

(previously sent)

Gen'burdong, a Ballarruk, belongs to the Yilgarn district, and apparently had not come much in contact with civilisation, for during his stay on the native reserve he was so isolated in a measure from the other residents owing not only to the difference in dialect between them, but also from the natives' fear of "strange magic" which they believed Genburdong possessed. He and Monnop fraternised, however, and "bulya'ed" their enemies right and left. Genburdong's wife was a half caste. Ballarruk, his "sister" by native law. She was paralysed in her lower limbs and had to be carried from place to place. The love of home was too strongly developed in Genburdong to admit of his being content outside his own district, and one fine morning the whole family decamped across the plains to Guildford, en route to Moora, the paralysed woman being carried on an improvised stretcher made of sacking.

The little party, consisting of Genburdong and his woman, Boo'yerman, their two little children, a boy and a girl, and an elder daughter, who had picked up one of Joobyten's half-caste stepsons on the reserve, reached the Moora district in due course, but the many privations consequent upon their voluntary relinquishment of Government rations, resulted in the death of Boo'yerman shortly after her arrival in her beloved "home country". Genburdong shows the Ballarruk type more clearly than any of his companions, since amongst the group he is the least influenced by civilised environment.

GENBURDONG

The kalleep of Genburdong's people, the kwont (snake) totemists of Kellerberrin area, adjoined a group of circumcised men who had penetrated to Kellerberrin from the east, helped by white settlement and the railways. Genburdong had one son, whom he called Kwont, after the totem. Kwont was greatly loved by his father and when the circumcised men approached him with gifts of weapons, food, women in return for his son, Genburdong refused, and kept as near the police quarters as the kindly constables permitted. Many times they tried to steal Kwont, but the vigilance of the fond father defeated them. Then they sent magic, fire magic, bone magic. Genburdong shielded his son until one day when he was sleeping, the fire magic passed him and entered Kwont's vitals and in a day or so the boy was dead. Genburdong brought his woman Booyerman to Maamba, where both sat down and wept constantly for their koolong (son), but the evil magic followed them and they remained but a short time on the Reserve.

GENBURDONG'S PEDIGREE

A Malyoorning Pedigree (north from Southern Cross)

BOONYIN = Jeerel = Wee'oorn
 Beerungoomat Beerungoomat Beerungoomat
 kwont or warr borun-
 kwonda borungur gur
 (snake totem) (female kangaroo)

Bannan	=	TARRAGOOLGURT	GENBURDONG =	Booyerman
Joowuk		Joowuk	Joowuk	Joowuk
Wit or		Yongar	Kwont	Jindung &
kaddurt		(male kangaroo)		Wardat (star
(white ant)				& evening
				star.)

All Beerungoomat	Winnee	KWONT	Biddy
dead	All Beerungoomat and kwont		borungur
			half-
			caste

The line of demarcation between the divisions obtaining at Southern Cross, etc. and the Southwestern Class divisions, is at a point somewhere east of Meckering and Kellerberrin, and it is here that the approximate line between the circumcised and the uncircumcised people may be drawn.

Burracoppin, Southern Cross, Mt. Jackson, Coolgardie, Wijjemooltha, Norseman and (partly) Dundas district, are all "one line" or road, the home apparently of the Beerungoomat, an all green bird, and Jooamat, blue bird with white breast and white round the neck, divisions. Here again I found a distinction of colour prevailing as several natives stated that at Kammeenee, a place some 40 miles N.E. of Kellerberrin, the Joowuk or darker people predominated over the fairer Beerungoomat, while east and south of Kammeenee the Beerungoomat were more plentiful. This persistence of the natives in the variation of colour and type amongst them does not seem to be confined to one particular area, but appears to be found here and there throughout the known part of the State.

Genburdong, Wood, Woolbar

Following after note on Genburdong.

I came upon a very curious confirmation of this fact on the southern edge of Nullarbor Plain. Old Mallain, then about seventy, was sitting with the initiation groups that had assembled in Eucla in 1912-13, and one afternoon in a pause of the ceremonies, Mallain told me he had been "caught" near Twilight Cove and taken on to Boundary Dam where he was initiated into the Mallee hen totem group there. He was a Bibbulmun and a mallee hen totemist, and his guardian was coaxed to relinquish him to the Boundary Dam group. An enlightening talk followed. Mallain had found some of his own Bibbulmun people who told him they had also been "coaxed" away when travelling on their Beedawong journey, and had been circumcised by the Mallee hen group of Boundary Dam. After his initiation these men took him westward to the border of the Bibbulmun to try and get some more young Beedawong, and on one occasion he saw his Bibbulmun sister, and brought her to Boundary Dam, giving her to a "brother-in-law" among the group who had initiated him.

These young Beedawong always became "recruiting agents" along the Bibbulmun border, and Mallain knew that they had put magic into Kwont at Kellerberrin because his father Genburdong refused to let him go, and they had also sent the magic that killed Kwont's father and mother.

Beerungoomat and Jooamat

Between these people and the Manitchmat and Wordungmat of the south and southwest, a change comes in the class divisional names and marriage laws. West and south of Kalgoorlie and Coolgardie, northward towards Mt. Jackson, westward of Southern Cross, and south towards and beyond Norseman, the people occupying the territory within this area call themselves after two species of birds. These two divisions are Beerungoomat (a species of bee-eater which has its nest in a tunnel underground), and Jooamat (a somewhat smaller bird which nests in trees). Certain dialectic variations occur such as Deerungoomat and Toemat. Wherever these people touch the borders of the neighbouring tribes, adoption (in the case of their western neighbours) and amalgamation (with their eastern and northeastern neighbours) take place.

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