

# **The expunction of the Reverend Richard Taylor from Australian Missionary Linguistics**

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# Abstract

A few years ago I came across a manuscript by the Reverend Richard Taylor in the Alexander Turnbull Library within the National Library of New Zealand. Within this MS are Notes on New Holland which run to about 50 pages. These notes include material from the Wiradjuri language of central NSW as well as cultural material. This provides some background on Taylor:

In 1835 Richard Taylor took his MA. After he was appointed a missionary in New Zealand for the Church Missionary Society, the family sailed on the *Prince Regent*, disembarking at Sydney on 13 June 1836, in company with a fellow missionary, the Reverend William Yate. Because of a shortage of clergy and because Richard Taylor was required to give evidence concerning Yate's alleged homosexual behaviour on board ship, the family remained in New South Wales for three years.

<https://teara.govt.nz/en/biographies/1t22/taylor-richard>

It seems that Taylor collected some of this material while at Wellington within Wiradjuri territory. This would have been some time within 1836-1839. The Church Missionary Society had a significant presence at Wellington from 1832 to 1842 including the Reverend James Günther and the Reverend William Watson (both of whom made efforts in documenting the Wiradjuri language) as outlined by Carey (2009). Neither Carey nor other sources on Wiradjuri language documentation make mention of Taylor. At the time the entire population of Australia at around 125,000 was a little over the current population of Ballarat. We can assume that the population of Wellington in the 1830s must have been tiny so how is it that Taylor's linguistic efforts seem to have been expunged from the history of Australian Missionary Linguistics?

## Reference

Carey, Hilary 2009 Death, God and linguistics: conversations with missionaries on the Australian frontier, 1824-1845. *Australian Historical Studies* 40 (2): 161-177.

# Richard Taylor in NSW

Three weeks after thanking God for relief from the cares of office, Marsden was visited by the Rev. Richard Taylor, of the Church/Missionary Society, who became an intimate associate of the family during his two-year sojourn while awaiting orders to proceed to New Zealand. Although annoyed by the rats in his bedroom at the parsonage, he was ‘very much pleased’ by the company of the principal chaplain. On 10 July 1836 he took the communion service at St John’s and heard Marsden preach extempore ‘a very good sermon’.

A. T. Yarwood 1977 *Marsden: The Great Survivor*. Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 271-272.

# Shipboard hanky-panky

On 30 June Taylor confided to Marsden that all was not well with his colleague, the Rev. William Yate, who had travelled with him to Sydney on the *Prince Regent* after receiving the applause of Evangelicals in London and Cambridge as a brilliant writer and lecturer on the New Zealand mission. Yate had drawn the opprobrium of Taylor and other passengers by his unguarded intimacy with the third mate, Edwin Denison, by sleeping in the same bed in Denison's locked cabin and ashore in his apartment in Park Street. Taylor had listened to the complaints of two scandalized ladies and was told by a second young man, Dick Deck, of a 'spree' when all three had been in bed together, 'but there had been so much tickling that [Dick] was obliged to get out of bed and sleep on a sofa in the next room in order to obtain any rest'.

A. T. Yarwood 1977 *Marsden: The Great Survivor*. Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 272.

# Shipboard hanky-panky

Marsden was hideously embarrassed by Taylor's allegations and refrained from taking definite action until the middle of August, when the rumours came to the bishop's attention. Dissatisfied with Yate's account of himself before two accusers, [Bishop] Broughton interdicted him from the exercise of his ministry as a relieving preacher at St James's Church and passed on to Marsden as chairman of the Church Missionary Society committee the problem of dealing with the society's backsliding servant, He added that if Yate continued to reside in his diocese, it would be his duty to proceed against him in a consistorial court for a breach of the seventy-fifth canon and for conduct tending to bring scandal on the ministerial office.

A. T. Yarwood 1977 *Marsden: The Great Survivor*. Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 272-273.

# Richard Taylor 1805-1873

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In September 1839, after a preliminary visit in March, when he had accompanied the Reverend William Williams on a missionary tour of the East Coast, Taylor and his family arrived at the Bay of Islands. He took over the mission school at Waimate North from the Reverend Octavius Hadfield. It was not a task he enjoyed.

<https://teara.govt.nz/en/biographies/1t22/taylor-richard>

# Richard Taylor 1805- 1873

<http://natlib.govt.nz/records/226077>

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A portrait of Reverend Richard Taylor, ca 1860-1873. Taken by unidentified photographer.



# Taylor in 1839

Rev. Richard Taylor

Extract from *Diary of a Residence in New South Wales(1)*

13th - 20th January 1839

13th I had a very large congregation for Campbelltown. Afterwards I rode to Appin but being overtaken by a thunder shower I took refuge at a little villa by the wayside.

I reached Appin to a late dinner at Mr Sparling's; afterwards I walked with them to call on Mrs Carne where I saw an interesting lady who was both deaf and dumb, but still being able to read could pronounce several words which appeared very remarkable.

