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Place Name SUMMARY (PNS) 4.02/01

Names of Port Noarlunga (4):

PIRRANGGA

and the Port Noarlunga meeting in February 1837

(last edited: 9.7.2021)

See also

- (1) PNS 4.02/05 'Ponkepurringa'
- (2) PNS 4.02/02 Tainbarangk, and
- (3) PNS 4.02/03 Witjalangk

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This essay has not been peer-reviewed or culturally endorsed in detail.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

Place Name SUMMARY (PNS) 4.02/01

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Abstract

Pirrangga (Old Spelling *Birrangga*) is the Kaurna name of a small relatively flat area around Section 1, Hundred of Noarlunga;¹ centred on the shallow valley of an extinct creek. This named place probably extends from a little north of Beach Rd and a little west of Dyson Rd almost to the Colonnades shopping centre, down to and along Goldsmith Drive (i.e. comprising all of Section 1 and adjacent parts of 2, 661, 660, 659 and 310).

The name and location were obtained in 1839 by Louis Piesse during the first surveys of the area, no doubt from Kaurna employees of the Survey Department who accompanied the teams as guides, interpreters and helpers with bush tucker.

Pirrangga means 'place of lung-passion, anger, or inclination to fight'. This may refer to an unrecorded traditional use of the place for warrior-like challenges and protocols with visiting groups, some of whom might come from distant Country via the major travel hub at *Ngangkiparingga* (the ford at Old Noarlunga), might sometimes be hostile, and in any case would need permission to be on this territory. The campsites at the dunes in Port Noarlunga, overlooked by the low ridge on the southwestern edge of *Pirrangga*, were less than 2 km away. An old burial site was discovered in 2011 a few hundred metres south of *Pirrangga*.

An Appendix to this essay gives an annotated first-hand account of an incident in February 1837 near *Pirrangga* and at Port Noarlunga, which fortuitously illustrates some of those protocols.

Coordinates	Lat, -35.14159°, Long. 138.488953° [centre of creek course in Seaman Road]
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Language Information

Meaning	'place of lung-passion, anger, or inclination to fight'.
Etymology	<i>Pirra</i> 'lungs, feelings associated with lungs; anger; inclination to fight' + <i>ngga</i> 'at, place of'
Language Family	Thura-Yura: 'Kaurna'
KWP Former Spelling	Birrangga
KWP New Spelling 2010	Pirrangga
Phonemic Spelling	/pirrangka/
Pronunciation	" P irrangga":
Pronunciation tips	Stress the first syllable. Rolled <i>rr</i> as in Scottish. Every <i>a</i> as in Maori 'haka'.

¹ All Section numbers in this essay are in the Hundred of Noarlunga (north of the river).

Main source evidence

Date	[Feb 1837] / 1875
Original source text	<p>[walking south from Glenelg] “It was about 4 p.m., when Nat [Thomas], who was walking in front with me, said, ‘As soon as we get to the top of this rise we shall see the mouth of the river. The water, however, is salt, and although there are native wells of fresh water under the sandhills, I may not be able to find them. We must go further up the river.’ We soon arrived on the summit and saw the mouth of the river, calm and glowing under the setting sun. Whilst enjoying the view I suddenly saw a few jets of white smoke rising from a clump of honeysuckles on the flat between us and the river, and on going further on we found that we were in the immediate vicinity of a native camp, and what was worse, that the natives saw us; our first impulse was to retire, but that was impossible, as the alarm had now spread in the camp, and men, women, and children rushed out to stare at us; a loud shout was set up, the men shook their spears, and seemed by their actions to invite us to come down, and at the same time to defy us...</p> <p>... Nat appeared to view them with some apprehension. ‘Full moon,’ said he, musing; ‘come down to corroboree and fish,’ muttered [sic] he to himself; ‘they must be the Onkaparinga and ‘Counter Bay blacks.’... Nat now took me on one side and explained to me that his wife was a native of one of these tribes, and that, though it was an advantage on our side, through him, to be able to say some words of their language, still his wife's relations had a great objection to their union, and that the chances were, should he be recognized, we should all be murdered. This was unpleasant news, and I wished Nat back at Glenelg or at Kangaroo Island; we agreed, however that he should not make himself too conspicuous, that I should be spokesman and get what words I wanted from him. I determined not to learn too much, so only learnt one word “Cowie,” water...</p> <p>... [W]e saw eight of their warriors coming straight towards us, armed with spears and waddies.... The blacks came up the hill in single file, headed by a tall fellow, after wards known as Tam o’Shanter... [T]he confident and open manner in which they advanced showed me—and Nat thought the same—that they did not mean mischief. Up they came to within about six paces, viewing us from top to toe with evident curiosity. Tam o’Shanter than addressed us, probably asking us questions, pointing at the same time towards the sea. He also seemed to think that there were more of us, and we had seen two small parties leave the camp with a view perhaps to get in our rear. To Tam o’ Shanter's speech I could only reply ‘Cowie, cowie,’ and make signs of drinking with my hands. After some conversation, not understood by either party...</p> <p>... By this time all the mob from the camp – men, women, and children – came up and surrounded us... They did not take any particular notice of the</p>

	guns, merely handling them and returning them to us... [O]ne of the party came up to me and saying, 'Cowie' led us down to a native well at the foot of the sand hills... he pointed to the water and left us... it was a nice situation, near a clump of teatree, on a slight rise about 300 yards from their Camp..."
Reference	'Noarlunga' [Charles W Stuart] 1875, 'An Adventure With The Natives', <i>The South Australian Advertiser</i> 28 /12/1875: 5e-f, http://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/31963670/2276412 .
Informants credited	
Informants uncredited	

Date	Oct 1839
Original source text	" Pe-run-ga : land on the banks of the Onkaparinga, or field, river, preliminary section No.1 , district C."
Reference	'L.P.' [Louis Piesse] letter to the <i>Adelaide Guardian</i> 18/10/1839, reproduced in <i>South Australian Colonist</i> Vol. 1 No.19. 1840: 296a, http://www.nla.gov.au/ferguson/1461426X/18400714/00010019/7-9.pdf .
Informants credited	
Informants uncredited	Kaurra guides employed as 'labourers' by Survey Department when Piesse was in John McLaren's survey team for District C.

Date	1839
Original source text	A clearly-marked creek line <i>[runs westward through Sections 2 / 1 / 310 / 309].</i> <i>[See Map 7 in this essay].</i>
Reference	Plan 6/13, 'Plan of the North West Part of District C', SA Geographical Names Unit.
Informants credited	
Informants uncredited	

Date	1840
Original source text	Clear creek line, <i>with hachures marking its valley [runs westward from Section 2 / 1 / corner of 310 / 312 / 309, reaching coast at north end of 'Rocky' shoreline].</i> <i>[See Maps 8 and 9 in this essay].</i>
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	- " <i>ira</i> fight; battle" - " <i>irabinna</i> warrior; a pugnacious or quarrelsome person"
Reference	Teichelmann & Schürmann 1840, <i>Outlines of a Grammar...</i>
Informants credited	
Informants uncredited	Kadlitpinna. Mullawirraburka, Ityamaiitpinna, etc. 1838-40

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...”
Reference	‘L.P.’ [Louis Piesse], ‘Descriptive Tour Through Part of District C’, <i>Observer</i> 13/4/1844: 7b, https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/158918431/18834087 .
Informants credited	
Informants uncredited	

Date	1857
Original source text	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - “<i>bira biranendi</i> seems to denote, to grow angry or show an inclination for fighting.” - “<i>birra binna</i> Syn: <i>marngo binna</i>. See: <i>bira biranendi</i>.” - “<i>birra</i> shall signify lungs, which else is 'karlto'; but I expect that it expresses [<i>sic</i>] some passion, which is, as generally, ascribed to one or the other intestines, having its seat there. Syn: <i>kar,lto</i>. Variant: <i>bir,a</i>. (alt. Eng BITHA).” - “<i>ira</i> see <i>birra</i>” - “<i>pira piranendi</i> See: <i>bira</i>.”
Reference	Teichelmann 1857, Dictionary of the Adelaide dialect.
Informants credited	
Informants uncredited	Kadlitpinna. Mullawirraburka, Ityamaitpinna, etc. 1838-45

Date	[1840s] / 1902
Original source text	“Memories of the Extinct tribe of Cowandilla natives... The boundaries of their state or Kingdom – North the river Parra – South Noarlunga – East Unkaparinga – West the sea shore...”
Reference	Thomas Day 1902: MS ‘Memories of the Extinct Tribe of Cowandilla Natives’, in Tindale ‘Supplementary papers [to] Notes On Kurna Tribe’, AA 338/2/68, SA Museum: 1.
Informants credited	
Informants uncredited	

Date	2011
Original source text	“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...”
Reference	Steve Rice, 'Aboriginal bones found', <i>Advertiser</i> 18/2/2011, p10.
Informants credited	
Informants uncredited	

Discussion: PLACE OF WARRIOR CHALLENGE?

