

WOOLBER AND BANYAP

Woolber's wife Banyap had been twice married before he got her. Kanill her first husband, was poisoned by some flour stolen from John Dibb (?) who had placed some poison in it. Two of Banyap's children also died and some others who had eaten the damper. A small bambooroo was given to Woolber having two notches in it. This meant that he could have some woman. "Which woman?" Woolber wanted to know. "You wait and see," was his friend's reply. They came to Mr. Keane's place "Nyoonoyoorda". Woolber and his ngoondan Joober, a one armed native.

When they came to the camp there were two young women and an old woman. The woman who sent the bambooroo was not Banyap, but the other. Banyap however asked Woolber for a smoke and took his pipe from him. He had an opossum which he had put in the fire to cook and Banyap took it out of the fire and ate what she required of it, Woolber making no objection. Woolber had an old aunt in the same camp to whom he had given another opossum and he intended to go to her camp to sleep, but Banyap made a fire and a shelter and prepared a bed for him and asked him to stay there and he stayed and as there was no one to prevent them they got married and they lived together until Banyap died. They had six children. (This was a moojoo marriage, both being Nagarnooks.) The other woman's name was By'at. The bambooroo was marked with two notches representing the man and the woman.

The spirit of the dead Gingin man, murderer or murdered, goes woortan (seawards), but Woolberr, a Gingin man, had forgotten the name of the "boojoor" of the dead. All the dead man's relatives will be on the shore to meet him. They see him coming, and call out to him as he approaches the boojoor, for he comes up at intervals during his passage through the sea, to see how close the boojoor is.

"Dreaming I see them," said Woolberr to me before his death, "wives and children, they come round me at night and we talk and the children play, and when I open my eyes in the morning I cannot see them. My women will meet me when I go woortan, they will see my kaajin coming through the sea. We never come back when we go over the sea. Our bones become white, like the kangaroos', but our spirit is in the boojoor beyond the sea. I see nothing in the daytime, but at night I see Banyap (his second wife) and the children. Banyap and Kaieel and the other children sit down and wait for me, and I will find them when I go away. All our relations are together, and walk about though their koojee (bones) are at Gingin. Banyap's "self" walks about. She does not want her body, and yet she has her body and is clothed in her booka (kangaroo skin cloak) and has her wanna and goota as well. Her booka covers all her body and face, except her left eye, which follows the sun from its rising to its setting."

The Gingin people believed that if both eyes or any part of the body, except the left eye, were exposed, it would be bad for the living as well as for the dead. "Don't show the sun all the face," said Woolberr, "that is weendung (bad), show the left eye only, that is gwabba (good)."