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ROCK ENGRAVINGS
of the Sydney-Hawkesbury District

Pt. 2 : Some Important Ritual Groups in the County of Cumberland

By
FREDERICK D. McCARTHY

Pages 203-216. Plates 23-26. Figs. 1-7.

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ROCK ENGRAVINGS OF THE SYDNEY-HAWKESBURY DISTRICT

Part 2 : Some Important Ritual Groups in the County of Cumberland

by

FREDERICK D. McCARTHY

(Plates 23-26. Figs. 1-7.)

(Manuscript received 11. 4. 58)

The groups at Mt. Kuring-gai and Maroota, Nos. 1, 4 and 5, comprise some of the outstanding series of rock engravings known in the Sydney-Hawkesbury district, and every effort should be made to protect them from vandalism. The Mt. Kuring-gai group was reported to the Australian Museum over fifty years ago when Etheridge (1904) published a brief description of the principal figures. The Devil's Rock group at Maroota has been known for an equally long time but the other groups described herein were not reported until the last decade.

Mt. KURING-GAI

[Group 1]

Etheridge (1904) did not mention the fish, kangaroo tracks and basket, and his diagram of the anthropomorphic trio is inaccurate. This group is unique in its composition, and a complete re-description and plan of it is necessary for permanent record. It is a remarkable omission from Campbell's 1899 memoir in which other groups in this area are described and illustrated.

The group is situated on the western side of a high ridge, the main one connecting Port Jackson to the Hawkesbury River. The site now lies between the railway and highway to the north, at a spot where they are only thirty yards apart, about half a mile north of the railway station. The ridge is midway between Berowra Creek and Cowan Creek; from it is to be seen a commanding view westward to the valley of Calina Creek into which a number of small tributaries converge to flow into Berowra Waters at Crosslands. To the eastward of the site the ridge rises slightly to block out the view into a gorge leading down into Cowan Creek.

The figures are engraved on a long and narrow ledge of rock which runs north-to-south across the slope of the ridge. They begin with a single human foot track or mundoe on a rock on top of a knoll; 68 ft southward is another rock bearing the next five mudoes, and then 73 ft further on, the next eight occur on separate rock surfaces almost at ground level, running down the slope of the knoll and then up a very slight slope to the end of the main continuous ledge of rock. The main ledge is narrow at its northern end, widens in the middle, and narrows again to a few feet until it joins the main rock surface which is 55 ft x 12 ft in area. A growth of heath in shallow soil projects into the middle of this area. The ledge narrows again at the southern end and on it is engraved a single small mundoe. There are no mudoes on a higher ledge or on lower rock surfaces outside the line of these tracks at the northern end. There is a drop of from 6 to 12 ft to the ground below the main ledge but no occupational deposit is present.

The continuous line of forty-five mudoes runs for a distance of just over a furlong from north to south, and 50 ft further on is the single one mentioned above. The mudoes are mostly from 1 ft 6 in to 7 ft apart; others are from 8 to 15 ft apart. There is a gap of 48 ft between them on an area of rock on the main ledge across which water flows and seeps and on which tracks were either never engraved or have been completely weathered away. There are other gaps of 18, 20, 25, 52, 68 and 73 ft. These mudoes are from two to three times natural size, and are both the longest series and largest individually, yet recorded. Examples of their size (in inches) include 12 x 5, 15 x 10, 19 x 12, 20 x 14, 22 x 6, 22 x 12, 22 x 17, 23 x 7, 23 x 17, 24 x 3, 24 x 14, 27 x 12, 29 x 18, and 30 x 18. They thus correspond in the main to those of the culture here, whose feet are 25 x 14 in and 22 x 13 in and are intended to represent his tracks, not those of his wives.

The shape of the mudoes is generally oval, some being irregular and others half-ovals. Some are either narrow or broad in relation to their length. The toes indicated vary from two to eleven, six being the commonest number. On two of the mudoes the toes are large round or oval pits, but

otherwise they are shown as short straight grooves. Thirteen of the mundoes bear from one to three punctured dots but on the large pair side by side, which are almost intaglios with the toes inside the outline, there are nine and ten respectively. The twelfth figure from the north in this track is an elongate slug-shaped one, with two antennae, similar to one at Devil's Rock, Maroota (Fig. 6, No. 38).

The last eleven mundoes are on the main rock surface where the track ends abruptly in a large pair, although another very faint one, evidently not re-engraved from time to time as were the others, occurs just beyond them. There is another faded figure, either a mudo or basket, below the large pair, and a single kangaroo track nearby. This is the longest single line of large mundoes yet recorded, but tracks of human, emu and kangaroo footprints are a feature of rock engravings of the Sydney-Hawkesbury district.

A few feet beyond the end of the mudo track is the main set of figures. It comprises a huge culture hero, his two wives and some small fish and other figures. The hero is 11 ft tall, with a span of 8 ft between his hands. He is depicted holding a boomerang, 22 x 6 in (normal size in relation to the hero) in his left hand, and is wearing armbands, two girdles, and a chest ornament which is probably a row of kangaroo teeth strung on human hair twine. There is a bar across his neck, probably indicating a necklet, and seven eyes. There are six fingers on each hand and six toes on each foot. The bottoms of his huge feet, each bearing seven toes, are turned sideways, a device necessitated by the inability of the artist to show the feet facing the viewer, as he has drawn the balance of the figure.

A woman is engraved on each side of the hero, probably his two wives but possibly a wife and daughter. One wears a girdle, the other bears five punctured dots on her body. These two women are approximately life-size; unusual features are the uneven length of the arms on one and the two short arms and the legs turned sideways (in the opposite direction to those of the hero) on the other one. The upheld arms, the general posture of the smaller woman, and the boomerang held by the hero give these poorly designed human figures a certain feeling of movement.

A large basket, engraved beside the ninth mudo from the main group, apparently belongs to one of the women. It is 2 ft 2 in long, with a loop handle, and is striped from top to bottom as though made by the twining method although it has the shape of a coiled one. It is similar to the twined basket shown in a group near Old Bobbin Head Road in Kuring-gai Chase National Park (Campbell, 1899; pl. 21, No. 4).

Above the culture hero's right hand is an irregular oval figure (now very faint) then a set of four fish and two ovals, and an almost indiscernible and indeterminate pyriform figure. Three different sets of kangaroo tracks run through the tableau. Two sets of two pairs run north-east in two lines, and four pairs run south-east in three separate lines, which is unusual. Thirty feet to the south of the main group is another mudo of natural size pointing towards the ancestral beings. Etheridge (1904; 45) said that immediately opposite the staff station, and on a sloping surface of rock within the westerly railway fence, is a single mudo at right angles to the long line already described, as if approaching the latter.

Technique.—Two of the ancestral beings have smoothed outlines, in which punctures are still visible in places, from 1 to 2½ in wide and up to ½ in deep. The outlines of the little woman are ¾ in wide and from ¼ to ⅙ in deep. The basket and some of the fish have a smooth groove 1½ in wide and from ⅜ to ½ in deep. The single fish, above the line of them, has conjoined punctures ¾ in wide and ¼ in deep. The outlines of the mundoes are all smoothed (although punctures are visible in some of them), and are from 1 to 2 in wide, and from ¼ to ½ in deep (with some up to ½ in deep in places). The kangaroo tracks vary from deep weathered grooves, in the majority, to one pair of narrow grooves and a single one near the pair of large mundoes, only ½ in wide and ⅙ in deep. All of the other figures are faint and difficult to discern. The majority of the figures belong to the one period, but one fish, several kangaroo tracks, and the single southernmost mundoes, were added at a later period. The outlines of the deeply grooved figures have been rubbed smooth, and the latter process has been furthered by weathering agencies.

Remarks.—Etheridge (1904; 47) thought the culture hero was Daramulan. There appears no reason to doubt that he is the great All-father hero, with his two wives, characteristic of south-eastern tribal beliefs, whose many names in different tribes are given by Howitt (1904; 488-508). He is associated here with fish, and as the site lies between Berowra Creek and Cowan Creek, two deep salt-water streams, these fish were probably a local totem and the site a totemic one at which ceremonies, connected with the increase of fish and the spirits of the totem and totemites, were performed. A complicating factor is the presence of the kangaroo tracks without the animal. The tracks obviously represent a mythical kangaroo or kangaroo totem man of the Dreamtime—perhaps a kangaroo hierarchy in the mythology. The group as a whole depicts an important historical episode in the life of the ancestral beings, one enacted during the ceremonies performed at the site. Initiated men attending these historical and initiation ceremonies, or visiting the site for any other reason such as the renewal of spiritual contacts, would follow the line of mundoes, the sacred track of the hero, from north to south to the main group, as would young men when the meaning of the group was being explained to them during initiations.

