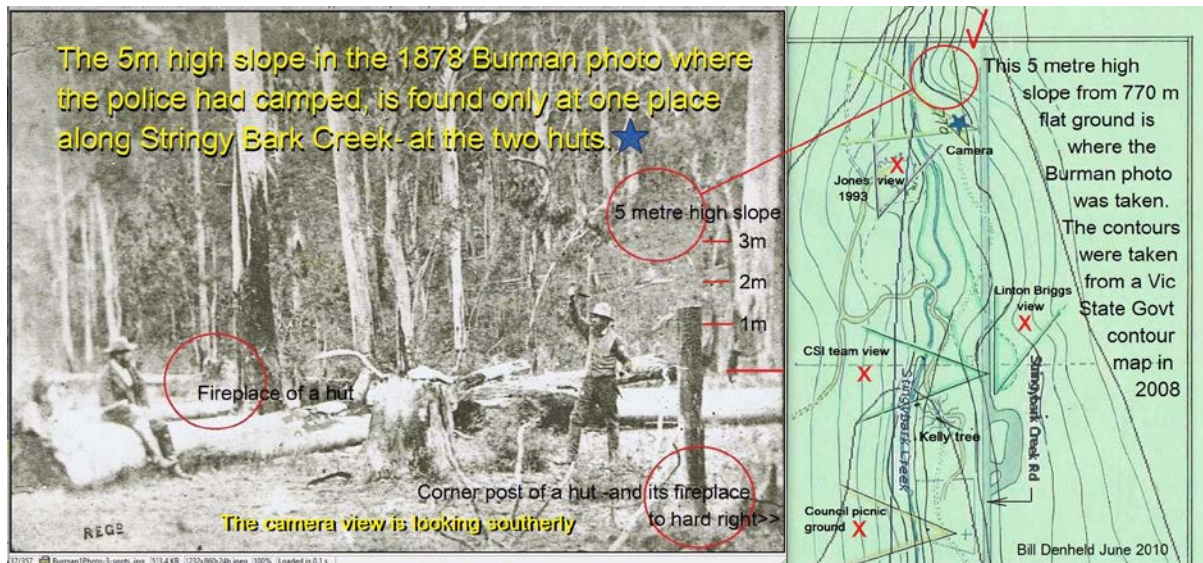


Supplement to FaceBook pages '[Ned Kelly –Best Bloody Man](#). Q & A, 6th August 2023

A few weeks ago I posted this image on BBM, and since then I've had trouble accessing certain replies, so will address some opposing comments here because I think it is important to let the readers know that I am not ignoring certain questions.



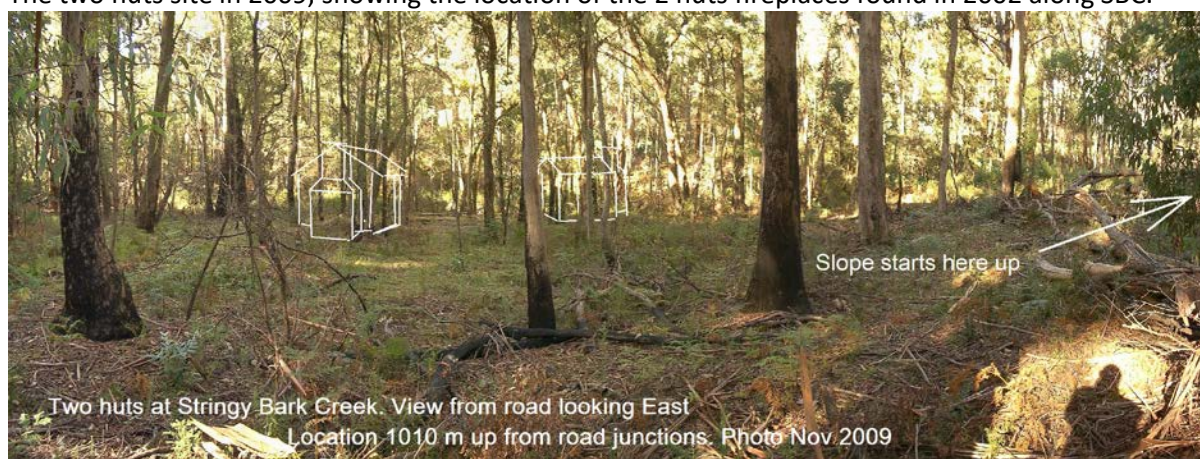
This above image speaks for itself; note there is a strong upward slope in the Burman photo behind the standing man, as supported by the contour map of the area circled in red. For those unfamiliar with contours, the closer the lines-the steeper, the further the lines are apart the flatter the ground. This subject attracted lots of comments numbering close to 170 by the time you may be reading this. There is a problem with FB pages where some comments can be deliberately hidden for some time and then re-appear later, and for days on end I could not find the comments that needed my reply. As I had made copies of their comments at that time, and to reply at this late stage is a lost cause as very few readers would know where the original questions and answers were posted. For this reason I will quote the questions addressed to me, and give my explanatory reply. -

