

BROOKSBY

45 OCEAN AVENUE, DARLING POINT



Brooksby c1958

In 1841 the merchant James Macle hose purchased part of Elizabeth Pike's original grant in Darling Point for £780, and he and his wife built the house *Brooksby* on the site.

Macle hose was the proprietor of a fancy goods store in Hunter Street known as the *Tunbridge Warehouse*, and was also a manufacturer of umbrellas and parasols.

The house he built was constructed of stone quarried from the site and both the construction and the extensive landscaping were carried out by convict labour.

Brooksby was famous for its gardens. Imported English flowers and trees figured prominently and the gardens featured two large ornamental ponds.

It appears that Macle hose did not enjoy *Brooksby* for long as he was living in *Mort's Cottage* in Ocean Street by 1842. During the 1840s *Brooksby* had a series of short term tenants including the Civil Crown Solicitor, George Cooper Turner, and Robert Tooth, who may have lived there whilst his house, *Swifts*, was being built.

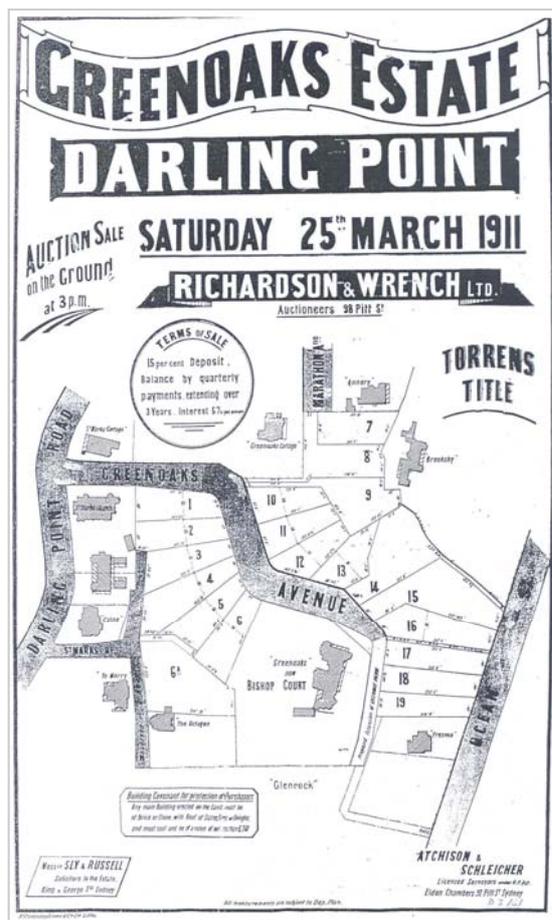
Possibly the most notable of the early residents of *Brooksby* was Robert Johnson who lived there in the 1850s and 1860s.

Johnson, a solicitor, was a member of the first NSW Legislative Council and served there from 1856 until his resignation in 1861. In 1863 he was reappointed to the Council but his promising political career was cut short when he died, at *Brooksby*, aged 44.

During his time at *Brooksby* Johnson was responsible for many changes to the house including the addition of the single storied wings. It was also Johnson who gave the house its name.

After Johnson's death the house passed to his son James William, and it remained in the family until the turn of the century when it became the venue for Mrs Robinson's Preparatory School for Boys between the years 1899 to 1905.

After serving briefly as the home of the French Consul, General M Pinard in 1906/7, *Brooksby* proceeded to live a quiet existence until its demolition for a unit development in 1965.



Greenoaks Estate showing the position of Brooksby

From Maps and Mansions by David Stanley
Local History Centre
Woollahra Library
Sherbrooke Hall
Double Bay NSW 2028