

## INTRODUCTION

This study of the management of a New England pastoral station in the second half of the nineteenth century addresses an aspect of rural Australia's regional history to which little direct consideration has as yet been given. Since 1911, when Collier published his highly-informative, albeit nostalgic, description of a by-gone 'pastoral age', with a few notable exceptions, successive historians have explored a variety of related topics to each of which station management, its 'mechanics' and the role of the station superintendent were important but secondary elements.<sup>1</sup> The historians of squatting and of particular regions provide typical examples, as do those who focus upon rural labour, free-selection, the rural economy and social and cultural history.<sup>2</sup> This study aims to redress an imbalance which is as evident in its author's previous social and cultural history of the subject station as it is in Iain Stuart's excellent article on free-selection in the Monaro, which contains this telling footnote; 'The diaries of George de Salis are a significant primary source of information on the managing (sic)

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<sup>1</sup> James Collier, *The Pastoral Age in Australasia*, London, 1911. Such exceptions include Duncan Waterson, *Squatter, Selector and Storekeeper: A History of the Darling Downs 1859-93*, Sydney, 1968; Jan Walker, *Jondaryan Station: the relationship between pastoral capita and pastoral labour*, St. Lucia, 1988.

<sup>2</sup> While many of this material overlaps, for squatting and the squatters, see S.H. Roberts, *The Squatting Age in Australia, 1835-1847*, London, 1935; M. French, *A Pastoral Romance: The Tribulation and Triumph of Squatterdom*, Toowoomba, 1990; M. Kiddle, *Men of Yesterday: A Social History of the Western District of Victoria 1834-1890*, Parkville, 1961; Regional historians include: R.B. Walker, 'Squatter and Selector in New England 1862-95', in R.F. Warner (ed), *New England Essays: Studies in the Environment in Northern New South Wales*, Armidale, 1963, pp. 75-84; Alan Atkinson, *Camden*, Melbourne, 1988; W.A. Wood, *Dawn in the Valley: The Story of Settlement in the Hunter River Valley to 1938*, Sydney, 1973; David Carment (ed), *Northern Encounters: New Directions in North Australian History*, Darwin, 2004; Geoffrey Bolton, *A Thousand Miles Away: A History of North Queensland to 1920*, Brisbane, 1983; G.L. Buxton, *The Riverina 1861-1891: An Australian Regional Study*, Melbourne, 1967. For Labour see: Russel Ward, *The Australian Legend*, Melbourne 1958; for Free-Selection see John Ferry, 'Mapping the New South Wales Free Selection Acts in Colonial New England', *The Globe*, No. 43, 1995, pp. 25-42; Bill Gammage, 'Who Gained, And Who Was Meant to Gain, From Free Selection in New South Wales?', *Australian Historical Studies*, Vol. 24, No.94, April 1990, pp. 104-22; G Buxton's *Riverina* and J.M. Powell, *The Public Lands of Australia Felix: Settlement and Land Appraisal in Victoria 1834-91, with special reference to the Western Plains*, Melbourne, 1970, while for rural economic history see, G. Abbott, *The Pastoral Age: A Re-examination*, Melbourne, 1971; A.V. Cane, 'Ollera 1838-1900: A study of a Sheep Station', M.A Thesis, University of Sydney, 1949. Recent social and cultural histories of rural Australia, see R. Waterhouse, *The Vision Splendid: A Social and Cultural History of Rural Australia*, Fremantle, 2005.

of a pastoral station'.<sup>3</sup> So, too, are the station diaries of Ollera-Tenterden's superintendent, James Mackenzie and the station's sheep overseer, Donald Stewart.<sup>4</sup>

Together with the station's ledgers, account books, personal letters and relevant parish maps, the diaries provide this thesis's primary source. The material forms part of the Ollera Station Records, a diverse and substantial collection of station records, personal and business correspondence, maps and photographs which are held by the University of New England and Regional Archives (UNERA), Armidale, NSW.<sup>5</sup> The addition, in 2010, of a considerable assortment of highly valuable material which was hitherto believed 'lost' has not only filled a significant gap in the collection, but will prove as invaluable to future researchers as it has to the present writer. This material is the second of two large additional donations to the Ollera Station Records.<sup>6</sup> As neither has as yet been fully accessioned and integrated into the initial collection, UNERA staff recommend that references to this material should contain the relevant date and the words 'Accession number (no) pending'.<sup>7</sup>

Ollera-Tenterden has been the subject of two previous studies, each of which has focused upon a different aspect of the twin-station's history. Completed in 1949, A.V. Cane's M.A. thesis was an economic history of the station which touched briefly on the founding family.<sup>8</sup> However, although Cane's research remains valid, it suffers from the sometimes inaccurate memories of Mr Tom Everett and Mr A. Mackenzie

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<sup>3</sup> Iain Stuart, 'Selection on the Cooleman Run, County of Cowley, New South Wales', *Journal of the Royal Australian Historical Society*, Vol. 98, Part 1, 2012, p. 96. The reference is to 'Diaries and Letterbooks of the de Salis family 1856-1900', manuscript collection *National Library of Australia*, mfm G20727-20733.

<sup>4</sup> M.E. Rodwell, 'Ollera and its People: A Social and Cultural History of A New England Pastoral Station 1838-1914', PhD Thesis, UNE, Armidale, 2006; Ollera Station Records, Diaries of James Mackenzie 1862-1887, *University of New England and Regional Archives* (UNERA), A103:V3052/40-41 and Tangley Station Records, Diaries of Donald Stewart 1871-1875, *UNERA* A133:V5634-48

<sup>5</sup> Begun by the late Mr Tom Everett in the 1970s and 1980s and continued by the station's present owners, Mr Bill and Mrs Linda Skipper, to whose generosity and foresight this researcher owes much, donations have continued until the present day.

<sup>6</sup> Made in 2002, the first of the two recent donations was made by the station's owners: The second was discovered elsewhere.

<sup>7</sup> Personal communication with Dr Philip Ward, May 2012.

<sup>8</sup> A.V. Cane, 'Ollera 1838-1900: A Study of a Sheep Station', M.A. Thesis, University of Sydney, 1949.

and, inevitably, its approach and language reflect the attitudes of its time.<sup>9</sup> The second, the present writer's 2006 PhD thesis, which presented a social and cultural history of the station, also addressed the 'push' and 'pull' elements which influenced the immigration of both the paternalist 'masters' and the families they brought to New England. Not only did the study address a different area of research than the first, it had the benefit of primary sources to which Cane lacked access.<sup>10</sup>

The impetus for the present study lay in the knowledge that several important though secondary themes which were discussed briefly in the 2006 thesis deserved full analysis and discussion. Aspects of the station's management to be examined include the structure, composition and divisions of responsibilities within the station's management team and the crucial role of its 'middle managers', the station's superintendent, James Mackenzie, and his 'deputy', Ollera's sheep overseer, Donald Stewart. Particular attention is paid to the manner in which both the management team and the workforce responded to squatterdom's greatest problem; the introduction, in 1861, of Sir John Robertson's controversial Land Laws which introduced 'free selection before survey'. Points for discussion include the chronology, location, rate, extent and demography of free selection on the property and its outcomes for both sides of the contest for the land. However, an important problem was encountered when successive parish maps were used to follow the progress of free selection on the station. Although the maps provided an important and 'easily' accessible source of information and an excellent means by which individual selectors and selections could be identified, much careful cross checking and confirmation, where possible, in the relevant Conditional Purchase Registers was necessary. While each map records the original selector's name, the date of his application and the number, location, type and dimension of each selection, successive maps often contain unreliable and conflicting information. Except where mortgages are involved, changes of ownership between selectors and the length of the original selector's tenure were commonly unrecorded when maps were revised. To make things even harder, the only information recorded on the mortgaged selection was the bank's name, while the

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<sup>9</sup> See, for example, the references to Everett-assisted immigrants as 'old retainers' and the use of racist references to Chinese shepherds' standards of living.

<sup>10</sup> These include a vast assortment of the Everett brothers' letters 'Home', which Mr Tom Everett received from his English relatives between the late 1840s and early 1850s. While Cane used some of these letters, which cover the years 1835-1895, most were received after the completion of his economic history.

transaction's date and the mortgagee's name were omitted. Present readers and future researchers are therefore warned of the existence of the problem inherent in an otherwise very useful source.

Two closely-related topics are also examined. The first considers the outcome for the station of a management system characterised by 'mobility within stability' (freedom of movement within the constraining boundary of the Everetts' landholdings), as a result of which their workforce gained a degree of choice in the location and type of work they did and of employer for whom they worked. The second examines the often 'hidden' or unacknowledged contribution made by two groups of people who lived, worked and, in many cases, settled on Ollera-Tenterden. Under the 'modified family economy' system, which had been a feature of Ollera management regime since the late 1840s, one 'hidden' group contained the European workmen's dependents, whose unpaid labour added considerably to their families' ability to save. In both senses of the word, the single Chinese men and the Indigenous people whose land the squatters had claimed comprised the 'other'. Their contribution was not so much 'hidden' as undervalued and almost unnoticed.

This can also be said of the station diaries which are fundamental to this study, providing invaluable insights into almost every facet of rural life in the colonial period. Like their many counterparts in university archives and folk museums and which gather dust in the lumber rooms of long established pastoral properties, these seldom-used diaries are packed with information on the daily life and activities of the station. While serving as an *aide memoire* and nineteenth century 'busy book', they contain information of vital interest to researchers and students in a number of different fields. Not only economic and social historians but those interested in agriculture, farm practice, animal husbandry, land-use, the climate, the environment and genealogy will find much grist for their particular mill.

The marked difference in tone of the two diaries also reveals each writer's personality and perhaps reflects his status or class. Though both volumes contain vital information, James Mackenzie, the station's superintendent, allowed little of his personality and very little of his feelings to emerge. Perhaps the most poignant evidence of this admirable man's 'stiff upper lip' can be found in the torn-out pages which follow the entry in which he records the death on nearby Copes Creek Station

of 'poor Charlotte', his much-loved sister.<sup>11</sup> By contrast, Donald Stewart is much more forthcoming and, as a result, is easier to understand. Sprinkled throughout the text, his mordant wit and often telling aphorisms, which are often Biblical, bring him to life on the page. These typical examples, one of which will gain a rueful nod from many a modern parent, reveal the essence of the man.<sup>12</sup>

**1 Oct 1877:** ...stayed some time at Tom Dawson's lambing- the children being neglected and the day cold with hail and rain.

**19 Jan 1878:** I was after travelling sheep all day - It is not Pleasant but necessary - see to everything if you can.

**8 July 1876:** Bad luck to the idea of children - they always disturb things.

**22 Aug 1877:** Jordan is a hard road to travel.

In examining Ollera-Tenterden's management this study addresses the conditions which generated these comments.

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<sup>11</sup> Ollera Station Records, Diaries of James Mackenzie, *University of New England Regional Archives* (UNERA), A103:V3054/6

<sup>12</sup> Tangley Station Records, Diaries of Donald Stewart, 1877-78, *UNERA*, A133:V5639/40

## CHAPTER ONE

### Management and the Managers 1: The Squatters

We have the satisfaction to think that we made ourselves independent in this country on a capital the interest of which in England would have done little more than keep us in clothes so that I am very grateful to New South Wales for what she has done for us although I shall be very glad to leave her which is but human nature.