In 1839 John McLaren was in charge of the first surveys for Districts B and C, extending in total from O'Halloran Hill to Sellicks Hill. A few colonists had made brief excursions and explorations into some parts of this area, including Governor Gawler himself acting as interim Surveyor-General for a few months after the resignation of Colonel Light; but the Country Surveys were the first time colonists had examined it thorough detail.

They were doing so in company with Kurna men, for in the Aldinga and Yankalilla surveys the Department was employing “several” Aboriginal men “who receive rations and pay the same as white laborers”.² No doubt they acted as guides and helped to find bush tucker and good camping places for the teams in their months away from Adelaide on dodgy and inadequate rations. Around campfires in their own country on those long nights, these Kurna men often shared the names of the places where they were sitting and travelling; and some of the surveyors listened – because Gawler, an enthusiast for ‘native names’ of places, was explicitly asking for the help of all colonists, and especially the surveyors, in “discovering, and carefully and precisely retaining these”, which “should be communicated in precise terms to the Surveyor-general, who will cause... native names... to be inserted in the public maps”.³

McLaren’s Second Officer was Richard Counsel, a maker of meticulously detailed sketch maps which survive in some of the Field Books held by the SA Geographical names Unit.

One of the assistants in the District C teams was Louis Piesse, who would later join Sturt as storeman on his epic journey to Central Australia. Piesse was keeping a journal during these months,⁴ but we don’t know whether it has survived. However, he also wrote for the local newspapers. In October 1839, while camped at Kurtandilla⁵ on Sellicks Hill, he sent a letter to the *Adelaide Guardian* which was reprinted next year in a London magazine, commenting on William Williams’s newly-published Kurna wordlist, adding some Kurna vocabulary from his own conversations with his Aboriginal team-mates, and a list of place-names, many of them located with some precision by Section number. One of these was as follows:

² SA Register 10/8/1839: 6a, <http://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/27440703/2049497>.

³ South Australian Gazette 31/10/1839, http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/other/sa_gazette/1839/93.pdf.

⁴ 'L.P.' [Louis Piesse], 'Descriptive Tour through Part of District C', *Observer* 13/4/1844: 7c, <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/158918431/18834087>.

⁵ See PNS 4.04.03/03 Kurtandilla.

Pe-run-ga: land on the banks of the Onkaparinga, or field,⁶ river, preliminary section No.1, district C.⁷

THE PLACE: 'SECTION 1':

Section 1, in what later became the Hundred of Noarlunga, is a 608-metre square roughly west of The Colonnades shopping centre, bounded by Dyson Rd on the west, Beach Rd on the north, and (very roughly) Burgess Drive on the east and Goldsmith Drive on the south.⁸ It was sketched by Counsel in 1839.⁹ Over the next couple of years the results of the McLaren surveys were then published in several forms, first by the SA survey Office,¹⁰ then by Arrowsmith in London.¹¹ Some of the data from Counsel was copied later into a compilation known to the GNU as 'Book A' in their collection of 'Diagram Books'.¹²

From these sources we see that in 1839 Section 1 was bisected by a small creek which ran due west through sections 310 and 309 to reach the coast roughly at today's Short St.¹³ I leave it to hydrologists to judge whether it could sometimes have been a source of drinking water. Its valley is very shallow, but the Arrowsmith map shows it by the hachures which outline the low ridges north and south of it.¹⁴ The creek itself has been obliterated by development; there is no sign of it today except at the little reserve opposite Seaman Rd between Dyson Rd and David Witton Drive, where a grassy depression runs under the trees and westward into Bruce Av.

In and around Section 1 is an area of relatively flat but elevated land, outlined by the broken red line on Map 6.

⁶ The Onkaparinga River was originally called "*Field's River*" by Colonel Light in 1836, and did not officially receive its garbled-Kaurna colonial name until Gawler requested it. Light's colleague Captain WG Field was then commemorated by adding his name to the creek which flows into Hallett Cove. See PNS 4.02/04 Ngangkkipari.

⁷ SA *Colonist* Vol. 1 No.19, 1840: 296, <http://www.nla.gov.au/ferguson/1461426X/18400714/00010019/7-9.pdf>.

⁸ See Map 6 in this essay, and Map 1 in PNS 4-02-02 Tainbarangk.

⁹ Counsel 1839, Field Book 94: 98; see MAP3 IN PNS 4-02-02 Tainbarangk.

¹⁰ e.g. [anon.] 1839 'Plan of the North West Part of District C', Plan 6/13, GNU (see Map 7 this essay); FH Burslem 1840, 'Plan of the country south of Adelaide J. McLaren Esq[Senior Surveyor 1840', Survey Office, Adelaide (C 236, SLSA; see Map 8 this essay).

¹¹ J McLaren 1840, 'Country South of Adelaide...', London, Arrowsmith, e.g. BRG 42/120/28 SLSA; see Map 9 in this essay, also Map 4 in PNS 4-02-02 Tainbaranangk.

¹² Diagram Book A p.4-2 (GNU); see MAP 5 in PNS 4-02-02 Tainbarangk.

¹³ See Maps 6 and 10 in this essay. This is a different creek from the one whose outlet is still visible about 70m north, as a drain onto the beach immediately south of the end of Beach Rd; this one is also marked on Plan 6/13 (Map 7).

¹⁴ Map 9; cp. Map 8, in which Burslem depicts the same ridges by shading. On Map 6 I have indicated the ridges by thick brown broken lines.

South of the creek a low ridge overlooks the river. From the east (on Section 13 near the Southern Freeway) it descends slowly westward to a low point (around Roeder Crescent near the boundary of 311/312), then rises with increasing steepness to Witton Bluff.¹⁵

It seems that in 1839 much of the elevated flattish area was relatively free of trees, which were concentrated on the surrounding ridges, sheltering the depression to some extent. Of the steeper approaches to it from east and south, the eastern one (Sections 3 and 4) was almost treeless, while the southern one (11, 12 and 13) had on the ridgetop a row of trees which may have been sparse.¹⁶ Lookouts among the trees along the ridgetop would command a view of the campsites near Gray St and elsewhere on the river flats, and also of the approaches from east and south, and from the northern ridge around Beach Rd.¹⁷

No doubt the trees shown on southern slopes of the ridge (on Sections 315 and separately 316-7, north of today's River Rd) were part of the avenue of "beautiful trees and shrubs, wattle, honeysuckle, silver wattle, sheaoak, teatree, and masses of wild flowers [which] grew in wild beauty and profusion along both river banks right down to Port Noarlunga",¹⁸ and formed part of the line of denser woodland in Frome's 1848 painting.¹⁹ 'Honeysuckles' are banksias; and we know that at the Loop#1 campsite there was a clump of them big enough to conceal a large number of people, at least when seen in the late afternoon shadow of the dunes from a short distance away.²⁰

THE NAME: 'PE-RUN-GA':

We can be confident that Piesse's spelling represents an original something like *Pirangga*.²¹ The suffix *ngga* is certainly the Kurna Locative ('at, place of'). The root is something like *pira*, which

¹⁵ The McLaren hachures (Map 9) seem to indicate another enclosed valley or bowl on Section 11, separated from the river by the final ridge on 316 (around today's Seaford railway line). However, this misrepresents the actual topography. A site visit, and the contour lines on Map 6, show that there is no enclosed bowl, but a continuous descent from the ridge on 11 and 12 (immediately south of the creek) down to the river. This has a small creek valley carved into it (around the reserve between New Rd and Kulkynne Way), in whose upper reach an old burial site was discovered in 2011 (Steve Rice, 'Aboriginal bones found', *Advertiser* 18/2/2011: 10; see Map 6).

