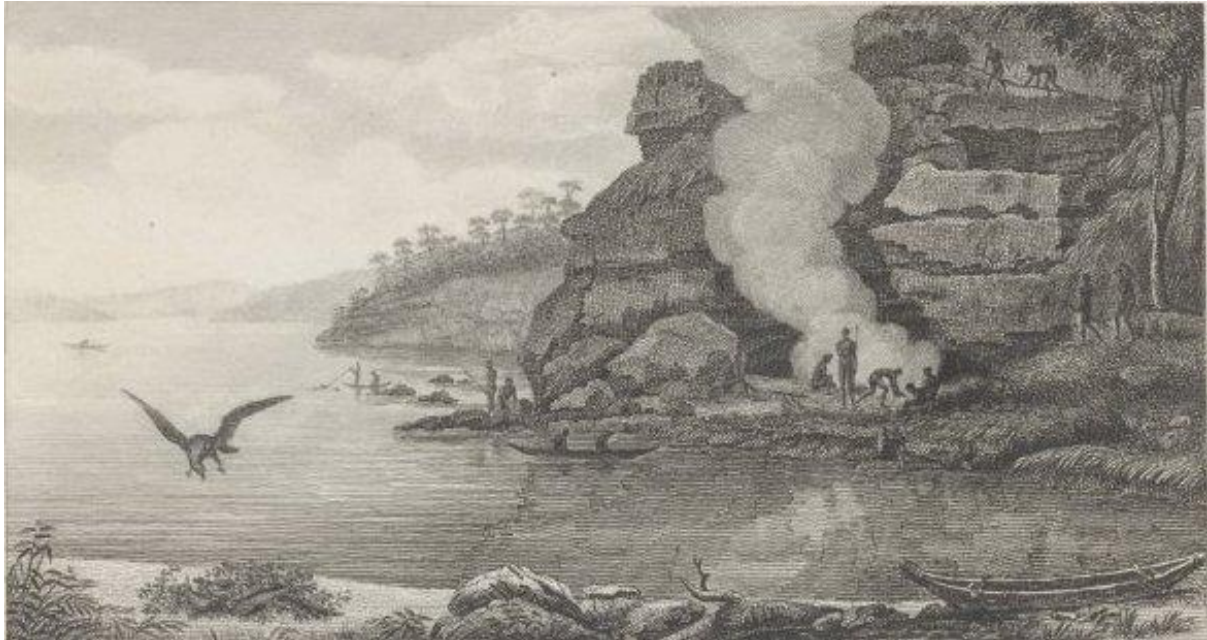


Aboriginal North Sydney

Dr Ian Hoskins, North Sydney Council Historian



This 19th century French engraving was possibly copied from artwork created in 1802 when the Baudin expedition visited Sydney. It shows Aboriginal people fishing and cooking around a rock shelter on what is apparently the north shore of Sydney Harbour. National Library of Australia

Since the discovery of burial sites near Lake Mungo in the western New South Wales in 1968, archaeologists have been revising estimates for the earliest Aboriginal occupation of Australia from 10,000 years to more than 60,000 years. This was a period of significant environmental change. Australia's ecology had been evolving throughout the last Glacial Period, or 'ice age', from 115,000 to 10,000 years ago. The range of flora and fauna changed as rainfall fluctuated and temperatures fell and rose. Animal species were particularly affected - most dramatically with the disappearance of mega fauna such as the giant wombat-like creature diprotodon. With the end of the ice age both temperatures and sea levels rose bringing more ecological change. Meanwhile, Aboriginal people moved across the continent adapting to every environmental zone from the Kimberley region of Western Australia to the valleys of South Western Tasmania.

Charcoal remains near Penrith in New South Wales have been reliably dated as 14,700 years old, making it the earliest undisputed Aboriginal site in the greater

Sydney area. Another nearby may be older than 40,000 years, mirroring the span of human occupation in other parts of the continent. (Attenbrow, 2002, pp.20-21)

North Sydney, too, is rich in Aboriginal culture and history. Radiometric dating indicates that people were living in the North Sydney area - at present-day Cammeray - at least 5,800 years ago. By this time the last ice age had ended and water levels risen to create Sydney Harbour and its river valleys. The landforms and waterways familiar to these people would have differed little from those that confronted European colonists in the late 18th century.



This is possibly the first depiction of Cammeraygal territory. It is a detail of a map of Port Jackson/ Sydney Harbour with water depth soundings created by Captain John Hunter in 1788. Balls Head is at the top left. Note the number of freshwater streams flowing into the Harbour. That opposite 'Sydney Cove' is emptying into Lavender Bay, called Gooneehabree by the Cammeraygal. National Library of Australia

In many parts of the continent, particularly northern and central Australia, Aboriginal lore and custom has been recounted by elders and knowledge holders from within the culture. So devastating was the social dislocation and dispossession

which immediately followed colonisation in the late 1700s, that the first-hand 'historical' accounts of colonists sometimes offer the only surviving records of the living culture at this time. The archaeological record tends to be much older. But however much the early colonists were interested observers, they were not trained ethnographers and the records they left are incomplete and often contradictory. They judged the people they encountered in the context of their time, often with a sense of entitlement to the territory they were occupying and little idea of the length of time Aboriginal people had lived around the Harbour. The colonists were loyal subjects and officers of King George III and did not question the claim made to the east coast of Australia by James Cook in 1770. The historical record, therefore, is replete with biases, silences, contradictions and prejudices.

Nonetheless we know that Indigenous people of the wider Sydney area were not of one 'tribe'. There were several language groups, each comprised of different clans occupying different territories. These people were not nomads. The earliest colonial accounts made a distinction between 'woods' people to the west as far as Parramatta, and 'sea coast' people to the east within Sydney Harbour as it is presently understood. Governor Arthur Phillip noted that the formidable Cammeraygal (Gammeraigal) inhabited 'the north west side of Port Jackson'. That territory is now thought to extend from Cremorne in the east, to Woodford Bay in the west, and probably to Middle Harbour which forms a natural boundary to the north.

Phillip also referred to a group called the Wallumedegal who occupied the 'opposite shore'. That somewhat vague reference has sometimes been taken to include present-day North Sydney. It is more likely that Wallumedegal country extended from the Lane Cove westward to Parramatta.

In 1790, Phillip made one of the first records of Aboriginal naming in the north Sydney area, referring to the district on the 'north west part of this harbour' as 'Cammerra' with its 'chief' named 'Cammerragal' (*Historical Records of NSW*, Vol.1 p.309.) Phillip did not understand clan structure when writing this, as a singular chief was not typically found in Aboriginal groups. One of his senior officers, John Hunter, wrote that Camme-or-gal was 'a great warrior' of whom the British had 'heard much' and who 'lives in the interior part of the country'. He followed that with an apparently unrelated reference to the 'tribe of Cammera' from 'the north side of Port Jackson'. Cammera, therefore, seems to be the name for present-day North Sydney. A painting of a man called Cammeragal was created in the first years of colonisation but this individual does not appear in the record at any other time raising questions about the accuracy of the account. If there was a single dominant

warrior figure for the north shore one might expect he would be regularly involved in interactions with the newcomers.

The name Eora is often used to refer to Aboriginal people from the Sydney area, particularly around the Harbour. 'Eora Nation' is a term frequently applied to the various clans of the Sydney coastal area in present-day discussion. The word 'Eo-ra' was recorded by various early colonists. Captain John Hunter who arrived in 1788 and compiled a list of several dozen Sydney words, defined it as 'Men or People'. It was rarely equated with a locality or territory. At some point in the 20th century it came to be applied specifically to Sydney people. It has since been used to denote a collective identity for those people. (Attenbrow, pp.35-36)

No single contemporary name is recorded for the language spoken by Aboriginal people in the Sydney area at the time of colonisation. The range and number of language groups and dialects is a source of ongoing debate. The Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council, which officially represents Aboriginal interests in central metropolitan areas such as North Sydney, maintains that the original inhabitants of the north shore were part of the Guringai (Kur-ing-gai) language group. Other linguists believe that a coastal form of the western Sydney language Dharug was spoken in Port Jackson. In the absence of conclusive linguistic evidence, some researchers refer simply to a 'Sydney language'. (See Troy, 1994)

Lists of Sydney words compiled by Europeans from the late 1700s may, therefore, include terms from various languages or dialects. They record words such as 'badu' meaning water and 'yanada' for moon. 'Barani' meant yesterday and 'barrabugu' was the word for tomorrow. These were living, dynamic language systems. The arrival of the First Fleet prompted local people to join the word for big, 'marri', with 'nuwi' meaning canoe, to create a new word 'marrinuwi' for big ship. 'Barawal', meaning far distant, also referred to England. Many words adopted by the colonists are still recognisable today. For instance, 'warada', an Indigenous name for the spectacular red flower common to the sandstone country around Sydney, became waratah.

