

EUROPEAN HERITAGE OF THE COORONG

A general survey of the sites of Early
European Heritage of the area now
comprising the Coorong National Park and
Coorong Game Reserve.

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May, 1982.

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INTRODUCTION

Although not of the same national interest as the prehistoric Aboriginal occupation of the Coorong, the European settlement of the area is of State and local importance. The Coorong area, particularly the Murray Mouth, holds great significance in the exploration of the State; the early Aboriginal-European contact along the Coorong is an especially important element of the state's history. Due to its physical characteristics, the area was never intensively settled, although some pastoral occupation and other land use took place. Perhaps of greatest state significance is the communication history of the Coorong area. A communication corridor and several related small settlements developed near the Coorong, along which there was early overlanding of stock to the growing South Australian colony, an intercolonial mail and passenger service, the Overland Telegraph and along the coastline, an extensive sea trade, with a number of ships being wrecked. The internal shipping trade with the Coorong waters was never fully developed, although early colonists held great hopes for its use. Later, as it was recognized that the Coorong offered no great potential for agriculture and pastoralism, and that the area's unique beauty and wildlife were being threatened, conservationists campaigned to have the area set aside and protected as government reserves. Accompanying this movement there was increasing recreational use and today much of the Coorong area is a high visitor usage National Park and Game Reserve.

THE REPORT

SCOPE OF THE SURVEY

The survey period for this study was only three months and as such, the report has obvious limitations. An effort was made to gain information both from the available reference sources and conduct field surveys, but neither of these fact finding procedures were comprehensive. Fortunately, several regional surveys compiled for the Department of the Environment and Planning, provided general base information identifying some of the major sites of significance of European occupation along the Coorong. Of additional use were local, district and town histories, notably Meningie and Kingston, and State Archival and Department of Lands records. Another major source of information for the Coorong was personal communication with local people and other interested individuals and organizations in Adelaide. For their assistance I am extremely grateful.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The study undertakes to compile a thematic history of European occupation, within the boundaries of the Coorong National Park and the Coorong Game Reserve, discussing the major phases of exploration, settlement, communication and landuse and placing the study area within a broader regional context. Within this framework, there is a general survey of sites, identifying those of local interest and state significance. Using this scheme the study recommends general and specific conservation measures and procedures where appropriate. Due to the inaccessibility of some sites and time constraints, the examination of sites during this study was not thorough. For this reason the report recommends further study and field surveys where necessary.

APPLICATIONS OF THE REPORT

The main purpose of this report is to provide background historical information on the European occupation of the Coorong National Park and the Coorong Game Reserve to be included in a plan of management. In a separate report, the major sites of historical significance, both local and State are identified and on this basis, general and specific procedures of management to conserve historic sites and relics are recommended. In addition, where appropriate, those sites worthy of nomination for inclusion in the Register of State Heritage Items or protection under any other appropriate legislation are identified.

An additional application for this report is providing background information suitable for future interpretative use by National Parks and Wildlife Service staff. For this reason suitable illustrative national and further sources are included in the report. The background section of the report may also be of use to individuals and organizations in compiling local histories. To assist these people, thorough referencing and possible further contacts are provided.

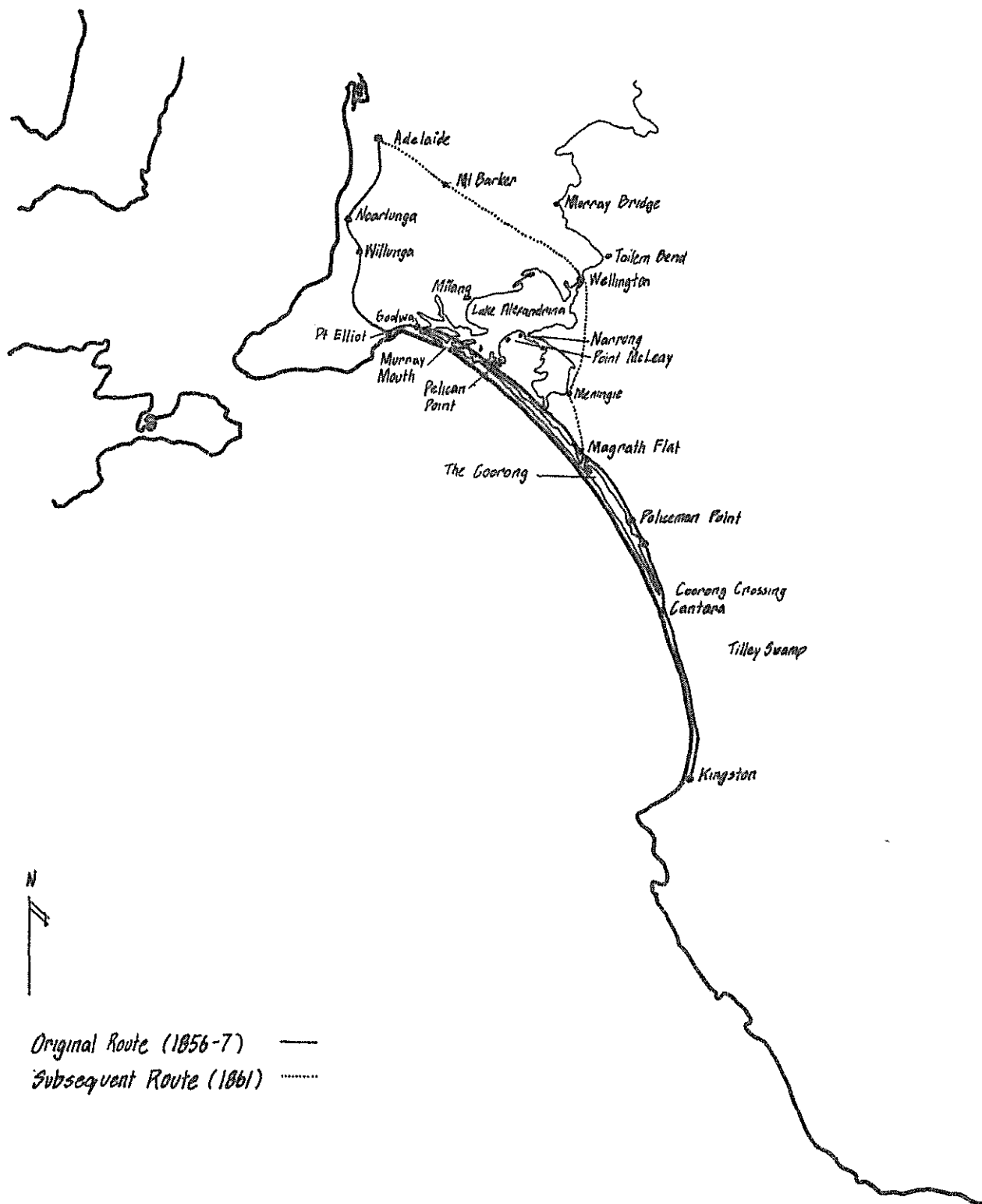


Fig 7: Approximate Route of the Adelaide to Melbourne Overland Telegraph

EUROPEAN EXPLORATION AND EARLY ACCOUNTS OF THE COORONG

EARLY SEA CONTACT WITH THE COORONG AND THE MURRAY MOUTH

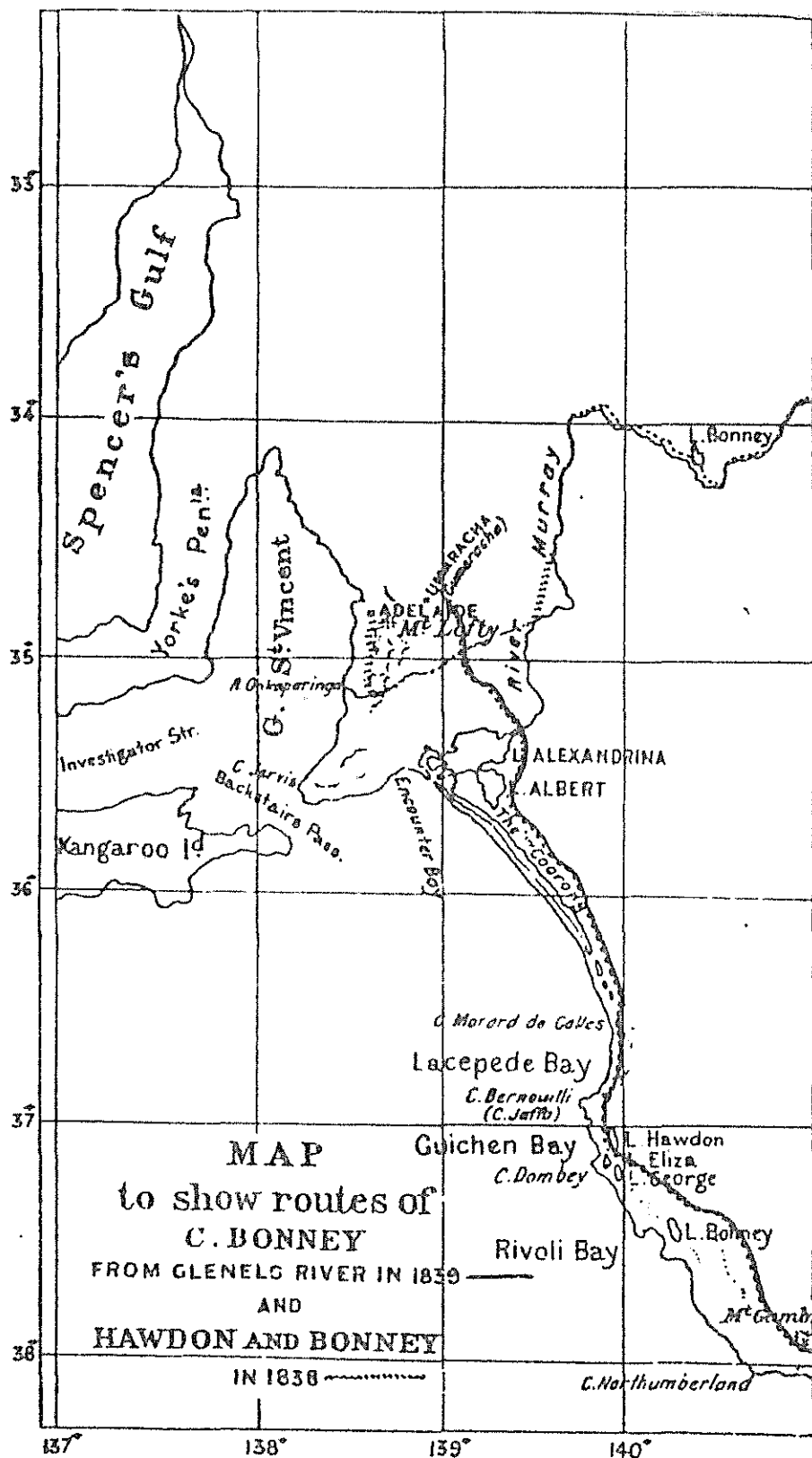
The earliest European contact with the Coorong was made from the seaward side at the turn of the nineteenth century. The French Captain of the Le Geographe Nicolas Baudin in April, 1802, described his sighting of the Coorong sand dunes,

"All the coast along which we have run since yesterday is merely composed of sand dunes inspiring melancholy and regret ... the sea breaks all along the coast with extraordinary violence...." (Cooper, 1952).

Baudin subsequently met the exploratory party of Matthew Flinders at Encounter Bay, however, the Coorong channel was not sighted by Flinders, and does not appear on his early maps of the South Australian coastline. Nor did Captain Sturt later in 1829-1830, reach the Coorong waters when he navigated the River Murray and explored the lakes and river's mouth. Even in 1836, a map of the colony, ordered by the House of Commons shows the coastline but not the Coorong Lagoons.

Although the extent of visitation is not known, from the 1820s Kangaroo Island whalers and sealers had contact with the Aboriginal tribes of the Coorong. Sturt attributed the unfortunate death of Captain Collett Barker in 1831, to the marauding expeditions by these white sealers to the mainland and their illtreatment of the aborigines notably kidnapping women of the local tribes. Barker disappeared without trace and his body was presumed to have floated out to sea, apparently after he was speared by Aborigines on the Younghusband Peninsula near the Murray Mouth.

A captain of H.M. 39th Regiment, Barker had been instructed by Governor Darling of New South Wales, to search for another river opening from Lake Alexandrina to the sea, west of the Murray Mouth. Swimming the mouth from the point of Pullen Spit with a compass on his head, he climbed the high peninsula dunes to take his bearings. In doing so, Barker became the first European to enter the Coorong Waters. According



Adapted from large map supplied by the late Mr. C.H. Harris of the Survey Dept.

Fig. 2 Charles Bonney's Overland Route 1839.
 Source: Urban and Environmental Planning Group (1981)
 Cultural Heritage of the South East Coast
 S.E. Coast Protection Study, Working Paper No. 6.

to J.G. Hastings, who gives a full account of Barker's disappearance, the high sand dune where the explorer was last seen by his companions, has since drifted into the waters of the river mouth. The northern-most point of the Younghusband Peninsula however, is still known as Barkers Knoll and this location stands as a sad memorial to his death on 30th April, 1831. A monument to Captain Collett Barker's exploratory endeavours was erected in 1903 at Mount Barker, which town also bears his name; there is another monument to Barker on Hindmarsh Island.

EXPLORATION AFTER 1836

Following the proclamation of the colony in 1836, more intensive exploration of the Coorong by Captain Sturt and others soon ensued. The early colonists undertook to locate travelling routes, both on land and water, as well as finding locations of freshwater and land unstable for settlements, agriculture and pastoralism.

The discovery of the Coorong waters proper, has been attributed to T. Brewes Stangways and Y.B. Hutchinson, who in December, 1837 were members of an official government survey party, searching for another outlet to the River Murray. Having explored the lakes area in a whaleboat, they were the first to report the Coorong as a salt water arm of Lake Alexandrina. It was during this government survey that two prominent colonists, John Blenkinsop and Sir John Jeffcott drowned near the Murray Mouth. There is however, some doubt that Strangway's party was the first to travel the Coorong waters, for on returning to Encounter Bay, they were approached by two men, whose identity is now lost, who claimed to have passed through the Coorong in a whaleboat on their six week journey along the coast from Cape Otway. Hutchinson gives the following account of their journey,

"The whole coast is generally speaking, of the most barren nature and they crossed only two streams as deep as their knees until they came to an inlet which they and the boat entered, consequently there is no other entrance to the lake from the sea." (Campbell, R. p.163).

Captain Gill, who was shipwrecked on the Ninety Mile Beach in the brig Fanny in June 1838, provided the newly found colony with one of the earliest descriptions of the Coorong,

"In surveying the coast around us I was much surprised to observe an expanse of water inland. A series of lagoons extend east and west as far as the eye could reach, separated from the sea by a sort of peninsula, about three quarters of a mile in width. The lagoons are from two to four miles in breadth and their average depth, as far as I have been able to observe, may be about six feet". (South Australian Gazette and Colonial Register, 8 September, 1838, p.5).

After travelling westward down the Coorong, Gill successfully negotiated the Murray Mouth and on his return to Adelaide he reported the difficulties of navigating this channel. The first official soundings of the Murray Mouth were subsequently carried out in 1840 by Lieutenant W.J.S. Pullen, in the vessel ship Waterwitch.

PIONEERING OVERLAND ROUTES

The first overland route along the Coorong was pioneered by Charles Bonney in March, 1839 when conveying stock from the eastern colonies to Adelaide. Bonney's experiences are outlined on page 29, as reported in the South Australian Gazette and Colonial Register, 8 May, 1839. The early overlanding explorations both indicated that there was suitable land for agriculture in the South East and also forged a route, which was traversed by subsequent overlanders. Watts Newland, an early occupant of Encounter Bay, heading for the South East with James Brown to take up a sheep run, was, in 1846, the first to cross the Murray Mouth with stock. Having ferried the sheep over in a whaleboat, he reached the peninsula and in his reminiscences, gives the following account of the Coorong,

"We found the sandhills very heavy, which necessitated taking the boat to the Coorong to carry the provisions. Brown's sheep were on one side of the Coorong and mine...were on the other. There was luxurious feed for stock on both sides, as well as plenty of good water and we found an abundance of wild fowl. There were swarms of ducks on the water and plenty of fat turkey in the sandhills. We met with no difficulties till we got to the "narrows" about opposite McGrath's Flat; but the boat acted as tender till we reached Salt Creek. There the waters became so shallow that we had to send her back..."

(Newland, W. undated p.44-46)

GOVERNMENT SURVEYS FROM 1844

In 1844, there was an official survey of the South East. From this expedition, which included Governor Grey, George Frencg Angus, Charles Bonney and Thomas Burr, there came several descriptions of the Coorong area. The party's base camp was at Rivoli Bay where they stayed for about a month. There is a record of the party's exploration of the region in the South Australian Times, June, 1844. On an earlier survey expedition in 1842, Grey had visited the Coorong and accompanied by the Deputy Surveyor General, Thomas Burr, had made sightings of the Toolache Wallaby. In 1844, the naturalist and artist G.F. Angas, also showed an interest in the brush kangaroo. Angas gives the following description of the abundant wildlife near the Narrows:

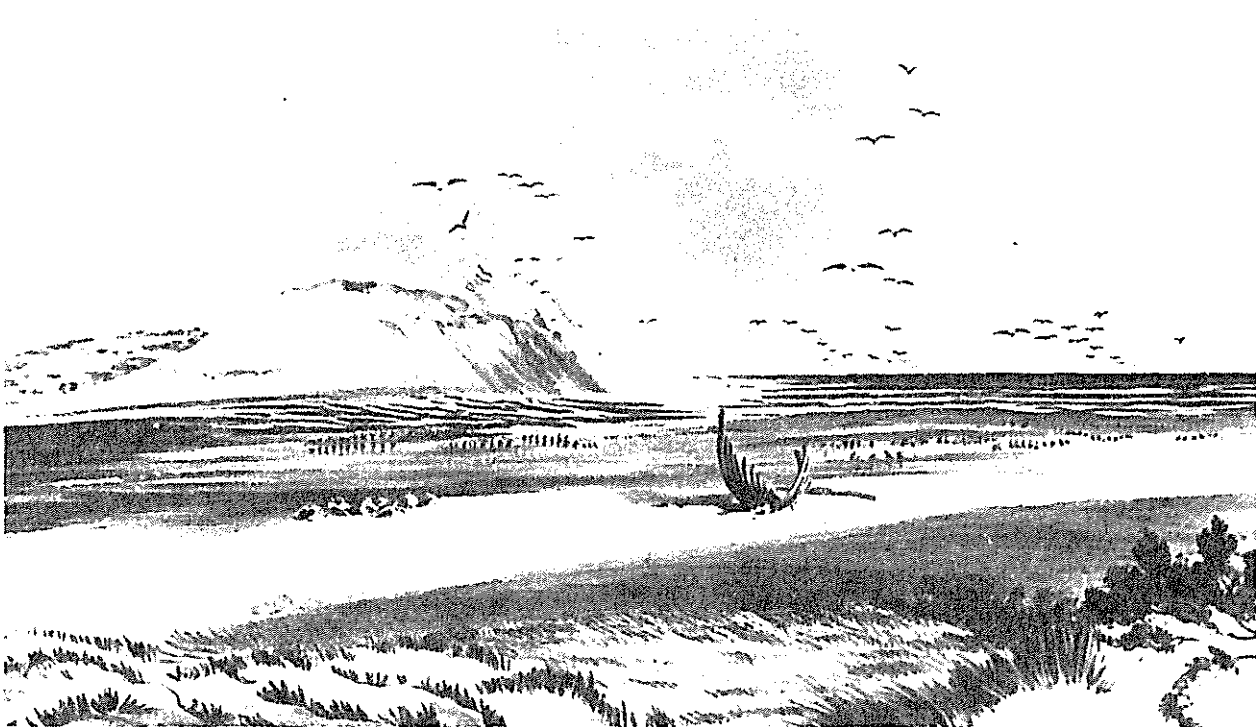
"To-day I struck off to the right....to visit that part of the Coorong called "The Narrows", where the water is less than half a mile in breadth: two promontories jutting out towards each other from opposite sides. From the extremity of one of these high promontories an extensive view of the Coorong, with its numerous islands and its indented shores, is obtained. Myriads of ducks, swans, pelicans, and every variety of sea-fowl, darkened the water beneath us; and, whilst sketching this island-studded scene, we were surrounded by innumerable flies, of a brown colour, which proved very annoying. Humming -bees wandered over the odoriferous plants in the scrub, and bustards, ground-parroquets, bronze-winged pigeons, robins and a variety of birds of brilliant plumage, constantly appeared, as we re-crossed the country towards the appointed camping-place for the night. We waded our horses half-way across the Coorong; but a strong tide and a deep channel flowing in the centre of the stream, between "the narrows", stopped our further progress. The bed of the Coorong is here a soft white clay and many lagoons of salt water, which occur along its margin, are connected with it at high tide and are surrounded by tea-trees, which impart a gloomy character to the scenery. The limestone reefs which run out into the water are so fretted away by the action of the sea-air, that they resemble castles and ruins covered with rich tracery. The entire country, from the water edge, is covered with surface limestone, in small rugged pieces amongst which grow the dwarf eucalyptus and the xantharaea. The natives here construct elevated seats or playforms in bushy teak oak trees, for the purpose of watching and spearing the emu and kangaroo as they pass towards the water to drink." (Angas, G.F., 1847)



George French Angas
(1847)

South Australia Illustrated
London

View of the Coorong
Plate 43



George French Angas
(1847)

South Australia Illustrated
London

View of the Murray Mouth
Plate 9

As well as his comparatively comprehensive written descriptions of the Coorong Angas also recorded the landscape, native plant and animal life and Aboriginal occupants by means of detailed paintings.

Angas described the sandhills of the Coorong as being relatively barren and it is from his and other accounts that one can ascertain that the Younghusband Peninsula, although more abundant in wildlife with some native grasses, was not heavily wooded at the time of early European contact. A map of 1844 dating possibly, from Grey's expedition, shows the peninsula as comprising "high barren sand dunes totally devoid of timber or any other scrub that will burn." By comparison, the nearby Narrung Peninsula is described as grassy country wooded with casuarina.

After 1844, there was rapid influx in population to South Australia due to the copper boom. As a result, the colonists looked to new areas beyond the Adelaide coastal plains and hills and the pressure of settlement proceeded towards the South East. Government surveys were soon carried out, to map and document the landscape so that agricultural land could be taken up by settlers, first under Occupation Licence and after 1857, under lease and freehold. The early licences generally comprised large 'runs' and in the 1850s, especially on the mainland side of the Coorong, some closer settlement took place. It is during this time that, in 1855, Salt Creek settlement was officially surveyed by Richard J. Loveday. The northern-most hundred of the Coorong, the Hundred of Baker, which comprised the Narrung Peninsula and was the most desirable pastoral land, was surveyed into sections and gazetted in 1860. The additional Hundreds of the Coorong, Bonney, Glyde, Santo, Neville and Duffield were gazetted in 1864. The Younghusband Peninsula was not surveyed into 80 acre Sections but was designated under larger leasehold blocks.

