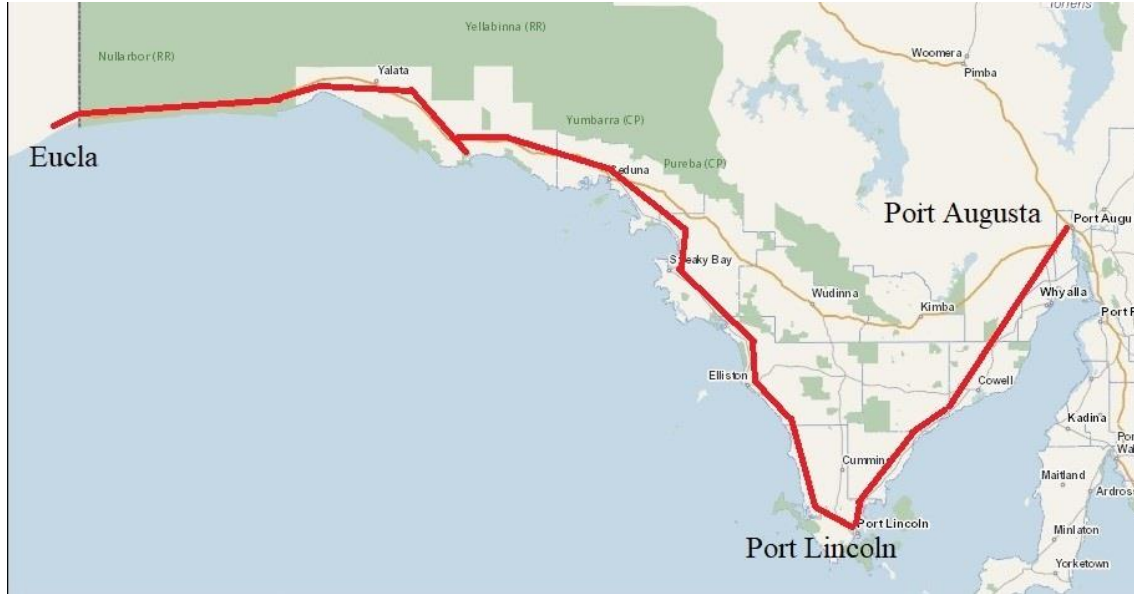


THE LAST LINK

The East West Telegraph Line



1875 - 1877

Gavin Beinke

East West Telegraph Line. Introduction.

At his wedding reception Charles Todd "asserted that he was 'going to Australia in the hope of being instrumental in bringing England and Australia into telegraphic communication'."

This he did in 22 years. The East West Telegraph Line was the last link in the telegraph system that Charles Todd (later Sir) had envisaged since coming to South Australia as the Superintendent of Telegraph and Government Observer in November 1855. He established a network in South Australia, (which in 1879 included 4,217 miles of line) linked Adelaide to Melbourne, Adelaide to Sydney, Adelaide to Darwin, which linked up with the submarine cable eventually with Europe and London. Victoria had laid a submarine cable to Tasmania, and Queensland was linked to NSW, and finally Adelaide to W.A. So, by July 1877 he had brought "England and Australia into telegraphic communication."

This is a collection of information I have found basically telling the story of the East West Telegraph line and the subsequent development of the Telegraph, Telephone and Postal service from Port Augusta to Eucla, and the submarine cable from Normanville to Kangaroo Island. It started as only the construction of the original line, however, as part of other research on Sir Charles Todd, it has grown to include the duplication route through the Gawler Ranges and the eventual closure of the line.

Most of the articles are from newspapers, sourced via the services of the State Library of SA (known as Trove) and the photo's are from the State Library of S.A.

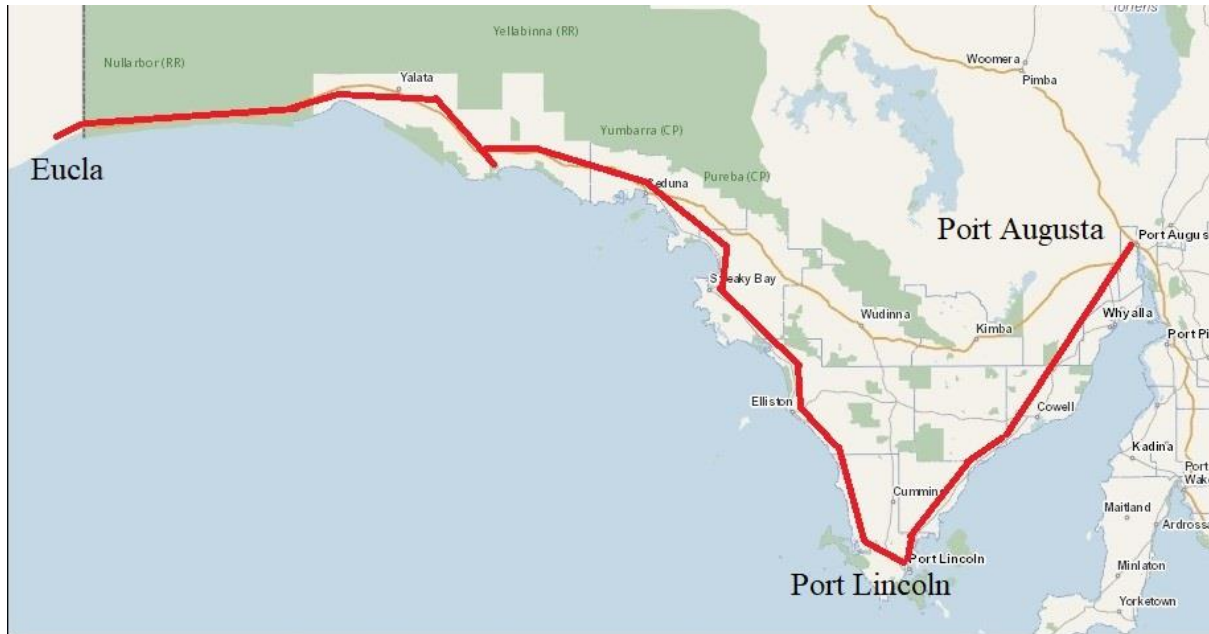
I have followed the route as marked on hundred maps and where possible given information in the appropriate hundred.

At this time Charles Todd was busy with the cable to Kangaroo Island, the new P.O. clock and the public criticism associated with that, as well as running the Post Master Generals Department, Telegraph Department, and the Observatory. Richard Knuckey had been involved with the construction of some of the other lines and was again relied upon to supervise this project with Mr. McMinn.

It is interesting to note that most of the roads from Port Augusta to Port Lincoln to Eucla follow the original telegraph line route because the area was sparsely populated when the line was erected, so the early settlers followed the cleared area and the track beside the line, which was originally used to construct and then maintain the line.

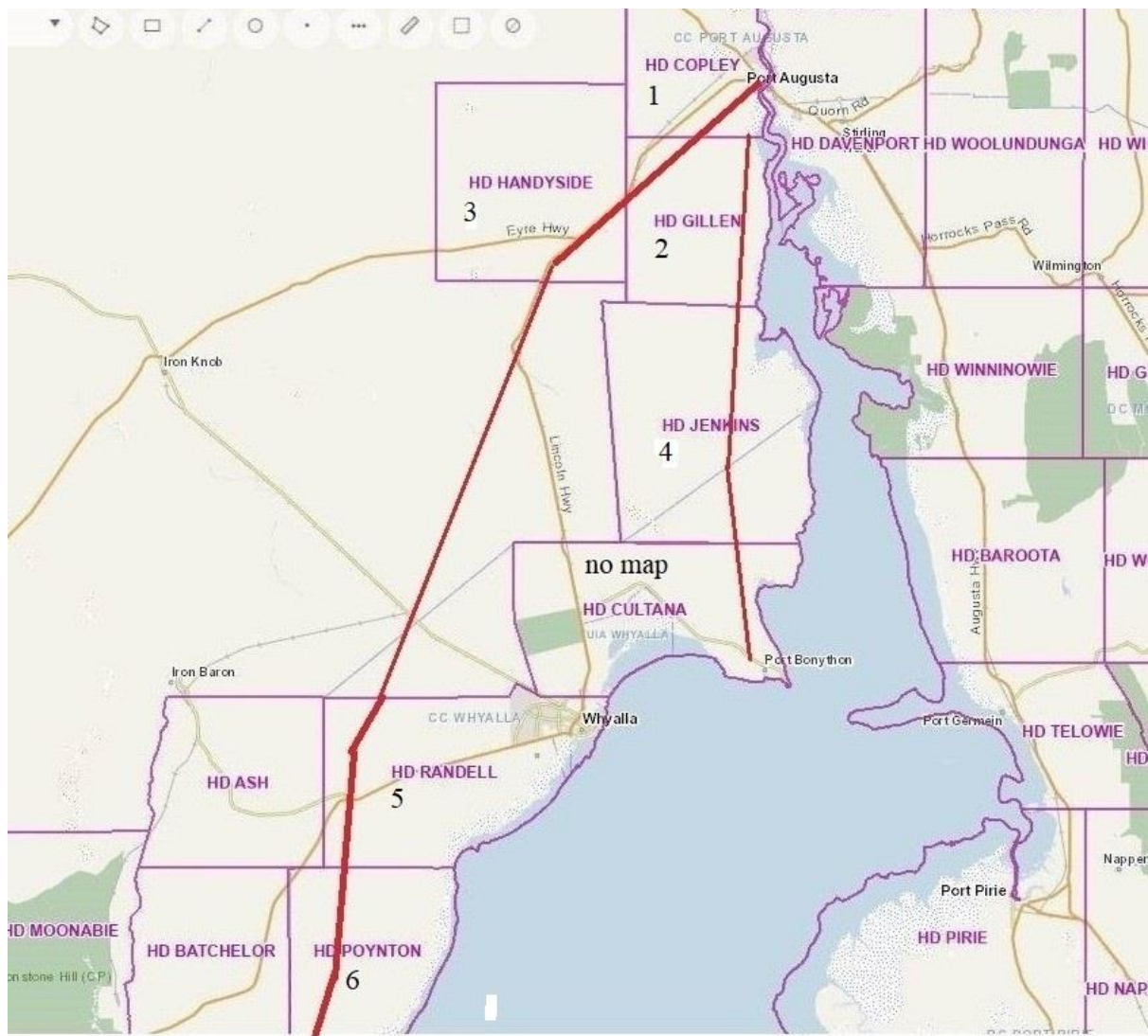
On the maps the line of telegraph is denoted by a solid red line.
On the Hundred maps the line of telegraph is denoted by dashes.

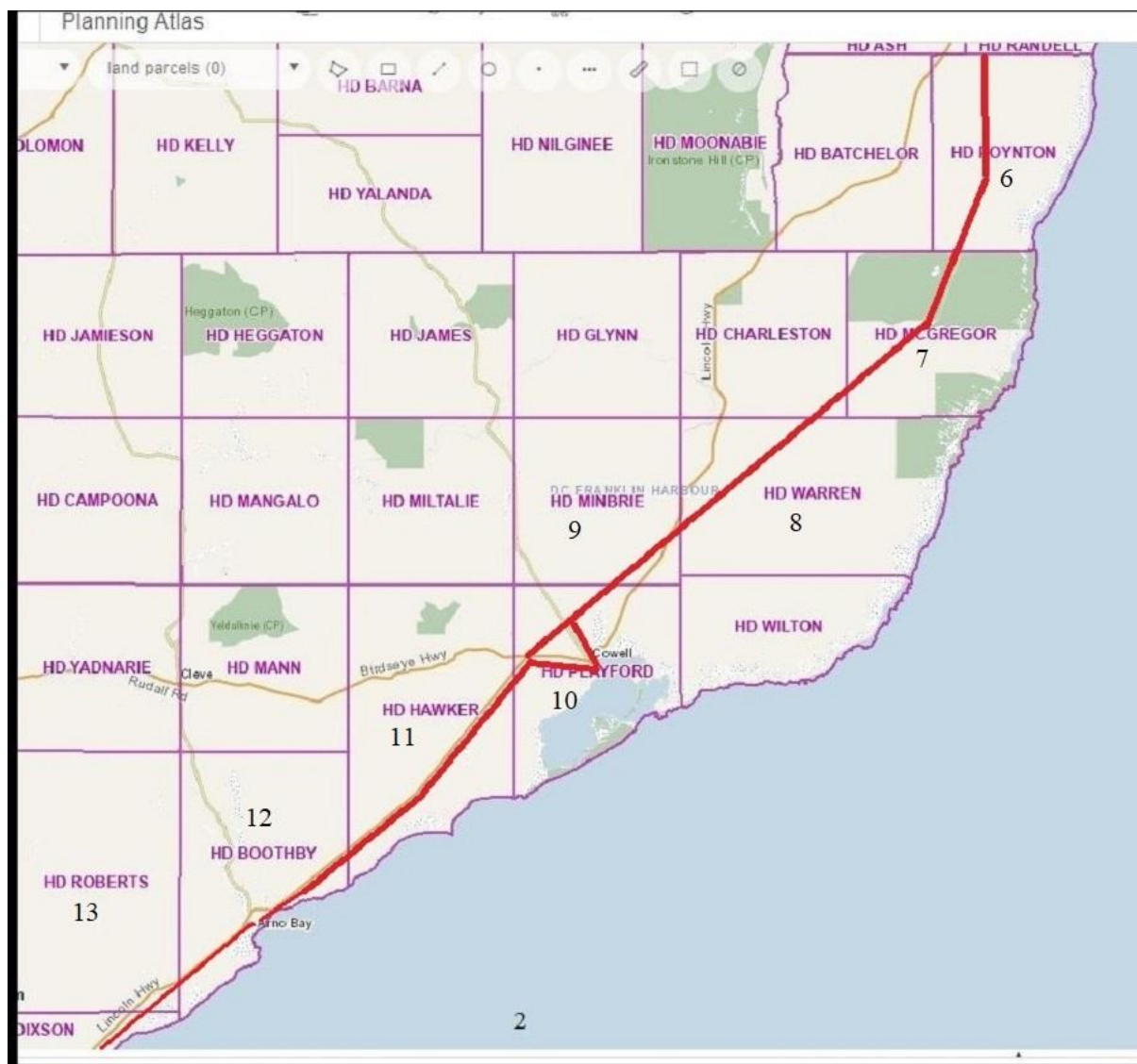
Gavin Beinke. January 2023. Member of the Sir Charles Todd Citizen History Team.

