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Parts of it have been built on the shoulders of essential work done by Philip Clarke on 'The significance of whales to Aboriginal people of southern SA' (2001). He also kindly found and copied for me Tindale's missing document on 'Strike-a-lights', and Harvey's field notes 1939.

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Place Name SUMMARY (PNS) 6/23

BRUKANGGA and Tindale's uses of the word *bruki*

(last edited: 26.10.2018)

See also PNS 7.01/07 Tjirbuki.

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This essay has not been peer-reviewed or culturally endorsed in detail.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 [2018].

Place Name SUMMARY (PNS) 6/23

BRUKANGGA and Tindale's uses of the word *bruki*

(last edited: 22.10.2018)

See also PNS 7.01/07 Tjirbuki.

Abstract

At the date of last editing (above), we can be *fairly sure* that in times of first contact (1) 'Brookunga' (phonetic spelling *Brukangga*)¹ was an 'outsider' name for a deposit of iron pyrites in the southern Mt Lofty Ranges; (2) it was on Section 5279, Hundred of Kanmantoo; and (3) it meant 'place of fire', with a secondary reference to pyrites. However, none of these propositions is yet proved beyond all reasonable doubt.

The name was first drawn to public attention in 1952 as a new name officially bestowed on a new settlement on Section 5279 for workers at the proposed Nairne Pyrites Mine. The Nomenclature Committee reported that "during the original survey" of this area the name "Brookunga" had been recorded on "a creek running through *the section*" (i.e. Dawesley Creek, which also contained the northern part of the large pyrites deposit); or perhaps on "the creek running through *the area*". After consultation with NB Tindale and the Mt Barker District Council, the name was gazetted in the spelling "Brukunga".^{#05}The precise location attributed to 'Brookunga' in the survey is not fully confirmed, because the much older *primary* document has not been found so far. However, I am prepared to grant provisional benefit of the doubt that the references in 1952 are accurate (see Discussion).

Pyrites was one of the two or three kinds of stone which Aboriginal peoples east of the Southern Mt Lofty Range used in fire-making by percussion with flints: a method not used by the Gulf peoples. According to Tindale, Milerum in the 1930s told him that^{#03}the main trade source of pyrites was somewhere in "the Mt Lofty Ranges" or possibly "the southeastern portion" of them.^{#01}Since the deposit at Brukunga was uniquely large, it is almost certain (as Tindale came to believe) that this was the place Milerum was referring to. Europeans first came across the deposit in 1843, the same year attributed to the record of 'Brookunga' (see Discussion).

¹ In these essays I usually represent English pronunciations and spellings in non-italics with inverted commas (eg. 'Wi-`llunga'); and phonetic pronunciation in italics, usually in KWP's New Spelling system 2010 (*Wilangga*). Stressed syllables may be underlined for emphasis, or may be preceded by the diacritic ` (as in Tindale): i.e. `Wilangga means the same as *Wilangga*; likewise *ba`ruki* and *ba-ruki*.

Brukangga probably means ‘place of fire’, with an important secondary reference to the pyrites ‘fire-stone’ which was then obtainable at this place.² On Peramangk land but not in Peramangk language, it is clearly an ‘outsider’ name. It is also a linguistic hybrid. The first morpheme is probably ^{##08}*bruki*, one of the Ramindjeri-Ngarrindjeri words for ^{##09}‘fire’.³ According to Tindale, ^{#04}Milerum also said that *bruki* could also refer to the stones of iron pyrites which were used in making fire. The second morpheme is *ngga*, the standard Kaurna Locative (‘at, place of’). It was probably given to the first surveyors by an Aboriginal guide. The Discussion deals with possible reasons why the form is hybrid.

Coordinates	Lat. -35.0043, Long. 138.9393 [high in creek valley on Section 5279 where a hypothetical Aboriginal campsite might be located near a lookout]
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Language Information

Meaning	Probably ‘place of fire (or pyrites)’
Etymology	Probably <i>bruki</i> (Ngarrindjeri ‘fire, pyrites’ + <i>ngga</i> (Kaurna ‘at, place of’). Probably adapted from <i>bruki</i> + <i>angk</i> (Ngarrindjeri ‘at, place of’) > <i>Brukangk</i> (correct in Ngarrindjeri).
Notes	The place is on Peramangk land but the name is not in Peramangk language. It is likely that this hybrid form was a Kaurna version of a Ramindjeri outsider name <i>Brukangk</i> , in ignorance of the Ramindjeri word <i>bruki</i> . The Kaurna Locative <i>ngga</i> would normally retain the final vowel <i>i</i> of the root word, but the Ngarrindjeri Locative <i>angk</i> usually does not. Another Ngarrindjeri word is a homophone of <i>bruki</i> (same sound, different meaning, like English ‘bat’) but means ‘skin’. This is unlikely to be the root of <i>Brukangga</i> , but <u>might</u> become relevant <u>if</u> the exact location of ‘Brookunga’ in the surveys turns out not to be on a source of pyrites.
Language Family	Hybrid: Yaraldic (‘Ngarrindjeri’) + Thura-Yura (‘Kaurna’)
KWP Former Spelling	Brukangga
KWP New Spelling 2010	Brukangga
Phonemic Spelling	/brukangka/
Pronunciation	“Brukangga”:
Pronunciation tips	Stress the first syllable. <i>u</i> as in ‘brook’. Every <i>a</i> as in Maori ‘haka’.

² Not now: the pyrites was completely mined out between 1955 and 1972.

³ Theoretically the root might be a Ngarrindjeri homophone of *bruki* meaning ‘skin, peel’; but this is unlikely, and would become relevant only if we find that ‘Brookunga’ in the first survey was not located on any source of pyrites.

Main source evidence

In Part 2 of this essay (included in the password-protected 'Complete' version of this document), I examine the uses to which the word *bruki* was put by Tindale in his published and unpublished writings about Brukunga and 'Tjirbruki'. Items of evidence which are relevant only to Part 2 are included in the chronological list here below, but they use **this Cambria font** (instead of **this Arial font** for items relevant to Part 1). Thus if you are reading only the Part 1 Discussion you can skip the Part 2 items:

<i>Date</i>	Nov 1843
<i>Original source text</i>	<p>- "Alcibius [= Penney] bade – "Tarrunkie, come and steer; Cheraboc, strike a light, that I may smoke; Tell me, who made the world and all that's here! Who thus in song, the old tradition spoke..."</p> <p>- [Penney's prose summary of the story] "... Ooroondooil [= Ngurunduri], the maker of the world, with three or four other spirits, woke up and found nothing but water. Ooroondooil made a piece of land, and they all got upon it. The names of the spirits who were with him were very much the same as those I have adopted, and referred to their several destinations, as 'Pereukie,' over the fire; 'Yilga,' over the sea, &c... Ooroondooil ordering each of the parties to make and bring the respective contribution to the general comfort, over which it would afterwards be his province to preside; as fire, wood, water, &c. He then sent them away over the world, which he extended, to look after their several dominions..."</p> <p>[Cheraboc continues] "... And gathered round Ooroondooil then, Amidst the hushing storms, An ugly race, who are not men,²⁶ Yet have their wants and forms...</p> <p>Hungry and chill, and tired withal, The spirits spake their lord – 'Wherefore, O master, didst thou call, That we attend thy word?'...</p> <p>[Ooroondooil says] '... A separate realm I give to each, To rule and fill with life; Beyond which limit none shall reach, Nor shall ye meet in strife.</p> <hr/> <p>²⁶ These beings answer rather to the character of magicians, being objects of dread, rather from their supposed power, than as agents of positive evil."</p> <p>Marma and Yilga o'er the sea, Pereukie fire and flame, Yappa the land, and Wyerrie The stubborn winds shall tame.</p> <p>Pereukie, make a spark and warm These cold and shivering frames; Yappa, draw wood upon thine arm To catch the kindling flames.</p>

	<p>Thou, Marma, to the sea descend, And from the parent stock, Fish of all kinds by Yilga send, With sea-shells from the rock!' ...</p> <p>Yilga he sent o'er plain and hill To sink the ancient wells; Marma, the sea with life to fill Where'er the billow swells. ...</p> <p>Pereukie reared the grass-tree's head,²⁷ And caused its tear to run: With fire its rising stalk he fed, Drawn from the noon-day sun..."</p> <p><small>²⁷ The grass-tree (Xanthorrhoea) is one of the most useful of the indigenous productions to the Australian native. It is the sole means he has of obtaining fire, by friction of its dry, pithy stalk. The "tear" exudes in the form of a gum-resin amongst the roots of the leaves; also from the seed-vessels..."</small></p>
Reference	'Cuique' [Richard Penney] (Robert Foster, ed. 1991), 'The Spirit of the Murray', <i>South Australian Magazine</i> 1842-3, as reprinted in <i>Journal of Anthropological Society of SA</i> 29(1), Adelaide 1991: 74, 79, 82-4.
Informants credited	(p.78-9) "two native boys, who were left with me one day when I was ill. One of them belonged to the Currency Creek, and the other to the Wationg tribe". The former was named "Cheraboc" (i.e. probably <i>Tjirrbuk</i>).
Informants uncredited	