The official survey of coastal ports and communication routes along the Coorong also took place after 1840. The Adelaide to Mount Gambier mail route was surveyed by Alexander Tolmer in 1846-1847 and later, in 1855-1856, Charles Todd selected the route for the Overland Telegraph. In 1862 the Surveyor General, G.W. Goyder led a survey party to the South East, accompanied by W. Milne, the Commissioner of Public Works and W. Hanson, Engineer and Architect, to assess drainage problems of the South East. This survey led to a drain being cut into Salt Creek. Richard J. Loveday, in 1866, took official soundings of the Coorong waters to facilitate boat travel down that channel.

REFERENCES AND FURTHER RESOURCES

Information on early exploration and surveying along the Coorong was obtained from secondary sources including local histories, the State Library and from several primary sources in the South Australian Archives.

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Illustrative Material

Early explorers' maps, notes and diaries are held in the South Australian Archives and Department of Lands. Paintings of early exploratory journeys and of explorers are possibly located in the National Gallery of South Australia.

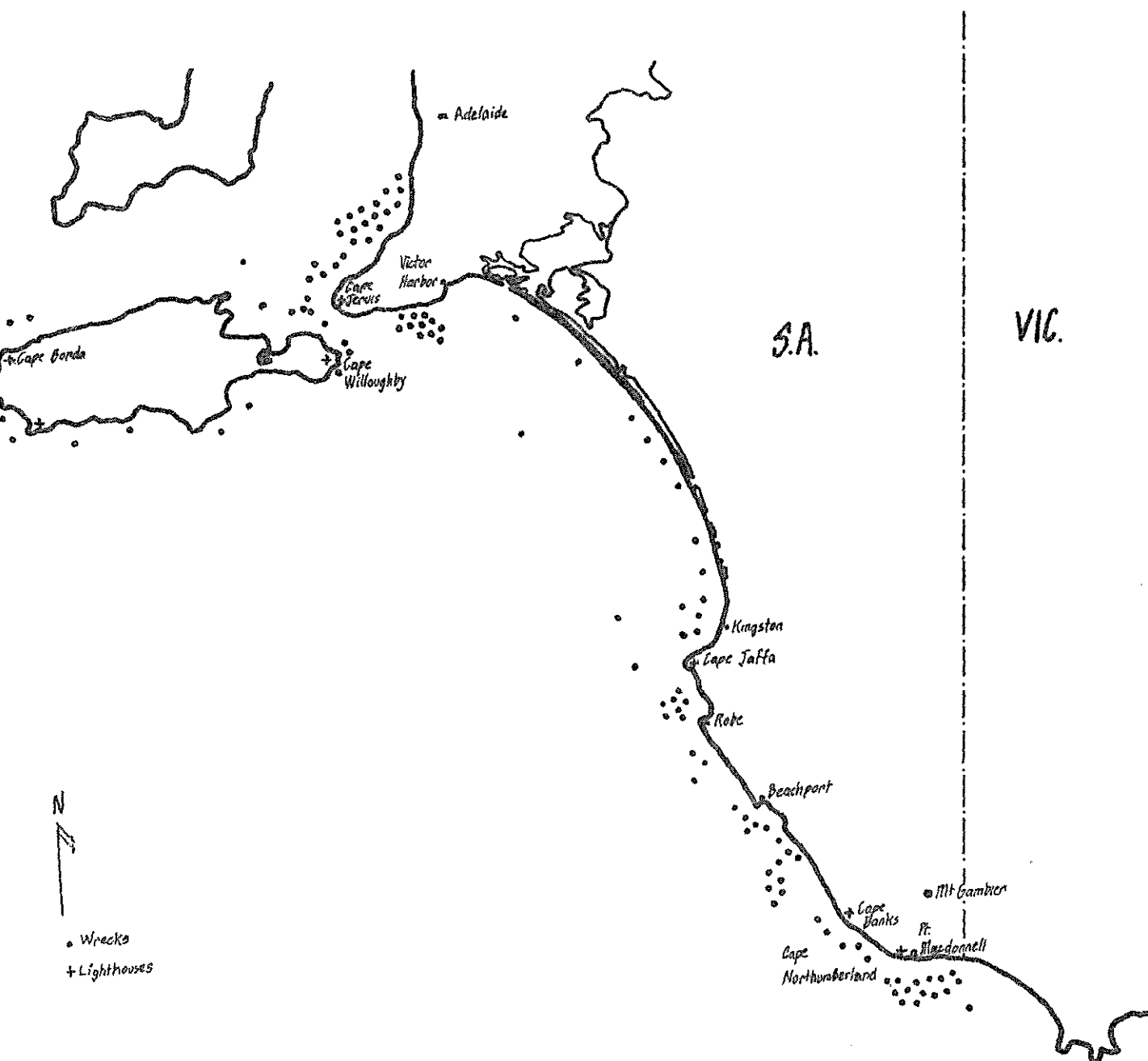


Fig 4 Approximate Location of Shipwrecks on the South Coast of South Australia
 Source: J.K. Loney (1975) Wrecks on the South Coast of South Australia

COASTAL SHIPPING AND SHIPWRECKS ALONG THE COORONG BEACH

In the mid nineteenth century when overland routes were poorly developed, shipping was an important means of communication along the South East Coast of South Australia. Passengers, cargo and mail were transported by sailing ships plying the waters between Adelaide and Port Phillip Bay and calling at local ports such as Victor Harbor, Goolwa, Kingston and Robe on the way. The most hazardous stretch of the journey comprised Bass Strait, the eastern most point of Kangaroo Island (Cape Willoughby) and the hidden reefs off Cape Jaffa through to Cape Northumberland. The many lighthouses bear witness to the danger of this stretch of coastline.

Although the Coorong Ninety Mile Beach offered no menace in the form of hidden reefs, "With the frequent west, south-west and north-west gales that lash the area, it was a terrible lee shore that was frequently impossible to struggle away from or avoid" (Parsons, 1981 p.18). Locally known as "The Paddock", this stretch provided difficulty mainly for those seafarers unfamiliar with these waters. Even given improved navigational aids, several vessels have been stranded along the Ninety Mile Beach in recent years. Many of the ships either stranded or wrecked along the Coorong are listed (Appendix III) and several are detailed below.

FANNY WRECKED 22ND JUNE, 1838

The brig Fanny having left Van Diemen's Land on 9th June, 1838, encountered a fierce gale and heavy squalls along the Coorong stretch, latitude $36^{\circ} 5'$ and longitude $139^{\circ} 12'$, (about opposite Salt Creek) such that all attempts to sail were ineffectual.

"When the soundings decreased to three and a half fathoms, the lead was laid in, a heavy breaker hove her into the trough of the sea and she struck the ground forward. The following sea made a passage over her, fore and aft, and we were up to our necks in water. I ascended the forerigging and now for the first time, saw land, which appeared a low dark ridge". (Captain Gill, 1838)

Gill's siting and description of the Coorong and encounter with members of the Ngarringjeri was one of the first to be reported to the emerging colony. However, his favourable account of relations with the Coorong Aborigines who helped him reach safety, was shortly to become supplanted by the fate of the survivors of the Maria wreck.

Gill gives his account,

"In the forenoon of the day after the wreck, we were visited by nine natives. They brought us a firestick, showed us their water holes, and were every way well disposed; and during our stay amongst them, which was about seven weeks, they at all times evinced the greatest friendship". (Gill, 1838)

Gill left several of his party, including Mr. and Mrs. Longbottom and their child, near the site of the wreck and set off for Encounter Bay, "our little boat being rather leaky and our passage unknown" Gill, 1838)

At the sea entrance to Lake Alexandrina he was joined by Captain Tyndal, Master of the Elizabeth, which had been wrecked in Rivoli Bay and in a small boat and with great difficulty, the newly expanded party crossed the Murray Mouth. Having obtained a whaleboat from Encounter Bay, Gill then returned to collect the party waiting along the Coorong.

MARIA WRECKED JUNE-JULY, 1840

Perhaps the most well known shipwreck incident along the Coorong and one which had a profound effect on race relations is that of the Maria and the twenty six (possibly twenty five) survivors who were killed (while journeying to Encounter Bay) by members of the Milmenjura clan of the Tanganekeld tribe. Many accounts and explanations of the unfortunate events have appeared in print and for many years the novel, Paving the Way, by Sir Henry Simpson Newland, (1893) was taken as the authoritative account. A recent publication by Graham Jenkin (1979) Conquest of the Ngarrindjeri, endeavours to give a more balanced reconstruction of the events, based on both European accounts and of the Ngarrindjeri tradition, as handed down to Milerum (Clarence Long), one of the last fully initiated Aboriginal men and told to N.B. Tindale in 1934. Jenkin writes,

"Briefly the facts can be established as follows:

The Maria left Adelaide bound for Hobart on 7th June, 1840, with a crew of ten, (including Captain Smith) and with sixteen passengers. On or about 28th June, she was wrecked on the coast at Lacepede Bay,

but the crew and passengers were able to get ashore, and were also able to salvage a large proportion of their personal portable possessions. Some Milmenrura people (whose lakalinyeri owned that part of the country) went to their assistance and commenced guiding them along the Coorong towards Encounter Bay, procuring food and water for them just as they had done for the survivors of the Fanny two years before."

For an unknown reason, the party was divided before the crossing place opposite Dodd's Landing was reached. But it was at this place that some violent altercation arose which resulted in the slaying of the Maria survivors. Various explanations have been put forward and according to Aboriginal tradition the provocation was that, in thick scrub just south of Palgarang (opposite Dodd's Landing) the sailors began to interfere with some of the Milmenrura women. The Europeans were killed in retribution for this violation, of which there was a history from Kangaroo Island whalers and sealers. An overlander, George McGrath, from whom McGrath Flat takes its name, was also said to have been killed by a Ngarrindjeri man, Wira Maldira, in June 1843 in retribution for raping an Aboriginal woman (Jenkin, 1979 p. 64).

The European reaction when Captain Pullen, the investigating officer, returned to Adelaide on 11 August 1840 with the report of the slaying of the Maria survivors, was understandably one of horror, this being the largest number of Europeans killed by Aborigines in South Australia. A party led by Captain O'Halloran and including Inspector Tolmer and Captain Pullen was instructed by Governor Gawler to locate the guilty parties, to number not more than three, and to execute them before the assembled Milmenrura people as an example. On 24th September, 1840, they picked out two men, Mongarawata and Pilgarie, who were said to look the most guilty and they were executed by hanging, near to the grave of some of the Maria victims. In addition, two Milmenrura died, having been shot.

Much debate ensued as to the legal and moral validity of Gawler's procedure, since the individuals Mungarawata and Pilgarie did not receive a formal trial under the requirements of British Law. Although Gawler's solution perhaps saved the Milmenrura from more severe measures of public retribution, his departure from British Law was a contributing factor to Gawler's censure and him being subsequently recalled to England. Despite

making some advances in highlighting the inequity of the British legal system as regards Aboriginal people, Jenkin outlines its most profound ramification,

"The Maria incident can thus be seen as a significant turning point for the Milmenrura, for it drove home to them, most dramatically, the fact that they were powerless in the face of European arms and the eventual invasion of their country was inevitable."

There is a plaque located at Kingston, a memorial to the death of the Maria shipwreck survivors who landed in nearby Lacepede Bay. The location, Palgarong, opposite Dodd's Landing is also of historic significance as a site of early European-Aboriginal contact. It is both the burial site of the unfortunate survivors of the Maria shipwreck and also the handing site of those Milmenrura accused of their murder.

TEAK WRECK

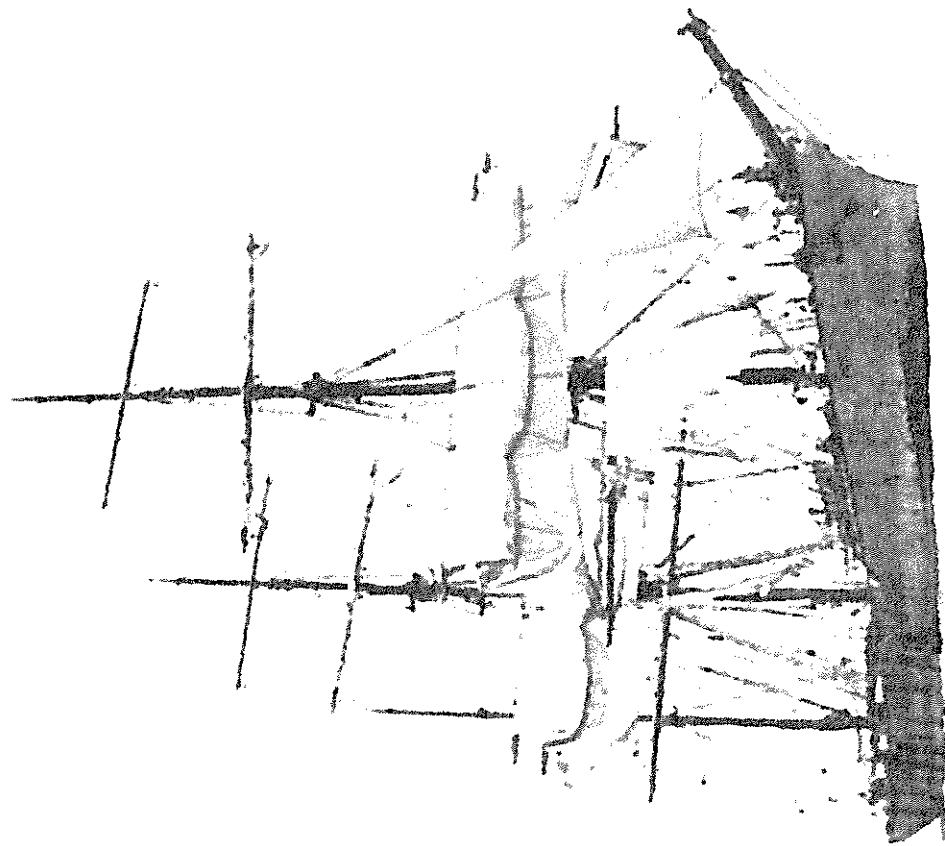
Of considerable interest and surrounded by equal mystery is the Teak Wreck, the scant remains of which are located in the dunes of the peninsula opposite Sams Island and which are occasionally uncovered by the sea. Fastenings from this wreck, located and identified in the 1950s, are said to be over 400 years old and there is a possible association with the Spanish galleons reputed to be wrecked in south-west Victoria.

MOSAMBIQUE WRECKED 19TH AUGUST, 1854

According to Parsons (1981), the barque Mosambique:

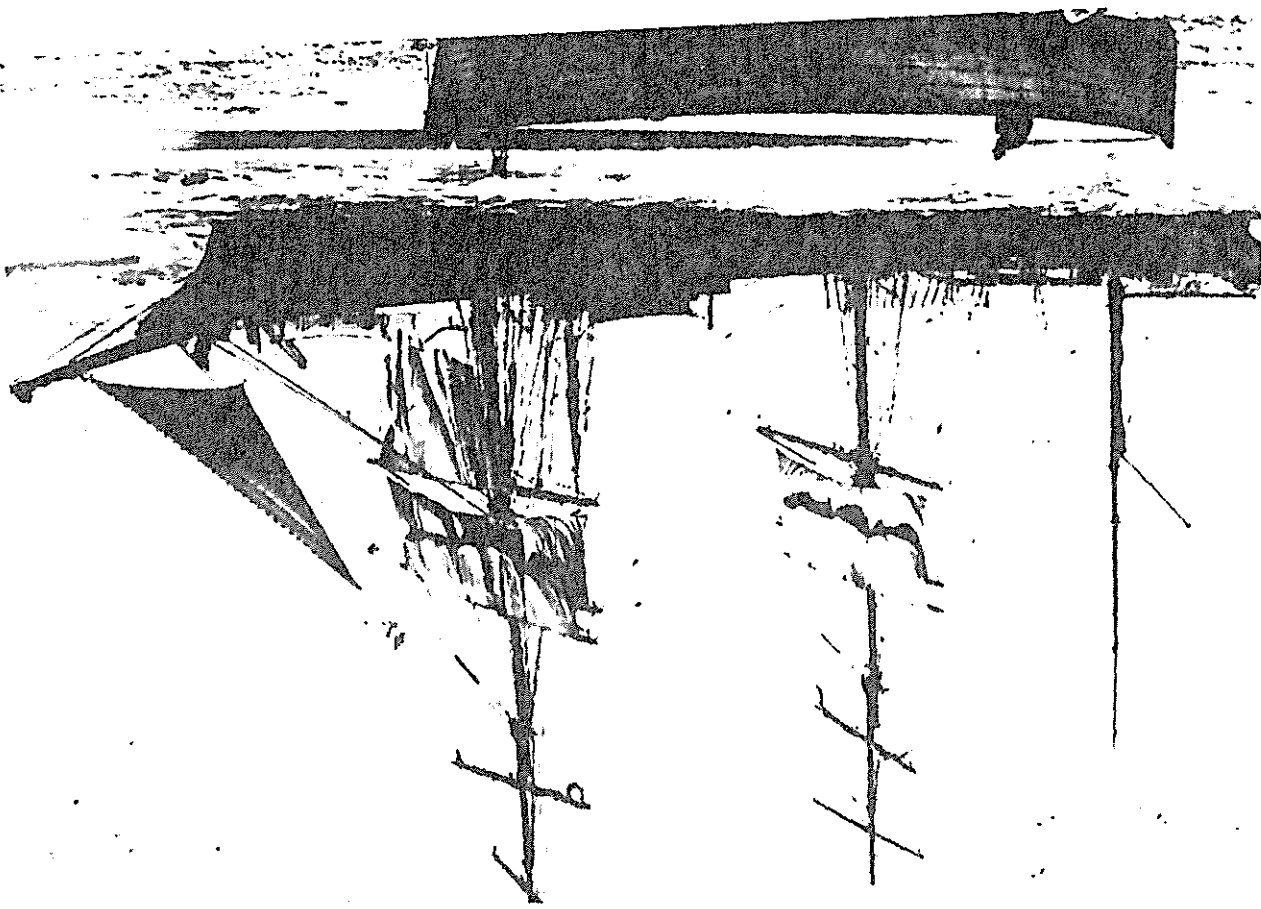
"Wasn't really wrecked on the Coorong in August, 1854; she simply gave up the struggle (p.13)."

This vessel, in dilapidated condition, having already sailed from Ireland to Perth, suffered further damage during bad weather on the last leg of her journey from King George Sound to Adelaide. Carrying forty five passengers and a cargo of coal for the mail steamers of the Australian Steam Navigation Co., the leaking ship was intentionally run aground by Captain Corcoran, some distance south of the Murray Mouth; the exact location is unknown. Suffering from exposure and exhaustion, all on



"MARGIT"

The *Margit* stranded on the Coorong Beach 1911



board landed safely. There were subsequently taken by boat to Goolwa by William Low, a local resident. An elderly passenger later died as a result of the hardship he experienced. The figurehead of the "Mosanbique" is still on view at Goolwa.

MARGIT WRECKED 10TH NOVEMBER, 1911

The three masted barque Margit was preparing to set sail from Victor Harbor for the United Kingdom when her captain disappeared. Having set off to secure a pilot, he was not seen again, the only trace being his upturned boat recovered on the beach. The ship's departure was thus delayed until a new captain was appointed.

The voyage seemed ill fated from the first, as the same day the Margit set sail, she ran aground on the Coorong beach, 34 miles (54 km) north of Kingston.

"When she struck, heaby seas swept over her forcing the crew into one lifeboat. She lay in the surf with sails flapping noisily in the wind, while the crew hung astern of her throughout the night. At dawn they returned on board, but lost the ship's papers when heavy seas crushed the boat (Parsons, 1981, p. 43)."

Using rocket equipment, the crew landed safely. Later, help comprising rocket crew and lifeboat arrived from Kingston, the alarm having been sounded by nearby Cantara Station.

Salvage rights were sold for 211 pounds, the purchasing company confident that the barque could be refloated. Two men working the pumps lost their lives when overcome by poisonous fumes emitted from the cargo of rotting wheat. Joseph Gall, of Cantara, also nearly lost his life while attempting to save these men. Efforts to refloat the Margit were subsequently abandoned, but she was stripped of all valuable fittings. For many years the Margit figurehead hung on a tree at Cantara Station; it is now located at the Nautical Museum, Port Adelaide. Today, only a small portion of the hull remains visible at low tide, 38 mimles (61 km) north of Kingston. Access is gained at the Wreck Crossing. The remains of the Margit mast are a landmark for fishermen seeking big mulloway.

DORA BASSETT

In the early 1920s, a 25-40 foot sailing boat went aground on the Coorong beach while sailing from Beachport to Goolwa, her home port. How this beaching occurred or an accurate date for the incident is not recorded.

A noteworthy recovery operation was soon undertaken by the owner Mr. A.P. Bowman, who was spurred on by the prospect of saving his valuable boat and collection a 100 wager on the boat's recovery. An ingenious salvage operation soon took place. An obsolete shipway trolley and tracks from Robe provided the vehicle and 25 horses the power, to transport the boat over the sandhills to the Coorong waters along which the Dora Bassett sailed back to Goolwa. The remains of the tracks and trolley wheels can be seen at a location on the Younghusband Peninsula opposite Woods Well. This site is known as The Wheels.

MOREE WRECKED 8TH JULY, 1961

Despite improved navigational aids, a sizeable tug, the Moree, 56 feet in length was stranded on the Ninety Mile Beach due to an error in navigation. Hampered by bad weather and misjudging its location from the siting of a spotlight on Younghusband Peninsula, it foundered on the beach in heavy seas, eleven miles south-east of the Murray Mouth.

Intensive salvage operations soon ensued to rescue the relatively newly built 55,000 tons Whyalla tug. Under the charge of Captain Taylor, ambitious attempts to reload the Moree using the tug Tusker to tow the boat, a crayfish cutter The White Pointer to find safe water, and a light aircraft to secure a line between the vessels, were abandoned when rough seas and high winds rolled the Moree on her side. A square hole was subsequently cut in the hull and the engines, propeller and valuables stripped and taken by four-wheel drive and barge to Goolwa. The hull itself was offered for sale, as she lay, by her owners Stannard Bros. The salvage solution employed was similar to that of the Dora Bassett. On two pairs of wheels welded to the hull, the Moree was hauled along the beach to the Murray Mouth. The Moree is still in operation from Whyalla.

