

OLD DUBBO CEMETERY

About 5 kilometres from Dubbo along the Old Dubbo Road is the town's original cemetery, containing the graves of some of the earliest settlers in the district. Many of the headstones have been removed or wrecked, while the markings on others cannot be deciphered, but one of the most historic headstones still remains, now horizontal through the efforts of vandals. It was erected to the memory of Robert Venour Dulhunty, who gave Dubbo its name, and who died at Old Dubbo Station on which the cemetery was then located, in 1853 at the age of fifty-one.

Dulhunty was the first white man to occupy land permanently in the immediate vicinity of Dubbo. He came to the area between 1829 and 1833, intending to graze stock on an itinerant basis. Following the Squatting Act of 1836, Dulhunty took out a squatting licence and established a 'run' which he named Dubbo (an Aboriginal word meaning either 'red earth' or 'feathered head-dress'). He married during the following year, but it was not until 1847 that he built a substantial homestead on the property and moved his family to the holding.

Dulhunty wanted the village to be established further upstream on his own property and strongly opposed the present site. Public opinion and the Government of the day were against him and he lost his battle.

After Dulhunty's death in 1853 his widow struggled to retain the family properties but they were heavily mortgaged and seasons were bad, so one by one they all slipped from the control of the family.