¹⁶ These tentative judgments are made by comparing the trees on Counsel's field sketch (Map 2) and the 'Book A' copy based on him (Map 5) with those on the office copy Maps 7 and 8 aimed at publication; and all of these with the actual contours on Map 6. The published McLaren-Arrowsmith Map 9 reduces the trees to a mere relic in favour of the hachures.

¹⁷ Today it is almost impossible to see any of these views from the streets of the town. Like most water views, they have been sold to the housing developers so that private individuals can own them exclusively from their balconies.

¹⁸ 'G.A.P.' [George Arthur Payne], *Register* 27/4/1921: 6f, <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/63034906/4552435>. He was remembering the 1860s.

¹⁹ 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/>; see also my comments in PNS 4.02/02 Tainbarangk.

²⁰ See Stuart's story in the Appendix to this essay.

²¹ The second vowel is given in a syllable which certainly represents the pronunciation of English 'run', whose vowel is the phonetic *a* as in 'haka' or 'father'.

would be *bira* in Old Spelling.²² Matching vocabulary in Kurna language includes the following range of meanings:

*birra*²³ shall signify lungs, which else is *karlto*; but I expect that it expresses [sic] some passion, which is, as generally, ascribed to one or the other intestines, having its seat there. (alt. *bir*, a. Engl. BITHA).²⁴

bira biranendi S seems to denote, to grow angry or show an inclination for fighting.²⁵

The word can be abbreviated: “*ira* fight; battle” (N.Sp. *irra*).²⁶ It was used to describe a personality: “*irabinna* warrior; a pugnacious or quarrelsome person” (N.Sp. *irrapina*),²⁷ and a variant of *irabinna* is *birra-binna* (N.Sp. *pirra-pina*).²⁸

We might also consider the Kurna verb “*pirrandi*, to pluck, pull out, scratch, shave’,²⁹ but the common noun *birra* is a more natural alternative.

With all these related meanings in mind, we can say fairly confidently that *Pirrangga* means ‘place of lung-passion’ – some violent gut-level feeling: jealousy for what a person owns? – and more specifically, ‘place of battle or anger or inclination-to-fight’.

Was this place a traditional battleground? I don’t know any record of battles here at Port Noarlunga. Was it a place where demonstrations of ferocity, warrior prowess and ‘readiness-to-fight’ were frequent and expected? i.e. was it a traditional meeting-place where visiting tribes were met with traditional challenges? We know that these protocols were very frightening to European

²² Aboriginal languages do not distinguish *p* from *b*, but use them as variant pronunciations with the same meaning.

²³ In KWP’s New Spelling 2010 this is *pirra*. Teichelmann 1857 spells it in different entries as *birra*, *pira* and *bira*. KWP analysis suggests that the *r* is a rolled *rr*.

²⁴ CG Teichelmann 1857, Dictionary of the Adelaide dialect, Bleek’s Catalogue of George Grey’s Library, South African Public Library). I don’t know what Teichelmann means by “Engl. BITHA”, but this does not affect my analysis here.

²⁵ Teichelmann 1857; (N.Sp. *pirrapirra-rninthi* ‘become angry, get into the mood for a fight’ [Draft Kurna Dictionary 2014]).

²⁶ T&S 1840; cp. “*ira padnendi* to go to fight (see *birra*)” (Teichelmann 1857); (N.Sp. *irra padninthi*).

²⁷ T&S 1840; ‘brawler’ (Teichelmann 1857); literally ‘anger-fellow.

²⁸ Cp. “*ira see birra*”; also “*birra binna* ? = *margo binna* (see *bira biranendi*)” and “*mangu* anger, crossness, jealousy, envy; *margubinna* a person prone to these passions” (Teichelmann 1857); (N.Sp. *margupina*).

²⁹ Teichelmann 1857, which continues: “very likely from the following: *pirri* 1) nails of the fingers & toes. 2) hook”. N.Sp. *pirranthi*. A *pirrapirrala* (N.Sp. *pirrapirrala*) is ‘someone who plucks or shaves’ (T&S 1840). It is conceivable that *Pirrangga* might come from the root of this verb, and so might mean ‘place of plucking or shaving’. However, it is possible that *birra* and *pirrandi* are related anyway, since biting the beard (and perhaps plucking at it with fingers) was a common expression of fierce male rage: “With his beard between his teeth, [he] raged towards his enemy” (Schürmann diary 20/12/1839); “Now the whole crowd formed a line, taking their beards between their teeth” (ibid. 28/12/1839).

onlookers, but they were often astonished to see them followed by joyful celebrations, dancing and feasts.³⁰

This would be consistent with the theory that *Tainbarangk* – or the whole Onkaparinga flood plain – was some kind of border place, as seems to be implied by Karlowan in Berndt's book,³¹ and in the Ramsay Smith version of 'Chirr-bookie' (Tjirbuki).³²

It would also be consistent with the topography, the managed landscape of trees and grass as described above, and its relationship with the camping places about 2 km away around the lower estuary.³³

This theory is not fact; it will need Aboriginal people to check it out by reading the land and finding more written and oral history around it.

.....

APPENDIX FOLLOWS: -

³⁰ Several accounts of this kind of battle-ready protocol are quoted in Tom Gara 1998, 'Historical Accounts of Kurna Ceremonies', Report to Kurna Aboriginal Community & Heritage Association; e.g. p.29, Joseph Mercer's letter written in 1841: "One Sunday morning a hostile tribe came in sight. Immediately a war shout was given, at the sound of which every man fled to his war instruments, and prepared for the battle by forming a close body under the direction of a leader. At the same time the poor women... ran to the rear... By this time the enemy had bounded over the plain and when within 200 yards lessened their pace, and approached with the greatest caution, moving in a compact body, with their long spears pointing upwards, and shouting as they advanced. When within 100 yards they stopped, and gave a signal of peace. The Adelaide tribe did the same. An old man from each tribe then advanced within a few yards of each other and held a conversation, and after a few minutes had elapsed the old men stuck up their spears in the ground, when each tribe followed their example, and ran up to each other in ecstasies of delight" (Observer 30/12/1905: 43b-c, <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/162445995/19014100>). Note that Mercer began by assuming that the approaching tribe was 'hostile'.

³¹ See PNS 4.02/02 Tainbarangk.

³² See PNS 4.02/03 Witjalangk.

³³ See PNS 4.02/02 Tainbarangk.

APPENDIX:

PIRRANGGA, TAINBARANGK, THEIR PEOPLE, AND MULLAYAKIBURKA ('TAM O'SHANTER'), FEBRUARY 1837:

An incident at Port Noarlunga on 1st and 2nd February 1837 – less than three months after the first settlers arrived at Holdfast Bay – throws much light on the people of the estuary, and coincidentally may illustrate the significance of nearby *Pirrangga*.

Though located mostly at *Tainbarangk*,³⁴ it began within a few hundred metres of *Pirrangga*. It then continued at what I have called Campsite Loop#1 (near today's Gray St), and involved Well #1 at the south end of Witton Rd. Next day the action included the rich waters of the river near the campsite, then moved upstream to the 'Horseshoe' at *Ngangkiparingga*. All of this happened in circumstances which were dominated by a large group of Aboriginal occupants.

It was probably then that the first recorded version of the name 'Onkaparinga'³⁵ was obtained by Charles William Stuart, stock agent for the South Australian Company at the time, and later an Inspector and Commissioner of Police in SA.³⁶ He was the author of the account and one of the leading participants in the events he described.

Although written 38 years after the event, Stuart's account has circumstantial details which tell us much about the place and people of Port Noarlunga as they were in February 1837. There are hints that this may have been first contact with Europeans for many or all of those who were present.³⁷

Having already referred to a few details from this article, I now append an annotated full copy of most of it.³⁸

Readers are forewarned that Stuart was proudly "brought up to the army"³⁹ and came to South Australia in December 1836 fresh from more than a year on a cattle station in a part of NSW which was then 'remote'. Here he is writing for the public about his own fearless youthful⁴⁰ exploits in a typical 19th-century Men's Adventure Story. He presents himself throughout as the competent,

³⁴ See PNS 4.02/02.

³⁵ See PNS 4.02/04 Ngangkipari.

³⁶ See Helen Thiselton [n.d.], 'Charles William Stuart – Inspector of Police', <https://www.campbelltown.sa.gov.au/library/local-history-room/localhistoryarticles/local-history-articles-people/stuart.-charles-william-inspector-of-police> [11/3/21].

