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BELTANA PASTORAL COMPANY

BRG 133  
Series list

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### **BELTANA PASTORAL COMPANY**

Establishment of the Beltana Pastoral Company followed the death of Sir Thomas Elder on 6 March 1897. Elder had been in partnership with Nathaniel Edmund Phillipson and Peter Waite who, together with Robert Barr Smith and Tom Elder Barr Smith, became directors of the company formed on 25 March 1898. In 1900 Sir J. Lancelot Stirling was also a director. Phillipson died in 1898. Stations operated by the company included Beltana, Mount Lyndhurst, Murnpeowie, Cordillo Downs and Mulgaria on pastoral leases of almost nine thousand square miles in 1965. Between 1981 and 1984 the Beltana Pastoral Company sold off its pastoral leases in the Far North.

BLANCHEWATER, on the MacDonnell Creek, was founded by John Baker in 1857. In 1868 Sir Thomas Elder who held leases of Beltana, Lake Hope, Umberatana and Mulligan Springs acquired Manuwalkaninna adjacent to Blanchewater through lease No. 1765 and established a homestead there. Following Baker's death in 1872 Baker's leases were transferred to Elder who then consolidated his holdings as the Blanchewater horse stations of some four thousand square miles. Blanchewater was developed as an important source of supply for the Indian Remount Service, Cobb and Co. and other commercial and domestic stables. In 1890 the partnership of Elder, Phillipson and Waite decided to move headquarters onto Murnpeowie on the Twins Creek. The woolshed built in 1890 reflected the shift in emphasis. Over four thousand Blanchewater brood mares and horses were advertised for sale in 1891. Blanchewater ruins are sited adjacent to the MacDonnell Creek. north east of Lyndhurst on the Strzelecki Track.

MURNPEOWIE lease was originally held by Phillipson and Waite, then by Sir Thomas Elder. After the death of Elder in 1897 and Phillipson the following year, new leases were issued for Murnpeowie and Mount Lyndhurst in the name of the Beltana Pastoral Company. Farina was established as a railhead in 1883 but it was the drilling of artesian bores which saw Murnpeowie eclipse Blanchewater which, along with Mr. Hopeless and Manuwalkaninna known as Manu, became Murnpeowie outstations. Murnpeowie was developed as a grazing property with a shearing tally of 106,000 in 1894. At over 3,000 square miles and with its lifeblood of artesian bores it was always the largest of the Beltana Company properties. Following erection of the dog fence, Murnpeowie was in the main restricted to running cattle. In 1965 Murnpeowie carried 6320 cattle on the lease of 3721 square miles issued in 1902. Murnpeowie was sold in May 1984 by private treaty to George Sumners of Alice Springs.

MOUNT LYNDHURST situated 30 miles east of Lyndhurst siding and south of Murnpeowie, though not as large as Murnpeowie, became of prime importance to the Beltana Pastoral Company. In 1888 Mount Lyndhurst leases were held by G. Noble with 156 square miles and N.E. Phillipson with 1,205 square miles. South of the dog fence, in 1965 Mount Lyndhurst shore 25,000 sheep, carrying 18 sheep per square mile on the Beltana Pastoral Company's lease of 1347 square miles issued in 1902. In August 1984 Mount Lyndhurst was sold to Lyle Barns, a grazier from Wudinna on the Eyre Peninsular.

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MULGARIA lease of 363 square miles on the shores of Lake Torrens north west of Beltana was originally held by Gool Mahomet and purchased from his son Sallay Mahomet by the Beltana Pastoral Company. On the lease acquired in 1961 the company could fatten 1,200 cattle in a favourable season. In August 1984 Mulgaria was sold by private sale to R.G. and L.R. Savage of Alice Springs.

