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## Place Name SUMMARY (PNS) 4.02/02

Names of Port Noarlunga (2):

**TAINBARANGK**

(last edited: 19.4.2021)

See also

- (1) PNS 4.02/05 'Ponkepurringa'
- (3) PNS 4.02/03 Witjalangk, and
- (4) PNS 4.02/01 Pirrangga

### 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*This essay has not been peer-reviewed or culturally endorsed in detail.*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: i.e. Aboriginal researchers who are linking their oral traditions with other up-to-date and best available knowledge, and associated archaeologists, geographers, ecologists, anthropologists and historians.*

*Chester Schultz [10/7/2020].*



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### TAINBARANGK

(last edited: 19.4.2021)

See also

(1) PNS 4.02/05 'Ponkepurringa'; (3) PNS 4.02/03 Witjalangk; and (4) PNS 4.02/01 Pirrangga

#### Abstract

Although the mouth and estuary area of the Onkaparinga River was part of Kurna Language Country in the 1830s, no Kurna name for it is definitely known. But *Tayinbariangk* or *Tainbarangk* was a name used by the Ramindjeri and Ngarrindjeri for the whole estuary, loosely described as 'Port Noarlunga', up to the western edge of the 'Horseshoe' loop of the river at Old Noarlunga. It is probably a fully-Ngarrindjeri name which means 'place of arriving'.

It was probably focussed around the two pre-contact dune wells on Sections 313 Hundred of Noarlunga (near the intersection of Witton Rd and Gawler Rd), and 1621 (probably near the end of the dune walkway); and around the dune campsites, e.g. those known on Sections 313 Hundred of Willunga (east of Gray St, Port Noarlunga), 318-Willunga (near the mouth), 319-Willunga (by today's oval), and 867-Willunga (an ancient site on the central walking trail, and another site 200m north of it). The name may also have applied further upstream, to include known campsites (ancient and recent) in Noarlunga Downs on Sections 29-Noarlunga (near Huntingdale Rd) and 37-Noarlunga (Burki-burki Aboriginal Heritage Site).

A Ramindjeri version of the name, "Tāinbari-angk", was obtained in 1843 by the missionary linguist HAE Meyer. In 1935-1940 the Ngarrindjeri man Albert Karlowan interpreted this for Tindale and RM Berndt as "Tainbarang", describing its location as "from [Section] 339<sup>1</sup> to the mouth" (i.e. the whole estuary wetland downstream from the Horseshoe), also as "Port Noarlunga"; and as the place of one of Tjirbuki's springs.

Another etymology is possible, though less likely than 'place of arriving': *bari-angk* might be a Ngarrindjeri adaptation of Kurna *pari-ngga*, 'river place', replacing the Kurna Locative *ngga* with the Ngarrindjeri equivalent *angk*. If so, *Tāinbariangk* would be partly or fully adapted from an unknown original Kurna or hybrid name, and *tain* would then be of unknown language and meaning.

The Onkaparinga estuary was an important residential area especially in summer, well resourced with fish and other food from both river and sea, with sheltered campsites in the high sand dunes at the mouth, and a good lookout nearby at Witton Bluff. A burial site nearby has been discovered only in recent years.<sup>2</sup> This estuarine area was closely associated with the woodland of *Ngangkipari*

<sup>1</sup> Hundred of Willunga. All Section numbers in this essay are in the Hundreds of Noarlunga (north of the river) or Willunga (south of it).

<sup>2</sup> Steve Rice, 'Aboriginal bones found', *Advertiser* 18/2/2011, p10.

5 km upstream at the Horseshoe (Old Noarlunga), whose ford was the only way to travel between north and south on the plains: an unavoidable focus of Aboriginal tracks from all directions. The Horseshoe was also well-known as one of the places where Kurna groups from further north often met southern groups who came from the Encounter Bay in the country of the completely different Ramindjeri-Ngarrindjeri language. These visits seem to have had a very long history, longer than the visits to Adelaide which became common after settlement, and Tainbarangk may have been an important part of the itinerary in traditional times.

‘Place of arriving’ is an ambiguous and very general meaning. If it is correct, the name may perhaps refer to a function of all or part of the downstream area in relation to those intertribal visits: perhaps hinting that the whole river line was some kind of boundary and that the area around the lower estuary and dunes was institutionalized for such visits to be managed with protocols. This theory is reinforced by another Kurna name near the mouth, *Pirrangga*, ‘place of getting-angry or thinking-of-fighting, and a historical incident which happened there.’<sup>3</sup>

In 2000 the Kurna language movement ‘Kurna-ized’ the name as *Tainbarilla*. This is a formally correct Kurna adaptation of the recorded name; but it is a New Name and there is no evidence that it was ever used in old times. Another alternative Kurna New Name given then was *Tainbarangga*, but this cannot be a correct form.

Two traditional Kurna names were recorded for places around Port Noarlunga, and might be preferable for public use: see PNS 4.02/05 *Purnki-paringga* (recorded in 1831 by Captain Barker’s team) and 4.02/01 *Pirrangga* (recorded by survey assistant Louis Piesse in 1839).

There is no historical or linguistic credibility in the alleged ‘Mullawirraburka Creation Dreaming’ story located at the Port Noarlunga and Horseshoe Reefs, nor in the associated New Name for Christies Beach, “Mullawirratingga”.

<i>Coordinates</i>	Lat, -35.150891, Long 138.472400 [nominal centre of area at approx. Gray St campsite]
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## Language Information

<i>Meaning</i>	PROBABLY 1. Ngarrindjeri ‘place of arriving’ OR POSSIBLY 2. Kurna ‘ <i>tayin</i> river place’
<i>Etymology</i>	PROBABLY 1. (Ngarrindjeri) <i>tainbarin</i> / <i>tayinbarin</i> [unrecorded form of <i>tainbarilin</i> / <i>tanbarelun</i> ] ‘arriving’ + <i>angk</i> ‘at, place of’ > <i>tainbariangk</i> / <i>tayinbariangk</i> / <i>tainbarangk</i> OR POSSIBLY 2. (Kurna) <i>tain</i> or <i>tayin</i> [language & meaning unknown] + Kurna <i>pari</i> ‘river’ + Kurna <i>ngga</i> ‘at, place of’ > <i>tain-paringga</i> or <i>tayin-paringga</i>

<sup>3</sup> See PNS 4.02/01.



Notes	The earliest record is Ramindjeri (Meyer 1843) as 'Tāinbari-angk', in which the diphthong <i>ai</i> is given with two separate macrons $\bar{a} + \bar{i}$ , i.e. in its expanded form which we could now spell <i>ayi</i> . In 1935 Karlowan interpreted this in Ngarrindjeri language as 'Tainbarang', i.e. with the diphthong unexpanded and no <i>i</i> after the <i>r</i> . The root <i>tainbar-</i> probably comes from a hypothetical Ngarrindjeri verb <i>tainbarin</i> (an unrecorded Active form of the known Antipassive verb <i>tainbarilin</i> ). But in this etymology the <i>i</i> in Meyer's <i>bari</i> is unnecessary and perhaps rather unlikely. It is possible that <i>bari</i> is the Kaurna word <i>pari</i> , and that <i>bari-angk</i> 'bari place' is a Ngarrindjeri adaptation of Kaurna <i>pari-ngga</i> 'river place'. If so, then <i>tain/tayin</i> might possibly be an unknown word in either Kaurna or perhaps Ngarrindjeri.
Language Family	PROBABLY 1. Yaraldic: 'Ngarrindjeri-Ramindjeri' OR POSSIBLY 2. Thura-Yura: 'Kaurna'
KWP Former Spelling	PROBABLY 1. Tainbariangk or Tainbarangk OR POSSIBLY 2. Tain-parringga or Tayin-parringga
KWP New Spelling 2010	PROBABLY 1. Tayinbariangk or Tayinbarangk OR POSSIBLY 2. Tain-paringga or Tayin-paringga
Phonemic Spelling	PROBABLY 1. /tainpariangk/ ~ /tayinpariangk/; or /tainparangk/ ~ /tayinparangk/ OR POSSIBLY 2. /tainparingka/ ~ /tayinparingka/
Syllabification	PROBABLY 1. "Tainbari-angk" or "Tainbar-angk": OR POSSIBLY 2. "Tain-paringga" or "Tayin-paringga":
Pronunciation tips	<i>Tain</i> as in English 'Tyne', OR <i>Tayin</i> as in "tyin" (= 'tying'). Every <i>a</i> as in Maori 'haka'.

## Main source evidence

Date	1839
Original source text	- "Well / fresh water" [#1: marked on Section 313, Hd of Noarlunga; approx. near south end of today's Witton Rd, Port Noarlunga]. - "fresh water well" [#2: marked near river bank on inland side of the dune-peninsula (an un-numbered Section on north side of Onkaparinga River mouth, later named as Section 1621, Hd. of Noarlunga)]. <i>[See Map 1 in this essay].</i>
Reference	Richard Counsel 1839, Field Book 94, Hundreds of Noarlunga & Willunga, SA Geographical Names Unit: 98.
Informants credited	
Informants uncredited	

Date	1839
Original source text	"Well" [#2: location seems to be about 180m further south than in Field Book 94:98]. <i>[See Map 1].</i>
Reference	Richard Counsel 1839, Field Book 102, Hundred of Willunga, GNU: 21.
Informants credited	
Informants uncredited	



Date	1840
Original source text	- “ <b>Well</b> ” [#1: about 115m north of its location in Counsel FB 94:98]. - “ <b>Well</b> ” [#2: seems to be about 20m further north than on Counsel FB 94:98]. [See Map 1].
Reference	John McLaren map 1/9/1840, ‘Country South of Adelaide’, London: Arrowsmith, BRG 42/120/28 State Library of SA.
Informants credited	
Informants uncredited	

Date	1840
Original source text	“[Section] <b>313</b> [Name of Place or Farm] Onkaparinga [Name of Cultivator] George Heppenstall – ½ [acre in wheat]... 1 [acre in Potatoes]... - [Supplied with water] From a native well on the Section” ...”
Reference	‘Statement of the Extent and Cultivation of Land, Supply of Water... compiled from the Official Returns for 1840’, in Papers Relative to the Affairs of SA, <i>BPP: Australia</i> 7: 118-9.
Informants credited	
Informants uncredited	

Date	1843
Original source text	“Ikirriwar, Wright’s Island Warrepari-ñgga, Sturt’s River Pattawilly-angk, Glenelg. Yertabuldi-ñgga, Port Adelaide <b>Tāinbari-angk</b> , Ngangkipariñgga, Tiiruñgga, <b>Horse-Shoe</b> Parna-ñgga, Neighbourhood of Emu Hotel ... <i>Note.</i> Several of these names, especially of those in the vicinity of Adelaide, belong to the Adelaide language, as their terminations show; and, indeed, are known only to a few individuals [among the people around Encounter Bay] who have been in the habit of visiting the Adelaide tribe, and who can speak both languages.”
Reference	HAE Meyer 1843, <i>Vocabulary of the... Aborigines of the Southern and Eastern portions of... South Australia</i> , Adelaide, James Allen: 50.
Informants credited	Ramindjeri people of Encounter Bay.
Informants uncredited	

Date	1844
Original source text	“The mouth of the river is also worthy of a visit from the tourist. The sand hummocks which look from the Horse-shoe as a mere sort ridge are in some parts steep, and about half-a-mile over. These sand hummocks used to be the favourite resort of the natives, and they generally stopped there for the fish which they could so easily obtain in the river... The cliffs at the



	mouth of the river abound with the red substance the natives call Karko, with which they paint themselves, and to obtain which they sometimes come great distances... The bar at the mouth of the river is dry during the summer at low water..."
Reference	'L.P.' [Louis Piesse], 'Descriptive Tour Through Part of District C', <i>Observer</i> 13/4/1844: 7b, <a href="https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/158918431/18834087">https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/158918431/18834087</a> .
Informants credited	
Informants uncredited	

