
DEVELOPMENT AND MATURITY: THE CHALLENGES OF THE 1880s

The great bulk of the free selectors in the New England district are ... bona fide selectors – very sound, hard working, prosperous men, who own from 1,000 to 3,000 sheep, and in some cases from 640 to perhaps over 2,000 acres, the latter area being occupied in those instances where several members of a family have taken up adjoining land. Dummyism has been carried on, comparatively, only to a slight extent ... and there are fewer selections forfeited in the Armidale district than in almost any other district in the colony.

Charles Lyne, *The Industries of New South Wales*, 1882.¹

In the northern autumn of 1881 John Everett once again took ship for Australia. The purpose of his fifty-one-day steamship voyage was to accompany his second son, Arthur William, to New England where the young man was to begin his new life at Ollera-Tenterden. As the eventual successor to his father's 'interest' in the twin stations, the young man was to follow the example set by his Uncle Edwin in the 1840s. In doing so Arthur Everett would spend a decade learning bush-skills and station management from the able James Mackenzie.

At sixty-six, after an absence of twenty-three years, his father John Everett was returning to the 'run' on which he had spent his young adulthood and early middle-age, in whose management he had maintained active involvement and on which so much of his children's prosperity depended. Of the many changes which the colony had undergone in the decades since his departure none was more surprising to the future holder of high office in Wiltshire than the event which occurred immediately after he disembarked on 10th October 1881.

[Having] landed in Sydney at Circular Quay [I] found that Edwin had gone on board; [I] waited at the Quay, and after some time a man with a beard came and stood by me; looking hard at me he said, 'You must be John Everett'; on hearing the voice I recognized Edwin, but the beard and the moustache, the grey hair, and the fact [that he was] twenty years older since we [last] met, disguised his features so much that I did not know him until he spoke.²

If, as he travelled northwards past familiar landmarks, John reminisced about the length and hardships of his first trek to New England, the elderly man must have marvelled at the speed, if not always the ease, with which his present journey could be accomplished. By 1881 the northern railway had reached Tamworth, where the travellers arrived eight and a half days after leaving Sydney, a time-span which included a three-and-a-half-day stopover at Cliffdale

¹ C. Lyne, *The Industries of New South Wales*, Sydney, 1882. p.152.

² A.V. Cane, 'Ollera 1838 to 1900: A Study of a Sheep Station', Unpublished M.A. Thesis, University of Sydney, 1949, p. 100. Like many of the letters written during this period, though available to Cane in 1948-9, the 'travel' diary in which John Everett recorded this comment is no longer among the documents held by the Regional Archives, nor is it among the Everett papers held at Ollera.

in the upper Hunter Valley. In contrast to the eleven and a half days it had taken to travel by horseback from Ollera to Maitland in 1840, after only five and a half days of travel ‘at railway speed’ they had journeyed to within seventy miles of their destination.³ However as John’s diary attests, these last few miles, which took three days to cover, proved to be the least pleasant and most difficult.⁴

Oct, 18th: Took Cobb and Co. coach at Tamworth; a rough conveyance but a good driver; we got to Bendemeer with only a moderate shaking; at Bendemeer we changed coaches and what with the rough couch and still rougher roads I got so shaken and knocked about that I stopped with Arthur at Carlisle’s Gully and Edwin, who seemed to bear the shakings went on to Armidale. I was twice thrown so violently as to strike my head against the roof of the coach and cut through my hat.

Oct, 19th: Edwin sent a buggy to meet me and Arthur at Carlisle’s Gully where we stopped and slept. Rain all day and very cold wind. The buggy reached Carlisle’s Gully at 1.30 [p.m.]. We started at 2.30 and reached Uralla at 6.30. and found Edwin there with his buggy and two horses.

Oct, 20th: Started for Armidale – Lunched at Scholes’ Inn, saw J. Moore, Allingham and the Bishop [Turner] and got to Boorolong at 6 p.m. Very cold

Oct, 21st: Arrived at Ollera at 12 O’clock and was heartily received by Mackenzie. Lunched there and on to Tenterden.

Once back in the much-missed and long-remembered valley where he had spent his young adulthood John Everett lost no time in ‘doing the rounds’ of the stations, where a doctor was busy vaccinating the children, almost certainly against smallpox. He spent most of his time with Edwin at Tenterden where to his delight ‘Old Thorpe’, the veteran of Waterloo, was there to greet him. ‘At ninety-four, shrivelled and wrinkled with age, [his old houseman] still had good eyesight and hearing’.⁵ Understandably, though, Ollera seems to have been the focus of his attention. During an inspection of improvements and additions to Ollera’s homestead and square, he found fence posts near the homestead which were still sound forty years after they had been erected and noted that the gig which had been purchased almost thirty years before was still in good order. He delighted in the progress of the beautiful garden in which he had once taken so much pride, observing that the acacia tree which he had planted close to their lonely little head-station hut in 1840 was ‘now six feet round’.

³ In several of the letters written to his siblings in the late 1840s, John Everett had envied their access to travel on the railway lines which were then criss-crossing the English countryside. Like ‘railway time’ which was then unifying the English nation and moulding the British psyche, ‘railway speed’ was the mid-Victorian catch-cry. Like ‘atomic’ and later ‘jet’ which signified progress in the mid-to-late twentieth century, ‘railway speed’ was the hallmark of technological success.

⁴ Cane, *op. cit.*, p. 100. Extracts from the now lost Diary of John Everett, October 1881.

⁵ Cane, *op. cit.*, p. 111. The quotations and other references come from the 1881 diary.

He recorded the pleasure with which he inspected the Washpool which had been enlarged and resited in 1864 and the results of the large-scale program of construction and rebuilding which had been underway on both stations since the mid-1870s. Such 'improvements' included the brick chimneys which now graced the homestead and workmen's housing, Ollera's rebuilt homestead, store and square, Tenterden's galvanized-iron roofed Dutch barn, the shearing shed and yards and the recently-purchased one-horse-power chaff cutter which served both stations. While bough yards were still being built on outlying parts of the run, dog-proof paling yards, 'killing yards for cattle', horse yards, salting yards with troughs and an 'improved sheep-drafting yard' and other special-purpose enclosures now adjoined each head-station.⁶

The still-manageable but ever-increasing encroachment of the free-selectors in the late 1870s presaged the end of extensive shepherding and increased the squatters' interest in paddock formation and more intensive flock-management. A line of fencing had therefore been built between Ollera's trial 'sheep paddock [and] the Selection on the Big Plain'.⁷ Having ridden the boundaries of 'Nell's Paddock' on Ollera, an impressed John Everett also inspected two experimental sheep paddocks that had been enclosed at Tenterden. While one stood on 'GJE's' land, the other enclosed part of the 'private land' at Brushy Creek which Edwin had bought from the would-be selectors James Jackson and Edward Mitchell' in 1876.⁸ John Everett also visited Salisbury Court, which being 'all paddocked' needed to employ a mere three boundary riders to control its 12,000 sheep. However, on a similar visit to Bukkulla where 8,000 sheep were now monitored by two boundary riders, he was deterred by the initial expense of the miles of dog-proof wire fencing which Hugh Wyndham had installed. Despite the significant long-term reductions in labour costs and the increased fleece weights and carrying capacity (one-and-a-half sheep per acre compared to about two sheep to three acres) which resulted from paddocking and boundary fencing, Everett considered that, at £100 a mile, the cost was as yet too high.

The old man also noted the all-but irreversible changes which forty years of occupation by Europeans and their hard-hoofed, close-cropping, introduced herds had imposed upon the valley. Creeks, which from the foundation years had been laboriously straightened and cleared of fallen logs and branches, now dried-up more quickly. Fish were now scarce in the muddy

⁶ Ollera Station Records, Yearly Balance Book, 1865-92, *UNERA*, A103:V2258

⁷ Ollera Station Records, Yearly Balance Book, 1865-92, *UNERA*, A103:V2258.

⁸ Ollera Station Records, Yearly Balance Book, 1865-92, *UNERA*, A103:V2258.

pools whose banks were broken down and denuded of succulent native vegetation.⁹ Many of the most productive native grasses had either been eaten-out or were slow to revive in compacted soils and in the absence of centuries of regular ‘mosaic burning’. New gullies had formed as rain and the water once trapped in ‘hanging’ swamps in the higher, rougher land now gushed down the pads formed by the cattle which had been deliberately introduced to clear this type of country.¹⁰ Sweet-briar, blackberries and other garden escapees were spreading through the more fertile flat lands and, in the ever-increasing absence of the Banbai hunters who had once controlled their numbers, kangaroos, koalas and possums now multiplied freely. The face of the valley was also being changed and ‘tidied-up’ by both squatters and selectors. Aware of the need to retain and make more intensive use of the available land they claimed, they had already set about the back-breaking task of ring-barking, clearing and stumping which gathered momentum throughout and beyond this decade.

However, while he observed all these changes with interest, John Everett’s concern focused upon the threat posed by the free-selectors, whose inroads were becoming harder either to control or to prevent. As a result of a combination of deliberately-taken management decisions and the independent actions of individual selectors, almost all selections on Ollera-Tenterden were taken up by long-term employees on the station. Though threatening, for almost a decade after 1866 the steady trickle of selections seemed controllable as until mid-1874 only 942 acres of the run had been taken up by six or seven men.¹¹ (See pp.270-272 below.) However, as Mackenzie’s annual tally shows, between July 1874 and December 1879 the pace quickened as fifty-two selections totalling 10,180 acres of the run were claimed by thirty-one selectors. Only one, the ‘Unknown’ man who chose forty acres in Happy Valley, was neither directly employed on the station or a member of an employee’s family. Both the acreage alienated and the rate of selection grew steadily, rising from 3,158 acres in seventeen selections in 1874-5, to 3,390 acres in fifteen selections in 1876-77. Then, in 1878-79 at the peak of the station’s productivity, twenty-one selectors caused 3,640 acres of the run to be cut

⁹ Judith Wright, *Cry for the Dead*, Melbourne, 1982, pp.4-6; Everett Records Guyra, Letter, Mr. Charles, E. Blomfield (late of Boorolong) to Mr. Thomas A. Everett, 13th May, 1946. ‘When I was a boy [in the 1880s] there were few or no fish except gudgeons on the New England Tablelands, but there were cod below the Falls. But Uncle George Marsh who was born in 1848 said fish there were very plentiful in the early 1860s. A pack horse would be loaded to the girth with big fish – the cod from the rocky waterholes were very nice.’

¹⁰ W. Gardiner, *Production and Resources of the Northern Districts of New South Wales*, 1851. n.p. The station tutor estimated that within an estimated five years, three cattle pads would drain the land. Cane, *op. cit.*, p.23. Cane was told by Mr Tom Everett, that from the 1840s the Everett brothers had released cattle into the foothills to drain and clear this land. The present author’s discussions with a relative, Mr. David Lawson of Delungra on the north-western fringes of the Tablelands, confirmed that the practice was remembered by ‘old-timers’ in that area.

¹¹ Ollera Station Records, Yearly Balance Book, 1865-92. *UNERA*, A103:V2258. The seventh man would have been the selector mentioned in Mackenzie’s 1865 diary.

up into twenty-three selections. Although the pace slackened in 1880, when only twelve selections comprising 1,540 acres were taken up, both the rate and the amount of land chosen reached their peak during 1881. Despite the adverse climatic conditions which persisted throughout that year, twenty-three selections, or 4,540 acres of Everett-held land were chosen by eighteen men. In the thirty months from July 1878 to December 1881, fifty-six separate selections covering 9,720 acres of Ollera-Tenterden had therefore been taken-up by forty-seven selectors.

Selections taken up on Ollera-Tenterden between December, 1869 and December, 1881¹²

<u>12/64-1/74</u>		<u>1/74-6/75</u>		<u>7/75-6/77</u>		<u>7/77-6/78</u>		<u>7/78-6/79</u>		<u>7/79-6/80</u>		<u>7/80-6/81</u>		<u>7/81-12/81</u>	
<u>Blocks</u>	<u>Acres</u>	<u>Blocks</u>	<u>Acres</u>	<u>Blocks</u>	<u>Acres</u>	<u>Blocks</u>	<u>Acres</u>	<u>Blocks</u>	<u>Acres</u>	<u>Blocks</u>	<u>Acres</u>	<u>Blocks</u>	<u>Acres</u>	<u>Blocks</u>	<u>Acres</u>
7	910	14	2,620	7	978	10	3,150	24	4,485	20	2,307	18	2,746	10	610

Total Selections: 110

Total Acreage: 17,876.

From July 1875, when the parish in which the selection was located is first recorded, it is possible to determine the general location, dispersion and concentration of selections on the sister-stations. As the map above shows, Ollera-Tenterden encompassed nine parishes, which are still shown on contemporary maps of the district. (See the Maps opp. pp. 266-306). Located north or south of George's Creek, the parishes lie between Limestone Creek in the north, Sandy Creek and the Wild Horse Range in the south and between the watershed of the Great Dividing Range in the east to the western rim of the plateau. Three of the parishes are located north of George's Creek. Ollera Parish lies centrally, with Tenterden to its west and Mackenzie to its east. The six parishes to the south of George's Creek form three pairs each of which lies (roughly) opposite one of the northern trio. Viewed from West to East, part of Buchanan parish and all of St. George face Tenterden, Skinner is opposite to Ollera, and Everett faces Mackenzie. Williams and Elderbury adjoin the southern boundaries of Skinner and Everett parishes respectively. Except in isolated cases where the memories of an elderly family member survive, a series of alterations to lot numbers and to parish boundaries which were made in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries have made it impossible to determine the exact location of particular selections.¹³ However it remains possible to detect the overall pattern of selection on the station in the first twelve years after free selection before survey began in New England. Whereas by late 1881 only one or two selectors had taken up land in Williams, St. George and Buchanan, all of which lay on the rougher and more-distant southern and western fringes of the run, Skinner and Ollera parishes contained more than half of the

¹² Ollera Station Records, Yearly Balance Book, 1865-92, *UNERA*, A103;V2258.

