



WALLUMEDEGAL AN ABORIGINAL HISTORY OF RYDE

KEITH VINCENT SMITH, 2005



City of Ryde

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***Warr be-rong orah
Where is a better country***

Arthur Phillip, Governors' Vocabulary 1790-1:21.8

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Other institutions and sources of information are acknowledged in the endnotes and Bibliography.

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Keith Vincent Smith

The City of Ryde thanks Keith Vincent Smith, author of *King Bungaree* (1992) and *Bennelong* (2001). He was recommended to the City of Ryde through Warawara, Department of Indigenous Studies at Macquarie University, Sydney, where he is currently a PhD research candidate.

Artist

We acknowledge Chris Tobin's the Artist for the picture on the cover – ***The Journey to the Clever Man***. Mr Tobin is a member of the Darug community. The accompanying story for this work is as follows: *The Ryde area was known as the place where the clever men would meet. The clever men, or Koradgi in the Darug tongue were believed to have special powers and could visit the sky country – the abode of the ancestors and home of the sky father Biami.*

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WALLUMEDEGAL

An Aboriginal history of Ryde

At the time of the arrival of Europeans at Sydney Cove in January 1788, the Wallumedegal or Wallumattagal were the traditional owners of the area we now call Ryde.

They had lived for generations as fisher-hunter-gatherers in a rich environment of river flats, mangrove swamps and creeks — fishing with pronged spears and handlines, gathering shellfish, hunting birds and small game and collecting a variety of edible bushfood plants.

In First Fleet reports the Wallumedegal were said to occupy the north shore of Port Jackson (Sydney Harbour) immediately opposite Sydney Cove and west along the north shore of the Parramatta River. Later accounts suggest that Wallumede territory commenced further west at the Lane Cove River.

The first known reference to this clan was made by Governor Arthur Phillip in a letter to Lord Sydney at the Home Office in London, written on 13 February 1790. Phillip wrote:

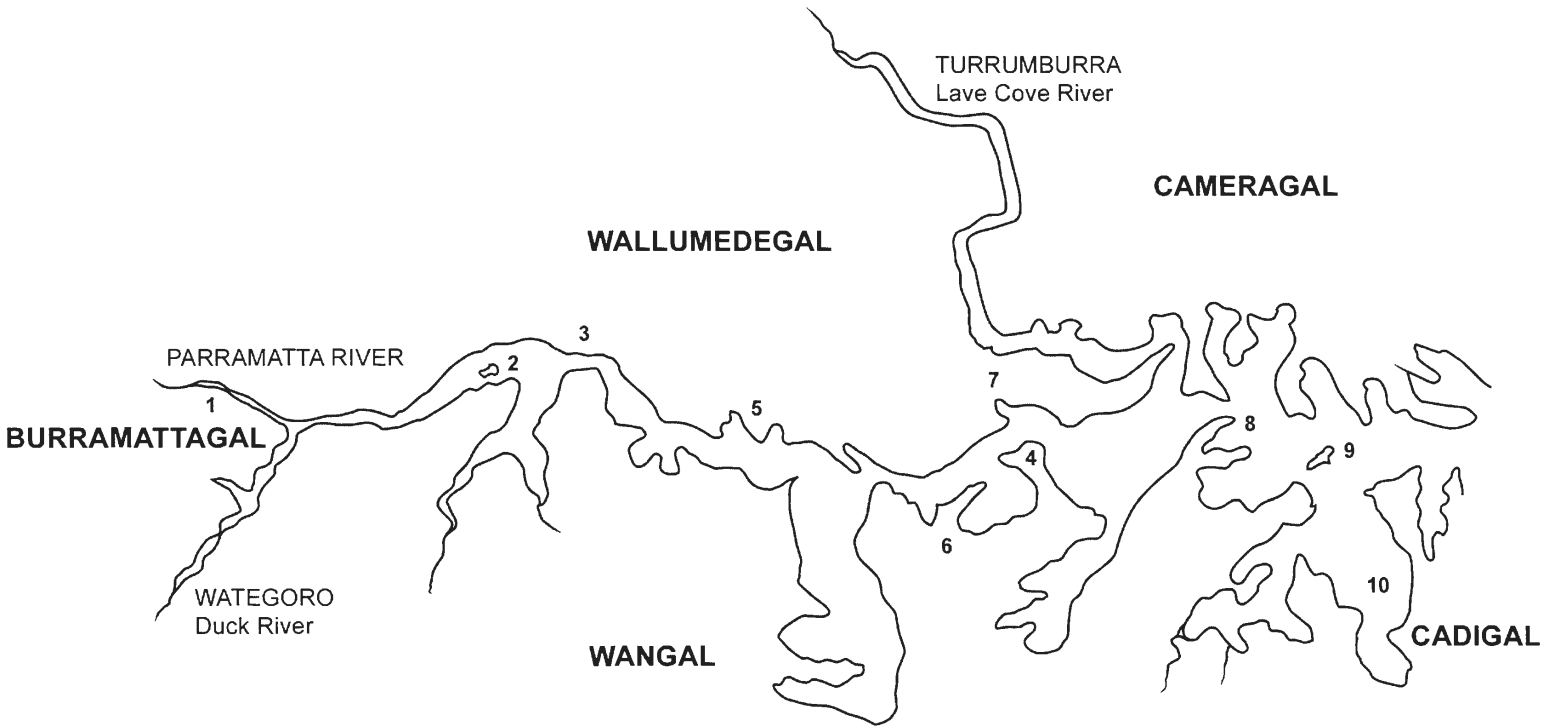
The South Side of the Harbour from the above-mentioned Cove [now Darling Harbour] to Rose-Hill, which the Natives call Par-ra-matta, the District is called Wann, & the Tribe, Wanngal.

The opposite Shore is called Wallumetta, & the Tribe, Wallumedegal.

In the same letter Phillip identified his informant as the native 'who lives with me, & will soon be able to inform us of their Customs, & Manners'.¹ This man was Woollarawarre Bennelong who had been captured on Phillip's orders at Manly Cove just 10 weeks before, on 25 November 1789. According to Judge Advocate David Collins, 'Bennillong himself was a Wahn-gal [Wangal]'.²

1 Phillip to Sydney, 13 February 1790. Public Record Office [PRO], London, CO.201/2-5 (1). Historical Records of New South Wales [HRNSW] 11:308; Historical Records of Australia [HRA] Vol 1, Series 1:155-161.

2 David Collins [1798] 1975:497. Notes refer to the edition issued by A. H. & A. W. Reed, Sydney 1975.



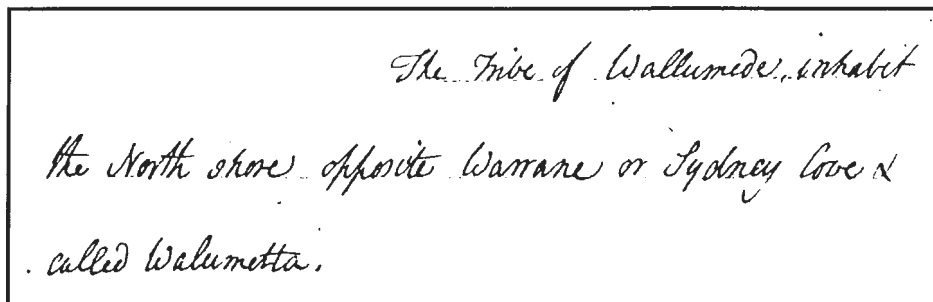
KEY:

- | | | | |
|----|------------------------------|-----|-------------------------------------|
| 1. | Burramatta
Parramatta | 6. | Booridiow-a-gule
Breakfast Point |
| 2. | Arrowanelly
Mud Island | 7. | Tarban Creek
Turiban |
| 3. | Mur-ray-mah
Charity Point | 8. | Yerroulbin
Longnose Point |
| 4. | Bigi Bigi
Abbotsford | 9. | Memel
Goat Island |
| 5. | Wallumetta
Kissing Point | 10. | Go-mo-ra
Darling Harbour |

Figure 1: 1788 Clans along the Parramatta River. Superimposed on *Chart of Port Jackson as Survey'd by Capt John Hunter, George Raper 1790, Mitchell Library, State Library of NSW.*

Before leaving Port Jackson for England with despatches, Lieutenant Philip Gidley King wrote in his journal on 9 April 1790:

The females of each tribe are distinguished by the word "leon" added to the name that distinguishes the Man - it is imagined that the word "Gal" signifies tribe & the word preceding it is the word of distinction - perhaps it is the place where the tribe resides.



