

Resting Place Of An Explorer

Old and New,
By SEEBEE

Sturt's men when
drought-stricken
country ringed them.
With bullock carts
horses, and sheep the
party pushed on



When James Poole, Capt. Sturt's second in command, was buried beneath this tree 99 years ago, members of Sturt's exploration party carved his initials and the year on the trunk. The monument (right) was erected about 35 years ago.

THIS year marks the centenary of the departure of Captain Charles Sturt to explore the Far North; it is 99 years this month since his second in command, James Poole, died about 160 miles north of Broken Hill.

His grave is on Mount Poole Station, and above it is the tree on which members of Sturt's party cut "J. P. 1845." Sir Sidney Kidman acquired the station in 1908, and erected a headstone.

A more imposing memorial to the explorer who gave his life is the red hill, Mount Poole, 3½ miles to the north-north-west, on the crest of which is a cairn, the stones of which were piled by

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through country where the few waterholes were fast drying up. It returned to a sheet of water about 9 ft. deep in Depot Glen. Tents were pitched there on January 27, 1845, and not struck for six months.

From here Sturt traversed the country in every direction, running down every creek, seeking a way out.

With the temperature sometimes up to 130 deg., the pool became shallower and shallower. Birds and other wild life had gone. Scurvy made its dread appearance. Poole being the worst case. Earlier Sturt and his men had walked across to the red hill on many occasions, building the cairn on their visits, as an occupation.

It was decided to send seven of the party back to Adelaide as soon as rain fell.

On July 12 there were drenching showers, and two days later the men set off, with Poole lying in a dray specially lined with sheepskins. He died on July 16, and his body was taken back to the glen and buried under a beefwood tree.

The party set off again for Adelaide, while Sturt, with eight others, headed north into a country revived by the rain, knowing that there would be supplies in the waterholes. Far to the north-west, on October 13, 1845, Sturt and his men discovered Cooper Creek, 15 miles west of where Innamincka now stands.

Mr. H. J. Bird, manager of S. Kidman & Co., Adelaide, and president of the Flying Doctor Service, has visited Poole's grave. He says that near it are the later graves of the wife of a former station manager and two children. From the pool by which Sturt camped a windmill pumps water for the homestead.

Soon, on a cairn in the grounds of the Australian Inland Mission Hospital at Innamincka, will be erected bronze tablets commemorating Sturt's discovery of Cooper Creek, and the passing by on December 17, 1860, of Burke, Wills, Gray, and King on the tragic expedition which made the first south to north crossing of Australia.

Sturt returned to Adelaide and lived in a house just inland from the Grange, which bore that name, later adopted by the resort. The privations of his many explorations had taken their toll, and his sight failed. He was totally blind when he died in England in 1869, aged 64.

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