¹³ Information kindly provided by Dr Phillip Ward at *UNERA*, Armidale.

seventy selectors for whom either a parish or an identifiable geographic location has been recorded. The number of selections that had been taken up in each of the four remaining parishes ranged from six to eight.¹⁴

Parish:	Skinner	Ollera	Mackenzie	St.George	Tenterden	Everett	Elderbury	Williams	Buchanan	Total
Selections:	22	15	7	2	8	6	7	2	1	70
Acreage:	4,340	1,860	1,520	1,120	1,110	770	720	540	500	12,480

Significantly, only forty-one different surnames appear on the list of 114 selections taken-up by fifty-one individuals during the twelve-year period. More than a few of these people were also probably juvenile relatives of male selectors. Until 1884 age did not restrict the right to free-select. Before 1875 up to 320 acres of land could be claimed; thereafter the limit was increased to 640 acres.¹⁵ While eighteen men took up only one selection in the twelve-year period, sixteen others were granted two or more selections in their own right. Like the seven families who also made multiple selections in these years, these men had probably exercised the rights of improvement and/or pre-lease which attached to their original holding to make one or more additional selections. By December 1881 seven of these individual selectors had each acquired between 500 and 1,400 acres of land on the station. Willis, whose two selections amounted to 1,400 acres, was the largest sole accumulator of land while H. Mackay obtained 1,280 acres in four selections. Of the other five individuals who also acquired larger areas of land during these years James Jackson took up 650 acres in six selections while by 1881 James Skinner held five which totalled 550 acres. According to the Yearly Balance Book, between 1878 and 1881 the Everett brothers' superintendent James Mackenzie made at least two selections, adding at least 160 acres in Ollera Parish to the 300 acres he had acquired in 1875 when he took over Fenton's selection, Stratton.

Sixteen males and one female who belonged to seven different families took up forty-one selections totalling 6,760 acres on Ollera and Tenterden between January 1874 and December 1881. These families were the Dawsons, who made fifteen selections, the Stewarts who made ten, the Mitchells who made six, and the Richards and the Jones who made three, while the Ramage and Thomas families each took up two selections. Thomas Dawson was by far the largest family-based selector in this decade. With three of his six sons Dawson selected a total of 2,910 acres on both stations between mid-1874 and December 1881.¹⁶ The next

¹⁴ Ollera Station Records, Yearly Balance Book, 1865-92, '[Annual] Lists of Selections on Ollera and Tenterden Stations', July, 1871-December, 1881, *UNERA*, A103:V2258; Conditional Purchase Register, *UNERA*, 33/5138.

¹⁵ Until this clause in the Robertson Acts were amended in 1884 there was so limit to the age of the free-selectors

¹⁶ Thomas Dawson and his wife Mary Anne Garner Dawson had eleven children, six of whom were male. The selections were taken out by, or in the names of, their eldest sons, Benjamin Garner Dawson, b.1845, George

family was that of was Ollera's sheep overseer Donald Stewart, who with his daughter Anne took up ten selections amounting to 1,650 acres within the parishes of Ollera and Skinner. Close behind them came three members of the Mitchell family who were granted 1,480 acres in six selections. The remaining 720 acres were held by the four remaining families, whose eight male members each made either two or three selections.

Identity and Category of Selectors on Ollera-Tenterden between December 1869 and December 1881

Single Selectors			Repeat Selectors: Individual			Repeat Selectors: Family		
Name	Selections	Acreage	Name	Selections	Acreage	Name	Selections	Acreage
Clemesha	1	120	Edgar	2	640	Mitchell	6	1,480
Cotterell	1	200	Skinner	5	550	Stewart	10	1,650
Lane	1	40	Jackson	6	650	Dawson	15	2,910
Crough	1	1 98	Damarell	3	260	Ramage	2	100
'Unknown'	1	40	Mackenzie	2	460	Richards	3	280
Archer	1	40	Willis	2	1,400	Thomas	2	140
McGuire	1	200	Mackay	4	1,280	Jones	3	200
Dickens	1	320	Ryder	3	340	Total Families: 7		6,760
McCrossin	1	320	Wade	5	500			
Kelly	1	100	Ferguson	7	652			
Macfarlane	1	100	Macdonald	3	280			
Low	1	60	Huntley	2	340			
Farrell	1	200	Carpendale	3	276			
Bailey	1	200	Fraser	3	400			
Prior	1	80	Spicer	3	210			
Weidemann	1	40	Holt	2	100			
Johnson	1	200	Totals:	55	8,338			
Cameron	1	320						
Totals:	18	2,778						

Total Surnames = 41
Total Selectors = 51
Total Selections = 114
Total Acreage = 17,876

Using information from the official Conditional Purchase Registers and the almost complete annual tally kept by James Mackenzie in the Yearly Balance Book, it is therefore possible to calculate both the amount of land selected on Ollera-Tenterden in the twelve years to December, 1881 and the rate at which it was acquired.

Selector Type	Years in which Selection were Taken up.								Totals ¹⁷		
	12/69-1/74	1/74-6/75	7/75-6/77	7/77-6/78	7/78-6/79	7/79/6/80	7/80-6/81	7/81-12/81	Selectors	Selections	Acreage
Single Selectors:	2	1	3	2	6	1	2	1	18	18	2,778
Repeat Selectors											
Individual First:	5	5	1	2	3	1	1	...	18	*	8,338
Individual Repeat ...	...	2	2	4	6	7	4	4			
Repeat Selectors											
Family First	....	2	...	....	1	1	1	...	5	*	6,760
Family Repeat: . ....	....	2	1	2	3	3	4	2			
Selections per Yr:	7	12	7	10	19	13	12	7	41	17,876	

Dawson, b. 1847, both of whom were born in England and Joseph Benjamin Dawson, who was born in the Hunter Valley in 1849.

¹⁷ Ollera Station Records, Yearly Balance Book, 1865-92, *UNERA*, A103:V2258.

Although, after three years' residence and the requisite improvements, additional acreage could be obtained by means of conditional and/or improvement leases, each free selector was officially permitted to acquire from forty acres to a maximum of 640 acres (i.e. from one-sixteenth of a square mile to a square mile of land) or fractional increments thereof. Only four of the eighteen men who made a single selection during these years took up the minimum of forty acres, while two others chose sixty and eighty acres respectively. Seven more chose from 81 to 160 acres and the remaining eight selected from 161-320 acres. Of the individual selectors who made more than one acquisition during this time, both Willis and Hugh Mackay accumulated at least two square miles (1,280 acres) of land on Ollera-Tenterden, while James Jackson, who acquired 630 acres, James Skinner, who selected 570 acres and their supervisor, James Mackenzie, who added 500 acres to his holding called Stratton, each selected almost a square mile of land. Four of the seven remaining men in this category selected between 340-350 acres of land, another chose 240 acres and two men chose between 140 and 150 acres. The smallest selectors in their category were the Ramage, Jones, Thomas and Richards families, who took up forty, 100, 280 and 280 acres respectively. Between their holdings and those of the Dawson and Stewart families, who held almost four square miles (3,560 acres) and a little over two square miles (1330 acres) respectively, were the Mitchells with 880 acres and the Frasers who claimed 400 acres of the land on which they were employed.

Acres under Free Selection on Ollera-Tenterden between December 1869 and December 1881

≥ ¼ Acre		¼ - ½ Acre		½-Acre		1-2 Sq. Miles		2-4 Sq. Miles		≤ 4 Sq. Miles	
0-80 ac.	81-160 ac.	161- 320 ac.	321- 640 ac.	641-1,280 ac.	1,281-2,560 ac.	2560-3200 ac					
Lane	40	Clemesha 120	Cotterell 200	Fraser 400	*Skinner 550	Stewarts 1,330	Dawsons 2,910				
'Unknown'	40	McGuire 200	Cameron 320	Wade 350	Edgar 640	Willis 1,400					
Low	60	Kelly 100	Dickens 320	Ferguson 340	Mitchells 880	Mackay 1,200					
Prior	80	Macfarlane 100	Farrell 200	Huntley 340	Jackson 880*						
Weidemann	40	Holt 100	Crough 198	Ryder 340							
Archer	40	Thomas 140	Johnson 200	Mackenzie 460							
Ramage	80	Damarell 140	Cameron 320								
		Carpendale 150	Richards 280								
			Macdonald 240								
			Bailey 200								
			Spicer 210								
Totals											
Selectors:	7	8	11	6	4	3	1				
Selections:											
Acreage:											

Analysis of the pattern of selection on Ollera-Tenterden shows that the station's experience matched that of most squattages in a district in which markets for agricultural and horticultural produce were restricted by an isolation made worse by poor communications over rough terrain. Innate and class-based prejudices which reinforced the squatters' preference for

extensive grazing over farming added to the problems of distance, time and cost which plagued communications between New England and the distant ports of Newcastle and Sydney before the railway reached Tamworth by 1881 and Armidale in 1883. However in solving the long-standing transport problem, the railway created a new and more daunting one for the district's existing farmers. By supplying New England with a reliable supply of cheap, high-quality South Australian wheat, the railway severely reduced the market for the cereal which was the district's only truly viable farming product. Thereafter sales of the district's inferior, 'softer' grain were made only to squatters on the colony's far north-western plains.¹⁸ As a result free selection in New England ran contrary to the principles of the Robertson Acts which, if only at face value, were intended to open up the interior to a multitude of successful small-holding farmers.¹⁹ From the beginning most selectors in the region preferred to select relatively large blocks of land to which, whenever possible and in due course, they would add by means of Conditional or Improvement leases.²⁰

In Ollera-Tenterden's case conditions peculiar to the station seem to have heightened the tendency. The higher wages dictated by the station's distance from Armidale and the firm-but-fair management practices and close oversight maintained since the Everett brothers began their venture had created a relatively stable and remarkably cohesive community at Ollera-Tenterden. As a result all but a very few selections were taken-up by people who had lived and worked for many years on the twin stations. Most of these long-term employees therefore had first-hand experience and long familiarity with the condition and capabilities of the land which they selected. The most prudent among them had also accumulated sufficient savings with which to fund their attempts to achieve greater independence. This was itself a relatively rare achievement for many bush workers, for whom the required deposit of 5s.0d an acre was beyond their capacity.²¹ Men like James Skinner, Thomas Cotterell, George Ryder, James Jackson and John Jones, all of whom had worked on one of the component stations since the mid-1840s and early 1850s, would therefore have known that local conditions and their own skills favoured the acquisition of larger blocks and a concentration upon grazing rather than intensive farming. Others like Tom Dawson, James Jackson, John Macdonald, William Ferguson, John Thomas, Hugh Kelly and Ralph Crough had been employed by the Everetts

¹⁸ R.B. Walker, 'Squatter and Selector in New England 1862-95', *Journal and Proceedings of the Historical Society of Australia and New Zealand*, Vol. 8, No. 29, November, 1957, p. 73.

¹⁹ 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. 82-84; Walker, 'Squatter and Selector', *op. cit.* p.66.

²⁰ Lyne, *op. cit.*, p. 152.

²¹ Bill Gammage, 'Historical Reconsiderations VIII: Who Gained, and Who Was Meant to Gain, from Land Selection in New South Wales?' *Australian Historical Studies*, Vol. 24, No. 94, April 1990, p. 112.

since the late 1850s and early 1860s.²² Younger men, of whom David, Ben and Joe Dawson, Andrew and John Farrell, James Skinner jnr and John Jones jnr are examples, were the sons of long-term workers. Having been born on the station on which they had worked full-time since the age of twelve, these young men would have been particularly well-equipped to judge their valley's strengths and weaknesses.

Although, like so many of their peers in the district and throughout the colony, the climatic and economic difficulties of the final two decades of the century would cause many to fail, a significant number of Ollera-Tenterden's workmen succeeded when they became selectors. Those who survived did so by taking-up the land which had been forfeited by workmates whose selections failed. By this means, over time, the several thousand acres which were needed to make mixed farming and grazing profitable in the district could be accumulated. As we shall see, the Everett brothers' attitudes and intentions were also vital to the success of many of the selectors. Although the appearance of free selectors on 'their' property was far from welcome and resisted for as long as possible, the policy of pragmatic paternalism or 'enlightened self-interest' adopted by the 'GJE' partnership could be of immediate benefit to both parties. The selectors and their families provided the squatters with a pool of stable and reliable permanent or seasonal labour, a modest but reliable source of supplementary income and additional land on which to 'agist' their livestock. In return, the selector-families gained a much needed source of alternative income with which to establish their smallholdings and make the 'improvements' necessary for the retention and later extension of their selections through conditional and/or improvement leases. Though the relationship was far from problem-free, in the longer term the Everetts sought to attain a long-held goal. Through the judicious exercise of paternalistic assistance to carefully 'chosen' employee-selectors, they planned to establish and retain a reliable source of labour for their stations and thus to maintain a significant degree of control over their land and their immediate neighbourhood.²³

This desire may explain the encouragement and active assistance the brothers extended to James Mackenzie when, from about 1860, he began to keep horses and a 'private' flock of sheep on his employers' land. The Everett brothers' accepting attitude towards Mackenzie's entrepreneurial sideline provides an early example of the benign paternalism which is still considered to have characterized Edwin Everett's later treatment of certain approved (i.e.

²² Ollera Station Records, Stores Issue Books, 1848-57, 1861-62, 1862-65, *UNERA*, A103:V3054/14; V3052/20 and V2270 respectively.

²³ *Everett Records, Guyra*, Letter, Edwin to John, 7th May, 1862; Letter, John to Arthur, 7th November, 1889, which refers to the possible and highly unwelcome purchase of a selection on the station by the Prentice family.