The Tribe of Wallumede inhabit
the North shore opposite Warrane or Sydney Cove &
called Walumetta.

Figure 2: "The tribe of Wallumede inhabit the North shore opposite Warrane or Sydney Cove & called Walumetta" Philip Gidley King, 'A very correct vocabulary'. Journal, 9 April 1790 (p. 406) MS C115, Mitchell Library, State Library of New South Wales, Sydney.

In a list of names on the same page, King included: 'Men - Wallume de-gal; Women - Wallume degal-leon.' On the following page, he noted: 'The tribe of Wallumede inhabit the North shore opposite Warrane or Sydney Cove & called Walumetta.'³

King copied this information from a vocabulary kept by Governor Phillip, his secretary David Collins and Captain John Hunter, referred to in this paper as the Governors' Vocabulary (GV).⁴ This part of King's journal was included in the section he contributed to Hunter's book, *Transactions at Port Jackson and Norfolk Island*, printed in London in 1793.

In the Governors' Vocabulary, Wallumede-gal appears as the sixth in a list of the names of eighteen 'Tribes' around Sydney Cove.⁵

From about 1816, during the term of office of Governor Lachlan Macquarie, the Indigenous people in the Ryde area were known as the 'Kissing Point Tribe'. However, the French voyager Captain Louis de Freycinet (1797-1842), who was rowed along the Parramatta River in 1819 later wrote:

The Wallumede-gal were distributed on the northern side of the Parramatta River, starting from Lane Cove (dans le district de Field-of-Mars).⁶

There is further evidence that the Wallumedegal did not occupy the north shore opposite Sydney Cove (Kirribilli). Governor Phillip reported an incident in November 1791 that suggests that this area belonged to the Cameragal. After breakfasting with some officers at his brick hut at Tubowgulye (Bennelong Point), Bennelong was taken across the harbour in their boat. 'However, he was seen soon afterwards with some of the Cammeragals, who were collecting the wild fruits which were now in season [probably geebung],' Phillip wrote.⁷

A later historian, H. W. H. Huntington, claimed in 1910 that 'the Cammera tribe inhabited what is now known as North Sydney'.⁸ Writing in 1892, George Thornton, sometime mayor of Sydney, was ambivalent about the eastern boundary of the Wallumedegal. 'There was another tribe a little west or opposite Sydney Cove; those were called Walumetta,' he wrote.⁹

Wallumedegal territory was bordered to the west by the Burrumattagal or Boromedegal who inhabited the head of the river at Parramatta. Phillip included Boromedegal among 'other tribes which live near us', while P. G. King gave 'Booramedegal (men) and Booramedegalleon (women)'.¹⁰

In today's terms, the Wangal occupied the Balmain Peninsula and the south bank of the Parramatta River, running west to Parramatta. Their eastern boundary was probably Goat Island (Me-mil or Memel), which Bennelong 'often assured me ... was his property,' wrote David Collins. 'He told us of other people who possess this kind of hereditary property, which they retain undisturbed.'¹¹

There is no record of the northern boundary of the Wallumedegal, which would logically be the Lane Cove River. The country north of the river presumably belonged to the Cameragal, who, wrote King 'inhabit the north part of Port Jackson which is somewhere named Camerra'.¹²

Anne Ross wrongly asserted that the Cadigal 'lived on the southern shores of Port Jackson, around present-day Concord'.¹³ That was Wangal Country. The Cadigal were a harbour dwelling clan, whose territory in today's geography followed the bays

and headlands of the Eastern Suburbs from Inner South Head, around Sydney Cove (site of the Sydney CBD) and west to the entrance of Darling Harbour.¹⁴

The English officers viewed these Indigenous social groups with names ending in *-gal* as 'tribes', although they were, in fact, extended families related by kinship or marriage, now described as clans. A clan might number from twenty to sixty men, women and children. The term 'tribe' today generally refers to a language group.

The Wallumedegal spoke the language of the coastal clans, dubbed by linguists 'the Sydney Language' because no Aboriginal name is known. Marine Captain Watkin Tench stated that the 'dialect of the sea coast' was spoken at Rose Hill (Parramatta).¹⁵ This single language united the Eora (*yura*, meaning 'people') in the area bounded by Botany Bay to the south, Pittwater to the north and west to Parramatta.¹⁶ There is no record of a separate language spoken on the north shore of Port Jackson until after 1830.

No specific vocabulary or wordlist from the Ryde area exists. William Small, who was born in Ryde the son of John Small, attempted in 1888 to pass on some of the words he had learned as a boy from the 'black fellows' to an uninterested newspaper reporter. 'I had many playmates among them, and I haven't forgotten the principal words of the tribes round here yet.' (Here the old gentleman quoted a score of native names for God, devil, sun, moon, stars, fire, &c. &c.). 'You see my memory is as good as it ever was.'¹⁷

Neighbouring languages were Darug, to the west, Dharawal, south of Botany Bay, Carigal at Broken Bay and Gundungurra in the Blue Mountains and Burratorang Valley.¹⁸

Members of an expedition to the Hawkesbury River in 1791 led by Governor Arthur Phillip, accompanied by Colebee (a Cadigal) and Ballooderry (a Burrattagal), first noted 'a language different than theirs' spoken by the Indigenous people west of Parramatta.¹⁹

When the botanist and explorer Captain William Paterson took boats up the Hawkesbury to the Grose River in September 1793, David Collins wrote: 'He saw but

few natives and those who did visit them were almost unintelligible to the natives of this place [Sydney] who accompanied him.¹²⁰

In 1901, ethnologist R. H. Mathews collected the vocabulary and grammar of a language he called Dharruk (Darug) from Aboriginal informants living at Sackville, near Windsor.²¹ Darug, differing by about 30 per cent, might be regarded as the inland dialect of the coastal language.

It is likely that the clan name Wallumedegal (Wallumattagal) was derived from *wallumai* the snapper fish (*Pagrus auratus*), combined with *matta*, a word used to describe a place, but more often a water place, as with Parramatta and Cabramatta. The Wallumedegal then would be the 'snapper people' and the fish itself their clan totem, just as *burra* (the eel) was the totem of the Burrumatta or Boromeda clan at Parramatta and *cobra*, the white grub of the shipworm (*Teredo* species), that of the Cabrogal at present Liverpool and Cabramatta.

Every First Fleet officer who recorded the name of this fish had a different way of spelling it. Captain John Hunter painted a watercolour of a mature snapper, which he captioned *Wo-lo-my*, Daniel Southwell wrote *Woal-la-mi*, Watkin Tench *Wallumi*, Philip Gidley King *Woollamie* and it appears in the Governors' Vocabulary as *Wal-la-mi*.²² In 1800, settlers at Port Jackson commonly called the snapper *wallimy*, said Mary Ann Reid, wife of Captain Hugh Reid, who fished for them herself from the convict transport ship *Friendship*.²³

Snapper were abundant in Sydney's bays and rivers. 'Mullet, Bream, Snappers, Jew Fish, Sting Rays, Mackerel are very common,' wrote Surgeon George Worgan of HMS *Sirius*. Watkin Tench asserted in his *Narrative of an Expedition to Botany Bay* that sailors from the French La Perouse expedition in one day landed 2 000 snapper at Botany Bay.²⁴ The English settlers named the pink-red Old Man snapper the 'light-horsemen' because they developed a characteristic forehead bump which resembled the helmets worn by horse guardsmen. The Eora taught Tench and others to share their appreciation of the snapper. 'The relish of this excellent fish was increased by our natives, who pointed out to us its delicacies. No epicure in England could pick a head with more glee and dexterity than they do that of a light-horseman,' Tench wrote.

