

## ***Darkiñung* Brief:**

**Common spellings with English characters include 'Darkinung', *Darkinyung*, *Darkinjung*.**

prepared for the University of Sydney Library's  
Sydney Electronic Scholarship (SES) Respository  
by G.E. (Geoff) Ford

2012

The "Brief" is extracts from the 2010 thesis "*Darkiñung* Recognition' by Dr Ford - which is a 558 page analysis of the historiography (study of the history of the history) with new findings from the original historic sources. Details of the findings can be read in the full text of the 2010 thesis chapters, with commentary in footnotes. The pages as listed here from the 2010 thesis are for citing, to allow the full text with its references to be found in the digital thesis, from online link at the University of Sydney Library catalogue, <http://ses.library.usyd.edu.au/handle/2123/7745>.

The Short Summary and Insights (from 2010 pp.9-12) remain in place at front: pages 5-8 of the brief.

The 1875 map and all seventeen photographic illustrations from 2010 have been retained for the brief.

This extracted Brief 2012 is formatted with alternating wide margins for double-sided printing.

As for *Darkiñung* Recognition 2010 thesis and for *Darkiñung* Borders 2011 abstract,  
the author has placed no restrictions on downloading and printing.

### Why the brief?

The 2010 thesis is the first historical account analysing the identification of the Aboriginal People in their Language groups ('Tribes') for the Country to the west and north of the initial 1788 colonial settlement at Sydney, New South Wales.

The mystery has been solved, as to who were - at the time of settlement - the Aboriginal people of the northern 'Blue Mountains' and 'Wollemi Wilderness': Country now included in the Greater Blue Mountains World Heritage Area. "When the study for this thesis began, the *Darkiñung*-language people as of the Hawkesbury-Hunter Ranges (northern Blue Mountains aka Carmarthen Hills) were 'somewhere else': On the south they were misidentified as *Dharug*, on the east misidentified as 'Awabakal', on the north misidentified as '*Wonnarua*' and on the west misidentified as *Wiradjuri*. But the research of original historical source records uncovered fallacies in these concepts." (Quoted from thesis 2010 p.469) The ancestral, traditional owners are the Aboriginal people who spoke the *Darkiñung* language [various spellings with English characters] and called their land *Wallambine* [range of spellings].

By analysing the historiography, several misconceptions have been exposed, the two most prominent being: both the 1887 misplacing by R. Miller of the coastal *Wannerawa* (aka *Wannungine*) people as 'Wonnarua' in the upper Hunter River valley (2010 pp.351-356); and the 1988 re-identifying the *Dharug* people of the Georges River as 'Darug' by J.L. Kohen from Blacktown and District Historical Society who incorrectly mislocated them at the Hawkesbury River and Blue Mountains - which at the time of settlement in 1788 was the Country of the *Darkiñung* people in the *Wallambine* Hawkesbury-Hunter ranges (alias Wollemi, Wollombi). The latter is analysed as the Blacktown Hoax (eg 2010 pp.285-298). A third exposure has been of the fallacy that the name of a coastal Land Council is the name of traditional owners who were there (2010 pp.308-309). *Darkiñung* (*Darkinyung* / *Darkinjung*) are mountain people.

More than five hundred copies of the digital version were downloaded within the first few months after being placed online at the University of Sydney Library, although the 2010 thesis was reprinted in its original formatting as a book version and already placed in more than thirty public libraries for reference. The first feedback was "Why not a map?", in response to which a 2011 two page simplified description of *Darkiñung* Borders was placed online at the university library URL.

As more and more of these readers commented favourably on the study, it was common to request a place where the research results (findings) could be read without the detail of the exhaustive historiography analyses explaining original historic source records. This 2012 document, abbreviating the 2010 thesis chapters to the issues and findings summaries, is the response.

There is no text change in the extracts, taken from the original pages identified as given here.

However, readers are still recommended to look through the stories told in the chapters of the original 2010 thesis, following the narrative above the line on each page which separate extensive commentaries in the footnotes. (The university department required footnotes, rather than endnotes for each chapter.) The subheadings given at the start of each chapter, which are useful for navigation, are included here in the brief.

G.E. Ford, 2012: *Darkiñung* Brief, extracted from 'Darkiñung Recognition' 2010 thesis - which see

from 'Darkiñung Recognition' Research Thesis, 2010 p.1:

For access to digital copy of this thesis, go to University of Sydney Library catalogue for Link.

The thesis is formatted with alternating wide margins for double-sided printing.

from 'Darkiñung Recognition' Research Thesis, 2010 p.2:

This publication is the result of  
a research study at the University of Sydney  
2007-2010.

It is a resource for reference material showing  
connections which have escaped earlier explanation.

Its page numbers as shown here should be given when citing aspects,  
attributed as given in page header.

(Any other extracts shared for comment - before this final digital and printed  
copy as deposited with Sydney University Library  
- should be discarded.)

from 'Darkiñung Recognition' Research Thesis, 2010 p.3:

[2010 full title]

***Darkiñung* Recognition:**  
**An Analysis of the Historiography for the Aborigines**  
**from the Hawkesbury-Hunter Ranges to the Northwest of Sydney**  
[commonly written with English characters as 'Darkinung', *Darkinyung* or *Darkinjung*]

Geoffrey Eric ('Geoff') Ford

[Ph.D., ANU]

2010

A thesis submitted to the  
University of Sydney  
School of Philosophical and Historical Inquiry  
Department of History  
for the degree of  
Master of Arts (Research)

[2010 short title (cover title)]

**Identifying the Aborigines**  
**to the West and North of Sydney**

from 'Darkiñung Recognition' Research Thesis, 2010 p.4:

### **Dedication [extract]**

This study for my M.A. is dedicated to my 'Class of 1955' at North Sydney Boys' High School.

The love of language is significant for this thesis.

I admire the contribution to knowledge about languages of Australia by a very important old boy from our school who has influenced this thesis, the Father of Australian and other Oceanic native linguistic studies, Arthur Capell.

from 'Darkiñung Recognition' Research Thesis, 2010 p.5:

### **Foreword**

Geoff Ford has accumulated a massive amount of original material. His knowledge of his subject is prodigious. His thesis has the capacity to challenge traditional interpretations about the Aboriginal groups who lived in the area north and west of Sydney.

R.W.

from 'Darkiñung Recognition' Research Thesis, 2010 p.6:

### **Acknowledgements [extract]**

I am appreciative of the then head of the School of Philosophical and Historical Inquiry, Richard Waterhouse, Bicentennial Professor of Australian History, for encouraging me in 2006 to come back to Sydney University to do a M.A. research thesis. He has continued to exhibit that encouragement as my supervisor through the turbid years while I found my way through the opacity into which my topic had taken me. This study is of the bush beyond the confines of urban areas, and I was impressed with his 'desire to understand the complex cultural context that shaped not only my life (with country origins) but also those of generations of rural Australians.' ['The Vision Splendid', p.7.] Richard's desire to embrace somebody committed to local history in their research studies was paramount.

**Short Summary [pages 9-12 in full]**

The historiographic studies presented in this thesis are analyses of the historical sources from which the indigenous, traditional Aboriginal, people of the Hawkesbury-Hunter Ranges are recognised.

People

In 1789, a boat expedition led by Governor Arthur Phillip 'inland' into the ranges first encountered these Aborigines on the Branches of the Hawkesbury River northwest of Sydney, and on returning there by land in 1791 he confirmed that they were a different people to those Aborigines whom they knew on the coast. They were friendly to white explorers. After settlement there, 'The Branch' natives were pacified in 1805 by a massacre led by Andrew Thompson towards Springwood. Subsequently, surviving Aborigines with their kinsmen assisted some settlers' crossings of the ranges, without distinguishing territory between the interleaved Hawkesbury and Hunter River catchments. The term *Wollombi* with a variation in English spelling was given as a reference to their country, and appears to have included both Hawkesbury and Hunter drainage. Convicts and convicts' sons played a part in the Aborigines surviving the rapid changes wrought by settlement, by taking in Aboriginal women and becoming fathers for their Aboriginal children - who are the progenitors of present day Aboriginal descendants. They were known as 'The Branch' natives and 'Wollombi tribe' before any term was recorded to identify them from their language.

Language

A language for these Aboriginal people of the Hawkesbury-Hunter Ranges was recorded near Sackville by native-born Robert Mathews at the Hawkesbury River from Aborigines who spoke that language throughout the ranges. Mathews recorded this language as *Darkiñung*, which is the identification since applied to these people. A wordlist from the same people native to the Hawkesbury was also recorded by local native-born James Tuckerman at Sackville. This language has been identified as the language of *Gomebeere* and *Yellomundy* who were met by Governor Phillip a hundred years earlier at the same location on the Hawkesbury River.

The language mistakenly purported by the Blacktown and District Historical Society to have been spoken at the Hawkesbury (north of the floodplain) was only known to have been used by Aboriginal people from Georges River. Some people with convict fathers, and who were familiar with the language, moved from Liverpool to the Black Town on the south side of the Hawkesbury floodplain, and it is guessed that it also was the local language there among the Aborigines of South Creek and Eastern Creek (south of the floodplain). In 1984 James Kohen of the society confirmed this as the Georges River language recorded by native-born John Rowley. Although Robert Mathews found no identifying name when he recorded this language, people at Camden (apparently descended from the neighbouring *Gundungurra* tribe) identified the people as *Dharrook*, present day *Dharug*. Although this term could be applied to the Black Town, it was a mistake to have applied it to the *Darkiñung* of the Hawkesbury and Blue Mountains. (The new term 'Darug', from a vegetable root in Western Victoria, was applied by Kohen for Blacktown descendants.)

### Country

Popular beliefs that the southern part of the Hawkesbury-Hunter Ranges was occupied by *Dharug* Aborigines, the northern part by 'Wonnarua', the eastern part by 'Awabakal' and the western part by *Wiradjuri*, are all found to be wrong when the historical source records are examined.

From the analyses carried out for this thesis, the traditional country of the *Darkiñung*-language people occupied by them at the time of settlement may be defined with borders to meet modern requirements. Theirs was the country of the ranges bounded by the Hawkesbury River floodplain to the south and the Hunter River floodplain to the north.

To the southeast the Hawkesbury River catchment-based *Darkiñung* bordered the Georges River catchment-based *Dharug*. The *Darkiñung* country included the Hawkesbury catchment in the foothills of the ranges on the right hand side of the river downstream of the floodplain - the flow of the Hawkesbury River itself in those foothills did not impose a boundary.

To the southwest the *Darkiñung* of the Grose River Branch bordered the people in the Cox River valley of the Wollondilly River catchment-based *Gundungurra* (or *Burra'gorang*) people.

To the northwest the *Darkiñung* of the upper Colo River Branch bordered the Macquarie River catchment-based *Wiradjuri* across the Great Dividing Range of the Central Tablelands, south of Coolah Tops. To the north of Coolah Tops the *Kamilaroi* based in the Namoi River catchment had penetrated over the Liverpool Range down the upper Hunter River valley and bordered the *Darkiñung* on the mid Hunter River floodplain at the time of settlement.

To the northeast the *Darkiñung* bordered the coastal Aborigines along the watershed of the coastal range. The coastal people occupied the catchments between the Hawkesbury River estuarine Arms of Broken Bay and the estuarine areas of the lower Hunter River. (John Fraser, an immigrant teacher who thought they were extinct created the terms adopted in the present day for these coastal people, 'Guringai' and 'Awabakal'.) These were the real *Wannerawa* people whose name had been misapplied (as 'Wonnarua') to the *Kamilaroi* in the upper Hunter Valley. The alternative name also recorded by Robert Mathews, now preferred, is *Wannungine*. It was this group, sharing the two rivers, who were closely allied with the *Darkiñung*.

More Insights from Historic Records

Watkin Tench, Lieutenant-Captain of the marines in the First Fleet, wrote a novel account of his memoirs on his voyage back to England in which he included some specific data copied from the official records. His story telling was written to entice an English public to buy his book. Analysis of the records has shown that it is not a reliable history source.

Many published reminiscences as have been used cannot be trusted as a historical record without verification from other sources. They should be subject to the same scrutiny as the historic novels attributed to 'Barrington' or by Tench (or even by Willmot or by Grenville).

The small pox, which devastated many Aborigines from an outbreak at Sydney in 1791, then spreading up the coast and into the Hawkesbury-Hunter Ranges, was carried to the colony as Shingles, a latent form of Chicken Pox, a small pox other than Smallpox.

The 'enmity' and 'battles' which drew the settlers' comments were most often intra-tribal sporting challenges between acquaintances (usually members of the same language group), rather than inter-tribal 'wars' as white authors have imagined.

As the Aborigines' food resources and way of life were destroyed by settlement, women survived by becoming *de facto* 'wives' of convicts (so there are many cryptic Aboriginal descendants at present unknown). Enigmatically, men attempting to live traditional lives disappeared.

The Aborigines' terms recorded on Governor Phillip's 1791 expedition, *bidji'gal* and *booroo-beron'gal*, were used as descriptions of people, both given in the 'Coastal' language. They do not apply to Phillip's 'Inland' at the Hawkesbury River, where a different language applied. Neither indicates a specific locality and they are not Clan names.

The recently contrived 'Clan' called 'Oryang-ora' at Springwood in the Blue Mountains did not exist. The Springwood forest of the Grose River catchment was part of the home range occupied by people from the lower Nepean River. Other non-existent 'Clans' such as a new 'Mara Mara' [aka Marra Marra] for the lower Hawkesbury have also been manufactured recently.

A 'chief' or 'king' did not establish the presence of a 'Clan' or 'Tribe'. Some settlers designated lone 'domesticated' Aboriginal men at their farm as 'King', i.e. a 'king' of nobody. The English term 'chief' tended to have been used in colonisation for indigenous men who conducted diplomatic relationships with the authorities. (Royal families with princes or princesses were concoctions of an English dreamworld.)

The name of an Aborigine 'Yarramundi' of Richmond Hill district is a Furphy, the term perhaps developed from *Yaramandy* printed in 1804. However, that person is now considered to have been *Yellomundy*, the 'chief' at Portland Head Rock district (present day Ebenezer / Sackville area). The 'chief' at Richmond Hill district then was *Yaragowhy* (of lower Nepean River area).

G.E. Ford, 2012: *Darkiñung* Brief, extracted from 'Darkiñung Recognition' 2010 thesis - which see

from 'Darkiñung Recognition' Research Thesis, 2010 p.12:

Although the term 'Guringai' from Fraser's 'kuringgai' has been adopted by descendants of *Bungaree's* Broken Bay people, John Fraser meant it to apply to all those who used the common noun 'kuri' for man. Fraser's term Awabakal [or Awaba'gal] applied specifically to the local Clan where the Rev. Lancelot Threlkeld was based on northern Lake Macquarie, and is taken to be a calm (flat surface) cove in the lake.

Threlkeld's Aboriginal language informant, Johnny (boy of [M'] military Captain John Mander Gill) who was reared in the Sydney barracks, was one of *Bungaree's* mob who had moved to Port Jackson. On reaching adulthood, when at Port Macquarie Johnny M'Gill took his adult name from *Birrugan*, the mythical young man who rose to the heavens, whom Threlkeld imagined as representing an eagle and introduced as '*Biraban*' [a term which he may have taken from emu chick, which made the sound 'bira'].

The yams along the banks of the Hawkesbury River Branches described from Governor Phillip's 1789 boat expedition were not a woodland species as proposed by modern authors, but a riverside sedge, the marsh club-rush *Bolboschoenus fluviatilis*. (Tubers of marsh club-rushes were food resources across Australia.)

The recent term 'Darug' for the Western Sydney Aborigines, as contrived by J.L. Kohlen for Blacktown and District Historical Society to apply to local people and publicised in his untested 1993 book, does not represent either the Hawkesbury River *Darkiñung* or the Georges River *Dharug* people. It is derived from the meaning of a vegetable root ('*darook*') at Tandarook in Western Victoria.

Under NSW state legislation modern Local Aboriginal Land Councils are not based on traditional Aboriginal land and most are named after a local town. That on the Central Coast, *Darkinjung* LALC, took its name from the Wollombi *Darkiñung* people of the neighbouring Hawkesbury-Hunter Ranges.



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G.E. Ford, 2012: *Darkiñung* Brief, extracted from 'Darkiñung Recognition' 2010 thesis - which see

from 'Darkiñung Recognition' Research Thesis, 2010 p.17:



Portland Head Rock showing the profile of the Duke of Portland  
- facing downstream on the Hawkesbury River  
from photograph by Lee Ford Wednesday 5 July 2006

Notes:

The location of present day Ebenezer (upstream side) and Sackville (downstream side), is where Governor Arthur Phillip communicated with *Darkiñung*-language Aborigines on his first expedition by the river branches, Sunday 5 July 1789 and again on his expedition by land Thursday 14 April 1791 when *Gomebeere's* speech was noted. This location on the tidal south Branch was the home of *Yellomundy*, and where James Tuckerman and Robert Mathews recorded the language. The cliff is the LHS of the high choke (or, bottleneck) which results in the upstream floodplain becoming inundated.

**Preface [extract]****Addressed to the Readers**

Being a local history treatise, the writing for this thesis has had to accommodate some geographical and topographical knowledge about the subject areas of the Hawkesbury-Hunter Ranges and their periphery. There is a basic general map from 1875 with Part III. Further, some basic background knowledge is taken as understood for the 'traditional [previously accepted] interpretations' referred to in the Foreword.

This thesis has been prepared for four audiences:

In principle, primarily this writing is for my assessors and examiners who will determine for my university whether I have established Mastery of the Art.

Travelling through Part I we will write in Chapter 2 while Hawkesbury settlers shoot the hero *Yaragowhy* to massacre 'The Branch' natives in the Blue Mountains, then walk in Chapter 3 together with Ben Singleton and his mate *Mullaboy* along the *Wollemi* ridges to meet members of the 'Wollombi tribe'. Through Part II we shall ride our horses in Chapter 6 alongside Robert Mathews while he meets *Madha*, the *Darkiñung*-speaking Aboriginal mother of William Onus from the Hawkesbury-Hunter Ranges (and in Chapter 7 establish that Hawkesbury River was not where a language called *Dharug* was spoken). Peering over the borders for Part III we can accompany in Chapter 10/SE native-born lads Hamilton Hume and John Rowley exploring with *Dharug* Aborigine *Duall* and establish that Georges River was the *Dharug*-Language People's Country when the settlers arrived, plus shadow the youngster Annabella Innes in Chapter 11/SW as she watches a corroboree of the Hunter/Goulburn River *Wollombi* people hosted by the station Aborigines in the upper Colo River *Capertee* Valley. As we pass by, we note that close allies, of the *Darkiñung*-Language People of the Country in the *Wallambine* Hawkesbury-Hunter Ranges, were the *Wannerawa* / *Wannungine*-Language People of the Country on the coastal lakes between the Hawkesbury and Hunter River estuaries.

