

7. Kullurk, the Bonurong choice for a reserve

Kullurk/Kulluck/Kulluk/Kullurt/Callert/Colour/Coolert/Coollourt/
Coolurt/Sandy Point/Tulum/Yellodungo/Yellodungho

The named place Kullurk, this general area around Sandy Point, was the Bonurong choice for a reserve, and it was the place to which they looked back to Thomas, accusingly, when they did not get it. Many Europeans walked across it and described the land as fine open country, which means that it was burned regularly as a kangaroo run by the Bonurong. Some described huts and signs of habitation. It is more prominent in the early records than either Point Nepean or Cape Schanck as a resort of the blacks. Point Nepean has claimed our attention because of the public fight to save it. But I suspect that there has been some inflation of importance used in the arguments to save it: Thomas does not mention it as a place of special significance – it is Kullurk which he mentions more frequently, and which they visited more frequently, and where Thomas mentions the solemnity of women acting separately from men (see 18 June 1840 below).

Coolart is now in public ownership, managed by Parks Victoria, with a substantial and impressive building, built by Frederick Grimwade in 1895, and grounds used now as a sanctuary for native wildlife from the time of its purchase by Thomas Luxton in 1937. Every scrap of information that I have been able to find from the earliest use of this land has been brought together here for consideration. By virtue of being the Bonurong choice for a reserve in 1840, a fact apparently not noticed since then, it merits its place in our recollection, and in our understanding of how the Bonurong regarded their country.

Thomas marked on some of his maps a rectangle immediately to the north of the site occupied now by the naval base HMAS *Cerberus*.¹ Smythe marked it as Callert, Merricks Station, at almost exactly the place that Coolart now occupies,² and Smythe also labelled Tarrnuck as the head of Hann's Inlet.³ Thomas' full description of it is reproduced. The most southerly extent of mangrove association vegetation occurs about one kilometre north of Sandy Point.⁴

1 CY 2984, frame 300, ML.

2 CS 17A, 1841, PROV.

3 Smythe, 1842 Survey of the Islands of Western Port, accompanying Mr Hoddle's letter of 1 May, PROV.

4 Gordon 1997: 157.

'I Succeeded Once'

1804

Lt Charles Robbins described the west coast of Western Port 'all the way down [travelling south] to the sandy point [Sandy Point] abreast the west point [Tortoise Head] of the Western island [French Island] a miserable low and swampy country for three or four miles in'.⁵

1825–1826

For a whole year, a party of Europeans camped at Western Port rebuilding a ship. The account of this prolonged stay entered the records via a report from Captain Whyte of the VDL government vessel, the brig *Duke of York*. Whyte had been commissioned to scour the Bass Strait islands for runaways, which he did, capturing 17 named convicts. He then poked his nose into Western Port, where he picked up John Scott who had lived there with a black woman, a Tasmanian, by whom he had three children, and discovered as well, Mr James Smith, his son Marmaduke and the vessel *Caledonia*, whom he escorted back under guard to Hobart. Mr Smith's story was checked by the authorities and accepted as truthful.⁶ 'The gentleman, on investigating the circumstances, was more to be pitied than blamed'.⁷

Smith had purchased the *Caledonia*, apparently without a marine survey, and finding himself in Western Port with the sloop so infirm as to be sinking, he rebuilt it. He was skilled at shipbuilding, had plenty of provisions, and managed to convert the *Caledonia* 'into a handsome schooner of double the tonnage', an improbable achievement as Valda Cole commented, but that is what the records say. While at Western Port, he explored the Mornington Peninsula and hunted across it.

Proceeding up the western channel, and opposite the second island [French] is another large tributary stream [? Merricks Creek], flowing through a level country of fine pasture land, lightly wooded and formed into a peninsula by Port Phillip about 15 or 20 miles to the west. Mr Smith met with a fine lagoon [? Tootgarook Swamp] in the centre of this tract, while hunting kangaroo which he found very numerous. Both the islands consist of good land, but the upper one is rather thickly wooded. The soil in general of the whole country is a deep vegetable mould, resting on a stratum of clay or fuller's earth, and appears to be the deposit which this valuable river (as yet but partially explored) has washed down from higher ground.⁸

5 Labilliere 1878, vol 1: 176.

6 Mr Smith does not have a given name in these accounts but Valda Cole has kindly identified them for me: they left Hobart on 19 January 1825 and returned 16 February 1826 (pers comm 27 November 2009).

7 *Hobart Town Gazette*, Saturday 13 May 1826: 2.

8 Article headed 'Western Port' in *Hobart Town Gazette*, Saturday 20 May 1826: 3.

James Smith met blacks whom he described as ‘a stately, healthy race easy to be civilised’, ‘their huts form villages of 40 to 50’, but there is an imprecision in the newspaper account which suggests to me that he *could* have been describing people he met on the east coast of Western Port, not on the Mornington Peninsula. On the other hand, if he did not meet any blacks on the Mornington Peninsula, he would have been just about the only European party in the early records who did not, so it is more likely that the imprecision comes from how the newspaper reporter understood the story.

17 November 1826

Dumont D’Urville’s party explored the area around Sandy Point. They:

went all over this tongue of land ... applied themselves to hunting kangaroos ... came upon a watercourse which seemed to belong to a river, although the water was still brackish, and he [Gaimard] noted recent traces of the presence of natives ... the open terrain is delightfully undulating. Here there are fine stands of trees easy to get through, there are vast grass-covered clearings, with well defined paths and linked by other tracks so regular and well-marked that it is hard to conceive how these could have happened without the hand of man.⁹

The French were correct – this was firestick-farmed country, frequently visited.

February 1827

The explorer William Hovell walking south from the vicinity of Melbourne said that:

There appears to be but little good Land ... until we arrive at a Creek which comes out at Sandy Point, Western Port; from that Southwardly in the direction of Cape Schanck is good open forest Land, grass thick, and a good quality.¹⁰

28 January 1836

Joseph Tice Gellibrand and his party landed at Sandy Point (after the disastrous loss of over 1000 sheep at Corinella) and saw ‘many tracks of the Natives upon the Beach’.¹¹

9 Cole 1984: 50–51.

10 *Historical Records of Australia*, series 3, vol 5: 856.

11 Bride 1983[1898]: 10–11.

'I Succeeded Once'

March 1836

George Russell and George Mackillop, anxious to find if sheep could be landed at Sandy Point and driven to Melbourne, camped at Sandy Point on the site of an old native encampment which had not been used by the natives for some months previous. Their two native guides slept in an old mia mia.¹²

July 1839

Edward Hobson, Robert Jamieson and George Desailley together with three Aboriginal natives (unnamed) carted a whaleboat from Kangerong to Western Port for the purpose of exploring the country in the neighbourhood of that bay.¹³ 'Mr Hobson's station was on what is now¹⁴ the Point Nepean Road'.