Writing in 1919, Walter Scott Campbell recalled that in the 1850s at Gladesville, where his father was superintendent of the Benevolent Asylum, 'fishing was excellent, there being nearly always an abundance of many kinds of fish in the river'.²⁵

River life

Although the Eora burned and maintained one metre wide pathways through the bush, the waters of the harbour, its creeks, coastal estuaries and lagoons and the artery of the Parramatta River were crowded with men and women fishing and coming and going in their bark canoes. The *nowey* or canoe was three to four metres long and about one metre wide, shallow and shaped from a straight sheet of bark bunched at each end and tied with vines or cord. Spacer sticks were jammed across the centre to hold the sides apart. Bark for canoes was taken from the stringybark (*Eucalyptus obliqua*) or from the *goomun* or 'fir tree' (*Casuarina* species).²⁶

Using a stone hatchet to cut out the bark, a canoe could be made in a day. Canoes used in inland waters 'differed in no wise from those found on the seacoast,' said Watkin Tench. 'Four or five people will go, in the small things, with all their Spears & Emplements [implements] for procuring their subsistence,' wrote John Gardiner of HMS *Gorgon*.²⁷

The task of fishing was divided along gender lines. Fishing from canoes with handlines was an everyday social activity for women, who hugged their small children between their knees, keeping their hands free for paddling. William Bradley said he had never seen an Aboriginal man fish with a hook and line. Men speared fish from the rocks or waded into shallow water.

A fire in the middle of the canoe built on a bed of seaweed, stone or sand, was kept burning to cook fish and shellfish. Women sang as they fished, laughing and joking. If hungry, women would cook fish in their canoe, but they usually took the catch ashore to eat with their families and to share with others. 'After a meal of this kind, they generally sleep,' observed Gardiner.

Hand fishing lines were called *car-re-jun* because they were spun from the inner bark of the kurrajong tree (*Brachychiton populneus*). Women rolled strips of bark along their thighs, wrote Tench, 'so as to twist it together, carefully inserting the ends of each fresh piece into the last made.'²⁸

Surgeon John White noted that to stop them fraying, the lines were strengthened by soaking them in a solution of the sap of the red bloodwood tree (*E. gummifera*).

Women made their own fishhooks (*burra*) by chipping, grinding, shaping and smoothing large seashells, usually of the Turban (*Ninda torquata*) into a crescent shape, using a long, rounded stone file. The shiny lures did not have a barb to snag the fish and were not baited. 'They nevertheless catch fish with them with great facility,' remarked Lieutenant David Collins.²⁹

Aboriginal men caught their fish with a *mooting*, a long spear headed with either three or four hardwood prongs barbed with bone points, which the English called a fiz-gig or fish-gig. They were made in the same way as other spears from lengths of the flowering stem of the grass tree glued together with yellow resin or gum from the same tree. The wooden prongs were hardened in the fire and tipped with animal or fish bones or teeth stuck on with gum. Fiz-gigs were launched by hand, without a spear-thrower.

Shellfish were an important part of the Wallumedegal diet. Women and children gathered bivalve molluscs such as mud oysters (*Ostrea angasi*), rock oysters, mussels and cockles. 'There is a great quantity of shell fish in the Coves that have mud flats at the bottom, Oysters very large,' wrote Bradley.³⁰ 'Oysters, Cockles & Muscles [mussels] are to be got for a little trouble,' said Worgan.³¹ Shells of the *kaadien* or Sydney cockle (*Anadara trapeza*) were used to sharpen spear heads and attached to spear throwers to use as an adze.

Oysters were just as plentiful forty-five years after the First Fleet. 'The rocky shores of Port Jackson abound with the rock oyster,' wrote William Proctor, who spent Christmas Day 1834 at Kissing Point. Proctor, from the *John Craig*, sent two ship's boys to fill a pot with oysters to follow his festive 'noble beefsteak pie'.³²

Discarded shells of edible molluscs piled in heaps or middens in all the bays of Port Jackson and along the Parramatta River, for example at Bedlam Point and Shepherd's Bay (near the present Ryde Bridge), testified to centuries of feasts. Walter Hibble in *Early History of Ryde* stated that 'old kitchen-middens, or shell heaps of the blacks were ... numerous' on the banks of the Parramatta River at Shepherds Bay, where enormous middens showed that 'mud oysters have been one of the principal resources of food to the aborigines for a vast period of time prior to the advent of the white man in Australia'.³³

While the storeship HMS *Gorgon* was in port at Sydney Cove, from mid September to mid December 1791, Mary Ann Parker, wife of Captain John Parker, made 'several little excursions up the cove to the settlement called Paramatta' [sic]. On one trip she saw two emus and later remarked: 'The flesh tastes somewhat like beef.' She ate kangaroo more than once, but found 'latterly I was cloyed with them, and found them very disagreeable'.³⁴

Friendly meetings

The first encounters between the English colonists at Sydney Cove and the Wallumedegal took place early in February 1788 when two boats from HMS *Sirius* began to survey and chart the harbour of Port Jackson. 'During the time we were employed on this service, we had frequent meetings with different parties of the natives,' wrote Captain John Hunter. 'We saw them in considerable numbers, and they appeared to us to be a very lively and inquisitive race; they are a straight, thin, but well-made people, rather small in their limbs, but very active.' The Aborigines were astonished by the strangers, whose clothing, said Hunter, they considered 'as so many different skins, and the hat as a part of the head'. Hunter observed:

*They were pleased with such trifles as we had to give them, and always appeared chearful and in good humour: they danced and sung with us, and imitated our words and motions, as we did theirs.*³⁵

On Tuesday 5 February 1788 Hunter and First Lieutenant William Bradley, with a guard of armed marines, were rowed to the 'upper part of the harbour' where a group

of Aborigines on the north side of the Parramatta River called out to them and followed the boats. 'We landed to cook our Breakfast on the opposite shore to them (Breakfast pt.)', wrote Bradley in his journal. 'We made signs to them to come over and waved green boughs' (a sign of friendship). Soon after seven men crossed the river in canoes and joined the party unarmed.³⁶

'We met them and shook hands,' wrote Hunter, who noticed that the Aboriginal men were alarmed by the marines armed with muskets. After Hunter ordered the redcoats to put down their weapons 'they came up with great cheerfulness and good humour, and seated themselves by our fire amongst us, where we ate what we had got and invited them to partake, but they did not relish our food or drink.'³⁷

Bradley added: 'We tied beads etc. about them and left them our fire to dress their muscles [mussels] which they went about as soon as our boats put off.'³⁸

The surveyors gave the name of Breakfast Point to this headland on the south shore of the Parramatta River (opposite Morrisons Bay). Its indigenous name, Booridiow-o-gule, recorded in the Governors' Vocabulary, is more beautiful, meaning Butterfly Point, from Bu-ru-die-ra (*burudyira* : 'butterfly') and gal-i.e. (*galyi*) a finger or point of land.³⁹ The survey boats went further west along the river that day, but turned back at noon at 'the termination of the harbour' for navigable ships, 'being all Flats above us' and very shallow. Returning to Sydney Cove they 'saw Natives in almost every part of the Harbour in small parties. In one of the Coves we found a peice [sic] of Cake which appeared to be made of the Wild Fig.'⁴⁰

Looking Glass Point (opposite Bigi Bigi or Abbotsford) received its English name on Friday 15 February 1788 when Governor Phillip, Captain Hunter and others in three boats stopped 'at a neck of land' for breakfast. They were soon joined by an inquisitive, intelligent Aborigine, who put down his spear to look at the boats. Bradley said he 'examined every thing very attentively & went into all our boats from one to the other', awkwardly attempting to use an oar in the longboat. Phillip gave him an iron hatchet and looking glass (mirror). 'When he looked into it,' wrote Bradley, 'he looked immediately behind the Glass to see if any person was there & pointed to the Glass & the shadows which he saw in the water signifying they were similar.' The original name of Looking Glass Point is not known.

Bradley continued: 'We next proceeded to the Flats, where we landed and went 2 or 3 Miles into the Country, found the trees a considerable distance apart & the Soil in general good[.] Grass very long and no underwood.' Surgeon George Worgan of HMS *Sirius* was also struck by this landscape during an excursion along the river on 14 May 1788. Worgan admired the 'gentle Slopes' of the river banks, 'green to the water's edge'. He continued: 'The Trees are small and grow almost in regular Rows, so that together with the Evenness of the Land for a considerable Extent, it resembles a beautiful park.'⁴¹ Bradley and Worgan were gazing at a landscape deliberately shaped by Aboriginal burning, a technique dubbed 'firestick farming' by anthropologist Dr. Rhys Jones. Constantly lit small fires created a mosaic of vegetation and encouraged new growth to attract small game.⁴²

Dinner Point, now called Charity Point at Memorial Park, Meadowbank, near the Meadowbank Railway Bridge, might have acquired its name on the same day (15 February 1788). Bradley wrote: 'At 1PM. returned to the Boats & after Dinner went in the smallest boat over the Flats past a Mangrove Island'. They then followed a creek so narrow that boat oars struck the sides until they were stopped by fallen trees.

