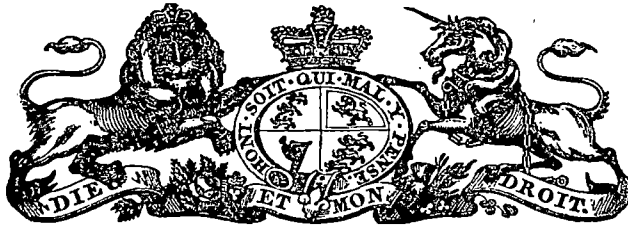


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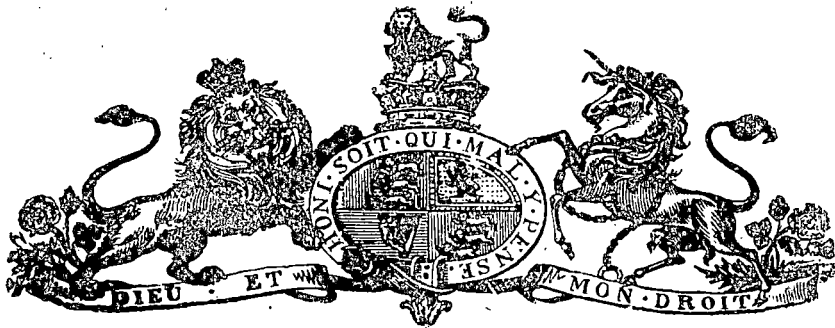
1890.

PARLIAMENT OF TASMANIA.

CONSERVATOR OF FORESTS:

REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDING JUNE 30, 1890.

Presented to both Houses of Parliament by His Excellency's Command.



CONSERVATOR OF FORESTS.

REPORT for the Year 1889-90.

Conservator's Office, Hobart, 30th June, 1890.

SIR,

I HAVE the honor to submit my Report for the year 1889-90 on the working of the Department under my charge.

In my Annual Report 1888-89 I made reference to the duties performed by the Crown Bailiffs, who received no remuneration for services performed by them in connection with Forest administration, and recommended a reconsideration of this part of the administration, more especially that alluding to the work performed by them during the barking season. Throughout the last wattle-bark season a premium of 5 per cent. has been allowed Crown Bailiffs on all bark contracts, and this has proved a very satisfactory arrangement, inasmuch as the work in all cases has been carried out with more energy, and with a general desire to study the interests of the Department.

Complaints have constantly been made, and with justice, by lessees of Crown lands with reference to the disposal of wattle-bark on land occupied by them. The practice has hitherto been to sell the bark on all Crown lands by tender, and this has often proved disastrous to the lessee by the loss of his sheep, broken fences, and other annoyances occasioned through men employed to strip the bark doing almost as they liked on his ground, and having no one over them to control their actions. To remedy this evil lessees have now the first offer of the wattle-bark on their land, which is first valued by the Crown Bailiff. These valuations have proved very satisfactory, as, with one exception, during the last bark season the valuations of these officers have been readily accepted.

COMPARATIVE Statement of Income arising from the Forests of Tasmania for the Years ending 30th June, 1888 and 1889.

	1888.	1889.
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Timber Licence Fees.....	591 11 10	537 0 2
Bark-stripping Contracts.....	216 1 11	659 10 8
Sales of seized Timber.....	76 10 3	29 18 6
Domain Contract (Balance).....	160 0 0	46 13 4
Royalty on Pine.....	1482 2 6	293 17 4
	£2526 6 6	£1567 0 0

From the above statement of income it will be seen that there is a falling-off for the year 1889 of £959 6s. 6d., the principal cause for which will be found under the item royalty on pine, reduced before I entered on the duties of the Department. The revenue, therefore, from this source has been decreased by £1188 5s. 2d. as compared with 1888, the amount received for this year being only £293 17s. 4d.; and it is even probable this would not have been received had not the duty been reduced from 1d. to $\frac{1}{2}$ d. on timber exported, and abolished on all required for local consumption.

The immediate result of the above alteration in the duty was to at once release a large number of logs in the forest—in one case 1000—that would have been allowed to remain there, as the cost of bringing them to market would be too heavy to remunerate owners for their trouble.

There is very little being done in either the home or export trade at the present time, and it is asserted by those who are perhaps the best judges on this matter—the timber merchants—that the local consumption is, and always will be, very small compared with the imported pine woods. The export trade is almost at a standstill, only prime logs of very best quality having any call made on it whatever.

