

HOW DEATH CAME TO THE MURRAY RIVER YUNGAR 8

In Nyitting times an old man and woman lived at Ngangalup and had one son. The old man went out every day hunting for daaj (food). One day he speared a wej (emu) but the gij went far and far away and he could not see it and so he lost the gij and the wej also.

As he watched and watched to see where his spear had gone, the spear returned and was coming straight for him, but he gij kwelgan, gij kwelgan, gij kwelgan = dodged the spear again and again, hoping it would soon go away and leave him. But no, it tried and tried and he had to keep dodging and dodging, for if he stopped kwelganung, the spear would have gone through him and killed him. The old man got very tired, but he still went on dodging the gij, and his son, who saw his father getting more and more tired, said to him, "Let me kwelgan." "No," said the father, "You might be speared." But the boy persisted and at last his father said, "You tr,."

The boy tried but going too close to the spear it hit him and he died and was buried at Beenyup. His mamman and nganga buried him there and after a short time his kaanya went to Koorannup. His mamman and nganga went to Ngangalup soon afterwards where they died.

If the boy had not been speared, all the yungar would have been able to dodge all the spears thrown at them and would never have been killed or have died.

The places where the father and son died must always be strewn with fresh blackboy rushes by any yungar who passes that way and he must remove the old rushes before strewing the fresh ones. If he neglects to do this he will very soon die.



SWAN DISTRICT

The manner in which death first came into the world is shown in the following Swan district legend :-

There was a certain place called Dandegurt on the south side of Woodman's Point, where a father and son lived. The father had to dodge spears every day, every day, to save his son. He did this until the boy had grown quite big. One day the son said to his father, "Let me help you dodge the spears, let me dodge the spears." His father let the boy try to dodge them but one of the spears went through him and he died and not long afterwards his father died also.

The place where the father and son died must always be kept clean by any native passing that way and fresh blackboy tops must be strewn upon it. If the native neglects to remove the old rushes and put new ones down, he will soon get ill and die.

"Father, father, let me dodge them," said the boy, but the father said, "No." One day the boy went out by himself and tried to dodge the spears but he could not and so he was killed and buried near Beenyup, but he did not stay there. He went afterwards to Nyeerganup Kooramup.

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Nyalvart

Nyitting was a good spirit who had a son. Old Nyitting spent his days dodging spears thrown to him from the eastward and when his boy grew up he said, "Father, father, let me dodge them," and the father said, "No," but at last the boy tried to dodge them and got killed and was buried the other side of Beenyup. Old Nyitting then went after his son to Nyeerganup and that is why all the nyungar die now. They didn't die before.