Date	1930
Original source text	<p>- [<i>Chirr-bookie</i>' is on his way north to take revenge on the brothers who killed Koolatowie] "As is the custom when a person goes out to kill some one, Chirr-bookie left his camp without bidding anyone goodbye. As Chirr-bookie went along toward Mount Barker he communed with the Spirits... So the spirit of the north wind stepped forth and blew with much force round the base of Mount Barker, then leaped to the top, where Chirr-bookie sat with his head bowed, and said, 'O Chirr-bookie, I shall not intervene...' ... So Chirr-bookie hastened on to fulfil his desire, and he came to Mount Torrens. Once more he prayed, asking the spirits of weapons to guide and give accurate flight to the boomerang, the spear, and the waddy... Chirr-bookie went straight from Mount Torrens to the home of Eurowie and Pithowie..."</p> <p>- "When Chirr-bookie reached his home he took the remains of Koolatowie into a cave and placed them upon a ledge, and stretched himself out beside them. He prayed to the Father of All Spirits to come and transform him into a blue crane, and to call back the wandering spirit of Koolatowie and command it also to become a crane. The spirit came and sang a song that belonged to the Spirit World, and the body of Chirr-bookie became a stone man, which is still to be seen, and his spirit entered into the body of the blue crane."</p>
Reference	William Ramsay Smith 1930, 'Chirr-Bookie, The Blue Crane', in <i>Myths and Legends of the Australian Aborigines</i> , George Harrap, London: 340-1. Reprinted several times, e.g. as <i>Aborigine: Myths and Legends</i> , Senate imprints, Random House, 1996.

Informants credited	
Informants uncredited	David Unaipon for original MS c.1926; informant unknown, possibly Reuben Walker.

Date	Feb 1934
Original source text	<p>– [<i>Tjelbruke' is on his way north to take revenge on the brothers who killed Kulutuwi:</i>] “Tjel. Said I’m off, get 1 spear fixed properly. Went down to Pt Elliot. Another spear given to him there. <i>[inserted]</i> Kingfisher at Inman gave another. <i>[inserted]</i> Yoldi at Finnis gave one. Another spear given to him at Strathalbyn, followed hills on E side & came round by Gawler. Almost where camp was. Got to Brighton camp...”</p> <p>– [<i>at Brighton, Tjelbruke is about to burn the two murderers asleep in their hut:</i>] “... Took out stringy bark waddy tinder all about camp, all around the `taldamari (big camp). Burn up quick he told the fire Left little gap at door...”</p> <p>– [<i>at 'Warabari past Myponga', taking revenge on those who had failed to deliver his message of forgiveness to Kulutuwi</i>] “Tj... untied his bundle of spears. Took about a dozen from them, as many as he could hold. Walked str. into camp; Drove it into the ^gummy shark (Narak:ani), then into fiddler (nejaratawi) & then the limi (carpet shark) then long, thin shark with flag on it (tul:aki)...”</p> <p>– [<i>carrying Kulutuwi's smoke-dried body</i>] “... carried his nephew way inland, a big hill there called Warabari <i>[crossed out]</i> <i>[inserted:]</i> Witawali (highest part of hill towards Cape Jervis) & got good place there & put in cave. Instead of going back he made it wide enough for him to go on inside until he got right up on top of range at Warabari <i>[inserted: Witawali]</i>. He came out onto main range there looked down Shut air hole where he came out. Fixed up with gravel as if he never come out there. went down to foot of hill, making for sea beach. One place he shook himself dirt came off. Gold found there since may be off him.</p> <p>– [<i>the final stage of Tjelbruke's journey and transformation into a bird</i>] “Went down to cliff leading to Victor Harbour from Cape. Looked over; “It will do me alright” he said. How will I do it, he thought... made a run & started to fly straight away & became is bird (today bird like blue crane, ^<i>[inserted: same size]</i> feathers gold colour on chest. became the tjelbruke bird (found anywhere along coast on stones beak like blue crane.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">End of story.</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; margin: 5px auto; width: fit-content;">Change name Warabari to Witawali within story.</div> <p>Notes: `kula`laki = gold stone ?pyrites or yellow ochre used on spears to make flash...”</p>
Reference	Milerum (Clarence Long) 1934, ‘Story of Tjelbruke...’, in Tindale ‘Southeast of South Australia’ journal Vol.2, SA Museum AA338/1/33/2: 46, 47, 50, 52.
Informants credited	Milerum
Informants uncredited	Probably Ephraim Tripp for ‘Witawali’

<i>Date</i>	1936
<i>Original source text</i>	<p>[‘Tjirbuki’ has left the body of his nephew in a cave and continued on deep into the hill] “... He eventually came out on the top of the hills near a swamp lagoon. He could see the sun shining through a high crevice. He climbed up, and as he looked about, he said: ‘Well, there no use in my living like a man any more.’ He therefore transformed himself into a bird, called [tji:rbuki] (a species of ibis), and spent his time catching fish in the lagoon.</p> <p>Although only a common man [Tji:rbuki] was a wonderful person. He was not so powerful as [Nu`runduri], but nevertheless had power to influence people.”</p>
<i>Reference</i>	Tindale 1936, ‘Story of [Tji:rbuki]: a Legend of the People of Rapid Bay’, in CP Mountford & NB Tindale 1936, ‘Results of the Excavation of Kongarati Cave, near Second Valley, South Australia’, <i>Records of the South Australian Museum</i> Vol.5 No.4 (1936): 500-1.
<i>Informants credited</i>	‘Karloan’ (Albert Karlowan)
<i>Informants uncredited</i>	Probably Milerum 1934 for the detail of cave exit ‘on top of the hills’.

<i>Date</i>	14 Oct 1952
<i>Original source text</i>	<p>“... Dear Mr. Clare, Re: The Name BROOKUNGA. A check of the name shows that its meaning is “place of fire stone”. The natives were well aware of the use of iron pyrites along with flint for the striking of fire and the area near Nairne was one of the places from which they obtained supplies of iron pyrites.</p> <p>The technical spelling of the name would be BRUKANGA, hence the spelling BROOKUNGA would give a quite reasonable popular rendering of the name. Because of the possibility of it being misinterpreted as a combination of the English word brook and a native word meaning place it might be more appropriate to use the phonetically correct spelling indicated above (BRUKANGA). In view of its ancient associations and significance of derivation I think it would take precedence over any other suggestion for a name.</p> <p>I have checked my maps but could see nothing else which would be in any way appropriate.</p> <p>I trust this information will be of service.</p> <p>Yours sincerely, Norman B. Tindale Ethnologist.</p>
<i>Reference</i>	Tindale to R Clare (Chief Clerk of SA Dept of Lands) 14/9/1952, in ‘SA Housing Trust: Re naming of settlement at Nairne Pyrites Mine’, Department of Lands docket DL 5421/1952, State Records of SA.
<i>Informants credited</i>	NB Tindale
<i>Informants uncredited</i>	

<i>Date</i>	16 Oct – 19 Dec 1952
<i>Original source text</i>	- “ <u>16/10/52</u> Brukanga for proposed settlement at sec 5279, Hd Kanmantoo. Re iron pyrites mine. (name suggested by Mr L [sic] Tindale)...” - “ <u>19/12/52</u> ... Housing Trust DL5421/1952 19/12/1952 Name “ BRUKUNGA ” adopted in lieu of Brukanga .”
<i>Reference</i>	Minutes Book of SA Nomenclature Committee (held in SA Geographical Names Unit, Land Services Group).
<i>Informants credited</i>	“L Tindale”, who must be Norman Tindale (he was a consultant to the Nomenclature Committee in that year).
<i>Informants uncredited</i>	

<i>Date</i>	21 Oct 1952
<i>Original source text</i>	“... In accordance with the within request, the Committee, at a meeting with all members present, decided to recommend the adoption of the name “ BRUKANGA ” for the proposed new centre at Nairne Pyrites Mine on Section 5279, Hundred of Kanmantoo. There is a creek running through the section and it was named “ BROOKUNGA ” in the original survey. The Committee, after due research and reference to Mr. Tindale, Ethnologist, S.A. Museum, could see no reason why the phonetically correct spelling of the name, as indicated by Mr. Tindale, should not be adopted as indicated. ...”
<i>Reference</i>	FL Fisk (Chairman of Nomenclature Committee) to AH Peters (Director, Dept of Lands) 21/10/1952, in docket DL 5421/1952.
<i>Informants credited</i>	Original surveyors of Hundred of Kanmantoo
<i>Informants uncredited</i>	

<i>Date</i>	19 Dec 1952
<i>Original source text</i>	“... In connection with the desire of the District Council of Mount Barker to alter the spelling of the name “ BRUKANGA ” to “ BRUKUNGA ”, my Committee raises no objection to the suggested alteration. The new spelling “ BRUKUNGA ” will not in any way alter the native meaning, and it is accordingly recommended that the suggested amended name be adopted...”
<i>Reference</i>	FL Fisk (Chairman, Nomenclature Committee) to AH Peters (Director, Dept of Lands) 19/12/1952, in docket DL 5421/1952.
<i>Informants credited</i>	
<i>Informants uncredited</i>	

<i>Date</i>	n.d. [probably after 1952]
<i>Original source text</i>	“The Tanganekald made fire by striking iron pyrites against flint using as tinder the dried and finely ground twigs of a slender glabrous shrub... The iron pyrites came by trade from the Mt. Lofty Ranges, the principal source being at [blank gap] whose name means firestone . The flint was traded from the opposite, southerly direction...”