MISTRELL WRECKED LATE MARCH, 1977

The voyage of the Mistrell, a 36' double ended cutter from Sydney to Port Adelaide, her new home port, was fraught with difficulty and mishap. Engine problems were experienced out of Apollo Bay, making repairs necessary at that port. In addition, heaving 20km off Cape Jaffa, the vessel was hit by several capricious waves which washed two of the crew of four overboard. In such choppy waters, there was difficulty in throwing lines, and the youngest of those overboard was drowned. Only suffering minor damage from the sea's lashings near Cape Jaffa, the Mistrell pressed on in difficult weather conditions, which, combined with navigation miscalculations, saw the vessel stranded on the Coorong beach several kilometres north west of Salt Creek. Having reached shore about midnight, the exhausted crew spent a day in the dunes before being rescued by the National Parks and Wildlife Service Ranger, Hermann Bakker. Much to the disappointment of the Mistrell's owner, Eric Mack, the beautifully fitted vessel built of jarrah, soon filled with sand and salvage attempts proved fruitless. Subsequently, valuable fittings were removed and the vessel cut up.

FLOTSAM AND JETSAM

As with any coastline, the sea washes up a great variety of objects. The house built by Hack at Parnka is said to comprise many materials found on the Coorong Beach. For many years, Mrs Reed, a resident of Policeman Point was well known for her carbed and adorned drift wood,

A grave in the dunes opposite Woods Well and shown on old hundred maps, is possibly that of a sailor washed up on the beach. A life buoy found in 1961 by those working on the salvage operation of the Moree was one of the few traces ever located of the tuna trawler Lincoln Star which was lost with a crew of five. An ominous piece of jetsam found on the Coorong Beach at 32 mile in 1941, by Mr. Joe Cameron, an official coast watcher in the Second World War, was a live Japanese mine.

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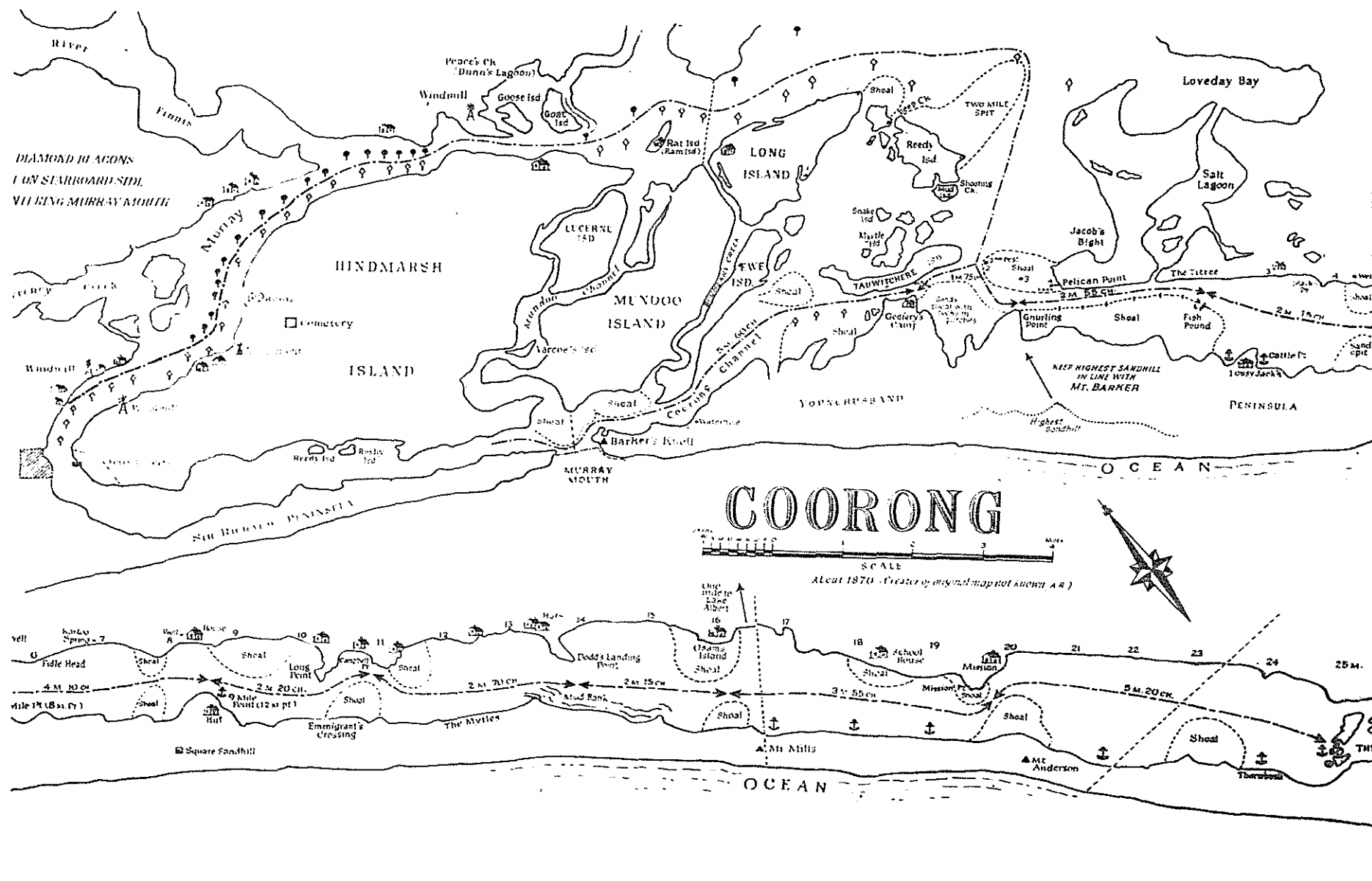
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The Goolwa Museum

The National Trust of South Australia

Marine Archaeology Section, Heritage and Conservation Branch

Department of Environment and Planning



SHIPPING IN THE COORONG WATERS

During the 1850s - 1870s, the shipping trade through the River Murray and Lakes area was extensive. Shipping installations and routes developed to facilitate the movement of export goods, such as wool and wheat from the emerging agricultural and pastoral lands, to the larger coastal ports. In turn, this regular boat trade carried passengers and supplies to newly developing towns and properties.

The Coorong waters at this time became an extension of the shipping network and in the 1870s, Captain Kruse sailed once a week in the schooner Punkari to Salt Creek. His cargo included chaff for the horses working on the road from Salt Creek to Naracoorte (Faull, 1981, p. 89). Other supplies bound for Salt Creek may have comprised such items as building and fencing materials, tobacco, flour and liquor. The Register, 2nd April, 1872 p. 4 gives details of several vessels arriving coastwise (most probably Victor Harbor) from Salt Creek.

Sailor Prince Ketch 40 tons, A. Reed, Master, from Salt Creek carrying cargo, 29 bales wool, G.P. Hodge; 26 bags wheat, Rawlings and Cave; 12 bags salt, Order.

Edith Alice Ketch 40 tons C. Heath, Master, from Salt Creek. Cargo, 106 bags salt, R. Place; $3\frac{1}{2}$ dozen kangaroo skins, W.G. Luxmore; 8 bags wheat, Rawlings and Cave.

Of note is salt listed as cargo; the salt scraping industry on the Coorong is described on page 55. It is said also that there was once a jetty at Woods Well where wool was loaded (Pers. Comm. N. Fagg). The last cargo of wool collected from McGrath Flat by steamer was by Charles Goode of Goolwa, at the turn of the century (Mincham, 1966).

With the completion of the railway line in the South East in 1887 and improved roads, the boat trade in the River Murray and surrounding area dramatically declined.

THE COORONG AS A NAVIGABLE CHANNEL

Despite the flourishing Coorong shipping trade in the 1870s and a long standing fishing industry, both seasonal and yearly variation are experienced in the ease of navigation of the Coorong. Gill in 1838,

gives the assessment that the Coorong is navigable only for boats, to be distinguished from sea-going vessels. Although the date is uncertain, Captain Cadell, when attempting to navigate the Coorong channel in the steamer Albury, was stopped by a reef of limestone that stretched across the Coorong for over a mile in breadth upon which the water was about a foot deep. This reef, for which no definite location is given, was unnavigable in summer even for boats. (R.G.S. SA V.18 p.30). Place names along the Coorong such as Hells Gates and the Needles, reflect the hazardous nature of navigation in this stretch.

"Local fisherman called the area from the Needles to Hell's Gates, Bum-Cooler Flat, due to the frequency of having to manhandle their boats over the sandbars and hazards" (Baker, 1977, p.45).

The steamer JHP, carrying Government officials assessing the Coorong as a mail route in 1872, could not proceed further than Dodds Landing due to the hazards of the channel.

RICHARD J. LOVEDAY CHARTS THE COORONG WATERS

In 1866, Captain Kruse sailed down the Coorong with the Government surveyor, Richard J. Loveday, who took soundings and charted the Coorong waters and obstacles. Baker and Reschke (1977), write of the surveyor,

He was a meticulous operator and his report tabled in the House of Assembly at that time as as valid today" (Coorong Pilot, p.31)

Unfamiliar with the Coorong waters and without a pilot, Captain Sam Shetliffe relied on Loveday's charts to make a run in the paddle steamer Vesta all the way to Salt Creek, which at the time was considered a remarkable achievement. Perhaps, also, the waters of the Coorong were higher at that time due to River Murray flooding. During a high river, in the 1890s, Tom Kruse is said to have got right down the Coorong in the Punkari. In the 1956 floods, Mr. Gardiner of Kingston performed a similar feat, mooring his sizeable fishing vessel just over the road from the Salt Creek roadhouse!

PROPOSALS TO DREDGE THE COORONG CHANNEL

It was common for travellers along the Coorong road, which was often impassable in winter, to lament the failure to develop the Coorong channel for passenger navigation. Ebenzer Ward, after a journey to the

South East as correspondent for The Register in 1869, condemned the obstinacy,

"Which has long prevented that fine street of water being utilized for the purposes of navigation."

In addition to passenger trade, it was hoped that the Coorong waters to Salt Creek could be utilised as part of the mail route to Victoria. Various proposals were put forward from this time to dredge the Coorong. In 1869, Mr. J. Rogers, Resident Engineer for the South East District, on his assessment of the channel, recommended dredging near McGrath Flat. Again in 1872, a survey was made, giving the estimated cost of clearing the Coorong, from Goolwa to Salt Creek, as 2083 pounds and from Goolwa to McGrath's Flat as 1576 pounds. This would provide for,

"The removal of obstructions to the navigation of the Coorong, so far as to enable a steamer of not more than one foot three inches, 15", draught to pass to and from Goolwa and Salt Creek and to and from Goolwa to McGrath's Flat." (S.A.P.P. 1872, No. 141)

A survey by the Marine Board in 1883 estimated the cost of clearing a channel to Salt Creek at 61,896 and predicted that it would take thirteen years to complete the operation.

However, the most ambitious proposal for dredging the Coorong was in 1926. This proposal provided for the direct sea communication at Lacepede Bay with the River Murray, avoiding the Murray Mouth and Goolwa. Called the Coorong Lacepede Bay Scheme and the principal protagonist being Vice Admiral W.R. Cresswell, who was at one time command of the H.M.S. Protector, the scheme involved,

1. Making navigable 50 miles on the Coorong.
2. Constructing a bi-cable aerial ropeway to bridge the remaining area between the southern Coorong terminus to the steamer's hold.
3. Constructing an island wharf in Lacepede Bay providing for ships of up to 20,000 tons.

The scheme, which was to cost not more than 500,000 pounds, was not well received at the time. The River Murray Commissioner, although agreeing in theory, stated that from his knowledge of the area, the estimated cost would be largely exceeded in practice. Sir William

Cresswell died in 1933 and although the proposal was generally abandoned, there were isolated attempts to resurrect the scheme during the following decade. Another project mooted for the Coorong was the dredging of a channel from Lake Albert across the narrowest point of the Narrung Peninsula to the Coorong.

CROSSING THE COORONG

The danger of the Coorong waters have often been underestimated by small boat users. Due to sudden offshore winds, previously calm waters can become almost instantly choppy and distances which were easily traversed, suddenly become a great obstacle. For this reason, the Coorong has had a history of strandings on the Younghusband Peninsula boat capsizings and periodic drownings, not only of newcomers, but also local fishermen.

An early drowning in the Coorong was that of John William Blenkinsop, whaler of Encounter Bay and Sir John Jeffcott, the first Chief Justice of South Australia. At the time they were members of an official survey party and the tragedy occurred in the northern Coorong near Mundoo Island. The two crewmen of the whaleboat, C. Wright and Henry Books were saved by Aborigines. The naming of Point Blenkinsop on Mundoo Island is a sad memorial of this drowning. As recently as 1977, the National Parks and Wildlife Service Ranger, Hermann Bakker, assisted in a search for several men drowned off Long Point.

The most suitable vessel to contend with the mud flats, limestone hazards and often choppy waters of the Coorong has a wide base and is relatively flat bottomed. Mr. Longmire, in the 1940s, ferried his sheep across to the peninsula from near Woods Well, on a barge made of drums and towed by a small motorboat. Another notable craft on the Coorong, although it only operated for several years, was the hovercraft used by National Parks Commission Ranger, Peter Tomlin in 1971. This gave improved access to areas where there was illegal poaching and dune buggy misuse.

Although it is not known how long it operated, there was a punt across Parnka Point which ceased operation in the early 1970s. When members of a joint Army Navy manoeuvre led by J.K. Angas were checking for mines on the Coorong beach, in Jan 1944, they crossed their jeep on this punt operated then by Mr. Bill Coad. Coad used this punt to take supplies to his house on the peninsula, where his family lived rabbiting for a living.

Along the Coorong shores there are various boating structures, such as jetties and landings, which were used mainly at a time when there were small farms along the Coorong; these structures are now generally obsolete and abandoned. There are still, however, ramps and landings in operation and these are used by recreational boat users and fishermen.

At several locations along the Coorong, it was in the past possible to cross cattle drays and horses and today to cross vehicles to the peninsula. In the southern Coorong at the Tea-Tree and 42 mile crossings, there are causeways which give relatively easy access to the peninsula in the summer months. At other shallow, narrow points of the Coorong, such as Hacks crossing, Dodds Landing and Parnka, it was sufficiently shallow to swim stock across. Immigrants Crossing near Campbell Point is one other such crossing. The knowledge of these crossing was probably based on traditional Aboriginal useage.

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 for many years.

OVERLANDING STOCK AND ROAD COMMUNICATION ALONG THE COORONG

Soon after the founding of South Australia, it was imperative that land communication links be forged with the older established eastern colonies. The first intercolonial route along the Coorong was pioneered in 1839 by stockmen overlanding cattle from Victoria and become within a short time the most important highway in South Australia.

"Roads - even major highways were not so much constructed as worn into existence by passing traffic frequently following ancient Aboriginal routes, natural contours and the available water supplies. This seems to have dictated the routes overland through the Coorong..." (Dept. Environment & Planning, 1980/81) p.20.

In this way, the overlanding routes soon became well established, traversed by stockmen, government surveyors, police dispatch riders, circuit judges, coaches carrying mail and passengers, bullock drays and fortune seekers and immigrants travelling between the colonies, notably the goldfields of Victoria. A network of stock watering holes and wells and accommodation, wine and eating houses became established. Alternative routes were developed to cope with the condition of the roads as affected by varying weather conditions. Especially in the early twentieth century, with motorized transport in its infancy, the Coorong route developed a reputation of hardship and misadventure. Although improved from the time of the early travellers, the road along the Coorong was not significantly upgraded until the opening up of the Upper South East after the Second World War.

OVERLANDING STOCK

Soon after the founding of the colony when pastoral and agricultural lands were being settled, there was a dearth of available sheep and cattle to stock these areas. For stock and farm expertise, the infant colony looked to the east.

The first overlander along the South East Coast was Charles Bonney, who with twelve men, including two Aboriginal guides, left Henty's Station at the Glenelg River near Portland on 18th March, 1839. Bonney was headed for Adelaide along the South East Coast with three hundred

cattle. At a distance of about 45 miles from Lake Alexandrina, Bonney watered the cattle at a watercourse:

"....wherein a hole of water so extremely brackish as to be totally unfit for human use" (S.A. Gaz. & Col. Reg., 27 April 1839, p.2).

At this location, which is possibly Salt Creek, the party, on digging about three feet, found fresh water. Later in the journey however, as the weather became extremely hot, they experienced great difficulty in finding water. The journey of 250 miles took nineteen days with comparatively few animals lost.

"Mr. Bonney states that notwithstanding the difficulties which he encountered and which he considers are inseparable from a first attempt that the route which he thus opened up between Portland Bay and South Australia must become the high road from New South Wales.he has no doubt that on a more careful examination of the country a safe and well watered route would be found, over which it would be practicable to bring stock and sheep to South Australia at all seasons of the year". (S.A. Gaz. and Col. Reg. 27 April, 1839, p.2).

In the same year George Hamilton, following Bonney's route, drove 350 head of cattle from Port Phillip Bay to Adelaide. In 1844, Governor Grey's expedition party to the South East encountered two parties of overlanders in four days. One party heading to South Australia to take up land comprised 12 men, 530 head of cattle, 320 rams and 12 horses.

In 1846, Watts Newland and James Brown were the first to cross stock over the Murray Mouth. Headed for sheep runs near an area later to become Kingston, they ran sheep down both sides of the Coorong on the peninsula down the Ninety Mile beach. Crossing at the Mouth was extremely hazardous and not as commonly used. With the advent of the Wellington Ferry, stock generally crossed the Murray at this location. In 1879, 86,677 sheep and 18,471 cattle crossed the Murray at Wellington and many of these animals would have travelled through the Coorong road and on the Dukes Highway to the north.

Molineux, in The Observer, 13th January, 1883, described the rotting carcasses of 3000 sheep along the Coorong Road which were from a mob of 10,000. Water and feed for stock were scarce at the time Molineux visited the Coorong in 1882 and it was reported to him that the driver of the sheep was unfamiliar with the location of the wells, with a consequence that the animals suffered from dehydration.

On the request of Mr. Giles, Manager of the South Australia Company, Commissioner of Crown Lands in 1846, did not issue occupation licences for land along the edge of the Coorong between Lake Albert and the Coorong Crossing south of Chinamans Well. This land was set aside for a travelling stock reserve. This reserve which was later part of the 3 chain wide road was used for local movement of stock and for use as feed in dry seasons. Generally, after the Second World War, there was little movement of stock in this way, the main means of transport being road transports and train.

WELLS AND WATERING POINTS

The early settlers gained their knowledge of the locations of fresh water from Aboriginal useage. Police Inspector Alexander Tolmer refers to drinking water from a native well on the Younghusband Peninsula in 1840 (Noye, 1977 p. 40). A network of wells and watering holes for travellers and stockmen soon developed after colonisation. Several locations were gazetted government wells to ensure public access. To prevent infill by sand at least three public wells were reinforced with stone. Located on the overland Victorian route these wells were generally used by travellers. Chinamans Well and Stony Well are described on page 39. There is another unnamed stone well but of different construction to the others located south of Salt Creek.

Opposite Stony Well on the old Coorong Road, there is a carved stone marking the site of underground water which reads, 'Very Good Water Stone'. Hotels, mail coach home watering stops and farmhouses were generally established near fresh water. Such sites include Chinamans Well, Sheoak, Salt Creek, Woods Well, Cantara and Coolatoo and Coconut Well. The first job of Mr. Alf Cameron, one of the few individual Aborigines who worked a farm in the nineteenth century on the Narrung Peninsula, was drawing water from Coconut Well. (Pers. Comm. Lola Bonney). On the peninsula, small farm homesteads and outstations were also located near fresh water and reinforced wells were constructed. Dodd's outstation is one such example.

Both on the peninsula and along the inland side of the Coorong, there are many waterholes marked on old hundred maps. The usage of these waterholes probably dates from the days of overlanding stock along the Coorong. Many are named, such as Waterhole Point, on the northern

peninsula; Tatunda Waterhole opposite Stony Well and Tea Tree Point Wateringhole. These naturally occurring freshwater seepages along the shores of the Coorong are called sucks or soaks. In several places along the Coorong, a wedge cut was made to enlarge the area available to stock and these were reinforced with stone or timber. A wedge cut was also made on the landside near Chinamans Well by John Gall, for watering stock. It has been speculated that the occurrence of these soaks on the mainland side of the Coorong has been adversely affected by the drainage schemes of the South East.

On the Old Melbourne Road south of Salt Creek, there is the remains of a trough and windmill, where stock was watered. In the northern Coorong, near Long Point, in an area within the boundary of the Coorong National Park, several areas were gazetted stock watering reserves in 1901. Useage of these areas for watering stock, however, probably dates from well before this time.

BULLOCK DRAYS

The Old Coorong Road was frequently traversed by bullock drays. At one time up to sixty teams traded around Kingston (Banks, 1970). Although mainly in operation in the nineteenth century, 'Joe' Cameron, son of Malcolm Cameron a driver before him, worked bullock teams possibly into the 1930s. The Camerons mainly operated in the southern district, visiting sheep stations as far north as Cantara Homestead. They carried a varied cargo including Wattle bark, wool, grain and fencing materials. Several bullock dray tracks remain on the Old Coorong road in the southern Coorong.

Another well known bullocky from the 1860s was an Aboriginal named "Grandfather" Joe Walker. A man of large stature, he carted supplies of rations to shepherds who cared for sheep in the scrub country behind Salt Creek (Hastings, G.J. 1944). As a young man of eighteen, Joseph Walker witnessed the arrest of Malachi Martin who became notorious for killing several people at Salt Creek.

MAIL ROUTES AND PASSENGER SERVICES ALONG THE COORONG ROAD

The mail route from Adelaide to the South East and eastern colonies, following the Coorong Road, was surveyed by Alexander Tolmer and the mail run was established soon after in 1846. The intercolonial mail service,

which was fortnightly at this time, was possibly first carried on horseback or by mail cart. In the late 1850s, William Rounsevell established a mail coach service which was taken over by Cobb and Co. in 1867, by which time there were three mails a week. The route was taken from Adelaide to Milang by coach, steamer from Milang to Meningie, then by mail coach to Mt. Gambier. Drivers for Cobb and Co. were Tom and George Smith. Tom was also responsible for providing grain and chaff for feeding horses at stopovers south of Chinamans Well, while Mr. Kruse transported horsefeed to Salt Creek on the schooner 'Punkari'. Tom Smith later worked for Hill and Co., who took over the intercolonial service from Cobb and Co. From the early 1880s, John Gall of Cantara Station subcontracted for the daily Meningie-Kingston run, a distance of 92 miles for which he received 2,440 pounds per annum. The intercolonial mail service was cut back with the advent of the more efficient Adelaide to Melbourne railway in the 1880's, however there is a local mail run still in operation today.

The mail coaches also provided a passenger service and in 1867, the cost of a ticket from Adelaide to Salt Creek was 2-15-0. The time taken for the journey to Port McDonnell was 48 hours. Many accounts are available of this laborious journey and these usually describe the distinctive odour of the Coorong, the arduous sandy, bumpy track which was boggy in winter. Proud, a correspondent for the Register, describes in July, 1880 the axles of the coach nearly being covered by water in many places along the Coorong road and sheets of water as far as the eye could see. By contrast, in the summer months, travellers praised the relief of travelling over the smooth pipeclay lakes for 6 or 7 miles south of Salt Creek; this section of the route became known as the Pipeclay. Possibly at 42 mile crossing during the summer months vehicles also crossed to the Ninety Mile Beach taking a short cut to Kingston.

