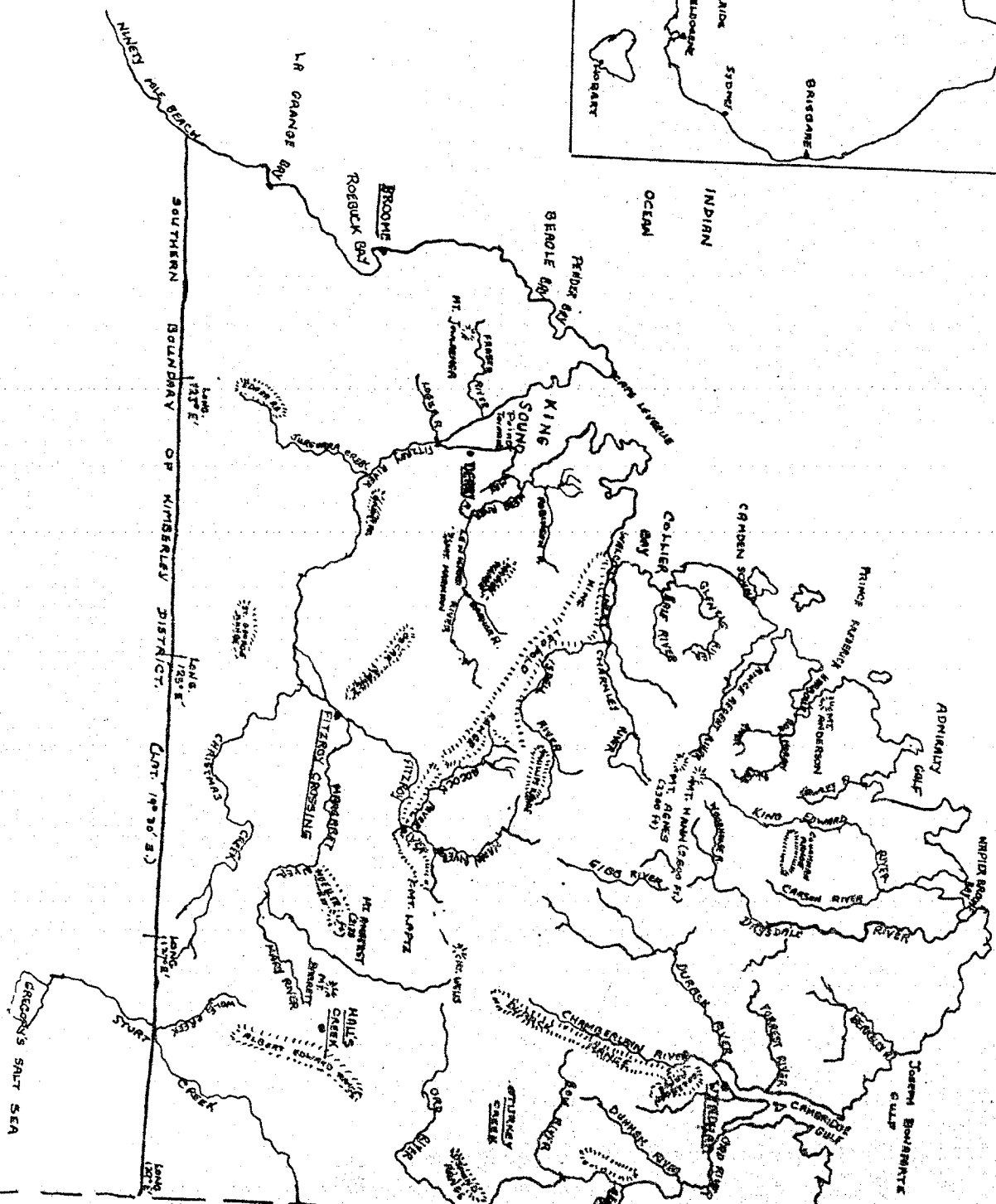
INDEX.

Introduction	...	...	...	p. 1.
Foundation (1885 - 1894)	...	...	...	p.19.
Consolidation (1895 - 1905)...	...	...	...	p.69.
Capitalisation (1905 - 1919)	...	...	...	p. 133.
Recession (1920 - 1935)	...	...	...	p. 192.
Recovery (1935 - 1953)	...	...	...	p. 274.
Appendices and Bibliography...	...	...	...	p. 340.
Illustrations and Maps	...	...	...	at end.



Scale = 80 miles (approx.) or 1 inch

TIMOR SEA



INTRODUCTION.

The Kimberley District is the northernmost portion of Western Australia. It is bounded on the west by the Indian Ocean, on the north by the Timor Sea, and on the east by the border-line with the Northern Territory. (Long. 129° E.) Its southern boundary is usually considered as Lat. $19^{\circ} 30'$ S. Hereabouts the great inland desert extends to the coast at Ninety Mile Beach, and creates some sort of natural barrier between Kimberley and the rest of Western Australia. For the purposes of this study, the Kimberley District will be taken to include Anna Plains station on the west coast, and Gregory's Salt Sea, at the end of Sturt Creek, on the east. Moreover, as the boundary between East Kimberley and the Northern Territory is an artificial one, having no basis in the natural features of the country, some passing consideration will of necessity be given to that portion of the Victoria River district included in the hinterland of Wyndham.

The district is situated in the path of the North-West monsoons which prevail between December and the end of March. It is thus usually assured of a regular summer rainfall, averages ranging from 15 inches in the southern portions to 50 inches on some coastal areas. In the higher rainfall country, the natural grasses are considered too rank and insufficiently nutritious to admit of successful grazing. Much of this country, North Kimberley, is rugged and inhospitable. The highest chain of mountains, the King Leopold

Range, with its offshoot, the Durack Range, coincides with the thirty-inch isohyet, and practically marks the limit of successful pastoral settlement. From the Leopolds flow two great rivers, the Fitzroy and the Ord, in whose basins are centred most of the stations. Further south and inland the influence of the monsoons decreases, and beyond the fifteen-inch line is unsettled semi-desert country, the presence of which cuts off the Kimberleys into a separate self-contained unit.

During the "wet" season, which usually extends from December to the end of March, temperatures and humidity are high, especially on the coast, and living conditions are not the most comfortable imaginable. The succeeding six months -- the "dry" -- are characterised by fine, warm days and cool to cold nights. In this season rainfall is rare. October and November are months of rising temperatures, with dust-storms, culminating in a normal season with the arrival of the first monsoons. If the monsoonal rains are late or inadequate, this is locally regarded as exceptional. Compared to the rest of the North-West pastoral country, the Kimberley District has a generous and assured supply of rain, and consequently, of natural waters.

The district is thus suited to primary production. It supports just under half a million beef cattle, and a smaller, but not inconsiderable, sheep industry, and is generally credited with potentialities for tropical agriculture. The major industry of the district has always been pastoral pursuits, and there is no

immediate indication of a change. In the first years of settlement, there was a gold rush at Hall's Creek, which in many ways foreshadowed the pattern of development at Coolgardie and Kalgoorlie, except in its untimely failure. Later, Broome prospered on the pearling industry, but this development was almost entirely a matter of local importance, insofar as its influence on the rest of the district was concerned. Similarly, little continuity of interest exists between the iron ore-mining settlement on Cockatoo Island, and any part of the district except the port of Derby. Therefore the development of these industries will be considered only with relation to their effect on the pastoral industry, the mainstay of the Kimberleys.

Estimates of the suitability of the district for successful pastoral development have varied widely from the wildest optimism to the most deeply damning pessimism. This thesis is written from the standpoint that, with intelligent husbandry, pastoral pursuits can be followed in the district successfully, but that, except in certain favoured localities in the valleys, the country is not suitable for small-scale development, or for any more intensive type of cultivation. Research now being undertaken may prove that this estimate needs revision, but the evidence does not, as yet, appear conclusive. The district possesses two environmental drawbacks. First, it is distant from markets and supply centres, and secondly, the conditions of living are those of a semi-tropical country. Part of the

history of the Kimberleys consists of the efforts made to mitigate these drawbacks, both by private interests, and by the governments responsible for the welfare of the district. Consideration will also be given to the part played by outside financial institutions.

Some attempt will be made to describe the men and women who were actually concerned in the conduct of the Kimberley pastoral industry, but, in so doing, it will be necessary to discard some of the colourful traditions propagated by other writers on the district. Oral tradition has been accepted only where no other evidence was available on the matter in question, and where the informant has been found to be correct in every detail which could be checked from outside sources. In declining to rely to any great extent on the tales of the "oldtimers", one does not imply that they are all given to untrustworthy romancing. Sometimes, indeed, their memories are far too good. But, in a work of this sort, any claim to authority must rest upon accurate documentation.

.....

.....

The exploration of the district may be said to have commenced as early as the seventeenth century, when various Dutch navigators, including Abel Tasman, touched along the coast, without making any examination

of whatever hinterland lay behind these inhospitable shores. William Dampier was the first to land, in his voyages of 1688 and 1699, at Roebuck Bay. His strictures upon the inhabitants and climate are too well known to warrant repetition. It was not until thirty years after the first settlement of Australia that the British Government, in 1818, sent Captain Phillip Parker King, and Lieutenant John Septimus Roe to make a series of nautical surveys which included the coast of what is now the Kimberley district. Their journeys added considerably to existing knowledge of this part of the Australian coast, and included the discovery of the Prince Regent and Roe Rivers.

Following the unsuccessful Melville Island establishment of 1824, no official interest was shown in Northern Australia for some years, although, with the establishment of British rule over Western Australia by Captain Stirling, a claim was incidentally made to the district under consideration. In 1837, however, prompted by rumours that Dutch merchants desired to found "a second Singapore" in Northern Australia, the Colonial Office garrisoned Port Essington in Arnhem Land, and also commissioned Captain George Grey to explore the country between the North and the Swan River Colony. During his travels, Grey spent several weeks of the wet season of 1837-8 examining the country around the mouths of the Prince Regent and the Glenelg, a rough and rugged terrain. (Meanwhile, Lieutenant Stokes, in the "Beagle", discovered and named the Fitzroy). Despite

hard conditions, Grey reported himself impressed with some of the patches of land about the Glenelg, and made experimental plantations of breadfruit, coconuts, and cotton. It is surmised that, in so doing, inadvertently he introduced the cotton boll weevil. His account of the country⁽¹⁾ was produced in 1841, at a time of commercial depression, and no investors were tempted to the north-west of a colony which had already been the undoing of Thomas Peel and the Australind venture.

But with the passage of twenty years, the introduction of convicts and an Imperial grant-in-aid gave Western Australia stimulus to expand. The pastoral industry moved steadily outward. In 1862, Walter Padbury landed at Nicol Bay, in the North-West, to settle with sheep on country discovered by the Gregory brothers the year before. New land regulations were promulgated to encourage settlement in this area.⁽²⁾ News of these developments reached the eastern colonies of New South Wales and Victoria, where the gold discoveries of the 'fifties had released large reserves of surplus capital for investment. The small pastoralist, harassed by closer settlement schemes, and unable to imitate the bigger squatters who had the help of the banks to consolidate their position by "dummying",

1 : Grey, Geo. : Journals of two expeditions of discovery in the North-West and Western Australia, during the years 1837-8-9. (London, 2 vols., 1841).

2 : Government Gazette of Western Australia, December 21st, 1862.

were being forced to the outskirts of settlement. This process was hastening the pastoral development of Queensland, the most accessible and obvious field for enterprise ; but the North-West seemed to provide an alternative. In Melbourne, one William Harvey remembered Grey's description of good country around the Glenelg. By January 20th, 1863, he had agreed with five associates that each would send ten horses, 200 cattle, and 1,000 sheep to Camden Harbour, near the mouth of the Glenelg, and there imitate Padbury's example in founding a new area for settlement.

Meanwhile, a body of Western Australian pastoralists had also had recourse to Grey's journals, and were fired with the idea of stocking the Glenelg country with sheep. In June 1863, the Brown brothers of Champion Bay, the Hamersleys of York, and B. Clarkson and J. Drummond of Toodyay equipped the "Flying Foam" to explore and report upon that neighbourhood. A second expedition resulted from the assertion of a convict, Wildman, that he knew where gold was to be found on the north-west coast. By what may not have been a coincidence, Inspector Panter, investigating this somewhat unlikely tale, also undertook an examination of the Camden Harbour area, the surly convict Wildman being kept in irons as an insubordinate liar.

Meanwhile, in Melbourne, Harvey had gone ahead with the formation of a Camden Harbour Association, of which he was treasurer, and had managed to induce a considerable number of

Victorians to come and settle a district "without an equal on the Continent of Australia."⁽³⁾ Carefully edited quotations from Grey were published, in which all references to the rugged and difficult terrain were omitted, and only tributes to the bounteous fertility of the soil allowed to remain. Such was the response that Harvey was emboldened to go ahead with the formation of another association, this time to settle the Denison Plains, which had been seen and named by the Gregorys while searching for Leichhardt in 1856. These lay along Sturt Creek, near the Northern Territory border, and were separated from the coast by four hundred miles of absolutely unknown country - but such a factor worried neither Harvey nor his dupes.

All attempts at settlement failed. The Victorian attempt on Camden Harbour was repelled because of difficult country, preparations ill-adapted to a Kimberley "wet", the total loss of their sheep, and dissensions among the leading settlers. Had it not been for the work of Sholl, the Resident Magistrate, the end of the settlement might have been more disastrous than the ignominious evacuation of September and October 1865. Many of the survivors, together with disillusioned shareholders in the Denison Plains Association, settled in the North-West sheep country. The Western Australian attempt at

3 : Description of Camden Harbour, its climate and adjoining country. (Fergusson and Moore, Melbourne, 1864). See also Crawford, Prof. R.M. : Miscellaneous material on Camden Harbour settlement. (Archives of Western Australia, PR640)

settlement, which was eventually centred at Roebuck Bay, ended in the murder of Inspector Panter and two companions by aborigines, while exploring for an advance party. Maitland Brown and other members of the company, having acquitted their honour by organising a punitive expedition, quitted the scene, and confined their subsequent investments to the more accessible pastures along the Gascoyne and the Murchison. Meanwhile, in January and February 1866 Cowle examined the country between Roebuck Bay and Nicol Bay, and reported "three million acres of permanent grass". Nobody was tempted.

The Kimberleys were left untouched during the 'sixties and 'seventies ; but gradually the outposts of settlement were approaching the district from two directions. In the eastern colonies, pressure from the cities in the rear was forcing the cattleman further afield. Growing urban populations had to be fed. In the inner districts close to city markets, the sheep-farmer took over from the cattleman, and the small wheatgrower, encouraged by well-meaning land laws, endeavoured to take over from the pastoralist. The older-settled lands came into the hands of those who could command resources of capital. "Disposed though the Crown lessee would himself be to save his run from the free selector, he would often be unable to do so, but for the assistance

of his banker or financial agent."⁽⁴⁾ With the entry of the city financial houses, the banks, and the stock agencies, with their head offices, as often as not, in Great Britain, the less wealthy squatter had to move out to the open ranges, where grazing entailed less heavy outlay. The impulse which compelled the cattleman to develop the wild marginal country was not so much the lure of unknown horizons or the spirit of adventure, as the necessity of finding fresh pastures when the better-developed ones near the markets were falling into the grip of the financiers.⁽⁵⁾ "Open range" grazing was a semi-nomadic existence in the early days, a matter of shifting stock wherever good feed and water were to be found. During the 'sixties, the leaseholders moved out across Queensland, and in 1872, D'Arcy Uhr founded the first cattle run in the Northern Territory. Within the next decade, the pioneers moved across the Territory, picking out good land, and avoiding the less tempting patches in case there was "better country farther out".

The Western Australian pastoralists were not subject to the same pressures. They concentrated on an export product, wool. Their finance was provided, where needed, by local merchants and agents. Indeed, as often as not, a sheep

4 : Official Directory and Year Book of Australia, 1884, quoted by Fitzpatrick, Brian : The Australian People, 1788-1945 (M.U.P.P. 1946) p. 65.

5 : Butlin N.G.: Company Ownership of N.S.W. Pastoral Stations, 1865-1900 ("Historical Studies", May 1950, p. 89.)

run in the North-West was financed from a family holding in the South-West. Settlement, for the most part, followed the tracks of the Survey Department's explorers. During the 'sixties and the 'seventies, there was enough land available in the area between Nicol Bay and Champion Bay to provide a field for settlement. By 1875, when the Survey Department sent Alexander Forrest to work in the North-West, the successful investors were consolidating their position, and some of the younger men were looking for new worlds to conquer. Immediately to the North lay the unpromising Ninety-Mile Beach. Beyond, the Fitzroy valley suggested unknown possibilities. In 1878, the Western Australian Government placed Forrest in charge of a party to explore this region. By the end of 1879, the exploration was an accomplished fact, and Forrest had returned with glowing descriptions of the Fitzroy and Ord valleys, each "capable of depasturing a million of sheep", besides offering possible scope for tropical products, such as were being fostered in Queensland.⁽⁶⁾

The enthusiasm provoked by this report was immediate. The prospect of the Kimberley District, as the new

6 : Votes and Proceedings, 1880, No. 3. (Forrest's journal).
Cf. "Alexander Forrest", a thesis presented for the degree of B.A. (Hons.) by the present writer, 1952.

country was called, appealed alike to the Western Australian sheepfarmer, nursing scab-infested flocks in the stagnant South-West ; to the battling Queensland cattleman, worried by adverse seasons, and by the encroachments of the banks and the sheepmasters' fences ; and to the Sydney and Melbourne capitalists, who, in a time of prosperity, sought new avenues of investment. In New South Wales, though the wool industry was thriving and expanding, the number of leaseholders had, over the years 1861 to 1883, decreased from 9,200 to 4,300.⁽⁷⁾ Of this, some Western Australians were well aware. Typical of views expressed in the colony at this time is the following editorial :--

"The first tentative little expeditions, and subsequent larger expeditions, were not attended by any great practical result beyond enlarging our knowledge of the vast domain, in a remote corner of which we had settled. It was not until greater facilities for inter-communication with "the other side" (8) were brought about that any extensive practical use was made of that knowledge. Our latest exploratory venture, of which Mr. Alexander Forrest was the fortunate leader, was launched in the very nick of time. The pastoral resources of the other colonies cannot be said to be 'played out', but sheep-farming there has developed into a business upon which only the capitalist could enter. The enterprising young pastoralist with moderate means is obliged to start for the 'Never-never'. And a 'Never-never' with so much to recommend it as our new Kimberley District was at the time of its discovery a perfect godsend to the Eastern squattocracy as well as to ourselves, to whom it has given a progressive spirit such as we have never experienced before." (9)

7 : Fitzpatrick, op. cit. p. 206.

8 : The overland telegraph to Adelaide was completed in 1877.

9 : "West Australian", January 9th, 1883.

Nobody seems to have observed that not only was the Kimberley District in a region of semi-tropical climate, but also it was remote from established markets, and since there were no roads, stock routes, or regular transport facilities between the district and other settled parts, it would be neither cheap nor easy to establish flocks and herds there without considerable outlay. The Kimberley District lay within the boundaries of a far from wealthy crown colony, lacking both the resources and the authority to embark upon a lavish programme of public works necessary for developmental projects. The enterprising young pastoralist of moderate means would be hard put to it to make an adequate living from this new country. It will be seen that, in the first decade of settlement in the Kimberley District, those who managed to become established in any way were either veteran pastoralists with resources behind them, or else companies combining the capital of several "small" squatters.

Because of the enthusiasm provoked by the report of the district, the Legislative Council promulgated regulations to ensure that only bona fide settlers took up land in the Kimberley District. Blocks of not less than 50,000 acres were to be leased for a term expiring at the end of 1893, for 10s. per 1,000 acres. Conditions were laid down to prevent monopolisation of the valuable pastures along the frontages of watercourses; each frontage block had to be taken with a depth of three times its

length along a major watercourse. Stocking clauses provided that twenty sheep or two head of large stock had to be introduced on to a run for every 1,000 acres held. Double rent was the penalty for non-compliance. This was increased to total forfeiture of a lease by Lord Kimberley, the Secretary of State for Colonies, who held that the measure was inadequate otherwise to impede "speculation" - the holding of undeveloped blocks in expectation of a rise in value through improvements in surrounding country. The Legislative Council tried to modify this stringent regulation by moving that the law could be satisfied so long as the requisite number of stock were in the district. They pointed out that settlers in a new and unknown region might have to band together at first, for mutual protection. But Lord Kimberley vetoed this suggestion.⁽¹⁰⁾

Despite the severity of the land laws, intending investors were not discouraged. By the end of 1883, 51,289,080 acres were held on lease, in the main by interests from the eastern colonies. The regulations could not curb the ambitions of many men in Melbourne and Sydney offices, who dreamed of utilising some of the abundant capital then available to found pastoral empires in the North. Much of the land marked off had never been examined, although the more business-like investors were sending ahead expeditions to report on the country. The King Sound Pastoral Company, some of whose founders may be identifiable with investors in the Camden Harbour project

10 : For land laws controversy, see Votes and Proceedings, 1880, No. 20 (esp. Kimberley-Robinson, August 21st 1880) : 1882, No. 5 : 1883, 1st session, No. A3 : 2nd session, A2 and A12 : Debates, vi., p. 464.

of 1864,⁽¹¹⁾ sent William Forrester to inspect their blocks on the Lennard in 1881. Of greater scope was the expedition in 1882 led by Michael Durack and party, who broke new ground between Cambridge Gulf and the upper Ord. In the next year, William O'Donnell and William Carr-Boyd, the "Munchausen of the North" made a useful examination of East Kimberley for the Cambridge Downs Pastoral Association. Prior to these explorations, however, investors had joined in a blind grab for Kimberley blocks, and the reports of the expeditions had the result of promoting a large-scale traffic in the transfer and exchange of blocks, and the abandonment of much useless and inaccessible country during the years 1883-5.

Owing to the activity of these speculators, much of the land remained locked until about 1885, when the expiration of the time limit allowed for stocking caused their lands to be forfeited and sold by auction to another lessee. Meanwhile, in 1883, the Surveyor-General, John Forrest, had visited the West Kimberley district, where a handful of bona fide settlers were already squatting at the mouths of the Fitzroy, the Meda, and the Lennard. He declared the townsites of Broome and Derby, the latter being chosen by the advice of J.P. McLarty, in preference to a deep-water anchorage at

11 : James Fergusson, Harvey's printer, was a director of the King Sound Pastoral Company, and James Wood, in whose name some of their land was first taken up in 1881, may be the man of the same name who was a provisional director of the Camden Harbour Association.

Point Torment, further up King Sound.⁽¹²⁾ In his report on the district, John Forrest introduced a note of sobriety into the extravagant statements then prevailing;⁽¹³⁾

"There can scarcely be any doubt that owing to the favourable description given of this country by Mr. Alexander Forrest, and afterwards to the extraordinary rush for it by capitalists and others from the Eastern colonies, a very high, if not exaggerated idea of the value, richness and the beauty of the Kimberley District is held by nine-tenths of the people of the Colony, and has resulted in the Regulations being more stringent than in any other part of the country, notwithstanding that it is a new and untried locality. The rent is double what it is in the North and East districts, the conditions as to shape of leases also less liberal; and, last of all, there is a Stocking Clause which does not find a place in the regulations dealing with any other district in the Colony."

His report stimulated the Legislative Council into making a further request for the modification of the stocking laws. A new Secretary for the Colonies, the Earl of Derby, proved more amenable than the Earl of Kimberley. By June 1884, the penalty for failure to stock up was reduced to paying a double rental, with the proviso that all stock held within the district might be counted to the credit of its owner,⁽¹⁴⁾ although not necessarily on his blocks. It had been correct to assume that the expense and labour of establishing a run would deter all but genuine investors from taking up leases.

12 : It was left to McLarty's nephew, some seventy years later, to revive the scheme for a deepwater port at Pt. Torment.

13 : Votes and Proceedings, 1883, 2nd session, No. 23, pp. 7-8.

14 : Ibid. 1884, No. 21, p. 58.

In 1884, the acreage held in the district fell by 11,555,000. This presaged the further widespread abandonment of leases in the next two years. For these reasons, the effective development of the Kimberley District may be dated from this unlocking of the land, which was being achieved by the beginning of 1885.

From the east side of the continent, several parties of cattlemen were planning to occupy Kimberley runs. In 1882, partly backed by their neighbours, the McKenzies, Charles Macdonald and his party left Goulburn (N.S.W.) on the road to a run selected for him by Alexander Forrest, at the junction of the Fitzroy and the Margaret. At Thylungara, in Queensland, the Duracks and their associates were preparing to move west. Further north, at Mount Cornish, a mob was being assembled for Osmond and Panton of Melbourne. After some delays, this party was placed in charge of the veteran bushman, Nat. Buchanan:

"One of the first things he did was to sack Jack Skuthorpe, who was being paid seven pounds a week as Pilot to the cattle along a main road. The next thing Nat did was to go to each camp and empty the demi-johns of run that was on the drays on to the black soil." (15)

Cattle could not be easily shipped to a district without ports, and these parties were preparing to walk their stock overland to East Kimberley. Overlanding trips had previously become an accepted feature of the Queensland and

15 : Durack papers : Letter, Thomas Cahill - J.W. Durack, (March 18th, 1926.)

Northern Territory cattle industries, but these ventures were notable feats of droving large mobs over long distances. It was not until 1884-5 that these parties arrived in the district, and it is only from that date that the Kimberley cattle industry began; just as, at the other side of the district easier land laws, and the unsuitability of the coastal country for sheepraising, were prompting owners to move inland up the Fitzroy valley.

There was a third factor which made 1885 a turning-point in the district's development. In 1879, Alexander Forrest had reported the likelihood of gold being found above the upper Ord. Three years later, Philip Saunders and Adam Johns had prospected Forrest's track, and found indications of colour. The Government Geologist (E.T.Hardman) confirmed the auriferous nature of the country after two examinations in 1884 and 1885. Prospecting parties were attracted by his report, and Charlie Hall soon found a paying patch. With the coming of a goldrush, an impetus would be given to the progress of the struggling district. It may therefore be of value to examine the state of the Kimberleys immediately before crowded boatloads of miners descended upon its shores.

CHAPTER ONE.

FOUNDATION (1885-1894).

"It is merely a district with fertile plains which will, I believe and hope, be suitable for pastoral purposes, and, in its more northern portion, in the future for tropical culture; but those who venture in its development will have to incur a large expenditure in getting their stock to the country, and much trouble and difficulty and years of toil under a tropical sun, before they make their fortunes, and they require the easiest terms and conditions."

--- John Forrest, Report on the Kimberley District, 1883.

=====

In reviewing the first ten years of the Kimberley pastoral industry, perhaps the most noteworthy feature is that the industry survived at all. The difficulty of adapting existing management methods to a new and unsettled country was but one of the problems confronting the early squatters. They had to contend with the privations of pioneering, the hostility of the natives, the inaccessibility of markets and supply centres, and, not least, the uncertainty of the capital market, which possibly ruined more men than the other three factors combined. Those who survived were, in the main, those who adapted themselves best to the environment.

The first settlers of West and of East Kimberley had little in common. West Kimberley was occupied by men who came up by sea from established settlements further down the coast, found a suitable landing point, and from there moved up inland along the

river valleys. This form of pioneering had earlier been adopted by the squatters at Champion Bay and Nicol Bay. East Kimberley was colonised by overlanders at the frontier of the continuous spread of settlement moving across the Northern Territory, and having its origins back through Queensland and New South Wales to the crossing of the Blue Mountains seventy years earlier. The occupation of the Ord valley followed immediately, in fact almost simultaneously, upon the formation of Wave Hill, Victoria River Downs, and Auvergne in the west of the Territory. The West Kimberley pastoralists, in the main, came from the South-West of Western Australia. This was a colony with a small consumer population ; hence they were woolgrowers, and, as such, practised paddocking. Of Irish and Scots origin, the East Kimberley cattlemen belonged to the "open range" tradition of grazing, and even the terms they used in mustering and handling their stock were different. The two settlements did not immediately merge. The district was known as "the Kimberleys" - indicative of the dualism, the double origin which characterised its development. Eventually, the "open range" methods proved, on the whole, more easily adaptable to conditions in the district, but the process of adaptation did not entirely eliminate the Western Australian sheep-grazing tradition.

By January 1885, there were in all fourteen sheep stations in West Kimberley, occupying an area of 5,556,000 acres.

Of these, nine had been formed by Western Australians, three by Victorians, one from New South Wales, and one, Yeeda, was financed by an Englishman, but entirely managed and controlled by Western Australians. Yeeda, originally named Ugooloowajjah, was the oldest property in the district. George Julius Brockman, in 1879, hearing of Alexander Forrest's successful expedition, decided, in his own words, "to get first cut for a home and station".⁽¹⁾ He purchased 500 sheep in the North-West, and brought them in his uncle's pearling schooner to Beagle Bay, already used by pearlers as a landing-point. His application for 400,000 acres on the south side of the Fitzroy was disallowed, because it had been sent in under the old regulations for the North-West, and not the Kimberley land laws. He therefore combined his flock with that of the Murray Squatting Company, the second enterprise on the scene. This consisted of a number of young men from the neighbourhood of Pinjarra, who had acquired 350,000 acres on One-Tree Plain, near King Sound. In March 1883, they sold out the property with 4,000 sheep, 30 horses, and 12 cattle to Alexander Forrest, on behalf of an English merchant James Aylward Game. Game already had 2,000 sheep in the district, which had arrived in 1882 under the management of George Canlar Rose, who proceeded to Yeeda and took over the property. The station was enlarged by a further 600,000 acres later in 1883.⁽²⁾

1 : Brockman, G.J. : Reminiscences of North-West Australia, 1850-1910 (Archives of W.A., MS 162).

2 : "West Australian", March 27th, 1883. A fictional account of this party exists in Shackeloth's "Call of the Kimberleys" (Melb. 1950)

The next settlement was made by the Kimberley Pastoral Company, a syndicate comprising William Edward Marmion, M.L.C. for Fremantle; the Pearse brothers, also of Fremantle; R.F. Sholl, a Gascoyne station-owner; Maurice Coleman Davies, who had extensive timber concessions in the South-West; and three resident partners, John and William McLarty, and Anthony Cornish, all from the Pinjarra district. Three thousand sheep were purchased from "Millstream" station in the Fortescue district, and brought by Marmion's boat, the "Amur", to Beagle Bay in two shipments in November and December 1881. From there they were overlanded to the station. To improve the strain of the stock in the new district, W.G. McLarty in 1883 purchased 2,000 ewes from the "Canowie" stud in South Australia, and 250 rams from another stud in the same state. This seems to have been the first attempt made at animal husbandry in the district.⁽³⁾ Marmion and Pearse were also shareholders in the Meda River Pastoral Company, whose resident manager, William Lavender, introduced sheep from the Williams district in the south-west in 1882. This flock numbered 3,383 in 1884. It was unfortunately responsible for bringing scab into the district, where it soon became something of a problem.⁽⁴⁾

In 1882, two arrivals from Victoria commenced

3 : "Liveringa" : brochure (12 pp.) published by the Kimberley Pastoral Company, 1912.

4 : C.S.O. 2656/84 : report of Hugh Morrison, Inspector of Sheep.

operations in the district. George Jackson Foulton settled at Mundoona on the Meda River, with 1,438 ewes, and C.J. and H.B. Daly brought a mob of between 500 and 600 mixed sheep to Mount Anderson. The latter, by 1885, were finding the difficulties of establishing a run so great that they were preparing to sell out to the manager of Yeeda, G.C. Rose.⁽⁵⁾

William Lukin, backed by a sleeping partner, J.H. Monger a merchant and grazier of York, was the first to settle on the Lennard River. Here "the sheep were doing remarkably well"⁽⁶⁾, although a few died, for which an unknown poison plant was blamed. This station was the first to report thefts by the wild natives, and in November 1883, the police had to undertake a special patrol of this vicinity. Morgan and McDermott were two Northam graziers who combined forces and also took up land on the Lennard.⁽⁷⁾ Though they had no trouble either from wild dogs or from natives, the Sheep Inspector reported in 1884 :⁽⁸⁾

"Their lambing has not been good, the average being only 33%. The rams are covered all over with a long spear-like grass seed, which grows on a portion of the run they pass over. It penetrates through the skin into the flesh. I have not noticed the same grass seed on any of the other flocks, although there is plenty of the usual kind."

The King Sound Pastoral Company was a Victorian concern, managed by William Forrester, who had earlier conducted a private

5 : For this, and other valuable information about this period, I am indebted to the reliable memory of Mr. G.C. Rose.

6 : C.S.O. 2037/84 : Report of Sgt. P. Troy to Resident Magistrate, Derby. (R. Fairbairn).

7 : Cf. "West Australian", January 31st, 1882.

8 : C.S.O. 2656/84.

expedition in the region. Founded by James Wood & Co., the company had passed to a syndicate whose principal shareholder was James Munro, later Premier of Victoria, and reputedly a millionaire from his widespread investments. In September 1883, the first mob of 4,220 sheep was shipped from Melbourne, but great losses occurred en route, and only 1,400 arrived safely. During 1884, the Company took over the land and stock of Clune and Company, whose manager, Patrick Butler, had brought one thousand ewes and an unspecified number of cattle from the Victoria Plains, north of Perth, by boat to Derby in December 1883.⁽⁹⁾

George Julius Brockman, as compensation for his effort at pioneering, was granted 100,000 acres near Mount Marmion, rent-free for fourteen years. He brought up 1,450 sheep from Cossack, some by sea, and some overland from Roebourne. En route, he pioneered a stock route from Roebuck Bay to Cape Vilarct, and sank wells. For this, he requested Government compensation, but, after much correspondence, only received £25.⁽¹⁰⁾ By now, he must have had enough of the Kimberleys, for in 1885, he sold his run, known as Balmaningarra, to M.C. Davies, one of the Kimberley Pastoral Company syndicate.

Thomas Moher and the Gregory brothers landed with their respective mobs of sheep at Roebuck Bay in April 1884. No

9 : "West Australian", November 20th, 1883. C.S.O. 2808/83, 2656/84.

10 : Brockman, op. cit. : C.S.O. 4399/84. Debates (Legislative Council), vii. p. 415-7, viii. p. 134.

details are available about the size of their flocks. The Gregorys took up Gilgully on the south side of the Fitzroy, whilst Moher, although his land was forfeited for non-payment of rent in 1884, ran sheep between Yeeda and Mount Anderson. He was the first settler to be accompanied by his wife. His connexion with the Kimberley pastoral industry ended abruptly with his arrest and conviction for manslaughter in December 1885. Mrs Moher had died as the result of a thrashing inflicted by her husband. (11)

By now, the West Kimberley settlement was assuming some permanency. The port of Derby, declared in 1883, supported a Resident Magistrate and police force, but, in the absence of a jetty, was of little convenience to the squatters. Visiting ships anchored offshore, whilst cargoes were carried across the marshy mangrove-lined shore, and loaded into small boats, and from them into the ocean-going vessel. In 1883, wool bales lying on the shore at Derby, awaiting a ship, were lost through being swept away by a tidal wave caused by the volcanic explosion at Krakatoa. (12) The absence of a regular shipping service prevented the settlers from selling their wool to the best advantage, while the lack of harbour facilities discouraged the shipping lines. During 1885, the Government, despite complaints by the Legislative Council in

11 : Derby Police Occurrence Book, December 1885. (Archives, MS 241).

12 : Information of Mr. G.C. Rose. For complaints by settlers, C.S.O. 2808/83 .

Perth at the expense (£3,000) of the project, constructed a jetty. However, it was found that "with the great rise and fall of tide, it would be impossible for any vessel except a lighter to use it... No steamer will ever be able to lay alongside."⁽¹³⁾ The citizens of the district took the matter into their own hands. They formed a Kimberley Progress Association -- the first of a long line of those regional councils which have aspired to wake the South into a realisation of the district's needs. The leading members were local managers and storekeepers : A.E. Malet, W.G. McLarty, W. Forrester, I.S. Emanuel, G.C. Rose, G.J. Poulton, and Thomas Lavender. They wrote to the Colonial Secretary, requesting the construction of a tramway, and suggesting that, to expedite matters, they would pay a contractor to do the work immediately, seeking a refund from the Government later. To this the Government assented.⁽¹⁴⁾

The Kimberley Pastoral Association, after one unsuccessful attempt to have a land office opened in Derby, apparently went into dissolution -- thus again anticipating the fate of many other associations of a similar character and aims. This is understandable, considering the isolation of the busy station managers who made up the majority of its members,

13 : C.S.O. 4722/85. Cf. Debates (Legislative Council), viii.p.190:
ix. pp. 158-160.
14 : C.S.O. 4330/85.

and the impossibility of arranging frequent meetings. The main area of settlement, however, was still confined to the lower reaches of the Fitzroy and the Lennard. Homesteads and paddocks had not yet been erected. Instead, most of the graziers lived in temporary camps, whilst their flocks were divided into manageable groups, each under the control of a shepherd, who led them wherever feed and water were best available. The rainfall, up until then, had been found quite adequate for the pastoralists' needs. The greatest stock losses had been due to wild dogs and poisonous plants, and, of course, scab, but on the whole the sheep were reported to be doing well. From the infected Meda River flock, scab had, during 1883 and 1884, spread to Lukin's, Brockman's, and McLarty's flocks. Morrison, the inspector, took prompt steps to segregate infected sheep, and to inflict penalties on breaches of the Scab Act. As a result, despite the difficulty of obtaining dipping materials, scab failed to get a hold on the district.⁽¹⁵⁾

To what extent reports of scab discouraged prospective settlers cannot be determined. Many leases were thrown up during 1885 and 1886, but they mainly belonged to capitalists in the eastern colonies who had decided not to

15 : C.S.O. 2656/84 and 964/85 (Reports of Hugh Morrison, Sheep Inspector at Derby). A valuable source of information about contemporary station conditions.

attempt the difficulties of practical pioneering. However, scab seems to have induced some of the owners to shift their flocks further inland, away from areas of infection. Thus, in January 1885, the "Victoria" brought up 2,860 sheep, 12 horses, and six men for Solomon Emanuel of Goulburn, whose son had been associated with Michael Durack's expedition. Isadore Emanuel once stated⁽¹⁶⁾:

"Between us we paid at that time £1,500 a year rent for two years for the country.... When we saw it, we threw up nearly the whole lot we had taken up, only keeping a certain amount on the West Kimberley side. The Duracks took the East Kimberley side."

This was pioneering in the grand manner. After the partition of this domain, the Emanuels originally planned to settle their stock near the coast, on the May River. This area proved infected, and Solomon Emanuel determined to transport his mob inland up the Fitzroy to clean country.⁽¹⁷⁾ This move, and that of the Kimberley Pastoral Company to Upper Liveringa about the same time, may also have been due to their recognition of the superiority of the up-country pastures. The lower coastal areas did not provide such good grazing.

To Upper Liveringa one day early in 1886, there rode in a stranger from the unsettled country to the east. This was Charles Macdonald, one of the pioneer overlanders from the

16 : Royal Commission on the Meat Industry, 1908 : (Votes and Proceedings, 1908-9, No. 21) : Minutes of Evidence. (Q. 252).
 17 : C.S.O. 3261/86 (Fairbairn-Fraser, July 14th, 1886).

eastern colonies, who, having arrived at his holding at the junction of the Fitzroy and the Margaret, was proceeding to Derby to announce the successful completion of his journey. It was an interesting moment in the history of the pastoral industry. The outermost settler of the Western Australian sheep-grazing industry met with the vanguard of the advancing cattlemen from the eastern colonies. Starting from opposite sides of the continent, pastoralists in quest of good pastures and certain water had covered the face of Australia until the two movements met in the Kimberleys.

The pioneers of East Kimberley were the Buchanans, with Osmond and Panton's mob, the Duracks, and the Macdonalds. The first station stocked was Plympton St. Mary, better known as the Ord River station. Its owners were William Osmond, a tight-fisted retired naval officer, and John Panton, a well-known Melbourne magistrate, who developed the habit of writing patronising letters to the Perth Government, advising them on how to run the Kimberley. They purchased 4,000 head of cattle in Queensland in 1882, and had the stock travelled to their Ord River holdings by the veteran bushman, Nat. ("Old Bluey") Buchanan. The manager was Robert Button, and others in the party were Hugh and Wattie Gordon, Thomas Cahill, Donald Swan and Gordon Buchanan. They arrived at their destination on June 22nd, 1884. To victual this isolated outpost,

Osmond came round the coast in his auxiliary screw yacht, the "Cushie Doo", anchored at the mouth of the Ord, and sent Sandy Mauger inland on foot to inform Button that rations had been left in a tin tank buried in a marked spot on the banks of the Ord.⁽¹⁸⁾ These amateur explorers successfully accomplished their task, but the aborigines rifled the contents of the tank before Button's arrival. Button also discovered a passable stock track between the Upper Ord and Cambridge Gulf, through the pass now known as Button's Gap. He undertook a sortie as far south as Sturt Creek, reporting the country as splendidly grassed, but without permanent water.⁽¹⁹⁾

Despite the setback in obtaining supplies, the station was well established within twelve months, when Surveyor Johnston's party examining the Ord called for meat. The Survey Department had not been inactive in charting the newly discovered district. Besides John Forrest's West Kimberley survey of 1883, the geologist E.T. Hardman had made two expeditions in 1884 and 1885, in search of gold. The surveyors, Nyaulsy and Johnston, spent the dry season of 1885 along the Ord, and John Forrest made a reconnaissance of the Cambridge Gulf

18 : Cf. Buchanan, G. : Old Bluey (unpublished MS : in possession Mrs. Ernestine Hill). Flinders, C.E. : "45 Years in the North-West of Australia" (unpublished MS : in possession Mr. William Flinders, of Wyndham) attributes this feat to two sailors. The journal of the voyage of the Cushie Doo kept by Osmond's niece, Miss Ada Booty, is now in the Mitchell Library, Sydney, and may clear up this point.

19 : C.S.O. 4609/85 : Johnston's Report, p. 16.

district in 1886.⁽²⁰⁾

The next party to arrive were the Duracks and their associates, who founded three stations, Lissadell, Argyle, and Rosewood. Lissadell was founded on September 17th, 1885, with 2,000 cattle, the property of Michael Durack and a sleeping partner, C. Lumley Hill. Argyle Downs was stocked for Patrick Durack with 4,000 head, under charge of John Durack, Patrick Moore and Duncan Macauley. J.J. Durack, with Tom Kilfoyle and Tom Hayes established Rosewood, with 2,000 head, on the border of East Kimberley and the Northern Territory. M.J. Durack estimated that the journey from Thylungara, on Cooper's Creek, to the Ord had covered 3,000 miles ; certainly the party was occupied for over two years in traversing it.⁽²¹⁾ The longest trek of all was undertaken by the Macdonald brothers, who left Goulburn, N.S.W., in 1882, but did not reach their destination until the end of 1885. They lost all their original stock on the journey, and, by taking fencing jobs en route, raised money to replenish their herd in Queensland. Even this second mob was reduced by redwater

-
- 20 : For reports of these expeditions, Votes and Proceedings, 1884, No. 31 : 1885, No. 34 : 1886, No. 14 : C.S.O. 4609/85
 21 : Durack, P.M. : Pioneering the East Kimberleys (Journal of the Historical Society of Western Australia, vol ii., No. xiv, pp. 2-28) : Royal Commission on Meat Supply, 1908, (Q. 2084-91) : biographical accounts of individual members of Durack family, showing relationships, in Appendix I.

fever in the Northern Territory, and only one of the original party, Charles Macdonald, completed the journey ; but he claimed that "the first-class condition that my cattle have reached the country in will dispel all fears as to the state of the route."⁽²²⁾ Of the 327 beasts that were eventually depastured on Fossil Downs, some were the property of a Sydney firm headed by one John Plumb, who had originally planned shipping sheep to Fitzroy blocks held by his firm.

By the end of 1885, there were altogether probably eleven thousand cattle in the East Kimberley district. The men in charge of them had undertaken tedious and hazardous journeys in order to commence operations. The overlanders had been delayed for months at a time by floods, and at other times forced to make long detours for want of water. After reaching their destination, they lived under hard conditions, isolated from their few neighbours, and from profitable markets. Yet the quality of the grazing country was considered adequate recompense for all this. One bushman wrote :⁽²³⁾

"The country was as fine as the best of Queensland; splendid old rivers of good fresh water everywhere - big timber, Leichhardt pine, gum and fig trees....There were several other kinds of fruit, currants and wild cherries. The banks of the rivers were covered with melon vines and edible grasses, and wild cabbage which they call 'Prince of Wales' Feathers'."

During the drought of 1952, the present writer heard more than one station owner express a wish that they might only see the country as it had appeared to these firstcomers.

22 : C.S.O. 2612/86 (Charles Macdonald-John Forrest, May 24th, 1886)
 23 : Lamond, G.H. : Tales of the Overland (MS : HS 487).

It has already been indicated that the enthusiasm of some of the pioneers found an echo in the financial houses of Sydney and Melbourne. While most of these "city squatters" quickly lost interest, two attempts were made by Victorian companies with large-scale capitalisation to form sheep stations in North Kimberley. Between them, they introduced some 3,000 sheep. The Cambridge Downs Squatting Company, a Victorian firm, having financed an expedition by O'Donnell and Carr-Boyd, took up five million acres on the western side of Cambridge Gulf, establishing a homestead on the Forrest River. The remnants of some fairly substantial structures in the country now held by the Forrest River Mission testify to the amount of capital invested in the attempt to raise sheep in this area. The venture soon failed. The country was not suitable for sheep, the blacks were troublesome, and there were several bad cases of scurvy amongst the staff. Late in 1886, the settlement was abandoned, and the flock disposed of, some to local butchers, and some to the Victorian Squatting Company. (24)

This latter company based its activities on the Cambridge Gulf, although its lands were on the west side of the Kimberleys, towards the Roe River. The homestead was in a most isolated position near the Couchman Ranges, supplies being transported either by a long overland route via Cambridge Downs,

24 : Durack, P.M., op.cit. and Flinders C.E. op.cit.

or by boat to the nearest part of the coast at Napier Broome Bay, where there were no port facilities. They also concentrated on sheep, although the suitability of the locality was unproved. It is hard to understand why these two organisations, with their considerable resources of manpower and capital, should have selected such inaccessible and relatively unknown areas as an object for outlay. The Victorian Squatting Company forfeited its lands for non-payment of lease rents in 1886, but continued its operations on the same site for several years.

In addition, individual stockmen, disheartened by the Queensland drought of 1883, were gravitating towards the new country in search of work.⁽²⁵⁾ Such men pioneered the overland trails across the Northern Territory to Kimberley, and were followed, very shortly afterwards, by others in search of gold. For, late in 1885, following Hardman's reports, Hall and Slaterry found gold in the Elvire valley. Goldseekers of all sorts immediately took to the tracks of the cattlemen. At the height of the rush, it has been estimated that as many as 10,000 men were attracted to Kimberley.⁽²⁶⁾ No contemporary record, however, indicates that there were more than three thousand men on the

25 : cf. Lamond G.H. : Tales of the Overland from Queensland to Kimberley in 1885 : History of the first Goldfields of W.A. (MS in possession of Historical Society of Western Australia).

26 : Counsel, C.H. : Pioneering the Gold Trail in the Kimberley. (Journal of the Historical Society of Western Australia, I, vii, p. 37.)

fields at any time.⁽²⁷⁾ Exact statistics are impossible to obtain, as some men arrived by ship from the eastern colonies and New Zealand, whilst others, such as that legendary band of vagabonds, "the Ragged Thirteen", entered less conspicuously through the Northern Territory. Those arriving by sea faced a problem. There was already a regular shipping route from Sydney through the Torres Strait to Singapore, and miners could obtain passages on these vessels, but the existing Kimberley port of Derby was off the direct route. Many sea-captains were unwilling to venture far up the uncharted Cambridge Gulf. A clamour began for the establishment of a port there. (The pastoralists had already been making representations, but the Government at Perth, always chronically short of revenue, had ignored the plea.)⁽²⁸⁾ Now, however, it was rumoured that the Government of South Australia planned to capture the goldfields trade by establishing a port just inside the Northern Territory border. Moreover, the miners arriving at Cambridge Gulf were evading all customs payments. Governor Broome then declared the townsite of Wyndham, and in 1886 the Surveyor-General (John Forrest), accompanied by an Admiralty

27 : "Western Mail", August 24th, 1886 : "upwards of 2,500" : "West Australian", January 5th, 1887 puts the number at 1,000. Unclassified telegrams in the C.S.O. files at the Archives, Perth, indicate that from May to August 1886, 763 men arrived at Wyndham by ship, of whom 604 were Queenslanders.

28 : C.S.O. 612/84.

survey, went up to provide East Kimberley with its port.

Other public works were planned as a result of the goldrush. At the diggings, settlements sprang up at Reform, Ruby Creek, Brockman, and Hall's Creek, and well-defined tracks from the latter centre to Derby and Wyndham provided Kimberley with some sort of highway. Carriers began operations from the two ports, between which rivalry soon existed. Freight was high, as much as £100 per ton being⁽²⁹⁾ charged by the drivers of the bullock teams that traversed what must have been wretched tracks. To the cattle-owners, however, the coming of the miners meant the provision of an outlet for their surplus stock, just at a time when this problem was beginning to exercise their minds. Most of the miners, travelling light, had gone a long while without tasting fresh meat by the time they reached the diggings. Four men, Lamond, McKenzie, Horrigan and McPhee, determined in 1886 to satisfy this want by setting up a retail butchering business on the goldfield. Horrigan and McPhee went to Argyle station, and, in exchange for £1,200 in gold, purchased stock from M.P. Durack, paying £13 each for cows, and £17 per head for bullocks. The demand was great, and the firm later purchased a mob from Lissadell, as well as 150 head from an overlander named McIntosh from Queensland, who had lost the rest of his mob in the Northern Territory from "red water", and had hence abandoned the idea of

29 : Flinders, op. cit. chapter v.

settling in Kimberley. The market thus provided was of value to the hitherto isolated pastoralists. Cash being short, most business transactions took place either in gold, or in cheques and promissory notes -- "shinplasters" as they were called.

Lamond's firm finally went out of business under competition from a rival backed by the Northern Territory station of Wave Hill, whose manager was anxious for a share in the trade.⁽³⁰⁾

Although the main alluvial rush was over by 1887, attempts were made to work the gold of East Kimberley by machinery, and the final major exodus from the fields did not occur until 1889, when the Pilbara discoveries attracted most of those whose optimism had survived hard conditions and poor returns. Meanwhile, the townships of Wyndham and Hall's Creek took on some appearance of permanency. This, although the attitude of the Perth Government about the wisdom of constructing further public works in the district had changed with the decline of the goldfield. Western Australia was undergoing a depression in 1887-8, caused by the extremely adverse state of the loan market in Britain, and unemployment in the south-west. Government expenditure was, of necessity, limited, and to Governor Brpome it seemed : "The establishments at Kimberley

30 : For a full account, Lamond, op. cit. p. 44 et seq.:useful, apart from a natural bias against his commercial rival. One of Lamond's "shin-plasters" is preserved in the Public Library at Perth.

are certainly costly, and the officials seem to scorn any economy."⁽³¹⁾ Nevertheless, the men of Kimberley, anticipating the temper of the miners of Kalgoorlie, continued to send down fruitless petitions demanding further public works. Such documents epitomise the story of the district in this period.⁽³²⁾ Thus, a petition of 1886 was signed by 106 miners, 12 tradesmen, five pastoralists, four storekeepers and a professional "explorer" (Carr-Boyd). A later document, dated 1888, shows only 14 miners, four storekeepers, three graziers, three carriers, and 16 others, including five publicans. To assist in the ventilation of its grievances, the district received the privilege of sending a member to the Legislative Council, and chose Alexander Forrest.

To the pastoralists of East Kimberley, indeed, the most urgently required facility was an improved wharf at Wyndham. The makeshift scaffolding then existing was useless for shipping stock. In urging a permanent structure, the Resident Magistrate stated in 1888:⁽³³⁾

"Mr. Durack has informed me that the British India Steam Navigation Company have agreed to call at Wyndham for cattle as soon as the pastoral leaseholders can supply 2,000 head per annum. I have consulted with two other representative squatters, and they have assured me that in less than two years they will be in a position to supply that number. The price per head offered is £9. Obviously this will cause a large and important trade, and a Jetty will be an absolute necessity."

31 : C.S.O. 3746/86.

32 : C.S.O. 3374/86 : 1434/88 et al.

33 : C.S.O. 980/88 (Dr. Laffan, R.M. - Malcolm Fraser, March 26th, 1888)

An Adelaide shipping firm had a Darwin vessel calling six times a year at Wyndham, but there was no outlet for stock. In 1889, the Victorian Squatting Company exported its first and only consignment of wool, seven bales. After losing all contact with Wyndham during the wet season of 1887-8, and becoming the object of search parties, the manager had moved his remaining sheep to the King River, about twenty miles from Wyndham ; but after 1889, there is no further record of the company, which must have gone out of business about then.⁽³⁴⁾

Cattlemen were still coming overland from Queensland, possibly attracted by the Hall's Creek market. Osmond and Panton's 2,222,000 acres extended to the north side of Sturt Creek, which, it is said "for more than twenty years... lay idle and unstocked."⁽³⁵⁾ However, the fertile strip along the south side was taken up in 1887 by Foster, Stretch and Weekes, who founded Denison Downs the next year by over-landing 750 head of cattle from Normanton in Queensland.⁽³⁶⁾ Another overlander was Nat. Buchanan, who stocked 1,800 head of cattle on to a Sturt Creek lease in 1888. With the desertion of the goldfields, this lease was abandoned, and the bulk of the cattle returned to their original home, Wave Hill (N.T.)

34 : C.S.O. 901/88 : 980/88 : 1422/88 : 2846/89.

35 : Buchanan, Gordon : Packhorse and Waterhole. (Angus and Robertson, Sydney, 1933.)

36 : See Appendix II.

A small block was retained in the Elvire valley, from which the local butcher was supplied. Meanwhile, Buchanan's son Gordon, with Hugh and Wattie Gordon, founded the nucleus of a holding at Flora Valley, about thirty miles east of Hall's Creek.⁽³⁷⁾ Closer to Wyndham, some of the more prosperous storekeepers took up small blocks. Francis Smalpage obtained the Ascot Depot, and Francis Connor and Dennis Doherty founded Newry.

As a result of this steady, if unspectacular, growth, the estimated number of cattle in the East Kimberley district, after five years of settlement, was 23,957. Naturally, this figure, and all other cattle statistics quoted henceforward, cannot be regarded as meticulously accurate. Where "open range" grazing was, of necessity, universally adopted, and where the main occupation of the cattlemen was traversing their vast runs to muster the branders, it was inevitable that strict control might not be kept over the breeding of the herd. Fencing would have been out of the question, if only because of the expense. In any case, the East Kimberley cattlemen held by the traditions of pastoral management formed in Queensland, which had been shaped by similar conditions.

Development at the West Kimberley end of the district was also showing a tendency towards cattle husbandry. The 2,122 head estimated to be in the district in 1885 increased

37 : Buchanan, op. cit. ch. xv.

to 8,744 in 1888 and 15,087 in 1889. Expansion outward from Derby was continuing in several directions, and cattle were being driven overland from the North-West, along Brockman's route from Roebourne to Derby, to stock new holdings. At the end of 1885, Edwards, Collins and York stocked a small run with 151 bullocks, 17 cows, and 50 horses overlanded from their North-West property. Between 1886 and 1889, Grant, Anderson and Edgar, already owners of the de Grey station, stocked Obagooma, north of Derby. Their drovers made at least five trips along the overland route, in which more than 2,500 beasts were sent north. (38)

About 1887, Roebuck Bay began to attract the pearling industry. Previously, Governor Broome had complained : "The township named after me is likely to remain a mere dummy townsite, inhabited by the tenants of three graves." (39) Now, however, a thriving pearling town and cable station was about to spring into being. Possibly attracted by this consideration -- for the country was usually considered inferior to the Fitzroy valley -- the cattlemen occupied the hinterland of Roebuck Bay. (1886-8) Four holdings are known to have been stocked. In order of arrival, these were : Lake Edah, owned by Hicks and Isdell,

38 : Derby Police Occurrence Books, Nov. 26th, 1885 : July 13th, 1886 : August 5th, 1887 : June 22nd, 1889 : September 1st, 1889 : Lamond, op. cit. p. 44.

39 : C.S.O. 4609/85.

area 534,000 acres ; Edgar and Collins, Jurgurra Creek, 300,000 acres; Osmond and Panton, 1,206,000 acres; and Lombardina, at the tip of Cape Leveque, 100,000 acres, owned by Harry Hunter, a somewhat disreputable Cossack pearling-man. Except for Osmond and Panton's run, all these properties were stocked from the North-West. There was a further pocket of settlement at Lagrange, where Cowan, Roy & Co. and Angus McPhee, managing for Wittenoom Bros., were attempting to found sheep-runs in the face of predatory natives and poor country.

The graziers were also pushing up the Fitzroy. Land previously under lease to more or less speculative investors was now given up for non-compliance with the stocking clause of the Land Regulations, and unlocked for further selection. The Act of 1887 had standardised rentals at 10s. per 1000 acres, and extended tenures until 1907.⁽⁴⁰⁾ Emanuel Brothers, who had the advantage of being able to command more capital than many other settlers, picked up some blocks on the south side of the Fitzroy and Margaret, and formed a cattle run which was first known as "Mount Campbell". Soon it was commonly called "Gogo", an aboriginal name which simply referred to the energy of the manager in ordering his blackboys to "go" and start on some job. Joseph⁽⁴¹⁾

40 : Government Gazette, March 2nd 1887.

41 : Such is the station's own tradition. The name is first recorded in the Quanbun journals, July 31st, 1896.

Blythe, Emanuels' manager at Noonkanbah started Brooking Springs on the other side of the Fitzroy. He built his homestead at a spot where the teamsters going to Hall's Creek used to ford the Fitzroy, and at this strategic spot shortly set up business as a wayside publican. A few years later, police and telegraph stations were erected nearby, thus forming the settlement of Fitzroy Crossing. Other smaller occupants of land in this area during 1887-9 were Sparke and Dare, at Lower Liveringa ; Edwin and John Charles Rose at Quanbun ; and J. and W. Collins at Oscar Range. Apart from Emanuels, these parties took up only small blocks, between 50,000 and 150,000 acres in extent. This probably reflects the tightening of capital in the depressed colony at this time. It is especially noteworthy that each of these new stations was selected by men already connected with enterprises in the district. There were no newcomers.

Some of the sheep stations were assuming an air of permanency, as fencing and other improvements were constructed. The King Sound Pastoral Company, whose backer, the millionaire Munro, was still prospering at the height of the Melbourne boom of the late 'eighties, was amongst the most progressive. By September 1887, when the Resident Magistrate of Derby passed by with a party examining a new route to Hall's Creek, he was hospitably received at Lilamaloora homestead: ⁽⁴²⁾

42 : C.S.O. 1666/87 (Journal of expedition by Dr. T. Lovegrove)p. 5.

"A small but neat house, partly constructed of limestone, and partly of clay, with a verandah front and rear, a shed to cook in, a garden, etc., and a stockyard and horse-paddock, is pleasantly situated about 600 yards from the base of the Napier. In the garden, cabbages, tomatoes, turnips, and a few other things are grown with success. A number of young pineapples appeared to be thriving, though the manager said they had been moved several times".

While traversing the "magnificent grassy downs" of this run, it was noted that "a considerable amount of fencing has been done, and the sheep - about 12,000 - are all in paddocks." On the unfenced part of the station, cattle were being run. Stud stock were imported regularly, including Merino rams from Deniliquin (N.S.W.) and pure Shorthorn heifers from Victoria.⁽⁴³⁾ In 1889, under Walter Gordon, 1,400 head of cattle were overlanded from Queensland, but the company's bad luck in importing stock again prevailed, and over one-third of the mob was lost from tick fever while crossing the Northern Territory.⁽⁴⁴⁾

Several of the other sheep stations were also putting in improvements. At the Lennard River station and Upper Liveringa, paddocks and new homesteads were erected during 1887 and 1888. At Balmaningarra, the property of M.C. Davies, the theory and practice of West Kimberley sheep grazing were well exemplified to the visiting Resident Magistrate.⁽⁴⁵⁾

"Mr. Conway, the manager, informs me that he has completed some extensive paddocks, and is prepared to stock the station. At present he has only some 2000 sheep and about 350 head of cattle on this station; he has advised his owners not to attempt to increase the stock until the fencing was completed, as it was

43 : C.S.O. 2183/86.

44 : Derby Police Occurrence Books, Sept. 4th, 1889. (Archives, MS241).

45 : C.S.O. 1666/87. (Lovegrove, p.3). Cf. Sgt. Troy's report in same file, also "Liveringa", op. cit. p. 9.

almost impossible to obtain good shepherds in Kimberley. It is now a recognised fact in Kimberley that land should be fenced before it is stocked."

This dictum mainly applied to the sheep stations, but it illustrates the contrast in method with the "open range" tradition of East Kimberley. Concurrently with this progress, however, several of the other sheep stations were falling into financial difficulties. As early as 1885, the Meda River company found it necessary to transfer its leases to the Bank of New South Wales, indicating that the Bank stood as a mortgagee to the owners of the property. Early in 1886, a Fremantle agent, William Dalgety Moore, whose firm was one of the predecessors of Dalgety & Co., took over the Lagrange sheep-runs ; they were abandoned altogether in 1890. Morgan and McDermott abandoned operations in 1886, and Poulton followed suit in 1888. From that year on, the W.A. Mortgage and Agency Company was registered as the lessee of Gregory's blocks at Gilgully.⁽⁴⁶⁾

West Kimberley, in the main, had originated as a field for comparatively small sheep station-owners. These transactions indicated that matters were not proceeding successfully for the small men. Several reasons combined to make the sheep industry a losing proposition, but foremost in the minds of the squatters

46 : These and all similar transactions are recorded in the Kimberley lease books at the Lands Office, Perth. (See Bibliography for detailed list.)

was the aboriginal question. The early years of settlement had been comparatively uneventful. Apart from one spearing, that of Anthony Cornish of the Kimberley Pastoral Company in 1882, the natives had been in general quiet and tractable, and had given no trouble beyond a few petty thefts. Station managers stated that they did not allow their employees to keep native women, and local aboriginals were employed on only two stations, Yeeda and Lulugui.⁽⁴⁷⁾ Until the wet season of 1885-6, there are no known reports of stock-killing; evidently wild game was still plentiful. Doubtless, also, it took some few years for the natives to develop a taste for mutton and beef, to which they would have resorted only when their own game was becoming scarce. The expansion of occupation by the white man entailed encroachments on the tribal hunting grounds of the natives, whose system of ethics forbade them to poach on the preserves of other tribes. Forced to starve or to spear stock, they naturally chose the latter alternative. Admittedly, there is truth in the squatters' contention that the natives enjoyed hunting and chasing the stock. This meant losses to the station-owner, not only from slain beasts, but from the wastage of condition which resulted from the other cattle being harried. It is also worth noting Inspector Finnerty's theory that the

47 : C.S.O. 2037/84 : Sgt. Troy's report.

formation of paddocks in West Kimberley meant that sheep were no longer supervised by a shepherd, and hence the natives had every chance of killing without detection. Moreover, the back-country natives were bolder than the coastal tribes: ⁽⁴⁸⁾

"As far as I can find out, the natives are very scarce on the plains. On and about the Barrier Ranges, however, they are numerous and courageous. I cannot see that the settlers are in a more dangerous position than other settlers in new country."

About this time, however, several cases occurred, both in West and East Kimberley, of white men being killed by the natives. At Argyle, John Durack was speared, and at Obagooma, J.G. Piton, a coastal trader, met his death. Late in 1887, one traveller, James Isdell, reported finding no less than four bodies in various localities. Simultaneously, cases occurred where the police and settlers deemed it necessary to fire at natives, sometimes with fatal results. ⁽⁴⁹⁾ This may reflect the irritation of the settlers at the increased losses of stock through native activities. It would also be reasonable to suspect that the gold-rush had something to do with the change. The miners were not all men of high character, nor had they as much experience of dealing with the natives as the squatters. It is likely that there were cases of cruelty,

48 : C.S.O. 4646/86. (Report of Inspector Finnerty).

49 : C.S.O. 4864/86 : 4946/86 : 5086/86 : Derby Police Occurrence Books, passim, esp. January 13th, 1888.

towards the natives, and more than likely that some of the newcomers developed a taste for native women. This, in turn, would have made the pastoral workers less scrupulous. The natives, in desiring to retaliate, did not discriminate between the "bad white" and the less blameworthy. As a result, several of the men who were speared were believed guiltless of any provocation to the natives, and, conversely, some scoundrels escaped. It cannot be said that all native murders were unprovoked, and the result of inherent depravity and treachery in the blacks.

In West Kimberley, stock-killing was worst on the outermost stations, especially those adjacent to the King Leopold Ranges, which offered hiding-places for the natives. The King Sound Pastoral Company at Lillamalloora, Lukin and Monger at the Lennard River, and Grant, Anderson and Edgar at Obagooma were the three owners who appear most frequently in contemporary police records as having lost stock through native activities. The Kimberley Pastoral Association was revived in May 1888, under the chairmanship of Isadore Emanuel, and passed a resolution urging police patrols, assisted by blacktrackers from districts outside Kimberley, to travel the Fitzroy and the Lennard. Reinforcements duly arrived for the Derby police, though owing to unexpected staff difficulties, patrols were not immediately sent out. (50)

50 : C.S.O. 1496/88 (I.S.Emanuel, to Col. Sec., May 14th, 1888.) : Votes and Proceedings, 1888, No. 27.

Meanwhile, police investigations found other factors to account for the losses. Sergeant Sherry noted that :

"with the exception of Grant, Anderson and Edgar's station, the other stations on the Lennard River are all worked short-handed. The stock are not properly looked after, especially sheep, scores of which are killed by the wild dogs through not having sufficient men and horses for boundary riding, and trusting too much to half-civilised native shepherds. When the sheep are counted, and the losses ascertained by the manager, he attributes the losses all to the natives."

(51)

And in the same report, Constable Ritchie wrote:

"This is one of the driest seasons witnessed since being settled. Early this season the grass has nearly all been burnt, the settlers say by natives, which I think is correct. Pools and springs not known to fail have dried up, causing a great scarcity of food and water, the result being that the sheep have become poor, many of them dying."

It had been necessary, on some properties, to turn the sheep out of the paddocks and run them in the bush, where they offered an easier temptation for the natives, themselves feeling the effects of the dry season and the growing scarcity of game. The native custom of burning off large tracts of country while hunting was another source of antagonism to the whites, who thought that the aborigines were deliberately trying to "burn them out". Further complaints continued from the settlers, and in November 1888, Alexander Forrest urged in the Legislative Council the formation of an expedition of

special constables "strong enough to resist, subdue and leave a lasting impression upon the minds of these aborigines, such an impression that will make it plain to them that an attitude of hostility to the settlers will not be permitted."⁽⁵²⁾ Forrest claimed, on the authority of William Lukin, that "the natives steal the sheep faster than the settlers can breed them." His motion was not passed, but subsequent legislation provided that aboriginals convicted for stock-killing might be whipped, and the maximum sentence for the offence was increased from one year to three.

Nevertheless, losses continued. The King Sound Pastoral Company claimed to have lost 7,000 sheep in one year (1888).⁽⁵³⁾ Police patrols traversed the country doggedly, returning occasionally with a long file of natives on the chain. It seems that if one member of a tribe slew a beast, most of his fellows shared the meat communally, and as possession of portion of the carcass was sufficient evidence for arrest and conviction, it does not follow that those who were gaol'd were the most persistent and cunning stock-killers. (Conviction, incidentally, automatically followed arrest. There are no acquittals recorded at Derby.) Whether this served any deterrent purpose is doubtful, as when the native convicts escaped or were released, they returned to their tribes with a knowledge of the white man's ways, and a taste

52 : Debates (Legislative Council), vol. xiv. p. 314 et seq.

53 : "Victorian Express", December 7th, 1889.

for his meat. Indeed, the habit of stock-killing seems to have spread as the years went by. The upper Fitzroy cattle stations, such as Oscar Range and Fossil Downs, could, as late as 1890, report that "the natives in the vicinity...are quiet and have not disturbed the cattle." By 1893, they were complaining to the Derby police of the "ruinous losses from the frequent attacks made on the cattle by the natives."⁽⁵⁴⁾ Losses were heaviest in the wet season, when the station workers and police were immobilised by the condition of the country.

The native question in East Kimberley is not so well documented. As late as 1889, the Resident Magistrate of Wyndham could write:⁽⁵⁵⁾

"Although the natives appear to be very numerous in the district, and have occasionally been seen in the vicinity of Wyndham, they are not at present very troublesome...Horses and cattle are not molested by them, and they have every opportunity were they so inclined, as stock are running in great numbers on the plains which the natives must constantly cross. They do not seem inclined to make the acquaintance of the white people."

And at Sturt Creek, later one of the worst affected areas, no depredations were reported until after 1890. Judging by the state of affairs later in the decade, however, it cannot have been long before whites and blacks were at warfare. Most of the settlers were Queensland men, accustomed automatically to assume the hostility and ill-will of the natives.

54 : Derby Petty Sessions Records, February 4th, 1893 : Police Occurrence Books, February 11th, 1890 : January 30th, 1894.
 55 : C.S.O. 2846/89.

The deprivations of the natives were by no means wholly responsible for the failure of the small sheep-graziers to make squatting pay. The price of wool, in 1886, began to decline steadily from a peak price of 12½d. to 9½d, where it remained until 1890. As most of the West Kimberley stations were capitalised from the depressed colony of Western Australia, some owners were tempted to cut their losses and withdraw from an enterprise in which small profits were apparently not combined with quick returns. On the other hand, the eastern colonies seemed still to be at the height of a boom period. In Fitzpatrick's words: ⁽⁵⁶⁾"There were about sixty banking and agency companies engaged in the business of pumping capital into the pastures." During the three decades since the gold-rushes, capital had flowed in from Great Britain, and the banks and stock agencies of the eastern colonies had distributed it out again to the pastoralists, incidentally achieving a firm grip over the destinies of the properties thus financed. To these financial institutions, the pastoral industry of Western Australia represented another field for outlay. During the 'eighties, several of them founded or enlarged their branches in Western Australia, one of the most noteworthy being Dalgety & Co., who took over from two local firms, W.D.Moore & Co.,

56 : Fitzpatrick, The Australian People 1788-1945 (M.U.P. 1946), p.66.

and J.H.Monger & Co. The needs of the investors in Kimberley compelled them to have recourse to these banks and stock agencies and to borrow money freely from them. Thus began the process through which the fortunes of the Kimberley pastoral industry were to be tied up to the fluctuations of the Australian capital market. The full implications of this process were to become apparent during the depression of the early 'nineties.

The poor returns in the wool industry caused interest in the possibilities of cattle. The stock were thriving and multiplying ; Mr. George Rose recalls that in those days, heifers calved at five months. The main problem was the want of a market. Early in 1890, the "Western Mail" remarked, of Kimberley, that : "Unless an outlet can be obtained in Singapore and India, there is reason to believe that the squatters in that district will soon be troubled with a serious glut."⁽⁵⁷⁾ The Near North had been probed for a market as early as 1874, when Captain Cahill, of the schooner, "Les Trois Amis", had sold a few cows from the Champion Bay district in the Malay islands at an average of £25 per head. Later the South Australian Government, wishing to develop the Northern Territory export trade, offered a subsidy of £2 per

57 : "Western Mail", editorial, March 28th, 1890.

head for a cattle-boat service to Java and Singapore. "The s.s. Darwin ran for several years in this trade, but partly on account of opposition in Singapore, and partly because of the distance fat cattle had to travel through poor country to Darwin, the venture ceased to pay."⁽⁵⁸⁾

As early as 1887, Davies and McLean sent an experimental shipment of Balmaningarra cattle from Derby to Singapore.⁽⁵⁹⁾ No further steps were taken to break into the Singapore trade until 1890, when two separate attempts were made. W.E. Collins, manager of Oscar Range, was recorded as "arriving in town with twenty-one store cattle for shipment to Singapore, where he is about to proceed to endeavour to open a butchering business on behalf of the Kimberley squatters for the disposal of some of their surplus stock".⁽⁶⁰⁾

They were sent up on the "Australind", and disposed of for a fairly satisfactory price, but the experiment was not repeated. The Buchanans also attempted to enter this market in the same year, with 300 Wave Hill bullocks which had been walked from Sturt Creek to Derby by Gordon Buchanan. Thirty were shipped as an experiment, but they found:⁽⁶¹⁾

"In Singapore, the bullocks brought £8 per head, but expenses totalled £5, and the ring or combine there would not allow a continuance of the trade. So that outlet was closed."

58 : Buchanan, Gordon, op. cit. p. 157.

59 : "Western Mail", December 6th, 1887.

60 : Derby Police Occurrence Books, June 28th, 1890 : "Western Mail", September 6th, 1890.

61 : Buchanan, op. cit. p. 133.

A more satisfactory outlet was discovered in the metropolitan market at Perth. Following the passage of the Tariff Act of 1888, a protective duty had been imposed on livestock imported for slaughter from the eastern colonies, and it was hoped that this measure would encourage the pastoral industry of Western Australia to grow sufficient to supply the colony's requirements of meat. During 1888 and 1889, it would appear that small lots of Kimberley cattle were shipped south to private buyers⁽⁶²⁾, but it was left to Alexander Forrest, the leading advocate of pastoral protection, to broach the Perth market. In June 1890, he had 31 bullocks shipped south on the "Franklin" by G.C. Rose, the manager of Yeeda. After a ten days' journey, these "splendid fat three-year-olds" were sold in Perth at the respectable price of £12 per head. "The Western Mail" commented :⁽⁶³⁾

"It says much for the Kimberley country as a cattle-producing centre. We learn that next year the Kimberley district will be able to supply not only these markets during the winter months, but also that arrangements are being made to supply Singapore."

Two more lots were shipped from Yeeda in July, making a total of 83 cattle sent down that year.⁽⁶⁴⁾ The success of the experiment encouraged other cattle-owners to enter the Perth

62 : Cf. Fossil Downs papers : Letter, S.L. Burges - Charles Macdonald, September 21st, 1888 (acknowledging shipment of 17 cows from Derby to Geraldton): (Archives, 524.)

63 : "Western Mail", June 28th, 1890.

64 : Derby Police Occurrence Book, July 5th and July 22nd, 1890.

trade. In 1891, 580 cattle were shipped from Derby ; in 1892, 1,140 ; and in 1893, 1,925.