Date	1935-1941
Original source text	- triangle [ <i>?campsite: marked at first river bend inside Onkaparinga mouth</i> ] - " <b>Tainba`ra:ŋ</b> (extends from 339 - mouth) / (Tāinbariangk of Meyer)" [ <i>arrow to river near bridge</i> ] - "Details from Karlowan Dec. 1935. March 1939. / 1941".
Reference	Tindale annotated map 'Hundred of Willunga', SA Museum AA 338/24/97.
Informants credited	Albert Karlowan; HAE Meyer 1843
Informants uncredited	

Date	1935
Original source text	- " <b>Tainba`ra:ŋ</b> " [ <i>arrow to north part of dune-peninsula</i> ] - two site dots [ <i>on Sections 319-320 (today's 867), on opposite sides of the billabong loop; ?recent ?campsites</i> ] - "Murundian type campsite" [ <i>at an 'X' marked at SE corner of billabong loop = NW corner of Sec. 322 (= part of today's 867)</i> ] - [ <i>nearly illegible</i> ] "Shell layer 23 June 62 / [ <u>  </u> of 2 inches] / sh[ <i>?ale</i> ] soil" [ <i>arrow to X at intersection of Sec. 324, 37 &amp; 45 = today's BurkiBurki Reserve</i> ]
Reference	Tindale annotated map Hundred of Noarlunga AA 338/24/72.
Informants credited	Albert Karlowan
Informants uncredited	

Date	1935-6
Original source text	"... Carrying his [ˈna:ŋari] he [ <i>Tjirbukij</i> ] walked along the coast until he came to a place near Hallett Cove, where he rested with his burden. As he reclined he began to think about his nephew, and burst out crying [ka`reildun]. The tears ran down his face, and where they fell to the ground a spring of water welled up; the natives go there to camp because of the spring. He then journeyed to [ <b>Tainba`ra:ŋ</b> ] (Port Noarlunga), where he burst into fresh tears. He went on to [Potarta:ŋ] (Red Ochre Cove..."
Reference	Tindale 1936 'Story of Tji:rbuki: a legend of the people of Rapid Bay', in Tindale & Mountford 1936, 'Results of the excavation of Kongarati Cave', <i>Records of SA Museum</i> 5(4): 500-1.
Informants credited	Albert Karlowan
Informants uncredited	



Date	[c.1940] / 1993
Original source text	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- (p20) “<b>Tainbarang (Noarlunga) River (the Onkaparinga or Ongkeperinga)</b>”</li> <li>- (p23) “Ramindjeri country... went inland... to Clarendon and along the Onkaparinga to <b>Noarlunga (Tainbarang)</b> or northwards to Hallet’s Cove”.</li> <li>- (p234) [<i>story of Tjirbuki</i>] His tears made the spring at Hallett’s Cove. He went on to <b>Tainbarang (Port Noarlunga)</b> and on to Putatang (Red Ochre Cove) where he cried, his tears again forming a spring. He continued on to Lukar (Luki, place of tears, Port Willunga)...”</li> <li>- (p312) [Appendix 2: Kukabrak Clans: J: Ramindjeri] “<b>Tainbarang, Noarlunga River</b>: people came down to Mulgali Cove for red ochre. <i>Ngatji: mulgali</i> (red ochre).”</li> <li>- (p330-1) [<i>map</i>] “<b>2 Port Noarlunga Tainbarang</b>” “<b>6 Tainbarang or Onkaparinga River</b>”</li> </ul>
Reference	RM Berndt & CH Berndt 1993, <i>A World That Was: the Yarlade of the Murray River and the Lakes</i> , Melbourne University Press.
Informants credited	(for Tjirbuki) Albert Karlowan; (for Ramindjeri information) Karlowan plus Mark Wilson and Pinkie Mack.
Informants uncredited	

Date	n.d. [1980s?]
Original source text	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- “Witjarlan Reuben Walker _?_” [<i>illegible: ‘1935?’ – arrow to Port Noarlunga north of mouth</i>]</li> <li>- “<b>Tainba`ra:ŋ (Karloan Dec 1935)</b>” [<i>arrow to Port Noarlunga south of mouth</i>]</li> <li>- <i>large red dot [on 1<sup>st</sup> river loop of Onkaparinga River: ?campsite ?water].</i></li> </ul>
Reference	Tindale annotated map of Adelaide Area “ <u>Tindale S Map / Summary of Kaurna area</u> ”, AA 338/16/8.
Informants credited	Reuben Walker, Karlowan
Informants uncredited	

Date	n.d. [1980s]
Original source text	<p>“<b>Tainba`ra:ŋ</b> Kaurna Tr. S.Aust. River camping places [<i>sic</i>] Section 339 Hd of Willunga and down to mouth of Onkaparinga River. Now called Port Noarlunga. Tainbariangk Meyer. Tindale ms from Milerum on Willunga H map. Tindale in Tindale &amp; Mountford 1936 Rec SAMus.5(4):500. Tindale from Karlowan Dec.1935, March 1939, 1941.”</p>
Reference	Tindale Kaurna place-name card [613] in AA 338/7/1/12.
Informants credited	
Informants uncredited	

<i>Date</i>	1985-7
<i>Original source text</i>	<p>- “Then Tjirbruki left, following the track of his <i>kari</i> [emu] along the coast to [Ka`reilḏun] (Hallett Cove) and on to [<b>Tainba`ranj</b>], now Port Noarlunga, to [Ru:warun] (Port Willunga)...”</p> <p>- “He departed, walking along the coast to [Ka`reilḏun], now called Hallett Cove, where he rested. As he reclined he began to think about his nephew and burst into crying [ka`reilḏun]. Tears ran down his face and where they fell to the ground a spring of water welled up (thus the spot became a camping place). Tjirbruki then journeyed to [<b>Tainba`ra:ŋ</b>] (<b>Port Noarlunga</b>) where he burst into fresh tears. He went on to [Potarta:ŋ] (Red Ochre Cove)... He then walked to [Ruwarun]...”</p>
<i>Reference</i>	Tindale 1987, ‘The Wanderings of Tjirbruki’, <i>Records of SA Museum</i> 20: 7a, 8b, online via <a href="http://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/bibliography/61893#/summary">http://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/bibliography/61893#/summary</a> .
<i>Informants credited</i>	Karlowan
<i>Informants uncredited</i>	

<i>Date</i>	2011
<i>Original source text</i>	<p>“Human bones believed to be from Aboriginal bodies were dug up yesterday by construction workers working on the Seaford Rail Extension project. Police said the bones were found on the corner of Lovelock Drive and Honeypot Rd at 2 pm... a forensic pathologist had confirmed Aboriginal bones were found at the site... The discovery comes after the Kurna community lobbied against the project last year, claiming the \$291 million, 5.7km extension would destroy secret sacred sites, including ancient artefacts and remains... The Kurna community was particularly concerned by the 1.2km bridge over the Onkaparinga River...”</p>
<i>Reference</i>	Steve Rice, ‘Aboriginal bones found’, <i>Advertiser</i> 18/2/2011, p10.
<i>Informants credited</i>	
<i>Informants uncredited</i>	

## Discussion: TAINBARANGK, KARLOWAN, BERNDT, AND BORDERS:

There is much to say about Port Noarlunga as an Aboriginal place, and much yet to learn.

One initial warning seems necessary: the Kurna name ‘Noarlunga’ (i.e. *nurlungka*, ‘bend place’) does not belong anywhere except at Old Noarlunga, the ‘Horseshoe’ river loop of local fame.<sup>4</sup> Settlers appropriated it for Port Noarlunga at the mouth of the same river, northwest nearly 4 km as the crow flies and much further by any land journey.<sup>5</sup> New suburb names and redefined

<sup>4</sup> See PNS 4.02/06 Nurlungka. I think *nurlungka* was probably a generic description of a local landmark, rather than a formal place-name. I therefore use no capital, and (in accordance with KWP New Spelling) spell its Locative as *ngka* rather than *ngga*.

<sup>5</sup> “The private town of Port Noarlunga was laid out in 1853 on section 311” [Hundred of Noarlunga] (GH Manning 2010, *Place Names of Our Land*, Gould Books: 599).



boundaries have followed in the wake of these.<sup>6</sup> But when trying to understand the ancient Kurna cultural map, we must remember that these are all different places with different ecologies and probably different stories.

This essay and its companion pieces on *Witjalangk* and *Pirrangga* gather together some of what is known about the names and provenance of the area of the estuary and mouth, recognizing that its significance will be understood better only after an ongoing journey of discovery and reflection by Aboriginal stakeholders in collaboration with non-Aboriginal researchers in several fields and with feet on the land.

Port Noarlunga lies in territory which was part of Kurna Language Country beyond reasonable doubt.<sup>7</sup> Its immediate vicinity undoubtedly contained several sites with Kurna names; we know at least one of them, *Pirrangga*,<sup>8</sup> and perhaps a second one, *Purnki-paringga*.<sup>9</sup> The mouth and estuary area was clearly important in Kurna life, as we shall see below.

But while the old *Kurna* names attributed to Port Noarlunga have been unfamiliar in recent times, two *Ngarrindjeri* names have been publicized: 'Tainbarang' and (to a lesser extent) 'Witjarlung'. Both were obtained in the 1930s from Ngarrindjeri people who remembered the place as it was in the 1870s-80s, a generation after the previous Kurna custodians had diminished in numbers and were no longer identified by white observers, and Ramindjeri and Ngarrindjeri people – probably relatives by intermarriage with the old Kurna – dominated the groups visiting it.

This situation was not the same as that which prevailed at first contact and before. But interpretations of the Onkaparinga area by these old Ngarrindjeri men hint at social realities which, being determined in part by the ecology of the landscape, probably existed already in some form when the land both north and south of the Onkaparinga was still being managed as Kurna Language Country by the Kurna.

We owe thanks to Tindale for obtaining much of this material. But here, as so often, he wanted a neat and definitive 'correct version' of everything, and usually ignored whatever seemed to

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<sup>6</sup> The area immediately south of Port Noarlunga township was known as 'Port Onkaparinga' (e.g. on the base map of Tindale map AA 338/24/97, printed in 1909); but it was changed to 'Port Noarlunga South' in 1923 (Manning 2010: 619). A recent urban development is 'Noarlunga Centre', 2 km northeast. Now we also have 'Noarlunga Downs'; and many people – speeding over the four-lane Onkaparinga bridge on Main South Rd – have never heard of THE Noarlunga, beautiful Old Noarlunga with its tall gumtrees and unusual 'horseshoe' river, which were once the highlight of any long trip on the southern plains.

<sup>7</sup> All of the place-names obtained at first contact from the locals of this area and the surrounding region were certainly in Kurna language. See my history *Feet On the Fleurieu*, and e.g. PNS 1/03 Patpangga, 4.02/05 'Ponkepurringa', 4.04.01/01 Ngaltingga, 5.02.01/02 Yarnkalyilla, 5.04.01/07 Yartakurlangga.

<sup>8</sup> See PNS 4.02/01 Pirrangga. This name may refer to the intertribal social function of the site.

<sup>9</sup> See PNS 4.02/05 'Ponkepurringa'. This seems to be an ecological name, 'dark-red river place', and may have referred to the colour of the samphire at some seasons.

question the line he took.<sup>10</sup> Hence the public have seen much about Karlowan's *Tainbarang*, but little about Walker's *Witjalangk* (and that little has been misreported).<sup>11</sup> And *Pirrangga* has been unknown to both scholars and the public until now.<sup>12</sup>

I will deal with *Tainbarangk* in this essay, *Witjalangk* in the second of the series, the Kurna name *Pirrangga* in the third, accumulating some interpretations on the way and summarizing them in *Pirrangga*. Read them preferably in that order. They will expose a small amount of the neglected material, centring around the Onkaparinga flood plain as some kind of boundary: a small attempt to interpret it in a non-partisan way which does justice to all the best known evidence.