"... we had a run along the now dried bed of the Coorong for about eight miles, where it was as smooth as a billiard table, with about an inch of sand on top. Here we could hear no sound but a slight jingle of the harness and the muffled tramp of the four horses"
(Molineux The Observer, 13 Jan, 1883 p.57)

Ebenezer Ward, an earlier correspondent for the Register in 1869, although stating that the road was well improved by this time, described the journey by coach along the Coorong as the mail miseries.

Other regular travellers on the mail coaches were the circuit judges.

Several royal visitors travelled the Coorong road in the nineteenth century. In the 1860s the Duke of Edinburgh visited the Lakes and the Coorong and in 1881 Their Royal Highnesses, the Duke of Yorke, later King George the V and the Duke of Clarence passed through Salt Creek and stayed at the Coolatoo Hotel.

HOTELS AND MAIL COACH STOPS

Although no major settlements developed along the Coorong Road in the nineteenth century, several hotels and mail coach stopovers were established. The mass movement of fortune seekers heading to Victoria especially prompted the need for such stopovers. The services generally offered were post office and telegraph, in the case of McGrath Flat, accommodation and refreshment for fatigued travellers and a change of horses for the mail coach. The seven horsechange stopovers were spaced at regular intervals, usually about twelve to fourteen miles apart and where possible, were located near wells.

In 1867, Boothby's Almanac lists Rounsevell Mail Coach Staging Stations at Meningie, McGrath Flat, Woods Well, Salt Creek, Cantara, Coolatoo, White Hut and Kingston. Chinamans Well was at one time a stopover and there was possibly another between Coolatoo and White Hut. Not all of the stopovers were hotels, but several became licenced inns from the 1840s.

McGrath Flat

(Not within the boundary of the Coorong National Park) At the time McGrath Flat (Sections 21-28, Hundred of Glyde) was surveyed by Loveday in 1855, a limestone inn had been built by Mr. Gollan. Called the Tam O'Shanter Inn, it was at this location that William Milne and the government surveyor, G.W. Goyder had a meal of fish and mutton in 1863. By this time, McGrath Flat was owned by Thomas McCallum. According to Whitworth's South Australian Gazeteer and Road Guide, in 1869 there was an Aboriginal Station at McGrath Flat.

Woods Well

(Not within the boundary of the Coorong National Park) Sections 29 and 30, Hundred of Glyde were surveyed by R.H. Edwards in 1862 and purchased by William Allan who was running The Coorong Hotel at this

location. From 1867-1876 W.G. Hardy held the hotel after which time it was delicensed. Several kilometres north of Woods Well on the Culburra Road is Tolmers Well and nearby the remains of an old police station.

Salt Creek

A primitive wine shanty was built at Salt Creek by James Foote on a hill to the north of the creek itself. The first licence was granted to W.A. Carter in 1847-1849 and the hotel was known as The Overlander. From 1850-1862, the inn became The Traveller's Rest and perhaps this change in name reflects the increase of travellers over stockmen as clientele.

From 1850-1851 the licensee was J.G. McPherson and although not on the official list of hotels, William Robinson was the licensee from 1851-1856 and Mrs. Robinson (later Mrs. Martin) until 1862. The survey of the Salt Creek Hotel, Section 32, Hundred of Santo, did not take place until 1862 and was carried out by Robert Edmunds. The first grant for the Salt Creek Inn was issued in 1863 to William Rollison, policeman from Wellington.

Subsequent licensees were A. Toole, 1864-1866 and Dennis Toole, 1867-1868. Dennis Toole, an expoliceman, died at the hotel as did Adams who held the licence from 1869-1875, by which time the hotel was known as the Squatters Arms. Salt Creek was still a stopover providing accommodation in 1906 although not a licensed hotel. At this time it was the out-station owned by John Gall. The chimney in the present National Parks and Wildlife Service ranger's house is all that remains of the hotel.

The Salt Creek Murders

The period 1850-1862 was perhaps the most significant for Salt Creek, as it was during this time that several infamous murders took place. Although many detailed accounts have been recorded, the following gives a brief outline. From 1851 the Salt Creek Inn was run by William Robinson and his wife Nellie. A frequent visitor at the hotel seeking the attention of Mrs. Robinson was Malachi Martin, who had a property seven miles south of Salt Creek on the Hummocks at Bul Bul. In June, 1856 Martin persuaded Robinson to help him search for some cattle which had strayed near Salt Creek. When Robinson did not return, a police search was organized. Three weeks later Aboriginal trackers found the body of Robinson with his throat cut. In addition, they found tracks to a pool

where the murderer washed his hands. This area behind Salt Creek is now a Conservation Park known as Martins Washpool. A hill to the south of Salt Creek became known as Robinsons Hill. Martin was soon arrested and an inquest was held at McGrath Flat. However, despite a substantial body of circumstantial evidence against Martin, no charges were laid and it was concluded that Robinson had committed suicide.

Martin left the district for several years and on his return married Nellie Robinson. They continued to live at Salt Creek running the hotel, amidst an atmosphere of local uneasiness and suspicion.

A twenty-nine year old Irish girl named Jane McMinamen, who was employed by the Martins, was one who held Malachi Martin in suspicion of Robinson's murder. She was friendly with a local resident names Wilson. In February 1862, Mrs. Martin went by steamer to Goolwa for a holiday. It was during her absence that Jane McMinamen disappeared.

Several months elapsed, by which time Mrs. Martin had returned to Salt Creek. On 27th May, Jane's body was found in a wombat hole behind Salt Creek by an Aboriginal from Kingston named Major McKenzie. He soon reported finding the body to Mr. Allen, the publican at Woods Well and police at Wellington were wired from the telegraph station at McGrath Flat. A police trap was set for Martin and he was arrested by the officer Rollison, who later became owner of the Salt Creek hotel.

After Martin's arrest, Wilson inadvertently let slip that he knew of the murder. An inquest was held at Woods Well and Jane McMinamen was buried on a nearby hillside. Martin was soon committed for trial and after being found guilty of the murder of Jane McMinamen, was executed in Adelaide on 24th December, 1862. The unfortunate Wilson, who did not report his knowledge of the murder, perhaps for fear of Martin, was sentenced to four years penal servitude in Tasmania for being an accessory after the fact. According to folklore pertaining to the Salt Creek murders, bloodstained handprints persisted on the wall of the Salt Creek hotel.

It was also near Salt Creek that Police Inspector Alexander Tolmer was nearly shot by mistake when emerging from a wombat hole where he had spent the night, he was confronted with a rifle barrel of a trooper who had hoped for a combat in his sights.

Chinamans Well

Possibly dating from 1864, when the Hundred of Neville was proclaimed, is a hut at Chinamans Well, located on the small Section 75. The well is located in Section 78 and the telegraph line passed between the two Sections (Fig. 8). The ruins of the hut were uncovered by National Parks and Wildlife Service Rangers in 1982 when removing a boxthorn bush. A few hundred metres to the north-east of the well is a large horsetrough and this was possibly used for watering the mail coach horses in the time of John Gall's mail contact operations in the 1880s. The Chinamans Well hut had possibly fallen into disuse by the turn of the century.

Cantara Homestead

Soon after the traveller passed Chinamans Well, the original road crossed the Coorong and headed south past Cantara Homestead. According to Mr. Phil Lloyd who worked at Cantara in the 1930s, the original house was a stone hut north of the present homestead. Probably located in Section 76, Hundred of Nelville, the hut was a staging stop for Rounsevell's mail service in 1867. In the late 1870s the substantial new homestead was built by Gall and the original house was in disrepair. The new Cantara homestead, one of the most important local pastoral properties, became a mail coach stopover providing accommodation at that time. (N.K. Thomas and Co., 1906, p.70)

Coolatoo Hotel

Coolatoo Hotel, Sections 34 and 35, Hundred of Nelville still had a roof in 1906 but was unoccupied by this time; today only the footings remain. The Coolatoo Inn was possibly constructed in the early 1860s by McAdam and was said to have a wine cellar. From 1865, there was a post office at Coolatoo run by A. Inglis and the coaching stop was known as Rankines. John Rankine and John Walker held the Coolatoo Run from 1859. Subsequent owners of the Coolatoo hotel were McLean, Elder and Anderson. The Coolatoo hotel was also known as the Doolem Buck and was noted for two whale ribs erected to form a dome from which hung the hotel lamp. In June 1881 the Dukes of Yorke and Clarence stayed at the Coolatoo Hotel whilst passing through the Coorong on their way to Victoria.

Albert Molineux writes of the Coolatoo Hotel in 1883:

"Between Cantara and Sheoak Hut is the Coolatoo Hotel - a very curious looking "hotel", more like a cockatoo's, but at which

returning passengers to Adelaide get a very comfortable supper. The house is kept by one Neil Anderson, a Swede, I think, who produced some enormously large figs grown close to the house."

Coolatoo Hotel witnessed some rather wild proceedings and Mrs. George Smith, wife of the mail coach driver, was said to have hit a customer over the head with a frying pan when she worked there as a cook before her marriage.

On a salt lake due east of Coolatoo, John Gall conducted horse races. The Coolatoo Hotel closed down when the road became impassible due to sand drifts. South of Coolatoo there was a hut called Sheoak hut; it is unlikely that this was an accommodation stopover for the mail coach.

White Hut

(Not within the boundary of the Coorong National Park) White Flat, 16 km from Kingston, was a stopover in the nineteenth century, but not by 1906, when it was a homestead for John Gall's Dalkeith property. The hut is still occupied today.

THE GOLD RUSH AND CHINESE TRAVELLERS ALONG THE COORONG ROAD

During the 1850s there was considerable movement of colonists and newly arrived immigrants from Adelaide to the Victorian goldfields. In the first years of the gold escort from the diggings to Adelaide, raw gold was carried in carts along the Coorong and escorted by troopers including Police Inspector Alexander Tolmer. A more northerly route was later to supersede this original gold escort route. However, travellers continued to trek along the Coorong Road headed for Victoria, many on foot pushing small hardcarts loaded with their belongings.

Amongst these fortune seekers were Chinese from Hong Kong and although the period of their overlanding was relatively brief, (1857-1863) their numbers were indeed large. At one time there were three hundred Chinese camped at McGrath Flat (Hastings, J.G. 1944 p.1)

From 1855 the Victorian Government imposed a poll tax of 10 pounds on each Chinese landing in that colony. To avoid the tax, those Chinese headed for the goldfields would land at South Australian ports, notably Robe, Kingston and Port Adelaide. From these ports, they made the long journey overland to Victoria. In the first five months of 1857, twenty-five vessels brought Chinese to Adelaide. However, within several years, the South Australian Government implemented a similar system to

that in Victoria and the passage of Chinese through South Australia to the goldfields ceased. Despite the many thousands of Chinese who landed in Australia in the 1850s, very few subsequently settled in this country. The Chinese brought with them many small items which they could trade for supplies. Chinese relics which have been found along the Coorong include coins and glazed earthenware pots.

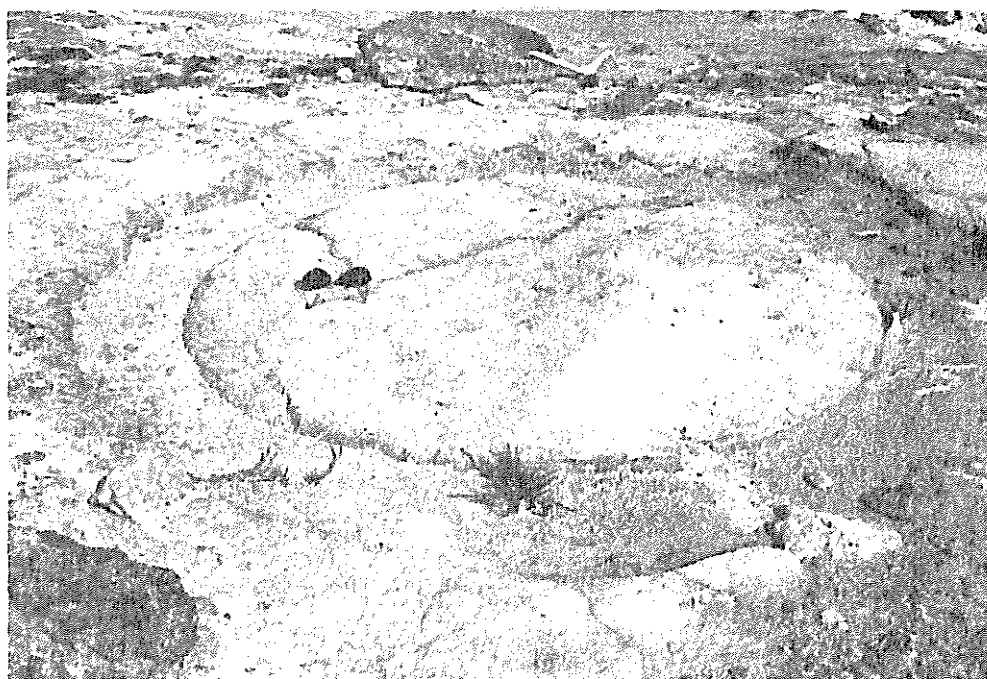
Of considerable interest, is Chinamans Well, Section 32 Hundred of Neville, which is located 14 kilometres south of Salt Creek. The definite origin of this limestone, freshwater well and a similar structure at Stony Well is not known, however, several explanations have been suggested. Although it is not known if the Chinese were responsible for the construction of the wells, it is likely that from the name Chinamans Well, they had some particular association with that site. One theory is that the stone wells were constructed by itinerant Chinese who were travelling through to the goldfields. Another plausible suggestion is that a Chinese family settled for some time at this location, possibly building the well and establishing a home and vegetable garden, selling produce and providing water to travellers along the Coorong Road. It is also said that the family settled to assist the recovery of several of their party who had become ill on the journey. However, it is not known how long this family lived at the site or if in fact they eventually reached the goldfields.

The survival of these stone wells bears witness to the skill of the craftsman responsible for their construction. The stones were carefully cut and trimmed to fit together, and the stone lining of the well continues deep into the ground; the well was reinforced with stone to prevent infilling with sand. On the top of the well is a large circular piece with a concentric hole in the middle. Through this hole a bucket would be lowered into the well and a stone lid with handles was placed in the hole in the top, possibly to prevent leaves and dirt falling in and contaminating the water, or to reduce evaporation.

The lid at Chinamans Well was unfortunately removed some years ago and as a result of this vandalism, a protective cage was erected over Chinamans Well. In a lake near to this well, there are distinct impressions where the stone was cut into blocks for use in the walls of the well. There is also a large capping piece which is clearly cracked; this crack possibly occurred when the stone was being cut, rendering it unsuitable for use in the well.



Water controlling dam^e across lake where salt scraped
near Salt Creek



Carved lid with crack located near Chinamans Well

In the 1940's when used by highway workers, Stony Well became contaminated with plant matter and had to be drained out. Stony Well, located between McGrath Flat and Woods Well was restored in 1962 and the names of those responsible are carved on the top of the well.

THE AGE OF MOTORING ALONG THE COORONG ROAD

The Coorong road developed a reputation as a difficult track becoming the challenge of early South Australian motorists.

In 1903, Ben Thomson, a founding member of the R.A.A., was the first person to drive a motor vehicle between Adelaide to Melbourne, in a 6 h.p. De Dion Bouton. The 596 mile trip took three days, nineteen hours and he arrived at Melbourne with eyes so sore he could hardly see and cut and swollen lips. John Steel, who in 1904 rode a $2\frac{3}{4}$ h.p. Clyde motorcycle between Adelaide to Melbourne described the track as a

"continuous series of fearful sand patches ploughed up by cross tracks in all directions through vehicles vainly endeavouring to find a place where the ground was firmer" (Nicol, S. 1978 p.17)

Nicol reports the tribulations of one early motorist who covered twelve metres in four hours and took eighteen hours to cross a single sand drift.

Perhaps one of the most well noted trips is that of Murray Auger and Bertie Barr Smith, who on 8th February, 1909, made a successful attempt in their 60 h.p. Napier on the Adelaide to Melbourne record, setting a new time of twenty two hours twenty four minutes. These motoring pioneers made a stopover at Cantara Homestead.

Early road maps give the mileage distance from Meningie and Kingston and the mile posts along the lengthy Coorong stretch became landmarks for travellers. The road maps also warn of the hazardous sections of the road and of the various gates along the route. One landmark was the cove or Titree Archway where teatrees enclosed the motorist. This was located near the southern tip of the Southern Lagoon. At the second gate from Salt Creek, the traveller was told to look for the pipeclay lakes. The smooth pipeclay lakes, which gave respite to the early motorist, witnessed speed trials in the 1930s. Triumph motorcycles and Alfa Romeo racing cars were put through their paces on the southern-most lake of the Coorong.

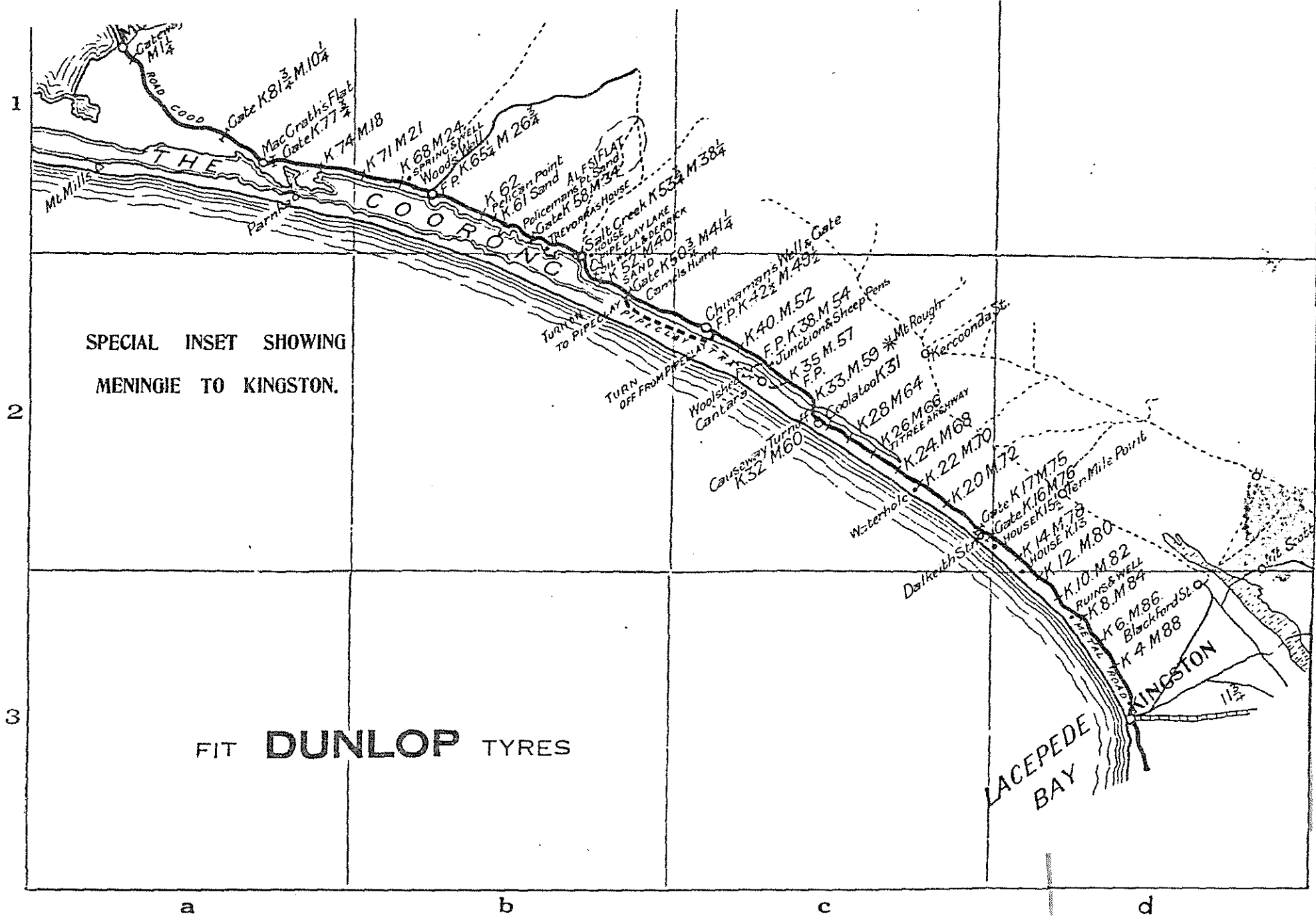


Fig. 6 Early road map showing mileage from Meningie and Kingston (Possibly 1920s)
 Source W.K. Thomas & Co. The Tourists Road Guide for South Australia
 By Courtney, David A. 1993

After the First World War, the motoring traffic along the Coorong road increased and Mr. Jim Trevarrow, who lived at Policemans Point, had an adjunct to his income, helping motorists tow their cars from the sand drifts and potholes. Even after the Second World War, the Coorong Road could be a gruelling crossing with sections of the road being unmade tracks. It was the completion of the new road in 1957 that facilitates the motorist's present ease of access along the Coorong.

MAINTAINING AND REROUTING THE ROAD

In the late nineteenth century a man named Lunberg was employed to service the Melbourne Road along the Coorong. He lived with his wife and thirteen children in a hut on the eastern side of the road near Parnka, on land that was designated a road reserve. Lunberg was probably responsible for filling bad potholes, clearing sand drifts and also checking the route to aid travellers in difficulty. The route at this time would have related to the underlying terrain. In summer, the bullock drays and mail coaches would have followed the smoother, low ground near the Coorong's edge, whereas in winter the dry higher limestone ridges were followed. Deep wheel impressions can be seen in places along the old tracks near the Coorong. After a time, these deep impressions in the road made by the wheels of earlier travellers would make that route impassable and new ground was sought. The main hazard, especially in the southern Coorong, was sand drifts over the road; this continues to be a problem on the Old Melbourne Road even today. The original road, after crossing the Coorong south of Chinamans Well, passed Cantara Homestead. This road was possibly in use, prior to 1877 but was gazetted in that year (Fig. 8). Later the road became impassable due to bad sand drifts several kilometres north of Cantara. As a result, the route was relocated in 1883 on the landward side of the Coorong and there was a causeway to Cantara from this road. About 2 km north of Coolatoo, the newer section of road crossed the Coorong. This construction became known as the causeway and linked up with the earlier Coorong road near Coolatoo. This unsurfaced road, which is the main internal road within the southern Coorong National Park and continues to Kingston, is generally known as the Old Melbourne Road.