This hero is remarkably similar in general outline to the Wandjina heroes painted in the caves of northern Kimberley, in Western Australia, although the arms of the Wandjina are usually held at the sides of the body, and the face is a distinctive stereotyped pattern. The large feet turned sideways, massive body and limbs, and front-view posture are characteristic of both types of heroes.

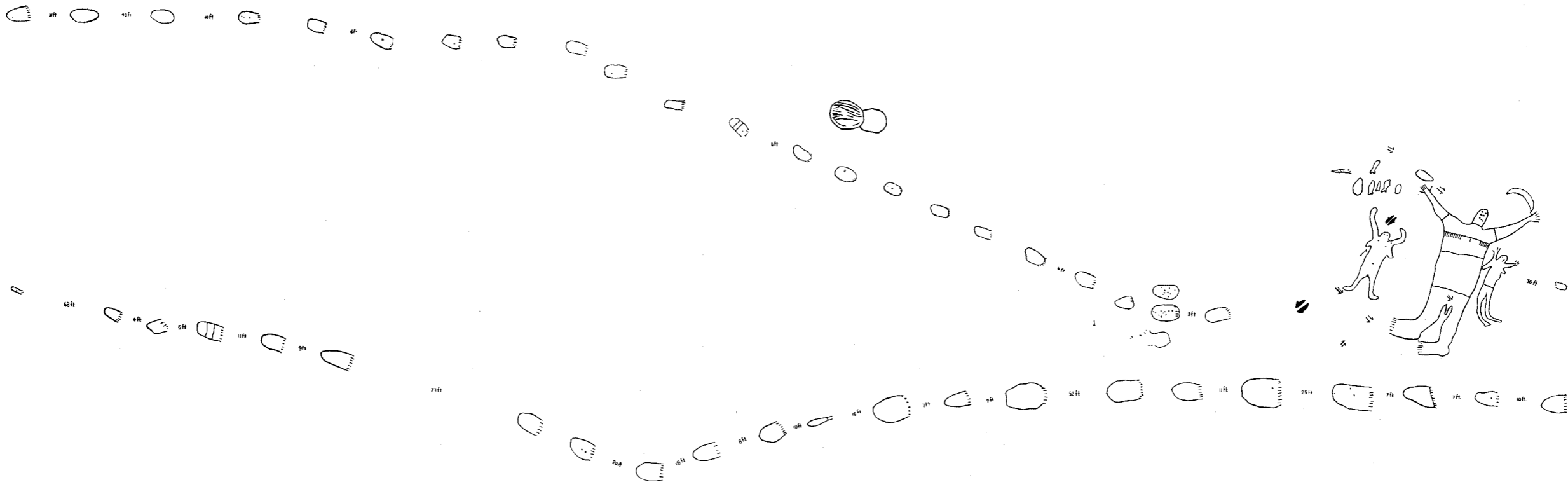


Fig. 1.—Group 1: Mt. Kuring-gai. In situ the footprints at the lower right hand corner join on to the series shown at the top left hand side of the diagram.

A preliminary recording was made of this group in 1943 by Messrs. F. L. S. Bell, H. Cocks, E. Wright and the author. It has been checked on several subsequent occasions by the author to determine obscure features of the figures.

SPRING GULLY OR COCKLE CREEK, WAITARA

[Group 2]

This group is situated at the bottom of the ridge which forms the eastern side of a tributary of Spring Gully Creek (which runs into Cowan Creek near Bobbin Head). The site is 300 yd north-east of the old Sewerage Works along the creek, and lies between a road and the creek.

Series I.—Only six figures of this group remain on portion of a large rock surface quarried away many years ago. They comprise four human foot tracks or mundoes leading to a wallaby, 4 ft long, 30 ft away, standing on both sets of limbs in a stiff pose, and a shield just over 3 ft long, with one vertical and three horizontal lines in the design. The head and fore-part of the wallaby are formed by natural cracks to which the body, tail and hind legs have been added. The outlines are of shallow conjoined punctures from $\frac{1}{2}$ to $\frac{3}{4}$ in wide (mostly $\frac{1}{2}$ in). The rough edges of the punctures in the wallaby and mundoes are indistinct and smoothed by weathering, but the shield is well preserved with a groove up to $\frac{1}{8}$ in deep. Other figures were no doubt destroyed in the quarrying.

Series II.—Situated 100 yd south of Series I, on a large rough rock surface sloping slightly towards the creek. At the southern end is (1) a shallow, curved, non-returning boomerang 2 ft long; (2) a pair of large oval mundoes 15 and 18 in long leading to (3) a maze of forty small and normal-sized mundoes (mostly oval, but one has toes) pointing at all angles; a line of twelve more mundoes leads northwards, the footmarks increasing in size as they approach (4) to (10), among which another line of four mundoes branches off eastwards; (4) skate-like fish 21 in long; (5) incomplete and indeterminate; (6) echidna, with spot on body, in profile, 2 ft long; (7) a dead echidna or the skin of one, 1 ft long, depicted in a style widely distributed in central and northern Australia; (8) stingray or skate 4 ft long with barred tail; (9) a woman 4 ft 6 in high, in an animated pose, with arms upraised, long fingers on both hands, holding an oval object like a bag in one hand with another smaller oval on one breast, and with four eyes; (10) man 6 ft 6 in high wearing rayed headdress.

A second line of nine mundoes (11) of all sizes runs from east to west from this series of figures towards (12) a man almost 6 ft high, with no head but three rays in its place, fingers on one hand, a long penis and poorly shaped legs. He is facing the main group.

Technique.—The figures were evidently done in two periods, and constitute an interesting example of technique. Among the maze of mundoes, and the boomerang, some of the outlines are of conjoined punctures but in others the punctures are from $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{3}{4}$ in apart. Most of the grooves and punctures are $\frac{1}{2}$ in wide but some are only $\frac{1}{4}$ in. The majority of the punctures are circular but some are oval in shape. The mudoer with toes has a smooth groove 1 in wide and $\frac{1}{8}$ in deep. Some of the mundoes in the north-south line near the maze are also of punctures, both separate and conjoined, but they are now indistinct. The east-west series (excluding those crossing the woman's leg) are of conjoined punctures from $\frac{1}{2}$ to $\frac{3}{4}$ in wide and up to $\frac{1}{8}$ in deep. No. (12) a man, has outlines of single punctures, mostly conjoined but separated in places by up to half an inch. These punctures, $\frac{1}{4}$ in diameter, $\frac{1}{8}$ to $\frac{1}{4}$ in deep, are also circular, with flat walls and a concave bottom. This man and some of the mundoes probably belong to a later period than the other figures.

Nos. (4) to (10), the main group, and some of the large associated mundoes, have smoothed grooves mostly 1 in wide, and up to $1\frac{1}{2}$ in in some parts of the outlines, and from $\frac{1}{8}$ to $\frac{1}{16}$ in deep. There is no sign of punctures in them.

Remarks.—This group is remarkably similar in composition and layout to the one beside the Old Bobbin Head Road (Campbell, 1899; 38-39, pl. 21, figs. 4-5), 45 chs south of Bobbin Trig. Station, in Kuring-gai Chase National Park. Both groups include a man and a woman in ceremonial attire, a basket, echidna, and a line of mundoes. They thus both probably illustrate a similar mythological incident or episode. In both groups, also, a number of animals, other than the echidna, are represented.

In this group, the maze of mundoes may represent a meeting of natives (a group or just the three engraved), a dance, or a fight between the two men for the woman. A track leads away to one of the men and the woman. Their track is crossed by that of the second man who is posed to the westward of them. Thus we may have here the track of a man and woman eloping, their camping place shown by the maze of mundoes, the two large ovals represent them sleeping, the mudoer track their route to a fishing and hunting spot, and the other man, the husband, trailing them. The group could well represent spirit people connected with one of the totems illustrated. The technique indicates that figures were added to the group at different times, evidently by natives attending totemic or historical rites at the site.

