





FILM 160
NO. 5

STONE AND BRICK RELICS OF WHALERS HUTS

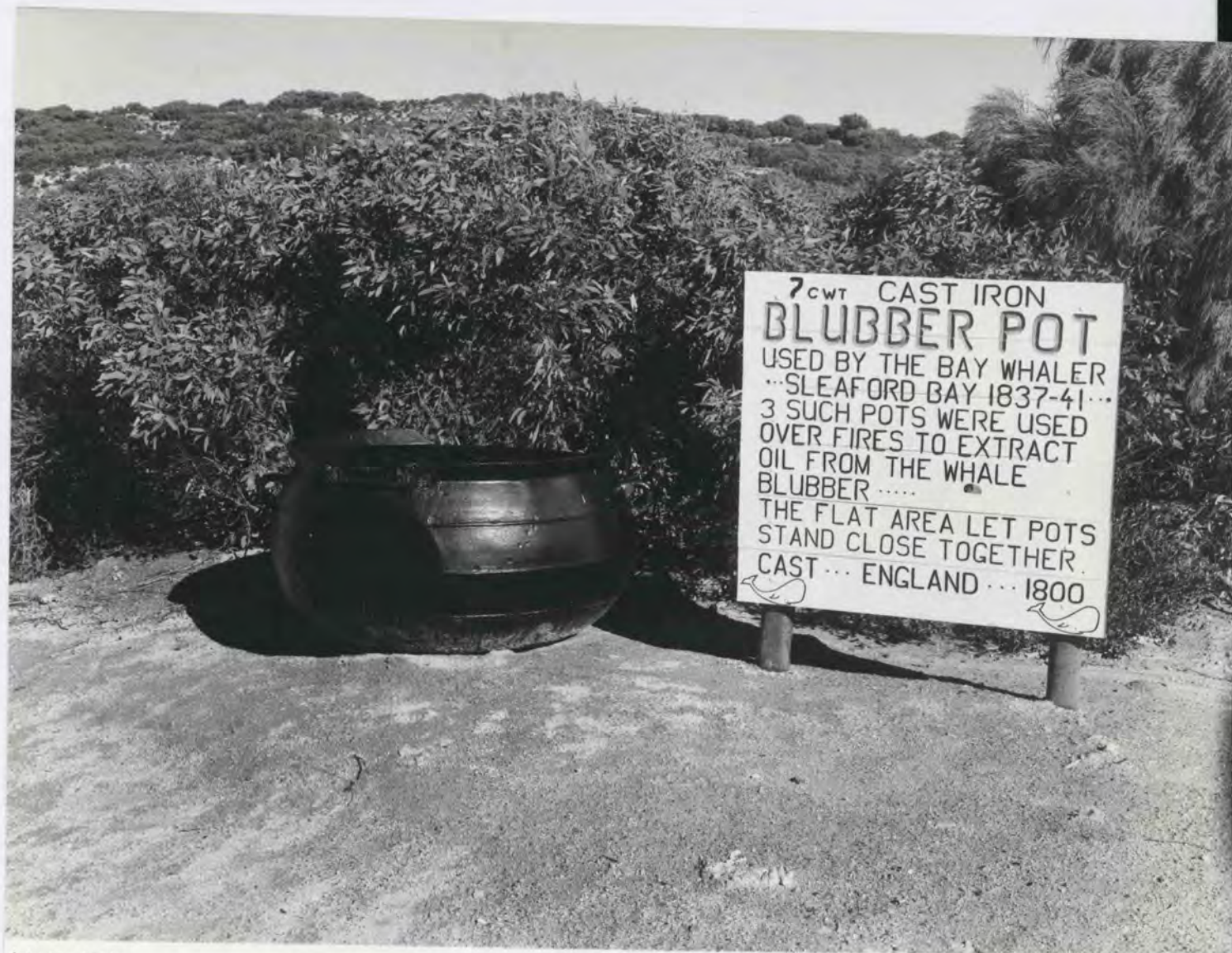
FISHERY BAY
DC. LINCOLN
18-7-80



FILM 160
No. 8

PERCE BAILLIE ON CLIFFTOP OVERLOOKING SUSAN MARSDEN
STANDING AT WHALERS HUT SITES.

FISHERY BAY
D.C. LINCOLN
18-7-20



FILM 156
NO. 5

RELICS AT WHALERS WAY ENTRANCE

FISHERY BAY
D.C. LINCOLN
16-7-80



FILM 156
No. 6

VIEW NORTH ACROSS FISHERY BAY TO FLENCING
FLOOR FROM ENTRANCE TO WHALERS WAY

FISHERY BAY
D.C. LINCOLN
16-7-80



FILM 156
No. 15

SUE MARSDEN ON FLENCING FLOOR

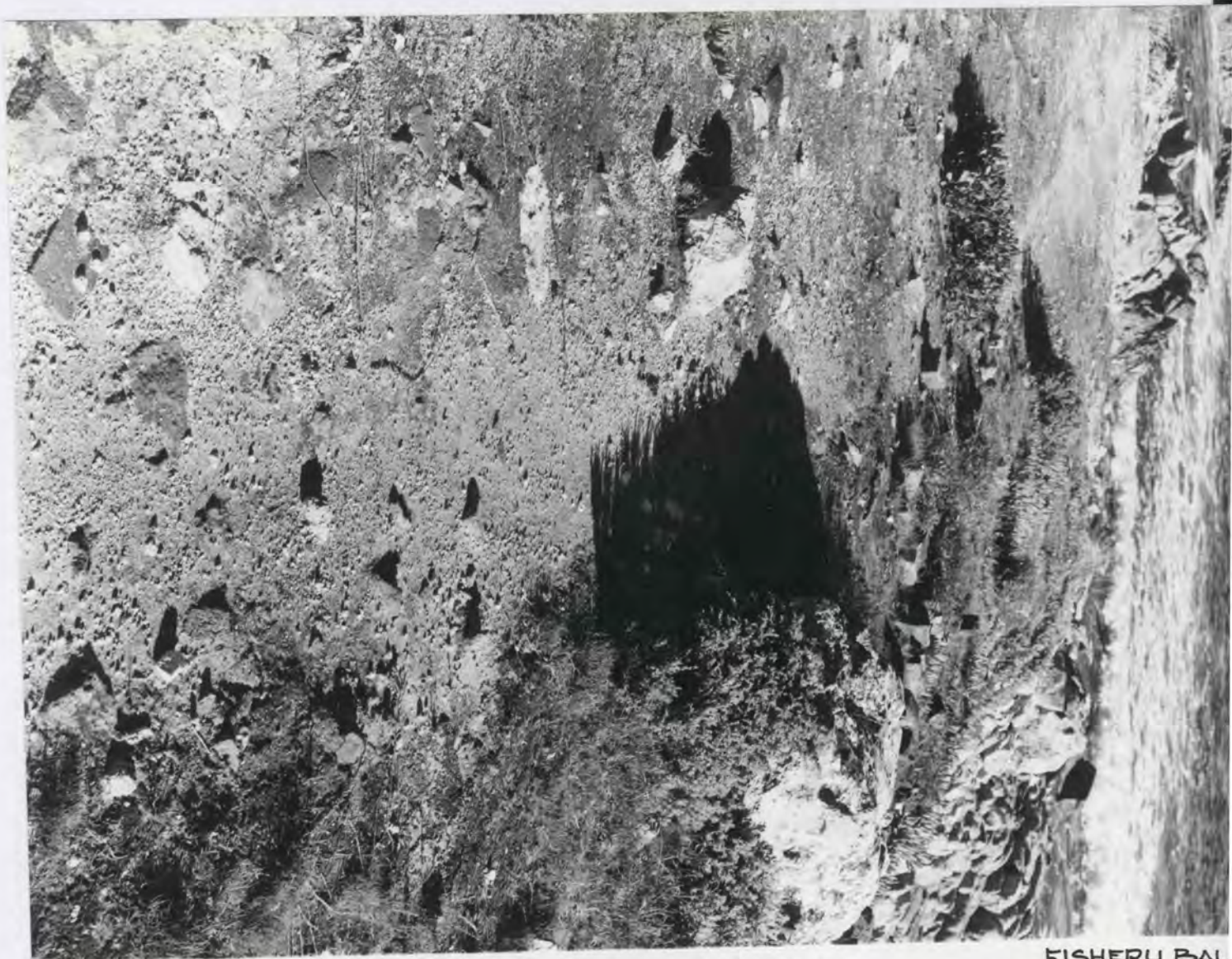
FISHERY BAY
D.C. LINCOLN
16-7-80



FILM 157
No. 1

EROSION OF FLENCING FLOOR
-VIEW TO SOUTH

FISHERY BAL
D.C. LINCOLN
16-7-80



FILM 157
No. 3

BRICK DEBRIS ON FENCHING FLOOR

FISHERY BAL
D.C. LINCOLN
16-7-80



FILM 156
No. 12

VIEW TO SOUTH ACROSS FISHERY BAY WITH
FLENCING FLOOR REMAINS IN FOREGROUND.

FISHERY BAY
DC. LINCOLN
16.7.80



FILM 156
No. 11

SUE MARSDEN ABOVE ROCK HOLE FROM WHICH
P.J. BAILLIE REMOVED RELICS OF WHIP.

FISHERY BAY
D.C. LINCOLN
16-7-80



FILM 156
No. 7

WATER HOLES IN CREEK AT SOUTHERN END
OF FISHERY BAY - VIEW NORTH

FISHERY BAY
DC. LINCOLN
16-7-80







SOUTH AUSTRALIAN SITE REGISTER — ABORIGINAL AND HISTORIC RELICS PRESERVATION

NAME: Fishery Bay Whaling Station.

DOCKET No. M.D. 317/1971.

DESCRIPTION: Former whaling station and site of the try-works, established in 1837 by the South Australian Company. It was abandoned in 1841 after a series of unsuccessful seasons.

LOCATION: Small bay approximately 32 kilometres south west of Port Lincoln, Eyre Peninsula. It is on an area known as Whalers Way.

TOPOGRAPHIC SERIES No.: R 502.

SHEET: LINCOLN: SI 53-11.

GRID REF.: 368 688 y.
L & L 34⁰55', 135⁰41'.

HUNDRED: Sleaford.

SECTION: 21.

REPORTED BY: R.W. Ellis.

ADDRESS: South Australian Museum.

DATE: 1971.

OWNER: R.E. Theakstone.

ADDRESS: Box 607, Port Lincoln, 5606.

INSPECTOR ☐HISTORIC RESERVE ☒PROHIBITED AREA ☐FILE ☒PUBLISHED RECORD ☐

DATE OF DECLARATION: August 31, 1972.

GAZETTE No.: 44.

SITE PLAN RECORD No.: #.

