

PART 2: THEMATIC HISTORY



THEMATIC HISTORY - FORMER CITY OF BOTANY BAY

This Part is arranged according to the Historic Themes that have been identified by the NSW Heritage Council in their publication *Assessing Historical Importance: a Guide to State Heritage Register Criterion A*. (2006). These state-level themes sit under the wider framework of national-level themes that have been identified by the Australian Heritage Council.

The Themes relevant to the former Botany Bay LGA are:

1. National theme: tracing the natural evolution of Australia
 - 1.1 State theme: Environment - naturally evolved
2. National theme: Peopling Australia
 - 2.1 Aboriginal cultures and interactions with other cultures
 - 2.2 Convict
3. National theme: developing local, regional and national economies
 - 3.1 Agriculture
 - 3.2 Commerce
 - 3.3 Communication
 - 3.4 Environment – cultural landscape
 - 3.5 Events
 - 3.6 Exploration
 - 3.7 Fishing
 - 3.8 Health
 - 3.9 Industry
 - 3.10 Mining
 - 3.11 Transport
- 4.0 National theme: Building settlements, towns and cities.
 - 4.1 Towns, suburbs and villages.
 - 4.2 Land Tenure
 - 4.3 Utilities
 - 4.4 Accommodation
- 5.0 National theme: Working
 - 5.1 Labour
- 6.0 National theme: Educating
 - 6.1 Education
- 7.0 National theme: Governing
 - 7.1 Defence
 - 7.2 Government and administration
 - 7.3 Law and order
 - 7.4 Welfare
- 8.0 National theme: Developing Australia's cultural life
 - 8.1 Creative endeavor
 - 8.2 Leisure

8.3 Religion

8.4 Sport

9.0 National theme: Marking the phases of life

9.1 Birth and death

1

TRACING THE EVOLUTION OF THE AUSTRALIAN ENVIRONMENT



Significant features occurring naturally in the physical environment & features that have shaped human life and cultures

THEME 1.0 ENVIRONMENT: NATURALLY EVOLVED

The relevant National theme is *tracing the natural evolution of Australia*. The relevant state theme is *'environment - naturally evolved'*. The Local themes within the state theme are:

- (1) Features occurring naturally in the physical environment which have significance that is independent of human intervention; and
- (2) Features occurring naturally in the physical environment which have shaped or influenced human life and cultures.

The following activities and places in the former Botany Bay LGA are relevant to this theme:

- The Bay
- The catchment of Botany Bay
- The Botany aquifer and wetlands
- Tides
- The evolving shoreline

1.0.1 THE BAY

The shape and geology of Botany Bay and its catchment, as we know it today, is the result of thousands of years of environmental change. The Bay formed around 10,000 – 6,000 years ago. Its physical environment is not stable; it continues to evolve naturally in response to changes in climate, topography and currents. Some changes are abrupt, while others are slow.

Around 40 million years ago, “Sydney’s” landscape was very different. Its coastline was further offshore than present as the climate was cooler and much of the earth’s water was locked up in glaciers. Tectonic movements, resulting from when the continental plates separated to form the Tasman Sea, slowly uplifted the earth around the Cumberland basin’s outer edges and formed the Blue Mountains. As these new mountains formed, coastal rivers found routes to the ocean, rapidly depositing sediments onto the coastal plains.

Early in the Quaternary period (1.8 million years ago), sea levels were still low and Botany Bay had not yet been formed. The Bay area was drained through two separate catchments, one draining to a depression running between the area today occupied by Sydney Airport, and the other near Inscription Point at Kurnell. The ancient Botany river drained the northern catchment through the present Bay entrance, while a network of creeks and rivers including the present day Georges and Cooks Rivers drained the



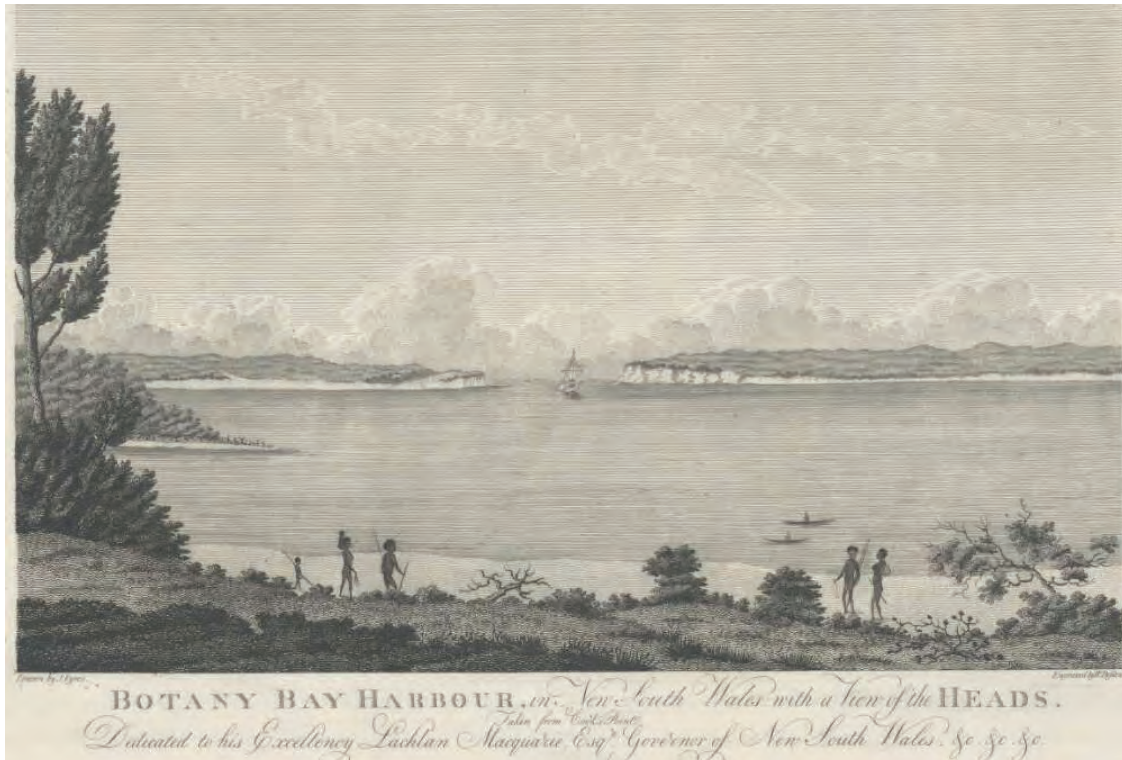
southern catchment through the area today occupied by Bate Bay.

When the last ice age ended, over the Quaternary period, the climate was alternately cold and warm, and sea levels rose and fell a number of times. Rising sea levels gradually deposited sand from offshore reserves on top of the deep open bay indentation forming the large sandy basin which underlies Botany Bay today. Offshore winds built up the large sand dunes on the Botany and Kurnell arms of the bay. Kurnell Peninsula, located along the eastern edge of the Bay, formed when northward ocean currents deposited sufficient sand to block off the mouth of the complex of rivers on the southern side. This river system then flooded the dividing ridge and entered the ocean via the present entrance channel during a period when sea levels were 35 metres below what they are today.

1.0.2 THE BOTANY BAY CATCHMENT

The Bay today can be viewed as a shallow bowl that gradually slopes down to the north with an average depth of only 5 metres. Its deepest point, which was 18 metres below the current sea level, was found in the entrance channel. Dredging here has increased this depth to 21 metres. Excluding the rocky entrance headlands, the floor of the bay remains mostly sandy in nature.

Fig 1.0.1 Sketch of the Sydney region showing the main geomorphic features. the undersea continental shelf reaches some 50km out from the present coastline. "The Colony: A History of Early Sydney" by Grace Karskens, p.20



The Cooks River rises in the low hills near Rookwood Cemetery at Lidcombe and flows through undulating shale landforms to the Bay. It once formed a swampy floodplain near its mouth on the Botany Sands, which lie on the eastern edge of its catchment. The main tributary to the river, Alexandra Canal (Sheas Creek), is permanent and drains the sandy reaches to the north of the river. The Cooks River itself is a truly intermittent river as most of its water comes from tidal influxes.

1.0.3 THE BOTANY AQUIFER AND WETLANDS

The Botany Aquifer and the Botany-Lachlan Wetlands are intricately connected. The Botany Aquifer is essentially comprised of layers of wind-blown sand that has accumulated over a weathered and eroded surface. It acts as a giant sponge which is comprised of 98% sand together with organic peat, silt, clay and shell fragments. The porous sand is able to absorb vast quantities of rainwater whilst the other elements filter out impurities as the water moves slowly down through the layers of the aquifer. The vertical percolation of water through an aquifer also minimises the potential for water loss due to evaporation.

It is these qualities that make the Botany Aquifer capable of holding

Fig. 1.0.2 “Botany Bay harbour in New South Wales, with a view of the heads, taken from Cook’s Point”, 1812, engraving by Walter Preston
Available online at: <http://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-135295806>

an underground reserve of approximately 170,000 megalitres of groundwater storage (or 170,000,000,000 litres). It is the most drawn-upon groundwater reserve in the Sydney region.

When an aquifer's water table fills to the ground surface, and when the ground forms a natural depression, a freshwater wetland is formed. As the Botany Aquifer has continued to be highly active, the wetlands have also remained and have become a part of the Botany landscape in their own right. In this still water, the Botany-Lachlan Wetlands and Aquifer continue to filter sediments and remove trace minerals from the water such as phosphorous, bacteria and pathogens and 'recharge' the reserve with fresh water. The Botany-Lachlan Wetlands themselves are connected through sub-surface draining which flows from Centennial Park down to Mill Stream, which is connected to Botany Bay.



Fig 1.0.3 The Botany aquifer filters the water from much of eastern Sydney, extending from Oxford Street near the CBD to Botany. Within this system there are several sub-swamps as shown here.

The wetlands and aquifer do not correlate with one another completely. Rainfall on exposed areas of Botany Sands is absorbed and any overflow travels to the Bay via either surface runoff, groundwater flow, or a combination of both.

Being linked to groundwater flow as well as the aquifer, the Wetlands are quite permanent, although because they occur when water accumulates in depressions, their water levels can increase with rainfall. In heavy rainfall the absorbent Wetlands act as detention basins which can slow the flow of floodwater from the upper catchment into the lower catchment. The permanency of the Botany-Lachlan Wetlands was a key factor in them being turned into a series of dams and ponds and used as Sydney's water supply from 1826 to 1886.

The plants of the Botany Sands were the first to be described by the early settlers. The great diversity of wild flowers from the varied heath, scrub and low forest was valued:

"We know of most of the wildflower regions of the colony, but none to compare in variety and richness with Botany, as it was."

Banksias, Wattles, Tea Trees and Grass Trees formed heath and scrublands which fringed the Botany-Lachlan Wetlands. The scrub, known as the Eastern Suburbs Banksia Scrub, covered the suburbs of Rosebery and Botany and was not found elsewhere in Sydney. The wetlands and Aquifer also continue to support an active ecological system, with small scrub and heath remnants surviving and being rehabilitated at Eastlakes Golf Course and Banksmeadow Public School.

The wetlands have become important refuges for many local species of flora such as the Eastern Suburbs Banksia Scrub which includes Wallum Banksia, Broom Heath, Pink Wax Flower, Wedding Bush and the distinctive Grasstree.

Native birds such as Rosellas, Swallows, Honeyeaters and Cockatoos have all flocked to the wetlands over the years. Migratory birds such as the Little Tern (endangered) and the Spine-Tailed Swift have also found refuge in the Botany wetlands. Australia has signed migratory bird treaties with both Japan and China and therefore has a responsibility to conserve the refuge for such species. Swans,

Cormorants, Spoonbills, Pelicans and Swampheens have all been seen at the wetlands over the years also.

1.0.4 TIDES

Tides play an important role in flushing water from Botany Bay. Freshwater inflows from the rivers and wetlands have very little effect on the Bay's salinity, except after heavy rainfall, meaning Botany Bay's waters are the same salinity as the neighbouring ocean. These marine waters usually mix with freshwater in the lower reaches of the Georges River. Much of the water that leaves the Bay at low tide is quickly displaced by strong offshore currents and does not re-enter the Bay with the high tide. This means that the Bay's waters are regularly changed and polluted water is not caught between the tides - a distinct advantage for the numerous noxious trades that set up in the area in the 19th and 20th centuries.