In 1957, the new surfaced Princes Highway was officially opened along the Coorong and the route at no point crosses the Coorong. This road, which in many places forms the eastern boundary of the Coorong National Park, has less sharp bends than the older roads and generally follows the higher limestone ridges. In the 1930s the only portion of metalled road was along the cliffs south of McGrath Flat. From about 1940, the construction and surfacing of the new road by the Highways Department provided considerable local employment and camps of about forty men were established at various locations along the Coorong, as progress was made in the road works. According to Meningie resident Mr. Bill Haywood, who worked on the road, the first camp was near the 43 mile post. There was subsequently a camp about 1 km north of Salt Creek. The camps generally had their own wells and at the Salt Creek camp there was even a vegetable garden. Near Stony Well, there was also a highways camp. Living in tents, the men lived off fish from the Coorong. Other supplies came by bus once a week from Meningie. It was during the period of construction, possibly the early 1940s, that the old wooden bridge at Salt Creek was replaced. The stone fittings of the original bridge can be seen on Salt Creek near the roadhouse.

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THE ADELAIDE TO MELBOURNE OVERLAND TELEGRAPH

A significant addition to intercolonial communications provided by the Colonial Post Office was the electric telegraph service from Adelaide to Melbourne.

Sir Charles Todd, who arrived in South Australia in 1855, was the moving force behind the telegraph service, convincing the governments of the two colonies to undertake this venture. It was especially imperative that the South Australian capital have a speedy means of direct communication with Melbourne, which was the first Australian port of call for the mail steamers carrying commercial intelligence from Europe. The estimated cost was not more than 60 pounds per mile of line, the total expenditure to be 45,000 pounds with annual maintenance costs of 11,200 pounds. The scheme, which was expected to yield a good return, would use Professor Morse's transmitting instrument.

The first telegraph line, comprising a single galvanized iron wire, was opened for service on 1st July, 1858 and Adelaide's communication links with the eastern colonies were further extended when the Melbourne to Sydney line was connected later in 1858 and the Sydney to Brisbane line in 1861.

The route taken in South Australia was that selected by Todd while returning from Melbourne to Adelaide on horseback in 1855-1856. The main stations were Adelaide, Willunga (Call Sign B), Port Elliott (Call Sign C), Goolwa (Call Sign D), Guichen Bay, Robe (Call Sign E) and Mount Gambier (Call Sign F). From Goolwa there was a submarine cable across the Goolwa Channel and Lake Alexandrina which connected with Pelican Point at the entrance to the Coorong, passed McGrath Flat, then continued southward, crossing the Coorong just south of Chinamans Well, then passing Cantara and Coolatoo.

In 1861, the line was duplicated and the additional route avoided the Murray Mouth, passing through Strathalbyn, Wellington and Meningie and joining the existing route at McGraths Flat. This homestead became a telegraph station and an early operator there was Joseph Woods. This station was closed in November, 1873 when Meningie became the main station. To be available in the event of disasters such as shipwrecks, the stations maintained a 24 hour service.

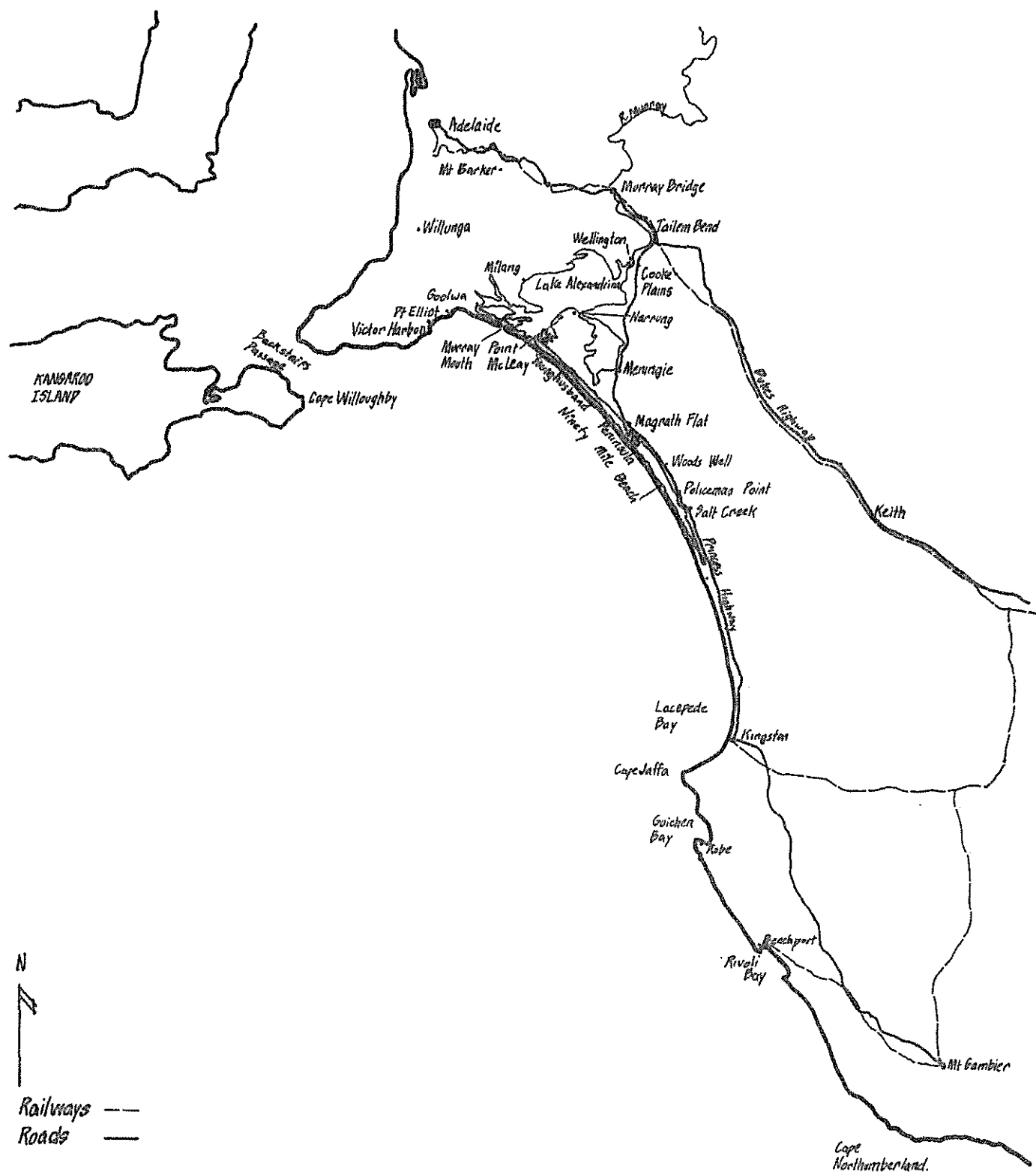


Fig 1: Location map - The Coorong and Major Towns in the South East.

Not only did the line experience several changes of route but also various upgrading programmes. In 1861, the original earthenware insulators were replaced by those of white poreclain which were made in Germany, and designed by Sir Charles Todd, who was by that time the Superintendent of the Electric Telegraphs. By 1865-70, the original telegraph poles, which consisted of local South Australian timber, had badly deteriorated and were replaced by the more durable timber, jarrah or Swan River mahogany. The jarrah poles comprised two parts, a large square section in the ground onto which was bolted a smaller square section. Remains of these posts can be seen in the southern end of the Coorong National Park.

Possibly by the turn of the century, the road and telegraph line near Cantara were relocated to the landward side of the Coorong. This resulted from the extensive coverage of the line by sanddrifts. The movement of sanddrifts in the Southern Peninsula has often been measured by local people in terms of coverage of telegraph poles. By the early 1900s telephone services had been added to the line and Cantara Homestead was a telephone exchange operated by John Gall's daughters. The remains of the telephone line to Cantara across the causeway to the house are still readily visible.

Early in the 1950s steel replacement posts were incorporated in the telephone line which followed the Princes Highway. These posts, at that time, carried up to four wires. In recent years the line has been replaced by an underground coaxial cable and the steel posts along the Highway are gradually disappearing.

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 location of telegraph Reserves.

MAKING A LIVING FROM THE COORONG

Particularly in the economic depressions of the late nineteenth century and the 1930s, the Coorong offered a means of eking out a living for those who had neither a regular wage nor the security of property. During these times the Coorong road was traversed by swagman looking for work or food handouts from farmers. From discussions with local people and written accounts, it can be seen that a living, often somewhat meagre, could be gained in times of economic hardship from such occupations as fishing, duck and rabbit shooting, contract work for the pastoral stations, working on government schemes such as the barrages and highway improvement and on local industries such as oil drilling, wattle bark stripping and salt harvesting. In fact, local people had to be prepared to turn their hand to just about anything and where possible live from local resources. It was this economic uncertainty, combined with often difficult and isolated living and working conditions, which has produced a notable independent and pragmatic spirit amongst the oldtimers of the Coorong. The ruined huts in several places in the park are a legacy of their occupation. Marsden's chimney off the old Melbourne road several kilometres south of Salt Creek is one such example. (Fig. 8)

FISHING

Based largely in Meningie, Goolwa and Milang and often spending several days at a time on the Coorong, net fishing as a livelihood became established along the Coorong from about the turn of the century, although the greatest number engaged in fishing was after 1930. At this time the main fisherman were Brunstall and Gardiner and several fishing families, which became established at this time are still operating today. Over this period there have been many changes in the techniques of fishing and these are described in Evans (1981) and Noye (1975). Several sites have been established along the Coorong which relate to fishing. Although never used on a commercial basis, two smoke houses were constructed to cure fish.

"The remains of one can still be seen near Barker's Knoll and the walls of another....in the low scrub on the eastern shore of Stony Well Basin in the South Lagoon" (Noye, 1974. p.99).

Shacks were also built by cockle gatherers and fishermen either as temporary shelter or for permanent occupation.

COMMERCIAL DUCK SHOOTING

In the late nineteenth century there was commercial duck shooting along the Coorong. Wild duck was a prized delicacy and the main markets were Melbourne and Adelaide, the prices in the former market being highest. According to Mr. L. Minchan, a good living could be made from shooting duck and the prices in the Melbourne market were pink ear 1/6 to 2/- a pair, mountain duck 4/6, and black duck 6/-, (Mincham, 1966). About 1890, there was a duck canning operating near the Old Aboriginal Mission Station on the mainland side of the Coorong. Operated by a Goolwa butcher named John Spencer, several families were employed shooting and preparing the ducks to be tinned. According to Mr. L. Mincham who visited the cannery as a youth, a tin of teal sold for nine pence and the ducks were of high quality. The factory, which only operated for six months of the year during the open season for ducks, was eventually closed down when the government introduced strict duck shooting quotas.

RABBIT SHOOTING

Until recently, licences were issued to shoot rabbits and foxes on the Coorong National Park and rabbits from this area undoubtedly reached local and Adelaide butcher shops. Landholders such as John Gall sanctioned the activities of trappers and shooters of rabbits, which by the turn of the century, had become a serious pest. There were also attempts to can rabbit in the early nineteenth century at Kingston, but this venture was abandoned when a shipment of cans on the docks ready to be loaded, exploded in hot weather. Rabbit skins also were sent to the Adelaide market for overseas export. Amongst the rabbit shooters in the early nineteenth century was the Ballard family who appropriately lived for many years in a hut on Rabbit Island, which is presently held by the

Aboriginal Lands Trust. (Baker and Reschke, 1977) Other rabbiters on the Coorong were Bill Coad who lived near Parnka operating the punt and the Gibbs family.

KANGAROO SHOOTING

The largescale campaign to shoot out kangaroos in the South East was of importance in the 1860s. Kangaroo skins were sold commercially at this time and shipped from Salt Creek.

WATTLE BARK STRIPPING

It is not known to what extent this landuse was carried out on the Coorong National Park, but several local people stripped wattle bark in the district, which was sent to Kingston and Robe for use in leather tanning.

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Information on local land use and identities is not generally recorded in written form. Fortunately, Mr. Mincham wrote his memoirs in 1966 and as he has since died, this written record gives valuable information which would have otherwise been lost. Generally, local landuse information is gleaned from oral history. The Meningie Area School is at present compiling a centenary history of the district and for this purpose has taped oral histories with "oldtimers".

Interviews with local residents have also been recorded in local and State newspapers. Several Coorong identities have been featured in the Chronicle, The Lakeland of Meningie and the Kingston Leader and the Naracoorte Herald.

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The Advertiser. 9 March, 1977: 21. The Attrill brothers locally known as the Three Stoogers.

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The Advertiser. 2 Jan. 1982. Mels Quitting the Coorong. Melville Applekamp.

"COORONGITE" : AUSTRALIA'S FIRST OIL WELL

In 1852, when a gold escort returning from the Victorian Gold Fields was looking for stray horses in an area behind Salt Creek known as Albert or Alfred Flat, -

"An elastic substance was found, covering the flats all around the many timbered sandy rises" (Coyler, F. 1974)

This find was to spark nearly eighty years of interest and conjecture in what became known as Coorongite. In 1878 exploratory leases were available for the Coorong and there was subsequently great effort made to establish that Coorongite was petroleum based and it was hoped that the Coorong would become Australia's own Texas.

After a ton of Coorongite, shipped to the Scottish works of James 'Paraffin' Young, was identified as containing petroleum, various companies rented Crown Land along the Coorong to search for oil. The main proponent of Coorongite during the late 1800s was Thomas Scrutton, who urged the Governor of South Australia, Sir Anthony Musgrave, to aid the search for oil by making available rental reductions to companies undertaking exploration. Scrutton claimed that oil discoveries along the Coorong could save the Colony 100,000 pounds a year.

There were various promoters towards the end of the century and experts from America, Canada and Dr. Hooker of the Kew Gardens, London, were consulted to establish the mineral origin of the substance. In 1892, the Salt Creek Petroleum Co. undertook the first full scale drilling operation on the Coorong; this was also Australia's first full scale exploratory oil well. Although bores were drilled to 330 and 992 feet, no subterranean sources of oil were found. The site of the well was selected by the toss of a coin and is located behind Salt Creek, near Alf's Flat where there are relics of this well remaining today.

In 1903, another company, the Coorong Oil Co., with Manager, E.J. Kennedy, developed a prospectus inviting public subsidy. A large area of 32,000 acres was leased from the Government under Search Licence for a fee of 60 pounds per annum. Most impressive in the prospectus of this company, was the claim that samples of Coorongite, which had been sent to the Philadelphia Exhibition, were awarded a certificate and medal as mineral oil. Several wells were drilled by the Coorong Oil Co. near the Old Melbourne road south west of Salt Creek. (Fig. 8)

The year 1915 saw renewed interest in Coorongite, when Dr. Herbert Basedow, a former South Australian Government geologist, took samples

near Robe. Great debate subsequently ensued in the local newspapers. Undoubtedly spurred on by the emerging motor car market for petroleum, protagonists such as Basedow, sought advice from various experts, including the eminent Russian geologist and engineer, Captain de Hautpick. Mr. L.K. Ward, South Australian Director of Mines, however, was equally opposed to the theory of mineral origin of Coorongite and he voiced his disagreement at the Pan Pacific Science Congress held in Sydney in 1923.

The pipedream of the Coorong oil field was finally shattered, however, in the 1930s when, with improved laboratory techniques, the American expert Reinhardt Thiessen definitely confirmed that Coorongite was not of mineral origin, but a product of a surface algae.

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SALT HARVESTING

Salt raking took place on at least two salt lagoons on the Coorong, probably from the 1870s onwards. The salt, in ample quantity, but not of a high quality, was sold to the railways for use in water softening and also to farmers in the South East to put in cattle feed. The addition of salt to the feed was to compensate for certain mineral deficiencies in the soil which had produced "coast disease" in stock.

Salt was raked under licence at a salt lagoon located on the peninsula, opposite Stony Well Island. A salt shed and stone jetty were shown at this location on early Hundred maps, and the sizeable stone jetty still remains today. From the Register, 2 April 1872, it can be seen that bagged salt was carried by boat from Salt Creek, (as many as 106 bags in one load) and was possibly shipped from this stone jetty (Fig. 8)

Another lagoon where salt is known to have been raked, is also shown as being under licence prior to 1921 and possibly also in the last century. This site is located south of Salt Creek near the Old Road (Fig. 8). Remains of recent salt scraping at this location can be seen today. Mr. Einde Singh, a retired fisherman of Meningie, worked here in the 1940s for several seasons for Mr. Jim Tiller and with his wife Esther and family, lived near the lake in an iron and timber hut. His hut drew the attention, at that time, of a journalist travelling through Salt Creek, as the wood stove used for cooking was outside the hut!

Employing four or five men, Mr. Tiller commenced the salt scraping in February-March when due to evaporation the lake was drying and continued until Easter. A substantial stone embankment across the lake was possibly used for damming and controlling water levels. The salt was raked by hand and shovelled into a small tip trolley, which ran on moveable narrow gauge tracks; the remains of this apparatus can still be seen. Initially, the salt was crushed by hand, but later a small motorised crusher was employed. The harvest for one season averaged between 200-400 tons and the salt, once heaped at a site north west of the lake's edge, was then bagged and taken by carrier to Kingston. The loading ramp still exists. After 1950 when Mr. Tiller died, and until the area became a National Park in 1967, salt was harvested on a smaller scale by Mr. Frank Watson of Salt Creek.

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Meningie)

1. Information on salt scraping was obtained from:

Mr. Einde Singh of Meningie

Mrs. Tiller of Meningie

Additional information and photographs could be available from Mrs.
Tiller and the Watson family of Salt Creek.

2. Tracing the licence details from the old Hundred maps may give the
dates of when salt scraping first began on a commercial basis on the
Coorong.

COORONG PASTORALISTS

Tracing land tenure for the long Coorong area is extremely complex and so that, for the purpose of this study, the Coorong is divided into three areas and only major land holders are discussed. The divisions are as follows:

The Northern Coorong (Dodd's property)

The Central Coorong (Parnka, McGraths Flat, Woods Well, Policemans Point, Salt Creek)

The Southern Coorong, south of Salt Creek (John Gall's Cantara property, Coolatoo)

THE NORTHERN COORONG: THOMAS AND JAMES DODD

It is uncertain if the northern Younghusband Peninsula was held under occupational licence in the early 1840s, although this area did receive considerable traffic of sheep and cattle headed for the South East. An area north of Mount Murray, Lease 60, was held under occupation licence by Thomas Holme from 1851 until 1859 when James Dodd and his brother Thomas took out a lease on the Coorong. The Dodd brothers came to South Australia in 1849 with their father who settled at Port Elliot. After spending some time at the Victorian diggings, James and Thomas took up 22 sq. miles along the Coorong from the Murray Mouth as far south as Rabbit Island. The Dodds later held Mundoo Island and a property on the Narrung Peninsula. On the Younghusband Peningula, the Dodd brothers originally kept cattle and sheep, but prior to 1870 they changed to horses due to the problem of coast disease. The property ran about 200 horses and in its heyday, was considered very successful, breeding mainly draught horses. There were elaborate horseyards and sizeable sheds, the horseyards being located opposite Rob's Point on the Younghusband Peninsula. Very little remains of these structures today. After mustering, the Dodds would swim the horses across the Coorong at Immigrants Crossing or Gnurling Point. Dodds Landing Point was probably also connected with their pastoral operation, possibly being the stopover for their steamer The Mundoo.

From 1859 until his death in 1872, James Dodd lived on the Peninsula. The homestead for this property, a solid, four roomed brick house with heavy gauge Scottish roofing iron, was built possibly in 1866. From 1872 Thomas Dodd lived on the Peninsula in this house. Located opposite Tauwitcherie Island there were several wells near the house which became known as Godfrey's camp (Godfrey was possibly a manager). The house is presently occupied as a weekender.

Thomas Dodd lived on Younghusband Peninsula until 1886, possibly employing Jack King as manager from this time. The District Council of Meningie Assessment Books of 1889, show that Dodd paid 4 pounds annual rental for the Crown leasehold of the peninsula property, which had the assessed value of 80 pounds. In 1902 an area of 1 acre was leased by William McBeath on the peninsula near Rabbit Island. Living in a hut on this small area, McBeath was possibly employed by Dodd as a farmhand or made a living as a rabbitshooter. By 1930 the peninsula property had become conomically unviable and was abandoned. This was mainly due to the destruction of the vegetation of the area by rabbits and the resultant sand drifts, which became a serious problem (S.A.A. Newspaper Cutting 1:105). Today, Michael Dodd continues to operate a property on the Narrung Peninsula which was established by his great-great grandfather Thomas Dodd.

An 1870 map also shows two other huts on the northern Younghusband Peninsula one opposite Nine Mile Point and another called Lousy Jacks near cattle Point. It is unknown if these were in Dodd's operation or fishermans huts, and if there are any remains today.

PARNKA, ON THE YOUNGHUSBAND PENINSULA

In the Hundred of Glyde, which encompasses Parnka, several annually renewable occupation licences were issued from 1846. The first grantees included Michael Martin, John Binney and Edward Spicer. By 1851, Michael Martin and John Bradford held Parnka under Lease. Charles Todd, when surveying the route for the Overland Telegraph in the mid 1850s, mentions stopping at Bradford's property between the Coorong and the sea, but it is possible that this station was further south than Parnka. (S.A. Parlt. Paper 1856 No. 11). In 1858 Parnka, which is an Aborigiial word meaning 'sandy beach', was transferred to John Barton Hack. A Quaker from Chichester, Hack arrived in the colony with his family in 1836.

"Hack was what we might call a big operator with impeccable connections and the damnest bad luck. He was in everything - land,

dairying, sheep, whaling and was even asked by Colonel Light to dig a canal from Port Adelaide to the City." (Baker, 1977 p. 44).

After loosing 30,000 pounds in the Colony's financial collapse of 1840, Hack prospered at the Bendigo diggings, returning to Adelaide with 40lb of gold. With his son Stephen, Hack brought Parnka in 1858 for 200 pounds and established a dairy. He built a house of shipwreck timber from the Coorong beach and although there are remains of a farmhouse at Parnka, it is uncertain if this was the one built by Hack or by subsequent farmers. Although Hack's cheese was highly acclaimed, he had problems with marketing his produce, as did other dairymen on the peninsula at the turn of the century. Hacks Point and Hacks Crossing commemorate John Barton Hack's rather shortlived dairying venture at Parnka from 1858-1862. Hack's House in association with Aboriginal sites at Parnka are presently being surveyed by Roger Luebbers an archaeologist from the Heritage Conservation Branch.

In 1863 the Parnka lease was transferred to John Baker M.L.C., who held the prestigious Lake Albert Estate. The combined properties, when sold on his death in 1872, were extremely successful, carrying 30,000 sheep and 500 cattle.