TITLE:

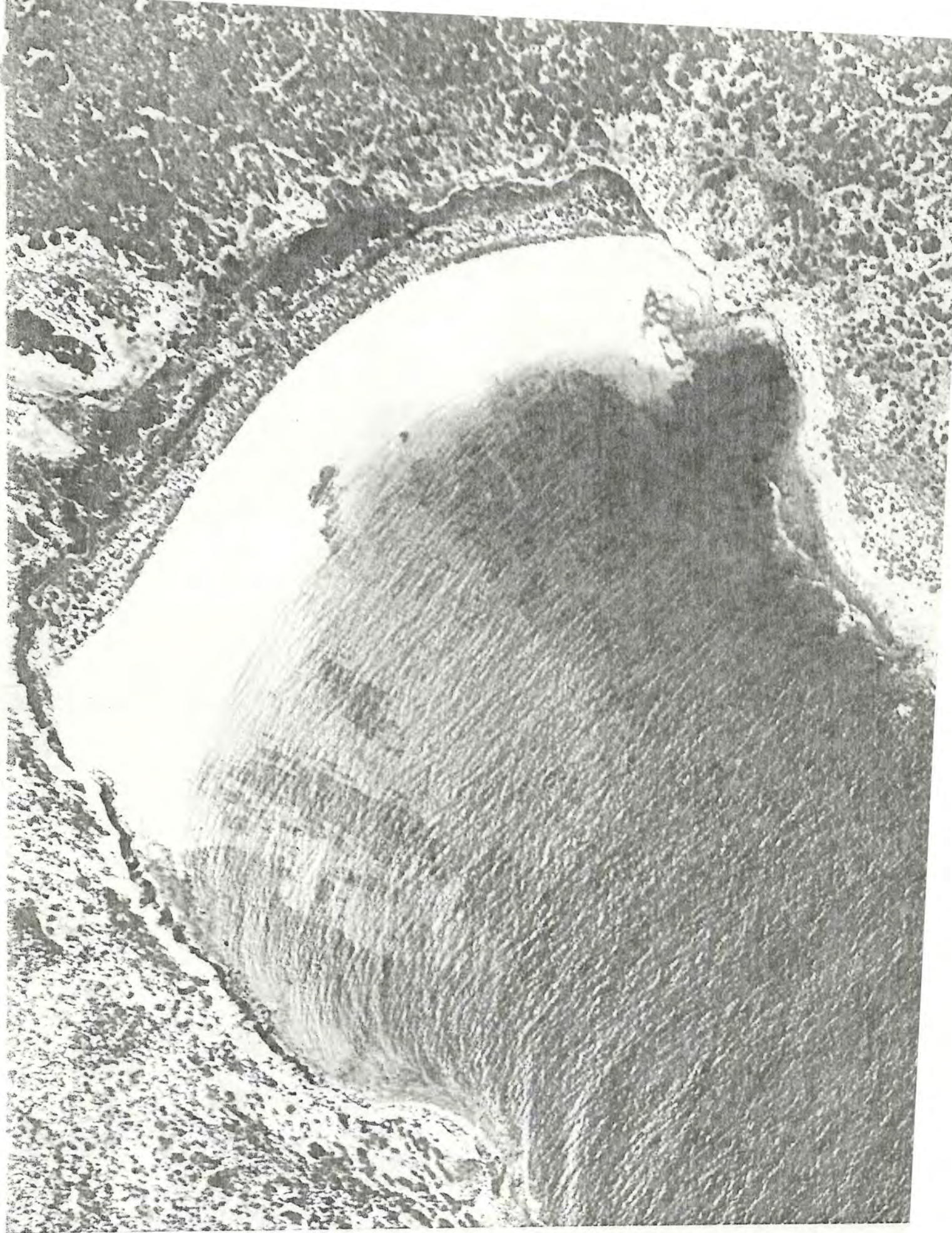
CLASSIFICATION

STATUS

FISHERY BAY WHALING STATION.

S 60/5/215.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 1 2 3 4 5 6



HERITAGE INVESTIGATIONS	SITE FISHERY BAY
EARLY EUROPEAN CONTACT TRANSPORT COMMUNICATIONS PROJECT 1980	REFERENCE S.A. DEPT OF LANDS AERIAL SURVEY: 48 PHOTO: 5040 DATE: 22-11-5 SCALE OF ENLARGEMENT 1:5714

the want of knowledge displayed at home, need not be cited than the appointment of the person who was sent out to fill the office of Superintendent of Whaling.

"The commencement of whaling operations in South Australia took place in 1837, when a party from Sydney in the "Hind," Captain Blenkinsop, and a double party of six boats from the South Australian Company were separately established at Encounter Bay. From the former many men deserted in consequence of the high rate of wages at that time given for labour in the town, and but a small quantity of oil was taken. Although the latter took one hundred and sixty tuns, the speculation became to them a complete failure in consequence of an error in allowing the lays. The quantity of oil procured by this double party should have been first divided into two, and the lays of the two respective parties calculated each upon one half, whereas, by this mistake of the company each man shared in the whole oil taken, by which the amount of the lays became more than the value of the whole oil caught, so that the greater the quantity the greater the loss.

"In the second year (1838) the South Australian Company continued their fishery at Encounter Bay with a single party of four boats, and established a new one on Thistle Island, Messrs. Hack and others purchasing the station established the year before by Blenkinsop. This season was also unprofitable from several causes. The station of the company at Thistle Island yielded but sixty-five tuns owing to the unfitness of its selection, stray whales only frequenting that spot. In Encounter Bay the quantity taken by their party was considerable, being about one hundred and fifty tuns; but nevertheless a loss attended it. This was in consequence of an excess of expenditure in provisions and stores, and mismanagement in shipping the oil to London. By reason of the "Goshawk" being chartered "by the month" the freight home amounted to upwards of £10 per tun, whilst from false impressions of danger this vessel anchored under Granite Island instead of Rosetta Harbour, where the oil lay, and where the "Katherine Stewart Forbes" and the "Lalla Rookh" subsequently loaded in safety. During the whole time that the "Goshawk" was loading the brig "Lord Ho-

bart" was engaged bringing oil alongside, thus still increasing the expenses. The injudicious selection of the men in Hack's party, and the subsequent management of them were the causes of failure. Out of a four-boat party only two headsmen were capable of killing a whale. The place selected for trying out the blubber was most inconvenient. These circumstances caused the men to desert, so that eventually two boats only could be manned. Nevertheless, one hundred and four tuns were taken by this establishment.

"The third year (1839) the South Australian Company and Hack and Co. joined their interests and conducted their fisheries under one manager, who unfortunately was absent until the very commencement of the season. Thus a very considerable want of organisation occurred at first starting. Besides, from the extension of the concern many men were engaged as headsmen without having previously acted in that capacity. A new fishery was established at Sleaford Bay; here the untried headsmen being chiefly placed, and proving insufficient, caused such disaffection that more than half the men deserted. No Colonial law at that time existed to punish them for breach of contract.

"At Thistle Island the South Australian Company having expended considerable money in establishing the fishery were desirous that it should have another trial, but no whales making their appearance up to the middle of June, the party was removed to Encounter Bay where, on their arrival the pulling hands deserted to a man. The three-boat party at Rosetta Harbour (Encounter Bay) was, however, very successful, having procured one hundred and seventy-six tuns of oil. That at Granite Island would have been equally so had not the chief headsmen been taken to Adelaide during the height of the season from the fishery upon a charge of manslaughter, on which, though at last acquitted, he was detained five or six weeks, the then acting Judge refusing bail, though offered to any amount. The men also being summoned to give evidence, the fishery was of necessity broken up. Another misfortune which attended this season was great leakage of oil occasioned by its lying on the flats during the hot months of De-

HERITAGE INVESTIGATIONS
EARLY EUROPEAN CONTACT
TRANSPORT COMMUNICATIONS
PROJECT
1980

SITE FISHERY BAY (SLEAFORD BAY)

REFERENCE THE ROYAL GEOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY OF AUSTRALASIA
(SOUTH AUSTRALIAN BRANCH) PROCEEDINGS, Vol. XXII, 1920-21,
PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS, "WHALING..." EXCERPT FROM AN
1841 REPORT, PP. 27-30.

ember and January waiting for shipment in the "Katherine Stewart Forbes," which had been chartered in July to load in October.

"In the fourth year (1840) many circumstances appeared more promising. The characters of the men were better known and more satisfactory arrangements made. Two drawbacks were, however, apparent from the first: namely, the exorbitant price of provisions, and the high rate of wages in the colony offering an inducement to desert. A single party was sent to Sleaford Bay, which took 113 tons of oil. The fishery on Thistle Island was not renewed. At Encounter Bay two three-boat parties were placed, but unfortunately there was great opposition, two vessels being there at the same time from Van Diemen's Land. Now a new evil presented itself. The boats being built upon a new and improved model pulled much faster than those at that time used in this province. Not infrequently were the boats belonging to the shore parties within a few fathoms of the whale when the Van Diemen's Land boats would shoot past them and fasten to the fish, thus disheartening the men and causing great dissatisfaction among them. Under these circumstances, in which the men had just cause of complaint, although the evil could not have been seen or provided against, it was found impossible to limit them to a stipulated quantity of provisions. In ordinary years this would not have been of so much consequence, but with flour at from £50 to £80 per ton, and pork at £7 per barrel, the wasteful extravagance that the owners could not stop made profit all but impossible. Although a good and stringent law had been passed for the regulation of the fisheries still it remained nearly a dead letter, as the Government had appointed no magistrate near the Bay who could be applied to in case of insubordination, thus obliging the manager when such instances occurred to go to Adelaide, a distance of fifty miles, for a warrant in the first place, and then to wait there until the offender was brought up, a period of many days. This caused many offences to be passed by which were very injurious to the success of the fishery. Still, the quantity of oil taken at Encounter Bay was 237 tons, not-

withstanding the enormous price and extra consumption of provisions, the result was better than in any previous year; while at Sleaford Bay there was a decided profit.

"In the present season (1841) there has been considerable change in the ownership of the South Australian Fisheries. So long a time having been required to overcome the difficulties, foreseen and unforeseen, but always attendant upon operations in a new colony, the directors of the South Australian Company have become disheartened, and the proprietary in England wishing them to lessen their colonial operations, have sent out to their manager here peremptory directions to abandon the whaling. He has, in accordance with these instructions, disposed of their half of the gear, boats, stations, to the parties late co-partners with them who are still engaged in the prosecution of it.

"Your sub-committee are informed by the officers of the South Australian Company that, leaving out of calculation the early expenses of settlements, which were for a variety of purposes besides whaling, and that loss upon casks and other property which must always be incidental to the sudden abandonment of so large an undertaking, together with some items of a minor character, the company have not been losers to any great extent. Indeed, taking the four seasons together, it is doubtful whether they have not realised their first expenditure, although they may not have found it a profitable speculation.

"The present season was commenced under much more favourable circumstances. Provisions were purchased at a little more than half the cost of former years. The reduction in the rate of wages throughout the colony obviated the difficulty before experienced in getting good men, and as there was no inducement for desertion, the stations were always efficiently manned.

In Encounter Bay the season has been what may be termed an average one, a single party having procured 134 tons of oil, and six tons of bone, the actual value now being £3,102 exclusive of casks, while the expenses, including shipping charges, are £2,084 8/2, leaving a balance of profit, £1,017 11/10.

"Sleaford Bay has not been successful this season, the whales not having set into that bay in such numbers as in former years; besides this the party was opposed by a ship from Sydney. The catch there, with three boats, has only been 30 tuns of oil and $1\frac{1}{2}$ tuns bone, value £710, while the expenses being £997, leaves a loss of £285 upon that station.

"Although the black-whale fishery in the bays is the only one at present organised in the province, still your sub-committee feel it required of them to notice the other branches of this trade.

"That Great Britain has never been able to conduct the South Sea Fishery from home so well as from her colonies is very apparent. Its first prosecution was from America, but upon the revolt of her colonies there she was obliged to carry on this trade from England, until the Australian settlements rose into importance, from whence it is now pursued with great spirit.

"The sperm trade is conducted from ships, instead of from bays, as before described. The organisation of the parties, and the mode of paying officers and men is upon a plan in many respects similar to that of the shore fisheries. From England, and till lately from the colonies, the attention of ships was confined to the sperm whale. Some, in the colonies, now take the black whale only (unless in the course of the voyage a sperm whale happened to be met with.) Others have latterly been fitted out for both fisheries, looking exclusively at first for sperm, afterwards taking anything that offered, or running, at some particular seasons, into bays for black whale.

"French and American vessels have of late come in very large numbers to these seas for the prosecution of the sperm, the black, and the mixed fisheries.

"Notwithstanding this province was admirably situated for the prosecution of sperm whaling, still your sub-committee would observe that from the very nature of the undertaking, it cannot start at once into vigorous existence. From England, from America, from the colonies, and from every other place the success of the enterprise depends almost exclusively on the abilities, experience, and proper selection of the officers and men.