The successful establishment of this export trade, while it was in part due to the increase in the consumer population of Western Australia after the Yilgarn discoveries, attracted the attention of cattlemen in the rest of Northern Australia. Times were hard for them. To quote Buchanan: (65)

"Cattle in Queensland in 1890 had slumped to a pound per head for fat bullocks. Boiling-down works were established at various ports in an endeavour to deal with the surplus stock. In Darwin and on the Pine Creek and Burrundie goldfields, a limited market (controlled by Armstrong and Lawrie) was the only resort for Northern Territory cattle; but in a few years this also declined."

Some of the cattlemen began to look to Western Australia for an outlet. The Buchanan interests, of Wave Hill in the Territory, and Flora Valley in East Kimberley, undertook three overlanding trips of memorable proportions. In 1890, they drove 350 fats down the Fitzroy valley, along the Ninety-Mile Beach, and inland to the Nullagine goldfields. In 1892, Nat Buchanan took a thousand bullocks from Flora Valley along the same route, and thence to the Murchison goldfields, where the cattle were sold and agisted. This route included a newly pioneered track from the de Grey to the Murchison, along which W. Richardson took a further draft of nine hundred Flora Valley steers in 1893. (66)

65 : Buchanan, op. cit. pp. 132-3.

66 : Ibid. chapter xvi : cf. also "Western Mail", September 6th, 1890: Derby Police Occurrence Books, July 27th, 1893 : Flinders, op. cit. chapter vi.

Other East Kimberley cattlemen, faced with the total absence of marketing facilities at Wyndham, turned to Derby. Even here, bullocks had to be slung by a rope into the hold of waiting boats, a slow and tedious process, in which it took two days to handle a mob of three or four hundred bullocks.⁽⁶⁷⁾ Nevertheless, any facilities were better than none. In 1893, M.J. and M.P. Durack drove a mob of 502 Lissadell, Rosewood, and Argyle cattle from their stations to Derby. Previously they had probed Armstrong and Lawrie's market at Pine Creek and Darwin, but the depressed Territory offered poor returns.⁽⁶⁸⁾ Of these interests, the "Northern Territory Times" noted in 1890,⁽⁶⁹⁾ in recording the arrival of

"two high class bulls to be added to their already fashionable breeding stud. There can be no doubt of the intention of the Duracks to raise nothing but pedigree stock on their station."

Like nearly all the cattle in Kimberley, they were beef Short-horns. The Ord River station was also breeding bulls for sale, and its herds were multiplying rapidly.

Although overlanding on this long-distance basis seemed an unsatisfactory marketing expedient, the Kimberley cattle industry attracted one or two of the magnates of the Northern Territory and Queensland. Joseph Bradshaw and Aeneas Gunn took up 1,000,000 acres at Marigui on the Prince

67 : Information given to the writer by Mr. G.C. Rose.

68 : Durack, M.P. : Diaries, 1891 and May-June 1893. (Durack papers)

69 : "Northern Territory Times", July 18th, 1890.

Regent River, with the intention of stocking the area with sheep and cattle. Considering that the country selected had already been the site of the failure of the Camden Harbour scheme, Bradshaw showed optimism in the capacity of the land. He began to put up permanent buildings, although "to add to my security and ability to control the settlement, the aborigines, the pearlers and others", he had persuaded the Government to appoint him to the commission of the peace so that he could deal with these rather disquieting neighbours. He abandoned the project in 1894, however, as a result of the passage of the Stock Act of 1893.⁽⁷⁰⁾

This Act was brought forward by the Premier, Sir John Forrest, to close loopholes in the Act of 1888. The earlier Act imposed the duty only on stock imported for slaughter. Fearing that interests in the eastern colonies would introduce forward store stock, fatten them for a short while in Western Australia, and then kill them and capture the market, the Legislative Assembly placed the duty on all imported livestock except stud animals.⁽⁷¹⁾ This was of advantage to the squatters around Derby, but it effectively barred the Kimberley outlet to Territory and Queensland cattlemen. An artificial barrier had been created, which brought to an end the long overland droving trips across the North to Kimberley, and may possibly have hindered the

70 : C.S.O. 819/92 : 957/92. Flinders, ch. vi.

71 : Debates, iv., pp. 257-288.

further stocking of the district. Already, in 1892, Sam Muggleton had stocked 50,000 acres, north of Hall's Creek, from the eastern colonies. Larger interests were making enquiries, including Innes of Cresswell Creek, and the great Jimmy Tyson, who had several thousand cattle on the road for Kimberley when the news of the stock tax induced him to disband them.⁽⁷²⁾ While the tariff may have discouraged such investors, it did not stop individual stockmen and intending settlers from leaving Queensland, the scene of the depression and the defeat of the unions, and taking the track for Kimberley. Buchanan has described:⁽⁷³⁾

"this intermittent stream of mostly impoverished unemployed of all classes. They travelled along the long, long northern trail where they were helped considerably on their journey by the hospitable cattle-stations...As to beef supplied free to travellers, that gratuity was in most cases an enforced one; many would have helped themselves to a fat steer out on the run, as all were armed and usually carried salt ready for emergencies."

Sir John Forrest's solicitude for the welfare of the local pastoralist may well have been prompted by the plight of the industry in West Kimberley. A few pearlers, such as George Streeter at Hill and Roebuck Plains, and George Roe at Thangoo, were forming cattle runs to victual their crews. Otherwise, expansion was at a standstill. The emphasis previously placed on wool

72 : Buchanan, op. cit. p. 197 : Votes and Proceedings, 1894, No. 1, p. 6. (Report of Collector of Customs, 1893) : information given the writer by Mr. Henry Denham of Broome. Cf. also Debates, vol iv. pp. 257-260.

73 : Buchanan, op. cit. p. 197.

had led to difficulties. The light season of 1888 had been followed by another in 1890, and by the failure of the "wet" season of 1891-2, when the monsoonal rains did not arrive in any quantity until March, and even then proved inadequate.⁽⁷⁴⁾ The only relief measure afforded by the Government was the extension of the dead-line for the payment of rentals. However, the recuperative powers of the country seem to have been excellent. The number of stock in Kimberley steadily increased, and indeed, the next setback, which came in February 1894, was caused by extensive floods along the Lennard River and the lower Fitzroy. Lukin and Monger lost 14,000 sheep, and the blow forced them out of business. Meda lost 13,000 sheep and 15 miles of fencing. The Emanuels, at Rarriwell, lost 2,200, including all their stud sheep, and Yeeda, Gilgully, Mount Anderson and Upper Liveringa each lost several hundred. In all, some thirty thousand sheep were reported missing, and, as much of the fencing hitherto done in West Kimberley had been along the fertile river flats, there was considerable destruction of improvements.⁽⁷⁵⁾

The sheep stations were already feeling the pinch of further falls in the price of wool. In 1891, it dropped to 8d, and thence to 7d. in 1893, and 6½d. in 1894. These disappointing

74 : Hunt, H.A. : Result of Rainfall Observations made in Western Australia. (Department of Home Affairs, Melbourne, 1929).

75 : Ibid. Pp. 97-8. "West Australian", February 7th and 28th, 1894. Derby Police Occurrence Book, February 7th and 13th, 1894.

returns compelled them to have further recourse to the banks and financial houses, for support. But the fall in the price of wool was mirrored in the fall of commodity prices, which caused investors to give up subscribing to the banks of Great Britain and the eastern colonies. The banks reacted to this by calling in old advances, and declining to make new loans. Credit was almost impossible to obtain, and the station-owners were not financially cushioned against low wool prices or losses from native deprivations and climatic hazards. The financial institutions were not prepared to release the owners from their obligations, and station properties were, at the time, regarded as almost unsaleable.⁽⁷⁶⁾ In order to secure themselves, the financial institutions took over the leases of the properties upon which they had made advances. This process was, during the early 'nineties, entirely confined to West Kimberley. But there it was common between 1890 and 1895. Of the twenty-two leaseholders in the district, five made over the leases of their runs to Dalgety & Co. during this period; five to the Bank of New South Wales; two to private mortgagees; and one each to the Union Bank, the Federal Bank, and the W.A. Loan and Mortgage

76 : Cf. "Nor'-West Echo", March 26th, 1892. The crisis is discussed in Fitzpatrick : "The British Empire in Australia", ch.vii.

Company. The list included all the sheep stations in the district, except for those held by Game and the Emanuels, who were perhaps protected by their cattle interests. The others who kept their own lease titles -- Osmond and Panton, Edgar and Collins, Sparke and Dare, the Blythes and the Macdonalds -- were all cattlemen.⁽⁷⁷⁾ Mention should also be made of the part played by the Derby storekeepers, Adcock and Malet, whose liberal credits helped several of the smaller squatters to stay solvent.

For the most part, the owners of mortgaged runs managed to extricate themselves eventually, and become the holders of their own lease titles once again. Several prominent station-owners, however, went out of business. The King Sound Pastoral Company was compelled to abandon its property when its backer, Munro, was involved in the great slump in Melbourne. After passing to Dalgety & Co., this station was subdivided amongst other leaseholders. Lukin and Monger, who had been carrying on under the backing of the Bank of New South Wales, had been flooded out in 1894. This partial retreat from the northern marches of settlement, on the Lennard, was paralleled in the country south of the Fitzroy, about the Edgar Range.

77 : Cf. Appendix III.

Edgar and Collins abandoned their run there in 1893, to concentrate on Oscar Range ; while the Bank of New South Wales threw up Edwards, Collins, and York's old property in 1895.

It may perhaps have been because of the shortage of capital that the pastoralists of West Kimberley took some of the local aboriginals into their employ. On the later settled stations, such as Noonkanbah and Quanbun, native shepherds were placed in charge of the sheep, under the supervision of a white overseer, until such time as an adequate fencing programme could be carried out. Each shepherd had charge of as many as one thousand sheep, which were from time to time tallied by the overseer.⁽⁷⁸⁾ Natives were also employed as servants about the homesteads and in Derby. What they lacked in efficiency they made up in cheapness, an important factor in a time of depression. They were also used as shearers. It was considered a good performance when Alf. Barnett, the manager of Balmaningarra, induced a team of eleven natives to shear 880 sheep in one day.⁽⁷⁹⁾ The police trained several local boys to act as blacktrackers. It was one such boy, Pigeon, who developed into the most notorious black outlaw in the history of the district, and whose exploits brought to a head the antagonism between the two races.

78 : Quanbun journals, 1894-9 : Derby Petty Sessions Records, March 17th, 1892.

79 : Flinders, chapter vi.

The case has been dealt with extensively in fact and fiction.⁽⁸⁰⁾ Briefly, these are the facts: In November 1894, Pigeon and another tracker, Captain, accompanied a constable on one of the periodical forays to bring in alleged cattle-killers. Learning that some wanted natives were in the vicinity, the policeman, who had already made several arrests, gave his trackers firearms, with which to go out and apprehend the other blacks. In the night, Pigeon returned and shot the policeman dead. It may be that he was suborned by a native outlaw of forceful personality, as Idriess claims; on the other hand, it is also stated that Pigeon suspected that the policeman was making advances to his gin. Whatever the cause, Pigeon and Captain, with the prisoners, promptly went bush in the refuge of the Oscar Range, and shortly afterwards Pigeon murdered two drovers proceeding with stock from Obagoona to Nerrima. He remained at large for two and a half years, committing two or three other murders during that time, before he was at last cornered by a strong posse and shot down. Most of his followers had already been dispersed. Naturally his activities gave rise to a state of tension in the district. The squatters had to be always on the alert, and whenever they sighted natives of whose intentions they were doubtful, they were inclined to shoot first and ask questions afterwards.⁽⁸¹⁾ Old natives in

80 : Ion Idriess, in "Outlaw of the Leopolds" (1951) has devoted a whole book to the subject. I have preferred to draw from the writings of two Kimberley men, Gordon Buchanan (op.cit.) and Richard Allen's "Reminiscences" ; also from the Robinson River Police Camp Occurrence Book, 1894-8. (Archives, 241.)

81 : Cf. Quanbun journals, esp. March 6th, 1895.

the district tell stories of massacres which are alleged to have taken place as a reprisal for white deaths. One white resident wrote: "Hundreds of men, women, and even children were shot down in this period. Where once the native roamed in hundreds only 40 odd years ago, hardly any survive, and you can ride in these Ranges for days and never see a sign of natives, let alone tracks." (82)

It seems undeniable that this series of incidents poisoned relations between the white and black inhabitants of the district in a way which was to take many years to overcome, even though there is insufficient evidence about the extent to which the blacks were maltreated. Conversely, the depredations of the natives caused serious setbacks to the pastoralists, not only because of the stock losses, but because it discouraged the white men from viewing the district as a place in which to live permanently. It was, instead, a district in which to make money before retiring to the South and hiring a manager to work the station. There is little affection in Edwin Rose's entry in the Quanbun journal⁽⁸³⁾: "Back to this dismal hole, after a glorious six months' holiday South". Squatters were not encouraged to expend capital on improving living conditions on their properties, or even on the sort of improvements which

82 : Allen, Richard : Reminiscences, p. 15. (MS in Perth Archives ; copy also in writer's possession).

83 : Quanbun station journals, May 6th, 1896.

would develop the productive efficiency of their holdings. For this attitude of mind, other factors such as the isolation, the trying climate, and the general lack of amenities were also responsible, but the activities of the natives must have increased the squatters' determination to leave the district when they had extracted enough savings from their properties.

One cannot altogether blame them. Even the unattractive little town of Derby, with its annual race meeting and dance, consisted of little more than "three pubs, a few stores, a laundry, a chemist, and the Japanese amusement houses".⁽⁸⁴⁾ It is not surprising that many of the station workers spent their few visits to town on the spree, and failed to invest their wages more profitably. Another consequence of the general lack of amenities was the unsuitability for white women of the district. At this date, there were only a few residing in Derby and Wyndham - the barmaids were the centre of social life - and hardly any on the stations. This was one of the most notable factors in retarding the progress of the district. Station owners and managers were prepared to live under rough conditions until such time as they could take a wife in the South. There was less incentive to plan for the future in the organisation of a station. The homestead was not regarded as the centre of a

84 : Flinders, op. cit. chapter iv.

permanent estate, nor does there seem to have been any sense of conserving the land for the future. It is the oldest of truisms that a wife and family encourage taking thought for the morrow. But the only womenfolk available, in many cases, were the natives, and this led to antagonism with the native men and the creation of the half-caste problem. The Derby police records (1885-1903) afford adequate proof that many pastoralists and station workers kept native women. It was not regarded as a criminal offence. There is evidence, however, that some settlers eschewed this alternative.

The population figures taken at the census of 1891 are revealing. Leaving aside the substantial number of 784 persons in Broome and the pearling fleet, West Kimberley supported 230 men and 28 women ; and East Kimberley (including the gold-fields), 213 men and 34 women. In all, excluding aboriginals, there were 505 inhabitants, of whom 62 only were women. The increased population due to the pearling fleet had tempted the Western Australian government to divide Kimberley into two electorates when self-government was granted in 1890. Alexander Forrest represented West Kimberley, and W.L. Baker, a Wyndham storekeeper was returned for East Kimberley. (Before he nominated, the electorate had been faced with the choice of a Perth lawyer who had never been near the district, or Carr-Boyd; but both these candidates discreetly withdrew.) After Baker's death in January 1893, Francis Connor, senior partner

in the firm of Connor and Doherty, was returned unopposed. The boundary-riders and station-hands of Kimberley concerned themselves little with politics ; less than two hundred persons, in West and East Kimberley combined, had bothered to enrol. The importance of Forrest and Connor lies less in their work as the elected representatives of the Kimberley District, than in what they accomplished outside Parliament. Between the two of them, they organised the Kimberley cattle trade to the metropolitan area, and gave the squatters the marketing opportunities, for the want of which the pastoral industry had languished. This could only have been done by men who combined resources of capital with a personal following in the Kimberleys. The examination of this development is necessary to understand the subsequent pattern of economic growth in the district. The "small men" had almost all been overwhelmed by economic adversity and the hardships of pioneering. Now it was to be the turn of the "big men".

=====

CHAPTER II.

CONSOLIDATION.
(1895 - 1905)

O Heavenly Father, if You please,
 We pray to Thee on bended Knees,
 That Thou and Thy dear Son, Our Lord,
 Will keep the Cockies off the Ord:
 O paralyse the duffer's hand,
 As he lifts up his flaming brand,
 Keep Poddy-dodgers from the glen,
 For Jesus Christ's sake, amen.
 Now, O God, forgive our sins,
 And may every cow on Ord have twins.

--- Prayer carved on a boab tree, attributed to Jim
 Patterson, managing partner of Ord River station, 1902-14.

=====

The turn in the fortunes of the Kimberley cattle industry can perhaps be dated from that day in June 1893 when Paddy Hannan, returning to Coolgardie from Mount Youle, where a rumour had led him and others profitlessly to seek gold, made his find at Kalgoorlie. This find confirmed the permanency of the Eastern Goldfields, and thus attracted thousands of men from the depressed eastern colonies. Western Australia's population grew from 49,782 in 1891 to 184,124 in 1901. Such an increase in the consuming population, most of them adult males, meant good business for the meat industry. Hitherto, it might have been doubted whether it was sound to encourage a growing beef cattle industry in Kimberley, when no convenient market existed.

Now there was an ever-increasing demand. Thanks to the protective legislation of 1888 and 1893, the Kimberleys, as the major beef-producing centre of Western Australia, were cast into the role of chief source of supply. For the next dozen years, the main object of the squatters was to send away as many fat bullocks as possible, so that they might eliminate their overdrafts, and go South to dwell in prosperous retirement.

The paramount need of the moment was for the efficient organisation of the marketing system. Previously there had been no need of a large-scale wholesale and retail butchering organisation. Outside the small metropolitan area, there were few districts where the local butchers could not draw their supplies from the immediate neighbourhood. In the Perth area, fat stock were auctioned at Midland Junction once a week, and the wholesale butchers maintained their own small separate killing centres.⁽¹⁾ The facilities to cope with a sudden increase in population did not exist. The early years of the Derby trade were marked by inefficient shipping methods. Wastage was considerable in livestock on the journey south. Most authorities agree that as much as one hundred pounds in weight might be lost from

1 : For a description of the trade in Perth in the early 'nineties, Votes and Proceedings, 1894, No. A12 (esp. Minutes of Evidence.)

a bullock in transit. Until the construction of a jetty at Wyndham, and a cattle race and yards at Derby, in 1894, facilities for embarking Kimberley bullocks were primitive. At the Fremantle end, the bullocks were swum ashore at Owen's Anchorage. The landing frequently took place in rough weather, as the main shipping period was in the winter months between April and October. Cattle were often knocked about, and, as there was no easily accessible country close to the metropolitan area for agistment, showed a decided loss in condition when slaughtered. Indeed, few voyages from Derby to Fremantle were accomplished without some deaths amongst the stock.

Under such circumstances, the risks of shipment were too heavy to be borne either by individual squatters, or by the wholesale butchers who purchased the beasts at Owen's Anchorage. The shipment of Kimberley cattle was a matter to be handled by some large-scale organisation which could efficiently plan shipping times by arrangement with the ship-owning companies, control sales at the Perth end, and stand the risks and losses incidental to this traffic. Two firms arose to deal with this situation, Forrest, Emanuel & Co., and Connor, Doherty & Durack.

The firm of Forrest, Emanuel came into existence in 1894, when Forrest, who already acted as Perth agent for most of the settlers in West Kimberley, and arranged the shipment of their cattle, made a large sum from the sale of the "Wealth of Nations" gold mine, of which he was a promoter. With this capital,

he determined to expand his interests in the North. An opportunity arose during a visit to his electorate at West Kimberley, where, in 1894, the pearlers at Broome had nominated G.S.Streeter as a candidate in opposition to him. Having defeated Streeter comfortably by 53 votes to 28, Forrest proceeded to the real purpose of his visit, and negotiated a merger with Isadore Emanuel. It was a formidable combination. Forrest was a man who had emerged from limited circumstances with the single-minded determination to make a fortune for himself, and, in so doing, to develop the primary and secondary industries of his native colony. During the depressed years in West Kimberley, he had bought up stations under mortgage, and developed them while leaving them still under mortgage. Owing to his widespread interests in other phases of Western Australian development, he could command capital and credit which the small man, with his entire resources invested in the pastoral industry, could not. In this way, Forrest acquired, between 1891 and 1894, Gregory's run at Gilgully, Grant, Anderson and Edgar's cattle station at Obagooma, and Nerrima and Plumb's Plain, two almost undeveloped properties on which the Macdonalds of Fossil Downs had been running stock on behalf of John Plumb, a Sydney businessman.⁽²⁾ Between 1894 and 1897, when Plumb's Plain

2 : Macdonald papers in Archives (524) : esp. telegrams between Charles Macdonald and Alexander Forrest, Nov. and Dec. 1894.

received the name of Jubilee Downs as a loyal tribute to Queen Victoria, these two runs were stocked from Obagooma.⁽³⁾ The new firm continued Forrest's practice, and bought out W.E.Marmion's share in Meda after his death in 1896.

Isadore Emanuel, suave, shrewd and self-contained, was the son of Solomon Emanuel, the largest single lessee of land in the Kimberleys, who owned a sheep station at Noonkanbah, and cattle runs at Gogo, Lower Liveringa, and Rarriwell. The family must have had considerable reserves of capital to weather the lean times. It was said that they had made an outlay of £50,000 on their Kimberley interests before making anything in return.⁽⁴⁾ Well served by their managers, they had an eye for selecting good country, and were continually making gradual additions to their properties. When Emanuel became Forrest's partner, the Emanuel properties remained solely in the control of that family, although Forrest made over all his Kimberley stations, with the exception of a one-fifteenth share in Upper Liveringa, to the new firm. It was Forrest, Emanuel who put the West Kimberley cattle shipping trade on an organised basis. They booked shipping space on the Blue Funnel and Adelaide Steamship Company's vessels - after 1896 they were Western Australian agents for the latter company - and then arranged with the local pastoralists for the delivery of

3 : Robinson River Police Camp Journal, November 4th, 1894 :
June 18th, 1895 : October 7th, 1895 : Quanbun journal, September
and October, 1897.

4 : Debates, xxxi, p. 694. (J.P. McLarty.)

cattle at Derby at a date convenient for their immediate shipment to Fremantle.⁽⁵⁾ At first Isadore Emanuel himself acted as local buyer for the firm, but they soon came to employ veteran local cattlemen, such as Felix Edgar and William Macdonald.⁽⁶⁾ Originally it was the firm's policy that station managers should be responsible for the delivery of their stock at Derby, but later they were prepared to accept delivery on the station.

To the cattlemen of West Kimberley, this at last meant that there was an assured market. Prices paid for "prime average bullocks, over 750 lbs", on delivery at Derby, went from £5 in 1895 to £5/5/- in 1896, and £5/15/- in 1898, with fat cows fetching £4/15/-.⁽⁷⁾ These were fair prices at a time when the average weekly wage of a stockman was between 30s. and £2. The penalty of this marketing organisation was that it concentrated the trade into the hands of a monopoly. Metropolitan and goldfields consumers alleged that Forrest, Emanuel controlled cattle prices, and used their position to make generous profits. Without a large-scale organisation of this type, however, contact between the wholesale butcher and the pastoralist would have been chaotic. The high prices in Perth chiefly arose from the necessity of bringing beef from sources of supply 1,500 miles distant. In 1896, a Select Committee noted "the complete absence of any intelligent system of drawing in a steady supply of fat stock" at the Perth end,

5 : Fossil Downs papers.

6 : Ibid. : esp. letter, I.S. Emanuel-Charles Macdonald, September 6th, 1895 miscellaneous receipts, 1898-1903. Quanbun journals, July 4th, 1898.

7 : Ibid : telegrams, Forrest-Macdonald, June 6th, 1895, December 22nd, 1895, March 28th, 1896 et al.

and recommended the establishment of abattoirs there to rectify the position.⁽⁸⁾ This was not attempted, and the consumers continued to blame the middleman for the high price of meat.

On the East Kimberley side, the opportunity to organise the cattle trade in a similar manner arose with the completion of the Wyndham jetty in April 1894. Here the middlemen were Connor and Doherty, already mentioned as storekeepers and small stock-owners of Wyndham. Connor was the member for the district. His characteristics were those often regarded as typically Irish ; charming, hot-headed, impulsive, eloquently persuasive, he had a talent for formulating big ideas for enterprises, and was not afraid to run risks in executing them. His partner, Denis Doherty, was a shrewd, affable man who knew how to make the right sort of contacts. When they began to act as stock agents between Wyndham and the metropolitan area, Doherty worked at the Fremantle end, and, in 1897, entered Sir John Forrest's third parliament as the member for North Fremantle. Their first big venture in shipment was in 1893, when they acted as agents for the 500 cattle shipped from Derby by the ~~Duracks~~.⁽⁹⁾ After that, they operated from Wyndham, drawing their supplies of stock not only from East Kimberley, but also from properties in the adjacent area of the Northern Territory.

8 : Votes and Proceedings, 1896, No. A8.

9 : Diary of M.P. Durack, May 2nd, 1893. (Durack papers).

Here the cattle market had been in a depressed state since the decline of the Darwin outlet; as late as 1895, "heifers could be bought for £1 per head and less, but there were no offers."⁽¹⁰⁾ But within a short time, the Wyndham trade was challenging Derby in its extent. Connor and Doherty prospered, and purchased two stations on the Territory side of the border, Auvergne and Newry. Settlement also increased in the hinterland of East Kimberley. In the years following 1893, a motley assortment of smallholders took up blocks between Hall's Creek and Wyndham. Near Wyndham, Nelson and Johnson founded Hillgrove, Joe and Jack Hart started Carlton, and J.J.Durack took up ^UDunham River. At Mount Barrett, near Hall's Creek, Jim Shepherd, and Franz Meinsen, a runaway German sailor, took up blocks. A neighbour on the south was Bob Button at Ruby Plains. Others settled along the Great Northern Highway between Hall's Creek and Wyndham. These included Jack Kelly, at Texas Downs ; Joseph Bridge at Cartridge Springs ; and Joseph Fegan and F.C.Booty at Koojebin⁽¹¹⁾ Finally, in 1897, the Church of England, backed by the Aborigines' Protection Board, endeavoured to found a mission on the Forrest River, near the old site of the Cambridge Downs enterprise. They stocked this run with cattle purchased from J.J.Durack. (The drover was his son Patsy, a boy of eleven.) The hostility of the aborigines, however, caused the mission to be abandoned in 1898.⁽¹²⁾

10 : Buchanan, op.cit. p.133.

11 : Allegedly this name is a corruption of "Could-you-bring" : the owner was continually requesting passing teamsters to bring back stores from Wyndham.

12 : Hawtrey, C.L.M. : The Availing Struggle, p.151. (Paterson, 1947.)

Most of the smallholders who came in at this time (1893-8) were men who had had experience as managers or stockmen on some larger run, and were now taking advantage of the improved state of markets to strike out for themselves. Thus Button, Booty, and Kelly had each served either as manager or head stockman on the Ord River station. Bridge was a Queensland stockman, who overlanded with his wife and young family, of whom one child was born en route. The eldest daughter, a girl of nine, often took control of the bullock team. Besides those mentioned, there were others who took up small parcels of land at this time, but who abandoned their enterprise after one or two seasons. It is of interest to note that East Kimberley, till then a big man's country, was breaking out into a rash of smallholdings, just at a time when West Kimberley was proving itself a difficult proposition for many of the small men. However, the old-established big cattlemen were still expanding. At the Ord River station, the stock, although exclusively depastured on riverside flats which constituted but a small portion of the run were breeding fast. One old stockmen describes them as "doubling their numbers every four years" ; and it seems certain that, from 4,000 in 1885, the herd increased to an estimated 30,000 in 1896, and 47,000 at the bangtail muster of 1901-2.⁽¹³⁾ Panton, one of the owners, had sold out in 1894 to W.H.S. Osmond, who

13 : Cf. Votes and Proceedings, 1897, 2nd series, No. 11, p. 7.

proceeded to enlarge the run by taking in the Nicholson Plains country. Foster, Stretch, and Weekes, the owners of Sturt Creek station, took up an entirely separate block to the westward of Hall's Creek, which formed the nucleus of the Margaret River station. This was in 1897, at a time when the depredations of the Sturt Creek natives were becoming serious.

It must not be supposed, as was frequently alleged at the time, that Connor and Doherty had secured a monopoly of the marketing in this area. Forrest and Emanuel were not averse to attempting to secure the agency rights for pastoralists in the East Kimberley and Victoria River districts, and there was some competition between the two firms.⁽¹⁴⁾ In the main, however, Forrest, Emanuel & Co. acted for West Kimberley exporters, and Connor & Doherty for East Kimberley. In 1897, the latter firm strengthened their position by arranging an amalgamation with the Durack brothers, of Argyle.⁽¹⁵⁾ Besides bringing five properties, Auvergne and Newry in the Territory, and Argyle, Ivanhoe, and the Ascot Depot in Western Australia, under the one control, this merger meant that henceforward Connor and Doherty could concentrate on marketing problems at the metropolitan end, while the Duracks acted as buyers and dealt with the squatters who wished to vend cattle.

14 : Letter, M.P. Durack - Francis Connor, September 5th, 1898.

15 : Articles of agreement, Connor, Doherty & Durack. (Fremantle, 1897).
Durack, M.P. : Diaries, 1897 et seq. (Durack papers).

All seemed ready for an uninterrupted supply of Kimberley beef to the miners and townspeople of the South. Seasons were good, and the pastoralists' only worry was to arrange the best contract possible with Forrest, Emanuel or with Connor, Doherty & Durack, and to have their fat stock ready for shipment at an appointed date. For them, and for the two marketing firms, the situation seemed, for the first time in years, edged with possibilities of prosperity. So far as East Kimberley went, these prospects were almost immediately dulled. The responsibility for this may be referred to a small parasite scientifically known as Ixodes bovis, the common cattle tick.

A certain amount of mystery surrounds the first entry of this costly newcomer to the Kimberleys. The broad outlines of its debut in Australia are thus described by J.H.Kelly: (16)

"The cattle tick appears to have been introduced to Northern Australia in 1876, on cattle imported from Batavia for the cable station at Darwin. The first outbreak of redwater fever, caused by the tick, occurred in the Darwin area in 1880, but the fever did not become serious until about 1890. In the early stages of tick infestation, redwater fever was not attributed to the cattle tick. It was not until 1894 that the responsibility of the tick for outbreaks of redwater fever was recognised."

During this period, the incidence of the disease spread over

16 : Kelly, J.H. : Report on the Beef Cattle Industry of Northern Australia. (Bureau of Agricultural Economics, Canberra, 1952.)

the Northern Territory into Queensland, and gradually in the direction of the Western Australian border. Several of the overlanders' mobs, travelling across the Territory to the Kimberleys, were infected by redwater fever, and suffered losses. Amongst them may be enumerated Macdonald's mob for Fossil Downs, the Sturt Creek cattle, McIntosh's lot, the remnants of which he sold to the Hall's Creek butchers, and the King Sound Pastoral Company's lot under W. Gordon. Nevertheless, no outbreak was reported in East Kimberley during the first ten years of settlement, although it seems beyond doubt that tick of some sort were observed by the early settlers -- whether Ixodes bovis or not nobody had the necessary scientific knowledge to prove. Quite possibly, the specimens observed were kangaroo ticks.

In January 1896, machinery was created for the administration of the Stock Diseases Act of 1895, which confirmed the Government's powers to impose an embargo or quarantine precautions on stock imports.⁽¹⁷⁾ During the same month, a deputation waited upon the Commissioner for Crown Lands (A.R. Richardson). Amongst its members were Francis Connor, and C. Lumley Hill, part-owner of Lissadell, who pointed out the danger which existed from the possibility of the introduction of the cattle tick from the Northern Territory and Queensland.⁽¹⁸⁾

17 : For regulations, see Government Gazette : January 17th and 31st,
 18 : "West Australian", January 23rd, 1896. (1896.

As a result of these representations, the Executive Council passed an ordinance prohibiting the importation of cattle from the Northern Territory, except from Wave Hill station, and those properties on the border which were owned by the same interests as neighbouring Kimberley stations (e.g. Ord River and the Connor, Doherty & Durack bloc). This was the area of the Northern Territory chiefly concerned in supplying the Wyndham market, and so at first no great hardship was anticipated from the regulations. Since Connor and Hill both had pastoral interests in East Kimberley, it seems reasonable to suppose that these restrictions had the support of most of the cattlemen - for the time being.

Before long, the situation changed. In April 1896, the Stock Department received reports from the inspectors at Hall's Creek and Wyndham that a few cases of tick and redwater had been detected. Richardson, one of the original shareholders in Yeeda, and still interested in extensive pastoral holdings in the North-West, recognised the seriousness of these reports. He promptly sent up a government entomologist, Richard Helms, to inspect the situation. Helms, in his report, was discouraging. (19) He found the settlers, with one exception - the Durack brothers - were far from co-operative. "An almost general opinion prevailed

19 : Votes and Proceedings, 1897, 2nd series, No. 11, pp. 5-8.

that ticks had nothing to do with the disease commonly known as 'Red Water'", he wrote. Helms was neither the first nor the last enquiring government official to meet with this type of attitude. The squatters assured Helms that there had been tick in East Kimberley as long as anyone could remember, but never a case of redwater fever. However, Helms pointed out that in June 1896, a mob of nine hundred beasts under sale to Connor and Doherty had entered East Kimberley near the junction of the Negri and the Ord. Of these, ninety-six were alleged to have died of redwater fever. An attempt was made to prove to him that overdriving was the cause of so many deaths, but Helms detected redwater fever in at least one bullock of those that survived. Although the tick were confined to a small portion of the Ord River station, no attempt was being made to prevent the spread of the pest, and in fact, stock for shipping were being driven indiscriminately from the affected area through other properties to Wyndham. Helms advised that cattle from infected areas should be confined to a special stock route to Wyndham along the border.

In West Kimberley, the Resident Magistrate of Derby (Dr. F.M. House) reported: ⁽²⁰⁾

20 : House, Dr. F.M. : Report for the half-year ending June 30, 1896. (Votes and Proceedings, 1896, No. 14).

"The squatters here are rather disturbed by the reports of the cattle tick having been seen in East Kimberley, and are pleased to see that the Government have so promptly sent an officer to inquire into the matter. Doubtless in the event of his investigation proving the existence of tick, measures will at once be taken to prevent the spread of this terrible parasite, the importation of which into this district would be a very real calamity, especially as the squatting industry is not yet on a large enough scale to enable freezing works to be established."

West Kimberley was fairly effectively divided from East Kimberley by the King Leopold Ranges, and by a strip of unoccupied country at least one hundred miles in width. Quarantine regulations between the two districts would have been easy to maintain. The West Kimberley squatters cannot have failed to perceive that, if restrictions were placed on the movement of East Kimberley stock, it would increase the demand for West Kimberley cattle. It is instructive to observe the economic motive in the discussions which followed.

Further reports seemed to indicate that the cattle tick was appearing in small numbers between the Negri junction and Wyndham. This low-lying country, in summer the most humid part of East Kimberley, offered conditions most favourable to the propagation of the pest. In January 1897, the Executive Council took more stringent measures. Orders-in-Council were gazetted, prohibiting the importation of all cattle, horses, and dogs from the Northern Territory and Queensland, until these colonies were declared "clean". (21)

As it eventually transpired, this was a case of shutting the stable door after the livestock had got away. At the time, the Stock Department hoped that there was a prospect of the few isolated tick colonies dying out. The immediate effect of these regulations, however, was to hit at the Wyndham export trade, and to confine the area, from which stock might be drawn, to East Kimberley. Connor, Doherty & Durack found the embargo would render it impossible to maintain normal supplies to the metropolitan market. By drawing extensively on the fat cattle of East Kimberley during 1897, they might keep their numbers up, but this would affect the prospects for future years. Only for a few of the East Kimberley cattlemen the situation seemed temporarily advantageous, as it brought about a rise in prices. P.B. Durack was authorised to pay as much as £5 10s. for Sturt Creek bullocks. (22)

Connor, as the spokesman for East Kimberley, did his best to have this regulation rescinded. Apparently encouraged by verbal expressions of sympathy from Sir John Forrest, shortly before the Premier's departure for the Imperial Conference in London, his firm shipped down a herd of cattle originating in the Territory. This was contrary to the regulations, and the Chief Inspector of Stock, who was then at Wyndham, launched

22 : Letter, M.P. Durack - Francis Connor. (Date undecipherable, but from internal evidence can be placed late in June, 1897.) (Durack papers).

a prosecution against Connor, Doherty & Durack, who were fined fifty pounds.⁽²³⁾ While this prosecution was pending, Connor was urging his case in two deputations to the Acting-Premier, Edward Wittenoom, who had large pastoral interests in the Murchison, and was financially interested in Thangoo, a cattle run near Broome.

The first deputation met Wittenoom on May 16th, 1897. It mainly consisted of West Kimberley, North-West, and southern pastoralists. Connor claimed that his inclusion had only been arranged at the very last moment. The object of most of the deputation was to request the strict enforcement of the prohibitory regulations. Connor dissented. He claimed that the regulations were unnecessary. The connexion between the cattle tick and redwater fever had not been satisfactorily established. There had been tick in Kimberley ever since the first pioneers arrived, and never a case of redwater. Furthermore, the stock inspectors had not been able to find any cattle tick. Connor implied that certain interests were urging the restrictions in order to keep up the price of beef, and secure profits. He could only have meant the cattlemen outside East Kimberley in general, and Forrest, Emanuel & Co. in particular.⁽²⁴⁾

23 : "Western Mail", June 25th, 1897.

24 : Ibid. May 21st, 1897.

Wittenoom's reply, while conciliatory, was generally in favour of the maintenance of the regulations. He had the majority of the deputation on his side. Five days later, Connor mustered up another deputation, consisting in the main of retailers, members of Parliament representing the consuming interests, and other sympathisers who were for cheap meat and the risk of tick. They reiterated Connor's previous arguments. Finally, Connor said that, if Parliament were in session, he would move a motion of no confidence in the Government, on this issue. This was the wrong way to handle Wittenoom, whose attitude hardened. He pointed out that reports from stock inspectors on the spot, amongst them the Chief Inspector (J. Morton Craig), noted improvement in the position, making it doubly foolish to run risks of further infection from the Northern Territory. The aftermath of these deputations was a press correspondence between Connor and Isadore Emanuel, in which each analysed the other's motives in the tick question with malice, and possibly not without accuracy.⁽²⁵⁾

Connor actually went so far as to join an opposition-based Goldfields Party which was being formed at the time, basing his claim on the moribund Hall's Creek fields. Eventually, he⁽²⁶⁾

25 : "Western Mail", May 28th, 1897 : "West Australian", May 22nd to June 7th, 1897 for Connor-Emanuel controversy.

26 : "Western Mail", July 1st, 1897.

was dissuaded from further action until the return of Sir John Forrest. A letter from M.P. Durack said, of the Premier: (27)

"Were he to see the question in the true light, that the introduction of (Territory cattle has been) vetoed by a lot of Southern pastoralists unscrupulous of the truth, and studying only their own personal aggrandisement at a loss to the country, and starvation to the miner, I am sure he would not have the slightest hesitation in allowing the introduction of bullocks from this quarter of the world."

In preparation for this, their drovers obtained a mob of 900 bullocks from Wave Hill (N.T.), and held them in isolation near the border. On Sir John's return, a report was obtained from the local stock inspector, certifying that this mob was clean, and a special Order-in-Council was passed, on November 3rd, 1897, permitting the entry of these cattle. (28)

Considering Connor's heated remarks at the Wittenoom deputation, the Opposition at once concluded that Sir John's motive in allowing these cattle to enter was not, as he said, a desire to keep up an adequate supply of beef at reasonable prices, but to placate Connor and Doherty, and to ensure their votes in Parliament. On December 15th, 1897, the Leader of the Opposition (George Leake) moved that the Government's administration of the Stock Diseases Act of 1895 should be deemed "unsatisfactory, and not in the best interests of the

27 : Letter, M.P. Durack-Francis Connor, Sept. 17th, 1897. (Durack papers).
 28 : Government Gazette, November 8th, 1897.

pastoral industry."⁽²⁹⁾ Debate followed, in which the Opposition had rather the better of the argument, Connor being absent, and Doherty choosing to take no part in the discussion. On the motion of Alexander Forrest, however, the debate was adjourned for a week. At the end of this time, Septimus Burt⁽³⁰⁾ moved for the amendment of Leake's motion, so as to remove any implicit censure, and also to provide "that no cattle be allowed to be moved by land or sea from East Kimberley district until such district is declared by the Chief Inspector of Stock to be free from tick, or until Parliament is again consulted."⁽³¹⁾ Almost the only voice raised in opposition to the amendment was that of Charles John Moran, a friend of Connor.⁽³²⁾ He stressed the possibility of a rise in price for the consumer, and added:⁽³³⁾

"If we pass this motion, the result will be that the whole of the cattle trade will be in the hands of one firm, and the mover of this motion will be inflicting great hardships on one part of the colony."

Despite this plea, and the receipt of a petition from Wyndham expressing confidence in the innocuousness of the tick, and the evil influence of the quarantine regulations, Parliament passed Burt's amendment. It was further provided that an experienced

29 : Debates, xi, pp. 1085-1109 : 1300-1317.

30 : Septimus Burt (1847-1919) : MLC 1880-90 : Attorney-General, 1890-7 : MLA for Ashburton, 1890-9 : owned several pastoral properties, some in partnership with Alexander and David Forrest.

31 : Debates, xi. p. 1301.

32 : Charles John Moran (1868-1936) : MLA for East Coolgardie, 1894-1901 : West Perth 1902-5. A political stormy petrel; later foundation member of the Country Party, and director of the Agricultural Bank.

33 : Debates, xi. p. 1307.

Queensland stock inspector should visit East Kimberley, and report on the prevalence of tick, and its ravages in the district. Moran attempted to extend the area of investigation to West Kimberley, but the move was blocked by the Forrests, and defeated at a division on party lines.

Pursuant to this, on January 12th, 1898, the Executive Council declared East Kimberley an infected area, and banned the export of all livestock from the district to other portions of Western Australia.⁽³⁴⁾ Almost simultaneously, a scare was caused by the discovery of cattle tick at the Fremantle stockyards.⁽³⁵⁾

The tick did not spread, and were presently stamped out; but the incident lost support for Connor and his partisans, who were still asserting that "the tick were not the true cattle tick, nor a menace to the industry."⁽³⁶⁾ The visit of the Queensland

inspector, Hancock, confirmed that "East Kimberley was hopelessly ticked up".⁽³⁷⁾ Drivers had exercised no restraint at all in taking cattle from tick-infested areas and contaminating the rest of the country. Consequently, there was no clean country on which to depasture cattle, and this rendered dipping futile. Hancock

34 : Government Gazette. January 21st, 1898.

35 : "Western Mail", January 28th, 1898.

36 : Ibid. : cf. letters by Sir Alexander Cockburn-Campbell (Ibid. March 22nd, 1898), and J.W. Durack (Ibid, July 14th, 1898).

37 : Ibid. June 24th, 1898.

recommended that absolute quarantine should be maintained, but that the prohibition on Northern Territory cattle should be removed, and a chilling and extract plant be provided in a meatworks, to be constructed at Wyndham.

Meanwhile, the cattlemen of East Kimberley were cut off from all markets. M.P. Durack endeavoured to overland store cattle to Queensland, but was caught by a drought in the Northern Territory, and his mob sustained heavy losses.⁽³⁸⁾ The firm of Connor, Doherty & Durack determined to develop a trade to the islands of the Near North and to Singapore. It was planned to ship about two hundred beasts a fortnight. However, in 1898, a rival trade was also developing from Broome, where a cattle jetty had been completed in the March of that year. Streeter and Male were the firm controlling this trade.⁽³⁹⁾ The Singapore outlet was not greatly developed; 172 cattle were sent there in 1898, and 203 in 1899, after which the trade lapsed, perhaps because of declining prices.

By now, tick fever was getting a hold on the lower Ord. Owing to the reticence of the pastoralists to disclose their losses to the Stock Department, it was impossible to form an

38 : Durack, M.P. : Diaries, Dec. 1897 and Jan.- May, 1898.

39 : "West Australian", April 8th and May 20th, 1898. Cf. Appendix VII (a).

estimate of the number of cattle lost. The local officers of the Stock Department made experiments in inoculation, but this was not practised on a large-scale basis.⁽⁴⁰⁾ But the friends of Connor and the East Kimberley squatters refused, even at this stage, to recognise the existence of the epidemic. When Parliament re-assembled in July 1898, F.C. Monger⁽⁴¹⁾ brought forward a motion that "owing to the absence of any sickness or mortality in East Kimberley cattle, the restrictions now existing be removed, so that the consumers, as well as the producers, may benefit by the large number of fat stock available there."⁽⁴²⁾ On the motion of Charles Harper, seconded by Alexander Forrest, the question was referred to a select committee of seven members. Acting as a fact-finding commission, with Harper as chairman, they took evidence from several stock inspectors and experts, as well as from Connor and M.P. and J.W. Durack.

The report of the select committee was pessimistic in outlook. "Those best qualified to judge state that vigorous quarantine laws will doubtless materially check the spread of the disease, although it will not prevent it from ultimately reaching all parts of Australia", said the report, "The dipping

40 : Report of Chief Inspector of Stock, 1898 (Votes and Proceedings, 1899, No. 9).

41 : MLA for York, 1892-1903, 1905-1914. Had worked under Lukin on the Lennard River station during the 'eighties.

42 : Debates, vol. xiii, p. 374 et seq., 390 et seq., 478 et seq.

of cattle has not, so far, proved satisfactory in absolutely destroying the adhering ticks."⁽⁴³⁾ Indeed, it was plain that during 1898, redwater fever had been spreading throughout East Kimberley. Quarantine being ineffectual, the committee recommended the immediate provision of inoculation facilities throughout the colony, and of slaughter yards and chilling works at Wyndham, although they expressed doubts about the reception which chilled meat would receive on the metropolitan market. This suggestion had been urged by the stock inspectors, Hancock and Craig. Meanwhile, until a satisfactory system of bringing carcases from quarantine districts had been devised, the Committee felt:⁽⁴⁴⁾

"It must be considered a serious and important problem whether or not livestock from the quarantined districts of East and North Australia should be permitted to land at Fremantle under strict conditions of immediate slaughter."

This non-committal comment reflected a divergence of opinion on the subject amongst members of the committee. One, J.J. Higham, after the reception of the report, moved that cattle should be allowed to come from Wyndham to Fremantle, and there held for slaughter within a rigidly quarantined area, or, if certified clean, for trucking to the goldfields. Inoculation facilities should be provided throughout the colony, and "to

43 : Report of the Committee : Votes and Proceedings, 1898, No. A8.

44 : Ibid. : Recommendation 15.

render the scheme complete, abattoirs and chilling compartments attached should be at once provided."⁽⁴⁵⁾ The debate which
⁽⁴⁶⁾ followed revealed several schools of thought. Those, like Monger, who favoured complete abolition of the restrictions were in a minority. Some were for Higham's scheme ; others, led by another member of the committee, H.W.Venn, favoured the construction of chilling works at Wyndham, together with the provision of an inoculation service. The Government and most of its supporters were against the latter scheme after Sir John Forrest had expressed his doubts about the possibility of raising the £15,000 estimated necessary to provide Wyndham with a killing centre; an unusually cautious attitude for the father of the Coolgardie Water Scheme. Instead, they favoured a cheaper version of Higham's proposal, by which all mention of the provision of metropolitan abattoirs was omitted, but permission was granted for Kimberley cattle to be brought down by sea from Wyndham after December 15th, 1898. Such cattle were to be slaughtered immediately on arrival at Fremantle, or, if clean, to be trucked direct to the goldfields in special freight vans. Once again, Sir John Forrest, with his talent for compromise, had managed to satisfy the requirements of Connor

45 : Debates, xiii, p. 1344.

46 : Ibid. pp. 1348-53 : 1518-27, 1528-62.

and his supporters, whilst giving some grounds for assurance to those who feared the spread of the tick pest. Charles Harper, the chairman of the select committee, tried to move that "the best interests of the country would be served, were the Government to guarantee interest on the cost of the erection of chilling works at Wyndham by private enterprise; such guarantee to be for a limited number of years at a moderate rate of interest." Sir John Forrest was not prepared to support this suggestion, and it, in its turn, was negatived. (47)

During the next few years, tick fever continued to take some toll of the herds of East Kimberley, though, if the statistical returns provided to the Government are to be trusted, not to such an extent as to prevent an increase in the numbers. In East Kimberley, cattle numbers doubled from 58,528 in 1896 to 112,551 in 1900. From Wyndham in 1899, 7,692 cattle were shipped -- nearly twice as many as from Derby. (48) However, the Stock Department found cattlemen as reluctant as ever to disclose their losses. In 1900, the Chief Inspector reviewed the situation thus: (49)

"The mortality from this cause is increasing. One stockman in East Kimberley acknowledged to me that he had lost 500 head of cattle through the fever, and as he is by no means the largest owner in the district, it is right to assume that others have fared even worse."

47 : Debates, xiii, p. 1695 et seq.

48 : Cf. Appendices IV and VII.

49 : Votes and Proceedings, 1900, No. 24.

By now Parliament must have exhausted itself on the tick controversy. Its members took very little time to agree to a motion put forward by Monger in October 1899 that "it is desirable that the prohibition against cattle in the Northern Territory of South Australia from entering into Western Australia be removed."⁽⁵⁰⁾ This entirely logical proposal was supported by all parties. J.J.Holmes, part-owner of the border-line station of Rosewood observed, a trifle maliciously, that ⁽⁵¹⁾ "it is a well-known fact that these cattle are being introduced from the Northern Territory without paying duty, but if this motion be carried, they will arrive in broad day, and give the Government an opportunity of adding to the revenue."

Orders-in-Council gave effect to this recommendation, and from that time on, the western part of the Northern Territory could again be considered as part of the hinterland of the port of Wyndham. By 1901-2, 10,172 cattle were passing through Wyndham, of which 40% came from inside the Territory.

The effects of the tick embargo may be summarised as follows:--

1. It brought the idea of a meatworks at Wyndham within the realm of practicality for the first time. Had a meatworks been erected at this stage of the district's history, it may have made for greater efficiency in marketing methods,

50 : Debates, xv, p. 1889.

51 : Ibid. pp. 1891-2.

and the earlier establishment of overseas outlets for the cattle of the Kimberleys. It would certainly have brought about greater efficiency in supplying the demand of the metropolitan market, and have eliminated the deaths and wastage of condition entailed in the long sea voyage from Wyndham to Fremantle.

2. Although losses occurred from tick fever, the respite in drawing off drafts from the various stations seems to have resulted in the district being stocked up faster than otherwise may have occurred.

3. The rivalry and competition between the West Kimberley and East Kimberley cattle trades may have been increased by this issue, which certainly confirmed the tendency in West Kimberley, hitherto primarily a sheepraising centre, to concentrate on the production of fat cattle.

This last occurrence was scarcely surprising. Wool prices had not greatly recovered from the slump of 1894 - as late as 1901 they were still at 6 $\frac{1}{2}$ d. - whereas cattle were in demand. Only seven sheep stations had survived the slump : the Kimberley Pastoral Company's Upper Liveringa ; Game's Myroodah ; Emanuels' Noonkanbah ; M.C. Davies' B'lina : Blythe's Brooking Springs ; Rose brothers' Quanbun ; and G.C. Rose's Mount Anderson. All these owners except G.C. Rose had cattle interests. This implies that only those sheepowners with sufficient capital to run two or more properties had weathered the bad times in the

wool trade. In addition, it had been by now definitely established that the country near the coast was unsuitable for sheep, which were now confined to a definite segment of country along the Fitzroy. From 1894, a profitable sideline was being developed in the sale of fat sheep and lambs for the metropolitan market. In the years between 1896 and 1900, eleven to fourteen thousand were sent away
(52)
annually.

Nearly all the big owners were, from 1894 onwards, expanding the area they held under occupation. This arose from the incentive provided by the Metropolitan market. With their favourable situation in the heart of the district, each of the owners mentioned above managed to free themselves from some of the burden of debt which had kept them back in the early 'nineties, and to extend their grazing runs. Between 1895 and 1905, ~~Emm~~uels, Game, the Rose brothers, the Kimberley Pastoral Company, and M.C. Davies each came to control areas of one to three million acres in the best and most accessible portions of the Fitzroy and Lennard valleys. This put these five organisations in a favourable position compared to most of the other small leaseholders. It must be admitted, indeed, that they had all gone through hard times during the infancy of the district, and no doubt felt entitled to their pre-~~eminent~~ position, now that matters were going better. Besides, mere land-hunger was not the only reason

for their acquisition of these extensive estates. As J.P. McLarty of the Kimberley Pastoral Company explained: (53)

"We have become large landholders by force of circumstances. When we first went to Kimberley, we did not hold very much country. But if you have a stockman who leaves you and takes up a couple of hundred thousand acres on the margin of your land, it is a marvellous thing how he gets cattle and how they breed. They seem to have triplets every time, and the end of it is the squatter has to buy this man out. I am not bringing forward an imaginary case. We have had to buy three people out, the land amounting to about three-quarters of a million acres."

There can be no doubt that some of the smallholders who entered the cattle industry in the later 'nineties supplemented their herds by "duffing". "Duffing", the art of acquiring and branding cattle without paying for them, was, when practised by an expert, very difficult to prove. The Derby police journals reveal several instances when the police had strong suspicions against a cattleman, but lacked evidence to prosecute. The attitude of the inhabitants of Kimberley was, in general, that if a squatter employed boundary-riders who were too inefficient to muster his cleanskin calves, he deserved to lose them to his more active neighbour. They were not unsympathetic to the small "duffer", although horse-stealing was another matter entirely, which led to immediate prosecution. For the most part, however, the small cattleowners were confined to the outskirts of settlement.

As the older-established and better-capitalised squatters consolidated their holdings in the neighbourhood of the Ord and Fitzroy valleys, the small men were left to go out and start their runs at the limits of settlement.

During the later 'nineties, there were two areas of expansion in West Kimberley. In the Broome area, the rapid development of the pearling industry was accompanied by increased activity in the pastoral industry. Following the example of Streeter and Roe, other pearling men were coming ashore to found cattle runs as a sideline, especially after the provision of a cattle-shipping jetty in 1898. Between 1899 and 1902 a string of stations appeared along the coast. North of Broome came Streeter and Male's Hill; Carnot Bay (T.H. Chatman); and Weedong, or Pender Bay (Male and Bell). In 1901, the Beagle Bay mission station was taken over from the Trappists by the Pallottine order, who, besides improving the lot of the natives, raised cattle upon their reserve. To the south of Broome came Thangoo; Yardagarra (Frank Biddles and John Lough Edgar); Rollah Downs (W.H. "Gentleman" James); and Calendigie (Larry Noonan). Besides engaging in the livestock shipping trade, these stations found an outlet for their cattle in the goldfields of the North-West and the Murchison. The stock route followed the Ninety-Mile Beach and Buchanan's track of 1892. Prominent in this trade was Streeter and Male's station at Roebuck Plains, from which drafts were sent to Marble Bar.

and points south. Daisy Bates accompanied one mob of 770 -- "perhaps the largest number that had ever travelled down from the West Kimberleys in a single herd."⁽⁵⁴⁾ These were overlanded to Peak Hill and sold as "advanced stores". It is of interest to note that the Roebuck Plains cattle were not Shorthorns, as were nearly all other Kimberley cattle, but Herefords, which were generally held to fatten more quickly, but also to lose condition more readily than Shorthorns. Other properties in this neighbourhood also sent stock overland to Condon, Port Hedland, and the Pilbara district.⁽⁵⁵⁾ Statistics to indicate the volume of this trade cannot be provided. This area, in the main, could be regarded as inferior to the rest of the district. The first comers to the Kimberley district had passed over it in favour of better country inland. More recent investigations have since proved its soil to be deficient in certain minerals, such as cobalt. Nevertheless, the demand for cattle had led to its cultivation, at first with sufficient success to encourage the leaseholders to continue operations.

Settlement was proceeding in other directions. Inland there was country of better quality, the main defect of which was its distance from a port. The boom in cattle prices revived exploration by men in quest of new pastures. To the south of the Kimberleys, two exploring parties, those of Wells and Carnegie (1896-7) reported only barren and unpromising desert country.

54 : Bates, Daisy : The Passing of the Aborigines, ch. vi. (O.U.P. Aust. ed., 1944). Cf. Derby police occurrence books, October 15th, 1900 : April 27th 1901.

55 : Cf. Derby Police Occurrence Books, May 8th, 1901 : June 21st, 1901 etc.

North of the settled area lay the barrier of the Leopolds, which had rebuffed Alexander Forrest. They had, indeed, already been penetrated twice, once by a prospecting party under Charlie Hall, and once, a few years later, by Tom Chatman, who is said to have been eloping from Wyndham to Derby with a publican's wife.⁽⁵⁶⁾ These discoveries received little publicity, and the country "over the range" remained unoccupied. There was still land to be taken on the settled side of the range, in and near the King Sound Pastoral Company's abandoned holdings. By 1898, Hutton and Rose had taken up Leopold Downs, and Joseph Blythe had stocked Fairfield. In that year, Frank Hann, an experienced stockman who had overlanded from Queensland, found his way over the ranges, emerging near the Prince Regent River.⁽⁵⁷⁾ His report of well-watered grassy country attracted attention, and in 1898-9, Joseph Blythe and his sons cut a stock track into the Leopolds, and formed the nucleus of another station at Mount House, which Hann had named and described.

Because of the interest taken in this country, the Government, in 1901, fitted up an expedition under two experienced surveyors, F.S. Brockman and Charles Crossland, to make a thorough examination of the unknown portions of North

-
- 56 : C.S.O. 1666/87 for Hall's expedition : for Chatman's journey, Flinders, C.E. : "Bushmanship" (unpublished MS) ; also noted in Chatman's obituary, "Nor'-West Echo", April 21st, 1914.
 57 : Reference is made to Hann's expedition in Brockman's report (Votes and Proceedings, 1902, No. 2).

Kimberley. Starting from Wyndham, their party made a wide circuit of the unknown country, which took the whole of the dry season.⁽⁵⁸⁾ Besides discovering and naming the Chamberlain, Calder, Moran and King Edward Rivers, they charted several "useful grazing tablelands", with possible stock routes which would make them accessible from the sea. In the neighbourhood of the western coast, they encountered a prospecting party under J.G. Calder, who had also crossed the range and examined new country. Dr. F.M. House, who accompanied Brockman, noted the discovery of what appeared to be cattle tick in the virgin country north of the Charnley River. Owing to the loss of his specimens, it was never determined whether these persistent parasites could really survive in an unstocked area.

The State Government seemed enthusiastic about the new country. In July 1902, the then Minister for Lands (Dr. Adam Jameson) spoke of establishing a new port, with freezing or chilling works, at Napier Broome Bay, beyond which lay some of the choicest of the new country. Although this was never found practicable -- even to this day the district remains the subject of politicians' promises -- this marked the first official statement that the Government favoured the establishment of freezing works in the district.

58 : Votes and Proceedings, 1902, No. 2.

This country "over the range" attracted the capitalists of the eastern colonies afresh to the investment possibilities of the Kimberleys. In 1899, F.C. Monger undertook enquiries of the Government on behalf of a Melbourne syndicate interested in the pastoral and mineral development of the country north of the Leopolds. (59) This move was indicative of the revival in health of the capital market outside Western Australia. In the following year, Tom Cue, a founder of the Murchison gold-field, who claimed to represent a company with a capital of one million pounds, requested the long-term lease of 3,000 square miles around the Prince Regent River, with full mining and grazing rights, at a peppercorn rental. This tract had already fascinated the imaginations of the Camden Harbour promoters, the Victorian Squatting Company, and Joseph Bradshaw of Marigui, all of whose grandiose schemes had failed in execution. A fourth probable failure was averted by the Government's refusal to consider a request whose terms were altogether too heavily weighted in favour of the syndicate. (60)

Following Brockman's expedition, interest was centred on the Napier Broome Bay area. Samuel William Copley, a Perth estate magnate who was contemplating investment in the

59 : Debates, xv, p. 3019.

60 : "Western Mail", November 3rd, 1900.

Kimberleys, applied for over a million acres in the vicinity; but, failing to get all he requested, he soon threw up his leases, finding more profitable fields for investment in the longer-settled part of the district. Five investors who made a handsome personal profit were Richard Tilden Smith, Frank Johnston, John Rosco, William Parker, and Henry Gunter. None of these gentlemen had any previous experience of pastoral pursuits, the best known of them being Tilden Smith, who had promoted Kalgoorlie mining companies in London during the 'nineties, and who later became connected with the Bovril interest. Despite their innocence of Kimberley conditions, these men were granted four leases totalling 1,000,000 acres in extent, which, it was stated in Parliament, "overlapped those of other people" and included "some of the finest ground in the vicinity". The four blocks were all transferred in January 1903 to the Rhodesia Cold Storage and Trading Company, and thence to the North-West Australia Land and Cold Storage Company, a previously unknown business whose directors had prudently registered it in the island of Guernsey to avoid liability to English company regulations. The Company proceeded to sell their land in London for the sum of £50,000. No development, in the supply of cold storage facilities or otherwise, occurred on the spot in North Kimberley, and, after a while, the leases were thrown up. Such land-jobbing did no good to the reputation of the

district involved, and deterred possible genuine investors.⁽⁶¹⁾ In effect, although for a brief period wide tracts of the "Brockman country" were held under lease, at least nominally, these investments proved as ephemeral as the speculations of the Kimberley company-promoters of the 'eighties. The only permanent runs were founded by West Kimberley squatters seeking to relieve the over-stocked pastures of the Fitzroy valley.⁽⁶²⁾ Mount Barnett was founded by E. and J.C. Rose, and stocked from Cherrabun. The indefatigable cattlemen working for J.A. Game of Yeeda stocked two runs in the new country, but one was too remote from a port, and, after 1907, only Isdell Downs survived.

In the longer-settled areas, the revival of prosperity in the capital market of the eastern colonies and Great Britain did not manifest itself in direct investment. Despite improving conditions, as late as 1899, one-fifth of all the holdings in the whole Kimberley district were the nominal property, not of the men who worked them, but of the banks and Dalgety & Co.⁽⁶³⁾ After 1900, however, most of the leases quickly reverted to their private holders. By 1903, only one run, a small West Kimberley sheep station,

61 : Debates, xxi, pp. 19, 628-9, and 904 et seq. Hon. Wesley Maley, M.L.C., a syndicate-promoter, objected to the Government's toleration of more successful practitioners.

62 : Cf. Debates, xxiii, p. 796.

63 : Appendix III.

remained in the hands of Dalgety & Co., while the banks had no properties in the district at all. This does not necessarily indicate that the squatters were no longer dependent on the advances of capital from financial houses based on Great Britain and the eastern colonies. Indeed, several of the owners in both West and East Kimberley were under mortgage.⁽⁶⁴⁾ Nevertheless, the pastoralists were not so deeply encompassed by financial obligations as they had been in the early 'nineties. They were free to concentrate on the development of their properties without the imminence of credit restrictions.

The station journals of the time give evidence of material progress. Two stations in the West Kimberley sheep country, Quanbun and Upper Liveringa, provide witness to this period.⁽⁶⁵⁾ Thus, in 1900, the last year of W.G. McLarty's management, Upper Liveringa, the main station of the Kimberley Pastoral Company, was running 65,000 sheep, including lambs, 3,100 cattle, and 93 horses, on about one million acres. Of this, 400,000 acres had been fenced with 330 miles of fencing, and buildings to the value of £600 had been erected. By the end of 1903, there were buildings to the value of £1,500, 5,623 cattle, and the unprecedented number of 103,200 sheep, a total

64 : The lease books for the Kimberley District in the Lands Office mention the existence of mortgages on leases when there was a question of transfer involved, but do not seem to have maintained complete records. Hence it is impossible to assess the extent to which the district was indebted.

65 : Quanbun journals (6 vols) : 1894-1953 : Liveringa journals, one for each year, 1899-1953. They are kept on the respective stations.

never surpassed on any station in Western Australia before or since.⁽⁶⁶⁾ To care for this property, there were ten permanent white employees and ninety natives, including fifty gins, who made better shepherds. Not all the natives could have been an effective labour force.⁽⁶⁷⁾ In one year (1903) three new paddocks were fenced, with 56 miles of fencing. Materials were readily obtainable, and labour was cheap. A stockman or a fencer usually made £2 a week above his keep, while a specialist, such as a good blacksmith or tankmaker, might make 45s. or 50s. The smaller stations could report proportionate progress. Between 1894 and 1903, the number of sheep on Quanbun increased from 4,000 to over 10,000. Ten paddocks were built in the area nearest the river, and the original homestead and shearing shed replaced by more substantial buildings.

By this time, the sheep-raising industry of West Kimberley had settled into a seasonal routine. Shearing commenced as soon after the end of the wet season as possible. In fact, while in the 'nineties the shearing season had usually been between April and June, by the early years of the new century, the season always began in March, and

66 : Liveringa journal, December 31st, 1903 : cf. January 1st, 1900.

67 : Ibid. December 7th, 1902. For wage rates, Liveringa and Quanbun journals, *passim*, and Rosewood account books.

sometimes a start was made in February on the fat sheep which were to be shipped from Derby. Western Australia had escaped the bitter disputes which had characterised relations between shearers and pastoralists in Queensland and New South Wales. Freedom of contract was the accepted practice. Indeed, in the earlier years, the pastoralists were accustomed to employ native shearers, with a smaller number of white men to supervise, and to lend a touch of efficiency to the proceedings. Experience showed that the natives were slow and not particularly adept at shearing, and that the white shearers did not like working with them. By 1900, white men and natives were employed in equal numbers, and shortly afterwards, natives were only kept on as shearers when they had reached some standard of relative efficiency, or for clearing up stragglers brought in after the main mob had been shorn. The added expense of employing white shearers was presumably compensated by the better quality of their work. Their employment had not become so systematically organised as it is today. It was a matter of individual contract, and a manager endeavoured to keep in contact with the men who had worked for him in previous years. There were also always, at the start of each shearing season, a number of extra hands travelling the district looking for work. This seems to point to the existence of a gradual influx of pastoral workers, and a mitigation of the shortage of labour which had been noted in the early years of West Kimberley.⁽⁶⁶⁾ However,

66 : Cf. Report of Government Labour Bureau, 1902 (Votes and Proceedings, 1903-4, No. 2), p. 12.

outside Broome, there had been no great increase in population. West Kimberley supported 276 inhabitants, and East Kimberley 240, according to the census of 1901. This represented an increase of eleven only over the figures of 1891.

Even before the advent of the union, the shearers maintained their traditional independence of attitude regarding conditions. The chief cause of dispute seems to have been their refusal to handle "wet" sheep, despite the owners' protests at the loss of time involved. After the shearers had travelled the half-dozen stations along the Fitzroy, and left to work their way through the North-West, the shorn sheep would be drafted. Breeding ewes would be put to ram, but a mob of cull ewes and wethers would be made up and sent to Derby for shipment. Fat sheep were being sent away from the Fitzroy as early as 1895⁽⁶⁷⁾. By 1900, 14,239 sheep were passing through Derby, in the main for the metropolitan market, although Singapore also provided an outlet. Despite the great increase in the flocks in West Kimberley, which in 1903 reached an all-time record number of 321,880, much of the land held by the pastoralists was scarcely used at all. Immediately after shearing, not long after the wet season, stock were sometimes depastured on the "pindan" -- the back country situated away from

67 : Quanbun journals, September 16th, 1895.

the watercourses. Here the feed was good, but the only natural waters were liable to dry up within a few months of the last rains. The majority of the stock, however, grazed along the rivers, feeding on the succulent grasses along the frontages, within easy reach of billabongs and permanent waterholes. In the sheep country, most of the frontage was fenced into paddocks.

In the cattle industry, the routine was similarly conditioned by seasonal exigencies. During the "wet" the grass grew very quickly -- in the coastal country, it could be described as rank -- and the stock fattened rapidly. It was the aim of every cattleman, as soon as the rains were over, to get their stock to port whilst they were yet "mud fat", so that their weights might be within the standards set by Forrest, Emanuel or Connor, Doherty & Durack. The desired minimum was usually about 700 pounds. This allowed for a wastage of anything up to one hundredweight on the journey to Fremantle. Anything lighter would be treated as store stock by the time it was yarded. Owing to the problem of shipping space, however, a time-table had to be worked out for delivery, and, pending shipment, owners endeavoured to keep their beasts fat on the pastures of the river frontages. The main occupation of the dry season was hunting and mustering cattle -- first fats for the southern market, and then calves and cleanskins for branding. As

the cattle runs were all almost entirely unfenced, the stock concentrated on the better waterholes as the season advanced, and thus fed exclusively on a narrow surrounding strip of country, the radius of which was determined by the distance the cattle could walk to water. If the next wet season was late in coming -- and it sometimes was, even in those days -- the strip of country adjoining the water might be eaten out, with consequent loss to the weaker stock, such as the calves and breeding cows. To the cattleman, however, this problem was alleviated by the fact that the recuperative powers of the country after rain were little short of amazing. Situated as the district was in the direct path of the summer monsoons, it had, in the first twenty years of settlement, scarcely ever failed to provide a fair rain, except perhaps in the seasons between 1890 and 1892. Droughts have an unhappy knack of coinciding with depressions in the capital market. Like the old-timers of all districts, Kimberley old hands claim that seasons in modern times are neither as reliable nor as copious as hitherto. The evidence is inconclusive.⁽⁶⁸⁾

The tendency in the cattle industry, both of West and East Kimberley, was for the older and wealthier concerns to consolidate their holdings around the ports and

68 : Cf. Appendix V. (Rainfall).

the great rivers, while the small men went to the marginal country on the outside. During the first years of the twentieth century this process continued at a brisk rate. In the ten years between 1895 and 1905, the acreage under lease in the Kimberleys doubled,⁽⁶⁹⁾ exceeding 30,000,000 acres. Besides expansion in the Broome and Leopold areas, the country between Fitzroy Crossing and Hall's Creek was stocked by smallholders. On the west side, J.G. Calder founded Bohemia Downs, and William Cox, Louisa Downs, in 1903. At the Hall's Creek end, F.C. Booty took up Lamboo in 1901. Between the two remained a strip of unoccupied country around longitude 127° East -- the tick barrier. In addition, the small men were taking up pockets of unoccupied land in the longer-settled areas, especially, as has been indicated, where it abutted on to the holdings of a big cattleman, who might not be able to keep a tally on every clean-skin calf on his run. By fair means or shady, a landless man could still hope to select himself a block and build up a run which might in time make him the equal of any owner in Kimberley.

When a new district is being settled, it seems usual for intending occupants to obtain a leasehold on any likely-looking block of country, regardless of whether their main holdings adjoin this land or not. In the Kimberleys, during

69 : Cf. Appendix IV. (Acreages).

the period 1895-1905, several of the large owners found they possessed small isolated blocks, of no value as they stood, adjoining the properties of another grazier. There was, during this time, a succession of exchanges, in which owners traded blocks, so as to consolidate their runs into a manageable unit. By 1905, when Emanuels, Game, and M.C. Davies negotiated a three-sided deal in the country north of Derby, this process was at an end, although in such outlying portions of the country as the Leopold district, it could be seen beginning all over again between such lessees as Hutton of Leopold Downs, Calder of Bohemia Downs and Milliwindi, Cox of Louisa Downs, and others.⁽⁷⁰⁾ This movement was probably assisted by the Land Act of 1898, which provided that, if a block were certified stocked with ten sheep or one head of large stock per ten acres, the rent on it would be halved from ten shillings per thousand acres to five shillings.⁽⁷¹⁾ This provision had been introduced as compensation to the pastoralists for the reduced protective tariff on livestock. It also served the purpose of ensuring that speculators did not lock up large undeveloped areas. And, by leading to the consolidation of the older holdings along the Fitzroy and the Ord, it strengthened the position of the well-established owners. By 1905, many of the big stations were assuming approximately

70 : Cf. Lease Books in Lands and Surveys Dept., Perth.

71 : Government Gazette, January 31st, 1899 : Land Act of 1898, Section 101.

approximately the same boundaries, and covering the same area, as at the present day.

In the older-established areas, the homesteads were being converted into permanent structures in an effort to improve living conditions. Conventionally, the Kimberley stockman of that time was envisaged as a hard-riding, hard-swearing bushman, scornful of comforts, who emerged from his up-country run two or three times a year for a glorious week in town with a fat cheque, an unlimited thirst, and a ready appetite for fights. This was no doubt true of many, but it is an over-simplified picture. The arts of civilisation were by no means entirely neglected. More than one squatter could turn an occasional classical quotation. At Denison Downs, farthest out of all the East Kimberley cattle stations, William Stretch entertained an appreciative audience of drovers with readings from Dickens, while his partner, Weekes, formerly a student of art at a Parisian atelier, provided a very passable imitation of French cooking.⁽⁷²⁾ At Ord River, Mrs. Charles Young insisted that gentlemen should wear their coats to the table -- and, no matter what the weather, the civilising feminine influence was obeyed.

Such amenities may perhaps be held to reflect the ascendancy of wealthy, well-capitalised owners in East Kimberley. The sale of Victoria River Downs by Goldsborough, Mort & Co. provides an example of the process by which the hinterland of

72 : Buchanan, Gordon : Old Bluey (Typescript : p. 160).

Wyndham was coming into the hands of the big capitalists. After Connor, Doherty & Durack had refused the property for £21,000, offers were made both by the Emanuel interests and by Sidney Kidman, then expanding his Central Australian holdings. Eventually, in 1901, Isadore Emanuel negotiated a merger with Kidman, to form a syndicate for the purchase of Victoria River Downs. In the next year, they bought Carlton, just outside Wyndham, from the Hart brothers, to be used as a depot for stock brought down from the Northern Territory for shipping from Wyndham. This materially increased the area from which stock were drawn for the Wyndham shipping trade, and may have been one factor which induced Connor, Doherty & Durack to seek a new market in Natal, South Africa, where they sent two shipments comprising 3,612 cattle, in 1902.⁽⁷³⁾ The closer metropolitan trade, however, proved adequate to satisfy Kimberley suppliers.

