

# *Land Hunger: Port Phillip, 1835*

*By Glen Foster*



*An historical game using role-play and cards for 4 players  
from upper Primary school to adults.*

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*Print on front page shows members of the Kulin Nations negotiating a "treaty" with John Batman in 1835. Reproduced courtesy of National Library of Australia. George Rossi Ashton, artist.*

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# INTRODUCTION

## ***'Fun with Local History' Series***

An education series exploring European settlement in Australia through game playing and hypothetical scenarios, incorporating factual events and real characters from the times. The series combines role playing scripts with card games to explore key aspects of the life and times of the early European settlement of Victoria in the first coastal towns of Melbourne, Portland, Port Fairy and Warrnambool.

The series is consistent with the Victorian and Australian Curricula for History. Teachers may also find the contents useful in other subject areas such as Drama, English, Geography and Mathematics.

The usual poetic license has been taken in the development of the scripts. Crossword puzzles based on each scripted game are provided. For more information contact Glen Foster at: [gfooster2@me.com](mailto:gfooster2@me.com)

## ***About the Game – Land Hunger: Port Phillip, 1835***

The setting of this game is in the Port Phillip District of New South Wales in 1835.

The aims of the game are to:

- find out about some aspects of John Batman's Treaty;
- compare some European and Indigenous peoples' customs and beliefs;
- participate in card games based on Indigenous Dreamtime stories; and
- eliminate the other players and win the games - players have an equal chance of winning each game.

Each character's lines are colour-coded to help players see when it is their turn to speak.

Once a character is chosen, players read lines with the same colour even if the character changes between games.

Before reading the script, it would be helpful if readers are familiar with the early history of Melbourne.

Many short histories of the European settlement of Melbourne can be found on the internet, for example:

- <https://www.onlymelbourne.com.au>
- [www.aboriginalhistoryofyarra.com.au](http://www.aboriginalhistoryofyarra.com.au)
- [https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/History\\_of\\_Melbourne](https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_Melbourne)

## PLAYERS

### List of characters\*

- **John Batman**, *pioneer and explorer*
- **Billibellary**, *influential Indigenous elder from the Wurundjeri clan*
- **William Buckley**, *escaped convict*
- **William Wentworth**, *pioneer and explorer*

\*The Australian Dictionary of Biography - [www.adb.anu.edu.au](http://www.adb.anu.edu.au) - provides detailed information about Batman, Buckley and Wentworth.

The Aboriginal History of the Yarra - [www.aboriginalhistoryofyarra.com.au](http://www.aboriginalhistoryofyarra.com.au) - provides detailed information about Billibellary.

- Click on 'Wurundjeri History of Yarra' then click #5 'Billibellary'.

- Further information about Billibellary can be found in other texts, eg 'Australia on Horseback' by Cameron Forbes, pages 151 – 153.

Wikipedia can also be consulted for information about Batman, Billibellary, Buckley and Wentworth.

# READING THE SCRIPT AND PLAYING THE GAMES

## **Equipment**

One full deck of fifty-two normal playing cards.

Two normal, six-sided and numbered dice.

## **Introduction**

Players sit around a playing surface, for example, a table top or floor space.

Four different card games are played in conjunction with four Dreamtime stories.

The rules of each card game are explained in the script.

## **Preparation**

- The activity commences with players choosing their character and reading the script.
- Players may like to dress in appropriate clothing to reflect their particular characters' personas:
  - for example, wear an appropriate costume, hat, wig, or draw or wear artificial facial hair.
- Prepare name tags for each character in the script.
  - Each player wears a name tag denoting their character to help other players recognise their character.
- The script can be:
  - read in groups, or performed in front of an audience from the beginning to the end without interruptions or:
  - stopped at any point and the deck of cards can be placed back into their box and put to one side until the game is resumed.
- Players can share a script/ipad to read from (ie one script/ipad between two players) so there are less materials on the table or floor space.

## **Background information about characters' lines in the script**

1. On Saturday, 6<sup>th</sup> June 1835, somewhere near the Merri Creek, John Batman negotiated a treaty with the Wurundjeri Indigenous people for 600,000 acres of their land, stretching from the Yarra River to Geelong. According to an article entitled "*Some Early Melbourne History*" published in the Western Argus in 1911, John Batman gave the Wurundjeri the following items in exchange for the land:

**40 pairs of blankets, 42 tomahawks, 130 knives, 62 pairs of scissors, 40 looking glasses, 250 handkerchiefs, 18 shirts, 4 flannel jackets, 4 suits of clothes and 150 pounds of flour (one pound = 2.2 kg).**

**The author wondered how Batman arrived at these numbers and provides a fanciful explanation.**

2. Billibellary was once asked why there were so few newborn babies in the tribes. At the time, Billibellary was being consulted about the Government forming a native-police. Billibellary replied, "*Blackfellows all about say that no good have them piccaninnies now, no country for blackfellows like long ago.*" (from 'Australia on Horseback' by Cameron Forbes, page 153).

