

History of Eromanga

Register of Bush Graves

(Including Roadside Memorials)

As at January 2021



Contributors

Members of the Eromanga Community
and other interested parties

Researched and compiled by

Rob Savory & James Livingston

REGISTER OF BUSH GRAVES

Ref No.	Name	General location
BG 01	Alfred James Walker	‘Cranstoun’
BG 02	Unknown	Beside the Kyabra Road
BG 03	Unknown	Stony Creek Opal Field
BG 04	Unknown	Hot Springs Bore Opal Field
BG 05	Peter Boylan	Yeppra Opal Field
BG 06	William Justin Beauchamp Cameron	‘Belombre’
BG 07	Effie May Jacka	‘Tallyabra’
BG 08		

History of the Eromanga District

PROJECT SPONSORS




Eromanga Royal Hotel



Eromanga Contracting



Costello Carriers



This is the second attempt at registering bush graves in the Eromanga District.



The previous register, including GPS coordinates, was compiled by a former Eromanga Police Officer. Unfortunately these records are currently unavailable.

Reg No.	Name	Date
BG 01	ALFRED JAMES WALKER	22 Sep 1921
Location of grave		
In a small grove of gidgea trees some 200 metres NW of the 'Cranstoun' homestead.		746058 E 7041228 N
Photos		
		
Alfred Walker 1897	Inscription on headstone	
	<p>In memory of ALFRED JAMES WALKER Died suddenly September 22nd 1921 1870 – 1921 A loved husband & father</p>	
Further information		
<p>Alfred Walker came to the Eromanga District from Nyngan. He started as a jackeroo on Mount Margaret which was owned by his uncle at that time. He later became the local Superintendent of the Rabbit Board Fence. He married Lydia Tubb in Sydney in March 1897 and they lived in Eromanga. In 1914, he drew Cranstoun in the land ballot. This block had been cut off from the greater Mount Margaret lease. Alfred Walker continued on the Rabbit Proof Fence at the same time running the station with his family.</p> <p>Cranstoun Station remains in the Walker Family to this day.</p>		
Record details		
<p>Site details recorded by Rob Savory on 4th May 2018</p> <p>Family details provided by: Dorothy Walker and Andrew Walker's great-granddaughter Wendy Groves (nee Walker).</p>		

Reg No.	Name	Date
BG 02	UNKNOWN	Unknown
Location		GPS Coordinates
In a gidgea grove on western side of Kyabra Road, 13.3 km from Eromanga. The grave is marked by a steel star picket at the head and foot.		719989 E 7058906 N
Photos		
 		
Inscription on tag		
Grave Site N° A8 UNKNOWN		
Further information		
The head and foot of the grave are marked by steel star pickets		
Record details		
Site details recorded by James Livingston, Rob Savory & Helen Savory on 25 th May 2019		

Reg No.	Name	Date
BG 03	UNKNOWN	Unknown
Location		GPS Coordinates
Near Thylungra-2 gas well on the Stony Creek opal field, 'Keeroongooloo'.		692353 E 7093725 N
Photos		
 		
Inscription on headstone / plaque / tag		
None		
Further information		
<p>The steel rail around the grave was erected by Michael Kelly:</p> <p>Email from Mike: <i>"I was getting concerned about the grave at Stony Creek particularly - I was worried he might accidentally get dug up. He died tough apparently- pretty much starved to death. It's understood that other miners nearby asked the local constable to check on him. He was given a small amount of money for food but apparently he died soon after."</i></p>		
Record details		
Site details recorded by James Livingston & Rob Savory on 7 th September 2019		

Reg No.	Name	Date
BG 04	UNKNOWN	Unknown
Location		GPS Coordinates
In the Hot Springs Bore opal field, 'Keeroongooloo'.		686510 E 7095022 N
Photos		
 		
Inscription on headstone / plaque / tag		
None		
Further information		
<p>The steel rail around the grave was erected by Michael Kelly.</p> <p>Email from Mike: <i>"We surmised from the very careful craft work associated with shaping the tops of the original grave posts into pyramid shapes that this was a special person, possibly a child or priest, no other graves had this attention to detail."</i></p>		
Record details		
Site details recorded by James Livingston & Rob Savory on 7 th September 2019		

Reg No.	Name	Date
BG 05	PETER BOYLAN	6 th November 1906
Location		GPS Coordinates
In the Yeppera opal field on 'Keeroongooloo'		690788 E 7092635 N
Photos		
 		