Another big capitalist to enter East Kimberley at this time was Samuel William Copley, who had established his fortunes by pioneering the Perth suburb of Mount Lawley, and other judicious real estate investments. Having investigated tentatively the possibilities of the country discovered by Brockman, Copley turned his attention to the Ord River station, which, in 1902, he purchased from Osmond's executors. This extensive property had not, during Osmond's time, been showing the results which might have been expected from such a large tract of good country. For this, the parsimony of Osmond himself

73 : Cf. Royal Commission, 1908 : Minutes of Evidence, Q. 13. For Natal shipment, cf. Durack, M.P. Diaries, July and August, 1902. It was believed that this was the biggest shipment of livestock ever to leave Australia.

(74)

was said to be directly responsible. Owing to the high prices which he demanded for his stock, the turn-off from Ord River had been confined to one or two mobs annually, right at the end of the dry season, when stock for shipping could not be obtained elsewhere. It was not until after his death, in 1900, that Charles Young, the then manager -- seven of his predecessors had been dismissed, and one resigned, within ten years -- succeeded in negotiating an agreement that Connor, Doherty & Durack could
(75)
remove up to six thousand cattle at 30s. per head. Apart from this, no major export had taken place when Copley's men took over. As a result, despite the tick, the stock had bred up unrestrictedly. The sale of the station was negotiated at a price of £1 per head of stock, and at the bangtail muster which ensued, 47,000 cattle are believed to have been numbered.⁽⁷⁶⁾ All these stock were depastured on the natural waters of the property; in fact, Young pointed with pride to the fact that "not one penny has ever had to be spent on water conservation".⁽⁷⁷⁾

Samuel and Benjamin Copley, and James Patterson,
the managing partner, immediately got to work to improve the

74 : "Westralian Critic", September 24th, 1903 : possibly an inspired article, but borne out by the Durack papers.

75 : Letters, M.P. Durack - Charles Young, June 24th, 1900 : M.P. Durack - Francis Connor, July 4th, 1900. (Durack papers).

76 : Royal Commission, 1908, Minutes of Evidence, Question 407 : Flinders, op.cit. ch.vi. : private information independently given by two men who were working on the station at the time.

77 : Young, Chas. : The Kimberleys : MS for a newspaper article (untraced), in possession of the writer.

turnoff. Instead of exporting their stock through the existing agents, they chartered their own boat, and, making nine trips annually, achieved an output of an average of 4,500 head.

Between 1902 and 1908, 31,801 head were sent south, production having increased from 3,385 in 1902 to 6,992 in 1908.⁽⁷⁸⁾

Contrary to the hopes of the consumer interest, the entry of a third exporter into the Kimberley cattle business did not lead to a reduction in the price of meat. In 1904, Copley purchased Margaret River and Denison Downs from Foster, Stretch and Weekes. For some years, this firm had been operating under difficulties, as their properties were situated on the tick-free uplands, but they had to ship their stock through Wyndham, and their cattle suffered ruinous losses in traversing the infected stock routes.⁽⁷⁹⁾ Copley perceived that, if cattle could be driven through the West Kimberley port of Derby, they would sustain no loss from the tick. He applied for permission to ship cattle, certified as tick-free by the stock inspector, from Sturt Creek via Derby. This aroused the alarm of the West Kimberley squatters, partly through a fear of infestation, and partly because Copley's formidable competition was not welcomed.⁽⁸⁰⁾ On this issue, one of the few interesting political crises in the history of the Kimberleys was provoked.

78 : Royal Commission, 1908, Minutes of Evidence, Question 473.

79 : Letter, M.P. Durack - William Stretch, June 14th, 1901 (Durack).

80 : "Western Mail", August 16th, 1905. : Cf. evidence of A.W. Edgar (questions 9,864-7) and F. Connor (q. 1272) at the Royal Commission of 1908.

Politics in Kimberley had not been characterised by the keen interest shown during the 'nineties by other parts of Western Australia. The electoral rolls in 1899 showed but 92 electors in East Kimberley and 137 in West Kimberley. The isolated shepherds, stockmen, boundary riders and other bush workers showed no interest even in becoming enrolled. In that year, the gold-fields party in Parliament moved for the amalgamation of the two electorates, which were amongst the "pocket boroughs" which kept the Forrest Government in power. The proposal was defeated after petitions had been sent down from the leading centres of the district.⁽⁸¹⁾ However, in 1900, the men of Kimberley gave an overwhelming "Yes" vote at the Federation referendum. East Kimberley testified to the origin of its inhabitants by recording only one vote against federation and 60 in favour. (There is reason to suppose that Connor was the nonconformist. With Doherty, Holmes and Alexander Forrest, he had spoken against the proposal.) West Kimberley supported federation by 97 votes to 34.⁽⁸²⁾ Considering that the State Government had pursued a satisfactory public works programme in the district, one looks for an explanation of the Federation vote in the northern man's support of the "White Australia" policy. Apart from a few pearling masters in Broome, who feared the cessation of coloured

81 : Debates, xiv, pp. 1239-1242.

82 : W.A. Year Book, 1900-1901.

labour, most of the Kimberley voters were conscious of the temptation which their fertile province might offer to overcrowded Asiatics. In East Kimberley, the prospect of inter-colonial free trade may also have been relevant.

The elections of 1901 provided interesting contests. In the State as a whole, the old Forrest party, under George Throssell, was outnumbered by an opposition-Labour combination under George Leake. The city and goldfields interested ousted the pastoral and agricultural interests from their dominance in the community. No longer could the eight northern "rotten boroughs" exert an appreciable influence as a pressure group. In East Kimberley, Connor was opposed for the first time by the respected William Stretch of Denison Downs station. Voting seems to have been affected by purely local issues, such as dissatisfaction in the Hall's Creek area with the tick regulations and the prominence of Connor, Doherty & Durack. At any rate, Connor scraped in by 33 votes to 32. Alexander Forrest was untroubled to hold West Kimberley against a pearl-ers' candidate, Frank Biddles, by 105 votes to 29.⁽⁸³⁾ However, on June 20th, 1901, Forrest died, leaving his business interests in the district to Isadore and Sydney Emanuel. Three candidates contested his seat in the Legislative Assembly. Connor's friend, C.J. Moran had been rejected by his Coolgardie constituents after serving a few months as Throssell's Commissioner of Crown Lands.

83 : "West Australian", April 30th, 1901.

Having authorised the Brockman expedition, he felt able to claim the suffrages of West Kimberley. The most commendable feature of his candidature was that he was the first aspirant to travel to some of the station homesteads and meet the electors there, instead of confining his campaign to the relative ease of Broome and Derby.⁽⁸⁴⁾ B.C.Wood, Commissioner of Railways under Throssell, and similarly inexperienced in Kimberley affairs also stood, without visiting the district. Not surprisingly, the electors preferred a local man, and chose Sydney Capel Pigott⁽⁸⁵⁾ the nominee of the Broome pearlers. Centred as the pearling interests were around one centre in Broome, they were better able to undertake political organisation than the scattered pastoral interests. As Broome maintained its rise to prosperity, it became more likely that the pearlers would return the district's representative, thus leaving the pastoral workers without an effective voice.

Pigott and Connor both sat in opposition to the Leake and James governments (1901-4), and in fact Pigott soon rose to become Leader of the Opposition.⁽⁸⁶⁾ He made a singularly ineffectual showing, and failed to prevent the amalgamation of the two Kimberley electorates in 1903.⁽⁸⁷⁾

84 : Cf. Liveringa journals, July 14th, 1901.

85 : Pigott (1868-1927) was a foundation member of the Pearlers' Association, and chairman of the Broome Road Board.

86 : Debates, xxiii, p. 156.

87 : Ibid. pp. 1247, 1278, 1316. Cf. "Dampier Dispatch", May 21st, 1904.

Consequently, in 1904, Connor opposed Pigott for Kimberley, and, after a hard-fought campaign, defeated him by 288 votes to 276, owing his majority to the support of the pastoral areas. Connor contended that Pigott, like so many Western Australian opposition leaders of the period, would have accepted office with the James Government, if returned.⁽⁸⁸⁾ In fact, however, the main grounds of his opposition were based upon two local issues. One was the tick question, and the other coloured labour.

Coloured labour was not regarded with favour by the average Kimberley voter. While most stations retained a Chinese cook, their attitude towards Asiatics in general had been indicated by the federation vote, and the pastoralists regarded with a wary eye the use of coloured labour by the pearlers of Broome. In attacking the proposal to amalgamate the two Kimberley electorates, Connor had protested that "the representative of Kimberley would not represent pastoralists. He would be elected by the black-labour crowd around Broome."⁽⁸⁹⁾ In this, Connor had the support of the electors. It may seem strange that the employers of aborigines should object to the use of non-white labour in Broome. The fact is, however, that in East Kimberley a steady influx of white stockman from

88 : Debates, xxiv, p. 245.

89 : Ibid. xxiii, p. 1273.

Queensland and the Northern Territory was answering the demand for station workers. Many of these men were skilled in bushmanship, including such crack horse-breakers as Amos Skuthorpe and George Kinivan, and craftsmen such as Louis Dagenhardt⁽⁹⁰⁾, a yard-builder whose structures are still to be found in use on some properties after fifty years. At the other end of the scale were "jackeroos" -- youths who entered the service of a station at a nominal wage, in order to learn the business from the bottom up.

As regards black workers, the settlers, especially in East Kimberley, were exasperated at the continued depredation on their cattle. Sheep-killing seems to have died out in West Kimberley after 1898, but the natives were held to have been responsible for the following cattle losses in Kimberley : in 1896, 1,507 head ; in 1897, 1,512 : in 1898, 1,897 ; in 1899, 556 : in 1900, 506 : in 1901, 309 : and in 1902, 160.⁽⁹¹⁾ The wild blacks were held chiefly to blame, but, as the years went on, the aboriginals were adapting the technique of the white to suit their own ends. Indeed, the manager of Leopold Downs (A.F. Rose) reported finding two yards constructed by the blacks to aid them in their stock-killing.⁽⁹²⁾ In 1901,

90 : Or Wagenhardt. See, Moore, W.D. : List of men employed on Ord River station, 1900-1914. (MS).

91 : Statistical Registers, 1896-1902 : Part V.

92 : Abo. Dept. 1065/01 (Archives, Perth) : Letter, A.F. Rose - Chief Protector of Aborigines, August 31st, 1901.

further impetus was given to ill-feeling by the shooting of J.J.Durack on the verandah of his own homestead at Dunham River, by two native servants.⁽⁹³⁾ Connor despatched telegrams to the Premier (George Throssell) in which he stated that the blacks were almost out of hand in the neighbourhood of Mabel Downs and Frog Hollow stations, north of Hall's Creek, and that the settlers would have to abandon their holdings if stern disciplinary action were not taken. In point of fact, the police patrol reports for this district report nothing out of the ordinary at this time.⁽⁹⁴⁾ The Durack murder, however, seems to have resulted in a certain reluctance in the squatters to take on more black labour. Connor, Doherty & Durack worked their stations almost entirely by white labour, apart from a few "trusties". Similarly on the Ord River station, where losses were serious, no blacks would be employed during Copley's ownership, although between three and four hundred white men were in their employ at various times.⁽⁹⁵⁾

In East Kimberley, and, to some lesser extent, in West Kimberley, the Aborigines' Protection Board, and their successor, the Aborigines' Department, were not popular, and the settlers would have little to do with any scheme for improving

93 : "Northern Public Opinion", March 15th, 1901 : Argyle police occurrence book (Archives, Perth, A241), for discovery of crime, coroners' inquest (M.J.Durack was coroner, and another Durack served on the jury of three), and pursuit of offenders.

94 : "Northern Public Opinion", May 27th, 1901 : quoting telegram, Connor - Throssell, May 21st, 1901.

95 : Mr. W.D. Moore, assistant-manager Ord River station, 1900-14 : cf. Debates, xix, p. 200.

the conditions of the natives.⁽⁹⁶⁾ In the station journals of the time, the officials in charge of native welfare were invariably referred to as "Nigger Protectors". At Flora Valley, the Gordon brothers had reduced the incidence of cattle-killing by persuading the local tribesmen to come in and form a camp near the homestead, from which the natives received rations, conditional on their not molesting the stock.⁽⁹⁷⁾ In 1905, the manager of the Ord River station followed suit, although in this case there was an element of coercion.⁽⁹⁸⁾ Other managers gradually followed this example. The outlying stations were still troubled, especially through the aboriginal custom of firing grass to hunt game, which resulted in the razing of much good feeding country. In 1905, a Royal Commissioner was appointed to probe the aboriginal question in the North-West. This was Dr. W.E. Roth, Chief Protector of Aborigines in Queensland. His revelations of the treatment of the natives, including the imprisonment of children on cattle-slaying charges, the roughshod methods of the police with the natives, and the prevalence of widespread cohabitation with native women by whites, created a sensation amongst

96 : Report of the Aborigines Protection Board, 1896. (Votes and Proceedings, 1897, 2nd session, No. 13).

97 : Weir, R.E. : Through the Kimberley. (Journal of Department of Agriculture, October 1905).

98 : Abo. Dept. 641/05 (correspondence between James Patterson and Copley & Co.'s head office).

the public in the South, and aroused their attention to the hitherto neglected native question.⁽⁹⁹⁾ Great indignation was rife amongst the squatters, who complained that few of their number had been called upon to state their side of the case.⁽¹⁰⁰⁾ Some had been mentioned by name as prolific begetters of half-castes.

Arising out of this report, the State Parliament passed the Aborigines' Act of 1905, the chief effects of which, in the Kimberley District, were to regulate the employment of native labour by the issue of permits to intending employers, and to empower the Government to create native reserves. Existing indentures were cancelled, and a Protector of Natives appointed for each Magisterial District.

The tick question had come to the fore again in the session of 1903, when J.J.Holmes moved that "the Tick regulations as enforced at Fremantle should be rescinded, and that all cattle for shipment from Wyndham to Fremantle should be dipped at Wyndham prior to shipment, and re-dipped on arrival at Fremantle, and then liberated."⁽¹⁰¹⁾ Holmes had, in 1898, been a strong opponent of relaxing the restrictions. In the interim, however, he claimed that the quarantine at Fremantle had been so extremely lax that, had the tick pest

99 : Votes and Proceedings, 1905, I, No. 5.

100 : Debates, xxviii, p. 421.

101 : Ibid. xxiii, p. 609.

been liable to spread in the southern districts, it would already have shown itself. The evidence of two select committees, in 1900 and 1902, had indicated that occasional beasts had got away while being swum ashore from Kimberley ships, without infecting local herds, and that the whole system of trucking cattle to the eastern goldfields had not been absolutely foolproof. (102) In addition, Holmes said: (103)

"Owing to the restrictions which exist today, fully one-third of the meat that goes into consumption is not fit for consumption. It is not diseased, but it is poor miserable stuff, without any substance; it is the store stock, and such like, that should be sent out on to the grass to fatten, but owing to the restrictions which exist, these cattle are penned up in the yard, where we can do nothing but slaughter them."

Connor seconded this motion, and in his speech made the surprisingly constructive suggestion: (104)

"In place of these absurd restrictions, it would be far more to the point if the Minister would advocate that in Kimberley artesian bores be put down, and the country cut up into smaller areas."

Fifty years later, this policy was still being advocated as necessary for the district; in 1903, coming from one who was usually accounted a leading "beef baron", the point was a remarkably sound one.

Opposition was voiced by Pigott, representing West Kimberley interests, and William James Butcher, a veteran

102 : Votes and Proceedings, 1900, A 8 : Ibid. 1902, A 12.

103 : Debates, xxiii, p. 616.

104.: Ibid. p. 1209.

squatter from Gascoyne. They expressed alarm at the danger of tick spreading to the clean herds in the rest of the State, and moved as an amendment that the regulations should be maintained, and that "immediate steps should be taken to induce the establishment of freezing and chilling works at Wyndham, on such conditions as may provide the full advantages of the process to all cattle owners within the district."⁽¹⁰⁵⁾ After a lengthy debate, this amendment was defeated, by a division on non-party lines, by twelve votes to eighteen, and the original motion by Holmes was carried.⁽¹⁰⁶⁾ The James Government, however, whose ministers had voted for Pigott's amendment, took no steps to implement this recommendation, and thus appeared to add weight to Connor's contention that it was doing nothing for the North.

When Parliament re-assembled in 1904, the James Ministry and the remnants of the old Forrest party had practically fused, in order to counter the rising influence of the Labour Party, which had returned 22 members. However, Connor and his comrade Moran, backed by two other members, Butcher, and A.E. Thomas, the member for Dundas, formed a splinter group of four known as the "Independent Party",

105 : Ibid. p. 798.

106 : Ibid. pp. 1216-7.

whose support enabled Henry Daglish to form the first Labour Ministry. This is one of the more erratic developments in the State's political history. Connor had not been regarded as a friend by the radical elements in Western Australia, and the Labour Party had been amongst the foremost of those who reviled Connor, Doherty & Durack as one of the operators of the legendary "meat ring". Connor's ostensible reasons for his course was the neglect of the North by the James Government. Perhaps it would be over-subtle to suggest that he felt that, while the Daglish Ministry was dependent upon his support to retain office, it would take no steps which might embarrass the big cattle dealers. But the James Ministry had just decided to allow Copley's men to travel tick-free bullocks from his Sturt Creek and Margaret River runs to the port of Derby.⁽¹⁰⁷⁾ Connor's new constituents in West Kimberley objected to the alleged risk of tick, and Connor himself seems to have felt that a competitor was securing undue benefits. On such issues hang the fate of governments.

For a year this alliance continued, then internal dissensions began to appear in the Labour Party. There were conferences and caucus meetings, and the support of the

107 : Debates, xxvi, p. 719.

Independent Party was more and more essential to Daglish. At this juncture, the Minister for Lands (Hon. T.H. Bath) came to the decision that he could not repudiate an agreement made by a predecessor, and hence Copley's cattle should be admitted to the stock routes along the Fitzroy. The Executive Council approved this on August 9th, 1905 ; on the 15th, Moran attacked the proposal, and on the following day, Connor moved for the production of all papers in connection with the move.⁽¹⁰⁸⁾ In the course of the debate, Connor, Moran and Butcher all dilated on the risk of ticking up West Kimberley and the south to benefit Copley, although several metropolitan members thought that, under proper supervision, the move might enlarge the supply of Kimberley beef, and tend to cheapen the price. The losses of such upland stations as Flora Valley and Denison Downs on the Wyndham stock route were also mentioned. The whole attitude of Moran and Connor was in marked contrast to their earlier stand on the tick question -- whether from Hibernianism or opportunism. While Connor was a forceful and eloquent spokesman for his district, consistency was not his strong point. Both Connor and the Ministry spoke of local support for their stand, Connor describing protest meetings in West Kimberley, and Bath in turn speaking of congratulatory messages from Hall's Creek.⁽¹⁰⁹⁾

108 : Debates, xxvi, pp. 717-730.

109 : Cf. "Western Mail", September 3rd, 1905.

The next day, when Daglish moved that the Government should purchase the railway and lands of the Midland Railway Company, Moran and Connor and their associates withdrew their support from the Labour government, and voted with the Opposition. The Daglish Ministry fell, and was succeeded by a non-Labour administration under C.H.Rason. Finding the support of the Independents unreliable, Rason called a general election. When Connor again faced the polls, on November 13th, 1905, he was opposed by another Broome candidate, Arthur Male, junior partner in the influential firm of Streeter & Male, pearlers, merchants, and pastoralists. Rason backed Male. The polling figures showed that Connor retained his majority in the Derby and Wyndham centres, but was outclassed in the numerically greater Broome district, and this, coupled with a decline of popularity around Hall's Creek, led to his defeat. (110)

It will be observed that political consciousness was not highly developed in the Kimberleys, in comparison with the pastoral workers of the eastern colonies. For this the isolated conditions were responsible. Electoral issues were few, and of local importance only. The electors made little attempt to regulate their representatives' views on State-wide issues. The member was always a man of wealth and position, who could

110 : See Appendix (Electoral).

afford to maintain a home in Perth, and whose interests were those of a capitalist. No small man, compelled to pay close attention to his station or his store, could spare the time or money to stand for Parliament. Consequently, the tick cattle question, which originated as a simple matter of quarantine precautions, could become the subject of conflict between opposing economic pressure-groups, in which the wealthy exporting firms, each claiming to represent some particular regional interest in the Kimberleys, were vying for the best position. Political expediency, and not dispassionate planning, influenced the development of the Kimberleys. The questions of improving the marketing system, and the provision of efficient killing or freezing facilities, were left unattended as the big exporters scuffled for supremacy.

This state of affairs may be in part attributed to the absence of a class of resident station-owners. During the early years of the century, owners and managers were moving to the more temperate South, retaining their Kimberley interests only as absentees. The rough living conditions ; the continued guerilla warfare with the aboriginals; the high incidence of disease, especially fever, caused by bad drinking water and unsatisfactory diet; the unbalanced sex ratio, making a normal family life difficult to achieve; and the ultimate uncertainty of an industry which had been through bad times, and which might again cease to bring forth a profit, all

encouraged this trend. Thus the McLarty brothers of Liveringa, the Rose brothers, the Macdonalds of Fossil Downs, Foster, Stretch & Weekes of Denison Downs, as well as smaller owners, all moved out of the district in this period, either leaving their properties to a paid manager, or selling out to a larger absentee capitalist such as Copley or the Emanuels. The development of the Kimberley pastoral industry lay largely in the hands of those few firms with the backing of the banks. Pastoral policy was, in the last resort, controlled by men not personally interested in the progress of the district. But, because of the superficial prosperity of the industry, the State Government took no action to secure the future of the district by the intelligent organisation of marketing methods, either through the establishment of a freezing works, or by rationalisation of the shipping methods. The future of the Kimberley pastoral industry was a responsibility assumed by nobody, but there were not wanting signs that, before long, the district's problems would be demanding attention.

=====

CHAPTER III.

CAPITALISATION (1905-1919).

"The owner lives in England now
 Of Kiley's Run.
 He knows a racehorse from a cow;
 But that is all he knows of stock:
 His chiefest care is how to dock
 Expenses....."

----- A.B.Paterson.

=====

From about the year 1905, a new phase may be noted in the development of the Kimberley pastoral industry. The pioneering period was over. The spectacular increase in acreage which had characterised the previous decade was replaced by a period in which the boundaries of settlement advanced very little, although within the Leopolds and the Broome area, there were still pockets of unoccupied country which could be taken up by smallholders. But the great wave of expansion was over. No attempt was made to stock "Brockman's country". In the West Kimberley sheep industry, and the East Kimberley cattle country, stock numbers showed a tendency to remain stationary. Only in the later-settled West Kimberley cattle districts was a steady increase maintained. The older regions had, it seems, been stocked to capacity.⁽¹⁾ Indeed, by 1905, the Kimberley district was the Commonwealth's major beef-producing area, outside of Queensland. Its stations supported 380,994 head of cattle, as against 346,910 in the whole of the Northern Territory, and 250,831 in the remainder of Western Australia (including the

1 : Cf. Henwood, W.W. : Report to Pastoral Appraisement Board, Nov. 1951.

dairy industry). But the only existing market for Kimberley beef was Fremantle. And, in the area supplied by that port, the demand had by now become less acute. The population was not increasing so rapidly as at the height of the gold rushes. Moreover, many miners were turning to agriculture, and were no longer consumers for Kimberley beef. There was less incentive to go out and find new pastures over the Leopolds, especially as the shipping available to Fremantle was handling already up to 25,000 head a year, which taxed their capacity. The smallholding pioneers lacked the capital to develop new markets. The development of land already occupied absorbed all the capital which the financial institutions were prepared to advance.

Other reasons may be advanced for the end of the pioneering period of expansion. The interest of the State Government was centred on the development of agriculture in the South-West, and attention could not be given to the little-known tropical province at the other end of the colony. As for the pastoralists, absentee ownership, the reasons for which were summarised at the end of the last chapter, meant a lack of liaison between the controllers of stations and the men on the spot. An absentee owner could not appreciate the needs of his property as well as a resident. With a few notable exceptions, the squatters of Kimberley, and of the north of Australia in general, were behind the rest of the world in the application of new techniques in station management. While many of the workers

were excellent at handling stock, efficient operation was not characteristic of the cattle industry. Change was not welcome; perhaps some disliked any form of husbandry which involved getting off a horse. At any rate, cattle did not fatten so well or so fast as in the early years. Owing to the policy of concentrating large herds of stock upon the river flats, the country could not recuperate so quickly as before. Because of this, and the tick and buffalo fly pests in East Kimberley, there was a decline in quality, although the excellent properties of the Shorthorn arrested this tendency to a considerable extent.

The stockmen of Kimberley, up until 1905, had not worried about the cumulative effect of thousands of beasts trampling the riverside flats, eating out the feed, and allowing insidious erosion to begin. Presumably they had noticed that, at the end of the year, the country around the most-frequented waterholes was eaten bare, while, where feed was available, water was short. There may have been losses among the weaker stock ; but, herds were still increasing in number every year, and the feed always shot up immediately after the first rains of summer, so that the temporary worries of November were forgotten. It took the dry season of 1905 to make pastoralists realise that the bounty of Kimberley was not unlimited. In that year, West Kimberley received an average fall of 15", and East Kimberley 12", as against a norm of 26" and 22" respectively. ⁽²⁾ The Chief Inspector

2 : Hunt, H.A. : Op. cit. p. 109.

of Stock (R.E.Weir), travelling through the Ord River station country, noted that: (3)

"The effect....was so disastrous that all pastures on the river frontages had completely disappeared for the time being, and for two days after leaving the homestead, the country travelled over might be compared to fallow land, and only with difficulty could we secure any form of feed for our horses. Water was also becoming limited, and on occasions we had to search for and clean out soaks to obtain sufficient for our requirements."

The effect upon the calves and the weaker females can be well imagined. They could only graze within walking distance of the nearest water, and, as they became weaker, the radius of their feeding ground became less, and the feed scarcer. It is, however, characteristic of the outlook of the time that Weir noted, with optimism:

"The country has, however, wonderful recuperative powers, and, should good rains be obtained at the end of the year, the country, which at the time of my visit presented such a barren appearance, will again assume its brightest form, and the stock which had then to travel long distances for a meagre subsistence will again luxuriate in abundant pastures."

The denudation of the frontages was furthered by the wallabies.

At the time of the first settlement of West Kimberley, most authorities agree that these animals were only present in any number in a small patch of country around Udialla, on the lower Fitzroy. One could ride all day in search of game without sighting wallabies. (4) With civilisation, the natives in this region ceased to hunt for kangaroo meat, and the wallabies

3 : Weir, R.E. : Through the Kimberley (Journal of the Department of Agriculture, first series, Vol xiv, No. III (p. 243) : Perth, 1906).

4 : Vide Mr G.C. Rose : also Mr. J.P. McLarty, (Debates, xxviii, p. 423)

multiplied fast. By 1905, they were eating out sufficient grazing country along the Fitzroy to cause the squatters concern, and some stations were laying out poison and employing kangaroo-hunters. The skins had some small commercial value.⁽⁵⁾ J.P.McLarty claimed⁽⁶⁾ that in eighteen months, 120,000 scalps had been brought in at Liveringa. With the erection of the rabbit-proof fence, there also seems to have been some apprehension in case the rabbits should be diverted by it into the Kimberley District, a possibility which caused the local M.L.A., Arthur Male, some alarm.⁽⁷⁾ Despite occasional reports of traces, rabbits never at any time became established in the district. Perhaps the wallabies provided too much competition.

The overcrowding of the frontages, reflecting as it did the rapid increase in numbers, was overshadowed by the marketing problems created by the same increase. The competition between Copley, Connor, and the Emanuels, for the Fremantle market clearly illustrated the limitations of available shipping space, inadequate to cope with the entire turnoff of the Kimberleys. Some East Kimberley owners sought an alternative outlet by overlanding store

5 : Cf. Quanbun journals, August 1st, 1904, Liveringa journals, October 18th, 1908, et passim.

6 : Debates, xxviii, p. 423.

7 : Ibid. xxi, p. 13 : xxiv, p. 423.

cattle for agistment and sale in Eastern States markets, more especially among the meatworks and canning factories along the coast. In 1905, M.J.Durack of Lissadell sent 4,000 culls overland along the Murrinji Stock Route via Newcastle Waters and the Barkley Tableland to the Queensland railheads, where they were sold at prices ranging from £3/17/6 to £6/6/-, the latter being paid by the Queensland National Bank for 1,200 head.⁽⁸⁾ About the same time, Buchanan and Gordon Bros. overlanded Flora Valley stock to Narrabri (N.S.W.)⁽⁹⁾ Other East Kimberley owners to adopt this outlet included Copley & Co., and Sam Muggleton of Frog Hollow. By 1907, 17,000 head from the area which would normally be served by Wyndham were being overlanded to Queensland.⁽¹⁰⁾ As, at the same time, over 10,000 head were passing annually through Wyndham, and around 8,000 at Derby, the necessity for less haphazard marketing methods should soon have become apparent. The Rason Government, and its successor, the Moore ministry, equipped an expedition under the surveyor Alfred Canning, to map a stock-route from Hall's Creek to the eastern goldfields, along which tick-free cattle might be brought to the Kalgoorlie market. At the same time, permission was eventually withheld from Copley to use the port of Derby for his Sturt Creek and Margaret River cattle.⁽¹¹⁾

8 : Royal Commission, 1908 : Minutes of Evidence, q. 2139.

9 : Debates, xxvii, p. 652.

10: Ibid. xxi, p. 68.

11: Royal Commission, 1908 : Minutes of Evidence, qs. 640-646.

From 1905, the State Government had, indeed, shown more activity in developing the North. During the period of political instability between 1901 and 1905, there had been a certain pre-occupation with the tick question, but the balance of power had lain with city and goldfields interests, and little had been done for the Kimberleys. After the elections of 1905, rural interests made a stronger showing, but the Kimberley district, in common with the rest of the pastoral north, was not so prominent as it had been in the Forrest era. In the Legislative Assembly, Connor, Doherty and Holmes were no longer present ; only J.P. McLarty and Arthur Male could claim any knowledge of the district's requirements, and neither possessed Connor's eloquent powers of advertisement for the district he represented. However, in the Legislative Council, the three North Province seats, previously occupied by inarticulate retired squatters who had voted faithfully for Sir John Forrest, now passed to equally conservative, but more vocal representatives of the North. R.W. Pennefather, who had been Forrest's attorney-general, represented the Greenough area. Sir Edward Wittenoom spoke for the Murchison and Gascoyne, except between 1906 and 1909, when he was replaced by R.F. Sholl, a veteran of the era before self-government. In 1906, Francis Connor from Kimberley was returned for the third seat. For all that, the North was not such a strong pressure-group as it had been during the reign of the Forrests.

Nevertheless, the Newton Moore ministry (1906-1910) devoted some attention to the problems of the Kimberleys. In particular, the Department of Agriculture took up the question of tropical culture in the Kimberleys. W.V.Fitzgerald reported in 1906 that over one million acres, mainly frontage country, would lend itself to tropical agriculture.⁽¹²⁾ Experimental plots of cotton and fruits were being grown by private interests in the district, and among those to achieve fairly encouraging results were E.G.Thurkle, secretary of the West Kimberley Road Board, at Derby, and the manager of the Oscar Range station, at that time the site of the most extensive irrigation plot in the district.⁽¹³⁾ A Commissioner of Tropical Agriculture was appointed, Adrian Despeissis, who encouraged experimentation in various problems of animal husbandry. Research was undertaken into the Kimberley horse disease, which on some stations accounted for a mortality of fifty per cent among the horses. Whilst the exact cause could not be ascertained -- it never was detected until 1952 -- the department's officers concluded that the disease originated from a plant growing wild in the district, and recommended the cultivation of lucerne and similar fodders by irrigation, to minimise the death rate. Only one station, Oscar Range, followed out these suggestions, and there the death rate fell from fifty per cent to three per cent.⁽¹⁴⁾

12 : Votes and Proceedings, 1907, No. 19.

13 : Journal of Department of Agriculture, xv, p. 94 : "Western Mail", March 22nd, 1910.

14 : Journal of Department of Agriculture, xii, p. 62.

Among the suggestions urged by Despeissis was the introduction of tick-resistant Zebu cattle from the Indies, to be crossed with Shorthorns. Experiments along these lines had already been undertaken by Walter McKenzie Grant, at Mount Scratch station near Dongara, where a Shorthorn bull had been mated with a Brahmin cow. "The progeny, slaughtered at between four and six years of age, each registered over 1000lb. dressed weight, and the beef was pronounced A1 by the butchers."⁽¹⁵⁾ These crossbred cattle had the humpless back and beef-producing qualities of the Shorthorn, together with the quick growth, greater activity, hardiness, and resistance to tropical diseases, such as redwater fever, of the Zebu. Although similar crossbreds had had success in South America, Texas, and North Africa, the suggestion seems to have aroused no vestige of interest in the Kimberleys. It was not until 1952 that two Zebu cross heifers and two bull calves were imported to Kimberley Downs by the firm of M.C. Davies and Sons. In the face of such invincible conservatism as the pastoralists showed in matters of animal husbandry, the efforts of the Department of Agriculture were productive of few immediate results.

15 : Despeissis, A. : The Nor'-West and Tropical North (Govt. printer, Perth : 1911), p. 84.

It may be argued that owners were discouraged from progressive improvement policies by the uncertain state of the markets. The Kimberleys were still supplying most of the winter metropolitan market, but the beef industry was growing in areas closer to Perth, notably the Murchison, Gascoyne and Irwin districts, and, by 1907, the Wyndham price for bullocks had fallen from £5 to £3.⁽¹⁶⁾ This encouraged the overland traffic to the Queensland markets, which, from 1907, annually accounted for 16,000-17,000 head of cattle. As Queensland supplied not only the Eastern States, but was also attempting trade to Great Britain and the Near North, concern was expressed in Parliament at the potential loss to Western Australia's export trade. In 1906, the Governor's speech had referred to the need for providing marketing facilities for the cattle industry, and the 1907 Speech put matters more concretely:⁽¹⁷⁾

"The very large increase in the number of Stock within the State has impressed my Advisers with the necessity of giving immediate consideration to the establishment of Freezing works at those Ports where an export trade may be encouraged and improved. Increased Harbour Facilities are being provided at the more important points of shipment."

Newton Moore, the Premier, stated that the Government would give a pound-for-pound subsidy to any

16 : "Western Mail", September 24th, 1910. (Analysis of situation by Arthur Haly, Stock Inspector, Wyndham). Cf. Durack diaries of this date.

17 : Debates, xxxi, p. 2.

private investor willing to construct freezing works at Wyndham, provided that the subsidy did not exceed £35,000. This loan would be free of interest for three years, after which four per cent would be charged. Regulations would be framed, so that every pastoralist, whether a large or small owner, would have the opportunity of securing treatment for his cattle at the same price.⁽¹⁸⁾ Considerable opposition was voiced by the Labour Party during the Address-in-Reply. They alleged that, if a meatworks were erected, the "meat ring" would ally themselves to the interests controlling the works, and secure a monopoly which would exclude the small man from the trade. As the Leader of the Opposition (Hon. T.H. Bath) put it :⁽¹⁹⁾

"It practically means that we are subsidising the meat ring who have had the consumers of this State under their heels for more than ten years. We have had these people complaining that there is no outlet for their stock, and that they must have freezing works in order that they may build up an export trade as an outlet, while we have the people of the State from the goldfields to the metropolis still paying extravagant prices."

In point of fact, there is no evidence whatever that either Emanuels, or Copley, or Connor, Doherty & Durack contemplated the construction of meatworks. Indeed, the "meat ring", such as it was, existed among the wholesale butchers of Perth. The high retail prices were chiefly due to the distance of the Kimberleys, the source of supply, from

18 : Ibid. pp. 68-70.

19 : Ibid. p. 58, et cf. pp. 56-520, passim.

the consuming population of the South, and the risk and wastage attendant upon the long sea voyage between the two. If prices were to be reduced by the development of closer producing centres, an outlet of export elsewhere would definitely be required by the Kimberley pastoralists.

The need for a comprehensive investigation of the situation was pointed out by a prominent Labour member, William Dartnall Johnson, who moved in 1907 for the appointment of (20)

"a select committee, to enquire into and report upon the best methods that can be adopted by Parliament to assist the pastoralists in the North-West, and at the same time protect the interests of the general consumers."

The scope of this enquiry was enlarged to the pastoral industry of the whole State. Both sides of the House supported this move, and a fact-finding committee of five members appointed. But when, a few days later, one member of the Committee, W.J. Butcher, asked to be discharged, a bitter dispute arose as to whether a Government supporter or a Labour member should replace him. The Government won its point, but owing to the ill-feeling which had been aroused, agreed not long afterwards to a motion by Johnson that the select committee should be discharged.)

However, in 1908, a Royal Commission was appointed to enquire into and report upon the meat supply. (21) The chairman was Richard William Pennefather, M.L.C. for North

20 : Ibid. pp. 680-699, 783-806, 1260.

21 : Royal Commission appointed to enquire into and report upon the Meat Supply : Report and Minutes of Evidence (Votes and Proceedings, 1908-9, No. 21. 410 pp.)

Province, and the other members were Captain Robert Laurie, M.L.C., and Johnson, Daglish, and W.B. Gordon from the Assembly. All shades of party opinion were represented. In its investigation, the Commission took extensive evidence from representatives of the Kimberley cattle trade and pastoral industry, and provided valuable information, such as Johnson's select committee had aimed at finding. The Commission made several suggestions for cheapening the price of meat, including the removal of the tick restrictions still in force at Robb's Jetty, the granting of permission for tick-free cattle to be shipped from Derby, and the improvement of Kimberley stock routes. The long dry stages which had to be travelled in the later part of the season were a frequent cause of complaint amongst Kimberley cattlemen, who attributed much of the wastage of condition in beasts to this factor. Finally, the Commissioners wrote: (22)

"The establishment of a canning and meat extract plant at Wyndham would be a distinct advantage to the pastoralists of East Kimberley, and should likewise tend to reduce the price of beef by diminishing the cost of production. Numbers of cattle which cannot profitably be shipped to market die annually on all the stations. During their existence they are cumbering the pastures and lowering the standard of the herds. Their utilisation for canning or extract would, by turning them into a source of profit, reduce the average cost of production per head.....It will soon be necessary for Western Australia to establish an export trade in beef. The first step towards that end is the improvement of the herds in Kimberley, for which the weeding out of inferior stock is essential."

Had Parliament kept these considerations in mind, instead of

allowing the question of the development of Kimberley cattle markets to become dependent on party tactics, the progress of the district would have been materially assisted.

Development work was, on the whole, very slow.

It is worth quoting a contemporary analysis by Despeissis: (23)

"When compared with Queensland, Kimberley cattle are undergoing a process of deterioration. Cattle there fatten quicker, but also melt down quicker than in Queensland. There are certainly exceptions to this tendency, and they are to be found on the runs where attention is paid to the introduction of choice bulls.

"On a number of runs, more particularly the smaller runs, degeneration is evident; the cattle are getting deplorably inbred, and show it in reduced size, lighter skin, weaker constitution; they mature tardily, fatten slowly, and calve poorly.

"Some owners bought bulls years ago. They have since relied on the larger station bulls mixing up with their herds to secure that infusion of fresh blood indispensable to the well-being of their cattle. Of late years, grazing has been such a precarious occupation for the smaller man who can't sell, ship or realise on their bullocks, that there is a marked disinclination to spend money even when it is most urgently needed."

A few stations, such as Argyle, Lissadell, Fossil Downs, and Gogo, tried to introduce fresh blood into their herds.

At Argyle and Fossil Downs, experiments were tried on a small scale in the breeding of poll Shorthorn stock, and at Lissadell, as at Roebuck Plains near Broome, the breeding of Herefords was attempted. But bulls only became acclimatised with difficulty, where they did not succumb to tick fever, and their importation was

23 : Despeissis, op. cit. pp. 80-81.

a hazardous business. Conditions were against scientific breeding. Thus Richard Allen, the bookkeeper of Gogo, wrote of conditions in 1910: (24)

"There were very few improvements in those days, a horse paddock and a spelling horse paddock being all the fences then in existence. The herd of cattle roamed this huge area of 3,000,000 acres, and the mustering of fats and branding of calves started early in April, and ended with the hot weather in October. There were about 1,000 horses and mules to work this station, and the stockmen had three changes during the season of two horses each, the native boys getting the same.... The stockyards were a long way apart, the furthest out being about 70 miles from the station on the S.S.E. of the run, which bordered on the wild open country, the home of nomad Natives, who caused a lot of trouble in the rainy season, spearing and running cattle."

This was one of the biggest and best-capitalised runs, and the manager's reputation was high among his contemporaries. The conditions under which the smallholders, or "battlers" as they were called locally, were primitive indeed. On many runs, branding was done by the "broncho" method, of running down and roping calves for treatment. Such musters were inefficient, and a large number of cleanskins resulted, who grew up into "scrubs" or "mickies", roaming the herd in a wild condition, and assisting in the degeneration of the breed. However, it is interesting to note of one Afghan smallholder near Hall's Creek, Mahomet Eser, who had no homestead, but camped with his small herd, wandering in

24 : Allen, R. : Reminiscences, p. 9. (MS in Perth Archives).

the manner of the patriarchs. As a result, his stock fattened well, and were quiet and tractable. Of course, such methods were clearly impracticable for general application; but the reason for much of the loss of condition during droving was that the stock were "man-shy", and wasted through worry during the unaccustomed contacts of mustering and droving. As for living conditions, these varied from the fairly comfortable type of homestead, such as Ivanhoe or Gogo, to the rather cruder pioneers' hut which then served Louisa Downs. (Cf. photographic illustrations).

One of the chief reasons for this retarded development was the expense of transport. All goods had to be carried on table-topped bullock waggon, some of them capable of loading up to six or ten tons⁽²⁵⁾, when drawn by twenty-four bullocks. The Kimberley horse disease put horse teams out of the question, but around 1910, mules were coming into favour for this class of work. Around Hall's Creek, there were a few Afghan camel drivers, and these beasts are reported to have been used on small outlying stations until recent years. Some are still running wild in the district. Bullock teams, however, pioneered most of the highways. Thus, in 1910, "Bullocky" Johnston, a man of sixty, singlehanded took twenty-two bullocks over the King Leopold Range to Isdell Downs station - a feat "regarded as utterly impossible" - thus constructing a fairly passable road to Derby.⁽²⁶⁾ Such tracks became necessary as more smallholders

25 : Ibid. p. 7.

26 : "Western Mail", July 8th, 1910.

occupied blocks in the Leopolds, such as Bowers and Sadler at Tableland ; Blythe, Orchard and Spong at Glenroy ; Peter Pianta at Lansdowne, and George Layman at Secure Downs.

The native problem was still fairly acute in the outlying districts, where cattle-slaying persisted, and some attempt was made by a new Chief Protector of Aborigines (C.F.Gale) to cope with the situation. Circulars were sent out asking station managers whether they would be prepared to kill enough beef to satisfy the needs of the natives in the adjacent country, and, if so, whether they would do so gratis, or would require compensation.⁽²⁷⁾ There was not, apparently, any encouraging response. The Aborigines' Department's next move was to found a cattle station of its own, upon which beef could be grown for the consumption of natives, who might also be gainfully employed there. This, it was hoped, would discourage depredations on the settlers' stock. Three small "battlers" near Hall's Creek, Franz Meinsen, James Shepherd, and M.E.Green, were bought out, and their cattle and land formed the nucleus of Moola Bulla station, under the management of Arthur Haley. The area of the run was expanded to over one million acres in 1909, and gradually the surrounding tribes were induced to settle on this neutral ground. Some stations in the neighbourhood, however, preferred

27 : Fossil Downs papers : Letter, C.F.Gale - J.M.Nicholson, October 5th, 1908.

to maintain their own blacks' camp, from which could be drawn a supply of native labour, in exchange for rations and tobacco.

The rapid growth of the cattle population of West Kimberley was not checked so greatly by native depredations, and there the number of cattle increased from under 200,000 in 1906 to over 300,000 in 1910. It is a controversial question as to whether overstocking took place. Statements that the carrying capacity of the country was permanently damaged during this period are not uncommon. It is, indeed, the opinion of the Pastoralists' Association that: (28)

"Except in isolated instances of culpable irresponsibility, overstocking, where it has occurred, is attributable to economic pressure, resulting from a combination of low prices for wool and stock, and the inability to reduce stock numbers in the early stages of a dry cycle because of the distances involved."

At this stage, however, it does seem that insufficient heed was given to the necessity of conserving the frontages. To underline this necessity, another bad season had visited West Kimberley in 1908. On Fossil Downs, E.G. Thurkle found, while inspecting for the owners, evidence of overstocking: (29)

"I went across the run from near Geikie Gorge a good way around the Margaret, and discovered as reported that feed was on the frontages very scarce, in fact they were found to be bare. Water was obtainable, but was of no use owing to the scarcity of feed within reasonable distance. Fortunately, DE Laney, who was temporarily in charge, is energetic and willing, and had shifted all stock from the frontages out into back country where feed and water was still good, and hardly a beast could be seen about the frontage, which was bare and almost becoming nothing but a lot of scalded ground."

28 : The Pastoral Industry in North-West Australia (Pastoralists' Association, 1945).

29 : Fossil Downs papers : Letter, Thurkle-Macdonald, Nov. 16th. 1908.

The season was late in breaking, and the squatters in the Fitzroy Crossing area were forced to desperate expedients. At Quanbun, there was "not a vestige of grass on the run", and the manager was compelled to shift his sheep on to pastures offered by helpful neighbours. The station journals for December 1908 and January 1909 describe graphically an anxious time of ekeing out the scanty feed and water supplies, searching - on foot, for the horses were too poor to ride - for claypans and waterholes in the open back country, keeping the stock shifting to wherever a small local storm had germinated a little grass, and tallying the increasing mortality until at last a good rain came.⁽³⁰⁾ At Oscar Range, no good rains came until February.⁽³¹⁾ (It is a fallacy to assume that the Kimberleys never wanted for rain until recent years.) These conditions sounded a warning which some of the squatters seem to have ignored. A few reduced their stock numbers. Fossil Downs, which had a book number of 32,605 in 1910, only ran 18,000 head in 1912.⁽³²⁾ A.J. Rose of Quanbun reduced the number of sheep on his run from 12,000 to 7,000.⁽³³⁾ But, on the whole, the number of stock in the Kimberleys steadily increased without a proportionate increase in the amount of country used for grazing. Other stations took steps to supplement

30 : Quanbun journals, December 4th, 1908 to January 16th, 1909.

31 : Ibid. January 31st, 1909.

32 : Fossil Downs Cattle Book. (at Fossil Downs).

33 : Quanbun journals, 1909, Seasonal Report: also information Mr. R.J. Rose.

their water supply. In 1905-6, a Government-sponsored party under Dr. Logan Jack had reported favourably on the prospects of finding artesian or sub-artesian water supplies in the Kimberley district.⁽³⁴⁾ Shortly afterwards, between 1907 and 1913, the Kimberley Pastoral Company worked a boring plant on their property at Upper Liveringa, in order to develop the "pindan" country away from the watercourses, where much good feed went to waste for want of permanent water. Several good waters were struck, but only flowing bores and those with large supplies close to the surface were utilised. At that time little was known of pumping from deep depths. Three shallow bores were put down, of which one watered four paddocks and carried a flock of 20,000 sheep for several months.⁽³⁵⁾ In East Kimberley, Connor, Doherty & Durack put down a 60-foot bore at the Ascot Depot, where cattle were held before shipping. Few other stations made any attempt to put down bores, partly because of the expense and uncertainty of the operation, and partly because of alleged insecurity of tenure. The possibility of resumption, distant though it was, perhaps made it more difficult for the pastoralist to obtain financial backing, although, under the terms of the Land Act of 1898, leases were not due to expire until 1928. As the land was not theirs, it is conceivable that some pastoralists felt no qualms about devastating the land to make profits.

Nevertheless, the Kimberley pastoral industry

34 : "Western Mail", November 30th, 1905.

35 : Liveringa journals, 1907-1913, passim : cf. Debates, xlii, p. 265.

in 1908 was attracting few capitalists. The expert view of Isadore Emanuel was that⁽³⁶⁾

"It would be absolutely impossible to get any money for anything connected with the cattle industry in this State...owing to the hostile attitude of a section of the Press, a large portion of the public, and...a large number of the members of the Legislature. I do not know of a single case of a cattle station having been sold of late years. I know people who want to sell them, but it is the most difficult thing to dispose of them".

In particular, he expressed the opinion that private British capitalists would not invest in a Wyndham meatworks where there was any suggestion of Government control. Early in 1909, however, there appeared grounds for hope that, after all, British investment would be tempted. In March 1909, the Bovril interests formed a company, Bovril Australian Estates, with a capital of £250,000. The chairman of directors was the Agent-General for Western Australia, Sir Hector Rason, the other directors being Lord Brassey, Sidney Kidman, and Sir Edward Wittenoom as their Perth representative.⁽³⁶⁾ This company purchased Victoria River Downs in the Northern Territory, and Carlton in East Kimberley, for an estimated £170,000, from Emanuel, Kidman and Troup.⁽³⁷⁾ It also took over 893,000 acres in the undeveloped "Brockman country" which the enterprising Tilden Smith had leased earlier.

36 : "Western Mail", April 3rd, 1909.

37 : Durack, M.P. : Diaries, March 9th, 1909.

The appearance of a wealthy British company inspired hopes of a profitable sale in most of the squatters around Wyndham, and Bovril was soon engaged in negotiations for sale with Connor, Doherty & Durack, M.J. Durack of Lissadell, and others. (38) These plans never came to fruition, otherwise the Bovril people would have been in possession of most of the immediate hinterland of Wyndham - a monopoly greater than ever was attributed to the "meat ring". For a while, it seemed that the Bovril interests would establish a meatworks at Wyndham, especially as their organisation in Britain could absorb all the turnoff available for export purposes from Wyndham. Local pastoralists supported the scheme, and urged Arthur Male into enquiring of the Government whether negotiations were afoot for concessions. (39) Nothing came of these enquiries. It would appear that Bovril Australian Estates did eventually approach the Commonwealth Government. They wished to make use of coloured labour, who, by slaughtering stock on board ship in Cambridge Gulf, would avoid any technical infringement of the White Australia policy. The Commonwealth Government turned down this ingenious proposal. (40)

While the Bovril representatives were still arguing this point, the firm of Connor, Doherty & Durack began to open up another export outlet. For some years, there had

38 : Ibid. January 18th, 1909, July 9th, 1910.

39 : Ibid. November 29th, 1909.

40 : Ibid. March 9th, 1911 : Cf. Sir Edward Wittenoom's remarks, Debates, lxxv, p. 2728.

been a demand for Australian cattle in the Philippine Islands, where the local herds had been decimated by rinderpest introduced during the Spanish-American war of 1898. Sidney Kidman had already built up an export trade. He, it was reported: (41)

"secured a contract from the (Philippine) Government for canned meat, and, in order to carry out his contract he secured and overlanded close on to 16,000 head of cattle from Kimberley pastures to the meat works in Queensland."

Wyndham still lacked meatworks, but there were possibilities in the livestock trade. In March 1910, M.P. Durack went to Manila, to enlist the support of the American authorities in stimulating trade with Wyndham. On behalf of his firm, and of the Bovril interests, he arranged with Fernando Lichauco, the leading cattle buyer of the Philippines, for the importation of Kimberley livestock into the islands. Prime quality fat cattle were not required. Indeed, the stipulated minimum weight on shipment from Wyndham was only 400 lbs. (42) Connor, Doherty & Durack were enabled to purchase stores from the small station-owners at £2 per head, and sell them, after droving to Wyndham, to Lichauco's agents for between £2/15/- and £3/10/-. In June 1910, a mob of 350 head were sent away on the "Frithjof" to Manila, and Durack was arranging with Lichauco's agents for the sale of 3,000 more lightweight cattle, when, on July 22nd, 1910, the Philippines Government imposed a ban

41 : Despeissis, op.cit. p.70.

42 : Durack, M.P. : Diaries, March-July 1910 : Contract between Lichauco and Connor, Doherty & Durack. (Durack papers).

on the import of Australian cattle, because of disease regulations. A small outbreak of pleuro-pneumonia had occurred at Carlton among some cattle brought in from Victoria River Downs in the Northern Territory, and this may have provided the pretext. Durack regarded it as "probably a move by the dealers and vested interests in Manila."⁽⁴³⁾

During the summer of 1910-11, the Wyndham exporters were still looking for Asiatic markets. J.J. Holmes was approached by a Java importer who proposed a three-year contract for the supply of beef to the Netherlands East Indies, but no agreement was made.⁽⁴⁴⁾ Meanwhile, Francis Connor went to Manila, and, by May 1911, had persuaded the Philippines Government to admit Kimberley cattle.⁽⁴⁵⁾ Some indication of his methods is given by the fact that his partners complained of the inordinate size of his entertainment expense account. Contracts were signed for the supply of 4,760 head, and later renewed so that, within two years, nearly 10,000 head were being shipped from Wyndham to Manila annually. This relieved the marketing difficulties of East Kimberley, and oddly enough, by the middle of the season, the smallholders supplying Connor, Doherty and Durack reported a shortage of marketable cattle.⁽⁴⁶⁾

The Manila trade was of material benefit to East Kimberley. The State Government, meanwhile, was at last considering

43 : Durack, M.P. : Diaries, July 22nd, 1910.

44 : Ibid. March 27th, 1911.

45 : Ibid. May 18th, 1911.

46 : Ibid. July 25th, 1911.

the provision of Wyndham meatworks as a State enterprise. The Canning Stock Route had not become a practicable major outlet. Shoosmith and Thompson, the first men to take a mob south along the Route, were murdered by wild blacks. Although Tom Cole, and others, had come through successfully later in the year (1910), the nature of the country traversed made it apparent that the carrying capacity of the route was limited. As no satisfactory marketing outlet had been provided by private enterprise, it was left to the Government. Although this was contrary to the non-socialist ideas of the Moore Government, most of the Cabinet, with the exception of the Minister for Agriculture, James Mitchell, seemed to favour the construction of meatworks, which was promised in the Governor's Speech of 1910.⁽⁴⁷⁾ Parties were sent up to Wyndham to investigate the problems of surveying, construction, and water supply.

Marketing problems had been particularly acute for the smallholders, because the large firms who organised the booking of shipping space were naturally anxious to get their own cattle on the market first, and the smallholders' drafts were left to the end of the dry season, or missed shipping altogether. This was the ground of some complaint, especially in West Kimberley. The Town Clerk of Broome, in response to

47: Debates, xxviii, p. 5.

an enquiry from the Fremantle City Council, said that there were in his district twelve cattle stations with an annual output of 3,000 head - yet only 650 head from two stations were sold in 1910, because of the hold which the large owners had on all available shipping space. ⁽⁴⁸⁾ Yet, despite this factor, and despite the adverse effects of four major cyclones between 1908 and 1912, during one of which Thangoo alone lost 2,000 head of cattle, the Broome area did not fail to attract new investors. In 1910, J. Eacott, having sold a valuable pearl for £4,500, put the money into the purchase of Frazier Downs; and when, in July 1911, the agents of another pearling-man, Mark Rubin, "illegally entered and took possession" of the run, Eacott brought suit against Rubin, and was awarded £8,750 compensation at the rate of £2/10/- per head on 3,500 cattle. ⁽⁴⁹⁾ Moreover, sheep were being tried in coastal country previously considered unsuitable. Roebuck Plains and Thangoo reported some success with small flocks, and Bohemia, near La Grange, was stocked between 1910 and 1914 with 6,750 sheep from Liveringa.

It seems undeniable that the smallholders' disadvantage lay in the fact that they could not book shipping space in advance until they knew what effect the season would have on their fat stock. Moreover, they were not protected

48 : "Western Mail", November 19th, 1910.

49 : "Nor'-West Echo", October 12th, 1912.

from the fluctuations of the seasonal market. Thus the Macdonald brothers of Fossil Downs sold 2,000 head of bullocks to the butchering firm of J. & W. Baker in 1911, without any middleman save the firm of Elder, Shenton & Co. as brokers. But the stock only fetched 27/6 per head.⁽⁵⁰⁾ Control by the stock agents lessened the risk of haphazard marketing. Nevertheless, Labour members of Parliament complained that freights were exorbitant, schedules not arranged to suit the convenience of the inhabitants of the North-West, and that the shipping companies allowed the "meat ring" to charter all available space and squeeze out the smallholder. It was even alleged that the Government station at Moola Bulla felt the effects of this combine.⁽⁵¹⁾

"Because we would not sell to the charterers of the ships at five shillings per head less than was offered by another intending purchaser, they refused to bring down stock from Wyndham at less than £4 per head, though £3 had been the charge previously."

On behalf of his firm, Arthur Male, in 1910, arranged a livestock trade with Java, and in that year, 416 beasts were sent up to Sourabaya. In subsequent years, between 4,000 and 5,000 head annually were absorbed by this outlet. This may have afforded the smallholders some relief, but dissatisfaction with control by the big stock shipping companies was expressed at the election of 1911, when Arthur Male, often regarded as

50 : Debates, xlii, p. 180 : Fossil Downs papers, esp. telegram, D. Macdonald - J.M. Nicholson, February 1st, 1911.

51 : "Western Mail", October 6th, 1914.

the Broome representative of the "meat ring" was opposed by T.L.Brown, formerly M.L.A. for Geraldton. Solid support by the Broome pearling interest ensured Male's comfortable return; but in the pastoral portions of the electorate, Brown led by 124 votes to 98. In this election, the Wilson Government (1910-11), in which Male had been a minister without portfolio, was ousted by Labour under John Scaddan. The new Cabinet reversed State policy on the freezing works and the North-West shipping service. They contended that the metropolitan and Philippines trade offered a sufficient outlet to the pastoralists of East Kimberley, and therefore discontinued plans for the construction of the meatworks. An interesting entry in the diary of M.P. Durack discloses the attitude of the Minister for Works (W.D. Johnson), who had sat on the Meat Commission which had recommended freezing works in 1908: (52)

"The Minister does not favour freezing, and says cattle are not good enough to compete on world markets....I declare quite good enough to freeze for Eastern markets, who will take all we can supply. Minister says definitely will attend to jetty facilities, and will send a bore to further try for water at Wyndham, that having a good supply of water at Wyndham, possibility of works. Says that, as cautious practical men, it is not likely Federal Govt. will rush into freezing works for Darwin, and that we need not worry on that score."

This dialogue took place at Wyndham in May 1912.

In the same year, the Labour Government, whose interests

52 : Durack, M.P. : Diaries, May 22nd, 1912. "Eastern markets", here, means the Philippines, Java, and Malaya.

favoured the consuming population rather than the producers, initiated measures aimed at reducing the price of beef in the metropolitan area. At the Perth end, the Government entered the wholesale butchering business, and, by conducting its own sales, succeeded in reducing the price by about 2d. per lb. Unfortunately, these businesses were run at a loss. It was felt that further savings could be effected by lowering the cost of shipping freights along the North-West coast. Two companies controlled this trade, the Adelaide Steamship Company and the Blue Funnel Line, trading with Singapore. The latter company's vessels were known as "the black boats", because they were not subject to the Navigation Act which forbade the employment of coloured crews on coastal vessels. To compete with these, the Government determined to found its own line, the State Shipping Service.⁽⁵³⁾

Because of the experimental nature of the venture, and because other state trading losses were already creating the deficits which would earn Scaddan the nickname of "Gone-a-million Jack", expenditure was kept at a minimum. Instead of new or modern vessels, especially equipped for the livestock trade, being obtained, old and obsolescent ships were purchased at comparatively low costs. Four vessels were obtained,

53 : Select Committee on the Wyndham Meatworks and the State Shipping Service, 1921 : Votes and Proceedings, 1921-2, No. A4.

the "Eucla", the "Kwinana", the "Una", and the "Darius", renamed the "Western Australia" -- the last, in M.P. Durack's eyes: (54)

"an old, dirty-looking tub that gives one the impression that it has been a neglected vessel with a coat of paint put over it in a hurry."

Not perhaps a good bargain. However, strong opposition was shown to the new service. The "Nor'-West Echo" reported: (55)

"Ever since the Government purchased the steamers for the North-West trade, some large firms, who practically had a monopoly of certain lines, have viewed the matter unfavourably. Some merchants in the North-West have instructed the wholesale houses in Perth on no account to ship goods to the North by State steamers.....The action is grossly unfair to the Government, which is doing its best to cheapen the means of transit."

For all that, the State Service gradually won acceptance. The first shipment bought by the Government fetched the fairly respectable price of £6/18/9 per head average on the Fremantle market. As the ships had not originally been built for the livestock trade, losses in transit were at first rather heavy, but by the end of the year, the Government could claim to have brought down the freight to £2/10/- per head, in consequence of which the price of cattle rose 10/- per head at Wyndham, to the benefit of the vendors. On the first year's operations, the State Shipping Service was officially estimated to have lost £19,354/7/11, but this leeway was reduced in later years. (56) Shipments were provided by Moola Bulla, Rosewood and Fossil Downs stations, and

54 : Durack, M.P. : Diaries, November 3rd, 1912.

55 : "Nor'-West Echo", August 3rd, 1912.

56 : "Western Mail", October 6th, 1914 : Select Committee of 1921.

support grew until eventually Connor, Doherty & Durack were sending down cattle by state steamers. The withdrawal of the Adelaide Steamship Company from the trade during the First World War undoubtedly assisted progress by the State line.

Emanuel Brothers would have nothing to do with the State Ships, but retained their contract for all the Blue Funnel Line's shipping space. Because of their disagreement with the Government, Isadore and Sydney Emanuel withdrew to England, where they subsequently prospered. They retained their Kimberley properties, but disposed of all their other Western Australian interests, including their agency business in Derby, which was taken over by two of their employees, A.J. McGlew and Rupert Monger. The firm of McGlew, Monger worked up the trade in fat sheep to Singapore, and thus assisted the Fitzroy graziers, whose exports to Perth had been declining in the face of competition from the Murchison and Gascoyne pastoralists closer to the metropolis.

These adjustments in the marketing position made for brighter prospects than had been evident for some years. Whether Government intervention made for fairer prices or not, the provision of additional shipping for the North-West trade was of advantage ; as also was the development of an Asiatic market for the plainer stock. In the Philippines alone, it was estimated that there was a market for up to 30,000 carcasses a year, for which Australia could be the

chief source of supply.⁽⁵⁷⁾ Contacts had also been established with the Singapore and Java markets. In all, these outlets represented a promising field of development. It does not seem that any State Government of the period, Labour or Liberal, was fully conscious of the fact. Furthermore, the vacillating official policy on the construction of a meat-works at Wyndham was responsible for delaying the appearance of Australian beef on the world market until a period when competition was much more stringent than it would have been if the project had been completed before the First World War.

Nevertheless, these were good times for the Kimberleys. For many of the early pioneers, it was an opportune moment to sell out and retire South. The Rose brothers made over Mount Barnett to Ben Copley and Vernon Hamersley, Cherrabun to the Emanuel brothers, and Quanbun to A.J. and Percy Rose. In 1910 and 1911, Connor, Doherty & Durack were enlarging their holdings. They purchased P.M. Durack's two runs at Ellen Vale and Dunham River, the latter of which, on rather poor country, realised £5,000. They also attempted to buy Fossil Downs (£25,000), Lissadell (£30,000) and Frog Hollow (£2,500 and the proceeds from the sale of bullocks for one year.⁽⁵⁸⁾ From these

57: Despeissis, op.cit. p. 70.

58 : Fossil Downs papers, letters, 1910-11 : Durack, M.P. : Diaries, July 9th, 1910, September 6th, 1912, et al.

figures, it appears that, although the "battlers" runs could not command much of a price, a considerable value was set on the bigger and better-developed properties. The Lissadell and Fossil Downs bids were eventually rejected because the owners considered them inadequate. In the Broome area, George Roe sold Thangoo to Edgar and Biddles, already owners of Yardagarra, the next station.

These were good times for the Kimberleys. Wyndham, one street surrounded by a marsh, a crocodile-infested arm of Cambridge Gulf, and a precipice, vied with Marble Bar for the reputation of the hottest town in the State; but it was the port for nearly 25,000 head of cattle annually. Derby, twice as large, had recently been shifted a mile and a half from its old site to a position closer to the jetty and the sea breeze. Broome was civilisation. Here the station managers came for a holiday. The pearlers had built a style of bungalow house with wide verandahs, admirably adapted for the climate; and this thriving community had attracted a legal firm, doctors and dentists, and a cinema palace (at which might be seen Harry Lauder in 'that Mirth-Provoking Riot, "Fou' the Noo", that tense Drama of Slavery, "Uncle Tom's Cabin", and similar programmes).⁽⁵⁹⁾ The town also supported a Roman Catholic convent, and was the seat of an Anglican bishopric. Perhaps the most reliable barometer of Kimberley prosperity was the number of public houses; there were five in Broome, three each at Derby and Wyndham, and one each at Fitzroy

59 : Vide "Nor'-West Echo", 1912, passim.

Crossing, Hall's Creek, and Ruby Creek. In the ensuing forty years, five of these establishments have vanished. It was a dry climate. At the Fitzroy Crossing rades of 1910, it is reported that sixty white men and three white women consumed 315 dozen bottles of beer, besides dozens of cases of whisky, brandy, and kegs of "O.P." rum.⁽⁶⁰⁾ It is doubtful whether, after such a festival, memory would permit an accurate tally of the amount consumed; but it must have been considerable.

These were good times for the Kimberleys. In the Fitzroy sheep industry, wool prices which declined to rise above 9½d. did not prevent the steady, unspectacular, growth of prosperity. The number of sheep in the district remained constant at about 300,000, but the wool clips had been improved by scientific breeding from an average fleece of a little over 3½ lbs. to 5 lbs.⁽⁶¹⁾ In the main, the bullock teams came to Derby with wool bales bearing the brands of the old-established stations; but here and there a smallholder was attempting to run sheep. It is worth citing the case of Robert and Ellen Bell, who founded Ellendale in 1910, Mrs Bell taking care of the stations while her husband worked as a shearer and fencer on the big runs, in order to earn capital to stock his 33,000-acre holding.

60 : Allen, op. cit. p. 8 : Cf. Appendix II (b).

61 : Despeissis, op. cit. p. 69.

Heavy losses occurred in January 1914, when the biggest flood ever recorded on the Fitzroy came down. Torrential rains in the Leopold Ranges caused the river to cover the whole of the frontage country with a sea of water.⁽⁶²⁾ The stock losses were enormous. An estimated 40,000 sheep were swept away, over half of them from the K.P.C. country at Upper Liveringa. Some 20,000 cattle were lost, 14,000 of them from the properties of the Emanuel brothers. Twelve months later, in January 1915, another flood of almost equal dimensions came down, but, on this occasion the pastoralists were forewarned, and succeeded in saving nearly all their stock. The temporary effect of these floods was beneficial, in that they restored vitality to the river frontages, and the stock fattened easily. However, the sheep stations did not recover their former numbers. Upper Liveringa, which had shorn 98,715 sheep in 1909, only had 41,630 by 1917. Noonkanbah, which ran 85,000 sheep in 1910, had half that number ten years later. For the district, there was a fall from 299,290 sheep in 1912 to 191,633 in 1917, a trend which continued, although in the part of the district around Broome, there were 18,270 sheep where only 1,129 had grazed in 1903.⁽⁶³⁾ The reasons for the decline have been summed up by K.C. Rose, manager of Liveringa :

-
- 62 : For a graphic account of the flood, Allen's "Reminiscences", or the diary of C. Fraser, who was floodbound in a hut on Liveringa, both make interesting reading. (Archives, Perth.)
- 63 : Appendix VI : cf. Liveringa, Noonkanbah and Quanbun station records and journals.

"Frontage country gradually became eaten out with continued heavy stocking. Thousands of kangaroos assisted in the deterioration. As there were no back waters, sheep had to remain on the natural frontage waters, until the rain came. Heavy losses occurred with bogging. When the country was more or less in its virgin state, the sheep remained strong throughout the year, and the waterholes did not contain so much silt and bog, which increased year by year with stocking." (64)

Two of these factors, increased silting and the wallaby plague, were advanced in the conditions following the great floods.

In East Kimberley, too, pests were adding difficulties to animal husbandry. About 1911, buffalo fly had entered the district from the Northern Territory. These insects worried cattle at the end of the wet season, and prevented them from putting on condition.⁽⁶⁵⁾ Pleuro-pneumonia was also reported occasionally, especially among stock emanating from the Victoria River district. Fortunately, the disease did not at this time assume epidemic proportions, and by 1913 was believed to have died out.⁽⁶⁶⁾ Herds had gradually become immunised against tick fever, although occasional losses were still experienced. Dipping facilities were erected on the stock route to Wyndham, but the process resulted in wastage through the cattle being knocked about.

Despite the presence of these drawbacks, East Kimberley provoked some response from overseas capitalists

64 : Rose, K.C. : Journal of Liveringa Statistics (on the station

65 : The earliest mention of the buffalo fly occurs in the diaries of M.P. Durack : April 19th, 1911. Cf. Jenkins, C.F. : Entomological Problems of the Ord River Irrigation Area (Journal of the Department of Agriculture, 2nd series, xxi, 2, p. 131)

66 : Votes and Proceedings, 1914-15, No. 18, p. 67.

Admittedly, the expected expenditure of British capital by Bovril Australian estates had not occurred. Little developmental work was undertaken, apart from an unsuccessful attempt between 1914 and 1916 to develop their holding in the "Brockman country".⁽⁶⁷⁾ Their failure left North Kimberley unsettled but for a Benedictine mission at Kalumburu on the Drysdale River, and the Anglican Forrest River Mission, re-settled in 1913. Meanwhile, hopes were entertained that some large capitalist would find the Kimberleys a field for investment on a scale beyond the means of any of the local interests. During 1912 and 1913, rumours were rife that units of the American Meat Trust intended taking over enormous holdings in East Kimberley and the Northern Territory, with a view to developing canning works, such as had been undertaken by the Swift enterprises in Queensland. But it was British capital which eventually won the field. It was announced in January 1914 that Copley & Co. were selling out their runs, Ord River, Sturt Creek, and Margaret River, to the Union Cold Storage Company, at an undisclosed price. It is believed that this price was £2 per head of livestock, which would have come to between £225,000 and £240,000.⁽⁶⁸⁾

The Union Cold Storage Company was a British firm, with some thirty thousand shareholders. Its affairs were

67 : Votes and Proceedings, 1914-5, No. 18, p. 67.

68 : "North-West Echo", January 23rd, 1914 : Flinders, op.cit., ch. vi.

controlled by the Vestey brothers, Sir William and Sir Edmund. In addition to running a great number of small retail butchering businesses throughout England, this firm was affiliated to Weddel & Co., a leading London stock-buying house. Thus it seemed that the Union Cold Storage Company had all the facilities needed to place Australian beef on the English market. Within the next month, the same company purchased Wave Hill in the Northern Territory, and Flora Valley, Buchanan and Gordon's run near Hall's Creek. All these holdings were well within the area served by Wyndham as the point of shipment. If Vesteys' were to build a meatworks, as seemed likely, Wyndham was the logical choice for a site. But, in July 1914, it was announced that Vesteys' had negotiated a contract with the Commonwealth Government for the construction of a meatworks at Darwin. (69)

This has fairly been described by J.H. Kelly as "an ill-conceived venture". He writes: (70)

"It is difficult to understand why such a decision was ever made as to embark on a meatworks venture of such magnitude at Darwin. Anyone with a knowledge of the country in the northern areas of the Northern Territory would have known that the country within a radius of 200 miles of Darwin was of the poorest in Northern Australia, and that within a radius of 500 miles, the country could not properly be classified as of good fattening quality; thirty years of cattle raising experience had proved this. Additionally, there was the knowledge of the class of cattle being shipped alive through Darwin to the Philippine Islands."

69 : "Western Mail", July 29th, 1914.

70 : Kelly, J.H. op. cit. p.63. Similar opinions have been expressed by experienced Kimberley cattlemen.

The Wyndham interests were greatly disappointed, and attacked the dilatory policy of the State Government, whose lack of interest, it was contended, had lost the meatworks for Western Australia. (In all fairness, it should be noted that the Federal Labour Government, which Johnson had said was unlikely to consider building meatworks at Darwin, had been replaced by the Cook Liberal Ministry in 1913, and the latter may not have kept the Scaddan Government well informed about these negotiations.) It now seemed that the chance of obtaining meatworks for Wyndham was gone for some time to come. The livestock trade, too, would suffer. Over five million acres in East Kimberley, and a like area in the adjacent portions of the Northern Territory, which had formerly supplied the Wyndham market with stock, would now come within the orbit of the competitive Darwin works.

Vesteys', however, were not the only people who wanted to build freezing works in the North. In May 1914, Scaddan had been approached by another of those enterprising British capitalists who from time to time have cast a speculative eye on the prospects of a little profitable empire-building in the wide open spaces of Western Australia. A proposal to construct freezing and canning works at Wyndham came from S.V. Nevanas, the head of a British meat importing firm. At first, Scaddan had not been encouraging. However, the outbreak of the First World War altered the complexion of affairs. Advice was received from the British Government that Army

and Navy would require large supplies of meat from Empire countries, such as Western Australia. Nevanas was commissioned by the Government, for a retainer of £1,000, to go up to Wyndham and report on the feasibility of building a meatworks there. The Cabinet received his report in October 1914, and three months later asked Nevanas to submit a tender for the construction of freezing works at Wyndham. Nevanas prepared plans and specifications, and quoted the sum of £159,510 as his estimate of the cost. On this basis, the Government signed a contract authorising him to construct a meatworks, in March 1915.

Nevanas proceeded to place orders for materials promptly and energetically, but, before very long, a dispute arose between him and the Government, over the failure of the Government to make available to him certain shipping space which he had been promised, in his consideration. By mutual consent, the contract was determined in July 1915, Nevanas being paid three per cent of his estimate by way of compensation. An experienced engineer was brought over from the Eastern States, and the Public Works Department was entrusted by the Government with the construction of the freezing works, based on Nevanas's plans.⁽⁷¹⁾ When Parliament re-assembled, complaints were made that this contract had been let secretly, without giving other firms an opportunity to tender for the project. A select committee of

71 : The Nevanas Contract is exhaustively discussed in Votes and Proceedings, 1915, No. A4 : 1917, No. 4 : 1921-2, No. A2).

five members, including three Labour back-benchers, was appointed to study the facts surrounding the case. They reported that there was no occasion to suspect corruption, but the Opposition moved a motion of no confidence, based on the principle that contracts should not be let without calling for public tenders. The motion was defeated, although a Labour amendment disapproving of such practices "on general principles" was passed.⁽⁷²⁾ Some of the Labour Party had expressed dissatisfaction, over this episode, and one member resigned from the party on this pretext. In addition, the Country Party withdrew its support from Scaddan, and at the next session of Parliament, in July 1916, a coalition of these forces and the Liberal Opposition succeeded in passing a no-confidence motion, which forced the resignation of the Labour Ministry.