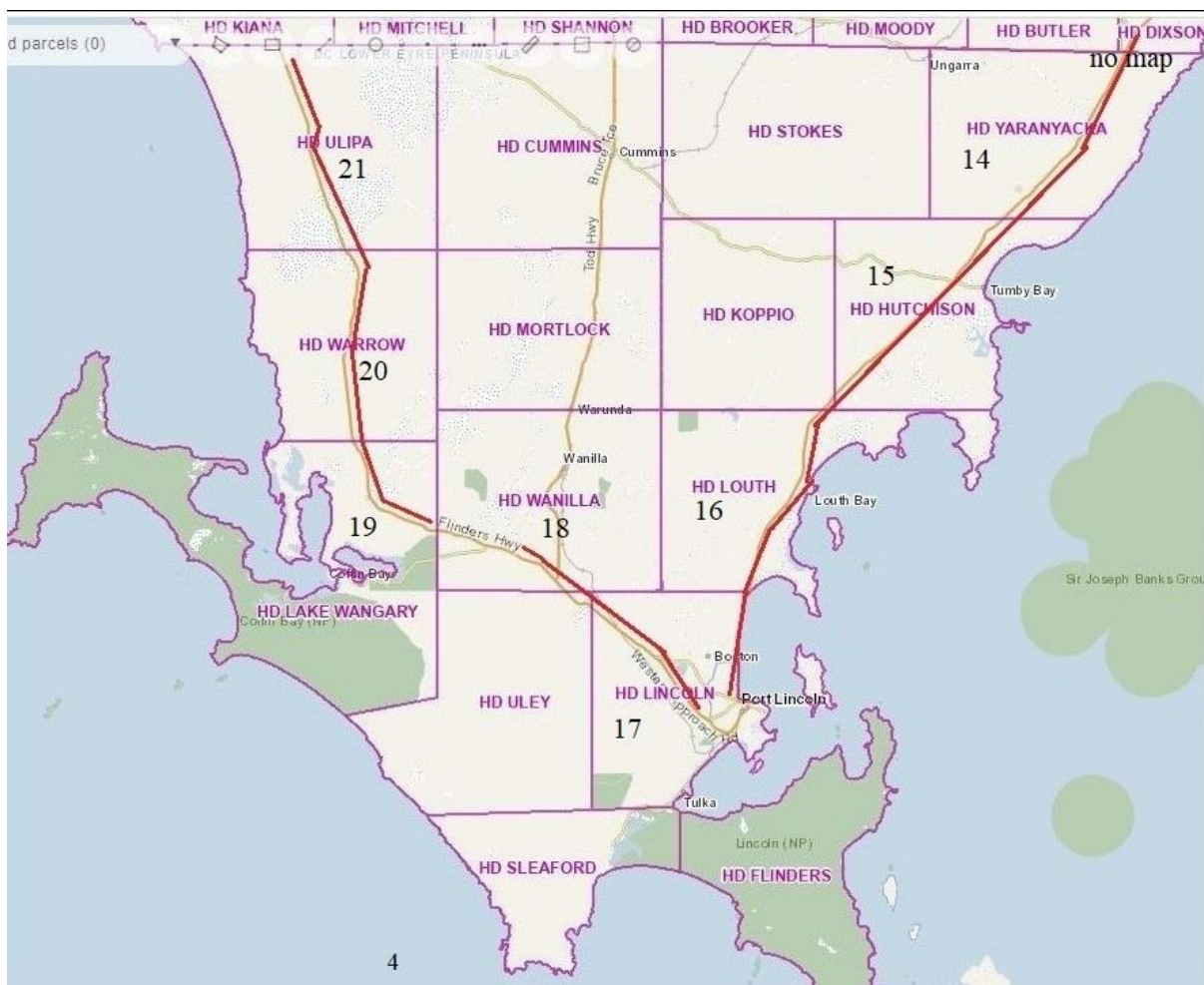
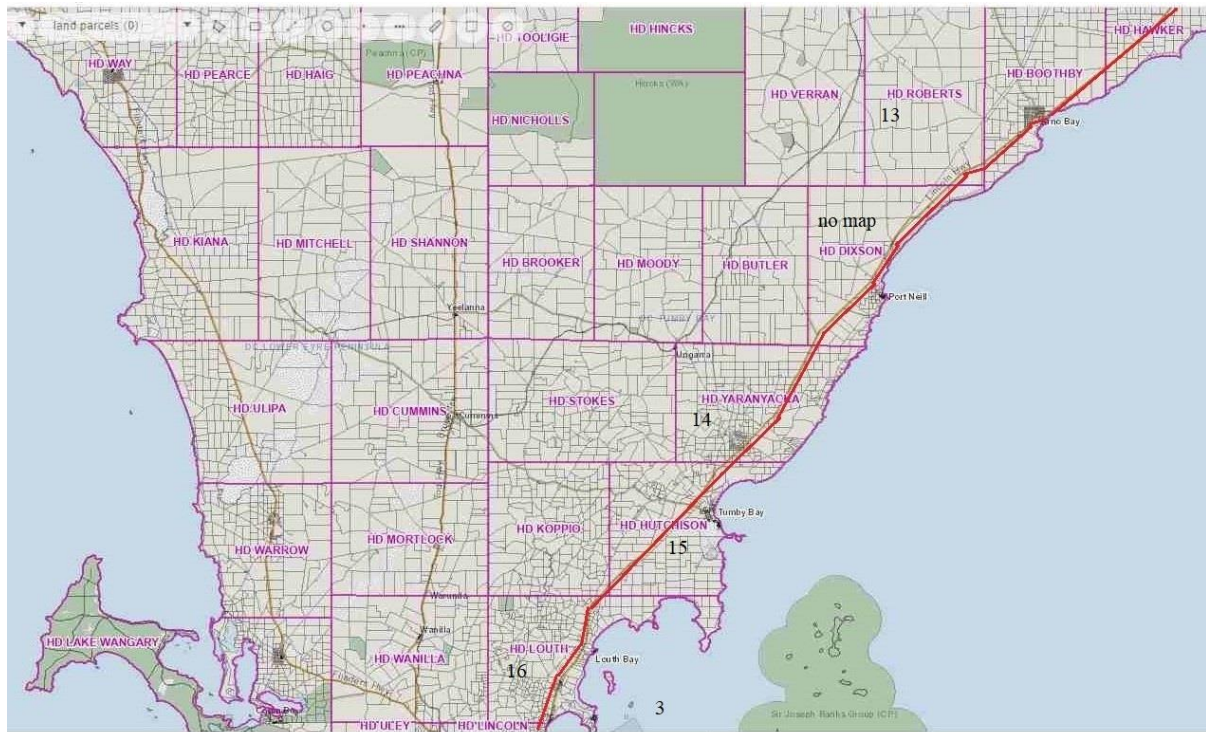