³⁷ – even though Kangaroo Island squatter George Bates had visited the Onkaparinga flood plain overland with Aboriginal tribespeople in 1829; and his fellow Islander Nat Thomas had been there by sea, probably in a sealing ship. There is no evidence that the sealing Captain John Jones had landed at the Onkaparinga, although he did visit 'Jones's Harbour' further north, i.e. the Port River estuary. (See below and my *Feet On the Fleurieu* Chapters 2 and 3).

³⁸ More about the whole article and its implications will appear in Chapter 4 of *Feet On the Fleurieu*.

³⁹ CW Stuart 1886, 'An Old Police Inspector', *Advertiser* 27/12/1886: 6a.

⁴⁰ He was about 25 years old at the time.

experienced Leader who knows how to handle Blacks, unlike the cringing greenhorns with him; even the hard-bitten pre-colonial Kangaroo Islander Nat Thomas gets only half-hearted credit from him, not much more than an equal-second hero with Stuart's hunting dog Hector. We might reflect on the attitudes and personal dynamics which would shape the actions of the two future police chiefs in this tale, Charles Stuart and 'Harry' Alford: -

*AN ADVENTURE WITH THE NATIVES.*⁴¹

In the commencement of the year 1837⁴² there were but two horses in the colony of South Australia, both imported from Tasmania. There being in those days neither stables nor yards, the horses were tethered out in the magnificent kangaroo grass that grew round the lagoons at Glenelg, and, indeed, covered the plains from the sandhills to the mountain range, girth high, like a field of waving corn.

One morning both the horses were missing, one having broken his tether-rope, and the other having slipped the collar over his head. One of these horses belonged to the S. A. Company, and was in my charge, and the other to a gentleman since knighted.⁴³ Having several men unemployed at the time, an immediate search was made for the horses for a mile or two round, some of the men venturing as far as the foot of the hills, some to the Reedbeds, and some even as far as where the City of Adelaide now stands, but without success; so I determined to start the next day to look for them in a southerly direction, and to proceed in that course till I came to fresh water. It was a fearfully hot morning about the end of January, and, taking with me one of the Company's young men (Harry),⁴⁴ a Kangaroo Islander, who volunteered to go (Nat),⁴⁵ and

⁴¹ 'Noarlunga' [CW Stuart] 1875, 'An Adventure With the Natives', *SA Chronicle and Weekly Mail* 25/12/1875: 12b-e, <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/93954922/8382693>. Thanks to Rhondda Harris for alerting me to this original version of an important first-contact story (Rhondda Harris 2001, 'Aboriginal Heritage Survey: Old Noarlunga Township: A Report to United Water': 5).

Hitherto most historians have relied on Bull's re-telling a few years later in his well-known book (John W Bull 1878, *Early Experiences Of Colonial Life In South Australia*, Adelaide: Advertiser & Chronicle Offices: 14-17; there is a rough complete text at http://www.archive.org/stream/earlyexperience00bullgoog/earlyexperience00bullgoog_djvu.txt. An expanded second edition came out in 1884). Even those few who have used the original 1875 article have not known who the pseudonymous author 'Noarlunga' was.

Bull based his version on the original article with some omissions, alterations, and additions. Some of these probably came from talking to Stuart, whom he had got to know, and who loaned some of his old notes (see p.11). Where Bull's changes throw extra light on Stuart's original account, I add them here in footnotes; but on many cases we can't be sure whether they come from Stuart or merely from Bull's embellishments and assumptions.

⁴² Stuart's journey began on February 1st. In his large set of surviving diaries, he briefly mentions it as part of a summary list of significant events in his life: CW Stuart MS Diaries 1833-1843, D6872(L), State Library of SA, Vol. 5, http://www.slsa.sa.gov.au/archivaldocs/d/D6872_5_Stuart_diary_transcript.pdf, p.3: "1837 Feb 1st. Started off to Enkeperinga to look for Polly". Polly was one of the two horses.

⁴³ John Morphet.

⁴⁴ Henry Alford, at that time an employee of the SA Company, later inspector of Police. Bull's book contains much about Alford's adventures. See Bull 1878: 14, 23, 33, etc.

⁴⁵ Nat Thomas: see my history in progress, *Feet On the Fleurieu (passim)*; also Rebe Taylor 2002/2008, *Unearthed*.

Mr. S. Allen, the botanist,⁴⁶ who also volunteered, I started at about 9 a.m. We carried three days' rations and two bottles of water each. I took with me, also, a very large and powerful kangaroo dog (Hector), a cross between a Sussex greyhound and an English mastiff. As for arms, I had a splendid single gun by Reilly, and Mr. Allen had a military carbine from the Government stores, as also had Harry.

I proceeded along the sea beach till about three miles to the south of where Brighton now stands,⁴⁷ then took inland, but never far out of sight of the sea. A few kangaroos, exceedingly wild, some wild turkeys, lots of white cockatoos, and plenty of quail were all the game we saw during the day; but as we were horse-seeking, not sporting, we did not meddle with them. Long before midday our water was exhausted and the bottles thrown away, the first token of civilization left in that part of the country. We were excessively tired as evening approached, for we had not walked in a straight line, but zigzag,⁴⁸ looking for the horses on the most likely flats.

It was about 4 p.m., when Nat, who was walking in front with me, said, "As soon as we get to the top of this rise we shall see the mouth of the river. The water, however, is salt, and although there are native wells of fresh water under the sandhills, I may not be able to find them. We must go further up the river."⁴⁹ We soon arrived on the summit⁵⁰ and saw the mouth of the river calm and glowing under the setting sun.

Whilst enjoying the view I suddenly saw a few jets of white smoke⁵¹ rising from a clump of honeysuckles on the flat between us and the river, and on going further on we found that we were in the immediate vicinity of a native camp,⁵² and what was worse, that the natives saw

⁴⁶ Bull's later versions do not include the initial 'S'. Actually this was Thomas Allen, botanist and cultivator; Bull adds that Allen came along because he "desired to have such an opportunity to botanise... (Mr. Allen was afterwards the manager of the first Botanical Gardens...)" (Bull 1878: 14). See 'Development of Adelaide Botanic Garden', https://www.environment.sa.gov.au/files/sharedassets/botanic_gardens/about-us/abg-conservation-study/3_abg2_history_conservationstudy.pdf: 4.

⁴⁷ i.e. the vicinity of Perry Barr Rd, Hallett Cove.

⁴⁸ "hoping to cross horse tracks" (Bull: 14).

⁴⁹ Here Bull adds "(He had landed there when sealing.)" (Bull 1878: 14). Approaching from the north, Nat probably recognized the distinctive high cliff topography of Witton Bluff on south side of the little bay at Christies Beach, including the short stretch of cliffs around it marked 'Rocky' on McLaren 1840. This would be visible from higher ground as they zigzagged thru Christies Beach, and he would remember it from his sea approach in a sealing ship or whaleboat, and from exploration around the Onkaparinga River. It seems the wells were not obvious to European outsiders, even one as experienced in bushcraft as Nat.

⁵⁰ Bull amplifies: "the summit of the gentle mound" (p.14).

⁵¹ Bull clarifies that these were campfire smokes, not signals (although Stuart saw them 'suddenly'): "a native camp... with the smoke of fires rising upwards towards the deep-blue sky" (p.14).

