DIARY
of
WILLIAM COULTHARD
1903

An account of his journey from South Australia to the Winnecke's Depot goldfield, and his subsequent activities on a Central Australian station, between February and August 1903.

Transcribed and annotated by Kate Holmes  April/June 1988
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Introduction

The Coulthard diaries, written in 1903, provide a fascinating insight into the daily life of a young man in the Centre. While his main reason for coming to the Territory, and that of his two companions, was to share in the gold prospects at the newly discovered Winnecke's Depot goldfield, in reality he spent most of his time on the property of an uncle, mustering horses and cattle.

It has not been possible to carry out detailed research on the Coulthard family in South Australia, and I am grateful to Betty Coulthard for lending Elfrida Jensen's "Barossa Foundations". This has provided much of the background information, but being a wide ranging book, may contain some inaccuracies.

Most of the information on those people mentioned in the diaries who were associated with both the Winnecke's Depot, and the Arltunga goldfields has come from the contemporary records now held by the South Australian Public Record Office, GRG 1 Incoming Correspondence of the Minister for the Northern Territory. This information has been collected over several years as a result of my own studies at Arltunga.

Additional information has been provided by two local historians, Dick Kimber and Keith Mooney-Smith, for which I am most grateful. Both have provided the additional advantage of proof-reading the document, but I fear there may still be some typing errors. Dick has been particularly helpful in providing material concerning the natural environment and the Aborigines, and Keith's particular forte is his interest in people and maps.

Betty Coulthard has provided additional family information, and I am most grateful to the Coulthard family for allowing this transcription, with its wealth of detail, to be made.

THE BACKGROUND:

The Coulthard family

The first Coulthard, William, is one of South Australia's pioneers, coming to the colony on the Buffalo in 1836 as a 16 year old with farming experience. He is famous as the founder of Nuriootpa, also known as Angas Park, and as an explorer who suffered a painful death through lack of water. While his first years in the colony are not known, William was successful enough to take his opportunity with the opening up of what is now the Barossa Valley, with his wife Marion Baird by 1842. Over the next fifteen years the Coulthards produced eight children, held the licence for the Red Lion Inn (1849) and were granted the hundred of Nuriootpa in 1850, allowing William to lay the foundations for the present town. The first town plan was prepared in 1854, and officially lodged in 1856; William began building a two storeyed bluestone building in 1855, but it was not completed at the time of his death. Among his other activities, from about 1854 William became interested in exploring the more inhospitable parts of South Australia; in 1858 he went out with Scott & Brooks to explore the area around Lake
Torrens, became separated from the others, and eventually died of thirst, in March. His body was discovered in June, and buried; beside his body was a billycan or water canteen, recording his last message, scratched, increasingly faintly, on the surface. Having recorded his failure to find water, and attempts to survive by drinking blood from his horse, he ends: "My eye dasels my tong burns I can see no way. God help". The billy is now in the South Australian Museum.

William's eldest son John was only fifteen, but became heir to the property; his mother remarried soon afterwards, to a Mr. Paterson, moved to Hamley Bridge, some distance to the west of Nuriootpa, and produced three more children. Two of the other sons, William and Robert subsequently moved to the Northern Territory, William in the 1880s, and Robert in 1879. In the meantime, John back in Nuriootpa was married and had three children, the youngest of whom was William the third, who kept the following diaries during his seven months trip to the gold-fields of Central Australia, in 1903.

This third William never married, nor did his two older sisters Harriet and Adelaide; he was a delicate child, and appears to have been of slight build. Before going up to the Centre, he was probably working for his father, and despite his great enjoyment of his 1903 trip, his father's ill health and death in 1908 brought him back to Nuriootpa where he remained for the rest of his life. He was obviously a very important local figure, involved in all sorts of local committees and very generous in donating both land and money for local improvements and amenities; he was awarded the M.B.E., in 1944 and died in 1953 aged 80.

Arltunga and Winnecke's Depot

What had brought young William to Central Australia? It was the lure of gold, plus the additional support of having two uncles in the district. Gold had actually been discovered in the eastern MacDonnell Ranges in 1887, in the area around Paddy's Rockhole which became known as Arltunga, but the field had never attracted a great deal of attention. Improvements were effected over time - wells were sunk, stores opened, a mail service begun, a warden appointed and in 1898 the Government Battery & Cyanide Works was opened. The population reached between 60 and 90 at this stage, as the isolation of the field may have discouraged some prospectors, when the richer discoveries in Western Australia seemed a better bet; the railway line had only got as far as Oodnadatta, and the rest of the trip was done by waggon, buggy, horse, on foot or occasionally by bicycle up the Overland Telegraph Line. A few hardy souls came across from Queensland, but most came from South Australia.

Late in 1902 the relative peace of Arltunga was shattered by the discovery of gold at Winnecke's Depot some 35 miles north-west of Arltunga, and 55 miles north-east of Alice Springs. Reef gold was found in October, and then some rich alluvial gold in November or early December found by William Russell really set off the rush. By January 1903 there were 200 men at Winnecke, and some 400 by June; Arltunga also benefitted, in that between 50 and 100 people decided to explore the better known field. The
sudden influx caused considerable problems, particularly at Winnecke where the well sunk between March and June 1903 was soon polluted by the stock using it, which lead to a typhoid epidemic and several deaths. A Dr. Shanahan was sent by the Government to cope with the problem, and his reports of the situation both at Winnecke and in the small township of Stuart, near Alice Springs Telegraph Station, are graphic in the extreme. The water supply was cleaned up and fenced, but the rush was just about over; there was a rapid decline in the population, and although a handful of Winnecke mines were worked for several years, it was not profitable. Arltunga, although untouched by the epidemic, also declined, and the early mining period was over by the First World War. Some mining activity occurred during the 1920s and 1930s at both fields, with intermittent prospecting ever since.

While some information is available about the people at Arltunga and Winnecke, comparatively little personal material has been found, describing the different parts of the goldfields, and talking about the people, as William's diary does. There are very few references to women in the primary sources, but the diary mentions seven at Winnecke, and at least four are known to have been at Arltunga. The surviving rubbish dumps on the fields give some idea of the diet available to the miners - lots of broken bottles, and tin cans; William gives a picture of a very dreary diet based on meat and damper; as a good Methodist he does not seem to have approved of the amount of alcohol drunk, although not averse to an occasional drink himself. He also makes clear the importance of horses, and how time consuming it was to cope with them, and the great use made of Aboriginals - the men mostly with the stock, and the women employed as domestic servants both on the goldfields, and on the surrounding pastoral leases. It is not certain if the population estimates for the goldfields include Aboriginals or not, but there were about 100 living in the White Range area by 1904, of whom only twenty or so were employed.

The diaries

There are five small notebooks in all, the last one being only about a quarter used; William does complain about the available notebooks in Alice Springs and Arltunga, and in the smaller ones his writing is equally small and occasionally rather cramped. His spelling is often phonetic, while other variations may be the result of tiredness or poor light, as he will spell a word correctly in most places. Generally, pretty is always preety, coming always is coming, whilst is usually whilest, etc. Every attempt has been made to follow the original spelling, although it is not always easy to be sure, particularly in letters such as e and i which can be confused. The punctuation has also caused some problems, as it seems reasonably clear that in the smaller diaries he uses the ends of the lines as punctuation marks. The more indiscriminate use of capital letters for ordinary words in those days makes it difficult to be sure of his intentions, as does the use of commas for full stops. In most cases, where a comma is followed by a word with a capital letter, and it seems that a new sentence was meant, I have used a full stop. Where I have not been so sure, the comma remains - even though this has
meant some very long sentences. However, as William says in the diaries, and some of his letters home, the conditions for writing were not ideal, and any attempt to tidy up would affect the whole feel of the diaries. Only where a letter has been left off, or added on to a work obviously known to William have I interfered to make the meaning quite plain; in a couple of places I have added words within square brackets [ ] where it appears something was left out. William does tend to repeat himself, but I have done no editing.

Some of his letters to his family were also kept, and apart from one written in February en route to Oodnadatta, these have been added at the end of the diaries, though referred to at the relevant point in the main transcript. Again, these tend to repeat information in the diaries, but in many cases give additional details.

The first diary, from Oodnadatta to Alice Springs, covers most of February. It is a small notebook, with a dark emerald green silky cover, 132 x 66mm and approximately 4mm thick. The second diary is small but much thicker, with a black cover including a pencil holder, 122 x 75 mm, and approx. 21mm thick. Inside it has a label naming it as "The Commercial Notebook - The paper for these books is specially made with a good hard writing surface and is equally suitable for writing upon either with pencil or Ink. No 4 J Charterhouse series." This diary covers the end of February to early April, and some of the pages were cut out to allow William to write to his sister in March. The third diary is very small, with a tan leather cover, 105 x 59mm and some 6mm thick and records the remainder of April and early May. It has With Curtis's & Harvey's Compliments on the cover, and is packed with information on the endpapers. The fourth diary is a larger notebook, with black cover, 104 x 161mm, although not very thick and includes the rest of May, June and July, including some of August 1st; at first the writing is crammed in, but soon William fills just the ruled lines and his writing is much clearer. The last diary has a red cover, 139 x 88mm and 15mm thick, only partly used, for August.

For this transcription, the diaries have been divided into months, with each having a short introduction giving some indication of the major events recorded, and followed by notes on the people and places mentioned.
FEBRUARY

Introduction

To explain some of the background, this chapter begins with a newspaper clipping, describing the send off given to the small prospecting party from Nuriootpa in South Australia. It is followed by the first of the letters sent from William to his sister Harriet, as this explains something of the journey to Oodnadatta; from that point onwards the diaries start.

The diary gives a very detailed description of the journey from the railhead to Stuart, with some extra information in Will's second letter, written from the Charlotte Waters Telegraph Station (see Appendix) about the difficulties due to the extreme heat in the first few days. The trip took from February 6th to 19th, and was reasonably quick, and the diary refers to their daily problems as well as giving some idea of the country, the wells and waterholes, plus people met en route. He refers to the town as Alice Springs although its official name was Stuart, but most contemporary records do use Alice Springs because of its importance as a telegraph station, in preference to Stuart. As the diary is being kept for his family's benefit, William has noted down details of prices, and mentions the availability of fresh fruit and vegetables, plus the dependence on goats for meat.

The threesome left town in the afternoon of February 20th, travelling to Winnecke's Depot via Bond Springs, and reached the goldfield early on 22nd. The Uncle referred to is also a William, or Bill, who had been in the Centre for many years, and at this time held Love's Creek station with Albert Wallis (which Will the diarist usually mispells as Wallace). The initial impression of Winnecke is not favourable, and on Feb 23rd Will travels with "old" Wallis, Albert's father, to find his uncle William and get some fresh meat. T.A. Wallis came from Oodnadatta to establish stores in Stuart, at Claraville on the north side of Arltunga, and briefly at Winnecke. These businesses seem to have been run in partnership with his son, Frank B., and both are well-represented in the Arltunga records for their commercial and mining interests; this diary reveals another son Albert, in partnership with William Coulthard, who held several pastoral leases in the Arltunga area.

The trip from Winnecke to Loves Creek took two days, February 24th and 25th. As there is no mention of Arltunga, Will and T.A. Wallis must have cut through the ranges which gave them a fairly rough trip. Will gives a desolate description of the homestead, which had been burnt out some 18 months beforehand, eventually meets up with his uncle, though only briefly, and ends the month camping at the Claraville store on his way back to Winnecke.

One interesting aspect of the diary, even at this early point, is the smallness of the community in South Australia and the Territory - almost everyone William meets knows other members of the Coulthard family, or has some connection with his home town of Nuriootpa. Another more personal feature is Will's quiet sense of humour, and his matter-of-fact description of mishaps and difficulties.
OFF TO THE GOLDFIELDS.

NURIOOTPA, January 31.

A smoke social was tendered to Mr. W. Coulthard at the Nuriootpa Hotel last night, prior to his departure to the Arltunga goldfields. Mr. H. Juncken presided, and in proposing the health of the guest spoke of his many good qualities and untiring energy in all matters for the welfare of the township, and the open-hearted manner always displayed by him. Several other townsfolk also spoke and wished the guest good luck. The Chairman presented Mr. Coulthard with a gold sovereign case, with the inscription: "Presented to Mr. W. Coulthard by the Nuriootpa Band and friends, as a token of esteem, January 30/03." Mr. Coulthard responded, and mentioned that anything he had done he looked upon as a pleasure and a duty to his fellow men. Several other toasts were honoured, and a jovial evening was spent. Songs were given by Messrs. J. Hatch, G. Lanye, H. Juncken, W. Penn, P. Trimmer, and others.

February 1. The prospecting party, Messrs. J. Hatch, W. Coulthard, and A. Parish, of Greenock, made a move this morning to Hamley Bridge, en route for the Arltunga goldfields. Quite a crowd of wellwishers lined the streets this morning to bid goodbye to our two townsmen as they moved off with two pack and five other horses. A number of residents escorted the party to Greenock, where Mr. Parish was waiting. The horses are to be trucked to Hamley, and train taken to the head of the line, and then they will strike across country to reach the fields, which it is expected will be reached in about twelve days. Mr. Hatch, who has had considerable experience about that part of the north, undertakes the leadership.
Dear Harriet,

We have arrived at Oodnadatta\textsuperscript{*} safely. We got to Hamley about 5 oclock fed the Horses and had Tea at the Pub, then I went up to Pattersons\textsuperscript{®} & stopped until 10 oclock & went back to Hamley & went to bed, but we did not sleep a wink, I never felt such a hot night in my life the sweat was just pouring off us, we got up at 1 oclock & went outside spread our campsheet out & layed down on it, at 4 oclock Wirths Circus came in on a Special train going to Moonta\textsuperscript{®} so we went & had a look at it they had to tranship into the narrow gauge it took them until just about 8 oclock & we could not get in with the horses until they were gone & then there are no trucking yards there we had to load them off the platform, but they went in splendid we got a start at about 9 oclock got to Balaclava\textsuperscript{7} & had to wait an hour we seen Shepherd there he is as fat as a pig. When we got to Brinkworth we got out to have a cup of Tea & who do you think I saw on the platform, Uncle Tom\textsuperscript{®} I stopped & looked at him for a bit before I knew him he did not know me until I spoke, he had been at Jims getting a load of cockey chaff & cut straw he had it on the Train Siley was going to meet him at Laura, he very near went mad when I told him where I was going (to Arltunga) wanted to come with, he said Jim would have about 1250 bags of wheat. They gave us a doose of a lot of trouble with the horses when we got to Blythe they told us we were on the wrong track & would not get any further than Petersburgh\textsuperscript*, I told them we would make them sit up if they left us there, but when we got to Jamestown there was a special going up with 75 Bulls for Angas to Undoolah\textsuperscript{10} & they hooked us on to that we got to Quorn about 1 oclock Tuesday morning, I can tell you we had a treat had to untruck them & knock the publican out to get chaff it was 2 oclock when we got to bed & we had to get up at 5.30 to put them in the truck again so that was 3 1/2 hours sleep in two days. Quorn is a very pretty place not so big as Gawler or Kapunda but such lovely houses 4 Hotels in the front street facing the Railway station & all Two story, it must be a lovely place in a good season, but now from Petersburgh up to the Coward Springs there is not a blade of grass such a fearful sight you never see nobody could believe it unless they saw it all the Agriculture ground is like a fallow Paddock you will see a nice house in the middle of a paddock, with a few gums around it and not the sign of life not a beast or anything else even the old Red gums in the Creeks have been dead but since the rains they have shot out green but that is the only sign of green you will see such a howling wilderness you could not imagine\textsuperscript{11}. Well we started from Quorn at 8 oclock Tuesday morning & got to Hergott\textsuperscript{12} at nine at night, & by the time we got the horses feed and Watered & to bed it was 12 we had to get out by 4 to get them trucked by 5 as the train started by 6. There was a terrible crush on the train all the way up when we got to Parachallana\textsuperscript{13} yesterday we could not get into dinner such a crush so we went to the store & got some bush biscuits, & made a dinner of them, & today there was no eating House on the road so we had biscuits again, you ought to see the Townships Blinman, Hawker, Beltana and all the rest, they are in sand up to your knees you see the sand half way up to the roof blown up, you would wonder what on earth they do or how they live, but they seem quite happy. We see the first Camel Team in a Waggon at
Lyndhurst siding with Wool from Beltana it is a comical sight. But on all the stations up we did not see a hoof any amount of dead ones alongside of the Railway line, we see a Team of 28 Donkeys at Leigs Creek brought in a boiler weighing 9 1/2 Tons it was going to Tarcoola, we got here at 6.30 tonight, got the Horses out of the trucks & took them to a bore hole 1/2 mile out but they would not drink, we have got them in the pub yards, they dont look too bad, there are about 40 going up mostly all Sindicatoes only a few on their own. They have all come up with the intention of going by the mail, but he cant take a 1/8 of them so there will be a mess tomorrow, old Nesbits brother & a young Catchlove are going up in a Buckbord they were going to start with 2 horses but they have been advised to take 4 so they are going to buy two more tomorrow. There are a lot in here that know Josh, they all say there is splendid feed all the way up, & the Camels are taking up rations by the ton so they say there will be plenty up there. All the Camels at the Hergott are coming up here to carry rations to the fields. They had a good rain here Monday it is nice & green so we will put the Hobbels on ours in the morning & let them out for a bit to get used to them, they are making hay of it here all Mitchell grass so I dont think we will get a start tomorrow. Josh knows the Storekeeper here he told us if we run short on the field just send him a Telegram & he will send us what we want without the money we will shoe all the horses tomorrow before we start as it is very stoney & they are preety tender from standing in the trucks, we would not of needed to bring anything with us they have got everything you could possibly want in the store far better than in the Park. I think we had the first goat for tea tonight they called it mutton but Josh said it was Goat & I think it was too it was very good, goats is about all you see up here. Well I think this is all I have to tell you I feel splendid & fit for the trip, if we never get the sign of gold it will be worth the trip just to see the country. I have not got time to write to Sleader or Enn as it is half past ten & I have to see to the horses again, but you could give this to him & let him show it to them all I will write to him from the fields you have to address yours to Arltunga you may not get another from me for 6 weeks as we dont know how long it will take up to get there. So with love to all & kind rememberances to all my friends

your affection.
Brother
Will

The diaries take up from this point.

Feb 4th

Got to Oodnadatta 6.30 untrucked horses took them 1/2 mile to bore hole to water put them in pub yards. Trucking yards full Angases Bulls & horses got 2 bags of chaff for them 60 lb bags the only 2 the publican had left he asked me if we would sooner have grain hay he has got the niggers out every day cutting grass & carrying it in bags the grass up here has got no roots as soon as the horses bite it it comes off at the top of the ground. Could not get beds so slept in the yard with the horses
next (Feb 5th) morning up at daylight took the horses 2 miles to rainwater. Got a bale of long hay from Frith & shod most of them during day. Angas Bulls went out of trucking yards during day, so we took the horses up there they are better yards. There was great fun during day people buying horses & trying them Nesbit & Catchlove got 2 from Dick Allen at Warrena they came up in the train with us & when they put them in they kicked & would not pull the empty trap so they had to buy more from Williams the trooper he done well selling horses got a lot of old crocks up from Adelaide we saw them at Hamley in the trucks the morning we left they only got here the day before us & he was selling them at from 10.0.0 to 17.0.0. We went to Mrs. Kunot at night the blind girl was up from Adelaide she is a very clever girl sings & plays splendid had some watermelon out of a chinaman's garden 4 miles from Oodnadatta. Camped with horses.

Feb 6 Up at daylight, took horses to water got our provisions got another packsaddle from Frith packed up & started just at 12 oclock with the sun very near roasting us went 23 miles to Storm Creek, first time horses had hobbles on took it very well did not hobble the fillies there was splendid feed & rain water but still the brutes went about 3 miles.

Feb 7 up at daylight I wont put this anymore as we were up every morning at daylight. Me & Josh went for horses while Alf packed up got a start at 8 oclock passed Wire creek bore & went on to Macumba 17 mile by dinner splendid waterhole in the Creek had dinner & washed my shirt put one of the others on but could not stand it to hot so put the one I washed on as soon as it was dry which did not take long for if you picked up at stone it burnt your hand. I reckon Macumba is the best little station on the track it is more sandy and splendid feed Josh went up to the station to try & get some meat but could not as the cove that is there has only just come there, Pat Dobly ? & his wife Cave & Co has taken it up, that is why he is buying up the cattle down there to bring up here started at 2 oclock for Willow Well 12 miles, all the troughs were rusted through and the water not good so Josh looked round and found some clay pans with water in good enough for the horses but jolly thick for us.

Feb 8 There was no feed for the horse much we thought they would be a long way in the morning but they were close handy so we got a good start & got to the Wirraburra waterhole by dinner rain water & good feed spelled half a day it being Sunday Josh baked some Buggers on the Coals our bread being all gone Mrs. Kunot gave us 4 loaves to start with. Marked & shod the two fillies had some fun with them but it was sand up to their knees so they could not do much tried the rifle shot a parrot & a crow no sign of anything else to shoot thought it was going to rain it was fearful close & thundery but it did not we had as swim in the evening & turned in.

Feb 9 Started for the Hamilton bore 12 miles passed the first mob of Camels got there about 9 got some meat went on 3 miles had dinner cooked some steak on the coals it was as good as any grilled steak another mob of Camels passed while we were having dinner had a lot of young ones with them started at 2.30 went 15 mile camped at a waterhole in the Stevenson good feed in the Creek the Mosquitoes were Terrible bad Josh had to make a cow-dung fire to smoke them away in the middle of the night it came
on to rain we got up & rigged our fly & then it stopped it only wanted to frighten us.

Feb 10 When we went to pack up we found that all our meat had gone bad it was not salted long enough it was just as well for it was more than half sand started for Bloods Creek passed a big mob of cattle Joe Bradens from Henbury to Todmore to fatten up they were in very good condition about 1000. Stokes in charge also passed another mob of Camels got to Bloods Creek about 12 good feed & water first place we see any cattle on the run, had dinner, then me & Josh went up to the store got some more meat 3 lbs of (crossed out) & 2 tins of salmon & a bottle of Whisky they are splendid stores all made of old boxes & bits of old tin in the middle of a plain and not a tree near a fearful hole on a hot day started after dinner went 12 miles to the Adminga waterhole passed a dead Camel, very rough ground camped, rigged fly, started to rain, put two front shoes on Slipknot, he hit me on the eye with his head gave me a black eye, not much feed for horses wind blew very strong in the fly but not much rain

Feb 11 I went for horses while Josh baked a damper had breakfast, put Slipknots hind shoes on then started for Charlotte Waters passed two Mobs of Camels one loaded with Wool going down & the other going up with rations Camped for dinner, saw a flock of ducks but a hawke hunted them before I could get a shot, we all had a swim splendid waterhole over a mile long also a Borehole with a 12 foot Windmill on it Wrote letters gave them to one of the operators, who came down to our camp sent a nigger for the horses but he was so long coming we went ourselves, met him coming with them they had gone about 2 miles up the creek the flies would not let them feed they keep getting behind one another they get the flies brushed out of their eyes with the others tail. Saw some blacks in mourning they have a band of white pipeclay or Gypsum around their forehead started at 5 for 9 mile it is a claypan we took our canteens full of water had enough of claypan water got in just about dark camped had tea & as I was walking about 10 yards from the camp I felt something hit my leg & when I looked down I see a great big snake & called to Josh to bring a stick while I kept my eyes on him he got a stick & killed it, he was about as thick as my wrist & almost 7 foot long, very good feed for the horses.

Feb 12 Josh bad with dysentry I & Alf started for the horses thought they would be close handy but the brutes left the good feed & took to the sand hills we got them about 3 miles making back for the Charlotte about 9 when we got a start traveled over very rough country, see the Mailman camped for dinner I rode over to him & asked him how far it was to water he told me had a great bit of luck going up when he got to within 100 yards of Horseshoe Bend his axel broke, he also told me of the treat he had with a woman that went up on the mail we saw her at Oodnadatta crying because she could not get a seat on the Mail all seats had been engaged weeks before but a man called Ted Warren gave up his seat to let her go she was going up to her husband on the field, she had the dysentry all the way up. We got to the Well about 1 they had a little bucket hold about a gallon in it and that was all holes it took us a long time to water 7 thirsty horses, no feed they just stood in the creek under a big gum tree we had dinner & stopped till 4 it being very hot, started for the Greenwater holes in the Fink river got
there pretty late water pretty thick but we brought some with us from the well, there being no feed about the water we went back on to the sandhills about a mile very good feed but dry, there were a lot of niggers camped there.

Feb 13 horses close to camp we got an early start took them back to water & then started up the Fink we had a 36 miles trip to do without water to the Horseshoe bend we passed another big Mob of Camels coming down, camped for dinner in a dry creek with a little bit of good feed I had dinner then took hobbels off horses and shepherded them but the brutes would not feed much too many flies, got to Horseshoe bend about 5 good job it was not to hot watered the horses at a soackage, filled our canteens, went up to the store bought 14 lbs meat very good & 3 1/2 per lb 3 lb of sugar 6d per lb & 2 lb of biscuits at 1/- per lb. Heard here that Uncle Bob had gone down he followed the Fink round to Paddys Hill if we would of known that he was there, we would of gone up as it was only 1 1/2 miles off our track. They told us that he had 56 of the nicest horse they had ever set eyes on there was no feed there as they have got 100 of Goats and Donkeys about there so we went on about 5 miles into the Sandhills & got very fair feed did over 40 miles.

Feb 14 Horses close got a good early start very big sandhills some almost straight up the mail must have a terrible time through them, the Camels cant get straight over them they have to go round them got to Depot Well about 10 and camped for dinner. There we saw a dray some horses & a tent When we were watering the horse there were four men came up to us traveling with packhorses & the other 2 with the dray one of them with the dray turned out to be Dick Brennan he used to be butcher at Booleroo dad knows him well, he was in a bit of a mess he only had 3 horses in the dray and one of them died the best one he had, poisened with poisened weed, he had been there 2 days he was going to bury his things & leave the dray & pack his horses up to the Alice get another one from Joe Harding & come back for it But Josh told him that after he got to the Francis Well the road would be good & he would be able to get on with 2 so he lent him Major to pull him through to the Francis Well, put his pack on the dray. We all started from Depot Well about 5 went 5 mile & camped on the Hugh river but it is dry.

Feb 15 Sunday Got up & heard the horses making back for Depo Well they were at the camp at 4 o'clock but one of Brennans missed its mate & made back, I started after them but could not catch them until they had gone 3 miles I caught up to them at about a mile from camp but as soon as they saw me coming they made off they went like smoke in the hobbles, I was very near giving them best once or twice but pulled my coat off & had another go at them they had to go around a bend & I cut across & got in front of them then they got passed me Pep's old mare she is a real old dog but I managed to catch Paddy & then I stopped them Paddy had broke his hobbles & Pep's old mare cut her legs a good deal, I took all the hobbles off them & drove them back to camp then started for the Alice Well we got there about 9 it was only 6 or 7 miles & splendid water the horses had a good drink. As soon as we got up to the Well there was a nigger came up he knew Josh at once, he went up with Uncle Bill & him to Frew river, Josh asked him where there was feed so he & Josh took them up the Creek to splendid feed, he is here looking after the mail horses,
they change here. We camped in the bed of the Hugh there is splendid timber in it just like the gums in our creek straighter but not as big. There is an old store here but it is deserted, the water in the Well is as good as rain water, there is a snake in it the niggers are awful frightened of it. Brennan got here with the dray at 11 just 2 hours after us it is very heavy pulling. As soon as we got here I started writing this up from Feb 11, had dinner and finished this Alf had a shave he boiled some beef & left it in the bucket on the ground to cool & Brennans dog got at it & eat it all so we had to have tinned meat for tea Josh went to the niggers camp & got some Yelka for us to eat it is bulbs about the size of a small marble they get them out of the ground & roast them they are very good. We made another start from Alice Well about 5 met another mob of Camels went about 6 miles to a waterhole in the Hugh and camped splendid feed Brennan got in about an hour after us with the dray he still had Major.

Feb 16 Horses strayed about 1 1/2 miles from camp Josh & I went for them had breakfast boiled beef & damper I am afraid our meat won't last us until we get to the Alice so we will have to eat damper & jam you ought to see us having our meals squatted on the ground bran bag for Tablecloth a lump of beef in one hand & damper in the other we dont use our dishes much only when we have tinned meat we got to Francis Well at 11 oclock 14 miles we started at 7 good water & fine feed in the creek the country up here is looking very well good dry feed on the plains & green in the watercourses it is Mt Burrell Uncle Bob had it once. When we got here we found Trott Kuenot camped here with the Government team they are going all along the line repairing the Telegraph & cleaning out the wells while we were here he started up the line he had 10 horses on the waggon & then got stuck I dont think he had 3 tons on Brennan came up at 2 he stopped on the road for an hour. We gave Major a drink & 2 hours feed and then took him from Brennan as they said he could get on with two horses from there. Alf had to ride the old mare again as Slipknot hurt the spine of his back rolling, we started for a big dam 15 miles another mob of Camels came up just as we were starting we got to the dam after dark, we met an old Lubra on horseback just at dark she showed us the dam, she had brought a mob of cattle from Mt. Burrell to the Waterhole about 18 miles all by herself & was going back in the dark we asked her if she had any tucker she said she had breakfast Alf thought that terrible sending here all that way without anything to eat Josh gave her a piece of tobacco we passed young Kuenot & the Telegraph men about 8 miles out they just finished tea they were washing up, we had our tea & then had to bake a damper it was after 10 when we turned in

Feb 17 Very cold last night I had to get up & light a fire at my feet. They got so cold I was up at 5 lighted the fire & boiled the Quapots had breakfast, horses close handy, there are a lot of cattle & horses on Mt. Burrell they come into water at sunrise & then go back 10 or 12 miles to feed there is fine feed round the dam, our horses done well Mt. Burrell is a very big run it took us two & a half days to get through it, & as soon as you get through it the bad country started as porcupine & Desert oak. We have a big stage today 40 miles to Oorominna rockhole, we started at 7 got to Deep Well at a quarter to 10 (10 miles). Watered the horses, there are a terrible lot of Goats at this
well & a couple of niggers to draw water for them, but I don't think they get much as the Well is over 200 feet deep & the niggers are too lazy to draw it they were into the Troughs like mad when we drew the water. Started on again met another young Kuenot with a packhorse he was going to Mt. Burrell for meat he had about 40 miles to come for the Beef he is on the track with a Wellsinking party they are putting one down 17 mile from Deep Well passed a dead Camel on the track, had to go on until one o'clock before we came to any feed very poor country, just found a nice bit in a watercourse, eat the last of our meat for dinner & have only one tin of Bully left so we will have to do on damper & jam until we get to the field as they say there is none at the Alice the only place within a 100 miles you can get it is Mt. Burrell, started at 3 oclock passed one of the Wells they are sinking they are down 80 feet and in solid rock their contract is to go too 200 feet, passed another dead Camel they must fall down dead going along as they are right on the track you have to go about 100 yards round for the smell Josh missed the track to the Rockhole they have shifted the Telegraph Line & we went to far it took us about 3 miles out of our way it was 8.30 when we got to the Rockhole & it took us until 9.30 to water the horses we had to take them down by twos it is down about 40 feet to the water almost straight down Slineys creek at the waterfall is a fool4 to it only for them being so thirsty they would never of gone down we came back about a quarter of a mile & camped on a flat with fair feed, we had to Bake some Johnny cakes before we could have tea they were splendid if we only had a bit of butter it was 11 before we turned in Josh had to go and get some grass to put under him as the ground was so hard, but the harder the ground the better I can sleep.

Feb 18 Got up at 5.30 horses close handy, about 50 horses passed us going to water. There were four different lots camped here a big Wagon & dray with about 35 horses, a buggy with 10 or 12 others, they have been a long time on the road Bogged & could not cross the Fink after the rain for the Quicksand & then the terrible sand they put 16 horses on the Wagon & have only 3 ton on they have got a Stamper for the Goldfields. They have pulled out about 6 mile & then will bring there horses back here to water, then start out in the morning pull the Wagon as far as they can then drive the horses to the Alice for water & then come back for the Wagon the next day, that makes 3 days to go 24 miles, as that is the distance from here, Brennan will never get through with 2. We had to make a damper before we could have breakfast, damper & jam again, after breakfast we got the horses took them down for a drink, washed all their backs, the Brown filly & Slipknot are pretty bad, the filly has got a very fine skin & she has got all galled & then we put Condys fluid on them got some from Brennan, greased all their fetlocks they are a bit sore from the hobbles, all but Paddy & the old horse from Sleader he is the best one among them goes splendid, Peps old mare I would like to shoot, she is a real old dog, runs away & wont let you catch her, after we fixed them all up me & Alf took them to some good feed about a mile up, while Josh made another damper for dinner. Came back took our bucket & went down to the hole & had a washing day I washed all I had on, Flannel Shirt Trousis Socks & Handkerchief, the cotton shirt has gone from white to cream, I tried boiling them this morning but I think it dyed them instead of cleaned them, I think I will have to engage someone to wash when we get up, even if it is an old black gin,
as I don't think I could earn my living by washing it took me about 2 hours to wash them. When I got back to camp Josh had the Quartpot on & the damper baked we had our last tin of Beef for dinner & I think we eat more flies than beef it is impossible to believe unless you would see you can't open your mouth but their are in & your Ears they make you real deaf, we swear more in one day here at them than you would in Twelve months down there, I don't think you will be able to read some of this writing but it is impossible to write with them I have to write with my eyes shut Alf says the only way you can get away from them is lay on your stomach & bury your head in your arms. Well I have go & gather in my washing as we want to start at four & hope to reach Alice tomorrow about dinner time Josh just thought that it was Angaston Show day. Alf said he wished he was there he would have a better time there than here with the flies, Josh said we would have to put on another cook if we keep eating so much Josh & Alf went for horses while I packed up, watered them there are thousands of Wax Bills & little doves like we had Cockertos parrots & Shellparrots at this waterhole the only place that we see any quantity we went out about 7 miles passed the big Team about 6 miles out, they had taken the horses back to the water we camped on a splendid flat of green feed all out in seed a small creek had emptied out on it damper & jam for tea turned in early.

Feb 19 Very cold last night had to get up at 4 & light a fire I started for the horses before daylight brought them to camp boiled the Quapots & roused Josh & Alf out had some more damper & Jam, I am beginning to feel pretty hollow on it started at 6.30 for Alice 20 miles saw the first Kangaroo this morning going across the plain like mad could not get a shot at him, passed another party of Wellsinkers 12 miles from the Alice. When we got near to the Alice we passed a Gin carrying a Watermelon on her head she had got from the Chinamans Garden at the Alice, I must see if I can get one before we leave, I can see the Garden Maize in it about 8 or 9 foot high. Alice Springs is a funny town first you come to the Police Station in a narrow Gorge then you go 3 miles & come to the pub & stores then go on a mile & a half to the Telegraph Station. We got here about 11.30 went to Charley Souths store watered the horses & took the packs off them took them down the creek not much feed but shade. Then we went up to the pub & had a drink Walkerville Ale 2/6 a bottle, there we met a lot of fellows just come in from the fields they give a splendid account of it, some of them have splendid samples of stone Dr Tuens just came in as we did, he had come to meet a nephew of his he is about a day behind us, I think they will get in tomorrow. We had dinner at the pub splendid dinner, Soup Goat I think Marrow & potatoes, & Apple pie have not paid for it yet so don't know how much it will be. There is an old fellow here by the name of Ted Vaughn, he said Huts Peperall told him to take the old mare & fillies on from here, but when I told him that I would have to get another to get out to the fields with he would not hear of it, he said take them on & leave them at Uncle Bills as Pep has 3 or 4 more horses there he was going to get them to but Uncle told him it would take 3 or 4 days to muster them so he had no time to wait, & beside Huts will be down himself in a month, wrote this since dinner, we are going up to the Telegraph station now to wire to Huts. Everybody says our horses look splendid after their trip. Went over to the Chinamans garden I never see such a splendid garden Tomatoes,
Melons, Marrows 2 feet high I got one for 1/6. Went & got our stores 6 tins of Bully 1/6 2 tins Jam, 1 lb of Sugar, 1 Tin of Baking powder, 6lbs Sugar 6d per lb, I got a pair of Dungaree Trousis 6/9. They cant get no beef here none of the stations will sell it only Undooilla & that at 35/ per 100 lb, & they say there is none on the field, Art Roberts is going to start Butchering they say. Got a horse from South & went up to the Telegraph station a good 1 1/2 miles up the Creek, heard the piano going so I suppose there is a woman about unless it was an old Gin, there are whips of them about here. There is a fellow in the Office now by the name of Thring he is sending down some splendid specimens he was only out 2 days he is for a Syndicate from Guorn. Could not hear from Huts as the wire to the Tenant was shut off, but the Operator said he would have a talk with Huts tonight & come down and let me know what he says. When I got back from the Office Fitz the manager from Undoola drove up 4 in hand Wallace introduced him to me, he said Huts wired him to get the fillies & take them out to Undoola, they all seem to want them so I will see first what Huts says he told Wallace to pay me for bringing them up so I think he must be alright, we would be glad to get rid of them as we can get the loan of plenty of horses to get out to the fields with. Wallace is going out tomorrow himself so says if we like to go out with him he will show us the way to Uncle Bills & will lend us 3 or 4 horses if we want them so I think we will go with him, he is killing Goats tonight he is letting us have half of one tomorrow morning before we start, so that is very good of him as the others cant get any at any price, we wanted to get out tonight as there is no feed about so we think but the others think it is very good the horses & cattle about here are mud fat. We took the horses out a bit to as good as we could get & then came back & had tea ourselves, Curry Corned beef, Tomatoes, cake, jam, but no butter out of the butter country. I forgot to tell you that the melon I got was splendid I see Brooks the Trooper, Josh knows the cook here at the pub an black Gin she used to be on the Mission Station, as soon as she knew him she asked where Allen was that is Joshes boy she used to look after him up there. Well I will have to close as I want to send this down by tomorrows mail, it starts down tomorrow you can copy this out in Ink if you have time & give it to the boys to read as I suppose it will interest them a bit also give it to Mrs Josh Hatch, you will have a job to read some of it but you can put it in ship shape order save this little book as it belongs to my pocketbook I bought another one here but dont know if I will keep it going as it is a lot of trouble especially when the flies are bad and you have to write on your knees I am sending you a couple accounts of goods we got so you can see the prices.

Feb 20 Up at daybreak the first up in Alice Springs. After a while Josh & Alf got up, then we went over to the Chinamans garden, he has also got a mob of Goats, we saw two Gins milking them one held them while the other milked, they had two gallon Billycans full the Chinaman was cutting up a goat you could see goats hanging on gallows all round the Town that is all the meat they get we got half of one from Wallace, before we came away. Alf is cooking half of it in the bucket while I am writing this in the firelight, Josh said it must of been an old stag it smells like stinking feet while it is boiling we had some chops for breakfast this morning it was pretty tough, after breakfast I got a horse from Wallace & went & got ours, watered them & put them
in the yard. Handed 4 horses over to Warn as his Telegram stated, he was going to start for Tenants Creek on Sunday with them. We met a fellow by the name of Jack Ryan he knew Josh on the Mission they got talking about horses Josh said he had two or 3 on Elleries Creek yet branded 4 I 2 well said Ryan I see a colt the other day with that brand on & wondered who he belonged to he said he was a nice colt worth £15.0.0 so he agreed to swap Josh give him the pick of his he had 10 with him he said he would be up at our yards by 9 oclock this morning with them & Josh was going to get one & then we would start by 10, but we waited until 10 & he did not turn up so I told Josh he had better go down & see him he was camped down at the police station with Brooks & French the Brooks from Tuero & French is some relation of Jim Fords, but he is up at the Barrow now, so when Josh got down he found both Ryan & Brooks down on the floor both drunk & the whisky bottle between them & all the horses gone, so it was 12 when Josh got back so we went & had some dinner just as we went to dinner Fitz came up to me & said he had just got a wire from Pep telling him to take the horses out to Undoolia, I told him I had no more to do with them as I had handed them over to Warn as Peps Telegram told me to so he went to Warn but Warn told him he would have to hear from Pep before he would hand them over to him, I dont know how they got on as we got two horses from Wallace & started out. We went to Bond Springs 12 miles watered & went on 5 miles to splendid feed & camped.

Feb 21 Up by daylight as we did not know how Wallaces horses would stop. Our four were only a couple of hundred yards away from camp I put the bridle on Paddy & went after Wallaces I got one 1/2 mile away but the other was making back we had the bell on him so I could hear him going a long way away so I set sail after him & soon caught him, had breakfast some of the goat it is very good started for a waterhole 10 miles away saw a Kangeroo got to the water at 10 shot a couple of young ducks they are a bit small but Alf cleaned them & cooked them. I forgot to say that there was a wild dog at our camp last night, I heard him sneaking about & when I looked up he was only a couple of yards away from me I had the rifle beside me but before I could reach it he was gone in the dark. Alf forgot to put salt in the duck but he said they were the best feed he had since he left home. There are a lot of cattle on this station Bond Springs we see mobs every 1 or 2 miles they are mustering a mob for Town we started after dinner for Sliding Rock 14 miles it is a great sloping rock with a waterhole at the bottom I see the best feed in this creak since I came up it is about 4 feet high, it must be some thing like the feed Dad talks about we got there about 6.30 camped met 5 [or 3] men here with 6 Camels they belong to Morriuses Exploring party they came from Western Australia 1300 miles, he is going to spell them a bit here then start for Fowlers Bay we put the horses up a Gorge splendid feed we camped in the mouth of the gorge so they could not get out.

Feb 22 Got up about 5.30 the horses were making off past us in the night, but I was too many for them & brought them back, it was 8.30 when we started we only had 12 miles to go to Winnekees Depot, but the road was something terrible you follow a bit of a creek down just wide enough for a buggy in between to big ranges rocks & trees in the track it is only a new track it is a wonder the traps stand it they drop over some of these rocks 2 feet pull Mulga down go down sidings it would make anybodys heart jump into
there mouth Miss Bessie Trewin*1 ought to be here it would soon take all the nervousness out of her. We got to a waterhole with a lot camped at it by 2 o'clock we were pretty hungry & had a good feed. We met one of the young Thrings here he has got a claim about 2 miles away. Just see a mob of Frank Wallaces Camels going back to the Alice they brought rations out he is going to open a store here, he is coming out himself in a day or so & then going out to Uncle Bills, so I will go out with him, he says that he has been keeping Uncle and Albert Wallace going but he says they have about a 1000 horses & 600 head of cattle between the three of them now they are thinking of taking another mob down in June or July, they had to shift all their cattle back from the goldfields as they were afraid the diggers would be killing them, as they cant get meat here for love or money if we stop here I will have to go out to Uncles for meat it is 35 miles from here. There are a terrible lot of horses on the place & the water*® will only last a day or so longer then they will have to shift up the creek 3 or 4 miles & that will make them about 6 or 7 miles away from work. We had a walk round made friends with a few had tea turned the horses up the creek & turned in.

Feb 23 Got up at 5.30, had breakfast I & Alf went for the horses while Josh baked a damper then we saddled up Paddy & Wallaces two & rode round the mines they are scattered over a distance of about 10 square miles we went to all the ones we heard so much about, Collins*3, Paddys Goose** & others but there is nothing to see they are not working them they have got two months time to start them in & then I dont think half of them will be started, as it will cost too much to work them, we went up to young Thrings a son of Thring that used to be at Angas him & 3 more fellows are in a gully digging for alluvial gold they are doing well, but only them & an old fellow by the name of Scotty Russell** are getting gold it is just the one patch & very small at that. No I dont think much of the goldfields yet there is gold here alright but it will take a fortune to get it, as there is no water about a fortnight will see it all done, & then there is no feed & you cant possible do without horses as there is such a scope of country to prospect. I reckon that a man to come here 12 months time will be alright for work that is if they go ahead. The country is so fearful rough most of the places where they are getting the alluvial gold are that rough that you cant get up with a horse it is wonderful how they get in at all with drays. They cart water to the foot of the ranges & then carry dirt down on their backs to wash it, there are a few places where they get water since the rain in rock holes right on top of the ranges almost straight up, when we were going back to camp we met Wallace he was just coming out to have a look round, he told me he was going to camp at the creek where we were that night & then go on to Uncles tomorrow, so I told him I would go with him & get rid of Slipknot, as if any thing went wrong with him Uncle might not like it. We got back to camp had dinner then I went to see to the horses while Josh & Alf went out prospecting. I put my horses with Wallaces & he sent his black boy a good way up the creek where there was good feed. I went back to camp about sundown Josh & Alf were back they had been a long way up the ranges but wherever they went there had been someone here before them, some of these old hands have been in here for the last 10 or 12 years prospecting off & on after a good rain they would come out then they could get about for a month or so. We arranged that I am to go out to Uncles with Wallace, I will take
Feb 24 Up early, had breakfast went up to Wallaces camp to get horses, he said we would start by eight o'clock I put our horses with his so that his nigger could get the lot in the morning, but they all split up & it was 10 before we got them all you cant see a 100 yards in the the ranges, before I started I gave a Gin 6d to wash a shirt, handkerchief, socks & Towel the old cove that came here with the Camels has got her & her husband with him & he told me if I had anything to wash I was to bring it down & she could wash them as she had nothing to do, & she was better doing something. We started & called in at a lot of the mines going along used to leave the packhorses with a nigger & Gin Wallace has got with him the gin is dressed up as a boy & looks fine sits a horse splendid we got about 6 miles by 12 to old Scotty Russell camp he asked us in to dinner, as soon as Wallace introduced me to him, he said he knew Dad & Bill & Bob, we had a very good dinner Mutton Bread jam Honey & doeboys they were very good he lives like a fighting cock, he is the old fellow that is getting all the gold. There was another fellow went as far as this with us Bill Lang I dont know if Dad knows him he knows Bill & Bob he came from Crown Point. We went on from here & the country we passed through was something terrible, we did not pass over one bit of smooth road we saw three Wallabys & Euroes went travelled until six o'clock & camped near a Waterhole in creek. Oh about a mile from camp, Slipknot had a doose of a fall, he put his foot in between two rocks a crack just big enough for his foot to go between & went clean over with his head under him when we got up to him we thought he was dead he did not move, but it is a wonder he did. not break his leg as we had to get the Bridle rains round it & pull like mad to get it out, then he could not get up as his shoulders were in a hole so we had to take the pack off him & drag him out of the hole before we could get him up, it did not hurt him much took a few bits of skin off. I wrote a good bit of this after we camped until it got dark then we had a bit of a yarn & turned in at 8.30 different hours to when I am home.

