CHAPTER TWO

Management and the Managers II: Superintendent & Sheep Overseer

... A man of keen intelligence, great knowledge of stock, commercial shrewdness and a military tactician’s power of combination ... He forgets nothing and superintends everything. He trusts nobody; he coerces, persuades and manipulates everybody. He has the terms of all contracts. He keeps the various parties in hand. Toiling every day and half the night, he does the work of two or ten men [so] that in a comparatively few years, out of a salary of £300, he saves as much as £2,000 or sometimes £3,000. He is usually rewarded by being taken into partnership or by becoming a runholder himself.

James Collier, 1911: on the qualities of a good station superintendent.¹

This chapter considers the management of Ollera-Tenterden by the station’s superintendent James Mackenzie and his principal assistant, Ollera’s sheep-overseer, Donald Stewart. Possessing either shared or individual responsibility under Edwin Everett’s immediate authority, the two were accountable for the operation of a ‘family enterprise’ whose landholdings doubled to almost 152,000 acres (237 sq. miles or 614 sq. km) when the Everett brothers bought Ollera’s western neighbour, Tenterden, in the early 1860s.² Throughout their long! collaboration each of these highly-skilled, hard-working men could have provided the template for James Collier’s ideal station superintendent. In origins, attitudes and ambitions each was particularly well-suited to his position on, and ‘place’ in, the hierarchical English estate on which the sibling partners’ Australian endeavour was modelled. Points to be discussed include the nature, importance, outcome and influence of this convergence of key employees and management model; the complexity and wide-ranging nature of their duties and

² New South Wales Government Gazette, ‘List of Run Holders in District of New England’ 1866 and 1879, In 1866 Ollera and Tenterden each comprised about 76,000 acres or 118 miles² (30,627 hectares/306 km²), a total of 151,671 acres (237 miles²/614 km²). However, by 1879 the Everett brothers held almost 112,000 acres (175 miles²/453km²), of which 47,984 acres were on Ollera and 64,000 acres on Tenterden. Ollera’s 47,984 acres comprised 6,345 acres of freehold land, 8,760 acres of preleased or reserved land and 32,879 acres of leased land. Tenterden’s 64,000 acres comprised 2,385 acres of freehold, 5,275 acres of preleased or reserved and 56,340 acres of leased land.
responsibilities and their opportunities for, and the extent to which each participated in, a variety of private entrepreneurial ventures.

By late 1864, a quarter century after Ollera’s two founding partners arrived in Australia, the Everett brother’s resident sibling could at last begin to live as an English landed gentleman on the colonial frontier. All its main elements were in place. Edwin Everett’s decision to base himself at Tenterden, about four miles down George’s Creek from the sibling-partnership’s centre of operations at Ollera, meant that at last he could live as a colonial ‘country gentleman’. With the venture’s superintendent, James Mackenzie, settled with his wife and young children in Ollera’s homestead and its sheep overseer and soon-to-be farm manager, Donald Stewart, housed just across that station’s square, Edwin, as resident partner, could supervise and direct the business while maintaining the requisite physical and psychological distance from its day-to-day activities. In making these arrangements Edwin replicated the system of estate-management to which he and his elder brothers, as younger sons of an English squire, were accustomed.

During the foundation decades, to suit conditions in the colony, the Everetts had made several necessary adaptations to the long-established paternalist system they had imported from ‘Home’. However, most of these modifications concerned the workforce as a whole. They included the payment of significantly higher wages, the employment, on equal pay, of women shepherds during the labour-starved gold-rush years, and variations in the quantity of rations issued according to season, task and family size. However, almost the only change made at the level of upper management was to nomenclature.

Titled station superintendent in the colony, James Mackenzie’s position corresponded to that of an English land agent, a centuries-old occupation which, by the 1850s, was gaining recognition and respect as a separate profession. Well-educated and often a younger son of the landed gentry, as his employer’s

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3 ‘Everett Notebook, 1838-46’, Ollera Station Records (OSR), University of New England and Regional Archives (UNERA), Armidale, A103: V3053/17. The plethora of goods and clothing the brothers thought necessary to their lives in Australia, ranges from genteel and highly-specialized to utilitarian and eminently practical.


representative, the land agent occupied a position of great respect and authority in county society. Working in close co-operation with, and answerable only to their employers, both the land agent and his colonial counterpart, the station superintendent, occupied remarkably similar positions in their respective milieus. Their duties included sole responsibility for the management of vast and often widely-separated landholdings and their produce; the oversight, physical and social control and care of the work-force; the preparation, payment and subsequent rendering of financial accounts; and the compilation of the multifarious records generated by the complex businesses they administered.⁶

Like Mackenzie, Ollera’s sheep overseer Donald Stewart had his counterpart in the English steward, to whom the responsibility for a particular major activity or area of a larger estate was often delegated. As highly-skilled and experienced members of the working classes who had gained position and authority purely on merit, stewards had neither the opportunities for extensive formal education nor the social status of the land agents to whom they were answerable.⁷ Nor, given their backgrounds, did they always share their immediate superiors’ personal long-term goals.

These resemblances are particularly close in Mackenzie’s and Stewart’s cases. Though both took great pride in their Scots’ ancestry, their origins differed greatly. An Anglo-Scot, James Mackenzie was born in 1828 on the Isle of Wight into a family which had deep roots in the minor aristocracy and the landed gentry. Already well-connected in the colony, to which he emigrated in mid-1852, Mackenzie’s marriage, in 1860, to Anna Maria Clerk, the daughter of the Everett’s neighbour E.G. Clerk of Clerkness, consolidated his position in the colonial elite. Between 1852 and July 1857, when he began work at Ollera on a year’s trial under John Everett’s close supervision, Mackenzie spent a few unsuccessful months on the goldfields before being trained in station management by the Everetts’ friend and mentor, George Wyndham of Dalwood in the Hunter Valley, to whom he was related by marriage.⁸ Sharing the Everett brothers’ background, all-important metropolitan and colonial

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⁶ Perkin, op. cit., pp. 152, 159.
⁷ Ibid, pp. 152-64, 180-81.
⁸ James Mackenzie was present when his brother Arthur married George Wyndham’s daughter Weeta at Clifffdale in 1852.
networks of kinship, friendship and life-style and also their mindset, interests and opinions, Mackenzie was thus ideally suited to his position as superintendent-cum-land agent. Initially paid £300 per annum, in mid-1858 he was confirmed as superintendent of Ollera and New Valley, the Everetts’ recently acquired station on Tenterden’s north-western boundary. However, in 1862-63, almost certainly in recognition of the added work-load and responsibilities incurred by the sibling partners’ purchase of Tenterden, his salary was increased to £400 per annum.

Donald Stewart’s background was very different. A Highland Scot, he was born in 1830 at Loch Carron in Rosshire. There, as his diaries attest, he took full advantage of the admirable education provided to even the poorest children by the Scots Parish System. Displaced like so many of his fellow smallholders, Stewart moved to the port of Greenock where he was apprenticed to a tailor. However, in mid-1857 he followed his brother Duncan to Newstead Station in New England where, between 28 August 1857 and 3 March 1858 he worked for nineteen weeks as a farm labourer, earning £30.16s.10½d (about 15/6 per week or £40 per annum). Then, as a brief memoir written not long before his death in 1913 confirms, on 6 March 1859, after a short stay in Sydney, he ‘agreed at Ollera and served that firm faithfully and true for twenty-four years as Sheepoverseer (sic)’. Although no record survives of the wage at which he began work at Ollera, by 1862 the recently-married Stewart was earning £100 per annum. Like Mackenzie’s, his responsibilities, though not his wage as sheep overseer, almost certainly increased as a result of the purchase of Tenterden. However, by 1865 he had two major areas of responsibility; immediate

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9 ‘History of the Mackenzie Family’, Journal compiled in the early 1900s, by Alice Ollera Mackenzie Everett, OSR, UNERA, A103, Box 2, File 2.9; Further information supplied to the author by Mr T. and Mrs J. Mackenzie, Armidale, NSW.
10 Account Book 1841-72, OSR, UNERA, A103: V2259.
12 Ross Fraser, ‘Notes re my Great Grandfather Donald Stewart’, information supplied to the author in 2003.
13 Inverell Family History Group. Newstead Station Ledgers 1-3 1847-63, A1826 Microfilm 134.1; Also available at UNERA, Newstead Station Ledgers, 1-3, 1847-63, MF134.1
14 Tangle Station Records, Pocket Diary (printed date 1902) of Donald Stewart,1906-10 UNERA, A133:V1168/1
15 Station Ledger, Feb 1862- Dec 1865. OSR, UNERA, A103: V2260; Fraser, op. cit., for Stewart’s marriage, in March 1861, to Catherine Jackson, the daughter of a fellow Scot who spent many years working on Ollera
though always subordinate oversight of the twin station’s acreage south of the central
watercourse, George’s Creek, and the management of Ollera’s farm at Sandy Creek a
few miles south of the headstation.¹⁶ Thus, less than a decade after their arrival at
Ollera, the dedicated two-man team which for twenty years would ensure the greatly
expanded station’s success was already established.

