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# Records of the Rock Engravings of the Sydney District Nos. 146-162

## GOSFORD DISTRICT, PART I

I. M. SIM

THE rock engravings described here are situated in the Gosford district, on the plateau on the Western side of Brisbane Water. Engravings are plentiful in this area and a large number have been recorded by Campbell (1899), J. Meredith (unpublished), McCarthy and others (1954 and unpublished) and the author. These 17 groups were recorded by the author. Grateful acknowledgement is made of the assistance given by several people in the district who helped the work, in locating and pointing out sites, and in providing local information. The Brisbane Water National Park Trust gave approval for the recording of sites within the Park, and its Chief Ranger, Mr. J. Higgs, has been particularly helpful. The Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies granted funds for expenses.

Map references given are to Broken Bay and Gosford & Norahville Sheets, 1 inch = 1 mile, Military Series.

Numbers which are shown between groups and figures in the diagrams indicate distances in feet which have been foreshortened for illustrative purposes.

Groups 146-148 are situated on the ridge which forms the spine of the narrow peninsula between the Hawkesbury River and Patonga Creek. They are within the Broken Bay National Fitness Camp Reserve. Map references are to Broken Bay Sheet.

*Group 146 (Sheet 1, Fig. A)*  
*Map Reference 259 534*

This group is engraved on a long tessellated surface on the Western side of the ridge top. The site is known as McRories Rock and

affords extensive views south and west over the lower reaches of the Hawkesbury River and Cowan Creek.

Scattered over a distance of about 50 feet are six fish, a man with a line across his neck and another line running from one elbow, a wallaby, and a human figure with both penis and breasts, and a line across its neck. The grooves are rough, about one-quarter inch wide and deep.

*Group 147 (Sheet 1, Fig. B)*  
*Map Reference 259 543*

This group is situated about half a mile north of Group 146. The figures are engraved on a large surface on the eastern side of the ridge top.

On the western edge of the rock is a line of three narrow footprints. These point east towards two indeterminate objects. Both of these are roughly rectangular in shape, but the larger, which is four feet long, has rounded ends, an indented waist and two transverse lines across it. Similar waisted figures were recorded by Campbell (1899), at Bantry Bay (Pl. 6, Fig. 4) and Balgowlah (Pl. 12, Fig. 1). South-east of this figure are two boomerangs and an oval, and west of these is an oval with a short projecting line. The grooves are rough. Those of the two indeterminate objects are about half an inch wide and one-quarter inch deep and those of the other figures one-quarter inch wide and deep.

*Group 148 (Sheet 1, Fig. C)*  
*Map Reference 265 536*

This group is situated about one-quarter mile north-east of Group 146, on the northern side of a spur which runs east

from the main ridge. The figures are engraved on an extensive tessellated surface.

Near the southern edge of the rock are three fish, part of another fish (?) and part of an indeterminate object. One hundred and twenty feet north-west is a wallaby. The grooves are rough, up to one-quarter inch wide and one-eighth inch deep.

Groups 149 to 151 are situated on the high ridge on the eastern side of Patonga, near the Umina-Patonga Road. Several series of engravings in this area have been recorded by McCarthy (1954, Figs. 5, 6, 10). Map references are to Broken Bay Sheet.

*Group 149 (Sheet 1, Fig. D)*

*Map Reference 285 549*

Within Warrah Sanctuary. This figure, of an indeterminate bag-like object with two projections at one end, is engraved near the south-western end of a large and prominent outcrop about 200 yards south-east of the road. The rock, which is known as Elephant Rock, affords extensive views west and south over the Patonga area and the Hawkesbury River entrance. The grooves are smooth, up to one inch wide and one-quarter inch deep.

*Group 150 (Sheet 1, Fig. E)*

*Map Reference 283 553*

Within Brisbane Water National Park. This group is situated about one-quarter mile north-west of Group 149, and 100 feet north-west of the road. The figures are engraved on surfaces in the bed of a small creek in dense scrub.

