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I am grateful to Gavin Malone for enthusiastically sharing with me his library research and on-the-ground investigations around McLaren Vale; and for his encouragement.

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Place Name SUMMARY (PNS) 4.03.02/03

RUWURU or RUWARUNG

(last edited: 26.11.2016)

SEE ALSO: PNS 4.03.02/02 Tirranangku.

NOTE AND DISCLAIMER:

This essay has not been peer-reviewed or culturally endorsed in detail.

The spellings and interpretations contained in it (linguistic, historical and geographical) are my own, and do not necessarily represent the views of KWP/KWK or its members or any other group.

I have studied history at tertiary level. Though not a linguist, for 30 years I have learned much about the Kurna, Ramindjeri-Ngarrindjeri and Narungga languages while working with KWP, Rob Amery, and other local culture-reclamation groups; and from primary documents I have learned much about the Aboriginal history of the Adelaide-Fleurieu region.

My explorations of 'language on the land' through the Southern Kurna Place Names Project are part of an ongoing effort to correct the record about Aboriginal place-names in this region (which has abounded in confusions and errors), and to add reliable new material into the public domain.

I hope upcoming generations will continue this work and improve it. My interpretations should be amplified, re-considered and if necessary modified by KWP or other linguists, and by others engaged in cultural mapping: Aboriginal people, archaeologists, geographers, ecologists and historians.

Chester Schultz, 21 July 2017.

Place Name SUMMARY (PNS) 4.03.02/03

RUWURU or RUWARUNG

(last edited: 26.11.2016)

Abstract

Ruwuru, or *Ruwarung*, is the Ngarrindjeri-Ramindjeri name for the beach spring 350 metres southwest of the jetty ruins at Port Willunga, as remembered by Aboriginal people from the Encounter Bay and Lakes region (such as Albert Karlowan and Reuben Walker) who travelled regularly to Adelaide in the late 19th century.

There is no record of the name in times of first contact. It is 'just a name', with no known meaning.

This spring (and others running northeast from it under the sea) served at least two Aboriginal campsites nearby, which were occupied especially in summer when mulloway (butterfish) were present.

The spring *Ruwarung* bubbles up on the beach but is covered by the sea at high tide. It is one of those created by the hero Tjirbuki along the coast as he travelled south, carrying the dead body of his beloved nephew and stopping from time to time to weep over it; the tears became the springs.

KWP has adapted the name into Kurna form as *Wirruwarrungga*.

The Kurna name for the undersea springs was also recorded: see PNS 4.03.02/02 Tirranangku.

Both names may perhaps have been used, in their respective times and cultures, to refer also to the whole area including the beach spring, the underwater springs and the campsites.

Coordinates	Latitude -35.264207°, Longitude 138.456949°
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Language Information

<i>Meaning</i>	Unknown
<i>Etymology</i>	<i>Ruwuru</i> [meaning unknown] + optional <i>ngk</i> 'at'
<i>Notes</i>	Tindale (from Karlowan) gives the name as <i>Ruwarung</i> , which seems to have a Locative ending ('at, place of'); but this is optional, since Berndt (also from Karlowan) gives it without one. Tindale gives the unstressed second vowel as <i>a</i> ; but an unstressed vowel is easy to mistake, and the more difficult reading <i>u</i> in Berndt is more likely to be correct.
<i>Language Family</i>	Yaraldic: 'Ngarrindjeri'
<i>KWP Former Spelling</i>	
<i>KWP New Spelling 2010</i>	
<i>Phonemic Spelling</i>	
<i>Syllabification</i>	"Ruwu-ru" or "Ruwa-rung":
<i>Pronunciation tips</i>	Stress the first syllable. Secondary stress on third syllable. Every 'u' as in 'put'.

