



**For a Labourer Worthy of His Hire:
Aboriginal Economic Responses to
Colonisation in the Illawarra and
Shoalhaven, 1770-1900
Volume 1**

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FORM B



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Date 23 April 2003

Abstract

This thesis presents a narrative of Aboriginal economic responses in the 19th century to the colonisation of the Shoalhaven and Illawarra regions of New South Wales. It explores the competing claims of articulation theory and dependency theory about the intersection of colonial and indigenous economies. Dependency theory claims that settlers destroy the indigenous mode of production to permit the expansion of their own economic system. They exploit indigenous labour which then becomes dependent on capitalist sources of subsistence. Articulation theory, as modified by Layton (2001) to recognise the bi-directional nature of contact, posits that the rate of capitalist penetration into indigenous economies is variable and that the non-capitalist mode of production may be preserved to create a self-supporting source of labour. The contrasting theories are assessed in this thesis by determining the contribution different strategies made to Aboriginal subsistence. Historical evidence is used to assess each strategy. The main source of information is from Alexander Berry's Shoalhaven estate, where Aboriginal people lived from settlement in 1822 until they were moved to a reserve in the early 1900s. The analysis suggests that contrary to previous research, Aboriginal people gained the majority of their subsistence from fishing, hunting and gathering until 1860. Strategies that depended on the colonial economy such as farm work, trading, living with settlers and stealing made only minor contributions to Aboriginal subsistence. After 1860, European land use intensified and Aboriginal people were further alienated from the land. The contribution of hunting and gathering contracted as a result. Dependency on government assistance increased, particularly after the foundation of the Aborigines Protection Board in 1882. Fishing remained an important source of food and cash. Maritime resources were not commercially exploited to a significant extent until the closing years of the 19th century when Aboriginal people were provided with boats and nets to assist their efforts. The historical evidence demonstrates that articulation theory offers a more realistic approach than does dependency theory when analysing the intersection of colonial and indigenous economies. This is because articulation theory can predict variable outcomes. The variable outcome suggested by the Shoalhaven and Illawarra data are that hunting, gathering and fishing economies have the resilience to withstand the colonial encounter if sufficient resources are made available.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION & THEORY

Introduction

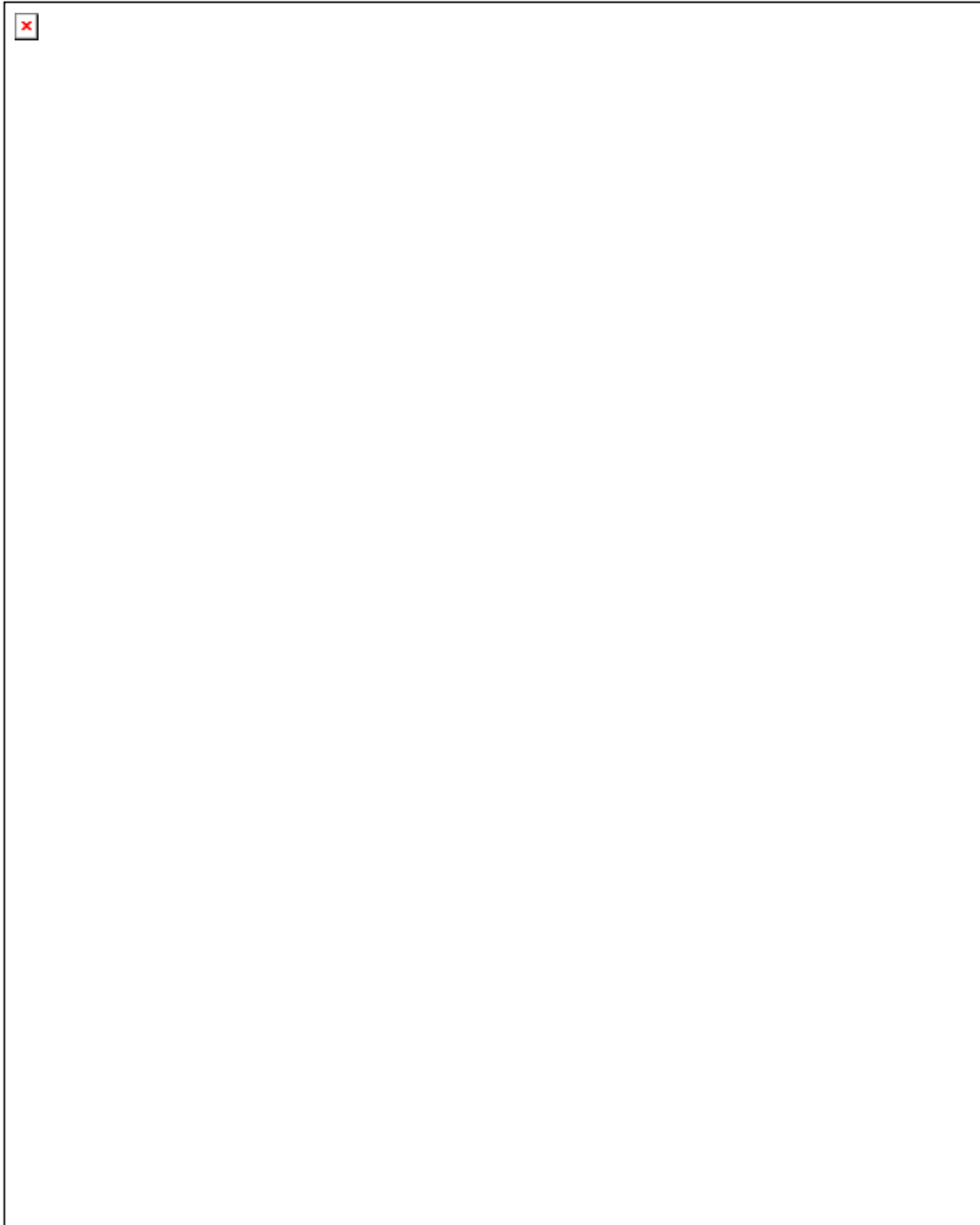
The Aboriginal people of the Illawarra and Shoalhaven regions of New South Wales believe they have lived in the area from the beginning of time (Egloff 1999: iv). They know their ancestors used a vast knowledge of the environment and deft skills to live comfortably off the land, the rivers and the sea. The coming of British and European settlers brought drastic changes to their economy. This thesis draws an historical narrative and examines the economic responses of Aboriginal people from the Illawarra and Shoalhaven to the colonisation of their lands by British and European settlers in the 19th century. It focuses particularly on the farm work undertaken by Aboriginal people at Alexander Berry's Shoalhaven estate and the contribution it made to their subsistence. The number of days worked by Aboriginal people is quantified to show the changing importance of farm work as an economic strategy. Other strategies, such as migration, trade and hunting, living with white people, gathering and fishing, are also described and analysed.

The Study Area

The study area encompasses the Illawarra and Shoalhaven regions on the south coast of New South Wales, from Coalcliff in the north to Lake Wollumbulla in the south, and from the coastline in the east to the escarpment of the Great Dividing Range in the west (see Map 1). The approximate size of the study area is 1200 square kilometres.

Aboriginal Groups

Today, the Illawarra and Shoalhaven are home to the Wodi Wodi and Jerinja Aboriginal groups. They are represented by different organisations including land councils and tribal elders' groups. According to Howitt, the regions in traditional times were part of a large inter-tribal group called the Murring whose range extended from Double Bay in Sydney to the Shoalhaven River and inland to the other side of the escarpment (Howitt 1904). The Murring were part of the Dharrawal language group. The language group to the south is the Dhurga. The precise boundary between the Dhurga and the



Map 1: The Illawarra and Shoalhaven Regions of New South Wales (taken from Organ 1990: xlvi)

Dharrawal is uncertain. Tindale (1940) places the boundary along the Shoalhaven River, while Egloff (1999), Mathews (1901), Morton (1929) and Eades (1976) place it further south, adjacent to Jervis Bay. It is likely that both languages were understood in the Shoalhaven and Jervis Bay regions. The Dharrawal and Dhurga languages form part of

the Yuin linguistic group that extended southwards from Sydney to the Victorian border (Egloff 1999: 5). To avoid confusion, I refer to the indigenous inhabitants of the study area as the Aboriginal people of the Illawarra and Shoalhaven.

Geology, Environment and Climate

The Illawarra and Shoalhaven regions both occupy the south-eastern extent of the geological structure known as the Sydney Basin, which Harnwell describes as a “sedimentary sequence bounded to the north by the New England Fold Belt and to the west by the Lachlan Fold Belt” (Harnwell 1996: 4). Shales, conglomerates and sandstones from the Permian and Triassic ages are visible in the landscape, as well as volcanic rocks from the Jurassic and late Tertiary periods. The study area also includes extensive deposits of Permian coal that form part of the Southern Coalfield, first discovered by Bass and Flinders in 1796. The escarpment, part of the Great Dividing Range, consists of Hawkesbury Sandstone in the upper layers and rocks of the Narrabeen Group below (Sherwin and Holmes 1986: 1-4; Collie 1990: 4). In the north at Coalcliff, the escarpment rises dramatically from the coastline to a height of over 400m above sea level. It measures over 500m above sea level in the area to the west of Wollongong. The coastal plain increases in breadth to the south, reaching up to 20km in the Shoalhaven district. It is intersected by the Shoalhaven River near Nowra and the Minamurra River at Kiama. Major bodies of water in the Illawarra include Lake Illawarra and Tom Thumbs Lagoon.

The hinterland and lower part of the escarpment originally supported a mixture of eucalypt and rainforest communities. The eucalypt forest included turpentine (*Syncarpia glomulifera*), Sydney Blue Gum (*Eucalyptus saligna*), Grey Ironbark (*Eucalyptus paniculata*), Blackbutt (*Eucalyptus pilularis*), Coastal Grey Box (*Eucalyptus quadrangulata*) and Spotted Gum (*Eucalyptus maculata*) (Sherwin and Holmes 1986: 7). Red Cedar (*Toona australis*) once flourished in the hinterland, but only isolated stands remain after 200 years of intense exploitation (Harnwell 1996: 12-13). Many other trees were cleared along the alluvial flats for agriculture and animal husbandry, supplementing existing pockets of pasture. The rainforest sustained Sassafras (*Doryphora sassafras*), Coachwood (*Ceratopetalum apetalum*), Lilly Pilly (*Acmena smithii*) and figs (*Ficus*

spp.). *Cyathea* and *Dicksonia*, two common tree ferns, also thrived in the rainforest (Sherwin and Holmes 1986: 7).

The climate of the Illawarra and Shoalhaven is typical of the temperate zone, with mild winters and warm summers. Rainfall is distributed evenly throughout the year, with slightly greater concentrations in late summer and early winter. Approximately 1400mm of rainfall is recorded annually at the top of the escarpment, compared to 1200mm on the coastal plain. In Wollongong, the hottest month is February, when the average minimum and maximum temperatures are 17.6°C and 26.9°C respectively. July is the coldest month, when the average temperatures are 8.4°C and 16.5° (Sherwin and Holmes: 6). A similar range of temperatures occurs in Nowra (Collie 1990: 4).

Thesis Structure

This thesis consists of nine chapters and six appendices. The remainder of Chapter 1 is concerned with the construction of an appropriate theoretical outlook for the analysis of the economic response of Aboriginal people to the colonisation of their land in the 19th century. Chapter 2 examines the pre-contact Aboriginal economy using archaeological and anthropological evidence. In Chapter 3, I examine the period of early contact and first settlement from 1796 to approximately 1820 when Aboriginal people assisted explorers and settlers to familiarise themselves with the landscape. Chapter 4 is an analysis of the period from 1820 to 1830 when Alexander Berry first settled the Shoalhaven district and Aboriginal people began working for him and other settlers. Chapter 5 investigates Aboriginal economic strategies from 1830 to 1840, including the expansion of farm work on the Shoalhaven estate and other properties, and the maintenance of fishing, hunting and gathering. It also looks at the reasons for the decline in the Aboriginal population since first contact. In Chapter 6, I analyse the period of 1840 to 1848 when labour shortages increased the opportunity for Aboriginal farm work in the Shoalhaven and Illawarra. Chapter 7 examines the period of 1848 to 1860 when the gold rush further increased the demand for Aboriginal labour. Aboriginal farm work on the Shoalhaven estate reached its peak during this time. Chapter 8 discusses Aboriginal economic strategies in the late 19th century, from 1860 to 1900, when settlement intensified and there was little land for hunting and gathering. There are comparatively few records of Aboriginal farm work from this time, but the indication is

that it was at least maintained at the same level as in the 1850s. The final chapter summarises the information about the variety of economic strategies used by Aboriginal people in the 19th century and discusses the changes in the relative importance of each strategy to Aboriginal subsistence. The six appendices present a record of the historical information analysed in this thesis, including evidence for farm work on Alexander Berry's Shoalhaven estate, blanket returns from the 1830s and 1840s, and census information from 1891 and 1901.

Theory

This section builds on relevant theory from anthropology and history relating to the process of colonisation. It begins with a discussion of theory and an examination of Australian case studies before moving on to develop an appropriate perspective for the study of the Aboriginal economy and its interaction with settlers on the south coast of New South Wales. Then the methodology for determining the dependence of Aboriginal people on farm work for subsistence is presented. The section concludes with a consideration of the historical documents to be used in the study and the appropriate approach to analysing them.

Substantivism and Formalism

The dominant debate in economic anthropology from the 1950s to the 1970s revolved around the question of economic motivation (see Plattner 1989). On the one side stood the Formalists, who argued that it is possible to analyse the workings of non-capitalist economies using the theoretical framework of modern economics. They claimed that the rationality of capitalism, the drive to maximise individual utility, is universal. It is believed that the material desire of individuals is boundless and that satisfying resources are relatively insufficient. The consequence is the necessity of rational choice to efficiently allocate scarce means to infinite alternative ends (Cook 1966).

On the other side of the debate stood the Substantivists. Their position, first articulated by Polyani (Polyani 1957), was that economic life is embedded in social and religious institutions, that obligations to kin limit both individual choice and the drive to the maximisation of utility (Dalton 1971). Others extended the argument to state that

culturally patterned behaviour restricts choice and people make decisions according to learnt values rather than comparing alternatives (Hopkins 1957). The implication is that the capitalist mode of production is not a universal phenomena and that other forms of economic organisation exist (Gowdy 1999: 391).

The debate never resolved itself and became highly politicised (Plattner 1989). Nevertheless, both sides raised some salient points. It is now recognised by some economists (eg Fukuyama 1995) and most anthropologists and historians (eg Narotzky 1997) that maximising utility is not the only economic motivation and that at the very least, social structures influence economic behaviour and organisation. It is also realised that hunter-gatherers behave rationally within their own context. Instead of maximising returns, they may set out to obtain subsistence while preserving resources for later use. Another realisation is that capitalism has now penetrated into most, if not all, non-capitalist economies, producing various changes and eliciting differing responses (see Peterson & Matsuyama 1991). The articulation can result in the destruction of foraging societies, as was the case with the Tehuelche and Puelche peoples of the Argentinean Pampas in the middle of the 19th century (Bodley 1999: 469). There are, however, numerous examples of people from non-capitalist societies combining capitalist elements with their social and economic organisation. Denning (1999) has demonstrated that foragers transform and recreate introduced technology to fit their social and economic structure. The successful adaptation of metal technology by numerous hunter-gatherers is a prime example. Wage work has also been successfully integrated. The Nayaka of southern India have worked in rubber plantations for over 40 years while obtaining the majority of their subsistence from hunting and gathering (Bird-David 1992; for other examples see Lee & Daly 1999: 6). The people of rural Wenzhou on the southeast coast of China have combined modern market practices with extravagant ritual expenditure to produce an economic logic that is subversive of capitalist and state socialist principles (Yang 2000).

Modernisation, Dependency and Articulation

The intersection of capitalism with non-capitalist economies posed a challenge to economic anthropology. Some anthropologists drew upon formal economic theories of development to explain the contact. These theories of modernisation particularly

influenced government policy and supported the assimilation drive which falsely believed that indigenous peoples would develop their economies along capitalist lines and adopt the cultural and economic values of Western society (see Altman 1987: 6).

Theories of modernisation and development looked at the broad scale of economic contact between capitalist and non-capitalist societies. They failed to understand the particularities of individual cases. As a consequence, the 'opportunity and response' approach was constructed as part of the development paradigm to assist the analysis of small-scale interaction and change. The approach is predicated upon the belief that capitalism provides various opportunities which non-capitalist societies respond to in different ways (Epstein and Penny 1973). The theory is particularly useful when non-capitalist societies have resources or skills to offer the settlers. An example is the fur trapping and surplus food production undertaken by the Chippewa of North America in the 19th century, which provided white settlers with crucial and profitable resources (Cleland 1993). It also provides a conceptual base for the understanding of hunter-gatherer resilience to articulation with capitalist economies.

Neither Substantivism nor Formalism (and other formal economic theories) possessed the requisite theoretical tools to understand the intersection of capitalist and non-capitalist economies. In response, some anthropologists influenced by Marx constructed the underdevelopment school, which emphasised the impact of the capitalist economy on indigenous peoples. This school consists of two approaches: dependency theory and articulation theory. Frank was the main exponent of dependency theory and he argued that the intersection took place in a process of colonisation where the capitalist forces exploited the indigenous peoples, creating a situation where they became dependent on manufactured goods (Frank 1969). This theory is potentially useful where the colonising peoples make use of indigenous labour or resources and pay them in goods and rations rather than money. The drawback of the theory is that it tends to underestimate the resilience of non-capitalist economies. It also cannot account for different levels of capitalist intervention and exploitation.

French anthropologists drew on the work of Marx to develop the articulation of modes of production approach (called articulation theory). The primary exponents of articulation theory are the French Marxist theorists Meillassoux (1973, 1981), Dupre and Rey (1978),

and Wolpe (1975). The theory is based on the Marxist concepts of the social relations of production and distribution. These are defined in terms of the ownership of the means of production (natural resources, labour, capital items) and the social distribution of the resulting produce (Altman 1987). Articulation theory is micro-orientated which means it looks at small-scale economic relations. Its main feature is that it attempts to explain the different rates at which capitalist economies penetrate non-capitalist societies. Articulation theory recognises that capitalist operators may make use of non-capitalist resources for various reasons including to appropriate raw materials, to use the land, to exploit cheap, self-supporting labour, or to expand markets. This may lead to the situation where capitalist interests, including the government, preserve non-capitalist societies for their own benefit. Alternatively, they may destroy the non-capitalist mode of production if it has little or nothing to offer in terms of labour or resources (Dupre and Rey 1978, Wolpe 1975). Wolpe's version of articulation theory, namely internal colonialism, recognised that the capitalist power may come from inside the country rather than an external source (Wolpe 1975).

The problem with asking if the capitalist economy preserves the non-capitalist economy is that it ignores the effort made by indigenous people to maintain independent sources of subsistence. As Bird-David emphasises, "the articulation of local and world socio-economic systems is *two-sided*" (his emphasis) (Bird-David 1992: 21). The implication is that hunters and gatherers can maintain their society and economy in the face of capitalist expansion. The example of the Nayaka of southern India, mentioned previously, is an example of the resilience of foragers to capitalist domination. The Basarwa ('Bushmen' or San of the Kalahari Desert) have provided a focus for the debate about the resilience of hunter-gatherers. Responding to the extensive ethnographic work of Lee on the Basarwa of Botswana, some of which underestimated their contact with the outside world, Wilmsen and Denbow (1990) and Schrire (1984) argued that Basarwa social organisation and economy was a product of many years of contact with farming peoples and the operation of larger economic forces, rather than a response to the needs of foraging life. Further research by Kent (1992; see also Solway & Lee 1990) revealed variability among Basarwa hunter-gatherers. Some groups were an underclass produced by contact with farmers and the wider economy, but others such as the Kutse Basarwa maintained foraging and a unique social organisation that resisted further change, despite some wage work and goat herding. Robert Layton, after reviewing the history of the

Basawra, reformulated the question about articulation to ask if once hunter-gatherers are implicated in relationships with farmers, capitalists, etc, can they retain their independence (Layton 2001: 294)? The advantage of this type of question is that it acknowledges the two-sided nature of contact. The outcome of historical analysis is not determined apriori by implicit assumptions that favour either resilience or degradation.

Australian Case Studies

The last 30 years has seen a dramatic increase in the number of historical studies that focus on the interaction between Aboriginal people and European colonisers. Part of this development has been the recognition by researchers of Aboriginal involvement in the European economy (see Curthoys and Moore 1995: 1-2). Various theoretical positions have been adopted. Numerous Australian anthropologists and historians have applied articulation theory to the situation of contact between settlers and Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islanders. Jeremy Beckett used Wolpe's theory of internal colonialism to explain the involvement of Torres Strait Islanders in the pearling and trepang industries from the late 19th century (Beckett 1977). He pointed out that the pearlers and trepangers were the first Europeans to establish commercial enterprises in the region. They found the Islanders desirous for trade goods such as iron tools and cloth, and willing to work for short periods to obtain them. Islanders were sometimes kidnapped if they were unwilling to work. Some women were taken as prostitutes. Beckett also emphasised that the older, married men remained on the land to continue fishing and gardening. Many women also remained to work in subsistence production. Wages for trepanging and pearling were low and employers relied on the fact that the Islanders could in most cases support themselves with subsistence production (Beckett: 84-5).

Mervyn Hartwig also used the theory of internal colonialism to analyse the colonial process in Australia (Hartwig 1978), but on a broader scale than Beckett's work. He argued that there was a geographical division to the penetration of capitalism in Australia. Across Australia, Aboriginal subsistence production created little or no surplus – exploitation by Europeans could not proceed by the extraction of commodities. Aboriginal people could only offer their labour or sexual services. According to Hartwig, the development of capitalist production in the south required little Aboriginal labour. Exploitation could only proceed through the dissolution of the Aboriginal mode of

production and the resocialisation of the people into workers within the capitalist economy. Government policies in the south (such as assimilation) were in support of the capitalist majority and aimed at the destruction of Aboriginal society. Hartwig argued that the situation was different in the north where Aboriginal society was conserved to some extent for work in the pastoral industry – they could support themselves with subsistence production from the bush while working for low wages (Hartwig 1978: 132-35). The problem with Hartwig's approach is that it is too broad and does not distinguish local variations. Numerous studies in New South Wales have shown the value of Aboriginal labour, which had not been resocialised into the capitalist economy, to pastoralism (see Goodall 1996: 57-66) and other industries (see Reynolds 1990, 2000). It will also be shown by the research in this thesis that Aboriginal labour played a small but important part in the economic development of the Illawarra and Shoalhaven. Hartwig's argument also ignores the white appropriation of Aboriginal investment in land. Firing created grasslands that were valuable to sheep and cattle owners. Aboriginal people received very little for losing the landscape they partly created.

Barry Morris has traced the labour history of the Dhan-gadi people of the mid-north coast of New South Wales (1983). His work does not explicitly use the theory of articulation but is consistent with its basic tenets. His concern is to react against the assumption that Aboriginal people were resistant to change and could not adapt to the evolving colonial economy (Morris 1983: 500-01). Morris identified three phases of Aboriginal incorporation into the capitalist economy. The initial phase of incorporation occurred in the early part of the 20th century when three camps of Aboriginal families formed on the upper reaches of the Macleay River. Men from the camps worked on pastoral properties in the area, exchanging their labour for rations. Most of the jobs involved stock work or clearing land. Rations were supplemented by bush foods, especially meat. Work patterns on the properties corresponded to traditional subsistence patterns. The type of work allowed large numbers of Aboriginal people to congregate (Morris 1983: 504-06).

The second phase of incorporation involved the concentration of Aboriginal people on the Bellbrook reserve in the 1930s, the only Aborigines Protection Board (APB) camp in the area. Morris emphasised that the "...essential feature of the economy in which Aboriginal men and women sold their labour was segmentation..." based on race (Morris 1983: 506). The Dhan-gadi worked in a different segment of the economy to Europeans,

occupying jobs of low status with low income. The four main types of work were bush work, fencing, corn pulling and stock work. Once again, Aboriginal families supplemented their wages with bush foods, allowing employers to keep wages down. Morris states that the Dhan-gadi formed a rural reserve army of labour to be called upon in shortages and were expected to look after themselves at other times (Morris 1983: 510).

The third phase was one of displacement. It began in the 1950s with increased levels of mechanisation of agriculture that reduced the demand for Aboriginal labour. The level of Aboriginal unemployment increased and they became reliant on welfare. Morris determined that the Dhan-gadi changed from producers to consumers (Morris 1983: 513-15). This last phase points out a problem with articulation theory which predicts that when the non-capitalist relations of production are destroyed, the individuals will join the capitalist workforce. In this case, and most likely many others, Aboriginal people could only find a limited foothold in the wider economy. Morris also over-emphasises the role of the Dhan-gadi as consumers. They were still part of the capitalist economy, but to a more limited extent due to greater unemployment.

Dawn May (1981 & 1991), in her study of the Queensland cattle industry, has demonstrated the vital role played by Aboriginal labour. May estimated that 404 Aborigines were employed in the North Qld pastoral industry in 1876 and 1004 in 1886, although she does not say how many days they worked for (May 1981: 54). On some properties, local Aboriginal men and women provided all labour. Station hands were adequately fed, but this was not the case for the remainder of the group camped on the property. May argued that most of their food came from traditional sources as many squatters did not think that it was up to them to provide subsistence for non-workers (May 1991: 48). May stressed that it is important to recognise internal factors within the traditional mode of production that account for the resistance to the penetration of capitalism (May 1991: 3-4). In the case of north Queensland, Aboriginal people used their adaptational abilities to modify their traditional seasonal cycle to fit in with the rhythms of pastoral life. They worked on the properties in the dry season and returned to the land in the wet. This modification has been identified in other parts of Australia as well, particularly for areas away from population centres where not all land was used for

farming (for the northwest Northern Territory, see Head and Fullagar 1997 & Layton 1992: 112; for New South Wales see Goodall 1996: 57-66).

Christopher Anderson has written in depth about the articulation of the Aboriginal mode of production on the southeast Cape York peninsula (particularly the Gugu-Yalanji speaking people) with the settler economy based on mining and pastoralism (1979, 1984, 1983, 1988). He emphasised the internal social structure of the Gugu-Yalanji as an important effect in determining the nature of the articulation. In particular, he singled out the role of individuals of high achieved status called 'bosses' who were forces for change and directed the nature of the contact with the settlers. He also identified the small nuclear-based family as the most significant production and consumption unit. According to Anderson, production and consumption took place within the family. The ideal for the Gugu-Yalanji was to live on their patrilineal estates. But this was only possible for part of the year, with other factors such as resource availability, social tension and kin obligations preventing it (Anderson 1984: 111-12).

In terms of European intervention, Anderson stressed systematic and contextual investigation. To this end, he developed the concept of intervention complexes. The concept recognises that different industries require different amounts and types of labour and resources, have different impacts on the environment and that the individuals involved may have various ideologies. Anderson analysed tin mining in particular, which took place in Cape York from 1886 to 1940. Mining activities required a large amount of labour and destroyed many natural resources. In response, the Gugu-Yalanji were interpreted to be "actively seizing upon the potentialities of the European presence and adapting to and solving the problems created by it" (Anderson 1984: 207). Further, "these responses were not merely reactions predetermined by the nature of the European forces... but rather were also ones brought about by internal Aboriginal economic, social and cultural factors." (Anderson 1984: 207) Anderson demonstrated that prominent elders used the presence of Europeans to live permanently on their clan estates and achieve their ideal. They did this using the younger men who established general relationships with important Europeans. A long-term reciprocal relationship was established where Aboriginal people provided labour and the Europeans provided resources (to replace those destroyed by the mining) and permitted the Gugu-Yalanji to live on the land. In effect, the key Europeans were brought into a social relationship with

the Aboriginal groups. Anderson recognised that this system also sowed the seeds for change. When mining finished and the Europeans moved away, the system broke down. People could not stay on their clan estates as mining had degraded the environment. They instead moved to the outskirts of white settlements and became further dependent on European goods.

Jon Altman modified articulation theory to analyse the economy of the eastern Gunwinggu people of central Arnhem Land after they returned to their land in the late 1960s and 1970s as part of the outstation movement (1987). He used elements of the opportunity and response theory to explain how the Gunwinggu adopted various strategies to deal with their contact with capitalism. He then focused on the changes to production relations and distribution that resulted from the contact (Altman 1987: 9). Using the social accounting method that imputes market values for bush foods, Altman found that hunting and gathering provided 64% of subsistence, income from craft production yielded 10% and social security payments 26% (Altman 1987: 47-57). He also noted changes in the food production system. Store-purchased carbohydrates (flour, etc) largely replaced vegetable foods, traditionally collected by women. Protein continued to be supplied by hunting, which had been made more efficient by the introduction of rifles. There was no corresponding introduction of efficient technology for vegetable gathering (Altman 1987: 42). Altman then questioned the accepted theory of the relative roles of men and women in the pre-contact economy. He concluded that the contribution of women had been over-estimated, as given the productivity of gathering, they could not have made up the contribution of store-purchased foods in the available time (Altman 1987: 44). Overall, the introduction of rifles for hunting and store-purchased carbohydrates reduced the number of necessary work hours from subsistence times. Altman recommended a re-evaluation of Sahlin's original affluence hypothesis in the light of this information (Altman 1987: 94; 1984).

Alastair Patterson documented the economic response to settlement of the Aboriginal people at Strangway Springs in the south west Lake Eyre basin of central Australia (Patterson 1999). He found that some men worked year round as shepherds or drovers, but a larger number did seasonal work. Women worked as domestic labourers and shepherds (Patterson 1999: 265). Some Aboriginal people did not work at all and lived outside the pastoral station. Traditional grinding equipment became redundant during the

first 30 years of settlement with the introduction of rationed flour. Pastoralists accommodated the social obligations of Aboriginal workers into their employment and were rewarded with cheap labour. Patterson concluded that the pastoralists acted to preserve the Aboriginal society and became partly engaged in it (Patterson 1999: 325-26).

Howard argued that Aboriginal people in the southwest of Australia were transformed into an undeveloped society through lack of access to land and other resources. The people were exploited and only able to gain menial jobs. Europeans maintained the status quo by supplying the Aboriginal elite with resources and favours to make sure the workers kept coming back. Those who rejected the situation were denied access to resources and status, and often ended up as alcoholics (Howard 1982).

The cases in Australia where articulation has been used have provided detailed insight into the particularities of contact between Aboriginal people and the European capitalist economy in different parts of the continent. The exception is Hartwig's contribution which was too broad and failed to take account of inconsistencies. There have been numerous other studies of the economic role of Aboriginal people in the European economy that are also worth noting. Henry Reynolds has written at length about the contribution made by Aboriginal people to the development of the Australian economy (1990, 2000). He has noted the various roles played by Aboriginal people included working as guides, diplomats and food providers for explorers, as black troopers for the government, as farm labourers, domestic servants and stock riders, to name a few. He also chronicled the difficulties facing Aboriginal people when working for Europeans including the perception that they were lazy and only fit for work in the lower labouring classes (Reynolds 1990: 106). Importantly, Reynolds noted that Aboriginal people often found working for whites to be tedious and boring, and that it was often only done out of a sense of duty to certain settlers who were treated as defacto kin (Reynolds 1990: 97-98). As Anderson noted, Reynolds approach, while documenting many important facts about Aboriginal-European relations, is too general and does not provide a framework to understand changing circumstances (Anderson 1984). Also, Reynolds does not attempt to quantify the contribution of Aboriginal labour despite claiming it was a major factor in the development of Australia. He is, therefore, unable to fully demonstrate his case.

Other studies have focused on Aboriginal work in particular areas. Damaris Bairstow examined the relationship between the Gampignal and the Australian Agricultural Company in the Port Stephens district of New South Wales during the 1820s and 1830s. She observed that a “considerable number” were employed cleaning wool and collecting marine shells for lime. They crewed the boats, six men at a time, and were found to be expert seamen. Aboriginal women worked as washers (Bairstow 1994: 7-10).

Sylvia Hallam examined the contribution of Aboriginal women to subsistence during the first decade of European settlement at Perth (1991). She found that in the pre-contact economy, women were the providers of carbohydrates from plants and that they also participated in kangaroo hunting drives and large scale fishing expeditions. However, their ability to contribute to subsistence was severely curtailed by the white usurpation of the land. Despite holding rights to land through kinship, in white eyes it was illegal for them to continue harvesting the main staples of their diet (Hallam 1991: 51).

Alan Pope wrote about the experiences of Aboriginal people in the early years of South Australia (1988). He found that government support for Aboriginal people dried up in difficult economic times. Pope also noted that they were only employed “as a last resort when European workers were either not available or refused to accept difficult or isolated jobs” (Pope 1988: 14).

Campbell analysed the early contact between squatters, settlers and Aboriginal people in the New England district of New South Wales from the 1830s to the 1850s (Campbell 1978). He found that Aboriginal people initially assisted squatters by guiding them to suitable land and providing food and water. Suspicion on behalf of the squatters, however, soon led to violence and reports of massacres began in 1836. There were disputes over women and Aboriginal people refused to work for whites. Campbell emphasised the disruption to the Aboriginal economy caused by pastoralism. He argued that Aboriginal people faced two choices: starve or be hunted down (Campbell 1978: 8-9). In reality, Aboriginal people had other options. As Campbell himself points out, the mountainous areas provided a refuge for some groups. Also, the gold rush of the 1850s led to an increase in Aboriginal employment and access to resources. These and similar studies provide a valuable contribution to understanding Aboriginal work in the capitalist

economy, but as was the case with Reynolds, they do not attempt to account for the changes in the Aboriginal economy that the contact brings about.

Options and Strategies

The economic historian Noel Butlin sought to explain changes to the post-contact Aboriginal economy outside the articulation framework (1983). He rejected the outright formalist approach by arguing that social factors played an important role in economic decision making and that natural resources were abundant compared to wants. He noted that economic life played only a small role in Aboriginal society and that a lot of time was spent in maintaining social ties and conducting ceremonies (Butlin 1993). Butlin introduced an element of the formalist approach into his analysis by stating that the scarce resource in Aboriginal society was time – Aboriginal people had to ration time to the various elements of their life such as hunting and gathering, ceremony, education, etc.

Butlin's approach to the contact situation is similar to that taken by the opportunity and response theorists. In the context of extreme population loss largely caused by disease he listed a variety of options for Aboriginal people and settlers. They are reproduced in Table 1.1. Butlin argued that only options 3-5 offered Aboriginal people a significant chance for survival as they reduced the settlement costs of whites and made them more accommodating (Butlin 1983: 100). Butlin rejected option 2 as a major possibility because Aboriginal groups would not have allowed others to move onto their land for an extended time. This is not necessarily the case as there are numerous examples from around Australia of new groups forming from the remnants of clans spread over a wide area. Butlin also assumed that all Aboriginal women yielded to the sexual demands of white men. He does not consider the possibility that some women, to maximise their access to European goods and ensure the survival of their children, chose to live with male settlers. He also failed to consider the possibility that in some areas settlers did not expropriate all resources immediately, leaving open sources of subsistence that could be exploited in roughly the traditional manner. For example, along parts of the coast, commercial fishing by settlers was slow in development. Aboriginal people could continue to use this resource without fear of retribution from whites. He also did not consider the possibility that Aboriginal people could maintain their communities by

trading with and selling artefacts and food to settlers. There were more economic options open to Aboriginal people than Butlin realised.

<i>Black Options</i>	<i>White Options</i>
1. Remain immobile in 'tribal' or inter-tribal areas and unresponsive (starve)	Deplete Aboriginal resources and allow to starve by constraining access to resources
2. Become mobile, moving to remaining lands of other groups	Deplete Aboriginal resources and evict them from their own lands
3. Assist white occupation	Seek black assistance without reward
4. Seek compensation for resource loss	Compensate Aboriginal people
5. Seek <i>regular</i> wage contracts with whites	Employ Aboriginal people
6. Fight each other for resources	Organise Aboriginal people to destroy Aboriginal people
7. Claim white goods by force	Punish Aboriginal people for 'stealing' or 'property' damage
8. Fight whites for resources	Punish Aboriginal people for resistance
9. Kill whites	Kill Aboriginal people
10. Aboriginal women yield to white men	White men use Aboriginal women sexually
11. Submit unconditionally	Accept submission

Table 1.1: Options for Aboriginal People and Settlers (after Butlin 1983: 99)

Castle and Hagan also considered in broad terms the economic response of Aboriginal people to the colonisation of their land by British settlers (Castle & Hagan 1998). They highlighted three choices available to Aboriginal communities in the face of the destruction of natural resources by domesticated animals and crops: survive on handouts from white society; obtain subsistence by stealing, begging and prostitution; or live by means of their labour. Castle and Hagan argued that "the economic position of Aborigines in settled areas was shaped... by the process of land settlement, the... convict system and the legacy of... Aboriginal resistance to the white alienation of their land." They reject the idea that Aboriginal people were overwhelmed by white society or unable to adapt to European civilisation. This leads them to a rejection of Wolpe's theory of internal colonialism as Aboriginal people had little to trade and were given few opportunities to work. The exception was during the gold rush, when Aboriginal workers replaced absent white staff, but it was only temporary. When the rush subsided, there was

“more white labour than ever before... and the use of Aboriginal labour declined” (Castle & Hagan 1998: 30). They also reject the explanation that what occurred was the result of “deliberate choices by Aboriginal people to distance themselves from white society” (Castle & Hagan 1998: 32). Loss of resources left Aboriginal people no choice but to seek work with whites, although this was hindered by their marginal place in settler society. Castle and Hagan conclude that “Aborigines formed a necessary part of the rural economy but not on terms that could give them equality or independence” (Castle & Hagan 1998: 34). The problem with their position is that it is too general. It does not sufficiently differentiate between geographic areas, nor does it consider different responses between men and women. It also does not consider that some Aboriginal groups maintained hunting, gathering and fishing as a viable source of subsistence. They make numerous salient points about the different types of dependency faced by Aboriginal people and the effect of wider economic developments such as the gold rush, but they are short on examples. They needed to consider specific geographical areas more carefully before drawing general conclusions.

Adaptive Response

An adaptive perspective may be useful in understanding the post-contact Aboriginal economy. J. Iain Prattis stressed the ability of many labourers and non-capitalist producers to adapt to difficult economic conditions, taking what work they can in the capitalist economy (Prattis 1987: 36). The emergence of the informal or underground economy (production not recorded in official statistics) is also an example of adaptation within the capitalist economy (see Narotzky 1997: 35-37). As Narotzky has pointed out, much informal production follows wage-work patterns “... although labour/capital relations are thickly woven into other ‘non-economic’ (kinship, friendship, neighbourhood), non-contractual, trust relationships which create a different context for the enforcement of cooperation.” (Narotzky 1997: 36) This indicates that existing social relations are resilient to changed work conditions. It also shows that an adaptive perspective could be used to analyse the economic response of hunter-gatherers to colonial expansion. It must be remembered though that in this context, adaptation refers to the Lamarckian theory of evolution rather than Darwinian theory as the focus is on acquired characteristics rather than blind, random change (see Hodgson 1993).

In the context of Australia, both von Sturmer (1978) and Sutton (1979) have emphasised the ability of the Wik people of far north Queensland to create their social and economic lives around their ideology. This is despite the fact that social and economic reality may sometimes conflict with their static conception of the universe. Sutton and von Sturmer emphasise the ability of the Wik to adapt to changes such as resource fluctuations and political turbulence. Anderson described the process whereby the Gugu-Yalanji adapted to the presence of Europeans and created a social and economic life that for the first time fulfilled the obligations of their static ideology. Anderson, von Sturmer and Sutton do not consider the possibility that Aboriginal people may sometimes step outside their social system in order to ensure survival. An example of this alternative approach is the work of Lomax (1988) who argued that economic change in the pre-contact Aboriginal economy can be described as a variable adaptive response where humans react creatively to the limits imposed by the natural and social environments. The approach can also be applied to the contact situation. Its advantage is that it allows for the possibility that hunter-gatherers may have to abandon their social and economic organisation if wider circumstances do not permit it to continue. It also allows the variability of response to be described, thereby avoiding progressivist typologies.

South Coast Studies

The south coast of New South Wales has been the focus of much archaeological and historical work (see Egloff 1999; Organ 1990, 1993). However, no research has as yet focused in detail on the changes to the Aboriginal economy following European settlement. A partial exception is the work of J. Bell who in the late 1950s wrote about the La Perouse Aboriginal community and the major barriers hindering their assimilation into “white Australian society” (Bell 1959: synopsis). Bell presented an historical sketch of Aboriginal society on the south coast to provide context for his analysis of assimilation in the 1950s. He asserted that by the late 1850s, when the full effects of land alienation were being felt, Aboriginal people on the south coast were fully dependent upon white society (Bell 1959: 84). According to Bell, up until that time, Aboriginal men had found casual work in cedar cutting, grazing and whaling. However, in the late 1850s, opportunities for labour declined as those industries collapsed. The dairy industry took off at this time but little outside labour was needed. Bell claimed that by the 1860s and 1870s Aborigines became an “uprooted people reduced to pauperdom” (Bell 1959: 85). I

will have cause to question some of Bell's claims about the south coast Aboriginal economy, particularly about the economic dependency of Aboriginal people in the 1850s. Despite describing the general social and economic organisation of Aboriginal people on the south coast, Bell did not seek to describe or understand the strategies they undertook to manage the change caused by European settlement. He maintained the argument that Aboriginal people were resistant to change.

A further partial exception is the work of Cameron (1987) who examined the 19th century Aboriginal economy on the far south coast of NSW from Batemans Bay to Cape Howe. He found, following Morris, that Aboriginal people "rapidly came to occupy an important, if undervalued, place in the new local economy both through the exploitation of their traditional skills and by means of their swiftly acquired mastery of new skills" (Cameron 1987: 76). Cameron's analysis is at times incisive, particularly when emphasising the creativity of Aboriginal adaptations to the white economy, but his review lacks detailed evidence and he is forced to sustain his argument with reference to general accounts of a primary and secondary nature.

Other works have looked at different aspects of Shoalhaven Aboriginal history, but not in-depth at the economic changes wrought by contact with Europeans. Terry Fox, in a brief history of the inhabitants of the Roseby Park Reserve, wrote that a number of Aboriginal people were permitted to live on Alexander Berry's Shoalhaven estate on the southern bank of the Shoalhaven River and that some were encouraged to take up farm labouring without much success (Fox 1978: 10). Elizabeth Brenchley examined the attitudes of Alexander Berry towards Aboriginal people and found it grounded in the ideas of the Scottish Enlightenment. According to Brenchley, Berry was moved by David Hume to have a benevolent attitude towards all people. But he was also drawn to the capitalist principles of Adam Smith which ultimately determined his interactions with the Aboriginal people of the Shoalhaven (Brenchley 1982: 15). Despite this economic analysis, Brenchley did not examine the work patterns of Aboriginal people on the Shoalhaven estate. In *The Destruction of Aboriginal Society*, C.D. Rowley offered a similar perspective (Rowley 1970: 29). He wrote that Alexander Berry, through self-interest and humanity, offered more than the usual opportunity for Aboriginal people to find work and a place in the settler economy, although it did not result in any benefits for the community in the long run. He did not, however, provide an indication of how he

drew this conclusion. There is no reference to evidence of Aboriginal employment on the Shoalhaven estate.

There is clearly an opportunity for a detailed analysis of the economic response of Aboriginal people on the south coast of New South Wales to the colonisation of their lands by British and European settlers. In particular, there is the opportunity to examine the work practices of Aboriginal people on Alexander Berry's Shoalhaven estate to test Bell's claim of dependency and Cameron, Rowley and Fox's preliminary accounts.

Theoretical Perspective

Table 1.2 lists the various economic strategies available to Aboriginal people of the Illawarra and Shoalhaven to obtain subsistence in the 19th century. Subsistence is defined as the necessary means to sustain life, including shelter, clothing and foodstuffs, and the material items required to obtain, prepare or consume those necessities. It is an objective of this thesis, in the course of constructing a narrative, to describe the economic responses of Aboriginal people to colonisation in terms of the strategies listed below. The strategy of working for settlers is defined broadly to include any type of work where Aboriginal people are requested by settlers to provide labour in return for goods, food or cash. Hunting, gathering and fishing are also defined broadly to include any act where Aboriginal people use their own labour and any indigenous or introduced technology to directly obtain subsistence from natural resources. The strategy of dependence on gifts and the free provision of goods, food and cash incorporates all situations where Aboriginal people are given items by settlers, etc, without having to provide anything in return. The strategy of selling and trading occurs when Aboriginal people manufacture items and procure resources that are either traded for goods or sold for cash. The strategy of living with settlers only includes the situation where Aboriginal people chose to do so of their own accord. It does not include cases where Aboriginal people are forced to live with settlers. The strategy of theft includes all cases where Aboriginal people take food and goods without permission from settlers. The strategy of migration, which includes moves of varying duration, is not complete by itself as Aboriginal people have to find a source of subsistence once they move to the new area.

Strategy	Example
1. Strategy of hunting, gathering and fishing in traditional and modified forms	Modified form includes use of steel fish hooks and boats
2. Strategy of working for settlers	Farm work, guiding explorers, delivering messages
3. Strategy of dependence on gifts and the free provision of food and goods	Gifts from explorers and handouts from settlers or government
4. Strategy of selling and trading	Selling and trading of items such as weapons and bark in return for food and cash
5. Strategy of Theft	Stealing food and goods from settlers
6. Strategy of living with settlers	Aboriginal men and women live with settlers
7. Strategy of migration	Permanent or short term moves to another area

Table 1.2: Economic Strategies Available to Aboriginal People

Dependency theory and articulation theory, as modified by Layton, predict contrasting outcomes to the intersection of colonial and indigenous economies. Dependency theory claims that settlers destroy the indigenous mode of production to permit the expansion of their own economic system. They exploit indigenous labour which becomes dependent on capitalist sources of subsistence. Articulation theory posits that the rate of capitalist penetration into indigenous economies is variable, that the non-capitalist mode of production may be preserved to create a self-supporting source of labour and that it may be resistant to capitalist expansion. The main theoretical question of this thesis is to determine whether the Aboriginal people of the Illawarra and Shoalhaven became dependent on the strategies listed in Table 1 (numbers 2-6), or whether they maintained an independent economy of hunting, fishing and gathering? The questions will be answered in the context of the usurpation of land by British and European settlers and the operation of the larger capitalist economy in the colony of New South Wales and beyond. A synthesis of opportunity and response and adaptive response theory is used to provide an implicit understanding of Aboriginal economic behaviour. This is because it emphasises the creative abilities of Aboriginal people to cope with loss of resources and either maintain economic independence or abandon traditional social and economic organisation in favour of strategies that ensure survival.

The question about independence links into the debate about the genuine nature of the hunting, gathering and fishing economy. Solway and Lee see genuine hunter-gatherers as

those who are economically self-sufficient (1990). Layton has reviewed the modern literature and demonstrated that very few, if any hunter-gatherers of the present or recent past have not been affected by contact with colonial powers or farming and pastoralist groups. He concludes that any attempt to "derive a model of 'genuine' hunting and gathering... must recognise the local impact of neighbouring peoples and colonial powers" (Layton 2001: 314). The study of the economic response of Aboriginal people to colonialism on the south coast of New South Wales will add to our understanding of the variability of hunting, gathering and fishing behaviours and help determine whether the notion of a genuine hunting, gathering and fishing economy can be generated.

Emphasis in this thesis is also given to the development of a detailed understanding of Aboriginal farm work, not only in terms of its contribution to subsistence, but also of its structure. Important questions include what type of work did Aboriginal people undertake, was it a male or female orientated strategy, what skills did they use, acquire and develop, what time of year did they work, how were they remunerated and did these patterns change over time?

Sources and Methodology

The main sources of information for Aboriginal employment on south coast farms come from ledgers, wage books and other official farm records. Diaries of farm owners and workers also provide valuable insight into Aboriginal labour. Journals of explorers and visitors also assist to build a picture of the Aboriginal response to the alienation of their land. Government records supply information about the Aboriginal population and work practices. Secondary sources provide details about the economic development of the Illawarra and Shoalhaven, as well as the operation of the wider capitalist economy in the colony of New South Wales.

The quantification of farm work by Aboriginal people on Alexander Berry's Shoalhaven estate is calculated by using information from ledger and wage books. The ledger books consist of daily entries for individual workers and the wages, goods and rations they were given. The wage books summarise the information in the ledgers. Each worker has a page in the book that lists his wages, rations and goods for the previous year. The ledger

books provide the majority of the information as not all Aboriginal workers had an entry in the wage books.

The approximate number of days worked by Aboriginal people is determined by adding the value of the rations, goods and wages they were given in return for labour. The calculation is finalised by making an assumption, drawn from examples, about the average wage rate of Aboriginal workers. For example, a group of Aboriginal workers received rations, goods and wages to the value of £12 in a given year. By making the assumption that the average wage rate for Aboriginal workers is £6, it is determined that in total, Aboriginal workers amassed two years worth of work between them in that given year. An assumption about the number of days worked per week is required. If it is assumed that Aboriginal people worked for seven days each week, then the annual total of days worked in this example is 730. If it is assumed that Aboriginal people only worked for six days each week, then the total for the example is 624. For the most part in this thesis, it is assumed that Aboriginal people worked for seven days each week, as they were not restrained by the rules and customs of the capitalist economy. The results of the calculation help to determine the level of Aboriginal dependency on wage work. The more days worked and the more goods and food received, the greater the level of dependency.

The Context of Historical Documents

In the course of analysing the changing economy of south coast Aboriginal peoples, I rely on various primary and secondary sources written by Europeans. Historical documents need to be placed in context (see Patterson 1999). This is done by considering a number of points including the temporal context of the document (ie how many years later the document is being read); the intended audience; the competency of witnesses and the motivation of authors. Barwick took this last point further by saying that any study “must take account of the ambitions and jealousies of individuals, the flow of information behind the scenes, the persuasive or protective intent of internal memoranda and public statements” (Barwick 1998: 7). Barwick is referring to administrative documents, but the point also applies to private correspondence and journals as well. In this study I have tried to incorporate information about the context of historical documents where possible.

Special consideration is given to the blanket records (see Appendix 4) and the farm ledgers from the Shoalhaven estate (see Appendices 3 and 5).

The type of information available restricts the type of analysis that can be undertaken. In this case, analysis of distribution and consumption patterns is not always possible, as Europeans were rarely present to observe these private moments of Aboriginal life. Also, there is no direct information about the decision making process undertaken by Aboriginal people to maintain economic independence. These can only be inferred from the work patterns recorded in the historical documents.

Summary

The primary aim of this thesis is to write an historical narrative of the 19th century Aboriginal economy in the Illawarra and Shoalhaven regions of New South Wales. A theoretical analysis complements the narrative. It will be determined whether Aboriginal people maintained an independent economy of hunting, gathering and fishing in the 19th century or whether they became dependent on a mix of other strategies such as working for settlers and the sale and trade of artefacts. The strategies used by Aboriginal people will indicate whether their economy was preserved to act as a self-supporting labour source or whether it was destroyed to increase their level of dependence on European goods and food.

CHAPTER 2: ARCHAEOLOGY AND ANTHROPOLOGY

Introduction

In order to trace the changes to the Aboriginal economy on the south coast during the 19th century, it is necessary to have a conception of that economy at the time of first contact. The purpose of this chapter is to review the work of archaeologists and anthropologists on the south coast and to synthesise the information into a descriptive model of the economy and relevant aspects of social structure. Some of the information comes from outside the study area of the Illawarra and Shoalhaven. However, it is all from either the Sydney basin or other parts of the south coast and is therefore deemed close enough to be relevant.

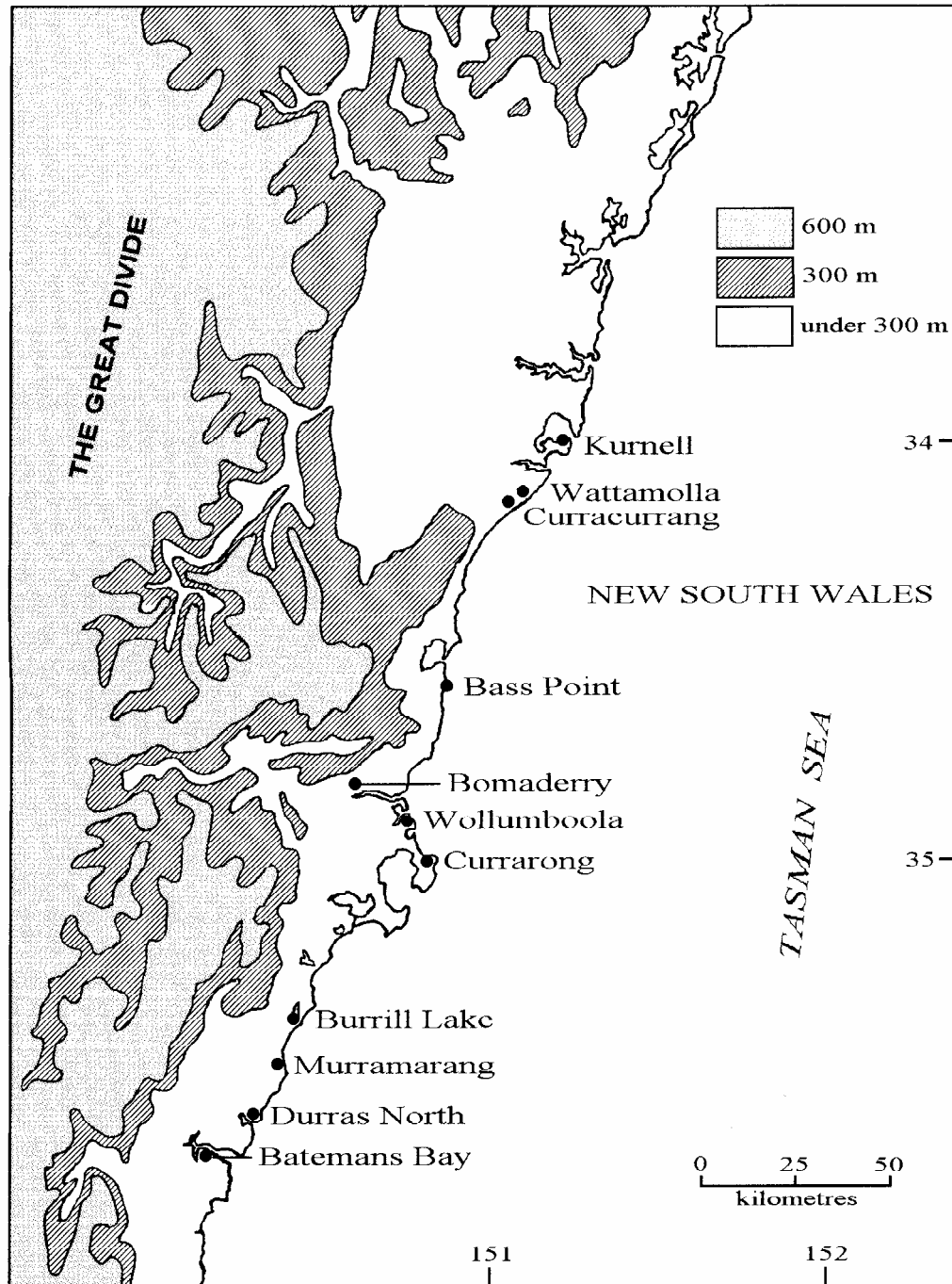
Models of Subsistence

Archaeology in particular provides detailed evidence of the nature of the Aboriginal economy on the south coast. Many archaeologists have sought to develop a model that describes the pattern of occupation and the seasonal exploitation of resources. They often relied on historical observations and ethnography to confirm their models and to provide detail about the social aspects of the economy. Lawrence proposed a model of subsistence for NSW coastal Aborigines based on archaeological and historical evidence from the Sydney basin and the south coast (Lawrence 1969). He identified three different site types:

- I. Small shell middens either by the coast or in harbours, away from permanent water supplies that contain little evidence of other subsistence activities. Sites include Balls Head in Sydney harbour.
- II. Sites close to permanent water which contain a wide variety of exploitable resources including faunal species, shellfish and fish.
- III. Sites, mainly middens, which demonstrate a specialisation in the exploitation of coastal food sources, including fish, shellfish and bird remains (terrestrial remains insignificant). These sites contain technology suggesting a specialisation in fishing activities. Sites include Wattamolla, Wallumboola, Murramarang Point and Durras North.

Lawrence considered three interpretations of the archaeological evidence. One interpretation proposes that there were three groups of Aboriginal people, one for each type of site. A second interpretation nominates two groups of Aboriginal people, one specialising in coastal resources and another using a combination of coastal and terrestrial resources. A third interpretation suggests that there was one group exploiting the diversity of resources at each site type. Lawrence favoured the last explanation, arguing that the simplest interpretation is often the correct one.

The historical evidence from the Sydney basin considered by Lawrence does not support his favoured interpretation of the archaeology. It points towards a specialised fishing economy on the coast and a separate group of hunters and gatherers who lived inland (see Kohen 1986). Lawrence points out that the first settlers were mainly mariners who were not attuned to observing the hunting and gathering of terrestrial resources. He also cites evidence of Aboriginal fires close to first settlement that indicates the clearing of land for hunting. Lawrence also highlights that Aboriginal people were observed with single pronged spears that are different from the multi-pronged fishing spears commonly seen on the east coast of Australia. Taking into account these last three observations, Lawrence still favoured the single group interpretation. However, Lawrence's arguments against the historical information only suggest that the coastal Aboriginal people exploited marine and terrestrial resources. He does not provide evidence that the hinterland people near the Blue Mountains regularly came to the coast to exploit the wealth of the sea. The evidence of Tench, who made several trips to the Hawkesbury River, supports this point. Aboriginal guides from near the harbour accompanied him and they did not recognise Aboriginal people from near the mountains (see Flannery 1996).



Map 2: Archaeological Sites on the South Coast of NSW (from Lourandos 1997)

Lampert also reviewed ethnographic sources for the south coast of NSW (Lampert 1971). He found that the Aboriginal people were almost completely dependent on seafood for the protein content of their diet and only a few vegetable foods were gathered from the bush. They used well-developed specialised fishing equipment consisting of multi-

pronged spears and crescentic fish hooks made of shell. Lampert also reported that the Aboriginal people employed a strict division of labour where women always fished with the hook and line and men with spears. Lampert also reviewed the archaeology of the south coast and proposed a three phase technological sequence for southeastern Australia (Lampert 1971: 119):

- I. a pre-Bondian phase from at least 12000 BP to 6000 BP, consisting of a mixture of amorphous stone scrapers, a few pebble tools and saw edged flakes;
- II. a Bondian phase from 6000 BP to 1000 BP containing the same tools from the previous phase with the addition of backed blades and Bondi points; and
- III. a post-Bondian phase where backed blades disappeared, Eloureras and fabricators were introduced and pre-Bondian technology was retained.

Lampert divided known sites into three groups on the basis of resource exploitation (Lampert 1971: 128):

- I. sites such as Durras, Wollumboola and Wattamolla on the foreshore and beach containing the remains of coastal resources such as fish, shellfish, marine birds and seals, with evidence of specialised technology;
- II. the Bomaderry Creek site in the Shoalhaven estuary containing only the remains of terrestrial resources despite being near the coast; and
- III. sites such as Currarong, Burril Lake and Curracurrang, next to creeks or estuaries containing the remains of both coastal and terrestrial resources.

Lampert's review concentrates on coastal sites and indicates that the inhabitants of this area, particularly in the last 6000 years since the sea level stabilised, operated a diverse economy utilising marine, riverine and terrestrial resources.

Poiner examined the food potential of the south coast between Sydney and Batemans Bay and found that although there was not a marked change in the availability of resources between the seasons, there was a sufficient difference to probably induce a change in the food procurement strategy (Poiner 1976: 191). She found that fish supplies were less plentiful in winter and that groups probably turned to inland resources to compensate. Poiner proposed a model of semi-nomadism in summer when marine resources were abundant and nomadism in winter. Archaeological evidence provided some support for

the model. Material from the foreshore sites of Durras North, Wattamolla, Bass Point, Murramarang and Wollumboola suggested summer use. However, there were no inland sites demonstrating nomadic winter occupation. Poiner argued that this was not surprising because if winter groups were smaller and more mobile there would be a reduction in archaeological visibility. She proposed a null hypothesis which stated that "... if groups did venture away from the coast during winter and were not nomadic during this time, there would be an archaeological record at least equivalent to that of the summer months." (Poiner 1976: 196) With little archaeological evidence for occupation of the coastal hinterland or the lower foothills, Poiner concluded that either inland movement was either nomadic or did not occur.

Poiner also considered historical observations from the Sydney basin (and several from the south coast) up until 1830 to test her model. She found that records pointed to a sufficient supply of food on the coast during spring, summer and early autumn, but a decrease in winter when some Aboriginal people suffered from distress caused by scarcity. There were no direct observations of long term occupation of coastal sites in summer. Records indicated that not all people moved away from the coast in winter. According to Poiner it was probably the case that some moved inland while others spread out along the coast (1976: 201).

Attenbrow proposed a model of subsistence for the far south coast of NSW around Bega based on ethnography that was then tested archaeologically (1976). The ethnographic sources included Howitt, Mathews, Robinson and Brierly. The principle underlying her model was that environmental conditions (including topography, climate, vegetation and the geographical and seasonal distribution of resources) set limits on the operation of the subsistence system and that cultural factors influence food choice, local organisation and ties to land, but can only operate within the environmental limits.

For the Bega Valley and the adjacent coast, Attenbrow found that people could be supported at all times of the year on the coast and the inland, although population density was greater on the coast in spring, summer and autumn. The coastal economy depended on marine resources for meat (fish, shellfish, wild duck and fowl) but also exploited vegetable foods and terrestrial mammals (wombat, possum, kangaroo and emu). Large

groups gathered on the coast in the summer. Inland people also formed large summer groups on the lower reaches of the river, collecting fish from traps, gathering vegetables and hunting eels, birds, wombats, possums, kangaroo and emu. Inland people based away from the river lived in smaller groups and made trips to the uplands. Overall, resources for the inland and the coast were insufficient for camps to be inhabited for the entire year. Thus, Attenbrow disputed Poiner's conclusion of semi-nomadism (Attenbrow 1976: 122). In winter, Attenbrow found that people on the coast and inland were evenly distributed over the landscape, but no one occupied the uplands. A greater percentage of land mammals were exploited in both areas compared to summer, and *Macrozamia* and roots plants became a more important part of the vegetable diet. Coastal people also looked out for beached whales (Attenbrow 1976: 122).

A similar pattern was evident for the Towamba Valley and adjacent coast. The overall population was smaller but the coastal density was about the same. Additions to the diet for coastal people included seals from Gabo Island. In the winter, people from the higher parts came into the valley and coastal areas. Otherwise, the economy and patterns of movement for coastal and inland populations was the same as in the Bega Valley (Attenbrow 1976: 123).

Attenbrow found that the archaeological evidence did not reject the models for both areas, but more work was required, particularly on the inland. She concluded that there was no marked seasonal variance in resources and therefore no marked seasonal movement. Poiner's model was largely rejected because it did not take sufficient account of the exploitation of inland resources. Also, Attenbrow claimed that Poiner's sources of information were biased as Europeans did not initially colonise inland areas - they stuck to the coast so few if any observations of the inland economy were made (Attenbrow 1976: 125).

Additional historical observations for the Shoalhaven and Illawarra between 1770 and 1822 confirm the coastal bias. Captain Cook observed smoke from fires near the shore while travelling between Jervis Bay and Red Point (Wollongong) in late April 1770. Bass and Flinders interacted with a group of Aboriginal men in the vicinity of Red Point and Lake Illawarra in late March 1796 (Organ 1990: 7). William Clarke, a survivor of

the *Sydney Cove* wreck in the Furneaux Islands, observed Aboriginal people along the coast in March and April 1797 as he and 17 others walked back to Sydney (Organ 1990: 12-15). Lieutenant Grant of the *Lady Nelson* met with Aboriginal people at Jervis Bay in March 1801 (Grant 1803). In October 1805, Joseph Murrell observed Aborigines on the coast at Jervis Bay (Sydney Gazette 27 October 1805). Governor Macquarie visited Jervis Bay in early November 1811 and met with local Aboriginal people (Jervis 1936). Charles Throsby arrived in Jervis Bay in early April 1818 after an overland trip from Liverpool and found Aboriginal people on the coast (SRNSW: CGS 898, 9/2743: 1-77). Alexander Berry landed near the mouth of the Shoalhaven River in June 1822 and was soon visited by groups of Aboriginal people (Macfarlane 1871). All these observations were made on or near the coast and confirm the bias suggested by Attenbrow. They also demonstrate that some Aboriginal people of the Illawarra and Shoalhaven lived on or near the coast at all times of the year. The greater number of observations made in the warmer months (only one observation for winter) suggests that coastal population density was lower in winter.

Social Change and Intensification

Other archaeologists have examined evidence from the south coast to evaluate the possibility of change to the size and structure of the Aboriginal economy. Bowdler investigated the midden site of Bass Point on a 3.5km peninsula jutting into the Pacific Ocean (Bowdler 1976). The basal date was 17000 BP. Bowdler discovered that shellfish hooks and blanks only occur in the last 600 years. She also observed a change in the shellfish remains to species such as bivalves that are caught closer to shore on rock tidal platforms and a change in fish species to those that are readily caught on a hook and line. Ethnography from Sydney indicated that Aboriginal women fished with hook and line. Bowdler interpreted this evidence as a change in the economic role of women. Six hundred years ago women took up fishing with hook and line. To accommodate the new technology, they changed the shellfish they gathered to a species found close to their fishing grounds. Bowdler concluded that before this time, men had done all fishing (Bowdler 1976: 254-56).

Sullivan reviewed the archaeological evidence for other middens on the south coast and found that 20% demonstrated an increase in the proportion of bivalves over the last 1100 years and that fish hooks appeared about the same time (Sullivan 1987). She argued that environmental change was an unlikely explanation for the increased proportion of edible mussel as the sea level and environmental conditions had stabilised at 6000 BP (Sullivan 1987: 100-01). Sullivan thought it likely that Bowdler's explanation applied to others sites on the south coast as well as Bass Point but that the direct causal connection could not be specified (Sullivan 1987: 105).

Walters took Bowdler's argument a step further, stating that the presence of fish hooks in the south-east of Australia was evidence for a dual social system characterised by all female labour groups and female ceremonial life with negligible male intrusion (Walter 1988). He based his argument partly on the absence in the south-east of secret male ceremonies that appropriated the product of women's labour and extreme polygyny where men have up to five or six wives. Secret male ceremonies and extreme polygyny form part of a social system, evident in some places where women did not use fish hooks, of male domination where women had little economic independence. There are several problems with Walter's argument. He does not cite evidence for all female labour groups. He does not consider the initiation ceremonies on the south coast, described below, that were organized by senior male elders. His claim for a dual social systems lacks sufficient support. The lesser claim for limited female economic independence, which does not necessarily imply the presence of a dual social system, stands on firmer ground.

Lampert and Sanders reviewed the evidence for Aboriginal firing of the environment for the Beecroft Peninsula at Jervis Bay (Lampert and Sanders 1973). Ethnographic evidence included the crewmembers of the *Endeavour* who saw fires that were too large to be simply campfires. The botanical evidence includes the presence of *Casuarina*, *Xanthorrhoea* and *Banksia*, all of which require regular burning (Lampert and Sanders: 99). It is likely that Aboriginal people burned the Beecroft Peninsula and other parts of the south coast to increase the ease of hunting and travelling, and at the same time altered the pattern of vegetation (Hughes and Sullivan 1981: 278). This process has been observed for other parts of Australia too (see Jones 1969). It represented an investment

in the landscape by Aboriginal people to maintain and in some cases improve environmental productivity.

In the past three decades, archaeologists and anthropologists have realised that hunting, gathering and fishing societies were more diverse and complex than once thought (see Price & Brown 1985; Lourandos 1997; Panter-Brick, Layton & Rowley-Conwy 2001). Some were sedentary and hierarchical like the Indians of the Northwest coast of America, and others such as the Pawnee of the American plains combined hunting and gathering with corn farming. The main source of that diversity and complexity was a process called intensification, basically a type of economic growth accompanied by technological change, new strategies that alter the environment and population growth. Various causes were identified including social competition (see Lourandos 1983), population pressure (see Cohen 1985) and rational economic decision making (see Winterhalder and Smith 1981). Despite inconsistencies in approach, particularly in explaining variability (see Lomax 1988; Rowley-Conwy 2001: 44-45), the important outcome of the debate for Australia and other places was the recognition that hunting, gathering and fishing societies were not static. They changed over time and were capable of developing new extractive strategies that altered the environment (fire in the case of Australia) and organising their societies in more diverse and complex ways.