George Everett to Rev Thomas Everett, 11 August, 1853<sup>1</sup>

This chapter focuses on the management of Ollera-Tenterden Station throughout the seventy-year duration of its founding partnership, with particular attention paid to the half-century after its members purchased Tenterden in the early 1860s. In these decades the Everett brothers' landholdings doubled in size, achieving peak prosperity in the 1870s before contracting under the combined impact of adverse seasons and the increasing influx of free selectors. Points to be considered include the aims, character, internal organisation and division of primary responsibility within a management system which, despite important changes and significant internal stress, survived until the death of the last founding partner, Edwin, in 1907. Change was necessitated by the venture's growth to maturity, by shifting power-relationships within the partnership and by the economic and political development of the colony. Further points to be examined include the influence of the transfer and adaptation of traditional attitudes, mindsets and practices from Old to New England; the stresses which resulted from the decision that one or more partners would be based permanently on the colonial 'estate' on the rapidly expanding frontier of settlement in New South Wales; and the related changes to the nature, extent and financial interest of the sibling-partners' involvement in their station's affairs during the life-long 'GJE' partnership.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Ollera Station Records, *University of New England and Regional Archives*, (UNERA), A103:V2010, Accession No. pending

<sup>2</sup> From 1849, when Edwin was admitted into the sibling partnership, the joint venture's initials, and its brand, which hitherto stood for 'George [and] John *Everett*' represented 'George, John [and] *Edwin*'.



Figure 3: Ollera Homestead in 1860, UNERA A103:FP5.



Figure 4: Tenterden c.1868-70, from L. Gilbert, *New England From Old Photographs*, Sydney, 1980.

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First, the background to the decades under discussion and the multi-generational continuity of the Everett family's connection with the property must be noted. Ollera Station, northwest of Guyra on the Northern Tablelands of New South Wales was founded in 1838-9 by George and John Everett who were joined in early 1842 by their youngest brother, twenty-year-old Edwin, who settled permanently in New England. For seven decades after Edwin's death in 1907, until John Everett's grandson Tom died without a direct heir in 1981, two generations of the founding family lived and worked on the station, which is now home to a nephew, Mr Bill Skipper and his family.<sup>3</sup>

The younger sons of the owner of Biddesden, a small but prosperous estate on the Wiltshire-Hampshire border, the Everett brothers emigrated to New South Wales between late 1838 and January 1842 to attain 'a useful ... independence' from the profits of the colony's rapidly overinflating wool boom.<sup>4</sup> High minded, well educated, adequately financed, fulsomely-equipped and with excellent colonial connections through George Wyndham to the Hunter Valley 'establishment', these third generation scions of the Wiltshire country gentry transported to the colony's distant frontier a suitably modified version of the lifestyle into which they had been born. The founding pair's intention had largely been realized when, in a two-year period in the mid-to-late 1850s, first George, then John Everett, returned permanently to England leaving Edwin, their youngest brother, as the station's resident partner, a position he would occupy for more than fifty years.

Several important decisions the Everett brothers made during their twenty-year joint residence in New England show their considerable management and planning skills. These qualities were evident in the careful preparations George and John made before they left Biddesden in mid-1838. Among the disparate collection of reading matter included in the extensive supplies they thought essential to gentlemanly life on the colonial frontier were James Macarthur's newly-published *New South Wales: Its Present State and Future Prospects* and various reference volumes dealing with aspects of agriculture, horticulture and human and veterinary

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<sup>3</sup> Mr Bill Skipper inherited Ollera from his aunt Nancy, who was Tom Everett's widow,

<sup>4</sup> Ollera Station Records [OSR], John Everett to his brother, Rev Charles, London, 9 June, 1838, written a few days before John and George emigrated to New South Wales, *University of New England Regional Archives [UNERA]*, Armidale. A103:V3052/3.

medicine.<sup>5</sup> During his final weeks at home John Everett made a brief but comprehensive field study of mixed-farming operations at nearby Chute Lodge.<sup>6</sup> With future needs in mind, he filled page after page of a pocket-sized notebook with a minutely-detailed list of the management practices and expected running costs of such a venture.<sup>7</sup> Before leaving Wiltshire the brothers also organized the assisted immigration of John Canning, the experienced Ludgershall shepherd whose skill ensured the survival of their first colonial flock.<sup>8</sup> Then, within six months of their arrival on their newly-claimed 'run', the inexperienced squatters made perhaps their most crucially important long-term decision. They would answer the colony's chronic labour shortage by importing even more 'honest men from Home'.<sup>9</sup> To this end, between 1840 and 1861, the Everett brothers brought more than fifty assisted immigrants to Ollera from the countryside around their father's Wiltshire estate. Successive generations of these eighteen shepherd and labouring families, many of whom free-selected land on the station after 1866, formed the nucleus of Ollera's permanent and remarkably stable workforce.

After taking up their 'run' on the leading edge of the rapidly-expanding frontier of settlement, the Everett brothers showed real skill in managing their employees. Although the 'necessary' distinctions between 'masters' and 'men' were always carefully maintained, better-quality rations and separate 'gunniahs'(sic) being provided for the particular young squatter who took his turn, during the early years, at an isolated shepherding station, the siblings proved themselves willing to work as long and as hard their more experienced workmen. In late 1839 John Everett described their day.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Notebook, 1838-46, OSR, *UNERA*, A103: V3053/17

<sup>6</sup> Chute Lodge was owned and occupied by the Everett brothers' Aunt Harriet Everett Fowle and Uncle William Fowle and their first cousin Tom Fowle to whom George and John were very close. Information supplied, January 2012, by Mrs Wendy Atkinson of Lewes, England, who is a direct descendent of the Everett brothers' sibling Rev. Edward Everett.

<sup>7</sup> OSR, Diary and Notebook of John Everett, Nov 1838-Mar 1839, *UNERA*, A103: V3053/10; D. Kent and M. Rodwell, 'Chute Lodge 1838: A Documentary Note on Farming in East Wiltshire', in R. Wells and M.A. Hicks (eds), *Southern History: A review of the History of Southern England*, Vol. 27, 2005, pp. 109-24.

<sup>8</sup> Canning, his wife Maria, who became the Everett's cook-housekeeper, reached Ollera with their two children in January 1841.

<sup>9</sup> OSR, John to William Everett, July 1839, *UNERA*, A103:V3052/3.

<sup>10</sup> OSR, John to William Everett, undated but contextually late 1839, *UNERA*, A103: V3052/3

We have hitherto made it a rule to get up at sunrise which is now at five o'clock and to dine at sunset which is at seven o'clock. If we continue this procedure we shall rise at four before long and dine at eight o'clock. But considering we breakfast as soon as we are up, I expect we shall find the interval between the meals too long and we must take a strong lunch in the middle of the day.

'Scratch', but carefully intra-class, task-based competitions enlivened the difficult weeks in November and December when the sheep were washed, then shorn and their wool packed and loaded for its long, slow journey south. Similar strategies filled the equally back-breaking weeks which stretched from early January until April, as the hay was gathered and the wheat and later the oats were harvested and threshed. Until well into the twentieth century the celebratory cricket matches which marked the end of these seasonal tasks and many other 'high days and holidays' were a hallmark of life at Ollera-Tenterden. A comment in a letter John Everett wrote in late 1840 reveals that, from their earliest years in New England, the brothers were highly skilled managers of their 'men'.<sup>11</sup>

Of course, we remembered the little rivalry which appears to exist between the men as being greatly to our advantage.

Other incentives and 'bonding' stratagems introduced in the foundation years and maintained throughout, and beyond, the founders' lifetimes, were the payment of generous 'premiums' for greater-than-stipulated lambing rates and bonuses for particularly good general work, while equally stiff fines were imposed for poorly-performed tasks.<sup>12</sup>

Other features of the Everett brothers' management were their meticulous record-keeping, prompt attention to problems, and close, paternalistic interest in the welfare as well as the performance of their workforce. John Everett's good judgement and characteristic caution were evident when, in mid-1857, he delayed his return to England by almost a year as he confirmed the suitability of his newly-installed superintendent and fellow Wessex 'gentleman', James Mackenzie.<sup>13</sup> For thirty years until his death in November 1887, this honest, hard-working Anglo-Scot was the linch-pin which held the increasingly prickly long-distance partnership together. As their meticulously-kept station diaries attest, Mackenzie's appointment and, from

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<sup>11</sup> OSR, John to William Everett, 9 October 1840, *UNERA*, A103:V3052/3

<sup>12</sup> OSR, Account Book 1841-72, *UNERA*, A103: V2259.

<sup>13</sup> Fragment of Edwin Everett's Diary, 1856-57, OSR, *UNERA*, A103: V3052/11

1861, that of his chief assistant, Ollera's sheep overseer, Donald Stewart, proved vital to the venture's long-term success.<sup>14</sup>

From the early 1860s, with James Mackenzie installed at Ollera in day-to-day control of both stations' management and Edwin Everett based at Tenterden, which the Everett brothers part-leased in the late 1850s then purchased between 1861 and 1864, the GJE venture bore a close resemblance to the English estate on which it was modelled. The similarity was evident in the style and organization of each component station's management practices and in the arrangement of its outbuildings which, at Ollera, formed the customary square behind the 'headstation'. From this time, while he never retreated entirely from active participation, Edwin Everett gradually distanced himself from consistent physical involvement in the stations' workload. Instead, and increasingly as he grew older and acquired other more distant rural properties of which Ollera-Tenterden formed the hub, he assumed the more 'gentlemanly' role of resident colonial 'squire', while James Mackenzie's position closely resembled that of an English land agent.

However, no thorough examination of Edwin Everett's involvement in the day-to-day management of the station can be made. The deliberate destruction of much of his private correspondence and all but a few of the station's ledgers and journals when Tenterden was sold a few years after Edwin Everett's death, means that only a broad outline of his activities and personal responsibilities can be given.<sup>15</sup> For details of these we must rely on passing remarks in letters sent to and answered by his English partners and other siblings and on entries in the annual work diaries kept by his immediate subordinates, James Mackenzie and Donald Stewart. Nevertheless, these points can be made. As sole Australian-based partner and *de facto* major shareholder in the sibling partnership after the renegotiated agreement over Tenterden, Edwin Everett had control, ultimate responsibility for the operations of the venture's stations and the power to make and implement decisions with which his English-based partners often disagreed. He audited the venture's annual returns and

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<sup>14</sup> OSR, Diaries of James Mackenzie 1862-87 (missing 1872, 1879) [hereafter DJM], UNERA, A103;V3052/40-48; V3053/23-24; V3054/1-12; Diaries of Donald Stewart [DDS], Tangleby Station Records [TSR] UNERA, A133:V5634-5648

<sup>15</sup> These invaluable documents were thrown into the well and burnt when Edwin's nephew and George's son, William Frederick, who inherited Tenterden in 1909, sold the station after enlisting in the English army on the outbreak of war in 1914. Personal interview with Mrs Linda Skipper of Ollera Station in 2005.

reports to his siblings; negotiated with GJE's colonial agents over the price per pound to be advanced against the annual shipment and sale of wool in England; supervised the breeding programs for the station's livestock and set the prices for which sheep, cattle and horses would be bought, sold or, in the case of 'entire' animals, rented to local squatters and to the stations' selectors and employees. As a member of the magistracy he presided over inquests, organised and supervised elections; attended delegations to Parliament over the approved but never-built Guyra to Inverell railway and settled the frequent boundary disputes which characterised landholding in the third quarter of the nineteenth century as squattages were surveyed and their extent recorded. But by far his most memorable activity and the one for which his sibling-partners had nothing but praise was the skill with which he 'worked' the land laws (see below, Chapter 3). While retaining the right of ultimate approval, in routine management matters, such as the hiring and firing of employees, the location and nature of individual men's work and the measuring, location and approval of fence lines, he worked jointly with either, and often both, Mackenzie and Stewart. Only one further characteristic feature of his management-style remains to be considered. Like his elder brothers and throughout his sixty-five-years in New England, but particularly as he aged, Edwin Everett remained a convinced paternalist, exercising his power in a highly-individual, arbitrary fashion which nevertheless adhered strictly to the guiding principle of 'enlightened self-interest'.<sup>16</sup> His refusal, in 1875, to buy back the block on Sandy Creek which formed the core of Donald Stewart's extensive land holdings on Ollera 'run' and instead, to lend his sheep overseer the money with which to clear, fence and cultivate his land, is typical of the encouragement Edwin Everett gave certain, carefully selected employees.<sup>17</sup> It is this aspect of Ollera-Tenterden's management system that must now be examined.

