Caboonbah Homestead 'Big Rock' or 'Little Britain': A study of Britishness in late 19th and early 20th century rural Queensland

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The recognition of ethnicity in the archaeological record is a complex phenomenon. Traditionally, ethnic groups are viewed as bounded, homogenous entities with ethnic labels assigned to associated material culture. In this paper we depart from traditional practice. The study of the ethnic identity of Britishness is situated within the framework of a comparative theory of ethnicity that examines the relationship of ethnicity and culture through the use of Bourdieu's concept of habitus. Britishness is a diverse, fluid and mobile ethnic identity, applied during the nineteenth century to subjects of the British monarchy both 'at home' and throughout the British Empire. Using the multidisciplinary approach of historical archaeology, we examine the Britishness of the family of Henry and Katharine Somerset at Caboonbah Homestead in the Brisbane Valley in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The use of this case study establishes that the ethnic construction of Britishness in rural Queensland was as much a product of the colonial experience as it was of the British homeland and demonstrates that the Somerset family was able to accommodate both the competing and complementary ethnicities of simultaneously being British and colonial.

INTRODUCTION

As an ethnic identity, 'Britishness' is a diverse, fluid and mobile phenomenon (Hicks 2004:937), that was used during the nineteenth century to describe subjects of the British monarchy both 'at home' and throughout the Empire. Utilising material culture, including documentary evidence, this paper examines the Britishness of the family of Henry and Katharine Somerset at Caboonbah Homestead in the Brisbane Valley Queensland in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The Somerset family's occupancy of Caboonbah spanned periods of intense nationalism in Australia, both in relation to the formulation of an Australian identity, with the transition from colonialism to Federation, and the 'king and country' duality of World War I.

In the glory days of the British Empire, the ethnic construction of Britishness was a sense of identity that united Britons throughout the world, grounded in the practice of colonisation and the idea of Empire as imagined community (Cochrane 1996:63). To be British was to claim an ancient heritage and an identity as an inhabitant of 'The Empire' (Hassam 2000:18). Yet, despite their ubiquitousness, the British are frequently the silent 'other' in studies of the British Empire (Colley 1992a; Hassam 2000; Lawrence 2003b, 2004).

Britishness is not a single monolithic entity, and the British Empire provides a broader scale within which detailed local studies can be situated (Lawrence 2003b:5) and, as Beaudry argues, "it is not appropriate to talk or write about 'British culture' in totalising and universal terms" (2003:193). This study of the ethnic construction of Britishness within the context of a rural Queensland family in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, addresses the acknowledged deficit in studies of the British in the historical archaeological literature. It contributes to the theoretical understanding of the processual nature of the ethnic identity of Britishness, and addresses the methodological problem identified by Johnson that:

> most recent work in historical archaeology … in its urge to say something relevant for a world audience … has ridden roughshod over the nuances and peculiarities of local situations and contexts (2006:318).

Defining Britishness as identification with the heritage and cultural practices of the British, it is argued that the ethnic identity of the Somerset family was fluid and actively negotiated, resulting in their ability to accommodate identification with both Britishness and colonialism, creating an identity that exemplified the emerging identity of 'Australian'.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Identity is inherent in any cultural process (Dietler 1998; Malesevic 2004; Touraine 1998) and it has been claimed that one of the most crucial and controversial elements of identity pursued by historical archaeologists is ethnicity (Fesler and Franklin 1999; Jones 1997; Levine 1999; Lucy 2005; McGuire 1982; Meskell 2001; Silliman 2001). The study of ethnicity has progressed from a question of its recognisability in the archaeological record (e.g. Etter 1980) to a focus on the analysis of the processes involved in the construction of ethnicity and their role in the mediation of social interaction and social relations (Jones 1997:84). Research based in social science has revealed that ethnicity involves the 'subjective construction of identity based on real or assumed shared culture and/or common descent' (Jones 1999:224).

The contextual approach of this paper is based on a comparative theory of ethnicity formulated by Siân Jones (1997). The underlying premise of this theory is of ethnicity as a process that involves consciousness of difference, resulting in ethnic categories that are reproduced and transformed in the ongoing processes of social life (Jones 1997:83). Grounded in the notion that the relationship between consciousness of ethnicity and cultural contexts can be explored through theories of practice, Jones states that her theory:

> … accounts for the dynamic and contextual nature of ethnicity at the same time addressing the relationship between people's perceptions of ethnicity and the cultural practices and social relations in which they are embedded (1999:227).

Drawing on the work of Bourdieu and his concept of habitus, 'habitual and repetitious social practices' (1977:72), Jones (1997) uses habitus as a means of understanding how individuals create ethnic identity at different times and places as a tool to cope with the world by drawing on existing structures of meaning and responding to them.

Material culture is frequently implicated in the recognition and expression of ethnicity; it both contributes to the formulation of ethnicity and is structured by it (Jones 1997:120). Studies assigning ethnic affiliation through material culture began in historical archaeology with the search for 'ethnic markers', specific artefacts that could be associated with particular ethnic groups (McGuire 1982:163; Orser 1998:662). Fesler and Franklin (1999:8) claim that in recent times there has been a concerted movement by historical archaeologists to discard ethnic markers and to engage in more rigorous and sophisticated analyses of the relationship between ethnicity and material culture (e.g. Rains 2005; Heath 1999).

The self-conscious expression of ethnicity through material culture is linked to the structural dispositions of the habitus which infuse all aspects of the cultural practices and social relations characterising a particular way of life (Jones 1997:120). Rather than a passive reflection of socialisation within bounded ethnic units, material culture is dynamic and consequently its meaning will change in a range of different contexts (Jones 1997:126).

Britishness

Britishness is what people mean when they identify themselves, individually and collectively, as British (Ward 2004:3). The term British, however, does not denote a people with a common culture, religion, language and social structure (Hassam 2000:16) rather, it is an ethnic identity which includes elements of politics and geography, citizenship and race, legal and administrative structures, moral values and cultural habits, language and tradition (Lawrence 2003b:4). The British, nevertheless, came to define themselves as a single people, not because of any political or cultural consensus 'at home' but rather as a reaction to the other 'beyond their shores' (Colley 1992b:5). British history was a history of military battles (Symonds 2003:142), and the British defined themselves in contrast to the peoples they conquered (Colley 1992b:5).