In particular, this is produced for my peers, the learned gatekeepers of knowledge.

from 'Darkiñung Recognition' Research Thesis, 2010 p.20:

Personally, I have in mind so many of my extended family, friends and acquaintances who wanted to be part of this amazing journey into Local History and Family History.

And principally, my work is for the young students who are to follow me, with the expectation that this can be a firm launching pad to use for your own studies.

The stage is set here for another Act in the theatre of History, as deduced in my Intermission soliloquy at the end.

## **Introduction to the Thesis [in full]**

Just as I have benefited from access to material in theses written at the university from the 1950s, I trust that the material in this thesis will be of value for future studies.

This thesis is not composed to be a passport for further postgraduate degrees - I already have those. This treatise is intended to demonstrate an old fashioned purpose, i.e. mastery of the art - less of a beginning but more of an ending to be shared with others, perhaps a legacy.

The project chosen has several facets. One major influence has been my study since 1994 of cultural heritage for the Hawkesbury-Hunter Ranges aka northern Blue Mountains - or Governor Phillip's 'Carmarthen Hills'. In this aspect I became interested in traditional Aboriginal people as an undergraduate in the 1950s, when I worked in these mountains with F.D. 'Fred' McCarthy, then at The Australian Museum. More recently, ancestral Aboriginal-descent cousins from the Hawkesbury River districts, involved in the Everingham Family Association, whetted my appetite to look at their history with them.

A sticking point has been being drawn into the constricting web of the charismatic proponent who has become the *de facto* authority on Aborigines of western Sydney, J.L. 'Jim' Kohen. He has conducted mesmerising talks. I met him at a well regarded field excursion in the bushland at Mitchell Park on Cattai Creek, when he was instructing members of the Australian Association of Bush Regenerators in 1999. Since then he has monitored my studies, later suggesting *Darkiñung* history as a subject for my attention because nobody had ever looked at this topic. Although I did not take up his proposal to supervise me, I have been pleased to have been able to share material with him, while he has been instructing me in what he thought I should discover. I am not a very well restrained explorer.

I have responded to gentle nudges by my university supervisor - which have altered the presentation of this thesis in many ways. As a part time M.A., my research project began preparing the History of the Aborigines from the Hawkesbury-Hunter Ranges with subjects of natural Geography, native Indigenous Voices, and imposed Colonial Power each divided into chapter topics. Some of these chapters were written from historical records, with glorious allusions to classical literature and literature that became classic. I had delved deep into knowledge of Aboriginal cultural practices of various eras with Australia-wide comparative studies. But, I had merely placed the *Darkiñung* identification into an Appendix,

from 'Darkiñung Recognition' Research Thesis, 2010 p.22:

relying with other authors on the veracity of conclusions which Kohen had published from the Blacktown and District Historical Society. However, when my supervisor advised that the identification should be at the beginning of the thesis, my student life changed, because I needed to determine recognition of the *Darkiñung* Aborigines myself.

A reading companion in the train to uni had been Butterfield's lectures on the History of History which had been broadcast by the BBC. When I set out to examine the history of how the *Darkiñung* were recognised, I discovered that modern conclusions were based on inadequate historical sources, and so developed an investigation of the historiography with analysis of historical records. This development consumed the whole thesis and has become vastly bigger and more complicated than the original project.

Early in this development, on Friday 5 October 2007, I went to the Macquarie University and, instead of the usual instant coffee in a staff room, I took Jim Kohen to the Student Union for a couple of beers there where I offered him first use of my new findings of historical record sources that showed the *Darkiñung* were present at the Hawkesbury River Branches as far upstream as the Grose River Valley and Springwood. This contradicted Kohen's widely quoted 1993 'yellow book' from the historical society at Blacktown and corrected modern interpretations of the Aboriginal groups who lived in the area northwest of Sydney. On television I had watched book author Henry Reynolds languidly acknowledge that he had made historical errors, with a promise to revise his books with corrections people told him about, so I thought that this would be an acceptable way to advance, as Kohen had said Reynolds was the best in the field. In response Kohen insisted that my independent findings could not be correct because he had decided that the Hawkesbury Aborigines were *Dharug* from Blacktown - people whom he had renamed 'Darug'. As two of my women anthropologist contacts put it to me, Kohen's rejection of historical records would influence my attitude which would be shown in this history thesis. They were right. This 2007 experience enthused me 'to tell it like it was' and to write up my study of historiographical aspects.

When my supervisor wrote the assessment in 2009 which appears here as the Foreword, I began to rewrite the findings in order to present sufficient detail so that the conclusions in this thesis will stand up to explicit scrutiny. I have included several biographical mentions from my studies about the people who themselves were the sources of the historical sources.

The findings in this thesis may be built upon by future history students. My graduate sons have referred to me and my home computers with the term 'Legacy' - that would be a legacy of which I would be proud.

## Part I



Ephraim 'Afie' Everingham  
son of Aborigine *Budha* (alias Mildred Saunders)  
from Sackville

### Notes:

Ephraim was known to Robert Mathews as a *Darkiñung* Aborigine. He spent his life at Sackville, as did his mother born there, identified by Mathews as *Budha* ('*Butha*'). Portrait extract from a posed family study taken by a photographer for the Hall family of 'Lilburndale' at Roberts Creek on the Hawkesbury River. The actual people in the full photograph were identified by me as guided by another of my Aboriginal cousins, the late Grace Sunderland (née James). She is the eldest daughter of the eldest daughter of the eldest daughter of Ephraim and his wife *Madha* ('*Martha*'), known to Mathews as 'Mrs Everingham'. Over cups of tea in her Kurrajong kitchen, Auntie Gracie recognised her grandparents, their nephews and nieces. The location, in front of 'Lilburndale' homestead, was identified by me on field trips together with local Dennis Mitchell. My copy of photograph is from the collection of Jack Brook, who obtained it from the late May Hall, Mrs Case. Jack used the photo for both the cover and inside his book about the Sackville Aborigines Reserve immediately downstream of Roberts Creek, 'Shut Out From The World' (1994 1<sup>st</sup> edn p.37, 1999 2<sup>nd</sup> edn p.41).

[Another portrait extract, of *Madha*, is inserted with the illustration at the start of Chapter 4.]





In modern times the people of the northern Blue Mountains, the Hawkesbury-Hunter Ranges of this thesis, had been considered to be a secret Aboriginal Tribe known as the *Darkiñung* [various spellings], taken from 'Darkiñung Recognition' Research Thesis, 2010 p.27: as having been located hidden away beyond 'The Forgotten Valley' of the Macdonald River, or in the mysterious adjacent ranges, now Wollemi National Park 'Wilderness' draining into the Colo River.<sup>2</sup> Some authors merely place them 'out of the way' at the upper reaches of the Colo River deep in the mountains around Putty.<sup>3</sup>

This concept of beyond the forgotten valley is a misunderstanding which has led to the research studies on neighbouring tribal groups ignoring the presence of these *Darkiñung*. It was the tribe of this wilderness location which was to be the subject of this thesis. But, my new research has found that many of those *Darkiñung* ancestors were in the periphery of the ranges, where their descendants have been designated erroneously - in recent times - as belonging to other nearby groups when they sought assistance for local history to identify their origins. In an ironic twist creating confusion, traditional country of the *Darkiñung* tribe appropriated for the neighbouring *Dharug* group by a local 'researcher', is now found to have been claimed as ancestral country by actual *Darkiñung* descendants who had been designated as members of the *Dharug*. A significant part of this study has had to address this unexpected confusion in order to correctly determine who and where were the ancestral people. I discovered that the history of 'The Branch' natives, as the *Darkiñung* were first known from the Grose River Branch near Richmond, is critical in relation to the settlers' first two landmarks on the Hawkesbury River, Richmond Hill and Portland Head Rock, the locations of present day North Richmond and Ebenezer/Sackville respectively.

To the date of the work for this thesis there has been no published history which analytically reflects the accounts of source material accurately. Therefore, some descriptive narrative of earliest records is given in brief as the basis for this thesis. I have intensively reconstructed the initial expeditions by Governor Phillip into the Hawkesbury-Hunter Ranges for the project, including following his progress in the field, and I have discovered that the novel accounts of First Fleet marine Watkin Tench for a popular book are

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<sup>2</sup> 'The Forgotten Valley' is the apt title of the 1978 'History of the Macdonald Valley'. In this, Neve created a frontier fantasy there in the 1820s by describing at a site which I have visited 'objecting blacks who still roamed the district' as 'hostile and treacherous'. In actual Local History an Aboriginal woman, wife of a white settler, is buried in a family cemetery there. Reversing Neve's stance, Grenville in 2005 used the identical lagoon site beside the Macdonald River to locate her dramatic massacre of peaceful Aborigines by white settlers. Her book title is a contraction of 'The Secret River of Blood' for this massacre of *Darkiñung* people (whom Grenville had misidentified as *Dharug*). The Wilderness is discussed in Chapter 11/SW.

<sup>3</sup> Putty is on an upper [northern] waterway of the Colo Branch of the Hawkesbury River, very close to the upper [northern] waterways of the Macdonald Branch of the Hawkesbury River, and aligned in the ranges with upper [southern] waterways of the Wollombi Brook tributary of the Hunter River.

G.E. Ford, 2012: *Darkiñung* Brief, extracted from 'Darkiñung Recognition' 2010 thesis - which see

from 'Darkiñung Recognition' Research Thesis, 2010 p.28:

an unreliable source of history, in judicial terms 'unsafe'.<sup>4</sup> This problem is discussed in Chapter 1.

For the historiography in Part I, Chapter 1 deals with the first contact of these Aborigines along the Hawkesbury River Branches by aliens from the First Fleet, followed in Chapter 2 by their repression and recognition as 'The Branch' natives by the settlers at the Hawkesbury River Branches, which sets the scene for identification of the people. By accompanying the original white explorers in Chapter 3, the core of the thesis, I discover the extent of the territory occupied by these Aborigines throughout the Hawkesbury-Hunter Ranges. Chapter 4 outlines how these Aborigines survived settlement, providing a perspective about the Aborigines who became informants for the language identification taken up in Part II.

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<sup>4</sup> My finding, discussed in Chapter 1, of Tench's popular books being unreliable is not unique, although not as blatant as the 'histories' published over the name of George Barrington (George Waldron) which had been accepted by many as an honest resource. It is appropriate that some of the 'history' attributed to Barrington was in turn plagiarised from Tench's book. I found that the Barrington tales included aspects from Governor Phillip's 1791 expedition outlined here in Chapter 1. Further, the prominent local historian of the Hawkesbury settlement, Jan Barkley-Jack, has found cause to criticise the reliability even of the colony's diarist, David Collins. And, in current research, the eminent historian of Sydney settlement, Grace Karskens at the University of New South Wales, has delivered a 2009 public lecture exposing a well used primary source: 'The Sydney Gazette got it wrong!'. In Chapter 2 I describe as an act of courage by the *Darkiñung* hero *Yaragowhy* what the newspaper described as 'treachery'.

# Chapter 1



The edible root tuber of a marsh club-rush, the sedge *Bolboschoenus* species  
(from waterside verges in western Sydney)

## Notes:

Governor Arthur Phillip's deputy, John Hunter, at their first contact with *Darkiñung* Aborigines on the bank of a Hawkesbury River Branch, Wednesday 1 July 1789, noted 'wild yams, about the size of a walnut', being roasted in camp fire. They investigated at a sheoak association four days later, where they found them in 'greatest plenty' on the marshy banks of the river. This specimen is from the National Herbarium at the Royal Botanical Gardens, Sydney, and I am grateful for Karen Wilson there providing the photograph to use. [Scale on LHS is mm.] The Hawkesbury species found by the First Fleet naval officers is consistent with *Bolboschoenus fluviatilis*. In her article about Root Use by the Aborigines, Beth Gott 1983 provides a similar photograph when the same plant species was known as *Scirpus medianus*.

## Part I (1)

## Chapter 1

**Arrival of the Aliens  
at the River Branches in the Hawkesbury-Hunter Ranges**

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<u>Trade with the Aborigines of The Branches</u> .....	38
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<u>Aboriginal 'Clan' Names v. Descriptions</u> .....	44
<u>On the Shore or In the Woods (Fish or Possum for Dinner)</u> .....	47
<u>The 'Stranger'</u> .....	49
<u>The Stranger Did Not Speak with the White Aliens</u> .....	52
<u>Communicating with the 'Inland' Aborigines: <i>Gomebeere</i> and <i>Yellomundy</i></u> .....	55
<u>Crossing the River with the 'Inland' Aborigines: <i>Deedora</i> and <i>Morunga</i></u> .....	58
<b>1793</b>	
<u>Further Exploration Encounters</u> .....	61
<b><u>Chapter 1 Findings</u></b> .....	62

G.E. Ford, 2012: *Darkiñung* Brief, extracted from 'Darkiñung Recognition' 2010 thesis - which see

from 'Darkiñung Recognition' Research Thesis, 2010 p.31:

The wretched condition of the miserable natives who have taken up their residence, for a time, so far back from the sea coast, where no fish are to be had, is far beyond my description. They, no doubt, have methods of snaring or killing the different kinds of animals which are to be found here, otherwise I think it impossible they could exist at any distance from the sea: for the land, as far as we yet know, affords very little sustenance for the human race.

John Hunter, Captain, R.N.

Thus wrote Captain Hunter in the first reaction of the Europeans to finding there were people in the mountains, Friday 3 July 1789 as they travelled from Broken Bay into the ranges, by boat up newly discovered river Branches. There was no racial discrimination expressed. But Hunter's assessment was wrong.

### **The Issue**

The original historical records by the British settlers about the Aborigines in the Hawkesbury-Hunter Ranges of this thesis, to the northwest of Sydney, were their observations when on expeditions to the rivers which flowed from the ranges.

In this chapter, with my first hand field knowledge of the sites, and with my new study for this thesis analysing original historic sources, I demonstrate in particular that the Aborigines found at the Hawkesbury River were a separate Language group (or 'Tribe'), as foreign to the coastal Aborigines at Port Jackson as say the English were to the French. Additionally, I show that Clan names were not

from 'Darkiñung Recognition' Research Thesis, 2010 p.32:

recorded for them in the way that Clan names were recorded for places around Botany Bay / Port Jackson and up the harbour (Parramatta River). The terms *bidjigal* and *boorooberongal* incorrectly purported to be Clans are explained as descriptive terms, in the language of the coastal people, which were not limited to a place as a Clan name must be.

Further, I have included some of my examination of Watkin Tench's writings from which I have discovered that his published works have limited value as historical records. In passing, I have noted my conclusion from my personal study a few years ago that the epidemic of a small pox which had affected these mountain people when Governor Phillip arrived was not the Smallpox, but was Chicken Pox.

from 'Darkiñung Recognition' Research Thesis, 2010 p.62:

### **Chapter 1 Findings**

In a sincere analysis of the historiography and the narrators behind the history recognising Aborigines of the Hawkesbury-Hunter Ranges (and their rivers of northern Blue Mountains), I have found that the stories - which a Lieutenant-Captain of the marines, Watkin Tench, composed for a book on the ship *Gorgon* during his voyage returning to England - are an unreliable source as a historical record.

Therefore, more credence must be given to alternative sources.

Travelling inland from Broken Bay up the newly discovered Hawkesbury River by boat in July 1789, Governor Arthur Phillip's first expedition to the Hawkesbury-Hunter Ranges encountered Aborigines there. Although they could not understand each other's language, the settlers communicated with these people beside the South Branch [the main Branch] of the river in the vicinity of present day Sackville in the Wilberforce area [which remained during nineteenth century history as a centre for these *Darkiñung*-language speaking Aborigines identified throughout this thesis].

Governor Phillip returned with another expedition on foot, accompanied by two men from the coastal Aborigines, in April 1791 after the front of an epidemic of a small pox, the chicken pox, had passed, and found that the inland people near the Hawkesbury River were of a different culture and language to those from 'Darkiñung Recognition' Research Thesis, 2010 p.63: on the coast. Further expeditions, such as Captain William Paterson's in 1793, verified that these Aborigines encountered in the Blue Mountains at the Grose River were a different people. On the April 1791 overland expedition, Governor Phillip's party met a man who had recovered from the small pox, *Gomebeere*, at *Bardo Narrang* Creek near present day Pitt Town, and further upstream were joined by another Aborigine, the original *Yellomundy*. This encounter was not located at present day 'Yarramundi' Lagoon as claimed by some authors, a place which was never visited by Phillip.

Analysis of the historic reports shows that in 1791 Phillip learnt that in the upper Parramatta River catchment now known as The Hills people were sick and dying of the small pox - *bidjigal*. The coastal Aborigines, who were fishermen of marine waters, referred to others away from the shores as possum hunters from the woods, *boorooberongal*. Both terms were from the coastal language, and neither term applied to define a Clan as has been erroneously claimed. The following month on a different excursion, it seems that Lieutenant William Dawes discovered that the inland Aborigines repeated coastal words with a variation in pronunciation. On their expeditions when they met inland Aborigines about the Hawkesbury, the settlers did not discover any place names (as they had along the Parramatta River) and therefore did not discover any clan names for these Hawkesbury River people.

On the first expedition, winter 1789, naval Captain John Hunter noted yams had been dug up on the marshy edges of the river branches, and I have identified these as the sedge *Bolboschoenus fluviatilis*, a marsh club-rush. (The yams at the Hawkesbury River have no relationship with the *Dharug* Aboriginal people who were from the Georges River, as investigated throughout this thesis.)

## Chapter 2



Axe making workshop of 'The Branch' natives on the bank of the lower Nepean River  
from photograph by Geoff Ford Wednesday 29 April 2009

### Notes:

Aborigines of the Hawkesbury River Branches were first identified as 'The Branch' natives from those *Darkiñung* Aborigines camped on the side of the lower Nepean River near the junction with the Grose River, who fled into the Blue Mountains towards Springwood when being pursued by Chief Constable Andrew Thompson's massacre party in 1805. At this workshop there the river bed is full of stones used as axe head 'blanks', which when rubbed on the rock to sharpen made the grooves shown in photograph. I visited this tool sharpening site with one of my Aboriginal Everingham *Darkiñung* cousins - who is listed also as a descendant of *Darkiñung* woman Betty Cox from Cattai on the Hawkesbury River and *Dharug* man *Woorrerwuda* (alias 'Johnny') from Eastern Creek.