1.0.5 THE EVOLVING SHORELINE

The shoreline of Botany Bay is a reflection of wave activity, river flows and tidal currents. These factors are influenced by climate, land use and engineering works. Shorelines are not stable landforms and can either erode or build up in response to natural and human interactions with the above influences.

In the Bay, wave activity moves the greatest amount of sediment and strongly influences shoreline formation. Storm waves can reach heights of 2 metres and occur quite frequently, lifting sediments and eroding the northern and western beaches of the Bay. In this area, storm activity, followed by calm conditions that gradually deposit sand on beaches, has created the sandy beaches and their backing sand dunes that Botany Bay is famous for. Sand dunes are a natural buffer to hold the activity of expected storms and protect coastal lands.

Today, the balance between shoreline development and natural climate have been affected by human development in the Bay. Shorelines have been built upon and large areas of the bay adjacent to the Botany Bay area have been reclaimed and drained for airport runways and the large container terminal.

2

PEOPLING AUSTRALIA



NATIVES OPPOSING CAPTAIN COOK'S LANDING.

Recognising the pre-colonial occupations of Indigenous people, as well as the ongoing history of human occupation from diverse areas

*Previous page: 'Natives Opposing Captain Cook's Landing'. 1888. By William Macleod.
Available online at: <http://trove.nla.gov.au/work/190029789>*

THEME 2.1 ABORIGINAL CULTURES AND INTERACTIONS WITH OTHER CULTURES

The relevant national-level theme is 'Peopling Australia'. The relevant state theme is '*Aboriginal cultures and interactions with other cultures*'. The Local themes within the state theme are activities associated with maintaining, developing, experiencing and remembering Aboriginal cultural identities and practices, past and present; demonstrating distinctive ways of life; and interactions demonstrating race relations. This theme is relevant to the whole of the former Botany Bay LGA. It includes:

- An introduction to traditional and contemporary Aboriginal culture in Botany Bay
- First contact and invasion
- Encounters at Botany Bay - The First Fleet and La Perouse
- Early Encounters, Resistance and Disease – 1788 to 1815
- Dislocation and Reorganisation – 1815 to 1850s
- Mahroot
- Refuge at La Perouse – 1850s to mid 1890s
- Late 19th Century and into the Aborigines Protection Board Era – mid 1890s to post World War II
- Sites of importance to the Aboriginal community in the former City of Botany Bay

Author's Note

In 2011 Bayside Council, formerly known as the City of Botany Bay Council (CBBC), commissioned an Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Study to be carried out for the former CBBC Local Government Area. Alan Ginns and Pamela Fletcher of Gondwana Consulting Pty Ltd, together with Dr Iain Stuart, JCIS Consultants, undertook extensive research for the project and in so doing produced a comprehensive and well-written history of the Aboriginal peoples of the Botany Bay and La Perouse area. The following section has been extracted from the Gondwana Consulting report, which is held by Bayside Council, entitled Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Study and Plan for the City of Botany Bay (2011). The author encourages any reader who wishes to learn more about the Aboriginal history of Botany Bay to read Gondwana Consulting Pty Ltd's thorough report, which can be downloaded from Council's website (at the time of writing) at: <http://www.botanybay.nsw.gov.au/files/sharedassets/public/documents/planning-and-development/heritage/aboriginal-cultural-heritage-study-and-plan-16-june-2011.pdf>.

2.1.1 ABORIGINAL CULTURES IN BOTANY BAY: AN INTRODUCTION

The historian Maria Nugent, who has worked closely with the Aboriginal residents of the northern side of Botany Bay, has described Botany Bay as a place “where histories meet”. Close to Aboriginal Australia’s first places of contact with Europeans on the nation’s east coast, it is a place holding stories of dispossession, resistance, marginalisation, survival and resurgence set in an area that has also been impacted by migration, urbanisation, industrialisation and the associated ecological and environmental costs of these changes.

While the Aboriginal cultural heritage of surrounding areas has been documented, the documented story of Aboriginal people in the Botany area – their history, culture heritage and continued presence within the area of the former City of Botany Bay LGA, is limited when compared to that of the La Perouse area. The La Perouse Aboriginal community’s history therefore forms the majority of the information that researchers have today on Aboriginal activity on the bay’s northern side.

The Aboriginal story of the former Botany Bay LGA remains a living heritage – closely associated with the adjacent La Perouse story, despite the area’s intensively urbanised and industrialised character and its location near the centre of Australia’s oldest and largest city.

The presence and recorded history of the La Perouse settlement has ensured a considerably larger historical record regarding Aboriginal people in this area than is available for most other parts of Sydney. Although this would suggest a wealth of historical information regarding Aboriginal people in the former Botany Bay LGA, unfortunately this is not the case. Despite the La Perouse settlement only being just over 1.5 kilometres from the nearest (terrestrial) boundary of former Botany Bay LGA, the official histories and the accounts of Aboriginal people themselves are consistently tightly focused around the immediate area of the settlement – with few mentions of areas that were once part of the former Botany Bay LGA.

More than 600 people identifying as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islanders were recorded as living in the former City of Botany Bay Local Government Area at the 2006 census. These include descendants of

the Aboriginal people originally living along the north side of Botany Bay as well as Aboriginal people from other areas, such as the South Coast and inland NSW, who have moved into the locality.

Only in the recent past have local or other Aboriginal people had a “direct voice” in contributing to, or preparing, histories and stories about the Aboriginal community and past of the former Botany Bay LGA and surrounds. Even so, much of this social and historical information remains unpublished or unavailable – being either lost under the changes and pressures of non-Aboriginal history or held by the Aboriginal community and not yet publicly recorded or otherwise readily available. Some culturally or personally sensitive information may also be withheld from published histories. An oral history project was attempted as part of the Botany Bay Heritage Review 2016/17, however time constraints of the project meant that this was not able to be completed by the time of publication. This history may therefore be reviewed and added to upon the completion of a separate oral history project being undertaken by Bayside Council with current Aboriginal residents of the Botany Bay area.

DATING OF SIGNIFICANT ABORIGINAL SITES

For tens of thousands of years prior to the first sighting of the Sydney region by Europeans, Aboriginal people had lived in the Sydney Basin. The cultural histories held by Aboriginal people themselves, and archaeological evidence, both point to Aboriginal people living in the Botany Bay area for at least the last 5,000 years – and undoubtedly much longer.

At the time of Lieutenant Cook’s declaration that the lands of Australia’s eastern seaboard, which he had named New South Wales, were terra nullius, or “no man’s land”, the Australian continent was owned by over 400 different Aboriginal nations.

The oldest reliably dated habitation site in the Sydney region is 14,700 Before Present (BP), from a rock shelter on the west bank of the Nepean River. During the peak of the last Ice Age (about 18,000 years ago) sea levels were approximately 110-130 metres lower than they are today, and the coastline as much as 15 kilometers further to the east. The coastal topography would have been vastly different to today. La Perouse was joined to Kurnell by dry land and Botany Bay

essentially did not exist as a waterbody, but was most probably a low lying depression. The Cooks and Georges Rivers joined and flowed as a single channel through what today is the Kurnell Peninsula before meeting the sea.

Rising sea levels after this ice age, from about 10,000 years ago onwards, would have progressively flooded the Aboriginal sites along this earlier coastline and pushed the original populations inland across the prehistoric coastal plain over the course of several thousand years. The greater majority of reliably dated archaeological sites around Botany Bay and along Sydney's eastern coastline therefore testify only to Aboriginal people's occupation and use of the coast and adjacent bushland at the current sea levels, dating from about 6,000 years ago after the end of this ice age and sea level rise, with most dates within the last 5,000 years.

Researchers acknowledge the difficulty in estimating the size of the Aboriginal population in the Sydney Region immediately prior to European Settlement. Current estimates suggest a population of 2-3,000 people "around Sydney" and 4-8,000 or 5-8,000 in the greater Sydney region including the lower Blue Mountains. Others suggest a pre-1770 population of around 1,500 indigenous people living in the area now occupied by Sydney's eastern suburbs. Trends in the size of this pre-contact population are even more difficult to ascertain.

However there is growing evidence that the Aboriginal "pre-history" of the Sydney region was not that of a fixed culture reaching back unchanged for millennia, but a dynamic and evolving culture responding to environmental, technological and social changes.

ABORIGINAL LANGUAGE GROUPS IN THE BOTANY AREA

The location and extent of the various groups of Aboriginal occupants and owners of the Sydney region in 1788 is a question of continuing academic and cultural debate. Within this debate Aboriginal languages are accepted as surrogates for, or indicators of, identifiable groups of Aboriginal people. Language groups, or "tribes" as they are usually referred to in historical literature, share common initiation ceremonies and speak closely related languages. Many attempts have been made to map the pre-contact and immediate post-contact territories of Aboriginal people in the Sydney Region.

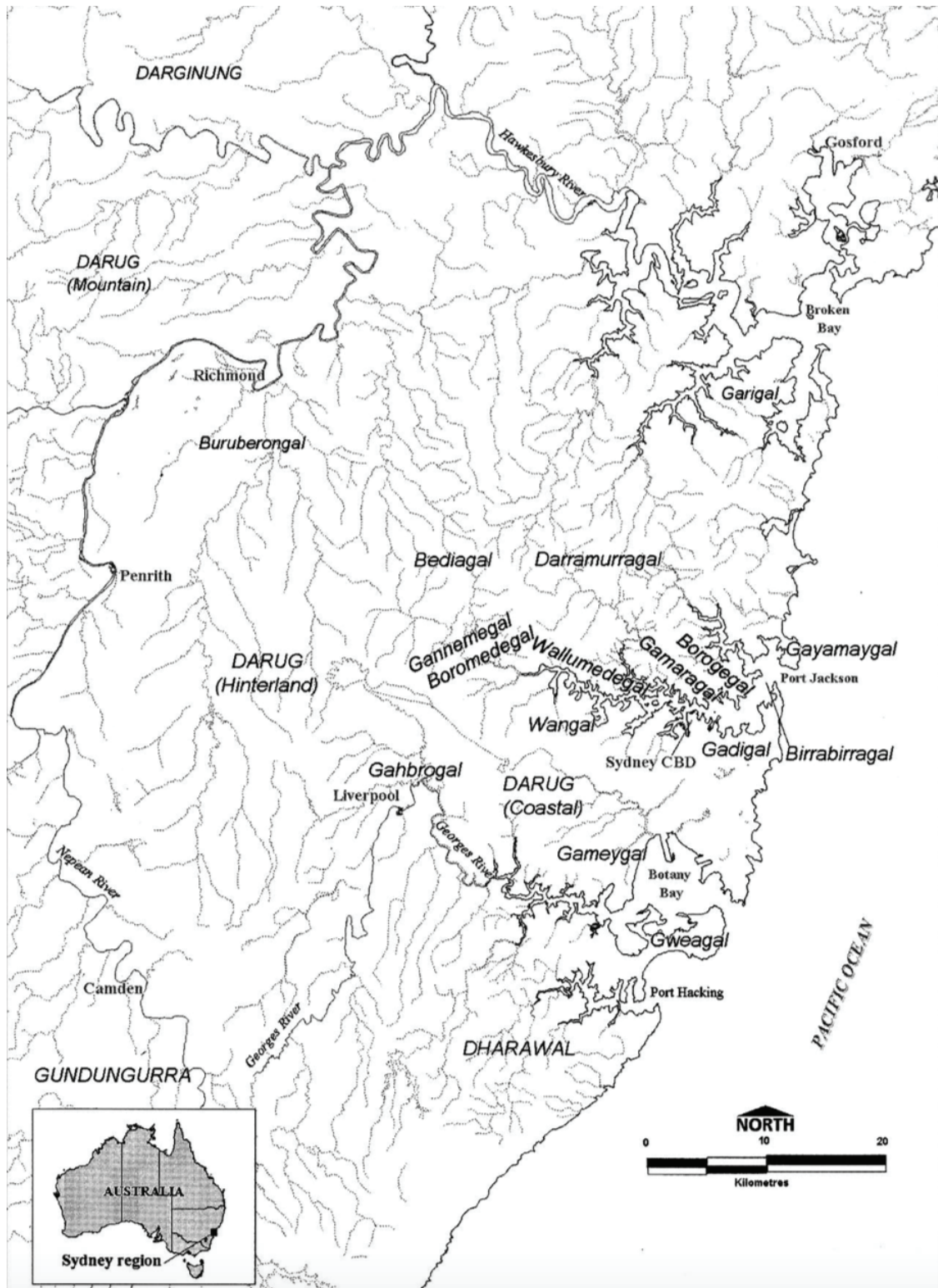


Fig 2.1.1 The location and extent of language, clan and “named” Aboriginal groups at the time of European settlement. (Attenborow, 2002. p.23)

The exact boundaries are very difficult to reconstruct due to the limited information available – many early European accounts date to the period when Aboriginal groups were already being impacted and displaced by the first waves of European introduced disease, and so don't reflect the pre-contact situation. Differing opinions and evidence exist on the location of these boundaries. In 1788, and the years immediately thereafter, it is now generally accepted that the Sydney region was occupied by two major language groups – the Darug and the Dharawal. These two groups were flanked by the Gundungurra on the southern margin of the Cumberland Plain west of the Georges River, and the Darginung in the Colo River area to the north-north-west.