Figure 6: Wool Waggon at Tenterden c.1880s, UNERA, A103: V2010

Despite Tenterden’s importance as Edwin’s residence, Ollera head-station was
the ‘control centre’ from which Mackenzie managed the two adjoining stations as a
single unit. The difference in the wages paid to key employees at each head-station
supports this conclusion (see above). Further evidence of the ‘unitary’ system
employed to manage the newly-combined stations includes the location of essential
infrastructure and the despatch and receipt of livestock and supplies. Both stations’
sheep were washed in Ollera’s washpool, shorn in the nearby woolshed and dunked in
that station’s dip. After 1869, mobs of sheep and cattle were regularly despatched

¹⁶ Diary of James Mackenzie, [DJM], OSR, UNERA, A103:V3052/42. Entry for 6 June 1865.
from GJE’s foundation station to be fattened at Clifftdale in the Upper Hunter or for sale in Dubbo and on the Darling Downs, as were the heavily-laden drays which carried the twin-stations’ woolclip ‘down country’ for shipment to the English sales. On their return with much-needed provisions and equipment, the drays were unloaded and their goods inventoried and priced at Ollera’s store. Supplies were then distributed to the outlying station stores at Tenterden, Limestone Creek/Wandsworth, Sandy Creek and, in later years, to Edwin’s privately-owned station, Dinton Vale, just south of the Queensland border.17

The Everett brothers already had some experience in managing Ollera and Tenterden as a single unit. From the two squattages’ foundation in 1838 until mid-1844 when the Everetts’ then partners and distant relatives, the Halhed brothers, sold Alluran (renamed Tenterden), the adjoining runs had been successfully managed as one property, the various running and equipment costs being shared by the two sets of siblings.18 When, twenty years later, the GJE partnership bought Tenterden, the inherent economies of scale were recognized and the system was reintroduced. From his base at Ollera, with Stewart’s able assistance, Mackenzie ran both properties and their workforce as a single entity. Jobs were assigned according to seasonal need and/or to suit each station’s requirements on a particular day or week. Although individuals were hired for specific purposes, positions, rates of pay and periods of time, such workers, like the men who, in March 1869, Mackenzie ordered ‘to come in from Limestone [Creek on the station’s northern boundary] for the thrashing (sic)’, received extra pay at the rate set for such tasks.19 Or, like William Matley who, in mid-1864, was ‘very discontented at having left Ollera for Tenterden’, at the end of each designated hiring period men were free to change jobs (i.e. from shepherding to general labouring) on and between sister-stations, or, from the late 1870s, to work, as Matley did for several months, on either Mackenzie’s or Stewart’s selections on the old Ollera run.20

Ollera-Tenterden’s management system was just as complex and flexible at the executive level. As station superintendent, James Mackenzie possessed three

17 Diary of James Mackenzie (DJM), OSR, UNERA, A103:V3053/23; V3054/2
19 DJM, OSR, UNERA, A103:V3052/41.
20 Ibid, A103:V3052/41.
different types of responsibility and control; immediate and continuous, distanced and/or intermittent and private (personal). In managing these closely related groups the superintendent acted individually or, where his employers’ interests were concerned, with Edwin Everett and/or Donald Stewart. Mackenzie’s skill and the complexity of his tasks are evident when the wide variety of responsibilities contained within each of these distinct but inter-related areas of supervision are considered. The superintendent’s immediate, continuous and principal responsibility was for the day-to-day operation of Ollera-Tenterden. Under Edwin Everett’s aegis, and with Donald Stewart’s assistance, he managed the twin-station’s workforce; its livestock and their produce and its agricultural output. The three men also closely monitored the location, activities and behaviour of the growing number of free-selectors and disguised ‘tenants’ who settled or were settled on land on the squattage. Either alone or with Edwin Everett, Mackenzie supervised the construction and maintenance of the station’s infrastructure; oversaw GJE’s property in the village of Limestone Creek/Wandsworth; monitored the secular and religious education of the station’s children; and, in his capacity as a Justice of the Peace, undertook a variety of legal and official tasks for the station’s illiterate or barely-literate workforce. Between 1876 and his death in 1887, the superintendent also had sole responsibility for training three young second-generation Everett males, each of whom was a potential successor to part, or all of the ‘family enterprise’.

With Edwin Everett, the superintendent shared long-distance and intermittent oversight of Cliffdale after its purchase in 1869 and of at least 2,000 acres of land near Bundarra. Ollera’s northern neighbour, Moredun, was included after John Everett’s brother-in-law, Andrew Wauchope, returned to England in 1870. Additionally for several years after the death of his father-in-law, E.G. Clerk, in 1876, the superintendent acted individually or, where his employers’ interests were concerned, with Edwin Everett and/or Donald Stewart.

21 *Ibid.*, A103: V3053-3054; V3054/6-10; These young men were the sibling partners’ nephew Charles (1976-1879, John’s son Arthur, who later owned Ollera (1881-1887) and George’s son William (who inherited then sold Tenterden (1893-1885).

22 DJM, OSR, UNERA, A103: V3052/42
Mackenzie also oversaw operations at Clerk. Although the superintendent’s remaining responsibilities were purely ‘private’ (personal), the same mixture of sole and shared management is evident. Concerned mainly with the acquisition and development of land on and near Ollera-Tenterden between the early 1860s and 1884, these private interests also included several joint speculative investments in the district.

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Before examining the many and varied tasks contained within each of these broad categories of responsibility, several defining characteristics of Ollera-Tenterden’s management by its superintendent and his principal assistant, Donald Stewart, must be noted. Perhaps the greatest of James Mackenzie’s many skills and the key to his success was his ability to cooperate, not only with Stewart’s ever greater self-confidence, but, even more importantly, with his resident and English-based employers, whose disagreements, particularly over the composition of their station’s flocks, he had increasingly to resolve (see Chapter 1 above). Combining seemingly infinite patience with great tact, Mackenzie not only complied with Edwin Everett’s headstrong and often impulsive decisions but, in his regular and carefully impartial correspondence with John Everett, kept the English-based founding partners informed of their station’s affairs and progress. However, despite their similar English backgrounds and the tone of their letters, which suggests friendship and a high degree of mutual respect, Mackenzie’s language reflects their respective positions in colonial society. Whereas the superintendent addressed his employers respectfully as ‘Mr’, they answered using his surname. The same social distinctions were observed by Donald Stewart. However, in his case they applied not only to the Everetts and Mackenzie, but to such ‘gentleman’ subordinates as Edgar Huntley and Edward Arnold Hill, both of whom were employed on Tenterden. Just as significantly, both Mackenzie and Stewart sought the permission of their English and Australian employers before they took up their first free selections on the Ollera run in the early

23 DJM, OSR, UNERA, A103:V3054/3a
24 DJM, entries for the years 1864, 1868, 1870 and 1877, OSR, UNERA, A103: V 3052/42; V3052/46, V3052/47 and V3054/3a respectively.
25 Letters, James Mackenzie to John Everett, 1879; John Everett to James Mackenzie, 31 May 1868, 27 December 1883; OSR, UNERA, A103, Access. Numbers Pending
Then, early in 1879, when Stewart wanted to move with his family to Tangle Farm, which he had purchased in mid-1876 and whose homestead he had already rebuilt and enlarged, he again sought Edwin Everett’s permission to move there from Ollera’s headstation.

Even the most cursory inspection of their respective annual work diaries shows how closely and amicably the superintendent and his principal assistant co-operated for over twenty years in the management of Ollera-Tenterden. Indeed, one of the few recorded disagreements between these strong-willed, self-assured men appears in Stewart’s diary. In the difficult late winter of 1881 the experienced sheepman expressed his strong disapproval of Mackenzie’s failure to move some of the flocks under the overseer’s immediate but not absolute control.

5 August: Went to Old Sam [a long-serving, but aging Chinese shepherd] and Carpendale’s - Old Sam’s sheep being very heavy round the head ['bottled'?] - Could I but do as I think I would see those sheep put to the other side of the run.