Huon pine for quality and durability is admitted to be about the best pine in the world, but there are so many dead knots, holes, and other defects in the log that for commercial and other purposes it is almost useless. Builders require larger sized timber than that procurable in Huon pine, which is more suitable for the cabinet-maker, who can use up the smaller sizes.

A railway carriage-builder in New South Wales gives his opinion of Huon pine, and of its great value for decorative purposes and quality:—"I contracted to build 56 railway carriages on the American principle, the Commissioners of Railways stipulating that Huon pine and blackwood was to be used in their construction. In my opinion Huon pine is the wood Tasmania should be proud of. It stands in the very first rank; will last three score years and ten, and then not look awry. I use it for panels principally, where it is quite at home, and with a cedar beading sets the carriage off grandly."

It is hopeless to think that Huon pine can ever compete with the imported American and New Zealand pines for building purposes; its real value will be rightly estimated by the cabinet-maker and railway constructor of the future. Great care should be taken of the forests of timber of this description, large areas of which are known to exist in the south-western portion of the Colony.

It is probable if all tenders for public works specified the use of Huon pine and blackwood in the construction of buildings, a large amount of small timber which is fit for no other use would be used up, and an industry now almost obsolete would be revived.

Clause 4, Pine Regulations 1st April, 1889, stipulates that "No pine shall be cut of a less girth than 4 feet 6 inches, such measurement to be taken at 5 feet from the ground." It will at once be seen that this regulation only applies to standing trees, and not to the superior limbs of trees—often of large size and good lengths—thousands of feet of which are left to cumber the forest, but if brought to market would prove valuable for boat-boards, house-building, and other purposes. The revenue on bark-stripping contracts shows a substantial increase a result no doubt attributable to a great extent to the careful supervision exercised by the various Crown Bailiffs throughout the Colony only one case of unauthorised bark-stripping having been reported up to the present date.

COMPARATIVE Statement of Export of Timber, sawn and in the log, for the years ending 1887, 1888, and 1889.

Blackwood, sawn.			Palings.		
Sup. feet, 1887	319,909		Total No. 1887	1,530,385	
" 1888	1,174,039		" 1888	1,673,969	
" 1889	1,574,114		" 1889	1,417,266	
Blackwood logs.			Laths and Shingles.		
Sup. feet, 1887	735,060		Total No. 1887	120,000	
" 1888	765,907		" 1888	5000	
" 1889	1,504,723		" 1889	190,200	
Sassafras logs.			Posts and Rails.		
Sup. feet, 1887	23,400		Total No. 1887	12,100	
" 1888	45,721		" 1888	55,159	
" 1889	35,322		" 1889	37,440	
Myrtle logs.			Trenails and Staves.		
Sup. feet, 1887	12,100		Total No. 1887	391,243	
" 1888	15,860		" 1888	267,001	
" 1889	21,520		" 1890	262,341	
Sawn timber.			Huon Pine.		
Sup. feet, 1887	7,503,837		Sup. ft. 30 June, 1889.....	208,207	
" 1888	15,164,160		" 1890.....	100,820	
" 1889	12,213,132		Pine logs—Macquarie Harbour.		
			31 Dec. 1889	4485	
			30 June, 1890	1806	

From the above it will be seen that the export of blackwood, both sawn and in the log, has increased to a very large extent—that in the log having almost doubled itself. Myrtle logs show a

substantial increase, as also do laths and shingles. It is a subject for regret to find that sawn timbers shows a falling off to a very large extent of 2,933,028 feet; Palings, 250,000; Sassafras, 10,000 feet; Posts and rails, 17,000; Trenails and staves, 4000; and Huon Pine, 107,000 feet. This can only be accounted for by the increased duty placed upon our timber in the neighbouring Colonies.

With regard to our local trade, the same stagnation is complained of by saw-millers and dealers, through contractors favouring imported pine, which is largely used in this Colony, and to which our own timber has to give place, and thus making it necessary for closing our saw-mills, throwing large bodies of men out of employment, and men, too, who have been intimately connected with the timber industry for years.

In my report for the year 1889 I was enabled to record the necessity of utilizing only matured timber of best quality, true to name, and properly seasoned; but from all the information I could gather at that time no stocks of any kind were kept on hand, but the requirements of the market—both intercolonial and local—were from hand to mouth.

I have no reason to believe the above condition of affairs has been altered in any degree, but our timber is still placed upon the market under exactly the same conditions. It is only natural, therefore, to suppose that until contractors can get our own timber properly prepared for them and ready to hand it will have to give place to imported pine, although the sizes required have to be a little larger in the case of pine, and the expense heavier. It is hardly to be expected contractors will for their immediate requirements employ a piece of heavy timber, full of sap, and in all probability of inferior quality, to a piece of imported pine, little more than half the weight, and fully seasoned.