In one group are four shields, a womerah, three flying birds and a boomerang, and a knob-headed club. The shields bear the usual line designs. One has a single longitudinal line, another has a double longitudinal and transverse line and the others have a single longitudinal and double transverse line. The womerah is partly infilled with a longitudinal line design. Fifty feet west of this group is an indeterminate oval shaped object four feet six inches long. The grooves are rough and waterworn, about one-quarter inch wide and very faint.

*Group 151 (Sheet 1, Fig. F)*

*Map Reference 288 552*

Within Warrah Sanctuary. This figure, of a fish, is engraved on a large surface on the southern side of a creek, about one-third mile east of Group 150 and 350 yards south-east of the road. The groove is rough, about three-quarter inch wide and one-quarter inch deep.

Groups 152 and 162 are situated on the western side of Brisbane Water, most of them being distributed along the high ridge forming its western watershed. A main road from the Pacific Highway to Woy Woy follows this ridge. Map references are to Gosford & Norahville Sheet.

*Group 152 (Sheet 1, Fig. G)*

*Map Reference 301 619*

This figure, of a kangaroo, is engraved in a shallow depression on top of a high outcrop about one-quarter mile south-west of the road. The site affords extensive views west and south-east across the ocean and Brisbane Water. The groove is rough, about half an inch wide and one-quarter inch deep.

*Group 153 (Sheet 1, Fig. H)*

*Map Reference 302 623*

This group is situated about one-third mile north of Group 152. The figures are engraved on an elevated sloping surface about 200 feet west of the road. The site affords an extensive view east across Woy Woy Bay and Brisbane Water.

The figures comprise, the forepart of an unfinished whale, four circles, parts of two indeterminate objects, two short lines, two footprints (?) a fish and part of a shield (?). The grooves of the whale are rough, about three-eighth inch wide and one-eighth inch deep. The other figures are faint and worn.

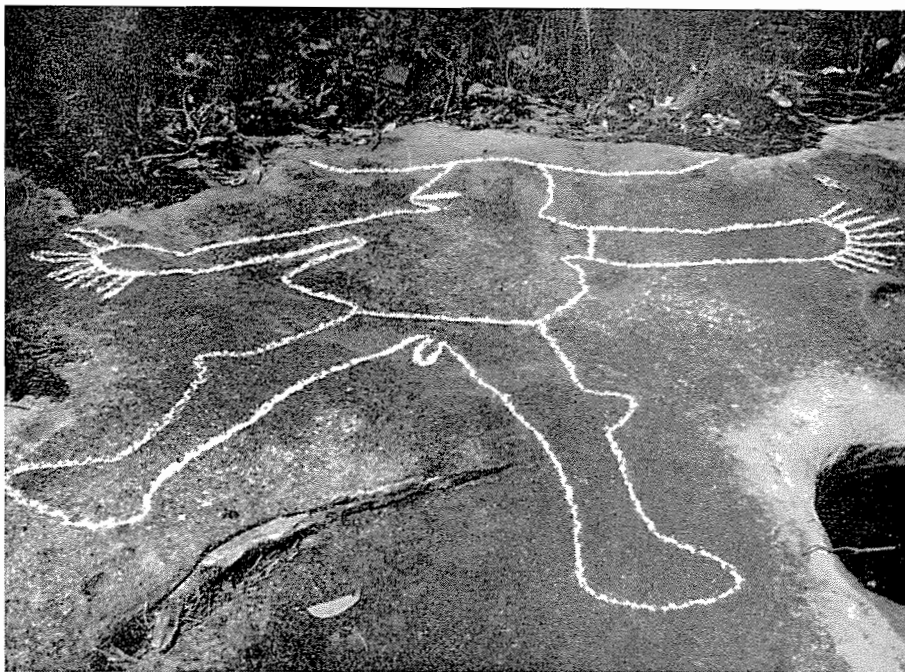
*Group 154 (Sheet 1, Fig. I)*

*Map Reference 294 625*

This site is situated in a gully, about half a mile west-north-west of Group 153 and one-quarter mile south-west of the road.