The Darug language covered an extensive area – from the Blue Mountains north-west of Sydney (“Darug mountain”), across the Cumberland Plain (“Darug hinterland”), to the coast on the Sydney Peninsula between Port Jackson to the north and Botany Bay to the south (“Darug coastal”) (with the Darug coastal dialect also possibly extending to the north side of Port Jackson and north possibly as far as Broken Bay – an area previous writers had identified as that of the “Guringai” language group). Dharawal, the other major language group, is accepted as being spoken from the southern shore of Botany Bay south to the Shoalhaven River (and possibly to Jervis Bay) and west to Camden.

As well as the accounts of early European writers, the location of a language group boundary at Botany Bay and the Georges River – with Darug to north and Dharawal to south – is also supported by an observable change in rock art styles from the areas north of the bay compared with those in the south. Differences in the cultural practices of Aboriginal groups were also observed along the Botany Bay and Georges River boundary.

More specific to the coastal area of eastern Sydney and northern side of Botany Bay, it is now widely accepted that the Aboriginal people living south from Port Jackson to the northern shore of Botany Bay (and perhaps around the bay's western shore) were part of the Darug (coastal) language group. The linguist Arthur Capell concluded in 1970 that a dialect of the Darug language was spoken on the “Sydney Peninsula” which he described as “extending between the south shore of Port Jackson and the north shore of Botany Bay and as far

inland as Rosehill (Parramatta district)". The coastal dialect of the Darug language, used between Port Jackson and Botany Bay (and possibly beyond), may have been the Eora language – although there remains vigorous debate about this subject in the academic literature.

Within these much larger language groups Sydney's Aboriginal society was traditionally structured into clans, or local descent groups, who traced their identity from a common (usually male) ancestor. These local descent groups, or land-using groups, typically occupied an identifiable area. However resource utilisation customs, cultural responsibilities, and other factors meant that the boundaries of these clan areas were often blurred or "fluid". Clans also did not necessarily always live, full-time, on their lands. The identification and recording of clans and clan areas by the early colonists was also difficult, incomplete and contradictory – making our understanding of these early traditional land use and management areas even more difficult.

A number of contrary views exist – among academics and Aboriginal writers – as to the clan group associated with the northern side of Botany Bay (in 1770 and 1788), and hence within the former Botany Bay LGA.

Several past writers and other sources have identified the Kameygal, also spelt Gameygal, as the clan group for northern Botany Bay. Many of these sources further identify the Kameygal (Gameygal) as being part of the Dharug (Eora) language group. The anonymous 1790-1792 publication *Vocabulary of the language of N.S. Wales in the neighbourhood of Sydney (native and English but not alphabetical)* (recently attributed to Governor Arthur Phillip, Judge-Advocate David Collins and Captain John Hunter) was the original source to locate this group, which it spelt Kamey-gal, to the Botany Bay area. It is presumed that the clan name is derived from the Aboriginal name for Botany Bay – Ka-may or Kamay (or in some accounts Gamay).

In 1790 Watkin Tench referred to the "Bideegal" group living on the peninsula at the head of Botany Bay and "*chiefly on the north arm of Botany Bay*" [Cooks River]. This association has been repeated by some authors in the recent past (such as Dallas 2004 and Bourke 2008), suggesting Bidjigal country extended as far west from Botany Bay as Bankstown and Salt Pan Creek).

However Attenbrow suggests that this recording represents the dislocation of the Bidjigal, or inland “woods person” from the north-west of Parramatta, as a consequence of the small pox epidemic and cites numerous historic accounts – including reported information offered by the Aboriginal people Colbee and Ballederry – in support of this claim (Tench himself also noted this group as occurring at the head of what is now Homebush Bay). Alternatively Attenbrow suggests that the group of Aboriginal people on the north-west shore of Botany Bay were “*so named because of Pemulwy’s association with them*” – Pemulwy being known as a Bidjigal man, or an inland “woods person”, from the current Hills District of Sydney. Others have speculated that remaining members of the Bidjigal Clan followed Pemulwy to his “*area of operations*” and resistance around Botany Bay.

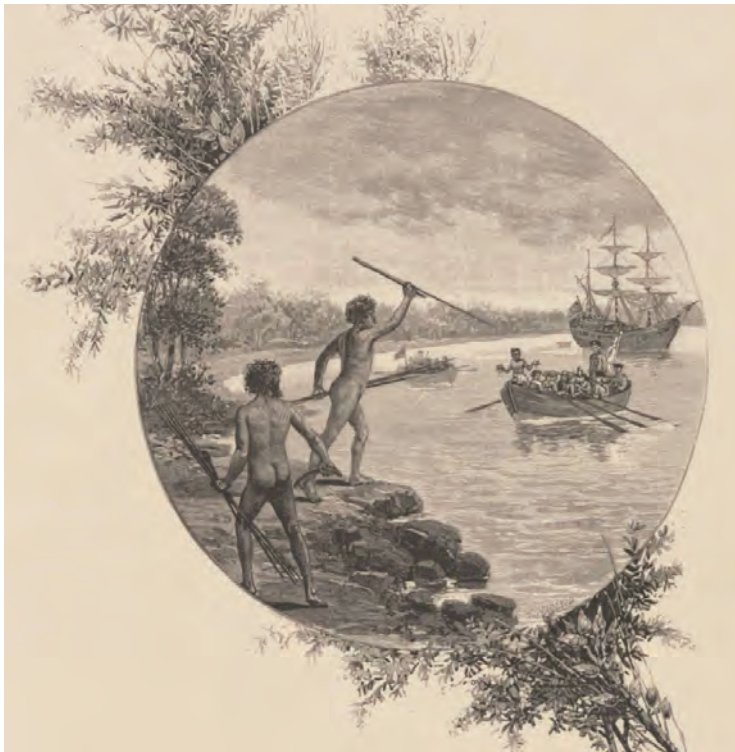
Even today, among non-Aboriginal authors there remain contrary accounts as to the original Aboriginal occupants of the northern shore of Botany Bay. Most recent authors cite the area as being home to the Goorawal people – with alternative spellings as Gooriwal, Goorawahl, or Guriwal – while others identify Gooriwal only as the traditional name for the La Perouse area.

Prior to the 2016 council amalgamations, the former City of Botany Bay Council acknowledged both Bidjigal and Gadigal peoples as traditional owners of the land within the Botany Bay LGA.

2.1.2 FIRST CONTACT AND INVASION

The landing place of (then) Lieutenant James Cook in 1770 was on Gweagal land (a clan within the Dharwal language group) near the southern entrance to Botany Bay – on the opposite side of the waterbody from the former Botany Bay LGA. However as the Endeavour waited offshore to sail into the bay Joseph Banks observed about ten Aboriginal people gathered around a fire on the bay’s northern head “*at a very barren place*” [possibly Bare Island], he reported that this group later “*retird [sic] to a little eminence where they could conveniently see the ship*”.

This is the first known European description of the Aboriginal occupants of the northern shore of Botany Bay. Banks noted that this group was joined by four men who pulled their two canoes up onto the beach below the group. As the crew in one of the Endeavour’s



smaller boats, which was sent to check the bay's depths, rowed towards the group's location Banks recorded that the people "*all retir'd [sic] higher up on the hill*" with the exception of one man who hid behind some rocks and kept lookout.

Banks continued to watch the northern headland and shoreline, observing that most of the Aboriginal people had followed the Endeavour's boat west around the coves – into the Botany Bay LGA area – but "*a few of the Indians who had not followed the boat remain'd [sic] on the rocks opposite the ship, threatening and menacing with their pikes and swords*". He described two of these men in detail as follows...

"... painted with white, their faces seemingly only dusted over with it, their bodies painted with broad strokes drawn over their breasts and backs resembling much a soldiers cross belts, and their legs and thighs also with such like broad strokes drawn round them which imitated broad garters or bracelets... [each had a wooden weapon] about 2½ feet long, in shape much resembling a scepter ... [and they] seemed to talk earnestly together, at times brandishing their crooked weapons at us in token defiance'.

The final landing place chosen by Cook, on the bay's southern side, was recorded by Banks as "*a small village consisting of about 6 or 8 houses*".

Fig 2.1.2 'Natives Opposing Captain Cook's Landing'. 1888. By William Macleod.

Available online at: <http://trove.nla.gov.au/work/190029789>

The Dharawal version of the actual landing, as told by Gweagal Elder Beryl Timbery-Bellar (and recorded by Dallas) is as follows...

“When they saw a big white bird sailing into the Bay, that’s what was handed down to me, they saw this big white bird coming, these two Aborigines went down as a warning party to let them get the children and hide them ! They stood their ground and the others were [in the bushes] a back up to help protect the family groups. On the rocks stood two warriors, and there were about thirty marines. Two against thirty!”

In his journal Cook described the landing thus...

...“I thought that they beckon’d us to come ashore; but on this we were Mistaken, for as soon as We put the Boat in they again Came to oppose us upon which I fir’d a Musquet between the 2 which had no other effect than to make them retire back to where their bundles of darts lay & one of them took up a Stone & threw at us which caused my firing a Second Musquet load with small shott, & altho’ some of the shott struck the Man yet it had no Effect other than to make him lay hold of a Shield or Target to defend himself, immediately after this we landed which we had no sooner done then they throw’d 2 darts at us which obliged me to fire a third shott soon after which they both made off.”

After their time on shore at what would later become Kurnell, Cook’s landing party returned to the Endeavour and later the same day rowed to the bay’s northern shore and went to the location where Banks had observed the Aboriginal group earlier in the day. Banks recorded that *“here however we found nobody”* and Cook’s records confirmed...

“went over to the north point of the bay where coming in we saw several people ... but when we landed now there were no body to be seen”.

At “the north point of the bay” Cook notes... *“we found here some fresh water which came trickling [sic] down and stood in pools among the rocks”, but the location was “troublesome to come at”* and so the southern landing place was the preferred. (It was this trickling stream that Cook described in his notes which would entice Captain Phillip 18 years later to land on the northern shore of Botany Bay in search of the fresh water source.)

The early historical work *The History of Australian Discovery and Colonisation*, published in 1865, included a purported account of Cook's arrival in Botany Bay from the perspective of several old Aboriginal men who were claimed to have been eyewitnesses to the event. The accounts were from six elderly Aboriginal men called Yadyer, Bullmayne, Dolmoik, Kurrul, Bluitt and Potta – and it is speculated that they were collected by Obed West “*who had frequent opportunities in his youth in the early part of present century [the nineteenth century], of acquiring information from the Botany Bay blacks, and who always took much interest in all that reacted to them*”. The text, although claimed as being sourced from Aboriginal eyewitnesses, was presented in a European voice.