Edward Hobson's hut at that time was at Buckkermittewarrer, by the Dromana Drive-in, and the boat landed supplies from Melbourne on Dromana beach, so the most logical route, the shortest and the easiest, would have followed the old Bittern-Dromana Road up over the escarpment and down towards Western Port: either Somers beach or Balnarring beach would be the departure point for the sea exploration of Western Port – either departure point would have taken them through the country the Aborigines named as Kullurk.

23 December 1839

Thomas' Memorial to the Governor of New South Wales, Sir George Gipps reminding the governor that his predecessor Sir Richard Bourke had approved a reserve for the blacks of 895 acres on the Yarra at Melbourne, that it was now very valuable and Thomas has heard that the government intends to sell; Thomas asks for land in his district of Western Port, exact location unspecified, for the use and benefit of his Aborigines as an agricultural and cattle establishment.¹⁵

29 February 1840

In remarks following his first periodical report of this date, Thomas explains why his people are in such need for a reserve:

The Aborigines in my district have not, like in other districts, back country to fly to: the ocean on the south and west, the Yarra and Melbourne to the north.

12 Brown 1935: 87–89.

13 Bride 1983[1898]: 90.

14 1853.

15 VPRS 10, unit 1, 39/336, PROV.

And how it will be used:

an agricultural and cattle station ... an asylum ... an Establishment in my District where the infirm may find shelter, the young education, and the industrious employment.¹⁶

28 April 1840

The Colonial Secretary informed La Trobe that the Governor approved of one square mile for each protector as an inner permanent reserve for cultivation, with an outer temporary reserve of five miles radius for hunting for the Aborigines.¹⁷

May 1840

Henry Howard Meyrick's letter home to 'dear Mama' in which he gives the detail of his selection of Coolourt is dated 16 June 1840, but the events occurred in the second week in May:

I left the ship for good on the first of May ... and after settling my business, rode down with Hobson, Maurice, Alfred and Mr Brodribb (of whom more anon) to Packomedurrawurra which is the name of Hobson's station. I stayed there one day and then Maurice, Alfred and myself, walked (ten miles) to Boniong, where we shot kangaroos and minded the sheep for a week, and then started on our first expedition into the bush to explore a run about 36 miles from Boniong called Colourt. We took no provisions with us, trusting to our guns for food, our black guides were excellent hands at stalking kangaroo, which we cut up and eat half raw, nothing like walking in the bush for an appetite. We found an excellent run, but we shall have to clear away a marsh to get water; there is a splendid river running thro' the middle of it but unfortunately it is salt, it is however full of fish and covered with ducks. We slept there under a miah-miah which the guides knocked up: we went however supperless to bed, as the kangaroos disappeared at sundown, and the next morning started for home and thence to Melbourne.¹⁸

21 May 1840

At Tubberubbabel, the Western Port blacks talk of taking a circuit to Point Nepean then to Sandy Point and back to the station at Tubberubbabel.¹⁹

16 HRV, vol 2B: 625.

17 VPRS 10, unit 2, 1840/395, PROV.

18 Hales and Le Cheminant 1997: 10.

19 Thomas Journal, CY 2604, item 3, ML.

'I Succeeded Once'

25 May 1840

Thomas insists on knowing the route they will take and they made him a mudmap with the number of nights they would *quamba* at each place. A later mudmap of a similar circuit shows Kullurk as near Kunnerlong.

2 June 1840

Thomas went looking for his blacks along the coast of Port Phillip from Arthurs Seat to Point Nepean, but could not see any smoke; he returned and checked his paper (his copy of their mudmap) and found that they proposed to return by Sandy Point: they had gone to Cape Schanck via Arthurs Seat and were to return along the Western Port coast.²⁰

5 June 1840

Thomas rode out from Tubberubbabel in the direction of Sandy Point and fell in with some of the principal Western Port blacks who were returning home viz Derremut, Ningeranow (Derrimut's brother), Dindoo (their mother), Budgery Tom and family, Burrenum, his two brothers and his lubra, and Munmunginna.²¹

11 June 1840

In Melbourne, 'Governor approved of a reserve of 10 square miles of land for each of the assistant protectors'.²²

Selection of Kullurk, 'the good land they talk of'

13 June 1840

Thomas' man Ross arrived at Tubberubbabel from Melbourne with the official notification of the grant of land. Thomas broached to them the subject of 'the good land they talk of'.

15 June 1840

Started with a part of the Natives of Western Port Tribe & 2 Mt Macedons with their lubras toward that Good country ... encamp at Kunnundrum. After encamping took my compass imagining that I was not far from course and plan of the rambling party out.²³ After going half a mile or more saw smoke. Returned, mentioned to Budgery Tom who laughed

20 Thomas Journal, CY 2604, item 3, ML.

21 Thomas Journal, CY 2604, item 3, ML.

22 Robinson Journal, Clark 1998, vol 1: 345.

23 There were 21 named people out on the ramble, having left Tubberubbabel on 10 June.

and considered me stupid that I did not know that from the description they had before given me on parting. No water had just enough in bag for tea for self and blacks.²⁴

16 June 1840

Early start without breakfast, no water. After going about 3 miles come up to water, had breakfast and give bullocks water. About 11 o'clock came up to the Blacks Encampment. I give them a cordial shake hands, commend them for giving me such a correct chart, and after an hour or so delay they take me to Kulluk. I am well satisfied with it. Encampment about 1 mile from Kulluk. [His marginal note says] Visit Kulluk, much gratified with it.

There are 36 people encamped. [In his second periodical report, Thomas notes that] with the exception of one family and two individuals, the whole of the Boonorong tribe were encamped & made choice of Kullock as their Locating Place.²⁵

17 June 1840

Thomas took Ross' spade, tried the soil in several places and found it good. He noted though that it had no standing water but a large bed of reeds.²⁶ He also identified one of the Mt Macedon blacks as Captain Turnbull who assaulted his wife.

18 June 1840

Captain Turnbull starts for Nunnup.²⁷ Broke up the encampment, proceeded accompanied by whole to Tubberubbabel. I should have stated just before starting while putting bullocks in dray, Captain Turnbull returns in a violent rage, throws his powerful spears promiscuously into the encampment. One hit the cart just where I was holding and another almost hit my man Davis. Budgery Tom and he has a regular set to. He starts. The breaking up of the encampment had a pleasing appearance. As they descended down the hill one by one, the women at some distance one by one in another direction. Encamped at a miserable place called Nermain by Kokobul.²⁸

24 Thomas Journal, CY 2604, item 3, frame 148, ML.

25 VPRS 4410, unit 3, item 67: 16, PROV.

26 Thomas Journal, CY 2604, item 3, ML.

27 This is the native name for O'Connor's station near Dandenong (Thomas map, VPRS 4410, unit 3/67, PROV).

28 Thomas Journal, CY 2604, item 3, frame 149, ML.

'I Succeeded Once'

Thomas locates Kulluk on his maps as a square on Hann's Inlet which is now HMAS *Cerberus*. The encampment one mile away on a hill may be Tower Hill at Somers. Henry Meyrick's run Colourt is shown from the earliest government survey of the peninsula to be where Coolart homestead is now.