Main source evidence

<i>Date</i>	1934
<i>Original source text</i>	"Ibaritji (considered to be the last Kurna woman) ..." [<i>her kin included a man of the</i>] "Ruwarunzheri of Ruwarung ..." [<i>here 'zh' represents a phonetic character</i>]
<i>Reference</i>	Tindale, 'Notes from Reuben Walker 21-24 April and July 1934', Southeast of SA journal Vol.2, AA 338/1/33/2: 152.
<i>Informants credited</i>	Reuben Walker
<i>Informants uncredited</i>	

<i>Date</i>	Probably 1935
<i>Original source text</i>	- "fish spearing place / kill butterfish here" [<i>arrow to coast of Section 396</i>] - " Ru:warunj / 'salty springs' " [<i>arrow to coast of Section 402 a little east of Snapper Point</i>]
<i>Reference</i>	Tindale annotated map Hundred of Willunga, AA 338/24/97, SA Museum.
<i>Informants credited</i>	Albert Karlowan (Dec 1935, March 1939, 1941)
<i>Informants uncredited</i>	



Date	1936
Original source text	“He [‘Tji:rbuki’] then walked to [‘ Ru:waruŋ ’] (a few hundred yards south of Port Willunga jetty). The tide was out. He sat down on the beach and cried some more. The [‘lu:ki’] (tears) dropped on the sand, causing a spring to appear. At high tide the sea covered it, but when the sea went down again water could be obtained by scratching in the sand. It remains so today. The old man then carried his nephew’s body to the beach at Sellick’s Hill...”
Reference	Tindale 1936, ‘Story of [Tji:rbuki], a legend of the people of Rapid Bay’, in Tindale and Mountford 1936, ‘Results of the Excavation of Kongarati Cave’, <i>Records of SA Museum</i> Vol. 5 (4): 501.
Informants credited	Albert Karlowan
Informants uncredited	

Date	[c.1940] / 1993
Original source text	- “He went on... to Putatang (Red Ochre Cove) where he cried... He continued on to Lukar (Luki, place of tears, Port Willunga), and yet another spring was formed. Then he went on to Ruwuru (near Aldinga), wailing. He picked up his sister’s son again and went on walking to a cave (<i>peki</i>) near Sellicks Beach...” {p234} - [map] “9 spring” [marked north of Pt Willunga] – [legend] “9 Luki spring” [p330-1]. - [plus other texts: see Discussion]
Reference	Berndt & Berndt 1993, <i>A World That Was</i> : 234, 330-1.
Informants credited	Albert Karlowan
Informants uncredited	

Date	n.d. [1960s-80s?]
Original source text	“ Ru:waruŋ ” [sic] [arrow to coast west of Section 386, just north of Willunga Creek]
Reference	Tindale annotated map County Adelaide, AA 338/24/107.
Informants credited	
Informants uncredited	

Date	n.d. [1960s-80s]
Original source text	“ Ru:waruŋ Kaurna Tr, Rapid Bay S Aust. Camp at Section 386 and vicinity H of Willunga, now known as Port Willunga. Lit. Hot place. <i>Deriv</i> : [‘ruwe] land + [‘rangkin] burning. Probably a name given by a southern group describing a more northern climate...”
Reference	Tindale Kaurna place-name card, in AA 338/7/1/12.
Informants credited	
Informants uncredited	



Date	[1985] / 1987
Original source text	<p>- “Then Tjirbruki left, following the track of his <i>kari</i> along the coast to [Ka`reildun] (Hallett Cove) and on to [ˈTainba`ran], now Port Noarlunga, to [ˈRu:waruŋ] (Port Willunga), and to [ˈWitawali] where the tracks turned inland...” [p.7a]</p> <p>- “Carrying his burden {<i>Kulultuwi’s corpse</i>}, now a dry compact parcel, Tjirbruki said, ‘I go back now!’ He departed, walking along the coast to [Ka`reildun], now called Hallett Cove... He went on to... [ˈRuwaruŋ] (several hundred metres south of Port Willunga jetty). The tide was out. He sat down on the beach and cried once more. The [ˈlu:ki] (tears) dropped on the sand, causing a spring to appear. At high tide the sea covered it, but when the tide fell again the fresh water could be obtained by scraping in the sand. It remains so today. The old man then carried the body to [ˈWitawali] on the beach north of Sellicks Hill.” [p.8b]</p>
Reference	Tindale 1987, ‘The Wanderings Of Tjirbruki: a tale of the Kurna people of Adelaide’, <i>Records of SA Museum</i> , No. 20: 7-8.
Informants credited	
Informants uncredited	