The Wilson Government proceeded to reverse some of its predecessor's policies. There had been no substantial change in the political complexion of the Kimberley District in this time, although on the deaths of Pennesfather and Connor in 1914 and 1916 respectively, they had been replaced in the Legislative Council by J.J. Holmes and G.W.G.J. Miles, both under the style of "independents". Holmes had achieved his seat by defeating the official Liberal candidate, J.D. Connolly; it was hard to break the Liberals of the habit of regarding the North

72 : Debates, lii, pp. 58: 351: 415: 526 et seq: 2246: 2263 et seq: 2324 et seq.

as a source of pocket boroughs for city politicians in search of a seat. In office, Holmes maintained a genuine independence of attitude, usually from the viewpoint of the smaller owner, which impelled him to speak out in opposition of Liberal and Labour governments alike. Although in later life this tendency sometimes developed into cantankerousness, he was of service as an advocate of the North.

The war had led to prosperity in the pastoral industry, and in West Kimberley, following several good seasons, the increase in livestock numbers continued apace. At Gogo alone, the herd is said to have reached the big number of 70,000, and the branding was about 18,000, while over 4,000 females were speyed.⁽⁷³⁾ To cope with such supplies, the Wilson Government evidently determined to "rationalise" the shipping position by entering into a contract with the firm of Emanuel Brothers for the sale of 12,000 cattle, for the delivery of which space was promised in the State ships. Emanuels did not have to supply all these stock from their own lands, but could buy from small-holders, in the same manner as before 1912.⁽⁷⁴⁾ J.J. Holmes got wind of these proceedings, and in November 1916, moved in the Legislative Council for the production of all papers relating to this contract.⁽⁷⁵⁾ He described this contract as

73 : Allen, op.cit. p.12.

74 : Durack, M.P. : Diaries, August 9th and 11th, 1916.

75 : Debates, liii, pp. 779-92, 821-31, 998-1003, 1052-74, 1275.

a retrograde step, and a breach of faith with the smallholders whose support had enabled the State Shipping Service to begin operations. He said he had no animus at all against Emanuel Brothers, but deplored their obtaining a monopoly of almost all the shipping space available. The imputation that the Wilson Government, which had expressed its abhorrence of secret contracts during the Nevanas controversy, was itself attempting something of the sort was not missed by the Labour Party. The Government did their best to put a good face on the matter, but found the opposition to the experiment sufficiently strong to persuade them to desist from repeating that type of marketing arrangement.

Before its ejection from office, the Scaddan Government had given indications of an intention to curb the influence of the great landholders. Clause 8 of the Governor's Speech for 1916 read: ⁽⁷⁶⁾

"Provision for the renewal of pastoral leases is one calling for early attention.

"A classification of pastoral lands to precede such legislation is necessary, and this will be put in hand at once. A Bill to provide for the repricing of such leases, and to prevent large holdings, will early follow such classification."

A few days later, the Scaddan Government fell, and was replaced by the anti-Labour coalition. But it was clear that action was needed on the subject of pastoral leases. Under the Act of 1898, these were all due to expire on December 31st, 1928.

To the impermanent conditions of tenure had been attributed the pastoralists' reluctance to put in improvements, and their indifference to the likelihood of erosion being caused by overstocking. Indeed, when the Minister for Lands (Henry Bruce Lefroy)⁽⁷⁷⁾ introduced the Bill to amend the Land Act, he thus described the aims of the Government:⁽⁷⁸⁾

"We want to give the pastoral lessee security of tenure so that he may be able to go to his banker and give him some security for the money which he desires to borrow for the development of his holding. The Bill provides for more rigid stocking, also for the expenditure of money in improvements."

Clause 30 of the Bill provided for the granting of pastoral leases for a term expiring on December 31st, 1948, the rate of rent to be based on the pastoral capabilities of the land, its distance from a port, and similar relevant factors. The rents would not be less than those already in force, but provision was made for reassessment at the end of fifteen years. Persons holding a lease due to expire in 1928 could surrender it, and apply for a new lease, expiring in 1948, subject to the provisions of the 1917 Bill. Within five years of the commencement of the new lease, improvements to the value of £5 per thousand acres were to be effected; within ten years, there must be improvements to the value of £10 per thousand acres. Most important of all, no one person was to hold more than one

77 : Lefroy (1854-1930), MLA 1892-1901, 1911-1921 : Minister for Education 1898-1901 (during period of introduction of 1898 - Land Act): Agent-General, 1901-1904 : Minister for Lands, 1916-1917 : Premier, 1917-1919.

78 : Debates, liv, p. 2088.

million acres in any one division of Western Australia. Since the Kimberley Division, under the act, only constituted one area, this proviso affected many large landholders, such as Emanuels, Connor, Doherty & Durack, and J.A. Game.

The discussion of the Bill did not come before Parliament until March 1917, towards the end of a session.⁽⁷⁹⁾ The Labour members held that insufficient time had been allowed for the discussion of the motion, and moved that consideration of the Bill should be postponed for six months -- in effect, until after a general election. This amendment was defeated by a vote on party lines. In speaking to the Bill, members of all parties professed a desire to thwart the combines, especially the American Meat Trust, which were believed to have designs on securing large areas of cattle country, after the manner of the Vestey interests. Hence the legislation limiting the extent of holdings -- the first time such a measure had been mooted by the Parliament of Western Australia. The Assembly passed this clause without amendment, but in the Legislative Council, the Colonial Secretary (Hon. Hal Colebatch) moved that the maximum area which might be held in one division by two or more persons jointly, or by any association of persons incorporated or unincorporated, should be raised to two million acres. If

79: Debates, liv, pp. 2088-96 : 2414-90 : 2496 et seq., 2509 et seq., 2535 et seq., 2613 et seq.

any leaseholder were beneficially interested in a greater area, he should forfeit the surplus. This gave the large owners a good deal of latitude, and the Hon. J.M.Drew and the Hon. J.W.Kirwan pointed out that the restriction could be rendered futile by the formation of dummy companies, "although consisting of the same shareholders, so long as there were in each case a separate registration, and the objects were slightly different". (80)

The Council passed Colebatch's amendment without much comment, whereupon the Government moved for its adoption in the Assembly. But the Labour Party moved for the reduction of the area which a company might hold to one million acres. Reference was made to the large areas held by Vestey Brothers, and Connor, Doherty & Durack, as well as the alleged intentions of the American Meat Trust. "Our northern areas must be populated," said Scaddan, "and they will never be populated so long as we permit men to hold millions of acres along our watercourses." Labour favoured subdivision into smaller units. When the question was put to a vote, several members of the Country Party supported the Labour amendment, which, as a result was carried by twenty votes to thirteen. In this form, the clause was accepted by the Council, several members of which, however, again expressed their misgivings about the possibility of dummying by combines. Lessees of holdings of over one million acres were given twelve months in which to subdivide their land, but, at the motion of Sir Edward Wittenoom,

80 : Ibid. p. 2515.

this period was extended to two years, because of the disruption caused by the war in settling business affairs. (81)

It seems indubitable that the intention of the majority of Parliament was to reduce holdings in the pastoral districts, especially the Kimberleys, to manageable proportions that would allow of more efficient development, and, in so doing, to attract more white population to these parts. The First World War had created a shortage of experienced white labour, as many stockmen enlisted with the Light Horse. Allen comments tersely : "The War had taken all the eligible men, and we had to get men from South, of an inferior type to the local hard product." (82)

By 1917, there were only 277 white men engaged in the Kimberley pastoral industry ; but there were 803 aboriginal males, and 560 gins. (83)

From this time on dates a growing reliance on native and part-native stockmen. From an employer's point of view, they had the merit of proficiency at rounding up cattle, even if they sometimes chased condition off the beasts. No wages were paid, but pastoralists repudiated the idea that black labour was cheap, and pointed to the cost of keeping the natives in clothes, food, and tobacco, and of maintaining the friends and relations

81 : Debates, lvii, pp. 253, 892, 977 : lviii, p. 1047.

82 : Allen, op, cit. p. 13.

83 : Cf. Appendix on Population and Labour.

of the workers. No accurate economic survey of the question exists, in which the relative efficiency of white and coloured labour might be taken into account. But the old, pre-war type of stockman had not been an expensive employee. His wages rarely cost more than £120 a year, and his "keep" mainly consisted of a few elementary items of diet, in which salt beef and damper figured prominently. For much of the time, stockmen camped out somewhere on the station, during musters, and, while they were at the homestead, the "men's quarters" seldom offered much in the way of luxury. It was a hard life, with few amenities. There were probably more deaths from suicide in this district than in most other parts of Western Australia; but the great reaper was fever, caused, in the main, by bad drinking water, or transmitted by mosquitoes. It has been stated that, in one year, 28 men died at Noonkanbah station, of fever; (84) and certainly, deaths by fever were sufficiently common to cause no undue comment in the station journals of the time. The Kimberley stockman was a hardy, self-reliant individual, nurtured in conditions which made independence and a keen sense of hospitality two of his main characteristics.

Under such circumstances, it was hardly surprising that the rise in the price of beef during the war, and the simultaneous shortage of efficient labour, induced many of the

84 : Private information from Mr. George Mawley, one of the owners of Noonkanbah station.

smallholders to sell out. In the main, the purchasers were absentee capitalists. Thus, in 1914, Ben Copley re-invested part of the proceeds of the sale of Ord River in buying Brooking Springs and Oscar Range from C.C. Blythe. Anna Plains station, where, until a few years previously, the manager had had to sleep on a platform forty feet high, because of hostile natives, was bought by the Macansh estate in 1915 from Birnie and zum Felde. At the same time, William Naughton, a Riverina pastoralist, made several purchases north of Hall's Creek, including Alice Downs (formerly owned by Ben Cranwell), Frog Hollow (from the estate of Sam Muggleton), and Mabel Downs (owned by Joseph Bridge, who thereupon purchased Springvale, in the same neighbourhood). Bob Sexton sold Texas Downs to one Rawson for £16,000, and Naughton purchased this run from its new holder for £32,000 - a handsome profit for the middleman.⁽⁸⁵⁾ Similarly, a Sydney firm, F.A. Brodie & Co., bought up Kelly and Sexton's Bedford Downs, Tom Cole's Carolla, and Gordon King's Idamere, three small runs to the west of the Hall's Creek-Turkey Creek road. These were sold in 1917, as one run, Bedford Downs, to the Quilty Brothers for £34,000 -- a price of almost £5 per head of stock estimated to be running on the property, or over double the rate at which Ord River changed hands three years earlier.⁽⁸⁷⁾ Moreover, there was considerable amalgamation in the

85 : Allen, op.cit. p. 5.

86 : Debates, lxi, p. 1290.

87 : Letter, Tom Quilty - G.C. Bolton, August 16th, 1952 : in possession of the present writer.

Leopolds, and in the later settled country around the upper Fitzroy, until then regarded as "battlers' country". Sir Sidney Kidman turned his attention to this area. In 1916, he purchased Glenroy from Orchard and Spong, and in 1919 paid approximately £80,000 to the Blythe brothers for Mount House, Fairfield, and a small run at Point Torment, near Derby, on which stock for butchering had been run. Later in the year, Kidman purchased J.A.Game's West Kimberley cattle stations, Yeeda and Isdell Downs, for £75,000. He did not take over Game's Myroodah, as he was not interested in sheep. Another £75,000 was paid for a half-share in Macdonald's property of Fossil Downs, to which was added Peter Pianta's small run at Lansdowne.⁽⁸⁸⁾ The latter was no doubt purchased in consequence of Kidman's experience of the competition which some smallholders provide in mustering unbranded stock.

East Kimberley provided a more attractive avenue of investment than West Kimberley, where the rapid increase in cattle numbers had been abruptly checked by the onset of tick fever around 1916-17. The barrier between West and East Kimberley had by then ceased to have any effect, as many cattle ran in the unfenced country along the Margaret and upper Fitzroy. The spread of the pest was inevitable. Although redwater fever was noted at Derby in 1916, it was not until 1917 that the herds along the Fitzroy valley were badly infected. Losses were extremely

88 : Letter to the writer from Walter Kidman, July 11th, 1952.

heavy, as the fever spread faster than it had in the sparser stocked East Kimberley of the late 'nineties. Within two years, the estimated number of cattle in West Kimberley fell from 408,366 to 308,194. Within the same period (1917-1919), calving figures fell from 54,035 to 25,785. At Gogo alone, branding fell from 18,000 in 1917 to 12,000 in 1918 and 8,000 in 1919. The malady caused many breeding cows to abort.⁽⁸⁹⁾ For a while, a local transport crisis occurred, as the tick plague put an end to the picturesque bullock teams which had been used to haul stores. Donkeys and mules were used for replacements, at first commanding very high prices.⁽⁹⁰⁾ Although the first motor cars had appeared in Kimberley in 1913, the year in which McKenzie and Robertson managed the journey from Derby to Wyndham via the Tanami goldfields, the roads were in no state for the commercial use of motor transport.

In East Kimberley, on the contrary, with the approaching completion of the Wyndham Meatworks, and with the opening, in 1917, of Vesteys' large modern meatworks, with a designed slaughtering capacity of five hundred head of cattle daily, the marketing position seemed assured, and it is not surprising that the large lessees throughout Kimberley desired to keep control of their lands. To this end, they adopted a very

89 : Cf. Allen, op.cit. p.14.

90 : Cf. Quanbun journals, October 25th, 1917.

simple expedient. The pioneers were the Union Cold Storage Company. The lands they had purchased in East Kimberley stood in the names of several individuals. On the face of it, the old Ord River and Sturt Creek had become divided amongst several independent smallholders, including Samuel Vestey, A.G. de L. Arnold, a Sydney lawyer who handled Vestey's business, C.W.D. Conacher, the manager of the Darwin meatworkers, D.D. Jones, an insurance broker, and others. All these smallholders entrusted the administration of their property to the Australian Investment Agency, which had been set up in 1915 to manage the Union Cold Storage Company's Australian interests.⁽⁹¹⁾ After Samuel Vestey made over his holding in 1919 to H.E. Powell, there was nothing in the title of the leases to indicate any connection between these properties, save their common administration by the Australian Investment Agency. But, in the Kimberley District, they were invariably referred to as "Vesteys'". Similarly Emanuels' holdings were divided into several stations, each just under one million acres in extent. Each was administered by a company, the shareholders of which were members of the Emanuel family and a former sleeping partner of Sydney. The Kimberley Pastoral Company made over half its lands to the Lulugui Pastoral Company, whose shareholders were almost identical. In short, although a polite legal fiction stated that there were now no stations of over one million acres in area, control by the large pastoral firms remained as widespread as

91 : Note the Sydney Directory, 1915-19.

before.

Very nearly all these large firms possessed outside interests. Thus the McLartys, the Roses, and the Duracks all held properties in the South-West ; the Macdonalds and the Naughtons were landowners in the Eastern States. Ben Copley had invested in the automobile industry of Perth, whilst J.A.Game,D.J.Doherty, and Isadore Emanuel had considerable interests in the British financial world. It was becoming increasingly apparent that the limitation of holdings to an area of one million acres was not having the slightest effect on the growth of absentee company control, but there was no indication that the State Government, since May 1919 under the control of James Mitchell, intended to intervene. Late in the 1919 session, however, action was precipitated by the Hon. J.J.Holmes. During the consideration in the Legislative Council of a completely innocuous amendment to the Land Act about the conditional purchase system, he moved, as an additional amendment:--(92)

"(1) After the commencement of this Act, no registered company, either local or foreign, shall be entitled to become a lessee of a pastoral lease under Part 10 of the Principal Act.

"(2) After the 31st December, 1921, no such company shall be entitled to hold a pastoral lease under this part of the act; Provided always nevertheless that this section shall not apply

(a) to any such company which was registered prior to or held a pastoral lease or leases on the 28th of February, 1917, and a shareholder therein shall be deemed to be beneficially interested only to the extent of any acreage proportionate to his interest in the share capital of the company,

92 : Debates, lxi, p. 2004 (et seq.)

(b) to any such company which has declared its refusal to accept a new lease under Clause 30 of the Land Act Amendment Act, 1917."

The effect of this amendment would have been to make away with the titles of all the "mushroom" companies which had been formed since the passage of the Act of 1917, expressly to circumvent the provision against any one interest holding over one million acres. The spirit, as well as the letter, of the legislation limiting the size of holdings would have influenced the future development of the Kimberley pastoral industry. The administration of the necessary capital investment in the district would have been in the hands of smallholders, with a greater reliance on the banks, but with a more intimate relationship between owners and workers than was apparent in the large-scale absentee owners who held the field. There was one flaw in Holmes's amendment, as then phrased, which the Hon. J. W. Kirwan pointed out. It would prevent the future formation even of bona fide companies having no connection with the multiple leaseholders against whom the amendment was designed. As an amendment to the amendment, Kirwan moved that provision should be left for the Executive Council to permit a company to take up new leases, if the individual case warranted such permission. This move was defeated by nine votes to seventeen. The division on Holmes's amendment showed a tie; twelve members, including Holmes, Miles, and the Labour Party favoured it, and twelve, including Wittenoom, Hamersley, and Edwin Rose, all interested in Kimberley investments, opposed it. The Chairman (Hon. Walter Kingsmill) gave his casting vote with the "Ayes".

Since it was the last night of the Parliamentary session, this amendment was promptly referred back to the Legislative Assembly. Mitchell moved disagreement with the Council's motion. He expressed pained surprise that the Upper House should have sprung this "ill-conceived" and unexpected proposal on the Government. It would not be fair to the companies to proceed against them at such short notice; "we damage security", said Mitchell. He hoped the House might trust him to bring down a measure dealing with the matter in the next session. (It never was, although he did sponsor a motion prohibiting any lessee from holding more than one million acres anywhere in the whole of Western Australia. But this did nothing to break the system of dummyming.) Even the Labour Party hesitated to ally itself with this radical proposal from such an unlikely source as the Legislative Council. One of its private members, S.M. Rocke, moved an amendment on Holmes's clause which merely called for power for the Minister of Lands to refuse applications for leases, and to request statutory declarations from companies. This modification was readily accepted by the Assembly. It was referred back to the Council, which assented by fifteen votes to seven, Holmes and Miles being numbered among the recalcitrant minority. (93)

In this way, the State Government determined the pattern of the future development of the Kimberley pastoral industry. The smaller leaseholders, with their greater dependence on established markets, and their smaller reserves of credit, were to yield precedence to the greater companies, with their connections in Great Britain or the Eastern States, which might provide better facilities for the development of their properties and the provision of markets. The hope underlying Mitchell's encouragement of the bigger firms must have been that they could and would spend more money in the development of the district, and build up the pastoral industry in a way which would be beyond the resources of the smaller pastoralists. It is easy to be wise after the event, and champion the smallholder ; but, at the time, the decision to permit the continuation of the control of millions of acres by interlocking companies was condoned by all political parties, who had combined to defeat Holmes's move in a contrary direction.

The marketing position favoured the encouragement of British capitalists. The abandonment, because of wartime policies, of the Philippines trade had been made permanent, in order that the Wyndham Meatworks might be assured of a sufficient supply of stock from East Kimberley. From evidence submitted before the Select Committee of 1921, it would appear that at first the State Government's intention had been to supply the metropolitan market with chilled beef. Partly because of public prejudice against the chilled article, and partly because of the cost of fitting

the State ships with equipment for refrigeration, the idea was abandoned. Instead, late in 1918, the prospective manager of the meatworks, L.J. McGhie, called a small conference of producers and experts, who concluded that the metropolitan market should be supplied from Derby and points south, leaving Wyndham to be regarded purely as an export proposition. (94)

Thus the differentiation between East Kimberley and West Kimberley persisted. In West Kimberley, the cattle industry was to be governed by the ruling price of livestock in the metropolitan market, for the better supply of which the State Shipping Service had been organised. East Kimberley's prosperity was to be tied to the British market. Apart from the small trade from Broome and Derby to Java and Singapore, the Asiatic outlets were not to be cultivated, although their ports were closer to the Kimberley District, and the competition for their trade far less keen than that amongst exporters to Britain. Since the East Kimberley output was to go to the British market, there existed opportunities for the British meat firms who had holdings in the hinterland of Wyndham to develop their cattle stations, and to ensure a supply of good quality beef for consumption by the British public. The British meat firms, being good businessmen, could only be expected to develop a source of supply in Australia if good quality cattle for freezing were not available nearer home. And these there were in abundance, in Canada and the

Argentine. Furthermore, Vesteys' misfortunes in Darwin seemed an object lesson against Australian investment. After three seasons, in which seventy thousand cattle were treated, Vesteys' meatworks in Darwin had closed down, partly because of the shortage of shipping, but also because of the high cost of operations. The latter included an acute labour problem, and a high wages bill, as a result of the hectic series of incidents which centred around unionist opposition to the Gilruth Administration in Darwin, and the riots of 1919-20. Vesteys' name was implicated widely in the subsequent investigations which probed these spectacular doings. (95)

The result was that Vesteys' and the Bovril interests, and possibly other intending investors, concentrated on the Argentine, which, in any case, was a closer source of supply. It may be doubted, under these circumstances, whether it was reasonable for Sir James Mitchell's Cabinet to expect that the British capitalists would attempt great developmental projects in the remote Antipodes. By committing East Kimberley's output to the British market, instead, the cattlemen, both large and small, had been exposed to foreign competitors, who held more advantages in selling their beef. It would be hard for anyone to prosper enough to encourage the financial institutions to

95 : Commonwealth Parliamentary Papers, 1920-21, vol. iii., pp. 1653-1688. (Report of Mr. Justice Ewing).

advance credit for developmental purposes. Instead, financial difficulties would encourage both absentee and resident owners to avoid expenditure on their stations ; to employ cheap native labour, rather than white stockmen ; to neglect the improvement of their herds ; and to postpone or abandon the construction of better homesteads, fences, and improved watering facilities.

Other factors, too, retarded the development of the whole Kimberley pastoral industry. Conditions were still hard. Absentee owners preferred to spend their profits in enterprises outside the district, instead of returning to the land the wealth the land gave. There was conservatism in station management. Governments with little knowledge or insight into the district's requirements made costly errors in its administration. All this had to be compensated for by the recuperative power of the frontages, and the consistency of the summer rainfall. In these two factors, Kimberley pastoralists reposed a trust which, as it happened, was too implicit.

=====

CHAPTER FOUR.

RECESSION.
(1920-1935)

And the children of Israel.....took the spoil of all their flocks and all their herds and all their goods.

--- Numbers, xxxi, 9.

=====

In viewing the Kimberley pastoral industry, it is difficult to say at exactly what date the recession set in. One estimate might place the turning-point at 1914, when the great Fitzroy flood smashed the West Kimberley sheep industry, and when the First World War called away the majority of the experienced stockmen in the district. Perhaps a more likely date would be 1917, when the tick got into West Kimberley, and when East Kimberley was tied to the overseas market. A further contributory factor was undoubtedly the absence of improvements on the runs, and the failure of those owners who had capital to advance from the free-and-easy methods of the old "open range", which could only be practised with complete success with a supply of experienced labour. This failure to progress is usually held to have been due to the insecurity of the marketing position. While West Kimberley was fortunate in having the metropolitan market, East Kimberley experienced several periods of uncertainty, which must have contributed

to the reluctance of owners to make those improvements which would have proved of benefit in later years.

Yet, from the inflated prices at which station properties were selling towards the end of the war period, it is plain that intending investors made light of these difficulties. Indeed, their very readiness to pay enormous prices meant that there was less capital available for the development of improvements, although over-capitalisation, and hence further indebtedness to the banking institutions, resulted from this tendency. In attempting to exercise the influence of the Copleys and the Emanuels on the industry, the Scaddan Government had only left the way clear for outside capitalists, such as the Vestey's and Kidman, with whom the Kimberleys were but a minor part of their widespread investments; so that the last state of the Kimberleys was worse than the first⁽¹⁾ It followed that the best country was in the hands of the large interests, and that it was very difficult for any smallholder to establish himself in the settled districts. When the ex-servicemen came

1 : Cf. Luke, xi, 24:26.

24. When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places seeking rest; and, finding none, he saith, I will return unto my house whence I came out.

25. And when he cometh, he findeth it swept and garnished.

26. Then goeth he, and taketh to him seven other spirits more wicked than himself; and they enter in and dwell there: and the last state of that man is worse than the first.

back from the First World War, those of them who expected to find in the Kimberleys "a land fit for heroes to live in" had little cause for optimism. Already forty million acres were under occupation, tied up in leaseholds until 1948, and for the most part the only country in which a man of small means might hope to prosper was already occupied by one or other of the big companies. This forty million acres lay in a great stretch of land shaped like a sickle, with the tip at Wyndham, with the blade sweeping through the Ord and Fitzroy watersheds, and with the handle extending south from Derby to Anna Plains. Outside lay poor and remote country, which even the tough "battlers" had left untouched. On these outskirts, a few ex-servicemen were to attempt to found new stations, and thus extend the area of settlement.

The Rehabilitation Department arranged for several men to receive training in the cattle industry on the aboriginal station at Moola Bulla. Of these, Black and Gliddon formed a run at Mount Amherst, west of Hall's Creek, in a pocket of land left unsettled because of the tick regulations. Store cattle purchased from F.C. Booty of Lamboo cost them £4 per head.⁽²⁾ At the edge of the desert, Weaber and Trenoweth formed the rather ironically named Beaudesert, to the south of Ruby Plains, which had recently been taken up

2 : D.N.W. 507/25 : cf. Lamboo journals, April-May, 1920.

by Darcy brothers and Oliver from the executors of Robert Button, East Kimberley's pioneer station manager. To the south, where Sturt Creek emptied itself about once every four years into Gregory's Salt Sea, Robert Falconer took up one million acres at Billiluna. West of Wyndham, in a former aboriginal reserve, south of the Forrest River Mission, F.W.Hay and L.R.Overheu settled at Nulla Nulla.

Even members of the Legislative Assembly, down in Perth, were led to enquire whether newchums were being sent into wild country where the natives were still uncertain. Time was to prove their questions warranted.⁽³⁾ But the Government did not share these misgivings. To them, the problems of the Kimberleys were comprehended in one question -- the fate of the Wyndham Meatworks. These were proving a continual source of expense. Like Vestey's, the State Government had found the capital cost of erecting meatworks in the North far exceeded original estimates. From the £155,150 suggested by Nevanas, the cost of construction had risen, by the completion of the works, to £723,000. Indeed, when the bill to authorise its maintenance as a state trading concern was before the Legislative Council, Sir Edward Wittenoom prophesised that, as a government concern, the scheme was "doomed to failure", and added : "I hope soon to hear that the Government has been able to transfer

3 : Debates, lxiii, p. 1354.

this responsibility to someone else's shoulders", and even J.J.Holmes speculated on the relative efficiency of private, as contrasted to Government, management.⁽⁴⁾ M.P.Durack, since 1917 member for the district in the Assembly, thought that the works should be taken over by local pastoralists on a co-operative basis.

The meatworks commenced operations at a particularly inauspicious time. It is impossible to study the story of the early difficulties of the Wyndham Meatworks without speculating on how different the position might have been if the Moore Government had built them when they were first mooted, when the cost of construction would have been much lower, and when Western Australian beef might have been in a better position to find a regular market. As it was, in the early 'twenties, the new meatworks had to make its way into overseas markets in the face of almost overwhelmingly strong opposition, and, as a result, pastoralists received such meagre returns that all development was discouraged, and the district stagnated. Only West Kimberley, benefiting from the better prices in the Perth market, and from the continued prosperity of the sheep industry, remained in somewhat better condition than the rest of the district, until new difficulties came at the close of the decade.

In its first two years of operation, 1919 and 1920,

the Wyndham Meatworks failed to please any section of the community. To the pastoralists, its prices of 20s.-25s. per 100 lbs. weight, seemed inadequate beside the 45s. obtainable at Townsville in Queensland. The average return per beast was £7/1/1 in 1919 and £7/5/5 in 1920, and it may be noted that these prices for delivery at Wyndham were considerably higher than anything most of the pastoralists received before the war -- or, for that matter, at any time in the subsequent twenty years. Inadequate storage space, and the shortage of suitable shipping limited the kill, and this was a more legitimate source of grievance to the squatters. In 1919, only 9,281 were treated, though in 1920 the number doubled to 18,495. Given adequate storage space, the manager estimated that he could treat 30,000 carcasses annually, and he had employed an architect to report upon the possible cost of supplying such space.⁽⁵⁾ But the Government were concerned to note that, in its first two years of operation, the meatworks incurred a loss totalling £195,387. This was, in some degree, due to high working costs, inevitable to some extent because of the tropical conditions in which the work had to be carried out. To the parliamentarians from the North, the high wages paid to the meatworkers were the cause of concern, and it was

5 : Votes and Proceedings, 1921-2, No. 4, provides a complete account of the problems of this period.

suggested that a saving could be effected by having the men work from April to September at Wyndham, and from September to April at a new meatworks at Carnarvon.⁽⁶⁾

Indeed, the labour question was one of some delicacy. This, more than any other factor, was said to be responsible for Vestey's decision to quit Darwin, and the Perth politicians anxiously scanned the North for signs of similar tendencies at Wyndham. There can be no doubt that, with the completion of the meatworks, and with the return of ex-servicemen, the following of the Labour Party spread in Kimberley. Thus, in 1917, M.P. Durack, the most prominent cattleman in the district, had been untroubled to win the Legislative Assembly seat on the Nationalist ticket. He had secured more than twice as many votes as his three opponents combined, although two were carrying Labour colours. The election was conducted in a fairly amicable vein; when Durack found one of the defeated Labour candidates stranded penniless in Derby, he immediately advanced him his fare home to Wyndham.⁽⁷⁾ In 1920, when the Farmers' and Settlers' Association changed its name to the Primary Producers' Association, and enlarged its platform accordingly, Durack and E.H. Angelo, M.L.A. for Gascoyne, had transferred allegiance to the Country Party, and, as a member of this party, Durack was challenged in March 1921 by a Labour candidate, Cornish, and an independent with a policy of land

6 : Debates, lxi, p. 1423 : lxii, p. 293.

7 : Durack, M.P. : Diaries, October 16th 1917 : cf. Appendix XI.

reform, Willessee, each of whom exchanged preferences. At this election, Wyndham, Hall's Creek, and Fitzroy Crossing returned substantial Labour majorities, whilst Derby and the surrounding district favoured Willessee. Had not the anti-Labour stronghold of Broome voted solidly for Durack, who was eventually returned with an absolute majority of fifteen votes, the swing Left would have become more obvious to the Nationalist government at Perth, and steps may have been taken to counter it by the provision of more public works, or a change in the land policy.

The increasing influence of Labour and the A.W.U. is attributable to the land question to no inconsiderable extent. Hitherto, in the Kimberleys, a station worker had been able to select a run, not too far from the ports for profitable working, with hopes of becoming a prosperous station-owner. Now all the accessible land was taken, and, by the Land Act of 1917, delivered into the hands of the big capitalists. It is no coincidence that, from that time on, a swing to Labour developed in Kimberley, nor that Kimberley's Labour leaders should win votes by denouncing Vestey's and "the London Jew, Izzy Emanuel".⁽⁸⁾ A class of resident smallholders would not have voted so readily for Labour; but, in the absence of such a class, the absentee landlord became identified

8 : Cf. phrase employed by Hon. A. A. M. Coverley : Debates, 126, p. 560.

in the minds of the voters with the parties of town and country capital. The vote for Labour was, to some considerable extent, the protest of men resentful that all the good land on which a smallholder might prosper should be parcelled out among the absentees. In supporting the claims of the smallholders, Labour argued that they would develop the land more intensively and less wastefully than the absentees.⁽⁹⁾ It may be noted that all developmental schemes are subject to the influence of the state of the capital market, and that it would probably have been harder for the smallholder to obtain adequate credit than for the larger owner.

Trade unionism in the Kimberleys was never as militant as the N.A.W.U. in Darwin. A lumpers' strike in 1921 temporarily dislocated supplies to the hinterland of Wyndham; and when, in the same year, A.W.U. workers demanded a wage increase from 3/6 to 5/- per hour, it was inferred that this contributed⁽¹⁰⁾ to the failure of the Wyndham Meatworks to open for 1921. The stoppage was, however, principally caused by the lack of shipping space, and by the decision of the Premier, Sir James Mitchell, to keep the works closed, and thus incur a loss of £75,000, rather than run them at a loss of twice as much. (The eventual deficit on the year was £140,000, so the economy was slight.) The decision not to operate was left so late that some owners already

9 : Cf. "Nor'-West Echo", November 20th, 1923.

10 : Debates, lxiv, p. 208 : but note also p. 769, and McGhie's tribute to the workers, Votes and Proceedings, 1921-2, A2, q. 375.

had cattle on the road before the announcement was made, and although some compensation was offered in the form of advances on later deliveries, the cattlemen of East Kimberley were left with no marketing outlet at all during the 1921 season.

The situation was extensively canvassed in the parliamentary session of 1921, but it was left to the persistent J.J. Holmes to move successfully for the appointment of a select committee of the Legislative Council "to inquire into and report on the working and administration of the Wyndham Freezing Works and the State Shipping Service."⁽¹¹⁾

The main witness examined, the manager of the meatworks (Leslie J. McGhie) produced some interesting evidence.⁽¹²⁾

Labour and employment relations, he said, were extremely good, and caused no problem. The profitable marketing of the meat was the greatest difficulty of the Wyndham Meatworks. A glut had arisen in Britain during 1921, and prices of beef and by-products, such as hides and tallow, had fallen sharply. Competition was formidable. The Vestey interests were devoting themselves to the development of Argentine beef, which was brought to Britain by their Blue Star shipping line, and sold by their chain of retail businesses. The Queensland meat works were owned by Lord Inchcape, head of the Peninsular and Orient Line, and his associates. McGhie

11 : Votes and Proceedings, 1921-2, No. A2. See also Debates, lxxv, pp. 1112, 1200, and lxxvi, 2610, 2720 and 2767.

12 : Ibid. Minutes of Evidence : Questions 168-492, 796-870.

considered that interests such as these controlled the London market and had manipulated it in order to squeeze out competition, and that the sole hope for the Wyndham product would lie in the negotiation of an agreement with the Commonwealth Shipping Line for the conveyance of Kimberley frozen beef to England and Europe, and the negotiation of an official agreement with the British Government.

Unfortunately, two barriers lay in the way of such a course. The Commonwealth Government was irked by the competition of the State ships, and its co-operation was problematical. More important, the British Government, in the belief that the world was still eager to exchange its raw materials for British manufactures, was adhering steadfastly to the old Liberal ideal of free trade, and would have nothing of Imperial preference. The closer proximity of South America to Great Britain enabled the adoption of the chilling process in preserving Argentine beef. Consumers preferred chilled meat to the frozen product. The latter was, however, less expensive in transit, and should have commanded markets among the lower-income classes. Here the competition of the big combines, with control of both shipping lines and the meat industry, may have provided opposition for Australian beef. It has sometimes been argued that the quality of Wyndham beef may have provoked unfavourable comparison with the South

American product. It is said that, because of the rough conditions under which Kimberley cattle were worked, the quality of their beef would be tougher. It is certain that the trek to the meatworks along inadequate stock routes caused wastage, sometimes amounting to half a hundredweight, especially in view of the growing shortage of experienced drovers. This factor can be over-stressed. Perth consumers have eaten Kimberley beef for many years, and the quality has never been so poor as to give rise to an urgent demand that beef should be raised exclusively in the South-West, or other regions near the marketing centre. However, there is no arguing tastes.

The Select Committee found that because of the depressed state of the overseas meat market, and the opposition of the combines, all future operations at Wyndham would run at a loss of approximately £150,000 a year. Canning had already been abandoned, and such of the cattle that were unfit for slaughter would have to be sacrificed for tallow and fertiliser. In such adverse conditions, the committee recommended that operations should be indefinitely suspended at the Wyndham Meatworks. Holmes, and a majority of the committee, went further and urged that the Government should attempt to lease or dispose of the works as soon as possible. To this the Labour members of the committee dissented. The report was adopted by the Legislative Council. Nevertheless, the meatworks re-opened in 1922, "because of prospects of

improved prices in the United Kingdom."⁽¹³⁾ Had it remained closed, the East Kimberley squatters may not have obtained shipping to market their cattle for some time, and a protracted period without sales might have proved ruinous to some of them.

The other section of the Select Committee's enquiry, that dealing with the State Shipping Service, was mainly concerned with the internal administration of this body, and conclusively demonstrated that:⁽¹⁴⁾

"Although the officers of the service have been assiduous and energetic as regards their duties, the control by Ministers has been anything but satisfactory. From the inception of the service, there has been manifested procrastination, indecision, and a measure of incapacity which has largely militated against successful working, and this, if continued, cannot fail to bring about but one result.... Business enterprises cannot succeed when the management is subordinated to politics, where the control is such that promptness and decision are almost impossible, and where there is lacking continuity of policy."

The evil effects of political control chiefly manifested themselves in failure to take advantage of opportunities to dispose of the antiquated ships with which the service had commenced operations, and to replace them with new oil-fuel vessels. This made for less efficiency in the marketing of West Kimberley beef, and in the delivery of goods and supplies to the ports of the North-West. With the burning of the "Kwinana" in December 1920, the number of State ships on the north-west run was reduced to

13 : "West Australian", March 26th, 1922.

14 : Votes and Proceedings, 1921-2, No. 12, p. 55.

two, augmented by the "Bambra", on loan from the Commonwealth Government. This did not make for efficient service to the ports of North, and added to the difficulties and grievances of settlers in these areas. Shortages of essential goods, such as flour, were prone to occur when too long an interval separated the calls of the State ships. (15)

It was at this juncture that the first harbinger of new conditions in Kimberley entered the field of transport. In 1921, Major Norman Brearly, assisted by a young lieutenant named Charles Kingsford Smith, secured a £25,000 subsidy from the Commonwealth Government for the inauguration of an air mail service from Geraldton to Broome and Derby, the first of its kind in Australia. The service was commenced in the December of that year, and despite serious mishaps in its early days, soon became well established, although the risk of forced landings added a savour of adventure to journeys. (16) Overnight stops were made at Onslow and Broome, and passengers were taken from Derby to Geraldton at a cost of £20. In addition, a profitable sideline was made from joy-rides. The importance of this development lay in the fact that the air service made for closer contact between station managers and their Perth offices. Not only could detailed instructions be conveyed quickly by letter,

15 : "West Australian", February 13th, 1922.

16 : "Nor'-West Echo", December 6th and 20th, 1921.



and small parts of machinery,urgently required,be sent by air freight, but also the more enterprising owners could now make quick journeys to visit their properties and take a personal interest in development.

Other amenities were also being gradually introduced into the Kimberleys. The question of medical facilities had long been one of the greatest drawbacks to settlement in the district. Although the Government had established hospitals at Broome, Derby and Wyndham, and subsidised resident doctors, these medical men were not always the best in their profession. Some,it is said, were too fond of the bottle, though this is by no means true of all. Inland,there were no facilities. When Dave Edgar was working at Gogo station,and had his foot taken off by a crocodile, he made a poultice of damper as a temporary measure, and rode 217 miles to Derby for medical attention. For worse injuries,the position was more serious. In 1917,one of the Darcy brothers was thrown from his horse and received severe abdominal injuries. Brought to Hall's Creek over primitive bush tracks,Darcy was in a condition calling for immediate operation. This was performed,without an anaesthetic, by the local postmaster,F.W.Tuckett,working from instructions telegraphed to him by Dr.J.J.Holland,in Perth. Meanwhile,Darcy's two brothers rode back from Wyndham,where they had been delivering cattle -- 250 miles on horseback,with one break, a journey which took them little more than a day and a half. The doctor immediately

proceeded to Hall's Creek, a twelve-day journey even by express steamer and car, but arrived too late to avert the result of complications. This incident brought home to Perth people some notion of the hardships of life in the North. Indirectly, it led to the State Government helping to subsidise the establishment of an Australian Inland Mission hospital in the old Miners' Institute building at Hall's Creek. Money was also donated by local residents, and two nurses appointed. In the thirty years which followed, this hospital has played a most important part in the life of the district. (17)

Nevertheless, despite the advances towards an improved standard of living, conditions were still hard, and unlikely to attract many new settlers. The use of native and half-caste labour was the only resort, especially for small station-owners who had neither the conditions nor the wages offering to attract white stockmen. Thus one well-known East Kimberley identity, when asked how he overcame the labour problem, always asserted: "We breed our own". Many of the small runs were in the hands of "old-timers" who had been in the district thirty years or more. Too old to modernise their methods of station husbandry, their only heirs, in many cases, half-castes, they had no incentive to put in improvements, which would have made for efficient

17 : Information from Dr. J. J. Holland, and the Australian Inland Mission office, Melbourne.

running, and enabled them to meet the problems caused by low export prices. In many cases, an innate distrust of "book-work" had led them into too great a reliance on advances from the banks, and their financial position was far from sound,

Before censuring the Kimberley pastoralists of that period for their neglect and apathy in planning for the future of the district, we must remember that developmental projects were hemmed about with difficulties, some of which might have been alleviated by sympathetic consideration from the State and Federal Governments. Thus, although for many years, the value of the "pindan" country had been talked about, no attempt was made to provide artificial watering points because of the cost of freights, and the consequent expense of deep boring. Apart from attempts to provide tanks in the back country, an unsatisfactory expedient which had been tried on Mount Anderson and Liveringa, in the West Kimberley sheep country, no station seriously went in for opening up new watering points until 1920-1923. It must be allowed that the credit for the first experiments in deep boring should be accorded to the Vestey interests, who, in that period, worked a boring plant on their properties in East Kimberley and the adjacent parts of the Territory. This involved considerable expense, as freight costs from Wyndham, were at least £30 per ton by camel or donkey team. Difficulties were sometimes experienced through errors on the part of the

manufacturers of bore equipment. Owing to the distances involved, it took months before any fault in supply could be rectified.⁽¹⁸⁾ Neither the State nor the Commonwealth Government granted any rebate or subsidy on this enterprise, and the prohibitive costs borne by Vestey's may have deterred less wealthy pastoralists from following their example.

Of course, the State Government was not entirely mindless of the welfare of the North. In April 1920, Hal Colebatch, one of the ablest of the Mitchell Ministry, had returned from a quick tour of the North, and advocated the formation of a separate department for the North-West. This was promptly done, and Colebatch placed in charge. As secretary of the Department, A.O. Neville, Commissioner of Native Affairs, was appointed, whilst a Commissioner for the North-West, resident in Broome, was found in Geoffrey Drake-Brockman. As a qualified engineer, he was expected to be able to answer the ever-present complaints from Broome and Derby and the other coastal ports as to the neglected state of their jetties and other public works.⁽¹⁹⁾ There is little evidence that the Government was making any concerted effort to rehabilitate the pastoral industry, the mainstay of the Kimberleys. Instead, their interest

18 : Vestey's improvements are noted in the Administrator of the Northern Territory's Reports, 1920 and 1922.

19 : "Nor'-West Echo", November 29th, 1921.

was centred around the possibilities of tropical agriculture, and in particular cotton-growing.⁽²⁰⁾ The emphasis on alternative forms of primary production probably arose from the apparent decline of the pastoral industry. With the decline in stock numbers, the unsatisfactory marketing position, and the increase of the wallaby problem on the frontages, sheep and cattle were no longer such an attractive proposition. During the early 'twenties, insect pests were on the increase. Tick was by now established in West Kimberley, although the cattle there were fairly well immunised after several seasons, and losses from redwater fever were on the decrease. But another insect, the buffalo fly, encouraged by the wet seasons of 1922 and 1923, had established itself in the country between Hall's Creek and Fitzroy Crossing, also appearing in the western coastal lands around Obagooma. This pest, according to P.D. Hutton, owner of Leopold Downs, caused an average loss of 57 pounds weight in cattle marketed.⁽²¹⁾

In 1921, W.R. Easton was sent up to explore the coastal country between Derby and Wyndham, and to report upon its suitability for tropical agriculture. Meanwhile, the Knowsley agricultural area outside Derby was sub-divided,

20 : For a historical account of the work of the Department of the North-West, D.N.W. file 491/23. The files of this Department are preserved in the Archives at Perth (A. 251).

21 : "Western Mail", January 31st, 1924.

and a group settlement of twelve men sent up to grow cotton there during the wet season of 1922-23. After a fairly promising beginning, the crop failed. Experts disagreed as to whether the soil had been unsuitable, insect pests responsible, or the workers inexperienced.⁽²²⁾ Meanwhile, experimental plots had been established at Violet Valley, an Aborigines' Department outstation in East Kimberley, at the Forrest River mission, and, under H.E.Thurkle, at the Presbyterian mission at Port George IV. Private squatters to experiment with cotton included George Oslington of Frazier Downs, near La Grange, and Hay and Overheu, at Nulla Nulla, west of Wyndham, who secured encouraging results.⁽²³⁾ Meanwhile, after the presentation of Easton's report,⁽²⁴⁾ the establishment of a port at Napier Broome Bay was mooted. John Thomson, M.L.A. applied for a concession to establish another group settlement -- they were the vogue then -- to grow cotton, tobacco, sugar and other tropical products in "this magnificent land".⁽²⁵⁾ Fortunately, the scheme was never carried through. Yet another private settlement was attempted by a group of six, led by Josiah Sawdon, at Udialla on the Fitzroy.⁽²⁶⁾ After the failure of his attempt to grow cotton, the block was transferred to an old Kimberley identity, Darcy Ryder, who had more success in growing fresh vegetables for

22 : D.N.W. 607/1922 : 1067/1922 : 1104/1922 : 62/1923.

23 : Ibid. : Cf. Debates, lxi, pp. 1198-1200, 1453-1469.

24 : Publication No. 3 of the Department of the North-West. (1922).

25 : "Nor'-West Echo", March 17th, 1923.

26 : D.N.W. 491/1923.

the Derby market. Another to grow vegetables with great success by irrigation was Arthur Gardener, the publican at Fitzroy Crossing whose garden was a showplace in the district for many years. (27)

The appointment of the Commissioner for the North-West, and the new experimental enterprises fostered under his aegis, seems to have given new life to the idea of a separate administration for the North. During the Address-in-Reply of 1922, M.P. Durack advised the formation of advisory committees from each of the four districts of the North-West, to work with the Commissioner. These committees should consist of the local Resident Magistrate, chairman of the road board, and two delegates nominated by the Government, working in conjunction with the local member for Parliament. (28) Durack said he was not an advocate of separation, but favoured the formation of a separate North-West administrative body under the State Government - a sort of imperium in imperio. It was with some idea of furthering this move that, later in the session, he moved for a return of all assets, revenue, and expenditure for the area of the State north of 26° N. (29) Durack was a member of the Country Party, which had declared itself in favour of the New State movement ; and here was a local opportunity for its

27 : And still is. (1953)

28 : Debates, lxvi, p. 304.

29 : Ibid. pp. 1198-1200 : 1453-1469.

practical application. The immediate reaction was not favourable. Sir James Mitchell opposed the motion because of the expense and difficulty involved in compiling such a return, while the Labour leaders, Collier and Angwin, were mildly derisive of the idea of a new province. But the members from the North, of all political colours, supported the motion, and indeed, James Willcock, the Labour member for Geraldton, moved an amendment requesting a separate return for his district as well. When Durack's motion was put to a division, those representing Northern constituencies voted solidly in its favour, but it was lost by a margin of four votes. This put a quietus to the move for a new province, though it might validly have been argued that the problems confronting the North could not be efficiently and sympathetically administered from Perth, and that the creation of a separate province within the state of Western Australia would have eliminated the under-populated northern "rotten boroughs" from the State Parliament.

Another feature of the new Department of the North-West had been its responsibility for the administration of the aboriginal question in the North. This still provided problems. Although most of the aborigines had come in and "sat down" either at a station homestead, or a mission, or one of the Government reserves, there were still nomad tribes who were responsible for an occasional stock-killing. This activity was blamed by some squatters on the influence of the missions, in developing a taste for beef in the blackfellows, without putting them to useful work.

Thus the manager of Glenroy, in the Leopolds, blamed deprivations on "Moola Bulla graduates"⁽³⁰⁾, while in the near neighbourhood of Wyndham, it was claimed that the natives from the Forrest River Mission worked a certain round on their stock-killing forays. Leo Overhep, of Nulla Nulla, complained thus:⁽³¹⁾

"They would come in and send a message that they wanted work. I would give them work. They would work for about three days until they knew it would take only about two more days to finish the job. Then they would go away. I would be two days in finishing the work, and then I would discover that they had killed cattle at Nooroo and along the Durack River. All the tracks would lead across the Durack and follow up the Pentecost. Sometimes they would go to Speewa station, due south of us; sometimes they would cross near the head of the tide of the Pentecost, and pass by Cockburn. They would kill cattle as they went along. They would kill cattle along the King River, and go to Carlton station, more to the east, and make sure that they could kill quietly. Then they would go down the Ord River, cross the gulf on logs, or in a dinghy near Adolphus Island, and proceed to the mission."

In the outlying districts, a man could not always be sure that his life was safe from the blacks. Down in the south, along the Sturt Creek, Joseph Condren and Timothy Sullivan, with sixty horses and twenty-two camels, were overlanding seven hundred head of cattle to stock up the newly-founded Billiluna run, when they were murdered by a semi-civilised native. Owing to the prompt action of Jack Barry, a well-known Kimberley identity, at that time managing Sturt Creek for Vestey's, a posse of police and civilians was soon on the tracks of the murderer and his friends, and "it is alleged by the police in incomplete files

30 : Royal Commission, 1923, Minutes of Evidence, q. 1258.

31.: Royal Commission, 1927, Minutes of Evidence, q. 1854.

that the offender was killed by the police in effecting an arrest."⁽³²⁾

The men who tried to start stations on the outlying fringes of settlement must have possessed great resources of optimism, with such hazards to meet. There was not even the solace of a good market. Even the British War Office refused a Wyndham tender for the supply of beef for the troops, in favour of South American competition.⁽³³⁾ As from 1923, however, the Wyndham meatworks obtained a regular contract with the Belgian army for the supply of meat for canning as bully beef for the conscripts, and for some years this absorbed most of the export from Wyndham.⁽³⁴⁾ But the return to the grower who sent his cattle to the meatworks was consistently low, averaging £3/5/- per head in the years 1923 to 1925. It was no matter for surprise that the larger owners in the district reacted to these conditions by re-entering the livestock shipping trade to Fremantle. Connor, Doherty & Durack had contemplated this move as early as 1922, but were discouraged by high freight rates of between £8/10/- and £9 per head. However, in the following year, Holmes & Kilfoyle sent down 322 Rosewood bullocks by ship to Fremantle, where they averaged the comparatively princely sum of £20 per head. It may be noted in passing that, when J.J. Holmes led a deputation requesting repairs to the

32 : Ibid. Question 2792. Mr. Barry's account is somewhat different.

33 : "Western Mail", March 28th, 1924.

34 : See Appendix IX.

Wyndham Jetty to facilitate this trade, and to allow cattle unsuitable for the metropolitan market to be shipped overseas, the responsible Minister refused to authorise public works which might allow competition with the Meatworks, until overruled by Sir James Mitchell.)(35)

The success of this enterprise encouraged the other big firms in the district, Vesteys', and Connor, Doherty & Durack, to follow Rosewood's example. West Kimberley could not supply its normal quota of bullocks, because the ravages of tick fever four or five years earlier meant that comparatively few of the calves of 1919 and 1920 survived to become marketable bullocks by 1924. In the latter year, the three East Kimberley shippers sent down to the metropolitan market a total of 1,893 cattle, which were sold for between £13 and £18. Even after deducting freight, this gave a better return than marketing stock at the meatworks, and so, in 1925, the three firms sent down 4,332 head. In that year, the kill at the Wyndham meatworks, which, in 1923 had reached the number of 30,418, was down to 18,848. This may have been the result of the abnormally bad seasonal conditions of the year before, but the Western Australian Government evidently felt that the competition of the shipping

35 : Royal Commission, 1928, Minutes of Evidence, Q. 3431.

trade was having an adverse effect. Connor, Doherty & Durack and Holmes & Kilfoyle were known to have purchased stock from the smaller owners. An attempt to counter this tendency by encouraging West Kimberley owners to ship stock to the Wyndham Meatworks failed because the returns were insufficiently encouraging.⁽³⁶⁾ Finally, orders were issued that vessels in the State Shipping Service were not to carry livestock from Wyndham.

This effectively crippled the trade between Wyndham and Fremantle. Since the withdrawal of the Adelaide Steamship Service from northern routes, during the war, the State line had enjoyed a monopoly of the coastal trade to Wyndham and Darwin, although the Blue Funnel Line, trading with Malaya, still called at Broome and Derby and carried cattle for Emanuel brothers and Streeter & Male. Other private lines were discouraged from competing by the Navigation Act of 1912, which forbade ships engaged in the coastal trade to engage crews at under award rates, and was designed to prevent the use of under-paid coloured crews. To some of the Kimberley pastoralists, it seemed that this legislation was now being used to protect the monopoly of the State ships. They also felt that "'black' boats meant cheaper freights", and that the temporary or permanent suspension of the Navigation Act in respect to the North-West would benefit them, both by

36 : Nor'-West Echo, July 28th, 1923.

cheapening freight rates, and by allowing East Kimberley squatters to participate in the more lucrative Fremantle markets. Needless to say, the Government did not entertain these proposals. In point of fact, it appears that the State Shipping Service was providing lower freights than any private line worked by white labour might have, and that its main defects arose from heavy-handed Ministerial control, which manifested itself in the failure of successive governments to equip the service with adequate and suitable ships.

The coloured labour question was also an issue in internal Kimberley politics. The pearling town of Broome, which depended for its prosperity on Asiatic labour, was inclined to look askance at the Labour Party's vigorous defence of the White Australia Policy, and was for that reason a Nationalist stronghold. Conversely, the pastoral workers inland feared that, to overcome the shortage of labour on the stations, owners would try to get permission to bring in indentured Asiatic labour, and, for that reason, supported Labour. The suspicion that M.P. Durack favoured indentured coloured labour may have lost him votes in 1921. But, in 1924, Durack retired from politics, and did not stand for re-election. The Labour Party thereupon nominated Arthur Augustus Michael ("Bob") Coverley, an affable young man who had served at the war, and had held jobs at Wyndham as a postal official and a barman. The Nationalists showed a fatal lack of solidarity, being split by regional interests. The official party nominee was G.J. Foley, who had no Kimberley affiliations, but who had just lost his seat in

the Federal Parliament in the service of his party, and needed alternative employment. However, Broome put up a well-known master pearler, Captain A.C. Gregory, as an unendorsed Nationalist, and some of the West Kimberley squatters supported a veteran smallholder, W.J. Chalmers, on a similar ticket. Their example was followed by a Hall's Creek man named Brown. As a result of all this competition, when the votes were counted, it was found that, although, on the primaries, the Nationalist vote substantially exceeded the Labour vote, there was an unusually large leakage of preferences as, one by one, Brown, Chalmers and Gregory were eliminated. Coverley finished up with a majority of 109 votes over Foley, and, to the surprise of most of the district, was declared elected. It is worth noting that he had polled an absolute majority in the districts outside Broome, and that half the remaining votes in these areas were secured by Chalmers, a small pastoralist. This is indicative of the swing towards Labour in the Kimberley pastoral industry, and illustrates the folly of the Nationalists in treating a northern seat as a "pocket borough" for a city candidate, instead of selecting a local man with a knowledge of the district's requirements. (37)

But the year 1924 was memorable in Kimberley annals not for its election so much as for its drought. (38) With the

37 : Appendix XI : "Western Mail", April 19th, 1924.

38 : The three most significant elections in the history of Kimberley took place in 1905, 1924 and 1953, all years of great drought. There is no ascertainable connection between the two events.

possible exception of the 1890-92 drought, this year was the driest hitherto known. Apart from the country within a hundred-mile radius of Wyndham, and for a very small patch of the West Kimberley sheep country, no station in the district received even so much as half its normal annual rainfall. The worst affected area was the coastal country between Derby (4.39") and La Grange (2.20"), although some of the marginal country settled after the war by ex-servicemen ran this unenviable record pretty close ; on Beaudesert, only one natural watering point survived the drought. "Enormous" stock losses were reported. (In West Kimberley, one-quarter of the district's 160,000 sheep were lost in 1924, and one-third of the calves. East Kimberley, surprisingly, recorded the second highest calving on record (56,000); but many of the calves included in this tally must have perished after branding. Many waterholes previously thought to be permanent dried up, and the stock were forced on to a small number of watering-points around which the accessible feed was soon eaten out. In many cases, the heavy concentration of stock on a waterhole over a period of years had led to erosion, and interfered with the runoff of rainwater, as well as producing a tendency to silt.

If the drought resulted in heavy losses, it was not entirely without its benefits. In West Kimberley, it helped to kill off many of the dingos and the wallabies.

These had reached plague proportions, and were furthering the devastation of the frontages. In one year, between January and October, 32,000 of these animals were shot on Mount Anderson, which, by Kimberley standards, was a small run of about 150,000 acres. (37) It must have been at this time that the adage, still current, arose that "a Fitzroy run carries ten kangaroos to every sheep". Under these circumstances, it is no surprise that the overseas owners of Kimberley sheep stations were selling out. In 1922, the Emanuel interests had sold Noonkanbah for £19,000 to a syndicate of six Western Australians. These were Alexander Watson, for many years Emanuels' stock manager; J.G. Kelly, local manager for Dalgetys'; J.G. McIntosh, a wholesale butcher; Hubert Evans and George Mawley, accountants, who managed the financial affairs of the company; and C.R. Herbert. The syndicate also acquired Emanuels' interest in Jubilee Downs and Nerrima, while Watson, in conjunction with a partner named Webster, purchased Myroodah from J.A. Game. Another transaction involved the sale of Emanuels' old cattle depot of Lower Liveringa to G.C. Rose, who continued to run cattle there, as a second string to sheep. Most of the Fitzroy sheepmasters believed that the deterioration of the frontages would necessitate a change to cattle before many years. However, the drought again

37 : Royal Commission, 1928 : Minutes of Evidence, Q. 1185.

turned attention to the "pindan", and its possible provision with artificial watering points, to curb the ruin of the river flats. Although, in the Murchison, there had been sub-artesian boring for some twenty years, this method of watering back country had never previously been adopted in West Kimberley. The credit of initiating this type of improvement is usually given to Robert Lukis, then the manager of Noonkanbah, backed by Alexander Watson. Lukis, a Murchison man, drew up a comprehensive scheme of development through the provision of artificial watering points, which was put into practice by him, and the succeeding manager, Bill Henwood. Although neighbouring stations were at first sceptical about the success of this scheme, the results convinced them before many years, and they proceeded to follow suit.

In the years following the 1924 drought, the stations in West Kimberley were thus enabled to effect a few much-needed improvements. Wool prices were still good, reaching 25d. in 1924, and the cattle market gave adequate, if not over-generous, prices. In East Kimberley, few growers were actually operating at a loss, but their profits were insufficient to justify outlay on improvements. (38) The change to a Labour government had not resulted in any perceptible increase in the amount of assistance given by the State. Presumably because it had originated with the Mitchell Government, the office of Commissioner of the North-West was abolished in 1926 by Collier, Drake-Brockman being returned to the Public Works

38 : See appendix at end of chapter.

Department as Engineer for the North-West. In its later years, the Department had been under criticism from an ephemeral West Kimberley Progress Association⁽³⁸⁾. Public opinion in the ports, which acted as distributing centres for the pastoral industry, was indifferent, if not hostile, to Drake-Brockman's policy of fostering alternative primary industries. They were not interested in anything except sheep and cattle. In 1926, the Collier Government sub-divided 140 blocks near Wyndham, but there were no takers, despite the supervision of an expert in tropical agriculture (F.J.S. Wise) and of Adrien Desreissis, brought out of retirement for the purpose. The best returns from cotton-growing, indeed, had been secured by private enterprise. In 1925, at Nulla Nulla station, Hay and Overheu grew a plantation of 34 acres of Egyptian cotton, which gave them a return of some fifteen tons. The establishment of this crop had been materially assisted by the use of aboriginal labour.

Unfortunately, these same aborigines, most of whom came from the reserve attached to the Forrest River Mission, were believed by Hay and Overheu to be responsible for spearing numerous cattle, especially in the wet season when hunting was impeded. The cost of these depredations was estimated at between £4,000 and £5,000, and relations between the partners and the natives were steadily deteriorating. Worse followed. One day in May 1926, Hay went out to muster, 38^a : D. N. W. File 486/24

add was later found dead with a shovel-nosed spear in his body. The murderer was apparently one Lumbia, having speared Hay while the latter was beating him with a stockwhip for being implicated in the cattle-killing. Accompanied by Overheu, and by Daniel Murnane, a Commonwealth scientist who was in the district undertaking research on the buffalo fly, a posse of police and civilians went out after the murderer. What followed then has never been definitely established, but the subsequent repercussions were spectacular. In Wyndham, rumours began to circulate from mouth to mouth that several natives had been shot by members of the police party. The local sergeant of police, who had not accompanied the posse, made enquiries to trace these rumours to their source, but could find nothing definite; "people would not talk". But one man, the superintendent of the Forrest River (Rev. Ernest Gribble) was not satisfied. Gribble, a hard-working, obstinate, tactless man, was not popular with the neighbouring squatters and townspeople, but nevertheless made extensive enquiries, and reported his conclusions to the local Inspector of Aborigines. For the rest of the year, Wyndham was subjected to visits by police officers from Broome and Perth, probing the activities of the posse. Charred human remains were discovered along the route taken by the police party, lending colour to the rumours that foul play had occurred. In January 1927, the Premier (Hon.

Philip Collier) appointed G.T.Wood, a magistrate with considerable experience of Northern conditions, as a Royal Commissioner to investigate and report on allegations of a massacre of natives by the police party. (39)

Public sympathy in the district was entirely with the posse, right or wrong. A fund was started to provide them with legal representation, and, during the enquiry, the reticent white witnesses were assisted by a Perth lawyer, W.M. Nairn, who had apparently convinced himself that Gribble and the blacks were in the wrong, and that the Royal Commissioner was in the role of an opposing counsel, rather than an impartial judge. It was not made easy for Wood to sift the truth, especially as some of the black witnesses disappeared for the duration of the trial. Somebody had given them the impression that they were going to be hanged, and they made off one night. After a long, involved, and at times heated enquiry, Wood reported that aborigines had met their deaths while in the custody of the police party in June 1926, but that there was no conclusive evidence to show at whose hands. The two constables were arrested for murder, to the great indignation of the entire Kimberleys, and further funds were raised for their assistance, and a common demand made for their trial by jury in the district. Further agitation was averted by their acquittal by a Perth magistrate, and their subsequent promotion and honourable service

39: Votes and Proceedings, 1927, No. 3 : Royal Commission into Alleged Killing and Burning of Bodies of Aborigines in East Kimberley, and into Police Methods when Effecting Arrests.

in the Force. (40)

This rather discreditable episode aroused considerable ill-feeling in the district; but since then, there have been no known cases of whites being killed by natives or vice versa. However, public animosity was so strong that Gribble, and the local Resident Magistrate who had sided with him, left the district before long. It was with the whole-hearted backing of his constituents that Coverley, in a manner startlingly reminiscent of Francis Connor rather than a modern Labour member, inveighed against the "niggers": (41)

"It is for the Government to decide whether settlers of this calibre are to receive adequate protection to enable them to go on developing the North-West, or whether we are just to muddle on under the present stupid system of protecting the aborigines to the detriment of the settlers as a whole. I could cite many more cases of small men who have been driven out of the country merely as a result of persecution by the natives."

A secondary result of this affair was to cast the spotlight of sensation on Daniel Murnane. The appointment of this veterinary surgeon to investigate the stock diseases of the Kimberleys was one of the first signs that the Commonwealth Government would assist in the development of the district. Following his researches into the buffalo fly pest, Murnane was put to investigating the cause of the Kimberley horse disease. Locally known as "walkabout", this disease had been responsible for the deaths of many horses, especially

40 : "Nor'-West Echo", June 4th, 11th, and 18th, 1927; August 13th, 1927.

41 : Debates, vol. 76, p. 454.

during the months towards the end of the wet season, and its eradication or control was a serious problem in the pastoral industry, especially in an era when mechanisation was not highly developed. As early as 1886, G.C. Rose had consulted the noted botanist, Baron von Mueller, as to its origin, which von Mueller attributed to the Darling pea plant.⁽⁴²⁾ Later investigations confirmed the theory of a plant origin, although many old stockmen diagnosed worms. Murnane suspected whitewood. He obtained five horses, and fed them on a diet of which whitewood was the main ingredient. Every horse died, and he considered his diagnosis confirmed. It now seems that his investigations were not thorough enough. Many managers could have testified that horses had died in paddocks from which whitewood was entirely absent, or, conversely, had continued to thrive in places where whitewood was present.⁽⁴³⁾

Murnane's visit was not the only sign of tentative interest on the part of the Commonwealth Government. The parlous condition of the beef cattle industry, not only in the Kimberleys, but throughout Australia, had gradually forced itself under the notice of the Federal authorities. Continued years of poor export prices were bringing about a crisis in the industry.

42 : Royal Commission, 1928 : Minutes of Evidence, Questions 1190-1.

43 : Ibid. Questions 223-7, 656-6, 906-11, 1080-5, 1142 et al.

In 1926, the Commonwealth Parliament passed an act dividing the Northern Territory into two provinces, North and Central Australia, divided at 20° South. At the same time, the Federal Government offered to take over control of the portion of Western Australia north of 26°. This scheme was rejected by the Collier Government as too vague and indefinite, but, in subsequent debates, the members for the North showed interest in the suggestion that the Kimberley District should be handed over, perhaps on a temporary basis, to the Commonwealth. The Hon. J.M. Drew, Collier's Colonial Secretary, admitted that the district "requires such an expenditure of money to develop it as the State cannot possibly find."⁽⁴⁴⁾ The Legislative Council passed a suggestion that the Commonwealth should administer Western Australia north of 20°, which might be added to North Australia; but the advice was not acted upon. Kimberley Labour circles were not enthusiastic about an arrangement which might subordinate their branches of the A.W.U. to the independent and radical North Australian Workers' Union, centred at Darwin.

Negotiations continued around the proposal to annex Kimberley to North Australia. It was hoped that the development of the combined province might be undertaken on a large scale by a company of British capitalists, and this possibility was investigated by a Western Australian member of the Federal Cabinet,

44 : Debates, vol. 75, p. 3008. Cf. vol. 74, pp. 332-3 : vol. 75, p. 3008 et seq.

Sir George Pearce. Meanwhile, the Collier Government seems to have been galvanised into maintaining its own plans for the advancement of the district. At an election address in Boulder, in February 1927, Collier made reference to the provision of a new ship for the State Shipping Service. This was the "Koolinda", still in action on the North-West run. He also foreshadowed plans for the systematic assistance of smallholders: (45)

"The Government has decided to make provision for the gradual conversion of the cattle stations from the West Kimberleys south to the Murchison into sheep runs. To enable this to be done permission would be sought to extend the operation of the Agricultural Bank to include these pastoral areas, and a sum would be provided for each holding deemed suitable for sheep raising. Advances would cover the purchase of sheep, fencing, and water supplies."

Such promises may have assisted the easy return of Coverley in Kimberley, by a large majority over Arthur Male and Patrick Percy, a pearling master. Unfortunately, the scheme was not put into practice. Further to assist the smallholder, however, the Wyndham Meatworks, although operating at a continued loss, had entered the stud business, and in 1926-7 had imported over seventy bulls to assist with herd improvement. The bulls were to be sold on terms, payment being made over six years. The response amongst pastoralists was the reverse of enthusiastic, and it took over eighteen months to dispose of the animals. The squatters, stubborn individualists to a man, preferred to choose their own bulls rather than have them selected for them by the Government, regardless of the fact that many had introduced no fresh blood into their herds for years. The aboriginal station at Moola Bulla, which sold

45: "Nor'-West Echo", February 26th, 1927.

stud bulls at £30, and herd bulls at £10, enjoyed a little more success, apparently because squatters felt that they could exercise more freedom of choice, but their logic is not obvious. (46)

It must be observed that, with fencing at £24 a mile, the smallholders were not encouraged to build paddocks in which stud bulls could run without the competition of the wild cleanskin "mickeys". The impression existed, nevertheless, that apathy was mainly responsible for the failure of the squatters to take advantage of the scheme. (47)

If the State Government could not develop the country through smallholders, the Federal Government was entitled to test the large capitalists. In March 1928, Sir George Pearce conferred with Sir Charles Nathan and M.P. Durack about the prospects of uniting North Australia and the Kimberleys, and attracting a chartered company to attempt the development of this combined province. It was concluded that an area of not less than 20,000,000 acres would be required to attract an investor, preferably in the hinterland of Wyndham, from which a railway might be built 150 miles or more to the south-east. Land might be secured from most of the lessees, and if Vestey's were not prepared to come into the scheme, Sir George Pearce indicated that the Commonwealth could impose taxation of such

46 : Royal Commission, 1928 : Questions 454-460 : 877-880 : 1386-1390 : and 1408-9.

47 : Debates, vol. 79, p. 403.

a nature that it would not prove to the advantage of those standing out.⁽⁴⁸⁾

The problem was to find their capitalist. It was known that Tilden Smith, the "pioneer" of the Brockman country was as ready as ever to hawk a Kimberley proposition; but Sir George suggested that Nathan and Durack should go to London to ascertain what would induce a capitalist to invest in the Ord valley. Durack thought that the Government should specify some definite terms which they could offer capitalists, but the Bruce Government, mindful of a coming election, were not to be committed. Eventually, Nathan went alone. Meanwhile, in the three main beef-producing States, Queensland, Western Australia, and North Australia, Royal Commissions were appointed to conduct fact-finding surveys into the beef industry, each commission to consist of three men well experienced in the cattle industry. The Commissioners for Western Australia were the chairman, Michael Patrick Durack ; Walter McKenzie Grant, who had been the first owner in the State to experiment with Zebu-Shorthorn cross-breeds; and Aubrey John McGlew, of McGlew, Monger & Co., who handled the affairs of nearly all the stations in West Kimberley.⁽⁴⁹⁾

This Royal Commission was noteworthy not only for

48 : For an account of these discussions, Durack, M.P. : Diaries, December 18th, 1926, and March 20th to April 10th, 1928.

49 : Government Gazette, April 24th, 1928. (Terms of appointment).

its recommendations, but also for the valuable minutes of evidence appended to its report, which provide a comprehensive description of the cattle country and its problems in 1928.⁽⁵⁰⁾ Its survey of the Kimberleys began with the hinterland of Wyndham, where the larger capitalists were entrenched. Indeed, the first evidence taken was from the manager of Carlton, near Wyndham, the coastal depot of Bovril Australian Estates, whose main property was Victoria River Downs (N.T.) This firm had attempted to build up a livestock market, but could not get shipping to Fremantle, whilst wastage in stock had frustrated an attempt to build up the Manila trade in 1927, when 4,800 head were shipped experimentally from Wyndham. Bovril were still overlanding stores to Queensland. However, the lack of marketing outlets produced no great enthusiasm about putting in improvements, and, although, by 1928, the manager had succeeded in obtaining permission to start boring and fencing, the Bovril properties had a local name for under-improvement at this time.

The other big English company, Vesteys', had more to show to justify their tenure. Their witnesses, the veteran inspector A.E. Moray, and the baronet drover, Sir Alexander Cockburn-Campbell, attested to the Commission that they had put down eighteen bores in Western Australia, and thirteen in

50 : Votes and Proceedings, 1928, No. 14 : Royal Commission to Inquire into the Meat Industry in Western Australia (118 pp.)

the Northern Territory. Such progress would have been more noteworthy if it had not been spread over an area of ten million acres. It is a little difficult to realise the reason which prompted these English companies to hold such a vast area of territory. Admittedly, this meant that stock could be shifted, if necessary, from drought-stricken areas to places where rain had fallen. But the tracts controlled by the Vestey and Bovril organisations were so immense that even these firms, with their large reserves of capital, were not in a position to develop them properly. No doubt the idea of controlling limitless tracts of the Empire appealed to the shareholders in whose name these estates were administered, but it gave rise to local allegations that the big companies were land-hungry, holding all the available land so that no competitors could come in and develop it. The Land Act of 1917, and its Federal counterpart of 1925, had given them some security of tenure, and if these well-capitalised organisations had concentrated on intensive development, instead of dissipating their expenditure on over-large holdings, their record in the North would have been less open to criticism. The policy of the Emanuels in West Kimberley, who disposed of all their interests except Meda and the Gogo stations, and concentrated on the development of these, offered a suggestive pointer to what Vestey's and the Bovril Estates might have accomplished.

The labour situation on the Vestey and Bovril stations was influenced by this policy of maintaining enormous

estates. In conformity with the Land Act of 1917, Vestey's had divided the old Copley and Buchanan runs into seven stations, Ord River, Turner, Nicholson, Gordon Downs, Flora Valley, Sturt Creek and Margaret River, and on each of these a homestead had to be maintained. But it has been stated that very often the resident staff consisted solely of the manager, the cook, and two or three other white men, all the other labour force being natives and half-castes, who worked without pay and camped out in the dry river-beds. One suspects that this practice was not confined to Vestey's. Improvements such as fencing and boring were carried out by workers employed by the Australian Investment Agency. They travelled from station to station under direction from Moray, who was, in fact, responsible for policy decisions for all stations managed by the Agency. The broad outlines of his instructions were presumably received from the shareholders in England, who were not influenced by the exigencies of local conditions. This form of administration was somewhat cumbersome, especially in view of the state of communications at this time. It meant that homestead managers, mostly oldtimers who made better stockmen than organisers, were not required to initiate their own programmes for developing their particular station. Instead, they were subject to periodical inspection from a travelling inspector and bookkeeper, and local opinion persisted in regarding the Vestey homestead managers as little more than "caretakers". But then, local opinion was disinclined

to give Vesteys' a good name. The belief persisted that this firm was developing its South American holdings to the detriment of its Australian interests, which were merely being kept as a reserve.