The same objection applies to blackwood, large quantities of which are now being used in railway carriage construction in New South Wales, where it is reported that the timber sent has not had sufficient care shown in its selection or preparation for the requirements of that industry. The report of a builder in that Colony states:—"I have had to cast aside a little more than one relishes, as much as 30 per cent., when required for a special purpose. This could be obviated if more care were exercised in selecting the trees for felling, and the time of year for operating. The construction of railway carriages going on at the present time would be used as a guide whether it should be further adopted; but from the above causes it was doubtful whether such would be the case, as the Commissioners looked with favourable eyes on teak, a really first-class timber from Burmah, which in all probability would supersede blackwood in future tenders invited."

The following shipment of timber was sent to London, per *Lufra*, to the order of the Agent-General, for testing purposes, with the view of introducing our hardwoods on the Continent for railway sleepers, and for which it is believed there would be a large demand. The introduction of blackwood, it is thought, will take the place of mahogany (now becoming very scarce) for cabinet purposes, &c. This timber was of good average quality. Large shipments could be readily obtained should any demand arise for it from this source:—

- 3 Pieces Stringy Bark, (*Eucalyptus obliqua*), 117 sup. feet.
- 3 Pieces Swamp Gum, (*Eucalyptus viminalis*), 117 ditto.
- 4 Pieces Blue Gum, (*Eucalyptus globulus*), 120 ditto.
- 2 Pieces Gum-topped Stringy Bark, (*Eucalyptus obliqua*), 39 ditto.
- 4 Pieces King William Pine (*Anthrotaxis cupressoides*), 24 ditto.
- 2 Pieces Pinkwood, (*Eucryphia Billardieri*), 36 ditto.
- 1 Piece Blackwood (*Acacia melanxylon*), 70 ditto.

The *Lufra* has arrived at London, but no report of any trial having been made has yet been received from the Agent-General.

I again desire to bring under notice the importance for early consideration of establishing Government yards for storing and seasoning timber—to be carefully chosen from selected districts—for railway purposes. Great difficulty is at present experienced in getting reliable and well-seasoned timber for renewals; and if yards, as I have suggested, were established, such difficulties in the future would be reduced to a minimum. The timber could be felled on Crown land, brought to Hobart and Launceston, cut in the Government yards, and transmitted to various centres, to be decided upon, for distribution as required.

Tree Planting.

Mr. B. E. Fernow, Conservator of Forests, United States of America, in his report for the year 1887, says:—

"The work of the Department is to act in the main as a bureau of information. Hitherto such information has naturally consisted in a recital of methods of forest administration which prevails in Europe and other countries, and a presentation of the needs of our country in general based upon imperfect knowledge of its forest conditions," and then asks the question,

“What is Forestry?”

“Forestry means more than tree-planting. It is the art of managing a wood crop so that it will reproduce itself spontaneously by the seed from old trees, and afterwards helping the young growth to make the best timber in the shortest time nature will reproduce the forest and grow timber, if allowed by man.” An opinion fully borne out in South Australia.—See Report of the Conservator, J. Ednie Brown, 1888-9.

“That much could be done to increase our indigenous forests simply by natural means there can be no doubt; but as the present disposition is to occupy the land in some way or other, without reference to this very important fact, I fear the chances of doing so are somewhat remote.

“As an instance of this, I do not hesitate to say that even from the partial protection afforded by the establishment of the Forest Board in 1876, at the very least some five millions of seedlings and saplings have been raised in our various forests simply from ‘natural regeneration.’ Such a statement of fact as this is, I think, sufficient encouragement to make us still more careful of our natural forest country instead of opening it up for cultivation and settlement, however much that may be subservient to departmental supervision and resumption. The material wealth of our indigenous forests would be increased immensely if carefully and systematically treated in the manner indicated.

“Owing to the protection from stock which was accorded the Willowie Forest during the last two or three years, the ‘natural reproduction’ of the indigenous trees has been very extensive and satisfactory, both as regards number of plants and their quality as well.”

The above opinion, from a gentleman so well able to give it, is worthy of serious consideration to this Colony, and while there is yet time we should conserve areas of forest country that are now of little use to the selector for either agricultural or pastoral purposes.

In the south-western portion of the Colony large areas of forest country could be withdrawn from selection, which, after having been denuded of all the mature timber, could be closed, and the forest again raised simply from “natural regeneration.” To replant such country would be impossible, as the forest in its eagerness to reproduce itself would keep an army of men employed to protect the young plants, the result of such a course being in the end disappointment and heavy loss to the State.