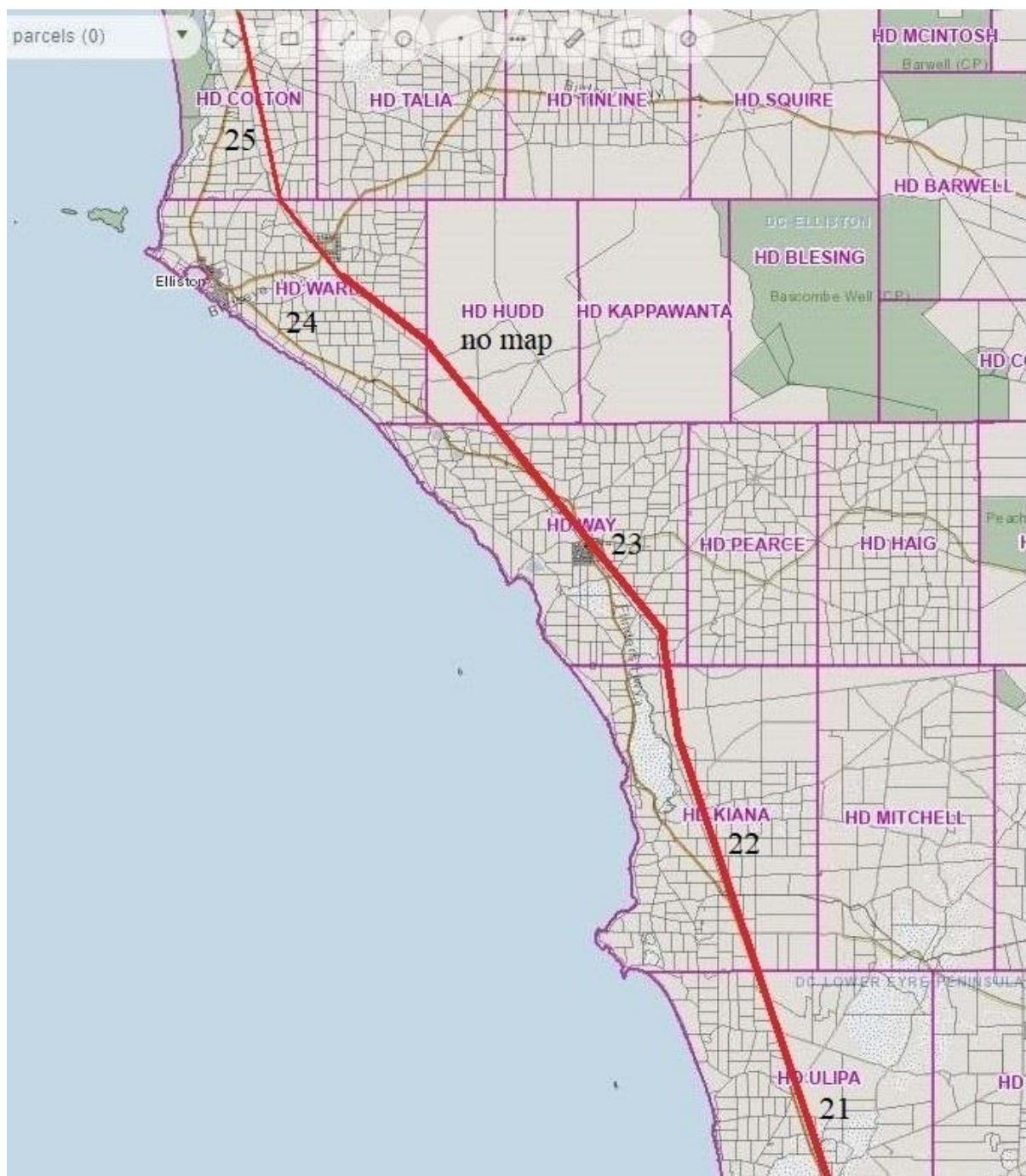
<https://sappa.plan.sa.gov.au/>

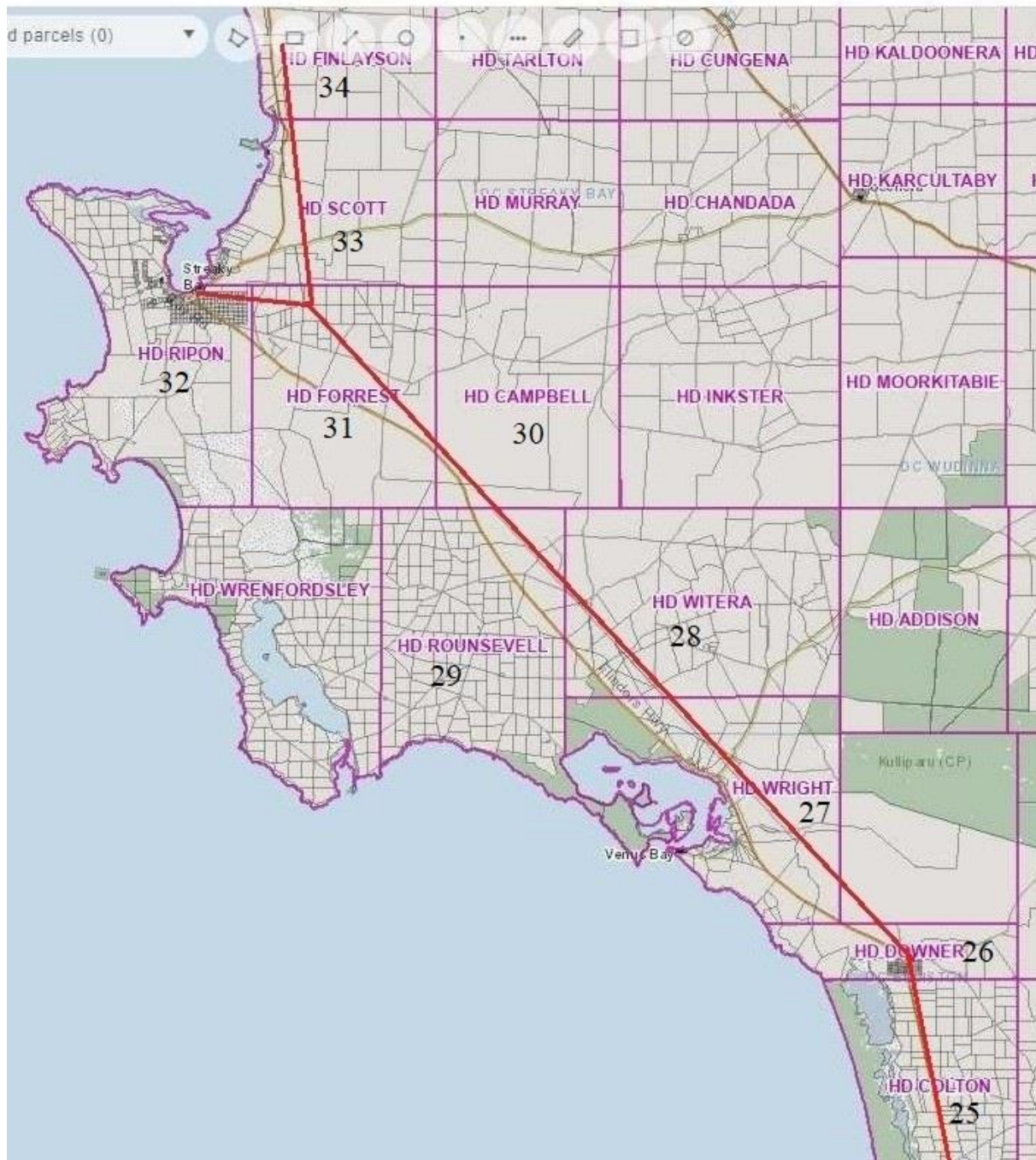
East West telegraph line from Port Augusta to Port Lincoln to Eucla to join the line to Perth, Western Australia.

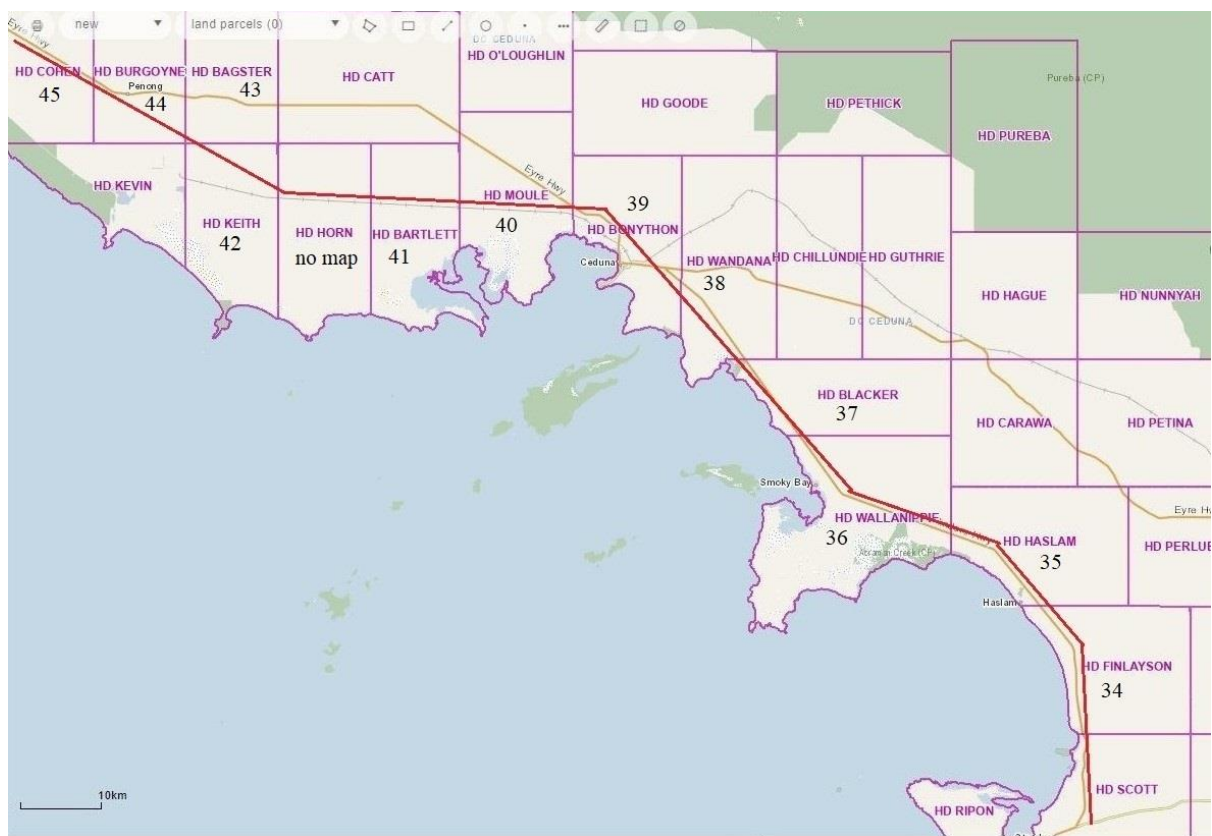














East West Telegraph Line index.

Map 1.

Line of telegraph from Port Augusta to Port Lincoln to Eucla.

Map 2.

1. Hundred of Copley. (Port Augusta West)
2. Hundred of Gillen.
3. Hundred of Handyside.
4. Hundred of Jenkins. (Point Lowly, Whyalla. Hd Cultana - no map. Out of surveyed land)
5. Hundred of Randell.
6. Hundred of Poynton.

Map 3.

7. Hundred of McGregor.
8. Hundred of Warren.
9. Hundred of Minbrie.
10. Hundred of Playford. (Cowell, Franklin Harbour)
11. Hundred of Hawker.
12. Hundred of Boothby. (Arno Bay)
13. Hundred of Roberts.

Map 4.

(no map) Hundred of Dixson. (Port Neill)

14. Hundred of Yaranyacka.
15. Hundred of Hutchison. (Tumby Bay)
16. Hundred of Louth. (Louth Bay)
17. Hundred of Lincoln. (Port Lincoln)
18. Hundred of Wanilla.
19. Hundred of Lake Wangary.
20. Hundred of Warrow.
21. Hundred of Ulipa.

Map 5.

22. Hundred of Kiana.
23. Hundred of Way.
- (no Map) Hundred of Hudd.
24. Hundred of Ward. (Elliston)
25. Hundred of Colton.

Map 6.

26. Hundred of Downer.
27. Hundred of Wright. (Venus Bay)
28. Hundred of Witera.
29. Hundred of Rounsevell.
30. Hundred of Campbell.

- 31. Hundred of Forrest.
- 32. Hundred of Ripon. (Streaky Bay)
- 33. Hundred of Scott.
- 34. Hundred of Finlayson.

Map 7.

- 35. Hundred of Haslam.
- 36. Hundred of Wallanippie. (Smoky Bay)
- 37. Hundred of Blacker.
- 38. Hundred of Wandana.
- 39. Hundred of Bonython. (Ceduna)
- 40. Hundred of Moule.
- 41. Hundred of Bartlett.
- (no Map) Hundred of Horn.
- 42. Hundred of Keith.
- 43. Hundred of Bagster.
- 44. Hundred of Burgoyne.
- 45. Hundred of Cohen.

Map 8.

- 46. Hundred of Giles.
- 47. Hundred of Magarey.
- 48. Hundred of Nash.
- 49. Hundred of Caldwell. (Fowlers Bay)
- 50. Hundred of Sturdee.
- 51. Hundred of Miller.
- 52. Hundred of Lucy.
- 53. Hundred of Bice.

Map 9.

- 54. Out of surveyed land. (Nullabor Plain, Great Australian Bight, Eucla)

55. Duplicate line via the Gawler Ranges.

56. Submarine cable from Normanville to Kingscote, Kangaroo Island.

<<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article50026492>>

PARLIAMENTARY PAPER.

REPORT OF COST OF TELEGRAPH LINE TO KING GEORGE'S SOUND.
REPORT by SUPERINTENDENT of TELEGRAPHS on estimated COST of
ERECTING a LINE of TELEGRAPH to KING GEORGE'S SOUND.

Observatory and Telegraph Department, Chief Office. Adelaide. July 10, 1860.

Sir— In reply to your letter of the 15th ult., which I must apologize for allowing to remain so long in abeyance, requesting me to report on the probable cost of a line of telegraph to King George's Sound. I would premise that, in the absence of any precise knowledge of the natural features of the country that would be traversed, at least to the westward of Fowler's Bay— whether available timber would be procurable within moderate distances — any estimate I can now furnish must be regarded as simply a rough approximation of the actual cost. If we could procure timber enroute a considerable saving would be effected; but, in the other case, I do not apprehend much, if any, excess on my estimate, which is for a line passing through a country but sparsely timbered— a considerable margin being allowed for carriage. From what I can learn, there would be no very serious obstacles between Port Augusta and Fowler's Bay. Beyond that point, we have only Eyre's account, which is, I believe, not to be relied on, as he was necessarily compelled to hug the coast too closely to know much of the interior; but, judging from what we do know of the coast between Port Lincoln and Fowler's Bay, I should not expect to meet with any insuperable difficulties. I believe a very trifling outlay only would be necessary to obtain all the information we require; and, seeing that the large tract of country between our present western frontier and Western Australia will probably be annexed to South Australia, it is, I think, advisable that a lightly equipped party should be dispatched to explore the country west of Fowler's Bay.

2. The distance from Port Augusta, which I regard as the starting point — as our northern line is certain to be extended thus far from Clare— I estimate roughly at 1,260 miles, which, taken at say £60 per mile, would make the cost about £62,600, or say £65,000. There would be one intermediate station, for testing purposes, between Port Augusta and Fowler's Bay, either at Yardea or Kundery, near the southern extremity of Lake Gairdner. Between Fowler's Bay and Albany I expect about five intermediate stations would be required, for testing and securing the continuity of the line.

3. Looking to the great risk and uncertainty attending all long submarine lines, I am more than ever disposed to think we shall yet connect ourselves with India by an overland line to the northern coast, and thence, by a comparatively short submarine section, to Java; and, if the line to King George's Sound should be

carried out, it would very greatly facilitate that course, as it would be certain to be continued round the western coast.