My concern started by '**Adrian Younger**', the leader of 'The Kennedy Tree Report group' who had posted a picture of the Burman photo super imposed over a 2020 bush picture taken along Stringy Bark Creek road. (I can't even retrieve those images because my particular topic page seems blocked to access) The KTR group claims they have identified the same trees that are in a 145 year old Burman photo taken where 'The Troopers were shot'. Adrian and his KTR associate Jim Fogarty then claim that at the 'Two Huts site' (circled in red) are 2 current trees that can be dated to be over two hundred years old. In other words, if the 'Two Huts site' (with the slope) does not have the same trees as in the Burman photo, then this cannot be the site where the police were shot by the Kellys. In one reply by me, I told them I had walked up that very slope in 2003.

Jim Fogarty posted- *"Bill Denheld, -- -- - I can confirm you didn't walk up the correct slope. There's several big old trees in your photo which should show in the Burman photos but they don't. How can you explain that? "*

Reply to Adrian and Jim: It is well known that saw millers took every tree of value including the one where Const Scanlan was shot dead, but it was not on the first land owner James McCrum's land. If Adrian and Jim think the trees in this picture (below) are now over 200 years old is a ridiculous claim as they are now different trees. Below picture, they are later re-growth, and according to their own report, the average yearly tree growth in the SBC area was 4.3mm per year. So if we multiply 4.3 times 200 years = 860mm radius, this would make that tree 1.72 metres in diameter, while today at the two huts site, the largest tree might be 800mm in diameter which means a radius 400mm divided by 0.43, makes that tree about 93 to 100 years old. This brings the ages for those existing trees to have started growing in around the 1930's when the saw mill was working from Kellys Creek which was only a mile away to the North West.

The two huts site in 2009, showing the location of the 2 huts fireplaces found in 2002 along SBC.



Adrian Younger- to Bill Denheld-

“McIntyre described the site in which they camped as being partly cleared by natural and man made. If the site was like that as partly natural then growth didn’t happen due to some reason possibly rocky or sodden wet ground. Your site is very thick with scrub and no natural clearing.” Any answers for that.”

My answer; for a start this area pictured was very bushy in 2002. In 2006 a bush fire went through and 3 years later it looked like this picture above. Today, you cannot walk into or through this area because the authorities have deliberately left it to overgrow despite the fact this is the actual sacred ground where Const Lonigan and near where Const Scanlan were shot. They want to hide the fireplaces to steer any visitors away –and up the garden path where nothing ever happened.

Adrian Younger- to Bill Denheld:

“Our police camp site has that very clearing towards the creek within the 70 so yards just as McIntyre described it. Our site all fits with the McCudden and fallen stump photos and Jack Healys directions. Police records also show that the land where the murders accured was divided up for selection and your site is way to far to the south of the selection. Any answer for that.”

