

## The Attack on McIntyre

### 3<sup>rd</sup> March 1788 – John McIntyre

I was anxious when I was called to Governor Phillip's house, although I had not caused any trouble as a convict since arriving here. It came as a slight shock to me when I was appointed to be the Governor's gamekeeper along with two other convicts. We were armed, given multiple firearms, and sent out to hunt for any animal to add to the colony's declining supply of food.

### 21<sup>st</sup> June 1789 – Pemulwuy

The heat from the *guwiyang* cooked our *badalya*, and gave warmth to those around it. We sat together, eating and talking as usual, but I sensed something wrong. Three *didjurigura* had not returned to camp yet. As I took a bite from my *ngarrun*, I heard shouting from behind me. "Pemullaway! Help!" I turned around and saw the missing *didjurigura* coming towards me. One of them, carried by the other two, was covered in blood. "Pemullaway," one pleaded, "you are a *carradhy*. Heal his wounds." I saw the injured *mula* with a gunshot in his *barrang* and asked what happened. The two *didjurigura* quickly explained how they saw the white people trespassing and hunting a *birabayin*. They said they tried to intervene, but a white man fired his gun at them, and they had to escape. When they finished their story, I could feel anger through my bones. I became furious and determined to find this hunter who had trespassed into *Bidjigal* land and shot not only our totem animals, but my people too.

### 17<sup>th</sup> January 1790 – John McIntyre

It was another hot summer's day. Me and the other men made plans to go hunting in the late afternoon, usually the time when the kangaroos started coming out from the shelter of the trees. I trudged outside, the sun still shining harshly on my face, and joined the others walking out to the grasslands where a few dozen kangaroos were spread across feeding on the plants. We chose our target, a big one, and I loaded my musket while the other two fellas stood behind waiting to collect the carcass once I had shot. I carefully aimed my gun at the kangaroo's chest and counted down. BANG! The animal fell straight to the ground, dead. The others around it suddenly fleeing away. As the two men slowly walked out to bring back the body, I saw a pair of armed black natives scurrying towards our kill. We often had to compete against the Indigenous people for food, but I was not going to let them win, not today. I pointed my gun at one of them and shot him in the head, reloaded, and raised the gun again quickly shooting the other before he reached the kangaroo. I felt a jab of guilt after lowering my weapon, but I did what I had to do. It was not my first time killing an aboriginal, and I knew it wouldn't be my last.

### **26<sup>th</sup> November 1790 – Pemulwuy**

I finally decided to make my way into Sydney to visit *Bennelong* and *Colebee*. The town was much different to what I was used to. There were white fellas everywhere. Men with their fine shirts, waistcoats, *garrangal* and trousers. *Wayjin barrabin* wearing dresses, *madyi* and cloaks. They even wore shoes of leather, while I walked barefoot and dressed in only *buru* skin, *bugi* and *djirang*. I went to *Tubowgulle* and met *Bennelong* at his brick hut, where I would stay for two weeks. I did not consider *Bennelong* a *gamarada* of mine, and I knew he spoke of me as an enemy of his. But, like me, he too hated and feared the gamekeeper, McIntyre, and wanted his revenge. Putting aside our past conflicts, *Bennelong* and I became *ngalaya*, and we, along with *Colebee*, began the discussion of our plan.

### **10<sup>th</sup> December 1790 – Pemulwuy**

I could feel something within me, and I knew today was the day. For the past two weeks, *Bennelong*, *Colebee* and I had been collaborating and I was finally prepared to go ahead with our initiative. I gathered the other three *didjurigura* who would accompany me and we readied our weapons. While they took their *ngalangala* and *buumarang*, I finished sharpening the *yalga* of my *gamai* and carried it along with my *wumara*. As we went off, I felt a slight satisfaction in knowing we would finally get our payback. McIntyre would get what he deserved and we could live without worry of him trespassing into *Bidjigal* land and hurting more of our people. We walked on for a while, hidden by the *diramu* and bush, until we heard the quiet chatter of white men. I pushed in front to see their faces, and there, sitting on a log eating his *gwanggal*, was the man we were after.