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## THE PLACE (1):

Port Noarlunga is a large estuarine environment, a rarity in the Adelaide-Fleurieu region. It extends from the mouth of the Onkaparinga River to the western edge of the loop at *nurlungka*, 'the bend' at Old Noarlunga. This area was well-resourced. Here was fresh water from at least two surface wells (see below). Here was food: fish from the river and sea, supplemented by shellfish and crustaceans from the reef.<sup>13</sup>

On 20 June 1837 during his journey to Encounter Bay, Colonel Light rode from the Horseshoe to the mouth, and noted that "The river is... nearly three miles from the sea a beautiful one, full one hundred yards wide, and very often more, with deep water, and we found the water at ebb tide fresh to within a mile of the sea,<sup>14</sup> and the country is not only beautifully picturesque, but rich in

<sup>10</sup> As Knight points out, Tindale sometimes wrote down his objections to what Walker was telling him, almost in the moment of the telling: "*This action implies that the 'informant' [Walker] was wrong. In this way, Tindale repeatedly disagreed with his own teachers*" (James Knight 2003, *Testing Tindale Tribes*, Ph.D. thesis in Archaeology, University of New England: 463-5). This comment is applied to a journal entry giving one of Walker's definitions of Ramindjeri territory (Tindale 'SE of SA' Vol2, AA 338/1/33/2: 149).

<sup>11</sup> See PNS 4.02/03 Witjalangk.

<sup>12</sup> See PNS 4.02/01 Pirrangga.

<sup>13</sup> Surveyor EC Frome painted a family on the beach below Witton Bluff, with two men spearing fish in the shallows (Frome 1844, '*Old Whaling Hut (Hephenstall's Hut) Whitton Bluff, 1844*', Art Gallery of SA, <https://www.agsa.sa.gov.au/collection-publications/collection/works/old-whaling-hut-hephenstalls-hut-whitton-bluff-1844/24361/>). Like Port Willunga, Port Noarlunga was one of the annual summer travel sites when family groups would follow the fish up the Gulf (see Steve Hemming 1985, 'Aborigines at Port Willunga: Reminiscences of Thomas Martin', *Journal of Anthropological Society of SA* 23(9), online via <http://www.anthropologysocietysa.com/home/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/>). Mullet and salmon were important staple items on the menu. For brief summaries see Val Campbell 1979, 'Archaeological Reconstruction of Coastal Sites South of Adelaide', *Journal of Anthropological Society of SA* 17(1), March 1979, [http://www.anthropologysocietysa.com/home/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/JASSA-Volume-17\\_1-Campbell.pdf](http://www.anthropologysocietysa.com/home/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/JASSA-Volume-17_1-Campbell.pdf); and Betty Ross 1984, *Aboriginal and Historic Places around metropolitan Adelaide and the South Coast*, Anthropological Society of SA: Chapter 3 pp.19, 20, <http://www.anthropologysocietysa.com/home/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/Ross-B.-ed.-1984-Chapter-3.pdf>.

<sup>14</sup> It was winter and there had been heavy rain for some days.

soil”.<sup>15</sup> He sketched the estuary from the east,<sup>16</sup> and for the state of the estuary at first contact this should be examined in conjunction with surveyor Frome’s watercolour view from the mouth in 1848.<sup>17</sup>

Of the dunes at the mouth, survey assistant Louis Piesse wrote in 1844: “The sand hummocks which look from the Horse-shoe as a mere sort of ridge are in some parts steep, and about half-a-mile over. These sand hummocks used to be the favourite resort of the natives, and they generally stopped there for the fish which they could so easily obtain in the river. I have seen thirty of them there gormandising on fish”.<sup>18</sup> He added, “The cliffs at the mouth of the river abound with the red substance the natives call Karko, with which they paint themselves, and to obtain which they sometimes come great distances”.

The dunes sheltered summer campsites, and there were other camping places upstream. Some of them have been well-researched in the past, but the public records are confusing, and I must leave it to others to clarify most of them; though we must note what I will call Campsite #1 next to the river east of the junction of Gray St and Saltfleet St.<sup>19</sup> Important for security was the lookout site Witton Bluff, about a kilometre away from Camp #1.

Not far away, within easy reach of a day’s activities, some completely different ecologies prevailed, marked by tree icons on the first field books and maps.<sup>20</sup> On the adjacent rolling downs immediately north of today’s River Rd was a patch of forest;<sup>21</sup> another south of the river, extending

<sup>15</sup> David Elder [ed.] 1984, *William Light’s Brief Journal and Australian Diaries*, Adelaide, Wakefield Press: 121.

<sup>16</sup> Second sketch titled ‘Tuesday’ in his Notebooks and Sketchbooks, PRG 1/4, SLSA. The location is identified by reference to the first ‘Tuesday’ sketch, ‘Camp at Field’s River’, which depicts the Horseshoe. Light had sent Pullen to visit the mouth of the Onkaparinga from the *Rapid* in 1836, and named it ‘Field’s River’. Later the name ‘Onkaparinga’ was obtained during the official surveys under Governor Gawler, who substituted it for ‘Field’.

<sup>17</sup> EC Frome 1848, ‘*Hephenstal’s whaling hut from Whitton Bluff*’, Accession number 709HP69, Art Gallery of SA, <https://www.agsa.sa.gov.au/collection-publications/collection/works/hephenstals-whaling-hut-from-whitton-bluff/24364/>. The vertical scale seems exaggerated; perhaps he was condensing a panorama into a smaller canvas. The apparently deep gully in the foreground is probably today’s Welland St. Behind it, what looks like a flat is probably the main part of today’s township. The sightline here points directly towards the Horseshoe, which is invisible behind a strip of thick forest in the middle distance. The river is visible from the area around today’s bridge (including the location of Kurna Campsite #1) up to the next bend near today’s oval. Hepenstal’s homestead is shown on a hill spur which is probably the one on the west side of Witton Rd. Of the dunes, only the northern extremity is visible. For commentary on the forest see main text.

<sup>18</sup> ‘L.P.’ [Louis Piesse], ‘Descriptive Tour Through Part of District C’, *Observer* 13/4/1844: 7b, <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/158918431/18834087>. The phrase “used to be” is significant. Piesse would have seen these people first in 1839 when he was surveying in the area. Apparently by 1844 they had ceased to come there.

<sup>19</sup> Some of the Kurna campsites are mapped approximately on Map 1 of this essay. They include: #1 at the margin of the river east of the junction of Gray St and Saltfleet St (Tindale ‘S Map’ AA 338/16/8; Campbell *ibid* 1979: 9 map; Ross *ibid* 1984: 20; *Atlas of SA*: 36); #2 near the mouth at Weatherald Tce, Port Noarlunga South (Tindale map Hd of Willunga AA 338/24/97, Ross *ibid* 1984: 20); #3-4, some unexplained dots and a “*Murundian type campsite*” (i.e. ancient) at the estuary east of the playground in Port Noarlunga South (Tindale map AA 338/24/72); and #5 upstream near the river in the vicinity of Huntingdale Rd, Noarlunga Downs (Ross *ibid* 1984: 20).

<sup>20</sup> FH Burslem 1840, ‘Plan of the country south of Adelaide’, SLSA C 236; John McLaren 1840, ‘Country South of Adelaide, London, Arrowsmith. Cp. Counsel Field Books 94 p.98 and 102 p.21, and Diagram Book A p.4-2 (GNU).

<sup>21</sup> On Sections 315 / 316 / 321, Hd of Noarlunga.



SW more or less along today's boundary of the suburb of Seaford Meadows.<sup>22</sup> A thick strip of forest followed up the eastern bank of the river north of the Horseshoe and west of River Rd,<sup>23</sup> continuing with another on the western bank all the way to the Horseshoe.<sup>24</sup> Between them all they make what looks like a continuous line of thick forest in the middle distance of the 1848 painting by Frome, which is one of the two earliest views of the estuary.<sup>25</sup> Less than 5 km from the mouth there was woodland on the enclosed 28-hectare flat of the 'Horseshoe', fed by fresh water from the Gorge; in the 1860s "Magnificent gum trees reared their majestic heads a hundred feet or more into the blue".<sup>26</sup> In these places the typical animal foods of the plains were available, kangaroos, possums, bandicoots.<sup>27</sup>

At the Horseshoe too there was direct access to the shallow ford and on the other side a large flat sheltered area which was probably a campsite, near the entrance to the formidable Onkaparinga Gorge. At the ford 'native tracks' converged from several directions, from Adelaide in the north, the ranges in the northeast, and Encounter Bay in the south.

These were riches indeed, both ecological and social. George Arthur Payne remembered the flood plain as he knew it in the 1860s: "Blacks came by the hundred from the Murray District<sup>28</sup> for the bream fishing season, and the smoke from their wurlie fires was a common sight all along the river."<sup>29</sup>

#### THE WELLS:

Sketched during the first survey of this area in 1839, Richard Counsel's Field Books mark two wells in the dunes at Port Noarlunga. Presumably they were surface wells which provided fresh water without deep digging; certainly they had been used and improved by Kaurna people for many centuries, and Counsel's team had the benefit of this care.

<sup>22</sup> On what was then 322 / 327 / 326 / 332, Hd of Willunga, and continuing southward. Sections 320, 322 and this part of 327 were later merged as 867.

<sup>23</sup> On 317 / 29 / 324 / 329, Hd of Noarlunga.

<sup>24</sup> On 327 / 328 / 337 / 339, Hd of Willunga. This part of 327 and all of 328 were later merged as 864, and most of 337 became 865 / 866.

<sup>25</sup> Frome 1848, 'Hephenstal's whaling hut from Whitton Bluff'.

<sup>26</sup> 'G.A.P.' [Payne] 1921, *ibid*.

<sup>27</sup> See Stuart's account from 1837 (in PNS 4.02/01 Pirrangga).

<sup>28</sup> The author here means the Goolwa area.

<sup>29</sup> 'G.A.P.' [George Arthur Payne 1853-1934] 1921, 'Noarlunga Past and Present', *Register* 27/4/1921: 6f, <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/63034906/4552435>. Thanks to Liz Schultz for alerting me to this reminiscence.

One – I shall call it Well #1 – was enthusiastically marked “Well / fresh water”, in a position which I calculate as the vicinity of the southern part of Witton St. A late memory of its condition in 1837 tells us that this was “ a nice situation, near a clump of teatree”.<sup>30</sup>

The other Counsel dune well in 1839 (my #2) was also marked “fresh water well”. It is on the eastern side of the dunes, on the riverbank, and its marked location varies a little between Counsel’s two field sketches and the maps based on it.

The more accurate-looking of the onsite sketches<sup>31</sup> puts it near the river end of today’s dune walkway from the end of the Esplanade. Here on my field trip of 28 Jan 2021, a few days after heavy rain, I found a vegetated depression in the dunes between the 4m and 8m contours, and an underground seepage line emerging on the river beach a few yards below and north of it. This is probably Well #2,<sup>32</sup> if the dune’s hydrology has not been completely altered by decades of overuse followed by over-enthusiastic revegetation.<sup>33</sup>

Other wells were dug by the colonists later, but they may not have been available at the surface with Kaurna technology.<sup>34</sup> We may safely identify one or both of these two ‘native wells’ with the ‘spring’ which the culture hero Tjirbuki created from his tears, as he wept in sorrow over the dead body of his beloved nephew during his last journey south along the coast. Albert Karlowan alone is the primary source of this part of the story, as told to both Tindale and Berndt.<sup>35</sup>

<sup>30</sup> SA Chronicle and Weekly Mail 25/12/1875: 12c, <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/93954922/8382693>.

<sup>31</sup> Counsel 1839, Field Book 94: 98.

<sup>32</sup> Counsel’s other sketch puts Well #2 180m further south (Counsel 1839, Field Book 102: 21). Of the Survey Department’s maps derived from the McLaren surveys of District C, an early one agreed with Counsel (plan 6/13, ‘Plan of the North West Part of District C’, GNU), and so did their later Diagram Book (Diagram Book ‘Book A’, GNU: 4-1); but their well-known published map put it 20m further north than FB 94 (John McLaren 1840, ‘Country South of Adelaide’, London, Arrowsmith, SLSA BRG 42/120/28 and many other versions). My field trip revealed several other seepage lines or patches north and south of the walkway one, though less clear.