It would appear that Vesteys' were responsible for standardising the wage rates paid to drovers. According to Cockburn-Campbell, a head drover received £8 per week, and his assistants £4/5/-. The price for droving by contract was 3/3 per head per 100 miles, up to a mob of about 650 beasts.⁽⁵¹⁾ The other stations supplying the Wyndham meatworks followed suit in paying the same rates, with prompting from the Australian Workers' Union, to which most of the pastoral workers now belonged. Through Kidman's Fossil Downs drovers, who supplied both Wyndham and Derby, this award spread to West Kimberley, where it was adopted by Emanuels' and most of the other owners. Such agreements appear to have been informal but mandatory.

Between the Vestey block and Bovril's Western Australian holdings lay the "Durack country". In 1928, it was divided into Rosewood, the property of Holmes & Kilfoyle; Argyle and Ivanhoe, the Connor, Doherty & Durack holdings; and the poorer Dunham River, which, after some vicissitudes, was in the hands of J.E. Davidson, the Wyndham agent (and brother-in-law) of the Duracks. Argyle and Rosewood usually commanded the best prices at the Wyndham Meatworks. They were perhaps the only stations in the vicinity on which improvements were described as "reasonable", "but even they still required vast additions in order to

51 : Ibid. Minutes of Evidence, Questions 115-119.

enable them to carry stock to their full extent."⁽⁵²⁾ It is noteworthy that they were both developed by resident owners. As so often occurs with neighbouring stations, there was some competitive rivalry between the employees of the two properties. But the general supervisor of Connor, Doherty & Durack's stations, W.J.C. Jones, had a story to tell the Commission which they were to hear from oldtimers throughout the Kimberleys. In Jones's words:⁽⁵³⁾

"We depend upon our black labour, and we find it dependable. Most of the young men who came here stay only three or four months to get a bit of money, after which they want to go back to the cities and the motor cars. I have never seen this country so devoid of young white people as it is to-day, and year by year it is getting worse.....

Mr. Grant: Could any scheme be devised to attract young fellows to the stations? Would they be of much use to the owners?

Witness: No. By the time you break them in, they leave you. If you had two or three young migrants here, you would require to tell off a blackfellow to go about after them, and see that they did not get lost. Then probably they would burn out your camp. These young fellows are not worth tucker for the first six months.

Mr. Grant: Would they be of any use after the first six months?

Witness: No.

Mr. McGlew: Where do they go when they leave you? Back to the ports?

Witness: Back to the cities mostly. At one time they used to come up here, get experience on one station, and then let the next station have the benefit of that experience. Now the tendency is to go back to the cities."

In their journey through the Kimberleys, Durack, Grant, and McGlew would become accustomed to such laments from veterans of the salt-beef-and-damper days, themselves scorning amenities,

52 : Ibid. Question 266.

53 : Ibid. Questions 585, 588-590.

and reluctant to admit, as Jack Kilfoyle confided to his record book, that "the white man is more inclined to work by a clock and on mechanised labour than to follow the humours of cattle and horses in a hot climate." (54)

This Jack Kilfoyle was later to become regarded as the most progressive owner in East Kimberley, but, in 1928, he had only been in charge of the family property for a few years, and did not receive a visit from the Commission. He was planning a carefully thought-out improvement policy. He had already done away with the "broncho" method of branding calves, and was a believer in the policy of shifting cattle among the various waters on the property, instead of allowing uncontrolled grazing on favoured spots, as occurred on less efficiently managed runs. Bulls were regularly imported. In addition, Kilfoyle was gaining a name for the thorough manner in which branding musters were conducted on Rosewood. Cleanskins were rare in this vicinity. A larger holder in this area was William Naughton, controlling Alice Downs, Mabel Downs, Terns, and Lissadell, the last of which had been purchased from M.J. Durack and the Hill estate in 1924-5. Naughton had already informed M.P. Durack, with a frankness rare in absentee owners, that: (55)

54 : Rosewood Rainfall Record Book, 1881-1940. (on Rosewood station).

55 : Durack, M.P. : Diaries, April 7th, 1928.

"he didn't know how they were going, it was bad enough to waste his money on them, but he wasn't going to waste his brains on them."

Naughton's heart lay in his Eastern States possessions, particularly one Murrumbidgee proposition whose value had risen from £40,000 to £200,000 within a few years - progress no Kimberley station could report.

The smallholders had their chance to put forward their point of view when the Royal Commission arrived in Hall's Creek. To the south and west lay country which, because of its lighter rainfall or its ruggedness, had failed to attract large-scale investment. The Wyndham Meatworks was their only outlet, and although the Belgian army contract had helped a small rise in prices to bring returns to £3/18/- in 1928, this sum was not enough to encourage an outlay on improvements by growers. There were many complaints about the state of the stock routes, which were still inadequately watered, and which brought about sufficient wastage to cause a reduction in the margin of profit available to these outlying stations. Yet a skilful owner-drover, such as Walter Darcy of Ruby Plains, might still command top prices at the Wyndham Meatworks with a mob from the far side of Hall's Creek. (56) This would lead one to suspect that the lack of skilled labour was a major contributory cause to much of the loss while droving. Further, despite their complaints, few station-owners were actually operating at a loss, although the profits each year were often

56 : Royal Commission, 1928, questions 266 and 849 : Lamboo journals, vol 1. (1916-27). Darcy repeated this feat in the 1952 drought.

extremely meagre. (57)

The station furthest out of all was Robert Falconer's Billiluna, on Sturt Creek. Well provided with reliable surface waters in the neighbourhood of this creek, this property ran five thousand head of cattle, and was breeding one thousand calves annually. The manager practised culling and speying, and herd bulls were introduced from Moola Bulla. However, owing to peculiar problems of its own, the station was not flourishing. Although the run had originally been stocked with tick-infested cattle from Leopold Downs, tick would not survive on Billiluna, and every attempt to immunise the stock by mild infestation had failed. Hence cattle could not be sent to the Wyndham Meatworks without sustaining heavy losses from infection. Since 1925, Falconer had been tirelessly petitioning the State Cabinet to re-open the Canning Stock Route, by putting the neglected wells in order, so that Billiluna cattle might be walked down to the goldfields. The nearby stations of Sturt Creek, Beaudesert, Ruby Plains and Lamboo, which were also lightly infested, might avail themselves of this route. Despite sympathetic Ministerial consideration, Falconer had been unsuccessful, chiefly because of the opposition of the officials of the Stock Department, who believed (without ever having visited the vicinity of Billiluna) that such cattle might introduce tick and pleuro-pneumonia into the southern

57: See appendix at end of chapter.

agricultural districts. Falconer had several arguments in his favour. The Canning Stock Route had originally been created to provide an outlet for clean stock in a "tick area", and even assuming that the latent tick-infection had passed undetected in the Kimberleys, the long trek south would provide time for the disease to show itself, if it existed. Pleuro-pneumonia was not known to exist south of the Ord River station, at that date. The slowness of the Stock Department in inspecting conditions in this area, and their unsympathetic attitude, again illustrate the drawbacks of attempting to govern the Kimberleys from departmental offices in Perth.

West of Hall's Creek, the smallholders had another grievance. Though almost equidistant from the ports of Wyndham and Derby, they could only avail themselves of the Wyndham Meatworks. They were barred from the more remunerative Derby livestock trade by the old quarantine barrier between East and West Kimberley at 127°E. Since the tick got into West Kimberley, this line had been maintained on the pretext that East Kimberley cattle were also subject to pleuro-pneumonia. In supporting this quarantine, West Kimberley cattlemen tended to ignore the fact that pleuro-pneumonia had only been detected in the north-east part of the district, near the Territory border, and to remember that the quarantine line had the effect of limiting the number of stations which might participate in the fairly lucrative Fremantle trade, which was still yielding much better returns than the meatworks.

The smallholdings around Hall's Creek were situated so far from a port that droving occupied several weeks of the dry season every year, and all station expenses were higher because of the freight charges. These properties were hence not among the best improved, and the homesteads were bachelor establishments, which might be described as "rough and ready". F.C. Booty, although a man of considerable education, who lived in elegance at the Weld Club while in Perth, kept no cook at Lamboo, and was known to serve tea in mugs improvised from baking-soda tins with leather handles. Cox's homestead at Louisa Downs had only one coat of paint in over twenty years, of such a colour that it caused the place to be known as "The Blue Lookout". Nor were some of the Vestey homesteads in better shape, especially where white ants had been at work. The old generation of cattlemen may have despised the comforts of life, but these conditions played an important part in the failure to attract young men to work in the pastoral industry.

Past Louisa Downs, the Royal Commission party came into less rugged terrain. This was Emanuels' country, Margaret Downs, Cherrabun, and Christmas Creek, otherwise known as "the Selection". At Margaret Downs, they interviewed the manager, Ted Millard.⁽⁵⁸⁾ Later to be known as "the grandfather of all the cattle in Kimberley", Millard was a Queenslander who had come over in 1921, and who was applying his Queensland experience to the more backward conditions on Gogo. Here, backed by the Emanuels' money, well-sinking and boring

58 : Royal Commission. 1928. Questions 997-1058.

had been undertaken on a fairly large scale to supplement the natural waters, and 170 miles of fencing had been put up so that paddocks might be constructed around the watering points. Once fencing had been put up, stud bulls could be regularly imported, and from them around one hundred herd bulls were bred annually. By 1928, a start was being made with the dehorning of bullocks, and the speying of cull cows. This was one of the best-improved runs in the entire district, and the policy of improvement was showing returns in quieter and more tractable beasts, in better condition, returning some of the best prices of the Fremantle market. Although the Emanuel interests possessed plenty of capital, they could not have achieved such favourable results, if they had tried to hold too vast an area, and if they had not been able to attract good managers.

North of Fitzroy Crossing, conditions were not so good. Fossil Downs, in which Kidman had a half-share with Dan Macdonald, was fortunate in being able to send stock both to the Derby and Wyndham markets, as well as occasional shipments North. Stores were overlanded to the other Kidman holdings in Central Australia. But further north, in the Leopold Ranges, Kidman was faced with the problem of getting his money back on the three stations of Isdell Downs, Mount House, and Glenroy, which he had purchased at inflation prices, and which, because of their remoteness, and the roughness of the stock routes in their vicinity, were not paying propositions. Tick losses had accounted for up to half

the 30,000 cattle on these three runs at the time of purchase, and, although breeders had been introduced from Yeeda and Fossil Downs, they had not done well. The stations had borne the whole cost of maintenance on Johnston's track, along which freights from Derby were £20 a ton, until in 1927 a landslide blocked it. Under such discouraging circumstances, Kidman attempted very little improvement work of any description, and instead endeavoured to reduce losses by drawing off as many cattle as possible for marketing. In 1924, after removing all stock available for mustering, he had handed back Mount House and Fairfield to the Blythe brothers, and in 1927, after losing over £16,000 on Isdell Downs, he abandoned this station and overlanded the remaining cattle -- 3,184 head -- off the run.⁽⁵⁹⁾

Mount Barnett, a neighbouring station, the property of Ben Copley and Vernon Hamersley, was thrown up in 1928, and its stock transported to the other Copley property of Brooking Springs, near Fitzroy Crossing, where 17,000 head were managed by Abe Seaton. This withdrawal from the Leopolds of two of the best-capitalised owners was a sign that this rough marginal area, taken up in the optimistic era of prosperous expansion about 1905, could not sustain its owners in more adverse circumstances. Of the other owners north of Fitzroy Crossing, Felix Edgar and William Chalmers at Mount Hart, and P.D. Hutton at Leopold Downs were both heavily mortgaged. There were also a number of "battlers' runs" along the Leopolds,

59 : Ibid, question 1202.

including O'Connor of Mount Leake, O'Leary of Galway Valley, Baker of Mount Laptz, "Scotty" Sadler of Tableland, Matthews, and Connaughton. On each of these, the owner ran a few hundred head of cattle, and maintained a rough and at times precarious living. They sent small batches of cattle either to Derby or Wyndham, usually doing their own droving, but occasionally managing to have their little mob included with the draft of a larger neighbour. There is very little written record of the lives these men led, although interesting traditions exist in stories, which, if true, give evidence of a code of morality differing somewhat from city conventions.

The Royal Commission came nowhere near this district, which was not fit country for automobiles. Instead, after a short detour to inspect the Franey oil bore, an enterprise into which M.P. Durack had invested heavily, the three Commissioners passed through the sheep stations of Quanbun, Noonkanbah and Upper Liveringa. The latter did not form part of the field for their report, but these properties were all enjoying a fair amount of prosperity with wool prices at between 16d. and 20d. -- in 1927, indeed, Kimberley wool brought top prices of 23d.⁽⁶⁰⁾ The boring plants on Noonkanbah indicated that an answer was at last being found to the erosion of the river frontages. This erosion problem had kept down sheep numbers along the Fitzroy, so that in 1928 there were only just over 150,000 along the valley, where there had been double the number twenty-five years previously. It had led to pessimism

amongst owners as to the future of sheep in that district, and they had hitherto been unwilling to undertake further fencing projects. It is worth noting that in the country around Hall's Creek, two or three smallholders, such as F.G. Taylor and E.R. Ezzy, had achieved some success with small flocks of sheep, and there were now 2,000 sheep in East Kimberley.

The wool industry was not the immediate concern of the Royal Commission, and they passed through the sheep country in one day, arriving that evening at the cattle station of Lulugui, where, after supper, they were hospitably entertained with pianola music.⁽⁶¹⁾ This property was held by the shareholders of the Kimberley Pastoral Company, who also owned Kalyceda, which was used for fattening country. The manager, William Douglas Moore, had been assistant-manager of the Ord River station during its heyday, the Copley era, and knew his business thoroughly. Unlike most of the other veterans, he succeeded in encouraging young men from the South to come up on to the property, and to remain there while learning about cattle management. The wages paid to these young men were 30s. per week the first year, 50s. the second, and £3 10s. in the third. The highest wage usually paid for a stockman in the northern pastoral districts at that time was not more than £3. (Managers at the top of their profession made between £6 and £7.) Living conditions at Lulugui were good. If a jackeroo stayed twelve months, his boat fare from Fremantle was refunded, and if he stayed three years, he was

61 : Durack, M.P. : Diaries, June 21st, 1928.

given three months holiday on full pay. Such attractive terms contrasted with the "salt-beef-and-damper" regime offered by many of the oldtimers, and, as a consequence, Lulugui had less trouble in staffing. Improvements at that time also included six hundred miles of fencing, including three sides of the station's boundary, and ten deep bores on Lulugui and Kalyeeda.⁽⁶²⁾ Moore's work, like that of Ted Millard at Gogo, demonstrated that a good experienced manager could make a success of a Kimberley cattle station, provided that the capitalists behind him had the sense to give him adequate financial backing.

The Royal Commission visited several stations within a sixty-mile radius of Derby, including Lulugui; Mount Anderson, a mixed sheep-and-cattle property run by George Rose and his two sons; Yeeda, managed for Kidman by Wilfred Steele; Emanuels' Meda; and Kimberley Downs, the main property owned by the sons of M.C. Davies. Their situations made for cheaper freights, and for little loss in weight while droving cattle to port, but all complained that the long ship voyage to Fremantle resulted in bruising and in losses of between fifty and one hundred pounds per head. They advocated -- and in this had the support of the Royal Commission -- that chilling or freezing works should be established at Derby, or at least a boiling-down factory for old "pikers". It was noted that, as in the hinterland of Wyndham, motor trucks were beginning to supersede the old donkey and camel teams for the delivery of

stores, being at once quicker and a little cheaper. Despite the capricious climate -- the drought of 1924 had been followed by a Fitzroy flood in January 1926, when a thousand Yeeda cattle were washed out to sea by flood-waters seventeen miles wide -- these properties were probably the best situated in the Kimberleys, so far as accessibility to the markets was concerned.

The stations around the port of Broome were not so well off. For this, there seems no other cause attributable than the inferiority of the coastal country. Of the string of little stations between King Sound and Broome -- Swan Point, Cygnet Bay, Weedong, Quondong Downs -- all had folded up by 1927, most of them falling into the hands of Streeter & Male, who had provided them with financial advances. Most of this land was taken over by the Beagle Bay mission, and the stock shifted to the two Streeter & Male stations, Hill and Roebuck Plains. These properties were outside the quarantine line. They thus had the choice of three markets -- the Java trade, developed by Male in 1910, and carried on intermittently by the firm ever since; the Fremantle trade, and the overlanding of store stock south to Ida Valley, or to the railhead at Meekatharra, in the lower North-West. These properties ran Herefords, which were believed to be lighter than the Shorthorns favoured elsewhere in the Kimberleys. On the other hand, on Hill, within the past few years, Hereford bulls had been disposed of, and Shorthorns substituted. The resultant cross was said to be better adapted to the country, and would go further out from the watering

points to feed upon the plains. (63)

South and east of Broome, many of the small stations founded by pearlers twenty-five years earlier had gone out of existence. They had been founded by pearling men as a second string, a means by which their fleets could be provided with meat, and at the same time a field of investment separate from the hazardous pearling industry. With the post-war decline of the pearl market -- a decline accelerated by lack of co-operation among the pearling masters, whose obstreperous individualism even exceeded that of the squatters -- these small runs, established as they were on poor coastal country, ceased to pay. Some went out of business, and others were burdened by enormous mortgages. Oslington and Crameri, at Frazier Downs, were in the process of giving up cattle in favour of sheep, a move completed by about 1930. Anna Plains, managed by F.S. Mullen for the Macansh estate, of Queensland, was able to ship from Port Hedland, and thus save on freights, as well as utilising the overland route to the railhead at Meekatharra. It was along that discouraging stretch of coast, the Ninety-Mile Beach, that the Royal Commissioners encountered the first Resident Magistrate of Wyndham, C.D. Price, living in wretched circumstances, "at 81 years of age, in an old tin hut on the side of the road, with little or no shelter, and only two old niggers to look after him, and very little clothing." (64) It was an

63 : Ibid. Questions 1666-1780.

64 : Durack, M.P. : Diaries, June 30th, 1928.

incident illustrative of the lot which overtook many of the less successful pioneers of the Kimberley district in old age.

After visiting cattle stations in other parts of Western Australia, the Royal Commission made their report: (65)

"Those persons who invested their capital in (the industry) when the marketing conditions were favourable, and the outlook was bright, have now passed into a zone where their capital is in jeopardy and the future of the industry gives them cause for the gravest concern."

To attract capital needed for further development, they recommended the extension of the date of expiry for pastoral leases from 1948 to 1978, subject to the cancellation of the last 25 years if improvements to full carrying capacity were not carried out.

It was believed, with some reason, that lessees would be more willing to improve their properties if they could be sure of security of tenure, and that financial institutions would have a better guarantee for the advancement of loans on cattle stations. Moreover, because of high production costs and adverse marketing conditions, it was suggested that producers in the Kimberleys might be exempted from taxation "until such time as they had been recouped for all their outlay in making the land productive," (66) and that the cost of necessary improvements should be deducted from profits in assessing taxable income. Production costs might also be reduced by the provision of better marketing facilities, including improved stock routes and shipping services, and the

65 : Royal Commission, 1928, p. v. (Full report, pp. v - xxiv.)

66 : Ibid. p. viii.

development of the chilled meat trade. A reduction in Crown rentals was also recommended. While this demanded considerable outlay by the Government, the Commissioners worked from the viewpoint that the position of the beef industry was so bad that its rehabilitation was a national responsibility.

Other recommendations listed by the Commission included the establishment of a research station to investigate methods of eradicating the tick and buffalo fly, and the provision of dipping facilities, so that all travelling stock could be dipped compulsorily at intervals of not less than twenty days. Research might include experimentation in the Zebu-Shorthorn cross, and other Shorthorn crossbreds better adapted to withstand prevailing conditions. Stock routes should be thoroughly reconditioned and provided with modern water appliances. The Canning Stock Route, or an improved alternative route, should be thrown open, and the adjacent part of East Kimberley examined with a view to ascertaining its suitability for sheep raising. The quarantine line between East and West Kimberley should be immediately abolished, as serving no useful purpose, but, on the contrary, hindering the struggling smallholders west of Hall's Creek from marketing their stock advantageously. Chilling works, to supply the metropolitan market, should be erected at Derby. The sea carriage of livestock should be discouraged as "not economically sound, wasteful to a degree, and inhumane."⁽⁶⁷⁾ If it were continued, the Navigation Act

67 : Ibid. p. xxiii.

should be amended to permit the free trading of vessels along the coast of Western Australia, for a term of not less than ten years. This would be particularly useful for the carriage of store cattle in the off season.

Many of these suggestions were sound in principle, and their adoption would materially have assisted the industry. Whatever their imperfections in the eyes of the Government, their framers knew the cattle industry, and the report at least presented a plan from which the Federal and State Governments could have formulated blueprints for a system of future development. Circumstances did not favour any such concerted action. While the State Cabinet was awaiting the return of Sir Charles Nathan from London, before continuing to discuss the transfer of the Kimberleys to the Commonwealth, the Leader of the Opposition, Sir James Mitchell, had expressed himself as against the alienation of any part of the State's heritage.⁽⁶⁸⁾ This, although forty years had indicated that State Governments lacked the wherewithal adequately to develop the whole North. The Royal Commission's report was also attacked by a meeting of the Pastoralists' Association, a body in which the West Kimberley interests held more influence than East Kimberley. This possibly resulted from the fact that most of the West Kimberley owners resided in Perth, whereas, apart from Durack himself,

68 : "West Australian", May 3rd, 1928.

most of the influential East Kimberley owners lived in England or the Eastern States. There was community of interest between the Fitzroy wool industry and the rest of the North-West. The Royal Commission's proposal to abolish the quarantine line between East and West Kimberley was condemned by the Pastoralists' Association, primarily, in Durack's view, from motives of self-interest, so that the field of competition in the Derby trade would not be enlarged. (69)

It could not be said that the line was an effective barrier to pleuro-pneumonia. The disease had already appeared among some of Kidman's West Kimberley cattle, and the Netherlands East Indies government had banned stock from infected stations from entering the Java trade. (70)

In December 1928, Sir Charles Nathan returned. His main contacts had been Lord Vestey and Sir Lawson Johnston, the head of the Bovril company. Vestey was unfavourable to any scheme, "unless where they would dominate", Sir Charles reported. Indeed, Vestey opposed the construction of a railway out of Wyndham which might help to bring more cattle into competition with his own interests. (71) (Later, (72) C.W.D. Conacher, Vestey's Sydney representative, was strongly to advocate such a railway. It is impossible to resist the conclusion that somebody was not being straightforward.) In Nathan's view, Sir Lawson Johnston was more encouraging. Bovril had a market for 70,000 cattle, if that number could be secured from the North. Sir Lawson was planning to visit Western Australia, and

69 : Durack, M.P. : Diaries, November 15th, 1928.

70 : Fossil Downs papers : letters D. Macdonald-J. Lahey, August 1927.

71 : Durack, M.P. : Diaries December 17th 1928. 72 : Ibid. Feb. 26. 1930

to ascertain, amongst other matters, whether it would be possible to operate the Wyndham meatworks for a longer period each year - perhaps seven months. He also spoke of establishing local men on small blocks to grow maize, and planned to acquire further areas around the present Bovril holdings. Thus Sir Charles Nathan; M.P. Durack formed the impression that the hope of becoming associated with the Bovril company, if any of these new schemes materialised, may have motivated him.

The failure of either State or Commonwealth Government to enact any legislature to implement the recommendations of the Commission may have been due to the fact that they were awaiting Sir Lawson Johnston's decision on whether the Bovril organisation would be prepared to take over the development of some thirty thousand square miles, before undertaking any Government expenditure. In the interim, also, the question of the transfer of the Kimberley district to the Commonwealth was allowed to hang fire. Since the Commonwealth administration of the Northern Territory was at least as inept as the State administration of the Kimberleys, such a union may have brought few immediate advantages, but it would have done away with the anomalous and arbitrary division of the hinterland of Wyndham. Besides, the Commonwealth was better able to stand the cost of government. But 1929 was not entirely without incident. The State Government's tropical adviser, F.J.S. Wise, spent the dry season making a detailed survey of the possibilities of tropical agriculture in the Ord valley. By appointment with the Federal

Government, two experienced Western Australian sheepowners, Hubert Evans and Langlois Lefroy, toured East Kimberley and the adjacent areas of the Northern Territory. This included inspection of F.G.Taylor's 1,100 merinos, which produced an average clip of $5\frac{1}{2}$ to 6 lbs. good quality wool per head, and a small thriving flock at Argyle, which, with Rosewood, Lefroy pronounced "the best country he had ever seen."⁽⁷³⁾ The value of their report lay in the possibility that this country might, in part, be subdivided for sheep, instead of continuing in the profitless and wasteful cattle industry.

Sir Lawson Johnston, now ennobled as Lord Luke of Pavenham, arrived in October 1929. Interested parties were hopeful; but there was no pressing reason why the Bovril interests should launch into extensive investments in Australia. Like Vestey's, they had large and prosperous interests in South America. There were 300,000 head of Bovril cattle grazing on 20,000,000 acres of alfalfa (lucerne) country in Argentina -- not, indeed, heavier stocked than much of the Kimberleys. However, Lord Luke did not fear the development of Australian competition on the British market:⁽⁷⁴⁾

"He considered Australia need not be concerned about the Argentine's competition, as they had a better market looming up in Australia, where we were already consuming 90% of our production."

Such a policy may have lain behind his firm's attempts to open up the Manila market. Another factor which may have been noted by the Bovril interests was the entry of Wyndham frozen meat into new

73 : Durack, M.P. : Diaries, June 20th, 1929. Cf. Lefroy-Evans Report, Commonwealth Parliamentary Papers, 1929-31, vol iv. p. 449-456.

74 : Durack papers : Letter J.W. Durack - Denis Doherty, Nov. 7th, 1929.

markets. Shipments were made to Germany and Italy, for the first time, in 1929, and a small trade with Egypt, begun some years earlier, was maintained. The Bovril enterprises found it unlikely that they would secure any governmental concessions, especially after the fall of the Bruce Government late in 1929, and of the Collier State Government a few months later. Interest, one suspects, had only been tepid on both sides. Desultory negotiations were begun with Connor, Doherty & Durack, for the purchase of their properties, and the Bovril Australian Estates were actually extended by the acquisition of Mingbing from Billy Weaver, who was selling out to go and seek gold at Tennant's Creek. (He was highly successful, too.) Apart from these occurrences, no result came from the move to secure the development of the East Kimberley and Victoria River districts by a chartered company. Flirtation with this prospect had only inhibited progressive legislation on the part of State and Commonwealth Governments alike.

In retrospect, the 'twenties could be viewed as a period in which the economic difficulties caused by marketing problems had been aggravated by governmental apathy, and a perhaps understandably defeatist attitude among all but a handful of the pastoralists. The opportunities which had been passed up in the 'twenties, and earlier, were not to recur in the 'thirties. Instead, the onset of world-wide depression, combined with a long sequence of years of light rainfall, was to bring the impoverished

and run-down Kimberley pastoral industry on to its most evil days.

Viewing the least complex, but perhaps the most important feature first, one finds that, from 1928, there was a long sequence of years of below average rainfall. In almost every part of the district, 1928 and 1929 were light years. The following season was better, but 1931 brought adequate rainfall only to the coastal areas and the lower Fitzroy. Inland, one station manager described conditions as "dry as a temperance tea party".⁽⁷⁵⁾ Several owners must have shared the experience of Jack Kilfoyle at Rosewood, who calculated that, between February 1928 and October 1930, his station received the equivalent of one normal year's average rainfall.⁽⁷⁶⁾ Most stations nearly made their average in 1932, but, of the next four years, only 1934 was favourable. Oldtimers solemnly pronounced each year "the worst ever", only to revise their prophecies in the year following. In fact, conditions in the Kimberley District were not nearly so bad as the North-West, where there was a more or less continuous drought. Nevertheless, there was much loss in feed, and many watering places previously believed permanent, dried up. These conditions were reflected in the lower marketable value of cattle.

75 : Quanbun journals, December 31st, 1931.

76 : Rosewood Rainfall Book (1881-1940) : October 31st, 1930.

The quarantine issue continued to produce complications. In October 1929, another quarantine line was imposed south of Broome, because pleuro-pneumonia had broken out in West Kimberley, and it was felt that no risk could be run of allowing the disease to spread to the colder South, where it could cause havoc in the dairy industry.⁽⁷⁷⁾ The move aroused strong opposition among the cattle-owners, who contended that these regulations only served to harass the squatters by putting an end to the overland trade between Broome and Meekatharra and other points south. Max Henry, a Royal Commissioner appointed in 1931 to examine the situation, found the restrictions entirely justified, but urged the abolition of the outmoded barrier between West and East Kimberley.⁽⁷⁸⁾ In point of fact, it does seem that the stations around Broome, such as Roebuck Plains, Thangoo, and Anna Plains were only slightly, if at all, in contact with the disease. The regulations weighed heaviest on Anna Plains, which could no longer ship cattle from Port Hedland, but which found it impossible to send cattle to Broome, because the intervening country was tick-infested, whereas Anna Plains was "clean". Once again, officialdom took several years in correcting this anomaly, and it was eventually not until 1934 that provision was made for the inoculation of Anna Plains stock. The similar case of Billiluna, in East Kimberley,

77 : Votes and Proceedings, 1929, No. 22 : pp. 6 and 14.

78 : Ibid. 1932, No. 1.

was at last given attention when, in 1930-1, at nearly seventy years of age, the surveyor Alfred Canning led an expedition which re-serviced the stock route from Sturt Creek to Wiluna. Falconer, the owner of Billiluna, received permission to travel cattle south along the Canning Stock Route. From then on, his cattle were sent down for agistment near the railhead at Wiluna, on his own properties, and then sold on the goldfields and metropolitan markets. His was the only station to take advantage of this outlet.

But the major marketing outlets, the Wyndham Meatworks in East Kimberley, and the Fremantle trade in West Kimberley, suffered greatly from the effects of the depression. The fall in prices was not unduly serious in 1930. At Wyndham, a record kill of 31,051 was treated, giving a return of £4/9/- . In West Kimberley, Fremantle cattle prices were down to an average of £11/13/- , of which about £8 went in shipping expenses. In later years the decline was more calamitous. Perhaps the West Kimberley cattlemen were harder hit than the East Kimberley owners. Despite the loss of the Belgian market, during a 1931 "tariff war", Wyndham returns were not much lower than they had been during the 'twenties, in 1933 attaining a record minimum average of 55s. per head. On the other hand, the Government-owned meatworks bore the costs of marketing, which meant that the suppliers could count on getting some return for their cattle, however small. Indeed, Sir James Mitchell found the loss entailed by the Meatworks a drain on the State's finances, and seems to have contemplated

disposing of them.⁽⁷⁹⁾ Ever since 1921, the season in which the Meatworks had not opened, there had always been a certain amount of doubt each season as to whether the meatworks would operate, and a committee of growers existed to ensure the management that supplies would be forthcoming. During the depression of the early 'thirties, the Wyndham Meatworks finally justified its existence in the eyes of the squatters. Many recognised that, but for its existence, they would probably have been ruined by marketing problems.

In West Kimberley, where no meatworks existed, conditions were worse. Participation in the Fremantle market had meant fair returns for the growers during the 'twenties. With the fall of consumer prices, Kimberley pastoralists found that the returns at Fremantle would no longer pay even the costs of freight, insurance, agents' fees, etc. There is hardly a squatter in this district who cannot describe how, having sent down a mob for sale, he was compelled to mail down a cheque afterwards to cover the costs involved, the sale of the stock not having realised enough to pay for these expenses. It might be noted that the agents for the Fremantle markets, usually Dalgety & Co., calculated their charges on the price cattle fetched at Fremantle, not on the return to the grower. Thus, if a beast were sold for £12 on the Fremantle market, freight costs of £7 and production costs of £5 might absorb all the profit; but the agent still charged his

79 : Durack papers : Letter, M.P. Durack-Lord Luke, Nov. 30th, 1931.
 Cf. Luke-Durack March 2nd, 1931 : January 14th, 1932.

five per cent on the £12. This state of affairs had only been a minor imposition when prices were good, but when, in 1930 and after, Fremantle averages fell below £12, the squatters regarded it as a major grievance. The burden of low prices fell generally on the smaller, poorer, and less well-improved properties. Thus, in the five years 1930-1934, Emanuels' stations averaged a return of £9/12/- per beast sold, whereas Thangoo, for instance, received £5, and sank further into debt than before. Of course, the better-capitalised stations could, or should, have made more improvements on their runs, practised a better type of animal husbandry, and otherwise been able to raise a better class of beast.

There was also the management problem. Following a decision of the Pastoralists' Association, in 1930, to suspend award rates of pay, most stations had persuaded their managers and stockmen to accept cuts in their wages. There was, however, little actual poverty in the district, as all workers were assured of their keep, and even out-of-work travellers could be sure of a handout of beef and bread. In fact, some of the unemployed made for the pastoral districts, where existence was a little less difficult than in the cities. But the "battlers", the small owners, who were often their own managers, and whose financial position was so desperate that they could not afford to take on employees, were in a worse case. Several of them were old men, who had been in the industry forty or fifty years. They had no incentive to put up the struggle necessary to preserve their properties from the

mortgagees. They were old, and few had sons to assist them - except, possibly, for unrecognised half-castes. They could not adapt themselves to modern managerial techniques. Rather than continue the unequal battle, it was so much easier to give up the old property to the mortgagees, and spend the rest of their days hanging about the Port in Derby, or the Continental at Broome, spinning tall yarns to touring journalists, who were discovering the Kimberleys since the extension of the air service to Wyndham in 1930.

Financial difficulties beset some of the larger owners as well. In their more prosperous days, many pastoral companies found it necessary to rely on large advances from the banks, and few had made any great effort to pay off their debts. Instead they had launched into further investments, often in the temperate South, financing these ventures with the profits from their Kimberley properties. By the time the depression came, some of these companies had enormous overdrafts. Durack mentions in his diary one case where a company making £8,000 clear profit annually on the Kimberley interests were (80) paying out £7,000 to the Bank of New South Wales in interest charges. His own firm, Connor, Doherty & Durack, were endeavouring to dispose of their Great Southern sheep-run, "Behn-Ord", as "the weak link in our chain of interests". Similarly, Macdonald of Fossil Downs was withdrawing from his Goulburn (N.S.W.) properties, on which he had dwelt for many years, and was keeping up only his Kimberley run. The Davies

family, owners of Kimberley Downs and Napier Downs, similarly disposed of some of their southern interests, whilst keeping up their two stations.

Conversely, of course, some owners withdrew from the district. Almost fifty years after the first overlanders had enthusiastically started off for Kimberley, their successors seemed to be about to retreat from the country. Nowhere was this process more evident than in the marginal country along the Leopolds, where already several runs had been thrown up. Between 1930 and 1935, some of the "battlers" rolled up their swags and left their land to revert to the Crown. Kidman, in 1931, decided to withdraw to Central Australia. He abandoned Glenroy, and sold his share in Fossil Downs to his partner's son, W. H. M. Macdonald. In several long overlanding treks, his drovers brought all the Glenroy cattle, and over a thousand Fossil Downs animals down through East Kimberley and the Northern Territory to his main holdings. Between 1932 and 1935, also, the McLartys abandoned Obagoona, which, although one of the oldest stations in West Kimberley, was situated on rank coastal country, with perhaps too high a rainfall for successful beef production. However, along the Fitzroy, they still kept Nerrima and Jubilee Downs, just as Kidman hung on to Yeeda, in hope of better times.

In this hour of adversity, however, some of the necessary preparation for a future renaissance was made. In the

era of prosperity between 1900 and 1920, many owners had left the district to reside South, where they married. Their sons were now of an age to take an active interest in the family properties, and to bring new viewpoints to the problems besetting the district. The management of Mount Anderson passed from G.C. Rose to his son, of the same name ; another son, Kim Rose, became manager of Liveringa for the Kimberley Pastoral Company. Arthur and Kim Male managed Roebuck Plains for their father, and Bill Macdonald was sent up on to the family property at Fossil Downs. In East Kimberley, Reg and Kim Durack worked on Argyle. (The perceptive reader will have noted a tendency for Kimberley fathers to name one son after the district.) A number of families provided managers and stockmen throughout East Kimberley and much of the Northern Territory, such as the Egans, Shadforth's, Skuthorpes, Darcys and Bridges. New blood and new ideas were urgently required by the pastoral industry, and the gradual arrival of younger members of some of the old families gave promise of the development of these qualities at some more favourable time in the future.

Despite adverse marketing conditions, station improvements were still implemented on some few properties, and nowhere was this process more noteworthy than the sheep country along the Fitzroy. Here the development of the "pindan" by boring for water and subsequent fencing was paying off with an increase in the size of flocks and the weight of fleeces. In

West Kimberley, the wool clip of 1935 reached a six-pound fleece average for the first time, a 25 % increase in just over a decade. Concurrently, the number of sheep shorn rose from 193,863 in 1929 to 293,645 in 1935. On the cattle stations, financial difficulties were held responsible for failure to put in new improvements. This excuse was brought forward by many station-owners, from small "battlers" to great absentee interests. Unfortunately, at least so far as the validity of such pleas went, a few determined managers were continuing to make progress. The example most often cited is that of Jack Kilfoyle of Rosewood, who, in 1930, commenced boring with a plant loaned by Connor, Doherty & Durack, and throughout the worst years of the depression, re-invested all his surplus returns into the improvement of watering-points, the quality of his herd, and the efficient equipment of his station. Nearly every other owner considered his policy foolhardy, and urged him to invest in outside securities. Kilfoyle's example is often quoted by those who advocate the cause of the resident owner, but there were other resident owners far less progressive, and conversely, one or two managers for absentees, such as Millard of Gogo, who also went forward with improvements, despite the depression. One cannot help feeling that if as much determination had been shown by every pastoralist, the Kimberley pastoral industry would have been in better shape, even in this era of low prices.

However, in the last resort, managers and owners were not able to make decisions as to what improvements they would make on their properties. The power of granting or withholding permission for developmental schemes lay with the banks, to whom nearly every station-owner was more or less heavily indebted, at interest rates ranging from $6\frac{1}{2}$ to 8 per cent. Loans were not easy to obtain on northern pastoral properties, principally because the lands which the pastoralists offered as security were only held under leasehold from the Crown, which, in theory, might resume the land at any time. This the banks regarded as a bad risk for advancements. Because of their maintenance of this policy of credit restriction, the banking institutions exercised a significant influence on Government policy with regard to the land laws. In 1932, the Minister for the North-West in the second Mitchell Government (Hon. T.A.L. Davy) appointed yet another committee "to consider the future development of industries in the North Western portion of Western Australia."⁽⁸¹⁾ This committee consisted of thirteen men, the seven northern members for Parliament, and six private gentlemen, of whom John Forrest of the Kimberley Pastoral Company represented West Kimberley, and J.W. Durack East Kimberley.

In the present extremity, the Committee seemed to take the view that any revision to the Land Act would be justified if it led to investment. They submitted that the restriction

81 : Typescript report of Committee's proceedings and recommendations among Durack papers. The report was never printed.

on the area of pastoral leases should be repealed in favour of any applicant who could satisfy the Government that he was financially in a position to develop more than one million acres. Even Holmes, author of the amendment of 1919, and Coverley, a staunch Labour advocate of subdivision, voted for this. Without criticising the collected wisdom of thirteen experts on the North, it seems remarkable that, after the failure of Durack and Nathan to attract capital on a large scale, and considering the uninspiring histories of the Vestey and Bovril organisations, optimism was entertained that a heaven-sent capitalist would come to the North, demanding several million acres to improve. The Committee also recommended that pastoral leases, due to expire in 1948, should be extended to 1978 in the North-West, and to 1998 in the Kimberleys, in which they considered: (82)

"A greater inducement is advisable to secure new settlers and make the position of the present holders more secure."

They specifically advocated these extensions, because the banks backing the pastoralists were not satisfied with the security of tenure offered by the shorter lease. To ensure development, they also recommended rigid improvement of the stocking and improvement clauses, which they felt should be made stricter after 1948.

On this matter, the Government moved with some alacrity, and brought down a Bill to amend the Land Act by

extending leases in all districts until 1982. The speech of the Minister for Lands (Hon. Charles Latham) admitted that: (85)

"It may seem a very long period, but unfortunately for us, during the time when wool and stock prices were high, many pastoral leases changed hands at very high prices, and in that changing of hands a good deal of money was borrowed for the purposes of completing payments.... The capitalisation of many of these stations is far too high, but the overcoming of this difficulty is not within the power of this House. We cannot afford at present to allow the excuse to be used that the term of the lease is so short that the security is not there for assuring further advances to assist the industry. Unfortunately, that excuse is offered. It is offered because it has been suggested that it is impossible to satisfy overseas shareholders of companies that it is necessary still to make further advances to protect securities already held by those companies. It will cost the State nothing, and, if it does give relief to the industry, it is worth while giving it, because I am fearful that the pastoral industry today is almost on the verge of collapse."

He stated that the pastoral industry was estimated to be £5,000,000 in debt. Leading members of the Labour Party, however, attacked the Bill, on the grounds that it would enable the large holders to maintain their monopoly of advantageous frontage positions. To W.D. Johnson, it seemed: (86)

"The banking institutions today are beginning to use their power to scare Governments, and possibly to threaten pastoralists, by declaring that the termination of the leases in sixteen years' time will have the effect of reducing the value of the assets to such an extent that the financial institutions cannot maintain the leases and advance further money for their development and improvement."

Others pointed out that the legislation of 1917, extending the leases, had only been followed by "a decline in

85 : Debates, vol. 89, p. 2431-2.

86 : Ibid. p. 2568.

population, and no appreciable results in improvements and conditions", and that the proposed Bill had "no mandate from the people". The Leader of the Opposition (Hon. Philip Collier) moved for a Royal Commission to examine a proposal which had already been endorsed by the Royal Commission of 1928 and the Committee of 1932. At this stage, however, Coverley deviated from the party line, and opposed Collier's amendment, stating that, however distasteful, the pressure of the financial institutions made Latham's Bill necessary: (87)

"We are tying up our national assets for a future generation. I am prepared to agree to it, however, because I believe that, in the course of time, we shall have in power a Government strong enough to commandeer these properties, and cut them up into smaller holdings in the interests of the development of the State, which in turn will be in the interests of the Empire. I imagine that, when we have a Government strong enough to do that, the Imperial Government will supply the cash necessary to enable the North to be developed along scientific lines."

His views as to the futility of denying the pastoralists the security demanded by the banks were supported by W.M. Marshall, another northern Labour member, and Collier's amendment was lost. Other noteworthy clauses in Latham's Bill included a proviso that the Minister might direct the improvement of stock by the building up of stud stock. This, too, had been recommended by the Committee of 1932; its other suggestions for the establishment of a Derby meatworks, under a Board responsible to Parliament, and of research centres, as planned by the Commission of 1928, were shelved as involving the outlay of public finance. Instead,

87 : Ibid. p. 2592.

Latham's Bill contained one retrograde principle ; it was provided that a company owning two or more stations could run them all under one manager, instead of having to provide a manager on each. This, an economy measure, actually made for greater reliance on native labour, and less adequate personal supervision of station development. In these years, there were over 1,000 aboriginal men, and some 600 women, employed on Kimberley stations. Since 1917, there had been a gradual rise in numbers incompatible with the common theory that contact with the white civilisation made natives a dying race.

Whether because of his support for Latham's Bill or not, Coverley found himself run very close at the next election in 1933. His opponent, an independent, Povah, disputed the return, and a new election was ordered. At the second election, all the meatworkers from the South enrolled at Wyndham, and ensured Coverley's return. Concurrently, the secession referendum took place, at which most of the Kimberley District voted solidly against secession. It was perhaps, a broad hint to State politicians that the Kimberleys were looking to the Commonwealth Government for a certain measure of assistance ; although, surprisingly enough, Wyndham returned a narrow margin for secession. Perhaps some of the meatworkers from South were already enrolled. The future of the meatworks had, incidentally, been assured by legislative action ten thousand miles from the Kimberleys -- at Ottawa, in Canada. Here, in 1932, was held the Conference at which Great Britain, following the disappearance of the old free-trade Liberal Party, had agreed to adopt

Empire Preference as its tariff policy, and to sever, as soon as possible, its commitments with foreign primary producing countries.

To the Kimberleys, and to the Northern Australian cattle industry in general, this meant that the competition of the Argentine would largely be nullified, with the termination of existing agreements in 1936. To the Vestey interests, a policy change was indicated. With the restriction on their Argentine holdings, now was the time to turn their attention to Australia. Within a year, their Blue Star Line was seeking to enter the Australian trade, and Sir Edmund Vestey was stating: (88)

"One thing the Blue Star Line can do for Australia particularly well. That is to demonstrate that chilled beef can be carried from Commonwealth ports to British ports."

After the gradual closure of the Asiatic livestock markets, because of the risks of pleuro-pneumonia, it was as well for the Kimberleys that Britain had come thus opportunely into the market. Chilling facilities were provided, and, by May, 1934, the first shipment of chilled beef had left Wyndham for Britain. Although this was carried by an Aberdeen and Commonwealth ship, the Blue Star line was later in the trade. In addition, Vestey's subsidiary company, Weddel & Co., amalgamated with William Angliss & Co., another large Australian firm of meat wholesalers, in January 1934. (89) Owing to the

88 : During 1932, the Sydney "Sunday Sun" printed several articles stating that Sir Edmund Vestey was amongst the staunchest opponents of Empire Preference, prophesising price rises and a fall in quality

89 : "Sydney Morning Herald", June 30th, 1933.

90 : Ibid. January 24th, 1934.

Ottawa decision, it seemed a little more likely that Vestey's might be encouraged to come in and develop their Northern holdings.

So, although the world-wide depression, coming on top of previous years of difficulty and neglect, had brought the fortunes of the Kimberley pastoral industry to their nadir, the situation was not wholly beyond redemption. The chief asset of those controlling the industry's fortunes was probably an incorrigible optimism. Somehow, capital would be induced to develop the stations; somehow, an improvement would occur in beef prices; somehow, a government might be found which would administer the district competently and not without sympathy. The fifteen years following the First World War were, on the whole, years of regression. On the credit side could be placed the application of modern mechanical methods to the industry. To this period dates the start of sub-artesian boring. The development of the Wyndham airline, and the use of motor trucks inland from the ports, had to some extent solved the problems of transport and freight, although much of the interior of the district still lay in isolation. But the unfavourable marketing situation, coupled with the apathy and indecision of absentee governments, had proved all too great a discouragement for any but a handful of Kimberley pastoralists to make any sort of attempt to better conditions in the industry. And yet,

with all the shortage of capital, it was perhaps characteristic of the North that, at this time, Connor, Doherty & Durack's most profitable investment was probably the Wyndham Hotel, which was still bringing in a steady £200 per week, mostly bar trade, increasing to £70 or £80 per day during Race Week.⁽⁹¹⁾

Yet the men of Kimberley can hardly be censured for this. The outlook was far from encouraging. During these fifteen years of stagnation, on far too many stations, inbred and neglected stock battled for an inadequate living on the deepening gullies of slowly eroding river pastures. Ageing men in ramshackle homesteads pondered their bank statements, and realised that they had borne the burden and the heat of the day for too long to have the energy to do anything at this stage, except to let their affairs slide into the hands of the mortgagee. And, in the south, an occasional politician would berate his fellow-Australians for permitting our heritage of the North to remain empty and under-developed, a temptation to Asiatic millions; and never pause to consider what possible incentive existed to cultivate it.

=====

91 : Durack, M.P. : Diaries, November 8th, 1930: September 24th, 1932.

PROFITS AND LOSSES.EAST KIMBERLEY : FIVE (5) STATIONS.

Year	No. of cattle	Value of station assets	Total Net Profit	Net profit per head.	Total net loss.	Net loss per head	Percentage of value of station assets.
1921	101,461	£278,299	£11,195	2/2½d.			
1921	101,461	£278,299	£11,195	2/2½d.			4.02
1922	98,520	£273,049			£6,727	1/4½d.	-2.46
1923	108,604	£285,643	£ 5,730	1/1d.			2.01
1924	113,388	£297,186	£13,318	2/4d.			4.48
1925	111,627	£300,800	£40	.01d.			0.01
1926	113,458	£303,050	£ 9,359	1/8d.			3.09
1927	116,333	£306,754	£15,656	2/8d.			5.10
1928	117,651	£309,795	£13,703	2/4d.			4.42
1929	111,220	£299,273			£1,030	2½d.	-0.34
1930	101,937	£280,132	£ 7,211	1/5d.			2.57
1931	104,395	£283,049	£ 6,371	1/2½d.			2.25
1932	102,362	£276,499			£4,958	11½d.	-1.79
1933	97,537	£266,130			£8,517	1/9d.	-3.20
1934	95,506	£263,171	£ 3,991	10d.			1.51
1935	91,375	£254,654	£ 6,173	1/2½d.			2.42
1936	84,522	£240,850			£12,946	3/0½d.	-5.38
1937	80,710	£231,338			£1,015	3d.	-0.44
1938	85,256	£239,990	£18,929	4/5d.			7.89
1939	91,972	£256,284	£24,889	5/5d.			9.71

WEST KIMBERLEY : EIGHT (8) STATIONS.

(a) 1921	47,528	£145,775			£2,653	1/1½d.	-1.82
(a) 1922	47,395	£141,428			£4,196	1/9d.	-2.97
(a) 1923	47,801	£144,938	£16,902	7/1d.			11.66
1924	112,340	£395,426	£20,330	3/7½d.			5.14
1925	107,902	£396,363	£26,543	4/11d.			6.70
1926	108,467	£400,934	£12,826	2/4½d.			3.20
1927	108,907	£402,017	£45,942	8/5d.			11.43
1928	115,863	£428,446	£60,641	10/5½d.			14.15
1929	116,734	£453,293	£87,986	15/1d.			19.41
1930	112,713	£452,410	£26,159	4/7½d.			5.78
1931	107,198	£437,035			£18,353	3/5d.	- 4.20
1932	110,655	£447,295			£7,985	1/5d.	- 1.79
1933	111,140	£443,157			£7,988	1/5d.	- 1.80
1934	107,472	£433,352			£12,751	2/4½d.	- 2.94
1935	103,064	£420,543			£10,285	2/-	- 2.45
1936	98,678	£407,860	£2,928	7d.			0.72
1937	97,063	£409,311	£9,296	1/11d.			2.27
(b) 1938	94,149	£385,860	£15,771	3/4d.			4.09
(b) 1939	94,190	£379,581	£13,731	2/11d.			3.62

(a) Returns from four stations only. (b) Returns from seven stations only.

Figures taken from Report of Royal Commission on the Pastoral Industry, 1940.

Profit and loss figures do not include interest payments.

CHAPTER V.

RECOVERY.

(1935 - 1953).

"When the Kimberleys have been developed to the limit of their pastoral capacity, closer settlement in some form may become possible. As things are, we have very far to go even to make the best use of the country from the graziers' viewpoint."

--- "The West Australian", July 28th, 1926.

=====

Fifty years after settlement, the Kimberley District presented a most discouraging picture. The extensive and well-watered pastures of Mitchell and Flinders grass, which had delighted the first pioneers, had undergone fifty years of exploitation, and were showing the effects. In the good times up to the end of the First World War, nobody had bothered to put anything back into the land, and in the subsequent fifteen years, improvement plans, where they existed, had, for the most part, been hamstrung by want of capital. The results were becoming apparent in the desiccation of the natural waters, and in the erosion of the soil. When H.C. Barclay was surveying the boundary line between East Kimberley and the Northern Territory, he reported serious erosion in the valleys of the Antrim Plateau. Similar tendencies might have been noted in the unimproved sections of the Fitzroy, the Ord,

and other river valleys. In all, the backward condition of much of the pastoral industry could be blamed as much on the failing recuperative powers of the frontages, as on old-fashioned management methods and on economic causes. It is significant that, about this time, such books as Upton's "Australia's Empty Spaces"⁽¹⁾ were written with a view to debunking the potentialities of the Kimberleys and other pastoral areas. In fact, in reaction from the buoyant optimism of the past, such works were, in some respects, too studiously pessimistic.

Yet it is from about 1935 that a story of gradual progress can be dated. This may, in a large measure, be held due to improved marketing conditions. But not altogether. Until 1940, cattle prices remained at a lower level than before the depression. It was the improvement in wool prices, and the comparatively progressive policies of the Fitzroy sheep stations, which provided the first noticeable signs of improvement. These properties, and some of the neighbouring cattle runs, were in the hands of a younger and better-educated generation of managers, adapted to the altered circumstances in the pastoral industry. Further, it was also in the later 'thirties that a handful of civil servants and private individuals began to devise tentative plans for the rehabilitation of the district -- plans which have found effect in the post-war development of the Kimberleys.

1 : Upton, Sydney : Australia's Empty Spaces. (Allen & Unwin, 1938).

Among the most significant portents of progress was a gradual improvement in living conditions. For many years, owners and managers had accepted the dictum that the Kimberleys were not a country for white women and children. Apart from a few notable personalities such as Mrs Rhatigan at Turkey Creek, and Mrs Woodland at Moola Bulla, all the white women in the Kimberleys were to be found in the ports and townships. With the adoption of various amenities, this state of affairs was to change. Better transport, better homestead facilities and water supplies, and improved medical attention were the factors that worked this alteration. The best-known of these was the Flying Doctor Service. Since 1930, the Derby-Wyndham mail-plane service had touched at Noonkanbah, Fitzroy Crossing, Hall's Creek, Ord River, and Argyle, thus providing a link for the inland stations with the doctors at the ports. In 1934, the contract for this service passed to MacRobertson-Miller Airways. Meanwhile, Alfred Traeger's invention of the two-way pedal wireless had enabled the Rev. John Flynn, also father of the Australian Inland Mission hospitals, to develop the scheme of a flying doctor service. By this, outback stations could be served by a doctor making regular flights from a township centre to isolated stations. Through the pedal wireless, he was on call in cases of urgency, when he could make extra emergency flights. When this scheme was first put up before a public meeting at Wyndham, the townspeople were decidedly against the innovation. They were apparently badly informed about the subject, as they

objected that the scheme would lead to the absence of a doctor when he might be required in Wyndham, and that, in any case, the stations could not call the doctor, as they were not linked up by telephone. More pertinently, they wanted to know who was going to pay for the service.⁽²⁾

When, however, the people of Victoria, a state in which there was no scope for a Flying Doctor scheme, subscribed to a fund to provide the Kimberley District with the benefits of this service, many of the objections vanished. The installation of Traeger's transceivers did not only bring the security embodied in regular and certain contact with a doctor. Kimberley stations also found that they could use the pedal wirelasses for business and personal calls with every other station on the service. Despite an unavoidable lack of privacy, which gave these conversations the listening public of a particularly extensive party-line, this service was greatly appreciated. As from 1936, when the service got under way, the problem of the loneliness and isolation of those living on the stations was considerably reduced. The Australian Inland Mission movement then commenced the construction of another hospital, this time at Fitzroy Crossing, which was eventually opened in 1939. Such services were available to both white and black inhabitants of the district. The latter were further ministered to, more or less

2 : Durack, M.P. : Diaries, August 21st, 1934.

efficiently, by missions at Port George IV (Presbyterian), Drysdale River (Benedictine), Forrest River (Anglican), Balgo Hills (Pallottine), and Fitzroy Crossing (U.A.M.) The Moseley Royal Commission, appointed at the motion of F.J.S.Wise and A.A.M.Coverley, had led to the appointment of divisional protectors of aborigines, and to a closer regulation of conditions of employment on stations.⁽³⁾ In this connexion, it is interesting to note that instances of stock-killing were still recorded, fifty miles from Wyndham, in 1935,⁽⁴⁾ but this habit was at last being eradicated, and the aboriginal was now usually on the side of the squatter, as a stockman, while his woman acted as domestic servant for the "white missus".

Other factors which made the district more habitable included the improvement of domestic water supplies, which came about with deep boring. On almost every property, the sinking of a "homestead bore" meant that the fevers caused by bad drinking water became a thing of the past, and that vegetable gardens, and modern ablutionary and sanitary conveniences, could be installed. The reduction of freights consequent upon the use of trucks⁽⁵⁾ meant that more home comforts could be brought inland. These innovations were regarded with disfavour by some of the more conservative oldtimers, who held that "fences and womenfolk weren't wanted in true cattle country". But they

3 : Votes and Proceedings, 1935, No. 2.

4 : Durack, M.P. : Diaries, September 21st, 1935.

5 : Cf. Rosewood journal, December 20th, 1938, where J. Kilfoyle notes that, since the coming of motor transport, freights from Wyndham to Rosewood had fallen from £17 a ton to £7.

attracted young men with wives and families to come up and reside on the stations. There was less excuse for absentee ownership, and more opportunity for managers to develop a personal interest in the progress and welfare of their runs. Along the Fitzroy, a spirit of healthy competition began to manifest itself among the sheep stations, as to which had the best living conditions, shearing sheds, or heaviest-fleeced sheep. Meanwhile, during the 'thirties, Obagooma, Kimberley Downs, Meda, Liveringa, Noonkanbah, Gogo, and Fossil Downs -- to make a list by no means exhaustive, and covering only West Kimberley -- ceased to be classed as bachelor establishments.

The standard of material improvements advanced more in West Kimberley during this period than in East Kimberley. Owners in West Kimberley were in a better economic position to effect such changes. Wool prices, which between 1930 and 1933 had been depressed to 8d., rose sharply in 1933-4 to 15½d., and, although in the next season the price dropped back to 9½d., it maintained an average of 13½d. between 1935 and 1940. During this period, West Kimberley alone, of all the Northern pastoral districts, benefited from this improvement, as it was the only sheep-grazing area which was not prostrated by a ruinous and protracted drought. Instead, the policy of improving the "pindan" paid dividends in increased numbers and better fleeces. The progress of this district may be gauged from statistics quoted by W.V. Fyfe. (6) Figures were obtained from two representative

sheep stations⁽⁷⁾, and these proved that not only was the cost of production lower in West Kimberley than in any other district, but also that these properties were far less heavily encumbered in debt than similar concerns in the North-West and Goldfields pastoral areas. It was not surprising to find some small indications of a tendency in West Kimberley to revert to sheep-grazing. Calwyn-yardah was purchased by W.W. Henwood, the manager of Noonkanbah, and developed on his own account as a sheep run, while, in 1938, Kidman's heirs sold their last remaining Kimberley property, Yeeda, to the owners of Noonkanbah, George Hawley and associates. This firm had some idea of converting Yeeda from cattle to sheep, but the intervention of the Second World War, and ultimate doubts as to the suitability of the country put an end to the notion.

Just as the better prices for beef, as compared to wool, had motivated the change from sheep to cattle in West Kimberley in the 'nineties, so it might have been expected that the reversal of this position would cause a return to sheep. This did not happen. Possibly few cattle-owners felt that they could stand the cost of fencing and re-stocking. Cattle prices remained low during the 'thirties, Fremantle returns seldom averaging more than £10 a head. The trade could not have been carried on with even the most meagre margin of profit, had not the State Shipping

6 : Royal Commission on the Pastoral Industry, 1940. (Votes and Proceedings, 1940, No. 23.) See appendix at end of chapter, with tables taken from statistics on pp. 69, 72, 78 and 82.

7 : Mount Anderson and Noonkanbah: one small, one large.

Service, despite loss of revenue, reduced the freight rate on cattle shipped from Derby from 90s. per head in 1931 to 65s. in 1935. Despite these adverse conditions, some stations continued to work on boring and fencing, and on such properties as Gogo, Fossil Downs, and Lulugui, dehorning and speying were kept up.

In East Kimberley, the adoption of the chilling process at the Wyndham Meatworks, and the increased demand in Britain consequent upon the Ottawa agreement, had provided an assured market, but had not created any great rise in prices. The new manager of the Meatworks (J.J. Farrell) was responsible for an enlargement in the capacity of the plant, so that, in 1937, a record number of 39,212 cattle were treated, at an average return of 32s. Such returns were insufficient to shift the East Kimberley cattle industry out of its long stagnation. No new capitalist had been attracted to this untempting prospect, and the mild activity of the Vestey interests in Australia about 1934 had resulted in few changes of policy. Regular imports of herd bulls were made on several of their stations, but it was understood that Vesteys' would defer any major projects until the Commonwealth Government had provided the cattle country with a railway, either from the terminus of the Darwin railway, at Birdum, to Daly Waters, or from Wyndham to a point near the Northern Territory border, due east of Hall's Creek. Such railways, as well as more extended lines,

had been recommended as early as 1920⁽⁸⁾, but no government had felt that the returns from freighting cattle would warrant the heavy capital expenditure. However, in 1937, the Commonwealth Government appointed yet another investigation committee:⁽⁹⁾

"To inquire into the land and land industries of the Northern Territory of Australia, and generally into the potentialities of that region, and to lay down a plan of development for the next twenty-five years."

Two Queensland men, W.L. Payne, and J.W. Fletcher, constituted the board of inquiry. Their report is generally regarded as an able and authoritative statement. Among other features, it recommended railways in the Barkly Tableland, and in the hinterland of Wyndham -- the latter proceeding down the Ord Valley, and thence a little way across the Northern Territory border, to a point north of Gordon Downs. Payne and Fletcher wrote:⁽¹⁰⁾

"In neither of these localities would a railway be justified merely for the transport of cattle, as such transport is not a paying proposition, owing to the fact that it does not provide any substantial back loading. But the construction of railways to these districts would enable considerable areas to be utilized for sheep, and this entirely alters the outlook."

While making it clear that unsound working methods were largely responsible for losses on cattle in the Ord valley and the adjacent Territory country, Payne and Fletcher gave their opinion that this area included thirteen million acres of potential sheep country, the development of which would justify a railway to Wyndham. Now the

8 : Commonwealth Parliamentary Papers, vol. iii, p. 725 et seq. (1920-21)
 9 : Ibid. 1937-9, vol. iv. pp. 813-925.
 10: Ibid. p. 854 (p. 30 of Report.).

suitability of this country for sheep-grazing had been attested eight years earlier by Lefroy and Evans, yet it is a remarkable fact that, despite the unsatisfactory condition of the cattle market, hardly one of the East Kimberley owners attempted to experiment in sheep. While lack of funds may have prevented the smallholders from trying this alternative, the large firms seemed to lack adaptability -- possibly a result of company control from London or Sydney. Many cattlemen, too, entertained a traditional prejudice against sheep. Payne and Fletcher recommended that the Federal and State governments should confer with the large lessees who controlled most of the land along the proposed route, with a view to arranging the resumption of portion of the land suitable for sheep and the encouragement of new settlement.⁽¹¹⁾

They also suggested that taxation rebates should be granted for the Kimberleys, so as to place this area, for purposes of development, on the same footing as the Territory. Furthermore, they submitted that a system of tariff rebates should be arranged in the Kimberleys. Under the high protectionist policy of the Commonwealth, the Kimberleys, in common with other pastoral districts, were subject to quite heavy duties on imported machinery and other necessities for development, as well as a petrol tax which at that time stood at 7½d. per gallon. Such impositions increased prices

11 : Ibid. p. 57.

already made heavier by freight costs, and were in part responsible for the high cost of living in a district already handicapped by rather unfavourable economic and environmental conditions. The Commonwealth would have sustained no great loss of revenue from the suspension of these taxes in the North, and such a policy might have had the psychological effect of stimulating investment in improvements. In drawing attention to the injurious effects of the tariff, the Payne-Fletcher Commission rendered useful service, and it is regrettable that no Commonwealth Treasurer has yet seen fit to experiment with their suggestions.

Nevertheless, the publication of the Payne-Fletcher Report was provocative of some interest. At least one large East Kimberley lessee -- the Naughton Estate -- sent up an inspector on to its properties, Lissadell, Alice Downs, and Mabel Downs, to report on the possibilities of sheep-raising, but despite fairly favourable indications, no action was taken.⁽¹²⁾ The Hon. John McEwen, Commonwealth Minister for Home and Territories, undertook an official tour of the district in the dry season of 1938, after which the Commonwealth Commissioner of Railways stated that surveyors would be sent up to plot the track of a railway south from Wyndham.⁽¹³⁾ The intervention of the Munich crisis, however, and subsequent preparations for war, seem to have led official circles to lay aside the good intentions forming at that time.

12 : Durack, M.P. : Diaries, August 14th, 1938.

13 : Ibid. August 8th, 1938.

World rearmament programmes caused interest to be directed to Yampi Sound, north of Derby, where rich deposits of iron ore were known to exist on Koolan and Cockatoo Islands. In 1935, Brasserts & Co., a British firm, were granted a lease of Koolan Island. (14) They proposed to develop the field with capital provided by the Nippon Mining Company, which, as its name suggested, originated in Japan, to which it was intended to ship the iron ore. The Commonwealth Government specifically stated that no embargo would be placed on the export of iron ore (15), and by 1937, the State Government had agreed to grant a concession for the export of 15,000,000 tons of Yampi iron ore, over a fifteen-year period. Iron ore being a very heavy cargo, ships could not be loaded to full capacity, leaving ample space for the export of West Kimberley cattle on the hoof on each Japan-bound vessel. It was known that Japan was already importing beef from South America, and the Premier (J.C. Willcock) thought that there was "every indication that a valuable trade would have developed in the export of cattle." However, without any warning, the Commonwealth Government suddenly reversed its policy, and, on May 19th, 1938, placed an embargo on the export of iron ore from Australia. This meant an end not only to the projected Yampi iron ore trade, but also to the prospect of a Japanese market for Kimberley livestock. Willcock was moved to send protests

14 : For a description of the whole controversy over iron exports to Japan, see Shepherd, J. : Australia's Interests and Policies in the Far East (I.P.R. 1939) : pp. 80-97.

15 : Commonwealth Parliamentary Debates, September 10th, 1936 : August 31st, 1937.

to the Commonwealth Government, but the latter remained adamant. When these failed, the Premier brought a motion of protest before the State Parliament. (16) During the debate, Willcock and Coverley made much of the benefit which would have accrued to the struggling cattlemen of West Kimberley if a trade similar to the old Manila livestock outlet had been developed. The Opposition, under Latham and Keenan, were more guarded in their remarks -- after all, Lyons, the Prime Minister, was of their party -- but supported the motion. Private members to make interesting contributions to the debate included a Nationalist, Ross McLarty, a shareholder in Jubilee Downs and Merrima, who commented that the establishment of a chilling works at Derby would be more likely to induce an export trade with Asia than reliance upon the old-fashioned method of shipping livestock a long distance across the tropics. (17) An independent member, T.J. Hughes, saw the ban as (18):

"the result of a dispute between two groups of capitalists, the Eastern States group being backed by the Federal Government, and the other group, pseudo-English and Japanese, being backed by the Western Australian Government."

The motion was passed in the Lower House, with the support of all parties, and referred to the Legislative Council. Here it met with its first serious opposition. Once again, the nonconformist was J.J. Holmes. (19) He claimed that the State Government had been misled by Brassaerts, as dummies for the Japanese, and admitted urging the Federal Government to impose the embargo on iron ore exports.

16 : Debates, vol. 101, p. 447 et seq.

17 : Ibid. p. 658.

18 : Ibid. p. 666. The reference is presumably to B.H.P.

19 : Ibid. p. 821 et seq.

He dismissed the immediate prospects of tropical agriculture being stimulated by the presence of the iron ore trade, and discounted the possibilities of exporting live cattle from Derby to Japan, because of the length of the journey in tropical conditions, and because closer markets in Java and the Philippines had been closed by quarantine restrictions ever since pleuro-pneumonia became widespread in the Kimberleys. In conclusion, he took the opportunity of urging that the Kimberleys should be handed over to the Federal Government - a move which Durack, Male, and he had advocated unsuccessfully during McEwen's recent tour.⁽²⁰⁾ This speech seems to have had some effect on the Council, as an amendment was moved to modify the motion to a request that the Federal Government should provide some compensatory developmental scheme to make up for the loss of the Japanese trade. However, Holmes received strong opposition from a fellow-member for North Province, George Miles, who considered his estimate far too pessimistic.⁽²¹⁾ Eventually, the motion was "talked out", as Parliament was prorogued before the debate ended. The controversy is of interest for the light it shed on the conflicting opinions on the potentialities of the district held at the time, even by those who should have been well-informed.

It was scarcely surprising, when experts differed so completely, that governments were reluctant to propound any large-scale scheme for the development of the Kimberleys. Indeed, until 1936,

20 : Durack, M.P. : Diaries, September 6th and 7th, 1938.

21 : Debates, vol. 102, pp. 1320-44.

the North-West portfolio in the State Cabinet was held by men with no personal experience of the district. The Willcock Government broke boldly with tradition. The appointment of F.J.S.Wise, and, after his transfer in 1939, of A.A.M.Coverley, made for a more sympathetic official approach. It was during Wise's term of office that another State ship, the "Koolama", was obtained to supplement the "Koolinda".

In extolling the potentialities of the Kimberleys, however, George Miles had been influenced by circumstances entirely irrelevant to the Yampi Sound proposition. He was, at the time, nursing a closer settlement scheme of a rather novel nature. In the early part of 1938, he had taken a trip to Great Britain, having a commission to find a buyer for the Connor, Doherty and Durack properties. He returned with an offer from one Dr. Steinberg, formerly a Menshevik Cabinet Minister in Russia, and now secretary of the Jewish League. The League, an organisation for the welfare of refugees from the anti-Semitic portions of Europe, proposed buying the Connor, Doherty & Durack holdings for £180,000 sterling, with a view to subdivision and the settlement of homeless refugees. (22) At first the State Government was inclined to be unfavourable to the scheme, and the Federal authorities "not very encouraging". It was believed that the Jews were more amenable to city life than to agricultural pursuits. There was also the point that a tentative scheme to settle Jewish refugees

22 : Durack, M.P. : October 3rd, 1938. (Diaries).

in the Fitzroy valley had come to nothing; but then, this earlier plan had contemplated employing the refugees in the entirely unsuitable occupation of pig-raising.⁽²³⁾

Steinberg proved persistent. Jewish settlers, he pointed out, had already made good in the Jordan valley in a climate rather worse than that of East Kimberley. Besides continuing pastoral pursuits, his settlers would engage in cotton-growing and the culture of other tropical crops. He also envisaged the creation of irrigation settlements and villages, leading to the development of secondary industries, although to what extent the migrants would be accepted by the other inhabitants of the district was a question left unanswered. Steinberg hoped the settlement would prove a stronghold of orthodox Jewry, from which the settlers would not drift South to the cities.⁽²⁴⁾ The thought of settlement and development in the empty North proved irresistible to the State Government. After an inspection tour by Steinberg in June 1939, they admitted the feasibility of the scheme, and by August had assented to Steinberg approaching the Federal Government to permit the entry of these migrants. Subject to their approval, the State Government would confer with the Jewish League's representatives regarding the conditions of settlement. These conditions included the scrutiny of refugees by migrant officers appointed by the Government and paid by the League; the establishment of a body of reputable

23 : Debates, vol. 101, p. 823.

24 : Cf. Steinberg and Melville : Investigations in East Kimberley Region of Western Australia and in Northern Territory in Respect to Possibilities of Close Settlement (Typescript 1939 - 24 pp.)

Jewish citizens in Perth, to stand guarantors for the scheme ; the maintenance of Education Department standards in any schools that were established; and an understanding that the Government would be under no liability to provide public works in the settlement area during the first three years of the experiment. Furthermore, Willcock strongly advised concentration on "an extensive and effective pastoral occupation."⁽²⁵⁾

The intervention of the Second World War put an end to this particular scheme. On the other hand, the war also foreshadowed better prices for beef, mutton and wool. Increased primary production was in demand. In March 1940, the Minister for Lands (F.J.S. Wise) appointed the Surveyor-General (W.V. Fyfe) to report upon the financial and economic position of the pastoral industry of the leasehold areas of Western Australia.⁽²⁶⁾ Although primarily initiated at the request of the Pastoralists' Association, to investigate the disabilities of the drought-stricken North-West sheep country, Fyfe's field of survey included the Kimberleys. The information gathered included numerous questionnaires on which data was supplied by station managers.⁽²⁷⁾ Fyfe reiterated the need for authoritative research into the potentialities of the district, and the classification of the lower Ord in respect to its suitability for irrigation. He suggested that the proposal

25 : Willcock-Steinberg, August 25th, 1939 : quoted Debates, vol. 104, pp. 1817-8. Cf. Debates, vol. 103, pp. 706-715, and vol. 104, pp. 1812-9.

26 : Votes and Proceedings, 1940, No. 23.

27 : These were not made available for the purposes of this thesis.

to investigate the construction of a railway in East Kimberley should be deferred until after the war, when it might be found that a good main road was more suitable. Another regular feature of past reports which turned up again in Fyfe's paper was investigation into the possibility of a meatworks at Derby. There was no novelty about any of these suggestions, but since at no time in the past had they been translated into action, Fyfe had little alternative but to repeat them.

Private enterprise took a hand in furnishing West Kimberley with a meatworks. In 1940, two sons of the manager of the Wyndham Meatworks (J.J. Farrell) undertook the construction of a small private meatworks at Broome. The Farrell brothers had already bought Thangoo station, outside Broome, and this may have influenced them in preferring this town to Derby. Other factors influencing their decision included the revival of prosperity in the Broome mother-of-pearl industry; preference for the shipping facilities of Broome; and the pleasanter living conditions of the old pearling port. The great drawback was that most of the stations in the supply area were situated in the Fitzroy valley, from which Derby was easier of access. The stock route between the Fitzroy and Broome was not of the best. Nevertheless, having found a suitable site, the Farrell brothers proceeded with their original plans, and opened their plant for operations in 1941. Prices were regulated on similar lines to those paid at Wyndham, but the provision of this additional outlet, coupled with a gradual upward trend in the Fremantle market, brightened prospects for the West Kimberley cattleman.

Developmental work was also mooted for East Kimberley, and in association with plans for the utilisation of the Ord River, two names must be mentioned -- R.J.Dumas and K.M.Durack. The latter, a graduate of the Muresk Agricultural College, which has produced several of the more progressive younger pastoralists of the present day, had had station experience on the Connor, Doherty and Durack properties, including the period of Steinberg's researches. Durack, in 1941, produced a scientifically-based study of the potentialities of the area in a manuscript, "Developing the North"⁽²⁸⁾. Basing his findings on the researches of Professor J.A.Prescott into northern soil types and rainfall, Durack wrote:⁽²⁹⁾

"The writer is of the opinion that a white community could flourish in such an environment, provided modern conveniences and comforts in the form of good housing accommodation and refrigeration, are coupled with a good balanced diet. Diet is hardly considered in this country, and it is thought that the lack of importance attached to this factor is largely responsible for the reputed unhealthy nature of the wet season."