19 June 1840

Friday. Arrived at Tubberubbabel safe about 11 o'clock. Captain Turnbull went off in earnest, and Thomas discovered that 'The blacks this trip made me opossum cloak and my two men'.²⁹

20 June 1840

Thomas wrote to Robinson describing the place the Bonurong selected:

I have the honour to acknowledge receipt of your communication of the 11th inst. In which His Excellency the Governor has been pleased to grant one square mile in behalf of the Aborigines of my District, and as an homestead for myself and family.

Accompanied by the Western Port Natives, I visited a part much spoken of by them as a good country. After two days journey they brought me to the country they had spoken of called Kullurk.

Kullurk is situated west of Western Port. I have well examined this spot. There is abundance of Game of all descriptions, about six or seven hundred acres of good land well adapted for cultivation. The surrounding country is barren, woody and worthless to the settler but of infinite value to the Aborigine.

I stop'd two days there. I examined the soil at different [sic] & in general it is 18 inches & two feet of dark good soil.

It has the sea to the East, a Salt Water Creek from the sea running inland about three miles forms a boundary to the Southward.³⁰

This country is of the Natives own choosing, is far away from settlers. I do not know that a single settler will be disturbed. Another recommendation is that the Yarra blacks are said to be fond of this part of the country & will no doubt avail themselves of its advantages.

There are no line [sic] of road to the spot. In the map accompanying my report will be found the road mark. The nighest I should say is the Arthurs Seat Road.

29 Thomas Journal, CY 2604, item 3, ML.

30 Merricks Creek.

I have the honour to be your most obedient servant, Wm Thomas, Asst.
Prot. Aborg. Western Port District.³¹

In his second periodical report, Thomas reiterates that it was 'a spot I often heard them talk about'.³²

20 June 1840

The native dogs are so numerous at Colourt that it would be nigh impossible to run sheep.³³

26 June 1840

In Melbourne, the Chief Protector called on His Honour who approved of Robinson's going to Thomas' district to select a reserve of land.³⁴

28 July 1840

The Chief Protector's assessment was as follows:

The situation chosen by Mr Thomas on the sea coast [Kullurk] was the worst that could be selected ... I told the natives that the Waverong were under Mr Thomas' care as well as themselves – the Boongerongs, and that they would have to occupy some land intermediate between the two districts and have a town of their own which would supersede the necessity of their coming to Melbourne.³⁵

4 August 1840

Thomas was edgy about his blacks still out on a ramble while he had received an instruction from the Chief Protector to round them up and bring them to Melbourne to join the Yarra blacks and select a joint reserve. Budgery Tom and Bogy Bogy took him looking for some of the blacks to an encampment by Sandy Point.³⁶

21 September 1840

Assistant Protector William Thomas' map of Part of Western Port District shows the head stations of the settlers, the new proposed Protectorate site at Narre Narre Warren and the previously approved site as a rectangle labelled 'Kulluk' on the northern side of Sandy Point.³⁷

31 VPRS 11, unit 7/312, PROV.

32 7 November 1840, VPRS 4410, unit 3/67, PROV.

33 Henry Howard Meyrick, Letters, Ms 7959, Box 654, SLV.

34 Clark 1998, vol 1: 347.

35 Clark 1998, vol 1: 358.

36 Thomas Journal, CY 2604, item 3, ML.

37 Enclosure with VPRS 11, unit 7/330, PROV.

23 November 1840

After the conclusion of a ceremony at Nerre Nerre Warren, the following Western Port blacks left for Toolum, Kornwarra and eel-catching at Kirkbillesse. Those who departed were Kurboro and two lubras, Nern Nern, Beruke, Nuluptune, Burburo Burboro, Worrunditolong, Poligerry, Pickaninny Tommy, Turnmile, Bugup, Kullorluk, Jack Weatherley and lubra plus two unnamed youths. They came and wished Thomas goodbye and asked if he was angry at their going. He said no, and they told him that they would return after five night's *quamba*.³⁸

Buckup/Buggup – Bonurong – elder son of Budgery Tom

Heir to Budgery Tom, clan head Mayone-Bulluk, whose country was around Carrum swamp (Barwick 1984: 117); A fine-looking fellow, six feet high, broad-shouldered, well-proportioned, with a bold, open cast of countenance, set off with well-trimmed whiskers and moustache ... a crack hand with the gloves ... good wrestler ... calm and lofty expression (R Boldrewood, 1899: 81).

1840 – His name is on a list of single Bonurong men (Thomas Journal, no date, CY 2605, item 1, ML); on a list of principal families, father Budgery Tom, brother Munite, (Thomas Journal, no date, CY 2605, item 1, ML); Feb 1840 – his father Budgery Tom is listed with wife and 2 pick as among those determined to go to Western Port on the raid (Thomas Journal, CY 2605, item 1); 13 Apr 1840 – on a list of families shifting encampment in Melbourne (Thomas Journal, CY 2605, item 1, ML).

2 Dec 1841 – One of seven men of the Waworong and Bonurong groups who volunteered to assist the authorities to capture the five Van Diemen's Land Aborigines who killed two whalers at Western Port in October 1841; all seven men joined the 1842 native police on its formation two months later; as a gratuity for capturing the Van Diemen's Land people, Buckup and the others asked for and received 1 blanket, 1 shirt, 1 pair of trousers, a leather belt with a buckle, a neck handkerchief and a straw hat; they asked also for a gun, but in vain (Thomas to Robinson, VPRS 11, Unit 8, PROV).