CORDILLO DOWNS in South Australia's north east, taken up as Cardilla Downs by Edgar Chapman in pastoral lease No. 2800 of 1,250 square miles issued to him in 1878. The lease was transferred to Peter Waite in 1883 when Waite also purchased adjoining pastoral lease 3118 of 364 square miles near Lake Hope between the Diamantina and Cooper's Creek. KANOWANA cattle station on Cooper's Creek below Innamincka was operated by the Elder, Phillipson, Waite partnership, thence the Beltana Pastoral Company and sold in 1914. The main Cordillo Downs lease was issued to Beltana Pastoral Company in 1898. In 1903 Cadelga Station of 1,513 square miles was incorporated in Cordillo Downs followed by Haddon Downs run of 600 square miles purchased in 1905. Depredations made by wild dogs on Cordillo Downs flocks forced the company to stock only cattle from 1941. In 1965 the Beltana Pastoral Company ran 6,177 shorthorns on the 3,040 square mile Cordillo Downs run. Cordillo Downs was sold by auction in 1981.

BELTANA, 322 miles north of Adelaide was taken up by John Haines as Waste Land lease No. 379 in 1854 and acquired by Robert Barr Smith, partner of Thomas Elder, in 1862. Barr Smith was the original lessee of Nilpena lease No. 709 of 162 square miles. In 1867 Elder officially took over both these leases as well as the Mount Deception run and Winnowie under lease 1710 of 532 square miles. Through S.J.S. Stuckey, Elder introduced breeding camels to Beltana which supplied expeditions of exploration as well as serving the far northern stations. N.E. Phillipson was appointed Manager of Beltana in 1870. Nilpena was lost in a reallocation of leases in 1888 when Beltana took approximately its recent form. Under the Beltana Company's 1902 lease, Beltana carried some 15,000 sheep on 497 square miles at 1965 shearing. Beltana station was sold by auction in August 1983 to Ekeldra Nominees Limited of Alice Springs.

Beltana Pastoral Co. leases 1965 consisted of 8,968 square miles as follows:

Beltana 497 square miles 15,000 sheep  
Mount Lyndhurst` 1,347 " " 25,000 "  
Murnpeowie 3,727 " " 6,320 cattle  
Cordillo Downs 3,040 " " 6,177 "  
Mulgaria 363 " " -

Sources: A History of Beltana Pastoral Company Limited. Adelaide : Gillingham Printers, 1965.  
Information communicated by Pamela Rajkowski, 1984.

R.N.A. 1993

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- Beltana Station diaries 1  
1867-1876, 1944, 1952-1953, 1955, 1957-1966. 15 volumes.  
Manuscript.  
Volume 1, formerly accession V1197, kept by N.E. Phillipson.
- Beltana Station improvement registers. 2  
1911-1957. 4 volumes. Manuscript.  
Comprises record of improvements on Beltana, Murnpeowie  
and Mount Lyndhurst relating to wells, bores, occasionally with  
dates of installation, dams, fencing and buildings. Includes sketch  
maps of station leases.
- Beltana Station wells record book. 3  
1928-1934 1 volume. Manuscript  
Records name of well or bore giving depth, capacity and details  
of pump, mill and engine as applicable.
- Beltana Station stocktaking sheets. 4  
1938-1939, 1958-1962. 2 cm. Typescript.  
Comprises record of station plant, furniture and stores  
giving book value and date of purchase in some instances.
- Beltana Station returns. 5  
1934-1941 1 volume Press copies and typescript  
Comprises monthly return to Adelaide of station accounts, plant  
and livestock including sheep summary and report, ledger balances  
and stock sheets.
- Beltana Station ledgers 6  
1927-1955 3 volumes. Manuscript  
Volumes 1 and 2 indexed by name of account including Adelaide  
office, fuel and fodder, ration stores, repairs and renewals, vermin  
destruction, wages and by personal name. Volume 3 not indexed but  
alphabetically arranged by name of account.
- Beltana Station cash book. 7  
1926-1942. 1 volume. Manuscript
- Beltana Station day books. 8  
1930-1937, 1939-1943, 1949-1959, 1962-1964. 8 volumes.  
Manuscript carbon.  
Comprises daily record of costs of stores issued, maintenance,  
wages and vermin destruction as returned to Adelaide office.
- Beltana Station livestock book. 9  
1941. 1 volume. Manuscript  
Comprises record of horses, mules, donkeys, camels and cattle  
on hand at January 1941 listing increase or loss over previous  
year. Fencing contracts entered in day books 1935-1936 also  
recorded at beginning of volume.