Also, during a different conversation with Government officials, Billibellary was quoted as saying, "*I am king; I no ride in horseback; I no go out of my country; young men go, as you say, not me.*" (from 'Letters from Victorian Pioneers', Edited by Thomas Bride, page 70)

**The author used these quotes as the basis for trying to capture Billibellary's way of speaking in the script. This attempt is not meant to be disrespectful to the legacy of Billibellary in any way.**

3. William Wentworth was a famous and influential pioneer in the colony of New South Wales. In 1819, he published a book with the following grandiose title:

*“A Statistical, Historical and Political Description of The Colony of New South Wales and Its dependent Settlements in Van Diemen’s Land with a particular enumeration of the advantages, which these colonies offer for emigration, and their superiority in many respects over those possessed by the United States of America.”*

On pages 4 and 5 of his 466 page book, Wentworth wrote a brief description of the Indigenous people:

*“The aborigines of this country occupy the lowest place in the gradatory scale of the human species. They have neither houses nor clothing; they are entirely unacquainted with the arts of agriculture; and even the arms which the several tribes have, to protect themselves from the aggressions of their neighbours, and the hunting and fishing implements with which they administer to their support, are of the rudest contrivance and workmanship.*

*In thirty years intercourse with Europeans has not affected the slightest change in their habits; and even those who have most intermixed with the colonists, have never been prevailed upon to practice one of the arts of civilized life. Disdaining all restraint, their happiness is still centered in their original pursuits; and they seem to consider the superior enjoyments to be derived from civilization, (for they are very far from being insensible to them) but a poor compensation for the sacrifice of any portion of their natural liberty. The colour of these people is a dark chocolate; their features bear a strong resemblance to the African negro; they have the same flat nose, large nostrils, wide mouth and thick lips; but their hair is not woolly, except in Van Diemen’s Land, where they have this further characteristic of the negro.*

*These people bear no resemblance to any of the inhabitants of the surrounding islands, except to those of New Guinea, which is only separated from New Holland by a narrow strait. One of the islands, therefore, has evidently been peopled by the other; but from whence the original stock was derived is one of those geographical problems, which in all probability will never be satisfactorily solved.*

*Rude and barbarous as are the aborigines of this country, they have still some confused notions of a Supreme Being and of a future state. It would, however, be foreign to the purposes to which I have limited myself, to enter into a detail of their customs and manners; nor would it, indeed, be the means of increasing the fund of public knowledge: since, whoever may be anxious to be informed on these topics, will find a faithful and minute account of them in the work of Mr. Collins.”*

**The author has taken quotes from the above extract and incorporated them into Wentworth’s lines in the script - not to be disrespectful to Indigenous people, but to help explore Wentworth’s likely attitudes.**

### ***The First People***

Before reading the script and playing the card games, it is important to acknowledge that the Kulin indigenous people were already living in the Port Phillip and Yarra Valley regions before Europeans arrived. The Kulin nation is an alliance of five Indigenous Australian tribes in south central Victoria and includes the Wurundjeri and Wathaurong.

Archaeological evidence suggests Indigenous People arrived in Australia approximately 40,000 years ago. However, recent evidence suggests that the time of their arrival might have been much earlier, at 65,000 years ago.

# SCRIPT: Land Hunger: Port Phillip, 1835

## William Buckley:

*The date is Monday, 6<sup>th</sup> July, 1835.*

*The place is Indented Head, near Geelong, in the Port Phillip District of New South Wales.*

*On this day I, William Buckley, walked into John Batman's campsite and revealed my identity.*

*I was an escaped convict and had spent the previous 32 years with the Wathaurong people<sup>1</sup>.*

*But what if my circumstances had been slightly different?*

**What if** I had given myself up on Saturday, 6<sup>th</sup> June, not the 6<sup>th</sup> July?

*I could have been present as an interpreter<sup>2</sup> when Batman's Treaty was negotiated with the Wurundjeri elders on 6<sup>th</sup> June 1835 near the Merri Creek.*

*I might have been able to help clear up some of the misunderstandings about the Treaty.*

*And about our different cultures.*

*Billibellary is one of the Indigenous tribal elders from the region who was present at the meeting.*

*William Wentworth is a famous colonial landowner and influential pioneer and squatter.*

*He published a book in 1819 that gave an historical account of the development of the colony.*

*His book was widely read at the time within the colony and England.*

*Wentworth's brief description of the Indigenous people in his book was scathing.*

*Like me, William Wentworth wasn't present at Batman's Treaty negotiations.*

*Let's consider the following hypothetical scenario:*

**What if** Wentworth and I had joined John Batman and Billibellary at the negotiation meeting?

*The following is a conversation that might have occurred during this hypothetical meeting.*

*Historical facts are mixed with some lighthearted and, at other times, poignant possibilities.*

## William Buckley:

My name is William Buckley.

I was born in the Cheshire region of the England nation.

My people have occupied that region for more than 1,500 years.

I speak the English and Wathaurong languages.

## John Batman:

Me name's John Batman.

Oi was born in the Sydney region of the New South Wales nation.

Me people have occupied this region for about 47 years.

Oi speak the English language ... Real well ... Yeah.

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<sup>1</sup> William Buckley can be considered to be the first permanent European settler in Victoria.

<sup>2</sup> John Batman employed William Buckley as an interpreter, at a salary of £50, and he later became a government interpreter.

**William Wentworth:**

By Jove, chaps ... Greetings and salutations to each and everyone of you.

I am absolutely delighted to be here with you all.

I am the ... well ... I am reticent to say this ... but ... I am the famous William Wentworth.

I am the colony's leading barrister, explorer ... and, of course, sheep grazier ... and landowner too.

**John Batman:**

Git on with it ... You blabbermouth.

**William Wentworth:**

Ahh, yes ... Of course.

I shan't bore you with any more of my many important but modest roles in our colony.

It seems likely I was born on Norfolk Island.

After my parents had a romantic assignation on the ship transporting my mamma to Sydney.

And I also articulate the English language.

