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This turkey-nest dam makes water available where it is badly needed

Fig. 1.—A view of the dam and the windmill. Note the growth of grass and shrubs on the banks

OVERCOMING STOCK WATERING PROBLEMS IN THE KIMBERLEYS

By B. SWAN, Adviser, Irrigation Branch

ONE of the ever-present problems of the pastoral areas is that of providing watering-points in reasonably close proximity to the grazing areas. All too frequently, the country on the river frontages and that in the vicinity of the water-holes becomes eaten out and although there may be ample feed on other portions of the run, it is too far distant from the available water to be effectively utilised.

The turkey-nest dam shown in the photographs accompanying this article was constructed to serve a portion of Ivanhoe Station in the East Kimberley area. The dam is on the blacksoil plain and is about 45 ft. in diameter with a capacity of about a million gallons.

A bulldozer was used to throw up a 10 ft. circular wall containing approximately 4,000 cubic yards of soil which, being of a clayey nature, holds water very well. Water was found in good supply at 40 ft. depth and this is pumped into the dam by a 22 ft. windmill on a 40 ft. tower. A
small diesel engine is also mounted over the bore to operate the pump in case of a "wind drought" or in case the windmill should be out of action from other causes.

Two wide, shallow "borrow-pits" were excavated near the dam to provide extra soil for the walls, and these depressions fill with water and serve as an auxiliary supply for part of the year.

The turkey-nest dam is fenced and stock-proof, and the bank has grassed over rapidly to consolidate the earth.

The stock are watered at a galvanised iron trough 75 ft. long and 28 in. wide fitted with a ball-tap feed. The trough serves two paddocks by means of a staggered fence.

The overall cost of such a set-up would be approximately £2,500 and it should soon pay for itself by bringing a large area of country into production.