CHAPTER EIGHT

GENERATIONAL CHANGE: OLLERA AND ITS PEOPLE IN THE 1890s

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

John Everett’s advice to his son Arthur, June 1890

You can’t rule but you can perhaps persuade, but don’t run your head against a brick wall and hurt yourself.

John Everett to Arthur, October 1890.1

Despite the frequency with which he advised his son to be cautious in his handling of his difficult uncle, in mid-1890 John Everett could feel more confident about the future of the New England venture to which he had devoted so much of his life. Prentice was gone and despite the trail of unpaid bills, Ollera-Tenterden had survived the two years of poor management which it had endured since James Mackenzie’s death.2 With Arthur Everett’s appointment as manager, not only was Ollera back under the personal control of its founding family but an Everett was once again living at the head-station where it had all begun. Arthur’s decision to make his home at Ollera must have given special pleasure to a father whose inability to spend long days on horseback had thwarted his permanent return to New England. Whilst acknowledging that ‘Uncle Edwin will decide and we shall hear his decision and be unable to advise or suggest’, he expressed his delight at the good news that Arthur’s elder brother had sent from Australia.3

Johnnie reports that you [i.e. Arthur] are now firmly settled as manager at Ollera and, assisted by Alan Cameron who is a good store and accounts keeper, can get on without further help. Ollera is now quit of broken-down swells. I have told Uncle Edwin so and that you and Cameron are enough and that the station has been saved £100 a year…. Prentice has gone leaving bills against the station unpaid. I suggest you identify them separately in the balance sheet. It seems the Prentice family will stick on as long as they can. It is lucky that Mrs Prentice can make herself useful in keeping house.4

The sub-text of many of the letters John Everett wrote to his son during the first half of the 1890s reveals a source of more personal satisfaction. Both the tone

1 Everett Records Guyra, Letters of John Everett, 4th June, 1890; 2nd October, 1890.
2 Everett Records Guyra, John to Arthur, 3rd July, 1890.
3 Everett Records Guyra, John to Arthur, 3rd July, 1890
4 This opportunity and the small ‘private income’ she possessed apparently saved the deserted woman and her children from complete disaster. The continuing friendship and gracious refusal to blame Prentice’s family attests to the generosity and true gentility of the Everett family.
and the frequency of the correspondence which survives from these years show just how much the old man was looking forward to becoming more actively involved in decisions about the management of the station he had helped to found. But none of this would have made Arthur Everett’s life any easier. Indeed, his close relationship to the two self-willed men who, as senior family members and his employers, expected him to heed their often conflicting advice, must often have added an extra difficulty to those endured by his more-experienced predecessor, the canny ‘outsider’ James Mackenzie.⁵

One cannot help but feel sympathy for Arthur and indeed for anyone who managed a pastoral station at the start of the trouble-filled 1890s; and in particular for one who was newly appointed. Having experienced a decade of gradually-falling wool prices and faced with the still unresolved legal and financial problems which resulted from twenty-five years of constantly-revised Land Laws, the pastoralists were unaware of the even greater economic and climatic disasters with which they would soon be confronted. As if the prevailing conditions were not testing enough, Arthur had also to contend with the elder Everett brothers’ long-held dissatisfaction with both their younger, resident brother’s management decisions and his style. An inherently difficult situation was therefore made worse by Ollera’s newly appointed manager’s close relationship to all the protagonists.

Arthur’s letters portray an earnest young man who was doing his best both to please and to match the achievements of a strong-willed, generous and much-loved father. He was also in the all-but impossible position of trying to satisfy the conflicting demands of an equally opinionated and dominant uncle.⁶ Like all John’s children he seems to have shared his father’s deep affection and very real nostalgia for the distant station where in early life the older man had achieved such success. The children had no doubt grown up on their father’s colourful memories of Ollera and surrounded by tangible reminders of his days on the Australian frontier. In young adulthood at least two of Arthur’s siblings paid extended visits to their family’s Australian station. Between the late 1880s and his return to England in 1894-5, Johnnie Everett spent several months working beside his brother as, with his cousin Willie, he ‘sized up’ Prentice. The newly-married engineer, who suffered from the nineteenth century Englishman’s all too common ‘bad chest’, lived for some years in

⁵ Everett Records Guyra, Letters of John, Edwin and Arthur Mackenzie, 1890-95, passim.
⁶ Everett Records Guyra, Letters of Arthur Everett, 1890-95.
northern New South Wales. Disliking the sub-tropical climate of Maclean in the Clarence River Valley and anxious to be closer to family and friends, within a few years the young couple moved to Inverell.\textsuperscript{7} Between late 1891 and mid-1894 John Everett’s daughter Sissie also made an extended visit to Tenterden before travelling home by way of New Zealand.\textsuperscript{8} With their father’s successful example to follow and with the English landed gentry facing an even more uncertain future than it had in the 1830s, both John’s younger sons would have been acutely aware of the need to follow his example. While Douglas, John’s heir, assisted in the management of aristocratic Broadlands Estate in Hampshire, his younger brothers sought to make their fortunes in Australia.\textsuperscript{9} Although each was clearly trying to live up to his father’s example, Arthur’s task was perhaps the more difficult. Whilst under the supportive but nonetheless acute scrutiny of a father who was also the partnership’s business manager, he was quite literally attempting to fill that elderly gentleman’s shoes.

Yet another complication lay in the timing of Arthur’s appointment, which occurred when the brothers were in deep disagreement over two important matters. Edwin’s hurt pride at being so thoroughly duped by Charles Prentice can hardly have been eased by two letters which reached Australia soon after Arthur was made manager. The first, which was written at Edwin’s elder brothers’ instigation and which may have prompted Prentice’s ‘moonlight flit’, came from the man’s supposed previous employer. The late Lord Camperdown’s steward flatly denied all knowledge of Prentice, indeed ‘of any such manager for thirty years or by any other such manager’.\textsuperscript{10} No doubt Edwin found the second letter even less palatable for it focused on his damaging misjudgement.\textsuperscript{11}

Edwin had first informed his brothers of his intention to change the station’s stocking policy in April 1888. His brief note was written on the back of an advertisement for an auction to be held in Armidale which advertised sheep for sale at the following prices: ‘aged, 4s.6d; wethers, 5s.6d to 7s.0d; and ewes, 8s.6d.’\textsuperscript{12}

\textsuperscript{7} Everett Records Guyra, Letter, John to Arthur, 28\textsuperscript{th} April, 1892.
\textsuperscript{8} Everett Records Guyra, Letters, John to Arthur, 16\textsuperscript{th} March, 1893; 19\textsuperscript{th} April, 1894.
\textsuperscript{10} Everett Records Guyra, Letter, John to Arthur, 20\textsuperscript{th} February, 1890.
\textsuperscript{11} Everett Records Guyra, Letters, John to Arthur, 20\textsuperscript{th} February, 1890.
\textsuperscript{12} Everett Records Guyra, Auctioneer’s notice dated 19\textsuperscript{th} April, 1888.
Chronically short of ready money and impressed by the reduced labour-costs and increased profitability which he was convinced would result from the heavier fleeces produced by the wethers, Edwin had decided to sell the stations' breeding ewes. Full of enthusiasm for his 'all wether' plan, he wrote,

[There is] no shortage of available stock and it is cheaper than breeding. Lambs take eighteen months till first shearing and one is running the risk of dipping, dosing and the loss of their mothers all for half as much wool as from the same number of wethers that can be paddocked all year at half the expense.  

Edwin's ingrained dislike of any involvement in the management of the sheep probably also played a part in his desire to change to a less demanding and labour-intensive system. However in reaching this decision he was also following the received wisdom of the day. To counter the decade's slight but steady decline in the price of wool in the 1880s, many squatters were anxious to maximize their profits by simultaneously raising productivity and lowering costs. Taking advantage of the British and European investment capital with which the eastern Australian colonies were awash until the last decade of the century, they pushed their sheep into the more marginal far west of New South Wales and southern Queensland. The outcome was rapid erosion as drought, widespread clearing and an ever-worsening plague of rabbits increased the impact of the close-cropping, hard-hoofed sheep on the regions' thin soils. As a result, not only was the industry's domestic imbalance worsened but wool prices continued to fall as an increasingly depressed overseas market was glutted with poorer-quality Australian wool.  

Although John Everett could not have foreseen the eventual outcome of the widespread preference for the 'all wether' flock, he was stubbornly convinced of the long-term benefits to be gained by continuing to breed sheep at Ollera-Tenterden. With George's support he argued, rightly as it turned out, that the potential gains from the wethers' sale would be eaten up by the cost of restocking. The long-distance argument, which coincided with the disagreement over Prentice, continued for more than two years. Aware that it would probably arrive too late, but alarmed by Edwin's announcement that he intended to sell all the stations' ewes and lambs at 4s.3d a head and to replace them with similarly low-priced wethers, in early 1891, John sent his

---

13 Everett Records Guyra, loc. cit.
son a copy of a letter in which he protested Edwin’s decision to follow Frank Wyndham’s advice.\(^{15}\)

…I think it will turn out to be a great mistake. It is a great pity [Edwin] cannot be content to let things go on as they have done for the last fifty years and our sheep have done well as any sheep in the country so long as they were managed as they began and went on for years. All wethers will as everybody knows throw off the greatest weight and quantity of wool of any class but the wool is all you get, no lambs to keep the stock up as the wethers grow old and have to be sold and when they are sold the money you get for them will not buy the same number to stock up with, but you must pull out the money you have pocketed for the wool to help pay the higher prices you have to pay. \textit{I should like to have a talk with Frank Wyndham upon this point.}\(^{16}\)

Within a few weeks his fears were realized when, only a few months after Arthur’s appointment, Edwin went ahead with the purchase. Against his partners’ wishes, sight unseen and with George Wyndham’s son Frank as intermediary, he agreed to pay, on six months’ terms, about £4,550 for 7,000 wethers from the Upper Hunter Valley. The sheep, which were to be delivered at the end of the year, were bred at Cassilis by a pastoralist named Busby, and were undoubtedly prime stock.\(^{17}\)

When shorn they ‘cut fine big fleeces which averaged seven pounds in weight’.\(^{17}\) However, faced with the need to sell the stations’ existing stock at knock-down prices to accommodate them, John was furious. He was implacably opposed to Edwin’s ‘most rash act, …a scrape’ from which he hoped Edwin would ‘escape by getting Wyndham to sell some to another particular friend’.\(^{18}\) The increasingly acrimonious argument raged over and about the head of the unfortunate Arthur, who must have longed for some peace in which to get on with his work and look forward his approaching marriage to Ollie Mackenzie.\(^{19}\) John’s letters reveal the depth of the disagreement. When first informed of Edwin’s high-handed action, he responded furiously,

The news … I find breathtaking. Where are we to find both money and Run for them? It is a very risky speculation. With the Rents and the future of the Run unsettled it is just blind speculation.\(^{20}\)

\(^{15}\) Everett Records Guyra, Letter, John to Arthur, 22\textsuperscript{nd} March, 1891. Emphasis added.