The over-sight of this most important point caused the total failure of the South Australian Company's spirited commencement in this branch. Although they sent out five vessels, they were mostly commanded by men unused to the southern fisheries, and the result proved most unfortunate, with but one exception. The "Gniana" having put into Sydney in the year 1839, the captain was dismissed, and another one, together with officers and men, being obtained upon the spot, who were well versed in this trade, she proceeded to sea and procured in the short space of five or six months, 900 barrels sperm oil of the value of £10,000. A lamentable event—the murder of the captain at the Island of Santa Cruz—put an end to this most auspicious commencement. The mate, having quarrelled with his fellow-officers and crew, was obliged to return with the ship to Adelaide, being not one quarter full.

"The "Sarah and Elizabeth," the only whaler now belonging to the South Australian Company, fitted out from Hobart Town in 1839, and may shortly be expected here, although there has been no authentic intelligence received of this ship.

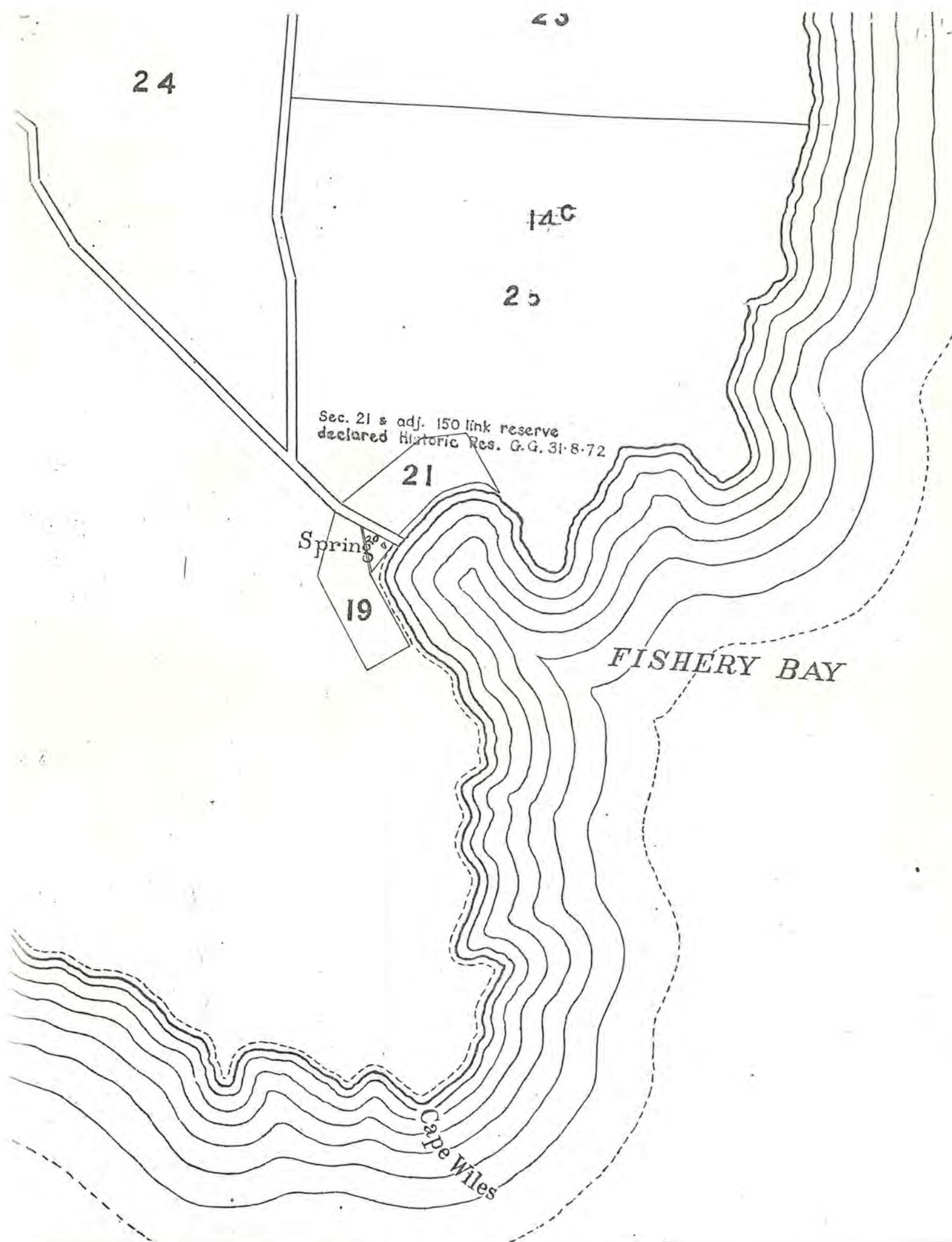
"The advantages to the colony which accrue from the prosecution of whaling are, among others:—

"Firstly, it furnishes a valued export in exchange for importations from the Mother Country.

"Secondly, by increasing the homeward freight which it does to a large extent compared to its value (the freight forming nearly one-quarter of the English value), it induces vessels to come out at lower rates when the ship owner knows that a return cargo can be procured.

"Thirdly, it employs a great many men who came principally from the other colonies, and who would return there were they not thus employed. These men, with very few exceptions, spend the whole of their pay in the province, and are engaged during the summer in shearing, reaping, sawing, fencing, &c. Some few have purchased land in the Encounter Bay district, and purpose building and improving.

"Fourthly, the demand for provisions, which, although not now wholly the produce of the colony, are



HERITAGE INVESTIGATIONS	SITE FISHERY BAY
EARLY EUROPEAN CONTACT TRANSPORT COMMUNICATIONS PROJECT 1980	REFERENCE DEPT. OF MARINE AND HARBORS PLAN 4931/85 "SLEAFORD", HUNDRED PLAN, DEPT OF LANDS 1931

DEPARTMENT FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

HERITAGE INVESTIGATIONS FOR HERITAGE UNIT

HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE OF FISHERY BAY WHALING STATION, EYRE PENINSULA

Introduction

At its meeting on 15th July, 1980, the Register Sub-Committee requested an evaluation of the heritage significance of the existing relics at the Fishery Bay Whaling Station, presently a declared Historic Reserve under the Aboriginal and Historic Relics Act.

History

A brief history of the Whaling Station is provided in the relevant Aboriginal and Historic Relics file. The Whaling Station was established by the South Australian Company in 1837 and was in use until it was abandoned in 1841. The Station was abandoned after a series of unsuccessful seasons due to inexperienced headmen, desertion of crews, and, most importantly, depletion of whales by foreign off-shore whaling vessels. The Station was quite large, employing 30 men in 1841, and in the preceding year (1840), had obtained a large haul of 3,400 gallons of whale oil. 1.

The problems besetting Fishery Bay were common to all the bay-whaling stations established in South Australia from 1837 (after official settlement). Almost all were abandoned - like Fishery Bay - within a few years of operation. By 1837 the Australian whaling industry in general had already reached a low point; "within four years, largely because of the great slaughter of whales around Van Dieman's Land and Victoria, the industry generally went into an abrupt decline from which it could not return" 2.

However, at the time of official settlement in South Australia (1836) it was believed that whaling would be one of the mainstays of the new colony, much as it had been for New South Wales and Tasmania. British, French, American and colonial ships had successfully hunted whales in South Australian waters possibly as early as 1800, and the Port Lincoln area and bays along the Peninsula coast were frequently visited and temporary off-shore gangs of whalers and sealers were often stationed there. In fact, early reports by whalers and sealers had turned colonist's attention to South Australia in the first place, and the colonists naturally expected to carry on successful whaling activities.

Most of these Stations were formed by the South Australian Company, and they did at first provide substantial return, despite their ultimate failure. 3

Fishery Bay is therefore, an example of the earliest European industry in South Australia and its most important, before and immediately after settlement.

Physical Evidence

Fishery Bay was visited on 16th and 18th July, 1980, by Heritage Investigations as part of their project locating items of significance in early European contact with S.A., early transport and communications. With the assistance of Mr. Perc. Baillie, the local Port Lincoln historian, and directions from the landowner, Mr. Bob Theakstone, we located extensive relics of the bay-

whaling station. These are situated over a large area, but are all within the original declared Historic Reserve. They are marked on the accompanying sketch maps.

The relics include a rock-hole, used as a well by the whalers (Baillie and Theakstone found the remains of a "whip" structure, used to raise water from the rock-hole), ruins of several whalers' huts (brick and stone), a track cut into the cliff face and the remains of the flensing (or fleshing) table, which is a ledge built up by brick, 4. above a naturally occurring flat rock where whales were dragged from the sea from stripping. Fire marked bricks, probably fallen from the cliff above, indicate that the blubber was also boiled down at this site. A try pot was removed from this site several years ago, and several pieces of whale bone, including a very large piece which is on display at the entrance to "Whalers Way", directly across the bay from the ledge.

These relics appear to be the most extensive remains of whaling in South Australia as a whole. Heritage Investigations has visited or enquired about other whaling sites on Eyre Peninsula, at Encounter Bay (Victor Harbor), at Beachport and at D'Estrees Bay (Kangaroo Island). Although there are some relics also at these places and possibly others in remote parts as yet unknown, they do not appear to be as extensive as those at Fishery Bay.

Recommendation

For these reasons, due both to the significance of the whaling industry and the activities of the South Australian Company, and to the fact that considerable physical evidence of these activities remains at Fishery Bay, it is recommended that the area be included in the State Heritage Register.

Susan Marsden
Heritage Investigations
August, 1980.

1. Port Lincoln Times, 24/7/1969
2. W.J. Hosking "Whaling in South Australia, 1837-1872".
(B.A. Honours History, Flinders University, 1973), p.1
3. P. Donovan, An Industrial History of South Australia (1836 to 1936)
(Working paper 2, Department of Architecture, University of Adelaide, 1979).
4. These bricks appear to be the same as those used at Reeves Point (near Kingscote), in the construction of the first South Australian Company buildings. Those bricks were brought from England as ballast in S.A. Company ships (1836).

HERITAGE UNIT

SITE NO.

