

BROCKMAN Charles Samuel

Charles Samuel Brockman was born at Guildford in 1845, his father, the late Mr Robert James Brockman, who came to Western Australia in 1830, being one of the earliest pioneers of the State. Education in those days was hard to obtain, but young Brockman had the advantage of a private tutor for a few months, and at fourteen years of age went on to his father's station, in the Geraldton district, which he managed for five years.

Subsequently he assisted in opening up the pastoral country at the Warren, and upon attaining his majority began farming on his own account at Greenough Flats. For the first three years he met with absolute failure through the prevalence of red rust which ruined most of the farmers of the district, their only resort being to apply to the Government of the day for assistance to tide them over this season of distress. Mr Brockman having lost heavily sold his stock and implements and entered into the sandalwood industry at Dongara, and was the first to cross the salt marsh for sandalwood.. While thus engaged he explored the Mount Magnet district in the Murchison Ranges, which afterwards was taken up as excellent pastoral country.

Nine years later, having cleared himself of most of his liabilities, he formed a small party and spent five months in exploring the Gascoyne district in the north-west, during which trip he discovered and named Minilya and Lyndon Rivers, the former being the first water struck after an 80 mile journey. Here he took up a tract of country and arranged to rent 3,000 sheep from a friend in the Geraldton district, continuing in the face of many difficulties until he had acquired 1,600,000 acres of some of the finest country, this being the largest area then held by any one man in the State. During the course of ten years his flock had increased to 20,000, besides horses and cattle; but the natives were very troublesome, and other anxieties incident to his calling so undermined his health that he decided to divide his property into three stations, two of which he sold, and having retained the third for a time eventually parted with that also.

After recruiting at the metropolis for a time, in 1886 he purchased a property in the Blackwood district, on the Balingup River, formerly known as Padbury's Brook. This comprised 30,000 acres of leasehold and 900 acres of freehold practically unimproved, with the exception of fencing. Naming it "Brooklands" Mr Brockman started operations and continued with such success that at the present time it will compare favourably with any of the fine improved properties in the southwest. As time went on he gradually reduced the area of the estate to 3,000 acres, finally selling out in May, 1911. Mr Brockman, who has held a Commission of the Peace for fifteen years, has always taken an active interest in matters affecting the welfare of the district, and was a member of the Roads Board for most of that time. In 1886 he married Mary Jane, eldest daughter of the late Mr G.C. Dowden, a well-known Murchison pastoralist, and has three sons and two daughters.¹

¹Battye - *Cyclopedia of Western Australia, Vol 2*