The figure, of a man with a club (?) touching his body, is engraved on a surface

PLATE I



Group 158



Group 162, Series 1

on the eastern side of a small creek. The grooves are of roughly conjoined punctures, about one-quarter inch wide and one-eighth inch deep.

*Group 155 (Sheet 1, Fig. J)*

*Map Reference 295 629*

This group is situated about one-quarter mile north-east of Group 154 and 100 yards west of the road. The figures are engraved on surfaces in and alongside the bed of a small watercourse.

The southernmost figure is a crudely drawn man, with prominent projecting ears of different size. Above his head is a shield with a design of a single longitudinal and double transverse line. Twenty-five feet north-east is a man wearing a forehead band, a headdress and an armband. The grooves are rough, about one-quarter to half an inch wide and one-eighth inch deep. Ten feet west of the second man is a shield with a design of a single longitudinal and double transverse line. On the western side of this is a group of eight small figures, comprising two fish, a knob-headed club (?), three hafted axes, a boomerang and a canoe (?) with three transverse lines across it. The hafted axes range in length from four to 11 inches. The boomerang is nine inches long and the canoe (?) 17 inches long. The grooves of these nine figures are roughly gashed, about one-quarter to half an inch wide and one-eighth inch deep.

*Group 156 (Sheet 1, Fig. K)*

*Map Reference 295 635*

Within Brisbane Water National Park. This group is situated about one-third mile north of Group 155 and 80 yards east of the road. The figures are engraved on a large surface on top of a spur which runs east from the main ridge to the head of the southern arm of Woy Woy Bay. The site affords extensive views south and east across the ocean and the entrance to Brisbane Water.

The figures are in two compact groups. The first comprises three circles, two fish, a five-toed footprint, a hand and forearm (?) and several short lines or parts of figures. The second group, a few feet north-west comprises two ovals, part of a large circle,

several lines or parts of figures and a man. The man has a short line running from each instep, an anklet, girdle and necklet, and has an elongated oval headdress (?) with a transverse line across it. Touching his waist is a large boomerang (?) with five transverse lines across it and a small projection in full intaglio near one end. On the south-western side of the two groups is a fish (?) and two short lines. The grooves of the circular and oval figures are faint. Those of the others are smooth, up to half an inch wide and one-quarter inch deep.

About 250 yards east of Group 156, on top of the same spur, at Map reference 297 634, are two groups of figures recorded by Campbell (1899, Pl. 28, Figs. 3, 4). These are within Brisbane Water National Park.