In the nineteenth century to be British was to claim an ancient heritage and a racial identity as an inhabitant of the British Empire (Hassam 2000:18). Britishness was extraterritorial, uniting Britons wherever they were in the world, grounded in the practice of colonisation and the idea – at its peak in Victorian times – of empire as imagined community (Cochrane 1996:63). The British state was a 'multi-national and multi-ethnic conglomerate successfully allowing diversity within a unifying framework' (Symonds 2003:153), and emigration from Britain to the white settler societies of the British Empire was viewed as a redistribution from one part of Greater Britain to another (Constantine 2003:23). Thus people were British, not by living in Britain, but by feeling British (Colley 1992b:5). Marshall (1996:321) asserts that:

> colonists generally experienced a greater sense of undifferentiated Britishness than those who stayed at home where individuals might still regard themselves as English, Scottish, Welsh, Irish or Cornish.

The Britishness of colonial Australia was a powerful idea system in which divisions marked by isolation, language and ethnicity were diminished by a sense of semblance and collective interest (Cochrane 1996:63). Britishness was not a simple matter of transplantation, it had to be sustained in new and unfamiliar conditions and reformulated within relationships that were very different to those in Britain (Cochrane 1996:63). British as an identity is composite, consisting of the juxtaposition of English, Irish, Welsh, and Scottish (Lawrence 2003b:5), and the British who migrated to Australia in the nineteenth century were far from a homogenous group. In Britain, although some benefited and supported the various Acts of Union, for the most part the Welsh, Irish and many Scots felt animosity towards the English who had forced them to join the Union (Meaney 2001:82). In the colonies, however, neither the Scots, the Welsh, the Irish, nor the English were able to successfully impose their identity on any of the others (Hassam 2000:13), although occasional conflicts between the Irish and other British groups occurred (Kwan 2007). As a consequence, these transplanted migrants from Britain mixed together in their new homeland and in many respects homogenised their traditions into an Australian Britishness (Meaney 2001:82). This shared sense of Britishness was achieved more readily than in Britain, partly because of the sharp contrast with the Aboriginal people and partly because the different populations of the British Isles were mixed together as they had never been before, even in Britain's American colonies (Gare 2000:1148).

Britishness, in common with all ethnic and political identities, should not be regarded as bounded and unproblematic (Symonds 2003:153). Ethnicity consists of traits believed to be shared with others, but because these traits are fluid and actively negotiated according to context, they are not mutually exclusive (Lucy 2005:97). Accordingly, it is possible for people to identify with several ethnic groups at once and to be able to accommodate those ethnicities whether they are competing or complementary (Hassam 2000:3). This would allow nineteenth-century Australians to consider themselves to be both colonial and British. For example, for Australians engaged in the project of Federation, Britishness served as the other against which a new Australian identity was being constructed (Lawrence 2003a:221).

Drawing on Jones' (1997) application of Bourdieu's concept of habitus to the explanation of ethnicity, the variability of Britishness can be examined. Individuals are socialised within particular cultural systems that shape and are shaped by individual practice and these practices and beliefs, or habitus, are shared with others within the same cultural system (Lawrence 2003b:5). This shared habitus is the source from which distinctive elements are selected to form an ethnic identity that will be relevant within a given situation (Jones 1999:225–7). However, as ethnicity is relationally defined against the otherness of someone else, how that 'other' is constituted will help to determine which of the available elements of habitus will be incorporated in an ethnic identity within a particular context (Lawrence 2003b:4). As the relationships with others change, different elements can be deployed and the sense of ethnicity maintained (Lawrence 2003b:4).

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

When nineteen-year-old Henry Plantagenet Somerset arrived in Brisbane on 19 September 1871 (Brisbane Courier 1871) he was already a seasoned colonial. A second generation South African, he was born in Grahame Town, Cape of Good Hope on 19 May 1852, the second son of a distinguished English military family. The Somerset ancestry can be traced back through the royal dynasty of the Plantagenets to the 12th century English king Henry II (Miller 1965:2). The Plantagenets ruled England until the Tudors were victorious in

the Wars of the Roses (1455–1487) with the resultant execution of all but one male member of the Plantagenet line, Charles Somerset, who founded the Beaufort family of which Henry Somerset was direct descendent (Millar 1965:3).

Henry's family relocated to India in 1853 (Somerset 1935:1) from where, with his mother and siblings, Henry was forced to flee the escalating violence of the Indian Mutiny in 1858 (Turner, Wait and Drane 1960). Misfortune followed the family and *The Eastern Monarch* on which they returned to England exploded while moored off Portsmouth for reprovisioning. Henry and his family were rescued but lost all their belongings (Somerset 1935:5).

Much of the rest of Henry's childhood was spent living with his paternal grandparents at Southsea in England (Somerset 1935:5). His father was invalided from India in 1862, and en route to be knighted by Queen Victoria, suffered a stroke (Turner et al. 1960). His mother, also, suffered lingering after-effects of her experiences in India and his parents died within two weeks of each other in 1863 (Eriksen 1990:8).

In 1864 Henry entered Wellington College, the precursor to Sandhurst Military Academy, as a Queen's Cadet, an award open only to the sons of officers who had died in the service of their country (Eriksen 1990:10). On completing his studies in 1870 he left to travel on the Continent with friends (Somerset 1935:24). Returning to England at the outbreak of the Franco-Prussian War, Henry learned that the family's fortunes had suffered irreparable damage and that he needed to find employment (Somerset 1935:25).

Prevented by his paternal grandmother from taking up a position as a managing agent for a horse property which she considered 'inappropriate for a member of the Somerset family' (Somerset 1935:25), Henry decided to go to the colonies and set sail for Queensland on the *Polmaise* on 10 June 1871, arriving in Brisbane on 19 September 1871 (Brisbane Courier 1871).

Henry immediately found employment, first as a jackaroo at Mount Brisbane Station in the Brisbane Valley and then as a stockman at nearby Cressbrook Station owned by David McConnel, who was the first squatter to take up a run in the Brisbane Valley (Somerset 1935:30). In 1873 Henry was made manager of the McConnels' newly acquired Mount Marlow Station in western Queensland, 1,000 km north-west of Cressbrook. While at Mount Marlow Henry lived an isolated life and had only minimal contact with other Europeans. In 1878, he returned to work at Cressbrook and later that year became engaged to Katharine McConnel (Somerset 1935:71).

Katharine Rose McConnel was born in Edinburgh, Scotland in 1855 during one of the family's many extended visits back to Britain and Europe due to her mother Mary's poor health (Vickerman 1998:8). Katharine came to Cressbrook with her family at the age of 8 and prior to her engagement to Henry Somerset does not appear in the documentary record, except in general reference to David McConnel's children.