### **10<sup>th</sup> December 1790 – John McIntyre**

After our short excursion for game, the hunting party and I stopped and took a rest in a hide near Cooks River. Not long had passed until we heard noises and the rustling of bushes nearby, causing some of the hunters to stand up. Then out from the scrub, we saw four aboriginal men crawling towards us. I recognized Pemulwuy amongst them and noticed his clean-shaven face and short hair, and believed he must have been in Sydney. "Don't be afraid," I told my other mates, "I know them." "*Budyari gumara.*" I greeted. I spoke to the natives in their language, and asked them to stop. I reached over to the loaf of bread the hunters and I were sharing, and tore some with my hands, offering it to them. As I placed my gun down onto the grass, I saw Pemulwuy stand up on a log and fix a spear into his woomera. I furrowed my eyebrows in confusion, until I suddenly felt a sharp pain in my chest, and noticed the natives running away. I slowly looked down and saw a long spear penetrating deep into my body. I was shocked. He threw it at me. I cried out in distress and fell to the ground.

### **10<sup>th</sup> December 1790 – John White**

McIntyre, the Governor's gamekeeper, staggered into the settlement late afternoon in complete agony. He had a death spear through him, and was immediately rushed to the hospital where I performed the tough surgery of removing the weapon. I extracted the jagged spearhead from deep within his body and found it to be measured at seven and a half inches long. On it was a wooden barb and smaller ones of stone, which, due to the force needed in the extraction, were torn off and remained lodged inside the man. It must have been a drastic attack; the spear had passed between McIntyre's two ribs and severely wounded his left lung. Never before had I seen such an injury or performed a surgery as horrid as this, and after the patient woke, I informed him of my sad anticipation that he would not have much longer left to live.

### **14<sup>th</sup> December 1790 – Pemulwuy**

After the attack not long ago, I heard news of the Governor. He was *gulah* at what I had done, and ordered a revenge party of 50 soldiers to kill six of my tribe's *didjurigura* and capture another two for execution. They wore big, red *garrangal* and boots, and carried with them *mugu* and bags to cut off heads and put them in. The white men must have been *gadalung* and exhausted wearing those clothes and I easily escaped them, fleeing to the south. I soon learnt that their expedition was a complete failure, the second one a disgrace, and so Phillip had stopped sending any more. But, little did he know that I was not done. I was not finished dealing with the British yet; this was just the beginning.

### **20<sup>th</sup> January 1791 – John McIntyre**

I knew why I was speared. I would have liked to have heard the reason from Pemulwuy himself, but I did not need to. I already knew the moment it happened, and in all honesty, I had been expecting their revenge sooner or later. In fact, an officer had come to question me about it just a few days ago. After a solemn inquiry, I admitted never firing but once at a native, and even then only wounding him. I did not reveal anymore. How could I? The horrendous offences I had committed in the past were not at all something I was proud of. However, I could not keep all my secrets to myself. I remembered the surgeon telling me I would not make it past New Year's, and although I managed to linger on for a little longer than expected, I was beginning to expire. I called for a priest as I laid on my deathbed, and confessed my dreadful sins. The terrible exclamations and crimes I had perpetrated that stuttered out my throat filled me with disgust. I was completely horrified at everything I had done, and begged ever so desperately for God's mercy as I faded away.

Pemulwuy was an Aboriginal Australian of Eora descent. He was part of the Bidjigal clan and spoke the Dharug and Dharwal language.

**Dharug and Dharwal to English dictionary:**

guwiyang – fire

badayla – food

didjurigura – men

ngarrun – fat of meat

carradhy – a clever man, sorcerer, doctor

mula – man

barrang – belly

birabayin – emu

garrangal – jacket

wayjin barrabin – white woman

madyi – petticoat

buru – kangaroo

bugi – bark

djirang – leaves

gamarada – friend, comrade

ngalaya – ally

ngalangala – club with a mushroom-shaped head

buumarang – boomerang for fighting

yalga – barb of a spear

gamai – spear (general name)

wumara – spear throwing stick

diramu – tree

gwanggal – bread

budyari gumara – good afternoon

gulah – angry

mugu – stone hatchet

gadalung – hot