‘deserving’) employees who became selectors on the station. For more than a decade before Mackenzie requested and received his employers’ permission to buy the selection called Stratton from J. Fenton in March 1875 the superintendent’s sheep were shorn in Ollera’s shed, his wool was transported with the Everetts’ clip and he sold ewes and lambs to his employers.²⁴ Two entries in Mackenzie’s diary from early in April 1864 provide further insights into the extent and variety of these mutually beneficial business dealings. While the first merely records the superintendent’s payment of a cheque for £100 to Edwin Everett, the second is more detailed: ‘Met Everett on the other side of Tenterden and made arrangements with him to give me cattle for sheep.’²⁵ Various entries in the Yearly Balance Book such as ‘Shearing James Mackenzie’s sheep, £46.5s.0d; J. Mackenzie’s [sheep] washing account, £7.10s.0d’ and ‘Shearing D. Stewart’s and J. Mackenzie’s sheep, £72.19s.10d’ recur frequently in the decades after the early 1860s.²⁶ Indeed, the practice continued throughout the superintendent’s lifetime and was maintained even after his death in late 1887.²⁷

Nor, as the mention of Stewart makes clear, was Mackenzie the only employee with whom the partnership had similar and quite rewarding financial transactions in the mid 1860s. Three entries which record payments made by the station in the winter of 1866 suggest that probably under a ‘halves’ or similar arrangement, two other men were grazing privately-owned flocks on their employers’ land. The first entry concerns the purchase of wool worth £20.7s.0d from E. Whalley, while the second and third note respective payments of £125.6s.0d and £764.10s.0d made for ‘Sheep bought from Sheppard and Whalley’.²⁸ The accounts drawn up at the end of the same year show that the station received £14.15s.0d for ‘the keep of Sheppard’s sheep’ and that Mackenzie was charged £7.10s.0d for ‘washing etc’.²⁹ The Everett brothers also apparently supported Mackenzie’s acquisition of ‘Parson’s pre-lease [of] 300 acres’ in 1875 and, three years later, of a further 160 acres in Ollera Parish.³⁰

As the earlier reference to the highly-respected Scotsman Donald Stewart shows, Mackenzie was not the only ‘key’ workman towards whom such compliance or encouragement was extended. A tailor’s apprentice, who with his family’s help paid his way to Australia in 1857, Stewart later recorded in his diary that on 6th March 1859 he had ‘agreed at Ollera and

²⁴ *Everett Records Guyra*, Diary of James Mackenzie; entries for 22nd March and 14th April, 1875;

²⁵ Ollera Station Records, Diary of James Mackenzie, entries for Friday, 1st April, and Saturday, 2nd April, 1864, *UNERA*, A103:V3952/41.

²⁶ The first two of these entries concern work done in 1866 and the last in 1884.

²⁷ Ollera Station Records, Yearly Balance Book, 1865-92, *UNERA*, A103:V2258.

²⁸ Ollera Station Records, Yearly Balance Book, 1865-92, *UNERA*, A103:V2258.

²⁹ Ollera Station Records, Yearly Balance Book, 1865-92, *UNERA*, A103:V2258.

³⁰ Ollera Station Records, Yearly Balance Book, 1865-92, *UNERA*, A103:V2258.

served that firm faithful and true for twenty-four years, [until 1883] as Sheepoverseer (sic).³¹ Between 1875 and 1884 Donald Stewart took up between 180 and 300 acres of land annually on Ollera. During these ten years he acquired 3,051½ acres of land bordering Sandy Creek at Tangley. 1,160 acres were selected in his own name, 1,360 acres in the names of four of his children and the remaining 1,451½ acres were acquired from three presumably failed selectors.

List of Stewart Selections: Tangley Station Ledger³²

Name	Relationship	Date	Acreage	Totals	When Taken Up
Donald	self	16.10.'79	100 ac.		Portion 77
"	"	9. 9.'80	40 ac.		Portion 91
"	"	13.12.'84	60 ac.		.....
"	"	9. 11.'80	100 ac.		.....
"	"	24. 3.'81	40 ac.		.....
"	"	31. 3.'81	50 ac.		.....
"	"	1.11.'83	47 ac.		.....
"	"	27. 3. '84	353 ac.	790 ac.	.....
Anne	daughter	11. 7. '78	390 ac.		Portion 34
"	"	9. 9. '80	40 ac.		Portion 93
"	"	3. 7. '84	50 ac.	390 ac.	.....
Isabella	daughter	31. 5. '83	200 ac.	200 ac.	.....
Jessie	daughter	18.12.'84	250 ac.	250 ac.	.....
John	son	27. 3.'84	320 ac.3r.	320 ac.	.....
McFarlane	selector	5. 9.'78	100 ac.		Portion 47
"	"	26.10.'82	220 ac.		Portion 53
"	"	4. 9.'84	131½ ac.	451½ ac.	.....
Willis	selector	11. 7.'78	100 ac.		Portion 40
"	"	18. 7.'78	320 ac.		Portion 48
"	"	1. 6.'78	200 ac.	200 ac.	.....
Attadale	selector	14. 9.'76	320 ac.		Portion 30
"	"	20. 7.'82	40 ac.		Portion 122
"	"	27. 7.'82	40 ac.		Portion 123
"	"	3. 7.'84	50 ac.	450 ac.	.....
				3,051½ ac.	

From this base Donald Stewart steadily increased his holdings until within a few years, 'with the help of Mr [Edwin] Everett' he had accumulated an area of some 6,600 to 7,500 acres close to Sandy Creek'.³³ Tangley, whose name recalled a village in the Hampshire parish which adjoined the Everett family's Wiltshire estate, spanned the parishes of Everett and Skinner. At £1 per acre, 320 acres of fertile land on the northern bank of Sandy Creek had been purchased under pre-emptive right by the Everett brothers in 1855-6. Tangley had later been ceded to Edwin Everett as part of a mutual exchange of land in which the Lambamata Plain (opposite Ollera head-station) became John Everett's 'private' possession.³⁴ The Tangley area contained some of the run's best agricultural land and for decades Tangley Farm, which

³¹ Ross Fraser, *Notes re: my Great Grandfather Donald Stewart*, unpublished document provided to the writer.

³² Ollera Station Records, Ledger: Tangley Station, *UNERA*, A103:V5628.

³³ Fraser, 'Notes', *op. cit.*

³⁴ *Everett Records Guyra*, Letter, John to Arthur, 19th April, 1894.

Stewart ‘bought’ with Edwin Everett’s assistance in the late seventies or early eighties, supplied Ollera with much needed agricultural produce. Building upon its acquisition, by the 1890s Donald Stewart and his family had surpassed the Mackenzie and Dawson families as the largest single employee-selector-landholders in the valley. Like Stewart and Tom Dawson, whose similar ‘dummying’ activities have already been described, James Mackenzie also applied for land in the names of at least two of his children. In 1882 and 1883 the superintendent acquired a total of 344 acres in the name of his daughter Ollie (Alice Ollera Mackenzie Everett); land which reverted to the station after her marriage to Arthur Everett in 1891.³⁵ However Mackenzie’s later application for land in his schoolboy son Charlie’s name was refused. On 7th February 1885 Mackenzie recorded the outcome in his diary: ‘Charlie’s selection lost but Ollie’s got through all right.’³⁶

Several other men who held positions of some responsibility on Ollera-Tenterden also took up one or more selections on the station during these years. They included Edgar Huntley, the station’s sub-manager of sheep at Stockbridge, who took up 340 acres in two selections in 1879 and 1880 and Francis Cameron, a relative of Tenterden’s sheep overseer, who selected 320 acres in Skinner parish in 1881. Tenterden’s cattle overseer David Judge, who took up 320 acres on the station in 1884, was among several other valued long-term employees who made their first selections in the early 1880s.³⁷ The acquisitions made by these men were typical of those made by the not-inconsiderable number of Ollera employees who, like Donald Stewart, held as much and in some cases more land by c.1900 than the Everett brothers.

For two reasons, several erstwhile assisted immigrants among those who selected or otherwise occupied land on the station during these years are of particular interest. First, their experience offers evidence that, given good health and a modicum of luck, with consistent hard work and thrift the Everetts’ immigrant employees could continue to better their financial and often their social status in colonial Australia. Second, and just as importantly, differences in the way their sponsors reacted to their emergence as landholders on the station offer valuable clues into the rationale and intentions which underlay the Everett brothers’ approach to the problems created by free-selection.

Four of the five men in the group, William Cannings, Thomas Cotterell, Isaac Spicer and John Reeves, had come to Ollera with their families as bounty-immigrants from Wiltshire between 1841 and 1858 at the instigation and with the assistance of the Everett brothers.

³⁵ Ollera Station Records, Everett Land Titles, *UNERA*, A103:V2258.

³⁶ Ollera Station Records, Diary of James Mackenzie 1862-87, *UNERA*, A103:V3054/1-12.

³⁷ Ollera Station Records, Yearly Balance Book, 1865-92, *op. cit.*

Although the fifth man was not sponsored by the Everetts, James Ryder was also an assisted immigrant who had reached Sydney with his wife and two young sons in 1849.³⁸ From the early 1850s the Ryder family was employed by the Everett brothers as shepherds at New Valley. As we have seen, during their years at this distant outstation the Ryder family took full advantage of the opportunities for additional income provided by the modified version of the traditional ‘family economy’ which the Everett brothers had established on their station. It is probable that as the 1860s began and while his sons continued to work on the station, James Ryder used these savings to set himself up as keeper of the newly-built inn which had been established on the boundary of Ollera and Moredun stations.³⁹

Located within the Town Reserve at the point where the road from Armidale to Glen Innes crossed Limestone Creek, this inn and the little school which the Everett brothers also established there in the early 1860s formed the nucleus of the small village of Wandsworth. By 1875-6 the hamlet contained the school, three inns, four carriers, a blacksmith, a fellmonger and a combined post-office and general store. All but three of the thirty-four residents, squatters and farmers served by the Wandsworth Postal District had lived and worked on Ollera-Tenterden for many years.⁴⁰ (See Appendix O, below) However James Ryder, whose son George took up a selection at Sandy Creek near Tangleby in 1875, was not among them.⁴¹ Within two or three years he was replaced as inn-keeper at Limestone by William Cannings, who had come to Ollera in early 1841 as the youngest member of the run’s first assisted-immigrant family. In the Autumn of 1863 Edwin Everett took pleasure in reporting cryptically that ‘Old Ryder has sold his Public House to Billy Cannings, which is perhaps better’.⁴²

Although the evidence is circumstantial and James Ryder clearly had a financial stake in the business to sell, it seems likely that the Everetts may have instigated the construction of the little hostelry on or beside the land whose purchase from ‘Mitchell’ was still being finalized in 1863. If so, they would have been following a practice which was common throughout the colony, as many of the earliest forty acre-blocks were either selected or bought at auction by squatters who hoped by this means to profit from passing trade.⁴³ Within the district, for example, inns were located on the fringes of Boorolong and Saumarez stations. Like the Limestone Inn, each stood at a strategic point beside one of the few tracks (and essential stock-

³⁸ Shipping Records, *SRNSW*, 2153: 2459, for the arrival, aboard *Diana* in 1849, of James Ryder (32), Eliza Ryder (30) and their sons George (8) and William (6).

³⁹ *Everett Records Guyra*, Diary of James Mackenzie, February, 1864.

⁴⁰ Ollera Station Records, ‘Greville’s Official Post Office Directory, 1875-6’, *UNERA*, A103:V3052/14.

⁴¹ Ollera Station Records, Yearly Balance Book, 1865-92, *UNERA*, A103:V2258, entry for financial year 1874-5.

⁴² *Everett Records, Guyra*, Letter, Edwin to John, 11th May, 1863.

⁴³ Gammage, *op. cit.*, pp. 116-118

routes) which connected Armidale with the northern and western interior.⁴⁴ In the sentence which immediately precedes his report of the inn's sale, Edwin Everett informed his elder brother John that, 'I cannot get the deeds for that piece of land on the Limestone because I cannot sign the receipt without a Power of Attorney from you and George'.⁴⁵

There are several other indications that for many years the Everett brothers maintained a particular interest in the Inn and a financial interest in other property within the Limestone Reserve. James Mackenzie's Diary for the years 1862-4 contains references to the completion of the transaction with Mitchell and to several visits he made to Limestone with Edwin Everett to inspect fences which were being constructed by (or perhaps in conjunction with?) Ryder.⁴⁶ The following entries in the Yearly Balance Book, which record sums credited to the station at the end of the 1860s, confirm this continuing connection with one or more properties at Limestone. In October 1867 Mackenzie noted the receipt of £7 in cash for the rent of an unspecified property and another £10 for the 'rent of the Limestone Paddock' while at the end of the year £5 was collected for the rent of 'the Limestone House'. Later in the year the same property returned a further £15 in rent. An entry made late in the following year, which presents the clearest evidence of the Everett's on-going connection to the Inn, suggests that this 'house' and its adjoining land were in fact the Inn and its essential resting paddock. In his accounts for 1869 Mackenzie entered, 'Squared up with Cannings and rented him the paddock for another year [for] £8 from 1st October, 1869'.⁴⁷ The Everett brothers owned at least one other house at Limestone. This dwelling was occupied by the impressively named Wordsworth Clemesha, who in 1868 was charged £5 for the rent of a house in the little hamlet and, in the next month, paid a further £5 for the 'Rent of Paddock and Horses'.⁴⁸ In January 1870 Clemesha selected 120 acres in the vicinity and by 1875 was listed in the directory as a fellmonger at Wandsworth.⁴⁹

Each of the three Everett-assisted immigrants from Ludgershall who belonged to this group took up selections on Ollera-Tenterden. Both Thomas Cotterell and John Reeves, each of whom continued to work at Ollera for over twenty years, selected land at Limestone. Cotterell took up 600 acres there in 1870 and Reeves selected 150 acres in the vicinity in 1871. However

⁴⁴ *Everett Records Guyra*, Annotated Diary of James Mackenzie, 5th September 1862 ; L.T.W. Lane, 'The Bedford Chapel at Saumarez Ponds: English Settlers in New England', Unpublished M. Litt Thesis University of New England, Armidale, 1990, pp. 40-42.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

⁴⁶ *Everett Records Guyra*, Diary of James Mackenzie, mid-1864.