Following the engagement, Henry returned home to England to visit his family (Somerset 1935:86) and it was decided that he and Katharine should marry in Switzerland, where her mother was again living because of her health (Eriksen 1990:52). They were married at the British Legation in Berne, Switzerland on 5 July 1879 (Somerset 1935:28). At Mary McConnel's request, Henry brought the wedding cake from England and arrived with a cake decorated with kangaroos, emus, possums and kookaburras (Turner et al. 1960).

Returning to Australia, Henry was employed as manager at a number of cattle stations in northern New South Wales. He returned to Queensland in 1888 where he secured 5,000 acres of the Cressbrook freehold (Somerset 1935:109). Henry and Katharine chose to build their family home (Figure 1) on top of a 120 foot (36.58 metre) cliff on the northern bank of the Brisbane River, below the junction of the Brisbane and Stanley Rivers (Eriksen 1990:77). The Somersets named their property 'Caboonbah' a derivation of the Aboriginal *Cabon gibba* meaning 'big rock' (Environmental Protection Agency 2006:2).

Henry, with assistance from Katharine, undertook extensive cattle-raising and thoroughbred breeding (Eriksen 1990:77). However, the 1893 floods which devastated much of the Brisbane Valley (Kerr 1988:166) saw them suffer massive stock losses, with the associated adverse financial impact (Somerset 1935:104). The floods were followed by severe drought in 1901–1902 and during this time Katharine and Henry demonstrated their community spirit by removing their fences to let the struggling German community at nearby Mount Beppo graze their stock on Caboonbah land (Eriksen 1990:83).

Henry served as a member of the Esk Divisional Board/Shire Council from 1890 to 1904 when he was elected to the Queensland Parliament as MLA for Stanley, a position he held until 1920 (Kerr 1988:238). He staunchly supported the welfare of his constituents and regularly travelled throughout his electorate by horse and buggy (Figure 2). At public request, the electorate of Stanley was renamed

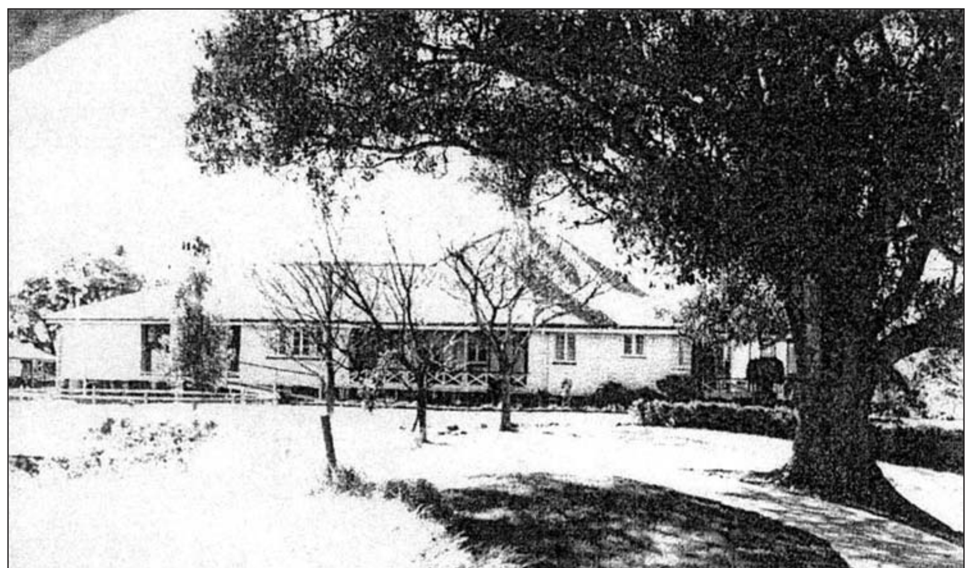

Figure 1: Caboonbah Homestead c. 1900 (Brisbane Valley Historical Society).

Figure 2: Henry Somerset touring his electorate c. 1913 (Brisbane Valley Historical Society).

Somerset in Henry's honour (Environmental Protection Agency 2006:3).

Katharine exhibited similar community mindedness as her husband. She was co-founder of the Stanley Memorial Hospital (now the Esk and District Hospital) (Kerr 1988:185). In 1905 she donated the land for the Caboonbah Undenominational Church (Kerr 1988:219) where following its completion, Henry took a fortnightly Church of England service and Katharine taught Sunday school (Eriksen 1990:105).

Katharine and Henry had ten children, seven girls and three boys, two of whom died in infancy in 1891 (Eriksen 1990:78). Their eldest son Rollo enlisted in the 5th Light Horse Regiment in 1914 and served in Gallipoli and Palestine (Anzacs n.d.). In 1917 he was awarded the Military Cross (Australian War Museum 2007). After the war, Rollo returned to live on a portion of Caboonbah land where he remained until his death by suicide on 20 February 1936 (QSA SCT/P2036 1936).

Following Katharine's death on 7 February 1935 (QSA SCT/P1977 1935), Caboonbah Homestead and one fifth of land was sold (Vickerman 1998:88). Henry went to live with his daughter and died on 11 April 1936 (QSA SCT/P2047 1936). Henry and Katharine are buried in the grounds of the Undenominational Church and their graves overlook Caboonbah Homestead.

Following its sale, Caboonbah Homestead was converted into a guest house which operated until 1962 when the property was again sold (Vickerman 1998:88). In 1973 the property was resumed as part of the Wivenhoe Dam project and the Brisbane and Area Water Board bulldozed all but one of the original timber outbuildings associated with the homestead (Environmental Protection Agency 2006:3). Today the site is the headquarters of the Brisbane Valley Historical Society (BVHS) who have moved several other historic buildings from the area onto the site. The homestead and grounds were permanently entered on the Queensland Heritage Register on 12th December 1996.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATION

Following a controlled burn of the gully line located on the southern side of Caboonbah Homestead in 2006, the BVHS discovered large numbers of artefacts along the length of the gully line. At the suggestion of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the BVHS contacted the University of Queensland to assess the significance of this deposit. Inspection of the gully revealed a range of relatively undisturbed artefacts that indicated the area had been used as a rubbish dump during a period of occupation of the homestead (Prangnell 2007:3).