Reference	Tindale typescript, 'Fire making' [no pagination], in Journal of Researches in the South East of South Australia: Supplementary Papers, AA338/2/66.
Informants credited	Tanganekald people
Informants uncredited	Milerum

Date	1968
Original source text	<p>"... Milerum volunteered all information... An instance of this occurred when the writer of this article brought to the Museum some stone implements gathered from eroding dunes. Milerum was present and he picked up a piece of flint, struck sparks from it with the back of his pocket knife and said: "My people made fire that way."</p> <p>At first Tindale and I thought that this must be something learned from Europeans, as it had never been recorded from any Australian tribe when first brought into contact with us, but Milerum was positive. It had been known to his people prior to European settlement. They obtained the flint by barter from the tribe living to the south of their territory, while the striker was another kind of stone, obtained from the tribe whose territory included the southeastern portion of the Mount Lofty Ranges. They found it at a spot known as Brukangga. When Tindale looked up this name in the files, he found that it meant "Place for Fire" and was, in fact, the deposit of iron pyrites at Nairne...</p> <p>This was indeed surprising information, as it represented an independent discovery by an Aboriginal tribe of producing fire by what is generally known as the flint, steel and tinder method..."</p>
Reference	Harold A Lindsay 1968, 'Art and Artifacts', <i>Aboriginal Quarterly</i> : newspaper of Abschol, Aboriginal Affairs Department of NUAUS, Vol.1 No.2, April-July 1968: 18.
Informants credited	Milerum
Informants uncredited	

Date	n.d. [probably after 1969]
Original source text	<p>- "Flints came by way of trade from the Meintangki to the south east, and were at times hard to come by [sic] since they came from Bunganditj territory south of Cape Jaffa.</p> <p>The other element necessary, in conjunction with flint, to generate the sparks was called [baru:ki], iron pyrites, which is also the Tanganekald term for fire, as well as among the Jarildekald and Ramindjeri...</p> <p>The pyrites used came by trade from the Mount Lofty Ranges. There was some at Whale Hill, just north of the western boundary of his tribe..."</p> <p>- "bəru:ke iron pyrites `marti, stone `narn, tinder"</p>
Reference	Tindale Typescript, 'Strike-a-lights' (pp.1 & 3), in Tindale Filing Cabinet AA338/14, SA Museum.
Informants credited	Tanganekald people
Informants uncredited	Milerum

Date	n.d. [1978 or later]
Original source text	[hand-written] " BRUKUNGA " [with arrow towards town ' Brukung ' printed on base map; no other commentary on this name].
Reference	Tindale annotated map AA338/16/52 'Echunga' (photocopy of NE portion of base map 'South Australia 1:50 000 topographic series. 6627-1,.., Echunga', published in 1978).
Informants credited	
Informants uncredited	

Date	1985-7
Original source text	<p>- [p.8a] [<i>Tjirbruki</i> is on his way north to take revenge on the brothers who killed <i>Kulultuwi</i>:] "Tjirbruki, with his new weapons, chose to follow tracks along the eastern side of the Mount Lofty Ranges through Peramangk tribal country, keeping to their eastern boundary to avoid serious trespass. On the way he camped at [ˈWiljau`a:r] near Strathalbyn, then at [ˈPeiera] (Woodchester Waterfall), then at [ˈMotoŋeŋal] (Mount Barker), and at [Bə`rukunɡa], now the mining town of Brukung. Travelling on through places not now remembered, he came to [ˈKali:a] (Gawler) which was the begining [<i>sic</i>] of Tandanja clan country..."</p> <p>- [p.8b] [at <i>Warrpari</i> (Marion), <i>Tjirbruki</i> is about to burn the two murderers asleep in their hut:] "Tjirbruki was a master at fire-making. He took powdered stringybark tree bark [ˈmorθi] [= <i>morthi</i>] as tinder and set it around the <i>taldamari</i> with much grass, leaving only a small gap at the entrance. Then, using a [bə`ruke] (iron pyrites) stone and a piece of flintstone [ˈpaldari], he started fires at each pile of <i>morthi</i> or tinder, telling the fire to blaze up quickly..."</p> <p>- [p.9a] [at <i>Warabari</i>, taking revenge on those who failed to deliver his message of forgiveness to <i>Kulultuwi</i>] "... Tjirbruki... untied his bundle of spears, taking as many as he could hold, and walked directly into the camp. A first spear he drove into Ngarakkani, another into [ˈŋeŋara`tawi], a third into Limi, and the last one into [ˈTul:aki]. (Even in those days it was proper to spear people in the legs unless murder was the direct intention)..."</p> <p>- [:9b] [<i>the final stage of Tjirbruki's journey and transformation into a bird</i>] "He made the way wide enough for him to continue inside right up on top of the range at [ˈWateira`ŋeŋgal] (now Mount Hayfield). Emerging there he shut the 'airhole' where he came out. He 'fixed it up with gravel' to appear he had 'never come out there'. Going down to the foot of the hill he shook his body and dust came off him. This became the [ˈmulkali] (yellow paint or ochre) which is used for decorating or 'making spears flash'. (A further comment from the informant: 'Gold has been found there; it may be from off him'). Tjirbruki arrived at [ˈTjutju`gawi] (west of Mount Robinson), the camp of the Ramindjeri tribesman [ˈKen`gori] of the [ˈwanma`rai] totem (ring-tail possum...)... Tjirbruki received permission from him to take <i>wanmarai</i> so that he could make a skin rug for the coming</p>



winter He was feeling old. He looked out and saw a swampy lagoon and said to himself, 'There is no use in my living like a man anymore'. However, he left the camp of Kengori... walked along the southern shore of the Fleurieu Peninsula on land well above the sea until he came to... Rosetta Head... 'This place will do for me', Tjirbruki thought. 'How will I do it?'... made a run, and 'straight away started to fly'. **As a [tji:rbruki], which white people today called the glossy ibis (*Plegadis falcinellus*), his spirit still appears in bird form where there are swampy areas. His body became a [martowalən] (a memorial), a rocky outcrop at Barukungga (on Section 1887, Hundred of Kanmantoo), the place of 'hidden fire'.**

[p.10a] "DISCUSSION:... [*Peiera near Woodchester, meetings for initiation and trade*]

[p.10b] "... For the implementation of such a trade, Tangane youths, for example, would have carried from their own home areas bundles of spearshafts... Flint pieces in packages also could be carried. Such flint would originate from as far away as Kingston in the south-east, having been traded from the Meintangki... Special needs of the Coorong people included good quality red ochre, **stony pieces of iron pyrites** and parcels of shredded stringybark tree bark, *morthi*, a powder valued as tinder needed for lighting of fires using the percussion method..."

[p.11a] "... **Tjirbruki, whose ancestors came down the Murray River with the great being, Ngurunduri...** Tjirbruki... also had a link with the making of fire, equally important in the cold and wet winters on the southern shores, directly exposed as they are to the chilly southwesterly gales coming from the icefields of Antarctica.

The totemic mantle which Tjirbruki assumed also **linked him with fire when his spirit became that of the glossy ibis (*Plegadis falcinellus*). His body was turned into stone as a memorial when it became the hill of iron pyrites near Nairne** on the eastern slopes of the Mount Lofty Ranges and the place which supplied the hidden fire held in its rock. We learn that **his very name has the literal meaning of fire, [tjirangabruke] or 'hidden fire'** which, according to informant Karlowan, was one of the terms used by the Jaralde for trade pieces of that stone. The Tangane term linked with the stone, as given by Milerum, is [**bə`ruke**] meaning 'fire'. His mother, who was of the Potaruwatj tribe, called it [**pa`ruki**] but at times said [wan:ap], a word used further north by the Ngarkat tribespeople. The Tjirbruki mining area, called by the Aborigines [**Bə`ruk:ungga**], was on Section 1887, Hundred of Kanmantoo, and is now part of the township of **Brukungga**. It was on a hill about fifty metres above the north/south flowing Dawesley Creek...

The percussive method of fire-making was old in the area covered by this story and was in use when the first Europeans arrived in the early nineteenth century. According to Milerum and his demonstrations it is clear that the rather battered pieces of flint [menpi] still to be picked up on their old camping sites are unquestionably the so-called 'fabricators'...