Charity Point, once backed by a creek which has been filled in, was originally named Mur-ray-mah, perhaps meaning 'black bream', heard by the linguist Lieutenant William Dawes as *karóoma* (*garuma*). The Mangrove Island, later Mud Island, mentioned by Bradley, lay off Homebush Bay and has since been absorbed by reclaimed land. To the Wallumedegal this was Arrowanelly, described as an 'Island at the Flats'.⁴³

Marine Lieutenant Ralph Clarke met an Aboriginal family on the Lane Cove River on Sunday 14 February 1790, when he exchanged an iron hatchet for two spears with two men named Dourrawan and Tirriwan. When Clarke returned the next day with some red cloth for the Aboriginal children, he forced his convict servants, Ellis, James Squire and Davis, who was trembling with fear, to go on shore to meet them. Tirriwan told Clarke that his wife had died (*boe*) from *mittayon* or smallpox.⁴⁴

The harbour of Port Jackson gives way to the Parramatta River at Yerroulbin or Long Nose Point, Birchgrove, a spit of land at its intersection with the Lane Cove River.

The Flats, said David Collins, began where the 'creek' leading to Parramatta entered the harbour. The area is marked at the foot of William Bradley's Map 11, titled 'The Channel to Rose Hill', as 'Beginning of the Mud flats at the head of Port Jackson'. According to Michael Levy in *Wallumetta* (1947), this was 'round about Meadowbank'.⁴⁵ The mudflats at Homebush Bay on the opposite bank were also called The Flats.

George Caley, employed by Sir Joseph Banks to collect botanical specimens in New South Wales, made friends with the Aborigines at Parramatta, where he lived for ten years before returning to England in 1810. Caley said The Flats was 'a noted fishing place for the natives; the water there is shallow, and at ebb-tide a great proportion of sand is left bare, which, with some marshy land adjoining, forms a convenient resort for several species of birds'.⁴⁶

Dispossession

The displacement of one kinship group of Burramattagal and their forced migration into Wallumedegal territory at Kissing Point (Ryde), eight kilometres further down the river, can be traced through a close analysis of the historical record. This was the family of Maugoran, a Burramattagal elder, who lost their land when a military post was established at Rose Hill (Parramatta) in November 1788.

One week after Governor Arthur Phillip was speared at Manly Cove in September 1790, Maugoran, through his daughter Boorong, 'expressed great dissatisfaction' to Chaplain Richard Johnson and Lieutenant William Dawes 'at the number of white men who had settled in their former territories' at Rose Hill.⁴⁷ Recognising the impact caused by the new settlement, Phillip gave Maugoran's words a stronger emphasis in his dispatches to London. 'If this man's information can be depended on, the natives were very angry at so many people being sent to Rose-hill, certain it is that wherever our colonists fix themselves, the natives are obliged to leave that part of the country.'⁴⁸

These statements suggest that Maugoran and his family had been living at the head of the Parramatta River where the settlement was established. As a result they were

expelled from their 'former territories', first by the military and then by the convict farmers who soon followed. Phillip reacted to Maugoran's protest by reinforcing the troops at Rose Hill the following day.⁴⁹

The occupation of the Parramatta area was a true invasion, undertaken with military planning and support. A detachment of Royal Marines under Lieutenant George Johnston first occupied Rose Hill on 2 November 1788 when an earthwork fort was built on the ridge near the Crescent in today's Parramatta Park, close to Old Government House.⁵⁰

The displaced Burramattagal were Maugoran and his wife Goroobera, their eldest son Ballooderry, another son called Yeranibi and their daughter Boorong. Their names had meanings which linked them to totems in the natural world. Maugoran was derived from *maugro* 'fish',⁵¹ Goroobera (*garubura*) meant 'firestick',⁵² Ballooderry (*baluderi*) 'leatherjacket fish'⁵³ and Boorong (*burang*) was a 'star'.⁵⁴

Maugoran's family was first linked to the English convict settlement at Sydney Cove through Boorong (at first called Abaroo), a twelve-year-old girl who was brought in suffering from smallpox during the epidemic that swept through the Aboriginal population in April and May 1789.

MAUGORAN'S FAMILY

Maugoran and wife 1 - Goorooberra

Their children:

Ballooderry (?1770-1791)

Buried in Governor Phillip's garden near Bennelong Point

Yeranibi Goruey (c.1775-1842) m. Worogan, a relative of Bennelong

Boorong or Abaroo (c.1777-?)

Maugoran and wife 2 - Tadyera

Their children:

Bidgee Bidgee or Bidya Bidya (c.1786-1837)

Bidgee Bidgee had no children, but adopted a 'little native girl' who died in February 1829 at the Native Institution.

Warreweer Wogul Mi (One-eye) or Warwiar (?-1798)

Names &c. of persons dead of the dysentery

Tadyera Mother of Warwiar the less & Bidya Bidya

- William Dawes Vocabulary b 1791:44.3-4

Boorong and a little boy named Nanbarry (a Cadigal) were nursed by Arabanoo, who had been abducted at Manly Cove on Governor Phillip's orders in December 1788 and died from the disease in May 1790. After treatment by Surgeon John White, Boorong recovered and was placed in the care of Chaplain Richard Johnson and his wife Mary. At first it was thought that Boorong was an orphan, but on 17 September 1790 she accompanied Governor Phillip in a boat that landed to meet Bennelong at his camp opposite Sydney Cove (Kirribilli). There she met her father, who was given an iron hatchet and some fish. In return, Maugoran presented Phillip with a short spear which had an English knife blade lashed to its tip, the first record of such an innovation.⁵⁵

Maugoran's eldest son Ballooderry was first noted by William Dawes in 1790 when he came with Nanbarry to ask for a plaster for a sore.⁵⁶

David Collins remarked of Ballooderry that 'Among his countrymen we had no where seen a finer young man.'⁵⁷ Ballooderry was a close friend of Nanbarry, with whom he had exchanged names, an Aboriginal cultural practice.

In April 1791 Ballooderry and Nanbarry's uncle Cadi Colebee were guides with the expedition to trace the Hawkesbury River (Deerubbin), but both were vocal in their entreaties to return to Parramatta and Sydney.⁵⁸

Two months later, Ballooderry, who lived for some months at the governor's house in Sydney, but left from time to time 'in order to go a fishing', built a new bark canoe and began to barter fish caught near the Port Jackson Heads in exchange for European food and goods with officers at Parramatta. This trade had been going on for just three weeks when convicts maliciously sank Ballooderry's canoe, which he had left by the river when he took fish to the huts. Ballooderry painted his hair and body with red ochre and appeared at Governor Phillip's hut at Parramatta armed with a spear-thrower and several spears. 'His rage at finding his canoe destroyed was inconceivable,' wrote David Collins, 'and he threatened to take his own revenge, and in his own way, upon all white people.'⁵⁹ The offenders were punished, but Ballooderry was not satisfied and speared a convict who had strayed from Parramatta to the Flats.⁶⁰ This event reinforces the view that by this time Maugoran and his family regarded Kissing Point as their Country.

Phillip gave orders to shoot Ballooderry, who was not seen for some time. In December 1791, Bennelong told Phillip that Ballooderry was gravely ill. He was taken to the General Hospital at The Rocks and also treated by an Aboriginal clever man or *carradhy*, but died while being taken across the harbour in a canoe. The reason for this custom was to avoid having to abandon or burn a camp to drive away the spirit of the dead. The nature of Ballooderry's illness is unknown, but it might have been a common cold, measles or influenza. All the members of Maugoran's family, except Yeranibe, attended Ballooderry's funeral, organised by Bennelong, at which Boorong was a *moobee* or official mourner. He was buried in the governor's garden (present Circular Quay precinct), close to Bennelong Point.⁶¹

Settlement and conflict

Eight former marines were granted plots of land at the Field of Mars (later Kissing Point and Ryde) on 3 January 1792. They cleared the timber and planted crops of wheat, Indian corn (maize) and barley.