The eastern end of the gully contained domestic artefacts apparently from the household. Comparison with a plan of the homestead, outbuildings and gardens believed to have been drawn by Hereward Somerset, youngest son of Katharine and Henry Somerset, in the 1920s, revealed that the location of the domestic artefacts matched exactly the location of the 'rubish gully' [sic]. The western end of the gully and hillside near the original location of the horse stables and blacksmith's shop contained large amounts of equipment and tack.

The BVHS was eager for further investigation of the site to add to their knowledge and understanding of the place and, with the agreement of the Queensland Heritage Council and EPA, the Caboonbah Homestead Archaeological Project (CHAP) was initiated. To date two field seasons have been conducted in August 2006 and February 2007.

Archaeological Method

As the main focus of the excavation was to provide data to answer questions about the occupation of the homestead, and as the surface scatter over the gully appeared to be archaeologically patterned, areas with the highest surface density of domestic artefacts were targeted for excavation. Five 1m x 1m pits were excavated in two trenches situated 3m apart on a grid west orientation on the centreline of the gully (Figure 3). Excavation was undertaken in arbitrary Excavation Units (XU) to a depth of 10cm using standard archaeological practice.

The stratigraphy of the gully was simple; SUI was a consistent friable, grey, sandy artefact-rich alluvium covering the entire site, varying in depth between 0.4cm to 85cm and SUII was a compact grey/brown clay uniformly underlying SUI across the entire site. The majority of the artefacts recovered were located on the interface of the two

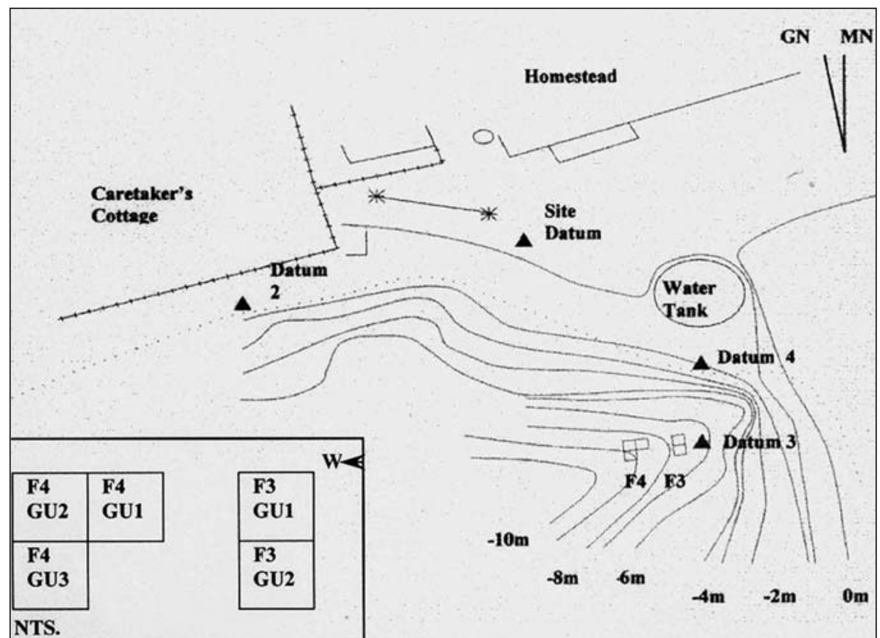

Figure 3: Gully line on the southern side of the homestead showing excavation trenches (J. Prangnell).

stratigraphic units, embedded in the clay or randomly scattered in the alluvium of SUI. This allows for the interpretation of SUII as the original surface during the period of artefact deposition (Prangnell 2007:8).

Artefacts

A total of 12,522 artefacts were recovered from the two field seasons. Based on classificatory systems applied to other Australian historical archaeological sites (Murphy 2003:58), artefacts were classified into specific fabric types (Table 1) and assigned a function type based on their functional attributes (Table 2). Ceramic quantification within this paper is based on sherd counts rather than vessel counts. While vessel counts are recognised within Australia and internationally as being statistically more reliable than sherd counts (Brooks 2005:22–24, Sussman 2000), sherd counts were used here as the high level of fragmentation within the assemblage made it difficult to complete a vessel count within the timeframe available for the original study. While sherd counts are less statistically reliable than vessel counts they tend to overestimate the amount of undecorated materials within an assemblage, for example (Brooks 2005:22), they are nonetheless often useful in providing a preliminary overview of an assemblage's contents.

Table 1: Fabric categories and inclusions with fragment count and percentage of total assemblage.

Fabric	Inclusions	#Fragment	%
Bottle Glass	Bottle glass	5551	44.3
Brick	Brick, mortar, concrete	142	1.2
Ceramic	Redware, stoneware, whiteware, porcelain, pipe clay	2076	17
Fauna	Animal bone, shell	1884	15.0
Flora	Seeds, kernels	37	0.3
Leather	Leather	414	3.3
Metal	Ferrous metal, non-ferrous metal	1749	14
Non-Bottle Glass	Window glass, table glass	491	3.4
Plastic	Plastic, Bakelite	70	0.6
Rubber	Rubber	14	0.1
Stone	Slate, other stone	6	0.06
Wood	Timber	85	0.7
Other	Material types not classified elsewhere	3	0.04
Total		**12522**	**100**

Table 2: Function type and inclusions used in classification of artefacts.

Function Type	Inclusions
Bottle	Glass and ceramic bottles
Building material	Nails, screws, bolts, door furniture, bricks, concrete, window glass
Clothing	Buckles, buttons, press studs, hooks & eye, eyelets, shoes
Decorative	Ornaments, vases, flowerpots
Dining service	plates >6cm diameter, bowls, platters
Domestic	Ewers, perfume
Domestic utility	Food storage and preparation utensils, cup hooks, meat-safe metal
Non-domestic metal	Horseshoes, farm implements, tools, wire, ammunition
Tableware	Cruet sets, glassware,
Teaware	Teacups, saucers, plates < 6cm diameter, sugar bowl, teapots
Other	Function types not classified elsewhere
Unidentified	Not yet classified

The most frequently recovered fabric types were glass, ceramic, bone and metal (see Table 1 for detail). Glass artefacts consisted of a range of function types including bottle glass, table glass and window glass. The ceramic collection included whiteware and bone china tea wares and dining service, household utility items and decorative pieces. Classification of the bone indicated that it was predominantly bovine with some avian and marsupial. Cut-marks have been identified on only three bone fragments. There were a small number of manipulated bone objects including a toothbrush and handle. Metal artefacts comprised a wide variety of domestic and non-domestic function types including clothing fasteners, meat-safe metal, nails, wire and tools. The remaining fabric types are represented by very small numbers of artefacts. While all fabric types have been analysed, as glass and ceramic artefacts were the most abundant the data from these types are presented in this paper.