JF Mann, a resident of Neutral Bay for many years from the 1860s, assembled a list of words that he obtained from the son of Bungaree and Cora 'Queen' Gooseberry, two Aboriginal people prominent around Sydney Harbour in the first three decades of the 19th century. Neither were Cammeray people but Mann specifically described the words as 'Cammeray' terms. Some accord with known pre-contact Sydney terms, others refer to things that could only have been encountered after the arrival of the British, such as horse, sulky and bullock. Just how specific the words were to the Cammeraygal is unclear for, as suggested, there was a shared language around the

Aboriginal names continued -

Run. Corongala

Yro. Bulah-Bulvarra

Speak. Weah

Always. Jerrum

Sometimes ^{for} Kurrebo

Sleep. Brigela

Come back tomorrow. Jamine Kooruba

Blow hard. Butterbarine

Behind. Keelong

Before. Nontongi

Water hole. Bingeye

Branch. Jerru

Full up. very full. Wronmilmit

Empty. Wurrung

Come along. Ki barley or Wardia barley

Make haste. Kringking

Come with me to [place], Wardia Barley [place]

Let us drink water. Bichala barley Karkum

Look out for honey. Gervalla Koorvung

Call out. Wacha a curry

Climb up. Cully. no. nil go bang

Give it to me. Moidia

Where is the money? Wanna money?

I have got it. Unde or unne. - Here it is

How much. Minyan

What do you say. Minging

What for? Minyan

Walk in. Murraring Walla

Hold your tongue. Korum

Do you want my blanket. Worbaun Blanket

Go and fetch it ^{come go} Kikumda ^{take} mara

Take it. Maria (Pick it up)

Come here. Undeki

Nice dog. Maron Warragal

Here. Neah

Climb up. Unde margin

Turn out early. Korgina Worgia

Cleaver fellow. Bonga

Traverse. Koorvungerry - covering of any sort

Do you want trousers? Mutine Koorvungerry

Come out and fish. Karkorra barley

... shoot. Bengalee barley

Very frightened. Kuidya

To roast ^{cook} food. Kibela

Where are you going to. Wanderrube

Yes. - How? ^{and} and by the women only

That will do. Wurrung. Unde by ja

Tired. Miera Koorvung

You hear it? Kurrulla

Listen. -

Come back again. Kolumbulla

Look out. open. Muraun jine bau

Do you want tea? Wierbe ta?

Very hungry. Yori nun bau

Very thirsty. Gullung

Take care. mind yourself. Maron. oomiltarie

When. Jahquanda

Do not know, Markamali. a doubt

Belong to another man. Jerrigoba

You made it. Jarbilla

Very hot. Worr

Saw the devil dust. Nagularbau. Bottom

I forgot. Worrubau

Light the candle. Bartlebung millar

Sharpen the tomahawk. Kumbala Mago

Clean the gun. Bourraa mulla. Bonul

What are you going to do. Minyanbaugunde

It is. Jah

One of five pages of names recorded by JF Mann, 'Aboriginal names and words of the Cammeray Tribe, [between 1884-1907]' State Library of NSW

harbour. In any case, groups merged through the 19th century in the wake of colonisation. Among the words listed by Mann were 'Bunna' for rain, 'Kelly' for lightning, 'Wallerling' for head and 'Mooraine' for ear. 'Kindulin' meant laugh and 'Tungulene' was the word for cry. Not all the terms noted by Mann accord with those recorded by John Hunter in the years immediately following the arrival of the British.

Just as the use of Aboriginal place names today is an acknowledgement of the long Indigenous occupation of North Sydney, so too the archaeological evidence that dots the landscape of Balls Head, Berry Island, Kirribilli, Cammeray and Cremorne is testimony to the presence of the original owners of this place. Jenny Munro, former Chairperson of the Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council, notes that the approximately 4,000 sites contained in the Sydney region 'are the only indigenous art sites of such magnificence and magnitude that are to be found in a large cosmopolitan city anywhere in the world'. (in Popp et al, p.5)

In the Warringah, Willoughby, Lane Cove and North Sydney Council areas alone there are approximately 1,000 Aboriginal sites including middens, rock engravings, axe grinding grooves, carved trees and stone arrangements. David Watts, Aboriginal Heritage Manager for these Councils, maintains that these are 'still in reasonable condition' and hold 'key secrets to our country's history'.

North Sydney's foreshore areas have some of the finest cultural sites on the lower north shore. Hand stencils and drawings are still visible in some large caves and rock shelters. There are two major engravings accessible to the public. One, on Berry Island, depicts a large sea creature – possibly a fish or a whale. Nearby is a small hollowed out rock basin with grinding grooves next to it – the result of shaping implements.

A second engraving on a sandstone platform near Balls Head shows a large whale or fish with a human figure inside. After visiting the site in the 1990s Gerry Bostock, a Bundjalung man from the far north coast of New South Wales, gave the following interpretation of the image and the site:

This is a place of learning, a place of ceremonies, a place where the whales were sung in to shore. Whales beaching themselves in the Harbour were a great source of food. The man in the whale is a clever fella. It looks like he's got a club foot, but that represents the feathers he wore on his

feet so he did not make footprints... having no neck he was also the Creator. (in Hoskins, p.9)



The carving of a whale or fish at Balls Head, photograph taken around 1900, Stanton Library

A rock shelter at Balls Head was investigated by anthropologists from the Australian Museum in 1964 and 1971. The skeleton of a female was discovered either interred or abandoned in the rock shelter. A small tooth, with traces of vegetable gum, found near the skeleton suggests that the woman had adorned her hair or wore a necklace.

As many as 450 artefacts were recovered from various layers of soil in the shelter. Aboriginal people used good quality stone to create different tools and implements. Most of the artefacts recovered at Balls Head were microliths, waste flakes from large tool manufacture and small stone tools such as barbs. Food remains consisted almost entirely of shellfish. The main species were the rock oyster, the hairy mussel and the Sydney cockle and mud oyster, both of which are now virtually extinct in Port Jackson. Glass of European origin was also found, though this may have dated to the earliest years of colonisation when the site was still inhabited by Aborigines.

Lead in the form of fishing sinkers and possibly gunshot suggested a later European use.

The report did not attempt to date any of the remains but did conclude that the site had been used by women who gathered shellfish, and men who made and repaired implements. (Bowdler, 1971).