9 August: Went to Old Sam’s again - Sorry I am to think that these sheep should have been moved sooner.

3 September: Went to Carpendale’s and Old Sam’s - Sad to see such young wethers die - Much good may be done by picking up skins and loose wool!

However, these rare differences of opinion highlight the concerted, conscientious and often selfless attention the two men gave to their joint and individual responsibilities. Day after day, from dawn often until after dark, working either separately or together, they tirelessly ‘did the rounds’ of the shepherding stations, farms, selections and tenant holdings, covering an area measuring at least thirty-five kms (21 ¾ miles) from east to west and about twenty-three kms (14 ¼ miles) from north to south (see Figure 10 below).

Appendix E, which contains extracts from their diaries, provides a glimpse of their working lives during one busy seven-day period during the six-to-

26 Ibid
27 Diaries of Donald Stewart, 1871-1885 (henceforth DDS), Tangle Papers (TP), UNERA, A133: V5639 and V5642, entries dated 10 July 1876 and 22 January 1879 respectively. Although the sequence continues until 1912, only the volumes which concern the years in which Stewart was employed on Ollera and the two years thereafter have been cited.
29 DDS, TP, UNERA, A133: V5643. Emphasis added.
eight week lambing season which began as the winter eased in late August.\(^\text{31}\) Separated by fifteen years, entries in Mackenzie’s diaries for October 1867 and August 1881 also provide valuable insights into the length of his working day and the many and varied problems he encountered.

**15 October, 1867**: The Creek very high - never seen it higher - Old Clark had to leave his house - The back creek could not be crossed at the headstation - Went out to Sandy Creek - My brother [Robert Mackenzie] and Peel could not cross to help Ramage with the lambing all day - At night found the creek had risen greatly - we had to swim our horses and got home wet to the skin. A good few lambs killed -Rev Johnstone could not come from Moredun.

**8 August, 1882**: Went to Sandy Creek with Huntley before breakfast - saw the Chinaman and his sheep - home by Tom Dawson’s, Paddy Heffernan’s and Arthur Everett’s selection - home to lunch at Tenterden - [Edgar] Huntley [stayed] there - on the road home I found some of Garrett [Farrell’s] sheep- saw him and Ross - also the sheep.\(^\text{32}\)

The following entries from Donald Stewart’s 1878 diary show that his days were just as busy and challenging. They also exemplify his more personal, less formal writing style.

**19 January**: I was after the travelling sheep all day - *Not pleasant but necessary* - see to everything if you can

**8 June**: I took the rams out of Percy’s ewes - writing letters at home - then went to Dawson’s run and counted his flock in at night - *I have seen Ben Dawson late on the move at dark* - [He was] certainly not gathering Church rents

**20 October**: Went to Dawson’s, Carpendale’s and then to Brushy Creek Went to [prepare] the Washpool in the afternoon and to Loo Sue’s lambing - then back to the Washpool and from there to Wise’s and Brushy Creek and back by Dawson’s lambing.

**21 October**: To Dawson’s and Carpendale’s then to Brushy Creek and Tenterden and Fitzroy [Gully] and back by the Big Plain – *Pretty tired and knocked up* - also my horse.\(^\text{33}\)

But perhaps the clearest understanding of the diversity and extent of the two men’s responsibilities can be gained by examining the work they supervised during a twelve month period. These activities were of three distinct kinds: year-round; seasonal and intermittent. Year-round activities included making regular ‘rounds’ of

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\(^{31}\) John Everett to James Mackenzie, 29 August 1877, OSR, UNERA, A103, Access. No. pending

\(^{32}\) DJM, OSR, UNERA, A103; V3052/45; V3054/7, respectively

\(^{33}\) DDS, TP, UNERA, A133: V5641 Original emphasis
the shepherding stations to deliver rations, scarce tools and machinery, monitor the welfare and conduct of the shepherds and their families and to check flock numbers and the condition of the sheep. A similarly close watch was kept on the activities of the steadily increasing number of free-selectors (mainly employees but also a few ‘strangers’) who took up land on the ‘run’. Lost sheep were searched for and returned on an almost daily basis, flocks which had become ‘boxed’ (intermingled, a cardinal shepherding sin) were separated; individual flocks were ‘salted’, lame sheep were ‘dressed’ (treated for footrot) and ‘dosed’ for worms, and dingoes, feral dogs and thousands of kangaroos, koalas, and possums were poisoned or shot.

The start of the seasonal work-year for GJE’s livestock operations and on its farms was governed largely by the dictates of each year’s weather. Improved conditions in late August-early September saw preparations underway for the lambing season, which began the busiest six-to-seven months of the year for ‘all hands’ on Ollera-Tenterden. However, no-one was busier than the superintendent and his overseer. Having found a suitably isolated and protected site on each shepherd’s ‘run’ for the lambing station at which his ewes could safely deliver their lambs, the two men began the most crucially important and stressful season(s) of their year. From late-August until the end of October or early November the lambers and their families often worked round the clock as the ewes gave birth and their lambs progressed through three separate mobs. Penned within an ever-changing maze of hurdles, each batch moved from new-born ‘droppers’ to the ‘green’ mob of suckling lambs and finally to the ‘strong’ mob to be weaned. As each successive strong mob was fully weaned, the ‘dry’ ewes were removed, the lambs were counted, and their survival percentages recorded before the lambs were tailed, branded with paint and ‘cut’ (castrated). Meanwhile, before being washed and shorn, each mature flock was drafted, counted and drenched with a mixture of salt and water.

As lambing passed its peak in late October and early November, Stewart prepared the washpool, for whose operations he was responsible. The dams were cleaned, their walls rebuilt and the pumps and bark spouts were repaired and renewed. Similar attention was given to the complex of hurdles and yards through which the sheep moved on their way through the washpool. Each outstation’s single or double flock was driven to the facilities at Ollera headstation where, under the care of its shepherd, over three days, it progressed through the washpool to be close-penned (to
dry and bring up the wool’s yolk) before being shorn under Mackenzie’s supervision. As shearing ended in late December, the newly-shorn sheep were then dipped for ticks, branded and provided with salt ‘licks’. Meanwhile, though reduced in intensity, lambing continued into February, as successive batches of the season’s lambs were progressively weaned, tailed, treated and dipped and surrogate mothers were found for rejected newborns.

Between March and the end of May, as the pressure of seasonal work slackened, the sheep were mustered, dressed and dosed with a mixture of salt and iron before being drafted into new mobs which were either distributed to the shepherds, sold, or dispatched to Cliffdale, Dinton Vale or to Copes Creek. The last of the lambs were weaned, new rams were purchased and, with their fellows, were put into the ewe flocks. As the seasonal cycle ended, work with the sheep continued throughout the winter as the last of the lambs were branded and the rams removed from the flocks before the sheep were mustered, ear-marked, branded, dressed, drenched and salted.

Though neither as consistently time-consuming and labour-intensive nor as crucial to the venture’s success as sheep-husbandry, work with the cattle and horses and on the station’s farms followed the same seasonal pattern. Although musters of large livestock were held throughout the year, they were more frequent in the summer and autumn. During these months the cattle and horses which grazed the higher and rougher country near the ranges on the station’s boundaries were rounded-up, their calves and foals were branded and cut, and mature animals were drafted-out, then counted, branded and prepared for sale or for despatch to either Cliffdale or Dinton Vale.

The farming year also began in late August when, throughout the spring, the sheep paddocks were burnt-off, ploughed and sown with pasture-improving grasses. Land to be cultivated was cleared and burnt before being ploughed and sown with crops of lucerne, cereals and potatoes. In late October, when lambing pressures eased and before ‘all hands’ were needed to wash and shear the sheep, an early crop of oats was harvested at the Red Farm. However, the harvest season proper began in mid-summer immediately after shearing ended in late December. From January to mid-March successive crops of hay, wheat, oats, barley, rye and lucerne were harvested

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and each reaper’s tally was ‘measured’ and recorded for later payment in either Mackenzie’s or Stewart’s diaries.  

Threshing, which began on the Big Plain, followed the harvest and continued into the late autumn and early winter. The grain was cleaned then threshed by the station’s steam-powered machine for whose maintenance and operation Donald Stewart was responsible. Stewart’s ‘private’ bullock-team also moved the machine from headstation to headstation, farm to farm and, for a price, around the shepherding stations and selections. Successive crops of potatoes were harvested in autumn and, following English practice, the surplus was ‘pitted’ (stored underground) until needed for sale to employees, selectors and in the district. During the winter months, as the seasonal year came to an end, the paddocks were burnt-off, new land was cleared and ploughed, and successive crops of wheat, oats and garden vegetables were planted and cultivated.

