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The Origins of the SA Woods & Forest Department: The Forest Board 1875-1878

David Jones

The forests of Australia have long been recognised as a public resource for both harvesting and recreational purposes. The industry is also a major generator of employment in rural areas. In his review of the history of Australian forestry, Carron has pointed to the lack of an adequate public history of this industry, a conclusion supported by Rule. In recent years this dearth has been redressed in New South Wales and Victoria, although the origins of the first government structures and plantation trials are still unclear. Carron concludes that John Ednie Brown 'started forest services' in South Australia, Western Australia and New South Wales.

In South Australia, Lewis has provided a loose narrative of the history of the Woods & Forests Department. It is a good reference, but also lacks a detailed analysis of the origins of the Department, the plantation trials, and the role of Brown. In particular, there is lack of clarity as to how Brown, an exceedingly well qualified and experienced individual from a prominent Scottish family, came to lay the foundations of the South Australian forestry industry.

It is commonly accepted that Brown was a significant appointment in the founding of the Woods & Forest Department, if not in promoting the acceptance of tree cultivation in the colony in the late 1800s. Under his tenure, as Conservator of Forests from 1878 to 1890, most of the Department's nurseries and plantations were either established or

* Dr David Jones is Senior Lecturer in Landscape Architecture in the School of Architecture, Landscape Architecture & Urban Design at the University of Adelaide.

planned for establishment, experimentation with *Pinus radiata* began, and several pioneering treatises on South Australian flora and forest culture were written.6

Little has been written about the role of Brown with the Forest Board.7 Many still incorrectly believe that he was the first Conservator. This paper examines the early history of the Forest Board, from 1870 to 1878, and in particular the appointment of the first two South Australian Conservators of Forests—nurseryman William Murray as the first, and sylviculturist John Ednie Brown (1848-99) as the second.

**Beginnings**

The origins of the Forest Board derive from the mutual concerns of George Woodroofe Goyder (1826-98) and Friedrich E.H.W. Krichauff (1824-1904). The rapid survey of lands in the colony, and their resumption for agricultural activities, had led to uncontrolled and rampant tree and shrub clearance. This activity affected both poorly and better timbered lands, and was not solely to enable the cultivation of grains or the pasturage of sheep and cattle. Timber cleared was also used in fencing, house and building construction, and commonly as firewood for domestic purposes.

Goyder and Krichauff were dismayed at this rapid loss of vegetation and feared for its effect on the quality of the colony's land resources. Goyder, appointed SA Surveyor-General in 1861, was occupied during the early years of his appointment with the northern and Northern Territory surveys, the implications of the 1869 *Strangways Agricultural Act*, and the development of the colony's railway network through the Railway Commission. His concern was to revive SA's severe shortage of cultivable and productive timber, and to this end he constantly sought to preserve existing timber resources and to encourage planting. Krichauff, a colleague of Ferdinand von Mueller, had a life-long interest in scientific agriculture and forestry. A member of the colony's House of Assembly (1857-58, 1884-90) and Legislative Council (1880-93), he was a supporter of Robert Torrens' *Real Property Act* (1858), Strangways' policies and the development of professional scientific and educative approaches to agriculture and forestry in the colony.8

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It is commonly believed that Krichauff was the first to advocate forestry conservation initiatives in South Australia. However, the Hon John Hodgkiss had previously moved in the Legislative Council on 6 September 1870, that it was ‘desirable to encourage by legislative action the planting of forest trees generally’ in the colony. The following day Krichauff moved in the Assembly the appointment of a select committee to report on the establishment and replanting of the colony’s forest reserves. Hodgkiss led the debate of this bill in the Council. In particular, the committee was to advise:

... as to what is the BEST SIZE OF RESERVES for FOREST PURPOSES, and where they are to be made, to recommend the best and most ECONOMICAL MEANS OF PRESERVING THE NATIVE TIMBER thereon, and of PLANTING or REPLANTING the RESERVES as PERMANENT STATE FORESTS; and what are the most VALUABLE INDIGENOUS or FOREIGN TIMBER TREES, having in view as well as supply for public purposes, also an annual revenue from the sale of surplus timber.