<sup>33</sup> Old residents and visitors, including me, remember when the inner slope of the big dune was a white wall of sand. Some say that this loose sand had an important ecological function: “*The dunes depended on an unhindered Onkaparinga River torrent to sweep sand back to The Gulf. This was a major feeder for the sandy beaches to the north. That the dunes actively fed the Onkaparinga with sand for centuries depended to some extent on sparse and transient vegetation... The Mt Bold Reservoir... had a terminal impact. No longer could valuable sand be flushed into The Gulf, nor the Onkaparinga flood plain continue as a major cradle for valuable marine life. To add insult to injury, the 1980s saw unprecedented if not fanatical government-led planting of the dunes – incorrectly termed revegetation – in the name of conservation. Now the dunes are higher than ever before in history, children are no longer permitted to slide down their slopes, and the beaches to the north are starved of vital supplies of sand*” (Rob Cheesman letter to Editor, ‘Sands of time’, Advertiser 18/6/2016: 54). Clumps of bushes and grass at the top of the dunes are shown close up in HP Gill’s 1892 watercolour ‘Noarlunga Headland’ (Art Gallery of SA <https://www.agsa.sa.gov.au/collection-publications/collection/works/noarlunga-headland/24370/>), but the inner slope is not depicted.

<sup>34</sup> e.g. the ‘Dome well’ at 13 Murray Rd (Lita Martella 2003, *Port Noarlunga through the years: a History in Pictures*, Abbott Printers, Lonsdale: 138), and another near the lower end of Gawler St. (Gavin Malone p.c. email 29/8/2016).

<sup>35</sup> The published versions are Tindale 1936, ‘Story of Tjirbuki: a legend of the people of Rapid Bay’, in Tindale & Mountford 1936, ‘Results of the excavation of Kongarati Cave’, *Records of SA Museum* 5(4): 500-1; Tindale 1987, ‘The Wanderings of Tjirbuki’, *Records of SA Museum* 20: 7a, 8b; Berndt, Berndt & Stanton 1993, ‘Becoming ngatji: Blue Crane’, in *A World That Was*, Melbourne University Press: 234-5.

The Gray St campsite #1 is about equally distant (around 400m) from both of Counsel's locations. "These sand hummocks used to be the favourite resort of the natives".<sup>36</sup> Piesse wrote that phrase in 1844. He had first known the place in 1839 during the first survey when his team was geometrizing 'District C' for sale. Five years later, it seems, the Kaurna use of these campsites had greatly diminished.

In 1840 George Hepenstal bought Section 313,<sup>37</sup> which covers an area bounded by the coast from Clarke St to the line of Murray Rd, inland to the intersection of Murray Rd and Gawler St, the western part of the 'Swampy' billabong, and Campsite #1 near Gray St.<sup>38</sup> The Land Returns listed him as obtaining his water "from a native well on the Section", which almost certainly was Well #1. Here in the early 1840s he attempted farming and whale fishing, both without much success.<sup>39</sup>

No doubt one of his first actions was to take over Well #1 for himself and his crops, and it was he who 'put it down' in 1841, beginning its development into the 20-foot-deep Whip Well, a familiar landmark to thirsty colonists; but no trace of it remains.<sup>40</sup>

By 1840 Aboriginal users of officially purchased land were regarded as trespassers and could be removed by mounted police armed with swords.<sup>41</sup> As usual, the takeover of waterholes was one of the first decisive acts of dispossession. The memories of people like Payne the 1860s and onward reflect a later situation "all along the river"; the decimated Kaurna people had died or merged with Encounter Bay and 'Murray' (Lakes) relatives, who were using whatever traditional or substitute camping places were still available to them.

<sup>36</sup> My emphasis.

<sup>37</sup> Now in the Hundred of Noarlunga.

<sup>38</sup> See Map 1.

<sup>39</sup> By the end of 1840 Hepenstal had two acres, a half-acre in wheat, one in potatoes, "with temporary or bush fence; Crops very indifferent. A stone-house" ('Statement of the Extent and Cultivation of Land... from the Official Returns for 1840', in Papers Relative to the Affairs of SA, *BPP: Australia* 7: 118-9). He also tried to establish a whale fishery, but caught only one dead whale and disposed of the gear in 1843 (Martella 2000/2001: 25-6). Two of Frome's paintings show his whale signal and signalman's hut on Witton Bluff, and one his house (Frome 1844, Frome 1848).

<sup>40</sup> David J Towler 1986, *A Fortunate Locality: a history of Noarlunga and district*, City of Noarlunga, Peacock Publications: 183; Lita Martella 2000/2001, *Port Noarlunga: an endearing coastal town 1840-1998*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition, Abbott Printers, Lonsdale: 63; W.G Sutton, 'Port Noarlunga Well', *The News* (Adelaide) 2/10/1924: 6c, <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/129861882/11090788>. Frome's painting seems to show Hepenstal's house very close to the position of Well #1 (Frome 1848).

<sup>41</sup> Cp. WA Cawthorne's sad watercolour '45 Natives driven to the Police Court, by the Police for trespassing (1845?; State Library of NSW, [http://digital.sl.nsw.gov.au/delivery/DeliveryManagerServlet?embedded=true&toolbar=false&dps\\_pid=IE3141546&ga=2.3030704.1278993551.1612075766-1574738953.1505421214](http://digital.sl.nsw.gov.au/delivery/DeliveryManagerServlet?embedded=true&toolbar=false&dps_pid=IE3141546&ga=2.3030704.1278993551.1612075766-1574738953.1505421214)). The original pencil sketch clarified "upon Private Sec." ([https://digital.sl.nsw.gov.au/delivery/DeliveryManagerServlet?embedded=true&toolbar=false&dps\\_pid=FL3141306](https://digital.sl.nsw.gov.au/delivery/DeliveryManagerServlet?embedded=true&toolbar=false&dps_pid=FL3141306)). In 1839 the government had deployed well-armed Mounted Police northward up to Port Gawler, and two of their captives were hung in Adelaide (see PNS 8/14, 8/18, 8/17). In 1840 after the *Maria* wreck they deployed the same terror tactics on the Coorong. By the time Hepenstal was settling on Section 313, Kaurna people everywhere would have known it was impossible to resist and dangerous to 'trespass' at this short distance from Adelaide.



## THE NAME (1) – LOCATION: FLOOD PLAIN, ESTUARY OR MOUTH?

The German missionary linguist at Encounter Bay, HAE Meyer, did not spend much time on Kaurna land, but on his occasional trips to Adelaide, sometimes with a few of his Ramindjeri contacts such as 'Encounter Bay Bob', he had to pass through the ford at the Horseshoe, like everyone else travelling to Adelaide from the south. In 1843 he recorded from Encounter Bay informants three place-names associated with the "Horseshoe": "Tāinbari-angk, Ngangkipariñgga, Tiiruñgga, Horse-Shoe".<sup>42</sup>

This entry is part of a chapter on place-names and their "terminations" (i.e. suffixes). There are two lists of place-names. The *first* contains names of whose 'terminations' he is sure, and gives three of their suffixes including the Locative.<sup>43</sup> The entry above occurs in the *second* list, of which he wrote, "Several of these names, especially of those in the vicinity of Adelaide, belong to the Adelaide language, as their terminations show; and, indeed, are known only to a few individuals who have been in the habit of visiting the Adelaide tribe, and who can speak both languages".<sup>44</sup>

In this entry, *Ngangkipariñgga* is a very well-attested Kaurna name for the Horseshoe area,<sup>45</sup> and *Tiiruñgga* is clearly Kaurna in form though we are not sure exactly where it was.<sup>46</sup> The other was in Ramindjeri form, *Tāinbari-angk*. For its more precise location we have only the much later testimony of the Yaraldi man Albert Karlowan.<sup>47</sup>

In December 1935 Tindale and Karlowan were mapping place-names along the entire Gulf coast from Adelaide southward.<sup>48</sup> On two of the maps they used, Tindale's notes make it clear that when they were looking at the Onkaparinga River he showed Meyer's record to Karlowan. All three of Meyer's place-names are cited, and Karlowan gives his own versions of the names and adds fragments of stories he has heard:<sup>49</sup>

<sup>42</sup> HAE Meyer 1843, *Vocabulary of the... Aborigines of the Southern and Eastern portions of... South Australia*, Adelaide, James Allen: 50.

<sup>43</sup> Meyer 1843 *ibid*: 49. Most of these are names of places in core Ramindjeri territory, with the exceptions of "*Kulkamāiwar... Adelaide*" and "*Mūtabariñgar... Head of Hindmarsh V.*" [Valley], which he did not recognize as the Kaurna name *Murtaparingga* (see PNS 7.02/04).

<sup>44</sup> The names in this list with 'Adelaide tribe' terminations are "*Warrepari-ñgga*", "*Yertabuldi-ñgga*", "*Ngangkipariñgga*", "*Tiiruñgga*" and "*Parna-ñgga*"; "*Punduwalluwati-ngg-*" is ambiguous.

<sup>45</sup> See PNS 4.02/04 Ngangkiparingga.

<sup>46</sup> See PNS 4.02/09 Tiirungga.

<sup>47</sup> The Yaraldi were the Lower Murray / Eastern Lakes clans of the Ngarrindjeri.

<sup>48</sup> "Dec. 19<sup>th</sup> to 27<sup>th</sup> 1935 Worked at odd times on several days with Karlowan... We placed put numbers of new place names on the map including a series along the coast from Cape Jervis to Adelaide" (Tindale 'Murray River notes', AA 338/1/31/1: 197).

<sup>49</sup> Tindale annotated map Hd Noarlunga AA 338/24/72.



- `Tainba`ra:ŋ (extends from 339 - mouth) / (Tāinbariangk of Meyer).<sup>50</sup>
- `Dangki`pari`ŋga  
woman's river  
in ancient time the woman urinated hence the river is brackish from the Horseshoe to the sea.
- `Tjirunŋa 'where in olden time a woman was assaulted; an old story which I only heard about'  
Karloan Dec 1935.

How much of this did Karlowan know from his own Yaraldi tradition? How much of it was simply his re-interpretation of Meyer? <sup>51</sup>

The southeastern boundary of Section 339<sup>52</sup> is at the southern end of Onkaparinga Drive, Old Noarlunga; so Karlowan meant that 'Tainbarang' (in our spelling *Tainbarangk*) was the name of the whole estuary from the mouth to the beginning of the Horseshoe loop. Much later one of Tindale's index cards made two extrapolations from his original record. The first was an easy one in the light of archaeological and historical records: "River camping places Section 339 Hd of Willunga and down to mouth of Onkaparinga River". The second was an unjustifiable limitation: "Now called Port Noarlunga";<sup>53</sup> but Karlowan's original statement includes an additional stretch of the river in Noarlunga Downs and Old Noarlunga which totals a length at least equal to that in Port Noarlunga.

At about the same time as the mapping, Karlowan was giving Tindale his version of the 'Story of Tjirbuki'. In a part of the story told only by him, the hero took up the smoke-dried body of his beloved nephew and embarked on his last journey along the coast southward:

*Carrying his [ˈna:ŋari]<sup>54</sup> he walked along the coast until he came to a place near Hallett Cove, where he rested with his burden. As he reclined he began to think about his nephew, and burst out crying [ka`reildun]. The tears ran down his face, and where they fell to the ground a spring of water welled up; the natives go there to camp because of the spring. He then journeyed to [ˈTainba`ra:ŋ] (Port Noarlunga), where he burst into fresh tears. He went on to [Potarta:ŋ] (Red Ochre Cove...<sup>55</sup>*

<sup>50</sup> Tindale annotated map Hd of Willunga AA 338/24/97 ("Details from Karlowan Dec. 1935. March 1939. / 1941").

<sup>51</sup> As we have seen, Tindale introduced Karlowan to Meyer's printed text "Tāinbari-ang". Moreover, both of them could read it. Unlike Milerum, Karlowan was literate (Mattingley & Hampton 1988, *Survival In Our Own Land*, Adelaide: Wakefield Press: 125; Berndt & Berndt 1993: 3-4).