Other, more intermittent farming and stock-related activities involved the movement of sheep into newly-constructed paddocks and, when necessary, from fouled to new shepherding stations. Hay, various cereals and potatoes were sold to employees, worker-selectors and neighbouring squatters. The station’s sheep, cattle and horses could also be bought, its rams rented and the services of its valuable stud bulls and stallions could be purchased. Nothing was wasted. Old or diseased sheep and, in the difficult 1880s, those rendered otherwise valueless by low wool prices, were boiled down for tallow. Hides and sheep skins were regularly sold to Armidale’s boot factory and the least valuable products of shearing, the locks and pieces, were sold in Sydney. Both the wool retrieved from dead sheep and loose, ‘paddock’ wool were also collected for sale in the colony.

Although, for the purposes of clarity, this discussion considers the management of Ollera-Tenterden’s stock and of its workforce separately, the two categories were, of course, inseparable and interdependent. As their diaries make clear, the problems the superintendent and his sheep overseer encountered on their daily rounds also ran the gamut of their many different responsibilities. Whether concerned with the welfare of

35 DDS, TP, OSR, UNERA, A133:V5643  
36 DJM, OSR, UNERA, A103:V3054/1; DDS, TP, UNERA, A113:V5636/7  
37 DJM, OSR, UNERA, A103:V3054/1
their employees and their families, with various aspects of ‘their’ people’s moral behaviour, or with their performance of and attitudes to their work, like Edwin Everett’s, the superintendent’s and sheep overseer’s supervision remained highly paternal in character.

In monitoring the welfare of the people who lived and worked on the station, Mackenzie and his family, often with Stewart’s assistance, treated illnesses and accidental injuries, visited the newly-born and the sick and buried the dead. Both men also provided a variety of civic and legal assistance to poorly-educated or illiterate employees. However, although both were on call day and night, the burden fell most heavily on Mackenzie, who dispensed a variety of patent medicines and administered first aid before sending, when necessary, for the doctor in either Armidale or Inverell. As first responder, the superintendent set broken limbs, reset a badly broken leg and a dislocated elbow and treated injuries and accidental gunshot wounds. Accompanied either by his wife Anna Maria Clerk Mackenzie, or the station’s midwife Mrs Jane Farrell, and, in later years by his elder daughters, Mackenzie made frequent visits to shepherds whose wives were ill or in labour, or whose children suffered from cuts, burns, scalds and snakebite or were enduring winter’s recurrent outbreaks of measles, croup and other upper respiratory tract infections. The following examples, all of which record Mackenzie’s activities in the mid-1860s, are typical of the all-encompassing nature of his responsibilities.

12 June, 1864: I heard Old Corporal [the Waterloo veteran, William Crew] had had a bad fall - went to Old Corporal’s before breakfast and looked after him [then] went to Paddy Heffernan’s and got young Heffernan to look after Corporal’s sheep - I went back to Tenterden and got some wine for Corporal. Hill came with me to witness William Crew sign his Will – I went home by the Big Plain.

13 June, 1864: Old Beazley [who died three days later] very ill - Anna and Mrs Clerk were called out to attend to Mrs Garrett [Farrell] who had a little girl.

9 July, 1867: David Judge came down [to Tenterden] from Ollera during the night to say the Blacksmith [George Beard] was ill and that he wanted to see me. I came back with Judge - got to Ollera about daylight - I gave Beard some medicine which did him good. Very hard frost - Bob [Mackenzie] came to say that Ramage had some sheep away. I went with Donald Stewart to look for them - found them all right [then] called in to see Mrs Bob.38

38 DJM, OSR, UNERA, A103:V3052/41; V3052/45
In his dual role as employer and Justice of the Peace Mackenzie also drew-up and witnessed Wills, recorded births, marriages and deaths, supervised burials, the sale or disposal of deceased workers’ belongings and organized charitable ‘whips around’ for the incapacitated or the bereaved.\(^3^9\) In cases of suicide and accidental or otherwise unexpected death, having recovered the body and sent for the police, Mackenzie held an official inquiry into the circumstances. Sadly, in the week between Christmas and New Year 1880-81, the superintendent conducted inquiries into two suicides; the first of an Ollera shepherd, the second of a Moredun workman. \(^4^0\) A similar inquiry was held after ‘poor Edgar Huntley shot himself’ at Tenterden in late 1883.\(^4^1\) The superintendent also came to the aid of employees whose dwellings had been flooded or burnt-down and organized all too frequent searches for shepherds who had lost themselves and/or their flocks in the bush and for their wives or children who had wandered away from their isolated outstations.\(^4^2\)

Both the superintendent and his sheep-overseer were often called upon to settle disputes with and between their employees. These ranged from arguments and fights to work-stoppages, strikes and covert protest activities. Although most of the ‘rows’, the majority of which occurred during lambing or at the Washpool, were settled ‘in house’, in some cases, like the one involving ‘the cranky man’, the offender was arrested and charged.\(^4^3\) On several occasions Mackenzie was called upon to settle disputes at Moredun. In one he arrived to find that the requested arrest was unnecessary. After another, which concerned a disputed free-selection, he organized the selector’s eviction and the valuation and sale of his possessions.\(^4^4\) Like the ‘rows’, many of the fights were caused by ‘boxed’ sheep and involved one or more Chinese shepherds. After one of the more serious of these altercations, in which Tom Dawson assaulted the long-serving ‘Chinaman’ Old Sam, Mackenzie served the European shepherd with a summons.\(^4^5\)

\(^3^9\) DJM, OSR, \textit{UNERA}, A103:V3053/24; V3052/47; V3054/3; V3054/3a; V3054/6; V3054/9
\(^4^0\) DJM, OSR, \textit{UNERA}, A103:V3054/5; V3054/6
\(^4^1\) DJM, OSR, \textit{UNERA}, A103: V3054/8
\(^4^2\) DJM, OSR, \textit{UNERA}, A103: V3052/40; V3052/42; V3052/43; V4052/44; V3054/3a; V3054/9
\(^4^3\) DJM, OSR, \textit{UNERA}, A103:V3054/3a
\(^4^4\) DJM, OSR, \textit{UNERA}, A103:V3052/47; V3054/2
\(^4^5\) DJM, OSR, \textit{UNERA}, A103:V3054
Though such incidents were relatively infrequent, during his thirty-years as GJE’s superintendent, Mackenzie faced both work stoppages and declared strikes. All these disputes occurred during peak-season and involved shearsers, contract fencers and dam-builders. Stoppages by shearers were over the provision of insufficient shears and for increased pay when shearing wet sheep, while the fencers and excavators refused to work during heavy rain and frequent, severe thunderstorms. In late 1883, Mackenzie took court action against striking shearers who, with Hugh Kelly, were fined for demanding 3s.0d rather than 2s.9d per score for shearing wet sheep.

A cluster of incidents involving arson, vandalism and the destruction of fences at the newly-surveyed townlet of Limestone (later Wandsworth) on the Ollera-Moredun boundary in the late 1860s are strongly suggestive of the covert action which was endemic in England’s pauperised rural south. Sabotage in redress of unresolved grievances may also have underlain the poisoning of several of Mackenzie’s dogs in 1886.

Both Mackenzie and Stewart kept a particularly close eye on the tenants and free-selectors, most of whom were Everett employees who had taken up land on the station. From the later 1860s until the mid-1880s both kept a careful record of each new selector’s identity and the rate, extent, location and date of selections that were taken up within each given twelve-month period, which for Mackenzie’s purposes covered July to June while Stewart’s records followed the calendar year. From 1866, when free selection began around the developing hamlet of Ollera (later Wandsworth) on the recently declared Town Reserve at Limestone Creek, Mackenzie made frequent inspections of their progress. As free-selection increased from a trickle in the 1860s to a steadily-growing stream during the 1870s and reached flood proportions after 1878, the superintendent and sheep-overseer were kept busy ensuring that selectors obeyed the strict conditions governing free selection. As the following entries in their diaries

46 DJM, OSR, UNERA, A103:V3052/40, V3054/7, V3054/8; DDS, TP, UNERA, A113:V5636
47 DJM, OSR, UNERA, A103: V3054/8
49 DJM, OSR, UNERA, A103:V3054/11
50 Yearly Balance Book1865-92, OSR, UNERA, A103:V2258 (Mackenzie); DDS, TP, UNERA, 1873-83, A133:V5635-5646 (Stewart)
demonstrate, both paid particular attention to the residence and ‘improvement’ clauses, either of which, if unfulfilled by the selector within three years, could disqualify his selection. These ‘non-residence’ entries come from Mackenzie’s 1880 diary:

April, Had a look at young Tom Dawson’s selection - I am sure no one had been there for some time.

