

South Australian
Heritage Act 1978-80:

HERITAGE SURVEY
ITEM IDENTIFICATION SHEET

REGION 6 :
SOUTH EAST

Item No. : ROB:009
ITEM NAME: Cape Dombey Obelisk
Former or other names:

LOCATION:

Address: Cape Dombey,
near Robe

Allotment:

Section :

Hundred : Waterhouse

County : Robe

L.G.A. : Robe

S.H.P. Region: 6

A.M.G., Ref. Z: 54 N: 5886700
E: 888750

TYPE OF ITEM:

Description: Obelisk

Subject: 4.07

Period: 1850-1860

Date: 1855

Condition: Well Kept

Architect: Col. Arch. - William B. Hays

Builder: George Shivas

STATUS State Heritage List: Registered

National Estate : Listed

National Trust : Classified

HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

RECOMMENDATION: State

Description:

Pyramidal-shaped landmark of rendered stone with plinth at base. Painted in red, orange and white bands. Timber lintel over tapered doorway to storeroom inside.

The Harbour Master, Capt. Thomas Lipson, suggested an obelisk for the Cape. The contractor who eventually built it was the third, two earlier contractors having apparently been deterred by the difficulty of the site. It was painted in alternate red and white bands in 1862 to make it more visible. At one time rocket equipment was stored in it as a life-saving measure. An unfounded legend has it used as a place of solitary confinement for the prisoners of the Robe Gaol.

Report Text:

REFERENCES: South Australian Archives Research Notes - No. 149
K. Bermingham, "Gateway to the South East" pp. 105, 106

Verbal:

PHOTOGRAPHS:

Slide No : 21/9

Film No : 22

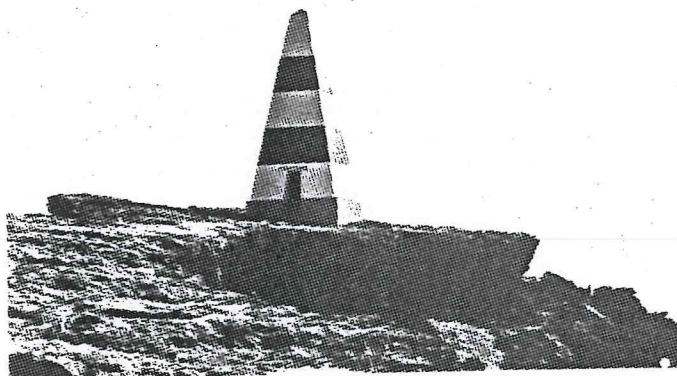
Negative No: 36

Archival No: B2014 (c.1910)

B2224 (1923)

B7472 (1938)