⁴⁷ Ollera Station Records, Yearly Balance Book, 1865-92, *UNERA*, A103:V2258.

⁴⁸ Ollera Station Records, Yearly Balance Book, 1865-92, *UNERA*, A103:V2258.

⁴⁹ Ollera Station Records, *UNERA*, Yearly Balance Book, A103:V2258; Greville's Post Office Directory, 1875-6, A103:V3052/14.

their compatriot Isaac Spicer, whose three selections were made in 1881, took up 210 acres in the neighbouring parishes of Tenterden and Buchanan which lay on the western flank of the station.⁵⁰ The three men are of particular interest because of the very different reactions which their attempts to gain greater independence aroused in their employers. While no evidence survives of any objection being raised to the activities of either Reeves or Spicer, or indeed to most of the others who made even greater acquisitions of land during these years, Cotterell's actions provoked a quite negative response. In a letter written from England in 1879, John Everett grumbled to Mackenzie about Cotterell who, in almost ten years, had more than doubled the size of the 200-acre selection which he had taken up near Limestone in January 1870.⁵¹

Cotterell has done pretty well for himself with 450 acres of improved land, 2000 four-year-old sheep and a pre-lease. Yet when I brought him out from Tedworth (sic), the Parish paid his outfit and the Government his passage.⁵²

The grudging tone of this comment, and of another which he later made about a member of the Judge family, shows that John Everett's attitudes had changed little since the early 1840s. The mixture of resentment and disbelief in his remark echoes sentiments he expressed in the 1840s and 1850s, when he feared that success in the colonial 'world turned upside down' was encouraging first the Cannings and later 'young Tom Reeves' to 'get above themselves'. Like theirs, Cotterell's transgression may have been his failure to keep his 'place' and thus exhibit, if only outwardly, the absolute loyalty and deferential obedience that paternalist 'governors' required of their subordinates. Significantly, although Cotterell was one of the earliest recorded selectors on Ollera, his name does not appear in any of the lists of selectors compiled annually by the station's superintendent. One of the genuinely independent selectors on the 'run', Cotterell probably compounded his error. Having succeeded, perhaps too well, he then described himself (or was described) in the official register as 'a grazier'.⁵³ The personal satisfaction John Everett later expressed at his son's success in blocking extensions to the selections made by members of the Judge family was just as redolent of perceived injustice, insubordination and ingratitude.

... I see you are taking up a new selection at Edgar's and mean to try to block one of the Judges *who are ready to sting their benefactors*.⁵⁴

⁵⁰ Ollera Station Records, Yearly Balance Book, 1865-92, *UNERA*, AA103:V2258.

⁵¹ Conditional Purchase Index, *UNERA*, 33/5138. Entry for 10th March, 1870.

⁵² Cane, *op. cit.*, pp. 58-9. Letter, John to James Mackenzie, 23rd April, 1879. (no longer held in any archive).

⁵³ Ollera Station Records, Conditional Purchase Index, *UNERA*, 33/5138.

⁵⁴ *Everett Records, Guyra*, Letter, John to Arthur, 30th June, 1892. Emphasis added.

The lack of similar vehemence with which John Everett reacted to the selections taken up during these years by Thomas Dawson and his sons supports this interpretation of his attitudes and mindset. Whilst at Ollera-Tenterden in 1881 he made only a single, terse comment on the matter in his diary; ‘Tom Dawson’s new selection at the Falls station will spoil our [out]-station’.⁵⁵ The lack of personal grievance in his words is as remarkable as it is, perhaps, telling. To the modern observer the Dawson family’s activities appear to present a far greater real and/or potential threat to their employers’ holdings than those of Cotterell. By 1881 the four Dawson men had been granted fifteen blocks encompassing 2,910 acres on both Ollera and Tenterden. In particular, the selections recently taken up by two of Dawson’s sons, one of whom took up 500 acres in Buchanan at or near the Falls Station and the other 150 acres in the adjoining parish of St. George, were directly opposed to their employers’ financial interests. In the Statement of Accounts for 1879 which probably stimulated Everett’s reaction to Cotterell, Mackenzie recorded that the station had undertaken building work costing from £20 to £25 at the Falls outstation.⁵⁶ A new hut had been built, a well had been dug for the shepherd who lived there and two yards and a salt trough had also been installed. In 1881 a further £5 was spent on other unspecified ‘Improvements’ to this outstation.⁵⁷

Why then did John Everett fail to react as strongly to the Dawson family’s incursions as he did to those made by Tom Cotterell? A possible reason may be that, although Thomas Dawson was also an assisted immigrant, three generations of his family having arrived in Australia from Bedfordshire in mid-1848, the group had not been sponsored by the Everetts.⁵⁸ Undoubtedly Tom Dawson was one of Ollera’s most valued and experienced long-term employees, having followed his employer James Mackenzie to the Everett’s New England station when the new superintendent moved there from Cliffdale in the late 1850s. However he and his sons were nevertheless free of the more-personal, unspoken but mutually ‘agreed’ duties of service to their ‘masters’ which John Everett appears to have expected ‘his’ Wiltshiremen to maintain.⁵⁹ Seemingly then, Everett saved his greatest resentment for those whose immigration he had personally assisted. Either by seeking independence and perhaps higher social status (Cotterell), or by obtaining land wanted or needed by their employers (young Judge), these men had neglected the lifelong obligations which were implicit within

⁵⁵ Cane, *op. cit.*, p.116. Entry for 2nd November, 1881. As previously stated, although Cane had access to this Diary, it is now in neither of the Ollera Archives.

⁵⁶ Although the overall cost of this particular work is not given, the individual costs of similar constructions appear elsewhere in the Yearly Balance Book, *UNERA*, A103:V2258.

⁵⁷ Ollera Station Records Yearly Balance Book, entries for 1879 and 1881, *UNERA*, A103:V2258

⁵⁸ Shipping Records, *SRNSW*, entry for vessel *Equestrian*, arrived Sydney 16th July, 1848.

⁵⁹ Lane, *op. cit.*, pp. 19-20.

paternalism. In short, they had ‘risen above themselves.’ John Everett maintained a life-long commitment to ‘place’ and ‘appearance’ both of which were fundamental precepts of paternalism. The young man, who deep in the backblocks of the Australian bush could fret about the threat implicit in a teenaged servant-girl’s ‘unseemly’ hairstyle would still, when old and comfortably retired to Southampton, comment caustically upon ‘the fringe and bustle’ adorning the woman who prepared his son’s meals in distant New England. He was just as aware of the need to keep the ‘proper’ and requisite social distance from the cook whose bad-temper was causing ructions in his own kitchen. ‘A good cook, [the woman] is said to have a very bad temper, but as I want her to cook the dinner and not sit down with me to help eat it, her temper can spend itself in the kitchen without disturbing me’.⁶⁰ *Noblesse*, it seems, did not always find it necessary to *oblige*.

Nor does it require much ‘historical imagination’ to recognize that in Thomas Cotterell’s example John Everett faced the consequences of the flaw which had been structured into his paternalist ‘family enterprise’ since its inception. A backward-looking management model which relied for lasting success on an over-supply of dependent, low-paid and obedient workers had been transferred to a colony on whose frontier labour was both chronically short and therefore increasingly able to assert its independence. This was the reality to which, with considerable success, the brothers had sought to adapt their management of the station during its first forty years. For Everett, Tom Cotterell, the penniless immigrant labourer whom years before he had twice fined heavily for drunkenness, probably embodied the socio-political element of the multi-faceted threat whose climatic and economic components would emerge in the closing decades of the century. In circumstances which were strongly reminiscent of the early 1840s, these elements combined to present an ultimately insurmountable threat to the survival of the paternalist ethic and to the pastoralists’ political and economic predominance.⁶¹

The Everett brothers’ legendary willingness to provide paternalistic aid to favoured employee-selectors was therefore always qualified and highly selective, varying both over time and, in interpretation and implementation, between individual members of the partnership.⁶² However despite these outward differences all three brothers shared a lifelong commitment to the retention, and the extension, of contiguous stretches of their prime land. In a letter written

⁶⁰ *Everett Records Guyra*, Letters, John to Arthur, 21st June, 1893.; John to Arthur, 21st June, 1893.

⁶¹ E.A.Boehm, *Prosperity and Depression in Australia 1887-1897*, Oxford, 1971, p. 95.

⁶² Ollera Station Records, Diaries of Edgar Huntley of Stockbridge, Ollera, 1878, 1881’, *UNERA*, A103b: V1199/26-27; Yearly Balance Book, 1865-92, *UNERA*, A103: V3358

to his son in 1879 John Everett stressed the station's need to gain freehold possession of such land.⁶³

Throughout his life John Everett remained more *openly* opposed than his younger brother Edwin to the concept and the consequences, both perceived and actual, of free selection before survey. Hard-won experience of the difficult colonial labour market of the 1840s and 1850s had probably hardened his belief in the squatters' right to the land they had 'found' and developed. A good, generous, honest master who was admired and respected by 'his' men, John Everett nevertheless remained convinced that by birth, education, innate ability and experience, he and his fellow colonial 'gentlemen' were entitled to retain possession of the land for whose vast acreages they had for decades paid a pittance of less than a farthing an acre.⁶⁴ However his letters make it clear that from the start of the protracted parliamentary debate which began in the mid-1850s, Everett recognized that neither he nor his peers possessed the power to resist the passage and implementation of Robertson's Land Laws.⁶⁵ Nor, with his elder brother George, had he the power to prevent their youngest brother and senior partner's 'unwarranted' benevolence towards many of the free selectors who were taking-up land on Ollera.⁶⁶

In many ways a more complex character than his elder brother, Edwin Everett's outwardly more benevolent attitudes and approach disguised convictions as conservative as those held by his brothers. Headstrong, heedless of his elder siblings' advice, eccentric and rendered increasingly testy and capricious by advancing age and ill-health, Edwin Everett clearly revelled in the role of colonial 'squire', willingly, though arbitrarily, dispensing advice and practical or even financial aid to favoured selectors. Forty years after his death in 1907 members of the third generation of the Everett and Mackenzie families still took much pride in his reputedly unfailing generosity towards 'worthy retainers'.⁶⁷ One instance concerned Donald Stewart or one of his sons. Lacking the money to 'make a go' of his selection, the man offered to sell it back to the station. Instead, Everett generously lent him the money to remain on his holding. Another well-known, but perhaps more telling example, involved Garrett Farrell's son

⁶³ Cane, *op. cit.*, p. 116. Letter, John to Arthur, 23rd April, 1879.

⁶⁴ King, 'Agricultural Economics', *op. cit.*, pp. 92-93.

⁶⁵ *op. cit.* pp. 71-76.

⁶⁶ Cane, *op. cit.*, Letter, John to Arthur, 23rd April, 1879.

⁶⁷ Cane, *op. cit.*, p. 116. Cane's informants were the owners of Ollera (Mr. Tom Everett) and Cabar Feidh, (Mr. A. Mackenzie) at that time. The designation is Cane's. The station, which was founded by one of James Mackenzie's sons, was given the name of the traditional Scots' war-cry. Owned by the Skipper family the beautiful 1,000-acre property, which looks down over Ollera from its hilltop, houses Mr Tom Skipper and his family and has returned to the Ollera 'fold'.

Andrew, who in 1878-9 selected land within 200 yards (c.185m) of the homestead at Ollera; land which also contained the iron tanks in which the station's sheep were dipped annually.⁶⁸ Everett family lore maintained that, much amused at young Farrell's 'joke', Edwin willingly accepted his employee's suggestion that he buy him out. However considerable evidence suggests that the deal may have had other, more devious motives. The pair may actually have been engaged in 'dummying'. Despite its proscription under the 1875 amendment to the Land Acts the inability of the under-manned and ill-prepared central bureaucracy to supervise and control transactions in the vast hinterland meant that the practice remained rife throughout the colony until, and even beyond, the repeal and revision of the Robertson Acts in 1884.⁶⁹ While it is possible that Farrell may have taken advantage of the lucrative chance to 'put one over' his boss, entries in the stations' accounts support the conclusion that Edwin had colluded with his employee to pre-select and then hand over acreage which was essential to the station. The record of expenditure for the second half of 1882 contains the following consecutive entries:⁷⁰

Debit: To J. Farrell's Selection:	£50
To 100 acres addition to [J. Farrell's Selection]:	£25.10s.0d

Significantly, after the 1889 amendment to the 1884 Acts made the pastoral reserves available for selection, Andrew Farrell's brother John also relinquished acreage which was vital to the station. In a letter to Arthur in late 1891, John Everett noted both the event and its inevitable outcome.