This select committee, the first inquiry of this nature in Australia, led to the drafting of Act 26 of 1873 to Encourage the Planting of Forest Trees. As the Colonial Treasurer was concerned about the cost implications of Krichauff’s committee, Goyder was requested to advise on the suitable selection and size of forest reserves, and Schomburgk on the species of trees most suitable. Williams concludes that Goyder recognised in his report that both conservation and the correct management of forest reserves was necessary, positioning him in ‘the forefront of resource management thinking’ in Australia at that time. Goyder recognised that the Crown had to ‘proclaim and maintain forest reserves on leased and reserved land ... [and that] the lands must not only be resumed and protected from the indiscriminate depasturing of sheep and cattle, but inspectors must be appointed, and the young stock raised suitable for the locality in which it has to be grown.’

The select committee’s Return to Order, printed on 19 October 1870, recommended the reservation of forest reserves not less than four square miles, as contained in Goyder’s report, and the design of forest plantings in

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10. SAPD 1869-70, pp 705-706.

accordance with Schomburgk's recommendations. On 25 October 1871 Krichauff continued his debate on forestry by seeking the designation of forest culture as a rural industry. The outcome of this debate was a questionnaire survey on forest culture activities in the colony, which the Commissioner of Crown Lands sent to all municipalities and select individuals in the colony. This Return to Order, tabled on 27 November 1872, was compiled by Schomburgk.13

Act 26 of 1873, to Encourage the Planting of Forest Trees, was moved by Krichauff on 10 October 1873, tabled for its first reading on 4 November, and assented to on 18 December.14 Before the Bill was tabled the Chief Secretary sought advice from Goyder, printed on 18 September, that reiterated his report to the select committee proposing that it was timely that the colonial government proclaim suitable forest reserves to conserve and produce timber supplies. His subsequent reports to parliament detailed suggested sites for the reserves, covering some 300 square miles in three Districts, plans of these reserves, together with a recommendation for the appointment of a Conservator of Forests and approximate costings for the establishment of seven nurseries and their staffing.15 Goyder reported that he was of 'the opinion that the cultivation of forest trees throughout the entire province is urgently required as in whatever direction my duty takes me, the rapid decrease in forest trees is brought painfully and prominently before us.' The Act also initiated an incentive scheme whereby any person planting not less than five acres with forest trees was entitled to a Land Order, valued at £2, for each acre planted, which could be cashed to enable the purchase of any available Crown land held or already purchased.

The Act provided that:

1. Persons planting trees and wishing to avail themselves of the provisions of clause 4 of Act 26 of 1873, may claim the land orders referred to in such clause, not earlier than two years nor later than five years after the date of planting, such claim to be made in writing, and addressed to the Clerk of the Forest Board.

2. Persons planting trees as above and maintaining them in good order will be entitled to the land orders specified in the Act, at the end of five years from the date of planting, on the certificate of the Conservator of Forest or other officer appointed by the Governor to report on such

13. SAPP No 144 of 1870-71; SAPD 1871, p 880; SAPP No 26 of 1873; Kenneth W.E. Vear, 'South Australia's Forests - Their History', in Our Forests in Focus - Proceedings of a Seminar Conducted by the Department of Adult Education, The University of Adelaide, in association with the Institute of Foresters of Australia (SA Division), March 21-22, 1975, at the University of Adelaide, (eds) R. Boardman & D. Corbett, Department of Adult Education (Publication No 43), University of Adelaide, 1975, p 36.
15. SAPD 1873, p 373; SAPP No 94 of 1873, pp 135, 221.
planting, that all the conditions of the Act and of these regulations have been complied with.

3. Conditions to be complied with by persons claiming land orders:

1. Distances at which trees to be planted.—Trees must be planted not more than sixteen (16) feet apart.

2. Size of blocks.—Blocks planted to be not less than five acres in area; and if strips of land are planted in form of shrubbery, they must not be less than 100 feet wide.

3. Description of trees.—Trees to be planted must consist of any of the following:—Eucalyptus (except dwarf varieties), oak, ash, sycamore, chestnut, walnut, poplar, willow, pinus halepensis, P. maritima, P. insignis, cedar, and any other trees that it can be shown to the satisfaction of the Government are likely to produce good, useful, and valuable timber.

4. Land to be fenced.—The proprietor of lands planted as above will be required to erect either a sheep and cattle proof fence of post and wire or a stone wall round the planted land, the same to be kept in thorough repair during the entire term for which trees are to be preserved, as hereinafter mentioned.

5. No stock to be depastured.—The proprietor of any land planted with trees under these regulations will not be allowed to depasture stock thereon.