The idea of the transmutation of ancestral beings at the end of their earthly wanderings into prominent features of the landscape... Places noted for particular products are often so denoted... Among the Tangane of the Coorong **such beings could become [ma:towalə]**, taking the form of

	<p>some unusual feature in that country... Meyer (1843) recorded a similar word used by the Ramindjeri of Encounter Bay, marto-wallin, translating it as 'becoming stone or being transformed into stone'. In the same work Meyer noted that a similar term, matengauwe, signified a 'song used by the Adelaide Aborigines'. It is possible that this was a term applied by them to songs about ancestral beings... [such as the Song of Njengari] a kinsman of Tjirbruki... Unlike Tjirbruki, whose body became a rocky memorial at Brukung, the Kurna saw the transformation of Njengari as taking him into the heavens...</p> <p>The archaeological details of the places mentions in this paper have not been as yet fully developed... It is more than unlikely that the period recalled by the Tjirbruki story goes very far back..."</p> <p>n.2 "The spelling [tji:rbuki] was used in my first published account of this legend (Tindale & Mountford 1936). It is now clear that [Tji:rbuki] is more acceptable in view of the semantics involved. Thus Tjirbruki is the best available conventional spelling."</p>
Reference	NB Tindale 1987, 'The Wanderings of Tjirbruki : a tale of the Kurna people of Adelaide', <i>Records of the South Australian Museum</i> 20: 8a, 8b, 9a, 9b, 10b, 11a-12b.
Informants credited	Milerum; Karlowan; Meyer 1843.
Informants uncredited	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Nomenclature Committee 1916 and Lands Dept maps for 'Wilyaroo' (> 'Wilyauar'). - Wyatt 1879 for 'Kali:a'. - 'Cuique' [Richard Penney] 1843 for 'Pereukie' / 'Ooroondooil' / Murray River. - unpublished secondary records and speculations of NB Tindale.

Date	n.d. [1987 or later]
Original source text	<p>"B`arukung Peramangk Tr. Mt Lofty Ranges S.Aust. Brukung township and iron pyrites mine. A source of ironstone used by a wide area of tribes in making fire with flint. Home of the ancestral being [Bə`ruki] who, under the direction of Ngurunduri created the homelands of the Lower Murray River peoples. His name, as Pereuki was first noted by Cuique (Richard Penny) in 1843. Tindale from Milerum & Karlowan Tindale in RecSAMus 20:8 Pereukie Cuique 1843:334"</p>
Reference	Tindale, Peramangk vocabulary card [348], AA338/7/1/43.
Informants credited	Richard Penney 1843; Milerum; Karlowan.
Informants uncredited	'Cheraboc' (i.e. probably <i>Tjirrbuk</i>), a Ngarrindjeri man in Penney 1843.

Discussion: PART 1: 'PLACE OF FIRE', 'PLACE OF FIRE-STONE'?

1a. INTRODUCTION:

I have taken even more care than usual to lay out the case of 'Brukunga' here, because part of it has to evaluate contentious issues around a potential sacred site. The result of complicated material is a complicated essay – for which I'm sorry, dear reader, but I have tried to make it as clear and brief as possible! You can skip the footnotes unless you want to check out the sources or details in background issues.

'Brukunga', as we have it today in the public realm and in Tindale, remains in part a puzzle from which #seven pieces – of varying importance – are still missing. The discussions of them are searchable below as #01, #02, etc in red. As at the last date of editing, I have still not been able to find these items of primary source material to confirm each of eight fundamental claims to fact. In most of these cases the main responsibility for the lack is Tindale's.⁴ Each of these eight items is therefore under its own individual degree of doubt. They are as follows:

#01 The pyrites deposit at Brukunga was well-known and widely used by Aboriginal people before colonization as a source from which to trade the stone to the tribes east of the range for use in fire-making. Though I have not yet seen direct evidence for this, it is inherently likely and we may readily grant it to be true for the sake of this essay.

#02 Milerum demonstrated the percussion method of fire-making to Tindale and told him that it had always been known to his tribe.

#03 Milerum told Tindale that the source of pyrites for trade was in the territory of a particular tribe somewhere in "the Mt Lofty Ranges" (or perhaps he said "the southeastern portion" of them).

⁴ Tindale left very few precise scholarly traces or clues about *the primary source* where he recorded these and other items of information; and in some cases about *who* (if anyone) had said these things. In fact this shortcoming is typical not only of his 1987 essay on 'Tjirbruki' (some aspects of T1987 are tackled in Part 2) but of his secondary records as I have found them in this local part of his work on 'the Southeast of South Australia'. He usually presents his items of information as established facts, but it is often extremely hard to check them. In a disturbing number of cases the references cited by him – or discovered by others in his papers with little help from his publications – do not support them. For example, a small bit of primary information on one of his index cards may be attributed to '*Tindale ms from Milerum*', which is far too vague to be useful on its own; or perhaps the alleged fact is not attributed at all, merely asserted without backup; or the relevant item on a map or a card is one of many, while the credits at the bottom are not particularized but generalized to the whole page of items, some of which did *not* come from the credited sources. We are then obliged to trawl through his huge archive of unpublished journals, letters and undated papers, in the slim hope of finding a tiny source note and checking whether it actually says what he later makes it say. I know from experience that his secondary and published records do not always accurately represent what his informants originally said. Even when he particularizes a reference, sometimes it does not even contain the aspect for which it appears to be cited; e.g. Reuben Walker appears to be credited for the *etymology* of the place-name "Wituwatang", when in fact he only gave a *location* for it (Tindale Kurna vocabulary cards 'wito' and 'Wituwa'tangk' [656] in AA338/7/1/12; see PNS 2/22 Wituwattingga-Brighton). Part 2 will present some cases in point. Knight's PhD thesis has much more to say about the absent or misleading references which also bedevil Tindale's tribal identity names in the Adelaide-Fleurieu region (James Knight 2003, *Testing Tindale Tribes*, passim).

#04 Milerum told Tindale that the common Ngarrindjeri word *bruki* can also refer to iron pyrites.

#05 A document or map from the first surveys of the area in about 1843 marked the name “Brookunga” on the creek in Section 5279 (where the town of Brukunga and its disused pyrites mine are now located), or perhaps on the same creek somewhere in “the area”. (It is now known as Dawesley Creek).

#06 Milerum also told Tindale that the source of pyrites for trade was at a place he called “Whale Hill” which was “just north of the western boundary of his tribe” (i.e. in Tindale’s terminology, the ‘Tanganekald’).

#07 Karlowan told Tindale that his Yaraldi tribe used the term “[tjirangabruke]” (= *tjirangga-bruki*) as “one of the terms ... for trade pieces of [pyrites]”.

To these we must add two linguistic deductions which are very probable but impossible to prove conclusively. These are in blue:

##08 The root noun in the word *Brukangga* is *bruki*.

##09 In *Brukangga* this root means ‘fire’, not ‘skin’.

With five of the missing Brukunga pieces (**#01, #02, #03, #04, #05**), we can be reasonably confident that their content has been accurately reported in the secondary sources.⁵

In one case (**#06** ‘Whale Hill’) I doubt the secondary information altogether and therefore doubt that it has primary source at all; but it does not affect anything in Part 1, nor the conclusions of my argument in Part 2.

Another, **#07** (*tjirangga-bruki*), if found, could *perhaps* affect my argument and conclusions in Part 2. But I believe the claim is very doubtful, enough so that its missing source (if any and if found) will probably *not* say exactly what T1987 writes about it, nor mean exactly what he makes it mean.

But I also believe the general outlines of my analysis are established fairly clearly in both Parts.

⁵ In **#05** (the exact location of ‘Brookunga’ recorded by the first survey), if the primary record is found and turns out to be a significant distance away from the Brukunga mine, **##09** alternative interpretations of the word ‘Brookunga’, and of its alternative site, *might* be needed.

I deal with two 'Brukunga' themes more or less separately:

- **Part 1 (in this public version of the document)** deals with **the place itself, its name, and its place in Aboriginal pyrites trade**. These things seem to be attested well enough that we can evaluate the place-name with reasonable confidence.

- **Part 2 (in the password-protected version of this document)** examines in some detail **the connection of the culture hero 'Tjirbruki' with this place, its name and its pyrites deposit**. The only sources for this are in the writings of Tindale, especially his seminal essay 'The Wanderings of Tjirbruki', written in 1985 and published in 1987.⁶ For simplicity I shall refer to that publication as 'T1987'.

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⁶ Tindale 1987, 'The Wanderings of Tjirbruki: a tale of the Kurna people of Adelaide', *Records of the South Australian Museum* 20: 5-13.

1a. THE SITE, ITS PYRITES, AND ABORIGINAL KNOWLEDGE OF IT.