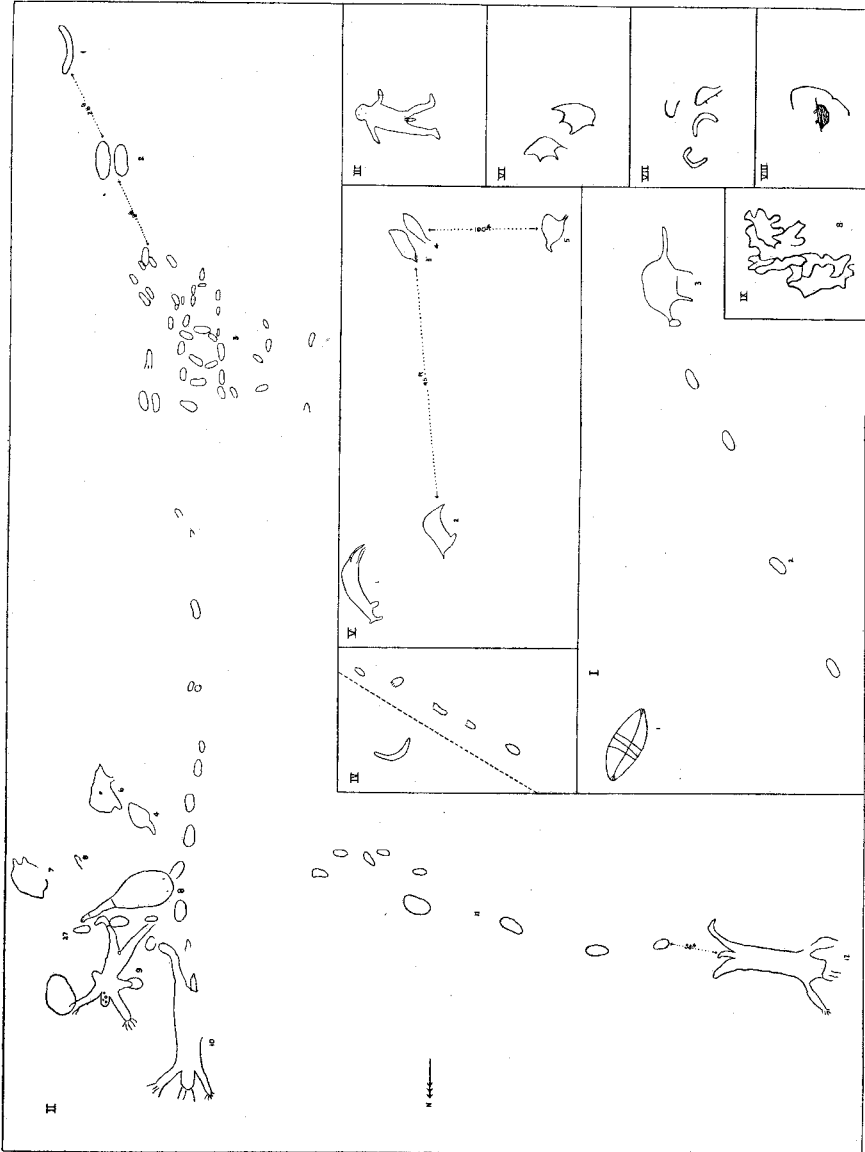


Fig. 2.—Group 2: Spring Gully or Cockle Creek, Waitara.

A similar maze of mundoes, and a track leading to various animals, is to be seen in a group in Allambie Road, Brookvale, north of Sydney.

Series III.—A poorly designed figure of a man, 3 ft 6 in high, situated 100 yd south of Series II, on the northern margin of a large rock. His outline consists of conjoined oval punctures $\frac{1}{2}$ in wide, $\frac{3}{8}$ in deep, and up to 1 in long.

Series IV.—Engraved on a large sloping but flat rock 150 yd north-west of Series II. At the lower end of the rock is a boomerang, and 60 ft away at the other end is a line of five mundoes (with toes on three of them). The outlines are of fairly well preserved conjoined punctures, $\frac{1}{2}$ in wide and $\frac{3}{8}$ in deep.

Series V.—Situated on another large rock surface 100 yd south-east of Series IV are five scattered figures. No. (1) is a wallaby 3 ft 3 in long and (2) an echidna 2 ft 3 in long; (3), (4), 45 ft southward are two fish, and 100 ft west of them is (5) a young emu. The outlines are of conjoined punctures $\frac{1}{2}$ in wide and $\frac{3}{8}$ in deep, but that of the emu is a smooth groove 1 to 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ in wide.

Series VI.—Two echidnas 30 ft apart, with conjoined punctured outlines. Series VI to IX are situated about a quarter of a mile north of Series I, and about the same distance from Cook Trig. Station.

Series VII.—Two boomerangs about 1 ft long, small figure probably a mammal, and indeterminate figure.

Series VIII.—A small striped bandicoot or rat inside a crescentic line.

Series IX.—One hundred feet south-west of Series VII. A line maze approximately 2 ft square.

(Recorded by the author and F. Hansen, May, 1946)

MAROOTA

[Group 3]

This group is situated in the Maroota district, but its precise location cannot be disclosed. The figures are engraved on the southern end of a spur (running east and west) above a low saddle. Creeks run down from this saddle to the north and south. The rock slopes gently from north to south and is broken here and there by patches of heath. The engravings form a U-shaped series, following the exposure of rock. There are patches of tessellations on this rock but there are no engravings among them.

The sixteen engravings are as follow:—

Nos. (1), (2), two large barred eels 5 ft long; (3) goanna or flying phalanger just over 4 ft long, with a peculiar foreleg on one side. No. (4), seventeen short straight grooves, from 1 to 2 in long, in an arrangement not recorded previously. There are pairs of these short grooves beside (5) and (7) and they have previously been noted beside an owl in the Wollombi district (McCarthy 1941, pl. G, fig. 2). Their meaning is unknown.

Nos. (5) to (7) three koala bears, from 2 ft to 4 ft 9 in long, in typical lateral pose with the forelegs represented as one long limb curved upwards in front of the face, fingers being shown on two of them. Two eyes are shown on the smallest koala, and one eye on each of the other two figures. The heads vary from a realistic one (6) to a dog-like face (7) and a pointed chin (5). No. (8), a leaping kangaroo, in classical pose, with five human footprints representing the tracks of the hunter, and a short line in the tail possibly representing a spear. Nos. (9) to (11), two pairs of kangaroo tracks, (9) pointing northwards away from the above kangaroo hunt but towards (10), an unusual portrayal of a man, just under 4 ft long and wide, with his legs up and with well marked penis. He is broad bodied and his arms are in the commonly shown upraised position. He is beside (11) a large kangaroo 8 ft 6 in long, leaping westwards in a classical pose.

Technique.—The outlines of (1) to (9) consist of conjoined punctures from $\frac{1}{2}$ to $\frac{3}{8}$ in wide and up to $\frac{1}{2}$ in deep, weathered but well preserved, and all of the same period. Those of (10) and (11), the man and large kangaroo, are 1 in wide and from $\frac{1}{2}$ to $\frac{3}{8}$ in deep, weathered and smooth, and more heavily worked than the other outlines.

Remarks.—The main features of this group are the kangaroo hunts in (8) and (9) to (11). The grooves indicate that they either form two separate episodes, or, though they were engraved at different periods, belong to the one legend. The koala, eels, and goanna or phalanger were probably totems of the members of the local group which occupied this locality. Three koala bears have not been recorded previously in one group.

(Recorded by the author, October, 1957)

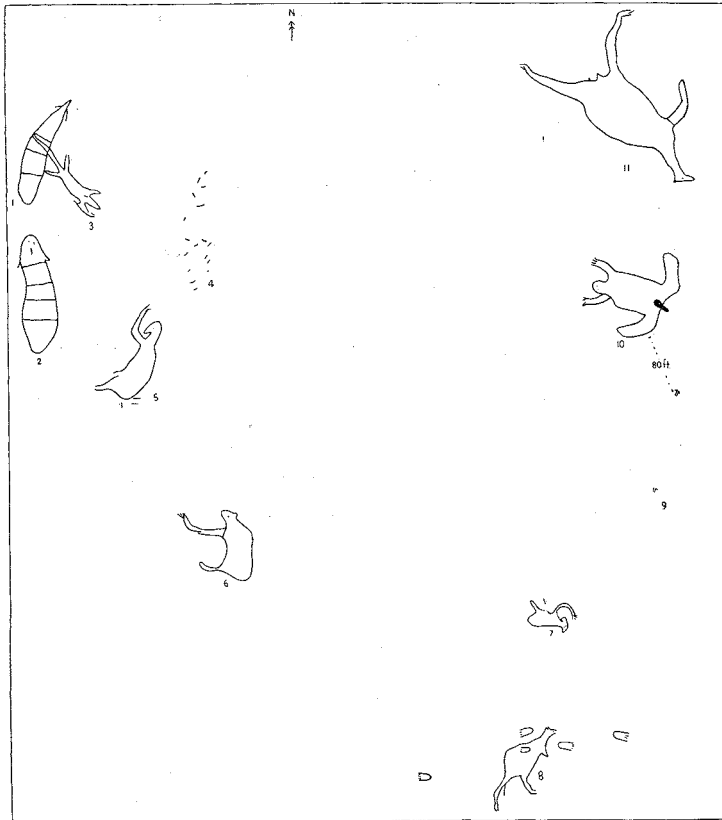


Fig. 3.—Group 3 : Maroota.