June, I looked at Frazer’s selection - no residence done

July, I saw Frazer putting up a new humpy

Then, in October, Mackenzie first ‘sent’, then ‘took’ Tenterden’s storekeeper, Edgar Huntley, to his almost certainly Everett-motivated selection called Stockbridge, which the superintendent had recently stocked with geese.\(^{51}\)

The free-selectors’ compliance with the ‘improvement clause’, which entailed the expenditure of at least £1 per acre within the prescribed period, was just as closely monitored by the station’s executive team. Thus, in the course of their regular rounds of the shepherding stations Mackenzie and Stewart inspected the nearby free selections, often ‘just to see what was going on’.\(^{52}\) During these visits they inquired into the location and extent of any recent additions to the free-selector’s landholdings and estimated the value of his improvements to his original selection.\(^{53}\) The five inspections the pair undertook in a six-week period in mid 1881 are typical of many.

In May and early June, after inquiring into Fraser’s new prelease, Mackenzie inspected both Holt’s and Skinner’s selections. Shortly thereafter, Stewart went to Tenterden where, with Huntley’s assistance, he estimated that Isaac Spicer had made improvements worth £216 and that Jones’ were worth £98.19s.0d, while the value of Tom Dawson’s questionable selection at The Falls had increased by £90.\(^{54}\)

Dawson’s ‘Falls’ selection and the land from which McKay was evicted were the two holdings over which the station took official action.\(^{55}\) While the sibling-partners believed that Tom Dawson’s closeness would ‘ spoil our [shepherding]-
station at The Falls’, McKay had actually selected, and refused to leave, land to which the Everetts were legally entitled.\textsuperscript{56} However, as Stewart’s diaries indicate, these were far from the only trespassing selectors with whom the superintendent and his sheep-overseer had to deal. Some selectors, in particular, members of the Ferguson, Parsons, Fraser, Percy, and Willis families, whose sheep trespassed repeatedly onto the station’s grass, were threatened with official action.\textsuperscript{57}

* * * * *

While it is clear that both Mackenzie and Stewart paid close attention to the moral well-being of the men and women for whom they were responsible, Stewart’s diaries are far more detailed and expansive, revealing both his vigilance and his frequent dry and witty responses to the difficulties he faced almost every day.\textsuperscript{58} Reported transgressions range from unruly and out-of-character behaviour to drunken sprees and binges and from suspicious activities to seriously criminal behaviour. Reports of unruly behaviour include Tom Carpendale’s absence without leave in Armidale, Stewart’s sighting of ‘Evan Reeves and a man behaving in a disordinary manner’ (sic) and a shepherd’s wife’s complaints about the behaviour of the young adult sons of two long-serving fellow shepherds.\textsuperscript{59}

While such entries are comparatively rare, reports of drunken behaviour and subsequent poor workmanship appear frequently in both men’s diaries. As one of the few escape mechanisms open to men in a still isolated and substantially male community, both binges and one-off sprees were common. While both transgressions caused problems, binges created far more serious difficulties. For example, in the summer of 1874-75, the sheep-washing was delayed by ‘old Bricky’s’ drunkenness, then Stewart spent many hours searching for sheep at Whisky Gully, where the shepherd, Goodwin, was ‘in the horrors’. Several months later he reported tersely, ‘Brierly drunk all week’.\textsuperscript{60} Between 1878 and 1882, several recidivist shepherds caused further serious trouble.

\begin{footnotesize}
\textsuperscript{56} Diary of John Everett, August 1881 - March 1882, OSR, \textit{UNERA} (Access. No. pending)
\textsuperscript{57} DDS, TP, UNERA, A133:V5642-44.
\textsuperscript{58} DDS, 1871-1883, TP, \textit{UNERA}, A133: V5634-V5646.
\textsuperscript{59} DDS, TP, UNERA, A133:V5634; V5637
\textsuperscript{60} DDS, TP, \textit{UNERA}, A133:V5637; V5638
\end{footnotesize}
13 September, 1878: [I went] to Hugh Gray’s and found him and McFarlane drunk - McFarlane had sheep lost as well - I had to provide a shepherd for three days.

4 November, 1878: At the Washpool - James Cleary and John Tynan [were] drunk and unable to work [all that day] and the next day

14 March, 1881: [Following Mrs Ryder’s death two day’s previously] I went to George Ryder’s and found Hugh Gray and G. Ryder drunk - the chimney was on fire.

4 June, 1881: Mr Hugh Gray at Weideman’s drunk.61

Between June 1881 and December 1882, Gray, McFarlane, Ross and Mosman, who was replaced after losing his entire flock while ‘at home drunk’, were the subject of four similar entries.62 Though sprees caused problems, the disruptions that followed were relatively short-lived. Usually celebratory in character, they focussed upon Wandsworth’s ‘Half-way Inn’, where quarterly wage-payments or, to Stewart’s chagrin, advances against future earnings were consumed. Both Mackenzie and Stewart regularly retrieved men who had overstayed or who were incapable of finding their own way home from such celebrations and from the over-indulgence which followed the annual sports’ and horse-racing carnivals and political elections that were held in the little village.63 Repeat offenders like Hugh Gray and James Ramage then spent time in Ollera’s ‘lock-up’.64 But they were far from alone, as the following entries, which demonstrate both the overseer’s constant vigilance and his wry humour, make clear

8 March, 1872: At Wandsworth for the Election - W. Saunders gave Coombs a good hammering [there] - I had a word after dark of a lost man, finding him among his friends with the black bottle for company.

7 January, 1874: Mr James Jackson, [Stewart’s father-in-law], had his New Year’s fit - with Weideman’s grey he started for Armidale.

9 January, 1874: I went to James Jackson’s place - he was away from home through the effects of the New Year’s Spree.65

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61 DDS, TP, UNERA, A133:V5641;V5644
62 DDS, TP, UNERA, A133:V5641;V5642;V5644;V5645
63 DDS, TP, UNERA, A133:V5634; V5636
64 DSS, TP, UNERA, A133, V5635
65 DDS, TP, UNERA, A133: V5635; V3637 Emphasis added.
Stewart was just as attentive to any unusual or otherwise suspicious activity by workers or selectors. Whether he was checking on the possible over-consumption of ration sheep, questioning a shepherd seen skinning a sheep at dusk, ‘as I would imagine’, investigating the possible mistreatment of another’s sheep, or simply ‘looking all round the neighbourhood at Carpendale’s, Brushy Creek and Skinner’s outstations’, he was constantly on the lookout and on the move. Indeed, by mid-1875, after inspecting all the shepherding stations he deemed it ‘necessary to be everywhere or in other words visiting the most shepherds’. Nor was he wrong.

In the quarter-century between 1862 and 1887, twenty-three incidents of serious crime involving Ollera-Tenterden’s men and women are recorded in the station’s diaries. These offences include four reports of burglary; four of theft; seven of sheep and cattle stealing and/or brand destruction; one of ‘dummying’ (trafficking in free-selections); two threatened and one actual armed assault; three rapes and an intended sexual assault; and, tragically, a case of infanticide. In each of these incidents, with Stewart’s assistance, Mackenzie made initial inquiries, then searched for and, when possible, apprehended and detained the offender while awaiting the arrival of the police constable from either Armidale or Tingha.

*   *   *   *

The superintendent and his sheep overseer also cooperated in the management of the station’s infrastructure. Working singly or together, the two men oversaw work of several different kinds. Driven, between 1870 and the early 1890s, by the ever-increasing influx of free-selectors, the construction of paddocks and internal and boundary fences was perhaps the most carefully-considered and certainly the most revolutionary change to the station’s land management, work- and hiring-practices in the nineteenth century. It was also time-consuming and very costly. Between 1870 and 1886 at least £2,520.2s.1d was spent on paddocks, fences and yards with £1,871.14s.1d being outlaid between 1870 and 1875. Constructed under close supervision using either pole-and-wire or ‘dog-legged’ logs, each new paddock or line of fencing, was first sited, measured, and costed then remeasured on completion.