Feb 25 Nigger started for horses we had breakfast, then proped a fence up in the creek to get through it is on Undoolia station it is 6 miles long in between two hills it makes two paddock then waited for the nigger with the horses, 8 o'clock there were 5 of them come in to water, but we waited & waited for the others but they did not come so we got on top of a high hill & could see 4 of the others only a Mule & a pony missing so we got the others got them through under the fence & started left the niggers tucker and tea under some bushes we travelled over some more horrible rough country we went through Sophena Gap just a river course through a big range it is just as though it had been cut through the sides must be 3 or 400 feet high it is about a 1/4 mile through, they have got a cattle yard made of it just two fences across one at each end it is a wonderful sight to see Wallace tells me there is another further south but that is 8 miles through it is called Rubys Gap. After we got through this we went over a mile out of our way Wallace was trying a shorter
track but could not get through so had to come back we stopped for dinner at 12 just as we camped the nigger came up the Mule had broken her hobbles & gone back 6 miles he had tracked them back we did not have much water for dinner, as one of the horses kicked the waterbag & knocked the cork out & spilled it all we travelled 10 miles this morning but if we could of gone straight it would of only been 6 we started about 2 o'clock traveled right up the bed of a creek all sand for 3 miles then crossed the track that comes from Alice to Arltunga. Uncles letterbox is on the track just here it is 4 miles to his place from here he has got a fence across here from one range to another about a mile long fork posts rail on top & 2 wires underneath there is a lovely flat runs right up to his camp it is from 1/4 mile to a mile wide, two great ranges each side nothing can get up them it is the best bit of ground I have seen since I left home black sandy soil something like ours at home & the creek at the bottom of it all guns in it, it is very bare now all round the camp for Uncle burnt himself clean out the Christmas before last he was training his horses for the Alice races & had them out on the flat lit a fire in some high grass and it got away & burnt stockyards sheds saddles & everything very near burnt the horses, he had to patch up a bit of a bridle & ride into the Alice bare backed to get some more things & as they have had no rain since then it is very bare, it is a very pretty place now where they are going to build the hut on the bank of the creek with a big hill at the back a good 100 feet high, all they have now is two tents one for Bill & one for Wallace & they have an old man here he sleep in the buggy under a shed, they have another shed they put up for a Meathouse but use it for a kitchen it is very tidy & clean & just along side they have got a place about 10 feet square built up with stone 4 foot high they use to cook in. When we got here all we see were niggers at the well it is a fine well only about 20 feet deep & very good water. We watered the horses took the packs off under the shed & sent the nigger down the creek with them to some feed, Wallace asked one of the blacks where Uncle was, & he said he was out mustering, we waited about for a bit when the old bloke came home he is cutting timber to build fresh stock yards, he told us Uncle was away out East mustering & did not know when he would be in, he went up & made the tea it was very good only they cant keep the meat this year it goes bad somehow, but it dont seem to make much difference to the old bloke he cant smell it & eats it, it is as dry as a bone, we had some cream & Jam I had such a feed I had to undo my belt although the cream is as thin as paper they have got 8 or 9 cows on the place the gin just brought them in shuts the calves up at night milks them in the morning & lets the calves go with them. I am sitting on top of the kitchen watching the old fellow cook the meat smells pretty high Wallace mixed up a good batch of bread & put it in the campovan to bake I wanted to take some meat back with me, but it is no good taking this stuff, besides it is all gone, unless we can drop on Uncle he is out with Braden & Harding, Braden has bought Harding out & they are mustering the run joins Uncle so there will be a lot of his amongst them, he sent here last Friday for salt they were going to kill a beast out there so I am going out with Wallace tomorrow his place joins them on the North so if they are at the same place we will see them Albert Wallace Uncles mate is up at the Barrow, Uncle went up the other day & bought Bennet the trooper out, he has been shifted to Adelaide, so they bought his goats & horses & a couple of buggies of some sort you see some comical turn outs up
here, so Albert has gone up to get them

Feb 26 Slept in Uncles tent last night but it was to close after being used to sleep outside got up & went down to the cowyard to see the old gin milk the cows she is very clean she takes water down to rinse out the buckets. They are fine cows in good condition & the calves are mud fat they are as big as ours at two years old. Had breakfast & then started out to where uncle was mustering 26 miles out East his country is very bare they have got all their horses & cattle out about 50 or 60 miles on some rainwater it rained all round their place but none fell on their run, the rainwaters are drying up fast so if it dont rain soon they will be in another fix, we camped about 17 out for dinner started again & when we got on the road 4 or 5 miles saw a blackfellow coming driving 4 steers it was Uncles bringing some in to kill, we asked him where uncle was he said coming behind with the packhorses we went on a bit & see him coming behind 7 or 8 horses, Wallace said Gooday he said gooday to me & then went on talking to Wallace after a while Wallace asked him if he did not know me he said I have seen his face before but did not know where to put me. Then I said why Uncle dont you know me, he said Halls what the Devil are you doing here, Miller did not write to him, so then Wallace asked him to come back & help him to muster his horses, he asked if they had plenty tucker at the camp Wallace said yes, a lot he cared if the old fellow had or not as long as he got Uncle with him so Uncle let the steers go turned round & came back with us we went on 5 or 6 miles & then camped on a waterhole in Wallaces Camel paddock it is a piece of country in between to big ranges 9 miles long & 3 or 4 wide just a few hundred yards of fence at each end Uncle put some of his horses in that always get away Wallace has got 38 young camels in it, I am talking about Frank Wallace not Albert Uncles partner he has gone to Barrow Creek to get some goats & horses Uncle went up & bought off Abbott Uncle bought 360 off Bennett the trooper when he left the Barrow & sold them to the Government at the Cyanide works done well out of them & he could sell all these that he just bought of Abbott, but he is going to keep 100. My word Uncle looked all torn to pieces all his shirt sleeves in ribbons his trousis torn in places from galloping in the scrub & the scar on his face is not healed up yet it is like Callised pieces of Mulga keeps still working out me & Uncle stopped up until 10 oclock talking & then turned in.

Feb 27 Had breakfast, some good meat Uncle had some left they shot a Bunyip while they were mustering with Braden & he had some left, he was telling us that he had one of the other fellows revolver & he fired at a heifer & hit the Bunyip he was only about 6 months old very good meat, we started then to muster the paddock we went up to the top end 9 miles & then spread out coming back we got about 30 horses & seen 25 Camels you cant drive the Camels on horseback they wont move, we yarded the horses & went & had some dinner we were pretty hungry it was about 3 oclock. Then we went & branded 5 foals they dont throw them like we do, just pull them up to a post & put ropes on their front & hind leg & pull them down like we do the calves just pop the brand on them & whip a piece of their tail off & sear it with the brand it is far better than resin, they dont bleed at all, then they put the blackboy on a mare that had not been ridden for a long time but she did not buck, let most of them out of the yard only kept what they wanted to take with them
21

& then went & had tea, boiled meat & cooked a damper. Wallace
turned in me & Uncle stopped talking for a long time then turned
in.

Feb 28  Got up & had breakfast Uncle & Wallace are going on 26
miles to where Franks other horses are but as they wont be back
for a week I will have to leave them as I told Josh & Alf I would
wait for the mail at Arltunga on Monday & get back to them by
Tuesday night. So Uncle & Wallace gave me instructions, which
way to go I started for Claraville where old Wallace has got a
store they said there was pretty good feed & water there for the
horses, so I had better camp there until Monday it is 12 miles
from where we were & all hills & only a horse pad to follow they
told me to keep the one straight north but that was a job as it
turns in and out amongst the hills, & there are horse pads going
in all directions I started & got to the White range about 8
miles I went a mile to far west but it did not make much
difference as I had to see the storekeeper there about the things
that are coming up from Oodnadatta, he said they would be up
about the 16 of March, then I went on to Claraville, it was a bit
of a job to strike the right track as there are buggy tracks in
all directions, the mines are pretty thick about here. I got out
here about 11 it is 6 miles from the White range North & the
Governemt Cynide works & Paddys hole are about 8 miles. Old
Wallace is not at home he is at the Cynide works, there is a
chap here bad he was staying at Uncle Bills for 3 weeks before he
came here living on milk, his name is Wilson, he made some tea
& we had Bully & a tin of pineapple for dinner, wrote letters
all the afternoon, went & had a look at the horses, had tea just
as we finished Wallace came home, he knew me at once but he had
heard that I was up here, sat up till 9 then turned in, I camped
outside.

1. Although Josh Hatch was one of the gold-seeking party, this
may have been a member of another family in Nuriootpa, which
included a John, James and Joseph.

2. Greenock is a small town close to Nuriootpa, but little is
known of Alf Parrish. Joshua Hatch lead the party because he had
spent some time in the Centre, going to the Frew River area with
uncle William Coulthard in 1887-8, and Hatch's Creek was named
for him.

3. The party could have travelled by train to Gawler and then be
on the line for Oodnadatta, but the cross country trip was shorter
and Will had family at Hamley Bridge.

4. The town, in the far north of South Australia, had become an
important centre as the railhead from 1891, providing goods and
services not only to the north of South Australia, but also to
the Territory.

5. Will's grandmother had married Philip Paterson after her first
husband's death in 1858, and although she had died in 1900, there
would have been half-uncles and cousins to see.
6. Moonta is on the Yoke Peninsular, near Wallaroo.

7. Correct spelling in Balaklava, and the point at which the train line branched, one going west to Moonta, and the other going north.

8. Thomas Baird Coulthard, 1853-1940, who was largely raised in Hamley Bridge with his younger siblings and half-siblings. He took up land near Booleroo Centre, a little north of Brinkworth.

9. Now Peterborough, the name change occurring during World War I. Blyth is spelled without the final e added by Will.

10. Undoolya station is one of the first three taken up in the Alice Springs district, and at this time owned by the Willowie Land & Pastoral Association. The chairman of this Association was John Angas, who also had considerable interests in the Barossa Valley.

11. Such desolation was the result of the major drought felt across much of Australia in the first years of the century.

12. The Herrgott Springs were discovered and named during explorations led by J.M. Stuart in 1859; the spelling soon became Hergott. The town of Marree was gazetted in 1883, when the railway line arrived, but as with Stuart and Alice Springs, both names were used. It is only after the First World War that Marree became the commonly used name.

13. Correct spelling is Parachilna.

14. All would be going up to the goldfields. The apparent richness of the discoveries at Winnecke had resulted in considerable speculative interest, but few of the syndicates were successful.

15. E.E. Nesbitt was from Angaston, and Catchlove was the third son of Mounted Constable E.N.B. Catchlove. The two were recorded on the goldfield only during 1903, but constable Catchlove was stationed at Winnecke from 1903 until 1906.

16. Sleader is often referred to in the diaries, and must have been a close friend and may be A.W. Sleader, butcher in Angaston, or one of his family. Ern has not yet been identified.

17. This could refer to John Angas, with his interests in Central Australia and the Barossa, or possibly to the breed of cattle.

18. The term was almost universal at this time, along with gin or occasionally lubra for Aboriginal women.


20. Warrina is south of Oodnadatta.

21. Will occasionally leaves the pound sign off, as here.

22. The Kunoth surname is often mispelled by Will. Mrs. Kunoth and one of her daughters ran a boarding house in Oodnadatta, and the blind girl was another daughter. One of the sons, Henry or
Trot, is mentioned on the way to Alice Springs.

23. This was an Adelaide general shipping company; W.R. Cave had had station experience in the north of South Australia, and kept up his interest.

24. The correct spelling for this may be Wirraburrina.

25. This may have been an expression used by the Kunoth family for something similar to Johnny cakes, or small dampsers; the name possibly arose from needing some damper in a hurry - "oh, put the buggers on the fire and be quick" or whatever. The word "beggers" has been seen in a similar context.

26. Most references to the native wildlife relate to their use as additional food.

27. Joe Breaden was one of three brothers with interests in the Far North of South Australia, and the Centre. Joe was mostly associated with Henbury & Todmorden, and had previously managed Macumba for Stokes and Grant.

28. F.W. Stokes, with A.T. Grant, were pioneers of the Far North, and the Finke River area in the Territory.

29. The first repeater station on the Overland Telegraph Line in the Northern Territory.

30. T. Williams was the mailman at this point; mails ran between Oodnadatta and Alice Springs every four weeks.

31. It is unfortunate that this woman is not named, as very few of the women on the goldfields are recorded; later William mentions seven women at Winnecke (only two were known of before) and there were others at Arltunga - e.g. Mrs. O'Neil, Mrs. Tabe, Mrs. Nicker, Mrs. Barr.

32. This may have been Alfred Warren, cook at the Govt. Battery & Cyanide Works from 1901, but who may well have gone to Adelaide in late 1902 and returned in early 1903. There was also a Warren family with land near Oodnadatta.

33. Will rarely spells the name, Finke, correctly; in this case he wrote a lower-case f, but as every other reference includes the upper case F, it has been corrected to that extent here.

34. Robert Coulthard was the seventh son of the first William Coulthard, born in 1855, who came to the Centre by about 1875 and is mostly associated with Tempe Downs. During most of the period covered by the diary, he is in South Australia.

35. Harding was another old timer and had begun as a teamster then an interest in Crown Point Station in the 1880s before moving to the Centre. He had a store at Arltunga from at least 1890, and pastoral interests; he moved to Oodnadatta in 1904. As a storekeeper he had teams moving between Oodnadatta and Arltunga, and would have had spare horses.
36. Will has earlier used the correct spelling for Depot Well, but in most cases leaves of the t in Depot. The Depot sandhills referred to earlier were feared by every traveller to the Territory from the time the Overland Telegraph Line was being constructed. The name came from the building of a depot here, as it took so long for the construction teams to get through the sandhills.

37. H.H. Pepperell, usually referred to as Huts or Pep, managed Undoolya Station between 1898 and 1902 and possibly longer.

38. Uncle William, and Josh, had taken up the Frew River lease in 1887-8, for the Willowie Land & Pastoral Association.

39. This is a mythological snake.

40. Yelka is the Arrente name for the bush onion, Cyperus bulbosus, about the size of a shallot, which can be eaten raw or cooked, once the hard casing is removed.

41. Mt. Burrell, now Maryvale, was taken up in 1875, and while Thomas Elder owned it (1885-93) he began breeding horses there. It was now owned by William Hayes.

42. Obviously he means quartpots, but only once does he spell the word correctly; later he simply refers to boiling "the pots".

43. Ooraminha is the correct spelling, and the rockhole was a well known stage on the road to Alice Springs.

44. This description is not very clear, although it seems to be what William wrote ..

45. These were smaller and could be sweeter than damper, with the addition of sugar and raisins.

46. This may have been a small private stamper, although none appears in the Arltunga records at this time; the Winnecke battery was not decided upon until late in 1904.

47. Another name for Zebra Finches.

48. Ah Hong was briefly on the goldfield in 1899 and 1900, but soon moved to Stuart and began his market garden.

49. Charles Rutherford South held a storekeepers licence in Stuart from 1894 and possibly earlier; he was the licensee of the Stuart Arms Hotel from at least 1903 until 1908.

50. This may be Will's spelling of Chewings; Dr. Chewings was interested in the Winnecke's Depot goldfield, and may have had a speculative interest - as the diary indicates later.

51. This may be E.A. Roberts who appears in the goldfield records between 1901 and 1903.

52. James E. Thring was involved in the Black Eagle mine at Winnecke, during 1903 and 1904.

53. H.B. Fitz.
54. The Wallis family, T.A. and sons T.A. (Albert) and Frank B. had pastoral and commercial interests in the Arltunga area; this may be Frank.

55. Uncle Bill Coulthard at this time owned Loves Creek station with Albert Wallis.

56. There are several references to the Mission Station - this may refer to Hermannsburg; Josh keeps on meeting people he knew there.

57. Probably R.E. Warne who was around in 1903.

58. Mounted Constable I.T. French was stationed at Alice Springs between 1901 and 1905, while C.E. Brookes was there from 1898 before being transferred to Illamurta Springs in 1905.

59. This was the northern route, the quickest way from Alice Springs to Winnecke; Bond Springs was one of the first pastoral leases taken up in the district.

60. R.T. Maurice.

61. Probably one of the daughters of the Rev. Trewin back in Nuriootpa.

62. The well had not yet been sunk at Winnecke, so everyone depended on natural sources.

63. Angas E. Collins and H.J. Page had the Melba claim but appear to have sold out later in 1903.

64. Paddy's Goose appears to have been the first claim taken up at Winnecke, in October 1902 by John McNeil and Ronald Ferguson; by mid 1903 the name had been changed to Winnecke's Depot Reward.

65. It was William Russell who discovered the small patch of rich alluvial at Winnecke late in 1903; he was a long time resident, mentioned in the Arltunga records between 1892 and 1908.

66. Not yet indentified, but two places it would be possible to get through the ranges would be at Georgina Gap or Jennings Gorge.

67. Mounted Constable W. Bennett was stationed at Barrow Creek from 1888 to 1902 - according to the official police records he moved to Port Augusta in July 1902, but the diary infers that he may have stayed on longer.

68. Halls may be a polite way of saying Hell.

69. The Camel paddock features prominently in Will's diary, and may be in the vicinity of the modern Tommy's Gap Dam, or slightly north, or further east around the Giles Waterhole.

70. While the men working at the Govt. Battery & Cyanide Works had their own store, with goods sent up from Adelaide every six months, they depended on local stores for fresh meat, and extras; both the Paddy's Rockhole store (owned by Harding) and the Claraville store were patronised by the Works men. Large goatherds
were common, and a major source of meat.

71. One explanation is that a bunyip was a cleanskin, too young to have been mustered and branded; possibly someone else's property.

72. Claraville was probably named for an Aboriginal woman, Clara, and the site was used from the very early days of mining at Arltunga, with the first well being dug in the Hale River in 1888. The store was opened in 1895.

73. The White Range is in the eastern part of the Arltunga goldfield, it was opened up in 1898 and rapidly became the most important mining area of the whole field.

74. There were several Wilsons in the Arltunga records, this may have been John Wilson who died in 1904; another John Wilson had the White Range store.
MARCH

Introduction:

William is camped at the Claraville store at the beginning of the month, and is offered a job there which he refuses; he goes to the post office at the Battery & Cyanide Works, meeting more people with some connections to his home area. He returns to Winnecke on March 3rd, and spends some days there, describing how the daily duties are shared between the three men, and the fact that it is necessary for one to remain in camp each day - for security reasons, and to carry out the domestic work necessary each day. By March 5th Josh and Alf were looking for employment at one of the mines, and there was considerable disillusionment with prospects, while some newcomers were returning home within days of reaching the goldfields. There were thunderstorms and some rain.

By March 9th the three had decided to split up, Alf remaining at Winnecke, while Josh and William went to Arltunga to check the situation there, and the latter to continue on to his uncle; "the great goldfields have turned out a failure". The two set off on 10th, met up with uncle and a mob of horses on 11th, and had a look around Arltunga. Albert Wallis (Uncle's partner) appears from Barrow Creek on March 13th, the same day that news is brought that Aborigines are killing cattle and horses out beyond Ruby Gap. Later the trooper, Corporal Nalty, and Albert went out to try and find them. On March 14th William and Josh visit White Range for the first time .."this is the place for gold" although as William describes it, not properly exploited. The old timers who have been working it for some years (indeed, since 1898) only do enough work to get some money and then take off for the Alice and blue the lot. The two return to the camp at Slate Hole, which appears to be north of the main Arltunga area, for the muster. This is disrupted by unusually heavy rains, and on March 17th William writes another letter home, detailing the past few weeks. In this he mentions that the basic cost of living is about £1 a week, and that the usual wage for those employed in mining was about £4.

While at Slate Hole Josh is offered a job droving the cattle just acquired by Breaden down to Todmorden, near Oodnadatta, which he eventually accepts as job prospects on the field are so poor. Will goes off to Loves Creek with Albert and his uncle to help muster there, but first there are certain duties done at the "homestead" - planting a vegetable garden on March 19th, and the killing and butchering of a heifer on March 20th. There was at this time an old boy on the station, cutting rails for them in return for 2 horses and their outfits; who also helps in the general round of activity. William includes such details as Albert turning barber on March 22nd, and the cleaning of their boots; that evening for a little light relief Albert played the accordion. William is becoming more accustomed to seeing Aboriginal women in the kitchen.

On the 24th Albert goes off to join Corporal Nalty, while Will and his uncle go out to check on some horses and then to the muster around Slate Hole, where they met up with Joe Harding amongst others. William gives a good description of the country, a rather disapproving description of Harding's drinking, and a nice account of his own difficulties in trying to cook very
March 1st. I got up at daybreak went to look for my horses found them about a mile away left them feeding came back & sat under the verandah until the others got up which was pretty late, the old gin came up from her Whirley & lit the fire & made the tea, she had some Tinned Irish stew for breakfast, after breakfast old Wallace went into the store & got a lot of orders ready for fellows at the Cynide works he takes them in Tomorrow when he goes for his mail about 9 I went & brought the horses in & gave them a drink & put them on some good feed when I got back I see the old gin working up bread, I asked Wilson who baked it he said she did, she does all the cooking. I thought then if anybody had told me I would eat what & old gin cooked I would not of beleived them, but I am getting used to eating anything. We had pork Sausages Tinned of course, dried prunes & custard for dinner, & the bread was as good as most you see down there, baked in a camp oven there are two little halfcaste Devils running about here a regular nuisance, old Wallace offered me a job in the store as he has a lot of running about to do now, but I dont think I will take it. I went & got my horses watered them & took them down the creek to good feed as I want to get an early start in the morning came back had tea, Wilson played the Cordion & then we turned in.

March 2 Up before daylight packed up all my things & then started for the horses just at daybreak the brutes had gone about 3 miles I tracked them all the way, getting a bit of a tracker, got back nobody up I lit the fire made the tea & had breakfast then started for Slate Hole 6 miles on the road to Winnickes, Joe Harding was camped there he killed a beast last night, so I wanted to get there before he sold it all. I got there about 8 & it was just about all gone I got 38 lbs he said if he had to give me what he had kept for himself I should of had some. I stopped there all day, had a good dinner steak & damper I eat three good steaks, started in to Arltunga about 2 o'clock it is 6 miles, had a look at the Cynide works, met a lot of old hands that have been in the North for years. As soon as they heard my name they all came up & shook hands they are terrors to shake hands up here, worse than the old Turners down there, old Lewie Nichols that used to be at Dr. Scholzes Dad will remember him is here too he has got a good reef on the White range I see him getting his cheque for his crushing that had just gone through, it was a pretty big one, I see Moody he used to live where Bartchs near Bairds lived. The mail got in just about sundown & then took them half an hour to stamp them, then they opened the door & they flocked in like mad papers strewn all over the floor everyone picked his own out. The letters they sorted out as soon as I got ours I on Paddy and off for the camp as the road is very rough for the first 3 miles and I wanted to get over it before dark. I got back to camp just after dark, watered my horses hobbled them & let them go splendid feed here, the best I have seen it runs from here to Winnickes, an old fellow in the camp had tea ready for me some more steak & boiled beef, then after I finished I lit a fire & read my letter I could not read the newspaper slips as it was too dark.

Mar 3 I was up long before daylight getting my meat packed I gave a nigger 6d to bring my horses up by daylight I boiled my Guapot
March 4 Got up had breakfast then I & Josh started for the
houses 2 went up the creek and 2 down they dont know one another
by more. Then I & Josh took Major & Bob & started for a place
2 miles away, that I see as I was going with Wallace out to
holes it looked a good place for gold, it was a very rough place
I got too, & when we got there we found there had been someone
there before us it was all tried we put some of the washdirt into
a little bag & brought it home to try but there was nothing in
it. It was 4 oclock when we got home we boiled our pots & had a
feed, Alf stopped at the camp one has always got to stop and look
after the camp, we bought two sets of shoes at the store as we
were coming home one for Paddy he has worn his front ones out
already & one for Wallaces horse, 5/- per set you can tell Ern
what he says, just after we got home a Thunderstorm
passed over it did not rain much but after it was just like a
steam bath everything was steaming, had tea I & Josh did not eat
much as had only just had dinner, but we can always drink our
Quart of tea up here, after tea I went up the creek & brought
Paddy & the other horse down & put them with Major & Bob to try &
get them to take to one another, then layed down & I suppose went
to sleep in time no late hours up here after we had been laying
down for a while we heard someone whistling we answered him, he
turned out to be a fellow from the camp three miles up the creek,
he was looking for his mate he told him he would shift camp down
the creek, but he could not find him so he camped with another
bloke just across from us. There is a lovely hole of rainwater
here 9 or 10 feet & splendid feed in the creek old Bob is doing
well.

March 5 Did not get up so early the chap that came here last
night was up by daylight & off we had breakfast, then Alf start­
ed off with pick & shovel I & Josh stopped home to shoe & do odd
jobs I cleaned the knives tightened the tomahawk made cork out
of redgum for the waterbag. Then I went for the horses they
were all together they know one another again. Then Josh shod
Paddy & I put two front shoes on Wallaces horse I will be able to
start opposition to Ern when I get back, then we made some Doe­
boys for dinner just as we started dinner Alf turned up no gold,
he came past some of the reefs they are starting work on one or
two of them. They put 4 men on one of them this morning, so Josh
& Alf are going to get a job if they can as they have no luck
prospecting most of the men that started from Oodnadatta with us
have turned up some 9 days behind us, Nesbit & Catchlove only got
here today everyone is disgusted with it, there are a good few
turning round and going straight back, the two from Mt. Barker
have gone back. After dinner I made a damper & baked it myself
March 5th While I was away & they could not eat it. Then I wrote up my diary while Alf washed then I washed my Trousis shirt, socks & Towel. I made a very good job of them today, good clear water & a nice place to wash, I will have to go & get them in as it is coming up a thunderstorm it is frightful sultry, it came on to rain pretty heavy for a while then it steadied & kept on a nice steady rain we were afraid we would have our tea without getting our Quapots boiled but it stopped for a few minutes while we boiled them, then it started again we had tea & turned in we had our fly rigged & it kept the water out fine, it rained until about the middle of the night.

March 6th When I woke it looked as though it was drizzeling rain but when I got out, I found it was only the hazy atmosphere, boiled the Billys had breakfast then I & Josh went for the horses, we got them a mile, 1 1/2 up the creek brought them back & put them on the ranges, the creek only ran a little the sand takes up the water as fast as it falls, it made no water lie about. I washed another shirt Alf had a bit to eat then started out prospecting, Josh was up the creek talking to an old mate of his, I made another damper then Josh came back & we had dinner another good damper, then I got Wallaces horse & started up to the reefs, I wanted to see Collins to see if he thought it was any good waiting for work, Collins was going to start on Monday, they are putting 6 men on but there are such a lot of men who came up prospecting that will work as they see it is no good waisting their time prospecting. Collins was pleased to see me & asked me to come & see him again. I got back to camp about 5 Alf came in just after me, he had no luck, Josh told us that Art Roberts passed down the creek with a cart & a lot of donkeys, he is going to start butchering at the Depo about a mile down the creek, there is a Surveyor & another chap camped here he is up buying claims but he don't think much of any of them his name is Saunders he came over to our camp & stopped a long time talking, then he went & turned in, I & Josh went & had a bath, came back yarned for an hour then turned in Alf was in hours before.

March 7 I got up & started the fire after a while the chaps at the other camp got up & one had a couple of shots at a Wallaby but could not hit him, I asked them if he was still there, & Saunders said yes he could see him so I took my rifle over, & he showed him to me I just up with the rifle & killed him I gave him to them I suppose they will eat him as they have no meat at all, then we had breakfast, Josh started for the horses & I cleaned my coat with my toothbrush & soap it got all greany in the packbag, then I wrote this sitting in the smoke of the fire to keep the flies away, Alf is laying on his back in the tent he is a terror to sleep. Josh came back with the horses then I & he went out prospecting we went along found any amount of reefs but no gold we sank a hole & tried for alluvial but no luck when we got back Alf had a visitor, young O'Loghlin one of a Syndicate that came up in the same train as us, they are all sick of it two or three more are starting back Alf made a sort of stew for dinner meat onions peas & Doeboys it was not too bad. After dinner Josh & O'Loghlin went out to look at some of the reefs we had found in the morning, but got back disgusted, he is coming up tomorrow & bringing the Observer with him all the news you get.
March 8 Got up & went & had a bath had breakfast, Josh is a bit sick with the dysentery after a while Roberts & another fellow came up, then Saunders & Roach came we had quite a party here, they left about 10 then young Tuens & his mate came in they have been away over a week prospecting & nearly died for water & never see a sign of gold I baked a damper for dinner. Had dinner went over to Saunders camp for a while & then went for the horses as Josh was bad, they went a long way up the creeks in the hills I must of walked four miles jolly near got lost when you get in amongst them one looks like the other, got back in time for tea, another thunderstorm on just beginning to drop rained very heavy the creek came down rose about 4 feet but went down in half & hour we did not get wet the fly is a good one about 4 miles south it hardly rained at all it seems to rain just along Winnickes gap where it has all been tried, it stopped raining at dark we turned in at 7 and had a good sleep.

March 9 Got up & went for the horses they were not far, had breakfast, then Josh & Alf young Tuens & Saunders went up to the reefs to see if they were going to start work, but all the reefs have got another months exemption so there will be no work for a month, while they were away I boiled some beef the last we had, & baked a damper it took a long time to bake as all the ashes got wet, I thought it would be a real sod, but it was not too bad, washed some more clothes. Josh & Alf got back about 3 oclock, then we arranged to go to Arltunga Alf is going to stop here to wait for work Josh is going to have a look round Arltunga & X am going out to Uncles so we will be all split up, the great goldfields have turned out a failure. A fellow be the name of Roach passed here looking for his horses he came from Terowie you know we see an account of his 8s Winchester departure a fortnight before we left, he cant find his horses he got a nigger to look after them & he did not, he says as soon as he finds them he is off back, we gave him a feed he was pretty hungry he had nothing from 6.30 until 3 and walking all the time. We had tea & then we all gathered around our camp fire there were 6 of us, young Tuens proposed getting up a petition & getting all the men to sign it & send it down to the papers to advertise to stop others from coming up he said would not his Uncle buck as he is one of the main ones in the Goose. They all think the whole turnout is a swindle, some of the old hands have 9 & 10 claims pegged out & dont work them, they are supposed to put 4 men on every claim, but they only want to sell them all the experts from Adelaide think the Goose is only a blow up & wont go down15.

March 10 Up early Josh went for the horses while I packed up. We all divided all the things with Alf he is going to shift down near the Goose as he has no horses only himself to get water for & he will be nearer the work if there is any we were a bit sorry to leave him all to himself, but he has made friends with a lot of
Other fellows so he will be alright, we left the packsaddle that we got from Frith at Oodnadatta with Art Roberts he will take it into Undoolia he started in for cattle Monday we filled our canteens at the waterhole then started for Arltunga stopped at 1 & had dinner, as we were having dinner two fellows with 6 horses & a blackboy passed us, they had left Winnicke & were going away out East looking for gold we started again & passed 2 big waggons & a Dray going out & some more riding some going & some leaving we got to Slate hole about sundown & camped. We heard that Uncle Bill had passed through Sunday going out to Harding & Braden mustering horses & after we had tea we heard a big noise down at the yard so we thought they must of brought a mob of horses in, I was going down but it was to far, so after a while we turned in.

March 11 Got up early & went up to the yard to see if Uncle was there, but the noise was only some of Harding men yarding a beast to kill, when I got up they were busy cutting it up they wanted me to stop & have some steak for breakfast but I went back to our camp & had some, after breakfast we packed up & brought the packs up the creek to where Joe Swift 16 was camped with the Waggon we were going to leave our packs & two horses with him while we went & had a look round the White Range & Arltunga, we stopped talking to him until dinner time he used to be on the Mission station with Josh, then we had some dinner with him salt Goat, & a sort of cake a mixture of currants & carraway seed it was not too bad, but then you must know it was the first cake we see since we left the Alice. Just as we finished Joe Harding rode up, he told us that Uncle was going into Paddys hole with 300 horses he passed within 3 or 4 miles of us so Harding said if we came into Arltunga we would see them so we packed up & started when we got to Arltunga Josh met another mate & stopped talking to him so when we got to the place Harding told us to meet them they had gone so we followed them on & caught up to them a couple of miles on the road so Uncle said they were going to camp on the plain about 4 miles on & that we had better come & take a turn at watching them, so we let the packhorses go into the mob & went with them, they camped about sundown on good feed I & Josh went & let our horses go as they were hungry then had tea. Uncle & another man & 2 niggers stopped out with the horses until the others had tea then 3 of them went out and let them come in, there were 10 of us altogether 6 white men & 4 niggers, so they divided the watches up in 3 turns, one white & 2 blacks went on first from 7 until 10 minutes past ten then 2 whites & one black went on until 20 minutes past 1 then 1 & Uncle & Josh went on until 6 Uncle went & called all of them up at 4.30 to get breakfast, Josh went into camp at daylight, but I & Uncle stopped until some of the others had their breakfast & came out & started with the horses.

March 12 Uncle killed a foal just before the mob started it was to weak to travel. Then we went in & had breakfast Paddy Maloney is the cook then Uncle started after the mob, I & Josh helped the cook to pack his horses, he has got the worst job, 5 packhorses to rig up & 2 of them colts it takes him a couple of hours to get a start then he has to go like smoke to catch up to the horses in time for dinner then unpack again it is a dirty job, after we got him a start we turned back for Arltunga, we unpacked at the Cyanide Josh met another old mate Frank McDonald 17 we boiled the pots at his camp & had dinner then we went up into the hills amongst the mines the[n] Josh see another old fellow who used to
On the mission station Fred May he is just opening up a reef, it is the best we see you can see gold all through the stone he has it under offer for sale he wants £200 & an 1/8 share in it, he gets it off I intend to put a bit in it. We came back packed up & went back to Slate hole.

March 13 We did not do much today spelled the horses, Hardings men came in about 9 & old Harding a while after, they had dinner then started out after a mob of cattle, will be back tomorrow night, he told us that some of his niggers had come in from Ruby Gap & told him that there were two niggers out there killing horses. They had stolen a rifle & some cartridges from some fellow at Arltunga, the trooper followed them but got frightened to follow them & turned back, so these blacks of Hardings were coming in from an outstation, when these other two hunted them & told them to tell the white fellow to come out & they would shoot them, they have killed 2 horses & have caught one & have built a yard & are killing cattle, they reckon the horses are Uncles & the cattle Hardings. Just about tea time Albert Wallace rode up, he had only got back from the Barrow with the goats & horses they bought to Loves Creek, when he heard the news, so he started straight out to see Uncle, Uncle was to come here tonight but did not turn up we had tea together then stopped talking until 10 oclock he sold all the goats they could spare in it the Alice done well out of them my word anything in the shape of meat sells up here all the stores at Winneckes Depo & Arltunga are out of Bully & Jam.

March 14 Had breakfast then I went for the horses then I & Josh started for the White Range while Albert stopped at the camp to wait for Uncle it is 9 miles from here to the White Range we got there at a little after 11 we went to the store to see if our flour & Sugar had come, but the Camels have not arrived yet, we hear that all the creeks are flooded lower down so they cannot cross them. Then we went to look at the mines, it is a big hill 3 or 400 feet high solid Quartz they have grubbed holes up to 60 feet deep into it, this is the place for gold, all the mines are owned by old hands & they have been making a living out of it for years, they work for a few months & get a few tons of ore out get it crushed at the Cyanide get their cheques & go into the Alice and boose the lot, then come back & start to get out a few more ton. If a big Syndicate got hold of it they would do well out of it, we had dinner with one of Joshes old mates Jack Woods Bully Jam Honey, we started for home about 3 got home Albert Wallace was here still, Uncle had not turned up Harding came in with 240 cattle it was a very cold day & looked very rainy, we had tea together & just said well Uncle is not going to turn up tonight, when Josh looked up & said there is somebody coming now, I looked & said it was Uncle he had 6 horses & a blackboy with him we boiled the billy for him & then sat by the fire yarning until 10 oclock, he had gone into Loves Creek instead of coming straight here, so if Albert would of stopped home he would of seen him.

March 15 Started raining in the night but not much we all had breakfast together then Albert started for home it started raining preety heavy, I & Josh rigged our tent & got preety wet before we got it fixed. Then I went with Harding to mustering the cattle round about here to put in Bradens mob he got here yesterday morning with about 500 from Ruby Gap we got 237 & got wet to the skin. It did not matter much as all the clothes I had on
wanted washing it rained pretty well all night. They all say they have not seen a rain like this for years it generally pours for a while & then stops but this is a real winter rain, steady & soaking like we get it down there, we turned in just after dark it was a terror of a night for Bradens men watching the cattle all night. I got up at 2.30 & went & roused up the fire, the moon was up & it looked like daylight, I looked at my watch & when I see it was only 2.30 I went back & crawled under the blankets again, we had Uncles little nigger in the tent with us he curled up at our feet & slept like a top in his wet clothes he has got a bad cold.

March 16 Got up about 6 poked the fire up & went & got water filled the pots, then went over to Hardings camp & got some chops Goat chops, & cooked them on the coals, they were splendid. Then Uncle & I & Harding went out mustering again he sent his man & three niggers out in different directions & we were all to meet at one place, but the man went the wrong way & came right into our beat, my word did not old Harding swear it upset all our plans so all we could do then was to follow him back to camp he had 27 cattle we did not catch him before he got back to camp with them, although I galloped on ahead to catch him, so I & Harding had to go back to the place where he told the niggers to meet, it started raining again just as we started & came down proper we met the niggers coming in with it head so I came back with them to deliver them over to Braden whilst old Harding & the man went round another way. I handed them over to Braden & then came back & changed I have got my last pair of dry trousers on now so I will have to look out & not get wet again, after I changed I sat in our tent & wrote up my diary it is still raining heavy, my word wont Bradens men have a treat tonight watching the cattle. Uncle is going to give them a hand, he is going to have Bradens overcoat. Josh did not go into Arltunga to get our mail as we reckon she will be late getting in so we will go tomorrow, Josh is out in the rain now boiling the pots we all had tea under the tent. Then Uncle got his horse & I lent him my coat & he took Hardings Overcoat & started on watch it rained all night one steady pour I & Josh turned in & slept splendid until near morning when the rain turned & came in on our heads.

March 17 Got up had a job to light the fire not a stick of dry wood about. Just as we got it a [to] start Uncle rode up he said he was not very wet, but the water was dropping out of him, but they take no notice of that they just go & lie down as they are, we boiled the pots & fried some steak they killed a beast last night, we had Hardings Frying pan they were real good I eat about 1 / 2 of them I have got a splendid appetite eat three times as much as when I am home then we tried to dry some of our clothes but it came on to rain again, Braden came up & engaged Josh to go in charge of the cattle as far as Todmorton close to Oodnadatta he get £4.0.0 a week he would of sooner stopped here & waited for the mines to start work but I told him he had better go as he may have to wait 3 months before they start, & that way he will be earning all he spent & if the place goes ahead I would let him know & he could come back, so we will all be split up now I stop here with Uncle to help muster these horses we will have to wait a few days now before we can get out as it is very boggy then I will go back to Loves Creek with him & help muster his that will take a couple of months they will be sure to get some of this rain as it is coming from that direction, we sent Uncles
after the horses he has just got back with them. I & Josh rode into get our letters we went to Fred Mays tent & wrote he gave us some tea then we started for home got back just at dusk Uncle had tea ready some steak fried we had a good tea & sat round the fire for a good while then turned in. I sold an old horse that Frank Wallace lent me when we came up, he told me to sell him if I got £5.0.0 for him. We put all our blankets out before we started in as it was fine, & gave an old gin some tobacco to put them under the tent if it started raining, it rained while we were away, & we were afraid she would not do it if we got back they were under the tent so we had a dry camp.

March 18 Drizzled all night & was still wet in the morning we took some steak for breakfast, then I got one of Uncle's horses took the old horse I sold into Arltunga to deliver him to the man who bought him. Uncle & Josh followed, Uncle & I are going to Loves Creek & Josh to take over the cattle it will be too foggy for a week to go mustering so Braden is going to start with the horses & cattle he has got & leave a man to get the rest, we camped & had dinner 4 miles from Arltunga started again & caught up to the cattle so Josh had to stop behind & take charge of them. I & Uncle went on got to Loves Creek just at dark, the place is a real bog hole, have not had a rain like this for years we had tea & then stopped talking until 10.30 I camped in the kitchen on slate floor & never slept better nothing under me but my camp sheet.

March 19 Got up at daylight & had a look round went over to the goat yard & cows then we had breakfast bread & Milk & steak then Albert went down to the letter box took the letters we wrote while I & Uncle went gardening, we planted a bed of Cabbage, Turnips, Onions, Radishes, Lettuce, Beetroot finished by dinner time, after dinner we branded all the horses they bought at the Barrow 17 in all, then we caught a colt & put the tackle on him then we had tea, & Uncle started for the Letterbox Josh was to be there with the cattle last night so Uncle went down & camped there so as to cut out all belonging to him first thing in the morning then Albert played the Cordion for a while then turned in.

March 20 I was up at 5 oclock this morning & boiled the kettle & made the tea I & Albert were going down to help Uncle with the cattle, he told the nigger to get two horses early, but we had breakfast & went & handled the colt & he had not turned up with the horses, so I went down the creek & found one for Albert as he had to go he knew some of the cattle that uncle did not I was going to follow when the other horses came. I went up to the kitchen & wrote up my diary. The Gins keep the kitchen in splendid order, sweep all round it & the tins shine like silver, all the things are put away in their places far better than a lot of kitchens down country. I & Tom had dinner by ourselves, Tom is an old white fellow they have got cutting rails for them, then I went over & saddled up the colt & put the blackfellow on him he was very quiet to handle & the nigger took him to easy he got on him & was a long time fooling about getting the stirrup Iron so the colt set to work & gave him a buster, he got on again but he did not do much so the nigger sat him alright the second time. We took the saddle off him & took him over & gave him a drink then hobbled & sidelined him & let him go, a bit different to our
March 21. Up at daybreak called Albert I & he went & cut up the cow while Tom cooked the breakfast he made some johny cakes cooked in fat & fried steak it was a first class breakfast, Albert cut up the meat & I salted it I will be a real butcher when I get back. After breakfast we went & got the colt & brought him up & gave him a drink then tied him up, went & let the other cattle out of the yard for the Gins they were going to take them out 12 [or 14] miles they like driving cattle better than being about the camp. I & Albert branded 2 calves before we let them go it is no fun branding in a yard with wild bullocks round you, you have to keep one eye on your work & one on the bullocks. We took all the fat from the cow & rendered it down it is nice dripping. Cracked all the shinbones & took the marrow out of them & fried it, then strained it into a tin, they call it butter up here, then we had dinner. After dinner we saddled up the colt & put the boy on him in the yard he did not buck today I got another horse & went out with him when we got back we shod him. Uncle came in with 13 horses he sold 3 of them to Braden, as soon as he got back he into the kitchen & out with the papers. The first thing he goes for is the racing. Just as we were having tea the Gins came back from the cattle we layed outside for a while & then turned in.