This early historical account includes considerable information on the landing party's visit to the northern shore and the Aboriginal people's response, and includes references to locations as far west as “Bumbera Point” just east of the south-east corner of the former Botany Bay LGA, and so is worth quoting extensively here:

“Yadyer says that on seeing the ship he went down to a corner of the beach, where a portion of the tribe were encamped and told them what he had seen. They all thereupon went up the hill to look ... Some of them thought that the ship was a large bird. But, as the object of their amazement approached the heads of the bay, they came to the conclusion that it was a large canoe with people on board. ... After staying there [the southern shore] some time, the boats came over to the north side of Botany Bay, and landed on the beach at Kooriwal. Three persons then landed from one of the boats; one of these had on his head something like a ‘bangalle’. [the text described this as an Aboriginal vessel for carrying water resembling “very closely a cocked hat” – the implication being that this person was Cook] ... These three men walked along the beach, the boats pulling close to land, till they came to Bumbera Point, half a mile from Kooriwall, due north. The blackfellows made their appearance on the bank above the beach, with spears and wommeras; but made no attempt to throw a spear at the strangers. When the aborigines [sic] appeared a second time, two guns were fired from the boats, on which they drew back into the bush. When the three persons who landed came to Bumbera Point, they got into the boat, and after staying there a short time went back to the ship, which was then anchored just outside the Heads. Either that evening or the following morning two boats came

up again to the north side at Bumbera Point, and hauled a seine twice, and then returned to the ships.”

Nugent observes that this account contains small details that accord with Cook’s and Banks’ journals, but it includes some minor discrepancies and elements that appear to be a mix of the Endeavour’s and the First Fleet’s arrivals in Botany Bay and the La Perouse expedition.

On 30 April 1770 (the Endeavour’s second day at anchor in the bay) Cook records that *“In the AM I went in the Pinnace to sound and explore the North side of the bay where I neither met with inhabitants or any thing [sic] remarkable”*. That evening Banks went across to Bare Island on the bay’s northern shore to collect shells and noted that as he was (presumably) being rowed there he saw *“six Indians on the main [land] who shouted to us but ran away into the woods before the boat was within half a mile of them, although she [the boat] did not even go towards them”*.

Cook and Banks both expressed frustration at the elusive nature of the local Aboriginal people and the lack of any “productive” contact with them – a behaviour which Nugent interprets as a typical/traditional response repertoire of Aboriginal people towards strangers of first deliberately ignoring, then avoiding and at last repelling (preferably from a distance. Cook wrote that *“The Natives do not appear to be numerous [sic] neither do they seem to live in large bodies but dispers’d in small parties along by the water side”*, and both Cook and Banks reported seeing several groups of people associated with “hutts” [sic] or houses in several places.

Overall Cook and Banks both recorded the Botany Bay area as sparsely populated (a view not supported by Watkin Tench and others on the First Fleet in 1788).

The next recorded visit to the northern side of Botany Bay was on the sixth day of the Endeavour’s stay (4 May 1770), when Banks was some distance in from the north-western shore of the bay. He described the future area of Banksmeadow as follows...

“Myself in the afternoon ashore on the NW side of the bay, where we went a good way into the countrey [sic] which in this place is very sandy and resembles our Moors in England, as no trees grow upon it but everything is covered with a thin brush of plants about as high as the knees.”

The Endeavour sailed out of Botany Bay on 6 May 1770, after eight days in the bay and nine days since Banks first observed the Aboriginal people on the northern headland. Cook's journal entry for this day of departure summarises his impression of the bay's Aboriginal inhabitants...

“... those I saw were about as tall as Europeans of a very dark brown colour but not black ... nor had they woolly frizled hair, but black and lank much like ours - no sort of cloathing [sic] or ornaments were ever seen by any of us upon any one of them or in or about any of their hutts [sic] from which I conclude that they never wear any - some that we saw had their faces and bodies painted with a sort of white paint or Pigment ... However we could know but very little of their customs as we never were able to form any connections with them.”

The Aboriginal people's views as to the unprecedented arrival of this strange vessel in their bay, and the inexplicable and uncustomary behaviours of its occupants, were not recorded at the time – but have been the subject of a continuous narrative in the Aboriginal community, around and beyond Botany Bay, in the centuries that followed.

Esme Russell (nee Timbery) believes her ancestors have always lived on the northern side of Botany Bay (in the La Perouse district) and she is descended from the people who witnessed Cook's arrival. The oral traditions she grew up with is that *“they were standing on the lookout hill and they stood watching him ... on our side the Timbery family just stood and watched ... they apparently did not get shot at ... The Timberys were a real placid family”*.

2.1.3 ENCOUNTERS AT BOTANY BAY - THE FIRST FLEET AND LA PEROUSE

The Aboriginal people of Botany Bay had nearly two decades to recount the story of the Endeavour's stay in their lands until their next, and much more permanent, encounter with Europeans when the Supply, the vanguard of the eleven ships of the First Fleet, sailed into Botany Bay in the early afternoon of Friday 18 January 1788.

Officers and men from the Supply went ashore, at what is today Yarra Bay, and as Second Lieutenant Philip Gidley King recorded...

“[we] just looked at the face of the country which is, as Mr Cook remarks, very much like the moors in England except that there is a great deal of very good grass and some small timber trees ... we went a little way up the bay to look for water but finding none, we returned to abreast of the Supply.”

No Aboriginal people were seen, or at least none recorded, until the party returned towards their ship. Here “a group of natives” were observed, and when the colonist’s boats pulled into shore near their canoes the following “meeting”, as described by King, took place...

“They [the natives] immediately got up and called to us in a menacing tone and at the same time brandishing their spears or lances. However, the governor showed them some beads and a ordered a man to fasten them to the stem of the canoe. We then made sign that we wanted water, when they pointed round the point on which they stood and invited us to land there. On landing, they directed us by pointing to a very fine stream of fresh water.”

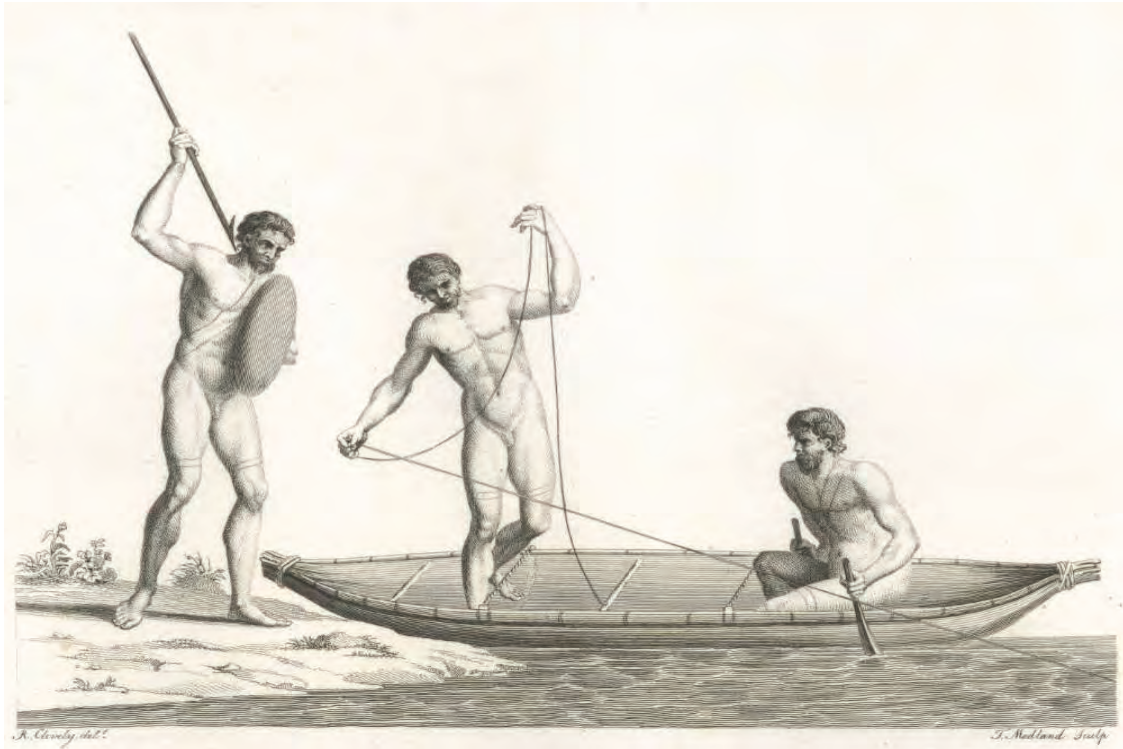
This “very fine stream of fresh water” is now named Bunnerong Creek.

Fig.2.1.3. (left) “Timbere” (Timbery) a native of new south Wales’ [sic] as sketched by Jacques Arago c. 1820. (detail) Available online at: <http://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-138466855>

Fig.2.1.4 (right) ‘Australian Aborigines in bark canoes. April 1770. By Tupaia (an indigenous Polynesian on HMS Endeavour) (British Library; London)

On landing (although the accounts vary somewhat) Phillip approached the group of Aboriginal people alone, unarmed, with his arms outstretched and palms open. As had happened at Cook’s landing 18 years earlier two Aboriginal men came forward and approached him, but instead of gunshots this time the new arrivals offered gifts which – with some “fear and trembling”, as King reported it – the Aboriginal men took and a brief interaction followed until the ship’s party “soon after took leave of them and returned on board”.





Phillip's initial contact with these Aboriginal people on the northern shore of the bay may have been aided by the fact that he was missing a front tooth, which was a sign of initiation and authority among the local men.

Phillip himself later commented regarding Aboriginal peoples' response to his missing tooth that it "occasioned a general clamour, and, I thought, gave me some little merit in their opinion".

King recorded that the next morning, as the landing party was returning with a catch of fish, "the natives came down and were much more confident than they were the night before".

Several of the First Fleet accounts might also suggest a different attitude to the invaders by the Aboriginal people on the north side of the bay (the Gooriwal or Guriwal) from those on the southern shore (Gweagal) – in addition to the less aggressive response to Phillip and his landing parties. Private John Easty recorded on the Fleet's second day in Botany Bay that he...

"saw several fires made by the Indians on Cape Banks ... great many Indians on Point Solander came down to the shore and shouted at us and held up their weapons over their heads and shook [sic] them at us."

Fig 2.1.5. 'Natives of Botany Bay' by Thomas Medland. 1789.

State Library of Victoria. Available online at: <http://trove.nla.gov.au/work/177671684>

Watkin Tench noted “*not less than 40 persons, shouting and making many uncouth signs and gestures*” on the southern shore as he sailed into Botany Bay, and Captain Hunter recorded that “*the men on the southern shore pointed their spears and repeated the words ‘wara wara’*” (which the invaders soon came to understand meant “go way” or similar).

By Sunday 20 January all eleven ships of the First Fleet were at anchor in Botany Bay. Phillip was exploring the bay, to assess its suitability for settlement, and water was a critical consideration. He recorded that...

“several runs of fresh water were found in different parts of the bay, but there did not appear to be any situation to which there was not some very strong objection. In the northern part of it is a small creek, which runs a considerable way into the country, but it has water only for a boat, the sides of it are frequently overflowed, and the low lands near it are a perfect swamp.”

The “small creek” that Phillip was so dismissive of was possibly Mill Pond Creek. Although his journals have never been located Phillip was a prolific letter writer, but his encounters with Aboriginal people in these explorations of Botany Bay are largely unknown. However William Bradley, First Lieutenant on the Sirius, recorded that “*the Boats met with Natives in every part of the Bay, but no women had yet been seen.*”

2.1.4 EARLY ENCOUNTERS, RESISTANCE AND DISEASE – 1788 TO 1815

There was frequent movement between Botany Bay and Port Jackson, and well-worn “native paths” were noted between these places from immediately after first settlement – suggesting that these were well established links. “Trinkets” given to Aboriginal people at Port Jackson were observed a few days later at Botany Bay, also suggesting regular traffic – which Attenbrow (2002) suggests increased after invasion with Aboriginal people coming together to talk about the uninvited arrivals.