4. With an overland line, passing through an unsettled country, it has been urged, as a great obstacle, that there would be required a large outlay in the maintenance of intermediate stations. This objection has, undoubtedly, great force, though still greater objections attach to submarine lines; but it has occurred to me that, where a line passes through country suitable for pastoral purposes, a small run might be attached to each station, on which the Stationmaster could place stock. By the adoption of this plan, I think intelligent persons, of limited means, would be found willing to undertake the duties at a comparative small amount of remuneration; and it should be remembered that a land line would greatly facilitate the settlement of remote districts— such, for instance, as that lying to the westward of Fowler's Bay,

5. The annual cost of maintenance of a line to King George's Sound, if the idea I have just thrown out should be considered practicable, would be comparatively small— perhaps not more than £2,500 or £3,000. The revenue accruing to this colony I should expect to be about £3,000 — certainly not less. Whatever decision may be arrived at with regard to this work I would strongly recommend, in the meantime, the establishment of a branch postal service with Albany, A fast steamer— and we shall soon be well supplied in this respect — would certainly anticipate the arrival of the ocean mail steamer at Port Phillip Heads some sixty or seventy hours; and the telegraph would, in that case, be very extensively used, even though we should impose a higher charge on mail messages, and a large revenue thereby derived. If we do not establish that service, but get our letters via Melbourne, the revenue of the telegraph will be decreased about £1,000. I might use many arguments in favour of the King George's Sound service, but I believe the matter has been already so well considered by the Government as to require no comment from me.

I have, &c.,

CHARLES TODD,

Observer and Superintendent of Telegraphs, SA.

To the Hon. the Commissioner of Public Works.

(Author. This is the early talk of a telegraph line from Adelaide to Western Australia. It is interesting to note that South Australia was prepared to take the line all the way to King George's Sound (Albany). It is only 5 years after Charles Todd arrived in South Australia. However, in the next 15 years a lot changed.

The residents at Port Lincoln objected to not having telegraphic communication, and the line bypassing them. The Overland Telegraph Line was constructed to join up with the cable to England. Therefore the idea of a cable from northern Western Australia was abandoned.)

<<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article40081388>>

TENDERS TELEGRAPH TO EUCLA FROM PORT AUGUSTA, VIA STREAKY BAY AND FOWLER'S BAY.

General Post-Office, Adelaide, Telegraph Branch, January 20, 1875.

SEALED TENDERS will be received at the office of the Postmaster-General and Superintendent of Telegraphs, until noon of Thursday, the 18th proximo, for the ERECTION of a LINE of TELEGRAPH from PORT AUGUSTA to EUCLA, on the Western Australian Boundary, via Streaky Bay and Fowler's Bay.

The line will be divided into two sections, viz: 1st From Port Augusta to Fowler's Bay—a distance of 340 miles, more or less. 2nd. From Fowler's Bay to Eucla—a distance of 250 miles, more or less. Plans and Specifications and all particulars can be obtained at the office of the Postmaster General and Superintendent of Telegraphs. Tenders will be received for one or both sections, but must be accompanied with a Bank deposit in favour of the Postmaster-General and Superintendent of Telegraphs for the sum of £350 for each section tendered for. The deposit to be retained, should the tender be accepted, as a security for the due fulfilment of the contract until the work is completed. Each tenderer must also submit, for the approval of the Government, the names of two responsible persons willing to become answerable for the due performance of the contract, who, with the tenderer, will have to execute a bond to H.M. Government, within one month from the acceptance of the tender, for a sum equal to the full amount of the tender. The deposit will be forfeited if the bond is not executed within the time specified. Neither the lowest nor any Tender will be necessarily accepted.

CHARLES TODD, Postmaster-General and Superintendent of Telegraphs.

TELEGRAPH TO EUCLA, ON THE WESTERN AUSTRALIAN BOUNDARY.

SPECIAL NOTICE OF INTENDING TENDERERS.

General Post-Office, Adelaide. Telegraph Branch, February 6, 1875.

Referring to advertisement of the 20th ult., inviting Tenders for the construction of the above Line of Telegraph, it is hereby further intimated that

ALTERNATIVE TENDERS will also be received up to noon of Thursday, the 18th inst, for the Erection of the Line from Port Augusta via Port Lincoln and Streaky Bay and Fowler's Bay, as under: — The line by this route will be divided into three sections, namely:—

1. From Port Augusta to Port Lincoln.

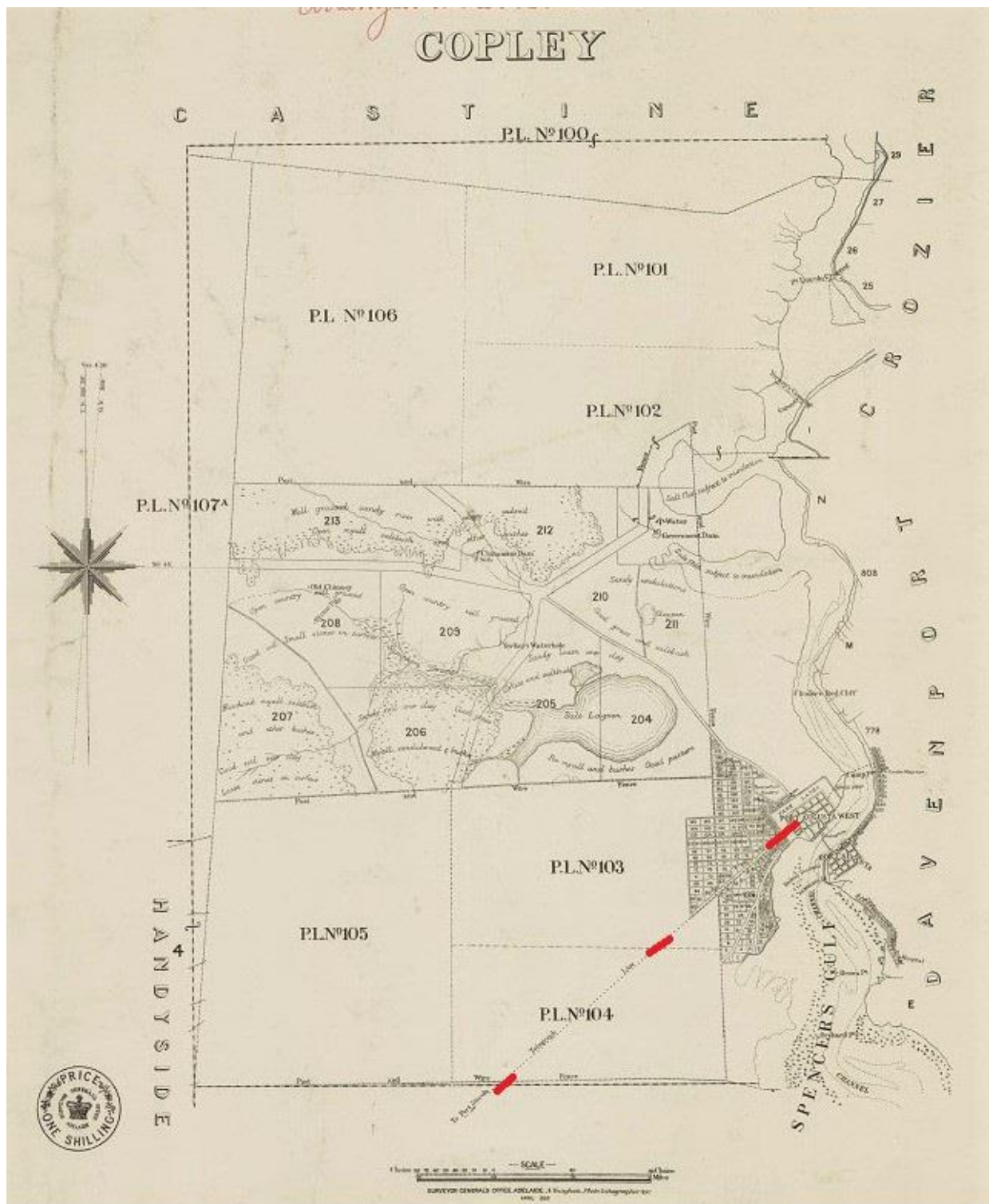
2. From Port Lincoln to Fowler's Bay.

3. From Fowler's Bay to Eucla.

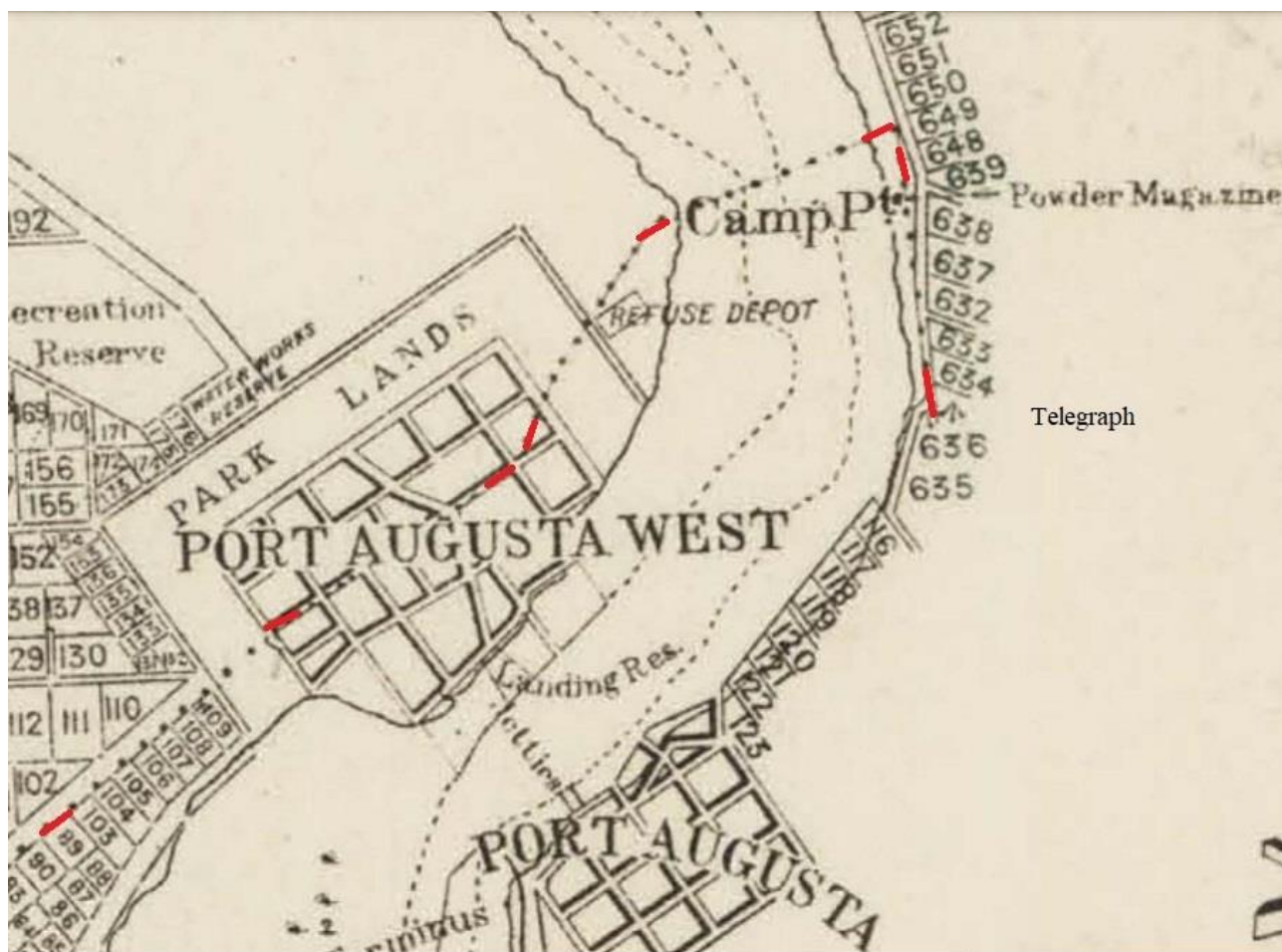
Twelve months will be allowed for completing the first section; eighteen months for the second section; and two years for the third section. Tenders may include one or more sections; but if more than one section, the Tender must state the price per mile for each section tendered for. Every Tender must be accompanied by a Bank deposit receipt in favour of the Postmaster General and Superintendent of Telegraphs for the sum of £350 for each section tendered for, or £700 if the Tender includes all three sections. In all other respects the Tenders are to be in accordance with the original call for Tenders and the plans and specifications lying at the office of the Postmaster-General and Superintendent of Telegraphs.

CHARLES TODD, Postmaster-General and Superintendent of Telegraphs.