Once there was a hill on the western side of Dawesley Creek at Brukunga (on Sections 5279, 1887 and 1886, Hundred of Kanmantoo) which contained a large deposit of iron pyrites, a rock featuring cubic crystals of iron sulphide.⁷ Varieties of this and related sulphur minerals lie in many locations in the South Mt Lofty Ranges from Birdwood to Kanmantoo and Callington, and where the ranges extend into the Fleurieu, as far west as Rapid Bay.⁸

The Dawesley pyrites deposit came to European attention on 27 December 1843 with a report from Surveyor-General Thomas Burr. "In the neighbourhood of Mount Barker" he "discovered, on land which is still unsurveyed,... a load of Iron Pyrites the outcrop of which I traced for a considerable distance in different gullies... at one point this load which rises perpendicular [sic] through gneiss, is about 100 yards across".⁹ But he was mainly interested in the accompanying traces of copper, the wonder mineral which would soon save the economy of the province. Colonists had little use for pyrites until the 20th century when it was used in the manufacture of sulphuric acid; and in SA in the 1950s this became urgently needed to produce superphosphate for the opening up of the mallee regions for farming.¹⁰ The Dawesley lode was mined exhaustively from 1955 to 1972, then abandoned by the company, leaving behind its toxic wreckage.¹¹

#01 Some of the region's Aboriginal people would certainly have known about this lode from times much more ancient than 1843; for pyrites was a valuable commodity to the groups living southeast of the range.¹² They used it as part of a toolkit for making fire by striking sparks with a piece of flint against another hard stone: either a second flint or (perhaps better) a piece of pyrites or ironstone (iron oxide). The portable toolkit was complete with carefully selected and prepared varieties of tinder. This 'percussion method' was a minority skill, not used by the peoples west of

⁷ 'Geoscience News and Information', <https://geology.com/minerals/pyrite.shtml> [24/9/18].

⁸ The 'mindat' website catalogues these in detail: e.g. general 'pyrite' search <https://www.mindat.org/locentries.php?p=16627&m=3314> [5/10/18]. Among its links note especially for our purposes Callawonga <https://www.mindat.org/loc-219345.html> and Mt Jagged <https://www.mindat.org/loc-16619.html>.

According to historian Tom Dyster, the Peramangk "had plentiful supplies of this [pyrites] material in the valleys around present day Nairne, Dawsley and Native Valley" (Dyster 1981, *Pump in the roadway and early days in the Adelaide Hills*, Adelaide, Investigator Press: 82, quoted in P Clarke 2016, Report on the Bird-In-Hand Heritage Assessment for a Mining Lease Application: 23, https://www.terramin.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/Terramin_Clarke_26-May-2016.pdf [14/5/18].

⁹ 'Report of discov^y of copper by JW Burr. 8 Dec^r/43', GRG 24/6/1843/1434: 5-6. The size of the biggest outcrop makes it fairly certain that Burr was talking about the Brukunga deposit as well as other nearby locations.

¹⁰ Don Armstrong & Ray Cox n.d., 'The Brukunga Pyrite Mine – South Australia A review of Developments since Closure in 1972', http://www.imwa.info/docs/imwa_2005/IMWA2005_029_Armstrong.pdf [18/5/18].

¹¹ i.e. a pile of 8 million tons of waste rock, a deep and permanent hole in the landscape 1.8 by 0.3 km where the hill had been, and a tailings dam which (according to a local landcare group) will need to be monitored and managed for up to 1000 years to minimize the acid leaching into Dawesley Creek, Mt Barker Creek, the Bremer River and Lake Alexandrina (Armstrong *ibid*: <https://www.adelaidenow.com.au/business/mine-to-stay-toxic-for-years/story-e6frede3-1226291201004> [5/10/18]).

¹² cp. Tom Dyster 1981, quoted in P Clarke 2016, Report on the Bird-In-Hand Heritage Assessment for a Mining Lease Application: 23, https://www.terramin.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/Terramin_Clarke_26-May-2016.pdf [14/5/18]

the range.¹³ In the mainstream method, people twirled a hard grasstree stem with their hands to produce friction in a tinder-packed bed of carefully prepared softer wood.¹⁴

Europeans had believed that they were the ones who introduced Aboriginal people to this 'strike-a-light' technology; but in the 1930s-40s South Australian ethnologists were the first to show that some Australians had known it for many centuries. Mountford and Berndt cited the myth of Kondoli the Whale as told by Ngarrindjeri man Albert Karlowan, in which Kondoli had fire in his "jaws" but kept it to himself until others stole it from him.¹⁵ Also in the 1930s, Tindale recorded versions of the Kondoli story from Milerum, Frank Blackmore and Mark Wilson.¹⁶

According to Tindale, the Coorong man Milerum (Clarence Long)^{#02} demonstrated to him the percussion method (among others), and told him it had always been known to his tribe.¹⁷^{#03} He said they obtained the two or three necessary stone types by long-distance trade: the flints from the Southeast beyond Kingston,¹⁸ and the pyrites from a place with a particular tribe somewhere

¹³ Tindale 1974: 73. The percussion method is not mentioned in any of the primary sources for the peoples of the Gulf.

¹⁴ The grasstree technology is described in many primary sources, e.g. Penney 1843, quoted in the Main Evidence above.

¹⁵ C Mountford & RM Berndt 1941, 'Making fire by percussion in Australia', *Oceania* 11(4): 343-4. Karlowan's version for Berndt was published in Berndt & Berndt 1993: 235-6. Here both the flints and the Whale's "jaws" (jawbone? baleen?) are called *maki*.

¹⁶ Tindale SE of SA Vo.2 AA338/1/33/2: 53, 181-4, 232-4; Murray River Notes Vol.1, AA338/1/31/1: 161-5, 272-3, 343. Some of these primary versions fill out a longer story of Whale and Shark. Some tell of both the grasstree and flint technologies; some only of the former; and some only of 'fire' in general. Some mention (like Karlowan) a technology of two flints only; some of them mention *wintjimi* "ironstone", which is not pyrites but iron oxide. Tindale – and in his wake the place-name scholar GH Manning – sometimes use the term 'ironstone' loosely as though it is a synonym for pyrites (Tindale 'The whales' and 'Fire & Fire making', both in AA338/2/66; Peramangk card 'B' arukunga' in AA338/7/1/43; cp. Manning 2010, *Place Names of Our Land*, Modbury, Gould Books: 139). Tindale writes in retrospect about Milerum's "demonstrations" (T1987: 11b); but the only account I have so far which is both first-hand and specific about demonstrating with a stone is Lindsay (1968: 18b), where Milerum used a pocket-knife on flint. He *recognized* old flint pieces as fire-making gear ('Strike-a-lights': 1; T1987: 11b); *demonstrated* the grasstree method (in 'Fire & Fire making', AA338/2/66); and *described* the ironstone-flint (*wintjimi-lakulari*) method ('Fire & Fire making'), the pyrites-flint method (Lindsay: T1987: 11b; and elsewhere by implication), and the various tinders which were necessary ('Strike-a-lights': 1; Lindsay: 18c).

For our study of Brukunga we should make a preliminary note here that no original account of the Kondoli story uses the word *bruki* for 'fire'; universally the word is *keni* or *keini* (see below). And none specifically mentions pyrites. Tindale *may perhaps* be right to assume that pyrites was implied (as he does in typescript 'The whales' in AA338/2/66; 'Strike-a-lights' in AA338/14; and Ramindjeri Vocabulary card 'Kondolin' gara' in AA338/7/1/17); but in many of entries he seems rather loose about which mineral he is talking about (flint or ironstone or quartz), and *here* the pyrites is one of his assumptions. These entries also mistakenly identify the flints with the *Shark's* teeth; but this seems to be a mis-reading or faulty memory of his sources. For further investigation see the many quotations from this material in Philip A Clarke 2001, 'The significance of whales to the Aboriginal people of southern South Australia', *Records of SA Museum* 34(1): 19-35. The leading question for our study now is whether this tale tells us that there were flints or ironstone or pyrites *at this Kondoli location*, i.e. in the vicinity of Browns Hill and 'Mootaparinga' (for whose location see PNS 7.02/04 Murtaparingga). This could include Mt Jagged, an ironstone deposit mined early by colonists.

¹⁷ cp. Tindale 1987: 11b. I have not found original primary source notes either for Milerum's demonstrations or for Tindale's discovery of 'Brookunga'-*Brukangga* in his files, only *secondary* accounts written after Milerum's death (Tindale 'Fire making' in AA338/2/66; 'Strike-a-lights' in AA338/14; HA Lindsay 1968, 'Art and Artifacts', *Aboriginal Quarterly: newspaper of Abschol* 1(2), April-July 1968: 18b-c). But the accounts are specific enough that I accept both matters as factual. Lindsay was a close associate of Tindale. They did some archaeological work together and co-wrote at least one book.

¹⁸ But Karlowan told Berndt that flints were traded from "*Ramindjeri hills people*", i.e. those we would usually call Peramangk (Berndt & Berndt 1993: 118).

in “the Mt Lofty Ranges”; or perhaps he said “the southeastern portion” of them.¹⁹ This certainly means the group which Tindale called “Peramangk”, whose land covered much of the range and certainly included Brukung and Mt Barker.²⁰

At first Tindale was sceptical about the claim that percussion was an ancient Aboriginal technology (since no European had previously recorded it here). But – again according to Tindale’s later accounts – ^{#04} Milerum had also told him that the Ngarrindjeri word *bruki*, one of the old and well-attested terms for ‘fire’, could sometimes also refer to pyrites.²¹

As we shall see below, Tindale discovered later – probably in 1952²² – that ^{#05} a very old Aboriginal name for the site of the Dawesley Creek pyrites lode had been recorded as “Brookunga” (= *Brukungga*) during the first survey of the area in about 1843. He immediately concluded ^{#08} (1) that its root was *bruki*, (2) ^{#09} that this was the ‘fire’ word,²³ and saw the implication, (3) that here it had been attached to a pyrites deposit before first contact;²⁴ so Milerum – by then 11 years dead – had been right not only about the word but about the antiquity of this technology in Australia. The matter was a significant contribution to knowledge. In preparation for his large work ‘The World of Milerum’ (never completed), Tindale wrote several preliminary fragments about what he called the ‘Strike-a-lights’.²⁵

It did not necessarily follow that ^{#01} ‘Brookunga’ was Milerum’s particular anciently-used site; but the very large size of the surface deposit makes this inherently probable, and Tindale quickly concluded that it was so.²⁶

¹⁹ AA338/2/66 for the former; Lindsay for the latter. Both of these very general indications could denote Brukung, or Whale Hill (see below), or any other of the mineral sites in the southern ranges.