In 1788 Watkin Tench described a semi-permanent Aboriginal camp at the mouth of the Cooks River (at that time much further east, on the former boundary between Rockdale and Botany Bay Councils within Sydney Airport) as...

“... on the north-west arm of Botany Bay stands a village, which contains more than a dozen houses, and perhaps five times that number of people; being the most considerable establishment we are acquainted with in the country”.

Tench also reported encounters with groups of up to “three hundred persons” north of Botany Bay. Tench again described a “village” in this location in December 1790 as “... a little village (if five huts deserve the name) ... on the nearest point of the north arm” [of Cooks River at Botany Bay]”, however this report dates from after the first wave of small pox had decimated the local Aboriginal population.

From Aboriginal peoples’ viewpoint, the arrival of the First Fleet was an invasion of their land. Initially the invaders were tolerated, especially when they shared some of their material wealth such as fish and iron tools. European “gifts” quickly entered the Aboriginal toolkit, and especially useful items like metal hatchets were traded and specifically sought or requested.

Hunter noted that Aboriginal spear tips were armed with “bits of glass bottle ... since our settling amongst them”. However when the generosity dried up and some of the invaders, particularly the convicts, began to take Aboriginal possessions, the response was forthright and

Fig. 2.1.6. ‘Botany Bay, New South Wales’ by Joseph Lycett. c.1825. Lycett’s vantage point appears to be close to the mouth of the Cooks River looking along the northern shore of the Bay towards the heads. Available online at: <http://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-135701715>



sometimes violent. Some writers noted that there was also a change in relations when the new arrivals started clearing the land and it became obvious they intended to stay. Commencing with the killing of two convicts at Darling Harbour on 30 May 1788, violent incidents proliferated around the harbour and soon spread to Botany Bay.

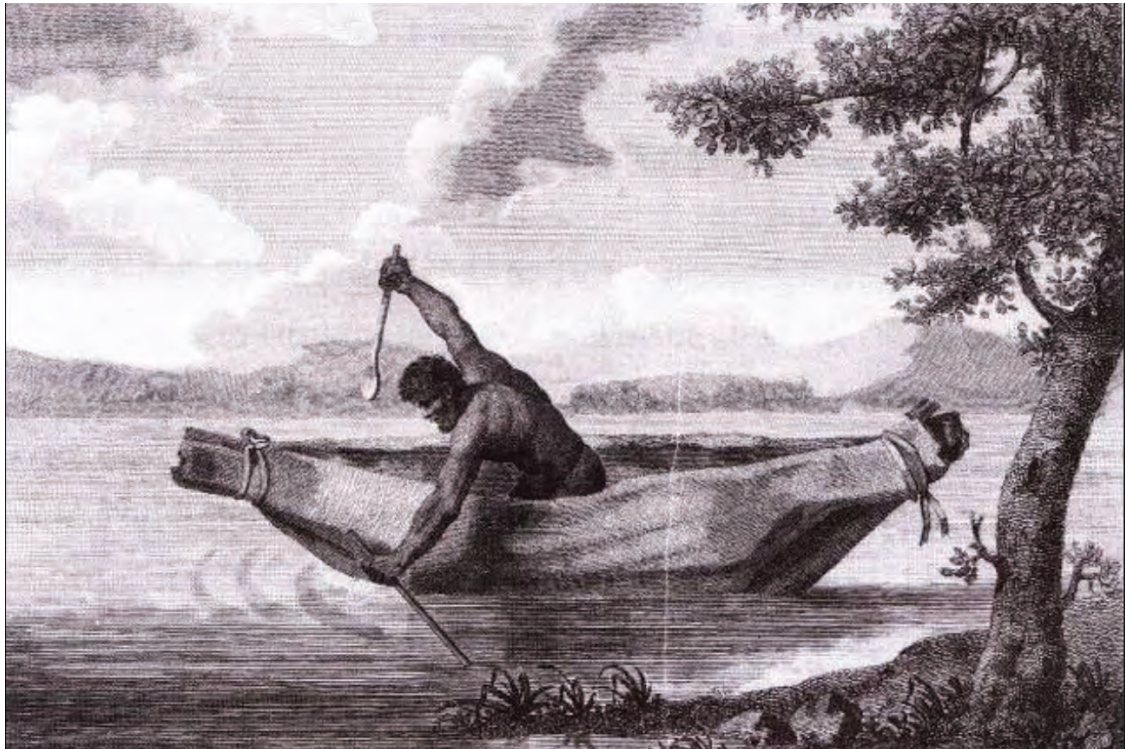
In December 1790 John McEntire the Governor's gamekeeper was fatally wounded in an attack near the Cooks River at Botany Bay, reputedly by the Aboriginal warrior Pemulwuy. McEntire was widely suspected of crimes against the Aboriginal people, but in response to the killing Governor Phillip issued a General Order that demonstrated a hardening in his attitude to the treatment of the Aboriginal people of Sydney. Phillip dispatched the first punitive expedition ordering the capture of six, any six, adult males "*of those natives who reside near the head of Botany Bay*" where the offence took place. Tench led this punitive party, after previously convincing Phillip to change his original orders that ten Aboriginal people be killed in reprisal, and made two expeditions in late December – but both were west of the former Botany Bay LGA.

No Aboriginal men were captured from what Tench described as "*our fruitless peregrination*" (and some writers have interpreted, from Tench's diaries, that he did not make a serious effort to carry out his orders).

There followed 20 to 25 years of sporadic Aboriginal resistance and "guerrilla campaigns" against European settlement and dispossession, reaching a peak from 1797 to 1805, in which the Aboriginal freedom fighter Pemulwuy, and later his son Tedbury, featured prominently. Pemulwuy was a Bidjigal man (translated as an inland "woods person") and was from a group whose lands are more often placed north-west of Parramatta and in the current Hills District of Sydney. However, Pemulwuy was active in pursuing his resistance campaign around the shores of Botany Bay, and elsewhere.

Pemulwuy was wounded or captured on several occasions but always managed to recover or escape, which greatly enhanced his reputation among both the "invaders" and the "natives". He was killed in 1802 but the resistance campaign continued for several years, led by his son Tedbury, particularly along the Georges River .

Some diarists described the Aboriginal people around Botany Bay as still living in their "native fashion" several years after first settlement.



Although this would imply some persistence of the original Aboriginal lifestyle, in reality the Gooriwal and other Aboriginal peoples around Botany Bay felt the full effects of European settlement and alienation of their lands very soon after 1788.

Violence and hostility was not the only blow the Gooriwal and other Aboriginal people suffered in the first years of European settlement. Smallpox broke out among the Aboriginal people of the Sydney district in April 1789. Smallpox is a highly infectious virus that has an incubation period of 12 days. Its main symptoms are pus-filled sores and extreme fever. Children under five and adults over 20 are the most vulnerable. Populations without previous exposure to the disease experience mortality rates in excess of 50%. The impact of smallpox on the Aboriginal people of Sydney, including the Gooriwal, was devastating and it likely that at least 50% of the population perished in several months.

In September 1789 William Bradley, after a survey of Botany Bay, reported that in “*some of the Caves, skeletons of some & loose bones of others were found, who had no doubt died of small pox by their bodies not being removed*”. Other diseases that the settlers introduced, and for which the people of the Sydney Clans had no resistance, included influenza

Fig2.1.7 Pimbley [Pemulwuy]: Native of New Holland in a canoe of that country by Samuel John Neele; 1804. In James Grant’s “A Narrative of a Voyage of Discovery”. n.d.

Available online at: <http://trove.nla.gov.au/work/186496999>

and syphilis. A second wave of smallpox swept the region's Aboriginal population in the 1830s.

2.1.5 DISLOCATION AND REORGANISATION – 1815 TO 1850S

In addition to violence and disease, for the majority of the Sydney Aboriginal Peoples the early years of European settlement represented a time of loss of access to natural resources and ceremonial sites, obstruction of traditional movement patterns, and disruptions to cultural or spiritual practices. It was a time of depopulation and disruption, which for the Gooriwal and other Aboriginal peoples meant the gradual end of their independence and self-reliance.

However the northern side of Botany Bay was somewhat slower to be cleared, settled and developed than those parts of Sydney offering easier terrain and fewer “marshy wastelands”. By 1821 there were only three land grants in the area of the former Botany Bay LGA (see Figure 4.1.1) – although this does not mean that unauthorised settlement and “informal” land uses were not occurring. Artist Joseph Lycett described the land on the northside of Botany Bay in 1825 as being “sandy and barren”.

For clans such as the Gooriwal, who relied heavily on estuarine resources, Botany Bay came under increasing fishing pressures from the colonists netting large catches for trade and subsistence. With the natural resources dwindling and the disruption of traditional lifestyles escalating, the remaining Aboriginal people became increasingly dependent on what food and clothing was offered by the new settlers. Alcohol, as a currency of the early settlement, further disrupted the lives and social structures of Sydney's original Aboriginal people.

The surviving Aboriginal people formed new groups that the British settlers identified by their geographic location, such as the “Kissing Point Tribe” and the “Botany Bay Tribe”. Using ethnographic records, contemporary reports, early census data, and government “*blanket returns*”, Dallas recognised two European-labeled “tribes” in the Botany Bay and Georges River area – however it is unclear where exactly the Botany Bay tribe related to.

By 1820 it was reported that only 20 Aboriginal people remained in

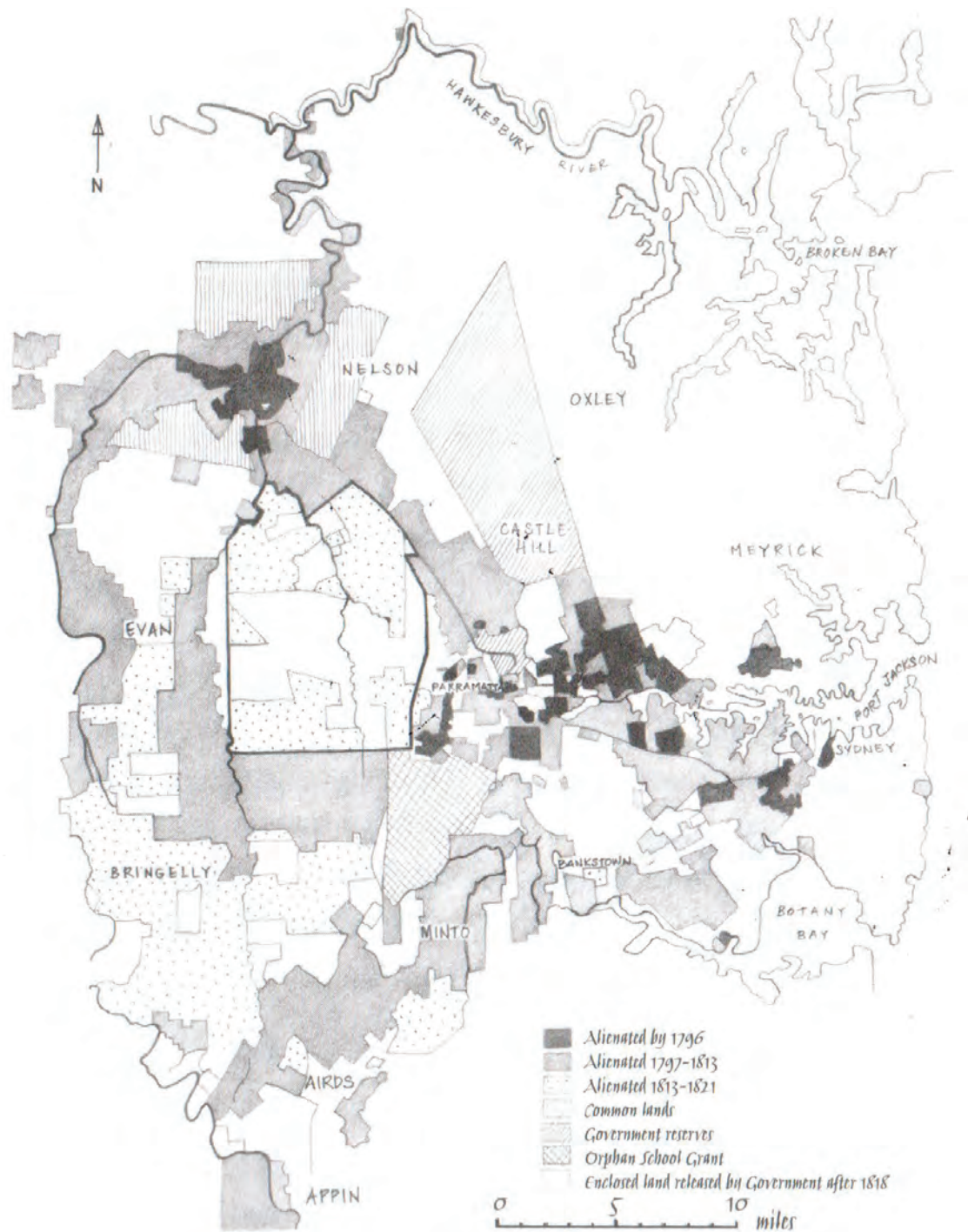


Fig 2.1.8 Land within the County of Cumberland that had been alienated by 1821. The large grants of Lord and Winder had not been formally issued at this time and therefore were not shown.