March 22 I got up down & watered the garden then came up & cooked the steak & made the tea, I was just finished as the others got up, we had breakfast then went & branded 4 foals that Uncle brought home yesterday it was hot work then caught another to break in, it makes no difference up here Sunday is the same as any other day, then sent the blackboy out to shepherd them until we are ready to take them out to where the other horses are then Albert shod two & I helped to clinch. Went up & saw if the meat was roasting alright. The Gins have gone up into the ranges to some rainwater to wash they will sooner walk 3 or 4 miles to rainwater than wash in Well water[2] had dinner roast beef, bread & Jam, we washed up & then sat down & read for a while, then went & got the colt led her to water & hobbeled her out. Albert cut mine & Uncles & Toms hair, I took some blacking out from the Alice with me so I mixed some up & we all blackened our boots it was the first dose that Uncle & Albert had, they never blacken boots up in this country only when they go to the Races at Christmas time. Albert picked out an outfit for Tom, he is
Nearly finished his contract, he has cut all the posts & Rails for the new stockyard, for two horses packsaddle & saddle a stockmans outfit, he is going to Undoolia to work as soon as he is finished here, they are sorry to loose him as he is such a nice old fellow & they can trust him at home when they both go away, but they cant afford to keep him & pay him wages, we also picked out 4 sets of Buggy harness old Lewie Nichols bought their buggy & harness & will be coming for it next week. And as Albert will be going away with the Trooper to hunt those 2 niggers that are killing their horses, & I & Uncle are going away out 50 miles on the run there will be nobody to give it to him when he comes so we got everything ready for him, then we had tea & after tea we spread all the meat out on the meat net to dry. I am afraid a lot of it will go bad as it was such bad weather the night we killed Albert played the Gordian for a while then we turned in.

March 23 I got up as soon as the fowls & went down & covered up the meat as they go for it if they get a chance they have no pickeltubs up here they cut all the meat off the bones in small pieces salt it & put it in a heap for two days, to let the salt take & get all the blood out of it, then they spread it all out on a wire netting to dry in a few days it is like a board. I cooked the last of the steak for breakfast, then we went & got the colt put him in the yard again put the packsaddle on him & let him run in the yard, then Uncle made a lot of hobble straps & I & Albert mended their hide rope that they use for catching the horses & cattle it is getting rather worn, old Charley Miller made it for Albert 4 years ago & it has been in constant use ever since, we were doing this while we were waiting for the blackboys to come in with the horses it takes them half a day to get them all since the rain they scatter all over the place picking at the green feed. They came in about 11 oclock with half of them, so we got one out of them to shoe Albert has to shoe all that he takes as it is such rough country where these niggers are after dinner Uncle got a horse & went out to see if he could find any, but came home without any, the blackboy brought some more in about 3 oclock we got another out them to shoe so there is only one more to do in the morning then we got all his packsaddles & rations ready he is going to start tomorrow after dinner if he can, go as far as Arltunga & meet the trooper there, cut out all the horses put them that I & Uncle are going to take away in the yard there are about 30 of them, & let the others that we are going to ride & pack go with the hobbles on so as to get them early in the morning we let old Bob go where he likes he comes in every second day to water, put the nigger on the colt but this one did not buck at all. Then we had tea, had some buns that one of the Gins made they were real good she has been living in at the Alice with people before she came out here, we have our meals first then cut theirs up and give it to them outside to eat, sat outside for a while it is very windy & squally all the others turned in, while I sat & wrote up this, it is 9.30 so I think I will turn in too. I feel a bit tired as I clinched all the horses while Albert shod them.

March 24 We had breakfast then got our packs ready & I & Uncle got a start with the horses about 9.30 Albert was going to start after dinner we put one pack on the colt & after we had gone about a mile she layed down & rolled & shifted the pack on one side she got up & set to work bucking & bucked until she got it under her belle then the brestplate got round her front legs &
bled her, it was a picnic for a while, all the other horses were frightened at her & we had a job to keep them together, we caught her & fixed her up again & she tried to roll again but we were too close to her, then she tried rubbing it off on a tree but did not like it at all we thought that she would off squashed all the things in the packbags but all she done was to flatten the baking powder tin & let it out in the flour so that did not matter much as we have it already mixed. We went about 17 miles through a fence & camped for dinner we left some of the horses a few miles on from here there is some big waterholes in the creek since the rain 3 mares that always clear out we put in the Camel paddock we weaned a couple of foals they just take them away from the mare & put them with some more horses & give them a good start & then clear with the mare not like us down here if one or two break their necks in the yard it is nothing, we got to camp in the Camel paddock just at dusk, put one of the mares that took the foal from & put her in the yard poor brutes they are for 3 days sometimes without food or water, then we had tea boiled some meat & turned in about 9 o'clock.

March 25 Up at daybreak I made a damper it turned out splendid then we had breakfast, then we started to look for a Grey horse in the Camel paddock it is one they are going to give to Tom for his outfit, we went right up & down the paddock but could see no sign of him we seen all the others but just because we wanted him we could not see him, he is the first one they generally come across when they did not want him we got back to camp about 12 o'clock had dinner & started again & looked until sundown but could not find him just fancy riding all day in a paddock looking for a horse & then not find him, Uncle said you might look for a week sometimes & not find them but the paddock is nothing but hills & valleys & pretty thick scrub, well we had tea & turned in after a while so as to be up early next morning to have another hunt.

March 26 Up at daybreak cooked another damper while the boy brought the horses, shod a couple of horses, they cant go very long without shoes up here they always carry shoes & tools with them one was a brute to kick so we tied his hind leg up to his neck & every time he went to kick he would tumble over it soon quietened him after a few falls, the best of these creeks are that they are all sand so if a horse tumbles he dont hurt himself, that is about all they are good for shoeing & riding colts. Then we started out again we split up & started up the paddock about a 1/4 mile apart first the boy then I in the middle & Uncle close to the Range. We had gone a couple of mile when they came tearing past me, they must of heard Uncle as he did not see them so I set sail after them for I knew if I once lost sight of them we might look all day for them again, but I soon found I could do no good by trying to catch them, as the ground was all rocks it was the roughest place in the paddock we did not go into it the day before as Uncle thought they would not be in that part, & beside I was riding a horse that had not been used much & he was too foolish he is only a young one so I made for the creek it runs right through the middle of the paddock. I used to gallop on about a mile & then get on top of a high hill & have a look where they were, I done this 5 or 6 times before they steadied down & I thought I was far enough in front of them to cut across & stop them so I made a dart for it & just got in front of them as they were coming out of a valley they stopped dead when they
see me in front of them let a snort & tried to get past me, but I managed to stop & turn them, I tried to drive them back the same way as they came so as to meet Uncle but they made away to the other side of the paddock & as the colt was preety well pumped I could only keep out wide of them. I managed to run them down to the yard but when I got them there they did not want to go in, there were two colts with him & they went round & round the yard trying to get away but I got them in at last. Then I went back to see where Unce was I went back about 4 miles but could not see him waited 2 1/2 hours & then went back to camp, he was just having his dinner, when he got to the top of the paddock & I did not turn up he thought I must of got them so he turned round & came straight back & I was waiting all that time for him, he had the horse at the camp tied up, he is a lovely looking horse the best horse I have seen since I am up here, but he has been staked right through the front leg below the knee, and it has left a scar there it does not hurt him. After I had a feed we saddled up & started for home it was 3 o'clock when we started so we only went 3 mile just outside of the paddock & camped we had to shoe the Grey horse as he could hardly walk & another one Uncle nailed the shoes on & I clinched them, it is a funny place where we camped they call it a pound high range right round and 30 acres in the middle & only two outlets where the creek runs through, they have a fence across the creek at each end. They have 2 bough sheds built on it they always camp there when they are mustering they keep all the brands & other things they use in them always, & they can always get there horses early in the mornings as they cant get away. After we shod the horses I & the boy went for a bath in a waterhole then had tea boiled some beef sat by the fire yarning until 8.30 then turned in it is a lovely night, a nice breeze blowing ust the sort of night to camp out only the Sandflies are a bit bad, they get just under the rim of my hat & raise blisters on my forehead.

March 27 Up before daylight as we want to get home by dinnertime. We ought to be at Slate hole today mustering with Harding but there is no show of it now, had breakfast then started packing up we had a bit of a job as we had two bad ones to pack the colt, & one of the mares that had the foal & we left it behind she was worse than a young one, we got a start at 7.30 & got home at 12.30 about 25 miles we had dinner then Uncle started out to look for some fresh horses to go to Slate hole mustering with, they take a fresh lot of horses every trip, they must have about 40 horses they use. As there was nothing else for me to do & I am here by myself all but the niggers I wrote up my diary as I was four days behind, there was a nigger here when we got home with a letter for Uncle they carry letters 30 & 40 miles on foot & all they get is a good feed & a bit of tobacco after I had finished with my diary I went outside & Uncle was back he was scraping green hide to make ropes I went & helped him, then he went & watered the garden while I made the tea, the Radishes we sowed the other day are up a couple of inches.

March 28 We got up early & got a start for Slate hole at 9 oclock we went the short cut across the Ranges, but I think the long way is the best, as it is fearful rough over the ranges while we were going along one of the creeks, I said you can almost fancy you are walking down Rundle street, as the walls are straight up & they look like span & Towers, then we climbed a big hill about 1/2 mile high when we got to the top the water was running off
the horses there is lovely feed when you get over the range they have had a good lot of rain there at different times we camped for dinner in feed 3 foot high we passed through the Cyanide & got to Slate hole about 3 o'clock. Harding & Laughton were there Laughton is Bradens man he has started mustering by himself as old Harding has been into the Alice & brought out some whisky is drunk ever since, they killed another beast, everytime I come here they are killing, old Harding was trying to cut out the tongue & very near fell into the beast. They cut of some pieces & sent me to fry them, I could not cut it into steak as it used to jump away it was all alive, so I just popped it into the fry­ing pan & put it on the fire it very near jumped out of the pan, they wanted me to have some, but I was off it. I had some cold ve brought with us, after tea I made a big fire, & we cooked a tamper then they had a good deal more whisky & turned in.

March 29 Up at daybreak, got the beast & cut it up, I fryed steak while they were salting it, then we had breakfast, I had a good share of steak this morning, it looks very much like rain again everytime I come here it seems to rain. I & Uncle & Laughton are going to Winnecke's depo today we will stay there tonight & muster into the yard there tomorrow we thought we would only be a couple of days but if we finish in a week we will do well. I am writing this while the nigger is after the horses, it kept on drizzeling all day so we did not start, just about sundown 3 coves rode up two of them were as drunk as they could be, they came from Claraville old Wallaces they unpacked in the creek & 2 of them came up to our camp with some rum, old Harding was dyeing for a drink as his was all done so he into it & was soon asleep, after it was all gone about 7 oclock one old bloke, Tom Coward I think Dad knows him got his horse & started off to Claraville for more, but he fell asleep on the horse & did not get there, got back to camp some time towards morning, the third one was a decent young fellow did not drink, he had to do all the work get the tea ready & then go & rig a tent, all in the wet, him & the other chap Tom Kelly by name came up to our fire & the young fellow seems quite a nice decent chap he said it is a terror with the two of them Kelly laid down by the fire & slept, about 9 they went of to their fire the tent was about 50 yards away from their fire, the young fellow picked up a fire stick to light the way & thought Norman was following him but when he got to the tent he found he was not with him, so he went back to the fire singing out Tom but could not get an answer so he struck matches all around the saltbushes but could not see him, so he said oh hang him let him stop after a while we heard Tom cough in one of the saltbushes but were in bed so were not going to get up. I woke up in the middle of the night & heard somebody talking looked down at their fire & see Kelly & Norman he had found his way back, by the fire they could not find the tent so they made a big fire & sat by that all night it must of been nice as it rained all night.

March 30 It was still a bit misty in the morning Norman came up to our camp as soon as we were up, & asked old Harding if he had a nobler left, Harding had none as I see him rinsing the bottle out as soon as he got up, my word they looked wrecks, when he could get no more they packed up & started for the Depo, we made a start after dinner mustering we just got a start when it started again it preety well wet us through, but it was not long before we were dry again, as it came out fearful hot. And wasent
flies & Misquoties bad it brought them out in thousands, we
mopped out about 20 mile we rigged our flys or tents, we had a
shower in the night, but not much, going out we passed
man & the other two camped they were too bad to go far.

March 31 We were up at daybreak the boys got all the horses but
of ours close handy. Ours are a lot of brutes always make back
towards home they go 4 or 5 miles in hobbels it was 9 oclock when
they came in, then we started Laughton & two niggers went north
i & Uncle & our boy went south we got back to camp just at 12
laughton got in just in front of us, he got 8 horses we did not
ee any. They go mostly north now as all the traffic from Arl-
inga to the Depo go along the south side of the range we start-
d back after dinner Laughton went north again we took the 8 and
1 the packs & went south again, we got three more & got back to
late hole just about sundown, we waited for Laughton for a while
but as he did not come we had tea, he got in just about dark with
2 more they have gone a good way out as they get little pools of
water about for a few days after the rain he had tea & then we
sat by the fire watching the lightening it was lightning all
round but we did not think it was going to rain I asked Uncle if
should rig the tent but he said no it would not rain we boiled
some meat & cooked a damper, then went to turn in I had hardly
got my blankets right before it came down proper Uncle was about
40 yards away he had just got in, I was under the tent pole,
after a while Uncle came running over with the tent so I crawled
out & we rigged it up in the rain we just got finished when it
stopped but not for long, we just got settled down when it
started again, & rained all night. We got pretty wet before we
got in the tent & our blankets got a bit damp, but I slept better
than I did for a long time.

1. Quite a variety of canned foods were available by this time,
and the empty cans are still to be found scattered over the gold-
field area.

2. At this time the Claraville store was the only one supplying
extras to the Works; up until 1900 the Paddys Rockhole Store
owned by Harding had been used, as it was closest to the Works
but due to arguments with Harding, the Works manager took their
custom to Claraville.

3. This is the first of several references to the playing of
accordions for relaxation in the evenings - Albert Wallis is
another who plays. Yarning, drinking, reading the paper, playing
cards, and such musical occurrences were popular entertainments
during the evenings "at home".

4. Not yet positively identified, but probably in the vicinity of
the present Ambalindum homestead (which had not been taken up in
1903).
The Government Battery & Cyanide Works was established on the
farm of the North well, on the western side of the Arltunga gold-
field in 1897-8. The necessary plant and equipment, office
buildings and residential area provided an official centre for
the field, and the battery must have been an impressive sight and
sound when operating.

6. Presumably Lewis Nicholson, recorded at Arltunga between 1901
and 1905 when he died and was buried at the White Range cemetery.
The parcel William mentions was over 13 tons of ore, which
produced 35 oz gold valued at £138; the nett profit was £77 and
Nicholson did not put another parcel through until December.

7. Dr. Scholz was a naturopath in Nuriootpa.

8. J.T. Moody is recorded as being at Arltunga between 1902 and
1904. The Bairds may be relations of Will's, as his grandmother
was a Baird.

9. The first post office had opened at Paddy's Rockhole in
January 1891, with a four-weekly service between Alice Springs
and Arltunga; in 1900 the office was moved to the Cyanide Works.

10. It is often difficult to be sure to whom William is referring
and in this case Saunders may have been the surveyor or the claim
buyer. Two Saunders appear in the records, A.A.F and E.C., in
1903, but there is no official record of a surveyor at Winnecke.

11. The only O'Loughlin recorded worked at the Battery briefly in
1903 - this could be the same person, if he became disillusioned
with the mining prospects, and needed some money to return south.

12. The Observer was an Adelaide paper.

13. Another Nuriootpa connection, and William seems to have the
known the Sage family quite well. They owned the Angas Park
Preserving Co., in the 1890s and/or the Redlands Preserving
Factory around 1905, as well as a small vineyard. There are
several references to their jam and preserve making in this diary
and the letters, and it is possible that they sold the jam
factory in 1903.

14. Roach may have been the surveyor mentioned earlier, but his
name does not appear in the records; a reference in the next
day's diary shows he was ready to leave Winnecke.

15. Paddy's Goose, later called Winnecke's Depot Reward was not a
success; one parcel was processed in 1903 and the lease was for-
feited in 1905.

16. Joe Swift was one of the old timers - a J. Swift was recorded
in 1889, but he seems to have come and gone from the goldfields.
His mining interests concentrated in the White Range area between
1904 and 1906, and he also did some carting of ore.

17. Probably K.F. MacDonald, on the goldfields between 1901 and
1905, and mostly employed at the Battery.
Fred May spent almost 20 years at Arltunga, from 1896 until his death in 1913; he worked at the battery between 1899 and 1906 though he resigned in 1901 and 1903 for brief periods.

The trooper stationed at Arltunga at this point was Corporal B and order on the gold field and the surrounding pastoral leases, and remained open until 1944.

Ernest W. Wood was at Arltunga between 1897 and 1908 and possibly later; he may have been known as Jack or John.

On March 16th the warden reported a fall of 2-3", and the battery manager explained at the end of April that little PUSHING had been done because 6" of rain had fallen in the last 3 weeks.

Will's version of offal (and just possibly a play on words, combining offal and awful).

This may have been an excuse for the women to spend time food gathering and socialising as well as washing, as their lives were fairly mundane. They may also have feared the mythological Rainbow Snake in the well.

He may be referring to Charlie Meyer, a saddler in Alice Springs from the 1890s on, or a member of the Miller family from Oodnadatta way.

There was a J. Laughton recorded as mining at White Range between 1905 and 1909, and afterwards in partnership with DuBois in taking up pastoral leases, who may be the same person; most of the men in the Centre seem to have been fairly versatile, willing to take on any job that offered.

If this is the Tom Coward for whom Coward Springs was named, he would have been a very old man in 1903.
APRIL

The muster based on Slate Hole and the country north and east of Maraville continues until April 5th, with more rain, allowing another visit to Arltunga for mail; the quest for the cattle- and horse-killing Aborigines was not successful, and Will mentions the possibility of another private trip. Then Uncle and Will return to Loves Creek for a couple of days in preparation for the next muster, for cattle - including a number of bullocks sold to Frank Wallis for the store; this took place between April 8th and 10th, and Will gives many details of the trials and tribulations of mustering. While he and uncle were out mustering, Albert goes into Alice Springs to collect rations for the next few months, and finds that they were both scarce and more expensive, due no doubt to the greatly increased numbers coming north in the search for gold.

A few more days were spent at the "homestead", with Will suffering from the Barcoo rot, and all three having eye trouble (April 17th). On that day, Sunday, they had a "real Sunday tea" of bread, boiled bones or steak, a cucumber salad made by Will, sideshies, milk, cream, jam and buns - quite a spread. More rain delayed the start of the next muster, supposed to start of April 20th, but the rain was the best for 8 years. On the 22nd Albert and Will were able to start out, to explore the south side of the run. quite a few of the creeks were running, and the stock had moved further out because of the plentiful water supply. While out, they found some mushrooms (April 25th) and Albert risked eating them - to his later discomfort. They found some horses and cattle and returned to Giles Hole, where they were supposed to meet Uncle, and returned home on April 28th.

Will began a letter home on April 21st, not completed until 29th, in which he goes into more detail about the "niggers dam"found by them on April 23rd, and says that Albert believes all the Aboriginals of the area have died out or gone to the Goldfields to look after miners' horses for tucker. It is obvious that Will is enjoying his time in the Centre, despite the hordes of bush flies, but the nights are getting colder and the flies are dying or disappearing. While he is a little concerned about his family, he wants to stay for the big horse muster scheduled for the middle of the year, as long as the family can cope back in Nuriootpa.

The diary

April 1 We could not get out of bed this morning to have breakfast it kept on raining it steadied up a bit about 7 so we got up & had breakfast & dried our trousers at the fire we did not go out mustering as it looked to rainy so we had a day spell Uncle wanted to see the papers, so Laughton gave me an order & I rode into Arltunga for them, a blackboy went with me we rode two colts. I got a letter from you here, which I did not expect as I wrote to the postmaster at Alice Springs to send my letters to Loves Creek he must of forgot. I heard in there that Albert & the trooper came back Monday from hunting those niggers, they found where they had killed two, but they were Hardings & not Uncles so they could do nothing had to come back for Harding to take out a Warrent for them what rot, they tracked them a good
...they were making towards Uncle's country so we have a bigger hunt all to ourselves when we go out there mustering, we got back to camp just at dinnertime. Uncle came out to meet me for the papers could not wait until I unsaddled the horse, went into the tent & lay down to read did not trouble about dinner I & Laughton boiled the pots, he cooked some meat & preserved potatoes & Onions it was a very good dinner, I had to loosen my belt after I had finished (then I went & read your letter before dinner I forgot) after dinner I put all our blankets out to dry & rigged up the tent proper so we will be alright tonight. Old Harding just came back from the White Range brought some more whiskey & beer with him, so I suppose he will be no good for a couple more days, I read the papers, see some glowing accounts of the Goldfields & the Adelaide Show see Lube won the Hurdles again don't see Millers name shining this time. You said Dad & Add were raving about which of the yellow heifers was Polly's neither of them are hers hers is the black or brown one with white mark, the others are Corrells, Jesses, Scholzes old black cow & the biggest yellow one is the black cows first calf Lubra I think we called her Bob always milked her another thing in your letter I don't understand is the court case you got Riefert you never mentioned in any of your letters before what it was about, you must mean Kenper as you said Harry had gone mad, I looked in the papers but could not see any court case with anybody with a name like it. Harding brought a tin of butter with him it is not bad. We sent the blackboy after the horses at 4.30 but he came in at dark could not find three, they are three youngsters & young ones don't go near so far in hobbels but they must off.

April 2 It did not rain last night if I had not rigged the tent it would of. We had some Beacon for breakfast a man came in from the Depo & had some with him he gave us a lump of Beacon, & we gave him some Beef, the boys got the horses pretty early all but the three that were away last night, so we gave them their breakfast & sent the best one of them after them he got back to camp with them about 10 he got them about 3 miles below Claraville 9 miles from this camp fancy the brutes going 9 miles in hobbels, but they were making for their old country Orratippera the least chance they get they are off, it is strange as they got such a terrible starving out there, & if any of them show up their now the niggers kill them, they say since they got the taste of horse flesh they won't look at cattle. We had a bit of a feed before we started as we would get no dinner. Uncle & 4 blacks took all the horses we had mustered here about 80 & all the packhorses & pack to a place called Paradise 13 miles from here, we are going to muster from there now we will be there 4 or 5 days the yards here are to small to hold all that we will get at night, we let them out in the day time to feed & the niggers mind them. I & Laughton, Harding & two boys started out north to muster into Paradise I & Harding & one boy went one direction Laughton & the other boy another. I had to go with Harding as he is to heavy to do any galloping, we got 56 & I can tell you they took some galloping to keep them together the boys horse gave in & old Harding was in the lead I had to do all the work of keeping them together & just about knocked mine out to the horses are in such good condition now that they are all life we got into Paradise about 4 oclock mixed them with the others & kept them on feed until 5 then yarded them just as we had our yarded Laughton turned up with 14 that made 70 all told that we had got in one day, my word there was some kicking & lashing when they were all
yarded it is a wonder half of them don't get broken legs, but none of them seem to get hurt. Uncle brought a bit of cheese out with him from old Wallaces, he got some more sugar & tea as he passed so he got a bit of cheese too we had bread & butter & cheese a luxury in this country, then we boiled some meat & cooked a damper, we could not rig a tent as there is not small timber about to get a pole & we were late in getting in, so as safe as eggs as soon as we went to turn in it started to rain I got my sheet & lay on one side of it & pulled the other over me, at first big drops began to come through, & I thought I was in for a ducking but as soon as it got wet it kept the rain out splendid, it would of been alright if it would of been cold but it very boiled you under the sheet we were all prespiring like if you had thrown water over us as soon as it cleared off a bit we had to throw it off so the blankets got a bit damp but we did not, it is the proper tropical rain that we are having now, you are wet one minute dry the next.

April 3 I was glad to get out this morning at daybreak as I did not sleep much it was not raining this morning, but very heavy clouds in the north, so we had breakfast & hung all our things out to dry then I & Harding went up to the yard to let the horses out took two boys to mind them but we had to stop with them for a long time as the brutes we brought in yesterday were not hungry enough to feed & kept trying to get away. We were going to leave Uncle here to look after the camp & going out after dinner to camp out & muster back tomorrow, but as the horses are so bad one of us will have to stay to look after the horses as you can't trust them to the niggers if they are bad, as they get playing and don't look out. We left Jim to look after the horses & Uncle to look after the camp & started out after dinner we camped about 12 miles out on claypan water the country looks splendid now that there is no stock on feed a foot high & 6 weeks ago it was as bear as the road. it was lightning something terrible out east, we turned in about 7 & were afraid we might get another wetting, the claypan water made me bad again, I was up pretty well all night & the lightning kept up they must of had a terrible storm out East, but it did not rain here, but the dew that fell was very near as bad it made the blankets quite wet.

April 4 We were up at daybreak a lovely morning the horses did not go far, the feed is up to their knees. We got a good start. I & one blackboy started out one way & made for a waterhole called the Red Ocha Bar* there is a bar of red Ocha right across a dry creek & as the water falls over this bar it has washed a big hole, we got to it about 10 I had all the packhorses & spare horses with me the others were coming in here to dinner. We unpacked our horses & hobbeled them out, then made a big fire as I had to cook a damper it turned out very good. Harding & one blackboy came in first, with 2 horses then Laughtons boy came in with 8 more & Laughton came in about an hour after but he got no more, they have scattered all over the country since the rain, so with the 3 we got it made 13. after dinner we started back to camp, & got back at 4 Uncle & Harding went out to yard the horses while I & Laughton cooked the tea, there is another man turned up just now after horses, as soon as they hear that any of the stations round about are mustering they come tearing in to see if any of theirs are amongst them as every man in this country owns a couple of brood mares as it costs them nothing for feed, & most of them that come out bring a few bottles of whisky with them, so
April 5  We were up early as I & Uncle are going home & as it is about 35 miles from here we had to hurry up, we had breakfast & I was going to pack up the horses while Uncle went & got our two out of the mob there was only two of his in the muster but when the boys came in with the horses one of ours were missing so the boy had to go after him so I had to go with Uncle to help get the two out of the mob, we got a start about 9 oclock went past Jaravill & stopped for dinner close to Aritunga we only stopped a few minutes as we wanted to get over the range before dark we got home just at sundown 2 of the horses lost their shoes coming down off the range it is a bit comical coming down, you sit right back your head very near touches the horses rump. Albert killed another beast last night so we had some steak for tea & some good cream the cows are giving twice as much milk now as when we left a week ago, the place is quite green, they had a little rain here but not much. Albert was out about 14 miles he said he nearly got bogged he said there is splendid feed & 2 months supply of water out there so we are going away out to the back country about 60 miles away & bring all the cattle in as the whites as well as the niggers are killing them out there. I have got a lovely bung Eye, it was a bit weak on Friday, & Saturday morning if I fly bit it, it swelled a bit then & just as we got back to camp another bit it, so in the morning when I got up I could not see out of it, & Sunday coming home it was very painful, it is a good bit swollen yet. There were two letters here for me when I got home, one from F Wallace he wants to know Tim Sages address as he wants to get jam & preserves from him & the other was from Alf he is out at the Depo yet some fellows struck a reef & as they did not know anything about mining they got him to join them*, he says he thinks it is pretty good & they are going to try & float it.

April 6  I got up & cooked the breakfast bread & milk & steak after breakfast we went over to the yards & started colt breaking we caught 3 & hobbed & sidelined them put all the tackling on them & while we were over there we could hear a doose of a noise at the well & the Cins singing out, we ran over & found a mare right in the water trough on her side the others had kicked her in so we got ropes on her & pulled her out, she was none the worse for her washing then I went & put some meat on to roast, while Albert & Tom got their turnouts ready, Albert is taking the Dray & 3 horses into the Alice for rations, & Tom is going to Undoolia as cook, old Joe Atkinson was there but has left. We had dinner then yoked Albert up & got Tom his two horses, he has cut all the timber for the yards for a rigout 2 horses packsaddle, riding saddle hobbels & waterbag, he cut 700 pieces of timber they are going to make a chock & log yard, after they had gone we went back to the colts put the saddle on one & put the boy on it, but it did not offer to buck, then we took it over & put 2 hind shoes on it is a bit of a terror to kick & they say the sooner you shoe them the quieter they are, then we put the hobbels on her & let her go & feed, went back to the other two & pulled them about a bit, came over to the camp read the papers for an hour or so went back just at sundown & led another over for a drink & let her out to feed the other one is a bit rusty so will have to stop till morning before she gets out, just as we were coming over for tea two black fellows rode up, they came
April 7 I was up at daybreak to cover up the meat, got the breakfast then started at the colts rode the three of them, none of them offered to buck the hobbels & sideline business nicks all we go out of them, shod the other two behind made hobbels strap chains I boiled meat ready for tomorrow we start out to muster all the cattle bring them all in closer & get 10 or 12 bullocks for old Wallace he has bought all they have about 70 at 7.0.0 per head he is to get them in lots of 10 so they will do very well out of them it seems a bit quiet without Albert or Tom, after tea Uncle made hobbel straps & I wrote a letter to Tim in case we do not get back in time for mail it is a bit of a job to write by Lantern light no lamps up here.

April 8 We wanted to get a good start this morning, but as it is generally the case the boys could not find the horses. I got all the rations ready whilst Uncle made a few more hobbel straps, & we kept on looking for the boys with the horses, about 10 one boy came in with 3 so we give him his breakfast & started him off again. I went & caught the 3 colts they had not gone far & saddled two, & put the pack on the other, I & the big boy rode one each, they got back with the other horses about 11.30 so I went & made the tea & we had dinner before we started, we got a start at a quarter to one five colts & 4 old horses we had not gone far when the one the boy was riding stuck up & as we were late he caught one of the other ones & rode that, I rode mine halfway & then changed as it had enough we got to our camp at sundown the feed has grown a foot since we were here 9 or 10 days ago, & all the waterholes are full up again they must of had a big rain since we were here, we had tea baked a damper & turned in Wallaces two niggers were here waiting for us to get the cattle.

April 9 Up at daybreak boys got the horses early & we got a start a little after 7 gave the colts a days spell. We split up Uncle & 3 boys went out South & I & one boy went West I went to get a bullock & some cows that we seen as we were going out. We wanted 10 or 12 but could only get 4 as they have all gone further out since the rain, we had dinner & I & Uncle & one boy started out again to have another look left the other 3 boys in camp but we could not find any more bullocks only a few cows with calves we got back just before sundown drafted the four bullocks out, let the others go left the bullocks in the yard all night as it was to late for Wallaces boys to start. I had a good bath in one of the waterholes they boiled the pots while Uncle read the papers he always carries them with him. We had tea, then I boiled meat while he cooked a damper.

April 10 Good Friday. Up again at daybreak very heavy dew last night wet all our blankets, & the misquotoes were worse than ever I felt them & the flies are terrible again since the rain they are eating holes out of the corners of the horses eyes & are buzzing around all night Uncle went & got Wallaces boys a start with the bullocks then we started packing up, & we had a nice job catching the colts they were preety lively after their days spell, we had to leave the one that stuck the boy up behind as she is very stiff she must of strained herself as she was such a
brute to kick, mine was quite frisky when we started kicked up a
fit, we got a start at last about 9, we passed Frank Wallaces
boys coming out of the Camel paddock with 6 or 7 colts he has
sold all his in at the Alice so has to get some more, he was
saving these to send to Adelaide but they are getting as much for
them up here as they would get down there, we rode on until 12
stopped had dinner put two shoes on one of the colts then went on
until 5 camped on a waterhole pretty stale saw one lot of horses
about 20 but are not after them now are after cattle, there was a
lot supposed to be watering at this hole but there are no tracks
to they have gone further out we are close on 60 miles from Loves
creek now Uncle is making a hide rope for the horse muster he
carryes it with him & does it when he has time, & I wrote up my
diary must go & boil the pots now as it is sundown you cant have
your tea before dark for the flies you eat more flies than tucker

April 11 Got an early start, went a long way further out East
tracked a mob of cattle until we came on them then started back
with them Uncle reckoned we were at the lead of them we got
back to where we were camped by 11.30 we went on a bit further &
stopped for dinner, after dinner I & Uncle started with the
cattle & sent the two boys after a lot we had passed going out,
as we do not go back the same way, we went in through one gap in
the range & they came in through another, we had 95 we brought
them on 3 or 4 miles & then put them on a Creek Uncle said they
would follow it on then we went up the Creek to some water &
camped we did not think we would get water in this Creek so we
brought some with us but there was rain here a couple of days ago
& there were still pools about. The rain is terrible patchey it
might rain on this side of the range & the other there wont by a
drop.

April 12 Got a good start I & the one blackboy went out one side
of the Creek about a mile apart Uncle went the other the little
boy drove the packhorses up the Creek where we put the cattle, we
went on about 4 miles I could see the packhorses now & again
from off the rises at first after a while I lost sight of them so
thought there must be something wrong so went across to see If I
could cut their tracks but could not so then I went over the
other side to cut the cattle tracks but could not find them, I
was looking & waiting a long time, until I begin to think they
must of gone another way, & then the filly I was riding went
lame, the rough stones cut her foot, so I was just beginning to
think of making my way to the Camel paddock, I was about 12 miles
from it I could see the tops of the ranges one particular point
that I knew, my word you have to get all the landmarks you can in
your memory if you dont want to get lost, I thought I would just
climb another rise & have another look if I could see any sign of
them before I started but could not but dropped on a fresh lot of
cattle so started to drive them along I thought I would not go
home empty handed. I had not gone half a mile just got on to the
Creek when I see Uncle & the others coming out of the hills with
the others the brutes had gone back about 7 miles, they were
brutes to drive a lot of Cows & calves we had to keep flog flog
all the time my arm was quite sore & throat quite hoarse from
singing out we got to the yard at 5, yarded them & then went up
to camp, when we got there we went to have a look where the filly
was that we left here the one that stuck up with the boy we found
her floating in a big waterhole, she must of committed Suicide by
drowning herself it is a pity as she was one of his bloods & was
a nice filly we had to pull her out the four of us had a good pull, had tea Uncle finished his rope I boiled meat & we cooked a jamper then turned in.

April 13 Easter Monday Up at daybreak pretty cold last night no flies this morning had breakfast then went to the yard drafted all the calves out & branded & Earmarked them, finished at 10 o'clock, came back to camp shod a couple of horses had some dinner, then started out to muster round about here we saw about 50 last Wensday when we did not want Cows & calves but bullocks, & today when we wanted the calves we could only find 3 we had 32 in the mob we brought yesterday & 3 this afternoon that made 35, whilst we were yarding the lot this afternoon one of the Cows took off Uncle was in the yard keeping the others back whilst we drove these in, so I after her the colt I was riding run me into a tree pulled my hat off scratched my arm & bunged my lip it pulled me out of the saddle on to his rump, I did not stop I got back into the saddle & kept going, I ran her stiff then had to leave her as all she would do then was charge, I was thinking I would like to be like dad said old Grey used to be, never come back without them if it was only the tail & Ears, I would of liked to of had hers we yarded & branded the other 3 then went back to camp. I had a bath it was a bit cold, it came out a bit warm about dinner time & you should of seen the flies coming out of the grass in Millions Uncle is reading the paper whilst I wrote this a different Easter Monday to down there I don't think we will get home tomorrow as we have to take the cattle 14 miles on the way before we leave them & I suppose it will be dark by then. Home Wensday morning just in time to drop you a note.

April 14 Got up early as we had to take the cattle a long way & if they do not go any better than they did before we yarded them it will take all day, but as they have been in the yard 2 nights & a day they will not be so full & may travel better, we got a start by 8 they went well for the first 6 miles then the calves began to get tired we got about 9 miles by dinner & after dinner we had a doose of a job to get them along, we got them to the waterhole where we left them just about sundown 14 miles from home, & as it was to late to get home we came on a couple of miles & camped. We had water in the Canteens, it got pretty chilly before we turned in so I made a fire & layed with my feet towards it but towards morning it got real cold so I got up & sat by the fire, it must of been pretty near frost.

April 15 I boiled the pots & we had breakfast, all the horses but two were close to the camp so we got a good start caught the other 2 on the road they were off home in hobbels we got home about 10 Albert got back with the rations alright he said they were very scarce still & gone up in price flour £3.10.0 a bag. I got your letter & read it Uncle made for the papers Albert cooked the dinner, made a rice pudding we had dinner and as soon as I finished I had to go & throw it all up again they tell me I have the Barcoo*. I wrote three letters & it was real punishment with the flies I wrote one to you first then Josh as I promised to & then one to Ern & rolled up the diary & got the mailbag ready. Uncle & Albert went over to the yard & caught a couple of colts, then they came back & read the paper, then I & Albert went back & took the packs off the colts, & the bits out of their mouths & let them go in hobbels, came back & had tea I felt pretty hungry but did not eat much was afraid I might be sick.
again but am alright yet, Uncle & Albert are outside talking to Patterson* he has come for goats I am writing this whilst they are yarning.

April 16 I felt very sick this morning we made some porridge Albert brought some Oatmeal from the Alice it was very good the meat we have to eat is getting pretty stale & hard we did not do much today just handled the colts & put the niggers on them they are very quiet we read the papers & then had dinner Albert boiled some Dried Apricots & put a paste on top it is better than a pie we loosed about in the afternoon had tea Albert played the Cordion for a while I had terrible pains in my right shoulder & when we turned in I could not sleep with them, they left me towards morning.

April 17 feel better this morning I made some real good porridge. After breakfast I & Uncle went for the colts while Albert baked some bread both the Gins are bad*. When we brought them in we put the niggers on them I rode one that we had with us after the cattle, & is a bit lively so we are going to keep her going then we shot two of them, one we had to throw she was a brute to kick, then I boiled some rice & got dinner. I intended to go to the White Range today to see about our rations but just because I wanted old Bob the brute did not come in every other day he comes in first for a drink, so it got to late. After dinner Uncle took two boys & went down the Creek to get some fresh horses to take out mustering next week I stopped at home with Albert to go out tomorrow & get a beast to kill we have to go 14 miles for one, then we did a bit of blacksmithen I mended my whip saddle & bridle, went up to the kitchen & wrote up this Albert is reading the paper. Had tea & I & Albert had a good yarn before we turned in, Albert got a bung Eye & Uncle had two & I one whilst we were shoeing the horses you want three hands one to keep the flies out of your eyes & the other two to do the work.

April 18 I cooked porridge for our breakfast then we got our horses I rode Bob he is quite fat the first time he has been used since he came here, he was one of the first in so as we had to go 14 miles for a bullock we had to start early we got a start at 7.30 we got out there at 10.30 had a look round for a beast to kill & then had a bit of dinner, then started for home with a bullock & three others we got home about 4 yarded them & let him stand until he cooled Uncle was home but got no horses they nock up one lot looking for others, they wont stop here at all every show they get they are off. We went down & killed the bullock just about sundown, it only took us about 1/2 & hour it is twice as quick with a gallows, Albert made a splendid one, he is a real handy fellow, it is a very bad night thundery, then we went & had tea & Uncle & Albert soon turned in I sat up reading until 9 o'clock it very near breaks my back laying so long.

April 19 Sunday. Up by daylight. We went down & took the bullock off the gallows & Uncle & Albert cut him up while I salted it they cut every bit of bone out, so as to make it keep better. Then Uncle went up & cooked some steak while I finished salting, there were thousands of flies I very near salted it with flies instead of salt, it is impossible to keep them out. We had a good breakfast of steak, then Uncle went down the Creek to put up some fence that was knocked down & the horses were getting out. I wanted to help him but he said I should stop & help Albert to
clean up, so the first thing we done was chop up all the bones they boil them for the niggers, just fancy what Soup we could make down here with all the bones out of a Bullock, but up here you cant eat it for flies we took all the marrow out of the leg bones & fryed it down made butter out of it as Uncle calls it, it is very good then we put on a big boiler full made the Gins scrub the benches down, then went down to the well & had a good bath & a change, felt 100 per cent better after it, we waited until 12.30 for Uncle but as he did not turn up we fryed some steak & had dinner. After dinner we got all our pack bags ready we all start tomorrow to finish mustering the cattle we take four packs with us. Uncle got back about 4 o'clock he went out about 10 miles to see if any of our horses had gone out there but got none, he seen some that Braden got from Harding going back, they had either got away from Henbury or the drovers who were taking them down, he only had a pannican of tea & a bun, we got the Gin to bake some for us to take with, they are first class, 2 of the hens have started laying so she put 5 eggs in made them real yellow. Uncle went cutting out hide to make two leg ropes, Albert put on a Roast of Beef & another boiler of bones, there were too many flies to roast in the day so we just put it on at sundown & take it off before we turn in. I went down to the garden & got 2 cucumbers the only two there were & some Radishes just fancy them being ready to pull & only sown a month & pealed the Cucumbers, sliced them put salt, pepper & Vinegar on them & left them stand for tea, we also had a Watermelon. We had a real Sunday Tea, Good bread, boiled bones or steak, Cucumber salad Radishes, Milk, Cream & Jam & Buns what more could you want. There is a very heavy thunderstorm gone round East & it is starting here looks like a wet night, Uncle & Albert are reading & I am writing this Albert has gone to roost, Uncle has followed & as it is only 8 o'clock I will write a letter to Sleeder as he did not get my last one, & if I dont write tonight we may not be back for the mail it is raining very heavy so if it keeps on all night it will stop us. 10.30 finished writing turned in.

April 20 Rained all night, did not get up very early as it will be too wet to start out, I cooked the porridge & steak, Albert just got out as I finished, we had a good breakfast not so many flies, then I & Albert made a hat band for my hat all the Ribbon got torn off out mustering, we made one of greenhide, then we went & seen to the horses, Uncle went gardening. About 11 o'clock we see a white man come riding up, he turned out to be Mercer the leader of the Syndicate that is going away out East prospecting, Uncle knew him before he used to be up here he came in to get particulars about the country, he is camped at a well 10 miles on the road to Arltunga he will have to stop there a week now after this rain. We had dinner, he stopped until 3 o'clock waiting for the rain to stop but it did not stop so he had to go he would get a ducking as it has been raining ever since we had a job to light a fire to make the tea. I fryed some steak it was splendid nice & tender after tea we sat talking for a while then all turned in at 8 o'clock.

April 21 All the rain seemed to of gone this morning it came out quite hot. We had Goats milk with our porridge this morning as it was too wet to shut the calves up it tasted nicer than cows with it. I & Albert put up a panel of fence this morning two posts 4 foot in the ground & 5 foot 6 out two rails across to tie young
April 22 It did not rain last night it was a very heavy fog this morning I & Albert cooked & got our packs ready this morning. Uncle is still making ropes. We had dinner then got ready & started, it looked very much like rain when we started we were very near unpacking again but it did not rain near us, but went round the North very heavy. We went out about 15 miles & camped rigged the fly as it looked like rain, I & Albert & a black boy are going out exploring the South side of their run. They have never been very far south so we have got hold of a boy from that country & are going out 70 or 80 miles, we will meet Uncle out where the cattle are in 4 or 5 days he will start out a couple of days after us, the ground is very heavy.

April 23 It only sprinkled last night. We got a start at 8, ground very boggy after we had gone a couple of miles we got to a Creek it had been flooded we had to follow it along there are great cliffs on both sides, when we got down it a few miles we came on a mob of horses making away south, as soon as a good rain falls they are off. We followed the creek down about 8 miles then it empties into a big one called the Giles, there was a flood coming down it, it must be the rain we saw in the North yesterday we had to cross it twice up to the horses bellies & a 100 yards wide we followed this down for a few miles then came on to a big plain it runs right through into the Alice, there is splendid feed on it but no water, all the water in the Creeks dry up in a few days, we stopped for dinner at 11 as the ground is awful boggy, & we will knock our horses up if we go to far, they are all rounded up in a heap the flies are too bad wont let them feed. We started about 1 as the nigger said it was a long way to the claypans where we were to camp tonight, plain all the way feed on some parts you could mow, but very boggy all the way saw three kangerooes we crossed the river Tod it comes right from Alice Springs & the Giles runs into it. The nigger said if you follow the Tod for four sleeps means 4 days you will come to where it runs into Halse, & then go on from there would be three sleeps into the Charlotte Waters. We got to the claypans just about sundown they are at the foot of a Range the hilly country starts again, here we see a niggers dam, Albert says it is very dry country where you see them. We made a big fire to cook a damper & boil but just as we started to mix the damper it came on to rain so we had to make Johney cakes they cook quicker, it soon cleared off & came out quite bright, so we did not rig the fly.
April 24 Could not get from under the fly until 7 it cleared of then, so we got up had breakfast, got a start at 9 crossed over a bit of a range & got on to another big plain very boggy still stopped at 12 for dinner, horses as wet as if you swam them through a river, real tropical weather, Albert said he never knew such weather in April. We had just finished dinner when it came on to rain very heavy we pulled the fly over a limb & sat under it quite cosey, it stopped in about an hour, it is all sand so it soaks away as fast as it falls, we packed up & started for the last lot of claypans we were going to they cover about 4 acres but only up to the horses fetlocks, & dry up in a week or so, just fancy getting nearly bogged & having to carry canteens filled it must be a fearful dry place in the summer time, just before we got into camp we saw a horses track preety fresh so Albert said we would track it up in the morning & see if it was one of theirs as they had lost one & he fancied he was down this way, if they can get him they can get £20.0.0 for him. We rigged the fly, then had tea, baked some Johnney cakes then turned in & yarned for a long time it did not rain, but in the middle of the night came on to blow & blew like mad, but we had our fly well tied down so it did not hurt.