But most properly ... Indeed.

As it should be spoken.

Certainly not like ... Him. *Pointing to Batman.*

**John Batman:**

Yeah ... Roight.

"Sheep grazier and landowner" ... Phh!

He's just a blinking squatter like the rest of us.

Know what oi mean.

**William Wentworth:**

Listen here ... My sad and insignificant little man.

I am an important and influential member of the New South Wales Squattocracy.

It would be in your best interests not to forget that fact.

**John Batman:**

Yeah ... Roight.

And oi'm the Governor of New South Wales, the Easter Bunny and Father Christmas.

**William Buckley:**

In 1799 I was sent to New South Wales as a convict.

In 1803 I escaped from the Sullivan Bay penal settlement.

Here in the Port Phillip region of New South Wales.

Eventually I met the people of the Wathaurong region of the Kulin nation.

I lived with them for 32 years.

**Billibellary:**

Billibellary my name.  
Wurundjeri region of Kulin nation I born.  
Occupy here maybe 50,000 years my people.  
Speak Woiwurrung language.  
And many others of our languages.

**John Batman:**

Roightio Billy ... Me old maate.  
Oi'm here to do a deal with yous.  
Oi wanna buy a small amount of land belonging to yous.  
Only 600,000 acres.

**William Wentworth:**

By Jove ... My dear old chap.  
Is that all?  
That's a rather trifling parcel of land.  
I am hoping to squat ... er, I mean reside ... on the entire South Island of New Zealand.

**John Batman:**

Oi'll pay yous for it Billy ... Me old maate.  
How does 5 pairs of blankets, 50 looking glasses, and 100 handkerchiefs sound?  
And oi'll throw in a couple of shirts and a suit of clothes for good measure.  
What do yous say?  
Deal or no deal, Chief?

**Billibellary:**

What you rave on about Mr. Batman?  
Deal is no.

**William Buckley:**

Batman ... You don't understand.  
These people believe they inhabit the land.  
And belong to the land.  
They don't believe they own the land.  
They don't understand what that means.  
Or paying for it.  
Or selling it for that matter.  
You're wasting your time.

**John Batman:**

Now listen ... The both of yous.

Billy and his mob reckon they've been here abou' 50,000 years.

Roight?

Then of course they own the land ... Don't they?

Well, if they don't ... Who does?

And if they don't want it ... We'll have it.

Or take it.

Know what oi mean.

**William Wentworth:**

By Jove, old man ... You'll find the Crown ... King William actually ... owns all the land in Australia.

And what's more, these aborigines have neither houses nor clothing.

And they are entirely unaquainted with the arts of agriculture.

They must surely occupy the lowest place in the scale of the human species.

**William Buckley:**

You don't understand them either, Wentworth.

Or their culture.

They don't need much clothing.

Or permanent houses.

Or use your farming methods.

They have their own methods.

They're completely self-sufficient.

But you're ignorant of all this.

You too have no idea.

**William Wentworth:**

Hmm, possibly ... Yes, I should be more familiar with their way of life ... I suppose.

Ahh ... But what about their confused understanding of the creation of life ... On Earth.

By their Supreme Being?

**Billibellary:**

We no confused.

In Kulin nation is Bunjil the eagle and trickster crow our ancestral beings.

Is other creators in our culture.

Oldest Rainbow Serpent is.

Life on Earth she bring.

**William Wentworth:**

Well Billibellary ... Our Christian belief tells us that in the beginning God created Earth. Which was formless and empty.

God said, "Let the waters under the heavens be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear. And the waters he called Seas."

Then God said, "Let the earth sprout vegetation. Let the earth bring forth living creatures according to their kinds."

That is how we explain the earth's formation and the existence of land, water and life. Quite straightforward really.

**John Batman:**

Roight Billy ... Me old maate.

Oi can tell yous are close to accepting me offer.

So it's 30 pairs of blankets, 75 knives, 30 pairs of scissors, 15 looking glasses, 100 handkerchiefs, 20 shirts ... And 5 suits of clothes.

**Billibellary:**

Oh, what you rave on about Mr. Batman?

Your name?

Is really Mr. Madman?

**John Batman:**

Tell yous what, Billy.

Why don't oi throw in a couple of tomahawks too.

Not at you ... Of course.

Ha! Ha!

But they'll be great when yous go fighting all them other tribes.

Know what oi mean.

Deal or no deal, Chief?

Yeah.

**Billibellary:**

Deal is no ... Mr. Madman.

**William Buckley:**

Wentworth's knowledge of God and his son Jesus come from a book of stories called The Bible.

Indigenous people don't have a special creation book.

They have a collection of stories called The Dreamtime.

Instead of written words, they act out their stories through dance, music and costumes.

**John Batman:**

Their music is real good ... Blowin' didgeridoodos ... Banging them sticks ... Yeah.  
So, Billy ... Me old maate ... How about 50 tomahawks, 100 knives and 70 pairs of scissors?  
Yeah.

**William Wentworth:**

Hmm ... Is that so?  
I suppose there might be ... Some similitudes.  
Billibellary ... Why don't you acquaint me with a Dreamtime story about this snake of yours.  
Some kind of ... Coloured Serpent?  
What was it?  
A Rainbow Basilisk?

**John Batman:**

Ayyee ... Hang on a mo'.  
Before we start any story telling stuff.  
Can we wrap up this deal?  
So that makes it 40 pairs of blankets, 42 tomahawks, 130 knives, 62 pairs of scissors, 40 looking  
glasses, 250 handkerchiefs, 18 shirts and 4 suits of clothes.  
An' this has gotta be me final offer.  
Cos that's all oi've got ... You've cleaned me out ... Maaate.  
Know what oi mean.  
Yeah.