*Group 157 (Sheet 1, Fig. L)*

*Map Reference 302 635*

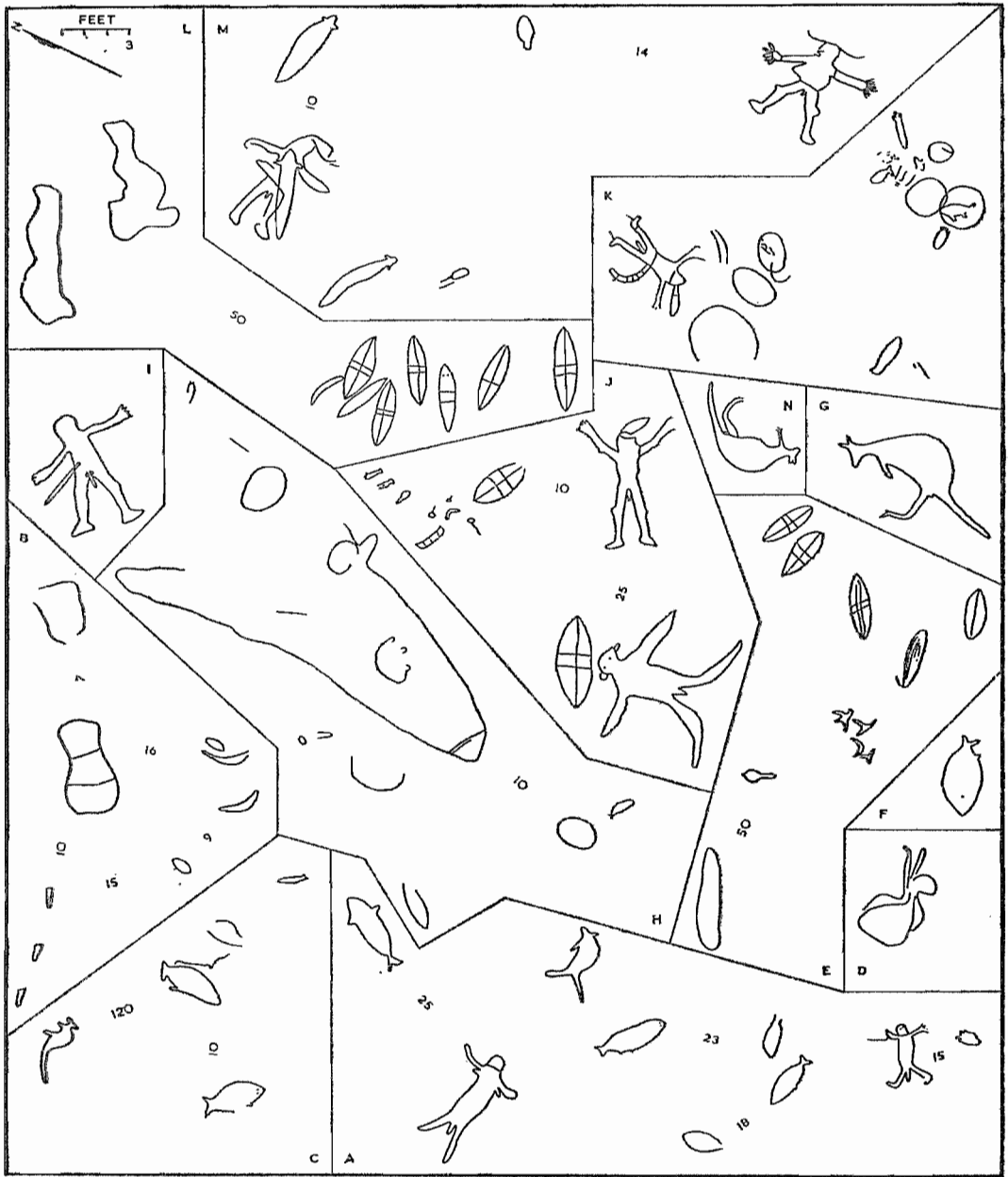
Within Brisbane Water National Park. This group is situated about one-quarter mile east-north-east of Campbell's groups, at a lower level, on the north-eastern side of the same spur. The figures are engraved on the extreme eastern edge of a very large surface which overlooks the head of the southern arm of Woy Woy Bay.

The figures comprise, two irregularly shaped indeterminate objects about three feet long, and, 50 feet south-east, a boomerang (?) and seven shields. Three of these have the usual design of a single longitudinal and double transverse line, one is plain, another has one longitudinal and one transverse line, and the last has two transverse lines and two pits like a pair of eyes at one end. The grooves are rough, about one-quarter inch wide and one-eighth inch deep.