Date	n.d. [late 1980s]
Original source text	<p>“NOTE: Native names in the districts south of Adelaide show influences of Ra:mindjeri. The derivations are often from the latter, although the country was in Kurna _____ in [MS version on p.77 says ‘hands at’] the time of first white occupation – e.g. Snapper Point [Ru:waruŋ]. There is apparently a stratification with Kurna culture, etc. superimposed on Ramindjeri. This is confirmed by the extension of Ra:mindjeri legends to Adelaide as in the story of [Tji:rbuki]. Note that the initial ‘r’ is absent in Kurna, although it appears in a few place names.”</p>
Reference	Tindale, ‘Place Names: Drafts For Text’, AA338/10/2: 71 (typescript), 77 (manuscript).
Informants credited	
Informants uncredited	

Discussion: RUWURU, PLACE OF LIFE-GIVING TEARS:

ABORIGINAL PLACE-NAMES AT PORT WILLUNGA:

The first record of an Aboriginal place-name belonging at Port Willunga was made in 1934, though it did not identify the place explicitly. The senior Ramindjeri man Reuben Walker was telling

Tindale about the Kurna woman “Ibaritji” and her ancestry. According to Walker, her kin included a man of the clan “Ruwarunzheri of Ruwarung”.¹

A year or so later the Yaraldi senior man Albert Karlowan gave Tindale his version of the story of “Tji:rbuki”. During the hero’s sorrowful journey southward along the coast, he wept at this place Ruwarung.²

He then walked to [ˈRu:waruŋ] (a few hundred yards south of Port Willunga jetty). The tide was out. He sat down on the beach and cried once more. The [ˈlu:ki] (tears) dropped on the sand, causing a spring to appear. At high tide the sea covered it, but when the sea went down again water could be obtained by scratching in the sand. It remains so today.

Tindale mapped this name under Karlowan’s guidance (probably in December 1935),³ glossing it as “salty springs”. However, the location is much further south of the jetty ruins (about 1.4 km).⁴ It may be intended only as a rough indication, or may have been marked before Tindale heard about the ‘few hundred yards’.

In fact, Tindale’s various records are fairly loose about the location of Ruwarung. Sometimes he placed it at ‘Port Willunga’ as a generalization,⁵ and once even placed it *north* of both the jetty and

¹ Tindale 1934, ‘Notes from Reuben Walker 21-24 April and July 1934’, Southeast of SA’ journal Vol.2, AA 338/1/33/2: 152. At this time Tindale was using a phonetic symbol which I cannot reproduce here but have given as ‘zh’. It represents a sound like the ‘z’ in ‘azure’, which most other authors heard and wrote as ‘dj’, e.g. in the familiar Ngarrindjeri Possessive suffix *-indjeri* ‘belonging to’. Clan identities are always complex and potentially controversial. This clan, like the place-name, was part of Ramindjeri-Ngarrindjeri culture in the late 19th century. Insofar as I understand it, the Ramindjeri informant Reuben Walker (Pulpumini, 1860-1935) seems to have regarded the Port Willunga area in his lifetime either as part of Ramindjeri territory, or perhaps territory of the trading partners of the “*real Raminzheri*” further south (see Tindale’s ambiguous note on p.161 of the same source). These perceptions and names would have been different among the Kurna-speaking people who occupied the area at first contact (as shown by the other place-names recorded on the Gulf coast from 1831 to 1837, which are *all* in Kurna language); and at that time Ngarrindjeri speakers may or may not have spoken of the ‘Ruwarunzheri’: we don’t know. In my two essays about Port Willunga my concern is mainly with the place, its names and the language of the names.

² Tindale 1936, ‘Story of [Tji:rbuki], a legend of the people of Rapid Bay’, in Tindale and Mountford 1936, ‘Results of the Excavation of Kongarati Cave’, *Records of SA Museum* Vol. 5 (4): 501. Note that Tindale normally represents the *ng* sound by the phonetic symbol *ŋ*.

³ Tindale annotated map Hundred of Willunga, AA 338/24/97. In the annotation “*Ruw:waruŋ*”, the last vowel ‘u’ appears to have been written over an original ‘a’, “*Ru:waruŋ*”. He must have concluded upon the *u* sound by the time of his 1936 essay; but much later reverted to it (temporarily and probably inadvertently) on one of his secondary maps (County Adelaide AA 338/24/107).