He attributed the lack of effective development in East Kimberley to five factors : isolation, the lack of any environmental pressure to compel development, pasture problems, the lack of incentive to improve the product sent through the Wyndham Meatworks, and the existence of four monopoly interests, which:⁽³⁰⁾

"Capable by reason of their monopoly of controlling the economy of the district, have not been motivated by any definite policy of development."

28 : (Archives, PR 430). Typescript MS, 40, 39 pp. : presented to the Departments of Lands and Agriculture.

29 : Ibid. p. 5.

30 : Ibid. p. 17. The reference is presumably to Bovril, Vesteys, Naughtons, and Connor, Doherty & Durack.

In a plea, "not for a rehabilitation commissioner twenty years hence, but for sensible administration now", he advocated the establishment of a research station at Ivanhoe, where experiments could be conducted in tropical agriculture, and in finding pasture plants whose cultivation would compensate for the loss of the country's virgin freshness. In the same year (1941), the State Government sent up R.J.Dumas to inspect the Ord River Gorge, and to report upon its suitability for use as a damsite. The possibility of damming the Ord had already been suggested, some years earlier, by the Engineer for the North-West (Geoffrey Drake-Brockman). So little action had been taken to enquire into this scheme, that it is said that Dumas found the most helpful information about the layout of the country in Surveyor Nyaulsy's field-books of 1885.⁽³¹⁾ Dumas returned from his visit impressed with the feasibility of the scheme, and in 1942 sent up a surveying party to the proposed damsite. In the same year, experiments in tropical agriculture and in pasture improvement were commenced at Carlton Reach on Ivanhoe station, Kim Durack being appointed to this undertaking.

Meanwhile, however, the outlook for the Kimberleys had been radically altered by the entry of Japan into the Second World War, on December 7th, 1941. Within the next four months, this nation conquered ^{the} Malaya, the Philippines, and the Netherlands East Indies, and the Kimberleys faced a very real threat of invasion. Broome and Wyndham were bombed, and women and children were evacuated from

31 : Drake-Brockman, Henrietta : The North-West Horizon (Paterson, Perth, 1946) : p. 59. (Cf. pp. 57-64.)

the coastal ports, some South, and some inland. The local unit of the Volunteer Defence Corps enlisted every able-bodied man in the district, and prepared for the coming of the Japanese. It still remains a hotly debated point as to whether the district would have been abandoned by the authorities in the event of an invasion. Nevertheless, there was surprisingly little disruption in the conduct of the pastoral industry. There was no parallel to the mass exodus from Darwin, when Jack Kilfoyle observed⁽³²⁾

"many carloads of men fleeing from a likely war zone, some of the men nearly hysterical from the way they spoke whilst drinking at the Bar of Bill Pearce's Daly Waters Hotel."

Instead, apart from labour shortages caused by enlistments, the pastoralists of the Kimberley District, and, indeed, of the whole of northern Australia, continued, as far as possible, the normal conduct of their stations' routine. As in the First World War period, there was a succession of good seasons. The wet season of 1941-2 approached record proportions in the majority of the district, and the following two years were also favourable. It is one of the ironies of Kimberley history that the best run of seasons for at least twenty years occurred at a time when the squatters could not make the best use of them to recover their former prosperity, and start putting their runs into good shape. All improvements had to cease, and in fact, many of the merchants in Perth were ignorant for months at a time of conditions amongst

32 : Rosewood journals, December 18th, 1941.

their Kimberley clients.⁽³³⁾ Transport facilities were limited. The military and air force camps at Noonkanbah made heavy demands, whilst the sinking of the "Koolana" by enemy action off Wyndham placed the whole burden of civilian supplies on the "Koolinda". There is a widespread tradition in the district that the Japanese spared the latter ship because of the part it played in rescuing Japanese pearling crews during the cyclone of 1935.

The chief problem was marketing. The Wyndham Meatworks did not operate in 1942, 1943, or 1944. During the months of crisis in 1942, there was considerable uncertainty as to whether they would not be blown up, either through enemy action, or to prevent invaders gaining possession of them in the event of a Japanese landing. Stock could not be shipped from Wyndham or Derby, as both these ports were approached by a narrow channel which made any vessel attempting the passage a perfect target for hostile aircraft. Broome, a more open port, alone remained. The pleyro-line restrictions were removed, incidentally with considerable loss to the owners around Broome,⁽³⁴⁾ and West Kimberley cattle were shipped from Broome during the war period. In addition, the Broome meatworks, which had been partly dismantled by order of the Commonwealth Government in 1942, was re-assembled and enlarged, and worked during the war years. The Commonwealth Government acted as stock agents, buying up all bullocks at

33 : Cf. correspondence between Southern Cross Engine & Windmill Co. and J.A.C. Kilfoyle, March to September, 1942. (Rosewood papers).

34 : Mr. Kim Male, then manager of Roebuck Plains, estimates that one-third of the 12,000 cattle on this station were lost through pleyro-pneumonia when the restrictions were removed.

a flat rate of £5 a head. J.J.Farrell, as agent for his sons, was in charge for the duration of the war.

Two outlets were provided for East Kimberley cattlemen. The Canning Stock Route was re-serviced, and, in July 1942, under a veteran drover, Fred Teroney, 400 bullocks from Moola Bulla were sent down to the railhead at Wiluna.⁽³⁵⁾ Between then and October 1943, 2150 cattle in all traversed this route, of which 930 came from Moola Bulla, and 1220 from private owners. Droving costs came to £3 a head, and sales were effected at £7/10/-.⁽³⁶⁾ The main market, however, was provided in the Northern Territory, where there was a large concentration of troops. The Commonwealth Government appointed Wave Hill station, one of the Vestey chain, as the receiving depot, and Katherine, where killing facilities were provided, as the distributing centre. Cattle were walked to Wave Hill from various stations in the East Kimberley district, and, although the main stock routes were fully utilised, some little-known overlanding stages were brought back into service. Those cattle which were not required by the army authorities were moved on by easy stages to the railheads of Alice Springs or Queensland. Prices received for stock were not the best, ranging from £4 to £5, but the turn-off from East Kimberley was maintained at the same figure as for former years.⁽³⁷⁾

35 : Moola Bulla journals, April-July, 1942, passim : June 2nd, 1943.

36 : Debates, vol. 112, p. 1198.

37 : Figures illustrative of the number of East Kimberley treated are not available at Wave Hill. No permanent record exists, unless in army files inaccessible to the writer. Contemporary station records, however, indicate a maintenance of normal turn-off

In the wool industry of West Kimberley, the improvement policies of the 'thirties were bearing fruit. The number of sheep had steadily increased. In 1943, the Kimberley Pastoral Company was shearing 86,000 sheep, a figure reminiscent of the boom days forty years previously, and sent away a record wool consignment.⁽³⁸⁾ The station owners, however, came to realise that such large numbers, as well as equalling the records of 1900-1914, might have a similar effect in denuding the land around the bores, just as the river frontages had been eaten bare. They therefore adopted a policy of restricting stock numbers to an extent compatible with the carrying capacity of the watering points.⁽³⁹⁾ Blowfly strike occurred at Mount Anderson in 1942, but, fortunately did not spread.⁽⁴⁰⁾ Wallabies and dingos remained the sheepowners' most serious natural enemies.

The importance of the war years in the Kimberleys lies in the fact that they drew the attention of the rest of Australia to the problems and potentialities of the district. Thousands of servicemen, who might otherwise have remained in utter ignorance of the North, were stationed in this area. Considerations of defence compelled the attention of both Federal and State Governments to the development of the territory which had seemed a danger-spot for invasion. Projects for advancement began to emerge. While Dumas's surveyors were undertaking estimates for a gravity masonry dam, capable of holding

38 : "West Australian", January 2nd, 1943 : cf. station records.

39 : Cf. Appendix V. After reaching a total of 321,224 sheep for the district in 1942, the number has since constantly declined.

40 : Jenkins, C.H. : Entomological Problems of the Ord River Irrigation Area. (Journal Dept. Ag., 2nd series, xlii, 2, p. 131 : 1944).

1,350,000 acre feet of water, which might be built at the gorge of the Ord for an approximate cost of £1,500,000, preliminary researches at Carlton Reach, further down the river, were finding uses for such irrigation. K.M. Durack reported principally experiments with pasture grasses, both irrigated (such as Rhodes grass, lucerne, and paspalum) and natural (such as Mitchell, Flinders, birdwood and buffel, the last an accidentally-introduced newcomer which was doing well, self-sown, in patches on the West Kimberley coast). Experimental crops included cotton, soya bean, peanut, maize, millet, and grain sorghums, the last of which were "outstandingly successful".⁽⁴¹⁾ Another officer of the Department of Agriculture, G.H. Burvill, made a soil survey of the East Kimberley area, and reported serious erosion. A further report by F.G. Medcalf indicated that Margaret River, Lambco, Turner, and Ord River were among the stations worst-affected, although all the Ord valley properties suffered water erosion to some extent.⁽⁴²⁾ It was clear that this country required intelligent treatment. In 1945, by co-operation between the State Department of Agriculture and C.S.I.R.O., a larger experimental area on the Ord was obtained not far from Ivanhoe homestead, and there the development of the permanent Kimberley Research Station was begun.

41 : Durack, K.M.: The Monsoonal North of Western Australia. (Journal of the Department of Agriculture, vol. xxii, second series, No. 3, pp. 248-274 : September 1945.)

42 : Medcalf's report, dated 1944, is held in typescript at the Departments of Lands and of Agriculture.

Meanwhile, in December 1944, the State Government appointed a committee, with the Director of Works (R.J.Dumas) in the chair, to prepare a case for submission to the Commonwealth Government for financial aid in relation to a general development scheme for the Kimberleys and the North-West. The Pastoralists' Association appointed its own committee to formulate recommendations.⁽⁴³⁾ The representatives of the two Kimberleys were M.P.Durack and John Forrest. While much of the report related to the North-West sheep country, the following quotations mention matters affecting the Kimberleys:---

"Income derived from primary production, mining, and fishing should be tax-free, as in the Northern Territory, if this is consistent with Sections 51 and 117 of the Commonwealth Constitution.....

"The Wyndham Meatworks should be reopened, and Commonwealth assistance sought in subsidising it, because of its services to Northern Territory pastoralists. At certain periods of the year, fat bullocks to the works have to travel over long dry stages; permanent waters should be provided so that there should be no stretch of more than fifteen to twenty miles. It would be of inestimable benefit to the cattle industry if holding grounds carrying adequate pastures could be provided in close proximity to the meatworks, so that cattle intended for processing could be spelled and conditioned after their long walks from the runs on which they are grown.....

"Since the port of Derby is much given to silting, consideration may be given to the creation of a deep-water outport....

"Boning works should be built at Derby, so that an economic use may be found for cows and old beasts not required for the Fremantle market."

Concerted action should be taken to reduce such vermin as kangaroos

43 : Published in 1945 by the Pastoralists' Association as "The Pastoral Industry in North-West Australia" (96 pp.), from which are taken the extracts quoted.

and dingos, which were again attaining plague proportions. With regard to dingos, there was evidence of a curious malpractice:

"Of the total number of dingo scalps presented for payment of bonus in Western Australia, by far the biggest proportion is submitted in the Kimberley area, the number from Hall's Creek being particularly high. The conclusion is inescapable that scalps of many dingos caught in the Northern Territory are eventually presented for payment of the higher bonus ruling in Western Australia."

The Commonwealth Government was requested to correct this anomaly.

The number of scalps was also increased by the surreptitious inclusion of mongrel dogs from the blacks' camps.

The official State Committee endorsed these and other recommendations, and suggested other amenities, such as the extension of the State dental service; the grant of a subsidy to schoolchildren who had to be educated in the South, pending the possible erection of a North-West high school; the regulation of petrol and oil supplies so that North-West prices should be no higher than those ruling in Geraldton; and an airmail subsidy, so that postal material might be carried at the rates applying to surface mail. Anti-erosion measures were advocated, but the Committee saw no necessity for a large-scale conversion from cattle to sheep. They predicted that the former industry, if based on improved water supplies and paddocking, might prove more profitable. Moreover, the State Government should appoint an officer to investigate the possibilities of overseas livestock trade, especially in the Near North. The appointment of these committees seemed to indicate that the State Government planned to initiate a comprehensive postwar plan for the rehabilitation of the

Kimberley District. Internally, conditions were most promising. A fairly poor season in 1945 did not entirely offset the good effects of the three preceding years; and the marketing position seemed safe. The Commonwealth Government had found markets for the Broome Meatworks in Ceylon, Kenya, and South Africa, and while none of these could be considered as a major outlet, they offered an avenue of development which, from considerations of geography, was of more promise to the Kimberleys than to any other part of Australia. When the Wyddham Meatworks re-opened in 1945, it was assured of a receptive market in meat-rationed Britain. England's extremity was Australia's opportunity. It could not be foreseen that the Peron Government in the Argentine would attempt to dictate higher prices to the British Government, and thus incline the Ministry of Food to cultivate Australian goodwill; but the outlook already seemed secure.

Within the district there were also prospects of improvement. The Department of the Army, as compensation for the over-use of the "Great Northern Highway" in the Kimberleys, offered a sum for repair work. It was decided to expend this on an all-weather road from Fitzroy Crossing to Derby, which would follow a direct track, instead of the winding old road along the Fitzroy River. Moreover, the departure of the services made much Army Disposal material available to the squatters. Nissen huts, trucks, jeeps, bulldozers, and other mechanised units were converted to

the use of the pastoral industry, and hastened the departure of the use of mule-power. To the war period also dates the final disappearance of "shin-plasters" as a form of currency. This era was marked by an advance into the Leopold country again. The development of small runs in various pockets by Macted, Ruddick, the Smiths, Plant, and others; the formation by Quilty of Arizona out-station, not to mention the rather earlier establishment of Dave Rust at Karungie, Fred Russ at Gibb River, and Frank Lacy at Mount Elizabeth - still inaccessible except by pack-horse -- were all well under way by the conclusion of the war. This was not easy country to develop, remote as it was from markets and supply centres. It indicated the manner in which intending smallholders were forced to the outskirts of the district, because the best and most centrally situated land was all under lease, in some cases to absentee interests which were still finding excuses for inactivity in "insecurity of tenure". In East Kimberley, the position at this time, and for some years after, was summarised thus; (44)

"While it is obvious that some owners are most anxious to improve, and are finding it difficult to get supplies of various materials in order to carry out such work, they are getting materials slowly and by degrees, while others give you the impression that the shortage of material is only an excuse for them to do nothing."

Some parts of East Kimberley, including portions of the land held by large absentee interests, were known as "the slum area of Kimberley", not only because of the condition of their homesteads

44 : Buchanan, G.A. : Report to the Pastoral Appraisal Board, 1951: p. 6.

which in some cases dated back to the turn of the century, but because they included the worst-eroded and most under-improved land under settlement. Although the inflexibility and inattention to detail characteristic of absentee company control may be held responsible for some of the lands in this condition, unprogressive smallholders also shared the blame - a factor frequently ignored by those seeking a scapegoat for the backwardness of cultivation in Kimberley. With Wyndham prices ranging from £6 18s. in 1945 to £8 19s. in 1948, the early postwar years should have seen more improvement in East Kimberley than was in fact the case. To what extent this failure to invest in improvements was due to the need to pay off debts incurred to the banks before the war cannot be determined. Such a factor should not have weighed overmuch with the larger pastoral firms. However, the writer knows of cases where a pastoralist, having extricated his property from debt after a sustained effort, resolved never again to draw an overdraft, even although this might result in the postponement or omission of necessary improvements.

In West Kimberley, where livestock returns were somewhat better, and where the wool industry was bringing phenomenally increasing returns to the sheep stations, more evidence of progress was noticeable. After remaining about 19d. from 1943 to 1946, wool went to 57d. by 1949-50 and 143d. in 1950-51. All along the Fitzroy, in sheep and cattle properties alike, boring for sub-artesian water was proceeding at an accelerated rate. More attention was being paid

to herd control. The leading station in this respect, Gogo, was speying extensively. In 1944 and 1945, 4,000 heifers were treated each year on Margaret Downs and Cherrabun.⁽⁴⁵⁾ An attempt was being made by the manager, Millard, to eliminate all beasts with any trace of white in their colouring, such animals being sensitive to photosensitisation; the ultra-violet rays of a tropical sun made white-skinned beasts more susceptible to skin cancers and to wastage.

Before Millard's death, in 1953, all traces of white had been eliminated from the hides of over ninety per cent of the herd. His neighbour, William Macdonald, at Fossil Downs, was experimenting in an entirely different direction. Already well-known for the magnificent homestead and men's quarters which he had had built from local materials, Macdonald now undertook the formation of a poll shorthorn stud. This, the first registered stud in the North, was devoted to polled cattle, for Macdonald held that horned cattle were subject to unnecessary bruising and goring in transit as livestock, and that dehorning, while it resulted in better prices for cattle so treated, was a tedious and unsatisfactory process.⁽⁴⁶⁾ Had the work of Millard and Macdonald been paralleled elsewhere, the standard of animal husbandry would have improved perceptibly. Many squatters, however, were more willing to criticise than to imitate innovators.

45 : Gogo station records (maintained on the property).

46 : Macdonald, W.N.M.: Kimberley Poll Shorthorns (Sands and Macdougall, Perth, 1951.)

Despite the presence of Wise in the Premier's Office, and Coverley in the Department of the North-West, the eighteen months following the end of the Second World War saw few important policy decisions on the Kimberleys. New police and post office buildings were planned for Fitzroy Crossing, and investigations were proceeding at Hall's Creek, which were to lead to a proposal to shift and re-build the whole centre to a new townsite at the aerodrome at the "Nine-Mile". Dependence on the Federal financial authorities curbed the outlay of government capital in the North. In August 1945, delegates from the Kimberleys had attended the informal congress of Northerners at Whim Creek, which demanded the abolition of taxation for Northern primary producers.⁽⁴⁷⁾ An ephemeral "Northern Advancement League" had appeared at Wyndham, where it seemed chiefly concerned with the preferential treatment shown by the State Government in supplying meatworkers with amenities not available to the townspeople.⁽⁴⁸⁾

It was left to E.M. Durack, already mentioned in conjunction with the Carlton research station, to attempt to head a reform movement. He stood as an independent candidate for Kimberley in the state elections of March 1947, on an electoral policy specifically designed for the district, and expressed in his

47 : "Northern Times", August 24th, 1945.

48 : Ibid. February 4th and 25th, 1946.

booklet : "A New Deal for Kimberley".⁽⁴⁹⁾ Besides reiterating the need for taxation relief, vermin control, and Government-equipped stock routes, Durack emphasised the need for a sustained research programme, preferably to be carried out by a branch Department of Agriculture with headquarters at Broome. He urged Government intervention in several other respects, including the provision of all-weather highways linking Broome, Derby, Hall's Creek and Wyndham; of Government-sponsored market gardens providing all the vegetable, fruit and similar needs of each community; adequate water and electrical supplies for the towns - at present sadly lacking; a High School for Broome, and a "flying teacher" service to make regular visits to outback stations. He advocated a regular fortnightly shipping service, with generous freight concessions operating for all fencing, building and water supply materials. To aid the stations, Durack recommended "Government plants equipped with modern machinery capable of dealing with the erection of fencing and water requirements of stations". He wrote:⁽⁵⁰⁾

"It should be possible for Stations to submit an annual programme of work which would allow for organising the movement of Government plants through the country. I am of the opinion that the State should view all applications for the use of these plants impartially regardless of the present financial position of the applicant, that where necessary very generous terms be granted to cover the cost of the work."

Despite an intensive campaign, he did not succeed in capturing Kimberley from Coverley, who won by 389 votes to 207. For

49 : Durack, K.M. : A New Deal for Kimberley. (Service Printing Company, Perth, 1946.)

50 : Ibid. p. 9.

Durack's defeat, a number of reasons have been given. Foremost is the traditional solidarity of the A.W.U., although Durack achieved the distinction of being the only non-Labour candidate ever to win a majority in the Labour centres of Wyndham and Cockatoo Island since 1917.⁽⁵¹⁾ In addition, his views were dismissed by many squatters as "too theoretical". His family relationship to the old Connor, Doherty & Durack interest may have had some influence in deciding voters, although his policy of widespread Government intervention in the affairs of the district was contrary to the private-enterprise views of his father, M.P. Durack. However one reads the result, it served to show that Coverley - a "safe man", who could be relied upon to initiate no startling changes in administrative policy - was in an unassailable position, even to a candidate with a programme tailor-made for the district. At the same election, however, the Wise Government was defeated, and the Liberal Ross McLarty became Premier and Minister for the North-West. Much was hoped of him as a shareholder in five properties along the Fitzroy, the most progressive portion of the district; although, in some quarters, a belief existed that, like Sir James Mitchell, his closest attachments lay with the South-West. There was prevalent an anecdote, the authenticity of which could not be guaranteed, describing his first visit to the Kimberley Research Station. His comment, which had been eagerly awaited by Kimberley residents, was

51 : In Wyndham, Durack polled 27 votes to Coverley's 21. At Cockatoo Island, the figures were 23 to 10. Elsewhere, Coverley was well ahead.

reputed to have been: "What lovely soil! Pity it wasn't down at Pinjarra or Harvey - it'd be worth £25 or £30 an acre."

Meanwhile, within the Kimberley District, the impulse towards regional self-consciousness implicit in Durack's campaign was showing further signs of life. "Partly as a result of the answers to questionnaires"⁽⁵²⁾ sent out by Durack to ascertain a consensus of local opinion, the idea was evolved of the formation of a Kimberley Development Council. The projected Council's functions included decentralised administration of the district; detailed planning for "healthy, profitable, and extensive development"; the definition of the capabilities and limitations of the district; the devising of an efficient system of land use; the study and implementation of methods of improving living standards; the elimination, as far as possible, of dependence on products from the South, and the establishment of industries for local consumption; the general development of coloured and native peoples; and the provision of "a permanent and vital source of encouragement to initiative within the community." The Council would advise the State Government in all matters affecting developmental policy for the Kimberleys, execute works of immediate and vital concern to the district's welfare, and co-operate with the Federal and State Governments in conducting research surveys to furnish information necessary for future planning.⁽⁵³⁾

52 : Letter from K.M. Durack to present writer, November 12th, 1952.

53 : "The West Australian", September 12th, 1947: December 5th, 1947.

Ambitious though this programme was, the existence of such a body might have stimulated the formulation of a policy of progress. Eight hundred signatures were appended to a petition to the Lieutenant-Governor (Sir James Mitchell), requesting the formation of a Council, and the project was editorially commended by "The West Australian".⁽⁵⁴⁾ However, it shared the melancholy fate of all previous associations of northerners. Possibly there were too many diverse opinions about fundamentals. Distance was also a factor. Broome and Wyndham are five hundred miles apart, and, even today, there is not a great deal of mutual contact or understanding. Parochialism has had more than its fair amount of influence on plans for the Kimberleys. A little judicious midwifery by the State Government may have prolonged the life of the infant Council, but this was withheld. Perhaps the extensive plans propounded by the backers of the scheme seemed to postulate too great an outlay of Government funds. However, not long after, an informal semi-official advisory committee was set up by the Premier for consultation on matters affecting the North-West in general, Kimberley viewpoints being represented by Gordon Blythe.⁽⁵⁵⁾ Amongst projects in which this body assisted was the planning of the new Hall's Creek townsite, which included a new hospital and a school for students up to the Junior standard, with a resident hostel incorporated.

54 : Ibid. December 6th, 1947.

55: For reference Kimberley Regional Advisory Committee, vide Debates, vol. 124, pp. 1437-8 : North-West Development Advisory Committee, Debates, vol. 126, p. 152 : vol. 127, 1580.

The creation of an entire new township, under modern conditions, was only one indication of the amenities which were coming to the Kimberleys in the postwar period. Similar plans were devised to move Wyndham to a more congenial position. The Civil Aviation Department had established what were practically all-weather aerodromes at all the townships, and many of the stations serviced by the Flying Doctor had their own airstrips. This number was continually increasing. Thus the MacRobertson-Miller airline was enabled to employ larger aircraft, with increased freighting capacity. During the summer "wet" season, fruit and vegetables and other perishables could be freighted from Perth to ensure a balanced diet for Kimberley residents. From 1949 to 1952, this service was subsidised by the State Government. On the more advanced stations, homestead comforts in some cases even ran to private swimming pools. The use of electricity and refrigeration was by now widespread. Much to the distaste of the more conservative oldtimers, the horse and mule, except during mustering, were rapidly disappearing before the internal combustion engine, although on some of the more remote stations, especially in the rugged Leopolds, donkeys and even camels were still in use. In 1949-50, the State Department of Agriculture and C.S.I.R.O. commenced combined research into the cause and cure of the Kimberley horse disease, which was still responsible for many deaths. Murnane's theory of whitewood was by now generally considered unsatisfactory.

The increasing mechanisation of the Kimberley pastoral industry, besides reflecting contemporary progress, was rendered necessary by the continued shortage of competent white labour. At no time in the postwar period were there more than 350 white men permanently employed on stations in the whole district, including owner-managers.⁽⁵⁵⁾ This led to an increasing reliance on native and half-caste labour. Most stations maintained their own blacks' camp, from which they drew a supply of stockmen and "house gins". Unlike the other North-West districts, it was not the custom to pay weekly wages, although some pastoralists did make cash payments. The general procedure was to provide native workers and their dependents, including children and the aged, with food, clothing, and the more or less exiguous shelter of the camp. The shortage of white labour led to a risk of inefficient herd control, which might best be countered by increased paddocking. The old "open range" method of grazing cattle functioned effectively where there was an assured and copious supply of stockmen and musterers to attend to the cattle. During the past thirty years, labour shortages had rendered it inefficient and outmoded, and the provision of paddocks with artificial watering points was the only answer. However, the shortage of labour and materials discouraged all but the most determined owners.

Instead, as in the boom period around 1917, there was a tendency for smallholders to sell out to wealthy capitalists, usually absentees. During 1949 and 1950, several more interests

entered the field. Robert Falconer of Billiluna sold out to Spencer Doman, a South Australian with interests ranging from Wiluna to Waroona. Jack Kilfoyle accepted £25,000 for Rosewood. The buyer, William Buckland, was a Melbourne man with a fortune made from the Mount Morgan mines, attracted by the fact that much of Rosewood was in the tax-free Northern Territory. Unlike the others, a third new capitalist, Tom Quilty, was not an absentee. Already owner of Bedford Downs, and an out-station, Arizona, inherited from his brother, Quilty sold holdings in the Northern Territory to re-invest in East Kimberley, where he also purchased Springvale, Lansdowne, and a hotel at Wyndham. In 1950 came the biggest sale of all, when Connor, Doherty & Durack's properties were bought by subsidiary companies of Peel River Estates, a New South Wales firm with widespread ramifications throughout Australia. Having effected the sale, H.P. Durack erected a memorial tablet at Argyle to his overland relatives, retired to Perth, and died within a month.

The result of these sales was to confirm the hold of the great capitalists on the East Kimberley pastoral industry. Of some 23,498,288 acres held under lease at the end of 1950, 9,263,362 acres was held by twenty-five owners, of which only one, and he a permanent resident of Wyndham, could not be classified as a resident owner. But the other fourteen million acres was parcelled out thus:

55: See Appendix on Population and Labour.

Australian Investment Agency Pty.Ltd. (Vesteys)	5,523,353	acres.
Naughton Estate,Melbourne	2,002,523	"
Tom Quilty and associates	1,874,856	"
Peel River estates (ex Connor,Doherty & Durack)	1,704,041	"
Department of Native Affairs	1,119,000	"
Spencer Doman	1,020,537	"
Bovril Australian Estates	990,616	* (56)

It may be queried whether even the capital resources of these interests were adequate to achieve the development of such big runs. The men of Kimberley, seeing that these large-scale interests held the whole of the Ord valley, felt that prospective smallholders were being deprived of opportunity, and resentment against the absentees was keen. Indeed, such hostility may have stifled genuine impulses towards improvement on the part of the absentees. The increasingly anti-British sentiments of the Argentine Government, coupled with a gradual breakdown in the supply of beef from the pampas, made it likely that the Bovril and Vestey interests would turn to their Australian holdings. Bovril Australian Estates had made an unsuccessful attempt to take over an Army meatworks at Katharine (N.T.) For Vesteys, A.S.Bingle, general manager of the Australian Investment Agency, could point to attempted ~~boiling~~ and fencing projects, and bull breeding at Wave Hill (N.T.) from which the other stations were supplied. With regard to soil erosion, which was especially a problem on Ord River and Turner, he wrote: (57)

56 : Bovril Australian Estates also control several million acres in the adjacent part of the Northern Territory. Data, checked by the present writer, has been taken from Gordon Buchanan's Report to the Pastoral Appraisement Board, 1951.

57 : Letter from A.S.Bingle to the present writer, November 13th, 1952.

"This is not entirely due to overstocking, but certainly a better control of stocking would materially stop erosion around the main watering points. Fencing and breakwinds have been provided, and perhaps a trial of introduction of suitable grasses and herbage which would take root in the wet season would be beneficial. I have endeavoured to have spread such natural grasses as soft spinifex, buffel, and birdwood. The various companies with which I am connected have put forward developmental schemes to improve their properties on the assumption that greater security of tenure will be given under the conditions of leases."

Security of tenure and a railway to Wyndham - these were the conditions inhibiting absentee investment. The most satisfactory answer yet received was the decision of the Commonwealth Government, in 1949, to commence the construction of an all-weather road from Wyndham to Nicholson, the most centrally situated Vestey property, a distance of some 250 miles. The great weaknesses of absentee ownership were the control of areas too extensive for efficient development by one authority, and the tendency in managers to become too dependent upon head office for their orders, instead of exercising initiative. (58)

In all the absentee capitalists of East Kimberley, signs were evident of a desire to check the deterioration of properties, but it remained problematical as to whether the country could best be developed by such interests. Many politicians and others did not hesitate to express opinions publicly on the subject, but the lack of reliable data available makes it unlikely that there was any satisfactory basis for their assertions. Apart from such energetic exceptions as Jack Kilfoyle of Rosewood, and Sam Lilley of Bow River, both of whose

58 : This may be confirmed, one gathers, by eavesdropping on the wireless transceiver when managers are in communication with head office.

properties were in a favourable position for marketing, East Kimberley smallholders were not conspicuously more progressive than big capitalists, even allowing for their slighter resources. A comparative study of production figures on five Vestey stations and five smallholdings does not show to the discredit of the former, and indicates that compulsory sub-division, in itself, would not necessarily lead to a more efficient use of the land.⁽⁵⁹⁾

In West Kimberley, control of the best country in the Fitzroy valley was almost as completely vested in a relatively small number of interests. But these units were smaller, there was a closer contact between Western Australian owners and their properties and an alert spirit of competition stimulated managers to a constant programme of improvements. This was particularly noticeable in the wool industry. One of the more noteworthy features was the subdivision, for administrative purposes, of the 900,000-acre runs of Liveringa and Noonkanbah. Although these properties remained entirely under the same ownership as hitherto, each was provided with an out-station, respectively Paradise and Wirrimbah. Each out-station was equipped with its own homestead, yards, shearing sheds, and other facilities, and placed under the care of a separate sub-manager and staff. This process marked the adoption of a more carefully supervised and intensive form of pastoralism, and a further moving away from the nomadic methods of the early days. The

59 : Table reproduced as Appendix X.

smaller stations were also vying with one another in the provision of improvements. G.C. Rose of Mount Anderson kept a model shearing shed, and was one of the first to experiment with pasture grasses, despite unusually heavy handicaps from droughts and vermin. Jeff Rose of Quanbun claimed in 1952 to have taken a wool clip averaging eight pounds. The district average was about 6.5 lbs., having advanced from the five-pound average of the 'twenties.

In several instances, the manager of a West Kimberley property became a shareholder or director of the owning company, as occurred on Liveringa, Myroodah, and Noonkanbah. On many stations, there existed a "family connection" which made for continuity in management policy, and personal interest in the stations' welfare. Besides such established owners as the McLartys, the Roses, the Emanuels, and George Mawley and associates, new interests were entering the field. Dermot Farrell of the Broome Meatworks added Fairfield and Leopold Downs to his family's holdings. Robert Rowell, agent at Derby, besides holding shares in Manguel Creek and the Mornington and Tableland Pastoral Company, was widely credited with giving financial backing to a number of smallholders in the district - thus occupying a part which factors and merchants had played in Derby for some sixty years. Conversely, the fortunes of the firm of Streeter and Male had declined with the pearling industry, and, in 1951, they sold Roebuck Plains to William Skuthorpe, one of a small class of "battlers" who were accustomed to buy up an old station, work on it for a few years, and then dispose of it at a profit. In 1953, Skuthorpe re-sold to an Englishman, George Harris, who

proposed to work the property as a resident owner. This procedure was sufficiently unusual, in an outside investor, to create some interest locally.

In the cattle industry, the most spectacular innovation took place in 1949, with the development of the Air Beef Scheme.⁽⁶⁰⁾ In essence, this planned to demonstrate that aircraft could be used for the transport of beef from inland killing centres otherwise difficult of access. The scheme was fathered by I.H. Grabowsky, an official of Australian National Airways, and Lindsay Gordon Blythe, a member of the squatting family which owned Mount House and Glenroy. These properties, situated amongst the Leopolds, had in the past been retarded in their development by the long distance of the rough routes which separated them from the ports of Wyndham and Derby. In 1947, Blythe, who had had some experience of air-freighting during the war, sent an experimental load of unchilled beef by air from Mount House to Perth, as a donation to the Red Cross, to demonstrate that beef could be flown long distances without deterioration. Towards the end of 1948, a company was formed, with a capital of £15,000. This money was subscribed in equal amounts by Australian National Airways, by MacRobertson-Miller Aviation, and by a group of local pastoralists, foremost

60 : "The Story of the Air Beef Project in North-West Australia" (various writers : published by Frank H. Johnston for Air Beef Pty. Ltd., 1951) contains a full account of the workings of this project. Relevant statistics are included in Appendix VIII.

the Blythe brothers. In January 1949, construction of an abattoir was begun at Glenroy station. It was planned that Air Beef should purchase cattle from neighbouring stations, pay them according to grading after slaughter, and transport the carcasses, after chilling for 22 hours, by Bristol freighter to Wyndham Meatworks. The State Government co-operated to the extent of lending the company £10,000 free of interest for three years, and instructing the management of the Wyndham Meatworks to make provision of transport and storage space for Glenroy beef.

Operations commenced in the winter of 1949, and despite initial setbacks which more than halved the estimated kill of 4,500 head, the scheme proved of such benefit to the neighbouring stations, that the management of Air Beef was greatly encouraged. Formerly, drovers had been compelled to take stock over rough and rugged routes, which resulted in great loss through wastage. By slaughtering in the grazing country, Air Beef saved pastoralists up to 100 lbs. weight. This was a great advantage to the smallholders in the Leopold country, who also found that much time was saved by the elimination of the long journey to Derby or Wyndham. Furthermore, the air freighter, on its return trips, was used to bring stores, supplies, and equipment to the inland stations, thus saving them the trouble and expense of a long and tedious land journey. Passengers were also carried. A further development was the establishment of a market for hides at Derby, where the freighter made the journey once a week. The most

interesting feature of the project, indeed, was the manner in which the Blythe brothers re-invested their profits into their properties. Taking advantage of the air freight, they initiated large-scale improvement programmes, which previously would have been impracticable. New homesteads were built at Mount House and Glenroy, ambitious programmes of boring and fencing were outlined, and a trial crop of grain sorghum grown as a preparatory experiment before attempting commercial pig-raising. To improve the herds, one hundred bulls were purchased from Macdonald's Fossil Downs stud, and, in July 1950, twenty of these bulls were flown from Fossil Downs to Mount House, in what was claimed to be a world's record airlift of livestock.⁽⁶¹⁾ Air Beef took the opportunity to point the contrast with the experience of the owners of Argyle station, who, in the same year, had endeavoured to bring 350 shorthorn cows, in calf to high quality bulls, across the Northern Territory by road-train. Their arrangements had failed, and it was found necessary to walk the cows to Argyle, thus occasioning delay and loss.

Nevertheless, considerable opposition to the scheme was manifested in the district. The most cogent argument against the working of the Air Beef scheme lay in the fact that it cost 2d. per lb. to freight beef to Wyndham, whereas droving costs came only to about 15s. a beast. Air Beef paid lower prices than those obtaining at the Wyndham Meatworks. But to the smallholders of the Leopolds, these

61 : Ibid. p. 66 : Macdonald, W.N.M., op.cit. pp. 7-9.

drawbacks found compensation in the quicker turn-off, and saving of weight and losses on the track. In fact, several utilised Glenroy by cleaning up their runs, and sending to the abattoirs all the old "pikers", who would never have made the journey to Wyndham, but would have died as total losses, if the Glenroy works had not afforded a few pounds for them. Other criticisms of the scheme were strangely varied. Labour members distrusted the connection of Australian National Airways, and sought to deduce that it was another catspaw of monopoly control capitalism, and that "the Orient Line owned the show".⁽⁶²⁾ The Farrells, managers of Wyndham and Broome Meatworks, became engaged in rather pointless rivalry with the Elythes. Organisations, which should have been complementary in the Kimberley marketing system, tended to regard each other as competitive. Meanwhile, Grabowsky was derided by some for his enthusiastic schemes to extend Air Beef centres all over Northern Australia, although he prepared endless statistics to demonstrate that air transport would be cheaper than the construction of railways.

The truth seems to have been that Air Beef could not profitably function in an era of low prices, such as occurred before the war. But, in a time of good returns, it succeeded. Moreover, in 1950, the future of the cattle industry in northern Australia was assured by the signing of a fifteen-year agreement with the

62 : e.g. Debates, vol. 126, p. 252 : vol. 131, p. 930.

United Kingdom. In this, the Minister for Commerce (Hon. John McEwen) arranged that the price of Australian beef, purchases of which were arranged by the British Ministry of Food, should be subject to annual adjustment by the two Governments, and should at no time fall below the level ruling in 1950. The Australian Government would do everything in its power to encourage the expansion of meat production, and believed that the prospect of longterm security for producers, the removal of any fear of over-production, and the assurance of profitable prices would provide the necessary incentive. It was also agreed that, if the purchase of Australian meat was returned to private hands, both Governments would make such agreements as (63) would enable them to meet their obligations under the contract. This pact meant that, for fifteen years at least, the economic factors which had checked development before the war would not be present, and pastoralists could press forward with impunity with improvement schemes.

Meanwhile, the State Government had announced another scheme to encourage improvements by pastoralists. Following a lead given by the Federal Government in the Northern Territory before the war, McLarty announced that the State would grant a pound-for-pound subsidy to Kimberley stations undertaking to bore for sub-artesian water. The ultimate aim was one watering point to every 28,000 acres. (64) The station managers

63 : Keesing's Contemporary Archives, pp. 9970, 11130, 11179.

64 : "Sunday Times", August 6th, 1950.

did not avail themselves of this offer with any conspicuous alacrity, and the list of those owners who took advantage of the scheme is worth reproducing. Of 24 bores, Emanuels took 6 : Farrell Enterprises and the Mornington and Tableland Pastoral Company, each 4 : Peel River Estates and the Blythes, each 3 : Macdonald of Fossil Downs, 2 : the Springs Pastoral Company (Copley), and Black & Glid-doh, each 1. Sam Lilly of Bow River equipped a natural artesian flow, under this scheme. ⁽⁶⁵⁾ The subsidy probably accelerated the provision of artificial waters during the years 1950-1, although a few owners were of the opinion of Tom Quilty, who held that sub-artesian supplies would not prove permanent, but might give out within twenty or thirty years. ⁽⁶⁶⁾ However, like the Air Beef subsidy, this plan was assailed by the Labour Party, whose members complained that it was benefiting those owners who had done nothing of their own volition to improve their properties, but awaited the assistance of the taxpayers' money. ⁽⁶⁷⁾ The charge seems unjustified. No effective alternative was suggested.

Other government departments were active in the Kimberleys. With the introduction of a new Commissioner for Native Affairs (S.G. Middleton), patrol staffs were increased, and officers of the department stationed at Derby, Broome, and Wyndham. An unofficial "gentlemen's agreement" was negotiated with the Pastoralists' Association, by which the Kimberley members of that body agreed to pay small wages to their native stockmen. Some objected

65 : Debates, vol. 130, pp. 2047-8.

66 : Letter to the present writer, August 12th, 1952.

67 : Debates, vol. 126, p. 567 ; vol. 128, p. 281.

to this procedure, the most relevant argument being perhaps that the aborigines would be unaccustomed to handling money, and might fall prey to unscrupulous storekeepers, or to their gambling instincts. The move was probably inevitable. Conditions for natives varied considerably. On some stations the natives were still allowed to camp in the creek-beds, in exiguous humpies; on one or two properties, conditions were such that a local patrol officer threatened to revoke their licences to employ natives, if no improvement was made. Conversely, on some few stations, such as Fossil Downs and Gogo, the management provided good sanitary and ablutionary conveniences, and were somewhat surprised to find that the aborigines used and appreciated these amenities. (Such luxuries had not yet found their way into the most backward public houses.) Mention should also be made of the work done at Moola Bulla since 1949 by the manager, C.L. McBeath, a former Deputy-Commissioner, who worked to convert living conditions at Moola Bulla into a model for other stations employing coloured workers, and to train natives as useful mechanics and stockmen.

The Department of Agriculture was also devoting much attention to Kimberley projects. A separate North-West branch had been founded in December 1950, to co-ordinate and supervise current research work. The Kimberley Research Station had had most success with pasture grasses, sorghum, and peanuts. Cotton and maize had proved less successful, because of pests. Vermin control was attempted by the appointment of two experienced Northerners, Charles Blair and Douglas Moore as wild dog exterminators. (No foundation can be traced for the story that Blair, to demonstrate the inefficiency of departmental poison baits,

swallowed several, without any ill effects, before an astonished departmental official). An investigation into scientific kangaroo control was begun. The wallabies along the Fitzroy had multiplied to unprecedented numbers, and were gradually spreading into East Kimberley, which had been relatively free. Grant Smith was stationed as a cattle adviser at Broome, and, late in 1951, a graduate of the University of Western Australia, Kevin Fitzgerald, was appointed agricultural adviser at Derby.⁽⁶⁸⁾ This followed increasing activity along these lines by private enterprise. Between 1949 and 1951, Dermot Farrell had endeavoured to establish a large pineapple plantation at Thangoo, but, although a sprinkler irrigation system was installed, the experiment failed because of the alkaline nature of the soil. Another resident of Broome, Robert Lawrence, was interested in market gardening, and in raising ducks for export treatment at the Broome Meatworks. He had, however, been unable to secure a block of land, as all accessible country was under lease, and an attempt to sublet Manguel Creek from Rowell, Maxted & Fallon fell through. Lucerne, sorghum, and pasture grasses were being cultivated by several station owners. To guide and superintend these activities, Fitzgerald brought zeal and ability, but could not always persuade pastoralists to his views.

Meanwhile, the Pastoral Appraisement Board proceeded to the revision of rents on Kimberley runs, which, under

68 : His report for the year 1951-2 (presented to the Department : unpublished) affords a description of his first year's work.

the provisions of the Land Act, should have been undertaken in 1942, but was postponed because of the war. Experienced local men were chosen as the assessors : William Wedge Henwood, owner-manager of Calwynyardah, and Gordon Buchanan, a third-generation Kimberley man. The latter was assisted by Hector Fuller, manager of Rosewood, after many years in charge of Newry for Connor, Doherty & Durack. Their report⁽⁶⁹⁾, presented in 1951, contained a useful account of the state of the country, corroborating the need for improvement policies to check wastage and erosion. They advocated more resident ownership. Their assessment quotas, which graded properties according to their capacity, were adopted. Rentals per 1,000 acres varied from 4/6 in East Kimberley "battlers' country" to 13/6 on a Fitzroy sheep run. The total rental on 19,320,088 acres in East Kimberley was £6,913, and on 21,082,656 acres in West Kimberley, £9,178. Of these sums, the Vestey stations contributed £2,114, the Emanuels £1,693, and no other assessment exceeded £800. Among their recommendations, few of which led to official action, were the improvement of marketing conditions by the decontrol of hides ; the remittance of petrol tax on Air Beef aircraft ; the provision of stock route improvements, including drafting and spealing reserves outside Derby ; and a campaign to eradicate tick on the stretches outside the ports. Their report also disclosed the shortcomings of station management in the district, especially where absentee interests deferred to shareholders entirely ignorant of the Kimberleys except as a source of dividends.

69 : Report of the Pastoral Appraisalment Board, 1950-1. Unpublished, 80. typescript, 48 pp. My copy by kindness the Agricultural Editor, "The Western Mail".

There was, however, activity by the State Government. The Deputy-Premier and Mervyn Forrest, M.L.C. for North Province, took a petition to the Commonwealth Treasurer (Sir Arthur William Fadden, K.C.M.G.) requesting the abolition of taxation on incomes earned in the North-West and the Kimberleys, but Fadden shelved the matter indefinitely. Despite the reluctance of the Commonwealth Government to part with loan funds, the State Shipping Service managed to acquire another ship, named the "Kabbarli" after Daisy Bates. The Education Department appointed a travelling schoolmaster in 1951, to visit homesteads regularly, and to ensure some small measure of personal tuition for station children. Intentions of developing North Kimberley were foreshadowed by the withdrawal from selection of this country in 1950, but not before one venturesome Irish migrant, John Eagleson, had set out to found a run in the remote hinterland of the Carson River. He tried both sheep and cattle, but no reliable reports of the fortunes of this bold experiment have come to the writer's notice.

In April 1951, a committee of two Commonwealth and two State experts was appointed to devise a plan of regional development. Their report was presented to and endorsed by the Executive Council on January 3rd, 1952. Chief among their recommendations was the adoption of a plan submitted by R.J. Dumas, to provide Derby with a deepwater outport at Point Torment, and there to transfer the meatworks from Broome. The estimated cost was £1,455,000, for which a Commonwealth pound-for-pound subsidy was recommended. The continuation of State

and Commonwealth subsidies totalling 2.2d. per lb. on Air Beef, and Federal aid to enlarge the scope of the scheme to subsidise station owners who provided artificial watering points, were also advocated. (70) These proposals set off a spate of comments inspired by parochialism and party politics. The project was praised by R.M.Rowell of Derby, who said that the outport would help the development of markets to Malaya and the Near North. (71) The Broome Road Board decried the proposed site as marshy and mosquito-infested, and stated that the existing works were equally well situated to handle the Fitzroy trade. (72) Coverley and the Labour Party tended to favour Broome, but there seems no reason to question the judgment of a committee of civil servants, including the Engineer for the North-West and the Department of Agriculture's Officer-in-Charge of the North-West. The result of the rivalry between pressure-groups was to hold up all further plans for the improvement of West Kimberley shipping facilities, and to leave the future of Broome and Derby in uncertainty.

The year 1952 was noted for its unprecedented drought. The failure of the wet season of 1951-2 was not complete, but it was enough to cause the drying up of many pools previously believed permanent, and to give point to the warnings of Henwood, Buchanan, Durack, and other commentators on haphazard management methods. Losses were heavy, although at this date an accurate estimate of the damage done is impossible. But shipping figures from Derby were down from

70 : "West Australian", January 4th, 17th and 18th, 1952.

71 ; Ibid. January 5th, 1952.

72 : Ibid. January 19th, 1952.

an average of 9,000 to 7,900 in 1952, and 5,600 in 1953, and the Wyndham and Broome meatworks reported low killings. However, air transport came into its own. Only the previous year, MacRobertson-Miller Aviation had been commissioned to fly the entire woolclip from Myroodah and Derby, because the roads were washed out by floods. Now the same line was transporting fodder to save the breeding stud at Fossil Downs, and other stations where the feed around the few remaining watering-points had been entirely eaten out. The inland abattoir at Glenroy had a record kill of 5,185 cattle in 1952, including many weakened stock which would not have survived the season if they had stayed on the runs. The Farrells endeavoured to bring about the use of road-trains to transport stock to the Broome meatworks, and, although the first experiments resulted in some bruising and wastage, later journeys caused a saving in time and condition. In 1953, 70 per cent of the kill at Broome were brought there by truck, the area served ranging as far as Mount Amherst, and Mornington in the Leopolds, thus providing competition for Air Beef. This transport method was especially useful to Anna Plains station, which could now send stock to Broome without running the risk of tick-infestation. On the opposite side of the Kimberleys, Billiluna found itself unable to use the Canning Stock Route because of the dryness of the 1952 season.

The sole consolation about the 1952-3 drought lay in the high prices. Broome and Wyndham were paying £20 a head for cattle, and the Fremantle market returned record prices, culminating in the payment of £77 for a Christmas Creek bullock. It was perhaps as a result of the effects of the drought on shorthorn cattle that one West Kimberley station experimented with the hardier Zebu-shorthorn crossbred, which had

been vainly recommended by Despeissis forty years ago. Kimberley Downs imported two pairs of Santa Gertrudis crossbreds from Queensland.⁽⁷³⁾ On the success of these beasts depended the prospects of cultivating a strain which had already done well under not dissimilar conditions in Texas, and which, if controlled so that they did not run wild, might prove better adapted to the Kimberley environment than the pure shorthorn. Another step forward in animal husbandry was marked by the discovery of the cause of Kimberley horse disease - a type of "rattlepod" indigenous to the district.⁽⁷⁴⁾ Von Mueller, in 1886, had been closer the mark than many subsequent theorists. The provision of artificial fodders seemed the answer to this problem.

Experiments along these lines were already proceeding on several stations. Irrigated lucerne and sorghum patches were flourishing at Bow River, Mount House, and Noonkanbah. The Air Beef scheme had enabled the extensive experimentation in sorghums by the Blythe Brothers, who envisaged the feeding of pigs and good quality "soft" fat cattle over a portion of the dry season when wastage usually set in. At Liveringa, a patch of ground had been leased to a private company, Northern Development Ltd., and experimental rice-growing with mechanisation was being undertaken, with Kim Durack as overseer. In 1952, no crop could be set, owing to the drought, but, despite almost equally adverse conditions in 1953, successful

73 : "West Australian", November 12th, 1952.

74 : "Western Mail", August 14th, 1952.

results were achieved with the Zenith and Magnolia varieties of rice, providing hopeful indications for commercial cultivation. The value of this experiment to the pastoral industry lay in the provision of irrigation channels, along which good grazing might be provided for sheep. The two industries might well be carried on together. The Department of Agriculture's adviser, Fitzgerald, attempted the cultivation of a tobacco patch outside Derby in 1953, and the Kimberley Research Station continued a consistent programme of necessary researches.

Meanwhile, further electoral matters occupied Kimberley. In 1950, Wise, then Leader of the Opposition, had determined to capture North Province for Labour. On the retirement of the aged Miles, he was replaced by Harry Strickland, a Labour man with the customary antagonism to large owners. Strickland was joined in 1952 by a Derby stock inspector, Charles William Barker, whose maiden speech, impugning the absentees, made some impression in Parliament, especially as his electors had not been sanguine as to his abilities, and had preferred him to Mervyn Forrest by the narrow margin of five votes. However, when, in 1953, Sir Ross McLarty's government was defeated by A.R.G. Hawke, it was Strickland who was selected as Minister for the North-West. Shortly after the election, Coverley, who had been in ill-health for some time, suddenly died. This hit at the Labour Government's slender majority. For the first time in nearly thirty years, the Liberals decided to contest the Kimberley seat, nominating two candidates,

Jack Murray, a Flying Doctor pilot, and Sam Thomas, chairman of the Hall's Creek Road Board, and a local bookmaker, whose attempt to graze sheep in the desert country south of Emanuel's Christmas Creek had ended in failure and litigation. The Labour Party, at the insistent request of local A.W.U. branches, nominated J.J. Rhatigan, a patrol officer for the Department of Native Affairs, and a lifelong resident of the district, whose claims to the succession had been urged by Coverley. Despite the loss of the asset of Coverley's personal popularity, the Labour Party found its following in the electorate as strong as ever, Rhatigan defeating his opponents by over two hundred votes.

The electoral campaign had, however, served a useful purpose in directing the attention of leading State politicians to the needs and requirements of the disputed electorate. With West Kimberley labouring under a third dry year, this attention was most necessary. Sir Ross McLarty attempted to secure support by urging the formation of a special commission, with its own funds, and with power to undertake administrative and developmental projects in the district.⁽⁷⁵⁾ Such an authority, with an appreciation of problems on the spot, might have done much to encourage development in the district; but it is a little hard to understand why Sir Ross McLarty did not implement this scheme during his term of office.

75 : "West Australian", April 30th, 1953.

The Labour Government reversed some of its predecessor's policies. After a rather unseemly wrangle with Sir Ross McLarty in the daily press, Strickland announced that the State Shipping Service was inadequate, and that another vessel would be ordered. The Government disclaimed any intention of proceeding with the transfer of Derby to the Point Torment site. Instead, Strickland contemplated the establishment of a port at Napier Broome Bay⁽⁷⁶⁾-- first suggested in 1902, and therefore twenty years later in origin than the Point Torment proposal which it replaced. Earlier, the acting-Premier (J.T. Tonkin) had announced⁽⁷⁷⁾ plans for water conservation, surveys for irrigation development, and an extensive reconnaissance of the North Kimberley area, "to expedite its opening-up for sub-division into cattle stations of a carrying capacity high enough to ensure good living and sound investment." Of relevance to this project was the experiment in sheep raising attempted by the Benedictine Fathers, of Kalukuru on the Drysdale River, who, in April 1953, introduced two rams and 51 ewes by air-lift from Noonkanbah.⁽⁷⁸⁾ It would appear that the Labour Government hoped to place within the reach of intending smallholders a compensatory field for investment, in view of the hold on the settled country of existing companies protected by long-term leases, not expiring until 1962. Another scheme enunciated by Hawke,⁽⁷⁹⁾ the appointment of an engineer-administrator as Commissioner of the North-West, thus reviving the office abolished by Collier in 1926,

76 : "Sunday Times", August 16th, 1953.

77 : "West Australian", May 9th, 1953.

78 : "Daily News", April 16th, 1953.

79 : "West Australian", January 23rd, 1953.

has not as yet (September 1953) been put into practice. All parties supported a move to make another approach to the Federal Government for the remission of taxation north of 26° N.⁽⁸⁰⁾ If this request were granted, it would represent a change in policy by the Commonwealth Government, which, of late, has not considered itself in a position to give much assistance to the Kimberley District. Proposals for the establishment of an air-beef killing centre at Fitzroy Crossing, to which Commonwealth Ministers promised sympathetic consideration, were shelved; in the opinion of local residents, assistance in providing such a centre would have obviated many losses from drought.⁽⁸¹⁾

It might therefore be doubted whether Commonwealth control of the Kimberleys would result in any outlay greater than struggling State Governments could afford. Direct Federal control of the Northern Territory had not provided a startlingly successful object lesson. Yet the Kimberley District had more continuity of interest with the adjacent portions of the Northern Territory than with the North-West. The Ord-Victoria River area had become the subject of plans which could not be satisfactorily accomplished if East Kimberley and the west of the Northern Territory remained divided by an arbitrary and artificial boundary line. Perhaps the creation of a local commission, including the Kimberleys and the Victoria River district, with discretionary borrowing powers, backed by the State and Federal authorities jointly, would combine the sympathetic insight coming from on-the-spot administration with

80 : "West Australian", September 17th, 1953.

81 : Ibid. January 12th, 1953 : private information.

freedom from parochialism. The great advantage of such a commission would be its potentialities for working out a consistent administrative policy for the district. The present system, by which outlay on public works and the encouragement of private enterprises are dependent upon changes of ministry in the South, has not proved in the best interests of the Kimberleys.

Nowhere can the inhibiting influence of party politics be seen so clearly as in the present system of land tenure. The leasehold system, adopted at a time when the resources of the district were unknown, and when Governments rightly wished to avoid the permanent locking of the land, needs revision. Should the reports of the Pastoral Appraisement Board prove inadequate, a survey might well be made of all land at present under occupation. Much of it has been and will be fit only for pastoral purposes, and such country could be offered freehold, or on a 99-year lease, subject to the institution of adequate improvements. In this way, lessees would gain the security of tenure for which they have so long appealed. If existing leases were surrendered, during this re-classification, the opportunity might be taken to resume land favourable to tropical agriculture and other intensive cultivation. Should irrigation prove practicable, much of the irrigated country might serve both agriculturalists and pastoralists. The present system, which keeps over forty million acres under leasehold until 1982, gives the pastoralist no ultimate

security, and frustrates those who wish to become agriculturalists or graziers on a small scale. Neither Liberal nor Labour governments have ever given adequate attention to the land laws, except when alleged insecurity of tenure has prompted the financial houses to withhold advances to the pastoralists, as in 1917 and 1932. Circumstances of such urgency do not make for the framing of the most far-sighted legislation.

No government or commission would be able to effect the rehabilitation of the Kimberleys in a short space of time. It would first be necessary to arrest the wastage and erosion still going on, which has been furthered by the recent bad seasons, and the effects of which are mirrored in the gradual decline of stock numbers, despite improvements. The reports of Payne and Fletcher, Fyfe, Kim Durack, Henwood and Buchanan, and Fitzgerald have already indicated the lines along which such action may begin, and to the recommendations of these competent authorities, a historian need add no modifications. With all respect to those authorities who envisage the settlement of North Kimberley, it would appear that the present need is not to extend the boundaries of settlement, but to organise the more effective cultivation of lands already held. Few, if any, Kimberley runs are stocked to estimated capacity, but inadequate development has led to the heavy concentration of stock on the best portions of the country, and this has resulted in erosion and over-exploitation. The experiments of Kim Durack, the Blythes, and other managers, indicate a growing realisation that old methods of land usage, involving the tenure of thousands of square miles, might well give way to more intensive

methods of husbandry, more highly mechanised, and more efficient. The largest owners, in point of land held, have not necessarily been the most progressive or the most successful, and this would imply that there is much scope for the outlay of capital in the parts of Kimberley already settled, without going to untried areas. Research has not yet been completed on the capacity of the occupied districts, nor on the possibilities and practicability of irrigation.

The smallholder, with scanty capital, may succeed in developing a run on virgin country on the outskirts of settlement; but, in the course of time, he either becomes a capitalist or sells out to one. The capital expenditure required for the development of a modern sheep or cattle station can only be furnished by recourse to a bank or by the formation of a joint-stock company. The registration of the Fossil Downs Pastoral Company probably leaves Quilty as the only individual lessee of any importance. Capital becomes increasingly necessary to overcome the present labour shortage. Amenities have to be provided to compensate for the drawbacks of the climate and the remoteness of the district. Cheap black labour can no longer be regarded as an indefinite asset. The aborigines are becoming increasingly sophisticated, and many pastoralists have expressed fears that a Don McLeod may arise, in Kimberley as in Pilbara, to win the blacks away from the stations.

Presumably, Australia's object in holding the Kimberleys is to make it as productive as possible in a world which, as Boyd-Orr has demonstrated, is not assured of being adequately fed. Most of the recent developments which have furthered this end have been initiated

from within the district, either by progressive resident capitalists, or by those civil servants who have not been content to administer the Kimberleys from a city desk. It seems probable that the development of the district would best be furthered, not by awaiting Government expenditure lavish beyond any justifiable return, nor by hoping for the advent of a fairy-godfather capitalist from outside, whether embodied in a pastoral chartered company, or in a discover of oil. The encouragement of a class of resident owners, who might reasonably expect that their residence in the district would not involve them in financial loss, still seems as likely a way as has yet been devised to ensure productive returns from the Kimberleys. The dependence of such owners on private banks and financial houses would more probably be reduced, not by extensive Government outlay on unproductive public works and subsidies, but by a policy of Government loans, repayable as lessees prospered. With the extension of the Rural and Industries Bank, advances could be made to assist intending smallholders and to establish local industries. There is also merit in Durack's suggestion of Government-maintained boring and fencing plants, for the use of which pastoralists might repay over a term of years. If Governments are to act in the role of Almighty Provider, they might with advantage interpret their duty as helping those who help themselves. If an alternative is to be found to the absentee capitalist, it should not be sought in the backward smallholder.

Before the war, it was questioned whether the Kimberleys were not marginal country, whether beef cattle could not be raised more easily in more congenial districts, closer to markets

and the centres of population. Now, the advance of agricultural science, and the diminishing food supply of the world, make it not only possible, but perhaps imperative, that the best use should be made of the district. In the last resort, the prime question of importance for the Kimberley District cannot be boiled down to a simple argument of Federal versus State administration, Labour versus Liberal, smallholders versus capitalists. The progress of the district might best be measured by the criterion of the King of Brobdingnag, who, according to Dean Swift⁽⁸²⁾ gave it for his opinion:

"That whoever could make two ears of corn, or two blades of grass, to grow where only one grew before, would deserve better of mankind, and do more essential service to his country, than the whole race of politicians put together."

=====

82 : "Gulliver's Travels", Book II, Chapter 7.

APPENDICES.

- I. Biographical Notes on some persons prominently connected with the district.
 - II. Original documents:
 - (a) Report on Sturt Creek in 1890. (C.S.D. 2605/90.)
 - (b) Kimberley in 1910. (Allen's "Reminiscences".)
 - III. Kimberley Stations Held in the Names of Mortgagees, 1885-1918.
 - IV. Kimberley District : Acreages occupied, 1881-1952.
 - V. Kimberley District : Rainfall Records, 1886-1952.
 - VI. Kimberley District : Livestock Statistics.
 - (a) Cattle Population, 1883-1953.
 - (b) Sheep. (i) Average Fleece Weight of Wool Clip, 1916-1951.
(ii) Sheep Population, 1881-1951.
 - VII. Livestock Exports from Kimberley District.
 - (i) Sheep sent to Fremantle, 1894-1951.
 - (ii) Cattle sent to Fremantle, 1890-1951.
 - (iii) Export of Cattle to Asia, 1898-1953.
 - VIII. Total Turn-off of Kimberley Cattle, 1919-1953.
 - IX. Population and Labour : Kimberley District.
 - (a) Population, 1890-1920, compiled from (i) Electoral Rolls
(ii) Census Returns.
 - (b) Population, 1921-1950, as given in Road Board Returns.
 - (c) Labour Engaged Permanently in Pastoral Industry, 1907-1941.
 - X. Comparison of four Vestey Companies and four Owner-Managed Units, 1933-47.
 - XI. Kimberley District : Electoral.
 - (a) Parliamentary Representatives of Kimberley, 1887-1953.
 - (b) Results of Kimberley Legislative Assembly Elections, 1890-1953.
 - XII. Bibliography.
-

Sources :

- For Appendix I, Battye and Fox's : History of the North-West (Perth, 1915), and private information.
- For Appendix II (a), the Archives, Public Library, Perth.
- For Appendix II (b), Mr. R. Allen, of Cottesloe.
- For Appendices III and IV, the Lease Books under Sections 71 and 98 of the Land Acts of 1887 and 1898, and Section 396 of the Act of 1932, held at the Lands and Surveys Office, Perth.
- For Appendices V, VI, VII(c), IX, and XI(a), the Statistical Register of W.A.
- For Appendix VII (a) and VII (b), the "Northern Public Opinion", Feb. 18th, 1898 : January 7th, 1899 : and Feb. 15th, 1901 : Reports of the Chief Inspector of Stock, 1902-1906 : Reports of the Fremantle Harbour Trust, 1907-1941 : and of the Chief Harbour Master, 1945-1952.
- For Appendix VIII, as Appendix VII, and the offices of the Wyndham Meatworks ; the Broome Meatworks ; Air Beef Pty. Ltd. and Emanuel Bros.
- For Appendix X, statistics held at the Kimberley Research Station.
- For Appendix XI (b), the State Electoral Office, and the files of the "West Australian", 1890-1917.
- For Appendix XII, the assistance of F.K. Crowley's "Guide to the Principal Documents and Publications Relating to the History of Western Australia" and the Ministry of National Development's "Regional Bibliography, Pt. V."

APPENDIX I.

(Biographical Notes on some persons prominently connected with the district.)

=====

BLYTHE family. Founded by Joseph B. (1850-1915), publican at Derby, 1884, and Fitzroy Crossing, 1887 : manager, Noonkanbah, 1888-94; owner Brooking Springs, 1889-91, and founded Fairfield, 1898, and Mount House, 1899, after pioneering track into Leopolds. Retired south to Bunbury around 1903, leaving Kimberley properties to his sons.

These included Charles Christopher B., owner-manager Brooking Springs, 1891-1914 : Joseph William, Arthur, and Mervyn, joint-owners Fairfield and Mount House, 1903-1919, and from 1924.

Lindsey Gordon B. (b.1908), son of Joseph William B., after organising airfreight service in Solomons, World War II, initiated Air Beef Scheme at Glenroy, 1949, of which still managing director ; his brothers Keith and Douglas respectively managers of Glenroy, Mount House.

BROCKMAN and DRAKE-BROCKMAN families. George Julius B. (1850-1912), first to bring sheep to Kimberley from North-West, 1879 : founded Mount Marmion (now Kimberley Downs), 1883.

Frederick Slade B. (1857-1917), nephew of above, explored North Kimberley between Wyndham and Derby, 1901 : his report led to speculative leasing, but country remains largely undeveloped.

Geoffrey D-B. (b.1885), his son, Commissioner of the North-West, 1921-6, endeavoured to stimulate tropical agriculture projects; later Engineer for the North-West.

BUCHANAN, Nathaniel (1826-1901) Veteran bushman, headed first over-landing party into East Kimberley, with Osmond and Panton's cattle, 1884 : pioneered stock-route from Kimberleys to Murchison, via Ninety-Mile Beach, 1892 : explored desert S.E. of Hall's Creek, 1896.

His son, Gordon B. (1865-1943), founder, with Gordon Bros. of Flora Valley, 1888 : frequently accompanied father : author (1933) of "Packhorse and Waterhole". A grandson, also Gordon, was Flying Doctor wireless operator and secretary of Hall's Creek Road Board before assisting compile report for Pastoral Appraisement Board, 1950-1.

CONNOR, Francis (1857-1916). Migrated from Ireland with Denis Doherty (1861-1935) : storekeepers, Roebourne, 1885, and Wyndham, 1886, where prospered. Took up Newry, 1888, and bought Auvergne (N.T.), 1894: from 1893 on, C. & D. acted as agents shipping East Kimberley stock to metropolitan markets, securing near-monopoly : amalgamated with Duracks, 1897 : C. chairman of directors. (D. retired to England, 1903). Attempted establish Natal trade, 1902: C. successful re-opening trade with Manila, 1911, where mainly resided thenceforward.

C. entered politics as MLA East Kimberley, 1893-1904: then MLA Kimberley, 1904-5, MLC North Province, 1906-16. Squatter rep., usually supporter Sir J. Forrest : temporarily in opposition over tick restrictions, 1897, on which issue took prominent, but not always consistent part, 1896-1905. Eloquent advocate his constituency : occasional disconcerting flashes liberalism and Hibernian appetite political turmoil make party classification difficult. In opposition as independent, 1901-4, then supported minority Labour govt. till defeat at polls by Mals, 1905. Often assailed by consumer reps. as leading influence "meat ring".

COPLEY, Samuel William (fl. 1894-1914). Hard-headed Yorkshire migrant : reputed originally Fremantle barber and commission agent : amassed money metropolitan land deals : in 1902, took up extensive leases "Brockman country", N. Kimberley, but did not develop: with brother Ben C. and Jas. Patterson purchased Plympton St. Mary (Ord River), 1902, and Sturt Creek, 1904 : shipped own cattle, but made no reduction retail prices, Perth : overlanded cattle Qld., 1905-14 : sold out to Vestey's, 1914. Ben C. also purchased Mount Barnett (1907 : abandoned 1928) and Brooking Springs (1914 : still the property of his family).

COVERLEY, Aubrey Augustus Michael (1895-1953) Having served in Light Horse, came to Wyndham after World War I : on first attempt returned as Labour MLA Kimberley, 1924, and since never defeated. Opponent big absentee landholders, interested in aboriginal question, sympathetic to settlers' outlook : not a prominent speaker, but well liked in electorate for affability, approachability, personal helpfulness. Served on North-West committee of 1932 : chosen Minister for North-West, 1939-47.

DURACK family. Patrick D. (1834-98), cattleman, Thylungara, Qld. backed expedition into Kimberley led by brother Michael (1846-92), in 1882. Several members family overlanded Kimberley, 1883-5. Patrick D. founded Argyle ; Michael D., with backing of sleeping partner C. Lumley Hill founded Lissadell ; another brother, Jeremiah D. (1855-1901) founded Rosewood with Thos. Hayes and Thos. Kilfoyle(q.v.), 1885, and Dunham River, 1897, where killed by blacks, 1901. Patrick D. resided for some years at Argyle, which he made over to his sons.

Of these, Michael Patrick D. (1865-1950) arrived Argyle, 1886: overlanded to Darwin with T. Kilfoyle, 1891, to Derby with M.J. Durack, 1893, and solo into N.T. 1897-8 ; negotiated merger with Connor & Doherty, 1897, remaining in charge Kimberley stations of C.D. & D. His brother John Wallace D. (1867-1936) was for many years in charge of the firm's Perth office, while Patrick Bernard D. (1870-1933), after acting as buyer in Kimberley, ran firm's Wagin sheeprun, Behn-Ord. M.P.D. visited Manila, 1910, to open export livestock trade. Chairman directors C.D.&D. after Connor's death, 1916: Nationalist MLA Kimberley, 1917-24 : joined Country Party, 1920: advocated separation, 1922. Chairman Royal Commission into Beef Industry in W.A., 1928 : associated, 1928-31, with attempt to attract large-scale capitalist to E. Kimberley; favoured C'wth. control. Negotiated with Steinberg re sale of company's lands for Jewish settlement scheme, 1938-9 : finally sold to NSW firm Peel River Estates, shortly before death, 1950. Regarded for many years as doyen of the Kimberley cattle industry. His eldest son, Reginald Wyndham D. (b. 1911) owner-manager Kildurk (N.T.) since 1950. A second son, Kimberley Michael D. (b. 1917) was prominent as officer Department of Agriculture in foundation research stations Carlton Reach (1942) and Ivanhoe (1945) : unsuccessfully contested Kimberley seat, 1947, as independent : now engaged in private experimental rice-growing, Liveringa, 1951-3.

Another branch of the family included five brothers: Patrick Mantini D. (1855-1932), overlander, first storekeeper at Wyndham, founded Ellen Vale, 1894 : John D. (1857-86), overlander, speared by blacks, Argyle, 1886 : Michael Joseph D. (1858-1936), overlander : took 502 cattle Derby, 1893, with M.P.D. : after 1898, part-owner Lissadell, and in 1905 originated cattle trade along Murraraji Stock Route to Qld. : was assisted in management of Lissadell, 1899-1907, by his brothers Jeremiah Bryce D. (1859-1952) and Thomas D.

EMANUEL brothers. These were Isadore Solomon E. (b.1860) and Sydney Philip E. (d. 1918), sons of Solomon E. of Goulburn. Sydney E. accompanied M. Durack's expedition, 1882, following which E. family took up Noonkanbah (sheep), Gogo and Lower Levarynga (cattle). In 1894, Isadore E. went into partnership with Forrest (q.v.) to found important Kimberley stock-marketing firm : at first E. acted as Kimberley buyer for the firm. After death of Solomon E. (1898) and Forrest (1901), the E. Bros. secured properties owned by both: as largest West Kimberley owners and shipping agents, frequently alleged manipulate "meat ring" : at length, because of hostility Scaddan Labour Govt. retired from WA, 1912, retaining only their stations, Meda, Lower Levarynga, Noonkanbah, Cherrabun, Gogo, and (with McLarty's) Jubilee Downs, Nerrima, and Obagooma.

In later years, Isadore E. disposed of sheep interests and some cattle holdings, and concentrated on Meda and Gogo, now (1953) perhaps best-developed absentee-owned properties in Kimberleys.

FORREST, Alexander (1849-1901). Explored country between Beagle Bay and N.T. 1879, thus opening Kimberley District for settlement ; acted as consultant and Perth agent for many intending investors : first MLC for Kimberley, 1887-90 when secured adoption protection cattle and sheep industries : MLC West Kimberley, 1890-1901. In 1890, marketed first Kimberley stock in Perth, and, after entering partnership with Isadore Emanuel, 1894, his firm became principal agents supply from West Kimberley. Purchased Obagooma (1891), Nerrima (1894), Gilgully (1896), and Jubilee Downs (1897). F. was prominent in early debates on tick question, advocating quarantine of E. Kimberley. An ineloquent but influential advocate for his district's interests. His son, John F. (b. 1887), for many years chairman of directors of the Lulugui and Kimberley Pastoral Cos., Vice-President of Pastoralists' Association, has sat on many advisory committees on Kimberley affairs.

HOLMES, John Joseph (1866-1942). Founded retail meat business, with backing Alex. Forrest, 1890 : MLC East Fremantle, 1897-1904, and 1905: joined anti-protection party, 1898, and favoured quarantine East Kimberley, but by 1903 led opposition to maintenance of ban.

From 1897 to 1931 part-owner of Rosewood, H., an independent in politics, represented viewpoint of smaller owners. MLC for North Province, 1914-42 (never opposed after first election) : at first staunch advocate State Shipping Service, and at all times opposed monopolies : in 1919, unsuccessfully proposed amendment Land Act to eliminate dummy companies holding over 1,000,000 acres: Chairman Select Committee into State Shipping Service and Wyndham Meatworks, 1921 : urged C'wth. control Kimberley : in 1938, one of the few local politicians to oppose project Japanese trade in Yampi Sound.

KILFOYLE, Thomas (d. 1908), overlanded with Durawks ; founder and part-owner of Rosewood. His son, John A.C. K. (b.1893), arrived, 1916, Rosewood, found standard upkeep deteriorated since time of Thos. K.: assumed managership, 1923 : during next 25 years instituted improvement programme, esp. with regard fencing, artificial waters, stock standards, etc. which made Rosewood frequently cited as pattern property (cf. Payne-Fletcher Report, Kelly, et al.) Sold property, 1949, to Melbourne absentee owner, William Buckland.

MacDONALD family. The brothers, Charles (1857-1903), William (d.1910) and Donald (1860-1937) began overlanding cattle from Goulburn, 1882 : Chas. M. arrived 1885, founding Fossil Downs, owner-managed until 1903. Eventually station passed to Donald M. who sold half-share to Sir Sidney Kidman, 1919-31 : the latter's share was then purchased by M's son, William Neil Mitchell M. (b.1911), who became sole owner, 1937. William M. effected improvement policy Fossil Downs, including notable homestead and station amenities, and, in 1946, the establishment of first registered stud in district, with poll shorthorns. With Gordon Blythe, an innovator in use aircraft to transport stud stock, 1950.