**Billibellary:**

Alright.  
Agree.  
Just shut you up Mr. Sickoman.

**John Batman:**

Yeesss!!  
You little beauty Billy.

**Billibellary:**

You give us all those gifts?  
Tomahawks, handkerchiefs, knives, scissors, blankets and more?  
Yes?  
Giving gifts part of our rituals too.  
After we exchange gifts you allow stay ... Little while only.

**William Buckley:**

It's what we call ... They call ... A tanderrum.

By the way, Batman.

You suck at maths.

**John Batman:**

Yeah, yeah ... No worries ... Whatever you says Billy.

Sign roight here Chief ... And your other seven maates.

Know what oi mean.

**William Buckley:**

Don't worry Billibellary.

The Governor of the Colony of New South Wales isn't going to let Batman simply walk away with 600,000 acres for a few tomahawks and handkerchiefs.

Anyway ... Why don't you tell Wentworth a Dreamtime story about the Rainbow Serpent?

**William Wentworth:**

By Jove ... Before you do ... I would welcome the opportunity to apprise you about our religion.

True Believers and Divine Christians like myself regularly attend Church to listen to our Gospels.

Our Gospels tell us about the Life of Christ and the Word of God.

They're most certainly not spurious stories.

**William Buckley:**

The Indigenous people have great faith and belief in their Dreamtime.

Together they interact with their Dreamtime by painting their bodies and performing their stories.

Such a gathering is called a corroboree.

**William Wentworth:**

And we sing hymns in our churches.

Hymns are beautiful and inspiring religious songs of praise to our God.

I am told ... by many celebrated choristers ... that I have the most beautiful, soaring voice.

Another of the many gifts bestowed upon me by my God.

**John Batman:**

Yeah ... Roight.

"soaring voice" ... Phh!

And oi've been told you sound like a screeching cat what's getting their neck squeezed real tight.

Know what oi mean.

**William Wentworth:**

By Jove, old chap ... I shall disregard your abnoxious, frivolous comments.  
And I am also invited by our Bishop to read passages from our Sacred Holy Book, The Bible.  
I am told I have a beautifully mellifluous and eloquent cadence in my voice.

**John Batman:**

Yeah ... Roight.  
“merry ... flowers and yellow ... paint” ... Phh!  
Effluent more likely.  
And oi’ve heard folks start snoring after two minutes of listening to your droning voice.  
Know what oi mean.

**William Wentworth:**

Oh, goodness gracious me ... You are a particularly irritating and vulgar little man.

**William Buckley:**

Oh, for Heaven’s sake.  
Give it up you two.  
Today, we’ll act out a Dreamtime story using playing cards and dice.  
I’ll explain how the game works.  
So Billibellary ... Please begin.

**Billibellary:**

Idea good, Murrangurk<sup>3</sup>.  
In Dreamtime ... All earth lay sleep.  
Nothing move ... Nothing grow.  
One day Rainbow Serpent ... She wake up.  
Out of ground she come.  
She travel ... All over places.  
Return place where first appear she does.  
Call to frogs ... “Come out!”

**William Buckley:**

We use one pack of normal playing cards and two normal numbered dice.  
The four suits in the pack each represent a different animal.  
The Indigenous people call each animal a totem<sup>4</sup>.

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<sup>3</sup> Murrangurk was the name bestowed upon William Buckley by the Wathaurong indigenous people.

<sup>4</sup> A totem is an animal or plant inherited by an indigenous clan or family as their spiritual emblem. A totem defines their relationships with each other and are believed to be the descendants of Dreamtime heroes, or totemic beings.

### **William Buckley:**

For example:

- Billibellary is the red '**Hearts**' representing a kangaroo;
- Wentworth is the red '**Diamonds**' representing a frog; and
- Batman is the black '**Spades**' representing a snake.

I'll be the black '**Clubs**' representing a magpie.

We play the game in stages as I read out the rules.

When I say "**Do this now**" we play the stage(s) that has just been explained.

Each player receives the 13 cards of their suit.

- The 'Ace' of each suit counts as one.

Players shuffle their cards and place them in a pile on the table in front of them.

**Do this now.**

### **Billibellary:**

Frogs come out slow.

Bellies heavy with water.

Rainbow Serpent ... She tickle their tummy.

When frogs they laugh, water run over earth.

Fill tracks of the Rainbow Serpents she make.

This how lakes, rivers made.

Water, grass and trees spring up.

All animals awoke.

Follow Rainbow Serpent across land.

Rainbow Serpent, she give each their own totem of animal, like bird or reptile.

From where came.

They happy on earth.

They live and gather food with own tribe.

### **William Buckley:**

Let's start the game.

- Each pile of 13 cards represents the "Mother" of the totem or animal;
- Players pick up the top card from their "Mother" pile of 13 cards and place it on the table face up in front of them.

The movement of a card off the "Mother" pack and onto the table represents the "birth" of an animal.

Or a particular totem.

**Do this now.**

### Billibellary:

Tribes themselves know by totems.

Kangaroo, magpie, carpet snake, frog.

But many, many more.

So no one starve.

Rainbow Serpent ... She rule no one eat own totem.

Only other totems.

So food for everyone.