PHOTOGRAPHIC FIELD DOCUMENTATION RECORD

SITE FISHERY BAY WHALING SITES

TOWN OR AREA

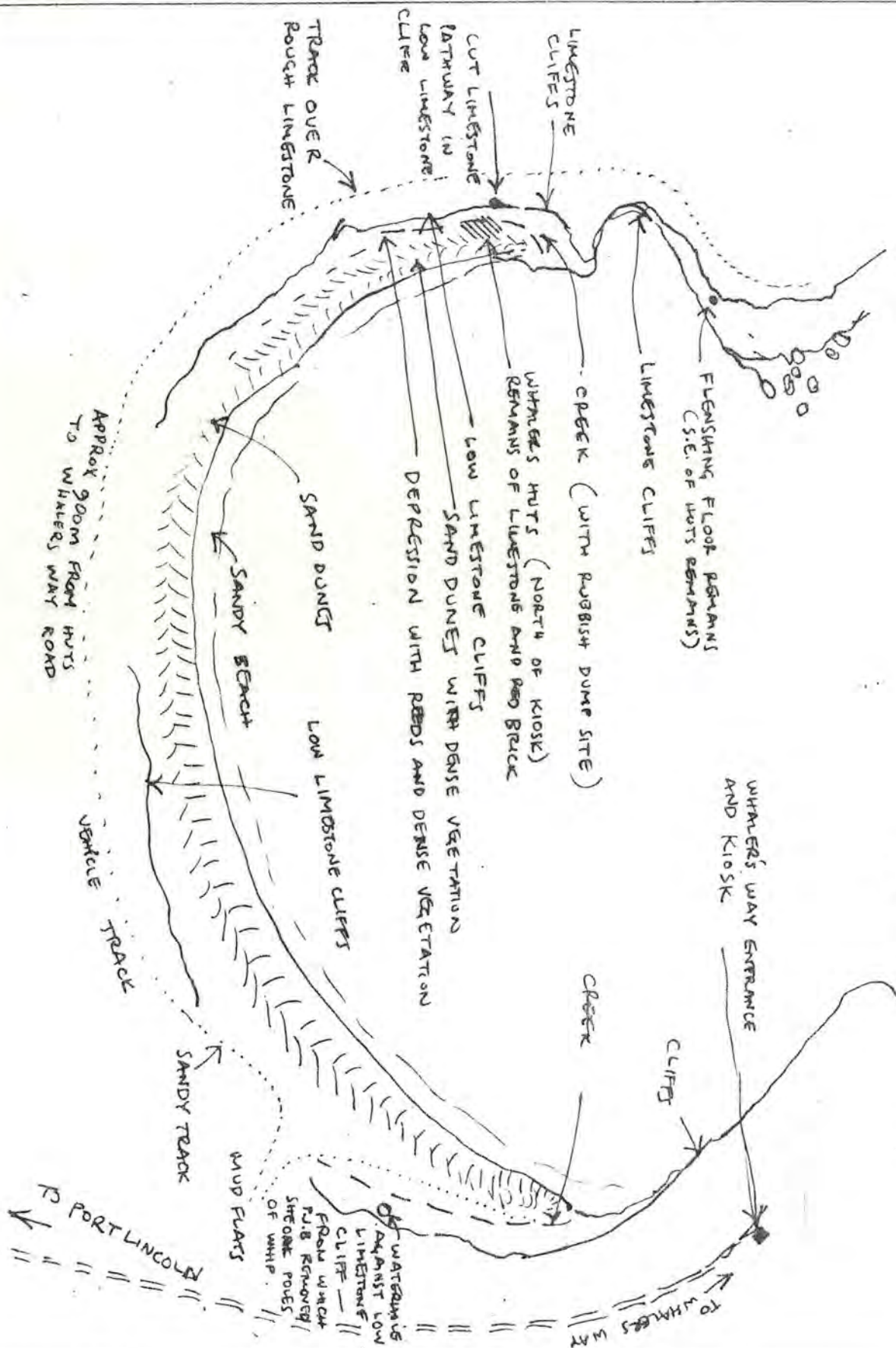
DISTRICT

MAP REFERENCE

RECORDER

JOHN DALLWITZ

DATE 18-7-80



HERITAGE UNIT

SITE NO.

PHOTOGRAPHIC FIELD DOCUMENTATION RECORD

SITE FISHERY BAY HUT SITE

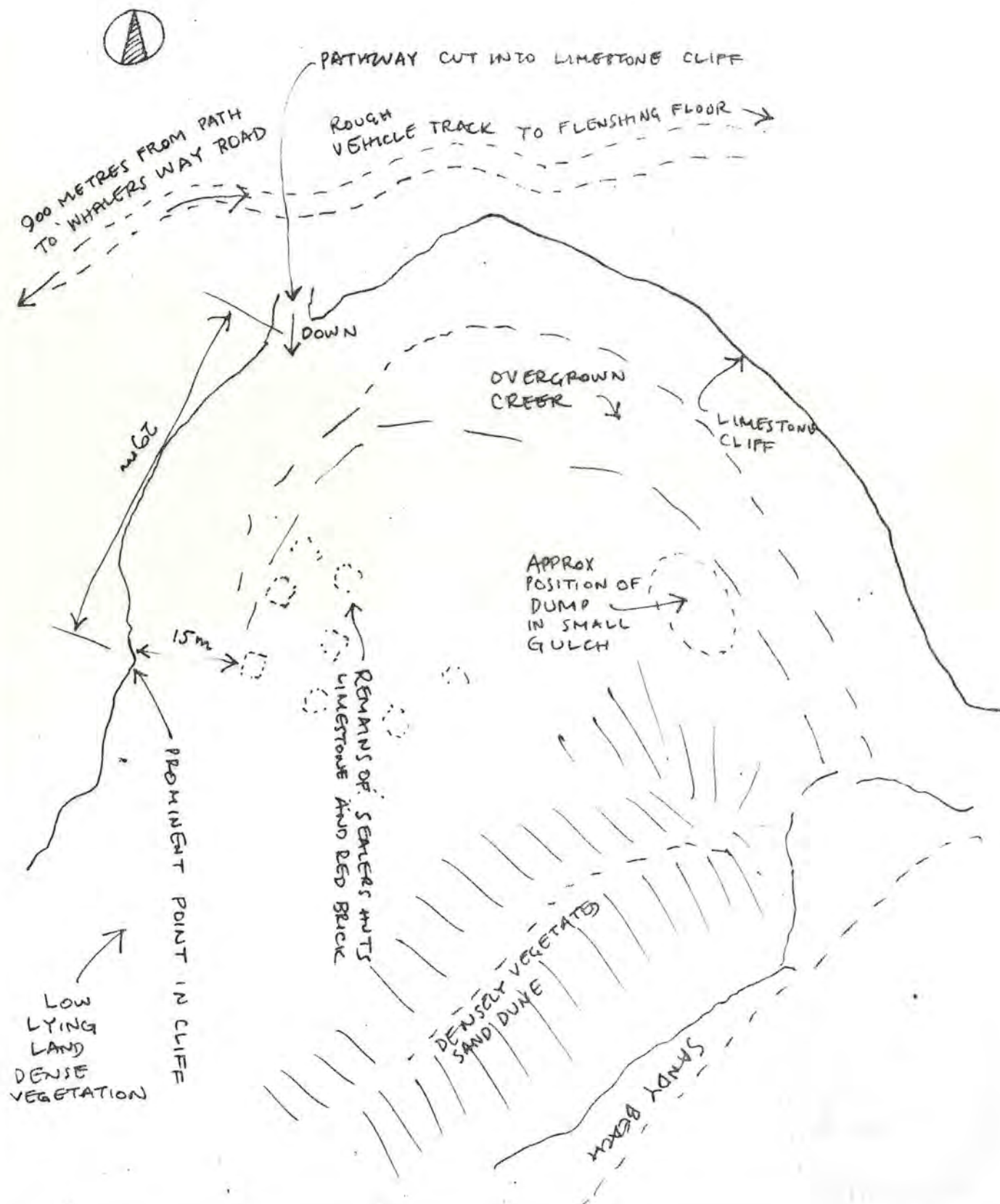
TOWN OR AREA

DISTRICT

MAP REFERENCE

RECORDER JOHN DALLWITZ

DATE 18-7-80



25/10/02 16:43 pg. 1
Fax from : +61886824417

Explaining Fishery Bay whaling

SOUTH Australia's whaling history will be featured as part of a series of interpretive signs, one of which will be placed at Fishery Bay, near Port Lincoln.

The interpretive signs will promote and protect heritage-listed archaeological sites through the State.

Minister for Environment and Conservation John Hill launched the signs on Sunday.

The first two signs are at Fishery Bay and another at Fleurieu Peninsula's Fishery Beach on the Heysen Trail near Cape Jarvis.

The signs are part of the "Sites of Archaeological Significance" series.

"Often the written historical record is poor or non-existent, making these archaeological sites the only source of information capable of providing an insight for tourists and the local community into the activities

that took place and the people involved," Mr Hill said.

"Therefore, it's important that we learn to appreciate these sites and protect them from damage as well as making sure they aren't forgotten.

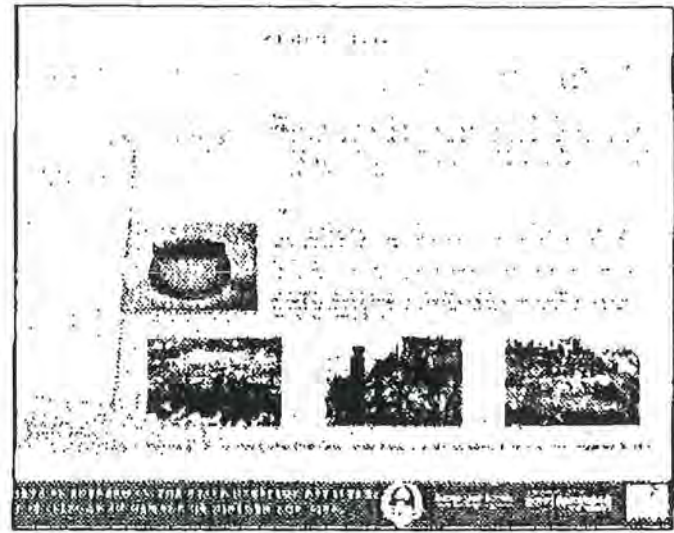
"It is fitting that the first signs to be installed tell us about two of South Australia's earliest export industries - whaling and mining - which were important to the economic development of the State."

The sign at Fishery Bay tells the story of the whaling station established there by the South Australian Company in 1837.

In 1839, 56 whalers employed by the United Fishing Company of Adelaide operated the station.

Prior to its abandonment in 1841, about 20 whales had been captured and 'tried-out' (boiled) for their oil.

Archaeological excavations recently carried out at Fishery



NEW SIGN: The new sign that will be displayed at Fishery Bay to detail the region's whaling history. The signs are part of the "Sites of Archaeological Significance" series.

Bay by Heritage SA in association with Flinders University, revealed one of the most complete tryworks platforms in Australia.

The sign at Fishery Beach near Cape Jervis, interprets archaeological evidence of both whaling and mining.

10223



ParksWeb

Southern Right Whales

South Australia

History

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[History](#)

[Behaviour](#)

[Activities](#)

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- [Hunting](#)
- [Watching](#)
- [Whaling and Whalers in South Australia](#)

From hunting...



Over 26,000 Southern Right Whales were killed in Australian and New Zealand waters.

- 1791 First whale (Sperm Whale) taken in Australian waters by the crew of Britannia after unloading cargo and convicts.
- 1804 Whales were so common in the Derwent River, Tasmania, they were a hazard to small boats.
- 1830 Whaling industry on mainland Australia underway with small shore stations.
- 1835-1844 Whales hunted to near extinction. Southern Right Whales were considered the "right" whale to hunt because they float when dead, can yield many barrels of oil, have long baleen plates and come close to shore. Whale oil was used for candles, light fuel, soap heating and lubricant. Baleen, often referred to as "whalebone" is strong and flexible and was used in corsetry, bookbinding, whip and umbrella making.
- 1845 Very scarce and no longer profitable to hunt.
- 1872 The whaling station set up by the South Australia Company at Encounter Bay closed.
- 1931 Protected in South Australia.
- 1935 Internationally protected through the League of Nations.
- 1978 All whaling in Australian waters ceased, the last whaling station (for Sperm Whales) being in Albany, Western Australia.
- 1990s Great Australian Bight Marine Park and Whale Sanctuary established, providing a

haven for southern right whales visiting Australian waters.



...to watching

World population diminished from more than 100,000 to around 4,000 - the Southern Right Whale is on journey recovering from near extinction. Whale watching is providing regional tourism opportunities.

Whaling and Whalers in South Australia

For many years before South Australia was settled in 1836, whalers and sealers had been visiting the coasts and islands to harvest the valuable products of whaling and sealing. One American whaling vessel "Union" spent the winter of 1804 at Kangaroo Island. The first white visitors to South Australia, hardened whalers, were probably a rough introduction to white people for local aboriginals. Records and statistics relating to whaling during this time are scarce as operations were conducted at sea or by visiting vessels.

For whalers life was harsh, sometimes so bad that entire crews deserted their whaling operation. Whaling parties were dropped off with their equipment and left for the season, sometimes the pick-up vessel did not return for more than a year. Being an opportunistic industry the whaling stations required few shore structures. Many stations were so scant that occupants were hardly able to live and survived on what they could catch.

Southern Right Whales were considered the "right" whale to hunt because they floated when dead, yielded many barrels of oil, and long baleen plates. They also came very close to shore and moved slowly. The whalers would watch for whales then give chase in boats about ten meters long. The boats were much smaller than the whales that grow up to 17 meters long, making the chase and harpooning of the whale dangerous to the whalers. The whale was then towed back to shore and hauled onto a ramp or rock platform for flensing (removing the blubber). The blubber, rich in oil, was heated in large "try-pots" over open fire and the oil collected. Whale oil was used for candles, light fuel, soap, heating and lubricant. The baleen often referred to as "whalebone" was also collected from the mouth of the whale. Baleen is strong and flexible and was used in corsetry, bookbinding, whip and umbrella making.

