

FORMER SMELTSYARD AND STORE, BURRA

The ruins of smeltsyard and storehouse are all that are left of substantial subsidiary activities that were associated with the smelting works established by the Patent Copper Company in Burra in 1849.

Previously, the copper ore had been transported to Swansea, Wales, for smelting. Then, after the development of a method of smelting ore using charcoal, a smelting works was established at Yatala. Neither of these situations solved the problem of carting the unprocessed ore over one hundred miles of unmarked roads and dirt tracks. Before the P.C.C. began smelting at Burra, it was estimated that at least 1,200 bullock carts, each carrying $2\frac{1}{2}$ tons of ore, were on the road to Adelaide during the summer of 1848.

The South Australian Mining Association, proprietors of the Burra Burra Mine, leased the area on the west side of the Burra Creek to the English smelting firm, the Patent Copper Company (incorporated later as the English and Australian Copper Company). By mid-June of 1849 the P.C. Co. had completed the smelting works and six large furnaces were ready to fire. Welsh and German smelters were brought in to work the smelting works and added extra 'national' quality to the Cornish mining population of Burra.

By 1851, the smelting works had sixteen furnaces in operation and these were using 150 tons of wood daily, cut from the Murray scrub to the east of Burra. However in the same year the Land Commissioner withdrew permission for any more wood to be cut from Crown Lands, so the company had to revert to carting coal from Port Adelaide.

To augment the carting services of the bullock teams the P.C. Co. imported mules from Chile, along with their drivers, probably in 1853 or 1854. The smeltsyard was the main service centre for these mule teams and the wagons they hauled, containing "every appliance and convenience necessary for repairing the waggons and shoeing the animals" in 1863. The yards also included stables for 30 horses.

An interesting sideline of the smelting works was brick-making and it is possible that some of the brick paved areas still remaining in the storehouse section of the yards are the products of the kiln at the smelting works.

After the railway reached Burra in 1870, the mule teams and bullock teams were no longer necessary for the transportation of copper ore. The yard's next main function was as the site for the annual Burra

Agricultural Show. The first show was held in the smeltsyard in 1877, the year after Burra was incorporated as a town and was held each year until 1885. The yards are now used as animal enclosures.

Sources:

Ian L. Auhl, Burra Sketchbook (Adel., 1969)

Ian L. Auhl and Denis Marfleet, Australia's Earliest Mining Era, South Australia 1841-1851 (Adel., 1975)

Ian L. Auhl and Stephen Gilbert, Burra Conservation Study (Adel., 1978)

J.B. Austin, The Mines of South Australia (Adel., 1863)

F.S. Dutton, South Australia and its Mines (London, 1846)

D. Pike, Paradise of Dissent (Adel., 1957)

Katrina McDougall
Register Historian

KMcD:JD

30/3/82

South Australian Heritage Act 1978-80	Register of State Heritage Items ITEM EVALUATION SHEET Buildings and Structures Item FORMER SMELTSYARD & STOREHOUSE, SMELTS ROAD, BURRA.					
Age 1849-1850's	Theme	Office 6630-10024				
Period 1836-1851	Subject SECONDARY INDUSTRY - PROCESSING OF PRIMARY EXTRACTIVE PRODUCTS	Region Lower North				
Building Type INDUSTRIAL/ MINING	Style COLONIAL INDUSTRIAL	Status N. Tr. (C.L.) N.E.R.				
<u>Qualitative Data</u>		Grading				
Component	Comment	E	VG	AG	FP	NA
<u>History</u>						
1. Context:	The Smeltsyard was associated with the smelting works erected at Burra in 1849, to process the ore from the Burra Burra Mine. Previously, the ore had been transported to Port Adelaide by bullock wagons.		*			
2. Person/Group:	The Smeltsyard was the property of the Patent Copper Company, an English copper smelting firm which leased land from the South Australian Mining Association to establish the smelting works.		*			
3. Specific Event:	The location for the first Burra Agricultural Show in 1877.			*		
<u>Architecture/Engineering</u>						
4. Architect/Engineer/ Builder:	Not yet established.					*
5. Design:	Ruins of a once large and well organised servicing complex. Design is simple yet functional, industrial.			*		
6. Construction:	Random rubble walls with a rare combination of slag rock and other locally quarried stone.		*			
7. Interior:	Not applicable to Smeltsyard ruins. Storehouse is relatively simple and plain.				*	
8. Representation:	A rare example of this building type.	*				
<u>Environment</u>						
9. Continuity:	Of importance in contributing to the 'mining town' atmosphere of Burra in both its immediate and broader environment.	*				
10. Local Character:	As above.	*				