20th. I went to Campbelltown in time to open a secondary school. Afterwards I preached and dined at Mr Redall 's whence I reached home late; the same evening I had a Roman Catholic who heard me both in the morning and evening. I trust he was led to hear from the desire of knowing the truth. At Woolongong I heard an instance of **the underhand way the papists [Catholics] are working.** [my emphasis] The Revd. Mr Wilkinson, Mr Mears' pre-decessor, was the only clergyman who assented to the Irish school system(12). His people were chiefly of the same mind and when the protestant school master left, leaving the place for some time without one, the liberal inhabitants sent their children to the popish school where the master said he would teach them the same as they were accustomed. But one evening a Gentn. named Osborne expressed a wish to hear his child say his prayers when to his surprise he heard him commencing "Hail Mary Mother of God". The father was very angry and bid him say his own prayers. The child said be had forgotten them. It is unnecessary to say the eyes of these foolish protestants were then open to see their folly.

# Population of Sydney

European settlement in Sydney began in 1788, and in 1800 Sydney had around 3,000 non-indigenous inhabitants. It took time for the city's population to grow—in 1851 its population was only 39,000, compared with 77,000 in [Melbourne](#).

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Demographics\\_of\\_Sydney](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Demographics_of_Sydney)

1840	35,000
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<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sydney>

# Population of New South Wales

AUSTRALIAN BUREAU OF STATISTICS

cat. no. 3105.0.65.001 Australian Historical Population Statistics

TABLE 20. Population, age and sex, NSW, 1833 - 1846

		1833	1836
Males			
	Above 12 years of age	17542	23121
	Under 12 years of age	5256	7464
	Convict	21845	25251
	Total	44643	55836
Females			
	Above 12 years of age	8522	11973
	Under 12 years of age	4931	7007
	Convict	2698	2577
	Total	16151	21557
Persons			
	Above 12 years of age	26064	35094
	Under 12 years of age	10187	14471
	Convict	24543	27828
	Total	60794	77393
Sources:	NSW censuses of 1833 and 1836		

# Population of Australia

1828	36,600
1830	70,000
1834	127,200
1840	170,400
1851	648,500

<http://www.populstat.info/Oceania/australc.htm>

# Taylor's world 1836-1839

## very small population

however population rapidly expanding –  
Australian population rising from c. 127,000 in  
1834 to c. 170,000 in 1840

we might assume that there was a sectarian  
divide between Catholics and Protestants

and another divide between those educated  
professionals and the wider population – more  
than  $\frac{1}{2}$  population are convicts or under 12

# Missionary activity in the Wellington Valley

Beginning in 1832, the Church Missionary Society posted three missionaries and their wives, William and Anne Watson, Johann Christian Sebastian and Mary Handt, James and Lydia Günther and the unmarried agriculturalist William Porter to the mission station at Wellington Valley, NSW. All were provided with the now traditional instruction to make what efforts they could to learn the language but only one, Watson, appears to have functioned effectively in the new language. (Carey 2009:169)

# Missionary activity in the Wellington Valley

Settled in Wellington at last, Watson worked hard to improve his understanding of the language on the Moravian model - that is 'not to speak on the subject of religion before they could address the natives in the vernacular tongue' - but this seemed impossible. Three years later, in 1835, he was/reporting a breakthrough at last: 'Now our way seems opening as we advance in the knowledge of the language we shall have reason to hope for brighter scenes'. By this stage Watson claimed that he had begun preaching in Wiradurri, sometimes travelling long distances to find native people assembled in a camp for this purpose. With the appearance of Threlkeld's Australian Grammar in 1834, Watson was pleased to have a model which might serve to create a grammar of Wiradurri. On 28 January 1835 he wrote in his journal that he had finished copying out nearly ten thousand English words from Johnson's Pocket Dictionary and was proceeding to record Aboriginal equivalents as they came to hand. In March 1835 he reported that he had been revising his translation of parts of the Church Service and, although he recognised its imperfections, was delighted that 'some who had attended Divine Service more than the rest immediately understood it'.

(Carey 2009:170-171)

# Wellington Valley Mission 1832-1842/3

Günther      Arrived c. August 1837

“Completes” a grammar in early 1840

lots of squabbles among Günther, Handt and Watson

# Richard Taylor extract

## Notes on New Holland

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Language. The tribes of New Holland aborigines are not only very numerous, but also totally different in language and this appears the more remarkable when we find how few persons compose a tribe, and what a small district pertains to each. the only way I can account for this difference of language is by supposing that it arises from the continued state of hostility in which they differend live toward each other, having no intercourse amongst themselves. They know no more of each other than if they were placed at the furthest extremity of the island from one another abodes, or else we must conclude that such is their degraded and debased state that they only make use of terms to make known their warring wants which as it were every family invents for itself, or that they are descendants from different stocks which from the general resemblance existing amongst them does not appear probable, unless this resemblance can be accounted for by the custom of their stealing wives from their enemies, which whilst it renders them in person similar becomes also a means of continuing the same customs &c. whilst it does not affect the language. — with the blacks of the lower

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# Wiradjuri language

## “the sound of the language is harsh and guttural”

p. 150

150  
the sound of the language is harsh and guttural. the following are a few words of their language

gungah - a House  
gilluk - silent  
gkan - The moon  
gkan - The sun

Gu arranini. The native name  
for Liverpool.