Around the time of settlement, bay whaling stations were set up, the South Australian Register recorded interest:

"The Black Whale is the one that hitherto has most engaged the attention of the colonists of the province, in consequence of its annual visits to our bays, and the facilities that thereby exist for pursuing it from the shore (South Australian Register, 1 January 1842)."

There were at least 18 separate bay whaling locations on the South Australian coast between 1828 and 1855. The whaling industry's heyday was from 1838 to 1845 after which the numbers of whales in Australian waters were no longer able to sustain this business. Today synthetic oils and materials have replaced the whale products.

Despite gaining protection in 1936 Southern Right Whale stocks are still a long way from recovering.

Reference and further reading:

Kostoglou, P. and McCarthy, J. (1991) Whaling and sealing sites in South Australia. Australian Institute for Maritime Archaeology Special Publication No. 6.



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This page was last modified 2002-10-17
Webmaster: parkinfo@saugov.sa.gov.au



<u>Letter to the Editor</u>	<u>Mainstreet Limewash</u>	<u>Bhundoo- Clyde River</u>	<u>Last chance for the Snowy River</u>
<u>Buy Nothing Day</u>	<u>Whale Tales</u>	<u>Skywatch</u>	<u>Prisoner of Conscience</u>
<u>Keneally vows Nowra</u>	<u>Children Only</u>	<u>Pat's Bay Wetlands</u>	<u>Walking Hand in Hand</u>
<u>People's declaration on global warming</u>	<u>Lucas Heights and Misinformation</u>	<u>System of Balance</u>	<u>Herb Gardening</u>
<u>'Huskymoon'</u>	<u>Conservation and Community Groups</u>		

Whale Tales

Diving regularly in Jervis Bay over the last ten years we have often seen Humpback and Southern Right Whales on their migratory paths off the coast. With a huge increase in the number of sightings over the last three years the Bay is fast becoming a Mecca for whale watching. Australia's participation in the history of whaling began with the arrival in 1791 of the Third Fleet from England. After unloading their live lumber (convicts), five ships, the Britannia, Maryann, William & Ann, Salamander and Matilda, hoisted sail after "fish" (whales). Although the Britannia and William & Ann harpooned seven "fish", they were only able to secure one each due to the violent weather. The Salamander lost an estimated ten barrels of fish and the Matilda returned after four days without daring to lower a whaleboat from the deck. The five ships then set sail for Peru. Four returned to London full of oil, the Matilda was wrecked in the Northern Pacific Ocean. Whaling was soon to be the most important industry in the colony and would continue to be for the next three decades, long before any notion of Australia's mineral resources or attempts at agriculture or pastoral endeavours.

The New Industry

The whalers were instrumental in the exploration of the Australian coastline in their pursuit of "fish", setting up operations in Port Lincoln, Portland Bay, Victor Harbour and along the Great Australian Bight. Indirectly, whales played a significant role in keeping the small settlements around our vast coastline functioning, as whaling ships were a vital lifeline bringing supplies, raw materials and labour. In 1803, on the way to establish the first settlement in Tasmania at Risdon, Captain Binker (Australia's whaling pioneer) remarked that "whales were so thick he could take 'em without looking". En route the only restraint placed on his whaling activities was the chaining of convicts below deck. By the 1839 season there were over 20 whaling stations in Tasmania centred around Hobart and the Derwent River. The then Maritime Authority were advising vessels to stay mid-river to avoid Southern Right Whales that were in close proximity to the shoreline as they were a hazard to navigation. 1864 brought the most devastating device whales had to face, the exploding harpoon gun, which by 1880 was fitted to steam ships. Combined with the advent of floating factory ships and chasers, the worlds great whales were hunted close to extinction. By the 1924-25 whaling season the world catch was 23,000 whales, which increased to 43,000 in 1930-31. The slaughter reached a peak of 66,000 being taken in 1961-62. Declining stocks and increased conservation measures significantly contributed to a much smaller catch of 19,000 whales in the 1975-76 season. 1962 saw the humpback fishery collapse and finally cease operation in 1963. Unfortunately by then Australia's visiting populations of Humpbacks and Southern Right Whales were on the verge of extinction.

Right Whales

There is some debate as to how many species of right whales exist. Most authorities recognize two, the Southern and Pygmy Right Whale. The Northern Right Whale has been proposed as a third. Both species were close to extinction before being declared protected in 1937. The Southern Right Whale is now showing signs of recovery with an increase of up to 7% per year. The number of Southern Right Whales taken is unknown. From an estimated stock of 50,000 animals pre-whaling, their

population is now estimated at three to five thousand world wide with several hundred visiting Australian waters annually.

Humpback Whales

The world distribution of humpbacks is divided into ten geographically distinct sub-populations with very little if any mixing between the groups. The southern hemisphere has six of these groups that spend the summer in Antarctica with two groups migrating north to Australia each year.

Before modern commercial whaling, the population of the Western Australian Group was in the region of 12,000-17,000. By 1963 their numbers were reduced to less than 800 individuals of which half were immature. The total catch of this group from 1912 to 1963 exceeded 40,000.

The East Australian Group population was around 10,000 and by 1963 was decimated to 500 animals. There were instances of illegal hunting of this group. In 1955 the factory ship, Olympic Challenger took over 1,000 whales. The total catch for this group was 15,000.

After a tireless campaign by several conservation groups, a worldwide ban on whaling was introduced in 1986. In defiance of the ban a number of countries still use a loophole to take several hundred whales each year for "scientific research". The carcasses are then processed for their meat and oil.

Over 140,000 humpbacks were killed in Antarctica. Most groups are now recovering at an average of about 9% per annum from the 1962 numbers, leading to more encounters each year, including several white humpbacks being sighted regularly during their trek along the east coast of Australia.

Perhaps the greatest threat whales and other marine animals face today is the increasing maritime traffic with its associated noise. Recent research indicates whales can communicate over vast distances through the ocean. Now they must compete with man-made noises as well. Maritime pollution is still a hazard with the continued dumping of raw sewage, toxic waste and other chemicals into the world's oceans every day. Autopsies carried out on dead whales have revealed high concentrations of chemical residue, some of which are known to cause birth defects and cancers.

Jervis Bay played a small part in Australia's fledgling industry. Whalers visited the Bay in pursuit of their quarry starting from the 1790s up until 1912-13. Vessels belonging to the southern whaling fleet regularly called into the Bay's sheltered waters to render down their fish, reprovisioning with food and water at Bristol Point. This changed in the 1790s when gold was discovered in the mountains behind Jervis Bay. Most ships lost crew members to the goldfields through deserters hoping for the chance to strike it rich.

Over the years a number of shorebased operations worked out of the Bay, the most successful being Captain William Kinghorne who, in 1840, with one ship working from the north eastern side of the Bay taking Black, Sperm and Humpback whales. He ceased operating after three years due to the prohibitive costs of transporting the finished product to Sydney combined with the scarcity of his quarry.

In 1912 the Norwegian eight thousand ton factory ship the Loch Tay plus the chasers Sorell and Campbell arrived in the Bay to hunt whales with the full support of the NSW government and fisheries. The two chasers harpooned one hundred and fifty eight whale in the 1912 season, rendering them down to 400 barrels of oil. They then departed to New Zealand, returning with a second factory ship, the Polynesia, for the 1913 season. From June through to October they took 379 whales, making a total of 537 whales for the two seasons yielding 2666 tons of oil. This operation was forced to close down after only two seasons as there were many complaints received due to the

strong odour and offal floating in the Bay. The last attempt at whaling in the Bay was in 1919 when a businessman was prepared to build a modern whaling station employing several hundred workers with ship building and other industries receiving a much needed boost. Despite local enthusiasm the acting Prime Minister, William Watt, stated "it would be unwise to permit the establishment of a whaling station which is in close proximity to the Naval College- HMAS Creswell"

Our observation over the last ten years have shown Humpbacks rarely show interest in anything during June/July, being very single minded on their trip north to their breeding grounds. Whereas in September/October, the southbound females will frequently indulge the inquisitive nature of their calves letting them investigate anything that takes their fancy. They often rest in the protected waters of the Bay before moving on.

During the migratory season, sightings off the entrance to the Bay have become a regular event. One morning we watched enthralled as four Humpbacks breached simultaneously in front of us, their antics continued for over an hour until we had to leave. Of course they must have known I had decided to leave most of my camera equipment at home and consequently only had a 20 mm lens in a housing.

Warren Jones regularly contributes his photographs to NBT

Stow it in a Whale

There are more and more reports of whales washed up, starved to death, with plastic bags clogging their guts. If you want Government intervention, you've got it. The Department of the Environment has come up with a slogan: "Stow it, don't throw it"! That should fix the problem. Coles and Woolies, mega plastic bag purveyors must be all atremble. How about a 20c levy on plastic bags as in Germany and confiscation of vessels or vehicles from which plastic bags are thrown as a follow-up?

Senator Bob Brown, The Australian Greens (From The Daily Planet)

Keep watching for Whales

Whales are presently moving south again having calved in warmer waters in the South. Take a trip to Governor's Head, the old Cape St. George Lighthouse and St George's Head for good vantage points in Booderee National Park.

Sleaford Bay fishery site D.C. Lower Eyre Peninsula

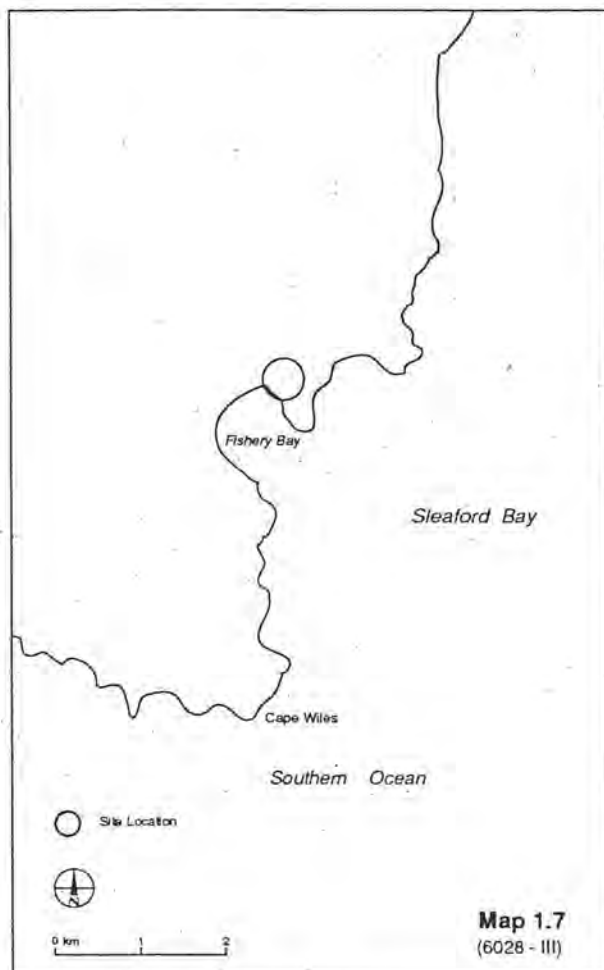


Figure 16. Location map Sleaford Bay fishery, Sleaford Bay (6028-III).

Location: AMG: 562800E 6136600N
(Zone 53 Map 6028)

Also known as the Fishery Bay whaling station, the site is located within Fishery Bay, approximately 35 kilometres south-west of Port Lincoln.

History

A foundation date for the Sleaford Bay fishery is yet to be established. In 1837, the *South Australian Register* reported on 12 August and 11 November that the schooner *Siren* had departed Port Adelaide for Sleaford Bay 'to take on a cargo of oil from the station there'. However, no governmental export/produce statistics or private records refer to oil cargoes from Sleaford Bay until 1839, when the South Australian Company and Messrs Hack and Company formed a combined fishery, the United Fishing Company of Adelaide, in what is now known as Fishery Bay. By June of that year only four whales had

been taken (Parsons, 1981).