"The Colony: A History of Early Sydney" by Grace Karskens, p.149

the entire Liverpool Police District, which included the Botany Bay area, but no doubt this was an under-estimate. Reverend William Walker described the Botany Bay Tribe in 1821 as “*not numerous*”.

Visiting Sydney in 1820 Thaddeus Bellinghausen noted...

“The natives remember their former independence. Some expressed their claims to certain places, asserting that they belonged to their ancestors. It is easy to understand that they are not indifferent to having been expelled from their own favourite localities. Despite all the compensation offered them, a spark of vengeance still smolders [sic] in their hearts.”

By the mid-1800s much of the Aboriginal population around Port Jackson, and the Sydney area generally, was a mix of the few surviving Aboriginal people of the Sydney Clans and the many Aboriginal people who had migrated into the settlement from outlying areas. The dislocation and mobility of Aboriginal people during this time is demonstrated by the settlers’ accounts of “Old King Tamara” (also called Tamara [believed to mean “hand”], Tommy or Thomas Tomara) who was painted in 1845 as “The Last of the Sydney Tribe” when living in rock shelters at Double Bay leading a group of 20 Aboriginal people. However Aboriginal people could still gather in considerable numbers, as demonstrated at the opening of the Sir Joseph Banks Hotel (Banks Inn) on the northern shore of the bay – “*in almost virgin bushland beyond the outskirts of the developing settlement*” – on New Year’s Day in 1845 when 200 Aboriginal people “gatecrashed” the Hotel’s opening and fed on an undercooked bullock deemed unsuitable for European consumption.

2.1.6 MAHROOT

In the written records from this period, the 1840s and 1850s, the Aboriginal man Mahroot figures prominently.

According to his testimony to a parliamentary inquiry held in 1845 – “The Select Committee on the Aborigines” – Mahroot/Maroot was born of “*Aboriginal native*” parents at approximately the end of the eighteenth century (around 1796), at the Cooks River. Mahroot described his clan’s lands as stretching roughly from Maroubra to the Cooks River (so possibly taking in most of the former Botany Bay LGA) – although he could not recall (or did not divulge) his clan’s

name.

As a child, after avoiding a traditional initiation ceremony, Mahroot lived in Sydney with Commissary David Allan where he learnt some English. There are records of a “Young Mirouth” participating in “payback” battles in 1805, once felling another Aboriginal named Bidgee Bidgee with a club and suffering a head wound on another occasion – however it is very unlikely that this was Mahroot as he would have been less than 10 years of age at this time. Mahroot later worked as a seaman on whaling ships and spent his wages in public houses with other sailors. He was painted by the Russian artist Pavel Mikhailov at Kirribilli in 1820, and was described as living a life sometimes at odds between the two worlds of his birth and adopted families or lifestyle.



Mahroot lived in a hut on the shoreline of Botany Bay where he fished and sold his catch to buy clothing, meat, flour and sugar. In 1832, Governor Richard Bourke granted him a 10 acre parcel of land “next to a creek near Bumborah Point” – on the foreshore between the 100 acre “Bunnerong” of John Brown in the north and John Crane’s (Crain’s) land to the east (see Figure 2.1.10).

Mahroot built five small slab huts on the land and leased these out – including to “some white fellow tenants” – for one shilling per week and his lands were considered significant enough to be listed in the 1843 District Council assessment book.

Mahroot – who was also known as Boatswain or Boatswain Maroot – claimed to be “the ‘last of the Botany Bay tribe’ who once numbered 400 people but, by 1845, only he and his three half-sisters had survived. He attributed the decline in the Aboriginal population to a tendency to fight and waning fertility (an aftermath of venereal disease). Mahroot also gave an insight into the translocation of Aboriginal people during this time when he told the Inquiry...

“... of [the] approximately fifty Indigenous people living at ‘the Heads’ in the mid-1840s ... except for himself and three women, these people ‘not belong to Botany ... different people raised up here in former times come.”

He recalled “how during his childhood his people lived on fish and fern roots and did not wander far from the ‘sea coast’”. Mahroot encouraged Aboriginal

Fig. 2.1.9. ‘Maroot’ sketched in 1820 when a young man. By Pavel N. Mikhailov. 1820.

Available online at <http://trove.nla.gov.au/work/217492202>

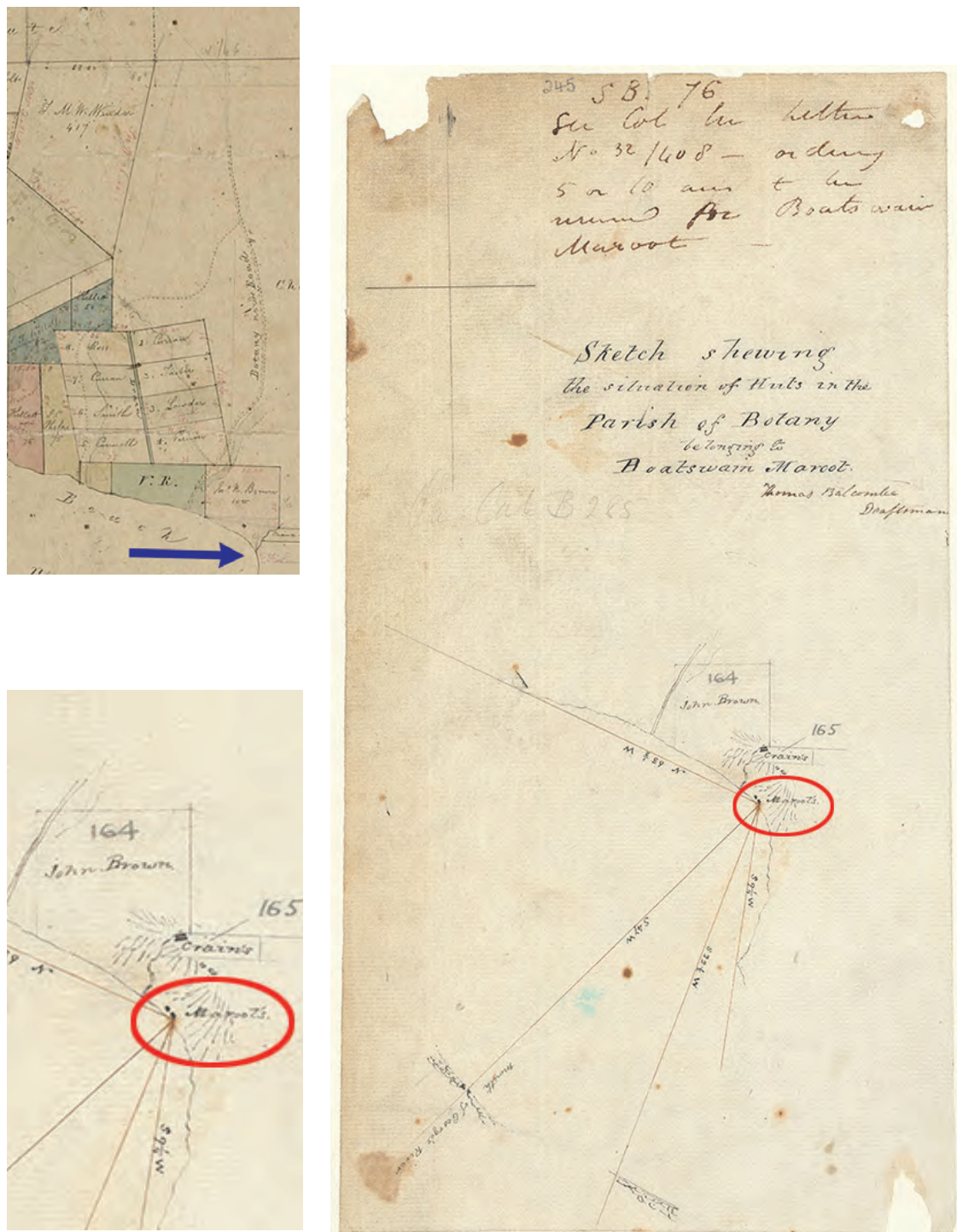


Fig 2.1.10 (a, b, c) (with details)

‘Cumberland County, Botany - Sketch shewing [sic] the situation of Huts in the Parish of Botany belonging to Boatswain Maroot.’ 1830. Maroot’s Hut was located with the group of fishermen’s huts to the south-east of John Brown’s 100 acre grant. (north to top of page). Also shown is extract from the 1838 Bemi Plan showing the location of Maroot’s hut relative to the Village of Banks Meadow and the Veteran Swamp allotments (arrowed)..

Sketch shewing the situation of Huts in the Parish of Botany belonging to Boatswain Maroot Thomas Balcombe (1810-1861), Draftsman Sketch Books of the Surveyor-General, Vol.1, Botany CG13886, X751, Folio 76, p. 245. NSW State Archives

people to accept “white fella” welfare but his efforts were seldom appreciated ...

“he considered the best thing whites could do for his people was to give him clothing of some kind to keep him away from town, and stop at Botany.”

Blankets were regularly distributed to Aboriginal people and served as a substitute for possum rugs. Possums were now rare, as Mahroot remarked “you look all day to get one or two”, compared with the twenty to thirty possums, enough skins to make a rug, that could be taken within a week when Mahroot was a child.

Quoted by the then Commissioner of Police W. A. Miles, Mahroot indicated to him that...

“this is all my country...nice country; my father chief long time ago; now I chief. Water all pretty – sun make it light. When I was a little fellow, plenty black fellows, plenty gin, plenty piccaninny, great corroboree, plenty fight. Eh! All gone now! ... only me left to walk about.”

Mahroot spent his last years in a bark hut in the gardens of the Sir Joseph Banks Hotel, where he died in c.1854.

2.1.7 REFUGE AT LA PEROUSE – 1850S - MID 1890S

The 1850s and 1860s saw many of the remaining members of the “Botany Bay Tribe” relocated, by coercion and choice, to the growing “illegal” or “informal” camp” at La Perouse. During this and the following decades La Perouse gained an increasingly prominent role as a camping site – possibly due to the good fishing and degree of isolation it offered – for displaced Dharawal People from the Illawarra, South Coast and Burragorang Valley as well as Aboriginal people visiting Sydney from other places. George Timbery was considered to be the father of the camp at La Perouse, where he arrived in the late 1870s and built a hut for his large family and gained access to a boat for fishing.

By 1881 approximately 15 Aboriginal people were reported as camping “on the reserve” at Botany Bay (most likely Meadow Reserve near

the Government Pier at Banksmeadow), and 35 in a larger camp at La Perouse. These camps were regarded as one, and Aboriginal people moved freely between them. The “Botany camp” was located close to the Pier Hotel, and its occupants were subject to a range of depredations and intrusions, as well as temptations. In the early 1880s a missionary called Daniel Matthews persuaded the camp’s female residents along with their families to move to his mission at Maloga, and the camp at Meadow Reserve was “closed” in the early 1880s.

The land within the former City of Botany Bay LGA would have provided a main travel route for people moving to and from the La Perouse camp, however this traffic would have been largely confined to the foreshore due to the growing settlements at Botany, Banksmeadow and the market gardens of Veterans Swamp. The market gardens located close to the former LGA boundary would have also prevented any significant spread or “intrusions” from the La Perouse camp into the former Botany Bay LGA.