From its foundation in 1838-39 until at least 1914, Ollera's management ethos and practices followed the precepts of England's Tory-Paternalist Revival. Reaching its height in Britain in the two decades after 1827, the management model had its greatest appeal to, and success within, England's landed gentry, the level of society into which the Everett brothers had been born. Centuries old, but newly revived and defined, the system which the young men transferred to the colonial frontier had three

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<sup>16</sup> D. Roberts, *Paternalism in Early Victorian England*, London, 1971, pp. 11-12.

<sup>17</sup> TSR, DDS, *UNERA*, A113:V5638

inter-dependent and closely associated elements, of which landed property, which conferred and validated the right to govern, had primary importance. Governance was to be essentially hierarchical and patriarchal, with an unspoken but mutually recognized exchange of duties and obligations implicit on both ‘masters’ and ‘men’. Buttressed by the Established Church, which formed the third leg of the paternalist tripod, it was thus local, authoritarian and personal.<sup>18</sup>

True to the ‘Old Society’ model, power at Ollera-Tenterden descended and deference ascended through each level of a steep, finely-graded and clearly differentiated pyramid of authority which reflected the Paternalist Revival’s anthropomorphic view of society. The two levels contained in the sharply pointed tip of the hierarchical triangle were devoted to the general management of the Everett ‘family enterprise’. At the apex, possessing ultimate authority, were Edwin Everett and his two English-based siblings, George and John, while their stations’ superintendent, James Mackenzie occupied the level immediately below. From their respective bases at Tenterden and Ollera, under the delayed but nonetheless close, constant scrutiny and often unsought and unwelcome advice of the English-based partners, Edwin Everett and James Mackenzie managed the Australian end of the Everett enterprise.

Beneath management level the pyramid divided vertically as well as horizontally, with each station having an identical hierarchy. However the internal power-relationships were unequal. Despite Edwin’s move to Tenterden, positions of authority and responsibility there were subordinate to, and lower paid than those at Ollera. For example, in the second half of the 1860s Ollera’s sheep overseer, Donald Stewart who, with the cattle overseers, occupied the level immediately below that of the managers, was paid £100 per annum while his successive counterparts at Tenterden (George Hart then Edward Arnold Hill) earned £60 p.a. The same inequality was evident in the wages paid to each station’s storekeeper. Ollera’s incumbent earned £60-£72 per annum in these years while Tenterden’s received £40-£50 p.a. The difference reflected Ollera’s importance as the partnership’s foundation ‘run’ and as the base from which Mackenzie supervised the operation of both stations. For example, the sheep were drenched, washed and shorn at Ollera and goods and

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<sup>18</sup> Roberts, *op. cit.*, pp. i, 29-33, 43, 73; K. Lawes, *The Revival of Paternalism in Early Nineteenth Century Britain*, Houndmills, 2000, pp. 5, 8, 31-36.

produce were delivered to, and despatched from that station. Tenterden's stores, the outlying stores at Sandy Creek and Wandsworth and, later, those of the more distant 'run' at Dinton Vale near the Queensland border were stocked from there and the venture's combined account books were regularly compiled and overseen by the superintendent, who had ultimate responsibility for both stations' performance.<sup>19</sup>

The assistant overseers of both sheep and cattle and various skilled and semi-skilled workers, most of whom lived at or near each head-station, occupied the level immediately below the overseers'. This specialist level also contained the school teachers, Ollera's governess, the component stations' store-keepers, the blacksmith, the carpenter-fencer, the saddler, the grooms, carters, stable-hands and domestic and 'outdoor' servants. The remaining two-thirds of the broadly-based pyramid of status contained the 'hands'; the shepherds, watchmen and rural labourers and their families, each of whose place in the hierarchy was determined by several elements. Status, remuneration and position in the pyramid were determined by the individual worker's skill and experience, the degree of responsibility needed for the particular job, the conditions (rationed or unrationed, task or 'piece') and the duration (full or part-time, seasonal or by the month, week, day or hour) of his employment, his age and race (Europeans consistently being paid more than their Chinese and Indigenous counterparts) and in the case of his family members, by maturity and gender.<sup>20</sup>

Throughout the seventy-year duration of the sibling partnership several important elements in its internal organization contributed significantly to its overall success. Beneficial while all three siblings lived at Ollera, these characteristics caused recurrent and increasingly severe problems after the founding partners returned to England. These characteristics included the allocation to each partner of direct responsibility for a major aspect of the station's operation; inequalities in each sibling's financial investment in the partnership, which magnified already significant inequalities in each brother's power to make (and enforce) important business decisions; and fundamental differences in the future Edwin and his more cautious elder brothers envisaged for their enterprise. In the early decades, perhaps the most positive of these was the allocation to each partner of defined tasks and overall

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<sup>19</sup> OSR, Diary of James Mackenzie, 1862-63 *UNERA*, A103: V3053/40

<sup>20</sup> The masculine pronoun is used because of preponderantly, though not exclusively, male nature of Ollera-Tenterden's workforce during the period under discussion.

responsibility for an important area of the station's production. The system was already working well when, in 1843, Commodore Hamilton visited the newly-established adjoining stations which, until the Everetts' distant relatives, Francis and William Halhed left Aloran (then renamed Tenterden) in mid 1844, were operated as a unit by the two sets of brothers.<sup>21</sup> However, as the Everetts' letters 'Home' and the early Station Account Books make clear, of necessity, the workload in each area of responsibility at Ollera was far more flexible than Hamilton's account maintained. Nevertheless, the pattern of the sibling-partners' responsibility and particular interest was already set. While George and John shared the time-consuming task of record-keeping, George took principal responsibility for negotiations with their Sydney agents, for general business correspondence, and for journeys 'down country' on station matters. Under Canning's guidance until 1845, John had responsibility for the sheep, while Edwin, who as a chronic asthmatic had a life-long aversion to sheep-work, took charge of the cattle and 'a good number of horses'.<sup>22</sup>

While the identity of the power-holder(s) changed significantly over time, from its inception the joint venture was characterized by inequality in the distribution of authority. Although the two founding partners shared power until 1849 George, as the elder brother, apparently had precedence. Not only did he conduct most of the station's important external business but he was the only partner whose given name was bestowed on two major local landmarks, the 'run's' central creek and a nearby mountain.<sup>23</sup> Although the *family* name was given to several other topographical features, and outstations named Tangley, Red Farm, Stockbridge, Weyhill and Sidbury Hill recalled the countryside around Biddesden, neither younger brother's personal name was similarly memorialized.

The partnership's structural imbalance was most obvious in Edwin's case. The twenty-year-old reached Ollera in January 1842, intending perhaps, to use his father's

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<sup>21</sup> M. E. Rodwell, 'Ollera and its People: A social and cultural history of a New England Pastoral Station, 1838-1914', PhD thesis, UNE, Armidale, 2006, p.137

<sup>22</sup> H.G Hamilton, *The Country between the Liverpool Plains and Moreton Bay*, 1843, London, 1851, n.p; OSR, Account Book 1841-72, *UNERA*, A103: V2259; Letters of John Everett, 1833-51 and Letters of George Everett, *UNERA*, V3052/3 and V3052/5-6 respectively; John to Rev Tom Everett, 23 March 1846, *UNERA*, A103:V3052/3

<sup>23</sup> Until 1844-5, when the Everetts changed it to Ollera, they named their 'run' Wandsworth In honour of their father's old school, a name which, in the 1870s, they also gave to the town they established on the station's northern boundary.

parting gift of £1,000 to establish his own squattage.<sup>24</sup> Such an intention would go far to explain the comprehensive, carefully-costed list of the requirements for such an enterprise that John Everett compiled during that year (see Appendix A).<sup>25</sup> The consistent manner in which, in later decades, Edwin increased his personal landholdings supports this suggestion. If so, in 1842 he changed his mind, reaching a decision that was almost certainly influenced by the state of the colonial economy which remained severely depressed until the later 1840s. His decision to put his partial legacy at his brothers' disposal undoubtedly enabled their station to survive the long downturn when so many others went under. However, Edwin's equally detailed 'Account Rendered, 1842', which appears towards the end of the station's earliest ledger strongly suggests that the transaction was a *loan* rather than an investment in the venture (see Appendix B).<sup>26</sup> The equally long 'apprenticeship' served by John's son Arthur Everett, may provide further evidence of the founders' caution and good judgement. Alternatively, the nature of the transaction may in fact be the reason Edwin was not taken into partnership until 1849. Undeniably, despite his initial generosity, for seven years after his arrival at Ollera Edwin's status was inferior to that of his brothers.

However, 1849 marked a seminal shift in the partnership's power-structure. Evidence of this change survives in a legally-binding document the Everetts' brother Henry, a London-based lawyer, drew up in January 1853, which indicates that for the previous four years Edwin had held a one-third share in Ollera. Although no reason for the alteration survives, it seems likely that, in entering into equal partnership with his brothers he was either reinvesting his repaid £1,000 loan to the station or writing off the debt incurred by its expenditure. However the detailed financial arrangements contained in the 'Agreement for Wool Dividend' are far more difficult to understand. Did Edwin's contribution, in 1842, of badly-needed cash to a station in desperate need entitle him to a much larger share of the profits from the venture's major income source? Or had the station benefited from his possibly larger share of their recently

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<sup>24</sup> Similarly, on their departure for Australia George and John each received a lesser, though still substantial sum, the equivalent of the amount Joseph Hague Everett spent on the education of four of his five English-based sons. Three were Anglican clergymen while the other was a lawyer/banker.

<sup>25</sup> OSR, 'The Necessary Articles Required in the Formation of a New Station', Everett Notebook 1838-46, *UNERA*, A103:V3053/17

<sup>26</sup> OSR, Account Book, 1841-72, *UNERA*, A103: V2259

deceased father's estate?<sup>27</sup> What is certain, as the reverse of the document makes clear, is that the pact remained unaltered for at least twenty-six years as, from 1 January 1873, the contract was renewed for a further two years.<sup>28</sup>

**Agreement for Wool Dividend: George and John with Edwin Everett, January 1853**

If the Nett sum realized in England by the Wool should be £7,000 George and John would receive one-sixth or £1,666 as per agreement of the last four years. But if the Wool realizes net £9,000 George and John would receive one-sixth of £7,000 and the remaining £2,000 would be divided equally, the one half to Edwin and the other half to George and John.

George and John receive one-sixth of the Wethers and Ewes sold as long as the price per head does not exceed 5s but all profits above 5s. to be divided half to Edwin and the other half the same as the Wool.

Note: The dividend from the Wool will be received (as per agreement) viz, one-sixth from the first £7,00 realized less expenses in England and the Bonus on all sums realized above £7,000 to be taken from the sales, so that there will be no difficulty whatever in apportioning the dividends.

Copy: Signed: George Everett John Everett

1849 not only marked a turning-point in the structure of the partnership, it also began a decade of fundamental change in the trio's consistent presence on Ollera. The protracted settlement of their late father's estate meant that, singly or in pairs, each was required to make repeated visits to England between 1852 and 1856 at a time when the discovery of gold at Rocky River worsened New England's already serious labour shortage. As a result, despite its considerable distance from the rich diggings south of Armidale, Ollera lost two of its best shepherds and, in John's opinion, 'the blacks were the only sensible people on the station'.<sup>29</sup> George agreed, grumbling to his English relatives, 'Give me less profits and abundant labour in preference to gold with all its troubles'.<sup>30</sup>

To add to John Everett's problems, both his workload and his responsibilities increased greatly during the eighteen months between his elder brother's permanent

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<sup>27</sup> OSR, Henry to George Everett, 5 April 1852, *UNERA*, 2010

<sup>28</sup> OSR, 'Document dated January 1853, File marked 'Important Information', *UNERA*, 2006 Access. No. pending

<sup>29</sup> OSR, John to Henry Everett, *UNERA*, A103:V3052/4.