### William Buckley:

Let's continue playing:

- The player with the highest valued card chooses one of the other three player's cards to pick up and take;

Note:

- If two or more cards show the same highest value, the players each shake the dice and add up the total;
- The player with the highest total has first pick of the cards.

- The player with the next highest valued card picks up the remaining card; and

- A player picking up a card places it face-up next to their pile of cards and places their own card on the bottom of their pile.

The picking up and taking of another player's card symbolizes the totem, or animal, "eating" a different totem or animal.

**Do this now.**

### Billibellary:

Rainbow Serpent, she made laws all obey.

Rainbow Serpent, she say:

"Those who keep my laws will be rewarded; I shall give them human form."

"Those who break my laws will be punished and turned into mountains and hills."

Tribes live together on land given by Rainbow Serpent.

She Mother of Life.

Know land always be theirs.

No one ever take from them.

### William Buckley:

The final **key rules** of this game are:

- Players cannot pick up a card of a suit if they have already picked up two cards of that suit; and
- The **winner** of the game is the first player to take 6 cards or totems: 2 per suit, **maximum**.

**William Buckley:**

The process of picking up cards and “eating” other different tokens, or being “eaten”, represents the circle of life.

Birth, live and eat, or be eaten, death, birth, and so on.

If there are no questions, let’s continue the game until we have our winner.

**Do this now.**

**Billibellary:**

Our story of creation.

Is similar yours.

Is it?

It really inconvenient truth.

Is it?

No can say we not your equal?

Can you?

Both know consequences of that be?

Don’t we?

**William Wentworth:**

Hmm ... I suppose there might be ... Some resemblances ... Maybe.

But Billibellary ... Can you please help elucidate your belief in the afterlife?

As I understand it, you consider Buckley to be the spirit of a dead tribal warrior.

The name of this dead tribal warrior is Murrangurk?

And you people come back to life as a white person?

**Billibellary:**

Yes, we believe Murrangurk ... You call him Mr. Buckley ... Is returned spirit of dead tribal warrior.

But your Christian leader.

Jesus, his name.

Rise from dead he did too?

Like spirit?

Not different our belief?

Is it?

**William Wentworth:**

By Jove ... It’s not really comparable ... Is it?

Jesus is the son of our creator ... God.

And then there is the Holy Spirit.

**Billibellary:**

Holy Spirit?

How related to God and Jesus?

Explain ... Yes?

**William Wentworth:**

With pleasure ... God is Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

God lives in a person who believes in Jesus Christ.

Through the Holy Spirit.

In our Bible, Matthew tells us in Chapter 28: Verses 18-20

“I am with you always, even to the end of the age”.

Yes, Jesus died on a cross and rose ....

By Jove ... Oh my goodness.

Gracious me ... Is it conceivable that the spirit of Murrangurk could be comparable ... Hmm.

**John Batman:**

Tell yous what Chief ... Me old maate.

I wanna show yous what a good bloke oi am.

Cos we're maates now, how about oi throw in 4 flannel jackets for yous as well.

Very fashionable and trendy in London at the moment, Billy.

And Paris.

Yous'll look real smart in them, Chief.

Yer wives will love them.

Know what oi mean.

**Billibellary:**

Er no!

Thanks anyway ... Mr. Insaneman.

**William Buckley:**

Billibellary, why not act out your belief of death and the afterlife in another card game.

That'll challenge Wentworth and Batman to understand your Dreamtime story?

**John Batman:**

Come on Billy ... Me old maate.

Lighten up a bit.

Wadda yous say?

Know what oi mean.

Yeah.

### Billibellary:

Yes.

Alright.

Accept ... Mr Wackoman.

### William Buckley:

We use the following rules from the 'Rainbow Serpent' game:

- We use one pack of normal playing cards and two normal numbered dice; and
- The four suits in the pack each represent a different totem and animal.

As it was in the first game:

- Billibellary is the red '**Hearts**' representing a kangaroo;
- Wentworth is the red '**Diamonds**' representing a frog;
- Batman is the black '**Spades**' representing a snake; and
- I'll be the black '**Clubs**' representing a magpie.

Players collect and shuffle the 13 cards of their suit and place them face down on the table.

**Do this now.**

### John Batman:

Yeah ... Reckon this will be the place for a village, alright.

### William Buckley:

The new rules for this game are:

- To work out the order of play, players shake the dice and add up the two numbers showing.
- The player with the highest total is first to have their turn and so on.
- If two or more players roll the same number, the dice are shaken again.
- In turn players pick up the top card on their 'Mother' pile.
- If the card is a numbered card from 'Ace' to 'Ten' the player places the card at the bottom of the 'Mother' pile of cards.
- However, if the card picked up from the top of the pile is the 'Jack', 'Queen' or 'King' the player places this card **face up** on the table in front of them.
- This process represents the birth of a totem.

### John Batman:

Yeah ... Might even call the village ... "Batmania".

Has a nice ring to it.

Know what oi mean.

### **William Buckley:**

Once a player has their 'Jack', 'Queen' and 'King' cards facing up on the table, when it is their next turn they role the two dice and add up the two numbers.

- If the total is an odd number, for example 3, 5, 7, 9 or 11, the player turns over the 'Jack' and places the card face-down on the playing surface.
  - This represents the death of a totem and their journey back to their sky home on the table.
- The **winner** of the game is the first player to have placed their 'Jack', 'Queen' and 'King' cards **face down** on the table in front of them.

If there are no questions, let's finish the game.

**Do this now.**

### **Billibellary:**

The journey of spirit of dead back to sky home is where Totemic ancestors gone before them.