... Johnny Farrell giving over to us his annual lease of the reserve running up to the milking yard must have been quite necessary for us or otherwise it seems to me we could *not* have got into the stockyard and should have had to build a new one.⁷¹

It therefore remains possible that by selecting land at strategic points on the station the Farrell family had twice succeeded in blackmailing their employers. If so, this would explain both Edwin's dismissive tone and his unwillingness to be involved when, more a decade later, Mrs Farrell sought permission for her sheep to be shorn in the Ollera shed. Her letter is particularly revealing. If actually composed and written by the station's long-serving midwife, rather than for her (perhaps by the teacher at Limestone), the brief note reflects a similarly high degree of literacy to that which was possessed by the female assisted immigrants who arrived from Wiltshire fifty years before. It also highlights the main problem which was faced by those bush-workers who sought independence through free-selection. Having saved enough for the deposit on a selection, many were unable to meet the considerable costs of the 'improvements'

⁶⁸ *op. cit.*

⁶⁹ Gammage, *op. cit.*, p.118

⁷⁰ Ollera Station Records, Yearly Balance Book, *UNERA*, A103:V2258, Balances, 1st July to 31st December, 1882

⁷¹ *Everett Records, Guyra*, Letter, John to Arthur, 10th December, 1891.

worth £1 per acre which, within three years, were required if the selector was to remain on and extend his holding. Walker estimated that the cost of establishing a selection (housing, essential infrastructure, fencing, clearing, stocking) and then cultivating the land at an all-but unaffordable £6 per annum.⁷² Like those who, in England, had access to an allotment, the women and children in the selector-families tended the little farms, while their menfolk earned ‘seed-money’ as seasonal shearers, sheep-washers, lambers, fencers, harvesters, ploughmen, or like Willie Farrell, as drovers.⁷³ Each ‘horn’ of the selectors’ dilemma is neatly encapsulated within his mother’s ‘few lines’.⁷⁴

Wandsworth,
17th September, 1890

Mr. Everett,
Sir,

I send a few lines to ask if you would be so kind as to give me permission to get my Sheep Shorn at your shed when yours are finished as I cannot afford to get one built this season. Willie [her eldest son] has been away with the horses.

You Would Greatly Oblige,
Yours very faithfully,
Mrs Farrell.

Edwin’s response to the letter contrasts markedly to the more laudatory version of this incident which was recounted to A.V. Cane in the late 1940s. With the single, pragmatic and ultimately self-serving comment ‘... perhaps the more sheep in one shed the more ready [the shearers] will be to come’, his nephew Arthur was left to decide that ‘our *old Friend* (sic) ... old Mother Farrell’ should be permitted the use, at the standard rate, of the station’s facilities.⁷⁵ Comments Edwin Everett made on the back of a report of those employed on Ollera-Tenterden on 30th June 1888 also exhibit neither his renowned benevolence nor much sympathy for ageing men who had ‘worn [themselves] out’ in his service.⁷⁶ Once again a member of the Farrell family was involved. This time it was Garrett Farrell, who was the longest serving man to be thus described. Since 1850 the old man had worked full-time on the station, first as a shepherd then for many years as a long-distance bullock-driver, before ending his days as a shepherd. In several letters written in the early 1890s John Everett remembered him with particular fondness, remarking in late 1891:

⁷² Walker, ‘Squatter and Selector’, *op. cit.*, p. 75.

⁷³ British Parliamentary Papers, 1843: ‘Report on the Labouring Poor (Allotments of Land)’, *Agriculture*, Volume 9, Shannon, Ireland, 1986, pp. 49-50; British Parliamentary Papers, 1843: ‘Report on the Special Commissioners on the Poor Law on the Employment of Women and Children in Agriculture’, *Agriculture*, Volume 6, Shannon, Ireland, 1868, pp. 15, 63-4

⁷⁴ *Everett Records Guyra*, Letter, Mrs J. Farrell to Edwin Everett, 17th September, 1890.

⁷⁵ *Everett Records Guyra*, Letter, John to Arthur, 6th November, 1890. Original emphasis. In the document the italicized words are underlined twice.

⁷⁶ *Everett Records Guyra*, ‘Remarks’ on reverse of ‘Ollera and Tenterden Employees on 30th June, 1888’. The information within the brackets appears on the front of the document.

Poor old Garrett with his wheelbarrow and spade cleaning up, must be a most useful man, tell him I hope the pipe smokes well and he finds the knife first rate at cutting the baccy. A year later he continued, 'Old Garrett [is] a brick, a hardworking, cheerful man'; adding in another which was written shortly after, 'Poor old Garrett, I hope it won't quite break his heart to leave Ollera and the shearing'.⁷⁷ In comparison, Everett's reputedly more benevolent younger brother's concerns were more purely 'economically rational'. After years of drought and low wool prices, Edwin Everett's sole concern was for the survival of his stations.

Remarks

1. John Cameron, [Sheep Overseer, too much]: J. Cameron must be reduced to £50 if I can not get rid of him, but he is getting very weak and unwell and has very few sheep to look after outside the Paddocks, and does not do it well but I have been so unwell the last four months I have not been able to go about enough to find out...
2. David Judge, [Stockman, too much]: D. Judge was to be reduced this last Quarter to £40 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 p.a.] being old and feeble.
4. Garrett Farrell, [Labourer, old and worn out]: Garrett Farrell has too much [£40 p.a.] being (sic) only half a flock and fenced nearly all round.

In letters written to Mackenzie whilst en route to England 1881 and to his son Arthur in the early 1890s, John Everett frequently expressed his frustration at his youngest brother's actions and decisions. Two typical examples are, 'Edwin does things at Ollera which George and I cannot approve but cannot block' and, in reference to the 'private[ly employed] men' for whose wages and rations Edwin regularly reimbursed the station, 'I only wish he was not so liberal in giving to many who don't deserve it and who never pay him back. He [had] better keep it and spend it on the station'. However despite his irritation, he recognized that Edwin was not only as committed as his partners to the retention of their land', but his 'strong point is *working the land laws*'.⁷⁸

This, with several other similar remarks contained in John Everett's private correspondence, provides the clearest evidence that, as was common practice throughout the 'squattocracy', the brothers were prepared to test, and indeed bend, laws which it has been argued, had deliberately been heavily biased in their favour.⁷⁹ When considered from this perspective, recurrent entries in the Yearly Balance Book suggest strongly that this was the case. If not 'dummying', like their Armidale peers Henry Thomas Arding of Saumarez and Captain William Dumaresq the absentee 'owner' of Tilbuster, the Everett brothers may have been converting favoured workers into tenants. These holdings would thus still be controlled

⁷⁷ *Everett Records Guyra*, Letters, John to Arthur, 1st October, 1891, 20th October and 29th December, 1892.

⁷⁸ *Everett Records Guyra*: Letter, John to Arthur, undated but written after the passage of the 1889 amendments. Emphasis added

⁷⁹ Gammage, *op. cit.*, pp. 111-122.

by and available for use by the station.⁸⁰ Various entries suggest that the brothers were involved in both these activities.

What *is* clear is that the brothers were engaged in a systematic and vigorous three-pronged defence of 'their' property. The first strategy involved 'peacocking', which referred to the open acquisition of the most fertile and well-watered parts of the run, or of blocks which would prevent selectors from increasing their initial holdings by means of conditional or improvement leases.⁸¹ The methods employed included acquisition at auction, by pre-emptive right, or by selection and its subsequent rights of Conditional Purchase and Improvement Leases and by trafficking in Volunteer Land Orders.⁸² The second strategy involved 'dummying' by the use of other, equally bogus selectors. The latter activity included selections acquired in the names of selectors' wives and often very young children. As those taken-up by James Mackenzie, Donald Stewart and Thomas Dawson indicate, this ruse was employed as frequently by the selectors as it was by the squatters. The third and all-too-common device involved the judicious purchase of selections which had proved financially unaffordable, too small, too drought-prone or which lacked an accessible and viable market for their produce.⁸³ When subsequently auctioned, these selections usually reverted by default to the squatter.⁸⁴

In 1879, when the twin stations enjoyed peak productivity, *The New South Wales Government Gazette* estimated that the Everett brothers held a total of 111,882 acres, 47,882 of which were on Ollera and the remaining 64,000 acres on Tenterden. Ollera contained 6,345 acres of land which had been purchased outright, 8,640 acres of pre-leased or reserved land and 32,897 acres which were leased by the GJE partnership. The Everett brothers owned less land on Tenterden. Only 2,385 acres had been purchased on the larger and more-recently acquired station, on which 5,275 acres were pre-leased or in reserves and 56,340 were held under leasehold.⁸⁵ The Yearly Balance Book shows that in 1879 the station paid a deposit of £115 on 410 acres of land, £25.10s.0d for pre-leases, and £197.5s.6d for 'Improvements on Selections'. While the cost of Conditional Purchases made during the next year is unrecorded, between

⁸⁰ J. Ferry, 'Colonial Armidale: A Study of People, Place and Power in the Formation of a Country Town', Unpublished PhD Thesis, University of New England, 1994, pp.221-224.

⁸¹ *Everett Records Guyra*, Letters, John to Arthur, 2nd October, 1890; 24th November, 1893.

⁸² Volunteer Land Orders gave retired Servicemen the right to select fifty acres of land. Though far too small to be viable as selections, the orders were widely bought and used by landholders to block selectors' expansion. The records evidence of only one such use by the Everett brothers.

⁸³ Walker, 'Squatter and Selector', *op. cit.*, p.74; Gammage, *op. cit.*, pp.115-6, 118.

⁸⁴ John Ferry, 'Mapping the New South Wales Free Selection Acts in Colonial New England', *The Globe*, No. 43, 1995, p. 38

⁸⁵ *NSW Government Gazette*, 'List of Runs appraised in New England by H.G. Baker', 30th October, 1879.

1881 and 1885, when climatic conditions on the station were far less favourable, a total of £1,208.15s.9d was spent on various land transactions. Of this, £479.8s.3d was spent on land purchases, £93 was spent on ‘Interest on Selections’, £483.9s.6d was spent on the ‘rent’ of selections and the remaining £153.17s.0d was spent on pre-leases.⁸⁶ Until the later 1880s, when a more general and non-specific system of accounting was adopted, the fine detail with which the Annual Balances were itemized makes it easier to identify the differences in, and thus the likely reasons behind, this expenditure.

Annual Expenditure by Everett Brothers, on Land at Ollera-Tenterden, 1879-1885⁸⁷

Year	Expenditure Type	Cost
1879	Improvements on Selections	£197. 5s. 6d
	Preleases	£ 25.10s. 0d
	Deposit on 410 acre selection (GJE)	£115. 0s. 0d
1880	Improvements on Conditional Purchases	unrecorded
1881	Interest on Selections (to 30 th June)	£36. 0s. 0d
	Preleases	£ 33. 1s. 9d
	Interest on Selections (to 31 st December)	£ 57. 0s. 0d
	Preleases	£ 23. 1s. 9d
1882	Rent: Preleases	£ 37. 8s. 2d
1883	Preleases	£ 45. 19s. 7d
	Land Bought	£227. 0s. 0d
	Selections Paid For	£252. 8s. 3d.
	Rent Selections	£112. 9s. 6d
1884	Rent Selections (to 30 th June)	£114.10s. 0d
	Preleases	£ 13. 6s. 9d
	Rent of Selections (to 31 st December)	£141.10s. 0d
1885	Rent of Selections	<u>£115. 0s. 0d</u>
Total Expenditure		£1,546. 11s. 3d

Two discrete reasons, or more probably a closely-related mixture of both, can be advanced for the frequency with which, during these same years, the Everett brothers spent considerable sums on selections which are identified by the names of men employed on the station. Either these men were ‘dummy’ selectors who were acting in the Everetts’ interest or they had been installed as tenants on the station. The second of these alternatives is suggested by successive entries in the annual statement of accounts for 1879. They record the receipt of £20 for the sale of a hut and of £23 for the ‘Rent of Houses and Land’, at least some of which refer to premises purpose-built at the head-stations and rented to skilled workers such as the storekeeper(s), the blacksmith(s) and the carpenter(s).⁸⁸ However, although the wording of several similar, though unspecified entries is more equivocal, evidence in several other documents suggests strongly that the former practice was being employed. A remarkable synchronicity becomes apparent when the record of the station’s expenditure on these

⁸⁶ Ollera Station Records, Yearly Balance Book, 1865-92, *UNERA*, A103:V2258.

⁸⁷ Ollera Station Records, Yearly Balance Book, 1865-92, *UNERA*, A103:V2258.

⁸⁸ Ollera Station Records, Yearly Balance Book, 1865-92, *UNERA*, A103:V2258.

selections is compared to the dates on which land was taken up by the employees whose names appear elsewhere in the annual balance statements. The 1876 statement, for example, contains the following entry: ‘Mr. Edwin Everett has purchased Jackson’s selection of 520 acres at Brushy Creek [part of Tenterden] and Mitchell’s 40 acres on the same creek’.⁸⁹ Neither of these blocks appears to have been retrieved from a failed selector as, in the succeeding years both of these men regularly took up selections on the station.

Further supporting evidence is contained in a volume entitled ‘Everett Land Titles: Selections: Conditional Purchase’.⁹⁰ The first entry in a long list of the brothers’ acquisitions concerns one of the earliest selections on Ollera. In December, 1869 John Edgar selected about 313 acres of land, for which an annual ‘rent’ of £15.12s.11d, or the officially determined rate of one shilling per acre, fell due on 31st March. In August, 1878, almost ten years later, Edgar was granted an almost identical area of land (320 acres) on which rent of £16 per annum was payable. Similar entries also appear beside the names of Jackson and Mitchell. However, though tantalizingly ambiguous, the entries in the column which immediately precedes the long list of ‘Owners’ seem particularly significant. Under the heading ‘When Taken Up’, one of the following sets of initials: ‘E.E’, ‘GJE’ or ‘E.E. pvte’ is written beside each name in the ‘Owners’ list. Entries in the appendix to the accounts for 1878-79 provide further supporting evidence of the Everetts’ strategy. Beside a list of free selections taken up by the partners during the twelve months ending 30th June 1879, five employees’ names, one of which is illegible, are scrawled in the now faded blue pencil which Edwin used when he checked the books. In at least one case, he either reconsidered his initial decision or one selector-cum-tenant was later replaced by another.⁹¹

Free Selections	Parish	Acres	
GJE	Skinner	60	<i>Mitchell *</i>
GJE	Skinner	220	<i>?</i>
GJE	Skinner	120	<i>Jackson</i>
E.E	Everett	<u>320</u>	<i>Mitchell/Edgar</i>
		720	

Details of improvements to these or other selections obtained by these men are recorded in a list of ‘Improvements to Ollera and Tenterden’ which is included among the debits in the accounts drawn up in June, 1879.⁹²

⁸⁹ Ollera Station Records, Yearly Balance Book, 1865-92, *UNERA*, A103:V2258.

