

Diary of Goyder's Survey Party 1869

**Extract from:
Northern Territory Archives Service, Surveyor-General's Department,
NTRS 3732, Diary of Goyder Survey Party, 1869**

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NTAS, NTRS 3732, Diary of Goyder Survey Party

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Diary of Surveyor General
Goyder, 5th Feb. 1869

NTAS, NTRS 3732, Diary of Goyder Survey Party

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Ship "Moruta" arrived at
Pt Darwin on afternoon of
5th Feb'y 1869 and came to
anchor at 3.15 pm. opposite
Fort Pt. Two boats were at
once lowered and put off
for land; the first containing
the Surveyor General, Doctor, Capt.
Barneson, Messrs Mitchell, Woods,
McMinn, McLachlan, Berry, Hardy,
Schultze, and the following men:
Collett, Edwards, and a Manaw
of the "Moruta". The second boat
contained R. Burton, Tackwell, Wm Rowe Senr,
Wm Rowe Junr, D. McAnlay, A Kennedy,
J. Lowther, C. J. Palmer, & J. Lovelady.
Upon the return of the party to ship

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arrangements were made to facilitate
the landing on the ensuing day.

It was arranged that W. McAulay, Mr.
Moyce, and F. J. Bennett should early
next morning proceed on shore with
tube-wells and other tools to search
for water on a spot selected by the
Surveyor-General today. It was ^{also} arranged
that the following parties should
proceed on shore next morning.

Road party

Mr. A. J. Mitchell

Cadet Guene
Walter
Collard
Cornish

Keate
Francis
Ryan
Edwards

Trig. Piling—

Mr. G. G. MacLachlan

E. Ryan
P. Bealey
J. Loudon
O. Hare

Landing party:—

Mr. G. R. McMiner

Mr. E. M. Smith

Dalwood

Lowther

Skills

McPherson

Robinson

Wilson

Farnant

Landing party—

Mr. R. P. Shuckey

Guy

P. Kelly

R. A. Horn

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Timber cutting party for June & July

Mr. J. M. Thomas

J. Ryan

D. Johnson

Houston

Stauborough

G. Bayfield

M. Kelly

Timber party -

Mr. S. String

W. Collett

Barrow

Basworth

Kersley

Fraser

G. Deane

Timber party -

Mr. Daby

Armstrong

Irwin

Gerald
Stevenson

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Timber party

Mr. Brookring

R. Loveday

G. Loveday

J. Lowther

G. Richards

G. Hughes

C. Lines

Ship party

Mr. W. Harney

Cadets Mr. Hay

Giles

Packard

Bee

Becton

Aldridge

Roberts

Barnden

Ship party (contd)

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Cadet Sprigg
Wells

H. H. Smith

Reformed land dug back from destruction
Saturday 6th Surveys. Capt. &
Capt. left vessel at 5 am.
to land along coast for
best landing place & to look
for water. Found surface
water at several places along
coast, arising out of rocks
also fresh water. Swamp abt.
2 1/2 m distant east of pt. Emery
& surface water seen in a
gully between Fort pt. &
pt. Emery. Found also that the
best landing place was close
to Fort pt. Landed parties

to work as arranged on the 7
previous evening. Capt. removed
from anchorage to as near
landing place as possible
abt. $\frac{1}{8}$ mile from shore. Landed
well to be sunk in gully between
Foot Pt & Pt Emery and tracks
cleared from well to beach and
commenced landing stock
Bullocks landed successfully
but one very weak. Half the
horses landed. Black mare
badly handled by men in
dingy and nearly drowned
by ship's carpenter. Went
in life boat to assist & took
more safely ashore. Order
x given by myself & Capt. that
the dingy should be used as

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more in landing stock. Proceeded
with well party to sink a round
well on a flat 3/4 of a mile
East of Fort Pt - men sunk 4
feet through nodular earth to
conglomerate, when the ground
became softer, ~~returned~~ examined
locality & returned to ship.
found contrary to my express
orders & that of Capt. ~~ding~~
~~Lee~~ that the ship's carpenter
has again attempted to land
stock with dingy, the result
was "Young Bobby" one of our
best horses was drowned, as
I consider this loss solely
attributable to one of the ship's
officers, I hold the ship
responsible for it. My English