Hughes and Lampert looked for changes in the intensity of occupation of Aboriginal sites on the south coast (Hughes and Lampert 1982). They measured site intensity by the rate of accumulation of roof-fall from rock shelters and the number of stone implements per unit of time. The measurements were based on the principle that there is a direct relationship between roof-fall and the length of occupation (Hughes and Lampert 1982: 16). They observed that from about 7000 BP when the sea level stabilised, the intensity of site occupation at Burril Lake and Bass Point began to increase. By just after 4000 BP, others sites were also showing an increase in the intensity of occupation including Currarong shelters 1 and 2 and the inland site of Sassafras shelter 1. At Burril Lake and Currarong 1, the increase continued until European contact. At Bass Point, it levelled off after about 1500 BP. At Currarong 2, intensity peaked around 1500 BP and decreased slightly thereafter. At Sassafras 1, the pattern was less apparent but intensity appeared to level off or decrease from around 2000 BP. Hughes and Lampert concluded that the

increase in the intensity of site occupation before 5000 BP can be attributed to the movement of people as the coastline changed. However, the reason for the most dramatic change that occurred after 5000 BP was given as population growth (Hughes and Lampert 1982: 16-19).

To support their argument for intensification, Hughes and Lampert also examined the rate at which new sites were formed. They analysed 20 sites from the Sydney basin and the south coast including 17 rockshelters and three open sites. They drew the following conclusions:

- I. Up until 8000 BP, very few sites were occupied. Between 8000 BP and 6000 BP, several sites were initially occupied as the shore arrived at its present position.
- II. Only one new site became visible in the next 2000 years but after that period progressively larger numbers of sites show evidence of occupation in each 1000 year time unit.
- III. There was approximately a 2-3 fold increase in the number of new sites over the past 5000 years (Hughes and Lampert 1982: 20)

Hughes and Lampert rejected other explanations including that the location of sites had changed to landforms that are more visible today. They argued that comprehensive surveys of all landform types invalidated that explanation. They also rejected the argument that there was a decrease in the rate of site destruction due to less erosion associated with environmental change. Hughes and Lampert pointed out that there was no evidence for any environmental change over the past 5000 years that could have increased the rate of site destruction. They also rejected the alternative that suggested increased numbers of stone implements (particularly with the introduction of the small tool tradition) represented an increase in the number of tools used per capita rather than an increase in population. To counter this argument, Hughes and Lampert, only measured tools from the older core and scraper tradition that continued to be used into the Holocene. They still found an increase in the number of stone implements in this limited category (Hughes and Lampert 1982: 20-25). The problem with this argument is that it does not consider the possibility that tools from the older tradition were used in different ways so that more had to be produced per capita. Another difficulty with the argument of

Hughes and Lampert is that they cannot identify why the Aboriginal population increased, although it is unlikely that archaeology can answer the question.

If the population did increase, then it is likely that the rate of growth was minute. Gray has shown that a population with a growth rate of only 0.001% will still increase seven-fold over 2000 years (Gray 1985: 26). It is unlikely that the population of the Illawarra and Shoalhaven has increased by that magnitude in the last two millennia. Further, Pennington has recently reviewed the evidence for population change in a variety of hunter-gatherer groups from the present and the past and concluded that the idea "we have been a slowly growing species... is not plausible" and that it is more likely that "periods of rapid growth and decline are characteristics of our species' history" (Pennington 2001: 198). The implication is that population growth alone cannot account for the observed changes in the archaeological record. It is more likely that changes in stone tool technology stemmed from economic or social causes.

Blackwell excavated several sites on Bowen Island off the coast of Jervis Bay (Blackwell 1982). The earliest date of occupation was 1200 BP. She measured an increase in the intensity of site occupation that paralleled those seen at Bass Point. Blackwell argued that if Hughes and Lampert were correct about the increasing population on the south coast, the use of the island and others like it may have reflected population pressure on the mainland (Blackwell 1982: 50).

Attenbrow excavated 35 sites in the Upper Mangrove Creek catchment area, approximately 50km north of Sydney and 30km inland (Attenbrow 1987). The oldest site was Loggers Shelter, which was dated to approximately 11000 BP. Attenbrow analysed the sites according to four criteria: i) distribution of sites; ii) rate of site establishment; iii) number of sites used per unit of time; iv) rate of artefact accumulation (Attenbrow 1987: 252). She determined that few shelters were occupied before 5000 BP. Furthermore, there was a greater number of shelters occupied for the first time between 2750 BP and 1200 BP. The most dramatic change happened after 1600 BP. There was continuous use of sites from that time until the present. There was an increase in the rate of accumulation of artefacts until approximately 1000 BP. Some sites showed a decrease after this time. Also, people moved into previously unpopulated topographical zones.

Attenbrow regarded this as a move into more marginal areas and an intensification of land use. She avoided linking the increase in the number of new sites to population growth. As Davidson (1990) and Binford (1980) have pointed out, an increase in the number of sites may represent a change in foraging strategy rather than an increase in population.

Hinterland

Attenbrow's work has several important implications for the south coast, despite being just outside the region. It confirms that economic change occurred in other parts of the coast. It also demonstrates that change was not confined to the coast, but also happened in the hinterland. In 1982, Flood called for more archaeological work to be done in hinterland to build up a complete picture of the economy and settlement patterns (Flood 1982: 31). Until that time, most of the work had been done on the coast, with the exception of Attenbrow's surveys in the far south. Since then, work on the hinterland has increased.

Hiscock analysed material from a survey transect approximately 6-7km long and 1km wide along Mumbulla Creek in the Bega area (Hiscock 1982: 32). Numerous low density stone scatters were identified, all within 100m of the creek. Collections were made from six sites. Approximately 80% of the stone materials were quartz, 12% volcanics and the rest were either silcrete or quartzite. The quartz sources were local. The volcanic material came from a source 14km distant in a straight line with an estimated transportation distance of 25-30km. The silcrete and quartzite were also not local. Only 18 artefacts showed evidence of use wear and 11 of these were made of non-quartz materials. Hiscock took this to imply that non-quartz artefacts were used more frequently (Hiscock 1982: 32-33). He argued that quartz technology may operate independently of functional motives and that Hughes may have only measured stone-working intensities and not occupation intensities (Hiscock 1982: 143-44). It must be remembered, however, that Hiscock's sample was small. He also suggested that the number of artefact scatters along Mumbulla Creek was comparable to many areas along the coast, indicating that models that predict greater population densities on the coast need to be evaluated (Hiscock 1982: 42).

In the past decade, Boot has undertaken the most intensive surveys and excavations of sites in the hinterland of the south coast (1994, 1996a, 1996b). In one study, Boot selected an area of over 5500 square kilometres between Jervis Bay and Narooma. He surveyed 1.19 km² or about .03% of the study area (Boot 1994: 337). The results showed that all parts of the hinterland were occupied including the rainforest, high altitude ranges and the dry heath country. The major river valleys and the well-watered ridgelines on the forested ranges were the most favoured areas. The majority of open sites on the hinterland were small and probably represented short-term camp sites. Sites on the river valleys were large and probably occupied for long periods. Local resources were mostly exploited although Boot found some evidence for the long-distance movement of stone over 10-20km (Boot 1994: 337).

Boot analysed the excavations of 10 sites in the study area between Jervis Bay and Narooma (Boot 1996a: 65). He found that there does not appear to have been an increase in artefact discard rates and intensity of site use during the mid to late Holocene in the south coast hinterland. There was instead considerable variation in such rates both within and between sites. Boot documented a series of peaks and troughs in the accumulation of cultural material at sites from the Pleistocene through to the time of first contact (Boot 1996a: 77). He identified seven periods common to most sites where levels of artefact discard were high: 19000 BP, 11000 BP, 6000 BP, 3500 BP, 2500 BP, 1500 BP and 500 BP. Periods of common reduced intensity of site occupation were also distinguished: 6000-4000 BP, 3000-2500 BP and 500-200 BP (Boot 1996a: 78). Boot argued that the short-term fluctuations in site intensity indicate that sites became unattractive due to local environmental change and were abandoned for sites with richer resources, which were often not far from previous locations (Boot 1996a: 78). Also, no evidence was found for a change during the mid-Holocene from semi-sedantism to a pattern of greater mobility. Boot suggested that the hinterland people were always mobile and only congregated in large groups for short periods in the open forests and the woodlands of the major river systems where resources were abundant (Boot 1996a: 78). He concluded that the Aboriginal people had adapted to a system that took advantage of short-term climatic fluctuation. Long term variation changed Aboriginal society to a far lesser extent than their ability to turn short-term changes to their advantage (Boot 1996a: 79).

Wesson has recently reviewed ethnographic sources for the area and demonstrated that people were broadly divided into two groups: the fishing people on the coast and the tomahawk people of the hinterland (Wesson 2000: 151; also see Flood 1982). Other early historical observations also suggest the existence of hinterland bands that only exploited inland resources. Throsby observed hinterland Aboriginal people on the Shoalhaven River in April 1817. On April 1 1817, Throsby and his party, which included two Aboriginal guides, met with a group of five Aboriginal women and three children during the day. That night they met with a band of 30 people made up of several families. Throsby traded several steel fish hooks for fresh fish caught by the Aboriginal people (SRNSW: CGS 898, 9/2743: 1-77). Throsby observed another group of inland people during a journey from Suttons Forest (in the southern highlands) to the west of Jervis Bay in November and December of 1821. He noted the sexual division of labour that prescribed men as the hunters of kangaroo and possums, and women the procurers of yams and berries. The band consisted of five men, 13 women and 17 children (SRNSW: CGS 898, 9/2743: 225-34).

The question arises whether there were specific hinterland groups in the Illawarra and Shoalhaven. The coastal plain¹, particularly in the Illawarra, is extremely thin, making the presence of separate coastal and hinterland bands unlikely. It is probable that the inhabitants exploited resources on the coast and the hinterland, and also the mountains, given that coastal people knew the tracks up the escarpment and later directed settlers along these route. George Caley of Bowral observed in April 1808 that the Aborigines from the Illawarra were in the habit of visiting those living in the southern highlands, implying the coastal people knew their way up the escarpment (Banks papers, Mitchell Library).

The coastal plain widens from Wollongong to Jervis Bay. There may have been bands that primarily exploited the coast in the Shoalhaven and others that used the resources of the hinterland and mountains. This interpretation is supported by historical evidence of Throsby that was discussed above. Supporting evidence also comes from the various groups living on the Shoalhaven estate of Alexander Berry. Some of the groups at Broughton Creek (at least 5km inland) were said to prefer travelling overland rather than

¹ Coastal plain and hinterland are used as interchangeable terms.

by boat because they were inland people (BP ML MSS 315/54). Howitt, who wrote that the tribes between the Shoalhaven and Newcastle had the same sea and inland divisions as the groups to the south (Howitt 1996: 84), also supports the idea of two groups. Blanket returns also suggest the existence of hinterland bands. For instance, they record a band of 13 Aboriginal people in 1834 as belonging to and living at the Kangaroo Ground (SRNSW: CGS 905, 4/2302.1).

Summary of Archaeology

The archaeology and additional historical observations suggest the following descriptive model of the south coast Aboriginal economy. Aboriginal people on the south coast occupied the coast, hinterland and mountains, exploiting a wide range of resources in each area all year round. It is likely that specific bands exploited specific environmental and geographical zones. Coastal people used marine resources extensively but also exploited flora and fauna found near the coast. Hinterland bands utilised the rich river systems and adjacent forests. They occasionally forayed into the higher mountains. Agreements may have permitted hinterland bands to exploit coastal resources at certain times of year. It can also be confidently stated that Aboriginal people developed or adopted new technology such as the small tool tradition and the fish hook, with the latter giving women some economic independence. Aboriginal people also altered the pattern of vegetation through firing. As Boot emphasised, Aboriginal people successfully adapted to short term resource fluctuations (Boot 1996a), although it must also be added that it is likely they followed a seasonal pattern, but only to a limited extent as many resources were available year round. For groups on the coast, fish stocks were lower (but not unavailable) in the winter, increasing the importance of terrestrial flora and fauna. People still lived on the coast in winter, but probably in smaller numbers. Population may have increased minutely in the past 5000 years but definite evidence is lacking.

Anthropology

Anthropology compliments archaeology by providing information about the social aspects of the economy. For example, anthropology may provide details about social organisation that can help determine how production decisions are made and how the

produce is distributed. The relevant anthropology of the south coast was undertaken in the late 19th century. Since then, conceptual changes within anthropology have occurred. For example, the concept of territorial organisation has undergone much change in the past 30 years. As Peterson and Long have pointed out, early emphasis in Australian anthropology was on the patrilineal horde/band that was thought to be inflexible and exist Australia wide (Peterson & Long 1986). It is now recognised that rights to land can be gained or transmitted by different means including descent and residence. Also, rights may be economic, based in ritual and based on relationships with people as well as land. The band is still seen as the central land-using group exploiting a particular tract of land and is defined as a patrilineal aggregate in most cases. However, the importance of differentiating between the land user and landowner is now recognised (Peterson & Long 1986: 11-12). Peterson and Long stated that it is wrong to imply that bands always acted with a single purpose. Households (defined as the immediate familial group of parents and children) and individuals in a band would each have their own networks within and between bands making it possible for them to join another if necessary. A band may only act as one in external relations when gathering with others for a ceremony (Peterson & Long 1986: 32). It is important to remember these factors when interpreting the work of anthropologists from a period when concepts were less flexible.

Howitt and Mathews did much of their formal work on south coast territorial organisation and other aspects of social, religious and political order at the end of the 19th century. It is important to remember that both Howitt and Mathews were writing at a time when Aboriginal society had already changed due to the impact of colonisation. The consequence is mitigated by the age of some of their informants who were young when Europeans first occupied the area and therefore more familiar with unaffected Aboriginal society.

Howitt wrote in depth about the Murring or Yuin tribes who occupied the country from Cape Howe to the Shoalhaven River (Howitt 1996). He stated that little was known about the tribes between Shoalhaven and Newcastle. Howitt also wrote that Yuin was a general name for those tribes between Merimbula and Port Jackson (Howitt 1996: 82), indicating that his information about the south coast also applied to the Illawarra and Shoalhaven.

Howitt asserted that the Yuin were different to other Australian tribes in that they did not have a society based on two exogamous moieties or classes. Instead, they had an anomalous class system based on male descent with autonomous, localised and exogamous bands as the basic food gathering and social unit (also see Bell 1959: 77). They had no class names, only totem names inherited from the father. These names were largely kept secret as if it was known an enemy could do injury to its bearer. Some men had two totem names: one inherited from the group and the other given at initiation. Marriage between two people of the same totem was prohibited. A man could not eat or kill his totem. It was also thought that their totem was in some way part of each person (Howitt 1996: 144-7).

Howitt distinguished other rules relating to marriage (Howitt 1996: 262). He stated that a girl was promised to a man when young and then exchanged for a sister of her husband. Marriages often took place between coastal people and inland groups. Some men had more than one wife. Howitt's claim is supported by John Harper, a Wesleyan missionary who observed that polygamy was common among the Aboriginal people of Jervis Bay (Mitchell Library, Bonwick Transcripts Box 53). Howitt reported that the limits of country for the south coast marriages as being Sydenham Inlet, Delegate, Tumut, Braidwood and Nowra (Howitt 1996: 262). As Wesson has recently written, the area described by Howitt was "probably larger than the pre-contact limits having been necessarily expanded² to allow men and women to find appropriate partners" (Wesson 2000: 129).

Howitt reported that he had heard it said that a child belongs to the father and he can therefore do what he likes with his daughter with regard to marriage (Howitt 1996: 263). This is reminiscent of Rose's theory of the polygynous-gerontocratic family where women are seen in traditional society as essential producers of food and children who are traded by senior men to ensure their own subsistence and prestige (Rose 1987). The women are subservient to the men and are exploited in production relations. The problem with the theory is that many women in Aboriginal society were economically independent to a large extent, which gave them bargaining power in negotiations over

² In the context of reduced population following contact.

their future. Aboriginal women on the south coast used fishing and gathering to establish economic independence.

Another form of marriage that Howitt identified was elopement, although it was not as frequent as sister exchange (Howitt 1996: 264). He reported that if an eloped couple were caught before a child was born, her family might beat the girl. The man would have to fight until he was knocked down four times or had knocked down all his attackers. If he managed the latter, then he would be permitted to continue the marriage if he provided a sister in return (Howitt 1996: 264).

According to Howitt, various rules regulated behaviour and actions towards others. The rules were generally well understood and binding on the individual. Individuals and groups of elders enforced them (Howitt: 1996: 295-97). According to Howitt, senior initiated men made decisions about important issues relating to the group (Howitt 1996: 325). Credence to Howitt's assertion about the importance of elders in south coast Aboriginal society is given by the published diary of Lieutenant James Grant, commander of the *Lady Nelson* that visited Jervis Bay in 1801. Grant observed a party of local Aboriginal people that included an old man "whose hair had become perfectly white with age". He wrote that the "... natives appeared to pay the old man great respect and obedience". Grant saw other examples of this respect and obedience later on during his visit to Jervis Bay (Grant 1803: 104-20).

The most senior man was the Gommera or Biamban (Howitt 1996: 314). Howitt described these men as medicine men who were aged, able to speak several dialects, skilful at warfare and capable of performing feats of magic such as removing items from inside their bodies without surgery. The powers of the Gommera were especially apparent during initiation ceremonies (generally called the Kuringal – see below) when they impressed their secret knowledge upon the initiates. Gommeras also took direct action when it was believed that magic was being used. They might order the death of the perpetrator or do it themselves by throwing invisible magic called Joias (Howitt 1996: 342).

Howitt recorded Yuin creation stories. The Yuin believed in Daramulun, the father and Biamban, the master. It was thought that long ago Daramulun lived on earth with his mother Ngalalbal. The earth was originally bare. It was as hard as stone and extended far beyond the current coastline. Only animals, birds and reptiles walked the earth. Daramulun placed trees in the ground. Kabooka the thrush caused a great flood washing all the coast people away except some who crawled onto the prominence of Mount Dromedary. Then Daramulun lifted into the sky and began to watch the actions of men. He established the Kuringal and the bullroarer, the sound of which represents his voice. Daramulun also handed down all the laws for the people to follow. He gave the Gommeras their magic. He takes care of a person's spirit when they die and it is their shadow which goes up to Daramulun (Howitt 1996: 494-95).

Howitt also described the Kuringal, of which there were two forms: the Bunan ceremony characterised by a circular ring of earth (called the Bunan) within which the preliminary ceremonies take place and a small sacred enclosure connected to the ring by a path; the Kadja-wallung ceremony where the ring, path and enclosure are situated in a small clear space. Howitt organised a Kadja-wallung ceremony in 1883, most probably on Mumbulla Mountain near Bega (Mulvaney 1970). People from Braidwood, Ulladulla, Twofold Bay, Queanbeyan, Moruya and the Shoalhaven attended the Bunan ceremonies. Illawarra people attended ceremonies further up the coast (Howitt 1996: 519-20). In both forms of the ceremony, boys, who would be about 13 or 14 years of age, had a lower incisor removed. The Gommeras explained about Daramulun and tribal power, and showed the initiates the Joias. The boys were assisted by the Kabo or the brothers (either real or classificatory) of the girls whom the boys will later marry (Howitt 1996: 525). The boys spent time in the bush alone at the end of the ceremony, practicing their hunting skills and following food prohibitions (Howitt 1996: 559).

When the initiates were in the bush, Howitt witnessed a kind of market where various articles were bartered and exchanged. Certain types of goods could only be exchanged as a group. A complete set of articles included a possum string belt, four men's kilts, a bone nose peg and a set of corroboree ornaments. These items had to be exchanged together (Howitt: 1996: 718-19). Women's trade seems to have had more of an economic focus. They exchanged items such as "opossum rugs", baskets, bags and digging sticks (Howitt

1996: 719). Some trade items witnessed by Howitt were held in great esteem, including a shield said to have originated from the upper waters of the Murrumbidgee River (Howitt 1996: 720).

Howitt only described the food sharing rules for the Ngarigo people from the Manero Tableland in the far south of New South Wales. They share the same initiation system as the Yuin, so it is likely they share similar food distribution practices as well. According to Howitt, the Ngarigo have specific rules about how to divide up certain animals. For example, when a kangaroo was killed, the hunter would take a piece from along the back near the loin. The father of the hunter would receive the backbone, ribs, shoulder and head. His mother would have the right leg and his younger brother, the left foreleg. His elder sister would receive a piece from the backbone and his younger sister, the right foreleg. The father would give the tail and part of the backbone to his parents and the mother would give part of the thigh and shin to her parents. There were similar rules for other animals (Howitt 1996: 759-60).

Howitt described a practice called *Neborak* for the Kurnai people of the southeast Victorian coast from Wilson's Promontory to the Victorian/NSW border. Again, given their proximity to the Kurnai, it is likely that the Yuin had a similar practice. The *Neborak* is a practice where a man is required to supply his father and mother-in-law with food. The mother-in-law then distributes the food to the camp. The hunter would receive some if he has not eaten part of the catch in the field. He may also be given a portion the following morning before departing for the hunt once more (Howitt 1996: 756-58). If the Yuin practiced the *Neborak*, then it would have had to be integrated with the mother-in-law avoidance rule that states that a man cannot look directly upon his mother-in-law. The food he owed to her would have to be given via a third party. As Bowdler has highlighted for other parts of Australia in similar circumstances, the mother-in-law does not always receive the food she is entitled to as it is consumed by the hunter or the third party (Bowdler 1976). The implication is that women and men operate separate economic domains; sharing is not as important as it is sometimes made out to be and women and men largely support themselves.

Mathews also contributed a large amount of information about south coast Aboriginal society. He collated the grammar and lexicon of the Thurrawal (Dharrawal) language, covering the area between Port Hacking and Jervis Bay (Mathews 1901). He also recorded information about the Kudsha or Narramang initiation ceremony, which corresponds with the abridged initiation recorded by Howitt and called Kadja-wallung (Mathews & Everitt 1900). Arguably Mathews most important contribution came when he recorded details about a Bunan ceremony held on the Coolangatta property near Broughton Creek in about 1888 (Mathews 1896). His informants included Richard Buttong who had lived and worked on Coolangatta for much if not all of his life. The field notes of Mathews indicate that Buttong was the senior elder who organised the ceremony. He wrote in the article that the Wiradjuri (inland) and coastal groups attended one another's ceremonies, indicating that people travelled from a considerable distance to attend the initiation. Mathews described the process of "gathering the tribes" where messengers are sent from the organising group to the others whom he wishes to be present. The messengers generally belong to the totem of the groups who are approached. The messenger usually arrives in the afternoon or the early morning when the men are in camp. He sits down in sight of the camp of the single men and waits for some of them to approach him and offer him some food. After some conversation, the messenger opens a bag and shows the men the mooroonga, the quartz crystals and bullroarer that carry the message (Mathews 1896: 327-29). Further aspects of the Bunan will not be described here as they match the description of Howitt written above.

Mathews also recorded a cosmological story about Coolangatta Mountain (Mathews 1899). He wrote:

It is believed that it was to this mountain that the dead went after burial in midden sands. The spirits of the recently buried had to ascend from a rock on the mountain's eastern side, to a world of spirits. In doing so they were required to avoid various dangers which were relative to their life's deeds.

Clearly, Coolangatta Mountain was of great spiritual importance to local Aboriginal people.

Conclusion

A synthesis of the archaeology, anthropology and early historical observations suggests the following model of the pre-contact Aboriginal economy in the study area of the south coast of NSW. The Aboriginal people of the Illawarra and Shoalhaven operated a mobile hunting and gathering economy that exploited diverse environments including the sea, riverine locations, the forests and open plains of the hinterland, and the mountain escarpment. These locations were exploited at all times during the year, although marine resources were particularly abundant in the summer when larger groups formed on the coast. In the Shoalhaven district, where the hinterland had greater depth, it is likely that there were bands that only exploited the forests, riverine and mountain resources. The resource rich river systems also supported larger groups in summer. The people lived in small bands of varying sizes that probably never grew beyond 20-30 people except during ceremonies such as the Bunan. Each band had its own range although rights were probably not exclusive. Rights to land were determined through patriarchal descent and residence. Marriage was exogamous and could be organised over large distances. A division of labour existed where the men hunted and fished with spears, while the women fished with hooks and lines, and gathered shellfish and vegetables, giving them some economic independence. The bands adapted to short term environmental change by moving camp and altering numbers. The economy was not static as the archaeological record shows changes in technology and subsistence patterns.

CHAPTER 3: EARLY COLONIAL HISTORY, 1770-1822

Introduction

The main purpose of this thesis is to construct a narrative of the 19th century Aboriginal economy and to determine what economic strategies they used to obtain subsistence as their lands were usurped by the expanding settler economy. It will be closely evaluated whether the Aboriginal economy became dependent on farm work, handouts, living with settlers, theft and immigration or maintained an independent economy of hunting, gathering and fishing. This chapter examines the first period of colonial exploration and settlement. It lists examples of contact between explorers, settlers and Aboriginal people and extracts relevant information about economic behaviour. Explorers and settlers are examined in the context of whether the preservation of Aboriginal society offered them significant advantage in their colonial endeavours. The Aboriginal response is analysed in the context of the opportunities afforded by the colonial presence and whether efforts were made by indigenous families to maintain economic independence.

First Sighting and First Contact

The first observations of Aboriginal people in the Shoalhaven and Illawarra were made by Captain James Cook and others on board the *Endeavour* between April 22 and 28 1770 as it sailed up the south coast towards Botany Bay. On the April 25 1770, somewhere between Jervis Bay and Red Point (Wollongong), Cook observed fires close to the shore. He spotted more fires the following day in the same vicinity. On April 28, Cook and three others attempted to land a yawl on a beach near Woonona after seeing a group of at least four people carrying a bark canoe. Heavy surf prevented a landing. A meeting was unlikely as the Aboriginal people took to the woods as the yawl approached the beach (Historical Records of NSW Vol. 1 Part 1 1893). Thus Cook made no contact with the Aboriginal people of the Illawarra and Shoalhaven. Their economic life is unlikely to have been altered by witnessing the passing ship although the experience would have had a profound effect upon their view of the world.

The first recorded meeting between Europeans and Aboriginal people of the south coast occurred in March 1796 when George Bass and Matthew Flinders, travelling aboard the

Tom Thumb, were washed ashore near Towradgi Beach, north of Wollongong (see McDonald 1976). Bass and Flinders were of the opinion that the people to the south of Botany Bay were cannibals and viewed their approach with anxiety. The two explorers quickly returned to the sea. The initial contact occurred the following day on March 27 1796 and consisted of an exchange at sea of several potatoes and two handkerchiefs for a small amount of water and two fish. Friendly relations were reinforced when Bass and Flinders landed near Red Point. While Bass fixed an oar with the help of several Aboriginal men, Flinders cut the beards of eleven or twelve elder men. Despite the friendly mood, Bass and Flinders felt threatened whenever an Aboriginal group of larger than two or three people approached.

The visit of Bass and Flinders is significant for more than the reason of first contact. The initial exchange was with two Port Jackson men, one of whom was named Dilba. This is the first recorded example of movement between the Sydney region and the south coast, a common part of Aboriginal life throughout the 19th century. Perhaps Dilba and his companion were forced further south to fish as access to their normal fishing grounds may have been impeded by the presence of Europeans. The other point of significance is that the Aboriginal residents mentioned the presence of some white men and two white women in the area who were growing “indian corn” and potatoes. These white people were likely to be escaped convicts who had established themselves near Wollongong. It is not known whether these white people were in any manner integrated with Aboriginal society in the Illawarra.

By 1796, or eight years after European settlement commenced at Port Jackson, trading relations between the people of the Illawarra and Europeans had begun. The indigenous inhabitants were familiar with European foods although their reliance upon them was minimal. The white people living in the Illawarra may have brought other technology with them such as tomahawks that the Aboriginal people would have found useful. Their use of handkerchiefs is unknown though it may have been more symbolic than functional. At this time, contact of this sort caused little disruption to traditional, independent economic life.

Similar exchanges took place when Lieutenant Grant on board the *Lady Nelson* visited Jervis Bay in March 1801. Grant was accompanied by two Aboriginal men from Sydney

who acted as interpreters. On the day of his arrival at Jervis Bay (March 10 1801), he gave large numbers of fish to a gathering of Aboriginal men who witnessed the hauling of a seine net. He reported they "seemed much pleased, and danced and shouted by turns around us". The number of men increased when the fish were distributed. Grant recorded on the same day that:

They seemed to know the use of the musquet (sic), and appeared frightened at it when pointed. They asked for blankets and bread, and made signs for something to put round their heads, which last article I gave them, and which I made out of an old white shirt torn up in strips like bands, tying the same round their foreheads, with which they seemed much pleased. They expressed much surprise at the looking-glass, searching everywhere to find if there was not someone at the back of it, dancing before it and putting themselves in all the attitudes they could. (HRNSW Vol. 4, 1897: 478-81)

The familiarity of the local people with guns indicates a previous violent encounter. Grant's objective in making the gifts was to maintain friendly relations. It also showed to the Aboriginal community that not all white explorers were prepared to use force. The only exchange that occurred happened several days later when Grant gave a blanket to an Aboriginal man who had recovered a lost surveying chain. Another feature of the contact was the initial reluctance by the Aboriginal men of Jervis Bay to introduce the women and children of their group to the explorers. This did not happen until after the men had satisfactorily determined the intentions of those on board the ship.

Governor Macquarie visited Jervis Bay on board the *Lady Nelson* in November 1811. By that time it was known that "a great number of natives inhabit... the bay". Three Aboriginal men were observed on Bowen Island. After the *Lady Nelson* had anchored, the three men canoed out to the ship and traded fish for biscuits and tobacco. Macquarie noted that the men were "perfectly at ease and devoid of fear" in the presence of white men (Macquarie 1956: 47-48).

By 1812, local men were acting as guides to explorers. A man from the Five Islands (Wollongong) district, Bundle, accompanied George Evans on his trip from Jervis Bay to Appin via Wollongong in March and April of 1812 (see McDonald 1979, Liston 1988). Bundle helped Evans and his other assistant (Mr Overhand) across rivers and acted as a diplomat to other local Aboriginal people. It is likely that Bundle would also have

provided food and fresh water. On April 3 1812, Bundle gave his shirt to an old Aboriginal man. The location of this transaction is not known but Bundle may have been making a gift as an outsider to demonstrate his peaceful intentions or to honour an elder of his own band. On the same day, Evans exchanged some tomahawks, a blanket, tobacco and steel fish hooks for some oysters (McDonald 1979).

The Aboriginal people of the Illawarra and Shoalhaven first gained access to European goods and food via exchanges and gifts. Transactions were rare and the amounts only small. These strategies contributed little to Aboriginal subsistence at the time. They did not need to as natural resources were still fully available. From the Aboriginal point of view, these early transaction had more to do with finding out about the newcomers and obtaining some useful items rather than securing a major portion of subsistence.

Timber

Cedar cutting was the initial industry to be established in the Illawarra and Shoalhaven. Like all initial economic developments in the colony, it focused on the exploitation of natural resources (Butlin 1994: 170). The first official load of cedar from the Shoalhaven arrived in Sydney in December 1811 on board the *Speedwell* (*Sydney Gazette* January 4 1812). The article reported that the timber was of good quality. Those on board the vessel maintained "... the most active vigilance necessary to their protection against the natives who appeared to be numerous and athletic." (*Sydney Gazette* January 4 1812) It is not mentioned whether the local Aboriginal people assisted in locating the cedar or traded with the sailors of the *Speedwell*. As McQuilton recently expressed, it is likely that cedar cutting commenced earlier (McQuilton 1997: 24). Cedar was an important resource to the colony as it was a strong and durable wood suitable for construction, shipbuilding and furniture. Governor Phillip reported a stand of cedar in 1790. The first application for export was made in 1795 and the regulation of cedar cutting on the Hawkesbury began in 1802 (Jervis 1939: 132-3). The *Sydney Gazette* article of January 4 1812 mentioned that travellers in search of bird specimens had identified cedar in the Shoalhaven, as had Lieutenant Oxley when he visited the area about six years before. It is possible that other ships may have visited the Shoalhaven before the *Speedwell*, but there is no direct evidence. Cedar getting in the Shoalhaven intensified after 1811. A

brig, the *Mary and Sally*, obtained a cargo of cedar in 1813 and in 1814 another brig, the *Trial*, took out 26000 feet (Bayley 1975: p.18).

Bell claimed that cedar cutters did little to disrupt the traditional way of life for Aboriginal people on the south coast (Bell 1959: 79). The claim requires reappraisal. The cutting of cedar represented the greatest threat to the Aboriginal economy thus far posed by the presence of Europeans as it began the process of altering the environment and restricting the availability of resources. Erosion may have resulted in areas where the timber was removed, further disrupting flora and fauna. Cutters may have forced sexual relationships with local Aboriginal women. There is no direct evidence for this, although similar relationships were made in other areas. Cutters may also have introduced venereal disease and other illnesses into the Aboriginal population, increasing the rate of mortality and infertility. A more certain conclusion is that contact with cutters enabled Aboriginal people to obtain additional items of European material culture. It is likely that locals directed cutters to stands of cedar in exchange for food and goods: this occurred numerous times in the 1820s. It is known that contact sometimes ended in violence. A party of three cedar getters disappeared in the Shoalhaven in late 1814. A search party found the remains of one cutter, George Woods, in February 1815 with his hands amputated. No sign of the other two was ever found. Organ interprets the amputation of hands as a sign of retribution against a murderer (Organ 1990). This is not a fanciful suggestion as cutters were known for their violence and carousing (Jervis 1939) but there is no specific evidence in the historical record about the Woods incident. Eight local Aboriginal guides, who identified the body of Woods and said they had known him well, assisted the search party. Woods was found next to his launch. A cask containing salt pork and a box of clothes was also found. The iron hoops from the cask and the hinges from the box had been removed. It is not known to what purpose these items were put. It is interesting to note that the Aboriginal people did not procure the pork, indicating either they did not like the salty meat or more likely, there were still sufficient natural resources for subsistence. The presence of timber cutters disrupted the Aboriginal economy, but not to a great extent.

Violent Contact

There was violence between Aboriginal people and Europeans in contexts other than cedar procurement. In April 1797, two survivors of the *Sydney Cove* wreck were apparently murdered near Coalcliff, north of Wollongong. Other survivors attributed the murder to Dilba, the same man who had met Bass and Flinders the year before. An Aboriginal guide led the search party of George Bass to the remains. The evidence of Dilba's guilt is unrecorded. An Aboriginal man was killed when the sloop *Contest* visited Jervis Bay in July 1804. According to a *Sydney Gazette* article, a group of Aboriginal men stole a knapsack containing clothes. Soldiers pursued the alleged thieves for 12 to 14 miles. A confrontation took place where one Aboriginal man was shot to death (*Sydney Gazette* July 22 1804). The *Sydney Gazette* related an incident at Jervis Bay in October 1805 where two Aboriginal men were killed and one European was speared. The Europeans were forced to take to the sea in a hurry, leaving some supplies behind which were "voraciously" consumed by their Aboriginal pursuers (*Sydney Gazette* October 27 1805). In December 1805, the *Gazette* reported the spearing of Mr Rushworth, skipper of the *Fly*, at Jervis Bay and the death of Thomas Evans, his assistant (*Sydney Gazette* December 8 1805). The context of the incident was unspecified. In all these events, the Aborigines are described as the aggressors. A more realistic analysis suggests that in some cases the Europeans may have initiated the violence or that the Aboriginal people were defending incursions into their land and sacred areas or reacting to untold violations of person and material.

By 1815, official settlement of the Illawarra and Shoalhaven had not yet begun. Timber cutters were intensifying their activities, but the vast majority of land was available for Aboriginal subsistence. Marine and riverine resources were also fully accessible. The brief presence of explorers, sailors and shipwreck survivors over the past two decades had given local Aboriginal people a glimpse of the variable behaviours of Europeans. Some were friendly and willing to trade, others requested assistance and some acted with violence. They provided useful items such as tomahawks, steel fish hooks, tobacco and food. The low intensity of their presence enabled the Aboriginal people of the Illawarra and Shoalhaven to operate their economy as they did before first contact. There was practically zero reliance on European food and technology for subsistence. It is likely that Aboriginal people still moved in bands across a range similar in extent to that which existed before first contact. The behaviour of the Europeans probably did not indicate to the Aboriginal people the extent to which they would alienate the land in the following

generations. If the Aboriginal people had known this, they may have done more to repel the first wave of visitors. Instead, by trading with them and guiding them over the land, and by generally taking advantage of the goods that the Europeans had to offer, they were giving the Europeans the foothold they required for the expansion of their economy and society into the Illawarra and Shoalhaven in the coming years.

It is possible that the Aboriginal inhabitants of the Illawarra and Shoalhaven were able to continue their hunting and gathering because of population decline that kept their numbers below the diminishing carrying capacity of land caused by timber cutting. The likely cause of population decline was smallpox. Lieutenant Grant noticed the characteristic scars of smallpox survivors on Jervis Bay Aboriginal men and women in 1801. They may have contracted the disease following the initial outbreak at Sydney within 6 months of the arrival of the First Fleet in 1788. Given the proximity of Jervis Bay to Sydney and the known movement of Aboriginal groups between the locations, it is possible that what Grant witnessed were survivors of the initial epidemic. Alternatively, they may have contracted the disease from one of the many ships that moored in the bay. According to Butlin, smallpox can kill in excess of 50% of a population without previous exposure (Butlin 1983). The extent of the effect of smallpox at Jervis Bay is unknown, but even if it had not reduced the Aboriginal population by 50%, they could have continued as before without a change in strategy due to low level European land alienation at that time. Smallpox would have effected the Aboriginal population in others ways. The survivors may have formed composite bands to pool labour and knowledge. Some social rules governing marriage for instance may have been temporarily lifted to help population recovery. The impact of small pox and other diseases will be further discussed in Chapter 5.

Settlement Begins

Official settlement in the Illawarra began in December 1816, although there is evidence that some settlers may have moved cattle into the region in the early 1800s. Benjamin Lindsay, who was born in the Illawarra in the early 1850s, wrote in 1934 that cattle were brought to the region by boat during the drought of 1803-04 under the direction of David Nichols who worked for Major Johnston (ML A2429-30). There is no independent confirmation of this statement. It is more likely that Dr Charles Throsby first moved

cattle into the Illawarra in 1815. According to his nephew, Charles Throsby Smith, some visiting Aboriginal people from the Illawarra told Dr Throsby that there was plenty of grass and water at the Five Islands. He soon visited the area and later in 1815 with the assistance of stockman Joseph Wild and two Aboriginal guides (possibly Bundle and Broughton) he drove cattle down Bulli Pass into the Illawarra (Jarvis 1942: 75). Throsby built a stockyard and a hut near the corner of what is now Smith and Harbour Streets, Wollongong (Dowd 1960). Other squatters soon followed, including John Oxley, the Surveyor-General (McQuilton 1997: 24) and prominent merchant and landowner, Samuel Terry (Dowd 1960: 2). Both Oxley and Throsby were never given official grants in the Illawarra (Dowd 1960: 2).

News of the desirability of the Illawarra for grazing soon spread to Sydney. The following description appeared in the Sydney Gazette on the March 18 1815: "A considerable extent of fine grazing ground is described by late travellers to lie about the Five Islands to which however, it would be thoroughly impracticable to convey cattle by land,". The statement about the difficulty of moving cattle by land indicates the article was written before Dr Throsby drove his cattle down the escarpment. It also demonstrates that settlers were dependent on Aboriginal guides to show the overland way.

In 1816, Governor Macquarie instructed Surveyor-General Oxley to survey the Illawarra in preparation for official settlement. He was told to reserve all lands near the entrance of harbours, creeks, bays and rivers for the Crown and any other land deemed suitable for townships or fortifications. Oxley, accompanied by James Meehan, commenced the survey on November 28 1816 by marking an oak tree at Lake Illawarra. They also visited Mullet Creek and the Macquarie River. The survey finished on December 10 1816 (Jarvis 1942: 78-9). Later that month, Macquarie issued the first five land grants for the Illawarra. The grants fulfilled various promises of land to individuals that Macquarie had made earlier in his term. He granted 1300 acres near Mullet Creek to Captain Richard Brooks. Brooks called the property Exmouth. Local Aboriginal people knew the area as Koonawarra. Brooks already had a stockman's hut on the land when Meehan surveyed the grant on December 5 1816 (Dowd 1960: 3). George Johnston, senior, an officer in the New South Wales Corps received a grant of 1500 acres on the northwest side of Macquarie River (Dowd 1960: 4-5). Macquarie granted 700 acres to Andrew Allan (son

of David Allan, Deputy Commissary General) on the south side of Macquarie River opposite Johnston's property (Dowd 1960: 7). Robert Jenkins, a shipping merchant, received 1000 acres at the northeast end of Lake Illawarra. The property was known as Berkeley (Dowd 1960: 9). The final grantee was David Allan who was given 2200 acres in the vicinity of Red Point and Tom Thumb Lagoon (Dowd 1960: 11). The owners did not live on their land – overseers were employed to manage the stock and property (Dowd 1960: 2). There are no records of Aboriginal people working on these properties. The granting of land to settlers in the Illawarra marked the beginning of the official process of alienating Aboriginal people from their land. The immediate economic effect can be determined by examining the location of the first land grants. All grants fronted fresh water creeks or rivers. The grants of Jenkins and David Allan fronted Lake Illawarra and the latter also fronted the sea. Aboriginal people would have had reduced access to fresh water and other resources in the vicinity of the rivers, creeks, lakes and beaches. The introduction of more cattle would have had a negative effect on faunal numbers, especially kangaroos and wallabies.

Macquarie continued to grant land in the Illawarra at a slow pace. Fourteen grants, totalling 20550 acres, had been given by January 30 1821 (J. Oxley in Bonwick Transcripts Box 26: 6005). The response of Aboriginal people to the continued settlement of the Illawarra in this period seems to have been peaceful. On forming a station at South Creek in 1817, James Badgery reported that "... the blacks were not hostile and were always glad to get articles of cutlery or food... The wild or untaught ones were extremely timid, especially if anyone handled firearms." The satisfied reception of food by the local indigenous people possibly indicates an early shortage of natural resources caused by settlement, but at this time it was probably a mixture of curiosity and thanks at what may have been considered a gift that spurred the observed response. The timidity observed when weapons were produced indicates that the Aboriginal people may have suffered fright or injury during an unreported incident or at least may have heard about the effect of muskets from an episode such as Macquarie's punitive campaign against the inhabitants of the southern highlands in 1816 (see Organ 1990: 62-90).

An incident in September 1818 would have confirmed the wariness of Aboriginal people about white men with guns. According to various testimonies sworn to the Sydney

Bench of Magistrates, an armed party was formed by Cornelius O'Brien, overseer at William Browne's property at Yallah, and Lieutenant Weston, owner of a property at Dapto, to recover two muskets that had been lent to local Aboriginal people (Wentworth Papers, Mitchell Library, A753, CY699: 243-52). The party approached a group of Aboriginal women and children who promptly ran off. The keepers of the muskets could not be found so the party broke up. Later in the day a shot was heard. John McArthy, a member of the party, went to investigate. He said he found McLease, another member of the party, and two other men at the place where the shot was fired. McArthy testified that McLease said he had fired a shot after "... a Native had ship'd a spear" at him. John Stewart, stock keeper to George Johnston and another member of the party, stated that he had heard several shots. He did not go to investigate and he never heard from the Aboriginal people that any one of them had been injured. Joseph Wild swore that McLease had told him he had "shot one who had howled like a Native Dog, and that he would shoot all before him even if the Governor stood by, if they ship'd a spear at him." Wild also testified that the day after the shooting, Bundle had visited him to report that he had been told by an Aboriginal women that all the natives at the river had been killed. William Richards, who was with McLease when he fired the shot, testified that an Aboriginal boy had been shot in the head, but that it was an accidental shooting done by another man who was aiming at a kangaroo. The court, led by D'Arcy Wentworth, castigated O'Brien and Weston for leading the vigilante action and confirmed that McLease had fired a shot after dodging a spear, but not that it hit any person. It would seem that at least one Aboriginal person was shot during the incident. McLease probably shot an Aboriginal person and had Richards cover for him.

The shooting had the effect of prompting five or six Aboriginal people to return the muskets to John Stewart the following day. It is worth considering the reasons why O'Brien lent the muskets to the Aborigines in the first place. It would seem that he did lend the guns. If the guns had been stolen then it is likely O'Brien would have mentioned this to the court – it would have been a useful reason to justify his actions. O'Brien may have lent the guns to the Aboriginal people so they could shoot some kangaroos to supplement his meat supply. Many early settlers were short of meat as they were unwilling to cull their breeding stock. Aboriginal people were good hunters and offered an alternative supply. It is known that Aboriginal people hunted for property owners in the 1830s. O'Brien may have lent the guns to speed up the hunting process. Aboriginal

people stayed on O'Brien's property – Richard's testimony confirms this. They may have hunted for O'Brien in return for some rations and permission to stay on their land.

More Exploration

Explorations of the Illawarra and Shoalhaven continued while settlement expanded. Charles Throsby travelled overland from Liverpool to Jervis Bay in April 1818 accompanied by a party including James Meehan, Bundle and Broughton. On the southern side of the Shoalhaven River, the party met a group of approximately 30 Aboriginal people. Throsby, who was concerned about the safety of his party, gave the Aboriginal group what he called a "trifling present" which included steel fish hooks. In return, he was given all the fish the Aborigines had in their possession. Four days later Throsby recorded that the indigenous inhabitants of Jervis Bay were the most "impudent" he had seen in the colony. He said that they would provide no fish without receiving twice the amount - most commonly bread - that is given at any other place (SRNSW: CGS 898 [9/2743: 1-77, Reel 6034]). It seems Aboriginal people were realising their value to explorers and taking the opportunity to increase the price of their services. People such as Throsby had little choice but to agree to the increased price, as there were no others who could guide them over difficult terrain and obtain local food when supplies ran low.

Allan Cunningham, the botanist, visited the Illawarra in October and November of 1818. In the vicinity of Lake Illawarra, Cunningham gained the services of a young Aboriginal man as a guide in return for a small piece of tobacco. Two days later on a trip to Mount Kembla, he obtained the assistance of another Aboriginal man who captured a ring-tailed possum and offspring. Cunningham was given the infant to observe (SRNSW: CGS 898 [Reels 46-7]).

Conclusion

By 1820, the settlement of the Illawarra had begun and the occupation of land in the Shoalhaven was only two years away. Settlers were bringing stock, particularly cattle, to graze on the grassy slopes and plains, some of which were being created by timber cutters as they removed the prized stands of red cedar. The settlers and timber cutters realised the

value of Aboriginal people and as such, it was in their interests to preserve their presence on the land. They could act as guides and provide food. British settlers took a peaceful approach to establishing social relations for the most part, but always kept a musket handy to enforce their advantage.

Initial economic contact with explorers consisted of exchanges, but the amounts of food and goods obtained by the indigenous population were small and did not contribute much to their subsistence. Aboriginal people lost access to some of their land as the settlers and timber cutters moved in. Limited food shortages were probably felt and the Aboriginal people of the Illawarra occasionally asked settlers such as James Badgery to provide the shortfall. Other groups camped on the land of settlers such as James O'Brien. The process of granting land, however, was slow and the impact of settlement and timber cutting was relatively small at this time. Bands could still move across the landscape obtaining food. The resources of the sea were fully available. Following several episodes of theft and violence, Aboriginal people of the Illawarra took a largely peaceful approach to dealing with the settlers. They took the opportunity of obtaining useful technology such as tomahawks and steel fish hooks. In return, they provided information about travelling across the land and some food. There are no examples of Aboriginal people undertaking farm work during the early years of settlement. This indicates that Aboriginal people did not wish to tie themselves to the colonial economy and that sufficient resources were still available to maintain their economic independence. By guiding Europeans to stands of timber and to prime grazing land, the Aboriginal people of the Illawarra and Shoalhaven were giving away a foothold to the colonial economy. It is unlikely that Aboriginal people immediately realised the extent of the European interest in their land. If that information was known, then a different approach may have been taken.

CHAPTER 4: SHOALHAVEN AND ILLAWARRA 1822-1830

Introduction: First Settlement at Shoalhaven

Official settlement in the Shoalhaven began in 1822 when Alexander Berry and Edward Wollstonecraft claimed the first part of their 10000 acre grant. There is evidence that several settlers may have taken up land in the Shoalhaven as early as October 1819. Charles Throsby, in giving evidence to the Bigge Commission in 1821, said that he and five others (two emancipated convicts, two free settlers and one resident born in Australia) had each been given 50 acres in the Shoalhaven district and one convict (Charles Throsby to Bigge Commission, Bonwick Transcripts Box 5: 2217-8). He reported that the settlers, except for a man named Wright who lived with his wife, four children and 23 cattle, had made little progress. There is no independent confirmation of Throsby's testimony.

Even if settlement did not begin until 1822, Aboriginal people were feeling the results of increased timber-getting activity. Throsby also reported to the Bigge Commission that several hundred timber ships had visited the Shoalhaven in the previous two years. He said that the Aboriginal population was diminishing due to consumption of introduced liquor and foods to which they were unaccustomed. Diseases of the lung, the symptoms of which were exacerbated by liquor, were also responsible for increased mortality in winter (Charles Throsby to Bigge Commission, Bonwick Transcripts Box 5: 2217-8). The extent of the population decline is unknown, but there was still a substantial Aboriginal population (in excess of 150) in the late 1820s when blanket records were first made. The decline did not threaten the viability of the Aboriginal population, though those bands most influenced may have combined resources.

Further Exploration

Exploration of the Shoalhaven continued in the early 1820s. Hamilton Hume journeyed from Lake Bathurst to the Illawarra via Jervis Bay in November and December of 1821. Two Aboriginal guides accompanied him: Nullawan from the Cowpastures district and Underduck (various spellings - Udderduck) from Lake Bathurst. Hume met with several Aboriginal informants on the banks of a Shoalhaven tributary who said that the meadows

were extensive. He also met with another hinterland group who appeared “quite friendly”. They assured Hume that there were no major obstacles between his present position and the coast. He gave them several kangaroos for their help, which pleased them greatly. None of the hinterland people could be persuaded to accompany Hume to the coast due to the “terror” they felt towards coastal people (Berry Papers ML MSS 315/44).

Hume observed the hinterland people in some detail. He reported that they wore opossum rugs sewn together with kangaroo tail sinew. Polygamy was common, with some men having six wives. Weapons were much the same as they were on the coast, except that spears were longer, commonly measuring 12-14 feet in length. Hume demonstrated firearms, which astonished the Aboriginal onlookers (Berry Papers ML MSS 315/44). This response, together with the lack of European implements, indicates that the hinterland people behind Jervis Bay had little experience of white people up to this time and lived in a manner very similar to that before first contact.

When Hume returned to Sydney in early 1822, he joined Lieutenant Johnston and Alexander Berry on board the *Snapper* to explore the coast around Jervis Bay and the Shoalhaven (Bayley 1975: 20). The *Snapper* arrived at the mouth of the Shoalhaven River on January 9 1822. In his journal of the voyage, Berry first recorded the name of “Coolungatta” (various spellings) for the mountain on the northern bank of the Shoalhaven (Berry Papers ML MSS 315/53). He also noted in his journal the abundance of mussels, oysters and middens along the shore of the river, indicating the importance of this location as a source of subsistence. Other evidence for local Aboriginal occupation of the area was found, including a well.

The expedition was accompanied by Charcoal, an Aboriginal man, possibly from the Illawarra or Sydney. Charcoal assisted in introducing the party to the Aboriginal people of the Shoalhaven. On January 10 1822, two local Aboriginal men were observed. At first they were afraid to come over, but did so after seeing Charcoal in his “native dress”. Berry also observed the changing environment. He noted that the north shore of the Shoalhaven River had “... formerly abounded with cedar...”, that all the old trees had been cut down and that new cedars and cabbage palms were growing (Berry Papers ML MSS 315/53).

The following day, the *Snapper* travelled further up the Shoalhaven River. Berry saw an Aboriginal man sucking sap from a piece of wood who ran away when Berry's party approached. Charcoal "prevailed upon him to come down" with the offer of little presents which greatly pleased him. He gave Charcoal his spear in return, which was accepted as a "mark of friendship". The Aboriginal man reported that the rest of his tribe was further up the river catching eels from the bank of a lagoon. Later in the day, Berry and company met these people who provided a "friendly reception". Berry talked with a man named Botoo who was knowledgeable about the district. He was familiar with the track up the mountains to Lake Bathurst (probably the same track followed by Hume the previous year). Berry asked Botoo to show him the track but was refused. Botoo replied that white men did not keep their promises. He said that Captain Brooks (the Illawarra landowner) had offered him a pair of trousers if he showed him some grazing land for cattle. Botoo had shown him the land but had not received the trousers. Berry, to demonstrate his honesty, offered Botoo part of the reward in advance, but nothing seems to have come of the conversation (Berry Papers ML MSS 315/53).

The party proceeded up the Shoalhaven River for the next two days, but did not see any Aboriginal people. The next encounter with Aboriginal people came at Jervis Bay in late January 1822. The group that Berry met with had just returned from a successful hunt with a couple of small kangaroos. Berry gave tomahawks to three men, including the "Chief" who in return built bark shelters for the party. The Aboriginal men informed Berry that in other seasons there was plenty of grass. They asked Berry if he intended to bring bullocks, indicating their familiarity with the beasts and that Throsby's testimony to the Bigge Commission may have been true (Berry Papers ML MSS 315/53).

It is probably no accident that Berry approached his first contact with Aboriginal people from the Shoalhaven in a friendly manner. He would have been familiar with some of the violence between Aboriginal people, timber cutters and settlers in the district. It is likely that Berry thought by offering gifts and asking for help, he would make his impending settlement of the Shoalhaven run more smoothly. His aim was largely achieved.

Alexander Berry and Edward Wollstonecraft

As Margaret Steven emphasises, Berry was sympathetic towards indigenous peoples (Steven 1998). He was born in Fifeshire, Scotland on the 30th November 1781, the eldest son of Isabel and James Berry. He attended Cupar Grammar School, St. Andrews University and later the University of Edinburgh where he gained a degree in medicine. Berry became a ship's surgeon with the East India Company (Swords 1978: 7). He had grown up during the Scottish Enlightenment and followed Adam Smith's dictum that "we must be men of the world" (Steven 1998). Berry realised that there was a lack of understanding about indigenous peoples and when travelling around the world with the East India Company, he took the opportunity to record his observations and make up for the dearth of knowledge (Steven 1998). At each port of call, Berry described the appearance and clothing of the people and their customs and religious beliefs as best as he could discern them (Swords 1978: 7). Potentially, Berry was a man who was willing to permit indigenous people to live on his land so he could observe their behaviour.

Berry recorded that the Javanese were resentful of their Dutch colonisers. He recorded that the Dutch "... keep the natives in subjection only by the most sanguinary measures, for as soon as a Dutchman is murdered by these people, the Government sends out a military party, who without distinction kill the first hundred Javanese that fall in their way." (quoted in Swords 1978: 7). This knowledge probably influenced Berry's friendly approach to Aboriginal people during his first expedition to the Shoalhaven and during most of his later residence at the estate.

Medical procedures of the day were largely primitive and Berry grew frustrated at his inability to alleviate pain. He thought that a commercial career might offer a greater challenge and to this end he gained his shipmaster's certificate. A business partnership was formed in Cape Town in 1807 with Francis Shortt, a collegiate friend and fellow doctor. Their first venture was to supply food to the lean colony of New South Wales on board the chartered ship, the *City of Edinburgh*. Other endeavours included a timber-getting trip to Fiji in 1809 and an unsuccessful voyage from Lima to Cadiz in 1812 during which the *City of Edinburgh* sank. In the same year, when returning to Cadiz via Lisbon, Berry met with Edward Wollstonecraft and the two became friends. Edward Wollstonecraft was born in London in 1783. Before meeting Berry, he had an association

with the Spanish merchant De Zastel (Pike 1966: 620). Wollstonecraft possessed a steely temperament and a keen business sense. He was also known as a “misanthropic user of men” (Wonga 1995: 3).

Berry’s partnership with Shortt ended with the sinking of the *City of Edinburgh*, although a court case, which Berry won, disputed Shortt’s share of the profits and whether the partnership was ever officially dissolved. Berry formed a new partnership with Wollstonecraft and the two were both living in Sydney by 1821. They both came to the colony with the intention of becoming landowners and adhering to the Tory maxim that advocated the social, political and economic dominance of the landowning class (Wonga 1995: 2-3). The partners were given a land grant of 10000 acres adjacent to the Shoalhaven River with the proviso they take 100 convicts. Berry set out to claim the land in June 1822 (Swords 1978: 9-13).

Berry’s desire to become a landowner indicates another side to his character. As Elizabeth Brenchley has demonstrated, he was also strongly influenced by the economic principles of laissez-faire capitalism, which eroded his humanitarian principles and tempered his benevolence towards Aboriginal people (Brenchley 1982: 15, 74)¹. Not only did he want to have indigenous people on his property to observe, he was hopeful that they would become a labour force, and eventually, settled yeomen farmers. It was Berry’s belief that Aboriginal people were inferior to other groups and only capable of occupying jobs at the lower end of the economy. The idea of inferiority is implicit in Berry’s support of the “science” of phrenology, which claimed to differentiate between nationalities on the basis of supposed measurable brain criteria. As Reece has demonstrated, Berry believed that the “Aborigines’ nomadic habits were attributed... to the over-development [in the brain] of ‘locomotive propensities’” (Reece 1974: 85-90). To advance phrenological investigations, Berry collected skulls from his estate into the 1840s, sending some of them to St Andrews University in Scotland. Berry was not an extreme supporter of phrenology, but it gave him the justification for prioritising self-interest over his concern for Aboriginal people (Brenchley 1982: 83).

¹ Berry’s economic self-interest also eroded his benevolence towards convicts, particularly in the 1830s (see Chapter 5 & Wonga 1995: 183).

Settlement at Coolangatta

While preparing in Sydney to claim his grant, Berry received a letter from Charles Throsby introducing Broughton, the Aboriginal man from the Shoalhaven who with Bundle had guided Throsby on his southern expeditions. Throsby wrote that Broughton is "... well acquainted with every inch of that part of the country, speaks good English, and I think may be useful to you. I have therefore told him if he will accompany you and explain to the natives there, that they are not to touch any thing you have and... that you will give him some tobacco, a pair of trousers, and he adds, he must have an old shirt." (Berry Papers ML MSS 315/46). This was the beginning of a working relationship that lasted over two decades and Broughton proved invaluable to Berry on the farm and in dealing with local Aborigines. Broughton was not transferred from Throsby to Berry as a slave. As the letter shows, Broughton would only go if he was given something in return. Farm records show, as we will see below, that Broughton was paid in food and goods. The move was probably attractive to Broughton as it meant moving back to his own land.

Berry, on board the *Blanch*, a 15 ton cutter, departed for the Shoalhaven River on June 21 1822, with a crew including Hamilton Hume, Broughton and Charcoal (aka Charcoal Will) whom he later described as a good boatman. A strong southerly prevented the boat from leaving the heads until the following day. The *Blanch* arrived at the mouth of the Shoalhaven River on June 23 1822. Berry recorded in his journal that five crewman, including Charcoal, went to examine the sand bar across the mouth of the Shoalhaven in a smaller craft. Large breakers brewed up and four of the crew were tossed into the sea. Much to Berry's chagrin, two perished; Charcoal survived. The *Blanch* entered the mouth of the adjacent Crookhaven River and soon picked up the survivors. (Berry Papers ML MSS 315/53-54).

Berry was keen to get the *Blanch* into the Shoalhaven River but the conditions prevented this until June 25 1822. The Crookhaven River was safer to enter and Berry instructed three of the crew to commence cutting a channel through to the Shoalhaven River. They also built a hut. Bark for the hut was obtained from a "party of natives". All members of the crew were well supplied with fish by local Aboriginal people. Berry does not mention if any goods were given to them in return. Various expeditions in smaller craft were sent up the river. On June 26 1822, Berry met with Wagin, an elder who claimed to

own the land called Numba on the south side of the Shoalhaven River. By June 30 1822, several grassy flats had been identified along with several swamps that Berry thought could be drained. On July 3 1822, Broughton guided Berry to more suitable grazing land between the Crookhaven and Shoalhaven Rivers. Berry travelled to “Cullengatty” (ie Coolangatta Mountain) on July 6 1822 with Hume, another white man and a group of Aboriginal people to clear the ground. The Aboriginal workers were apparently given all of Berry’s axes and tomahawks in return. Further assistance was provided by local Aborigines on July 9 1822 when they went to cut a passage up Coolangatta Mountain (Berry Papers ML MSS 315/53). Berry later recalled that Broughton and his brother Broger, who was enticed to continue clearing by the offer of fresh pheasant, assisted Hume (Berry Papers ML MSS 315/54). The job was done by June 12 1822. Berry commented that the road was “... indifferently formed and in some places steep and rugged, Still, with a little trouble may be rendered passable with a cart.” (Berry Papers ML MSS 315/53). The road permitted Berry to transfer his supplies to the spot chosen for his residence.

Word of Berry’s arrival soon spread among local Aboriginal bands. On July 8 1822, a party from Jervis Bay met with Berry, headed by an elder named Yager (Berry Papers ML MSS 315/53). Yager accompanied Berry when he returned to Sydney on July 23 1822, along with Wagin and Charcoal. Broughton returned overland as he was said to dislike the sea. Broughton’s mate Billy, a youth probably aged between 16 and 20, was left with the overseer to ensure peaceful relations with local Aborigines. Berry recalled in 1838 that Broughton had also instructed his countrymen “to behave in a friendly manner toward the white people...” (Berry Papers ML MSS 315/54).

Initial relations between Berry, his white crew and local Aboriginal people were friendly, peaceful and productive, particularly for Berry. Clearly the presence of Broughton, a local man, and Charcoal helped smooth the way. Aboriginal people provided food, building supplies and labour. They guided Berry to suitable grazing grounds. Axes, tomahawks and some food were given as payment, although sometimes nothing was received in return. No violence of any degree was reported.

Appendix 1 contains a list of the first three shipments of equipment and supplies sent to Coolangatta in 1822 (Berry Papers ML MSS 315/6). The list is extensive. The material

is indicative of a man establishing a farm: there are carpenters tools for building the homestead, axes for clearing the land, hoes for tilling the soil and plates, spoons and a tea kettle for a semblance of civility. The amount of material may have indicated to the Aboriginal populace that Berry was intending to stay at Coolangatta for a long time. Nevertheless, no attempt was made to prevent the supplies from landing or to disrupt the beginning of settlement. The shipments contained items of use and value to Aboriginal people and they helped to deliver them onto the land. It has already been reported that Berry gave away all of the 30 axes and tomahawks in the initial load of supplies. This is probably an exaggeration. Axes and tomahawks were needed to clear ground and provide timber for huts. The other item of particular interest to Aboriginal people was the fishing line. It is not known whether any line was given to them. Other items such as the clothing, plates, cutlery and material became important items of Aboriginal material culture in the decades to come.

After returning to Sydney with Wagin and Yager, Berry made a further effort to cement friendly relations with the local Aboriginal people. He had made three brass breast plates for Wagin, Yager and Broughton. A note written in July 1822 recorded the gift:

This is to certify that Yager the native chief of Jervis Bay and Wagin the native chief of Shoal Haven, have generally conducted themselves with propriety, and that Broughton the native constable is a steady discerning individual and superior to most of his brethren. (Berry Papers ML MSS 315/46: 89)

The value of the plates to the three recipients is unknown. Wagin and Yager initially sought out Berry to meet him. Since they were both elders, Wagin and Yager may have been trying to establish a relationship with him in order to secure resources such as axes and fishing line, so in turn they could supply their own people and strengthen their political position within the band or larger group. The plates would then have been a sign of their superior procuring abilities. Broughton's case is slightly different. He had spent a considerable portion of the previous five years away from the Shoalhaven. When Berry first arrived at Coolangatta, Broughton encouraged him to establish the homestead at the head of Broughton Creek, close to his birthplace and on his own land. This would have given Broughton and his brethren easy access to useful goods. Blanket records suggest that Broughton was about 24 when Berry settled at Coolangatta. He may have been representing the interests of his elders or challenging their authority. If the later was the

case, the brass plate symbolised his abilities as a negotiator and procurer. In any case, Broughton was not entirely successful as Berry chose to build the homestead near Coolangatta Mountain rather than Broughton Creek.

Farm Development, Aboriginal Work and Punishment

The development of Coolangatta continued in Berry's absence. Hume arrived on August 20 1822 with a herd of cattle accompanied by another white man and two Aboriginal guides (Berry Papers ML MSS 315/46: 95). Berry, who was in Sydney at the time and most probably at his George Street address, wrote to Wollstonecraft on August 8 1822 saying that "Broughton is here and tomorrow I shall despatch (sic) him with a letter to Mr Hume requesting his assistance (in moving some more cattle)." (Berry Papers ML MSS 315/86) Berry also sent a letter to Stewart, the overseer, in August 1822 giving various instructions about clearing land, planting corn, and building the canal (Berry Papers ML MSS 315/54). The instructions did not contain a direction to employ Aboriginal labour. David Souter, who replaced Stewart as overseer in March 1823, wrote to Berry on September 25 1822 that the workers on the establishment were on friendly terms with the local Aboriginal people. Souter reported that they occasionally brought in a wallaby. He also said they were good at tracking cattle, for which they were given a handful of corn. Broughton was back at the Shoalhaven by this time. Souter recounted that Broughton was currently searching for a convict called Smith who had stolen some clothes and money. He stated that Broughton was well behaved and always followed orders (Berry Papers ML MSS 315/6).

Not everything ran smoothly in the early settlement of Coolangatta. Souter wrote in October 1822 that the workers were suffering from dysentery. It is not mentioned whether the disease spread into the Aboriginal community (Berry Papers ML MSS 315/6). Also Hume, who had just delivered more cattle to Coolangatta, wrote to Berry on December 5 1822 expressing his surprise to hear that "... the natives are beginning hostilities at Shoalhaven." He went on to say that he thought the best course of action was to "... if possible get about a half dozen soldiers and take them down immediately." (Berry Papers ML MSS 315/46.) The nature of the hostile action was not described and it does not seem that the soldiers were sent to Coolangatta.

Berry had returned to Coolangatta by March 1823. He wrote to Wollstonecraft on March 22 1823, saying that he intended to get “the blacks” to bring some boat rigging down from Sydney. The farm was clearly short of such equipment as Berry wrote enthusiastically to Wollstonecraft two days later that “... the blacks this day have brought some of the rope...” from the small boat that sank in June the previous year when Charcoal and party attempted to breach the mouth of the Shoalhaven River (Berry Papers ML MSS 315/86). Overall, Berry was very impressed with the maritime abilities of local Aboriginal people. He wrote in 1838 that he never boated on the Shoalhaven River without an Aboriginal crew (Berry Papers ML MSS 315/54).

Peaceful relations between the Aboriginal people and Berry were maintained throughout the early months of 1823. In a letter to Wollstonecraft dated March 23 1823, Berry wrote that the “... natives are peaceable and I am informed have lately committed no depredations.” (Berry Papers ML MSS 315/86.) However, Berry was not averse to a display of firepower to enforce his authority. The next day, Berry wrote to Wollstonecraft that the blacksmith has made a “... few pairs of handcuffs which the natives fear more than a musket – At the same time I am glad of the six muskets and bayonets, because the sight and knowledge of such things guards us against hostility.” (Berry Papers ML MSS 315/86.) It would seem Berry was reacting to some Aboriginal people sampling the corn growing on the estate and possibly the unspecified hostile action mentioned by Hume. They could not have taken much as Berry wrote in the same letter that crows and cockatoos were “... more destructive to the corn than the natives.” (Berry Papers ML MSS 315/86.) The likelihood of a small amount being taken indicates that the Aboriginal harvesters were trialing the food rather than relying on it for subsistence.

Berry relied on Aboriginal guides to increase his familiarity of Coolangatta. He was shown a rocky ridge on Coolangatta Mountain that was used to sharpen axe heads. Berry described the stone as “... hard and fine grained.” It projected out from the ridge and Berry thought it could be used as a millstone (letter to Wollstonecraft April 17 1823 Berry Papers ML MSS 315/86-7). It is not known whether the stone was ever employed for such a purpose. Berry continued to use an Aboriginal crew for his Shoalhaven River expeditions, but members of the community were not always keen to oblige. He wrote to Wollstonecraft on April 17 1823 that it was “... no easy matter to muster a crew of

natives – they have as a consequence of the weather (rain) have become lazy, torpid and sickly – our men however enjoy good health.” (Berry Papers ML MSS 315/86-7.) Berry was unaware of the extent of Aboriginal knowledge of local conditions that informed them about the best time to work. Rather than being lazy, the Aboriginal crew were probably unwilling to sail upon the river when the swollen current was fast and dangerous after rain.