MALE, Arthur (1870-1946). Junior partner Streeter & Male, pearlers, merchants, pastoralists (Hill & Roebuck Plains stations). Mayor of Broome, M. was chosen conservative candidate agst. Connor, 1905, and won election MLA for Kimberley, 1905-17 : minister without portfolio, 1910-11. In 1910, developed livestock trade Broome-Singapore and Java. After retirement, unsuccessfully opposed Coverley as independent, 1927 : associated with Pastoralists' Association in later years.

MILLARD, E. Edward (1877-1953). Qld. cattleman : managed Gogo for Emanuels, 1922-53 : in later years controlled supervision all Emanuel pastoral properties. M. was noted for efforts to improve standard of shorthorn stock on Gogo, for many years main source of supply of herd bulls in West Kimberley. In later years, his nephew Arthur M. was associated with him at Gogo.

QUILTY, Thomas John (b. 1887) . Of N.T. station-holding family, which, in 1917, purchased Bedford Downs, managed by his brother Paddy Q. (d. 1938). Q. then controlled Coolabah - Bradshaw (N.T.) (8,000 square miles) . After World War Two, determined concentrate on East Kimberley properties : made further purchases in 1950, to control bloc of stations including Arizona, Bedford Downs, Lansdowne, and Springvale. Supporter of Air Beef scheme and projected introduction Zebu crossbred cattle. Bush balladist of some local repute.

RHATIGAN, John Joseph (b.1907) : an officer of the Department of Native Affairs, son of an early smallholder at Turkey Creek. On death of Coverley, elected as Labour MLA for Kimberley, 1953 : policy similar to predecessor's, AWU Labour adapted for local requirements.

ROSE family. George Canlar Rose (b.1861), one of the earliest pioneers of West Kimberley, manager of Yeeda for J.A.Game, 1883: purchased Mount Anderson, 1885 : as manager Yeeda, associated with A.Forrest in first shipment stock to Perth market, 1890 : an expert on local aboriginal languages and customs. After his retirement, Mount Anderson managed by his son, George Canlar R., whilst his second son Kimberley Clarke R. managed Liveringa for the Kimberley Pastoral Company from 1931. A son-in-law, William Wedge Henwood, was manager Noonkanbah, 1927-49, and owner Calwyn-yardah : one of the authors of the 1951 Report to the Pastoral Appraisement Board.

Of G.C.R.'s brothers, Edwin and John Charles R. were assisted by him, in 1887, in founding the Fitzroy River station - later separated into Quanbun (sheep) and Cherrabun (cattle). On the retirement South of these two owners, 1908, Cherrabun was sold to Emanuel Bros., and Quanbun passed to its manager, A. Jeffes R. (1867-1952) and Percy R. (1872-1942); manager of Liveringa in its 90,000-sheep era, 1901-12. Percy R. withdrew from Quanbun, 1935. The property is now managed by Jeffes R. jnr. (b. 1916) A sixth brother in the older generation was Augustus Frederick R. (1871-1909), manager Obagooma, 1893-6, and managing partner of Leopold Downs, 1897-1909.

The sheep stations owned by members of this family enjoy a favourable reputation for improvements and amenities.

=====

APPENDIX II.

REPORT ON STURT CREEK. 1890.

(Furnished at the request of the Resident Magistrate in Wyndham, this report was forwarded to the Colonial Secretary, and is now included in C.S.O. file 2605/90, at the Archives branch of the Perth Public Library. Dated from Denison Downs, July 29, 1890, it provides an interesting picture of settlement in the early years of the East Kimberley district.)

".....The Sturt Creek country was taken up in 1887 ; and, during the same year, we left Normanton, Qld. with 750 head of cattle and 30 horses. After a long trip via the tableland, we finally reached our station in Oct. 1888, with 550 cattle. We had lost a good many with pleuro and Red Water. Our horses did not suffer much en route, except when crossing the border between Sth. Australia and this colony, and there they cost us one pound per head. This we thought a great injustice. The cattle after their long march soon started to mend, and in a very short time we were able to send in a draft to the Kimberley goldfields, this itself speaks for the fattening capabilities of the run.

"The country consists of large open plains, and through these plains the Sturt winds its way. Along its banks Coolibah trees grow out from the creek; and here and there are patches of scrub consisting of fattening bushes of all kinds. The creek runs out into big blue-bush flats in places, and in these places the cattle thrive wonderfully. The plains and downs are thickly covered with Mitchell grass, whilst the timber country is grass(ed) by various herbages; in places the sandridges come in on the creek. These ridges are covered with maiden

spinifex and low scrub. Native fruits are very plentiful, the chief being the wild orange, the plumtree and the currant bush. Large yams are also to be found in places.

"Now, as regards the water, it is simply wonderfully well watered. The lake-like holes would greatly surprise the traveller in these northern climes where water is so scarce. Our largest waterhole is 3 miles long by $\frac{1}{4}$ mile wide. We have had no heavy rains since our arrival, and the Sturt proper has never run, the various creeks flowing into the Sturt above our camp have caused the Sturt to run past our place twice, but we have never seen the head waters down yet, and do not want to either, as a heavy flood would mostly likely wet our blankets, etc. In no instance have the cattle far to go for water, and in nearly all the holes they can get a swim. We have explored the country far and wide. We have been 80 miles down the Sturt Creek to the Salt Lake, but could get no water low down, so had to return. The lower Sturt runs right through barren useless country, nothing but Sand, Spinifex & Scrub: out 30 miles E.S.E. from our camp we found a big creek through desert all the way.

"As you may imagine, the water holes are covered with game of all kinds. The plains swarm with native companions and emus. Turkeys come now and then. Fish are also to be had, but no very big ones have yet been landed. The horses do well, and stand any amount of work off the grass. The blacks, we are glad to say, cause no trouble; we rarely see any, and they in no way harass the

stock. In regard to the carrying capacity of the run, it is impossible to say how much it would carry. The present herd makes no impression whatsoever. The country is splendidly fitted for sheep, no grass seeds to contend with, and water everywhere. Our first branding is nearly over, and we will have about 300 calves to book. The distance to Hall's Creek is about 100 miles, over very dry country; the small creeks do not hold water long. We are all looking forward to the shipping trade from Wyndham, as we have no market now for our fats. Trusting to hear of yards, etc. being erected soon at Wyndham, and the other things settled so that the cattle trade will be a success,

J.S.FOSTER" .

APPENDIX II (b).

KIMBERLEY IN 1910.

(Selections from the "Reminiscences" of Richard Allen, bookkeeper at Gogo, and subsequently at Lulugui, West Kimberley.)

"We stopped a night at Anna Plains cattle station. The Manager had a huge Platform about 40 ft. from the ground on which he slept, as the Natives were not to be trusted at night.....The Kangaroo rats running about all night spoilt our night's rest. There must have been thousands by their tracks in the Sand. We now passed Edgar's station and Thangoo, and turned towards the coast, and camped at Cockle Well before going into Broome town. The Mosquitos were in clouds day and night, and drove our horses away miles. Sandflies and March flies tormented you to death; so we cleaned up, and rode our best horses into Broome..

"...We loaded up here with Rations, getting some fine Singapore Coffee and other tinned luxuries from the Store of Streeter & Co. We now had a nasty bit of country to cover, about 90 miles to the Fitz-Roy River, through dense Pinian and heavy Sand. Water was scarce and often off the Beaten track a lot of men have died of Thirst on the track....We however reached the Fitaroy River without any Mishap, and picked up a German Sailor who would have had a bad spin if we had not caught him up. The River was running a fair stream up to our girths, and about 100 yds. wide. It is infested with the Salt Water Crocodile here, and only a week before a swagman had gone to sleep on the Bank when a huge "gator" grabbed him by the leg, and badly tore his thigh; he got away from it, however.

"We camped on the North Bank, the Timber is quite dense, Coolibah, White Gum, Pine, Cadjebut and Cork, Bauhinea, Cedar, White Wood Fig and Oragge trees (natives) grow in great profusion, also dense Patches of Cane grass and small Bamboo. Fish of all sorts from Sharks, Stingaree, Sawfish and Barramundie, Eels and Water Snakes abound; on the Banks are thousands of Swamp Wallaby and other small Marsupials such as Nail Tailed Wallaby, and Water Rats not unlike a Platapus in their habits. Bird life is very plentiful, flocks of White Cockatoos look like white blossoms on the Trees, Galas in flocks, Sulphur crested Cockatoos with their harsh cries, Crimson Wing Parrots, and lovely Blue Mountain Parrots, Wierros in flocks, and all sorts of Aquatic birds from pied Geese, Snipe, Cranes, Jabaroos, Egrets, and Ducks of all kind, quite a sight after the arid and waterless N. West.

" We now crossed the Yeeda Plain, a big open well-grassed Plain alive with cattle. After crossing this following the Telegraph Line, we came to the FitzRoy, Hall's Creek Road, and turning to the left, camped at Yeeda Cattle Station. Two Bullock Teams were camped there, each having 24 bullocks in them loaded for Stations up the River, big table

topped Wagons loaded up to 6 tons and 10 tons, a white driver, and 2 natives as Bullock boys, those teams are similar to those in South Africa. We now had Yeeda Creek on our left, full of Crocodiles and other Vermin, and open Marsh country to Nobby's Well, where we camped for the night.... We had to contend against Wild Pigs, which in the night came around our camp picking up scraps of food. We now saw numerous Bullock Waggon; I counted 42 altogether. In those days, Kimberley was flourishing. Men passed with packs, and the Police looking for a lost man who got drowned in the River we had just crossed, and his body eaten by the "Crocs". The fifteen miles we did from Nobbys into Derby the next day, camping at Mayall's Well where a bunch of Bullock Teams, Kangaroo Shooters and Drovers had their plants turned out while they were worshipping at the Shrine of Bacchus in Derby.

"...We stopped in Derby a week, a nice clean little Port, the Headquarters of the West Kimberley district. Derby is pronounced as it is spelt, not as the English pronounce it, and if you happen to say "Darby" they all look at you. The town has or had in 1909 three Hotels which all appeared to have a good trade. There is a long jetty here, with an "I" piece at the end. There is a rise and fall in the Tide here of about 40 ft. and when the tide is out the vessels sit on the mud, and you can walk around them. The waters are infested with sharks and Crocodiles, so no bathing is possible. There is a big difference between Broome and Derby. The former is the headquarters of Pearling, and the latter of the Cattle Industry of the North, and the people are not so conservative in Derby, and the colour line which is very strict in Broome is quite different in Derby, where quite half the School Children have a dash of the "Tar Brush". The old residents in both places rather "resent" being called North-Westerns, always calling themselves Kimberleyites, not that they resent it or consider themselves better than the "sheep men" of the North-West, but there is such a vast difference between the two divisions, and it is about 400 miles from FitzRoy River to De Grey at the top end of the North-West. The main street of Derby is lined with Poinciana, Boab, Cork Wood, and other tropical Trees, and is alive with Bird Life. The Boab is a peculiar tree, growing to 40 and 60 ft. in height, with a girth of sometimes 60 ft. It has a pretty white blossom at the start of the Wet season, and a nut forms which is cooked by the Natives, and the Pith when fermented makes a mild Drink."

(Allen proceeds to Fitzroy Crossing)

"I was now in the Cattle Country proper; right from Jubilee Downs to Camowee on the Queensland border was Cattle country, and when leaving Jubilee House Paddock the next fence was 115 miles. From Jubilee to Fitzroy Crossing was 25 miles. This consisted of a "Pub" store, Police Station $\frac{1}{4}$ mile away on Bank of River, and the Post Office over a mile away on a hill out of the flood waters, the whole of this FitzRoy valley being subjected to heavy floods. Here I camped on the Bank of the River about $\frac{1}{2}$ mile below the "Pub"....

The crowd at the Pub consisted of about 12 whites, not including the Publican, his man, and a Chinese cook. All the men had good plants of horses and packs in those days, and were mostly drovers, Station Hands, Prospectors, etc., just in to load up and enjoy themselves. Drink and singing seemed to be their chief amusement, and gambling at night; as there were no white women, they were dressed anyhow, in fact some had very little clothing on at all. Beer was 3/6 a bottle and 20/- a gallon. Whisky and other spirits averaged £1 a Bottle and the grog was not of the best quality either. The Police Station was a Bungalow in which two Troopers lived. One was generally out on Patrol, and was often away for 2 and 3 months, this being the biggest Police district in the State. Very few whites ever got into trouble here, mostly natives and coloured. You had to report yourself here, who and what you were, and where you came from, in case you got lost or speared by natives in the Wild Bush. The Telegraph and Post Office ran a Post-Master and a Linesman, the latter had 260 miles of telegraph line to look after. This little place in the Never Never has no less than 9 Cattle Stations within a radius of 50 miles, which is no distance in the Bush even in these days of horses and Packs.

"I now started in the employ of Emanuel Bros. in one of their Droving Plants with a chap named Evans who had been a Dispatch Rider to Lord Milner in S. Africa during the Boer War; the Outfit consisted of 25 horses and Mules, Evans, another White Man, a Scotsman, and myself and three native boys. We had 580 head of bullocks and generally travelled them 10 and 12 miles per day, watering the Cattle midday, and letting them feed along to the night Camp which was generally an open space with no timber, and one tree to tie up the night horses; these three animals never did any work by day, being kept to ride around the Cattle at night, the Cook and his boy going on ahead, and getting wood and a fire going, as we came to camp about Sundown and did not put the Cattle into Camp until just dark. The night was divided into watches of about 2½ hours each; with a boy, I took the daylight watch. You needed a big warm coat, as the nights were cold. I used to ride around for a bit singing, and meet the Boy on his end, and then sit on my horse. Generally the Cattle camped well if they had a good day's feeding and plenty of water, but should anything frighten them such as Kangaroos or rain, you had a job to hold them. I used to take the Cattle off camp in the morning, and then return, wash, and have my breakfast and then follow on and catch up the mob. We always carried our Lunch with us, and so on to the Port. All our provisions were carried, and when we wanted Meat, we killed a small one from the mob. On reaching Derby, we put the Cattle into the yards on the Jetty, and we had finished. We generally took 21 days to get them to the Ship, and were allowed 22 days to get back to the Station."

(Other quotations from this work are given on pages 147 and 166.)

The crowd at the Pub consisted of about 12 whites, not including the Publican, his man, and a Chinese cook. All the men had good plants of horses and packs in those days, and were mostly drovers, Station Hands, Prospectors, etc., just in to load up and enjoy themselves. Drink and singing seemed to be their chief amusement, and gambling at night; as there were no white women, they were dressed anyhow, in fact some had very little clothing on at all. Beer was 3/6 a bottle and 20/- a gallon. Whisky and other spirits averaged £1 a Bottle and the grog was not of the best quality either. The Police Station was a Bungalow in which two Troopers lived. One was generally out on Patrol, and was often away for 2 and 3 months, this being the biggest Police district in the State. Very few whites ever got into trouble here, mostly natives and coloured. You had to report yourself here, who and what you were, and where you came from, in case you got lost or speared by natives in the Wild Bush. The Telegraph and Post Office ran a Post-Master and a Linesman, the latter had 260 miles of telegraph line to look after. This little place in the Never Never has no less than 9 Cattle Stations within a radius of 50 miles, which is no distance in the Bush even in those days of horses and Packs.

"I now started in the employ of Emanuel Bros. in one of their Droving Plants with a chap named Evans who had been a Dispatch Rider to Lord Milner in S. Africa during the Boer War; the Outfit consisted of 25 horses and Miles, Evans, another White Man, a Scotsman, and myself and three native boys. We had 580 head of bullocks and generally travelled them 10 and 12 miles per day, watering the Cattle midday, and letting them feed along to the night Camp which was generally an open space with no timber, and one tree to tie up the night horses; those three animals never did any work by day, being kept to ride around the Cattle at night, the Cook and his boy going on ahead, and getting wood and a fire going, as we came to camp about Sundown and did not put the Cattle into Camp until just dark. The night was divided into watches of about 2½ hours each; with a boy, I took the daylight watch. You needed a big warm coat, as the nights were cold. I used to ride around for a bit singing, and meet the Boy on his end, and then sit on my horse. Generally the Cattle camped well if they had a good day's feeding and plenty of water, but should anything frighten them such as Kangaroos or rain, you had a job to hold them. I used to take the Cattle off camp in the morning, and then return, wash, and have my breakfast and then follow on and catch up the mob. We always carried our Lunch with us, and so on to the Port. All our provisions were carried, and when we wanted Meat, we killed a small one from the mob. On reaching Derby, we put the Cattle into the yards on the Jetty, and we had finished. We generally took 21 days to get them to the Ship, and were allowed 21 days to get back to the Station."

(Other quotations from this work are given on pages 147 and 166.)

APPENDIX III.

Kimberley Stations Held In the Names of Mortgagees, 1885-1918.

Year	Bank of N.S.W.		Dalgety & Co. (+)		Union Bank		Federal Bank		W.A. Mortgage Co.		Private mortgagees		Total area mortgaged	Total area under lease
	No. of stns.	Area in acres	No. of stns.	Area in acres	No. of stns.	Area in acres	No. of stns.	Area in acres	No. of stns.	Area in acres	No. of stns.	Area in acres	Acres	Acres
1885	1	350,000									1	101,000	451,000	35,262,080
1886	1	350,000	1	400,000							1	101,000	851,000	27,151,080
1887	1	350,000	2	850,000							1	191,000	1,301,000	16,831,080
1888	2	650,000	2	850,000					1	200,000	2	301,000	1,801,000	15,243,000
1889	2	650,000	2	850,000					1	200,000	1	101,000	1,801,000	15,321,080
1890	2	650,000	2	720,000					1	200,000	1	191,000	1,671,000	15,041,000
1891	3	1,119,000	3	514,000	1	704,000			1	200,000	1	160,000	2,697,000	15,313,000
1892	3	1,119,000	4	1,564,000	1	704,000			1	200,000	3	789,000	4,376,000	14,706,000
1893	3	1,119,000	4	1,564,000	1	704,000			1	200,000	3	789,000	4,376,000	14,080,000
1894	3	1,119,000	3	894,000					1	200,000	3	779,000	2,792,000	14,474,000
1895	3	1,119,000	4	1,760,000			1	250,000	1	200,000	3	779,000	3,906,000	14,752,000
1896	2	519,000	3	1,380,000			1	250,000	1	200,000	3	779,000	3,278,000	14,656,000
1897	2	519,000	3	1,380,000			1	250,000			3	779,000	3,078,000	16,643,520
1898	4	769,000	3	1,380,000	1	932,000	1	250,000	3	779,000	3	779,000	4,270,000	17,403,520
1899	5	1,375,000	3	1,380,000	2	1,532,000			2	629,000	2	629,000	5,916,000	15,632,341
1900	4	975,000	3	1,380,000					1	129,000	1	129,000	2,434,000	17,831,510
1901	2	775,000	2	1,111,000					1	129,000	1	129,000	2,015,000	20,057,847
1902	2	775,000	2	1,111,000					1	129,000	1	129,000	2,015,000	24,956,725
1903			1	151,000							1	129,000	280,000	
to 1909			1	151,000									151,000	
to 1918														

NOTE : With the exception of the lands held by the Union Bank, 1885-1918, all the stations were held by the Union Bank.

APPENDIX IV.

KIMBERLEY DISTRICT : ACREAGES OF OCCUPIED HOLDINGS

Year	Total Acreage Leased	Year (+)	E. Kimberley Acreage	W. Kimberley Acreage	Total Acreage	Year (+)	E. Kimberley Acreage	W. Kimberley Acreage	Total Acreage
1881	5,512,080	1906	6,201,053	21,397,339	27,598,392	1931	18,613,558	23,027,545	41,731,103
1882	44,201,080	1907	10,694,377	21,343,608	32,038,985	1932	18,231,524	23,369,887	41,601,411
1883	51,289,080	1908	13,225,152	21,872,740	35,097,892	1933	18,384,251	23,136,686	41,520,937
1884	39,734,080	1909	11,822,559	22,487,761	34,310,320	1934	18,631,558	23,687,488	42,319,046
1885	35,262,080	1910	12,062,935	21,034,289	33,097,224	1935	18,799,964	22,566,924	41,366,888
1886	27,151,080	1911	11,978,389	23,178,553	35,156,942	1936	19,503,097	21,776,589	41,279,686
1887	16,831,080	1912	12,708,926	21,732,792	34,440,718	1937	19,016,297	20,643,868	39,660,165
1888	15,244,000	1913	13,666,269	21,696,080	35,362,349	1938	19,653,876	20,802,624	40,456,500
1889	15,321,000	1914	13,692,927	22,770,584	36,463,511	1939	19,414,394	19,619,140	39,034,534
1890	15,041,000	1915	14,830,715	24,758,062	39,588,777	1940	20,317,573	21,430,963	41,748,536
1891	15,313,000	1916	16,302,405	25,218,637	42,520,042	1941	19,546,451	19,573,616	39,120,067
1892	14,706,000	1917	13,782,324	23,770,309	37,552,633	1942	20,285,936	20,590,106	40,876,042
1893	14,080,000	1918	19,044,420	25,186,222	44,230,642	1943	20,024,953	20,717,223	40,742,176
1894	14,474,000	1919	19,427,417	25,639,178	45,066,595	1944	20,760,455	18,922,251	39,682,706
1895	14,752,000	1920	19,137,812	25,506,662	44,643,474	1945	20,849,995	19,738,115	40,588,110
1896	14,656,000	1921	18,811,263	25,733,092	44,544,355	1946	22,916,094	19,713,293	42,629,387
1897	16,643,520	1922	22,929,249	24,853,459	47,782,708	1947	22,831,169	21,206,195	44,037,364
1898	17,403,520	1923	20,514,577	24,942,907	45,457,484	1948	21,782,431	21,793,447	43,575,878
1899	15,632,341	1924	20,888,112	24,407,841	45,295,953	1949	21,936,299	21,603,042	43,539,341
1900	17,831,510	1925	21,359,118	23,692,895	45,051,013	1950	22,585,085	20,640,734	43,225,819
1901	20,057,847	1926	22,036,473	24,491,445	46,527,918	1951	20,640,763	22,585,184	43,225,947
1902	24,956,725	1927	18,292,005	23,787,906	42,079,911	1952			43,014,656
1903	30,615,260	1928	18,983,599	22,455,624	41,439,223	1953			
1904	27,783,466	1929	18,642,543	22,145,094	40,787,637				
		1930	19,028,486	23,250,344	42,278,830				

(+) From 1881 to 1904, acreage taken as at 31st December. From 1906 on, as at 30th June.

KINBERLEY DISTRICT : Rainfall Records.

Average 1886 to 1895.		1896.	1897.	1898.	1899.	1900.	1901.	1902.	1903.	1904.	1905.	Average 1886 to 1905.
EAST KILBERLEY												
Wyndham	27.09	42.94	20.13	36.23	28.93	17.58	20.64	30.17	53.25	36.66	14.40	28.76
Argyle Downs	19.88	24.01		27.59	29.42	20.64	22.41	25.71	42.34	34.15	21.00	27.70
Rosewood		27.90	14.50	30.71	28.24	16.41	29.19	18.13	39.66	29.43	17.30	23.36
Lissadell		24.77	19.35	31.43	31.08	14.29	22.80	26.26	41.20			26.77
Ord River		29.41	16.43		19.95	13.40	17.64	18.47				19.22
Turkey Creek				22.23	35.00	14.49	28.70	24.74	50.41	28.84	21.58	28.25
Hall's Creek	19.59	30.50	13.72	26.47	22.96	18.19	18.25	17.36	42.02	30.55	8.54	21.29
Flora Valley					20.68	10.13	19.37	13.56	27.51	32.90	11.54	19.38
Ruby Plains					15.82	5.42	27.84	18.46	24.48	28.19	14.03	19.18
WEST KILBERLEY												
Leopold Downs		26.65	20.80	28.96	27.26	13.75	20.89	20.78	31.08	31.62	15.69	22.30
Fitzroy Crossing					16.76	17.09	23.04	12.72	30.02	30.91	11.65	22.91
Noonkanbah					27.68	14.56	23.95	17.84	31.53	30.13	13.00	20.10
Upper Liveringa	19.63	19.50				19.71	17.34	21.87		29.94	14.22	20.70
Mount Anderson						17.07	17.36	20.29	19.98			18.68
Yeeda	19.02	31.84	11.26	52.72	33.39	17.68	23.30	18.60	21.89	24.68	14.64	22.76
Obagama		51.33	23.89	43.57	38.92	23.59	20.83	31.50	36.08	42.78	23.00	33.54
Derby	27.88	33.27	19.91	57.01	29.97	16.90	13.74	15.93	25.79	33.14	16.10	27.03
Beagle Bay									24.41	24.70	20.66	23.26
Broome	17.66	43.07	22.31	42.66	28.60	18.42	34.05	22.36	19.15	28.57	10.12	23.45
La Grange	13.68	29.38	20.63	38.18	25.96	15.32	25.32	27.19	13.52	16.95	9.49	18.15

Average
1886
1916

1906. 1907. 1908. 1909. 1910. 1911. 1912. 1913. 1914. 1915. 1916.

NORTH KIMBERLEY

Drysdale R.
Forrest R.

34.65
30.33
25.45 35.20

EAST KIMBERLEY

Wyndham
Argyle Downs
Rosewood
Lissadell
Ord River
Turkey Creek
Hall's Creek
Flora Valley

28.34 25.51 15.31 20.74 35.11 20.71 23.20 27.91 20.50 20.32 32.05
32.65 37.74 16.88 26.37 36.06 22.35 17.96 34.21 27.17 18.76 33.17
25.87 40.75 20.21 20.02 29.32 18.35 20.29 32.75 34.49 19.54 34.19
30.65 27.15 23.50 24.43 28.11 21.04 18.91 32.85 23.88 23.45 25.65
21.49 20.10 32.90 33.93 45.49 12.78 14.83 21.95 19.70 19.51 16.84
30.97 37.13 13.83 19.44 24.00 28.05 24.92 31.65 41.15 30.22 28.72
15.89 21.41 13.83 19.44 24.00 21.70 11.90 15.59 36.22 16.77 22.92
19.10 22.46 18.28 18.70 35.03 13.99 13.52 17.52 31.52 17.29 18.38

WEST KIMBERLEY

Isdell Downs
Mount Barnett
Leopold Downs
Fitzroy Crossing
Gogo (Mgt. Downs)
Moonkanbah
Upper Liveringa
Mt. Anderson
Yeeda
Kimberley Downs
Napier Downs
Obagana
Derby
Beagle Bay
Brooms
La Grange
Rollah Downs

19.05 26.43 25.22 14.92 30.39 30.64 27.12 23.34 47.14 42.58 36.59
22.39 28.19 22.85 10.95 17.56 14.18 21.33 16.46 39.45 47.40 35.87
22.41 27.26 31.16 18.67 18.87 13.10 20.72 16.37 23.93 18.94 22.44
23.01 22.28 28.41 28.86 18.90 16.31 26.94 15.13 29.85 19.91 20.82
34.68 33.37 26.28 19.48 18.90 16.81 26.09 20.78 31.64 25.46 22.58
24.83 35.89 39.25 22.82 70.27 23.18 35.13 24.06 50.98 31.52 18.18
32.43 24.82 30.69 21.61 23.13 13.43 27.47 17.39 28.93 24.96 25.77
32.07 36.80 21.73 24.49 21.97 23.76 37.49 18.38 37.85 26.31 24.46
21.71 24.48 23.91 24.55 22.41 9.84 26.06 12.02 31.38 30.63 31.15
25.16 22.56 17.13 15.66 15.76 13.08 24.02 11.63 23.38 22.41 34.83
16.36 12.96 20.45 9.27 23.89 8.14 22.90 22.82 17.60 19.20 26.15
16.61 23.26 26.97 18.96 18.96 18.96 18.96 18.96 18.96 18.96 18.96

| | 1917. | 1918. | 1919. | 1920. | 1921. | 1922. | 1923. | 1924. | 1925. | 1926. | 1927. | 1928. | Ave.
as at
1928 |
|------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-----------------------|
| <u>NORTH KIMBERLEY</u> | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Port George IV | 81.46 | 57.30 | 48.35 | 75.67 | 54.75 | 48.97 | 57.13 | 20.68 | 33.13 | 82.43 | 51.76 | 24.31 | 56.42 |
| Drysdale R. | 48.61 | 28.65 | 41.49 | | 37.68 | 43.77 | 30.93 | 20.07 | 33.54 | | | | 37.11 |
| Forrest R. | 29.37 | 26.31 | 35.01 | 16.77 | 26.95 | 51.06 | 39.33 | 20.30 | 33.63 | 49.49 | 38.44 | 22.81 | 33.22 |
| <u>EAST KIMBERLEY</u> | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Wyndham | 30.70 | 29.22 | 36.22 | 17.59 | 25.60 | 27.10 | 23.80 | 17.22 | 34.19 | 35.84 | 28.91 | 25.10 | 27.12 |
| Argyle Downs | 31.99 | 23.21 | 20.72 | 14.36 | 22.39 | 34.88 | 27.87 | 18.43 | 27.90 | 29.38 | 36.66 | 17.49 | 26.58 |
| Rosewood | 25.23 | 22.20 | 22.64 | 17.99 | 23.02 | 37.96 | 26.81 | 19.16 | 18.75 | 31.75 | 25.41 | 17.44 | 24.01 |
| Ord River(+) | 33.21 | 33.21 | 11.90 | 16.17 | 17.65 | 30.63 | | | | | | | 21.91 |
| Lissadell | | | | | | | | 13.63 | 30.26 | 26.60 | 26.53 | 21.31 | 25.18 |
| Turkey Creek | 30.76 | 35.05 | 26.72 | 23.45 | 25.83 | 42.93 | 29.63 | 14.65 | 22.04 | 36.69 | 24.18 | 14.98 | 30.10 |
| Hall's Creek | 22.20 | 20.19 | 17.18 | 13.69 | 19.75 | 33.36 | 19.94 | 8.69 | 18.73 | 40.03 | 23.96 | 12.29 | 21.10 |
| Flora Valley | | | | | | | | 7.68 | 19.12 | 42.21 | 19.14 | 9.58 | 20.41 |
| Sturt Creek(+) | 18.56 | 13.56 | 17.11 | 13.17 | 28.63 | 22.31 | 22.57 | | | | | | 17.21 |
| Margaret River | 19.02 | 16.03 | 13.17 | 13.83 | 20.48 | 26.29 | | 10.24 | 10.81 | 42.93 | 20.95 | 20.43 | 20.31 |
| <u>WEST KIMBERLEY</u> | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Isdell Downs(+) | 40.83 | | 39.26 | 36.23 | 23.68 | 33.16 | 30.80 | 15.88 | 21.80 | 35.47 | 26.40 | | 34.70 |
| Mt. Barnett(+) | 45.72 | | 32.39 | 39.63 | 33.17 | 41.35 | 30.98 | 15.70 | 24.22 | 42.74 | 27.86 | 23.14 | 34.65 |
| Leopold Downs | | | | | | | | | | | | 24.64 | 22.44 |
| Fitzroy Crossing | 22.89 | 20.28 | 21.00 | 20.67 | 24.85 | 18.66 | 24.29 | 9.40 | 20.89 | 27.22 | 33.59 | 23.84 | 22.44 |
| Margaret Downs | | | | | | | | 7.76 | 16.03 | 29.38 | 23.72 | 15.81 | 19.37 |
| Bohemia Downs(+) | | 11.96 | 12.51 | 18.45 | 18.38 | 17.36 | 25.78 | 5.77 | 15.66 | 30.34 | 19.70 | 12.08 | 16.81 |
| Noonkanbah | 18.09 | 17.70 | 20.98 | 15.70 | 16.49 | 14.68 | 22.38 | 10.18 | 19.69 | 39.62 | 17.73 | 16.71 | 19.62 |
| Mt. Anderson | 28.51 | 15.58 | 23.10 | 15.44 | 17.81 | 20.75 | 25.14 | | 18.95 | 48.27 | 21.75 | 19.18 | 20.50 |
| Yeoda | | | | | | | | | 28.79 | 47.88 | 30.91 | 26.42 | 26.13 |
| Kimberley Downs | 26.25 | 24.01 | 26.08 | 31.21 | 32.70 | 18.34 | 25.99 | 10.40 | | | | | 31.20 |
| Mapier Downs | 27.69 | 22.66 | 29.68 | 35.73 | 41.00 | 23.78 | 26.23 | 12.24 | | | | | 34.95 |
| Otagama | 41.53 | 26.00 | 44.17 | 47.33 | 30.55 | 32.20 | | 10.87 | 25.82 | 50.39 | 36.84 | 21.33 | 26.08 |
| Derby | 49.85 | 24.01 | 29.00 | 29.95 | 15.77 | 20.46 | 21.63 | 4.39 | 16.09 | 46.90 | 20.50 | 13.98 | 28.73 |
| Beagle Bay | 58.70 | 19.36 | 32.95 | 36.00 | 22.83 | 30.42 | 34.21 | 7.65 | 21.36 | 50.78 | 28.45 | 16.06 | 28.73 |
| Brooks | 41.96 | 24.23 | 34.63 | 31.87 | 19.86 | 19.07 | 17.14 | 5.61 | 17.54 | 57.64 | 26.09 | 15.22 | 23.50 |
| La Grange | 20.51 | 26.89 | 17.04 | 13.33 | 16.17 | 16.53 | 17.26 | 22.30 | 20.20 | 11.40 | 22.20 | | 22.20 |

Average
as at
1940.NORTH KIMBERLEY

| | 1929. | 1930. | 1931. | 1932. | 1933. | 1934. | 1935. | 1936. | 1937. | 1938. | 1939. | 1940. |
|-----------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Port. George IV | 44.12 | 59.77 | 35.09 | 40.87 | 35.08 | 61.74 | 46.13 | 30.20 | 46.72 | 38.79 | 53.35 | 58.12 |
| Forrest River | 25.66 | 28.56 | 23.01 | 20.32 | | 32.98 | 19.88 | 15.94 | 21.61 | | 32.54 | 21.35 |
| <u>EAST KIMBERLEY</u> | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Wyndham | 23.36 | 24.72 | 24.63 | 17.45 | 15.76 | 20.75 | 22.47 | 14.38 | 28.14 | 18.18 | 29.98 | 38.41 |
| Argyle Downs | 17.62 | 21.63 | 12.63 | 22.65 | 17.32 | 23.81 | 19.91 | 19.29 | 25.58 | 24.29 | 25.37 | 27.34 |
| Rosewood | 8.69 | 21.66 | 22.80 | 23.82 | 13.81 | 24.95 | 15.66 | 15.44 | 31.46 | 17.37 | 24.41 | 27.91 |
| Lissadell | 16.02 | 24.28 | 21.36 | 22.17 | | 19.19 | 15.66 | 16.81 | 34.46 | 18.05 | 23.75 | 25.20 |
| Turkey Creek | 12.15 | 23.80 | 17.65 | 17.01 | 16.90 | 16.71 | 27.55 | 15.06 | 26.87 | 18.16 | 26.78 | 30.60 |
| Hall's Creek | 9.87 | 27.38 | 11.84 | 16.34 | 12.07 | 15.77 | 17.24 | 8.20 | 16.12 | 17.80 | 20.28 | 12.99 |
| Flora Valley | 10.89 | 18.32 | 11.30 | 13.86 | 11.78 | 16.92 | 16.39 | 6.94 | | 8.59 | 17.48 | 12.58 |
| Ruby Plains | | | | | 10.18 | 15.62 | 11.80 | 10.33 | 17.40 | 11.81 | 15.46 | 5.68 |
| Margaret River | 4.45 | 14.79 | 8.76 | 13.17 | 9.54 | 22.82 | 10.62 | 7.59 | 10.47 | 11.09 | 13.84 | 10.37 |

WEST KIMBERLEY

| | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Leopold Downs | 17.37 | 26.93 | 15.34 | 25.62 | 19.58 | 19.40 | 14.95 | 17.01 | 25.58 | | 18.26 | 26.86 |
| Fitzroy Crossing | 12.43 | 26.99 | 10.42 | 22.72 | 12.32 | 24.14 | 14.54 | 12.29 | 15.08 | 16.26 | 17.09 | 21.64 |
| Margaret Downs | 9.52 | 17.41 | 8.99 | 19.94 | 9.81 | 20.36 | 11.24 | 10.59 | 17.00 | 12.68 | 11.86 | |
| Noonkanbah | 8.93 | 18.00 | 16.11 | 20.53 | 10.83 | 17.77 | 23.62 | 7.84 | 14.75 | 14.68 | 12.47 | 15.77 |
| Mount Anderson | 17.45 | 21.28 | 21.60 | 30.24 | 23.38 | 21.71 | 22.74 | 11.23 | 17.63 | 15.43 | 18.37 | 21.67 |
| Yeeda | 18.74 | 20.61 | 24.66 | 30.03 | 27.83 | 18.76 | 15.97 | 10.53 | 24.66 | | 13.16 | |
| Kimberley Downs | 17.21 | 24.56 | 25.52 | 23.33 | 21.24 | 21.01 | 17.86 | 12.93 | 17.49 | 15.92 | 27.12 | 28.24 |
| Hapier Downs | | | | | | | 20.05 | 18.05 | 18.78 | 23.10 | 23.43 | 37.02 |
| Obagama | 36.04 | 55.52 | 30.78 | 36.05 | 27.83 | | | | | | | |
| Derby | 18.35 | 33.64 | 33.16 | 36.40 | 20.45 | 26.33 | 22.11 | 15.88 | 17.83 | 14.22 | 19.78 | 23.57 |
| Beagle Bay | 18.67 | 32.38 | 36.23 | 20.86 | 22.99 | 42.45 | 39.77 | 18.70 | 21.85 | 18.00 | 23.90 | 33.63 |
| Broome | 10.03 | 23.30 | 32.18 | 31.39 | 13.00 | 35.35 | 30.28 | 15.49 | 16.47 | 15.15 | 15.10 | 30.08 |
| La Grange | 9.86 | 15.34 | 25.50 | 25.57 | 13.80 | 31.83 | 18.57 | 11.21 | 9.28 | 14.49 | 10.67 | 19.93 |
| Anna Plains | | | | | | 32.42 | 18.23 | 13.70 | 14.29 | 18.34 | 10.87 | 21.87 |

1941. 1942. 1943. 1944. 1945. 1946. 1947. 1948. 1949. 1950. 1951. 1952. Average

NORTH KIMBERLEY

| | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|-------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Kumanya (+) | 52.58 | 64.73 | 43.24 | 47.08 | 60.76 | 42.54 | 55.19 | 40.88 | | | | 50.44 |
| Drysdale R. | | | | | | | 51.67 | 44.05 | | 28.31 | 24.75 | 37.16 |
| Forrest R. | 24.98 | | | 33.99 | 21.38 | 35.70 | 34.07 | 21.74 | 31.68 | 35.00 | | 29.32 |

EAST KIMBERLEY

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|----------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Wyndham | 20.12 | 56.34 | 21.61 | 27.43 | 23.56 | 34.75 | 31.07 | 17.46 | 26.39 | 38.24 | 25.68 | 19.48 | 25.15 |
| Argyle Downs | 17.46 | 34.24 | 31.86 | 27.06 | 21.49 | 20.88 | 21.53 | 17.42 | 19.61 | 26.65 | | | 24.21 |
| Rosewood | 21.91 | 36.17 | 28.73 | 28.04 | 31.89 | 28.10 | 28.30 | 17.04 | 29.71 | 29.51 | | | 23.97 |
| Lissadell | 21.57 | 31.37 | 23.61 | 32.25 | 28.17 | 17.72 | 25.80 | 11.63 | | 26.65 | | | 23.93 |
| Hall's Creek | 17.23 | 22.41 | 17.82 | 19.91 | 13.70 | 11.92 | 22.63 | 13.17 | 24.31 | 19.48 | 17.63 | 9.99 | 18.72 |
| Flora Valley | 14.46 | 16.36 | 12.65 | 21.65 | 9.67 | 11.34 | 18.17 | 11.41 | 26.02 | 20.58 | | | 18.13 |
| Ruby Plains | 15.42 | 15.58 | 13.38 | 13.17 | 11.13 | 7.31 | 16.95 | 8.71 | 17.34 | | | | 12.78 |
| Margaret River | 21.56 | 17.03 | 17.27 | 16.22 | 11.47 | 12.69 | 16.82 | 13.40 | | | | | 14.75 |
| Mount Amherst | 22.52 | 20.36 | 17.03 | 21.03 | 12.21 | 9.66 | 17.54 | 15.69 | 14.18 | | | | 15.97 |

WEST KIMBERLEY

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|-----------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Leopold Downs | 21.40 | 25.28 | 25.48 | 22.74 | 16.61 | 17.90 | 19.01 | 14.38 | 32.18 | 29.68 | | | 23.39 |
| Fitzroy Crossg. | 20.12 | 24.34 | 23.95 | 20.14 | 17.29 | 15.15 | 23.30 | 17.76 | 28.88 | 25.55 | 19.98 | 9.31 | 20.47 |
| Bogo | 17.05 | | 19.70 | 15.41 | 15.34 | 8.63 | 19.31 | 19.24 | | 17.66 | | | 17.15 |
| Noonkanbah | 13.28 | 23.36 | 18.67 | 13.11 | 11.49 | 15.47 | 16.91 | 11.15 | 19.84 | 30.26 | | | 17.11 |
| Mt. Anderson | 14.45 | 30.53 | 26.19 | 17.56 | 18.28 | 18.35 | 27.75 | 15.38 | 20.22 | 22.95 | | | 20.47 |
| Yeeda | 23.44 | 37.04 | 31.52 | 20.74 | 18.40 | | 25.49 | 17.97 | 28.64 | 24.88 | | | 23.60 |
| Kimberley Downs | 30.55 | 27.46 | 42.61 | 25.95 | 24.08 | 25.26 | 21.79 | 14.50 | 24.59 | 34.48 | | | 25.33 |
| Napier Downs | | 45.64 | 40.18 | | | | 28.91 | | 34.10 | | | | 28.20 |
| Derby | 25.38 | 34.21 | 32.45 | 25.36 | 23.60 | 23.09 | 26.22 | 23.25 | 28.26 | 24.69 | 17.16 | 7.47 | 23.96 |
| Broome P.O. | 18.05 | | | 11.72 | 23.93 | 16.05 | 26.06 | 23.95 | 15.40 | 20.06 | 13.24 | 12.55 | 23.01 |
| Beagle Bay | 20.74 | 51.01 | 36.04 | 23.29 | 38.93 | 27.22 | 27.55 | 38.40 | 44.69 | 26.45 | | | 28.56 |
| La Grange | 11.07 | | 22.42 | | | | 17.98 | 21.60 | 13.97 | 17.55 | 7.07 | 6.42 | 18.57 |
| Anna Plains | 11.05 | 31.60 | 21.28 | 2.85 | 6.90 | 6.36 | 16.48 | 15.32 | 13.32 | 9.94 | 8.33 | 5.14 | 14.52 |

(+) Kumanya was formerly known as Port George IV.

Except for recordings taken from private station records (e.g. Rosewood, Ruby Plains) all data furnished by the Kimberley District Office, Port George IV, North Kimberley.

APPENDIX VI.

LIVESTOCK STATISTICS FOR KIMBERLEY DISTRICT.

(a) : Cattle.

| <u>Year</u> | <u>WEST KIMBERLEY</u> | | | <u>EAST KIMBERLEY</u> | | | <u>KIMBERLEY</u> | <u>STATE</u> |
|-------------|-----------------------|--------|---------|-----------------------|--------|-----------|------------------|--------------|
| | Over
1 yr. | Calves | Total | Over
1 yr. | Calves | Total | Total | Total |
| 1883 | a | a | 50 | | | 0 | 50 | 64,558 |
| 1884 | a | a | 960 | a | a | (b)2,000 | 2,960 | 71,102 |
| 1885 | a | a | 2,122 | a | a | (b)8,000 | 10,122 | 70,408 |
| 1886 | a | a | 5,069 | a | a | 10,597 | 15,666 | 88,254 |
| 1887 | a | a | 7,298 | a | a | 13,266 | 20,564 | 93,544 |
| 1888 | a | a | 18,744 | a | a | (c)11,566 | 20,260 | 95,822 |
| 1889 | a | a | 15,087 | a | a | (c)23,957 | 39,044 | 119,571 |
| 1890 | a | a | 17,937 | a | a | (c)25,450 | 43,457 | 130,970 |
| 1891 | a | a | 20,713 | a | a | (c)27,448 | 48,161 | 133,690 |
| 1892 | a | a | 22,422 | a | a | 50,240 | 72,662 | 162,886 |
| 1893 | a | a | 27,365 | a | a | 49,219 | 76,584 | 173,747 |
| 1894 | a | a | 33,424 | a | a | 53,762 | 87,186 | 187,214 |
| 1895 | a | a | 36,624 | a | a | 55,293 | 91,917 | 200,091 |
| 1896 | 31,618 | 4,576 | 36,196 | 46,629 | 11,899 | 58,528 | 94,724 | 199,793 |
| 1897 | 44,153 | 9,218 | 53,371 | 66,704 | 4,821 | 71,525 | 117,864 | 244,971 |
| 1898 | 51,250 | 11,173 | 62,423 | 71,543 | 17,187 | 88,730 | 151,153 | 269,947 |
| 1899 | 59,933 | 16,209 | 76,142 | 84,609 | 12,013 | 96,622 | 172,764 | 297,075 |
| 1900 | 74,205 | 17,995 | 92,200 | 102,900 | 9,651 | 112,551 | 204,751 | 338,590 |
| 1901 | 93,176 | 19,848 | 113,024 | 115,817 | 9,678 | 125,495 | 238,519 | 398,547 |
| 1902 | 96,464 | 25,953 | 122,417 | 120,050 | 20,086 | 140,136 | 262,553 | 437,136 |
| 1903 | 111,416 | 23,737 | 135,153 | 143,114 | 17,127 | 160,241 | 295,394 | 497,617 |
| 1904 | 128,998 | 30,055 | 159,053 | 150,008 | 25,055 | 175,063 | 334,116 | 561,490 |
| 1905 | 155,825 | 26,123 | 181,948 | 174,315 | 24,731 | 199,046 | 380,994 | 631,825 |
| 1906 | 166,906 | 31,164 | 198,070 | 186,265 | 33,387 | 219,652 | 417,722 | 690,911 |
| 1907 | 183,333 | 38,253 | 221,586 | 209,226 | 32,923 | 242,149 | 463,735 | 717,377 |
| 1908 | 202,543 | 42,970 | 245,513 | 179,437 | 25,169 | 204,606 | 450,119 | 741,788 |
| 1909 | 226,411 | 48,173 | 274,584 | 190,733 | 20,188 | 210,921 | 485,505 | 793,217 |
| 1910 | 263,390 | 44,534 | 307,924 | 169,365 | 34,931 | 204,296 | 512,220 | 825,040 |
| 1911 | 256,137 | 50,559 | 306,696 | 175,884 | 39,211 | 215,095 | 521,791 | 843,638 |
| 1912 | 264,672 | 48,729 | 313,401 | 175,683 | 43,790 | 219,473 | 532,874 | 806,294 |
| 1913 | 306,488 | 49,500 | 354,988 | 183,175 | 35,540 | 218,715 | 573,703 | 834,265 |
| 1914 | 280,063 | 41,449 | 321,512 | 256,276 | 33,096 | 289,372 | 610,884 | 863,835 |
| 1915 | 281,088 | 48,859 | 329,947 | 213,443 | 41,422 | 254,865 | 584,812 | 821,048 |
| 1916 | 283,679 | 58,036 | 341,715 | 227,344 | 35,749 | 263,093 | 604,808 | 863,930 |
| 1917 | 346,926 | 61,440 | 408,366 | 225,755 | 39,849 | 265,604 | 667,970 | 927,806 |

a : Not available.

b : Not given in contemporary Blue Books : estimated from other sources.

c : Although these are the figures given in the Blue Books, 1888-1891, there exists some probability of inaccuracy.

| Year | WEST KIMBERLEY | | | EAST KIMBERLEY | | | KIMBERLEY | STATE |
|----------|----------------|--------|---------|----------------|--------|---------|-----------|---------|
| | Over
1 yr. | Calves | Total | Over
1 yr. | Calves | Total | Total | TOTAL |
| 1918 | 311,260 | 55,447 | 366,707 | 225,756 | 40,496 | 266,252 | 632,959 | 943,847 |
| 1919 | 276,569 | 31,625 | 308,194 | 233,739 | 41,960 | 275,699 | 583,893 | 880,644 |
| 1920 | 253,080 | 35,908 | 288,988 | 218,936 | 36,108 | 255,044 | 544,032 | 849,803 |
| 1921 | 247,021 | 45,863 | 292,884 | 220,611 | 43,216 | 263,827 | 556,711 | 893,108 |
| 1922 | 239,755 | 48,655 | 288,410 | 231,256 | 52,736 | 283,992 | 572,402 | 939,596 |
| 1923 | 239,685 | 47,597 | 287,282 | 233,759 | 68,559 | 302,318 | 589,600 | 953,764 |
| 1924 | 226,841 | 31,794 | 258,635 | 261,022 | 60,594 | 321,616 | 580,251 | 891,564 |
| 1925 | 217,411 | 36,820 | 254,231 | 242,639 | 47,167 | 289,806 | 543,037 | 835,911 |
| 1926 | 204,752 | 35,158 | 239,910 | 245,308 | 51,880 | 297,198 | 537,108 | 827,303 |
| 1927 | 201,891 | 43,284 | 245,175 | 250,368 | 60,029 | 310,397 | 555,572 | 846,735 |
| 1928 | 199,735 | 45,163 | 244,898 | 263,858 | 57,448 | 321,306 | 566,204 | 837,527 |
| 1929 | 198,598 | 53,994 | 252,592 | 261,071 | 43,817 | 304,888 | 557,480 | 836,646 |
| 1930 | 202,763 | 32,413 | 235,176 | 228,409 | 42,206 | 270,615 | 505,791 | 812,844 |
| 1931 | 194,594 | 34,344 | 228,938 | 215,189 | 51,010 | 266,199 | 494,137 | 826,532 |
| 1932 | 182,507 | 38,866 | 221,373 | 220,984 | 44,895 | 265,879 | 487,252 | 857,473 |
| 1933 | 183,965 | 39,659 | 223,634 | 216,460 | 42,037 | 258,497 | 482,131 | 885,669 |
| 1934 | 189,047 | 38,994 | 228,041 | 217,184 | 38,410 | 255,594 | 483,635 | 911,940 |
| 1935 | 184,610 | 31,092 | 215,702 | 206,453 | 45,758 | 252,211 | 467,913 | 882,761 |
| 1936 | 177,712 | 31,073 | 208,785 | 203,464 | 39,041 | 242,505 | 451,290 | 792,508 |
| 1937 | 167,567 | 38,244 | 205,811 | 184,102 | 37,815 | 221,917 | 427,728 | 740,241 |
| 1938 | 172,305 | 41,285 | 213,590 | 190,832 | 44,894 | 235,726 | 449,316 | 767,680 |
| 1939 | 168,987 | 44,608 | 213,595 | 198,081 | 53,768 | 251,849 | 465,444 | 799,175 |
| 1940 | 155,579 | 36,902 | 192,481 | 194,706 | 55,893 | 250,599 | 443,080 | 788,928 |
| 1941 | 166,419 | 42,101 | 208,520 | 212,209 | 55,249 | 267,453 | 475,973 | 839,731 |
| (+) 1942 | 166,257 | 29,811 | 196,068 | 220,522 | 43,859 | 264,371 | 460,439 | 831,231 |
| 1943 | 176,603 | 35,605 | 212,213 | 217,725 | 41,237 | 258,980 | 471,193 | 870,939 |
| 1944 | 160,985 | 39,500 | 191,485 | 246,915 | 30,994 | 277,909 | 469,394 | 852,563 |
| 1945 | 153,890 | 26,629 | 180,519 | 251,049 | 28,469 | 279,518 | 460,037 | 833,567 |
| 1946 | 152,522 | 32,708 | 185,230 | 227,210 | 27,405 | 254,615 | 439,845 | 811,949 |
| 1947 | 153,346 | 31,777 | 185,123 | 220,484 | 24,525 | 245,009 | 430,132 | 815,610 |
| 1948 | 156,545 | 37,824 | 194,369 | 258,886 | 26,007 | 284,893 | 479,262 | 864,131 |
| 1949 | 153,738 | 34,918 | 188,656 | 261,630 | 33,107 | 294,737 | 483,393 | 864,936 |
| 1950 | 151,629 | 40,112 | 191,741 | 214,989 | 52,835 | 267,824 | 459,565 | 841,204 |
| 1951 | | | | | | | 447,241 | 851,534 |
| 1952 | | | 168,975 | | | 260,963 | 429,936 | 846,261 |

(+) As from 1942, statistics are taken "as at 31st March" of the year following.

"West Kimberley" in this and following tables, includes Broome and West Kimberley Road Board districts : "East Kimberley" includes Hall's Creek and Wyndham Road Board districts.

APPENDIX VI

(b) Sheep.

(i) Average Fleece Weight in Kimberley Wool Clip, 1916-1951.

| Year | West Kimberley
lbs. | E. Ky.
lbs. | Year | Broome
lbs. | W. Ky.
lbs. | E. Ky.
lbs. |
|------|------------------------|----------------|------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| 1916 | 4.9 | 4.7 | 1933 | 6.8 | 5.5 | 5.8 |
| 1917 | 4.7 | 5.7 | 1934 | 6.0 | 5.6 | 6.3 |
| 1918 | 4.1 | 4.4 | 1935 | 6.6 | 6.0 | 6.4 |
| 1919 | 4.5 | 4.0 | 1936 | 6.6 | 6.4 | 6.1 |
| 1920 | 4.8 | 4.0 | 1937 | 5.9 | 5.3 | 6.0 |
| 1921 | 4.5 | 3.7 | 1938 | 6.1 | 6.0 | 6.2 |
| 1922 | 4.8 | 5.8 | 1939 | 6.1 | 5.7 | 6.2 |
| 1923 | 4.4 | 5.3 | 1940 | 5.6 | 5.9 | 7.2 |
| 1924 | 4.6 | 5.8 | 1941 | 5.7 | 5.9 | 7.2 |
| 1925 | 3.8 | 5.2 | 1942 | 5.9 | 7.3 | 8.0 |
| 1926 | 5.1 | 5.0 | 1943 | 6.7 | 6.5 | 6.8 |
| 1927 | 5.4 | 5.1 | 1944 | 7.3 | 7.2 | 7.5 |
| 1928 | 5.2 | 5.3 | 1945 | 7.4 | 6.2 | 2.4 |
| | Broome
lbs. | W. Ky.
lbs. | 1946 | 7.5 | 6.1 | 5.9 |
| 1929 | 6.3 | 5.3 | 5.7 | | 6.3 | 6.3 |
| 1930 | 6.2 | 5.5 | 1947 | 6.4 | 6.5 | 7.2 |
| 1931 | 6.9 | 4.7 | 1948 | 6.9 | 7.1 | 8.2 |
| 1932 | 6.4 | 5.2 | 1949 | 7.2 | 8.1 | 6.7 |
| | | | 1950 | 6.6 | | |
| | | | 1951 | | (7.3) | |

(ii) Sheep Population of Kimberley District, 1881-1951.

| Year | West Kimberley
Total | East Kimberley
Total | Kimberleys
Total | State
Total |
|------|-------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------|----------------|
| 1881 | 5,000 | | 5,000 | 1,267,912 |
| 1882 | 20,000 | | 20,000 | 1,259,797 |
| 1883 | 28,120 | | 28,120 | 1,315,155 |
| 1884 | 46,839 | | 46,839 | 1,547,061 |
| 1885 | 55,597 | | 55,597 | 1,702,719 |
| 1886 | 66,159 | 2,950 | 69,109 | 1,809,671 |
| 1887 | 75,693 | 2,002 | 77,695 | 1,909,940 |
| 1888 | 87,328 | 1,160 | 88,488 | 2,112,302 |
| 1889 | 95,353 | 734 | 96,087 | 2,366,681 |
| 1890 | 107,852 | 100 | 107,952 | 2,524,013 |
| 1891 | 116,104 | 51 | 116,155 | 1,962,212 |
| 1892 | 129,714 | 96 | 129,810 | 1,685,500 |
| 1893 | 125,987 | 12 | 125,999 | 2,220,642 |
| 1894 | 154,299 | 4 | 154,303 | 2,132,311 |
| 1895 | 182,141 | | 182,141 | 2,295,832 |

Sheep: continued.

| Year | BROOME | | WEST KIMBERLEY | | EAST KIMBERLEY | | KIMBERLEYS
TOTAL | STATE
TOTAL |
|------|---------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|---------------------|----------------|
| | Over
1 yr. | Lambs
Total | Over
1 yr. | Lambs
Total | Over
1 yr. | Lambs
Total | | |
| 1896 | 3,005 | 645 | 152,275 | 27,089 | 35 | 8 | 183,057 | 2,248,976 |
| 1897 | 3,031 | 110 | 160,394 | 21,365 | 33 | 35 | 184,968 | 2,210,742 |
| 1898 | x | x | 163,029 | 57,668 | 66 | 24 | 220,787 | 2,251,548 |
| 1899 | x | x | 192,411 | 39,659 | 87 | 19 | 232,176 | 2,282,306 |
| 1900 | x | x | 227,224 | 56,415 | 79 | 39 | 283,757 | 2,434,311 |
| 1901 | x | x | 248,561 | 50,308 | 109 | 40 | 299,018 | 2,625,855 |
| 1902 | x | x | 255,499 | 56,957 | 110 | 25 | 312,591 | 2,704,880 |
| 1903 | 1,017 | 112 | 250,535 | 70,216 | 759 | 3 | 322,642 | 2,600,633 |
| 1904 | 88 | 20 | 237,483 | 78,808 | 312 | 40 | 316,751 | 2,853,424 |
| 1905 | 251 | 50 | 253,354 | 34,281 | 336 | 79 | 288,331 | 3,120,703 |
| 1906 | 2,386 | 25 | 251,807 | 43,674 | 411 | 13 | 298,316 | 3,340,745 |
| 1907 | 1,000 | 150 | 203,988 | 66,526 | 477 | 187 | 272,328 | 3,684,974 |
| 1908 | 1,940 | 206 | 226,025 | 49,271 | 540 | 118 | 278,100 | 4,097,324 |
| 1909 | 3,149 | 72 | 243,112 | 42,891 | 375 | 100 | 289,699 | 4,731,737 |
| 1910 | 3,800 | 392 | 240,652 | 56,534 | 327 | 90 | 301,795 | 5,158,516 |
| 1911 | 4,351 | 791 | 240,061 | 59,661 | 386 | 90 | 305,340 | 5,411,542 |
| 1912 | 4,615 | 1,388 | 221,675 | 71,612 | 427 | 219 | 299,936 | 4,596,958 |
| 1913 | 6,759 | 1,248 | 218,642 | 58,057 | 396 | 151 | 285,253 | 4,421,375 |
| 1914 | 10,742 | 1,236 | 189,193 | 53,263 | 1,370 | 400 | 256,104 | 4,456,186 |
| 1915 | 10,522 | 3,153 | 178,083 | 54,706 | 416 | 77 | 246,957 | 4,803,859 |
| 1916 | 14,390 | 2,508 | 179,336 | 32,563 | 337 | 125 | 229,259 | 5,529,960 |
| 1917 | 16,259 | 2,011 | 146,574 | 26,789 | 711 | 66 | 192,410 | 6,384,191 |
| 1918 | 13,253 | 1,548 | 143,888 | 29,134 | 824 | 157 | 188,804 | 7,183,747 |
| 1919 | 9,368 | 651 | 144,160 | 25,408 | 465 | 234 | 180,286 | 6,697,951 |
| 1920 | 10,245 | 2,239 | 121,160 | 21,713 | 460 | 100 | 155,917 | 6,532,965 |
| 1921 | 7,382 | 1,921 | 119,684 | 41,710 | 205 | 75 | 170,977 | 6,506,177 |
| 1922 | 7,051 | 600 | 121,453 | 26,155 | 506 | 260 | 166,025 | 6,664,135 |
| 1923 | 6,110 | 1,521 | 114,889 | 38,067 | 653 | 260 | 161,500 | 6,595,867 |
| 1924 | 3,222 | 317 | 95,103 | 25,100 | 713 | 252 | 124,707 | 6,396,564 |
| 1925 | 1,991 | 450 | 105,571 | 35,129 | 760 | 371 | 144,272 | 6,861,795 |
| 1926 | 1,784 | 504 | 106,525 | 40,544 | 883 | 397 | 150,637 | 7,458,766 |

BROOME (+)

WEST KIMBERLEY

FEAST KIMBERLEY

KIMBERLEYS

WESTERN
AUSTRALIA
TOTAL

[illegible]

From 1943, figures are as at 31st March of the year following.

(+) Includes Wallal and Mandoora in the Port Hedland district.

(x) Was included in West Kimberley, 1898-1902.

APPENDIX VII.

LIVESTOCK EXPORTS FROM KIMBERLEY.

(i) Sheep Sent to Fremantle.

| Year | Ex
Broome | Ex
Derby | Ex
Wyndham | Total | Year | Ex
Derby | Total |
|---------|--------------|---------------|---------------|--------|---------|--------------------|-------|
| 1894 | | 3,051 | | 3,051 | 1926/7 | 3,909 | 3,909 |
| 1895 | | 7,916 | | 7,916 | 1927/8 | 1,971 | 1,971 |
| 1896 | | 12,349 | | 12,349 | 1928/9 | 1,208 | 1,208 |
| 1897 | | 11,066 | | 11,066 | 1929/30 | | 0 |
| 1898 | | 11,840 | | 11,840 | 1930/1 | | 0 |
| 1899 | | Not available | | x | 1931/2 | | 0 |
| 1900 | | 14,000 | | 14,000 | 1932/3 | | 0 |
| (a) | | | | | 1933/4 | | 0 |
| 1901/2 | | 16,391 | | 16,391 | 1934/5 | | 0 |
| 1902/3 | | 14,365 | | 14,365 | 1935/6 | | 0 |
| 1903/4 | | Not available | | | 1936/7 | 3,015 | 3,015 |
| 1904/5 | | Not available | | | 1937/8 | 4,437 | 4,437 |
| 1905/6 | | 1,907 | | 1,907 | 1938/9 | | 0 |
| 1906/7 | | 13,724 | | 13,724 | 1939/45 | No exports | |
| 1907/8 | | 15,305 | | 15,305 | 1945/6 | 707 | 707 |
| 1908/9 | 1,379 | 11,948 | | 13,327 | 1946/7 | 7,985 | 7,985 |
| 1909/10 | | Not available | | | 1947/8 | 0 | 0 |
| 1910/1 | 700 | 45,286 | 2,232 | 48,218 | 1948/9 | 3,982 | 3,982 |
| 1911/2 | | 18,591 | 2,736 | 21,327 | 1949/50 | 3,030 | 3,030 |
| 1912/3 | | 15,714 | 1,476 | 17,190 | 1950/1 | 6,364 | 6,364 |
| 1913/4 | | 7,454 | 802 | 8,256 | 1951/2 | Not yet available | |
| 1914/5 | 507 | 14,849 | | 15,356 | 1952/3 | Not yet available. | |
| 1915/6 | | 18,359 | | 18,359 | | | |
| 1916/7 | | 14,949 | | 14,949 | | | |
| 1917/8 | | 6,503 | | 6,503 | | | |
| 1918/9 | | | 845 | 845 | | | |
| 1919/20 | | | | 0 | | | |
| 1920/1 | | 2,085 | | 2,085 | | | |
| 1921/2 | | 1,296 | | 1,296 | | | |
| 1922/3 | | | | 0 | | | |
| 1923/4 | | 825 | | 825 | | | |
| 1924/5 | | 2,329 | | 2,329 | | | |
| 1925/6 | 487 | 4,298 | | 4,785 | | | |

(a) As from 1901, records are taken as for the year ending June 30th.

Export figures to Malaya are not available for each port.

(ii) Cattle sent to Fremantle.

| Year | Ex
Broome | Ex
Derby | Ex
Wyndham | Total | Year | Broome | Derby | Total |
|---------|--------------|-------------|---------------|------------|---------|------------|--------|--------|
| 1890 | | 83 | | 83 | 1926/7 | 576 | 12,673 | 13,249 |
| 1891 | | 580 | | 580 | 1927/8 | 877 | 12,673 | 13,550 |
| 1892 | | 1,140 | | 1,140 | 1928/9 | 367 | 14,917 | 15,284 |
| 1893 | | 1,925 | | 1,925 | 1929/30 | 578 | 14,939 | 15,517 |
| 1894 | | 1,647 | + | (=) 1,647 | 1930/1 | 430 | 14,663 | 15,093 |
| 1895 | | 1,442 | + | (=) 1,442 | 1931/2 | 1,196 | 7,835 | 9,831 |
| 1896 | | 3,017 | + | (=) 3,017 | 1932/3 | 965 | 9,319 | 10,284 |
| 1897 | | 3,466 | + | (=) 3,466 | 1933/4 | 1,153 | 8,856 | 10,009 |
| 1898 | | 3,311 | 0 | 3,311 | 1934/5 | 1,361 | 9,529 | 10,890 |
| 1899 | | + | 7,692 | (=) 7,692 | 1935/6 | 353 | 9,793 | 10,146 |
| 1900 | + | 4,639 | + | (=) 4,639 | 1936/7 | 836 | 12,861 | 13,697 |
| (a) | | | | | 1937/8 | 202 | 11,220 | 11,422 |
| 1901/2 | + | 6,648 | 10,172 | (=) 16,820 | 1938/9 | 0 | 11,922 | 11,922 |
| 1902/3 | + | 6,369 | 14,986 | (=) 21,355 | | | | |
| 1903/4 | 0 | 1,573 | 16,622 | 18,195 | 1939/45 | Not given. | | |
| 1904/5 | + | + | + | + | | | | |
| 1905/6 | 0 | 2,278 | 7,789 | 10,067 | 1945/6 | 0 | 4,459 | 4,459 |
| 1906/7 | 0 | 4,395 | 14,589 | 18,984 | 1946/7 | 0 | 6,378 | 6,378 |
| 1907/8 | 875 | 8,077 | 12,515 | 21,467 | 1947/8 | 0 | 7,224 | 7,224 |
| 1908/9 | 3,054 | 7,933 | 7,320 | 18,307 | 1948/9 | 0 | 6,087 | 6,087 |
| 1909/10 | + | + | + | + | 1949/50 | 382 | 8,580 | 8,962 |
| 1910/1 | 414 | 14,352 | 11,120 | 25,886 | 1950/1 | 0 | 9,336 | 9,336 |
| 1911/2 | 120 | 11,970 | 10,683 | 22,773 | | | | |
| 1912/3 | 292 | 16,296 | 11,991 | 28,579 | | | | |
| 1913/4 | 54 | 13,175 | 14,160 | 27,389 | | | | |
| 1914/5 | 1,094 | 19,265 | 6,102 | 26,461 | | | | |
| 1915/6 | 940 | 14,218 | 5,351 | 20,509 | | | | |
| 1916/7 | 0 | 13,462 | 3,869 | 17,331 | | | | |
| 1917/8 | 0 | 11,545 | 1,044 | 12,589 | | | | |
| 1918/9 | 198 | 8,282 | 1,525 | 10,005 | | | | |
| 1919/20 | 0 | 10,348 | 518 | 10,866 | | | | |
| 1920/21 | 433 | 18,140 | 574 | 19,347 | | | | |
| 1921/2 | 0 | 11,172 | 526 | 11,698 | | | | |
| 1922/3 | 6 | 9,308 | 1,095 | 10,409 | | | | |
| 1923/4 | 536 | 12,277 | 1,163 | 13,976 | | | | |
| 1924/5 | 69 | 10,666 | 4,213 | 14,948 | | | | |
| 1925/6 | 1,320 | 10,775 | 2,334 | 14,429 | | | | |

(+) Not available.

(=) Believed incomplete.

(a) As from 1901, statistical year ends at June 30th.

N.B. Export figures from the various ports do not include cattle over-landed South or East.

(c) Livestock: Exports of Cattle to Asia.

| Year | Malayan States | | H. E. I. | | Philippines | | Total | |
|---------|------------------|--------------|------------------|---------------|------------------|---------------|------------------|--------------|
| | No. of
beasts | Value
(£) | No. of
beasts | Value.
(£) | No. of
beasts | Value.
(£) | No. of
beasts | Value
(£) |
| 1898 | 172 | 1,102 | | | | | 172 | 1,102 |
| 1899 | 203 | 1,239 | | | | | 203 | 1,239 |
| (a) | | | | | | | | |
| 1910 | | | 416 | 1,497 | 1,953 | 6,272 | 2,369 | 7,771 |
| 1911 | | | 4,728 | 19,947 | 3,465 | 11,348 | 8,193 | 31,295 |
| 1912 | | | 4,315 | 19,257 | 9,625 | 29,968 | 13,940 | 49,225 |
| 1913 | | | 5,491 | 23,033 | 8,373 | 25,137 | 13,865 | 48,185 |
| 1914(b) | | | 2,957 | 13,045 | 5,344 | 16,632 | 8,301 | 29,677 |
| 1914-15 | | | 5,053 | 22,315 | 4,841 | 14,523 | 9,894 | 36,888 |
| 1915-16 | | | 4,624 | 20,693 | 1,000 | 4,050 | 5,624 | 24,743 |
| 1916-17 | | | 1,853 | 8,881 | 900 | 4,500 | 2,753 | 13,381 |
| 1917-18 | | | 1,043 | 5,367 | | | 1,043 | 5,367 |
| 1918-19 | 13 | 280 | | | | | 13 | 280 |
| 1919-20 | 566 | 3,514 | 2,316 | 13,896 | | | 2,882 | 17,410 |
| 1920-21 | 3 | 81 | 3,606 | 21,826 | | | 3,609 | 21,907 |
| 1921-22 | 1 | 20 | 5,082 | 33,039 | 2,298 | 12,959 | 7,381 | 46,018 |
| 1922-23 | 12 | 292 | 3,079 | 19,085 | 7,092 | 39,050 | 10,183 | 58,327 |
| 1923-24 | | | 1,328 | 8,060 | | | 1,328 | 8,060 |
| 1924-25 | | | 400 | 2,050 | | | 400 | 2,050 |
| 1925-26 | 663 | 1,078 | 2,677 | 13,720 | | | 3,340 | 14,798 |
| 1926-27 | | | 3,020 | 14,714 | 584 | 1,460 | 3,604 | 16,174 |
| 1927-28 | 581 | 3,626 | 670 | 3,990 | 4,867 | 12,170 | 6,118 | 19,786 |
| 1928-29 | 219 | 1,346 | 797 | 4,950 | | | 1,016 | 6,296 |
| 1929-30 | 3 | 48 | | | | | 3 | 48 |
| 1930-31 | 10 | 140 | 259 | 1,295 | | | 269 | 1,435 |
| 1931-32 | | | 266 | 1,340 | | | 266 | 1,340 |
| (c) | | | | | | | | |
| 1946-47 | 291 | 10,041 | 30 | 800 | | | 321 | 10,841 |
| (d) | | | | | | | | |

- (a) No shipments between 1900 and 1909, but 3,612 head (valued at £10,836) were shipped to Natal, South Africa, from Wyndham, in 1902.
- (b) Period from January 1st to June 30th. All subsequent figures for financial years ending June 30th.
- (c) No shipments between 1932 and 1946, except for a very small number of stud cattle sent up to Malaya.
- (d) No shipments between 1947 and 1953, except for stud animals.

APPENDIX VIII.

TOTAL TURN-OFF OF KIMBERLEY CATTLE (1919-53). (excluding those overlanded into N. T.)

| Year | Purchased at
Wyndham Works | | | Sold at Robb's
Jetty, F'tle | | | Sold overseas (12
mths ending June) | | | Total |
|------|---|----|----|--------------------------------|----|----|--|-------------------------------------|-----|--------|
| | No. | £ | s | No. | £ | s | No. | Av.
Price | | |
| 1919 | 9,281 | 7 | 1 | x | x | | 13 | £13 11 | (=) | 9,294 |
| 1920 | 18,492 | 7 | 5 | x | x | | 2,882 | 6 3 | (=) | 21,380 |
| 1921 | + | + | | (=) 9,714 | 13 | 2 | 3,609 | 6 0 | (=) | 13,323 |
| 1922 | 22,636 | 3 | 18 | (=) 5,716 | 15 | 1 | 7,381 | 6 6 | (=) | 35,743 |
| 1923 | 30,418 | 3 | 3 | 10,721 | 14 | 8 | 10,183 | 5 19 | | 51,322 |
| 1924 | 26,539 | 3 | 7 | 12,290 | 15 | 14 | 1,328 | 6 1 | | 20,157 |
| 1925 | 19,848 | 3 | 5 | 13,981 | 12 | 13 | 400 | 5 2 | | 34,229 |
| 1926 | 24,920 | 3 | 11 | 10,748 | 15 | 11 | 3,340 | 4 9 | | 39,008 |
| 1927 | 26,734 | 3 | 18 | 10,478 | 15 | 11 | 3,604 | 4 8 | | 40,816 |
| 1928 | 27,127 | 3 | 18 | 12,709 | 19 | 7 | 6,118 | 3 5 | | 45,954 |
| 1929 | 25,766 | 5 | 0 | 16,391 | 15 | 14 | 1,016 | 5 5 | | 43,173 |
| 1930 | 31,051 | 4 | 9 | 12,718 | 10 | 13 | 3 16 | | | 43,772 |
| 1931 | 31,170 | 3 | 6 | 11,230 | 9 | 0 | 269 | 5 7 | | 42,669 |
| 1932 | 28,459 | 2 | 19 | 9,041 | 9 | 7 | 266 | 5 0 | | 37,766 |
| 1933 | 31,239 | 2 | 15 | 9,589 | 9 | 19 | | | | 40,828 |
| 1934 | 33,003 | 3 | 0 | 10,957 | 7 | 11 | | | | 43,960 |
| 1935 | 35,918 | 4 | 2 | 9,911 | 9 | 18 | Purchased
by Broome
Meatworks | Purchased
by Air Beef
Glenroy | | 45,829 |
| 1936 | 28,946 | 3 | 10 | 10,897 | 10 | 13 | | | | 39,843 |
| 1937 | 39,212 | 4 | 2 | 10,864 | 9 | 0 | | | | 49,896 |
| 1938 | 38,346 | 4 | 11 | 10,662 | 10 | 10 | | | | 49,008 |
| 1939 | 36,721 | 4 | 12 | 10,765 | 11 | 7 | No. | No. | | 47,486 |
| 1940 | 33,762 | 5 | 4 | 10,760 | 12 | 16 | x | + | (=) | 44,522 |
| 1941 | 25,928 | 4 | 11 | 10,772 | 13 | 2 | x | + | (=) | 36,700 |
| 1942 | All sales made by Commonwealth Govt. emergency regulations. | | | | | | | | | x |
| 1943 | + | + | | 3,670 | 16 | 0 | x | + | (=) | 3,670 |
| 1944 | + | + | | 4,346 | 17 | 0 | x | + | (=) | 4,346 |
| 1945 | 17,060 | 6 | 18 | 3,518 | 15 | 13 | x | + | (=) | 20,578 |
| 1946 | 26,366 | 6 | 9 | 5,903 | 14 | 7 | x | + | (=) | 34,269 |
| 1947 | 28,347 | 7 | 7 | 6,623 | 14 | 16 | x | + | (=) | 34,970 |
| 1948 | 30,579 | 8 | 19 | 6,332 | 17 | 11 | x | + | (=) | 36,911 |
| 1949 | 31,734 | 10 | 5 | 7,816 | 22 | 16 | 8,754 | 1,805 | | 50,109 |
| 1950 | 33,410 | 12 | 10 | 8,028 | 29 | 18 | 7,991 | 3,676 | | 52,105 |
| 1951 | 30,437 | x | | 9,131 | 33 | 5 | 6,903 | 4,079 | | 50,550 |
| 1952 | 19,449 | x | | 7,961 | 37 | 3 | 5,203 | 5,185 | | 37,798 |
| 1953 | 26,065 | x | | 5,721 | x | | 6,300 | 3,524 | | 41,610 |

(x) Not available.