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terrier dog "Liger" carelessly left
on shore by Hammer found
dead on beach - Track cleared
through from landing place to
well. Teamsters sent on shore
in charge of Wm Rowe to take
charge of & water stock. Quake
from NE at 2 pm - thunder
lightning & a little rain. Self
still suffering from bilious
attack. no other illness of
importance on board - Much
of country thickly timbered,
grass long, and of but little
service for stock - Breeze N.W.
Bar: 29.9. Ther: from 92 to 96
in shade. Visited by two natives
Sunday night - Service on
board at 9.30 am. new

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and officers allowed to land —
Blacks took two of the men to show
them water and after a long search
about took them to where we had
already sunk a well. Mr. Intyre
brought on board, suffering from
suppression of urine, and in great
pain, obtains relief on remedies
being applied by Dr. Fort Alligator
seen this morning — men who slept
on shore report that they rested
well and were undisturbed by
mosquitoes — self still ill. One
of boats reported finding water
at 8 & 11 miles, the first in
the sand on a point at the N.
Entrance of the Eastern Arm, the
second abt a mile & a half to
~~south east~~ south east
~~of~~ of mouth of river

at foot of a nodulous rise ^{staircase} ⁽¹¹⁾
low swampy land, beyond the
mangroves fringing the reach.
exaggerated the distance however
the first being $5\frac{1}{4}$ miles &
second $7\frac{1}{2}$ from Fort pt

Monday 8th - Landed with
well party at 6.30 am. erected
the well apparatus at work on
flat east of Fort pt. only able
to penetrate 8 inches. Mem. This
apparatus is only suitable for
alluvial soil. Left well sinker
at work to sink by the ordinary
means. proceeded abt. $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles
E. N. E. examining country with
Barton & Moyer in search of
a more favorable site. found

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a suitable place for emitting, but
every appearance of water at a few
feet - whilst examining the locality
more particularly Burton came
on a small creek with abt 1/4 mile
running fresh water. the water very
good - water course drying out at
edges of mangroves; returned to
well party & left Moyer to continue
operations. examining for road
at Pt. Look Pt. on arrival found
that the weak bullock had died
and that Burnett the teamster
had been taken suddenly ill
Remainder of stock safely landed
Timber cutting going on satisfactorily
also clearing of rocks from
landing place preparatory to
construction of small jetty

Fixed working hours for party ¹³
from 7 to 11 am. and from 2 to 6 pm
sent remainder of teamsters &
stockmen on shore. horses &
bullocks to be ranoined to
Burton's Cr tomorrow, where
there is better feed & abundance
of water. The stock to be
tailed by Holland, Hemming &
Hord under Alick Kennedy
Three fettines being taken down
& rafted on shore clear of
high water mark. Cases being
got up preparatory to landing
such as are required. Progress
of the whole of party on shore
satisfactory, with exception of 10th
party. Invalids improving. Under
lightning train at 10.30 pm

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Bar: 29.85. Ther: 92. Squall from
S.E.

Monday 9th Breakfasted & party
proceeded to work by 7 a.m. Men
in vessel getting up trails &c. Surveys
improving. Wind S.W. Surveyors
completed traverse of site to
include township - draftsman
plotting work sent stock to
Banton's Ck. Bullock's drawing
timber for getting till 11 a.m.
Landed after dinner & examined
progress of various parties
timber cutting, clearing, and
landing party progress satisfactory
naturalists out collecting. Brooks
taking photos well party done
no work save to erect shade

and rough work since
yesterday at noon. Cautioned
them and sent Mr. Woods to
inspect & measure work done
& Mr. E. M. Smith to see that
they continue their work. Arranged
for shoeing horses for Mr. Mitchell's
party. Returned to vessel. Mr.
Surveyor Mills to be reduced
to Cadetship, Mr. Brookings
to be promoted - Mr. Mitchell's party
to consist of himself, Cadet Green
^{2^d} Brookings, R. P. Horne & Steven King.