## Part I (2)

## Chapter 2

**'The Branch' Natives  
of the Hawkesbury-Hunter Ranges**

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### The Issue

This chapter plays an important role in preparing the historical scene for the Hawkesbury-Hunter Ranges People (Part I) identified by their Language (Part II) as *Darkiñung* Aborigines, who occupied the Country of the northern Blue Mountains (Part III). Until identified by their language, they were known in the colony as 'The Branch' natives along the Branches of the Hawkesbury River, or as the 'Wollombi tribe' along southern tributaries of the Hunter River.<sup>1</sup> Chapter 1 has established that, at the time of arrival of the settlers, the 'inland' Aboriginal people of the Grose River and country along the Hawkesbury River were of a different language and culture to the 'coastal' Aborigines already known to the settlers at Port Jackson / Botany Bay.<sup>2</sup>

In this chapter, I illustrate that these Hawkesbury river and ranges Aboriginal people were known to the early settlers to have occupied the catchments from the ranges, i.e. for the Branches of the present day Hawkesbury River arising downstream from the junction of the Warragamba and upper Nepean Rivers (that is, for tributaries other than the Cumberland Plains 'South Creek'). 'The Branch' natives at a tributary of present day Wollemi Brook, *Putty* (aka '*Boottee*') - part of the Colo River Branch of the Hawkesbury - were associated through the ranges with those from the southern tributaries of the Hunter. These ranges represent the northern Blue Mountains. The potential limits to the Country occupied by these People are the subject of Part III.

These Aborigines referred to by the early settlers as 'The Branch' natives encompassed identities of several locality groups along the branches, such as the Richmond Hill 'tribe' for the people around Richmond Hill and Portland Head 'tribe' for people around Portland Head Rock area. These historic localities are discussed in Chapter 1. Whereas a locality group was then called 'tribe', the present day concept of a locality group is to designate it as a 'Clan', using 'Tribe' to distinguish contiguous groups with a common language.

from 'Darkiñung Recognition' Research Thesis, 2010 p.68:

I have used the term ' "The Branch" natives' following its application by the settlers to identify the Hawkesbury Aborigines at Richmond Hill and across the Nepean River into the Grose Valley towards Springwood. The massacre of these people led by Andrew Thompson from the green hills port as below was referred to as 'The successful assault made upon the *Branch natives* [emphasis in original] by a party of

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<sup>1</sup> Historically, from the start of the expeditions and then settlements, Branches referred to the Hawkesbury River tributaries of which the South (or Southern) Branch had become the main river over geological time (since the Wollondilly / Warragamba flowed into it). Although '*Wollombi*' became the term for a Hunter River tributary and was appropriated subsequently by Surveyor General Thomas Mitchell for a village located there, it appears to have been an indigenous term for the valleys of the high ranges, recorded in English characters with various spellings, including '*Wallambine*' and '*Wollemi*', as discussed later in this chapter. Further discussion of the original naming is given under The Issue of Chapter 12/NW.

<sup>2</sup> Because Aboriginal groups are recognised by their language identification (Part II), the coastal people of Port Jackson - Parramatta River / Botany Bay - Georges River were quite distinct to the inland people of the Hawkesbury River and its Branches.

Richmond Hill and adjacent settlers [Sunday 28 April 1805]'.<sup>3</sup>

from 'Darkiñung Recognition' Research Thesis, 2010 p.88:

## **Chapter 2 Findings**

The Hawkesbury River was identified by its Branches from the time of Governor Phillip's 1789 expedition, of which the south Branch was the main river. Thus the identification given to the Hawkesbury Aborigines was 'The Branch' natives, first applied to those of the Grose River Branch. Although some Aborigines were already living as fringe dwellers around the green hills river port (present day Windsor), the massacre led by Andrew Thompson in 1805 in which the hero *Yaragowhy* was killed was a turning point in race relations for the district. A second Aborigine named at the time as *Yaramandy* was never heard of again either, but was possibly the same man met by Governor Phillip in 1791 as *Yellomundy*, for which 'Yarramundi' is taken as a later corruption.

Within a few years of Andrew Thompson's fatal encounter, Aborigines were being referred to by English Christian names, which were repetitive making it difficult to distinguish individuals. Such a person was one of those called Maria, a girl from 'The Branch' natives born ca.1808 reared and educated by the white people [who was to call herself Mary as the wife of a white man].

These two men, *Yaragowhy* and *Yaramandy* were termed 'chiefs' - which signalled that the local settlement authorities communicated with them at that time. Another fifteen years on, Aborigines of the 'The Branch' natives such as old *Yellomundy* and later young *Kootee* were designated 'king' at the whim of settlers - which signified that local settlers communicated with them.

Further north into the Hawkesbury-Hunter Ranges, the so-called 'Kings' at Wollombi Brook for whom there are historical records included *Jetto* and *Potembo* known as 'Boni' ('Boney') who used to visit the neighbouring coastal people. At a settler's property on the south side of the Hunter River, another Aborigine from these people who had a historical identity as a settler's 'king' was *Kurba* ('King Cobra') alias Constable.

This chapter sets the scene for this thesis about identifying Aboriginal people from the Hawkesbury-Hunter Ranges who had survived the settlers' occupation, at least for the first generation (after which the men vanished). The next generation is considered in Chapter 4.

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<sup>3</sup> Used (as published in Sydney Gazette) in relation to Richmond Hill and Grose River watershed area, the designation was the term accepted to describe the major Aboriginal group of the Hawkesbury and its tributaries downstream of the Warragamba junction, distinguishing them from the Aborigines of the Port Jackson / Botany Bay catchments.

## Chapter 3



Eric Taggart  
grandson of Aborigine 'Harry' Taggart  
from *Putty / Boorohwall*  
in the midst of the Hawkesbury-Hunter Ranges

### Notes:

The Aboriginal people of 'The Branch' natives from the Hawkesbury River catchment merged - as the same *Darkiñung* people in the midst of the ranges - with the 'Wollombi tribe' from the Hunter River catchment. These were Eric's grandfather's people who were helping (or hindering) the white explorers trying to cross the ranges. The late Eric Taggart was a well known figure around Broke on Wollombi Brook, where he could be relied upon by locals to tell a good yarn to strangers. The journalist Percy Haslam used to visit to collect Eric's stories, and this photograph is an extract from one apparently by Haslam's newspaper driver and photographer, George Steele. The published picture is online from Newcastle University archives.

## Part I ( 3)

## Chapter 3

**Colonial Exploration with 'The Branch' Natives  
through the Hawkesbury-Hunter Ranges**

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<u>A Road across the Ranges</u> .....	104
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<u>John Howe and Ben Singleton Co-operate</u> .....	127
<u>Aboriginal Companions or Outlaws</u> .....	128
<b><u>Chapter 3 Findings</u></b> .....	130

from 'Darkiñung Recognition' Research Thesis, 2010 p.91:

### **The Issue**

In this chapter, I outline some of the interactions of early white explorers with members of 'The Branch' natives from the Hawkesbury-Hunter Ranges described in Chapter 2. The Aborigines, who gathered around the developing Hawkesbury River townships where they became known as the Richmond 'tribe', originated from as far away as the Hunter River before settlement occurred there.<sup>1</sup> These are the People later to be identified by their Language as *Darkiñung* (Part II, Chapter 6) who occupied their Country of the northern Blue Mountains from the floodplain of the Hunter River in the north to the floodplain of the Hawkesbury River in the south (Part III). This chapter has a significant role in setting the scene for Part III. It is the core of the thesis in recognising the place of the *Darkiñung*, 'The Branch' Tribe.

The chapter deals with first white contact away from the navigable river Branches, particularly covering the period up to when Surveyor General Oxley sent out explorers or land commissioners such as George Bowen (Chapter 2), before Surveyor General Mitchell sent out his Assistant Surveyors to prepare for his 1834 map.<sup>2</sup>

from 'Darkiñung Recognition' Research Thesis, 2010 p.130:

### **Chapter 3 Findings**

This chapter provides the core of the thesis for recognising the place of the *Darkiñung*, 'The Branch' natives, at the time of settlement.

from 'Darkiñung Recognition' Research Thesis, 2010 p.131:

An examination of the historiography for interaction with Aborigines by settlers' expeditions to the rivers and ranges of the northern Blue Mountains has demonstrated that reminiscences which have been relied upon by modern authors are not reliable. Even journals based on the trips were subject to the whims of their writers, so in this chapter I have attempted some analyses of the motives for the writing.

Until settlers learnt to understand the topography from local Aboriginal knowledge, their attempts to cross the mountains were thwarted. The way they wanted to go was not the way of Aboriginal paths. In 1813

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<sup>1</sup> The Aborigines known as the Richmond (or 'Belmont', Richmond Hill / Kurrajong) tribe were the people from the ranges and Branches of the Hawkesbury River. They were a different language group to those who were survivors from the Cumberland Plain of South Creek (including its tributary Eastern Creek). A source of the confusion which has arisen in modern times is because the term Richmond Road (from Parramatta) had taken in these latter people.

<sup>2</sup> After I had started going through surveyors' records in the New South Wales state archives without finding material describing Aborigines, Alan Andrews told me he had not noticed it either. Mitchell would not tolerate reports with extraneous material such as he wrote himself, while requiring his surveyors to use terms from local Aborigines to name geographical features.

G.E. Ford, 2012: *Darkiñung* Brief, extracted from 'Darkiñung Recognition' 2010 thesis - which see

the successful Gregory Blaxland, with his navigator the surveyor William Lawson, seem to have taken advantage of James Burns's experience ranging along the ridges apparently having learned from local Aborigines.

Other younger brothers reared in the colony among the Aborigines at Richmond Hill / Kurrajong, both a convict's son Ben Singleton in 1818 and a soldier's son Archie Bell in 1823, demonstrated that friendship and trust of 'The Branch' natives were the most successful criteria which enabled settlers to cross the Hawkesbury-Hunter Ranges, Ben heading north and Archie heading west. In comparison, the glory grabbing grocer John Howe found the going more difficult without voluntary Aboriginal co-operation, so to save his 'fits of the ague' he induced the Aborigine *Mioram* (alias Myles) to travel without him through the ranges between the Hawkesbury and Hunter Rivers in 1819. In 1820 the astute Governor Macquarie sent the Aborigines' friend Ben Singleton with Howe for the ultimate exploratory expedition through the ranges.

The interactions of the early white explorers with members of 'The Branch' natives from around Richmond Hill / North Richmond and Richmond demonstrated that the same tribal people occupied the country of the northern Blue Mountains from the Grose River catchment in the south to the southern side of the Hunter River in the north: The Hawkesbury-Hunter Ranges.

## Chapter 4



'Bill Onus', William Onus 2<sup>nd</sup>

at his Beecroft home near Hornsby (Sydney) in 1930s

when he was throwing boomerangs at the old 'Koala Park' paddocks, Pennant Hills

Insert: Bill's grandmother *Madha*

(Mrs Everingham at the time of the photograph)

### Notes:

The late 'Bill' Onus was elder son of William Onus 1<sup>st</sup>, a *Darkiñung* Aborigine born as William Hibbs at Laguna (Wollombi). William's mother, *Madha*, later married Ephraim Everingham at Sackville. The putative father of William 1<sup>st</sup> was William Hibbs (b.1833) when living at Watagan Creek, Laguna, an Everingham descendant through the convict Woodbury line (which is my ancestry) - hence the mother was called '[Mrs] Hibbs'. It appears that Aborigine son William became an independent adult droving cattle for Joseph Onus, along the Bulga road through the Hawkesbury-Hunter Ranges. Thus, as was the custom, he took Joseph to be his 'social' father with the name Onus for his adult name. Although he married in Victoria, William's children's early years were spent at *Cummeragunja* in NSW. After a childhood based at Echuca in Victoria where his Aboriginal Everingham uncles and aunts from the Hawkesbury used to visit, son 'Bill' returned to the Sydney area when separated from his first wife. During some of this period he lived in a house at Beecroft where he set up a boomerang workshop at the time the photograph was taken. Their two little daughters were then cared for at Beecroft by Gracie James, his young niece from the Hawkesbury, who shared with me the history at his home there where Bill taught Gracie's fiancé (Reg Sunderland) to make boomerangs. The provenance of this photo is from the collection of J.D. Tipper, who knew 'Bill' when he was working at Koala Park while living at Beecroft (acquired from Tipper's widow by Bruce Foott from whom I got my copy when at *Gibberagong* Field Studies Centre in Ku-ring-gai Chase). The provenance for picture of *Madha* is the family photograph as given for illustration at start of Part I.



## Part I (4)

## Chapter 4

**The Convicts' Aboriginal Sons and Daughters**

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from 'Darkiñung Recognition' Research Thesis, 2010 p.135:

It once was my ambition  
To better my position  
By nuptial addition  
Of a queen *Marri*.<sup>1</sup>

### **The Issue**

In this chapter I discuss some selected examples from Families of the Hawkesbury-Hunter ranges to illustrate the importance for survival by the Aborigines of liaisons between a white man and a traditional Aboriginal woman - usually un-identified (thus un-named) in the history. For the subjects of this thesis, the last man known born to traditional parents who left surviving offspring, named as Joe *Goobra* [various spellings], died in hospital in 1897, an apparent victim of change from his traditional cultural lifestyle. It may be significant that of all his thirteen children, only one had survived him.<sup>2</sup> She married an Aboriginal man believed to be the grandson of Lampet Saunders, a convict at the Hawkesbury River as below. Their descendants are part of this study. *Goobra* had been the last known person, as a fullblood from the Hawkesbury-Hunter ranges, to undergo traditional male initiation.

This chapter with identification of some People of the Hawkesbury-Hunter Ranges (Part I) provides a perspective for reference to the specific informants for the identification of the Language known as *Darkiñung* (Part II) in the Country of the Hawkesbury-Hunter Ranges (Part III).

from 'Darkiñung Recognition' Research Thesis, 2010 p.159:

### **Chapter 4 Findings**

This chapter provides a perspective about the people who became informants for the language identification.

It illustrates the part played by convicts for the protection of Aboriginal women and perpetuation of their race on the outskirts of Sydney in the early colonial period with its sudden impact. (The inherent physiology of the indigenous people had not had time to adapt without the convicts' genetic input which

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<sup>1</sup> An Aboriginal ('*Marri*') wife could be seen as desirable to a lone male English newcomer. Within a long poetic story about a social gathering of colonial settlers (referred to by them as a '*Corroboree*'), in this extract from the ditty of the dainty chap who 'sang the truth in fun', John Mathew had versified the harmless folly of an 'ornamental toff' 'shipped off' from England to work in the Australian bush. Had Rev. Mathew read about Tench's infatuation with *Gooreedeena* (as follows) one may wonder.

<sup>2</sup> The Aborigines could not maintain their traditional life style, because the settlers depleted their means of sustenance. Clearing land for farms removed the habitat of possums, part of the staple diet and source of winter cloaks. Ceremonial culture lost its meaning with the loss of natural resources. Joe's putative younger brother John survived until 1906, unmarried (but, from his description in local history, possibly suffering from syphilis).

G.E. Ford, 2012: *Darkiñung* Brief, extracted from 'Darkiñung Recognition' 2010 thesis - which see

ensured survival in the suddenly changed environment of European occupation and settlement.) Identification of convicts' Aboriginal sons and daughters provides the background for those aspects of which knowledge has survived for cultural heritage of the Aboriginal People from the Hawkesbury-Hunter Ranges.

While the principal model, for the perpetuation of 'The Branch' natives from the Hawkesbury - i.e. those later identified as *Darkiñung*, was named 'Maria', born circa 1808, examples of others are included.

from 'Darkiñung Recognition' Research Thesis, 2010 p.160:

As I have followed in Part I, there is an unbroken succession of Aboriginal people belonging to the Hawkesbury-Hunter Ranges from the first white contact of Governor Phillip in 1789. This has continued to the present day, where the Families remain in a strong community of the Hawkesbury area, and another in the Hunter area.

## Part I

### Brief Conclusion for Part I

#### Recognition of the *Darkiñung* People

From the start of contact by the original settlers in 1789, it was discovered that the Aborigines inland at the Hawkesbury River Branches in the Hawkesbury-Hunter Ranges to the northwest of Sydney were distinct from those at Sydney on the coast at Port Jackson / Botany Bay.

There was no local Aboriginal term recorded to identify these inland people. Just like describing people who had been sick and dying using the term *bidjigal* in the coast language, the term *boorooberongal* was used in the coast language to describe people in the woods who caught possums instead of fish. Neither description identified a local Clan. The only local name recorded at the Hawkesbury was another description, *buttagal*: 'water people'. The yams at the water edges, identified here as a marsh club-rush, had no bearing on the identity of local Aborigines.

The earliest settlers distinguished the Aboriginal people of the Hawkesbury River Branches as 'The Branch' natives, applied in 1805 to those occupying the Grose River Branch towards Springwood from Richmond Hill. These people of the Branches were to be the source of local knowledge for the settlers exploring to the west and to the north across the ranges which led to the respective discoveries both of the westerly flowing rivers beyond their country at what was called the interior Bathurst district and of the easterly flowing Hunter River in their territory at Patricks Plains. 'The Branch' natives in the ranges south of the Hunter River became known as the 'Wollombi tribe'.

Aborigines named in historical records were individuals who communicated with the settlers - who then referred to these men at local farms as 'king'. Traditional people known to have left descendants were those who adapted quickly to the overwhelming changes brought by colonial settlement, exploiting the settlers to their advantage. Under the circumstances, having families with convicts and convicts' sons was the key to Aboriginal survival.

from 'Darkiñung Recognition' Research Thesis, 2010 p.162:

However, some of the Aboriginal children from the Hawkesbury River, after being reared at the Parramatta Native Institution, remained in the foreign country of the coastal people, in particular at the Georges River and South Creek drainage south of the Hawkesbury floodplain. Thus, while their ancestry was from the Hawkesbury River, their changed nationality was from the Georges River - a different country of different Aboriginal people with a different language.