One of the essential features of a Bill submitted to Congress, 1887, through the agency of the American Forestry Congress, was as follows:—

“The lands found to be of agricultural value, but wholly or partially timbered, are to be open to entry under the Homestead or other laws, but an appraised value for the timber shall be paid by the settler, excepting for the timber on five acres, which he may hold under a ‘Settler’s Licence,’ without any other payment other than a nominal licence fee of 2 dollars.”

It would be well if something as above indicated could be brought to bear on selectors in this Colony who select rich agricultural land covered with a dense forest of the most valuable timber, equal and in many cases superior to anything the Colony has yet produced, and who ruthlessly destroy as soon as he puts his foot on the land—without giving a thought of its probable value to him hereafter, or the requirements of those who may not be so fortunate in their selections—timber on thousands of acres of land, which at this day testify, by their bleached trunks and limbs, the folly of such wilful and thoughtless destruction.

Tree-planting is being carried on in South Australia at the present time on a very extensive scale, the cost to the State being about £7500 per annum, the benefit of which will be derived by future generations. The interest in regard to tree-planting amongst the people generally in that Colony is still upon the increase. Large numbers of plants are given away, attaining the large number 236,532 for the year 1888-9. A bonus of £2 per acre is also given for land planted with trees, and a claim for 146 acres was allowed, two more claims being under consideration.

A good deal of interest has been taken in the culture of wattle-bark for commercial purposes; and my attention has been drawn to the desirability of introducing the Golden or Gum-leaved (*Acacia pycnantha*) Wattle of Western and South Australia, the bark from which is said brings the highest price in all markets, on account of the large amount of tannin contained in it. It is a matter for doubt, however, whether our own Black or Rock Wattle taken at the same age does not, tree for tree, produce equally as much tannin property. It has been suggested that the Golden Wattle might well be introduced into this Colony, and planted on the East Coast, and also along railway enclosures. That it would thrive very well on the rich light soils of the East Coast there can be no doubt; and I shall take an early opportunity of procuring some seeds, and distribute them among the landholders along the East Coast, and in my next Annual Report I hope to show the success or otherwise of the experiment.

With regard to utilising our railway lines for the purpose of growing wattles, this cannot be entertained; I could not recommend the Government to try the experiment. In New South Wales the experiment has been tried, but the cost of keeping the young trees free from grass is very great; and watering the plants till they are established is out of the question. The telegraph line repairers have also killed a large number of the wattles which were most thriving, because it

was feared they would interfere with the telegraph wires. Altogether, the difficulties of growing wattles along the railway lines are so considerable that the enterprise will probably be abandoned, or confined to extremely favourable localities.

Wattles have been extensively planted by the Governments of New South Wales, Victoria, and South Australia; but it is too early to predict whether wattle-planting by Government, except in South Australia, will be a profitable commercial enterprise.

If the first stripping of the South Australian Government is a guide, it does not give much hopes of its success. The Conservator, in his Report, 1888-9, tells us that "A small lot of five tons of wattle-bark (*Acacia pycnantha*) was stripped from five acres of a rough piece of ground immediately above the Forester's residence. The seeds of the trees were put in eight years ago. The result was fairly satisfactory, but nothing worthy of special mention."

I respectfully recommend for your consideration the desirableness of withdrawing from selection all wattle-producing country on the East Coast. This land is very valuable for its production of wattle-bark, and is capable of re-producing and allowing itself to be stripped every five or seven years. The bark along the East Coast is of the Silver, Black, and Rock varieties, the two latter being the most valuable produced in the Colony. As most of this land is let for grazing purposes, it will readily be seen how desirable it is all such land should still be held by the Crown.

If the interest taken in tree-planting by landholders in the neighbouring Colonies can be taken as a guide, I have every reason to believe seedlings of some of our indigenous trees, as well as those of the neighbouring Colonies, could be raised and supplied at a small expense. Should such an experiment prove successful, many thousands of plants would be distributed in the now almost treeless Midland District.

The establishment of an "Arbor day" for Tasmania, in conjunction with the free distribution of trees to landed proprietors, would add very materially to re-forest large areas of what are now treeless wastes. The planting of trees on the above day would be carried out mostly by schools, and a general distribution of plants over the whole Colony in this manner, ensuring their being received where most wanted.

I respectfully recommend that a small sum be set apart to enable me to carry out the above experiment, as I feel certain the money would be well spent, and the Colony reap a large indirect benefit.

Total Revenue and Expenditure for Financial Year ending 30th June, 1890.