⁹⁰ Ollera Station Records, Records of Everett Land Titles, 1869-c.1921, *UNERA*, A103:V5772.

⁹¹ Ollera Station Records, Yearly Balance Book, 1865-92 *UNERA*, A103:V2258.

⁹² Ollera Station Records, Yearly Balance Book, 1865-92, *UNERA*, A103:V2258.

Ollera: Clearing four acres [at] selection ... *Edgar's selection*.^{*}
New hut; zinc roof; fencing fifteen-acre paddock; fencing waterhole.

Tenterden: Clearing and fencing four acres ... *Jackson's selection*.^{*}
Fencing at Jackson's 1½ miles.

Note: ^{*} Italics indicate entries written in blue pencil.

In the following year £20 was spent in improvements 'on Mitchell's selection', £184.16s.7d was paid in improvements to Highfield[']s selection and an unspecified sum was expended on 'clearing and [a]new barn at Holt's'. The last man's name appears twice in the Land Titles document which records that, having taken-up forty acres of 'GJE' land in 1875 and another sixty acres in 1880, he was to be charged a rent of £5 per annum. The possibility that, with so few acres, Holt was simply the unsuccessful selector which at first reading he appears to be, is contested by several similar entries concerning Isaac Spicer. The list of selectors in the appendix to the accounts for 1881 shows that Spicer, who began selecting in that year, took-up 160 acres in June and a further fifty acres in August. However, details of the cost (£7.12s.0d) to the station of providing a waterhole at 'Spicer's' are recorded elsewhere in the accounts for the same year. A further £21 was spent for unnamed improvements at 'Spicer's' in 1884. The coincidence is as striking as it is uncharacteristic. A business partnership which recorded and deducted money owed to the station by individual partners and which meticulously calculated *all* its debits and credits to the farthing would almost certainly not have consistently expended such large sums on land in which it had no financial interest.⁹³ Three more pieces of evidence suggest that the Everetts possessed, to their ultimate advantage, at least a partial interest in the selections taken-up by Spicer and (at least) four other employees named in the list of Everett selections. Two concern entries which appear in the statement of accounts for 1886. The first notes 'Memo: 47 acres at Jones paid for, £59.15s.0d', while the second records 'Fencing up at Dun's: £62.12s.7d'.⁹⁴ The third appears in a letter written in late 1890 in which John approved his son Arthur's application for a number of important annual leases.

Some of the Free Selectors may bid against you by tender but *those little bits of purchased land at Spicer's, Baldersleigh and I believe Jones' will help block them*.⁹⁵

Several references in the Yearly Balance Book and in the Everett brothers' private correspondence indicate the extent to which Edwin Everett was actively involved in defending the interests of both the 'GJE' partnership and of all the squatters in his neighbourhood. To

⁹³ Ollera Station Records, Yearly Balance Book, 1865-92, *UNERA*, A103:V2258, passim.

⁹⁴ Ollera Station Records, Yearly Balance Book, 1865-92, *UNERA*, A103:V2258, Half-Yearly Statements of Accounts, ending 30th June and 31st December, 1886.

⁹⁵ *Everett Records Guyra*, Letter: John to Arthur, 2nd October, 1890. Emphasis added.

forestall the increasing influx of selectors, financial as well as legal and political strategies were employed throughout the late seventies and eighties. In a letter written in late 1888, Edwin anticipated that, with a change of government and the imminent proclamation of amendments to the 1884 Land Acts, the long-standing problems caused by the colonial government's intention to collect several years' worth of outstanding and much increased rents 'owed' by the squatters would soon be resolved.⁹⁶ However, despite his hopes that the much-needed £3,000 which had been reserved for the purpose in their English account could now safely be released, the dispute was not finally settled in the squatters' favour until mid-1894.⁹⁷ On several occasions the brothers also took legal action to defend 'their' land. 'Law expenses' cost £8.12s.6d in January 1882 and in December 1883 £10 was spent in legal action against the selector Mackay. The respected Armidale solicitor, A.W.Simpson, earned £25 for similar services in 1884 and a further £3.1s.8d in early 1886.⁹⁸ The Everetts also took action in their local Land Court, one of which had been set up in each of the decentralized pastoral districts established under the 1884 Land Act. In mid-1892, a man named Sinclair was paid £2.0s.6d 'for attending the Land Court'.⁹⁹

The annual balance statements also record frequent payments to 'Donkin and Du Faur', a firm of Sydney land agents and solicitors who represented the Everett brothers in financial, legal and also political matters. In June 1881 the firm was paid a 'commission' of £12.9s. 3d, while Du Faur, who acted for the partnership, was paid £80 in the first six months of 1885 and a further £40 in the second half of the year. Between January 1886 and 30th June 1887 the agent received successive payments of £3.1s.8d, £55.2s.6d, £15.16s.2d and £6.6s.3d for work done on their behalf. Du Faur had a new partner named Gerard when, in September 1890, the Everetts paid him £6.12s.0d for Conditional Leases, which was followed twelve months later by a payment for services costing £3.2s.0d.¹⁰⁰ Evidence of Du Faur's activities as GJE's political lobbyist appears in a letter in which Edwin informed his brother of his confidence in the man's ability to convince Mr. Bruncker, the new Minister for Lands, of the need for the proposed Armidale to Inverell railway, whose route would traverse Ollera's eastern boundary.

⁹⁶ *Everett Records Guyra*, Letter: Edwin to John. Day and date missing, but written in late 1888.

⁹⁷ *Everett Records Guyra*, Letter: John to Arthur, 8th May, 1894.

⁹⁸ Ollera Station Records, Yearly Balance Book, 1865-92, *UNERA*, A103:V2258.

⁹⁹ Ollera Station Records, Yearly Balance Book, 1865-92, *UNERA*, A103:V2258.

¹⁰⁰ Ollera Station Records, Yearly Balance Book, 1865-92, *UNERA*, A103:V2258. Entries in Balance statement for six months ending, 30th June 1881, 30th June 1885, 1st January, 1886, 30th June 1886, 31st December, 1886 and 30th June 1887, 30th September, 1890 and 30th September, 1981.

Du Faur took Everett's place when he was forced by advancing age and a flare-up of his debilitating chronic illnesses to excuse himself from this delegation.¹⁰¹

The incident also reveals the persistence, into the second generation of the Wyndham family, of the Everett-Wyndham connection. Edwin had travelled to Sydney with Hugh Wyndham and several other interested local squatters to convince the sympathetic but ultimately non-compliant Premier, Sir Henry Parkes, of the economic potential of the proposed but never-built extension of the railway to Inverell.¹⁰² Though tantalizingly obscure, several other references in the surviving letters, diaries and station accounts hint at the continuing strength of the 'English county gentry squatter' network in New England. The payment of £5.5s.0d in 'expenses to Wilson and Ranken' in mid-1880 suggests a possible connection with the surveyor, George Ranken. Less than three years later, with fellow commissioner Augustus Morris, Ranken was chosen to conduct the thorough but decidedly 'squatter-friendly inquiry into 'the state of the public lands and the laws' which resulted in the repeal of the Robertson Acts and the passage of the revised Land Acts of 1884.¹⁰³

Though the evidence is circumstantial and inferential, it seems likely that the Everett brothers may also have benefited, albeit quite innocently, from their 'friendship' (in both the modern and nineteenth-century definitions of the word) with James Buchanan, the magistrate who, during the late 1870s, served a term as the Commissioner of Lands at Armidale.¹⁰⁴ Buchanan and his wife, a sister of Anna Maria Clerk Mackenzie, were frequent guests at Ollera and also dined often with Edwin at Tenterden. The sisters and their like-minded husbands were close, alternating visits to their respective homes with joint trips to their parents' station, Clerkness.¹⁰⁵ The Wyndham-Everett-Mackenzie-Clerk-Wright connection was to be strengthened even further in 1891 when Arthur Everett married Ollie (Alice Ollera) Mackenzie.¹⁰⁶ Though, as we shall see, the Everetts' links with at least one of George Wyndham's sons were strained almost to breaking point in the difficult 1890s, James Mackenzie and his family's ties to his Wyndham relatives remained strong. Throughout his life Mackenzie corresponded with his widowed sister-in-law Weeta Wyndham Mackenzie,

¹⁰¹ *Everett Records Guyra*: Letter, Edwin to John, 27th August, 1888. His ailments included liver problems, severe asthma and associated dermatitis.

¹⁰² *Everett Records Guyra*, Map showing the route through Ollera and part of Moredun Stations of the proposed Armidale to Inverell Railway, c. 1888. D.N. Jeans, *An Historical Geography of New South Wales to 1901*, Sydney, 1972, p. 188.

¹⁰³ Ollera Station Records, Yearly Balance Book, 1865-92, *UNERA*, A103:V2258, entry dated 30th June 1880; King, *op. cit.*, p. 94

¹⁰⁴ Ollera Station Records, Diary of James Mackenzie, 2nd January, 1870, *UNERA*, A103:V3052/47.

¹⁰⁵ Ollera Station Records, Diary of James Mackenzie, *UNERA*, A103:V3052/40-48; V3053/23-24; V3054/1-12.

¹⁰⁶ *Everett Records Guyra*, Letter, John to Arthur, 9th July, 1891.

who had returned to Dalwood with her children after the death of her husband and the failure of their Central Queensland 'run'.¹⁰⁷ When Weeta's daughter Charlotte May married Albert Andrew Wright in 1872, the young couple wove another influential strand into the network of family and friends which characterized business and personal relationships in nineteenth century Anglo-Australian Society.¹⁰⁸ Scattered entries in Mackenzie's diary show that even before his death the Wrights, whose son later built Armidale's Edwardian 'gem' Booloominbah, frequently made the long trip from Kangaroo Hills (now Wollomombi) on the eastern fringe of the Tableland to visit their extended family at Ollera.¹⁰⁹ Though tenuous and fleeting, a close study of the surviving references provides evidence of the importance of these networks of power and influence. The superintendent's links to the Wyndham and Wright families were strengthened even further by the marriage, to Harold Wright, of his niece Elizabeth Swinton, whose brother Sam took up a station near Tingha in the late 1860s. The Everett-Clerk-Mackenzie-Swinton-Wyndham-Wright connection within the closely-woven network which bound the New England squatting families was ramified by the marriages of Mackenzie's daughters Ethel to R. Robertson of Wellington Vale, Inverell and Ollie to Arthur Everett.¹¹⁰

A cash-poor colonial government increasingly controlled by metropolitan business and professional men who promoted free selection and closer settlement as a means of funding the construction of the roads, railways and bridges which were essential to economic development, was not the only problem faced by the Everetts and their fellow squatters in the 1880s. The long run of good seasons which began in the later 1860s and whose profits permitted the vast investment in land acquisition, homestead building and other infrastructure, fencing, clearing and dam construction which characterized the 1870s, ended abruptly after 1879.¹¹¹ The new decade began badly, when a harsh winter caused the size of the twin stations' flocks to fall from 32,553 in January to 25,373 in September, 1880.¹¹²

The number of shepherds needed to tend the reduced flock also fell, beginning a trend which accelerated as the 1880s drew on. Whereas thirty-one shepherds were employed in 1879

¹⁰⁷ Judith Wright, *Cry for the Dead*, pp 94-129, passim.

¹⁰⁸ Judith Wright, *Generations of Men*, Sydney, 1995, pp 1-2; Davidoff and Hall, 'Family Fortunes', *op. cit.*, passim.

¹⁰⁹ Ollera Station Records, Yearly Balance Book, 1865-92, *UNERA*, A103:V2258, various dates.

¹¹⁰ *Everett Records Guyra*, Memoirs of Ollie Mackenzie Everett: Mackenzie Family Tree, n.p.

¹¹¹ Ollera Station Records, Yearly Balance Book, *UNERA*, V2258; G.L. Buxton, '1870-90', F.K. Crowley (ed), *A New History of Australia*, Melbourne, 1977. pp. 174-5

¹¹² Ollera Station Records, Return of Sheep, 1862-83, *UNERA*, A103:V2255: Cane, *op. cit.*, p. 93.

only twenty-four were needed in 1880 and twenty-three were employed in 1881. Even fewer shepherds were required in 1882 and 1883, eighteen men being employed in each of these years. The retrenchments continued and gathered pace, with sixteen shepherds being needed in 1884 and 1885, fifteen in 1886 and only twelve in 1887. However the real break in the stations' long-established management of their flocks occurred during 1888, when the number of shepherds halved as the station faced the financial stringencies generated by drought, a depressed and cautious international market and, with Mackenzie's death in December 1887, the lack of a suitable replacement. From six in 1888, the number of shepherds fell to three in 1889 and to one in 1890. Despite a brief reversal which reflected the return of a better season in 1891 when five shepherds were needed, the downward trend resumed, with two men being on the books in 1892 and one in each of the years until 1895, when such entries cease. However there was another reason for the steep fall in the number of shepherds employed on Ollera-Tenterden between 1879, when thirty-one men were needed and 1889, when only three shepherds were on the books. This was the Everett brothers' growing preference for paddocking rather than shepherding their flocks. Once again the change was fastest during two of the decade's most difficult two-year periods. These 'break' years came in 1882-3, when the number of paddocks increased from three to seven and in 1884-85, when the increase was from eight to thirteen. The relationship between the three elements of production is clear.¹¹³

Number of Sheep, Shepherds and Paddocks: Ollera-Tenterden, 1879-1895¹¹⁴

Year	Number of Sheep		Weaned Lambs	Shepherds	Paddocks
	Jan.	Sept.			
1879	32,539	33,715	6,629	31	1
1880	32,553	25,373	5,143	24	1
1881	22,011	21,877	4,376	23	1
1882	19,233	19,346	2,212	18	3
1883	19,041	21,773	3,983	18	7
1884	21,136	23,560	4,646	16	8
1885	23,177	22,120	3,255	16	13
1886	21,625	23,005	4,450	15	11
1887	21,821	19,765	3,294	12	13
1888	16,900	11,583	4,168	6	12
1889	9,673	11,266	534	3	12
1890	10,646	10,141	860	1	14
1891	15,708	16,124	1,794	5	15
1892	15,252	14,780	1,392	2	16
1893	14,409	10,283	.....	1	16
1894	13,020	9,841	.....	1	16
1895	8,958	8,303	550	1	16

The 1880 shearing season's wool clip reflected the climatic difficulties of that year, returning only £4,795, which was far less than the £7,294 which was realized in the previous

¹¹³ By 1900 only three per cent of sheep in New South Wales were still shepherded. R. Waterhouse, *The Vision Splendid: A Social and Cultural History of Rural Australia*, Fremantle, 2005, pp. 102-103.

