

D7919/9(L)

ROUGH DIARY OF DR. F. E. RENNER

AUG. 3 to SEP. 8
1872.

Powell Creek Lat. 18.4.

Aug. 3rd. 1872.

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PRES. BY MRS. E. M. RENNER.

1.

Saturday, 3rd Aug. Mr Burton's camp on Powell Creek, L.18.4
Strong gale from S.E., cold. Wind veered round to E. in afternoon.
With sunset plenty mosquitoes and sandflies. Sun hot in the
afternoon, plenty flies. Scottie, no change. Mr King complaining
of pains in knees and back, likewise indigestion, gave him kali nitri } lfs.,
Aqua Menth Pip. } XII, Sp. nitr. aeth. } 1.

Sunday, 4th Aug. Wind S.E., no gale. Mild day. Flies, sandflies,
mosquitoes very troublesome. King better. After sunset Scottie
complained of great aching pain in the head, his nose bled profusely and
he perspired freely. I am afraid he will not stand this long. Read
Gregory's journey along the Victoria River in publication of London
geograph (illegible ? for) 1857.

Monday, 5th Aug. Gale ceased to blow. Beautiful day. King
again very ill.

Tuesday, 6th Aug. Gale ceased to blow. Beautiful day. King better.
Boucaut arr. Telegr. fr. Mrs Ar and fr. Mr Todd. Letter to
Mr Mitchell. In the afternoon Mr Patterson arr. Suffers also from
intermittant fever, with gastric symptoms, vomiting, headache, swollen
tonsils, eruption round the lips. Inf. (illegible ? nit) Digit pr.,
Syrup citr., Kali chloris. Had a walk east of the camp along the
creek. Hume shot a few pigeons for my patients. Read Graham;
Deserts east of the Hauran. (Bashan, of the (illegible ? Rephaim) of Abraham's
time, the land of Moab. Deuteronomy 3.

Wednesday, 7th Aug. Mild beautiful day. Wind N towards sunset,
cloudy to the west. Mr Patterson departs for Burton's camp.
King better. Scottie still bleeding from nose. New moon.

2.

Thursday, 8th Aug. Fine morning, mild day. Wind N.W. blowing a good breeze. In the afternoon wiring party reached here. Prepared for a start but the horses have not been seen today. Sandflies very troublesome about sunset. Scottie the same, King improving. Re. Digit. pr., Chlorodyne, Kal chlor. Mixture.

Friday, 9th Aug. Wind changeable, warm day, very hazy. King complains of sharp griping pains and diarrhoea. Scottie in the same unsatisfactory state. Soucaut returned. Letter fr. Musgrave and Mr Rix (?Ricks) Report of work progressing rapidly. Cable not restored.

Saturday, 10th Aug. Gale from S.E. during night, blowing all day. Heavy clouds towards south. King suffering still. Scottie slightly better. A. Giles arr. bringing some brandy for patients. Recovered my horses. Wire party started north.

Sunday, 11th Aug. Cold night, wind S.E., blowing a gale all night and all day. Sun powerful in afternoon. Patients improving. Very cold after sunset, clear night, cloudy before sunset, clear night. O'Israeli : Curiosities of literature.

Monday, 12th Aug. Gale increasing in night. Blowing all day. Bitter cold morning. Mr Johnston left for wiring party. Day clear. Patients better, cold evening.

Tuesday, 13th Aug. Bitter, calm, cold night. Wind blowing furiously. Cold morning, clear sky, blowing all day. Mr King complains of rheumatics, hips, knees, ankles. Diarr. nocturnae. Had a walk in the afternoon along the creek E of camp. Mr King, Pulv. aromat.

3.

Wednesday, 14th Aug. Cold night, warm day, wind E. King suffered from soreness of gums, sickness, Kal. citr. Scottie better. Mr Burton sent some potatoes, onions, apples, oranges. Calm evening. Cool. Poor King very feverish, hot and faint, one minute hot, the other cold, pulse 120. In the afternoon bleeding from nose, (inward bleeding from ulcerated intestine?).