One centre of activity for Aboriginal people, both local people and those from much further afield, was the Sir Joseph Banks Hotel. From 1884 to 1982 the Hotel was one of the foremost venues in the state for foot-racing – on a purpose built 150 yard track. These races, with cash prizes and gambling, attracted the nation’s best sprinters.

Aboriginal men Charlie Samuels (from Queensland) and Bob Macdonald were considered stars (although exactly where Macdonald came from is unclear) and raced against visiting international sprinters. Aboriginal people were regular entrants over most years, although not always fairly treated. In 1885 an Aboriginal man, recorded only as G. Black from an outback cattle station, clearly won the final only to be disqualified after a protest from the (European) favourite. Charlie Samuels, known as the “Black Streak” and a “full-blood Aboriginal” was more fortunate and won the Sir Joseph Banks Handicap in 1886 and scored the fastest time (in a heat) in 1888.

2.1.8 LATE 19TH CENTURY AND INTO THE ABORIGINES PROTECTION BOARD ERA – MID 1890S - POST WORLD WAR II

In 1900 the Aborigines Protection Board decided to close the La Perouse Reserve and relocate its occupants. Despite the Board reducing, and eventually halting, the supply of rations the people

refused to move. By 1902 the Board had resumed supplying rations.

Fishing in the bay provided subsistence and a limited livelihood for the reserve's occupants, and the residents were supplied with materials for sail boats, fishing nets and lines as well as food, tents, and construction materials for huts. "Shellwork", which would become synonymous with the La Perouse area, had also commenced by the early 1900s. Aboriginal people from the reserve, and visiting from elsewhere, would no doubt have also used the beaches of the Botany District. Some Aboriginal men from La Perouse also worked at the "Chinese Gardens" north-east of the reserve (some within the former Botany Bay LGA) and at Maroubra.

In 1918 the Board adopted a dispersal policy and expelled Aborigines who were not full-blood or half-caste from the reserves, on the grounds that they were not Aboriginal and should be part of the "white" community. However these policies do not appear – from the available evidence – to have relocated Aboriginal people into the former Botany Bay LGA.

Possibly as a response to such regressive legislation, La Perouse people became politically active during the 1920s in support of Aboriginal rights – notably through the Australian Aboriginal Progressive Association. Jack Patten, from La Perouse, was one of the Association's leaders and Joseph Timbery and Wesley Simms played a major role in the 1938 Day of Mourning (marking Australia's sesquicentenary).

Hillsdale, in the former Botany Bay LGA, began to develop during this time – largely as a soldier settlement for returning WWI servicemen. It is highly unlikely however that this included Aboriginal people, either as displaced residents of the La Perouse reserve or as returned servicemen, as Aboriginal servicemen returning from World War I were not eligible for soldier settler land grants.

The Aborigines Protection Board was renamed the Aborigines Welfare Board in 1940 and, working under the directions set in the Aborigines Protection (Amendment) Act 1940, pursued an even more aggressive policy of assimilating Aboriginal people into the wider "white" society. However again this does not appear to have meant more Aboriginal people moving into, or living in, the former Botany Bay LGA.

Despite better (public) housing being available in surrounding suburbs, economic disadvantage and a strong sense of community and “ownership” meant La Perouse remained the clear concentration of Aboriginal activity on the northern side of Botany Bay. Even when living in areas around the reserve Aboriginal people most strongly connected with, and identified as, La Perouse residents.

Local employment opportunities for Aboriginal people increased after World War II as industry developed in the district, and many Aboriginal workers filled positions – usually lower paid roles – in offensive industries (such as the foul-smelling wool scouring and tanning factories) often working beside post-war immigrants. Aboriginal women also worked in the surrounding factories and as domestic staff.

The 1960s and early 1970s was a time of increased political action by Aboriginal people and a greater recognition of the rights of Aboriginal people and concern for their well-being by the wider population. This was a period of the “Freedom Rides” (1965), Federal Referendum on status of Aboriginal people (1967) and establishment of the Aboriginal Tent Embassy in Canberra (1972). A NSW Legislative Assembly “Select Committee Upon Aborigines” was set up in 1978 and established two reports, the first in 1980 and the second in 1981. These resulted in establishment of the NSW Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs in 1981 and the NSW Aboriginal Land Rights Act 1983. Consequently, the residents of the La Perouse reserve filed a land claim to have ownership of the reserve lands passed to them, and in 1984 the newly formed La Perouse Local Aboriginal Land Council was presented with the title to the area. The Land Council’s first Chairman Tom Williams said at the time “*we always considered it our own*”. The Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council was also established at this time.

These trends toward self-determination also saw a range of Aboriginal service, welfare and support organisations – as well as numerous government agencies – be established and evolve over the subsequent decades.

Many Aboriginal people migrated to Sydney in the late 20th century in search of jobs and to be with family. La Perouse and the surrounding areas attracted a considerable proportion of this migration, as well

as natural growth in the city's Aboriginal population. The former City of Botany Bay's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population has steadily grown over these decades – from 1.4% of the LGA's population in 1996 to 1.8% (632 people) in 2006.

2.1.9 SITES OF IMPORTANCE TO THE ABORIGINAL COMMUNITY IN THE FORMER CITY OF BOTANY BAY

The topography and landforms of the Botany District (both within the LGA and beyond) influenced the type, location and density of sites that would have been present at the time of European settlement. The sandy nature of the area, with fewer rock outcrop and stone shelters or overhangs, would have skewed toward a greater number of “open” sites as well as foreshore and waterway sites (most notably middens). However the survival of these, and all, sites has been very strongly influenced by subsequent European land uses and disturbance.

While Aboriginal heritage sites are protected under current legislation, and are therefore perceived “legally” and among the general community to be of value, it is not necessarily the case that all sites are of paramount or equal value to Aboriginal people or that Aboriginal peoples' cultural focus is on sites alone. The full cultural significance of a site, place, collection of sites or a landscape – individually, collectively and with other places (both known and “undisclosed”) – is more appropriately determined by the Aboriginal people themselves.

The relationship comprises many inter-related features – physical, social and spiritual – including climate and weather, land and patterns on the land, waters, plants and animals, significant places and stories, historic and contemporary events and land uses, built locations, and people and their interactions with each other and with places.

There are many Aboriginal sites scattered in and around the Botany Bay LGA, including about thirty sites in Botany Bay National Park, which include rock carvings, burial sites, axe grinding grooves and places that show evidence of Aboriginal occupation. Significant sites within the LGA include:

- a historical burial on the East Lakes Golf Course (now possibly re-interred elsewhere);

THEMATIC HISTORY - FORMER CITY OF BOTANY BAY

- the former gardens of the Sir Joseph Banks Hotel, now part of the Sir Joseph Banks Pleasure Gardens (significant for its location and as a site of considerable interaction between Aboriginal people and European settlers during the second half of the 19th century and the site of a possible Aboriginal campsite);
- a historical campsite on the foreshore of Botany Bay (now most probably part of the botany Bay golf course);
- the waters and shoreline of Botany Bay, as a culturally important location for traditional, historic and contemporary use;
- the Botany wetlands, as a culturally important location for traditional, historic and contemporary use;
- a possible midden site, on or just behind the north-eastern Botany Bay foreshore (exact location uncertain)

For a more extensive list and explanation of sites of Aboriginal importance, and for more information on the history of Aboriginal people in the Botany Bay and La Perouse area, please see Bayside Council's *Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Study and Plan for the City of Botany Bay* (2011) written by Alan Ginns and Pamela Fletcher of Gondwana Consulting Pty Ltd with Dr Iain Stuart, JCIS Consultants.



Fig 2.1.11 Some of the Aboriginal heritage sites within the former Botany Bay LGA.

Note that the locations shown are indicative only.

1. Course burial
2. Botany wetlands resources area
3. Shell midden
4. Historic campsite
5. Historic campsite
6. Botany Bay resources area

THEME 2.2 CONVICT

The relevant national-level theme is *'peopling Australia'*. The relevant state theme is *'convict'*. The Local themes within this theme are activities relating to incarceration, transport, reform, accommodation and working during the convict period in NSW (1788-1850). The following activities and places in the former Botany Bay LGA are relevant to this theme:

- Early settlement by emancipists
- Simeon Lord and his industrial enterprises

Related themes:

3.4 Environment and cultural landscape - Botany Wetlands

3.9 Industry

4.1 Land tenure

4.2 Towns, suburbs and villages

9.2 Persons

2.2.1 EARLY SETTLEMENT BY EMANCIPISTS

Many of the early promises of land grants in the area were made to emancipists by Governor Lachlan Macquarie, consistent with his policies of rehabilitation and settlement of the convict population.

2.2.2 SIMEON LORD AND HIS INDUSTRIAL ENTERPRISES

Simeon Lord (1770-1840) was born in Todmorden, Lancashire England in 1771. When he was 19 years of age he was tried and found guilty of stealing 100 yards of muslin and 100 yards of calico, numbering 21 pieces of cloth altogether. His father was a handloom weaver, therefore Lord had grown up in the cloth, fabric and mill environment. If Lord had stolen just a fraction more to make a shilling's worth, he would have been sentenced to the death penalty. Instead he was sentenced to transportation to New South Wales and arrived on board the *Atlantic* in August 1791 as part of the Third Fleet. Ironically, stealing cloth was Lord's crime, yet making and selling it in the colony would bring Lord wealth and status likely greater than would ever have been achievable in England.

Lord saw out his full term of seven years, but during his sentence he began his early career as an auctioneer, steadily acquiring finance and powerful connections in the colony. He became a shrewd businessman, ship builder and owner, trader, sealing pioneer and a hat manufacturer, (many titles he held while still serving out his sentence). In 1798 he purchased a cottage in Bridge Street near Pitt Street, later known as Macquarie Place. Various portions of Lord's city holdings were later reclaimed by Governor Macquarie and as recompense Macquarie promised Lord a valuable harbourside dock, which would have suited his growing shipping interests.



Fig 2.2.1 (left) Simeon Lord c. 1830.

Fig 2.2.2 (right) Mary Hyde (Lord's wife) c. 1854-1865. Photographer unknown.

Ambrotype of Mary Hyde (Mrs Simeon Lord) 2015, Museum of Applied Arts & Sciences, accessed 12 September 2017, <<https://ma.as/76858>>



When this promise was never realised, Governor Darling later gave Lord both financial compensation and additional large land grants elsewhere in NSW. These grants included land in Petersham, Field of Mars (Ryde), Dobroyd, Penrith, Cowra, Orange and Tasmania, making Lord the sixth wealthiest man in the colony in 1822, and by 1828 the wealthiest landowner.

Lord's first land acquisition at Botany was in 1812 when he received 135 acres originally granted to Edward Redmond. At the time Lord was eagerly experimenting with new and exciting industrial ventures. Lord was investing time and money into researching dye manufacturing at this time, so when he acquired the land at Botany - which was sited strategically at the edge of a freshwater wetland - Lord wasted no time in constructing a fulling, or wool, mill.

Fulling involves two processes - scouring and milling (thickening). Fulling or tucking is a step in woollen cloth making which involves the cleansing of cloth (particularly wool) to eliminate oils, dirt and other impurities and to make it thicker. The waterwheel drives the carding machine which prepares the wool for spinning. These are followed by stretching the cloth on large frames (tenting). Simeon Lord was the first man to make cloth directly from Australian wool and at the Botany mill he manufactured clothes, stockings, blankets, flannels and hats. Lord's products began to be recognised for their high quality which were considered to rival those produced in England.

The following year, in 1813, Lord and his business partner at the time,

John Hutchinson, submitted a Memorial to Governor Macquarie to be granted exclusive rights to the waters of the wetlands, including the right to create dams and water races to help power Lord's mills. The application also made clear that Lord and Hutchinson were worried that future Governors would not be so supportive and would attempt to limit their access to the resource (see Figure 4.1.3 for a copy and transcript of this letter). Macquarie looked favourably on the request, but it took until 27 May 1823 for Governor Brisbane to execute the formal grant of 600 acres, which extended Lord's holding over the whole of the lower wetlands.