The station operated under the United Company for two seasons until late 1841, when the South Australian Company sold off all its interests in the black whale industry, leaving the Hack brothers in total control. Only months later Hack and Company, in dire financial straits, were forced to sell off all their interests in the industry including the Rosetta Head and Sleaford Bay stations. Hack and Company were declared insolvent in 1843. Both stations were purchased by Hagen and Hart, who operated the latter station for three to four months and then abandoned it. The station was never occupied again.

The sites

The station complex is composed of two functionally separate sites, the first serving as an accommodation area, and the other as a processing facility for whale carcasses. It should also be noted that a well site was once situated to the south of the accommodation precinct.

Site A: Accommodation complex

Seven building foundations were identified scattered randomly within a 62 x 35 metre area dominated by thick coastal scrubland. Overgrown by vegetation and in extremely deteriorated condition, these features were only identified after an extensive foot survey of the entire area.

All structural features were constructed of rubble limestone, although in three examples large *in situ* stone outcrops were used as corners, and the building walls incorporated around these.

Two scatters of brick (see Artefacts section) and a further sample still *in situ* at the interior base of Feature 2 would seem to indicate that at least some of the structures' floor areas or fireplaces were paved with loose bricks.

Site B: Flensing floor and try-works

Approximately 500 metres east of the accommodation area, at the base of the cliff-line that overlooks most of the bay, a compacted sandy platform was identified as the flensing and trying out facility for the station. Although the platform proper is only 10-15 metres in length, the outer edge has eroded to reveal a stratified subsurface artefactual progression extending in discontinuous concentrations to a point 31 metres south and 51 metres north of this feature.

This deposit includes an extensive charcoal lens which by the extent of deposition, suggests sustained utilisation of the facility for a number of seasons.

Site C: Whip well

A whip well structure, composed of she-oak saplings sunk into a rock hole catchment is said to have been constructed by the whalers at the southern end of the bay in the freshwater flood-zone that exists there. Unfortunately the whip structure was dismantled and removed



Figure 17. Site A, Sleaford Bay accommodation precinct. (Markers indicate positions of the seven structural features identified.)

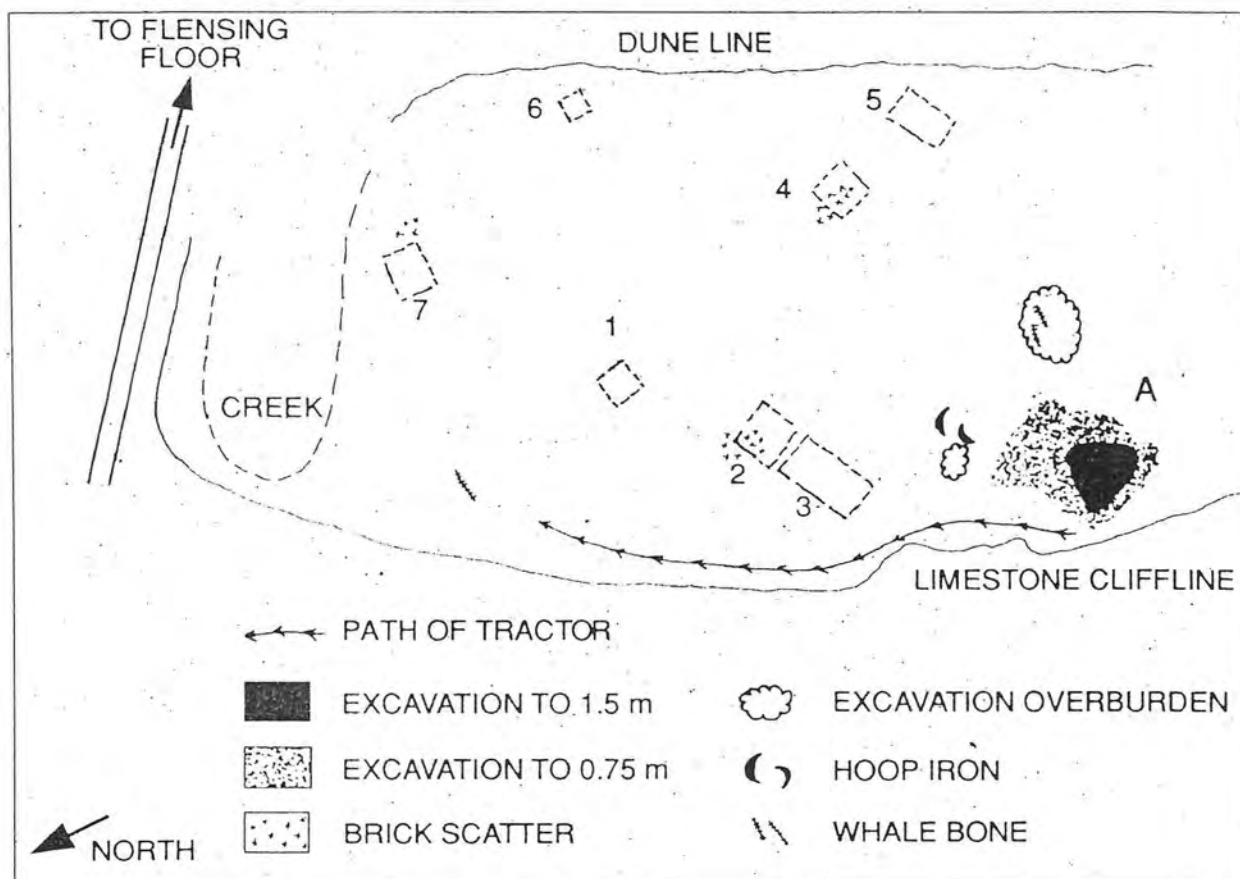


Figure 18. Site A, plan of accommodation area, Sleaford Bay fishery.



Figure 19. Site A, artefacts, bricks *in situ* on floor.

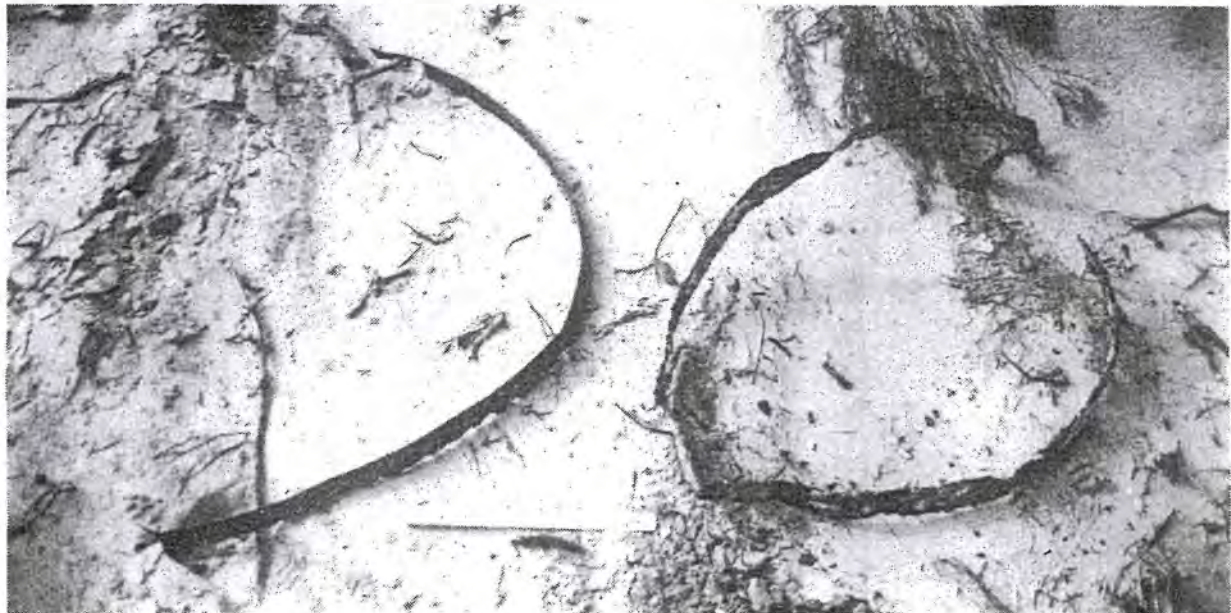


Figure 20. Site A, artefacts, hoop iron exposed in excavation overburden.

by local residents before this survey, and no further details are available.

Artefacts

Site A: Accommodation area

In association with Features 2, 4 and 7, scatters of hand-made red clay bricks were located. Composed of very fine grained clay with few impurities, these bricks were well fired and accordingly have weathered minimally. All lacked frogs, but several bore characteristic thumb prints on their surface. The average size was recorded at 23 x 11 x 6 cm.

As a result of an unauthorised excavation (see plan),

fragmentary pieces of whalebone were also located within the precincts of the accommodation area. Although unprovenanced, their recovery from the excavational overburden indicates that they occupied a position within a subsurface deposit. Two lengths of hoop iron (see Appendix 3) were also obtained from the same location.

Site B: Flensing floor and try-works

Within the stratigraphic profile of the try-works floor, three compositionally differing layers were discernible. The surface unit was composed of compacted soil, within which were noted several complete and fragmentary red clay bricks of the same type identified at the accommodation area. The intermediary soil unit was of



Figure 21. Site B, flensing floor, general view, Sleaford Bay fishery.



Figure 22. Site B, stratigraphic profile try-works floor.

a far coarser nature, containing minor deposits of charcoal beads and very fragmentary bricks of poor quality. The base layer was a well defined lens of charcoal two to three centimetres in depth. Component carbon varied in size from microscopic to fragments four millimetres in diameter.

On the surface of the floor was a varied assortment of masonry, possibly having originally served as a lining of sorts for areas used to house the try-pots. Apart from the rubble calcrete fragments which possibly were dislodged and thus deposited

accidentally from the caprock layer on the adjacent cliff-line, four different brick types were identified (see Fig. 23). The poorer quality samples have been severely reduced by natural degradation, and match the fragments referred to in the intermediate layer of the floor profile.

At two locations in the profile, both north of the floor proper, the charcoal lens has diminished, and in its place is found deposits of strip iron up to 5.5 cm in width and 18 cm in length.

Previously said to have been associated with this



Figure 23. Site B, artefacts, brick scatter on floor. (Note differing texture, colour and grade of representative samples.)



Figure 24. Site C, rock hole formerly accommodating whalers whip well.

flensing floor site are the try-pot and sperm whale mandible now removed to the entrance of the Whalers Way tourist display (see Appendix 3).

Discussion

In the first season, 1500 gallons (about 50 tons) of oil and three tons of whalebone were obtained. This poor yield was not looked upon kindly by the South Australian Company/Hack and Company combine, who in seeking appropriate scapegoats, blamed inexperienced heads-men and constantly deserting boat crew members for the low result. Paid in direct proportion to their catch, it is little wonder that so many employees chose to abandon the fishery. Indeed, desertion was an occupational hazard on every whaling venture where the 'lay' was used as a standard form of payment to employees.

In 1840, the annual yield was greatly improved with 3400 gallons (about 110 tons) being shipped to Port Adelaide by the *John Pirie* (Parsons, 1981). Hack and Company had purchased the South Australian Company's interest in the United Fishing Company by 1841 (Parsons, 1981). The arrival of a competing whaler from Sydney during the 1841 season depressed profits once more. Only 1000 gallons (34 tons) were obtained, and more disturbing to the owners, few whales were entering the bay. At this time the station employed 35 men using

three catchboats.

In the *South Australian Magazine* (November 1841: 153-158), Mr Neales Bentham optimistically forecast an expanded whaling industry for the Port-Lincoln area, including Sleaford Bay. He stated 'it appears quite evident that the whale fishery ere long will be one of the principal sources of wealth of the Port Lincoln settlers'. Only months later the fishery showed how misguided Bentham's assessment was, when it closed down for the final time, and the Boston Island station proposal also came to nothing (see Spalding Cove whaling site p. 22).