⁴ This location seems to have been used by the Survey Department for “*Ruwarung Springs*” on the last edition (1985) of its hard-copy raster maps (Diagram Book Hundred of Willunga, Map1). As noted below, it seems now to have been superseded by gazetting ‘Ruwarung Spring’ at Tindale’s location for the ‘fish spearing place’ (see the Report for Ruwarung at <http://maps.sa.gov.au/plb/> [25/5/2015]). The meaning given in this report – “*brackish watering place*” – presumably paraphrases Tindale’s “*salty springs*”; but this interpretation is incorrect both linguistically and geographically, as we have seen.

⁵ Tindale maps AA 338/16/7 and /8; Tindale Kurna place-name card [612].



Willunga Creek.⁶ But in the draft notes for an introduction to his proposed Gazetteer of place-names, he put it at “Snapper Point”, further south than ever.⁷

Around 1940, Ronald Berndt also heard from Karlowan about the “Ruwurindjera” clan which, he said, was named “from Ruwuru, a point located south of Port Willunga”.⁸ Berndt’s map of this area is too small in scale to be sure of exact locations, but appears to equate ‘Ruwuru’ with a “fishing ground” indicated roughly at the mouth of Willunga Creek, and a “spring” somewhere in the same vicinity or just north of it.⁹ In the verbatim Yaraldi text, Karlowan’s account of Tjirbuki around the Port Willunga area is very vague about locations. After the wailing at “Putatang” (Ochre Cove, 4 km north of Port Willunga),

wonyili-an plundanang lamba thuperamb ikak Ruwuru
Then he picked him up again for carrying it (him) to Ruwuru

ngalakin k’relkunin ngalak k’relkunin
there wailing there wailing

andin Ruwuru plundanang itjan nangangopoli.
from here Ruwuru picked him up that sister’s son.

Wonyili-an plundanang lambul ngoperamb ak ika-aka ngalakin
Then he picked him up [again] for walking here right down there

k’relkunanang Pukangk.
wailing at Puki (cave) place –

According to Berndt and his map, the *Puki* (or *Peki*) cave place is somewhere near Sellicks Hill, from which the next stop is the *nguri* reed swamp at Carrickalinga.¹⁰ So in Karlowan’s extant account ‘Ruwuru’ is merely somewhere between Ochre Cove and Sellicks Hill. Berndt’s own

⁶ Tindale map County Adelaide, AA 338/24/107. The ‘Tjirbruki’ plaque in Towilla Yerta Reserve (at the carpark just south of the creek mouth) also places a spring north of the jetty: “*he sat north of this location and created a fresh water spring called Ruwaring [sic]*”. This error may have arisen by taking literally one of the records which place it at the mouth of the creek by way of the generalization ‘at Port Willunga’.

⁷ Snapper Point is 1.8 km south of the jetty ruins.

⁸ Berndt & Berndt 1993: 312. Berndt’s “*Ruwurindjera*” is the plural form of Tindale’s singular “*Ruwarunzheri*”. Berndt’s third vowel here is *i*, contradicting the *u* in all other records. Probably it is optional whether the suffix *indjeri* adapts or not to the final vowel of the root (as the Locative *ang*k may also do, e.g. in *Ruwarung*).

⁹ Berndt & Berndt 1993: 330-1.

¹⁰ Berndt 1993: 234, 330-1.



paraphrased account in English tries to be more specific in its geography of Ruwuru (no doubt from conversations with Karlowan), but becomes confusing and probably misleading. From Ochre Cove

He continued on to Lukar (Luki, place of tears, Port Willunga) and yet another spring was formed. Then he went on to Ruwuru (near Aldinga), wailing. He picked up his sister's son again and went on walking to a cave (peki) near Sellicks Beach.

It is extremely doubtful that Karlowan was actually using *luki* or *lukar* (singular and plural forms of the common word for 'tears') as a place-name.¹¹ But it seems Berndt got the impression that there were two different places: a spring 'Luki' somewhere near Port Willunga, perhaps just north of the creek, and a fishing ground 'Ruwuru' just south of it.