Mr. Mitchell to start on Wednesday
morning with five saddle &
led & three pack horses and to
make his way to the rocky bar
about 13 miles south of the
entrance of Eastern arm of lake
to note natural features of

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Country as he goes to endeavor
to keep upon the high ground as
as to obtain a practicable route
for a line of road from God's Pt
to latter places & where the
Country is intersected by creeks
impracticable for drays to
note places & where roads
or bridges may be most easily
constructed. Mr. Mitchell to take
with him a weeks provisions
for 5 men. and three feeds of
barley for each horse to
be given at night. Should
I ~~not~~ fail to meet Mr. Mitchell
on evening of 11th or at latest
by noon of 12th Mr. Mitchell
is then to proceed to Fred's
Pass. Examining of Country

for route as before. At this
place he will sketch in natural
features of country & return
thence ~~by the most direct~~
to Fort pt noting most
available routes for dray
traffic & the impediments
that exist thereto. Mr. Mitchell
will take sextant & artificial
horizon with him to enable
him to fix latitude of camp
each night. Taking such
bearings of his course as
will also enable him to
give ^{in the} approximate longitude.
Left 4.30 pm. 29. by falling thro
88° under windsail — sent
boats off at once for men
but storm came on before
heavy squall from S. down

Went to S. E. with the band
lightning & rain - The bar fell
2 tenths - Mr. Spall located the
horns ^{part of} - then got off safely before
Spall - remainder afternoon
during heavy rain - Drizzle
afternoon with lightning - ~~light~~
~~partially~~ . Dr. reports

Monday. Dr. reports six
cases. (including those whom
alluded to & Lawson who was
^{knocked} ~~hurt~~ by the horses meeting part
& knocking him down.

^{and}
Tuesday. Dr. reports ^{and} several
more out with including
also nine cases - 11

Beard fell down four knots
after dark - & broke one of
his ribs on left side & hit
the doctor at our set - The
accident the result of careless-
ness more than any thing
else - In the evening gave
written instructions and plan
of cog to Mr. Mitchell - who is
previously agreed upon to
start to morrow morning -
Samson & the McFadyen
& Beard off duty.

Sea: rose 2/10th in
breaking of Sypall.

Wednesday 10 Went on shore at
7 am. Saw all night as before
Started off Mr. Mitchell & party
equipped as per agreement.
Mr. King declining to go from
alleged fear of return of
fence. Mr. Packard was
substituted, and Mr. King
condemned for undertaking
a duty for which he had
not moral courage to carry
out. Mr. King excused himself
on plea that he expected
only to have survey work
to do & not to have to
camp out anywhere at night.

Returned to vessel ~~4~~ Dr
reports made doing work
Started with Capt. Dr &
boats crew to Gale Head
locality shown with general
accuracy in marine survey
a dyke of quartz ~~thick~~ with
plates of mica thickly embedded
running from East side a
little to S. of point to S.W.
in direction of the Shoal bay
to W. of Gale Head stratified
rocks, mica schist &
quartzaceous sandstone visible
in places on the shore

the beds dipping at high angles
and running from S.E. to N.W. the
cliffs - principally beds
of indurated clays, with
anhydrous peroxide of iron
& ferruginous sandstone
Vegetation similar to pt. Barrow
Not slightest appearance of
country being arid -
~~the~~ ^{the} ~~best~~ ^{fresh} water was obtained
by striking ~~a~~ a few feet
in the margin of a swampy
hollow inside the coast cliffs
abt. 500 yds inland from
the point. The rock covered
at high tide ~~is~~ ^{is} covered.

with small ^{rock} oyster. - The glare
from sand rendered heat
almost intolerable. the shingle
on beach ~~is~~ mostly consist
of talc, sand & coarse ^{fragments of} quartz
admirably suited for ballast
and can be readily obtained
at any state of tide by boats
proceeded thence up Western
Arm & found good landing place
available for shipping &
discharging stores, & country
so far as could be seen
well adapted for construction
of roads to the higher lands