Broughton continued to show Berry about the property and region. In June 1823 he showed Berry large stands of cedars on the lower slopes of the mountains (letter to Wollstonecraft June 20 1823 Berry Papers ML MSS 315/86-7). He also couriered letters for Berry between Coolangatta and Sydney and between Coolangatta and the Illawarra (see letter from Souter to Berry May 20 1823 Berry Papers ML MSS 315/6). On October 13 1823 Berry reported to Wollstonecraft that: “Broughton and his mate (possibly Broger or Billy) got on modestly well with the bricklaying...” referring to the construction of the homestead at Coolangatta (see Plate 4.1). He thought that two rooms and a kitchen would be finished in about a month (Berry Papers ML MSS 315/86-7).



Plate 4.1: Remains of Coolangatta Homestead, partly built by Broughton and mate

It would seem that in time Berry forgot about the extent of Broughton’s contribution to the bricklaying. In 1838 he recalled that Broughton only acted as a bricklayer’s labourer. He also stated that Broughton was jeered by a female cousin of his for doing the work of

a prisoner (it is likely that convicts were also working on the house). Apparently Broughton never again worked in this capacity (Berry Papers ML MSS 315/54). There is another story that suggests Aboriginal people did not like to be grouped at the same social level as convicts, a response evident in other parts of the colony (Hughes 1986: 279) and found at least some farm work distasteful. Berry wrote that he once said to Billy² on returning to Coolangatta: “Well Billy, I expected you were to have become like a white man but am sorry to find that you have again become a wild bush native.” Billy replied: “Oh no sir, I am no more wild than formerly, but I have become a free man again.” (Berry Papers ML MSS 315/54) Billy’s response indicates that Aboriginal people of the Shoalhaven preferred their traditional subsistence pattern to the restrictions of sedentary farm work. The story also confirms Berry’s wish to see the local Aboriginal populace adopt “civilised” behaviour and “habits of industry” (Berry 1838).

Berry used less savoury means to suggest “civilised” behaviour to the local Aboriginal population. On October 21 1823, he composed a letter to Wollstonecraft saying that he intended to have several convicts flogged in front of the Aborigines (Berry Papers ML MSS 315/86-7). He did not say why but the likely reason was to keep the Aboriginal people in line. An incident occurred in March 1824 that demonstrated the lengths to which staff on the estate would go to punish any perceived Aboriginal misbehaviour. In a letter dated March 20 1824, Souter wrote that large (but unspecified) quantities of corn, potatoes and tobacco, 3 jackets, 6 shirts, 7 blankets, 1 rug, a £5 note, 1 handkerchief, a cap, a musket and an axe had been stolen by some Aboriginal people. A party was organised to recover the goods and some were found at an Aboriginal camp, possibly the camp on the southern side of Coolangatta Mountain. Souter recorded that at least one Aboriginal person was shot dead. More were probably killed. The shooting had an immediate impact on the Aboriginal population of the property. Souter wrote to Berry on April 13 1824 that the Aboriginal people had been quiet lately and had returned the remaining stolen goods. There is no record showing Berry’s response to the incident, although it is hard to believe that he did not hear of the shooting. He did not give instructions for such actions to be avoided in the future.

² The assistant to the overseer in the early months of settlement at Coolangatta.

There is a clear reason for the Aboriginal action of stealing food and goods that is evident from Berry’s own farm records, which show that Aboriginal people were given relatively little compensation for the assistance they provided during the first two years of European settlement at Coolangatta (see Table 4.1). By March 1824, the Aboriginal people of the Shoalhaven would have realised that the settlement on their land was permanent. Berry had 120 acres of wheat, 40 acres of maize, three acres of barley and three acres of garden. At Numba on the southern side of the Shoalhaven, 250 acres had already been cleared and swamp drainage had begun. Tobacco grew in a small stand and pigs grazed in the clearings. The dairy milked 72 cows, producing butter and cheese (Sealy 2000: 93). In taking the items they did, the Aboriginal people were only seeking to balance the ledger³, which was still clearly in Berry’s favour and encourage him to share his material plenty, which all living on the land at Coolangatta were required to do.

Date	Receiver	Ration
25-07-1822	Broughton	4 suits of jackets and trousers
31-07-1822	Aboriginal boy	1 suit of jacket and pair of trousers
4-11-1822	“Per natives”	4 red blaize shirts, 1 pair blue trousers
June 1823	Aborigines listed in timber account (no names or numbers)	12 pounds of flour, 6 pork, 1 sugar & ¼ tea
October 1823	Aborigines listed in boating account (no names or numbers)	4 pounds of pork
19-11-1823	Aborigines (no names or numbers listed)	1 pound of tobacco
5-1-1824	Aborigines (no names or numbers listed)	1 shirt and 1 pair of canvas trousers per Aborigine
29-03-1824	Jago Will	Paid native .25 dollars

Table 4.1: Provisions given to Aboriginal workers as recorded in Shoalhaven Estate Waste Book and Financial Journal, 1822-24 (Berry Papers ML MSS 315/17-22 & 315/25-9)

Table 4.1 confirms the type of work that Aboriginal people were undertaking at the Shoalhaven estate, including crewing the boats and working with the sawyers. At this stage, Aboriginal people were not performing farm duties such as sowing and reaping. Rather, they were doing tasks where they had a comparative advantage such as delivering letters across difficult terrain and guiding Berry to concealed natural resources. The table

³ This is a common pattern throughout Australia (see Reynolds 1982: 68-70).

also confirms that Broughton was given his suit of clothes in the first months of settlement that Throsby said would be required if he was to stay. Further, it records the first instance of an Aboriginal person (Jago Will) being paid in cash. At this time, Aboriginal workers were usually given rations, tobacco or clothing. Cash was of little use in the Shoalhaven as there was no where to spend it. Jago Will may have been given the money in Sydney for delivering a letter. The denomination was probably the Spanish dollar, which was imported to the colony when other currency was scarce.

Edward Wollstonecraft first visited Coolangatta in the middle months of 1824. He set out to visit the Kangaroo Ground in the mountains to the northwest to search for timber. Berry wrote to him from Sydney in June that “(y)ou must take a native acquainted with the place to show you the cedar – Broughton or still better his brother Broger who is a... constant resident of the place.” (Berry Papers ML MSS 315/86-7.) Timber was a lucrative business for the estate. Berry and Wollstonecraft depended on the returns from timber sales to prop up their flagging merchant business in Sydney (Wonga 1995: 69). They were always keen to identify untouched stands of cedar and hardwoods. Men, in teams of two, were contracted to cut the timber. Oxley reported to the New South Wales Colonial Secretary that the sawyers in the Shoalhaven and Illawarra worked by digging pits “... in any part of the land to suit (their) convenience... without regard to order, as it seldom happens that more than three or four trees can be cut at the same pit, owing to the extreme thickness of the timber and brush.” (Report of J. Oxley to NSW Col. Sec. December 8 1826, ML Ao 15 –2/2). Souter supervised the sawyers on Coolangatta. The felled trees were floated down the Shoalhaven River on rafts and then loaded onto ships or barges for the trip to Sydney (Berry Papers ML MSS 315/6).

Aboriginal people continued to assist with the timber getting over the next five years. Berry was guided to untouched stands of timber in September 1825 and August 1826. He wrote to Wollstonecraft on September 5 1825 that Black Dick did not care who ended up with the timber as long as he was paid for his labour. The implication is that either Dick guided the sawyers to timber or helped to cut it down. The latter is likely as Berry wrote to Wollstonecraft on April 19 1827 that “I’ve no objection in... engaging (Black Dick) for 12 months (as a sawyer) – he will do no more than earn his rations.” (Berry Papers ML MSS 315/86-7.) Wollstonecraft acquainted Berry with the news on June 27 1829 that he had sent two men to Maroo Creek accompanied by Aboriginal guides to scout the

location for a new sawing establishment. Extensive stands of blue gums between 80 and 100 feet tall were discovered approximately three miles from the navigable section of the creek. One of the Aboriginal guides also identified a large stand of cedar on the bank of the creek and only a short distance to the Shoalhaven River. Wollstonecraft suggested building the sawmill in the vicinity of these newly discovered timber stands (Berry Papers ML MSS 315/50). In a letter to Wollstonecraft dated December 8 1829, Berry recorded that “Broughton informs me that there is an easy road to bring the cedar from the Kangaroo Gully and has again gone to explore the ridge – from what he says there is still a large quantity of cedar towards the head of the western area of his (Broughton) creek.” Ten days later, Wollstonecraft received a letter from Berry saying that “... Smith (overseer of the timber mill at Broughton Creek) and Broughton inform me that the largest quantity of good cedar in the neighbourhood is to be found in the Kangaroo Ground (ie Kangaroo Valley).” (Berry Papers ML MSS 315/86-7.)

Massive amounts of timber were removed from Coolangatta in the 1820s. In January 1826, 628049 feet of timber passed through the mill at Broughton Creek (Bayley 1975: 34). Berry and Wollstonecraft needed the cash receipts from timber sales to support their merchant business, which was constantly in debt (Wonga 1995). The cutting of timber cleared the land, permitting the growing of crops, the raising of animals, and isolated Aboriginal people from resources needed for subsistence.

As well as guiding timber cutters to new stands, Broughton worked in a variety of jobs on the Coolangatta Estate. In October 1824, Broughton worked on the tobacco crops (Letter from Berry to Wollstonecraft October 16 1824 Berry Papers ML MSS 315/86-7). On July 25 1825, Berry reported to Wollstonecraft that Broughton had helped to recapture two convict workers (Berry Papers ML MSS 315/86-7). In August 1825, Broughton couriered a letter from Souter to Berry in Sydney that contained information about the exploits of bushrangers in the Shoalhaven district (Berry Papers ML MSS 315/6). Later in the same month, Berry hired Broughton and another local Aboriginal man (Jack Waterman) to act as guides for a doctor visiting from the Illawarra (Berry Papers ML MSS 315/86-7). Broughton spent September and October of 1826 “... up to the middle in water cutting reeds for the cow house – no white man could have stood it – even his health has been slightly affected – one day put one of the stoutest men into fever.” (Letter from Berry to Wollstonecraft October 8 1826 ML MSS 315/86-7.) Broughton travelled

to Sydney in July 1827 with a letter of introduction by Wollstonecraft to Alexander Macleay, the Colonial Secretary, requesting the issue of 40 blankets to the Aboriginal people of the Shoalhaven. The request was successful and 40 blankets were sent down to Coolangatta in early July 1827 (SRNSW: CGS 905 [4/2045, letter no. 27/6118]). In August 1827, Broughton procured parrots for a bird collector in Sydney by the name of Harrison. He was keen to receive his payment and Berry wrote to Wollstonecraft: “Broughton desires me to remind (Harrison) of the blankets and slops which he promised to him – and I must add that the faithful way in which he has executed his commission deserves such a reward.” In the same letter, Berry wrote that Broughton was “... now employed in procuring the means of paying the debt he contracted with Miss Wollstonecraft (Edward Wollstonecraft’s sister and later Berry’s wife) on account of his wives – and he has delivered one to me (bird specimen)...” (Berry Papers ML MSS 315/86-7). The debt that Broughton contracted is not specified – it appears he paid for at least part of it with a parrot. Broughton used his skills as a hunter and gatherer and knowledge of the land in working for Berry. He tracked escapees, located timber and guided visitors. He procured wildlife and cut reeds. But Broughton learnt new skills such as working with tobacco and bricklaying. He also displayed tenacity in ensuring that he was paid for his work.

Raids and Response

The amicable nature of the working relationship between Broughton, Berry and Wollstonecraft was not characteristic of all encounters between whites and the indigenous inhabitants of the Shoalhaven estate. After exploring Numba in August 1826 for viable agricultural land, Berry wrote to Wollstonecraft that “(t)he only difficulty will be the preservation of the maize from the blacks – Graham tells me that his farm (“Werrigee” – a recent grant {Bayley 1975: 30}) appears to have been one of the great routes through which the Jervis Bay blacks plundered our crops, as he found there immense quantities of husks” (August 26 1826 Berry Papers ML MSS 315/86-7). Four days later, Berry informed Wollstonecraft that “... the blacks are making havock (sic) amongst our pigs – this morning your favourite English boar came in perforated with no less that five spears, so that he must have been attacked by a large gang.” Berry continued in a sarcastic tone:

... of course it will be expected that we must not resist (the) aggression of these innocent children of nature, these cherished adopted favourites of the Attorney General... Such innocents in his estimation being incapable of doing wrong only obeying the genuine impulses of nature. These people every day kill one another over the slightest quarrels and slay their wives without remorse. Yet in the case of every murder perpetuated by them upon the whites, the latter are almost invariably considered as necessarily the aggressors (Letter from Berry to Wollstonecraft 30th August 1826 Berry Papers ML MSS 315/86-7).

Berry was clearly angry over the proliferation of such incidents, but what he did not realise is that the terrestrial food sources of local Aboriginal people were disappearing as more land was settled, cleared, farmed and grazed. His reaction also supports Brenchley's argument that Berry's humanitarian attitudes were being eroded by his capitalist principles that encouraged him to develop the Shoalhaven estate with less consideration for the indigenous inhabitants.

Further incidents occurred the following year. In April 1827, Berry lamented the lack of a secure storage facility: "No doubt there has been much plunder both of corn and wheat as the barns have remained from want of flooring in an unfinished state – and either blacks or whites might enter when they please" (Letter from Berry to Wollstonecraft April 8 1827 Berry Papers ML MSS 315/86-7). Berry now recognised that both whites and Aboriginal people were taking grain.

Berry returned to Sydney soon after and on the May 3 1827, he wrote to Wollstonecraft, who replaced him at Coolangatta, that "Tom informs me that the black fellows are determined to spear Wylie, and have a regular plot – and are what they call sweetening you so as to put you off your guard – drive them away without killing them" (Berry Papers ML MSS 315/86-7). The disagreement between Wylie (farm worker) and the Aboriginal people was unspecified. Wollstonecraft replied on May 10 1827: "You advise me to turn away the Natives from the farm – to keep them away altogether. Pray how is that to be done?" (ML MSS 315/50). The difficulty arose from the fact that the Aboriginal people from Coolangatta were mostly living on their own land in proximity to a source of useful resources. Berry anticipated Wollstonecraft's question and sent him down a "... couple of excellent riffles (sic)" (Letter from Berry to Wollstonecraft May 6 1827 Berry Papers ML MSS 315/86-7). There is no record of the rifles having been used to drive the Aboriginal people away.

Correspondence later in May 1827 sheds some light on the nature of the dispute between Wylie and the local Aboriginal population. On the May 14 1827, Berry wrote to Wollstonecraft from the Coolangatta homestead that the "... worst thing against maize is the plunder by the natives which I do not see any means of preventing, at least while our cultivation is so struggling on account of the brushes and swamps." He went on to say that the cornfields were selected and run by Wylie. The threats against Wylie by the Aboriginal people may have come from his attempts to prevent their access to the corn. He may have used violence, but there is no record of this.

Why did Berry say that nothing could be done about the plundering by the Aboriginal people while brushes and swamps limited cultivation? It may have been the case that manpower was deployed in clearing and draining the land rather than cultivating and protecting the crops. This does not imply however that if the manpower were available, Berry would have used force to stop the taking of corn. On the whole, Berry seems to have preferred a display of arms to their violent employment. The humanitarian attitude derived from his Scottish education was not completely worn.

Episodes of violence and destruction continued in 1829. Wollstonecraft reported to Berry on July 28 1829 that a fire most probably started by Aborigines had almost destroyed the wheat stacks (Berry Papers ML MSS 315/50). The following month, he wrote that in the past year, both "... black and white thieves" have taken pigs (Letter from Wollstonecraft to Berry August 26 1829 Berry Papers ML MSS 315/50). He did not say how many were taken or whether both groups ever acted together.

The most serious incident occurred in the early months of 1829. Berry wrote to Wollstonecraft from Coolangatta on February 17 1829 about an alleged murder of a sawyer by Broger. He stated that:

Souter... gave me information of a horrid murder committed by Broger, Broughton's brother, upon... a sawyer – purportrated in the most treacherous manner, without any provocation, and it appears merely to obtains possession of a quantity of flour and other articles which the unfortunate victim had procured shortly before – Broughton... has acted in this affair in rather an ambiguous manner – the natives have disappeared to a man... Some time before this happened a mortal feud existed between Broughton and Broger (Berry Papers ML MSS 315/86-7).

Broughton's "ambiguous manner" probably stemmed from the dilemma that he had social ties connecting him to both sides of the incident. More information came to light several days later and Berry communicated it immediately to Wollstonecraft:

Both Smith and our sawyers imagine that Broger had some secret grudge against Rivett (the murdered man) and his mate (who was also injured) – they say that Hynde's sawyers (the employer) were in the habit of trading with the natives, and took advantage every opportunity of over-reaching them – I am told that Hynde's men have forsaken the bush – ours however seem to have no apprehensions – none of the natives have yet appeared but have been occasionally heard in the bushes – Smith says that Broughton fled from the soldiers because they foolishly threatened to shoot him provided he did not find his brother, and supposes that he has gone to Sydney – this appears not unlikely from the circumstances of the natives returning and conducting the soldiers home (February 19 1829 Berry Papers ML MSS 315/86-7).

The incident did not take place on the Shoalhaven estate, but news of it quickly spread to the Aboriginal people on the property, who fled, probably fearing reprisals by other sawyers and authorities.

Broger and an accomplice were captured soon after the event, but escaped. They were still at large in June when Wollstonecraft at Coolangatta wrote to Berry in Sydney that Broger and his companions were back in the neighbourhood, harboured by stockmen (June 12 1829 Berry Papers ML MSS 315/50). Broger was captured some time after that, taken to Sydney, tried, and executed at Campbelltown. His accomplice apparently escaped from a lock-up at Darling Harbour, but drowned trying to cross the upper part of the inlet. Berry recalled in 1871 that after Broger's execution, a party of his friends visited the Shoalhaven estate and claimed Broger had acted in self-defence (Macfarlane 1871). This information could never have come to court, as Aboriginal people were not permitted to give evidence.

The incident, as well as highlighting the inadequacies of the court system for Aboriginal people and the dangers they faced in dealing with sawyers and other settlers, demonstrates the difficulties of uncovering all aspects of the economic interaction of Aboriginal people and Europeans. It is fairly certain that the murder took place after a trade dispute, the precise details of which are unknown. Knowledge of the transaction

would not be known without the murder. There were probably numerous other instances of trade as Aboriginal people sought to obtain rations and items in return for guidance, food, water and possibly sexual services. The incident also reveals the different types of relationships that Aboriginal people had with different groups of workers. Wollstonecraft recounted that stockmen harboured Broger when he was a wanted man by the authorities and probably by other sawyers. The reason why the stockmen wished to protect Broger is not clear. Perhaps the sawyers, too, had exploited them. At other times, the stockmen may have felt differently, especially when their animals were being taken for food.

Episodes of Aboriginal resistance to European settlement decreased after the Broger incident. Aboriginal people began working on the wheat and corn harvests soon after so the increased access to European food and goods that followed may have reduced their need to steal. Alternatively, an unrecorded show of force may have demonstrated to the community the futility of maintaining violent opposition.

The Expansion of the Shoalhaven Estate and Aboriginal Work Days

By 1829, the number of stock at Coolangatta reached 1000 head. Tanning and shoemaking were recent introductions to local industry. The white population was increasing too, though there were fluctuations. In September 1824, there were 56 men (mostly convicts) working on the property. This number increased to about 160 in April 1825, including approximately 100 convicts. The numbers fell to 17 free workers and 86 convicts in 1827 (Berry Papers ML MSS 315/37-8). Despite the overall increase, Berry complained of being short handed (see letter to Wollstonecraft October 26 1826 Berry Papers ML MSS 315/86-7). The corn harvest in the middle of the year and the wheat harvest at the end of the year were the two periods when the demand for labour was greatest. Aboriginal people first worked as harvesters in May 1829. They also worked in the following summer wheat harvest. Aboriginal reapers were brought in at a time when convicts were protesting against inadequate rations and poor treatment by going slow and absconding (Wonga 1995: 182). They may have been replacements for the missing convicts. Berry informed Wollstonecraft on January 7 1830 that “We have been employing as many natives as possible to assist in the reaping – and four of them have stuck steadily to the work for eight or ten days and although not first rate reapers still they are better than some of the worst reapers among the white people” (Berry Papers ML

MSS 315/86-7). Aboriginal people formed a reserve workforce to be drawn upon in times of shortage.

Wollstonecraft was less praiseworthy about the reaping abilities of Aboriginal people:

I know not what Mr Toosey's (overseer) system for his May harvest may be – but nothing could be worse or more injurious than that which was pursued last year... He handed it over to the black people to be gathered as they thought proper – and merely had it carted into the field when picked. The results were – as might be expected – that the blacks picked some – but left a much larger quantity upon the stalks.... At least one third (was) lost to us... This system – or anything similar to it – will I trust be avoided on the present occasion (Letter to Berry May 22 1830 Berry papers ML MSS 315/50).

Wollstonecraft's assessment of their harvesting abilities is hasty and unfair. There are no previous records of Aboriginal people having participated in the harvest. Wollstonecraft's account indicates that the Aboriginal people were given little training in harvesting technique and had to learn on the job. It is not surprising that some of the corn was left on the stalks at their first try. As is to be expected, their skills improved and Aboriginal people continued to assist with corn and wheat harvesting over many decades. Further, the Aboriginal reapers were working when money was tight on the farm. Wollstonecraft advocated that no more money be spent on farm development and that any excess workers be dismissed (Wonga 1995: 158-9). It seems that he did not fully appreciate the presence of a reserve workforce who largely supported itself and worked for very little.

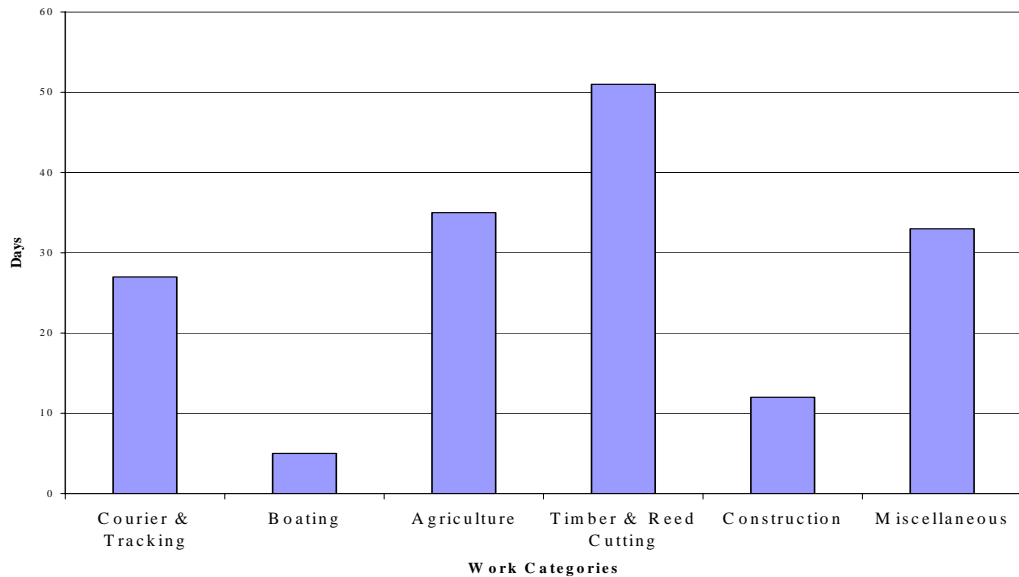
It is possible to determine the minimum number of days that Aboriginal people worked on Coolangatta from soon after first settlement to the end of the wheat harvesting season in January 1830. The details of Aboriginal work for this period are tabulated in Appendix 2. The database does not include any work done by Aboriginal people during Berry's second visit to the Shoalhaven when the land grant was claimed. The information has been extracted from farm work books and letters. When the numbers of work days are not specified in the records, the following assumptions are made: a day of work is allocated for each mention of an Aboriginal person undertaking a task. For example, a day of work is allocated when the record states that "a native tracked a lost cow". Two work days are allocated when the record states that "two natives tracked a

cow". Only the minimum is calculated. It may have been the case that the two Aboriginal trackers spent three days each looking for the lost beast, but that cannot be determined from the information available. In some cases an extrapolation is made. For example, when an Aboriginal person is listed as delivering a letter to Sydney, two work days are allocated, one for the initial trip and another for the return journey. In the case where a week or more was recorded, it is assumed that the working week consists of seven days. Overall, the calculation is most probably an underestimation. Countering this, the number of hours that Aboriginal people worked each day is unknown. They may have worked for considerably less than what was considered a full days labour. A day of work is allocated even when a few hours may only have been accrued.

Using the assumptions just outlined, I have calculated that Aboriginal people worked a minimum of 163 days on the Coolangatta Estate from July 1822 to January 1830. The type of work undertaken has been divided into the following categories: courier and tracking services (includes guiding), boating, agricultural labour (including harvesting), timber and reed cutting, construction and miscellaneous (including the provision of medical services). The results are shown below in Graph 4.1. The most common work undertaken by Aboriginal people was timber and reed cutting with a minimum of 51 days work. Forty-eight out of 51 days was made up of Broughton's two months cutting reeds in 1827. Black Dick's year as a timber cutter was not included as Berry only mentioned the possibility of his employment. The next most common category was agriculture, including 34 days of harvesting. The result is misleading as the harvesting occurred at the end of the period. Before that, most of the work that Aboriginal people did was not concerned directly with farm production. An example of this is the minimum of 27 days that Aboriginal people spent carrying letters, tracking cattle and guiding settlers.

The individual who accrued the most work days was Broughton with 84 days. No other individual could be identified as working more than a couple of days. Broughton was clearly an invaluable and trusted worker to Berry and Wollstonecraft who could perform a variety of tasks using his skills from hunting and gathering and new abilities learnt on the farm. He also acted as a link between Berry and the rest of the Aboriginal community, organising workers when convict numbers were down.

It is difficult without more precise records to determine the maximum number of days that Aboriginal people worked on Coolangatta between 1822 and 1830. Even if you quadruple the minimum number to take account of unrecorded work, that still only gives 652 days overall or 81.5 Aboriginal work days per year. Clearly, Aboriginal people only worked the minimum number of days on the farm that they needed to obtain the few



Graph 4.1: Aboriginal work days, 1837-1838

European items they wanted and to reaffirm a generally positive relationship they had with most whites on the estate. It indicates that at this time Aboriginal people still had sufficient means of subsistence not to have to rely on working for Berry to obtain their food. Despite the increase in the size of settlement and the destruction of many natural resources, sufficient land, river and sea were still available for the indigenous population to live off.

The following calculations confirm the minimal amount that Aboriginal people relied on farm work at Coolangatta in the 1820s to obtain subsistence. The blanket records from 1828 indicate that 40 blankets were handed out to Aboriginal people in the Shoalhaven area. This is most probably an underestimation of the population as the records from the early 1830s show numbers in excess of 100. Nevertheless, for the following calculation I assume that 40 Aboriginal people were available to work on Coolangatta if they wanted

to. Taking the assumption of a six day working week, that means 40 people could work 12480 days in a year and 99840 days over eight years. Using the assumption that Aboriginal people worked for 652 days on Coolangatta between 1822 and 1830, that amount makes up approximately .65% of the possible number of days that they could have worked on the farm. If we make the further assumption that Aboriginal people, for each day of work, were given the food they needed for that day, then Aboriginal people only gained .65% of their subsistence from work on Coolangatta. It is likely that Aboriginal people were given less food than they needed for a day's work – Berry and Wollstonecraft were known to regularly reduce the rations of convicts so they could save money and pay off debts (Wonga 1995) - so the percentage is probably less. The conclusion to draw is that farm work was a minor strategy for supplementing subsistence among the Aboriginal people in the Shoalhaven in the 1820s. It is unlikely that trade between sawyers, convicts and other farm workers, and Aboriginal people would have provided much additional food as the former had little excess to exchange. Also, as Alexander Berry emphasised, Aboriginal people stole relatively little from the Shoalhaven estate. Although the amount cannot be quantified, the evidence suggests it contributed little to Aboriginal subsistence.

There was still sufficient land for Aboriginal people to obtain subsistence in the late 1820s. In 1828, the estate consisted of 30000 acres with several thousand more acres leased from the government. However, only 1200 acres of the land was cleared. Aboriginal people lived on the property and had access to the remaining land. Sea and river resources were also still fully available.

Did Alexander Berry and Edward Wollstonecraft set out in 1822 to preserve the Aboriginal economy as a self-supporting labour force? Both men did not write as such in their journals and letters. They were, however, happy to make use of Aboriginal assistance when necessary. The small payments they made to Aboriginal workers and their knowledge of the bush skills possessed by the indigenous inhabitants suggest they knew that Aboriginal people could look after themselves when working on the Shoalhaven estate. This was probably reason enough to permit them to continue living on their traditional lands. There were other reasons too. Alexander Berry had a sympathy towards Aboriginal people, although this was tempered by several instances of

stealing and his belief they were inferior. He also thought they could be 'civilised' through example and instruction to become settled farmers and workers.

Other Strategies on the Shoalhaven Estate

Aside from hunting, gathering and fishing, the most significant strategy for Aboriginal people on the Shoalhaven estate was theft, which increased in frequency up until the end of the 1820s. It is unlikely, however, to have been a major contributor to subsistence. Berry made the comment in 1823 that the birds were responsible for the loss of more grain than Aboriginal people. The rate of theft increased after that, but its status as a minority strategy is confirmed by Berry's statement in his 1838 reminiscences that Aboriginal people stole very little. Other strategies also contributed little to Aboriginal subsistence in the 1820s. Free food and gifts were not forthcoming from Berry after the initial period of settlement. He only provided rations if Aboriginal people worked in return. There is no evidence of local people selling or trading, or permanently moving away from the estate. The first evidence for long term relationships between free workers and Aboriginal women does appear until the 1830s.

Further Settlement of the Shoalhaven District

More land was granted and settled in the 1820s while the development of the Shoalhaven estate continued. Thomas Hyndes was granted 1000 acres near present day Gerringong in 1824. Aspinall and Brown were given 4000 acres at the head of Broughton Creek. 1280 acres was issued to Charles Staples in 1830, as was 1920 acres to J.G. Richardson at Toolijoola. All four grants had passed to Berry by 1840 (Bayley 1975: 29). Also in the 1820s, Prosper de Mestre received 1300 along the Shoalhaven River to the west of Coolangatta Mountain. In the vicinity John Layton took up a grant of 640 acres. Brundee, a property of 2516 acres was granted to William Elyard. David Cooper secured land at Jervis Bay in 1827. The government also planned village reserves at Illaroo on the northern side of the Shoalhaven, Terara on the southern side and on the upper reaches of Broughton Creek (Bayley 1975: 30). The only record of Aboriginal people working on these grants in the 1820s comes from the Broger incident when Berry wrote in a letter that Aboriginal people traded with the sawyers on Hynde's farm. More information

about Aboriginal work on smaller grants comes from the 1830s and will be dealt with in the next chapter.

Fishing, Hunting and Gathering in the Shoalhaven

Visitors to the Shoalhaven in the 1820s made acute observations about Aboriginal life. Barron Field travelled to the Shoalhaven estate in October 1823. He observed the way that Aboriginal people used the stalks of a palm (*Seaforthea elegans*) to make a "... water bucket... by tying up each end, like their bark canoes" (Field 1825). Field also recorded dairy farmers made milk pails and cream pans in the same manner.

On the night of October 22 1823, Field went night fishing by torch light with several Aboriginal people from Coolangatta. He noticed that the torches were made of bark that was beaten and tied up. The light from the torch was used to "... scare the bream into motion that lie among the rocky shallows, when they either spear them with the fiz-gig, or drag them from under their hiding places with their hand, bite their heads, and throw them high and dry on the shore." (Field 1825.) The fishing technique suggests that only men were present. Field attributed the small number of the fishing party to the fact that many were absent feasting on a beached whale.

The Wesleyan missionary, John Harper, visited Jervis Bay in October 1826 with the aim of establishing a mission in the area. He also visited Bateman's Bay with this intention. Harper landed on Bowen Island on October 7 1826 and observed several Aboriginal people fishing. He distributed a few fish hooks among them. Later in the day he observed that the Bowen Island Aboriginal people were "... never satisfied give them whatever you will." Harper attributed this behaviour to the cruel conduct of the whites (ML Bonwick Transcripts, Box 53: 1555-70; CY1529). Over the next couple of days, Harper had several meetings with the Jervis Bay people – on October 9 1826 he encountered 96 people, including women and children. He distributed a few biscuits at these meetings and talked about the Bible. Harper found that the Jervis Bay people knew a song he had heard at Wellington. About their mode of subsistence, he observed:

These blacks roam without fixed habitation, and only find a temporary shelter under the branches of a tree, the hollow of a rock, or under two or three sheets of

bark, laid in a reclining position against each other. They are very idle and but very seldom employed, except in fishing and hunting the Kangaroo and Opossum. Their weapons are spears and clubs. They are very dexterous marksmen, and will hit a bird flying or guanna (sic) on a tree, or any other small object, at an amazing distance. (ML Bonwick Transcripts, Box 53: 1555-70; CY1529)

Harper's observations suggest that the Aboriginal people of Bowen Isle and Jervis Bay were at this time still able to conduct their hunting and gathering economy with little interference from and reliance upon, white settlers and travellers.

A group of French sailors, naturalists, soldiers and artists aboard the *Astrolabe* visited Jervis Bay between November 26-29 1826, commanded by Jules-Sébastien-César D'Urville. On their day of arrival, D'Urville spotted several fires on the shore and a group of five Aboriginal people carrying some fish. He sent two sailors ashore to make contact and they reported that several of the group could speak some words of English and "... all gave evidence of being amicably disposed." D'Urville explored the land about Jervis Bay the next day and was surprised by the scarcity of plants and trees. He attributed this to the frequent burning carried out by the Jervis Bay people. D'Urville also observed seven men and two children aged between eight to ten years old. He commented that Aboriginal women remained out of sight. The Jervis Bay people were categorised as "...better looking, stronger and, in particular, better proportioned..." than their Sydney counterparts, the reason being a greater abundance of food (Rosenman 1987: 66-67).

On November 28 1826, the sailors of the *Astrolabe* cast a single net into the bay. A huge catch was dragged onto the shore. Many of the fish, particularly the small sharks and trigger fish, were given to the Jervis Bay people who responded with "... extravagant exhibitions of delight." The response drew the attention of D'Urville who thought an unfortunate incident had occurred (Rosenman 1987: 66-67). Louis Auguste de Sainson recorded the scene in a lithograph entitled "Sailors from the *Astrolabe* share their catch with the Natives" (see Organ 1990: 144-5). He also depicted other Jervis Bay people in various poses including a man with a fish in his hand.

Later that day he described several huts built of eucalyptus bark and shaped into an oblong beehive, six to seven feet in height. Each roof was covered with grass and various

marine plants. D'Urville thought them to be clean and spacious and capable of housing between 8-10 to people. He also wrote of examining the sandstone rocks about the bay and finding drawings of cutters and launches. A member of the crew left a wooden rule on the shore one day and found it the next decorated with similar depictions (Rosenman 1987: 66-67).

D'Urville's writings confirm the conclusions drawn from Harper's journal: that Aboriginal people from Jervis Bay were still operating a hunting and gathering economy with as yet minimal interference by whites. His comment about the relative health of the people he observed compared to those in Sydney indicates that sufficient resources were available to maintain the required level of subsistence. The burning of the land and the building of huts also attests that a largely unchanged hunting and gathering economy was in operation. It is interesting to note that both Harper and D'Urville both observed the Jervis Bay people several months after Berry reported that Aboriginal people from the area were responsible for taking corn from Coolangatta. The relative health of the Jervis Bay people and their relaxed approach to hunting indicates that the corn was taken as an experiment rather than a necessity.

Illawarra in the 1820s

The settlement of the Illawarra intensified during the 1820s. McBrien surveyed nearly 7000 acres of grants in 1825 from Bulli to the Minamurra River. John Spearing was promised 1000 acres near Wollongong and he took up the land in 1825 – the grant was not confirmed until May 1841. His property was known as Pauls Grove (or Paulsgrove). Surveyor Knapp was sent to the Illawarra in 1829 to locate grants for military veterans, particularly at Dapto, and to map the land for the proposed townships of Wollongong and Kiama (Jervis 1942: 83-87). Many of the landholders in the 1820s were absentee, with managers employed to run the properties. Some owners expanded their holdings. Robert Jenkins, one of the first grantees, built his holdings to 32000 acres (McQuilton 1997: 26-27).

Relations between the Illawarra Aboriginal people and the settlers were mixed. Charles Throsby Smith, nephew of Doctor Charles Throsby, recalled in 1863 that when he first claimed his grant in 1823, the local people were "... disposed to be very troublesome" as

he and four convicts cleared the land. He went on to say that he always treated them with kindness and they all soon became friends. Throsby wrote that:

The Aborigines were never particularly hostile to the whites. The Wollongong tribe numbered about one hundred (in the 1820s)... (I)n the early days they had abundance of fish, kangaroos, 'possums, ducks, and other wild fowl. On one occasion, I saw a blackfellow spear a kangaroo between the two large trees standing in front of my house. (1863 Reminiscences of Charles Throsby Smith: *Illawarra Mercury* October 3 1876.)

Throsby went on to state that he was familiar with "Old Bundle" (possibly the same fellow who accompanied Dr Throsby in 1818 and before) who claimed the land around Wollongong as his "domain". Throsby said that he paid "... no end of tribute... to his Majesty, in the shape of tea, sugar, flour, meat." He also knew "Old Timberry" who roamed in the Berkeley district. Both areas were apparently at war with the Kiama and Shoalhaven Aborigines (1863 Reminiscences of Charles Throsby Smith: *Illawarra Mercury* October 3 1876).

Barron Field stopped off in the Illawarra on his way to Coolangatta in October 1823. He crossed the shallow opening to Lake Illawarra on October 20 1823 where he observed "... Natives in their canoes, looking very characteristic and beautiful, now that the process of English civilization has disarmed this part of the coast of those savage dangers..." (Field 1825). The process of civilisation that Field referred to included elements of murder and violence, behavior of a less savoury nature than he anticipated.

Two such incidents occurred in April 1822 (SRNSW: CGS 897, [4/1758 reel 6054]). The convict Seth Hawker, an overseer at Richard Brook's farm, accompanied by John Neale and Thomas Binskin, shot an Aboriginal woman and then set his dogs upon her for taking some corn. The woman later died. Hawker was arrested and brought before the Sydney Criminal Court in June. He was acquitted. Both Neale and Binskin made depositions stating that Aboriginal people regularly took corn, potatoes and anything else they could get their hands on. Binskin went on to claim that three months before the murder, several Aboriginal people had threatened to spear him if he did not dig up some potatoes. The extent to which Neale and Binskin said that Aboriginal people stole corn and other items is not credible as both were attempting to establish circumstances that would partly justify Hawker's later actions.

At about the same time, William Graham and his son William Junior, shot one Aboriginal man and sliced the hand off of another for allegedly taking corn and tobacco from their land. Depositions were taken but they were never brought before a court. William Graham junior deposed that Aboriginal people were in the habit of stealing corn and other items from the property. He also said that he believed that both injured Aboriginal men both recovered quickly. There is no independent confirmation of their survival.

Observer	Location	Date	Observation
Barron Field	Tom Thumb Lagoon Wollongong	20-10-1823	Aboriginal people in their canoes on the lagoon.
Barron Field	Stream or river near Coolangatta Estate	22-10-1823	Aboriginal people fishing by torchlight and either spearing them or catching them by hand and biting their heads. Field reports not many Aborigines present as many more feasting on a whale.
Charles Throsby Smith	Wollongong	1823	Observed that Aboriginal people had an abundance of fish, ducks and kangaroos – saw an Aboriginal man spear a kangaroo in front of his house.
John Harper	Bowen Island	7-10-1826	Fishing – observed that scales not removed before cooking.
John Harper	Jervis Bay	9-10-1826	Aboriginal people fishing and hunting kangaroo and possum using spears and clubs. Observes their accuracy in throwing.
John Harper	Twofold Bay	20-10-1826	Observes their principal source of subsistence is catching fish and seals and procuring fruit from the woods. Also records they live in temporary huts about a mile from the coast.
Jules Dumont d’Urville	Jervis Bay	26-11-1826	Aboriginal people carrying fish.
Jules Dumont d’Urville	Jervis Bay	28-11-1826	Observes two Aboriginal huts shaped in an oblong beehive and standing six to seven feet high with a covering of grass and marine plants.
Alexander Stewart	Tom Thumb Lagoon, Mullet Creek and Lake Illawarra	Nov. 1828 (recalled in <i>Illawarra Mercury</i> 1894)	Aboriginal residents lived mostly on fish

Table 4.2: Observations of Fishing, Hunting and Gathering on the South Coast in the 1820s.

The frequency with which Aboriginal people took corn, potatoes, tobacco and other items cannot be determined. The testimony of people like Neale, Binskin and the Grahams cannot be taken for granted as they had other motives. It is likely that the corn and potatoes were taken to replace native plant foods that were scarcer because of the spread of settlement. After the Hawker and Graham incidents, reports of Aboriginal people taking corn and other items became less prevalent. Aboriginal people in the Illawarra realised the dangers of being caught and may have either adopted a more concealed approach to corn-taking or taken up a different strategy altogether such as working for settlers or increasing their reliance on other natural food sources such as the sea. There

are no records of Aboriginal people working on properties in the Illawarra in the 1820s comparable to the situation at Coolangatta. The majority of available evidence records Aboriginal people fishing, as is seen in Table 4.2.

The observations do not by themselves demonstrate that fishing was the most important economic strategy in the Illawarra as some of the observations are from outside the Illawarra (but still on the south coast). Also, farm records showing the extent of Aboriginal work have not survived. Nevertheless, they show that for the Illawarra and Shoalhaven, rivers, lakes and the sea were an important source of food and other useful material. Further, given that the historical evidence suggests that other strategies were relatively minor, the implication is that fishing (combined with hunting and gathering) was the most important. This is a reasonable conclusion given that Aboriginal people had the expertise to exploit marine and riverine resources, and that settlers were not commercially interested.

Blanket Distributions and Census

The government first distributed Blankets to Aboriginal people in the Illawarra and Shoalhaven in May 1826. Yager and his band received 26 blankets on May 1 1826. On May 5 1826, 10 blankets were given to an unnamed group in the Illawarra. A week later, 3 blankets were provided for the Bulli people. The Five Islands people received 8 blankets on May 18 1826 (SRNSW: CGS 905 [4/2045]).

The following year a census was taken of the Aboriginal people living in the Illawarra, with a total of 105. The Illawarra population was broken down into 6 bands: the information is recorded in Table 4.3:

The Thapma and Garramah bands were most probably located on the Thapma River. The Kangaroo Ground band clearly consisted of inland people and the Five Islands band was coastal. The others may have been a combination of both. It is likely that the count was an underestimation of Aboriginal people in the Illawarra region. Not all people may have come forward to collect a blanket for various reasons including the wish to remain separate from white people. All those listed in the table received a blanket by July 1827 (SRNSW: CGS 905, [4/2045]). The bands may have been intact since before first contact

or an amalgam of survivors after population loss. The issue of population will be considered more carefully in the next chapter.

Chief's Name	Tribe	Men	Women	Children
Cratherea	Thapma	12 ⁴	5	3
Paddy Gally	Garramah			
Timberly	Five Islands	10	6	5
Bundong	Illawarra	11	15	9
Sillee	Crooked River	6	5	3
Timmulang	Kangaroo Ground	5	9	1
	Total:	48	36	21

Table 4.3: Population Census, Illawarra Aborigines May 1827 (SRNSW: CGS 905 [4/2045, letter 27/3735]).

Forty blankets were distributed to the Shoalhaven Aboriginal people at the request of Broughton and Wollstonecraft. The population consisted of 17 men, 13 women and 10 children (SRNSW: CGS 905, [4/2045]). The 40 people probably belonged to Broughton's band, which was based on Broughton Creek. The number is likely to be an underestimation of the Shoalhaven population as other local bands such as Numba and Jervis Bay, which were counted in later blanket distributions, were not included this time. The census also includes an entry for Budjong of 15 people (6 males, 5 females and 4 children). Information from the 1828 blanket distribution records indicates that the Budjong band divided their time between the Shoalhaven River, Kangaroo Ground and Sutton Forest in the southern highlands (see below).

A further census of Illawarra Aboriginal people was taken in May 1828. The information is present in Table 4.4. The total population recorded was 89, a reduction of 16 from the previous year. The Five Islands and Illawarra bands both decreased – the Thapma and Yarramagh (Garramah from the previous year) bands both increased. It is not known whether the Wangeyuana and Jamorroo bands are the Crooked River and Kangaroo

⁴ The population for Thapma and Garramah was combined.

Ground bands with different names. Movement between bands and migration out of the district can probably explain some of the reduction. Some mortality is likely. Others may have not been willing to come forward. The government initially issued 50 blankets. A further 30 blankets were later given to Aboriginal women (SRNSW: CGS 905, [4/2045]).

Tribe	Usual place of resort	Men	Women	Children
Five Islands	Chip baroley	10	5	3
Illawarra	Bunadorough	8	6	5
Thapma	Thapma River	9	6	4
Yarramagh	Yarramagh	6	4	3
Wangeyuana	Mangey	4	2	1
Lilley or Jamorroo (ie Jamberoo)	Jamorroo	6	6	1

Table 4.4: Population Census, Illawarra Aborigines May 1828 (SRNSW: CGS 905, [4/2045]).

The Budjong band was given eight blankets in May 1828. They were also provided with six suits of slops. The chief elder was listed as Thomas Errombee. Their population was recorded at 28, consisting of eight men, eight women and 12 children. Their usual places of resort were registered as Sutton Forest, Kangaroo Ground and both sides of the Shoalhaven River (SRNSW: CGS 905, [4/2045, letter 28/4074]).

In early May 1829, 30 blankets were distributed in the Illawarra. They were given to 30 men whose names were recorded, many for the first time. Some of the men, such as Shoal Haven Jack, were from further south. The names are included in Appendix two. Later in the year 39 more blankets were apportioned and a larger list of 69 names was submitted to the government in August, again including some from the Shoalhaven, and possibly Sydney – Parramatta Tom is an example (SRNSW: CGS 905, [4/2045, letters 29/2884 and 29/7245]). A separate issue of blankets was made to the Aboriginal people at Bulli in April 1829. Four men, three women and seven children were given blankets. Their ‘Chief’ was recorded as Charcoal Will (SRNSW: CGS 905, [4/2045]).

The blanket returns, as well as giving some indication about population, also provide additional information about Aboriginal mobility in the 1820s. Some bands, such as the Budjong group, exploited widely different areas. Individuals such as Broughton and Shoal Haven Jack moved about the south coast, delivering messages and collecting blankets. The movement would have allowed the passage of important information between Aboriginal groups concerning the availability of resources and the behaviour of settlers. Mobility continued to be an important economic strategy for the remainder of the 19th century.

Conclusion

The early 1820s saw the beginning of permanent settlement in the Shoalhaven district. Previously, only short-term timber cutters had visited the area. Aboriginal people initially responded to the permanent presence of Alexander Berry, Edward Wollstonecraft and others by assisting them to establish the farm. They crewed boats, carried supplies, cleared roads, identified pasturage and timber stands, drove cattle and delivered messages. Their contribution was important and Berry responded in a positive manner, although the remuneration he provided was largely of a token nature. As the Shoalhaven Estate expanded and Aboriginal people lost access to some resources, they increasingly took to taking corn, pigs and other items. Berry's response was to initially display his superior firepower, but later the guns were used and at least one Aboriginal person was shot dead. This was at odds with Berry's supposed sympathy towards indigenous people, although he did not order the shooting. Clearly, Berry's main agenda was to establish a successful farm and he was not going to stand in the way of his staff taking punitive action to protect his property. Despite the violence, the injury and death toll was relatively low compared with other areas of the colony and the Shoalhaven Aboriginal people were largely happy to continue living on their traditional lands in return for a small amount of labour. They continued to work for Berry and Wollstonecraft, particularly putting to use their skill at tracking and moving across the landscape. By the end of the 1820s, the Aboriginal workers had taken up reaping and were more fully involved in the work of the farm. They worked at a time when convicts were protesting against poor treatment by absconding. The Aboriginal people formed a self-supporting reserve workforce, a situation tacitly support by Berry and Wollstonecraft. Despite this, work was infrequent and it is likely that the food they gained accounted for less than one

percent of their total subsistence. It is likely that theft contributed a greater amount to subsistence, but it was a minor strategy too. There was some variability in work practices – relatively few individuals appeared to work and those who did worked only for a few days. The exception is Broughton who worked at least for part of every year excluding 1828.

The Jervis Bay Aboriginal people made early contact with Berry – Yager sailed to Sydney as a crewman on Berry's boat – but the extent to which they interacted with him and worked on the farm after that is not known. Observations by visitors suggest they maintained an independent economy with little reliance upon and interference by white people. Settlers did not take up their land and they had complete access to the resources they required for subsistence. The Jervis Bay people raided Berry's cornfields in 1827, but this seems to have been a one-off episode possibly motivated by curiosity.

Settlement intensified in the Illawarra during the 1820s. Aboriginal people were further alienated from their land and its resources. They responded by raiding farms and taking corn, potatoes, tobacco and other items. Their raids were met with violence and Aboriginal people were maimed and killed. Raids declined in frequency after the violence reached its peak in 1822. Other economic strategies were adopted. Fishing was the important source of subsistence on the south coast as Aboriginal people used a resource not commercially exploited by the settlers. Other Aboriginal people, such as Old Timberry and his band, occasionally sought supplies of flour, sugar and meat from sympathetic settlers.

CHAPTER 5: SHOALHAVEN AND ILLAWARRA 1830-1840

Expansion of the Shoalhaven Estate

The Shoalhaven estate of Alexander Berry and Edward Wollstonecraft continued to expand throughout the 1830s, despite the introduction of the Rippon land regulations which decreed that land would no longer be granted by the government, only sold at auction (Jervis 1941: 35). Berry and Wollstonecraft increased their holdings by purchasing private land and the estate consisted of about 40000 acres by 1836 (Wonga 1995: 217). Sheep were introduced onto the property in 1831 (Bayley 1975: 34). In the same year Berry imported a wheat threshing machine from Scotland to improve labour efficiency (Wonga 1975: 202). Farm development in the early 1830s though was curtailed by debts from their merchant business: Berry and Wollstonecraft were frequently in court at this time answering the charges of their creditors (Wonga 1995: 81). On March 2 1831 Wollstonecraft wrote to Berry accusing him of excessive expenditure on improvements at the estate and the employment of unnecessary workers. He considered that the farm was lost to him as a residence and that it should either be sold or divided in two (BP ML MSS 315/50). Berry soothed Wollstonecraft's concerns, the two remained business partners and the estate remained intact.

The convicts also posed a problem for the estate in the early 1830s. To save money, Berry and Wollstonecraft were sometimes late in distributing rations and clothing. The convicts protested by going slow on the job and absconding. In June 1831, 18 convicts went to Wollongong to complain to a Lieutenant about their treatment. He visited the Shoalhaven estate several days later to investigate and had the convict ringleaders flogged for their insubordination: the Lieutenant was on the side of Berry and Wollstonecraft and the problems of inadequate rations and poor working conditions were not addressed (Wonga 1995: 183).

Wollstonecraft died in 1832 after a long period of ill health (Pike 1967: 620). Berry immediately sold the merchant business to concentrate on managing the Shoalhaven estate. He visited the property less frequently, preferring to oversee the sale of its products in Sydney. Another outcome of the death of Wollstonecraft was an

improvement in labour relations. Convict rebellion was less frequent, suggesting that Wollstonecraft was the harder task-master.

Berry invited his brothers from Scotland to join him in managing the estate. They initially refused, but Berry's persistence paid off and they arrived in July 1836. John Berry was made superintendent at £200 pa; David Berry first assistant at £100 pa; and William second assistant at £50 pa. All three brothers lived on the estate and were given various areas of responsibility. John became heavily involved in the day-to-day running of the farm, often overseeing operations from horseback. He shifted the focus of the estate to stock breeding and cattle production. This was necessary as wheat prices had declined throughout the early 1830s and cedar stocks were dwindling (Wonga 1995: 231).

Scarcity of Aboriginal Work: 1830-1836

Evidence for Aboriginal work on the property is scarce from 1830 to 1836. In October 1830, Berry reported a situation where the blacksmith was apparently making tools to give to Aboriginal people as payment for shooting birds and obtaining skins (BP ML MSS 315/86-7). On December 31 1830, Wollstonecraft wrote to Berry from Crows Nest, Sydney, that he had given two "black boys" a check shirt each for driving some cattle to Sydney. He asked Berry to make sure that the shirts were not taken from the boys (BP ML MSS 315/50). Wollstonecraft did not specify those most likely to take the shirts. Elizabeth Berry addressed her Aunt in London in May 1836, stating that "we have always been on the best of terms with the... natives when at Shoalhaven." She recalled that several of them were employed by her to carry wood and water. Elizabeth went on to say that they would display "little jealousies" if others were employed to do the same job. Apparently, the Aboriginal population of the Shoalhaven estate had "pride in calling Mr Berry their master". For many years, she reminisced, Berry never had a weapon for defence¹: "we often trust them with important messages – and with property." She reported that recently an Aboriginal man had carried a message from a ship at Jervis Bay to the Coolangatta homestead. Another Aboriginal man had also just recaptured an

¹ Elizabeth Berry was clearly ignorant of the incidents in the 1820s when Berry kept several guns on the estate.

escaped convict, while someone else had sucked the poison from a snakebite victim (BP ML MSS 315/90).

It is interesting to note that Aboriginal people appear to have been given guns to shoot birds. It is testament to the peaceful relations that existed at the time between the Aboriginal and white inhabitants of the estate. Elizabeth Berry's letter further confirms the stable nature of the relationship, although she was probably mistaken when she said that the Aboriginal people had pride in calling Alexander Berry their master – the small amount of work recorded indicates that Aboriginal people were still economically independent and did not have to obey the wishes of Berry to obtain subsistence. The nature of the relationship was reciprocal in that Aboriginal people were permitted to remain on the Shoalhaven estate in return for small amounts of labour and a tacit agreement not to disrupt the operation of the farm. The power, however, was weighted with Alexander Berry, who had the means to force Aboriginal people from the land if the relationship deteriorated.

James Backhouse, a missionary, visited the property in September and October 1836. He met an unnamed Aboriginal man who worked in the sawing establishment. Backhouse reported that the man had also cleared a piece of ground, planted some pumpkins and was planning to sow potatoes as well (Backhouse 1843). It appears that the attempt at settlement did not last. Alexander Berry wrote in his 1838 reminiscences that the two families his brother had assisted to start farming, most probably including the man mentioned by Backhouse, had abandoned their enterprise as it did not suit their "locomotive propensities" (Berry Papers ML MSS 315/54). The failure of Alexander Berry to 'civilise' the Aboriginal people of the Shoalhaven estate, although confirming his opinion of their inferiority, did not motivate him to remove them from the land. It is indicative of the increasing importance of Aboriginal labour on the estate that they were permitted to remain. Again, Berry's self-interest was coming to the fore.

Backhouse also employed two Aboriginal guides from the Shoalhaven estate, Lewis and Sam, for his trip to Bong Bong. Berry gave Lewis and Sam some clothes for the journey. Lewis is probably Lewis Makah listed in the 1842 blanket returns. Sam may either be Sam Tookambooy from the Shoalhaven (1837 blanket returns) or Sam Conduwite of Murroo (1837 blanket returns). All three men are mentioned in later work records.

The scarcity of Aboriginal work from 1830 to 1836 is partly a product of historical documentation. There are few surviving farm record books from this period. Also, correspondence between Berry and Wollstonecraft declined in the last few years of Wollstonecraft's life. Further, since Berry spent much less time on the estate after Wollstonecraft's death, he had less opportunity to observe any work done by Aboriginal people. Therefore, it is likely that there is an under-recording of Aboriginal work in the early to mid-1830s. Aboriginal workers would have been required from 1830 to 1832 when the convicts were protesting over poor conditions. Cash was scarce to employ additional free workers so it is likely that Berry and Wollstonecraft would have called upon the Aboriginal people to work in periods of high labour demand such as the harvest, as they had done so before. Given that relations seem to have been peaceful, it is probable that the Aboriginal people responded positively at least some of the time.

The employment records may not show the details of Aboriginal work, but court records and the convict punishment book from the Shoalhaven estate both contain information about Aboriginal life on the property and their interaction with its residents, showing that relations were not always peaceful. The casebook from the Illawarra Bench of Magistrates show that on the December 5 1835, two convicts from Berry's property – Thomas Keat and Thomas Parsins – were convicted of kidnapping and assault of an Aboriginal woman named Muira. They were sentenced to 75 and 50 lashes respectively. The depositions show that Muira was living with Joseph McNeil at Numba when the two defendants and another convict – Henry Thompson – dragged the women from McNeil's hut back to their accommodation where they kept her for four days. McNeil stated that Muira had been living with him for the past eight weeks, although it may have been longer as one of the convicts also demanded that he be given the child. It is not known whether the child belonged to McNeil and Muira. The case is partly significant because the court recorded the testimony of Muira. She stated that she wanted to live with McNeil, and not the three convicts who took her away. The punishment book kept on the estate shows that the incident took place on the September 15 1834. It records that Keat was found at the Aboriginal camp at 11pm and consequently confined to the watch house for three days. Parsons came to the Aboriginal camp at 11pm “for the purpose of carry(ing) off (a) black woman to Numba”. According to the punishment book, Joseph Meehan was also charged with the same offence, although he was never taken to court (BP ML MSS 315/37-8). The other man charged with the offence though later acquitted,

Henry Thompson, is not mentioned. It is interesting to note that the case took over a year to be heard before the courts.

The case is also significant as it is the first record of an Aboriginal woman openly living with a white man in the Shoalhaven. The evidence suggests that Muira was not forced to live with McNeil. Her choice represents a viable economic strategy for Aboriginal women. By living with McNeil, Muira had ready access to the rations he received for working on the farm. She may have been able to distribute some of the rations to other members of her family.

Other Aboriginal women were also having relationships with white men. Berry wrote in his 1838 reminiscences that Broughton's second wife had two white children to an unnamed father. Also, in September 1836, Thompson was sentenced to 35 lashes for "keeping sawyers wife the native". It appears the Aboriginal woman was living with a white sawyer and Thompson kidnapped her. The number of cases of Aboriginal women living with white men is probably under-represented in the historical records. Many of the relationships were probably with illiterate workers and convicts and were not written down. For the most part, Aboriginal women did not have to look to white men for a husband as there was a surplus of Aboriginal men. But when they did, it was partly an economic decision, motivated by the desire to obtain European goods and food. Aboriginal women rarely worked on the Shoalhaven estate and had little opportunity to gain access to any goods they wanted.

The punishment book from the Shoalhaven estate records other instances of the disciplinary measures handed to convicts for offences against Aboriginal people. Henry Thompson, one of the defendants in the Muira case, was confined in gaol for "maliciously and wilfully cutting a black native (Wallaby Jack) with an axe". In July 1837, Samuel Gell was accused of stealing 84 figs of tobacco and giving it to an Aboriginal woman. The charge was dropped as it could not be demonstrated that Gell was present when the tobacco was stolen. Finally, John Andrews (a convict carpenter) was sentenced to 50 lashes for being found at the black's camp in August 1837.

These instances show that Alexander Berry was prepared to protect the Aboriginal people on the Shoalhaven estate. The advantage for him was to keep a healthy and confident

reserve work force. They also demonstrate the variable nature of the social relationships between Aboriginal people and convicts and other workers on the Shoalhaven estate. Some Aboriginal women lived with free workers but this put them in danger from some convicts whose motives were probably sexual. The case involving Wallaby Jack demonstrates that Aboriginal men were also in danger. Later records show that Wallaby Jack worked on the property and received rations. Thompson may have sought to deprive Jack of his ability to work and earn rewards. Alternatively, the attack may have involved Thompson's attempts to gain access to Aboriginal women. The case involving Gell suggests that convicts and Aboriginal women could sometimes cooperate to their mutual advantage. Overall, Aboriginal people seemed to form stronger working and social relationships with the free workers on the Shoalhaven estate. Berry wrote in 1838 that Aboriginal men would live and work with free men for up to several weeks at a time but did not wish to be associated with the work done by convicts (Berry Papers ML MSS 315/54). This observation is supported by Baron Carl Freiherr von Hügel, who came across an Aboriginal family living and working with a free planter in July 1834 (Clark 1994).

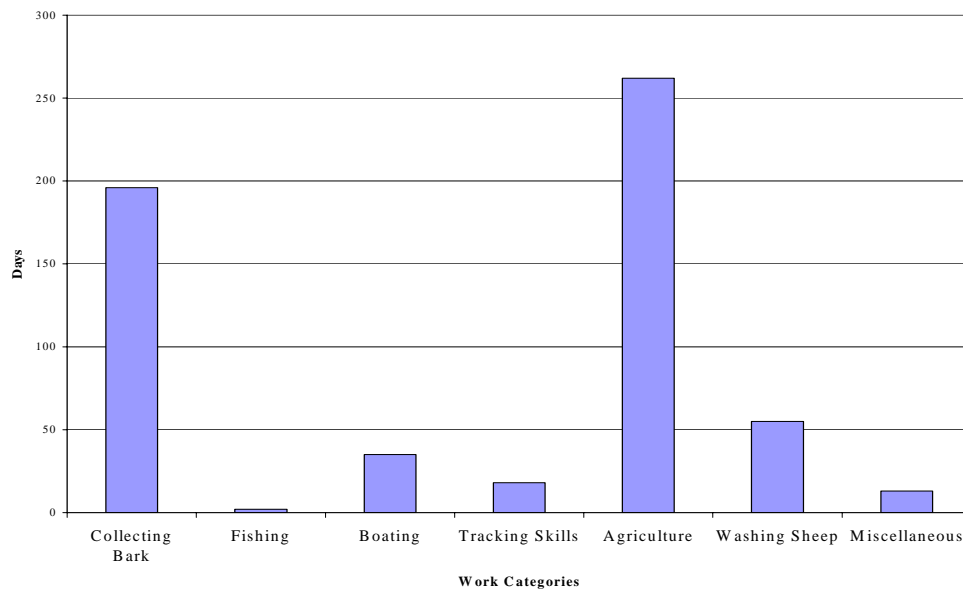
Provision Store Books: 1837-1838

Detailed recordings of Aboriginal work on the Shoalhaven estate resume in 1837. They are contained in three provision store books which cover the periods of January 23 1837 to January 19 1838 and July 21 1838 to December 22 1838 (BP ML MSS 315/67-9). The book containing the information from the January 19 to July 21 1838 is missing. The provision store books contain lists of the rations and supplies given to the free workers, convicts and Aboriginal workers at the three main centres of the estate: Coolangatta, Numba and Broughton Creek. It sometimes contains details about the tasks undertaken by the various workers. The overseer of the provision store at Coolangatta recorded the information. The information is summarised in Appendix 3.

Aboriginal people are listed in the book as undertaking a variety of tasks. The task frequency of working days is displayed in Graph 5.1. The tasks included collecting bark, fishing, boating, tracking horses, capturing convicts, delivering messages, sewing and reaping crops, threshing seed, washing sheep, making yeast, washing bags and cleaning the storehouse. There are also instances where the tasks are unspecified. It may be the

case that the work was not listed or the rations may have been given without work in return.

The skills displayed by Aboriginal people in working for Berry can be divided into three broad categories: direct use of hunting and gathering skills such as collecting bark and fishing; mixture of traditional and new skills such as boating, butchering animals and collecting and threshing grains; and new skills such as handling large numbers of animals in sheep washing. Clearly, Aboriginal people were valuable not only for their existing skills, but also for the skills they were ably learning on the job.



Graph 5.1: Aboriginal Work Days, Shoalhaven estate 1837-1838

Excluding the high number of days when the work done was not specified, the most common work type was in agriculture followed by collecting bark and sheep washing. This represents a change from the 1820s when tasks such as delivering messages and guiding settlers were more important. There was no need for Aboriginal people to guide Berry or other white people on the farm as they were by now familiar with the terrain. The changes reflect the development of the estate. The demand for agricultural and husbandry labour was high. It is interesting to note that there are no instances recorded in the provision store books of Aboriginal people working with cattle. At least one Aboriginal man was working in the timber mill (see below), but the number seems to have dropped as supplies were depleted. There was still a strong demand for bark to roof huts and sheds, and for leather tanning (see Brenchley 1982: 93). Aboriginal people had

a comparative advantage in technique and were employed for 196 days for this purpose. Arthur McLeod of the Wreck Bay community recently described the process of cutting bark to Cath Renwick, demonstrating the reasons why it was in demand. He said:

People got the bark for the huts in the early days by cutting a zigzag line around the base of a tree near the bottom and then another line about (two metres high). Then you cut another zigzag line up the trunk. Then you build up a bit of a fire right at the base of the tree and you peel the bark away a bit up the trunk. The fire would dry out the bark and it would peel up and up ... and then eventually it would peel the whole thing off. It would dry the whole thing out and you'd be able to rip it off the tree. Then you'd lie the bark down on the ground to flatten it with a log at the top and bottom. Then you'd have a very nice warm piece of building material. It was good insulation, much warmer than tin and cheaper too. (Wreck Bay Community and Renwick 2000: 31)

The advantages to Alexander Berry and other settlers are clearly seen. Bark was a versatile material and the skills of Aboriginal people made it a cheap resource.

Aboriginal people rarely worked alone in 1837 and 1838. The usual listing is for "natives" rather than the singular. The largest group consisted of 11 Aboriginal people assisting the butcher to slaughter an ox at Murroo in September 1837. The second largest group consisted of "8 natives getting bark, getting 56 sheets bark", in the week beginning September 9 1837 (BP ML MSS 315/67-9). There are several other groups of between five and seven individuals undertaking tasks such as wheat harvesting and cleaning the tobacco store. Aboriginal people were used to working in groups, so doing the unfamiliar work with familiar faces probably made the job easier and improved labour efficiency. It would also have made the task a social occasion.

1837	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	April	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan. 1838
Mon		1	1								1		
Tues		2	2			1					2		
Wed		3	3			2			1		3	1	
Thur		4	4	1		3	1		2		4	2	
Fri	1	5	5	2		4	2		3	1	5	3	
Sat	2	6	6	3	1	5	3		4	2	6	4	1
Sun	3	7	7	4	2	6	4	1	5	3	7	5	2
Mon	4	8	8	5	3	7	5	2	6	4	8	6	3
Tues	5	9	9	6	4	8	6	3	7	5	9	7	4
Wed	6	10	10	7	5	9	7	4	8	6	10	8	5
Thur	7	11	11	8	6	10	8	5	9	7	11	9	6
Fri	8	12	12	9	7	11	9	6	10	8	12	10	7
Sat	9	13	13	10	8	12	10	7	11	9	13	11	8
Sun	10	14	14	11	9	13	11	8	12	10	14	12	9
Mon	11	15	15	12	10	14	12	9	13	11	15	13	10
Tues	12	16	16	13	11	15	13	10	14	12	16	14	11
Wed	13	17	17	14	12	16	14	11	15	13	17	15	12
Thur	14	18	18	15	13	17	15	12	16	14	18	16	13
Fri	15	19	19	16	14	18	16	13	17	15	19	17	14
Sat	16	20	20	17	15	19	17	14	18	16	20	18	15
Sun	17	21	21	18	16	20	18	15	19	17	21	19	16
Mon	18	22	22	19	17	21	19	16	20	18	22	20	17
Tues	19	23	23	20	18	22	20	17	21	19	23	21	18
Wed	20	24	24	21	19	23	21	18	22	20	24	22	19
Thur	21	25	25	22	20	24	22	19	23	21	25	23	20
Fri	22	26	26	23	21	25	23	20	24	22	26	24	21
Sat	23	27	27	24	22	26	24	21	25	23	27	25	22
Sun	24	28	28	25	23	27	25	22	26	24	28	26	23
Mon	25		29	26	24	28	26	23	27	25	29	27	24
Tues	26		30	27	25	29	27	24	28	26	30	28	25
Wed	27		31	28	26	30	28	25	29	27		29	26
Thur	28			29	27		29	26	30	28		30	27
Fri	29			30	28		30	27		29		31	28
Sat	30				29		31	28		30			29
Sun	31				30			29		31			30
Mon					31			30					31
Tues								31					
Broughton Creek		Numba				Coolangatta			Unspecified location				

Table 5.1: Distribution of Aboriginal Work Days per location for 1837/38

Tables 5.1 and 5.2 display the distribution of Aboriginal working days for 1837 and the second half of 1838. The tables are colour coded for the different sections of the Shoalhaven estate. Work done at Broughton Creek is represented by green, Numba by yellow and Coolangatta by red. Blue signifies either work completed or provisions distributed at an unspecified location within the Shoalhaven Estate. Two colours on the one day indicates that Aboriginal people were working at different parts of the estate. The table shows that there were very few work days in the first five months of 1837: 10 at Broughton Creek and three at an unspecified location. The greatest concentration of work days comes in the second half of the year, particularly in September. The pattern for 1838 is incomplete. It exhibits concentrations in August and November.