## Part II



*'Budha from Wallambine'* - Annie Barber

born as Annie Dillon, sister of Tom Dillon, native to Wollombi  
as wife of Harry Barber lived at Sackville  
known as Grannie Barber after they moved to La Perouse

### Notes:

Annie Barber, sister of Tom Dillon, was not just known to Robert Mathews as a *Darkiñung* woman at Sackville, she was one of the principal sources for the identification of the language and hence of the people. Another was Tilly Clark (Clarke), sister of Hiram, who were native to Sackville at the Tuckermans' farm on Addy Creek (present day Currency Creek). Whereas in his notebook '7', Mathews entered 'Darkiñoong' for Tilly, he heard 'Darkin-nyoong' for Annie. (At La Perouse it seems white people heard 'Boozah' when she said 'Budha', although Aborigines did not pronounce 's' or 'z'. The Aboriginal 'dh' was pronounced like the English 'th' with the tongue on the teeth, as in English 'mother'.) Annie was one of the subjects for the portraits drawn by artist Herbert Beecroft at what he called 'The Aborigines camp at La Perouse'. From his correspondence [which he signed 'Jimmie'], Beecroft was sometimes kept waiting by 'Grannie Barber' when she was not prepared for a sitting. The photograph here [by me] is from one of the original portraits held in the research collection of Randwick and District Historical Society. The Beecroft material there was collected by Ellen Waugh, whom I thank for help with my research and permission to use the material.

## Part II

**Recognition of the *Darkiñung* Language**

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## Part II

## Preamble

Speech is a marvellous human quality. Our spoken Language permits us to be characterised when we meet other members of our species.<sup>1</sup>

In the preliminary phase of British occupation in New South Wales Aboriginal people were merely characterised by the location where the settlers and explorers observed them, consistent with their own practice of local identification with the place of a Clan, as recorded around the harbours at Port Jackson / Botany Bay. But even there, such little attention was paid to the identification of their wider community, that when language records were eventually addressed they had to be given a name from the original

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<sup>1</sup> Yet, when we determine what we think other persons' different speech means in our own topical language, the expression may be subject to different meanings - a trap in the circumstances of Part II - which had been experienced by Eliza Dunlop (Chapter 2). For instance, even amongst Europeans with overlapping speech, the line "Ich hab' ein kleines Hüttchen nur", translated for rhyming poetry as 'I have a Cottage in a nook' became in the colonial context: 'I have a Bark Hut in the bush'.

English settlement: 'The Sydney Language'. As settlement began to roll out over the land to provide the colony with European food, the surviving Aborigines there were those who gave way to this new use for their traditional locations while beyond the Cumberland Plain perimeter the rugged sandstone country provided sanctuary for foreign mountain Aborigines.

Aboriginal People of the northern Blue Mountains to the northwest of Sydney survived the worst of the roll out at the rivers of the Hawkesbury-Hunter Ranges, where they soon became known around the Hawkesbury River Branches as 'The Branch' natives, while later towards the Hunter River the same people in the ranges became recognised as the 'Wollombi tribe' (Part I). If they had had an overall name for themselves or their country it was most likely that first identified by a Hawkesbury Aboriginal companion to John Blaxland jnr in 1824 as 'Wallumbi' (footnoted Chapter 3) from the valley country they occupied in the ranges between Richmond on the Hawkesbury River and Maitland on the Hunter River, but later written with English spellings varying from 'Wollemi' to 'Wallambine'.<sup>2</sup> However, the name as *Wollombi* was co-opted by later Surveyor General Thomas Mitchell instructing his assistants to locate a township in the ranges at the junction of two streams - present day Wollombi village (Chapter 12/NW).

from 'Darkiñung Recognition' Research Thesis, 2010 p.167:

The Aborigines of these rivers and ranges remained un-named until seventy years later when the native-born bushman-scholar, surveyor Robert Mathews, sat down with remnant members of these people, and identified their language in his notebooks as 'Darkiñoong', 'Darkinyûng', eventually settling on *Darkiñung* for publication as used in this thesis. Since then the People have been recognised by this Language name, with a range of spellings using English characters.

For the historiography in Part II, Chapters 5 and 6 deal with two phases of the English identification of the People in the Hawkesbury-Hunter Ranges from Language records. Chapter 7 discusses how a neighbouring, misnamed, language identification has been misapplied to these *Darkiñung* people from circa 1990 by the member of a local history society (who wanted his own Irish ancestry identified), while Chapter 8 outlines how their own identification was misapplied to the neighbouring people on the coast north of Broken Bay, from a family with Aboriginal ancestry who moved there from the ranges.

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<sup>2</sup> For Joe *Goobra*, the last *Darkiñung* fullblood initiated man, in the records at the hospital where he died (Chapter 4) his pronunciation was spelt 'Wallendbine' with English characters.

## Chapter 5



Joan Cooper, youngest daughter of Alfred Everingham from Sackville performing the Opening for the inaugural gathering of *Darkiñung* Families at Wilberforce near where Governor Phillip first saw groups of these Aborigines from photograph by Geoff Ford Sunday 6 November 2005

### Notes:

The *Darkiñung* Aborigine Alfred Everingham was second son of *Madha* ('Martha', who married Ephraim Everingham), so that her first son, William Onus 1<sup>st</sup> (born William Hibbs) was his elder brother. After his wife Edith Lock b.1881 died, Eva Lock b.1885 (at that time Mrs 'Darcy' Webb) became his partner, and the late Aunty Joan (born Alatheia Joan Webb), was the youngest child born to that second relationship. After marrying *Gundungurra* Aborigine 'Digger' Cooper, Joan became a prominent person among his Katoomba community, but retained strong links with her ancestry among the Everingham family of close Hawkesbury *Darkiñung* relatives. It was an honour for the *Darkiñung* descendants to have such a person as one of them to open their first specific gathering, held at the Hawkesbury River at Wilberforce, Sunday 6 November 2005.



## PART II (1)

## Chapter 5

**Original Encounters with Officers from the British Royal Navy:  
The First Fleet's 'Inland' Dialect**

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from 'Darkiñung Recognition' Research Thesis, 2010 p.171:

### **The Issue**

This chapter provides the history for the initial recognition, by British officers of the sailors and marines from the Royal Navy in the infant colony of New South Wales, that Aborigines were not a uniform group across the continent of New Holland. The discovery of a separate language occurred when they made contact with the 'inland' Aborigines of the Hawkesbury-Hunter Ranges. In this chapter I also analyse recent publications where authors perversely contradict Governor Phillip's on the spot first hand observations separating languages.

The First Fleeters were rather slow to understand a local language - perhaps because they imagined they would soon be going 'home' to Great Britain - as most of them did. More importantly, the Aborigines exhibited greater intellect than those who came to occupy their country, being quick to understand the English speech which the whites spoke among themselves as well as to learn how to communicate in the infantile English language the whites spoke to them. However, some literate members of the First Fleet made short lists of Aboriginal words as souvenir curiosities to take or to send 'home'. It is the recognition of such historic wordlists which form the basis of this chapter. On the earliest expeditions beyond Botany Bay and Port Jackson when they met Aborigines at Broken Bay, it made no impact on the English-speakers that they could not understand the local language there, so they did not appreciate its difference to Sydney Cove (Chapter 9/NE). Acknowledgement of different languages had to wait until Governor Phillip walked inland to the Hawkesbury-Hunter Ranges in 1791 with coastal Aborigines from the settlement and witnessed them trying to communicate with foreign people there.

from 'Darkiñung Recognition' Research Thesis, 2010 p.189:

### **Chapter 5 Findings**

At an April 1791 camp near the Hawkesbury River - before it was realised they were near the river - a land expedition led by Governor Phillip accosted a stranger about whom the only information came from the coastal Aborigines with the party. Junior officer Dawes could not have collected any words from the Aboriginal stranger as suggested by some writers, although he may have recorded the sounds of some coastal language words when repeated by other Aborigines at the Hawkesbury River the following month. A few days later when the expedition had returned to the river near the first camp, Phillip's party camped with local Aborigines *Gomebeere* and *Yellomundy* when the colony's diarist David Collins recorded some of their speech, with Governor Phillip concluding that their 'inland' language was different to the 'coastal' language of the Aborigines from Port Jackson / Botany Bay.

A published mathematical 'Soundex' analysis aligned this 'inland' speech more closely with that allied with the 'coastal' language. An interpretation of that analysis demonstrated that it is inadequate to stand alone, requiring a knowledge of 'loan' words and a more subjective historical approach.

G.E. Ford, 2012: *Darkiñung* Brief, extracted from 'Darkiñung Recognition' 2010 thesis - which see

from 'Darkiñung Recognition' Research Thesis, 2010 p.190:

Aborigines at that early colonial period did not give identification names for their Language, their Country, or their People, yet when this speech of the Hawkesbury River Aborigines was examined by modern linguists it has been found to be *Darkiñung* (the language identified from Aborigines at the same place). This was the speech of *Yellomundy* [latterly renamed 'Yarramundi' - Chapter 4].

## Chapter 6



Andrew Barber [on right], eldest son of John Luke (Johnny) Barber  
of Sackville Aboriginal Reserve (with a visitor at the neighbouring farm)

### Notes:

The late Andy (Andrew) Barber, elder brother of Harry (Henry) who 'retired' to La Perouse with his wife Annie, was the last *Darkiñung* Aborigine to live on the Sackville Reserve as a lone widower. Andy did not move from the Hawkesbury. His final dwelling was in the reserve where the 1952 obelisk was placed as a memorial to the Aborigines. (The main community was further upstream closer to Hall's 'Lilburndale'.) Andy informed Robert Mathews about activities of Hiram, who may have been the last known fullblood *Darkiñung* man born at Sackville. This photograph was taken on the farm adjacent to Andy's place (then Mitchell's farm, previously an Everingham property). The photo includes a visitor who frequently came to the Mitchells' place to hunt rabbits. He was police sergeant Cecil Joseph Chuck known as 'The Bogeyman' from working undercover in East Sydney - whose biography was written by Vince Kelly: 2 vols, 1956, 1963. [It was members of Wilberforce police who had responsibility for the reserve on behalf of the APB.] The location and visitor were identified by Dennis Mitchell who was reared on the property. My copy of photograph is from the collection of Jack Brook, obtained from Mrs Sarah Younger (née Kemp), who at the time was a tenant on another Mitchell farm downstream. Jack used a companion photo in his book about the Sackville Aborigines Reserve, 'Shut Out From The World' (1994 1<sup>st</sup> edn p.46, 1999 2<sup>nd</sup> edn p.53).

## PART II (2)

## Chapter 6

**Sharing Speech with Native-born Settlers:  
Identification of the *Darkiñung* Language  
with The Place of the *Dharug* [The *Dhar-rook*] Language**

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from 'Darkiñung Recognition' Research Thesis, 2010 p.193:

As explained by Alan Rumsey for latter day native Aborigines, **People** were recognised by the **Country** from which they came, and that **Country** was identified by the **Language** spoken there. Thus:

Language and Country are directly linked, and that mediated link is between Language and People: *Darkiñung* People are not *Darkiñung* because they speak *Darkiñung* but because they are linked to country to which the *Darkiñung* language was linked.<sup>1</sup>

### The Issue

This chapter is the heart of the thesis, in which I look at the history of how the speech of the Aborigines from the Hawkesbury-Hunter Ranges to the northwest of Sydney became identified as the *Darkiñung* [various spellings], which has been accepted as a 'Tribal' name to recognise the People of that Country. This Hawkesbury River language is compared with the Aborigines to the southwest of Sydney whose language was - rightly or wrongly - identified as *Dhar-rook* [various spellings], for whom the *Darkiñung* Aborigines have been mistaken (Chapter 7). This latter group now called '*Dharug*' (mistakenly alias '*Darug*') were those who had lost their 'Tribal' identity as the early settlers colonised their country, moving across the landscape like voracious amoebae absorbing anything in their way until frustrated by the rugged Hawkesbury Sandstone geology of the Blue Mountains. These Aboriginal people on the Cumberland Plain had had their language noted as *Gur-gur* by a neighbour, but it had not been recorded as such (Chapter 10/SE), and may have been used as a derogatory expression by the neighbouring group who felt superior. (Their neighbours also called them *Dhar-roock* / *Dhar-ruck*, like their word for hen, the apparent origin of present day '*Dharug*' as shown below.) By way of comparison, those neighbours beyond the *Dharug* who were the *Burra'gorang* Tribal people of the Wollondilly River, had their language identified as *Gundungurra* [various spellings].<sup>2</sup>

from 'Darkiñung Recognition' Research Thesis, 2010 p.194:

In order to examine the veracity of the historical records, this chapter concentrates on the credibility of the principal historical source, Robert Hamilton Mathews, and examines some of his detractors. The historiography analyses history of the South Creek Aboriginal people ['*Dharug*'] to the west of Sydney, located in part of the Hawkesbury colonial administration area, because they had become confused with the Hawkesbury River and ranges people ['*Darkiñung*'].

Jim Kohen of the Blacktown and District Historical Society reported that the *Dharug* language from Blacktown did not extend to the east past Toongabbie (which is west of Parramatta), yet he reported that the language to the east of Parramatta was *Dharug*. Kohen recognised in 1984 that the language of the Georges River was *Dharug* but later he proposed that the same language was '*Darug*' at the Colo River in

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<sup>1</sup> Modified from Rumsey. The term Country represents territory. I have substituted for his *Jawoyn* people of the Katherine River, the *Darkiñung* people of the Hawkesbury-Hunter Ranges.

<sup>2</sup> The halfcaste Billy Russell (*Werriberrie*) was supposedly illiterate (despite local missions and schools). His Language terms were reported by Alfred Bennett as '*Gur-gur*' and '*Gun-dun-gorra*', although for the 'tribe' Bennett wrote '*Gun-dung-gorra*'.

the Hawkesbury-Hunter Ranges.<sup>3,4</sup> That's one very confused argument, and I attempt here to assist in resolving that confusion by examining the historiography to determine if the Hawkesbury River area had been *Dharug* [Kohen's 'Darug'] rather than the *Darkiñung* of this thesis. The credibility of Robert Mathews who recorded the language terms in the 1890s is dealt with in this chapter with Kohen's misrepresentation of Mathew's work a hundred years later examined further in Chapter 7.

from 'Darkiñung Recognition' Research Thesis, 2010 p.247:

### Chapter 6 Findings

The work by Robert Mathews outlined in this chapter is the heart of the thesis.<sup>142</sup>

In the earliest historical records about the Aboriginal languages or vocabularies to the west of Sydney

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<sup>3</sup> In 1983 Kohen published, with a map, that 'the Kuringgai, Dharawal and Dharug adjoined the territory of the Darkinjung around the Colo and Macdonald Rivers.' (Instead, the first two were on the coast. Although geographically inept, it has to be assumed that he meant his target audience of Blacktown residents and associated Aboriginal-descendants to take this seriously.) According to him in 1980, the 'Daruk' tribe occupied from the west to Toongabbie, but by 1984 the language used at Port Jackson was Dharug, as well as the language of Georges River being identified as Dharug. By the time of submitting exhibits to the Federal Court ca.2002 Kohen had moved his 'Darug' to the Colo River in a flagrant misunderstanding of Mathews, while in his 1993 book the Colo River (north of Wilberforce) had been Darkinjung country. When the Tribal Link was formed with descendants of Maria Lock and Sarah Castle (as follows), Kohen's new term 'Darug' had been manufactured, separating it from Tindale's term 'Daruk' to distinguish them from the Local Aboriginal Land Council [without local ancestors\*] who had been using Tindale's term. Later on when they incorporated, James Kohen became their responsible Public Officer, registered 28 June 1996. (An annual gathering has been held from 1990, the first of the Darug Tribal Link at *Nurragingy* reserve, and later the Darug Tribal Aboriginal Corporation has met at *Muru Mittigar*.)

[\*Under 'white-man's' law in the state of New South Wales, Aboriginal people have land rights at the location where they reside, as well as retaining traditional land rights at the location of their ancestors if it is somewhere else.]

<sup>4</sup> Throughout this thesis I am using the term *Dharug* as standardised for AIATSIS other than when citing historical spellings. As discussed later, 'Dh' represents the Aboriginal sound closest to 'Th' used in English 'this' or 'that', just as for the overlapping Aboriginal group, *Dharawal*. In 1940 N.B. Tindale published his new word, 'Daruk' fabricated with a different sound, followed fifty years later by J.L. Kohen's invention 'Darug' for the people who had sought advice from Blacktown and District Historical Society (Chapter 7). Neither change can correctly represent the Aboriginal people because it is like calling a thicket a ticket, saying a thug is the same as a tug, *etc.* [I acknowledge that I have been advised by established linguists, who preferred not to be named while still in academia.] In his own writing, Jack Brook chose to retain *Dharug*, while using 'Darug' in the context of Kohen's re-naming of the people. However, mesmerised in the beams of Kohen's spotlight, when writing spoken history collected at Katoomba from some whose families had moved to The Gully at Katoomba, Blue Mountains authors Thomas and Johnson provided sanctuary for Kohen's contrived new word. This is normal human behaviour for the printed word: In the 1990s a group with which I was working adopted a new acronym after it had been used in newsletters, within only three years saying they'd **always** used it.

<sup>142</sup> With a tribute to Robert Mathews (who died Wednesday 22 May 1918), 'The Bulletin' farewell, as published in its 'Personal Items' columns two weeks later, began: 'Slipped out from Parramatta to Paradise, R.H. Mathews, that good Australian scientist who probably knew as much about Brother Binghi as any white man ever did. - - -' [Mathews 1903 had listed *binghai* as 'brother' in his 'Vocabulary of Darkiñung Words'.]