*Group 158 (Sheet 1, Fig. M)*

*Map Reference 289 635*

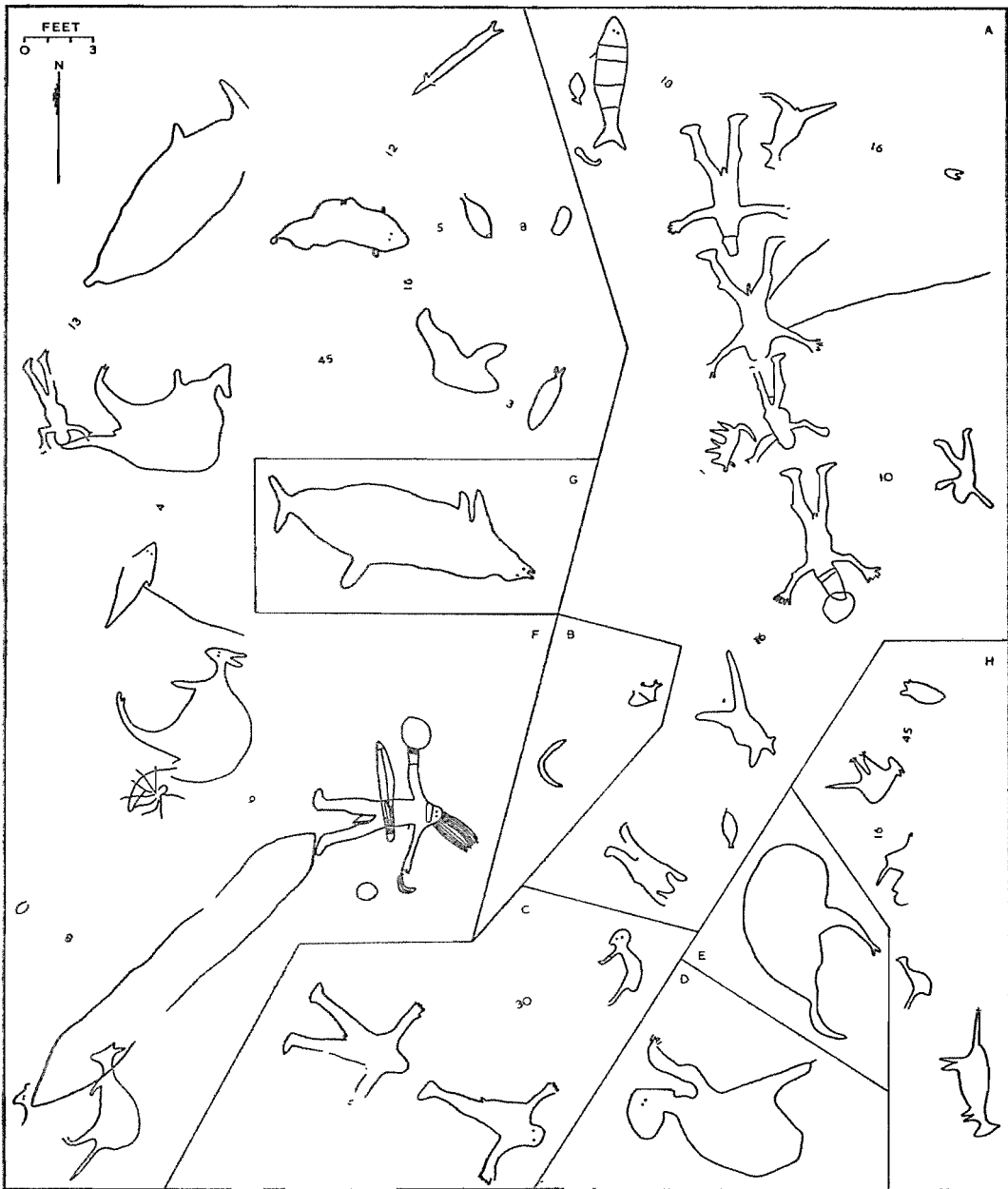
Within Brisbane Water National Park. This group is situated about one-third mile west of Group 156 and one-quarter mile west of the road. The figures are engraved on a large sloping surface in the bed of a small creek, at the western end of an open swampy slope. There are a number of waterfilled potholes scattered over the rock.