6. Period for which trees must be preserved.—Trees must not be cut down or injured in any way whatever for a period of five years from date of planting.16

Unfortunately, only four applications were received for this rebate, and only one approved. The newly formed Forest Board noted in September 1877 that the Act 'does not appear to be so well known as is desirable, there having been but one inquiry concerning its provisions made to the Board and no claim has yet been proffered to plant trees under its terms, although districts have been defined and regulations published.'17 Eventually, in 1881, the colonial government made provision for the free distribution of trees to land owners; administered by the Woods & Forests Department, this system continued until its abolition in 1921.18

17. ibid., p 1.
18. Lewis, A Hundred Years of State Forestry, op cit, p 14.
Appointment of a Conservator

Krichauff initiated the formation of a Forest Board. On 1 July 1874 he was granted leave to introduce a Bill to establish a Forest Board, but the subsequent discussion was proroged. He re-introduced the Bill on 12 May 1875, and the Forest Act 1875 was assented to on 15 October 1875.19

In line with Goyder's 1870 and 1873 reports, the Act provided for the identification of Forest Reserves, the appointment of five members to comprise the Board to manage the Reserves, the appointment of a Conservator and associated staff, power to administer the Forest Trees Act of 1873, and the declaration of Forest Districts to be served by local Forest Boards. The latter did not eventuate. Goyder, as Surveyor General, had previously proposed to the Commissioner of Crown Lands on 28 September 1873, the need to appoint a Conservator of Forests on a salary of £400 per annum, plus travelling expenses. His perception was that an individual thoroughly knowledgeable in the theory and practice of forest culture was required to advise the Commissioner on these matters.20

The first members of the Board were Goyder, Boyle Travers Finniss, Colonel W. Barber, Dr Richard Schomburgk and George McEwin. Barber was a member of the Central Board of Health and Finniss an elderly parliamentarian and former surveyor and explorer. Schomburgk (1811-91) we know as the Director of the Botanic Gardens of Adelaide from September 1865 until his death in March 1891. McEwin authored The South Australian Vigneron and Gardener's Manual (1843) and was associated with George Stevenson's 'Leawood Gardens', George Anstey's 'Highercome', and 'Glen Ewin' with its significant fruit tree and jam-making historical associations. The Board first met on 17 November 1875, when McEwin proposed and Schomburgk seconded the Board's first motion that Goyder be appointed chairman. Its first annual report was submitted on 27 August 1877. The Forest Board Amendment Act 1876 enabled the Board to lease lands, buildings, forest resources and appurtenances thereto, for periods up to 21 years, subject to the approval of the Commissioner of Lands.21

Under the Forest Act the Board was required to meet monthly. However, during 1875-77 the 'Board found it impossible to carry out its duties without meeting more frequently', and by 27 August 1877 had met a

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19. SAPD 1874, pp 784, 2246; SAPD 1875, p 42.
'South Australia's Forests', op cit, p 56.
21. SAPD No 157 of 1877; SA Government Gazette, 11 November 1875, p 2079; Forest Board Amendment Act 1876; Forest Board Minutes, 17 November 1875 (Forest Board Minutes were in copperplate handwriting and normally ran to only two or three pages). Robert F.G. Swinbourne, Years of Endeavour: An historical record of the Nurseries, Nurserymen, Sentimen, and Horticultural retail outlets of South Australia, South Australian Association of Nurserymen, Adelaide, 1982, pp 5-6, 21.
total of 49 times.\(^22\) As a matter of policy, the Board’s meetings were open to the public and the press. Albert Molineux (1832-1909) noted, in *The Garden and Field*, that “by admitting the Press to its meetings a deal of information is spread over the country, and such an interest is excited in forestry that many people have begun planting who would otherwise never have thought of doing so.”\(^23\)

The third agenda item discussed at the Board’s first meeting was the appointment of a Conservator and a Secretary. Several eager applicants for various positions had already lodged applications; these were read by the Board, but no action proposed. Advertisements were, however, approved by the Board for placement in the *Empire and Herald* in Sydney, *Argus, Australasian, Age* and *Herald* in Melbourne, and *Register, Observer, Gazette* and *Advertiser* in Adelaide. These stated:

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\text{Wanted by the Forest Board of South Australia an officer to undertake the duties of Conservator of Forests. He should possess a thoroughly practical knowledge of forest culture and must furnish testimonials of experience and ability. Present salary £220 per annum with two forage allowances of £52 each. Applications to be made to the Board, Surveyor General’s office, Adelaide, till the 15th December 1875.}\(^24\)
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At its meeting of 24 November the Board considered 53 applications for the Secretary’s position and recommended that a Mr C.L. William be appointed, “subject to his attendance at this office under temporary engagement”. Subsequent Board meetings reconsidered this appointment, and at their meeting on 5 January 1876, the Board ratified a minute of the Commissioner of Crown Lands, upon the recommendation of Goyder, that a Mr Hughes be appointed Secretary. This decision also proved a mistake. Finally, at the meeting of 27 August 1877, after again advertising in the *Gazette*, Goyder introduced H.D. Melville ‘and explained his appointment’ to the Board. Melville proved a most adept Secretary and clerk, serving Brown over most of his tenure.\(^25\)

Unfortunately, the legal and procedural difficulties experienced by the Board in appointing a Secretary were also to occur in the appointment of a Conservator. In contrast to the large number of applications for the post of Secretary, there were only four applicants for the Conservator’s position. These were William Murray and W. John J. Curnow, both local nurserymen, and from Victoria William Hyndman and a Mr Meredith.

\(^{22}\) Forest Board Report 1876-7.
\(^{23}\) Anon, “Forest Board”, *The Garden and the Field*, 1 October 1877, p 72.
\(^{24}\) Forest Board Minutes, 17 November 1875.
\(^{25}\) Forest Board Minutes, 24 November 1875; 8 December 1875; 8 December 1876; 15 December 1875; 5 January 1876; 27 August 1877.
After considering the applications at its 15 December meeting, the Board sought by telegram further information from Hyndman and Meredith.26

William Hyndman appears to have implied in his application that he was then engaged as Gardener of the Carlton Gardens for the City of Melbourne Council; he had in fact been sacked from that position by the Council in 1870. The reason for his dismissal was his apparent mis-management of the Gardens, resulting in severe neglect and incorrect planting decisions. Clement Hodgkinson (1818-95), Victorian Deputy Surveyor-General, reported on the condition of the Gardens in 1872, concluding that, despite the Council's best intentions and financial investments in specimen trees, the Garden 'had been rendered nugatory in consequence of such trees having been planted by the gardeners in undrained holes: many of such trees have consequently perished, and the remainder of them are so stunted, unsightly or unhealthy, as to be now worthless for the arboreal ornamentation of the garden.' John Foster, in his history of the Gardens, attributes the poor condition of the Gardens in the 1870s to vandalism but also attaches 'blame clearly ... to William Hyndman'. Foster continues, 'To judge from his correspondence Hyndman was a man of limited education, but his generally accurate acquaintance with Latin botanical names suggests that he had completed some training in gardening, perhaps in the form of an English apprenticeship.'27 Hyndman again wrote to the Board in late 1876 about the Conservator's position.28

John Curnow appears to have been engaged in nursery activities in Adelaide at the time. Unsuccessful in this application, he was in February 1876 offered the position as Nurseryman to the Board. Accepting, he was directed in February 1876, with two assistants, 'to clear the Bundaleer Springs from the nursery-raised seed and prepare a thousand acres [405 ha] for planting', thereafter establishing the Board's Bundaleer (Springs) Nursery and plantations. Meredith, also unsuccessful, wrote again to the Board in January 1876 offering his 'services under Curator', but consideration of his request was deferred.29

William Murray (1819-1901) had arrived in Adelaide at the age of 21 in September 1841 on the City of Adelaide. Born in Dumfriesshire, Scotland, he was trained as a professional gardener and nurseryman, working in both Scotland and England before his departure. During the 1840s and 50s he established the 'Ridge Park Gardens' in Myrtle Bank, on the present site of Ridge Park, where the first olives produced in the colony were said to have

26. Forest Board Minutes, 15 December 1875; 5 January 1876.
28. Forest Board Minutes, 13 November 1876.
29. Forest Board Minutes, 12 January 1876; Forest Board Report 1876-7, p 2; Swinbourne, op cit, p 36.
been grown and harvested. In the mid 1850s he developed the 'Mt Barker-Road Nursery' which operated for some 35 years and offered a wide range of both fruit and ornamental trees. In the late 1870s, after his resignation as Conservator, he started the Glen Osmond Jam Factory where an extensive range of jams were produced from fruits grown in the colony. In later years Murray regularly contributed to The Garden and Field, became a prominent member of the Royal Agricultural & Horticultural Society of SA, later being elected a Life Fellow, and was active in the Glen Osmond community and in the local Presbyterian Church.30