⁵² This passage tells us (1) that they had probably passed within 500m or so of *Pirrangga*, and at the top of the 'gentle mound' were probably somewhere between Roeder Cr and England Av (see Map 6); and (2) that they were approaching the campsite at Loop#1 near Gray St. To the people camped there they would have been visible as soon as they had arrived over the ridge at a distance of 1 km or perhaps less (see the pink sightlines on Map 6; the longest of these [1.9 km] is unlikely to indicate their position of appearance, since it cannot be described as 'immediate vicinity', even after 'going further on').

us;⁵³ our first impulse was to retire, but that was impossible, as the alarm had now spread in the camp, and men, women, and children rushed out to stare at us; a loud shout was set up, the men shook their spears, and seemed by their actions to invite us to come down, and at the same time to defy us.⁵⁴

It would be impossible to describe the looks of consternation and alarm shown by Mr. A. and Harry, who had never seen a wild black before;⁵⁵ I also found that Nat appeared to view them with some apprehension. "Full moon," said he, musing; "come down to corroborie and fish," muttered [sic] he to himself; "they must be the Onkaparinga⁵⁶ and 'Counter Bay blacks."⁵⁷ I must here mention that I had been 18 months in New South Wales before coming to South Australia, and was the best part of the time living at Port Stevens, about 120 miles north of Sydney, the then outer bound of settlement in that direction, where the Australian Agricultural Company had obtained a grant of a million acres of land; at that place I was much among the natives, the Port Stevens and the Miall River tribes, and had learnt a good deal of their habits and customs,⁵⁸ and was not therefore so much alarmed at our present position. Nat now took me on one side and explained to me that his wife⁵⁹ was a native of one of these tribes, and that, though it was an advantage on our side, through him, to be able to say some words of their language, still his wife's relations had a great objection to their union, and that the chances were, should he be recognized, we should all be murdered. This was unpleasant news, and I wished Nat back at Glenelg or at Kangaroo Island; we agreed, however that he should not make himself too conspicuous, that I should be spokesman and get what words I wanted from him.⁶⁰ I determined not to learn too much, so only learnt one word "Cowie," water.⁶¹ We did not at that time let our mates know the dilemma we were in; they had quite enough to think of. Mr. Allen was talking

⁵³ Bull p.15: "fears [were] aroused by the sudden appearance of a considerable number of natives of all ages and sexes".

⁵⁴ Bull p.15: "appeared to invite or dare the whites to approach and engage them".

⁵⁵ Bull p.15 adds: "and they exhibiting threatening actions".

⁵⁶ The spelling 'Enkeperinga' in Stuart's journal probably reflects Nat's actual pronunciation, since this was the first time the name was recorded. The spelling 'Onkaparinga' was not recorded until at least Sep 1837, or possibly later.

⁵⁷ How well did Nat know these 'Onkaparinga' people? How much did he know about interactions between the peoples of 'Onkaparinga' and Encounter Bay, and how did he come by this knowledge? These questions are addressed in Chapter 4 of *Feet On the Fleurieu*. As we shall see below, he was mistaken in his assumption that Encounter Bay people were present on this occasion. He recognized nobody, and nobody recognized him.

⁵⁸ Stuart had worked on a cattle station near Port Stephens in NSW before coming to SA in December 1836 (<https://www.campbelltown.sa.gov.au/library/local-history-room/localhistoryarticles/local-history-articles-people/stuart,-charles-william-inspector-of-police> [11/3/21]).

⁵⁹ Bull p.15: "the black woman whom he had on the island".

⁶⁰ Bull p.15 condenses this passage: Nat "was aware that they were not pleased at her absence. He understood a few of their words, but thought it better for him to keep as much out of sight as possible".

⁶¹ Kurna *kauwi* 'fresh water'. This passage implies at least two things: (1) His wife had taught him "some words" of her tribe which was "one of these tribes", and was somewhere in Kurna Language Country – and therefore not Encounter Bay; in fact she probably came from the southern Fleurieu. (2) Nat knew (or assumed) that the language here was the same. The passage may also imply that he did not know Encounter Bay had a quite different language from 'Onkaparinga' (in fact it is doubtful whether any of the Kangaroo Islanders knew this). In any case, it was the Encounter Bay people whom Nat feared. Her southern Fleurieu family probably had close relatives there, possibly including her lawful husband. Marriages across this language barrier were common.



about being prepared for death, but to die like Englishmen.

In the meantime there was a movement in the black camp, and we saw eight of their warriors coming straight towards us, armed with spears and waddies. Our position appeared critical. Hector was giving warning barks, and walked up and down with his tail up, and growling; he was as good as another man on our side, quite equal to any blackfellow; but still he might precipitate a fray. I therefore fastened him to a small wattle-tree close to where I stood. Harry was on one side with his carbine across his arm, Mr. Allen and Nat in the middle, while I stood a little in advance with my fowling-piece in hand. The blacks came up the hill in single file, headed by a tall fellow, afterwards known as Tam o'Shanter.⁶² I was thinking, if their intentions were hostile, at what distance they would attack us; but the confident and open manner in which they advanced⁶³ showed me – and Nat thought the same – that they did not mean mischief. Up they came to within about six paces,⁶⁴ viewing us from top to toe with evident curiosity. Tam o'Shanter then addressed us, probably asking us questions, pointing at the same time towards the sea. He also seemed to think that there were more of us, and we had seen two small parties leave the camp with a view perhaps to get in our rear.⁶⁵ To Tam o'Shanter's speech I could only reply "Cowie, cowie," and make signs of drinking with my hands.

After some conversation, not understood by either party, but in which I distinctly recollect Mr. Allen apologized for intruding on their country, and endeavored to explain to them the Wakefield scheme of colonization, had been carried on, Tam o' Shanter, tired of speechifying to so little use, stepped up to me, and taking my cabbage-tree off my head, ruffed up my hair, burst open my waistcoat and shirt collar, to see, I suppose, if I was all white; examined my boots and feet, as if he were a vet., and I a horse for sale. Each of my party was at the same time undergoing a similar inspection, and I heard Mr. Allen exclaim that he had never been so treated before in his life by any man, and that he had a great mind to knock the scoundrels [sic] down.⁶⁶

They did not covet or take anything belonging to us till they found the sugar. That and the fat off the salt pork they devoured greedily, throwing the lean of the pork away. The biscuit they would not eat, nor would they touch the tobacco.

By this time all the mob from the camp – men, women, and children – came up and surrounded

⁶² The man known as 'Tam o'Shanter' was Mullaayakiburka, a Port Gawler man (see PNS 8/17 Murlayaki). Why was he here at all, 60 km south of his own country, let alone taking the lead in negotiations with unknown newcomers?

⁶³ Were they unfamiliar with the guns carried by Stuart's party? or were they confident in the power of numbers?

⁶⁴ Bull p.15: "within six paces of the leader of the English force (Mr. Stuart)". Bull fully accepts Stuart's view of his role.

⁶⁵ It is hard to evaluate these gestures and questions. Were they perhaps along the lines of 'Did you come from the west, the grave country of white corpses?' or 'Did you come by sea in ships?' cp. Kaurna use of *pindi-meyunna* ('grave/pit people') for white-skinned Europeans.

⁶⁶ It seems that for 'Tam' and his companions the European clothing and white skin were novelties; probably they had not previously met even visiting sealers.



us, and we were stared at by all, but not annoyed again as we had been. I suppose Tam o'Shanter had reported in our favor. It would have been curious could we have understood the remarks made upon us, and upon the dog, which seemed to frighten them, and upon from whence we came. They did not take any particular notice of the guns, merely handling them and returning them to us. I thought now I would show them what they were. I touched Tam o'Shanter on the arm, and drawing his attention to my gun, put it to my shoulder, and fired it in the air. He did not seem much astonished, but snatching it out of my hand imitated my motion, holding it up to his shoulder for a minute, as if waiting for it to go off, then threw it on the ground in disgust.⁶⁷

Having now satisfied their curiosity, one of the party⁶⁸ came up to me and saying, "Cowie" led us down to a native well at the foot of the sand hills. He was accompanied by two or three others; he pointed to the water and left us. I thought it most prudent to camp here; it was a nice situation, near a clump of teatree, on a slight rise about 300 yards from their Camp.⁶⁹ What we suffered from want of water during the hour or so of suspense and examination we had undergone, I can hardly explain.

As it was sundown by this time, we lit a fire, put on our pots,⁷⁰ and made our beds with some branches of the teatree. We missed the sugar and the pork, but to our surprise, while at our meal some old ladies brought us an ample supply of baked fish on some tea tree bark. This was a great treat, and I was sorry I had not anything to give them in return.

Nat and I looked upon this as a very favorable omen, and in fact, our treatment in all was as good as we could expect. We had no reason to suppose that Nat had been identified, nor had he recognised any one of them. But in spite of our satisfaction Mr. Allen was sure we should never see Glenelg or a white man again, and he got Harry on his side; that they were cannibals he was certain by the way they devoured the pork; as for the present of the fish, it was "Timeo Danaos," &c., with him.⁷¹

We being tired lay down directly after supper; it was very hot, and a beautiful full moon rising

⁶⁷ The dog frightened them (and so later did a wax doll: see below), but not the guns. Were they unfamiliar with sealers and their weapons? Contrary to previous authors, my research makes a case that the people of Adelaide had little or no contact with Europeans until the end of 1836; the sealers had rarely visited there at all. At first contact in Glenelg and Adelaide the Kaurna people, unlike those on the Fleurieu, knew no English and showed no fear of guns (see *Feet On the Fleurieu*).