1. Hundred of Copley. (Port Augusta)



https://maps.collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/series/hundreds_SA_63360/C/copley/zsmp_830bje63360_copley1892_ds.jpg



1892. Telegraph line through Port Augusta.

Express and Telegraph (Adelaide, SA : 1867 - 1922), Tuesday 10 August 1875, page 2

<<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article208177056>>

<clip> As we have before mentioned, the telegraph line to Western Australia will go from Port Augusta to Fowler's Bay. Iron poles are to be used throughout, and these will be taken from Port Augusta, via Franklin Harbor to Port Lincoln, thence across to Coffin's Bay, and along the coast to Venus Bay, and then from Streaky Bay to Fowler's Bay, a sufficient number having been ordered to pole right through. Mr. Knuckey will start this week for the purpose of laying out the line. Mr. Walter Thompson has the contract for this portion of the work, but the other parts are not yet let. As to the Western Australian end of the line, the Government have, we believe, let the contracts, and the work has been commenced. <clip>

South Australian Register (Adelaide, SA : 1839 - 1900), Friday 13 August 1875, page 5
<<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article40091854>>

The Telegraph to West Australia.— The work, which was authorized in 1874, is now about to be carried out. On Saturday, the 7th inst, three men of the Government survey party started with 12 horses and a wagonette for Port Augusta. Mr. Knuckey, who is in charge with Mr. Joseph McMinn as Sub-Overseer and four men will leave Adelaide on Tuesday August 17, by the Royal Shepherd, for Port Augusta, where they will join the other members of the party. Mr. Walter Thomson the contractor, with his employe's, horses, and equipment, started on Monday, a number iron poles having been already sent on, with others are now being unloaded from the Pakwan. The route of the telegraph will go from Port Augusta to Port Lincoln, thence to Streaky Bay, and from Streaky Bay to Eucla, where the line will meet the West Australian portion. The distance altogether it about 5'?) miles, and the work is expected to occupy about 18 months.

Evening Journal (Adelaide, SA : 1869 - 1912), Wednesday 25 August 1875, page 2
<<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article197683699>>.

THE TELEGRAPH TO EUCLA.

Port Augusta, August 24.

The first pole of the telegraph line to Eucla, West Australia, was planted at 11 o'clock this forenoon at Port Augusta West by Mr. Thomas McTurk Gibson. There was a large assemblage of spectators.

South Australian Chronicle and Weekly Mail (Adelaide, SA : 1868 - 1881), Saturday 28 August 1875, page 18
<<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article93955509>>.

EDITHBURGH, August 23.

<clip> The residents here are anxiously waiting to see a call for tenders for the telegraph, the pegs of which were put down some few weeks back by Mr. Knuckey and party. The line will be a great boon to the Peninsula people, and it is hoped that the work will soon be completed. —<clip>

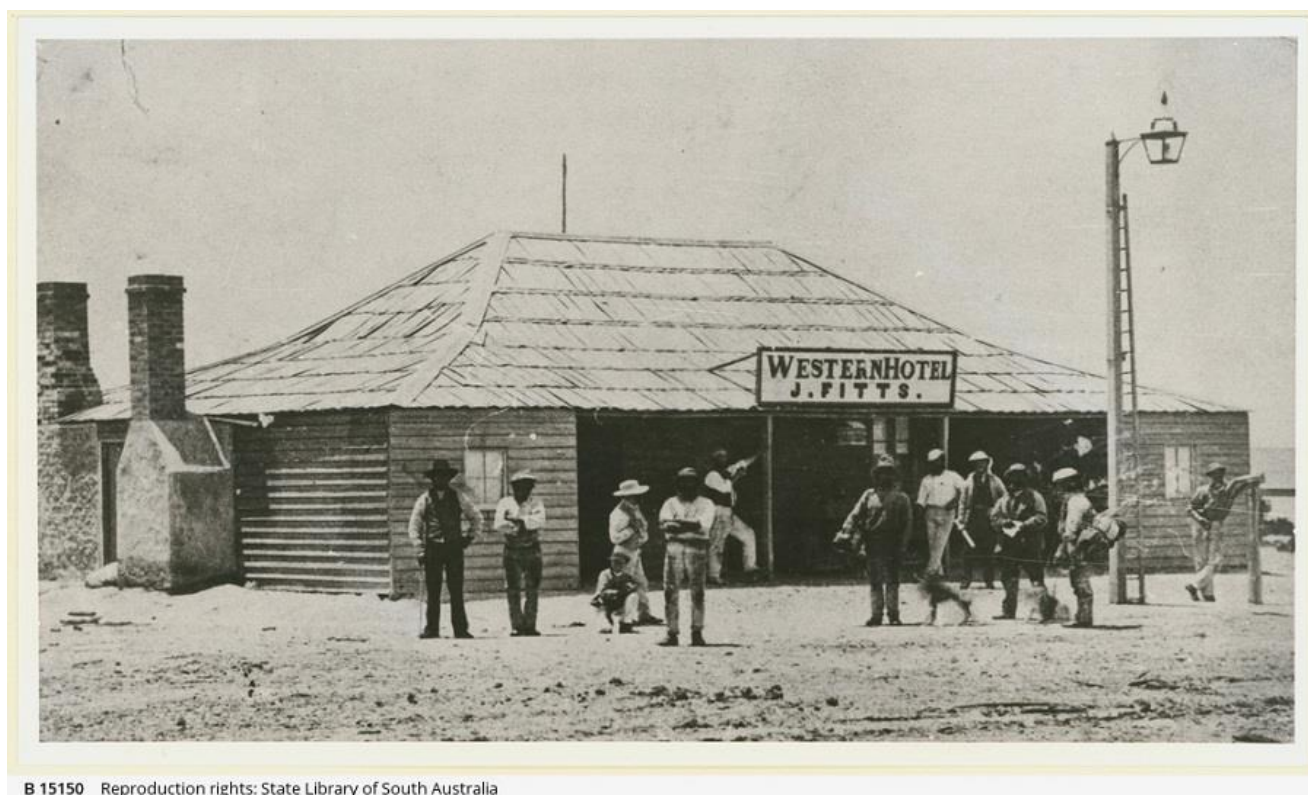
(Author. Mr. Knuckey is a busy man on Yorke's Peninsula before going to Port Augusta.)

THE WEST AUSTRALIAN TELEGRAPH LINE.

On Tuesday, August 24, the first pole of the Western Australian Telegraph line was planted on the rising ground at the side of Loudon's Road, Port Augusta West. Very short notice of the ceremony had been given, still a considerable number of people assembled on the occasion. Mr. T. McTurk Gibson, who had been requested to perform the ceremony, addressing the spectators, said he felt honoured in being called upon to plant the first pole in the extension of our telegraphic system to Western Australia. South Australia had taken the lead in telegraphic matters, and shown more energy and pluck in carrying out these works than even the older and more populous colonies. Most of those present remembered the commencement of that great work of carrying the northern line through arid, and to a great extent, an unknown country; this was successfully carried out, and we were now in direct communication with England and Europe, and also with America and many other parts of the world; but our Government were not content with this, and were about to form a line to the western border, by which the people of Western Australia would be brought into telegraphic communication with the other colonies. The Government deserved great credit for their enterprising spirit, and although there might be difference of opinion as to the route chosen there could be none as to the advisability of the line being constructed. The Port Augusta people, living as they did at the central point where the lines met, should feel an especial interest in the work. Port Augusta was the heart whence all the main telegraph lines radiated like the arteries of the human body, and before long he hoped to see the place advancing in importance rapidly, as it should do from its important position. He felt grateful to the contractor, Mr. Walter Thomson, for the compliment paid him in asking him to plant the first pole and hoped the work would be carried on successfully by him and would rebound to his honour and pay him well. He had no doubt from the similar work which had been done by Mr. Thomson that if any one could do it, he could. He (Mr. Gibson) knew the country very well, having travelled over it many years ago with sheep, and he should have been very glad if Mr. Thomson had been there before him to clear a road, as some of the scrub was anything but pleasant to get through. This was many years ago, and since that time the west side had become much more important, and the town of Port Augusta had improved greatly too. When he came there first (and he had not been there so long as some of those present) they had to pay 12s. for a cask of water; now they had the water laid on, and facilities for watering stock even on the west side of the Gulf. The town now

began to assume a respectable appearance, and what was of more importance the public were beginning to recognise its position as the outlet for an immense extent of country and the depot for a large and daily increasing trade; and now that the railway was likely to be formed (even if the proposed route should be adopted to Yudanamutana, which to those who knew the country must appear to be a great mistake) they might expect still greater and more rapid progress. Mr. Gibson then planted the pole in the earth and declared the same to be truly placed, shovelled in the earth, and the whole was well rammed by an assistant. Three cheers were then given for the Queen, also for the contractor (Mr. Thomson), and for Mr. Knuckey, the engineer of the line. Most of those present then adjourned by invitation of the contractor to Host Fitt's, where champagne flowed freely and sundry toasts were given; among others, the healths of the contractor and engineer were cordially proposed and responded to. Mr. Thomson, in returning thanks, said he was quite pleased with Port Augusta and its people, and he thought in no part of the colony could they find such a fine lot of manly-looking fellows gathered together at such short notice as those present in that room. There was only one thing wanting — many of them had not yet taken wives. They should all settle down and increase the population of the place. As for the country they had a splendid and a pleasant climate; and as for soil he had seen fine crops produced on what appeared at one time to be far worse than the soil round Port Augusta, while the range at the back was prettier than anything he had seen even in Scotland itself. (Laughter.) He proposed "Success to the town and trade of Port Augusta", coupling with it the names of Mr. T. McT. Gibson, the Mayor that was to be. Mr. Gibson responded, and said it was not necessary that they should be a wheat-producing community. That could be done in other parts of the colony, while in the North they could produce the wool and minerals, which were equally necessary, and thus add to the wealth and prosperity of the people by creating articles of export, while at the same time creating a market for the wheat of the more southern parts. Mr. Knuckey, in responding, spoke of the kind feeling which he had experienced on a previous occasion from the people of Port Augusta, and said though the present undertaking was not so arduous as the former, he had no doubt there would be some hard work to do, and for his part he should do all he could to assist the contractor to carry out the work without trouble or delay. He hoped it would not be long before the railway operations would be commenced at Port Augusta. Dr. Cotter proposed "The Health of the Construction Party" and after referring to the gradual growth of the colony in spite of the many difficulties it had to contend with, said that having watched its progress from its infancy he was proud of our colony, especially of its telegraph lines. In nearly every respect it would contrast favourably with the more populous and older colonies. He had no doubt that the contractor and his staff, if they had health,

would surmount all difficulties, and he hoped to see them return as hale and vigorous as they were then at starting. Mr. J. Thomson was called upon to respond but said he would prefer doing hard work to speaking. Mr. W. Thomson responded in a humorous speech, which elicited rounds of applause. The "Health of the Superintendent of Telegraphs" was then given and responded to. Some dissatisfaction was expressed at the manner in which Port Augusta had been treated in regard to mail matters, but it was decided that on that occasion they should dissociate the offices of Postmaster-General and Superintendent of Telegraphs. After a very pleasant hour's enjoyment the company separated. Had the ceremony taken place in the afternoon a very much larger number would, doubtless, have attended.



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<https://collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/resource/B+15150>
J. Fitts, Western Hotel, Port Augusta West. c1870.



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<https://collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/resource/B+15899>
 Western Hotel, Port Augusta West. 1899 - 1918.



B 71096/32

<https://collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/resource/B+71096/32/continue>
 Western Hotel, Loudon Rd, Port Augusta West.



Port Augusta. First pole planted 1875 August 24. Line went down Mildred Street to Port Lincoln. Post & Telegraph Office built 1884 October. Bridge built 1926 and new Eyre Highway changed road plans.

<https://data.environment.sa.gov.au/content/heritage-surveys/flinders-ranges-survey-volume-2-city-of-port-augusta-1995.pdf>

FLINDERS RANGES HERITAGE SURVEY Former Post Office LOCATION
33 Loudon Road, Port Augusta.

HISTORY On 17 December 1877 a meeting was held of Port Augusta West residents to consider the need for a post office distinct from that on Flagstaff Reserve on the eastern side of the Gulf. As a consequence, a committee was formed and a memorial prepared and sent to the appropriate authorities requesting the services of a post office. Within seven months approval was granted but it was not until October 1884 that a start was made to erect a permanent Post and Telegraph Office on the West Side. The building included “an office, 17ft. Sin. by 14ft., telegraph lobby, sitting-room, two bedrooms, kitchen, front verandah, fencing &c”. The construction was carried out by R. Honey, a timber merchant and builder from Port Adelaide and Kaniva (Victoria) at a cost of £880-8-0. Honey purchased the business of Messrs T. Coombe & Co. of Port Augusta in April 1883. The building is currently used as a private residence.

The history of Port Augusta by Robert James Anderson.

A thesis submitted on 1 September 1988 to the History Department, University of Adelaide for the degree of Master of Arts.