24 Feb 1842 – Enrolled in the native police and made his mark; received blankets, clothing and equipment, drilled twice daily (Dana to La Trobe, 31 March 1842, VPRS 19, Box 28, 42/674, PROV); 27 Jul 1842 – Rations have been issued to Buckup since 1 Feb last; a member of the 1st division;

went to the westward [ie to the Western District on the first experimental excursion in the winter of 1842] (Dana to La Trobe, VPRS 19, Box 31, enc with 42/1143); 13 Sep 1842 – Buckup, mounted on Punch, one of the nine troopers who accompanied Dana on the first experimental journey to the Portland Bay district in the winter of 1842. On arrival at The Grange, Dana recorded the following, ‘I have particularly to bring under your [La Trobe’s] notice the good conduct of Yupton and Buckup during the march from Melbourne. The good care they took of their horses and their cleanly and orderly conduct. I have not one cause of complaint against one of the men. All obeying orders cheerfully and endeavouring to please me as much as possible’ (Dana, Diary, in T O’Callaghan, SLV); 21 Sep 1842 – Buckup and Nerimbineck on duty at Mr Hunter’s station; 27 Sep – 1 Oct 1842 – tracking the depredators and the 200 sheep taken from Desailley’s station; 10 Oct 1842 – Buckup, Gellibrand, Nerimbineck and Yupton started with Dana for the Hopkins River to call at all stations along the way; 27 Oct 1842 – Buckup left at Rickett’s station after travelling over 300 miles, he having caught a severe cold from the constant wet; 1 Nov 1842 – Buckup and Nerimbineck dragged the unconscious Dana from the flooded Wannon River after Dana nearly drowned trying to swim his horse across (Dana, Diary, in T O’Callaghan, SLV); 22 Nov 1842 – Commandant commends Buckup and Yupton who gallantly rescued him from drowning while Dana was trying to swim the flooded Wannon River; Buckup in particular deserves every praise for his conduct, he being only a few days off duty during the whole time the Corps was in the Western District (VPRS 19, Box 38, 42/2153, PROV); 5 Dec 1842 – Dana and the police arrived back in Melbourne from Portland Bay; Dana left the same day, taking Buckup and four other native police to join Commissioner Powlett at Westernport; 6 Dec 1842 – Dana left three of his police on duty with Powlett, taking Buckup and Gellibrand by boat to Jamieson’s station at Westernport, and thence to check on the limeburners at Pt Nepean, and stations on the Mornington Peninsula (Dana, Diary, in T O’Callaghan, SLV); 1842 – aged 18, single, no children, never punished; on duty with Commissioner Powlett in May in pursuit of bushrangers; on duty three months with officers in Westernport District; several times handed drunken men [Europeans] over to the police in Melbourne; on duty in the Portland Bay District, often took and had charge of prisoners, conducted himself exceedingly well in many trying and dangerous circumstances; took four absconders at the Wannon and brought them to gaol; general conduct extremely good, obedient, quiet, anxious to perform his duty well and to improve (Dana, Return, for the year 1842 in *NSW Legislative Council Votes & Proceedings*, 1844).

4 Jan 1843 – Buckup warned Thomas, working in the garden at Nerre Nerre Warren of the presence of four suspicious characters, who turned out to be runaway sailors from the *Thomas Hughes*, a ship in port; they were four of the tallest, stoutest sailors Thomas ever saw; four native police took them into custody and escorted them to gaol at Melbourne [Thomas said two would have been enough, but they had no handcuffs] (Thomas, Quarterly Report, *NSW Legislative Council Votes & Proceedings*, 1843); 29 Sep 1843 – Buckup on duty in Portland Bay District since 27 June (Dana to La Trobe, enc with 43/7302 in 4/1135.1, AO of NSW); Jul to Aug 1843 – On the road to Portland; carrying despatches from The Grange to Mt Eckersley; pursuing the murderers of Mr Ward's child, captured on suspicion; Sep 1843 – Seeking Ward's child, tracking Bassett's murderers, severely wounded; Oct 1843 – Escorting prisoners, to the Protector's station, with despatches to Melbourne (Dana, Return, 30 June 1844, enc with 42/8217 in 4/1135.1, AO of NSW); 28 Oct 1843 – his name is on Thomas' list of men in the Native Police (CY 2606, item 1, ML); 3 Nov 1843 – Buckup and Henry returned from Portland Bay with despatches (Thomas, Journal, uncat Ms, set 214, item 3, ML); 11 Nov 1843 – Thomas recorded the story from the native police gathered around his fire at Merri Creek, of their exploits including the killing of 17 Aborigines, of whom Buggup shot 2 (Thomas, Journal, uncat Ms, set 214, item 3, ML); 30 Nov 1843 – Authority from the Col Sec to pay Buckup and Yupton, two of the best men who acted as Corporals, at the rate of threepence a day (VPRS 29, vol 13); Dec 1843 – To Mt Macedon (Dana, Return, 30 June 1844, enc with 42/8217 in 4/1135.1, AO of NSW).

1 to 31 Jan 1844 – Corporal Buckup receiving pay at the rate of threepence a day (VPRS 29, vol 18, PROV); Jan 1844 – At H.Q., assisting in the capture of an illicit still; Feb 1844 – With Commissioner Powlett to Gippsland (Dana, Return, 30 June 1844 – enc with 42/8217 in 4/1135.1, AO of NSW); 8 Feb 1844 – Buckup's absence in Gippsland noted by Thomas in his account of the native police present at the great gathering of tribes for judicial proceedings at Merri Creek (Thomas to Robinson, VPRS 11, unit 8, PROV); Mar 1844 – Returned from Gippsland with the Commissioner; Apr 1844 – Westernport and the bush; May 1844 – With Commissioner Powlett, collision at the Pyrenees; Jun 1844 – At H.Q., Conduct report, Corporal at threepence a day, conduct uniformly good (Dana Return, 30 June 1844, enc with 42/8217 in 4/1135.1, AO of NSW); No date, but either 1844 or 1845 – TA Browne records the arrival of a detachment of native police at his property Squattlesea Mere in the Portland Bay District: The Corporal

[Buckup] rode slightly in front, the others following in line ... Buckup saluted, 'We have been sent up by Mr Dana, Sir, to stop at this station a bit. Believe the blacks have been very bad about here' (TA Browne, 1899: 80–81).

Feb 1845 – Buckup was one of four native police with Sergeant Bennett who captured Wandilla, the Buninyong Aborigine who speared Booby, a young Aboriginal boy in the company of a European, on 12 December 1844 on the Keilor Rd (Dana to La Trobe, VPRS 19, Box 70, 45/714, PROV); on or about 2 Nov 1845 – Corporal Buckup involved in the shooting in self-defence of two Gippsland Aborigines at Robert Thompson's station Clydebank (Tyers' Deposition, enc with 46/1288, VPRS 19, Box 84, PROV); 27 Nov 1845 – General Muster, Commandant presented natives with money from His Honour for good conduct (VPRS 90, PROV); Corporal Buckup and another Native Trooper set off for Cape Otway with La Trobe and Sergeant McGregor (VPRS 90, PROV); 29 Nov 1845 – At Dana's request, have sanctioned pay of ten shillings each to troopers of the Corps as an approval of their uniform good conduct at Gippsland and the Wimmera last winter (La Trobe to Col Sec, 45/8847 in 4/2704, AO of NSW); Dec 1845 – Corporal Buckup has been receiving pay at threepence a day [separate from gratuity] (VPRS 29, vol 18, PROV); 21 Dec 1845 – Buckup, Native Place Yarra Yarra, enlisted Feb 1842, length of service 3 years 11 months (Dana, Return, VPRS 19, Box 77, 45/2179, PROV).