⁶⁸ Probably local people, not 'Tam' the visitor, were the right people to deal with matters of local hospitality and country.

⁶⁹ This well was certainly Well#1 on Sec 313. Both wells are about 400m from the Gray St camp, but there is a 'slight rise' to Well #1 at the end of Witton Rd. Bull p.15 says they chose to stay here "as the place was well adapted for a camp". No doubt they also preferred to be on higher ground!

⁷⁰ Bull p.15-16: "Pots of tea having been made".

⁷¹ Latin; the famous quotation from Virgil's *Aeneid* 2:49, "Timeo Danaos et dona ferentes" = 'I fear Danaeans [Greeks] even [those] bearing gifts'; proverbial in English as 'Beware of Greeks bearing gifts'. This refers to ancient Troy and the 'Trojan horse' full of Greek soldiers; <https://www.oxfordreference.com/view/10.1093/oi/authority.20110803104650943>.



*behind us, shone right on the camp, so that we could see all their movements. When, suddenly, we heard the sound of two sticks being knocked together, then the dull thumping of the lubras on their skins; immediately half-a-dozen fires blazed up and a grand corroboree commenced.*⁷²

*Mr. Allen and Harry who had perhaps never heard of such a thing before, were both astonished and alarmed, and could not be convinced but that it was a signal for our slaughter.*⁷³

The Corroboree was as good a one as I had ever seen. There were a great many performers – men only, of course, all naked — their ribs, and down the bones of their arms and legs, and round their eyes being whitened gave them a ghastly appearance, especially when they came dancing from the shade of the trees into the light of the full moon.

Being tired I soon went to sleep, with my dog chained up at my feet; and my gun by my side. Nat wished to follow my example, but was kept awake a long time by the queries and alarms of our mates, who declared in the morning that they had not slept a wink the whole night. Next morning as soon as it was light I was up, my party all asleep, as were also the blacks, for as a rule they are not early risers.

*On looking towards the river⁷⁴ I was delighted to see it swarming with wild fowl, and three black swans close in shore. I loosened my dog, hastened to the spot and shot one of the swans, which Hector fetched out. I hung it up on a tree out of reach of the blacks' dogs, and walked up the river after the other two. Soon Hector looked round and growled, and I saw two young blacks, with their throwing sticks, following me; we greeted each other with a smile; and they made signs that they had heard the gun.*⁷⁵

Proceeding on together we met the two swans returning down the river. I fired and broke the wing of one, which fell into the water. Hector and a blackfellow jumped simultaneously into the river, and as the swan could swim well, there was a good chase. The dog caught the bird, and was bringing aim to shore, when the black intercepted him to take the prize, but Hector, letting the swan go, made such a furious assault on the black that he was fain to dive to evade him, the dog bringing the bird ashore in triumph.

This little ebullition of temper of Hector, however, made no alteration in our friendly relations; the blacks were more frightened at the dog, and let him fetch the birds out of the water himself after

⁷² There is ample flat ground for ceremony in the immediate vicinity north of Loop #1 campsite.

⁷³ Bull p.16 adds: "Mr. Stuart and Nat by their laughter reassured {sic} them that no injury was intended".

⁷⁴ Bull p.16 adds that the river was "at a short distance from the camp".

⁷⁵ Bull p.16 adds: "and wished to join in the sport".



that. There being such fine shooting I walked up the river for about an hour, in which time⁷⁶ I had bagged the three swans and some half-dozen ducks, which my sable companions carried with much glee.

On returning to breakfast, tired and hungry, about 7 o'clock, I found my friends up and rather alarmed at my absence, especially my old friend Mr. A., who rated me soundly for my folly, in the first place in leaving them without notice, and for risking myself and my dog.

A black duck apiece all round, however, set all right. I presented a black swan to Tam o'Shanter, and one to the old lady who gave us the fish, the other to my shooting companions; the birds I had over I gave among the camp. When I returned the blacks, even then, were not all up.

After breakfast we had a bath, taking the precaution to go into the water two at a time. About 11 a.m. we made a start up the river to get some ducks and to make a further search for the horses.⁷⁷ A number of the natives followed us, say from 20 to 30 of all sorts – men, women, and children, and stayed with us all day, searching the trees as they went along for opossums, and the logs for bandicoots, neither of which were very plentiful. The dog killed an old man kangaroo, which we gave to the blacks, and in the afternoon I shot a fine turkey, which lasted us to Glenelg. My two young companions of the morning attended me closely all day, and were most amusing.

When near the Horse-shoe Nat found the track of the horses. We showed the print of a horseshoe on the sand to some young natives. They immediately knew it, and going on all fours imitated as well as they could a horse's gallop, then pointing over the ranges intimated that they were there.⁷⁸ Upon further examination we found that they must have been a day or two in the Horseshoe, and were probably frightened out by the blacks. Had we found them in there, we could soon have shut them up with a brush fence across the isthmus, and have caught them at our convenience. I had not, on starting, any idea of being able to catch them on foot, but daily expecting more horses from Launceston, was anxious to find which way they had gone.⁷⁹

At about 3 p.m. we left the Onkaparinga to return to the beach,⁸⁰ but far to the east of the way

⁷⁶ Bull p.16 inserts: "The water birds were so abundant, and had not before been scared by gunners, that..."

⁷⁷ Bull p.16: "to seek a place where the horses, if they had travelled south, might have crossed".

⁷⁸ Bull p.16: "that the horses were feeding there".

⁷⁹ Bull p.16 adds: "it was decided to return, as traces to be followed had been met with".

⁸⁰ i.e. at Glenelg.



we came,⁸¹ and I was not pleased to find that the natives still accompanied us. The day had been excessively hot, and a little before sundown the rain came down, and continued steady till morning. Being without blankets, we spent a miserable night, the old black Croggie or doctor beating sticks and singing all night to drive the rain away, which he was satisfied he had done when it cleared up about daylight.⁸²

We made an early start in the morning, and at about 11 am. reached the top of what is now called O'Halloran Hill, from whence we could see the Buffalo and other ships in the Bay. The blacks immediately halted, and expressed their surprise, shouting and gesticulating, pointing first to the ships and then to us, as if they now understood from whence we came. After resting half an hour, during which time the blacks were in earnest and animated conversation, we proceeded on our journey, and were soon followed by Tam o'Shanter and five or six of his mates; whether bent on mischief, or determined to go to the ships with us, we could not tell.

The blacks we left on the hill kept shouting and cooeing after us as long as we were in hearing. Very little communication took place between us on our way to the beach. The sight of the ships seemed somewhat to have lessened our mutual confidence. The natives, following us at a distant [sic] of 200 or 300 yards, were silent and watchful, thinking, perhaps, they were on a dangerous venture, while we watched them, equally uncertain of their intentions.⁸³

On arriving at the tents we were met by His Excellency Captain Hindmarsh, and a crowd of emigrants who had seen us from a distance.⁸⁴ The Governor mildly censored me for bringing a lot of naked savages amongst white people, and requested Mr. Gilbert, the Government Storekeeper, to give each of them a suit of marine's uniform, and the sailors of the Buffalo to see them properly attired. The poor blacks were now more than requited for the way they had pulled us about when we visited their camp, and perhaps thought that it was our fashion to clothe our prisoners in red before slaughtering them, as Mr. Allen thought their corroborie was an intimation of our doom.

⁸¹ Probably they travelled north on or near the 'native track' shown on the McLaren 1840 map, just west of today's Main South Rd.

⁸² Stuart says this was a 'rain dance', but it is not clear whether any of the Kaurna people told him this.