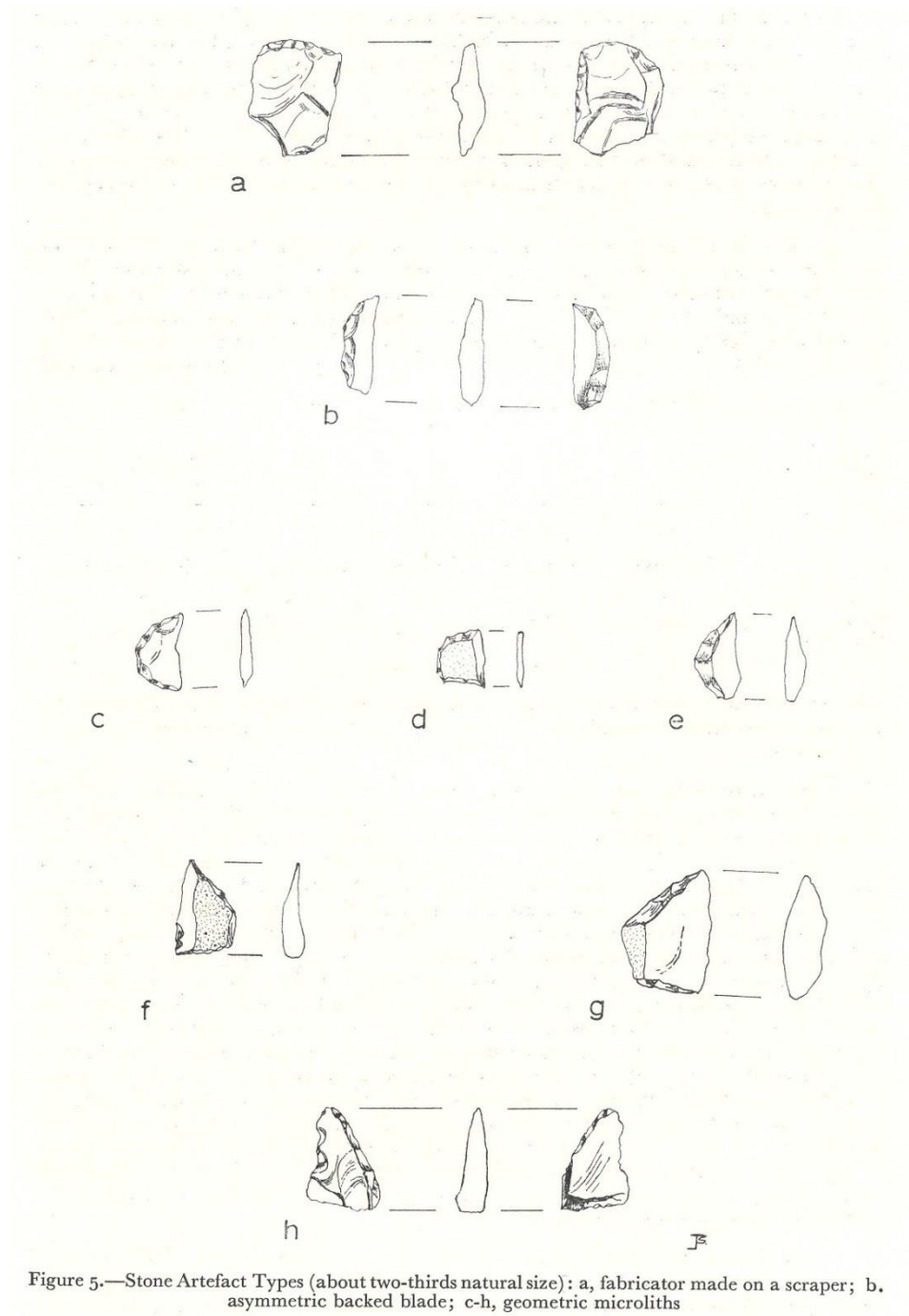


Figure 5.—Stone Artefact Types (about two-thirds natural size): a, fabricator made on a scraper; b, asymmetric backed blade; c-h, geometric microliths

Stone artefacts found at Balls Head, from Sandra Bowdler, 'Balls Head: The Excavation of a Port Jackson Rock Shelter', Records of the Australian Museum, October 1971

Aboriginal spirituality survives across Australia – in rural and urban settings. There is no single religion or set of beliefs. However, a profound relationship between Indigenous people and ‘country’ is a central element in this spirituality. This relationship is often encrypted in artwork such as that still produced throughout central and northern Australia. Other common elements are a belief in an eternal earth shaped by ancestral figures, the importance of family, the significance of particular animals in creation or Dreaming stories and the ongoing relevance of Dreaming in the present. Sacred knowledge is often segregated according to gender – sometimes referred to as ‘men’s business’ and ‘women’s business’.

Little specific information about the belief systems of the Sydney Aborigines has survived. Archaeologist Val Attenbrow argues that later studies of Aboriginal people to the north and south of Sydney point to a common spirituality operating along coastal New South Wales from the South Coast to as far as north as Port Macquarie. From these we can deduce central aspects from the religious beliefs of the Sydney Aborigines – including the Cammeraygal.

It was commonly held that a male ancestral figure formed the land, the waterways, the law and customs during the Dreaming. This was a past creation time which was, nonetheless, intricately linked to the present and the future. The supreme creation being was referred to as Baiame. Another figure, Daramulan, was sometimes called Baiame’s son or brother. In some areas these names referred to the same being. Daramulan’s thunderous voice was imitated in ceremonies by the whirring sound of the bull-roarer. Engraved figures thought to represent these beings survive in sandstone outcrops near West Head – the country of the Guringai people in far northern Sydney.

Other spirits and supernatural figures inhabited the bush. Many were malevolent creatures that threatened death or injury to those who ventured into the dark or to particular sites such as waterholes or caves. Around Sydney they were called *mané*. (Attenbrow, p.130) The Bunyip, still a popular figure in Australian children’s literature, derives from these earlier Aboriginal beliefs.

Totemism is another important part of Aboriginal spirituality. It expresses the relationship between a person or group of people and a plant, animal or object

(Attenbrow, 128-130). In South Eastern Australia, each family clan had a totem – usually an animal – derived from the father or mother’s brother. Individuals may have had more than one totem relating to significant sites such as one’s birthplace. When a woman married into a clan from another group she brought with her established totems and affiliations to her previous place. Totemic creatures may also have influenced the names given to children. They figured in Dreaming stories of creation and featured in the initiation ceremonies and rites of passage that were particularly important in south-eastern Australian Aboriginal cultures.

Several early colonial accounts noted that the Cammeraygal presided over some of the rituals of other Port Jackson aborigines. In 1795 Judge-Advocate David Collins recorded in detail an elaborate ceremony in which Cammeraygal men alone performed ritual tooth evulsion (removal) upon uninitiated boys from other groups. At a carefully prepared oval-shaped site on the south side of the harbour called Yoolahng - near the shorefront of the present-day Royal Botanic Gardens - the men of other clans awaited the arrival of the Cammeraygals:

It was not until the 2nd of February that the party was complete. In the evening of that day the people from Cammer-ray arrived, among whom were those who were to perform the operation, all of whom appeared to have been impatiently expected by the other natives. They were painted in the manner of the country, were mostly provided with shields, and all armed with clubs, spears and throwing sticks.

Before the ritual commenced, a Cammeraygal ‘Carrahdis’ (*karadjis*), - practitioner of healing and the supernatural - ‘fell upon the ground, and throwing himself into a variety of attitudes... appeared to be at length delivered of a bone, which was to be used during the ensuing ceremony’ (Collins, p.565). Attenbrow argues that details in this account are similar to those recorded later in the Lake Macquarie region and, to a lesser extent, the south coast suggesting ‘that they belonged to the same religious system’ (Attenbrow, p.133).

However, in more recent times, the role of the Cammeraygal in these rituals has been questioned. Michael Powell and Rex Heseline suggested ‘Cammera’ was a misunderstanding of the word ‘Gommera’, which referred to ‘magic men’ or spiritual leaders. In this reading, those who presided over the ceremony witnessed by David

Collins were Gommera not men from the north shore. (Powell and Hesline, 2010, pp.121-124)

When read carefully colonial accounts, such as that of David Collins, complement the information gleaned from the archaeological record. Collins was one of a number of Europeans who arrived with the 'First Fleet' in 1788, keen to record their new environment in keeping with the prevailing European ideas of science and philosophy. Others, such as the new Governor Arthur Phillip, Captain Watkin Tench, and Lieutenant William Dawes left detailed accounts of the early years of the colony, many of which include descriptions of the Indigenous people and their languages and practices. Such was the European interest in foreign lands and peoples that some of these 'first' colonists entered into publishing contracts before they left.



'Yoo-long Erab-ba-diang'. This was the 7th image reproduced in David Collins and showed the act of tooth removal or evulsion. Upon losing his tooth the newly initiated man received a wooden 'sword' belt, and head band as seen here being worn by initiated men

Europeans noted the significance of the sea as a source of food for Aboriginal people. Indeed, Watkin Tench thought that the Cammeraygal possessed the best fishing grounds in Port Jackson (Tench, p.285). Snapper, bream and leatherjacket are known to be among the species caught. They were speared by men from the shore or caught by line and shell hook by women in canoes. Sea urchin, shellfish and other foodstuff might be thrown into the water to attract the fish.