P 286 A post and Telegraph Office was built on the West Side in 1885 by R. Honey, a Port Adelaide timber merchant and builder, who opened a branch in Port Augusta during the boom.

P 290 A proposal for a combined bridge and wharf was put to the Commission on Wharves and Jetties in 1880-1. The plan called for a bridge to be built across the Gulf, from Marryatt Street to Loudon Road on the West Side. A bridge would provide an important physical link for the two populations, there was increasing north west traffic to the Port wanting to use the shipping facilities of the east, and a bridge would cut out 24 km overland journey from east to west via Yorkey Crossing. It was proposed that the central section of the bridge be built wide and strong enough as a 200 metre-long wharf served by two lines of railway. Beyond the wharf was to be an American swing bridge to allow vessels to pass beyond, similar to that of Port Adelaide. The fixed bridge would then

continue to the West Side. The cost was put at £40,000. No more was heard of the proposal after its submission to the Commission.

(Author. Great Western bridge opened in 1927. New bridge (Joy Baluch) opened in 1973.)

P 307 The telephone was invented in 1876. The following year reports of its tests in Adelaide were read with great interest in the Port. In 1878, telephonic experiments were conducted between Semaphore in Adelaide, and Port Augusta, and between Port Augusta and northern towns, using the lines of the Overland Telegraph Line. 1.3.4. At the local Telegraph Office, Postmaster Todd demonstrated a telephone through which came the chimes of the Adelaide Post Office clock, as it struck nine: "We need scarcely say that but a few years ago this would have been scouted as an impossibility."

In 1883 the Telegraph Office and new Railway Station were connected by telephone, and in the following year Dr. Markham's Chapel Street residence was connected to the Hospital. There were individual direct line connections. There was no exchange until 1911.

P 342 In 1896, there was a flurry of activity when the old defective coastal telegraph line to Perth was replaced with one across the Eyre Peninsula. But this would only have boosted employment on the West Side for six to twelve months.

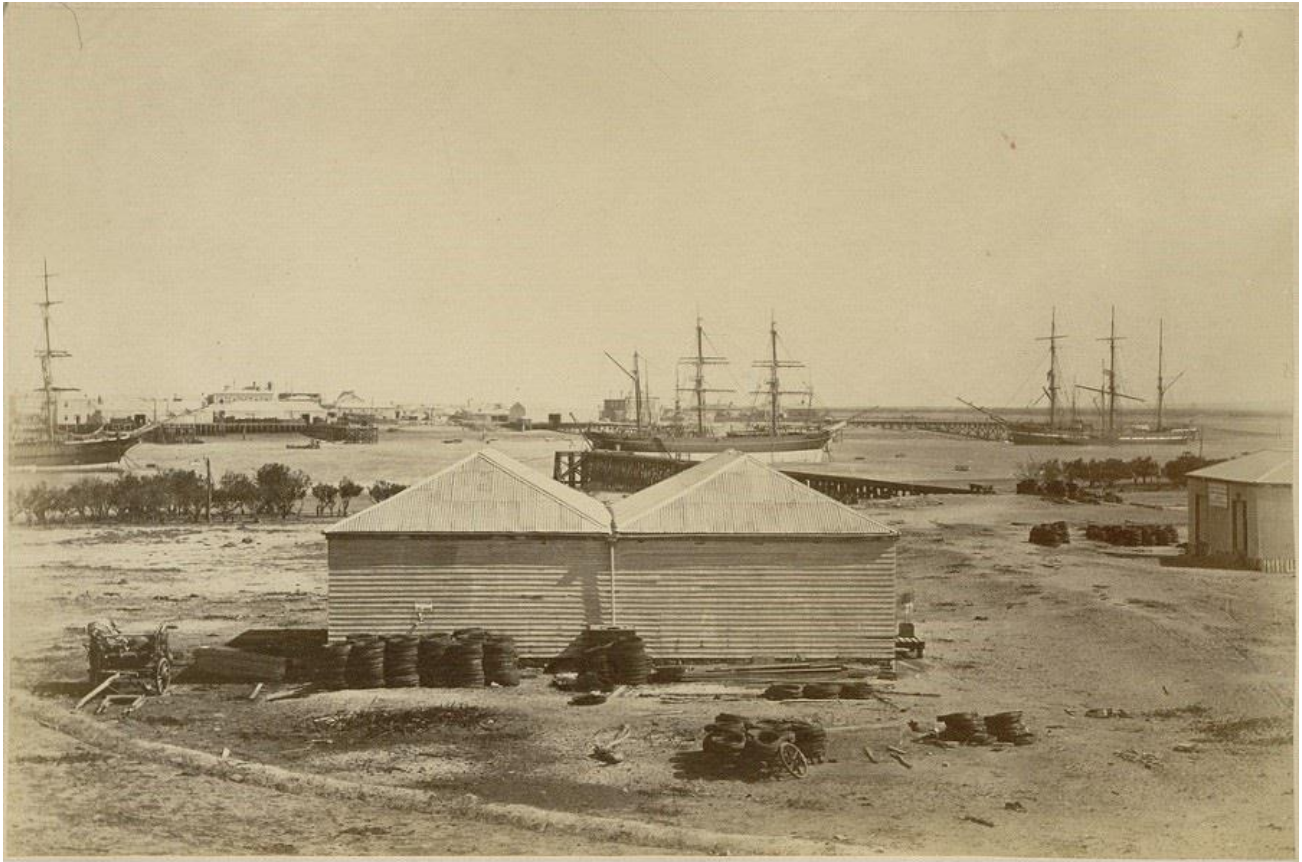
P 357 Two years later (1875) at the planting of the first pole in the new telegraph line to Eucla, West Australia, all speakers hoped that the new line was "only a forerunner of a line of railway, that would convey Queensland cattle across to the West." They anticipated that it would hasten Federation because - "there were great difficulties in the way of a railway to West Australia except it be constructed on a federal basis or by a federal government. Brighter things were in store for Port Augusta and the days of desolation were at an end."



B 42390

<https://collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/resource/B+42390>

Looking east down Mildred Street, Port Augusta West. c 1900. Telegraph poles in foreground.



B 9348

<https://collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/resource/B+9348>
c1876. Possibly Loudon Road from Jetty. Coils of wire against building for telegraph line??

South Australian Chronicle and Weekly Mail (Adelaide, SA : 1868 - 1881),
Saturday 18 September 1875, page 18
<<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article93956566>>

PORT AUGUSTA, SEPTEMBER 13.

<clip> Indeed, one cannot help feeling impressed with the idea that the rain seems to be following the area taken up by the farmers, and that our northern climate is changing to a far moister one. Mr. Knuckey's survey party are well in advance with the western telegraph line, and the contractor has 30 miles of poling completed behind him. We look forward with pleasure to being brought into closer communication with Port Lincoln. <clip>



2021, September. Mildred Street, Port Augusta, looking
Lincoln Gap.

Walter Thomson (also spelt Thompson)

Born 1808, Scotland.

Died 1882, O'Halloran Hill. (74)

Spouse - Eliza Jane Stephens ??

Resided at Fairy Knowe farm, O'Halloran Hill, S.A.

1838 - arrived 26 December. Ship Prince George from London. Thomson/
Thompson Walter and wife Jean nee Crawford.

1853 - owned sect 1463, 472, 481 parts, O'Halloran Hills. (Genealogy SA other
records)

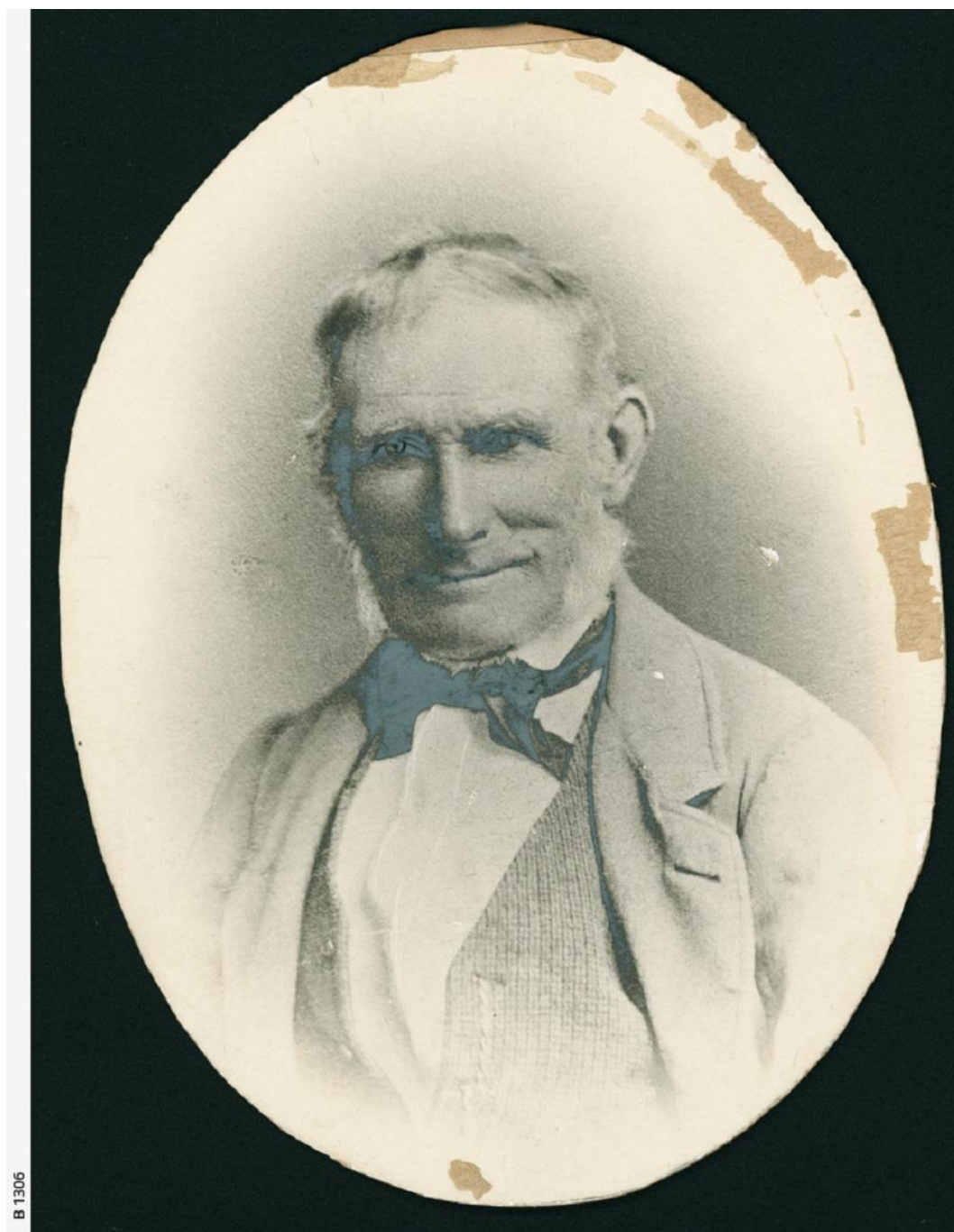
1856 - Built telegraph line down South Road and Mount Gambier to Victorian
border. (age 48)

1877 - Built telegraph line from Port Augusta to Port Lincoln, and from Port
Lincoln to Fowlers Bay.

1882 Narracoorte Herald 11 August 1882 article 146446158 Married. James,
8th son of Mr. Walter Thompson, of O'Halloran Hill.

1882 November 28 Express and Telegraph 29 November 1882 article
208261940 Death. Thompson. On the 28th November, at Fairy Knowe,

O'Halloran Hill, Walter Thompson, aged 74 years. An old colonist of 44 years.
(arrived 1838) SA Register 43328977 Interred in Happy Valley Cemetery.
Headstone spelling Thomson.
Had been contractor under Government carried out contracts connected with
railway and telegraph lines.



<https://collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/resource/B+1306>
Walter Thompson, Fairy Knowe farm, O'Halloran Hill. c1865.

Submarine cable across Spencer's Gulf at Port Augusta.

I was wondering how the telegraph line crossed the Gulf. Was it strung between two posts close to the water, or a submarine cable? Looking at the Hundred map of Copley gave me some clues and after some investigation I found the following evidence of a submarine cable, seen in the photos.

Pole 1. Has to be a telegraph pole with the insulator peg holes in the cross arm. Holes in the sides would have been for foot pegs to climb the pole. The metal strip around the top was a Charles Todd stipulation on wooden poles. Probably Swan River Mahogany (Jarrah).

