

COOK'S HILL "LIKE A HATT":

At the risk of opening old wounds amongst members of our Society, one might advert, in this bi-centenary year, to the controversy as to which is Cook's Hatt Hill: Mount Kembla, or Mount Keira.

It is an anomaly, but he did not so name it, though it has since been assumed that he did. After referring to Red Point, he wrote in his journal these words: "a little way inland to the NW of this point is a round hill the top of which look'd like the Crown of a hatt." Mount Kembla came to be known, later, as Hat Hill, until confusion arose: Kembla is not NW of Red Point; it is WNW. And Keira is not NW either; it is NNW. To settle the question, therefore, the further question arose: which mountain is like the crown of a hat? Further questions then proliferated: what sort of hat? A sailor's hat, square like Keira? An officer's hat, round, like Kembla? A woman's hat, — what you will, and (at your peril) you name it! Beautiful friendships became endangered, as wigs were thrown upon the green, until the memorable occasion arose in a talk given many years ago by our worthy member, Mr. Bill Wentworth, M.P., in which, holding forth polemically on the visibility of the geographical feature from the position where the "Endeavour" was at the time of observation, he hotly postulated that from there you couldn't see the bloody thing. This was a reference to the mountain against which he was arguing, not Red Point, which is not red anyway.

Latterly, peace has reigned, and it is likely to continue, because there is a further piece of evidence now to hand. It has been strangely overlooked that on 10th May, 1770 Cook, saw another hill to which he referred as follows: "In the Latitude of $33^{\circ} 2'S$ a little way inland is a remarkable hill that is shaped like the Crown of a hatt which we past about 9 o'Clock in the forenoon". The descriptions are remarkably similar, inclusive of Cook's usual bad spelling.

There can be no doubt; the other Hat Hill is to the west of La Macquarie; it is Warrowolong, a well-known navigation guide. And its shape? — its top is not square, but round, just like Mount Kembla.

The evidence to resolve the ambiguity is purely circumstantial, but one feels that in future, when the time-honoured question is asked — which hill in Illawarra did Cook describe like the Crown of a hatt? — the answer may confidently be given: the cap fits Kembla.

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