Tench observed that men tended to make spears and wooden tools and weapons while women made and used the fishing lines and fish hooks. He was especially impressed by the latter: 'the fish hooks are chopped with stone out a particular shell, and afterwards rubbed until they become smooth...considering the quickness with which they are finished the excellence of the work, if it be inspected, is admirable'. (Tench, p.284) Rock oysters, cockles, mussels and clams were also consumed, opened either with a thumbnail or stone oyster hammer. Shell middens can still be seen in several North Sydney locations – a record both of countless meals and the type of food that was eaten.

Where the harbour was a regular food source, the forest surrounding it was apparently relatively little used. David Collins noted that 'The woods, exclusive of the animals which they occasionally find in their neighbourhood, afford them but little sustenance; a few berries, the yam and fern-root, the flowers of different banksia, and at times some honey, make up the whole vegetable catalogue'. The observation may have overstated the distinction between food sources, but it certainly underlined a difference between those Aboriginal groups which occupied interior tracts and those, like the Cammeraygal, whose territories included foreshore.

Burning country was something undertaken by both woods and coast people. John Hunter described extensive fires around Sydney in August 1791: 'Some natives were likewise burning the ground on the north side of the harbour, opposite the settlement'. It was a practice, he noted, 'constantly' done when the weather was dry (Hunter, p.361). 'Firestick farming' is the term given to the practice of burning land to create new green shoots and thereby attract kangaroos for hunting. That almost certainly resulted in the pasture-like country the colonists observed to the west and south west of Sydney Cove. But it is probable that the use of fire on the steep and rocky ridges and drops of the north shore was primarily a means of controlling undergrowth in order to minimise the chance of catastrophic summer fires and to ease travel through forest and heath, rather than create pasture.



*This 1875 photograph of the Berry's Bay foreshore shows uncleared forest, much of it probably *Angophora costata*, extending right down to the foreshore. Earlier artworks suggest that the country around Milsons Point was more heath like. Detail from 'Holtermann Panorama', State Library of New South Wales*



This 19th century engraving is probably of French origin copying artwork created during the visit to Sydney Harbour by the French in 1802. The image shows the four pronged fishing spear typically used by Harbour clans. The body markings, made from white clay, are characteristic as is the head cloth and the shape and decoration of the shield. The lean muscularity of the man's physique accords with early descriptions. The possum has probably been included for zoological interest. Stanton Library collection

These early colonial accounts are complex records. Historian and anthropologist Inga Clenndinnen argues that they can reveal something of the worldviews and actions of those caught up in this crucial early period of interaction. Descriptions of events and interactions are particularly important: 'we have to get inside episodes, which means setting ourselves to understand our subjects' changing motivations and moods in their changing contexts'. To do so allows us to appreciate the Aborigines as a 'high spirited militant people' who were protagonists trying to deal intelligently with the dramatic changes confronting them (Clenndinnen, pp.286-287). There was also genuine empathy in the colonial accounts - acknowledgement of the humanity and intelligence of the Aborigines.

The Europeans had intruded upon a society in which many clan groups related to each other within a complex system of customs, beliefs, mutual obligations and rituals. There were parallels here to the ways in which European nations practiced diplomacy and trade. The 'robust and muscular' Cammeraygals apparently enjoyed a powerful place within this network. Estimates of Sydney clan sizes suggest that there may have been as many as 50 or 60 Cammeraygal people in 1788. The population around Sydney has been estimated between 1500 and 3000. (Attenbrow, pp.17-23,29). The north shore clan was, in Collins' observation, the most numerous and formidable Aboriginal group in the area, to whom went the 'privilege' of presiding over rituals involving other groups: 'Many contests or decisions of honour... have been delayed until the arrival of these people... it was impossible not to observe the superiority and influence which their numbers and their muscular appearance gave them over the other tribes.' (Collins, vol.1, p.456.)

However, Collins and others were recording a culture that was already changing. The European invasion had had an immediate and devastating effect upon Aborigines. As early as 1789 a disease that was possibly small pox, *galla galla* in the local language, had halved Sydney's Aboriginal population. There were perhaps fewer than 1000 people in the region. The relative power and authority of the Cammeraygal probably predated the arrival of Europeans but, as Watkin Tench noted in the 1790s, the North Shore group had 'suffered less from the ravages of the small pox' than other groups and this may have contributed further to their standing (Tench, p.285).

If the spread of disease altered the political and social balance among the Sydney groups, so too did the presence of the Europeans themselves. Politics, for instance, underpinned the friendship between the prominent Wangal man Baneelon (Bennelong) and Governor Phillip. Indeed, the Aboriginal man had first been captured and brought forcibly into the European camp in an endeavour to learn

more about the local people. Phillip also hoped Baneelon might act as an intermediary between whites and blacks – one who might facilitate a peaceful transition to European domination.

Baneelon eventually lived willingly among the Europeans, using his relationship with Phillip to his own advantage. Recognising this new power and authority, the Wangal man frequently spoke of his hostility towards the north shore people and urged Phillip to attack both the powerful Cammeraygal and Botany Bay group to the south. On another occasion he saw fit to foster a truce between those groups and the Europeans, assuring Phillip that these were ‘good men’ who would throw no more spears. (Hunter, p.327) The rigidly enforced system of marriage that outlawed unions within clans could cut across these enmities. Baneelon married a Cammeraygal woman despite his general hostility towards her clan.

Inter-clan marriages such as this meant that Cammeraygal women like Barangaroo frequented both sides of the harbour and interacted with the Europeans who had not yet ‘settled’ the north shore. The colonial accounts portray her as a spirited person who visited Sydney town, and the Governor’s compound, at will. She defied overtures to cover herself when in the European settlement and chose to remain naked whether in town or bush, occasionally adorning her pierced nose with a bone or stick. Barangaroo responded to violence with remarkable defiance – whether that meant confronting aggression from Aboriginal men or the harsh ‘justice’ of the European penal system. On one occasion she intervened in the flogging of a convict by attacking the soldier carrying out the sentence.

When Barangaroo died in early 1790s she was given a traditional burial. Her body was cremated on a funeral pyre of wood and grass accompanied by a basket and some fishing equipment she had used and a burial mound, or tumulus, was constructed around her remains.

Meanwhile, Arthur Phillip was wrestling with the practicalities and paradoxes of his imperial task. He had been charged with both ‘taking possession’ of a land without owners or sovereigns - ‘terra nullius’ - and of opening a peaceful intercourse with the original inhabitants of that land. The assumption that Aborigines did not own their land because they simply ranged over it without political organisation was contradicted by Phillip’s own observations of Aboriginal territoriality.

These ambiguities meant that the status of Aborigines under British law was also uncertain. Were they subjects of the crown? Did they have legal protection? Could

they testify in court? These unresolved issues would cloud the fate of Australia's original inhabitants for the next 200 years.

That this interaction occurred between two profoundly different cultures with no common language made the endeavour even more fraught. In the first years of colonisation several Europeans were killed by Aboriginal groups. Phillip himself was speared at Manly in 1790 during an encounter that began peacefully. In response to the fatal spearing of a game-keeper, a frustrated and angry Phillip sent out a punitive expedition to kill the 'offenders'. While this adventure was ineffective, it was part of a cycle of attack and reprisal that would intensify after Phillip's departure.

For Captain John Hunter, who recorded the incidents, this series of events was evidence of mounting Aboriginal aggression that was as unfathomable as it was unfortunate. He wrote plaintively of the need to make them understand that 'we wished to live with them on the most friendly footing, and... to promote... their comfort and happiness'. (Hunter, p.112-114).

That Hunter hardly questioned the right of the British to intrude upon the land is clear. However, several other questions arise from the account. Were the Aborigines really intending to kill the shooter? They laughed after throwing the first stone and did not follow up that attack with spears. Maybe their intent was more mischievous than murderous. Why did they allow him time to reload? And if they had intended to kill the European, might not this have been a response to his incursion on their land, his taking their game or possibly intruding on sacred ground? Was the sailor the aggressor in the eyes of the Cammeraygal and were the subsequent attacks a response to the unjustified killing of their people?