OLD NORTHERN ROAD

[Group 4]

This group is situated half-a-mile to the west of the old Northern Highway at a point $3\frac{1}{2}$ m from its junction with the Windsor Road opposite Beckett's Forest. The site is at the head of one of the tributaries of the southern branch of Stone Chimney Arm Creek.

Series I and II are at the eastern end of a number of large rock surfaces which extend in a crescent to the top of a ridge to the north-west, where Series III is located. There are several orchards in the vicinity and these carvings are now on Mr. F. S. Mitchell's allotment which is in the process of being cleared for cultivation.

Series I.—On a sloping but flat rock, which forms the bed of a creek on the edge of a marshy slope, are three circular potholes about 3 x 2 ft in size, and up to 2 ft deep, with almost vertical walls. Two of them hold water, and the other one is filled with soil in which heath is growing. On the lower side of them are 12, 12 and 4 axe grooves respectively. A groove of conjoined punctures is engraved behind two of the potholes, a custom noted previously at several localities in Kuring-gai Chase National Park and Terrey Hills.

Series II.—One hundred feet to the north-west of Series I is a very large expanse of sandstone, about an acre in size, in two levels. At its top end are (1) and (2). No. 1 is a puzzling creature to identify. It has a kangaroo's body—tail, leg and humped back—a fin and a wing, and a strange head which resembles that of a kangaroo wearing a headdress. Looked at from the southern or left side it is a composite figure of a kangaroo with fins (related to the whales and dolphin in the group) and a headdress, which, extended further into a ritual interpretation, would represent an ancestral

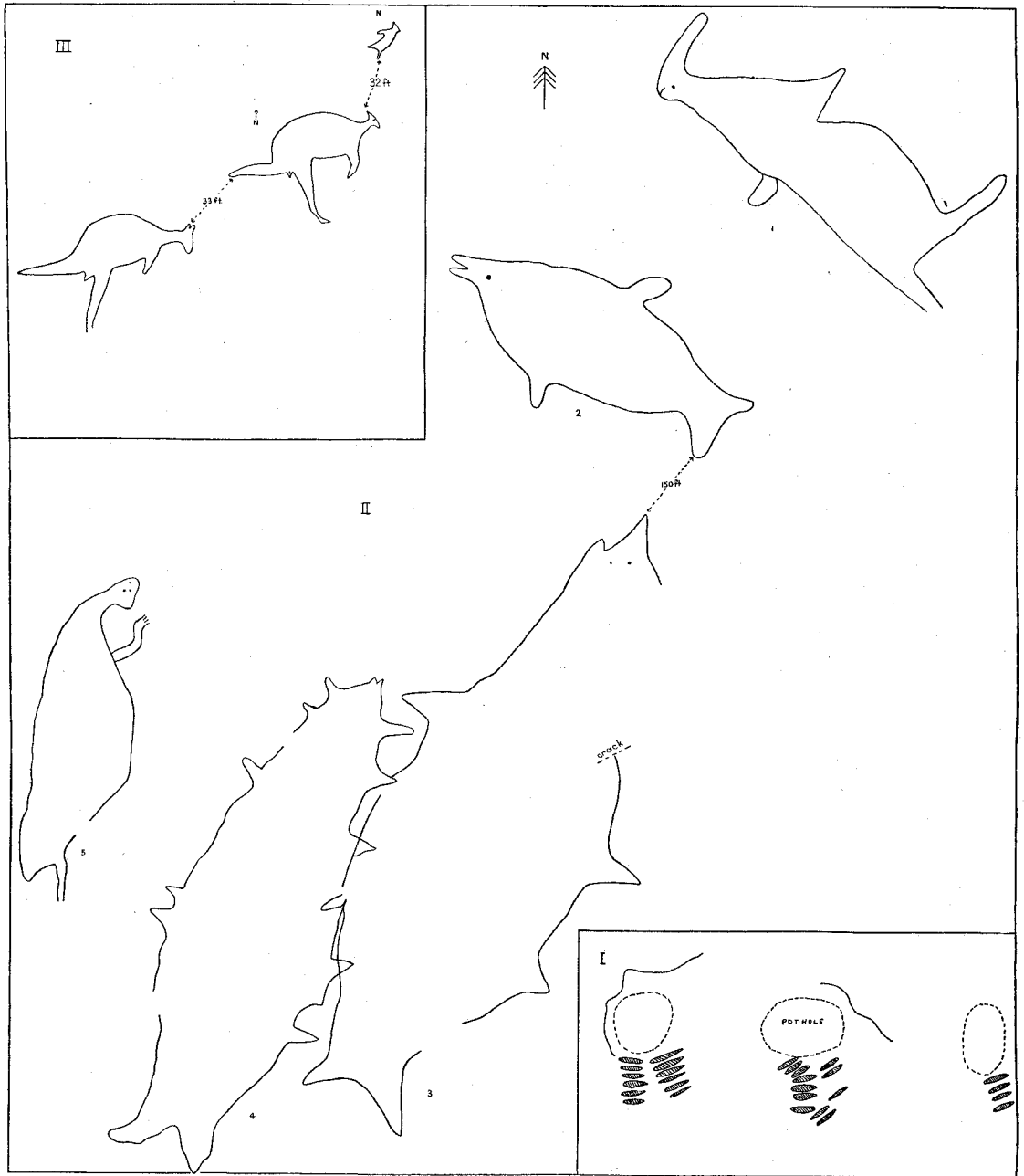


Fig. 4.—Group 4 : Old Northern Road, Maroota.

being of the one-legged Daramulan type in the guise of these two totems. However, when the figure is looked at from the northern or right side it resembles a large bird, with small wings and a long flat bill, although the mouth on the back of the head is difficult to account for if this interpretation is accepted. It is 17 ft long, with the legs incomplete, and is obviously a ritual figure. Beside it is (2) a well proportioned dolphin 15 ft long.

One hundred and fifty feet south of (1), (2), are three more large engravings. No. 3 is a whale almost 30 ft long, with portion of its outline not engraved on one side. It has four fins, open mouth and two eyes, and is reasonably well proportioned. Beside it is another whale 24 ft long with five fins on each side, evidently drawn by a man who had not seen many whales but knew they had fins. The outlines of these two whales overlap in the middle of one side.

No. (5) is another strange animal, evidently a spirit or a sacred and gigantic depiction of a koala bear. It has the typical head and front limb, with digits, shown by the artists in koala bears among the Sydney-Hawkesbury engravings, but the straight hind limb and pointed posterior are unusual characters. It is 17 ft long.

Technique.—The outlines of these five figures are all well preserved, with smooth rubbed grooves from 1 to $1\frac{1}{2}$ in wide and up to $\frac{3}{8}$ in deep.

Remarks.—This is a sacred site of considerable importance. The two gigantic spirit figures (1) and (5), of the bird or Daramulan, and of the koala bear, establish it as one visited by a sky-hero in a totemic guise at either initiation or increase rites. The dolphin is also larger than life size and is apparently a Dreamtime representation. It is surprising to find whales and a dolphin engraved at a site so far from the coast. No doubt the local natives visited the lower Hawkesbury River to join in whale feasts, and it is not known how far up the river such marine mammals travelled. These engravings could, of course, represent totems of coastal women who married into this local group at Maroota, or they may simply represent marine creatures esteemed for their enormous food supply when stranded (whales) or speared (dolphin). The engravings of whales and dolphins are the furthest west known, but there is a large swordfish engraved on Flat Rocks Ridge (McCarthy, 1956; Fig. 4, No. 27) on the other side of the Hawkesbury River. Perhaps visiting natives, with these totems, engraved the figures, but large subjects like these would take a long time and many visits to complete, too long for visitors who might be on their way to the important source of pebbles for axes in the Castlereagh area.