My Answer: Near the Kelly tree, if you measure 70 yards from the creek you end up on the west side of SBC road, and you cannot take a photo similar to the Burman photos anywhere along SBC except at the two huts site. At the time of the first land surveys in 1884, there were no roads. The surveyor for the area would have been informed of the police killings somewhere along SBC, but people did not apply for this land until 6 or 7 years after the shoot out, and in the mean time there was also gold mining going back to late 1860s in this area as reported in Sheila Hutchinson’s book- History on my Doorstep. If you look carefully anywhere along SBC, there is only one main area where the major gold diggings are, and they are right near the two huts area to the east. The two huts had been re occupied by a small mining party, and by the time of the police killings, whatever was left of the two huts, the Kellys must have set fire to them as also the police tent. The Burman photo does not show a standing hut, only the remains. In the intervening years a miner may have rebuilt one of the huts as described in Sheila’s book- when a jogger came across a lone miner camped at the very place the police were killed. No doubt other miners further down the creek had also built humpy shelters or tent frames, and when the surveyor plotted the course of the creeks for the first time, he came across some hut sites and assumed one to be where the police had camped, but at those sites, there are no fireplaces nor any indication on the ground. The only thing that could pinpoint a hut site was calculated to be the 804 m from the junction of Ryans and SBCreek. Metal detectors will react to charcoal in the ground and I can assure the reader nothing of any note was found to suggest any hut had ever stood there, like the metal objects and stuff found at the fireplaces of the two huts, this site is around the 1010 metres from the creeks junction.

The following picture shows where the CSI @ SBC team reckons the site is.

Picture of panorama view



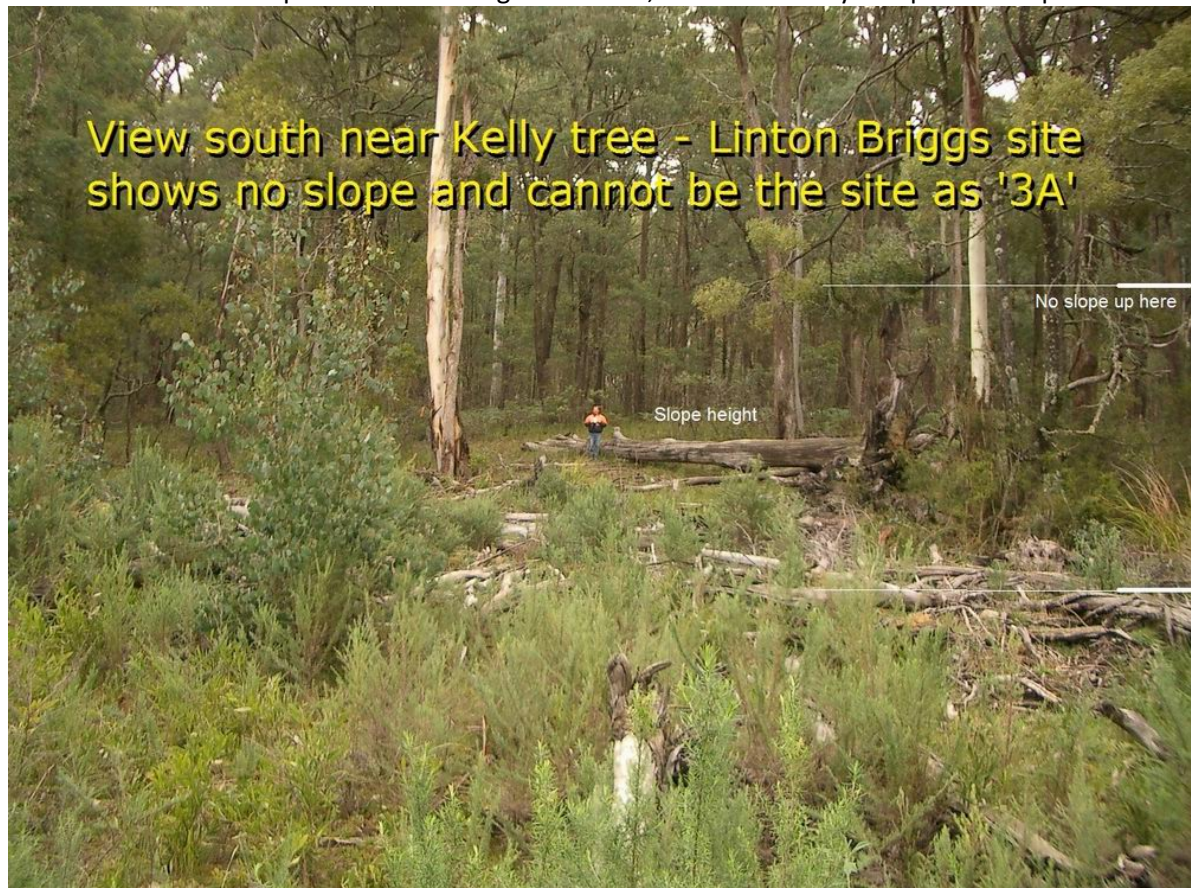
Standing on the road, Glenn, Kelvyn and Linton - the CSI team are considering if the creek being 70 yards away, where would the slope be in the background of the Burman photo, perhaps it on the other side of the creek, but any suitable slope is 120 yards away where as it should only be 40 yards from where the photo was taken.