However, it also implies unremitting warfare and military-style campaigns. This better describes the later 19th century Australian frontier. The first decade of European colonisation, rather, was characterised by violent skirmishes and various acts of exchange, negotiation and support as Governor Phillip attempted to enact a peaceful seizure of land and the Aborigines came to understand the implications of the European presence.

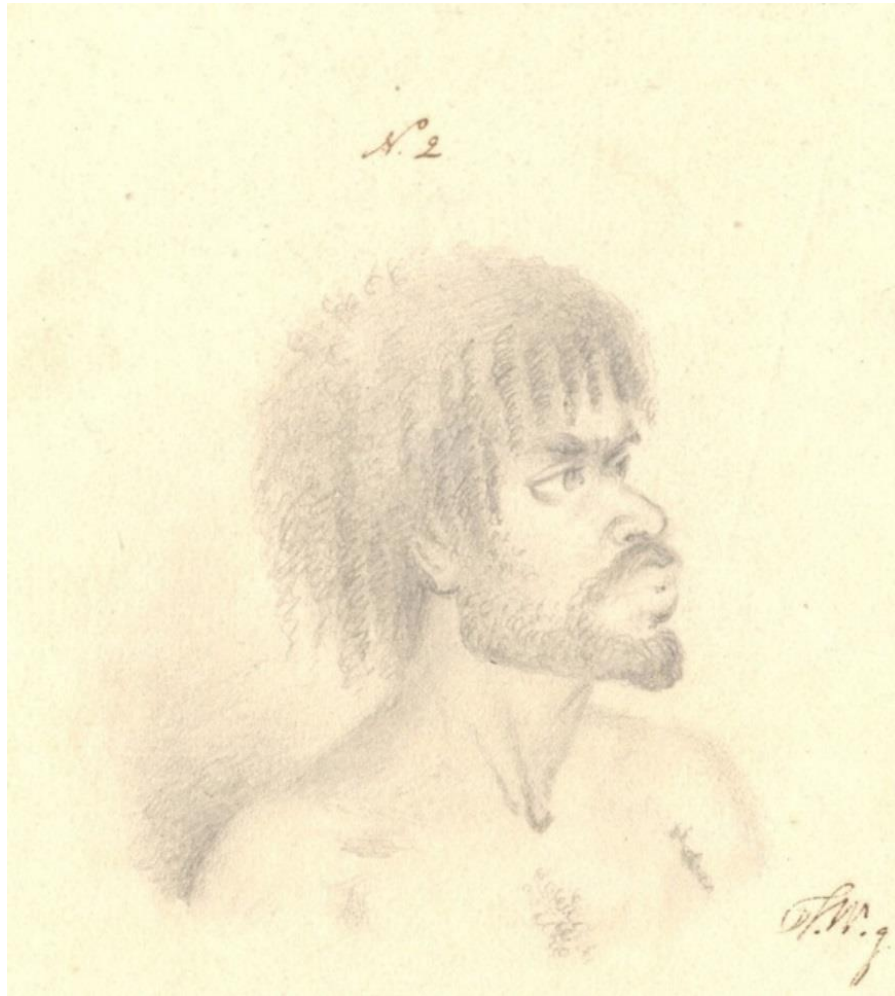
There were also friendly encounters between the north shore Aborigines and the newcomers. Watkin Tench was moved to remark upon the intelligence and presence of another young woman called Gooreedeeana who came to his hut in search of food: 'she belonged to the tribe of the Cammeraygal and rarely came among us... She excelled in beauty all the females I ever saw...' (Tench, p.276) Clearly attracted to the woman, Tench gave her as much food as he could spare. He met

Gooreedeeana on one further occasion. Then she was paddling a canoe near the entrance to the harbour apparently on her way to or from a ceremony with her body painted in broad white stripes. Gooreedeeana recognised the Englishman but maintained a discrete social and physical distance from her admirer.

Another Cammeraygal man called Carradah made the acquaintance of Lieutenant Lidgbird Ball, commander of the ship *Supply*. The relationship between the two men was significant enough for Carradah to 'exchange' names and adopt the title Mr Ball for himself (Collins, p.328). It was a gesture of friendship and respect that had marked the relationship between Baneelon and Governor Phillip. Carradah may well have aided the Lieutenant in his explorations of north shore areas such as Balls Head, which was named in the Englishman's honour. The Aboriginal name for the site has not survived in the record.

David Collins was especially impressed by Carradah's bravery during a ritual 'payback' spearing in December 1793. Dutifully confronting the relatives of a person he had injured: 'He was suffered indeed to cover himself with a bark shield, and behaved with the greatest courage and resolution'. In the first round of spearing Carradah successfully deflected the projectiles. On the second day, however, the nerves of his arm were cut leaving his left hand 'very much convulsed'. The retribution was apparently enacted between friends who remained respectful of each other. Collins was somewhat confused by the 'extraordinary' episode but aware that he had witnessed the enactment of law and custom. (Collins, p.328)

The fate of Carradah's people is unclear. The illustrations that accompanied Collins' published description of the ceremony at Yoo-lahng show as many as 15 Cammeraygal men presiding in the ritual. While they may still have held on to their power within the network of Sydney clans, they were unable to prevent the steady seizure of land that followed the departure of the cautious Governor Phillip in 1792. A year before the initiation ceremony was enacted at Yoo-lahng in 1795, 30 acres of Cammeraygal land directly across the harbour at Kirribilli had been given to the ex-convict Samuel Lightfoot. Between 1792 and 1795, 21 225 acres [8590 hectares] of 'Crown' land were 'granted' to individual Europeans around Sydney.



This is possibly the only portrait of a Cammeraygal person. Thomas Watling sketched Lieutenant Ball's friend Karra-da in the early 1790s, Natural History Museum, London

Whether the Cammeraygal were immediately aware that they had been dispossessed is unclear. In any case Lightfoot promptly sold his new 'farm' to political exile Thomas Muir who built a house there – the first European habitation on the north shore. Muir used his 'little spot of ground' for 'literary ease and retirement' (Russell, p.26). In 1800, the grant was taken over with an added 90 acres by marine, Robert Ryan. It was subsequently leased by North Shore 'pioneer' James Milson – whose family's name would come to dot the area.

In 1814 Captain John Piper acquired 700 acres extending from Neutral Bay to Middle Harbour. In 1817 another 80 acres of Cammeraygal land was given to ex-convict Billy Blue. The grant extended back from the point Aborigines had called Warungareeyuh, and Europeans came to know as Blues Point. Within five years, 524 acres of land encompassing present-day Wollstonecraft, Waverton and much of

Crows Nest was granted to the merchant Edward Wollstonecraft. With that more than half of the Cammeraygal's land had been deeded to individual colonists.

Two reports in the *Sydney Gazette* indicate that north shore Aborigines survived in some numbers and were prepared to resist these European incursions well into the early 1800s. In late August 1804, several Aborigines forced labourers on Mr Wilshire's farm at Lane Cove, an area approximately eight kilometres to the north west of Kirribilli, to cook them a feast of vegetables and poultry. The arrival of Mr Wilshire and armed reinforcements produced only 'shouts of defiance'. As shooting began, the Aborigines retreated to a waiting group of up to 200 companions - taking with them 'the servants' necessities and bedding' (*Sydney Gazette*, 2/9/1804).

The ongoing need for food seemed to be the motivation for later incidents in that area. In 1816 a group of '80 or 90' Aborigines 'plundered' maize from several Lane Cove farms (*Sydney Gazette*, 30/3/1816). Reference to these people being from 'the more retired tribes' suggests that various bands, possibly including Wallumedugal and Cammeraygal people, had joined together to form larger groups capable of successful forays onto white owned properties. Fighting continued also in Dharug country to the west of Sydney where the warrior Pemulwuy and his son Tedbury had conducted guerrilla warfare against the Europeans since the 1790s.

