

# Invasion to Embassy

This book is dedicated

to my mother, Betty Callaghan Goodall, who taught me the  
power and excitement of the stories of the past,  
to the two Isabel Flicks, whose insight, humour and courage  
have sustained and inspired me  
and to my daughters, Emma and Judith, whose questions open  
up new futures.

# **Invasion to Embassy**

Land in Aboriginal politics in  
New South Wales, 1770–1972

**Heather Goodall**

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Return to us this small portion of a vast territory which is ours by Divine Right.

– *William Cooper, 1887, Cumeragunja*

They'd only be spruikin' on land rights, that's all, on land rights .. . y'know 'Why hasn't the Aboriginal people got land rights?', they said. 'The Aboriginal's cryin' out for land rights!'

– *Jack Campbell, on the 1920s Land movement in NSW, Sydney, 1980*

They gave us rations, a little bit of rations when the manager was here, but we still want this ground. We are hungry for our own ground.

We should have land, this is our land. We are hungry for our land.

– *Milli Boyd, Woodenbong, 1972*

Mutawintji: Closed by the owners

– *Blockade notice written by Paakantji landowners, 'Mootawingee', 1983*



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Heather Goodall 1996

# A Note on Usage

When I am referring to indigenous people across New South Wales or Australia, I will use the words *Aborigines* or *Aboriginal people* as nouns and *Aboriginal* as an adjective, following Professor Eve Mumewa Fesl, 1995. When I am referring to the indigenous people of particular regions, however, I will refer to them by the words they currently use to name themselves. These derive from the local language words for ‘person’ or ‘human being’, but since the invasion they have come to mean ‘one of us’ or ‘one of our people’, that is, ‘an Aboriginal person from our area’. They may also be used inclusively to refer to all Aboriginal people. These words are *Koori*, *Murri* and *Wiimpatja* in New South Wales, and I have chosen spellings which are recognisable to contemporary Aboriginal users, although a diversity of spellings exist. The areas in which these words are used, their pronunciation and the variations in their spelling are shown on Map 1, p. xiv.

## *Pronunciation of Aboriginal words*

The Aboriginal language groups referred to in the text are shown on Map 2, p. xvi. There are some useful guidelines to pronunciation which hold for most indigenous languages in Australia:

- 1) Stress for all words is on the first syllable
- 2) Vowels are short and are pronounced as in the following English words:

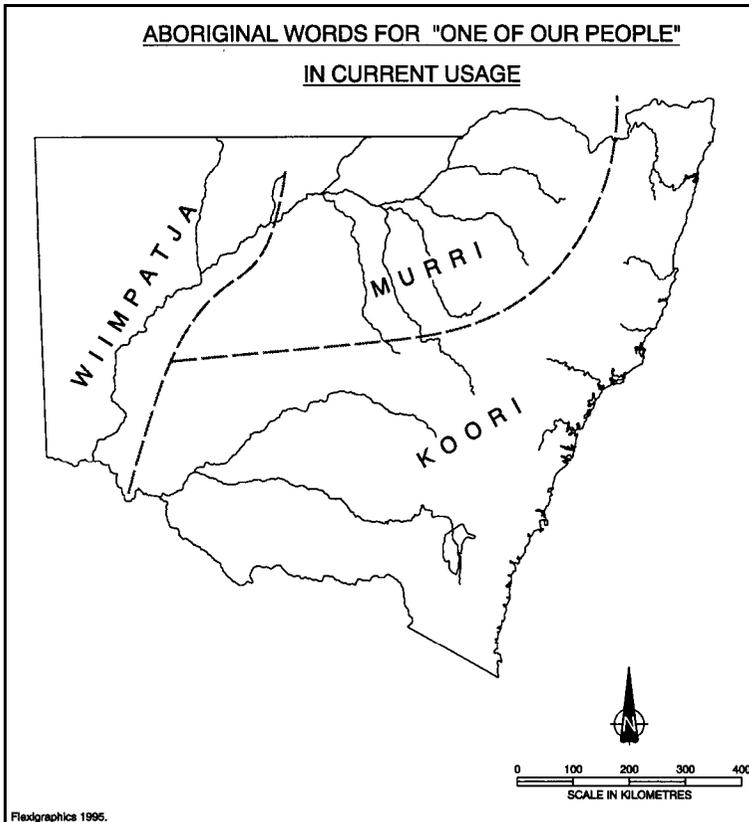
*a* as in *cut*

*u* as in *put*

*i* as in *sit*.