Series III.—On the south-western side of a large rock surface, at Mr. Mitchell's corner boundary, are engravings of two fine buck kangaroos 8 ft and 7 ft 3 in long, in classical leaping posture, and a wallaby 1 ft 9 in long, scampering away as fast as he can go. The convex pointed head of one of the kangaroos is unusual.

Technique.—The wallaby and one kangaroo have conjoined punctured outlines $\frac{1}{2}$ in wide and up to $\frac{1}{8}$ in deep; the other kangaroo has smooth grooves $\frac{3}{4}$ to $1\frac{1}{2}$ in wide, and up to $\frac{1}{4}$ in deep.

Remarks.—This area was evidently a favoured hunting place for these animals which were either depicted at different times or the outlines of one were rubbed at a period subsequent to the original puncturing. It appears to be an older figure than the other two.

(Recorded by the author and J. Beeman, October, 1957)

OLD NORTHERN ROAD

[Group 5]

This group is situated on a large rounded rock of dark brown and hard ferruginous sandstone, beside the western side of the old Northern Road at a point $2\frac{1}{2}$ m from its junction with the Windsor Road. The Main Roads Board of New South Wales generously diverted the old Northern Road during its reconstruction some years ago to preserve this most important group.

The figures form a semi-circular series from the south-west to the north-east, and are on the top of the rock which slopes southwards. No. (1) at the southern end, is an indeterminate elongate figure with a pointed head, four eyes in a row, one arm and one leg, with a well-marked rump. It resembles portrayals of the koala bear in the Sydney-Hawkesbury area. Beside it are Nos. (2) and (3), a boomerang and an unfinished open-ended figure. No. (4) a koala bear with a human-like breast, is shown in profile with one leg and one arm, and is reaching towards Nos. (5) and (6), two men in rayed headdresses, both wearing girdles and one bearing on his chest a line design which probably represents a painted pattern. Both have fingers on the right hand but not on the left one. Both are in a realistic attitude, posed as though participating in a dance-drama. At the northern end is (7), a huge ancestral being 14 ft 6 in long, of the Baiami type, with two huge legs but small arms, wearing a girdle and armlets, and bearing body stripes from the shoulders to the ankles. His head is not joined to his body and no penis is indicated. Although poorly proportioned, this figure suggests great strength and power from its bulk and a certain feeling of movement from the pose of the arms and head. No. (8) is an incomplete figure, of indeterminate nature, on the northern slope of the rock.

On a small isolated rock is a human foot track. On a large rock exposure, beside the edge closest to the main group, and 40 ft from it, are four indeterminate line and dotted or punctured figures (9).

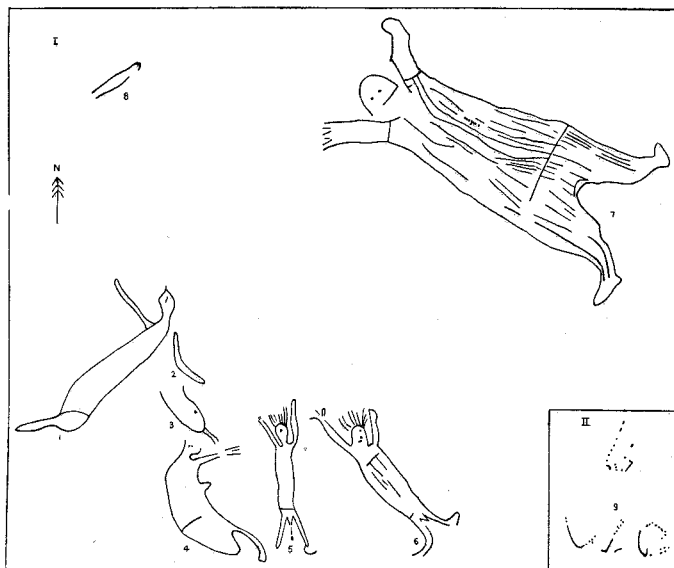


Fig. 5.—Group 5: Old Northern Road, Maroota.

Technique.—The eight figures in the main group have smooth rubbed outlines, $\frac{3}{8}$ to 1 in wide and $\frac{1}{8}$ to $\frac{3}{16}$ in deep, although large punctures are still visible in parts of the grooves. Parts of the grooves in the large hero are $\frac{1}{4}$ in deep. They are well preserved. No. (9) consists of punctures $\frac{1}{2}$ in wide and up to $\frac{3}{16}$ in deep.

Remarks.—This is a group of the most sacred type, a koala bear totem centre, with two bears and two human totemites at which the ancestral being is looking. One of the men or the hero has thrown the boomerang at the bear, and the site thus represents an incident in an historical myth. Vandals have just begun to deface this group by carving initials in the rocks.

(Recorded by the author, 1944)

DEVIL'S ROCK, MAROOTA

[Group 6]

This important group of engravings is situated on a flat-topped ridge which runs south to north from Wiseman's Ferry Road to the Hawkesbury River. The site is 100 yd from the Laughtondale Road at a point three-quarters of a mile from Wiseman's Ferry Road at North Maroota.

The rock is a large exposure, sloping from west to east, on the eastern side of the ridge. From it the view is restricted on all sides but the eastern one, which looks down the ridge through open forest and across the tops of low trees and scrub to the south. This ridge slopes down into the gorge of one of the tributaries of Laybury's Creek which flows into the Hawkesbury River several miles away.

There is a steep face 10 ft high or more on the eastern side of the rock. In the middle of the rock surface is a large patch of soil in which heath vegetation is growing, and there is a smaller patch at the north-eastern corner. It is not known whether any engravings are covered by these deposits, but it is considered unlikely.

A furlong to the north is another extensive exposure of rock, in the middle of which are three potholes 6 x 6, 10 x 10 and 25 x 20 ft in size, and from 2 to 3 ft deep, which hold water at all times except possibly after a series of drought years. Another series of rock surfaces occurs to the south on a lower ridge. There are no engravings on any of these rocks.

There are two potholes on this rock with 14 and 9 axe-grinding grooves beside them, respectively. Another large pothole, 5 ft in diameter and 2 ft 3 in deep, which was filled with soil, was dug out by a party from the Anthropological Society of New South Wales but no implements were found in it.

The forty-four figures comprise :

Nos. (1) to (4), on the western side of a car track which runs through the group, on a flat rock in the north-western corner of the outcrop. No. (1) is a bent line 6 ft long, like a spear; (2) an indeterminate tailed figure; (3) a leaping wallaby or kangaroo, just over 4 ft long; (4) a headless wallaby 2 ft long. No. (5), in the middle of the western side of the main rock, on a slight hump, is a well proportioned leaping kangaroo 9 ft 4 in long, struck by six boomerangs on the body and by a spear in the stomach. No. (6) is a fine leaping wallaby or kangaroo 5 ft 3 in long. Nos. (7) to (11) at the southern end of the group is an unusually interesting composition of an ancestral being with an emu (8) and shield (9), mundoe (7) and another figure (10). The ancestral being, 20 ft 3 in high, is wearing an eight-rayed headdress (with a bar across the top and a dot below it) and also a girdle and several necklets. His oval body is decorated with six vertical rows of oval and circular basin-shaped pits 1 to 2 in long, $\frac{3}{4}$ to 1 in wide, or 1 in in diameter, which evidently indicate a cicatrice or painted pattern on his chest and stomach. His back is demarcated by a line pattern. His small head is un-aboriginal with its long face, pointed nose and bearded mouth. One eye is shown, and the "Adam's Apple" prominence is clearly indicated on the exceptionally long and thin neck. He has one arm bearing three long fingers. His legs are very short for such a long body and one bears four toes. His erect and large penis has the shape of an uncircumcised organ, the bar across which apparently represents either a painted band or the gland inside the foreskin. Beside this great hero is a large emu 10 ft long, with a barred neck and leg, and a well marked foot to which is attached an indeterminate figure. Inside the emu is an oval shield, 3 ft long, of the well-known coastal type. There is a human foot or mundoe 5 ft away pointing towards this set.

Nos. (12) to (15) make a group of four small figures (23 ft south-east of (7)) comprising (12) a circle 2 ft in diameter, (13) a delicately posed bird, (14) three oval mudoes without toes and (15), short punctured line.

Beginning the greatest assemblage of figures in the group as a whole is a line (16) of eighty-five circular and oval pits, 1 to $1\frac{1}{2}$ in in length or diameter and $\frac{1}{4}$ in deep, which begins 80 ft north of the great ancestral being (37) and runs in a sweeping curve southward through the group for just over 100 ft to (11), another ancestral being. This is a unique kind of sacred track unrecorded elsewhere.