Tindale and Berndt interpreted the geography differently, even though it was the same informant telling the same story. Such unwitting confusion can be hard to avoid even in other cases when the interviews are done onsite and the places pointed out physically, and especially hard when the researcher does not know the country. In this case Tindale was more specific about the fishing ground; it was near the 'Ruwarung' spring site but not identical with it. His map shows a "fish spearing place – kill butterfly here"¹² in the sea off the southwestern end of Section 396,¹³ by my measurement about 600 metres southwest of the jetty; i.e. east of Snapper Point, near the northeast end of Aldinga Reef. From here, extending 400 metres further southwest right next to the beach, today's GoogleEarth images show large patches of clear sandy bottom surrounded by reef: the only such spots in the immediate area. Subject to clarification by Aboriginal fishermen, these probably are or were ideal places to see the fish from the beach as well as from the low cliffs above, and to trap and spear them.

ABORIGINAL PEOPLE AT PORT WILLUNGA:

In the decades after first contact, Ngarrindjeri-speaking travellers, such as Tindale's elderly informants Karlowan, Walker and Milerum (Clarence Long) visited this area much more frequently than their pre-1836 ancestors. At this period their Kaurna-speaking relatives and other original occupants were largely disappearing, decimated by disease, deported to Poonindie near Port Lincoln by 1850, others existing as fringe dwellers or absorbed into the southern majority culture. Port Willunga was a regular summer fishing place for the southern travellers. In an interview with

¹¹ See PNS 4.03.02/06 Luki.

¹² 'Butterfish' and 'Kingfish' are common alternative names for Mulloway, a large fish which was an important source of food from the Coorong and Lakes to Yorke Peninsula and the West Coast of SA.

¹³ Tindale annotated map Hundred of Willunga, AA 338/24/97. Section 396 is now separated from the sea by the narrow strip of newer Section 802; Tindale's location is approximately that of the currently gazetted 'Ruwarung Spring / Wirruwarrunga', almost opposite Zephyr Tce.

one of the Thomas Martin family of Port Willunga, Steve Hemming recorded memories which dated from around the turn of the 20th century up to perhaps 1910:¹⁴

They came from Port Elliot when the weather was too rough for fishing and they knew that the fishing was better at Port Willunga. He particularly mentions that they were after the mulloway... the group he knew came to the area predominately [sic] to catch fish.

There were two regular camp areas: one in the fore-dunes on the site of the former caravan park (immediately south of the creek mouth), the other on a nearby hill which these visitors called "Dulil".¹⁵ The people followed the mulloway (butterfish) up the coast, and might head further north when they heard news from the "Watching place on cliffs for shoals of Mulloway" which Milerum knew 6 km to the north,¹⁶ near the big and ancient campsites on the southern approach to Pedler Creek.¹⁷

Martin "also emphasizes the ease with which they obtained water":

When the Willunga Creek dried up or became too brackish the Aborigines used fresh water springs on the beach... He describes a fresh water spring that was not far south of the jetty and during very high tides the salt water would wash over it. The Aborigines would dig down into the sand until the fresh water bubbled up, he goes on to say, "that's all they used for water".¹⁸

From these details, coupled with modern observations, we can become very specific about the place where Tjirbuki wept and created his life-giving beach spring, as told by Karlowan in conversations with Berndt and Tindale.

The spring place was called 'Ruwuru' or 'Ruwarung' and was located "a few hundred yards" south of the jetty, at the extreme northeast end of Aldinga Reef, and within a few hundred yards of the 'fish spearing place'.

In times of need – say, in a dry summer –not only were springs essential (as Hemming points out) but the ones here were 'all they used for water';¹⁹ and it seems this was because there were other springs where water was accessible even at high tide.

¹⁴ Steve Hemming 1985, 'Aborigines of Port Willunga: Reminiscences of Thomas Martin', *Journal of the Anthropological Society of SA* 23(9): 24-28.

¹⁵ Hemming 1985: 24. For 'Dulil' see PNS 4.03.02/07.

¹⁶ Tindale map AA 338/16/6. The same information is marked at Section 353 on the County Adelaide map AA 338/24/107.

¹⁷ This ancient campsite area is now part of the Moana Sands Conservation Park.

¹⁸ Hemming 1985: 25.

¹⁹ Hemming 1985: 25.