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66 DDS: TP, UNERA, A133: V5639; V5640; V5641; V5642; V5643

67 For details of these offences, see Chapter Five.

before payment was made. The fencing contract between Mackenzie and James Jackson in July 1870 is typical of many. Having ‘agreed with Jackson to put up five miles of fencing for sheep at £50 per mile - two rails and two poles for wire and he has to draw it in’, the superintendent then began the preparatory work for the new paddock on the Big Plain.\(^{69}\)

Several large-scale building projects were undertaken in the 1870s. They included the construction and maintenance of dams and a new, more complex washpool, whose drying yards were floored with timber gratings. A new, improved dipping trench was dug and Ollera’s woolshed was repaired and its roof rebarked. New stores and a variety of stables, barns and storage sheds were built at each headstation and at Sandy Creek. Throughout the 1870s, a program of road construction and improvement connected Ollera with Tenterden and with Wandsworth in the north, New Valley in the north-west and Sandy Creek in the south. Then, in the next decade, a road was built eastwards to meet the railway at Guyra, from which a branch-line passing through Ollera-Tenterden to Inverell was proposed, officially approved but ultimately never built. Schools were built for the children at Sandy and Brushy Creeks, bringing to four the total built at the Everetts’ expense before 1880.

Assisted by Stewart, Mackenzie also supervised the substantial building program which was undertaken on both headstations in the 1870s. A stone Dutch barn was built at Tenterden and, using bricks baked from clay mined on the property, St Bartholomew’s Church was constructed beside Ollera’s enlarged and rebuilt homestead. New stores were built at both headstations and brick chimneys were added to the new, larger, zinc-roofed huts which were provided for the twin-station’s workforce.

James Mackenzie also managed a number of Everett-owned properties, most of which were located on Ollera ‘run’. From the early 1860s, he supervised the annual rental of houses in Wandsworth and paddocks on the fringes of the developing townlet and later at Highfield, a GJE selection near the station’s southern border. The dwellings and workshops adjacent to each headstation were also rented to the station’s blacksmith and other skilled workers at £10 a year. Throughout the 1870s, as a result

\(^{69}\) DJM, OSR, UNERA, A103; V3052/47.
of the Everett brothers’ acquisition of their selections, several workmen, of whom John Edgar was an early representative, were converted from free-selectors to tenants. During the same decade Mackenzie was responsible for at least three separate flocks in which the Everett brothers had a half interest. Indeed, in 1862 the superintendent was a partner in the first of several ‘halves’-system agreements entered into by the Everetts. Then, for more than a decade after the early 1870s, as more and more free selectors took up land on the station, Mackenzie spent much time with the succession of surveyors who, by the late 1870s, had an almost permanent presence on the ‘run’. As a consequence he gained early access to a great deal of valuable information. This included each survey’s result and the route, through Ollera-Tenterden, of the proposed branch-line to Inverell and the location and dimensions of approved free-selections and of the Water Reserves at Stockbridge, Sandy Creek and the Five-Mile outstation. Right of access to this water was of great benefit to the officially approved holder. These entries, which are typical of many in Mackenzie’s diaries, show how closely the superintendent cooperated with the surveyors.

1878: 16 August, Out with the surveyors during the day then went to Tenterden at night.

17 August, Went to the Falls and Paddy Heffernan’s in the morning and out with the surveyors in the afternoon

1880: 12 July, Went with Mr Everett and [the surveyor] Mr Chatfield to the Five Mile to mark a [water] Reserve.

1881: 4 March, Drove Mr Chatfield to look at the Water Reserve near Huntley’s place [Stockbridge]

5 March, Came back with Chatfield [from] Tenterden by the Big Plain and went after lunch to Sandy Creek and back

1882: 31 October, Went with Mr Chard [the surveyor] to look at the Water Reserve near Huntley’s place [again].

Meanwhile, in January 1881, both Everett and his superintendent entertained and cooperated closely with George Ranken, who, with his fellow Royal Commissioner

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70 DDS, OSR, UNERA, A133:V5635
71 DDS, OSR, UNERA, A133:V5620
72 DJM, OSR, UNERA, A103:V3054/5
Augustus Morris, conducted the inquiry which led, in 1884, to the first major changes to Robertson’s 1861 Free Selection Acts.  

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Although the management of Ollera-Tenterden was Mackenzie’s principal responsibility, from the early 1870s he had distanced oversight of four other stations, three of which were in New England. All four properties were closely connected to the Everett and Mackenzie families. Whereas Edwin Everett had purchased Cliffdale in the Upper Hunter in 1869, Morendun on GJE’s northern boundary was held by John Everett’s brother-in-law, Andrew Wauchope, who returned to England in 1870. The other two ‘runs’, Copes Creek near Tingha and Clerkness near Bundarra, were held by close relatives of James Mackenzie.

For two decades after Edwin Everett purchased Cliffdale from Mackenzie’s aunt and uncle, both men shared in the oversight of the Upper Hunter property. While Everett’s visits were longer and more frequent as the railway approached Armidale, which it reached in 1883, the superintendent’s involvement was restricted to a few days’ ‘stop-over’ on his way to and from his biennial three-to-four week ‘busman’s holiday’ in Sydney. Mackenzie’s time at Cliffdale, which was managed by his brother Robert from 1869 to 1887, was spent organizing and approving the property’s accounts.

However, he was far more actively involved with both Moredun and, for a few years in the late 1870s, with Clerkness. Moredun’s proximity to Ollera and to the townlet of Wandsworth on the stations’ shared boundary meant that for two decades after Wauchope’s departure, GJE’s superintendent was closely involved in the neighbouring station’s affairs. For example, during the 1870s Mackenzie supervised the preparation of Moredun’s annual accounts and its livestock returns, salted its sheep, paid its resident overseer, Spurling, and was notified of the man’s intention to leave. In addition to the legal actions already described, in 1871 he arrested and

73 DJM, OSR, UNERA, A103:V3054/6; King, op. cit., pp. 80-84.
74 The weeks in Sydney were far from purely recreational. As well as frequent trips to the theatre, shopping, trips to Manly, the North Shore and the races at Randwick, they were filled visits to and treatment by doctors and with station business and the ordering of supplies.
75 DJM, OSR, UNERA, A103:V3053/23; V5054/12.
charged two Moredun runaways, one of whom was gaolled and fined £5 under the Masters and Servants Act.\textsuperscript{76} Mackenzie’s supervision of Clerkness began with the death of his father-in-law, E.G. Clerk, in 1876 and continued until 1879-80, when he found and settled-in a suitable superintendent (Kennard) for the station. During these years GJE’s superintendent paid frequent visits to Clerkness, paid its workmen, inspected its books, interviewed its bank-manager and settled its accounts and oversaw its operation.\textsuperscript{77}

But, as his ‘Private Account Book’ shows, Copes Creek, near Tingha, was the distanced station in which he had the greatest personal interest. A detailed list of expenditure dated 1 June 1864 in his Private Account Book suggests that, a little more than a decade before he took up his first selection on Ollera, Mackenzie spent a total of £3,037.13s.9d on Copes Creek; £2,500 of which was spent to purchase the station and £537.13s.9d on its establishment (see Appendix F). However, when two years later his much-loved sister Charlotte Mackenzie Swinton immigrated to New England with her husband Captain Edward Swinton and their family, Mackenzie settled them on Copes Creek which they purchased, by instalments, over several years. \textsuperscript{78} The Ollera and Copes Creek families remained very close with frequent visits being exchanged and with Edwin Everett. The connection remained strong after Charlotte Swinton’s death in 1881 and persisted beyond the Swintons’ loss of Copes Creek during the banking crisis of the 1890s, after which Charlotte’s son Sam was employed as a stockman on Ollera-Tenterden.\textsuperscript{79}

As has already been noted in reference to his on-station activities as a Justice of the Peace in New England, James Mackenzie exercised both judicial and legal authority. For more than twenty years after his appointment to the Armidale Bench in 1864, he attended most of the district’s courts, where he presided over cases ranging from drunkenness to affray, to burglary and livestock theft, assault, armed hold-up, rape and murder.\textsuperscript{80} In his legal capacity he recorded births, deaths and marriages, inquired into accidental or unexpected deaths, drew up and witnessed Wills and other

\textsuperscript{76} DJM, OSR, \textit{UNERA}, A103:V3053/23; V3054/2
\textsuperscript{77} DJM, OSR, \textit{UNERA}, A103:V3054/3; V3054/5
\textsuperscript{78} James Mackenzie (snr), Private Account Book 1864-87 (henceforth JMPAB) OSR, \textit{UNERA}, A103:V2257.
\textsuperscript{79} DJM, OSR, \textit{UNERA}, A103: V3054/6; V3054/12
\textsuperscript{80} DJM, OSR, \textit{UNERA}, A103:V3052/41-V3054/9
legal documents, summoned employees and evicted selectors and, from 1871, took census of the station every three years. Between 1866 and 1869, accompanied by Everett, several other interested squatters and a surveyor, he settled the boundaries of several of the district’s squattages, some of which were hotly disputed. Whereas Olla’s boundaries with Moredun and Ben Lomond and Tenterden’s with Laura were easily settled, those between Gara and Guyra in the east, Darby and Whalley at Bundarra, and New Valley and Tingha stations north-west of Tenterden, proved both difficult and protracted.81