They think this has to be the site which correlates with the 804 m Hut marked on the map.

Several commentators on Best Bloody Man are proponents of the CSI @ SBC team, their theory that supports the Kelly tree site that Jack Healy had rejected in the 1920 and 30s.

To further explain the CSI @SBC case, during a mutual site visit I had made the CSI team aware that their view of the Burman photo looking south westerly could not be the site. At that time 2009, I pointed this out to Linton Briggs, Glenn standing and Kelvin Gill, and at that time I was also member of the team. I had instigated the team to solve- once and for all the police campsite conundrum. Glenn and Kelvin had followed Linton's location, but I pointed out that there was no suitable slope there, so surprisingly, overnight they decided to turn their whole scenario around by 180 degrees thinking their general location was still viable by using the current Kelly tree location.

Here is the CSI Burman photo view looking south west, but without any comparable slope-



On their turn around, the CSI team also seized the opportunity to align their site with the photo of Mr. Cuddon standing in front of the 2nd Kelly tree (1930s) which all the locals knew was not the true site even though it was marked on the earliest of maps.



Image below, my tripod with camera on road where the team thinks the 1938 Mr Cuddon photo was taken, but also believe this was where F. C. Burman took his photos of the police camp in 1878



If local farmer Jack Healy knew exactly where the true site was, he decided to tell the world and be interviewed by journalists of the Women's Day magazine in 1964, this was one year after taking Ian Jones to the site, but Jones rejected it. In Jack's report he said, "I'll show you the spot," - tourists who come here would never find this place- *"Its hard to find", - and a misleading signpost leads them to the Kelly tree'*,

If Jack said *"its hard to find"*, then it would not be near the current Kelly tree, because that would be very easy to find. (Do we agree on that?)

Jack Healy said he remembered seeing the stump of the first Kelly tree which was cut down in 1908. This tree was where Scanlan was shot. The Sketcher has an image of finding Scanlan's body (central left image) with an observer on horse looking down, this scene is exactly near the two huts on the bridle track which still exists in places today.

In the book *The Inner History of the Kelly Gang* by J.J.Kennealy, on page 56 shows a white gum stump attributed to near where Sergeant Kennedy was first shot, but not from behind that stump, and this might be a false conclusion made by JJK 50 years after the event.

Adrian comments on BBM and thinks the two huts site are too close to the creek and asks me the following question,-

Adrian Younger- to Bill Denheld

"Would they have camped in a gully so close to the creek (at the two huts) or on flatter open ground where it was cleared. Remember too close to the creek with running water is noisy and you cannot hear enemy approaching."