Darrell Kraehenbuehl told me there are “several springs”.²⁰ Some decades ago a young Aboriginal man told Grant Pinnington that fresh water is available in the sea “just beyond” the jetty ruins, ten feet under the sea; “you could dive down and swallow a mouthful of it”. Pinnington says there are “several [springs] along a line from the edge of the ruin of the jetty in a line parallel to the beach but also aiming at where the reef meets the beach”,²¹ and that fresh water was “collected in bladders made of hide where the bubbles can be seen... they tried to get water from the beach if possible but they used both”.²² These underwater springs were also remembered by the southern travellers under their Kurna name *Tirranangku*.²³ It seems there is a whole system of springs here, some available in the sea at any time, others on the beach with less effort but only at low tide.²⁴

During my family’s visits to the beach at low tide in 1988 and 2001, we photographed fresh water bubbling up through several small holes in the sand, including one which was visible under a couple of inches of seawater. They were at the eastern edge of the rock shelf at the north-eastern extremity of the Aldinga Reef, about 350 metres from the jetty ruins. At other high-tide visits in 2012 and 2016 they were all under water and invisible.

This experience coincides with Karlowan’s and Martin’s descriptions of bubbling through sand and scraping or digging. Its location is the one I give in this essay for Tjirbuki’s spring and for *Ruwarung*.

It does not quite agree with the location gazetted in 1978 for ‘Ruwarung Spring’ about 260 metres further southwest.²⁵ I do not know how this location was arrived at, but it happens to coincide with that of the ‘fish spearing place’ mapped by Tindale.²⁶

Place-names can be flexible in the size of the area to which they are applied. The line of undersea springs (as described by Pinnington)²⁷ is positioned at an angle which strongly suggests that they are part of the same hydrological microsystem as the beach spring, the latter marking a surface outlet of the subterranean drainage which feeds them all. Coupled with natural extensions of meaning, this makes it likely that both names *Tirranangku* and *Ruwuru* would be used from afar to

²⁰ Darrell Kraehenbuehl p.c. 1990s.

²¹ i.e. ‘aiming at’ the site of Ruwuru beach spring (see below).

²² Grant Pinnington p.c. 9 Sep 2013, emails 22 & 23 Nov 2016.

²³ See PNS 4.03.02/02.

²⁴ The signage at Towilla Yerta Reserve (at the carpark a short distance south of the creek mouth) contains a new interpretation of Karlowan’s Tjirbuki spring. It reads: “*Tjirbruki walked the length of the coast with his nephew Kulutuwi tracking Kari (Emu). On his travels he sat north of this location and created a fresh water spring called Ruwaring [sic]. Tjirbruki created a second fresh water spring where he sat and cried on the beach when his nephew died. This spring is just out to sea at Port Willunga*”. I have no information about any spring north of this point. The ‘second spring’ is presumably the underwater one referred to by Pinnington. “*Tjirbruki*” is the spelling Tindale used in his 1987 essay. More hydrological homework would be needed to see whether there is any on-the-ground basis for any of the alternative locations, and this I must leave to others. Were there other nearby springs which I have not seen or heard about? Or were the officially mapped locations based on taking Tindale’s rough map markings literally (as I suspect)?

²⁵ See the Report for Ruwarung at <http://maps.sa.gov.au/plb/> (25/5/2015).

²⁶ AA 338/24/97.

²⁷ See above.

refer to the whole notable area of springs and campsites. However, the records do distinguish them from each other.

TINDALE'S LATER SPECULATIONS:

Fifty years after his mapping sessions with Karlowan, Tindale was drafting an Introduction to his proposed Place-names Gazetteer. In a section titled 'Place Names as History' he wrote a note about the Ramindjeri place-names on Kurna land in this area, "e.g. Snapper Point [Ru:warun]".²⁸ But Snapper Point is even further away from the jetty ruins (1.8 km), and once again we may safely assume that he had no new information, and that this was intended only as a nearby topographical reference point.

Probably around the same time, he wrote another map annotation and a place-name card which show why his secondary records must always be checked against other information. On the County Adelaide map²⁹ (one of a series finalizing his place-name research in the region) he spells the name as "Ru:waran"; the last vowel 'a' is not a new piece of information but an error which he had corrected on the original Willunga map. His location arrow points to Section 386, north of Willunga Creek instead of south (the position of 'Dulil' on the old Willunga map). On the card he corrects the spelling back to "Ru:warun", but maintains the new location: "Camp at Section 386 and vicinity".³⁰ These discrepancies are disconcerting evidence of haste, a careless reliance on secondary records, and a failure to check original sources – the more astonishing since at this time he was also writing his big essay on "Tjirbruki", which recapitulates the exact location of Ruwarung from Karlowan 1936, "several hundred metres south of Port Willunga jetty".³¹

THE WORD 'RUWARUNG' / 'RUWURU', AND POSSIBLE MEANINGS?