No. (17) a small circle; (18), (19), two narrow parrying shields 18 to 23 in long; (20), a snake-like figure 10 in long; (21) fourteen axe-grinding grooves in and beside a shallow depression which holds water during rainy periods and into which water could be tipped for grinding blades; (22) sword club; (23) a series of four complete (and one unfinished) boomerangs, from 10 in to 2 ft long. One boomerang is barred at each end. No. (24) short elliptical figure of unknown significance; (25) sword club; (26) hind portion of a large kangaroo with very weathered outlines. Part of the rock bearing the outline has spalled away.

Nos. (27) to (30) : Further northward is a kangaroo hunting composition in which a man 7 ft 6 in high has thrown a boomerang at two leaping kangaroos. One is a buck 10 ft 7 in long (from nose to end of outstretched tail) with digits on the foreleg, an oval figure inside its outline, and bars on the foreleg, shoulder and tail. The other one, 5 ft 2 in long, is an earless doe or young animal.

No. (31), nine axe-grinding grooves beside a shallow pothole; (32) large pothole 5 ft in diameter and 2 ft deep. Beside it is a splendid picture of an emu just over 8 ft long, standing over a clutch of eleven eggs, with three of the bird's tracks leading away from the nest and the pothole. This is a unique composition in the Sydney-Hawkesbury district. Emus were plentiful on Emu Plains a few miles to the west. No. (33) pointed oval figure 2 ft long, probably a shield lacking the usual crossed line design shown in (8).

No. (34) a ground bird, like a scrub turkey, almost 6 ft long, with an unusually small tail, broad bifurcated leg and large eye, standing over a clutch of six eggs in a line; (35) irregular oval; (36) fish; (37) an ancestral being just under 14 ft tall, in a stiff spread-eagled pose. Fingers, toes and bars are shown on the limbs, and a girdle on the body. Four rays form part of a forehead band or headdress. Four eyes and, most unusually, two large ears, are shown on the head. Eight lines of pits in the basin technique, to indicate a cicatrice or painted design, are shown on the body, together with several small right-angled lines. The penis is decorated with a line of seven dots and a bar, evidently the pattern of a painted design.

No. (38) a peculiar oval figure with two antennae, like a slug; (39) a spear and spear-thrower in a linear style; (40) a curved elongate figure 4 ft long, of unknown significance; (41) leg of bird like an emu; (42) clutch of eight small eggs in two rows.

Technique.—As in most of the extensive galleries of engravings the technique indicates that figures were made at this site over a long period.

Nos. (1) to (4), (40), (41) have a conjoined punctured outline $\frac{1}{2}$ to $\frac{3}{4}$ in wide and up to $\frac{1}{8}$ in deep. Nos. (12) to (15), (17) to (19), (22) to (25), (30), (33), (35), (36), (38), (39) have a very faded outline $\frac{1}{2}$ to 1 in wide, $\frac{1}{16}$ in deep, smoothed by weathering, and many of these are so faint that they can only be seen in a morning or afternoon side-light. Nos. (5) to (11), (27) to (29), (32), (34), (37) have a smooth rubbed outline, from 1 to $1\frac{1}{2}$ in wide and $\frac{1}{8}$ to $\frac{3}{16}$ in deep, in which punctures are partly visible in some places. No. (20) has an unusually big 2 in wide and $\frac{1}{2}$ in deep groove with straight walls.

Remarks.—This is undoubtedly one of the finest and most important groups of engravings in the Sydney-Hawkesbury district. Artistically, it is a planned composition from north to south, or vice

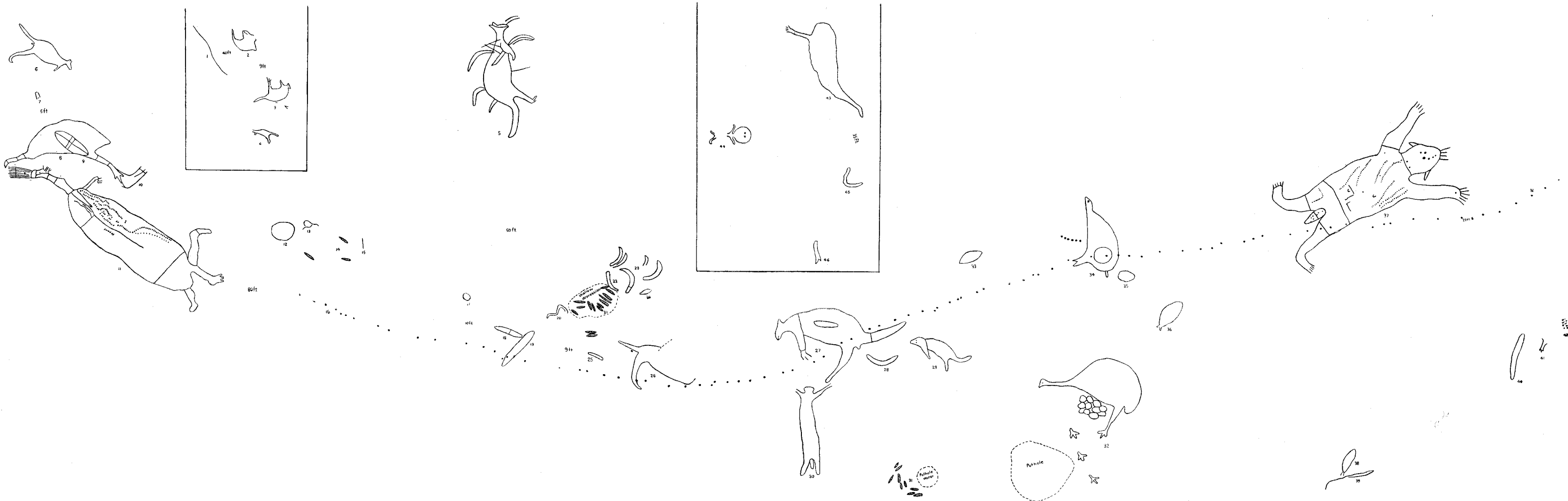


Fig. 6.—Group 6: Devil's Rock, Maroota.

versa, with a few extraneous figures to the west and east of the main series. The two magnificent ancestral beings are linked together by the long line of pits, along which are shown a nesting emu and ground bird, a kangaroo hunt, a series of weapons (boomerangs, shield, sword clubs) and a fish. Here we have the layout of portion of a Bora initiation ground, where the novitiates are told the tribal beliefs when being shown the figures, symbols of the tribal religion. Historical ceremonies were performed here and, if representations of nesting birds are any indication, totemic increase rites were also enacted.

The ancestral being in (37) is identical with the figure of the great All-Father hero, Baiami, of south-eastern Australian tribes, described in many papers by Mathews (1905) and by Howitt (1904) and illustrated in Kerry's photographs, as being made by shaping soil and sand over a framework of logs on the Bora grounds west of the Great Dividing Range and on the south and north coasts of New South Wales. The other hero, (11), probably represents Daramulan (the son or brother of Baiami), with his shield and with his totem the emu. The presence of both heroes in the one group demonstrates its immense importance in the rituals of the tribes.

This group is similar in composition to the Flat Rocks ridge groups (McCarthy, 1956; fig. 5, group 6) on the other side of the Hawkesbury River, about 10 m to the north of Maroota. Both include two ancestral beings of comparable types, kangaroo hunts, and emus in a group or nesting. They illustrate, in these themes or motifs, some of the most fundamental inspirations yet revealed among the engravings of the Sydney-Hawkesbury district. In another group (McCarthy, *op. cit.* fig. 3, group 2) on this ridge a huge mythical kangaroo struck by twelve boomerangs resembles very closely (4) in the Devil's Rock group at Maroota. Other figures of various kinds occur in one or both of these groups.

Series II.—A furlong south-west of Series I, on a flat rock, are four scattered figures, as follows: (43), an emu 8 ft long in an alert suspicious pose; (44) unique human figure, 3 ft 7 in high, with a very large head, two eyes, and a slender body; (45) thirty-five feet east of (44) is a returning boomerang 10 in long; (46) indeterminate figure with bifurcated end, like a narrow bag or basket, 1 ft long. The weathered outlines are 1 in wide and $\frac{1}{8}$ in deep.

Recorded by Misses E. Bramell and G. Bell, Professor A. P. Elkin, Messrs. F. L. S. Bell, J. H. Cocks and E. H. Wright, and the author, 1943, and subsequently checked on several occasions by the author.