\(^{16}\) Everett Records Guyra, Letters, John to Arthur, 1\textsuperscript{st} January, 1891; 2\textsuperscript{nd} February, 1891; 23\textsuperscript{rd} July, 1891.

\(^{17}\) Everett Records Guyra, Letters, John to Arthur, 31\textsuperscript{st} July, 1890; 12\textsuperscript{th} December, 1891.

\(^{18}\) Everett Records Guyra, John to Arthur, 18\textsuperscript{th} September, 1890. Original emphasis.

\(^{19}\) Everett Records Guyra, John to Arthur, 23\textsuperscript{rd} July, 1891

\(^{20}\) Everett Records Guyra, John to Arthur, 31\textsuperscript{st} July 1890.
He was even more concerned a few months later when he feared that even at 6s.3d a head, the prospective sale of Ollera-bred wethers would not cover the cost of the Cassilis sheep. To make things worse,

On July 1st we had £926 in two [English] Banks, all of which will be needed if the 7,000 wethers are bought. If Edwin is considering the wool money at the London and Wiltshire Bank he’ll break us there. That is for the new Rents, and some over.  

John was undeterred by two letters in which Edwin expressed his ‘dislike of his strong language [at the decision] to buy a large number of sheep when he [Edwin] had no money at his command to pay for them and no run to put them on’. Furthermore, he expected his brothers to have more confidence in his management. Unwisely, Edwin went on to inform his brothers that ‘sheep management is quite different now than in our [John and George’s] day’. Nevertheless, he agreed albeit very unwillingly to continue breeding ‘to please John’. Cut to the quick, John replied that only the introduction of paddocks was different and that,

Despite Edwin’s poor opinion of my knowledge of new conditions, for twenty years I was looked upon as one of the best managers of sheep in New England and that our sheep and wool bore comparison with any in New England barring those few squatters who imported expensive rams and who were extra careful in the culling of ewes. Now I have said my say about the sheep question. I hope that Edwin will have had his fling and will get out of the mess without crippling us.  

With that said and having gained two important concessions from Edwin, first to retain the breeding ewes and then to pay, if not ‘half the cost’, a substantial part of the money owed on the new wethers, John calmed down enough to praise his son’s efforts.  

I would not advise selling the Cassilis sheep if we had the money and the Run -but to pay off £2,275 you will have to sell nearly all our present stock except the ewes and hoggets, some cattle and dip pretty heavily in the wool money of this year and then what will you have to carry on with? I am sorry as you have just got things in paying order and I am sorry for Edwin as I expect he will have to repent his rash act. I will be pleased if you can manage without crippling Ollera and without touching the wool account. I will be thankful and will think you have done well.

Arthur had indeed done well. He had reduced overheads by employing fewer men at the head-station and in doing so had saved the money needed to replace that ‘triumph of bush mechanics’, Ollera’s original home-made wool press.  

---

21 Everett Records Guality, John to Arthur, 18th September, 1890.
22 Everett Records Guality, Letter, John to Arthur, 6th November, 1890.
23 Everett Records Guality, loc. cit.
24 Emphasis added.
year despite heavy rain, some flooding and a severe hail-storm at Tenterden, shearing was successfully completed without antagonizing the recently-unionized and more-militant shearsers who that year, for the first time, were using the newly-introduced machine shears. Better still, after hours of painstaking work, Arthur had restored order to the stations’ accounting system. As the Yearly Balance Book demonstrates, the hitherto meticulous record-keeping had been woefully neglected in the years after Mackenzie’s death. In the interim, bills were missing, neither back wages nor some outstanding debts had been paid and insufficient details had been kept of the payments which had been made. But by May 1890, having settled these outstanding accounts and established the firm’s position with the local bank, Arthur had provided his father with a ‘clear balance sheet’. He had also just informed John of his intention to begin a breeding program, in preparation for which he had taken inventory of the stations’ ewes. After ‘careful culling and sorting for size and fleece’ he had assembled a flock of 2,000 ewes which he planned to put to several good, young rams (‘old rams make weak lambs’) which he intended to hire from Auburn Vale Station near Inverell. As Arthur’s program followed the guidelines which had previously been laid down by his father, John Everett had clearly been closely involved in its planning.

Arthur must therefore have been just as disappointed and if possible even more frustrated than John by his Uncle’s unilateral decision. Not only were weeks of careful planning undone but, at a time when New South Wales’ finances were threatened by the resounding crash which announced the end of the highly-speculative Victorian Land Boom, the station was barely breaking even. In January 1891, when John noted that with only £300 in his Australian bank account Arthur, ‘was cutting it very fine’, he sent the disheartening news that, as Edwin had already taken most of the money advanced on the season’s wool, not much extra had been earned at the

---

26 Everett Records Guyra, Letters, John to Arthur, 6th November, 1890; John to Arthur, 28th April, 1892.
27 Everett Records Guyra, Letters, John to Arthur, 4th June, 1890; 18th November, 1890; 4th December, 1890.
28 There is a noticeable difference in the detail with which the records for 1888 and 1889 were kept, suggesting that the debits and credits for these years were probably compiled from information that was available to Arthur Everett in the early 1890s.
29 Everett Records Guyra, Letter, John to Arthur, 4th June, 1890.
30 Everett Records Guyra, Letter, John to Arthur, 22nd March, 1891.
sales in England. He stressed the need to retain the substantial sum (£1550 in 1890-91) which for years had been held in reserve to pay any back rents imposed by the colonial government. However Everett promised his son that if he was unable to sell more sheep he would send him another £400 or £500, the latter sum being despatched at the end of the year.  

Though far from unexpected, there was even more bad news. Not only was Arthur faced with the need to find £2,275 to pay for the unwelcome wethers, but to make matters worse, their impending arrival on the station was preceded in the winter of 1891 by the official proclamation that Ollera’s lease had lapsed and that the run had been thrown open to the selectors.  

By the end of the previous year it was thought that cattle would need to be sold as ‘most of the upper run [had] gone to the selectors’. A few months later when ‘the free selectors were pressing hard’, Arthur was forced to move the sheep from the outstation at the Ten Mile. However John doubted that the selection of the ‘not very choice land’ at Austin’s shepherding station would prove successful unless it was acquired to add to better country. In the meantime, at a total cost of £62.3s.4d, Arthur was doing his best to protect the station by acquiring land in strategic locations. By this means, 200 acres of land were taken up at Highfields selection under Conditional Purchase, a survey was underway on land at Baldersleigh, a Conditional Lease had been granted at Edgars, and in an attempt ‘to block the cattle-stealing selectors there’, an Annual Lease had been taken out over land at The Falls outstation. With the express purpose of blocking a member of the Mitchell family of employee-selectors, the station had also taken up land at Happy Valley in Ollera’s north-eastern ‘corner’.

Two further problems added to the general confusion. The first uncertainty was with the fate of the half of the station’s acreage which had been resumed for reserves under the 1884 Act. Could the land still be leased annually by the station or would it be made available for selection? The second problem lay with the selection

---

34 Everett Records Guyra, Letter, John to Arthur, 6th November, 1890.
35 Everett Records Guyra Letter, John to Arthur, 15th June, 1892.
37 Everett Records Guyra, Letters, John to Arthur; 22nd March, 1892; 24th November, 1892.
process itself. As many new selectors had been granted land that had previously been allocated to others, the provenance of many blocks was uncertain.\(^{38}\)

Although the situation had become a little clearer when, in February 1891, Edwin had ‘at last’ provided John with of a detailed statement of the Everetts’ joint and private landholdings, money remained the stumbling block. While it was clear that if the selectors were made to fence their blocks, the stations would still have enough land on the ‘upper run’ to accommodate their cattle, the Everetts could not afford to meet their share of the fencing costs.\(^{39}\) Yet, though the decision had still not been made, the partnership’s Australian solicitor believed it unlikely that, without the passage of an enabling Act, the colonial government could legally collect back rents from the squatters. In the end this proved to be correct, although the possibility dragged on, tying-up the reserved funds until 1894.\(^{40}\) However, Edwin’s ‘very full account’ has also given later researchers a valuable insight into the extent of the Everett brothers’ land holdings in the early 1890s and the various titles under which it was held. By Edwin’s reckoning they possessed:

> jointly or separately... in all more than 18,000 acres of land under the heads of freehold selections, conditional leases and annual leases- that is a good bit even if we should lose the outside run.\(^{41}\)

At the end of the first quarter of 1891, the 7,000 wethers having arrived from Cassilis late in the previous year, there were at least 17,438 sheep on the station, 15,356 of which had been shorn, at a cost of £191.10s.2d.\(^{42}\) The flock contained 2,460 breeding ewes, while 954 other sheep which were being grazed under a ‘halves’ agreement with a selector named W. Wilson, earned the station £74.16s.8d.\(^{43}\) The stations’ remaining livestock consisted of 1,700 cattle and ninety-six horses. In the following March, with the long-delayed Cassilis sheep at Ollera-Tenterden, the stations paddocks were ‘overflowing’ with animals whose wool was sold in London at an average price of 1s.1d. per pound.\(^{44}\) The Sheep Book kept by Colin Campbell, the current overseer, shows that they were located at nineteen different ‘stations’, although very few of these were under the control of shepherds. Although nine of

---

\(^{38}\) *Everett Records Guyra*, Letter, John to Arthur, 10\(^{th}\) December, 1891.

\(^{39}\) *Everett Records Guyra*, Letter, John to Arthur, 5\(^{th}\) February, 1891.

\(^{40}\) *Everett Records Guyra*, Letters, John to Arthur, 5\(^{th}\) February, 1891; John to Arthur, 8\(^{th}\) May, 1894.

\(^{41}\) *Everett Records Guyra*, Letter, John to Arthur, 5\(^{th}\) February, 1891.


\(^{43}\) *Everett Records Guyra*, Letter, John to Arthur, 5\(^{th}\) February, 1891, 12\(^{th}\) November, 1891; Ollera Station Records, Yearly Balance Book, 1865-92, *UNERA, A103:V2258*; Edwin calculated the number of sheep at 18,443 in February 1891.

