

THE STUD ROAD NATIVE POLICE CEMETERY AND THE BURIAL

PLACE OF BUNGELEEN

As a historian specializing in the study of the Kurnai people of Gippsland my interest in the cemetery at the Stud Rd. Native Police Station was first inspired by my desire to find the burial place of the Gippsland Aborigine, Bungeleen. The story of Bungeleen has been told elsewhere (Gardner:1,2) and is basically a morbid tale. He and his family were bought to Stud Rd., in June 1847 and held as hostage for a white woman supposedly held by the Kurnai in Gippsland. At Stud Rd., Bungeleen was treated brutally, being chained to a tree and then locked up for a considerable time. One wife, Mumbalk, died, and the second, Parley, was claimed by other Aborigines at Stud Rd., to have been taken from the Westernport people many years ago. G. A. Robinson investigated these claims and Bungeleen's lubra and two young sons were taken to Melbourne from the Stud Rd. Depot. It is interesting to note that this corresponds closely with the folk history of Stud Rd., related to me by Mrs. Bartlett who lived on the site in the early 1930's. (Bartlett:3)

Bungeleen died on 21.11.1848 at Stud Rd., and was buried the following day when 'all the men on the station attended'. (Stud Road Police Day Book:4) His death, according to Mrs. Bartlett, was of a 'broken heart', and because he was an important Aborigine (a 'chief' of Gippsland) (Thomas:5 and Robinson:6) a fence was erected around his grave. Later on a pine tree was planted on the grave and it was this pine tree growing from the fenced grave site that was remembered by Mrs. Bartlett and marked by her on 9.7.81.

What the folk history of the Stud Rd., Police Station has failed to retain was the deaths of all the other Aborigines on the Station and the fact that a substantial cemetery existed there. The Stud Rd., Police Day Book record the deaths of ten Aborigines, including Bungeleen, who were buried at the Depot between 1845 and 1853. The book does not record the wife of Bungeleen, or any children being buried. Also there are no records of burials on the station for the periods 1837-8 and 1842-5. It is therefore possible that as many as twenty individuals were buried at the Native Police Station cemetery.

Native Police Cemetery Cont.

Though there is no doubt about the previous existance of the cemetery, there are problems associated with the exact location of it. Also the grave with the fence was not that of Bungeleen, but that of Corporal Buckup of the Native Police. The flood prone flats along the Dandenong Creek seem unsuitable as a cemetery site. Mrs. Bartlett located the pine tree grave about 400m almost due west of the old house (now demolished) (Bartlett:7) She insisted that the pine tree was towards the setting sun and near a small creek on the flat. But the Churchill National Park Ranger, who has also lived in the area a long time, said that the pine tree grave was located to the south of the old house near Brady Rd. (Garner:8) This tree is still standing, although a large drainage ditch has been cut beside it. Finally there is the possibility that Bungeleen, for some reason, was not buried in the cemetery. However the grave of Corporal Buckup must have been interred within the cemetery confines.

It seems unlikely that the cemetery will be located with any degree of accuracy beyond what has already been done by Mrs. Bartlett. The site recently marked with a steel post (see Sketch maps) is of considerable historical significance. As it is possible that in the future the area will be drained and reclaimed as playing fields, the site should be preserved and some suitable marker or monument placed upon it. This should include the names and dates of death known and a brief resume of the tragic account of Bungeleen. In the long run all of the former Native Police Station and in particular, the historical sites, should be preserved within the boundaries of an extended National Park.

Peter Gardner
Ensay 14.7.81

Bibliography

- 1.Gardner P.D. 'The Journals of DeVilliers and Warman' in Victorian Historical Journal, v 50(1979)p.89
- 2.Gardner P.D. 'A Melancholy Tale' in Victorian Historical Journal,v 52(1981)p.101
- 3.Mrs.Irene Bartlett Letters 7.5.81 & 18.5.81
- 4.Stud Road Police Station Day Book,P.R.O. Laverton
- 5.W.Thomas Papers Ms214 Mitchell Library,Sydney and in the papers of the Aboriginal Protectorate,PrR.O. Laverton.
- 6.G.A.Robinson Papers (as for Thomas Thomas)
- 7.Mrs.Irene Bartlett, interview 9.7.81
- 8.Mr.Bill Garner,Churchill Park,interview May 81.

Copy

- 1.Dept. of Crown Lands
- 2.Sgt.Bliss,Dandenong Police Station.
- 3.Dandenong Historical Society
- 4.Royal Historical Society of Victoria
- 5.Bill Garner,Churchill National Park
- 6.Ms.J.Lennon,National Parks Historian
- 7.Mrs.C.Hogarth,National Museum of Victoria

List of Individuals buried at Stud Rd.

- | | |
|------------|--|
| 9.11.1846 | a recruit Janry (or Jarry) died.
'Buried in military form' |
| 4.12.1846 | ' a native of Wimmera died and buried in
usual manner' |
| 2,9.1848 | Corporal Buckup died |
| 21.11.1848 | Bungeleen |
| 5.9.1849 | 'Old Mary' |
| 11.12.1849 | Narthehong (late trooper) |
| 14.12.1850 | Poligerry (trooper) |
| 4.11.1850 | Corporal Tunmile |
| 14.4.1851 | Trooper Snowball |
| 1.4.1852 | Trooper Billy |

Source: Day Book

- 5.8.1848 Mumbalk (Bungeleen's lubra)

Source :W,Thomas,Dec.1848 Quarterly Report of
Abor.Prot.,PR.O.Laverton

July 8th

Sketch Map - Native Police Stn - Stud Rd,