April 25 Quite cold this morning wind from the south had to get our coats had breakfast & got a good start we went back & got on the horses tracks & run them about 2 miles when we got to the top of a sandhill, we saw one solitary horse standing in the middle of a big plain the one they lost is a chesnut, so I & the nigger said it was a brown, Albert said you could not tell he was to far off, when we got nearer we see he had a white face & the one they lost got a white stripe down his face so we begin to think it was him, but it turned out to be one that Uncle had out at Slate hole with him when I came here with him first, & he let him go for a spell, he is a dark chesnut, now just fancy the brute coming down here 70 miles from Loves Creek & by himself, & in less than a month he was a bit wild when he see us first but we got him in with the other horses & let him run with them until dinner time, we traveled over another plain not so good as the ones we crossed yesterday, we stopped at a quarter to 12 Albert see a lot of Mushrooms the first he ever see in this country so he said we would have some for dinner we unpacked & let the niggers put the pots on while we got some ready, I fried them nice in some nice dripping, but did not have any myself Albert had a good feed of them he wanted the nigger to have some but he said they dont eat them. We started again, we caught the fresh & I rode him, as my two colts were getting tired we had two changes each, when we put the saddle on him he bucked round a bit & was very flash, but when I got on him he went off alright until he felt the crupper then he tried to go in a bit, but I kept his head up & would not let him, we took the crupper of & he went fine, he is a half bred Arab, & as fat as mud, he was poor when he went away. We crossed the Tod again it is half a mile wide here & has never run since 94 Albert began to feel bad here, & we had not gone far when he had to get off & was awful sick it was the mushrooms he eat too many he said he felt better but we had not gone far when it came on again, I began to think he was poisened, but after that he was alright, we went through a range & came out on to a big swamp it must be 9 or 10 miles long & 3 or 4 wide splendid feed & a very
good hole of water in it, we had a job to find a place to camp, but had to camp as it was getting late & too far to go to the next range. We made a big fire, I boiled the pots & fried some salt meat, while Albert baked some Buggers on the coals it made a splendid tea the salt meat tasted like brains fried, then we baked some more cakes as the ground is too damp to bake damper, then I wrote this by the firelight as I have no time daytime, it must of taken me hour as the firelight is bad one time it flares up then dies down again I suppose we will turn in now very clear & the air quite frosty.

April 26 Very heavy dew last night almost frosty I was up at daylight fryed out some fat that I got of the water we boiled, meat in it is very good eating if you fry the water out. I got up Twice in the night & piled wood on the fire so there were a splendid lot of ashes this morning, Albert baked some Johny cakes in them before we started we went about 1/4 mile to a waterhole the boy had found last night got our feet sopping wet, it is a fine hole would last a few hundred stock 2 months we started & after we had gone 10 miles we came on to another swamp not so big as the last one but still 4 or 5 mile long. If I had 4 or 5 thousand pound I would take this country up I reckon you could get water on it by sinking just before we stopped for dinner we came across two horses we wanted to get them in amongst the packhorses but as soon as the brutes see us they off & the ground was to boggy to follow them so we let them go until we come horse mustering, we had not gone far when we see 11 more, Albert got around them & we got them in amongst the packs, there were a couple of lovely Draught mares in them their breeding mares & they were as fat as whales, one of Alberts old saddle horses was with them he tried to catch him but he was to fresh we drove the lot along for a mile or so just to quieten them then let them go while we stopped for dinner we only stopped a little while then started we crossed the border of their run on the south side just here, we see 2 more horses on our way in we camped on a creek called the Clarey the same creek that I camped on with Uncle when we were mustering the cattle only we are further out East on it tomorrow we will get to Giles hole if we get on alright we take all the cattle we can get in with us. If it has not been to wet we will meet Uncle there & finish mustering the cattle before we begin on the horses it is going to be another heavy dew tonight, it has been a lovely day no flies until dinner time but then they came out & were very bad like half dead.

April 27 Dew very heavy & cold we got a very early start, we got on to the tracks of 5 cattle, sent the boy after them told him where we would pull up we had just got the packs of when he came over the hill with them they were going like mad & him in front trying to stop them so Albert & I jumped on our horses & after him, it took us a long time before we could get them steadied then we had to leave them stand for half & hour to cool their temper, we got them quietened down & started. Sent the boy out again told him where to meet us for dinner, I drove the horses & cattle along Albert scouted around but could see no more cattle any amount of horses, we stopped for dinner, but the boy did not roll up so we had ours & then Albert saddled up another horse & went back thought he might have some more cattle, but he met him coming he got on the tracks of the ones we got & run them a long way before he found out, he had his dinner then we started again,
got 10 more on our road in when we got to the yard we found Uncle had been there & gone again we could not make out why he did not wait for us, he took his mob & started for Box hole where we took the others so we will have to brand the 3 calves we got & follow, all the country has been flooded the creek is running still, & the country is looking splendid, Albert has not seen it since the rain, & hardly knows it all the tracks are covered up with grass. Uncle was to of left a note in a post but I suppose he forgot, we bakes some Johnnies on the coals for supper, our jam is finished so we have to take to Treacle, it is very good up here.

April 28 We got up early very Dewy again had breakfast, went & branded the calves, & got a start with them at 8.15, they traveled splendid, we got to Box Hole with them a little after two got home at 4.30 when we got near we see a hole like a grave & not a soul in sight & as one of the Gins was bad when we went away we thought she might of pegged out, Uncle ought of been here but we could see no packs or saddles so could not make out what was the matter, we had just unpacked when an old Gin came up with the mailbag, so Albert asked here where they all were, she said all the others were up the creek & Billy he walk long time. It seems old Wallace sent a black boy over for some more cattle, so when he get here they sent him after Uncle to Giles Hole where we ought to of met him, & as there were no bullocks there he would have to go to Boxhole for them & that is how we missed him if he would of just wrote a bit of a note as we arranged we would of waited there for him, but now we are home we will have to wait until he comes. The hole we thought was a grave turned out to be a bit of a dam the Gins made to catch rainwater. We opened the mailbag then & I was very much surprised when there was no letter for me, as I made sure there would be one letting me know how you were getting on, for when we start horse mustering it will be a month before we finish, & if you wanted me home I would not of started with them. We had tea then Albert read the papers while I wrote this.

April 29 Done nothing much today, wrote & read the papers at night Albert played his Cordion.

April 30 Went for a load of wood before dinner made a cutter to take of horses shoes after dinner took some shoes of then Uncle came home he did not finish mustering as his eyes got very sore he has got a touch of Sandy blight & he had no eye water with him so he came home, he told old Wallaces nigger to come back in five days for cattle so as the five days will be up to morrow, I & Albert will take 3 niggers & go out & give them the cattle they want, & finish mustering the rest, that is if it is not too wet, as it has started raining again. After tea we sat around the fire until bedtime.

1. Here Will is addressing the family, both in relation to matters in the Adelaide papers, and in their letter(s) to him; it has not been possible to identify all the events or people mentioned.
2. Another of Will’s unusual spellings, meaning bacon which seems to have been quite a luxury in this area.

3. On modern maps there is a Paradise Well, north-east of Claraville.

4. The modern Red Ochre Dam may be the site of Red Ochre Bar, north-west of Paradise and north of Claraville.

5. Alf Parish does not appear in the records of the goldfields and as there is no mention of his partners, it is not known which particular reef, or lease, was concerned. Over 60 leases were paid for in April, covering claims at Winnecke and Arltunga.

6. The Barcoo spews, defined by the Macquarie Dictionary as a colloquial term meaning heat-induced vomiting.

7. A. Patterson was working at the White Range Great Western claim at this time, and he may be the same Patterson who was said to have discovered gold at Paddy’s Rockhole in 1887; Joseph Hele and Isaac Smith have also been suggested as the discoverers. Paddy’s Rockhole itself may be named for the Aboriginal Paddy who first showed what is now Paddy’s Plain and Paddy’s Rockhole to Europeans early in 1887.

8. "...both the Gins are bad" - Will means sick.

9. No such name appears in the records of the goldfields, but he may have been prospecting around the Star Creek area, or further north in the Harts Range where mica was being worked.

10. This may be the Goat Camp Creek which joins Giles Creek not far north of the Fergusson Range - though many other smaller, unnamed creeks also join the Giles.

11. The flood plain of the Todd River.

12. Cleary Creek is marked on the modern maps.

13. Giles Hole, on the Giles Creek in the Atnarpa Range may be quite close to the Camel paddock; it is between Cleary Creek and Love’s Creek homestead.

14. Probably in the vicinity of Boxhole bore, on Goat Camp Creek, and south-west of Giles Hole - a rather roundabout route from Giles Hole to Love’s Creek homestead.
At the beginning of the month, Albert and Will plus "old" Wallis' "Aborigines prepare to muster more bullocks for Claraville, and by May 5th they had found about 80 head, including 20 for Wallis, as well as seeing about 30 kangaroos the day before. On May 7th, they heard from uncle that things weren't so good on the goldfields; Will also recorded some of the problems they had experienced with crows while out mustering. During their few days rest, two visitors arrived, Walkington and Baker, and as the latter proved to be musical, they all enjoyed a pleasant Sunday evening on May 10th. The two had come to ask Albert or uncle to help them muster horses out Ooratippera way and it was decided that uncle would go, while Albert and Will continued with the horse muster. Will's letter of May 12th gives more details about the situation at Winnecke, and he has heard that his other Centralian uncle, Bob, has visited Nuriootpa. Will reports that he is enjoying the life still, although at night he misses the social life he enjoyed at home. In replying to news from home, he is shocked at the payment of £10 for income tax; postage stamps seem to have been 2d each.

On May 13th uncle sets off alone, planning to meet up with Will, Albert and Paddy Maloney the next night at Giles Hole, the latter going straight there to find Joe Harding with one Hugh McLeod who was looking for heifers with the idea of starting a dairy at Winnecke. On May 14th Will rode into White Range to find out about the rations sent up from South Australia to the store, and to get a bottle of St. Jacobs Oil for his leg - this seems to have been a particularly useful medication for bruises. While there, he notes that the man with the billiard table was putting up a mulga shanty with help from his wife. Uncle did not catch up with them until May 15th, and the next day they split up again. Uncle moving north to Claraville and the others continuing with the horse muster, which included making yards on May 18th and again on the 19th; the party was enlarged by the presence of Joe Harding from the 18th and then Prosser from the 21st. For the remainder of the month Will describes the daily life of a muster including the difficulties of having an argumentative man, Prosser, in the camp. As the month goes on, the weather becomes colder, and on May 29th Will woke to find that his teeth had been frozen in the pannican of water.

The diary

May 1st It did not rain last night only a cold change, it is cloudy & cold east wind. Uncle's eyes are a lot better this morning, no doubt that Australian eye lotion is a grand thing up here. We had breakfast then Albert & I got our packs ready, we had just finished when up rides Wallaces two niggers for the bullocks, they had come to Giles Hole last night & then came on here they are a day too soon we shod a horse, I got a bump on the nose as I was clinching her made it bleed pretty freely, then I went & made a Rice pudding I put 5 eggs in it, but they are only as big as Guinea fowls eggs, I boiled the Rice first in milk then put it in the dish beat up the eggs in some milk sugar & mixed it with the Rice & cooked it in the campoven, it turned out lovely Uncle had a good dinner. Then I & Albert started with two
of our niggers & old Wallaces two for Box hole we will get them 12 or 15 from there & then go all round again & bring them all in Uncle will go & tell all the people at the Cyanide that we will start horse mustering next Monday week, as soon as his eyes get right. & see if any flour & stuff are at the store, we went about 10 miles & camped it is very cold. Made some butter before we started, had some for tea it is splendid, so nice & sweet.

May 2 Up at daylight, cooked some Johny cakes, mustered up all the cattle, picked 12 lovely bullocks out & started with them went four miles on Wallaces niggers track, had dinner, started them of with the bullocks. Then we went due east traveled until 5 oclock came on some fresh tracks & camped, boiled meat & cooked a damper. We were beginning to think we would have to camp without water as we had none in the canteens, but we struck a claypan just at sundown.

May 3 Up early nice morning two of the horses cleared out, wanted to get an early start, but it was after 8 before we got a start, got on the tracks we see last night, & followed them all day, over hills up & down valleys round & round at last they took a straight line for the swamp we see the other day, we wanted to camp on a creek, but could not find any water so had to follow the cattle we just got on the outskirts of it by night. Claypan water as red as Ocha, I suppose it will make the damper pink. We see a mob of 12 or 15 horses when we get here I hope we will get the cattle early tomorrow morning so as we can get a good way back on our road by night as we have another mob to track up nearer home. I see three kangaroos camped today, you ought to see the niggers tracking over stones where you can't see a sign of a track & in & out amongst hundreds of others.

May 4 It began to rain about 4 oclock this morning, it looked very black just at daybreak, but it all cleared off & left it a lovely morning, we got a good start. Oh the damper & meat was quite pink from the Claypan water, we had only gone a couple of miles when we came on 6 head of cattle we thought we were right but we found that they were only half of them, we could see 6 more tracks going on, so we left them & followed the others, they were going due south, they went right across to the big swamp 10 miles from here, then they were making for the claypans where we got the horse, but they must of got to dry so they took to the ranges trying to find water, we got them just about 3 oclock up in a pound in between two ranges we got quite close to them before they see us, my word dident they go, they went up the side of a ravine where nobody would think they could go, Albert & one of the niggers after them. I had to get the packhorses up after them by the time they got up, I could see them a mile away going like smoke on the plain, I did not catch them for 6 or 7 miles, then we had to ride in front of them to steady them, their tongues were out about a yard & blowing like steam engines but still they would gallop, we got back to the little swamp, where we left the others at 5.30, so we had come 16 miles in 2 1/2 hours not bad traveling for cattle, they were pretty quiet when we get here when we got close up here Albert sent one of the niggers on to the top of a hill to see if he could see the others, he came back & said he could see two mobs, the 6 we left and another big mob out east so Albert sent the two boys to bring up the six we drove the others with the packs on to the edge of the swamp, unpacked & hobbled out the horses then he went &
brought the big mob down, I made a fire put meat on & the billies
we boxed them all up together & kept them for a while then came
away from them & let them go away quietly. They all went off
across the swamp quite quickly so we hope to get them early we
did not expect to get the big mob out here, when we came through
here a week ago, we did not see a beast, neither cattle or
horse, but now the place is full of horses we see a lot today, we
see the Stallion Albert bought from OSullivan Bros at Tarlee3 the
last time they see him was at Ruby gap about 50 mile from here,
so that will tell you how they travel, when we see the mob he was
in first, they were off like a shot, & out of sight in a few
minutes, we thought they had stopped in some scrub, but when we
had got on 6 or 7 mile we see another mob as we thought but when
we rounded them up we found it was the same mob, we always round
a mob up if we can, it makes them quieter, he is a very active
horse, he can gallop with the best of them. We must of seen 30
kangaroos old & young, Albert said he has not seen so many for
years Albert is baking damper & Johnny cakes, while I am writing
this by the firelight, the only thing that does me is too much
lay down, we turn in at 8 I can sleep until about 1 then I lay
wake until morning I could eat all day, always hungry.

May 5 It began to rain again this morning, so we got up at 5.30
& rolled up our swags so that they did not get wet, but it was
only a shower, it came out quite a hot day, & flies by the
million & tonight the misquitoes are pretty bad, it is quite
warm. We got a very early start, tracked the cattle up, they
went about 3 miles, they were all together but 5 of the brutes
that we had the long chase after, they cleared when the others
camped, you would of thought they would be glad to lay down.
Albert & one boy followed up their tracks, I & the other drove
the cattle & horses along. We had to go straight up a valley, &
if they were not back to us by 11 we were to pull up & camp &
wait for them. We had gone 3 miles when Albert came back he said
the boy had lost the tracks out on a hard flat just before he
came up the boy that was with me see their tracks pass over ours,
so he followed them up & whilst we were talking about it, he
came tearing up with them, we had only gone a few 100 yards when
they see another big mob of tracks so we sent them after them
while we drove the others along, after we had gone on a little
way I see something white just pass between the trees over a
mile away I said there they are, & so it was a mob of 30, so that
made 80 that we had got & about 20 bullocks in them fit to kill
so it was a bit of luck for us them 6 coming away out here, as we
would of never of thought of looking out here for them, we
stopped for dinner just after 11 as it was a clear piece of
ground just here, & all scrub ahead we only just boiled the pots
& had dinner then started again, I & Albert with the cattle, sent
the boys out again to see if they could find any more we got back
to where we camped 3 nights ago by 5, let the cattle go in be-
tween to ranges, they can go as far as they like to night as it
will be towards home, we had just unpacked when the boys came in
they see no more so we reckon we have got them all out here, we
are going to take this lot straight to Box hole so we wont have
time to go to Ruby gap & Giles hole before Monday as that is the
day we start the horse muster, we will get to Box hole tomorrow
night if we can.

May 6 Up by 5 boiled the pots & had breakfast by firelight, that
is one thing in this country any amount of wood we make a great
fire you can see half a mile of, we would of got a start by sunris but one of the horses got nasty & would not let us catch him it took us about 1/2 hour to get him. I & Albert started down the middle of the Valley sent the boys out each side of us to see that no tracks went back or crossed the ranges, they went right down the Valley alright for 4 mile, we thought they would be all glad to camp last night after traveling all day, but they did not we got 51 on the creek, the others had followed it up, as we thought, Albert & one boy followed them while I & the other boy stopped with the horses & cattle, it was 8 when they started & did not get back until 10.30, they went about 8 miles & then there were only 15, so that left 14 more away we had a look round for more tracks & found that some more of them had gone down the Creek the way we were going, so we started with the mob & caught them up in a couple of miles, 11 of them so that left 3 missing 3 of the brutes that we had the long chase after an old white cow they got her out of a wild mob & two heifers so we let them go as we had no time to look for them again, it will take us all our time now to get to Box hole now, we sent the boys down the Creek to see if any more tracks went down the Creek; they came back & said yes so as it was 12 we camped had dinner eat the last of the butter so will have to go back to jam & dripping. After dinner we packed up some tucker for the boys & sent them after the tracks they see, told them to follow them until they got them, camp down the Creek tonight if they did not get them, if they did, we told them where we would camp. We took the cattle & horses on, & I can tell you it was a job only two of us the horses used to get in the middle of them & would not let them get along then a calf would get in a bush, we had a lively time & the flies were about in Billions you could not see the colour of your hand, it was just black with them the air was teeming with them but we got there just at Sundown when we got within a mile I took the horses on & unpacked & hobbled them out then went back & helped Albert to bring them in, my word dident they tumble into the water, we picked up 21 that Uncle had branded & brought here & it is some more that the boys are after 41 he had, but he did not turn them right in he just let them go in the Gorge & they turned round & came back, so it makes a lot more work, perhaps two or three days, where it would of only taken him 10 minutes to do but his eyes were bad so we will have to excuse him. As soon as I had made a fire & put the pots on I went & had a bath it was lovely a bit cool perhaps, after tea I made a big fire & wrote this, I am just finished & we can hear the boys coming a couple of miles off, by the whip cracking, so they must of got them, we have been very lucky this trip, we will have to muster them all up again in the morning & cut out 11 cows & calves to take home to brand as we did not go to Giles hole yards & a bullock to kill & two heifers to break in for milkers.

May 7 We did not get up until 6 this morning, we went & rounded all the cattle up & cut out the cows & calves & a bullock to take home we got back to our camp at 11 so we had a bit of dinner & sent the boys on with the cattle while we packed up, one of the horses the one we got away out South August they call him, has given us a bit of trouble all through to catch, so as we had plenty of time today Albert have him a good doing. We packed up & then we tried to catch him, for me to ride, we always change dinner time, one in the morning & one in the afternoon, but he jumped away & cleared straight away on to a rise & turned round & looked at us, so Albert jumped on his horse & gave him a good
quarter of an hour round the flat in hobbles, then he let me
catch him, then he said let me have him Will, I will have satis-
faction out of him so he dressed him down with the whip this is
the first time I see him hit a horse, he has got a splendid
temper, then we started caught the boys half way home, so we came
on with the packs, we got home & had just finished unpacking &
putting our things straight when Uncle came along, he went into
the Cyanide Sunday then came round by Giles hole, had two days
there in the Camel paddock looking for horses, but could only
find 2 out of about 30, he says it is very boggy in there water
dozing out of all the ranges, then as we did not turn up, he came
on home. After a while the boys came along with the cattle so
Albert & I got on our horses & yarded them, then killed the
Bullock, it is lovely beef now, they are all getting as fat as
and the bullocks they are selling for £7.0.0 would bring 14 or 15
down here, then we had tea & went out to the fire to hear the
news about the Goldfields. There were no letters at the Cyanide
for me. There is a bit of a slum on at Winnecke Depo, Uncle see
a miner from N.S.W. there he said he wished he had never seen
Winneckes Depo, there are a lot wanting work, it is only Trade-
men that do well up here yet, a bootmaker would do well, or a
Saddler, there is a Chemist came up he took £8.0.0 the first day
he arrived. There are a lot of Syndicates going out prospecting,
there is a Melbourne firm at the Cyanide going out to Irra-
tippa, they wanted Uncle to show them round they would of
given him £10.0.0 a week, but he said he could not go as he had a
horse muster coming on. When he told us, we said he was foolish
not to go, as we could of mustered the horses, he did not go to
the store at the White Range, to see about my rations, as he
heard the store was empty & shut up, so I suppose they have sold
them, they havent got a thing neither there or at Claraville, it
is getting a real famine again for flour, they will get plenty
meat soon, as old Wallace supplies the Cyanide & White Range, &
he heard that Huts Pepperall was going to start he is down at
Owen Springs now getting cattle, you remember the old publican
'Rhodda' that I told you about coming up with Brennan, well he
started a bit of a pub at the Cyanide made all his own booze, the
police had to stop him as all the men around were never
sober, they would not wait until the stuff got cold, but drink
it hot, he got his wife up the other day too, I believe the
mailman drowned 3 of his horses last time he came up, very near
drowned the lot & himself only the buggy was watertight & floated
up against a tree, only a few mile from here on the road to the
Cyanide if it had been before he got here I would of said that is
where your letter went, down in the flood. The Cyanide is sack-
ing 3 or 4 men as it cant get enough stone to crush to keep two
sets of men going. Oh I forgot to tell you about the Crows up
here, when we left the camp this morning to round up the cattle I
said to Albert let us put our blankets out to air a bit, he said
no fear not if there is nobody here to watch the Crows, they
would tare them all to pieces, so we rolled them up, when we got
back I see a handkerchief & a sock on the ground so I said to
Albert you lost some of your clothes so when he looked he found
there was a little hole in his valise & the Crows had pulled them
out, then we found a lot of Wool about & found they had picked a
hole in my swag & right through the rug, they also pulled the
lining out of the packs, they are real brutes up here. When
Uncle came home he said they had picked a hole through his bread
bag & got at his damper so when we go out again we are going to
take some poisen with us I also burned my pillow case the other
morning hung it on a stick by the fire to dry, & it fell on the hot ground & burnt it right through, so I had to roll it up & tie it up with string made a round one out of it.

May 8 Up at daylight, cut up the beast & salted it, it was nice & firm, just like Beacon, it was a cold night, then we had break­fast. I & Albert cut up the suet Uncle went gardening, went & branded the calves & sent two niggers back to Box hole with them, Albert cut up the bones, I cooked the dinner Cabbage & steak. After dinner we done up the horseyard, then lay down & read, had tea. We had a Kidney pie for tea, I boiled the Kidneys a couple of hours, then Uncle made the pastery, top & bottom crust & baked it in the camp oven it was better than any you could get in Adel­side, after tea Albert got the Cordion & had a few tunes we had a Waltz together him playing at the same time, but the ground was too rough knocked us up to quick, then he went to bed, he gave me a couple of books to read so I & Uncle sat up reading until after 10.

May 9 As soon as I got up I churned the butter, the cream was quite stiff blistered my hand stirring it, I got 3 lbs out of the cream, it is real nice. Uncle & Albert cooked the breakfast, Albert the steak & Uncle the porridge so we had porridge steak & fresh butter not a bad breakfast. After breakfast we went & shod some of the horses we want for mustering the horses, we will want 16, 12 saddle & 4 packs, shod 3 before dinner, I was cook again, I boiled some Turnip Tops & put butter over them they were not bad & steak. After dinner Uncle took a packhorse & one boy & went down the Creek to look for horses, he will camp down there tonight. We shod two more horses, made a couple of shoeing tools, read for 1/2 hour, had tea Grilled steak & Radishes, then I wrote this while Albert read I forgot we roped a heifer & tied her calf up this morning.

May 10 Sunday I got up at sunrise, Cooked steak & porridge, then we put the heifer in. I put on a Roast for dinner, Albert started shoeing horses, I helped him for a while, then went & got some Turnip tops & put them on to boil & some Apricots we were going to make a pie for dinner, but it got too late, we shod two horses then had dinner. It was a lovely roast, melted in your mouth. We did nothing in the afternoon but read, about 4 we went down to the shed to mend a bridle while we were at it two men & two blackboys rode up with a lot of horses, Ben Walkington, he used to be on the Frew with Uncle & another young fellow by the name of Jim Baker, he comes from about Manoora, Walkington came to see if one of them either Uncle or Albert would go out to Irratippera with him, some of his horses are gone out there too so as Uncle or Albert would go out to finish mustering he came to see if one would go now Uncle did not come home tonight so he will wait & see him. Albert said if Uncle will go we can muster the horses, as he would like to get the horses that have gone out there, he is afraid the niggers will get them. We gave them tea, they had a good feed, of Beef, Radishes, stewed Apri­cots & Butter, said we lived here as well as they did at the pub in the Alice, after tea we went out to the fire & talked for a while, then Baker got out a tin whistle & by jove he could play it, then Albert got his Accordion, and Baker could play that too, we stopped until 10.30 before we turned in.

May 11 Had breakfast, pulled the heifer in, had a look round a
lot of horses in the yards, went to hobble & let the workers out. I went up to one there were 5 in a row they always stand with their heads turned to the other ones tail so as to brush to flies out of one another's eyes, this was a quiet one, I did not notice that there was & unbroken colt standing next to him with his rump towards the ones head that I was going to hobble I just caught hold of his hobbles on his neck to lead him up a step or two when the colt let fly & caught me fair on the back part of the right thigh, it turned me sick for a bit & now I am stiff as a poker, will be alright in a day or two. Uncle came home just before dinner only got 3 horses he tracked the others all going out east, had dinner then went over to the yards to brand 3 foals the first one we caught broke its front leg between the foot & knee it was only jumping about Uncle said he never see anything like it before, so they knocked it on the head & dragged it away we finished the other two then went shoeing, Albert got a bung eye, so did Walkington, so it was a day of accidents. Walkington & Baker did not start today, so we had tea & another night of playing. I bathed my leg in hot water & rubbed some kerosene into it. It did not hurt much during the night, it is a good job it was not a shod horse or he would of broke my leg, sent the nigger for the mail, but it did not come.

May 12 [written in ink] My leg was no worse this morning swoolen a bit & stiff. Walkington & Baker started for Winnecke's Depo this morning to get ready they will meet Uncle at Claraville on Sunday & start from there. Albert & I pulled the shoes of two horses we are going to spell & shod another that we want it is one for me a little black pony blood mare Uncle thinks a lot of her & would not let the niggers ride her she is a very quiet little thing & very fast they say. The heifer cleared out during the night so sent a boy after her, for if the Gins cant manage here when we are away they will have to let the calf go with her. The other two boys had to mind horses that we want to take with us, the nigger came with the mailbag just before dinner so we read our letters & Uncle went for the papers, I got dinner ready & after dinner we got our packs ready 3 for us & two for Uncle a months supply in each, more flour in Uncles than meat as he can shoot a beast out there as there are some of their cattle out there still, then I wrote a letter to Alf & started one to you, then had tea & finished writing your letter & this Uncle & Albert have gone to bed long ago, I have got my rug around my legs & am quite comfortable but now as I am finish will have to turn in so Good Night. in three weeks time

May 13 Got up early. I made butter three days cream, 2lbs Albert cooked breakfast, porridge & Eggs, had a good breakfast the last we will get for a month, my leg was fine. Then we went & packed up Uncle first got him a start, he is going to look for the horses & meet us at Giles hole tomorrow night, he only took one packhorse with him, we took one of his with us, with his meat & flour, then we put the saddles & packs on our horses then had a bit of dinner so as we would not have to stop on the way. As we had a lot of foals we weaned to take away, we had four packs & about 30 horses & foals we got a start at about 11, Paddy Maloney turned up just before we started so we took him straight away with us, he is a rum little fellow he used to be a jockey, we got to Giles hole alright, put the horses & foals we did not want in the yard, leave them there till morning, then take them out on to a waterhole a few miles away, while we were at the yard, Harding
two more coves rode up, Harding came to attend the muster, & one of the other fellows came to see Albert & Uncle about some heifers, he is going to start a Dairy [dairy] out at Winnecke he is getting some from Undoola, but we have got none here we have a job to get one for ourselves, his name is Hugh Mcloud, he is getting a Seperator up a Mallotte, dont know anything about Diarying, it will never pay him, the Cows up here dont give much milk & then they only get the mornings milk, as the calves run with the cows all day only shut them up at night, then we went up to the camp, my leg got very bad it all swelled up at the knee from riding leg hanging so after tea I boiled some water & bathed it well, then turned in, it stopped aching after a while & I had a very good night, I had a nice little quiet mare to ride, one of Uncles bloods not 14 hands high so I could get on her easy.

May 14 My leg was pretty right this morning, after breakfast Mcloud & the other fellow he was a publicans son from Stepney a bit soft I think, what a shame to send that sort up here, started of for the Alice they went Loves Creek way, then sent the boy to put the horses in that we left in the yard out, then I & Albert & Maloney started for the Camel paddock to fence the creek the flood washed it down it is 4 miles from here. I left them to do up the fence & rode into the White Range the same track that I went when I left Uncle & Frank Wallace when I first came up I went in to see about the rations as we were close here, they have not got here yet, I got a bottle of St Jacobs Oil, a bottle of Ink & this book. The White Range seems to be going ahead the man with the Billiard Table is putting up a Mulga shanty there he started with us & the Table has only just arrived, his wife is up also she was holding the posts whilst he was ramming them, I got back at two oclock, had some dinner hot meat & some nice scones & Butter, then bathed my leg in hot water again & gave it a good rubbing with St Jacobs Oil it took all the stiffness out of it at once, I was lucky to get it, it was the last last bottle they had left. Albert & Maloney & Harding came back from putting up a stone wall across the creek a few hundred yards away from here, that is the worst of the floods it always washes the fences away, & we have got to have them secure now as we may want to put some horses in when we are mustering, it is 5 oclock & Uncle has not turned up yet, I suppose he cant find the horses I expect they have gone South too we will have to wait here until he comes to give him a start, as the trip he is going is a bad one & he has to take a lot of things such as Rifle, Revolver, Cartridges Compass & a months supply of rations he did not turn up so we had tea sat at the fire until 9 oclock then I rubbed my leg & turned in.

May 15 Up about Sunrise had breakfast poked about a bit bathed my leg & rubbed it it is getting fine, shod horses, one of the fillies came in with a stake in her foot only 1/2 [inch] long & it made all her leg swell up & made her quite lame, it was a bit of Mulga it is poisenous. We got some piemelons & cut them to boil the Creek is full of them, then I started up a Gorge after wild dogs, saw one but he got in some bushes out of sight did not get a shot then I climbed a big range pure rock almost straight up, I could see for 50 or 60 miles, when I began to come down it was no easy job especially with my gammy leg. I got down alright & back to camp they were having dinner I had some piemelon it was not bad with plenty of salt & pepper on, they thought it was splendid, after dinner we poked about read until Uncle turned up
4 oclock, he did not get the horses they have gone away South & he had no time to follow them his horses were 2 days & nights without water all the waters are dried up down South already so we dont know how they will shape, that have gone down there old Bob must be amongst them, & all the horses we wereaying for this must eat. We had tea then talked by the fire until 30.

May 16 I got up at 5.30 I did not sleep much my leg was very painful the climb made it stiff & when I used to bend it it used to wake me up. I made a fire & rubbed my leg, it got easier after that then I put the pots on the others began turning out he by one. We had breakfast packed up Uncle & Harding started for Claraville & we started for a yard about 8 miles out, old Harding went back to Arltunga to take a Warrant out for those diggers he has left it too long but he has just come back from here & seen where they killed 3 of his horses, so he is a bit did, & the old trooper wont go without Uncle or Albert & now they have left it too long, Uncle is going out to Corratippara & Albert out here so old Harding says he will have to go himself, if he wont go he will report him, the old trooper dont like Harding he insulted him the other day so Harding wants to put him to all the trouble he can. We got to the yard about 11 had dinner & then went & done the yard up it is a bush yard it will hold 250 horses, we finished at 3.30, so have nothing more to do. Albert & Paddy Maloney have gone up to a spring a 1/4 mile up in the range to get water, I would not go, I want to spell my leg, so I stopped behind & wrote this, I have to mend my camp sheet, I got it tore last trip, & again today it is not strong enough up here gets caught in the Mulga & tears, they all have canvas. We dropped across a mob of about 30 horses coming out mostly all Blood mares & foals, & the Blood Stallion 'Silence' he is a pretty horse but very small. Albert & Paddy came back brought some nice water we had tea, I cut three big logs for the fire & we turned in at 9 it was a lovely fire burnt all night, kept us warm all night.

May 17 Up at daybreak had breakfast fixed some boiled meat, got a start at 7.30 went through some very rough country, & fearful scrub, could not see a horse 50 yards, Paddy says this is a Devil of a country he is a terror to swear he would make your hair stand up if you heard him, but I am getting used to it they all swear & curse up here, he is a little fellow a lot smaller than I, we stopped for dinner at 11 on some soakages all the water in the Creeks are dried up & they were running a fortnight ago when we were mustering cattle, we started again at one & went to where Albert wanted to make the second yard, but the water what he was reckoning on was dry so we had to go on about 5 miles, we found a place in a belt of scrub to make a yard & enough water to last for a week, it was early when we camped so I mended my shirt sleeve it was all torn I dont suppose we will have any left by the time we are finished, then I boiled some Apricots & meat, made a bit of pastry to put on top of the Apricots like pudding had tea, pudding very good Paddy was telling us yarns until 9.

May 18 Got up before daylight, boiled the pots & had breakfast by daylight left the boys tucker they went after the horses, we went about half a mile to a gully in the range where the timber was pretty thick, & started to build a yard, two fork posts in each hole two rails then a lot of brush piled up against them
Albert sank the holes 1 cut the posts Paddy got a lot of dry timber ready to pull up when the boys brought the mare. The brutes went a long way & they did not get back until 10 they brought the tucker for dinner & water upon her in a pack we got all the posts in by dinner time about 50 & Paddy had a lot of brush dragged up. I can tell you we did wire in we had dinner then started again, cut the rails & dragged them up with the old mare she is a splendid old mare so quiet & pull like a bullock, stand in one place for hours & if the winkers tumble off she takes no notice. About 3 Hardings boy turned up but old Joe he stopped in the camp said it was to hot to work, well we got finished just at sundown a yard big enough to hold 250 or 300 horses. Then we went back to camp had tea & the others turned in about 8 my leg was paining a bit to much walking on it so I bathed it in hot water & rubbed it with Ellinans Embrocation, I used all the St Jacobs Oil, then turned in about 9 had a very good night. We very near killed the little boy Jim, I hooked on to an old Mulga it had long roots on & started the old mare did not notice him standing near the roots stuck in the ground & the end swung round & just caught him across the back of his neck nocked him out flat with the limbs on top of him. I made sure he was dead, but I pulled the limbs of him & he got up he only got a fright, it would of broke a white mans neck.

May 19 Up pretty early, boys got the horses close to camp, got a good start at 7.30 went 20 miles to the big swamp got there just after 12. The waterholes we thought would last 6 months are pretty dry & it is only 4 weeks since we were here the first time. We had dinner then started to build a yard, it did not take us long to build this one as it is a small one only to hold 50 or 60 we think all the horses have left & gone as we dont see any & last time we seen 3 or 4 mobs on this swamp last time we finished the yard about 4, went back to camp, put our meat in it was alive with Magots great big ones. The winter is the only time the Bloviers are bad here, put some on to boil washed it in hot water first then I gathered some dry grass to make a bed have a soft bed tonight, then wrote up my diary Albert & Paddy & old Harding are lying down reading. Then we had tea, Paddy turned in he has got a bad shoulder, & working plays up with it.

May 20 Had a soft bed last night about a foot of dry grass under me, but I did not sleep any better. I turned in at 9 woke up at 12 & never slept after, but was comfortable, got up at 5.30 put the pots on, had breakfast ready by the time the others turned out, got a start at 7.30. Harding, Paddy & one black boy went out East, I & Albert & another boy went West to see which way those horses went, that went away from Loves Creek & that Uncle was after, we left Jim to look after the Camp. We went South until we reached the Todd crossed it & followed it down about 10 or 12 miles, we were just beginning to think that they must of turned & gone in back towards Giles hole when we struck their tracks we had just killed a snake & started on again did not go 10 yards when we struck them going South. We tracked them right away down in the country where we got that horse by himself on the big claypan, only they kept East of the Claypan, & kept going South Albert cant make out what is taking them South as they have all been bred North & always try to go back there, unless it is old Bob leading them & I dont think he would try to go back to the Murry Scrub from this country, where he has feed up to his eyes. Well as it was 12 & the tracks were 3 weeks old we found
it was no good of following them they might be down at the Charlotte Waters by this time we made back to camp, got there about 2.30 having traveled over 40 miles, the water just poured off the horses as it was very hot, a thunderstorm passed down South of us this morning we only got the tail end, Harding & Paddy were back they did not get any horses, they seem to of all gone in again, all tracks are going in most of the water is dried up, so we built the yard for nothing this time it will come in another time, we had dinner then lay down & read the paper, there is not much in it that we dont read fried some meat had tea, Albert fancied he eat a fly at tea so after we sat by the fire for a bit he had to get up & go away & was sick, he cant stand the thought of a fly, so then I made him a pot of strong coffee, Harding has got some with him then he turned in.

May 21 Got up & had breakfast ready by daylight, got a good start rode 3 or 4 miles together through a gap in the range. We met Mr. Prosser just in the gap come to attend the muster then we split up Albert, Prosser & his boy went East, 1 & 2 boys went West & Harding & Maloney with 2 boys went straight North with the packs, to a place where we were to meet for dinner. We traveled until dinnertime, never see a sign of a horse & all old tracks, when we got in to camp all the rest were there having dinner, they had got 7 horses Albert & Prosser had about 20 but they all got away but 2 Albert had a 20 mile gallop after them & then his horse gave in & he had to stop Harding & Maloney got 5 on the swamp, poor old Harding had a big spill, he started to gallop in the swamp & it is all crabholes, his horse put his foot in one of them & turned over on top of him, we had dinner & started again Albert took one boy & started to follow the ones he lost, I & Maloney & one boy went East we had gone a couple of miles when I see six coming like mad Harding & Prosser had started them with the packs the packs were making to the big yard we made, I & the boy were riding colts too heavy to gallop Maloney was on a colt too but a good one so he set after them he headed them but they would not stop one of them was a 2 year old colt & had never been yarded he kept the lead it was all creeks & scrub you could not get through we followed 4 mile then got in front of them again, but they went straight up a steep stoney range we after them we got around them but they just gave a snort & off down again, so as our horses were done we let them go & started to find our way to camp, none of [us] knew where to go, we rode over one hill after another, until we came on to a big flat that led us to the camp 6 miles away just as we got on to it we see 5 more, so we managed to round them up & take them into the yard, when we got there there was 20 in the yard, so we put ours in & went to the camp. Albert got half of the mob what he went after, they were preparing a good tea Prosser was making a stew he got some petatoies in at the Alice from the Chinaman, & some Tinned meat & salt mixed, Albert made a Apricot pudding, so we had a good tea, I could hardly move after it, then we boiled meat & baked a damper everyone is knocked out but me Harding is very sore after his fall, Albert is all rubbed sore, & Maloney is tired, so they have all turned in & I wrote this

May 22 Up & had breakfast by daylight very cold jolly near a frost, it knocked the flies a bit they did not turn out until after dinner. Old Harding stopped in the camp he was a bit sore after his fall, we left the two small boys with him to look after the horses, Albert & his boy went after the lot they lost yester-
day, his old saddle horse was amongst them & he wants to get him. Paddy, Paddy & two boys went out after the 6 we lost yesterday & any others we could see we went out about 8 miles when we got on some fresh tracks, followed them 3 miles, we see them a good mile off so we got off & girded our horses up ready for the fray, we had not finished when they sighted us, & took off, we on & after them headed them in about 2 miles but they would not stop they kept on cutting in behind until 2 old mares got pretty tired then we managed to stop them you ought to see the young ones when we round them up they hop round heads up & snort it took the 5 of us all our time to get them to the yard 3 in the lead to stop them & 2 behind we got back to the yard by 11 went to camp & had dinner got fresh horses & started out again we traveled all the afternoon & never see a horse, we got back just at Sundown, Albert got back about 3 he got his old horse & 5 more, so then we had tea, cooked meat & damper, then started Argueing, such Devils to Argue & row you never hear, they are just like cats & dogs growling & snapping at one another, it is a job to write this with the noise, that is Harding, Prosser, & Paddy, Albert doesn’t say much & I say nothing.

May 23 I slept well last night & did not wake up until 6 Albert said he was awake but was waiting for me as I am always the first, he had his head covered & did not think it was daylight. We packed up & started, went to the yard & let all the horses out drove them along with the packs we all stopped with them until they steadied down then split up, I Albert & our boy went one side of the horses & Paddy, Harding & his boy on the other. We told Prosser where to pull up for dinner, we went through some terrible thick scrub & got a mob of 7 all fine big horses, we were a couple of hours tracking them before we found them we got right on top of them before they see us or we them, my word didn’t they fly round but it was too stoney & scrubby for them to go very far so we got around them pretty easy, we got to the other horses at 1.30 all the others were there, Harding got 18 out on the plain we had dinner then started for the first yard we done up we scattered out again like we did before dinner & got about 70 so that makes about 150 all together I & one of the boys took the pack horses & went & found a camp we got a soakage in a creek about a mile from the yard, the others took the horses & yarded them, we were just having tea when one of Frank Wallaces niggers rode up he sent him out to help muster as a lot of his are amongst them, he came up & pulled out a lot of letters for Albert, & 2 tins of butter the Gins sent from Loves Creek for us not bad of them, we had a good go at it as we had just emptied our Treacle tin dinner time, & we dont care about dripping much, it get melted to often gives it a nasty taste, & the meat is not very nice now, as we have to clean it every 2 or 3 days of the Maggots they get as big as rainworms. After tea Prosser came in to our camp again & started Argueing with Paddy, he got sick of him then he started on Harding about some horse he said Harding stole, & at last they got Albert into it, I got that sick of him I got up & walked about, but it was too cold away from the fire so I had to go back, so I said for Gods sake Prosser shut up, he talks so fearful loud to, he stopped & went to his camp as it was bedtime. We were talking as we were getting ready for bed & he was listening & thought we were talking about him so he came half way back & started again, then Albert got savage & told him if he did not shut up he would punch the liver out of him, al-
ight said Prosser I will fight you in the morning. Albert said
any time you like, now if you like, but he was not on, so with
that we turned in.

May 24 Up pretty early, it was very cold last night, frost this
morning. After Albert had a wash he got up on the bank & asked
Prosser if he was ready for the fight, he said he did not come to
fight, but to get horses, so with that it ended, we saddled up, Albert took Paddy, Harding & three niggers out mustering, Prosser
did not run his horses so he & his 2 boys & I & young Jim* all
black-boys, there are 5 whites & 6 blacks now, went over & let
the horses out of the yard & tailed them, Paddy should of done
this but he did not care about going with Prosser, so Albert
asked me if I would stop. I stopped with him until the horses
stood down, then went back to camp & cooked a damper, Prosser
was Apologising to me, I said he could have as many rows as he
liked with Harding, but he wasent to come to our camp to do it
in, as we liked a quiet camp, & always had one until he came.
They all came in for dinner about 11.30 only got 9 horses, so
after dinner we packed up & started for Giles Hole yard, I &
Prosser & 3 boys drove the mob whilst all the others went out
around us mustering, we just had the horses yarded when the
others came in they only got 7, & Albert reckoned on getting 40
or 50 so there are a lot gone somewhere, then we cooked our tea
and had a quiet night Prosser stopped in his camp never came near
us.