\(^{44}\) *Everett Records Guyra*, Letter, 12\(^{th}\) November, 1891.
these ‘stations’ carry a man’s surname, the £168.11s.0d which the stations’ shepherds earned during 1891 suggests that five men were employed as full or part-time shepherds in that year. Men such as Tom Carpendale, John Jones, John Edgar and David Judge were selector-shepherds who as permanent or seasonal workers provided a valuable service to the stations. Colin Campbell’s record which shows the number, type and distribution of Ollerag-Tenterden’s sheep in March 1891 and August-November 1892 provides a ‘snapshot’ of conditions on the sister stations at a critical point in their history.  

| Record of Sheep contained on Ollerag-Tenterden: 31st March, 1891, and 8th August, 1892 |
|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| March 31st, 1891: 19 Stations | 17,438 sheep | 8th August, 1892: |
| 1. Shinglehurst | 2,002 | 1,738 sheep |
| 2. Wattle | 902 | |
| 3. Nels Plains | 1,846 | 843 |
| 4. Willow | 1,143 | | |
| 5. Road Paddock | 115 | 72 |
| 6. Highfields | 1,020 | 764 |
| 7. McCormack | 1,083 | 969 |
| 8. Percy | 1,160 | | |
| 9. Long Paddock | 681 | | |
| 10. Baxter Paddock | 59 | 772 |
| 11. Stockbridge | 734 | 643 |
| 12. Rations Ollerag | 448 | | |
| 13. Jones: 2 & 3-yr old wethers | 1,161 | 942 |
| 14. Pompey’s Paddock | 1,260 | 399 |
| 15. Woolshed: 2, 3 & 4-yr old ewes | 1,340 | 1 yr old ewes: 1,686 |
| | | 2-yr old ewes: | 1,337 |
| 16. Charlton | 646 | [11,748] |
| 17. Chas Jones: 2-yr old wethers | 1,075 | |
| 18. Carpendale: 2-yr old wethers | 1,087 | Mt. Selim* Station fr. 30th Nov 1892: 1,094 |
| 19. Washpool | 1,245 | |
| | | 17,438 |

Edgars Paddock 1,071
Fawl’s Station 104
Judges Paddock 871

Dead: 192; Rations: 35; 15,098

The inclusion of the selectors’ names on Campbell’s list shows how Arthur Everett coped with the influx of sheep from Cassils. Taking advantage of the six months’ delay in settlement, he extended a practice which had been in use at Ollerag-Tenterden since the mid-1870s. Both parties to the agreement benefited from the plan to agist the stations’ sheep on land which lay vacant after being taken-up by the many ex-shepherds who could not afford to stock their selections. John Everett met his

---

45 Ollerag Station Records, Returns of Sheep, 1891-1901, UNERA, A103:V3053/25
*Although knowledge of its exact location has been lost, this station was apparently located close to the ridge-top from which the Everett brothers were first shown the ‘sweet water’ which gave their ‘run’ its name.
son’s successful solution to the problem with a mixture of approval and relief. After reporting that, as interest rates were sure to rise, he could deposit £500 in the stations’ account with the Bank of Australasia ‘by Xmas’, reducing thereby the amount Arthur would need to borrow, he expressed his delight at the news that in New England,\textsuperscript{46} ....the paddocks are now white with clover and the stock are getting fat, [and] you hope to have cattle fat enough for rations... Where you find room for all [the sheep] puzzles me. The Queen’s wasteland would help out and the selectors who cannot afford to stock their Selections would I should think be glad to let you have the grass which they cannot use. I should think you will be able to make terms with them to keep and shepherd a flock as they cannot afford to buy them.

However, by mid-1892 the situation was again causing alarm to an old man who had lived through very similar circumstances in the early 1840s. Not only had Arthur reported that ‘1lb of butter is the same price as a sheep (to whit 2s.0d. to 2s.6d)’, but neither New England’s sheep nor its cattle were fat enough to boil down for tallow. To add to their woes, in response to the failure of the colonial banks the bottom had fallen out of the London wool market. While the ninety-six bales which were sold in April realized ‘a fair price for the present state of the market’, the seventy bales which were offered for sale in the following June proved disappointing.\textsuperscript{47}

\begin{center}
12\textsuperscript{th} April, 1892: \textbf{Wool Prices:} 96 Bales per \textit{Brilliant}
\begin{tabular}{|l|l|l|}
\hline
Hoggets & 12 bales & 9\d
\hline
Long and fine & 18 bales & 19d
\hline
Long and fine & 37 bales & 8\d
\hline
Long and fine & 9 bales & 8\d
\hline
Long and fine & 11 bales & 8\d
\hline
No 42: Rams & 9 bales & 19d
\hline
\end{tabular}
\end{center}

\begin{center}
16\textsuperscript{th} June, 1892: \textbf{Wool Prices:} 70 Bales per \textit{Yallaroi}
\begin{tabular}{|l|l|l|}
\hline
14 bales long wool & 8\d
\hline
41 bales fine wool & 8\d
\hline
13 bales second [wool] & 7\d
\hline
2 bales second [wool] & 7d
\hline
\end{tabular}
\end{center}

Fortunately, two half-sheets of note-paper which were lodged between unused pages at the back of the Yearly Balance Book 1865-92 have survived to provide valuable information on the stations’ financial standing and also details of the extent and profitability of its wool-clip in the previous year. Written on both sides of John Everett’s pale blue notepaper and sized for easy inclusion in his current letter to Arthur, the notes combine a statement of accounts with an \textit{aide memoire}.\textsuperscript{48}

\begin{footnotes}
\item[46] \textit{Everett Records Guyra,} Letters, John to Arthur, 12\textsuperscript{th} November, 1891; 10\textsuperscript{th} December, 1891. Emphasis added.
\item[47] \textit{Everett Records Guyra,} Letters, John to Arthur, 28\textsuperscript{th} April, 1892; 16\textsuperscript{th} June, 1892.
\end{footnotes}
Insert 1-Obverse: Statement of 4 Quarterly account from 7th March 1890 to 1st April 1891

1890:  
Balance Dr  £240.11s.9d
First Quarter to 30th June  £232.12s.2d
Second Quarter to 30th Sept  £588.3s.6½d
Balance Cr.  £1,061.7s.5½d

1891  
Quarter Ending 31st March  £1,142.19s.9d
Proceeds of 149 Bales nett  £2,129.6s.5d

Deduct Dr as above  £1061.7s.5½d
£2210.18s.8½d

Insert 1-Reverse: The nett proceeds of 149 Bales sold in London  £2,156.10s.2d
Less Sea Insurance Paid in Sydney  £27.8s.9d
£2,129.0s.5d

Insert 2-Obverse: 18 Bales [aboard] Neotsfield: 7 Bales 1,167lbs [sold] @ 1s. 2½d
9 Bales [aboard] Deveron: 8 Bales 2.021lbs [sold] @ 11 d
1 Bale 286lbs [sold] @ 9½d
Locks scoured in Sydney

Insert 2-Reverse: The sale expenses in England on the 149 Bales is (sic) £166.12s.7d so if you could find out the price in Sydney and London at the same date you would see which way was the best market last year.

The more general nature of the regular statements in the Yearly Balance Book for the early 1890s makes it impossible to be certain about the number of people employed on Ollera-Tenterden during these years. However the statements, which by then were compiled quarterly, record both the types of work for which people were employed and, in some cases, the numbers of individuals engaged in a given task.\(^{49}\) The number of shepherds employed fell from five in 1891, to two in 1892 and to one in 1893. Rendered superfluous by paddocks, these men were replaced by stockmen, one boundary-rider having been estimated to have done the work of four shepherds.\(^{50}\) (See Appendix P, below) While, unfortunately, the table below is not a definitive record of the number of employees engaged in every category of work, it nevertheless provides several valuable insights into the nature of the working year at Ollera-Tenterden. Spanning fifteen months, the table details payments for work done during the last five quarterly periods recorded in the Yearly Balance Book, 1865-92. Several important features are immediately apparent. First, the marked similarity between the kinds of payments that were made to those which, fifty years before and a world

---

\(^{49}\) Ollera Station Records, Yearly Balance Book, 1865-92, UNERA, A103:V2258, Quarterly Balance Statements, 30th Mar, 1891 to 30th June, 1892.

away, John Everett had so diligently recorded before leaving Wiltshire for Australia. While, of necessity men were still hired on an annual, seasonal or daily basis, their payments also rose and fell according to the needs of the season and the intensity or greater difficulty of the particular task. For example although by 1891-2 paddocks had almost entirely replaced the shepherd and his dog, only a few years before different payments had been made for shepherding work performed during winter and summer. For example, while George Lansley was hired at an annual wage of £52 in 1885, his pay was calculated quarterly. His earnings of £1 per week during the six ‘summer’ months fell to 17s.6d per week during the ‘winter’. 51 (See Appendix R)

While the wages paid to some full-time workers remained unchanged throughout the fifteen-month period studied, the earnings of other permanent employers were also apparently calculated quarterly. In accordance with the rhythms of the rural year and with the long established English practice with which the founding partners were so familiar, earnings were higher during busy seasons than in quieter months. 52 Those who were paid at an annual rate included Ollera’s manager, Arthur Everett, its carpenter W. Grattan, its ploughman J. Heffernan and J. Johnson, the boy-of-all-work who did the milking at the head-station. By contrast, despite working all year round, the storekeepers at each head-station, the sheep overseer, the stockman and the house-servants appear to have been paid on a quarterly basis. However in the latter case it is possible that the variations in the payments recorded were caused by the changes to the number of servants employed rather than the individual servant’s wage. Both ‘piece’ and task work also remained common, with payments being calculated on both daily and weekly rates, by the satisfactory completion of prescribed quantities of work and also by the individual difficulty of the task. For example, whereas threshers were paid by the bushel, the horse and bullock-driver, Patrick Heffernan, received payments by both the task and the week, while the earnings of the men who ring-barked trees near the Shingle Hut paddock probably varied according to the size and difficulty of the trees they attacked.

Exception in one major respect, the replacement of free-ranging shepherds with paddocks and stockmen, many of the stations’ work and management practices therefore appear to have changed little in the half-century since Ollera’s foundation.

51 Ollera Station Records, Station Ledger 1873-90, UNERA, A103:V2263.
However two other significant changes are apparent. The first concerns the type of work women performed. Having proved their worth as shepherds and hut-keepers in the labour-starved 1840s and 1850s, taking up jobs that were previously reserved for males, they had once again been relegated to their traditional female roles. As servants or as cooks and washer-women during the shearing season they were assigned the secondary, though none the less important role of helpmeet. The source of the two women seasonal workers' income also varied. Whereas Mrs Wilson, who cooked for the shepherds during shearing, was apparently paid by the station, each shearer contributed to Mrs Campbell’s wage.

Like the prevalence of ring-barking, the second noticeable change was to the environment. Both the cost and the regularity of briar-cutting, which increased markedly throughout the last quarter of the nineteenth century, reflected the impact of European land management and of introduced plants and animals on a fragile environment.  