¹¹⁴ Ollera Station Records, Returns of Sheep, 1862-96, *UNERA*, A103:V2275, Cane, *op. cit.*, pp. 93,121.

year.¹¹⁵ The next two years were even worse. Ollera-Tenterden's flock fell by more than one-third when 7,460 sheep perished of scab and intense cold and another 1,460 were sold during 1881. 3,000 animals in a flock of 22,011 sheep perished overnight when a record snowfall came at the end a particularly long and very cold winter. At Stockbridge on 23rd August 1881 Edgar Huntley recorded in his diary, 'Heaviest snow I've ever seen in Australia – over one foot deep'.¹¹⁶ Coming as it did just as the lambing season was about to begin, the toll was heaviest on the breeding ewes, with the result that, even had the 1882 season been good, fewer lambs would have been produced.

Instead, 1882 proved to be even worse, as the station experienced the first of the severe droughts for which the 1880s were long notorious. Although sheep numbers fell again, from 21,877 in September 1881 to 19,233 in January 1882 before rising slightly to 19,346 in the following September, this time it was the cattle which bore the brunt of the drought. The unfortunate beasts were either sold or deliberately 'sacrificed' to preserve the dwindling water supplies for the sheep which were the basis of the stations' prosperity. As a result the cattle herd was virtually halved and its profitability squandered when 1,000 animals were permitted to die of thirst and the 470 beasts which were sold returned only £680 or about £1.9s.0d a head.

¹¹⁷ However the bold management decision paid-off. With their water-supply assured, and even perhaps aided by the severity of the drought which persisted until late-1886, Ollera-Tenterden's sheep numbers rose slightly from their then lowest point in January 1883 to reach 23,005 in September 1886.¹¹⁸ But despite the brief but paradoxically damaging return to good seasons, the death-rate remained high. A severe hailstorm which hit just as the 1886 shearing season ended killed many of the newly-shorn sheep. The increasing and 'unbearable' pressure imposed by the selectors meant that sales also remained heavy. Despite the successful weaning of 7,744 lambs during the two-year period, between January 1886 and January 1888, when the stations' flock fell from 21,625 to 16,900, 4,518 animals died and 6,075 were sold.¹¹⁹

In 1888, the year of the colony's centenary, the Everett brothers had little reason to celebrate. Not only was a government surveyor conducting so thorough an investigation of 'those vacant bits of country' which were as yet unoccupied by the selectors that Edwin feared

¹¹⁵ Ollera Station Records, Yearly Balance Book, *UNERA*, 1865-92, A103:V2258; Wool Book, 75-95, A103:V3053/2; Cane, *op. cit.*, p. 93. Whereas 86,782 lbs of wool, which averaged 1s.8d lb, were sold in 1879, the 66,536 lbs produced in 1880 averaged 1s.4d lb.

¹¹⁶ Ollera Station Records, Diary of Edgar Huntley of Stockbridge, Ollera, 1881, *UNERA*, A103b:V1199/27;

¹¹⁷ Ollera Station Records, 'Annual Returns of Sheep and Cattle' Yearly Balance Book, 1865-92, *UNERA* A103:V2258, Cane, *op. cit.*, p.96.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁹ Ollera Station Records, Yearly Balance Book, 1865-92, *UNERA*, A103:V2258, Cane, *op. cit.*, p. 121.

‘something is in preparation for us’, but the year saw the return and worsening of drought conditions.¹²⁰ Only eighteen-and-a-half inches of rain, or a little more than half central New England’s usual annual average rainfall of about thirty inches, fell in the driest year since European settlement began in the region.¹²¹ The results were again dire, with sheep numbers plummeting to 9,673 in January 1889 and see-sawing thereafter until they settled at 10,141 in September, 1890.¹²² During this two-year period, when sheep numbers reached a thirty year low, 1,003 sheep died, 4,448 were sold, and only 1,404 lambs were weaned; 534 of them in 1889 and 860 in 1890.¹²³ These were the years in which three important elements combined to cause a marked fall in the price and the market for Australian wool. Reduced overseas investment and a decline in demand caused by a downturn in the international economy and by changes in fashion combined to exacerbate the serious imbalance in the domestic industry which had resulted from almost two decades of over-production of wool and the extension of the industry into the deceptive but very marginal far-western plains of New South Wales.¹²⁴ Although, unlike the practice in early decades, the Yearly Balance Book contains only scattered references to the returns from the sale of wool in the 1880s, the progressive reduction in profitability can be easily seen.¹²⁵

1879: Wool realized	£ 7294. 3s.3d
June 1881: Wool realized	£ 4,395. 4s.8d
June 1884: Advance on Wool:	£2,261.14s.0d
1886: Advance on Wool:	£ 830 1s.6d
1887:Advance on Wool:	£ 946. 7s. 9d.

The old ‘saw’ which holds that problems come in threes, or in this case fours, held true for Ollera-Tenterden in the closing years of the 1880s. As if drought, low wool prices and the ever-growing threat to the Everetts’ possession of ‘their’ land were not enough, for the first and at perhaps the worst time in its fifty year history, the station was beset with management problems. When, after three months’ treatment in Sydney, James Mackenzie died of ‘dropsy’ in late November-early December 1887 the partnership lost its mainstay at a time when it most

¹²⁰ *Everett Records Guyra*, Letter, Edwin to John, January 1888.

¹²¹ J.E. Hobbs and I.J. Jackson, ‘Climate’, in Lea, Pigram and Greenwood (eds), *op. cit.*, p. 81. This estimate is highly conservative, first as expert opinion believes the region to have had a higher rainfall in the nineteenth century and secondly as the average is taken from figures for Armidale, which lies below the highest ‘step’ in the Tableland.

¹²² Ollera Station Records, Annual Returns of Sheep, 1862-96, *UNERA*, A103:V2275; Cane, *op. cit.*, p. 121. Sheep numbers were 11,266 in September, 1889 and 10,646 in the following January.

¹²³ Ollera Station Records, Yearly Balance Book, 1865-92, *UNERA*, A103:V2258

¹²⁴ E.A.Boehm, *Prosperity and Depression in Australia, 1887-97*, Oxford, 1971, pp.74-81.

N.G.Butlin, *Investment in Australian Economic Development, 1861-1900*, Cambridge, 1964, pp.166-180, Jeans, *An Historical Geography*, pp.271,276.

¹²⁵ Ollera Station Records, Yearly Balance Book, 1865-92, *UNERA*, A103:V2258.

needed his long experience and sure ‘touch’.¹²⁶ Not only was he a skilled and tireless superintendent, the fifty-eight year-old Anglo-Scot was as successful in the ‘management’ of his strong-minded employers, whose opinions often conflicted, as he was with those he employed. One cannot escape the feeling that the problem-filled 1880s had an adverse impact upon Mackenzie’s health which had been failing since 1883, when terse and widely-spaced entries such as ‘Ill’ and ‘Not at all well’ appear with growing regularity in his increasingly less-informative diary.¹²⁷ Upon her return from Sydney and Mackenzie’s burial in the little graveyard on the hill overlooking the head-station which had been her home for almost thirty years, his widow, Anna Maria, moved with her ten children to the family’s large selection Stratton. Situated on a low-rising spur about two miles across George’s Creek to the north of her old home, the property’s sheep and other livestock were managed as part of the Everetts’ venture.

Arthur Everett, who had left the station on a prolonged visit to his family in England in March 1887, did not return to Ollera until the first quarter of 1888.¹²⁸ To his evident disappointment he did not succeed Mackenzie as superintendent. For several months in 1888, Jim Spurling occupied Mackenzie’s position with little success before Edwin, much to the dismay of his distant senior brothers, installed G.S. Prentice, who not only lacked the requisite management skills but proved to be guilty of grossly misrepresenting his English background and experience. Edwin’s stubborn refusal to accept his elder brothers’ proof that Prentice’s references were bogus, extended to accusing them of ‘slandering’ the man, and brought decades of niggling tension and disagreements about decision-making between the resident and non-resident partners to a head. While acknowledging the need to reduce the number of overseers, John regretted the loss of Johnny Cameron, ‘a very useful man and attached to the station...I think we could have better spared David Judge or Prentice.’¹²⁹ To John’s horror, ‘the scoundrel’ considered the ‘purchase [of] Thomas’ selection on the Big Plain near Stratton ... he might shunt himself there and that would be too near for such a man.’¹³⁰ When after almost two years of poor record keeping, and general mismanagement Prentice left Ollera without his wife and family, he was found to have defrauded the station.¹³¹ Despite his joy at Arthur’s appointment as manager, John was scathing in his assessment of a man who from the outset he had considered to be ‘a rogue’.

¹²⁶ *Everett Records Guyra*, Annotated extract from James Mackenzie’s Diary, entries for 1887.

¹²⁷ *Everett Records Guyra*, Annotated extract from James Mackenzie’s Diary, entries for 1887.

¹²⁸ *Everett Records Guyra*, Letter, John to Arthur, 19th January, 1888.

¹²⁹ *Everett Records Guyra*, Letter: John to Arthur, 20th February, 1890.

¹³⁰ *Everett Records Guyra*, Letter: John to Arthur, 7th November, 1889.

¹³¹ *Everett Records Guyra*, Letters, George to John, 12th March, 1889; John to Arthur, 3rd. July, 1890.

Prentice is fairly out and you fairly in your new billet ... I expect Prentice has left the books in a muddle ... [Arthur's visiting brother] Johnnie says he has cost the station a good deal of money in different underhand ways. He has destroyed all the bills and charged his purchases to the stations' account.¹³²

Prentice's appointment in late 1888 came at the end of a year which had only got worse since it began with Edwin's report that:

... 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.¹³³

Although, despite Edwin's gloom, the recently-introduced practice of stocking the paddocks with larger flocks was proving successful, financial stringency had necessitated the sale 'to neighbour Perrot ... of 115 acres at the old sheep station at Kangaroo Creek', which drained the land on the northern side of George's Creek opposite Tenterden head-station.¹³⁴ These were the circumstances to which Edwin, ageing and increasingly plagued by a multitude of chronic illnesses, returned from lobbying Sir Henry Parkes to report adversely on the performance of two key employees. John Cameron, the sheep overseer, resigned rather than see his annual wage of £80 reduced by £30, while failing health may have forced the head stockman David Judge, whose wage was the same as Cameron's, to accept an even more swingeing reduction of £40.¹³⁵ Though his actions are perhaps understandable given his ill-health and the station's financial problems, Edwin's attitude towards these experienced 'middle-managers' indicates that his judgement was seriously flawed at a time when the stations' future was under threat on several fronts. Since the mid-1880s, the venture had needed regular capital advances from both English partners. On seven occasions between November 1883 and October 1886, George and John sent substantial payments which totalled £5,100.¹³⁶

Nov, 1883:	Cash received from England:	£800
1884:	Cash received from England:	£600
	Cash received from J. Everett:	£200
Jan, 1886:	Cash from England	£900
Jun, 1886:	Money from England:	£600
Sept, 1886:	Cash from England:	£1,000
Oct, 1886:	Cash from England:	£1,000

At the end of the decade, when things were even worse, John was forced to consider giving up the extensive areas of land which were leased on the station and to refuse to renew at

¹³² *Everett Records Guyra*, 4th June, 1890

¹³³ *Everett Records Guyra*, Edwin to John, 7th January, 1888.

¹³⁴ *Everett Records Guyra*, Letters: Edwin to John, one dated late-1888, the other, 31st December, 1888.

¹³⁵ *Everett Records, Guyra*, Remarks on reverse of Report, Edwin to John and George, Employees on 30th June, 1888. David Judge died unexpectedly within two years of this incident. Letter, John to Arthur, 6th November, 1890.

¹³⁶ Ollera Station Records, Yearly Balance Book, 1865-92 *UNERA*, A103:V2258.

least one annual lease whose increased rent he considered exorbitant.¹³⁷ In the event the decision was made for him as his letter ‘crossed’ with one from Edwin which informed his brothers of the imminent passage, in late 1889, of an amendment to the 1884 Land Act. With its publication they would know:

... if we are to be amongst the squatters any longer. Anyhow none of our Runs in the Eastern Division are supposed to be let on lease any more after this year. I hope to be able to put you and George out of your doubts about the Rents within another month.¹³⁸

In the meantime George successfully pulled the strings of the kinship network. He exacted the promise of an unspecified loan from Everett’s bachelor brother, Harry, the London lawyer who had overseen Ollera’s English business until John’s permanent return from Australia. This letter, one of only two written by George which survive from the period, provides evidence that, while he may have played a less active role than his brother John, he nevertheless kept a close eye on the affairs of the station the elder brothers had founded. After commenting on his letter to their ‘old brother, Harry’, he criticized the latest statement of accounts which had arrived from Australia.¹³⁹

The Balance Sheet is very Imperfect and the following Items should have been included...