Glass

Bottle glass was present in large amounts in both excavation trenches with 5,551 artefacts recovered. The assemblage was highly fragmented with an unusual colour distribution for Queensland sites as 75 per cent was clear. Green was the next most frequent colour at 13 per cent, and blue, brown, pink and yellow were present in relatively small amounts. Only 8.5 per cent of the assemblage is identifiable to a specific body part and only nine complete bottles were found. Table 3 details identified seal types with production dates. Six of the bases had the Australian Glass Manufacturing Company trademark and can be dated to the 1922–1929 production period (Burke and Smith 2004:370).

Table 3: Identified seal types with production dates.

Finish Type	Quantity	Production Dates
Applied lip	63	1872–1920
Codd's patent seal	1	1878–1895
Crown seal	7	1896 to present
Double collar	6	1870 to early 20th century
Machine made (not otherwise identified)	3	1920 to present
Ring seal	30	1900–1920
Screw thread	33	1885 to present
Total	**143**	

Identifiable bottle shape and/or markings allowed the identification of use type of only 6.3 per cent of the assemblage (Table 4). Medicine/poison bottles are disproportionately represented because of the often distinctive cobalt-blue colour of this use type. Additionally, of the nine complete bottles recovered, five were identified as having contained pharmaceuticals or poisons including Dr Williams Pink Pills for Pale People, a patent medicine particularly popular in Australia in the late nineteenth century (Fahey 2005:3), Morses Indian Root Pills, and Schulke and Mayr lysol disinfectant.

Table 4: Identified use type of bottle glass.

Original Function	#Fragment
Aerated water	6
Beer	60
Condiments	96
Medicine/Poison	250
Milk/Cream	14
Perfume	6
Other alcohol	14
Total	**446**

The non-bottle glass was predominantly window glass (83 per cent) with some table glass (12 per cent) and unidentified (5 per cent). Three sherds of clear window glass, contain obvious air bubbles and have a variable thickness of 4.5–5.5mm which indicates handmade glass, providing a TPQ of 1890 (Burke and Smith 2004:192). Significant among the tableware is a crystal knife rest (Figure 4).

Figure 4: Crystal knife rest (L. Terry).

Ceramics

Ceramic is the second largest fabric type of artefacts in the assemblage, comprising 2,077 artefacts (Table 5). The assemblage is also atypical for excavated rural Queensland sites with bone china sherds accounting for 25 per cent. The distribution of ceramics was consistent with the general pattern of artefacts from the site, with the largest number of artefacts located at the interface of SUI and SUII within the gully line. The functional attributes of the ceramic artefacts are set out in Table 6. This table specifically examines the domestic artefacts and does not include clay pipe or non-domestic items.

The ceramic assemblage is notable for its diversity. A breakdown of the basic decoration types is given in Table 7. The final classification of artefacts by decoration remains incomplete and to date 50 different underglaze transfer print patterns have been documented. The most prevalent pattern type is floral (74 per cent), in polychrome (34.5 per cent), blue (30 per cent), green (22 per cent) and brown (13.5 per cent). Three underglaze transfer print patterns have been identified: *Willow*, *Regal* and *Glenwood*.

Willow pattern is the most frequent transfer print (22 per cent). This pattern and its variants were extremely popular in the mid to late nineteenth century and were ubiquitous in Victorian households throughout the British Empire. It was manufactured and marketed by over fifty British companies and ranged in price from affordable to expensive (O'Hara 1993:421).

The *Willow* pattern ceramics in the assemblage are manufactured from both whiteware and bone china, with both teaware and tableware represented in both material types. The presence of a single overglaze painted band on the rim of bone china teacups, saucers, plates and a sugar bowl indicates that these artefacts are part of a tea set. Whiteware artefacts also comprise set/s with the presence of dinner plates and serving platters indicating a dining service.

The *Regal* design (Figure 5) was produced by R.H. Plant and Co. from 1881–1898. Sherds of this pattern include whiteware plates, bowls and platters and are also indicative of a dining service. This ware is manufactured from a heavy duty material and appears to be of a utilitarian nature.

Table 5: Ceramic artefacts by fabric with fragment count and percentage of ceramic assemblage.

Fabric	# Fragment	% of Total
Whiteware	1225	59.0
Bone China	519	25.0
Redware	186	9.0
Stoneware	145	6.9
Clay pipe	2	0.05
Other	2	0.05
Total	**2077**	**100**

Table 6: Fragment count of ceramic artefacts by function, form and fabric.

Function	Form	White-ware	Bone China	Red-ware	Stone-ware
Decorative	Flowerpot	6	12	137	–
	Ornament	12	19	–	2
	Vase	3	1	–	–
Domestic	Ewer	14	–	–	
	Jug	3	–	–	3
Domestic utility	Mixing bowl	19	–	3	1
	Storage jar	2	–	–	513
Tableware	Plate	143	33	–	–
	Bowl	19	4	–	–
	Platter	11	–	–	1
	Lid	9	1	–	–
	Cruet	1	1	–	–
Teaware	Cup	42	71	–	–
	Saucer	1	12	–	–
	Plate	10	17	–	–
	Milk jug	3	2	–	9
	Teapot				
Other		1	1	1	2
Unidentified		892	335	75	69
Total		**1201**	**515**	**216**	**139**

Table 7: Decoration styles of ceramic types with fragment count.

	Whiteware	Bone China	Redware	Stoneware
Clobbered	23	–	–	–
Moulded	73	23	5	2
Overglaze Painted	58	73	2	7
Salt Glaze	–	–		66
Slip	1	–	14	77
Sponged	7	–	–	–
Underglaze Transfer Print	432	83	–	3
Undecorated	629	340	154	–
Total	**1225**	**519**	**178**	**153**

Figure 5: J.H. Plant & Son soup bowl in Regal pattern (L. Terry).