May 25th Up early, had breakfast. Then Paddy & two boys went out
& Albert, Harding, Prosser, & the other boys went up to the yards
to draft the horses, we got Prossers out first, & he sent his two
boys to mind them, then we got all the strangers & Town horses &
Uncles Blood mares out, & I & two boys took them up & put them in
the Camel paddock, then we drafted all the foals out, Paddy came
in with 10 more, then we went & had dinner, just as we started
one of the boys said there was a mob of Camels coming so every­
body darted after their horses to get them out of their road.
They belonged to Frank Wallace, they came round this way from
Winnekes Depo to get some young ones out of the paddock to
break in, they had three young ones tied on to the others, they
had 40 in all, one Afghan & two niggers, they had the case of
dried fruit on, we told them to take it on to Loves Creek, they
will get there tomorrow night. I had a ride on the Afghans
riding Camel she is a splendid riding Camel goes along quite easy
we finished our dinner, then all went to the yards & Doctored up
about 35 foals, finished just about Sundown. Then let them all
out of the yard, just as we finished Frank Wallace came up Albert
reckoned he was coming to help muster, but he said he had no
time, the store was paying him better than horses, he said he was
turning over £1000 a month he had all sorts of Eatables with him, he
got them all out & told us to help ourselves, Fresh Beef,
Beacon, Butter, Fig Jam, Marmalade, & Cheese, I fried some steak
& Beacon, & we had a great Tea, after Tea we sat by the fire
until 9 oclock Prosser came over tonight & was quite Sociable.

May 26 Very severe frost everything was white, it burnt all the
grass & made it smell like hay, just when we did not want to see
one after doing all the foals, I got up at 5 oclock & made a big
fire lay down on my blankets & wrote up my diary I had no time
these last two days to write it. Then I put on the pots, Fried
some more steak & Beacon, & had breakfast, Frank Wallace left us
ome Beacon, Cheese, Fig Jam & Marmalade, then I got all the packs ready, while Albert shod his horse, Frank packed up & started, Albert followed him when he had shod his horse, he is going in too Loves Creek to see if everything is alright there, & to get some more rations & the mail, I wrote a bit of a letter home, with Franks paper & an old pen I had in my Saddle bag Frank is going to post it for me. Then me & Paddy packed our two horses & took 4 of our boys, Prosser & one of his, we went out to get a steer Prosser is going to kill one while we are away. We all went down the Creek 4 mile then Paddy & 2 boys went on to South Gap with the pack & loose horses we will have dinner there, I took 2 of our boys, Prosser & his & went up into the Ranges to look for a steer for Prosser we got 47 cattle, that will make Albert smile, as he thought we had got them all before, & there was not so many as he expected to get, we steadied them down then I & my 2 boys left Prosser to take them into the yard & kill one, showed him which one to kill, we got to South Gap at 12.30 Paddy had dinner ready so we had it & packed up again & started as none of us knew the track, we followed Giles Creek down about 17 or 18 miles & came to the place we wanted to camp at just at Sundown. The boys got bushed at one time & Paddy began to growl & said why did not Albert let me go to Loves Creek & come down here himself, I said we cant go wrong if we follow the Creek, it was further than we expected, it is such a Crooked Creek & you cant get out of it great high Ranges on both sides, when we got to the place where we wanted to camp there was no water, so as we only had two 1 1/2 gallon Canteens amongst 6 of us we had to be very saving, I gave the boys roar salt steaks to fry on the ashes, as we did not have any boiled & only 3/4 pot of tea, I fryed some Beacon on the coals for me & Paddy, it was very good only a few ashes on it then I made a damper, so now we have just enough for tea for breakfast, cant have a wash, had to wash my hands with a panican full, Paddy kept pouring it on, whilst I rubbed them, then I wrote this now will have to take out the damper & turn in. Albert said he dont know what he will do without me when I go, as I am a sort of head Stockman.

May 27 Got up at 5 boiled the pots, knocked the boys out & gave them their breakfast by the firelight, we had ours too. Then started the boys after the horses at daylight, the brutes had to go a long way last night just because we wanted to get an early start, they did not get back with them until nearly 8, & then their was one missing, so I sent one boy after him while we packed up. Then we started, I took 2 boys & went down the Creek until we got to a Creek that led into the Box hole from the East side, I followed it up it is very rough, I wanted to see if any of the cattle had gone from Box hole that way, Paddy took 2 boys & the packhorses & went down the Creek on the North side the one we brought the cattle up by into the Box hole but there was none gone out either way he came in on the bottom end of them & we on the top end, when I got on to the flat I sent a boy out each side of me I went up the middle & drove all the cattle before us, we got a big mob together by the time we got half way down, then Paddy & one of the boys came up to help us, he left one boy with the packs at the Gap where we were going to have dinner. Just after they came up Albert got here to from Loves Creek, then we drove them all down close to the camp, then I & one boy kept them together whilst the others went & had dinner, then 2 of them came out whilst we went in. Then we all went out & cut out 24 fine Bullock for old Wallace they were preety wild it took 6 of
all our time to keep them together we got them out through 
the Gap & started old Wallaces nigger & one of our with them to 
Giles Hole, told them to yard them there tonight, & tail them 
the others tomorrow them that Prosser took in, we wanted to 
get back tonight but could not manage it, so we will camp here 
next night & muster the horses tomorrow morning & get back there by 
night, we thought we might have to shift all the cattle but there 
was water enough for another fortnight. When we got back to camp 
Albert gave me your letter I made sure I would of got one from 
leader this mail but I suppose he has forgotten me by this time, 
Albert found out that he had come away without the newspaper, so 
sent one of the boy back for them 12 miles, in & 12 out he 
shot back by 5.30. I read your letter, and was glad to hear you 
were all pretty well, all but yourself, & the cold sure to play 
up with you, I never thought it got so cold up here as it does at 
night, but in the daytime it is lovely & warm, very seldom see a 
cloud in the sky, poor Uncle did not have a long stay. After I 
read your letter I mended my Coat & Waistcoat all the lining 
& splitting I don't know if I am getting too fat for it, then I 
put on some meat & Apricots to boil, Albert & Paddy are lying 
on reading the papers, then I boiled the pots, Albert made a 
peep at the Apricots & we had tea, after tea they read the paper 
by the firelight & I wrote this. Albert opened the case of dried 
fruit, he said it was very near in pieces & there was only, 
Pears, Raisins, Prunes & a few Pears in it, I think you said 
in your letter that Robin put Apples & Apricots in too, if he did 
they are gone & he never sent no prices, don't forget to let me 
know in your next letter, well I think I will have a look at the 
paper now & then turn in.

May 28 Frosty. Up at daylight, boys a long time after horses, 
one missing went towards home 6 miles. Started about 9 o'clock 
got to South Gap by dinnertime did not get a horse, thought we 
would get 40 horses at Box hole but they are all gone, cant make 
it out, we had dinner, then Albert & one boy took the pack horses 
to Giles hole to camp, I & Paddy & one boy went round the range 
to see if we could get any more cattle or horses we did not see 
a hoof, we got to camp about 4, Prosser lost all his horses, only 
got 5 out of 11 so we will have that lot to get again, he killed 
the beast it is a bit thin he looked nice too before he killed 
him, but it is nice & tender, I cooked some steak & Albert 
brought some more butter so we had a good supper. Albert pulled 
a lot of logs into camp with a horse, when he got home, so we 
made a splendid fire, we are just about done for saddle horses 
all going lame getting staked & spraining their fetlocks on the 
stones.

May 29 I put my head out at 5.30 but it was too cold to get out, 
the biggest frost I ever see the water in the dish & in my panni- 
can on my teeth was one solid block, by jove they are terrors up 
here, I got out at 6, I slept pretty ([well?] had a big fire going 
all night, I got up once & stoked him up & Paddy a couple of 
times we sleep all round it Albert one side, Paddy another, & me 
on the other there was room for one more that is one thing in 
this country any amount of wood. I put the pots on & warmed some 
water in the Billy to wash my teeth in, then had a wash & fried 
some steaks, then we had breakfast, my word it plays. up with the 
niggers, going for the horses in the morning they come in shiver- 
ing like a leaf. Then we went up to the yard & drafted out 24 
bullocks for Wallace & started his 2 niggers with them, then we
Branded 15 calves & one foal I & one of the boys took some more horses up to the paddock, then came back & had dinner, more steak. After dinner we started 2 boys with the cows & calves to South Gap, then Albert & Paddy shod 3 horses, I & a boy went up to the yard & mended a Gate, the cattle broke 3 bars out of it, I had to take it all to pieces & put new bars in, I had just finished when Albert finished shoeing, he said it was a splendid job I made of it, then we went & cooked our tea. After tea the riggers went up the creek & lit a big fire, & the two little fellows had a great fight, it lasted a couple of hours, we were a couple of hundred yards away & we could hear the thumps & their breathing quite plain, this morning I see blood on our boys shirt collar, I asked him what that was, he said the other boy Prossers kicked him on the head he showed me a big hole in his head, but he beat the other boy, we let them alone, as there were three big riggers with them, & we thought they would see fair play, it was great sport for the big ones we could hear them yelling & slapping the little fellows. At last we heard one crying so Albert sung out to them to be quiet, so they lay down & went to sleep.

May 30 Got out at 6 not quite so frosty, Albert has got a bad cold, we had breakfast, left the two little boys here to mind the camp & horses, took one pack with our dinner, & started out mustering, sent Paddy & a boy to a round hill with the dinner, I & Albert went out together, & Prosser & his boy, Harding ought to of turned up last night but did not, we all met at the hill by 10 I & Albert got 12 horses Prosser got none, we left Paddy & a boy here with the horses, & started out again, got close on 50 more got back to dinner by 1 after dinner, I & Paddy & a boy started with the mob for Giles hole. All the rest went out each side of us, got 7 more, that made close up 70 we took them to the yard & yarded them. Old Harding was here when we got back, he was cooking piemelon he is a terrible man to eat, then I got the old mare put the Harness on her & dragged a lot of wood up to camp, Albert had the pots boiled when I finished so we had tea. Then we all sat round the fire boiling meat & cooking dampers, we have to make 2 a night now there are so many of us, Albert turned in he is preety sick, I made my bed & as all the others have turned in & all is quiet I wrote up this.

May 31 It began to rain last night, I thought it was going to come heavy, but it did not, got up at 6 it looked very wintery, we had breakfast, then went up to the yard & done up 11 more foals, it cleared off about 11 & came out fine, we dont want to see any more rain now as all the outside waters are just about dried up, & the horses are coming in, if it rained they would all go out again. Then we had dinner, after dinner we got all the packs ready for another start tomorrow, we are going out East again over the same country we have been. Then Albert & Paddy shod 2 horses, I went up to the yard & put three rails in that were broken this morning then I sewed my boots Tscharke did not sew them well around the Elastic & my Trousis, I have just about worn all my clothes out that I brought up, I gave one of my shirts to the blackboy yesterday it was quite good only the sleeves were torn from the bushes. Then we had tea boiled beef cooked a big damper, made a big fire & sat around it until 9 it was quite cloudy about dark we thought it would be a nice warm night for the horses, but it all cleared off & got quite frosty.
A town in South Australia, north-west of Nuriootpa.

Will may mean slump, as there wasn't a great deal of mining activity, or he may mean that Winnecke had become a slum because of the number of men and the poor conditions.

This may have been J. Edgar, recorded on the fields in 1906 very possibly around at this time. Up until then, miners were dependent on their own resources in times of sickness or accident, with some help available from the manager of the battery or the mining warden.

The correct spelling is Ooratippera, as Will later discovers. It is well to the north-east, on the Sandover River.

A James Rodda was recorded at Arltunga in 1903 to 1905, and there was some correspondence about problems if an hotel was built near the cyanide works, but this report of Will's is the only evidence so far that the pub existed, even if only briefly.

The Works employees had peaked at the beginning of the year at 14, then reduced to 8 by July, but increased again to 12 by the end of the year.

H.B. Walkington had arrived at Arltunga by 1901, and remained there until World War I when he moved into Stuart.

James Baker's name does not appear in the records until 1905, but it is possible that he worked for wages in 1903; in 1909 he took over the Stuart Arms hotel in Stuart.

Possibly one of the McLeod family from Oodnadatta.

Patrick O'Neil was given a licence for a billiard table in September 1903, which was never renewed. His camp is one of the larger groups of single rooms at the White Range, not far from the store, and identified during excavations in 1978 and 1979 by the discovery of slate fragments from the bed of the billiard table; Will's description of the mulga shanty being built for the table would fit the site. Patrick and his wife came to Arltunga in this rush year, and remained until about 1911.

Stone was used for building on the goldfield, as timber was scarce, and in this case was an acceptable fencing material.

There are three Prossers recorded around Arltunga in the 1890s, and it is not certain which one is referred to here—David, Edward or William. He appears to have taken up a small part of the old Huckitta station, in which either uncle William or uncle Robert Coulthard may have had an interest at this time.

Ah Hong, the market gardener in Alice Springs for many years.

Possibly Jim Drover; the family still lives in Alice Springs.

Not yet positively identified, but this could be the gap through the Fergusson Range, made by Giles Creek.

From the modern map, this would be Goat Camp Creek.
The horse muster continues into June, as does the cold and frosty weather. Will describes some difficulties with a donkey stampeding the horses on June 1st, and continuing problems with the choleric Prosser. On June 2nd one of Prosser's "boys" left, so Prosser has to go to Arltunga to try and find a replacement, leaving the others to two peaceful nights. On the 5th Albert & Harding take the horses back to Giles Hole while Will and Paddy check the cattle at Box Hole, as the waterholes were drying up; they all join up again on June 6th. The next day saw them split up again, before meeting back home on the 8th.

The usual domestic and work duties are recorded during the next few days; on June 10th Will wrote to the family, saying that he must be getting used to the diet as he was putting on weight. He mentions the extreme wear and tear on his clothes, and that Albert bought some socks for him at the Claraville store, for 2/6. He also mentions that it is a real chore to keep going with the diary, but that Albert has kept him up to the mark. The news had reached them of the outbreak of fever, said to be typhoid fever, which took several lives in Stuart and at Winnecke in June and July. He also comments on the cost of freight, but that Frank Wallis is doing very well at the store, making £1000 in a fortnight, mostly through grog. He also details the plans for the next month or so - they plan to go out to Ruby Gap, to muster that part of the run.

On June 11th Albert & Will set off again for Box Hole to check for any extra cattle and horses, before meeting Frank Wallis at Giles Hole on the 12th. The following day they go to Ruby Gap, and mustered the area until June 15th when they returned to the camel paddock. Here the camp increased to 16, as several locals had arrived to pick out their own horses, found during the muster. The next day the various owners were sorted out, and uncle was disappointed to find only 50 horses suitable for the Adelaide sale, as he had been hoping for 200. June 18th saw the party split up briefly, with Will off to check Ruby Gap again, and to deliver Frank Wallis' horses - the first time he had been "on his own" with only the boys for company. Meeting up again on 19th, Albert and Will check the southern areas again, while uncle and Paddy went east. Will has quite a nasty fall on June 25th, while trying to catch a colt; that same day they return to Loves Creek. After the usual domestic round, Will decides to visit Winnecke, to catch up with Alf, and the gold-fields news. He sets off on June 29th, reaching Winnecke on 30th and gives quite a description of the small "Canvas & Tin & Bush" town which has sprung up in the last few months.

The diary

June 1 Up at 5.30 very cold last night did not sleep well quite white this morning. I boiled the Billies washed & done up my swag before the others turned out. Albert was coughing the best part of the night, only stopped towards morning. We had breakfast eat the last of our butter, have to go back to Jam again. I used to make Toast with the butter. We packed up & started I took 3 blackboys with me & took all the spare horses & packs, & Prossers
& 30 pack & spare horses & 8 of Prossers we got on the run, to the first yard out. All the rest went in 2 & mustered in, I got to camp about 11 took all the packs off 6 in all & hobbled the horses, made a fire put the pots on, then the others began to come in, they all got in by 12 got a good lot of fresh horses I see a lot of them we done up last week on my way out I had to dig a little well to get water, all the surface water is dried up. We had to water the horses out of a dish, it took a good while to water 30. We had dinner, then Albert & Paddy went out to look at some cattle one of the boys had seen to see if there were any more calves amongst them not branded Prosser wanted to go back over the same ground that they had come this morning, & when Albert would not, he got in a terrible temper he is a bit of a lunatic said Albert did not want him to get his horses, Albert & Uncle are only too glad to get rid of all the strangers on run, but was not going to run the saddle horses off their legs for nothing. Albert came in about 4 got a good lot of horses, was after the cattle when he dropped on them so let the cattle go & took the horses, Prosser came in just after with nothing, he said he was satisfied now. We watered all the horses out of dishes again, & then put on the pots we were just going to start tea, when a blooming Donkey that Uncle brought from the Barrow, came up to the camp, & started he-hawing, all the horses in hobbles took to their heels & stampeded, all the nigger boys after them Albert got on a horse & took him away a couple of mile we rounded all the horses up again, & had tea, but the brute was on for mischief, he came sneaking back & when he got close to the horses he started he-having & they all of again, but three they were not frightened of him so we drove him & these three over the creek to keep him away from the others, we were just going to turn in at 9 when he started again & came back & started the others again we could hear them going for miles but as it was too dark to follow them, we had to leave them go. Albert swears he will shoot him in the morning, we could hear him all night no wonder we cant find the bush horses with such a brute as he is on a run, the bush horses are just as frightened as the quiet one of him.

June 2 Up pretty early, not quite so cold last night, started the niggers after the horses at daylight, we had breakfast packed up & then sat down to wait for the horses, one boy came in with & about 8 he said the Donkey had them rounded up they are as timid as mice it must of given them a terrible fright. It is 9 & no sign of any of the others turning up yet, & we wanted to get an early start as we have a good way to go to the second yard, it is very likely that we will have to stop here all day, Prosser is walking round swearing all the time, 3 more boys came in about 10 with all the horses except 3 of Hardings, his boy went after them, Prosser has 2 boys a big one & a little fellow, he always keeps the big one in the camp sends the poor little one after the horses, he gave the big one his breakfast, he went down to the Creek & eat it, when the mob came in he wanted the big fellow to catch them, but could not find him anywhere, so he went down to the Creek to the niggers camp to see if he was there, he found he had taken his blankets & cleared, he told the other boys he was sick of him, he was all day yabba, yabba, when he found he was gone he did rave, he had to go to the Cyanide to get another or a white man, as he cant manage by himself, so we had an early dinner & he started we will take his horses & packs on with us, he swears if he catches him in there he will kill him, we were just ready to start When Hardings boy came in with his 3 he got
them at Giles Hole, 9 mile away, they were all wet, they must of had the life frightened out of them. Albert went over to the yard to let the horses out, 'the bush horses' we are going to muster both ways this time out & in to make sure of getting all we see, when he went to open the rails he see the niggers boots in the gateway, he took them off & put them there so as we could see them, & so as he would have none of Prossers property they were pretty cunning. We all split up Harding & Paddy took all the horses & packs along, I & a boy went away out East, Albert & another went of West of them, I only see 7 mares & foals & they were what we had before the foals were branded so I left them, Albert got 11 & Harding run into a big mob just as he was getting near the camp, about 40 in all, they have got a tremendous lot of greys on the run, I believe a quarter of their horses are Greys. We unpacked all the horses hobbled them out & took the others & put them in the yard, then had tea & a quiet night as Prosser was not hear to make a noise.

June 3 Up early, horses close handy, had breakfast & went up to the yard & let the horses out. I stopped & tailed them with the little boys, all the others went out mustering, Albert came in at 9.30 with 11 they were all Prossers but 10 very wild, Paddy & the rest got in just at dinner time with 16 more, we had dinner then Albert & 2 boys went out again, & Paddy & another boy, Harding & I took the horses about a 1 1/2 [miles] to a waterhole & gave them a drink, then took them back on a flat near the yard to feed. Albert got back about 4 with 3 more, he stopped with me until sundown, then we yarded them, there will be some fighting tonight, as there are 6 Entires in the mob, it will be a go if they knock the yard down. Then we went back to camp, Paddy had just got back no horses. We had tea, then baked a big damper & boiled a bucket of meat, it just about keeps one going cooking, Albert got bad again after tea, Harding had some preserved potatoes & he gave us some, I think they must of made him sick, Prosser did not turn up, Paddy said it is very likely they have got him chained up in there. All the rest have turned in, I wrote up this, & will turn in to, I dont think it will be so cold tonight as it is cloudy.

June 4 Paddy up first this morning could not sleep kept coughing all night, I had a grand sleep not so cold. We had breakfast, eat all the jam & cheese, nothing left but damper & meat, have to do on it for a week. We left Harding to tail the mob, the rest of us went out a long way we got 30 horses did not get back to camp until 3 o'clock, had a bit of dinner, then Albert went out to the mob & stopped with them until he yarded them, the yard is pretty full this time 150 in it, I & Paddy stopped at the camp cooking, I cooked meat & Apricots, he cooked some doeboys. Then when Albert came in we had tea doeboys & Apricots, the last we have. Then we cooked some more meat & damper, as I & Paddy & 2 boys are going from here to the Box holes to shift the cattle as all the water will be done by now, & we will have to take enough of cooked Tucker with us to last us 3 days as we wont get any water until we get back to South Gap. We will cut Prossers horses out in the morning he will take his on home from here, he will have a bit of a job, as he came back without anybody, could not get a man to come with him. Then Albert & Harding & 2 boys will take this mob into Giles Hole to the yards & brand all the foals.
June 5  Up at daybreak, had breakfast damper & meat then we got the packs ready one for Albert & 2 for us then we got the horses & pack that Albert is taking with him ready took them over to the yard, drafted all ours out left Prossers in, & started Albert & Harding with them. They nearly knocked one side of the yard down last night it would of been a go if they had been all gone this morning. I & Paddy went back to camp packed up our horses & started at a quarter past 9 left Prosser packing up, had another row this morning, wanted half the foals that had no brands on, he has got the cheek of old Nick, we traveled on until 11.30 came to a pool of water in a creek so as we did not know when we would get the next, we stopped & had dinner gave the horses a drink, we started as soon as we finished our dinner. As we have a long way to go before night, I took the lead & made the pace, & it was pretty hot, we got a mare & a 2 year old foal with her on our road the foal was as wild as a hare it is not branded I dont suppose it had ever seen anybody before, we got it cooled down after a bit & mixed up with our packs & drove it along with us the old mare is quiet & has got one eye grown shut, the flies do it they eat the eyelids until they get quite sore, then when they heal they grow together, you cant see a sign of her eye, Albert has to cut them open very often. We got to within a mile of where we intended to camp, but as it was getting late, & we got a patch of nice feed we camped, hobbled the old mare with the rest, so we will have no trouble to get her in the morning. We lit a big old hollow tree that has fallen down, & have got a roaring fire, we had tea damper & meat, and as I am afraid to eat to much meat I had a bit of damper & sugar, then went & got a lot of bushes to sleep on as it is very stoney, wrote up this good light from the fire, & will now turn in, as we must be up early, have a big contract to do tomorrow, I dont think we will manage it.

June 6  Woke up at 1 oclock to see the old mare off past us, I was up & on with my boots, but not quick enough to stop her. We got up at 5 sent the boys after the horses as soon as they could see. They were not long after them, they got them all close but 2 they made straight down the Creek for home, we will get them as we go along. The boys had their breakfast then one followed the mare & foal that got in the night. We packed up & started, sent the boy along the middle of the valley one of us went up each side. We had just got all the cattle together, when the boy came back with the mare & foal she had gone back 4 or 5 mile, we left one boy with the packs & cattle & mustered all the horses, we got about 20 & the other day we could only find 4. We drove them all down to the Gap, then had dinner it was only 10 but we did not want to stop when once we started as it was an awkward job driving wild horses & cattle together. After we had a feed, we cut out some heifers with calves & a fat heifer or two to kill & left them behind as there is enough water to last them a few days. Then we started one boy in the lead to steady the horses, & we behind driving the cattle, we got on very well for 6 miles then they began to jib on it. As it was getting preety late, I let Paddy & a boy go on with the horses I & the other boy stopped to bring on the cattle, we had to leave them at South Gap 6 miles from camp. The two of us had a doose of a job to drive them, as it was all creeks & scrub, & narrow Gorges, we got them to the water just at Sundown, & got to camp at seven I was that hoarse I could not talk, so had a good tea of damper & meat & turned in.

June 7  Sunday I almost forget now when it is Sunday we did not
get up so early, we had breakfast, left Paddy in the camp to cook
enough meat & damper to last us until tomorrow night, the rest
of us went up to the yard to finish up the foals that we brought
that they left yesterday, they done up 33 & left 8 so as we
brought one we had 9 to do. After we finished them we caught a 5
year old colt as we thought to break in but after we had got the
headrope & legropes on we found we had a broken in horse, he took
it all so quiet so we put the saddle on him & he walked of quite
quiet he is one Albert though[t] had gone back to Ooratippera &
Uncle will be looking for him, after we had finished I went &
had a bath but it was too cold to stand much of it so I had a
good wash & felt twice the man after it it is the first good wash
I had for a month since we left Loves Creek. Then had dinner,
damper meat & boiled piemelon old Harding cooked it. Then we
packed up everything that we did not want to take back to Loves
Creek with us, 50lb of Flour Tea & a lot of other things as we
will be back in 3 or 4 days again, then we split camp, Albert &
Harding started for Claraville Albert has gone to see the old
man, I & Paddy took all the horses & packs & went to Box hole &
camped, we will get the heifers we left there & take them home
tomorrow. We got here just about Sundown unpacked & hobbled out
the horses, lit a fire carted some big logs for the night, cut
some grass & bushes for a bed as it is stony here, then had
supper, damper & Beef that had been alive with Maggots before we
boiled it, but it goes down just the same as if it was the best
of fresh meat when you are hungry, I had a bit of damper & Sugar
to finish up on, it is very good it must be making me fat at any
rate as my Coat & Waistcoat are getting to tight after tea we
made a big fire & I wrote up my diary, whilst Paddy sewed his
Trousis.

June 8 Up at daybreak had breakfast fryed boiled meat on the
coals, not to bad the boys came in with all the horses except one
we had taken her foal from her left it at Giles Hole, we hobbled
& sidelined her, but it did not stop her going in the night, we
waited until 9 oclock, & as they did not turn up with her, I &
Paddy went out to find the cattle we had left here to take home,
we came across the boys they had just got the mare she went 3
miles, we got all the cows & calves & the bullock we left to
kill, but the Bull was gone he left during the night we saw him
when we came here but could not find him this morning, tracked
him up & found he had gone through the Gap with a few more young
things & made for South Gap, on the tracks of the mob. I sent one
of the boys after him but he came back without him, he went 4
miles on his tracks so I suppose he was just about there, then we
had a bit of dinner, & started for home. I sent Paddy & one boy
on with the packs, & I & the other boy brought the cattle I got
home just about Sundown, Albert & Uncle had just got here before
me, Albert & Uncle just met at Claraville, Albert came in from
one side & Uncle the other, Uncle only got one horse. We had a
bit of a job to yard the Bullock he galloped away a time or two
as soon as we got him in, Albert came with the Rifle the first
shot did not hit him fair, then he took to the yard & jolly near
got out, but he got another pop at him & dropped him, we soon had
him hanging on the Gallis, he is lovely beef, Albert asked me if
I wanted any of him for Tea I said No, so we had Scones & Butter
& garden Cress & Mustard green mustard what we grow for green
feed for Tea, & had a real good one to, then the others went out
to the fire I stopped & read your letter & opened the parcels, I
got a letter from the porter at Oodnadatta telling me that he
forgot to charge me for our packs & things coming up, & he had to pay it a pound to the Railway & asked me if I would forward it to him. Then I went out & told Uncle that I had got a little box of Almonds from you, my word he said we will have a feed of Almonds & Raisins tomorrow. We read the papers for a while & then turned in.

June 9 Up at daylight, Albert & Uncle cut up the Bullock Paddy salted it & I cooked the breakfast. After they had finished we had our breakfast, then went & caught the heifers & milked them, tied the calves up & let them go, they made straight back to Box Hole, they would leave their calves, so we sent a boy after them, brought them back & put them down the Creek with the other cows then poked about cleaning up, an awful lot of fat to render down, it seems a shame to see so much nice fat wasted. I went & got a lot of Turnips peeled them & boiled them for dinner, some of them are as big as a big cup, they were very good with steak & a bit of butter over them. After dinner I put on a pot a pears to stew & get cool for tea, they like the pears better than any of the other fruit, they are very good, but the currants are not much very near all of them have got stones in them, they are as big as grapes dried. Broke up the bones & got the Marrow out of them & melted it down put it in a Tin to use as butter, when it runs out got a Roast of Beef & put it on to Roast for tea so you see I am the cook, Uncle has been reading pretty well all day. While we have been out branding I have been the Clerk keeping the number & sex of all the foals, so I have just gave them to Uncle he puts them down in his Book. Now I am writing this, the Cows have just come in & are kicking up a big noise Bellowing & calves singing out. The niggers are all pretty lazy today, they were up pretty well all night, Cribbering there are a lot of fresh ones come here, & are camped down the creek, they got all the Orful & head of the Bullock & it seems to make them drunk, they always kick up a terrible noise the night we kill, even the ones that get good tucker, will go down & have a feed of the rubbish they cook in the ashes, if one of the boys see an old Jew Lizard they will get off their horse & kill him & carry it with them until night & then cook it in the ashes. I put on a Roast of Beef & cooked it for tea after tea we read the papers until bedtime.

June 10 Got up & cooked the breakfast, Steak & Eggs, after breakfast we pulled up the heifers & milked them. Albert & Uncle shod horses, I was Cook, cooked Turnips & stewed plums for dinner. After dinner I started to write but the flies were too bad & Frank Wallace turned up so I gave it best. He brought a bottle of Brandy a smoked leg of mutton & some Beacon he always brings something for us when he comes. I put on another Roast towards evening, & we had fryed Turnip Tops Smoked leg of mutton, Roast Beef, Radishes, Cress, Butter for tea, not too bad oh & Buns. After Tea I started writing, Albert wrote a couple of letters & Paddy one they all finished before I did, they all went to bed & left me, they all kept saying cut it short, but I knew you liked to get a long one so I kept going. After I finished yours I wrote to the porter at Oodnadatta & sent him the £1.0.0 for our packs which he forgot to charge us for, I was going to write up my diary but the lantern went out so I had to turn in.

June 11 Up at daylight, nice warm night I beleive it is beginning
to come summer again. I cooked the breakfast, before the most of
the others were up, after breakfast I pulled the heifers in with
the Gins help & Uncle, Albert was with Frank getting him a start,
he is going from here to Claraville to meet his packs & will go
from there to Ruby Gap & meet us there. We sent some Turnips &
Cress to old man Wallace with him, as they would all be in seed
by the time we get back again. After he started I made the
butter while Albert got our packs ready we take all the butter
we can get hold of with us went & got Turnips for dinner then had
a bath & a change, & then wrote up this before dinner. After
dinner Albert & I started on our trip again. We took 3 boys & 14
horses got to Box Hole & camped, we fryed steak & Beacon for our
tea & finished up with buns. We had no cooking to do so we lay
down & talked til we had nothing left to talk about, then we
tried to read, but the firelight was not good enough so we turned
in at 8. I woke at 12.30 & could not sleep any more.

June 12 Up at daybreak cooked steak & Beacon again the horses
split up in three lots, so they were a long time getting them, I
took 2 boys & started out to look for any cattle that may of been
left behind when we shifted the mob, we got on some fresh tracks
& followed them 3 miles & got them up a Gorge in the ranges. One
was a big red Bull that we had not seen since we put him there we
got about 25 & brought them to the Gap in the Range, Albert was
here with the packs & had dinner ready for the boys, gave them
their dinner & started them with the cattle. Then we cooked ours
& had it at our ease, then I rounded up the horses whilst Albert
packed up started for Giles Hole at 12.10 we did not overtake the
boys as we expected to, they said they were there a good while,
they had knocked a duck on the waterhole, & caught an Opossum*,
we got to Giles Hole at 4, Albert took some flour we are leaving
behind up to the shed, I made a fire dug a soakage, & put on some
meat, then darned my rug, the packhorse ran up against a dry
Mulga tree & got it caught, she pulled the tree up by the roots
so it is no wonder it tore, then we had our tea, the boys cooked
the duck & Opossum & eat them, they only just warm them, cant
wait until they are properly cooked. We made two dampers & put
them in the ashes to cook, whilst we were standing by the fire
we heard a bell it was Frank coming, it was pitch dark how he
got over the rocks in the dark goodness knows, he said he just
let his horse find its own road, we made him a pot of tea as he
was very cold, then had a bit of a yarn, they all turned in, I
made my bed then sat on it & wrote this.

June 13 Nice warm night up at daybreak we had breakfast & as the
horses were close we got a good start, we got to Clancy Gap at 11
stopped & had dinner, as there is no water further on, filled the
Canteens & waterbags & started for the Hale river, we struck it &
followed it down a long way but could find no water to camp on,
was just beginning to think of camping without it when one of the
niggers found a small hole full enough to give the horses a
drink, we have a good mob 23, 14 of ours & 9 of Franks. We sent
two boys away out to a Gap in the range that leads out East to
see if there were any horses out there they got back after dark,
said a mare & a foal had gone out in the rain, they tell by the
tracks, we made 2 dampers & boiled 2 Billys of meat, it takes us
all our time cooking at night, there are 8 of us Frank & Albert
have turned in I am waiting for the second lot of meat to finish
boiling, to take it of, then I will turn in to. While we were
sitting around the fire, we heard a noise like a tank rolling up
the Creek very loud, it must of been a land slip, this Creek runs in between 2 high ranges only a Gap where a smaller Creek runs into where you can get out. I made a mistake in the last four dates put May instead of June.

June 14 Sunday nice warm night. Up early I fried some steaks for Frank & myself Albert is off his tucker this morning eat to much fat steak last night. Then they took 2 boys & went down the creek after some horse tracks that have gone down, I stopped at the camp with the others, while they were away I cleaned up the camp & sewed my Trousis, then lay down & read the paper. They came back at 9.30 got no horses, packed up I went with the packs up the Hale Albert & Frank went out each side. Got to a big waterhole where Uncle & I camped when we were down here for cattle, had dinner, the niggers got a lot of Wegites® them grubs out of the gum trees & another Jew & cooked them. After dinner we split up the same as this morning we made for a yard 10 mile up the Hale, I got 13 horses on the way, took them to the yard & put them in. None of the others got any, we got in about 3.30, then Frank came in so he & I went up to Ruby Gap to look at it & at the Spring it is the only spring around here. The Gap is 8 miles through & just like two walls each side you cant ride through it now since the rains it is all quicksand, we tied our horses up & walked up to the spring. I went down up to my knee in it it looks quite solid, but as soon as you touch it down you go, when we got back to camp, Albert was in he got no horses, we put on some meat to boil, then fried steak & Beacon for our tea.

June 15 Up at daybreak, fried the last of our steak for breakfast, saddled our horses, let the others out of the yard boxed them with our workers, & took them all up the creek a mile on to a flat & left 3 niggers to mind them, the rest of us went out to look for horses, we rode a couple of hours without seeing any sign of any, then Albert & I scrambled up on top of a high range, & see about 30 away down on a flat, there were a lot of Franks Cream ponies with them, so as it was all little hills around we got up close before they see us & got all around them, they took off up the side of the range but as there were 5 of us we soon had them, the ponies are terrors to get away if they can. Frank & I got in the lead Albert & 2 boys behind & took them down to all the other horses, Frank stopped with them while Albert & I went into camp & got the dinner ready as we had a few minutes to spare we got our meat out & cleaned it, we have to clean it every day or it would be alive in two days. Frank brought all the horses close to camp left 2 boys with them while we had dinner then he went out & sent them in, Albert sent 2 away out East to look for 2 Cows & calves that have gone out there gave them some tucker in a bag to last them until tomorrow night. Then we packed up & started for the top of the Camel paddock 9 miles. When we got down the Creek we came on some fresh tracks so Albert & a boy followed them, they took up a gully between 2 ranges so Albert let 2 boys follow them & came back to us, they cant get out of these gullies until they get to the paddock, we went up one further over all you got to do is some ride in front to steady them & some behind to drive them along they cant get away either side, when we got close to the fence we could see Uncle & a couple of boys on a hill waiting for us, he said the boys had gone past a good while with the others, he said he left the gate open, so they would go through, but when we got up we found they had gone over it & pulled about 20 posts out, so we had to go to
camp & unpack, Harding & Pepperall & a man by the name of Smith were in the camp, & a lot of boys, there are 16 of us all together, they have all come for their horses, & as there are so many of us we will be able to muster it in one sweep. After we unpacked Albert, Smith, & I & 3 boys went back & put all the fence up, the niggers are dabsters at sinking holes, places where you can't sink with a shovel for stones, they will make one in no time with a stick & their hands, we got back to camp at sundown, boiled our pots had tea then made a damper, & went over to the others fire & pitched. Pepperall had turned in he has had to much whisky so I went & warned to him for an hour, came back & took the damper out went back & sat with Uncle & the rest until 9 then made my bed & lay on it & wrote up this, it is 10 now I will turn in.

June 16 Up at daybreak, it took a good while to get a start such a lot of horses to find. We all spread out in a line about 300 yards apart, & mustered the paddock in one sweep, we must of had 250 going through the gap to the yard we had a string on of 1/2 a mile, we got them yarded by dinnertime, had dinner, went up to the yards & drafted Hardings, Pepperalls, old Wallaces, & Walkingtons, out & got them a start, they went as far as the yards in the paddock & camped there last night, then we drafted out the Town horses, just got 50 that is a long way short of 200 but we reckon to get 30 or 40 more. Uncle, Albert & 2 boys took them back to the paddock, Frank & I drafted his Town horses then, he got 20, then he & I took his lot up too, he turned a pair of Cream coloured ponies out in the paddock, he sold them to a man from Euralia he came up here to the goldfield & hired some horses off Frank to travel about with, these two ponies were amongst them, he liked them so well that he gave him £32.0.0 for them, I reckon they would bring about £24.0.0, or 25 down below, they are not preety ponies, we are to take them down as far as Terowie. Came back & had tea, then all got round the fire & talked horse until bedtime, it has been a cold East wind all day & cloudy tonight.

June 17 Did not get up so early this morning. After we had breakfast we went to the yards drafted all the foals & branded them, about 20 had dinner, drafted all the horses that they did not want & let them go, run them through again & took all Frank Wallaces out, through again & kept all Uncles best Blood mares he is going to take about 30 of the best to Loves Creek, to breed from, they are all he cares about, he dont trouble about the draughts, Albert is the Draught man. Caught 3 colts we are going to break in, one of them is a young blood Stallion 3 year old, he is a lovely colt, the last of General Stuarts. After we had sidelined & hobbled them, we performed an operation on an old mares eye, she had a big lump as big as your fist growing out of it, so we cut it out Frank is going to take her into the Alice to work in a dray & try and cure it with Treacle. Went back to camp washed some meat & put it on to boil had tea then all got round the fire it is quite cloudy. Turned in about 9.

June 18 Up early, had breakfast, got my pack ready, I am going to take 2 boys & take Frank Wallaces horses all the mares & foals back to Ruby Gap, will have a look round to see if there are any more of ours there. Albert & Frank will take the blood mares to Loves Creek. Frank will go home from there Albert will come back tomorrow & bring a load of meat. Uncle & Paddy & 2 boys stop at
the yard & handle the colts until we get back. Albert & Frank started first then I started with my mob, I had to go through the Camel paddock, had to be very careful as I had 3 foals in the mob that we had weaned yesterday, going to send their mothers to Town & as they were in the paddock I had to look out, I used to go ahead & drive all the horses out of the road, so got through safely. When we got through the fence I kept one boy & sent the other on with the horses, told him to go along steady as we had to draw half a strain of wire into the fence some one had taken half a strain of the bottom wire out, we brought a coil with us on the pack. After we had put it in we started after the horses we caught up to some about a mile down the track, kept on going but could not catch up to the others, until we got about 3 miles, as soon as he left us the ponies bolted & he could not catch them, there are some of those Northern Territory ponies Cream with pink eyes, they are regular little devils on a run, there is one here that they cant catch, we got to the Gap at 12.30. Sent one boy to see if he could see any fresh tracks going through the gap, I made a fire & boiled the pots while the other one hobbled out the horses. The other one came back & said there were 3 fresh tracks, so we had dinner, while we were having dinner I see them pulling leaves of a plant, I asked them what it was they said Tobacco®, when I looked at it I could see it was just the same as old Riedel grows, it grows wild out here. As soon as we finished dinner I took one boy left the other to look after the horses & followed the fresh horse tracks. We came on them in about 1/2 an hour, we rode round them but a long way off, kept getting closer until we had them, they are 3 of Uncles bloods I think, 3 nice horses, we got them back to our other saddle horses packed up & started for Admingina yard the first yard we done up when we started mustering just before we got to the yard we got a lot more horses, but they are some that we had before and all the foals are branded, but as they were a bit wild we yarded them to give them a night in the yard will quieten them a bit, it was just about Sundown when we got here so we made our camp in a bit of a sandy Creek close to the yard. I took a Canteen & went up to the spring & filled it, it is about a 1/2 miles from the yard, it is a pretty place, when I got back the boys had the pots boiling so I made the tea, & we had it, put everything straight made my bed close to the fire, & lay down & wrote this by the firelight, I had 2 days to write up as I had no time yesterday. I forgot to say that after we had finished in the yards yesterday I had a good wash & went to put a clean shirt on, it was the one Fred May lent me at Slate hole when it was raining, when I looked at it the buttons were only hanging on by one thread & the button holes were not sewn round, so I had to set to work to sew the buttons on & make the button holes, it was a bit of a puzzle at first but I soon found out the trick of throwing the cotton over the needle, & made a very good job, Frank was watching me he said I was as good as a woman at it. They had all the tea ready by the time I was done, this is the first night that I am camped by myself.

June 19 Up at daylight, very frosty, I slept well I one side of the fire & the 2 boys on the other, they kept getting up & piling wood on I just lay & watched them. I baked some Johney cakes for breakfast, after breakfast we left the horses in the yard & went a long way round looking for cattle & horses that we had not branded, we hunted about until dinner time but could not find any, so we went back to camp had dinner, had a bit of a spell
then started for Giles Hole with the horses, we got there about 2
put them in the yard. Uncle & Paddy and all the boys were there
riding & handling the 3 colts, Uncle came & had a look at the 3 I
brought, they are all thoroughbreds they had gone from Loves
Creek, some of his best ones. Then we put 2 niggers & Paddy on
the colts & got them all out, rode them up & down the creek, none
of them offered bucked, then we shod 2 of them, they stand quite
quiet if you shoe them as soon as you ride them, one of them is
the one that kicked me while we were shoeing. Albert turned up
with a load of meat, hobbled the colts out put on meat & boiled
the pots had tea cooked dampers & sat round the fire until 9
occlock then turned in, I see a white wild dog today.

June 20 Up preety early, very heavy frost, we had breakfast,
wanted to get an early start, but the horses did not come in
until 8.30, & then one was missing, gave the boys their break­
fast & started one of them to track her up & told him to catch up
up to us, while they were packing up I & a boy took the 3 horses I
brought in yesterday & put them in the paddock, came back & got a
start at 9.15, rode the 3 colts. Albert & I & 3 boys are going
away South again to see if we can get any more horses, Uncle &
Paddy & 2 boys are going after those 14 horses, that left Loves
Creek a month ago, we got 8 miles on the road before the boy
cought up to us with the horse, got to Clancy gap at 12.35, had
dinner & started again let 2 colts run loose put a light pack on
the one that kicked me, he is a bit rusty, so we will give him
plenty of work. Uncle I & 3 boys took the loose horses & packs,
Albert Paddy & 2 boys scouted out to see if they could find any
horses. We got to camp just at Sundown I went on ahead to look
for a good camp as we had used all the wood round the old one, I
found a good spot in the bed of the Creek nice & sandy, plenty of
Gidge wood on the banks & we dug a Soakage lovely water, we had
just finished unpacking when Albert rode up, did not see a horse,
we are camped on the Pullya Pullya where we built the first
yard, we made 2 big fires had tea, boiled meat & baked 2 dampers,
cut grass for beds, & turned in about 9.