²⁰ Tindale’s final version of Peramangk territory gave it as “*In Mount Lofty Ranges from Myponga north to Gawler and Angaston; east to Wright Hill*” [at Currency Creek], “*Strathalbyn, Kanmantoo, and along the eastern scarp of the range to near Towitta*” (Tindale 1974: 217). But we must remember that most of Tindale’s much-quoted 1974 definitions have been rightly questioned ever since he wrote them.

²¹ The claim that *bruki*=pyrites occurs in Tindale n.d., ‘Fire Flints’, typescript in ‘The World of Milerum’ Stage A #3 (SA Museum); ‘Strike-a-lights’: 1, 3; Tangani vocabulary cards from Milerum: ‘pa’ruki’, ‘pəruki’, ‘bə’ru:ki’, ‘baru:ke’, quoted in Gale 2009, *Ngarrindjeri Dictionary*: 116; Tindale 1987: 8b. So far I have not found this item in any of the vocabularies noted down in Tindale’s journals during the lifetime of his informants. However, in this essay I will grant for argument’s sake that it is true, and that Tindale’s extension of its use to the place-name ‘Brookunga’-*Brukungga* in the hills is culturally valid. The usage may be a matter of the Tangani dialect of Ngarrindjeri language, since Milerum-via-Tindale is the only known source for the gloss ‘pyrites’, with the possible exception of ^{#07} another item which might (if we could find its primary source) confirm the usage from a Yaraldi perspective, Karlowan-via-Tindale (see “*tjirangga-bruki*” in Part 2). But this item is very problematic and need not detain us here.

²² See below.

²³ Tindale did not consider the ‘skin’ word *bruki* (see section 1c Linguistics).

²⁴ None of these three conclusions is completely watertight: (1) ^{#08} It is perhaps conceivable that *Brukungga* is ‘just a name’ unrelated to *bruki*, (2) or even ^{#09} that its root is the word for ‘skin’ (see section 1c Linguistics); and (3) ^{#05} without the original document we cannot be totally sure that the name was marked exactly at this particular site. But – for argument’s sake – I accept all three conclusions as overwhelmingly probable.

²⁵ See the references for *bruki*-pyrites, above.

²⁶ It was said in 1952-3 that “*it was well known locally*” – i.e. to old settlers of the Mt Barker area – “*that the natives did use iron pyrites found in the area*” – Brukung or Mt Barker? – “*to mix with their flints for fire making*” (Mount Barker

At some stage – undated but presumably before 1952 – Tindale wrote that ^{#06} Milerum had told him the main trade source of pyrites was at “Whale Hill, just north of the western boundary of his his tribe”.²⁷ From other Tindale sources this location ought to mean Brown’s Hill (now known as Kirby Hill), on the main Adelaide road 4-5 km northeast of central Victor Harbor, and about 5 km WNW of Middleton. But Tindale’s secondary records seem confused about which hill could be considered as Kondoli’s home’. *Perhaps* he meant Mt Jagged, another hill associated with Kondoli by Karlowan, in the range 11 km north of Browns Hill; or perhaps even the Kondoli dancing site *Murtaparingga* at the top of the range in this area. But there are no known pyrites at any of these places, only ironstone at Mt Jagged. The claim is therefore very unlikely for the stone in question; and having found no primary source, I will discard this claim (for the purposes of this essay) as a temporary confusion of memory by Tindale.²⁸

So when ‘Brookunga’ turned up on Tindale’s desk it was obviously the most likely candidate for Milerum’s trade source ‘in the south Mt Lofty Ranges’. A large source of surface pyrites would be a place so important that it would certainly have had a well-known Aboriginal name – in fact more than one; every language group who used pyrites in that whole region east of the range would have had its own name for it, either related or completely different.

Courier and Onkaparinga and Gumeracha Advertiser 10/12/1952: 6a, <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/148089533/17359355>. Tindale has written – probably unintentionally – as *though* this was known to the early colonists (Tindale to Clare in DL5421/1952; Tindale 1987: 11b). But I do not know the primary sources which may confirm this; and anything written after 1974 is likely to be merely quoting Tindale.

²⁷ ‘Strike-a-lights’: 1.

²⁸ For more about these names associated with Kondoli, see PNS 7.02/04 Murtaparingga. As noted above, most versions of the Kondoli story speak of flints in this locality, not pyrites. Mark Wilson did mention ironstone as a tool, but not specifically in the story (AA338/1/31/1: 273).

In Tindale’s work the western boundary of Milerum’s ‘Tanganekald’ tribe was at Middleton (e.g. Tindale 1974: 218; cp. Karlowan and Wilson in Berndt 1940, ‘Some Aspects of Jaralde Culture’, *Oceania* 11(2): 176).

Milerum called Browns Hill *Kondolanangg* and featured it in an episode of his version of the “Story of “Kondoli from Milerum May 1936” (Tindale AA338/1/33/2: 181, 232; cp. AA338/1/33/1: 161, 272). Tindale glossed it as ‘Kondoli’s shelter or home’ (Ramindjeri card “Kondola`nangg” in AA338/7/1/17; also in various Jarildekald cards in AA338/7/1/7, and Warki cards in AA338/7/1/1).

Karlowan told Berndt that “*Kondaling`nara (the place of the whale)... is by Mount Jacketears, in the Hindmarsh Valley*” (Mountford & Berndt 1941: 343. “*Mount Jacketears*” is ‘Mt Jagged’ mis-heard or adapted; clearly Berndt did not know the place). Berndt later re-spelled the name as “*Kondilina*” (Berndt & Berndt 1993: 235-6). Tindale noted the 1941 item (assuming prematurely that *Kondaling`nara* was Mt Jagged or was at it, when it was only “*by*” it and “*in the Hindmarsh Valley*” 10 km away. If so, Mt Jagged itself has no direct significance in the myth). But apparently Tindale regarded this spelling as impossible (which it is not); and without giving a reason he re-spelled it as “*Kondoliñ`gara*” (Ramindjeri cards “*Kondoliñ`gara*” and “*Kondoling`gara*” in AA338/7/1/17; also in various Jarildekald cards in AA338/7/1/7, and Warki cards in AA338/7/1/1, one of which adds a spurious etymology citing a word which does not exist, “*ngarin, to assault or wound*”). Tindale’s geography, like his linguistics, becomes confused at times. On one of his late cards he locates “*the ‘Whale’ mountain of Milerum `Kondoliñ`gara*” at the Urimbirra Wildlife Sanctuary; but this is on Browns Hill (extra card ‘Urimbirra’ attached to card “*Kondoliñ`gara*”).

While we may *guess* (as Tindale did) that Kondoli perhaps carried pyrites as well as the other components of the kit, none of the several original accounts of the story mentions it, only flints and the grasstree alternative.

In ‘Strike-a-lights’ was Tindale speculating? or had Milerum actually specified ‘Whale Hill’ in some record so far unfound? We don’t know; but I think it very unlikely that any primary source will be found. Probably Tindale here was writing from faulty memory while speculating about the location of Milerum’s pyrites source, and thinking (inaccurately) of the Kondoli story which Milerum and others had also told him. As usual, the ‘Whale Hill pyrites’ is presented as fact, unaccompanied by any question marks, provisos, or mention of alternative views or possibilities. Much the same happens in many of his index cards such as those cited above, giving most of them a false appearance that they are his solid conclusions, rather than mere working notes (a fair number of which contradict each other).

However, I do not know of any direct archaeological evidence for Aboriginal campsites in the immediate area of the deposit.

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1b. THE YEAR 1952: THE INSTITUTIONAL NAMING OF BRUKUNGA:

The name was first drawn to public attention in October 1952, after the SA Housing Trust had begun to build a new settlement on Section 5279, Hundred of Kanmantoo, for workers at the proposed Nairne Pyrites Mine. They asked the government's Nomenclature Committee to suggest a name for it.

The Committee reported that "during the original survey" of this area ^{#05} the name "Brookunga" had been recorded on "a creek running through the section"²⁹ (i.e. Dawesley Creek on Section 5279, which also contained the northern half of the large pyrites deposit). Or perhaps the old record had it on "the creek running through *the area*".³⁰ The distinction is important, since Dawesley Creek is 25-30 km long. Aboriginal traditions do not give a single name to a whole watercourse, but different names to many sites along it.