Inscription on plaque		
<p>I.M.O. PETER BOYLAN Died 6th November 1906, aged 60 years. Erected by his brother Lawrence R.I.P</p>		
Further information		
<p>In about 1974, the headstone was repaired by long-term opal miner John Kelly. John Kelly's son Mike provided the following information: <i>"I can recall driving up to Fort Hill Mine and seeing a car rapidly driving away. We discovered Peter's brass plaque just about torn off its original mount. Dad took it and had a better mount brazed to the back of the plaque and then he remounted the plaque in a new concrete block. I also recall reading in a related text (cannot recall the origin) that Peter had been reported as being ill – 'he had some trouble with the waterworks' was the quote. He died soon after."</i></p> <p>(Continued on next page)</p>		
Record details		
Site details recorded by James Livingston & Rob Savory on 7 th September 2019		

A Journey with Colour. A History Of Queensland Opal 1869-1979

Len Cram, 368 pages, published and distributed by Len Cram, P.O. Box 2, Lightning Ridge, NSW 2834, Australia, 1998,

The author was inspired by the remnants of an old grave among the Fort Mines, at Stoney Creek, with a metal tag wired to a rotting pole, inscribed with these words:

"Peter Boylan, 69 yrs, died 1906; erected by his brother Lawrence."

*Oh, Peter Boylan, 69,
I'm looking for your opal mine;
No doubt your brother Lawrence, too,
Stood here thinking as I do!
T'was in your blood the same as mine
To wander o'er the hills of time,
Seeking for the treasured Gem
And finding such a few of them!
I traced your steps, your camping ground,
The very place you slept I found
Your camel pads led me this way,
Only just the other day -
Now fifty years and more have passed
Since you lay down, and slept your last.
You sank your shaft through sandstone rock,
And sometimes worked around the clock -
No man can stop when gemstones gleam,
Out from a fiery sandstone seam! -
And underneath the gypsum line
The pay dirt-boulder you would find.
You sat upon your rock to rest,
And figured how to work it best:
You'd switch a little bit around,
And send your mate down underground,
Never can a bracedman find
An idle moment on a mine!
Soon as you felt it good to stop
You'd hear a voice call out, "On top!"
The windlass creaks, she comes up slow,
You'd sing out "Coming down, below."
The dirt you'd shovel all away,
The same as I have done today;
You'd drink the water from the bag,
Wipe off the sweat with that old rag -
You've specked around the eyes as keen
As my eyes have ever been;
You'd pick-up colours here and there,
Spit off the dust to lay them bare...
Peter I can see you still
Prospecting there upon this hill!*

Peter Boylan was prospecting for opal on Yowah Station, in 1884.

Thargomindah Herald, 23 August 1884:

On the 12th instant, before Mr Brookes JP, Mr Hutchison, manager of Cobb and Co's Yowah Station, summoned Peter Boylan for trespassing. It appears that Boylan, who is a miner, was on the Yowah run prospecting for opals.

Boylan holds a miner's right, and many people have manifested a great interest in the case as they are mostly of the opinion that the holder of a miner's right can prospect where he chooses.

Unfortunately the case had to be postponed, owing to the non-arrival of the Police Magistrate at Eulo, from Cunnamulla. The case is to be tried on the 18th instance. Boylan in the meantime, pursues vocation as if nothing has happened. Opal mining seems to be the rage once more. There are no less than three parties going to try their luck in that direction. They started out some days ago, and we hope they will be successful.



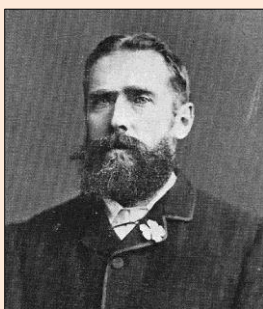
Editor: We think the powers conferred by a miner's right are generally misunderstood. A "right" gives the holder the power to search for minerals, but does not in our opinion justify him in allowing his horse and cattle to trespass on a run.

The death of Peter Boylan, Eromanga police, 9 November 1906:

Constable O'Connor begs to report: On the 6th instant, the Stoney Creek mailman arrived in Eromanga and informed me that Peter Boylan was dying at Stoney Creek. He also gave me a letter written by a miner named Cunningham from there which urgently requested me to come to Stoney creek and take care of Boylan's property, as he believed he wouldn't last any more than a few more hours.

I left Eromanga with my black tracker the same day, and arrived at Stoney Creek that night at 8 o'clock after travelling 50 miles. Boylan had died eight hours before we arrived. Some of the miners informed me that he has been suffering for years with water blockages, and about two weeks ago he hurt his testicles on the pommel of his saddle, and from all appearances, inflammation set in. When I examined the body they were as big as a football, which possibly caused his death. I could find no suspicious circumstances, and everything possible was done to save his life. On the 7th instant at 7 pm, myself, the tracker and three miners buried him at the mines. He left no will, and his property consists of four horses, an old riding saddle, a pack saddle, a new bridle, one Winchester rifle, one revolver, two small parcels of opal, a rolled gold watch and chain, two shirts and 15/6 in cash.