---

**Occupations and Wages Paid at Ollera-Tenterden: June, 1891 to September, 1892.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>June 91</th>
<th>Sept 91</th>
<th>Dec 91</th>
<th>Mar 92</th>
<th>June 92</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Manager</td>
<td>£50</td>
<td>£50</td>
<td>£50</td>
<td>£50</td>
<td>£50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Storekeepers O &amp; T</td>
<td>£16</td>
<td>£16</td>
<td>£21</td>
<td>£16</td>
<td>£16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sheep Overseer(s)</td>
<td>£15</td>
<td>£15</td>
<td>£16</td>
<td>£15</td>
<td>£15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blacksmith O</td>
<td>£17/19/</td>
<td>£20/5/-</td>
<td>£20/5/-</td>
<td>£20/5/-</td>
<td>£20/5/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carpenter O</td>
<td>£10</td>
<td>£10</td>
<td>£10</td>
<td>£10</td>
<td>£10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shepherds</td>
<td>£43/15/-</td>
<td>£44</td>
<td>£31/18/9</td>
<td>£17/10/-</td>
<td>£17/10/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stockman</td>
<td>£6/13/4</td>
<td>£10</td>
<td>£10</td>
<td>£8/4/6</td>
<td>£8/4/6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ploughman O</td>
<td>£13</td>
<td>£13</td>
<td>£13</td>
<td>£13</td>
<td>£13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Horse Driver O</td>
<td>£11/7/6</td>
<td>£14/10/-</td>
<td>£11/7/6</td>
<td>£13</td>
<td>£11.7/6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Horse Driver T</td>
<td></td>
<td>£12/7/6</td>
<td></td>
<td>£11/7/6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boy Milking etc at Ollera</td>
<td>£7/16/-</td>
<td>£7/16/-</td>
<td>£7/16/-</td>
<td>£7/16/-</td>
<td>£7/16/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Servants O</td>
<td>£11/3/-</td>
<td>£11/10/-</td>
<td>£18/11/-</td>
<td>£14/10/-</td>
<td>£11/3/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haymaking Man</td>
<td></td>
<td>£6/12/-</td>
<td></td>
<td>£3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thrashing at 1/- [bushel]</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>£1/6/-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Briar Cutting</td>
<td>£20/3/-</td>
<td>£17/15/-</td>
<td>£20/3/-</td>
<td>£20/3/-</td>
<td>(6 mths)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ringbarking at Edgars &amp; Highfield</td>
<td>£32/7/2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mrs Cameron, Shps' Cook</td>
<td>£1/19/-</td>
<td>£1/19/-</td>
<td>£1/19/-</td>
<td>£1/19/-</td>
<td>£1/19/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mrs Williams, Shrs' Cook</td>
<td></td>
<td>£2/16/-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Shearing: Total Cost</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>£154/5/0½</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wool Pressing</td>
<td>£8/5/7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wool Rollers</td>
<td>£15/16/6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tar Boys</td>
<td>£8/13/0½</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rouseabouts</td>
<td>£4/10/-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W. Moore Carrying Wool to Guyla</td>
<td>£4/18/6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Horse Drivers Expenses</td>
<td>£2/10/-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fencing:</strong> J. McDonald for half fence erected at Highfield</td>
<td>£5/3/1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P. Heffernan for pulling &amp; erecting 1 mile 27 chains 32 links</td>
<td>£29/6/-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P. Heffernan on Stony (sic) at £1 per week</td>
<td>£8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P. Heffernan for driving bullocks for same</td>
<td>£15/-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ringbarking:</strong> at back of Shingle Hut at 9d</td>
<td>£10/4/-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ringbarking at back of Shingle Hut at 10d</td>
<td>£2/1/8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

If Arthur Everett’s appointment as Ollera’s manager came at a bad time, the
timing of his enforced decision to borrow from the colonial banks was even worse. 54
By mid-1892, shortly after the decision was made that Ollera-Tenterden’s existing
flock should not be ‘sacrificed’ at the going price of 4s.3d. per head, the eastern
Australian colonies had been plunged into deep depression. Local credit was
exhausted when British investors, already made nervous by Barings’ involvement in
financial crisis in Argentina, were panicked even more by the crash which ended the
Victorian land-boom. As the situation worsened, a ‘run’ on the banks closed twelve
of New South Wales’ twenty-one lending institutions during April and May, 1892.
When the nine survivors reopened for business six weeks later, the Bank of
Australasia was one of the two major Anglo-Australian institutions still solvent. 55
However the Australasia’s survival had indeed been ‘a close run thing’ and John
Everett was rightly astonished to learn of the Australian branch’s delay in processing
his deposit. But once again, the Everett brothers had reason to be glad of their
family’s close connection to London’s bankers. 56

Meanwhile, all pastoralists were affected by circumstances which made the
rural land on which the colonial economies depended all-but unsaleable, and those
pastoralists who raised sheep were particularly hard hit. The financial crisis’ impact
was worsened by over-production and over-extension which combined to decrease
quality and depress even further the prices offered by a sluggish overseas market. 57
Between 1892-94 many sheepmen who had mortgaged themselves to the hilt to make
land purchases and expensive ‘improvements’ such as buildings, fencing, clearing and
dam construction to withstand the free selectors, were obliged to surrender their
stations to the bank. The Swintons and the Sydney Darbys, the Tingha district
squatters both of whom were close friends of the Everettts, were among those who
were bankrupted. The selectors were just as hard hit. However, as Lane’s study of the
selectors at Saumarez Ponds has shown, most small landholders in the Armidale
district were indebted to the town’s storekeepers, who acted as de facto bankers for
the struggling farmers. 58

54 de Garis in Crowley, op. cit., pp. 218-219
55 Ibid.
56 Everett Records Guyra, Letter, John to Arthur, 6th September, 1893
57 de Garis, op. cit., pp. 220-223; Sinclair, op. cit., p. 150
Purchase Register, UNERA, 33/5138
Although their situation caused real concern during the years 1892 and 1894, just as they had in the crisis of the 1840s the Everett brothers avoided the disaster which overtook so many of their less prudent and less well-backed fellow squatters. While the question of the back rents was not finally resolved in the squatters’ favour until 1894, John Everett seems to have been certain enough of the outcome to release at least some of the reserved money to the station’s use, adding it to the better prices being realized ‘as times go, for the fine, soft, good fleeces’ which resulted from the dipping of the stations’ sheep.\textsuperscript{59} Nevertheless their situation was very worrying. Not only were the station’s money and Arthur’s meagre private savings frozen by the closure and reconstruction of the colony’s banks, but Sissie Everett was denied access to the money she needed to return to England. Long-standing family-kinship networks were severely strained when an over-extended Frank Wyndham was declared bankrupt. To John Everett’s disgust and disappointment, the entrepreneurial son of the respected George Wyndham transgressed even further when he defaulted on the payment of cattle that he had purchased from his father’s closest friends.\textsuperscript{60}

The seriousness of Ollera-Tenterden’s situation in the four years after late 1891 is perhaps best illustrated by the steep decline in the size of its flock. Sheep numbers literally halved between September 1891, when the station contained 16,124 sheep, and September 1895 when 8,303 animals were reported.\textsuperscript{61} 1892 and 1893 were the worst years, their September counts being 14,780 and 10,283 sheep respectively. The decline continued throughout the following two years during which the number of sheep on the station fell by another 1,980 animals. Of the 6,283 reduction in the flock’s numbers during 1892 and 1893, 4,479 sheep died and the remaining 3,596 were sold, mainly for their skins and tallow.

Once again the problem was caused by the Cassilis sheep. The sturdy, well-woollen animals from the warmer and dryer Upper Hunter failed to thrive in the harsher climate of the high plateau. Worse, within two years of their arrival approximately 2,000 of the expensive animals were dead. Fearing that the losses would be even greater if the survivors spent the approaching winter on the station, the remaining animals were sold off ‘at 2s.6d per head at most, for the value of their tallow and skins’ which, in the current market, ‘was considered to equal the value of

\textsuperscript{59} Everett Records Guyra, Letter, John to Arthur, 21\textsuperscript{st} June, 1893.
\textsuperscript{60} Everett Records Guyra, Letter, John to Arthur, 5\textsuperscript{th} October, 1893.
\textsuperscript{61} Ollera Station Records, Return of Sheep 1892-96, \textit{UNERA}, A103: V2275, Cane, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 121.
their wool. While these huge losses were offset somewhat by the 1,392 lambs which were born in 1892, to accommodate the Cassilis wethers and with his father’s full agreement, Arthur shelved his breeding program. Although the breeding flock was retained and kept on the upper ‘run’ well out of Edwin’s disapproving sight, breeding was not resumed until mid-1894. By that time a chastened Edwin readily agreed to purchase twenty new rams from Bickham in the Upper Hunter to serve the 1,500 breeding ewes which Arthur had retained. The Everetts hoped that with most of the trees in the paddocks ring-barked, an activity which was believed to result in the growth of more nutritious fodder, the station could make a good start to its restocking program. However, despite their hopes and the young manager’s careful preparations, the results of the 1895 lambing season were pitifully low. Arriving as they did at the beginning of what proved to be the worst drought for one hundred years, only 550 lambs survived long enough to be weaned.

The only relief for Ollera-Tenterden’s problems in 1894 came first with the colonial government’s decision to abandon its attempt to collect rents which had been outstanding since 1884 and later with the small, though welcome profits earned by the sale of station-bred bullocks. John Everett took great pride in the high prices paid for the 150 beasts at two sales which had been held in April. Having cared solicitously for the station’s first imported bull ‘Macenas’ on the long walk up from Sydney in 1842, quite correctly, he put the profitable results down to ‘the value of fifty years of good breeding’. However there was more bad news that year than good. In June John was ‘startled’ by the latest balance sheet in which debits totalled £1,039.14s.0d which, with only £827.5s.11d having been earned from the sale of just sixty-three of the 111 bales of the previous season’s wool, left a deficit of £292.15s.1d. But within a few weeks Everett was relieved to report that as £354.11s.9d had been earned from the sale of ‘the last thirty-seven bales in grease at 7¾d per lb’ the station was debt-free. Noting that, while prices at that year’s sales were low, ‘attendances and competition were good’, he compared the marked difference in the prices paid for washed and greasy wool.

---

63 Everett Records Guyra, Letters, John to Arthur, 15th June, 1892
64 Everett Records Guyra, Letter, John to Arthur, 8th May, 1894.
66 Ollera Station Records, Return of Sheep, 1862-96, UNERA, A103:V2275; Cane, op. cit., p. 121.
67 Everett Records Guyra, Letters, John to Arthur, 1st April and 14th April, 1894.
68 Everett Records Guyra, Letter, John to Arthur, 19th June, 1894.
...Scoured wool got a fair price but ... bales in grease brought a poor 7½d. I believe washing is better – scoured fleece gets 1s.0½d and grease 7½d; locks 9d; bellies 10½d. Washing knocks the sheep about – especially ewes and lambs, but strong wethers and young sheep can stand it without injury. Although I cannot understand why scouring has been abandoned, I guess that colonial calculations have been made.