DANVERS ARCHITECTS Date: 1983



6823-10268
Obelisk
Robe

82/27/02

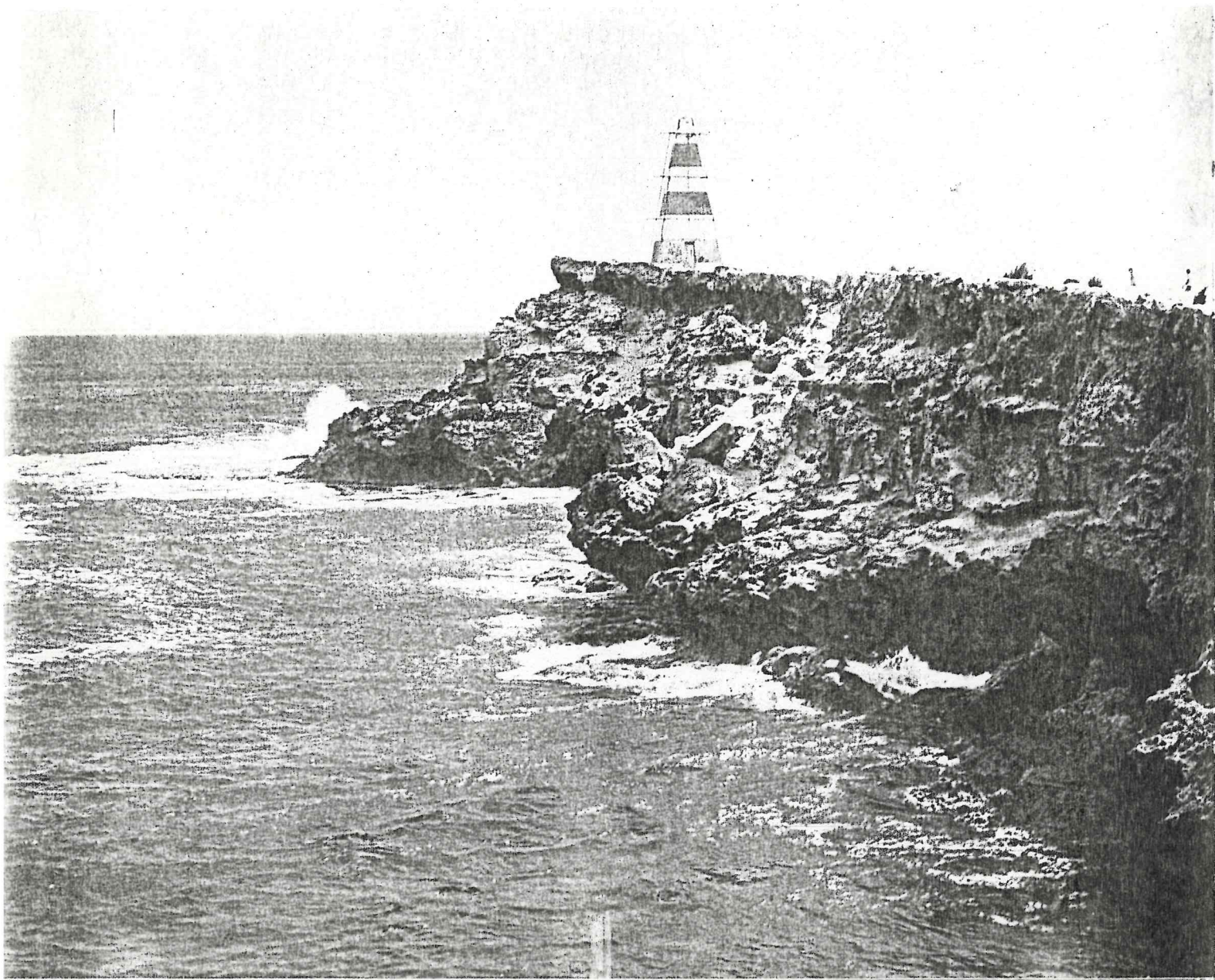
Colwell & Smith - 1973

THE OBELISK, Robe

Built of local stone carted by a team of over thirty bullocks, the obelisk at Robe, forty feet high and one hundred feet above sea level, is a well-known landmark on Cape Dombey.

It was a storehouse for rockets used by the local volunteer life saving crews who, in the early days of settlement, often provided the only means of rescue for those on board ships wrecked along the coast.

With a line attached, rockets were fired from the shore to the ship. A stout rope was then hauled aboard and survivors were brought to safety in a large basket.



ROBE - OBELISK

Research Note 149 Cape Dombey Obelisk

An obelisk was erected in 1855 at a cost of £230 to serve as a land mark for shipping. When first proposed it was spoken of as the Cape Lannes Obelisk.

Its erection was first recommended on 23 Aug. 1853 (Col. Secretary's office docket 2174 of 1853), when the harbour master (Captain Thomas Lipson) suggested that an obelisk at Cape Lannes would be more satisfactory for marking the entrance of Guichen Bay than the flag staff formerly recommended by him. This suggestion was approved and £250 was placed on the estimates for the purpose in Dec. 1853 (871 21/12/1853). Lipson recommended that the structure should be half as large again as the obelisk at Pt. Elliott (883 22/12/1853).

On 20/2/1854 the Col. Architect accepted the tender of Custance & Hinkley to do the work for £250 (871 Feb. 20 1854), but the contractors do not appear even to have made a beginning, and the Government called for fresh tenders in October 1854 and again in Feb. 1855 (Government Gazette 19/10/1854, 22/2/1855.)

A man named Sheppard obtained the contract, but threw it up soon afterwards owing to the difficulty of getting stone on the spot selected (871 15/5/1855, 6/5/1855, 25/4/1855).

The Col. Architect then suggested that the idea of a stone land mark be abandoned in favour of a 70 ft. beacon, consisting of two spars, surmounted by two plates of galvanised iron at right angles to one another (883/237 of 1855, 871 15/5/1855). A few days later, however, a Robe builder (George Shivas) tendered for the erection of an obelisk according to the original design for £230 (871 29/5/1855, 874 19/5/1855). This tender was accepted (871 8/6/1855) and the work was completed by the end of Aug. 1855 (Observer Aug. 11 1855 4e). A contemporary newspaper gave the height of the obelisk as 80 ft. and stated that it was visible in fine weather at sea for a distance of 10 miles.



FILM 44
NO 2

OBELISK

ROBE
19-2-79



FILM 44
NO 1

OBELISK FROM EAST

ROBE
19-2-79