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- Beltana Station wages book. 10  
1930-1945. 1 volume. Manuscript.  
Indicates marital status and occupation in most cases, e.g.  
overseer, book-keeper, station hand, boundary rider, musterer,  
cook, domestic.
- Beltana Station service record. 11  
1964. 1 page. Typescript carbon.  
Lists station employees at February 1964 giving date engaged.
- Beltana Station money order books. 12  
1947-1942, 1953-1959. 2 volumes. Manuscript carbon.  
Comprises monthly record of money orders issued for  
wages, contracts and freight as returned to Adelaide office.
- Beltana Station stores issued books. 13  
1936-1945 4 volumes Manuscript.  
Comprises monthly record of commodities issued for house,  
cottage, camp, outstations, maintenance, station hands,  
musterers, well sinkers and others.
- Beltana Station invoice books. 14  
1934-1941. 2 volumes. Manuscript.  
Alphabetically indexed by name of commodity recording  
quantity, price, freight and cost laid down in station store.
- Beltana Station motor maintenance book. 15  
1936-1952. 2 volumes. Manuscript.  
Comprises monthly record of maintenance and expenditure on  
station vehicles and of sales of petrol.
- Beltana Station receipt butts. 16  
1934-1960. 1 volume. Manuscript  
Comprises butts of receipts issued to pastoral companies,  
vermin board, police station and individuals.
- Beltana Station scalp receipt butts. 17  
1941-1959. 1 volume. Manuscript  
Comprises butts of receipts for tails and scalps issued  
under Wild Dogs Act 1931-1938.
- Beltana Station rainfall statistics. 18  
1959-1964. 1 cm. Printed, with manuscript additions.
- Beltana Station show certificates. 19  
1965-1966. 1 cm. Printed, with manuscript additions.  
Comprises prize certificates issued by the Royal Agricultural  
and Horticultural Society of South Australia for fleeces exhibited  
at Royal Adelaide Show.

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- Beltana Station bookkeeper's assignments. 20  
1955-1956. 1 cm. Printed, with manuscript additions.  
Comprises assignments submitted by R.J. Arnold  
together with progress reports from Hemingway Robertson  
Institute.
- Beltana Station tax instalment claims. 21  
1965. 1 cm. Printed, with manuscript additions.  
Comprises tax instalment deduction claim forms submitted by  
several station hands and by station carpenter for concessional  
allowance in respect of dependants.
- Beltana Station correspondence. 22  
1945-1965. 15 cm. Typescript and typescript carbon.  
Comprises letters received from Adelaide office and other  
correspondents 1959-1965 together with copies of letters  
sent by Beltana Station Manager 1945-1965.
- Mount Lyndhurst Station correspondence. 23  
1958-1965 5 cm Typescript carbon.  
Comprises copies of letters sent from Adelaide office to Mount  
Lyndhurst Station Manager.
- Mount Lyndhurst Station sheep summaries. 24  
1958-1965. 5 cm. Printed, with manuscript and typescript  
carbon additions.  
Comprises copy of monthly return received by Beltana from  
Mount Lyndhurst.
- Beltana Pastoral Company press cuttings. 25  
1984. 1 cm Printed.  
Relates to sale of Beltana Pastoral Company stations.
- Beltana Pastoral Company historical notes. 26  
1984. 1 cm. Typescript.  
Comprises brief notes on Beltana Pastoral Company stations  
derived from A History of the Beltana Pastoral Company 1965,  
information communicated by Pamela Rajkowski, subsequently  
author of In the Tracks of the Camelnien 1987 and press cuttings  
on sales of company stations.
- Blanchewater - Murnpeowie Station letter books. 27  
1876-1877, 1887-1888, 1890-1893. 4 volumes.  
Press copies.  
Alphabetically indexed by name of addressee. From November 1890  
as Murnpeowie eclipsed Blanchewater as head station, letters are  
addressed from Murnpeowie. Volumes 1 and 2 have been copied;  
originals in reserve.