South Australian Heritage Act 1978-80	Register of State Heritage Items ITEM EVALUATION SHEET Buildings and Structures						
Component		Comment	Grading E VG AG FP NA				
11. Landmark: <u>Integrity</u>		Situated between Redruth and Kooringa, the complex is clearly visible along Smelts Road and is a well known landmark.	*				
12. Alterations:		Not discernible on ruins. Cottage does not appear to have suffered any major alterations.	*				
13. Condition:		All structures within the complex are in ruinous condition.				*	
14. Compatibility:		Present use is not compatible with original function.				*	
<u>Supplementary Information</u>							
15. Adaptability:		The complex has not been used for its original purpose since the 1870's, and it is unlikely that it ever will be. Any future compatible use should be associated with an overall interpretation programme for which the Storehouse may be restored.					
16. Interpretation:		As part of the overall Burra mining activities, it has excellent interpretation potential.					
17. Current Situation:		The present owner, B.A. Riggs, intends to continue to use the complex for general storage and as an animal enclosure. The owner intends to demolish those portions of the complex which he felt were hazardous.					
Evaluated By Lothar Brasse Register Architect		Kate McDougall Register Historian	Date 31.3.82				
Reviewed By		Date					
South Australian Heritage Committee Categorization						Date	

I.E.S./D3/211081

Australian Heritage Database

Place Details

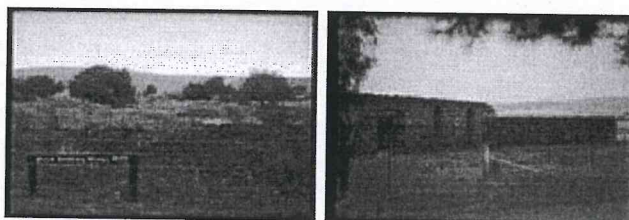
SHR 10024

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Send Feedback

Smelts Yards and Storehouse, Smelts Rd, Burra, SA

Photographs:



List: Register of the National Estate

Class: Historic

Legal Status: Registered (21/10/1980)

Place ID: 7396

Place File No: 3/08/240/0015

Statement of Significance:

Originally built by English and Australian Copper Company to house smelting stores and as a mule yard. Site of Burra's first Agricultural and Horticultural Show.

(The Commission is in the process of developing and/or upgrading official statements for places listed prior to 1991. The above data was mainly provided by the nominator and has not yet been revised by the Commission.)

Official Values: Not Available

Description:

A roofless storehouse, constructed of brick and clinker. Stables of clinker from smelts, wall of same, very solid construction, now used to yard animals. Galvanised iron (early type) now covers wooden shingles. Small loopholes at 1500mm above ground, circular-headed arched openings to external elevation to storehouse are trimmed with brick

History: Not Available

Condition and Integrity: Not Available

Location:

Smelts Road, Burra.