Between 15 and 17 December there was either an unrecorded meeting of the Board or Goyder acted on his own authority as Chair on the appointment of a Conservator. Either way; on 17 December 1875, Goyder wrote to the Commissioner of Crown Lands recording the Board's preference for Murray. While Meredith and Hyndman were also considered suitable, Murray was recommended on the basis of his knowledge of and familiarity with South Australia. On 31 December 1875, the Chief Secretary proposed in cabinet the appointment of Murray as the first Conservator, stating, 'he was well known in South Australia [and] to have the necessary qualifications.' This decision was ratified at the Board's meeting on 5 January by a motion that accepted 'the minute of the Commissioner of Crown Lands informing the Board that the Government propose to appoint Mr Hughes as Secretary & Mr Murray as Conservator'. Murray was advised of his appointment on 7 January 1876.31

On 12 January 1876, Murray presented himself to the members of the Board and was duly requested to inspect the Wirrabara and Bundaleer Springs reserves. Apart from familiarising himself with the reserves, he was to 'report upon the nature and extent of the growing timber, seedlings, young trees, matured trees & dead timber on the ground, the suitability of the springs bore in timber of the springs for nurseries' at Bundaleer Springs under the charge of a Mr Campbell.32

Murray reported his observations to the Board on 2 February, and was further instructed to interview John Curnow as to his possible appointment as Supervising Nurseryman at Bundaleer Springs. Campbell's engagement was terminated upon Murray's report. At this meeting the Board also proposed that 'land at Mt. Gambier included in the Act 1875 be included in the Schedule of Forest Reserves resumed from under the district council of Mt. Gambier', thereby seeking the permanent reservation of the Leg of Mutton locality as part of the Board's nursery reserves.33

31. Forest Board Minutes, 15 December 1875; 5 January 1876.
32. Forest Board Minutes, 12 January 1876. Note that text struck-through in quotations is quoted exactly as written in the Forest Board's Minutes.
33. Forest Board Minutes, 2 February 1876.
At the beginning of his appointment Murray appears to have developed a poor relationship with his Board members. While the Board's Minutes do not clearly record the nature of the relationship, various comments throughout clearly display tension and dissatisfaction at Murray's execution of his duties and responsibilities. Certainly, the presence of Goyder as Chair, with Krichauff undoubtedly in the background, meant that strong ideas and expectations may have been imposed upon the new Conservator. Nonetheless, Murray appears to have misled the Board as to his additional expenses, execution of planting instructions, and managerial competency in the tasks the Board wished him to fulfil.

The problems are perhaps illustrated by his absence in name or reference as 'Conservator' in the *Forest Board Report, 1876-7*, prepared by Goyder and dated 27 August 1877. Yet nurserymen, John Curnow at Bundaleer Springs, Robert Lucas at Wirrabara, and Albert Charles Beale at Leg of Mutton Nursery at Mt Gambier are all mentioned by name, and detailed summaries of their activities given. In contrast, Goyder reports on 16 September 1878, in the *Forest Board Report, 1877-8*, that the 'Board have secured the services of Mr. J.E. Brown, who is hourly expected in the province, and who on arrival, will undertake the duties of Conservator.' Since Murray's appointment had not been mentioned in Goyder's first report, Brown, not Murray, appeared to be the first incumbent.

With the gazettal of the *Forest Act* some 173,800 acres were allocated to the responsibility of the Board. The Board also accepted as its own the planting policies, in particular that 'trees must be planted not more than sixteen (16) feet apart' contained in Krichauff's 1873 *Act*, as quoted above. The Board established as an objective, in early 1876, 'to grow only useful timber; and where ornament and use could be combined, preference was given to such varieties ... and where the quality of the timber was equal, preference was given to that variety having the most rapid growth.'