G.E. Ford, 2012: *Darkiñung* Brief, extracted from 'Darkiñung Recognition' 2010 thesis - which see

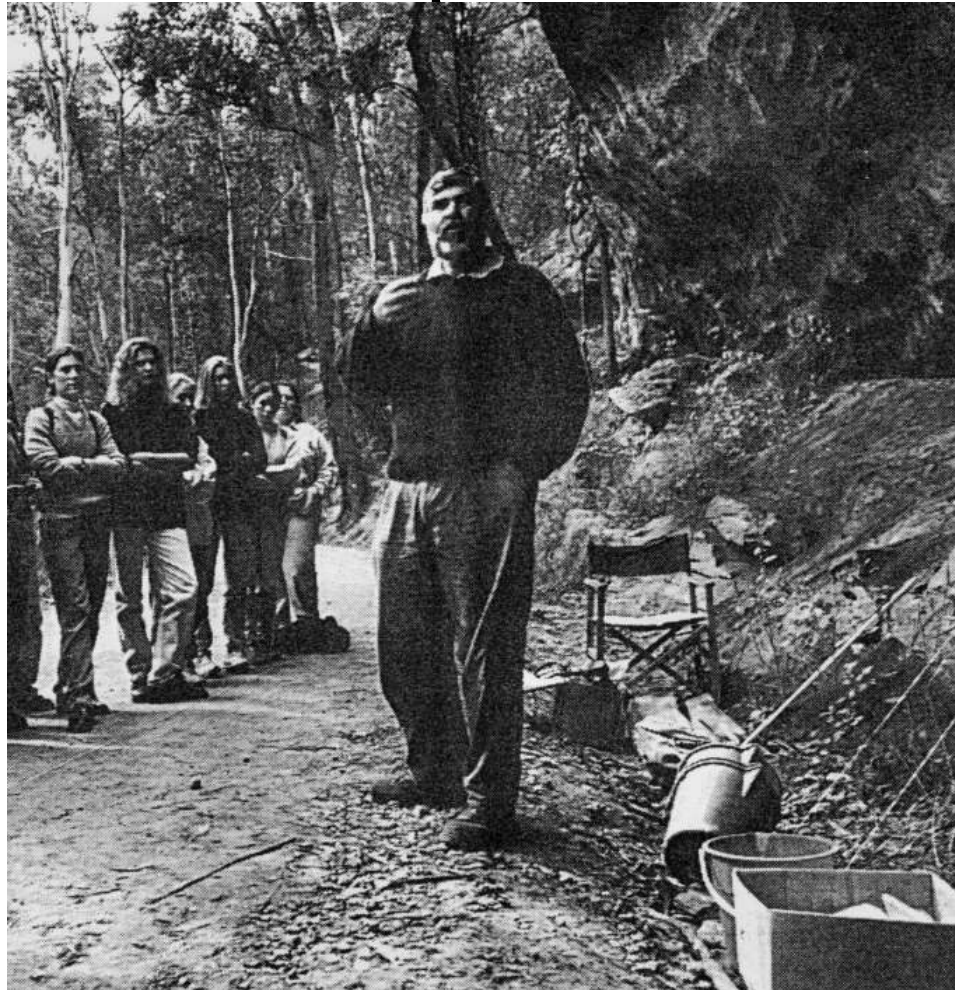
listed by native-born settlers reared with Aborigines, an identifying name was not known. Starting when he lived at Singleton and continuing when he retired to Parramatta, Robert Mathews born 1841 met Aborigines of the Hawkesbury-Hunter Ranges and listed their language. The name these people gave their language was *Darkiñung*. Although migrant English (or Scottish) men arriving during the 1850s to 1960s who considered they were authoritative on Aboriginal culture derided Mathews, studies of his unpublished notebooks have authenticated his endeavours.

from 'Darkiñung Recognition' Research Thesis, 2010 p.248:

Despite Mathews's thorough records for *Darkiñung* as the Aboriginal community at the Hawkesbury River, modern authors - taking their lead from confusion at the Blacktown and District Historical Society - have erroneously placed another community associated with the original Black Town area as occupying the Hawkesbury River instead of the *Darkiñung*. This area was located on the southern side of the Hawkesbury floodplain in the vicinity of South Creek where the historic Richmond Road crosses. The error is generously explained by the then Black Town being included in the Hawkesbury church circuit with which James Kohen at the historical society confused the Aboriginal 'Tribal' identity. I have found that this Aboriginal community identified with the Black Town was actually associated with the Georges River Aborigines, from where their language came and thus their 'Tribal' identity. Their 'Blacktown talk' was based on the Georges River language which was identified by Robert Mathews, confirmed by Alfred Bennett, with the term *Dharruk* - taken from *Gundungurra* sources they met near Camden. It had been verified in 1984 by Kohen at the historical society who recognised the Georges River Aboriginal language recorded by John Rowley as *Dharug*, and this is taken up in Chapter 7. (Although *Dharug* is the modernised term for *Dharruk*, Kohen subsequently altered it to 'Darug', a term for a vegetable root in Western Victoria, which changes the pronunciation - and thus has a different meaning.)



## Chapter 7



Jim Kohen at Martin Williams's Mogo Creek Aboriginal excavation site  
instructing a group of high school students about conducting archaeological research

### Notes:

This cave being excavated is located on the through road north of St Albans just before 'Deanes', which was a rest stop for the Cobb & Co coaches operating between the Hawkesbury and Hunter valleys. Mogo Creek [aka Wallambine] is a tributary of the Macdonald River. This route through the ranges was preferred to the Great North Road along the top of the Judge Dowling Range which was considered too dry for livestock. When Peats Ferry over the Hawkesbury River was closed on the advent of the railway bridge crossing there in 1889, this route became the main road highway to the north from Sydney, via Wisemans Ferry. After the Hawkesbury was bridged in 1945 at the new highway at Peats Ferry, this road became a byway, which was bulldozed deeper through the cave to accommodate local timber jinkers. The photograph was published for a press article 7 July 1995. I thank the newsphotos manager at 'Newspix' for approval to use their photograph.

## PART II (3)

## Chapter 7

**Being Given Neighbour's Identity:  
The Misidentification of *Darkiñung* People as *Dharug* People  
at the Hawkesbury and the Northern Blue Mountains**

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A good man:

*Gently my eyelids close  
I'd rather be good than clever  
And I'd rather have my facts all wrong  
Than have no facts whatever*

A dream of Ogden Nash for J.Cohen<sup>1</sup>

### **The Issue**

This chapter addresses the historiographical conundrum as to why, against the evidence of all the historical records, the people of the Hawkesbury identified by Robert Mathews as *Darkiñung* had been, and are still being, considered as people of the Georges River identified by Robert Mathews as *Dharug*. The error had been taken up both by the Blacktown and District Historical Society where the Aborigines were renamed 'darug' for a Western Victoria yam, and by those who followed publications there without checking sources.

from 'Darkiñung Recognition' Research Thesis, 2010 p.298:

### **Chapter 7 Findings**

The *Darkiñung* People have been misidentified as *Dharug* People (the 'Darug' of J.L. Kohen) on the Hawkesbury River and into the Ranges of the northern Blue Mountains. This mislocation of the term *Dharug* had occurred from a community of the 'Black Town' at the 'Richmond Road' on the western Cumberland Plain, whereby due to lack of local history knowledge, some authors mistakenly transposed this language group from Blacktown in the early 'Inland' Bathurst District west of Parramatta to the 'Interior' Bathurst District west of Mount York on the Blue Mountains.

The language of this community known as *Dharug* was correctly identified by the 'archaeology consultant' Jim Kohen in his 1984b publication at the Blacktown and District Historical Society as the historic language of the Georges River from Botany Bay inland. After Kevin Moore of the society circa 1980 had adopted the Aboriginal history of Blacktown as a society project and had suggested he participate, Jim Kohen allocated descendants of the original Black Town community to be *Dharug*, irrespective of their ancestral origins. Instead of building on his 1984 finding that the Georges River was the Country of the *Dharug*-Language People in historical records, he translocated their territory to the Hawkesbury River, which was the Country of the *Darkiñung*-Language People in historical records

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<sup>1</sup> A dream of Ogden Nash in 'Who Did Which?', with 'At last, in the stilly night, When the mind is bubbling vaguely, I grasp my history by the horns, - -'. J. Cohen produced the Penguin Dictionary of Modern Quotations until his death in 1989, when his son continued with Penguin dictionaries of quotations.

G.E. Ford, 2012: *Darkiñung* Brief, extracted from 'Darkiñung Recognition' 2010 thesis - which see

(Chapter 6). Every suggestion by Kohen that Robert Mathews - the source of both terms *Dharrook* / *Dharruk* (*Dharug*) and *Darkiñung* - had located *Dharug* at the Hawkesbury was based on a circular argument. For a source record Kohen referred to his own 1984b publication for the Blacktown and District Historical Society. With Kohen's promotions of his actions, the *Darkiñung*-descent people - such as those who had come to Parramatta in Governor Macquarie's time - retrospectively became known as *Dharug*.

The misidentification has been complicated further by Kohen renaming the term *Dharug* as a different word 'Darug' - from 'darook' a term from western Victoria for 'vegetable root', which has been wrongly from 'Darkiñung Recognition' Research Thesis, 2010 p.299: connected to the reporting of river-side yams during the 1789 boat expedition up the Hawkesbury River by Governor Phillip. After twenty years of being promoted with Black Town descendants, this complication with regard to the language term should now be dismissed with a 2010 response for this thesis from Kohen himself: 'WHAT DOES IT MATTER IF DARUG MEANS YAM OR NOT'.

Answer: In western Victoria 'darug' [*darook*] may have been 'yam', but in western Sydney the ancestral Black Town and Georges River People were *Dharug* [*Dharrook*].

## Chapter 8



Tommy Sales

### Notes:

The late Eddy ('Tomahawk') Sales was an amazing advocate for his *Darkiñung* people (or as he would say, 'Darkinoong true blood'). [It appears to be due to his promotion that modern people mistakenly thought that the Central Coast was *Darkiñung* ancestral country rather than recognising the traditional *Wannungine* there.] 'Tommy's' mother, 'Nana' Sales (née Newman), was herself a remarkable Aboriginal woman, the granddaughter of Mrs Sophia Newman from Wollombi. As Sophie Newman, Robert Mathews knew her after the death of her first husband when she was living with her *Darkiñung* people at Sackville on the Hawkesbury River. The photo is an extract from a Sales family photograph of which I am grateful for being allowed to use.

Part II (4)

Chapter 8

**The *Darkiñung*-Language Identity Taken Out of Country:  
The NSW Central Coast Experience**

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“....there is little to remind us of those vanquished tribes who inhabited these forested lands for countless years” Stinson 1979. The history of the Central Coast of NSW - currently identified as Darkinjung Country - has been presented in such a way as to install collective amnesia, dislocation, perhaps misplaced compassion and invisibility.<sup>1</sup>

### The Issue

Language identifications are used to define Country and its People, as dealt with in previous chapters, Chapters 6 and 7 (which detail the escape of the language term *Dharug* out of its true ancestral place on the Georges River to be misapplied to its north on the Hawkesbury River). Correspondingly, this chapter summarises the escape of the term *Darkiñung* out of its ancestral country to be misapplied to its east on the Central Coast.<sup>2</sup> The historic territories are discussed in detail in Part III. This chapter has had to be included in response to repeated requests for me to deal with this issue as if it was part of the thesis topic in order to be placed in the public domain for reference. Without the explanation in this chapter, the thesis would be unbalanced, and the recognition of the *Darkiñung* incomplete.

The work reported for this chapter provides a resolution as to how Norman Tindale of the South Australian Museum (SAM), followed by some people of Newcastle University, incorrectly allocated the middle part of the New South Wales Central Coast to have been traditional, ancestral, '*Darkinjung* Country'. The deception may be attributed to a twentieth century showman, who, like a conjuror did not perform alone.

While more and more Aboriginal descendants become involved in the legislative and emotive politics of land rights and title, those are not aspects of my studies. My research of Local History and Family History does involve the historic identification of ancestral People, their Country and Language - as for citation of Grace Karskens by Richard Waterhouse in the Preamble of Part I. The inaugural Family Gathering of *Darkiñung* people from the Hawkesbury-Hunter Ranges occurred on the Hawkesbury River, held at Wilberforce, Sunday 6 November 2005. It was attended by descendants of Aborigines whom Robert Mathews had recognised in his notebooks as such *Darkiñung* people (Chapter 6): including John Barber and Mildred Saunders ('*Butha*') from the Hawkesbury River, and Mildred's son's wife 'Mrs Everingham' ('*Madha*') and Joe *Goobra* from the Wollombi Brook (Chapter 4). Members of the

---

<sup>1</sup> Stinson 1979 did write about the NSW Central Coast, of: 'great forested wildernesses that had been effectively protected by those most exemplary conservationists, the indigenous Aborigines' and they lived 'without adverse effects on their environment and they were exemplary conversationists.' I did not find Blair's above quote of Stinson 1979.

<sup>2</sup> The Family History study summarised for this chapter is from a 2005 project which has not been undertaken for Sydney University research. The issue discussed is not a matter of colonial history records as for this thesis. It is a twentieth century phenomenon, so I have followed the protocol of not including previously unpublished details concerning the Aboriginal-descent people who have been personally contributing to this project.

G.E. Ford, 2012: *Darkiñung* Brief, extracted from 'Darkiñung Recognition' 2010 thesis - which see

Aboriginal Saunders family seem to have dispersed among other Aboriginal groups, and representatives attended other than Mildred's descendants.<sup>3</sup> Notably absent were any people who identified as Family of Sophie Newman who is listed by Mathews among these *Darkiñung* people. This chapter is an historical account about Sophie's missing Family.

from 'Darkiñung Recognition' Research Thesis, 2010 p.311:

### **Chapter 8 Findings**

*Darkiñung* Aboriginal persons of the Hawkesbury-Hunter Ranges in the 1890s were listed by Robert Mathews, among whom was Sophie Newman who in 1867 had gone from Wollombi in the ranges to the coast where she had reared her family. Members of the Newman Family retained their ranges *Darkiñung* identity on the coast where they joined the Aboriginal fishing community. This *Darkiñung* identity was maintained in public and appeared to have been taken up for Wyong (across to The Entrance of the Tuggerah Lakes) when Norman Tindale from South Australia was collecting local data for his maps of 'Tribal Boundaries' in Australia. The traditional *Wannungine* local identity was not publicised during this period, allowing people to mistakenly assume that the Central Coast had been '*Darkinjung*'.

A Newman family member, the late 'Tommy' Sales, had presented *Darkiñung* as a tribal name to the public, using it in his talks on the Central Coast. Although in New South Wales the boundaries of Local Aboriginal Land Councils do not reflect any sort of Tribal boundaries and it is not usual for Land Council names to be the same as for local 'traditional owners', when the Land Council covering Gosford and

from 'Darkiñung Recognition' Research Thesis, 2010 p.312:

Wyong Councils' local government areas adopted the title '*Darkinjung*', it led to a 'mass consciousness' that this meant the original Central Coast Aborigines at the time of settlement would have been the *Darkiñung*. That concept is not supported from knowledge of legislative history, of Local History or Family History.

[The historic traditional *Wannungine* Aboriginal people of the coast currently refer to themselves using the terms 'Guringai' and 'Awabakal' (Chapter 9/NE).]

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<sup>3</sup> A 2005 gathering open to the public, entirely planned and conducted by descendants, was held on Sunday 5 November 2005 at Wilberforce. Visitors included J. Brook and J.L. Kohen from Blacktown and District Historical Society, who had assisted descendants at Blacktown establish the Darug Tribal Link (Chapter 7). I was present at Wilberforce as a guest speaker. The then chairman of the Darug Tribal Aboriginal Corporation (DTAC) was present as an invitee - there was no other known organised group with *Darkiñung* members other than DTAC. However, I have since found the Darug Custodians Aboriginal Corporation also has *Darkiñung* members. The Custodians were a breakaway group from the Tribal Link at the time of registration as Aboriginal Corporations in 1996.



## Part II

### Brief Conclusion for Part II

#### Recognition of the Darkiñung Language

Although the First Fleet expeditions into the Hawkesbury-Hunter Ranges found that the Aboriginal language inland at the Hawkesbury River Branches was different to that on the coast at Port Jackson / Botany Bay, an identifying name was not recorded until native-born Robert Mathews made friends with these people one hundred years later and recorded their language at the same place as Governor Arthur Phillip had met them in 1789 at the Portland Head Rock location. In his exercise books Mathews noted this language spoken by Aborigines from the Hawkesbury River and Wollombi Brook as *Darkiñung* [various spellings with English characters]. A translation was not recorded. Thus, *Darkiñung* is the present identification of the **People**, their **Language** and their **Country**. They had referred to their landscape in the Hawkesbury-Hunter Ranges, and perhaps themselves, as '*Wallambine*' [various spellings].<sup>1</sup>

An analysis is included showing the history how this *Darkiñung* identification was misapplied (as *Darkinjung*) to become the name for a modern Local Aboriginal Land Council on the Central Coast, even though the Land Councils under New South Wales state legislation are mostly named after local towns. The traditional people at the Central Coast had referred to themselves as *Wannungine*.<sup>1</sup>

Detailed explanation is given from source records with analysis of how in modern times the historical *Darkiñung* at the Hawkesbury River have been misidentified as *Dharug*, using a hoax term 'Darug' published by the Blacktown and District Historical Society concocted from a Western Victoria word. The original *Dharug* language recorded by native-born John Rowley applied to the Georges River Aboriginal people from Botany Bay to beyond Appin upstream. By the late 1800s (after coalescing with intermarriages between adjacent language groups), Aboriginal people from Liverpool and Black Town on the south side of the Hawkesbury floodplain referred to their *lingua franca* as 'our talk', *jumna*. The term *Dharug* was given for this at Camden by neighbouring *Burraborang* persons, spoken as *Dharrook* [various spellings] (which may have translated for those *Gundungurra* people as 'hen').

---

<sup>1</sup> Note on pronunciation:

When using English characters '-ine' is spoken as for tine and fine, not pronounced as for tiny or finny - e.g. *Wollambine* became written *Wollombi* [to rhyme with 'eye']. Similarly, *Wannungine* would be meant to be spoken *Wannungi(ne)*, rather than as '*Wannunginny*' requiring *nn*. [From its Latin origine, Ab-origine ('-inny') is unusual.]

# Part III



As at 1875: 'In the Midst of the Hawkesbury-Hunter Ranges (with surrounding country)'  
 [Aborigines' *Putty* is on Tupa C. (taken from Major Mitchell's map as shown here),  
 their *Boorohwall* is on nearby tributary of Macdonald R.  
 and *Wollemi* is shown as *Wollena* ]

Reference: J. D. Lang, 1875 (4<sup>th</sup> edn), 'An Historical and Statistical Account of New South Wales', adapted from accompanying map, cartographer ng, engraver Edw<sup>d</sup> Weller.

Part III

**Recognition of the *Darkiñung* Country**

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Part III (1)

Chapter 9/NE Country to the Northeast of the *Darkiñung*: ..... 323  
 Interacting with the *Wannerawa* of the Coast and Estuaries  
 (aka *Wannungine* alias 'Guringai' and 'Awabakal')

Part III (2)

Chapter 10/SE Country to the Southeast of the *Darkiñung*: ..... 359  
 Interacting with the *Dharug* of the Coastal Plain,  
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Part III (3)

Chapter 11/SW Country to the Southwest of the *Darkiñung*: ..... 389  
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Part III (4)

Chapter 12/NW Country to the Northwest of the *Darkiñung*: ..... 437  
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 or with the *Wiradjuri* Across the Central Tablelands

Brief Conclusion for Part III ..... 469

Part III

Preamble

For people interacting with their environment,

The relations between a group and its territory are among other things ecological relations. The relations between members of the group in respect of the territory, in itself, or as a locality of a larger entity, are among other things social relations.