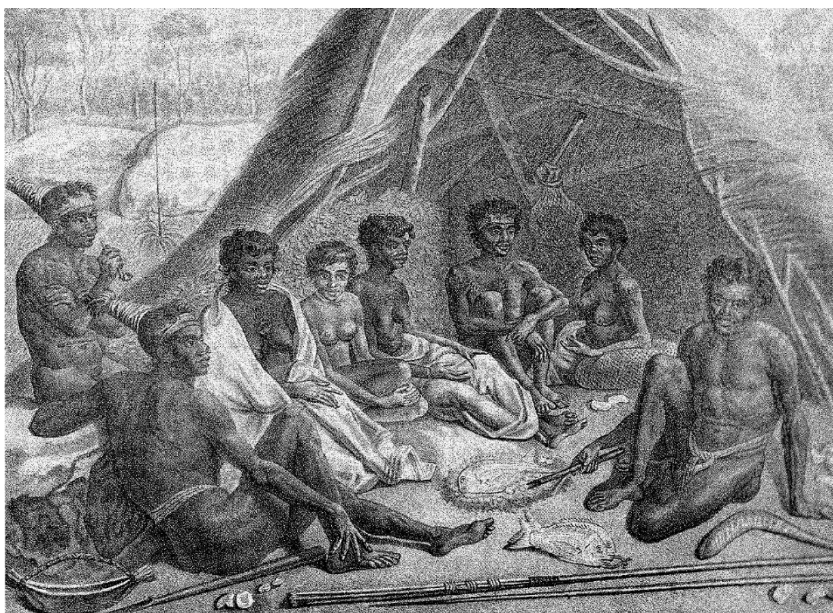
Accounts of the once formidable Cammeraygal decreased markedly after 1800. Given their escape from the worst effects of the epidemic of 1789 and the slow development on the north shore it is very probable that many survived well into the 19th century. But references to clan names were replaced by general locations and the individuals, such as Pemulwuy, who caused concern making it difficult to trace the whereabouts of the first groups. It is likely that individuals remained on their 'opposite shore' alongside members from other displaced bands. No doubt their kin and country ties remained important but these links fell from the historical record.

In 1820 the visiting Russian explorer Bellinghausen referred to the people he encountered around Kirribilli as 'Burra Burra', rather than Cammeraygal or Wallumedegal. The name came from an individual encountered on the northern foreshore in 1820 who identified himself as such and his home as 'the whole extent of the woods beyond'. The ethnologist Glynn Barratt assumes that this group were Cammeraygal but the name may also have been a derivation of Borogegal, the people who had occupied the land around Mosman and Spit Junction. (Barratt, p.61) Its

currency suggests a merging of Aboriginal bands in the wake of social dislocation. The Russians estimated that there were as many as 120 in the band.

It is equally probable, however, that Burra Burra was a reference to Bungaree, a prominent Guringai man from Broken Bay who regularly camped around the harbour. and had told the Russians that the north shore was his country. Bungaree was proclaimed 'Chief of the Broken Bay tribe' by Governor Macquarie in 1815. He was 'given' land for farming near Chowder Bay along the north shore and presented with a brass neck plaque inscribed with his 'title' – a symbol of European approval and patronage that would become widespread.

A sketch by the Russian artist Pavel Mikhailov shows a 'Burra Burra' campsite at Kirribilli in the 1820s. A family group sits in front of a sapling and brush shelter. Around them are European blankets, traditional tools and freshly caught fish. The hair of two of the men on the left is arranged in a conical style typical of the north shore Aborigines and similar to that depicted by the French artist Nicolas-Martin Petit who had visited Port Jackson in 1802. Historian Keith Vincent Smith has suggested that these figures were probably copied from the earlier picture with the man in the foreground given a European-style classical pose for artistic effect. The others in the group are individuals known to the Russians, among them Gulanba Dunby with the net bag. (Smith, p.111). Smith has identified the lighter skinned girl in the middle of the Mikhailov's sketch as Bungaree's daughter, Ga-ouen-ren (Smith, p.111) For Bellingshausen Bungaree was 'distinguished by a kind heart, gentleness and by other good qualities' (in Barratt, p.44).



Pavel Mikhailov, 'Natives of New Holland', from Atlas k puteschestviu Kapitane Bellingshausena, St Petersburg, 1831, Mitchell Library, State Library of New South Wales

The Russian scientist IM Siminov noted that traditional rituals endured within this group. Upon returning from an early evening session of astronomical observation Siminov encountered the Kirribilli band feasting, dancing and singing in a clearing amongst banksia trees. Both men and women ate 'fish and mussels' which had been cooked over a small fire. Their bodies and faces were painted with 'patches of red ochre...their music consisted of the sound of two small sticks, which the single musician beat time with, and of his loud voice as he sang a dissonant song. The dancers stood before him in a single line. They jumped at each blow of the sticks, and hummed: prrs, prrs, prrs.' (in Barratt, p.52)



Augustus Earle's 1826 'Portrait of Bungaree, A Native of New South Wales with Fort Macquarie, Sydney Harbour in Background', was probably the first portrait of an Aboriginal person painted in oils, National Library of Australia

Bunagaree was well-versed in European ways, having sailed with Matthew Flinders on his circumnavigation of Australia in 1801. He would have been aware that the land he had been 'given' belonged to the Borogegal people only a decade before. With no enthusiasm for farming and little regard for European expectations of respectability and diligence, he dressed himself in a cast off military uniform and, with his breastplate, became a well-known figure greeting newcomers to Sydney town.

In the 1820s Bungaree was badly injured in a fight and given assistance by the one-time ship's surgeon Alexander Berry. Berry's business partner Edward Wollstonecraft had recently taken possession of 524 acres of land, once owned by the Cammeraygal. Bungaree stayed at a cottage on the estate for several days while recuperating. (Smith, p.101) He died in 1830.

During this time European artists depicted Aborigines in 'traditional' apparel wandering through bushland. The Aboriginal presence in the pictures may have been more symbolic than factual – there to satisfy the interests of local and European customers. In these paintings and drawings 'natives' embodied a pre-European 'state of nature' that contrasted with the development of 'civilisation' represented by the town beyond. By the mid-1800s this convention was no longer fashionable. Conrad Martens executed many views of Sydney from the ridges near his St Leonards' home, 'Rockleigh Grange'. In the 1840s he began replacing Aboriginal figures with colonists.



This 1844 lithographic print, from an original drawing by John Skinner Prout, shows an Aboriginal woman in what may be a combination of European and traditional clothing. She is smoking a clay pipe. The scene is from a rock platform above Lavender Bay. Note the low heath like shrubbery tolerant of wind and salt spray, and possibly grown thick without the regular fire regime of the Cammeraygals, Stanton Library collection

In *A Narrative of a Visit to the Australian Colonies*, James Backhouse wrote of an evening trip to the north shore in 1835 during which he and his companions ‘again fell in with a group of Aborigines that we met with there a few days since.’ They joined the Indigenous group who were ‘now sitting around a fire and smoking’. Backhouse remarked that these people were quarrelsome among each other but ‘very peaceable toward the white population’.

Relations may well have been ‘peaceable’ between whites and those individual Aborigines who remained around Sydney, for the frontier of European incursion had moved beyond Sydney and its surrounds. With it went large scale and regular violence. In 1838 Indigenous resistance to the ‘settling’ of land around Port Phillip far to the south was so strong that a petition was sent to Governor Gipps requesting police protection for farmers. At the same time the Governor was wrestling with the issue of violence towards Aborigines. In June of that year 28 Aboriginal men, women and children were murdered by whites on a property near Myall Creek in the New England area.

The perpetrators were acquitted in the Supreme Court in Sydney but, determined to dispense justice even-handedly, Gipps ordered a retrial. The resulting prosecution and execution of seven of the offenders split white society between those who deplored the treatment of Aborigines and those for whom frontier violence was the necessary outcome of the assumed European right to the land. The sentencing Judge, William Burton, would later become a prominent resident of St Leonards (present-day North Sydney) and a campaigner for establishing local government in the area.