So our story, life after death no much different yours.

Is it Mr. Wentworth?

It inconvenient truth?

Is it?

You can no admit we your equal?

Can you?

Know what consequences that would be?

Don't we?

### **William Wentworth:**

By Jove ... How extraordinary.

Apparently we seem to have some comparable beliefs.

But if we are basically similar people with similar beliefs.

But different in some ways.

How can we justify taking your land ... And treating you like ...

Oh dear, oh dear ... I am becoming somewhat muddled and befuddled.

This really is a perplexing development.

### **John Batman:**

Tell yous what chief.

I wanna show yous what a real, top bloke oi am.

As well as the flannel jackets, oi'm gonna throw in about 150 pounds of flour for yous as well.

Great for making bread!

Yous wives will love yah for it!

Know what oi mean.

**William Wentworth:**

By Jove ... I might consider some minor edits to my description of Billibellary and his people in my treatise: *“A Statistical, Historical and Political Description of The Colony of New South Wales and Its dependent Settlements in Van Diemen’s Land with a particular enumeration of the advantages which these colonies offer for emigration, and their superiority in many respects over those possessed by the United States of America.”*

Hmm ... With the benefit of hindsight, wonder if I’ve omitted anything in this rather succinct title?

**John Batman:**

Yeah ... Wonder what they’ll say about me back in ‘obart.

Press’ll go crazy over me Treaty.

They’ll probably call me ... “The greatest landowner in the world” ... Yeah.

If I encourage them to.

Know what oi mean.

**William Buckley:**

*Of course I didn’t participate in the negotiations of John Batman’s Treaty.*

*Nor did William Wentworth.*

*And, in reality, none of the above conversations took place.*

*Although Batman’s Treaty was rejected by the NSW Government it didn’t stop European settlement of the land along the Yarra Yarra River.*

*Events transpired quickly.*

*Melbourne was declared the capital of the Port Phillip District in 1837 by Governor Bourke.*

*In March, 1837 William Hoddle surveyed the land taken from the Wurundjeri people.*

*The first Melbourne Land Sale took place on the 1<sup>st</sup> June 1837.*

*As we all know the township of Melbourne did develop rapidly.*

*But it might have been so different ... if only ...*

**THE END**

**William Buckley:**

If time permits there are two more Dreamtime stories we can act out using the playing cards ...

**Billibellary:**

Next story, called: ‘The Hero who was changed into a Mountain’.

The Dividing Range mountain’s profile is of a young warrior.

His face at the sky stares up.

Mother Nature, her hand shows his face for all men to see.

### Billibellary:

Ugarapul people, they reminded of their freedom when see Hero's face.  
It is to one of their young men, Butcha his name, that they owe their freedom.  
He their hero.  
A fighting man from the Baluchi tribe - wait and watch he does.  
The Ugarapuls, he make several raids on.  
Defenceless men, he kill ... Most desirable women, he capture.

### William Buckley:

We use a normal pack of 52 playing cards and two normal dice.  
Each player has their suit of 13 cards representing their totem animals from the previous games.  
Each player takes out the 'Jack', 'Queen', 'King' and 'Ace' from their 13 cards.  
The remaining nine cards are placed to one side – they will be used later.  
Baluchi is played by Wentworth.

#### **Do this now.**

Next, all players shuffle their 4 cards and place them in a pile on the table in front of them face down.

- Players turn over the top card of their pile and leave it on top of the pile.
- If Baluchi's card is the 'Ace' he picks up and keeps any other player's 'Aces' that are showing on top of their pile of four cards.
- This same process happens if Baluchi's card is the 'Jack', 'Queen' or 'King'.
- Players shuffle their remaining cards and turn over their top card and repeat the above process.
- This process is repeated until **ONE** of the players has lost **ALL FOUR** of their cards to Baluchi.

#### **Do this now.**

The taking of the cards by Baluchi represents the killing of Ugarapul men by Baluchi.  
Players with cards left over add their remaining cards to their pile of 9 cards, from 'Two' to 'Ten', that was separated out and put to one side previously.  
The player who was first to lose their 4 cards – ie 'Jack', 'Queen', 'King' and 'Ace' - also takes part in the next stage.

### Billibellary:

Baluchi warrior, stands on a rock one morning he did.  
High above the Ugarapul camp he is.  
Insults and threats he shouts.

### Baluchi:

Choose the best of your weakling warriors and I will cut him to pieces.  
Or if you are afraid, come and attack me in force.  
And you will learn the strength of a Baluchi fighting man.

**Billibellary:**

Sit in conference, the Ugarapul elders do.  
Around the campfire that night.

**Ugarapul elders:**

We must accept the challenge or our people will never live in peace.  
We dare not fail.  
The honour of our tribe is in your hands.

**Billibellary:**

The Ugarapul young men, told they are.

**Ugarapul elders:**

Only one man can be chosen.  
Sleep well, and in the morning, we will choose the one who is to serve us all.

**William Buckley:**

We will now select Baluchi's opponent.

Baluchi does not take part in this stage of the game.

Each of the remaining three players now play their cards to try to eliminate the other two players.  
Players shuffle their cards and place the pile of cards on the table in front of them face down.

**Do this now.**

Each of the remaining players now plays their cards to try to eliminate the other two players.

- Each player picks up the card from the top and places it on the table face up.
- The player with the highest valued card picks up and keeps the other two cards and puts them to one side.
- This player then retains their card and places it on the bottom of their pile.
- If there are two or three cards with the same value the dice are shaken by the players.
- The player with the highest total takes the cards.
- This process continues until there is only one player left with one or more cards.