Bill Stanner wrote of 'three connected adaptive systems - the ecological, the institutional or social, and the cultural' when considering traditional Aborigines surviving in northern Australia.<sup>2</sup> His views are universal, to apply to the circumstances of this thesis seeking history to recognise territory as at the time of British settlement.

---

<sup>2</sup> Bill Stanner had a broad perspective from his earlier experiences with cultures of East Africa and Pacific Islands too.

For a local group [viz. 'Clan'], Stanner's 'estate' was their home country with a 'range' being a wider area over which those people foraged or hunted. His approach was based on local ecology in a period before intervention by settlers.<sup>3</sup> However, it is seen in Chapter 3 that even when retaining possession of their home estate in the ranges 'The Branch' natives, from the northern locations of the Colo and Macdonald Rivers Branches near the Hunter/Goulburn River, had begun travelling across tribal country through the ranges into the settlement townships on the Hawkesbury River even before white men had arrived in their locality. For Part III of this thesis, I am considering for the Hawkesbury-Hunter Ranges what Country was occupied by the related local groups of People identified by a common Language, *Darkiñung*.

from 'Darkiñung Recognition' Research Thesis, 2010 p.319:

Before the advent of the civilisations which led to accumulative aggregations of people developing into cities (as in a termite colony with specialist functions of its inhabitants), societies of humans living in a natural or 'wild' state are seen to have parallels with situations for other foragers and hunters sharing the habitat. In Australia, although separated by cultural factors, humans showed similarities of ecological territorial behaviour with dingos - the other predatory, yet omnivorous, eutherian mammal to arrive on the continent having evolved elsewhere.<sup>4</sup>

From my review of literature about Aboriginal Country - grown more mountainous since Stanner's 1965 presentation - I understand edges to have been porous, with visits to neighbours 'covered by conventions or institutional rules', as he put it. But even this requires borders to be understood. In his 1974 review, Tindale cites examples where boundaries were defined by natural features with intruders driven away by force.<sup>5</sup> The venture of interpreting from historical records appropriate topographical features for such borders is better appreciated after consideration of the routes of arrival of humankind into this situation, as follows.

In the present day, with public acceptance of using molecular biology for investigating human evolution across the planet, our society recognises the research hypothesis of population expansion by migration along the ocean coast where nourishing resources are plentiful, expanding upstream along river courses - following waterways to their watershed. Continuing movement around South Asia took humans through the Sunda [Malaya, Indonesia, Etc.] archipelago, crossing to the Sahul [Papuan/Australian] continent.

---

<sup>3</sup> Stanner's actual observed territories have become severely modified to adjust to the advent of changes by settlers' culture such as roads for vehicles, as well as a more recent thrust to accommodate native title under white man's law.

<sup>4</sup> I marvel at the adaptability of these species. After learning something of the lore of the wild dingo in the Blue Mountains during my youth, in later life I also had the opportunity to observe their flexibility to cope with seasonal changes in the outback of the Lake Eyre Basin and Central Australia. It is eerie to have observed how the ecology of such indigenes in the mountains changed, by them utilising the settlers' roadways constructed through the scrub covered ranges.

<sup>5</sup> I was given a similar message by Luise Hercus (pers. comm.) from her own knowledge of the inland situation in SA.

An excellent model to adopt for the Hawkesbury-Hunter Ranges has been provided by Sandra Bowdler's adaptation of Stanner's terminology for the people on Sahul making their way along the east coast from the north, taking up a home 'estate' on the seashore where sustaining resources are abundant and easy to harvest, extending their 'range' into the hills of the coastal catchment. Where they took up permanent occupation, neighbours would retain some language and cultural similarities, as seen here in Chapter 9/NE based on the Hunter River region marine environment with *Wannungine* and *Kattung* languages peoples. However, the next node of coastal habitation may have a more distant relationship, here based on the Botany Bay - Georges River environs seen in Chapter 10/SE for the *Dharug* language people who had an observed variation in culture from those to their north.

from 'Darkiñung Recognition' Research Thesis, 2010 p.320:

From the permanent populations at the coast, more intrepid members of the expanding population who had to move away from the marine environment followed the fresh water rivers inland as elsewhere on the planet, here moving along the waterways into the Hawkesbury-Hunter Ranges of the northern Blue Mountains to become the *Wallambine* (*Darkiñung*) people who remained associated with their coastal neighbours the *Wannungine* as in Chapter 9/NE. Correspondingly, the people who crossed from the Georges River (and Shoalhaven ??) into the southern Blue Mountains to become the *Gundungurra* people remained associated with their ancestral neighbours the *Dharug* (and *Dharawal* ??) people as in Chapters 10/SE and 11/SW. Such inland movements up streams into higher lands are consistent with a subsequent review by Bowdler. Just as the *Gundungurra* moved upstream to the far reaches of the Wollondilly River, probably the *Darkiñung* had first moved upstream to the headwaters of the Hunter River - before more aggressive *Kamilaroi* had invaded over the Liverpool Range [of the GDR] and replaced them in the upper valley.

Of alternatives for populating central regions of Australia, it has been surmised that the *Wiradjuri* / *Kamilaroi* peoples of the interior to the west of the Great Dividing Range either would have followed up the rivers from the coast at the Murray River mouth or could have spread overland from arrival points at the north.<sup>10</sup> Either way, these interior people would be adapted to very different ecological relations - as from 'Darkiñung Recognition' Research Thesis, 2010 p.321: mentioned by Stanner above - to those people on the rivers flowing east to the coast (Chapter 12/NW).

Back in the nineteenth century, the connections now being examined in the twentyfirst by molecular biologists were presciently surmised as the British sought to explain the place of Aboriginal origin among humankind in view of the findings of Wallace and of Darwin:

(Coming) from the north would the east and west coasts [of Australia] be gradually peopled. Spreading along the east coast, so rich with the food they loved, tribe after tribe would be formed, until the south coast would be reached, unless, before such migrations had extended thither, some families had traversed the continent and preoccupied the land.

---

<sup>10</sup> The pattern of occupation along the interior rivers and marshes suggests following river branches upstream from the coast, at least for these people. Birdsell was one of the postulators for a general overland model, citing earlier of his papers in a symposium article about the sea crossing. During the early 1960s I had driven my Volkswagen 'Beetle' car along deep sand dry river beds in the arid zone of Central Australia to visit the oasis relic Palm Valley, which demonstrates how a more profusely vegetated centre of the continent with flowing rivers could have been amenable to crossing.

G.E. Ford, 2012: *Darkiñung* Brief, extracted from 'Darkiñung Recognition' 2010 thesis - which see

Rivers would be ascended, and their watersheds would become the hunting-ground of the first-comers.

George Rusden, 1883<sup>11</sup>

Bill Stanner is credited with popularising the concept of 'The Dreaming' to the European population, the conception of which [as 'The Dream Time'] he attributed in 1956 to Spencer & Gillen.<sup>12</sup> Perhaps dreaming stories of 'once upon a time' may be the correct approach, that the people have always been here and the mountains came afterward. Eileen Carberry presented just such an approach for the topic of from 'Darkiñung Recognition' Research Thesis, 2010 p.322: Part III, the country of the Blue Mountains, 'telling it as it was told to me by an aged aborigine'.<sup>13</sup> But rather than Aboriginal mythology, her story uses European similes to tell of an Aborigine maiden, so beautiful that flowers would shut their petals in shame as she passed. She was adorned by a mantle of butterflies' wings. After being captured by the neighbouring tribe to be the bride of their chief who was an ugly old man, she escaped, thereby precipitating an intertribal war. Just as the peaceful tribe of the maiden was about to meet death, 'a Great Chain of Mountains rose up between the two tribes'. So the maiden threw her mantle into the air where it turned into the blue curtain of the mountains. Irrespective of the source of such a legend, the concept of a mountain divide becoming a tribal border is the topic of Part III.

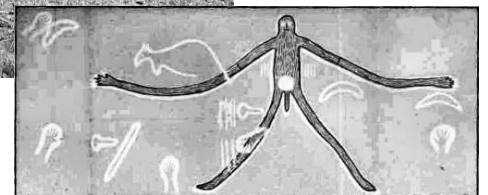
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<sup>11</sup> Rusden went on to suggest that the Aborigines had been under-rated and, by comparison, to place in a 'contemptible' light the explorers with 'civilized appliances' who have perished in explorations. (In Chapter 12/NW I note a literary relationship of Rusden with Alfred Howitt whose relationship with the Burke expedition - of perished explorers - is mentioned in Chapter 6.)

<sup>12</sup> Stanner in 1956 recognised The Dreaming as the *alcheringa* of the *Arunta* people. He attributed the term to 'meaning something like "men of old" '. The term was taken for the 1962 ABC television program 'Alcheringa' by Frank L. Frew which featured the boomerang maker W.T. ('Bill') Onus as the Aboriginal narrator. Bill's father William Onus, mentioned in this thesis (Chapter 4), was a *Darkiñung* man who is part of the history of the Hawkesbury-Hunter Ranges and he (Bill) retained his links with his immediate family [my cousins] who still live in their Aboriginal ancestors' traditional 'tribal' country around the Hawkesbury River.

<sup>13</sup> Eileen Carberry, 1910, 'Legend of the Blue Mountains', The Blue Mountains Echo 11 June 1910 [my copy was obtained by Fisher Library]. Jim Smith has been collecting Blue Mountains Legends purporting to have been passed down from Aboriginal tribes. As far as any may apply to the northern Blue Mountains of the Grose and Colo Rivers catchments, then they would be legends of the *Darkiñung* Country, the *Gundungurra* Country being the Cox Rover catchment of the southern Blue Mountains.

## Chapter 9/NE



A Rock Overhang above Bulga Creek  
close to the first Bulga Road stock route from Richmond (Chpt 3)  
where it came out near Bulga village on Wollombi Brook.

The insert showing some of the rock art is modified from 1896 published scale drawing by R.H. Mathews. The figure was 9ft (2.75m) high. The white patch on the stomach is visible in exact centre of photograph. Although a *Darkiñung* site, this deity-like figure is now claimed by other Aboriginal people from the NE to the NW.\*

Photograph by Geoff Ford Sunday 17 September 2006

### Notes:

On the back wall of this rock shelter is an Aboriginal art figure pre-dating arrival of the settlers, referred to as The Milbrodale Man (from the locality). The site is on a farm where David Moore from The Australian Museum carried out an archaeological excavation (1969, 1970). I have become familiar with the property in consultation with the owners to whom I was introduced by a past resident of Milbrodale (Joan Robinson - on steps in photograph). Since the 'large and lofty trees' (reported by Mathews 1893 p.355 to be in front of cave) had been cleared, exposing the cave, the bottom of the back wall has lost pigment so the legs in the present day are only seen reaching the size of the prominent penis. The figure was outlined in white (with pipeclay) and filled in by rubbing lines of dry red ochre into the rock - as Moore has discussed with me. Similar style artwork (including stark white eyes and rubbing red ochre), is a common feature at sites which I have visited throughout the Hawkesbury-Hunter Ranges. Although Mathews wrote (1893 p.358) that he would not speculate on the meaning, the art reminded him of 'a colossal figure of a man on the ground' built up with earth that 'the blacks said represented *Baiame*' when associated with a *Kamilaroi* initiation bora ceremony elsewhere (e.g. 1894 p.111). He was familiar with a description in Ridley's book (1875 p.156) in upper Hunter Valley where the *Kamilaroi* had penetrated from the Interior before settlement (Chpt 12/NW).

\*This site has been set up as a tourist cave by the NSW NPWS as if this was a *Kamilaroi* bora site. It was not.

## Part III (1)

## Chapter 9/NE

**Country to the Northeast of the *Darkiñung*:  
Interacting with the *Wannerawa* of the Coast and Estuaries  
(aka *Wannungine* alias 'Guringai' and 'Awabakal')**

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from '*Darkiñung Recognition*' Research Thesis, 2010 p.325:

### **The Issue**

This chapter examines the relationships of the Hawkesbury-Hunter Ranges people with the Aborigines occupying country on their northeast quadrant - at the Hawkesbury River estuary of Broken Bay and its Arms following along the coast to the Hunter River estuary of Port Hunter. My research discovered that although the actual 'Tribal' and/or Language name for them of *Wannerawa* had been noted from the 1890s, it has been misapplied (as '*Wonnarua*') from the false memory of one man as published in 1887. Instead, the published terms of 'Kuringgai' ('Guringai') and 'Awabakal' created in 1892 by a white man for an international book had inadvertently been adopted. In consequence, I am favouring the alternative term *Wannungine*<sup>1</sup> which was recorded also for the actual *Wannerawa*. From this study it appears that the people of the ranges and those of the coast were aligned, possibly with ancient common ancestors, and their boundary was porous. The findings are consistent with the hypothesis that an ancient group on the coast had moved up the Hawkesbury River and Hunter River tributaries, expanding into country of the ranges while their relatives remaining on the coast had had their residual country depleted as the sea levels rose over the continental shelf.

from '*Darkiñung Recognition*' Research Thesis, 2010 p.356:

### **Chapter 9/NE Findings**

The purpose of this chapter is to recognise the *Darkiñung*-Language People of the Hawkesbury-Hunter Ranges by separating their Country from that of those to their northeast at the time of settlement, who are found to be the People who really spoke the *Wannerawa* Language in the region from the Hunter River estuary along the coast to the Broken Bay estuary. This neighbouring language was assessed without identification by Lancelot Threlkeld who recovered it from *Bungaree's* Broken Bay Aborigines (who had expanded to their south to occupy the north shore of Port Jackson subsequent to settlement). Threlkeld's principle source was a boy from this group presenting himself when a young adult at Newcastle to become known as '*Biraban*', representing the hero *Birrugan* from Aboriginal culture he learnt when at Port Macquarie. (In his missionary work before terms such as *Kamilaroi* were applied to languages, Threlkeld had not succumbed to 'tribal' name-creation which was taken up by others.)

Although Threlkeld himself did not provide an identification term, the recognition of these people for the English was provided as *Wannerawa* aka *Wannungine*, apparently to indicate 'of the Place' - as a response to queries to the people about who they were. [In English convention, this identification

from '*Darkiñung Recognition*' Research Thesis, 2010 p.357:

becomes the term which is used for People, used for Language and used for Country.] In the mean time, a literary man, John Fraser, took it upon himself to create a name for these indigenes (who, he wrote) 'are gone long ago', naming them after a cove in Lake Macquarie known to the settlers as Awa-ba. The

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<sup>1</sup> Note on pronunciation: When using English characters '-ine' is spoken as for tine and fine, not pronounced as for tiny or finny with nn - e.g. *Wollambine* became *Wollombi*. [From its Latin origing, Ab-origing ('-inny') is unusual.]

G.E. Ford, 2012: *Darkiñung* Brief, extracted from 'Darkiñung Recognition' 2010 thesis - which see

success of his 1892 book meant that Fraser's artifice has been used ever since for northern *Wannungine* near the Hunter River. The farther *Wannerawa* had since adopted another term proposed for near Broken Bay as 'Guringai' by Arthur Capell in a preliminary 1970 article. 'Guringai' had been used by Fraser in 1892 as 'Kuringgai' to designate people who used the common noun *kuri* for man, which he appeared to have taken from the term *Gringai / Gooringai* used by the settlers to identify a local group of *Kattung*-Language people across the Hunter River at the Paterson / Allyn River tributary.

The coastal range watershed is the natural topographical feature which appears to have been a practical geographical border for the coastal *Wannungine / Wannerawa* to the northeast of the *Darkiñung* Aborigines in the Hawkesbury-Hunter Ranges. [It is taken as understood that the former used to occupy the continental shelf when it was above sea level.] This coastal range watershed is present day Peats Ridge from Mooney Mooney on the Hawkesbury River through Kulnura, along the central spine of the Watagan Ranges to the Newcastle Sugarloaf. Historic records demonstrate that the boundary was permeable in the sense that people from the ranges on the inland Wollombi side were regularly welcomed visiting the coastal people. While the ridge of the present day Mona Vale Road (1890s Lane Cove road ridge) was the southern Broken Bay catchment border, to the north of Newcastle the Hunter River floodplain / estuary covered the northern border with *Kattung*-speaking people. The *Darkiñung* shared language and cultural relationships with these neighbouring coastal groups. [In distinction, they did not share with *Dharug* or *Gundungurra* on the south who had their own relationship with each other as in following chapters.]

Further, the corollary issue is considered here whereby these coastal and estuarine Aboriginal people had been mislocated to country in the upper Hunter Valley which actually had been occupied by *Kamilaroi* Aborigines originating from the interior as shown in Chapter 12/NW. Only two historical records stated the upper Hunter was the location of the *Wannerawa* (as 'Wonnorua'), the first with false statements about these coastal people, the second merely plagiarism of the first. The *Wannerawa* (aka *Wannungine*) were the most important neighbours interacting with the *Darkiñung* - but only residing at the coast and estuaries to the northeast of the Hawkesbury-Hunter Ranges.

## Chapter 10/SE



In the SE foothills of the Hawkesbury-Hunter Ranges,  
the tidal reaches of present day Cattai Creek cannot be crossed by foot  
from photograph by Geoff Ford Thursday 11 October 2007

### Notes:

When Governor Phillip's walking expedition arrived here Tuesday 12 April 1791, the stream (on the right hand side of the Hawkesbury River) was too wide for the convict servant class to fell a tree so that the officer upper class could walk across the water, so they followed the bank upstream. While the walking party bashed through the tangles of scrub with thickets of vines and fallen trees (in present day Mitchell Park), they could hear the local Aborigines talking among themselves while they canoed on the water shown here. A couple of days later when they returned to the main river, Phillip's party met some of the canoeists (who camped with them) who have been identified as *Darkiñung* from examination of their language.