Thursday, 15th Aug. Powell Creek. Fine day, warm breeze, SE. King better. Teams arr. fr. N. and S. Messrs Giles. The poles of the telegr. line are all erected and the wire stretched as far as the Lawson. We are to leave this place to return to the Roper. Plenty vegetables and brandy here today.

Friday, 18th Aug. A deep purple tint opposite the rising sun. Wind SE. Started after dinner, two buggies for transport of patients and team to carry rations etc. Myself on horseback, (King's Bob), Abraham's ditto. Reached a fine waterhole in Watson by sunset and camped. Distance 13 miles.

Saturday, 17th Aug. Started from the Lawson. Came over good grass country looking very different from the usual country on acc. of a very fine acacia tree growing on it, whose leaves looked bright green and (illegible, S.A. Archives say besides) well grown on stem. Came by sunset to Mr Burton's camp. Both patients better.

Sunday, 18th Aug. Had a walk with Mr Burton on top of a rise to get a view of the great lake on Sturt's Plains. The water was glittering in the bright sunshine and the horizon reflected often the surface of the water.

Monday, 19th Aug. Very cold night. Teams started by 10 o.cl. All Mr Burton's party make a start for the Roper. Reached a waterhole on Newcastle Waters by sunset and camped. Good water and feed. Mr Burton with two teams remained 5 miles south hunting for bullocks. Fine day but very dusty. Moon full.

4.

Tuesday, 20th Aug. Bitter cold night, wind still S.E. Follow Newcastle Waters on E. side. 5 miles brought us to Mr Ringwood's camp. (Burton's party (illegible ? yet)) whose men were there ready for dinner and start. Mr Johnston here and Mr Blexton. Beautiful day. The country here is open, covered with hedgewood, leaves green and small, like myrtle with eucalyptus. Beautiful evening. Peculiar purple (illegible, ? tint) E. N. and West. King and Scottie suffer from diarrhoea.

Wednesday, 21st Aug. Newcastle Waters. Cold night. Beautiful day. Wind still S.E., cloudless sky. King compl. of heartburn. Ringwood and Johnston. Mr Giles remains here to search for the lost 3 bullocks. Started by 10 a.m. Travelled to 4 p.m., and camped on a fine pond with plenty green grass around. The ground has been all flooded. Polygonums grow round the pond, box timber, hedgetree. The soil is black and covered thick with broken stones of small size. After tea King complained of severe pain in the pit of the stomach and under the right hypochondrium. He moaned loud and looked distressed. Some of the men sat up with him all night applying wetted flannels. Lotion of chloroform gave only a temporary relief.

Thursday, 22nd Aug. Bitter cold night and morning. Sun hot in daytime. Wind strong S.E. Cloudless sky. Had a short walk, too swampy and stony to enjoy it. King fell asleep after 8am, pain ceased.

Friday, 23rd Aug. Newcastle Waters. Fine weather. After an hour's travelling came up to Mr Burton's camp. Came across Sturt's Plain for 18 miles, plenty grass but no timber. Forest country to the N. Sunset after crossing the plain. Very dark through the scrub to Frew's Ponds 4 miles. King better. (Very illegible, S.A. Archives say H (e) and on JT) of the finishing of the line, fireworks burnt.

5.

Saturday, 24th Aug. Frew's Ponds are of good size surrounded by iron conglomerate rocks. Some natives came near the camp for water. One could speak a few words of English, "very good." One gave me a boomerang. Left with tanks full of water. Passed through beautiful country, high native trees, jasmine, clematis, some spots covered with high mulga trees, soil red loam. Came to camp in the forest without water but good green feed.

Sunday, 25th Aug. Proceeded to Milner's Ponds. Forest country. Messrs. Patterson, Mitchell, Rutt, McCauley, Rix (?Ricks), Howley there. Dined with Mr Rutt. Good feed and water. (Fisula and).

Monday, 26th Aug. To McGorey's Ponds, passing Auld's Ponds. Plenty good forest country and plenty inferior scrub. At Auld's Ponds saw one of Stuart's marks JMDS round a tree. Mark very feint. Mr Mitchell's camp at McGorey's Ponds. King improving. 19 miles.