The information may therefore have been the catalyst for the reintroduction, within a year, of wool-scouring at Ollera. 69 For several years until the end of the 1882 season, John Farrell had overseen scouring operations at the Ollera washpool. However with the arrival of the railway at Armidale in January 1883 the added cost of 2d per lb the process was considered to be unprofitable. 70 But the practice was resumed between 1886 and the end of 1889, when it became worthwhile to scour the second-grade wool (locks, bellies and pieces) on the station. 71 The resumption proved so successful that by 1895 Arthur Everett joined Arthur Mackenzie in a partnership in a wool-scouring business which, for several decades processed much of the district’s wool. 72 Nevertheless, with real concern, John informed his New England relatives that, having sent all of the ‘very poor surplus’ to the Bank of Australasia,

There will be nothing for our private purses this year – the income on my Foreign Possessions is Nil. I have told Edwin ... we are quite cleaned out, there is no nest egg now. For the first time for years I have had no deposit for G.J.E. at the London and Westminster Bank. 73

But John Everett had far greater and more personal reasons for concern at this time for, within two years, three of his elder brothers died. Though saddened by the death of his bachelor brother Harry, the London-based lawyer who had supervised Ollera’s English affairs whilst his siblings were in Australia, the other two deaths affected him even more deeply. As a young man John Everett appears to have been closest to William, the bachelor who died at the end of 1894 and whom long ago he had repeatedly urged to join him in Australia. However during their father’s lifetime William remained at Biddenden where he managed the family’s estate. Understandably, therefore, John Everett’s deepest grief was for George, after whose death in early October, 1893 he wrote, 74

I feel [George’s death] as a blank as he and I passed our whole lives together, in the early days in Australia and later days in the old country and as you know not far apart. The G.J.E. arrangements have not been finalized – things are to go

---

70 Cane, op. cit., p. 123.
71 Ibid, pp.121-122.
73 Everett Records Gwyra, Letters, John to Arthur, 19th and 26th July, 1894.
74 Everett Records Gwyra, Letter, John to Arthur, 5th October, 1893.
on as is probably till Edwin and I are gone. But we need a distinct understanding
as to what is G.J.E’s and what is Edwin’s.

By June of the next year, whilst in New England the auctioneers were valuing
‘both station and stock’ for the purposes of settling George’s colonial estate, this
‘distinct understanding’ had been reached. 75 Not only had it been decided that as
executors the stations’ business decisions would be made by John and Edwin and ‘for
some time to come it will be best for all concerned for the G.J.E. faggot to remain
unbroken’, but soon after Edwin clarified the situation further. He drew up a will in
which he left his share of the G.J.E. land to the firm. Before their deaths his bachelor
brothers had proved just as strong supporters of the ‘family interest’. In what proved
to be one of his last actions, Henry advanced an apparently considerable sum of
money to assist Ollera. William left £1000 to each of John’s sons, a legacy which
came at a time when Arthur was in great need of such help.

John Everett had also done his best to secure Arthur’s future at Ollera. After
two years of negotiation with Edwin, by July 1893 Arthur was the owner of ‘a
compact estate’ on or near the Lambamata Plain between Ollera and Tenterden. In
keeping with the tradition the Everetts had followed since their arrival in New
England the property, which lay not far from the long established outstation called
Stockbridge, was named Danebury. John considered the name fitting, as ‘[in England]
Danebury lies close to Stockbridge’. 76 The manner in which John Everett negotiated
the purchase of the land reveals much about the way in which the brothers’ conducted
the internal business of the partnership. In the best Forsyte tradition, family was
family but business remained business. 77 What is even clearer, however, is the
decency and scrupulous honesty of John Everett’s character. In July 1890 he sent his
son the copy of a letter he had written to his brother in which he requested an account
of all the money the station had spent on the selection taken-up in Arthur’s name.
Beginning ‘I want to put all matters straight so that there may be no dispute or
misunderstanding’, he continued. 78

... Before [Arthur] can claim it as his own ... I am bound to repay to the station
... all the money advanced in taking [the selection] up. He has a legal right to it but
is in honour bound to pay all the monies due to the Station, and of course will do it
or give it over to the Station. [As] he could not use it with any advantage to himself

75 Everett Records Guyra, Letter, John to Arthur, 8th June, 1894.
76 Everett Records Guyra, Letter, John to Arthur, 5th October, 1893. Arthur’s earlier selection,
Colbury, bore the name of his family’s home in Wiltshire.
78 Everett Records Guyra, Letter, John to Edwin, 30th July, 1891. Original emphasis.
or but little advantage it can only be worked to its full advantage by being worked as part of the Station. Again I think so long as he is manager of the Station it is far better (and experience has pointed it out so to be) that he should have no sheep of his own as private stock.

The first selection taken up by the station in Arthur’s name comprised Charlton and a little over 718 acres of his father’s privately owned land. By 1914 the 830-acre ‘compact estate’ would extend to 1,600 acres. In the letter in which he informed Arthur of his decision to make an early gift of the five blocks his son would eventually inherit and to add the necessary codicil to his will, John outlined the agreement he had reached with his resident partner. An alternative had been necessitated by Edwin’s rejection of his brother’s initial proposal to buy Arthur’s present selection, Colbury, from the G.J.E. firm. As Colbury lay within Tenterden, to consolidate that station, Edwin ‘very generously’ offered not only to exchange Charlton and Ollie Mackenzie Everett’s selection at Back Gully for Colbury but also to make up the difference in Colbury and Charlton’s value by including an extra 200 acres of land. With that, Edwin believed, Arthur would have the makings of a fine model farm.

Although the final decision reached is unknown, some of the extra land may have been acquired from one of the two selectors who, defeated by the prevailing conditions, offered to sell their properties to Arthur in 1894. However his father considered that, at £200, Johnson’s land was both too expensive and in too much debt to the banks who would most probably resume it. While Wade’s selection was both cheaper and a better proposition, it was not ‘choice land’ and unless it had access-rights to the creek in a nearby reserve, it lacked permanent water. Johnson and Wade were among the many selectors whose hopes for independence vanished at the turn of the century. Only too aware of this and with shrewd business sense, characteristic caution and confirmed reliance upon the value of the family-friendship network, John continued:

... I must see my way more clearly than at present as to these properties for sale before I part with money which I can leave behind me and which, though not much, you each will be able to use ...on land or otherwise which you can make sure are good investments. Now Johnnie is at Inverell you two can see the ins and outs and paying prospects of these Selectors’ holdings around Ollera. Doubtless it would

---

eventually increase the value of G.J.E’s property to add to its breadth of lands but you must take care that the horse does not starve whilst the corn is growing.

However not all the selectors were defeated by the sequence of economic depression, low wool and livestock prices and, from 1895, the return of the devastating eight-year-long drought which, until the appearance of one that was perhaps even worse at the start of the present century, was labelled ‘the worst in Australia’s recorded history’. Many of the seventeen grazier selectors who in 1892-3 were officially reported to have taken up at total of 20,200 acres on Ollera-Tenterden for their 19,939 sheep, survived the difficult decade. 82 Foremost among them was Donald Stewart, Ollera’s long-term sheep manager who, when he died in 1910 on the brink of the First World War, left an estate valued at over £10,000. 83 Those who did well seem to have combined hard work and experience with thrift, caution, large families of children who were willing to work unpaid towards a common purpose and, last but far from least, the good luck which protected the ‘breadwinners’ from accident and severe illness. 84

Several of those who, with the Everett brothers’ assistance had come to Ollera as penniless immigrants from Wiltshire, had also succeeded in New England. At his death in 1912 Daniel Reeves’ nephew James, who reached Sydney with his wife aboard Java in 1853, left real property valued at £1,410. Having retired to Armidale with his third wife, Martha, the ‘landed proprietor’ owned five houses in the recently-declared city of Armidale, and eleven separate blocks of land in three different locations on the outskirts of Sydney in the County of Cumberland. 85 (See Appendix Q, below). Tom Cotterell had also built upon his early success. When he made out his will on the 26th February 1900, the childless and still illiterate old widower, who fifty years earlier the parish had outfitted for his voyage to Australia, could afford to bequeath the considerable sum of £200 to his widowed sister in far-away Tidworth.

The manner in which Thomas Cotterell disposed of the rest of his property provides us with important insights into the even greater intricacy of the networks of family and friendship which linked the assisted immigrants from Wiltshire in the

83 Ollera Station Records, Diary of Donald Stewart, UNERA, A133:V5628; Walker, ‘Squatter and Selector’, op. cit., p. 68
85 Estate of James Reeves, ‘Declaration of Probate’ and Valuation of Real Estate’, copies of the original documents were provided by Mrs Deirdre Tarrant of Llangothlin, NSW, whose generosity is much appreciated.
second generation. Lacking direct heirs, Cotterell left the ‘remainder of [his] real and personal estate’ to be shared equally by two people. They were William Baker, the nephew of his deceased wife, Martha Tarrant Cotterell, and Sarah Jane Reeves, both of whom resided with him at his property at Moredun, near Wandsworth. Cotterell probably expected his beneficiaries to marry and thus ensure the future of his land. However, no doubt to the disappointed disapproval of their many relatives, the two chose not only to remain single but to spend the rest of their lives sharing the homestead they had inherited.

Though the episode is both trivial and amusing, the interest for us lies in what it reveals of the even closer kinship ties which linked the second generation of the Wiltshire immigrant families. The brothers, James and John Reeves, were the nephews of Daniel Reeves. After the early death of his wife Jane, James married Rebecca Cook, who had come to Ollera with her brother, George Cook and his young family in 1856. James and Rebecca Reeves’ son Henry later married a daughter of Edward and Sarah Lansley, yet another couple who had come to Ollera aboard Java in 1853. James Reeves’ brother John, who came to Ollera with his young wife from Ludgershall in 1858, married Eliza, another of the Lansleys’ daughters, and it was their daughter Sarah Jane who inherited half of Tom Cotterell’s property. Her co-beneficiary, William Baker, was connected to the Ludgershall-Tedworth immigrant circle through his maternal aunt, Martha Tarrant Cotterell. She and her husband had travelled to Australia with her brother Edward and his family aboard the Walmer Castle in late 1848. Both Edward Tarrant and his son were employed at Ollera in the late 1850s where their daughter Sarah met and married John Reeves in 1860. Lucy, the second of Sarah Reeves’ three daughters, married yet another Ollera workman, William Baker. Their son, who was also named William, was the second beneficiary of Cotterell’s estate.

The Cannings-Hutton family was typical of several other Everett-assisted immigrants who prospered in New England. Having been in the vanguard of the Everett brothers’ venture and having borne the first white child on her fringe of the distant frontier, sixteen-year-old Sarah Cannings Hutton surely deserves a mention in any volume of the fledgling women’s history of Australia. Instead, her sole but

---

86 Last Will and Testament of Thomas Cotterell, 26th February, 1900, loc. cit.
87 Ibid. Documents and information provided by Mrs Deidre Tarrant, Llangothlin, NSW Shipping Records, SRNSW, Arrival of vessel Walmer Castle, 30th December 1848.
lasting legacy remains the family that she and her husband Daniel began. While some of her sons and grandsons remained working at Ollera-Tenterden and also for Donald Stewart at Tangleys into the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, others took up land at Black Mountain, between Armidale and Guyra. Some of Sarah and Daniel’s descendants still own prosperous farms in the area at the start of the twenty-first century. Others own similar properties near Toowoomba on Queensland’s Darling Downs.