- £400 in sundries, viz: Half year’s salary to Prentice.

do.	to Arthur
do.	to Prentice’s groom
do.	to Arthur’s hut-keeper
do.	to Huxham [getting paid for nothing unless he is Storekeeper or accountant.]

So great was the elder Everetts’ anxiety over the absence of the detailed accounting which had hitherto characterized Ollera-Tenterden’s book-keeping and in particular over Edwin’s stubborn refusal to face the fact of Prentice’s misrepresentation that each sent a son on a fact-finding mission to Australia. Ostensibly George’s son Willie, who was Edwin’s chosen heir, and John’s son Johnnie, an engineer who later settled at Maclean on the Clarence River east of Grafton, were on extended visits to their uncle, and cousin/brother.¹⁴⁰ In reality, each young man was there ‘to size up Prentice’ for their fathers, whose worst fears proved to be valid.¹⁴¹

¹³⁷ *Everett Records Guyra*, Letter; John to Arthur, 26th December, 1889. ‘One wonders should the lease of the run be taken up again?’

¹³⁸ *Everett Records Guyra*, Letter, Edwin to John, 5th October, 1889.

¹³⁹ *Everett Records Guyra*, Letter, George to John, 12th March, 1889. The Eastern Division, one of three into which New South Wales was divided, comprised the coast, the Tablelands and the Western Slopes. Jeans, *op. cit.*, pp. 284-286.

¹⁴⁰ *Everett Records Guyra*, Letters, John to Arthur, 12th March, 1889; Ollera Station Records, Undated Biographical Notes re Everetts, *UNERA*, A103:V2255 (18 pages from the end of the volume).

¹⁴¹ *Everett Records Guyra*, *loc. cit.*

If, as the saying goes, ‘life’s only real constant is change’, we must now consider the extent to which, after fifty years, the aphorism held true for the Everett brothers and for the paternalist management practices they had imported to Ollera-Tenterden. As we have seen, it was not so with John Everett, who maintained a life-long commitment to the precepts of nineteenth century paternalism. Nor was it so for his younger and still energetic wife, Helen Wauchope Everett who, as John informed Arthur in the early 1890s, attended diligently to her duties as patroness and Evangelical exemplar.¹⁴²

The Mother has just been packing up all the clothes she has got her ladies to make during Lent and a fine heap she has of them – most *useful* garments.

Nor, despite his eccentricity, had Edwin’s basic principles changed greatly. Indeed the arbitrary manner in which he dispensed favour to some employees at the expense of others can be seen as an expression of his ‘self-image’ as a transplanted paternalist ‘governor’. Loss of the patriarch’s favour had replaced the earlier imposition of monetary fines as a punishment tool. Throughout the nineteenth century all three Everett brothers met the challenge of their new environment by modifying and adapting their paternalist practices to suit the conditions which prevailed in each decade. In doing so they never lost sight of the fundamental precepts of their philosophy. Rather it was a matter of which element of the paternalist compound was best suited to the current circumstances. Benevolence came to the fore in good times and ‘enlightened self-interest’ when times were tough.

The latter was the case in the final decades of the century when Ollera-Tenterden faced challenges even greater than those of its foundation years. Nevertheless as his acts of spontaneous generosity demonstrate, Edwin continued to mix benevolence with a harder-edged, self-interest. However, in viewing his responsibilities through the prism of the prevailing conditions, he was following yet another precept which underpinned the non-prescriptive philosophy. This was the freedom given to the individual paternalist to interpret his patriarchal duties to suit his particular situation and advantage. By this yardstick Everett’s first responsibility was to retain his station and as much of its land as he could. In doing so, according to this view, he would benefit both the partnership and its dependent employees.

Though modified to suit the prevailing politico-legal and economic conditions, paternalism was therefore as important a feature of the Everett brothers’ management of Ollera-Tenterden in the last quarter of the nineteenth century as it had been for the fifty years since its foundation. Long-established benevolent practices were still in regular use. The only difference was the extent of such expenditure, which was ‘tailored’ to fit the stations’ financial

¹⁴² *Everett Records Guyra*, Letter, John to Arthur, 30th March, 1893. Emphasis added.

circumstances. ‘Premiums’ continued to be paid, albeit less frequently and only for particularly good results at lambing-time. Garrett Farrell earned £4.5s.0d for his efforts in 1881 and in the previous year ‘lambing and premiums’ had cost £83.8s.4d.¹⁴³ Until their deaths in the late 1880s and early 1890s, ‘pensions’ were paid to valued long-term workmen. The Waterloo veterans George Thorpe and the ‘Old Corporal’ William Crew and the Chinese shepherd Old Sam, received both rations and payments which varied according to status and affordability. Thorpe was paid £35 p.a. until the lean years of the late 1880s and early 1890s when his pension-payments halved. Crew, who consistently received less, was paid £10 in 1888. When the Old Corporal died aged ninety-one in 1888 only Sam Dudman was left to ‘get a bit of ration’. The issue was made even though the old man lived by then ‘in his own house at Wandsworth’.¹⁴⁴

On request, money was still deducted at half-yearly ‘settlement’ and forwarded to employee-selectors’ families in England. In 1888, for example, John Reeves requested that £3.5s.0d should be sent ‘home’ to his mother.¹⁴⁵ Even more importantly, the Everett brothers followed up any over-long delay in the receipt of such money. In mid-1863, for instance, having made repeated attempts to trace the considerable sum of £50.16s.5d which an England-bound acquaintance had promised to deliver to the shepherd Henry Aikens’ mother, Edwin sought his brothers’ help in tracing the missing money.¹⁴⁶ The station also continued to record and settle debts which individual employees ‘ran up’ with their work-mates. The ‘settlement’ for six months’ work done by George Lansley in 1886 provides a typical example. Debts to the value of £5.13s.9d were repaid to Thomas Mitchell, Thomas Jackson and Mrs Read from Lansley’s earnings of £24.7s.6d.¹⁴⁷

Edwin Everett was just as diligent as his elder brothers in fulfilling his duties to the religious, educational and physical welfare of their employees. He continued to make generous donations to the Anglo-Scots Church which stood beside the homestead at Ollera; to the Bishopric, clergy and churches at Armidale and to the town’s hospital. In circumstances which remain all too familiar, Edwin’s offer to sponsor the housing and ‘keep’ of a resident doctor for

¹⁴³ Ollera Station Records, Yearly Balance Book, 1865-92, *UNERA*, A103:V2258, entries for 30th June, 1880 and 31st December, 1881.

¹⁴⁴ Ollera Station Records, Yearly Balance Book, 1865-92, *UNERA*, A103:V2258, Entries for 30th June 1879, 30th June, 1885 and 1886, 12th December, 1888. *Everett Records Guyra*, Letters, Edwin to John, 31st December, 1888; John to Arthur, 31st December, 1888.

¹⁴⁵ *Everett Records Guyra*, Letter, Edwin to John, 13th August, 1888.

¹⁴⁶ Ollera Station Records, Yearly Balance Book, 1865-92, *UNER*, A103:V2258; *Everett Letters Guyra*, Letter: Edwin to John, 11th May 1863.

¹⁴⁷ Ollera Station Records, Station Ledger, 1873-90. *UNERA*, A103:V2263.

Wandsworth was unsuccessful. The following donations which were made to these institutions reflect the financial stringencies of the 1880s:¹⁴⁸

1881:	Clergy, Hospitals and Schools	£60
1882:	Clergy	£14
	Schools	£20
1883:	Church and Hospital	£10
	School	£10
	Subscription to Railway Opening	£ 3
1884:	Station School	£10
1886:	Hospital	£ 2
	English Church	£ 3
1887:	English Church	£ 6
1889:	Rev. F. Morrish, Church Collection	£6.15s. 5d
	per Edwin Everett	£4.10s.11d
1890:	Rev. F. Morrish Stipend ... Anglican	£7
	Rev. T Johnstone Stipend... Pres	£.1. 5s. 0d.

Everett also continued to deduct the donations of 5s.0d, 10s.0d or £1 which were given, for example by John and Daniel Reeves, George Lansley, and Daniel and John Hutton.¹⁴⁹ Other charitable deductions included 10s.0d subscribed by Thomas Mitchell to assist ‘the Widow Quinnell’ and two 10s.0d donations made by John Reeves, the first for ‘the Blindman’ and the second which was even more touching, for ‘Brickey’s grave’.¹⁵⁰

However the ‘self-interest’ component of Ollera-Tenterden’s paternalist regime proved of even greater benefit to the Everett brothers and their employee-selectors during these years. The long-established practice of purchasing potatoes, poultry, dairy goods and small quantities of flour, (£20-worth was bought from Carpendale in early 1884), oats, hay and even excess sheep from shepherd- and selector-families continued throughout and beyond the century. In return selectors were permitted to store their freshly-killed beasts in the stations’ cool-rooms and to purchase from the store extra meat and dry goods, clothing, tobacco, sweets for their children and essential farm supplies such as tools, fencing wire, nails, old iron, and sawn timber, including quantities of North Coast cedar which was used for coffins as well as building.¹⁵¹ The station also earned much-needed revenue from the hire to shepherds and selectors of the services of its stallions, stud bulls and, in particular, of its rams to both shepherds and selectors. During one eight-year period rams alone earned £67.8s.0d.¹⁵² In return, and for a price, these men’s sheep were washed in station’s washpool, shorn in its shed

¹⁴⁸ Ollera Station Records, Station Ledger, 1873-90, *UNERA*, A103:V2263.

¹⁴⁹ Ollera Station Records, Station Ledger, 1873-90, *UNERA*, A103:V2263.

¹⁵⁰ Ollera Station Records, Station Ledger, 1873-90, *UNERA*, A103:V2263.

¹⁵¹ Ollera Station Records. Yearly Balance Book, 1865-92, *UNERA*, A103:V2258.

¹⁵² Ollera Station Records, Yearly Balance Book, 1865-92, *UNERA*, A103:V2258, entries for the years, 1882-90 (1889 excepted).

and drenched in its dip. A selector named Wade paid £6.7s.6d in shearing costs and a further £15.9s.9d to the station store in 1887 and in 1890, Mackenzie's widow, Anna Maria, paid £23.6s.8d in shearing costs.¹⁵³

The selectors' paddocks were ploughed, their hay was mown and their grain was threshed by the station's bullock-drawn machinery. In return, those who were not full-time employees earned much-needed money as shearers, lambers, harvesters, fencers, ring-barkers burr-cutters and drovers; as kangaroo, koala and dingo-shooters and as both long and short-distance teamsters. Even those men who could not yet afford to stock their selections benefited by agisting the Everetts' sheep on their land. Between 1885 and 1887, as the drought deepened and the encroaching selectors closed in, the Everetts spent £56.6s.8d on 'the rent of grass' on a number of unstocked selections.¹⁵⁴ In 1887 Arthur Everett's grassy paddocks earned him £10.13s.4d. These outlays were additional to the quite considerable sums spent by the stations for hire of at least four other much larger selections. Since 1870-80, at a cost of £50 per annum Mackenzie's Stratton had been hired and a crop of hay had been grown by the station. At the end of the decade his daughter Ollie was paid £25 p.a. for the use of her selection, Edgar Huntley's returned £17.2s.0d a year for its occupant and Hugh Kelly's brought him £15 annually.¹⁵⁵

Despite their growing threat, with the short-lived promise of a better season in early 1890, the larger selectors provided other, much-needed sources of income. At least one employee-selector was grazing sheep on the property under the 'halves' system in the late 1880s, from which the station earned £37.15s.6d. The statement of accounts for the two year period ending 30th June 1890 contains the following lucrative transactions.¹⁵⁶

<u>Sales of Sheep to Selectors</u>			
1889:	Ferguson ...	1650 at 5s.0d	£412.10s. 0d.
	Mrs Farrell ..	200 at 5s.0d	£ 50. 0s. 0d
	Chas Prentice	100 at 5s.0d.	£ 25. 0s. 0d
	McGinty (?)	400 at 5s.0d.	£100. 0s. 0d
1890	Rams sold to D[avid] Dawson at £1		£ 5. 0s. 0d
	300 ewes at 5s.6d to W. Wilson		£ 82.10s.0d
	60 ewes at 5s.6d to J[ohn] Jones		£ 16.10s.0d
	662 wethers at 6s.6d to W[illiam] Hutton		<u>£215. 3s.0d</u>
	Total		£907. 1s. 0d

¹⁵³ Ollera Station Records, Yearly Balance Book, 1865-92, *UNERA*, A103:V2258.

¹⁵⁴ Ollera Station Records, Yearly Balance Book, 1865-92, *UNERA*, A103:V2258.

¹⁵⁵ Ollera Station Records, Yearly Balance Book, 1865-92, *UNERA*, A103:2258. After Huntley's suicide in the early 1880s, the selection at Stockbridge, which still bore his name, was occupied first by John Codrington before being sold to a man named Edwin Mayled.

¹⁵⁶ Ollera Station Records, Yearly Balance Book, 1865-92, *UNERA*, A103:V2258.

In 1890, as Ollera-Tenterden emerged from the most-difficult decade in its fifty-year history, at least two of its pressing problems appeared to have been solved. In the event this was only half right as 1889's promised return to better seasons proved short-lived and only the appointment of its new young manager afforded a degree of permanent stability.

Having decided to settle permanently at Ollera, Arthur Everett was eager, after his long apprenticeship, to make a success of his position and to return the station to the prosperity for which his elders had lain the groundwork. As he struggled with the even greater problems which threatened the pastoral industry in the decade ahead, he must often have had to remind himself (albeit through gritted teeth) of his father's advice, which was waiting for Arthur when he returned to Australia in 1888,

I hope you and your Uncle will settle comfortably ... Don't forget as I often tell you he is a man who likes to have his own way and he owns half the station, and has his own notions about management, so you must meet him in every way you can and not dictate to him.¹⁵⁷

¹⁵⁷ *Everett Records Guyra*, Letter, John to Arthur, 19th January, 1888.