South & West of the Adeline
A signal thunder lightning
& heavy rain set in ab
4 pm. and continued till
near sundown, returned to
resal at 9.30 pm. good
progress made by land
party satisfactory &
invalids doing well. Self
though thoroughly saturated
for hours. feeling considerably
better

Thursday 11th party proceeded
to shore as usual at 7 am
to assigned place of tomorrow

and set drafter to work
preparing 6 copies for
use of Surveyor. Invalids
better, proceeded to shore
gave necessary instructions
for work to be carried on,
and started with Capt. Dr.
Mr. A. Smith & boat crew
to examine Eastern Arm
with a view to select a
landing place & site for
township at head of
navigation, Dr reports that
patients are progressing
satisfactorily & that he will

be able to accompany me
for a few days without any
fear. Mr. Hoare in meantime
attending to patients —
It was arranged that previous
to starting that in the event
of the Doctor being or Capt.
being required on board, that
two rockets would be fired
for the former & one for
the latter, punctually at 9 o'clock
by Cabin clock & the Doctor's
watch being set to same
time — West of Eastern arc
as far as navigable until intercepted
by overhanging branches — the water

perfectly fresh above bar. found
the rocky obstructions more numerous
than anticipated. & that the
area above had apparently
only been sketched. Anticipated
from what had been told us
that the mangroves would
entirely disappear. Succeeded
about a couple of miles down stream
and landed through fringe of
mangrove to ridge of land coming
down to within abt. 40 yds
of high water mark. Went
inland abt. a mile blazing
trees. Country undulating with
small watercourses, soil brown
sandy loam with nodules

of granite, boulders of granite
quartz, quartz rock, micaceous
sandstone, frequently cropping
out from surface. the timber
consisting of jaw & cork screw
& palms, various kinds of
eucalyptus, a few pines
cotton tree, a tree something
resembling the Casuarina,
and long threadlike leaves,
but free from knotty articulation
the milkwood &c &c, - The
herbs &
grasses of usual description
tobacco ~~other shrub~~ indigo
& other shrubs, ^{Returned} ~~to~~
boat, descended stream &

again landed at a narrow
opening through mangroves
on north bank which led
to a native frame in small
opening above high water mark
where the high land came to
within 60 yds of high water mark
& being still dissatisfied
with this spot the high tide
concealing all rocky obstructions
returned to boat & descended
stream abt 3 miles up S bank
narrowly but mangroves extended
farther & farther inland, so
anchored for night. At 8 pm
found rocket as agreed upon
between W. Mitchell & myself

~~Friday 12~~ ^{Dr. reports - 14 cases}
Friday 12 - Returned up stream
at daylight having decided
that bar shown in St. Kishkat
must be at opening to
native grave, which afterwards
proved to be the case.

Landed with Dr. Dr. A. H. Smith
Roberts & Benton, made rough
sketch of country abt a mile
on each side of landing place
including upper land of
previous day, blazing trees
as indications to Mr. Mitchell's
party. of our presence.
Returned to boat at abt 2 pm

I heard ~~fire~~ a shot fired
answered, & sent Benton &
Roberts out, who returned with
Mr Mitchell at 3.30 pm.

Mr Mitchell has succeeded
perfectly in his object, without
mishap, and reached the creek
within 100 yds of landing place,
but his party instead of following
had run down the trees blazed
by us on previous day, & reaching
creek at opening cut by us
& not finding Mr Mitchell
there had fired shot which
he heard, having every
confidence, from result

of Mr. Mitchell's journey that
he would satisfactorily
complete journey to Fred's
pass. I gave him instructions
to that effect, with all stores
in boat we could spare, &
feed taken up for the horses
and he returned to his camp
on a fine fresh water creek
abt 1 1/2 miles ^{E.S.E} from our camp,
his horses had done well
upon the journey and though
wet nearly all the time, the
men had suffered but little
inconvenience from this
cause or mosquitoes.
Started at 6 pm. for ship