(+) Was not operating in this year.

(=) Incomplete. It is known that Broome's maximum turnoff was 8,754 head in 1949, so that figures between 1940 and 1948 may be approximately assessed.

APPENDIX IX.

POPULATION AND LABOUR.

(a) . Population, 1890-1920.

(i) Electoral Rolls.

| Year | Males | Females | Total | East Kimberley | West Kimberley | Total |
|------|---------------|---------|-------|----------------|----------------|-------|
| 1890 | | | | 88 | 39 | 127 |
| 1891 | | | | 71 | 37 | 108 |
| 1892 | | | | Not available | | |
| 1893 | | | | 30 | 38 | 68 |
| 1894 | | | | 26 | 98 | 124 |
| 1895 | | | | 84 | 100 | 184 |
| 1896 | | | | 94 | 117 | 211 |
| 1897 | | | | 90 | 100 | 190 |
| 1898 | | | | 89 | 144 | 233 |
| 1899 | | | | 65 | 150 | 215 |
| 1900 | | | | 65 | 189 | 254 |
| 1901 | | | | 108 | 251 | 359 |
| 1902 | | | | 231 | 359 | 590 |
| 1903 | | | | 251 | 371 | 622 |
| 1904 | | | 1,149 | | | 1,149 |
| 1905 | | | 1,124 | | | 1,124 |
| 1906 | | | 1,373 | | | 1,373 |
| 1907 | 1,087 | 157 | 1,244 | | | 1,244 |
| 1908 | 1,341 | 180 | 1,521 | | | 1,521 |
| 1909 | 1,402 | 219 | 1,621 | | | 1,621 |
| 1910 | 1,328 | 230 | 1,558 | | | 1,558 |
| 1911 | 1,478 | 248 | 1,726 | | | 1,726 |
| 1912 | | | 1,397 | | | 1,397 |
| 1913 | | | 1,293 | | | 1,293 |
| 1914 | 1,413 | 250 | 1,663 | | | 1,663 |
| 1915 | 1,413 | 250 | 1,663 | | | 1,663 |
| 1916 | Not available | | | | | |
| 1917 | 1,200 | 186 | 1,386 | | | 1,386 |
| 1918 | 1,229 | 194 | 1,423 | | | 1,423 |
| 1919 | 1,254 | 200 | 1,454 | | | 1,454 |
| 1920 | 1,192 | 207 | 1,399 | | | 1,399 |

(ii) Census Returns.

| | <u>Broome & W. Kimberley</u> | | | <u>E. Kimberley and Goldfields</u> | | | <u>Total</u> |
|------|----------------------------------|---------|-------|------------------------------------|---------|-------|--------------|
| | males | females | Total | males | females | Total | |
| 1891 | 994 | 48 | 1,042 | 213 | 34 | 247 | 1,289 |
| 1901 | 1,805 | 175 | 1,980 | 205 | 35 | 240 | 2,220 |
| 1911 | 1,173 | 431 | 1,604 | 324 | 34 | 358 | 1,962 |

(b) Population in Road Board Districts, 1921-1950.

| Year | Broome (area 20,740 sq. m.) | | | Kimberley West (38,550sq. m.) | | | Hall's Creek (32,920 sq.m.) | | | Wyndham (46,350 sq.m.) | | | KIMBERLEY DISTRICT (Area : 139,060 sq. miles). | | |
|------------|-----------------------------|-----|-------|-------------------------------|-----|-------|-----------------------------|----|-------|------------------------|-----|-------|--|---------|-------|
| | M. | F. | Total | M. | F. | Total | M. | F. | Total | M. | F. | Total | Males | Females | Total |
| (+) 1921 | 733 | 313 | 1,046 | 344 | 75 | 419 | 239 | 14 | 253 | 362 | 97 | 459 | 1,678 | 499 | 2,177 |
| 1922 | 733 | 313 | 1,046 | 344 | 75 | 419 | 239 | 14 | 253 | 362 | 97 | 459 | 1,678 | 499 | 2,177 |
| 1923 | 733 | 313 | 1,046 | 344 | 75 | 419 | 240 | 16 | 256 | 362 | 97 | 459 | 1,679 | 501 | 2,180 |
| 1924 | 705 | 510 | 1,215 | 189 | 35 | 224 | 232 | 16 | 248 | 150 | 50 | 200 | 1,276 | 611 | 1,887 |
| 1925 | 710 | 520 | 1,230 | 173 | 37 | 210 | 230 | 15 | 245 | 426 | 59 | 485 | 1,539 | 631 | 2,170 |
| 1926 | 699 | 513 | 1,212 | 207 | 34 | 241 | 225 | 10 | 235 | 400 | 43 | 443 | 1,531 | 600 | 2,131 |
| 1927 | 670 | 505 | 1,175 | 201 | 34 | 235 | 100 | 11 | 111 | 200 | 44 | 244 | 1,171 | 594 | 1,765 |
| 1928 | 630 | 495 | 1,125 | 210 | 45 | 255 | 100 | 13 | 113 | 160 | 32 | 192 | 1,100 | 585 | 1,685 |
| 1929 | 624 | 481 | 1,105 | 74 | 45 | 119 | 110 | 14 | 124 | 170 | 36 | 206 | 978 | 576 | 1,554 |
| 1930 | 708 | 323 | 1,031 | 74 | 45 | 119 | 120 | 14 | 134 | 153 | 42 | 200 | 1,060 | 424 | 1,484 |
| 1931 | 381 | 281 | 662 | 84 | 53 | 137 | 125 | 22 | 147 | 157 | 43 | 200 | 747 | 399 | 1,146 |
| 1932 | 365 | 282 | 647 | 81 | 53 | 134 | 125 | 19 | 144 | 153 | 40 | 193 | 724 | 394 | 1,118 |
| (+) 1933 | 522 | 416 | 938 | 328 | 125 | 453 | 139 | 29 | 168 | 150 | 106 | 256 | 1,139 | 676 | 1,815 |
| 1934 | 437 | 407 | 844 | 328 | 125 | 453 | 138 | 24 | 162 | 423 | 145 | 568 | 1,326 | 701 | 2,027 |
| 1935 | 665 | 533 | 1,198 | 223 | 68 | 291 | 145 | 25 | 170 | 476 | 60 | 536 | 1,509 | 686 | 2,195 |
| 1936 | 675 | 540 | 1,215 | 228 | 69 | 297 | 153 | 26 | 179 | 480 | 74 | 554 | 1,536 | 709 | 2,245 |
| 1937 | 570 | 467 | 1,037 | 267 | 81 | 348 | 168 | 24 | 192 | 476 | 60 | 536 | 1,481 | 632 | 2,113 |
| 1938 | 561 | 412 | 973 | 251 | 92 | 343 | 163 | 31 | 194 | 449 | 60 | 509 | 1,424 | 595 | 2,019 |
| 1939 | 570 | 431 | 1,001 | 260 | 95 | 355 | 172 | 34 | 206 | 450 | 62 | 512 | 1,452 | 622 | 2,074 |
| 1940 | 670 | 503 | 1,173 | 243 | 87 | 330 | 160 | 25 | 185 | 435 | 95 | 530 | 1,508 | 710 | 2,218 |
| 1941 | 670 | 503 | 1,173 | 243 | 87 | 330 | 160 | 25 | 185 | 435 | 95 | 530 | 1,508 | 710 | 2,218 |
| x) 1943 | 120 | 2 | 122 | 243 | 87 | 330 | 184 | 27 | 211 | 31 | 5 | 36 | 578 | 121 | 699 |
| | 200 | 50 | 250 | 250 | 100 | 350 | 195 | 26 | 221 | 56 | 9 | 65 | 701 | 185 | 886 |
| 1944 | 200 | 50 | 250 | 250 | 100 | 350 | 156 | 28 | 184 | 55 | 9 | 64 | 661 | 187 | 848 |
| 1945 | 749 | 451 | 1,200 | 160 | 106 | 266 | 134 | 24 | 158 | 292 | 31 | 323 | 1,335 | 612 | 1,947 |
| (+) 1947-8 | 572 | 449 | 1,021 | 611 | 251 | 862 | 199 | 83 | 282 | 459 | 150 | 609 | 2,841 | 933 | 2,774 |
| (-) 1949 | 651 | 420 | 1,071 | 611 | 251 | 862 | 200 | 82 | 282 | 460 | 150 | 610 | 1,922 | 903 | 2,825 |
| 1950 | 615 | 400 | 1,015 | 611 | 251 | 862 | 200 | 82 | 282 | 460 | 150 | 610 | 1,886 | 893 | 2,779 |

(x) No records given for 1942. (+) Census year. N.B. The variation in Wyndham returns is caused by the exclusion in some years of the Heatworks employees. Apart from Census returns, some guesswork is involved in estimates.

(c) Labour Permanently Engaged in
Primary Industry, 1907-1941.

| Year | WHITE | | | ASIATIC | | | ABORIGINAL | | |
|------|-------|---------|-------|---------|---------|-------|------------|---------|-------|
| | Males | Females | Total | Males | Females | Total | Males | Females | Total |
| 1907 | 252 | 11 | 263 | 35 | - | 35 | 500 | 352 | 852 |
| 1908 | 270 | 15 | 285 | 29 | - | 29 | 505 | 380 | 885 |
| 1909 | 272 | 20 | 292 | 39 | - | 39 | 557 | 401 | 958 |
| 1910 | 284 | 16 | 300 | 28 | 1 | 29 | 645 | 431 | 1,076 |
| 1911 | 237 | 5 | 242 | 18 | - | 18 | 562 | 386 | 948 |
| 1912 | 261 | 6 | 267 | 25 | - | 25 | 645 | 485 | 1,130 |
| 1913 | 270 | 6 | 276 | 28 | - | 28 | 748 | 530 | 1,278 |
| 1914 | 308 | 9 | 317 | 27 | - | 27 | 669 | 462 | 1,131 |
| 1915 | 295 | 10 | 305 | 28 | 1 | 29 | 651 | 455 | 1,106 |
| 1916 | 301 | 11 | 312 | 33 | - | 33 | 719 | 523 | 1,242 |
| 1917 | 287 | 16 | 303 | 28 | - | 28 | 803 | 560 | 1,363 |
| 1918 | 321 | 7 | 328 | 26 | 1 | 27 | 826 | 595 | 1,421 |
| 1919 | 300 | 7 | 307 | 24 | 1 | 25 | 777 | 590 | 1,367 |
| 1920 | 321 | 15 | 336 | 21 | 1 | 22 | 855 | 644 | 1,499 |
| 1921 | 296 | 13 | 309 | 22 | - | 22 | 876 | 655 | 1,531 |
| 1922 | 293 | 11 | 304 | 25 | 1 | 26 | 968 | 652 | 1,620 |
| 1923 | 288 | 14 | 302 | 23 | 1 | 24 | 1,033 | 689 | 1,722 |
| 1924 | 276 | 7 | 283 | 18 | - | 18 | 949 | 674 | 1,623 |
| 1925 | 257 | 8 | 265 | 25 | - | 25 | 946 | 699 | 1,645 |
| 1926 | 259 | 10 | 269 | 25 | - | 25 | 1,021 | 824 | 1,845 |
| 1927 | 262 | 10 | 272 | 21 | - | 21 | 1,060 | 783 | 1,843 |
| 1928 | 294 | 8 | 302 | 19 | - | 19 | 980 | 738 | 1,718 |
| 1929 | 274 | 9 | 283 | 14 | 2 | 16 | 963 | 679 | 1,642 |
| 1930 | 278 | 8 | 286 | 14 | 1 | 15 | 1,007 | 711 | 1,718 |
| 1931 | 275 | 9 | 284 | 13 | - | 13 | 1,042 | 801 | 1,843 |
| 1932 | 250 | 8 | 258 | 13 | - | 13 | 1,062 | 791 | 1,853 |
| 1933 | 250 | 14 | 264 | 16 | - | 16 | 1,044 | 778 | 1,822 |
| 1934 | 261 | 17 | 278 | 9 | - | 9 | 999 | 727 | 1,726 |
| 1935 | 247 | 12 | 259 | 7 | - | 7 | 1,032 | 767 | 1,799 |
| 1936 | 272 | 14 | 286 | 9 | - | 9 | 1,031 | 844 | 1,875 |
| 1937 | 284 | 18 | 302 | 12 | - | 12 | 887 | 580 | 1,467 |

ALL NATIONALITIES.

| | Permanent | | | Casual | | | Total | | |
|------------------------|-----------|---------|-------|-----------|---------|-------|-------|---------|-------|
| | Males | Females | Total | Males | Females | Total | Males | Females | Total |
| 1938 | 643 | 161 | 804 | 384 | 153 | 537 | 1,027 | 314 | 1,341 |
| 1939 | 786 | 261 | 1,047 | 288 | 61 | 349 | 1,074 | 322 | 1,396 |
| <u>WHITES ONLY</u> | | | | | | | | | |
| 1940 | 260 | 16 | 276 | 224 | 8 | 232 | 484 | 24 | 508 |
| 1941 | 241 | 6 | 247 | Not given | | | | | |
| <u>ABORIGINES ONLY</u> | | | | | | | | | |
| 1940 | 869 | 361 | 1,230 | 135 | 63 | 198 | 1,004 | 424 | 1,428 |
| 1941 | 889 | 253 | 1,142 | 149 | 26 | 175 | 1,038 | 279 | 1,317 |

Since 1941, statistics given do not distinguish between white and aboriginal workers, and include only those persons receiving payment of some sort. They are thus insufficiently complete to allow a comparative record to be made.

APPENDIX X.

Comparison of Four Vestey Companies and Four Owner-Managed Units, 1933-47.

(i) Vestey's.

(Flora Valley and Margaret River Pastoral Co., Nicholson Pastoral Co.,
Gordon Downs Pastoral Co., and Sturt Creek Grazing Co. Average
rainfall, 17½". Total acreage, 3,544,634.)

| Year. | Total No.
Cattle | Total No.
Calves | Bull pur-
chases | Total No.
Sold | Total Mort-
ality | Percentage of entire
herd.
Calves Sold Mortality | | |
|-------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|-------------------|----------------------|--|-----|-----|
| 1933 | 55,090 | 8,210 | 0 | 5,554 | 5,530 | 15 | 10 | 10 |
| 1934 | 56,150 | 11,046 | 41 | 3,356 | 5,547 | 20 | 6 | 10 |
| 1935 | 54,648 | 12,294 | 150 | 7,470 | 6,625 | 22 | 13½ | 12 |
| 1936 | 54,017 | 10,509 | 0 | 2,382 | 6,943 | 19½ | 4½ | 13 |
| 1937 | 48,145 | 7,869 | 0 | 3,030 | 9,063 | 16 | 6½ | 18½ |
| 1938 | 50,131 | 11,572 | 0 | 2,915 | 6,401 | 23 | 6 | 13 |
| 1939 | 51,354 | 11,640 | 132 | 5,013 | 4,594 | 23 | 10 | 9 |
| 1940 | 51,838 | 11,966 | 51 | 7,699 | 5,994 | 23 | 15 | 11½ |
| 1941 | 48,880 | 10,455 | 40 | 7,721 | 4,809 | 21½ | 16 | 10 |
| 1942 | 51,003 | 13,674 | 80 | 7,918 | 4,406 | 26½ | 15½ | 9 |
| 1943 | 55,059 | 12,787 | 60 | 5,764 | 3,693 | 23 | 10½ | 6½ |
| 1944 | 59,156 | 13,895 | 85 | 6,364 | 3,781 | 23½ | 10½ | 6½ |
| 1945 | 59,670 | 15,300 | 0 | 7,137 | 6,105 | 25½ | 12 | 10 |
| 1946 | 51,921 | 9,121 | 63 | 8,243 | 7,515 | 17½ | 16 | 14½ |
| 1947 | 50,849 | 11,285 | 0 | 3,747 | 7,121 | 22 | 7½ | 14 |

(ii) Smallholdings.

(Arizona-Bedford Downs, Billiluna, Rosewood, and Ruby Plains. Average
rainfall, 18½". Total acreage, 362,1048.)

| Year | Total No. | Total No. Calves | Bull pur-
chases | Total No. Sold | Total Mort-
ality | Percentage of entire
herd.
Calves Sold Mortality | | |
|------|-----------|------------------|---------------------|----------------|----------------------|--|-----|----|
| 1933 | 28,443 | 6,807 | | 3,209 | 2,825 | 24 | 11 | 10 |
| 1934 | 28,716 | 5,625 | | 3,139 | 2,615 | 20 | 11 | 9 |
| 1935 | 29,796 | 7,386 | | 2,964 | 2,662 | 25 | 10 | 9 |
| 1936 | 30,350 | 5,610 | | 3,146 | 2,327 | 18½ | 10 | 8 |
| 1937 | 31,304 | 7,130 | | 2,924 | 2,468 | 23 | 9½ | 8 |
| 1938 | 33,019 | 8,032 | | 3,534 | 3,431 | 24 | 10½ | 10 |
| 1939 | 34,324 | 7,875 | | 3,879 | 3,331 | 23 | 11½ | 9½ |
| 1940 | 31,279 | 8,175 | | 8,028 | 1,540 | 26 | 25½ | 5 |
| 1941 | 31,981 | 9,461 | | 6,162 | 2,329 | 29½ | 19½ | 7 |
| 1942 | 37,490 | 9,722 | | 2,986 | 2,363 | 26 | 8 | 6½ |
| 1943 | 39,628 | 10,838 | | 5,025 | 3,010 | 27 | 12½ | 7½ |
| 1944 | 41,346 | 10,634 | | 6,587 | 2,523 | 25½ | 16 | 6 |
| 1945 | 42,474 | 9,734 | | 4,823 | 3,320 | 23 | 11½ | 8 |
| 1946 | 42,311 | 8,339 | | 4,941 | 3,434 | 20 | 12 | 8 |
| 1947 | 41,499 | 8,571 | | 6,578 | 3,556 | 20½ | 16 | 8½ |

ELECTORAL : PARLIAMENTARY REPRESENTATIVES OF KIMBERLEY, 1887-1952

| <u>Year</u> | <u>Govt.</u> | <u>M.L.A.</u>
(for West and East
Kimberley until
1904; thence for
Kimberley only.) | <u>Legislative Councillors</u>
for North Province. |
|-------------|-------------------------------|--|---|
| 1887 | (Governor) | | Alexander Forrest (Kimberley) |
| 1888 | Sir Fredk.
N.Broome. | | |
| 1889 | | | |
| 1890 | (Premier) | Alex. Forrest (W.Ky.) | |
| 1891 | Sir J. J. Forrest | Wm. L. Baker (E.Ky.) | (Nominees included R.E.Bush, M.Grant, E.T.Hooley) |
| 1892 | | | |
| 1893 | | Fras. Connor (E.Ky.) | |
| 1894 | | | Edwd. Robinson J.E.Richardson F.M. Stone |
| 1895 | | | |
| 1896 | | | D. MacD. McKay |
| 1897 | | | |
| 1898 | | | |
| 1899 | | | |
| 1900 | | | |
| Jan. 1901 | Geo.Throssell | | |
| July 1901 | Geo.Leake | S.C.Pigott (W.Ky.) | Sir E. Wittenoom |
| 1902 | Walter James | <u>M.L.A. for Kimberley</u> | |
| 1903 | | Fras. Connor (Ind.) | |
| 1904 | Henry Daglish | Arthur Male (Lib.) | |
| 1905 | C.H.Rason | | R.F.Sholl Fras. Connor |
| 1906 | Newton Moore | | |
| 1907 | | | |
| 1908 | | | R.W.Pennefather |
| 1909 | | | |
| 1910 | Frank Wilson | | Sir E. Wittenoom |
| 1911 | John Scaddan | | |
| 1912 | | | |
| 1913 | | | |
| 1914 | | | J.J.Holmes |
| 1915 | | | |
| 1916 | Frank Wilson | | |
| 1917 | H.B.Lefroy | M.P.Durack (Nat.) | Geo.W.Miles |
| 1918 | | | |
| 1919 | H.P.Colebath
Jas. Mitchell | | |

Appendix XI (a) - continued.

| Year | Premier | Legislative Councillors for North Province | |
|------|-----------------|--|------------------------|
| | | M.L.A. for Kimberley | |
| 1920 | Sir J. Mitchell | M.P. Durack (C.P.) | Sir E. Wittenoom |
| 1921 | | | (Nat.) |
| 1922 | | | J.J. Holmes |
| 1923 | | | (Ind.) |
| 1924 | Philip Collier | A.A.M. Coverley (Lab.) | Geo. W. Miles |
| 1925 | | | (Ind. C.P.) |
| 1926 | | | (after 1947, L.C.L.) |
| 1927 | | | |
| 1928 | Sir J. Mitchell | | |
| 1929 | | | |
| 1930 | | | |
| 1931 | | | |
| 1932 | Philip Collier | | E. H. Angelo (C.P.) |
| 1933 | | | |
| 1934 | | | |
| 1935 | | | |
| 1936 | J. C. Willcock | | |
| 1937 | | | |
| 1938 | | | |
| 1939 | | | |
| 1940 | | | F.R. Welsh (Nat.) |
| 1941 | | | (after 1947, L.C.L.) |
| 1942 | | | |
| 1943 | | | C.R. Cornish (Ind.) |
| 1944 | F.J.S. Wise | | |
| 1945 | | | |
| 1946 | | | |
| 1947 | | | |
| 1948 | Ross McLarty | | |
| 1949 | | | |
| 1950 | | | |
| 1951 | | | |
| 1952 | A.R.G. Hawke | | |
| 1953 | | | |
| | | J.J. Rhatigan (Lab.) | |
| | | | H.C. Strickland (Lab.) |
| | | | C.W.D. Barker (Lab.) |
| | | | R.M. Forrest (L.C.L.) |

APPENDIX XI : (b) Results of Kimberley Legislative Assembly
Elections.

WEST KIMBERLEY

| | | |
|-------|------------------------|-----|
| 1890 | A. Forrest (unopposed) | |
| 1894. | Forrest, A. | 53 |
| | Streeter, G.S. | 28 |
| 1897 | Forrest, unopposed | |
| 1901 | FORREST, A. | 105 |
| | Biddles, F. | 29 |
| 1901 | PIGGOTT, S.C. | 54 |
| | Moran, C.J. | 52 |
| | Wood, B.C. | 24 |

EAST KIMBERLEY

| | | |
|------|----------------------------|----|
| 1890 | W.L. Baker (unopposed) | |
| 1893 | (|) |
| 1894 | (Francis Connor:unopposed) | |
| 1897 | (|) |
| 1901 | CONNOR, F. | 33 |
| | Stretch, W. | 32 |

KIMBERLEY

| | Broome | Derby | Wyndham | Inland
centres
(+) | Postal
votes | <u>Total</u> |
|----------------------------|--------|-----------|---------|--------------------------|-----------------|--------------|
| 1904, CONNOR, F. | 152 | 33 | 30 | 73 | | 288 |
| Piggott, S.C. | 169 | 13 | 29 | 65 | | 276 |
| 1905, Connor, F. (Ind.) | 74 | 41 | 33 | 38 | | 186 |
| MALE, A. (Lib.) | 189 | 13 | 15 | 42 | | 259 |
| 1908, MALE, A. (Lib.) | 327 | 24 | 15 | 43 | | 410 |
| O'Donoghue, P.
(Ind.) | 49 | 48 | 21 | 119 | | 237 |
| 1911, MALE, A. (Lib.) | 301 | 44 | 4 | 50 | | 399 |
| Brown, T.L. (Ind.
Lab.) | 128 | 44 | 20 | 60 | | 252 |
| 1914, MALE, A. (Lib.) | | Unopposed | | | | |
| 1917, DURACK, M.P. (Nat.) | 274 | 73 | 69 | 95 | | 511 |
| Moloney, J. (Lab.) | 31 | 8 | 51 | 38 | | 128 |
| Cameron, A. (Lab.) | 4 | 7 | 11 | 13 | | 35 |
| Hollingsworth (Nat.) | 26 | - | 5 | - | | 31 |
| 1921, DURACK, M.P. (C.P.) | 266 | 23 | 47 | 42 | | 378 |
| Cornish, J. (Lab.) | 61 | 5 | 102 | 69 | | 247 |
| Willessee, W. (Ind.) | 56 | 26 | 16 | 18 | | 116 |

XI (b) : continued.

| | | <u>Broome</u> | <u>Derby</u> | <u>Wyndham</u> | <u>Inland centres</u> | <u>Total</u> |
|-------|-------------------------|---------------|--------------|----------------|-----------------------|--------------|
| 1924. | COVERLEY, A.A.M. (Lab.) | 97 | 20 | 56 | 61 | 234 |
| | Foley (Nat.) | 153 | 7 | 13 | 1 | 174 |
| | Gregory (Nat. Ind.) | 148 | - | 4 | 3 | 155 |
| | Chalmers (Ind. Nat.) | 28 | 66 | 2 | 8 | 104 |
| | Brown (Ind. Nat.) | 4 | 5 | 2 | 21 | 32 |

Distribution of Preferences.

| | | | Brown's pref. | | Chalmers' pref. | | Gregory's pref. | | <u>Total</u> |
|--|----------|-----|---------------|----|-----------------|----|-----------------|----|--------------|
| | Coverley | 234 | + | 13 | + | 65 | + | 92 | = 404 |
| | Foley | 174 | + | 1 | + | 32 | + | 88 | = 295 |
| | Gregory | 155 | + | 6 | + | 19 | | | = 180 |
| | Chalmers | 104 | + | 12 | | | | | = 116 |
| | Brown | 32 | | | | | | | = 32 |

| | | <u>Broome</u> | <u>Derby</u> | <u>Wyndham</u> | <u>Inland centres</u> | <u>Postal votes</u> | <u>Total</u> |
|----------------|--------------------------|---------------|--------------|----------------|-----------------------|---------------------|--------------|
| 1927. | COVERLEY, A.A.M. (Lab.) | 239 | 72 | 55 | 59 | | 431 |
| | Male, Arthur (Ind. Nat.) | 99 | 21 | 10 | 12 | | 144 |
| | Percy, P. (Ind.) | 96 | 2 | 2 | 2 | | 102 |
| 1930. | COVERLEY, A.A.M. (Lab.) | Unopposed | | | | | |
| 1933. | COVERLEY, A.A.M. (Lab.) | 206 | 55 | 73 | 35 | | 369 |
| | Povah, A. (Ind. C.P.) | 225 | 39 | 42 | 31 | | 337 |
| 1933. | COVERLEY, A.A.M. (Lab.) | 95 | 52 | 242 | 22 | 145 | 556 |
| | Povah, A. (Ind. C.P.) | 110 | 29 | 26 | 17 | 85 | 267 |
| 1936. | COVERLEY, A.A.M. (Lab.) | 146 | 53 | 12 | 69 | 216 | 496 |
| | Herrin, J. (Ind.) | 26 | 11 | 2 | 29 | 23 | 91 |
| 1939. | COVERLEY, A.A.M. (Lab.) | Unopposed | | | | | |
| 1943. | COVERLEY, A.A.M. (Lab.) | 29 | 59 | 10 | 29 | 167 | 334 |
| | Davidson, D.J.D. (Ind.) | 14 | 13 | 7 | 8 | 50 | 98 |
| 1947. | COVERLEY, A.A.M. (Lab.) | 79 | 66 | 21 | 27(x) | 196 | 359 |
| | Durack, K.M. (Ind.) | 48 | 32 | 27 | 37(x) | 63 | 207 |
| 1950 and 1953. | COVERLEY, A.A.M. (Lab.) | Unopposed. | | | | | |
| 1953. | RHATIGAN, J.J. (Lab.) | 183 | 124 | 88 | 73(x) | 114 | 582 |
| | Murray, J. (Lib.) | 60 | 30 | 42 | 36(x) | 96 | 264 |
| | Thomas, S. (Lib.) | 23 | 25 | 8 | 8 (x) | 26 | 90 |

(x) Includes Cockatoo Island.

(+) Prior to 1921, "Inland centres" included Fitzroy Crossing, Hall's Creek, La Grange, Obagooma, Meda, Lower and Upper Liveringa, Noonkanbah, Ord River and Argyle. Later returns include Fitzroy and Hall's Creek only.

BIBLIOGRAPHY.

(The following abbreviations have been employed : A, indicating that a work may be found in the State Archives of Western Australia, at present housed in the Public Library, Perth ; PL, in the Public Library, Perth ; UL, in the Library of the University of Western Australia ; and D, among the papers of the late M.P. Durack, at present held by Mrs. Mary Durack Miller, Nedlands, W.A.)

Official Records.

I. PARLIAMENTARY.

State of Western Australia.

Debates of the Legislative Council, 1876-1889 (17 vols.) (UL)

Debates of the Parliament of Western Australia, 1890-1952 (133 vols.) (UL)

Votes and Proceedings of the Legislative Council, with Papers Ordered to be Printed, 1870-1889. (PL)

Votes and Proceedings of both Houses of Parliament, with Papers Ordered to be Printed, 1890-1952. (PL)

Amongst the Printed Papers, the following are of special relevance :---

| Year. | Volume | No. of Paper | Subject |
|-------|--------|--------------|--|
| 1878 | | A3 | Special Settlement of that part of the Territory of Western Australia which is North of the 19th parallel of South Latitude -- Offer by Mr. A. Forrest to conduct Exploration in that direction. |
| 1879 | | 1 | Instructions issued to Alexander Forrest, Commander of the Northern Exploring Expedition. |
| 1880 | | 3 | Journal of Exploration from DeGrey to Port Darwin (with Illustrations and Map) -- A. Forrest. |
| 1880 | | 20 | Despatch from His Excellency the Governor to the Secretary of State, forwarding copies of proposed Regulations for the Kimberley District, together with a copy of telegram from Secretary of State approving of same. |

| Year. | Volume | No. of
Paper | Subject |
|-------|--------|-----------------|---|
| 1882 | | 5 | Correspondence between His Excellency the Governor, the Hon. Surveyor-General, and Mr. Steere, on the subject of the Survey of the Kimberley District. |
| 1882 | | 29 | Minutes on the subject of Police Protection for the Kimberley District. |
| 1882 | | A9 | Letter from Messrs. McKenzie Grant and H.W. Venn to His Excellency the Governor, having reference to the construction of a Railway on the Land Grant System in the Kimberley District. |
| 1883 | I | 5 | Instructions to Mr. R. Fairbairn as Government Resident in the Kimberley District. |
| 1883 | I | 6 | Kimberley Survey Expedition - Instructions to Mr. J.S. Brooking, Officer-in-Charge, also Minute by His Excellency the Administrator on the subject of a Site for the proposed Township in the new Kimberley District. |
| 1883 | I | A3 | Kimberley Land Regulations - Memoranda written by Members of the Legislative Council in response to the request of His Excellency the Governor. |
| 1883 | II | 23 | Forrest, John - Report on the Kimberley District. |
| 1883 | II | A2 | Despatches on the Subject of the Stocking Clause for the Kimberley District, and other points connected with the Land Regulations. |
| 1883 | II | A12 | Report of the Select Committee of the Legislative Council appointed to consider and report..... upon the subject of proposed Amendments in the Land Regulations for the Kimberley District. |
| 1884 | | A1 | Despatch from the Right Hon. the Secretary of State for Colonies, respecting the Stocking Clause of the Kimberley Land Regulations. |
| 1884 | | 31 | Hardman, E.T. - Report on the Geology of the Kimberley District. |
| 1885 | | 34 | Hardman, E.T. - Report on the Geology of the Kimberley District. |
| 1886 | | A7 | Proposals to construct Railways in the Kimberley Districts. |

Year Volume No. of
Paper

Subject

| | | | |
|--------|-----|------|--|
| 1886 | | A10 | Proposal by Mr. A.F. Wileman, on behalf of himself and others, to construct a tramway to the Kimberley Goldfield. |
| 1887 | | A18 | Report upon the Kimberley Goldfield, by the Warden. |
| 1888 | II. | 27 | Papers respecting the necessity of Increased Police Protection for the Settlers in the Kimberley District from Aboriginal Natives. |
| 1889 | I. | 5 | Report by Captain F.C.P. Vereker of the work carried out by H.M. surveying vessel "Myrmidon" at Cambridge Gulf, 1888. |
| 1889 | I. | 12 | Forrest, Sir John - Notes and Statistics Respecting the Six Land Divisions of Western Australia. |
| 1894 | II. | A13 | (Chairman : A.R. Richardson) Select Committee on the question of Supply of Meat, by Land and Sea, to Metropolitan and Goldfields Markets. |
| 1896 | I. | 14 | House, Dr. F.M. - Report on the West Kimberley District for the Half-Year ending 30th June, 1896, by the Resident Magistrate, Derby. |
| 1896 | II. | A8. | (Chairman : C. Harper). Report of Joint Select Committee of the Legislative Council and Legislative Assembly appointed to inquire into the Causes of the High Price of Meat. |
| 1898 | II. | A8. | (Chairman : C. Harper) Report of the Select Committee on the Removal of the restrictions re tick in East Kimberley. |
| 1898 | II. | A34. | Hancock, E.T. - Report on the existence of cattle tick in East Kimberley. |
| 1900 | II. | A7. | (Chairman : C. Harper) Report of Select Committee of Legislative Assembly appointed to consider the present stock regulations, so far as they affect the distribution of cattle from East Kimberley and the Northern Territory of South Australia. |
| 1901-2 | IV. | A9. | (Chairman : J.M. Hopkins) Report of Select Committee of the Legislative Assembly appointed to inquire into the best means of improving the Food Supply. |

| Year | Volume | No. of
Paper | Subject |
|----------------|--------|-----------------|---|
| 1901-
1902. | IV. | A32. | (Chairman : A.Y.Hassell) Select Committee on importation of stock from South Australia to the northern portion of Western Australia. |
| 1902. | I. | 2. | Brockman, F.S. - Report on Exploration of North-West Kimberley, 1901. |
| 1902 | II. | A12. | (Chairman : J.J.Higham) Select Committee on Stock Regulations affecting East Kimberley cattle. |
| 1902 | II. | A13. | (Chairman : W.B.Gordon) Select Committee on the Provision of Public Abattoirs. |
| 1905 | I. | 5. | Roth, W.E. - Report of Royal Commissioner on the condition of the natives. |
| 1907. | II. | 19. | Fitzgerald, W.V. : Report on portions of the Kimberleys. |
| 1908-
1909 | II. | 21. | (Chairman : R.W. Pennefather) Report of Royal Commission appointed to inquire into and report upon the Meat Supply. |
| 1915. | II. | A4. | (Chairman : W.J. George) Select Committee of the Legislative Assembly on the cancellation of the contract with Nevanas & Co. for the establishment of freezing works at Wyndham. |
| 1917 | I. | 4. | (Commissioner : R.B.Burnside, J.) : Royal Commission appointed to inquire into the transactions between the Government of Western Australia and Mr. S.V. Nevanas in regard to the Wyndham freezing works, together with Minutes of Evidence. |
| 1918. | II. | A4. | Kingsmill, W. - Report on possibilities of opening up trade with the Federated Malay States and Java. |
| 1921/2 | II. | A2. | (Chairman : J.J.Holmes) : Select Committee of the Legislative Council appointed to inquire into and report upon the Working and Administration of Wyndham Freezing Works and State Shipping Service, together with minutes of evidence, etc. (Interim and final reports.) |
| 1922/3 | II. | 31. | (Commissioner : W.G.Pickering) : Royal Commission on Forestry. (Includes mention of cypress pine forests, East Kimberley). |

| Year | Volume | No. of
Paper | Subject |
|------|--------|-----------------|--|
| 1924 | II. | A3. | (Chairman, Harry Mann) : Select Committee of Legislative Assembly on the establishment of markets in the metropolitan area. |
| 1927 | I. | 3. | (Commissioner, G.T. Wood, R.M.) Royal Commission of Inquiry into alleged killing and burning of bodies of aborigines in East Kimberley : with evidence, etc. |
| 1928 | I. | 14. | (Chairman, M.P. Durack) : Royal Commission on the Meat Industry in Western Australia ; with minutes of evidence. |
| 1932 | | 1. | (Commissioner, Max Henry) : Royal Commission to inquire into the Application and Administration of the Regulations under the Stock Diseases Act, 1895. |
| 1935 | I. | 2. | (Commissioner, H. Moseley) : Royal Commission on Aborigines. |
| 1940 | II. | 17. | (Commissioner, W.V. Fyfe) : Royal Commission on the Pastoral Industry in Leasehold Areas. |

=====

Cf. also annual reports of the following Departments, which have been included with printed Papers :

Aborigines. (1899, 1907-12, 1917-19, 1934-36)

Agriculture. (1898, 1907-08 to 1951-52).

Fremantle Harbour Trust Commissioners (1907-08 to 1951-52). (for details of livestock shipments from Derby, Wyndham and Broome.)

Lands and Surveys. Annual Reports of Surveyor-General, 1870 - 1928-9.
Annual Reports of the Under-Secretary, 1907-8 to 1951-2.

Stock : Report of Chief Inspector, 1896-1901. (Thereafter incorporated in reports of the Department of Agriculture).

Native Affairs : Report of Commissioner, 1936-8, 1943-51.

=====

Government Gazettes, 1880-1953. (From 1888 to 1915, lists of pastoral lessees are included ; thereafter only forfeitures and declarations of new land thrown open for sale.) (PL)

Departmental Documents and Publications.

Aborigines Department. Miscellaneous files, 1898-1908.
Foolscap. 6 linear feet. (A : 255)

File re Moola Bulla station, East Kimberley, 1908-1922 (Ibid.)

Agriculture

Journal of the Department of Agriculture : First Series, 1900-1909.
Second, " 1924-1951.
Third " 1952-1953.

Especially the following articles :

First Series :

Weir, R.E., Le Socuf, H.A., and Edward, H.H. : Kimberley Disease
in Horses. (July 1905, p. 60).

Weir, R.E. : Through the Kimberley. (7 instalments : July 1905-
January 1906.)

Second Series :

Teakle, L.J.H. : The Kimberley Project. (Dec. 1944, pp. 281-298)

Jenkins, C.F.H. : Entomological Problems of the Ord River
Irrigation Area (June 1945:vol. 22, p. 131 et seq.)

Durack, K.M. : The Monsoonal North of Western Australia.
(Sept. 1945:vol. 22, pp. 248-274.)

Snook, L.C. and Durack, K.M. : Pasture Plants of the Kimberleys.
(Dec. 1946:vol. 23, pp. 318-340.)

Joint Supervisory Committee: Kimberley Research Station Progress
Report, 1947-49. (June 1950, vol. 27, No. 2.)

Third Series :

Smith, Grant : More Beef from the Kimberleys. (vol 1., pp. 121
et seq. : p. 287 et seq.)

Gooding, C.D. and Harrison, L.A. : The Wallaby Menace in the
Kimberleys. (Vol. 2, No. 3, p. 333.)

Suijendorp, H. : Problems of the Spinifex Areas. (Vol 2, No. 4.
p. 489).

Blair, C.K. : The Annual Habits of Dingos in the Northern Pastoral Areas. (Vol. 2, No. 4, p. 495 et seq.)

(UL : PL : Kimberley Research Station.)

Publications :

Bulletin No. 13 : The North-West and Tropical North (A. Despeissis).
(Govt. Printer, Perth, 1911 : 105 pp.)

Bulletin No. 36 : Tropical Agriculture in Western Australia
(A. Despeissis) (Govt. Printer, Perth, 1910 : 51 pp.)

Unpublished Material :

Fitzgerald, K. : Report of Agricultural Adviser, Kimberley District,
1951-52.
(Dept. of Ag.)

Colonial Secretary's Office.

Correspondence files, 1878-1898. (Now in process of classification at Archives, Perth. Between 1881 and 1890, include many files relevant to the early settlement of Kimberley, among the more valuable being C.S.O. 2808/83, 2037/84, 2656/84, 964/85, 4330/85, 4722/85, 4609/85, 2612/86, 3621/86, 3374/86, 3621/86, 3746/86, 4646/86, 4864/86, 4946/86, 5086/86, 1666/87, 980/88, 1422/88, 1496/88 and 2846/89. After 1890, there is a falling-off in Kimberley material, although 819/92 and 957/92 deal with Bradshaw's settlement at Marigui on the Prince Regent River.)

Lands and Surveys.

Barclay, H.C. and Stokes, S.J. : Reports (2) on Survey of Boundary between Western Australia and Northern Territory, 1936.

Medcalf, F.G. : Report on Erosion in Ord valley, 1944.

Pastoral Appraisement Board : Report on Kimberley Division, 1951.
(including reports by W.W. Henwood and G.A. Buchanan.)

(Unpublished : in possession of Department).

North-West

Administrative Files, with card index, for 1920-1926, with some relevant files of the Aborigines Dept., 1909-1919. (A : 251).

Publications :

1: The North-West and Tropical North (3rd. ed. revised): (A. Despeissis) (Govt. Printer, Perth, 1921).

2 : The north and north-west of Western Australia ; its wealth and possibilities (Govt. printer, 1932).

3 : Easton, W.R. : Report on the North Kimberley District, W.A. (Govt. printer, 1922 : 52 pp.

(PL)

Report of Committee to consider the future development of industries in the North Western portion of Western Australia (E.H. Angelo, Chairman.) (1932) (Typescript, 18 pp.) (D)

Premier's Department.

Correspondence files, 1898-1902. (4 vols.)

(A : 242)

File 695/1932 (Minutes of Evidence of Royal Commission to Enquire into Stock Diseases Act, 1895) (Prem. Dept.)

Minutes of meetings of the North-West Advisory Committee, 1948-53. (Prem. Dept.)

Publication :

Development work and other activities of the Government of Western Australia, 1947-48-49 : a fact manual. (Govt. Printer, Perth, 1950:96pp.)

W.A. Geological Survey: Bulletins.

No. 2 : Smith, R.N. : State of Mining in the Kimberley District. (Govt. Printer, 1898) (Govt. Geologist)

No. 25 : Jack, Dr. R.L. : Prospects of obtaining water in the Kimberley District. (Govt. Printer, 1906) (Govt. Geologist, Perth.)

(b) Commonwealth Parliament.

Commonwealth Parliamentary Papers, especially the annual reports of Administrators of the Northern Territory, 1913-1950, and :

Ewing, N.K., J. : Report on Northern Territory Administration. (1920-21 : vol iii. pp. 1653-1688).

Hobler, Geo. : North-Western Australia (1920-21 : vol v. pp. 725-744: with maps : investigation possibility of railways.)

Buchanan, Sir Geo. : Report...on the ports of north and north-western Australia. (1925-27 : vol. iv. pp. 1135-54.)

Payne, W.L. and Fletcher, J.W. : Report of Royal Commission to inquire into the land and land industries of the Northern Territory of Australia, and generally into the potentialities of that region. (1937-9 : vol iv., pp. 813-925.)

C.S.I.R.O. Bulletins.

No. 36 : Murnane and Ewart : Kimberley Horse Disease. (Melb. 1923: 61 pp)

No. 172 : Kelley, R.B. : Zebu-Cross Cattle in Northern Australia.
(Melb. Govt. Printer, 1943: 96 pp.)

Pamphlets (C.S.I.R.O.)

No. 12 : The cattle tick and methods for its eradication. (1929:25pp.)

No. 27 : Zebu (Brahman) cross cattle and their possibilities in
Northern Australia. (1934 : 24 pp.)

No. 31 : Handschin, Prof. E. : A preliminary report of investigation
on the buffalo fly and its parasites in Java and Northern
Australia. (1932 : 24 pp.)

No. 43 : Krijgsman and Windred : Investigations on the buffalo fly. (1933)

Bureau of Agricultural Economics.

Kelly, J.H. : Report on the Beef Cattle Industry in Northern Australia.
(251 pp. and Appendices (Canberra, Nov. 1952).)

Commonwealth Railways.

Buchanan, Sir George : Report....on the ports of north and north-
western Australia, 30th April, 1926. (19 pp.)
(Melb. Govt. Printer, 1926: also included as Commonwealth
Parliamentary Paper No. 57 of 1926).

II. PRIVATE DOCUMENTS.

(a) Unpublished journals, diaries, and reminiscences.

Allen, Richard : Reminiscences. (Typescript, 80., 15 pp. : in possession
of writer : copy presented to Archives, Perth. Useful as
eye-witness account West Kimberley 1910-1920.)

Brockman, G.J. : Reminiscences of North West Australia, 1850-1910.
(Archives, 162.)

Buchanan, Gordon : Old Bluey. (Unpublished typescript MS : 80., 208 pp.
In possession Mrs. Ernestine Hill. Informative account
East Kimberley, 1885-1914.)

Crawford, Prof. R.M. (ed.) : Miscellaneous material on Camden Harbour
Settlement. (Archives, PR 640).

Durack, K.M. : Developing the North. (39 pp. : Archives, 490. : 1941)
(Preliminary analysis stating themes later developed
in writer's subsequent works.)

Durack papers :

A valuable and interesting collection, including :

Durack, J.W. : Diaries, 1892-1894, and 1923.

Durack, M.P. : Diaries, 1886-1950. (One for each year: 1900 missing).

Steinberg and Melville : Report on East Kimberley. (So., 21 pp.: 1939.)

Correspondence, account books, reports of meetings of directors, and other papers relating to the firm of Connor, Doherty & Durack, 1897-1950. (v)

Flinders, C.E. : 45 Years in the North-West of Australia.

(Typescript : 6 chs : 1933. In possession Mr. W. Flinders, Wyndham. Of more use as an eye-witness account of early Broome and Derby, but an interesting collection of Kimberley anecdotes.)

Flinders, C.E. : Bushmanship. (Typescript, 10 pp. in possession of Mr. W. Flinders, Wyndham.)

Fraser, C. : Diary written while floodbound on Upper Liveringa, Fitzroy River, January, 1914. (In possession Mr. K.C. Rose, Upper Liveringa. Typescript copy in Archives, Perth.)

Lamond, G.H. : Tales of the Overland from Queensland to Kimberley in 1885 : History of the first Goldfields of W.A. (Typescript, So. : Historical Society of W.A., MS 487). Describes life during the Hall's Creek goldrush.

Moore, W.D. : List of men employed on Ord River station, 1900-1914. (MS in Mr. Moore's possession; typescript copy in possession of writer.)

Rose, K.C. : Statistical Record of Progress of Upper Liveringa, West Kimberley, with brief history, 1912-1952. (In possession Mr. Rose, Upper Liveringa.)

Young, Charles : The Kimberleys. (MS for a newspaper article, untraced; in possession of writer.)

(b) Station journals and other records.

Argyle Downs : Horse Book and Rainfall Record Book. (on station; in possession Mr. Eric Durack.)

Flora Valley : Managers' Reports from 1937 on are preserved at the station. The records for Flora Valley, Gordon Downs, Nicholson, Margaret River, Ord River, Sturt Creek and Turner are in the keeping of the Australian Investment Agency, Sydney. Records prior to 1942 kept by Northern Agency, Darwin, were destroyed during the war. The Ord River records kept during Capley's time (1902-14) are believed to have been destroyed also at this time.

Fossil Downs : The Cattle Book, Horse Book, and Branding Book are preserved at the station, in the possession of Mr. W.N.M. Macdonald. Include Chas. Macdonald's branding tallies, 1887-1900, and subsequent data.

Letter, Alex. Forrest - D. Macdonald (May 15, 1882) preserved at station.

The "Fossil Downs papers", including letters relating to the conduct of the station, 1894-1927, telegrams, 1894-1912, accounts, receipts, and the Kimberley electoral roll, 1908, have been loaned to the Archives, Perth. (A : 524).

Lamboo : Journals, 1916-1938. (6 vols.) (A : 501).

(Upper) Liveringa : Journals, 1899-1953. (One for each year: some missing between 1914 and 1930. In possession of Mr. Kim Rose, manager of Liveringa.)

See also above, under Rose, K.C.

Margaret Downs (Gogo) : Cattle Book for Margaret Downs, Christmas Creek and Cherrabun ; including livestock statistics. (In possession Mr. A. Millard, manager of Liveringa. Permission for perusal should be obtained from Emanuel Brothers, Perth.)

Koola Bulla : Journals, 1940-1953. Correspondence files, 1949-1953. (In possession Mr. C.L. McBeath, Manager).

Mount Anderson : A number of private letters of Mr. G.C. Rose contain relevant information.

Quanbun : Journals, 1894-1953. (6 vols.) (In possession Mr. R.J. Rose, Quanbun.)

Rosewood : Rainfall Record Book, including annual summary of season and events. (2 vols : 1881-1940 and 1941-1951).

Miscellaneous account and storekeepers' books, 1912-1949.

Correspondence files, 1930-1949.

(In possession Mr. Hector Fuller, manager Rosewood.)

Noonkanbah : Livestock journal, 1914-1928.

Springvale : Horse Book, 1914-1953.

(N.B. In many cases, these station records were only made available for perusal by the kindness of the managers concerned, and they cannot be regarded as available for public examination. Current station records are not listed, except where incorporated in a journal or record book of some antiquity.)

III. PRINTED MATERIAL (Non-official).

(i) Newspapers.

The Western Mail, 1885-1953. (Perth.) (PL)

The Nor-West Times, 1891-1894. (Roebourne). (PL)

Northern Public Opinion, 1898-1902. (Roebourne). (PL)

Dampier Dispatch, 1904-1905. (Broome) (PL)

Broome Chronicle, 1908-1912. (Broome) (PL)

Nor-West Echo, 1912-1930. (Broome) (PL)

Northern Times, 1930-1953. (Carnarvon). (PL)

(Most of the North-West papers give disappointingly slight reference to major pastoral issues, the Broome papers being more concerned with the pearling industry and local town council politics.)

The West Australian, 1879-1953, has been consulted extensively but not exhaustively. (PL).

(ii) Other periodicals.

Dalgety's Review, 1925-1953. (Fat stock prices). (PL)

The Australian Shorthorn, 1952-53. (In writer's possession)

"The Northern Territory Times", the "Northern Standard" and the "North Queensland Register" all circulate in East Kimberley, and carry occasional references to this district, but their files are not available in Perth.

Walkabout, esp. 1945-1953. (UL)

(iii) Other publications.

Anonymous : Description of Camden Harbour, its climate and adjoining country. (Fergusson and Moore, 1864) (A)

Anonymous : Liveringa. (Published for Kimberley Pastoral Company, Perth, 1912 : copy in Company's offices.)

Anonymous : The North-West : a realistic summing up. (16 pp.:Perth, 1949.) (UL)

- Bates, Daisy : The Passing of the Aborigines (esp. chapters v-viii)
(O.U.P. Aust. ed. 1944). (UL)
- Battye, James Sykes, and Fox, Matthew J. : History of the north-west
of Australia, embracing Kimberley and Murchison dis-
tricts. (Perth, 1915.) The Kimberley material
is by no means Battye at his best. Fox's information
about contemporary worthies is of interest. (PL)
- Buchanan, Gordon : Packhorse and waterhole. (Sydney, 1933).
Biography of Nat. Buchanan, pioneer overlander. (PL)
- Burges, L.C. : Pioneers of nor'-west Australia. (Geraldton, 1913). (PL)
- Counsel, C.H. : Pioneering the Gold Trail in the Kimberley. (Journal
of the Historical Society of Western Australia,
vol I, part vii, p. 37 et seq.)
- Drake-Brockman, G.J. : Chairman's address to the Perth division of
the Institution of Engineering, Perth, April 5th, 1937.
(Journal of the Institute of Engineering, Australia,
vol. 9, 1937, pp. 446-452). First practical exposition
of the Ord River dam scheme.
- Drake-Brockman, Henrietta : The North-West Horizon (Paterson, Perth, 1946)
(Articles from "Walkabout") (96 pp.)
- Dumas, R.J. : Report of Committee appointed by the Government to
investigate measures necessary to promote the develop-
ment of the Nor'-West. (Perth, Govt. Printer, 1945:20pp.)
- Dumas, R.J. : Development of the north-west of Australia. (Journal of
the Institute of Engineering, Australia, vol. 16, 1944,
pp. 65-72). (Ord River irrigation scheme.)
- Durack, K.M. : A New Deal for Kimberley. (16 pp. : Service Printing
Co, Perth, 1946 : 16 pp. inc. maps.)
- Durack, Mary : An Outline of North Australian History. (Journal of
the Historical Society of Western Australia, vol II,
part xii, p. 1). Covers 1818-1887.
- Durack, Mary : Kimberley Epic. ("Walkabout", February, 1948). The
story of Fossil Downs station.
- Durack, Mary : Beef on the Wing. ("Walkabout", February, 1951).
- Durack, P.M. : Pioneering the East Kimberleys. (Journal of the Hist-
orical Society of Western Australia, vol II, No. xiv, p. 2)
Reminiscences of an overlander of 1883-5.
- Ewers, J.K. : With the Sun on My Back. (Angus and Robertson, 1953).
Good factual account based on "Walkabout" articles.

Flying Doctor Service of Australia - Victorian Section : Wings over the Kimberleys (Melbourne, 1947 : 19 pp. illust.) (Presbyterian Church Office, Perth.)

Forrest, John : Settlement of the Kimberley District, 1886. (Journal of the Royal Geographical Society of Australia, Victorian Division, vol. 4, 1886, pp. 137-149.)

Grey, George : Journals of two expeditions of discovery in the North-West and Western Australia, during the years 1837-8-9. (London, 2 vols., 1841).

Hunt, H.A. : Result of Rainfall Observations made in Western Australia. (Department of Home Affairs, Melbourne, 1929.) (PL)

Hill, Ernestine : The Great Australian Loneliness (Angus and Robertson, Sydney, 1940.) (UL)

Idriess, Ion : One Wet Season (Angus and Robertson, 1929, 272 pp.)
Over the Range (Angus and Robertson, 1938, 315 pp.) (UL)
Outlaw of the Leopolds. (Angus and Robertson, 1951.)

The above four works should be read chiefly for their undoubted entertainment value, rather than as works of reference.

Kelley, J.H. and White, L. : Beef Cattle Transport : methods and problems in North Australia. (Quarterly Review of Agricultural Economics, April 1950, pp. 76-9.) (UL)

Kirwan, Sir John : An Empty Land ; pioneers and pioneering in Australia. (Eyre and Spottiswoode, London, 1934 : xii, pp. 328.) (UL)

Macdonald, W.N.M. : Kimberley Poll Shorthorns. (Sands and McDougall, Perth, 1951: 16 pp.) (In possession of writer.)

Maze, Walter H. : Settlement in the eastern Kimberleys, Western Australia. (Australian Geographer, vol. 5, No. 1, Jan. 1945, pp. 1-19.)

Pastoralists' Association of W.A. : The Pastoral Industry in North-West Australia. (Perth, 1945: 96 pp.) (P.A. Office, Perth.) (

Richardson, A.R. : Early Days in the Great North-West. (E.S. Wigg, Perth, 1908)
Useful for early settlement of West Kimberley. (UL)

Robinson, W.S. : Farwell, G.F. : Grabowsky, I.H. et al. : The Story of the Air Beef Project in North West Australia. (Frank H. Johnston publications, Sydney, 1951 : 64 pp.) (UL)

Shackcloth, Irene : Call of the Kimberleys. (fictional account of the Murray Squatting Co. : Melbourne, 1950.) (UL)

Upton, Sydney : Australia's Empty Spaces. (Allen and Unwin, 1936): esp. "Rugged Inhospitable Kimberley", ch. x. A debunking book. (UL)

The writer wishes to express his sincere appreciation to the following persons, who have assisted in providing material for this thesis, or have extended the hospitality characteristic of the Kimberleys:

Mr. Richard Allen, of Cottesloe.
Mr. and Mrs. Ian Andrews, of Wyndham.

Mr. and Mrs. Duncan Beaton, of Noonkanbah, West Kimberley.
Mr. A.S. Bingle, of the Australian Investment Agency, Sydney.
Mr. L.G. Blythe, of Glenroy, Central Kimberley.
Mr. John Clark, Bureau of Agricultural Economics, Canberra.
Mrs. E. Clancy, of Nedlands.
The late Mr. A.A.M. Coverley, M.L.A. for Kimberley.

Mr. Henry Denham, of Broome.
Miss M. Doman, of Waroona.
Mr. K.M. Durack, of Northern Development Co., Derby.

Mr. D.T. Farrell, of Broome.
Mr. Kevin Fitzgerald, of Derby.
Mr. John Forrest, of Perth.
Mr. Hector Fuller, of Rosewood, via Wyndham.

Mr. and Mrs. W.W. Henwood, of Calwynyardah, West Kimberley.
Mrs. H. Guest, of Maylands.
Mr. and Mrs. J.M.C. Knox, of Thangoo, via Broome.

Mr. C.L. McBeath, of Moola Bulla, East Kimberley.
Mr. and Mrs. W.N.M. Macdonald, of Fossil Downs, via Fitzroy Crossing.
Mr. A.J. McGlew, of West Perth.
Mr. L.R. Marchant, of Canberra.
Mr. S.G. Middleton, Commissioner of Native Affairs, Perth.
Mr. and Mrs. A. Millard, of Margaret Downs, Fitzroy Crossing.
The late Mr. E.E. Millard, of Margaret Downs, Fitzroy Crossing.
Mrs. M. D. Miller, of Nedlands.
Mr. W. D. Moore, of West Perth, and Mount Anderson, via Derby.
Mr. Rupert Monger, of Perth.
Mr. George Mawley, of Perth.

Messrs. T. and R. Quilty, of Springvale, Bedford Downs and Lansdowne,
East Kimberley.

Mr. G.C. Rose, snr., of Claremont.
Mr. G.C. Rose, jnr., of Mount Anderson, West Kimberley.
Mr. and Mrs. K.C. Rose, of Upper Liveringa, West Kimberley.
Mr. and Mrs. R.J. Rose, of Quanbun, West Kimberley.

Mr. Les. Wylde, of Wyndham.
Mr. and Mrs. P. Brett Young, of the Kimberley Research Station, via Wyndham.

The writer also wishes to acknowledge the valuable assistance of Miss M. Lukis and staff, of the Archives, Perth Public Library; and of the Department of History, University of Western Australia.

ILLUSTRATIONS AND MAPS

The photographs shown in the following pages, depicting some few aspects of the Kimberley pastoral industry, are reproduced by the kind permission of the Archives of Western Australia, Mrs. Mary Dorack Miller, and West Australian Newspapers Ltd. The maps were compiled by the writer from the plans of the Lands and Surveys Department, Perth.

It would be difficult to include photographs of all the types of country and scenery included in the Kimberley District. Fairly typical of the Ord River cattle country is the scene shown below:-





Mustering begins in March, at the end of the wet season. Cattle for sale are walked to the entrepôt centers - Glenroy (where the above mob is depicted) or the ports of Wyndham, Derby, and Broome.

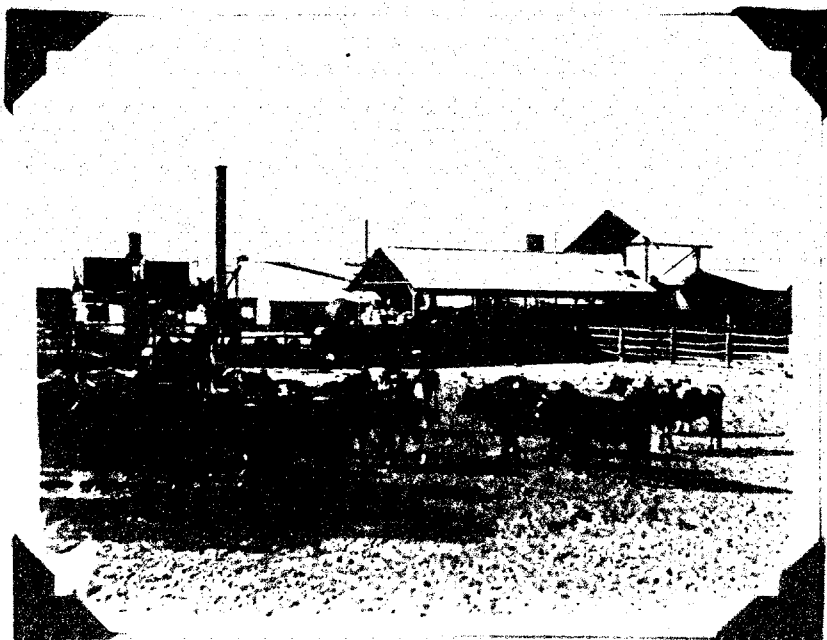
Formerly, the next step was shipment - either to Fremantle or to the Near North. Between 1910 and 1916, cattle were shipped to Manila, where they were swum ashore for treatment. (as below.) Similar methods were in use in Australia.





Today, most cattle are shipped to Robb's Jetty - under rather less primitive conditions (Above)

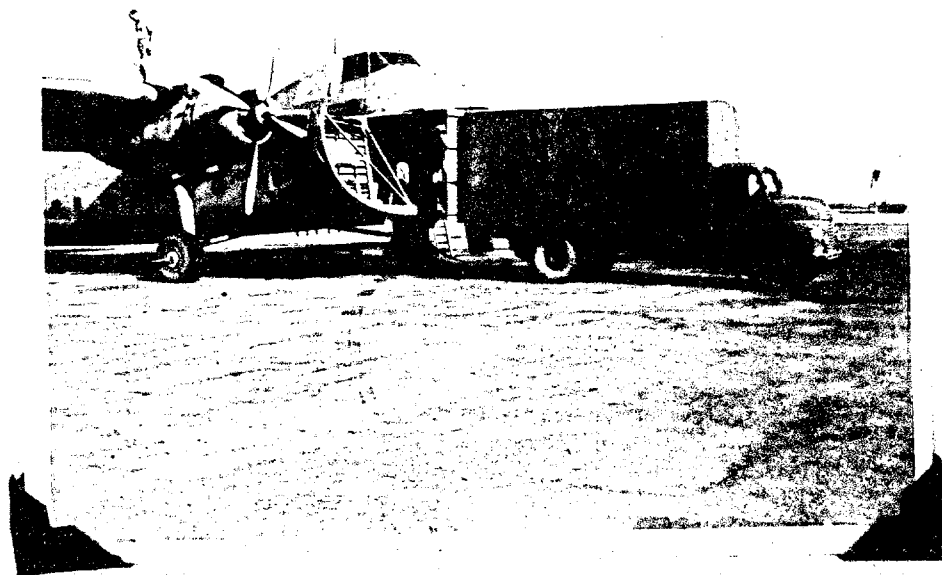
The provision of killing centres at Wyndham (1999), Broome (1940) and Glenroy (1999) substantially reduced the shipping trade, but gradually increased the district's annual turn-off. (Below) :- Broome Mustworks.





Transport methods have improved greatly. Bullock waggons were at first in general use, but after the spread of cattle tick, 1896-97, were replaced by mule & donkey teams (see above)

— In East Kimberley, camels were also in use.



Today, the Riv Reef freighter and the Wynaham Mastworks' motor transport exemplify the application of modern methods to the district's freighting problems.

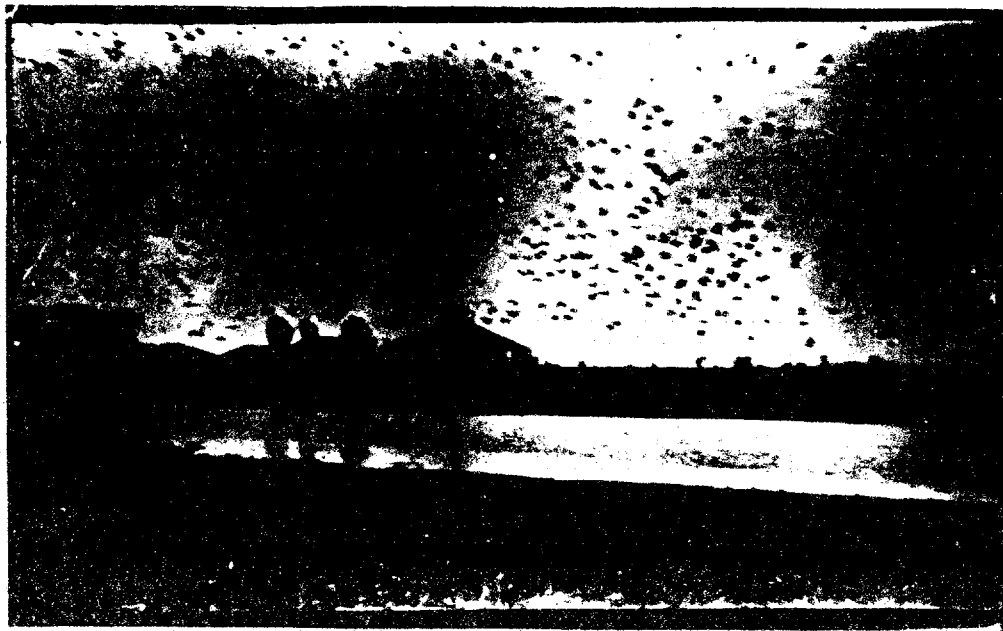


There was less change in the labour situation. Throughout the 20th Century, the readiest source of supply was the blacks' camp (as above).

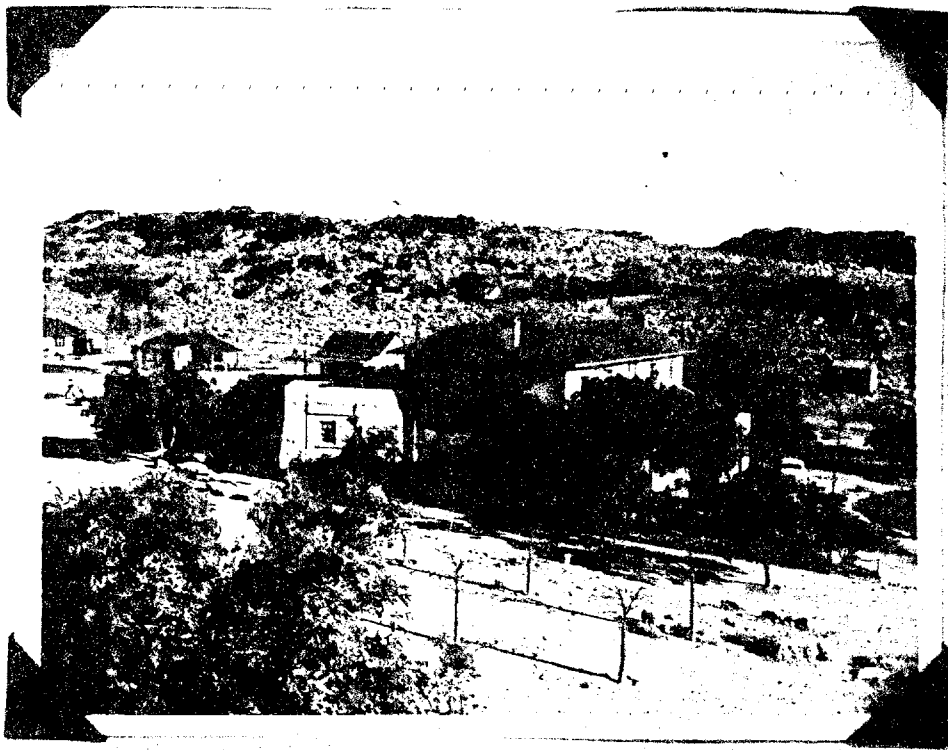


A pioneer squatter's homestead, Kimberley.

Farther to illustrate the district's progress, it is interesting to compare the pioneer's hut (Louisa Downs, 1900) —



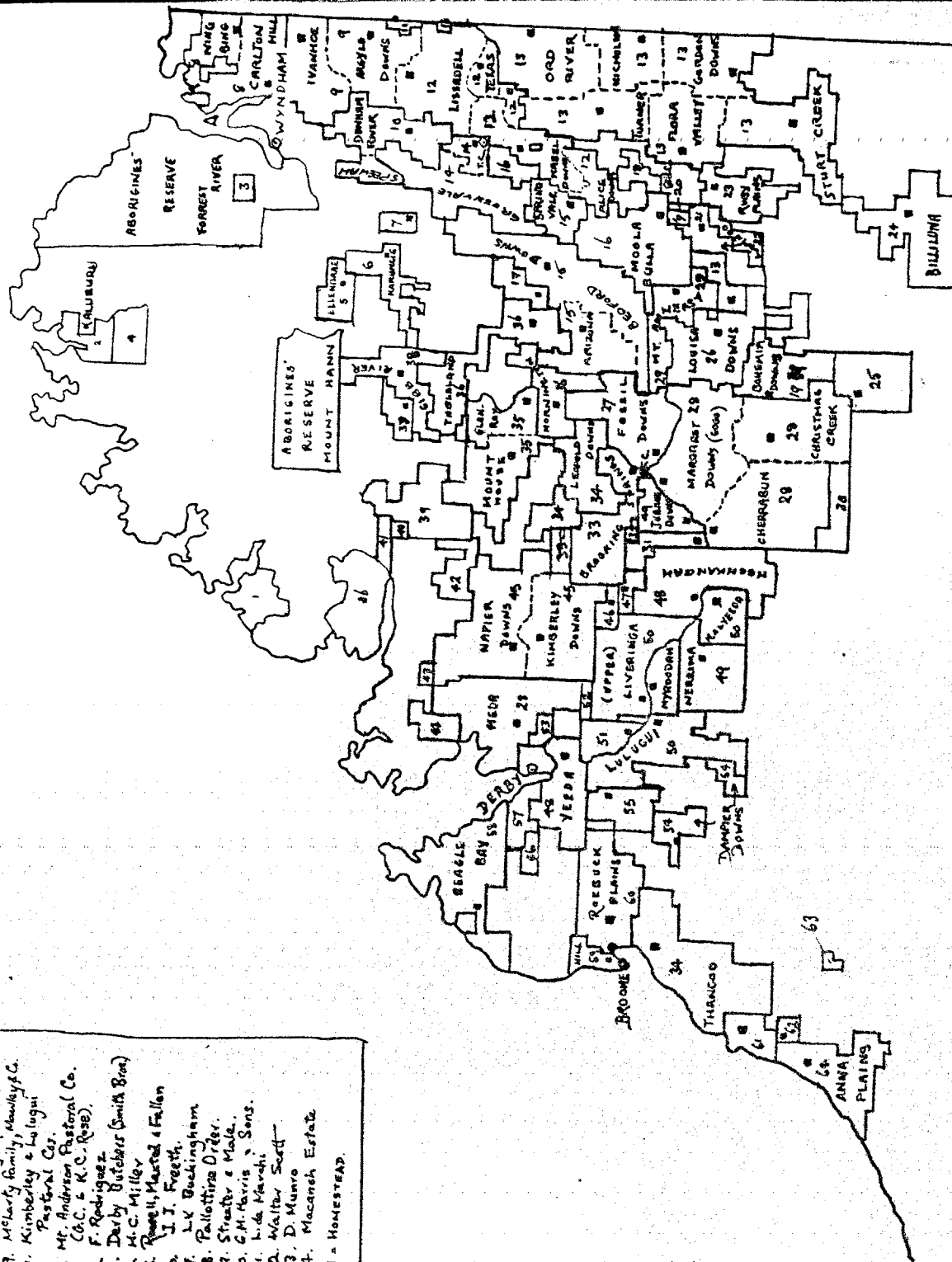
—or even the more comfortable type of old-style homestead (Ivanhoe, 1915) —



—with Fossil Doves homestead today. (above).

Such amenities as the wireless transceiver (shown below, in operation at Glenray) have played an important part in recent years in making the Kimberleys more attractive to potential residents.





CASEHOLDERS:-

1. Presbyterian Mission.
2. Benevolent Order.
3. Forest R. Mission (C. of E.)
4. J. C. Eagleson.
5. L. H. Hughes
6. D. W. Rust
7. P. J. S. Plant
8. Borvil Australian Estates
9. Paul River Estates
10. C. Conner, Deberry & Durack
11. Wm. Davidson
12. Wm. Buckland
13. M. Naughton (Estate)
14. Australian Investment Agency (Vedags)
15. S. Lilly
16. Tom Gilby & Partners.
17. Dpt. of Native Affairs.
18. A. O'Malley & J. Dickson
19. M. Green
20. E. K. Bridge
21. J. Green
22. B. Taylor.
23. E. Bolton
24. W. Darcy
25. S. Dorman (Estate)
26. R. Stafford
27. W. M. Macdonald
28. E. Emanuel
29. Black & Gliddan
30. J. S. Lloyd.
31. A. J. Rose (Estate)
32. M. Furlong
33. Springy Pastoral Co. (Coffey)
34. Farnell Bros.
35. Blythe Bros.
36. Powell, Marshall & Riddick
37. F. B. Lucy
38. F. A. Russ
39. W. Canwell
40. J. Riddick A. H. G. Armstrong
41. C. J. Kelly
42. F. Fraser
43. J. Riddick
44. E. Lloyd
45. M. C. Davis & Sons
46. R. E. Bell-Bay
47. W. W. Hornsby

