

5.2 POST CONTACT SITES

1. Dight's Falls

Melways reference – 2D B5, 2D E5, 2D A6

In 1803 as a part of what was called an exploratory mission, but which was in fact the beginning of the invasion, Charles Grimes, Assistant Surveyor-General of NSW, and his party, travelled up the Yarra, stopping at what is now Dight's Falls, before returning to their boat which was moored in the bay.

2. Merri Creek School Reserve

Melways reference – 2D B5, 2D E5, 2D A6

The school initiated by the Collins St Baptist Church. The Merri Creek Aboriginal School for Aboriginal Children – opened in late 1845 on 27 acres near the junction of the Merri Creek and the Yarra River, known as Yarra Bend near Dights falls.

Edward Peacock was employed as a teacher. He began teaching in William Thomas's (Assistant Protector of Port Phillip) hut 0.5 Km east of the junction of Merri Creek and Yarra River. He was soon given Dr Peter McArthur's abandoned 30ft x 12ft homestead, 'Arthurton', near the junction of Merri Ck and Yarra River. Attendance grew to more than 40. Lessons were conducted in two sessions of ninety minutes.

Second half of 1845, several Aborigines died of disease and old age and one healthy baby was born. – P160 "Who killed the Kooris" by Michael Cannon Sited at the junction of Merri Creek and Yarra River, the main part of settlement is now under the Eastern Freeway.

This site is soon to be marked by Aboriginal Affairs Victoria

Refer to the following document for further reading –

The confluence of the Merri Creek and Yarra River:

A History of the Western Port Aboriginal Protectorate and the Merri Creek Aboriginal School. A Report to the Heritage Services Branch, Aboriginal Affairs Victoria by Ian D. Clark & Toby G. Heydon 1998

3. Native Police Encampment

Melways reference – 2D B5, 2D E5, 2D A6

In 1842 Henry Dana, commandant of the new force of Native Police, reported that the Dandenong Creek had dried up, causing a dangerous shortage of water at the Narre Warren site. He shifted his men from the nearby police paddock to permanent water on Merri Creek. Refer p 18 'Who Killed the Kooris' by Michael Cannon.

Names of men who enlisted on 24th Feb 1842 – Billibellary, Buckup (Bug-gup), Boro Boro (Bur-bor-rough), Benbo, Berring, Culpundurra (Kul-pendure) – Billibellary's son, Curra Curra (Kur-rek-kur-rek), Coonerdigum, Gellibrand, Giberuke, Murrumbean (Murrum Murrum-bean), Moonee Moonee, Nangollibill (Ning-goolobin) Nunuptune, Nerimbineek (Ner-rim-bin-uk), Peripe (Pee-rup), Polligary (Polligery), Munmungina (Mun-mun-gin-ner), Tommiel, Tomboko, Warworong, Wideculk (Wi-gee-gulk), Yamaboke (Yam-mer-book), Yuptun, Barak.

According to Les Blake in Captain Dana and the Native Police, accommodation by the Merri was in tents at first but in later years barracks were built and stables erected for horses. A 1500-acre paddock was fenced and 30 acres of land cultivated. The camp was sited next to the Assistant Protector Thomas's Protectorate.

4. Yarra Protectorate

Melways reference – 2D B5, 2D E5, 2D A6

The Yarra protectorate was set up by Assistant Protector Thomas in early 1840's on the Merri Creek at the site of the Yarra Bend Park, Clifton Hill. Situated in the Yarra Bend Park, 80 metres southwest of pavilion southwest of Sir Herbert Olney Oval, between Eastern Freeway and Yarra River. Refer to AAV Aboriginal Historical Places Program, Inventory No: 5.1 –12

5. 'Ryries' or 'Riery's' Hill Camp (no photograph available)

Now Clifton Hill

William Kyle who arrived in Port Phillip in 1841 recalled that the so called 'Murray and Goulburn Tribes' now thought to be Daung Wurrung, and possibly Ngurai-illam wurrung camped on Ryries Hill near what is now called Clifton Hill probably in the vicinity of Merri Creek and Heidelberg Rd. There is thought to be some certainty about the Melbourne side of the Merri Creek by Heidelberg Rd, near present day Dwyer St.

6. 'Newton' or 'New Town' Hill (no photograph available)

Now Fitzroy Hill, was frequented by the Wurundjeri willam in the 1840's. "New Town was also a place of Aboriginal-European interaction. During the decline in operations at the 'mission', or Merri Creek Aboriginal School, toward the end of Peacock's tenure as schoolmaster, Thomas (to La Trobe, 6/5/1848 in VPRS 10, Item 1848/1029), reported that on 3 March 1848, 'all were absent [from Merri Creek Aboriginal School]fencing at New Town'. William Kyle who arrived in Port Phillip in 1841 recalled that the so-called 'Plenty River Tribe', now thought to be Wurundjeri (Woiwurrung

language group), camped upon Newton Hill, now Fitzroy in, according to William. Kyle, the vicinity of Gertrude St.

Refer to 'Reminiscences of Aboriginal life in Victoria and New South Wales' in The Geelong Naturalist, Second Series, Vol 2, Nos. 3 & 4: pp 159-72, 182-86.

7. North Fitzroy Battle

Cnr of Nicholson St and Alexandra Parade

William Kyle (1906) arrived in Melbourne in 1841 and lived at Dights Falls near Merri Creek with his parents. Kyle recorded that a battle was fought around the year 1843-44 between 500 or 600 Aboriginal people. Three tribes, from what was then called the Yarra Yarra, Goulburn River and Plenty River were allies against tribes from Lal Lal, Barrabool Hills and Corio who camped on the west side of the old Plenty Road in line with Nicholson St. The battle was held on the southern slope of what was known as Ryries Hill (Clifton Hill), in the vicinity of Nicholson Street and Alexandra Parade Nth Fitzroy.

8. Old Swamp behind Richmond Town Hall

According to Copping it Sweet, Shared Memories of Richmond, Kulpendori, oldest son of Jaga Jaga and Douttagalla, died in the swamp.

9. Richmond Baptist Church (no photograph available)

Bridge Rd Richmond.* no site has been able to be located

Local Aboriginal children were encouraged to go to Sunday school by being offered bread during the week and a more substantial meal on Sunday.

Reverend Han and other parishioners suggested running a proper school. They raised money and employed Edward Peacock as a teacher.

10. The Church of Christ Aborigines Mission

258 Gore St Fitzroy

Opened in June 1888 and was known locally as the "Old Tab". The building came up for sale in the early 1940's and Doug Nichols approached the Victorian Aborigines Committee of the Federal Aborigines Mission Board of the Churches of Christ, with the request that the board take over the church. The board agreed in October 1944 and Doug Nichols was appointed missionary. According to Alick Jackomos, the church opened in 1942. It was used as a meeting place and famous people were often invited to talk to the congregation including William Warfield, Tom Duncan, Harry Belafonte and Winifred Atwell.

11. The Merri Creek Treaty Site

The possible site of the signing of the Doutagalla Treaty – for the down payment of two hundred pounds worth of blankets and other trade goods and the promise of a yearly rental of the same amount, Batman claimed to have bought 600,000 acres extending from the Plenty Ranges to Geelong.

12. Merri Creek Camping Site

Intersection of Heidelberg Rd and the Merri Crk, Clifton Hill side.

Is recorded as a camping site in the early 1800's