Sorobin - George River

morgan - water affected by  
the tide

Boardo - fresh water

kuungs a  
mebora  
gnolo.

ngogon - throat  
the eye  
fore head  
the nose

Kara a - the mouth  
beril - a finger

Kura - ear

Yarung - the beard

erakh - the teeth

dolung - tongue

marasay - teeth

huring - arms

warlo - chin

olay - a man a boy

Korrek - knee

Worow - ay a girl

Gin - a woman a wife

mona - hole

guern - fire

Burra, or Boora sky

Barlut to via he is dead

now

Albyrunya to kill

wile go, where are you

gungi

ningung gara he will be alive yet.

Tarra - the legs, shins

Tara - thigh

Tammora hands or fingers

Tannah foot

Tana - foot

Jonyou traps

Balgah a big hill

Narrang Balgah a little hill

Birrago a valley a deep place

Bonah to ram

nung away go to sleep

I go nung a I go to sleep

Guorah, wind

Morninghal, thunder

Mangs. Man a lightning

Kundoo a kill

Tabora ground

Kara gum salt water the sea

Boendervin a big river

Narrangroon little

Mara - bee 1. wargal

2. buller

Jerang - leaves 3. borra

4. bullahaw

5. karrul

Kadarbin ants

on barley he will be

dead

big ones

# Taylor notebook metadata

REV. RICHARD TAYLOR

PAPERS

Volume 8

NOTEBOOK 1835

Copied March 1967 from originals lent by  
Mr Cranleigh Barton  
Christchurch

# Wiradjuri language

p. 195

a few words of the language,  
spoken at Wellington Valley called in the native tongue  
Wiradjuri 195

Ballang head	Bardang bitter
Ba-gur. hind part of the arm.	Bandara to tie
Babbin. Father	Banday. The band worn the cows' girdle
Babin. a nettle	Banglong. Autumn bit, face of the winter
Bamir. long, tall	Ba coll. upolung forked bam.
Baldang. a cloak	Barr. Babbin red
Barrang. white	Balli a new born baby
Baigur. Earings ornament for the ear	Bana. Step
Balgurra. to emit sparks	Babu mud ang.
Baldara to bite	Balunay. Bitterness
Ballong dead, Ballungarn <sup>exhale</sup> to exhale	Babi father mudang
Ballunara. to die <sup>Ballungbambar</sup> to die	deficient without
Ballungmerra to kill insect	Baramai. a native god
Ballungmildain a murderer	Barraiy. eating a to rice again applied to the
Balbar-dal Poison	Barrecolion
Balidai cold	Barrai sneeze quickly
Balldara to be cold	Ballya. no fore part gone out
Banganalbara to burn	Barrimarra to make fire on the native wo- ods with 2 pieces of stick
Balladong. a cup	Biring break
Balla head (wronga to cut)	Borba track
Ba. frost cold winter	Billa River
Barrain. abile apron	Birra tree
Bairgarn. leeches	Birbarra To take
Baujai. shell spoon	Birbal-dain a barker
Ballyan little finger	Burya the thigh
Barramma. to take hold of	Burri a child
Barrama. Thumb	Burruin a trap
Bambinya. To swim	Bubbai little
Bandar. Karrarroo	
Bombal. The place where the natives meet first in the morning	
Plan of assembly	

# Wiradjuri language

p. 196

Wulla Two	Dawarang a native dog
Wullangunbai Three three in tail of their numerals	Merrit same
Beards many 4 or 50	Dawn a hatchet
Wullamni hairs & whiskers	Burquin iron
Buddans dark black	Tandair a frog
Burrinbal Fly	Tangung food bread
Bulbin Whirlwind	Beri grey hair
Bunbarra to smoke	Birring old man
Burbin belly	Boran a mountain
Bunyung knee	Birri meat flesh
Buringang warama knee to stand on the knee	Bibun a bird
Budya budya a butterfly a moth	Bondi swan
	Buron snake
	Burri ant
Galani Tongue	Bulldang the soul
Baffal Cheeks	Nartang bag for a
Banning thigh	female also the pouch
Dafin ground soil land	of marsupial animals
Dapunbi a dirty fellow	Dre sun, sun woman
Dabal a bone	Geung moon
Davar Rib	Gorralung place
Daya dung dirt	Narabong a pouch or bag
Darra To eat	
Darmal wrist	
Dangung heel	
Dandilla Hailstone	
Dannin a small species of	
Dalbin a kind yanna	
Danna to net	
Dabbureng pipe clay	
Danni sun	
Darrambin a littlebird	
Dalara snow	

# Some questions

Did Taylor get to the Wellington Valley?

Did Taylor “borrow” material from Günther or someone else?

How did Taylor’s connection with early Australian missionary linguistics apparently become expunged from the record?

## Some questions **bonus slide?!**

Did Taylor get to the Wellington Valley?

Did Taylor “borrow” material from Günther or someone else?

To what extent was Taylor shanghaied by Marsden?!

How did Taylor’s connection with early Australian missionary linguistics apparently become expunged from the record?