The Committee consulted NB Tindale, then Ethnologist at the SA Museum.³¹ He wrote to Mr R Clare of the Lands Dept, apparently in reply to a previous letter from Clare which is now missing and which must have contained the old spelling of the name. Tindale's letter was headed "Re: The Name BROOKUNGA", and gave his take, first on the meaning of the word and the provenance of the place:

A check of the name shows that its meaning is "place of fire stone". The natives were well aware of the use of iron pyrites along with flint for the striking of fire and the area near Nairne was one of the places from which they obtained supplies of iron pyrites.

then on the spelling:

Because of the possibility of it being misinterpreted as a combination of the English word brook and a native word meaning place it might be more appropriate to use the phonetically correct spelling indicated above (BRUKANGA).

and finally on its desirability:

²⁹ Fisk (Nomenclature Committee) to Peters (Dept of Lands) 21 Oct 1952 (DL5421/1952, State Records of SA).

³⁰ Peters to SA Housing Trust 26 Nov 1952 (DL5421/1952; my emphasis).

³¹ Tindale and HM Cooper at the Museum were often consulted by the Nomenclature Committee between 1947 and 1959 because of his well-known interest in Aboriginal place-names, but Tindale was not appointed as a member until 1958 (Minutes of Nomenclature Committee 5 & 6 Oct 1958 (Geographical Names Unit [now abolished], Land Services Group).

*In view of its ancient associations and significance of derivation I think it would take precedence over any other suggestion for a name. I have checked my maps but could see nothing else which would be in any way appropriate.*³²

The proposal went to the Mt Barker District Council. But at least one of the councillors “struck a humorous note in saying that he approved the title because its final syllable ‘Anga’ seemed to incorporate the Kangaroo”, which would have upstaged the real meaning. So the Council suggested that the spelling be “altered to read Brukungu thus retaining the native word for place”. The various wheels of bureaucracy ground on, and it was gazetted two months later in this spelling.³³ ‘Brukungu’ was the first place-name officially bestowed on that small part of the range, which was occupied at that time only by timber, a few farmhouses, a few roads, a ford, and some of the upper waters of Dawesley Creek.³⁴

Surprisingly, after an extensive search of Tindale’s unpublished papers, maps, and index cards, I have not been able to find in them any clues about this process or his source for ‘Brookunga’, not even a note about the etymology he claimed for it.³⁵

#05 Thus I cannot yet fully confirm the precise location of the name as recorded in the first survey – only the location(s) attributed in these late records – because I have not found so far (2018) the original primary document, and cannot even be sure whether it was a map or something else.³⁶

³² Tindale to Clare 14 Oct 1952 (DL5421/1952).

³³ *Mount Barker Courier and Onkaparinga and Gumeracha Advertiser* 10/12/1952: 6a-b, <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/148089533/17359355>. DL5421/1952; Minutes of Nomenclature Committee 16/10/1952, 19/12/1952. The Committee Minutes credit the suggestion of ‘Brukungu’ to “Mr L Tindale”. There was no such person, the Committee were familiar with NBT, and it is a mystery how the secretary came to mistake his initial.

³⁴ As seen e.g. on the survey map in my possession, ‘Echunga 1:63,360’, No 820 Zone 6, Sheet South 1.54, S 11 NE & NW: (n.d.), surveyed in 1937 and bought by me new c.1962-6.

³⁵ The name seems to have fallen under Tindale’s radar during preparation of material for his proposed Gazetteer of Place Names. I have found no ‘Brukungu’ card. His annotated maps contain no credit for any form of the name, and (unusually) no record of any contribution by him to it except on the annotated map AA338/16/52 ‘Echunga’. The base map of this photocopied portion was published in 1978. Tindale’s only annotation is the word “BRUKUNGA” in red ink (signifying a late ‘Summary’ version prepared for the Gazetteer); from which an arrow points to ‘Brukungu’ already printed on the base map (it had been gazetted in 1952, as we saw above). He left no annotated map of the Hundred of Kanmantoo. On his ‘Summary’ map of County Sturt (AA338/24/130), in which the Hundred of Kanmantoo is located, he has a few names likewise added in red ink but Brukungu is not one of them, and is not even printed on the base map.

³⁶ Was it a map? a Field Book? a Diagram Book? an internal report? I am not even sure of the date of the primary document, nor where or by whom it was found in 1952. According to an unverified newspaper report in 1953, the name was obtained in 1843 (“The name, which means ‘place of fire stone,’ was applied during the original survey in 1843” (*Whyalla News* 16/1/1953: 3d, <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/195979196/22360321>)). This was the same year when Burr found the pyrites on 27 December, when the land there was “still unsurveyed” – allowing only four days for the name to be obtained (unless it was Burr who got it), and putting the survey year in doubt. It seems likely that the document or map was found by some Lands Department employee after the initial request; this seems deducible from the correspondence in DL5421/1952. But it could perhaps have been Tindale who found it; his letter does not tell us. I know no other example of Tindale referring to an original survey map, nor any hint of this in anything I have seen about Brukungu. Lindsay 1968 only says vaguely that Tindale “looked up this name in the files”. Was this misleadingly said? In conversation with Lindsay – at some unknown date between 1952 and 1968 – did Tindale mean that he had added to his files a 1952 letter from Clare about finding ‘Brookunga’ in a Lands Dept document?

Yet we may grant it as *very probably* true that this name was mapped on Section 5279, or perhaps on 1887 or 1886 adjacent, rather than somewhere else altogether on Dawesley Creek. And it was a first-contact record, reflecting Aboriginal culture while it was still flourishing, though already under threat.³⁷

If the elusive document is found, and it turns out that 'Brookunga' was marked somewhere miles away from Section 5279 so that 'in the area' was the better phrase, then we might have to ask the geologists (and perhaps local and oral history) for a different Aboriginal trade source of pyrites in the ranges. But this seems unlikely.

1c. LINGUISTICS OF THE NAME *BRUKANGGA*: A PUZZLE:

In the original survey record, and no doubt also as Tindale intended it, we can be sure that the stress was on the first syllable, 'Brookunga'. Tindale and the anonymous Councillor (above) have explained that 'Brookunga' was re-spelled, first as 'Brukanga'/'*Brukangga*' and then as 'Brukunga', in order to encourage the casual reader to pronounce the second vowel correctly. Unfortunately, both the first and second vowels are now spelled 'u'; but the first is a phonetic *u* while the second is a phonetic *a* (i.e. as in Maori 'haka' or English 'clung').³⁸

Regardless of our pronunciation, the word *brukangga* is linguistically problematic. It apparently adds a Kurna-style suffix *-ngga* onto what is probably the Ngarrindjeri word *bruki*, one of two terms for 'fire'.³⁹ But if so, in Kurna the second vowel should be *i*: *Bruckinga*, not *Brukangga*.⁴⁰ If

³⁷ However, in view of other data about *bruki* and the very large pyrites deposit here, it is very likely that the name was either on Section 5279 or on Sections 1887 or 1886 immediately south of it (pyrites was mined in the 1960s on all three). In either case ('section' or 'area'), the place is within Peramangk territory. Brukunga is 5 km east of the Kurna Native Title Claim boundary; Dawesley Creek rises northeast of Inverbrackie and runs into Mt Barker Creek just south of Callington.

³⁸ The larger problem ignored by all in 1952 was that English-speaking readers will inevitably shift the stress from the first syllable to the second. Thereby they will also misrepresent the first vowel as the neutral vowel (the schwa ə) or another phonetic *a*: i.e. today's standard pronunciation 'Brə'kunga' (*Brə'kangga*) or 'Bra'kunga' (*Bra'kangga*).

³⁹ *Bruki* is spelled "*Brūge*" in Meyer and Taplin; *prugi* in the most recent Ngarrindjeri language revival movement. In fact *bruki* can mean either 'fire' or 'ashes': see *prugi* in M Gale 2009, *Ngarrindjeri Dictionary*: 116. In Aboriginal languages there is no distinction in meaning between the pronunciations *b* and *p*, or between *k* and *g*; so that *prugi* = *bruki*; i.e. the pronunciation may vary. The spelling choice may be made by the language reclamation workers for the sake of consistency in writing.

The other 'fire' term is *keni*, which can mean 'burning coal, embers, cinders and firestick' as well as 'fire in general'. Karlowan told Berndt that this word could also refer to "*the red lining of the gut of the Murray cod that looks like flames*" (Berndt & Berndt 1993: 105).

There are other unrelated words with associated meanings: *pinawi* 'coal, cinder'; *tawangi* 'firestick'; *wirratji* 'ashes, mother who has lost a child'.

There is also a Ngarrindjeri word very similar to *bruki*, found only in Meyer 1843, spelled as "*Brūke*" and "*Prōke*", and meaning 'skin' or 'peel'. Meyer gave two extended forms derived from it; one means 'skinless', the other means 'having a skin or rind' or 'uncircumcised'. The 'skin' word seems to be pronounced identically with the 'fire' word, not distinguished even by a first vowel of a different length; both are given as a long *uu* signified by Meyer's diacritics 'ū'

the word were fully Kaurna – which it cannot be because of the initial consonant cluster *br*⁴¹ – the root would be *bruka*, and there is no such word in either Ngarrindjeri or Kaurna language. Or a Kaurna version might separate the cluster and (using the Kaurna rule about the other common Locative *-illa*) might adapt it into something like *`Baru`killa*.⁴² However, a name with the root *bruki* in correct Ngarrindjeri would be *Brukangk*, ‘place of *bruki*’.⁴³

So the recorded form is a hybrid; it would not pass muster with mother-tongue speakers in either language.