<sup>52</sup> Hundred of Willunga.

<sup>53</sup> Tindale Kaurna place-name card [613] `Tainba`ra:ŋ, in AA 338.7.1.12. Here he inexplicably and incorrectly credits the name to Milerum as well as Karlowan; but there is no known primary record of Milerum using the name.

<sup>54</sup> Nephew.

<sup>55</sup> Tindale 1936: 500-1. This passage is almost identical in the late draft which is the earliest source for Tindale-Karlowan Tjirbuki I have found ('Notes On The Kaurna', AA338/1/35: 79-85), and in Tindale's final version (1987, 'The Wanderings of Tjirbuki', *Records of SA Museum* 20:8b). However, the latter essay is Tindale's own composite, and in it he introduces



No doubt one or both of the two wells mapped by Counsel in 1839 is the 'spring of water' which Tjirbuki created by his tears.

A few years later Karlowan also worked with anthropologist Ronald Berndt. The relevant material was not written up and published until 1993. If we are to trust the words of Berndt and his editor John Stanton in the main text, "Tainbarang (Port Noarlunga)" featured again in another telling of Karlowan's Tjirbuki. However, the name does not occur in the verbatim Yaraldi text, where at this point Karlowan tells only of unlocated "tears" (*lukar*) somewhere before reaching Putatang (Ochre Cove).<sup>56</sup>

The authors also cite Tainbarang in other contexts, and their usages are sometimes puzzling. Their Index cites "Tainbarang (Port Noarlunga)".<sup>57</sup> As described by the Berndt's chief informants for this western area – Karlowan, Mark Wilson and Pinkie Mack, all from clans far away in the northeast of Ngarrindjeri country<sup>58</sup> – 'Tainbarang' was a destination on trade routes:

*From Goolwa, one trade route traversed thick scrub along Currency Creek to Mt Compass and then on to Willunga and McLaren Vale, down to Tainbarang (Noarlunga) River (the Onkaparinga or Ongkeperinga) to Red Ochre Cove.*<sup>59</sup>

Elsewhere in this book, *Tainbarang* is said to be "Noarlunga"<sup>60</sup> or "Noarlunga River",<sup>61</sup> and on the one map is marked both at "Port Noarlunga spring" and far upstream in the hills as "Tainbarang or Onkaparinga River".<sup>62</sup>

Perhaps terms like 'Noarlunga River' were how Karlowan and other informants talked, being unsure about places and names at this distance from their own country.<sup>63</sup> Or do these details simply reflect the authors' own geographical confusion?<sup>64</sup> It would have helped if they had told us.

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Tainbarang into an episode (p.7a) which he obtained only from Milerum, who never mentioned either Tainbarang or Port Noarlunga. Since Tindale sometimes inserts items from his other research without acknowledging the source, we can't be sure that Karlowan actually used the name Tainbarang in his Tjirbuki story; but this is likely in view of his concurrent mapping of it.

<sup>56</sup> Berndt & Berndt 1993: 234-5, 446.

<sup>57</sup> *ibid*: 613. Tainbarang is also 'Port Noarlunga' on p.117.

<sup>58</sup> *ibid*: 2-3.

<sup>59</sup> *ibid*: 20. 'Ongkeperinga' is presumably an unnamed informant's pronunciation of 'Onkaparinga' or *Ngangkiparingga*.

<sup>60</sup> *ibid*: 23.

<sup>61</sup> *ibid*: 312.

<sup>62</sup> *ibid*: 330-1. The officially-gazetted Onkaparinga River extends almost to Mt Torrens.

<sup>63</sup> Of the area marked 'Ramindjeri' on the Berndts' map, they write, "*The people with whom we worked were unable to provide place names for much of this area*" (*ibid*: 23). Karlowan's own country which he knew intimately was in the Lower Murray and Lakes, at least 100 km away in travel terms by the direct route over the range, and much further by the southern route.



From all this we may conclude that Karlowan probably did know *Tainbarangk* independently of Meyer as his people's Yaraldi 'outsider' name, and associated it with Port Noarlunga as a focus but including a significant stretch of the river upstream from it; and that he may sometimes have used this name as a generalization for the whole area, rather than the very familiar Kurna 'insider' name associated with the Horseshoe, *Ngangkiparingga* – which he also knew and associated with a woman's story.<sup>65</sup>

If so, then we may be fairly sure that Meyer and the Ramindjeri of 1843 were likewise using 'Tāinbariangk' for the estuary and/or mouth area. From their rather distant perspective, near enough was close enough; 'Horseshoe' could cover what we now call Port Noarlunga, as well as the ford site.

## THE NAME (2): – LINGUISTICS: NGARRINDJERI? OR ADAPTED FROM KAURNA?

### 1. NGARRINDJERI, 'PLACE OF ARRIVING'?

There is a Ngarrindjeri verb "Tainbarilin" or "Tanbarelin", recorded only by Taplin; it means 'coming' or 'arriving'.<sup>66</sup> The simplest explanation of *Tāinbariangk* and *Tainbarangk* seems to be that they both mean 'place of arriving', and the different spellings signify optional or dialect variants of the same word (e.g. Ramindjeri for Meyer, Yaraldi for Karlowan).

There are some complications. Karlowan's *Tain-ba-rang* (= *Tain-ba-rangk*)<sup>67</sup> has only three syllables. Meyer's version "Tāinbari-angk" has two macrons which signify that the diphthong *ai* is expanded (*āī* = *ayi*);<sup>68</sup> so the pronunciation he heard was *Ta-yin-ba-ri-angk*, with five syllables. Meyer also has an extra vowel *ī*.

But these discrepancies can be explained.

The diphthong expansion is almost certainly optional, which discounts one of the extra syllables.<sup>69</sup>

<sup>64</sup> e.g. There is no 'Noarlunga River' in common usage. Is *Tainbarang* supposed to be the mouth, or the whole river? The authors do not question the incorrect Western assumption that an Aboriginal name can apply to the entire length of a river.

<sup>65</sup> See Tindale annotated map AA 338/24/73. As we saw above, the same map has a brief note from Karlowan interpreting Meyer's "Tiirungga" in the light of an "old story" he knew about another woman at another place on the Horseshoe (see PNS 4.02/09 Tiirungga).

<sup>66</sup> "Arriving - Puntin, Tainbarilin"; "Coming – Terpundun, Tanbarelin, Puntin (coming to)" (G Taplin 1879, *The Folklore, Manners, Customs, and Languages of the South Australian Aborigines*, Adelaide, E. Spiller: 126, 128).

<sup>67</sup> Tindale recorded Karlowan's pronunciation always as "Tainba`ra:ŋ" (*Tainbarang*, without the final *k*). There is a difference between *ng* (one sound *ŋ*) and *ngk* (two sounds *ŋk*) – cp. 'sing / sink' in English – but Tindale is often careless about it, and the difference can easily be minimized in speaking, or pass unnoticed in hearing. I assume that Karlowan meant the Locative *angk*, whether or not he pronounced the *k* audibly.

<sup>68</sup> cp. Kurna *mai* > *mayi* 'vegetable food'.

<sup>69</sup> Taplin's alternative spellings "*Tainbarilin*" and "*Tanbarelin*" suggest not only that the unexpanded diphthong *ai* was the normal pronunciation of this morpheme, but could also be spoken as an ordinary *a*, not a diphthong at all.

The other extra syllable – created by Meyer’s second *i* – alerts us to a more serious difficulty. The syllable *il* or *el* in the verb *tainbarilin* does not seem to be accounted for; we might expect the verb root to be *tainbaril-*, and the name to be *Tainbarilangk*. However, there is a rather complicated linguistic reason why the verb-root used in the name may actually be *tainbar-*, from an unrecorded second form of the verb, *tainbarin*. This would have a meaning very similar to *tainbarilin*.<sup>70</sup>

We can therefore regard the etymology ‘place of arriving’ as very probable, though not certain.

## 2. PARTLY ADAPTED FROM KAURNA, ‘TAYIN RIVER PLACE’?

The final syllable is the Ngarrindjeri Locative suffix *angk* (‘at’). In Tindale’s record “‘Tainba`ra:ŋ”, the stress marks (represented here by the sign `) tell us that Karlowan stressed the last syllable as well as the first: *Tainbar-angk*.<sup>71</sup> But the Ramindjeri in 1843 are a more authoritative first-contact source, and we don’t know how they pronounced the second half of *Tayinbariangk*. Did they put a stress on *ba*: *Tayin-bariangk*, not *Tayinbari-angk* (similar to Karlowan) nor *Tayinba-riangk*? If so, then *bari-angk* (= *pari-angk*)<sup>72</sup> could very easily be a Ngarrindjeri assimilation of the common Kaurna word *pari-ngka*, ‘at the river, river place’, as found in many Kaurna Compound place-names.<sup>73</sup>

<sup>70</sup> There are many other Ngarrindjeri verbs whose final syllables are *ilin* / *elin* / *ilun* etc. Many of these – such as *krungk-ilun*, *lakk-elun*, *lungund-elun*, *nyrip-elun* – were also recorded in a parallel form with the ‘*il* / *el*’ syllable omitted: *krungk-un*, *lakk-in*, *lungund-un*, *nyrip-un*. The two forms of each pair have similar or identical meanings. In each case the short version is the basic Active form, while the long version is a form called ‘the Anti-passive’, made by adding the extra syllable *el* / *il* (Mary-Anne Gale with Dorothy French 2007, *Ngarrindjeri Learners’ Guide*, Raukkan Community Council: 36-8). I do not claim to understand the exact nature of the difference in meaning between the Active and the Antipassive. Among Gale’s explanations which might apply to Intransitive verbs like ‘arriving’, she includes “4. *Giving a Durative meaning to the verb*” and “7. *It subtly changes the meaning of verbs of mental processes e.g. kungun ‘hear’ > kungelun ‘thinking, listening’*”. It is therefore likely that *tainbar-ilin* is an Antipassive, and had an unrecorded Active form *tainbar-in*. From Gale’s observation about ‘Durative meaning’, perhaps *tainbarilin* might imply something to do with time: that the ‘arrival’ is either frequent and repeated (?visitors) or perhaps prolonged (?residence; though Gale has a footnote which discourages this ‘Continuative’ interpretation). In any case, this subtlety would presumably not apply to *tainbarin* or the place-name derived from it.

<sup>71</sup> KARLOWAN’S ‘TAINBA-RANG’:

1. The stressed Locative in Karlowan’s *Tainba-rangk* is inconsistent with the stress pattern of Kaurna *paringka*, and therefore tends to question the Kaurna etymology described here. However, this particular objection is not serious. Tindale also recorded from Karlowan several other Kaurna place-names which he pronounced with a stress on the final *ngga*. In Karlowan’s 1936 ‘Story of Tjirbuki’ alone, we have “‘*Maitpa`ŋa*”, “‘*Karika:liŋ`ga*”, and “‘*Kongarati`ngga*” (Tindale 1936: 501); cp. “‘*Dangki`pari`ngga*” (Tindale annotated map AA 338/24/72) (my emphases). This habit could be described as ‘Kaurna spoken with a Ngarrindjeri accent’, probably derived unconsciously from the heavier Ngarrindjeri Locative *angk*.

2. Perhaps Karlowan’s stress on *angk* originated from an assumption that Meyer’s hyphen in “Tāinbari-angk” signified a stress on the following syllable. But this was not what Meyer meant. This page of his wordlist was explicitly devoted to commenting on the “terminations” (suffixes) such as *angk*, and he was separating them all out with hyphens for the sake of clarity.

3. It is also possible that the pre-contact Ramindjeri had adapted the morpheme from *paringka* and also changed the stress.

<sup>72</sup> In most Aboriginal languages the sounds *g* and *k* are not distinguished.

<sup>73</sup> Spelling *ngka* and *ngga*: KWP’s New Spelling for Kaurna uses *k* rather than *g* in most contexts, so that the Locative suffix is now spelled *ngka* in Common Nouns such as *paringka*; but in place-names (e.g. *Ngangk-i-paringga*) the Old Spelling *ngga* is retained because today’s Kaurna people have been very familiar with it. The meaning and pronunciation are the same.