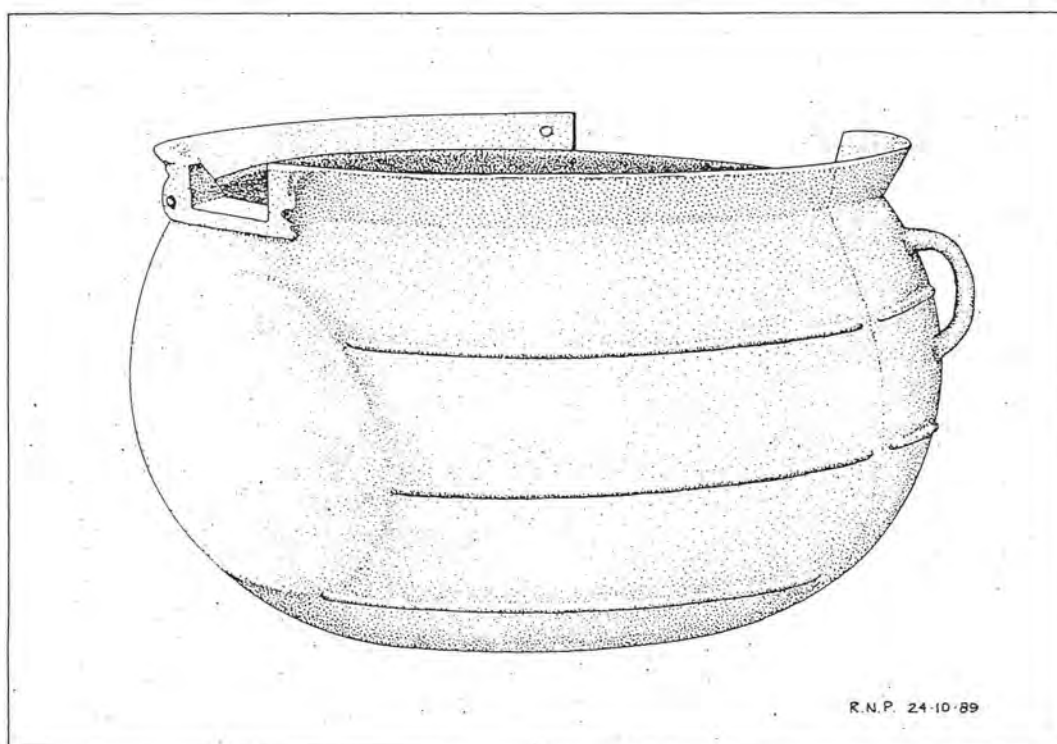
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- Parsons, R.H., 1981, *Port Lincoln shipping*. R.H. Parsons, Magill, South Australia.
- South Australian Archives, Research Notes, No. 67.
- South Australian Register*, 1 January 1842 (see Findings of Hart Committee, 12 August 1837, 11 November 1837.
- South Australian Magazine*, November 1841: 153-158.

WHALING AND SEALING SITES IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Parry Kostoglou and Justin McCarthy

Compiled by Jeni Paay



State Heritage Branch
Department of Environment and Planning
Adelaide, South Australia

Australian Institute for Maritime Archaeology
Special Publication No. 6
1991



Sleaford Bay Site Structure (photo by M. Staniforth).

Unlike Fowlers Bay, Sleaford Bay revealed extensive archaeological evidence of the whaling station in the form of habitation (and storage) sites and a tryworks platform (see Bradbury et al 1997). Again the building sites were largely constructed of local stone but in this case there is far more extensive use of brick in particular in the form of the tryworks floor.



Flensing Platform at Sleaford Bay (photo by M. Staniforth)

Artefacts

Another issue which came up was the nature and extent of the archaeological material which lay in the waters in front of the whaling station - an underwater survey by Tim Anson and Nathan Richards revealed a range of artefactual material including this blue transfer print found underwater. The se artefacts indicate that the seas may have been a convenient receptacle for unwanted rubbish or that

20

1010 Acres
CH. 11, 100 P. 99

14^A

Area
3115 Acres
14017

For Subdivision, vide page 7A + S.G.O. 35

Opening + Closing of Roads
vide P. 11, 100 P. 99
+ DL 1528/50

14^E

LESS 20 for water works
1540 Acres
30
1570
1518 Ac

15312
15020
1517

14964
14964
To 150 lks. Res.
67.15

23

13^S

Vide page 11

14^C

2915 Acres

25

11

21

Vide page 12

40 v. 12

41 v. 14

Area
3115 Acres
14017
For Subdivision, vide page 7A & S.G.O. 3551/06

14^E

1540 Acres

1518 Ac

23

page 1.1

14^C

SLEAFORD

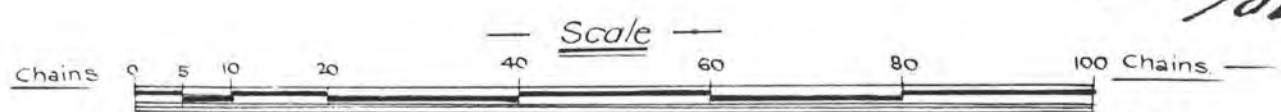
BAY



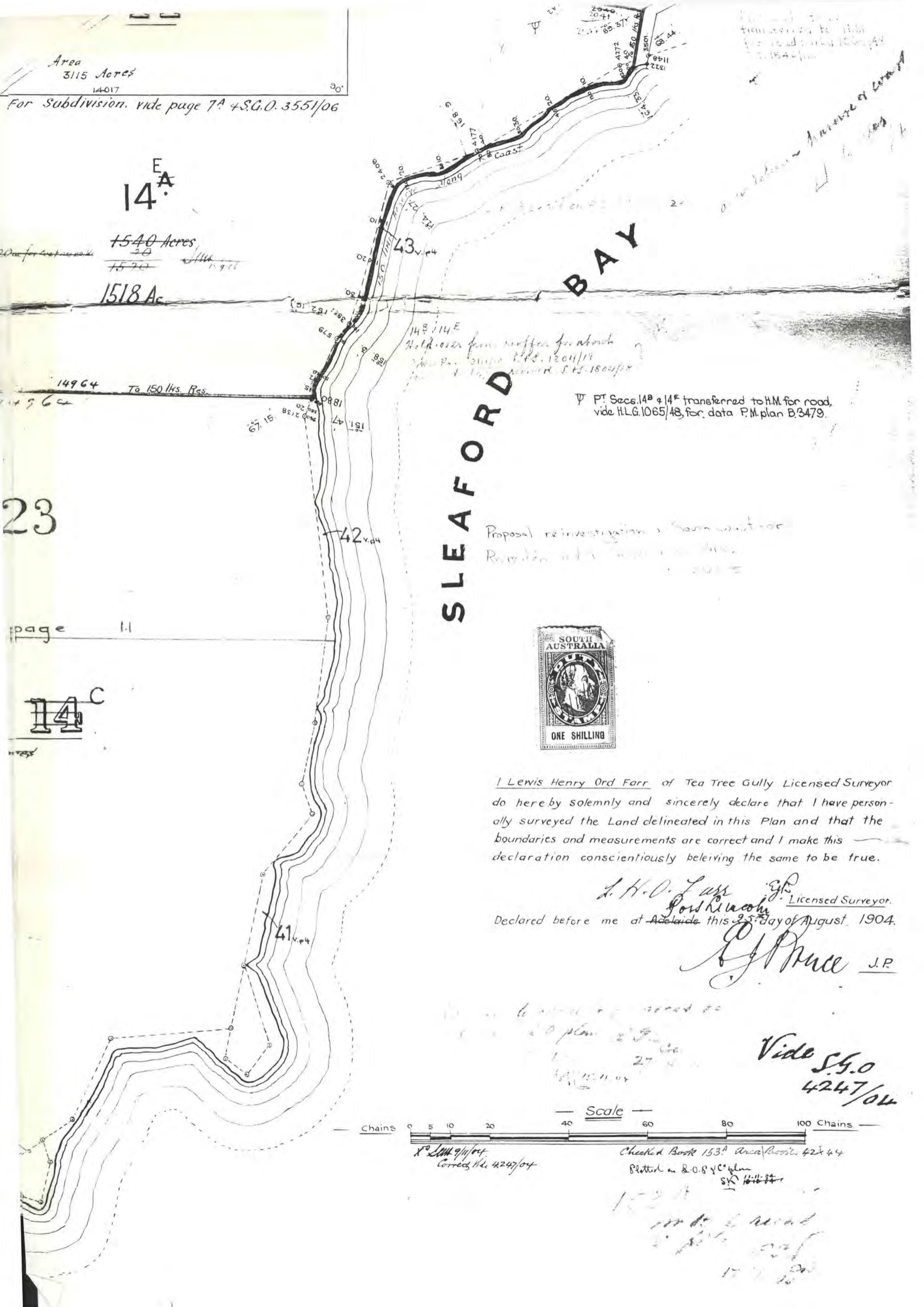
I Lewis Henry Ord Farr of Tea Tree Gully Licensed Surveyor do hereby solemnly and sincerely declare that I have personally surveyed the Land delineated in this Plan and that the boundaries and measurements are correct and I make this declaration conscientiously believing the same to be true.

L. H. O. Farr ^{gk}
L. H. O. Farr Licensed Surveyor.
 Declared before me at Adelaide this 25th day of August, 1904.
J. P. Price J.P.

Vide S.G.O.
4247/04

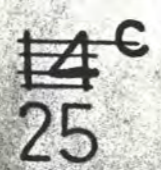


X^o LHM 9/11/04
 Corrected vide 4247/04
 Checked Book 153^A Area/Bores 4247/04
 Plotted on 8.0.8 v.c. plan
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12

35
Y. P. 18



July 19 60
Fishers
Surveyor.

12 CHAINS



INTERIM LAND TENURE MAP

Information on this map
has been validated with
S.A. Land Information System.

SLEA

CO FLI

D.C. LOWER E
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U

BK1

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OP13278^A
C.L. 651-76
18
1387
R.A. CASANOVA

OP 9544
C.L. 1321-20
12
2720

SALT LAKE

N.J. & P. THEAKSTONE
TOTAL 4747.82

CT 4371-130
34
1607.0

OP9544^A
C.L. 3321-21

26
3712

OP14565^A
C.L. 1276-34
22
761.8
P.N. & P.N.