Post 2. It lines up with the posts on the western side. I presume it was used to anchor the cable so it wouldn't move with the tides, which are quite high in this area. There are two other posts nearby that I presume supported the main post. The pieces of cable are evident here. The dimensions of the Kangaroo Island cable are given in that section, but are "The conductor, along which the message flashed, consists of seven strands of copper wire, insulated by three coatings of Willoughby Smith's improved gutta percha, with immediate layers of Chatterton's compound, which consists of Stockholm tar, resin, and gutta percha. All this makes about the thickness of a man's little finger or rather less. This core has a thick serving of tarred jute. Then over all this are ten wires, protected by a serving of Clark's bituminous compound. In different portions of the cable there is a difference in its diameter, and that of the protecting wires." This cable has 12 wires I think. The copper core has corroded away, but the remaining hole is about the size of a little finger.

Post 3. Again, lines up with the others, and I presume is the anchor post. Being much closer to settlement any others have gone. The distance between Post 2 and 3 is approx. 485 metres or 548 yards.

Pole 4. There is no evidence of the metal pole (Oppenheimer) that I presume would have been used, but I found the cluster of broken insulators. This is approximately 65 metres or 74 yards from post 3.

Pole 5. There is no evidence of a metal pole, but a cluster of broken insulators about 63 metres or 65 yards from Pole 4.

Pole 6. There is no evidence of a metal pole, but a cluster of broken insulators, about 50 metres or 54 yards from Pole 5. I presume any good insulators were removed when the poles were removed.

Pole 7. There is no evidence of a metal pole, but some broken insulators, about 84 metres or 93 yards from Pole 6. This is the start of the line heading to Mildred Street.

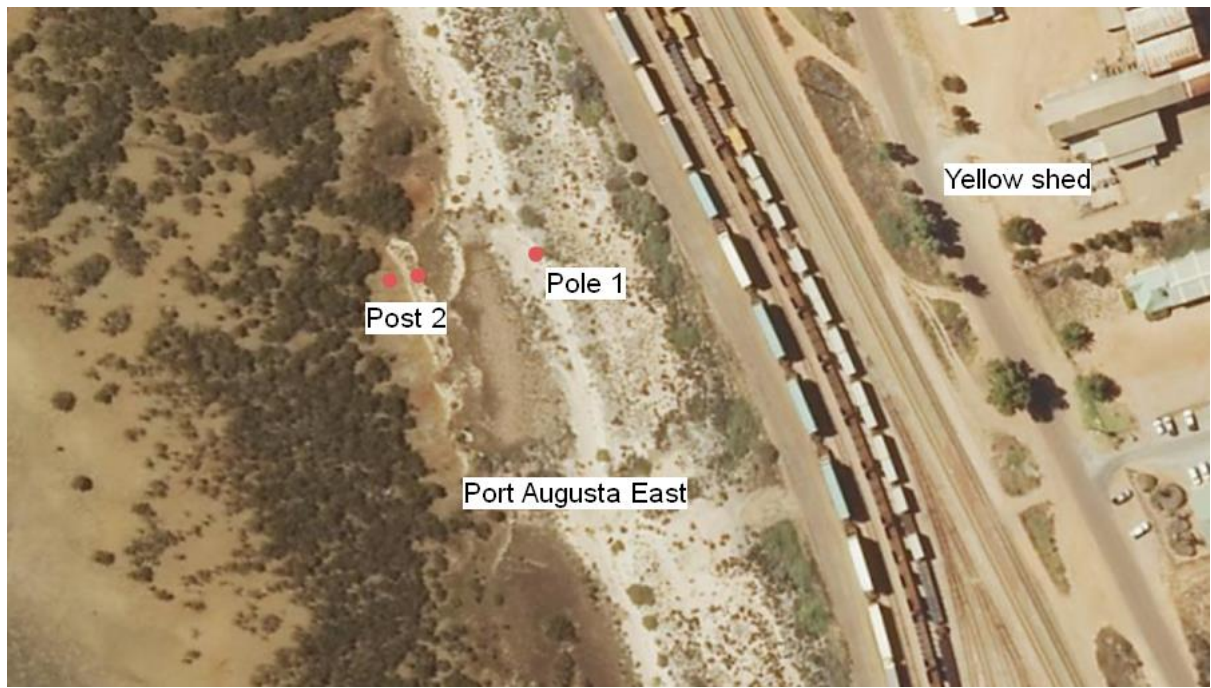
The stipulated space between poles on the line was 5 chains (110 yards) apart.

The large number of broken bottles and some crockery is evidence of the “refuse depot” shown on the hundred map. Although the line is on the south side. Metal has probably rusted away being so close to the sea.



1892. Hundred of Copley Dotted line is telegraph line







Pole 1 East side looking South



Pole 1 East side looking to West side



Pole 1 Top section



Post 2 at edge of mangroves East side



Pieces of cable at post 2



Pieces of cable at post 2



Outer wires of cable at post 2

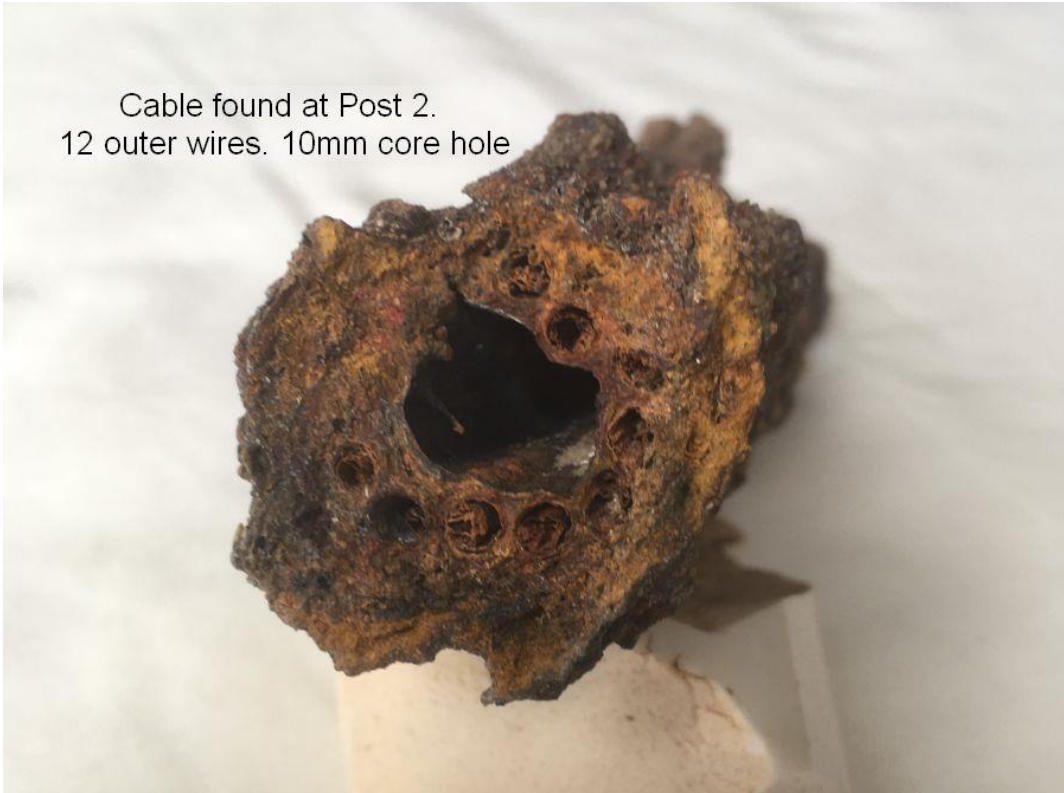


Cable at post 2

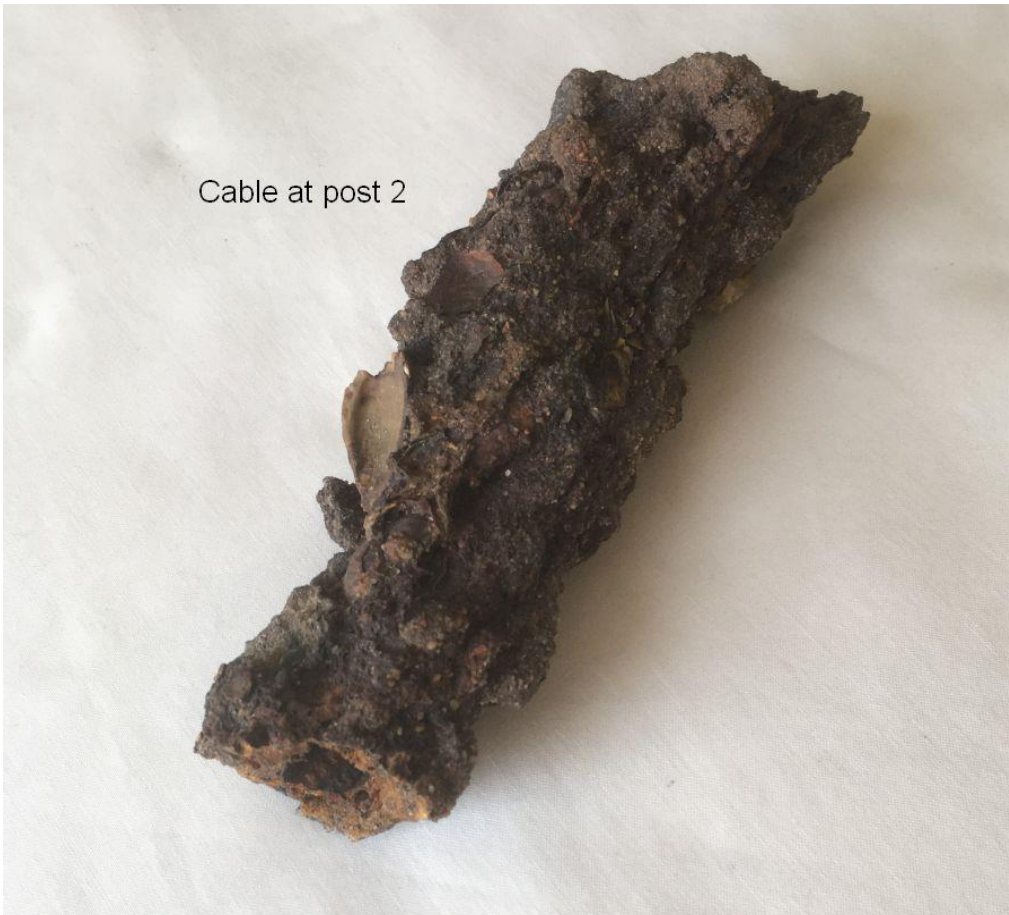


Outer wires at post 2

Cable found at Post 2.
12 outer wires. 10mm core hole



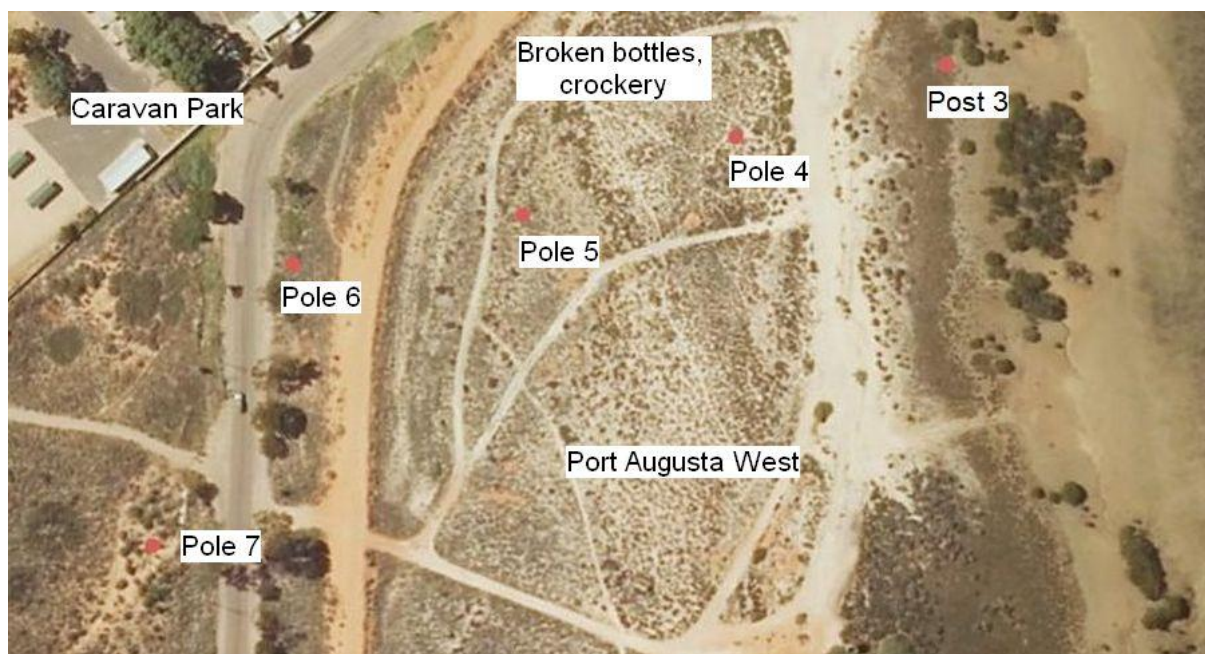
Cable at post 2











Broken bottles, crockery near caravan park



Post 3 looking to pole 1 at yellow shed



Post 3 looking west to poles 4, 5, 6.
Caravan Park on right. July 2022.