Long vowels are spelt by doubling the letter, as in *Wiimpatja* or *Ngiyampaa*.

- 3) The consonant pair *ng* represents one sound, and at the beginning of a word is pronounced exactly like the ‘ng’ in ‘sing’.



**Map 1.** Aboriginal words for "one of our people" in current usage  
**PRONUNCIATION**

Murri: pronounced like the English word "Murray". It can be written as "Murrie" or as "Mari".

Koori: There are two regional variations in pronunciation. In the south coast and inland southern areas, as well as in Victoria, the first consonant sounds like an English "k". On the North Coast of NSW, the word is pronounced with the first consonant sounding like a hard "g". The word can be written as "Koorie", "Goori", "Goorie", "Kuri" or "Guri".

Wiimpatja: this word is pronounced with the stress on the first syllable and the double "i" indicates a lengthened vowel.

4) Aboriginal language speakers do not distinguish between the voiced and unvoiced consonant pairs: *t* and *d*; *p* and *b*; *k* and *g*. They are therefore alternatives in the spelling of Aboriginal words. The same word may be spelt either as Kamilaraay or as Gamilaraay; Paakantji or Baagandji; Yota-Yota or Yoda Yoda. Communities developing consistent spelling systems generally choose to use either the unvoiced set (*t*, *p* and *k*) or the voiced set (*d*, *b* and *g*). Actual pronunciation may differ between individual speakers and may be influenced by original dialect differences.

### *Land terms*

I have used the words ‘country’ and ‘lands’ interchangeably to refer to the area(s) for which Aboriginal people were the owners and custodians.

An area set aside as a ‘reserve’ for Aborigines was and is technically ‘Crown Land Reserved for the Use of Aborigines’. The term ‘reserve’ was used by NSW administrations to refer to such land if it did not have a supervisory manager resident on it. Aborigines usually called such a place a ‘reserve’ but occasionally they called it a ‘camp’.

The term ‘camp’ was more usually used by all parties to refer to an Aboriginal living area on land not reserved for Aborigines, which might sometimes be town common, sometimes vacant Crown land, sometimes land ‘owned’ privately by non-Aborigines, or land reserved for other purposes such as a travelling stock route or water reserve.

When the Protection or Welfare Board appointed a manager to live on a reserve and supervise the Aboriginal residents, the reserve became known as a ‘station’ in all official references. In most cases managed reserves (‘stations’) were known by both Aborigines and local whites as ‘the Mission’, despite the fact that the NSW government removed any church control over any reserved land in 1893, and from that time onwards missionaries came onto reserve and station land only at the invitation of the Board to conduct religious services. I have chosen to use the Board term ‘station’ to indicate clearly the secular authority and aims with which the Board managers and matrons implemented.

To avoid confusion, I refer to the pastoral concerns which are often called sheep or cattle ‘stations’ as ‘pastoral properties’ or ‘properties’. The term ‘stations’ refers only to Board reserves with resident managers.



# Abbreviations

AAF	Aboriginal Australian Fellowship
AAL	Australian Aboriginal League
AAPA	Australian Aboriginal Progressive Association
ABC	Australian Broadcasting Corporation
ALP	Australian Labor Party
ANA	Australian Natives Association
APA	Aborigines Progressive Association
APB	Aboriginal Protection Board
APNR	Association for the Protection of Native Races
ASP	Australian Society of Patriots
AWU	Australian Workers' Union
CPA	Communist Party of Australia
DWO	district welfare officer
FAA	Foundation for Aboriginal Affairs
FCAA	Federal Council for Aboriginal Advancement
FCAATSI	Federal Council for the Advancement of Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders
MLA	Member of the Legislative Assembly
P & C	Parents' and Citizens'
PWIU	Pastoral Workers' Industrial Union
SAFA	Student Action For Aborigines
TLC	Trades and Labor Council
VAAL	Victorian Aborigines Advancement League