Sheet 1

Engraved in the creek bed, on the southern side of the main stream, are two eels, a man wearing a headdress and with an eel across his body, a fish, and an oval together with

two short lines. On the northern side of the man are 12 axe grinding grooves. On the southern edge of the rock, out of the creek, is a human figure drawn in profile.



Sheet 2

It has a breast-like protuberance on one side of its body, a penis, and prominent knee caps and fingers. The mouth is shown and there is a line across the waist, one wrist

and one upper arm. An upcurved line projects horizontally from each side of the top of the head. The grooves are rough, about three-eighth to half an inch wide and

one-eighth inch deep. The figures in the creek bed are very worn.

*Group 159 (Sheet 1, Fig. N)*

*Map Reference 293 647*

Within Brisbane Water National Park. This figure, of a kangaroo, is situated about three-quarter mile north of Group 158. It is engraved on a small surface on the edge of the ridge, about 200 yards north-east of the road. The groove is smooth, about three-eighth inch wide and one-eighth inch deep. Seventy feet south-west are a few axe grinding grooves in a small water-course which runs over a rock outcrop.

About half a mile north-west of Group 159, at Map reference 289 654, is a group of engravings recorded by Messrs. F. L. S. Bell and F. D. McCarthy in 1946. The engravings are in several series within a Reserve alongside the road, which here follows the western side of the ridge.

At this point the main ridge is joined by another, which runs west to Mt. Kariong. The road to the Kariong Rifle Range follows this ridge.

*Group 160 (Sheet 2, Fig. E)*

*Map Reference 280 658*

This figure, of a bird (emu?) nine feet long, is engraved on a small surface in scrub, 40 feet south of the road leading to the Rifle Range. It has a massive body, a short, thin, curved neck and head, and a two toed foot on its single leg. Parts of the groove are of roughly conjoined punctures about half an inch wide and one-quarter inch deep. On the hind part of the body the punctures are separate, about one inch apart.

*Group 161 (Sheet 2, Figs. A-D)*

Within Brisbane Water National Park. This group comprises several series of engravings scattered along a spur which runs north-west from the main Mt. Kariong ridge. Large open rock surfaces, separated by patches of scrub, extend for about one-quarter mile along the top of the spur.

*Series 1 (Fig. A)*

*Map Reference 277 663*

This series is situated on the eastern side of the spur, about one-third mile north-west

of Group 160. The figures are engraved on the easternmost of the rock surfaces, a large exposure which slopes down to the north-east.

Near the north-western edge of the rock are a large fish with four transverse lines across its body, a small fish and a narrow indeterminate object. Eighteen feet south-east of these is a line of four men with raised arms, engraved one above the other up the slope. The northernmost man wears a head-dress. Alongside him is a wallaby and 16 feet further east is a small indeterminate object. Two lines, four feet and nine feet long, run east from the second man. The third man is crudely drawn and smaller than the others. Alongside him is a dingo with a short line near its nose. The fourth (i.e. the southernmost) man has a high peaked headdress crossed by two transverse lines and surmounted by a circle. Ten feet east of him is a small human figure wearing an armlet and drawn in an animated pose. Sixteen feet south-west of the fourth man are a leaping wallaby, a fish and another human figure with upraised arms. Most of the grooves are rough. Those of the large fish and leaping wallaby are about half an inch wide and one-quarter inch deep. The others are about one-quarter inch wide and one-sixteenth to one-eighth inch deep.

*Series 2 (Fig. B)*

These figures, of a fish and a boomerang, are engraved on the north-eastern side of the ridge, about 150 feet north-west of Series 1. The grooves are rough, about three-eighth inch wide and one-eighth inch deep.

*Series 3 (Fig. C)*

Two hundred feet north-west of Series 2, on a smooth level surface, are two men and an indeterminate animal. The men are drawn face on, with raised arms. In one, the trunk tapers to a single leg. The animal, possibly a crudely drawn koala, has a beak like projection on its head and a line across its front leg. The grooves are rough, about three-eighth inch wide and one-eighth inch deep.