This player is Butcha.

Butcha challenges Baluchi in the final stage of the game.

**Do this now.**

**Billibellary:**

Next day.

Facing each other the two men they stand.

### **Baluchi:**

Come my little man!

Are you the best the Ugarapul can provide?

I expected to find a warrior worthy of my spear this morning.

### **Butcha:**

Boasting words do not bring victory.

### **William Buckley:**

Baluchi has just two cards – the 'Jack' and 'Queen' of Diamonds.

Baluchi places these two cards face up next to each other on the table in front of him.

Butcha shuffles the thirteen cards of his suit and places them in a pile on the table in front of him.

Butcha's 'Ace' counts as 'One'.

#### **Do this now.**

The two "fight" and inflict "wounds" by trying to take each other's cards.

- Baluchi turns up one of his two cards.
- Butcha turns up the top card on his pile of cards.
- If Baluchi's card is of a higher value than Butcha's card then he takes Butcha's card and puts it to one side.
- If Butcha's card is of a higher value then he takes Baluchi's card and puts it to one side.
- Butcha places his card under the bottom of his pile of cards.
- If both cards have the same value, players shake the dice.
  - The player with the highest total takes the other player's card.
- The taking of cards in this way represents a 'hit' or 'wound' inflicted on the player's opponent.
- If Baluchi still has his two cards in his next turn, he chooses the other of his two cards – he must alternate between his 'Jack' and 'Queen'.
- Butcha turns up the next top card on his pile of cards.
- As before the player with the higher valued card takes the card belonging to the other player.
- This process continues until Butcha has taken both of Baluchi's cards.

### **Billibellary:**

Butcha time after time wounded he was.

But Butcha lightly as a bird he dance.

Penetrate opponent's guard he does.

Now and again.

Baluchi man lowered his shield for just a moment he does.

Baluchi man's head, Butcha hit with a shattering blow.

**Billibellary:**

Baluchi man fall to ground he does ... Dead he is.  
A roar of triumph came from the men of Ugarapul.  
Butcha, he threw his arms wide and laughed.

**Butcha:**

Yesssss.

**Billibellary:**

With a smile on his face Butcha he swayed and fell.  
Sacrificed his life.  
Their young champion, he did.  
His people he saved.  
With honour and in sorrow he buried.  
On his back he lies.  
On the summit of the Dividing Range his face smiles.  
A proud profile he shows against the blue sky.  
A god of the mountain heights he is.  
Enshrined in the hearts of his people his memory ... Always.

**Baluchi:**

Not sure how I lost that battle.  
I certainly had the upper hand.  
The whole time ... How extraordinary.

**John Batman:**

I can't believe it too.  
Me Treaty got knocked back.  
Nothing wrong with it ... Fair and square it was.  
Oi'm happy.  
Billy, me old maate, is happy.  
Everyone was happy ... Yeah.  
Except the blinking government.  
Know what oi mean.

**William Buckley:**

Time for one final Dreamtime story?  
It's a favourite.  
It is called 'How animals came to Australia'.

### **Billibellary:**

The animals, in human form animals were.

A flock of migratory birds, animals are told.

Told about a much more desirable land.

A vast delectable land.

A continent of mountains, rivers and abundant vegetation.

But get there how?

Take them a bark canoe of great dimensions could.

But it belonged to Whale.

Refused to lend it to the animals Whale did.

### **William Buckley:**

The full pack of shuffled 52 cards is used in this game.

The bottom card of the pack should be checked to make sure it is not one of the following cards:

- 'Jack', 'Queen', 'King', or an 'Ace' of any of the four suits.

The pack of cards represents Whale's canoe and is placed in the middle of the table.

### **Billibellary:**

Whale's closest friend, Starfish is.

Animals enlisted Starfish to help them, they do.

Catching lice on head is how Starfish distracts Whale.

Tiptoed to the shore, animals do.

Loaded all their possessions into the huge canoe, they do.

Paddled out to sea they did.

Discovering what had happened, furious Whale was.

Tore Starfish to pieces, he did.

Swam after his canoe in a fury, he does.

Spurting water into the air through a wound in his head from Starfish, Whale does.

Mutilated and tattered, Starfish was.

Lay on the sand, Starfish does.

### **William Buckley:**

Players take turns to turn up the top card of the pile.

The order of turns is not significant.

Players adopt the same suit as in previous games.

If the card turned up is the 'Jack', 'Queen', 'King', or 'Ace', the player whose suit is showing on the card picks it up and places it on the table in front of them.

Cards numbered from '2' to '10' of any suit are discarded to one side.

### **William Buckley:**

The **winner** of the game is the player who is first to pick up their 'Jack', 'Queen', 'King', and 'Ace' of their suit.

The picking up of the 'Jack', 'Queen', 'King', and 'Ace' represent the animals climbing out of Whale's canoe and moving onto the shore of Australia.

**Do this now.**

### **Billibellary:**

Catch up, Whale couldn't.

When the canoe was beached safely, jumped ashore, the animals did.

Turned aside in disgust and swam up the coast, Whale did.

His descendants have done ever since.

Spouting water furiously through the hole in his head, Whale did.

The animals explored the land and settled there making their homes all over Australia, they did.