Such adaptation might well happen in the 1840s because the Ramindjeri then were often in contact with Kaurna relatives or trading partners, and would certainly have known that Kaurna *ngka* meant the same as Ngarrindjeri *angk*.<sup>74</sup> Karlowan in the 1930s still knew this, even though he knew very little other Kaurna language.<sup>75</sup>

So was *Tayin-bariangk* a Ngarrindjeri adaptation from a Kaurna original something like *Tayin-paringga*? There is no known vocabulary for *tayin* or *tain* in either language; so *IF* it was a separate word its language and meaning would remain unknown, and the original Kaurna name cannot now be identified beyond *Tayin-paringga*, ‘*tayin* river place’.

#### LINGUISTIC CONCLUSION?

On balance, the lack of any known vocabulary for *tain* / *tayin* (a hypothetical word with no explanation in sight) counts against the second alternative; so does the existence of another Kaurna name for the estuary using *paringga* (‘Ponkepurringa’: ?*Purnki-paringga*). ‘Arriving place’ seems more likely than this. Even though it might look inherently improbable at first sight, a name with such a meaning might perhaps be used to refer to a very well-known site or area which was in frequent and socially-important use by people ‘arriving’ from afar, for example more or less distant tribal groups whose arrival had to be challenged and justified: in other words, a regionally recognized border meeting-place. The hints that *Tainbarangk* was a ‘borderland’<sup>76</sup> may signal that this derivation is more plausible than it looks.

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#### THE PLACE (2): TAINBARANGK AS A TRADE GATEWAY AND SOCIAL BOUNDARY?

The name may hint at another aspect of cultural heritage which so far has not often been examined in mainstream literature about the Kaurna: the Onkaparinga River flood plain seems to have been some kind of border or boundary.

Of the place ‘Tainbarang’ or Port Noarlunga the Berndts’ book says only five things: Tjirbuki created a spring there; a clan there was named after the place; it was near the important deposit of red ochre at Ochre Cove; it was roughly the northern border of the whole Ngarrindjeri language group; and Berndt extrapolates that the clan may have been “intermediaries” between north and south. Nothing else, not even about camps or fishing, no local awareness of Country: a viewpoint

<sup>74</sup> e.g. The Kaurna name recorded by Teichelmann & Schürmann as *Pattawilya* ‘Glenelg’ was given to Meyer by Ramindjeri people and recorded in his book as “*Pattawilly-angk*”, as though it is Ramindjeri word. Those who knew the place and used this from the name would also have heard Kaurna people use the form *Pathawilyangga*.

<sup>75</sup> e.g. Karlowan did not know the other common Kaurna Locative *illa*, so that he interpreted ‘Tortachilla’ as “*Turtotjalangga*”, unwittingly adding a Locative to a Locative (Tindale annotated map AA 338/34/97). The Coorong man Milerum was even less clear about Locatives. He thought that “*beringgi*” was a Kaurna word meaning the same as *angk* (Tindale ‘Place Names: Drafts For Text’, AA338/10/2: 29). But it is almost certainly a variant of *paringka*.

<sup>76</sup> See above.

of ‘foreigners’ from faraway clans. Evidence about Gulf country from this book must be treated with caution.

In the text, Tainbarang is the site after which a surrounding ‘Ramindjeri’ Clan 77 is named, and Ochre Cove is the key place of interest in their territory: “Clan 77 (Jxix) Tainbarindjera,<sup>77</sup> from the place name Tainbarang, Noarlunga River: people came down to Mulgali Cove for red ochre. *Ngatji* [totem]: *mulgali* (red ochre)”.<sup>78</sup> Tainbarang is a border place. The text describes a boundary at or just north of Port Noarlunga. South of it are the Tainbarindjera, the northernmost of the larger “Ramindjeri Dialectal Unit” of the “Narrinyeri or Kukabrak” group. North of it is the very small territory of the “Lower Kona or Kurna”. They in turn border at Brighton on the “Wilipi-mutha” further north around Adelaide. The maps, though small-scale,<sup>79</sup> make all this look very precise and authoritative; but there is scanty support for it in the main text of the book, which confesses much uncertainty:

*Ramindjeri country... went inland northwest, passing Mt Compass on the west, towards the Gulf to Clarendon and along the Onkaparinga to Noarlunga (Tainbarang) or northwards to Hallet’s Cove. It was also said to include all the country down the coast to Cape Jervis. However, the extent of Ramindjeri country on this eastern coast of the Gulf is open to question. The people with whom we worked were unable to provide place names for much of this area.*<sup>80</sup>

We may wonder whether this major extension of the identity ‘Ramindjeri’ really came from Karlowan or whether it was Berndt’s theoretical construction 50 years later. It is incompatible with an earlier published record from the same informant and author, that the creator being Ngurunderi,

<sup>77</sup> Ngarrindjeri *indjera* (‘belonging to’) is the plural form of standard suffix used to identify where people live or originate (singular *indjeri*).

<sup>78</sup> Berndt & Berndt 1993: 312. The word ‘down’ reminds us that Karlowan was remembering trade journeys from the Lakes and hills, which all had to cross the range through Clarendon and come ‘down’ at Old Noarlunga, only about 5 km from the Cove (see his trade route below); whereas the Ramindjeri of Encounter Bay crossed the range at Sellicks Hill and travelled much further on the plains before reaching the Cove, especially if they went via Sellicks Hill instead of Willunga.

<sup>79</sup> In the very small-scale map on p.304, the major border with the Wilipi-Mutha is at Brighton, and the ‘Lower Kurna’ occupy a tiny wedge from Brighton southward. In the somewhat larger-scale map on p.330, this is refined to show the ‘Lower Kurna’ extending down to about Port Stanvac (unmarked, less than halfway from Hallett’s Cove towards Port Noarlunga). I have not found any evidence for this boundary in the book’s text; it seems to be a pure guess. The Clan 77 territory is mapped (*ibid*: 330) very inaccurately, with ‘Red Ochre Cove’ marked several km *north* of ‘Moana’ in the middle of the its coastline. In fact the Cove is *south* of Moana, at about the same latitude as McLaren Vale town, which would put it at the southern extremity of Clan 77’s land as marked.

<sup>80</sup> *ibid*: 23. Cp. p.312: “The material is relatively complete for all the Kukabrak dialectal units, except for the Wakend and Ramindjeri... [T]he information on this dialectal unit and its clans demonstrates that the area its members occupied was much larger than had previously been suggested. However, the extension towards Willunga, Clarendon, Noarlunga and the surrounding country could have been brought about through the trade routes... which linked the Kukabrak to northern peoples. Undoubtedly, that expansion must be seen in the light of the fascination with European settlements”.

travelling west, “entered the Kurna tribal country” somewhere between Callawonga Creek and Tunkalilla Beach on the Southern Ocean.<sup>81</sup>

The only social function of Tainbarang which this book mentions is that it was a gateway to the important trade and ceremony site at Ochre Cove:

*They had no doubts of the trade routes going across country to Noarlunga and Red Ochre Cove, and of their linkages with the Lower Kurna.*<sup>82</sup>

But

*the trade lines beyond<sup>83</sup> Red Ochre Cove (Mulgali or Putatang) near Tainbarang (Port Noarlunga) were not well-defined... It would seem that the camps at Mulgali – or rather, the people who inhabited them – served as intermediaries between the southern (that is, the Kukabrak) and northern people.*<sup>84</sup>

In speaking of these trade routes, why did Karlowan so often mention *Tainbarangk* at Port Noarlunga – a detour – rather than *Ngangkiparingga* at the Old Noarlunga ford?<sup>85</sup> This little mystery deserves more attention.

Perhaps with this Ramindjeri-Ngarrindjeri name those southerners were reminding themselves that this place was the familiar and important place where their travellers from the south and east really ‘arrived somewhere else’. Was this perhaps the place where neighbouring groups such as the Peramangk of the hills or the Ngarrindjeri of the Lakes managed their protocols about ‘permission to trespass’ after crossing over into someone else’s land, beyond most of their close blood relationships? In the Ramindjeri version of Tjirbuki, ‘Chirrbookie the Blue Crane’,<sup>86</sup> the issue of ‘permission to trespass’ at the Onkaparinga is amplified into a major theme. I will take this theory a little further when discussing *Witjalangk* and *Pirangga*.

<sup>81</sup> RM Berndt 1940, ‘Some Aspects of Jaralde Culture’, *Oceania* 11(2), University of Sydney: 180, cp. 165. That essay tells the story of Ngurunderi as given to him by Karlowan “assisted by *Thralrum* (Mark Wilson)”. It was probably this reference which caused Tindale in his later mapping to change the Kurna-Ramindjeri border from Rapid Bay or Cape Jervis to Tunkalilla Beach (for which see Knight 2003: 197, 275, 418). It seems Berndt and Stanton overlooked this important datum when compiling their 1993 book. With Tindale it is possible sometimes to sort out his constructions from the actual words of his informants, because his primary records are readily available; not so with Berndt, where we have only the publications.

<sup>82</sup> Berndt & Berndt 1993: 23.

<sup>83</sup> Presumably ‘beyond’ means ‘north of these places’.

<sup>84</sup> *ibid*: 117.

<sup>85</sup> Traders going from Clarendon to Ochre Cove came down the ‘native track’ on the north side of the Gorge (today’s Piggott Range Rd) and would have to cross the ford at Old Noarlunga. In order to visit Port Noarlunga first they would then have to detour 5 km each way on the wrong side of the river. Why? – unless ‘Tainbarang’ referred to the whole flood plain including Old Noarlunga; or unless they were obliged to make the detour because Port Noarlunga was the agreed site of some necessary protocols.

<sup>86</sup> ‘Chirr-bookie, the Blue Crane’, in William Ramsay Smith 1930, *Myths and Legends of the Australian Aborigines*, George Harrap, London: 331-341; still available in facsimile as *Aborigine: Myths and Legends*, Senate imprints, Random House, 1996; and online at [https://openlibrary.org/books/OL6287617M/Myths\\_legends\\_of\\_the\\_Australian\\_aboriginals](https://openlibrary.org/books/OL6287617M/Myths_legends_of_the_Australian_aboriginals).

## KAURNA NAMES?

In this essay I am conjecturing from ambiguous records that *Tainbarangk* might be the Ngarrindjeri name for an important border site for intertribal protocols of arrival. If so, then we might also expect to have an old Kaurna name which signals the same social reality for the same place on Kaurna land – at least in first-contact times, although it may have been forgotten when the people who used it had become invisible, by the time Karlowan was remembering the 1870s.

In 1999-2000 the Kaurna language movement looked at the Ngarrindjeri place-names on Kaurna land along the Gulf coast, and “an attempt [was] made to Kaurna-ize these names... *Tainbarang* [was] converted to *Tainbarilla*, because the location suffix *-illa* regularly attaches to three-syllable words”. This preceded any thoroughgoing search for records of traditional Kaurna names surviving in non-linguistic sources. It is linguistically correct, but almost certainly not ‘the correct Kaurna name’, implying antiquity; it should be classified as a New Name.<sup>87</sup>

One first-contact Kaurna name right next to Port Noarlunga is discussed in another essay, *Pirrangga*.<sup>88</sup>

Another, *Winingga*, may perhaps belong in the same general area; and in a remarkable coincidence, it may be derived, as with *Tainbarangk*, from a verb root referring to travel: ‘going or walking’, but this time ‘motion in any direction’ instead of specifically ‘motion towards’.<sup>89</sup>

The matters of territory and boundaries will no doubt continue to be vigorously argued to and fro by stakeholders. For something like the very large area designated as ‘Kaurna’ by Tindale, we might helpfully use the term ‘Language Country’ rather than ‘tribe’ or ‘nation’. But these matters cannot be pursued any further here under the heading ‘*Tainbarangk*’. I will tackle the issue of an

<sup>87</sup> Rob Amery 2001, ‘Reclaiming the Kaurna language’, in Yvonne Allen & Georgina Yambo Williams et al, 2000/2001, *Footprints In the Sand: Kaurna life in the Holdfast Bay area*, Holdfast Bay Reconciliation Group & Aboriginal Research Institute: 37. In the table on p.38 Amery wrote, “*Tainbarangga* is an alternative option”. He would now agree that this is incorrect, since *ngga* is used only on words with a two-syllable root, e.g. *witu* ‘reed’ > *Witungga*, ‘reed place’; *pirлта* ‘possum’, *wardli* ‘dwelling’ > *Pirtawardlingga* ‘possum dwelling place’. Soon after the movement’s place-names website <http://kaurnaplacenames.com/> was launched in 2007, KWP uploaded an account of ‘*Tainbarilla*’ which included the analysis that “*The ‘r’ sound is a flapped r*”. This may perhaps be so, but probably does not affect my analysis earlier in this essay.