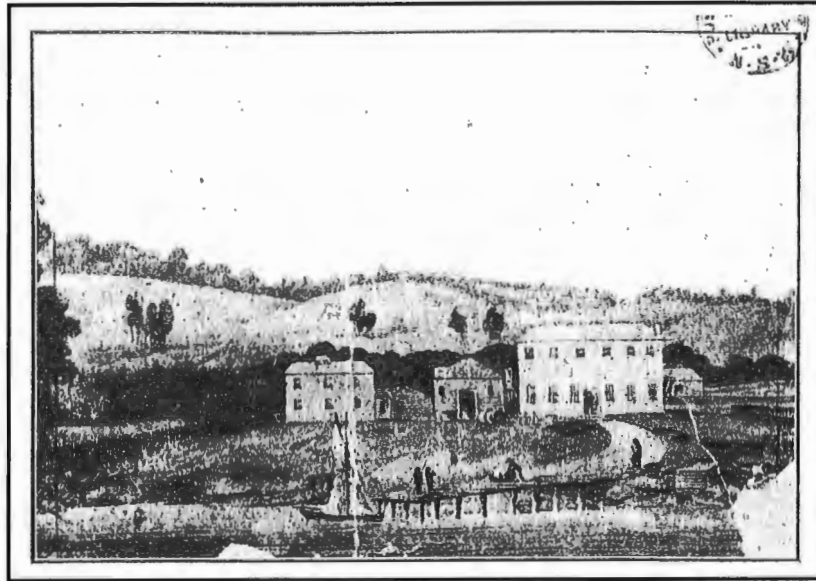


Figure 3: *View of the brewery of James Squire at Kissing Point on the Parramatta River, established in 1795. Unknown artist. After Joseph Lycett. Engraving in R. Carmichael, Ryde, 1926*

While visiting Sydney in 1793, the unnamed surgeon of the whaling ship *Britannia* took 'a very pleasant and agreeable jaunt' by water to Parramatta. From the Field of Mars to Rose Hill (Parramatta), he said, 'we have one continued view of meadows cover'd with grass and of fields with Corn'. The Field of Mars had been named 'by Governor Phillip, upon account of its be[ing] settled by Marines', he wrote. The surgeon said that, although the Aborigines relied principally on fish for their diet, 'of late [they] have become extremely addicted to Indian Corn which they steal with great Boldness'.⁶²

This hunger for Indian corn or maize spurred the first known raid by Aborigines which caused the first European fatality in the Ryde area. 'At Kissing Point ... they dangerously wounded a settler and his wife, first burning every article belonging to them', the *Sydney Gazette* reported in May 1797. The following day soldiers fired at 'a large body of natives' who 'instantly fled, leaving behind them their spears, etc.

and about 40 bushels of Indian corn which they had stolen'.⁶³ The settler was John Wood, who died and was buried on 16 May 1797.⁶⁴ Wood's wife Mary, who survived the attack, died in 1803.

William Small, born in 1796 in a farmhouse at Ryde, recalled the difficulties faced by the first farmers at Ryde. 'I remember this place when we were a handful of white men camping in an unknown country crowded with hostile or doubting blacks. Even during the day we scarcely dared go outside the house unarmed, and constant alarms added to the toils of us first settlers.'⁶⁵ By 1803 much of the land that could be cultivated along the Parramatta River had been allocated in land grants.

Referring to the period 1802-3, the Irish rebel Joseph Holt said the 'tribes of Sydney and Field of Mars, Northern Boundary (Parramatta) and Georges River, Cabramatta, all joins in time of battle'. Once a year, said Holt, this alliance opposed a union of clans from the Cow-Pasture plains (Camden), Hawkesbury River, Broken Bay and Seven Hills.⁶⁶

Aborigines were again 'very troublesome' in September 1804, when some 200 warriors took possession of the farm of James Wilshire at Lane Cove. They were 'dispersed' the following day by 'a discharge of shots'.⁶⁷ In another attack a few months later, in April 1805, James Weavers, who had settled at the Eastern Farms on 10 January 1792, was 'killed by the Natives'.⁶⁸ The settlement between the Parramatta River and the present St. Anne's Church, Ryde was at first called the Eastern Farms, being the most easterly allotments from Parramatta.

In May 1805 a military detachment 'on an excursion near the Flats, fell in with a horde of natives' who called out 'who comes there: white man I believe'. All but one ran off when they saw the troops were armed. 'Of this number it was the fate of Carraway, whose exploits and inimicable disposition have long distinguished him, to be left behind.'⁶⁹ Caruey or Carraway, a young Cadigal who had appropriated Bennelong's wife Kurubarabulu after he left for England, died in a battle in December 1805 from a spear wound in the thigh.⁷⁰

Aborigines continued to fish on the river at Ryde well after white settlement. In 1814 Governor Lachlan Macquarie asked the Reverend Samuel Marsden for his opinion

on the best place to establish a school to 'civilize' Aborigines. 'I replied, on or near the banks of Paramatta [sic] River, opposite to the flats, as numbers of natives were wont to resort there at that time, for the purpose of fishing,' wrote Marsden. He suggested that the farm of the late Captain William Kent of the Royal Navy with its outbuildings could be rented for about £30 per annum 'for the intended establishment of the Native Institution'.⁷¹ Macquarie established the Native School at Parramatta.

This popular fishing spot was at Charity Point, where the railway bridge now crosses the river to Meadowbank. Kent, a nephew of Governor John Hunter, was first granted 170 acres on 12 May 1796.⁷² He received a further grant in 1803, when his nephew William Kent Jnr obtained 570 acres in the District of Eastern Farms.⁷³ Captain William Kent died in 1812.

ABORIGINES ASSOCIATED WITH THE RYDE AREA

Bidgee Bidgee

Maugoran's youngest son Bidgee Bidgee (ca.1786-1837) had a long-lasting association with the Ryde area. Twenty years after Governor Lachlan Macquarie officially gave him the title in 1816, Bidgee Bidgee was still regarded as 'Chief of the Kissing Point Tribe'.

In December 1791, David Collins described 'Bèdia Bèdia' as 'the reputed brother of the deceased [Ballooderry] a very fine boy of about five years of age'.⁷⁴

In fact, Bidgee Bidgee was Ballooderry's half-brother, since his mother was not Goroobera but Tàdyera, who William Dawes said had died of dysentery. Tàdyera was also the mother of Bidgee Bidgee's sister Warreweer or 'Warwiar the less'.⁷⁵ Warreweer, who died in 1798, was blind in one eye and was known as Warreweer Wogul Mi or 'One eye' to distinguish her from Bennelong's sister Warreweer.

In 1805 at the age of nineteen 'Bidgiwidgy' took part in a ritual revenge duel in which he knocked down young Maroot (Boatswain Maroot) from Botany, but, in turn, was felled by 'a dreadful stroke that left a ghastly aperture behind'.⁷⁶ Not long after this,

'Bidgy Bidgy' went to sea and was named as one of several Aborigines 'who had made themselves useful on board colonial vessels employed in the fishing and sealing trade, for which they are in regular receipt of wages'.⁷⁷

A document in the Surveyor General's Government Order Book for Land Grants, 1811-1858, dated 16 February 1816, affirms Bidgee Bidgee's connection to Kissing Point. Governor Macquarie had reserved an unspecified area of land to be set aside as a grant for 'Bidgee Bidgee ... Kissing Point'. The grant was never taken up or completed.⁷⁸

Macquarie promised this land two months before he recruited Bidgee Bidgee and others as guides for a punitive expedition against hostile Aborigines to the west of Sydney. In April 1816, Bidgee Bidgee with Creek Jemmy (Nurragingy) from South Creek and Harry (Corrangie or Congarail) from Parramatta accompanied Captain W. G. B. Schaw's detachment from Windsor to the 'Kurry Jong' [Kurrajong] Brush.⁷⁹ The following month Macquarie rewarded his 'Native Guides'. Each received 'a Complete Suit of Slops [clothing] Blanket, 4 Days Provisions, Half Pint of Spirits and Half Pound of Tobacco'.⁸⁰

Finally, in June 1816, Macquarie formally recognised Bidgee Bidgee as chief of Kissing Point. The governor wrote in his diary:

Thursday 6 June 1816!!!

This day appointed Bidgee-Bidgee Black Native, to be the Chief of the Kissing Point Tribe, and invested formally with a Brass Gorget having his name and Title engraved thereon.