Sarah Cannings and Daniel Hutton and the family they founded therefore embody both the success and ultimate failure of the paternalistic ‘governance’ system which the Everett brothers imported into Australia in the late 1830s.\footnote{Interview with Mr. John Hutton, of ‘Fernhill’, Guyra, to whom I am indebted for this information.} In seeking to benefit from the glut of pauperized labour on and about their family’s Wiltshire estate these younger sons of the gentry had built-in an ineradicable flaw which was apparent to John Everett within less than a decade. He discerned it in the attitude of the Cannings family whom he criticized in the mid-1840s for ‘getting above themselves’. To make matters worse, they were ‘making their fortunes at the employers’ expense’.\footnote{Ollera Station Records, Letters of John Everett, 1833-67, John to William, 3rd December, 1843; John to Rev. Tom, February, 1845, \textit{UNERA}, A103:V3052/3.} The Everetts’ ‘old wine’ therefore had not matured well in the colony’s ‘new bottles’.

However, not all Ollera’s assisted immigrants achieved as much success in New England and perhaps Sam Dudman can serve as an example of those whose futures were not so rosy. Throughout the research for this study Sam has remained an enigma. Despite the frequency with which his name appears in Ollera’s records between early 1842 and the 1890s, neither the manner of Dudman’s arrival in the colony nor his burial place can be traced. The records tell us a great deal about him. They report the work he did, how much he earned, the nature and cost of his purchases at the station store and that he was fined once or twice for being drunk or disobedient. However, while we know that he married in the early 1850s, that at least one child, a son, was born to his wife Mary, who died in the 1870s and is buried in Ollera’s graveyard, Sam’s resting place is unknown. All we know is that in the late 1880s, as the last of Ollera’s ‘old pensioners to get a bit of ration’, he was living alone ‘in his own house’ at Wandsworth.\footnote{\textit{Everett Records Guyra}, Edwin to John, 31st December, 1888.} But, despite the well-established legal requirement, no official record of his death or burial can be found. The most likely
explanaion is that the old man died during the poorly-recorded two-and-a-half years between Mackenzie's final illness and Arthur Everett's appointment and that, with so much else, his passing went unrecorded. Sam Dudman therefore remains elusive. If his is not one of the unmarked graves in the cemetery on the hill opposite Ollera's homestead then, like so many of the old man's fellow bushmen, his resting-place is 'out where the dead men lie'...91

Some mounds cared for, some left fallow;
Some deep down, yet others shallow:
Some having but the sky.

In rounding-out this study of the first sixty years of Ollera-Tenterden's history, let us consider the living and working conditions of its people during the last quarter of the nineteenth century. By examining the wages earned by four men who were members of three families of Wiltshire emigrants, we can assess the degree to which their living standards had maintained the improvement which was so evident in the 1850s. The wages earned and the expenditure incurred by George Lansley, Daniel Hutton and his son John, and by John Reeves and his sons Johny and Harry during the twelve years from 1878 to 1889 are typical of the earning-power of Ollera-Tenterden's employees in the decades of the station's maturity.

Several important points are apparent immediately. First, both the station and many of its workmen continued to benefit from the employees' ability to save. While the men accumulated significant sums which could be withdrawn when required, the reserves would have significantly reduced the station's running costs. The second point of interest lies in the much lower sums all of these men spent at the stations' stores. This evidence reflects not only the reduction in the price of freight which resulted once the railway reached Armidale, but also suggests strongly that each of these families was almost entirely self-sufficient. Ollera's 'family economy' practices, which had been introduced in the late 1840s and early 1850s, were either still functioning or had eased the selectors' transition to virtual independence. The third point concerns the greater seasonality of payments and the variety in the type of payments made for the work done by the men whose employment details appear below.

Though they were often still calculated at an annual rate, in most cases wages were recorded quarterly and according to the number of weeks and days on which the man worked. Significantly, and even before the widespread use of paddocks on the stations, the previous separation of shepherding from general labouring work appears to have broken down. The wages paid to Daniel Hutton in 1876 provide a typical example. During that year he received £45.5s.8d for ten months work at £55 per annum. He earned £34.11s.9d for shepherding one flock, £2.2s.2d for threshing six bushels of grain at 7s.0d a bushel, £2 for mowing and carting hay and a ‘killing pot’, another £1.10s.0d for cutting burrs and the remaining £2.10s.0d at various fencing tasks. He also received repayments totalling £1.10s.3d from two of his fellow workmen. £9.5s.5d was deducted from his wages at settlement. £4.9s.11d of this was paid to the store and the remaining £4.15s.6d was spent on butter (£4.4s.0d) and other dairy goods (11s.6d).  

Six years later, during five months in 1881, Daniel’s son John Hutton earned £21.6s.6d for his work as a carter/farrier and blacksmith. He was paid £13.14s.0d for carting goods from the rail-head to the station store, £4.0s.6d for shoeing horses and £3.12s.0d as a blacksmith. The sum of £4.12s.6d in deductions comprised a debt of £3.2s.6d to the store, £1 which was paid to Mrs Mitchell and 10s.0d which was donated to the Presbyterian clergyman, Rev. Thomas Johnstone.

Between 1st July, 1885 and 30th June 1886 George Lansley earned £49.10s.4d for shepherding two flocks at the rate of £52 per annum. Lansley was paid £24.10s.0d for twenty-six weeks’ work at the summer rate of £1 per week, and £25.0s.2d for the remaining twenty-six weeks’ work at the winter rate of 17s.6d per week. Deductions to the value of £12.16s.3d were made from his wages. They comprised £5 spent on the purchase of a horse, £1 paid to support the station’s church and £6.13s.3d in repayments owed to two men and one woman. Three years later, in 1889, Lansley earned a total of £46.15s.0d. The sum comprised £45.0s.0d for shepherding, again at the six-monthly seasonal rate, £1 for shearing 100 sheep and another 15s.0d for wool-pressing. A total of £9.7s.5d was deducted to repay debts of £3.11s.5d to the store and another £5.16s.0d to four of his workmates.

The details of John Reeves earnings for the twelve months beginning May, 1883 are given in the table below. They are of special interest as they reveal that, like

---

92 Ollera Station Records, Station Ledger, 1873-90, UNERA, A103:V2263.
his Uncle Daniel in the 1850s and later his elder brother John, whose sizeable estate has been noted, John Reeves was a thrifty man who had inherited his family’s considerable ability to save.93 (For further examples, see Appendix L, below.)

John Reeves: Earnings and Expenditure, 1883 and 1884.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Debit by Station</th>
<th>Credit to Employee</th>
<th>Balance Standing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1883:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May</td>
<td>Cheque £2</td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>£55.6s.6d</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov.</td>
<td>Chq. McCrossin £4.7s.3d</td>
<td>Jan 6mths Sheperdg 2 flocks £32.12s.0d</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct</td>
<td>Registering Dogs £ 7s.6d</td>
<td>15 wks work wool washg £15.0s.0d</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dec</td>
<td>Cheque £1.5s.0d</td>
<td>Boy: 10½ wks lambing £10.10s.0d</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Store Account £3.6s.6d</td>
<td>Debit Wm. Foster for Horse lease 10s.0d</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 Cow £3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan ’83</td>
<td>2 Chqs to £100</td>
<td>Harry, 4 days</td>
<td><strong>£114.6s.3d</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>£114.6s.3d</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb’83</td>
<td>Cr Mitchell Exps’s £6s.0d</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March</td>
<td>Cheques (2) £21.7s.6d</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April</td>
<td>Cheques (2) £39.10s.0d</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cr. Mitchell 7s.6d</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1884:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan</td>
<td>Shearing 17 score £2.11s.0d</td>
<td>Jan: Shepherding 1 Flock £24.7s.6d</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Store Account £7.4s.2d</td>
<td>Shepherding 1 Flock, 12 mths £32.10s.0d</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cheque £12.11s.4d</td>
<td>Boys wages, 5 weeks £22.0s.0d</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Left Standing £106.17s.6d</td>
<td>John Reeves jnr working about 28 wks at £1 week £28.0s.0d</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>£106.17s.6d</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>£106.17s.10d</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan.</td>
<td>Cheque £3.2s.0d</td>
<td>Standing £23.0s.0d</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April</td>
<td>Cheque £1.1s.6d</td>
<td>Jan 9 Commenced 1 flock 3m £5.8s.4d</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cheques (2) £50.7s.7d</td>
<td>1 flock 3 months £8.2s.6d</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>£56.15s.10d</strong></td>
<td>1 flock 10½ wks £10.10s.0d</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May</td>
<td>Store Account 2s.6d</td>
<td>April John the Boy £9.15s.10d</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1884</td>
<td>Cheque £8.16s.6d</td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>£56.15s.10d</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May</td>
<td><strong>£8.19s.0d</strong></td>
<td>May Johnny, 5 weeks £4.0s.0d</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Harry herding cattle 9 days £1.10s.0d</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>John Reeves 2 days 6s.6d</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>£8.19s.0d</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The diaries kept by James Mackenzie and for a shorter period by Edgar Huntley are filled with the light and shade of everyday life at Oller-a-Tenterden in these years. Though mostly concerned with the each man’s need to keep a record of maintenance work to be supervised or performed, livestock husbanded, bought and sold and the all-important weather, they also contain the occasional item of more general interest to their contemporaries. Such news items include Thunderbolt’s disturbance of the Christmas and New Year’s festivities in 1868-9, the visits during the same years of such dignitaries as Lord Gordon and the State Governor and, with horror, the disturbed Fenian’s attempted assassination of Prince Alfred on 15th March 1868. More importantly, however, they tell us about the lives of those who lived on

---

93 See above, pp. 211.
the station during these years. One thing that is immediately obvious is the frequency with which deaths occurred, generating an all-too common sequence of entries: sudden illness followed by a dash for the doctor, then death and burial the next day in a cedar coffin.