<sup>30</sup> OSR, George to Rev Tom Everett, 11 August 1853.

return 'Home' in January 1857 and his own departure in mid-1858. His letters show the considerable strain he experienced as he searched during this period for a trustworthy superintendent.<sup>31</sup> His first 'gentleman' appointee, 'Stud' Hodgson, having proven incompetent, John then found the equally well-bred but far more experienced James Mackenzie who, during the next thirty years, made an invaluable contribution to the venture's success. During these same years, the brothers exercised their purchase rights under the 1847 Acts which gave squatters security of tenure for fourteen years after survey, to purchase Ollera's 169-acre homestead block and a total of 640 acres in two privately owned blocks of their run's best land.<sup>32</sup> Then, as their flocks steadily increased and the station's returns showed consistent improvement, the Everetts again increased their landholdings. They took over George Wyndham's lease of New Valley, on Tenterden's north-western boundary, in late 1855 and within a year or two, by agreement with the latter station's lease-holder, Chesborough Macdonald, they were paying several of his shepherds to tend Everett-owned flocks on Ollera's adjoining neighbour.<sup>33</sup>

The half-decade after 1855 is therefore the first of two important interregnum periods in which significant change in the nature of the sibling-partnership was developing.<sup>34</sup> The permanent return to England of *both* of Ollera's founders added unexpected strength to Edwin's position and status within the joint-venture. While George's repatriation was planned, John's was not. When he left for England he planned a 'twelve months' leave of absence', during which he would travel to Edinburgh to marry Helen Wauchope, whose brother Andrew held Moredun, the 'run' on Ollera's northern boundary.<sup>35</sup> However, the recurrence of a long-standing and ultimately disabling spinal or hip injury forced Everett to settle permanently in England. Having reached this decision with great reluctance, he took over from his brother Henry as manager of the English end of GJE's finances, paying close attention

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<sup>31</sup> OSR, John to Rev Charles Everett, *UNERA*, A103: V3052/4.

<sup>32</sup> OSR, Fragment of Edwin Everett's diary, Entries for 3 - 7 May 1856, *UNERA*, A103: V3052/11. Private purchase of 320 acres on Big Plain for John Everett and 320 acres at Sandy Creek for Edwin A103; V3053/11

<sup>33</sup> OSR, Edwin's 1856 diary, A103: 3052/11; Tenterden account book *UNERA*, A103: V2256.

<sup>34</sup> The second, which also took about five years to resolve, began after James Mackenzie's death in November 1887

<sup>35</sup> OSR: for Edwin's letter about peacocks, Edwin to John, n.d.; for John's inability to ride, John to Rev Chas, 30 December 1857, *UNERA*, A103:V3052/4

to the business's various accounts and to its resident partner's decisions. George's responsibility was to guide Ollera's annual clip through all stages of its passage through the English wool sales.<sup>36</sup>

As the wealth of letters he wrote to Edwin and, after 1882, to his son Arthur make clear, John Everett, unlike George, had an intense emotional 'investment' in the station to whose interests he devoted the remainder his long life.<sup>37</sup> The depth of this commitment was evident in the replica of Ollera he erected in his English garden. Frequent family picnics were held in the replica slab hut, which survived into the late 1940s and which he surrounded with Australian flora and fauna.<sup>38</sup> However this unflagging interest brought the partnership's structural inequity, which was made worse by Edwin's role as sole Australian-based partner, into the open. At a time when letters took from at least six to nine or more months to make the round trip between England and Australia, decision-making would have been difficult even had the partners shared truly equal financial power and had their agreement on important station matters been more frequent. But this was seldom the case, as the English and Australian-based partners held entrenched and divergent opinions on the development of their venture. Severely constrained by time and distance from first-hand involvement in decisions which would have crucial effects on their station, but convinced of their validity of their more cautious view of its future direction, Ollera's founding partners, with John as principal spokesman, found Edwin's decisions very difficult to modify, if not contradict. For this they turned to James Mackenzie, upon whose tactful mediation and fine judgement George and John came increasingly to rely. In late 1874 John Everett acknowledged Mackenzie's qualities. 'You have always acted in the most honourable straight-forward manner with respect to our interests'.<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> OSR, *UNERA*, A103: 2010

<sup>37</sup> See, for example, OSR, John to Edwin Everett, 2 January 1861; 31 October 1861; 25 August 1862; 25 April 1867; *UNERA*, A103: 2006 (or 2010), Access. no. pending.

<sup>38</sup> John Everett's letters to Edwin and Arthur, in the 1860s and 1870s, record the struggle to survive of various eucalypts and a succession of kangaroos and wallabies.

<sup>39</sup> OSR, John Everett to James Mackenzie, 29 September 1874, *UNERA*, A103:2010



Figure 5: John Everett, Family and Friends at 'Ollera', Colbury House, Totton, Hampshire, UNERA, A103: V2010

Edwin's entrepreneurial, less cautious mind-set and management style was apparent almost from the start of his fifty-year stint as the partnership's Australian-based representative. Early in January 1861 he informed his astonished siblings that he had bought Tenterden from Chesborough. Having secured the deal with a deposit of £3,700 but unable to finance sole ownership of his acquisition, Edwin sought his siblings' agreement to take up shares in the station. He gave two reasons for his impulsive action; the revival of several local squatters' interest following Andrew Wauchope's recent unsuccessful attempt to purchase the property on their western boundary, bolstering his argument with a warning that Ollera's present sheep numbers were insupportable. While, as John Everett made clear, possession of Tenterden had always been his long-term ambition, both founders considered Edwin's hasty purchase ill-timed and ill-considered. To add to the transaction's risk, under the terms of an existing mortgage over Tenterden which still had three-and-a half years to run,

Chesborough, whom the partners distrusted, owed £3,500 to William R. Bligh, the confirmed ‘squattocrat’ who had recently been dismissed from his post as Armidale’s Clerk of Petty Sessions.<sup>40</sup> As a result, it took two years of frequent, closely-argued letters for the brothers to refine the details of a reworked partnership in which Edwin would have a half-interest. Hampered by time, distance and significantly-reduced influence, but keen to exert as much control as possible over their headstrong younger partner, John and George took pains to clarify even minor details of their agreement. For example, in refusing, despite Edwin’s persistent protests, to pay all the interest on Bligh’s pre-existing mortgage, they made their position and their disapproval clear.<sup>41</sup>

[Had] we been unable to take up all [sic] the shares all the liabilities both capital and interest would have fallen on you [therefore] I say you are not in a worse position in paying the whole [of Bligh’s interest] than you had great reason to think you might be *when you made the bold purchase*.

Nevertheless, and despite Edwin’s complaints that his move to Tenterden meant ‘giving up my comfortable new house at Ollera so that I may turn super of shepherds’, he reported, more cheerfully, that by 1862, ‘...the two stations are now boxed up together like two flocks of ewes and lambs and could not be drafted out, so we must make the best of it.’<sup>42</sup> However, the deal was far from done, as New Valley, whose sale for £1,800 was necessary but which was delayed by seasonal conditions until May 1863, meant that Tenterden’s purchase was not finalized until 1864.<sup>43</sup> Difficulties arising from New Valley’s delayed sale combined with unavoidably long delays in the arrival of the previous season’s wool cheque to heighten Edwin’s inability to pay his share of the £16,000 he had agreed to pay for Tenterden. Then, to his brothers’ dismay, having already inherited Bligh’s existing £3,500 mortgage, he borrowed £1,500 from an Armidale bank, and £2,000 from GJE’s English solicitor. When even these sums proved insufficient he borrowed a further £1,000 from his friend, the local squatter, John Goldfinch of Tiengha.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> OSR, Edwin to John Everett, 12 January 1861 and 5 July 1861, *UNERA*, A103:2010, for distrust of Chesborough; N. Townsend, ‘Mutiny in Armidale: The case of W.R. Bligh’, *Historical Studies*, Vol. 21, No. 85, 1985, pp. 534-35.

<sup>41</sup> OSR, Long undated fragment of a letter: John to Edwin, c.1861-2, *UNERA*, A103:2006, Emphasis added.

<sup>42</sup> OSR, Long undated fragment of a letter, Edwin to John, c.1862, *UNERA*, A103: 2006

<sup>43</sup> Everett Letters Guyra, John to Edwin Everett, 25 August 1862, A103:2010

<sup>44</sup> Edwin to John Everett, 7 May 1862; John to Edwin, 25 August 1862, *UNERA*, A103:2010

While 1849 marked the end of the first stage of the partnership's development, the renegotiation necessitated by Tenterden's purchase introduced its second, longer lasting and more influential stage. Not only had the elder siblings' purchase of a combined half-share in the greatly enlarged venture proved costly to men with young families, but geography had given even further power to an impulsive younger brother who fitted Lord Palmerston's description of equally stubborn opponents. Like the Americans, Edwin was 'on the Spot, strong .... and determined somehow or other to carry [his] point'.<sup>45</sup> However John, in particular, never stopped trying. Decades of frustration underpin two pieces of good advice he gave his son Arthur on his appointment as Ollera's manager in 1890. In June of that year John wrote,

Remonstrate but do not try to take the upper hand with Uncle Edwin when you know he will have his own way - half-ownership gives him a strong position. He acts on his own responsibility before George and I can have a chance to veto.

Then in October he cautioned,

You can't rule, but you can perhaps persuade, but don't run your head against a brick wall and hurt yourself.<sup>46</sup>

The survival of numerous long letters which he sent to his brother until the mid-1890s attests to both founders', and John's in particular, dogged persistence. An early example is of particular interest (see Appendix C). Not only does it provide details of the new partnership in which Edwin held a half-share (20/40ths) compared to John's (11/40ths) and Edwin's (9/40ths), it identifies the problems which beset the 'family enterprise' throughout Edwin's lifetime.<sup>47</sup> Regretting his younger brother's 'obvious misunderstanding' over the interest on Bligh's £3,500 mortgage, John reiterated the terms Edwin had recently proposed for an agreement which valued debt-laden Tenterden at £16,000 while Ollera and New Valley, which were largely debt-free, were together considered to be worth £24,000.

The tone of Edwin's explanation for his failure to honour a recent promise he had made to his English siblings shows that the long-distance partnership was already showing signs of strain. 'I am not sending [you] £100 each [as] I promised but John's

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<sup>45</sup> Lord Palmerston to his Foreign Secretary, Lord Clarendon in 1857. A. Foreman, *A World on Fire*, Penguin, 2011, p.19

<sup>46</sup> OSR, John to Arthur Everett, 4 June 1890; 2 October 1890, *UNERA*, A103:2006

<sup>47</sup> OSR, John to Edwin Everett, 25 August 1862, *UNERA*, A103: 2006, Emphasis added.

orders to draw heavily on the wool to pay Cheesbro [sic] meant I couldn't do both'.<sup>48</sup> Edwin's resentment of his elder brothers' insistence on being both informed of, and involved in, all major decisions increased as the partners aged and the difference in their opinions on important management matters became more obvious. Tension was again apparent in 1867. Having repaid the debts he had incurred in Tenterden's purchase, Edwin did not respond well to the tone of John's cautionary and undoubtedly well-meaning advice on the disposal of the unexpected and substantial bequest he would receive from his god-parents.<sup>49</sup>

... [now] you will have your present fortune clear and if you will be *most strongly* advised by me and I think you must have made up your mind you have stations enough, if I say you will be advised by me do not lay your £15,000 in buying sheep and stations but invest it in safe securities in England and then whatever happens to the GJE firm you have a comfortable maintenance for your old age. Let me also warn you that my brother Andrew [Wauchope] is very keen to sell Moredun and I have no doubt if he comes out, which I expect he will do before long, he will try it on with you and would very much like to pocket your legacy.