Bidgee Bidgee brought in Coggie, the late Chief of the Cow Pastures Tribe, who made his Submission, delivered up his arms and promised to be friendly in future to all White people. —L. M.⁸¹



Figure 4: Nouvelle-Hollande-Bedgie-Bedgi. Jeune homme de la Tribu des Gwea-gal. After Nicolas-Martin Petit (1777-1804). Coloured engraving Plate 22, Atlas in Francois Peron and L de Freycinet, Voyage de decouvertes aux terres australes [2nd ed.], Paris 1824

Bidgee Bidgee's crescent-shaped metal gorget or breastplate was the second awarded by Macquarie. The first had been given to Bungaree of the Carigal (Broken Bay clan) in 1815 when he settled on a farm at Georges Head in Sydney Harbour.⁸²

Like Bungaree, Bidgee Bidgee preferred a boat for fishing to a fixed portion of land. In June 1818, Daniel Daykin or Deacon was paid £13.0.0 from the Police Fund administered by D'arcy Wentworth for a boat supplied in March to 'Bidgee Bidgee, a Native Chief'.⁸³

Bidgee Bidgee was chief of Kissing Point in 1821 when the Reverend William Walker recognised the difficulty in persuading the clan to move to his mission in Parramatta because of their deep attachment to their own Country.

Walker wrote:

'The tribes adjacent are as follows:

Kissing Point—some of whom I see every day, and have reason to believe they will settle at Bethel. Probably not the whole of them, as they are a most bigotted [sic] race of people to the ground on which they were born. This tribe is very small ... Bidgee Bidgee is the Chief'.⁸⁴

		1834							
Return of Aboriginal Natives taken at Parramatta on 23 rd June 1834									
No.	English Names	Native Names	Age	Sex	Children		Designation of Tribe	Place or District of usual Resort	
					Male	Female			
	Miss Witte	Alouquito	30	1			Wahigoro	Duck River	
	Lenny	Lenny	30	1	1	2		Kissing Point	
	George	George	25	1	1			do	
	Tom	Tom	20	1		2		do	
	Mandy	Mandy	25					do	
	Benn	Benn	30	1	1	1		do	
	Jackey	Jackey	20					do	
	Moran	Moran	50					do	
	Waddy	Waddy	15					do	
	Bidgee Bidgee	Bidgee	45			1		Kissing Point	
		Puchamori	25	1				do	
		Benning	60	1				do	
		Woromat	60	1				do	
	Johnny	Johnny	22	1	1	1		Duck River	

Figure 5: Bidgee Bidgee and other Kissing Point Aborigines recorded in Return of Aboriginal Natives taken at Parramatta on 23rd June 1834, State Records New South Wales.

Bidgee Bidgee, said to be aged 45, was listed in the 'Return of Aboriginal Natives' taken at Parramatta on 23 June 1834 and in May 1836, when he was said to be aged 35. These Returns noted people who received blankets and were a kind of census of the Aboriginal population. Bidgee Bidgee's 'Place or district of usual resort' was given as Kissing Point, but he had no wife. In 1834 three Kissing Point men with wives were recorded: Puchamori, aged 25 and Benning and Woromat, both aged 60.⁸⁵ Kissing Point people in the 1836 Returns, signed by Henry Bailey, Clerk of Petty Sessions, included William Wilson, aged 40, and his wife, who came from Duck River, also Sophy Buckenbah, aged 30, Mary Bollon and Jenny Ingally, both aged 50 and Rosa, aged 10 and Kitty, aged 8.⁸⁶

No members of the Kissing Point clan received blankets at Parramatta in 1837. On 6 May 1839, Jem Quoider, aged 30, was registered at Kissing Point, but in 1840 he gave his usual place of resort as Bungarrabee (Eastern Creek).

The Reverend Samuel Marsden was probably referring to Bidgee Bidgee when he wrote his obituary for the Wallumedegal on 12 January 1836 in a letter to Danderson Coates:

*I am very apprehensive very little can be done for Aborigines from Sydney to Parramatta all along the north side of the river, there is but one original Native; the rest are all dead; tho' they were very numerous in these districts.*⁸⁷

There is no ready explanation for the extinction of the Kissing Point 'tribe' after 1840. Logically, the older Aborigines died, while the youngest married into other clans. About this time the former orchards and farms of the Ryde area began to be subdivided and Charity Creek was filled in. Further research is indicated.

While it is likely that Aboriginal people continued to live in the Ryde area after this period, references to them are few and far between. Jessie Taylor, a descendant of James Weavers, told Michael Levy that she had an Aboriginal nurse about 1848-50.⁸⁸ At the turn of the twentieth century, Maria Smith, grand-daughter of Robert and Maria Lock, lived at the Field of Mars Reserve (formerly the Common). The Aborigines Protection Board minutes first referred to this family in 1898. In December 1900 they were seeking food rations and blankets.⁸⁹

Bidgee Bidgee asked to be buried in the same grave as Nanbarry and Bennelong, but there is no record of his death or where he was buried. James Squire, who supported Nanbarry and Bennelong, had died in 1822. However, Bidgee Bidgee's name is associated with Abbotsford, opposite Looking Glass Point. The site of 'Abbotsford', the mansion which belonged to Sir Arthur Renwick and was later the Nestles chocolate factory, was said to be originally named 'Bigi Bigi'.⁹⁰ In the Sydney Language, Bidgee Bidgee (Bigi Bigi) meant 'a flat by a river', a reference to The Flats on the Parramatta River.⁹¹

Bundle

In 1810 Bundle assisted James Squire, then district constable, by tracking armed robbers who broke into the house of Richard Jenner at Kissing Point. Bundle followed footprints left by two nails in the sole of a shoe to a nearby hut whose owner had lent the shoes to a labourer at Lane Cove named Kean.⁹² Later, Kean [Patrick McKane] was found guilty of robbery and sentenced to 100 lashes and two years hard labour, while Edward McHugh and John White received 50 lashes each.⁹³

Young Bundle (c.1781-1844), also called Bondel and later Bundell, was 'the first [native] who has had confidence & Courage enough to go to Sea,' wrote William Bradley.⁹⁴ Bondel was an orphan who attached himself to Captain William Hill of the New South Wales Corps. Bundle sailed with Hill to Norfolk Island on board the brig *Supply* on 22 March 1791 and returned in September on the transport *Mary Ann*.⁹⁵

The Mitchell Library holds a pencil portrait of 'Sally Bundil, A Native of Kissing Point', who might have been Bundle's wife. This image was part of the collection of Governor Lachlan Macquarie. There are no other references to Sally Bundil, whose name does not appear in Return of Natives blanket records.

Harry

M. C. I. Levy in *Wallumetta* (1947) observed that 'it may be correct to assume that Bidgee, Harry and the generically-named Billy may have been one and the same person.'⁹⁶ In the nineteenth century the best known 'King Billy', an Aborigine named William Charles Wentworth from La Perouse, often walked from South Head to Darlinghurst to collect his tobacco ration.⁹⁷

It is easy to separate Bidgee Bidgee from Harry (c.1789-1840), who was Bennelong's brother-in-law and the second husband of his sister Carangarang. Looking back in the 1880s, George Macarthur, who lived at Parramatta, remembered them both. 'I knew "Harry" and his contemporary "Bidgee Bidgee" personally and intimately, for as boys we were allowed to go out with them on excursion to hunt opossums and bandicoots. In this way we acquired an extensive knowledge of their vocabulary.'⁹⁸

Harry was known for his manners and well-spoken English. Judge Barron Field praised him as 'the most courteous savage that ever bade good-morrow'.⁹⁹ As a boy, Harry had been taught to read and write English by the Reverend Samuel Marsden at Parramatta. Under the alias 'A friend to missions', Marsden in 1831 recalled:

*About thirty years ago, a native, known by the name of Harry, lived with me, and promised for a time to improve in civilization, but at length he got tired, and no inducements would prevail upon him to remain in my family; he returned to his native habits, in which he has continued up to the present time.*¹⁰⁰

Both Harry and Bidgee Bidgee served as 'Black Guides' with Captain Schaw's detachment in the expedition against hostile Aborigines around Appin in 1816.¹⁰¹ As a reward, Governor Macquarie ordered a small plate or Order of Merit to be engraved with the words 'HARRY 1816'.¹⁰²

The French surgeon and pharmacist Rene-Primavere Lesson (1794-1849), who visited Sydney in 1824, wrote: 'The tribes today are reduced to fragments scattered all around Port Jackson, on the land where their ancestors lived and which they do not wish to leave'. Lesson said the ['tribe'] 'of Parramatta [was] under the control of *Hari* [Harry]'.¹⁰³ The Reverend Charles Wilton, minister of the Parish of the Field of Mars from 1826 to 1828, said 'Harry, alias Coorangie' was 'Chief of Parramatta'.¹⁰⁴

In the *Cumberland Year Book* (1882), an anonymous writer referred to 'The last aboriginal King of Kissing Point, "King Harry"'.¹⁰⁵ If Harry outlived Bidgee Bidgee he might have succeeded him as the Kissing Point headman.