This group is a reserve on the boundary of Mr. J. Trevenna's orchard. He does his utmost to protect the figures, but the site is well-known and is visited frequently by people interested or otherwise in the rock art of the aborigines. Fortunately, it has not yet been defaced.

UPPER CRESCENT REACH, CATTAI

[Group 7]

This group is situated at the end of a ridge two miles long around which flows Upper Crescent Reach of the Hawkesbury River. The last half mile of the ridge is rocky, but lightly forested. The rock bearing the engravings is about half an acre in extent, sloping slightly from west to east, and outcrops on the western side of the ridge, about a furlong from the river. On the eastern side there are extensive swamps and lagoons (and citrus orchards) frequented by swans, ducks, ibises and other birds: they begin 100 yd from the site. From this rock is to be seen an extensive view (probably somewhat restricted by trees in pre-white man days) across to the opposite side of the river. The site is now on a farm (Mr. Payn's), the military map reading being 900.587.

The site was first reported by Mathews (1901; pl. ix, fig. 1), and subsequently republished by the same author (1910; 403, fig. 1), but he said nothing about the outlines of the figures or the axe grooves and his drawing is inaccurate. There is no vertical stripe on the nose, and the tail is slightly different to that shown in his figure. The eyes are now practically indiscernible.

The gigantic figure engraved here is 37 ft around the curve of the body, from nose to tail, and 29 ft across the curve. Its greatest width is 6 ft. The ears are well marked, there are two bands (curved) across the nose, one band across the neck, and two across both the body and the tail. The significance of these bands is unknown.

A few feet away from the tail-end of this figure are two pairs of kangaroo or wallaby tracks, not shown by Mathews.

On the eastern side of the big figure, and on the eastern slope of the rock, are five potholes, up to 1 ft deep, and from 10 to 25 ft apart, around which there are in all 138 axe-grinding grooves (4, 6, 33, 39, 55 and an odd 1). Beside two of the potholes, from four to six of the grooves are arranged in unusually neat rows.

Technique.—The outline of the main figure is from $1\frac{1}{2}$ to 2 in wide, and from $\frac{1}{8}$ to $\frac{1}{4}$ in deep, with smooth sides. There are no punctures visible, these having been eliminated in the deepening and widening of the original groove by abrasion. The kangaroo tracks are also smoothed, with grooves 1 in wide and $\frac{1}{8}$ in deep.

Remarks.—The remarkable main figure at this site is identical with three others depicted being speared by men in the Peter Howe Sanctuary (McCarthy, 1947; 322–29, pl. AD), two in another group (unpublished) at Somersby, and one on the Flat Rocks ridge, Gunderman (McCarthy, 1956; 51, fig. 10,

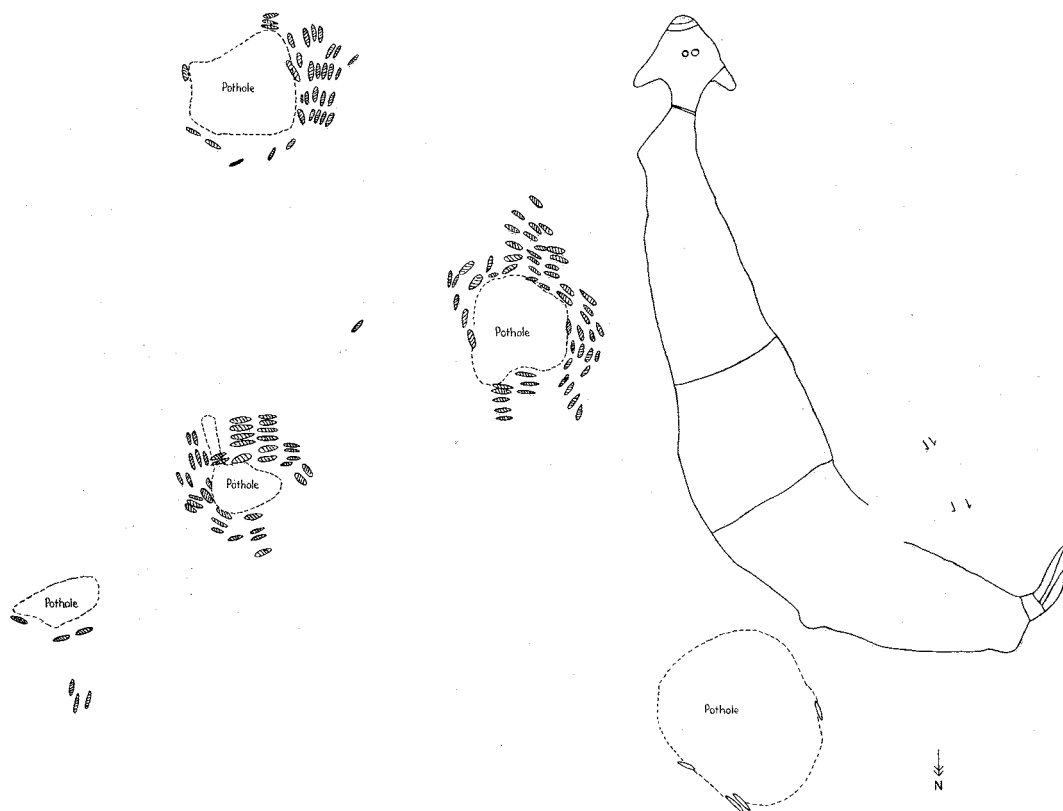


Fig. 7.—Group 7: Upper Crescent Reach, Cattai.

No. 6). These are all big figures, from 10 to 35 ft long, on the northern side of the Hawkesbury River, and from twelve to twenty miles away, in a direct line, from Upper Crescent Reach. I regard them as being Rainbow-Serpents, and discussed the evidence fully (1947). Generally speaking (Radcliffe-Brown, 1926 and 1930), the Rainbow-Serpent belief is characteristic of Australian aboriginal religion as a whole, and is a feature of the Bora initiation ceremonies of south-eastern Australia. The Rainbow-Serpent represents the element of water and is visible as the rainbow, thus being integrally identified with rain and rain-making. It lives in a waterhole, lagoon or river, or is associated with waterfalls in which rainbows are seen. It is the source of magical powers, and of the quartz and other crystals, of the medicine-men and sorcerers who alone may approach its abode with safety, other people doing so being killed and eaten. It is, as Radcliffe-Brown said, a deity, the object of a definite totemic cult or of a cult forming part of the initiation ceremonies. Representations of it, up to 4 ft long, were prepared and painted in these ceremonies. It was called Gurunaty or Gurunatch by the Gundungurra tribe of the Blue Mountains and Camden districts (Mathews, 1905; 143), and by other names by the different tribes in whose beliefs it figured. It probably was thought to have lived in the river at Upper Crescent Reach, and in swamps near the site, and, as was usual when a Rainbow-Serpent was believed to live in a river, it probably would have been considered responsible for carving out the channel of the river (in this instance, of the Hawkesbury River).

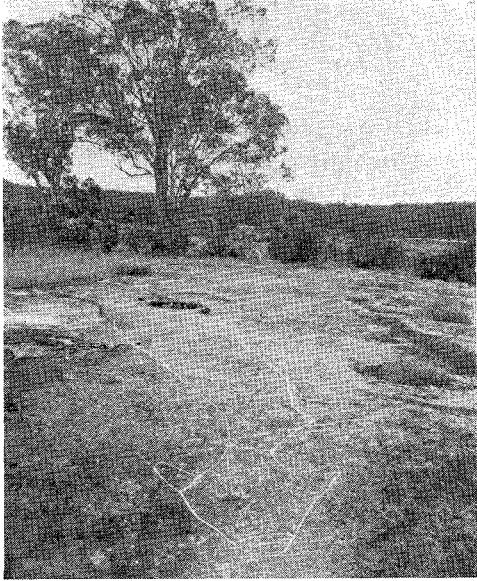
In the various groups described in this paper are included large figures of both the Daramulan and Baiami types of ancestral beings or heroes, and also of the Rainbow-Serpent. These are among the most important deities in the religious complex of south-eastern Australian tribes, and the importance of these groups, and of this area from a ritual point of view, cannot be over-emphasized. The full implications of these figures will be discussed in a monograph on the rock engravings of the Sydney-Hawkesbury district now in preparation.