1838	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
Mon						
Tues		1				
Wed		2			1	
Thur		3			2	
Fri		4	1		3	1
Sat	1	5	2		4	2
Sun	2	6	3	1	5	3
Mon	3	7	4	2	6	4
Tues	4	8	5	3	7	5
Wed	5	9	6	4	8	6
Thur	6	10	7	5	9	7
Fri	7	11	8	6	10	8
Sat	8	12	9	7	11	9
Sun	9	13	10	8	12	10
Mon	10	14	11	9	13	11
Tues	11	15	12	10	14	12
Wed	12	16	13	11	15	13
Thur	13	17	14	12	16	14
Fri	14	18	15	13	17	15
Sat	15	19	16	14	18	16
Sun	16	20	17	15	19	17
Mon	17	21	18	16	20	18
Tues	18	22	19	17	21	19
Wed	19	23	20	18	22	20
Thur	20	24	21	19	23	21
Fri	21	25	22	20	24	22
Sat	22	26	23	21	25	23
Sun	23	27	24	22	26	24
Mon	24	28	25	23	27	25
Tues	25	29	26	24	28	26
Wed	26	30	27	25	29	27
Thur	27	31	28	26	30	28
Fri	28		29	27		29
Sat	29		30	28		30
Sun	30			29		31
Mon	31			30		
Tues				31		
Broughton Creek		Numba		Coolangatta	Unspecified location	

Table 5.2: Distribution of Aboriginal Work Days 1838

Most of the records for Aboriginal work are at Broughton Creek. This is the birthplace of Broughton and the residence for himself and his family, as recorded in the blanket returns for the 1830s. The situation reflects Broughton’s social relationship with Berry and also his growing influence within the Broughton Creek band. He was most probably able to influence other members to work for Berry, at least some of the time. Thus other residents of Broughton Creek are also recorded as undertaking work. On the January 17 1838, Tammal is recorded as receiving six pounds of flour and 1/8 pound of tobacco. In the 1837 blanket list for Broughton Creek there is a listing for Joe Tammell, aged 14. On the same date, Charcoal, who crewed the *Blanch* with Broughton when Alexander Berry first settled the area in 1822, is recorded as receiving one and a half pounds of flour. There are entries in the provision store book that demonstrate that men sometimes moved across the estate to work. For example, the entry for the December 10 1837 states that Aboriginal men from Numba were working at Broughton Creek. There are no entries for 1837-38 stating that men from Broughton Creek worked at either Coolangatta or Numba. It would appear that there was sufficient farm work for the Aboriginal residents of Broughton Creek to largely remain at that place. The Aboriginal residents of

Numba and Coolangatta Mountain had to sometimes travel to Broughton Creek for extra work and provisions.

Broughton is the name most frequently mentioned in the provision store books. For 1837, he is recorded as receiving a weekly ration on 38 occasions. His wife, who is named as Mrs Broughton, is listed on a further three separate weeks. Both Broughton and his wife received 10 pounds of flour, seven pounds of beef, some sugar, tobacco and occasionally tea in their ration pack. It approximately matched the rations given to assigned servants but was well below that usually given to hired hands. The tasks that Broughton undertook are not listed. Berry wrote in his 1838 reminiscences that slops and rations were always available for Broughton if he wished to claim them, implying that he need not work in return (BP ML MSS 315/54). On one instance, his wife is listed as helping with tobacco processing. She may have worked there to get supplies of tobacco. Alexander Berry was known to freely distribute tobacco among the convict labourers as an enticement to work (Sealy 2000: 95).

Mrs Broughton is the only identifiable Aboriginal woman in the provision store books. This is not to say that all the other Aboriginal workers were men. Only five Aboriginal men are named: Broughton, Charcoal, Tammal, Lewis and Black Joe. Overall, there is a general absence of information about the work accomplished by Aboriginal women.

The provisions that the Aboriginal workers received varied, but always at the small end of the scale. Other than for Broughton, there does not seem to have been a structure underlying their payments. The workers usually received flour, tea and tobacco. Sometimes beef was distributed. There are no records of money being paid, although if it was, it is unlikely to have been recorded in the provision store book that dealt solely with rations. The small amounts given as payment reflects the knowledge of Alexander Berry that Aboriginal people were still largely self-sufficient and could find their own subsistence after working for very little. Berry was happy to preserve the Aboriginal economy on his property, despite the occasional incident of stealing, if it meant he could have access to a skilful workforce that knew its way around the landscape and could be called upon quickly.

As for the 1820s, it is possible to calculate the minimum number of work days for all Aboriginal people living on the property. The same assumptions are used as in the previous chapter, with one addition. In the case where the number of Aboriginal workers and the period of their work is unspecified, the number of days worked is estimated from the flour they received, using Broughton's standard ration as a guide. Broughton received 10 pounds of flour for each week of work. Given that he probably did not always work to receive his rations, Broughton is assumed to have worked for five days each week, meaning he received two pounds of flour for each working day. It is assumed that other workers also received, on average, two pounds of flour each day.

Aboriginal people worked for a minimum of 785 days in 1837 and 373 days in the second half of 1838. This is a clear increase in the number of Aboriginal work days from the previous decade which numbered only 163 in total. The increase suggests that as more land was taken up for settlement, Aboriginal people relied increasingly on the estate for subsistence, but only to a minor extent. The conclusion is supported by comparing the minimum number of work days with the maximum number of work days. The combined adult male population (aged 15 years and above) for the Aboriginal bands at Numba, Coolangatta and Broughton Creek in 1837 was 49. In the 517 days covered by the provision store books, these 49 men could have worked a total of 25333 days between them. The minimum number of days that were worked – 1167² – represents 4.40% of the maximum number of work days. The calculation confirms that working on the property was a minor economic strategy and that Aboriginal people were not dependent on the Shoalhaven estate for food and survival.

European Economic Development

Economic development of the Shoalhaven and Illawarra continued in the 1830s. The focus of production turned from the exploitation of natural resources, particularly cedar, to livestock and agriculture. The changes generally matched those at the Shoalhaven estate. Cattle continued as the dominant livestock. The extensive pastures of the Illawarra were used for grazing, as were the smaller pastures of the Shoalhaven. Sheep were grazed but not to the same extent, as the climate was not suitable. Wheat was an

² This figure includes the known four days of work undertaken in 1839 – see Appendix 3.

important part of agricultural development, although rust posed a major problem. As was the case on Berry's Shoalhaven estate, most wheat was for local consumption. Some was shipped to Sydney after being ground at the various mills at Shoalhaven, Wollongong, Dapto, Shellharbour, Kiama, Bushbank and Terara. Clearing of the land continued as other crops, including maize, oats, potatoes and fruit, became important (McQuilton 1997: 30-1). Permanent settlement also developed with the official surveying of Wollongong in 1834 (Jarvis 1942: 102). Another feature of the 1830s was that more landowners began living on their grants and purchases. Some kept diaries and letters that recorded the working habits of Aboriginal people on the properties.

Aboriginal Work on Small Properties

James Spearing obtained 1000 acres in the early 1830s on the slopes of Mt. Keira in the northern Illawarra. The property was called Paulsgrove, though it later became known as the Mount Keira Estate (Cousins 1994: 48). Wheat, maize, barley, oats, rye, rape, turnips, onions, potatoes, peas and tobacco were all grown on Paulsgrove. An orchard and grape vines were cultivated. There was also a large pig run on the property. An overseer, possibly Mr Webster, kept a diary of farm operations from June to September 1833 and March to April 1834. The diary mentions several instances of Aboriginal men working on the property. The entries for June 18 and 19 1833 record "blacks husking corn". On July 11 1833, an Aboriginal man named Timothy went shooting for Spearing, while on July 24 1833 the "blacks (were) picking potatoes." On the August 16 1833, Webster, Spearing and an Aboriginal man named Jerralong went to the Five Islands to obtain some black swan's eggs. "Phillip the black" was sent to procure birds for Spearing on March 16 1834 and "Timbouree" delivered three pheasant tails to Webster via Phillip on April 6 1834. Three Aboriginal men mentioned in the diary can be identified from the 1830s blanket records. There are listings for men named Timberry (also Timbery) in 1834, 1836, 1837 and 1838. It is possible that Timothy and Jerralong are the same man. The blanket records for 1834 contain an entry for a man with the English name of Tommy and the Aboriginal name of Jerrengong. There is no separate entry for Timothy.

Two types of labour were undertaken by Aboriginal workers on Paulsgrove, agricultural work (consisting of husking corn and pulling potatoes) and bird procurement. Aboriginal

people had a comparative advantage in the latter type of work as they knew where to find the birds and were proficient with firearms and other hunting methods. Their work in husking corn and in the potato field was a valuable adaptation of skills developed in gathering wild vegetables and also for the extra hands they provided at a busy time.

Dr William Elyard senior (1771-1853), acquired property in the study area from the late 1820s onwards: Avondale Farm, a 500 acre grant in the Illawarra settled in 1829; and a grant at Crookhaven Head which he exchanged with Alexander Berry for the Brundee Estate (later known as Brundee Orchard Farm), near Numba, in the mid-1830s. Dr Elyard was the first government superintendent of convicts at Red Point, near Port Kembla. He later owned land at Stonequarry Creek, Picton before settling at Avondale in the late 1820s (Cousins 1948: 76-77). Dr Elyard came to Sydney in 1821 with his wife and five children: William, Alfred, Elizabeth, Arthur and Samuel. William, junior, and Samuel worked in the Colonial Secretary's office – the latter was also a painter of some renown. Alfred became the Chief Clerk of the Supreme Court. Elizabeth married John G. Colyer. Arthur Elyard worked on the farms and his brothers sometimes joined him for labour and recreation.

The Elyard family first employed Aboriginal workers at Wellington Farm on Stonequarry Creek, Picton. On February 7 1824, William Elyard, junior, employed “black Frank to split rails at seven shillings a hundred to work with Lovell (convict) to allow me 200 rails for him every week”. William Elyard, junior, recorded Frank working with Lovell subsequently on February 9 and 17 1824. On February 26 1824, William Elyard, junior, recorded that “Black Frank ran away took Wood's (convict) trousers and shirt and a pair of boots belonging to me – Hammock and Blanket of father” (William Elyard Papers ML GY Pos 676). A list of workers on Wellington Farm contains the name “Timbery” suggesting that Aboriginal men from the Illawarra sometimes travelled to the southern highlands to work (ML MS 116). Alfred Elyard gave a sack of wheat to some Aboriginal people for cutting bark on June 28 1825. Relations between the Elyards and Picton Aboriginal people were not always favourable. A diary entry for September 23 1830, most probably made by Dr Elyard, states that the writer “fired at a native” who was “after the sheep” (ML MS Q218).

The first record of Aboriginal labour on Avondale farm comes soon after it was established in early 1829. Alfred Elyard wrote in his diary on April 17 1829 that “three blacks cut some bark for me - gave them my Blue Jacket”. On May 19 1829 “Manggy the black shot me two Blue Pigeons and a Wallaby”. Manggy (Jack Mangee – Wollongong blanket returns, 1834) returned on June 2 1829, after shooting three pheasants and two ducks for Alfred. Over the following three days an unnamed Aboriginal person shot two pigeons and a duck for Alfred Elyard. On the June 4 1829, four Aboriginal persons assisted two convicts cutting bark. Manggy assisted Alfred Elyard to look for a horse on June 6 1829. He returned to the property on June 19 1829, shooting a “wild turkey”, a cockatoo and a pheasant (possibly a lyrebird) the next day (ML MS 115-117).

The next records of Aboriginal work on Avondale farm start at the beginning of 1831. Dr Elyard wrote in his diary on February 1 1831: “Arthur and black fellow gone duck shooting. Rest of blacks gone off for the present... Arthur and Ned returned from shooting and bought (sic) home a couple of ducks.” Arthur Elyard’s diary confirms that Ned was the black fellow mentioned by his father. He also recorded that he and Ned shot seven ducks. The following day Arthur Elyard wrote that he went shooting with Ned again and bagged two ducks and one quail.

The Elyard family made use of Aboriginal technology on Avondale farm. Dr Elyard noted on February 13 1831 that: “Bob, Ned and Johnny Black fellows³ came, told them to get banglees. The blacks got us 10 banglees and tied up the Corners to make barins of them – tied with native fig tree bark – very tough – gave them tuck out”. On the same day, Alfred Elyard recorded that “Some blacks here got some bangaloo leaves and made them up into Barins”. Dr Elyard wrote to his son William Elyard on March 30 1833 saying that the “pans your mother sent are full of holes and all our banglees are rotted and let the milk out so that unless you send some Tines we shall not be able to make any more butter.” The material that both Elyards refer to could be the bark of the Bangalay or Mahogany Stringybark (*Eucalyptus botryoides*): the brown fibrous bark of this tree was regularly used to make huts and canoes (Wreck Bay Community & Renwick 2000: 31). In 1871, Louisa Atkins remarked that Shoalhaven Aboriginal people were known to make

³ There are numerous men named Johnny listed in the Wollongong blanket returns during the 1830s. There are no entries for men named Ned or Bob.

a *bangale*, a small bark basket or vessel (*Sydney Morning Herald* January 2 1871; see also Dixon et al 1990: 126-27). Jakelin Troy, in her dictionary of the Sydney language, records a *bangala* as a “water-carrying vessel made from bark tied at each end” and “barrin” as a pubic covering (Troy 1994: 67). The Elyard family may have used a modified Aboriginal container made of bark to store their milk. Alternatively, given that Alfred Elyard refers to leaves, the material may have been the leaves of the Bangalay palm, which was then woven into a covering or container. Support for this explanation is given by Barron Field, who in 1823 noted that settlers used the leaves of a palm (*Seaforthea elegans*) to make milk pails. The Elyard letters and diary entries indicate that *barins*, most probably made of palm leaves, were used by settlers to hold milk or to cover dairy pans and keep the milk fresh.

February 1831 proved to be a busy month of interaction between the Elyards and local Aboriginal people. Bob, Ned and Johnny returned on the morning of February 14 1831 and accompanied Arthur Elyard on a shooting expedition to Lake Illawarra that netted 15 ducks⁴. On the same day, Dr Elyard asked other Aboriginal people to cut bark but they went off hunting possums instead. He observed them smoking possums out of a hollow in a blue gum tree. Aboriginal workers were available to cut bark the following day and Arthur Elyard monitored their activity (ML MS 115-117, ML MS Q218-220). The proficiency of some Aboriginal men with firearms was demonstrated on February 24 1831 when an unnamed Aboriginal man shot 8 ducks. Arthur Elyard only dispatched one duck (ML MSS 594).

On February 21 1831, Dr Elyard wrote in his diary that he had helped Andrews (most likely a convict worker) to cut bark. He noted that smoking bark was “the best plan to lay it smooth” (ML MS 115-117, ML MS Q218-220). It is probable that Dr Elyard learnt the techniques of cutting and smoking bark from Aboriginal people.

Relations between the Elyards and local Aboriginal people were generally friendly and productive. The same tone continued in April 1831 when an Aboriginal man went shooting with Arthur Elyard and they returned with seven grey parrots (ML MSS 594). Early in May, Dr Elyard reported an incident involving Andrews, who claimed he had

⁴ Dr Elyard wrote in his diary that Arthur returned from hunting with 11 ducks – it appears that 4 were given to Bob, Ned and Johnny as payment for their labour (ML MSS 594).

been chased by the blacks after discovering them stealing the maize. Andrews wanted Dr Elyard to pursue them with a gun, but Dr Elyard “knew him to be a great liar” and refused. He investigated further and found that maize had been stolen and that another convict named Barrat had chased the offending Aboriginal people away (ML MS 115-117; MS Q218-220). Unlike the sheep-stealing incident at Wellington Farm, Dr Elyard chose not to pursue the matter further.

The incident does not seem to have soured relations between the Elyard family and Aboriginal people for very long. On June 18 1831, Corporal Land, accompanied by a soldier and “black fellow Timothy” (most probably the same man who worked on Paulsgrove) called into the farm on their way to Weston’s property. Aboriginal people visited Avondale on October 26 1831 during pea planting season, but do not appear to have participated. In the middle of November, Dr Elyard planned an overland trip to Bong Bong. He tried to arrange an Aboriginal guide but none were available. He set off for Bong Bong on November 17 1831, but returned on November 20 1831 after becoming hopelessly lost. The Doctor remarked that “none but native blacks and cattle hunters accustomed to such bogs, mountains, ravines, gullies and swamps (should) ever got to that road” (ML MS 115-117; MS Q218-220).

Aboriginal labour does not seem to have been employed during the summer harvesting season of 1831-32. Dr Elyard had six white workers (mostly convicts) on the farm in addition to himself at this time and they must have been sufficient to bring in the wheat crop. Aboriginal labour was used to transport two bottles of rum and one pair of stirrups from Avondale to a nearby property owned by Mr Tate on Christmas Day 1831 (ML MS 115-117; MS Q218-220).

Aboriginal people came to stay on Avondale for approximately one week in late March 1832. Arthur Elyard wrote in his diary on March 21 1832 that the “blackfellows (were) here all day”. They do not seem to have worked. Arthur and the assigned servants were cutting down trees and fencing at the time. The following day Arthur Elyard recorded that the “Blacks (were) about House all day”. Black Joe⁵ went shooting and returned with four ducks. A “Black Man shot a Paddy Melon” for the Elyards on March 23 1832.

⁵ There are numerous men name Joe listed in the 1830s Wollongong blanket returns.

Black Joe made a canoe for Arthur on March 27 1832, but his trip was not successful. He wrote ruefully that day that the Canoe sank and “gave me a Ducking” (ML MSS 594).

Samuel Elyard visited Avondale in January 1834 for a holiday. He enjoyed the rural atmosphere, writing that the “house is situated upon the top of a small hill, and at the back is a running stream of fresh water, hemmed in on the other side with all sorts of trees so thickly intermingled and twined together” (ML MS Q217 & ML MS Q223-4). The entry demonstrates that not all natural vegetation was cleared by that time.

Samuel Elyard, as was the custom with his family, sometimes went shooting for recreation. He recorded:

I had not much shooting, one day however I went with a blackfellow among the marshes after ducks. We walked about for a couple of miles before we came to the first swamp, the blackfellow then cautiously ascended a tree, for sometime he looked around him, and when coming down held up his hand uttering the simple word ‘plenty’. He took one of the Guns and disappeared among the large reeds with which all the swamps about here are covered, and I heard nothing of him more, until I saw about 40 black (ducks) rise on the wing, when he soon reappeared and said they had gone to another part of the swamp and had arisen in consequence of hearing us speak. We went round for nearly a mile through cabbage trees and vines, at last he layed his blanket upon the ground and disappeared among the bushes, for as I was unwilling to get wet I did not follow him but waited at the place he left me. Whilst I was there, birds of almost every species, and some of the most beautiful plumage came. I waited nearly an hour before I heard the report of his piece, and in about an equal space of time after that, I grew so impatient that I climbed up the tree which he had previously ascended. A long way off I saw the water, but could discern no sign of him, and I was still gazing upon the swamp, when turning accidentally around, I beheld him at the foot of the tree. He had four black ducks and a pidgeon in his hands, and as that was sufficient we... returned home.” (ML MS Q217)

The story not only confirms the aptitude of Aboriginal men with guns but also reveals that many of their hunting skills, such as sneaking upon a quarry, had not atrophied.

Samuel Elyard, after spending several days boating on the Shoalhaven River, rose early on the last day of his trip to catch a barge through the canal to the Crookhaven River. Observing the scene, Samuel wrote “the gleam from the blackfellows fires showed it to consist of the densest wood, such as we might imagine an Indian jungle to contain” (ML MS Q217 & MS Q223-4). Ignoring the romantic aspect of the perception, it shows that

not all the trees had yet been cleared and those remaining offered protection for a campsite, most probably to the band living at Numba.

There is only one further record for Aboriginal employment on Avondale Farm after 1834. Unfortunately, the diaries of Dr Elyard and Arthur Elyard for the mid-to-late 1830s have not survived. James Roberts, an overseer on Avondale Farm, made the last record on July 23 1834, stating “I wrote a letter to Mr Atkinson (local landowner) by Timothy the blackfellow” (ML MS Q218).

Aboriginal people are first recorded working on Brundee Orchard Farm on September 13 1838 when Dr Elyard observed the “Blacks clearing away the cobs from the threshing house (ML MS 115-117; MS Q218-220). Two Aboriginal men, Jemmy Cotton and Billigong, arrived in Sydney on February 7 1839 to deliver a letter to Dr Elyard from Brundee requesting that a bill be paid. The following day, Dr Elyard gave Billigong “a New Shirt, Duck Trowsers (sic) – my old Coat and white hat”. Later in the day, Billigong went sailing with Arthur Elyard on the harbour. Jemmy Cotton received a duck frock and 1 pair of blue trousers on February 11 1839. The two Aboriginal men started the return journey to Brundee the next day. Both can be identified from the 1830s blanket records. Jem Cotton (native name of Illitt or Yellite) is listed as belonging to the Wooregee (or Wooragee). The recording of his age fluctuates but he was probably in his late 20s or early 30s when he travelled to Sydney in February 1839. The identity of Billigong is more difficult to confirm. There is a listing for a Paddy Bulingolong, aged 22 in the 1840 Wollongong returns. In the same year there is an entry for Billy Boolelong, aged 15 in the Broughton Creek returns. I favour the Broughton Creek entry, despite the Wollongong name being phonetically closer to the Elyard’s recording, as it is closer to Brundee.

The information from Paulsgrove, Avondale Farm and Brundee Orchard Farm demonstrates that Aboriginal work on properties less than 1000 acres in size was sporadic and poorly rewarded. Aboriginal workers were generally given some clothes, a share of the hunting spoils and maybe some rations. It is unlikely that the food they received would have contributed a significant proportion of their subsistence. The information indicates that Aboriginal people would spend a week or so at a property before moving on, possibly to another friendly farm. Sometimes they would stay on the property

without working. When this happened, they did not ask for handouts of food, indicating there were sufficient sources elsewhere. Aboriginal people rarely stole corn or other foodstuffs from these properties. Overall, the subsistence they gained from Paulsgrove, Avondale and Brundee was negligible, indicating that other sources of subsistence were more important.

Comparison of Aboriginal Work on Small and Large Farms

The information about Aboriginal work from Paulsgrove, Avondale Farm and Brundee Orchard Farm has been plotted on a calendar to display the distribution of work over an average year (see Table 5.3). The calendar is colour-coded so that a blue rectangle marks a day of hunting, yellow a day of bark collecting, red a day of agricultural or animal husbandry work and green a day of courier services such as delivering letters and tracking lost cattle. A similar calendar has been prepared for the Shoalhaven estate, collating the information from the 1837 and 1838 provision store books (see Table 5.4).

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	April	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
5	5	5	5		5	5	5	5	5	5	5
6	6	6	6		6	6	6	6	6	6	6
7	7	7				7	7	7	7	7	7
8	8	8				8	8	8	8	8	8
9	9	9				9	9	9	9	9	9
10	10	10				10	10	10	10	10	10
11	11	11	11			11	11	11	11	11	11
12	12	12	12			12	12	12	12	12	12
13	13	13	13			13	13	13	13	13	13
14	14	14	14			14	14	14	14	14	14
15	15	15	15			15	15	15	15	15	15
16	16	16	16			16	16	16	16	16	16
17	17	17	17			17	17	17	17	17	17
18	18	18	18			18	18	18	18	18	18
19	19	19	19	19	19	19	19	19	19	19	19
20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20
21	21	21	21	21	21	21	21	21	21	21	21
22	22	22	22	22	22	22	22	22	22	22	22
23	23	23	23	23	23	23	23	23	23	23	23
24	24	24	24	24	24	24	24	24	24	24	24
25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25
26	26	26	26	26	26	26	26	26	26	26	26
27	27	27	27	27	27	27	27	27	27	27	27
28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28
29		29	29	29	29	29	29	29	29	29	29
30		30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30
31		31		31		31	31		31		31
Hunting			Bark Collecting			Agriculture & Animal Husbandry			Courier Services		

Table 5.3: Distribution of Aboriginal Work on Small Farms by Tasks, 1830-1840

A comparison of the two calendars shows that Aboriginal work on small farms was dominated by hunting with firearms of birds and other animals. Work parties were small,

being no larger than four people and periods of work were short. Work was concentrated in the first half of the year.

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	April	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6
7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7
8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8
9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9
10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11
12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12
13	13	13	13	13	13	13	13	13	13	13	13
14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14
15	15	15	15	15	15	15	15	15	15	15	15
16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16
17	17	17	17	17	17	17	17	17	17	17	17
18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18
19	19	19	19	19	19	19	19	19	19	19	19
20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20
21	21	21	21	21	21	21	21	21	21	21	21
22	22	22	22	22	22	22	22	22	22	22	22
23	23	23	23	23	23	23	23	23	23	23	23
24	24	24	24	24	24	24	24	24	24	24	24
25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25
26	26	26	26	26	26	26	26	26	26	26	26
27	27	27	27	27	27	27	27	27	27	27	27
28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28
29		29	29	29	29	29	29	29	29	29	29
30		30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	28
31		31		31		31		31		31	31
Hunting		Bark Collecting		Agriculture & Animal Husbandry			Courier Services		Unspecified		

Table 5.4: Distribution of Aboriginal Work on the Shoalhaven Estate by Tasks, 1837

On the Shoalhaven estate, Aboriginal work was dominated by agricultural and husbandry tasks, the area where labour demand was greatest, although collecting bark was still important. There were larger work parties of up to 11 people and longer periods of work. Aboriginal people undertook a greater diversity of tasks. Work was concentrated in the second half of the year when the demand for labour was greatest, particularly during the maize and wheat harvests and sheep washing. Similar tasks were undertaken on the smaller farms, but they were less able to offer remuneration so Aboriginal workers gravitated to the larger enterprises. Also, small farms had a lower demand for labour that could be more easily supplied from convicts and free workers without the need to employ indigenous labour.

Working for Settlers: Whaling, Guiding and Tracking

Some Aboriginal people took on tasks outside the usual selection of employment opportunities. According to the *Australian* (October 28 1831) Cornelius O'Brien was planning to establish a whaling station at Bulli. The correspondent wrote that O'Brien

had “several boats well equipped and manned, chiefly by native lads with all the necessary gear and apparatus”. The venture may not have got off the ground as there was no further mention of it in the press or in private papers. If it became operational, Aboriginal whalers may have been attracted to the job by the possibility of receiving part of the catch as payment: whales were a favourite feasting food of coastal Aboriginal people. Aboriginal men crewed whaling boats for the Imlay brothers, Benjamin Boyd and others at Eden for many years in the 19th and 20th centuries (Colwell 1995: 78).

Aboriginal people also undertook more familiar tasks in the 1830s. Many continued to act as guides for local residents and visitors, although the work was infrequent and poorly remunerated. It contributed little to Aboriginal subsistence. For example, an unnamed Aboriginal man directed Alexander Harris around a difficult part of the coast at Coalcliff, or Stanwell Park, in the early 1830s (Harris 1847). Timothy, most probably the same Aboriginal man who worked on Paulsgrove and Avondale Farm, showed a path across the mountains to a gang of men coming to the Illawarra for the December 1833 harvest season (Organ 1993: 82-83). Timothy and the unnamed man do not appear to have received anything at all for their efforts.

Jacki of Mullet Creek⁶ and another unnamed man from the same place escorted Baron Carl Freiherr von Hügel during his visit to the Illawarra in July 1834. When setting up camp for the night, the Baron observed Jacki and others cutting bark from a Eucalyptus:

The natives do this (cut bark) with great skill and speed. They begin by cutting a circle round the tree with diagonal cuts like these: V V V using their Tomahawk, then they cut in a vertical straight line as high as they can reach and from there, by using small notches cut into the bark for their big toes, they climb to whatever height they wish to peel the bark off the tree, cutting through the bark all the way and then cutting a horizontal line round the tree, as lower down. To do this they swing their hatchet... with a peculiar stroke above their heads. When it has been cut through like this the bark is not always easy to detach from the trunk. (Clark 1994)

It is interesting to compare the Baron’s description of bark cutting with Arthur McLeod’s recollections of more recent times. Both mention the use of zigzag lines (or a cut in the shape of VVV, to use the Baron’s parlance). It indicates that the skill of bark cutting has

⁶ There are no men by the name of Jacki or Jack listed in the blanket returns for the Illawarra in the 1830s – he may have spent most of his time away from the area or gone by another name.

been passed down to modern times largely unchanged. The Baron's description also confirms the expertise of the Aboriginal cutters and the comparative advantage they had over settlers in the procurement of this resource.

As mentioned previously, James Backhouse visited the Illawarra and Shoalhaven in September and October of 1836 (Backhouse 1843). When in the Illawarra, Backhouse was guided by an Aboriginal man named Tommy. Several Aboriginal people, including Tommy, stayed with Backhouse's party when they spent the night at the property of Thomas Kendall near Kiama. Backhouse observed that Aboriginal people were welcome at this residence. Tommy later rejoined Backhouse at the Kangaroo Ground where he jointly directed the party to Bong Bong with Lewis and Sam. Backhouse described the Kangaroo Ground as a "place of resort for the blacks" with five "tribes" living upon it. There were few whites living at the Kangaroo Ground at this time and it was probably a place where bands could live with minimal contact and interference from settlers. Backhouse does not say where the "tribes" emanated from. The blanket returns only list one group as resident at Kangaroo Ground. According to Backhouse, the three groups were on their way to Bong Bong to learn a new song. The other two were probably stopping over before making the remainder of the journey.

Local Aboriginal people continued to assist with the apprehension of bushrangers and absconded convicts. Thomas Campbell, owner of Bark Hill Farm near Gerringong, wrote to the *Sydney Morning Herald* in January 1833 (published January 28 1833) to say that Black Harry⁷ had assisted him to capture a bushranger who had robbed Harry's hut. Campbell expressed the hope that Black Harry would help him to pick up more of the robbers. In May 1836, a group of Aboriginal people found the clothes of a murdered convict. The evidence proved crucial in the case against the alleged murderer and it was recommended that the Aboriginal people be given the reward. It is not known if the reward was forthcoming (Organ 1990: 199). The *Sydney Gazette* reported on August 29 1839 that a group of Aboriginal people had captured gang of five bushrangers responsible for a series of thefts. The Police Office at Wollongong recommended to the Colonial Secretary that the reward money be used to pay for a new suit of slops for each of the 19 Aboriginal people involved in the apprehension of the prisoners. Once again, it is not

⁷ There are two men named Harry mentioned in the blanket returns for Gerringong: Harry Yuckier in 1836 and Harry Geargong in 1837.

known whether the clothes were provided (Illawarra Historical Society: Illawarra Bench of Magistrates).

Migration

The 1830s saw the emergence of different economic strategies by the Aboriginal people of the Illawarra and Shoalhaven. John Batman, with the assistance of Alexander Berry, recruited nine Aboriginal men from Jervis Bay, Shoalhaven River, the Five Islands district and Twofold Bay in late 1829 to join the campaign organised by the Van Diemens Land government to round up Tasmanian Aborigines (Plomley 1966: 473-74, Brenchley 1982: 80). Their role was probably similar to that performed by other Aboriginal men in the Native Police that operated in Victoria, New South Wales and Queensland later in the 19th century (Reynolds 2000: 103-159). We do not know the motives of the Aboriginal men who went to Tasmania. Alternatives include subsistence security, avoiding domestic difficulties and the desire to explore. There is no evidence they were forced to travel to Tasmania. At least six returned home later in the decade. John Crook, Lewis Maccah (also spelt Makah and Macher), Jack Radley, Sawyer, Joe the Marine (also known as Joe the Sailor) and Waterman (possibly Waterman from Erowal or Jack Waterman from the Shoalhaven) can be identified from later blanket returns. Stewart Nilang from Jervis Bay apparently drowned in the Yarra River on March 16 1839. The fates of Pigeon (brother of Lewis) and Jack Waiter (also known as John Piper) are unknown.

Theft and Violence

There was little evidence for theft as an economic strategy in the 1830s. In May 1833 two Aboriginal people were shot dead in the Minamurra district, supposedly after spearing a bullock the night before (Organ 1990: 181). In 1835, landowners from the Kiama area wrote to the *Sydney Monitor* (August 20 1835) to express their concern about the behaviour of local Aboriginal people whom they accused of stealing pigs. The focus of their accusation was Black Harry who was seen leaving a farm with a pig on his back. The decline in relations may well have stemmed from increased settlement of the Kiama area encroaching upon Aboriginal hunting grounds. The possibility of violent reprisals prompted Aboriginal people to stop taking food from settlers. No further records of theft in the Illawarra and Shoalhaven were found after 1835.

The 1830s saw more violence inflicted upon Aboriginal people of the Illawarra and Shoalhaven, and the wider south coast, although at a lesser rate than the previous decade. A young Aboriginal woman with child and an old couple were murdered by a group of convicts and a free worker at Murramarang, south of Jervis Bay, in December 1832 as a reprisal for cattle spearing. The main perpetrator, Joseph Berryman, was arrested and taken to Wollongong and later Penrith but there is no evidence to suggest he was prosecuted (SRNSW: CGS 905, [4/2206.2, letter 33/910). The *Sydney Morning Herald* on August 8 1833, reported details of an inquest into the death of a Five Islands Aboriginal man outside a tavern in George Street, Sydney. The inquest heard evidence that suggested a struggle had taken place at the scene of the death. The jury returned a verdict of death by the “visitation of God”.

The authorities also enforced the separation of convicts and Aboriginal women. On November 30 1837, William Childs, a convict assigned to Colonel John Thomas Leahy of Wollongong, was convicted of harbouring two Aboriginal women at his hut. The court heard evidence that Childs was supplying vegetables and some of his rations to the two women so he could “keep” them. He was sentenced to 14 days solitary confinement (Illawarra Historical Society: Illawarra Bench of Magistrates). Another convict from Wollongong, John Mater, was convicted in February 1838 of being drunk at the Aborigines camp. The court heard from a Captain of the Mounted Police that the presence of white men in the camp caused quarrels amongst the Aboriginal people. This suggests that liaisons between white men and Aboriginal women were not necessarily organised by elders and that the women may have acted to ensure their own economic security (Illawarra Historical Society: Illawarra Bench of Magistrates).

Fishing, Hunting and Gathering

Fishing continued to be an important component of subsistence for Aboriginal people in the 1830s. On his trip to the Shoalhaven River, Samuel Elyard observed the “blacks in their bark canoes, filling them up as fast as they could” (ML MS Q217 & MS Q223-4). Backhouse observed some Aboriginal people fishing at Jervis Bay in March 1837. He recorded that “some of their hooks were formed of pieces of shell, but they preferred English ones, of steel” (Backhouse 1843: 468-9). Backhouse does not say whether Aboriginal men or women were fishing with hooks. If the former was the case, then

economic stress may have forced a change in the division of labour to ensure a regular supply. The Shoalhaven blanket return for 1840 lists two Aboriginal people with the name of Fisherman, including a woman called Fisherman Yiambur (the man's name is Fisherman Tom Nunnar). Names were often given to Aboriginal people according to the work they did. Robert Westmacott, a local settler at Bulli and amateur artist, produced multiple sketches, watercolour and lithographs of Illawarra Aboriginal people between 1837 and 1848 (ML PXA 1760). Five of these showed Aboriginal people fishing, two with spears and one with strips of Dog Tree bark that was used to stun the fish. Margaret Menzies of Jamberoo wrote in her diary on April 23 1839 that Aboriginal men and women often supplied fish and crayfish to her and other local residents. They were supplied with tea and sugar in return, and it astonished Menzies how fond the Aboriginal people were of these provisions. She also noted that some Aboriginal people were "useful for sending place to place" to deliver messages. She singled out William Roberts in this regard, whom she described as the King of Jamberoo (NLA MS 3261). There is a listing for Billy Roberts in the Gerringong blanket returns for 1834, 1836 and 1837. The instances described here cannot be quantified but they suggest that fishing remained a significant contributor to Aboriginal subsistence.

Aboriginal people also relied on other natural resources for subsistence. When travelling between the Shoalhaven and Bong Bong, Backhouse witnessed an Aboriginal man climbing a Cabbage palm to obtain the heart, which was soon eaten (Backhouse 1843). He also observed a party of Aboriginal men carrying fishing and hunting spears. One of the spears was barbed with broken green bottle glass, a common Aboriginal adaptation of European objects throughout Australia. Backhouse noted the mixed clothing that Aboriginal people wore, including possum skin rugs and European shirts and trousers. He also recorded the construction of bark shelters at Jervis Bay (Backhouse 1843: 468-9). Westmacott painted a watercolour depicting an Aboriginal man of Kangaroo Valley scaling a tree to hunt a possum. He also produced numerous other works showing Aboriginal men carrying hunting spears and women, draped in possum rugs and sheltering in huts.

Summary

Clearly, Aboriginal people retained the hunting, gathering and fishing skills they required to obtain subsistence. Where possible, they adapted European material culture to their own equipment to improve hunting and fishing efficiency. It is not possible, however, to quantify the contribution of hunting, gathering and fishing to Aboriginal subsistence. Aboriginal people were not dependent on Europeans for food and shelter. Information from Berry's Shoalhaven estate and other smaller farms suggests that rations from Europeans formed less than 10% of the Aboriginal diet. Stealing and handouts from farms also formed only a small part of Aboriginal subsistence. Despite this, the 1830s saw the acceleration of the process that alienated land from Aboriginal people. More settlers came to the Shoalhaven and more land was cleared, grazed and cultivated. Aboriginal people responded with several new economic strategies including participating in whaling and travelling beyond the local area to seek work. Other strategies continued from the 1820s such as delivering messages, guiding travellers and providing bush and marine food in return for rations. There were differences in Aboriginal work patterns between large and small farms. On the large estates, Aboriginal people concentrated their labour in the second half of the year during the harvest period. On smaller farms, Aboriginal people contributed by supplying food for the settlers. They worked mainly in the first part of the year.

The 1830s saw an increase in the number of liaisons between white men and Aboriginal women. In some of the cases it appears that Aboriginal women may have acted independently to ensure their own economic security. There is little evidence for work done by Aboriginal women on the Shoalhaven estate and other farms, indicating they were possibly forced to seek relationships with male settlers as the available land for gathering contracted.

Population

Population change has important implications for the economic strategies used by indigenous people in a colonial setting. In an economic context, population decline entails the loss of labour power, knowledge and skills that may not be readily replaced. Those remaining may have reduced ability to access important resources, forcing them to

derive subsistence by various means from the colonial population. A further implication is that there may be an insufficient number of adults to reproduce the next generation. Alternatively, a stable indigenous population may face increased resource pressure as settlers take up more land. The most detailed records of the post-contact Aboriginal population for the Illawarra and Shoalhaven come from the blanket returns taken in the 1830s and early 1840s. To determine the extent of population change, two components are required: an estimation of population at the time of first contact and an accurate chronicle of population, in this case provided by the blanket returns.

Aboriginal Population at the Time of First Contact

There are no records of the indigenous population of the Illawarra and Shoalhaven at the time of first contact in the late 18th century. The population can be estimated by taking a density reading from a comparable area and applying it to the region in question. There has been substantial debate for many years about the pre-contact population density in Australia. The debate has focused on whether the Aboriginal population was stationary or growing at a small rate (see Gray 1985; Meehan & White 1990). The question has yet to be resolved. It has demonstrated, however, the many difficulties of obtaining an accurate estimation.

Population densities are usually higher on the coast than inland because of greater environmental productivity (see Bellshaw 1978: 77). Lourandos calculated the population density for the groups along southwest coastal Victoria at one person per 1.4-2.5 square kilometres (Lourandos 1997: 37). Hiatt computed a population density of one person per 1.29 square kilometres for the Gidjingali of coastal Northeast Arnhem Land (Hiatt 1965: 17). Meehan recorded a population density of one person per two square kilometres for the Anbarra people of coastal Arnhem Land (Meehan 1982: 15). It is likely that the population density for the south coast of NSW lies somewhere in between these readings. It is best to err on the conservative side and therefore reasonable to assume that the population density for the Shoalhaven and Illawarra (and for the south coast in general) was one person per two square kilometres.

The next stage of the process involves determining the number of square kilometres in the area from which the Aboriginal population lived and gained subsistence. The area

was calculated by consulting the following topographic maps: Bulli 1:25000 (9029-2N third edition), Wollongong 1:25000 (9029-2S third edition) and Kiama 1:10000 (9028 first edition). The area of rivers and lakes was included. The area measured extended from the coast to the escarpment and ran from Scarborough in the north to the southern most edge of Jervis Bay. The floor of Kangaroo Valley was included. The number of square kilometres used by the Aboriginal people of the Shoalhaven and Illawarra is calculated at approximately 1200. Using the density range of one person per two square kilometres, this gives an Aboriginal population at the time of first contact of 600.

Blanket Returns

A record of Aboriginal population in the 1830s is provided by the blanket returns. The magistrates, police and settlers who agreed to distribute the blankets were ordered by the colonial administration to take a census of the Aboriginal groups to whom they were giving the blankets. The details recorded include the recipient's name, age, usual place of residence, tribal designation and number of spouses and children (see Appendix 4). The first blanket return for the Illawarra and Shoalhaven containing such detail is from 1834. Previous blanket returns, including those from 1830 and 1828, only contain partial statistics. The change came about after the declining attendance at the annual December feast held at Parramatta. Governor Bourke observed that most of the clothing and blankets provided at the feast were traded for rum before the end of the day. He decided that from May 1833, clothing and blankets would be distributed locally by magistrates, police and settlers. The intention of the Governor was to keep the Aboriginal people in their own territory and stop them coming to Sydney and other towns to which they were increasingly being attracted (Reece 1974: 124-6).

There are reasons to believe that the blanket returns do not provide an accurate record of the Aboriginal population. It is known for instance that in some parts of the colony, Aboriginal people used different names at various police stations to obtain more than one blanket. It is also known that some settlers falsified returns so they could keep the extra blankets. These practices would inflate the population statistics. Some Aboriginal people may not have registered all their family members fearing that they may be forced to give up their children, although this is unlikely in the 1830s when removal policies were not in place. Others may have ignored the distribution because they did not need

the blankets and wished to avoid contact with whites. It is known that poor weather sometimes discouraged Aboriginal people from collecting blankets (Reece 1967: 199). Distorting factors can be partly overcome by ensuring that names are not recorded twice in the same year. The absence of wild fluctuations without reason improves the likelihood that a series of returns are accurate. Also, in more settled areas such as Wollongong, Aboriginal people were more easily recognisable (Reece 1967: 197-98). It was harder for them to deceptively obtain additional blankets. The Shoalhaven returns were usually taken by Alexander Berry or his brothers, all of whom were familiar with the large number of Aboriginal people living on the estate. For this study it is assumed that the blanket returns provide roughly accurate demographic totals, unless otherwise indicated.

The least reliable component of the blanket returns is the age evaluation. Aboriginal people kept no record of their age, so the returning officer, who was not always the same from year to year, was compelled to estimate the figure using his experience of settler society as a guide. Consequently, the evaluations fluctuated and by large margins in some cases. For example, Timbery's age was estimated at 50 in the 1834 blanket returns and 40 two years later. The age structure of the population is not analysed in detail for this study, as the estimations are not a reliable guide. The returning officers sometimes counted Aboriginal people as young as nine as adults. In the following analysis, I have followed Barwick's example and counted Aboriginal people aged 14 and younger as children (Barwick 1971).

Blanket Returns for 1834

W.N. Gray, the resident magistrate, took a detailed blanket return for Wollongong on May 21 1834 (SRNSW: CGS 906, [4/6666B.3: 37-37a, Reel 3706]). He recorded 78 Aboriginal people for the Wollongong region, comprising 37 men, 31 women, 7 boys and 3 girls. The usual place of residence was not recorded in this return. It is interesting to note the small proportion of children. Parents may have not registered all their children to protect them. Alternatively, the small number of children may be the product of disease. This will be considered below.

Alexander Berry recorded a similar return for the Shoalhaven on June 4 1834. In total, 170 people were noted, including 77 men, 46 women, 30 boys and 17 girls. Further breakdown of the statistics is presented in table 5.5.

Location of band	Men	Women	Boys	Girls	Total
Shoalhaven	21	14	11	7	53
Numba	12	11	7	3	33
Broughtons Creek	10	7	1	3	21
Gerongong	5	3	2	1	11
Woregy	16	8	3	2	29
Murroo	12	3	7	1	23
Total	76	46	31	17	170

Table 5.5: Breakdown of Population Statistics for Shoalhaven 4th June 1834 (SRNSW: CGS 906, [4/6666B.3: 37-37a, Reel 3706])

The Shoalhaven band is likely to have based itself in the vicinity of Coolangatta homestead, possibly on the northern side of Coolangatta Mountain. The Gerongong band most probably lived close to the modern township of Gerringong. It is not known whether the location of the six bands recorded in the blanket returns matches that of bands before contact. The distribution indicates that three bands, Broughtons Creek, Woregy and Murroo, concentrated on hinterland and riverine resources when hunting, gathering and fishing in the 1830s and the remaining three, Gerongong, Shoalhaven and Numba, exploited a mixture of terrestrial, riverine and marine resources. It is worth noting that the band which relied most on rations gained from work, Broughton Creek, was the only one situated away from either the sea or the Shoalhaven River, implying reduced access to fish stocks.

It must also be mentioned that the six bands outlined in the Shoalhaven return may not have lived as a corporate group throughout the year. We know that some individuals were not present in their designated areas at different times of the year. For example, Broughton and others from various Shoalhaven bands travelled to Wollongong in 1830 to

collect blankets. Also, Broughton collected rations for 37 weeks in 1837. The remaining 15 weeks he was apparently away from the estate. The bands may have sometimes broken up into smaller family groups when fishing, hunting and gathering, then coalesced to participate in the harvesting seasons when labour demand was high or to perform ceremonies.

There are almost twice as many Aboriginal men chronicled as Aboriginal women. Part of the discrepancy can be partly accounted for by realising that some Aboriginal women were living with white men, as was discussed in the previous chapter. However, the extent of that figure is unknown. The difference may also be the product of disease. Children formed a larger percentage of the overall population than they did at Wollongong, but their number was insufficient to ensure the reproduction of the group⁸.

The bands ranged in size from 10 people at Gerongong to 53 at Shoalhaven. The small number at Gerongong may reflect the movement of Aboriginal people join to bands closer to the Shoalhaven estate to improve access to rations such as flour and tea. The large population at Shoalhaven may reflect its close position to the main homestead at Coolangatta where rations were issued. Alternatively, it may be a product of the distribution system. It appears that Aboriginal people congregated near the homestead to receive the blankets. Members of other bands may have moved to Coolangatta Mountain in the days before the distribution to meet and trade. They may have then given Shoalhaven as their current residence despite its temporary status.

The combined Aboriginal population for the Shoalhaven and Illawarra in 1834 was 248. A clear decline in population from the time of first contact is evident.

The Causes of Population Decline

There are various possible reasons for the extreme population decline. Butlin argued a strong case for the devastating impact of smallpox on a previously unexposed Aboriginal

⁸ Hart examined the Aboriginal population of Bathurst and Melville Islands in 1929 at a time when the impact of settlers was limited and found that children made up approximately 40% of the population (see Peterson and Taylor 1998). This figure is also probably lower than the norm for pre-industrial societies where 60% of the population was commonly below the age of 14 (Ann Carmichael, University of Indiana – pers. comm.)

population (Butlin 1983 & 1993). He contended that two epidemics of the disease swept across the southeast of the continent in particular, in 1789 and 1829, causing a high rate of mortality in children under five and the elderly. Other age groups were less severely impinged upon.

It is worth asking the question whether either epidemic shaped the Aboriginal populations of the Illawarra and Shoalhaven? It is a feasible scenario that at least one of the smallpox waves reached the south coast. The initial development of the disease involves a period of 8-12 days when the victim is contagious but still mobile. If contact occurs within that window, the disease is easily transmitted by air-borne particles. We know from numerous records that Aboriginal people from Sydney, the south coast and the southern highlands frequently visited each other. Smallpox could have been passed down the coast or from the other side of the escarpment.

The evidence for a smallpox epidemic on the south coast is slim. Cameron found no direct observations of the disease for the far south coast (Cameron 1987: 25). This is also the case for the Illawarra and Shoalhaven. Lieutenant Grant observed several Jervis Bay Aboriginal women in 1801 with the characteristic facial pitting. Charles Throsby recorded a similar perception in 1821 to the northwest of Jervis Bay. The women were much older, indicating they survived the 1789 epidemic. They may have contracted the disease at Jervis Bay. It is also possible that the women were infected while living in another area and moved to Jervis Bay after surviving its consequences.

When Backhouse visited Dapto in late September 1836, he noted that members of a group sitting near the house of a settler were covered with sores (Backhouse 1843). The editors of a later edition of the journal interpreted the sores as scars from the previous smallpox outbreak (Beale 1991: 26). It is unlikely that this was the case as there are no observations of Aboriginal people suffering from the disease earlier in the 1830s. If an epidemic had occurred, settlers such as Alexander Berry and Dr Elyard, who were both doctors and in regular contact with local Aboriginal people, would have noted it. The sores noticed by Backhouse were the result of another illness.

The smallpox epidemic of 1789 may have reached Jervis Bay. American evidence demonstrates that adjacent communities will not necessarily suffer from smallpox at the

same time (see Palkovich 1994: 91). The disease may not have been passed on to Aboriginal people in the north. However, the extent of population decline between the time of first contact and 1834, at over 50%, indicates that smallpox may have infected Shoalhaven and Illawarra Aboriginal people. The last reported epidemic in India during the 1970s produced a mortality rate of 30% (Butlin 1983). Those people had some access to medical services. It is likely that the mortality for an outbreak on the south coast would have been higher, perhaps towards the 50% mark. Overall, the population evidence permits the possibility of a smallpox epidemic on the south coast in 1789 but the historical record is inconclusive.

Other diseases may also have reduced the Aboriginal population. Butlin considered venereal disease as a major impediment to the recovery of the Aboriginal population after the smallpox epidemics. There are no recorded instances of venereal disease in the Illawarra and Shoalhaven. Given the known liaisons between white men and Aboriginal women and the known instances of transmission between convicts, timber cutters, sealers and Aboriginal women on other parts of the Australian continent (see Reynolds 1982: 57, 60, 147), it is likely that venereal disease was present, but to an unknown extent. Barwick noted a similar structure for the Victorian Aboriginal population in 1863, with more men than women and children accounting for less than 20% of the total (Barwick 1971: 298-301). Meticulous research revealed that sterility, stemming from syphilis and possibly gonorrhoea, and infant mortality were largely responsible for the distorted population structure. The Victorian case gives limited credence to the claim that venereal disease afflicted the people of the Illawarra and Shoalhaven.

There are recordings of other illnesses among the Aboriginal people of the Illawarra and Shoalhaven. Dr Throsby suggested to the Bigge Commission in 1821 that Aboriginal people on the Shoalhaven were particularly affected by inflammations of the lung, the result of which was exacerbated by the use of liquor (ML BT Box 5: 2217-18). Souter, an overseer on the Shoalhaven estate, recorded an outbreak of dysentery among the convicts on the Shoalhaven estate in October 1822 (Berry Papers ML MSS 315/6). It is not known whether the illness passed into the Aboriginal community. Berry reported in May 1838 that Aboriginal reapers had not worked during the previous harvest due to an outbreak of influenza. He did not state whether anybody had died from the illness (Berry Papers ML MSS 315/54). In the same reminiscences, Berry wrote that a “good many”

had died over the years from measles and as of a consequence of drinking. George Imlay of Twofold Bay wrote on July 12 1841 that measles had severely reduced the local Aboriginal population in the past five or six years, having a disproportionate impact upon women (SRNSW: CGS 905 [4/2302.1]). It is possible that measles may have had the same impact on the Shoalhaven estate, producing the notable discrepancy in the balance of the sexes. However, there are no independent studies that demonstrate that measles has a higher mortality rate among women than men.

Another factor reducing the Aboriginal population was death at the hands of European settlers. A total of 11 Aboriginal people from the Illawarra, Shoalhaven and Jervis Bay are known to have been murdered between 1788 and 1840⁹. In reality, this number is probably higher as some settlers were unwilling to report their activities.

Internal conflict was also a cause of Aboriginal mortality. Berry reported several instances of Aboriginal men murdering their wives, although these incidents cannot be independently confirmed (Berry Papers ML MSS 315/54). A Wollongong resident, Martin Lynch, wrote in 1898 that he had witnessed as a boy, a battle between the Aboriginal people of Wollongong and Bong Bong at Fairy Meadow almost 70 years before (Organ 1990: 157-59). He claimed that over 100 men died in the battle, which was over the abduction of a woman from Bong Bong. There are no other reports of the incident so even if it did take place, the death toll is likely to have been significantly lower. Overall, internal conflict was responsible for very few Aboriginal deaths¹⁰.

Starvation does not seem to have contributed significantly to Aboriginal mortality. After his visit in 1836, Backhouse wrote that the Shoalhaven and Illawarra Aborigines were sometimes pressed for hunger. His other descriptions although illustrate a robust people who enjoyed a wide variety of foods from whale flesh to cabbage tree hearts (Backhouse 1843). Other documents show that Aboriginal people were not short of food. For example, D'Urville wrote in November 1826 that the Aboriginal people of Jervis Bay

⁹ The number includes the death of three south coast men in Sydney, including the execution of Broger for the murder of a Shoalhaven timber cutter.

¹⁰ Cameron argues that internal conflict was an important factor for Aboriginal mortality on the far south coast (Cameron 1987: 41). His position, however, is largely based on one incident, a battle between coastal people and those from the Monaro plain, which apparently resulted in the death of 60 Aboriginal people. The only witness was an early white settler in the area and there is no independent confirmation of his report.

were in much better condition than the people at Port Jackson, ostensibly due to the relative abundance of food available to them (Rosenman 1988: 66-7).

The precise cause of Aboriginal mortality in the Illawarra and Shoalhaven is difficult to determine. In all likelihood, a combination of the factors listed here – disease, murder, internal conflict and reduced access to resources – is responsible, with disease having the greatest bearing. Despite these limiting factors, the Aboriginal population showed signs of stability in the 1830s.

Blanket Return of 1836

The blanket return taken at Wollongong on 20th May 1836 records a population of 79 Aboriginal people, an increase of one over the 1834 return (SRNSW: CGS 905 [4/2302.1]). All are listed as belonging to the Five Islands and Kiama tribe – there is no further breakdown into smaller areas. The total consists of 39 men (an increase of two), 26 women (a decrease of five), six boys (a decrease of one) and eight girls (an increase of five). The percentage of children at 17.7% is still extremely low and insufficient to reproduce the population. Over 50% of the population now consisted of Aboriginal men. The reduced number of Aboriginal women may reflect mortality or an increased number living with white men who did not need to come forward to collect blankets.

Does the age range of the population display the effects of a recent smallpox epidemic? The small number of children is consistent with the outcome of the disease. However, the relatively large number of Aboriginal men over 40 years of age, 10 in all, indicates that the structure of the population is the result of other factors. For instance, venereal disease lowering the birth rate could also explain the limited number of children. Children are also more susceptible to influenza and measles, two other known diseases on the south coast. Overall, it is difficult to account for the consequences of specific diseases.

Berry compiled a return for the Shoalhaven on June 21 1836. This return included a band from Jervis Bay. Berry recorded 172 people, including 85 men (an increase of nine), 43 women (a decrease of three), 31 boys (stable) and 13 girls (a decrease of four). A similar pattern to the Illawarra is evident: almost 50% of the population consists of Aboriginal

men and the number of women is declining, as are the number of children. It is interesting to note the preponderance of boys over girls. The reason for this fact is unclear. There is no evidence to suggest that the Aboriginal people of the Shoalhaven practiced female, infanticide, although it is known from other parts of the continent. Further statistics are presented in Table 5.6.

Location of band	Men	Women	Boys	Girls	Total
Shoalhaven	18	15	11	3	47
Numba	13	7	6	2	28
Gerongong	10	2	1	1	14
Broughton Creek	8	5	5		18
Murroo	13	4	3	1	21
Jarvis Bay	3	1	4	0	3
Woregy	20	9	5	6	40
Total	85	43	31	13	172

Table 5.6: Breakdown of Population Statistics for Shoalhaven on June 21 1836
(SRNSW: CGS 905 [4/2302.1])

The Shoalhaven band remained the largest, although it recorded a decrease of six persons from 1834. Numba decreased by 5, while Broughton Creek contracted by three and Murroo by two. The Gerongong band expanded by three. Woregy recorded the largest increase. An additional 11 people appear on the return from that of 1834. The new names cannot be identified from those of the 1834 return. The men may have been absent working or hunting during the previous recording, they may have moved to the area in the intervening period or they may have previously chosen not to collect blankets.

The return demonstrates that Aboriginal people were still moving about the south coast and beyond. Three men from the Gerongong band, Carroll, Harry Yuckier and Georgey Numerall, were at the Five Islands when the census was taken. Sam Conduwhite was still in Tasmania at the time working for the government. The return also lists Darby Brook (aka as Yacking) of Broughton Creek as a “notorious thief”. At least one Aboriginal man in the mid-1830s was still partly subsisting by taking goods from Berry.

The return of Aboriginal people for Bong Bong taken on November 15 1836 includes the names of Aboriginal people from the Kangaroo Ground and Broughton Creek. Thirteen people are listed as belonging to the Kangaroo Ground tribe including 6 men, three women, one boy and three girls. Seventeen people are listed as belonging to the Broughton Creek band. The list of names includes Broughton, who along with his two wives and three children is listed as usually residing at the Shoalhaven. Another Broughton Creek man, Cobann Jack, is recorded as living at Bong Bong. The other 10 Broughton Creek people are registered as usually living at the Kangaroo Ground. The Broughton Creek people probably took advantage of the ignorance of the Bong Bong authorities to get extra blankets. The return also demonstrates the mobility of the Broughton Creek and Kangaroo Ground bands.

The combined population for 1836 was 265, an increase of 17 from 1834. The 1836 figure includes 13 people from the Kangaroo Ground, an area not included in the 1834 returns. Overall, the figure remained largely stable, although there was change in the structure. The proportion of men increased to over 50% of the population.

Blanket Return for 1837

The blanket return taken at Wollongong on May 8 1837 by A.. Holden, the police magistrate, was the first one for the district to include information about the place of usual resort (SRNSW: CGS 906, [4/1133.3 Reel 3706]). Eight areas were recorded as containing Aboriginal residents (see Table 5.7). Holden counted 81 people in total, an increase of two from the return taken in 1836. The population consisted of 42 men (up by two), 25 women (down by one), four boys (down by one) and 10 girls (an increase of two).

The bands in the Illawarra tended to contain fewer members than those in the Shoalhaven, reflecting the presence of a greater number of small landholders and the lesser amount of land between the coast and the escarpment available for hunting and gathering. Also, there were no estates equivalent in size to Berry's property for Aboriginal people to congregate on. The bands were spread along the coast and hinterland. The largest band was found at Dapto, which was home to numerous small landholders where the Aboriginal people may have found occasional work. The second

Location of band	Men	Women	Boys	Girls	Total
Wollongong	9	7	0	1	17
Dapto	9	5	1	3	18
Macquarie Rivulet	5	4	1	1	11
Kiama	8	3	1	3	15
Peterborough	3	0	0	0	3
Jambaroo	1	2	0	0	3
Lake Illawarra	3	1	0	1	5
Mullet Creek	2	2	1	1	6
Kangaroo Ground	1	1	0	0	2
Minamurra	1	0	0	0	1
Total	42	25	4	10	81

Table 5.7: Breakdown of Population Statistics for Wollongong May 8 1837 (SRNSW: CGS 906, [4/1133.3 Reel 3706])

largest band lived at Wollongong, possibly camped on the outskirts of the fledgling town. In that place they would have had access to the town to do odd jobs for rations and still have been close to Tom Thumb lagoon and the sea for bird catching, fishing and other subsistence activities. Mullet Creek flowed into the northern end of Lake Illawarra. It ran through the Avondale property owned by Dr Elyard and the six Aboriginal people recorded as residing at the creek may have camped on the property from time to time. However, the two named men in the return are not mentioned in the Elyard diaries. The Macquarie Rivulet flowed into the southern side of Lake Illawarra. Twenty-two people lived in the vicinity of the lake and would have made use of its extensive fish and birds stocks. Peterborough was the estate owned by D'arcy Wentworth at Shellharbour and the three men who listed it as their place of residence may have found regular employment there. There could be a similar story about the three adults from Jambaroo. The resident from Minamurra was an elderly man of 60 years named Coolbanee who may have attached himself to a property in the area to obtain rations. The couple from the

Kangaroo Ground probably travelled to Wollongong to collect blankets and visit relatives.

The overall population for the Illawarra continued to display the same structure as for the previous year. Over 50% of the population were adult males, with adult women making up approximately 30%. The number of children increased by only one. The ratio of girls to boys increased to approximately 3:1. The number of children was still insufficient to replace the existing adult population.

Location of Band	Men	Women	Boys	Girls	Total
Shoal Haven	17	15	9	3	44
Numba	14	6	3	3	26
Gerongong	11	5	3	2	21
Broughton Creek	9	8	3	2	22
Murroo	13	5	2	1	21
Woreegee	21	9	4	7	41
Total	94	49	22	20	185

Table 5.8: Breakdown of Population Statistics for Shoalhaven 2nd May 1837
(SRNSW: CGS 906, [4/1133.3 Reel 3706])

David Berry took over taking the return of Shoalhaven Aboriginal people on May 2 1837 (SRNSW: CGS 906, [4/1133.3 Reel 3706]). He recorded a population of 185, an increase of twelve from the previous year. The population consisted of 94 men (the same number as 1836), 49 women (an increase of eight), 22 boys (an increase of 10) and 20 girls (an increase of six). The increase in the number of women on the return may reflect the breakup of relationships with white men and their return to their own band. Alternatively, the increase may have been caused by migration from other areas. The expansion in the number of children may reflect improved access to resources on the estate. Another possibility is that as relations improved between the Aboriginal population and the white residents on the estate, Aboriginal families were more willing to reveal the existence of their children. Overall although, the structure of the population

remained the same, with men accounting for over 50%. The number of children, although increasing, was still insufficient to replenish the next generation. The particulars of the return are present in Table 5.8.

The Shoalhaven band remained the largest in the district, although it contracted by a further three persons. Woregy increased by one person to 41. Gerongong recorded an increase of seven people to 21. The population at Broughton Creek expanded by 4 to 21. The population at both Murroo and Numba remained steady.

The combined population for 1837 was 266, an increase of one from 1836. However, this total does not contain statistics from the northern shores of Jervis Bay or the Kangaroo Ground. If we assume that the population from Jervis Bay and the Kangaroo Ground remained stable, giving an estimate of 282, an increase of 17 from the previous year.

Blanket Return for 1838

The return taken by P. Plunkett, Wollongong Police Magistrate, on May 7 1838, shows a sharp increase in the Illawarra Aboriginal population, although there are inconsistencies in the data (SRNSW: CGS 906, [4/1133.3 Reel 3706]). Plunkett recorded a population of 120, up from 81 in the 1837 return. The population consisted of 47 men (an increase of five), 22 women (a decrease of three), 24 boys (an increase of 20) and 27 girls (an increase of 17).

The factor to notice about the population change is that most of it was made up by an increase in children. According to the return, children in 1838 comprised over 30% of the population: previously their number represented less than 20% of the total. However, there is the possibility that some of the children may have been double-counted. The return lists the names of both men and women, plus the number of their children. In previous returns for Wollongong, the names of few women were included: they were recorded under the column of wives next to their husbands' names. The 1838 return does not indicate the relationship between the men and women listed. It is possible that each husband and wife is separately listed with their children, meaning their children are included twice. Alternatively, it is possible that husbands were listed with their children

but without their wives and vice versa, meaning that the actual population would be larger than the number recorded. This second alternative is unlikely as it would expand the population even further, increasing the inconsistency with the three previous returns and a later return, all of which recorded the population in the 70s and 80s. My conclusion is that the 1838 return is an over-estimation of the Illawarra Aboriginal population.

Another component of the return worthy of comment is the large number of places recorded as the various residences of the Aboriginal population. In all, 21 places are listed, more than double the previous return. The statistics for some of the places contain an unlikely mix of people. For example, the return for Bulli comprises 4 men and one girl. The return for Hooker's Creek¹¹ is made up of 2 men and one girl. Overall, the 1838 Wollongong return contains unusual combinations of people and inconsistencies that make it unreliable.

The Shoalhaven return of 1838 also lists P. Plunkett as the recording officer (SRNSW: CGS 906, [4/1133.3, letter 38/11130, Reel 3706]). It is not known whether Alexander or David Berry took the return. It is unlikely as the census contained in Alexander Berry's 1838 reminiscences differs by 32 from the government records (Berry Papers ML MSS 315/54). The blanket return recorded 212 people for the Shoalhaven district, an increase of 27 from the 1837 return. It comprised 78 men (a decrease of 16 from 1837), 54 women (an increase of five), 48 boys (an increase of 26) and 32 girls (an increase of 12). Berry's census recorded 180 people for the Shoalhaven district, including 73 men (a decline of 21 from 1837), 66 women (an increase of 17), 22 boys (stable) and 19 girls (a decrease of one). The data from both sources of information is presented in Table 5.9.

A question arises as to which record is more accurate. The total number of people in Berry's census is more in accord with previous years, however there is significant change, particularly in the balance of the adults. In 1837, men accounted for 50.8% of the population and women 26.5%. In 1838, the proportion of men declined to 40.6% and women rose to 36.7%. The percentage of children remained approximately the same. It is difficult to account for the change in the proportion of the sexes. Perhaps more men were away working and some women came forward after ending relationships with white

¹¹ Most probably refers to Hooka Creek, which runs into the northwest shore of Lake Illawarra.

men. Perhaps men were more effected by the influenza outbreak earlier in the year. Migration is another possible cause. Despite the indeterminacy of the causes of the change, Berry's census is given more credence than the government return as it was taken by a person more familiar with the area and the overall total is consistent with previous results and the 1840 return.

Examining Berry's census data further, the Woregy band expanded by 4 from 1837 to become the largest group in the district. Shoalhaven decreased by 5 to 39 and Numba shrank by one to 25. Gerongong remained stable at 21. Broughton Creek grew by four to 26 and Murroo by three to 24.

Location of band	Men	Women	Boys	Girls	Total
Shoalhaven ¹²	37	29	24	15	105
Murroo	13	9	8	4	34
Worrige (ie Woregy)	19	11	11	9	50
Numba	7	5	7	4	23
Total	78	54	48	32	212
<i>Shoalhaven</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>18</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>39</i>
<i>Broughton Creek</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>26</i>
<i>Uurro Tribe (Murroo)</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>24</i>
<i>Numba</i>	<i>9</i>	<i>8</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>25</i>
<i>Wooragee (Woregy)</i>	<i>20</i>	<i>14</i>	<i>7</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>45</i>
<i>Gerongong</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>21</i>
Total	<i>73</i>	<i>66</i>	<i>22</i>	<i>19</i>	<i>180</i>

Table 5.9: Breakdown of Population Statistics for Shoalhaven 1838 with Berry's census figures in Italics (SRNSW: CGS 906, [4/1133.3, letter 38/11130, Reel 3706] Berry Papers ML MSS 315/54)

The combined population for 1838 was 300, an increase of 34 from the year before. It must be remembered although that the Wollongong figures in particular are of suspect

¹² A combined figure for Shoalhaven, Broughton Creek and Gerongong.

accuracy so it is likely that the total is an over-estimation. However, any surplus is balanced by the fact that the figure does not include an estimate for Jervis Bay or the Kangaroo Ground.

Blanket Return of 1840

Plunkett took the 1840 blanket return at Wollongong on May 1 (SRNSW: CGS 905, [4/2479.1, letter 40/4871, Reel 1927]). He recorded a population of 88, a decrease of 32 from 1838. It consisted of 42 men (a decrease of five), 23 women (an extension of one), 14 boys (a decrease of 10) and 9 girls (a reduction of 18). The main change in the population occurred in the number of children, which decreased by 28. The total is more in line with the 1837 return. The significant reduction in the number of children suggests that they were double-counted in the 1838 return. Plunkett did not record the usual place of residence for each individual. The structure of the population reverted to one similar to 1837; men made up 47.7% of the population, women 26.15% and children also 26.15%.