June 21 Sunday shortest day, very frosty. Up early had break­
fast, boys in early with the horses, gave them their breakfast, &
started to pack up, Albert & I had our horses packed & ready long
before Uncle & Paddy. I helped them Paddy is awful slow, we could
not catch one of the colts, the boys let him go so we drove them
all up to the yard & caught him there, 'my friend,' we cut out
our horses & split here, Albert & I to go South Uncle & Paddy to
go East. We kept going until 12.30 came about 20 miles to the
last yard, we had a job to find a camp as the prickels are very
bad, we found a preety clear spot close to a drop of water, un­
packed & had dinner, while we were having dinner the horses went
a good way up the swamp & found some more water, we sent the boys
after them when they came back, they said there was plenty water
up there & a dry claypan to camp on so we sent 2 out to have a
look round for horses or tracks, & we packed up & shifted our
camp on to the claypan, made a good fire, washed some meat & put
it on & cleaned all the other, then lay down & read the paper for
a while, got the little boy to get us some grass to lay on as the
claypan is as hard as a clay floor, boiled the pots no meat for
tea, bread & butter & Treacle, just as we started tea the 2 boys
came in no horses but plenty of tracks, made a damper & baked it,
then made a big fire of Gidge, & turned in.
June 22  Out at daybreak, pretty frosty, boiled the pots & had breakfast by sunrise, the boys came in with the horses, 2 were missing gave them their breakfast, Albert & I & 2 big ones started out south, left one little fellow to go & find the 2 horses, & fetch water for us. We went down South East 12 miles could not see any sign of horses saw where a lot had been watering, but the water had just dried up, we turned & went North then made for camp thought they had all gone out of these parts, when we got within 6 miles of the camp, the boys see a mob of fresh tracks, so we followed them up & got 12 in a little belt of scrub, when they see us they off but we all had good horses, & soon rounded them up, they were very wild at first, quite a fresh lot Albert had forgotten about them. There are 4 nice Town Colts in them, we got to the yard & yarded them by 1 had dinner, then sent 2 boys down the swamp to see if they could see any fresh tracks that way, we lay down & read the papers, but the flies would not leave us in peace, so we had to come back to the fire & get in the smoke, & as it was a pretty hot day it was not very pleasant near it. The boys came back they only see one fresh track, it must be the track of a horse we got in a muster yesterday, he is a 6 year old horse & they can't catch him, they had him once & put him in the paddock but he got out, we had him rounded up nicely yesterday with a lot we had before, but there was a Stallion in it & he kept chasing him out, so at last he made one dart & cleared, Albert after him, but could not get near him, he made straight down here so I expect these are his tracks, we would like to get him he is a lovely Indian remount & would bring £30.0.0 in Town. I cleaned meat & put it on to boil, got some big logs made tea, sat yarning & reading by a big fire Albert turned in at 7.30 I read for a while longer, made my bed, lay on it & wrote this, & will now turn in.

June 23 Up at daybreak the cold hunted me out I let the fire burn too low it was too cold to get out & stoke it, I was up once & done it. I boiled the pots then Albert turned out & we had breakfast. 2 of the boys came in with some of the horses, 3 of them were missing so one boy tracked them up he did not get back until 9 oclock they were making straight back, we packed up while he had his breakfast. Then went to the yard & let the others out, they were a bit of a job at first, wanted to bolt right a [or] wrong after a while they steadied down. Then Albert & one boy went away East to see if they could find any more, I & 2 boys took this lot on, we arranged a place to stop at for dinner before he left, we got to it at 10 minutes to 12 boiled our pots & gave one boy his dinner while the other looked after the horses, then sent him out & let the other have his, Albert did not get in until 1 oclock, they got on some fresh tracks & followed them a couple of hours before they found out it was the same mob as they got yesterday. After they had their dinner we started for the second yard got here at 4, put them in the yard, went to the camp, carried wood cleaned the soakage out, boiled meat then had tea, made a damper, cut grass for our beds. Albert is very much afraid of getting burnt with a grass bed & so close to the fire, I said I would chance that, sooner than spend another cold night.

June 24 We were up early as we wanted to get an early start, we had our breakfast, got our packs done up, but as usual the brutes of horses done us bad, the boys did not get in with them until 8.30 then one was missing the brute that goes every night, while
they were having their breakfast Albert & I saddled two horses & went up to the yard & let the mob out, & brought them down to the camp, then I stopped with them while he went & packed up the horses, sent one of the boys after the one that was missing, told him where to meet us for dinner, we started had gone a couple of miles when we spotted a mob of 6 horses, but they see us, & started. Albert reckoned they would go north & rode out that side, but they just went the opposite South, so the boy in front took after them but as he was mounted on a colt he could not catch them. I was also on a colt, the one they got at Corratiperra but I got him going & soon headed them, but they had got hot & would not stop, crossed behind me then got in the Mulga scrub, I after them over bushes under trees, straight into them I had half a tree hanging round my neck once, I run them over 4 mile, had them beat & my colt to neither of us could hardly raise a canter, I reckoned I had them when 3 more fresh ones rushed out from another scrub & started the lot again so as I could not see anyone coming to help me, I pulled, as I knew it was no good trying to stop them as my horse was done. I turned round & started back at a very slow pace I had gone a mile when I see Albert, & all the rest of the horses on a flat, he could not follow me for when the mob that we had see me after the others they wanted to go too & it took him & the two boys all their time to keep them together, so after he got them rounded up he tracked me up, he was wild that he could not come & help me, as he was on a good horses, he said curse the colts I say when we are horse mustering, & the old mare that cleared out as if the other boy would of been here, he could of come & helped me, we made for Williams Gap then got there for dinner. The boy was there with the old mare Albert promised her a night in the yard tonight, we put one boy at one end of the Gap & we stopped at the other & let the mob have a feed, after we finished dinner, we made for Giles Hole passed a lot of horses on the road, horses we had had before all nice & quiet, we got to the yards just at Sundown Albert & 2 boys took the horses up to the yard while I unpacked, carted some good wood for the night boiled the pots had tea, boiled meat cooked some Johnney cakes & then turned in.

June 25 Up before daylight, had our breakfast gave the boys theirs before they went for the horses sent 2 after them, kept the biggest one to help us, we went up to the yard, hobbled the old mare out drafted out 3 that we branded & Docked, cut out the Adelaide Colts, went to the camp got our horses to take them up to the paddock, Albert & 2 boys took them up I only went up to give them a start as they were pretty cold & lively, then I packed up the horses & had them ready by the time they got back. We got a start by 9 to South Gap, I & a boy took the packs down the creek Albert & the other 2 boys went out each side, to get all the cattle they could, we want to take a couple home to kill, I got a mob on the track & took them along with me, I went through the Gap with the packs left the boy this side to stop the cattle from going out, I unpacked the horses, & hobbled most of them, one Colt I could not catch so I run him up the side of a range amongst a lot of stones, thought I would get the best of him there but he had the best of me, he made a dart to get past me, I run to stop him put my foot on a round stone it rolled & sent me flying down the range on top of a lot of rocks, my jaws clapped as though you clapped your hands, I lay for a bit then got up & begin to feel myself, to see if there were any bones broken but I found they were alright. I had a cut on the jaw
below my ear & some scratches on the neck & a bruise on top of the shoulder. I shook myself together & lit a fire put the pots on, then Albert & the boys came in with more cattle, we had dinner & got a start for Loves Creek with the killers at 12.30 we sent the packs on ahead with one boy stopped with the cattle until they steadied down then left the other 2 boys with them, told them to bring them along steady. We caught the packs up & jogged along, when we got 12 miles from home we dropped across a mob of horses we wanted so we took them along with us, we got home unpacked took the mob we got over & put them in the yard, kept one horse saddled to help the boys yard the cattle when they come, made our tea & were having it when the boys came with the cattle so Albert had to jump on the horse & go & help them yard them. I finished my tea & went & sat by the fire as I was all of a shiver & my head was splitting from the fall. Albert was not long yarding the cattle he finished his tea then sat by the fire, my arm began to get very painful, as if I had sprained it I lost all use of it so Albert made my bed up in Uncles tent, pulled my boots & helped me in, I could not go to sleep with the pain for a long time but at last it began to ease off & I went of to sleep. I woke and thought it was daylight but when I looked at my watch it was only 12.30, I could not sleep any more after that but I was nice & warm.

June 26 I got up at Sunrise Albert said I was to stop in bed until he came & helped me to dress, but thank goodness my arm was better I could use it only very sore on top of the shoulder, if I had some St Jacobs Oil it would soon put me right but I could not get it Albert tried when he went to Claraville, but they had none. I put the pots on for porridge & Eggs, then Albert came out of his tent he was surprised to see me up, we had a good breakfast of porridge & Eggs & butter. When we got home last night we asked the niggers if they had been up for the mailbag they said they went up Tuesday & Wensday & it never came so they never went yesterday, Albert sent one up first thing this morn­ing. After breakfast we sawed of a hollow tree to make a meat cask as the flies get at it too much, we just got it cut off when the nigger came with the mailbag so the coach must of been 2 days late, so we went into Alberts tent, it is too cold in the kitchen today it is the nastiest coldest day since I have been up here, very cold East wind, we sorted out the letters only one from you again none from Ern or Sleader, a couple of Telegrams one for Wm Coulthard & one for Coulthard & Wallace, so Albert said I had better open the one with Wm Coulthard on it, it was for Uncle from Mayoh Miller advising him to bring his horses to Kapunda, & the other was from Barker Bros telling them to bring them down as soon as possible as they were a big price now, I think they will take them to Barker Bros this time as Albert wrote to them about them. As we did not know if the mail went back this morning or not we did not send the mailbag back, the coach is due at the Alice at 12 oclock today so I dont suppose he would stop long at Arltunga but go yesterday or early this morning. After we had finished reading the letters I went & made butter, they had a lot of cream saved it was very stiff so I had to get Albert to help me churn it. I churn it in a Billican made about 4 lbs then we had dinner only Bread & Butter all the meat is gone until we kill tonight, we have a couple of Roosters to kill but did not feel up to it today. After dinner we caught a colt to break in, just caught him left 2 niggers to handle him, came back &
finished the meat cask got the Bullock in the yard to kill ground
the knives & went & killed him finished just at dusk, gave all
the niggers some of him to cook. Albert asked me if I was going
to have any I said no bread & butter would do me so then he said
he would not have any either, we made our Tea & had it, there is
some of the tinned meat here yet that I brought with me from the
fields & we found a Tin of sheeps Tongues amongst them & had it
for tea they were very good. Then we went to Albert's tent, he
read the papers while I wrote up this I was three days behind.

June 27 Did not get up very early, it was a cold windy morning,
we cut down the Bullock, Albert cut him up I salted him & put it
in the new cask we made, it was a preety cold job, but it did not
take us long, we fried some steak for breakfast, went up &
handled the colt, he is a nasty brute he will kick or strike at
you if you throw a piece of bag at him he would paw at it first
then kick at it. After we had learnt him to lead we left him for
a while to get over his temper, Albert put a top on the meat
cask, I cooked the dinner, Turnips steak & stewed prunes & pears.
we had a good dinner lay down & read for 1/2 & hour, pulled the
shoes off most of the horses to give their feet a bit of a spell.
then went up to the colt & put the saddle on him & put a box on.
the boys were a bit gallad of him one wanted the other to ride
him, but he did not buck, rode him round the yard a few times.
then took the saddle of him led him to water & hobbled him out.
lay down & read the paper for an hour, went & cleaned out the
troughs in the garden, Albert fried the steak I made a Lettuce
Salad cream & Vinegar & Sugar, Albert thought it was splendid
went out to the fire & he played the Cordian then we went to bed.

June 28 Did not get up until sunrise had our breakfast, cleaned
out the horses trough, Got an Oxtail & Kidneys ready for a Stew,
cleaned our boots, went to the Garden troughs & had a good bath.
my was it not cold, put on clean clothes. I got a few Turnips &
Onion Tops & put them on the stew, Albert made a bit of pastry
for the top I set the table & we had dinner. We had a good meal
Oxtail stew & stewed fruit, after dinner we went for a ride down
Loves Creek, I wanted to have a look at a well Albert sunk about
6 miles down. We want to water the mob for Town there one night.
It is a splendid well 45 feet deep & any amount of water they
were going to put all the cattle on it, but just as they finished
it the rain came, & they have not used it yet, it was a lovely
ride down the creek high cliffs on each side for 2 miles then it
begins to open out on to little flats, I said to Albert it would
be a lovely place for a picnic. We got home in time to get our
Tea before it got dark then we read the paper for a while but it
got so cold in the tent, so we went & sat by the fire & made more
tea & had supper, & turned in.

June 29 Up a little after daylight, it was too cold to lay in
bed, the water in the basin was one solid block of ice 3 inches
thick, cooked porridge & Steak for breakfast. Then I got my pack
ready Albert shod a horse for me, I am going to have a trip round
Winneckes before we have the final muster for Town, & try & get 3
head of cattle that went from Claravill belonging to us. I cook-
ed a Cabbage & a Roast for dinner. we had it at 11.30 then I
made a start, Two quiet horses & two colts. I took a black boy
with me he rode a colt belonging to Macdonald at the Cyanide, he
is always asking for him so we are taking him in, we put the pack
on the other colt. When we got a couple of miles from home
Mac['s] colt stick up so I had to get behind him with the whip, he came along alright then until we got half way up the big hill then he stopped again, I had to get off my horse & crawl back behind him again, the boy got off & led him up we only got a few mile further when he stopped again, so we pulled the saddle off him & let him run, & the boy rode the spare horse, he is an awful sulky brute, we got to the Cyanide just at Sundown, we watered the horses at the well & hobbled them out, there is splendid [feed?] all round the place then I boiled the pots at Fred Mays fire gave the boy his supper, & had mine in Mays tent. Then we sat at the fire, three or 4 more men turned up, there was May & Macdonald, Wright, Cooley & Muller12 you know Jack Muller father that was down at Dr. Scholzes, about 9 oclock they all left & we turned in I slept in Mac['s] tent.

June 30 Slept well nice & warm mud walls13. Got up put the pots on, the boy came in with the horses close handy had breakfast with May, then packed up & started, heard that Josh was at Slate hole with Peperall & Harding so went there, when I got there I only see Peperall all the others have gone to Winnickes, so I started for there too, had dinner on the road, then went to Ben Walkingtons camp 4 miles this side of the Goose that is where Pep said they would be camped. When I got there found they had gone, so I went on to the Goose, that is where the main part of the Town is. Went to the store & asked where Alf was camped they showed me up a little Creek, so I went up he was just coming from the Well with a couple of Canteens of water, he knew me at once, & said my word you are looking well, I hobbled the horses out & had tea, then went for a look round my word the place has altered tents everywhere & shafts with Windlasses on & pullies worked by a horse hauling the stuff out of the mines. There are 2 stores, a Boarding house, Barbers shop, a Grog shop & a lot of other shops, 2 Chemists, there are 7 women on the field, it is a rum sight all Canvas & Tin & Bushes. Alf goes to work at 8 knocks off at 4 & gets £3.12.0 a week. The fever has broken out, one died & another shot himself so if that gets a start it will rage up here. Alf told me that Josh & Walkington had gone through just before I came, they are going up to Frew river & went out to Winnickes Waterhole to camp last night. We had a look in at the store I got a bottle of St Jacobs Oil & a lb of biscuits then had a look in at a Gambling Saloon you ought to see the money on the table, you would think the country was full of it, then went back to the camp & sat by the fire until 9 oclock, then Alf went into his tent & I dozed down by the fire, he has got a mate camping with him, so the two fill up the tent.

1. Barrow Creek; many Territory towns are named in this way - the Alice, or the Tennant for Tennant Creek.
2. Will's spelling of corroboree.
3. A name for the Bearded Dragon.
4. Brush-tailed possum.
5. Witchetty grubs; Will does not seem to have tried them.
There were several Smiths recorded at Arltunga, and this could be either John, (Spring-heeled Jack) mostly associated with the wheel Fortune mine, or William, (Walter's father) from White Range, both of whom were long time residents on the field.

Known to the Aborigines as mingulpa, after preparation this was used as a chewing tobacco.

The wild dog, or dingo, is usually a golden-brown colour, which is why Will would make a special note of an albino.

Gidgee wood is prized for producing very hot and long lasting coals - useful when damper was made every evening, and also for the cold winter nights.

Pulya Pulya Creek flows south-easterly into the Hale River, and is well east of Giles Creek.

The context suggests that the Aborigines were a bit frightened of the horse, and may be an alternative use of the colloquial galah, meaning an idiot.

These were all employed at the Works; George Wright was the assayer from 1901 until his death in 1906, Cooley is probably M. Colley one of the original builders of the battery but now more involved in mining, and John Mullar or Muller (the spelling varies) worked there from 1898 to 1910.

The "houses" that survive around the Works area vary from quite substantial stone walled structures to minor "foundations" that once had timber or canvas walls. It sounds as if Will was able to camp in one of the more substantial buildings.
JULY

On visiting Winnecke's Depot, Will finds that Josh is in the area, and is able to catch up with him on July 1st, before moving back to Claraville to chase up some cattle, on the 2nd. He found that some of their horses had also been found in a muster, and had to be taken back to Loves Creek. He set off on July 3rd, having dinner at Paddy's Hole where about 8 men were "boosing"; he camped with his uncle and Paddy that night before getting back home the following day. There he prepared for one last muster, and wrote another letter home, describing his visit to Winnecke and mentioning that Wallis was now suffering losses caused by the number of men leaving the district without paying their bills.

Will and Albert set out on July 6th, during an especially cold spell, heading out for the Cleary River and Prosser's camp, which they reached on July 8th. They were then forced to hang around for several days, waiting for Prosser to appear before taking the horses found in his area; Albert in particular finds this very boring and depressing. Fed up, they finally leave with the 27 horses on July 12th, without seeing Prosser, heading back towards Giles Hole where they rejoined Uncle and Paddy. On July 16th uncle and Albert went off to check "down South" while Will and Paddy remained in camp - largely to protect their supply of meat from the dingoes; Paddy stayed too, as they felt Will would be too lonely on his own. The next day Will made a "brownie" in the camp oven, which turned out well - throughout the diaries, Will gives quite detailed information about his growing domestic skills.

After checking the Box Hole area, Will set off for a last look around Ruby Gap, on July 18th, and met a group of 20 Aborigines, heading for Paddy's Hole, and a fight with the Aborigines there. They were a sufficiently wild looking lot to remind Will of his isolation, and he found no more horses. Everyone met up at Pulla Pulla on the 21st, then Will was sent off again on his own to check Prosser's camp and found a few more horses on his return, and the muster was more or less finished. On July 27th uncle and Will returned to Loves Creek, while Albert and Paddy set off with the mob to water them just south of the homestead. Will wrote one last, short letter to Harriet in his diary, saying that the muster was a bit disappointing as they only had 88 horses, plus 34 of Frank Wallis' and 6 of old T.A. Wallis.

On July 28th they begin the trip south with the horses, going across country rather than via Alice Springs, to save about 100 miles. Albert came with them for the first few days before returning home; Will breaks his watch during a night watch, and by July 31st they had reached the Hayes 'dam, and knew their route from then on.

The diary

July 1 Had a good camp out at daylight we had breakfast, then Alf had to go to work so I packed up & made for the Waterhole to see if I could catch Josh before they started, I struck straight through the ranges & struck the road a 1/2 mile from the hole, so you can see I am getting a bit of a bushman, when I got to the Waterhole I see about a dozen camps all round & niggers by the
score. I had a look round while my horse was having a drink, & spotted Josh sitting down in his camp, I rode up towards him, he kept looking at me, I got up to him & said good day, he said Good day, I had another look at him, & said well ? Josh dont you know me, Good God Bill is it you then he was not sure it was. So if he dont know me I must be getting fat, I weighed in at the store last night, & weigh 136 lbs so I have gained 12 lbs. I unpacked will stop here today with them, two of their horses are gone so they have to wait until they find them, so wont start today. Walkington went over to the Goose so Josh & I were left to ourselves, we had a good yarn then cooked a couple of dampers, & then had dinner. Just as we finished dinner his blackboy rode up he sent him to the White range yesterday for his letters, the day he got here he went to the post to get them & they had just sent them into Arltunga Josh passed the man on the road that was taking them in, so now he is reading them while I am writing this, he got 2 from his wife one she wrote in April & one May. He yawned all the afternoon, had tea at Sundown, just finished when Walkington came, sat round the fire until 10 oclock there were 6 of us 3 strangers came into our camp, until bedtime.

July 2 Cold East wind this morning. I go[t] up & put my pots on Josh was in no hurry, but as I have to get to Claraville tonight, I will have to shift along. The boy came in with only 3 horses Mac colt was away, his feet were awful sore so I did not hobble him, that is how they return kindness shown them, he started out after him again, came back in an hour with him, he was off back, so that made us an hour late, I packed up preety quick said Goodby to Josh & started, travelled along preety well until 11.30 stopped for dinner, while we were having dinner a Buggy with 3 horses in & 2 men & a woman passed, the woman sung out Good afternoon, then a Bike passed, packed up & started for Slate hole. Got there at 3.30, I see Laughton he had just come in from mustering he has just about got all Bradens horses he got 4 of Uncles & 5 of Franks, & wanted me to take them away as the yard was too full. I told him I would see, as I wanted to go after 3 head of cattle that had gone back. Then I started for Claraville, got there about 4.30. When I got there they told me that Uncle had just gone a couple of hours, he had had dinner there, he was coming in off the Marshall he only got five horses, old Bobs mob of 14 turned in -towards Prossers country, they reckoned Albert & I would get them but we did not. Old Wallace told Uncle that Laughton had some of his, & also told him that I had been in at the Cyanide, so he said oh he will take the horses in then, he did not know that I was after the cattle. I sent the boy to follow his tracks to see if he went to the paddock on Loves Creek, he came back & said he had gone to the paddock, so I camped there, there was 80 lbs of flour here that Uncle ought to of taken with him but he forgot it, so I divided it & put it in my pack, it was a heavy load with all the rest of my things & I only had a colt to carry it but I had to take it for goodness knows when they will be back this way again. Old Wallace was not home when I got there, he went into the Cyanide after Uncle left, so I had tea with the man he has here, Ballingall1 his father used to be an old Commercial traveller down our way one time, we sat up until 8 then turned in I camped outside it was a very heavy dew, in the middle of the night I heard old Wallace coming home singing to himself he is preety well always tight now.

July 3 I was up at break of day boiled our pots & got everything
ready to get an early start, the boy got the horses, I was just going to have my breakfast when the old man came out, & kicked up a row would not hear of me going without coming in to breakfast, so I had to wait until they cooked some steak. Then I started back to Slate hole to get the horses, will have to leave the cattle, we cut the horses out & as Laughton was going into Macdonald colt, then went on to Paddys hole, stopped there for dinner. Old Harding & Peperall & 5 or 6 more were there Boosing, Curtis, Cave & Coes man has got a store there & any amount of grog so all they do is drink. This Curtis is Uncle Jims neighbour, after they had drunk a bottle of whisky they went to dinner old Joe Swift & Lewie Nichols were the cooks Steak & Ham. I had a good feed then packed & started for the Paddock, bought a pound Cake at the store 2/- it is in Tins, got to the paddock at 8 it is 8 miles from here, left the horses then went on 4 miles to the sheds at Giles Hole, left the flour here as we will want it here in a few days when we come out to finish mustering & we would only have to fetch it back. I was going on a few miles further to camp so as to get home early tomorrow but when I got down to the yards I found Uncle & Paddy there, Breaking in a mare they had got, she is a beauty but got one white eye, so that would spoil her for Adelaide. When I was at Paddys hole yesterday, a man came to me and asked me when he would find Uncle home I told him tomorrow he said he would come over to see him, he wants to buy a mob of horses, so they might sell them up here. We had supper & sat yarning until 9 o'clock then turned in.

July 4 Did not get up so early, it was white with frost, we had breakfast, the boys are after the horses still, a mob came in to water last night & all ours have gone with them. Uncle & Paddy are up at the yard with their colt, I am writing up this, was 3 days behind. I am starting for Loves Creek as soon as the horses come in, Uncle will start after dinner. Albert & I will have to start for Prossers at once, as we hear a lot of our horses are turning up at his muster, they told me they got 16 Town horses in one mob, but we think it must be Bobs mob, horses just coming. All in but one of mine, it did not come in until 10 so we had an early dinner & all started together rode the colt that they caught yesterday, got to Loves Creek just at dusk unpacked & hobbled the horses, then went & had a good tea it is pretty cold East wind. Sat by the fire until 9 then Uncle & Paddy went to bed Albert & I stopped until 9.30, he says he wont know what to do when I leave, as he missed me awful.

July 5 Got up just before Sunrise cold East Wind, made a big fire cooked a good pot of porridge for breakfast, it seems quite homely with 4 of us at the table. Went up to the yard & caught 2 more colts, Slipknot was in he is as fat as mud looks quite a different horse, I have not seen him since I came up until a week or so ago, left Uncle & Paddy with the colts Albert & I went shoeing getting ready to start for Prossers tomorrow. I boiled some plums for dinner, after dinner we went shoeing again, shod 4 today & 2 of them colts, not a bad Sundays work, then I started to write you a letter, just got one sheet full when Albert came to set the table for tea, so I knocked of intended to finish after tea, but it was too cold to sit writing we all sat around the fire until 9 then turned in.

July 6 Up as the Cocks were crowing another cold East Wind boiled
the porridge again Uncle sat by the fire reading. Albert got up after a while, but I had to go & rouse Paddy out for breakfast. We took our ropes & went & brought our colts in we put them over the Creek in hobbles last night then I got our packs ready while Albert shod 2 more horses. We sent a boy up to the Letterbox to see if the mail would be up to time today, as we wanted to get our letters before we started. I finished my letter, then made butter to take with us. Uncle brought some Turnips up to boil for dinner. Just cut the tops of & put them in the pot tails & all on had dinner, the boy came back from the letter box the mail had not arrived yet so we had to start without it. got a start at 2 got to Box hole at Sundown & camped had tea, baked a damper. Sat yarning for a while, made our beds. Albert turned in I wrote up my diary.

July 7 Out at daybreak had breakfast very heavy frost boys came in with half the horses. 3 went back 5 miles to the fence & when the boy got back with them we found that there was one still missing, it was 11 before we got them all, so we had dinner before we started. Albert made a watch chain out of bootlaces for me. We started at 12 & kept going until Sundown about 20 miles, camped had tea boiled meat & made a damper turned in about 8.

July 8 Up early cold wind this morning got the horses pretty early although the 3 that went back yesterday morning made homeward again last night, but did not get so far, we got a start at 8 went to Pulla Pulla watered the horses, then made for the Clarey river, got to it about 11 went on until 11.30 stopped for dinner. packed up & started at 1 got to Prossers yard about 3.30, no one about so we went up to his spring where he camps, he has got no tent or anything anywhere on the run is his home, but there was nobody there. We see 27 of our horses in a little paddock between the ranges, so thought that Froser had gone with his horses for Town & left ours here, we let them out & took them down & put them in the yard as they might get out of the paddock they were hanging over the fence a lot, We camped at the yard. After tea we went & had a look around their camp, there are a lot of things here still so we came to the conclusion that they must be about here yet. made a good fire & turned in at 8.

July 9 Very frosty again, horses went a good way last night, let the horses out of the yard, took them up through the paddock they were in yesterday & into another big one, we were making for home when we ran into about 40 of Prossers Town horses so we knew then that he was not gone so we turned round put the horses back in the little paddock we got them in & went down the Creek to a Waterhole, & camped. We will have to wait until he comes back, it is a bit of a nuisance as we have only 3 weeks left to get ours in. we had dinner, then I took a pair of new Moles & dipped them in water to shrink them as they are too big I burnt a big hole out of the bottom of them, had the bottoms turned up & a coal must of dropped in, then we made another watchchain. Albert is boiling another pot of tea. he is a terror on Tea, towards evening we took a walk down to the yard to see if anyone had turned up there, but there was no body about, went back to camp had tea poked about until 8 then turned in.

July 10 Did not get out until Sunrise as it was very frosty, the water froze in the dish after we had washed we had breakfast, the
boys too, then sent them after the horses, we lay down & read the papers we have read everything in them advertisements & all except the sermons & Albert said he would have to read them next if they dont soon come, this waiting is a terror it would soon drive a fellow mad, when the horses came we saddled up a couple & rode up to see if the horses were alright in the paddock, they were all there & we see Prossers tracks they went out East so Albert reckons they will be back tonight, we came back had dinner. I done some sewing & writing Albert read, we had tea. Albert made some Johnny cakes, we sat up making puzzels out of paper & Hand-kerchiefs until 9 then turned in.

July 11 I got up about daylight it was very cold but not frosty, I made the fire up boiled the pots fed the niggers, before Albert got up, he said he had a good mind to stop in bed, as there was nothing else to do. We put a Tin on a stone & started throwing at it to pass away the time, but our arms soon got too sore, so we got the revolver out & had some practice with that, we poked about until dinnertime had dinner, done some more Throwing, for Exercise, then got our horses & went for a bit of a ride. Then I went & had a good bath, it is getting on for Sundown Albert says if Prosser dont come tomorrow he will take the horses & clear, as we are wasting too much time, had tea, Albert got the Blues he would soon go mad here.

July 12 I got up & got breakfast ready then Albert turned out, the boys were a long time after the horses, they went over 4 miles towards home & when they got back one was still missing, the one that always clears out this is her country, so I suppose she is off to look for her mates, the horses are like us dont seem to like it here. Albert wrote a note telling Prosser we took the horses, & took all the meat we had left & took it down to his camp & hung it up for him. We had dinner at 11.30 Albert & a boy went up & got the horses out of the paddock, & tied the letter on a stick in the slip panel so that they could see it when they went to open them, I packed up just finished when they came with the horses so we cleared, we picked the old mare that cleared up on the road, were going to stop at a yard on the Hale but it was to early when we got there so we pushed on to the yard at Adminazina, it was just dark when we got there we came 25 mile, yarded the horses then sent the boys up to the spring with the saddle horses & to fill the Canteens, Albert & I got a good supply of wood, as it was preety cold, we had to wait a good 1/2 hour before they came back. it is very rough up to the spring, so they would have to go very steady. I soon boiled the pots when they came & we had a good tea, it is lovely water, it was 9 when we turned in.

July 13 Got up & got the breakfast ready before Albert got up, he says he will take it out of the blankets while I am here as he will soon have to do it all himself, gave the boys theirs, before they started for the horses, as it is cold & a pot of tea will warm them, one came in with half the horses all the other brutes are making back to Giles Hole the other boy got 3 more horses, 2 still away we will pick them up on the road in, we packed up & started got close to Giles Hole before we got the 2 horses got in about a quarter to 10, Paddy was just off to meet Uncle, he went out & camped, & was coming in this morning with all the horses he got, he left Paddy here to look after the Beef they killed a Bullock here yesterday & the Wild Dogs are that bad, that they
come right into our camp of a night. you wake up & see the brutes running all around you, we put our lot of horses in the yard, then got our letters out of uncles valise. the mail came the night we left loves creek, read them & thanked my lucky stars. i am not home this winter it being so cold. i was pleased to get a letter from ern. after we had read them, we went up to the yard & branded the foals. we were just about finished when uncle came in with some more, so we done them all before dinner, it must of been about 2 when we had it. paddy did not turn up with uncle. he missed him. did not turn up until 4. after dinner we sent the town horses up to the paddock. then went to camp & read the papers until tea time. we sat around the fire yarning until 9.30 then i read the papers until 11 by the firelight. the man that wanted to buy their horses turned up wensday, but wanted all heavy draughts for £8.0.0 per head, so we will take them down.

july 14 up pretty early, frosty again. albert went to claraville to see the old man. all the rest of us went out mustering, took a pack horse with our dinner there was 8 of us. 3 whites & 5 niggers. we left the pack at a place where we were to meet for dinner, then all split up we got a mob of about 50 by dinnertime, we had our dinner. paddy & 2 boys went along with the horses. uncle took one & went out one side i took 2 & went the other. we dropped on a mob of fresh tracks & followed them, they led us up a narrow creek for about 5 miles between two ranges some places only a few yards wide, when we got them they turned out to be a mob we were looking for. we got a lot more on our road home. uncle began wondering where we had got to, was just coming to see where we were. we varded them, as we were leaving the yard albert rolled up from claraville. boiled our billies fryed steak & had tea. turned in at 9.30.

july 15 frosty morning after breakfast we went up to the yard branded & done up 15 foals & 2 & 3 year olds sent 2 boys out to have another look over the place we were yesterday but they came home without any. got them all yesterday, we finished by 12 uncle & albert went to camp & cooked the dinner. i stopped & filled up the hole with sand, where the horses always fall, they kick out a big hole & it gets as hard as a stone. after dinner we shod horses. paddy went for a ride on one of the bloods they are breaking in. albert & i took the town horses up to the paddock. then let all the others go back to bush. read the papers until teatime. carted a few good logs for the night had tea, varned & read until 9 then turned in.

july 16 very frosty this morning. we were shivering like wet dogs round the fire cooking breakfast. the horses were a good while coming in. the boys were nearly frozen when they got in. after breakfast we got 2 packs ready for uncle & albert they are going away down south again to have one more look. they took 3 boys, we were all going but we cant carry all the meat & it is not safe to leave it here as the wild dogs would have it. so i said i would stop & look after it. but they said it would be too lonely by myself, so they left paddy & 2 boys. we will have another go round the box holes & ruby gap. they got a start about 9 after they went. i cooked a damper & poked about until 11.30 then i cooked some meat. & we had dinner, then i started paddy & a boy for the box holes. they will camp there tonight & bring what horses they get in tomorrow. there is only one more mob there that we want. after they had gone i tried to sew my boots with
needle & cotton but it would not work. I broke one needle & as I only have another left, I stopped, then I tried to read but the flies would not let me. I sent the boy to round up the horses we have 6 left with us about 4.30. got some wood for the night put all the meat out. fixed some steak for our tea, after tea put everything away for the night, as we were having tea. 2 wild dogs came & had a look at us. they came to within 50 yards of us. dont I wish for my rifle. made a good fire. lav my bed down, then lav on it & wrote up my diary by the firelight. read a while & turned in.

July 17 Not so cold this morning I did not get up until near sunrise. I cooked steak. gave the boy his breakfast before I started him for the horses. they did not go far last night. I stacked the meat in a heap again & covered it with bushes. put some on to boil. then tried my hand at a Brownie. I cut a lot of Suet up fine mixed it with flour & Sugar then baked it in a camp oven. it turned out as light as a feather it is very good with Jam. made another damper. poked around until 12 then cooked dinner the camp oven. acts as fry pan & ovan Uncle & Albert took the frypan so I use the campoven to fry in. after dinner I & the boy practised stone throwing for Exercise, sent him after the horses. Paddv turned up with the mob from Box holes. put them in the yard unpacked his horses. he lay down & read whilst I put the meat out on busnes. & cooked the tea. after tea it began to get a bit windy. so we cut a lot of bushes & put them around us it kept the wind off fine. we made our beds down lav on them & variend until Paddy went asleep. I woke up in the middle of the night & heard the Wild dogs close to the meat I just put my head up. & they were gone like a shot.

July 18 It was not cold last night quite cloudy this morning. we had breakfast. Paddy cooked it the last of the steak. while I made a damper & stacked the meat away. Then we went up to the yard & drafted the horses. went back to camp got my pack ready. had an early dinner. then started with the 2 boys for Ruby Gap. something knocked a part of the fence down & they reckon some of the horses had gone back. so I am going to see. I took the Town horses out of the yard up to the paddock with me. After we had gone 5 or 6 miles we met about 20 wild niggers, they told the boys they were going into Paddys hole to have a fight with the niggers in there. they were quite naked & had spears & Boomerangs & all sorts of Arms they looked a bit savage. they only stopped a few minutes talking to the boys then went on, we could see their track all the way to Ruby Gap. & we came across their fire near a waterhole. we got to the yards a little before Sundown. but too late to look round for horses. so we made our camp. & I wrote up this before I made the tea. had tea. got some bushes for a breakwind. made my bed & lay down on it. This is the time to make you think when you are all by yourself. & away out in the wild parts. I got my rifle Uncies at least & put 6 cartridges in it. & lay it along side of me. then turned in about 7.

July 19 Out at daybreak. roused the boys out & sent them after the horses while I got the pots boiled. had my breakfast. & stacked all the things away, so as the Crows could not get at them. then the boys came in with the horses. whilst they had theirs. I saddled the horses. we started out mustering. came across a mob of 10. but there was none in them that had got out of the paddock. so we left them & went on. we hunted about until
July 20 Up early pretty cold, horses split up one old brute made back to Ruby Gap, but I thought she would so sidelined her at night so she did not get far. We got a start at 8, got to within 5 mile of the paddock when we crossed some fresh horse tracks. Sent one boy on with the packs & I & the other boy followed them dropped on them after we had gone a couple of miles, but they were not ours they were some of Hardings with the chain brand on. I suppose he has put them out of the road. to do Braden for them as everything with the chain on belongs to Braden now. We got to Giles Hole at 12.30 Paddy was nearly mad he said if I had not of come tonight he would of packed up & cleared. We had dinner, but it was to late to start, so we got everything ready for a good start in the morning. boiled meat cooked damper, then I cleaned all the meat from Blows & lay it out on bushes. had tea. poked about until 8 & turned in.

July 21 Up early, very frosty, had breakfast, then got our packs ready. 2 packloads of meat it very near froze our hands off bagging it. the boys came in with the horses, & by the time they had breakfast we had everything ready, so we went to catch the horses & then the fun began. Paddy with his colts cursing & flying round. then he frightens all the others I packed 2 horses while he was doing one. well we got a start at a quarter to 9. got to Clarey Gap at 11.30, the waterhole had just gone dry so we had to dig a couple of feet for a soakage. We started dinner I just eat a piece of damper & meat when I began to feel sick & had to clear I came back & had another feed, but it was no good. I had the Barcoo right enough, we started after dinner & got to Pulla Pulla about 4.30 Uncle & Albert were there. they got there the day before, Uncle was just going up to yard the horses they got, there were none down where Uncle see them, when he was going out to the Marshall, they had all come in. They got 2 or 3 mobs coming in to Pulla Pulla to water all the water South & East of that is done. & that will only last about 10 days then they will all have to come in. They got half of the mob that old Bob went away with. but did not get him. he has gone with 7 more they reckon they have gone out to Orratippera, so he will have to stop, we had tea. cooked two damper & two buckets of meat, then got talking about getting ready to start. I mentioned to them that someone ought to go down to Frossers & see if he had any more of ours. they said yes but who is going to go, they said will you go. I said yes. I would go. we stopped up until about 10
July 22 Very cold & frosty had breakfast, then I got my pack ready to start for Prossers, a damper & some boiled meat & flour & roa meat for fear I would have to stop a couple of days, & Uncle's rifle. I took a boy & 2 spare horses, got a start at 7.30. there was great buckjumping in the camp this morning the colts did not like the cold. 3 went at once & squelling like pigs. just as I was leaving Paddy sung out, if you see Prosser coming for you. pick up your rifle & blow his stuffing out. give him no time to get near you. Albert told me to steer for the Clancy & follow it down, but after I got out a bit it looked to far to go right out there so I took to the ranges, & made straight for Prossers it was pretty rough at first but I struck a small creek & followed it down & got to Prossers at 10.30. I must of cut of 5 or 6 miles. When I got to his yards there was no sign of anyone. & everything was gone from his camp. so I thought he was gone with his horses but when I got up to his spring I found they were camped there. A man by the name of McInernie was there. he is a friend of old McNamarro the schoolmaster, he told me they would of been gone last Tuesday. but 15 of the horses got out of the paddock & they had been looking for them ever since. he said they would all be in tonight, & were going to start without them if they did not get them today, well they would have to, as they were starved out. had no meat for the last three days. & there flour was just about done. all they had was dripping no Jam or anything else. I decided to stop & get the horses in the morning. he told me they had 3 more of ours so I unpacked & we had dinner. my word he did enjoy a bit of meat. Prosser came in about 4 he was very civil. he made a pot of tea & had some meat. Smith came in just at Sundown, then we all had tea. after tea they decided to stop another day & have another look in the paddock. so I said I would go on in the morning. Smith would bring ours on with Hardings. as he has to put his in the yard a night at Giles Hole. we turned in about 9.

July 23 Up by daybreak we had breakfast before sunrise. my boy got my horses quite close. brought them in & hobbled them until he was having his breakfast. they walked around a bit of a rise out of sight. so as soon as he finished I told him to bring them back. just as he started Prossers boys were bringing in their lot. they started playing & galloping & the Bells on their necks were kicking up a big noise. ours are not used to the Bell & cleared, they went 3 miles in hobbles as hard as they could go. I did not know they went. kept waiting, at last I got one of Prossers horses & followed their tracks. met the boy coming with them 2 of them had broken their hobbles so I packed up at once & started at 8.40. went on until 11 when we dropped on some fresh tracks. told the boy to follow them. I went into the creek & boiled the pots. I had just got them on when he came back, said they had gone on up the creek, so we had dinner. & followed them up until 2.30 then as it was 20 miles to Giles Hole I left the tracks & made of came on about 30 horses. but we have had them all. so left them. went on a couple of miles when I see another mob of 8 half a mile away going like smoke we after them, rounded them up, & see some that had come from Loves Creek & we had been looking for them. & one lovely Town horse so we took them with us. this made us still later. we sailed along at a good pace. when we got within 4 miles of the camp we got another mob another Town horse. we got into the yard just at dark. varded them. then had a good tea. sat up
until 10, Uncle & Albert were very pleased with the horses that I brought in, Albert with the Town horses & Uncle with the bloods.

July 24 We did not get up so early, had breakfast Albert took a couple of boys & took the horses out of the yard up to the paddock, & sent a boy over to old Wallace to tell him to send his horses over that he wanted to send to Town. Uncle & I caught 3 horses & took them down to camp one was a mare that they had not seen for 2 years, she was as fat as a Whale, we put the pack on her, she was too fat to stand up with hobbles on she kept falling down then we packed up & all went up to the paddock unpacked shod 3 horses, had dinner, poked about until 2.30 then packed up & started for the top end of the paddock, just as we were starting old Wallaces man came up with 5 he is going to send. We got to the top of the paddock before sundown unpacked & camped for the night.

July 25 Up early, very frosty, had breakfast, then packed up & split all over the paddock, we mustered down to the yard, got to it about 11 thought we had all we put in the paddock except 3 of old Wallaces that we had put in the night before we went & had dinner, Wallaces man & a boy went to look for the 3, we went & drafted the others & branded 6 foals, that were amongst them, then went through the Town mob again & I took all the numbers & brands of them, then we found we were a few short, so we will have to stop another day & go over the paddock again. Wallaces man came back without his 3 could not find them, we had tea then cooked, all turned in about 9 I made a big fire made my bed down then patched my trousis I burnt a big hole in the bottoms of them, they are too long & I had them turned up, a coal flew in the tuck & burnt a big hole before I noticed it, Paddy's were too long so he cut a piece off his, I took it to patch mine with, it took me until 10 to finish.

July 26 Cold wind this morning, after breakfast we all caught our horses except Paddy he is stopping in the camp, we let the horses out of the yard & took them up into a Gap in the ranges to feed, I & two boys stopped to mind them, all the others went up to have another look in the paddock, while the horses are feeding up at the other end, I am writing this, I was 4 days behind I started to write it on horseback but the brute I am riding would not stand quiet so I got off & wrote it on a rock, Wallaces man came in with his 3 & 5 of ours about 11, Uncle & Albert did not get in until 1 I sent 2 boys in at a time to have their dinner, then I went in about 2, had dinner, Wallaces man started home, Albert went up to the horses, Uncle put a shoe on one of his, then went up to, Paddy & I went to look for a filly that had not come in this morning with hobbles & sidelines, found her, brought her in, gave her a drink & let her go, then Albert came in. We got the packs ready for tomorrow, carried some logs, he went up to help yard the horses, while I got the tea, we had tea, then cooked meat & Damper for tomorrow, then turned in about 9.

July 27 The nigger boys were out before daylight, they are in a hurry to get home. We had breakfast then packed up, took all the horses & packs up to the yards, then drafted them out Albert & Paddy to[ok] 2 packs & the Town mob & 4 boys they are taking them through South Gap and around the back of Loves Creek will put them in a Gorge in the range tonight & just sleep at the entrance of it, it is like a yard they cant get out, about 6 miles from
Loves Creek. Uncle & I took 3 packs & a lot of his bloods to Loves Creek, we camped for dinner got to Loves Creek about 3 then shod 2 horses killed 2 roosters, got some Radishes & boiled some eggs for tea, then read our mail.

July 27

Dear Harriet,

It is just 3 weeks today since we left here, we have been going like mad trying to make up a 100 horses, we have been split up, Uncle & Albert went away down South they got a few more horses, they were all coming in from the back country, they got 9 of Bob mob coming in, but old Bob is not with them he is with the others & they always make back to Corratippera so I suppose the niggers will have a feed of him. I have been a couple of trips on my own down to Ruby Gap & to Prossers, we could not get the 100 only got 88 of ours 34 of Frank Wallaces, & 6 of old Wallace, so we have a good mob all together. I am writing this tonight, as we have got a lot to do tomorrow shoe 3 horses get our 3 packs ready for the road & start out from here at 3 tomorrow afternoon & meet the horses 5 mile down the Creek, Albert & Paddy are with them Albert will go on with us a couple of days until they steady down, then Uncle I & 2 boys will bring them down, we are going to strike straight South across country, & come out somewhere about the Bend, none of them know the country so dont know how we will get on. I hear that all the mines at Winnickes are shut down so dont know if Alf has left or not, the fever is pretty bad about the Alice & out there there are a good few dying, they are leaving in mobs. I suppose if we get on all right we will be down in a month from now. We have been getting Telegrams & letters by the score from the Auctioneers in Kapunda & Adelaide wanting us to bring the horses to them, but we are going to take them to Town this time, we will have a special train, 16 trucks, so I will go on to Adelaide. As soon as I get in I will have to get a new rig out, as I wont be fit to be seen in the cloths I come down in, & it is no good getting good clothes until you get in Adelaide for you would spoil them on the train looking after the horses. I will fix this up & leave it here for Albert to put in the mail bag.