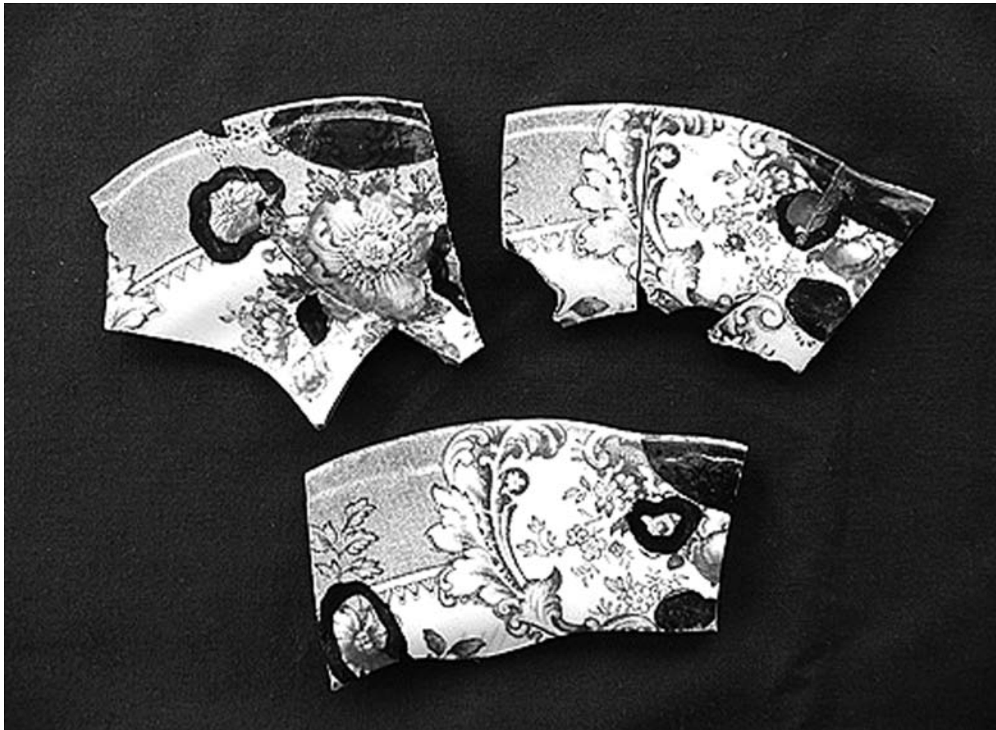

Figure 6: Wood and Sons Glenwood pattern demonstrating clobbering (L. Terry).

Glenwood is a green floral underglaze transfer print clobbered with black and red enamel (Figure 6) manufactured by Wood and Son from 1891–1907 (Birks n.d.). Clobbering is a technique of over-decorating used in an attempt to improve the desirability, and therefore the value, of a ceramic design (Bly 2002:147). Sherds of this pattern comprise plates, bowls and a tureen lid.

The overglaze painted ceramic assemblage is dominated by gilding (67.5 per cent). Two bone china tea sets, one characterised by three fine gold bands around the rim of the cups and a milk jug and the marly of the saucers, and another with a single gold band similarly located, have been identified.

Dating of the assemblage

The assemblage is dated from its glass and ceramic contents. The manufacture-deposition lag is always a concern when dating historical assemblages but generally bottle glass is known to be deposited into the archaeological record more readily and quickly than ceramic (Williamson 2006:338). The seal types of the bottle glass recovered from the Caboonbah Homestead rubbish gully have provided a TPQ of 1870 and a manufacturing date range into the 1930s.

Maker's backstamps are important chronological indicators and are the best means to accurately date the manufacture of a piece of ceramic (Burke and Smith 2004:370–371). Twenty-four full and partial maker's backstamps were recovered of which 15 have been identified (Table 8). These indicate dates of manufacture ranging from 1873 to 1931. However, as domestic ceramic items can have long use lives and be introduced into the archaeological record many years after they were manufactured, dates obtained from maker's backstamps need to be used in conjunction with other lines of evidence (Williamson 2006:329).

Figure 7 demonstrates that the ceramic and glass assemblage provides dates which relate to the period of occupation of Caboonbah Homestead by the Somerset family. There is no stratigraphic evidence of deposits post-dating this period and this is supported by historical record of the sale and change of use of the homestead in 1935.

Table 8: Maker's backstamps with dates of manufacture and country of origin.

Manufacturer	Date Range	Place of Manufacture	Ref (Godden 1964)
Minton	c.1873	Staffordshire	2711
RH & SL Plant Ltd	1907–1936	Staffordshire	3061
Lovatt & Lovatt	1895–1931	Nottingham	2425
George Jones & Sons Ltd	1874–1924 Pattern reg. Jan.1889	Staffordshire	2218
J & G Meakin	1912+	Staffordshire	2604
John Aynsley & Sons Ltd	1891	Staffordshire	193
Wood & Son	1891–1907	Staffordshire	4285
Doulton & Co Ltd	1922–1927	Staffordshire	1337
Johnson Brothers	1913+	Staffordshire	2178
R.H. Plant & Co	1881–1898	Staffordshire	3057

THE BRITISHNESS OF THE SOMERSET FAMILY

As noted previously, individuals are socialised within particular cultural systems that are shaped by habitus (Lawrence 2003b:4). Examination of habitus identifies the basic processes involved in the reproduction and transformation of ethnicity across diverse social and historical contexts (Jones 1997:130), and it is these processes that bring an understanding, often subliminal, of what is appropriate for one's place in society (Lawrence 1999:8).

The habitus that Henry and Katharine Somerset brought to Caboonbah Homestead was shaped by the cultural practice of their early lives. Henry's colonial childhood, upper middle class English youth and years spent working in the Australian bush, saw him traverse the stereotypes of wealthy, privileged Englishman and Australian bushman to become what Lake (1986) describes as 'Domestic Man', a colonist of British origin, grounded in evangelical constructions of respectability and domesticity, who took responsibility for his family and