Place of residence	Men	Women	Boys	Girls	Total
Shoalhaven	15	16	9	3	43
Broughton Creek	14	12	2	8	36
Worrigee (ie Woregy)	17	10	6	7	40
Murroo	15	13	4	1	33
Numba	5	5	2	2	14
Gerongong	12	11	4	3	30
Total	78	67	27	24	196

Table 5.10: Breakdown of Population Statistics for Shoalhaven May 1840 (SRNSW: CGS 905, [4/2479.1, letter 40/4871, Reel 1927])

Alexander Berry compiled a return of Shoalhaven Aboriginal people in May 1840 (SRNSW: CGS 905, [4/2479.1, letter 40/4871, Reel 1927]). Berry recorded a population

of 212 in 1840, however, this is clearly an over-estimation. He counted several men in both the men's and boy's columns. Also, a woman named Overseer Wathut was recorded at Broughton Creek and Woregy. The total has been adjusted downwards to 196 to account for these discrepancies. The revised population consists of 78 men (an increase of five when compared with Berry's 1838 census), 67 women (an expansion of one), 27 boys (an increase of five) and 24 girls (also an increase of five). The increase may reflect the amicable relationship between Aboriginal people and the white residents of the estate in the late 1830s when more work was available to Aboriginal men in particular. Conditions may have attracted more people to the area and encouraged an improved birth rate. More details of the 1840 return are presented in Table 5.10.

A notable change in the distribution of the population was the increase of 10 at Broughton Creek from Berry's 1838 census. Another large increase was recorded at Gerongong where the population expanded by nine. The same increase occurred at Murroo and the Shoalhaven band increased by four to 43. Woregy declined by five and Numba by 11. There are various reasons for the changes. Mortality reduced some bands; Long Charcoal of Murroo is listed as deceased in the 1840 return. Some Aboriginal people moved to a different band. For example, Souter is recorded in the return for Broughton Creek in 1837 and the Woregy band in 1840. Indigenous inhabitants may have moved out of the district altogether to be replaced by others moving in.

Thomas Kinghorne took a blanket return at Jervis Bay on 25th May 1840 (SRNSW: CGS 905, [4/2479.1, letter 40/4871, Reel 1927]). It recorded the Aboriginal people living either on the northern edge of the bay (the Wagamy tribe) and those living in the vicinity of Wollumboola Lake (the Conamy¹³ tribe). Thirteen Aboriginal people were listed in the return, including six men and seven women. No children were recorded. The return includes the name of Dr Wentworth (also known as Thyeghan, Tucken, Tucking and Tuckin) who was previously recorded in the 1834, 1836 and 1837 returns as a resident of Numba. It confirms the statement that Aboriginal people were not tied to one band in the Shoalhaven district.

¹³ The tribal name is reflected in Coonemia Creek, which flows in an easterly direction into the south-western edge of Wollumboola Lake.

The combined population for the study area in 1840 was 297, a decrease of three from 1838. The difference would have been greater if the Jervis Bay data had not been included. A blanket return was not taken for the Kangaroo Ground in 1840. It is likely that it would have boosted the total by at least 10, given the previous recording in 1838. A population estimate of just over 300 is a reasonable claim.

Blanket Return of 1842

Plunkett recorded the last detailed blanket return of Aboriginal people in the Illawarra on May 27 1842 (SRNSW: CGS 906, [4/1133.3, Reel 3706]). He took down the names of 70 Aboriginal men and women. However, Plunkett then took this figure as the adult male total. He then double-counted those women who were married, producing an over-inflated final total of 137. I have reconstructed the numbers by only recording those adult men and women who were named (70 in all) and adding it to the number of children listed in the return. The revised total comes to 95, an increase of seven from 1840. The population was made up of 41 men (a decrease of one), 29 women (an expansion of six), 11 boys (a decline of three) and 14 girls (an increase of five). The revised total is consistent with previous returns and is therefore likely to be more accurate than the 137 suggested by Plunkett. The population continued to display a similar structure to previous returns, although the difference between the number of men and women declined. The proportion of children remained roughly steady at 26.3%. Unfortunately, Plunkett once more did not record the usual place of residence for the Aboriginal people of the Illawarra. Also, there is no return from the Shoalhaven in 1842 so a combined population for the study area cannot be provided.

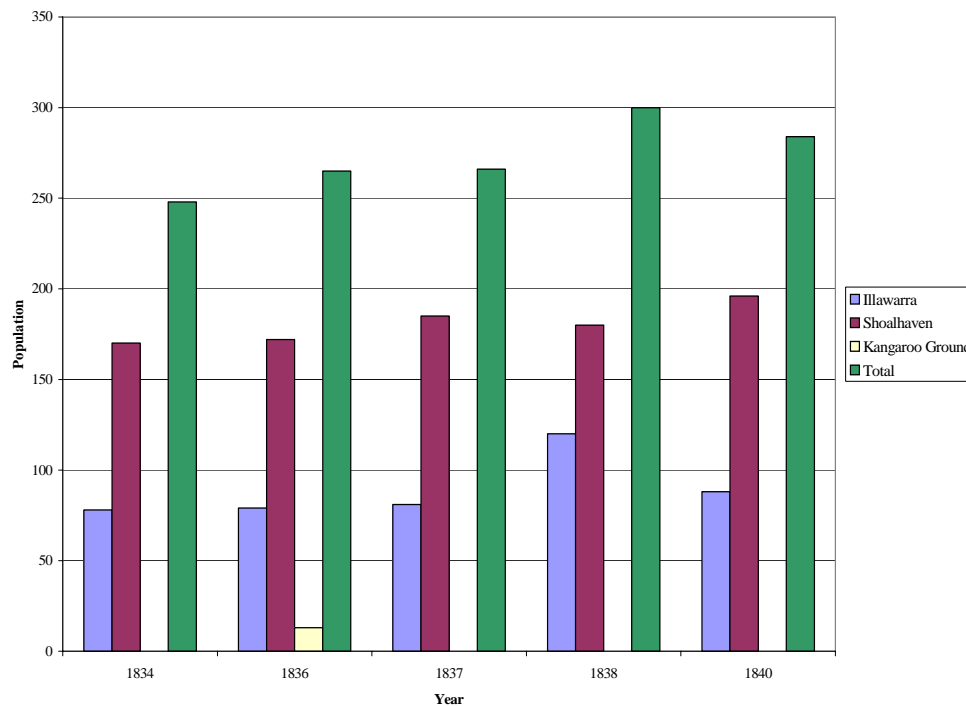
Blanket Return of 1844

A partial return for Wollongong and Dapto was made in May 1844 (ML Dixon Collection ADD 81). It recorded 47 people including 34 adult and 13 children. The reason for the partial return is that fewer blankets were being distributed and consequently, fewer Aboriginal people were turning up on the designated day to be counted. Governor Gipps disapproved of the extent of the blanket distribution. He enforced the rule that only those Aboriginal people who had rendered some assistance to white society should be given a blanket as a reward. The number of blankets distributed

in the colony dropped from 2485 in 1841 to 562 in 1844. The consequences were felt on the south coast. In May 1842, Captain William Oldrey, Police Magistrate at Broulee, informed the colonial government that a harsh winter had caused many deaths among the local Aboriginal population who were usually kept warm by blankets (Reece 1974: 209-10).

Implications

The Aboriginal population of the study area showed some improvement in the 1830s and early 1840s (see Graph 5.1). If, for example, we compare the 1836 returns that included figures for the Kangaroo Ground and the northern edge of Jervis Bay, with the 1840 results, into which an estimate of the Kangaroo Ground can be factored, we see an increase of approximately 35 persons. However, the population in 1840 was significantly lower than the estimate for the time of first contact. It appears that the population declined from approximately 600 in 1796 to 300 in less than 50 years. The recovery in the 1830s suggests that the majority of the reduction happened in the first 30 years of contact when the indigenous inhabitants had no immunity to European diseases and



Graph 5.2: South Coast Aboriginal population, 1834-1840

relations with explorers, itinerant workers and settlers were sometimes tense and violent.

An implication of the decline over the first 40 years of contact was that the smaller Aboriginal population required a reduced amount of land from which to obtain subsistence. It is an unfortunate statement that Aboriginal people were able to rely so little on subsistence from settlers because their reduced numbers meant they could hunt, forage and fish on the available land that had not been cleared for agriculture and stock raising.

The 1840 population was not structured in a way to guarantee a long-term recovery. The proportion of children, although rising slightly, was insufficient to replace the older generation. The population displayed this characteristic throughout the 1830s. If the detailed blanket returns had continued throughout the 1840s and 1850s, it is likely that they would have recorded a declining population, particularly as settlement intensified.

CHAPTER 6: SHOALHAVEN AND ILLAWARRA 1840-1848

Introduction: Development of the Shoalhaven Estate, 1840-1848

Convicts were withdrawn by the government in 1841, forcing Alexander Berry to look for an alternative supply of cheap labour, including the employment of immigrants (Sealy 2000: 106, Jeans 1972: 124-25). The scarcity of labour and a drought in 1840 pushed up wages. Alexander Berry responded by refusing to employ British immigrants who he said were demanding excessive remuneration. Also, many immigrant labourers were unwilling to travel away from the cities (Wonga 1995: 226). To overcome the labour shortage, Alexander Berry brought over several Maori workers including Tommy Newzealander, Ahiah, Acuttie and Amootoo (see Berry Papers ML MSS 315/61). The economic conditions also created the opportunity for greater Aboriginal employment.

The operation of the estate was made more difficult by a depression in the early 1840s. To raise funds, Alexander Berry mortgaged land in 1840 and 1842. Some of the money had to cover his liability for the failure of the Bank of Australia in March 1843. He was a shareholder and had to pay £2500 (Wonga 1995: 241-5). The majority of the remaining money was spent on improving the estate. Demand for wheat in the colony was falling and by 1844 only 400 acres were under crop (Wonga 1995: 230). Despite this, John Berry erected a windmill at Upper Numba for grinding wheat (Bayley 1975: 36). With agriculture mostly unprofitable, John Berry shifted the focus of the estate to horse breeding and cattle production. By 1844 there were 8000 cattle contained by a new system of fencing. When cattle prices were low in the mid-1840s, carcasses were boiled down to make tallow. This brought an immediate return, but it was not a profitable use of resources. Alexander Berry's aim to establish an export business of the estate's products was hindered by low demand for beef in Britain, which preferred mutton. The dairy was a profitable operation in the 1840s and a second establishment was constructed at Gerringong (Wonga 1995: 231-5). Some timber was still being cut and a new water-powered mill was constructed at Broughton Creek, replacing the pit saws previously used (Bayley 1975: 37). Sheep were still run on the property. Other crops included maize and potatoes.

There were 212 people living on the Shoalhaven estate in 1841, down from 270 in 1839 (Wonga 1995: 222). Most of the reduction can be accounted for by the withdrawal of convict labour. The subsequent shortage of workers increased the employment opportunities for Aboriginal people on the estate, but as in the late 1830s, it was only occasionally taken up. Neither John Berry nor his brother Alexander seems to have pushed hard to recruit a large number of Aboriginal workers. They accepted that Aboriginal people would work when they wanted to.

Aboriginal Labour

Records of Aboriginal work from this period come from ledger and day books kept on the estate (ML MSS 315/56-61). They contain information about all the free and convict workers. The information includes details about wage rates and goods provided to the workers such as clothes and cooking utensils. Workers were rarely paid in cash. Most of the remuneration came in the form of rations and goods. There are no records of Aboriginal workers in 1840 and 1841. Information about Aboriginal labour begins in 1842, but is scarce until 1844. The most detailed picture of Aboriginal labour from this period comes from 1845. It appears that most of the ledger books from this year survived. There is little information from 1846 and none from 1847.

Unfortunately, the ledger books contain limited information about the type of work undertaken by Aboriginal people. In the latter half of 1842, Monkie (probably Monkey Burrall of Numba in the 1840 blanket return) is recorded as burning off the land. On August 23 1843, four unnamed Aboriginal people were recorded as pulling maize. In return they received a shirt and a cotton handkerchief each. Two days later, seven Aboriginal people each received a shirt and a pair of duck trousers, most probably for also participating in the maize harvest. Joe Tummwall (likely to be Joe Tumeoul of Broughton Creek from the 1840 blanket return) and Paddy Cooroomool (or Paddy Cooroomul of Broughton Creek in the 1840 blanket return) were recorded in the ledger as keeping sheep during the previous week. There was an entry for McCarty (or Macaitie Bangal of Shoalhaven in the 1840 blanket return) on the same day so it is likely that he was keeping sheep too. On June 14 1845, Joe Tummwall was given a pair of tick trousers for pulling maize and other unspecified work done in 1844. Roger (probably Roger of Numba from the 1840 blanket return) was supplied with a pair of duck trousers

on July 7 1845 for driving a plough. Three days later, Unie (probably Oonie Bunbam of Broughton Creek in the 1840 blanket return) received a pair of braces for stock keeping. On the same day, Charcoal (possibly James Charcoal Numberry of Murroo in the 1840 blanket return) was given a stripe shirt for sheep washing. On July 19 1845, Tom Bailey (also known as Nurrambine of Worrigea in the 1840 blanket return) was provided with a stripe shirt, a pair of braces and a cotton handkerchief for cutting bark. A point to note about the work done by the Aboriginal people is that with the exception of the bark cutting undertaken by Tom Bailey, all the other tasks were directly connected with farm work. It continues the trend from the late 1830s when the development of the estate meant that traditional Aboriginal skills such as bark cutting, hunting game and guiding people were not required to the same extent as they were previously. The exception is the burning off done by Monkie in 1842, which was a traditional practice directed to an agricultural purpose.

Information about the type of work engaged in by Aboriginal people is supplemented by the writings of Joseph Townsend who visited the estate between July and December 1846 (ML MSS 1461). He wrote that “Two small Blackfellows are employed as stockmen but they generally indulge each year in a few months holiday in the bush.” One of the men may have been Unie who was listed as working as a stockman in July 1845. Work records for 1844, 1845 and later years confirm Townsend’s statement that Aboriginal work was interspersed with breaks.

Reverend W.B. Clarke visited the Berry’s establishment in January 1840. He observed that the machinery in the sawmill was simple and conformed to an American design. Clarke did not say if any Aboriginal people were working in the mill. While on the property he met two Aboriginal women, of whom the younger one was carrying a baby in a blanket. He asked them what they were doing and they replied that they were going on walkabout in search of food. Clarke gave the older woman a shilling which she thanked him for. The women told him that their husbands were at home and he interpreted this to mean they were asleep.

A notable absence from the work records is the name of Broughton. By the early 1840s it appears that he had retired from working on the Shoalhaven estate and replaced with a new generation of Aboriginal workers such as McCarty and Wallobee Jack. Broughton,

however, was still living on the farm. In April 1842, he carried a letter from Alexander Berry to Governor Gipps requesting blankets for the Aboriginal population. It read that Broughton was the “oldest surviving Black prince and the virtual Head of the Shoalhaven Aboriginal Aristocracy.” Berry went on to say “Mr Broughton has always conducted himself a Good and Loyal subject and has been the means of capturing many Bushrangers” (SRNSW: CGS 906, [4/1133.3 Reel 3706]). Gipps replied that while he was happy to provide blankets to those Aboriginal people who had assisted the white population in a useful manner, he considered the “indiscriminate giving of presents to the Aborigines to be highly objectionable.” SRNSW: CGS 906, [4/1133.3 Reel 3706.] It appears that no blankets were given to the Aboriginal people of the Shoalhaven in 1842.

Some Aboriginal work in the 1840s was formalised. The ledgers contain information about work contracts given to five Aboriginal men. Monkie was contracted from June 22 1842 to August 8 1843 at the rate of £16 per annum. He was contracted with two Maori workers, Ahiah and Acuttie, and between the three of them they worked for 459 days, receiving rations and goods to the value of £23.9.3 which they shared. It is likely that at least for some of the contract period they worked together in burning off the land. The three men were given another contract from August 8 to November 14 1843 at the same wage rate. Between them they worked for a further 168½ days amassing rations and goods worth £8.12.3. Monkie was contracted individually for six months and 16 days from April 1 to October 19 1844 at an unspecified rate, for which he received rations and goods worth £11.3.8¼. The rations he received included 172 pounds of flour, 81 pounds of beef and smaller quantities of tea, sugar, tobacco, soap, tallow, butter and coffee.

It is worth examining when Monkie was given goods as payment to determine at what time of the year he was working. Suitable information is available from the details of Monkie’s six-month contract from April to October 1844. The information shows that Monkie received goods twice in April, May, June and July, at no time during August and once in September. Assuming that Monkie was given goods at approximately the same time he was working, it appears that he worked consistently from April to July, had a break in August possibly after the maize harvest, and resumed work spasmodically in September. The analysis confirms Townsend’s observation that Aboriginal workers on the Shoalhaven estate tended to take some breaks in between periods of work.

Wallobee Jack (or Wallaby Jack Barltoon of Numba from the 1837 blanket return or John Barltoon from the 1840 blanket return) was given a 28 day contract in May and June of 1845 at the rate of £6 per annum. Part of the wage included a weekly ration of 10 pounds of flour, two pounds of sugar and some tobacco and soap. In the course of the month he also received a pint pot, a quart pot, a cotton handkerchief and a regatta shirt. Jack's duties were not listed. Given that he was working in June, he may well have participated in the maize harvest which was usually carried out at that time of year.

On August 2 1845, the details of the work contracts of three Aboriginal men were recorded. They were for Joe Tummwall, Paddy Cooroomool and McCarty. All three had worked from July 26 1844 to August 2 1845 at the rate of £6 per annum. It is unlikely that Joe, Paddy or McCarty worked full time as each contract said that lost days were being made up. Their accounts were settled on August 5 1845 with cash payments of over £1. The men had received other goods for their services including shirts, trousers and handkerchiefs.

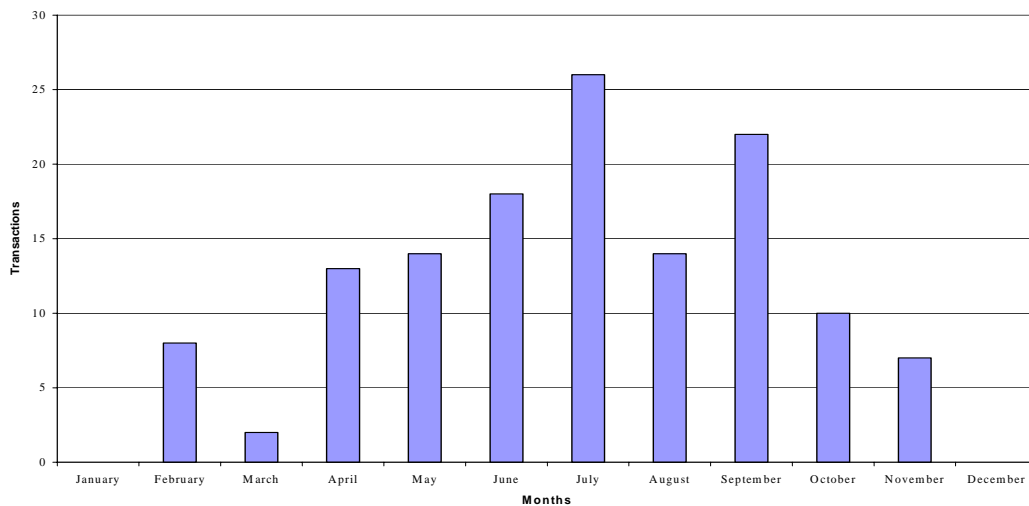
The 1844-45 work patterns for the three men show a similar distribution. Joe, Paddy and McCarty received goods on the same day four times. These instances were July 29 1844, October 10 1844, November 18 1844 when all three were probably keeping sheep and August 2 1845, the day when their contracts ended. Both Joe and Paddy received goods on June 14 1845. McCarty received goods three days later. Given that Joe was recorded as pulling maize, it is likely that the other two were doing the same. The men, however, did not work together all the time. Joe received goods three times in August 1844 when McCarty was supplied only once and Paddy not at all. None of the three worked to any great capacity in the first four months of 1845. Joe received goods only once in this period, Paddy twice and McCarty three times in April.

Other non-contracted Aboriginal men also worked intermittently in 1845. For example, Souter (Souter of Worrigea in the 1840 blanket return) received goods once in February, March, April and June, twice in July, again once in October and three times in November. There were five months in which he did not receive supplies, indicating that he was not working at those times. The greatest concentration of distribution of goods to Souter came in July and November, suggesting that he worked during the maize and wheat

harvests. Alternatively, Souter may have been washing sheep in November. He received a pair of duck trousers for sheep washing in early December 1839.

The work records of Unie, Pattie Nonorah and Barrow Coolbool for 1845 display the same intermittent work pattern as Souter’s. Other Aboriginal men worked less frequently. For example, Bonie (Bonie Narang of Numba in the 1840 blanket return) only received goods three times in 1845, namely in June, July and November. Overall, only 24 Aboriginal men out of a possible 78, or 30.8% (using data from the 1840 blanket return), worked on the Shoalhaven estate in the period from 1840 to 1848. This indicates that working on the farm, the place where the majority of the men lived, was still a minor economic strategy.

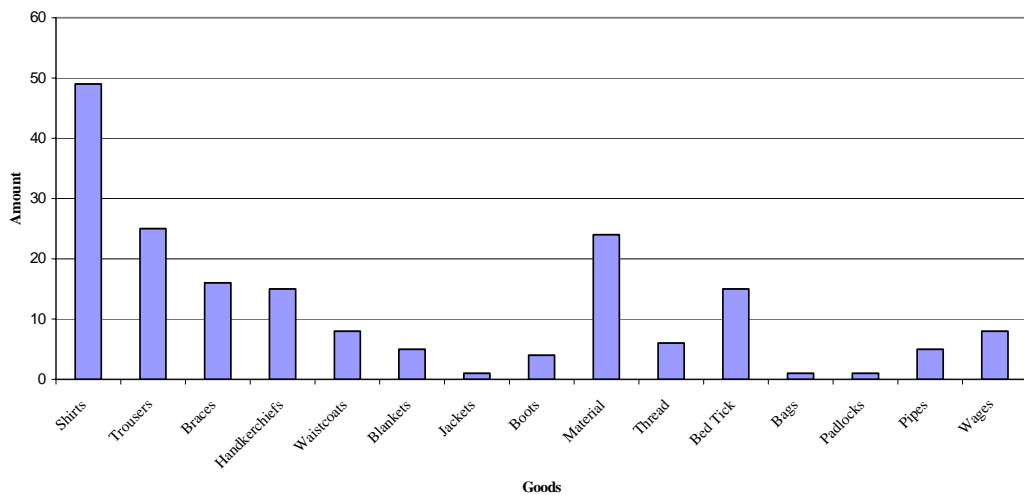
No Aboriginal women were recorded as working on the Shoalhaven estate between 1840 and 1848. Some may have performed unrecorded farm work and others may have been domestic servants. We cannot be certain of that, however, as detailed records of domestic work were not kept on the farm. Aboriginal women may have chosen not to pursue farm work because of their commitment to other economic activities such as fishing and gathering, and to socio-economic activities such as child caring. The observations of Reverend Clarke support this interpretation.



Graph 6.1: Number of goods and wage transactions per month, 1845

The overall work pattern for Aboriginal men in 1845 is shown on Graph 6.1. It records the number of times each month that Aboriginal workers were provided with goods and

wages. The graph shows that the busiest month was July when goods were given to Aboriginal workers on 26 occasions. Various tasks were undertaken in that month including sheep washing, stock keeping, bark cutting and plough driving. The maize harvest in 1845 was done in June, the third busiest month for Aboriginal workers. The pattern for the year shows an increasing amount of work being done in the first six months, peaking in July and then falling away as the year moved to a close. There were no records for December. The graph demonstrates that Aboriginal men worked in all the months that records were kept. The pattern is seasonal insofar as the peak came in July when much work on the Shoalhaven estate was required to be done.



Graph 6.2: Goods given to Aboriginal workers, 1845

Graph 6.2 displays the amounts of goods and wages given to Aboriginal workers in 1845. The most common item that Aboriginal workers received was various types of shirts, 49 in total. Other common items included 25 pairs of trousers, 16 pairs of braces, 15 handkerchiefs, 16 pots and saucepans, 24 yards of material and eight waistcoats. A curious occurrence was the distribution of 15 yards of bed tick, or a basic type of mattress cover with stuffing. Perhaps the single most unusual item was the padlock given to McCarty in September. It implies that he may have had a box to lock, or perhaps the door of a dwelling. Either way McCarty probably wanted to protect some of the possessions that he had accumulated from working on the property. Unfortunately, we do not know how the goods given to Aboriginal people for work were distributed in the community. Given that only 24 men were working, there would not have been enough to

go around. If goods were not distributed, a division in the community may have emerged between those who had access to European items and those who did not.

The types of goods given to the Aboriginal workers signal various changes in their material culture and economic practices. For example, the distribution of pots and saucepans indicate that at least some Aboriginal people were not cooking in the traditional manner. The distribution of European clothes meant that some Aboriginal people had no need to hunt possums or kangaroos for their skins. It is important to note these changes because even if Aboriginal people did not rely upon Europeans for the majority of their subsistence, others may have done so for items of material culture, particularly as the supply of natural resources became less certain.

The total value of goods and wages given to Aboriginal workers in 1845 was £35.19.9½. In some cases, the value of the good provided was not recorded in the ledger. The value was then estimated by using the most recent example of the value of that good. By making an assumption about the average wage rate that Aboriginal workers received, it is possible to determine the number of days that were worked throughout the year. In 1845, the contracted workers were given a wage of £6 per annum and that rate is used as the base assumption for the following calculations. The second assumption is that Aboriginal men worked for seven days each week. This is a reasonable assumption as Aboriginal workers were not subject to the same conditions as white workers. They were free to work whenever they wished. The calculation is made using simple arithmetic. The number of Aboriginal work days is determined by dividing the value of the goods and wages by the wage rate and multiplying it by 365 (the number of days in a year). For 1845 Aboriginal people worked for an estimated 2189 days. Twenty Aboriginal people were identified as working on the Shoalhaven estate during the year. This gives an average of 109.5 days each, although some men clearly worked for longer than others. Assuming that there were still 78 men in the district, they could have worked for 28470 days between them. The 2189 days actually worked represents 7.7% of the possible total. If the number of days that women could have worked is included, that percentage drops to under five. If Aboriginal people were given sufficient subsistence for each day they worked, and that may not have always been the case, then their reliance on Europeans was minimal.

In 1837, Aboriginal people worked for an estimated 785 days. There was an almost three-fold increase in the next eight years to 2189 days. Working on the farm was becoming more important, particularly to Aboriginal men, but it was not the main economic strategy for the Aboriginal community as a whole.

Aboriginal Labour on Brundee Orchard Farm

The Elyard family continued to employ Aboriginal workers at Brundee Orchard farm in the 1840s. The information comes from Dr Elyard who lived in Sydney throughout that period (ML MS 118-121). Unfortunately, a complete picture of Aboriginal work on Brundee cannot be told for the 1840s as we only know about Aboriginal work on the farm when the labourers travelled to Sydney to collect wages and perform other duties.

Dr Elyard sold Avondale farm in September 1839, allowing the family to concentrate their agricultural activities at Brundee (ML MS Q217). By 1846, the Elyards were running 62 horses, 688 cattle and 17 pigs on the farm (ML MS Q218-220). The following year the number of horses increased to 66 and cattle declined to 614. Billigong continued to be the main Aboriginal presence in the workforce. In early February 1842 he travelled to Sydney from Brundee. Dr Elyard did not record the purpose of the visit although Billigong was probably transporting information or possibly livestock. Dr Elyard took Billigong to Dalleys store on February 5 1842 where he spent some of his £3 wage on clothing and blankets (ML MS 118-121). Given that Billigong was in Sydney during February, he may have received his wages for working on the previous year's wheat harvest.

On February 12 1844, Dr Elyard wrote that "Black boy Billy came to Eat and sleep" at his Sydney residence. It is not certain from the entry that Billy came from Brundee, although this is likely as later entries record him returning to that place. Billy was also a common name given to Aboriginal people in the Shoalhaven. For instance, there are 12 Aboriginal males by the name of Billy in the 1840 blanket return. Billy also spent the night of February 14 1844 at Dr Elyard's residence. The following day Billy was taken to Dalleys where unspecified items were purchased for him. A comb, one pair of trousers, a shirt and a waistcoat were also purchased for Billigong, though it is uncertain

whether he was present. On February 19 1844, Billy was sent to Brundee on board a boat carrying salt as cargo (ML MS 118-121).

Billigong and another non-Aboriginal man arrived in Sydney on February 13 1847 from Campbelltown. Other Aboriginal people from Brundee arrived in Sydney on the same day with orders to be paid for reaping (ML MS 118-121). Dr Elyard did not state what Billigong and the other Aborigines were paid for their work. The question arises, why did Billigong and the other Aboriginal people travel to Sydney to be paid? It may have been the case that there were insufficient funds at Brundee to compensate the Aboriginal labourers. Also, the Aboriginal workers may have enjoyed the opportunity to visit Sydney where a wider array of goods was available for purchase.

On February 8 1847, Billigong and a non-Aboriginal man arrived in Sydney from Brundee with Alfred Elyard's horse. Five days later, Billigong went "to Hallet's with the breaking tackle." This may refer to gear that was used in the process of breaking in a horse. On February 15 1847, Dr Elyard wrote that Billigong assisted with bringing in "three of the horses from Hallet's to Armstrong's inspection for Mounted Police but they were already provided, so the horses went back again." The Elyard family kept a growing team of horses at Brundee in the 1840s. It seems that Billigong sometimes worked with the horses and he may have broken them in. A day after shepherding the horses for inspection, Billigong boarded the *Louisa* under the captaincy of a man named Halcrow for the return journey to Brundee (ML MS 118-121).

The information from Dr Elyard's diary suggests that Aboriginal work on Brundee in the 1840s was seasonal. It appears that a small number of Aboriginal workers participated in the December wheat harvest. Remuneration was limited to some goods and a small amount of cash. The strategy contributed little to Aboriginal subsistence. The diary also suggests that at least one Aboriginal man (Billigong) was familiar with horses and was trusted by the Elyards' to transport them over long distances. Billigong seems to have occupied a similar position to that of Broughton at the Shoalhaven estate. He worked reasonably regularly at a variety of tasks and maintained a strong and amicable relationship with his employers.

Preservation of the Aboriginal Economy

Contracted Aboriginal workers on the Shoalhaven estate were paid at the rate of £6 per annum. Non-contracted workers may have received even less. We do not know precisely the rate at which Aboriginal workers on Brundee Orchard Farm were paid, but given that Billigong was rewarded with £3 at the end of the summer harvesting season, £12 per annum (pro rata) is a reasonable, if not slightly over-inflated, estimate. Work on Brundee was seasonal so it is unlikely that Billigong would ever have collected that amount over twelve months. Aboriginal workers on both establishments were paid at a lower rate than other employees. They provided valuable assistance in times of labour shortage, with their value enhanced by their low cost. Wages were kept low partly by the ability of Aboriginal workers to support themselves. The implication, although not necessarily the result of a conscious decision, is that Aboriginal people of the Shoalhaven district were permitted to live in the area and maintain hunting, gathering and fishing to provide a cheap, self-supporting labour source for local farmers.

Economic Development in the Illawarra and Shoalhaven

The suspension of convict assignment in 1838 and the ending of transportation two years later also caused labour shortages in other parts of the Shoalhaven and the Illawarra. Owners of the larger estates partially overcame the shortage by leasing land to tenant farmers. They found this method cheaper than contracting private labour. Mostly “clearing leases” were granted, commonly rent-free, with the provision that the land be made productive by clearing trees and erecting structures within a specified number of years. In 1843, Caroline Chisholm settled thirty families containing 240 people on the Peterborough estate at Shellharbour owned by Robert Towns. The Reverend Dunmore Lang promoted the recruitment of tenants from Scotland. The recruitment of tenants from within Australia and overseas continued until the 1860s (McQuilton 1997: 28).

With the tenant farmers came a major period of land clearing and cultivation. Mills were established at Wollongong, Dapto, Shellharbour, Kiama, Bushbank and Terara to process the additional grain. In the early 1840s, grain, salted pork, potatoes, fruit and tobacco were being shipped from the Illawarra to Sydney (McQuilton 1997: 30). The dairy industry also developed rapidly in the Illawarra at this time, particularly after the

introduction of clover as cattle fodder (Jarvis 1942: 277). In the late 1840s, Illawarra dairy products were exported to California during the American gold rush (McQuilton: 1997: 30).

Despite considerable agricultural development, the economies of the Illawarra and Shoalhaven were constrained by the depression of the early 1840s. The depression was particularly felt in Wollongong where the population declined from 831 in 1841 to 501 in 1851. It was estimated that 20% of the town's buildings were vacant as the unemployed travelled elsewhere looking for work (Lee 1997: 36). The pace of agricultural development was slowed by the depression, which saw a decline in the price of many local products (Jarvis 1942: 275).

Select Committee into Aboriginal Affairs

The most detailed information about the Illawarra Aboriginal community in the 1840s comes from the 1845 report prepared by the New South Wales Legislative Council into the condition of Aboriginal people living on the east coast of Australia (Votes and Proceedings 1845: Report from the Select Committee into the Condition of the Aborigines). The Council sent a circular to various Benches of Magistrates and clergymen, asking them to compile information about the local Aboriginal population. Among those who replied was the Reverend Matthew Meares of Wollongong. (Unfortunately, a circular was not completed by a suitable person in the Shoalhaven.) He said there were 93 Aboriginal people living in the district, including 34 men, 40 women and 19 children, of whom 11 were of half-caste descent. The total is consistent with the revised 1842 blanket return, which recorded 95 persons. However the structure of the adult population is markedly different. In 1842 there were 41 men and 29 women.

Meares, who had no apparent reason to falsify his testimony, stated that the means of subsistence for the local Aboriginal population was sufficient to satisfy their wants. He said that despite the increase in farming, there were still sufficient hunting grounds for the remaining population. Meares also emphasised the abundance of fish available to the Aboriginal people. In reply to a question about employment, he stated that two or three were frequently employed by settlers, but for irregular periods. They were given rations and wages in return for their labour. Overall, Meares thought that their habits were

inappropriate for long term employment and that they lacked sufficient muscular development for most types of farm work. He said that relations between blacks and whites were generally peaceful, but that there was no desire on the part of the white labouring population to amalgamate with the Aboriginal people.

The picture painted by Meares is one of limited reliance by Aboriginal people on settlers for subsistence. Hunting, gathering and fishing provided the greatest contribution to subsistence out of the strategies available to Aboriginal people. It seems few were employed and those that were exhibited a pattern similar to the Aboriginal workers on the Shoalhaven estate: frequent employment at irregular intervals. His description indicates that Aboriginal farm employment was minimally reduced by the colonial depression. This was probably because Aboriginal workers were paid little and were self-sufficient. In some cases they may have replaced the more expensive full-time workers for short periods.

Meares suggests that the majority of their subsistence was still being gained from the land and the sea. The pattern may have differed according to location. For example, the Aboriginal people living in the vicinity of Lake Illawarra, where most of the land was being intensively farmed, probably had a greater reliance upon fishing and settlers for subsistence than those living near Kiama, where there were still relatively large tracts of land unused for agriculture (Jervis 1942: 208-9).

The Select Committee report illuminates the situation for other Aboriginal groups on the south coast and inland. At Broulee, Francis Flanagan recounted a situation where settlers employed both Aboriginal men and women in harvesting the maize and potato crops. More regular employment was gained by bark stripping. They were paid in rations, but most insisted upon monetary remuneration, indicating they preferred the purchasing flexibility conferred by that method of payment. Flanagan reported that kangaroos had diminished in the area, but that was of minor concern to the Aboriginal community who depended more upon the sea than the bush for food.

At Suttons Forest, the Reverend William Stone informed the committee that local Aboriginal people were occasionally employed during the harvesting season and that they frequently complained of inadequate remuneration. He described their condition as

miserable. Reverend Stone reported that he was frequently approached for food and clothing and that he was unable to satisfy their wants to a satisfactory degree. He indicated that their ordinary means of subsistence may have diminished.

The Select Committee report records a situation for the south coast and southern highlands where Aboriginal people found regular seasonal work, particularly at harvesting time. On the coast, work at other times was frequent but for irregular periods. At Suttons Forest, it appears that work outside the harvesting seasons was not available. Payments were typically a combination of rations, goods and money. Resources for subsistence were ample on the coast and diminished in the southern highlands.

Other Economic Strategies

Further information about the economic condition of Aboriginal people in the Illawarra and Shoalhaven regions for the 1840s is provided by a variety of sources, including the journals of visitors, the reminiscences of residences and government records. Reverend Clarke visited the Illawarra in January 1840 before travelling to the Shoalhaven estate (ML MSS 139). Here he spoke with Frying Pan (also recorded as Mueamull in the 1840 Wollongong blanket return) who he found to be a fisherman. Reverend Clarke asked Frying Pan to catch some large prawns, but was angrily refused. He was told that this was a woman's task and that men only fished with spears. It appears that the traditional division of labour for fishing was still operating. Frying Pan also took the opportunity to ask Reverend Clarke for a sixpence. The Reverend stated that this was a common experience in the Illawarra.

Reverend Clarke also witnessed the gathering of large number of Aboriginal people for a corroboree. They came from Kiama, Liverpool, Sydney, Brisbane Waters and Newcastle. During the preparation, Reverend Clarke met an old woman that he had seen earlier in town dressed in a dirty pink gown. He also observed several men drinking sugar water from a tin pot. Sitting by a fire was a man holding a stick with a hook on it that was used for catching witchetty grubs. During the corroboree, Reverend Clarke noticed men making rhythm by beating shields with waddies. One of the musicians had a red pocket handkerchief on his shoulder. The dancers were daubed with white pigment and wore no European items. Reverend Clarke's observations provide an example of the

blending of two material cultures. It shows some of the ways that Aboriginal people used items given to them by whites. Unfortunately, the meaning of some of the items, such as the red handkerchief, can only be guessed at. The observations also demonstrate that Aboriginal people retained the ability to make traditional items that were used to obtain subsistence.

William Burliss arrived at Kiama with his family in early 1839. In February and March of 1902, the reminiscences of his early years in the district were published in the *Kiama Reporter*. Burliss recounted that the local Aboriginal people in the 1840s made good use of the extensive tracts of uncleared land between Kiama and Gerringong. He recalled the first time that Aboriginal people camped on his property at Weary Creek. Feelings of apprehension were assuaged when an indigenous man approached the hut to ask for some supplies and to explain they were only there to cook possum and wallaby. Burliss said that Aboriginal people regularly camped on his property for up to three or four weeks at a time. He did not write whether they worked for him. Relations with the Aboriginal people were amicable and his family was particularly friendly with King Harry, who may have been the same man who in the 1830s assisted Thomas Campbell of Gerringong to capture a bushranger and was later found carrying off a pig on his back.

Charles McCaffrey was appointed as the manager of the Osborne cattle station at the Kangaroo Ground in 1846. His experiences were described in reminiscences published by his son in 1930 (see Organ 1990: 295). His son recalled that the task of moving was made easier by the assistance of a group of Illawarra Aboriginal people who introduced McCaffrey to their relatives in the valley. In 1846 there were five Aboriginal camps at the Kangaroo Ground, with each camp occupying a separate gully. McCaffrey's son recalled that Aboriginal people believed that mature cattle were inhabited by evil spirits and refused to eat them. Calves were considered to be too young to have the evil spirit in them and when McCaffrey rounded up a group of wild cattle, the young offspring were given to the Aboriginal people.

Migration

At least one Aboriginal man from the Shoalhaven estate supplemented his income from farm work by travelling inland to undertake similar duties. Charlie Kindel (also known in

the blanket returns as Charlie Tyndel¹) worked on R. Maddrell's property at Braidwood in January 1846 as a "finder" (most probably a tracker) in return for £1.0.0 (R. Maddrell papers: Uncat MSS set 511/17). Charlie visited Bong Bong in 1836 to collect a blanket along with other Aboriginal people from the Kangaroo Ground and the Broughton Creek band. He was familiar with the territory behind the hinterland and may have made regular visits during the periods when he was not working on the Shoalhaven estate. Charlie Kindel may have taken others with him as the word "blacks" is found in brackets next to his name, but further Shoalhaven names are not recorded in Maddrell's farm journals. The evidence suggests that migrating to work only made a small contribution to his and others' subsistence.

In the Frame

Several artists visited the Illawarra in the 1840s and produced numerous depictions of local Aboriginal people and their activities. William Nicholas twice painted Johnny Crook (John Crook or Genboeonn of Peterborough in the 1838 Wollongong blanket return) in watercolour (Buscombe 1978: 242.1). Nicholas also engraved a likeness of Marang (no record in the blanket returns) of Kiama (Buscombe 1978: 239.1).

John Skinner Prout visited the Illawarra in 1841 and 1844. He engraved a scene of a man fishing with a spear on Tom Thumb lagoon. Frying Pan, the confidant of Reverend Clarke, was painted in watercolour wearing European clothes. Another Aboriginal man in European garb was painted in the foreground at Red Point with Lake Illawarra in the distance. Finally, a group of Aboriginal men and women were painted in watercolour while seated in and around two conical *gunyahs*. The scene is set in the semi-tropical vegetation of Mount Keira in the foothills of the escarpment. Several spears rest against a *gunyah* and a small dog sits in the foreground (see Brown and Kolenburg 1986).

George French Angas sojourned to the Illawarra in August 1845, staying at the farm of Mr Jessot near Dapto (see Organ 1990: 281). He painted a watercolour of an Aboriginal man climbing a cabbage palm. Angas was impressed by the ability of Aboriginal men to

¹ In the Maddrell papers he is referred to as "Charles Tindale".

climb the smooth trunk of the cabbage palm with the assistance of only a notched stick and sometimes a piece of vine placed around the tree.

Summary

Despite the depression of the early 1840s and the ending of convict assignment two years earlier, economic development of the Illawarra and Shoalhaven continued. The introduction of tenant farmers, particularly in the Illawarra, increased the intensity of land use, further alienating it from Aboriginal people. Despite this, Aboriginal people continued to live off the land and the sea when they could, as is demonstrated by the observations of Reverend Meares, Reverend Clarke and William Burliss. Fishing, hunting and gathering provided the majority of subsistence, sometimes using modified technology, but the reliance cannot be quantified. Reduced access to resources forced more Aboriginal people request assistance from settlers and townspeople, but instances were rare. None permanently left the area and no new liaisons between Aboriginal women and settlers were reported. Others sought more work from settlers, with at least one man travelling beyond the escarpment to find employment. There was an almost threefold increase in the amount of work done by Aboriginal people on the Shoalhaven estate in the 1840s compared to the previous decade. But farm work remained a minor economic strategy. Only a small number of men and an even smaller number of women sought work on farms. For a few, the work was frequent but of irregular duration. Most of the Aboriginal workers only sought employment in the harvesting seasons. No Aboriginal people appear to have worked full time. By the 1840s most of the work done by Aboriginal people was directly connected with agriculture and animal husbandry. Some acquired specialist skills in horse and crop management.

Aboriginal people were paid with a combination of rations, goods and wages. The rates at which they were paid were below that given to white workers, indicating that Alexander Berry and other settlers thought that Aboriginal people could look after themselves. The implication is that the self-supporting Aboriginal economy was being preserved to provide a cheap source of labour, if the individuals could be encouraged to work. The amount of goods that Aboriginal people received, including clothes, cooking utensils and bedding, was insufficient to supply entire communities. Consequently, divisions within groups may have arisen between those who had access to European

goods and those who did not. The goods were put to a variety of uses. Some were used in ceremonies. Most clothes appear to have been everyday items. Items such as cooking utensils may have resulted in changes to Aboriginal cultural practices. Their introduction into the material culture also reflects changes in diet.

CHAPTER 7: THE EXPANSION OF ABORIGINAL WORK PRACTICES 1848-1860

Introduction: Development of the Shoalhaven Estate – 1848-1858

John Berry was killed in a horse riding accident in April 1848 (Bayley 1975: 37). The estate had prospered under his management with the focus of production shifting to cattle and horse breeding. After John's death, Alexander Berry asked his brothers, David and William Berry, to jointly manage the estate. William was not interested in the additional responsibility and David was left in charge (Wonga 1995: 246). David Berry proved to be an inept manager (Jervis 1941: 39). He ignored the advice of Alexander and frequently refused to communicate with him. He sometimes failed to pay bills and permitted cattle stealing at Meroo Swamp to flourish. In the ten years to 1853, Alexander Berry did not obtain a net return on capital of even 1% (Wonga 1995: 248-53).

The operation of the estate was further hindered by labour shortages (Bayley 1975: 47; Jervis 1941: 41). After the end of convict assignment in 1838, the estate had struggled to attract sufficient workers. To overcome the labour shortage and assist in the development of the property, Alexander and David began leasing land in plots of twenty acres in 1848. The land was leased on the halves principle, which stated that the landowner provided the land, seed, animals and tools and took half the produce in return (Wonga 1995: 280). The tenants were responsible for clearing the land and fencing it within two to five years (Bayley 1975: 37).

In 1849, Alexander urged his brother to increase the amount of leased land and by 1850, there were 36 tenants on the Shoalhaven estate, who with their families numbered 145 people. These were in addition to the 222 hired workers on the property. During 1851, the number of tenants increased to 60 (238 people including family members) farming 1400 acres. The number of employees increased to 236. The gold rush hindered the leasing of land and no new tenants were recruited for eighteen months following the end of 1851. The number of employees decreased by half in the same period as men left to seek their fortunes on the gold field. The tenant population increased to 270 in 1854 after the first rush of gold fever had subsided (Wonga 1995: 280-3). By 1863, there were 300

hundred tenants farming 8650 acres, or approximately one sixth of the estate. They paid £1000 in rent (Cousins 1994: 70).

To overcome the heightened labour shortage during the gold rush, Alexander Berry paid the passage of German and Chinese immigrants to come and work on the property (Cousins 1994: 70; Wonga 1995: 264). The first group arrived in May 1852 (Bayley 1941: 40). They were poorly paid and responded by slowing the pace of their work, a method of protest previously used by convicts. Many of the Chinese immigrants left the property. At least one stayed, Jimmy Suna, who was responsible for handing out the rations to employees every Saturday morning (Cousins 1994: 72). The German workers added new skills to the operation of the estate, including stone cutting and viticulture.

The main products of the property in the early 1850s were salt beef and to a lesser extent, salt pork. The quality of beef declined due to David's poor decisions. Cask beef ebbed in importance during the gold rush as there was insufficient labour to process it. Consequently, some government contracts were not fulfilled. To generate immediate returns, surplus cattle were boiled down to make tallow (Wonga 1995: 267-9).

Many of the new tenants ran small dairy cattle herds. Cows were milked twice a day by hand from the late 1840s, the first milking taking place before dawn and the second after lunch. All members of the family usually participated. More butter was produced than cheese, as it was simpler to make and easily stored on the boat journey to Sydney (Bayley 1975: 47). The quality of the butter fluctuated – flies were sometimes found stuck in the blocks. Despite this, Alexander secured export contacts to New Zealand, Mauritius and Victoria (Wonga 1995: 269). As was the case for other products from the farm, Alexander's judicious marketing generated increased returns that partly overcame David's poor management (Wonga 1995: 274).

Horse breeding continued under David's stewardship, but once again the quality of animals declined. The gold rush resulted in an increased demand for trained draught horses. The estate could not keep up with demand due to the shortage of labour. In the 1850s, the estate began exporting horses to India and New Zealand. One hundred horses were supplied to India in 1858 (Wonga 1995: 272).

Wheat production was hampered by rust in the 1848-49 season. The disease became endemic in the 1850s and yields declined. During that period, maize vied with wheat as the major crop on the estate. Maize from the estate supplied a significant share of the Sydney market. Other products from the field included barley, oats, potatoes and hay (Wonga 1995: 265-6).

Another source of employment for workers on the estate was sheep herding. Flocks were maintained in the 1850s, however the quality of the wool clip was poor. It routinely did not pay for the shepherd's wages (Wonga 1995: 273).

Aboriginal Labour: 1848-1858

The labour shortage caused by the cessation of convict assignment and the beginning of the gold rush increased the opportunity for Aboriginal people to work on the estate in the late 1840s and 1850s. The introduction of tenants to the estate increased the amount of land either used for cultivation or animal husbandry, thereby reducing access for Aboriginal people to resources for subsistence. Aboriginal people responded by increasing the amount of work they performed on the farm. Information about Aboriginal work practices in the late 1840s and 1850s comes from the day books, which recorded the goods, wages and sometimes the rations given to employees (BP ML MSS 315/62-65). Each entry in the day book consisted of the date, name of the employee, type of good or ration issued and commonly, the value of the payment. Unfortunately, it rarely recorded the type of work performed on the property or where the work was done. Overall, the day books provide a reasonable picture of Aboriginal work patterns from October 1848 to June 1858. Limited information is also provided by the letters of Alexander Berry.

Aboriginal workers carried out various tasks in the period under consideration. On March 13 1850 there is an entry for McCarty working on a punt, for which he received the balance on his wages valued at £0.11.8. Three Aboriginal men (Jonny, Mickie and Tom) each received £0.6.7 for reaping on January 10 1851. On May 13 1852, Billy Mirning and George Natto were both given £1 for gathering potatoes. It is likely that others were working at the same time as each entry also says that the money was "for self and others". Two weeks later, a further eight Aboriginal people were paid for gathering

potatoes, including Billy Mirning, his wife (no personal name recorded) and George Natto's wife. Another Aboriginal woman by the name of Old Mary is listed. The payments included a small amount of cash to Billy Mirning, a quart pot to Old Mary, and shirts and handkerchiefs to the other potato pickers. McCarty's wife and Roger's wife are recorded for June 16 1852 as burning charcoal, for which they were given 10 shillings each. This is the only instance where Aboriginal women worked alone. The following day, an unnamed and unaggregated group of "blacks" are recorded for gathering potatoes. They divided £1.5.0 between them. In August 1852, Murro Joe was employed for six months as a horse breaker at the rate of £20 per annum. Around the same time, Roger was contracted for three months as a stable hand at £16 per annum. Four Aboriginal men (Tom, George Natto, Dick Buttong and McCarty) were paid £0.1.6 for swimming horses on January 17 1853. An undetailed group of Aboriginal people was jointly paid £1.16.2 for burning charcoal on April 26 1853. Carpenter Jack and Billy were each given £2.4.0 for working on the punt on June 30 1853. The relatively large payment indicates they had worked on the punt for at least several months. Paddy was paid ten shillings for cutting bark on September 9 1853. Dick and Murro Joe were employed to pick potatoes in June 1854. Dick received an iron pot and six yards of calico with a total value of £0.3.6. Joe was given two cups and saucers, three yards of calico and some ribbon, a payment worth £0.1.8. Nine Aboriginal people (including six women) were paid between £0.9.0 and £1.5.0 on August 8 1854 for pulling corn at Numba. The amount they were provided with indicates a work period of at least several weeks. Twenty days later, Comodant received goods and wages to the value of £0.18.3 for ten days of pulling maize. A group of "blacks" was paid £2 for keeping sheep on October 20 1855. Billy Took was supplied with calico worth £0.2.4 for sheep shearing and horse riding on January 25 1856. In December 1857, Billy was paid five shillings per day for riding horses to Sydney.

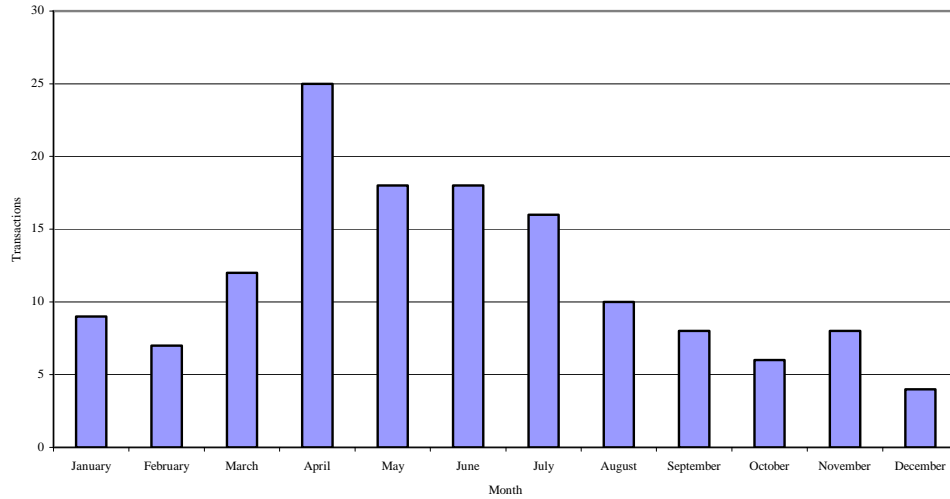
The type of work undertaken by Aboriginal men and women in the decade of 1848 to 1858 conforms to the pattern established in the late 1830s and the early to mid-1840s. For the most part, the Berry's no longer required their Aboriginal workers to use their traditional hunting, gathering and tracking skills¹. Instead, Aboriginal people were in

¹ While Aboriginal people were not often wanted for their hunting, gathering and tracking skills for use on the farm anymore, it was to the advantage of the Berry's that they were maintained as Aboriginal people could provide most of their own subsistence, reducing the amount they had to be given from farm supplies.

demand for their agricultural and animal husbandry skills. At least two Aboriginal men, Murro Joe and Billy Took, had developed specialist skills, including horse breaking and sheep shearing. Aboriginal people were contributing to the major areas of production on the farm, including maize growing, and sheep and horse management. Some sexual division of labour is apparent, as women do not appear to have worked with horses. The largest work groups were for potato picking and maize harvesting where men and women worked together. Overall though, women only seem to have worked during the highest periods of labour demand, and then only occasionally. More about this issue will be discussed later. It is interesting to note that Aboriginal people were not recorded as working with cattle. In the previous chapter, it was noted that the son of Charles McCaffrey wrote in 1930 that in the late 1840s the Aboriginal people of the Kangaroo Ground believed cattle to be inhabited by evil spirits. A similar belief may have existed among the Aboriginal people of the Shoalhaven and prevented them from working with the cattle.

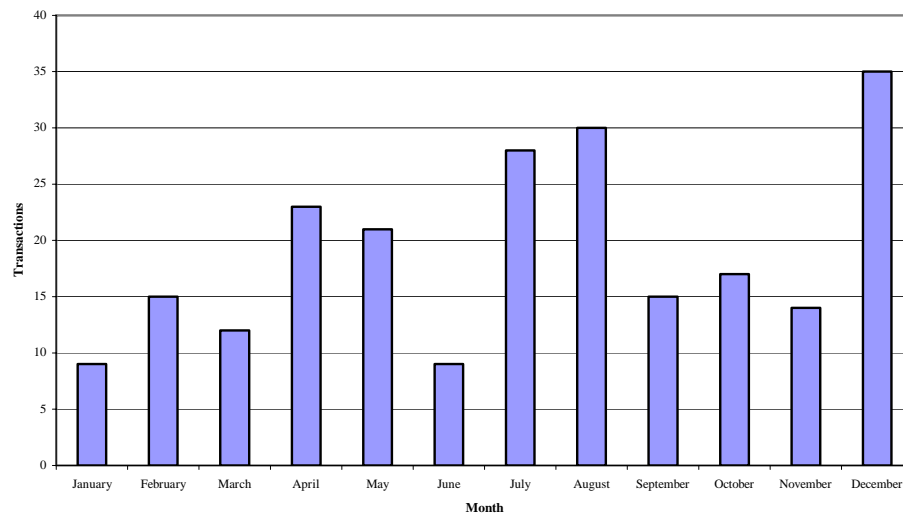
Aboriginal Work Patterns

The work patterns for Aboriginal employees on the Shoalhaven estate for the period of 1849 to 1857 are shown in Graphs 1 to 9. The graphs give a general indication of the time of year that Aboriginal people worked on the estate. They do not indicate the precise amount of time that Aboriginal people were working. It must also be stated that there may be a time-lag in operation for some of the years, but this cannot be determined with certainty. It is possible that some Aboriginal workers may have collected their wages, goods and rations some time after they finished their jobs. However, it is assumed for the most part that workers collected their payments either during or immediately after finishing a period of work. This is a reasonable assumption, as poor record keeping may have prevented them from collecting later on.



Graph 7.1: Number of Wage and Goods Transactions per Month – 1849

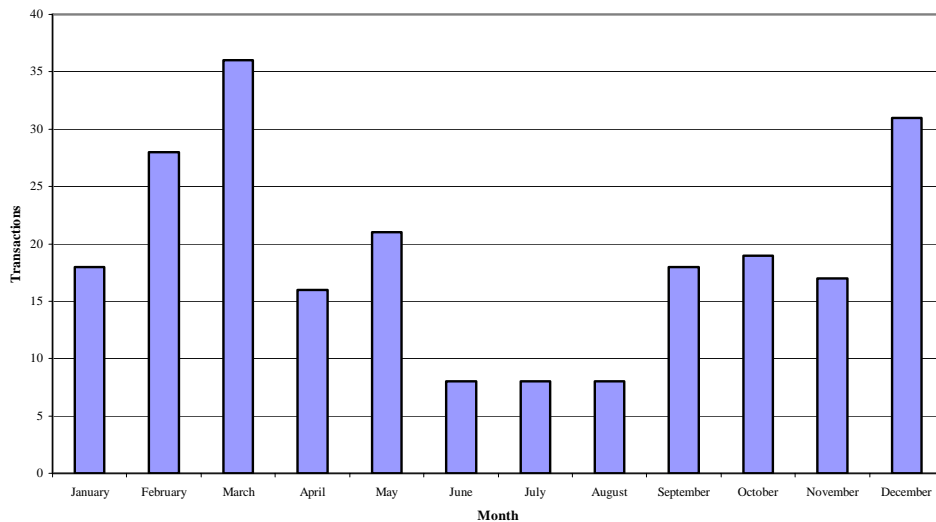
The Aboriginal work pattern for 1849 is shown in graph 7.1. The graph indicates that Aboriginal people worked throughout the year and that the busiest month was April. The amount of work appears to have gradually declined for the remainder of the year. The low number of transactions in November and December show that Aboriginal people probably did not work in the wheat harvest for any great length of time. They may have worked during the maize harvest or at potato gathering from April to July when the number of transactions was highest.



Graph

7.2: Number of Goods and Wage Transactions per Month - 1850

Graph 7.2 displays the Aboriginal work pattern for 1850. It also shows Aboriginal people working throughout the year, but with peaks in July, August and December, indicating participation in the maize, potato and wheat harvesting seasons². Participation in the 1850/51 wheat harvest is confirmed by the payment made in January 1851 to three men (see above). It is interesting to note the decline in transactions from September to November following the second highest peak for the year in August. It may show that some Aboriginal workers increased the rate of non-farm duties (including hunting, gathering, fishing, parenting, socialising and travelling) after working in the maize and potato fields.

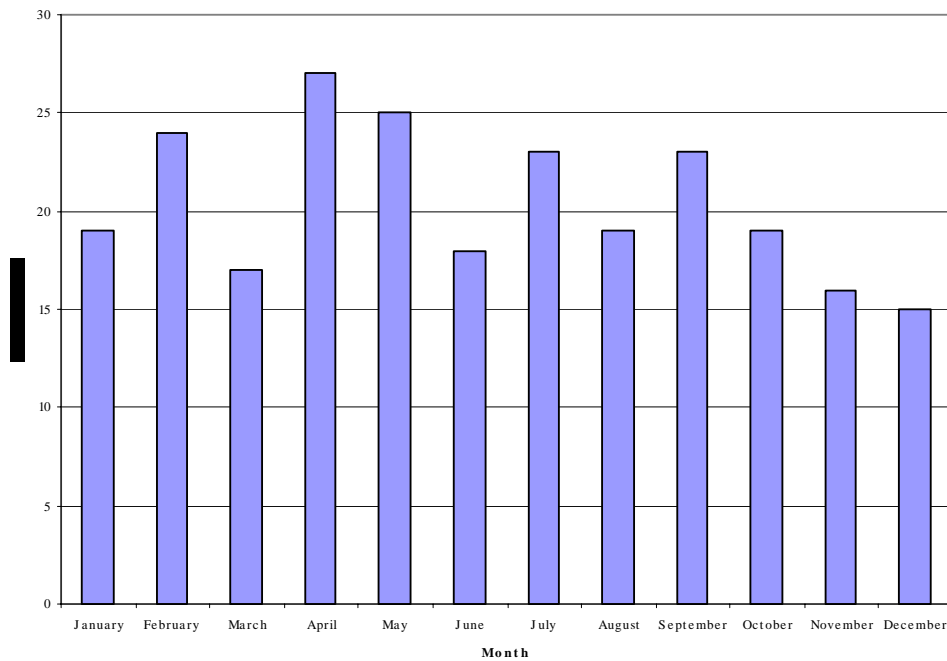


Graph 7.3: Number of Goods and Wage Transactions per Month - 1851

The graph for 1851 (Graph 7.3) reveals the number of transactions increasing to a zenith of 36 in March before decreasing to a low of eight, repeated in the months of June, July and August. Transactions increased to 31 in December, the second highest number for the year. There is no information about the type of work that Aboriginal people were doing in March 1851. It is possible that some of the payments represent a lag from the previous wheat harvesting season. Some of the workers may have returned to non-farm responsibilities immediately after the harvest and not returned to collect their goods and wages until March. The low values for June to August indicate limited participation in

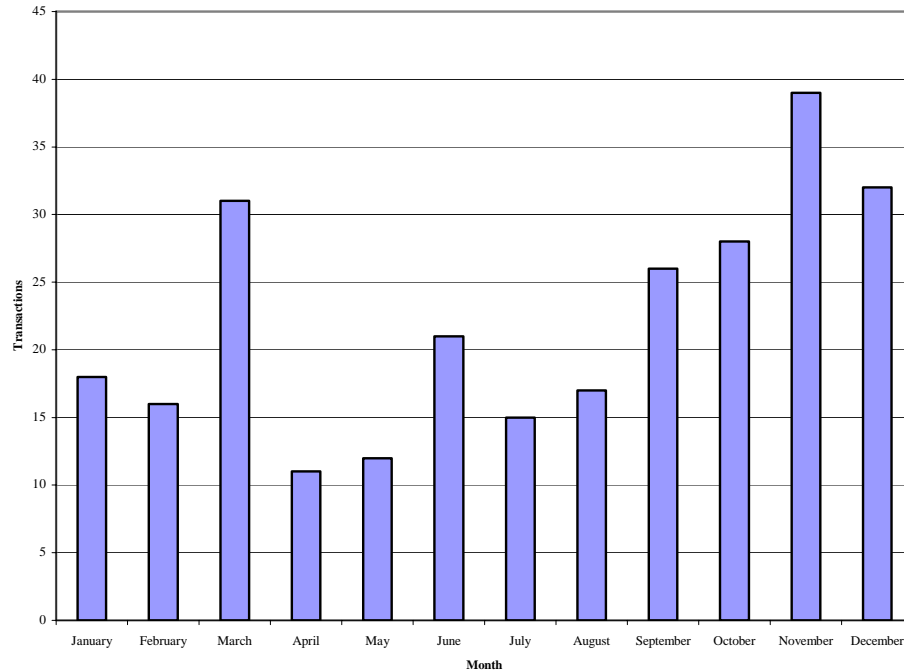
² Other duties done at the end of the year that Aboriginal people may have participated in include sheep washing and shearing.

potato and maize harvesting. The number of transactions in December suggests Aboriginal participation in the wheat harvest.



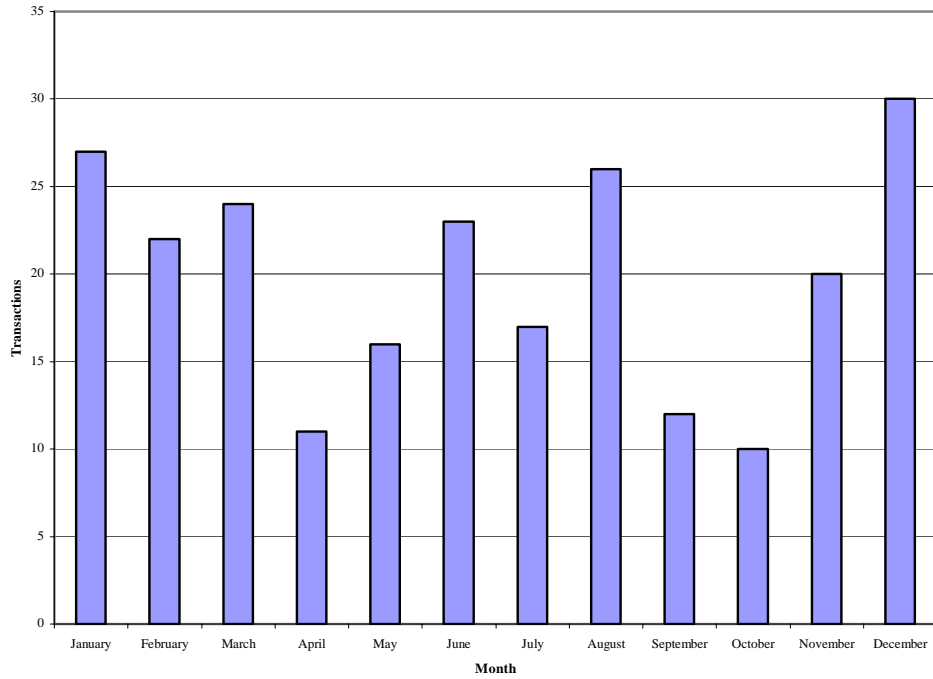
Graph 7.4: Number of Goods and Wage Transactions per Month - 1852

Graph 7.4 displays the number of transactions for 1852. It suggests that Aboriginal people worked consistently throughout the year, particularly from March to November. The transactions for May, June and July included payments for Aboriginal men and women harvesting potatoes. The pattern shows some different trends from 1851 when the greatest number of transactions occurred during the wheat harvesting season. In 1852, the lowest number of transactions was recorded in December, representing only half the number from the year before.



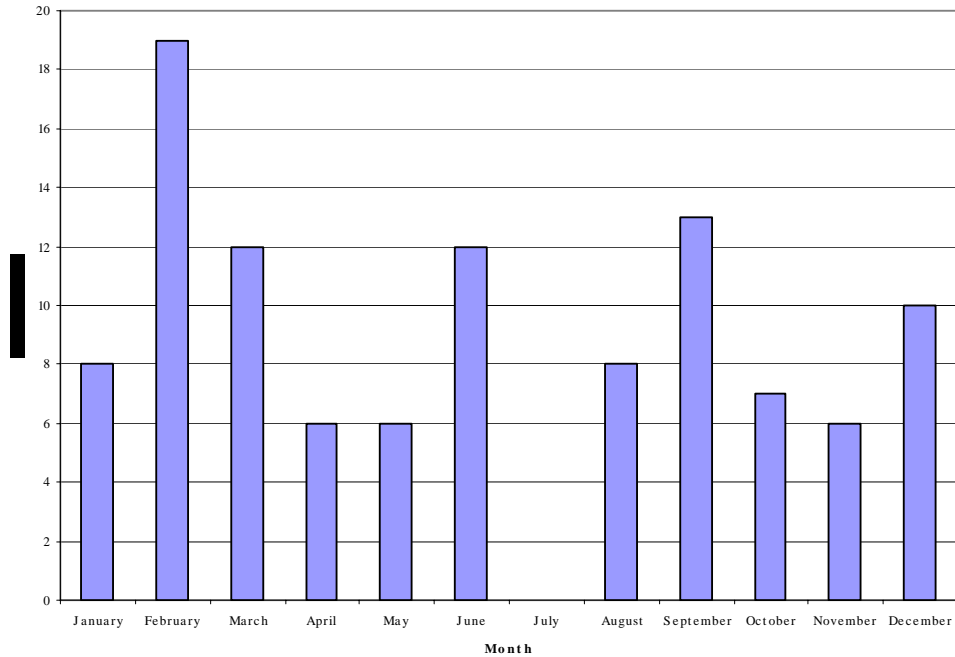
Graph 7.5: Number of Goods and Wage Transactions per Month - 1853

The pattern for 1853 is similar to that for 1851, with the greatest concentration of transactions during the wheat harvesting season, with relatively few during the middle months of the year (see Graph 7.5). The high value for November may indicate Aboriginal involvement in sheep washing and shearing, which was often conducted about this time. As in 1851, there is no obvious explanation for the high number of dealings in March. Once again, it may represent a lag from the previous wheat harvesting season.