Answer; The two huts were built by the first lease holders of Fern Hills Run- Messrs Heaps and Grice. The creek is a tiny little spring only 50 m up the creek from the 2 huts, this ensured them clean drinking water as the horses and sheep would drink a little further down the creek. The hut were placed on a natural level rise besides the creek and in front north was 'particularly boggy ground' and a steeply sloped ravine to the south, which offered protection from both ends. A perfect secluded spot for any camper.

Adrian Younger- to Bill Denheld

*Here's a question for you, why did different groups start looking for where it really happened. Did they think no one ever knew. **No one really asked did they.***

Answer reply; Very few people would have seen the Burman photos at that time, and if they did it was only as a post card one of a set in 1879.

It is likely that some locals like Jack Healy had seen the No1 titled 'Wombat Ranges Where the troopers were shot. The Burman photographers had assembled a set of 12 photos related to the Kelly gang.

They would not have made many sets because to date there is only one complete set in existence. Even the original glass plate photos taken at the police camp in Nov 1878 were never printed and made available to the public except that the artist for the 'Australian Sketcher' had published the SBC scene as a lithographic pen drawing, which by the way does show the ruins of a hut fireplace behind a large tree, he shows the logs and spear grass behind which the gang waiting for the return of police Sgnt Kennedy and Cons Scanlan, the slope somewhat covered with spear grasses, all features as in Burman photo postcard No1. By all accounts the artist copied the photo.

In May 2010 a man named Terry Scott contacted me saying that in 2000 he and his brother were out metal detecting at SBC when they detected a large caliber bullet. The bullet description caught my attention and Terry said he would show me where he had found it. Before anything else I let him show me the spot, and only then I would show him the two huts site. As it turned out, the bullet was



The Mr. Cuddon photo clearly shows no slope in the background comparable to the Burman photo, it is just an eroded creek bank with gentle undulating land into the distance. Some people will say the eroded creek bank is the slope in the Burman photo, but even the sun 'light and shadows' is from the left side indicating an easterly view, whereas, in the Burman photo the light comes from behind the photographers right shoulder.

Behind Mr Cuddon can be seen the remains of a large burnt tree trunk lying on the creek bank, and to the left is a forked tree. This tree was left standing because forked trees are more difficult to chop down with less valuable timber. I concluded this was the current Kelly tree because this Cuddon photo was taken where the signage tree was at the 804 m mark along SBC road.

Adrian suggests this is not the current Kelly tree because it looks to narrow at the base. I agree with him because other close-up photos of the Kelly tree taken during the 1950-60s look much larger.

In the background are several chopped tree logs lying horizontal with numerous saplings having sprung up since the original land owner James McCrum and Charlie Beasley would have tried to clear their allotted land.

BTW: The original Engelke photo set was given to me by Harry Engelke's son Charlie, who grew up in the area during the 1940s. The family photos were of high interest to us and were digitally scanned for our research with Sheila Hutchinson, who during her teen years also grew up around SBC, and would have known the Engelke family living about a mile to the west near Kellys Creek. They also later had a dairy farm at the top end of SBC road. The Engelke family photo scans were later presented to the Mansfield Historical Society of which Sheila and were members.

Picture of Harry Engelke at a Kelly tree stump and his dog. (Can you see the dog?)

This photo left is looking westerly towards a fence. At that time the Engelke family was living at Kellys Creek as Harry was the resident manager of the saw mill. According to Harry's son Charlie, the tree stump was pulled out of the ground to make way for a tramway during the 1930s, to bring logs into the Kellys Creek saw mill. As far as I know there were no tramlines running along SBC that required a Kelly tree stump to be removed.



1930s Harry Engelke at Kelly tree stump probably at Kellys Creek near where he lived. The stump is a long way from the fence estimated to be about 20-30 yards.



Mr Cuddon at the 2nd Kelly tree at Stringy Bark Ck circa 1938. This K tree was only few yards from SBC road boundary fence.

Photo 02- Kelly stump Harry Engelke-and Mr.Cuddon who was a fertilizer salesman who came by to sell his wares and was interested in the Kelly tree and had his photo taken. The sign saying something like 'Lonigan killed by Kelly 1878', but almost unreadable except for date.