Bennelong and Nanbarry

On the orders of Governor Arthur Phillip, two Aboriginal men, Woollarawarre Bennelong, a Wangal aged 25, and Colebee, a Cadigal about 35 years old, were captured at Manly Cove on 25 November 1789. Colebee soon escaped, but Bennelong remained a 'guest' of the governor at his house until May 1790, when he jumped the paling fence to freedom.

After negotiations with Phillip, Bennelong came in peacefully to Sydney in September 1790. At his request Phillip built him a brick hut at Bennelong Point.¹⁰⁶ In December 1792 Bennelong sailed to England on HMS *Atlantic* with Phillip and his kinsman Yemmerrawannie, who died there and was buried in Eltham, now South London.

After his return to Sydney in 1795 Bennelong was represented by contemporary observers and later historians as a flawed character: a drunk, scorned by both European and Aboriginal society. There is evidence, however, that Bennelong was the leader of a clan observed on the north side of the Parramatta River, between Kissing Point and Parramatta.

Joseph Holt, who took part in the 1789 rebellion against English rule in Wicklow, Ireland, arrived in Sydney in 1800 as a political exile. Holt managed the farms of Captain William Cox, paymaster of the New South Wales Corps. One of these was Brush Farm in the present Eastwood-Dundas area. Another was the Vineyard, owned by Henry Waterhouse, second captain of HMS *Reliance*. In August 1797, Waterhouse purchased the property from Phillip Schaeffer, who had planted grape vines there in 1791.

According to James Jervis, William Cox leased the Vineyard during 1802-3.¹⁰⁷ Waterhouse's property, in the present Rydalmere area, was bounded by Vineyard Creek and Subiaco or Bishops Creek, tributaries of the Parramatta River. In his *Memoirs* Holt described a large group of Aborigines led by Bennelong. 'The king of the natives his name is Bennelong, that is to say "been long" deemed their king,' wrote Holt, who bragged that he had had 'one hundred of both male and females in my yard together'.¹⁰⁸

While in London, Bennelong lodged at the Mayfair home of William Waterhouse, who billed the Admiralty for his expenses. Arthur Phillip, then living in London and Bath, entrusted Waterhouse's son Henry with a sum of money for Bennelong. On his return to Sydney in 1795, Waterhouse advised Phillip that he would give the money to Bennelong 'whenever I can see an opportunity of it rendering any service'.

In October 1795, Henry Waterhouse told Phillip:

*He [Bennelong] already goes away with the Nativs [sic] for days together, has got his old Wife &c., however he shall never want any friendship I can shew him as well on his own account as yours ... Benalong desires me to send his best wishes to yourself & Mrs. Phillip.*¹⁰⁹

Bennelong, Nanbarry and others might have camped at the Vineyard and perhaps at William Kent's farm at Kissing Point as both men were away at sea for long periods. At some stage Bennelong went to live in the orchard belonging to brewer James Squire, who was granted land at the Eastern Farms on the north shore of the Parramatta River in 1795.

Bennelong died at Squire's farm on Sunday morning 2 January 1813. His obituary in the *Sydney Gazette* was scathing and patronising. 'His propensity for drunkenness was inordinate; and when in that state he was insolent, menacing and overbearing,' the newspaper said. 'In fact, he was a thorough savage, not to be warped from the form and character that nature gave him by all the efforts that mankind could use.'¹¹⁰ Bennelong, who had experienced British civilisation in London and Sydney, had chosen the traditional way of life of the Eora.

The one dependable explanation of the cause of Bennelong's death was given in 1815 by Old Philip, brother of Gnung-a Gnung-a Murremurgan ('Collins') to ship's surgeon Joseph Arnold, who wrote in his journal: 'old Bennelong is dead, Philip told me he died after a short illness about two years ago, & that they buried him & his wife at Kissing Point'.¹¹¹ Gnung-a Gnung-a or Anganangan had married Bennelong's sister Warreweer, so Old Philip was also Bennelong's brother-in-law.

While Bennelong's illness might have originated in the many wounds he received over the years in the relentless cycle of ritual vengeance battles, his health must also

have been affected by his 'propensity to drunkenness'. According to 'Atticus', a contributor to the *Sydney Gazette* in March 1817, Bennelong had been 'much addicted to spirit drinking, and for the last five months of his life was seldom sober.'¹¹²

Bennelong was buried in a grave in Squire's orchard near the river that separated Wallumedde territory from that of the Wangal, his birth country. 'He lies interred, between his wife and another Chief [Nanbarry], amidst the orange trees of the garden,' wrote the Reverend Charles Wilton, minister of the Parish of the Field of Mars.¹¹³ It was only 25 years — half his lifetime — since Bennelong had first seen a white man.

Nanbarry died at Kissing Point on 12 August 1821 and was buried, at his request, in the same grave as Bennelong. His obituary in the *Sydney Gazette* said he had taken to the woods, from which 'he only occasionally emerged for a number of years, in order to return with renewed avidity and satisfaction. Mr. Squire we have every reason to believe treated him with particular tenderness.'¹¹⁴

At the age of nine, Nanbarry or Nanbaree was brought to the Sydney settlement on 15 April 1789, seriously ill from smallpox, which had killed his mother. He recovered after treatment by Surgeon John White, who adopted him and named him after his patron, Andrew Sneap Hamond Douglass White.

Nanbarry was a Cadigal and the nephew of Colebee. 'Cole-be was the brother of this boy's father', said John Hunter.¹¹⁵ He was connected to Maugoran's family through Ballooderry, with whom he had exchanged names.¹¹⁶ Both Caruey and Maugoran's son Yeranibe were initiated with Nanbarry at Woccanmagulye (Farm Cove) in 1795.¹¹⁷

When Surgeon White returned to England, Nanbarry became a sailor. On 30 October 1799 Nanbarry and Bundle sailed from Sydney to Norfolk Island as crew members of HMS *Reliance*, commanded by Henry Waterhouse.¹¹⁸ In 1802 Nanbarry, whom Matthew Flinders called 'a good natured lad', sailed with the Broken Bay leader Bungaree on HMS *Investigator*, but returned to Sydney from the Great Barrier Reef aboard the sloop *Lady Nelson*.¹¹⁹

Writing in 1828, Wilton said 'Bidgee Bidgee, the present representative of the Kissing Point Tribe, is a frequent visitor to these premises, and expresses a wish, after his death, to be buried by the side of his friend Bennelong.'¹²⁰ Bidgee Bidgee told the French voyager Jules Dumont d'Urville that he was the uncle of Bennelong's son, called 'Dicky', baptised as Thomas Walker Coke.¹²¹ After an illness in which he was nursed by Bundle, the boy died aged 19 in 1823, after a brief but childless marriage to an Aboriginal girl named Maria (later Maria Lock).¹²² If Bidgee Bidgee was his uncle, Dicky's mother was Bidgee Bidgee's sister Boorong.