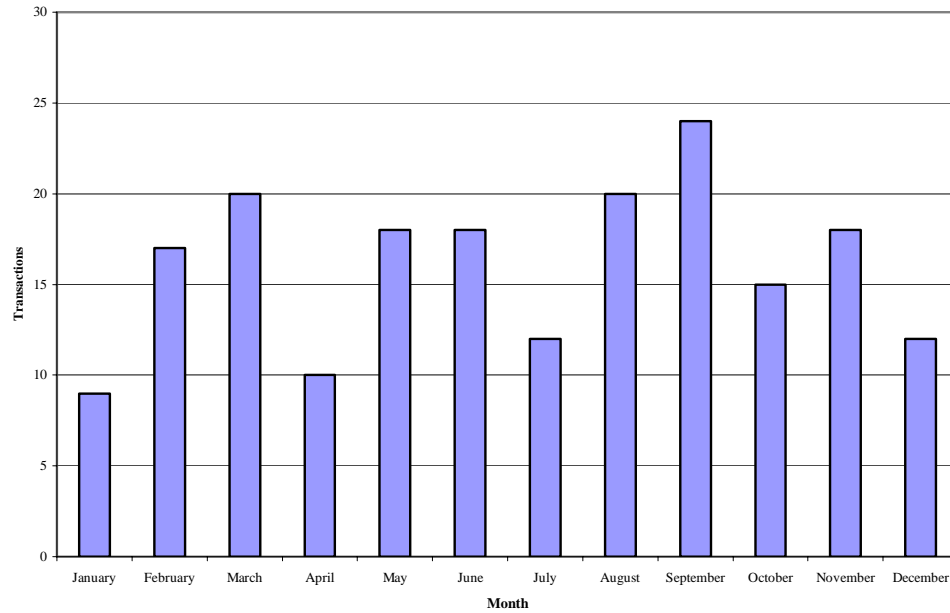
Graph 7.6: Number of Goods and Wage Transactions per Month - 1854

As shown in Graph 7.6, Aboriginal people once again worked throughout 1854. The number of payments for labour reached three peaks in January, August and December. Payments in January probably represented compensations for wheat harvesting. The high number of transactions in June included payments for potato picking, while the August apex was bolstered by payments for maize reaping at Numba. The high value for December probably represents Aboriginal collaboration in wheat harvesting. The troughs in April, and September and November may indicate that Aboriginal people returning to non-farm responsibilities.



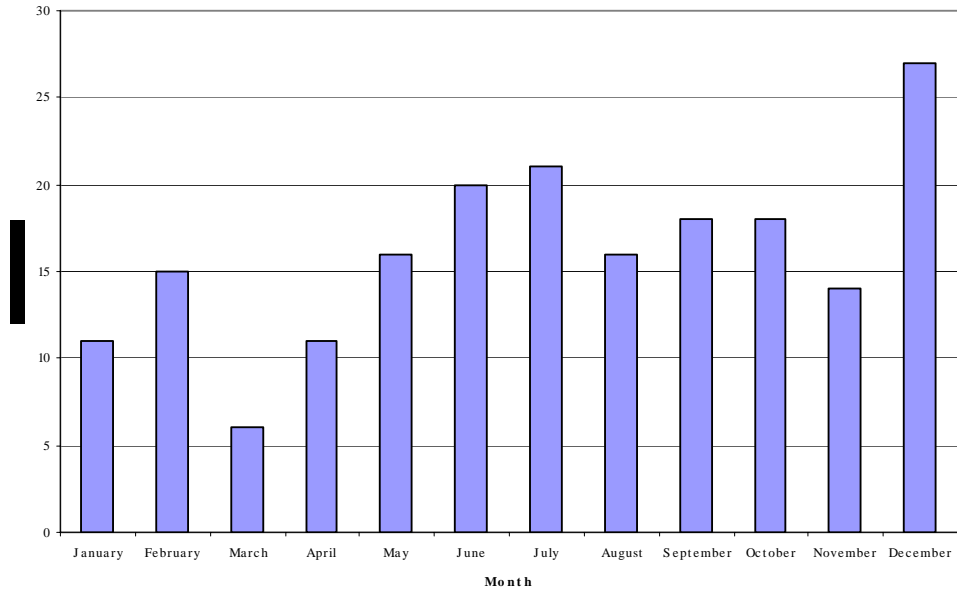
Graph 7.7: Number of Goods and Wage Transactions per Month – 1855

The main feature of the Graph 7.7 for 1855 is the absence of transactions in July, the first time a zero monthly value was recorded. Overall, the year saw relatively few transactions. The peak in February may represent a lag from the previous harvesting season. The small values in the middle and end of the year shows limited Aboriginal involvement in potato, maize and wheat harvesting. The October figure includes payments for keeping sheep. The reason for the reduced number of transactions is not apparent but it may be connected to reduced demand for Aboriginal labour. The initial gold rush had quietened by this time and some labourers were returning home and looking for work. This issue will be discussed later on.



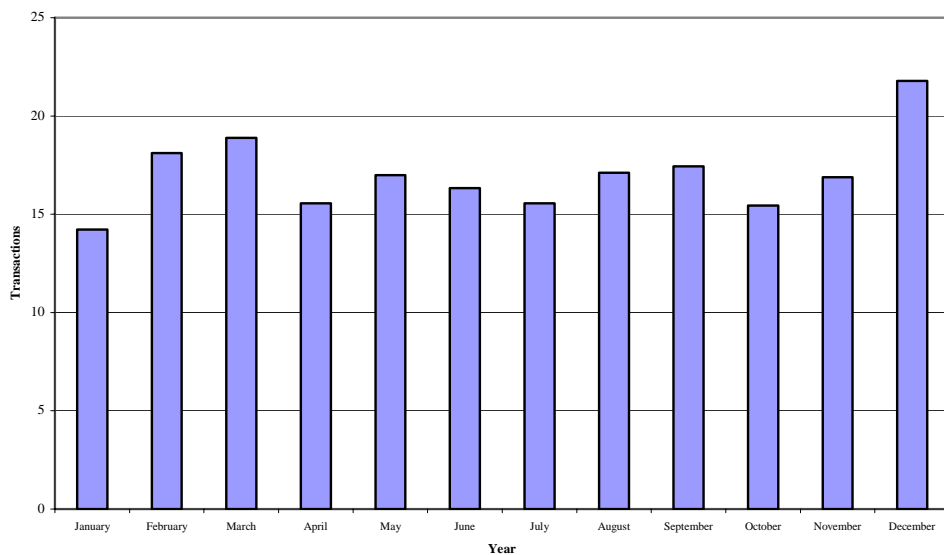
Graph 7.8: Number of Goods and Wage Transactions per Month - 1856

The number of transactions increased in 1856 (see Graph 7.8) with Aboriginal people apparently working during every month of the year. The pattern suggests a peak during the middle of the year with a slight dip in July. Aboriginal people were probably working at either potato picking or maize harvesting, or both, during this time. The small value for January supports the contention that the Aboriginal contribution to the 1855/56 wheat harvesting season was limited. The only work listed for January was sheep shearing and horse riding by Billy Took, further indicating that wheat harvesting at that time was not a priority for Aboriginal labourers.



Graph 7.9: Number of Goods and Wages Transactions per Month - 1857

The pattern for 1857, shown in Graph 7.9, indicates Aboriginal involvement in the potato, maize and wheat harvesting seasons, also with possible participation in end of year sheep washing and shearing. Values increase from the beginning of the year to a peak in July before declining marginally between August and November and reaching the highest number of transactions in December. The value for December was bolstered by Billy’s transportation of horses to Sydney.



Graph 7.10: Average Number of Goods and Wage Transactions - 1849-1857

Graph 7.10 shows the average number of transactions per month for the period of 1849 to 1857. It demonstrates that the monthly averages were similar, with all but two falling between the values of fifteen and nineteen. The most noticeable exception was the value for December of nearly 22, indicating that Aboriginal participation in the wheat harvest was greater than for other farm activities. It is likely that the average for December was also increased by the work of Aboriginal sheep washers and shearers. The next two highest values were for February and March and they may represent lag payments for work done in December.

The only year that approximately conforms to the average pattern is 1852 when the number of monthly transactions consistently surpassed fifteen. However, there is a noticeable difference as the lowest value for 1852 was in December. For the other years, various fluctuating patterns are detectable. In 1850, 1854 and 1857, there were peaks in the middle or the year during the potato and maize harvesting seasons and at the end of the year at wheat harvesting time. In 1851 and 1853 there were peaks during the wheat harvesting season but lows in the middle of the year. There were highs during the potato and maize reaping seasons during the middle of 1849 and 1856 and lows at the end of those years. The year of 1855 saw relatively low values for all months. Aboriginal labour on the estate does not seem to have followed a consistent, seasonal pattern as was the case in the pastoral industry of Australia's north where Aboriginal people consistently worked during the dry season and returned to the land in the wet (see Head and Fullagar 1997). The pattern on the Shoalhaven estate changed from year to year, reflecting variations in the demand for Aboriginal labour and the necessity for Aboriginal people to obtain subsistence from sources other than the land and the sea.

The reasons for the fluctuations in the demand for Aboriginal labour are not apparent. The lows at the end of each year may have been caused by the appearance of rust in the wheat crop. With decreased yields, Aboriginal labour may not have been necessary for the harvest. Alternatively, the fluctuations in the number of transactions may have been caused by deliberate decisions made by the Aboriginal people not to work on the estate and concentrate on their own subsistence activities instead.

The overall picture of Aboriginal work on the estate is of continual employment at fluctuating low levels. The picture for individuals is different. The records indicate that

no Aboriginal person was continuously employed from November 1848 to June 1858. Some Aboriginal people only appear once or twice in the day books. For example, Tiger was recorded only once in April 1852 when he received one shilling for unspecified work. There are two records for Pilboon in December 1850, indicating that he may have worked in the wheat harvest. He received two shirts, a knife and a pair of trousers for his unspecified efforts. Aboriginal women also worked infrequently. At most, they were recorded twice³. Interestingly, all entries for Aboriginal women contain information about the tasks they completed. They either harvested maize or potatoes, or burnt charcoal. It appears that Aboriginal women only worked on the farm in labour intensive jobs at periods of high demand. Their work was also concentrated in the middle months of the year, suggesting that they kept the summer months free for other subsistence activities such as fishing, which were plentiful at that time.

Some Aboriginal men worked infrequently with gaps of at least several years between employment. Sam Cunduite received goods and wages in May, August and December of 1850, and three times in February 1851. His name does not appear in the day books again until June 1857. Sam then received regular payments of goods and wages until the end of the year. His working life was cut short in November 1858 following his supposed murder. Two other Aboriginal employees on the Shoalhaven estate, Unie and Georgie, were arrested and charged with his murder, but a magisterial enquiry found there was no evidence to convict them (*Illawarra Mercury* December 2 1858).

Other Aboriginal men developed long work histories on the estate. Roger was first recorded in December 1848 (see Appendix 7 for individual work calendars). He also has three entries for January before a two month break until late March 1849. Roger then has numerous entries until August, then a five month hiatus until February 1850. The day books indicate that Roger worked consistently throughout 1850 with a possible break in September. He then resumed work in March 1851 and kept going until the end of May. Roger rarely worked in the next five months with only one entry in August. The number up entries picked up from late November and continued monthly through to August 14 1852, with the exception of January when Roger may have taken a break after the

³ Of the eleven entries for known Aboriginal women between 1848 and 1858, five do not contain personal names. They are listed as McCarty's wife, for example. It is possible that they may have been listed again

December wheat harvest. There were no entries for Roger in the following six months. They resume in March 1853 and continue for the next ten months until January 1854. His work intensity appears to pick up from about June 1853 and maintains a constant level until the beginning of the next year. After January 1854, there are no entries for Roger until August 1856. They continue until late November when Roger travelled to Sydney. Before departing, he was given a three month contract at £20 per annum and rations of beef, flour, tea and sugar. His position was unspecified. After completing the contract, probably in late February, Roger did not work again until December 14 1857, the middle of the wheat harvesting season. He then worked until June 1858 when the records ended. Roger's general pattern was to work for between six and ten months and then take a break of between five and eighteen months. Also, he did not always work at the same time of the year. For example, Roger worked during December only in 1848, 1850, 1851, 1853, 1856 and 1857

Like Roger, McCarty was first recorded in the day books in December 1848. However, there was only one entry for that month, and only one entry for 1849, in October. The number of entries increased in February 1850. In March, McCarty was paid for working on the punt. He received goods and wages six times in April before a two month cessation. The records indicate that work picked up in July and continued until January 1851, though at an infrequent pace. McCarty worked briefly in March 1851, but not at all for the next five months. He resumed labouring in September and continued to receive goods and rations monthly until March 1854, except for November 1852 and April 1853. The pattern suggests that McCarty worked consistently for over two years, though probably taking breaks of two weeks to a month several times a year. Only once was the type of work noted. In January 1853, McCarty was paid for swimming horses. McCarty worked again in June 1854. Like Roger, he did not work at all in 1855. He took up work again in June 1856 and did so frequently until the end of the year. In 1857, McCarty received goods in February, April, May, June and July. His last record was for October 31 1857. McCarty's work pattern was similar to Roger's, though his longest period of work exceeded Roger's by six months.

under their personal names. As there are no repetitions in the six personal names of Aboriginal women in the days books, no Aboriginal woman can be listed more than twice.

Unie first received goods and wages in 1845. He began working on the property when he was young, probably about 12 years old. (The 1840 blanket return lists Unie as seven years old). He grew up on the estate watching and learning from the Aboriginal workers. From 1848 to 1853, there were only five months in which he did not receive at least one payment of goods or wages. The breaks occurred either at the beginning or in the middle of the year. During those five years Unie made trips to Sydney in August 1849, June 1851, July 1852, November 1853 (when he travelled with Billy Mirning by ferry) and June 1854. He also visited Kiama in September 1852. The purpose of the journeys was not listed. Unie was probably not employed full-time from November 1848 until December 1853. As well as the five months in which he did not receive goods and wages, Unie probably also took other small breaks several times a year. Unie did not work in 1854. He resumed in February 1855 and continued until October 1856, with breaks in July and October of 1855 and January 1856. Unie then did not toil for wages again until June 1857. He then worked in every month until the end of the year, receiving his last payment on December 22. Of all Aboriginal employees on the Shoalhaven estate, Unie was perhaps the most consistent worker. He had the longest period of work, exceeding the next best by two years. The type of work undertaken by Unie between 1848 and 1857 was not recorded in the ledgers. In July 1845, Unie was given a pair of braces for stock keeping. It is likely that he continued in this role for at least part of his working life. An Aboriginal man named Buthring, possibly a member of the Buttong family, recalled to Archibald Campbell in May 1902 that a “black named ‘Oney’” was a renowned stockman on the Shoalhaven estate who was “proud of his expertise with the stockwhip”. According to Buthring, ‘Oney’ could split the head of a snake with the crack of his whip (Archibald Campbell Papers).

Other workers did not maintain a similar intensity over a long period. For example, Bony worked in every year from 1848 to 1857, but rarely for more than a couple of months at a time and with regular gaps of three months or more. The exception was for the six months beginning in late July 1851 when Bony was formally contracted to the estate at an unspecified wage rate to perform unspecified tasks. He visited Sydney in early August. Carpenter Jack worked consistently from November 1848 to February 1852 with only three breaks of between one and three months. He visited Sydney four times in that period, including February and September 1850, and February and June 1851. After February 1852, Jack worked only rarely and received goods and wages three more times,

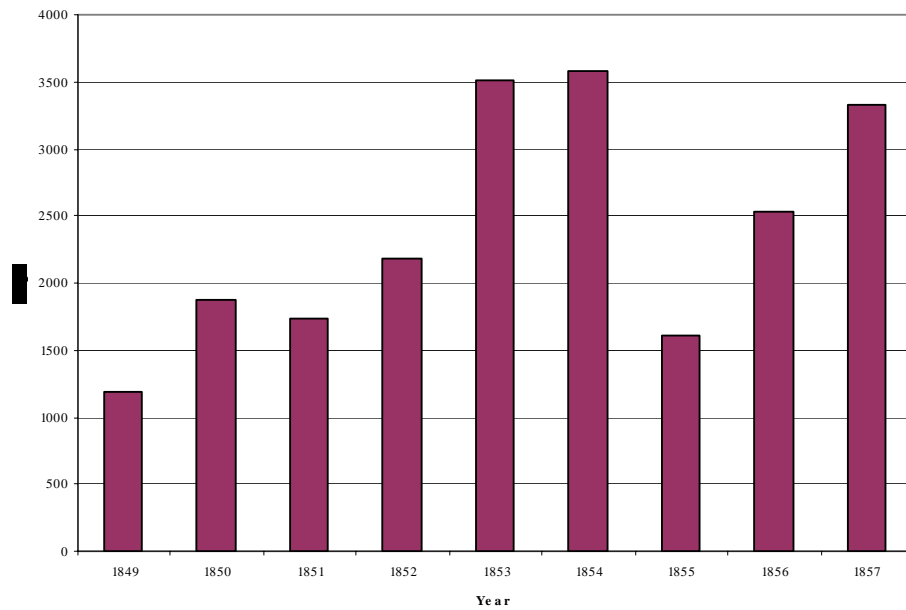
in April 1852, June 1853 and May 1857. In June 1853, he was paid £2.4.0 for working as a boatman on a punt. This relatively large sum indicates that he must have worked for at least several weeks on the boat. He may have also crewed a boat on his previous trips to Sydney. Billy Took's work pattern was opposite to that of Carpenter Jack. He started off slowly, not working until November 1849. Billy then worked occasionally until July 1854 when he began a concentrated work period until November 1854. He worked infrequently in 1855 before starting a twenty seven month period from January 1856 during which he received goods and wages every month. Part of that stretch was spent riding horses in February 1857.

The work of Aboriginal men and women on the Shoalhaven estate was characterised by a variety of patterns. Some Aboriginal men and women did not work on the property at all and others for only short periods once or twice over ten years. Other Aboriginal men worked consistently for several years at a time with each period punctuated by some breaks of a month or more. In one case, Unie worked for five years with only five breaks of around a month. It is not certain however, whether he worked every day of the months for which he received goods and wages. The same goes for the other Aboriginal men who worked for several years or more. No Aboriginal man or women worked every year in the period under consideration. There were no full-time Aboriginal employees.

Quantification of Work Days

Graph 7.11 displays the estimated number of days worked by Aboriginal people on the Shoalhaven estate from 1849 to 1857. It does not include the number of work days for 1848 and 1858 as there was only partial information for those years. The number of work days for each year was calculated in the same way as that for 1845 in the previous chapter. The only difference is that the average annual wage rate was increased from £6 to £10. There are two reasons for the increase. The first reason is that wages for contracted Aboriginal men had increased from around £6 to £20 in some cases. It is reasonable to assume that the rate for non-contracted Aboriginal workers would have increased as well. An average rate of £10 seems fair, as most of the work did not require the skill of horse breaking, the job for which Murro Joe was paid £20 per annum. The second reason is that during the labour shortages of the early 1850s, Aboriginal people

were in an improved bargaining position to ask for additional remuneration. (Despite this, Aboriginal rates of pay were still lower than the rates for white workers.)



Graph 7.11: Average Number of Days Worked per Year

The graphs show that the estimated number of work days rose steadily from 1189 in 1849 to 2175 in 1852. There was a significant jump in the following year to 3512 days. The number of days increased again in 1854 to reach a decade high mark of 3576. The most obvious reason for the increase is the labour shortage caused by the gold rush. With fewer white workers, the Berry's turned to Aboriginal labour to fill the gap. However, the first payable gold was discovered in April 1851 near Orange in central-western New South Wales (Bartlett 1999). By 1854, over a year had passed since the workforce on the estate had shrunk by 50% (Wonga 1995). The response of the Aboriginal community to the labour shortage was gradual. This may have been partly due to the inept management of David Berry who was slow at recruiting replacement staff. Internal reasons in the Aboriginal community, not apparent in the historical records, may have also contributed to the later increase.

The number of days worked by Aboriginal people decreased sharply in 1855 to 1602, the lowest since 1851. The likely reason for the drop is the return of white workers from the gold fields. The number rebounded to 2534 days in 1856 and dramatically increased to

3329 in 1857, the third highest aggregate of all. The number of tenant farmers on the property was expanding at this time, possibly forcing more Aboriginal people to seek subsistence from farm work as their land was taken for farming and animal husbandry.

In all, fifty eight Aboriginal men and women worked on the Shoalhaven estate between 1849 and 1857. The adult population at 1840 was 145. By 1882, the adult population on the Shoalhaven estate had declined to 60. Assuming a linear contraction, the adult population would have fallen from 127 in 1849 to 111 in 1857. Thus approximately 46-52% of the adult Aboriginal population worked on the estate during the period concerned. From 1849 to 1857, Aboriginal people worked a combined total of 21531 days on the property. In the same period, all Aboriginal adults could have worked for 364635 days (figure calculated by multiplying the 1857 population by the number of days in nine years). Work days on the estate represented 5.9% of total possible work days. Assuming that Aboriginal people were given approximately a days subsistence for a days work (and they were most probably given less), farm work was still a minor economic strategy for the Aboriginal community as a whole. The figures put paid to Bell's claim that Aboriginal people were fully dependent on the white economy by the late 1850s, at least in terms of wage work.

Aboriginal people resisted the opportunity to further expand the amount of farm work they did on the Shoalhaven estate. This is because they did not want the restraints of wage labour imposed upon them, a response seen in other parts of Australia (see Reynolds 1983). The Aboriginal point of view comes through in a letter from Alexander Berry to his sister Barbara on 15 October 1850. He wrote that an Aboriginal boy in charge of the bees had drawn an analogy between the introduced insects who drove out and killed the natives, and the white men who were becoming masters over all. The implication is that by refusing to work, some Aboriginal people were evading the control of the white masters and maintaining some independence in their lives. Those that worked did so for several reasons. One is that it gave them access to useful European goods (see below). It also provided them with some subsistence items to replace traditional foods no longer available due to the expansion of tenantry on the estate. It is also likely that some of the Aboriginal people on the estate felt a social obligation to contribute because of a long association with the various long-term residents of the property such as Alexander and David Berry. The most important reason was probably

that working on the Shoalhaven estate enabled the Aboriginal people to continue living on their land in proximity to important sites such as Coolangatta Mountain.

Aboriginal workers made a small but important contribution to the running of the Shoalhaven estate from 1849 to 1857. In that time there was an approximate average of 200 white workers per year. Assuming they worked for six days each week, their aggregate of work days for the eight years was 584000. Therefore, a total of approximately 605531 days were worked on the estate, including the Aboriginal contribution. Aboriginal work days represent 3.6% of the total. Terry Fox wrote that Alexander Berry encouraged Aboriginal people to take up farm labouring without much success (Fox 1978: 10). The number of days that Aboriginal people worked and the contribution they made to the running of the estate, although relatively small, belies the statement of Fox. Rowley was closer to the mark when he made the claim that Alexander Berry offered more than the usual opportunity for Aboriginal people to enter the white economy (Rowley 1970: 29).

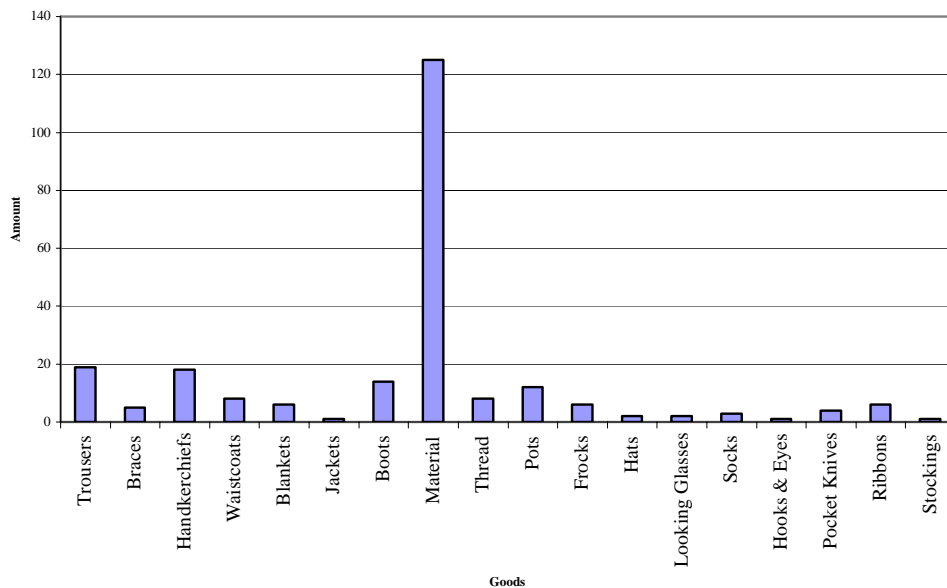
Aboriginal labour made its greatest contribution in a time of need. As was the case in the western pastoral areas of New South Wales (see Goodall 1996; Castle & Hagan 1998), Aboriginal workers helped to fill the labouring void created by the departure of white workers to the gold fields, although probably not to the same extent. On the Shoalhaven estate, some gained specialist skills that produced valuable export commodities such as horses. Others worked in the fields to harvest grains and vegetables that helped to feed the estate's other employees and residents.

The contribution of Aboriginal workers ensured that the community would be able to continue living on the estate. Wage rates were still below the level of white workers. Aboriginal workers represented a cheap alternative that could support itself in times of labour stress. Elements of the Aboriginal economy, however, were changing as people gained more access to European goods.

Goods and Wages

Aboriginal workers were given a variety of goods as payment for their labour. The quantity of goods provided is presented in Graphs 7.12-21. Some comment about the

type of material distributed and its presentation is necessary. The amount of material is shown in yards. Different types of material were distributed, including twill, osmaburgh (heavy, coarse cotton material used for grain sacks), print and calico. Duck, print and moleskin trousers were given out. Striped and regatta shirts were distributed. Guernseys are also included in the shirt category. The types of handkerchief included cotton, black silk and blue silk. Cutlery is recorded in individual units, including forks, knives and spoons. Cutlery knives are differentiated from pocket knives, of which there are two types, namely clasp and twin blades. Plates, saucers and cups are included in the same category as they were often given together, though individual units are recorded on the graphs. Some of the plates were made of tin. Quart, pint and iron pots were handed out. Plain ribbon and broad hat ribbon were issued. Boots are shown in pairs, as are socks. Thread is mostly quantified in reels, though several examples were of an unspecified length. The weight of each epsom salt ration is unknown.



Graph 7.12: Goods Given to Aboriginal Workers - 1849

One hundred and twenty five yards of material were distributed in 1849 (see Graph 7.12). The uses to which the material was put are unknown. Given that eight reels of thread were also issued as well as a set of hooks and eyes, it is likely that some of the material was sewn into clothing, possibly using bone points or needles. Material may have had other uses, too. The Anangu people who live in the vicinity of Uluru, use canvas to sort seeds from their casings (personal observation). The canvas is held taut and tapped, with

the lighter casings bouncing and separating from the seeds. The Shoalhaven people may have used some material for a similar purpose.

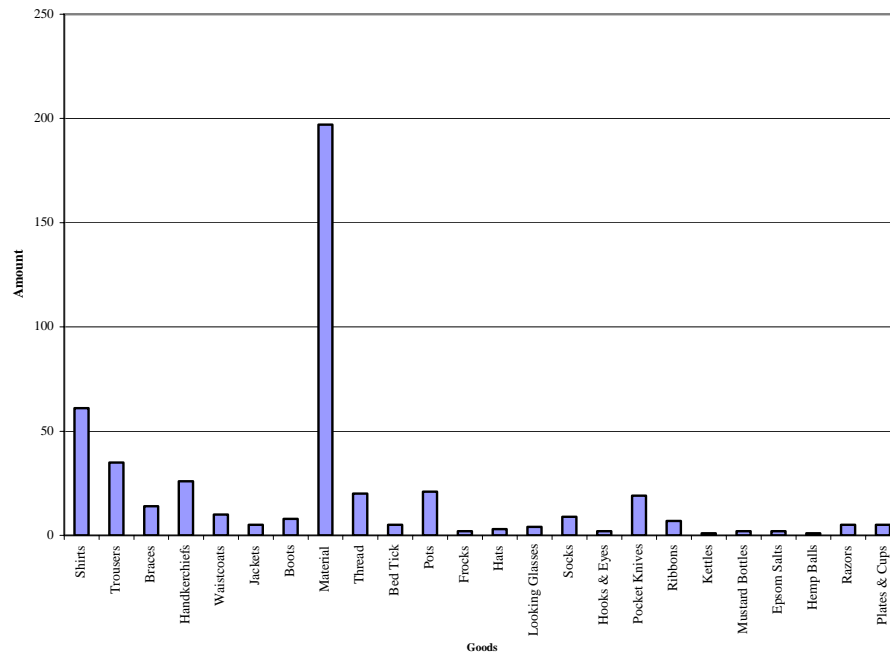
Aside from the material that may have been sewn into garments, Aboriginal workers received numerous full sets of clothing. Most items were clearly working clothes and some give an indication to the type of work being done. For example, the individuals receiving moleskin trousers could have been riding horses. Others items such as silk handkerchiefs may have had a decorative function and acted as status markers. The dominance of clothing and material continues the pattern from 1845. New items of clothing in 1849 included hats, a pair of worsted stockings and six blue woollen frocks.

Other new items distributed to Aboriginal workers in 1849 related to the preparation and consumption of food. Pockets knives were useful for cutting meat, although they were probably also utilised in farm work as well. They received a variety of pots useful for cooking and possibly storage. Tea was probably brewed in the smaller pots. Some Aboriginal people were probably consuming food from plates using knives, forks and spoons. These items also reflect the changing diet of Aboriginal people, although traditional foods could also have been cooked and served using European utensils. Cutlery may have been put to other uses such as digging for yams. Pots may have been taken into the bush and used to carry fruit, vegetables and other collected foods. Cooking and eating utensils also reflect changes in the Aboriginal pattern of movement. Some of these items were bulky and difficult to transport. Their use suggests that Aboriginal people were not travelling as much as they once did.

The total value of the goods and wages given to Aboriginal workers in 1849 was £32.11.9. The component of wages was small at £2.15.3 (representing 8.5% of total remuneration). This reflects the nature of the colonial economy on the Shoalhaven. The only available store was on the property and it was the same place from which goods and rations were distributed. Cash was only useful if the Aboriginal workers were travelling to other villages to the north or to Sydney.

The goods given to Aboriginal workers in 1850 are shown in Graph 7.13. More items were issued in 1850, reflecting the greater number of days worked by Aboriginal people. There are many similarities to 1849 with material, shirts and trousers dominating the

distribution. A trend from 1845 and 1849 is the prevalence of shirts over trousers. This is not surprising, as trousers were the more expensive item. Also, trousers tend to be more durable than shirts, thus Aboriginal workers probably required fewer of them. A new item of clothing for 1850 was the pilot coat, first given to Carpenter Jack in July. Pilot coats were made of a coarse material and were used by sailors. In June 1853, Jack was listed as a boatman on a punt. Given that he received a pilot coat in 1850, he may have been working in a similar job at that time.



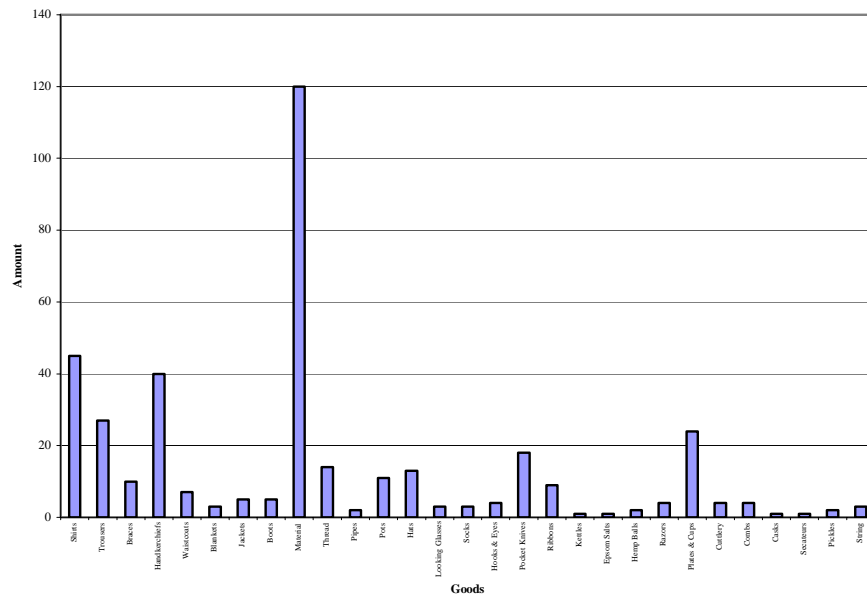
Graph 7.13: Goods Given to Aboriginal Workers - 1850

It is interesting to speculate whether Aboriginal workers had any choice in the goods they were given, once they had earned sufficient funds. They may have if supplies were plentiful. It would also have depended upon their relationship with the man in charge of the store. Their bargaining position would have improved during times of labour shortage, but in most cases, Aboriginal people would have had to have accepted what they were given.

Other continuities from 1849 include supplies of pots, pans, cutlery and cups. A new item in the food preparation category was a kettle, probably used for boiling water to make tea. Some food was garnished by mustard. The mustard bottle may have been used for storage later on. Another new article was the razor, five of which were distributed in

1850. It is likely they were used by men in combination with the looking glasses (mirrors) to shave. From the time when Bass and Flinders first shaved several Aborigines near Wollongong in 1796, south coast males had shown an interest in having their whiskers removed. The razor gave Aboriginal men the chance to shave themselves. Another new item was the hemp ball, which may have been woven into string that replaced sinew and other traditional twine. Aboriginal workers were also given epsom salt for the first time in February 1850. Epsom salt is a white powder that is often used as a laxative. It may have been given to Aboriginal workers who were suffering from constipation. In Victoria, employers often gave their Aboriginal workers 'salt' as a 'remedy' for all ailments, with the treatment producing haemorrhoids and other negative side-effects (Barwick 1971: 307). Epsom salt can also be mixed with water to make a solution for applying to swollen body parts. Aboriginal workers may have used it to soothe tired muscles after a hard day of physical work. The salt may have replaced a traditional medicine.

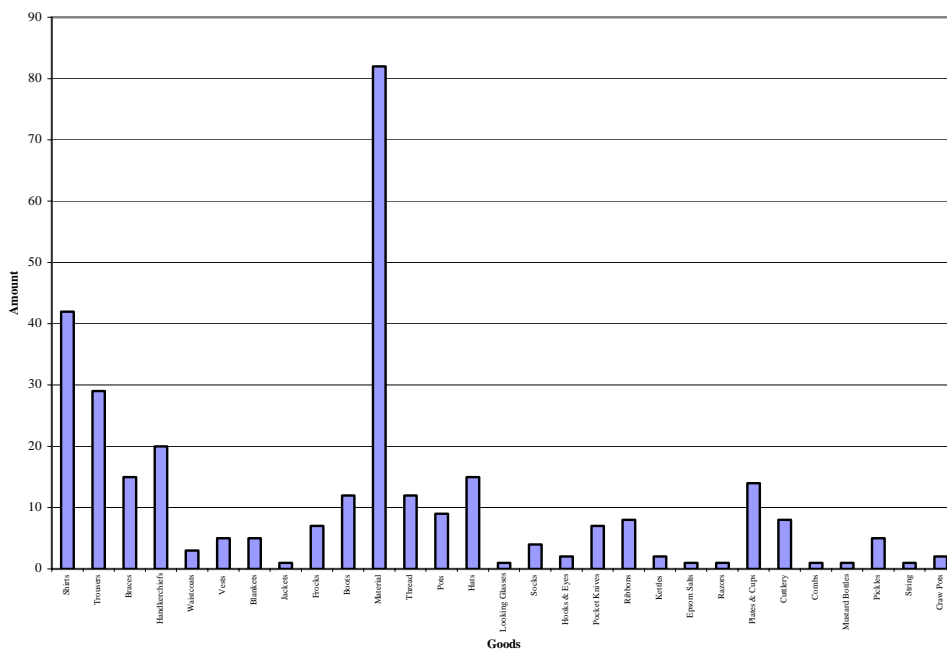
The total value of goods given to Aboriginal people in 1850 was £51.9.1. The value of wages for the year was £7.0.1, or 13.6% of the total, an increase from the previous year. The additional money increased the flexibility of Aboriginal purchasing as they could obtain items not available from the estate store, though they would have to wait until either they or someone else travelled to Sydney or the Illawarra.



Graph 7.14: Goods Given to Aboriginal Workers - 1851

Graph 14 shows the goods issued to Aboriginal workers in 1851. The number of shirts decreased by 16 to forty five and trousers dropped by eight to twenty seven. Material diminished by seventy seven yards to 120. Boots, socks waistcoats and braces all fell. The reduced amounts all reflect the fewer days worked by Aboriginal people in 1851. Other items though, increased. For example the number of handkerchiefs rose by fourteen to forty and hats by ten to thirteen. A variety of hat styles were distributed including felt, manilla, brab and bonnets. Plates, cups and saucers increased by nineteen to twenty four, but pots and pans contracted by ten. Pipes were distributed for the first time since 1845. New items included four combs, a pair of secateurs, two bottles of pickles, a cask and a ball of string. The combs were all given to men. They may have been given to the workers to encourage them to present with a more European look. The secateurs were given to McCarty in December. Perhaps he was working in the orchard or he or his wife may have used them in gathering food. The cask would have made a useful liquid storage container.

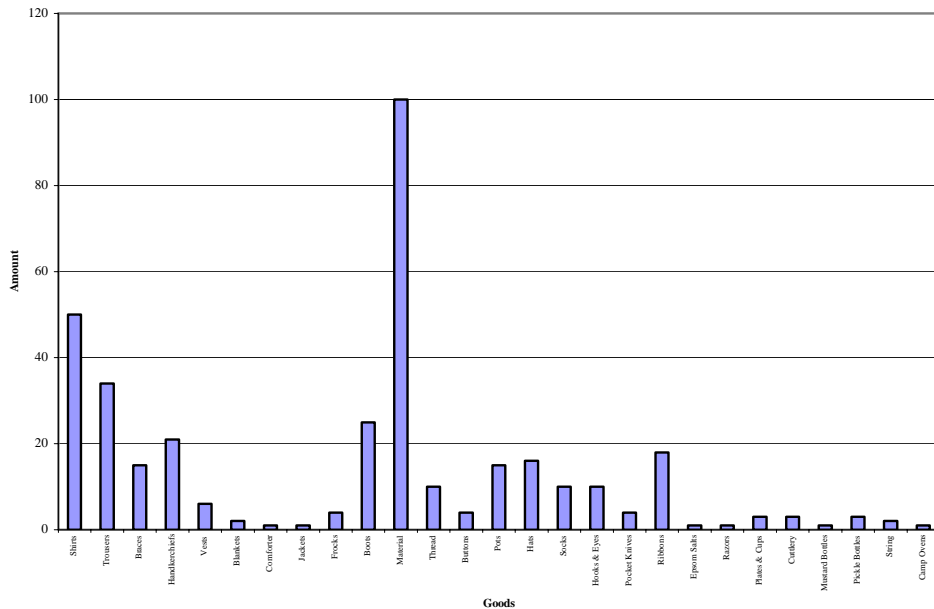
The total value of goods and wages given to Aboriginal workers in 1851 was £47.11.1½. Wages came to £13.5.2, or 27.9% of the total, an increase of approximately 50% from the previous year. The increase in the proportion of money also accounts for the decrease in the number of many goods given to Aboriginal workers.



Graph 7.15: Goods Given to Aboriginal Workers - 1852

The quantification of goods issued to Aboriginal people in 1852 is presented in Graph 7.15. There is a continuing trend of fewer goods being distributed. Of the three main types of goods, both shirts and material are down, with trousers only rising by two. Aboriginal workers were increasingly being paid in cash. In 1852, they were given £22.8.9 in cash, which represented 37.7% of the total value of their remuneration. An interesting addition to the goods given to Aboriginal people were the two crow pots issued to McCarty and Billy Mirning on the same day in September. They would have been very useful on the banks of the Shoalhaven.

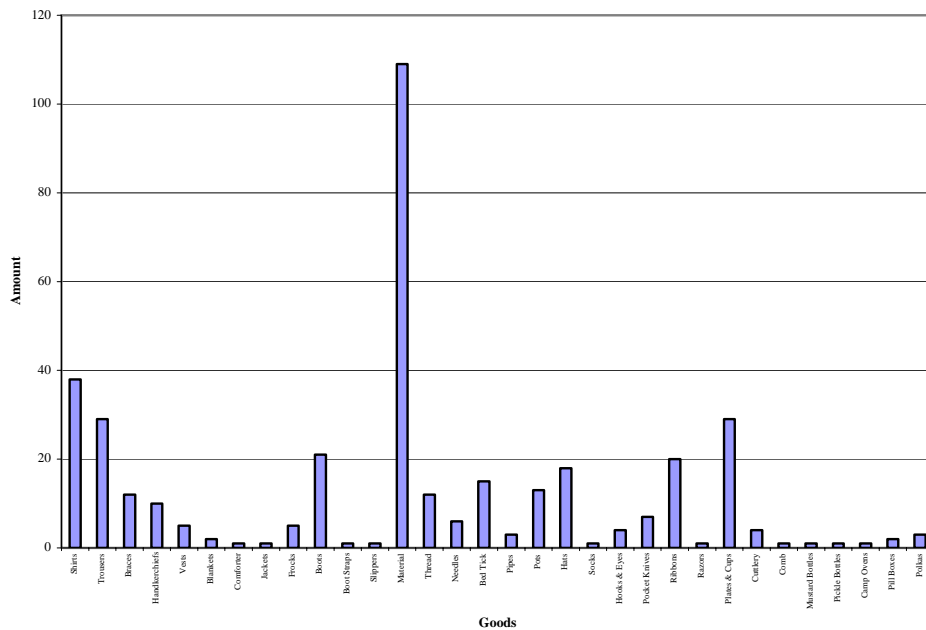
1853 saw a dramatic increase in the number of days worked by Aboriginal people from an estimated 2175 in 1852 to 3512. There was a corresponding increase in the number of goods given to Aboriginal people (see Graph 7.16). In 1853, there were increases in the categories of shirts, trousers, material, handkerchiefs, boots, socks, hats, ribbons, hooks and eyes, vests and pots and pans. A new item was buttons, further indicating that Aboriginal people were either making new clothes or repairing old garments, or possibly both. Another new item was a camp oven, given to Charlie Kindall in late October. It indicates a further change in the cooking methods of Aboriginal people. It was probably sufficiently light to carry if the user moved to another camp.



Graph 7.16: Goods Given to Aboriginal Workers - 1853

The overall increase in goods presents a misleading picture of the payment pattern, as there was a more than proportionate expansion in cash given to the Aboriginal recipients. They received £44.12.10 of their remuneration in cash, representing 46.4% of their total payment. The familiarity of Aboriginal workers with cash was increasing and it is likely that they were demanding it more frequently as a method of payment. This was particularly the case as more stores opened in the district.

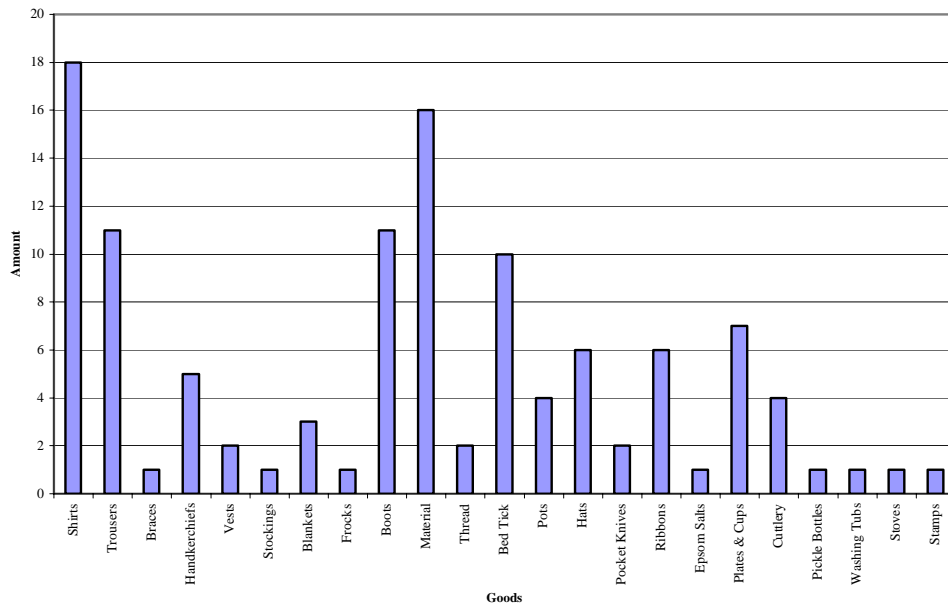
The proportion of cash as a method of payment in 1854 reduced to the slightly lower figure of 44.9%. This was in a year when the number of Aboriginal work days reached a ten-year maximum of 3739. The reason for the slight decline in the proportion of cash is not apparent. It is possible that David Berry did not have any more cash to distribute, so resorted to more payments by goods instead. The reduction in the proportion of cash was not made up by an increase in the gross number of goods distributed (see Graph 7.17). There were reductions in several main categories, including shirts, trousers, handkerchiefs, braces, boots, pots and pans, vests and hooks and eyes. The reduction in the gross amount of these goods handed out indicates that their values were increasing. Aboriginal people were receiving fewer numbers of some items, but they were probably of better quality.



Graph 7.17: Goods Given to Aboriginal People - 1854

There was a marginal increase in the amount of some material distributed in 1854 (see Graph 7.17). The largest increase occurred in the category of plates, saucers and cups, which increased from three items to 29. Cutlery increased by only one unit. It is interesting to note that cutlery is consistently distributed in lower amounts to cups, plates and saucers. It indicates that while Aboriginal people commonly ate from European vessels, European utensils were not used to carry food from plate to mouth. That is to say, Aboriginal people continued to use their hands to eat.

For the first time, Aboriginal people were given needles as remuneration. They were only given out three times, once to Billy Took and twice to Jimboo. Each allotment consisted of at least two needles and always came with thread. Jimboo’s needle distributions were in both cases accompanied by material and bed tick, items which the needle and thread could be used upon to either make clothes or sew up the mattress.

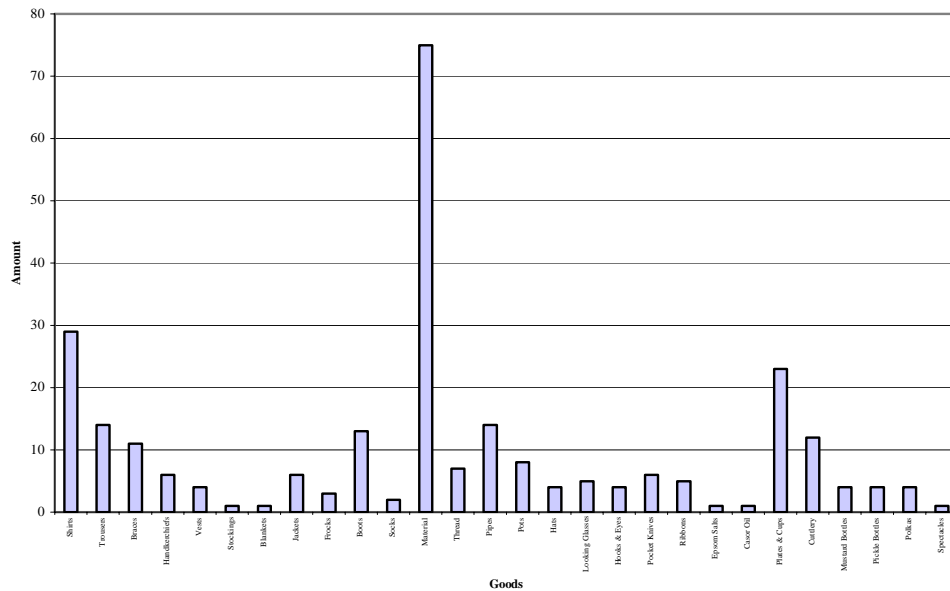


Graph 7.18: Goods Given to Aboriginal Workers - 1855

The number of days worked by Aboriginal people in 1855 dropped dramatically to 1602. There was a corresponding reduction in the amount of goods issued to the workers (see Graph 7.18). The most noticeable fall was in material. In 1855, only sixteen yards of material were distributed, down from 109 the year before. All other commonly given items fell. Unie received two different items in 1855. In September, he was given a stove. It is not clear whether the stove was any different to the camp ovens issued in

previous years, though it is likely that it was a more permanent fixture. Unie was also the recipient of postage stamps in December worth ten shillings. It raises the possibility that Unie was literate. From 1839, Unie made at least eight trips to Sydney and one to Kiama. He may have been writing to acquaintances in Sydney or the south coast, or corresponding with commercial establishments to order goods and rations not available on the farm. It is also possible that Unie was getting someone else to write for him.

The proportion of wages in total remuneration rose in 1855 to 51.3%, an increase of over 5%. Another feature of payment in 1855 was the introduction of store orders. Unie received the first order in December, worth £1 at J. Green’s store⁴. The store orders did not have all the flexible purchasing power of cash, as the range of goods may not have been extensive. But few Aboriginal workers had the opportunity to visit Sydney where a wider variety of goods was available. Locally, store orders were similar to cash as they allowed workers to chose from a range of goods and rations that was probably more extensive than that on the Shoalhaven estate. However, they were only useful at one store and the Aboriginal recipients could not shop around.

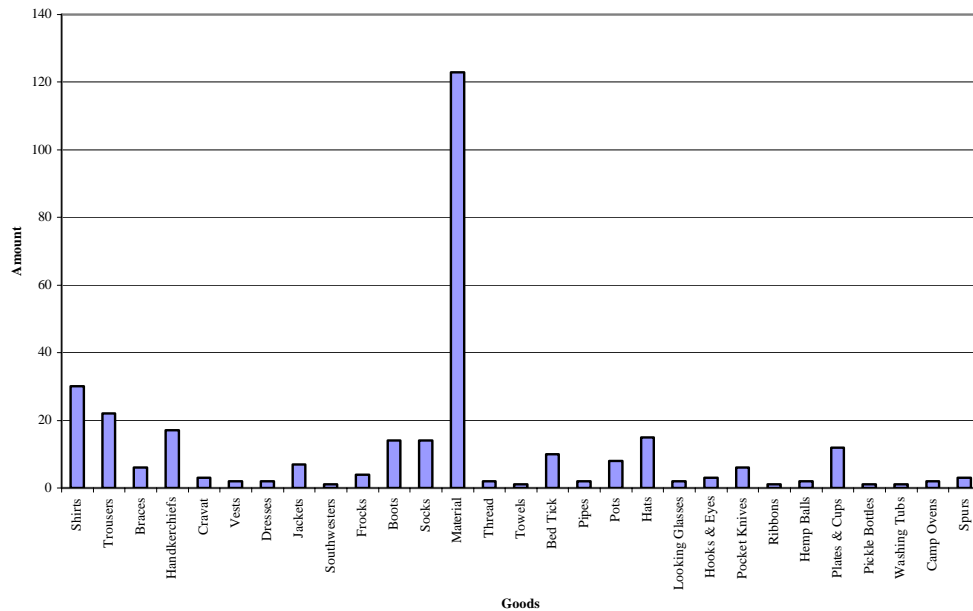


Graph 7.19: Goods Given to Aboriginal Workers - 1856

⁴ Likely to refer to Jeremiah Green who owned stores in Terara and Nowra. Unie probably went to the Nowra store, as it was closer. According to Bayley (1975: 64-5), Green’s Nowra store did not open until 1861. The information in the workbook indicates that it opened several years earlier.

The number of days worked by Aboriginal people in 1856 recovered to 2534. There was a corresponding recovery in the quantity of goods handed out, as shown in Graph 7.19. The sum of material rose to seventy five yards, shirts increased to twenty nine, trousers to fourteen, coats to six and cups, plates and saucers to twenty three units. A new article of note was the pair of spectacles given to Unie on May 29 1856. It offers some support to the contention that Unie was literate, though he may have been given the glasses to assist him at his work.

The proportion of cash in total remuneration declined to 45.2% in 1856. The reason for the decline is not apparent, although it is a slightly misleading figure, as the proportion of remuneration given as store orders to J. Green’s establishment increased to 7.1%. The total proportion of payment given as cash or its near equivalent in 1856 then was 52.3%, an increase from the previous year.



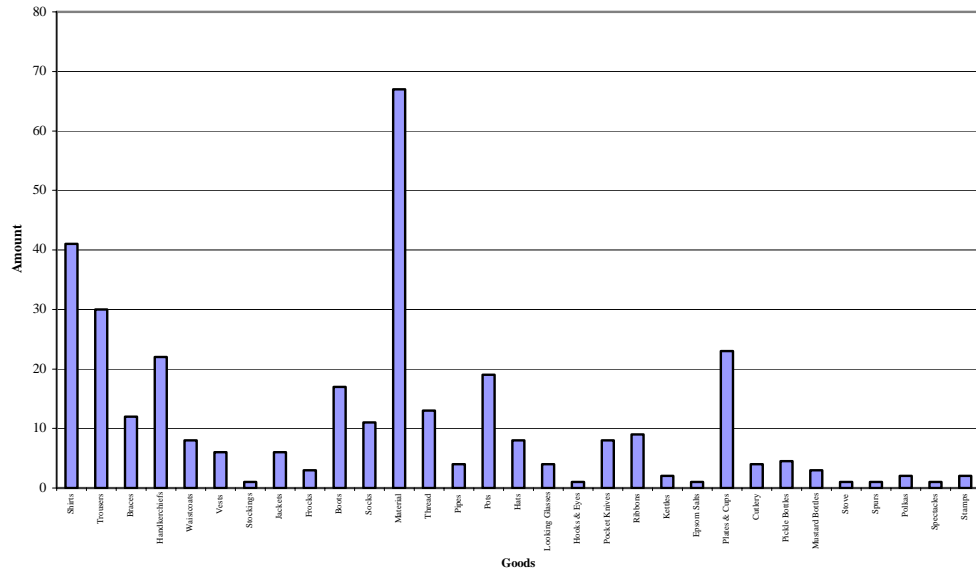
Graph 7.20: Goods Given to Aboriginal Workers - 1857

The number of Aboriginal work days increased again in 1857 to 3329, the third highest total. There were increases in several common categories (see Graph 7.20). Shirts rose by one to 30, trousers by eight to 22, handkerchiefs by 11 to 17 and material by 48 yards to 123. Several new items were distributed. In February, Billy Took was given two dresses. It is known that Billy was married, as in August 1856, his wife was recorded as

working on the estate. He may have given the dresses to her. Dick Buttong, Comodant and Charlie Edwards were each given a cravat. Billy Took and Charlie Edwards were also given a southwester each in winter, indicating they may have been working on the boats. Charlie, Billy and Unie were each issued a pair of spurs in November, confirming their work with horses, possibly in rounding up stock. Charlie may have worn his cravat while riding a horse.

In 1857, the percentage of cash in total remuneration decreased to 43.3%. The proportion of store orders rose to 6%. Overall, cash and its near equivalent accounted for 49.3% of total payments in 1857, a small reduction from the previous year. In 1849, cash accounted for only 8.5% of total payments. In the next eight years, the village of Nowra was established and a shop opened. Aboriginal people had greater opportunity to spend money and this is reflected in their remuneration. There is a clear trend to paying Aboriginal people in cash rather than goods. Aboriginal workers were probably demanding to be paid in cash. In 1845, Francis Flanagan of Broulee reported to the Select Committee that many Aboriginal people in his district were insisting on being paid with money. A similar sentiment probably existed among those on the Shoalhaven estate by 1857. With cash in hand, the workers probably spent the money on goods not available from the Shoalhaven estate and additional rations for subsistence. Extra supplies were needed when the expansion of tenantry alienated more land from Aboriginal use. We do not know how the Aboriginal workers spent their money. At best, the cash they were given would have allowed them to double the amount of rations they received from the Shoalhaven estate. If Aboriginal workers spent all their money on food, which is doubtful, then their dependence on farm work for subsistence would have risen to approximately 12%.

From the list of material given to Aboriginal people from 1849 to 1857, we can build a picture of a typical Aboriginal male worker and his possessions. He was probably dressed in a shirt and trousers, with a handkerchief in his pocket, socks and boots on his feet and a hat on his head. At mealtime he ate food cooked on a camp oven from a plate using a knife and a fork, with pickles and mustard added for taste. He drank tea from a cup and saucer. At night he slept on his bed tick with a coat or blanket for warmth. He shaved using a razor and mirror. At work, he carried a pocket knife to help him with odd jobs.



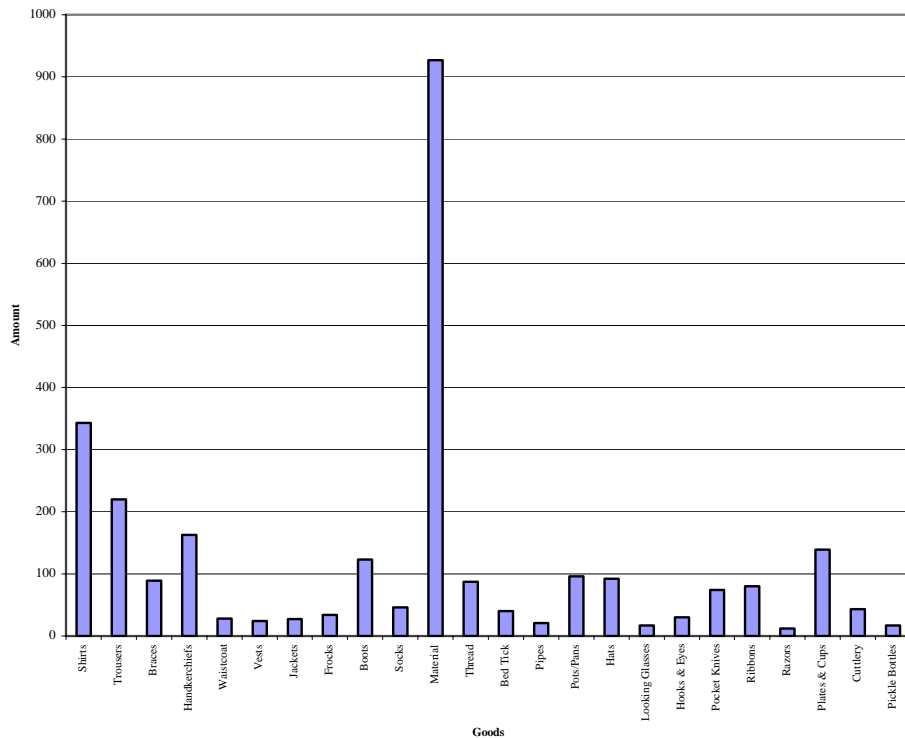
Graph 7.21: Goods Given to Unie 1849-1857

The goods given to Unie between 1849 and 1857 offer the closest match to the typical Aboriginal worker described above (see Graph 7.21). As was the case for each yearly distribution, the most common item that Unie received was material, followed by shirts and trousers. He was also given some items that either he or only a few others received. They included stamps, spectacles and spurs. The total value of goods and wages that Unie was given came to £75.5.6. Using the same assumptions as above, it is estimated that Unie worked for approximately 2748 days between 1849 and 1857 at an average of 305.33 days per year. Cash accounted for 30% of total remuneration. Store orders accounted for 3.1%, giving an overall total for money and its equivalents at 33.1% of total remuneration. The proportion is lower than for the total average of later years as more goods than cash were used for payment in the late 1840s and early 1850s.

Distribution

Other workers such as Bony, McCarty and Roger also accumulated large amounts of goods and wages, though at slightly lower levels than Unie. A question arises about how the Aboriginal workers distributed their goods and earnings within their family group and band. The goods were concentrated in the hands of relatively few men, so most individuals required a system of sharing to obtain cash and European items.

Unfortunately, there are no direct observations about internal distribution, so only speculation is possible. It is likely that at least some internal distribution took place. Sharing was a common practice among Aboriginal groups, including the south coast, and there were specific rules governing certain items, food for example. Similar rules may have applied to European goods and cash, or new ones may have evolved. Among the Gunwinggu of the Northern Territory, people showed a preference for sharing cash rather than goods. Cash was distributed by gift giving, gambling and communal drinking. Food from the market was shared within the family group and the act was a marker of sociability. Larger market items such as guns were expected to be used communally (Altman 1987:154-6). It is not known whether the Aboriginal people on the Shoalhaven estate followed a similar pattern and more information is required to evaluate these possibilities.



Graph 7.22: Totals of Goods Given to Aboriginal Workers

The gross sum of goods that workers received suggests that a sufficient amount existed for some distribution to have taken place (see Graph 7.22). The most likely goods to be distributed were material, shirts and trousers. It is possible that senior men or others

seeking political advantage may have controlled the distribution of other uncommon items such as camp ovens.

Aboriginal women worked for fewer days than men did, and consequently, most relied on their husbands and other male family members to obtain European goods. For their work, women received two handkerchiefs, a pot and £8.1.0 in cash, for total remuneration worth £8.3.4. Using the assumption of an average wage of £10 per annum, it is calculated that Aboriginal women worked for 298 days on the Shoalhaven estate between 1849 and 1857. In the same period, Aboriginal men worked for 21233 days.

For clothes, women had to rely on their husbands or male relatives to provide material. The wives of Aboriginal men who worked on the estate possibly received a share of their husband's payments of material and other goods. Other Aboriginal women without husbands or relatives working on the farm may have found it much more difficult to obtain European items. Since Aboriginal women did little work on the Shoalhaven estate, they had time to pursue other responsibilities such as caring for children and fishing. Traditionally, Aboriginal women fished with hook and line, giving them a source of economic independence. They may have used the fish they caught, together with other foods they gathered, to bargain with men to gain European goods they wanted. Alternatively, given they already had some economic independence, they may not have wanted many European goods and chosen instead to obtain subsistence using their own labour in the traditional way (most probably with the addition of steel fish hooks). It is possible that men and women operated their own economic systems, with men working on the farm for cash, goods and rations (a source of carbohydrates) and hunting for meat (a source of protein), while women fished for protein and gathering for carbohydrates with an occasional supplement of cash, goods and rations from farm work. There is insufficient evidence to confirm the existence of separate economic spheres for men and women.

Another question that arises about the goods given to Aboriginal workers concerns the uses to which they were put. It is known from other parts of the world that the adoption of European technology may lead to economic change. For example, the adoption of metal implements by the Mbuti of Zaire improved hunting efficiency. In the early 20th century they became specialised ivory hunters for the western market (Ichikawa 1991).

Changes on the south coast are more difficult to determine. The Aboriginal people on the south coast could have adapted numerous items to improve the efficiency of traditional subsistence practices. For example, the ‘craw pots’ given to McCarty and Billy Mirning in September 1852 would have assisted the process of catching crustaceans. Iron fish hooks may have improved fishing efficiency. The many pocket knives handed out would have been helpful in numerous activities from hunting and fishing to collecting plant material. The string may have been used to attach stone points or prongs to a spear, or as fishing line. These items replaced traditional goods that may no longer have been available. They would have enabled Aboriginal people to continue obtaining the majority of their subsistence independently, thereby reducing the cost of their labour to Alexander and David Berry and helping to ensure the long-term residence of the Aboriginal community on the Shoalhaven estate.

Economic Recovery of the Illawarra and Shoalhaven: 1848-1860

The colonial depression of the 1840s severely impacted upon the population of Wollongong. In 1841, the population was 831. By 1849, the population had declined to 501. The discovery of gold in New South Wales and Victoria propelled the economic recovery in the 1850s. The Illawarra helped to supply the gold fields and the expanding population of the colony with agricultural produce (Lee 1997). The dairy industry, particularly the churning of butter, took off in the 1850s and replaced crops and cattle as the main form of agricultural production. There was strong demand for Illawarra butter in the Sydney market. The gold rush led to marked increases in the price of butter and cheese. The earnings of Illawarra dairymen skyrocketed as a result (Jervis 1942: 277; McQuilton 1997: 30). The growth of the dairy industry helped push the population of Wollongong to 864 in 1856.

The recovery of the Illawarra economy in the 1850s was also promoted by the development of the mining industry. Coal was discovered in the Illawarra in 1787. In 1828, James Shoobert sought to develop a mine at Bulli but was prevented from doing so by the coal monopoly given to the Australian Agricultural Company. The monopoly was withdrawn in 1848 and Shoobert, who was then a dairy farmer at Mount Kiera, opened a coal mine in 1849. Mining did not prosper immediately as Shoobert invested little capital in the operation (Lee 1997: 35-7; Jervis 1942: 283-4). The Osborne/Wallsend

mine at Mount Kiera opened in 1857. Thomas Hale opened a mine at Bellambi soon after. A jetty was constructed and tram tracks were laid to transport the coal to ships. Another mine was started on Dr O'Brien's land at Bellambi in 1858. In that year, the Illawarra mines produced 16218 tons of coal, valued at £17934 (Jervis 1942: 286-7).

Dairying expanded in the Shoalhaven district throughout the 1850s, particularly from 1855 onwards when men began returning from the goldfields. Many of the farmers were tenants on the Berry estate, but other landholders also kept dairy herds. Dairy farmers also kept pigs as an additional source of income. The pigs were fed on whey left over from the butter making process. Wheat, maize and potatoes were also cultivated by some of the smaller farmers (Bayley 1975: 48-9). By the end of the 1850s, there was little productive land that was not occupied by farmers, though not all of it was cleared (McQuilton 1997: 29).

Small villages in the Shoalhaven district were settled in the 1850s. Alexander Berry set aside land at Numba for a village and by 1855 there was a courthouse, church, post office, store, schoolhouse and a few houses. Nowra was the only government-planned town in the area. The first sale of land there occurred on April 2 1855. By January 1857, it consisted of seven dwellings and forty three inhabitants. A steam mill was also constructed in that year. In February 1859, there were sixteen buildings in the village. Later in the year, the Shoalhaven Municipality was established at Nowra. At the end of the 1850s, there were three other villages close by, including Worrigea, Terara and Bomaderry (Cousins 1994: 247-53). New tracks were cleared to facilitate the movement of produce to the jetties on the Shoalhaven River. In 1858, the government gazetted a road from Gerringong to Broughton Creek. Men from the Shoalhaven estate were set to work on a road from Gerringong to Bomaderry in the same year (Bayley 1975: 50-1).

Cultivation of land in the district of Kiama intensified in the 1850s. On a farm of 250 acres, there were a reported seventy people making a living. Exports for 1850 totalled 10484 bushels of wheat, 3374 bushels of barley, seven tons of pork, 149.5 tons of potatoes, seventy nine tons of butter and 152 casks of ale. Timber was still being felled in the district and 91700 feet were cut in 1850. Most of Kiama was undeveloped though and in 1855 it consisted of only a few buildings. Much of the land was used for cattle grazing (Jervis 1942: 210-11).

Farm Work

The increasing intensity of land use by whites further inhibited the ability of Aboriginal people to obtain subsistence by hunting and gathering. Some sought food, rations and wages by working on the smaller farms of the Shoalhaven district, though the evidence is limited. Outside of the Shoalhaven estate, the most detailed evidence of Aboriginal farm work comes from the Elyard's Brundee Orchard Farm. Billigong continued working at Brundee in the 1850s. His value to the Elyard family is apparent in a letter written by Arthur Elyard to his brother, William Elyard, junior, in Sydney on April 10 1850. Arthur Elyard, requesting that William Elyard, junior, send down some Savoy cabbage seed, also suggested that he dispatch Billigong immediately "... as he is the only one we can depend on here (and) I ...wish that he be returned." It is clear that Billigong was an important worker on the farm and intensely missed (at least from a practical point of view) when absent (ML MSS 594).

In February 1851, the stock on Brundee Orchard Farm consisted of 106 horses, 458 cattle and 16 pigs. Wheat was also cultivated and Billigong participated in the harvest. On December 17 1849, Billigong was given tobacco, a blue cap and four pairs of duck trousers for harvesting wheat. The four pairs of trousers indicate that he may have been assisted by at least three colleagues. This was not the first time that Billigong had worked in 1849. In August, he was given a blue jacket worth £1.5.0 and a pair of moleskin trousers. Billigong continued working in 1850. The Elyard's gave him eight yards of print material on March 18 1850 for unspecified tasks. In December 1850, tobacco, six pairs of duck trousers and six check shirts were allocated to the blacks for helping in the harvest. The quantity of shirts and trousers indicates the participation of at least six individuals. Billigong's name is not mentioned, but it is reasonable to assume his presence. On December 19 1850, £5 were sent from Sydney to be distributed among the Aboriginal harvesters, indicating that a group of more than six Aboriginal people were involved (ML MS Q219). If an average wage rate of £10 per annum is assumed, this gives a total number of work days over the harvest period of approximately 180. Given that Brundee Orchard Farm was less than 1000 acres and the amount of land under wheat cultivation somewhat less, it is unlikely that the Aboriginal harvesters would have to have worked for that length of time to bring in the sheaths. It is more likely that they

were paid at a higher rate. Despite this, several weeks of work were available for the six Aboriginal harvesters mentioned, and possibly more.