## Part III (2)

## Chapter 10/SE

**Country to the Southeast of the *Darkiñung*:  
Interacting with the *Dharug* of the Coastal Plain,  
The Cowpastures and the Woronora Plateau**

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### The Issue

In this chapter I examine the country to the southeast of the Hawkesbury-Hunter Ranges, effectively that land first occupied by the colonial settlers, County Cumberland, where the Aboriginal people and their culture were diminished - but not demoralised, in the sense that survivors had learned both how to live among the settlers and how to exploit their produce. As the Aboriginal societies declined, women joined the working class white communities, when they became partners of convicts and convict sons (Chapter 4). Some men moved to work as labourers such as for miners at the Wollondilly River and its tributaries, joining the *Gundungurra* at Burratorang Valley and later at Megalong Valley, some men travelled as stockmen or became station hands, such as Jimmy Lowndes (Chapter 6) going to the New South Wales central west.<sup>1,2</sup>

It has become popular in modern times to consider the Aboriginal children who were at the Parramatta Native Institution school or later at the Black Town - and their offspring, to have belonged to this diminished County Cumberland group of Aboriginal society living under the colonial regime. Instead, children had been brought in from surrounding groups such as from the southern and northern Blue Mountains peoples, *Gundungurra* and *Darkiñung* respectively (Chapter 6). The Black Town was located at Richmond Road, and renamed Plumpton when rural Blacktown became a suburb moving east to the later railway station.<sup>3</sup> The historically inept presumption has arisen by extrapolating backwards from the 1980s, assuming that for Aboriginal families associated with Blacktown District in the present day, the tribal identity of their ancestors would have been the same as that of the original Aborigines who once upon a time had occupied the lands where the Black Town had been located - i.e. at Gidley Ponds - present

from 'Darkiñung Recognition' Research Thesis, 2010 p.362:

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<sup>1</sup> This thesis has tried to unravel what was the status at the time when the new white occupants arrived. Afterwards, Aboriginal men from the coast (especially sons of convicts) travelled into the interior as stockmen with pastoralists from the settled areas taking livestock to sheep and cattle runs. As these runs became established with homesteads (often occupied by the white sons of the pastoralists), Aborigines from the interior travelled with the pastoralist families back to the areas which had been settled earlier. In parallel with this movement were the number of Aboriginal children born to lonely white men growing up in the interior, and conversely, the valuable economic role played by these Aboriginal stockmen after convict servants were no longer available and farm labour became scarce when the immigrant men chased the mid nineteenth century mining boom of the gold rushes. For the new era of Aborigines working away from their home estate with the white men, the Aboriginal Lore, providing Law, of Country no longer applied.

<sup>2</sup> Long after the convict era, even when it was considered that Aboriginal 'sexual exploitation was a way of life for many white men' in the brutal days of colonisation of regions to the north, Ted Egan's social history tells of situations 'where a meaningful relationship developed and mixed race children were recognised', immortalised in his 1981 love song 'The Drover's Boy'. Of course, sometimes a wife and family did travel overland as white 'pioneers', such as for my mother's Bridge family settling at Mabel Downs in northern WA. The Aborigine politician Ernie Bridge was an outcome of good relationships with the locals such as described in Chapter 4.

<sup>3</sup> Discussed in Chapter 6.

day Bells Creek, a tributary of Eastern Creek near where it flows into South Creek.<sup>4</sup> With regard to this misplacing of people from the Hawkesbury-Hunter Ranges, the misidentification of the *Darkiñung* people of the Hawkesbury as *Dharug* people at the Black Town is dealt with in Chapter 7. Thus this chapter seeks to recognise the situation at the beginning of settlement, from which the new findings considered in this study suggest the geographical border of the Hawkesbury-Hunter Ranges was the geological floodplain of the Hawkesbury River downstream of where the Warragamba joins the Nepean. With regard to terminology, in the present day as descendants seek an origin of their forebears, it has become usual to adopt names recorded for languages (Chapter 6), thus the diminished group of the Cumberland Plain were the *Dharug*-speaking peoples while the Aborigines of the mountains and rivers northwest of the floodplain were the *Darkiñung*-speaking peoples.

from 'Darkiñung Recognition' Research Thesis, 2010 p.386:

### Chapter 10/SE Findings

The purpose of this chapter is to recognise the *Darkiñung*-Language People of the Hawkesbury-Hunter Ranges by separating their Country from that of those to their southeast at the time of settlement, the *Dharug*-Language People known from the Cumberland Plain to the west of Sydney. These latter are now commonly referred to in western Sydney by a new term 'Darug' contrived for them at the Blacktown and District Historical Society from where some Aboriginal descendants were being contacted to share historical information ca.1980, detailed in Chapter 7. This new word, adapted from a vegetable root in western Victoria, was applied to their infant Tribal Link ca.1990 [1988?], and gained false fashionability from the 1993 society publication 'The Darug and Their Neighbours' which is misleading about the historic position for their neighbours as well as being misleading for the *Dharug*. The author's motive for this successful hoax could not be ascertained.

The findings of this chapter show first of all that the Cumberland Plain people to the southwest of Sydney, the *Dharug*-Language People, distinguished themselves from the Aborigines of the northern Blue Mountains, the *Darkiñung*-Language People, of whom they were afraid.

The collections of evidence from historic records place the *Dharug* southeast of the Hawkesbury floodplain, which for the mountain *Darkiñung* forms the southeast border. Robert Mathews, the surveyor

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<sup>4</sup> This erroneous presumption, now widely assumed, seems to have arisen from the response at Blacktown and District Historical Society where Kevin Moore was approached by descendants who could help the society with Aboriginal local history. Moore passed the benefits of Aboriginal contact to Jim Kohen, from where the historiography has been considered in Chapter 7: Jim Kohen, apparently employed for technology in the biology department at Macquarie University, seems to have become a higher degree student for archaeology in the geology department. At Blacktown and District Historical Society he aided the establishment of a *Dharug* Tribal Link for which he took a Western Victoria language term to contrive a new brand-word for them, 'Darug'. When the Tribal Link split at registration, Kohen was the Public Officer for the 'Darug Tribal Aboriginal Corporation' (DTAC). Later Kristina Everett of Macquarie University social sciences, a postgraduate student in anthropology, became Public Officer for the 'Darug Custodians Aboriginal Corporation'. For a more complete perspective of their work, both these Macquarie University theses should be considered.

who first recorded these two language terms, placing the terms in the public domain, provided a separation line from the watershed south of Broken Bay across to Windsor. The watershed ridge, present day Mona Vale Road was then known by the road from the south Arm of the Bay, Pittwater, to Lane Cove which had been misinterpreted in 1970 as Lane Cove river. (The people of Broken Bay are considered in Chapter 9/NE.) Windsor town had become a settlement administration location for the *Dharug* from the then Black Town who visited across the Hawkesbury floodplain (as described in Chapter 6). It was the Hawkesbury settlers' administration district, not the Hawkesbury Aborigines' traditional area, which crossed the floodplain along the Richmond Road from Windsor and Richmond.

from 'Darkiñung Recognition' Research Thesis, 2010 p.387:

The traditional country of the *Dharug*, identified from earliest records of their language, has been shown credibly by J.L. Kohen at Blacktown and District Historical Society in 1984 to be based around the Georges River flowing into Botany Bay, using records by John Rowley reared there - who was a friend of *Dharug* Aborigine *Duall* from Appin. Assuming the river itself as a boundary was a misinterpretation in the 1993 book. As well, the *Dharug* occupied the upper Nepean River (above Warragamba junction) - possessing the South Creek plains country in between. The *Dharug* language was recorded from Botany Bay up into the Woronora Plateau beyond Appin before any other Aboriginal group moved in to occupy that country. Once the settlers began penetrating into the Wollondilly-Warragamba River catchment, it seems that the mountain neighbours from there, *Gundungurra*-Language people, began their own defence on *Dharug* land around Camden (having retaliatory consequences known as the 1816 Appin Massacre).

The only practical conclusion which is practicable is for the Hawkesbury / Nepean River floodplain to have formed a boundary between the Cumberland Plain *Dharug* and the northern Blue Mountain *Darkiñung*, with lower Nepean River as *Darkiñung* and South Creek catchment higher than the floodplain as *Dharug* territory, leaving the watershed between South Creek and the lower Nepean River as a nominal border. (While either side could be defended, for the use of land on the floodplain itself where open campsites existed, the answer to the question 'who was where' may be best answered by which way you would run when a flood arrived.) To the northeast of the floodplain the natural topographical feature to have been a geographical border is the watershed between the tributaries of the Parramatta River for the 'coastal' *Dharug* and the tributaries of the Hawkesbury River for the 'inland' *Darkiñung* (which corresponds to the Mathews Line).

G.E. Ford, 2012: *Darkiñung* Brief, extracted from 'Darkiñung Recognition' 2010 thesis - which see

from 'Darkiñung Recognition' Research Thesis, 2010 p.389:

## Chapter 11/SW

The misty vista of the upper Grose Valley from Govetts Leap Lookout, Blackheath, at the end of the modern tourists' road from photograph by Geoff Ford

Friday 4 June 2010



The cleared top of mountain *Uraterer* - which became 'Gospers Mountain' farm in the centre of the Colo River wilderness from photograph by Andy Macqueen

September 2001

From the Blue Mountains (on the drivers' road) to the Wollemi (in the walkers' wilderness)

### Notes:

The SW of Darkiñung Country encompassed the Northern Blue Mountains peaks and valleys for the catchment of the Hawkesbury River Branches, both from the Grose River Branch and from the Colo River Branch which includes the present day 'Wollemi Wilderness'. When my family was at Blackheath, we would walk to Govetts Leap (where there was a kiosk) where people began their bushwalking journeys. In colonial days small farmers settled in the wilderness while pastoralists took their stock through. Yet modern humans driving on roads in their air conditioned motor vehicles imagine it was too rough for traditional Aborigines to walk.



## Part III (3)

## Chapter 11/SW

**Country to the Southwest of the *Darkiñung*:  
Interacting with the *Gundungurra* of the Southern Blue Mountains**

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G.E. Ford, 2012: *Darkiñung* Brief, extracted from 'Darkiñung Recognition' 2010 thesis - which see

from 'Darkiñung Recognition' Research Thesis, 2010 p.391:

The valorisation of “wilderness” has accompanied an  
Amnesia of the fate of indigenous peoples.

Langton, 1995<sup>1</sup>

None more so than amnesia about *Darkiñung*-Language people who have been misplaced.  
The designation of their Country in the Hawkesbury-Hunter Ranges as ‘wilderness’ applies particularly for the southwestern quadrant adjacent to Country of the *Gundungurra*-Language People.

### The Issue

This chapter examines putative borders on the southwestern quadrant of the Hawkesbury-Hunter Ranges, that is, examines the distinction between the Aboriginal occupation of the northern Blue Mountains of this thesis and of the southern Blue Mountains, bounded on the west by the Central Tablelands. It has become comfortable to accept that the range onto which the Great Western Highway ascends from the lower Nepean River at Emu Plains provides a border between Aboriginal Language groups (‘Tribes’), with *Gundungurra*-speaking Aborigines to the south of the main road. The consensus that these *Gundungurra* language people bordered *Dharug*-speaking people in the mountains to their north has been shown to be without foundation in this study - the *Dharug* did not occupy any country in the Blue Mountains before settlement (Chapter 7 and Chapter 10/SE). Rather, it was the *Darkiñung*-speaking Aborigines, first known in the colony as ‘The Branch’ natives who occupied the Grose River catchment to the north of the highway as detailed in Chapter 2.<sup>2</sup> A natural topographical border is formed at the lower

from 'Darkiñung Recognition' Research Thesis, 2010 p.392:

eastern section by the lesser known main range which is to the south of the highway. The natural border constitutes the watershed on the northern side of the Cox River, which flows east through the mountains joining the Wollondilly River in the Burragorang Valley to form the Warragamba River.<sup>3</sup> This chapter

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<sup>1</sup> From a perceptive essay by ‘former actress’ Marcia Langton discussing ‘terms like “native”, “wilderness”, “landscape” and “primitive”’.

<sup>2</sup> At issue for the study in this thesis is authorities who contradict themselves, which has influenced me to include detailed descriptions of sources in order to assist the reader to follow the argument. The most prominent researcher on *Gundungurra* history J.L. Smith published a 2003 book over the name of R.H. Mathews [Chapter 6] with text attributed to an unpublished manuscript by Mathews (located at the National Library by ‘Karen Attard’, giving ‘versions of legends’ written by Mathews). In this Mathews stated: ‘On the north of the Gundungurra was the country of the Darkiñung’, for which Smith gives two of Mathews's publications as verification. One of my research ms circulated for comment as part of my studies provided early historic evidence to support Smith: that it was ‘The Branch’ natives (*Darkiñung*) to the north of the *Gundungurra* in the Blue Mountains - and hence it could not have been *Dharug* as had been supposed before my study (Chapter 2). In response, Smith (pers. comm.) contradicted Mathews's publications and his own 2003 publication, arguing that it was preferable to believe they were *Dharug* because Kohen said so, rather than to recognise what was found in historic records (of which there is further discussion in Chapter 7). Jim Smith was Jim Kohen's postgraduate student at Macquarie University.

<sup>3</sup> On the southern side of this watershed border is the Cox River catchment as stated. On the northern side - as elevation is gained east to west, are the Erskine Creek, the Grose River and the Colo River catchments of the Hawkesbury River.

G.E. Ford, 2012: *Darkiñung* Brief, extracted from 'Darkiñung Recognition' 2010 thesis - which see

shows that range to be an appropriate geographical boundary between the *Gundungurra* Aborigines of the southern Blue Mountains and the *Darkiñung* Aborigines of the northern Blue Mountains (the Hawkesbury-Hunter Ranges of this thesis).

Geographically this chapter deals with the Blue Mountains from the Nepean River to the Great Dividing Range. Moving from south to west, the first task is to address the history of the lower part of the range rising west from the lower Nepean River up to the Kings Tableland (Wentworth Falls township). This lower part of the range with the Cox River to its south is named Erskine Range. The second task is to consider the higher range between the upper Grose River valley and the Cox River valley (Katoomba to Mount Victoria township). The third task is to study the range beyond the Grose River valley between the catchment of the upper Colo River tributaries and the upper Cox River. This is the section of the range from Mount Victoria to where the range branches off the Great Dividing Range, which was named by Hamilton Hume in 1827 as Darling's Causeway after the then governor (Chapter 3). I make the case that the Hawkesbury-Hunter Ranges were not impenetrable, to establish that the Aborigines of the upper Colo did not come into the ranges from the interior [west of Mount York] the way settlers had arrived at Wolgan and Capertee Valleys of the upper Colo River.

I am including at the end of the chapter the discussion as to whether a main dividing range, in this context the Great Dividing Range, formed a border for Aboriginal groups.

from 'Darkiñung Recognition' Research Thesis, 2010 p.433:

### **Chapter 11/SW Findings**

The purpose of this chapter is to recognise the *Darkiñung*-Language People of the Hawkesbury-Hunter Ranges by separating their Country from that of those to their southwest at the time of settlement, the *Gundungurra*-Language People known from Burratorang Valley and further south in the Wollondilly River catchment.

The northern edge of the watershed draining to the Cox River appears as the natural topographical feature to have been a practical geographical border of the *Gundungurra*-Language Aborigines to the southwest

from 'Darkiñung Recognition' Research Thesis, 2010 p.434:

of the *Darkiñung*-Language Aborigines. This is Erskine Range from the Nepean River to Kings Tableland, thence the present day Blue Mountains Range, incorporating Darling Causeway to the Great Dividing Range.

It cannot be ascertained from known historical records who were the *Wallerawang* (aka 'Wywandy'), Aborigines who were poised between *Wiradjuri* on their west and *Darkiñung* on their east. Concomitant with *Kamilaroi* intrusion outlined in Chapter 12/NW they may have been *Wiradjuri* of the Macquarie River catchment in the Central Tablelands - yet following the watershed criterion it is likely that they may have been *Gundungurra* since *Wallerawang*, the local name, is at the head of the Cox River - which is a tributary of the *Wollondilly* River which is the *Gundungurra* base of their *Bannaby* Country. In a parallel situation on the more southerly part of their western flank, the *Gundungurra* may have been repelling the

G.E. Ford, 2012: *Darkiñung* Brief, extracted from 'Darkiñung Recognition' 2010 thesis - which see

*Wiradjuri* of the Lachlan River catchment in the Central Tablelands.

While there may have been an overlap around the Mount Victoria vicinity, no interactions were discovered between the *Darkiñung* and the *Gundungurra* prior to the impact of settlement.

Where the Blue Mountains Range joins the Great Dividing Range are the *Capertee* and Wolgan Valleys at the head of the Colo River which is a Branch of the Hawkesbury River system. Confusingly, the colonial settlement of this upper Colo watershed was from the interior Bathurst district further southwest, yet it is shown that the Aborigines at the head of the Colo at the time of settlement were related to those of the Goulburn/Hunter River system to the northeast within the Hawkesbury-Hunter Ranges occupied by the *Darkiñung*-language Aborigines. The recent thought that these ranges have been impervious to people, requiring occupation from across the tablelands to the west, is shown to be untenable.

The vexed issue is considered as to whether - when the settlers arrived - Aboriginal Language groups occupied land beyond their basic home catchment over a main dividing range, here for the Great Dividing Range which is not distinct to the modern casual observer on the tablelands. While Aboriginal borders seem to have been permeable, historical records do not verify occupancy over the divide in the situation for this chapter (in contrast to Chapter 12/NW). The claimed placement of people from the coastal drainage over the divide was found to have been from interpretive mistakes reading the records. In the earlier case, by Charles Throsby misapplying the name of a Wollondilly group to name a waterway in the Lachlan River catchment, and in a later case by Alfred Bennett misinterpreting a locality term. It was from 'Darkiñung Recognition' Research Thesis, 2010 p.435: discovered that the country of the *Gundungurra* to the south of the Cox River had been known before its settlement as *Bannaby* [range of spellings] which was sometimes confused by settlers regarding it as part of Bathurst district over the mountains in the interior. With this discovery, some modern historical interpretations need to be re-visited.

## Chapter 12/NW



Across Martindale Creek [earlier Greig's Creek of this chapter]  
at the head of the cleared cultivated valley looking towards the Cow Parlour valley  
from photograph by Geoff Ford Sunday 8 March 2009

### Notes:

This is where the *Darkiñung* Aborigines retreated into the ranges to turn up at *Putty*, aka *Bootty* (Colo River Branch drainage) after the killing at Greig's farm 'Craytonshaw' October 1825. The Cow Parlour is now a stock run for a cattleman who is descended from those Aborigines of 'The Branch' natives. This valley (draining to Hunter River) is where the Medhurst boys came through the ranges with cattle from Howes Valley (Macdonald River Branch drainage) to settle this valley. [John Howe had been first led, misled, by these Aborigines down the next one of these valleys to the east.] A Medhurst cousin of my age, Bert Sykes, pointing from his homestead verandah, is a son of a granddaughter of one of those boys. The family continued to be horsemen. We are descendants of John Medhurst who advised Robert Mathews about Aboriginal art work in the ranges.