He was a native of South Australia and has relatives living there. I have informed the curator that his property is valued at £50.

No.	Name	Date of burial
BG 06	William Justin Beauchamp CAMERON (Known as Beauchamp Cameron and “The Wild Irishman”)	Died on 15 th Sept 1928
Location of grave		GPS Coordinates
Somewhere close to the ‘Belombre’ / ‘Whynot’ boundary, 4 km south of the Cooper Development Road from a point about 4 km west of the junction with the Quilpie-Windorah Road. Possibly on the southern edge of the stock route (see <i>A Strange Bird on the Lagoon</i> below).		26.647413 South 143.899138 East
Photos of grave		
		
Photo (unknown date) in <i>A Strange Bird on the Lagoon</i>		Photo 2019
Beauchamp Cameron (1881)		Inscription on headstone
		WILLIAM JUSTIN BEAUCHAMP CAMERON 1845-1928 A PIONEER OF QUEENSLAND COME UNTO ME ALL YE THAT LABOUR AND ARE HEAVY LADEN AND I WILL GIVE YOU REST
Further information		
<p><u>Summarised from <i>A Strange Bird on the Lagoon</i> by his granddaughter Margaret Reeves:</u></p> <p><i>“In 1928, Beauchamp Cameron had a stroke. His daughters Helen and Isobel would prepare a pack of provisions ready for him to go back to his hut on ‘Moombidary’ at Quilpie near Bourke. Beauchamp was much happier this way than being cooped up in an old-peoples home. He died there and was buried by his sons Billy and Matey Cameron. They placed the grave on the stock route so that they would always have access to it. Later they erected a monument with a marble plaque.”</i></p> <p><u>December 2019:</u> According to Scott Clifford, current Manager of ‘Moombidary’, the only grave on the station is that of five year-old William Cameron who was killed in the cattle yards in 1943. Sometime after that, the Camerons sold up and went to Aramac. All the ‘Moombidary’ records were destroyed in a fire in 1984.</p> <p><u>Comment:</u> Margaret Reeves (who lived in Sydney) was mistaken on two counts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• She located ‘Moombidary’ at Quilpie near Bourke NSW. It is in fact near Hungerford, QLD.• She has Beauchamp Cameron buried of ‘Moombidary’... some 300 km south of the actual grave site.		
Names of persons who recorded the site details.		
Site details recorded by Adam Murray and Fiona Ferguson (Belombre) - November 2019		

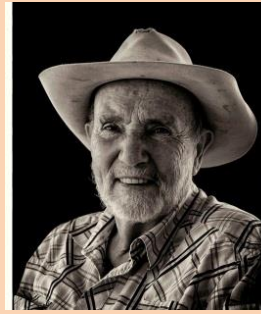
Reg No.	Name	Date of death
BG 07	EFFY MAY JACKA	6 th October 1918
Location of grave		GPS Coordinates
On Tallyabra Station, under a bloodwood tree about 100m west of the track in from the highway to the shearers' quarters.		751408 E 7051750 N
Photos of grave		
 		
Inscription on headstone		
<p>In loving memory of our sister EFFIE MAY JACKA who died 6th Oct 1918 aged 27 years. Gone but not forgotten. Erected by her sisters Ethel, Mary and Alice.</p>		
Further information		
<p>Born Effy May Hunter in Berrawinia NSW, she married Albert Jacka at 'Keeroongooloo' when she was 19 years old. Sometime later, she and her husband Albert Jacka took up 'Tallyabra', to the east of Eromanga.</p> <p>She had three children at the time of her death: Elizabeth May Jacka (6), Margie Ethel Jacka (5) and William Albert Robert Jacka (3).</p> <p>Her official Death Certificate states that the cause of death was 'gun shot wound in the head'. Legend has it that the accident occurred when she was climbing over a fence with a loaded shot gun.</p>		
Name of person who recorded these details.		
<p>Rob Savory, on the advice of Adam Murray, 'Belombre'. Site details recorded 31st December 2010</p>		

Researchers / compilers

Rob Savory

Rob is an environmental professional who first visited SWQ in 1995 while working for the Department of Mines & Energy. Now retired, he is researching aspects of the local history and he calls Eromanga his second home.

robsavory.env@bigpond.com



James Livingston ('Giggles')

Giggles first came to the Eromanga District in 2005 as a shearer. He has lived in Eromanga since 2009, employed by the Quilpie Shire Council. He owns two opal mines on Keeroongoolo - where several of the bush graves are located. He has a deep interest in the history of Eromanga and, together with Scotty Walker, was responsible for the rediscovery of the 1877 Eromanga Blaze Tree.

jlivingston109@gmail.com