



## Corner Country Exploration

# The Burke and Wills Expedition

### The expedition leaves Menindie

On the 19<sup>th</sup> of October 1860, members of the Victorian Exploring Expedition (Burke and Wills Expedition) left Menindie on the Darling River for the second stage of their charge across the country to Coopers Creek. Intended as a scientific expedition, it was, for Burke, a race with John Macdouall Stuart to be the first to cross the continent.

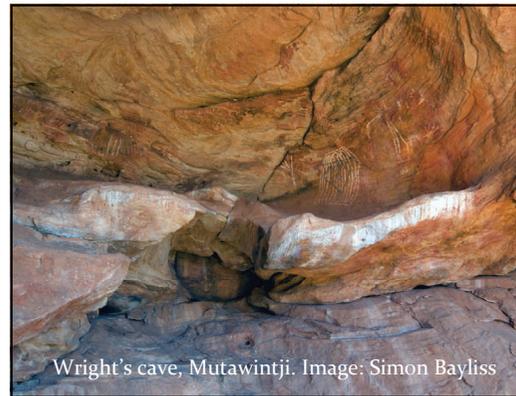
Arguments in Menindie led to the resignation of some members of the expedition and Burke separated the remainder into two groups; those who would travel to Cooper Creek in an advance party, and those who would remain behind, as “back-up”.

William Wright was recruited as a guide.

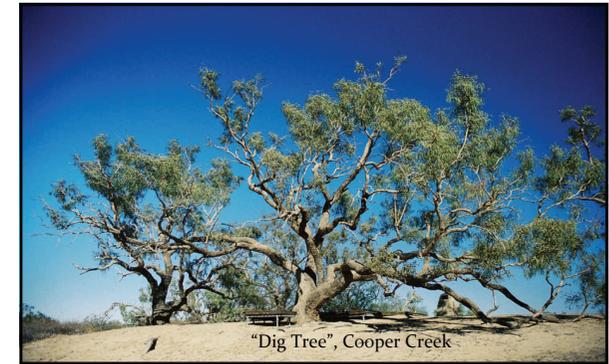


### Wright leads the party to Mutawintji

Under Wright’s guidance, and that of two Aboriginal guides, the expedition was able to make good progress. After marching across the flat, shrubby plains north of Menindie, Burke and Wills reached the Bynguano Ranges of Mutawintji, but had little time to explore this secret place.



With the expedition moving forward with as much speed as they could muster Wills tried to keep up with the maintenance of navigational, geological and botanical observations by making the recordings when others were asleep at night.



### Cooper Creek is reached.

Successive camps were made on Nuntherungi, Tellawongee, Wonnaminta and Puldramata Creeks, before turning towards the north-east. Ten days after leaving Menindie the group reached Torowoto Swamp. Still there was no rest as Burke hastened onwards to Cooper Creek.

Wright returned to Menindee with instructions to retrieve the remaining camels, wagons and stores and follow Burke to Cooper Creek.

The expedition reached the banks of Cooper Creek on November 11<sup>th</sup>, 1860.