Bibliography: Not Available

Report Produced: Thu.Aug 5 15:01:39 2004

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Qualitative Data

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Item

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Component

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Grading

E VG AG FP NA

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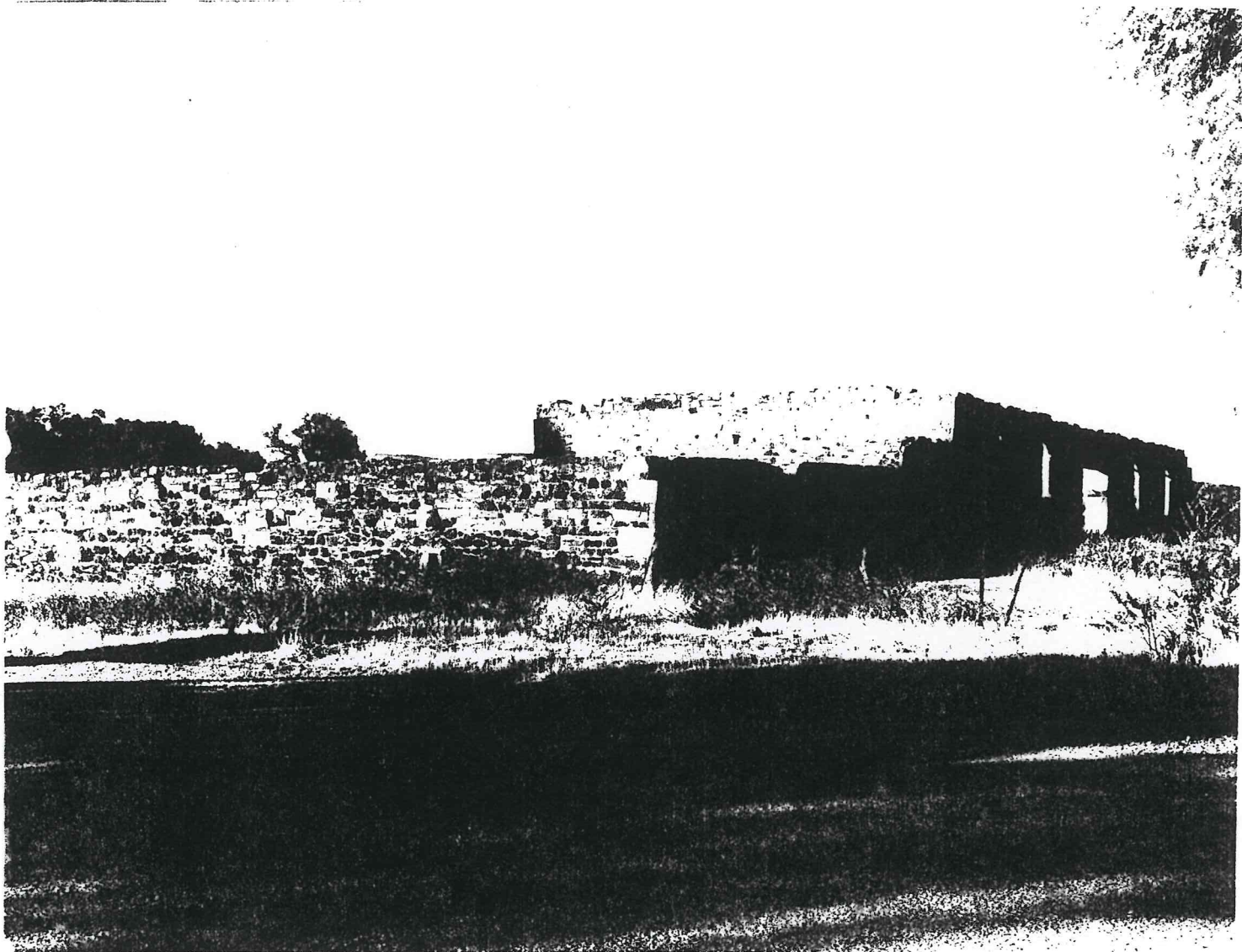
Reviewed By