Instead, in 1868, in the second expansionary decision he made in that decade, Edwin purchased Cliffdale near Bickham in the Upper Hunter Valley. Since the mid-1860s the 1540-acre property, which had close connections to both the Mackenzie and Wyndham families, had been leased by the sibling partners to fatten their stock for sale.<sup>50</sup> For almost twenty years large mobs of Ollera-Tenterden's sheep and cattle were regularly driven south to be 'finished' at Cliffdale, which was managed by James Mackenzie's brother Robert from 1869 until a few years before its sale in the late 1880s. In March 1869 4,512 sheep left for Cliffdale, to be followed twelve months later by an unspecified number of wethers. Then in February, March and December 1871, cattle were drafted then driven south. The following extracts from James Mackenzie's Annual Diaries record the regularity with which for, almost thirty years, stock moved between the Everetts' New England and Upper Hunter holdings.<sup>51</sup>

August, 1884: 250 sheep and some cattle drafted and sent to Cliffdale

October, 1884: 96 cattle sent to Cliffdale

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<sup>48</sup> OSR, Edwin to John Everett, 7 May 1862. *UNERA*, A103:2006, Original Emphasis. The Everett brothers' consistent reference to Chesborough as 'Cheesboro' or, more often, as 'Old Cheesy' shows their lack of respect for him as a squatter and as a man.

<sup>49</sup> OSR, John to Edwin Everett, 25 April 1867, *UNERA*, A103:2010, Original Emphasis

<sup>50</sup> OSR, Diary of John Everett, August 1881 to March 1882, *UNERA*, A103:2010

<sup>51</sup> OSR, Diaries of James Mackenzie, 1869, 1871, 1880 and 1886, *UNERA*, A103: V3052/24; V3053/23; V3054/5; V3054/11

May, 1886: 103 bullocks (68 GJE & 35 EE) and 95 cows (85 GJE & 10 EE) sent to Cliffdale.

Nor was this the only example of Edwin's entrepreneurial proclivities in the prosperous 1870s, when Ollera-Tenterden reached peak productivity. By March 1880 Edwin owned Wyndham's Dinton Vale, near Ashford just south of the New South Wales-Queensland border. That year a flock of ewes left Tenterden for Dinton Vale in March, followed by mobs of cattle in May and 1,128 wethers in December.<sup>52</sup> During the same period Edwin bought at least two residential blocks in Armidale, others in the ten-year old town of Wandsworth on Ollera's northern boundary, 2,500 acres near Bundarra and joined Mackenzie, Stewart and several others in the purchase of a block on the Tingha tin-fields.<sup>53</sup> Then, in 1893, he reported the construction of a house worth £650 on one of seven half-acre lots he had purchased in the newly-developing townlet of Guyra on Ollera's eastern boundary.<sup>54</sup>

Edwin also bought land on their greatly-expanded 'run' for the GJE 'firm' and in each partners' own right. This met with his partners' full support. Faced with their venture's greatest threat, the brothers were united in their determination to secure 'a strong fortress' against the inroads of the free-selectors.<sup>55</sup> By early 1882, in addition to the 15,467 acres they held jointly, the siblings owned a total of 3,349 acres of privately owned land on the station.<sup>56</sup> In the 'Memorandum' he attached to a letter to George in mid-1882, John Everett gave details of each partner's privately purchased land on their 'run'.<sup>57</sup>

In looking at the map Edwin sent home of *purchased* land I make out

Edwin Everett	1675 acres
John Everett	1445 acres
George Everett	<u>229 acres</u>
	3,349 acres

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<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>53</sup> OSR, DJM, Entry for December 1874, *UNERA*, A103: 2010

<sup>54</sup> OSR, Edwin to John Everett, 26 June 1894, *UNERA*. A103: 2006 (or 2010), Access. no. pending.

<sup>55</sup> OSR, John Everett to James Mackenzie, 23 April 1879, *UNERA*, A103: 2006

<sup>56</sup> OSR, Diary of John Everett, 1881, *UNERA*, A103: 2006 (or 2010), Access. no. pending. The partnership's acreage consisted of freehold, conditional and additional purchase, conditional lease and annual leasehold land.

<sup>57</sup> OSR, John to George Everett, 29 May 1882, *UNERA*, A103: 2010. Original emphasis

Typically, his purpose was to gain ‘the most advantageous [and least costly] terms’ for the formal agreement of their shares in the GJE ‘firm’ that his siblings signed six months later (see Appendix B). In doing so he revealed that the siblings still owned large numbers of privately owned livestock. While he made no reference to the draft agreement’s declaration that except for, ‘all horses registered under the Brand of *GJE* [having] the additional brand of the letter *E* are and will be the separate property of the said Edwin Everett’, all livestock would henceforth be jointly-owned. Instead, John calculated the privately-owned acreage each would have to surrender, on annual rental, ‘for the use of GJE’. Under the terms of the renegotiated 1862 partnership, Edwin’s half-share meant that he would contribute 1,000 acres, while John’s eleven shares required 550 acres and, to justify his nine shares, George would need to add an additional 221 acres to the 229 he already owned.

But despite general consensus having been reached, questions remained about the ‘private’ land both English-based partners had handed over for use by their station. For example, in a letter written early in 1884, John asked George if he had deposited his payment for the additional 221 acres (at £1 per acre) into Edwin’s or the station’s account. He then noted that the station was using 900 acres rather than the 550 acres of his land required under the agreement. Nor, until this land was fully fenced, would he receive the agreed annual rental of ‘4 percentage interest’, or £4 per £100 of its value.<sup>58</sup>

The ownership of some of the privately owned land on Ollera-Tenterden changed during the final two decades of the partnership’s existence. When, three years after John’s son Arthur Everett, who had at last been appointed to manage Ollera Station in 1890, married Mackenzie’s daughter Ollie (Alice Ollera Mackenzie Everett) in 1891, John gave his son almost 714 acres in five contiguous blocks of prime land on the Lambamatta Plain opposite the head-station.<sup>59</sup> In return, Arthur’s selection Colbury, the second of two selections the young man had previously taken up on Tenterden, was transferred to Edwin Everett, as were the two selections totalling 334 acres Mackenzie had taken up for Ollie in 1882 and 1883 . Yet more land changed hands in the following year when, to mark the birth of the young

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<sup>58</sup> OSR, John to George Everett, 10 February 1884, *UNERA*, A103: 2010, Access. No. pending

<sup>59</sup> OSR, John to Arthur Everett, 21 July 1893, *UNERA*, A103: 2006, Access. No. pending

couple's daughter Helen, Edwin gave the infant a 112-acre block of fine land. Originally selected by John W. Thomas then acquired by G. Prentice before being bought by Edwin after his disgraced superintendent's hasty departure, this acreage adjoined the western boundary of the recently acquired 'compact property' Arthur named Danebury.<sup>60</sup>

Arthur Everett's long-delayed appointment to Ollera's management in 1890 marked the mid-point of two decades filled with serious trouble for the Everetts and their station. To add to the stock losses and infrastructure damage caused by adverse climatic conditions in the previous three years, in 1883 the station began a decade in which it lost several highly experienced men. Foremost among them were Donald Stewart and James Mackenzie, the two men the station could least afford to lose. Stewart, the partnership's sheep overseer and Mackenzie's right-hand man, retired to his steadily accumulating selections at 'The Roggerly' (later Tanglely) in mid-1883.<sup>61</sup> Unfortunately, his resignation coincided with the steady decline in Mackenzie's health which culminated in his death from 'dropsy', (congestive heart failure), in November, 1887.<sup>62</sup> Treatment for this condition necessitated the superintendent's absence from the station for several months prior to his death in Sydney. While Edwin bore, at most, only indirect responsibility for the loss of either of these key employees, this was not so where his head stockman, David Judge or Tenterden's sheep overseer, John Cameron, were concerned. Each of their dismissals was ill-timed, wilful and the direct result of Everett's acceptance of bad and far from disinterested advice given by G. Prentice, Mackenzie's second, even poorer replacement.<sup>63</sup> Edwin's marked preference for the dubious advice of colonial acquaintances and his stubborn refusal to consult or be advised by his brothers before taking important long-term decisions increased already apparent strains upon the partnership.<sup>64</sup>

While Edwin's actions and entrepreneurial mind-set closely resembled those he exhibited during his risky but ultimately successful approach to the purchase of Tenterden, the consequences of the sequence of poor and ultimately costly decisions

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<sup>60</sup> OSR, John to Arthur, 16 March 1893, *UNERA*, A103: 2010, Access. No. pending

<sup>61</sup> OSR, DD S, 11 March 1883, *UNERA*, A113:V5646

<sup>62</sup> OSR, DJM, Oct-Nov 1887, *UNERA*, A103: 2006

<sup>63</sup> OSR, Edwin to John Everett, 4 September 1888, *UNERA*, A103: 2010.

<sup>64</sup> OSR, John to Arthur Everett, 20 February 1890, *UNERA*, A103: 2010

he made between 1888 and 1894 posed a serious threat to the venture's survival. Beginning after Mackenzie's death in late-1887, the partnership's second interregnum period was extended well beyond Arthur's appointment as Ollera's manager by Edwin's distrust of Arthur's closeness to Mackenzie's widow, who moved with her ten children to the late superintendent's nearby selection, called Stratton, in 1888.<sup>65</sup>

The disastrous decisions Edwin Everett made during these years are understandable, if not excusable, when the experiences of pastoralists in Eastern Australia's mainland colonies in the quarter-century after 1880 are considered. During these years graziers in eastern Australia were plagued by unseasonable, frequently extreme weather events (severe thunder-, hail- and snow-storms) which occurred during years of almost unbroken drought. Above average rainfall was recorded in only three of the ten years 1883-92, the exceptions being 1889, 1890 and 1891. However, when the drought returned in 1893 only one good season interrupted the long 'dry' which persisted until 1902. These conditions coincided with severe economic depression, which began with the collapse of unsound land and building companies and culminated in the dire financial crisis of 1892-93. By May 1893 only six of the twenty-six banks which operated in New South Wales and Victoria in 1887 remained in business. Political and economic instability in the eastern mainland colonies generated a wave of crippling strikes by shearers and transport workers, urban draymen and shearers from 1890 to 1892 and shearers and seamen in 1894.<sup>66</sup>

Wool-producers, most of whom had gone deeply into debt during the 1870s in an effort to protect their holdings from the growing threat posed by free selection in New South Wales, were particularly hard hit. In addition to almost a decade of unprecedented economic depression, disturbed politics and bad seasons, wool-growers faced serious threats on two separate but related fronts. Their first and ultimately more serious problem was low and falling profits from the sale of their wool in England. More than a decade of low returns resulted when an over-supply of poor-quality Australian fleece, produced by an industry whose extension into marginal land had been encouraged by the availability of far too much 'easy' money, flooded an imperial market already depressed by the implosion of Britain's hugely

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<sup>65</sup> OSR, Edwin to John Everett, 25 July 1888, *UNERA*, A103: 2010

<sup>66</sup> C.J. King, *An Outline of Closer Settlement in New South Wales, Part I: The Sequence of the Land Laws 1788-1956*, Sydney, 1957, pp. 108-116

overinflated overseas' development 'bubble'. To add to their worries, New South Wales' wool-men endured a decade of political and financial uncertainty which followed the passage, in 1884, of the Land Acts drawn up after Morris and Ranken's detailed investigation of the various Robertson Acts that, since 1861, had permitted 'free selection before survey'.<sup>67</sup>

Until 1894, when successive New South Wales governments finally abandoned their attempts to impose retrospectivity on the 1884 Acts' steadily-increasing charges to lessees of Crown Lands, the threat of substantial 'back-rents' decreased pastoralists' ability to ease their financial difficulties. Only John Everett's careful retention of a significant amount of 'wool money' (worth £1,550 in 1890-91) to meet this looming threat ensured the survival, albeit barely, of the sibling partners' venture, when many of their neighbours were forced to surrender their properties to the banks.<sup>68</sup> Two letters, written a week apart in mid-1894, when the reserved funds had at last been released, show how close the Everett brothers' venture had come to disaster. Noting that he was forwarding the profit from the annual wool sales, a mere £394.11s.9d, to the Bank of Australasia, John informed his son Arthur that no private income would be generated by the GJE venture, which was 'quite cleaned out' having, for the first time in decades, 'no nest egg'.<sup>69</sup> When such adverse and prolonged conditions and the aging Edwin Everett's chronic ill-health are considered, the reasons for the very bad decisions the increasingly eccentric and obstinate man made between 1887 and 1894 become easier to understand.<sup>70</sup>

Edwin's sequence of costly 'mistakes' began with his urgent need to find a replacement for Mackenzie, who for almost six months prior to his death had been receiving treatment for his illness in Sydney.<sup>71</sup> Everett's need was especially urgent as his long-term supervisor's death came at the end of a succession of difficult years. For example, between November 1883 and October 1886, on seven different occasions, a total of £5,100 was sent from England to meet the station's running costs.<sup>72</sup> As New

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<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.* First passed in 1861, these Acts were amended in 1866 and, substantially in 1874.