⁸³ These two paragraphs leave us wondering what was actually happening among the people of this mixed group. For instance, why did Tam's group (perhaps a Mulliakki group who had come down to Port Noarlunga with him) follow Stuart's party down to Glenelg, while the others (presumably Onkaparinga people) hung back at O'Halloran Hill? 'Tam' would probably have passed through Adelaide on the way south from Port Gawler, Were they all, or some of them, unfamiliar with ships? Or was Tam the leader of a Mulliakki group who had become more familiar with the ships and resident colony since November 1836? Had all of them already been well aware of this, and perhaps had called a meeting at Port Noarlunga to discuss them? Were they not 'surprised' but suddenly alerted on seeing the subject of their conference? Or had Tam come south to announce the news? For more analysis of initial contact in Adelaide, including this incident, see Chapter 4 of *Feet On the Fleurieu* (in progress).

⁸⁴ Bull p.17 adds: "There had been some anxiety about their fate".



They behaved, however, very well, not attempting to escape or to resist, or showing any sign of fear. The sailors in their kindness endeavored to make them drink and to smoke, but they had not reached that stage of civilization.⁸⁵ Alas, it was astonishing how short a time it took to make them adepts at both. Sugar, butter, and fat pork were their chief luxuries.

Australian aborigines do not generally display much wonder or surprise, and the only thing in the camp that seemed to really astonish and frighten them was a large wax doll belonging to a little girl, "a passenger by the Tam o'Shanter," which opened and shut its eyes. One of them having seen it, the others wished to do the same, but you could not persuade them to look at it a second time, or even to go into the tent in which it was kept.⁸⁶ Towards evening I suggested to the Governor that they should be allowed to take off their clothes, and be supplied with blankets. This was done, and in their new dress they were quite at home; but each man kept his suit, tying it in a bundle, and carrying it over his shoulders.⁸⁷

Here Stuart's 1875 article lapses into a few generalities about the 'natives' of Australia,⁸⁸ then winds up:

To conclude, there may be some in Adelaide who recollect our friend Tam o'Shanter; he was a wild, dangerous fellow, very tall, and powerful. He was killed in some fray a few years after the incidents here mentioned.⁸⁹

One of the young blacks I before spoke of I met in Adelaide about 20 years after.⁹⁰ He had aged much, his hair was grizzled. He recollected me, and called me Onkaparinga.⁹¹ He spoke English very well, and recounted circumstances that happened on the river. I asked his name. He said "Tector, all same as big one dog." As a proof of his advancement in learning of the whites, he accepted a shilling and a stick of tobacco, and asked for some grog. One of the two horses we recovered, the carcass of the other we found. It had evidently been speared by the

⁸⁵ Bull p.17: "some of the sailors, who were ashore from the Buffalo, took the natives in hand to dress and pet, pressing on them pipes and grog, which at the time the blacks declined".

⁸⁶ Possibly the doll was uncomfortably similar to objects used in sorcery or payback.

⁸⁷ Bull p.17: "The dressed-up black men displayed anything but comfort or content in their unaccustomed array, which on becoming apparent the Governor, on advice, was considerate enough to order blankets to be exchanged for the unpopular garments, and the men soon retired greatly pleased with the blankets enveloping them, and rejoined their anxious and doubting families".

⁸⁸ One of Stuart's assertions here is that "the boomerang [was] a weapon unknown to the South Australians".

⁸⁹ For more on Tam o'Shanter (Mulliakiburka) see PNS 8/17 Murlayaki.

⁹⁰ i.e. c.1857.

⁹¹ It is unlikely that this man pronounced it literally *Onkaparinga*, even in 1857. Did he say *Ngangkiparingga*? Probably it was he who had tried to teach it to Stuart in 1837. If so, perhaps he remembered the white man's unusual curiosity about the place-name. Or more likely he remembered and slyly mimicked whatever tortured sounds Stuart had made back then and represented by his spelling "Enkeperinga"; possibly this was a highlight of the fun that day. Englishmen like Stuart might laugh at Aboriginal attempts to pronounce words like 'Hector' or 'split sixpence' (the sounds *h* and *s* are not used in Aboriginal languages); but no doubt there was at least as much merriment on the other side whenever the invaders tried a bit of Pidgin Kaurna.

natives.

I may add that of the party of four who went to look for the horses, although now more than 39 years ago,⁹² three of us are still in the land of the living.⁹³

NOARLUNGA.

.....

My three essays Tainbarangk, Witjalangk and Pirrangga – read them in that order – have exposed a small amount of the neglected material, centring around this area as some kind of boundary. They make a small attempt at a non-partisan interpretation which does justice to all the known facts.

Perhaps in the name *Pirrangga* the Kurna to the north were reminding themselves this was the place where they would routinely need to make visitors from the south or east justify their presence or else fight. Since the name was still current in 1839, we may deduce that this was the case even when the entire Gulf coast down to Cape Jervis and beyond was clearly Kurna Language Country. The Kurna southerners of Patpangga might be intermarried with the Ramindjeri foreigners of Ramong, and the country immediately north of here might be *tawuli* (adjacent and permitted hunting territory) for some visitors;⁹⁴ but they would all need to observe protocols; and even more so any who came from the east down the Piggott Range Rd track to the Horseshoe; these were likely to be Peramangk (a different and often hostile language group) and potential raiders.

This is of course only a theory. It is not clear why the place for the formal ‘challenge’ would be here rather than at the Horseshoe ‘crossroads’, or somewhere nearer to it than *Pirrangga* nearly 5 km away. These questions will need more work.

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SEE ALSO THE MAPS ON THE FOLLOWING 6 PAGES:

⁹² Actually about 38 years (1837-1875).

⁹³ Allen had died in 1868 (Development Of Adelaide Botanic Garden: 4).

⁹⁴ For *tawuli* see PNS 4.02/03 Witjalangk.

MAPS

p.23 – MAP 6: Pirrangga and Port Noarlunga contours and features.

Source: NatureMaps, SA Department for Environment & Water,
<http://spatialwebapps.environment.sa.gov.au/naturemaps/?locale=en-us&viewer=naturemaps> [accessed 12/3/21].

p.24 – MAP 7: part of 'Plan of the North West Part of District C', c.1839 (Plan 6/13, GNU).

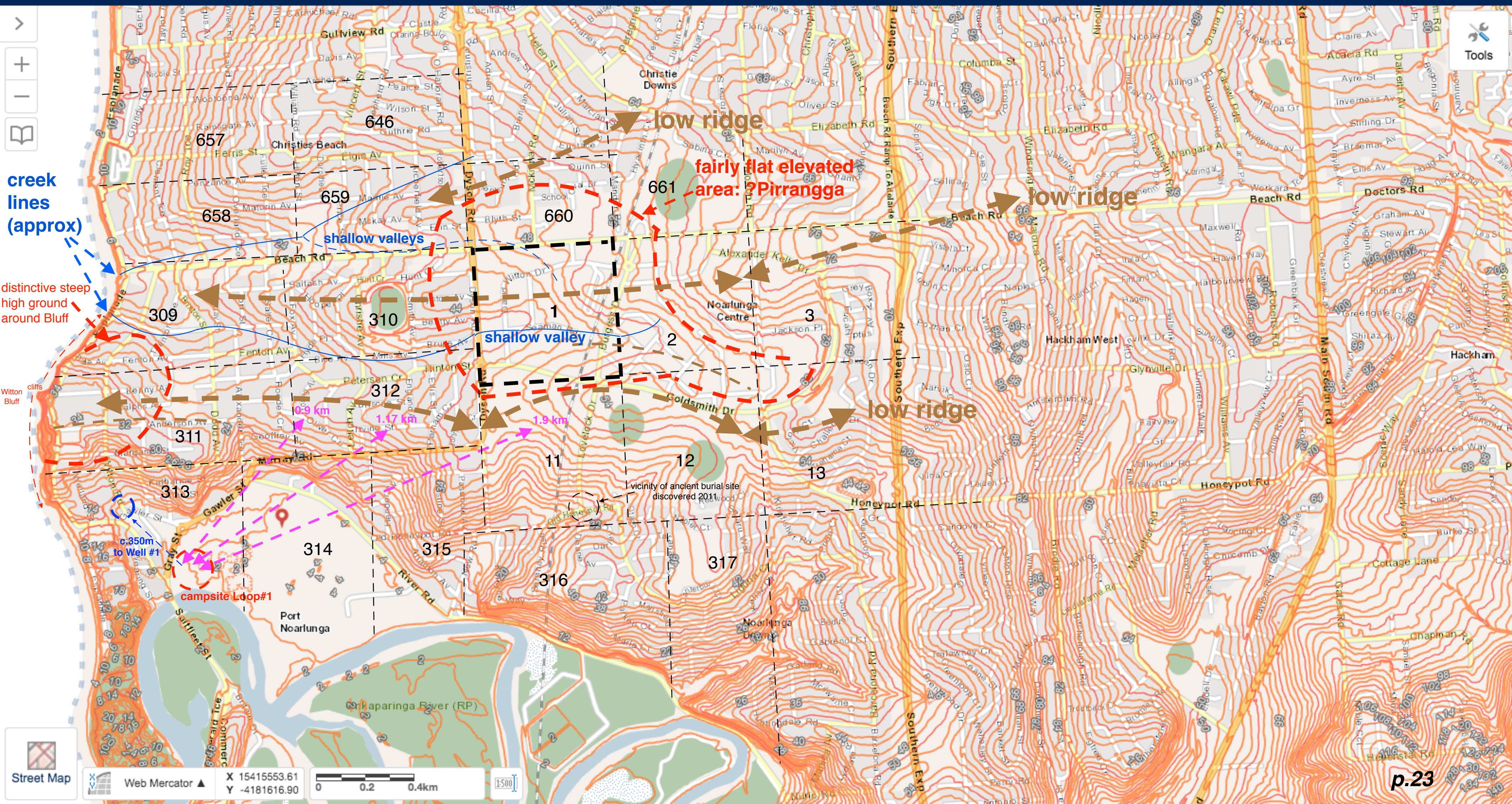
p.25 – MAP 8: part of Burslem 1839, 'Plan of the country south of Adelaide' (C 236, SLSA).