REVENUE.	£	s.	d.	EXPENDITURE.	£	s.	d.
Timber Licence Fees	591	11	10	Salary Conservator of Forests	300	0	0
Bark-stripping Contracts	216	1	11	Travelling and Incidental Expenses...	102	10	4
Sales of seized Timber and Bark	29	18	6	Commission, Timber Licence Fees ...	53	14	0
Domain Contract, balance	46	13	4	Commission, Wattle Bark Contracts	32	19	6
Royalty on Pine	293	17	4	Balance	1077	16	2
	<u>£1567</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>		<u>£1567</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>

I have the honor to be,
Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

WILLIAM T. H. BROWN, *Conservator of Forests.*

30th June, 1890.

MOUNT MAURICE.

Crown Lands Office, Hobart, 30th January, 1890.

SIR,

I HAVE the honor to report, for your information, that I left Hobart by s.s. *Warrentina* for George's Bay on the 8th instant, arriving on the 11th. The following morning left by coach for Ringarooma, arriving on the 15th. On the 17th left here for Launceston, at which place I arrived on the 22nd instant, proceeding to Hobart by express the same day.

The Crown Lands Bailiffs, through whose Districts I passed, were interviewed, and from them I obtained a large amount of useful information connected with my Department.

Wattle of a good marketable quality, and in quantity, was found on most of the Crown Lands; but in many places it will be found difficult to get the bark out till roads are made into them.

A very large area of land in this locality which has been withdrawn from selection for some years, and through a good deal of which I passed, is of first-class quality, of a red and chocolate description.

The Ringarooma (Krushka) township, about 2 miles north of the township reserve—Maurice—is practically a private one, as the land on which it stands is private property, and most of the buildings have been erected by the proprietors. The site is a very good one, with Hotel, Stores, Post and Telegraph Offices, Town Hall, Police Office and officers' quarters, blacksmith and other shops, private residences, and streets laid out to meet the requirements of a further extension of the township; and, as it is here the terminus of the railway from Scottsdale is to be, it may be inferred it will be the future township of the district.

The reserve, Maurice, contains 1132 acres of first-class basaltic land, with a dense covering of myrtle and old man ferns. As it is unlikely it will be used for the purpose originally intended, I would recommend for the consideration of the Minister that it be thrown open for selection.

Two large blocks of land adjoining the township reserve, and of the same quality, I recommend to be thrown open for selection, viz., 2500 acres on the north-west side. A good lot of wattle on this lot, and about 800 acres on the south east.

At three miles south of Maurice, on a branch of the Ringarooma River, a good extent of flat land extends to the south east; and, although not fit for agricultural purposes along the river, it improves on getting further back. This land is well watered by the Ringarooma and other small streams. There is also a good stripping of wattle-bark here.

On the western side of Mount Maurice, through Diddleum, a distance of five miles, a large area of good summer feeding-land for cattle, with belts of myrtle forest, is met with. The grass at the present moment is very good, and will either run to waste or be burnt by the first fire. No stock was seen on my way through.

After leaving Diddleum, and in the vicinity of Mount Barrow, the track, which is here very good, passes through what is evidently a large block of first-quality chocolate land, with small creeks running through it,—the usual myrtle forest, old man and cat-faced ferns covering it. A good road could be got into this country from Launceston, which would be the highway to the Camden Plains and surrounding country. I recommend to the Minister that this land be thrown open for selection. I would also recommend the desirability of cutting tracks through this land to enable selectors to look over it and facilitate settlement.

In opening up this country for selection mining would sustain no injury, but rather be assisted. As all the land selected is purely agricultural, the settlers would obtain large quantities of tin out of the abandoned alluvial claims on the various rivers and creeks in the neighbourhood. That large quantities of tin remains in these abandoned claims there can be no doubt; but it is in small patches, which would be all worked if brought within the miner's means, which could be brought about if some system of licence could be introduced: for, should the Minister think it desirable to open up the large area of rich agricultural land in this part of the Colony for selection, every inducement should be held out to the settler to enable him to pay his instalments as they become due, and make him a permanent resident on the soil. The land is of excellent quality; but the man of small means soon finds himself exhausted before any extent of forest is cleared, and is compelled to sell out to his richer neighbour or the rich speculator.

I have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

WILLIAM T. H. BROWN,
Conservator of Forests.

*The Hon. A. T. PILLINGER, Esq.,
Minister of Lands, Hobart.*

MOUNTS ALBERT, VICTORIA, AND YOUNG, FINGAL DISTRICT.

Crown Lands Office, Hobart, 14th June, 1890.