July 28 Uncle shod horses I cleaned Roosters & cooked them, they were splendid, got our packs ready Albert turned up about 10, he had to bring the horses in to the spring for a drink. We had dinner, Albert went out to the horses & let Paddy come in for his then started with them down the Creek. We packed up & started after them about 4, Went down the Creek 5 miles & put them in a Gorge between 2 ranges & watched the entrance it was about 80 yards wide first Uncle then I & then Albert watched.

July 29 Albert put the pots on at 5 & called us we got up had breakfast by the firelight then packed up & started Albert went back to Loves Creek to get another boy as they dont think 2 will be enough. We kept on traveling until 1 oclock could not find any open ground to stop for dinner until then, We had just put the pots on when Albert came up with the boy, we went on after dinner & got to a spring just before sundown, gave them a good drink & put them in a big paddock about 6 acres hills all around, just watched the entrance again, it was 300 or 400 yards wide, we watched by turns again Uncle first then Albert & I last, towards
morning I heard some horses in the water at the spring, & reckoned it was some of ours that had got out somewhere. I boiled the pots & roused them out. we were all ready & out by daylight, went around the paddock & found all the horses, although some were right on top of the range, it must of been Bush horses that I heard.

July 30 We are going across country a new track straight South to Hayes dam it cuts of pretty well 100 miles, instead of going round by the Alice. Prosser started a day before us, & we will be a couple of days ahead by the time he gets to the dam. Albert left us went back home, he was to of gone through to the dam with us. I forgot to say we left Paddy at Loves Creek, but we can manage without him. We stopped for dinner & got to another spring about 4 they told us there was a yard here but when we got here we could not find it. so we asked the nigger where it was he showed us a pound where the spring was said Hayes uses that as a yard, it was fearful stoney, so I set to work to clear it a bit while Uncle made a brush fence, the boys were minding the horses. We put them in about dusk & camped at the entrance, made the 2 boys watch until 11 then Uncle watched until a quarter to 2, he was to of called me at 1.30 I woke at 1.40 looked at my watch see what time it was then looked for Uncle he was sitting reading at the fire quite peaceful, I said it is a quarter to 2, so he turned in. In putting my belt on I turned my Watch pouch upside down, & as I was climbing over the Rocks my Watch fell out on a Rock, broke the Glass & stopped it. It will be a bit awkward now without it wont know when it is five oclock, I went by the star Jupiter you learn to know all the stars up here when you are watching. I boiled the pots fed the boys then called Uncle he got up & made straight for the fire he was going to put the pots on, he was quite surprised when he see them made.

July 31 The saddle horses were close handy so we packed up & got a start by Sunrise, Albert said it would be about 40 mile from here to the Dam. We sailed along pretty fast the nigger lost his road once or twice, it is a long time since he was through this way, we stopped & had a feed started off again at once, we kept them going at a good pace, one of the boys horse knocked up, had to put him on another one, when it got near Sundown we were going to stop & watch them all night, but the boy said, no big way now, so we kept on going & going the wretch did not like the Idea of watching them. We struck the road at last & got to the Dam at 8.50 good miles, we put the horses in the yard I & two boys went to look for a camp, it is a job to get wood near the Dam now, so many camp here on their way to Airtunga, there were 2 drays here when we got here. Uncle filled the Canteens & came into camp we had tea, then set to work to cook meat & damper, as we will get no water tomorrow night, it must of been 12 by the time we turned in.

1. A George Ballingal is mentioned in the records in 1904, but obviously came up in the rush of 1903.
2. The only Curtis in the goldfield records appeared in the early 1890s, and Harding was the licensee of the Paddy's Hole store, though known to have managers. It is not certain if Harding was an agent for the Adelaide company, though it does seem possible.

3. As Will and Albert have travelled via Pulya Pulya and Cleary Creek, Prosser's camp may be on the Hale River, and the spring mentioned may be Oolera Spring, marked on the modern maps, and not far from the Hale.

4. Another reference to the gentle art of horsestealing, so popular amongst the old timers.

5. This was a route known to the Aborigines, as is made clear in the diary, and was also used by at least some of the cameleers, e.g. Walter Smith.
Introduction

Will completed his fourth diary notebook on August 1st, and began on the last one. They have a dry camp on that night, but reach the Finke River on the 2nd - where the horses bolted for the waterhole. The diary describes the minor problems of taking the horses down - they were very nervous of anything unexpected and inclined to bolt at the slightest provocation. A number of bicyclists were encountered on the trip, which seem to have been especially exciting for the horses. At Horsehoe Bend, on August 4th, they were asked to yard the horses quite close to the store, which they did despite the possible distractions of "Dogs, Gins, Goats, Donkeys, Calves & Camels & men on Bikes." Here they were told that many prospectors were returning south from the goldfields, although a few were still going north. Of general interest on this trip south is the number of bush horses encountered in this arid country.

They tried to keep off the main road as much as possible, but on August 6th they travelled it briefly, just past old Crown Point Station; the following night was their last chance to yard the horses before they reached Oodnadatta. On reaching Charlotte Waters they heard of a recent death of a man from the telegraph station, killed by Aborigines; here the horses had to be inspected for tick, and the number of horses and their brands noted before they were allowed to continue. On leaving, they encountered the trooper, then his tracker, then his camels, and finally the extra police horses, but their mob remained fairly calm, largely because the stony gibber country prevented them from bolting. They reached Bloods Creek on August 10th, Hamilton Bore store on the 11th, and on the 12th encountered a man shearing his sheep.

Despite the nervousness of the horses, they reached Storm Creek on August 14th, and camped there for a few days as they were in good time for the train. While there, Will mentions a rabbit being killed by one of the Aborigines, and also the largest snake he had ever seen outside a zoo. Uncle went on the 23 miles to Oodnadatta to make sure all the arrangements had been made, and came back with some extra flour, sugar and treacle, but the lid of the treacle tin came off and made a frightful mess on his clothes and saddle. The diary ends abruptly on August 17th, as they set out for Oodnadatta.

The diary

Aug 1 We got up had breakfast by firelight, boys soon got the horses, Uncle & 2 boys went to the yard & let the horses out for a feed, while I & the other boy packed up, we had to leave one mare behind here, as she was too lame to travel, Uncle says she will go back to Loves Creek, it took me a good while to pack up as all our pack horses had scalded backs from traveling to fast yesterday, I had to wash them & change saddles, went up to the Dam filled Canteens, as we will get no water until tomorrow night, gave all the horses a drink then started, followed the main road for about 10 miles then turned off just before we turned off we see a cove coming on a Bike swag on his back we stopped him until we turned the horses off the road, or they
would of cleared, stopped for dinner got to the yard at Black Hill about 4, let the horses feed until Sundown then yarded them.

Aug 1 cont [in the new notebook]
We had tea, had no cooking to do, as we had no water, I cut a lot of bushes for our beds as we had to camp on a hard claypan to get out of the grass seeds. We sidelined two of our saddle horses to keep them from going to look for water, there is an old Well here but no good now, as soon as we let them go they went straight down to it, we brought them back, & put them up the other way then turned in.

Aug 2 I got up before daylight boiled the pots fed the niggers, & started them after the horses, we had our breakfast got the packs ready, then had to wait patiently until 10 before the boys came with the horses, the brutes went past our dinner camp yesterday, towards the dam, so that has made 20 miles extra for them, we packed up & started, did not stop for dinner, got on to the Fink river about 4, there was a waterhole 1/2 mile down from where we struck it, as soon as they got down the banks they smelt the water & all bolted Uncle & 2 boys in the lead trying to steady them, but could not, they went full gallop into it, & kept running up & down without their mouth to it, we got them steadied at last then they began to drink, & you would of thought they were never going to stop one got stuck in the quicksand, but did not try to get out, just lay there drinking, I went in after her it took her a good while to get out, she was too full to try much, we unpacked & had a feed then Uncle & the boys took them up to the yards, they are a couple of miles off the waterhole, I stopped & got Wood & water, & boiled the pots again for tea.
Uncle came in at dusk, had tea then started cooking, finished about 9 & turned in.

Aug 3 Up again long before daylight, I go by the stars now that I have no Watch, made tea fed the boys then Uncle got up, it is awful frosty every morning. We had our breakfast packed up, I went to the waterhole 1/4 mile away to get water for dinner, it very near froze my hands off. The boys came in with the horses just at Sunrise so we packed up & got a good start went to the yard, let the horses out, they were on for a gallop this morning, it being cold, 3 had to keep in the lead to stop them, we let them feed along very steady, as we only have a short stage to another yard on the Finke we got to it just about dinner time. We camped, had dinner, sent the 3 boys out to tail them, while Uncle & I done the yard up, then Uncle went out to the boys, I went to the camp, carted wood, water, washed horses backs. It is a good job Uncle went out to the horses for just after he got to them, a white man came over a Sandhill right on the top of them, gave them a start, & they off full gallop, it took them all their time to stop them, the cove that started them helped stop them, he is one of Hayes men, coming to Horse shoe bend to attend a horse muster, I suppose Sargeant & Elliot are that pleased with the big price they got for their last lot that they are going to try & get some more. The little boys pony knocked up again so he had to get another, I went and brought all our saddle horses back to camp at Sundown, got tea ready then Uncle came in, had tea cooked damper & meat, Uncle turned in I sat up & wrote up this, I was 4 days behind, I was not going to keep it coming down but I thought I might want to know the places we camped at in some future time so I wrote it up.
Aug 4 I got out a bit too early this morning, we had breakfast & were ready to start before Sunrise, we waited a bit until the sun rose, as the horses would gallop too much would be cold, it was fearful frosty, after we started it nearly cut us in halves. The horses would of liked a gallop, but we kept them to close 3 in front of them & 2 behind we traveled along very slow let them feed going along we stopped for dinner, started again got to the yard 2 mile this side of the Bend about 3 come about 15 mile, we took them down the Finke to a waterhole, but they would not drink they had one as we were coming along, we just turned them around to take them back when they saw a white horse coming in for a drink & they took off full gallop at once, I & one boy after them we headed them but could not stop them for a while, but got them steadied down after a while, tok them back close to the yard, & let them feed, but they are like wild dogs in the Zoo always on the lookout for something to get frightened, they are just getting in racing trim now, there are 6 lovely horses the leaders Uncle says he wished he had them in the truck at Oodnadatta. They had just begun to feed quietly when the smallest boy got off his horse got fooling about & let him go, he came tearing into the mob, the stirrup Irons flapping gave them another start & they off again, Uncle had been to look at the yard, was just coming back, he thought they were frightened of him but when we got them stopped he see the boys horse in the mob, I thought he would give him a good basteing, but he caught the horse & took it back to him on the hill, the boy came up howling to get him but Uncle did not touch him, only told him if he let him go again he would tan his hide, I felt like giving him one myself. We cut the packhorses & loose saddle one out I & a boy took them down & gave them a drink filled the canteens, came back & was going to make our camp near the yard, when Uncle told me that Elliot was using it, he has been mustering Cattle & has got a big mob to put in, he told Uncle to take them down to the yard at the store, by Joe I said we will never get them in there, as it is only 70 or 80 yards from the store, & there are Dogs, Gins, Goats, Donkeys, Calves & Camels about it & men on Bikes, I said we had better watch them. He said I dont think we will get them in but we will give them a try, so we started down with them, when we got within a mile of it, I happened to look ahead it is all little sandhills, & I see a Gin coming with a load of Tucker on her head for the men at the Cattle yard. We yelled out to her to clear out of the way & sit down in the Cane grass, but she was not quick enough some of them seen her & made another bolt but we stopped them before they got a proper start, they say all the horses play up here in the Sandhills it is nice & soft for them, stopped within 1/2 mile of the yard & took all the loose saddle & pack horses out of the mob, & Uncle took them up first & put them in a little yard for fear the mob would get away from us & our packs besides, I & the 2 boys let the mob feed along quietly until Uncle came back. He said it was a good yard if we can get them in. We made a bid for it passed a string of Camels, they were all lying down quietly so they took no notice of them, kept them going & run them right in before they had time to bolt, I was behind & could not see a yard in front of me for dust when we looked around there was everything I mentioned as would be there, we were very lucky to get them in. We went out about a mile on the Sandhills to camp as there is no Wood about the Bend, after tea Uncle walked down to the store to see Elliot, he told Uncle if he came to the store he would come in, the 2 big niggers went
down too, so I was by myself with the little fellow. I made a big fire to get Ashes. then made a damper. Uncle came back about 9, they told him that a lot of people have gone down lately but there are always odd ones going up. 2 on Bikes went past today. Elliot told Uncle to go to a yard 8 miles from here tomorrow as there is plenty of Water & feed there, we were going to Paddys Well but there is no Water there it is 24 miles from here.

Aug 5 We were ready to start at Sunrise went down to the store & yard. hunted old Sargent out of bed to get some things we wanted. he swore & cursed us for coming so early, while I was settling the things Uncle tied a packhorse up & my saddle horse & let the others out of the yard & started. I got the things & caught him up, the horses seemed nice & quiet feeding along nicely we gave them a drink & went along slowly as we reckoned we had not far to go. we got within a mile or so of the place. when a mob of bush horses came tearing past in front of ours, when they see them off too, all the lot of us got in front but they would not stop so we had to keep galloping them round in a circle boxing them up before we could stop them, we kept them rounded up for a while then started again, had not gone 1/2 mile when 4 more coming tearing through the scrub past us, our lot off again but they went clean away this time it was all sand & our saddle horses could not catch them. Some of the quiet ones & the packs stopped behind so as my horse was done up. I stopped & rounded them up. I could see Uncle & the boys going a couple of miles away over a Sandhill so thinks I to myself, that is the last of the horses, but as it happened there was a bit of stony ground on the other side Uncle got up to the leaders & belted them over the head with the whip before he could turn them after I had rounded up the tailers I followed & when I got on top of the Sandhill when I see them rounding them up. I heard some one coming behind me. looking round I see a stranger, he is a young fellow from Crown Point station he is here attending Elliot's muster he was going along with a mob of cattle 2 or 3 miles away, he see the dust our horses were making & reckoned they had cleared. as it was him with the cattle that started the bush mob, he came across to give us a hand stop them. Uncle knows him quite a young chap & such a tidy one to be always up in the bush. They had just settled down when Elliot came galloping over another hill from the opposite direction he had seen the dust from his way & reckoned it would be us as all the horses that come from higher up, cut up badly about here, we stopped talking for a while then said goodbye to them & made for Paddys Well Uncle said if they can gallop like this they can travel, so we will give them no quarter now, there are 8 or 9 of them lame now & the leader amongst them which is a good job, one was lame yesterday but he cooked himself today his fetlock is out & he goes on 3 legs. we stopped & had dinner on a bit of a stony flat, they cut up in the worst place they could of found on the trip thick Mulga flats with Sandhills around them. we just had dinner & started again, they were on the lookout all day for something to go again we see another mob of horses Uncle went on & drove them out of the road. we got to Paddys Well yard just about Sundown & varded them at once I bet some of them will be a bit stiff tomorrow. We left the one on 3 legs behind. It took us until dusk to find water to camp on, we only got a little drop for ourselves & saddle horses. it must of been nearly 11 by the time we got to bed.

Aug 6 I woke up before daylight & heard the horses coming in to
Aug 7 Up to early this morning we had breakfast, then had to wait for daylight horses close, so we got a start before Sunrise, went to the well first watered our horses, went & let the mob out & started. They were hungry & feed along splendid we had gone a few mile when we see a big team of Camels in a hollow just packing up so we had to go a good way around, so as the horses could not see them, they smelt them, flew round a bit, but were too hungry & as we had just struck a nice patch of green feed they fed, we crossed a range they call Mt. Daniel it is all round stones from the size of Marbles to as big as your head they had to follow one another on the pad as it was too rough to walk out of it, Uncle says we have got them now as they cant gallop on the stones, we came on to a nice flat & camped for dinner they would not feed wanted a drink, so we started again, got on to the Main track again & struck a claypan at the 9 mile where Josh & I & Alf camped one night when we were going up, they had a good drink, & started feeding again we let them feed along slowly to the yard 3 miles away, near another nice waterhole. I took the packhorse with the Canteens & filled them up, took all our packs & went & made a camp, Uncle let the mob have another drink & let them feed until Sundown I went out & helped to yard, they looked twice as well after their drink & feed, this is the last night they will get yarded until we get to Oodnadatta, no more yards we will put them on top of stony tablelands at night after this, we had our tea Uncle made the damper I boiled the meat then we fixed up all the Brands of the horses, you have got to give the number of each brand & the quantity you have to the Operator at Charlotte Waters as we pass tomorrow, then Uncle turned in, I sewed my coat & wrote this.

Aug 8 Up & had breakfast by dawn, our saddle horses rambled a good way the sun was up before the boys came in with them, they had no need to as there was lovely feed all round our camp, as
soon as they came Uncle & 2 boys went & let them out of the yard I packed up then we started for Charlotte Waters let them feed all the way in. We see a white man coming towards us Dick Taylor Uncle knew him, he was looking for a hobbled horse they have been mustering round the Charlotte he told us the niggers killed one of their men out on the Goyder Bill Lang, I see him up at Winn-ecke when we went up there first. One of the niggers came into the Charlotte & gave himself up said he killed him, 4 or 5 days ago nobody has gone out yet to see, they are waiting for the trooper to come back from Oodnadatta he has taken a half caste down he went mad we got to a waterhole 1 mile the other side of the Charlotte at about 10.30 Uncle started up to the Telegraph station at once to wire to Barker Bros, & get his pass for the horses, I unpacked boiled the pots & was going to have dinner when another Taylor rode up, he wanted to see Uncle I told him he would be back directly, he said no fear he stopped talking 1/2 an hour then went, I & one boy had dinner then went out & stopped with the horses, until they went & had theirs, came in & put all the things away as I thought Uncle would have dinner up there as he was so long, caught the packhorses & began to pack up when a man drove up 2 horses in a dray, he put a Bell on one of his, & as soon as our mob heard it they were off, we got them stopped, then I went over & asked him to take it off until we got away, he is coming back from the field & 4 passed Charlotte this morning 2 on Bikes 1 on horseback & one footing it, just as I finished packing up Uncle came back, we gave the horses another drink & started, we had to take them up close to the station for the old fellow to inspect them to see if they had any Tick, they flew round a bit, but it is very stony & they could not do much, I helped them passed the station then went back & sent your Telegram, after we got on the road a bit we see a Buggy coming so we took the horses of the track on to the stones, they all lined up & had a look at it then gave a snort & wanted to be off but cant get at all it jars their feet. It was the Trooper French & young Warburton they stopped & wanted Uncle to come back to the Charlotte again, next we passed the troopers nigger on horseback, they had another look, then a mob of Camels loaded up, & last 5 niggers & about 20 horses they belonged to the trooper & Warburton so they ought to of seen enough to quieten them. The country around here looks lovely a big difference to when I came up, it is a big plain you can see for miles & it is all green with Saltbush, we went along the track until about Sundown, then turned up a bit of a Creek, nice green feed in it, we went up 1/2 a mile then let the mob go, this is the first time we let them go, but it is all stony on both sides of the Creek so we think they will stop, we camped had tea. Our sugar & meat is just about done, it will last us until we get to Bloods Creek the day after tomorrow.

Aug 9 It is a job to tell when it is getting daylight now as the Moon is up in the morning now, I go by the stars & come out alright, we had our breakfast then Uncle & the boys took their saddles & went & caught a horse each, saddled him up, I stopped to pack up, they went out in a ring to see if any horses had cleared the boys tell by the tracks. I had just finished packing up when they came down the creek with the mob, I carried my saddle & drove the packhorses up to them, my saddle horse was amongst them, I caught him & then we started back on to the main road, they all go one behind the other on it as it is all stones on either side, there is a string of them 1/4 mile long,
went about 9 miles to Adminggana Waterhole just turned of the road when the Coach came along they tried to bolt again but could not we camped a couple of hours shod 2 horses. started again & only went a few miles I took the packs & went & made a camp. Uncle & the boys stopped with the horses until Sundown then put them up on a stony Tableland for the night.

Aug 10 We had a bad night the horses kept coming back. About 4 o'clock we woke up with a start heard a lot of horses coming pulled our boots on, & run out, it was one of the boys bringing our saddle horses, he woke up & heard them making for the track, so went after them there is not one in a hundred that would leave his bed & go after horses in the night, it was very bright Moon-light, they had just got to the track when he caught them, he see the tracks of a lot more of the mob that had gone back along the track, so he brought the saddle horses back, we boiled the pots had breakfast, then 2 boys saddled their horses & started after them, they were not gone long before they were back with them they had not got far. Then we had to wait for daylight, as soon as it was light enough Uncle & the boys went to round the mob up I packed up, they came in with a few over the 100, there were over 30 short so I & 2 boys took the mob along the road Uncle & the other boy went to look for the others, they were not long in finding them, we dodged along to Bloods Creek about 5 miles, watered them, I took a pack & went up to the store to get some meat & other things Uncle went on with the mob, I got the things & caught him up went on 5 or 6 miles & camped for dinner there is lovely feed along here Geranime & all sorts of herberge, while we were having dinner a man went along with a pack going down from the field, started again & struck the Stevenson river a lovely Waterhole in it just here a mile long, met a man by the name of Sandford coming back from Town he had a mob of horses down, I took the packs on & made the camp a 1/2 mile off the track on a watercourse running East, Uncle brought the mob up just at dusk & turned them up it, then we had tea I got some Goat chops at Bloods Creek so I fried some for tea they were splendid. The men with the 1000 head of cattle from Newcastle Waters are just on ahead of us tonight.

Aug 11 I woke up in the middle of the night & heard some horses going over a rise toward the road, I told Uncle but he said we could do nothing, for if we went after them we might only frighten them, so we lay down again. I got up & got the breakfast, called the boys & Uncle, it was just breaking day as we finished, the boys took their bridles & went after the saddle horses, it was them & a few others that I heard in the night, they got them down on the Creek. Uncle & the boys went to round up the mob I packed up then had to wait a while before they came with them there were a mile or so away in a soft hollow, just before they started, we heard 2 shots fired it was the men with the cattle shooting a bullock, we thought that would startle them, but they were all here when we counted them, we went back into the Creek & traveled along it all day, passed the cattle about 10, they were one side of the Creek we the other, there are some splendid Waterholes in it & lovely green feed, the best we have had along the road, we camped a couple of hours for dinner & let them feed then came on slowly stopped at 4 and gave them another good feed, took them up on the Tablelands again at dusk, found a nice hollow for them, they ought to stop well tonight we camped in a watercourse with all Red Mulga growing in
it the first I have seen it is very pretty wood we are camped close to the Hamilton bore Hole & store. We heard a couple of shots fired there tonight so I suppose they have killed there.

Aug 12 Up & all ready by daylight, boys started after the hobbled horses the brutes went over a mile down on to the Creek, soon got the others together, Uncle went on to see Underwood at the Hamilton bore about a fresh track they talk about from here, came back we took them into a Waterhole, Uncle filled the Canteens I went up to Underwood to get some Meat & Tobacco. When I got back they were gone, so I had to catch them up I left my whip at the foot of a tree where Uncle was filling the Canteens & they did not bring it so I sent a boy back for it we kept going on, the fathead came back & said he could not find it, we were a couple of miles on the road then Uncle said leave it, I said no fear, so went back myself & got it, caught them up again, it was a patch of Sandhill country we were going through & they were very lively in it we were almost through, when they took off & had a good gallop round & round before we got them stopped, we got on to a sort of a dry Creek about 100 yards wide, Sandhills on one side & stony Tablelands on the other, big Waterholes in it every few miles we came on to a fellows camp, he has got some sheep, & was shearing, had a shed made out of his blankets, camped on a big Waterhole for dinner put the horses on the stones while we had it as they were very lively, they tried to clear when they see 3 old Gins driving a flock of sheep, but we run them on the stones & they soon stopped, after dinner we travelled along steady until dark then put them up a Creek feed 3 foot high, we had just finished tea when we could hear them coming back. We could see them passing our camp but dare not go to stop them on foot as they would all clear, we made sure they would be 5 or 6 miles by morning & did not go to sleep in too easy a mind.

Aug 13 We got up a bit anxious to see where the horses were, when it got light enough we could see them round us, but we had to keep very quiet or they would of cleared the hobbled ones were over a mile away, we got a good start & let them feed along until 12 then we stopped for dinner on a claypan, filled up the Canteens for fear we would get no more before night, it was as thick as cream, started again kept going until about 4 when we struck the Alberga Creek Uncle went up it a bit & found some Waterholes so we took the horses & gave them a good drink, & I emptied the Canteens & filled them afresh then we went on until dark. I went on ahead with the packs & fixed the camp, put the horses up a stony Creek I dont think they will come back tonight. The niggers have done well tonight the Sandhills we passed through are full of Lizards they came to camp with their D straps full one had 4 hanging by the necks.

Aug 14 Were ready to start at daybreak but the Saddle & pack horses were a couple of mile away all the Mob were just around the hills, & the hobbled brutes were gone it did not take long to round them & to get a start after we got our saddle horses, it was pretty stony going this morning, we got to Wire Creek Bore Hole about it, there were a mob of Camels camped near it so we had to wait until they cleared out before we could take the horses up to water, gave them a drink put some water in the Canteens for dinner, went on a couple of mile on to Storm Creek & had dinner. This is where we have to camp now until Monday before we go into Oodnadatta we are 3 days before our time to get the
trucks, after dinner Uncle went to some Waterholes to see if there was any water in them, there was none one of the niggers said he knew some more holes in a Creek further up, sent him to have a look, came back & said there was plenty, he killed a rabbit while he was out, I took the packs on ahead & fixed up a camp. Got Water, wood, boiled meat & washed the meat bag, Uncle brought the mob up at Sundown & put them up the Creek, we had tea the niggers dont care about eating rabbits I asked him if he had him cooked, he said no, me been chuck him, too much skiney Buggar.

Aug 15 We were all ready before the sun rose, Uncle started for Oodnadatta to see about the trucks it is 23 miles from here so dont know if he will get back tonight. I & the boys rounded up all the horses they were scattered all over the country, we took our dinner on a packhorse then took them back to where we had dinner yesterday there is good feed & it is soft ground we let them feed all the way down about 3 miles I see a mouse run out of a bush as I was going along, I looked in the bush & see a great snake, I gave him a cut with the whip it only made him silly, so I went to get a stick, but the noise the boys made frightened the horses & they made off so I had to jump on my horse & leave him, when I came back he was gone, it was the biggest snake I ever see outside the Zoo. I went on ahead & boiled the pots then 2 of us had dinner at a time, the horses are all full & are all camped, so I got of my horse & wrote this. It seemed a terrible long afternoon. When the sun got preety low, we started for the camp, we got further away than I thought & it was dusk when we got to it, I could see Uncle comeing a good 3 miles over the Tablelands, he brought 10 lbs of flour 6 lbs of sugar & a tin of Treacle, had it all in a Sugarbag in front of the Saddle, the Treacle tin lid came of & you should of seen the mess, it did not get through the Calico flour bag, but the sugar & his saddle & Trousis everything was Treacle, it is quite a warm night, it was a hot wind today.

Aug 16 Up & had breakfast by daybreak, then I boiled a bucket of water & washed all the bag with Treacle on them, Uncle went to make a Damper he turned the Sugar [bag] up & shook it to get the Calico one out with the flour in, the cove in the store did not tie the flour bag & all the flour came out on the ground, I had to get a spoon & scoop it up. The boys came in with the horses, I & the boys went out & rounded the mob up Uncle stopped & cooked the damper then went to look for a place to camp tonight we are going to give them a drink about 3 then go on towards Oodnadatta until Sundown, Uncle came back, found a good place, went on to camp will have dinner then come back & I will go in, it must of been 2 o'clock before we had dinner, I packed up Uncle watered the mob & started with them, I caught him up we must of went on 4 or 5 miles then camped.

Aug 17 Rounded all the horses up & found 6 missing

1. Dick Taylor's descendents still live in Alice Springs.
2. Geranium, and herbage, the result of the recent rains.
Dear Harriet,

Just a few lines to let you know that we have got this far safe we got here for dinner & as the mail gets here tomorrow night I thought I would just write a few lines. I dont know if you will be able to read them as I am sitting on the ground with the paper box for a desk on my knees the Flies by the million & red dust I believe I have eat more sand than anything else since I left Oodnadatta. We left Oodnadatta Friday at 12 o'clock Took us all day Thursday shoeing the horses & getting our stores we got another pack from Frith as soon as he heard who I was he would of given me anything so we got on splendid we put 2 50lb bags of flour in my pack & put it on my old horse & my swag, then we put 12 lbs of sugar 6 Tins of Tinned meat 6 Tins of jam, 2 lbs of Tea 1 salt, Tin of baking powder, 4 lbs of biscuits the valises & all the other things in Josphs pack on Major & his swag the two Canteens the fly & Alfs swag on Slipknot so we had it divided fine. I rode the brown filly, Josh Daniels chestnut. & Alf Peas old mare, I ride the fillvs half a day each, they are all going splendid as yet. we are the first on the road out of the train we came up in. There will be a lot of them turn back or die before they get here as it was fearful hot until yesterday, we got to Storm creek the first night about 23 miles good rain water & splendid feed for the horses in the morning the brutes had gone about 3 mile we hobble them all but the two fillvs none of them took much notice of it. Saturday we got to Macumba for dinner it is the best run so far it is more sandy there is fine feed on it we started after dinner & got to Willow well that night but there was no water, so Josh had to hunt round for water he found a claypan with a drop in it was very thick we had to make tea of it could not drink it like it was. I was wishing I had some rice to try it as Dad always said it was as good as cream we were very glad to get away in the morning & so were the horses as there was not much feed. Sunday we went about 15 miles to the Wirraburra & camped for the day it was fearful hot. we shoed the two fillvs & washed our clothes, shot a crow with the rifle we have not seen a sign of wildfowl until today we see a mob of duck but could not get a shot it is horrible country all the way up, all but the Macumber & this place all great rocks & boulders & all round like if they had been water washed. the rivers are all sand & about half a mile wide they are the only green spots you can see you can see them for miles we have passed four lots of Camels since we started & one mob of cattle. I have been a bit bad with the dysentry since Sunday that jolly thick water we had gave it to me, but I am pretty right now I got a bottle of whisky at Bloods Creek yesterday that put me right it was only 8/6 a bottle & the best I ever tasted. We got 30 lbs of Beef at the Hamilton Bore Monday morning we cooked some on the coles for dinner it was splendid & boiled some for tea, but in the morning when we got up all the other had gone bad it was too fresh not salted long enough, but we got some more yesterd ay at Bloods creek. that is salted better if not with salt with red dust it cracks in your teeth like mad. We had to cook our first bread on Sunday night one of Mrs. Kunitns girls baked us some bread to start with. Josh made some Buggers on the coles as Mrs.
Kunith calls them they were splendid I was only wishing for some butter to put on them, he makes fine damper, oh we are getting on fine it seems as though I have always been on the road. We shod Slipknot last night, he was a nasty brute to shoe, he hit me on the eye with his head & give me a black eye they dont wear their shoes flat up here like our horses down there, they get as round as round iron from the stones rolling under their feet. There is a mob of Camels passing while I am writing all loaded for the goldfields they put terrible loads on them great big cases of all sorts just tied over their backs. Well I will have to stop as it is time to stop & get ready to start we are going 9 miles further tonight Josh has sent a nigger after the horses but he is a long time coming so he has gone himself. Josh & Alf only wrote a few words they said the flies are something fearful they get in your Ears, Eyes & nose & wont come out you have to scratch them out, when we are going along you would think our swags were black they are that way covered with flies, they say they are worse than ever they knew them to be on account of the rains. I have just thought it is Shore day today, I wonder will any of them think of us today.

Remember me to all my friends & tell Sleader I will write to him when I get up there, so good bye all & I hope you are all well as it leave me I will drop a line from the Alice.

your brother

Will

Alice Springs
Feb 19th 1903

Dear Harriet,

Just a few lines to let you know that we arrived here safely Alice Springs or Stuart Town as it is called up here is a very nice place & everybody seems to know you at once as soon as they hear the name Coulthard they very near shake your hand off. We were the first after the mail of the last train that arrived here we got here at 1.30 but two more young coves got here tonight one is a nephew of Dr. Tuens he arrived here from the fields just as we did to meet them. The first five days on the road were fearful hot very near roasted us we could hardly eat anything but since then it has been very nice a little bit hot in the middle of the day but cool at nights in fact to cool I had to get up three nights & light a fire as my feet got so cold, but it never affected my throat a bit Josh & Alf got a sore throat, so I think it will do me good, as long as we can get meat as I dont think I could live long on damper & Jam. I felt preety hollow when we got here & so did Alf & Josh I think we eat 2/3 worth for dinner as that is what you have to pay for a meal I wanted to go down the Creek & have our own but Alf said we had better have a good feed while we can get it. When we got to the Horseshoe bend we heard that Uncle Bob had passed the day before he went to Paddys Well we must of passed within a mile & a half of him that morning they told us that he got a letter from me & one from dad there had been nobody down from up his way for the mail so when he read them he said he would go on now as he turned back from the Charlotte before they said he had 56 horses as good as ever they see, so I suppose you will have him down in a fortnight, he will keep you lively. I heard here today that Uncle Bill had a narrow escape he was galloping after a mob of
horses, when the horse he was riding shot into a tree & put a splinter right through his cheek, they say he will carry the mark to his grave, when the blackfellow found him he was still unconscious & they still keep pulling pieces of wood out of it. I wired to Huts Peperall asking what to do with the horses, I just received a reply to send them on with an old fellow by the name of Ted Warn he is one the line with Huts, he told us to get another from Fitz the manager of Undoolia if we were short, but we can get as many as we like here, anybody will lend us horses to take us out. I have kept a bit of a diary since we left Oodnadatta & am sending it to you so you will get all particulars of our trip in it that is if you can read it if you have time you can copy it out in ink as leadpencil will smudge & give it to the boys to read & Mrs. Josh Hatch, they could hand it to one another then, but keep this little book as it belongs to my pocket book. Well I will close Hoping you are all well & with love to all your brother
Will

Dear Harriet

I just received your letter I & Josh have just come into Arltunga for our letters we were coming in yesterday but it rained all day & all night, we have been camped at Slate Hole since last Tuesday so we could not write out there it took us all our time to keep ourselves dry, I got back to Winneckes from Claraville that is where I wrote my last letter from last Tuesday week. I started 6 o'clock in the morning I got a negro to get my horses early as I thought it was going to be a hot day & so it was I had 30 miles to go I got to where Josh & Alf were camped just at dinner time Josh was just having dinner, I was very near dead for a drink so I had a good drink of tea Alf was up at the Goose that is about the main part of the field. The day after I got back I & Josh took Major & Bob & started for a place about 12 miles away that I see as I passed with Frank Wallace. When we got there we found that there had been somebody before us it was all tried holes everywhere, so we can see by that that the old hands have been here years ago & tried everywhere so we have decided to give it another weeks trial & then if we found nothing Josh & Alf would try & get a job, we tried all round the country but it was no good all the good reefs are pegged out some of the old hands have as many as 9 claims pegged out, only on the chance of selling them, they never intend to work, & still you cant get on them for another 2 months, all the experts reckon it is a big swindle there were a couple camped near us & they took it awful hard they reckoned Tuens & Corbin I ought to be hung putting such glowing accounts in the paper & fooling people. one of Tuens nephews are up & there were 6 of us at our camp one night, & he proposed we get up a petition & get all the men on the fields to sign it, & send it down to the papers to advertise to stop others from coming up, he said would not his uncle rave, it will be a great place in 12 months time of the Goose & the other claims turn out any good for it would employ 100s of men & the wages would be £4.0.0 per week it costs a man a £1.0.0 a week to live &
then he can have no luxurious Art Roberts has started butchering there they say the meat will go up to 1/- per lb before long the claim that we heard he was offered £3000 for he sold for a horse so you can see how the yarns grow. I went up & had a talk to Collins he said he would not leave yet now that we were here as they would soon see now how things were going to go, he was very pleased to see me & asked me to come back again, when we found there was not going to be anything done for a while I & Josh decided to have a look round the White Range, Alf would not come he said he would stay a while longer, so we divided all our things & I & Josh started for the Slate hole last Monday we met 4 or 5 different lots going out they will be in a mess as the stores have sold out of all their stores, but flour they have plenty of that. We got to Slate hole about dark the Waterhole was full as it rained very heavy on Sunday before we left Winnecke the creek came down in flood in less than an hour so you can tell by that what hilly country it must be. I just got back to camp when it started raining, we did not go after the horses in the morning I started to look for them after 2 oclock I got on their tracks and followed them up into the hills they can only follow the watercourses & they had gone round & round these hills when I got them I began to look which way to steer for camp, but was a long time in coming to a decided course but I went by the sun & after a lot of winding about I got out alright my word it would of been no fun in getting bushed just then as it was thundering & lightning something terrible it was 4.30 when I got back to camp with them they were frightened to move, just as I got back it started & just poured for a couple of hours. The creek that runs past Winnecke Depo comes right on here & filled all the waterholes, it is about 5 miles from here into Arltunga & 9 to the White range so we will make this our camp while we stop here. After we had tea we heard a noise up at Harding yards so we thought Uncle would be there as Harding has sold out to Braden & they are mustering, Braden is giving Harding £3600 for the run & all the cattle & horses, I got up early next morning & went to see if uncle was there but it was only Harding's man killing a beast, we got some fresh meat, he told us Uncle & the others were away out East mustering the horses but would be in in a day or two. Just before dinner Harding came in & told us that Uncle had gone into Arltunga with 300 horses so we packed up & followed them we got to Arltunga just after they had passed so we followed them when we caught up Uncle said we had better come on, on to the plain & help them to watch them during the night so we went with him, we camped on a round plain, & as there were 9 men we divided the watches up into 3; three men at a time, I & Uncle & Josh went on from 1.30 until daylight it was a lovely moonlight night, & I thought it was not bad, next morning we went back to Arltunga a had a look round we like this place better than Winnecke Depo, Fred May one ofJoshes mates has got a reef close to the Cyanide you can see gold all through the stone the best we have seen, he has it under offer to a Syndicate for £200 & an 1/8 share in it if it goes off I mean to put a few pound in it they are going to call it the Valentine, so you can tell Sleader & he will tell the rest, we went back to Slate Hole again there is splendid feed here for our horses. We did not go out next day gave our horses a spell. Just about 4 oclock Albert Wallace turned up he had just got back from the Barrow with the stock they bought off Abbott, he sold all the goats but 98 at the Alice done well out of them he came to see Uncle about some niggers who had got away from Arltunga with a rifle & cartridges & had gone
out to their back country & were shooting their horses & Hardings
cattle, he went to the old trooper here, but he is too slow to
catch grubs, he wont go out until they bring him the brand of the
horses killed & take out a warrant for them. They are too bad
niggers, but Uncle did not turn up until the next night and as
they are too busy mustering they will leave them until they are
finished. Albert started back for Loves Creek next morning as he
had to look after the horses he had brought from the Barrow I &
Josh went over to the White Range yesterday that is the [place?]
for gold a big white hill 3 or 400 feet high & one solid Quartz,
some of the old hands have been there for years just grubbing out
a bit of stone & getting it crushed they get as much as 4oz out
of a Ton of stone, then they get their cheque & go into the Alice
& have a big spree come back & start to get a few more ton out,
it wants a Company with about £100,000 to work it, it would last
for years, you dont hear half as much about it up here as you see
in the papers, there are a doose of a lot going back. When we
got back Braden had got into camp with about 400 head of cattle,
so Sunday morning I went out with Harding to muster a lot that
were on the plains around Slate hole, we got 237 & got wet
through beside it rained pretty heavy while we were out & rained
all night. The poor fellows that had to watch the cattle had a
bad time of it, next morning I & Uncle & Harding & his men went
out again & got wet through again the water was running out of
our boots we only got 41 the ground is getting very boggy, I have
got my last dry clothes on so will have to look out & not get wet
again it rained all day & all night a regular down country
winters rain they say they have not had a rain like this for 10
or 12 years. Uncle went out & helped them watch the cattle last
night, I gave him my coat & Harding have him his overcoat he came
back this morning just as I was lighting the fire he was pretty
wet, but they take no notice of getting wet in this country they
just go & lie down in their wet clothes. This morning Braden
came to our camp & asked Josh to go to Todmorron in charge of the
cattle he said he would give him £4.0.0 per week Josh did not
know what to do so I said he had better go as he would not earn
that here if he got a job & if things went ahead up here I would
let him know & he could come back so he told Braden he would go,
I would of gone too only I promised Uncle to give him a hand
mustering & branding his horses & caytle, so I did not like to
back out, else I should of liked to of gone with Josh, so we came
in here today to get our letters & write, we wrote in Fred Mays
tent, & in a terrible hurry so you will have to excuse the bad
writing. I am getting on fine up here never had a cold since I
left home I made sure I would get one after getting wet but I do
not feel any the worse for it. I can eat like a horse eat about
3 times as much as when I am home if it is only Damper salt junk
& jam we had a Tin of honey for a change. The only thing that I
dont like is when I have got to wait for meals I am always
hungry. Old Lewis Nichols it out at >our camp you know the old
fellow that is crippled up & was down at Dr. Scholzes, he is the
biggest card I ever see talk about swear he beats the Devil. I
am sorry that the colts are going wrong with Miller as I have not
seen anything like them up here with all their horses, they are
the worst lot of horses I ever rode, I just sold the old horse I
had from Frank Wallace as I have no further use for him now that
I am going with Uncle. This is the place to breed horses
everybdoy breeds foals & dont own an inch of ground, I thought
that would be the end of the Tanundas wanting the show on their
own & I suppose they will get it in a few years, you done well at
it taking 4 firsts & a second, just fancy Dave & the old man having a fight. Dave ought to of come with us as all the stations are shorthanded all the fellows going to the fields, they are offering 30/- to 35/- a week I have a good mind to go on myself, as it is far before cockekeying. Tell Ern I intended to write to him this mail but it being so wet I did not have time as we could not write in the tent. Tell Dad to take Mrs. Josh out £8 eight pound he gave it to me & I will pay him back, I wanted to give him a cheque but he was afraid he might have a bother in getting it cashed, he does not like going but the pay is good, he dont like leaving me my word the old cows must be milking well you cant beat Lucern. If you dont want me home yet I think I will stop a few months longer Uncle is talking of sending 200 horses down in July or August so if you can do without me I will wait till then, but if you should want me you had better send a Telegram as it takes a letter a long time to get here. Remember me to all my friends it must be hard on poor Violet again, no more paper with Love from me to you all & hoping you are all well as it leaves me hope you will get on better through the winter with your leg if my being away makes it any harder on you let me know & I will come home at once address my next letter Loves Creek.