In the late nineteenth century there was closer settlement of the peninsula and several small farms were established. In 1889 William Ashby was the lessee, occupier of a fenced farm of 300 acres which comprised Round, Long and Cow Islands. Later in 1902, William Ashby held Black F' (1,390 acres) at Parnka, where he had a house and fenced farm; Ashby becoming a well known Coorong identity. To the south of Parnka on the peninsula, John Attrill held G' (994 acres), John Luscombe G² (933 acres) and William Robinson N (2,170 acres). In 1903 Thomas Goldfinch held O (4,175 acres), and this property was known as Wataleera. These small farms were generally lessee occupied and not outstations of other mainland properties. The huts or houses where the farmers lived were simple structures, often two roomed and made of stone from the mainland shore of the Coorong or galvanized iron; all are in ruins today. Four of the farmers kept dairy cows; however, these dairy farms were shortlived due to the difficulty of getting produce to market. According to Mincham (1973) however, the country on the Hummocks was well grassed at this time and suitable for dairy cattle. Near Parnka, the flats were ploughed and sown to lucerne for use as feed.

By 1920 only the larger farms had survived and several had increased in size. Claude and James Bascombe and later Elliot held a sizeable farm, including Parnka which combined, F, F¹ and g¹ (4m287 acres).

At one time they ran 800 sheep on the property and later 220 head of cattle. At this time Victor Shepherd held N (2,170 acres) and Harold Gates O (4,175 acres), and this property, Watalleera, was then occupied by Jim Wright, who was the last to have dairy cattle on the Peninsula about 50 - 60 years ago. The stone hut on this farm has since disappeared. (Pers. Comm. Mr. E. Singh). Ruben Taylor who held g² (933 acres) from 1910, still occupied this land in 1920. He was a well known farmer along the Coorong, keeping sheep and cattle. He built a galvanized iron hut near Long Bay which was later to become the home for Longmires farm. Longmire established an elaborate sheep shearing shed and yards immediately west of this hut, probably after the Second World War. The remains of the nissen hut shearing shed hut and yards are still visible today. The Younghusband Peninsula near Parnka received sporadic pastoral use after the 1920s until about 1960 and the Longmires venture near Long Bay being the most ambitious. There was a road along the Coorong shore of the Younghusband Peninsula from the southern boundary of Lease O to F¹. This road serviced the small farms and possibly dates from the late nineteenth century. Farmers with horses and carts would cross the Coorong south of Salt Creek or at Parnka on the ferry. Today the road is almost overgrown.

McGRATH FLAT

McGrath Flat is not within the boundary of the Coorong National Park, but is of considerable local importance. In 1863 Thomas McCallum purchased McGrath Flat which is north east of the Princes Highway, establishing an extensive pastoral property, mainly carrying sheep. This property soon became a focus in the northern Coorong, Meningie district, and incorporated an Aboriginal settlement, a sizeable homestead which was a mail coach stopover and telegraph station. Members of the McCallum family were also actively involved in the District Council of Meningie and State politics. Also within the McGrath Flat property were Parnka Point and Hacks Point on the mainland side of the Coorong and the islands from the Needles to Jacks Point.

SMALL FARMS ALONG THE MAINLAND COORONG SHORE

On the mainland side of the Coorong there were several small farms in the vicinity of Parnka and McGrath Flat and south towards Salt Creek.

WOODS WELL

From 1890, Sections 29 and 30, comprising 132 acres, Hundred of Glyde were leased from Thomas McCallum by Joseph Wood. On this land, which was known as Woods Well, there was a hut and stable and a landing near the Coorong's edge. In 1902 Thomas Goldfinch leased 1 acre in Section 29 which area is now within the Coorong National Park.

POLICEMANS POINT

In 1902 A. McLeod leased Sections 34 and 35, Hundred of Santo from John Gall. This area at Policemans Point was a small farm of about 107 acres, with a hut, stable and well. In 1903 a small area of 40 acres, Section 2, near Policemans Point was leased to W.J. Coad. Section 1 another 40 acre area to the south of Policemans Point was leased to Jim Trevarrow, a Cornishman and his Aboriginal wife Alice Walker. The Trevarrow family were not farmers, but made a living by selling fish and other jobs such as fencing and wool pressing (Mincham, 1966). Several mulberry trees mark the location of Trevarrow's house, which possibly dated from the 1860's and the ruins of which have recently been demolished. Between Policemans Point and Salt Creek there was a farm comprising Sections 36 - 46, Hundred of Santo, which was leased by Alex McLeod from John Gall in 1890. The area of 220 acres was a fenced sheep run. Only a few sections of this area fall within the present boundary of the Coorong National Park.

SALT CREEK

In 1889 Sections 32 and 33, Hundred of Santo at Salt Creek were a small fenced farm which were occupied by William Hastings and leased from John Gall.

THE SOUTHERN COORONG: JOHN GALL AND CANTARA HOMESTEAD

The Southern Coorong runs were taken up under occupation licence in 1846 by T.G.F. Lang near Salt Creek and later Peter MacDonald. John Walker and John Rankine held Coolatoo, forming a company and employing W. Cook as manager. They held the Coolatoo lease and the Coorong run (leases 226 and 226A) and on 12 square miles ran 1020 sheep until about



Anna Maria Gall (Batton) wife of
John Gall
b. 26 May, 1844 m. 12 Jan., 1863
d. 1938

Photos courtesy Mrs. Marilyn Jeisman



John Gall established 'Cantara' on the Coorong
b. 22 Dec., 1830 d. 10 Dec., 1907

1870. In the 1860s the mail coach stopped at the Coolatoo homestead which was known as Rankines. South of this area, William Harding and George Bunn held extensive sheep runs near Tilley's Swamp which were held under lease from the early 1850s. A large ruin in the Southern Coorong near the Old Melbourne road is known locally as Bunn's Woolshed. The infamous Malachi Martin had a small cattle property on the Younghusband Peninsula near Bul Bul Soak.

JOHN GALL

The area south of Salt Creek changed hands several times before the mid 1870s, by which time leases were issued to John Gall. By 1889 John Gall and his family held nearly all the area under lease or freehold south of Salt Creek on both sides of the Coorong. His northern property was Salt Creek Station and he also held Cantara which comprised Chinamans Well and Coolatoo, Tilley's Swamp and Dalkeith (White Hut) 17 miles north of Kingston. His holdings made up one of the most important properties along the Coorong.

John Gall was born 22nd December, 1830 in Aberdeenshire, Scotland. To avoid being transported to the antipodes, having been guilty of the serious offence of shooting two hares, his father sent him to South Australia in 1847. He was then aged 17 and he worked for his uncle for five years on a sheep property on Yorke Peninsula where he gained considerable experience in property management.

After experiencing little luck in the goldfields, as did many other Scottish immigrants, Gall settled in the South East. He worked for ten or eleven years on properties in this area, finding employment in various occupations including farm overseer and contracts cleaning scabby sheep. When he was colt breaking at Warratenbullie, he became acquainted with the poet Adam Lindsay Gordon. By 1862 Gall had accumulated 500 pounds, sufficient capital to purchase his own property Scrubby Station (now Kircunda near Tilley's Swamp) which he held only for a short time. In 1863 he married Anna Batton and the witness was John Rankine of Coolatoo Station. Gall later purchased Tilley's Swamp and Cantara Stations, living at the latter when he was first married for a short period, then at Tilley's Swamp from 1866-1883 with his brother-in-law Richard Batton managing Cantara. From 1883 Gall had the mail run in the South East from Meningie to Kingston. This provided a considerable addition of 2,440 pounds per annum to his income and he also drove Judges Boothby and

Wearing on circuit duty in the South East. At this time Gall built and lived at Cantara Homestead, home for his wife and family of fourteen children. The homestead is presently within the boundary of the Coorong National Park.

John Gall was a founding member of the District Council of Meningie from 1889 to August, 1890, giving old age as his reason for retirement from this council. It is likely also that the long distance travelled between Cantara and Meningie was a major drawback, as Gall was subsequently Chairman of the Lacepede District Council from 1892 until his death in 1907. During this time he missed only four council meetings. In addition, Gall was also President of the Kingston Pastoral, Agricultural and Horticultural Society and the Lacepede Bay Institute, donating the land for the showground.

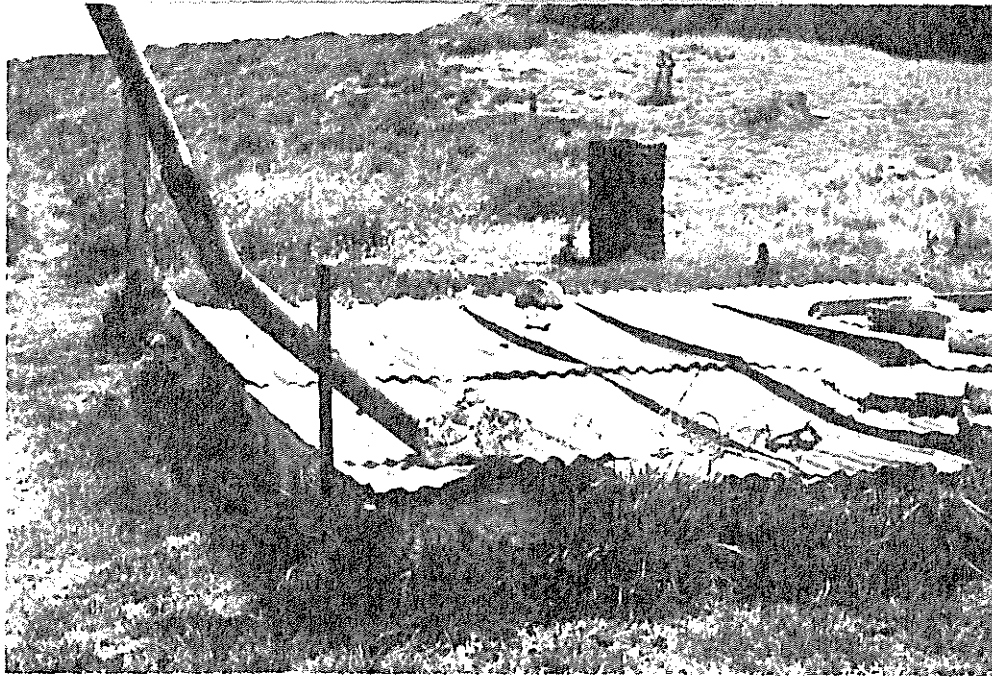
"Mr. Gall had a fine sense of citizenship and never allowed his personal worries to interfere with a proper demonstration of his community obligations". (Cockburn 1925, 1927 p. 176).

GALL'S PASTORAL OPERATIONS

John Gall came to South Australia with very little experience or money yet by the late nineteenth century his holdings and pastoral operations were considerable.

"Mr. Gall was looked upon as a man who had done a great deal to develop the pastoral industry and during his half century residence in the South East did much by pluck, energy and endurance to prepare the way for his successors". (Burgess, 1907. 1909 p. 984)

The properties of Gall at one time aggregated about 300 square miles supporting 3,500 sheep, 1,500 horses and 1,000 cattle. Tilley Swamp was mainly devoted to sheep and Cantara ran 200 cattle and 1,500 horses. The class of horses favoured was heavy and medium draught and the J.A.L. brand became widely known throughout South Australia. Gall's horses were sold locally and were also sent to India. The Cantara property suffered greatly from wild dogs and rabbits, the former being eradicated. Rabbits, however, continued to be a menace and due to the devastation caused by this pest the number of horses had been reduced from 1,500 to 350 by the time of John Gall's death, 10 December 1907 from which time his son assumed control of Cantara. For many years Joseph Hall, who was born in 1867, managed the family property of Dalkeith. Associated



Household water supply for Cantara Homestead from a stone reinforced underground well



Site of Old Cantara Homestead, denuded dunes a legacy from overgrazing

with the horsebreeding property of Cantara there were fences, stables and horseyards which were located several hundred metres north of the homestead near the original house. Very little of these structures remain today. Employed on the property there were originally many stockmen. Alf Watson, an Aboriginal who had worked for Gall for many years, lived with his wife in a traditional shelter north of the Cantara homestead until his death, possibly in the late 1920s. (Pers. Comm. Mr. M. Phillips).

CANTARA HOMESTEAD Section 76, Hundred of Neville

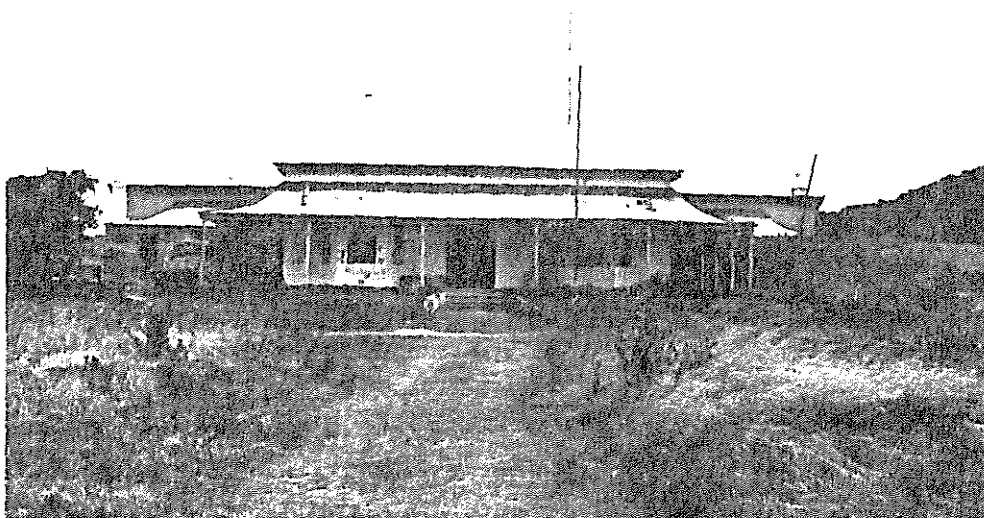
The remains of the original homestead which was not built by John Gall but was occupied by him briefly after he was married in 1863, was located several hundred metres north of the present homestead. This original homestead was in ruins in the 1930s. (Pers. Comm. Mr. P. Loyd). The scant remains of the footings are still visible today.

The present Cantara Homestead, a sizeable, elegant house, was built possibly in the late 1870s-early 1880s and occupied by Gall after 1883. Built of local stone carted on wagons to the site, the house has fourteen main rooms, a main passage 16 metres long and ceilings about 3 metres high. The builder's name was Jarman and the house cost 3,000 pounds to build. Other building materials, included heavy gauge roofing iron from Scotland, (much of which still remains today), Italian marble fireplaces and cedar from South America. Access to the house is across a causeway over a large salt pan and this road dates probably from the early 1880s. Crossing the causeway, Cantara Homestead, with the dunes of the Younghusband Peninsula immediately to the west, has an imposing aspect and the site was probably chosen for this reason. There are also several wells near the house, one reinforced with stone near the northern kitchen wing. Around the turn of the century there were many outbuildings, including a washhouse, stockmen's quarters, garages and poultry houses. There is little trace of these today.

John Gall and his wife Anna had fourteen children and the large house provided the necessary accommodation which was undoubtedly elegant. There was a large drawing room which housed a grand piano, a dining room, a large entrance hall, large bedrooms and the house was surrounded by an elevated verandah. The thick stone walls would have kept the house cool in summer and fireplaces in every room provided warmth in winter.



Cantara Homestead, foreground, causeway across lake in background



Cantara Homestead, 1982

Periodic visitors stayed at the Cantara, but due to its isolated location very few large functions were held there. In the early nineteenth century there was a telegraph relay station at Cantara and Gall's daughters Annie and Ruby operated the post office services there, possibly until the 1920s. John Gall's wife, Anna who lived at Cantara until about 1930, died in Adelaide in 1938. When John Gall's son Murray Gall died in the 1930s, Joseph Gall employed a manager A. Cameron who operated Cantara until it was sold in the early 1940s. Subsequent owners of Cantara after the Galls have included F. Nancarrow and Lindsay, with their manager McFayden and the Jeffrey family who held Cantara from the early 1950s until about 1972, by which time the station was considerably reduced in size. The Jeffrey family ran about 2,800 sheep at Cantara.

National Parks and Wildlife Service purchased the property in September, 1972. By this time most of the pastoral animals had been removed from the Younghusband Peninsula although the occasional wild sheep can still be seen near Cantara Homestead. Some fencing, possibly dating from the Jeffrey's ownership, is still visible on the Cantara property and weeds and erosion are an evident legacy from the pastoral occupation of the area.

HARD TIMES FOR COORONG PASTORALISTS

From the earliest exploration in the South East, the Coorong coastal belt was recognized as land of inferior quality. According to 'the best land first principle', areas north of the Coorong on the Narrung Peninsula and south to Rivoli Bay and Cape Jaffa were the first to be taken up by pastoralists and were more closely settled. By the early 1840s;

'Some good land had been surveyed for pastoralists around the margins of Lake Alexandrina and Lake Albert, but exploration of 50 miles of the Coorong coastline had revealed only mallee scrub and sandhills". (Dunn, 1969 p.12)

Towards Kingston land was also found to be less favourable, "...but the flats between Lacepede Bay and the Coorong were of a more doubtful quality. Much of the land was infertile and every winter it was inundated by floodwaters from the higher land in the South East". (Dunn, 1969 p.15)

Accordingly, when occupation licences were replaced by leases in 1850 and three grades of rentals were established based on land quality, the land near the Coorong was rated third class, the annual rental being 10/- per square mile per annum.

When settled, the Younghusband Peninsula was found to be marginal land especially for small farms. Those dairymen and farmers who established small holdings on the peninsula suffered many hardships, some of which are described below. Only those pastoralists such as Baker, Gall and Dodd who held extensive areas, comprising land of mixed quality on both sides of the Coorong, achieved any success. Later these Coorong properties were reduced in size yielding them economically unviable by the 1960s.

An early problem for pastoralists was containing stock in unfenced areas. The peninsula, however, perhaps afforded a better natural confine than elsewhere in the south east and shepherds were engaged to supervise animals. By the turn of the century, the small farms on the peninsula were generally fenced, overcoming the worry of straying stock.

COAST DISEASE

A severe problem particularly prevalent along the south east coast was "coast disease" which was caused by a deficiency of copper and cobalt in the soil. The complaint mainly affected sheep, which became emaciated and crippled when depastured in the "coasty" districts. Unable to lamb, the sheep also produced wool which was wiry and unsuitable for the British market. Before it was discovered that coastal disease was associated with soil nutrient deficiency, pastoralists such as Dodd, learnt that stock fared better if depastured for only short periods of the year near the coast and later agisted further inland, where the animals' condition would improve. Both Dodd and Gall favoured horses over sheep, because the former were less susceptible to the coastal condition. Coastal disease is no longer a problem in the south east, having been rectified by the addition of trace elements to the soil from about 1930.

CROSSING THE COORONG

Of difficulty for the pastoralists on Younghusband Peninsula was crossing stock from the peninsula to the mainland. Summer crossings were comparatively easy, however,

"The crossing of the Coorong was a nightmare, especially in the winter when they had to swim their horses, which made life very difficult". (Mincham, 1966 p. 43).

James Dodd, in particular, had difficulty in crossing stock from the peninsula at the treacherous Murray Mouth to his property on Mundoo Island. Lewis, an early stock agent in South Australia, describes one of Dodd's crossings with 50 cattle,

"We got them to take to the water and Jim Dodd, in a boat with two black fellows, was directing the cattle across, but the current was too strong for them and they were taken out to sea.... However, a little later we saw the boat on top of a huge breaker. Fortunately it carried them a long distance towards the Coorong and they managed to get onto the sand at Barkers Knoll... It was a most exciting time". (Baker, 1977 p. 40)

Dodd later employed a steamer called The Mundoo for the purpose of crossing stock mainly sheep.

MARKETING

For the dairymen of the Coorong, including John Barton Hack in the 1850s and Bart Ashby and several others at the turn of the century, a great obstacle was getting their perishable dairy produce to market. They would take cream and butter (over bad sandy roads) to Meningie and then by the paddle steamer Jupiter to Milang, from where it was carried by horse and cart to Adelaide. Later the route was via Tailem Bend, bypassing Milang.

"All up it would have been a 24 hour journey to market for the dairy produce. Sadly, a case of 'bang off the lid and stand back', if the weather turned hot". (Baker, 1977, p. 46)

VERMIN

It is not known to what extent native fauna, such as kangaroos and wombats, were considered pests by early pastoralists in this area. The eradication of such natural competitors was probably more easily achieved on the Younghusband Peninsula than elsewhere and early kangaroo and wombat hunts would have undoubtedly effected their numbers. The major problem for pastoralists from the late nineteenth century and still present today in large numbers, were the rabbit and fox. The wild dog was a problem at one time, but was generally eradicated early from in this area. The first major rabbit plague along the Coorong was in 1882 and this introduced pest provided considerable competition with stock for feed and also devastated the natural vegetation which led to sand drift. From this time, pastoralists along the Coorong reduced the numbers of sheep, 80,000 being shorn in the year 1882 in the Coorong area. (Smith, 1950 p. 8) A vermin proof wire netting fence was erected from the Coorong out to Cookes Plains in the 1890s. This fence was erected to contain foxes and wild dogs. A ld. tariff was paid by landholders at this time for the destruction of foxes. According to Mincham (1966), the vermin proof fence had a bad effect on native birds and other scrub animals. The fence was possibly located on the Coorong near Rabbit Island.

ECONOMIC DEPRESSION

As elsewhere in the State, pastoralists along the Coorong were at the mercy of the prevailing economic climate and this, combined with several serious drought years, saw difficult times for Coorong pastoralists. Such was the case for pastoralists such as John Gall when, during the droughts of the 1860s, sheep prices were very low. The Jeffrey family who held Cantara in the late 1960s also suffered economic hardship when after several dry years, the statewide wool scene crashed. Pastoral landuse discontinued at Cantara after this time.

CULTIVATION OF CROPS

There was some cultivation of wheat near Salt Creek in the 1870s and this was bagged and taken by schooner from that location. It is unlikely that wheat cultivation was extensive, however, as an Atlas of 1876 by Wigg and Son shows that of the 1,187,840 acres in the Hundreds of Santo, Neville and Glyde, only 290 acres were under cultivation. According to Cornelius Proud writing in 1881, most cultivation was for animal feed;

"Toward Kingston, of late, there has been a good deal of land taken up for cultivation, but the wheat and rye grown there are generally eaten as grasses, or cut for hay for which there is a great demand."

Late last century, barley, rye and oats were sown on the northern estuarine flats of the Younghusband Peninsula by the Dodds for horsefeed and in the 1920s oats were also grown by the Galls in the paddocks on the dunes immediately south of Cantara Homestead. The serious weed problem at Cantara possibly relates to this introduction of exotic grasses.

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Mr. Bill Haywood of Meningie, Mr. Robin Bourne and Mrs. June Prosser,
District Council of Meningie, Mrs. Nancye Fagg, Mr. Hans Mincham, Mr.
Michael Dodd, out of Meningie, Mr. V. McLaren and Mr. and Mrs. George
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EARLY RECREATION ALONG THE COORONG

Although the level of recreational useage of the Coorong has become more marked in recent times, occasional hunting trips and pleasure excursions also took place from the nineteenth century.