Mackenzie was also actively involved in the civic and community life of his station and its surrounding district. Throughout his years at Olla he played a leading role in a wide variety of organizations which held meetings in Wandsworth. From the choice of candidate to the recording of results he was a driving force behind the frequent political elections which were held in the little town. Other gatherings he attended in Wandsworth or in Armidale ranged from cricket and football clubs and auxiliaries in support of the secular and Sunday schools at Olla and Wandsworth, to pressure groups lobbying for or against free-selection. Similar meetings were held in support of the construction of the northern railway and its proposed Guyra-Inverell branch-line and by such special-interest groups as the district’s Agricultural Society and by those anxious to control diseases spread by travelling sheep and to eradicate dingoes and other native animals.82

Mackenzie was just as concerned with the religious wellbeing of his employees and of the region. Like the Everett brothers, he made regular, generous donations towards the construction of Anglican and Presbyterian churches in Armidale and at Olla, Wandsworth and Bundarra and to support the district’s Anglican bishop and the relevant ministers of both denominations. He also continued the Everett brothers’ long-established ‘tithing system’ at which, at each quarterly ‘settlement’, amounts of 5s.0d to 10s.0d were deducted from the wages of participating workers to support various churches and the hospital.83 Elected to New England’s Anglican Synod as lay representative for Glen Innes in 1876, Mackenzie was a regular participant in a variety of Church-related gatherings in Armidale such as

81 DJM, OSR, UNERA, A103:V3052/43; V3052/46; V3053/24
82 DJM, OSR, UNERA, A103: VA103:V3054/9
83 Account Book, 1841-72, OSR, UNERA, A103:V2259.
the 1877 meeting at which a clergyman was appointed to the Armidale-Walcha circuit. He organized and attended dinners, bazaars, balls, ‘fancy sales’ and ‘Xmas trees’ to raise funds to build and maintain the Anglican and Presbyterian churches at Ollera, Wandsworth and Armidale. Then, in 1884, with the help of his wife and elder daughters, he organized the station’s first Harvest Festival, a combined religious and secular celebration which became a highlight of the year at Ollera-Tenterden.

Figure 7: Location of Managers' Holdings

The private business ventures in which James Mackenzie and Donald Stewart were involved either unilaterally or in partnership during their quarter century on Ollera remain to be examined. Mackenzie’s initial enterprise began within a few years of his appointment, when the superintendent entered into a ‘halves’ agreement with his employers. This agreement, which allowed him to graze privately-owned sheep on the
station, proved mutually profitable. On the one hand, in January 1862 the superintendent earned £175.10s.0d from the sale of 460 lambs to the station. On the other, between March 1861 and 1863, in four separate transactions totalling £905, Mackenzie bought 1,810 sheep from the Everett brothers and in late 1865 he paid £48.17s.0d to have his flock shorn in Ollera’s shed.84

Meanwhile, in 1864-65, Ollera’s superintendent spent £3,037.13s.9d on the purchase and establishment of the squattage at Copes Creek. He then settled his relatives, the Swintons, on the station, for which they paid him annual instalments of £400-£50085 (see Appendix E). An entry in Mackenzie’s diary for October 1867, which records the sale of ‘some of my personal land at Bundarra’ and three speculative investments he made in tin mines at Copes Creek in the early 1870s, suggest an early interest in the locality.86 Two of these speculations were made in 1873. In March of that year, with his nephew Sam Swinton, Mackenzie ‘took half shares in sixty acres of tin land on Copes Creek’ where, four months later he purchased 100 of Arthur Darby’s shares in the nearby Boundary Tin Mine. A third, similar but undated partnership with Frank Huxham appears in his private account book (see Appendix E).

However, during these same years he was also involved in the development of Armidale where, between mid-1870 and 1874, he paid £396 for ‘Bradshaw’s house’ and spent another £14 on an allotment described only as ‘Block 12’.87 He made no further investments in the town until 1880, when he bought two lots from the local tanner/boots-maker B.A. Moses. A year later, he built a house worth £350 on one of these lots. Finally, in March 1883, as the railway reached Armidale, he inspected land at Roseneath.88

But these investments were secondary to the concerted program of purchase and free selection which Mackenzie undertook with his employers’ approval between 1875 and 1886. The sequence began when he paid the Fenton brothers £565 for the 420 acres in two adjoining selections they had taken up on Lambamata Plain in 1872.

84 Ibid.
85 JMPAB, OSR, UNERA, A103:V2257.
86 DJM, OSR, UNERA, A103:V3052/47;V3053/23; V2257
87 DJM, OSR, UNERA, A103:V3052/47;V3054/1
88DJM, OSR, UNERA, A103:V3054/5; V3054/6; JMPAB, OSR, UNERA, A103:V2257
When it ended ten years later he had accumulated a total of thirteen selections comprising at least 1,956 acres on the Everetts’ foundation ‘run’. Ten of these selections (1,611 acres) were acquired in his own right. Situated just north of the headstation in Ollera Parish, they formed a contiguous holding which Mackenzie named Stratton. The remaining three selections were taken up in the names of two of his adolescent children. Of these, the 345 acres in two adjoining blocks in Skinner Parish he selected in 1882-3 on behalf of his eighteen-year-old daughter Ollie (Alice Ollera Mackenzie Everett) were accepted after survey. However, the 300 acre selection ‘further up [Georges] Creek’ in Everett Parish that he took up for his sixteen-year-old son Charles was rejected in 1885.

As his diaries and private account book attest, as each successive selection was made Mackenzie took care to comply with the residence and improvement clauses under which it was granted and to keep a detailed record of his compliance. Thus, from 1875 until the onset of his final illness in mid-1887, the diaries are filled with the superintendent’s visits to Stratton and his children’s selections during his regular rounds of the shepherding stations and the nearby selections. The following entries, covering the busy weeks from late-October 1882 to late-January 1883, are typical:

**1882:**
- October, 26: To Armidale to take up Ollie and Charley’s selections
- 30: Went to look at Ollie and Charley’s selections

**1883:**
- January, 3: Went up the creek with Sammy [Swinton] and Charlie to see about a place for his station [i.e. house]
- 24: Ollie slept on her station - this is her second time
- 25: Charley went to his station

Although houses and other basic improvements were provided on both Ollie’s and Charley’s selections, the dwelling being pulled down and its fabric carried away

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89 Although no further land was registered in James Mackenzie’s name after 1886, for more than two decades after his death in late 1887 land continued to be selected in the names of his widow, Anna-Maria her sons James, Arthur and Charles Mackenzie and her son-in-law, R.G.A. Robertson.

90 DJM, OSR, UNERA, A103:V3054/2/-3; V3054/3n/-4;V3054/7/-8; V3054/11; Parish Maps, Armidale Office Set, CD 8, Hardinge Parish of Everett to County of Inglis, Parish of Looanga, County of New South Wales Crown Land Administrative Maps, *NSW Department of Land and Water Conservation*, Mt Panorama, 2000

91 DJM, OSR, UNERA, A103:V3054/7; V3054/8.
when the latter’s selection was rejected in 1885, the bulk of improvements were
carried out on Stratton. Formed from ten contiguous selections, eight of which were
Additional Conditional Purchases (ACPs), only its two original Conditional Purchases
(CPs) required improvements. Mackenzie’s private account book contains the
following undated ‘declaration’ of those he had made.

These are the improvements since the original declarations have been made by
the Fentons and H. Guy

**On the 200 acres taken up by J Fenton 9 August 1872**

New cultivation Paddock fenced and ploughed - all new fencing
Water hole made, stoned and slated all round on three sides
Garden enlarged and new fruit trees planted
Brick chimney
Cultivation paddock enlarged
All the land fenced in

**On the 200 acres taken up by W. Fenton 9 August 1872**

New house which Mrs Beard [the blacksmith’s widow] has
New Stables shingled and fenced in and yard
Large waterhole dug out and stoned and slated on three sides
House and Garden improved
Small paddock for Entire Horse
Sheep yards - two
Barn fenced in
Horse yards, Milking yards
Fowl house

As they had at Copes Creek in 1864-65, between 1875 and 1887 a succession of
Ollera-Tenterden’s ‘general hands’ were employed on Stratton. While some worked
for the superintendent on the improvements contained in his declaration others were
employed by the Everett brothers, who paid Mackenzie £50 per annum for the use of
his property. For example, during the financial year 1879-1880, the Everett brothers
spent £115.14s.0d on Stratton on which their station ran sheep and grew wheat, oats
and hay. In addition to the rent, £57.14s.0d was spent on wages and £8 on seed.