Jan 1846 – On Thomas' Family Connections census with his father Mooderrogar (Budgery Tom), mother Narragrook, Buggup male aged 20, brother Munnite, male aged 10 (Thomas CY 3083, ML); 16 Jan 1846 – Issued with the following articles prior to departure for duty at the Murray River with the 2nd division under Mr WAP Dana, saddle complete, 2 jackets, 2 pair duck trousers, 1 pair moleskins, 1 red shirt, 2 regatta shirts, new boots and spurs, sword and new carabine and cap, kit complete (VPRS 90, PROV); Jan 1846 – Listed as one of the Melbourne tribes still in the Corps on Thomas criticism of the native police (Thomas, Quarterly Report, December 1845–March 1846, enc with 46/3341 in 44/2745.1, AO of NSW); 1–31 Dec 1846 – Corporal Buckup receiving threepence a day (VPRS 29, vol 24, PROV).

1 Mar 1847 – Corporal Buckup, 2nd division, date of enlistment January 1842, horses name Surrey, aged but fit for duty (Dana, Return, VPRS 19, Box 97, 47/1861, PROV); 12 Apr 1847 – Buckup one of the native police in encampment at Merri Creek, having come down from

Nerre Nerre Warren for duty at the race meeting in Melbourne; 'Something amiss with the native police', wrote Thomas; they all sent their police uniforms back to Nerre Nerre Warren with a boy on horseback and refused to go themselves, except for Buckup, who accompanied the boy (Thomas to Robinson, VPRS 10, Box 8, 47/561, PROV); 5 Jul 1847 – Buckup one of 26 troopers approved by La Trobe for gratuity of five shillings (Dana to La Trobe, VPRS 19, Box 94, 47/1225, PROV); 15 Nov 1847 – Sergeant McGregor went with Corporal Buckup and placed him under the care of Dr Hobson (VPRS 90, PROV); 22 Nov 1847 – Buggup has had his left thigh amputated under ether at the residence of Dr Hobson on the banks of the Yarra (Thomas, Quarterly Report, September – November 1847, enc with 47/9842 in 4/2784, AO of NSW); 24 November 1847 – Robinson visited Buckup who has had his leg amputated at Dr Hobson's (Clark 2000, vol 5: 189); no date - Surgeon's bill, Dr Hobson for Buckup, ten pounds (Robinson Papers, vol 57A, ML); 1847 – A successful operation under the influence of ether was performed by Dr Hobson on Buckup, a domesticated Aboriginal of the Yarra tribe; the patient had suffered for a considerable time from a white swelling in the knee and was gradually sinking. A few days would have closed his existence. The limb was removed above the knee, and the patient recovered and is now well (Robinson, Annual Report for 1847, Papers, vol 61: 40, ML); 31 Dec 1847 – Corporal Buckup has been receiving pay at threepence a day (VPRS 29, vols 27 and 28, PROV).

21 Jan 1848 – Native Corporal Buckup returned from Dr Hobson's (VPRS 90, PROV); 2 Oct 1848 – Corporal Buckup died; 3 Oct 1848 – Corporal Buckup buried with military honours; 4 Oct 1848 – Men employed in fencing in grave (VPRS 90, PROV); 12 Oct 1848 – Dana reported to La Trobe Buckup's death; he was quite recovered from the effects of the operation, Dana said, but died from a violent cold and inflammation [others were sick at the time]; he was one of four Corporals being paid at the rate of threepence a day for steadiness and good conduct. Minuted by La Trobe, poor Buckup (Dana to La Trobe, VPRS 19, Box 111, 48/2169, PROV); 22 Dec 1848 – Thomas visited Nerre Nerre Warren to enquire into the deaths of Corporal Buckup and Bungaleena; found they had been carefully attended to, visited by the Colonial Surgeon twice (VPRS 11, Box 11/710, PROV).

26 Nov 1851 – Author of a letter to the editor praising the native police cites Buckup some years ago at the Gippsland races admonishing another unnamed native policeman **'Get out of that you drunken brute, you are a disgrace to the b... Corps'** (*Argus*, 26 November 1851).

A fine intelligent man; after two expeditions he was made Corporal and received pay; he continued in the police until his death; had been on much arduous duty; from the effect of one very long day's ride, somehow his ankle was hurt by the stirrup iron, which was not considered of any consequence; however, after some months, it so affected his leg then his thigh, that to save his life amputation was required which he consented to. He was one of the first in the colony who underwent an operation under the influence of ether; the operation was performed by Doctors Hobson, Thomas and Barker. He lived a year after the operation making himself useful at the police barracks till his death on 2 September 1848 after nearly six years service (Thomas in *Bride* 1983[1898]: 405).

1841

'Callert' Merricks Cattle Station is shown on George D Smythe's map 'Survey the Coast from the West side of Port Phillip to Western Port with internal features'. Callert is located virtually on the coast of Western Port quite some distance from and south of Sandy Point: Smythe's map commences at Sandy Point, and is 'stretched' between what is now Somers and Balnarring. Callert would be almost exactly where Coolart is located now.³⁹

29 January 1841

'Kulluk' is shown located north of Sandy Point on Thomas' map accompanying his letter to the Chief Protector of this date.⁴⁰

no date

Yet another Thomas map annotated 'Not having my papers and instruments could not give a better sketch' shows Kulluk as a square, the Protector's hut at Tubberubbabel and Nerre Nerre Warren, also as a square.⁴¹

20 March 1841

'Alfred is now erecting huts on the shores of Western Port at Sandy Point the native name thereof being Colourt ... where we have found an abundance of fresh water'.⁴²

39 VPRS 8168, P 1/12, file CS 17A, PROV.

40 VPRS 11, unit 7/365. The map has been separated from the correspondence and is now located at VPRS 6760, P O unit 1, file no 1, PROV. It is reproduced in Coutts 1983: 55; *HRV*, vol 2B: 578.

41 William Thomas Miscellaneous Papers, 1838–1868, CY 2984, frame 300, ML.

42 Letters of Henry Howard Meyrick, Ms 7959, Box 654, SLV.

'I Succeeded Once'

16 May 1841

'Alfred has been all this time at Colourt, making preparations, building huts etc ... cattle go to Colourt on Thursday'.⁴³

23 June 1841

In a formal Petition to the Governor of New South Wales Sir George Gipps, Assistant Protector William Thomas 'prays that a Block of land equal in size to that of Narre Narre Warren be reserved between Sandy Point and Cape Schanck for the Aborigines of the Boonwurrung or Coast Tribe, and another station formed there on the scale and in every respect as the Central Stations'. Thomas gives as the reason 'the total failure of uniting the two tribes' at Narre Narre Warren – the Coast Tribe will not stay there out of their own country. They have 'occasionally visited it, but their visits have been but transient'.