Recreation activities in the last century along the Coorong certainly related to the sport of hunting. One early report is of a wombat hunt in 1844, the participants being Governor Grey's exploration party. A kangaroo hunt was also the means of entertainment for royal visitors to the Coorong in the 1860s. Probably the most important hunting excursions, however, related to the shooting of wild duck and this sport is still practiced in the Coorong Game Reserve for a limited open season. It was for wild duck shooting that the Coorong became known as a sportsman's paradise and the peak of this activity was possibly in the 1930s, although even at this time there was a defined duck shooting season and a daily limit on the number of ducks shot. These restrictions resulted largely from the dramatic reduction in duck numbers through overshooting. Around the turn of the century punt guns, rather more like cannons, were used along the Coorong. Capable of shooting up to one hundred ducks with one blast, the punt gun was later banned in Australia. A traditional practice developed of shooting Mountain Duck and other waterfowl on soaks along the Coorong.

"...here a fine old sporting practice of fire from blinds into massed flocks drinking at soaks has persisted. Sometimes the soak is dug out to form a narrow gutter running away from the blind to afford a more efficient enfilade" (Frith, 1977 p. 149-150).

The 1930s was a significant period for duck shooting along the Coorong. At this time "Sporting Macs" at Policemans Point became somewhat of a traditional hunters club, providing accommodation and facilities for duck shooters. Reports of this period extoll the virtues of the Coorong for wild duck and rabbit shooting.

Another recreational activity carried on in the Coorong district in the nineteenth century was horseracing. In 1881, at the time of the visit of the Dukes of Yorke and Clarence, there was horseracing and merrymaking along the Coorong Beach. (Smith, 1950, p.4) The royal visitors, however, bypassed this event. Also, horseracing was carried out by John Gall on a salt lake near the Coolatoo Hotel and this event was possibly patronised by people from the Kingston district.

From 1907, people from the Narrung area made an annual excursion to the Younghusband Peninsula for a picnic. Other daytrips were conducted by local people to the mainland side of the Coorong, particularly the cliffs, which location gives a scenic view of the Coorong. "Needless to say the picnics in this interesting part of the district were always a success and very enjoyable." (Holtham, J.M. 1954). These excursions, which did not usually involve shooting or fishing, reflect the increasing appreciation of the scenic merits of the Coorong. The publication, Progress in Australia in September, 1930, refers to the Coorong as a wonderful stretch of water, and of the pleasurable sight of the many nesting pelicans. It recommended the Coorong as an ideal day trip from Meningie. The expanding use of motorised transport probably give increased access to places such as the Coorong.

The practice of camping and revisiting specific locations along the Coorong as was traditional with local Aboriginal people even after more permanent occupation has ceased, was adopted by many of the white population. Especially after the 1890s, recreational camping was gaining in popularity amongst local people and city dwellers and the Public Service Review of this period gives several accounts of camping along the Coorong. It was a challenge, especially for city dwellers to live off the land, eating local fish and game and carrying minimal equipment. One party in 1895, however, carried a 10 gallon keg of beer to the Neddles; the keg was carefully installed in wet weed near the water's edge to keep it cool. A newcomer to camping in 1903 described some of the discomforts he experienced:

"Of course, sand always plays an important part in every meal and when you have porridge you must always use two spoons - one to sup the porridge with and the other - to lift the flies out, for no sooner do you get them out than in tumble some more....for it seemed that every fly in Adelaide had taken its annual leave and followed us to the Coorong". (Camp Oven, 1903 p. 89)

Surprisingly enough, the writer fails to mention the ants of the Coorong, yet despite his complaints he goes on to describe the excellent fishing and good swimming along the Coorong Beach. After a fortnight camping, a local fisherman collected the campers and conveyed them in his boat to Goolwa from where they returned to Adelaide.

From 1901, several five acre camping reserves were proclaimed in the northern Coorong. These locations were set aside for use by recreational

and professional fishermen. Although not specifically set aside for use by fishermen, the Public Purpose Reserve of 1923-1926 on the northern Peninsula was gaining increasing use at that time. Makeshift shelters were established by some fishermen in this area and after the Second World War, official shack licences were granted. Many of the shacks date from this period and on $\frac{1}{4}$ acre blocks, an annual licence was issued to each shackholder for camping purposes. In 1950, 20% of licences on the Younghusband Peninsula were held by Adelaide people, the majority being from Goolwa and Milang. The major activity of these shack holders was fishing. In 1955, a Public Recreation Reserve was gazetted in the northern peninsula comprising the previous Public Purpose Reserve and other land purchased by Sir James Gosse. After the Second World War a nissen hut was built at Parnka on the Peninsula, which was used for recreational purposes by the Salvation Army Boys Home at Mount Barker; this hut was used possibly into the 1970s, but is presently falling into a state of disrepair.

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CONSERVATION MOVEMENT: THE COORONG

From the late 1890's there were three major conservation thrusts relating to the Coorong. These were to protect the breeding ground of pelicans against marauding fishermen, to limit the slaughter of ducks at soaks along the Younghusband Peninsula and to remove stock from the peninsula which was reducing the natural vegetation and resulting in considerable soil erosion.

THE PELICAN ISLANDS

Pelicans were considered a pest by fishermen due to the birds habit of raiding fishing nets. In an effort to protect their interests, there were massacres of nesting birds and their young, by local fishermen particularly on the Pelican Islands. By the turn of the century, the decline in pelican numbers in the Coorong area was of great concern to the South Australian Ornithological Association and in particular the Society's Secretary, Mr. Mellor, from whom Mellor Island takes its name:

"From 1904 to 1919 the South Australian Ornithological Association (S.A.O.A.) leased these islands, then from 1919 to 1962 the S.A.O.A. paid a rental of one shilling a year on the islands for an annual licence in an attempt to prevent the illegal destruction of the eggs by fishermen". (Chapman, Delroy and Noye 1974 p. 108)

From about 1910 the S.A.O.A. employed a warden, a local resident named Goldfinch and although some illegal destruction of eggs continued, the problem of declining pelican numbers was largely overcome. In 1963, the six islands, Teal Island, North Pelican Island, Pelican Island, Halfway Island, Mellor Island and an unnamed island to the south together with all waters for 7 chains from highwater mark around the islands were declared Prohibited Areas and were administered by the Department of Fisheries and Fauna Conservation and from 1972 by the National Parks and Wildlife Service.

SOIL CONSERVATION

Largely due to the efforts of Sir James Gosse who was at one time Chairman of the Flora and Fauna Board and an active conservationist, several areas in the northern Younghusband Peninsula were set aside as

reserves for soil conservation and within these areas the depasturing of stock was prohibited. In 1923 and 1926 several areas near the Murray Mouth and the area between Mount Mills and Mount Anderson were gazetted Public Purpose Reserves. The setting aside of these areas had the dual purpose of setting aside public area for recreation and with no stock being depastured, permitting the spread of grasses which were resistant to sand drift (S.G.O. 3340/1915). In 1948 Sir James Gosse, after purchasing freehold a large area from the Bowman and Warren families, made further land available for soil conservation. In a letter to the Premier, Mr. Playford, dated 14th October, 1948, Gosse stated that he was making the area over to the Government:

"...for the purpose of attempting to restore the sandhills waste to a condition as depicted by George French Angas in his pictures of early South Australia...available on condition that your Government in co-operation with the Waite Institute will make these freehold together with the adjacent Crown Lands, available for experimental work in the fight against soil erosion". (Fisheries & Game 24/1937)

The freehold area and the adjacent Crown Lands became Section 590 Hundred of Baker and this area, with Section Z, between Mt. Mills and Mt. Anderson, a total length of peninsula of about 45 km was gazetted a Public Purpose Reserve in 1950. Stock was no longer depastured in this area with most stray animals being removed, the road along the Coorong shore was subsequently closed and in several locations there were marram grass plantings, only one of which remains today. (Noye, 1974 p. 4)

SANCTUARIES ALONG THE COORONG

From the early nineteenth century there were conscientious moves to limit the shooting of ducks along the Coorong and it is largely as a result of the government controls on the daily bag and the proclaiming of a set season for duck shooting that the duck canning factory near the Old Aboriginal Mission Station was closed in the 1890s. The first sanctuary protecting birds was proclaimed in 1908, for a period of 5 years under the Birds Protection Act of 1908. This Act prevented people from entering and thus shooting birds, on all the islands south of Parnka excluding Cattle Island. Subsequently, sanctuaries were proclaimed in 1914 and 1920, protecting the islands and waters of the Coorong in the vicinity of Parnka from the Needles to Policemans Point. In 1920 local

people formed a formidable lobby against Coorong sanctuaries and a petition of 160 signatures claimed that the restriction on duck shooting was disadvantages to many local shooters, including returned soldiers for whom duck shooting was an important adjunct to their livelihood. As a consequence from 1925 the sanctuary area was reduced to the waters from the Needles to the Stone jetty opposite Stony Well and proclaimed under the Animals and Birds Protection Act of 1919. Under the terms of this Act there were limits to the number of wild ducks shot per day and the type of gun used.

There were several approaches to the government in the 1930s to make a permanent reserve along the Coorong, including a deputation to the Premier by Mr. Cecil Rix, later Chairman of the Land Board. There were several letters to the Department of Fisheries and Game even from shooters, decrying the slaughter of ducks along the Coorong, especially at soaks near the peninsula. As a result of these complaints, the Chief Inspector of Fisheries and Game in March, 1937 endeavoured to eliminate the duck slaughter from the Younghusband Peninsula by proposing a sanctuary on the peninsula and waters, from Mount Mills to Cantara Homestead. This scheme was decidedly too ambitious for the time and although some of the landholders were in agreement when approached, there was sufficient opposition for the proposal to be abandoned.

By 1955 by which time Sir James Gosse had died, the northern area of the peninsula comprising approximately 6660 ha. had been declared a sanctuary under the Animals and Birds Protection Act of 1919-1938, administered by the Minister of Agriculture. There were also moves at this time to extend the sanctuary southward on the peninsula near the Needles and Parnka, an area where there was still considerable duck shooting. There was a great deal of local opposition and protest, largely from the shooting lobby and local business people, against the northern area of the Coorong and the proposed extension being proclaimed a sanctuary. As a result, the earlier proclamation for the northern peninsula was revoked in June, 1955. Debate subsequently ensued as to Gosse's intentions in making the land available to the Government; those decrying the revokation claiming that although it was not specified, Gosse an ardent conservationist would have undoubtedly wished to see the area a sanctuary and that the Government of the day had dishonoured his wishes. (Flora and Fauna Committee, Fisheries and Game 47/1954).

In 1964 a Mrs. Long was keen to see birds on her peninsula property protected and as a result of approaching the Department of Fisheries and Fauna Conservation, the Coorong sanctuary was proclaimed under the Fauna Conservation Act of 1964-1965 on the peninsula from the Needles to Long Island, when previously only the waters of the Coorong were protected. In 1966 Mrs. Long's property and that of the late Mr. R.M. Longmire, who had also made enquiries about a sanctuary on his land, were purchased by the Government. This area, comprising the peninsula from approximately the Needles to Fat Cattle Point, which was no longer viable for grazing and was purchased cheaply, came under the control of the National Parks Commission in 1966. The Game Reserve, 6840 ha. was purchased in 1968 and both areas came under the joint administration of the National Parks and Wildlife Service in 1972, affording the area better protection than under the previous sanctuary system.

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Retired Chairman of the Land Board Mr. C. Rix.

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APPENDIX 1

PLACE NAMES OF THE COORONG

The nomenclature of the Coorong comprises a mixture of European and Aborigine words, the latter being more common in the northern Coorong where Aboriginal association has remained strongest. Some names are descriptive of local topography, whilst others relate to events and people associated with specific locations. The following list, by no means comprehensive, gives the origin of major place names along the Coorong; the meanings of some names such as Coolatoo and Cantara have long since been lost.

Barkers Knoll	Place where Captain Collett Barker disappeared presumed killed by Aborigines in 1831
Chinamans Well	Possibly Built by itinerant Chinese or location settled by Chinese in 1850s.
Campbell Point	Relates to nearby Campbell House Estate at one time owned by John Baker and later the Bowman family.
Coorong	Descriptive. From the Aboriginal word "Karangh" meaning 'narrow neck'.
Dodds Landing Point	Named after the brothers James and Thomas Dodd who had a property on the Younghusband Peninsula.
Gnurlung Point	Descriptive. From an Aboriginal word meaning 'shallow water'.
Hacks Crossing Hacks Point	Named after John Barton Hack who had a dairy on the Younghusband Peninsula in the 1850s.

- Hells Gates Descriptive. Hazardous outcrop of limestone near narrow portion of Coorong waters, possibly named by local fishermen.
- Hummocks Descriptive. Meaning knolls or rising ground and describing the sand dunes on the Younghusband Peninsula.
- Hundreds Baker, Co. Russell, gaz. 1860.
Named after John Tuthill Baker, local pastoralist and owner of Narrung Estate and M.L.C. 1851-1872
- Bonney, Co. Russell, gaz. 1860
Named after Charles Bonney early overlander of stock along the Coorong and M.P. 1857-1858, M.L.C. 1865-1866.
- Duffield, Co. MacDonnell, gaz, 1864
Named after Walter Duffield, M.P. 1857-1871 and M.L.C. 1873-1880
- Glyde, Co. Cardwell, gaz. 1864
Named after Lavington Glyde, M.P. 1857-1884
- Neville, Co. Cardwell, gaz. 1864.
Named after Naville Blyth, M.P. 1860-1878.
- Santo, Co. Cardwell, gaz. 1864
Named after Phillip Santo, M.P. 1860-1870 and M.L.C. 1871-1881.
- Margit Wreck Wreck crossing Crossing at location of Margit wrecked on Coorong beach in 1911.
- McGrath Flat Property just south of where George McGrath was killed by Aborigines in 1843.

Mellor Island	Named after the secretary of the South Australian Ornithological Association whose efforts helped protect pelicans' breeding areas along the Coorong.
Mount Anderson	Possibly named after a government surveyor. High sand dune on Younghusband Peninsula.
Mount Mills	origin as above
Mount Murray	Possibly named after the government surveyor, A. Murray. High sand dune on the Younghusband Peninsula which was a Trigonometric Reserve.
Murray Mouth	Descriptive. Narrow outlet of the River Murray to the sea.
Nine Mile Point	Imperial measurement commonly used locally to describe area corresponding along the Coorong.
Parnka	Descriptive. An Aboriginal word meaning 'sandy beach'.
Pelican Point	Descriptive. An area abounding in pelicans, possibly named by G.F. Angas in 1844.
Pelican Islands	Descriptive. Nesting place of pelicans.
Policemans Point	Varying explanations. Possibly a policeman stationed there at an Aboriginal Station. (Praite & Tolley). Several policemen camped there before arresting Malachi Martin. Association with local policeman named Rollison.

Salt Creek	Descriptive. Name given by G.F. Angas describing creek's salty waters although Angas under the misconception the creek flowed eastward from the Coorong.
Stony Well	Descriptive. Stone sided well. Stone cut locally.
The Wheels	Describes location where remains of trolley wheels used to transport <u>Dora Bassett</u> over the Younghusband Peninsula.
Teatree Crossing	Descriptive. Area vegetated with teatree, so named early settlers brewed a form of tea.
Woods Well	Several explanations. Meeting place of Burr and Angas in 1844 with an overlander Thomas Woods. Possibly named after a farmer Joseph Wood who settled at that location in 1890.
Younghusband Peninsula	Named after William Younghusband M.L.C. 1851-1861

Compiled from various sources including:

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Further explanation of Aboriginal names and meanings available from N.B. Tindale's maps. Aboriginal Section, Heritage and Conservation Branch, Department of Environment and Planning.

APPENDIX II

CHRONOLOGY OF EARLY EUROPEAN SETTLEMENT ALONG THE COORONG

- 1800-30 Smallpox plague struck most Aboriginal communities in South East, possibly decimating 50% of the population in some areas.
- 1802 The coastline explored by the French Navigator Captain Nicolas Baudin. Describes Younghusband Peninsula in his journal.
- 1802-39 South East Coast visited only by whalers and sealers.
- 1829-30 Murray Mouth explored by Captain Charles Sturt in his voyage down the Murray. The Coorong, however, was overlooked.
- 1831 Captain Collet Barker the first white man to enter the Coorong proper. Speared to death while searching for the Second River Murray Mouth.
- 1836 Coorong did not appear on first map produced of South Australia, although more conscientious exploration efforts after this time.
- Dec. 1837 The Coorong waters proper discovered by Strangways and Hutchinson. Two unknowns possibly proceeded this expedition by a matter of weeks.
- June 21 1838 The first written description of the Coorong waterway
New Year 1838 by Captain Gill after being shipwrecked on the brig Fanny 20 miles south east of Murray Mouth.
 Captain Blenkinsop (eminent citizen of the colony owning a whaling station at Encounter Bay) and Sir John Jeffcott, the first Chief Justice of South Australia drowned in the northern Coorong.

- 1839 Charles Bonney overlanded cattle through the South East and established a stock route along the South Eastern coast between Portland and Adelaide.
- June 1840 Ship Maria wrecked. Survivors murdered by Aborigines along the Coorong. Two Aborigines tried and hanged by a punitive party led by Major O'Halloran
- 1840 Police Inspector Alexander Tolmer nearly shot by mistake near Salt Creek
- 1840 First survey of the Murray Mouth with official soundings by Lieutenant W.J.S. Pullen.
- 1841-2 Economic depression in the Colony.
- June 1842 George McGrath killed by Aborigines near to McGrath Flat while overlanding cattle to Portland.
- 1843 Meningie was established as an outstation of the South Australian Company. The town name is believed to be an Aboriginal word meaning 'mud'.
- 1844 George French Angas accompanied the Governor Sir George Grey and Thomas Bull on their exploration trip to the South East. Angas compiles detailed description of the area and Aboriginal inhabitants.
- 1844 Previous to this time the South East coast held in low regard. Copper boom brought an influx of population to South Australia.
- 1846 W. Newland and J. Brown cross Murray Mouth while with sheep on way to South East to establish sheep runs. Travelling stock reserve proclaimed along the Coorong.
- 1846-47 Police Commissioner Tolmer asked to survey a mail route from Adelaide to Mount Gambier and a mail service established soon after.

- 1846-47 John Walker and John Rankine take up an annual licence for Coolatoo. Other licences taken up near Parnka.
- 1847 First hotel licence for Salt Creek issued to W.A. Carter. Several Inns established subsequently along Coorong Road.
- 1848 Establishment of Wellington Ferry.
- 1850 McGrath Flat taken up as a pastoral run.
- 1851 Pastoral Leases issued for the South East including the Coorong.
- 1852 Coorongite discovered near Alf's Flat (near Messent, N.P.) by party of gold escort troopers looking for stray horses.
- 1850s Route along the Coorong Road travelled extensively by those heading east to the diggings although a Gold Escort Route established north of the Coorong Road.
- 1855 Richard Loveday surveyed Sections 21 to 28, Hundred of Glyde. Malachi Martin murders start Salt Creek.
- 1855-56 Sir Charles Todd surveys a route along the Coorong for the Overland Telegraph Line established soon after.
- 1856 Navigation of Coorong by steamer, by Captain Cadell as far as Salt Creek.
- 1857-63 Many Chinese headed for diggings in Victoria. Landed in South Australia along coast to avoid the poll tax imposed in Victoria. Several Chinese possibly settled at Chinaman's Well.
- 1858-62 John Barton Hack ran a dairy on the Younghusband Peninsula at Parnka.

- 1858 Township of Kingston established by Cooke brothers, Archibald and James.

- 1859 George Taplin established the mission and pastoral property at Point McLeay in the heart of Jarildekald country; known by the Aboriginies as Raukkan. As the first European to live with the Ngarrindjeri, his published account and observations provide the most detailed information of traditional life in the South East.

- late 1850s Rounsvell began mail coach passenger service from Adelaide to Mount Gambier.

- 1861 Census South East, south of Wellington, Aboriginal population 538.

- 1860s Royal visitors to the Coorong.

- 1862 Expedition to South East by G.W. Goyder (Surveyor General), W. Hanson (Engineer and Architect), W. Milne (Commissioner of Public Works). Described drainage problems at Salt Creek.

- 1862 Woods Well, Section 29 and 39, Hundred of Glyde surveyed by R.H. Edwards.

- Dec. 2, 1862 Malachi Martin's murder trial starts. Convicted of murdering Jame McMinamen of Salt Creek. Executed December 24th.

- Sept. 1863 William Allen, Publican, purchased Woods Well. Thomas McCallum, Publican, purchased McGrath Flat.

- 1863 Cantara Station purchased by John Gall.

- 1864 Drain constructed Tilley Swamp to Salt Creek.

- 1866 Surveyor Richard J. Loveday drew navigation charts for the Coorong waters in a search of the navigable waterway into the South East.
- Mar/June 1866 Cadet William Farquar surveyed the township of Meningie, original spelling 'Minningie', meaning 'mud'.
- 1867 Alfred Nichols and Robert Gardner surveyed the southern part of the Hundred of Baker.
Meningie Post Office opened. 'Overland Mail'.
Cobb & Co. takes over Adelaide - Mt. Gambier mail coaches. Two - three mails per week along Coorong Road.
- 1860s-1870s Much river and Coorong traffic steamers and sail.
Signal station on Hindmarsh Island, 1857.
- 1860s Kangaroo population plague proportions destroyed as vermin, 50,000, 5 years, South East coast.
- 1860s Rental of Coorong Crown Land by oil searching companies.
- 1980s Tilley Swamp owned by James Foot.
- 1860s Poor seasons in South East pastoral areas.
- 1869 First proposal to dredge the obstacles of the Coorong near the Needles.
- 1860-70 Scheduling of Pastoral Leases at Parnka and Coolatoo.
- 1870 Major floods in the South East.
- 1870 Salt harvesting on salt lakes near Salt Creek.
- 1870 South East Drainage Scheme underway. Coorong - Kingston canal for the outlet of the Murray Valley.

- Nov. 29 1873 Electric Telegraph Station at McGrath Flat closed.
Telegraph opened at Meningie. Meningie main centre
for northern Coorong.
- 1875-89 Railway construction through South East led to
discontinuation of coach service.
- 1876 Outstation of Raukkin farm (Point McLeay) established
near the Needles 10 sq. km. House, yards and well
sunk. Remains of the building still stand today.
- 1876 Kingston the major wool outpost in the South East.
- 1880s Major drainage schemes commence in the South East.
- 1880s The last traditional Aboriginal groups to assimilate
with Western culture, the Tanganekald, abandoned the
Coorong for the last time.
- 1880-1920 The Ballard family lived and worked the Coorong and
Islands (Rabbit Island) for rabbits and wattle bark.
- 1881 Dukes of Yorke and Clarence pass through Coorong
area. Travelling by coach, stopped at hotels
including Coolatoo.
- 1882 Year of the first rabbit plague - led to considerable
decline in sheep numbers.
- 1883 John Gall takes over Meningie - Kingston mail run,
although long established mail coach service through
the Coorong discontinued forcing hotels at McGrath
Flat, Wood's Well, Salt Creek, Coolatoo and other
horse changing stables to close.
- 1886-93 Economic depression in the South East of South
Australia.