Following Murray's first visits to Bundaleer and Wirrabara in January 1876 the Board, meeting on 8 February and 1 March, issued clear instructions to Murray regarding planting activities at these reserves. The meeting's discussions record that Murray was consulted concerning tree stock already raised by Curnow and his suggestions noted, and that Murray was 'in all cases to supply the Bd. with a journal every month' of his activities. The latter implies that some concern may have been felt by Board members as to Murray's movements and activities. The February motion states:

> That Conservator be instructed to report upon the trees in the Bundaleer Forest desirable to retain & those that may be disposed of
classifying the timber in lots to suit purchasers[,] trees suitable for fencing purposes[,] sawing with slabs & standing & fallen timber only suitable for firewood. That the Bd. considers it undesirable that trees casting shade such as she oaks should be cut unless fully grown.  

At their meeting on 1 August the Board considered Murray's report and work diary for July and reprimanded him for his failure to execute the Board's instructions, in particular that tree seedlings be planted 16 feet apart. The Board also sought an explanation for his early arrival back in Adelaide before fulfilling the instructions. Murray was instructed to return to Bundaleer Springs to carry out same, and his travelling expense claim was disallowed. In the following week Murray tabled to the Board an explanation about his travels. This was accepted, but his travelling expense claim was again disallowed. Instead, the Board repeated its planting policies, and specifically the instructions as to planting distances.

The travelling expense claims for Murray's travels in August and September dominate the Board's Minutes. On 29 August the Board sought a detailed account of Murray's travelling expenses. They also reaffirmed that travelling expenses could not be claimed when fulfilling his duties as Conservator. Clearly apprehensive of what was occurring and what was being reported to the Board, Goyder, Barber and McEwin visited the Bundaleer Forest and Nursery in October 1876 and were evidently displeased. On 16 October Goyder circulated a report of the visit to the Board, and a special meeting was convened on 24 October. Goyder read his report at the meeting and

*It was resolved that in consequence of Mr Murray having proved himself totally inadequate unfit for the post of Conservator that the Government be recommended to dispense with his services. Report by the Bd. to be embodied. Recommendation to be forwarded. Confirmation of above to be sent to Mr Murray so as to give him an opportunity of resigning should he desire to do so.*

The undisclosed field report by Goyder must have been damming, as the above motion was carried unanimously by the Board members present—Goyder, Barber, Schomburgk and Finniss. There appears some dissent as to Goyder's actions and the content of his report. At the subsequent meeting of the Board on 13 November 'Mr McEwin stated his objections to the Board several matters portions of the report referred to. The Chairman explained that his reasons for and considers that the report

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37. Forest Board Minutes, 2 February 1876.
38. Forest Board Minutes, 1 August 1876.
39. Forest Board Minutes, 24 October 1876.
was written hastily and regrets having signed the same.' While the meeting adopted the report and previous motion, 'Mr McEwin stated his objection to voting for or against the resolutions', indicating the dominant role Goyder played in expediting the removal of Murray from the post of Conservator. Murray's letter of resignation was tabled at the Board's meeting on 13 November and forwarded to Parliament on 27 November.40

Appointment of a Second Conservator
The Board appeared unclear on how to proceed following Murray's resignation. It recognised that it needed to appoint a Conservator but was perhaps apprehensive, given its first mistake and the limited qualifications and experience of the original applicants.

The Board's immediate reaction was perhaps accidental. Recent correspondence by William Hyndman had obviously been received by the Secretary, and on 24 October the Board requested that 'references be made to the gentlemen named in Mr Hyndman's letter' as to his standing, and that £10 be allocated for travelling expenses to enable Hyndman to present himself before the Board 'for inspection'. The 13 November meeting considered a letter of reference from a Mr Smith, and 'resolved that W.C. [Clement] Hodgkinson [in Victoria] be telegraphed as to employment of Hyndman. Hyndman to be asked whether he was engaged at Carlton Gardens and why he left there.' Hodgkinson obviously communicated by reply telegram a negative report about Hyndman. In December 1876 Hyndman advised the Board by telegram, noted in the minutes, that he had 'entered into another engagement.' The Board appears also to have followed up referee reports for Meredith, considered at this meeting, and resolved to advise Meredith 'not to hold out any hope of employment.'41

At the 9 January 1877 meeting of the Board McEwin suggested, in a tabled letter giving his apologies, 'that Dr Brown of Stirling [in Scotland] be written to with reference to a suitable person for the post of Conservator.' McEwin's suggestion and reply was politely recorded in the Minutes: 'that Mr Mc McEwin be thanked as to his suggestion as to Conservator but Board considers prefers a Conservator with Col[onial] experience'.42

Dr James Brown was Deputy-Surveyor of Woods and Forest in Scotland, and an acknowledged expert on European arboriculture. In 1847

40. Forest Board Minutes, 13 November 1876; 27 November 1876.
41. Forest Board Minutes, 24 October 1876; 13 November 1876; 27 November 1876; 18 December 1876.
42. Forest Board Minutes, 9 January 1877.