Lord states in the Memorial that the Governor had already promised land for his factory and cottages for workers and had not waited for the grant to be formalised. By 1813 he had damned the wetlands to create Mill Pond to provide the water to power the colony's first private woollen mill. The mill was built over the waters of the pond, powered by two undershot 8-15hp waterwheels. An undershot wheel is a vertically mounted water wheel that is rotated by water striking paddles or blades. The name undershot comes from this striking action at the bottom of the wheel. This type of waterwheel is the oldest type, often regarded as the least efficient, but is simple and inexpensive to build. It is not always the best solution in areas that are prone to drought or intermittent water supply, but this was not of concern to Lord given that he had assumed access to the waters of the Botany aquifer.

By 1815 Lord had constructed a second dam, known as Engine Pond, and started to build a three-storey flourmill powered by one undershot wheel where the outflow from the pond met the Cooks River.

In 1816 Lord applied to Governor Macquarie to contract production to burl, mill, dye, dress and press cloth to be then sent to the Government factory at Parramatta to be manufactured into clothing. Lord won the contract and was requested to start production at two shillings per yard and retail it to the Government at 15 shillings per yard.

Lord employed sixty convicts at the mill, which formed a considerable proportion of his total workforce of 300. In 1823 he was granted the land requested in his 1813 Memorial. It expanded his holding by 600 acres and ensured him the rights to the waters of the Botany aquifer. Simeon Lord and his wife, Mary Hyde, took up residence at Banks

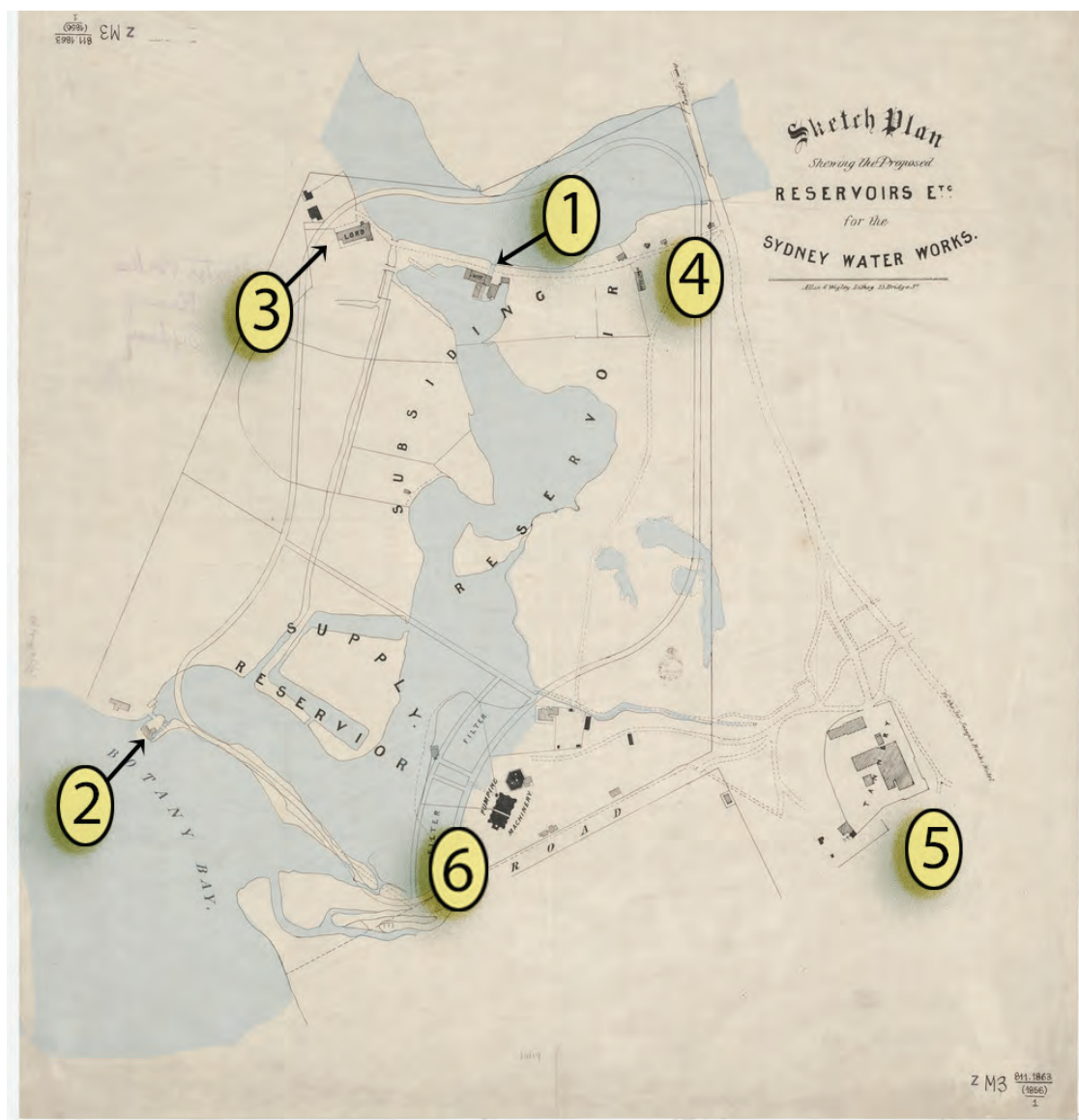


Fig. 2.2.3 1856 plan prepared during planning for the proposed construction of the waterworks showing Lord's lower dams (shaded blue to assist interpretation). The woollen cloth factory ((1) and left detail) was sited at the northern end of the Mill Pond and the flour mill was at the exit to the pond where it emptied into Botany Bay ((2), centre detail). The opening had been dammed by Lord to create the pond system. The location and footprint of Banks House, the Lord's family home, is shown at ((3), right detail). Some of his cottages for workers are also indicated (4), plus Darvall and Castella's large tannery (5). This tannery was situated between today's Byrne and Chegwyn Streets. The northern and southern halves of the Botany area had finally been linked by a bridge over the main pond and the alignment of today's Botany Road identified passing to the tannery.

The waterworks building indicated on this plan at (6) was not its final location; which was near the main outlet at (2).

Base plan: Allan & Wigley 1856, Sketch plan shewing the proposed reservoirs etc. for the Sydney water works, Allan and Wigley, Sydney. Available online at <http://trove.nla.gov.au/work/36422384>

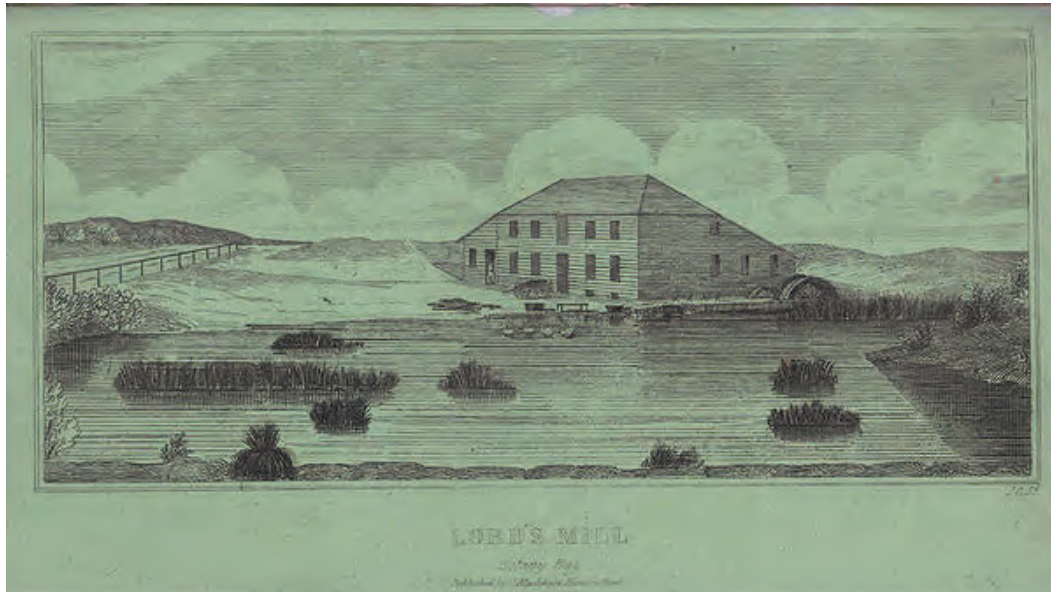


Fig. 2.2.4 (above) Pre 1838 sketch of Lord's woollen cloth factory. Comparison with the footprint of the building shown at (1) in Fig. 2.2.3 (opposite) suggests that this view was made from the eastern shore of the pond looking north-west.

Plate facing p. 175 of: *The picture of Sydney and strangers' guide in New South Wales for 1838* / James Macle hose. In Carmichael, John. & Macle hose, James. 1838, *Lord's Mill, Botany Bay* [picture] / J.C. sc. Available online at <http://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-136126304>.

Fig. 2.2.5 (below) 1847 Sketch of Simeon Lord's Flour Mill and cottage situated at the mouth of the Botany Wetlands. The cottage was located to the west of the mill, suggesting that this view was sketched from the north and looking to the waters of Botany Bay in the distance. The bridge was the only direct route between the Mudbank area to the south until the final Botany Road was built. The track then passed through the area of Booralee and thence through Byrne's Macquarie Sea View farm and parallel to the bay to the Sir Joseph Banks Hotel.

Original sketch by W.A. Miles in 1847. Reproduced in *The Sydney Mail and New South Wales Advertiser*, Saturday 6 December 1884, p.1146.



House in the 1820s and leased their city residence. Considering at the time that the Botany area was little more than swamp and scrubland, such a move says a great deal about Lord's anticipation of the mill's financial success. Lord's permanent move to the area was crucial in Botany's evolution as a suburb. Lord himself was a charismatic, well-known and influential character in the political and social scene of the early colony, having gained a long term reputation for reliability and honesty.

Not only did Lord regularly dine with the Governor of the day, but the high quality cloth products he fastidiously produced also attracted attention to the Botany mill. Trips were made to Botany to visit "Lord's mill", indeed, the two mills and then eventually his house became "sites of Sydney" visited by people as demonstrations of progress in the colony.

Lord's presence in the area put Botany 'on the map' in a way that nothing so far had yet managed to do. While many suburbs have similarly been influenced by the holdings of a prominent land owner, Botany's was notable for the particular influence of Simeon Lord. It was not Lord's popularity that brought settlement to the area; it was Lord's settlement itself that populated Botany.

Simeon Lord took an active interest in the growing community, being instigator of infrastructure such as roads and housing, and agitator for local improvement committees. The cottages Lord built for his employees were precursors to the later suburbanisation of the area (see Fig. 2.14). He leased sections of his land to market gardeners and fishermen; an action quickly mimicked by Redmond and other landowners in the area. The village of Booralee was also established within Lord's land holding by Lord's sons, Edward and George, in the 1850s and was the first private (i.e non-government) subdivision in the Botany District.

Simeon Lord died a very wealthy emancipist in 1840. Mary Hyde, Lord's wife, was made executor of his estate and continued Lord's businesses situated at his numerous holdings, including the two at Botany. In keeping with her late husband's values, Mary continued to employ many local Botany people in the milling and dressing of cloth. She remained one of the wealthiest women in the colony in her own right and continued to reside at Banks House in Botany. (As

an interesting sidenote, Mary, like Lord, had also been sentenced to transportation for stealing cloth, at age 17.)

In 1855 the City of Sydney Water Board resumed 75 acres of Botany land and wetlands which included Banks House, the cloth factory mill and the remains of the flour mill (which had been partially demolished in 1847). The precise date in which the main factory mill ceased operation is unclear, however reports generally state between 1853 and 1856. Mary Hyde took the matter to court in an effort to gain financial compensation for her land loss. As she was female, it was a landmark court case which she won in 1859 and was awarded compensation by the Privy Council in England. In that same year, the Botany Water Scheme commenced.

(facing page) Three characteristics of the development of the Botany district since first settlement by Europeans: Market gardens, transport and heavy industry. (BCHA)