The spelling differences between Tindale's "Ruwarung" and Berndt's "Ruwuru" are slight.

Tindale records a form which is probably Locative, 'place of *ruwaru*'.

Berndt's "Ruwuru" has no Locative. For the second vowel it gives *u* instead of *a*. This, being unstressed, would be easy to mistake, and Karlowan might have said either; but *a* is a default perception, so that the *u* – a more difficult reading, more likely to reflect careful listening – is more likely to be correct.

²⁸ Tindale n.d. (late 1980s), 'Place Names: Drafts For Text', AA338/10/2: 71, 77.

²⁹ Tindale n.d. (?1980s), annotated map County Adelaide, AA 338/24/107.

³⁰ Tindale Kurna place-name card [612] 'Ru:warun'.

³¹ Tindale 1987, 'The Wanderings of Tjirbruki', *Records of SA Museum* 20: 8b.



A place-name need not have a 'derivation' or dictionary meaning (consider 'Rome' or 'Asia'). If we must hunt for derivations, a case might be made for *ruwar* 'plentiful, abundant' with the standard Ngarrindjeri Locative *angk*, giving *Ruwarangk*, 'place of plenty'. Sometimes the Locative can be *ung*, matching Tindale; but there would be no reason to use *ung* unless the root ended with a *u* as in *Ruwuru* – and this subverts the *ruwar* theory.

According to Berndt's record, Karlowan said the name *Ruwuru* was derived from a fish: not the Mullet but the clan's totem, "*uwal*" or *kuratji*. Berndt identified it as the saltwater Tommy Ruff,³² but other sources indicate that we should modify this to 'like a Tommy ruff'.³³

Reuben Walker agreed independently about the existence in those times of a "Ruwarinzheri" clan whose land was focussed around "Ruwarung".³⁴

Was there perhaps an important Dreaming site of this small fish somewhere at Port Willunga? We should not theorize too far in this direction. Berndt acknowledged that some of Karlowan's information on the Gulf coast was "open to question".³⁵ Walker seems to have said that everyone around the region had the same totem *wuruldi* (golden wattle).³⁶ In view of this, we may doubt his derivation of *Ruwuru* from *uwal* and/or *kuratji*; for Karlowan sometimes gave demonstrably false Ngarrindjeri 'folk etymologies' for Kaurna place-names along this coast.³⁷

The original map note in which Tindale recorded 'Ru:warun' also includes within inverted commas what appears to be a gloss: "salty springs". But there are no known words in either Ngarrindjeri or Kaurna which could associate this name with those meanings. Nor is it easy to understand why the name of an important source of fresh water would identify it 'salty'; nor did Tindale ever mention this again.

But derivations were his habit, and on the same dubious place-name card to which I referred above, he included another passing guess: "Lit. Hot place. Deriv: [ruwe] land + [rangkin] burning", and added a passing theory: "Probably a name given by a southern group describing a more

³² Berndt & Berndt 1993: 312, 565.

³³ Wyatt called the *kuratji* a "mullet"; Taplin "a Coorong fish". Gale quotes Doug Wilson: "salmon, a Coorong fish like a Tommy rough"; and Neville Gollan: "a bony saltwater fish you can catch in the Coorong, not as big as a mullet"; and concludes, "It is probably a Salmon trout which is a juvenile Australian salmon *Arripis trutta*" (M Gale 2009, *Ngarrindjeri Dictionary*: 31). The fish 'runs' up the Gulf coast include Tommy ruffs, Salmon and Mullet as well as Mullet (Hemming 1985: 25).

³⁴ Tindale 1934, 'Notes from Reuben Walker 21-24 April and July 1934', *Southeast of SA' journal* Vol.2, AA 338/1/33/2: 152.

³⁵ Berndt & Berndt: 23. Their informants were "unable to provide place names for much of this area". They admit to a "lack of data" on the clans here which they describe and map as 'Ramindjeri' (p.320, 330). "Karlowan's knowledge was most detailed in relation to his own dialectical unit, *Yaraldi*", around Raukkan on Lake Alexandrina (p.312).