Aboriginal people continued to frequent the lower north shore as whites pushed further out into the rest of the colony in search of farmland, gold, and timber. Writing in 1932, LF Mann recalled those he saw as a boy living in Neutral Bay in the 1860s. They came from ‘far and near’ for the annual Queen’s Birthday distribution of blankets and rations, supplementing their rations by hunting possums

In 1868 a group of Aborigines arrived at Weeyuh Weeyuh, now called Careening Cove, to perform a ‘corroboree’ for the benefit of the visiting Prince Alfred. They used wood from local trees for boomerangs and painted their bodies ‘in many designs’, but it is unclear how much freedom of expression they were granted by the white organisers of the event or, indeed, where they came from and therefore which ceremonies and ritualistic markings they were using. Mann simply described them as ‘the original inhabitants of this country’. It was an acknowledgement of prior

occupation that did not entail any awareness, let alone acceptance, of any wrong doing. (Mann, 1932, p.196)



This photograph, taken from the heights above Neutral Bay in the 1870s, shows the 'piece of flat ground' - to the left of the seated figure - on which Aboriginal people camped in the preceding decade when coming together for the distribution of blankets and food. They also hunted local wildlife. Much of Neutral Bay appears to be heathland while the steeper land down to Rainbow Creek which fed the bay was more heavily timbered. Mann recalled a landscape that was still bountiful with fresh water and varied bird life including black swans and duck, ring-tailed possums, bandicoots and quolls. Oysters were easily gathered along the foreshore. Stanton Library collection

Other non-indigenous people clearly did think there had been an injustice perpetrated through dispossession. In 1878, one resident of Blues Point wrote to the *Sydney Morning Herald* to suggest that the group of Aboriginal people who were camping at Berrys Bay be given back ownership of Goat Island 'considering the vast territory which has been wrested from these people without compensation.' (*Sydney Morning Herald*, 23/11/1878)



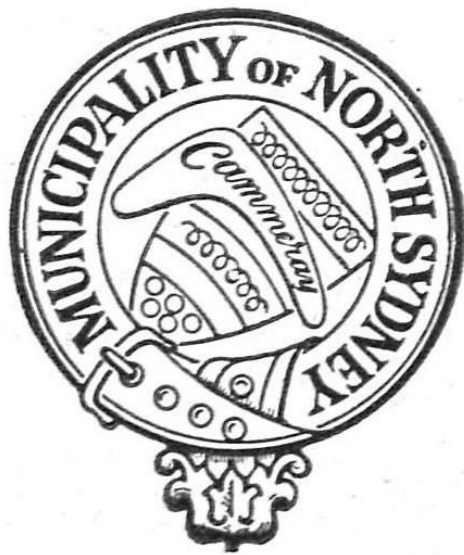
Henry King's photograph 'Sydney from Berry's Bay', shows the high ground above the tidal mud-flat at the head of Berrys Bay, present-day Waverton Park, much as it would have been when Aboriginal people camped there in the 1870s. Boatbuilding had just begun on the eastern side and a small naval boat station recently established on the west but the tidal flat may still have afforded shellfish. Nearby Balls Head had yet to be cleared of timber. By the 1870s and 1880s Aboriginal people would have been using European-style boats and nets for fishing. Stanton Library collection

Recognition of dispossession was again expressed in 1890, this time by the highly-respected public servant and local resident Alexander Oliver. As names for the new Council area created by the amalgamation of three pre-existing boroughs which included St Leonards were being considered, Oliver suggested the name Cammeray in recognition of the original inhabitants of the area who 'we have driven out of their heritage.' (*Sydney Morning Herald*, 9/6/1890) 'North Sydney' was chosen for practical reasons but 'Cammeray' was incorporated into the new Municipal seal shortly after, and given to the area's northern-most suburb in the 1920s.

Significant though these acknowledgements are as evidence of a longstanding urge to reconcile a difficult historical truth on the part of white Australians, it was somewhat academic in the context of the time for by the 1890s it was widely believed

that the Aborigines of North Sydney had ‘disappeared’ in the wake of ‘progress’ and ‘civilisation’, along with many of their sites.

This sentiment typified prevailing white assumptions that Aborigines were destined



to ‘die out’ in accordance with the laws of Social Darwinism. Some people were clearly regretful, others less so. Reporting a school excursion to a picnic ground near Long Bay Cammeray, the *Freeman’s Journal* was simply matter-of-fact about the issue: ‘Some visited the cave on the ground and were curious about the hieroglyphics which were inscribed there some years ago, but they had long since disappeared like the Cammera tribe that traced them.’ (*Freeman’s Journal* 12/9/1889)

North Sydney Council’s seal was used as early as 1896. The belt signifies unity while the boomerang and shield represent the original owners of the place called Cammeray. Stanton Library collection

Indigenous Australians were not counted in the census that were conducted regularly from the mid-1800s – a situation that would continue until 1967. It is difficult, therefore, to determine how many families or individuals continued to live on the lower north shore. The 1891 report of the Aboriginal Protection Board, which presided over the removal of Aborigines to missions, the distribution of rations and the gathering of demographic statistics, did not record any Aborigines in the North Sydney area. Yet Holtermann family photographs show Aboriginal man Fred Grunway working as a groom on their large Crows Nest estate, St Leonards Lodge. At least one other Aboriginal boy worked on the estate in the 1870s. It is probable that other Aboriginal people were employed as domestic labourers in the area.

The question of Cammeraygal descent remains contested. While the Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council does not recognise any descendants of the original North Sydney people, some individuals still claim Cammeraygal ancestry. (see Foley and Read)

Aboriginal Australians, the continent’s first people, have had a long and difficult struggle to secure civil rights and regain access to their traditional lands. In New South Wales they were being pushed in large groups onto missions and other reserves. In the 1880s a group of predominately South Coast people had set up camp

at Circular Quay. They were subsequently moved to the La Perouse reserve in the 1890s. In 1909 the *New South Wales Aboriginal Protection Act* sought to separate ‘full blood’ and ‘half caste’ Aborigines in the belief that the former would die out and the latter would be best incorporated into the general community. By the 1920s young New South Wales Aborigines of mixed descent were being forcibly removed from their homes by State officials. They were the first of the ‘Stolen Generation’.

Many of these girls and boys were trained in domestic and labouring work to prepare them for employment in white households. Cootamundra Girls Home opened in 1911 and Kinchela Boys Home near Kempsey in 1918. The ‘education’ and treatment in these places was often brutal and traumatic. In the 1920s a young Margaret Tucker was taken to the Cootamundra Girls Home. Afterwards she worked in domestic service for a Neutral Bay family. ‘I used to take the children for walks, or rather they used to take me, because I didn’t know my way about’, she recalled. Tucker was treated well by the family; however she was expected to call the children ‘Miss’ and ‘Master’ – a reminder that she ‘was only a servant after all.’ (Tucker, pp.127-135)

By the 1930s Margaret Tucker and others were organising to protest against the conditions to which they had been subjected. While white Australians were celebrating the Sesquicentenary of colonisation on 26 January 1938 with pageantry and historical re-enactments around Sydney Harbour, the Aboriginal Progressive Association declared Australia Day a ‘Day of Mourning’. They demanded the rights of citizenship and an end to the poor treatment they had received since colonisation. At the same time a group of Aborigines, forcibly brought to Sydney to take part in a re-enactment of Governor Phillip’s landing, were locked in police stables to keep them away from the activists. Newsreel footage of the celebrations was rushed to local cinemas. White North Sydney residents queued at the Cremorne Orpheum to watch the moment of colonisation.

The right to vote in federal elections, central to any definition of citizenship, was finally won by Aborigines in 1962. However, many other civil liberties, such as the right to travel and marry freely, were still denied Aborigines under various State laws. In 1965 Charles Perkins and others embarked on the ‘Freedom Rides’ to western New South Wales, which exposed unacceptable living conditions and brought discrimination under the spotlight of nationwide publicity.

By then another important campaign to promote Aboriginal rights had been initiated in North Sydney – at the small flat owned by Faith and Hans Bandler on the Pacific Highway. The Bandlers were immersed in the progressive intellectual community of

post-war Sydney. Faith was the daughter of a Melanesian man who had been taken, or 'blackbirded', from his island home to work in Australia in the late 19th century. She was visited regularly by her friend and Aboriginal activist, Pearl Gibbs. Gibbs had helped establish the Aboriginal Progressive Association which protested the 1938 Sesquicentenary. Now she wanted to enlist white support for Indigenous rights and finally persuaded Bandler to join with her in the struggle.