‘Brookunga’ was probably given by an Aboriginal guide working in the survey team. We don’t know whether he came from Adelaide (where Kaurna was the local language), or Encounter Bay (where it was Ramindjeri), or perhaps the *Patpangga* region focussed on Yankalilla and Rapid Bay (where the local language was Kaurna, but many residents intermarried with the Ramindjeri and consequently heard and often spoke both languages).⁴⁴ Of these three groups it was only the Ramindjeri speakers (as far as we know) who used pyrites and therefore had a stake in knowing its name and visiting the location to obtain pyrites from the Peramangk; but their relatives at Rapid Bay and Yankalilla would have heard them speak of it, and some may have travelled with them on their trading trips.

The most likely explanation for the hybrid form is a scenario something like the following guess:

Suppose a bi-lingual guide from the southern Fleurieu, who knew the correct Ramindjeri form of the place-name. Suppose that he either knew beforehand where the place was, or recognized it from Ramindjeri descriptions when he saw the outcrops. Suppose that he did not know the Ramindjeri root word *bruki* (or else he would have used the more correct pronunciation

and ‘ô’. If so, the two words are homophones, like English ‘bat’ (the animal) and ‘bat’ (in a sport); they sound the same but mean something quite different. It is conceivable that this word could be the root of *Brukangga*, which would raise the likelihood of a quite different significance for the site, related to the intertribal initiation meetings mentioned by Tindale (T1987: 10a-b) rather than to the pyrites. But – since these were held near Woodchester 20 km away from Brukunga and in a different creek catchment, and in the light of all the other evidence favouring the ‘fire’ word – we may provisionally bypass this alternative.

⁴⁰ The Locative suffix *ngga* is Kaurna, and always retains the last vowel of the root word; e.g. *Wila* > *Wilangga*, *Waitpi* > *Waitpingga*, *Witu* > *Witungga*.

⁴¹ Kaurna words almost never *begin* with a consonant cluster such as *br/pr*, though these often occur *within* the word. The only recorded exceptions are three words beginning with *tr*. However, families in the southern Gulf coast would be familiar with the sound of these Ramindjeri initial clusters, and many would have learned to say them (see below). Initial consonant clusters are common in Ngarrindjeri language, the word *Tjilbruki/Tjirbuki* being another example.

⁴² cp. ‘Karildilla’, the KWP ‘translation into Kaurna’ from Karlowan’s *K’rildung* (*Ka`reildung*) (Amery in Yvonne Allen, Georgina Williams et al 2000, *Footprints In the Sand: Kaurna life in the Holdfast Bay area to 1850*, Holdfast Bay Reconciliation Group: 38). In Kaurna, a root word of two syllables (such as *bruki*) would *retain* its final vowel and use the Locative *ngga*, but a three-syllable root (such as the imaginary *baruki* in this case) would *replace* its final vowel with the other Locative *illa*. Cp. *waitpi* > *Waitpingga*, but *kawanda* > *Kawandilla*.

⁴³ The Ngarrindjeri Locative replaces the root’s final vowel with the *a* in the suffix *-angk*.

⁴⁴ I must emphasize that this intermarriage happened in spite of their very dissimilar languages, not because their languages were similar.

Brukingga); and that he – and probably members of his extended family before him – adapted the mere sound of *Brukangk* into a somewhat Kurna form as *Brukangga*.⁴⁵

Regrettably, it is typical of Tindale’s work around the Fleurieu region that he either did not notice or ignored the fact that that *Brukangga* combines these two quite different languages.⁴⁶

So *Brukungga* is on Peramangk land but the name is not in Peramangk language.⁴⁷ Being a hybrid two neighbouring languages, this form could not have been the true ‘insider’ name of the place as known to its owners. It is an ‘outsider’ name – in company with a number of others in seemingly Kurna form but well outside Kurna-speaking territory, which were mapped in the first-contact period, probably after being given to the first surveyors and explorers by guides hired in Adelaide.⁴⁸

⁴⁵ The only phonetic difference between *Brukangk* and *Brukangga* is in the final extra vowel *a* in Kurna, which is unstressed and could sometimes be almost inaudible. It is even possible that the surveyor only imagined that he heard it (conditioned at this date by other familiar Kurna-form sounds such as ‘*Wilangga*’ and ‘*Ngangki-paringga*’), and that the guide actually said ‘*Brukangk*’. It is a likely guess that he put an incorrect stress on the final Locative syllable *ngga*, perhaps from the effort to adapt. This seems to have been a feature of ‘Kurna with a Ngarrindjeri accent’, carried over from the Ngarrindjeri Locative *angk* (which has a cluster at the end instead of a vowel, and also seems to get a secondary stress). Tindale noted that Karlowan pronounced a number of Kurna place-names with this incorrect final stress, e.g. “*Karika:li`ngga*” and “*Karika:liŋ`ga*” (Carrickalinga) and “*Konjarati`ngga*” (Congeratinga) (Tindale 1936: 501); also Mark Wilson’s “*Mut:a`bariŋ`ga*” (for Kurna ‘*Muta`paringga*’) (AA338/1/31/1: 272).

⁴⁶ Another example of Tindale’s language confusion occurs in his categorization of lands, applied in his ‘Tjirbruki’ 1987 essay indiscriminately from the southern Fleurieu to Adelaide (and to Gawler and Crystal Brook by implication) (Tindale 1987: 6a-b, 7a, 8b, 11a). He uses *ruwe* (a Ngarrindjeri word for ‘land’ in general) to refer to everyone’s “*clan lands*”, and for their “*hunting areas*” the term *pangkara* (a Kurna word meaning ‘an individual’s tract of land inherited from his father’ – which is a different thing from either of Tindale’s usages). This is careless work, sitting loose to the primary linguistic sources which Tindale also knew and used. Reading these, Amery “would suggest that *ruwe* in Ngarrindjeri is equivalent to *pangkarra* in Kurna... It seems that both the Kurna words *yarta* ‘earth; land; soil’ country’ and *pangkarra* are rendered as *ruwe* in Ngarrindjeri” (Rob Amery 2000/2016, *Warraparna Kurna!*: 115-6). Tindale writes that “*The names of the several clans between Gawler and Rapid Bay are mentioned as being involved in the story of the wanderings of Tjirbruki*” (T1987: 11a); but they were only mentioned by Tindale (who refers the reader to his 1974 *Tribes* book), not by his story sources.

⁴⁷ I have not seen any Peramangk vocabulary which could match both the word *Brukangga* and its probable meaning even remotely; nor any words beginning with any consonant cluster other than *dl* and *dy* (assuming that we can take Moorhouse’s *Vocabulary... of the Murray River Language* [1846] to be more or less similar to the Peramangk or ‘Mt Barker’ language; he thought so [Moorhouse Protector’s Report 24 Nov 1842]). Those interested in Peramangk place-names should be cautious when reading the linguistic information in the following recent works: R Coles & F Hunter, *The Ochre Warriors: Peramangk culture and rock art in the Mount Lofty Ranges*, Axiom Australia, Adelaide; Paul Simpson 2011, *Peramangk: A Social History of the Aboriginal People of the Southern Mount Lofty Ranges*: 6 & 58, <http://phasai.deviantart.com/art/Peramangk-Second-Edition-2011-203140763>). Though these works have other virtues, their linguistic data are unreliable, e.g. often appropriating and mis-spelling place-names from Kurna language and territory.

⁴⁸ Other ‘outsider’ names were recorded from 1839 onward – spelled with what look like formally-correct Kurna Locatives – on land along the Langhorne Creek route to the Murray just beyond Wellington, places where the local language was completely different from Kurna: “*Mylunga*”, “*Yngabilla*”, “*Caranga*”, “*Meromeringa*”, “*Marunga*” (Arrowsmith 1/2/1839, ‘The maritime portion of South Australia’, PRG 1336/5/1, SLSA; Arrowsmith 10/7/1843, ‘South Australia shewing the division into counties... from the surveys of Captⁿ. Frome... 1842’), and even “*Moorundungah, near Coorong*” (*South Australian*, 14/3/1845: 3, <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/71600929/6249980>).

In conclusion of this Part 1:

In the light of all the relevant data above, coincidence is stretched too far, perhaps ruled out. It certainly looks as though Tindale is right on three counts at least. With a fair degree of confidence we conclude that

- (1) The root of *Brukungga* is probably the same as Milerum's *bruki*, so that the word means 'place of fire', with a likely extended reference to 'place of pyrites'.
- (2) This name confirmed Milerum's account of ancient fire-making with flint and pyrites.
- (3) It was probably used to identify and remember the big source of the trade at Brukungga.

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End of Part 1 (Place-name Summary)

Part 2 (in the password-protected 'Complete' version of this document) deals with the connections of this place, name and pyrites deposit with the culture hero 'Tjirbruki'.