<sup>68</sup> OSR, John to Arthur Everett, 1 January 1891, *UNERA*, A103: 2006

<sup>69</sup> OSR, John to Arthur Everett, 19 July and 26 July 1894, *UNERA*, A103: 2006 (or 2010), Access. no. pending.

<sup>70</sup> E.A. Boehm, *Prosperity and Depression in Australia*, Oxford, 1971, pp. 68-77.

<sup>71</sup> OSR, DJM 1887, *UNERA*, A103:V

<sup>72</sup> OSR, Yearly Balance Book, 1865-92, *UNERA*, A103:V2258.

South Wales prepared to celebrate its centenary, and the understocked station faced severe drought and the impending implementation of significant changes contained in the Land Acts of 1884 Edwin wrote:<sup>73</sup>

... on account of the very great drought almost all over the country, we do not know how much land we have got to feed over [and] we are getting fearfully dried up again. We can hardly tell what to do with the few stock we have got ... since the country was burnt in the early spring we have had insufficient rain.

However, only the increased severity of the problems which plagued the station was new. The difficulties began in the long, harsh winter of 1880 which saw 7,180 scab-weakened sheep perish from intense cold. As a result, the wool clip returned £2,499 less than the £7,294 it realized in 1879 and the number of shepherds employed fell from 31 to 24.<sup>74</sup> If 1880 was bad, 1881 was no better. During that year another 7,460 scabbed sheep died, 3000 animals perishing in a single unusually cold night. To add to Edwin's problems and almost certainly worsen Mackenzie's already declining health, 1882 saw the onset of a prolonged drought whose worst years were 1883 and 1887 but which persisted until late 1888.<sup>75</sup> Further bad luck struck during the shearing season in 1886, when a sudden severe hailstorm killed a large number of newly shorn sheep. As a result, by 1 January 1888 sheep numbers on Ollera-Tenterden had fallen to 16,900.<sup>76</sup>

Little wonder that, on learning of Mackenzie's death, Edwin, who was himself suffering from a bewildering list of chronic ailments, was anxious to find a successor to his long-term superintendent.<sup>77</sup> However, despite Arthur's six-year 'apprenticeship' the aging man was determined not to appoint his nephew, who was about to return from several months' leave in England. Convinced that 'Arthur works against me with the Mackenzie lot', he believed the young man to be too close to a family towards whom he was increasingly unsympathetic. Instead, between early 1888 and late 1889, Everett employed two successive poor alternatives. His first choice, J.B.

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<sup>73</sup> OSR, Edwin to John, 7 January 1888, *UNERA*, A103: 2006

<sup>74</sup> OSR, 'Diary of Edgar Huntley of Stockbridge, Ollera 1881', *UNERA*, A103b:V1199/27. From a peak of 32,553 for whom 32 shepherds were needed in December 1879 sheep numbers dropped to 25, 273, (needing only 24 shepherds) in the following September.

<sup>75</sup> OSR, Edwin to John, 22 March 1883, *UNERA*, A103:2010; A103: 2006

<sup>76</sup> OSR, Returns of Sheep 1862-96, Sheep numbers 1 January 1888, A103:V2275.

<sup>77</sup> OSR, Edwin to John Everett, 2 October 1893, *UNERA*, A103: 2006 (or 2010), Access. no. pending. A lifelong sufferer from asthma and eczema, in 1893 he also had boils, gout, rheumatism, bad headaches and gall-like symptoms.

Spurling, one of two brothers who worked on Moredun Station, lasted only about six months.<sup>78</sup> Not only was Spurling's combined salary and upkeep too expensive at £300 p.a., but he proved so incompetent that Edwin's friend 'Huxham' had to be employed to keep the station's annual accounts.<sup>79</sup> But Spurling's replacement, G. S. Prentice, whom Edwin hired while on one of his regular visits to the Upper Hunter, proved worse than incompetent, being finally exposed by George and John as a confidence man whose apparently impeccable English references were bogus. In his eighteen months' stint on Ollera, this unscrupulous man so neglected and 'cooked' the station's books that, by leaving genuine bills unpaid, burning the evidence and redirecting the allocated funds, he defrauded the station significantly.<sup>80</sup> However, the urgent need for a reliable successor to Mackenzie, a stubborn lack of confidence in his nephew Arthur and Prentice's self-serving promise to reduce the running costs of a station enduring another very dry winter and early spring, combined to reinforce Edwin's belief in the validity of his choice.

Thus, for eighteen months after Prentice's appointment in September 1888, Edwin steadfastly supported his new superintendent against his partners' frequent and increasingly strident criticism of Prentice's account-keeping and general suitability for the position. Decades of increasing tension and frequently disputed management decisions came to a head in late 1889 when, rather than accept his brothers' evidence, Edwin accused his brothers of 'slandering' his hapless superintendent. However, in March 1890 when faced with undeniable proof of his lies, Prentice absconded, leaving behind his wife and large family and undeniable proof of his mismanagement of the twin-stations' 18,000 acres.<sup>81</sup> John's pleasure in his son's appointment as Prentice's successor was tempered by his disgust at 'the scoundrel ... a broken down swell' whom he had distrusted from the first.<sup>82</sup>

Prentice is fairly out and you fairly in your new billet ... I expect Prentice has left the books in a muddle ... Johnnie [Arthur's visiting sibling] says he has cost

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<sup>78</sup> Some doubt, generated by references to both 'F. or Frank' Spurling and 'Jim' Spurling in the letters and in various station ledgers, surrounds this man's given name. While entries appear to concern a single individual, it is possible that both men were working for the Everetts or on Moredun, whose management Mackenzie supervised, during the late 1870s and 1880s.

<sup>79</sup> OSR, John to Arthur Everett, 9 August 1888, *UNERA*, A103:2010

<sup>80</sup> OSR, Arthur to John Everett, 26 March 1890, A103: 2010.

<sup>81</sup> OSR, John to Arthur Everett, 3 July 1890, *UNERA*, A103: 2006

<sup>82</sup> OSR, John to Arthur Everett, 4 June 1890, *UNERA*, A103: 2006

the station a good deal of money in different underhand ways. He has destroyed all the bills and charged his purchases to the station's account.

Although the return of better seasons between 1889 and 1891 combined with Arthur Everett's diligent attention to the firm's unpaid bills, his overhaul of the station's account-keeping and plan to hire several good, young Auburn Vale rams to serve 2,000 of the station's best ewes promised a return to prosperity, this proved illusory. In the three years between mid-1892 and mid-1895, not only was Ollera-Tenterden under pressure from the developing crisis in the colonial economy, but the station faced its most serious internal threat to its survival.<sup>83</sup> Again the problem had its roots in the badly managed years after Mackenzie's death in late 1887. In late April 1888, on the reverse of a 'flyer' giving prices for which sheep would be auctioned in Armidale (aged: 4s.6d; wethers: 5s.6d to 7s.0d; ewes: 8s.0d), Edwin first raised his 'all wether plan', a potentially money-saving strategy which had wide support among his fellow wool-growers. Arguing that there was 'no shortage of available stock' he maintained that:<sup>84</sup>

- an all wether flock is cheaper than breeding as lambs take eighteen months till first shearing, running the risk of dipping, dosing and loss of [their] mothers, for only half as much wool as from the same number of wethers that can be paddocked all year round at half the expense.

Ignoring John's vehement opposition to such 'blind speculation ... with the Rents and Future of the Run unsettled', Edwin went ahead with his plan and by mid-1889 3,500 prime wethers from Cassilis in the Upper Hunter had arrived on the twin stations.<sup>85</sup> To accommodate them, by the end of that year a total of 30,000 GJE sheep were being shepherded by free selectors who could not yet afford to stock their holdings on Ollera-Tenterden. Heartened by a successful shearing season and the apparent return of good seasons, Edwin informed his brothers of his intention, on Frank Wyndham's advice, to buy an even larger flock of wethers from Cassilis.<sup>86</sup> He announced that, at a cost of £2,275 which was payable within six months, 7,000 newly-shorn wethers would arrive on Ollera-Tenterden in October 1890. The news, which necessitated the sale, at a mere 4s.3d per head, of the station's entire flock of

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<sup>83</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>84</sup> OSR, Edwin to John Everett, 30 April 1888, *UNERA*, A103: 2006

<sup>85</sup> OSR, John to Arthur Everett, 31 July 1890, *UNERA*, A103: 2006

<sup>86</sup> OSR, Edwin to John Everett, 18 November 1889, *UNERA*, 2006

ewes and lambs, added fuel to the brothers' protracted long-distance, increasingly bitter argument over Prentice's qualifications.<sup>87</sup> Too late to veto Edwin's 'breathtaking[ly] risky speculation', which he considered 'most rash ... a scrape', John insisted upon the retention, on Ollera, of 2,460 prime ewes for which Arthur had already prepared a breeding program.<sup>88</sup> Undeterred by the 'fine big fleeces which averaged seven pounds in weight' produced by the initial Cassilis flock's first shearing in 1890, John adhered to the advice he had given Arthur in March of that year.<sup>89</sup>

*I think it will turn out to be a great mistake. It is a great pity [Edwin] cannot be content to let things go on as they have done for the last fifty years ... All wethers will as everybody knows throw off the greatest weight and quantity of wool of any class but the wool is all you get, no lambs to keep the stock up with as the wethers grow old and have to be sold and when they are sold the money you get for them will not buy the same number to stock up with, but you must pull out the money you have pocketed for the wool to help pay the higher prices you have to pay.*

Two years later, as the drought resumed in a colony struggling to emerge from the depths of economic depression John was proved right. Very worried, but unable to resist a touch of *Schadenfreude* over his brother's costly 'breathtaking speculation', he noted that, not only had Frank Wyndham defaulted on his recent purchase of GJE cattle, but, despite 1893's good winter and spring, 2,000 of the 7,000 Cassilis sheep whose purchase Wyndham had negotiated were dead and the rest were only suitable for boiling down. As a result, the station would pay no dividend in 1893-94.<sup>90</sup> More personal problems also plagued the aging partners during these years. George Everett's death in October 1893 necessitated the valuation for probate of the family firm's assets, requiring decisions to be made about the partnership's future. In the end the two surviving siblings, despite their advanced age and increasing infirmity,

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<sup>87</sup> OSR, Edwin to Arthur, 3 June 1890, *UNERA*, A103: 2010

<sup>88</sup> OSR, John to Arthur Everett, 31 July 1890, *UNERA*, A103: 2006 (or 2010), Access. no. pending.