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92 JMPAB, OSR, UNERA, A103:V2257.
93 Yearly Balance Book, 1865-92, OSR, UNERA, A103:V2258
Though James Mackenzie had considerable success in ‘private’ business, Donald Stewart was even more entrepreneurial. Like Mackenzie he began with the active support and encouragement of his employer, Edwin Everett. According to a list of his investments he hand-wrote in October 1910, Stewart bought forty acres of Everett’s privately-owned land on Sandy Creek in 1865.\(^94\) Significantly, during the same year he was being paid another £100-£120 to manage the station’s nearby farm at Tangle on Sandy Creek.\(^95\) In the eleven years until 1876 he earned £817.9s.2d from the sale of a variety of produce to the station.\(^96\) Nor was this the capable Scotsman’s only source of supplementary income. In 1872, having paid £70 for a larger 10-bullock team, Stewart was paid £40 for the ‘dray, four-bullocks, 4 yokes, 3 chains and breeches’ that for several years had carried the station’s goods to and from Armidale and Grafton.\(^97\)

Although the station’s sheep remained his principal responsibility, Stewart continued to manage the agricultural outstation on Sandy Creek until mid-1876, when, for £200, he purchased ‘the Big House and Paddock at Tangle’, and began farming for himself.\(^98\) In the preceding half-decade his employer had provided further tangible support. For example, in 1872, in two separate transactions, Edwin Everett sold Stewart another 190 acres of adjoining land at Tangle, for which the overseer was charged £200 for 150 acres in April and about £50 for the remaining forty acres in October.\(^99\) Between 1876 and early 1883 Stewart added another six selections (996 acres) to his holding at Tangle, which proved consistently profitable. In 1881, for example, the farm returned £79.0s.7d, £62.14s.0d of which came from the sale of potatoes, mainly in and around Tingha.\(^100\)

\(^94\) Tangle Papers, \textit{UNERA}, A113: V 5628
\(^95\) Station Ledger, OSR, \textit{UNERA}, A103:V2263
\(^96\) Station Ledgers, OSR, \textit{UNERA}, A103-226-62. This produce included wheat, oats, barley, flour, bran, pollard potatoes and bacon.
\(^97\) DDS, \textit{UNERA}, A133:V5634/5 for references to the purchase of the larger team and the sale in 1872, of the smaller outfit.
\(^98\) DDS, TP, \textit{UNERA}, A133:V5639
\(^99\) DDS, TP, \textit{UNERA}, A133:V5635; V5364. As no record survives of the cost of these 40 acres, their cost has been estimated at £1.6s.8d per acre, the rate at which Stewart bought his 150 acres.
\(^100\) DDS, TP, \textit{UNERA}, A133:V5646. The remaining £16.6s.7d came from the sale of bullocks, pigs, bacon, oats, cheese and fruit trees.
Between 1865 and March 1883, when he resigned as Ollera sheep-overseer, Donald Stewart acquired a total of 5,840 acres of land on Ollera Station. All but forty acres of this land was obtained between 1872 and early 1883. While 290 acres were purchased from Everett and from a neighbouring failed selector Archibald MacFarlane, Stewart took up the remaining 5,550 acres under the Free Selection Acts, using CPs, ACPs, Conditional Leases and Pre-emptive and Grazing Rights. He made a total of twenty-two selections, sixteen (4,050 acres) in his own right and six (1,500 acres) for three of his children; John (360 acres), Anne (940 acres) and Isabella (200 acres).101 Running east and west along Sandy Creek from Tanglely and north to the southern boundaries of Ollie Mackenzie’s and Charles Willis’s adjoining selections on Georges Creek, Stewart’s selections formed a solid block which straddled the border between Skinner and Everett Parishes.102 Stewart grew potatoes, fruit, vegetables and cereals, principally wheat and oats, and raised cattle and sheep on this land, on which he built-up four successive holdings that he named Tanglely, Gum Flat, Attadale and Aurangura/The Roggery’, which he had renamed Tanglely by 1900.

To achieve these noteworthy results, Stewart hired a succession of the station’s shepherds and labourers, entered three different joint-ventures and relied on the unpaid labour of his wife and children, who ‘did residence’ on his selections, shepherded various flocks, raised pigs for sale and cultivated his crops. The first of the two partnerships concerning sheep was with James Mackenzie. Between April 1873, when the two men hired James Gray to shepherd a small, jointly-owned flock of 627 sheep, and 1878, when Stewart paid £81.7s.6d (3s.9d per head) for Mackenzie’s share of the sheep, the flock had increased to 3,550 animals, whose wool had earned £135.10s.11d at the previous year’s sales.103 Then, in April 1874, Stewart entered into a halves agreement with James Skinner, who agreed to shepherd 200 sheep ‘for three years for half the increase and half the wool’.104 Stewart entered his third joint venture in April 1879 when he ‘agreed with Robert James Dickens [a selector at Sandy Creek] to cultivate Attadale’.105

101 DDS, TP, UNERA, A133:V5644
102 Parish Maps, op. cit., Maps of Skinner and Everett Parishes
103 DDS,TP, UNERA, A133:V566536; V5641
104 DDS, TP, UNERA, A133:5636
105 DDS,TP,UNERA, A133:V5642
Like Mackenzie, during the 1870s Stewart invested in land in Armidale and in forty acres of ‘tin land’ at Copes Creek. By April 1882 Stewart owned four allotments in Armidale, asking £150 for his two blocks in Faulkner Street.\(^{106}\) Bought in 1872 and managed by John Moore, in 1874 they were rented by Mr George Buckley.\(^{107}\) At least one of the remaining blocks, No.11 Brown Street, which was close to Mackenzie’s ‘Lot 12’, had been purchased in the previous year.\(^{108}\) The forty acres of ‘tin land’ which Stewart selected on Copes Creek in 1873 was his only purely speculative investment. Mined by Tom Jackson for an Ollera-based informal ‘Company’ consisting of Stewart, Jackson, David Judge and Hugh Kelly, the group had also prospected in New Valley and in Tenterden’s Barn Gully in 1872 and 1873. Although no record survives of Edwin Everett’s participation in the venture, there are two pointers to his active or tacit membership of the short-lived ‘Company’. First, in an entry dated 4 February 1873, Stewart mentions meeting his employer at this land on Copes Creek. Second, without Edwin Everett’s involvement or permission, the ‘Company’ could not have prospect in Tenterden.\(^{109}\)

Several important impressions arise from this study of the contribution made by Ollera-Tenterden’s superintendent, James Mackenzie and his immediate subordinate, Donald Stewart. These include the sheer number, complexity and all-encompassing nature of the responsibilities the two men shared and the dedication and willingness with which they worked together and with their employers. Two close resemblances are striking; the similarity of their respective positions to their British counterparts, the land agent and the steward and the closeness with which they match Collier’s description of the ideal station superintendent. The success of their long working-partnership is highlighted by the additional problems the station faced after the long-term partnership between their ‘middle-managers’ ended when Donald Stewart ceased full-time work for the station in March 1883. His decision came early in a decade of low wool prices and very adverse seasons and at a time when James Mackenzie, who died four years later, had clearly worn himself out in his employers’ service. Tribute must also be paid to the Everett brothers’ shrewd business sense. This is apparent in the trio’s initial recognition of each man’s suitability for the task and,

\(^{106}\) DDS, TP, \textit{UNERA}, A133:V5645.  
\(^{107}\) DDS, TP, \textit{UNERA}, A133:V5635.  
\(^{108}\) DDS, TP, \textit{UNERA}, A133:V5634.  
\(^{109}\) DDS, TP, \textit{UNERA}, A133:V5635-36.
particularly, in the generous and continuing support with which they encouraged them to remain and to settle on the station. Thus, at both senior and middle levels, the management of Ollera-Tenterden during the decades under discussion exemplifies the definition of the system on whose precepts the station was founded. As a result, both parties reaped the benefits of ‘enlightened self interest’, the hallmark of the nineteenth-century’s ‘Paternalist Revival’.\textsuperscript{110} Like Collier’s ideal superintendent, GJE’s managers possessed ‘keen intelligence, great knowledge of stock, commercial shrewdness and a military tactician’s power of combination’. In doing so, both men had proven the truth of Stewart’s comment: ‘Jordan is a hard road to travel’.\textsuperscript{111} These qualities and that realization stood them in good stead as, with their squatter employers, they faced the station’s greatest challenge - free selection before survey.

\textsuperscript{111} DDS, T P, \textit{UNERA}, A133: V3054/3a, 22 August 1877