*Series 4 (Not recorded)*

This figure, of a wallaby, is engraved in a shallow depression on top of the spur between Series 3 and 5.

*Series 5 (Fig. D)*

Three hundred yards north-west of Series 3 is a "Daramulan-type" anthropomorph eight feet long. The figure is engraved on a rough surface at the extreme northern edge of the last large rock exposure on the spur. From here the spur drops away to the north-west into Piles Creek. The groove is rough, up to half an inch wide and one-quarter inch deep.

*Group 162 (Sheet 2, Figs. F-G-H)*

This group, which is in three series, is situated about half a mile north of the group recorded by Messrs. Bell and McCarthy.

*Series 1 (Fig. F)**Map Reference 291 660*

Within Reserve 83048 for the Preservation of Aboriginal Carvings and Drawings. This group is engraved on a large surface about a furlong north-west of the road. The rock is ringed by trees and a small watercourse runs along its southern edge. Several figures in the group were recorded by J. Meredith in 1951.

In the watercourse are part of a kangaroo head, a kangaroo, a canoe (?) and a man. The canoe (?) is 17 feet long and two feet wide, with pointed ends. The man is an impressive figure. He has a large penis; he wears a headdress of nine rays two feet long; across his face is a looped line; he has a line across his right wrist and holds a circular object in his right hand; there is a short line projecting from his left armpit and he holds a boomerang with a median stripe in his left hand. On his left side is a circular object. Across his waist is a narrow object four feet six inches long. It has a transverse line across one end and three across the other. A longitudinal line runs its full length and there are four others on it within the man's outline. The grooves of the canoe (?) and kangaroo are up to three-quarter inch wide and one-quarter inch deep. Those of the other figures are about half an inch wide

and one-quarter inch deep. All are water-worn.

The remaining figures in the group are scattered over the rock. North-west of the canoe (?), near the western edge of the rock, are a small oval, a kangaroo eight feet long with an octopus across its tail, and a speared flathead fish four feet long. Four feet further north are another kangaroo eight feet long and a small human figure. Thirteen feet north-east of this is a fish or dolphin 10 feet long, and 45 feet east-north-east is a bird (?) five feet long, with a rough groove about half an inch wide and one-eighth inch deep. Three feet south-east of the bird (?) is a fish and 16 feet north of the bird (?) is a crudely drawn second fish six feet long. Five feet east of the second fish is another fish and eight feet further east is an oval object, both with rough grooves about three-eighth to half an inch wide and one-eighth inch deep. Twelve feet north-east of the second fish is a narrow eel or fish five feet long, with a forked tail. The groove is rough, about three-eighth inch wide and one-eighth inch deep. Except where otherwise mentioned, most of the grooves are smooth, one-quarter to half an inch wide and one-eighth to one-quarter inch deep. Those of the two kangaroos are about three-quarter inch wide and one-quarter inch deep.

*Series 2 (Fig. G)*

One hundred and eighty feet west of Series 1, on an outcrop, is a dolphin (?) 12 feet long. It has a small head with two eyes, a pointed nose and open mouth, a single dorsal fin and two chest fins or flippers. The groove is smooth, up to three-quarter inch wide and one-quarter inch deep.

*Series 3 (Fig. H)*

This series is situated about 170 yards north-north-east of Series 1, and a furlong north-west of the road. The figures are engraved on top of a low prominent rocky bluff, beneath a transmission line.

Toward the southern end of the rock are a kangaroo, a standing bird and part of an indeterminate object. Sixteen feet north of the indeterminate object is a kangaroo or

wallaby, and 45 feet further north is a fish. The grooves of the bird and the northernmost kangaroo or wallaby are smooth, about three-eighth to half an inch wide and one-eighth inch deep. The other figures are faint.

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