## Part III (4)

## Chapter 12/NW

**Country to the Northwest of the *Darkiñung*:  
Interacting with the *Kamilaroi* Who Occupied the Upper Hunter Valley  
or with the *Wiradjuri* Across the Central Tablelands**

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from 'Darkiñung Recognition' Research Thesis, 2010 p.439:

### **The Issue**

In this chapter, I outline historical records illustrating that at the time the settlers arrived at the northwest locations of the Hawkesbury-Hunter Ranges, there were Aboriginal people foreign to those who belonged to the Branches of the Hawkesbury River (known as 'The Branch' natives) and to the ranges south of the Hunter River (referred to as the 'Wollombi tribe'). At this time there were no names of locations, other than those Ben Singleton had shared from his earlier contact with Aborigines from the ranges (Chapter 3).<sup>1</sup> Some time ago these strangers had come from the plains and marshes of interior rivers to the west of the Great Dividing Range which flowed towards the centre of the continent. Settlers were to identify interior Aborigines from their languages which were designated by the respective word for 'no'. To the north the tribes shared a language designated by 'kamil' for no, thus *Kamil<sup>a</sup>-roi* [various spellings]; to the west tribes shared a language identified by 'wira' for the word for no, hence *Wira-djuri* [various spellings].<sup>2</sup>

It has become conventional in recent times to consider that the Aborigines of the upper Hunter and Goulburn Rivers were 'Wonnarua' as did activist and author Jack Horner in 1977 who called them *Wonj-arua* (Chapter 3). However, historically this is an error attributable to a false memory of one man as published in 1887, so not pursued in this chapter but discussed for this thesis in Chapter 9/NE.

from 'Darkiñung Recognition' Research Thesis, 2010 p.466:

### **Chapter 12/NW Findings**

The purpose of this chapter is to recognise the *Darkiñung*-Language People of the Hawkesbury-Hunter Ranges by separating their Country from that of two major nations to their northwest. These were the Aborigines known from the Interior (across the Great Dividing Range) who were *Kamilaroi*-Language People from Country of the Namoi River catchment, and *Wiradjuri*-Language People from Country of the

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<sup>1</sup> The reader should be aware that the term *Wollemi*, *Wollombi*, *Wallambine*, etc, apparently represented an Aboriginal term associated with the mountains, which was co-opted by Surveyor-General Thomas Mitchell who instructed his surveyors to call a township site Wollombi located at the junction of the two main branches of the mountain stream on the Great North Road survey. (That is, Mitchell artificially chose the site for the convenience of white travellers to be at the meeting of the waters of present day Wollombi Brook.) Surveyor Heneage Finch who had performed the road survey had applied the term *Illulughn* as the Aboriginal location for this junction site - which is apparently the word giving us present day *Ellalong*. (Breton's 'Illarong' later this chapter.) Finch's associate, surveyor Peter Ogilvie, in an 1829 map showed 'Wollambi' as a double peak in the Bulga Mountains. Writing to Ogilvie three months earlier, Mitchell himself had identified the double peak as *Warrawolong*. The original record of the term Wollombi is attributed to young John Blaxland jnr (viz. John de Marquett Blaxland) in 1824, on a second journey pioneering a shorter way from Richmond across the then unnamed Macdonald River Branch - 'through *Wallumbi*, a level grazing country' - when he was accompanied by Rev. George Middleton who was a friend of the Aborigines (Chapter 3).

<sup>2</sup> Language names to identify Aborigines were not used by the settlers, who used locality terms, but introduced by missionaries such as the peripatetic William Ridley as below (mentioned Chapter 6).

G.E. Ford, 2012: *Darkiñung* Brief, extracted from 'Darkiñung Recognition' 2010 thesis - which see

Macquarie River catchment (separated from each other on the Great Dividing Range at Coolah Tops and thence the Warrumbungle Range to the west).

from 'Darkiñung Recognition' Research Thesis, 2010 p.467:

From the time that John Howe arrived in 1819 from the south across the Hawkesbury-Hunter Ranges with Aborigines from Richmond, foreign *Kamilaroi* (Howe's 'Coomery Roy') Aborigines have been noted at the Hunter River who were those who had already penetrated over the range to occupy the upper part of the Hunter River Valley, downstream to what became 'Merton'. It appears they had only been repulsed by the *Darkiñung* at the floodplain, for which I surmise that any advance party obtaining a foothold across the river would have been annihilated at the next flood.

The *Kamilaroi* had occupied country on the coastal side of the Great Dividing Range which may in a legendary past have been *Darkiñung*. The 'Glendon' *Ge(y)awegal* who were also in dread of the *Kamilaroi* intrusion may have been a residue of those *Darkiñung* who had been cut off but retained an affiliation when compared with the *Kattung*-speaking people on the north of the lower Hunter River. (Despite the apparent war footing at the boundary, it is observed that the *Darkiñung*, *Geawegal* and *Kattung*-speaking people had some common cultural characteristics shared with *Kamilaroi* peoples.)

The Aboriginal people south of the mid Hunter River floodplain such as visited 'Craytonshaw' on Greigs Creek were part of 'The Branch' natives at Putty (Colo River Branch), i.e. *Darkiñung*.

Although foreign *Wiradjuri* from west of the Central Tablelands appear to have had intentions on the Goulburn River Valley down to the Wollombi, their intrusions had been limited, so that the Goulburn River Valley and its side valleys remained as Country of the *Darkiñung*.



## Part III

### Brief Conclusion for Part III

#### Recognition of the *Darkiñung* Country

When the study for this thesis began, the *Darkiñung*-language people as of the Hawkesbury-Hunter Ranges (northern Blue Mountains aka Carmarthen Hills) were 'somewhere else': On the south they were misidentified as *Dharug*, on the east misidentified as 'Awabakal', on the north misidentified as 'Wonnarua' and on the west misidentified as *Wiradjuri*. But the research of original historical source records uncovered fallacies in these concepts.

Modern expectations assume cadastral boundaries, but that was not the case for traditional Aborigines, so I have reported topographical borders which fit the findings from the original histories. The country of the *Darkiñung* extended to the floodplain of the Hawkesbury River in the south, to the floodplain of the Hunter River in the north, to the Interior Bathurst district of the Macquarie River watershed on the Great Dividing Range in the west and to the Watagan area of the watershed on the coastal range in the east. These people of the ranges were closely allied with the coastal people between the Hawkesbury and Hunter River estuaries.

To the northeast of the ranges, the traditional 'people of the place here' on the coast from the Hunter River estuary south were *Wannungine*, while apparently indicating those of the same group as 'people of the place there' (i.e. further away) were *Wannerawa* to the Hawkesbury River estuaries at the Broken Bay Arms. Particularly with the *Wannerawa* ('Wonnarua') misunderstanding to the northwest, it is most appropriate to use the term *Wannungine* for these coastal people. Due to the 1892 scholarly writing by a retired school teacher who thought them extinct, the names adopted now for these *Wannungine* are 'Awabakal' of lower Hunter River and Lake Macquarie and 'Guringai' of Broken Bay and Tuggerah Lakes. They are identical people: e.g. a principal ancestor residing at Lake Macquarie had moved there from Tuggerah Lakes.

To the southeast, the *Dharug* were identified from their language as the traditional people of Botany Bay - Georges River with the nearby upper Nepean River [above Warragamba] up into the Woronora Plateau. Just as the *Wallambine* mountain people were allied to the coastal *Wannungine*, so were the *Wollondilly* mountain people allied to the *Dharug*, with the South Creek people being part of the Georges

from 'Darkiñung Recognition' Research Thesis, 2010 p.470:

River *Dharug*. [My study does not deal with the question of how closely these Georges River people dubbed 'Dharug' were related to the Illawarra *Dharawal* Aborigines.]

The border with the *Darkiñung* at the time of settlement could only have been the Hawkesbury floodplain. Between floods the people are considered to have ventured onto the fertile floodplain either to attack or to co-operate, with an eye to their escape home when the waters rose. (Any mention of Hawkesbury or Windsor Aborigines at the Black Town on the Richmond Road in *Dharug* country applied only to the administration of the parsons and ministers, police and magistrates, whose circuit crossed the floodplain and had no bearing on traditional Aboriginal country.) An appropriate border for present day

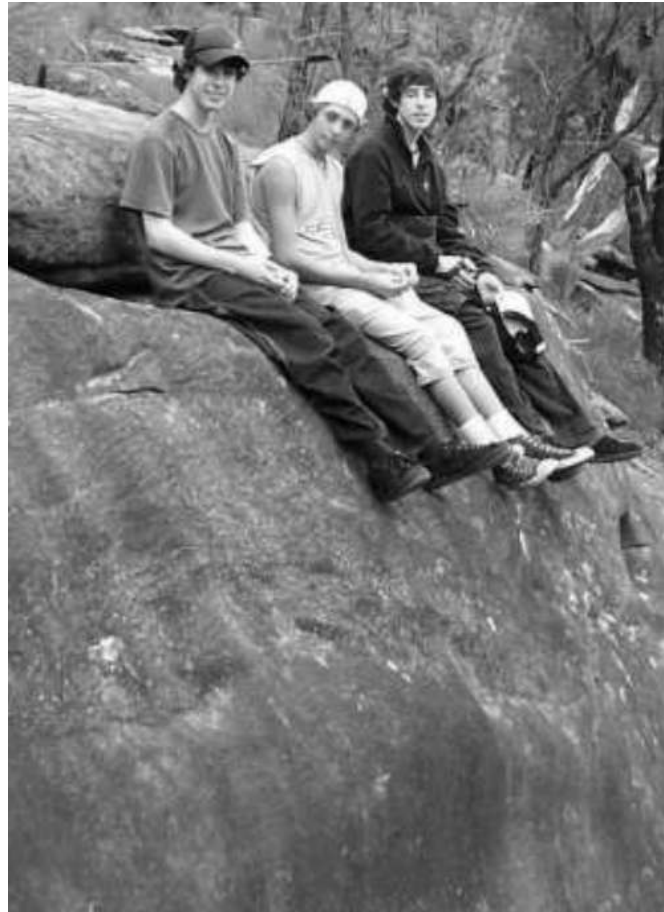
requirements would be the low watershed ridge between the South Creek and the River.

To the southwest there was a more certain geographical border from the junction of the Warragamba River with the Nepean/Hawkesbury River along the watershed of the Blue Mountains Range up to the Great Dividing Range, with the *Gundungurra* to the south in the catchment of the Cox River tributary of their main Wollondilly River country. Near the Great Dividing Range, the upper catchments of the Colo River Branch of the Hawkesbury, especially the Capertee Valley, were occupied by *Darkiñung* people who identified with other Hawkesbury-Hunter Ranges Aborigines. The misconception that across the mountains from the coast was occupied by *Dharug* people arose because the Black Town located near South Creek had been in the original 'Inland' Bathurst district which was not known to those writers who had made the mistake and confused it with the subsequent 'Interior' Bathurst. [My study does not answer the question as to whether the top of the Cox River at *Wallerawang* had become occupied by *Wiradjuri* from the west (*Wywandry*?) coming over the divide of the Central Tablelands.]

To the northwest, although the *Wiradjuri* from the Interior Bathurst district made forays over the Great Dividing Range down the Goulburn River to the Hunter, they had not occupied that *Darkiñung* country. However, by the time of settlement, the *Kamilaroi* from the interior had intruded over the Great Dividing Range further north to occupy the main valley of the upper Hunter River, repelled by the *Darkiñung* at the mid river floodplain. (The '*Wonnarua*' were the coastal people whose name had been misplaced to that *Kamilaroi*-occupied land due to a false 1887 report - whose author may have misunderstood *Wannerawa* for 'people of the place further away'.)

Analyses of historical records discovered that the *Darkiñung* Aborigines were not hidden 'somewhere else' away in the wilderness. Although their members have been misidentified in modern times, they were the great tribe of the Hawkesbury-Hunter Ranges, the Blue Mountains to the northwest of Sydney.

## The Next Stage



The *Darkiñung* Future:

Three men, then schoolboys, on a family visit to an Aboriginal cultural site created by their *Darkiñung* ancestors north of the Hawkesbury River  
from photograph by Lee Ford Monday 13 June 2005

### Notes:

Descendants of Aborigines **Budha**, native of Sackville on the Hawkesbury River (Mildred, the first Everingham partner) and **Madha**, native of Laguna on the Wollombi Brook (Martha, the next 'Mrs Everingham'), bushwalked to the "Place of the gods" heritage location in the Hawkesbury-Hunter Ranges on an excursion with family members. Robert Mathews knew, and noted, both of these Aboriginal women in the *Darkiñung* community. This photograph was taken along the way.

## Intermission

My mother may have called me a tinker, yet I am only in the shadows of the likes of simple Sym, the son of Joi: 'I, who have lived 'neath the tent of the skies, Know of the flowers, and which to prize . . .'

*Joi had a son and his name was Sym;  
And his eyes were wide as the eyes of Truth;  
But Sym, he would laugh when he ought to be sad;  
He romps with the puppies and talks to the ants,  
With his back to a tree and his feet in the grass,  
He watched the thistledown drift and pass,<sup>1</sup>*

This is the period of Intermission, the present Act in this theatre of History having been played out by resetting the stage for the Recognition of the *Darkiñung*. In this Act I have analysed the historiography of how - in a preceding Act - the *Darkiñung* who were at the Hawkesbury River northwest of Sydney had been taken for the *Dharug*, then renatured to be a plant root from Western Victoria, 'darug'.

The stage is ready to enthuse descendants of Aborigine 'Sarah Moran' and convict Ben Castles with others from the Georges River to celebrate their Georges River *Dharug* heritage, while the descendants of 'Maria' and convict Robert Lock with her compatriot 'Betty', Aboriginal daughter of convict George Cox, re-join their Hawkesbury and *Wollombi* relatives in celebrating their *Darkiñung* heritage of the Hawkesbury-Hunter Ranges.

The next Act may be performed by a later following generation with their '*eyes of Truth*', just as that other anthropological hoax publicised by Arthur Woodward in 1912 took forty years to resolve in the public's eye, even though it was exposed in 1915 by Marcellin Boule and by Gerrit Miller. Has the Black Town become another Piltown Quarry, publicised by a '*stern Sir Stodge and all his Swanks*'?

In the meantime, I will continue with the local history of the Hawkesbury-Hunter area rivers and ranges, and their indigenous *Darkiñung* history, as foreshadowed in the thesis Preface addressed to the readers.

*With his feet in the grass and his back to a tree;  
And he looks on the Valley and dreams of old years,  
For the wise seek the mountains - - -*

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<sup>1</sup> Line extracts selected from Clarence James ('C.J.') Dennis, 1917, 'The Glugs of Gosh', Facsimile reprint 1980, Angus & Robertson, Sydney, quotes taken from p.116, p.35, p.46, p.48, p.97, p.127.

# Glossary and Bibliography

(with some annotations)



The university location for this study:

The Post Graduate Arts Research Centre (PG ARC)

high in the roof of the John Woolley Building

at Sydney University

from photograph by Geoff Ford Tuesday 21 April 2009

from 'Darkiñung Recognition' Research Thesis, 2010 p.475:

## **Glossary [start of],**

### **Abbreviations and Acronyms, with Annotations of selected terms**

Some readers may be uncomfortable about some words written in this thesis not satisfying 2010 usage. I have used terms with their English-character spellings and meanings as in the context of historic records for the times about which I am writing. The glossary is to assist with the life of the thesis after I've gone.

In repeating terms such as 'fullblood', 'halfcaste', 'mixed' descent and so on, I am mindful of the consideration of a historian of my own age, Aboriginal academic Gordon Briscoe (2003 p.3), who wrote with regard to source records that 'Changing the terms to reflect modern usage - - - distorts the intentions of the people involved in past events.'

Not every word is annotated here which has changed its meaning, for which I had consulted Johnson dictionaries, and other writings of the period. For example, the First Fleeters used the term 'creek' for a small inlet or bight. Some entries are included with a later generation of readers in mind. [2012 supplement: And a 'hundred' people was used for a company of indeterminate number - cf fn.103 p.120.]

**[There are 183 entries in the Glossary, which includes definitions for 26 locations as used in the thesis.]**

from 'Darkiñung Recognition' Research Thesis, 2010 p.487:

## **Bibliography [start of]**

### Annotations

This Bibliography contains added annotations for some entries, particularly added for the background of future readers not necessarily familiar with the reference.

### Primary Sources

The nominal classification of reference sources into primary and secondary records of events cannot be met because of the analyses in this thesis showing that many of the primary source writers used here included events at which they were not present - even relating events before they were born. Original newspaper items seem particularly prone to hearsay (as do some letters). Being born 1939, I am the same age now as some of the informants cited whose reminiscences I have found cause for wariness. Many retold other's stories. I trust readers to distinguish between recalled experiences and recorded events. Classifying some sources as primary provides an imprimatur of historic respectability which I have discussed may not be justified. For example, Alexander Harris's 1847 book has been taken as a primary historical source although exposed by Manning Clark 1953 and by Alec Chisholm 1961. See, for example, annotation for W.H. Suttor 1887 in this Bibliography.

Many of the secondary source writers are not describing historical events, yet may be the primary writer on the topic such as describing plants which I can relate to 1789 descriptions.

### Maps

Maps have been particularly important for this thesis study. Varied categories have been used .

**[There are 1026 entries in the Bibliography as used for the thesis study, plus notes on particular authors'.]**

G.E. Ford, 2012: *Darkiñung* Brief, extracted from 'Darkiñung Recognition' 2010 thesis - which see

from 'Darkiñung Recognition' Research Thesis, 2010 p.557:

## **Index Note**

This thesis does not have a static index. Rather, it is intended that it be freely available in digital pdf configuration so that readers can choose their own terms to electronically search and note.

For access to digital copy of this thesis, go to University of Sydney Library catalogue for Link.  
The thesis is formatted with alternating wide margins for double-sided printing.

G.E. Ford, 2012: *Darkiñung* Brief, extracted from 'Darkiñung Recognition' 2010 thesis - which see

from 'Darkiñung Recognition' Research Thesis, 2010 p.558:

"When the 'facts' change,  
I change my mind.

"What do you do?"

[Attributed to John Maynard Keynes,  
with implications of The Great Depression.]