In fact 'I believe that the friendship of the two tribes have suffered thereby, so much that the Coast tribe prefer the distant tribe of the Barrabools to their near neighbours, and continually are sallying forth to and fro to that District, and often upbraid your Petitioner for not coming and living among them'.⁴⁴

10 September 1841

Letter to his mama from Henry Howard Meyrick at Colourt, giving his news – that he is bullock driving and cultivating, has sown two acres of wheat and one acre of oats, and that as soon as the rain finishes, he will plant an acre of potatoes.⁴⁵

25 November 1841

Letter to his mama from Henry Howard Meyrick at Colourt saying that the economic crisis at Melbourne is fast approaching – no credit – not a single merchant in Melbourne can take up bills, and the consequence is that no one can get a farthing for their produce. But the Meyricks have cash and are not suffering. The whole neighbourhood has been thrown into the utmost confusion by the actions of the three VDL blacks' murder and robbery.⁴⁶

24 March 1842

The encampment is at Turrak in Melbourne (Toorak). Two families of Goulburns and one Pangerang had arrived the previous day, and Budgery Tom excited the people to have other groups sent for. Captain Dana and Thomas had to use

43 Letters of Henry Howard Meyrick, Ms 7959, Box 654, SLV.

44 The formal petition is an enclosure in Thomas to La Trobe, VPRS 10, unit 3, 1841/909, PROV.

45 Letters of Henry Howard Meyrick, Ms 7959, Box 654, SLV.

46 Letters of Henry Howard Meyrick, Ms 7959, Box 654, SLV.

threats and all ended quietly. But this day, Lummer Lummer and Bobbinary endeavour to use some persuasion to separate the blacks at the encampment at Turrurk. 'I interfere and Lummer Lummer states his determination to leave for Kulluk'.⁴⁷

8 September 1843

Thomas in Melbourne was concerned for the welfare of his blacks and went to enquire along the beach. He called at a number of native encampments for which he gave the native name, and in the margin, the squatter occupying the run. These places were, Boollerim – Mr Shannessey, Binningean – Captain Baxter⁴⁸ and Ballewrunan – Mr Gorringe⁴⁹ where he stopped the night having travelled 43 miles on horseback. He found no blacks. Next day he visited Tuerong then Kangerong and heard at Kangerong that the blacks were at Kulluck. The next day was a Sunday but even so he rode from Tuerong to Kulluk and found the blacks. They then came to Tuerong and encamped by a creek, about 30 of them, all Western Ports except one Barrabool lubra and her child. 'The poor children and lubras look very sadly', he wrote, ' – poor creatures'.⁵⁰

3 September 1844

Tuesday. Thomas told Yankee Yankee in Melbourne that great good might be done if he would prevail upon the Western Port blacks to settle down and cultivate the ground. His answer was:

Where it [illegible] Black Fellows want Kulluck and white man would not let them have it. You know when you was at Tubbarubbabel Black fellows stopped with you and worked and wanted to sow potatoes but you go away and go to the Yarra blacks. These observations were so [illegible]. I am so often upbraided by the Western Port tribe for removing from them that it is useless arguing with them when I know I have not the power to accede were they so disposed.⁵¹

15 January 1845

Letter to his sister Susan from Henry Howard Meyrick at Colourt, relating the death of poor little Hamilton at Baillie's station 90 miles from Melbourne on the Gippsland Road. Alfred was there when the accident happened and gives all the details.⁵²

47 Thomas Journal, CY 2605, item 5, frame 397, ML.

48 We know this as the run Carup Carup.

49 Ballewrunan is Poleorongong, the important encampment at the back of Mt Eliza.

50 Thomas Journal, CY 2606, item 2, ML. Thomas crossed out another sentence in this days' entry for which the verb cannot be read. It looks like a matter of regret for the station they once had.

51 Thomas Journal, CY 2606, item 3, ML.

52 Letters of Henry Howard Meyrick, Ms 7959, Box 654, SLV.

'I Succeeded Once'

18 August 1845

The blacks are very fast disappearing from the face of the earth ... of 'our' tribe of blacks there are only eight men and children and one woman ... Yal Yal is about to marry Puppa-co-ran-go-rok only daughter of Brikko Morning or the one-eyed.⁵³

11 April 1846

Alfred has sold Colourt for 90 pounds.

17 April 1847

Henry Meyrick's summary for his mother of his life so far in Port Phillip says that he went to Colourt, commenced to form a station, and after spending 60 pounds was obliged to leave it, then went to Narren Gullen a place where nothing can possibly thrive and purchased cattle from one whom he esteemed a friend but was not. The cattle were wild, and many of them got away and the others did no good, so he moved back to Colourt. The cattle did not do much better at Colourt, so, after some years hard work at the dairy he and cousin Alfred found themselves in the hard times of the general financial collapse in Port Phillip. They tried sheep but sheep did not do any better, and because they were scabby the only place they could travel them to was Gippsland. Byrne, the man to whom they sold Colourt, did no better with the land.⁵⁴

1849

Thomas went looking for the Western Port blacks, by this time with their numbers augmented with Gippsland wives. There were none at the nine mile beach (Booherum), none down Arthurs Seat way, and none on the Western Port coast. Mr Mantuan from Kullert between the Point⁵⁵ and Sandy Point told Thomas that there were no Aborigines in that district.⁵⁶

27 February 1849

His name means bear. Thomas heard this day from a settler in Melbourne that Kurbooro had died at Kulluk.⁵⁷

53 Letters of Henry Howard Meyrick, Ms 7959, Box 654, SLV.

54 Hales and Le Cheminant 1997: 42–43.

55 Now Pt Leo, but known then as Bobbinaring (various spellings) Point.

56 Thomas Weekly Report, 20–27 July 1849, CY 2606, item 3–8, ML.

57 Thomas Journal, 20–28 February 1849, CY 2606, frame 570, ML.

Kur.bo.roo/Kar.bor.er/Car.per.rer/Carborer/Kurboro/ Kurburu/Kurburra/Kaborer/Kurboror alias Mr Ruffy

His country was the Yallok Bulluk, from Mantuans to Jamiesons along the four muddy rivers at Western Port (Thomas Miscellaneous Information, CY 3130, ML).

Undated – ‘Seasons as given by black, Kurboro, WP, summer – Woodin, winter – Pereen, spring – Perripe, autumn – Pilligerin’ (CY 3126, frame 160, ML).

1839 – On Thomas’ more correct census as Kubburrough, male 42 years, with two lubras, Kurundum aged 20 and Bowyeup aged 16 (CY 3082, frame 51, ML).

