



Voices Frontier Wars

Queensland History Week
22 - 26 May 2023

The Queensland History
Teachers' Association
presents



Queensland History Week

22 – 26 MAY 2023

QHTA

On this page are images from an artwork by Vincent Serico.

See: what can you see in these images?

Think: What do think the relationship between the three images might be?

Wonder: What questions do you have about these people and images?

Above and Right

Image: 'Myall Creek Massacre (2003) by Vincent Serico (1949 – 2008)

Reference

<https://socialjustice.catholic.org.au/event/1838-myall-creek-massacre-nsw-2022-06-10/>



Voices - The Myall Creek Massacre

The Myall Creek Massacre occurred in New South Wales in the 1830's. It is sadly just one example of the widespread culture of frontier violence against First Nations Peoples at this time. Despite there being strong laws outlawing violence against these traditional owners, the murder of Aboriginal people regularly occurred as part of the quest for territory by pastoralists. The practice was described as 'a war of extermination' even by those in authority such as Muswellbrook police magistrate Edward Denny Day.

Near Myall Creek, some First Nations men were accused of killing some Stockmen as part of this conflict. In response an expedition left from Sydney, led by Major James Nunn, the Commandant of the New South Wales Mounted Police. When they arrived in the region they massacred up to 50 Wirrayaraay people who were camped at Waterloo Creek. The bodies were burned. Nearby stockmen and settlers were also encouraged by the expedition to kill any Aboriginal people they encountered.

A station manager named William Hobbs, local police superintendent Thomas Foster, and settler Frederick Foot broke the silence around what had happened at Myall Creek. Eight men were tried and found guilty of murder in the Australian Supreme Court. They were hanged on December 18, 1838. For many there was more outrage around the execution of British citizens than there was for the massacre of the Wirrayaraay people. Future perpetrators of violence against Aboriginal people learned from this and took steps to cover their tracks in future acts of violence to avoid prosecution.

Thinking Activity

Colours, shapes and lines

Looking at the full image below:

What colours do you see?

What shapes do you see?

What lines do you see?

What new ideas do you have about the artwork?

What do you now see that you didn't see before?

Extra for experts

Watch the clip

at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P_eh1nFPi3s

Discussion: Why is it important that events such as these are commemorated in current times?