SIR,

IN accordance with your instructions to inspect the country in the vicinity of Mounts Victoria, Albert, and Young, Fingal District, I have the honor to report that I left Hobart on the 3rd instant, returning on the 11th instant, having made as thorough an examination of the country as the time of the year would allow.

Mr. L. Witham, owing to official duties, was unable to go with me till the 5th instant, so I took an opportunity of inspecting the Mount Nicholas coal and the Golden Gate gold mines, an account of both of which visits I have appended to this Report.

Saturday, the 4th instant.—Mr. Witham, the Superintendent of Police and Crown Bailiff for the district (who intended to accompany me through), Mr. Dodge (the constable), and myself, left Mathinna at 9 A.M. for the Starlight gold mine, arriving at noon, where lunch was partaken of, having been kindly provided by the manager. Mr. Dodge, who lent me a horse to ride, returned to Mathinna taking the horses back with him, Mr. Witham and myself proceeding on foot over a steep rough ridge towards Mounts Victoria and Albert, leaving Mount Black Boy on our right hand.

Camped that night under some high rocks, on a small creek running in a N.E. direction; the weather fine, but cold.

By the chart I had with me we were on the watershed of the St. George's River; but after proceeding some distance it proved to be that of the Evercreech, which river by the same chart took its rise on the southern side of Mount Young, 10 miles distant.

An early start was made the following (Sunday) morning, taking an easterly direction, crossing some fairly good land and a small button-grass plain, but up to this point no timber of any value was met with. At noon the descent commenced, Mount Albert bearing W.N.W. and Mount Black Boy south. The soil here was of fair quality, improving as we proceeded down the river. The timber on this land is large and of very good quality, comprising myrtle, sassafras, stringy-bark, and white gum, some of the latter very high and straight, and measuring 8 and 9 feet in diameter as many feet from the ground, with an undergrowth of old-man ferns (very large and high), bracken and cat-head ferns, musk, ti-tree, and other scrub, the whole growing through dead timber of all descriptions. At 4 P.M., the weather dark and threatening, camped under some large ferns, on a clear opening of very rich soil. The rain commenced soon after camping, and kept on till after daylight the following morning.

6th June.—This camp was not left till 11 A.M., having our tent and clothes to dry, also sundry repairs to make to them. The walking till 2 P.M. was not so difficult as yesterday's, the undergrowth not being so dense; the soil was of best quality, of a red, yellow, and chocolate colour, and very deep, fallen trees having torn out holes 6 feet deep showing still the same quality. The timber was also denser and larger. Heavy fog prevailed all day. I should estimate the area of this good land at thousands of acres, and the locality the northern side of Mount Young. Towards evening the soil and timber ran out, and a deep narrow gorge, with steep, rocky sides, was entered, down which we made the best of our way till a little after 4 P.M., when the best camp we could get was selected on some stones 100 feet above some beautiful cascades and falls.

Tuesday, the 10th June, found us on the move at dawn, allowing us to make an early start down the gorge, over loose stones and rotten moss-grown logs, and through dog-wood scrub, ferns, and ti-tree, arriving at the bottom at noon, when we found we had to wade across a marsh, through ti-tree scrub, ferns, and cutting-grass, to Mr. Clayton's homestead, two miles distant, where on arrival we were made welcome. Two miles further on a call was made at Mr. Peter Mackenzie's—who was unfortunately not at home, but his housekeeper would not listen to our passing his door without partaking of his hospitality. Our packs were left here to come on by the coach the following day, and at 5 P.M. we started on foot for Fingal, 11½ miles, arriving at 7.30 P.M. No accident happened to us on our journey across, which occupied four days and three nights. The country passed through was very wet and foggy, consequently no stoppage was made between breakfast and tea. My companion, Mr. Witham, proved a very good bushman and a genial companion.

Having some spare time on my hands, I paid a visit to the Mount Nicholas coal mine, meeting the manager, Mr. S. Birrell, on my way up the Company's tram, by whom I was received very kindly, and shown over the property, first inspecting the endless wire rope, screens, weighbridge, and tramway to the station; thence to the various seams on the mount; and finally to the present working, which is known as the 4-foot seam—proceeding first to the furnace shaft, all through the returns, and round the working faces to the No. 1 and 2 headings (600 feet from the mouth of the mine), where a very valuable seam of coal is being worked, and improves in the bulk every day.

A band of slate that separated the working seam from another overhead, which at the mouth was five feet thick, had here dwindled down to two feet. The manager told me he was in hopes of being able to break through soon, and work the two seams in one face. Everything connected with the mine is in good working order, and the result satisfactory. Quite a little village is growing up at the works, and the Company have found it necessary to build a schoolhouse, a schoolmaster for which will be provided by the Government.