OP14565
C.L. 1276-33
24
751.1

R.C. THEAKSTONE
TOTAL 4250.7 (A)

OP12925^A
C.L. 1366-25
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2736

D'ANVILLE BAY

Rock

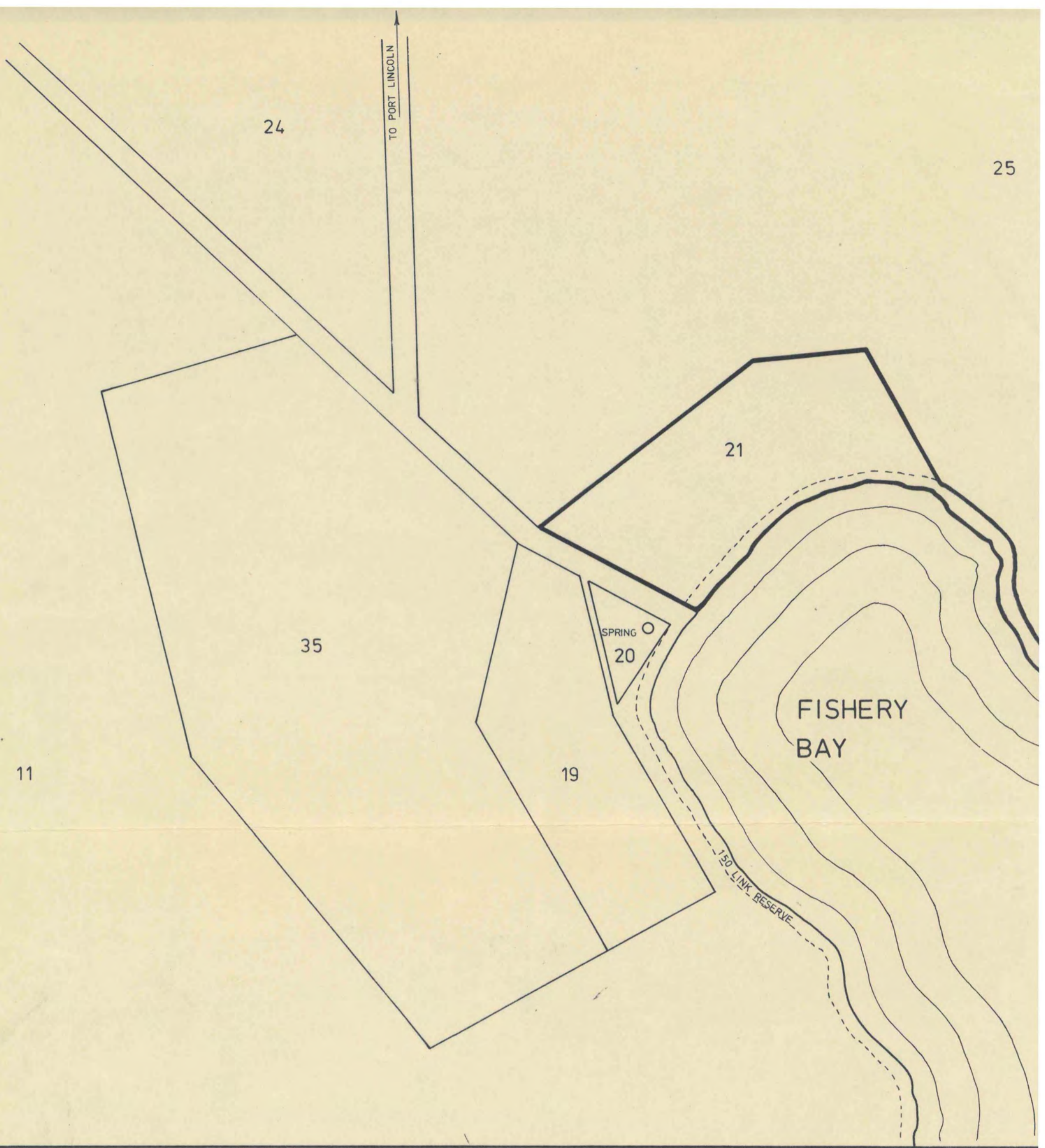
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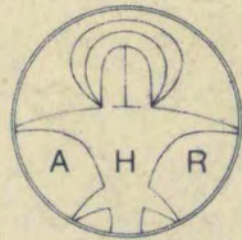
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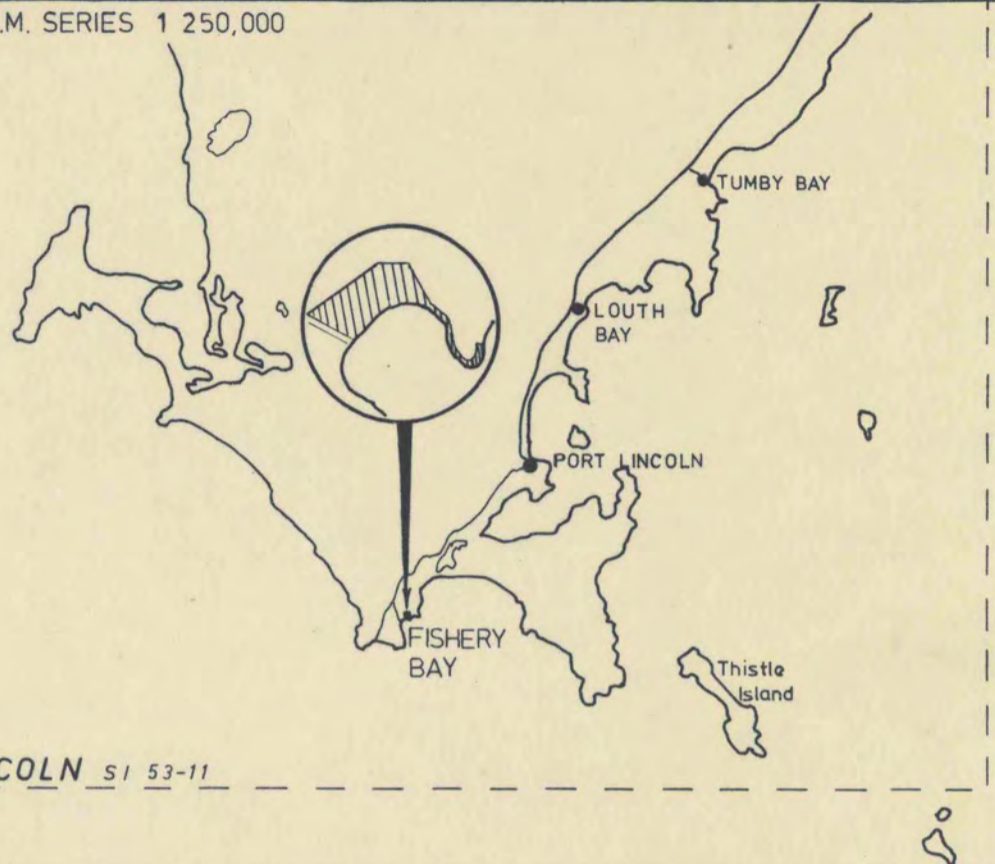
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PROCLAMATION DATI



ABORIGINAL & HISTORIC RELICS PRESERVATION ACT

A.N.M. SERIES 1 250,000



LINCOLN SI 53-11

THIS RESERVE COMPRISES SECTION 21
HUNDRED OF SLEAFORD, COUNTY OF
FLINDERS, TOGETHER WITH THE ADJOINING
150LINKS RESERVE & PORTION OF THE
150LINKS RESERVE ADJOINING SECTION
25 & EXTENDING APPROX. 40 CHAINS
FROM THE EASTERNMOST CORNER OF
SECTION 21.

AREA Approx. 33 Ha.

LONGITUDE 135° 41' (approx.)

LATITUDE 34° 55' (approx.)

SCALE 1:10,000

0 100 200 300 400 500m.

RESERVE
BAY
TATION

31/8/1972

S 60 / 5 / 215

HUNDRED OF

Field Book N°1590 Pages 13 to 36

Date Offered	No ^s of Sec ^s	Areas of Sections	Description	Locality
25	14^A 14^C 17/14^D 14 ^E	3#15 29#5	D.L. 5154/60 C.E. 457 p. 108/9 (1810) A approx. (1760) P. irregular scattered water, grass & burnt sand and clayey soil with patches ironstone on surface	
	41	6030 6587	14 ha approx.	
	43		7.8 ha approx.	
Area of Sections		5400		
Roads		137		
Reserves				
Total		5537		

From 1 to 6 miles Southerly from Mikkira

Area Books 442 & 444 Checked 1200 R: 153^A

Section	Description	Dimensions	L	s	d
14	Fencing	43+6 lks	5	4	10

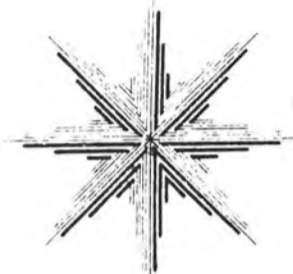
I certify that I have personally examined the above sections and have found the same to be properly pegged and trenched and correctly numbered.

red. J. W. Petrick
Survivor 3.

Surveyor 3. 9. 88

SCALE

20 10 20 40 60 80 100 120 140 160 Chains



For Opening & Closing of Beach vide Ad Pl 55 DC Lincoln
DL 1328/50

For Subⁿ of Secⁿ 114
vide herein.

For sub. " of Dec^r 114
vide page 8

Well
back by camp.

Scatter

CD W. H. H. H.
J. W. H. H.
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ID OF STEAFORD

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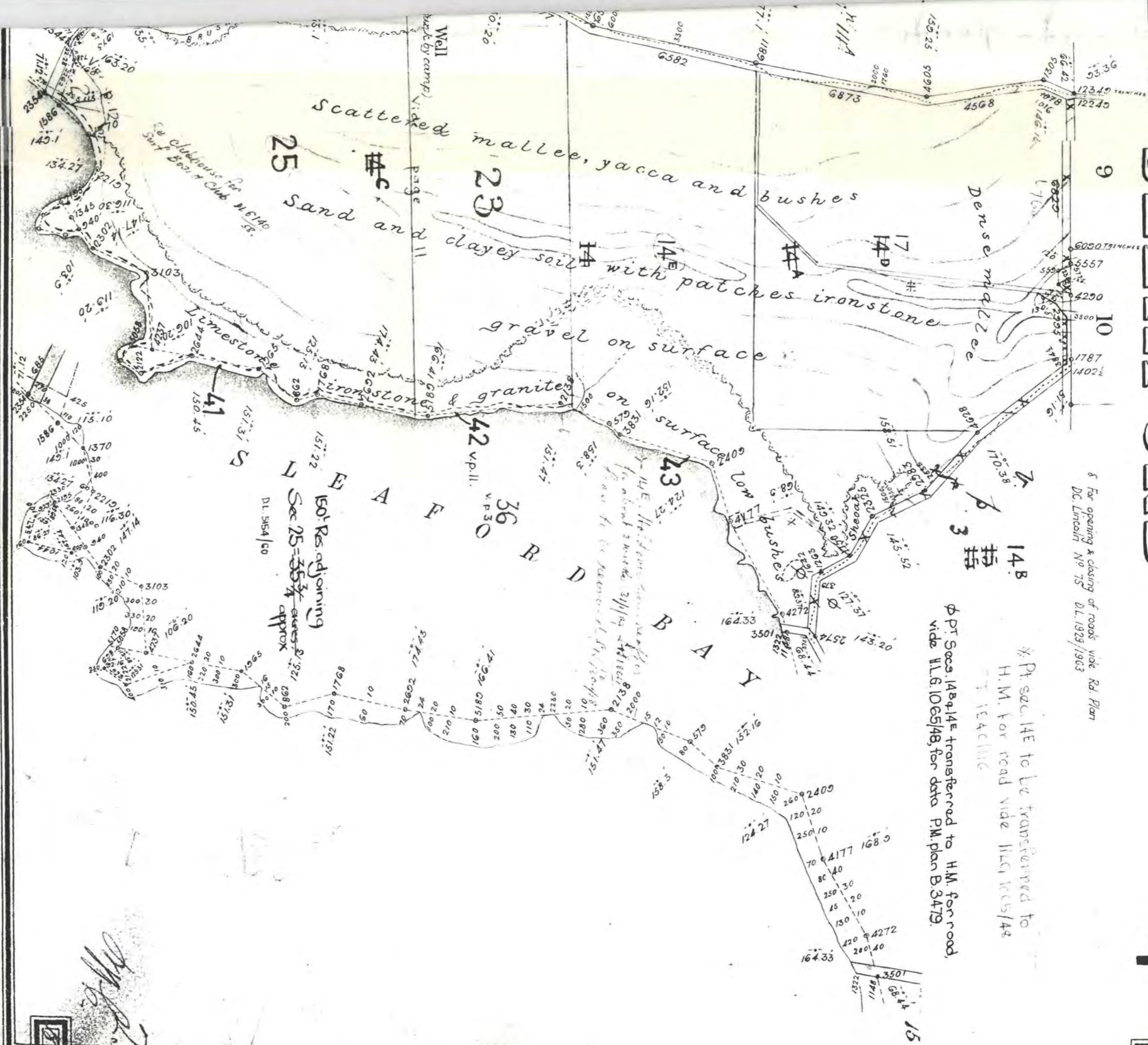
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10

For opening & closing of roads vide Rd. Plan
D.C. Lincoln No 75 D.L. 1929/1963

* Pt sec 14E to be transferred to
H.M. for road vide H.L.C. 1065/48
T 164C1116

φ PT Socs 14B, 14E transferred to H.M. for road,
vide H.L.G. 1065/48, for data P.M. plan B.3479.



Handwritten notes and signatures at the bottom left of the map, including a large signature and the date '235'.