Though several older, long-term workmen and some women died in the twenty years from 1866 to 1885, deaths were most frequent among the children. Infants and new-borns were the most frequent casualties. Most of the fourteen little ones whose deaths were recorded in the diaries during these twenty years died at, or soon after birth, or in infancy. The causes of death of only two older children, a boy and a girl, are recorded. The terse little entries record that, ten years apart, both died of snake-bite. Except for the occasional report of a broken bone, the workmen were in less danger of harm from infection (three related deaths occurred in April 1883) or of accident than they were from the effects of heavy drinking and of depression-related suicide, which still blights the lives of many men and some women in rural Australia. Two women drowned by ‘putting [themselves] in the creek’ near their homes during this time, and in October, 1881 Edgar Huntley reported in his diary that, while still recovering from the year’s second especially-long bout of binge-drinking, Vernon, his fellow workman at Stockbridge, had ‘dosed himself’ with arsenic. Sadly Huntley also seems to have succumbed to depression. On 11th and 12th October 1883, almost exactly two years after Vernon made a shaky recovery, Mackenzie made the following entries in his diary: ‘Poor Huntley shot himself; Buried at Tenterden on 12th October’.

On a happier note both diarists tell us much about the ways in which the stations’ people filled their leisure hours during these years. Huntley’s diaries are replete with fishing expeditions (twenty-five fish being caught on one occasions), visits to the races at Limestone and Bundarra, an occasional ‘holiday’ trip to Tingha and frequent shooting parties which targeted foxes as well as dingoes, kangaroos and the plethora of koalas and possums. Huntley was also a frequent, if not always enthusiastic, church-goer. In November 1878, after recording the presence of the [Anglican] Bishop and his wife on the station, he made the following dry entry in his

94 Ollera Station Records, Diary of James Mackenzie, 1868; UNERA, A103:V3052/46; Diary of Edgar Huntley, Ibid, entry for 5th July, 1881. A103b:V1199/27. The quotations are taken directly from the diary.
95 Ollera Station Records, Diary of Edgar Huntley, 1881, UNERA, A103b:B1199/27.
96 Ollera Station Records, Diary of James Mackenzie, 1883, UNERA, A103:V3054/9
diary, ‘Any amount of preaching’. Three years later, in one of the last entries in his surviving diaries, the stringent critic reported, ‘Church – New parson Robinson ... no good’.  

Those who were children in 1883 must have remembered with delight the arrival of the first circus at Wandsworth. Although, like their teachers, they would have dreaded the regular arrival of the School Inspector who had visited the valley’s four schools since the 1860s, they would also have looked forward to the School Picnics and ‘feasts’ which were an annual highlight of each school’s year. In 1884 Donald Stewart detailed the costs of the picnic enjoyed by the children of Tangleys school, which by then, one hopes, was no longer housed in a tent.  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dr.</th>
<th>Cr.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Books, fruit, Sweets from Armidale</td>
<td>£9.0s.0d</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To one hour ['s work]</td>
<td>15s.0d</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To G. Damarell</td>
<td>£1.8s.0d</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>£11.3s.0d</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Store 11s.3d</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Balance (sic) £1.5s.7d.

But it must have been even more exciting when Ollera’s school celebrated the Queen’s Birthday on 24th May with its annual picnic and a fireworks display. Thereafter, though the reason for its timing would be known to very few, for almost a century Cracker Night was to remain a red-letter day in the Australian school year. With their parents, the station’s children would also have paid an annual visit to Armidale’s Agricultural Show and occasionally, perhaps, to those held at the nearby towns of Glen Innes, Inverell or Tenterfield. The Mackenzie family regularly attended each of these Shows, its Ball that night, the next day’s Races and the Ball with which the two-day celebrations ended.

Although far less exhausting, reading was apparently as popular a pastime in New England as it had been for generations of rural labourers and artisans in the English countryside. Though more of the ‘labouring orders’ could read than write, even those who lacked either skill could gather round to listen as the story was read aloud. A single-page list among the otherwise unused pages near the end of one of Ollera’s ledgers records just how popular a pastime reading was in the early 1870s. Titled ‘Books Given Out in August 1873’, it shows that in the three-and-a-half months from mid-August to the end of that year thirteen men made forty-eight

\[77\] Ollera Station Records, Diaries of Edgar Huntley, 1878; 1881, UNERA, A103b:V1199/27, in which he reports the presence in the valley of a buyer who was doing a brisk business in koala skins.

\[78\] Ollera Station Records, Tangley Station Ledger, UNERA, A103: V5628.
borrowings from the contents of the current ‘box-library’ which circulated to meet the needs of its isolated readers. 99 Three books written by Charles Dickens and another by Sir Walter Scott were among the thirty-six volumes in the collection. The rest were a mixture of romantic novels, such as the improbable choice *Lover’s Legends and Stories*, adventure stories, books about English landmarks and a few on hunting and fishing. While Edwin Everett borrowed twice during these weeks, he was out-read by several of his shepherds. The Waterloo veteran, William Crew, who borrowed ten books in about fifteen weeks, was by far the most avid reader. Not by much though, as Hugh Mackay made eight choices and John Cameron and John Jones each borrowed seven books. With the exception of G. Gray, who took out four books, all the other men made between one and three choices. William Crew clearly loved to read, and as his apparent completion of two Dickens classics within less than a fortnight attests, the bigger the book the better. The books chosen by ‘the Old Corporal’, Hugh Mackay and John Cameron help us to assess both the enthusiasm and the preferences of these isolated readers. 100

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>William Crew</th>
<th>Hugh Mackay</th>
<th>John Cameron</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18/8: ‘Singleton Fontenoy’</td>
<td>12/8: ‘Never to Late to Mend’</td>
<td>17/9: ‘Flood and Field’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22/12: ‘Windsor Castle’</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘Tilney Hall’</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

True to Australian mores, sport played an important part in the life of Ollera-Tenterden’s people. Sports’ days were organized, horse races were regularly held at Limestone and Bundarra and the older boys and young men travelled to Glen Innes to play both billiards and football. But cricket was still both the main recreation and the station’s main sporting preoccupation. John and Arthur Everett frequently relieved their long distance discussions about drought, low wool prices and the vagaries of their troublesome relative with comments on the achievements of the Australian and English teams. 101 In almost every month between Spring and Autumn cricket matches were held and their scores were as regularly recorded. Matches were played at

---

101 *Everett Records Guyra*, Letters of John Everett, various dates, 1888-94.
Bundarra and Limestone, between Ollera and Tenterden and between the stations' team and Boorolong. District matches were played between rival teams from Armidale and between Armidale and Ollera-Tenterden and against teams from Stannifer, Glen Innes, Inverell and as far away as Tenterfield. The young ladies of Ollera and Stratton were apparently just as devoted, if less expert, cricketers, a failing for which the gentlemen gallantly compensated.

It is fitting that this study of Ollera-Tenterden and its people should end with a vignette from a time when the stations' management had passed to the youthful representative of the second generation of its founding family. In 1924 the Armidale Express carried a report in which Arthur Everett gave a nostalgic account of a cricket match in which he and his fiancée Ollie took part in 1891. The match was played at 'Mr. J[ohn] Codrington's station at Stockbridge', beside the road between Ollera and Tenterden head-stations. The site of the match – at one of Ollera’s earliest shepherding stations – symbolizes the important changes which had occurred in both landowning and social relationships in the years between Ollera’s foundation in 1838-1839 and the close of the nineteenth century. Despite its brevity, Arthur’s description of the light-hearted game whose story his parents must often have told is redolent of the confidence with which, from the beginning, their family overcame and would continue to overcome, the challenges which faced Ollera and Tenterden.

Novel Cricket Match: Sports of Thirty-three Years Ago

Mr. A.W. Everett of Ollera writes: On 2nd March, 1891, a novel cricket match was held at Stockbridge (Mr. J. Codrington). The ladies had bats, and the gentlemen use broomsticks and fielded and bowled left-handed. The scores were:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ladies:</th>
<th>Innings 1</th>
<th>Innings 2</th>
<th>Gents:</th>
<th>Innings 1</th>
<th>Innings 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Miss Rose Prentice</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Arthur Everett</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miss Maud Mackenzie</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Fred Mackenzie</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miss Bertha Mackenzie</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>John Cameron</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miss Ollie Mackenzie</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>C. Prentice</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edith Mackenzie</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>H. Mackenzie</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Julia Prentice</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>A. Prentice</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emily Prentice</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Score:</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Prentice</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Score: 22          27

---

102 Ollera Station Records, UNERA, Press Clipping, 1924, A103:V3053/1. See also Everett Records Guyra, General Knowledge Book: Stratton., A103:V3053/9
AFTERWORD AND CONCLUSION

‘The old order changeth, giving way to new…’

The first decade of the twentieth century marked the end of an era in the story of Ollera Station. Generational change had been prepared for since the early 1880s and had begun with Arthur Everett’s appointment as manager in 1890. However, as John Everett informed his son after the death of its eldest member George in late 1893, ‘the GJE faggot remained unbroken’ during the lifetimes of the two remaining partners. Despite his deep sense of loss at his ‘old brother’s’ death, John Everett remain focused on the management of Ollera’s affairs. In doing so he provided proof that the station’s payment system remained virtually unchanged.¹

...We have agreed that it is best to leave it to the lawyers in the Colony to take the usual time necessary before winding up [George’s Australian estate] for Release. You [Arthur] should make up the Accounts most carefully and explicitly so they may understand them. There should be no difficulty in us showing all the money spent by cheques and men’s wages which are made up partly by cash in Cheque and partly by Store Accounts, which must also be shown separately. Our [Accounts with] the Sydney Bank and Armidale Banks will have to be shown and the counterparts of the Cheque Books. It is agreed that John and Edwin are to make decisions as Executors that the Station and property of GJE must go on for some time to come [and] for the GJE faggot to remain unbroken. I have written to Edwin saying the same.

Between 19th January, 1888 and 23rd August, 1894 in his dual role of business manager and interested partner/parent, John Everett wrote more than fifty such letters to his son at Ollera. There the correspondence ends, and with it our ability to observe life at Ollera through John Everett’s eyes. Although the accidents of time and chance cannot be discounted, Everett’s apparent silence during the seven years until his death aged, ‘eighty-six’, in November 1902 seems to have been imposed by age and increasing incapacity.² By early 1894 the ‘rheumatism’ which had prevented his return to Ollera in 1859 had severely restricted his movements, forcing him to ‘stop quietly at home’ to receive his daughter Sissie when she returned from more than two years in Australia.

Between August, 1893 and mid-1895, John Everett’s health and his emotional well-being must have been further taxed by his duties as executor of the estates of three of

¹ Everett Records Guyra, Letters, John to Arthur, 5th October, 1893; 8th June, 1894. Emphasis added.
² Everett Records Guyra, Although the ornate mourning card gives Everett’s age as eighty-six if, as the parish records state he was born in the first quarter of 1815, his would have been eighty-seven years old.
his older brothers. First George then Harry, who was by then squire of Biddesden, died in 1893. William’s death followed in 1895. Harry’s affairs proved to need most attention, Biddesden having been inherited by a nephew whose fitness for the role John quite correctly suspected. In mid-1894, having spent a busy but worrying week on the estate where he had spent his youth and early adulthood, John reported on conditions there.

