

## WAVERLEY COUNCIL

# BATTLE HILL, 1868

---

### A Waverley Library Local History Fact Sheet



ALDERMAN DAVID FLETCHER, J.P.  
FIRST MAYOR, BOROUGH OF WAVERLEY  
17<sup>th</sup> FEB. 1868 - 15<sup>th</sup> FEB. 1869

Alderman and Mayor of  
Waverley, David Fletcher.

On the 30th September, 1868, Charles Moore, Mayor of Sydney, decided that Waverley and Randwick residents could no longer use the sandy track which ran across the Water Reserve (now Queens Park) – a track that had been in use for over 20 years. Sydney's need for a clean water supply drawn from the Lachlan Swamps (now part of Centennial Park) trumped the convenience of the local short cut between Randwick and Bondi Junction.

Waverley residents awoke on that fateful morning to find that City of Sydney workmen had advanced during the night and begun erecting a stout three-rail fence across the track, barring access through the scrub. Mayor David Fletcher was not prepared to take this lying down.

Together with Ald Lewellyn Baglin and Council Clerk, William Mortimer, he rallied the Waverley forces. Five horses and carts were man-handled into position to block the fence-building activities of the City men.

As the opposing bodies faced each other across the obstacles, a considerable crowd gathered to watch and join in the heated debate. At about 4.00 p.m. a general attack was made by the 24-strong force of men from the City, brandishing pick-handles and similar weapons. The police were powerless to halt the fight that raged.

Amongst the casualties was a horse owned by Mr John Egan. The unfortunate animal had been struck a blow from a pick-handle with such force as to knock it down.

WAVERLEY COUNCIL

# BATTLE HILL, 1868.

---

Egan sued the Mayor of Sydney in the Supreme Court where the jury found a verdict for the plaintiff (Egan) after only seventeen minutes deliberation. The damages awarded were a princely sum of nineteen pounds nine shillings, for injury to the animal, loss of time, and veterinarian services.

The fight had caused great excitement amongst Waverley's residents and was absorbing topic for many a long day and night. The battleground itself became known as "Battle Hill", and the deeds of the Anzacs were considered "small potatoes" compared to the "day we licked old Charlie Moore and his mob".