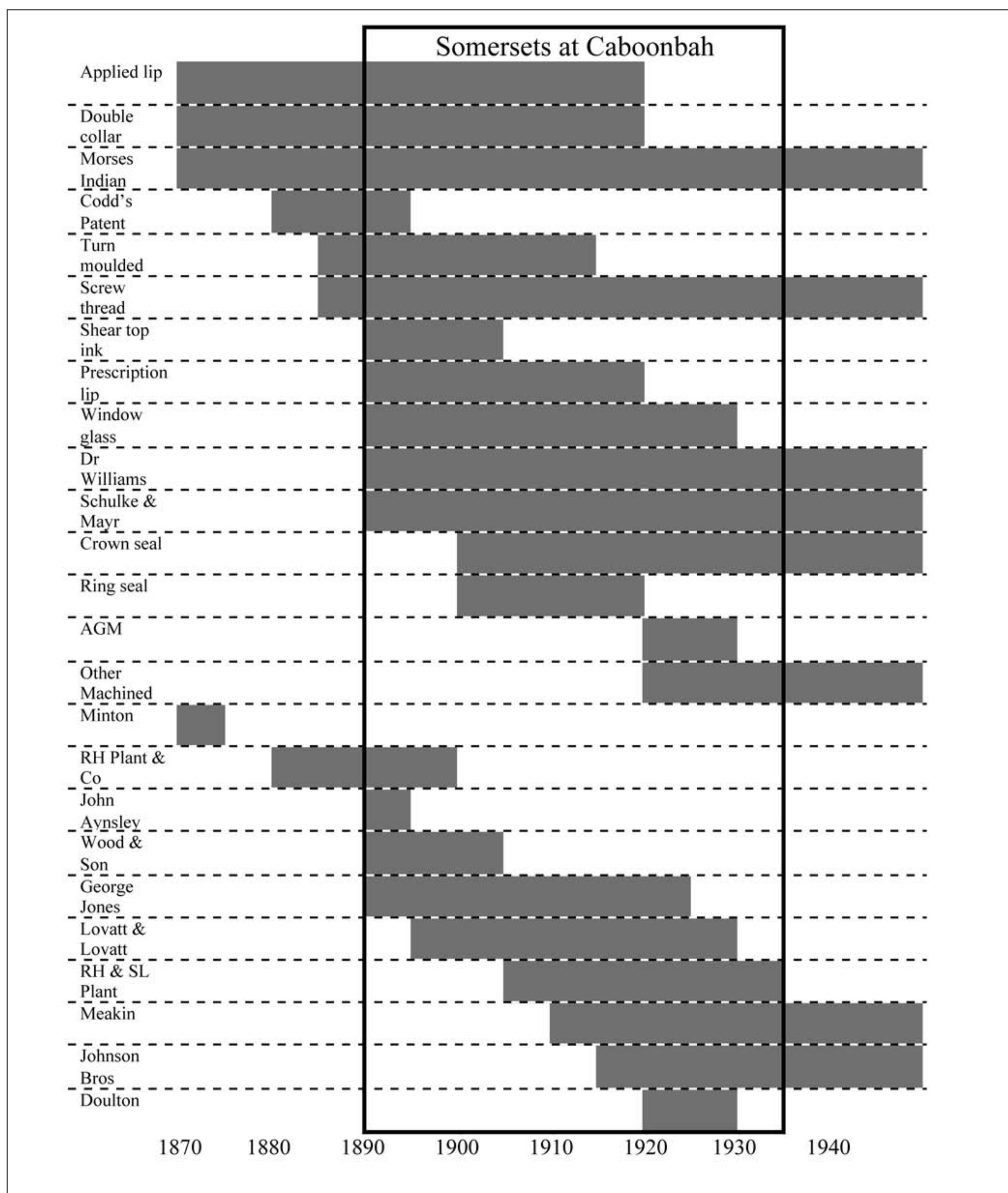

Figure 7: Graphic representation of the correlation of artefact dates with the Somerset occupancy of Caboonbah Homestead.

worked hard to provide for them. His own disrupted childhood undoubtedly caused Henry to be particularly conscious of providing a stable and happy home for his own family.

Katharine spent her early childhood travelling on the Continent with her wealthy parents. Later, in Queensland her time was divided between Cressbrook Station and the family home in Brisbane. Although the documentary record is silent about her youth, Katharine, despite her mother's repeated episodes of ill health, undoubtedly led a privileged life. As a family, the McConnels were deeply religious with community responsibility and involvement embedded in their culture.

It has been argued that in Australia the general social and cultural identity of people of British heritage was for the most part associated with and constructed by their sense of Britishness (Gare 2000: 1146). Even so, the traditional norms of British society had to be moulded to fit the colonial context. Despite the rigours of station life and the financial setbacks of their early years at Caboonbah, it is reasonable to assume that both Katharine and Henry had sufficient accumulated cultural

capital to enable them to maintain the proprieties of a genteel lifestyle. This is not to imply that they considered themselves privileged landowners. On the contrary, the documentary record portrays them both as hard working, with Katharine being involved in the day-to-day running of the property as well as maintaining the home. However, both were raised in a culture of gentility where adherence to appropriate etiquette was the norm. Gentility has been described as the common currency of an international English speaking middle class that shared a transnational identity as inhabitants of Greater Britain (Young 2003:32).

Henry Somerset did not consider himself English but rather a proud second generation colonial. Despite this, the Somersets maintained their Britishness. Katherine and Henry used royal and historical British names for several of their children including Hereward, named for a Saxon leader, Ealhswith, the wife of Alfred the Great, and Charles William Henry Rollo, named for numerous kings and an ancestor of William the Conqueror. When the Somersets travelled to Britain to visit family, it was considered a trip 'home'. At the outbreak of World War I, Rollo Somerset gladly went to fight for king and country – the British king and the British Empire. However, the Britishness of the Somerset family was fluid and actively negotiated and throughout their lives they were able to accommodate both the competing and complementary ethnicities of being simultaneously British and colonial. Henry would have been the epitome of a well-educated British gentleman when arguing the cause of his electorate in the Queensland Parliament, but the hard working Australian farmer when at Caboonbah.

Britishness and the material culture of the Somerset family

It is apparent from the archaeological data that the assemblage recovered in the rubbish dump of Caboonbah Homestead predominantly relates to the domestic activities of the inhabitants of the homestead. Dating has placed the assemblage within a timeframe that corresponds to the occupation of the site by members of the Somerset family and contains the artefactual evidence of their everyday life, consisting of remnants of household items that are, according to Brooks (1999:62), frequently chosen to establish identity.

Similarly, it has been argued that the choice of ceramic vessel decoration can be related to the conception of British identity (Brooks 1999:57). However, the presence of British themed or British made ceramics does not necessarily indicate that the Somersets were in any way overtly expressing a desire to display their Britishness. Indeed, it is more likely that they chose items based on taste and function and the subliminal effect of habitus led them to purchases that reflected the customs and traditions of their ethnic identity.