<sup>89</sup> OSR, John to Arthur Everett, 22 March 1891, *UNERA*, A103: 2006 (or 2010), Access. no. pending. Emphasis added.

<sup>90</sup> OSR, John to Arthur Everett, 31 July 1890; 1 February 1894, *UNERA*, A103:V2006. A modern authority on diseases and parasites in sheep, thinks the animals probably succumbed to infestation by either (or perhaps both) 'Black Scour worm' or 'Barber's Pole worm', each of which thrives in cold and wet Winter and Spring conditions. Information supplied, in November 2011, by Geoff Green, a specialist veterinarian at the Livestock, Health and Pest Authority for the Armidale district, New England.

decided that ‘the GJE faggot would remain unbroken’ during their lifetimes.<sup>91</sup> However, by late 1895, Edwin’s ‘highhanded pigheadedness’ resulted in John’s decision to restrict any further investment in GJE to essential items.<sup>92</sup>

But, although their final agreement on important decisions remained essential, both surviving brothers played an increasingly restricted part in their venture’s day-to-day operation in the remaining fourteen years of GJE’s existence. In late 1894 John suffered a serious stroke, from which he made only a partial recovery during the eight years until his death in 1902.<sup>93</sup> Although Edwin, and with him the sibling partnership, survived until November 1907, his physical condition during his final decade was perhaps even more frail. In 1895 Arthur’s brother Johnnie Everett reported that, despite increasing infirmity, Edwin remained determined not to relinquish ultimate authority for the station’s management to Arthur.<sup>94</sup>

Uncle Edwin’s inability to write makes any business go slow through him and there is no doubt his brain is weak and can’t grasp facts as clearly as before and it takes a lot more puzzling for him to arrive at a satisfactory conclusion to himself.

His uncle’s determination to retain control despite his deteriorating health made Arthur’s struggle to rebuild Ollera-Tenterden’s flocks, which fell to their lowest level in fifty years in 1895, even more difficult. However, the decision late in the same year that George’s heirs, who had decided to remain within the partnership, would contribute to the purchase of 2,000 ewes meant that he could at last fully implement the breeding program which had been curtailed since 1890-91.<sup>95</sup> Despite all-but uninterrupted drought, Arthur’s concentration upon improvement through selective breeding rather than live purchase meant that by 1900, when machine shearing began on Ollera-Tenterden, the sheep numbers had risen to 10,000.<sup>96</sup> A prospectus in the extensive ‘Ollera Papers’ which is dated 1897-8 shows both his

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<sup>91</sup> OSR, John to Arthur Everett, 8 June 1894, *UNERA*, A103: 2006 (or 2010), Access. no. pending..

<sup>92</sup> OSR, John Everett Jnr to Arthur Everett, 10 September 1895. *UNERA*, A103: 2006

<sup>93</sup> OSR, John Everett Jnr to Arthur Everett, 6 December 1894, *UNERA*, A103: 2006 (or 2010), Access. no. pending.

<sup>94</sup> OSR, John Everett Jnr to Arthur Everett, 10 September 1895, *UNERA*, A103: 2006 (or 2010), Access. no. pending.

<sup>95</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>96</sup> OSR, Advertisement: ‘Ollera Wool Scour’, *UNERA*, A103:V3052/14; A.V. Cane, ‘Ollera 1838 to 1900: A Study of a Sheep Station’, M.A. Thesis, University of Sydney, 1949. p.121

innovatory ‘mind-set’ and his continuing respect for his father’s advice. Not only, as John Everett suggested in one of the last letters he wrote before his disabling stroke, were *all* the station’s sheep being dipped and their wool once more being washed, but, a commercially-oriented steam-driven scouring works was established on the station in the mid-1890s. A joint-venture between Arthur Everett and his brother-in-law Arthur Mackenzie of nearby Stratton, Ollera’s modern scour, which processed most of the district’s wool for several decades thereafter, provided both ‘value adding’ and a valuable source of supplementary income.<sup>97</sup>

However, the more general, less detailed nature of his record-keeping and the almost complete cessation, after John Everett’s stroke in late 1894, of his constant stream of letters filled with both advice and shrewd commentary mean that, for the first time in the founding partnership’s long history, far less detailed evidence of Arthur’s actions survives. Yet it remains clear that in preserving Ollera’s core landholdings and precious water resources, which necessitated the surrender of less important and/or more distant annual leases; paying the stations’ employee-selectors to agist the venture’s surplus flocks on unstocked selections; and, despite his uncle’s constant carping, delaying costly repairs or replacement of yards and fencing, Arthur ensured Ollera-Tenterden’s survival into the new century.<sup>98</sup> Three entries contained in a list of landholders on previously ‘Everett’ land which Arthur compiled on 15 April 1902 shows the extent of his success (see Appendix D). Not only had the GJE venture retained 15,446 of the just over 18,000 acres it held in 1892, but its sheep numbers (11,361 in early 1892) were steadily increasing. The remaining entries show Arthur’s personal investment in Ollera. To his father’s gift of 818 acres at Danebury, on which he grazed 1766 sheep, he added a further 640 acres (883 sheep), his half-share of near-by Oakley, yet another joint-venture with Arthur Mackenzie.<sup>99</sup> Thus, as the new century began, the Everett ‘interest’ held a total of 16,904 acres on which they grazed 18,095 sheep.<sup>100</sup> 1902 also saw the erection of the first stage of Ollera’s present brick homestead, the third and final stage of which was completed in 1914.

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<sup>97</sup> Cane, *op. cit.*, p. 123.

<sup>98</sup> Edwin to John Everett, 26 June 1894, *UNERA*, A103, 2006; Cane, *op. cit.*, pp. 123-25.

<sup>99</sup> Adjacent to both Everett’s Danebury and Mackenzie’s Stratton, Oakley lay in the northeast corner of the old Ollera run.

<sup>100</sup> OSR, List dated 15 April 1902, compiled by Arthur William Everett, *UNERA*, A103: 2006

Arthur Everett's focus upon preserving and extending Ollera Station's landholdings continued after the seventy-year sibling partnership ended when Edwin died in November 1907. Under the terms of Edwin's Will, his half-share of GJE and almost all his privately-owned lands, in effect Tenterden, passed to George's son, William Frederick (Willy) Everett, while, by a combination of inheritance and previous agreement with his father, Arthur purchased his siblings' shares in the property and outright ownership of Ollera.<sup>101</sup> Then, between 1910 and 1912, by a process of individual and joint-purchase, he added a further 1,819 acres to GJE's foundation 'run'. This comprised 267 acres of individually owned land at Danebury, and 1,560 acres of jointly-purchased land in Mackenzie Parish, 700 acres of which he acquired in partnership with his cousin Willy Everett and the remainder with his brother-in-law Arthur Mackenzie.<sup>102</sup> Thus, on New Year's Day, 1914, when Arthur listed his landed possessions he calculated his assets at £45,299, made up of land worth £37,829, carrying stock and infrastructure worth £7,470. His holdings comprised 4,884 acres and 5,220 stock on Ollera, while the remaining 5,168 acres, 5,000 sheep, and livestock and plant valued at £200 were held on Boori (2,560 acres) and Lochaber (2,628 acres). Until the 1930s these stations near Gunnedah on the Northern Slopes of NSW, served as 'finishing' stations for Ollera's livestock (see Appendix D).<sup>103</sup>

Arthur's achievements testify to the Everett brothers' success as long-term planners for Ollera's future. However, despite its initial success, this was far from the case at Tenterden, which was purchased by yet another of James Mackenzie's sons in about 1914 after Willy Everett's hasty departure for England and future well-deserved acclaim as one of Britain's first flying-aces in World War I. Despite its only partial success in regard to Edwin's beloved Tenterden, which was attributable to the ultimately-harmful combination of Edwin's stubborn refusal to cede power and his chosen heir's already obvious unwillingness to devote his life to on-site management of the station, the need for planned generational succession had been recognized by

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<sup>101</sup> OSR, Letters: Edwin to John, 31 October 1893; John to Arthur, 24 August 1893, *UNERA*, A103: 2006 (or 2010), Access. no. pending.

<sup>102</sup> Map E08, dated 1 January, 1919, *Parish Maps: Armidale Office Set, CD 8 of 12 CDs, Version 2.1.2*, Land and Property Information NSW, Bathurst, 10 October, 2000.

<sup>103</sup> OSR, '[List of Assets] Sent to F. F. Harrison, 12 Bent Street, Sydney, 1 January, 1914', *UNERA*, A103: 2006 (or 2010), Access. no. pending.

the founding partners since the acquisition of Tenterden in 1860-61 and implemented in 1875.<sup>104</sup>

Between 1875 and 1889-80, four successive second-generation Everett scions, all but one of whom, John Everett Jnr, spent several years working on the station, were considered. The first, Charles E. Everett, who in the mid-1890s succeeded his father, Rev Charles Everett, as master of Biddesden, spent almost five years at Ollera-Tenterden before returning to England in the summer of 1879-80. Next came Ollera's future manager and ultimate owner Arthur William Everett, whose father John eased his transition to life in the colony's back-blocks by travelling with him to the station in October, 1881.<sup>105</sup> Arthur Everett's decade-long apprenticeship was broken only by a year's leave in England which began early in 1887, but which was cut short by James Mackenzie's death in November 1887, necessitating his early return to New England in January 1888.<sup>106</sup>

Arthur's first seven years at Ollera overlapped with the two-and-a-half year 'apprenticeship' George's son, Willy Everett, served at Tenterden between October, 1883 and May, 1886.<sup>107</sup> Although, through a combination of personal inclination, concern for continuing partnership 'fairness' and, perhaps, sibling rivalry with John, Edwin had clearly chosen Willy as his heir, the young man never completely settled into life at Tenterden. Like Arthur, he was subjected to his uncle's constant criticism and complaints, with the result that in mid-1886 Willy left for Sydney, where, by 1889, he completed his previous training as a surveyor.<sup>108</sup> The infrequency of the letters exchanged between Ollera and 'Home' after 1894-5 means that little trace survives of Willy's movements in the fifteen years before he inherited the bulk of Edwin's 'private' landholdings and his share of GJE in early 1910. However, we do know that, in 1889-90, at his father's request, when the acrimonious dispute over Prentice's *bona fides* reached its height, he spent several weeks or months on the

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<sup>104</sup> OSR, John to Edwin 18 April 1862; DJM, 1875, John to James Mackenzie, undated, 1879, *UNERA*, A103, 2010, DJM], Letters, A103: 2006 (or 2010), Access. no. pending.

<sup>105</sup> OSR, Diary of John Everett, October 1881-March 1882, *UNERA*, A103: 2006

<sup>106</sup> OSR, John to Arthur Everett (en route to England), January 1882, *UNERA*, A103: 2006 (or 2010), Access. no. pending.

<sup>107</sup> OSR, DJM, 1883; 1886, *UNERA*, A103: V3054/4 and V3054/6, respectively.