A photograph by Charles Kerry of James Squire's property about 1900, is said to show 'The known grave site of Bennelong'. A Mitchell Librarian noted on the reverse of a copy of this photograph:

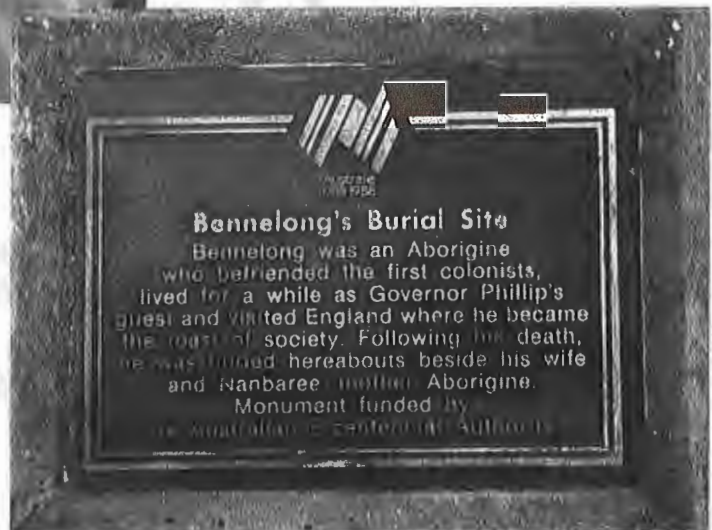
*Very near the right hand corner was the 'black man's grave' a slightly raised mound covered with old bricks made in Squire's time, in which were the bodies of White [Nanbarry], Bennelong and his wife.*¹²³

The site of Bennelong's grave was found again in 1927, but its position was not properly marked or recorded. Charles Watson, a descendent of James Squire, was told by his mother about a 'black man's grave' underneath a tennis court behind Squire's house, which in 1947 adjoined Lars Halvorsen & Sons boatsheds, covering five acres of the former Squire property, including the brewery and the old wharf.¹²⁴

John Earnshaw, who visited the site with Watson and historian T. D. Mutch in 1927, recalled in 1970 that the grave was 'part of a suburban allotment on the north-west corner of the intersection of Watson and Hordern Streets, Putney'.¹²⁵ This spot 'in the vicinity of the old Watson home' was accepted as the burial place by A. W. Stacey, editor of *A Basic History of Ryde*.¹²⁶



Figure 6: Memorial plaque commemorating Bennelong's burial site erected by the Australian Bicentennial Authority 1988. Photograph by Jeremy Steele



In 1988 a bronze memorial plaque mounted on a concrete plinth was placed in Cleves Park, not far from Bennelong Park and the neighbouring Kissing Point Park, about 13 kilometres from the City of Sydney.

ENDNOTES

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- 8 H. W. H. Huntington. *Science of Man*, 1 June 1919:34.
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- 17 W. Small 1888:6.
- 18 See K. V. Smith 2004:1-30. 'Language of Port Jackson and coastal Sydney' in *Eora Clans*. Unpublished thesis submitted for a Master of Arts degree. Macquarie University, Sydney.
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- 25 *JRAHS* Vol 4, Pt 6, 1916:277-8.
- 26 'Goomun – the Fir tree' – King 1790:400.
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- 28 Tench 1793:191.
- 29 Collins 1975:461.
- 30 Bradley 1969:79-80.
- 31 Worgan 1978:22.
- 32 William Proctor 1834:121. *Journal on the John Craig*. CY Reel 1518, ML.
- 33 Walter Hibble 1916:274.
- 34 Mary Ann Parker [1795] 1999:206-8. *A Voyage Round the World, in The Gorgon Man of War ...* London. In D. Coleman (ed.) 1999. *Maiden Voyages and Infant Colonies*, London: Leicester University Press.
- 35 Hunter 1793:52-4.
- 36 Bradley 1969:76.
- 37 Hunter 1793:55.
- 38 Bradley Op. cit..
- 39 GV 38.8. 'Dar-ra-gal-lie forefinger; Bar-roo-gal-lie, middle or ring'd [finger]' - D. Collins 1975:508:31.2.
- 40 Bradley Op. cit.
- 41 Worgan. 1978:45.
- 42 R. Jones 1968:186-215. 'The geographical background to the arrival of man in Australia and Tasmania.' *Archaeology and Physical Anthropology in Oceania* 3.
- 43 GV 34.10. Rev. C. P. N. Wilton 1828:139 wrote: '[Opposite Homebush Bay] We pass Mud Island near where the lime-burners at low water collect the shells, which they afterwards burn, for the supply of the neighbourhood.'
- 44 R. Clarke [1790] 1981:109; 'Bo-é - - - Dead' - D. Southwell 1790-1:148.22.
- 45 M. C. I. Levy. 1947:26. *Wallumetta*. Ryde: Ryde Municipal Council.
- 46 Vigors and Horsfield 1827.

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- 47 Tench 1793:61. This section is based on chapter 3.4 'Burramattagal at Kissing Point' in Keith. Smith 2004:106-109. Eora Clans. Biographies are based on original research by Keith V. Smith for the Indigenous Dictionary of Biography (IDB) he is preparing for a PhD thesis at Macquarie University, Sydney.
- 48 Phillip in Hunter 1793:468-9
- 49 Tench Op. cit.
- 50 Collins 1975:37.
- 51 'Maugro - - - fish' - GV 32.7; Bennelong to Daniel Paine 1795:27.
- 52 'Ger-rub-ber - - - that gives fire' - King 1790:125.
- 53 'Bal-loo-der-y signified the fish named by us the leathern-jacket [sic] - Collins 1975:486.
- 54 'A Star - - - Boorong' - Bennelong to Paine 1795:46.
- 55 Phillip in Hunter 1793:467.
- 56 Dawes a 1790:10.1.
- 57 Collins 1975:146.
- 58 Phillip in Hunter 1793:512-25.
- 59 Collins 1975:137-9.
- 60 Phillip in Hunter 1793:532-4.
- 61 See K. V. Smith Bennelong 2001:121 et seq.
- 62 Surgeon's Log, Britannia 1794.
- 63 Hunter in Collins 11 1975:25.
- 64 J. Copley 1986:43.
- 65 W. Small, Daily Telegraph, 23 January 1888:6.
- 66 Holt in O'Shaunessy 1988:78.
- 67 SG 2 September 1804.
- 68 SG 21 April 1805, 3c; Reel 1068 4/1824 State Records (SR) NSW, Sydney.
- 69 SG 12 May 1805, 4a.
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- 72 James Jervis 1963:207. The Cradle City of Australia. Sydney: Council of the City of Parramatta.
- 73 List of Grants – copy of Colonial Secretary Records, Bonwick Transcripts (BT) Box 88:55.
- 74 Collins 1975:501.
- 75 Dawes b 1791:38.3-4. Dawes noted another woman with the same name who died of dysentery, so the word might be the Aboriginal name of the disease itself. There are no other records of Aboriginal deaths from dysentery in First Fleet accounts.
- 76 SG 17 March 1805.
- 77 D. D. Mann 1811: 47. The Present Picture of New South Wales. London. Mann's narrative ends in 1806.
- 78 CGS 13912, Reel 1434, State Records (SR) NSW, Sydney.
- 79 Governor Lachlan Macquarie, 16 April 1816. CSIL Reel 6065, 4/1798, p.47, SRNSW.
- 80 Lachlan Macquarie, Diary, 7 May 1816. A773 ML.
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- 85 Colonial Secretary Return of Aboriginal Natives. Parramatta, 1834 - 4/16666B.3, SRNSW.
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Information about the author

Mr Keith Smith describes himself as a mature age post-graduate student, an ex journalist and founding publisher of Earth Garden magazine (now aged 65). In 2004 he gained a Master of Arts degree at Macquarie University with a thesis titled EORA CLANS: A history of Indigenous social organisation in coastal Sydney, 1770-1890. In preparation for his thesis he made a thorough study of the Wallumattagal (or Wallumedegal), the life of Bidgee Bidgee chief of Kissing Point and his family, and the fate of Bennelong and his burial at Kissing Point.

Keith Vincent Smith is the author of King Bungaree (Kangaroo Press 1992) and Bennelong (Kangaroo Press 2001). He was a contributing co-author, with Dr. James Kohen and Andrew Knight, of an extensive report (unpublished) titled Uninvited Guests: An Aboriginal Perspective on Government House and Parramatta Park, prepared for the National Trust in 1999. In June 2003 Mr Smith was commissioned by Mosman Municipal Council to research, write and edit A Brief Report on the Indigenous Inhabitants of the Mosman Area. He has also contributed biographies of Cora Gooseberry Bungaree and Daniel Moowattin which will be printed in the forthcoming Australian Dictionary of Biography (ADB).

Mr Smith is currently a curator for the EORA: Mapping Aboriginal Sydney 1770-1850 exhibition to be held at the Mitchell Library, State Library of New South Wales in July 2006.

ENGLISH

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