(Recorded by the author, February, 1958)

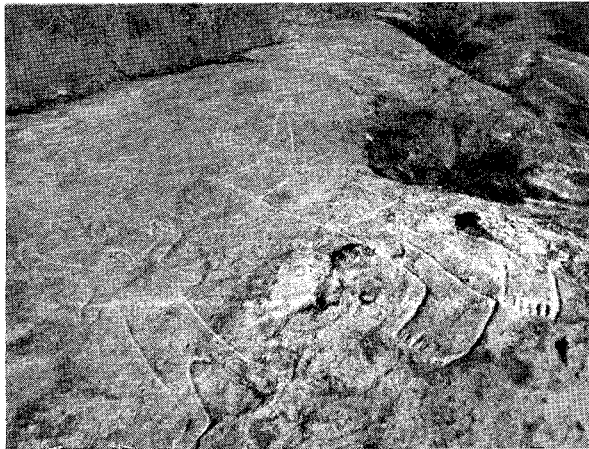
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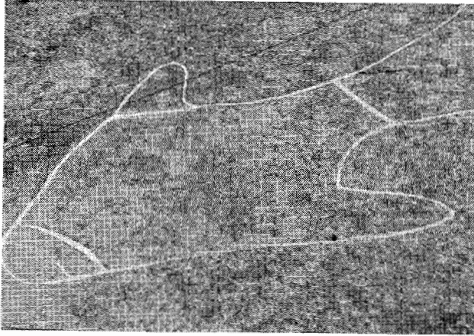
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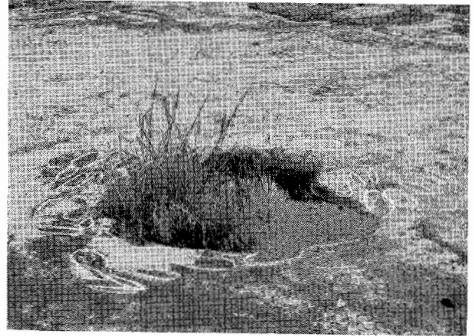
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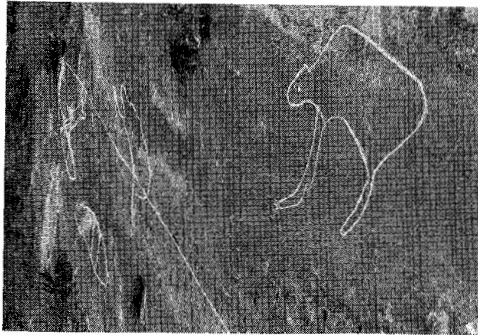
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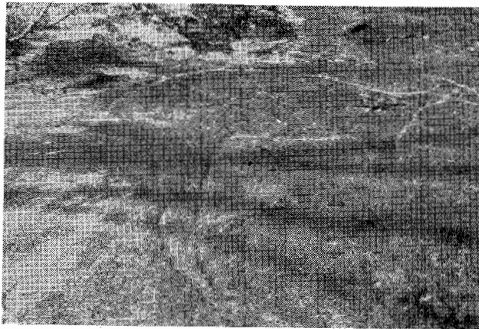
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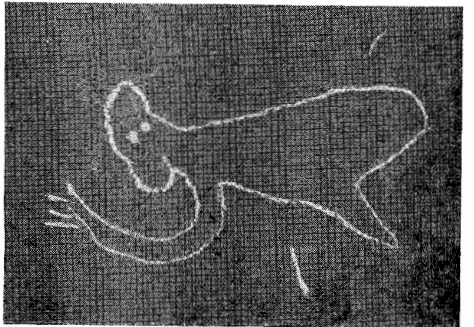
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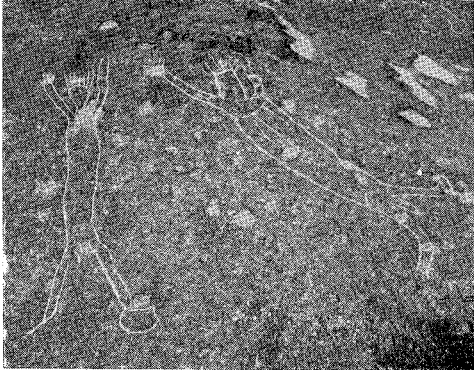
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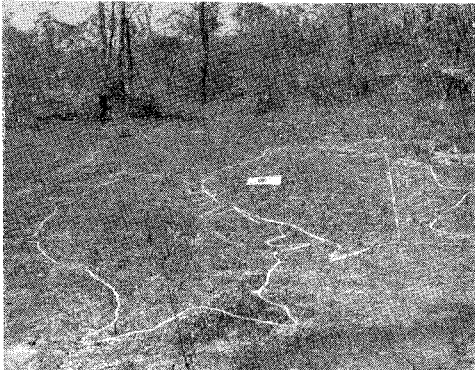
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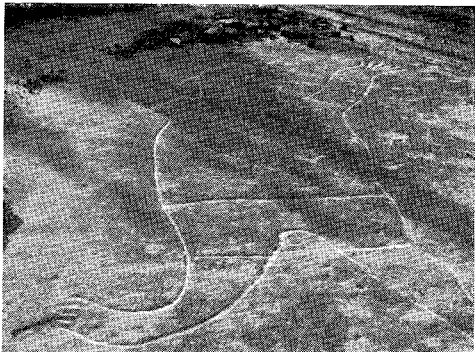
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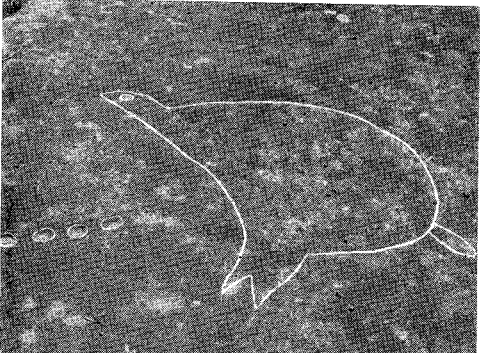
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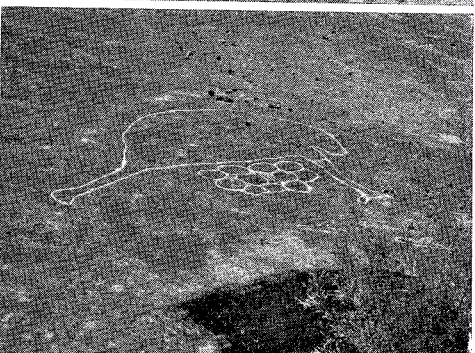
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EXPLANATIONS OF PLATES

Plate 23.

1. Mt. Kuring-gai (Group 1). Ancestral being, with boomerang in left hand, wearing armlets, girdle and chest ornament.
2. Upper Crescent Reach (Group 7). Serpent and potholes.
3. Mt. Kuring-gai (Group 1). The ancestral being and one of his two wives. The other wife is between his outline and the first small island of vegetation (right).
4. Mt. Kuring-gai (Group 1). Pair of large human feet or mundoes.

Plate 24.

1. Upper Crescent Reach (Group 7). Head of serpent. The eyes are very faint but one (unchalked) is visible near the middle of the head.
2. Upper Crescent Reach (Group 7). A pothole surrounded by axe-grinding grooves.
3. Maroota (Group 3). Two koala bears, phalanger and two eels (a steel tape datum line crosses the figures).
4. Maroota (Group 3). Kangaroo hunt.
5. Old Northern Road (Group 4). Leaping kangaroo (unchalked).
6. Maroota (Group 3). Koala bear.

Plate 25.

1. Mt. Kuring-gai (Group 1). Basket.
2. Old Northern Road (Group 4). Upper part of composite spirit creature.
3. Old Northern Road (Group 5). Two men in ceremonial attire.
4. Old Northern Road (Group 4). Pair of whales in foreground, with general view of site. The dolphin and composite spirit creature are engraved on the rock behind the line of trees, in the middle.
5. Old Northern Road (Group 5). Two men, koala bear, boomerang, and indeterminate animal, probably another koala bear.
6. Old Northern Road (Group 5). Ancestral being.

Plate 26. Devil's Rock, Maroota (Group 6).

1. Ancestral being, with emu and shield, at southern end of group.
2. Ancestral being at northern end of group. Portion of the line of pits is shown on the right.
3. Bird and eggs. There is a circle (unchalked) on the body of the bird.
4. Emu, eggs and tracks beside a pothole.
5. Boomerang thrown at one of a pair of fleeing kangaroos.
6. Kangaroos struck with a number of boomerangs and a spear.