William Elyard, junior, made an unusual entry while at the farm on January 15 1851 (ML MSS 594). He wrote "Gillenburg (blackfellow) fruit sold – paid 9th March 1851 1s 0d." The entry is ambiguous. It may indicate that Gillenburg purchased some fruit in January and paid for it in March. Alternatively, it may mean that Gillenburg was employed to sell fruit and was paid for his labour after completing the task. Either way, it is a unique interaction between Aboriginal people and the white residents of the Shoalhaven district for the time.

Billigong returned to work in late February 1851. For his unspecified duties, he was given a bag of No. 3 shot, two cans of gunpowder and a box of percussion caps (ML MS Q219). The payment indicates that Billigong owned or had access to a relatively modern percussion cap gun, which would have given him a significant advantage when hunting. Billigong may have been hunting game with a gun for the Elyard's as several Aboriginal men had done the same for them in the early 1830s on Avondale Farm in the Illawarra.

On March 3 1851, Billigong arrived in Sydney with two horses (ML MS 118-121). William Elyard, junior, purchased clothes for him on March 5 1851. The following day, he was provided with a cap, shirt and handkerchief. While in Sydney, Billigong's lodgings were also paid for. In December 1851, Billigong once again participated in the harvest, receiving tobacco, a blue cloth cap and a pair of moleskin trousers for his efforts.

From August 1849 to December 1851, Aboriginal workers on Brundee Orchard Farm received goods and wages to the value of £12.9.6. Using a yearly wage rate of £10 gives a total of 455 days work. For the two years where complete records are available - 1850 and 1851 – Aboriginal people worked for 350 days. On the Shoalhaven estate, Aboriginal people worked for 3614 days in the same period. The quantity of work days for Brundee Orchard Farm is approximately 10% for that of the Shoalhaven estate. This is not surprising as the latter farm was considerably larger and offered more work opportunities. Nevertheless, Brundee Orchard Farm provided an alternate source of employment. However, as few names were recorded, it is not known whether the Aboriginal men from the Elyard's property also worked on the Shoalhaven estate.

There is little other evidence for Aboriginal employment on farms in the Illawarra and Shoalhaven from 1848 to 1860. William Lovegrove, a landowner on the southern side of the Shoalhaven River, wrote in 1871 that Aboriginal people of the Worrigeer band arrived “en masse” at wheat and corn reaping time in the early 1850s (*Shoalhaven News* December 23 1871). He said that they also performed any unskilled labour that was required. Lovegrove’s property was not large and the work pattern of the Aboriginal people probably matched that from Brundee Orchard Farm. After payday, the labourers often adjourned to the public house at Terara where rum was a favourite drink. Lovegrove expressed concern that the Aboriginal people were abandoning their “native usages” in favour of white peoples’ vices. This was not entirely the case though as Peter⁵, the leader of the labourers and the Worrigeer band in general, was skilful in the use of a gun and provided wild fowl for the white and black families living on the property.

Francis McCaffery wrote in his 1930 reminiscences that his father had employed Tommy Noggera as a horse breaker and black-tracker at Kiama in the 1850s. On July 7 1856, the *Illawarra Mercury* reported the death of an Aboriginal man named Mongo Mongo who was originally from Tamworth. The article described Mongo Mongo as an "equestrian" employed for the past three years by Mr Ashton, a property-owner on the Shoalhaven River. Mongo Mongo's duties may have included shepherding stock from horseback and possibly breaking in wild horses.

Crafty Bush Guides

Aboriginal people worked for whites in other ways by using their bush craft. In 1854, the botanist William Macarthur travelled to the Illawarra to identify plants in the escarpment rainforest. He was due to be assisted by Dr Ellis, an Aboriginal man listed in the 1840 blanket return for Berrima. However, Dr Ellis was unfit to accompany Macarthur on his journey. Macarthur was consequently unable to identify the names of many trees (see reproduction of a letter written by Miss Annette Macarthur-Onslow in the *Illawarra Historical Society Bulletin*, June 1983).

⁵ Possibly Peter Weedallock of the Worrigeer band from the 1840 blanket return.

The *Illawarra Mercury* reported on August 19 1858 that Paddy Burrangalong, a well known local Aboriginal man, had shot a specimen of the Gigantic Crane for a Mr Marr and some other gentlemen. On September 9 1858, the *Illawarra Mercury* again reported about a shooting expedition involving Mr Marr and other gentlemen, with the different aim of bagging wallabies. The correspondent wrote that a group of Aboriginal men were employed to beat the bush and flush the wallabies into the open where they could be shot at will. The article mentions that Old Paddy, most probably Paddy Burrangalong, also shot a large wallaby. After a lunch of ham sandwiches, the party walked to the forested area in the vicinity of Mt Keira to continue the hunt. Apparently, "Joey the blackfellow" approached the party and asked them not to kill the wallabies in the area and to leave some for next time. Joey's protestations were successful and the hunting party returned to their homes. The incident suggests that the forested lower slopes of the escarpment were an important hunting zone for the Illawarra people that they wanted protected to preserve their subsistence. It exemplifies a significant feature of a hunter-gatherer economy: to leave sufficient resources for future use. It also indicates that hunting was still an important source of subsistence for Illawarra Aboriginal people.

Showtime

Aboriginal people attended the Kiama Agricultural show in February 1851 (Weston Family Papers: ML MSS 1643). They were provided with food to the value of £0.3.3. The reason for their attendance was not recorded in the show records. It may have been the case, as in later years, that they demonstrated a bush art such as spear throwing, or displayed some of their implements at a stall.

Fishing

Other Aboriginal people continued to use their bush skills to obtain subsistence. David Dymock recalled in February 1933 that he had seen "Aboriginal fellows" around Kiama in the 1850s throw pieces of the cork tree into a waterhole to stun the fish and make them easier to catch (ML Ad54). Barron Field previously observed this practice in the 1820s.

Blanket Distribution

Blanket distributions recommenced in the late 1840s, however detailed census information was not recorded. The data comes from the records of the Colonial Secretary, and south coast and Sydney newspapers. Unfortunately, the papers from the Colonial Secretary relating the distribution of blankets in 1853, 1855, 1856 and 1857 have not survived.

The *Sydney Morning Herald* published a report on June 8 1849 about the distribution of blankets to the indigenous population of Wollongong. The correspondent observed that the Government had branded each blanket with large letters to prevent their sale to obtain money for alcohol. The strategy was not entirely successful as numerous blankets had been offered for sale at between three and five shillings soon after the distribution had taken place. The article did not quantify the number of blankets issued. The sale of blankets did not provide a regular source of income for Aboriginal people as they were only handed out once a year. It was probably not the first time that Aboriginal people tried selling blankets given they were first distributed on the south coast in the late 1820s.

In 1854, 185 blankets were requested for the Shoalhaven Aboriginal population on February 11 1854 and 185 were granted on March 27 1854 (SRNSW: CGS 905 [4/3226 Letter no. 54/1431]). On the same day, twenty blankets were also granted to the Kiama Aboriginal community (SRNSW: CGS 905 [4/3228 Letter no. 54/2041]). This record is perhaps the closest indication of the Shoalhaven Aboriginal population in the 1850s. The 1840 population stood at 196. The 1854 population of 185 fits well that figure. Given increased rates of white land use, further exposure to disease and increased access to alcohol, a small population decline is a reasonable possibility. The 185 blankets issued by the government in 1854 also explains why few blankets were given as payment to workers on the Shoalhaven estate. The Aboriginal workers already had a reliable supply.

In the winter of 1857, a return of Aboriginal people living in Sydney was prepared for the committee overseeing the distribution of blankets (SRNSW: CGS 905 [4/3378 Letter no. 58/1529]). A population of 35 Aboriginal people was recorded, comprising 22 men, 10 women and three children. The population was principally composed of people from Port Stephens and Raymond Terrace. Two south coast people were listed, namely Dr

Ellis, a sometimes resident of Berrima, Wollongong and Kiama, and Georgy (or Georgie), a former worker on the Shoalhaven estate from 1844 to 1850. As will be seen below, Dr Ellis regularly travelled to different parts of the south coast to collect blankets. He may have travelled to Sydney for the same purpose and to obtain other supplies. The presence of both men in Sydney demonstrates another economic strategy for the Aboriginal communities of the Illawarra and Shoalhaven. Dr Ellis in particular moved from place to place, collecting blankets and offering assistance to white people where he could. By employing a strategy of movement, he ensured that he did not overuse a source of subsistence and supplies, and that he would be welcome next time he visited.

Twenty five Aboriginal people assembled at the Wollongong court house on April 1 1858 to receive blankets from the government. Their number included Cooma who was dressed in boots and helped to organise the crowd. Dr Ellis was also present to collect a blanket. He rallied the other Aboriginal people to give three cheers each to Queen Victoria, the magistrates and the town of Wollongong.

Twenty three blankets were issued to the Aboriginal people at Kiama in April 1858 (*Illawarra Mercury* April 26 1858). The article testified that the number of Aboriginal people in the district was falling, despite the fact that three more blankets were issued compared to 1854. The article also reported that several Aboriginal people from Wollongong and the Shoalhaven had travelled to Kiama to obtain a blanket. That number included Dr Ellis, who once again led the cheering for "Victoria the Queen".

On April 18 1859, the *Illawarra Mercury* reported that 59 blankets had been distributed the previous Tuesday to the Aboriginal population on the Shoalhaven River. It went on to say that many more Aboriginal people were known to be in the district and that the remainder of the distribution had been postponed until Sunday. The correspondent claimed, however, that the population had decreased from the previous year. The reasons for the decrease included the supposed "execution" of three individuals according to Aboriginal law, the death of one or two from natural causes and the departure of a group from Burrier to the Murrumbidgee River. The article stated that few children had been born in the previous year and most were of half-caste descent. It also revealed the existence of a marriage between an Aboriginal woman and a "New Zealander" that had produced five children. The marriage may refer to a relationship involving the Maori

Amatoo and an unnamed Aboriginal woman on the Shoalhaven estate. "Amato" is a name of some south coast Aboriginal families today and it is possible they are descended from the union cited in the paper.

The *Illawarra Mercury* reported on April 25 1859 that 43 blankets had been distributed to the assembled Aboriginal people the previous Tuesday. Only one bale of blankets had arrived instead of two, with the result that the children missed out. The correspondent lamented the fact, saying that the children required them as much as the adults. There are no later reports suggesting that the second bale turned up.

Population Decline

The blanket reports from the late 1840s and 1850s provide only limited information about the Aboriginal population in the Illawarra and Shoalhaven. Names and ages were not recorded and it was common for some Aboriginal people to miss out. The consensus among the newspaper reporters, however, was that the population was falling, but at an unspecified rate. The number of unaccountable deaths and murders of Aboriginal people from 1848 to 1860 provide partial support for this claim. Fisherman (see Wollongong blanket return 1842) was killed while assisting two constables to apprehend an ex-convict at Wollongong in January 1851 (*Sydney Morning Herald* January 6 1851). The ex-convict was charged with murder, but no record of a conviction was found. William Burliss recalled that in 1851 he had seen the body of an Aboriginal man lying on a shelf inside the Kiama blowhole (Organ 1990: 298-9). He thought that the man had died during a domestic dispute and then been dumped down the blowhole. There is no independent evidence to support Burliss's claim. The *Illawarra Mercury* reported on September 15 1856, the death of an Aboriginal woman in the Shoalhaven district. Murder was suspected, but the perpetrator was unknown. On July 6 1857, the *Illawarra Mercury* carried a story about the death of Captain Brooks (see Wollongong blanket return 1842) at Kiama. The article described Brooks as an old "well-known Aboriginal chief" who was blind and unable to move independently. The correspondent reported that other Aboriginal people carried Brooks from camp to camp. He died when a campfire blew out of control in heavy winds. The coroner, who chaired an inquest the following week, does not seem to have considered the possibility of foul play. The Shoalhaven correspondent of the *Illawarra Mercury* reported on September 4 1858 that

an Aboriginal man named Billy Bailey was found murdered at Terara. He said that the murderer was unknown but that it probably was the work of other local Aboriginal people after a drinking row. He also wrote that several white labourers under the supervision of the district constable had buried Billy at the spot where he was found. He did not consider the possibility that the labourers were covering up their own misdemeanour. To this list of fatalities we can add the deaths of Mongo Mongo and Sam Cunduite, previously discussed.

There was only one report of an Aboriginal birth between 1848 and 1860. The *Illawarra Mercury* carried a story on February 23 1857 of the birth of an Aboriginal girl to the wife of Paddy Burrangalong at the camp near Tom Thumb's Lagoon. Other Aboriginal births did not receive coverage in the local press.

With the development of several small villages in the Shoalhaven district during the 1850s came the opening of public houses and increased access for Aboriginal people to alcohol. The *Sydney Morning Herald* published an article on October 5 1850 declaring that many Aboriginal people had recently taken to drinking and consequently become "great drunkards". The article does not quantify the number of Aboriginal people who were regular imbibers and the picture it paints does not fit entirely with the historical information that shows the increasing amount of work done by Aboriginal men throughout the 1850s. It is unlikely that the workers on the Shoalhaven estate were "great drunkards", as that sort of behaviour was not tolerated by the Berry's. It is likely that the article exaggerates the drinking behaviour of Aboriginal people and that a smaller number than supposed were regularly drunk.

Summary

Aboriginal workers on the Shoalhaven estate increased their frequency of farm work between 1849 and 1857. In that period, there was only one month during which Aboriginal workers did not receive remuneration (July 1855). Aboriginal people worked an estimated 1189 days in 1849. This amount increased to 3576 days in 1854 before falling to 1602 days in 1855. The number of Aboriginal work days then recovered to 3329 days in 1857. In total, Aboriginal people worked for 21531 days, a relatively small but important contribution to the running of the estate. They replaced white workers who left for the gold fields. Aboriginal men performed a significantly greater proportion of

farm work than Aboriginal women. Only 46-52% of the adult population ever worked on the estate and only a small fraction of those people ever worked consistently. There were no full-time Aboriginal employees and farm work was still only a minor economic strategy, probably accounting for no more than 12% of subsistence. Work periods were interspersed with breaks of several weeks to several years. The most common time for Aboriginal people to work was in the wheat harvesting season in December. Aboriginal men and women also commonly worked in the maize and potato harvesting seasons in the middle of the year. On average, Aboriginal work was evenly distributed throughout the year, but each individual year showed fluctuations and there was no common pattern.

Aboriginal people worked for a variety of reasons, including social obligation and to gain access to European goods and food. Initially, Aboriginal workers were paid with goods supplemented by a little cash. The proportion changed and by 1857 approximately 50% of wages was given as cash or store orders. Cash increased the flexibility of Aboriginal purchasing and allowed them to buy goods and food not available on the estate. Aboriginal workers were paid in a wide variety of goods. The most common items were material and pieces of clothing, particularly shirts and trousers. They were also given items that they adapted to their existing technology such as iron fish hooks, pocket knives, string and craw pots. This would have enabled them to maintain an independent economy of hunting, gathering and fishing, thereby reducing labour costs for Alexander and David Berry and helping to ensure the continued presence of Aboriginal people on the Shoalhaven estate. Sharing was required to distribute goods throughout the Aboriginal community. We do not know the extent to which this was done and divisions within the community may have emerged. Aboriginal women were particularly disadvantaged because of their small amount of farm work. They may have bargained for European goods with the fish and other food they collected. Alternatively, they may have chosen to operate a separate economic sphere largely supporting themselves and their children through their own labour without the need for European food and goods. The evidence for this contention is inconclusive.

Other Aboriginal communities in the Illawarra and Shoalhaven faced mounting difficulties in the late 1840s and throughout the 1850s. The white population increased as the economy improved following the depression of the 1840s. The large estates leased their land to tenants, further alienating Aboriginal people from subsistence resources.

Coal mining also commenced, although only on a relatively small scale. The Aboriginal population contracted slightly in the 1850s. Those remaining responded to the economic changes by continuing to seek work on the smaller farms, although the extent of their participation is hard to determine. The evidence for Brundee Orchard Farm and other small properties suggests that Aboriginal people did not work at the same level as those living on the Shoalhaven estate. The implication is that farm work was also a minor economic strategy for Aboriginal people living outside the land of the Berry family. Other strategies were employed to supplement their rations from farm work, including the use of bush craft to catch fish and guide whites on hunting and botanical expeditions. Hunting was an important source of subsistence, as is implied by the case where an Aboriginal man guided white hunters away from a kangaroo ground. Some Aboriginal people sold their government blankets in Wollongong, but it was not a regular source of income. At least one Aboriginal woman gained access to food and goods by living with a Maori worker on the Shoalhaven estate. Some Aboriginal people also travelled to different towns to obtain supplies. In one situation, Aboriginal people were supplied with food at a local agricultural show. These strategies are hard to quantify, but they occurred rarely and were not significant contributors to Aboriginal subsistence. It is apparent that, contrary to the claim of Bell, Aboriginal people were not fully dependent on the white economy by the late 1850s.

CHAPTER 8: SHOALHAVEN AND ILLAWARRA 1860-1900

The Shoalhaven Estate: 1860-1900

In the 1860s, the Shoalhaven estate struggled to remain viable under the management of David Berry. Poor financial returns were exacerbated by a mild colonial depression in the 1860s, and a series of floods and droughts that reduced income and increased prices (Wonga 1995: 254-55). Alexander Berry continued to criticise David Berry's management style (see Jervis 1941: 42). He wrote to his brother on July 15 1863 to say:

You have now nearly 200 tenants, and the nominal rent is about £6000 according to Morton's statistics, but it is nearly all spent on the place. There are let about 8650 acres, or about one sixth of the land, so that you are nominally in possession of about 40000 acres, which in reality gives no return whatever.

It is clear from the letter that a large portion of the estate was undeveloped, despite the tenants, a further 200 employees and diverse production. The wheat yield was hindered by rust and cultivation ceased in 1869. Maize replaced it as the major crop. The estate also produced barley, oats, potatoes and hay, although the quality of the tenants' potatoes was poor. The quality of butter from the dairy fluctuated. In November 1863, Alexander Berry reported that the dairy had lost money in the previous twelve months. The export of horses declined in the 1860s until the Indian market improved in 1869 when disease reduced local stocks. Sheep were poorly managed on the estate. In the flood of 1867, the entire flock of 8000 was moved into a barn instead of high ground. All drowned as a result. A new flock of 1400 was purchased but they only returned an average of one pound of wool per sheep instead of the colony average of two and a half (Wonga 1995: 265-74).

Many of the tenants complained that their leases were of an insufficient size to rotate crops and maintain the quality of the land. Instead of increasing the size of each lease, David Berry brought in additional tenants. Leases were for no more than seven years and this dissuaded many tenants from improving the land. Tenants wanted to buy their small farms but Alexander Berry refused to sell. He wanted to maintain his image as the gentleman landowner and he could not understand why the tenants complained about the supposed benefits of his leadership. The Reverend Dr J. Dunmore Lang launched a

virulent attack on Alexander Berry in 1858, accusing him of monopolising the land and oppressing his tenantry (Cousins 1994: 70-71). Alexander Berry rejected the accusations, but did respond by encouraging David Berry to further develop the estate.

In 1871, the estate was home to 310 tenants and their families. They farmed 9574 acres (Wonga 1995: 281-83). Rent was paid in cash, farm produce and labour (Cousins 1994: 72). Many tenants fell behind in payments, but David Berry was patient. The total population of the estate was 2563. Monetary returns were still disappointing, but Alexander Berry was loyal to his brother and did not dismiss him (Wonga 1995: 278).

The additional tenants increased the stress on the land. Alexander Berry saw the value of keeping trees along the line of the river to prevent erosion. In the year before his death in September 1873, he urged his brother to cease the allocation of clearing leases, but was unsuccessful (Wonga 1995: 284). There were other pressures on natural resources. In the 1870s, shooters came from Victoria with swivel guns mounted on boats to hunt ducks and other bird life. Alexander Berry protested, but David Berry permitted the practice to continue (Wonga 1995: 277).

David Berry died in 1889, maintaining his casual management style until the end. He was fondly remembered by his employees and tenantry as a “big hearted man” (Cousins 1994: 72). David Berry left the Shoalhaven estate to his second cousin, Sir John Hay, formerly of Hazelbank, New Zealand. Sir John Hay first visited the Shoalhaven estate in 1882 and found a “perfect paradise for loafers” (Berry Papers ML MSS 315/111). He reported that David Berry refused to castigate an employee for poor performance, let alone fire him. After overseeing the construction of two steamships for the estate in Scotland, Sir John Hay returned in 1884 to assist David Berry with the management of the property (Clapham 2001: 39).

When Sir John Hay succeeded David Berry as the sole manager of the Shoalhaven estate, many improvements were required to maintain the same level of agricultural production. With the cooperation of his brother, Alexander Hay, Sir John instituted a program of development that included clearing 10000 acres of forest and constructing 125 miles of channel to drain 15000 acres of swampland. Large concrete floodgates were added to control the water levels. The total cost of the improvements was £135000. The

additional land was used to create a further 150 farms for new tenants, most of whom were dairy farmers. The proceeds from tenants were used to pay for the improvements and also to partly fund the large bequests of David Berry that amounted to £1 285 875 (Cousins 1994: 72-73). The program of development also included the establishment of a central dairy factory at Berry in 1895 that received cream from 15 local separating stations and churned it into butter before sending it to the Sydney market via the railway for consumption and export (Jeans 1972: 261).

Parts of the estate were sold to raise money. Four small farms at Gerringong, ranging in size from 21 acres to 91 acres, were sold on March 29 1892. Through the remainder of the 1890s and into the next century, the Shoalhaven estate was gradually sold off until there were only several hundred acres around the Coolangatta homestead (Cousins 1994: 74). The unfortunate implication for the Aboriginal residents is that they were gradually forced to leave the estate and move away from their ancestral home to the reserve at Roseby Park. This issue will be discussed in greater depth later in the chapter.

Aboriginal Work Practices

Evidence for Aboriginal work on the Shoalhaven estate from 1860 to 1900 is scarce compared to the 1840s and 1850s. This is at least partly due to the poor record keeping of David Berry. Alexander Berry continually castigated David for failing to write down tenantry agreements. It appears he was also guilty of failing to inscribe employee contracts as well. The extant evidence for Aboriginal employment from 1860 to 1872 is found in the population records (BP ML MSS 315/75), day books and financial ledgers (Berry Papers ML MSS 315/56-65) of the Shoalhaven estate. There are no farm records from 1872 to 1900 containing information about Aboriginal employment. The poor records keeping evident during David Berry's time continued under the Hay administration. The information about Aboriginal employment from the latter part of the 19th century comes from other sources including letters, government reports and oral history.

The record of Aboriginal employment for 1860 consists entirely of work done by McCarty. He was employed at the beginning of 1860 for approximately three months at the rate of £24 per annum. McCarty received most of his payments in cash. The only

goods he was given were a pair of boots, a shirt and an iron pot. Part of his wage consisted of rations. Each week he received 25 pounds of flour, nine pounds of beef and some tea and sugar. The amount of flour that McCarty was given is double that usually given to a single male worker. It indicates that McCarty was supporting other people. McCarty's wife was recorded as burning charcoal in June 1852. Some of the rations may have gone to her and other members of his family and band. In total, McCarty received payments to the value of £5.12.3, which transforms to 85 working days against a yearly rate of £24. The type of work that McCarty performed was not recorded. His previous roles included working on a punt and swimming horses. He may have continued to work in a role connected to the river. The time of year in which he was working indicates that he was not harvesting wheat, maize or potatoes.

McCarty, Dick Buttong and Charles Kindal were employed in December 1864. The timing of the employment indicates their participation in the wheat harvest. McCarty was paid £0.19.0, Buttong £0.18.6, and Kindal £0.6.6. Total remuneration came to £2.4.0. All payments were made in cash. Using £24 per annum as a base, both McCarty and Buttong approximately worked for 14 days each and Kindal worked for about five days, giving a total of 33 days during the harvesting season.

The three men continued to work on the estate in the early months of 1865. McCarty was given 25 pounds of corn meal, 15 pounds of flour, 10 pounds of beef, small amounts of tea, sugar and tobacco, and £0.5.0 for unspecified duties on January 14 1865. One week later, Dick Buttong received two shirts, 31 pounds of corn meal, 15 pounds of flour, 10 pounds of beef, small amounts of tea, sugar and tobacco, and £0.18.1. The remuneration settled his account for 47 days work, which most probably began the previous year. On the same day, Charles Kindal was given 25 pounds of corn meal, 22 pounds of flour, 15 pounds of beef, small quantities of tea, sugar and tobacco, and £0.0.5. On January 30, 1865, Kindal gained £1.4.7 to settle his account for 47 days work. McCarty was paid £0.19.1 on February 3, 1865, after finishing 51 days of work.

Work continued for the three men until late March and early April. Dick Buttong received £1.0.4 on March 25 1865, to settle his account for 20 days work. His payment in that work period also included two shirts. On the same day, Charles Kindal was granted £0.18.1 to complete his account after working for 21 days. McCarty was paid

£1.10.8 on April 3 1865, to settle his account after working for seven weeks and five days. McCarty and Dick Buttong resumed work in November 1865. On December 8 1865, both men were paid in cash after working for twenty-two days each at the wheat harvest. They were also given small amounts of rations.

The unusual component for the Aboriginal work record in 1865 is that the number of days each man worked is listed. The total comes to 284, though some of those days were probably worked in December 1864 after the men had been paid for the wheat harvest. The total value of their remuneration comes to £15.16.5. Using £24 per annum as a base, the total number of work days is calculated at 241, indicating that approximately forty-three of the work days listed in the ledger for 1865 were probably worked in December 1864.

There are no work records for either McCarty or Charles Kindal after 1865. Both men built up impressive work histories on the Shoalhaven estate. Charles Kindal was first recorded in the day books in July 1845. Unfortunately, the type of work he did over the next twenty years was not written down. In the 1840 blanket return, Charles Kindal was listed as a twenty-four year old resident of Broughton Creek. Although the age estimates in the blanket returns are unreliable, he must have been close to fifty years old when his name last appeared in the work records of the Shoalhaven estate. McCarty's work history goes back even further. The first record of his employment is in March 1838. Over the next twenty-five years McCarty worked on the boats, swam horses and harvested wheat. These were probably only a fraction of his duties. In the 1840 blanket return, McCarty was recorded as a fourteen-year-old resident of the Shoalhaven tribe. He must have been close to forty years of age in 1865. It is not known what happened to both men after that year. Both were still young enough to have kept on working. They may well have done so, but David Berry's poor record keeping means that we cannot know for sure.

The next information about Aboriginal labour on the Shoalhaven estate comes from 1871. Only two men with Aboriginal names were recorded in the day books, namely Charlie Edwards and George Longbottom senior. Edwards was first recorded in November 1848. In April 1856, he worked in the blacksmith's shop. His previous entry to 1871 was in March 1858. He is listed in the population records for 1871 as a stockman who is married with one male child (BP ML MSS 315/75). The surname of Longbottom is

associated with the modern Aboriginal community on the south coast. According to Gloria Ardler, Essau George Longbottom, an Englishman, married Catherine Lippear, an Aboriginal woman from Newcastle, in 1845, moving to the Shoalhaven soon after (Ardler 1991: 15). They had four children, namely George junior, Jane, James and Essau. It is likely that the George Longbottom Senior recorded in the day books for 1871 and 1872 is the father of these children and the husband of Catherine Lippear. On July 24 1871, George Longbottom senior was paid £0.4.6 for land clearing. Charlie Edwards was given £0.4.0 on the same day. It is likely that he was clearing land too. There are no further records in 1871 for Aboriginal workers or other men connected to the Aboriginal community.

There are thirty entries distributed between ten Aboriginal workers in 1872, with only two listing the type of work undertaken. "R. Buttong" (most probably Dick Buttong) was paid £0.4.6 on November 14, 1872, for clearing land. "Buttong and son" (most probably Dick Buttong and son) were given £0.10.0 on December 21 1872, for the same task. Dick Buttong was first recorded as working in November 1851. He swam horses in January 1853 and picked potatoes in June 1854. The 1840 blanket return showed him as a twenty-five year old resident of Broughton Creek. Dick Buttong was probably in his mid-fifties when his last evidence of work on the Shoalhaven estate was written down. He continued to be an active member of the local Aboriginal community as he helped to organise an initiation ceremony on the estate in the late 1880s.

The majority of entries for 1872 occur from mid-November onwards. The remaining entries all concern payments in cash. The recipients included George Longbottom junior, Charlie Methven (another name associated with the modern Aboriginal community) and three members of the Amootoo family (ancestors of the modern Amatto family and descendants of Amootoo, the Maori worker from the 1840s and 1850s). There is no evidence for the distribution of goods or rations in 1872. The type of work done by these men - there are no names of Aboriginal women listed - was not recorded. They would not have worked in the wheat harvest as that form of agriculture had ceased on the estate in 1869 because of rust.

There is no further evidence of Aboriginal work on the Shoalhaven estate in the farm day books or ledgers. The evidence for 1860 to 1872 is scant, but this does not mean that

Aboriginal people worked rarely in this period. The poor record keeping of David Berry means that we cannot determine the full extent of Aboriginal work. Consequently, the level of dependency of the Aboriginal community on the goods, rations and money stemming from their work on the farm cannot be quantified. The increasing intensity of white land use suggests that dependency would have increased, but this cannot be stated with certainty. The slow development of the estate from 1860 to 1880 meant that there was still probably some land from which Aboriginal people could obtain subsistence.

The absence of at least one Aboriginal worker can be accounted for by his death. The *Illawarra Mercury* reported on February 22 1867 that the body of Comodant (also known as Commodore) had recently been found in the vicinity of Kiama. A doctor examined the body and no external marks of violence were found, although inflammation of the lower pelvic region was noted and determined to be the probable cause of death.

The information about Aboriginal employment from 1872 to 1900 comes from letters, government reports and oral history. On November 25 1890, John Swift, an employee on the estate, wrote to Alexander Hay requesting that he “send a black fellow up from the yard” to assist in the felling of a tree that was hanging dangerously over a building (BP ML MSS 315/114). Swift urged Hay to send an Aboriginal man who was adept at climbing. The plan was to get him to climb up and secure the overhanging branch with rope before two axemen lopped it off.

Aboriginal employment on the Shoalhaven estate is confirmed by the Aborigines Protection Board reports of the 1880s and 1890s. The annual report for 1888 stated that David Berry employed about 25 Aboriginal people at the rate of £0.10.0 to £0.13.0 per week plus rations and quarters. The report for 1890 declared that 20 to 30 Aboriginal people were employed on the property at a weekly rate of £0.12.0 to £0.16.0. It also announced that other Shoalhaven Aboriginal people were earning a living as farm labourers on different properties and that others obtained subsistence from fishing. A similar story was recounted in the annual report for 1891, the only difference being the reduced weekly wage rate of £0.10.0 down from £0.12.0, which was probably the consequence of the emerging economic downturn. The indication from the APB reports is that Aboriginal employment on the Shoalhaven estate was at a similar level to that in the 1850s.

More information about the type of work undertaken by Aboriginal people on the Shoalhaven estate in the 1880s and 1890s is provided by the oral history recorded by Janet Mathews in the mid 1960s (AIATSIS Library: Tapes J10-11). In April 1965, she spoke with Mrs Emma Longbottom (nee Lloyd), then 73 years of age. Mrs Longbottom, who was married to John Longbottom, recalled that her parents, William Thomas Lloyd and Mary-Anne Dixon, had lived all their lives on the estate, as had her grandparents. She was probably related to the Longbottom family mentioned in the day books for 1871 and 1872. Mrs Longbottom said that when she was a child, her father collected corkwood (*Duboisia myoporoides*) and took it to the milk factory on a bullock dray. His two brothers did not work on the estate. She lived with her family near a black swamp lined with tea-trees about six miles from the homestead. Unfortunately she did not give a direction, but it may have been one of the swamps that lie behind Seven Mile Beach. Mrs Longbottom recalled that George Nipple also worked for the Hay brothers at the homestead, where he was the “main man ...(who) used to help with the rations.” In summing up her experiences on the estate, she said that Sir John Hay was a “wonderful man” who looked after the Aboriginal people by providing them with boxes of new clothes and rations, including meat¹. Life under Alexander Hay was less enjoyable as they were not treated as well. She did not go into details, but it may have been because of the part he played in the removal of the Aboriginal people to Roseby Park.

Mathews also spoke to Agnes Johnson of Wreck Bay, who described herself as the “oldest pioneer from the Coolangatta estate”. Mrs Johnson recollected that her husband worked at cutting down trees on the property. Perhaps Alexander Hay sent Mr Johnson to John Swift to help him cut down the overhanging branch mentioned in the letter cited above. Also, he may have helped to clear the land that was used by the Hays to create the additional 150 tenant farms. She also recalled that Geoff Matto (probably Amatto) was the chief stockman on the property when David Berry was in charge.

It is clear from the various sources that at least 20 to 30 Aboriginal people, most probably men, continued to work on the Shoalhaven estate in the 1880s and 1890s. They worked at a variety of tasks including stock management and timber cutting. Their ability to climb trees was put to use. We know that they were paid at between £0.10.0 to £0.16.0

¹ The APB also delivered rations to the Shoalhaven estate Aboriginal people. It is possible that Sir John Hay was distributing rations provided to him by the APB and not the result of his own expenditure.

per day, which converts to a yearly rate of £10 to £20.16.0. Additional rations were provided for other Aboriginal residents, at least up until the time that Alexander Hay took control of the property. Unfortunately, we do not know how frequently Aboriginal people worked on the property, so despite the fact that we know what they were paid and how much rations they received, we cannot calculate the extent to which Aboriginal people depended on farm work for subsistence. The development of the estate under the management of the Hay family suggests that Aboriginal people had to increase their rate of work to obtain subsistence. The APB reports suggest that the employment rate for Aboriginal people in the 1880s and 1890s had not changed much since the 1850s. If their amount of work on the Shoalhaven estate had increased, then it was not by much.

Selling Artefacts

Aboriginal people on the Shoalhaven estate sought other means to earn cash in the 1880s. John Stewart, an auctioneer from Nowra (Clapham 2001: 40), wrote to Sir John Hay on March 13 1888 about a forthcoming sale of local Aboriginal weapons (BP ML MSS 315/104). The likely buyer was Henry Moss, who had previously organised a display of Aboriginal weapons from the Shoalhaven at the Garden Palace exhibition in the early 1880s. Stewart informed Hay that he would not be able to obtain “anything like the price you mentioned for them”. Hay was not at the estate to receive that letter and other correspondence concerning the sale. James Robertson, the estate accountant, forwarded the correspondence to Hay on March 20 1888, writing that he had referred the matter to David Berry. Robertson went on to say that Berry thought it “best to accept the offer although... they might give one pound more seeing that it was for the black fellows”. It is not known whether the sale went ahead or if the Aboriginal manufacturers received their payment. Even if it did, the contribution to Aboriginal subsistence would only have been small.

Another sale of local Aboriginal artefacts took place in May 1888. H.L. Lovegrove of the Broughton Creek Agricultural and Horticultural Association, wrote to James Robertson on May 17 1888 to say that he had been “instructed by the committee... to forward you the enclosed cheque for £5 which they desire you to pay the blacks entitled to it for the collection of curiosities exhibited at our last show” (BP ML MSS 315/104). It is not known whether the funds were passed on to the Aboriginal manufacturers.

Bunan at Broughton Creek

The Bunan at Broughton Creek demonstrates why Aboriginal people wanted to continue living on the Shoalhaven estate. They were the traditional owners, Dick Buttong for example, who still had strong ties to the land and were willing to keep on working for the Berry and Hay families if it meant they could stay.

Mathews wrote in the article published in *American Anthropologist* that men and the initiates hunted during the day to provide food for those involved in the ceremony (Mathews 1896). This is the only evidence that hunting was undertaken on the estate between 1880 and 1901. It is probable that women gathered vegetable foods for the party as well. He describes some women as carrying yamsticks, although their use in the ceremony was symbolic rather than practical. Other traditional items are described such as firesticks and bark sheets, indicating that Aboriginal people still possessed the skills to live in the bush. Part of the purpose of the Bunan was to instruct initiates in useful skills. The aptitude displayed by Aboriginal people such as Percy Mumbler in the 20th century indicates that the instruction was successful.

Removal to Roseby Park

Aboriginal employment on the Shoalhaven estate was obstructed in the early 1900s when the community was moved to the Roseby Park reserve. The historical context of the removal is a time of increasing government control over the lives of Aboriginal people in New South Wales. The Aborigines Protection Board (APB) was formed in the early 1880s, partly to administer a system of reserves on which it was intended that Aboriginal people would live. As Heather Goodall has shown, many of these reserves were created following Aboriginal demands for land (Goodall 1996: 88-97). Others were established by the APB without consulting the local community. The creation of the reserve at Roseby Park falls into the latter category. The Aboriginal people of the Shoalhaven estate gave no indication that they wanted to leave their land, even if it was to move only across the river.

The story of the removal is found in the minutes of APB meetings (SRNSW: CGS 2 [4/7108-15]). Unfortunately, the letters and reports relating to the removal and referred

to in the minutes have not survived. The first hint of things to come is seen in the minutes of a meeting held on May 21 1896. On that day, the APB discussed Sir John Hay's objection to "vagrant Aborigines from other districts loafing about the estate". The matter arose when two Aboriginal adults and two children moved themselves from Lake Illawarra to the part of the property along the Crooked River near Kiama. The APB investigated the matter and determined that the four Aboriginal people were in fact from the Crooked River area. The minutes of the meeting held on June 18 1896 refer to a drafted letter to Sir John Hay advising him that the four recent arrivals should be persuaded to stay at the Crooked River. The letter seems to have worked, as there is no further mention of the issue in the minutes.

The next episode in the removal came in February 1898 when the Government Medical Officer from Berry reported cases of fever at the Coolangatta camp. The minutes to the meeting held on February 24 1898 reveal that he recommended to the APB that the settlement be moved "to a more desirable location" and that an application be made to the Minister for Lands for permission for the Aboriginal people to occupy an unspecified reserve, possibly Roseby Park. The APB made no decision at that time and called in the Government Medical Officer for further consultation. There is no known relationship between the medical officer and Sir John Hay, although it is likely they would have known each other given that the government man was responsible for all medical matters concerning the Shoalhaven estate Aborigines. Hay may have approached the medical officer to make the request to the APB.

The minutes to the meeting of August 11 1898 refer to a letter from the Under Secretary for Lands asking for the Protection Board's opinion on a suitable reserve for the Aboriginal people of the Shoalhaven estate. The APB did not make a recommendation at that time. Instead, it asked the police to compile a "careful" report and they did so in time for the meeting on September 29 1898. They recommended Roseby Park on Orient Point as a suitable site for a reserve and the APB agreed. It seems that Sir John Hay acted to move the Aboriginal people to the proposed reserve as the APB meeting on February 1 1900 considered a report from the police at Botany stating that the camp on the Shoalhaven estate was about to be broken up and that the residents were intending to move to the camp at La Perouse. The APB responded by ordering the police to warn the Aboriginal residents that they must not move to La Perouse.

The meeting of April 26 1900 deliberated about a letter from Sir John Hay requesting that the Aboriginal people of his estate be moved to the proposed reserve at Roseby Park before the onset of winter. The APB responded by requesting that the police obtain an estimate of the cost of removing the Aboriginal dwellings and re-erecting them at Roseby Park, plus the construction of necessary additions.

The police provided extra information for the APB meeting of May 31 1900. The minutes of that meeting disclose that 10 families were to be removed from the Shoalhaven estate to Roseby Park. The five three-roomed dwellings then occupied by the Aboriginal residents were to be taken down and re-erected at the reserve. Sir John Hay offered to donate £50 provided the work was carried out within three months. The APB determined that a further five three-roomed dwellings were required to house the other families at a cost of £170. Tenders for the work were ordered and a decision was made to inform Sir John Hay of the proposed action.

The relocation was delayed on June 28 1900 when the APB discovered that no government funds were available to build the new houses without ministerial authority. The APB appealed and approval was given in July by the Chief Under Secretary (apparently of the Attorney General's Department) for the APB to expend its own funds on the project without ministerial authority. A further unexplained delay occurred later in July when the police reported that Alexander Hay had requested that the Aboriginal people on the estate be left in their present dwellings until September. The APB was also informed that the £50 from the Hays would still be forthcoming. The reason for the further delay is unclear. Perhaps Alexander Hay wished the Aboriginal people to remain for several more months so that some of them could work on the estate. It is interesting to note that Alexander Hay rather than his brother wanted the Aboriginal people to remain, even for a short time. It produces a possible conflict with the recollection of Mrs Emma Longbottom who told Janet Mathews that Sir John Hay was a "wonderful" man who cared for the Aboriginal people on the Shoalhaven estate. If that was the case then presumably he, rather than his brother, would have wanted the Aboriginal people to stay for longer. But that is not necessarily so as Alexander Hay's motives are not apparent and may have had a sinister undertone. It is possible that Sir John Hay could have acted as a generous man for many years and still organised the move of the Aboriginal population in a manner that was consistent with his behaviour. His offer to donate £50 to

fund part of the relocation is indicative of this. Of course he was first and foremost a landowner who probably wanted to move the Aboriginal people to permit further land sales and that took precedence over the wishes of the community.

Roseby Park reserve was still unoccupied in February 1901 though the buildings had been completed. The minutes of the meeting held on February 21 1901 refer to a list of family groups ready to occupy the huts. At least some of the residents of the Shoalhaven estate moved to the reserve soon after as the 1901 census shows that 23 members of the Carpenter and Bundle families were living there when the return was taken in early April. It records that 10 huts were unoccupied. The census also shows that at least 60 Aboriginal people were still living on the estate, including the families of William Lloyd (father of Emma Longbottom) and George Nipple. The precise time at which they were moved to the reserve is unknown². It was likely to have been soon after that as Sir John Hay was keen to sell more land. No Aboriginal people would have lived on the estate by 1916 when the last of the land was sold. The relocation ended many thousands of years of direct association between the Aboriginal people and the land around Coolangatta Mountain and the Shoalhaven River. Some Aboriginal workers may have continued to work on the property, but there is no mention of it in the estate's work records or other documents.

The Aboriginal people of the Shoalhaven estate were moved to Roseby Park so that the land could be sold. The Aboriginal workforce was no longer required, even if they were cheap and had some means of self support. The new owners of the land were mostly dairy farmers. The mechanisation of that industry reduced the demand for labour. There were fewer jobs for Aboriginal workers. In harsh economic terms, there was no use for the Aboriginal community so they were moved away.

Economic Development of the Illawarra and Shoalhaven: 1860-1880

In 1861, the combined settler population for the Illawarra, Kiama and Shoalhaven districts was 15831 (NSW Census of 1861). Most of the available land had been taken

² Some of the residents may have established a camp at Woregy, to the west of Nowra, rather than moving to Roseby Park. The Woregy camp still existed in the 1930s when some of the residents worked as bean pickers on nearby farms (see Goodall 1996: 221).

up, particularly in the Illawarra (Cousins 1994: 66). The introduction of free selection following the Robertson Land Act of 1862 saw the occupation of the majority of the remaining land. For example, 4000 acres of Shoalhaven land was taken up by free settlers in 1862 (Bayley 1975: 52). The combined population for 1871 was 16173, only a marginal increase from the previous census (NSW Census of 1871). The population of the Wollongong district fell by 4.4% (Lee 1997: 43). The slow population growth can be accounted for by the colonial depression of the late 1860s that saw butter prices crash by 90% and coal output fall by 9.9%. In 1870, there were many abandoned houses in Wollongong (Lee 1997: 43).

The dominant agricultural industry of the 1860s and 1870s was dairy farming, with butter the principle product (Lee 1997: 41; Bayley 1975: 51). Much of it was shipped to Sydney. A butter exporting company was formed at Kiama in 1870 and in that year, 600 kegs of butter were shipped each week in summer and 300 kegs each week in winter. Similar organisations were formed at Shellharbour and the central Illawarra. Attempts were made to ship butter to England in the 1870s, but they failed due to defective cooling technology (Jervis 1942: 280; Jeans 1972: 254). Roger Secombe began a new Shoalhaven venture in March 1873 of preserving or condensing milk, using a technique developed by Gail Borden of Brewster, New York. The business continued for several years but folded when it could not compete with foreign equivalents (Bayley 1975: 51).

Other agricultural products of the Illawarra and Shoalhaven were wheat, maize, oats, potatoes and fat cattle. As was the case on the Shoalhaven estate, rust decimated many wheat crops and little was planted after the 1870s. Horse breeding and training was another prominent industry in the Shoalhaven. The principle exponent was Etienne de Mestre, who trained Archer, the winner of the first two Melbourne Cups in 1861 and 1862 (Bayley 1975: 51-57).

The transportation of agricultural products from the Shoalhaven was improved in 1863 with the dredging of the Shoalhaven River. The way was opened for steamers and by 1873 the Shoalhaven port was the fourth busiest in NSW, being exceeded by only Sydney, Newcastle and Wollongong (Bayley 1975: 55).

Coal mining expanded in the Illawarra during the 1860s and 1870s. By 1879, four mines were in operation including two at Mount Keira, one at Bulli and one at Coalcliff. The output at Mount Keira was approximately 20000 tons per month. The output at Bulli was 6000 tons per month, though it employed more men than the two Mount Keira collieries combined. In 1880, 754 men were employed in the mines (Jervis 1942: 293)³. Despite expansion in production, the Illawarra mining industry was hampered by lack of transportation. The Wollongong Port opened in 1868, but it could only handle a few ships simultaneously.

The combined population for the Illawarra and Shoalhaven in 1891 was 20637 (1891 Census). The main spur for economic growth in the previous decade was the development of the dairy industry. The small dairy farmers improved their facilities by building small factories with galvanised iron roofs, sawn weatherboard walls and concrete floors (Bayley 1975: 47). They formed cooperatives at Wollongong in 1881 and Kiama in 1884 to combine resources to take advantage of the new milk separating technology and to promote butter and cheese in Sydney against the rising imports from New Zealand (Jeans 1972: 255-61). Centralised factories were established (the Jamberoo Butter Factory for example) and by using the latest technology, a product of uniform and high quality was ensured (Lee 1997: 41). The completion of the railway line connecting Nowra⁴ to Sydney via Wollongong in 1893 opened a new market for the dairy farmers of the south coast. Fresh milk could now be transported quickly to Sydney in refrigerated rail cars and consequently this product increased in importance during the 1890s (Jervis 1942: 282; Bayley 1975: 138).

A drought and recession in the late 1880s hindered the development of the dairy industry. Butter production crashed to 0.5 millions pounds in 1888 from 2.1 million pounds the year before (Lee 1997: 47). The number of dairy cows in the Illawarra and Shoalhaven declined from 117000 in 1891 to less than 100000 in 1898, before recovering to 103500 in 1901. The number of people employed in the industry diminished from 9500 in 1891 to 8100 in 1901 (Jeans 1972: 261). The industry remained sluggish until 1906 (Lee 1997: 49). Farmers grew more fodder crops during the drought in response to increased land

³ There is no evidence for Aboriginal people working in the coal mines.

prices and rents. This had the result of returning some nutrients to the soil and improving the quality of pasture, a practice neglected during the better years (Jeans 1972: 261).

The pig industry grew in tandem with the dairy factories. Pigs grew fat on skim milk. A bacon factory opened in Berry in 1884 with the capacity to slaughter 300 pigs per week. A second factory opened later at Bomaderry with a capacity of 400 (Bayley 1975: 160).

The coal mining industry expanded from 1880 to 1900 and was much less impacted than the dairy industry by the recession and drought. In 1880, there were four mines in operation in the Illawarra, employing 771 men and producing 240211 tons of coal. By 1890, the number of mines had increased to 10, employing 1873 men and producing 582447 tons of coal. In 1900, there were 12 operational mines employing 2313 men and yielding 1261843 tons of coal. The figures are slightly misleading as they disguise a pattern of intermittent employment for miners. The government decided to build a new harbour at Port Kembla in 1897 to handle coal and other goods. The construction of the harbour helped to boost employment and bring the district out of recession (Lee 1997: 47-49).

In the early 1890s, the unemployed sought different jobs to make a living. Hundreds took to picking blackberries that grew on the edges of the rainforest for which they received a penny a pound. Four tons were taken to Sydney in 1894 and this increased to 35 tons in 1898 (Lee 1997: 49).

Very few women were employed outside the home in the Illawarra and Shoalhaven during the late 1880s and early 1900s. For example, in 1907, 93% of women in Kiama and 95% in Wollongong were listed as working in mainly unpaid domestic duties (Lee 1997: 51). Statistics are not available for earlier periods but it is likely that a similar pattern prevailed. Men were the breadwinners and there was little opportunity for women to earn an independent income.

⁴ The extension of the railway to Nowra and other towns promoted their growth and stifled the development of villages such as Terara and Numba that were not connected.

Aboriginal Farm Work

From 1860 to 1900, there is little evidence for Aboriginal employment in the Shoalhaven and Illawarra outside of the land owned by the Berry and Hay families. Intensified land use during the last 40 years of the 1800s does not seem to have stimulated an equivalent response in the level of Aboriginal farm employment. There is no quantifiable data, but the existing accounts do not indicate a noticeable increase. The *Illawarra Mercury* reported on August 21 1866, about the death of Charley Cooma, an employee of Henry Osbourne at the Avondale farm. (Osbourne purchased Avondale from the Dr Elyard in the late 1830s). In 1889, an Aboriginal man established a small settlement in Kangaroo Valley on land owned by Henry Osborne. Aboriginal people worked on the property and local historian W. Bayley described the nature of the employment as “constant”, but there is no evidence to back this up (Bayley 1975: 123). Aboriginal people first worked for the Osborne family in the 1830s when they were provided with rations at Christmas time and they later assisted the family to move to Kangaroo Valley (Cousins 1994: 53). The work mentioned by Bayley was probably part of the continuing association between Aboriginal people and the Osborne family.

Major E.H. Weston took up land at Albion Park in 1865 after arriving from the Clarence River. He was accompanied on his trip from the north by an Aboriginal boy named Tiger, who was later widely known as Mickey Johnston and later, King Mickey⁵. Mickey Johnston worked at various jobs for Major Weston including droving horses from the Illawarra to the Murrumbidgee in the late 1860s. Major Weston also reported that Mickey Johnston once retrieved the body of a drowned boy from a waterhole when no one else could find it (Organ 1990: 318-19).

The largest source of information for Aboriginal farm work from 1882 to 1900 comes from the annual reports of the APB. The report for 1882 states that men and boys were occasionally employed by Shoalhaven and Kiama farmers. Precise descriptions of the farm work were not recorded. It is interesting to note that there are no descriptions of Aboriginal people working in the dairy industry. The cultural aversion to cattle evident at Kangaroo Valley earlier in the century may have been maintained. Also, many of the

⁵ I shall refer to him as Mickey Johnston.

dairy farms were small scale and did not require many workers outside the owner's family. Mechanisation of the industry also reduced the demand for labour. The 1889 report states that along the south coast of NSW, many Aboriginal people "are fairly well employed... in farming pursuits". The reports for 1890 and 1891 state that in the Illawarra and Shoalhaven districts Aboriginal people were generally employed in "assisting farmers".

Other Aboriginal Occupations

Evidence for Aboriginal work in other areas is also provided by the APB reports. The 1882 report for Wollongong describes some Aboriginal men working as assistant fishermen. The 1889 report records some Aboriginal men on the south coast working in saw-mills and on wharves loading and unloading cargo. More specific information was not recorded. The reports for 1890 and 1891 mention some Aboriginal people working at a quarry south of Wollongong, their first connection in the district with the mining industry. It is likely that the people mentioned were working at the Kiama quarry. Barbara Nicholson reports that Mickey Johnston and his wife, Queen Rosie (her great-grandmother), sometimes lived and worked at the quarry. She is in possession of a death certificate that states one of her ancestors worked with explosives at the Kiama quarry (Barbara Nicholson personal papers).

Unfortunately, there is no direct evidence of Aboriginal people working on Brundee Orchard Farm in the 1860s and 1870s. The diaries and work books of Arthur Elyard for that period have not survived. It is possible to infer the presence of Aboriginal people on Brundee Orchard Farm from the diary of Samuel Elyard. Samuel Elyard was a public servant in Sydney who only visited the farm for recreation. He made an extended visit in October and November 1868. On October 1, he wrote that he travelled in a blackfellows canoe. In late October and early November he made two trips to Berellan (also spelt Barellan) where the Aboriginal people had made a camp. Samuel Elyard was an artist and made several sketches of the camp, concentrating on the gunyah's. Aboriginal people were clearly living on the property but there is no evidence that they were employed. Given their previous history on the farm, it is likely that at least some of them worked for some of the time. Samuel Elyard recorded on November 25 1868, that

“Johnny the black” had taken him and a friend by canoe to a geological feature called the Rocky Ground that he sketched in pencil (ML MSS 594).

By August 1874, Samuel Elyard had retired from the public service and was living in the Shoalhaven, possibly in Nowra or on Brundee Orchard Farm. While returning to the Shoalhaven from Sydney on April 1 1875, he was assisted by an Aboriginal boy at Suttons Forest to carry his luggage. On October 26 1880, Samuel Elyard wrote “Mr Walter drove me to Greenwell Point where Capt. Craig met me, and took me in his whale boat off Pilot Station. After dinner, I met Roger (an Aboriginal) who walked with me round the reserve, and to Caffery’s house,” (ML MSS 594). The situation shows that Aboriginal people were still guiding Europeans around their district when needed. The ‘Roger’ referred to by Samuel Elyard may well have been the man of the same name who worked on the Shoalhaven estate in the 1840s and 1850s. It is interesting to note that Roger took Samuel Elyard to Caffery’s house. Caffery, an employee on the Shoalhaven estate, was the man in 1867 who failed to move the sheep to high ground during the flood. Despite his ineptitude, Caffery’s employment was not terminated. Roger may have been working with Caffery in 1880 when Samuel Elyard was taken to meet him. Roger was still of working age in 1880. The blanket return of 1840 lists him as a six year old resident of Numba, making him approximately in his mid-forties four decades later.

An Aboriginal man named Baraban rescued six year old Edgecliff Laidley from the Shoalhaven River on December 9 1867. Later in the month he was presented with a brass plate for his assistance. It is not apparent whether he was also presented with goods, rations or cash (Cleary 1993).

Aside from emergency services, farm work and path finding, Aboriginal people earned money and rations in other ways from white residents in the 1860s and 1870s. In December 1871, William Lovegrove wrote that a Shoalhaven Aboriginal man named Jim Woodbury had once been in the service of the local bank manager. His duties were not minutely described but Woodbury did have a uniform, indicating he may have had a position in domestic service. Alternatively, he may have worked as a bank clerk. Lovegrove reported that Woodbury’s role ended when another Aboriginal man murdered him during a trip to Jervis Bay (*Shoalhaven News* December 23 1871).

In the late 1800s, the diversity of Aboriginal employment increased. In 1887, the wife of Billy Sadler was described as a “hard working woman” who provided for Saddler so he could go on a “continual spree” (SRNSW: CGS 905 [1/2693 Letter no. 88/3003]). What the “continual spree” consisted of was not specified, but Billy Sadler still had time to run a fishing boat, as we will see below. Charles Golding cut and removed timber from Crown Land near La Perouse in October 1899 (SRNSW: CGS 2 [APB Minutes October 26 1899]). It is unclear to what purpose the timber was put. In 1900, a male member of the Simms family from La Perouse worked as a fencing contractor. The wife of Jack Timbury, who was himself in constant but unspecified employment in 1900, worked as a charwoman at La Perouse (SRNSW: CGS 2 [APB Minutes September 27 1900]).

A description of the type of employment sought by Aboriginal people, whether on farms or elsewhere, is found in the superintendent’s 1892 report for the reserve Wallaga Lake, south of Jervis Bay. He wrote that:

For the able-bodied and willing Aboriginal there is ample work in this district for all, but they do not care for big contracts or constant employment. They prefer ‘odds and ends of jobs’ that give a quick return of a few shillings, and so furnish themselves with some item desired, and then ‘take a spell.’ To reason with them or to rebuke them for this conduct is simply to drive them away from this district.

The quote indicates that Aboriginal employment in from 1860 to 1900 followed the same pattern as was observed for the Shoalhaven estate in the 1850s. Most Aboriginal people tended to work for short periods. There were no full-time employees and work periods were interspersed with breaks. The implication is that farm work and other occupations continued to provide a small amount of Aboriginal subsistence. Ironically, the pattern of casual employment indicates that the effect of the depression was minimal. Employment was not at a sufficient level for there to be any noticeable change.

A report in the October 11 1899 edition of the *Nowra Colonist* provides the context for Aboriginal employment in the late 19th century. The correspondent wrote that:

Some employment might be given these aborigines (referring to the community at Jervis Bay) in gardening and poultry-raising, for which purposes there is plenty of Crown land available about the place. Some residents think the black labour could be utilised with profit. It is suggest that the powers that be consider this matter, and endeavour to rid our 'cullid' people of that lazy feeling by which they

seem to be weighted. Flower culture, for instance, might be a good thing to put the darkies to, probably it would effect great improvement on the mind. So also might vegetable gardening.

The correspondent was clearly ignorant of the history of Aboriginal employment on the south coast. Aboriginal labour had been utilised for profit since 1822, if not earlier. The article also demonstrates the difficulties faced by Aboriginal people seeking employment. Despite many years of toil by a significant number of Aboriginal people, they were regarded as lazy. Further, it is clear that Aboriginal people were only thought fit to occupy a limited number of positions in agricultural labouring.

Migration

Aboriginal people continued to use the economic strategy of migration to obtain subsistence. In the late 1870s, a group of Aboriginal people from Kiama and the Shoalhaven district moved into the government boat shed at Circular Quay, Sydney. Others from the Hunter district joined them. By January 1881, 17 people, including five women and four children, were living in the shed. The police, who described the Aboriginal people as obtaining money by “begging and other disgraceful means”, were desirous of returning them to their home districts (APB Annual Report 1883). George Thornton, who was appointed as the Protector of Aborigines in 1882, agreed and the Aboriginal people were moved on. Some of the south coast people formed camps at La Perouse and Botany. The population of La Perouse in 1890 was 27, the majority of whom came from the study area. By 1899, the La Perouse population had risen to 53. The proportion of the south coast population in the 1890s who moved to La Perouse and thus relied on migration as a source of subsistence fluctuated between 13.6% and 20.9%.

Once at La Perouse, the men gained subsistence by fishing. The women made shell baskets that were sold in Sydney and the suburbs (APB Annual Report 1883). The APB report for 1890 described the inhabitants as subsisting by fishing and selling native weapons. Women and children made shell ornaments and collected wild flowers for sale. It also reported that two women were in domestic service.

The police reported in the 1880s and 1890s that there was much movement between La Perouse, Wollongong, Shoalhaven River, Georges River and Burragorang. Some of the

moves were permanent. One of the residents of La Perouse was Charlie Edwards who had worked on the Shoalhaven estate in the 1850s. The families of other ex-employees followed him, including the Amattos and Simms. Visits from La Perouse to the south coast were haphazard at first, but eventually became seasonal (Bell 1961: 427). During summer, large numbers of La Perouse people visited their former southern homes to see relatives, attend ceremonies and catch fish. It is also likely that people from the Shoalhaven and Illawarra visited relatives and friends at places further down the south coast of New South Wales.

The Strategy of Selling Food and Artefacts

Aboriginal people of the south coast, as well as La Perouse, sold items to the white residents of the south coast to raise small amounts of cash. An old and unnamed resident of Kiama recalled in approximately 1900 that Aboriginal people once sold boomerangs and brooms made from the Cabbage tree. He dated his observations to the 1830s, but given that he refers to (King) Mickey Johnson in the same paragraph, a date from the 1860s or 1870s is probably more accurate. He said the brooms sold for a price of £0.1.6.

Aboriginal people earned more money by selling fish. Samuel Elyard wrote in his diary on August 26 1874 that he purchased 13 fish from “the blacks for 1/1” after returning from a boating trip (ML MSS 594). The 1891 APB report states that the Aboriginal people of Greenwell point raised a fair amount of cash by selling fish. The La Perouse community sold fish to Sydney consumers. In the late 1880s, Lizzie Malone of La Perouse rented her fishing boat for cash. There is insufficient information to determine the amount Aboriginal people earned by selling fish. It is likely that the consumption of fish was a more important source of subsistence.

Fishing and Economic Independence

There was an abundance of fish available on the south coast in the late 19th century. Reverend T. Sharpe wrote that fish were plentiful in Kiama and the comment probably applies to the entire south coast (ML A1502: 189-90)⁶. He went on to say that “people

⁶ Cameron notes that 19th century Aboriginal people on the far south coast had largely unhindered access to the resources of the sea and river (Cameron 1987: 13).

are so much taken up with their cows, that fish is only to be had (eaten), now and then. A few fishermen might make a very snug living here, I should imagine, yet this is not tried, and the fish are left to enjoy their home in peace”.

Supplies of fish were profuse and sufficient for Aboriginal people to use as a mainstay for their subsistence. The government recognised this possibility and fishing boats were provided to communities on the south coast from the late 1860s. It seems that the hook and line were rarely in use from this time. In 1868, a boat was constructed for the Aboriginal community at Jervis Bay (SRNSW: CGS 905; [Letter no. 68/896]). By 1876, there were seven boats and numerous nets in possession of Aboriginal people on the south coast. The boats were used for fishing and they helped the Aboriginal communities to maintain economic independence. They may also have been used to ferry Aboriginal people across the Shoalhaven River and Lake Illawarra to take them to work or to visit relatives. The boats’ dimensions are unknown, but it is likely that most were suitable for river and lake travel only. The information from the government records is presented below in Table 8.1.

Place	Name of Aborigine	Purpose	Condition
Wollongong	George Timbery & William Saddler	Fishing	Good
Wollongong	Paddy Bangalong & Mickey Johnson	Fishing	Good
Shoalhaven	Fisherman Johnny	Fishing	Undergoing repair
Ulladulla	Campbell	Fishing	Fair
Ulladulla	Abraham	Fishing	Fair
Nelligen	Abraham Morris	Fishing	Good
Wallaga Lake	Merryman	Fishing	Good (11 oars, 9 feet long required)

Table 8.1: South Coast Fishing Boats, 1876 (SRNSW: CGS 905; [1/2349 Letter no. 76/8919])

By 1876, there was no record of the boat at Jervis Bay. It no longer may have been operational, or it may have been transferred to another location. The police oversaw the allocation and maintenance of the boats. Senior Constable Grieve discovered Fisherman Johnny’s boat lying damaged on the beach at Numba (SRNSW: CGS 905; [1/2349 Letter no. 76/8919]). He wrote to his superior’s about the situation and they approved a plan to

mend the boat. His superiors, including Edmund Fosberry who later became Chairman of the APB, recommended that all boats “be kept under control so far as possible of the chief police officer”. The 1870s were a time of increasing surveillance by the government of Aboriginal life.

George Timbery and William Saddler made great efforts to obtain their fishing boat. Several unnamed white gentlemen gave them a document addressed to the Colonial Secretary that requested a boat and appropriate gear. Timbery and Saddler then travelled the district, obtaining the signatures of several magistrates and other men. The *Illawarra Mercury* reports that they then proceeded to Sydney where they presented the request to the Colonial Secretary who promptly instructed the President of the Marine Board to provide a suitable boat (June 23 1876). The efforts made by Timbery and Saddler demonstrate the importance of fishing to them and their community. It also suggests that the men were determined to maintain their economic independence by acquiring the necessary equipment.

The importance of fishing to the Shoalhaven Aboriginal community was further demonstrated in 1879 when a group led by Roger and supported by Henry Moss successfully petitioned the government to issue an additional boat. It is likely that the fish sold to Samuel Elyard were caught from one of the three boats on the Shoalhaven in 1880. It is unlikely that they were caught using the traditional methods of line and shell hook or spearing. Only one old woman could be found in 1879 who could manufacture a fish hook in the old style (*The Nowra Telegraph* October 30 1879). Iron fish hooks were available and women may have used them to catch fish.

It is interesting to note that the boats were issued to either one or two individuals. This may have been an administrative requirement or a reflection of the actual situation. If the boats were given to only a small number of Aboriginal men rather than to communities as a whole, those without access to the boat would have depended on a process of distribution to obtain fish. By giving boats to specific people, the government may have established a system where resources were unevenly distributed. More information is required to verify this conclusion.

The APB reports also give a strong indication that fishing was still an important source of subsistence for the Aboriginal communities of the Illawarra and Shoalhaven. The report for 1882 shows that Aboriginal people obtained subsistence by fishing at Kiama, the Shoalhaven estate and the Illawarra. The reports for 1890 and 1891 stress the importance of fishing at Greenwell Point and the Illawarra. The reports also detail the distribution of fishing boats. In 1883, there was one boat each at Kiama, Jervis Bay, Terara and Broughton Creek.

Aboriginal people, who were by now familiar with the bureaucratic channels, regularly petitioned the APB through the police and local members of parliament to obtain new boats and fishing equipment. The APB sometimes responded positively such as in 1895 and 1900 when boats were given to the community at Lake Illawarra. Not all applications were granted though. In March 1898, the APB rejected an application made by A. Campbell, MLA, for a sea fishing boat for the Aboriginal people at Lake Illawarra (SRNSW: CGS 2 [APB Minutes March 17 1898]). In October 1887, the APB rejected an application to provide Billy Sadler of Lake Illawarra with a new boat following the destruction of his old one. The circumstances surrounding the case demonstrate that Aboriginal people sometimes used fishing boats for other purposes. The police investigated the destruction of Sadler's boat and found that it had been taken onto Lake Illawarra by James Wright, a local white man, and dashed upon the rocks. Further scrutiny revealed that Wright was frequently employed by Sadler to take "excursion parties" onto the lake for a fee. Sadler also used the boat for fishing. He denied that Wright had permission to use the boat. The police concluded that Sadler was "unfit to have control of a government boat" (SRNSW: CGS 905 [1/2693 Letter no. 88/3003]). Sadler continued to petition for a replacement boat. In 1895, he gained the ear of A. Campbell, MLA, who asked the APB to provide a boat for Sadler. The APB refused and Sadler was informed personally of the decision (SRNSW: CGS 2 [APB Minutes January 31 1895]).

In the late 1890s, commercial fishermen on the south coast began impinging upon the fishing territories of Aboriginal people. In March 1898, the police at Botany wrote to the APB about complaints from the La Perouse Aboriginal community that they were being interfered with by commercial fishermen. The APB largely came down on the side of the commercial fishermen by saying that Aboriginal people were exempt from licenses and

therefore should “take their own turn in due rotation with other fishermen” (SRNSW: CGS 2 [APB Minutes March 31 1898]). There was little consideration that the Aboriginal people were gradually being pushed away from the one source of subsistence that had not previously been denied them.

Some Aboriginal women had access to the fishing boats. In the late 1880s, Mrs Lizzie Malone of La Perouse owned a fishing boat that she let out to other Aboriginal people for a payment of money or fish. She does not appear to have worked on the boat herself. She suffered from weakness of the knees in early 1888 and was looked after by her daughter who was previously a domestic servant. The APB also supplied her with weekly rations (SRNSW: CGS 905 [1/2687 Letter no. 88/1253]). In most cases it appears that only men worked on the fishing boats. The use of nets enabled a larger catch compared to the technique of hook and line. The importance of women's fishing may have declined as a result, with the consequence that women also lost a source of economic independence.

Hunting and Gathering

No known observations of Aboriginal people hunting and gathering were made from 1880 to 1901 outside of the Shoalhaven estate. The only evidence comes from R.H. Mathews who wrote that men and initiates hunted in the daytime during the Bunan held at Broughton Creek in the late 1880s. Opportunities were reducing as most land below the escarpment was by then taken up for agriculture, dairy farming, mining and settlement. It is likely though that some hunting and gathering was practiced. Recent historical studies show that knowledge about hunting and gathering is still distributed among the Aboriginal people of the south coast (see Chittick and Fox 1997; also see Creamer 1988 for a general perspective on the distribution of traditional knowledge in modern times). Percy Mumbler, who passed away in 1991, regularly gained subsistence from the land throughout his life. His mother, Rosie Carpenter, came from the Jerinja people on the lower Shoalhaven River. She may have been related to Carpenter Jack (also known as Jack Carpenter) who worked on the Shoalhaven estate for many years. Percy Mumbler knew how to smoke possums out of trees and to collect yams to cook in the ashes. He said that “you wouldn’t spend much of a day to look for food because you’d know how to get it” (Chittick and Fox 1997: 6). Percy Mumbler learned his skills

from his parents and other Aboriginal people on the south coast. He was born between 1905 and 1907 at Wallaga Lake. The logical conclusion is that his parents and other Aboriginal people of that generation, knew how to hunt and gather and made good use of their skills. Aboriginal people were still living off the land, rivers and sea in the 1880s and 1890s, but the contribution it made to subsistence cannot be quantified.