- 1887 Railway completed, Adelaide to Melbourne through Bordertown.
District Council of Meningie established by Act of Parliament No. 419.
- 1890-1910 Small farms settled on Younghusband Peninsula opposite McGrath Flat.
- 1892 Australia's first oil well drilled near Salt Creek by the Salt Creek Petroleum Co.
- 1892-3 Duck canning factory in the Coorong area.
- 1890s Dry season. Depression. Many swagmen along Coorong and South East roads looking for handouts.
Vermin proof wire netting fence constructed from the Coorong to Cookes Plains.
- 1890s Boat trade lessened in River Murray and surrounding area, river and lake complex.
- 1890s Tom Kruse (seaman) Milang, said to have got right down the Coorong in a high river, in Schooner Punkari while bringing back wood from Salt Creek.
- 1890s Oil exploration along the Coorong although some survey before this time. Wells drilled by the Salt Creek Petroleum Co. behind Salt Creek, the first in Australia.
- 1903 Ben Thomson first person to drive a motor vehicle from Adelaide to Melbourne along Coorong.
- Mar. 1907 George McCoy surveyed the township of Narrung.
- Apr. 4 1907 Narrung gazetted as a town. Government purchased 17,000 acres from "Narrung Estate" for closer settlement.

- 1908 The first sanctuary protecting birds proclaimed along the Coorong.

- 1908 Party including Murray Auger and Bertie Barr-Smith made record-breaking history by negotiating the Coorong from Meningie to Kingston by motor car.

- 1909 Murray Auger breaks Adelaide to Melbourne speed record taking $22\frac{1}{2}$ hours.

- Nov. 10 1911 Barquentine Margit wrecked along Coorong Beach.

- 1915-1927 Further interest in oil exploration along Coorong and other areas to the south east.

- 1917 Major floods in the South East.

- 1926 Last major proposal to dredge the obstacles of the Coorong.

- 1930s Discovered that Coastal Disease a result of copper-cobalt deficiency in the soil.

- 1930s Motorbike speed trials on salt pans in Southern Coorong.

- 1931 Major floods in the South East.

- 1930s "Sporting Macs" at Policeman's Point provides accommodation for duck shooting.

- 1930s Many Aborigines continued to hunt and fish in the Coorong.

- 1940 Living memory of traditional Aboriginal culture in the area disappears with the death of last initiated males.

- 1940 Barrages completed. Tauwitchene closest to the Coorong.

- 1941 Live mine found on Coorong Beach by Mr. 'Joe' Cameron.

- 1944 Shanties at McGrath Flat, Woods Well and Salt Creek
still inhabited. Those at Chinamans Well, Coolatoo
and Katalpa in ruins. (Hasling)

- 1944 Blackford Drain, Kingston commenced from this time.

- 1950 Northern Younghusband Peninsula gaz. a Public
Recreation Reserve.

- 1956 Major floods in the South East.

- 1957 New surfaced Princes Highway opened along Coorong.

- 1966 Area on Younghusband Peninsula proclaimed a National
Park.

- 1973 Two seminars on the ecology of the Coorong Lagoons.
Dept. of Adult Education - S.A. Branch, Australian
Marine Science Association - Field trips.

- Nov. 1973 Duke of Edinburgh visits Coorong staying at the
Currawong property of Bob Hawkes.

Compiled from various sources including:

Centenary Celebrations Committee Meningie (1966) Chronological
History of Meningie District (Pub. Auth.: Meningie)

Luebbers, R. A. (1981) The Coorong Report: An Archaeological Survey of
the Southern Younghusband Peninsula (Prep. for the Dept. for the
Environment and Planning)

APPENDIX III

SHIPS KNOWN TO BE WRECKED NEAR THE COORONG BEACH 1800-1981

<u>Date of wrecking or stranding</u>	<u>Vessel</u>	<u>Voyage Destination (where known)</u>	<u>Rig Cargo</u>	<u>Tons (where known)</u>	<u>Hull Material (w/k)</u>	<u>Place</u>	<u>Survivors : Salvage (where known)</u>
38 June	Fanny	Hobart - Swan River, W.A.	Schooner (passengers general cargo)	New Measurement	Wood	Lacepede Bay	Survivors walked the Coorong to Goolwa. Helped by Aborigines.
38 August	Elizabeth	Adelaide - Launceston	Schooner	52 Tons	Wood	Rivoli Bay	Survivors joined party from Fanny. Boat salvaged and refitted.
19 September	Maria	Adelaide - Hobart	Brigantine (27 passengers mixed cargo)	Old 136 Measurement Tonnage	Wood	Lacepede Bay	All survived shipwreck. Murdered along Coorong by Aborigines.
4 September	Sophia Jane	Local	Cutter	New 13 Measurement Tonnage	Wood	Coorong	No trace of boat or crew.
5 Nov.	Mariner	Port Phillip - Adelaide	Schooner	New 46 Measurement Tonnage	Wood	Coorong	All passengers and crew survived. See Rob's Wreck Column
8	Gazelle	Local	Cutter	17 Tons New Measurement Tonnage	Wood	8 miles north of Salt Creek	

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1854 19th Aug.	Mozambique	London calling Melbourne	Ship (coal) 24 passengers 22 crew	Old 399 Measurement Tonnage	Wood	Coorong	All on board survived shipwreck. Elderly man died on journey back to Goolwa.
1856 19th July	Sir William Forster		Barge			Stranded Coorong Beach	Refloated.
1857 14th Nov.	Halcyon	Headed Port Elliot	Brig	New 192 Measurement Tonnage	Wood	6 miles from the Murray Mouth	All on board reached safety
1859	Melbourne	River Murray - Goolwa	Paddle Steamer (wool)	153 Gross Tonnage	Iron	Murray Mouth Point Pullen	Wool recovered. Crew reached safety.
1874 August	Adelaide		Ketch (potatoes)	63 registered Tonnage		Coorong	Mate drowned swimming to shore with the line. Remainder of crew reached safety.
1901	Elsie	Kingston - Port Adelaide	Ketch (preserved rabbits ground bark)	73 tons lengthened in 1891 - 84 tons		Coorong Beach	Mast located Meningie school

SHIPS KNOWN TO BE WRECKED ON THE COORONG BEACH 1800-1981

<u>of ing or ling</u>	<u>Vessel</u>	<u>Voyage Destination</u> (where known)	<u>Rig</u> <u>Cargo</u>	<u>Tons</u> (where known)	<u>Hull</u> <u>Material</u> (w/k)	<u>Place</u>	<u>Survivors : Salvage</u> (where known)
iv.	Margit	Victor Harbor - United Kingdom	Barque (wheat)	1241 gross tonnage	Steel	Wrecked Coorong Beach	34 miles north of Kingston. In attempting salvage, two killed.
	Gem	Sailed from Kingscote	Fishing Cutter			Washed up on Coorong Beach	
	Dora Bassett	Beachport - Goolwa	Sailing boat	40 feet approx.		Stranded Coorong Beach	Salvaged. Towed over Younghusband Peninsula and sailed down Coorong waters.
b.	Lincoln Star		Tuna boat			Foundered at sea. Wreckage found Coorong Beach	Five crew members unaccounted for.
	Moree	Sydney - Whyalla	Tug		Iron or Steel	Ran aground Coorong	Salvaged, 19th September Taken overland to Lake Alexandrina. Still in use Whyalla.

SHIPS KNOWN TO BE WRECKED ON THE COORONG BEACH 1800-1981

<u>Date of Wrecking or Stranding</u>	<u>Vessel</u>	<u>Voyage Destination (where known)</u>	<u>Rig Cargo</u>	<u>Tons (where known)</u>	<u>Hull Material (w/k)</u>	<u>Place</u>	<u>Survivors : Salvage (where known)</u>
Winter 1977	The Mistrell	Sydney - Port Adelaide	Cutter	36 feet		Ran aground Coorong	One person drowned off Cape Jaffa. Cut up with chain saw, engine removed.
1981 August	Flying Scotsman	From Victor Harbor	Catamaran	52 feet approx.			Broke up. Illegally stripped of valuables.

Note: Compiles from secondary sources.
This list is not comprehensive.

APPENDIX IV

FROM: WRECKS ON THE SOUTH COAST OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA by J.K. Loney (1975)

Glossary

- Barque : A three or four masted vessel with fore and aft sales on the mizen mast.
- Brig : A two masted vessel with square sails on each mast also afore and aft staysails and jibs.
- Brigantine : Two masted vessel with foremast square rigged and mainmast fore and aft rigged.
- Cutter : A small vessel with one mast, usually of narrow beam and deep draught.
- Ketch : Two masted vessel with a high forward mast.
- Schooner : A vessel with fore and aft sails.
- Ship : A vessel with three masts each carrying square sails.

Lighthouses, lifeboats and rocket crews maintained a constant vigil along the stormy south coast for many decades, but now with the development of ships and electronic equipment, much of their work has become redundant.

Major Lighthouses

- Cape Jaffa ; Built 1872. It was dismantled in 1973 when many of its functions were replaced by an automatic light at Robe (visible 24 km).

Cape Banks : Built 1882.

Cape Northumberland : Built 1859. Rebuilt 1882.

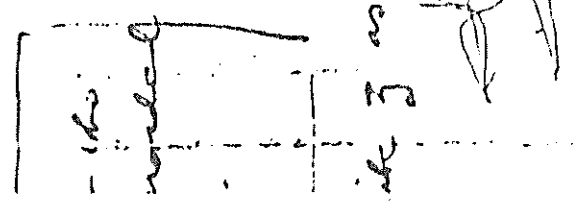
Cape Jervis : Built 1871.

Cape Willoughby : Kangaroo Island. Built 1851. (visible 35.4 km).

Summary Report, Identification

(Dept. of Environment and Planning)
of Sites..(1979/80)

Summary Report, Identification



HERITAGE INVESTIGATIONS	SITE "MARIA" MURDER AND RETRIBUTION SITES (circled)
EARLY EUROPEAN CONTACT	REFERENCE DR. NORMAN TINDALE'S ORIGINAL FIELD MAP OF THE
TRANSPORT COMMUNICATIONS	1930s, INCORPORATING DATA FROM MILLERUM, 1932. ORIGINAL
PROJECT 1980	FIELD BY S.A. MUSEUM (MSO). See also excerpt from Heritage
	Investigations' interview with Dr. Tindale, 30/4/80.

Description of the hazards of the Coorong by Richard J. Loveday
S.A. Parliamentary Paper 1866/7, No. 180.

[No. 180.]

SOUTH AUSTRALIA.

THE NAVIGATION OF THE COORONG.

Ordered by the House of Assembly to be printed, 7th December, 1866.

REPORT (accompanied by Plan, showing the SOUNDINGS, CHANNEL, &c.) of an examination of the COORONG, undertaken in compliance with terms of ADDRESS, No. 5, 3rd October, 1866.

Surveyor General's Office, Adelaide, 5th December, 1866.

Sir—I have the honor to forward herewith a plan, and copy of a report, received from Mr. Loveday, who, in accordance with a resolution of the House of Assembly, was deputed to take the soundings, and report generally, on the Coorong.

I may add, that to arrive at the minimum depth of water in dry seasons, I consider that eighteen inches may safely be struck off the soundings given on the chart.

I have, &c.

G. W. GOYDER, Surveyor-General.

The Secretary, Crown Lands and Immigration.

Adelaide, 4th December, 1866.

Sir—I have the honor to inform you that, in compliance with your instructions of the 17th October last, I proceeded to the Coorong, for the purpose of taking the soundings, and reporting generally thereon. I append herewith a sketch, showing the different parts of the Coorong, where the depth does not reach two feet six inches.

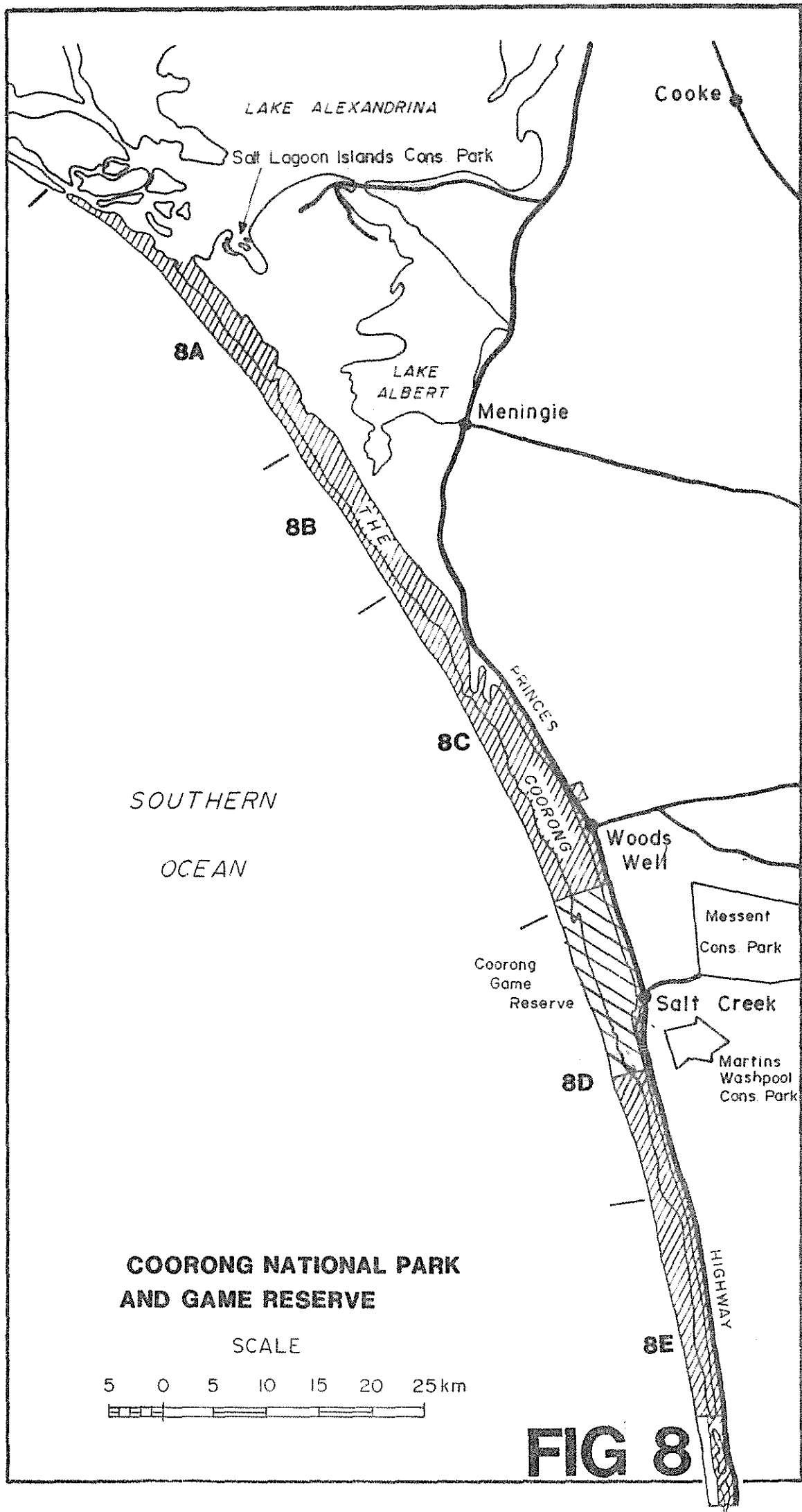
The first obstruction occurs between Dodd's Station and Pelican Point, where there is an even bar of limestone and silt, with soundings of two feet six inches; in the present boat channel (about half a mile in length), from this point to the "Needles," there is a good channel, with from five to eight feet of water—generally about eight feet. At the "Needles," a reef runs across the deepest part of the Coorong (which is used at present as a boat passage), composed of sandstone strongly impregnated with lime, and covered with a thin shell of limestone, which is very soft, and would be easily removed (specimen herewith), in fact, I believe a considerable portion has already been knocked away by boats striking against it, as the channel is very much wider than when I passed through it some years ago.

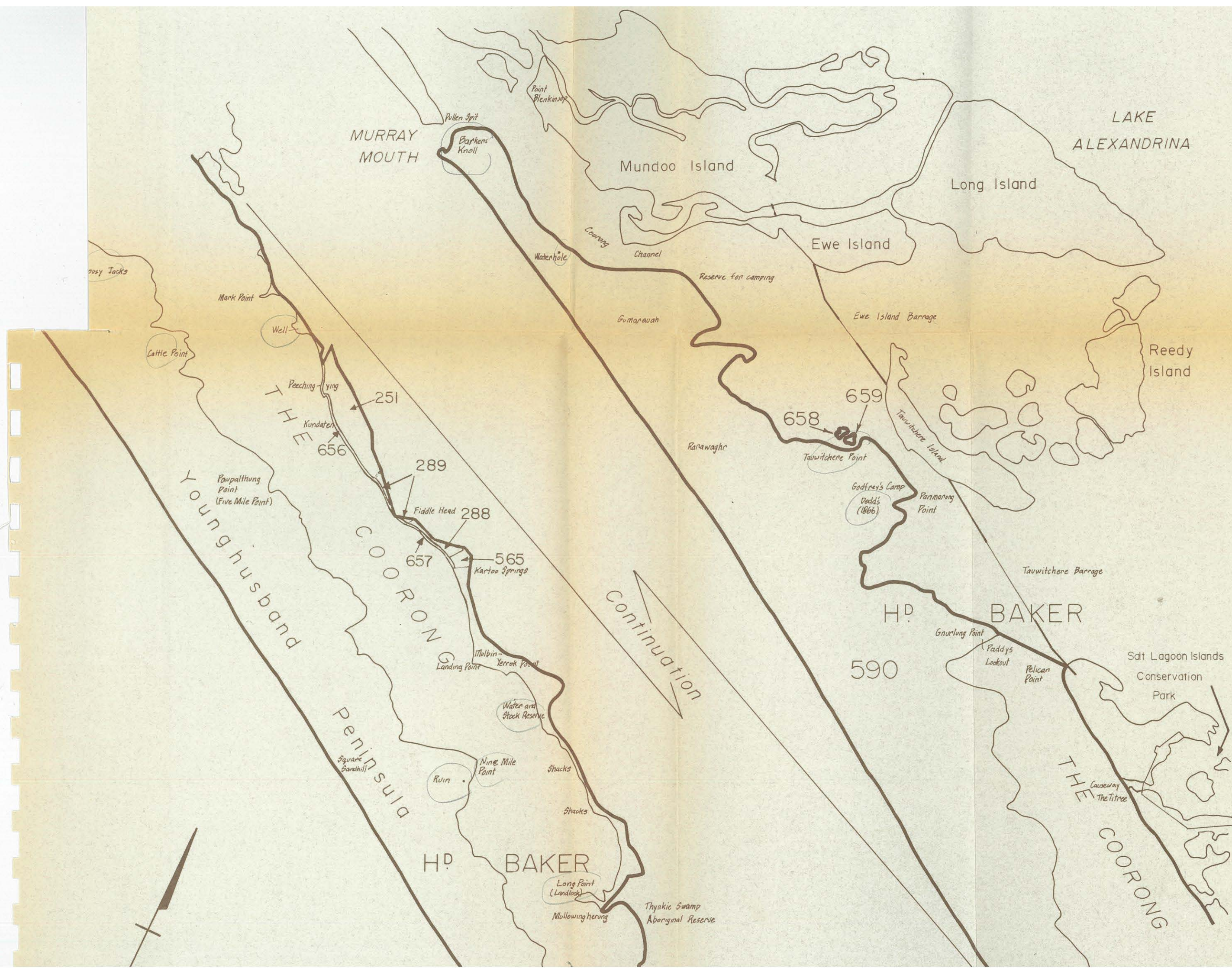
About one mile south-east of the "Needles," there is a mud flat, about fifty chains in length, with soundings from one foot eleven inches to two feet four inches. This mud is very soft, covered with a thin layer of silt; this could be easily removed, as the boats passing over it have deepened it some two or three inches. From this point, there is a pretty good channel until McGrath's Flat is reached. This channel is about thirty-one chains in length, with soundings at the present time of two feet; this also is composed of a soft muddy bottom, with a thin layer of silt, and also deepened some two or three inches by boats passing over it. From thence, there is a pretty good channel until "Bluff Island" is passed, where there is another mud flat, of about ten or twelve chains in length, with soundings of from two feet two inches to two feet six inches; this also is soft, with a thin layer of silt, and likewise deepened by boats passing over it. From this, there is deep water to the "Gates," where a double reef of soft sandy limestone runs across the channel, and there is at present from two feet six inches to three feet of water where boats cross, which part is both difficult and dangerous, but could easily be remedied by removing the stone, which is very soft (see specimen). From this there is a good channel to a point about one mile south-east of Mack's old station. Here there is another mud flat, similar to that at McGrath's Flat, extending about ten chains, with a depth of from two to three feet. Then, for a distance of about two miles, there is a tolerably good channel, when another small mud flat is met with, with soundings of from three to four feet; and from this point to Wood's Wells, and from thence to Salt Creek, there is a good channel, with soundings of from six to twelve feet. The deep water continues for about two and a-half miles, where it gradually shallows to the Chinaman's Wells, where there is a short channel with from two to four feet of water. From this point it shallows so rapidly that in a quarter of a mile it is but two inches deep. I accordingly thought it useless to proceed any further, and returned to Adelaide with my party.

I have, &c.

G. W. Goyder, Esq., Surveyor-General.

RICHARD J. LOVEDAY, Surveyor.





MURRAY MOUTH

LAKE ALEXANDRINA

Mundoo Island

Long Island

Ewe Island

Reedy Island

Mark Point

Cattle Point

Peaching-ying

Kundaten

251

289

Fiddle Head

288

657

565

Kartoo Springs

Molbin Landing Point

Yerrek Point

Water and Stock Reserve

Nine Mile Point

Ruin

Shacks

Shacks

H.D.

BAKER

Long Point (Landlock)

Mullowingherong

Thynkie Swamp Aboriginal Reserve

Coorong Channel

Waterhole

Gumarawah

Reserve for camping

Ewe Island Barrage

658

Godfrey's Camp

Dodd's (1866)

Parmarong Point

Tauwiche Barrage

H.D.

BAKER

590

Gnurlung Point

Paddy's Lookout

Pelican Point

Salt Lagoon Islands Conservation Park

THE COORONG

Causeway

The Titree

Continuation

Youngusband Peninsula

Peninsula

COORONG

Posy Jacks