There seems to be some date discrepancies as Sheila Hutchinson dated the Cuddon photo was taken around 1938, while the current Kelly tree was supposedly blazed by her father around 1934 well before the Cuddon tree had fallen over due to rot and white ants, the reason the nearest other tree was blazed by Tim Brond.

Currently on FaceBook NK- the Best Bloody Man, there are Kelly students who want to make use of these pictures to support their dubious claims, but I know what I know and can only relay to the readers here my views based on rational logistics. However, regarding this Kelly tree stump photo with Harry Engelke, this would not have been on McCrums land at SBC, nor was it at or near the two huts site. In the 1930's locals like Jack Healy and Billy Stewart would have known of the sign-posted tree linking to the police shootings. Personal letters from Charlie Engelke say that both Charlie and Sheila and their families knew nothing of the two huts fireplaces that I came across in 2002. These fireplaces were outside the Beasley's southern boundary fence line and not on his land.

Its always important to record and acknowledge local and oral history of an area. Children growing up during those times like Sheila and Charlie, would not at that time been all that interested in every historical detail, except they heard this and that, and because these families came into this area about 60 years after the SBC shooting event, they would only have learnt by hearsay. Even James McCrum in 1884/5 would have become confused by having the police killings at two different sites on his land * but marked differently on his parish allotment maps. This false marking would of course create interest amongst the locals wanting to know where the gruesome event took place, a place that nobody would be proud to have on their land holdings.

* As these two site locations differed by 162 meters (530 feet) they contradicted each other, it is either one or the other, and the difference would not help pinpoint the true site, and by careful scientific analysis, all the evidence says neither of the McCrum sites are correct.

As a note; The 162 m difference was gleaned from the detailed second survey map of McCrum's land- with surveyor notes of links, a calculation of 'chain links', to decimal metres.

(One link = 7.92 inches, and 100 links = 22 yards)

It's interesting to note that the Beasley family who took over McCrum's land about 60 years after the event, would easily get tired of the string of visitors along SBC road wanting to know exactly

where the Killings took place. Maybe they knew it was way up the creek, and could not be bothered showing people exactly where the site was. In order to stop the continual interruptions to their life on the farm, they decided to mark the nearest tree to the road according to the original 1884 map with description 'Police murdered by the Kellys' and not by the 1885 McCrum allotment map which would have brought the visitor closer to the Beasley house.

Then, not more than a few years later the sign posted tree with Mr.Cuddon fell over due to rot and white ants, and Sheila's father Mr.Tim Brond and Charlie Beasley decided to mark the nearest other tree which was a forked gum, and Tim axed the bark out and on the hard wood wrote the names of the three police, and 1933/4 it became known as the Police tree.

During the 1951, Alex Trahair and Keith Lovick cut the overgrown bark off the inscription referring to the police killings by the Kelly gang and wrote in the words " 1878 Kelly shot Lonigan".

During the 1970s the blaze was again heavily over grown and a local sculptor inserted a mini Kelly helmet and breast armour into the tree blaze – thus turning the police tree into the 3rd Kelly tree.
Bill Denheld 3/08/2023

For further information about the correct locations, orientation of the police camp where the troopers were shot, please access the following links
introduction pages-

<https://ironicon.com.au/sbc-image-pages-points-1-to-14.pdf>

Then the full document-

https://ironicon.com.au/stringybark_ck_the_authentic_location.pdf

Then read the 'Kennedy Tree report Group 'KTG'

<https://ironicon.com.au/de-fencing-the-ktg-report.htm>

This site highlights some bizarre observations where members of the group see things that are not there, and rejects things that are. No, their findings are not a joke, but rational logic by the reader of this ongoing debacle will one day realise that this miss-understanding of a photos orientation cost Ned Kelly his life by hanging. This story is expanded upon in my pending book - 'Ned Kelly - Australian Iron-icon –A Certain Truth'

For all contemporary research, visit <https://www.ironicon.com.au>
'Ned Kelly- from Iron-outlaw to Iron-icon'