1840 – Undated – Kurboro with 2 lubras and 2 pickaninnys is listed at Arthurs Seat among the 57 determined to go on the revenge raid to Western Port (CY 2605, frame 8, ML); 7 Jun 1840 – Car-per-rer’s name is on a list of blacks presently at Tubberubbabel given to Robinson in Melbourne by Billy Lonsdale (Clark 1998, vol 1: 344); 12 Jun 1840 – Kurburo with two lubras and Old Tuart is at Tubberubbabel (CY 2604, item 3, ML); in August 1840 he speared his wife and was most distressed afterwards as has been seen in Chapter 4.

1841 – In the afternoon of Wednesday 31 March 1841, Kurboro’s lubra Quondom struck Mrs Wilson [manager’s wife] at Nerre Nerre Warren because Mrs Wilson would not give Quondom water, on the grounds that she could not spare it. Quondom snatched some water and threw it on Mrs Wilson’s face, then struck her. Thomas broke and burned Quondom’s digging stick in front of her as a punishment. Then Kurboro speared Quondom in the arm. Then Thomas recorded ‘I was much displeased with Kurboro who was also in tears. I showed great sorrow & spirted water from my mouth for some time on the wound, pretended to mourn’ (Thomas, CY 2605, item 5, frame 256, ML).

1842 – On Wednesday 17 February, at Nerre Nerre Warren Thomas recorded ‘a cruel punishment and fight’ – ‘a lubra from her brother Kurboro is most seriously maltreated – for marrying herself without consent of her Brother’ (Byrt 2004: 76); 28 Feb 1842 – Kurboro and his family plus other named blacks left Nerre Nerre Warren for Western Port (Byrt 2004: 76).

1 Jul 1844 – Carborer, now at Narre Narre Warren is a Yowenjerrie, alive, the latter speaks the language of the Gippsland tribes (Clark 1998, vol 4: 120); He and Munmunginna are the only two people living of the Yowenjerry (Clark 1998, vol 4: 120).

1846 – Kurboror is listed on the Family Connections census with his wife Quondom, but no children (CY 3083, ML).

Kurburu's song – the words and the tune in the key of B minor are reproduced in *Native Tribes of South-East Australia*.¹ The information came from Barack, and Howitt's understanding was that it was composed and sung by a bard called Kurburu who lived during the early settlement of the country by the whites near where the town of Berwick now stands. He was supposed to have killed a native bear, and being possessed by its *Murup* or spirit, thenceforth sang its song.

KURBURU'S SONG.

Sounded as if in the key of B minor.
Tempo moderato. M ♩ = 100.



ē - - - na gur - ē - a nung ngal - ūr - ma há - reng

gūr - - uk ba mirnín mirnín nge búrún bángan bódha¹

e - lē - re mūr - ingá: ē yam-yam mūdhan guru báí wirge ngū-rak.

Fig 30. 'Words and Music of Kurburu's song'

Reproduced from Howitt 1904: 420.

'I was not able to get a verbatim translation of it, but Berak gave me the following free translation:

You cut across my track

You spilled my blood

And you broke your tomahawk on my head.

I. Howitt 1904: 420–422.

Kurboro a well known Western Port black, and held in high esteem as a sorcerer, a dreamer and diviner, was named “The Bear” under the following circumstances. Kur.bo.roo was born at the foot of a tree, and during his mother’s trouble a bear in the tree growled and grunted until Kur.bo.roo was born, when he eased his noise. By this, it was said, the bear intended to show that the male child born at the foot of the tree should have the privilege of consulting the bear, and the child was called Kur.bo.roo. Kur.bo.roo attained to some excellence in his profession and was regarded by all as a very wise man and a doctor. When a black dreams of bears it is a sad omen. All the people are afraid when anyone dreams of bears. One time when there were about 200 blacks at Nerre Nerre Warren, including about 18 at the school, Kur.bo.roo had a dream. He dreamed that he was surrounded by bears. He awoke in a great fright about one o’clock in the morning, and at once aroused the whole encampment. It was half an hour or more before I could discover the cause of the great excitement everywhere apparent. Fires were suddenly set ablaze. The young blacks climbed the trees, cut down boughs and fed the fires. The men women and children rushed hither and thither displaying the greatest terror. I reasoned with them, sought to soothe them, endeavoured to control them, but all my efforts were useless. They fled from the spot where they had so long lived in comfort. By eight o’clock in the morning, the forest was a solitude – not a soul remained; and all because of a dream of Kur.bo.roo’.ⁱⁱ

Again, Thomas wrote of being out with a celebrated Western Port black, tracking five other blacks. They lost the tracks, then passed a tree where a bear made a noise as they passed.

‘The black stopped and a parley commenced. I stood alternately gazing at the black and the bear. At length my black came to me and said **Me big one stupid; bear tell me you no you go that way.** We immediately crossed the creek, and took a different tack. Strange as it may appear, we had not altered our course above one and a half miles before we came upon the tracks of the five blacks and never lost them thereafter’.ⁱⁱⁱ

Thomas also wrote about a transgression of cultural norms regarding the bear: it was permissible to cook and eat the bear, but not to skin it. Thomas ‘sadly wanted a bear’s skin to make a cap but I could never get it’. One day he importuned a Yarra black who had brought in a

II. Quotation from Thomas in Smyth 1876, vol 1: 447–448.

III. Thomas in Bride 1983[1898]: 427.

bear before the rest had returned from hunting, to skin it. Initially he refused, but at length after bribing from Thomas, and assurances that the sorcerers and other chiefs were absent and would never know about it, the young man skinned the bear and Thomas took the skin to his tent. But the man grew anxious and remorse overtook him. He said 'Poor blacks lose 'em all water now', and he became so alarmed, and exhibited such terror that the old doctors came to enquire into the cause. He told all. Much excitement followed, but Thomas laughed at their fears. At length though, he was obliged to return the skin to them, and the skin and the bear were buried in the same manner as a black man is buried. 'Though the bear was actually roasting' Thomas wrote, 'his body was taken away and buried with the skin. This ceremony they all believed would propitiate the bears, and avert the calamity of a loss of water'.^{IV}

Thomas recorded too, the belief system underpinning this behaviour regarding the bear:

'The bear too, must not be skinned. The blacks have a strange tale of the bears having stolen all their *tarnuk* (buckets) and drained a creek of water, and so bewildered the blacks that Karakarook came down, and it was settled by Karakarook, on the part of the blacks, that they would no more take the skins from the bears bodies, and on the part of the bears, that they would no more in any way molest the blacks in supply of water or vessel.'^V

Brough Smyth offers two more elaborate versions of the story, and of the belief, as well as the large statement that 'The Native Bear, Kur-bo-roo, is the sage counsellor of the Aborigines in all their difficulties'. In the Upper Yarra version, not only could the bear not be skinned, his bones could not be broken either, and 'No one has roasted Koob-borr without his skin or broken his bones in killing him since the law was made'.^{VI} Wesson has identified Karborer as the author of the views of the mountains taken from Yerring station (Smyth 2002: 16–17).