The history of the landscape design and management of the Carlton Gardens is equally problematic, as Foster explains in 'The Carlton Gardens', op cit, pp 264-270.
he had written *The Forester*, one of the foremost European texts on tree culture, that ran into six editions.43

Five months later McEwin again moved that a letter be written to Dr Brown, seeking advice as to possible candidates for the post, with colonial experience and with both practical and theoretical knowledge. This time the Board accepted the suggestion, but also approved on 2 July 1877 the advertising of the position in the *Gazette*. The Board also determined to forward a copy of this correspondence to a Captain Musgrave in the hope that he might apply for the position. The suggestion for the appointment of an Inspector, as an interim measure, was also considered, but no action taken, although the appointment of a Mr Bouchier was discussed.44

By late August no applications had been received and the Board decided to appoint an ‘inspector’ in the interim, and endorsed the placement of an advertisement for the position in the *Gazette*.45 Molineux reported the activities of the Board in his October issue of *The Garden and Field*, but did not mention any difficulties with Murray or the Board’s search for a new Conservator in the 1877-1878 issues of this periodical. Of the successful operations of the Board he noted:

*The Board has received from various sources, £5,836 during last year, mostly made up from rents of timber reserves. The area of land held by the Board up to the present time is 195,598 acres, of which 103,602 acres are leased at an average of 10 1/2d. per acre in addition to fencing in the blocks, and sub-dividing and fencing off a certain portion every year for planting purposes. Nurseries have been formed at Bundaleer Springs, Wirrabara Forest, and Mount Gambier Reserve, where many hundreds of thousands of seedlings have been raised.*46

The 4 October minutes record receipt of applications from Samuel Le Brun and Alfred Smith for the position of Conservator. Smith operated an olive nursery on Hackney Road in the 1870s. The Board wrote to these two applicants advising that they were awaiting correspondence from Dr Brown. This action was re-affirmed at the 3 December meeting. The Board also recorded applications for the Inspector’s position from Bouchier and George Samuel Perrin (d1901), and Bouchier was appointed.47

44. Forest Board Minutes, 19 June 1877; 2 July 1877.
45. Forest Board Minutes, 27 August 1877; 4 October 1877.
46. ‘Forest Board’, *The Garden and Field*, 1 October 1877, p 72.
47. Forest Board Minutes, 4 October 1877; 4 December 1877; 14 January 1878; *Observer*, ‘Forest Board’, 4 December 1878.
Perrin was unsuccessful in this application but Brown later engaged him on his staff, following the Board’s meeting of 12 May 1879. During Brown’s tenure as Conservator the Board, and the subsequent Department, served as the initial forestry ‘training school’ in Australia. Perrin was one of its products. Perrin was engaged by Brown later in a Deputy Conservator’s position before leaving to set up the Tasmanian Forestry Department, and later being appointed in 1888 as the first Conservator of Forests in Victoria and establishing their forestry service.

In January 1878 the Board received Dr Brown’s letter. The letter, considered at the 11 February meeting, offered the Board the services of one of his sons, John Ednie Brown, and the Board determined to accept this recommendation. Colonel Barber dissented from this motion. Goyder, as Chair of the Board, wrote to the Commissioner of Crown Lands on 4 March, recommending the appointment of Brown as Conservator and also wrote to Brown, then in Canada.

John Ednie Brown went to school in Edinburgh but had left formal education early to follow in his father’s profession. After three years as an apprentice to his father, learning the practical management of nurseries and reviewing forestry management in England and Scotland, he was appointed Assistant Agent & Forester to the large Invercauld estate in Aberdeenshire. In the late 1860s he was engaged designing plantations and managing estates in Yorkshire and Sussex. The 1860s was a period at when gardenesque landscape design ideas, as articulated by James Claudius Loudon (1783-43), were receding, and historical revivalism in design and exoticism in planting in England was fashionable.

