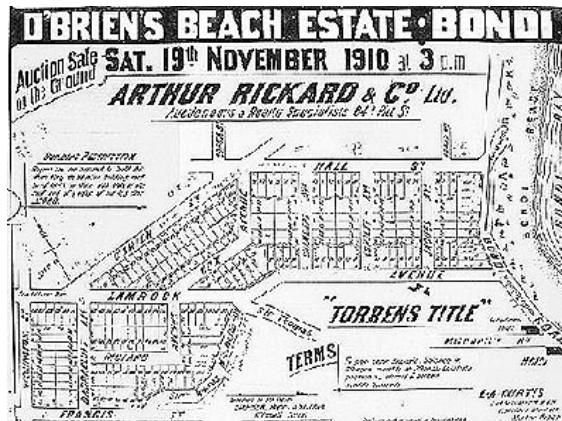


O'Brien Estate, Bondi Beach



The first land grant in the Bondi area was made during the term of Governor Bligh to William Roberts on 22nd December, 1809. Governor Macquarie who succeeded Bligh revoked all land grants made but re-granted the land to Roberts in 1810. The grant of 200 acres embraced almost the whole of the frontage of Bondi Beach.

The land was purchased in 1851, together with its small building known as "Bondi Lodge", for £300 by Edward Smith Hall in trust for his daughter, Georgiana, who had married Francis O'Brien.

In 1852 Edward Smith Hall and Francis O'Brien decided to subdivide the land which was advertised in the Sydney Morning Herald of as "The Bondi Estate". This early attempt at subdivision of what were then just sand hills situated at a distance of some miles from Sydney Town did not attract buyers.

Between 1855 - 1877, the family made the beach and adjacent land available to the public as a picnic ground and amusement resort. During this time Francis O'Brien had purchased the 200 acres from his father-in-law; hence the transition to the "O'Brien Estate"

As the area became extremely popular increased activity promoted a threat from Francis O'Brien to close the beach and grounds to the public. This encouraged the Council to seek Government intervention to make the area once and for all a public recreation space.

As of 9th June, 1882 access to Bondi Beach was resumed as public land - a decision which was upheld by the - with Council eventually appointed as Trustees of Bondi Park.

Francis O'Brien (1816-1896)-owner of the Bondi Estate