<sup>108</sup> OSR, George to John Everett, 12 March 1889, *UNERA*, A103: 2006 (or 2010), Access no. pending.

property to ‘size up’ Edwin’s chosen manager.<sup>109</sup> He shared this task with Arthur’s eldest brother, John Everett Jnr (Johnnie), the German-educated civil engineer who arrived in Sydney in late 1889 seeking a cure for his chronically weak chest.<sup>110</sup> After spending several months assisting his newly-appointed younger brother with Ollera’s management, by November 1890, Johnnie had married his newly-arrived fiancée and found permanent work in his profession. The couple spent a few years at Maclean on the lower Clarence then moved to Inverell before returning permanently to England in 1894-5.<sup>111</sup>

An even longer-term and more fundamental characteristic of the Everett brothers’ management system was their commitment to the tenets of the Paternalist Revival, a mindset which, despite adaptations to changing conditions over the decades, persisted until the social upheaval of World War One. From the start, as colonial ‘landed gentry’, they claimed the right to choose their neighbours. This assertion was as clear in comments made in the early 1840s as it was in 1861 when plans for the town reserve on Limestone Creek were gazetted.<sup>112</sup> ‘We must keep all strangers out.’ The Everetts’ determination remained as strong in 1889-90 when the station bought the employee-selector John Thomas’ holding on the plain opposite Ollera headstation, a purchase made solely to prevent Prentice from settling his family there. ‘[Prentice] might shunt himself there and that would be too near for such a man’.<sup>113</sup>

Further evidence of the sibling-partners’ paternalism exists in the help extended to carefully-chosen key employees, whom they encouraged, first as share-farmer/tenants and later as large-scale selectors, to settle on ‘their’ land. The first key employee with whom they made such an agreement was James Mackenzie who, from the early 1860s until the mid 1870s, raised sheep on the ‘halves’ system on the property.<sup>114</sup> The arrangement proved so profitable that, between the late 1860s and 1887, the Everetts made similar agreements with at least four other individuals, the

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<sup>109</sup> *loc cit.*

<sup>110</sup> OSR, John to Arthur Everett, 26 March 1890, *UNERA*, A103: 2006 (or 2010), Access. no. pending.

<sup>111</sup> OSR, John to Arthur Everett, 7 & 20 November 1895, *UNERA*, A103: 2006

<sup>112</sup> OSR, John to Edwin Everett, 5 August 1861. See Chapter 3, below.

<sup>113</sup> OSR, John to Arthur Everett, 7 November 1889, *UNERA*, A103: 2006

<sup>114</sup> OSR, Account Book, 1841-72, *UNERA*, A103: V 2259.

last of whom earned £37.15s.6d for the station.<sup>115</sup> The GJE partnership benefited from the ‘halves’ system in several other ways, the most profitable being the sale of surplus stock to prospective tenant-partners. For example, in 1861 Mackenzie paid £325 for his foundation flock of 500 sheep, adding a further 500 in 1863. Then, in 1865, he paid £46.5s.0d to have his flock washed and shorn in the station’s facilities.<sup>116</sup> A decade later, with his employers’ consent, Mackenzie made his initial selection on Stratton. Thereafter, for several years, for £50 annual rental the Everett brothers’ flocks were depastured on Stratton where Mackenzie also grew cereal crops and potatoes for sale to the station.<sup>117</sup>

Ollera’s sheep overseer, Donald Stewart, was another key workman the sibling-partners encouraged to settle permanently on ‘their’ land. A few years after Edwin Everett sold his privately-owned acreage on Sandy Creek to Stewart in 1875, he refused its repurchase, choosing instead to lend Stewart, as guarantor for one of his adolescent sons, the money to meet development costs on a recently acquired additional selection.<sup>118</sup> For many years Mackenzie’s and Stewart’s sheep were washed and shorn in Ollera’s facilities, a practice for which they paid a total of £72.19s.10d in 1884, and which cost Mackenzie’s widow £23.6s.8d in 1890.<sup>119</sup> As their agreement with Mrs Jane Farrell’s 1890 request demonstrates, for an agreed price, other favoured long-term employee-selectors’ sheep received similar treatment.<sup>120</sup> Comparable arrangements, some of which dated back to the 1840s and early 1850s, concerned the use of the station’s infrastructure and expensive equipment.<sup>121</sup> Thus, to both parties’ benefit, shepherds’ and selectors’ land was cleared and ploughed by the stations’ bullock teams, their cereal crops were threshed by its steam-driven machine and their freshly-killed beasts were stored in the station’s storeroom, from which, in addition to a wide variety of food, clothing and household necessities, they could also purchase

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<sup>115</sup> OSR, Yearly Balance Book, 1865-92, *UNERA*, A103: V2458.

<sup>116</sup> OSR, Account Book, 1881-72, *UNERA*, A103: V2259.

<sup>117</sup> OSR, John Everett to James Mackenzie, 29 August 1877, *UNERA*, A103:2010; Yearly Balance Book, (for records for 1879), A103: V2458.

<sup>118</sup> Cane, *op. cit.*, pp. 116-17.

<sup>119</sup> OSR, Yearly Balance Book, 1865-92, *UNERA*, A103: V2458.

<sup>120</sup> OSR, Mrs Jane Farrell to Edwin Everett, 17 September 1890, *UNERA*, A103:2006

<sup>121</sup> OSR, Account Book, 1841-72, *UNERA*, A103:V2259. For various entries, in the early 1840s, of fees deducted ‘at settlement’ for the services of the station’s prize stallion(s), the imported bull ‘Maecenas’ and the station’s rams. See also entries from c.1856 about the purchase, and hiring, of Ollera’s first steam thresher.

their fencing wire, iron, nails and the cedar they used for coffins. To the stations' benefit, many of its selectors survived the difficult early years on their holdings by agisting their employers' sheep on land they could not yet afford to stock. Both parties benefited from the agreement for, though far from complete, the records show that between 1882 and 1890 the station earned at least £125.10s.8d from the rent of its 'grass' and 'paddocks' to their workmen.<sup>122</sup> The situation was reversed in the following five years when the practice proved crucial to the drought-ridden and initially heavily overstocked stations' survival. During the same period, worker-selectors provided the following supplementary income:<sup>123</sup>

Sales of Sheep to selectors in 1889 & 1890	£907.13s.0d
Rent of Rams (1882-6; 1890)	£ 73.17s.4d
Use of Store facilities (1882-6; 1890)	£ 38.17s.9d
Sales of Cattle & Beef (1882-6; 1890)	<u>£ 43. 4s.8d</u>

**£1,063. 12s. 9d**

However, employees who were deemed for various reasons, not to have behaved in a suitably deferential manner faced harsh and often undeserved treatment. The Everett brothers' intolerance of individuals' perceived failure to maintain their God-given 'place' in the paternalist hierarchy was apparent throughout the GJE partnership. It was as clear in their stringent criticism of the Canning family, who were 'getting above themselves' in late 1843 as it was of the young shepherd Tom Reeves in 1852, and of the successful employee-selector, Tom Cotterell in the mid-1870s.<sup>124</sup> As Everett-sponsored assisted immigrants these employees were expected to remain obedient and satisfied with their lot. In the difficult 1880s several skilled long-term employees were the focus of Edwin's disapproval and increasingly 'rough justice'. The first recipient was David Judge, the skilled cattleman who attempted, in the early 1880s, to 'sting his benefactors' by selecting land which blocked Ollera's

<sup>122</sup> OSR, Yearly Balance Book, 1865-92, *UNERA*, A103: V2458.

<sup>123</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>124</sup> OSR, John to Rev Charles Everett, 8 December 1843; John to Henry Everett, 10 December 1852, John Everett to James Mackenzie, 23 April 1879, *UNERA*, A103:V3052/4 and 2006 respectively.

planned expansion along George's Creek.<sup>125</sup> Then, plagued by ill-health and concerned, after almost a decade of drought and low wool prices, for the survival of his stations, Edwin succumbed to Prentice's poor advice to cull overpaid and otherwise 'unnecessary' workers, the first two of whom were his rivals, while the second pair had 'worn themselves out' in Edwin's service. On a list of wages paid to men employed on Ollera-Tenterden in June 1888, he wrote:<sup>126</sup>

#### Remarks

1. John Cameron [Sheep Overseer, too much]: J. Cameron must be reduced to £50 if I cannot get rid of him, but he is getting very weak and unwell and has very few sheep to look after outside the paddocks...
2. David Judge [Stockman, too much]: D. Judge was to be reduced this last Quarter to £40 [per annum] but they paid him without my orders.
- 3: Edward Kelly [Labourer, old and worn out]: The wood and water man old Kelly has too much wages [£30 per annum], being worn and feeble
- 3: Garrett Farrell, [Shepherd, old and worn out]: Garrett Farrell has too much [£40] being (sic) only half a flock and fenced all round.

But, if the Everett brothers expected their employees' unquestioning acceptance of the paternalist 'bargain', they demanded no less of themselves. Thus, throughout their seven-decade-long partnership, 'premiums' and 'presents' were given for excellent work and annual pensions, the amount of which varied according to the stations' profitability, were paid to at least five retired workmen. Significant improvements were made to workers' housing in the early 1870s, when huts were enlarged and floored, windows replaced timber shutters, roofs were first shingled then replaced with galvanized iron and brick chimneys were built.<sup>127</sup> Like James Mackenzie, Edwin Everett contributed generously to station-wide collections to assist ill, injured or bereaved employees. Both employer and employees also made similarly generous annual donations to the construction and maintenance of the district's churches and hospitals. Then, in 1892, at Edwin's instigation, housing was promised to Wandsworth's first resident doctor. For 8s.0d weekly rental, he would receive a house, stables, garden, paddocks and £100 annually plus fees.<sup>128</sup>

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<sup>125</sup> OSR, John to Arthur Everett, undated, 1892, *UNERA*, A103:2010

<sup>126</sup> OSR, Edwin to John Everett, 30 June 1888, A103: 2006 (or 2010), Access. no. pending.

<sup>127</sup> OSR, Yearly Balance Book, 1865-92, *UNERA*, A103;V2458

<sup>128</sup> Cane, *op. cit.*, pp.125.

The sibling-partners were as committed to the spiritual and educational needs of their workforce as they were to their physical well-being. Between the early 1860s, when schools were built at Ollera and Limestone Creek/Wandsworth, and the mid-1880s, a total of five secular, Sunday and evening schools were educating the twin stations' children. But the achievement in which the brothers, as lifelong Evangelical Anglicans, almost certainly took most pride was the brick church which, in the last quarter of the century, adjoined each head-station. Built with money raised by station-wide subscription and designed by John Horbury Hunt, Ollera's little gem, St Bartholomew's, at which Anglican services are still held, was consecrated in 1877. Two decades later Edwin paid for the construction of Tenterden's now seldom used Anglican counterpart, St Thomas'.<sup>129</sup> For decades after the 1880s each church's annual Harvest Festival, which began with morning worship, continued with afternoon cricket and athletics, then ended with a celebratory dinner and dancing, was a highlight of the stations' year.<sup>130</sup> Thus, as this discussion makes clear, throughout their seventy-year tenure, the Everett brothers' paternalism was characterised by 'enlightened self interest', underpinning the survival of their enterprise through the creation and maintenance of a stable, reliable and multi-generational pool of permanent and seasonal labour.

What, then, were the elements which ensured the success of the Everett brothers' lifelong partnership and guaranteed its inheritance by their descendents? Throughout their seven decade long tenure the Everett siblings demonstrated fine long- and short-term planning skills; highly-developed talents for business and management; the abilities to train their successors; to select and retain key subordinates and to make long-term plans for their stations' future. However, while all three possessed the ability to adjust to the colony's changing economic and political conditions, the ultimate success lies with the English-based founders' patient, moderating influence and resigned acceptance of their headstrong younger brothers' increasing power after 1860. In particular, John and Edwin Everett demonstrated excellent judgement in the choice of their 'middle managers'- their superintendent

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<sup>129</sup> L.A. Gilbert, 'Address to Mark the Centenary of the Laying of the Foundation Stone at St. Bartholomew's Church, Ollera', *Journal and Proceedings of the Armidale and District Historical Society*, No. 28, 1978, pp. 96-100.

<sup>130</sup> OSR, DJM, various entries for 1883-87, *UNERA*, A103: V3054/5-9.

James Mackenzie and his principal assistant, Ollera's sheep overseer, Donald Stewart. It is their vital role in Ollera-Tenterden's management that must now be discussed.