

The mystery which gave Mystery Bay its name is known as the Bermagui Mystery.

MYSTERY BAY

Four of the missing men are remembered in the names of Mystery Bay streets.



An Unsolved Mystery

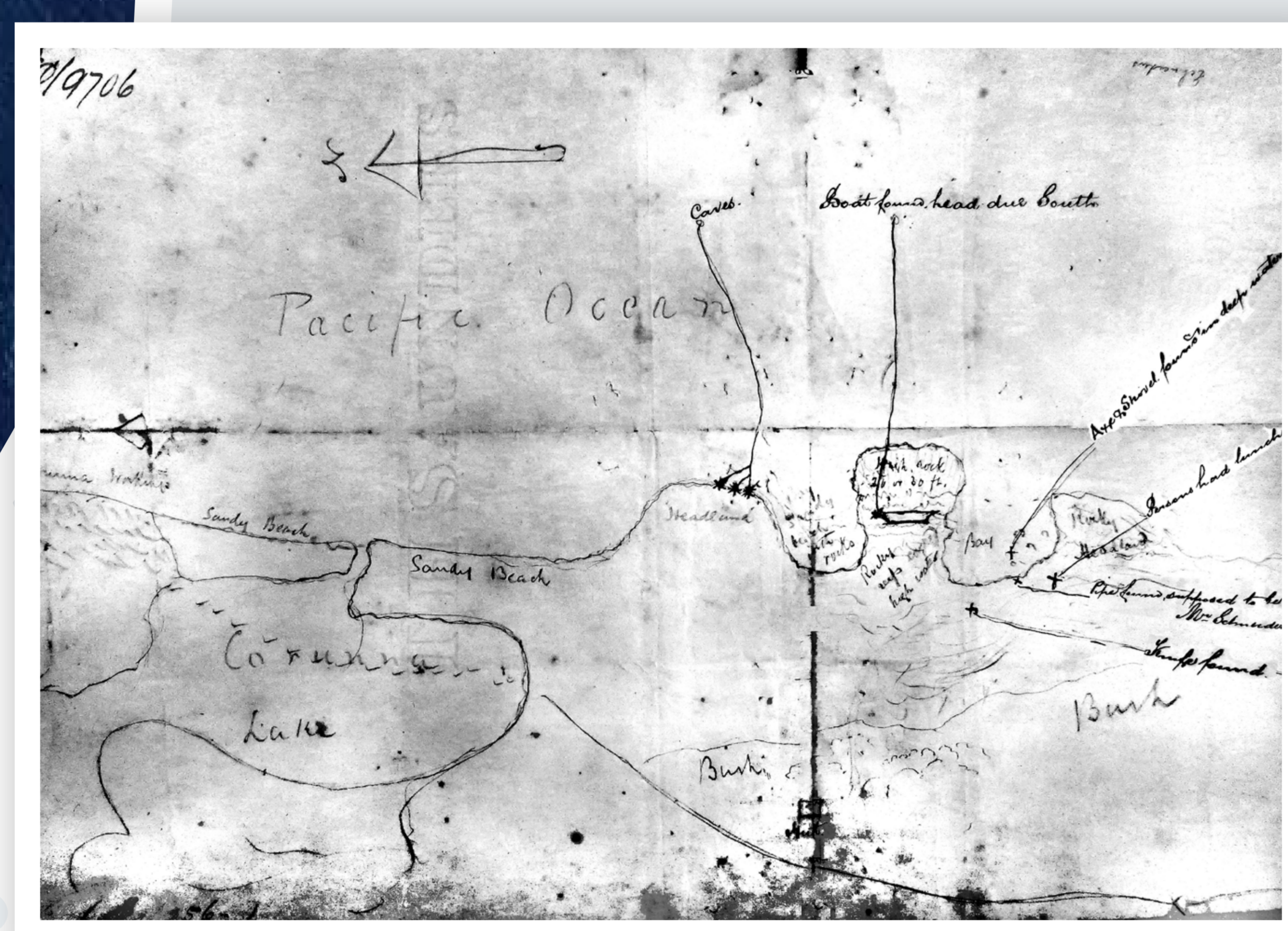
When gold was discovered near Bermagui in 1880, the NSW Mines Department sent their geologist, Lamont Young, and a botanist, Maximilian Schneider, to survey the goldfield.

On arrival at Bermagui River on Friday 8th October, Young and Schneider set up camp near Batemans Bay boatman, Thomas Towers, and his friends William Lloyd and Daniel Casey. Young and Schneider visited Montreal goldfield the following day and also arranged for Towers to take them to Corunna by boat.

None of the five men were seen again after Saturday.



POSITIONS OF EVIDENCE, CORUNNA (ACCORDING TO 1880 POLICE SKETCH MAP)



SKETCH MAP CONSIDERED BY 1883 SELECT COMMITTEE OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY TO REPORT ON THE DISAPPEARANCE (MINE SPECIAL BUNDLE 2/3512 NSW STATE RECORDS)



LAMONT YOUNG



MAXIMILIAN SCHNEIDER

On Sunday afternoon Towers' boat was found wrecked near Corunna Point, north of the area now known as Mystery Bay.

While some claimed to have seen the boat leaving the Bermagui River, no one could confirm who was in the boat. The boat was found without its sails, and planks stoved out, not in, suggesting foul play. The anchor and stern ropes were missing. Young's personal effects were found in the boat, along with other items thought to belong to the other four men. Various items were scattered on the beach.

The police investigation was flawed from the beginning, confounded by an early belief the five men drowned.

The wreck site was searched by police but Young's campsite was never properly searched. Many possible leads were either ignored or discounted. In 1884, a Select Committee of the Legislative Assembly were 'inclined to the belief that the party were murdered and their bodies thrown overboard some distance from the shore, in order to evade detection'. One later theory implicated Edward Reader, a botanist living behind the dunes at Tilba Tilba, who disappeared the day after the wreck was discovered.

To this day there is no credible explanation for the disappearance of the five men.



REWARD NOTICE (NSW STATE RECORDS 4/459 AND 4/460)



SKETCH "ON THE BEACH, NEAR THE MOUTH (BLOCKED UP BY SAND) OF THE CORUNNA LAKE" (TOWN AND COUNTRY JOURNAL, 21 APRIL 1883)



The mystery remains . . .