...I spent last week at Biddesden clearing up Uncle Harry’s papers and letters – a great sorting out ....Charlie [Rev. Charles’ son] has done great drainage – not had but very costly – run to front not back. He has let the House and his home farm to Piper – lucky but the rent is very low. It is very difficult to let farms, corn is low and sheep this year, but they will get up again as there are plenty of people to eat mutton, but money they say is also scarce. ... I met Charlie’s son and heir, Arthur Bernard Guy Everett. One wonders, but sees little chance of his becoming heir. Charlie has no head for managing a property like Biddesden and I am sure [your Uncle] Edward agrees. 3

The old man clearly regretted the decision he had made almost fifty years before that, having decided to settle permanently at Ollera, he would relinquish his share of the Estate. 4 His nephew’s decision to rent Biddesden House and to ‘sell all the cottage property in Ludgershall’ confirmed doubts John had expressed in the previous year. ‘I cannot reconcile myself to Charlie Everett being Squire and representative of the Everett family in the family mansion’. 5 The old man’s fears were confirmed when in 1907, almost five years after his death, the family’s agents, ‘Messrs Smith and Son Solicitors of Andover’, advertised the impending sale of the property. 6

Biddesden Estate [with its] Interesting Old Queen Anne Residence seated in a Grandly Timbered Park of Nearly Sixty Acres and its Three Compact Farms, known as ‘Crawlboys’, ‘Biddesden’ and ‘Longbottom’ respectively, with suitable Residences, Homesteads and Eight Cottages.

If little evidence remains of John Everett’s last years, even fewer glimpses can be had of Edwin Everett during the twelve years between his last surviving note to his nephew, Arthur at Ollera, on 26th July, 1895 and his death aged eighty-seven on 12th November 1909. 7 While the note is mainly concerned with the allocation of shared station equipment (fodder, ploughs, entries in the Sheep Book), two other points deserve attention. The first, the delivery to Arthur of an employee named John Thomas from Wandsworth’s

3 Ibid. Original emphasis.
4 See above , p. 171.
6 Everett Records Guyra, Large, multi-page booklet giving details of properties for sale either as a whole or separately.
bank book and £1.4s.0d suggests that after sixty years, paternalist practices were still adhered to on the station.\textsuperscript{8}

The other, more personal insight is more revealing. The unsigned note ends with this poignant comment: ‘Ointment arrived from Guyra (about thirty kilometres away) took from Tuesday morning to Saturday’.\textsuperscript{9} The reader cannot help but feel for the unfortunate old man who had suffered all his life from asthma and associated skin complaints which worsened with age. In a letter to John in late 1893, with a touchingly stiff upper lip, Edwin added the following list of ailments to the ‘blinding’ headaches, neuralgia and ‘indigestion all around’ to which he had referred in 1888.\textsuperscript{10}

\textit{...I am much troubled with Exema (sic), Boils, Gout, Rheumatism [and] Sciatica. Still I have always been strong and able to get about and I have a very great deal to be thankful for.}

The only first hand account of Edwin’s declining years was made by his housemate Edward Arnold Hill, whose unflattering description of the ‘stupid old man’ might have been verified had its author not burnt all his ‘friend’ and employer’s correspondence after Edwin’s death.\textsuperscript{11} But perhaps the clearest and best account of Edwin’s last years and of the difficulties Arthur Everett faced in managing the station was given by his brother Johnnie in the last months of 1895. In a letter informing Arthur of their Uncle William’s death and of George’s sons’ agreement to pay their share of the proposed purchase of 2,000 sheep, he explained John Everett’s opinion.\textsuperscript{12}

\textit{...Unless Father thought [the purchase] absolutely necessary he would not put any more money into a concern that might be botched again by Uncle Edwin’s pig-headedness. [John was] considerably annoyed by Uncle Edwin’s high handed way of reducing your salary but has not yet decided what is to be done. Uncle Edwin’s inability to write makes any business go slow through him and there is no doubt his brain is weak and can not grasp facts as clearly as before and it takes a lot more puzzling for him to arrive at a conclusion satisfactory to himself.}

Edwin’s death finally ended the ‘family enterprise’ in which he had joined his elder brothers George and John in 1842. The dissolution of the seventy-year-old partnership brought great changes to Ollera-Tenterden. While, as previously arranged, Arthur inherited John’s ‘interest’ and his ‘private’ stock and land, Edwin’s heir was George’s son Willie Everett. However, though he and his young socialite wife took up residence on the station, they did not stay long. Disliking life deep in the bush, within a few months they left.

\textsuperscript{8} Everett Records Guyra, Letter, Edwin to Arthur, 26\textsuperscript{th} July, 1895.
\textsuperscript{9} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{10} Everett Records, Guyra, Letters Edwin to John, 27\textsuperscript{th} August, 1888: 5\textsuperscript{th} October, 1889: 2\textsuperscript{nd} October, 1894.
\textsuperscript{11} Ollera Station Records, Letter, Hill to ‘My dear Count’, n.d. UNERA, A103: V3053/22 (at rear).
\textsuperscript{12} Everett Records Guyra, Letter, Johnnie to Arthur, 10\textsuperscript{th} September, 1895. Emphasis added.
Tenterden for good and Edwin’s beloved home station was sold to one of James Mackenzie’s sons.\textsuperscript{13} As part of the final settlement of the partnership and with Arthur’s purchase of Ollera, the acreage of the Everett brothers’ first ‘run’ was further reduced to settle the inheritances of George’s and John’s remaining heirs.

Arthur, Ollie and their children Tom, Helen and Nancy settled-in at Ollera. Having survived the two-year hiatus which followed the failed experiment with the Cassilis wethers, Arthur introduced an active program of flock improvement, rebuilding sheep numbers by restocking and selective breeding. As a result, by the end of the century, Ollera grazed 10,000 sheep whose wool was again in demand internationally.

In the last quarter of the decade, as the social centre of its locality, the station with its spacious homestead, church and carefully tended garden assumed the role and some of the qualities of the estate on which its founders had been born. Though long disused, the elm-shaded carriage drive still circles the garden with its tennis court and now disused private golf course.\textsuperscript{14} However, during the First World War the drive was regularly filled with vehicles bringing the district’s ‘ladies’ and lesser women-folk to the garden parties and knitting and sewing bees over which, as part of her patriotic and paternalist duty, Ollera’s mistress, Ollie Mackenzie Everett, presided.\textsuperscript{15} Nor were these the only signs that, however attenuated and adapted, the paternalist principles on which the station had been founded still played a part in Ollera’s management system. To this end until the early 1920s, an elderly shepherd named W. Tibbs was still ‘on the books’ and Banbai people lived and worked on the station. Before their retirement in the mid-1980s Gordon and Mary Connor, an elderly Banbai couple, tended the homestead and its garden.\textsuperscript{16}

In closing this account of Ollera’s early history let us consider the extent and financial standing of the Everetts and their station in the last peaceful months before the outbreak of the First World War brought the ‘long nineteenth century’ to an end.\textsuperscript{17} As 1914 began, ‘for book-keeping purposes’, Arthur Everett made out a statement of his holdings at Ollera and on two outlying stations, Boori and Lochaber, on the Western Slopes near Gunnedah, New South Wales.

\textsuperscript{13} Personal interview with Mrs Linda Skipper, who related the story of a valuable pearl necklace left in full view on a dressing table.
\textsuperscript{14} Information provided by Mrs Linda Skipper during personal visit to Ollera Station.
\textsuperscript{15} \textit{Everett Records Guyla, ‘Memoirs’, press clippings: various dates, 1914-18.}
\textsuperscript{16} Ollera Station Records, Quarterly Wages and Accounts, W. Tibbs, 1921-22, \textit{UNERA}, A103:V1428-24. Additional information provided by Mrs Linda Skipper and by Mr Ross Fraser.
\textsuperscript{17} The phrase is Eric Hobsbawm’s.

Ollera Estate (sic)

Danebury 1600 acres Freehold £5,603 [valued] @ £3.10s.0d p. ac.
Charlton 112 acres C.P. £2 392 “ £3.10s.0d p.ac.
Farrell’s [Dairy] 657 acres F/CP/CL £2,135 “ £3. 5s.0d p.ac.
W.F. Everett’s 406 acres Freehold £1,119 “ £3. 5s.0d p.ac.
Oakley 100 acres Freehold £350 “ £3.10s.0d p.ac.
Oller J. Farrell’s 57 acres Freehold £171 “ £3. 0s.0d. p.ac.
Ollera Homestead 1,592 acres Freehold £7,808 “ £4. 0s.0d p.ac.

Total acreage 4,884 acres £17,778

Stock on Ollera
5,000 sheep @ 10s.0d £2,500
200 cattle @ £7. 0s.0d £1,400
20 horses @ £7. 0s.0d £140

Boori and Lochaber
Lochaber 2,628 acres F/CP/CL £8,531 [valued] @ £3.5s.0d p.ac.
Boori 2,560 acres C.P. £11,500
5,188 acres £20,051

£17,778

Stock on Boori & Lochaber
1,200 sheep @ 10s.0d £600
3,800 sheep @ 12s.0d £2,280
Cattle £150
Horses £50
Plant £50

£ 3,130

Stock: Ollera, Boori & Lochaber: £ 7,470; Land: Ollera, Boori & Lochaber: £37,829; Total: £45,299

* * * * *

This thesis has traced the development of a pastoral property in the New England region of northern New South Wales from its foundation by three younger sons of a Wiltshire estate-owner in 1838-9 until early 1914. A social and cultural history, the study has considered the outcome of the Everett brothers attempt to transplant the attitudes, management-style and hiring practices inherent in nineteenth-century paternalism to the fringes of settlement in the distant colony. The Everetts’ letters, station and personal diaries, Accounts and Stores Books and related business records have been used to explain the brothers’ success where so many of their peers failed and examine the survival of a somewhat modified paternalism on the station over the seventy-year ‘life’ of the partnership.18

There seems little doubt that careful planning, adequate capital investment, careful selection of a core workforce and continuous residence and supervision were central factors in that success. Important too were the religious and social beliefs and values that shaped

---

18 The collections are held by the University of New England Regional Archives at Armidale, NSW and by the station’s owners at Guyra.
the Everett' relations with their workers and which evolve to meet changing circumstances. and house servants on the station.

Ollera's records are filled with details of the living and working conditions of the men and women who were employed by the Everett brothers and of the opportunities for advancement which were available to those who were willing to work hard under their paternalist system. Particular attention was paid to the families the Everetts brought to Ollera from the countryside around their family's English estate. Quantitative and qualitative analysis of their living conditions has revealed that even in the first generation the lives of the shepherds and rural labourers who brought their families to Ollera were improved significantly by their immigration to Australia. Although many more such studies are required, the thesis therefore serves a wider purpose. In providing an in-depth analysis of the lives of several generations of 'masters' and 'men' on a particular station, it addresses the need for a better understanding of life in rural Australia in the nineteenth century.