³⁶ Tindale, 'Notes from Reuben Walker 1934': 153, 158.

³⁷ See e.g. his 'Turtotjalangga' in PNS 4.03.02/04 Tartatyilla. It is likely that in most cases Karlowan gave a 'derivation' for a name mainly because Tindale or Berndt asked for one. As Tindale once admitted about another informant, "Presumably Milerum did not dissect the name" (Ramindjeri vocabulary card 'wita' in AA338/7/1/17).



northern climate”.³⁸ The Ngarrindjeri words are cited from the literature, but as an interpretation of ‘Ruwarung’ his ‘burning land’ has no linguistic credibility. The second vowel is incorrect (*i* for *a* or *u*); so is the third (*a* for *u*); and there is no known precedent for such use of a Ngarrindjeri verb. He is grasping at linguistic straws for the sake of another item in his favoured ecological focus.

In fact we do not know any meaning for *Ruwuru* or *Ruwarung* which is even possible. Even *wuruldi*, though it might be worth investigating, does not explain the whole name. As far as we can tell, it is ‘just a name’.

‘WIRRUWARRUNGA’:

Between 2001 and 2007 KWP adapted ‘Ruwarung’ into Kurna form as “Wirruwarrunga”.³⁹ a process directly analogous to the two forms of the name of the Encounter Bay whale fishery site, as recorded by Wyatt in 1837 and Meyer in 1843: *Ramong* in Ramindjeri, Kurna version *Wirramulla*. Kurna language never begins a word with *r*. In order to adopt a two-syllable word like *Ramong*, an extra syllable is added at the beginning, the stress pattern is changed from *Ra-mong* to *Wirra-mu-*, and the Locative added is the one appropriate to the new three-syllable Kurna root, giving *Wirra-mu’lla*.

By analogy, the three-syllable *Ruwa-rung* could become in Kurna *Wirru-warru-* plus the Locative appropriate to the two-syllable root *waru-*, thus giving *Wirru-warrunga*.

This must count as a new name rather than a “traditional” one.⁴⁰ In my view it is probably redundant now that we have found a genuine Kurna name for (almost) the same site, *Tirranangku* (or perhaps *Tirrangga*).⁴¹

I now offer a controversial opinion which is simply my own and has no endorsement from any group. There is no inherent reason why the public should not see at Port Willunga two different Aboriginal names from different languages.⁴² The beach spring could revert to ‘Ruwuru’ (Ngarrindjeri), alongside ‘Tirranangku’ (Kurna) for the underwater springs. Both could be

³⁸ Tindale Kurna place-name card [612] ‘Ru:warun’.

³⁹ See Amery & Buckskin 2014, ‘Pinning down Kurna names: Linguistic issues arising in the development of the Kurna Placenames Database’, in ID Clark, L Hercus and L Kostanski (Eds) 2014, *Indigenous and Minority Placenames: Australian and International Perspectives*, Canberra, ANU Press, The Australian National University: 201-2, <http://press-files.anu.edu.au/downloads/press/p286811/pdf/ch101.pdf>. Cp. Amery 2001, ‘Reclaiming Kurna Language’, pp.30-40 in Holdfast Bay Reconciliation Group and Georgina Yambo Williams 2001, *Footprints In The Sand*, 2nd Edition revised: 3, 37, 39.

⁴⁰ About the rescinding in 2011 of the previously gazetted name ‘Ruwarung Spring’, the Land Services Group website report says, “*The traditional Kurna name is Wirruwarrunga*” (see <http://maps.sa.gov.au/plb/> [25/5/2015]).

⁴¹ See PNS 4.03.02/02 Tirranangku.

⁴² Two Ngarrindjeri names have already been publicized there for some decades, and the addition of an old Kurna name need not be too confusing. After all, an international map may acceptably show a place as “Deutschland / Germany” or “Hellas / Greece”.

acknowledged as names for Port Willunga, on condition that there be public information which makes clear that these were used by different language groups in different eras, each with true stories to tell, and explains their different historical, social and political circumstances. The names need not be a source of conflict.

But these must be decisions for Aboriginal people to make.

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End of Summary

DRAFT 26 Nov 2016