which we reached a little after
midnight. Chooer not arrived
no light signal light on ship
though we fired off a rocket
and discharged a gun several
times, the only notice taken
was by Wm Rowe, who suspended
a lighted lantern from the
summit of Fort pt. - found
all asleep on board & no watch
Kept. Wm Woods & Hainy afterwards
reported that everything had
gone on well, that salt water
had been got in well sunk
near the saddle, and that

the men had got down 10 ft
at well End of Fort pt
~~Dr reports~~
Saturday 13 ~~two~~ men went
to work on well at 7 am
Dr Hopton has nearly completed
plan of township - gave instructions
to Mr Smith to plot the
up river survey. I landed
- well party down 11 ft. took 10 gallons
water out - percolation from bottom
with the draw down. There progress
later factors. Observations from taken
from Lost Point by Mr M L,
pole & pile raised - Havers
again on from heat. plotting
work with Mr Hopton in
after
to do a memorial

presented relation to increase
frog allowance - See
correspondence. visits
will party & returned to
Ship. Dr. Reports. out-cases
& to-day. - ten Cases - none
serious - one man Markin ill
from heat.

Monday 15th. Men went to work
as agreed - Camp Equipment being
got out for shore parties stable
being completed. Store commenced
loading place in progress. Asters
being got out. Day ^{Bar: 29.85. Ther: 50} ^{1st. in slight}
bright. Invalids improving but
many of the men have ^{had} ^{had} ^{had}
from throats & slight abrasion ⁱⁿ
throat at work. - D. ^{had}
to see blacks - Camp arranged

Poles completed - Dredger for Mr. Larkin
& on mine double party kept on
board. Donley sent in request to
be allowed to forfeit wages if allowed
a passage back by the vessel - He
stated that he had been badly used & con-
stantly humiliated at & had too many
matters - Defered decision -

Went on shore & saw work going
on as arranged - Well party had
got down about 14 feet - the water
previously obtained proved to be
a drainage from N side - &
appeared to be less than
on Saturday - Returned to
vessel at 7 P.M. -

Dr. Reports 8 Cases - none
serious - Wind N. N. W. Day
not hot ^{& there} as before -

W. M. L. reported in very
favorable terms of Cadet

Wells - decided that
he & Cadet Bee should
maneuvered as I push
from 1st inst. Wells to
be senior & Bee junior.

1903. 07. 16

Tuesday 16th July -

11 a.m.
Party of road & Township
commenced - landing nearly
complete - Dr. saw all
invertebrates - D. & I enjoyed
on board - Strong wind from

N. Bar: 29. 03. Ther: 90
in shade - Fine weather
residing on

All on ~~board~~ shore
except ~~profession~~ My
doctor. Mr L. & Mr. M's

Double pattern ~~to~~ Draft
Store keeper

July 20th

Commenced ascending

- Men cutting timber -

Landings stores - Erecting

store & sawing & road making.

Draftsmen plotting

and writing - stopped

work at 5 P.M.

Following morning addressed
to officers & men

Dr. Depott 12 cases -
Salwood fractured his ^{7th rib} ~~7th rib~~
by ~~his~~ fall last night - all
going on favorably -

from notice to close
mail on Saturday morning
at 7 A. M. time to be
attended to Monday -
Should ship not have
sailed

Grey man ill

Sunday 21st Grey man
since dead. I attribute his

death in a great measure to
the phlegm she has received.
Have since placed the horse
under the care of Robinson,
who will attend to all that
require veterinary treatment.

21st Sunday

Heavy rain from 3 to 6 a.m.
Boating party getting water
~~each~~ at 6 a.m. D. Lorrain
on shore at 10 a.m.
D. reports but 4 cases
all going on well - Strong
wind from ~~the~~ N. N. W.
placed a kedge anchor
to secure floating netting

Mem^o To make ^{extra} landing
as E side of Govt point
on board in afternoon.