I was unable to visit the Cornwall Mine; to do so I would have had to walk through two miles of scrub, for which I was not prepared, the afternoon having set in with rain.

A visit was also made to the New Golden Gate Gold Mine at Mathinna, where I met the Manager, Mr. Thos. Andrews, by whom I was very kindly received and shown over the whole of the workings. The battery, consisting of 10 head of stampers, was at work, with 120 tons of stone in the hopper ready to go through, which was constantly being added to from the mine. The whole of the plant is in good working order, and the shaft engine is capable of sinking the shaft another 50 feet at the least. The Manager, Mr. Dodge, and myself descended the shaft to the No. 3 level, 236 feet from the surface, on to Loan's reef, which has only recently been opened out, showing a perfect reef of gold-bearing quartz, 8 feet wide, between clearly defined solid walls. In looking over the stone in the hopper hardly a piece of any size could be picked up without showing gold. I do not pretend to be an expert, but, from the present appearance of the mine, I should not only look for its production of great wealth in the future, but the Mathinna field generally.

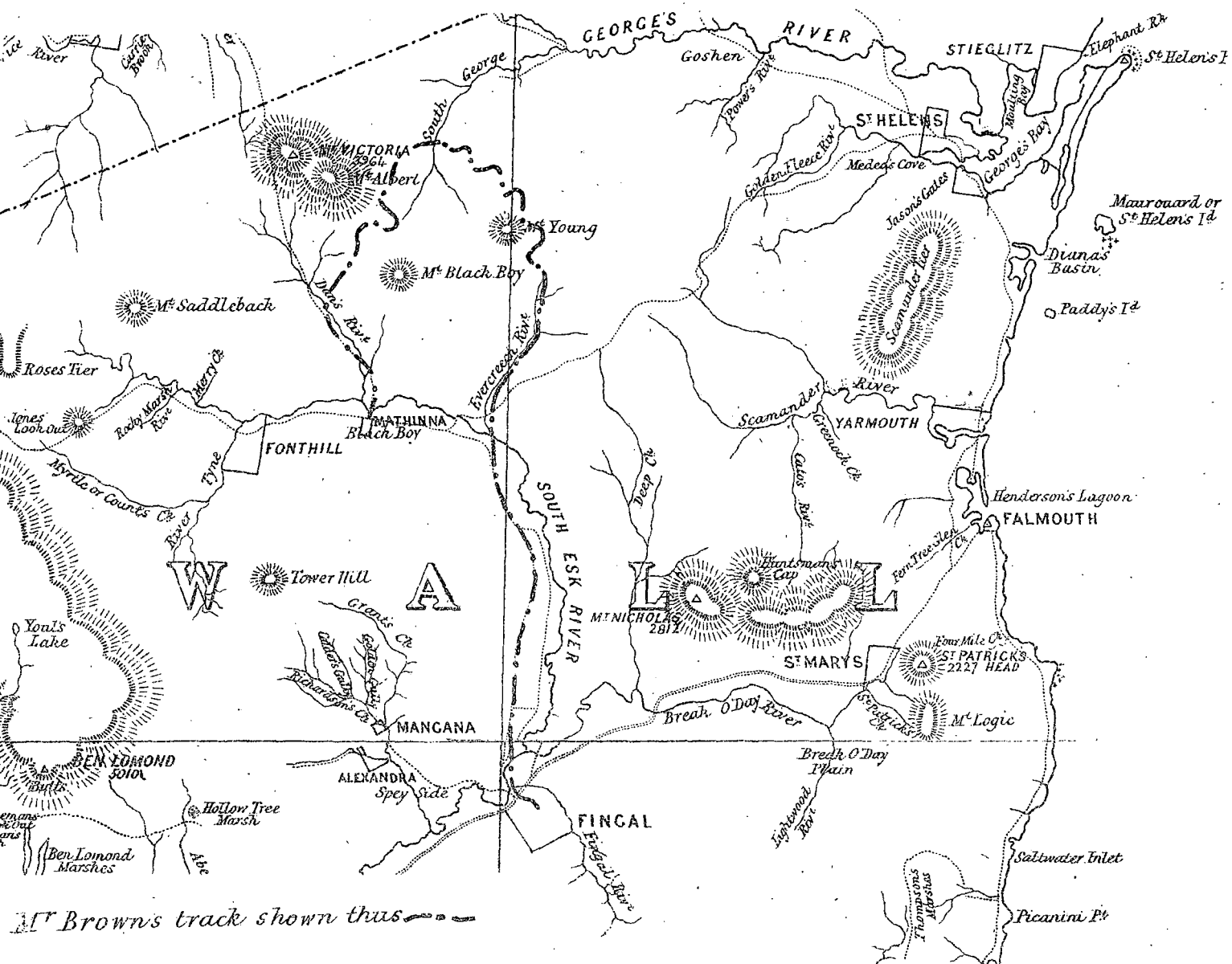
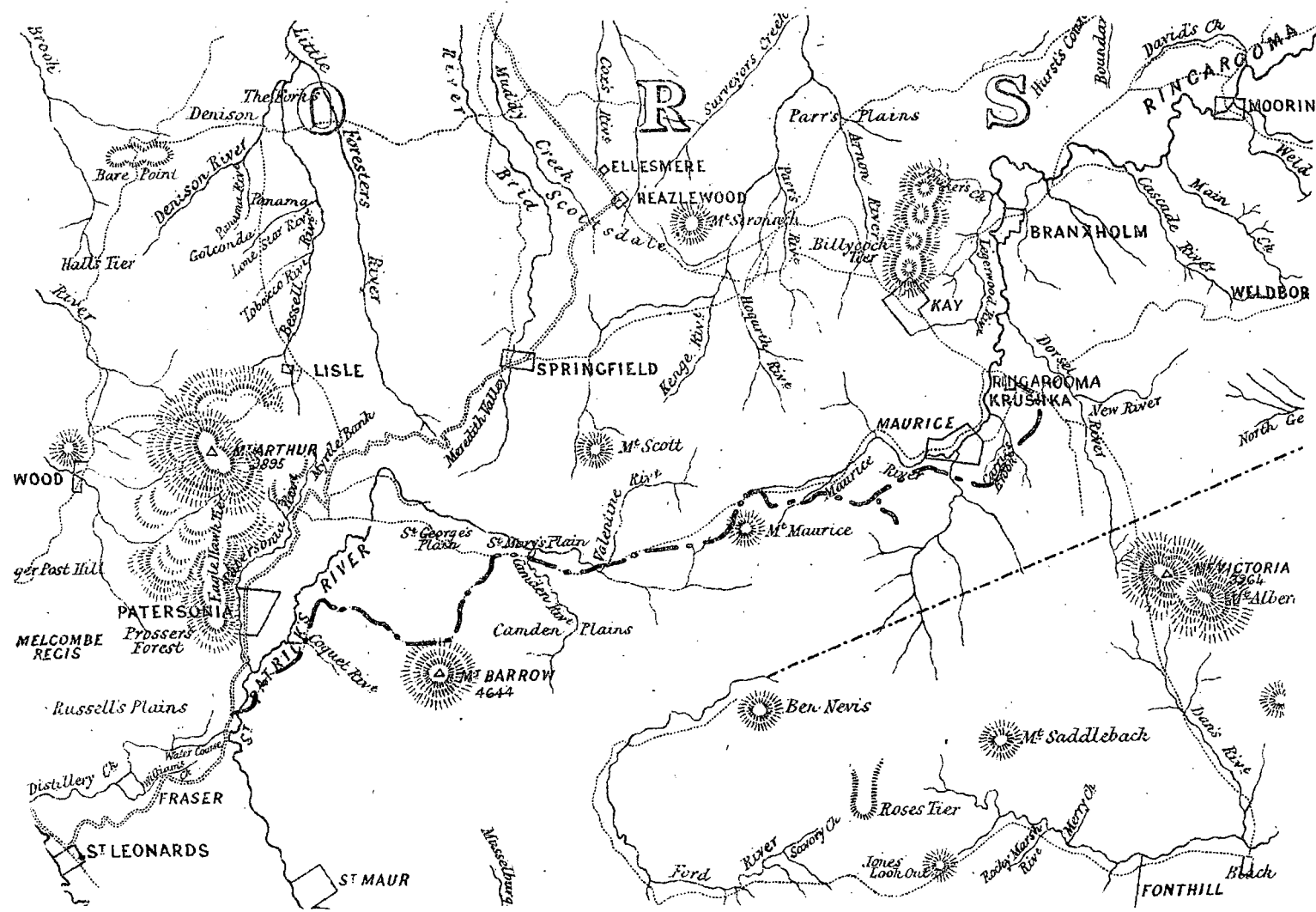
I have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

WILLIAM T. H. BROWN,
Conservator of Forests.

The Hon. the Minister of Lands and Works.



Mr Brown's track shown thus — — —