In 1871-72 Brown visited the United States and Canada researching trees and forestry management practices. His observations were recorded in the Report Upon Trees Found in California and Forests of the Eastern States of America which won him the Highlands & Agricultural Society of Scotland’s gold medal. His Trees of America treatise won the prize of the Scottish Arboricultural Society. It is most likely that Brown visited landscape architect Frederick Law Olmsted’s Central Park and Niagara Park commissions while in the USA and Canada. He was again in Canada in 1878, with his father, when the position of Conservator was offered.

Molineux records Brown’s appointment in The Garden and Field with both concern and hope:

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48. Advertiser, ‘Forest Board’, 13 May 1879; Register, ‘Forest Board’, 13 May 1879; Moulds, op cit, pp 21-22, 159.
49. Forest Board Minutes, 11 February 1878; 4 March 1878; 6 May 1878, p 2.
The Forest Board wrote some time back to a Dr. Brown, in England, asking him to recommend a person suitable for Conservator of Forest, and he, with a father’s partiality, could see no one better suited for so good a situation as his own son, Mr. J.C. Brown, who, ... was at present “professionally” engaged with his father in examining the great forest growths in North America, but would be ready to start at once if appointed. The Board resolved to snap up this eligible young man at once. We hope it will not be found that “distance lends enchantment to the view.”

Brown arrived in Adelaide from Plymouth on 15 September 1878 on the steamer Garonne and presented himself to a special meeting of the Board, comprising Goyder, Barker, Finniss, McEwin and Schomburgk, on 19 September.

Brown remained as Conservator from September 1876 to June 1890 and directed most of the Forest Board’s initiatives and his visions. Prior to Brown’s arrival new parliamentary legislation repealed and consolidated three earlier forest-related Acts, with some amendments, into the Forest Trees Act of 1878. The amendments removed references to local Forest Boards, did not change the Board’s membership, stipulated that the Board would receive annual funding through the government, and required that the Board pay all revenue into the General Revenue accounts of the Treasury. This Act was assented to on 22 October 1878.

By 1878 the forest area under the Board had increased to 213,000 acres. The Woods & Forest Act of 1882 abolished the Forest Board, most likely upon Goyder’s request, as a means to reduce Brown’s influence, and the Commissioner of Crown Lands also became the Commissioner of Forest Lands, with control over all forest reserves and the same responsibilities as the abolished Board. The Woods & Forest Department was created in name under the Woods and Forests Act 1882, assented to on 17 November 1882, with Brown as its first Conservator and Head. This Act remained relatively intact, with minor amendments, until the 1950 Forestry Act.

Brown resigned in 1890 to become, on the invitation of (Sir) Henry Parkes, Director General of Forests in NSW from 1 July and to establish their Forest Department. Walter Gill was then appointed Conservator. Gill, born in Northampton, England, was a forester who first started at the Wirrabara Nursery in about 1885, and was also an accomplished

52. Forest Trees Act, No 96 of 1878.
photographer; many of his images appear in the Department's Annual Reports. He served as Conservator until 1923.55

Brown believed strongly in the beneficial influence of forests upon climate, aligning himself with a theoretical premise that the planting of trees, in particular in arid areas of the colony, would increase the amount and reliability of rainfall in these areas. These views were contrary to those held by Goyder, creating considerable private and public friction between these two obviously highly energetic, productive and strong-willed administrators. Goyder's progressively irregular and intermittent attendance at Board meetings, due to his increasing duties and travels as Surveyor-General, probably enabled Brown to cultivate support from Board members for his initiatives and policies.56

Conclusion
The period 1875 to 1879, leading up to the appointment of Brown, was a difficult one for the Board. Notwithstanding its good intentions, it was repeatedly thwarted in finding suitable senior staff to fulfil its objectives. It is readily acknowledged that Brown established the foundations of the state's forestry industry, under the direction of Krichauff and Goyder, and had a major influence upon the establishment of similar departments in Victoria, Tasmania, New South Wales and Western Australia. But this initial period severely tested the dreams of both men in establishing a forestry industry in the colony as a contributor to the colonial economy as well as to increase the percentage of vegetation cover on the colony's landscape. The appointment of Brown did not end this tension. Instead, a new debate of ideologies and approaches to forestry management, and its climatic associations, developed directly between Brown and Goyder, culminating in the re-design of the Board into the Woods and Forests Act 1882.

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55. Lewis, op cit, pp 53-56; Vear, 'South Australia's Forests', op cit, p 39.
56. Vear, op cit, p 38; Williams, 'George Woodroofe Goyder', op cit, pp 8-11, 17.