By the early nineteenth century tea drinking was a well established part of British culture (Lawrence 2003a:219). Throughout Britain and in most of the British Empire it was an activity associated with social elites, representing a conspicuous display of leisure time by those not tied to subsistence manual labour (Brooks 2005:63). In Australia however, tea drinking was part of everyday life with vast quantities of tea consumed in hot weather by people in both urban and rural areas (Blainey 2003:357). Tea drinking served the purpose of removing the dubious taste of impure and sometimes muddy local water (Blainey 2003:360; Brooks 2005:63). It was however, also an entrenched part of the custom of visiting and entertaining with a complex set of rituals, customary beliefs and practices (Lawrence 2003a:219) that maintained and reinforced longstanding ideological differences (see Brooks 2003:131–132).

The presence of fine bone china and utilitarian teawares in the ceramic assemblage of Caboonbah Homestead is testimony to both the everyday and the formal consumption of tea. Katharine Somerset would have used her gilt edged bone china tea sets when entertaining the women from surrounding properties and at meetings about founding the Stanley Memorial Hospital, and raising funds for the Undenominational Church would have taken place over morning or afternoon tea. The more utilitarian, but still good quality, plain and transfer printed whiteware tea equipage would have been used on an everyday basis.

Transfer prints were the most expensive ceramic types available in the nineteenth century (Miller 1980, 1991), yet transfer prints are the most common decoration recovered from historical archaeological sites across Britain and the former British Empire (Brooks 2005:62). Although as a long distance consumer, good quality was obviously an important factor (Allison and Cremin 2006:61), the extensive and varied collection of transfer print designs implies that the purchase of matching sets of teawares and dining service was not a priority when Katharine chose her crockery, although it appears that she did choose items imported from England (see Table 8). It is not considered that availability reduced the choices that Katharine could make. Contemporary newspaper advertising indicates that by the 1890s Brisbane merchants were importing a great variety of ceramic and other goods that Katharine and Henry could easily access during their frequent trips to Brisbane.

Despite the huge variety of underglaze transfer print patterns only three sets have been identified in the ceramic assemblage, and Lampard (2007) suggests that unmatched patterned ceramics were purchased to effect sets, with matching sets purchased for use only at family meals as a symbol of family unity. It has been noted (Allison and Cremin 2006:62) that the 'genteel performance' was an important concern for Australian women in the late Victorian period and the presence of matching large serving platters, as well as cruet sets and the crystal knife-rest suggests that Katharine ensured that her family observed the proprieties of gentility when dining.

The material culture used and discarded by the Somerset family is the physical expression of their habitus. The choices they made transposed matters of taste and function into expressions of their ethnic identity. Their habitus was infused into all aspects of their cultural practices and social relations and the material culture speaks of their adherence to the customs and traditions of their British heritage and of their recognition of the adaptations necessary to maintain their ethnic identity in their Australian environment.

The emerging Australian identity

The construction of Britishness is essentially about nationalism and nationalism is a product of a particular set of social conditions and a particular time in history. In the decade preceding Federation, Australians actively considered what it meant to be Australian and how being Australian was different to being British. People were attempting to articulate a new national identity that could co-exist with loyalty to the Empire (Meaney 2001:83). Typically nineteenth-century Australians felt Australian when they met British migrants or visitors but British when they encountered Aboriginal people and non-British migrant groups (Partington 1994:13). Thus Australians could be British or not British depending on the context and they might, at times consider themselves to be both (Hassam 2000:28).

In the lead up to Federation prominent Australian nationalists, led by a group of writers for the *Bulletin* mag-

azine, including Henry Lawson and Banjo Patterson, and artists known as the Heidelberg school led by Tom Roberts and Frederick McCubbin, constructed the character of the Australian bushman[1] (Meaney 2001:80). The bushman and the associated depiction of bush life was a cultural myth. Up until this time the dominant cultural myth in the colony was Britishness (Meaney 2001:79; Gare 2000:1146). Consequently, the gentility and domesticity that maintained Britishness had to be removed. At a time when dissatisfaction with British interference in colonial affairs was increasing (Gare 2000:1154), the iconographic representations of the bushman sought to remove any notion of British heritage in an effort to establish a separate Australian identity (Meaney 2001:83). The bushman signified the binary to the British aristocrat making unpopular policies for the young country.

The reality of the national identity was one of Australian Britishness. The Somersets epitomised the emerging Australian identity; they were both British and Australian. Henry Somerset had been the stereotypical bushman and became a responsible family man and upstanding citizen. He forged a life for his family in an environment that demanded a toughness and strength of spirit that became synonymous with being Australian. Katharine raised her family, supported her husband and worked for her community. By their involvement in the community and the political future of the State, the Somersets were not attempting to recreate a British homeland but an Australian homeland where they adjusted and reworked their customs and traditions appropriately. The ethnic identity of the Somersets was fluid and actively negotiated according to the social and cultural contexts they encountered throughout their lives and characterised the moral values, customs and traditions they instilled in their children. The result was a Britishness that was as much a product of the experience of everyday life in rural Queensland as of their British heritage.

CONCLUSION

The study of ethnicity is fundamental to the understanding of identity, yet traditionally, archaeological interpretation has been dominated by the identification of cultural types that exist essentially unaltered, in different contexts, at different times and in different places. This methodology fails to acknowledge the active engagement of ethnicity in social practice and the processes involved in the reproduction and transformation of ethnic identities.

This paper has addressed the ethnic identity of Britishness in late nineteenth and early twentieth-century rural Queensland by adopting the comparative theory of ethnicity which examines the relationship of ethnicity and culture through the concept of habitus. Using this theoretical approach and the development of a processual definition of Britishness as identification with the heritage and cultural practices of the British, this research has explored the emerging ethnic identity of Australian Britishness in a contemporary manner rather than as a reproduction in the image of the present.

The use of this analytical framework has facilitated the Somersets telling their own story of life in rural Queensland in the period encompassing the transition from colonialism to Federation. Their story has clearly demonstrated that influences on ethnic identity are not unidirectional. The Somerset family's expression of ethnic identity was not only a product of their British heritage but also of the realities of day-to-day life and social contexts. The ethnic identity conveyed in the documentary record and the material culture of Caboonbah Homestead provides evidence of this family's ability to accommodate both the competing and complementary ethnicities of simultaneously being British and colonial. Habitus is not a set of inflexible rules and the Britishness of the Somerset family was as much a product of their experiences in Queensland as of their British heritage and homeland.

POSTSCRIPT

On 11 May 2009 Caboonbah Homestead and all its contents were totally destroyed by fire.

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ENDNOTES

1. Discussion of this constructed character requires use of the gender specific term 'bushman'.

ABBREVIATIONS

BVHS Brisbane Valley Historical Society

EPA Environmental Protection Agency

QSA Queensland State Archive

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