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- Blanchewater - Murnpeowie Station invoices. 28  
1891-1896. 1 cm. Manuscript.  
Comprises invoices issued R. Stafford, C. Gardiner and  
E. Hender together with general invoices.
- Murnpeowie outstation stocktaking lists. 29  
1896. 3 items. Manuscript.  
Comprises lists of stock on hand at Clayton Tank, Manuwalkaninna  
and Mount Hopeless.
- Manuwalkaninna Station ledger. 30  
1883-1901.  
Alphabetically indexed by name of account including Afghan,  
brandings, camping, horses, Kanowana, rations, shearers' mess  
and individual station hands, with general rouseabouts listed at  
end of volume.
- Blanchewater - Murnpeowie Station returns. 31  
1889-1898. 4 volumes. Press copies.  
Comprises monthly returns from Blanchewater, thence Murnpeowie,  
to Beltana, entered under boundary riders, 'black boys', buildings,  
contracts, droving, horse sales, improvements, rainfall, rations,  
requisitions, wages, wool, Clayton, Cordillo, Kanowana, Lake Hope,  
Manu, Mount Lyndhurst and other accounts.
- Murnpeowie Station wool returns. 32  
1894-1897. 1 volume. Press copies.  
Records details of clip sent to Port Augusta via Mount Lyndhurst  
siding, giving paddock, sheep numbers, bale brand, fleece weight  
and summary.
- Murnpeowie Station shed wool book. 33  
1891-1901. 1 volume and 1 cm. loose leaves. Manuscript.  
Contains entries recorded under bale number, brand,  
description, weight gross and weight nett.
- Murnpeowie Station shearing ledger. 34  
1891-1895. 1 volume. Manuscript.  
Alphabetically indexed by surname recording accounts for  
individual shearers, branders, dumpers, pressers, woolrollers,  
wool pickers, piece pickers, yarders, cook's mate and  
others engaged for shearing.
- Murnpeowie - Blanchewater Station improvements register. 35  
1890-1894. 1 volume. Manuscript.  
Records particulars of improvements installed by way of fencing,  
machinery, store, smithy, engine houses, eating house, manager's  
residence, shearers' kitchen, woolshed, yards, huts, tanks, dams  
and wells giving names of contractors and relevant lease numbers.

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- Blanchewater - Murnpeowie Station ledgers. 36  
1891-1896. 2 volumes. Manuscript.  
Alphabetically indexed by name of account including 'blackboys',  
droving, camping out, horse breaking, station expenses, vermin  
destruction and names of employees e.g. Jacky Boy, P. O'Reilly,  
Mrs Gregory. Balances transferred to Murnpeowie August 1891.  
Outstation rations 1895-1896 listed at end of volume 2 as day book  
entries.
- Blanchewater Station day books. 37  
1883-1888, 1891-1896. 3 volumes. Manuscript.  
Comprises day by day record of station debits and credits and  
itemised store and ration issues. Includes stocktake of Murnpeowie  
store and list of mail horses and station workers spelt at Cooryaninna  
at end of volume 3.
- Murnpeowie Station ration book 38  
1893-1906. 1 volume. Manuscript.  
Commenced as day book 1891, followed by house, kitchen and  
camping out accounts 1893-1895 and daily record of rations issued  
for house, kitchen, outstations, smithy, 'gins', musterers, donkey  
teams and other requisites 1896-1906, with shearers' mess account  
1894 at end of volume.
- Murnpeowie Station day books. 39  
1890-1895, 1911-1913. 3 volumes. Manuscript & manuscript carbon.  
Comprises day by day record, with costs, of rations, store issues to  
Blanchewater, Manu Walkaninna and Kanowana, camping, mail  
and station expenses. Wages of stockmen, 'black boys' (assistant  
stockmen) and other hands listed 30 November 1890 and 31  
December 1891. Volume 3 consists of carbon copies of returns to  
Adelaide office.
- Murnpeowie Station journals. 40  
1891-1895. 3 volumes. Manuscript.  
Comprises monthly record of accounts including wages (listing  
employees), mail, plant, Blanchewater, Kanowana, Beltana, Mount  
Lyndhurst, droving, building, improvements, contracts, wool, vermin,  
store and station expenses. Volume 1 folios 258-260 note closure of  
Blanchewater books for transfer Murnpeowie August 1891.
- Photograph albums. 41  
ca.1870-1936. Photoprint.  
Albums of photographs of station properties, Mount Lyndhurst,  
Beltana, Mutooroo, Umberumberka, Lilydale Innaminka, Cordillo  
Downs Murnpeowie, sheep flocks and wool, camel herds, some  
station people and employees, and scenes of outback South Australia.