Monday 22nd

Bar: 29.63 Ther: 90° in shade
This is the lowest reading of the
Bar since we embarked.

~~Tuesday 23rd~~

Discharging Cargo -
Men at sawmills work.
Cutting timber & Landing
stage - hull sinker completely
slabbing had proved. Draft
at Journals & Corroded
- Red. W. Mitchell's plan.

and reports of Lass reports
from Dr. Sulaim to Bel
Sulphide of Lime - 2 pounds
meat — Completed
designing Post Township

Depart at 2 P. M. from
S. with heavy rain &
thunder & lightning

Dr. reports 12 cases
none serious.

Tuesday 23^d. Feb

Men at work as usual
by Captain Somers

Francis Day from 7 to 9.30 a.m.

Returned to ship - Completed
design of Township. - D.P.
preparing working drawings - Re-
note from Mr. Woods relative to
familiarizing of men with
waters - Took necessary steps
to prevent this infirmity -
Bar. at noon 25.3, Ther. 50° -
Light breeze from WNW.

Wrote men to Dr. Paul with reference
to men ~~able~~ unable to stand work of
party - ^{2/19} ~~to~~ ^{to} ~~oppress~~ ^{oppress} men as to
treatment of party. -
Delwood etc. etc. ordered on board.

Plans being completed for surveying
Kangaroo Bay all of Thursday night
went to dinner from 5 to 8. at 8
4.30 to 6.0 pm — Drupsteen
enjoyed the 10.0. m. ~~Plans~~

Dr reports but to cause some
concerns:

body 24th July -

went on shore at 6 a.m.
to give plan & instructions
for survey of Township
at Post to Messrs Woods
Smith Harry Mitchell &
Merrill. - W. Ruy-
sel to plot survey of Francis
Bay - etc at command

of Townships plans - Acct
proposing for Mail by Ship
to Adelaide - Dr. Paul -
arranged to take a rough record
of Rain fall until vessel
sailed - Regular records
kept from 1st prox^o -

Thursday 25th

Started with Capt. Dr. Paul, W.
M. L. Packard & two seamen for
west arm - found good land
& fresh water on ~~each~~ ^{west} side -
Lat: 2^{hrs} minutes out as shown
on Stokes Chart. Heavy rain
with thunder lightning at 4
from 4 to 6 P.M. Camped on
shore - Mosquitoes & sand flies.

Friday ~~Thursday~~ 26th Had a six
mile walk - vegetation as before
with additional of Honey suckles &
Ranunculus grass - water had

fallen object. Dingy had to be
carried to Gas test. Since - landed
& had a seven mile walk - Sticks
of by as shown on sketches about -
irregular - The arms are further
appt. by same gas on East side
but more honeycomb on side near
west arm - Had to sit down &
rest falling for a time knocked
up by bit-troness. leather lapping
& quantity of long grass to carry
or step over each time ^{with} - Tipping
& started again all right. Reached
boat & arrived at ship at
5.30 P.M. - Steward
Drunk - He had opened
cases in my own & Gen.
Cabin - missing 14 1/2 lb of
wine. 2. brandy & 2 1/2 bottles

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Saturday 27th July.

Cleared out of ship - D. [unclear]
to saw parties at work on
shore [unclear] - & started with
party in land - camped at
forked inlet - Mosquitoes &
sand flies / No. [unclear].

Sunday 28th
Examining of N.E. & N. See
Mitchell's sketch - Returned to
camp - Service at P.O.M.

Monday 1st March - 1
Heavy Rain with thunder & lightning
at 4 a.m. storm at E. end to
open - many of my things
spoiled or saturated. [unclear]
Holiday to men. Sent Burton

out for samples of Double
papering for mail. ~~pen~~
wrote out orders in duplicate
for Capt. Barneson for
balance of sum named in
Charter party - viz: £1500 -
Disputed Steeward - M. M. L.
asked where him as well for
his party - Committed -
M. Schulz complained of
Honeyer.

Dr's Report rec'd - read -
specimen of *Schinia* brought in by
black -



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