Dear Harriet

March 29th

You will think this a funny sort of letter, but this is all the paper I have here & my ink bottle has gone dry & I am at Slate hole. We started from Loves Creek yesterday got here last night, & were going to Winneckes Depo tonight to muster there tomorrow, & get back home Tuesday night & then I would of been able to write from there, but when we got here we found it would take us a week or more here, we did not find the horses until 11.30. There is splendid feed here & still they ramble so we had dinner & started packing up, when it came on to rain very steady just like the last time we were here & had to go home, so we unpacked & let the horses graze again, & rigged our tent, it is a good job we did or else we would of been wet through as it is raining pretty heavy now. I hope we get it at Loves Creek, as the last rain we had started the feed fine, & if we dont get another shortly it will all dye off again, we made sure the last rain we had would of been general as it came from the South but Harding heard in at the Alice that it only went as low down as Charlotte Waters, Braden & he went into the Alice to do some business & when Braden heard that they had no rain at Todmorton that is where Josh was taking the cattle to, he was in a great way & said he would have to leave them at Henbury, so Josh might be back soon. We have been pretty busy at Loves Creek since I have been there, getting the horses & cattle out of the mobs Braden is taking past & branding them & taking them back on to the run, they have got a doose of a job to keep horses here, they all try to get back to the country what they used to have further north, we had a couple of days shoeing as Albert has gone out with the trooper & their niggers to catch those other two that are killing horses & cattle as soon as any of the horses make back there these niggers kill them, they are getting quite plucky now as they think the whites are frightened of them, they told some of the other niggers to tell the whites to come & catch them
& they will shoot the first one they see, they are saving cartridges to do it, they went down to Prossers place joins Uncle on the East & took all his flour & rations, he came into Arltunga in a great way, but Albert only laughed at the idea of getting shot. He went away prepared for three weeks trip, he says his nigger Sam will track them until he gets them as he has got a set on one of them, one of them is the ringleader that used to kill Uncle’s horses before, the blacks killed two others themselves, as they reckoned they were the cause of loosing so many friends through the horse killing business. I & Uncle took a lot of horses out to the Camel paddock where I went with Frank Wallace, we wanted one of the horses that was running there to bring back so we camped there Tuesday night & started looking for him next morning we rode all day but could not find him, so we had to camp another night & start again next morning I & Uncle & the niggers split up, one went one side & I in the middle we had not gone above a couple of miles when he & two others came tearing past me, they must of heard Uncle as they came from his way but he did not see them, so I after them they went about 4 miles before I could head them, I was riding a colt, & he was a bit foolish, would not go straight, I turned them back & started for the yard but never expected to get there with them by myself, but I kept wide of them & when they tried to get away I used to cut corners, so got them down and in they tried all they knew to get away, at the yard I had to wait 2 1/2 hours before Uncle turned up he was quite surprised when he see them in the yard we had dinner it was three when we packed up & started for home, but only went a few miles & camped on some feed, got home dinnertime Friday instead of Thursday as we expected, we were to of got here Friday instead of Saturday so you see you never know what to expect in this country, if you dont happen to get a letter every fortnight dont take any notice as we may be away for weeks soon when we start on Uncle. Ern will get no letter this time & it will be a chance if you get this, as I will have to send it in with Harding to Fred May to get an envelope & address it as I have none here & it will be ten to one if he dont forget to give it to May. I have not heard much about the goldfields lately, they say there are a terrible lot of people coming up & there are pubs & stores going up by the dozen all over the place, I heard here yesterday that some fellows with Camels found a new reef, Camels are the only way of getting about, as you might have 3 inches of rain up here & in two or three days there is no sign of it. I have not heard of Alf since whether he has gone down or if he is out there still, all the stations are in a fix for men around here all their old hands have left to got prospecting & they cant get any men, I could get any amount of Billets if I wanted them, it is a pity Dave did not come with us when we came for I am sure this life would suit him it is splendid galloping after cattle & horses & breaking them in we have broke two in since I have been here, dont go the bother up here that we do & it breaks them in half to the time, throw them put the hobbles & sidelines head stall on them & then let them up they fly around for a bit & then stand quite quiet then they put the saddle on them & bit in their mouth let them stop like this for a bit then free them up after that they never try to run away from you, but if Dave started up now by the time he got up the goldfield might go broke & then there would be plenty of men again. The mine that Art Roberts got that they talk about down there being worth £300 he swooped for an old horse the other day so you see how they imagien things down there. When we are at Loves Creek we get very good tucker
good bread, buns, plenty of meat & milk, Cream, Jam, Honey, Treacle, they have run out of Rice & Sago, so we have bread & milk every morning, they have got a halfcaste girl there she has been brought up by white women & she prides herself on the bread & buns she makes, she is very clean, Uncle brought another little halfcaste boy about 4 years old from the Barrow with him - he is bringing him up white man style, makes him sit at the table & use his knife & fork, he gave him a bit of a drubbing before we started Tuesday, he asked him a question & he would not answer him so he performed on him a bit, it made me laugh to see him, otherwise he is awful good to him, if he was reading the paper & this little cove comes up & talks to him he will put his paper down & answer him, I was quite surprised when I first see him do it, but if he talks to much at the table he just says eat your dinner or tea whatever it may be or out you go. This is all the news this time Hoping you are all well & that you leg is not giving you much trouble & that you are getting plenty of rain so as not to have any trouble with the sheep, I am well & still eating like a horse. Remember me to all my friends & with love to you all especially Sleader [writing gets very cramped here] & tell him I will ?

I remain?
your afft. brother
Will

Loves Creek
April 15th 1903

My Dear Harriet,

I just received your letter of March 27th. We just got back from a weeks mustering cattle, I & Uncle & two blackboys, Albert went into the Alice for rations, he says they are going up terrible flour is £3.10.0 per bag now he went away last Monday week & got back Sunday. We started last Wensday & got back today just a week, we had to go out to get some for Wallace he has bought all theirs (bullocks) about 70 at £7.0.0 per head so they will do pretty well out of them so then we went away out further to get all the cattle that were at Ruby gap where the niggers are killing them & Whites too as Albert found out when he went out there we got 1260 & brought them in nearer the station there is good feed & water about now, I never see feed grow so quick 6 inches to a foot in a week. I wont write much this time as I am sending you another diary that I have filled & you will get all the news up to Easter Monday in that, they keep no Good friday or Easter Monday up here, & I have not much time to write as Albert has to take the mail bag to the letter box this evening & I have only a couple of hours to write in & I want to write a few lines to Ern this time, poor old Sleader ought of got a letter last time you did as I wrote one to him from Claraville & if you got yours he ought of got his as I posted them myself, I was expecting an answer from him this time. What a pity it is keeping so dry down there again the same as last year, it all came up nice three times & then died off again, you did not say in your letter if Ellis took Jess & Biddy. I dont think I will get any horses up here now as they are getting as much for them up here as they
would in Town. the Mailcontractor Williams is buying them in hundreds for the Mail he bought 50 off Joe Braden some of those he got from Harding. I will stop & help Uncle muster his horses & then if he will start down with them at once I will help him, if not I will come down with the coach. I am a bit sick this afternoon we just got home before dinner & Albert cooked a rice pudding. & what with the flies & I suppose I eat to hearty, it turned me up & had to go down the Creek & get rid of it all my stomach is not used to rich food now. Uncle & Albert are over at the yard now catching two more colts & I am here writing & very near eat with the flies. I don't hear much about the goldfield you will know more about them by the papers. I see in the paper today that there are still a lot of people coming up. I had a letter from Alf the other day, he has gone in with three other fellows they found a Reef but knew nothing about mining so got him to go in with them. he said he thought it would turn out very good. We heard today that the new Warden is playing up with them it costs them about 25.0.0 now to take out a claim so if that is the case it will stop all prospecting. We also heard that Art Roberts has given up the butchering again it did not pay him. It ought to suit Dave with Uncle Bob if he will take him it is preety rough but no hard work, no lifting it makes you tired driving a mob of Cattle especially Cows & calves but still there is no strain on you I & Uncle & the two boys branded & Earmarked 35 in a couple of hours & some big & wild ones too. Uncles revolver went wrong so we took my rifle with us & coming home the brute of a packhorse rolled with the pack & bent the barrel so it will be no good up here, now I will have to bring it down with me to Ekins. There is a fellow from the White Range here for goats he bought 47. Fancy poor old Tim selling out. I just wrote a letter to him before I went out mustering for fear I should not be home today about Jam & preserves. I was telling Frank Wallis the storekeeper about his preserves so he sent out for his address as he wanted to see if he could supply him with Jam of the year it would of been a good opening as there is a tremendous lot of Jam used up here so I wrote explaining what he wanted it has to be quite thick for up here so as it will carry in the packbags, but as he is selling it out it will be no good. Old Bassett will kill poor old Tony yet with trouble it will suit Martha going to Gawler again, how is Harry getting on & what will Mudge do now I see they are finding some sort of Manure at Robertstown it will be a big thing if it turns out good. Andy must be preety slow if it is going to take him 4 months to finish Charleys house. Just fancy Billy Boehm dead, but it is just as well for him the way he was. I see in the paper where there was one man drowned in a tank of wine at Baxedows & another ran over the wine season is always the death of a few, & old Mrs Raedel well it is time she snuffed out, poor old Mrs Lemon in the wars again, it will disfigure all her face the scald marks tell Bob to tell her that I am very sorry to hear of her bad luck. & hope she will soon get over it. & poor Juncken having to go to the Hospital, that will be bad for him & the Miss Trewins what a shame to buy them out like that, tell them that I am awfully sorry to hear it & only hope they will be able to stop in the park, it seems that everything is going wrong since I left. Daniels will just grin over their bad luck. Martin is always going to leave but it never comes to anything. but perhaps having his meals at home will suit him better, it will make it worse for Mrs. Kindlen. I should like to see him up here, this would take a fall out of him. It was bad luck for young Roenfeld having his
stable & horses burnt. It must of been a good year for apples as we see a photo of seven Teams loaded with apples leaving Angaston in the Observer. You can pay Robin for the dried fruit & I will settle with Uncle well I will have to stop as it is getting late & if I want to drop Ern a few lines I will have to hurry up so hoping you are all well as it leaves me but for being sick. & with love from me to all. & remember me to all my friends

I am your loving

brother Will

Is Dad thinking of putting any crops in this season
Tell Sleader if I dont get no reply from him by next mail I will write him another letter but I think he ought to get the last one I wrote him if you did, that is if I am at home & not out mustering when the mail goes down.

Loves Creek
April 21st 1903

Dear Harriet.

I am going to write a few lines to you tonight. As I dont think we will be here next mail day, we were going to start out on Monday & then we would of got back by Wednesday week, but it started raining Sunday night & rained all night & a good part of Monday & a very heavy thunderstorm passed over here this afternoon at 3 o'clock. They say they have not had a rain like this for 8 years it must of rained fully 2 inches, they reckon it will make feed enough for two years it will put us a week behind with the mustering, I & Albert & a nigger are going to start out tomorrow & going to go 70 or 80 miles out South East to see if any of the horses or cattle have gone down there & then we will work up East & meet Uncle he will start out a couple of days after us with the niggers. & then we will finish up mustering the cattle, then come home get our mail & a fresh supply of rations & go back to muster the horses. We killed a big bullock Saturday night so as we would have enough meat for three weeks but as it was very bad weather we are afraid it will go bad, we have just been poking about since last Wednesday breaking in two more colts. Sowing more seed in the garden. Just fancy we are using Radishes already only sown 4 weeks. We had a great feed Sunday night. Fried steak, lovely bread, Buns Cream & Jam, Cucumbers & Radishes. I dished up the Cucumbers with pepper Salt & Vinegar. Today Albert & I made a place to tie colts up to, two posts 4 foot in the ground & 5 foot 6 inches out with two rails across Uncle has been making hide ropes. We made a hide band for my hat as the ribbon dont last no time up here gets torn off in the Mulga. We had a visitor here on Sunday Mr Mercer from West Australia he has got a party going out East prospecting I suppose you will of seen an account of him in the paper, he wanted to get all the particulars of the country, he stopped to dinner & left about 3 o'clock he is camped 10 miles out at a well he will have to stop there a week now he wont be able to go on with the camels it will be to boggy, they wont stand up if it is boggy. I wrote a letter to Sleader Sunday night am sorry he never got the last one I wrote him poor old fellow it is strange to that you got yours & his went astray as I put the two in the letterbox at once. I wrote them both that Sunday I stayed at Claraville. I have not
heard any news from the Goldfields. only that there is still a lot of people coming up & that rations are pretty scarce. I was going into the White Range last Friday to see about ours, but the jolly horses did not come in till it was to late so did not go, will go in when we finish the cattle. I suppose Uncle Bob will be out home by this time would not I like to see him, but I suppose he will be gone long before I get hom. Well I think this is all as it is only a few days since I wrote the last letter. I will be done for a diary soon. I told Albert to bring me one from the Alice, but they sent a pocketbook, so will have to send it back. I have only one of them little ones that Ekins gave me. I will not close this letter perhaps we may get back before the mail goes back if not the Gin will close it & put it in the mailbag Sleaders too. Hoping you are all well as it leave me all but a weak eye & Remember me to them all. & with love to you all

I remain your
brother
Will

I see Kempers case in the paper know now what you ment

April 29th

When I wrote the first part of this letter I did not think we would get back in time for mail but we just got home Tuesday night as the black was bringing up the mailbag the mail was a day behind. I suppose the heavy rain made him late. It is only by chance Albert & I got home, we missed Uncle somehow at Giles hole, saw where he had been there I had come in with some cattle made sure he would be home. We were quite surprised to find he was not here, but the Gin told us that one of Wallaces niggers came here for some more bullocks & they sent him after Uncle so I suppose he was at Box hole getting them, so we will have to wait until he comes before we can start of the horses. I & Albert started last Wensday afternoon & went out South East 70 miles to some country nobody had ever been into before, we wanted to outside of all their horses to see if any of them had gone away in the rain. It was lovely country we traveled over after we got out 25 mile it is all plains sandy soil with just a line of low hills every 8 or 10 miles it looks lovely now feed 2 & 3 feet high it must of rained out there long before we had any here, we travelled Wensday Thursday & Friday kept going out. We had a heavy Thunderstorm pass over us Thursday while we stopped for dinner. We did not get wet, we got Alberts fly out & hung it over a limb & sat under it it was real tropical weather. the ground takes in all the water as fast as it falls & we had to keep our Canteens full for fear of getting no water at night. we had a nigger with us that knew the country & he took us too a Claypan the second night, here we see a niggers dam Albert says it is very dry country where they make them, then they only last two or three weeks. they come out from the hills directly after a rain & hunt on the plains, but they have all died out. we did not see one in our travels they are all coming in to the Goldfields look after peoples horses for their tucker. the third night we got to another claypan, it covered 4 or 5 acres but was only up to the horses fetlocks it would last no time, just before we got to it we see a horses track only a couple of days old Albert thought it would be one they had lost long ago next morning we went back & tracked him up he turned out to be one that Uncle had with him when I came out here with him. & he let him go for a spell we see him a month ago at Loves Creek & now just fancy him being out here & all by himself he must of got out here after the
first rain he was poor when he let him go, now he as as fat as a whale, we caught him after we had our dinner & I rode him he played up a bit. Saturday we started back only went further East that night we came on to a big swamp miles long & wide we had to camp in the middle of it as it was too far to go to get across it, it would carry thousands of stock if there was water on it, I believe you could get water by sinking. Sunday we begin to get to the outside of the horses, we came on two just about dinner, Albert wanted to round them up & take them with us but as soon as they saw him they were off & it being so boggy he could not follow them you ought to of seen them tossing up the mud, there will be some fun mustering them, we came on to a big mob next & managed to round them up, as there were some of their Draught brood mares in it, they are fine mares & fat as mud, we took them on with us for a mile to two until we stopped for dinner just to quieten them a bit, when we let them go they just walked of quietly. through coming out here we know now how far out they have got, we had not seen any cattle so far, we camped on the river Clarey that night, Monday we had only gone a few miles when we came on five cattle tracks followed them up & got them, they were very wild took a long time to steady them, then I drove them & the packhorses along while Albert & the niggers scouted each side we got 10 more before we got into Giles hole, we expected to see Uncle there but he was gone, he was to of left a note in a post hole but I suppose he forgot, so we put the cattle in the yard & camped for the night next morning we were up early branded 3 calves we had & started with them for Box hole, they want to get them all together they will have over 400 we got hom at 4 having covered abot 175 mile. I was very much surprised & disappointed when we opened the mailbag & there was no letter for me, as I was sure you would of wrote & let me know about Uncle Bob, but most likely it has gone astray, as Sleaders did it is lovely weather up here now, nice warm sunshiney days, with cold Dewey nights, I get on alright I & Albert lay together & pull his fly over us it is very wet in the mornings but we are dry. After we have gone through the horse muster they will know if they have enough for Adelaide & they will start in August with them to get down in September, so if you can get on without me till then I will stop & help them down, poor beggars they need a bit of help for instead of having a 1000 horses as they ought to, they have only about 400, what with the niggers & the drought. After we have finished the horses, Uncle is going out to Irratippara the station they had before where the niggers killed all the horses, a lot of them have gone back from here, they have had a job to keep them here as their was no feed it is 140 miles North East from here if he goes I will go with him, then Albert is going away out North West on to the river Wright & I will go out there with him so I will see all the country that is if you can do without me so long if not, you had better send me a wire as soon as you get this letter, we will be just about finished horse mustering then. The wire will only cost 6d or 9d, just address it W Coulthard Loves Creek, Come home, tell Miss Mitford to tell the station master at the Alice to send it out by the mail, or otherwise it would cost £3.10.0 to bring it out, then I would get word in a month from now instead of 6 weeks if you wrote & then the letter may go astray, as they say the horses they drive in the coach are all colts, & they have some awful smash ups sometimes. I am keeping fine up here have not had a cold since I came up, I only get a touch of Indijestion some times, I think it is the salt meat, the flies are beginning to thin out the cold
nights are playing up with them. there none about in the mornings or nights now only in the middle of the day, they are very troublesome just now while I am writing. but if I dont write this afternoon I cant see at night with the lantern. we are having a spell today Albert is laying down reading the paper. I though I would of got a letter from Josh to say what he is going to do. but did not. I suppose he will go home. I have not seen Sages place advertised yet they must of had a good apple season this year. I see the photos of the Distillery in the paper. We had porridge & Eggs for breakfast, & a Apricot pudding for dinner we boil the Apricots for half an hour then put a doe on top the same as you do for stew it is splendid that way better than pie. we are saving the cream going to make butter. Well I think this is all. so hoping you are all well as it leaves me & with love to all

your loving
brother Will

I dont feel easy now that I did not get a letter from you

Loves Creek
May 12th 1903

Dear Harriet.

We just received our mail dinner time it ought to of come yesterday morning. but it was late again. I got two letters from you the one I should of got last mail it is strange as most of Uncles letters are addressed Loves Creek, you said it was no use sending it I got it all the same you must of altered your mind & sent it. I am glad you did. We have not got a start at the horse mustering yet. such a lot of things come in between I wont write them as I am sending another little diary it is the last I have. & that will tell you what we have been doing. Uncle went to Arltunga & I told him to get me a little pocket diary. but the store was shut up sold clean out. they are in a doose of a mess for rations it seems funny the more stores they open the less stuff they seem to have. There were a couple of fellows here from Winneckes Depo yesterday they came Sunday & stopped until this morning. Ben Walkington & Jim Baker. they say the Depo is very dull no work & a lot of men pretty hard up. the great mine the Goose is no good. they have tunnelled a hole right into the hill & cant strike no reef. I have not heard from Alf since so dont know what his is turning out like. Walkington dont know nothing about it he has been there from the first so if it was any good he would of heard of it. old Klotz the publican that used to be in Angaston is up here he is Captain of one of the mines. Captain Klotz he calls himself. he says Mr Tuens says a lot. Mr Brown says very little. Captain Klotz says nothing. but when he does he will open his mouth like a Chark & all the world will hear him. Walkington & the other fellow are going out to Uncles old station I have always called it Irratipperaa it is urratippera prospecting & to look for some of his horses that are out there he used to be with Uncle on the Frew so he came to see if Uncle would go with them as a lot of his have gone back. & they are frightened the niggers will get them. so he is going with them. they start from Claraville next Sunday so that will do
me out of the trip as I will have to stop & help Albert muster the horses, it will take us 5 or 6 weeks to finish them, we have got everything ready today & will start tomorrow, there is a fellow should of turned up today, Paddy Maloney a jockey he is going to work for them & train the racehorses, so we wanted to get him to take with us, but it is nearly 5 oclock & he has not turned up yet, so we will go without him if he dont come tonight. If you dont get a letter next mail dont take any notice as we wont come back here unless we run short of tucker for a month or so. So Uncle has got out home poor old chap he is always unlucky fancy loosing 15 of them, we heard that long ago but did not know if it was true, & then only getting £8.0.0 for them, Uncle got a telegram from Braden today he said his lot averaged £17.0.0. those that he got from Harding, & they were nothing extra, he bought three from Uncle here, gave him 26.0.0 for the three they were nothing much, he sold one to Williams at the Alice for 12.0.0 & said in the telegram that the two he took down brought £52.0.0 & so he must of had a good sale, he was a bit disappointed when he got Hardings lot together thought they would of been a better lot. Horses are a big price up here now, that is broken in horses they are giving £12.0.0 & 14.0.0 for old horses & up to 20.0.0 for young that is only ordinary saddle horses, so there will be no chance of me getting any. I am sorry I am not down to see him, I wonder will he take Dave with [him], I think it would suit Dave I am quite used to it seem quite at home I like it far better when we are out than when we are in here at the station & eat, I eat more in one day here than I used to in three down home, I dont know now when I will start for home, as you seem to be getting on alright without me & while I am up here I may as well have a good look around, after we are finished the horse muster I think I will have another look round the Goldfields, sometimes of a night I think what a fool I am to be up here, when I could be enjoying myself down there playing pingpong & all the rest of it, during the winter nights, but in the daytime when we are out it is lovely, such grand weather, hot in the day & cool at night, & the country is looking splendid everything getting as fat as butter, it is no wonder that the old coves that have been up here so long & get used to it dont like to leave it. Poor old Uncle & Albert have had such bad luck loosing al those horses & cattle out at the other place, & now that they have come in here the brutes keep going back, they are pretty heavy in debt Frank Wallace the storekeeper at the Alice has been keeping them going paying their rent & finding them in rations for these 3 years they owe him close on £1000 but now that they are selling cattle & expect to get 200 horses to bring to Adelaide they think they will be able to get a good start again, but dont say anything about it only to Dad & yourselves as Albert told me & Uncle might not like it, he never tells anything much, he only told me that Frank Wallace had been keeping them going. About the dried fruit, Uncle said that Marsh is a real scoundrel he will open that case & half empty it you ought to of addressed is as I said, I dont suppose we will get it from the Alice for a good while, as they only go into the Alice for rations every 3 or 4 months & Albert has only got back a month ago, but it will be alright at Frank Wallises, I have not heard from Josh as to whether he is coming back or not he must of got to Todmorton 2 or 3 weeks ago, I did not get a letter from Sleader either, unless he addressed it Arltunga & it has gone on there. We only see the paper today what won at Onkerparangs it will be a month tomorrow since the Races, none of the favorites won all big dividends pity Uncle Bob
did not strike some of them.  
It is good enough for Daniels that Bob give him a dressing down, he ought not to of stopped until he had flogged him to within an inch of his life, he will have to watch him now he will be laving in wait for him some of these nights with an armful of stones or something else, he is a bad egg, it is a pity he was not sold out instead of Trewins, I hope they will be able to get a house in the Township, Lowes did not last long, Tom Brooks got a big price for his horses, the fire was a big loss to young Roenfield, fancy Hans Thamm married I suppose Selma will stop home now. You said that the dogs have been at Sleaders sheep & that he poisioned two of Daniels, I always thought they would take to stealing or killing, Daniels wont like that. It is a good job Dad advertised the paddocks again, so that he can put a stop to them at once if they begin on our sheep, the season must be something like last year, a few showers then a few hot days to dry it up, he got a good price for the sheep in Kapunda, I did not think they would be fit to sell yet, you will have any amount of feed now for what you have left. I see Perry sent his Interest alright, & just fancy having to pay £10.0.0 Income Tax I see in the papers where they gave Mr Blackett a social in Angaston, but did not see any account of the one in the park. I should of liked to of been at that. Lucy Trewin must of had a comical dream, poor old Tim & Edie will be in a great way about their mother they have nothing but trouble. You had better keep going to Glynn to see if he cant do your leg no good, & now that he has this Dr from England he might be able to help you, mind you dont turn the trap up next time you go though. I see you sold old Jess & Biddy to Smith so Ellis did not take them & Bluey to Trimmer, they must be milking well on the Lucerne if you make 55 & 56 from 9 cows, in your last letter you say 10 so I suppose one of the heifers have calved this is your first letter answered now for the lost one. We heard up here that Cowel and Martin the sooner he comes back the better for him the winter in Adelaide will kill him, you will have to take Uncle out a bit now, he must like Ms Bogner to go down to see her so often, the boys will be set up now with a poney, I daresay Coles would like old Sam for £30.0.0 he would get £40 or 45 for him now in Town, have they started building the Church of England yet, you said they had a Concert in aid of it. Charley will be getting sick of Andys building if he dont soon finish. Tell Trewins girls that I would of liked to of been at the ping pong party, I often think of the games we used to have last winter, when I am sitting by the campfire at night. & the last game we had the night before I left with Miss Wilson it was hot enough to melt you, tell them the first time I heard Dolly Grey sung since I left home was last night, Jim Baker & I sang it, it made me think of them then & very often. I think what night is this, Wensday oh the Band will be just about starting playing & I am turning in. I dont quite believe Lucy is 42 but I think she is more than 28, they will do Daniels a lot of harm now that they are selling off. I see Simons have not forgot the hanes yet it is a shame turning them out now that the place is done up, Mrs Lemon soon got over her scalding & she will look quite spruce now with her teeth. Old Smith must of had a good season if he gave his packers a picnic. & Robin too. Just fancy Uncle August sending for help we will have to keep the whole lot of our Uncles & Aunts soon. Old Tom Brock, wont have nothing to drive in his family trap for Madam if he lets Dad have that horse. I suppose Bess is to flash now that she has had a spell
with the foal, they might turn out a good Buggy pair, the filly must be a good size now & fit to break in. Old Thamm would smile when he see Uncle coming he would know he wanted a saddle, I got Albert to get me a Quire of paper & a packet of Envelopes & 2/6 worth of stamps, when he went to the Alice for rations so I have plenty, he could not get 2d stamps, only 1d ones they were out of stamps there too, all they have left in the pub there is Brandy & Wine & that is 9d a nobler. If Uncle is not gone before you get this letter tell him I think he had better leave the German girls behind especially the likes of Miss Kortens they are bits of flyers, he might manage with one of the Lights Pass ones one of them at Larry Smiths that have come from the flats, & cant eat anything even to a bit of bullock hide these wemon up here have a terrible time of it, the Language they hear is something terrible, it is no place for a woman. Yesterday was an unlucky day here first thing I got a kick in the thigh, was hobbuling the quiet horses in the yard, did not notice that a colt had come in with them, he had no business there, about 20 quiet ones we are collecting for the muster, the boys bring them in every morning & we keep them in for an hour or two then let them go again just to keep them from going to far. Well I was in amongst them & had just caught the last one was going to kneel down to put the hobbles on when I thought I would lead him up a bit away from the others, I just turned round when I got such a clout in the back part of the thigh if it had been a shod horse it would of broke my leg it turned me sick for a while, but I soon got over that, but my leg is very stiff, I bathed it in hot water last night & rubbed some kerosene into it, it was no worse this morning & a good bit better tonight I suppose it will be a bit sore riding tomorrow if it is I will ride into the White Range & get a bottle of St. Jacobs Oil, as we will only be about 8 miles from there, & that will soon fix me up, they take no notice of kicks or nocks up here. After that we went to brand 3 foals the first one we caught was jumping about a bit & snapped his front leg clean in halves between the knee & fetlock Uncle said he never see the likes before, he has had them break their necks running into the fence but nothing what ever touched this one he must of twisted it, we knocked him on the head & dragged him out, finished the other two, then went shoeing, Albert & Walkington got bung Eyes. Tell Sleader I am sorry to hear he is bad again & hope he will soon be better, & tell him I expected a letter from him. Remember me to all & give my love to Mother & Add Dad & yourself & Uncle & tell him I am awfully sorry I wont see him, Huts Peperall is down he is going to start butchering at the Depo your loving brother Will

Giles Hole
Tuesday morning Sunrise May 26

Dear Harriet,

Just a few lines to let you know I am alright. It is only by chance that I am able to write. We have been out a fortnight mustering & got in here with the horses we only got 120 thought we would get 300 by the time we got in here goodness knows where they have gone to. Old Bob & 12 or 13 more have
cleared out from Loves Creek & gone South. Uncle followed them two days then had to leave them to go to Oorratipperra, then when we were out South mustering I & Albert followed them down to where we got that other horse but as the tracks were about 3 weeks old we left them, as they might be down at the Charlotte by this time, so we will leave them until Uncle comes home. We doctored up 35 foals yesterday, while we were at dinner 40 of Frank Wallaces Camels came by, they had come from Winnecke Depo, had taken loading down there & came back this way to get some young Camels to break in. the Afghan gave me a ride on his riding camel, just to say I had a ride on a Camel. Just as we were finishing up last night Frank Wallace rode up. Albert thought he was coming to help to muster, but he said the store was paying him better than all the horses, he said he was turning over a £1000 a month, he said he got up 20 cases of Whisky & it was all gone in two days they buy it by the case. I had a letter from Alf by Frank, he is working one of the mines, his reef was no good, he said they give as much as 2.5.0 for a bottle of Whisky, Frank is getting up 100 cases the Camel had the dried fruit on they will leave it at Loves Creek. Albert is going to Loves Creek with Frank to see that all is right & to get the mails & more rations I got Franks writing bag that is how I am writing this, I & Paddy are going down to Box Holes to muster there & to get some Bullocks for old Wallace. Well I will have to close as they are ready to start, hoping you are all well as it leaves me I am splendid my leg is alright again they say I am getting quite fat. so with Love to all

I remain your brother Will
dont take any notice of the writing as the nib is like a pin

Loves Creek
June 10th 1903

Dear Harriet

I just got back here to Loves Creek on Monday at 4.30 been out on the run a month. Albert came in last mail to see if everything was allright, so I wrote a bit of a note in the morning & sent it in with him, he gave it to Frank Wallace to post in the Alice so I suppose you will get it. I was glad to get your letter when I came in the mail was up to time & the nigger had just brought the bag in when I got hom, I brought a Bullock with me to kill, so we had to kill him at once as it was getting dark. & I left your letter until after tea, so that I could read it in comfort. I was glad to hear you are all well & getting on so well. I am in splendid health, I must of got used to the Salt meat as I dont get the Indiestion so much now. One thing I know is that my Coat & Waistcoat are getting too tight for me, they tell me I am getting fatter every day. I have just about gone through my two shirts I had to give one to the nigger boy all the sleeves were torn out of it, from catching in the Scrub & one pair of Trousis, the pair I got from Daniels they have been a splendid pair, they fitted me like a glove. Albert brought me a new pair of Socks from Claraville, all wool 2/6, I wished I had had the pocketbook you sent me a month ago all I could get was a book like you get from the Storekeepers, & I had to pay a 1/- for it, but it does alright I always carry my saddlebag with me & keep it in that, so when it gets too torn I will send it down &
It is a bit of a job to keep the Diary going. When I am out I have to write it by the firelight at night. Very often I don't feel inclined to do it. Albert always jogs me on, he says what about the Diary? I say Oh hang the Diary, he says don't jib on it now as you have kept it going so long. Paddy says I am a good one to stick to it. I can't write very well just now as Lil the halfcaste is shaking the table. She is making some Buns for us. She is a splendid Bun maker. I got the little box of Almonds, Uncle & the rest were sitting at the fire, when I had finished reading your letter I went out & told them you had sent me a little box of Almonds. My word he said we will have a feed of Almonds & Raisins tomorrow. We are living like fighting cocks while we are here. Fresh meat, plenty of Vegetables, dried fruits. The pears are splendid. I cook while we are here. We have steak & Eggs & Bread & butter in the mornings. Roast Beef, Turnips or Cabbage & stewed pears or plums for dinner, & steak Radishes, Garden Cress. Butter Jam or suchlike for tea. We have a couple of young Roosters to kill, but cant find the time to do it. We got all the butter Jam & Treacle before we were finished & our meat got full of maggots, the Blowies are very bad up here now. It is too hot for them in the summer, so they come in the winter. It is lovely weather up here now. Leave water in a dish it will be one solid block of Ice in the morning. I put my teeth in my pannican & fill it with water. It is one solid lump in the mornings. I have to put hot water on it to get them out. I have split the plate of my teeth somehow. Don't know how, expect them to break at every meal. You said in your last letter that you thought I must be getting sick of this life. But the more I have of it the better I like it, especially when we are out on the run. We have had as hard a month as anyone could get on a station. We branded 70 in the month, we got over 300 horses while we were out, & that is only about half of them. They have gone all over the country with the rain & are only beginning to come back to the main water. The Blowies are very bad up here now. They have dried up. They thought they would get 200 horses for Town but so far we have only got about 150 if they get 60 or 70 I think they will do well. They can't get them to stop here. They always clear out. We went out over the same ground as we went before the last mail & got more horses the second time. We got the first Albert & Harding & 2 niggers took the horses into Giles Hole & Brand them, whilst I took Paddy & 2 more niggers & went & shifted all the cattle from Box Holes to South Gap. As the water was done at Box Hole, we got about 20 horses there so we took them into Giles Hole. We finished up there on Saturday. We are putting all the Town horses & strangers in the Camel paddock. Then Albert started for Claraville to see his father & get some money for the Bullocks. I & Paddy went back to Boxhole & got a couple of heifers with calves & a Bullock. We left there & brought them home to break in & to kill. As Albert was going up to the store from this way Uncle was coming in from the other. He has been all over Orrratiperra & only got one of his horses & 2 of Walkingtons, the one he got is a nice horse, so I am going to take him & if he turns out any good I will keep him & bring him down, their
horses are not what I expected to see, but it has been the
drought that has done for them, they have got a nice lot of
yearlings & eighteen months foals, & as they could not do
anything with them during the drought they were in a real mess,
Stallions of all sorts amongst them, I could not of come here in
a better time, either for myself for experience or to be of use
to them I will stop now until we come down with the horses. We
will start about the beginning of August so as to get down about
the first week in September I was going to get a truck off them
but they had a letter from Barker Bros telling them to bring as
many as they can, 200 if possible, as the Melbourne buyers will
come over if they have a big lot so I wont trouble unless I can
pick up a few outsiders. Frank Wallace has just turned up,
Albert, Frank & I are going out to Ruby Gap to muster there Frank
has a lot of horses out there too, Uncle & Paddy will start
Sunday to the Camel paddock, all the strangers will meet there to
get their horses, Huts Pepperall, Walkington, May, Harding & a
lot of others, then Uncle & Paddy will start after the horses the
mob old Bob went away with, Albert & I will go on mustering for a
fortnight then Albert will have to go into the Alice for more
rations, Alf Parish has got hold of our rations they sent them to
Winneckes Depo, I think I will have a look round the Depo while
he goes in there, Frank Wallace says there is a bit of a lull at
Winneckes, I have not heard anything of Josh, I think he would of
done better to of gone down. I believe the Typhoid fever has
broken out at the Alice a young fellow that came up with us to
look after the store has got it & a lot of thers at the pub,
there are still a lot of people coming up & a lot going down. You
must be going to have a good season this year, I see by the
papers that they have had splendid rains all through the North &
floods all over th country. Dad got a big price for poor Sam, but
it was just as well to sell him or he might of died, I did not
think he would of sold Gipsys filly, you will not have any stock
left if you go on selling at the rate you have been. I had to
stop writing this afternoon when Frank came, & have started now
by the light of the Lantern they are all out at the fire. We all
had a big feed for tea Frank brought some Beacon & a smoked leg
of mutton ready boiled, I fried some Turnip tops & we had
Radishes & Cress. You done well out of the pig you sold to Ern,
how are Dads fingers Albert very near cut one of Uncles off
cutting down the beast yesterday morning. Frank told us that he
turned over £1000 in the last fortnight, so he is doing alright
out of the Goldfields. Rations have been awful scarce this last
month, until the Camels arrived & 2 or 3 Teams of Cave & Coes,
but they mostly carry Grog & sell it out, that is what Frank is
making the money out of such Brutes to Boose you never see a
bottle of Brandy or whisky is nothing to them they drink it by
the Gallon. The cost of getting it up is awful the case of Fruit
you sent or Robin cost 11/- on the railway along & the price of
loading from Oodnadatta is £20.0.0 per ton, but Frank only
charges a few bob for it, the carriage came to as much as the
fruit that is if he would of charged full rates. The currants he
sent are not much, as big as ordinary grapes & all stones, but
they think they are good, they are used to getting the imported
ones all stones & sand. Fancy poor old Tom Brock wanting to go
with Uncle, a fine manager he would make & Dave has missed his
chance as there are any amount of men about now wanting work,
they have got 7 or 8 on Undoola now where they could not get one
a couple of months ago, there are a lot of men coming across
country from Queensland & they do buck when they get here 2 of
them turned round & went straight back. You may of read an account of a reporter reviewing a man by the name of Bill Lang he gives a great account of it. Well he has got jail for drawing false cheques, so those are the sort of men that praise it up to make money out of it. It cost poor old Below a nice sum for his drunken row but it may do him good. It will be a pity of Trewins girls cant get a home in the Park, as they would be a great loss to the Town especially the church. I suppose it will break up if they go, but it is always the same in the park the one that are any good go, & the rubbish stops. Tell them I hope to see them there still when I get back. It is a pity they could not get Daniels out of that store & get in. I suppose Bob has great times now the long nights are on playing ping pong he must of improved to beat Master Kindler, I suppose Sleader is too much taken up with it too, as I have had no letter from him, he thought it bad of me when he did not get my letter that went astray but he got the second long ago as you said. I did not get one from Ern or Tim, Frank Wallace told me he had one from Tim about the Jam, he has sold out. Mrs. Penn will feel it awful lonely if she stops there by herself. Fancy Mrs Ellis coming back, it is all she deserves to live in a room by herself. It is about time I got home again to stick up for the poor girls as the vixen will be doing all she can to make people believe her of course I dont take any notice of old Ellis but the girls cant help what he does, so dont you turn against them too. You said the garden was looking lovely I suppose mother is proud of it, well I am glad she has got some pleasure out of it at last, & less work now with the hose. How is the Mill working does she still jerk. You were telling me about the different pigs but I can hardly remember them any more the spotted one & red one I can, but the others I cant, you will only have two to cure if Rischeckes take one of the others. the young ones you got from Edwin ought to be good ones. Old Toney would not take much notice of the youngster dying she would think it a good job, one less to look after, how is Charleys house is it finished yet. Just fancy old Bill Atkins married, a nice couple they will make. I & Albert were talking of my going down with the horses. the niggers were listening, they said young Bill they call me, Uncle they call Billy, him no go way Albert said ves him go along a mob. they said, but him come back, Albert said no him go along & get married take a farm, they said farm no good him good fellow here, they dont like the idea of me going away, Well I think I have told you all the news this time, & anything I miss you will get in the next Diary. Oh I had a letter from the porter at Oodnadatta telling me that he did not charge me for the Carriage on the packsaddles & other things & that he had to pay it out of his own pocket, & asked me to forward him the amount £1.0.0 so I suppose I had better send it to him. Remember me to all my friends the Trewins & Mrs. Penn if you see her, I hoping you are all well as it leaves me, so with Love to you all

I remain your
Brother Will
Dear Harriet,

I received your last letter last Friday week. The coach was over 2 days late too many parcels on. We only got home here on the Thursday night, a day after the mail goes back to the Alice from here, so I was to late to write to you, but if we had known that the mail was behind time, I would of had plenty of time to writ. We sent up Friday morning to the Letter Box & got our bag, but did not know that she had only gone into Arltunga instead of being on her way back to the Alice. I went into Arltunga last Monday & heard there that she was late. We caught a colt belonging to a man in at the Cyanide on Friday, & as I was going for a look around Winneckes before we start the final muster for Adelaide I took him in with me. I got to Winnickes Tuesday night & stopped with Alf, had a look around the field it has altered since I was there last Tents & Iron houses everywhere. 4 stores, 2 Chemists 2 Bakers, Butcher, Boarding house, Sly Grog shop, Barbers shop & a lot of others all of Canvas or Iron. & a Gambling Saloon I had a look in my word you ought to see the money on the table, there were 6 playing cards for money & Alf says another great past time is 2 up as they call it, they play it all day Sunday, he has started a Football Club & they play on a Sunday he says it is a fearful shop, far worse than the West. all the blaguards of the Colony are there, he hates it, says he wont stop no longer than Christmas. a lot of the mines are going Bung he is a bit of a boss over the one he is in. & says he thinks it will soon shut down too the fever has broke out. one young fellow shot himself with it his Temperature was 107 his brother just went outside to do something, & while he was out he shot himself through the head, & another has died with it, 2 more got it. there has been 3 deaths in about a fortnight, Mrs. Ragget at the Alice has also died of it I think, so if that gets a start up here it will thin them out. Alf told me that Josh had just passed through before I came, he & Walkington are going up to the Frew they were going as far as the Waterhole that night so I got up early & went down to see him, he was sitting on the bank of the hole when I rode up, with another man. I sung out Good morning, they said Good morning, & then Josh looked away, then I said why Josh dont you know me, he looked at me again & considered then said Good Lord Bill its not you is it, I said of course its me. Well he said I would never of known you, you are so fat, perhaps it is no wonder for I weighed myself at the store & weigh 136 lbs that is 12 lbs more than when I started. They did not start that day so I stopped with them, Josh is waiting to see what this Great man from England is going to say about the White range, the whole concern depends on him now if he says the White range is good enough his Company will work it, & that will set the whole lot going again, but if he says it is not good enough I think it will fall back to a few of the old ones that were here years ago again. they reckon it will take him 5 or 6 weeks to inspect it, so Josh says he might as well have a look around the Frew as lay about here. he told me to tell you to let his wife know that he is going up there for 3 or 4 weeks, & to address his letters to Arltunga. Most of the men that came up with us have gone back. One of them that started a store at Arltunga went out to Ooratippera prospecting by himself with 2 horses he was going for 10 days but as he is gone a month the Troopers have gone out to look for him, the niggers will have him before this. there will be a lot of them lost before this is
over. A lot of the men clear out & dont pay their Bills old man Wallace has lost a £100.0.0 this last week through mines going bung & not paying the men. I left Josh Thursday & started for Claraville, 3 head of our Cattle are running about 20 miles North East of there, so I was going out to get them, as I was passing Slate hole I see Laughton he had just come in from mustering the last of the horses the Braden bought off Harding & he had 8 of ours in the mob, he wanted me to take them away, as his yard was too full. I told him I would go on to Claravill & see if old man Wallace would send his niggers out after the cattle, if he would I would come back in the morning & take them to the Camel paddock. I got to Claravill about 4 old Wallace was not home, his man told me that Uncle had just gone from there, he is coming back from off the Marshall, Old Wallace told him that Laughton had some of our horses. but also told him that I was out this way, so Uncle thought I was after them & went on to the Paddock with the ones he got, he only got five, Bobs mob did not go out there they tracked them into Prossers country, then they turned & made for the Claypans down South so Uncle thought we would get them, but they were not there they must of stopped in about Prossers country. I heard in at the Cyanide that Prosser had got 16 of our horses in one mob, so I suppose it will be them. Albert & I are going to start down there tomorrow. I went back to Slate hole from Claravill & got the horses & started for the paddock with them, I passed through Airtunga got to Paddys hole for dinner it is Hardings old home there is a store there now. & a butcher, there were a lot there boosing, Harding & Pepperal, & 5 or 6 others, I had dinner with them then went on to the paddock, when I got there I found Uncle there still, he was breaking in one of the horses he got. We started after dinner the next day for Loves Creek, & just got home at dusk.

July 6 I am writing this this morning as it was too cold to finish last night it is the coldest week since I have been up here East wind. We started for Prossers after dinner, we sent a boy up to the Letter box to see if the coach will be up to time today told him to stop until dinner time as we would like to get our mail before we start if it dont come Uncle will bring it out to Giles hole we will meet him there in about 10 days or a fortnight, we are going to have one more good muster of 3 weeks then start for Town with whatever we get. After you get this letter you had better not write any more unless you address them to Charlotte Waters, as we reckon to be down about the end of August or the beginning of Sept. Uncle got a Telegram from Miller advising him to sell at Kapunda but they are going to take them to Adelaide, I dont care about leaving now as I am quite at home & doing splendid. all but the spills & knocks a fellow gets but we take no notice of them up here they are to plentiful. I had another the other day I went into camp for dinner with the packs Albert was out looking for cattle, I unpacked & hobbled some of the horses & went to catch a colt, he would not let me so I run him up the side of a steep range, I got up close to him when he slewed around I made a jump to stop him put my foot on a round stone & landed about 20 feet below on my neck & shoulder, I can tell you it made me feel sick for a bit, took all the hide off my neck & shoulder, we got hom that night & Albert had to undress me & put me to bed I had no use in it, but it was a bit better next day & preetty wright now. Well dear Harriet, I will have to close as I have to make some butter before we start & it is nearly dinner time Albert is shoeing horses we shod 7 yester-
day, old Slipknot we have not seen him since I brought him up until last night he is as fat as mud & looks a splendid horse we are taking him with us, if you write to me at the Charlotte or Oodnadatta ask Dad if he thinks old Bob would be of any use to us or if I will sell him in Adelaide that is if we get him. There is no chance of buying any up here they want 20 & 25 pounds for anything like a draught horse I am bringing a saddle hack that Uncle & Albert gave me down, he is not much but as good as they have got excuse the scribbling as I have no time to write well. Hoping you are all well as I am & with love to all & yourself. 

Your brother Will

1. Hugh Burton Corbin had been employed at the Arltunga Battery & Cyanide Works between 1900 and 1902, first as assayer and then as manager. He had been very enthusiastic about prospects on the goldfields, and may have been involved with Dr. Chewings and his interests in Winnecke.

2. Chark may mean shark; the Mr. Tuens is Dr. Chewings. interested in raising expectations about the Winnecke's Depot goldfield, Mr. Brown in the South Australian Government Geologist who visited the field in 1903, while Captain was a title often given to mine managers, deriving from the Cornish custom.

3. Marsh may have been connected with one of the stores en route between Oodnadatta and the goldfields, or have been involved in the mail run.

4. Mounted Constable Cowle had been in the Centre for many years, and as a result of his hard bush work, suffered severe arthritis/rheumatism.