**THE END**

### ***Acknowledgements***

In addition to sources already cited, I would like to acknowledge that additional historical information was sourced from:

- **Dreamtime Story 1:**

"The Rainbow Serpent" from 'Dreamtime Kullilla Art' by Michael J Connolly: [www.kullillaart.com.au](http://www.kullillaart.com.au)

- **Dreamtime Story 2:**

From "Australian Dreaming: 40,000 years of Aboriginal History". New Holland Publishers, 2005. Based on:

- page 230: The Spirit World;
- page 214: Meeka the Moon meets Kangaroo.

- **Dreamtime Story 3:**

Based on 'The Hero Who was Changed into a Mountain' from "Aboriginal Myths, Legends and Fables" by A. W. Reed. Publishers: Reed New Holland, 1999. Page 332.

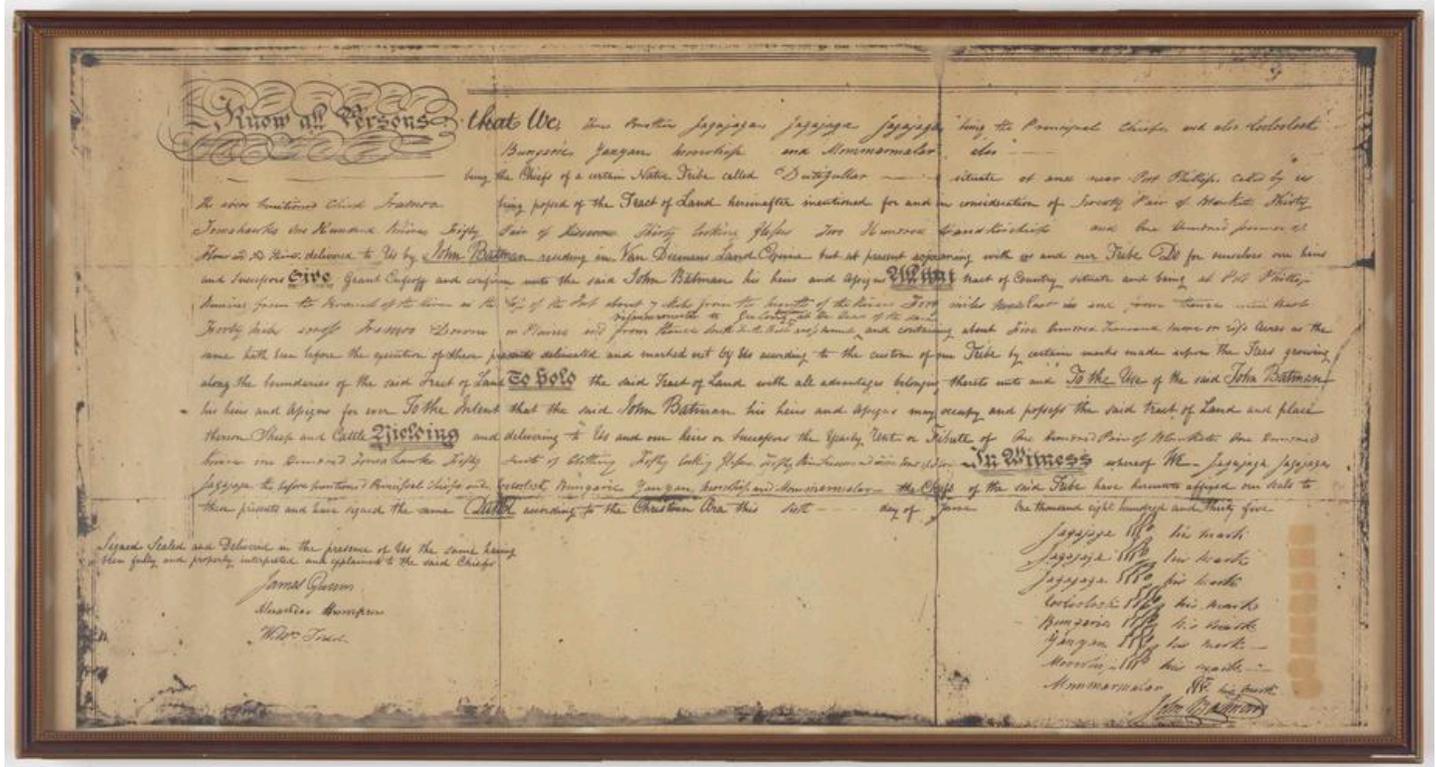
- **Dreamtime Story 4:**

Based on 'How Animals Came to Australia' from "Aboriginal Myths, Legends and Fables" by A. W. Reed. Publishers: Reed New Holland, 1999. Page 335.

- "Australia on Horseback" by Cameron Forbes. Published by Pan Macmillan Australia, 2014.
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- "A Statistical, Historical and Political Description of The Colony of New South Wales ..." by William Wentworth. Published by G. and W. B. Whittaker London 1819.
- 'Australians Together' by Graham Paulson: [australianstogether.org.au/discover/indigenous-culture](http://australianstogether.org.au/discover/indigenous-culture)
- 'Crossword Labs' was used to construct the crossword: [crosswordlabs.com](http://crosswordlabs.com)
- I would like to thank Lesley Foster and Judith Kershaw for their proof reading and suggestions.

# APPENDIX

## BATMAN'S DEED, 1835



“Print of the Batman Deed, dated 1835. The so-called signatures of the aboriginal elders being private marks of the tribe. This is a printed copy of the Batman Deed, made in 1966 from the ‘original’ once held by Dame Mabel Brookes and now held by the National Museum of Australia. The three ‘original’ copies, made in 1835, are in public collections: the British Museum, the National Museum of Australia, and the State Library of Victoria.”

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