<sup>88</sup> PNS 4.02/01 *Pirrangga*.

<sup>89</sup> See PNS 1/04 ‘*Weeninga*’. This name has uncertainties about its location and derivation. *IF* it is in fact a Kaurna name for the same referent as Ramindjeri-Ngarrindjeri *Tainbarangk*, it would raise some subtle socio-linguistic questions. The verb *wenendi* was “used only by the natives of *Yangkalya* and *Rapid Bay*” (T&S 1840). Why would Ramindjeri-Ngarrindjeri southerners think of this place on Kaurna land in 1843 as one where people ‘come towards or arrive at it’, while Kaurna southerners thought of it as a place where people merely ‘come and go’, i.e. ‘travel’, ‘to, from and through it’? Does this semantic difference signal the political difference between the two major Language Countries and their respective social rights? And was there another unrecorded ‘travel’ name for the same place in the *local* Kaurna dialect at the river? These questions may not be answerable now, so late in history; but Aboriginal stakeholders may have some ideas.

Onkaparinga boundary again in my other two Port Noarlunga essays. Unfortunately the presentation of details in the Berndts' 1993 book has served mainly to fog the matter rather than clarify it.

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### MORE ON ABORIGINAL HERITAGE AT PORT NOARLUNGA:

Public and official currency has been given to an alleged "Mullawirraburka Pingyallyingalla (Creation) Dreaming" story, telling how Mullawirraburka created both the Port Noarlunga Reef and the boomerang-shaped Horseshoe Reef a short distance north at Christies Beach.<sup>90</sup> This is a very recent invention with no basis in any historical record or (as far as I know) any old oral tradition.<sup>91</sup> As presented, the premise of this story cannot be traditional, since the central creator figure is Mullawirraburka, a historical man, not an ancestral creator Being of the Dreaming. He was well-known to settlers from 1837 until his death in 1845 at the age of about 35; they called him "Onkaparinga Jack" and later 'King John'. He frequented "the neighbourhood of Onkaparinga" and was buried there<sup>92</sup> after rites elsewhere; but the records show no specific connection of him with Christies Beach or Port Noarlunga.<sup>93</sup> Associated with this tale is a newly-invented name for Christies Beach, "Mullawirringga", in which the *ti* seems to be added with no linguistic rationale.<sup>94</sup>

Another record is of a different order; other material to support it is mentioned earlier in this essay. In 1992 Georgina Williams and Lewis O'Brien identified the Onkaparinga estuary as a place of women's business:

<sup>90</sup> It appears in a scuba-diving pamphlet published by the government: "*It is told that Mullawirraburka stood on the cliff between Christies Beach and Port Noarlunga, threw his spear into the water south of the bluff to bring fish closer to the beach for his people to catch. As he did, the top part of the spear broke. The spear became a reef with one part longer than the other and attracted and provided a habitat for fish. Mullawirraburka's people never went without seafood in the summer again*" (Government of SA [n.d.], *Port Noarlunga Reef Underwater Trail: Protecting our Underwater Heritage*, <http://www.southeasterntrails.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/ptnoarlungadive.pdf> [9/3/21]).

<sup>91</sup> Another public document elaborates a little: "*Witton Bluff was historically used as a lookout for spotting mulloway. This was the central location for the Mullawirraburka creation of Horseshoe and Port Noarlunga reefs... The creation of the river is not a well known dreaming and due to its importance to Kaurna women, it may never be shared with non-indigenous people*" (City of Onkaparinga pdf document, 2004, *Port Noarlunga Coastal Precinct*: 16, [http://www.onkaparinga.sa.gov.au/custom/files/docs/port\\_noarlunga\\_precinct.pdf](http://www.onkaparinga.sa.gov.au/custom/files/docs/port_noarlunga_precinct.pdf); however, this link is not available as at 12/1/21).

<sup>92</sup> He was buried on John MacPherson's land on Section 78, Hd of Noarlunga (Rhondda Harris 2001, 'Aboriginal Heritage Survey: Old Noarlunga Township: A Report to United Water': 12), i.e. about 4 km due east of the Horseshoe, in the vicinity of Coriole Winery, Chaffeys Rd and Neill Rd.

<sup>93</sup> See Tom Gara 1998, 'Life & Times of Mullawirraburka', in Simpson & Hercus (ed) 1998, *History In Portraits*, Aboriginal History Monograph, Canberra.

<sup>94</sup> [http://onkaparingacity.com/onka/discover/history\\_heritage/history\\_of\\_onkaparinga/kaurna\\_yerta.jsp](http://onkaparingacity.com/onka/discover/history_heritage/history_of_onkaparinga/kaurna_yerta.jsp) [18/6/18]. There is no credible linguistic explanation for the syllable 'ti' added here to the name *Mullawirra* + Locative *ngga*. *Mullawirringga* (i.e. without the 'ti'), 'dry forest place', is the recorded name of a site in the foothills near Sellicks Hill, the location of the actual 'dry forest' after which Mullawirraburka was named (see PNS 4.04.03/04).





“The map of the mouth of the Onkaparinga River region shows a connection between the shape of the river and the reproductive organs of a woman... The story of Lake Eyre (made from a kangaroo skin) shows a strong visual image of the outline of the lake. Showing that Aboriginal people can visualise a map like view of an area of land... This was and still is known as a site of significance for Kaurna women of the Adelaide Plains. While men fished on the sea side of the river, the women held their ceremonies in this area. Old photographs of the area, which shows sea shells placed in designs on the sand near the river”.<sup>95</sup>

There is more to be said about Port Noarlunga as an Aboriginal place, and more yet to be learned.<sup>96</sup>

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**SEE ALSO THE MAPS ON THE NEXT 5 PAGES:**

**p.26 – MAP 1: Some Sections and Sites at Port Noarlunga: TOPOGRAPHIC**

Source: SAPPA (SA Property and Planning Atlas), <https://sappa.plan.sa.gov.au/>, SA Government [accessed Feb 2020].

**p.27 – MAP 2: Some Sections and Sites at Port Noarlunga: IMAGE**

Source: SAPPA.

**p.28 – MAP 3: Port Noarlunga in Richard Counsel 1839, Field Book 94, p.98**

Source: SA Geographical Names Unit.

**p.29 – MAP 4: Port Noarlunga in McLaren 1840, ‘Country South of Adelaide’**

Source: State Library of SA.

**p.30 – MAP 5: Port Noarlunga in part of Book A, p.4-2, Diagram Books, begun ?1850s.**

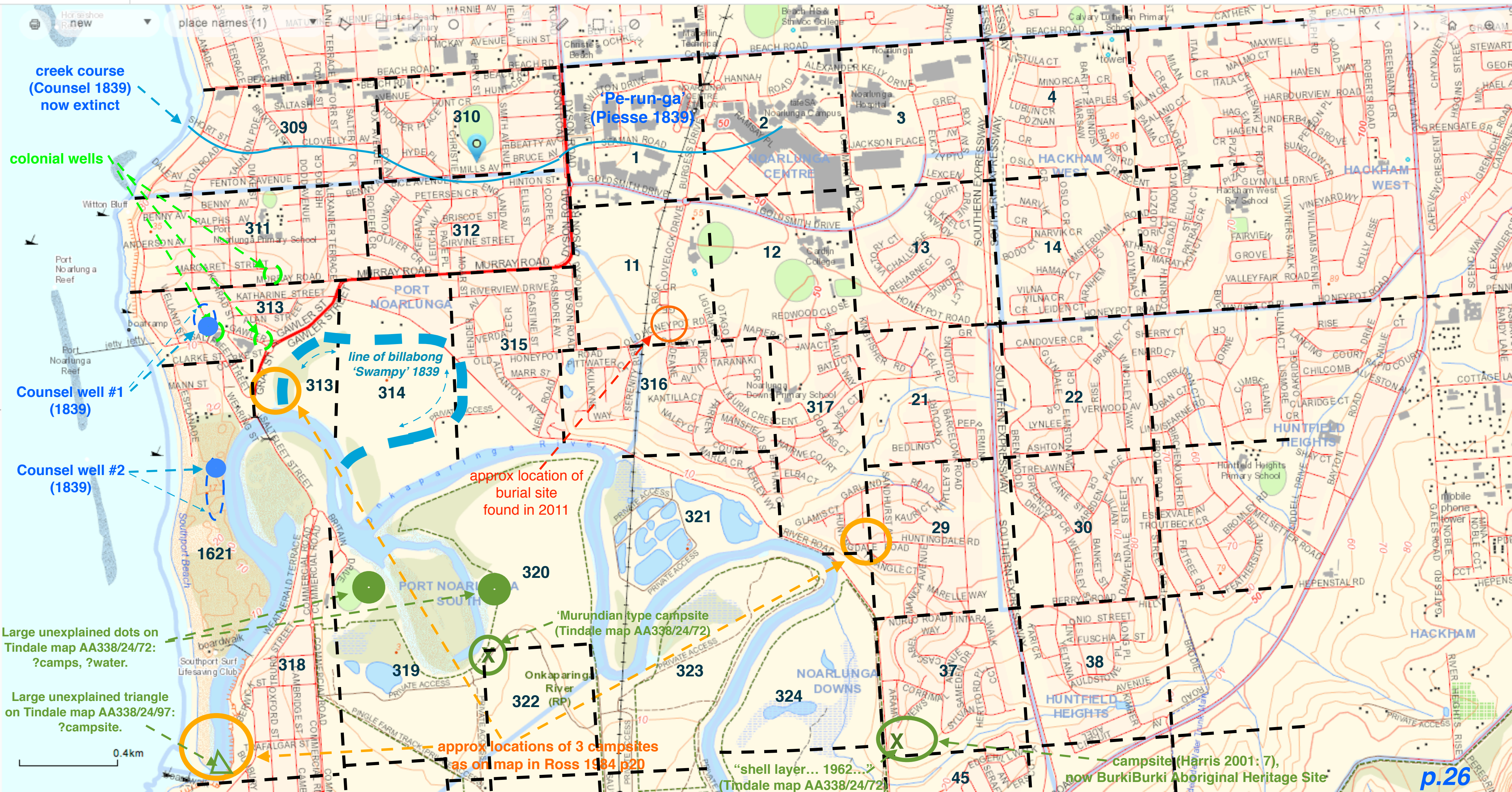
Source: SA Geographical Names Unit.

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*End of Summary*

<sup>95</sup> Lewis O'Brien and Georgina Williams 1992, 'The Cultural Significance of the Onkaparinga River', *Kaurna Higher Education Journal*, Issue 2, April: Underdale: Kaurna Higher Education Centre, University of SA: 69-70.