Date

South Australian Heritage Committee Categorization

Date

I.E.S./D3/211081



FILM 21 SMELTS STORE AND YARD FROM
NO 7 SOUTH

BURRA
14-12-78

FILM 21
NO 6

DETAIL FROM NORTH, FORMER
SMELTS STOREHOUSE

BURRA
14-12-78





FILM 21 SMELTS STORE FROM
NO 3 NORTH EAST

BURRA
14-12-78



FILM 21 SMELTS STORE AND YARD FROM
NO 7 SOUTH

BURRA
14-12-78



FILM 21
NO 6
DETAIL FROM NORTH,
SMELTS
STOREHOUSE
FORMER
6630-16026

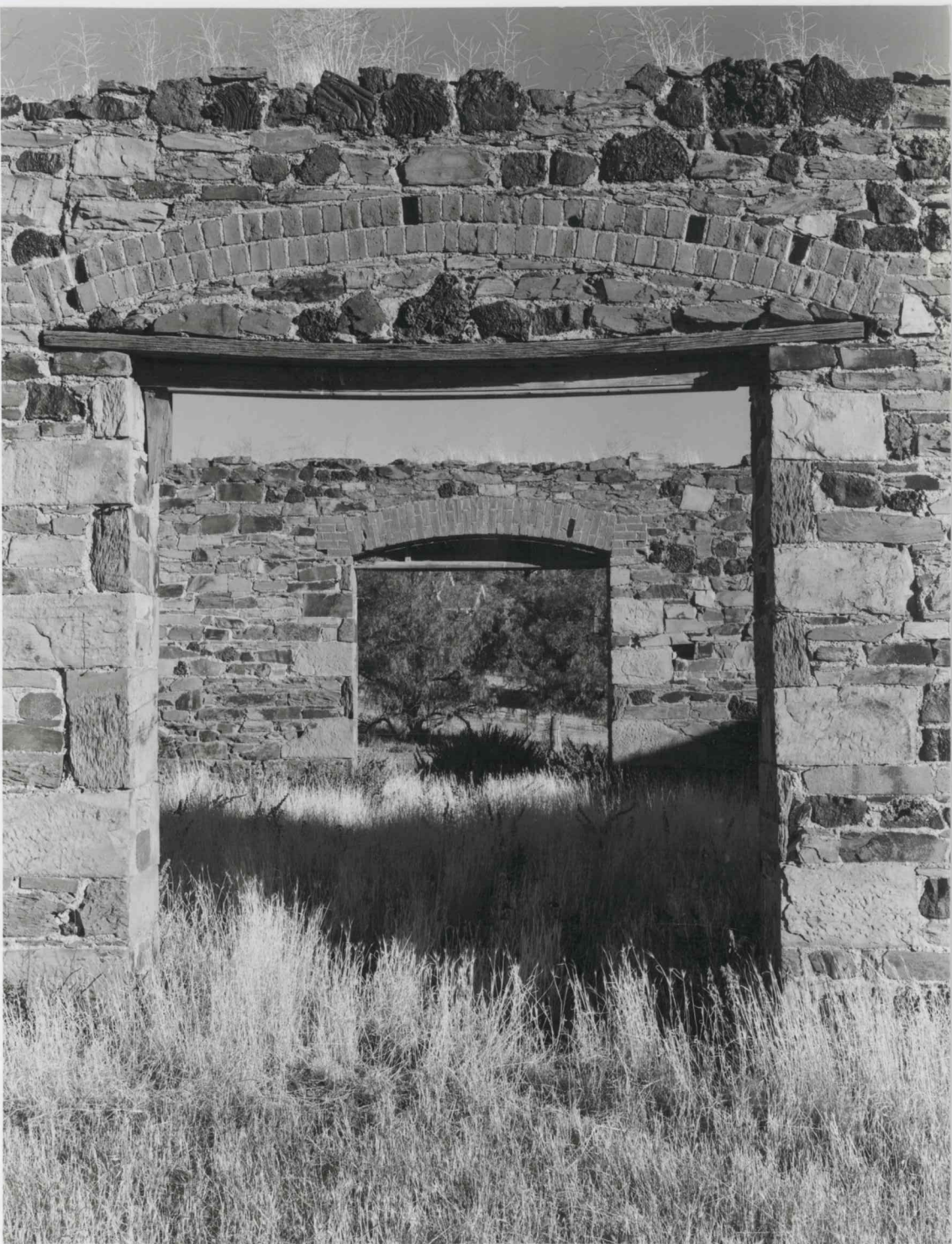
BURKA
14-12-78



FILM 21
No 2

DETAIL SMELTS STORE YARD WALL

BURRA
14-12-78



FILM 21
No 6
DETAIL FROM NORTH,
FORMER
SMELTS STOREHOUSE

BURRA
14-12-78