Tuesday, 27th Aug. To Daly Waters. Forest country, road along the line 14 miles. Stuart's camp. Mr Howley, Mr Tucker (operators), Mr Patterson, the latter still very ill. The weather has been very fine, cold during night, today wind changed to N the sky got cloudy and a few drops of rain fell. During evening air very close. Met Boucaut and Lewis, also Mr Hack. Boucaut started for Strangways River. News fr. Mrs Ar, fr. Harris and Muller.

Wednesday, 28th Aug. Daly Waters, Cool wind before sunrise. Plenty patients here, two cases intermittent fever with the symptoms of (illebale, S.A. Archives say cholera) one man suffering from disease of kidneys, one ulcerated leg after a cut with axe.

Thursday, 29 to Saturday, 31st Aug. In camp. All patients improving. The weather is getting now sultry. The wind is blowing daytime from N in night from E., In the afternoon, cloudy sky, squalls of wind, rain, thunder after sunset. Saw 3 marked trees, 3 on two trees, on one "J."
Telegr. fr. Mrs Ar. During the last days Mr Mitchell's and Burton's parties passed through this camp.

6.

On the 31st Mr Burton arr. with camel caravan.

Sunday, 1st September. Daly Waters. Very hot, cloudy. Wind N. Had a look at the station building of sawn timber, weather boarded. High walls, steep roof make the rooms very cool, it will be a comfortable house. The waterhole here is deep and of good size, water good. Mr Abrahams gives me the fruit of a fig tree. The tree is leafless and full of beautiful blossoms, of the shape of peach blossom and of beautiful rose color. Two pods, with 3 sides, sharp edges, 4 inches long, velvety, greenish skin, hang on stem. Mr King tells me that the natives eat the kernels contained inside.

Monday, 2nd September. Late start on a hot day. Team and buggys came to a camp on a swamp found lately by Mr Ringwood. Good supply of water, rather boggy. Found Mr Burton here. The country we travelled over is similar to that S. of Daly Waters, plain, sometimes well timbered, sometimes scrubby, near the camp it was well grassed.

Tuesday, 3rd September. All day in camp, waiting for arrival of Mr Patterson and party, whose rations I have taken on. He arr. late in afternoon, so Mr Rix (Rock). Poor King very ill all day. Had a walk over the flat, saw some waterlilies in flower, yellow and others white and pink. Weather sultry, morning cool, wind soon shifting round to N., clouds rising and after sunset, sudden squalls without rain.

Wednesday, 4th September. Started for Purdie's Ponds. Only a short distance. Enjoyed the ride. Plenty green grass here and plenty water. Saw here Stuart's mark on a tree. In the evening plenty lightning and a strong breeze from N.E. King better. New moon.

7.

Thursday, 5th September. The weather was fine in the morning and rode about 11 miles on, when we found water in the Strangways River. Camped, some fine grass land here. Altogether enjoyed my ride. The air was fresh. The trees green and tall, the cockatoos, parrots, magpies lively. Very little water here in the river.

Friday, 5th September. Went as far as the rocky gorge about 18/19 miles. Fine weather and good country make travelling still pleasant. Had a bath in the waterhole below the rocks. There was plenty water south of the rocks. Rocks limestone, like the limestone in the spring country of SA. The rocky gorge is a pretty spot and the vegetation healthy. Country well described by Stuart.

Saturday, 7th September. Travelled only 12 miles. Camped on a lagoon with beautiful water. (Stuart mentions this lagoon?). Fine country, fine weather, plenty pines with the corkscrew stem, leaves a yard long, spiked like the ananas or pineapple, most stems here (illegible, S.A. Archives say decapitated). The water here covered with beautiful purple and blue lilies, most flowers double. King much better.

Sunday, 8th September. Remained here. Had a walk in the morning on top of the stony hills on the west side of water. The limestone mentioned cropping out everywhere (honeycombed limestone). Large camp here, Mr Burton and party, Lewises, Bayfield.

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