<sup>96</sup> Perhaps one day we may hear more from senior custodian Karl Telfer or his mother Georgina Ngangkiburka Williams, who has a longstanding connection with the area.



creek course (Counsel 1839) now extinct

colonial wells

Counsel well #1 (1839)

Counsel well #2 (1839)

line of billabong 'Swampy' 1839

approx location of burial site found in 2011

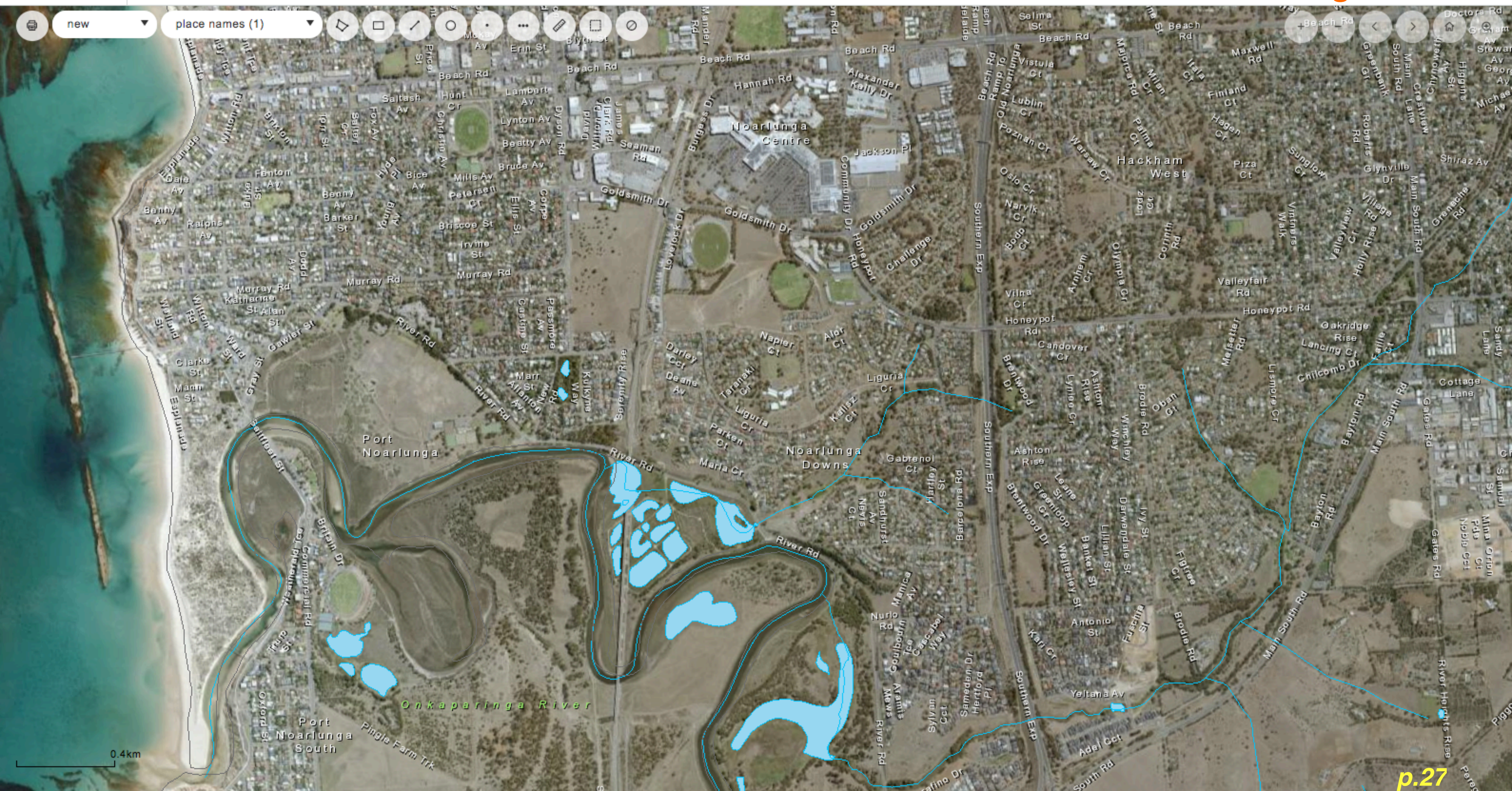
'Murundian type campsite (Tindale map AA338/24/72)

approx locations of 3 campsites as on map in Ross 1984 p20

"shell layer... 1962..." (Tindale map AA338/24/72)

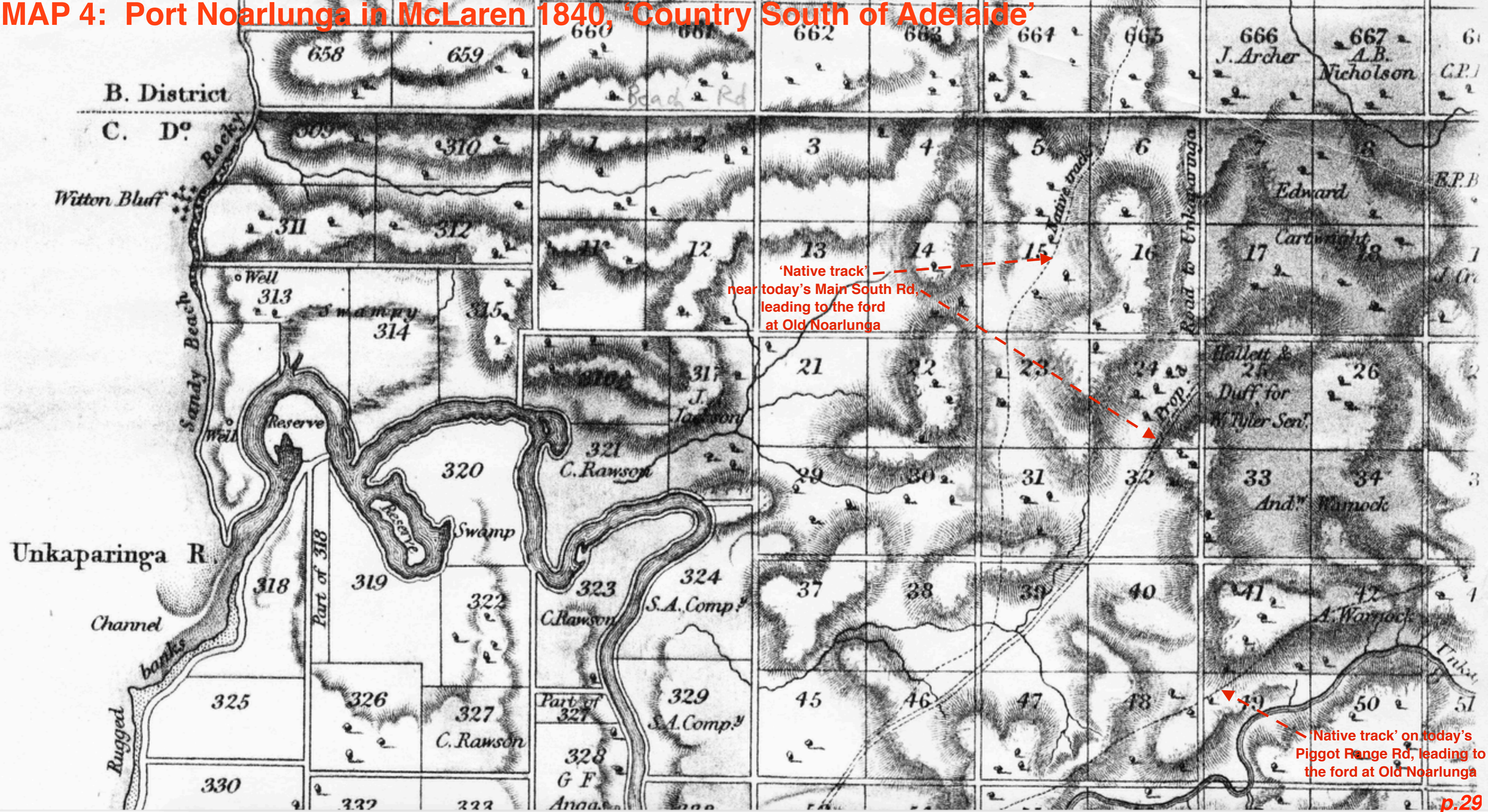
campsite (Harris 2001: 7), now BurkiBurki Aboriginal Heritage Site

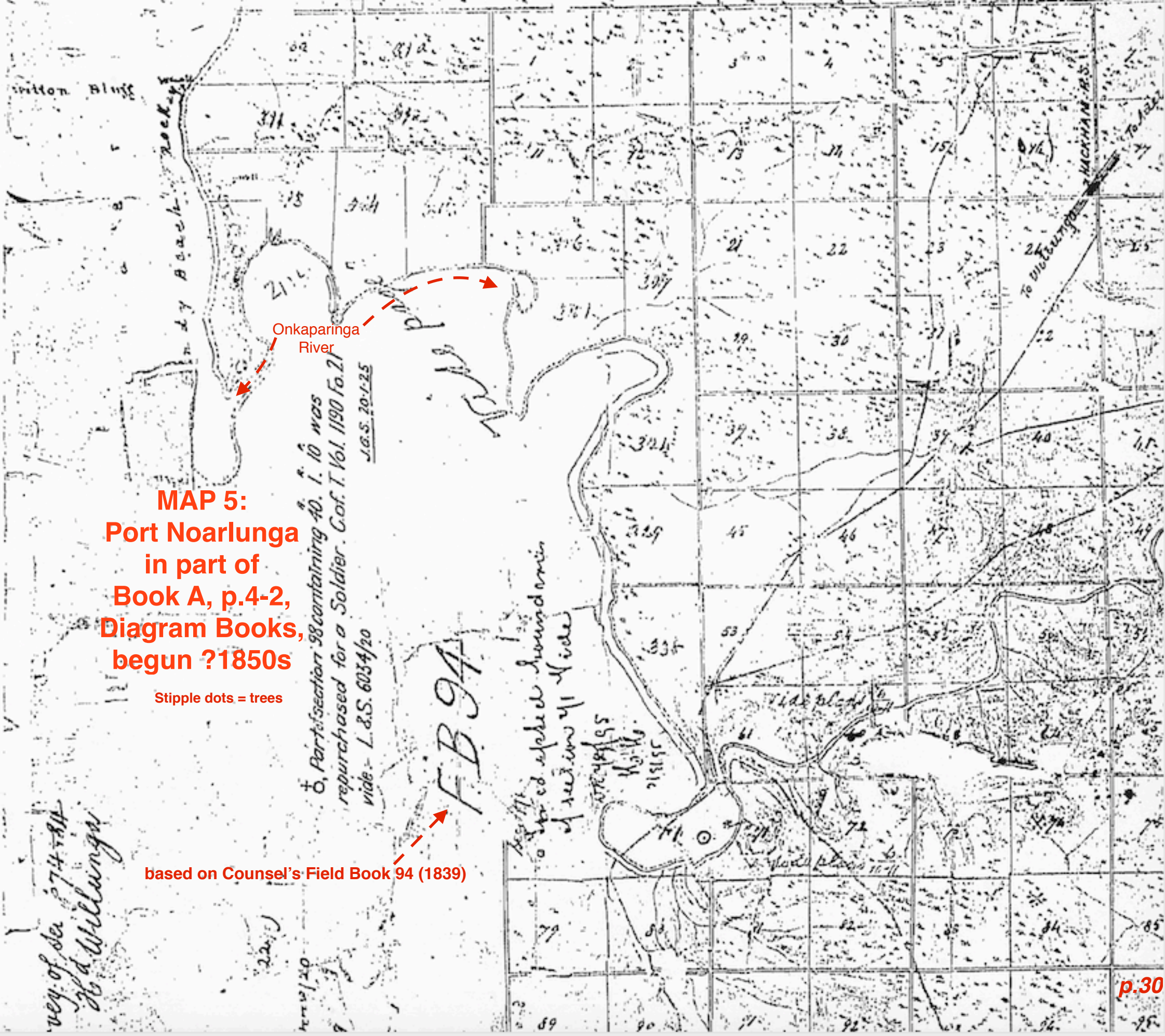
# MAP 2: Some Sections and Sites at Port Noarlunga: IMAGE





# MAP 4: Port Noarlunga in McLaren 1840, 'Country South of Adelaide'





**MAP 5:  
Port Noarlunga  
in part of  
Book A, p.4-2,  
Diagram Books,  
begun ?1850s**

Stipple dots = trees

based on Counsel's Field Book 94 (1839)