IV. Quotation from Thomas in Smyth 1876, vol 1: 447.

V. Thomas in Bride 1983[1898]: 427.

VI. Smyth 1876, vol 1: 446–449.

King Benbow's request for land

20 March 1849

The occasion was the formal visit from New South Wales of Governor Fitzroy. The Aborigines arrived in Melbourne on 17 March having been told that His Excellency would give them a feast. On this day, Benbow said that he was going to see the governor. In the afternoon, well equipped in his Commissariat uniform, he waited at the entrance to the Royal hotel for his turn to be introduced to the governor. He said that:

he had sent up his brass plate like white man's letter [Thomas inserted "meaning card" in brackets] and that bye and bye he was to see the governor ... he had been duped by the white men ... his object ... to ask the governor for a country for the Western Port blackfellows.⁵⁸

27 July 1849

Thomas' weekly report states that he went looking for his Western Port blacks, and Mr Mantuan, from Kullert between Sandy Point and the Point told him that there were no Aborigines in that district.⁵⁹

15 July 1850

In reply to a request from the Governor in Sydney via La Trobe asking where the reserve for the Bonurong should be located, Thomas wrote:

It is with regret that I am not prepared to state precisely where the reserve of the Coast 'or Boonurong' tribe should be situated and that from their growing restless disposition which seems to increase upon them as their number awfully decrease – Since their friendly intercourse with some tribes in Gipps Land they may be said as a body to be more in that District than in their own. A few years back when shifting from Melbourne their regular route was natural, shifting gradually along the Coast to the nine mile beach, Mt Eliza, (Berringwallin) Mount Martha, (Nerngallin) Arthurs Seat, (Wongho) Point Nepean (Monmore) Cape Schank (Tuornangho) Sandy Point (Yollodunnho) then to the index & returning in land by Mahoon (Western Port plains) to Dandenong the whole circuitous route of their Country, but the last 2 or 3 years, from Melbourne they merely take a turn to the nine mile beach and make direct for the route to Gipps Land leaving the most valuable part of their country and lairs located regularly deserted. –

58 A contemporary sketch of King Benbow in his uniform wearing his brass plate is reproduced in *HRV*, vol 2B: 546. The written record is Thomas Half-yearly Report, 30 June 1849, at 4/2872, Pt 2, 1849 in AO of NSW.

59 CY 2606, item 3–8, ML.

Nor is this the only difficulty another arises which makes me Cautious ere I offer any fixed plan respecting them to Your Honor, which is the diminution of their numbers. Your Honors position among us must perceive to a considerable extent their decrease even had not my half yearly returns when Assistant Protector made such known to the Government, the last 6 months has as tho' to vie with former mortality shifted no small number from the ranks of the living to the dead, that what with those who have died by the visitation of God in a natural way (and many of these have through intemperate habits brought on premature death) and those in an unnatural way I may say by the visitation of the Devil, it is my firm impression & I think I am not overdrawing the mortality when I state the startling fact that not one-third of their number exist which at my first coming among them numbered but eighty-three, cannot leave more than twenty-eight. I fear there are less, and no children to fill up the ranks of the dead, points the dial of mortality to steadily to their speedy extinction – taking these considerations into account it would be useless sacrificing a great block of land for this tribe. I should say a regular section of 640 acres would suffice, but before even this is granted or any expense gone to by Government I should prefer taking a careful census of this minished tribe, & consult them that they might select the locality. Were I left to settle the spot it would be on the Coast near Mt Eliza or Sandy Point.⁶⁰

1850

On a list of runs in the County Mornington and Intermediate Districts, along the coast from Mt Eliza to Bass River, Thomas lists as number 14 'Willm Payne, Coolert W Pt Bay, 19 square miles'.⁶¹

1850

An amended schedule for pastoral run Port Phillip No 147, submitted by William Payne corrects the information previously submitted regarding the run's southern boundary. On the previously submitted schedule he described Coolert's southern boundary as the run Cape Schanck, thus claiming all the land from Somers to West Head. On the amended schedule, he states the southern boundary is 'a bluff and camping ground about three miles on the coast towards Cape Schanck from Coolort'.⁶² The other boundaries remain the same; the northern boundary is Warringite Creek which is halfway between Coolert and

60 Byrt 2004, CD CY 3084 B DOC.

61 Thomas Papers, CY 3127, ML.

62 VPRS 5920, jacket mf no 296, PROV. This fact will be important in the identification of Aboriginal encampments. Three miles from the homestead Coolart is Cliff Road, the high ground at Balnarring/Merricks beaches. The question is whether encampment refers to an Aboriginal place or a cattle camp. Encampment is not a bush word, not a usual word to describe a plain and simple cattle camp.

Mrs King's run, the eastern boundary is Western Port, the western boundary is the Arthurs Seat Ranges run.⁶³ This bluff and camping ground three miles from Coolort would be Balnarring Heights.

10 January 1855

On Harry Drew's application to transfer the run Coolert Station to Joseph Hann, the Commissioner of Crown Lands has commented 'this is an original run – improvements considerable – good dwelling house, stockyards, cultivation paddocks – no road access near homestead, allowed 640 acres at upset price of 20 shillings per acre'.⁶⁴

no date

On a list entitled 'Names of Places found afterwards' by Assistant Protector William Thomas is the following:

'Merarmile – A rise of springs about 10 miles NE of Arthur's Seat these springs feed Ner Ner, Kunnulong falls into the swamp at Kulluk from there to Nerwein into the sea by Sandy Point'.⁶⁵

no date

'Yellodungoo – Sandy Point'.⁶⁶

no date

'Sandy Point – Yellodungo'.⁶⁷

1850s–1860s

Roll Plan 88 shows Coolort, 10,000 acres, extending from Warrangine Creek southwards to Merricks Creek during the occupancy of Joseph Hann.

1869

W Owens' map of Victoria with pastoral runs shows Coolort as a district name for the country extending from Sandy Point to Tyabb.

63 VPRS 5920, jacket mf no 296, PROV.

64 Drew to CCL Barnard, 9 February 1854, 54/152, VPRS 5920, jacket mf no 296, PROV.

65 Byrt 2004, CD Language Files, 214. 23 BO. DOC, p. 71.

66 Byrt 2004, CD Language Files, 214. 23 BO. DOC, p. 70.

67 Byrt 2004, CD Language Files, 214. 22. DOC, frame 273, p. 523. This is annotated 'HMAS *Cerberus*, sdm', which is Dr Stephen Mayne, La Trobe University, who did the language transcriptions for Byrt.