Dependence

Work and natural resources were not always available to provide subsistence for Aboriginal people. Some made direct requests to white residents of the Illawarra and Shoalhaven for cash. For example, Black Polly, reportedly the wife of an Illawarra elder, was well known for her solicitation to “gib a penny to Poor Polly” (*Illawarra Mercury* May 5 1865). Her death was reported in May 1865. Other Aboriginal people relied on the generosity of others during hard times. During the winter of 1876, Aboriginal people living at the Minamurra camp were caught without food for several days. Local settlers came to their aid (Thomas & Higham 1982: 10-11). The situation fits well with the description of the Kiama environment by Reverend T. Sharpe, who visited the district for five weeks in 1869. He noted that “almost every vestige of tree and scrub” had been removed from the land (ML A1502: 189-90). There may have been limited natural resources in the Kiama district to provide subsistence for the Aboriginal community.

Miscellaneous Strategies 1: Artistic Response

An Aboriginal man from Ulladulla known as Mickey, or Willy the Cripple, gained some distinction through his artwork in the late 1800s, although there is no evidence he gained any monetary reward for his work. Mickey used traditional European techniques of ink, crayon and pencil on paper. The corroboree depicted in the drawing entitled “The Illawarra and Environs” is believed to be part of the Bunan ceremony held on the Shoalhaven estate in the late 1880s. He made various other drawings including one of the *Peterborough Steamer* at Ulladulla in 1888 (see Organ 1990: 348).

Miscellaneous Strategies 2: At the Show

Aboriginal people in the Shoalhaven may have gained some remuneration from providing Henry Moss with artefacts for display at the Garden Palace Exhibition in Sydney in the late 1870s (*The Nowra Telegraph* October 30 1879). Moss collected a variety of artefacts including two bark canoes, stone axe heads, spears, spear-throwers, boomerangs, shields, fishing line made out of currajong and wattle fibre, and shell fish hooks. He also collected a quantity of grass tree resin that was used by Aboriginal people to connect spearheads to shafts, etc. Moss considered the resin to have commercial possibilities, particularly as a varnish. The product, however, was never developed. The artefacts that Moss collected demonstrate that Aboriginal people retained the ability to manufacture traditional technology that could be used to maintain economic independence. Some skills, however, were disappearing. Moss recounted that only one Aboriginal woman could be found who could still manufacture a shell fish hook. The skill was no longer in demand by the 1880s as most fish were caught using nets cast from boats. It is not certain that the Aboriginal makers were paid for the artefacts they made for Moss. They probably received some remuneration as Moss paid cash to Aboriginal people in the 1880s for making implements that were displayed at the Nowra Show.

Mickey Johnson sought some more unusual means to obtain subsistence. In January 1900, the secretary of the Rockdale School of Arts wrote to the APB to obtain permission for Johnson and other Aboriginal people to perform a corroboree at an upcoming carnival at Brighton Race Course. The APB rejected the application as they did not approve of the “Aboriginals being engaged in this manner” (SRNSW: CGS 2 [APB Minutes January 11 1900]). In January the following year, the Mayor of Rockdale requested that Mickey Johnson and 15 other Aboriginal people from Lake Illawarra be allowed to take part in a carnival organised to raise money for the St. George Cottage Hospital. The APB once again denied the inquiry saying that “there would be many objections to such a proceeding” (SRNSW: CGS 2 [APB Minutes January 1 1901]). If both events had gone ahead, it is likely that Mickey Johnson and his companions would have at the very least received some rations for their efforts, and possibly some money as well. He had already managed to attend the Wollongong Show of 1896 where he was invested as “King Mickey Johnson” of the Illawarra by Mr Campbell MLA. Johnson was apparently pleased at the proceedings and spoke of his hope that Australia and England would never

go to war⁷ and that Queen Victoria would live for many years (*Shoalhaven Telegraph* February 8 1896).

Miscellaneous Strategies 3: The Sporting Life

A team of Aboriginal cricketers from Victoria played a local white team at Wollongong in April (and possibly again in November) 1867. The match attracted a large crowd, including many Aboriginal people from the Illawarra and Shoalhaven who camped in the thick scrub by Tom Thumb lagoon. The visiting Aboriginal team won the contest. After the match, various athletic games were held. A spear and boomerang contest took place between the visiting Aboriginal cricketers and some local Aboriginal men, with the latter coming out on top (Flemming 1982). Witnessing the cricket match apparently inspired some local Aboriginal people to take up the game as in 1871 a match was held against a white team from the Illawarra (Organ 1990: 333).

Aboriginal people participated in other sporting events. Mickey Johnston and Commodore competed in a foot race at a Kiama Turf Club meeting on January 1 1877 (Organ 1990: 337). The result of the race and any prizes given out are not known. Commodore may have been related to Comodant (also known as Commodore), the Aboriginal employee from the Shoalhaven estate who was found dead in 1867.

Aborigines Protection Board and Reserves

The appointment of George Thornton as Protector of Aborigines in 1882 and the creation of the APB the following year led to many changes in the lives of Aboriginal people on the south coast. Numerous reserves were created for Aboriginal people to live upon and obtain their own subsistence, either through cultivation or fishing. But Aboriginal people refused to live upon these lands in some cases, particularly when they were not consulted about the location. A reserve at Jervis Bay was gazetted in September 1881. By 1890, Aboriginal people were still refusing to live on it. The reserve was revoked in 1916 (McGuigan 1984: 31). A reserve at Kangaroo Valley was set aside in 1890. The date of its revocation is unknown (McGuigan 1984: 32). A reserve at Minamurra was gazetted in

⁷ He was probably aware of the declining situation in South Africa. The Boer War broke out later in the year.

July 1896 and revoked in November 1898 when the local population refused to reside upon it (SRNSW: CGS 23 [2/8349]). The Seven Mile reserve (adjacent to the beach of the same name) was gazetted in September 1899. At one time, there was a proposal to move the residents of the Shoalhaven estate to the Seven Mile Reserve, but they were taken to Roseby Park instead. The reserve was revoked in January 1953 (McGuigan 1984: 39). As previously mentioned, the Roseby Park reserve was created in 1900 and Aboriginal people from the Shoalhaven estate were living on it by the following year. They continue to do so today.

Instead of living on reserves, many Aboriginal people lived on land of their own choosing. The available land was not always ideal. For example, the camp at the mouth of Lake Illawarra was not favoured by some of its Aboriginal residents. In June 1899, Mr J. Vidler, a white missionary, approached the APB on behalf of the residents at Lake Illawarra to lobby for the establishment of a new reserve at Port Kembla, to the north of Lake Illawarra, possibly at Coomaditchy Lagoon. Vidler reported that the Aboriginal people were keen to migrate (SRNSW: CGS 2 [APB Minutes June 15 1899]). The Wollongong police did not agree to the move, but the reasons for their decision have not survived (SRNSW: CGS 2 [APB Minutes July 20 1899]). Vidler later changed his mind and told the Board that a site at Port Kembla was not suitable, but he still urged a new reserve to be located. He also suggested that a new boat be supplied to the community (SRNSW: CGS 2 [APB Minutes August 10 1899]). The Kiama Police rejected this appeal. They said that prior to Vidler's intervention, the community at Lake Illawarra had been "happy and contented". They were now "unreasonable and discontented". The police reported that five people had moved to the northern extremity of Lake Illawarra, close to Port Kembla (SRNSW: CGS 2 [APB Minutes August 24 1899]). The fact that five people moved indicates that it was not just the influence of Vidler that was prompting discontent. It appears that the community had genuine grievances against the location of the camp and their treatment by authorities. They were prepared to take action to improve their situation. Their efforts were to no avail, however, as the police visited the departees and threatened to cut off rations and access to a boat if they did not return (SRNSW: CGS 2 [APB Minutes August 24 1899]). By early September, the police reported that the five had returned to the Lake Illawarra reserve. They also made numerous recommendations including that the children be supplied with suitable clothing so that they might attend school; that a deep-sea fishing boat be provided; that some

garden tools be issued along with a supply of seed potatoes, turnips, cabbages, pumpkins and beans; and that the Aboriginal people living at Bombo and Port Kembla (apparently another group was already living there) be moved to the Lake Illawarra reserve. The Aboriginal people at Bombo and Port Kembla declined to move and they do not appear to have been coerced (SRNSW: CGS 2 [APB Minutes October 12 1899]). In February the following year, a whale boat was transferred from Newcastle into the care of Mickey Johnson at Lake Illawarra. A shed was constructed to house the boat (SRNSW: CGS 2 [APB Minutes February 2 1900]). Previously, Johnson had unsuccessfully applied for a fishing boat in 1897 (SRNSW: CGS 2 [APB Minutes September 16 1897]). Given that the boat was supplied to Johnson, he may have been instrumental in petitioning for a new reserve and in moving the small group to Port Kembla. It is unknown whether the clothing and vegetable seeds were supplied by the APB. Their annual report for 1897 does not list these goods as being given to the community at Lake Illawarra. The provision of the whale boat seems to have represented a compromise as there was no more agitation by the Aboriginal community to establish a new reserve.

Provision of Rations and the Restriction of Movement

Another role of the APB was to provide rations, including food, clothing and blankets, to old and infirm Aboriginal adults and to Aboriginal children, who accounted for over 50% of the population in the 1890s. Other Aboriginal adults also applied to the APB for rations but were rejected if considered fit enough to work. The implication is that over half the Aboriginal population of the Illawarra and Shoalhaven were dependent on government rations in the 1890s. There are factors reducing this proportion. Some would have been lost to spillage in transit and during preparation for consumption. Also, the food rations, which usually consisted of flour, sugar, tea and meat, were sometimes of poor quality and consequently inedible. A sample of flour from a La Perouse supplier was sent to the government analyst in 1895. The flour was found to be substandard and the analyst recommended that the supplier be told to provide “a better article” (SRNSW: CGS 2 [APB minutes October 17 1895]). Taking these factors into account, it is safer to estimate that approximately 30% of the Aboriginal population (or about half the number of children and the elderly) were dependent on APB rations in the 1890s.

The APB also restricted the movement of Aboriginal people, as evidenced by the rejection of the application for Mickey Johnson and others to perform corroborees in Rockdale. In April 1896, the APB refused to issue rail passes to two Aboriginal people on the south coast to participate in a corroboree to mark the centenary of the Colonial Secretaries Office (SRNSW: CGS 2 [APB Minutes April 2 1896]). Harry Simms of La Perouse was granted a rail pass in February 1900 to Kiama on the good chance that he would be able to find employment there (SRNSW: CGS 2 [APB Minutes February 22 1900]). By regulating the movement of Aboriginal people on the south coast, the APB was restricting their opportunity to obtain subsistence. It is not clear how effective the restrictions were on inhibiting movement. Aboriginal people were still knowledgeable about the landscape and could still move undetected between camps. Mickey Johnson is a prime example. In 1891, he was recorded in the government census as living at Kangaroo Valley with four other males and three females, most probably his immediate family. Ten years later, the census listed him at a camp on the Minamurra River with three other males and one female, possibly his wife, (Queen) Rosie Johnson.

Applying for Land

The creation of reserves by the APB encouraged Aboriginal people to make direct applications for land grants. The *Shoalhaven Telegraph* reported on September 28 1892 that Paddy Swift made an application to the APB to be granted Comerong Island near the mouth of the Shoalhaven River. The application was refused. In September 1900, the APB considered a proposal to create a one-acre reserve of permissive occupancy title at Georges River for Mrs Timbury (mother-in-law of the charwoman from La Perouse). The proposal was rejected. Aboriginal people fully realised that intensified land use by white farmers had eroded their ability to obtain subsistence from the land. With the recession of the early 1890s they realised that jobs were not always available. By applying to the government to have that land returned, the Aboriginal residents were trying to reclaim the means for their own economic independence (see Goodall 1996 for a detailed examination of NSW land and Aboriginal politics in the late 1800s).

Attending School

The APB also encouraged Aboriginal children to attend school. In 1882, approximately 30 children attended school on the Shoalhaven estate and five at Jervis Bay (APB Annual Report 1883). Twenty-two children attended school at Jervis Bay in 1885. The children did well at school and the local police sergeant reported that “most of (the children) are quick at learning”. The local school inspector, apparently unfamiliar with the local community, expressed surprise at the intelligence of the children. Aboriginal children continued to attend school at varying rates for the remainder of the century. It was the aim of the APB to prepare the children for employment in agriculture, labouring or domestic duties. Other jobs were deemed to be unavailable for Aboriginal people. Literacy and numeracy assisted Aboriginal people to avoid exploitative jobs where possible and maintain high safety standards.

The Work of Aboriginal Women

A feature of the 1880s and 1890s is increased amount of information about the economic activities of Aboriginal women. To summarise the information so far presented, Lizzie Malone of La Perouse owned a fishing boat that she rented out to other Aboriginal people in return for payments of money and fish. Other La Perouse women and girls made shell baskets and collected wild flowers for sale on the streets of Sydney. The wife of Jack Timbury worked as a charwoman at La Perouse. The wife of Billy Sadler supported her husband with unspecified work. Generally, employment opportunities for Aboriginal women were few, as was the case for white women. Nevertheless, Aboriginal women displayed creativity in their approach to finding work. Three types of work can be identified. Lizzie Malone owned and operated her own business. The other La Perouse women worked for themselves and sold the items they manufactured and collected. The wife of Jack Timbury was most probably an employee⁸. These strategies may have regained some of the independence Aboriginal women lost when boat and net fishing, seemingly a male strategy, increased in importance in the late 19th century.

⁸ The same division can also be seen in the work of south coast men. Billy Sadler operated his own boat and fishing business. Some men on the Shoalhaven estate made weapons that were auctioned. Others were employed to do farm work.

Blanket Distributions and Population

The government continued to supply blankets to Aboriginal people in the 1860s and 1870s, although complete records of the distributions no longer exist. The *Illawarra Mercury* reported on April 17 1860 that about 50 Aboriginal people received blankets at the Wollongong Court House the previous day. The journalist noted that the number of claimants was the largest for many years. Once again, Dr Ellis called for three cheers each for Queen Victoria, the Governor and Mr Hildebrand, the local magistrate. Dr Ellis was presented with a gold-braided jacket.

On April 24 1861, A. de Mestre J.P. (brother of Etienne) wrote to the Colonial Secretary to state that the blankets for the Aborigines, usually sent at that time, had not as yet arrived. He requested 125 for the Shoalhaven and 75 for Ulladulla. The letter was sent too soon as the blankets had been dispatched by steamer on April 22 1861 (SRNSW: CGS 905; [4/3447 Letter no. 61/1717]).

The Aboriginal people of the Shoalhaven were supplied with 115 blankets in early April 1865 (*Illawarra Mercury* April 11 1865). Not all Aboriginal people were supplied with a blanket, but extra stores were available for those who applied later on. The implication is that the Shoalhaven Aboriginal population was greater than 115 in 1865.

According to the *Illawarra Mercury* (May 5 1865), roughly forty blankets were distributed to Aboriginal people at the Wollongong Police station on May 4 1865. The correspondent noted that the greatest proportion of those present were children. After the distribution, the Aboriginal people made their way into town, but no mention was made of trading the blankets for cash, goods or alcohol.

Judge Alfred Macfarlane witnessed the distribution of blankets at Terara on April 8 1870 (*Sydney Mail* June 10 1871). In all, 105 blankets were given out on the day. Macfarlane expected additional applicants the following day, bringing the number to approximately 140. The men gave their blankets to the women who bundled them up and carried them on their backs, along with their children. He noticed that all the men were dressed in the “bush fashion” of trousers, shirts and hats. Some of the clothing may have been given to them as payment for work on the Shoalhaven estate or other farms in the district. At least two of the recipients, Carpenter Jack and George, were former workers on Berry’s

property. Aboriginal women were dressed in old blankets and occasionally in a petticoat. The younger women wore bonnets. Older women had handkerchiefs on their heads, perhaps in imitation of Queen Victoria and smoked pipes. The pipes and handkerchief may have been symbols of seniority. Macfarlane's description indicates that Aboriginal men wore more items of European clothing than women. The implication is that Aboriginal men, through their farm work, had greater access to non-indigenous goods.

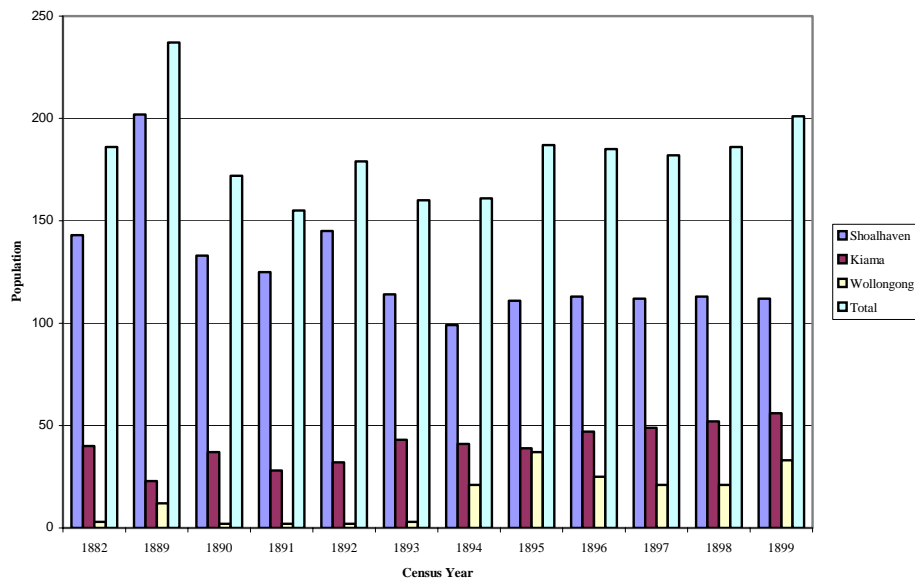
Fourteen Aboriginal people were given blankets at the Kiama courthouse in early June 1872 (*Kiama Independent* June 8 1872). The correspondent reported that the number was down from about 30 the previous year. The sole reason for the decline is unlikely to be mortality. Some of the claimants may have travelled to a different distribution point or chosen not to receive a blanket.

Blankets were forwarded from Sydney to the Shoalhaven River in June 1879 for distribution among the Aboriginal population. They were sent at approximately the same time that Roger's fishing boat was dispatched. Unfortunately, a record of the number of blankets issued has not survived (*Shoalhaven Telegraph* June 12 1879).

The blanket returns for the 1860s and 1870s do not provide an accurate representation of the Aboriginal population for the Illawarra and Shoalhaven. They suggest that the Shoalhaven population was in the vicinity of 140 in 1870, but there are no names to check against other lists to see if people were travelling outside their area to collect a second blanket. The records suggest an Illawarra population somewhere near forty in 1865, but the same proviso as for the Shoalhaven applies. The population for Kiama fluctuated between 14 and 30 in the early 1870s. The likelihood is that the overall population declined in the 1860s and 1870s.

More certain information about the Aboriginal population of the Illawarra and Shoalhaven is provided by the APB census figures collected from 1882 onwards. The available statistics are shown in Graph 8.1. The combined population for Wollongong, Kiama and the Shoalhaven in 1882 was 186, a decrease of 111 since the last combined population total from the 1840 blanket return. The likely reasons for the decline are increased mortality due to disease, poor nutrition and alcohol consumption, and migration to other areas such as Sydney and La Perouse. After an increase to 237 in 1889, the

population dropped further in the early 1890s, before settling at an increased level of between 182 and 201 in the late 1890s. A feature of the statistics worth noting is the low population for Wollongong in the 1880s and early 1890s. During those times, the population never exceeded 12 and was more commonly at the levels of two or three. The reasons for the low total are unclear. There were probably few work opportunities for Aboriginal people in Wollongong during the early 1890s when the depression was in full swing. The population increased in 1893 when land at the mouth of Lake Illawarra was made available. A notable change occurred in the composition of the population between the time of the blanket returns and the APB census statistics. In 1840, children accounted for approximately 26% of the Shoalhaven Aboriginal population. In 1890, this percentage had risen to 55.6. Part of the difference is probably illusory, as it appears that the APB classified Aboriginal people under the age of 20 as children. In the blanket returns, where age estimations were unreliable, people under 15 were classified as children. Nevertheless, the proportion of young Aboriginal people had increased, thereby improving the outlook for at least a stable population.



Graph 8.1: APB census figures, 1882-1899

The government census of 1891 provides a point of comparison with the APB statistics from the same year. According to the government census, the combined Aboriginal population for the Shoalhaven and Illawarra was 159. This compares with 155 from the APB statistics. The difference is marginal and can be accounted for by the fact that they

were taken at different times of the year, thereby allowing for small-scale migration, mortality and parturition. The census also provides data about household composition and location. For example, at Coolangatta, most probably at a camp on the northern slopes of the mountain, there were 14 households ranging in size from one man to four men and three women. The nominal head of household was also listed. Family names at Coolangatta include Amatto, Longbottom, Lloyd and Dixon. The census also records R. Buttong, an old man with an estimated age of 70. This is probably Dick Buttong, who we know from R.H. Mathews notes was still living in the early 1890s. The census also shows that Aboriginal people were living at Back Forest (near the town of Berry), Numba, Pyree, Terara, Burrier, Bomaderry, Kangaroo Valley and the Kiama district. One Aboriginal man, Mr C. Williams, lived in Shoalhaven Street Nowra. Most other Aboriginal people appear to have lived in camps outside of the towns and villages.

Some Aboriginal males and females (they were possibly children) lived with white families. For example, an Aboriginal female lived with the family of Sam Percival at Pyree, while an Aboriginal male lived with the family of John Reuter at Numba. The status of these people is unknown. They may have been spouses, servants, employees or adopted children. The latter option is the least likely as there are no reports in the files of the APB about Aboriginal children living with white families at this time. White people also lived in Aboriginal households. In 1891, the household of William Lloyd, included two Aboriginal males and two females. William Lloyd was married to Mary-Anne Dixon, a known Aboriginal woman. This leaves the possibility that William Lloyd was a white man, or that the couple had adopted a white child. The former possibility is more likely. The case demonstrates the difficulty of interpreting census information when a breakdown of the numbers is not included in the published record. In all, the census records show that 26 Aboriginal people were living with white people in 1891, and 33 Aboriginal people were living with 22 white people in 1901. Living with white people was not a guarantee of subsistence. It is likely that Aboriginal adults living in white households were required to obtain subsistence by some other means such as working or fishing. As in the first half of the 19th century, living with white people was only a minor economic strategy.

The government census shows that after 70 years of white occupation, some Aboriginal people were still living on the land of their ancestors. The Bunan ceremony of the late

1880s further strengthened their ties to the land and demonstrates its enduring nature despite the fact that intensive agriculture and dairy farming largely prevented them from living off it. The census of 1901 shows that Aboriginal families still occupied land on the Shoalhaven estate. It is likely that the ties were interrupted soon after.

The census of 1901 records a population of 187 for the Illawarra and Shoalhaven. It shows that Aboriginal people were moving back into the Illawarra. A group of four males and four females were living at Dapto, while a camp of 36 were living at Port Kembla, consisting of 20 males and 16 females. Four Aboriginal people lived within the township of Kiama. The census also shows that Aboriginal people had moved within the last 10 years. For example, in 1891, John Judson was recorded as living near Berry. In 1901, the locality of his household was listed as Coolangatta. It also suggests that an Aboriginal man, J. Low, was living with a white woman (or possibly a white child) at Terrara.

Summary

The lack of records for the Shoalhaven estate and other farms in the study area make it difficult to determine the importance of farm work as an economic strategy for Aboriginal people in the late 19th century. It is probable that employment levels were at least maintained from the 1850s as Aboriginal people increasingly lost access to the land and its resources. Unfortunately, there is insufficient evidence to confirm this statement. Employment on the Shoalhaven estate ended in the early 1900s when the Aboriginal population was moved to Roseby Park so that the land could be sold. The community still had close ties to the land as was demonstrated by the Bunan ceremony near Broughton Creek in the late 1880s. Aboriginal people, however, were no longer economically viable to the Hay family as a self-supporting labour force and had no choice but to leave.

Aboriginal people in the Shoalhaven and Illawarra further entered into the capitalist economy from 1860 onwards by varied means. New strategies emerged, including selling fish and artefacts, giving them an additional source of cash to farm work. However, Aboriginal people were prevented from broadening their ties in the economy by the unsubstantiated notion that they were lazy. In the labour market, the majority of

jobs open to Aboriginal people were as agricultural labourers. Some responded to the situation by moving away from the south coast to places such as Sydney and La Perouse, although movement was restricted by the APB in the 1880s and 1890s. The APB also created reserves but Aboriginal people did not always live on them. Instead, some made direct application to the government for their own plot of land. There is little evidence to demonstrate that the Aboriginal people of the Illawarra and Shoalhaven hunted and gathered into the 1880s and 1890s, although given that knowledge of techniques survived into the 20th century, it is likely that at least a small amount was practiced. The diversity of artefacts collected by Henry Moss for the Garden Palace Exhibition in Sydney and observed by Matthews at the Bunan ceremony also demonstrate that Aboriginal people retained the ability to manufacture traditional technology that would have enabled them to obtain subsistence from the remaining areas of unoccupied land. Some Aboriginal people relied on the generosity of white settlers for cash and subsistence, particularly in hard times. From 1882 onwards the APB also supplied rations to the elderly and children. Up to 30% of the population may have depended on the APB for subsistence. But the APB and government also provided the means to sustain economic independence. Numerous boats were given to individuals in the Illawarra and Shoalhaven, sometimes after direct application. They were used to catch fish, both for the market and community consumption. Commercial fishing was not a major industry on the south coast and supplies were plentiful for Aboriginal people to exploit. There is insufficient information to determine the contribution that fishing made to subsistence, but the historical evidence suggests that it was important. Given that boat and net fishing enabled a larger catch than the technique of hook and line, the importance of women's fishing may have declined as a result. Aboriginal women regained some of their independence by operating their own fishing boat and finding work outside the camp.

CHAPTER 9: CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

Introduction

The first chapter of this thesis identified two useful approaches for analysing economic change stemming from the relationship between capitalist and indigenous economies. Previous theories, such as substantivism and formalism, failed to consider the consequences of contact between indigenous and capitalist economies. In response, some anthropologists influenced by Marx constructed the underdevelopment school, which emphasised the impact of the capitalist economy on indigenous peoples. This school consists of two approaches: dependency theory (see Frank 1969) and articulation theory (Meillassoux 1973, 1981). Dependency theory claims that settlers destroy the indigenous mode of production to permit the expansion of their own economic system. They exploit indigenous labour which becomes dependent on capitalist sources of subsistence. Articulation theory posits that the rate of capitalist penetration into indigenous economies is variable and that the non-capitalist mode of production may be preserved to create a self-supporting source of labour. Layton modified articulation theory to recognise the two-sided nature of the contact (Layton 2001). Rather than asking whether the capitalist economy preserved the hunter-gatherer economy, he asked whether the hunter-gatherer economy could remain independent from capitalist expansion. The main theoretical question of this thesis has been to test the respective claims of dependency and articulation (as modified by Layton) in the context of the economic relationship between settlers and Aboriginal people in the Illawarra and Shoalhaven regions of New South Wales. This has been done by determining whether the indigenous economy became dependent on the strategies listed in Table 9.1 (numbers 2-6), or whether they maintained an independent economy of hunting, fishing and gathering.

The strategies under consideration were partly derived from the work of Butlin (1983) and to a lesser extent, Castle and Hagan (1998). It was found, however, that neither Butlin nor Castle and Hagan considered all the strategies open to Aboriginal people. For example, it was not considered that some Aboriginal groups might be able to continue hunting, gathering and fishing if those resources were not being exploited by the colonists. Butlin also failed to realise that some Aboriginal women may have yielded to the sexual demands of white men to obtain necessary resources for themselves and their

family. The list of strategies in Table 9.1 was amended to account for these shortcomings.

The theoretical perspective was augmented by a synthesis of adaptive response (Narotzky 1997: 35-37; Lomax 1988) and opportunity and response theory (Epstein & Penny 1973) to provide an implicit understanding of Aboriginal economic behaviour. The synthesis emphasises the creative abilities of Aboriginal people to cope with loss of resources by maintaining economic independence or abandoning traditional economic and social organisation to ensure survival. It ensures that articulation is seen as two-sided and that the outcome is not predicted. In this view, Aboriginal people are not inevitably seen as passive victims of a more powerful economic force as they are sometimes able to organise their economy according to their wants and needs.

It was also noted that the question about economic independence links into the recent debate about the genuine nature of hunting, gathering and fishing economies and their ability to resist capitalist expansion (Solway & Lee 1990; Kent 1992; Layton 2001). The debate grew out of competing interpretations of the Basarwa that saw them as either degraded outcasts from the colonial era or pristine foragers relatively untouched by the modern world. A more balanced approach has emerged in the last decade (see Lee & Daly 1999; Layton 2001) to which this thesis has made a contribution. It has traced the changing importance of hunting, gathering and fishing as an economic strategy and shown that skills were retained despite a decline in the importance of the strategy as the 19th century concluded. This issue will be further discussed later in the chapter.

The question about maintaining economic independence has been addressed by analysing historical information about indigenous economic strategies from the Shoalhaven and Illawarra, with a particular focus on Aboriginal farm labour on Alexander Berry's Shoalhaven estate. Other information about Aboriginal economic behaviour was taken from the work records of small farms, the diaries and letters of residents, explorers and travellers, and newspapers reports.

Methodological Issues

This thesis has introduced a new method for the analysis of Aboriginal farm work that could be used to good effect in other parts of Australia. It was demonstrated that if there is information from farm ledgers and work books about the value of the goods and wages given to Aboriginal workers, it is possible to calculate the number of days worked by making a reasonable assumption about wage rates. Further, if there is reliable demographic information available, it is possible to calculate the contribution of wage work to Aboriginal subsistence by comparing the number of days worked with the total number of possible days worked if Aboriginal people were in constant employment. The assumption is that Aboriginal farm workers were paid the equivalent to one day's subsistence for each day of work. In reality, Aboriginal workers were probably paid less so the calculation can safely be regarded as an over-estimate.

Information from ledgers and work books was also used to answer questions about the structure of Aboriginal farm labour. By plotting the timing of payments to Aboriginal workers on a calendar, it is possible to build up a seasonal picture of farm work over a year, and longer if the data is available. Then changes to the pattern can also be analysed.

A Variety of Strategies

The Aboriginal people of the Illawarra and Shoalhaven used diverse economic strategies in response to colonial settlement in the 19th century, as shown in Table 9.1. Aboriginal people used these strategies to varying degrees to obtain subsistence. The historical evidence shows that the boundaries between the sub-groups of strategies are not absolute. Sometimes Aboriginal people used a mixture of traditional and newly acquired skills when working for settlers. An example is provided by the Aboriginal people who crewed boats on the Shoalhaven River for Alexander Berry. They used their existing knowledge of the river to navigate and their new skills to handle larger craft than they were used to.

Group	Sub-group	Examples
1. Independent fishing, hunting and gathering economy	Fishing, hunting and gathering economy unmodified by contact	Use of traditional technology
	Fishing, hunting and gathering economy modified by contact	Traditional technology replaced by European items including steel fish hooks, guns and rowing boats
2. Working for settlers	Use skills as a hunter-gatherer (bush skills)	Guiding settlers and explorers, providing food, cutting bark
	Learn new skills in agriculture and animal husbandry	Harvesting wheat and corn, shepherding animals, shearing sheep, breaking-in horses
3. Dependent economy	Gift/free provision of goods & food	Aboriginal people consume food and goods freely provided by settlers and government
	Theft	Stealing grains and animals
4. Sale & Trade economy	Produce artefacts or procure food for sale	Spears, fish etc provided in return for money
	Trade artefacts and food for European items	Spears, fish etc traded for goods rather than money
5. Living with Settlers	Permanent/long term relationships	Aboriginal women gain access to food & goods
	Short term liaisons	As above
6. Migration	Permanent/long term	Aboriginal people move to Sydney or further
	Short term	Brief visit to Sydney or other district to obtain resources

Table 9.1: Division of Economic Strategies used by the Aboriginal People of the Illawarra and Shoalhaven in the 19th Century.

Wage Work: Shoalhaven Estate

The majority of the historical evidence for determining the importance of wage work as an economic strategy has focused on Aboriginal employment on the Shoalhaven estate of Alexander Berry. The quality of evidence enabled other questions to be answered about the nature of Aboriginal farm work, including its timing, frequency and the sexual division of labour.

Alexander Berry arrived in the Shoalhaven district in April 1822. The crew of his boat included two Aboriginal guides. Peaceful relations with the local community were soon established and there were few cases of theft. Aboriginal men helped to clear ground. They took messages to Sydney and guided cattle down the escarpment. In 1829, Aboriginal men participated in the harvest for the first time. By the end of the 1820s, Aboriginal people had spent at least 163 days working on the estate. They probably worked for more days, as the records for that time are incomplete. But it is evident that

Aboriginal work in the 1820s was infrequent. Some worked far more than others did – Broughton is the prime example – but most did not work for Berry at all. Working on the farm was only a minor economic strategy and Aboriginal people did not depend on it for subsistence.

Aboriginal work on the Shoalhaven estate increased in the 1830s. Many Aboriginal people used their bush skills to assist Berry. They worked on boats and guided timber cutters to valuable stands of red cedar. Others used their new skills in handling sheep and harvesting wheat. Using information drawn from the provision store books of the estate, I calculated that Aboriginal people worked for 785 days on the property in 1837 and for 373 days in the second half of 1838. This represents a significant increase from the 1820s, but overall, farm work was still not a significant contributor to subsistence. The 49 men on the property could have worked for 25333 days in the period covered by the provision store books. The 1158 days that were worked represents only 4.57% of that total. Farm work remained a minor economic strategy. There were a few reports of theft, but nothing of a significant extent.

Aboriginal farm work reached a peak in the 1840s and 1850s. By that time, most of the jobs done by Aboriginal employees were directly related to farm production. There are numerous instances in the day books and ledgers of Aboriginal men harvesting corn, washing sheep and riding horses. Some workers developed specialist skills including horse breaking and sheep shearing. By the middle of the century, there was little call for the bush skills of Aboriginal people. Berry, his brothers and the employees were by now familiar with the landscape and required little help in moving across it. Bark was rarely needed for huts. Aboriginal labour was valuable for the new skills it had learnt in agriculture and animal husbandry. The number of Aboriginal work days rose from 1189 in 1849 to a peak of 3576 in 1854. From 1849 to 1857, Aboriginal men and women worked a combined total of 21531 days on the property, a significant increase from the late 1830s. But this represents only 5.9% of the total number of days that the adult population could have worked. Further, only 46-52% of the adults worked on the estate and most of those worked infrequently. Farm work, in all its diversity, remained a minor economic strategy.

Farm work on the Shoalhaven estate was largely a male economic strategy. Women worked for 298 days between 1849 and 1857; men worked for 21233. Women tended to work in large groups that included men, making it a social occasion. The type of work they did, namely digging potatoes and harvesting crops, was similar to the gathering activities they regularly performed in the bush.

Is there hidden Aboriginal female employment on the Shoalhaven estate? Some Aboriginal women may have found work as domestic servants. But opportunities were few and their employment would not have increased the level of dependency on wage work by much. It is more likely that Aboriginal women concentrated on their own domestic tasks such as caring for children and supplying food. Given that men worked on the farm more frequently, it is possible that women provided the greater proportion of bush foods and fish. From the 1830s, there is evidence of Aboriginal women living with white men on the estate. All the reasons for this development are unclear, but an outcome was that the women gained access to a regular supply of food and goods, which they may have shared with their family members. The practice seems to have continued for the rest of the 19th century as the population records contain many listings for Aboriginal children of mixed descent.

A feature of Aboriginal work in the 1850s is that the labourers were increasingly paid in cash. Economic development of the district saw the opening of more shops where the money could be spent. We do not know what the workers spent their money on, but it is likely that some of it would have been spent on food and goods, thereby increasing the level at which Aboriginal people were dependent on farm work for subsistence. It is also worth noting that Aboriginal work reached its height during the gold rush when labour throughout the colony was scarce. Aboriginal people may have been motivated to increase their amount of work by the additional supplies offered to attract their interest rather than any pressure caused by intensified cultivation of their lands.

From 1860 onwards, poor standards of record keeping make it impossible to quantify the level to which the Aboriginal people on the Shoalhaven estate were dependent on wage work. Aboriginal men continued to work on the property in a variety of jobs including clearing, stock keeping and timber cutting. They were paid in money and rations. In the late 1880s and early 1890s, up to 30 Aboriginal men were employed on the estate and a

few others worked on nearby properties. Most land was now under cultivation or pasturage. There were reduced opportunities for Aboriginal people to hunt and gather. The evidence suggests that Aboriginal dependency on wage work at the very least remained at a similar level to 1850.

Wage Work: Other Farms

There is evidence for Aboriginal employment on other farms in the Shoalhaven and Illawarra districts. Most of the information comes from two farms owned by the Elyard family in the period from 1830 to 1855: Avondale farm near Wollongong and Brundee Orchard Farm on the Numba side of the Shoalhaven River. The data is not as extensive as that for the Shoalhaven estate, but it suggests that employment was infrequent. In the early 1830s at Avondale, Aboriginal people mainly provided the Elyard's with food. In the 1840s at Brundee Orchard Farm, several Aboriginal people took up agricultural tasks. The workers were paid with small amounts of rations and cash that contributed only a small amount to subsistence.

Did the Aboriginal residents of the Shoalhaven estate seek employment on other nearby properties such as Brundee Orchard Farm? The names of all Aboriginal employees were not recorded at Brundee, but those listed in the diaries of family members are not found in the work books of the Shoalhaven estate. The reverse situation is also true. It appears that there was no crossover employment and that the dependency of Aboriginal people on one farm was not increased by working on another.

There are several differences between Aboriginal work on small and large farms in the period from 1830 to 1850. Aboriginal people tended to provide food for the settlers of small properties rather than engage in agricultural labour. Work was concentrated in the first half of the year. On large properties such as the Shoalhaven estate, Aboriginal labour mainly consisted of agricultural and animal husbandry tasks. Work parties were larger and most of the labour was done in the second half of the year during the various harvesting seasons when the demand was greater.

There are only isolated reports of Aboriginal wage work on farms other than the Shoalhaven estate after the 1850s, making it difficult to quantify the level of dependence.

Dairy farming dominated the agricultural scene in the last 40 years of the century. Many of the operations were small scale and had little demand for labour. There were not many other jobs for Aboriginal people. For example, a few occasionally guided visitors across the landscape for a small amount of cash or food. At least one man worked in a quarry at Kiama in the 1890s. Another worked in a bank at Nowra. Newspaper reports from the late 19th century demonstrate that many thought Aboriginal people to be lazy and only fit to occupy agricultural labouring positions. This attitude made it difficult for Aboriginal people to find other jobs. If dependency on wage work did increase, then it was not by much.

Unmodified Fishing, Hunting and Gathering

Table 9.2 displays the records of unmodified¹ fishing, hunting and gathering by Aboriginal people of the Illawarra and Shoalhaven from the time of first contact to 1900. All examples were discussed and referenced in earlier chapters. They suggest, without precise quantification, that unmodified fishing and hunting contributed significantly to Aboriginal significance until the 1850s before declining as Aboriginal people lost access to natural resources. It is also interesting to note the paucity of observations about the collection of vegetable foods. This does not mean that vegetables were rarely collected. Rather, it suggests that such an activity took place away from settled areas, possibly on the escarpment and mountains where settlement was less intense. Also, the knowledge of traditional vegetable foods did not disappear from Aboriginal communities, as is demonstrated by Percy Mumbler who in modern times was instructed by family members who lived in the late 1800s (also see Wreck Bay Community & Renwick 2000).

The continued importance of fishing, hunting and gathering was assisted by population change. The pre-contact Aboriginal population for the Illawarra and Shoalhaven was estimated at 900. The blanket return for 1840 records a population of 297 and the dramatic fall can be accounted for by the effect of sexually transmitted disease and measles. The APB recorded a population of 201 in 1899. There is a clear trend downwards, although the population stabilised from the late 1880s. The unfortunate implication of population decline is that it probably reduced Aboriginal dependence on

¹ Unmodified in the sense that traditional technology and division of labour was used.

the settler economy for subsistence. The harsh reality is that fewer mouths to feed meant that more could be made of the food collected from fishing, hunting and gathering.

Activity	Time	Location	Observer
Fishing	March 27 1796	Off the coast of Wollongong	Bass and Flinders
Fishing	November 1811	Jervis Bay	Governor Macquarie
Procuring shellfish	April 1812	Jervis Bay	George Evans
Kangaroo hunting	January 1822	Jervis Bay	Alexander Berry
Fishing	June 1822	Coolangatta	Alexander Berry
Wallaby hunting	September 1822	Coolangatta	David Souter
Fishing at night	October 22 1823	Coolangatta	Barron Field
Feasting on beached whale	October 1823	Coast near mouth of Shoalhaven River	Barron Field
Fishing	October 7 1826	Bowen Island	John Harper
Fishing and hunting	October 1826	Jervis Bay	John Harper
Fishing	November 1826	Jervis Bay	Jules-Sébastien-César D'Urville
Evidence indicating the firing of land	November 1826	Jervis Bay	Jules-Sébastien-César D'Urville
Kangaroo hunting	1820s	Wollongong	Charles Throsby Smith
Fishing	January 1834	Shoalhaven River	Samuel Elyard
Fishing	March 1837	Jervis Bay	James Backhouse
Procuring Cabbage tree heart	March 1837	Shoalhaven hinterland	James Backhouse
Aboriginal people mainly living on fish and from hunting	1845	Wollongong	Reverend Matthew Meares to Select Committee into Aboriginal Affairs
Possum and wallaby hunting	1840s	Kiama	William Burliss
Fishing	1850s	Kiama	David Dymock
Fishing – only one woman found who could manufacture shell fish hooks	October 30 1879	Nowra	<i>Nowra Telegraph</i>
Hunting for initiation ceremony	Late 1880s	Broughton Creek	Carpenter Jack, etc, to R.H. Mathews

Table 9.2: Unmodified fishing, hunting and gathering

Modified Fishing, Hunting and Gathering

Evidence for the introduction and use of European technology in the Aboriginal economy is shown in Table 9.3. The evidence demonstrates that Aboriginal people began using European technology in the period of exploration before settlement. Tomahawks and steel fish hooks offered advantages over indigenous items, being both stronger and longer-lasting. The increase in efficiency helped maintain the dominance of fishing, gathering and hunting as a subsistence provider. The analysis for guns is harder to determine. Weaponry of the time was relatively inaccurate and slow to load.

Observed Activity	Modified/introduced technology	Time	Location	Observer
Obtained from trading	Steel fish hooks, tomahawks	April 3 1812	Illawarra hinterland	George Evans
Gift	Steel fish hooks	April 1818	South of Shoalhaven River	Charles Throsby
Lent for hunting	2 muskets	September 1818	Illawarra	Cornelius O'Brien
Payment for work	Tomahawks	July 1822	Shoalhaven River	Alexander Berry
Gift	Steel fish hooks	October 7 1826	Bowen Island	John Harper
Hunting birds & wallabies	Gun	May 19 1829	Avondale, Illawarra	Alfred Elyard
Hunting pheasants & ducks	Gun	June 2-19 1829	Avondale, Illawarra	Alfred Elyard
Hunting duck	Gun	February 1 1831	Avondale, Illawarra	Dr Elyard
Hunting kangaroo	Gun	March 23 1832	Avondale, Illawarra	Arthur Elyard
Hunting birds	Gun	January 1834	Illawarra	Samuel Elyard
Fishing	Steel fish hooks	March 1837	Jervis Bay	James Backhouse
Hunting	Spear barbed with green bottle glass	March 1837	Shoalhaven hinterland	James Backhouse
Payment for work	74 pocket knives	1848-1858	Shoalhaven estate	Day books
Payment for work	96 pots	1848-1858	Shoalhaven estate	Day books
Payment for work	139 plates & cups	1848-1858	Shoalhaven estate	Day books
Payment for work	Gun powder, shot & percussion caps	February 1851	Brundee Orchard Farm	
Payment for work	2 crawpots	September 25 1852	Shoalhaven estate	Day books
Payment for work	Needles	April 29 & July 1 1854	Shoalhaven estate	Day books
Hunting birds	Gun	August & September 1858	Illawarra	<i>Illawarra Mercury</i>
Fishing	8 boats & nets	1868-1879	Illawarra, Shoalhaven & Jervis Bay	Colonial Secretary
Fishing	Boat	1895	Lake Illawarra	APB minutes
Open sea fishing	Whaling boat	February 1900	Lake Illawarra	APB minutes

Table 9.3: Evidence for the Introduction and Use of European Technology

The results of hunting parties, however, show that Aboriginal people quickly worked out how to use them successfully. The description of Samuel Elyard from 1834 of an Aboriginal man sneaking up on his quarry before shooting it demonstrates the successful combination of hunting skill and European technology. Access to guns was limited – only Billigong from Brundee appears to have owned one – so the contribution of gun-shot quarry to Aboriginal subsistence was small.

Modified fishing increased in importance with the introduction by the government of fishing boats and nets in the last three decades of the 19th century. The use of boats and nets permitted a larger catch, increasing the contribution of fishing to subsistence. Surplus fish were sold for extra cash, increasing ties to the wider capitalist economy. The introduction of boats and nets may have also resulted in changes to the sexual division of labour for fishing. In the first half of the 19th century when steel and shell fish hooks were commonly in use, few women worked on farms, giving them the time to follow the traditional pattern and obtain fish using the hook and line. Mostly men appear to have worked on the fishing boats from the late 1860s, reducing the role of women in the strategy.

European items changed consumption patterns as well as fishing and hunting techniques. Access to plates, cups, stoves and pots increased in the 1850s with the expansion of Aboriginal work on the Shoalhaven estate. Food, whether rations or kangaroo, could be cooked in an iron pot and eaten on a plate with cutlery. Modes of dress changed as Aboriginal people were paid with trousers, shirts, material, needles and thread.

Gifts and the Free Provision of Goods and Food

A summary of the evidence for reliance by Aboriginal people on gifts and handouts for subsistence is presented in Table 9.4 on the following page.

Item received	Recipient	Time	Location	Observer/giver
Fish & old shirt	Jervis Bay Aboriginal men	March 10 1801	Jervis Bay	Lieutenant Grant
Food & cutlery	Illawarra Aboriginal people	1817	South Creek, Wollongong	James Badgery
Steel fish hooks	30 Shoalhaven Aborigines	April 1818	South of Shoalhaven River	Charles Throsby
Brass plates	Wagin, Yager & Broughton	July 1822	Coolangatta	Alexander Berry
Steel fish hooks	Bowen Island Aboriginal people	October 7 1826	Bowen Island	John Harper
Biscuits	Jervis Bay Aboriginal people	October 9 1826	Jervis Bay	John Harper
Fish	Jervis Bay Aboriginal people	November 26 1826	Jervis Bay	Jules-Sébastien- César D'Urville
Tea, sugar, flour, meat	Old Timberly	1820s	Illawarra	Charlies Throsby Smith
Sixpence	Frying Pan	January 1840	Illawarra	Reverend Clarke
Food	Kiama Aboriginal people	February 1851	Kiama Agricultural Show	Records of the Kiama Show
Cash	Black Polly	May 1865	Wollongong	<i>Illawarra Mercury</i>
Food	Camp at Minamurra	June-August 1876	Minamurra	Local settlers
Food & clothing	Children, elderly & incapacitated	1882-1900	Illawarra, Kiama & Shoalhaven	APB annual reports
Food & clothing	Shoalhaven estate Aboriginal people	1890s	Shoalhaven estate	Mrs Emma Longbottom

Table 9.4: Reliance on Gifts and Freely Provided Goods for Subsistence

The evidence demonstrates that the contribution of gifts to subsistence in the period of exploration was insubstantial. Their purpose was to establish friendly relations rather than provide subsistence. The first evidence for Aboriginal dependence on handouts occurs in the 1820s with Old Timberly making regular requests of Charles Throsby Smith. But such incidents were rare. Dependence on freely provided food and goods did not significantly increase until the 1880s when the APB began supporting Aboriginal children, the elderly and incapacitated. In 1890, Aboriginal children accounted for 55% of the population, a dramatic change from the 1830s when they consistently contributed less than 20%. However, the quality of rations was at times substandard and it is impossible to determine whether the dependents always received their entitlements. A reasonable estimate suggests that dependents received their rations half of the time, meaning that approximately 30% of the population lived on food provided by the APB from 1882 to 1900, possibly supplemented by contributions from landowners such as Sir John Hay.

Theft as an Economic Strategy

The evidence for theft as an Aboriginal economic strategy is presented in Table 9.5. The information in Table 9.5 demonstrates that theft was only used as a strategy in the early stages of settlement in the Illawarra and Shoalhaven. This strategy was limited by the possibility of violent retaliation by settlers. Some of the evidence is also suspect as it was presented by convicts who may have been trying to justify acts of violence. Alexander Berry said that the birds stole more grain than Aboriginal people on the Shoalhaven estate. Theft was only ever a minor economic strategy.

Item(s) stolen	Perpetrator	Time	Location	Observer
Corn & potatoes	Illawarra Aboriginal people	April 1822	Richard Brook's farm, Illawarra	John Neale and Thomas Binskin
Corn & tobacco	Illawarra Aboriginal people	April 1822	Illawarra	William Graham
Corn, potatoes and tobacco, 3 jackets, 6 shirts, 7 blankets, 1 rug, a £5 note, 1 handkerchief, a cap, a musket & an axe	Shoalhaven Aboriginal people	March 1824	Shoalhaven estate	David Souter
Corn	Jervis Bay Aboriginal people	August 1826	Shoalhaven estate	Alexander Berry
Corn & wheat	Shoalhaven Aboriginal people	April 1827	Shoalhaven estate	Alexander Berry
Corn	Shoalhaven Aboriginal people	May 1827	Shoalhaven estate	Alexander Berry
Pigs	Shoalhaven Aboriginal people	August 1829	Shoalhaven estate	Edward Wollstonecraft
Cattle	Kiama Aboriginal people	May 1833	Minamurra district	(see Organ 1990: 181)
Pigs	Black Harry	August 1835	Kiama	Thomas Campbell

Table 9.5: Evidence for Theft as an Economic Strategy

Trading as an Economic Strategy

The evidence for trading as an economic strategy for the Aboriginal people of the Illawarra and Shoalhaven is presented in Table 9.6. It demonstrates that explorers and settlers mostly used trading with Aboriginal people to establish friendly relations and obtain information. The transactions were not always successful as is indicated by the incident involving Broger in 1829. Aboriginal people used the opportunity to acquire useful items of technology and small amounts of food. Trading was a minor economic strategy that disappeared after the 1830s to be replaced, as we will now see, by the sale of goods for cash.

Items traded	Time	Location	Observer
2 fish and water for 2 handkerchiefs & potatoes	March 27 1796	Off the coast of Wollongong	Bass & Flinders
Lost surveying chain for a blanket	March 1801	Jervis Bay	Lieutenant Grant
Fish for biscuits & tobacco	November 1811	Jervis Bay	Governor Macquarie
Oysters for tomahawks, steel fish hooks, a blanket & tobacco	April 3 1812	Illawarra hinterland	George Evans
Fish for bread	April 1818	Jervis Bay	Charles Throsby
Information for 2 kangaroos	December 1821	Shoalhaven hinterland	Hamilton Hume
Spear for "little presents"	January 11 1822	Shoalhaven River	Alexander Berry
Bark for tomahawks	January 1822	Jervis Bay	Alexander Berry
? for flour	February 1829	Shoalhaven hinterland	Alexander Berry
Fish, crayfish for tea & sugar	April 1839	Jamberoo	Margaret Menzies

Table 9.6: Evidence for Trading as an Economic Strategy

Sale of Artefacts and Food

Details about the strategy of selling artefacts and food for cash are presented in Table 9.7. The data suggests that selling items as an economic strategy did not begin until 1849, ten years after the last recording of a trading transaction between Aboriginal people and settlers. Blankets were first distributed on the south coast in the 1820s so it is likely that some were sold before 1840. Nevertheless, cash was rarely used in the settler economy before the 1850s so any sales would only have produced a small amount. The selling of artefacts and food increased in importance in the second half of the 19th century. Aboriginal people realised the benefits of cash, and selling items, as well as wage work, offered the opportunity to obtain additional supplies. Artefact sales were rare in the Illawarra and Shoalhaven, accruing very little cash. They were more frequent at La Perouse where the Aboriginal community had access to the larger Sydney market. There are, however, no details about how much money was raised. The sale of fish increased in importance after the introduction of boats and nets in the late 1860s, further connecting Aboriginal people to the capitalist economy. Boats and nets enabled them to expand the size of their catch and allocate a portion of it for sale, with the cash available to purchase goods and food. The community at Greenwell Point raised significant but unspecified sums from the sale of fish. It is not possible to quantify the contribution of fish sales to Aboriginal subsistence, despite clear evidence for its escalating significance.

Item sold	Payment	Time	Location	Observer
Blankets	3-5 shillings per blanket	June 1849	Wollongong	<i>Sydney Morning Herald</i>
Artefacts & brooms	£0.1.6 per broom	1860s or 1870s	Kiama	Unnamed resident of Kiama
Fish	£0.1.1	August 26 1874	Nowra	Samuel Elyard
Artefacts	?	October 1879	Nowra for display in Sydney	Henry Moss
Artefacts, flowers & fish	?	1882-1900	La Perouse	APB annual reports
Boat trips on Lake Illawarra	?	1887	Lake Illawarra	APB minutes
Artefacts	?	March 1888	Nowra	John Stewart
Artefacts	£5.0.0	May 1888	Nowra	H.L. Lovegrove
Fish	?	April 1891	Greenwell Point	APB annual report

Table 9.7: Evidence for Selling Artefacts and Food as an Economic Strategy

Living with Settlers

Table 9.8 displays the evidence for Aboriginal women living with settlers as a source of subsistence. Few instances are apparent from the historical record of Aboriginal women living with settlers in the first half of the 19th century. Many more cases probably went unrecorded, including some characterised by threats and violence. The number was kept in check by the surplus of Aboriginal men from the 1830s onwards, most probably due to disease. Young Aboriginal women did not have to look elsewhere to find a partner. When they did, it was probably an economic decision, at least in part. Aboriginal women rarely worked in the white economy and had reduced access to European goods and food. Some Aboriginal women chose to live with white men, and in one case a Maori who was constantly employed, to improve their access to flour, material, etc. It is unlikely that they would have obtained 100% of their subsistence from the man they were living with. It is only a partial strategy that requires other means to obtain necessities. The implication is that the strategy was insignificant in its contribution to total Aboriginal subsistence.

Participants	Duration	Time	Location	Observer
Muir & Joseph McNeil	Long term	December 1835	Shoalhaven estate	Punishment book
Unnamed woman & timber cutter	Long term	September 1836	Shoalhaven estate	Punishment book
Catherine Lippear & Esau George Longbottom	Long term	1845	Newcastle then Shoalhaven estate	Gloria Ardler
Unnamed Aboriginal woman & Amootoo	Long term	1859	Shoalhaven estate	<i>Illawarra Mercury</i>
26 Aboriginal people living with 35 white people	Unknown	1891	Illawarra & Shoalhaven	1891 Census
33 Aboriginal people living with 22 white people	Unknown	1901	Illawarra & Shoalhaven	1901 Census

Table 9.8: Living with Settlers as a Partial Source of Subsistence

The situation is different in the last two decades of the 19th century. Census records show that 26 Aboriginal people were living with white people in 1891, and 33 Aboriginal people were living with 22 white people in 1901. The records are difficult to interpret as they do not clearly indicate whether a white man was living with an Aboriginal woman and children or vice versa. In some cases, a male or female Aboriginal person (ages were not shown in the records) was recorded as living with numerous white people in a household. The same caution for earlier cases of Aboriginal women living with settlers applies. There is no guarantee that Aboriginal people living in households with white people had 100% of their subsistence provided. It is likely that Aboriginal adults were expected to obtain subsistence via some other strategy such as work or fishing. Living with white people was an increasing but minor economic strategy in the last decades of the 19th century.

Migration

The information about migration as an economic strategy presented in Table 9.9 is not exhaustive. It presents a summary of permanent and short term moves to indicate location, timing and frequency. Migration was an important strategy throughout the 19th century. Many groups made short term moves within the study area. For example, Broughton and his band temporarily moved to the Kangaroo Ground in 1836, and Mickey Johnson and family moved regularly between Lake Illawarra, Kiama and the Kangaroo Ground in the 1880s and 1890s. In these and similar cases, migration was combined with other strategies to obtain subsistence. Permanent and long-term moves were rare, but

increased in frequency towards the end of the 19th century as settlement intensified. The most significant was the movement of people from the south coast to Circular Quay, and then La Perouse. The population of La Perouse in 1890 was 27, the majority of whom came from the study area. By 1899, the La Perouse population had risen to 53. The proportion of the south coast people who moved to La Perouse fluctuated between 13.6% and 20.9%.

Person/group	Home base	Destination	Purpose	Duration	Observer
9 Aboriginal men	Shoalhaven, Jervis Bay, Illawarra	Tasmania	Work for Tasmanian government	5-10 years from 1829	John Batman
3 Aboriginal groups	Kangaroo Ground	Bong Bong	Learn a new song	October 1836 –short term	James Backhouse
17 Aboriginal people	Broughton Creek	Kangaroo Ground	Obtain blankets, visit relatives, etc	November 1836 – short term	November 1836 blanket return
3 Aboriginal people (minimum)	Wollongong, Kiama, Shoalhaven estate	Sydney	Blankets	1857 – short term to several months	Committee overseeing blanket returns
17 people ²	Kiama & Shoalhaven	Circular Quay boatshed, Sydney	Reports of begging & prostitution	Several years from late 1870s	George Thornton
Numerous families	Illawarra, Shoalhaven & Kiama	La Perouse and Botany	Selling artefacts & fishing	Permanent	George Thornton
Charlie Edwards	Shoalhaven estate	La Perouse	Retirement?	Permanent	APB
Mickey Johnson & family	Lake Illawarra	Kiama & Kangaroo ground		Regular moves	Barbara Nicholson, Government Census 1891 & 1901

Table 9.9: Migration as an Economic Strategy

Summary of Changes to the Pattern of Subsistence

Changes in the contribution of each strategy to Aboriginal subsistence are presented in Table 9.10. Estimated values are italicised. The proportions are only a guide. The overall pattern is clear, but the information to provide precise values in some categories was not always available. The proportion with the greatest certainty comes from evidence for Aboriginal work on the Shoalhaven estate from 1822 to 1858. Farm work increased in importance as a strategy but only ever made a minor contribution to subsistence. Proportions for the other categories cannot be accurately quantified, but the

² Including some from Newcastle

historical evidence indicates they were minor strategies at best. The implication is that hunting, gathering and fishing, with the introduction of new technology, remained the dominant source of subsistence through to the 1850s. To this time, Aboriginal

Pre-contact		1820s		1850s		1899	
Hunting, gathering & fishing	100%	Hunting, gathering & fishing	74%	Hunting, gathering & fishing	70%	Hunting, gathering & fishing	23%
Working for settlers	0%	Working for settlers	1%	Working for settlers	12%	Working for settlers	15%
Gifts/free provision	0%	Gifts/free provision	5%	Gifts/free provision	10%	Gifts/free provision	30%
Theft	0%	Theft	10%	Theft	1%	Theft	0%
Trade	0%	Trade	5%	Trade	1%	Trade	0%
Sale	0%	Sale	0%	Sale	5%	Sale	10%
Living with settlers	0%	Living with settlers	1%	Living with settlers	1%	Living with settlers	1%
Migration	0%	Migration	4%	Migration	0%	Migration	21%

Table 9.10: Estimated Changes in the Pattern of Subsistence, Pre-contact to 1899

people of the Illawarra and Shoalhaven were not dependent on the settler economy for subsistence and their indigenous economy was not destroyed. They maintained an independent economy for longer than previously supposed. Integration with the settler economy increased in the second half of the 19th century as settlement intensified and Aboriginal people had to look to other strategies for subsistence. Hunting and gathering declined in importance as a source of subsistence. Sales of artefacts increased. Dependency on the free provision of rations expanded dramatically with the creation of the APB. Also, a larger proportion of people moved away from the study area, particularly to La Perouse, in search of means of support. With the introduction of boats and nets, fishing remained an important source of subsistence, both for direct consumption and as a source of cash via the market.

Independence, Preservation and Dependency

Modified articulation theory predicts a variable outcome to the penetration of the capitalist economy into the indigenous economy. Capitalist settlers may preserve the indigenous economy as a self-supporting labour source in the long or short terms if there are benefits to be gained. If resources are available, hunter-gatherers may maintain their foraging life way in combination with wage work and other contact with the colonising

group. Dependency theory predicts that the settlers will immediately destroy the indigenous mode of production to permit the expansion of their capitalist economy based on agriculture and animal husbandry. The documentary evidence for the Shoalhaven and Illawarra in the 19th century demonstrates that settlers did not immediately destroy the Aboriginal economy. Aboriginal people maintained an independent economy with the majority of subsistence provided by fishing, hunting and gathering until at least 1860. Wage work and other sources of subsistence dependent on settlers were only minor economic strategies to this time.

If Aboriginal people on the Shoalhaven estate did not become dependent on wage work as a means of subsistence, was their economy preserved to provide labour when needed? Alexander Berry was not clear on this matter. He was happy to have the Aboriginal people live nearby. He was curious about their lifestyle and keen to observe them. They proved knowledgeable guides and willing workers. Berry wanted them to work more but the Aboriginal people were not amenable. They were happy to keep living on land to which they had spiritual ties. Berry's hope, however, was that Aboriginal people would 'civilise' themselves by abandoning their nomadic ways and settling down to farm the land. He was most delighted when a family took up the sedentary life, but was not surprised when they abandoned it. In this sense, Berry's intention was not to preserve their economy or society. He wanted them to assimilate into the class of agricultural labourers, but he did not force the issue. It seems that Berry was happy to have a labour source during times of shortage that looked after itself (possibly to the extent of providing over 70% of its subsistence into the 1850s), thereby reducing the amount he had to pay for its use. In part, Berry's inaction preserved the Aboriginal economy for his benefit. But Aboriginal people were keen to maintain their hunting, gathering and fishing economy, as is indicated by Billy's claim to Berry that he returned to the bush to become a 'free man again'.

The level of dependency for Aboriginal people increased in the last four decades of the 19th century as land use intensified and the level of government control increased. Aboriginal people lost access to important resources and many became dependent on rations from the APB. The pattern evident in the 19th century is that the Aboriginal economy was independent until at least 1860 with dependency increasing thereafter. This pattern is more in line with the predictions of articulation theory. Dependency theory,

which is more rigid and predicts the immediate destruction of the Aboriginal economy, is not supported by the documentary evidence.

External Forces

Large-scale, external forces helped to convince settlers of the advantages of keeping Aboriginal people as a self-supporting source of labour. The withdrawal of the convict labour force in 1841 together with the gold rush in the early 1850s created more opportunities for Aboriginal employment. The cost of labour increased and Alexander Berry responded by bringing in workers from New Zealand, and later on from China and Germany. The opportunity for expanded Aboriginal employment emerged and it was taken up to a limited extent. The number of Aboriginal work days increased from 710 in 1837 to over 2500 in 1845. The gold rush of the early 1850s also created the opportunity for more Aboriginal work. The number of white employees on the Shoalhaven estate fell by approximately 50%. More Aboriginal men were employed, reaching peaks in excess of 3000 days work per year after 1853.

Other external forces later in the century created the conditions for increased Aboriginal dependence on the capitalist economy. New land regulations in the early 1860s intensified the rate of settlement, further eroding the opportunity for Aboriginal people to hunt, fish and gather. The expansion of the dairy industry in the second half of the 19th century reduced the demand for agricultural labour, including Aboriginal workers. More Aboriginal people became dependent on the APB as a result. The external force with the greatest effect was the expansionary nature of the capitalist economy that propelled an intensified exploitation of natural resources and marginalised Aboriginal access to the land.

Opportunity and Response and Adaptation

The synthesis of opportunity and response and adaptive response theory has provided an implicit understanding of Aboriginal economic behaviour throughout this thesis. It emphasises the ability of Aboriginal people to build strategies to manage resource loss and maintain economic independence (Epstein & Penny 1973, Narotzky 1997: 35-37, Lomax 1988). On the south coast, Aboriginal people combined hunting, gathering and

fishing with introduced technology such as metal implements and fishing boats that improved productivity and made economic independence easier to maintain. Also, as Cameron found for the far south coast of NSW, they soon occupied an important place in the new economy by working for landowners such as Alexander Berry, but only for the length of time that gave them access to useful goods and permitted their continued residence on the land. Further, the synthesis stresses that strategies to maintain economic independence are not always successful and that hunter-gatherers have the flexibility to adopt new social and economic structures to ensure survival. External factors can override the efforts of Aboriginal people to maintain their independence, forcing them to take up new strategies bearing little resemblance to traditional responses. The most striking example was the sale of the Shoalhaven estate, where once the decision had been made by the land owner with the support of the APB, Aboriginal people had no choice but to move away from their ancestral lands. The synthesis has allowed a balanced view to be achieved by avoiding the extremes of the general debate about hunter-gatherers and European contact that either emphasises resilience or degradation. This kind of perspective could be profitably used in similar studies.

Resilience and Genuine Hunter-gatherers

The evidence from the south coast confirms the conclusions of researchers such as Altman (1987), Solway and Lee (1990), Bird-David (1992) and Kent (1992, 1996) that hunter-gatherers can maintain a viable and independent economy in articulation with an expanding capitalist economy. In the Australian context, Hartwig (1978) was incorrect to argue that colonial development immediately destroyed the Aboriginal mode of production. At least in the Illawarra and Shoalhaven, it survived in a modified form well into the 19th century, negating Bell's claim (1959: 84) that Aboriginal people were fully dependent on white society by the late 1850s.

The evidence from the south coast also demonstrates the importance of modifying articulation theory, following Layton (2001), to recognise that contact is two-sided. This permits the resilience of hunter-gatherers to be acknowledged and studied. The south coast evidence, however, also demonstrates that forager resilience is not absolute. External changes in the capitalist economy can reduce access to resources which are necessary for hunting, gathering and fishing to continue. If land is also unavailable for

farming, then the people will become dependent on wage work and government handouts for subsistence. The implication for today is that modern foragers can survive if resources are available. Skills endure as they are often used in the context of work. (The fishing industry at Wreck Bay is a prime example for the south coast). They can be reintroduced into the subsistence sphere if resources are available. The conclusion is that foragers are sufficiently flexible to combine hunting, gathering and fishing with capitalist forms of production and maintain a distinctive social and economic organisation.

The combination of foraging with other economic forms raises the question about the genuine nature of hunter-gatherers. In economic terms it can be said that genuine hunter-gatherers are those who rely on foraging for the majority of their subsistence. This definition is similar to Solway and Lee's claim that genuine hunter-gatherers are those who are economically self sufficient (Solway & Lee 1990). The advantage of this definition is that it includes groups who abandon hunting, gathering and fishing for different reasons, but later return to it when the opportunity arises. It also includes groups who take up foraging for the first time when other subsistence modes collapse. The economic definition is inclusive as it is not solely based on the concept of tradition. The problem with the economic definition is that it does not take account of social organisation. As Bird-David emphasises, hunter-gatherers sometimes take their social and economic organisation into the capitalist economy when they undertake wage work. The phenomenon is also evident on the south coast where Aboriginal people generally worked together on the Shoalhaven estate for small periods in much the same way as they did when hunting, gathering and fishing. Elements of hunter-gatherer social organisation can exist even when foraging does not provide the majority of subsistence. The implication is that asking whether a group in a contact situation are genuine foragers is a spurious question. It ignores the historical situation, now more fully realised, that no modern foragers (including the majority of groups over the past 200 years) are untouched by contact with other social and economic forms. The diversity of economic and social organisation stemming from the articulation of capitalist and non-capitalist society needs to be recognised and described before more appropriate categories can be established. This can be done by pursuing more regional studies where the outcome is not preconceived by theory that does not acknowledge the two-sided nature of contact. Modified articulation theory, which permits a balanced view, is an appropriate theoretical outlook for pursuing such studies. In the Australian context, more regional research is

needed along the south east coast to determine whether the experiences of Aboriginal people on the Shoalhaven estate were unique or part of a wider pattern.

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¹ A copy of the entry is held at Stanton Library, North Sydney, in the local history collection.