North Sydney around 1960 when Faith and Hans Bandler were hosting meetings with Aboriginal activists. Their flat was on the right hand side of the Pacific Highway, shown here, about 100 metres down from the huge newly-built MLC Building which dominates the skyline. Photograph by Marjorie Whiffen, Stanton Library Collection

In 1956 a meeting was held nearby at the Kirribilli flat of the writers Muir Holburn and Marjorie Pizer. The groundwork was laid for formation of the Aboriginal-Australian Fellowship which would become the Federal Council for the Advancement of Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders. Upon the insistence of human rights activist Jessie Street, the Fellowship set as its task the repeal of the clauses in the Australian Constitution that gave the States exclusive power to make laws relating to Indigenous people and excluded Aborigines from the Census count. The Bandler's North Sydney flat became a meeting place for luminaries in the battle for Aboriginal rights; people such as Harold Blair, Doug Nicholls and the writer Dorothy Hewitt. (Lake, pp.52-83)

The consequent passing of the 1967 referendum on Aboriginal affairs resulted in Indigenous people being included in the national Census and the Commonwealth Government given power to make laws relating to Aborigines where previously the States had enacted many different and often discriminatory laws. For many Aboriginal people this win, rather than the right to vote granted five years earlier, symbolised the long deferred achievement of citizenship.

By this time the issue of land rights was emerging as another critical issue. Protests by the Yirrkala and Gurindji people in northern Australia had placed traditional ownership of land on the political agenda. In 1972 a Tent Embassy was established outside Parliament House, Canberra, and the Land Rights Flag flew for the first time. In that year Gough Whitlam pledged Federal Labor Government support for land rights in Federal territories.

A Racial Discrimination Act was passed in 1975 but advances in land rights were impeded by successive changes of government, Federal reluctance to push the States to legislate for uniform land rights and growing white concerns at the implications of land rights for freehold title. (see Bennett, pp.27-39)

Some Indigenous and non-indigenous activists contemplated the value of signing a treaty as a means of recognising and redressing the wrongs suffered by Indigenous Australians. It was hoped that such a document might acknowledge the invalidity of *terra nullius*. The 200th anniversary of the invasion of Australia in 1988 was considered the most appropriate year for signing. The details of the document, however, never gained widespread acceptance. Instead on 26 January 1988 Aborigines, and many white supporters, marched in their thousands to protest against the lavish celebration of Phillip's arrival in which tall ships from around the world recreated that fateful day 200 years earlier. Whereas in 1938 Aborigines had been locked in pens to prevent disruption to the Sesquicentenary, this protest received widespread coverage and support.

The doctrine of *terra nullius* was finally overturned in 1992. In the 'Mabo Case', the High Court of Australia acknowledged that the first Australians did have title to their land in 1788 – title that was legally recognised by the English common law of the time. The *Native Title Act* that followed in 1994 allowed Aborigines to claim some areas of Crown land with which a traditional association had been maintained. The subsequent High Court 'Wik decision' in 1996 recognised that native title might exist on some leasehold land.

White Australia was divided in its response to 'Wik'. Many saw in the Court's decision an opportunity to reconcile past wrongs and redress the profound disadvantage still experienced by Aboriginal Australians. Others, particularly pastoralists who held long-term leases, feared losing their properties. Tim Fischer, the Deputy Prime Minister and Leader of the National Party, promised 'bucket loads of extinguishment' of native title. In 1998 the Howard government passed the *Native Title Amendment Act* which countered many of the findings in the 'Wik decision'. Some individuals and groups, such as Australians for Native Title and Reconciliation, remain opposed to any idea of extinguishment in the wake of the Mabo judgement. In 2002 Professor Mick Dodson declared 'The beauty and poetry of Mabo is dead – dead forever'. (Dodson, 2002)

There were few Aboriginal people living in North Sydney as these debates were unfolding. Some 88 people identified as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islanders in 1997. This reflected the relatively small Indigenous in the greater Northern Sydney region. The population of 1077 was less than 25% of that in the remaining metropolitan area. However, North Sydney Council embraced the notion of reconciliation and offered a formal apology to Aboriginal Australians for past treatment, particularly in relation to the practices that resulted in the 'Stolen Generation' - those children like Margaret Tucker who were taken from their families. In 1997 a permanent place was provided to fly the Aboriginal Land Rights flag outside the Council Chambers.

The Council co-sponsored the *Walk for Reconciliation* in 2000, when 300,000 Sydneysiders made the journey on foot from North Sydney across the Sydney Harbour Bridge to Darling Harbour. Local reconciliation bodies such as the Harbour to Hawkesbury Group were established to further the issue of reconciliation and understanding. Among their stated goals was support of the 'Indigenous people of Australia in their quest for a just place in their own country and a respected place in the Australian society'. (*Aboriginal People in North Sydney*, p.11)

In 2004 North Sydney Council endorsed the dual naming policy of the Geographic Names Board which controls the official naming of public land in New South Wales. Consequently, Careening Cove is also called Weeyuh Weeyuh (pronounced 'wee-uh-wee-uh'). Lavender Bay is now also Gooweebahree (pronounced 'goo-wee-bah-ree') which is the modern phonetic version of 'Quibaree' – the first name given to the Bay. Blues Point is now also called Warungareeyuh (pronounced 'wuh-rung-uh-ree-uh').

These names join existing words taken from early lists and are understood to be original Aboriginal place names. Kirribilli, Wudiyong, Kurraba are all examples of these. Around 1911 Benelong Road in north Cremorne was named after the Aboriginal man, Bennelong. In the early 1930s Wulworra Avenue was named in reference to Wulworra-jeong, the Aboriginal name for nearby Robertsons Point. The suburb Cammeray was named shortly before. More recent namings include Badangi Reserve in Balls Head Bay which uses the Aboriginal word for a Sydney rock oyster. The name of the small pocket park, Gannura Reserve, means place of lizards. Matora Lane which runs through Primrose Park is named after Bungaree's wife, a woman who came from the Broken Bay area.

Practical measures were undertaken by Council in 2000 with the publication of *Aboriginal People in North Sydney Community Plan*, which addressed the health, education and other social requirements of the local Indigenous population. It recognised that for decades 'Aboriginal people have been shuffled around to meet the needs of non-Aboriginal culture'. (*Aboriginal People in North Sydney* p.20)

North Sydney Council and the Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council [MLALC] began collaborating in the 1990s. Bush regeneration staff and others had worked with Aboriginal sites officers and members of the MLALC on programs and initiatives to protect Aboriginal heritage sites. In 1999 North Sydney Council became the first Local Government Area in Australia to employ an Aboriginal Heritage Officer – the former MLALC sites officer David Watts. This program was enlarged in 2000 when Lane Cove, Warringah and Willoughby Councils joined the scheme. Manly Council joined in 2005.

In March 2006 the relationship between North Sydney Council and the MLALC was formalised with the signing of a set of Principles of Co-operation. These committed the organizations to:

- Actively work together to foster reconciliation between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people;
- Actively work together to promote an increased understanding of Aboriginal culture;
- Establish and maintain open and transparent two-way communications and consultation between their two organisations;
- Establish a framework for considering development proposals affecting Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council interests that is consistent with the North Sydney Council's duties and obligations under all relevant laws.

Significantly, the Principles of Co-operation were predicated on an acknowledgement of the historical context of the social issues confronting Aborigines in contemporary Australia:

Before the arrival of Europeans, the Australian continent was owned and occupied by Aboriginal Nations Clans and Families. Sydney is the place where Aboriginal dispossession commenced, where Aboriginal resistance to the forced occupation of Aboriginal land commenced.

This historical outline has been a further step in the process of understanding and acknowledging that history.

Aboriginal North Sydney was first published by North Sydney Council in 2006 as part of its commitment to Aboriginal heritage and reconciliation. It expanded upon *Hands across Time*, a brief guide to Aboriginal history and culture written by Margaret Park in 1998. This 2019 revision adds further information to the historical account of Aboriginal people in North Sydney, particularly in the 18th and 19th centuries.

Now, as then, we wish to acknowledge the assistance of the Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council, North Sydney Council's Aboriginal Heritage Manager, David Watts and Jean Hart, a long-standing member of Council's Historical and Cultural Resources Committee.

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