**p.26 – MAP 9: part of McLaren 1840, 'Country South of Adelaide', Arrowsmith (SLSA):
Piesse's "Pe-run-ga" Section 1.**

p.27 – MAP 10: Creek line along Seaman Rd [image].

Source: NatureMaps [accessed 19/3/21].

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End of Summary



creek lines (approx)

distinctive steep high ground around Bluff

Witton Bluff

c.350m to Well #1

campsite Loop #1

low ridge

fairly flat elevated area: ?Pirrangga

low ridge

low ridge

shallow valleys

shallow valley

vicinity of ancient burial site discovered 2011

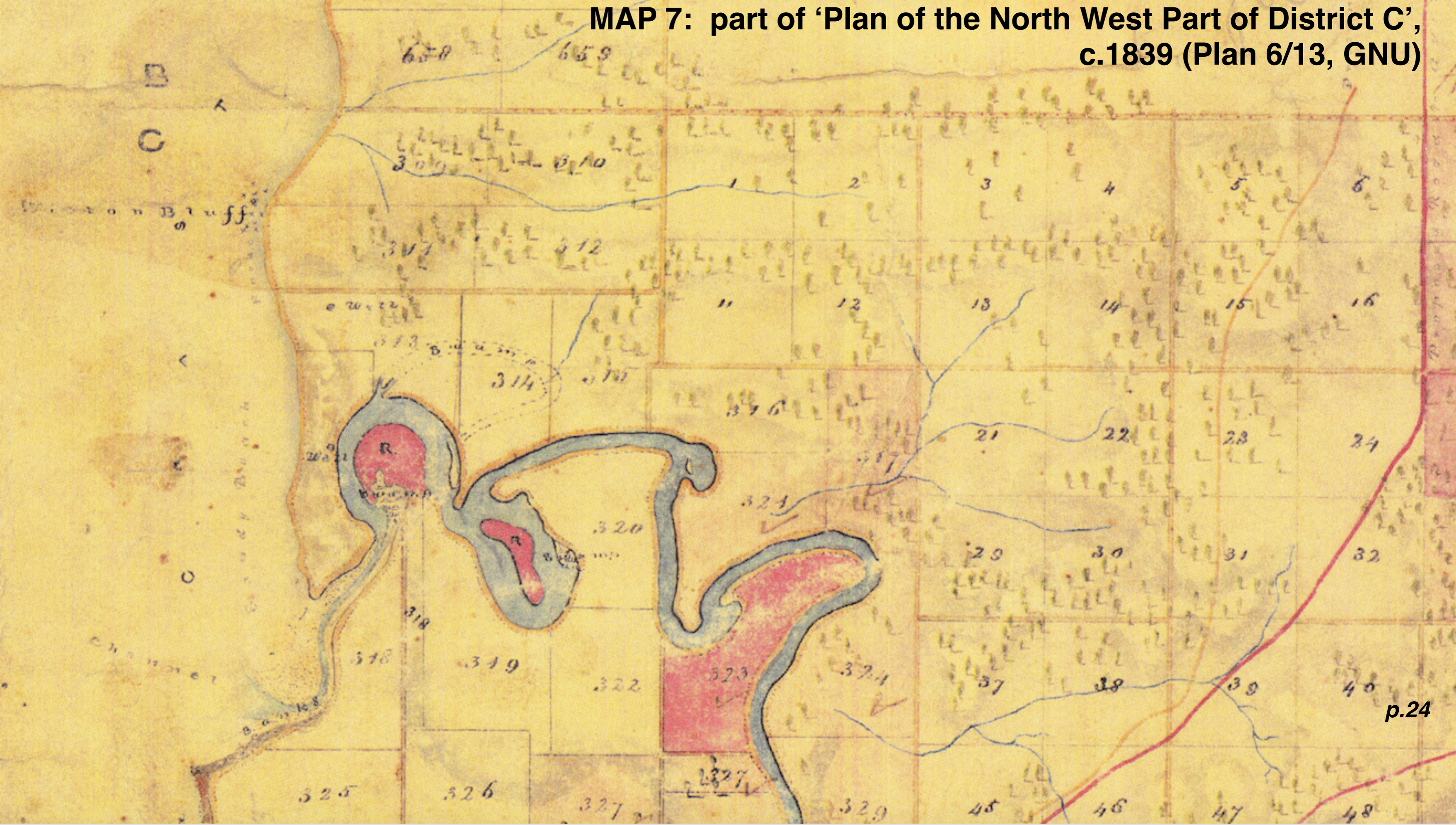
Street Map

Web Mercator X 15415553.61 Y -4181616.90

0 0.2 0.4km

1:500

MAP 7: part of 'Plan of the North West Part of District C',
c.1839 (Plan 6/13, GNU)



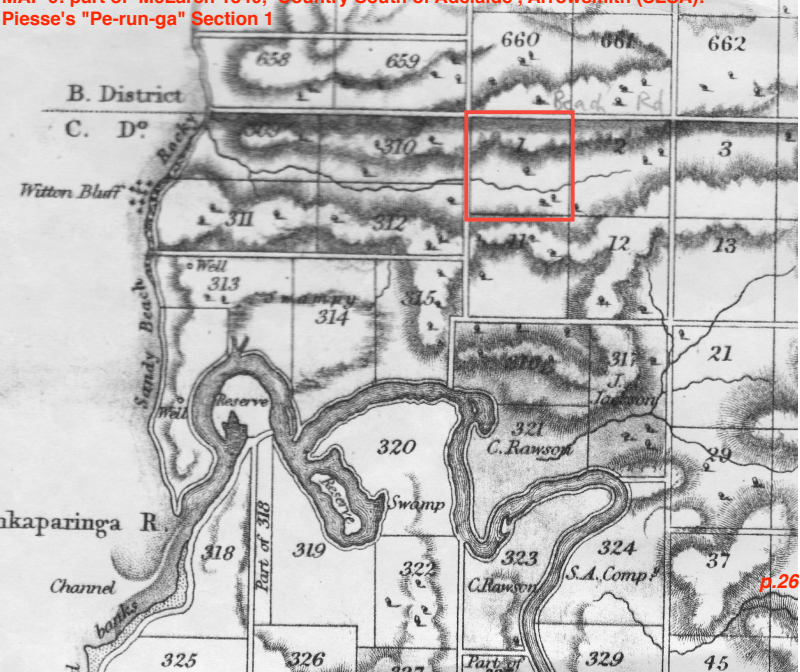
MAP 8: part of Burslem 1839

'Plan of the country
south of Adelaide'
(C 236, SLSA)

(reverse-coloured
from SLSA's
negative copy)



MAP 9: part of McLaren 1840, 'Country South of Adelaide', Arrowsmith (SLSA): Piesse's "Pe-run-ga" Section 1





Web Mercator ▲ X 15416992.92 Y -4182686.28

1:500