Pole 4 insulators

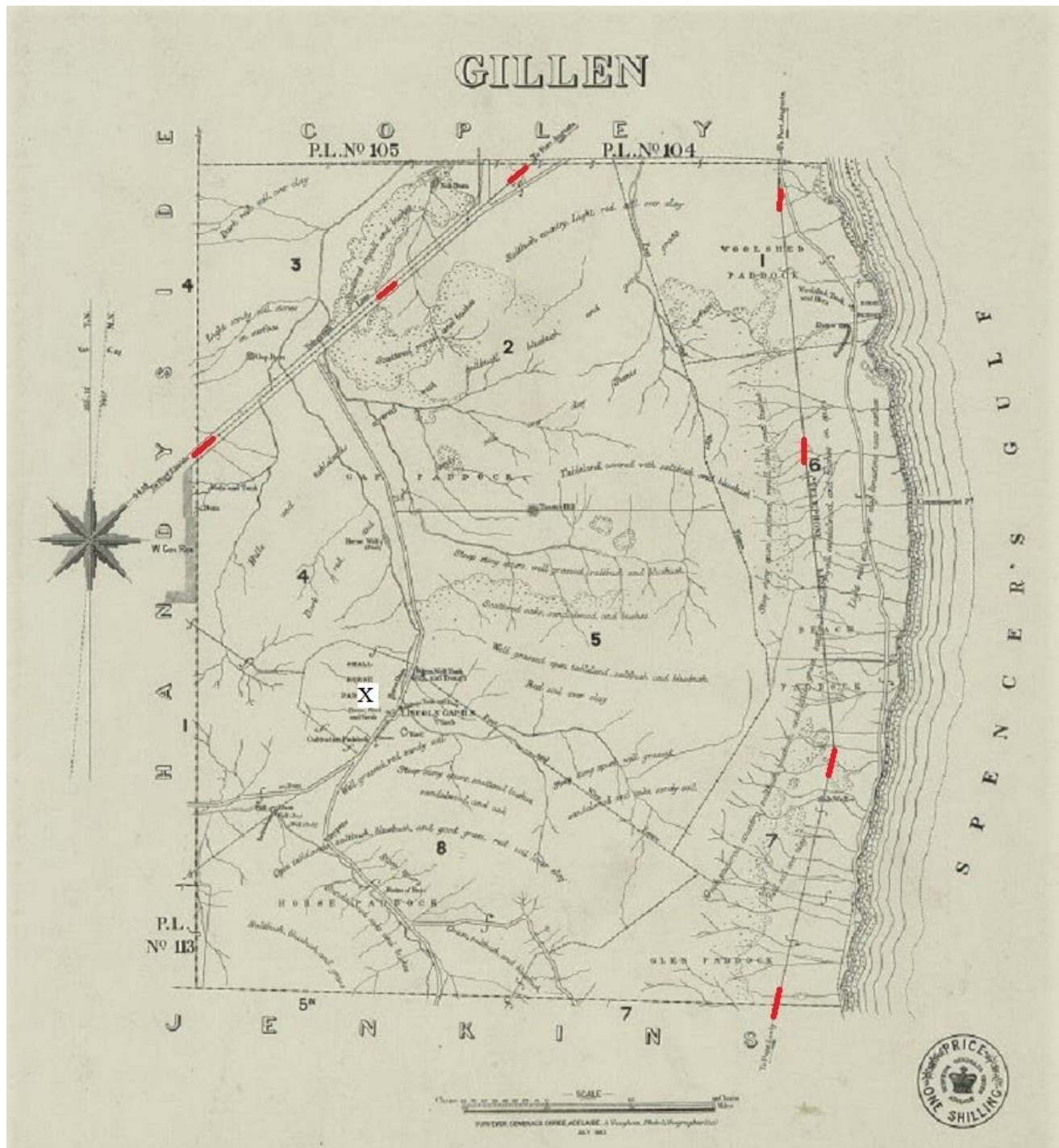


Pole 5 insulators



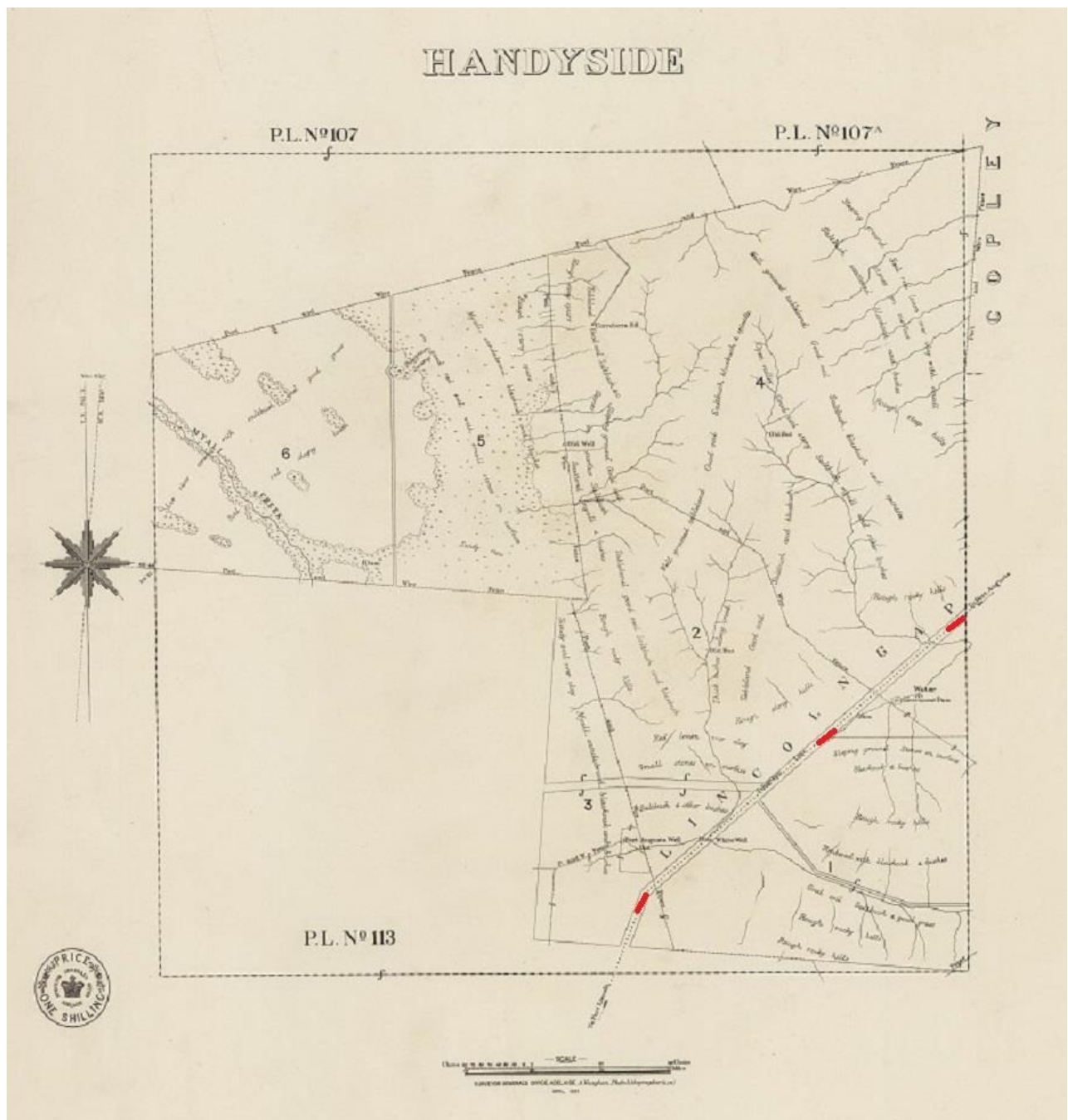
Pole 6 insulators

2. Hundred of Gillen.



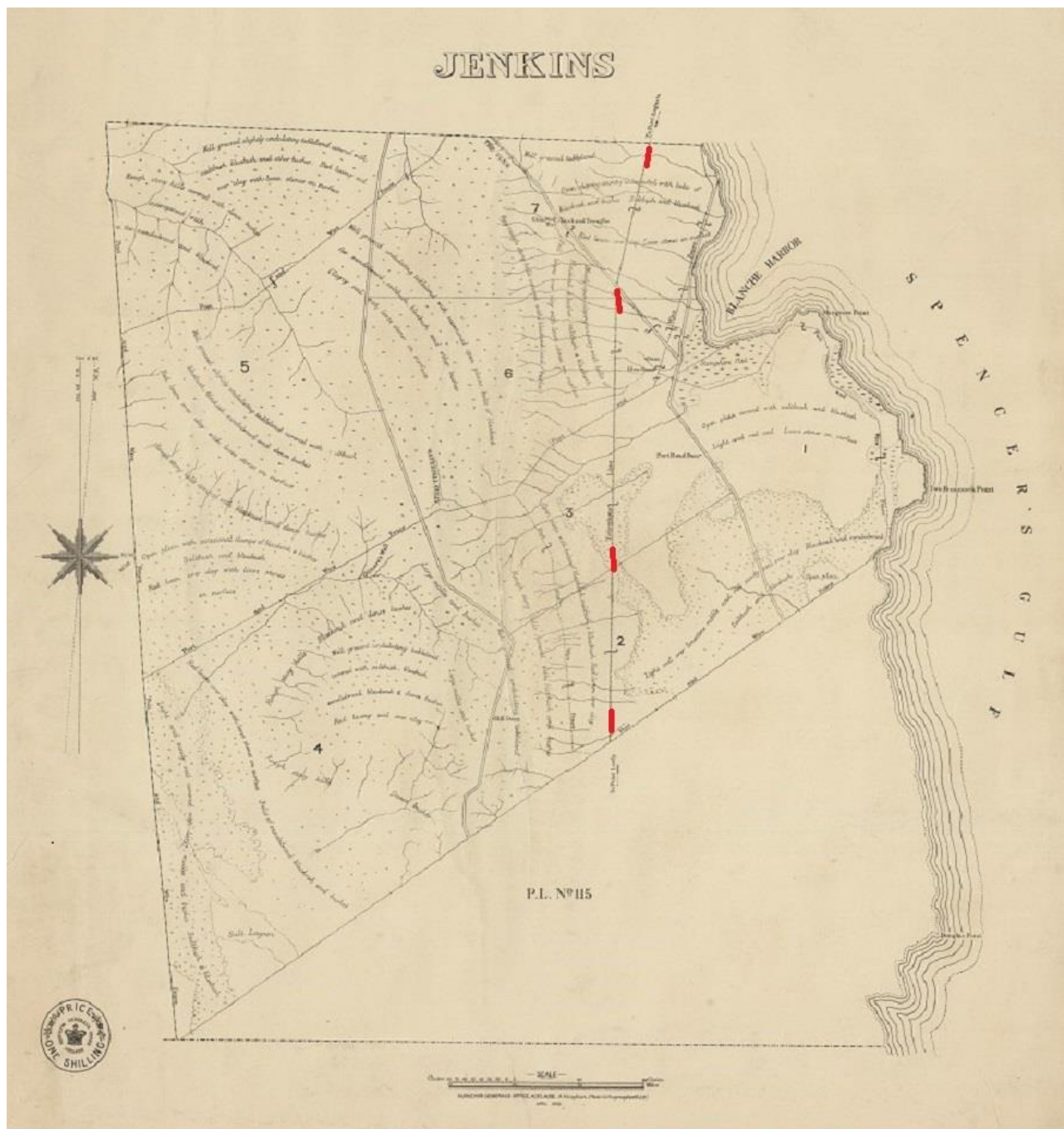
https://maps.collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/series/hundreds_SA_63360/G/gillen/zsmp_830bje63360_gillen1893_ds.pdf
Shows telegraph line Pt Augusta to Pt Lincoln & Pt Augusta to Hummock Hill.
Lincoln Gap H.S.

3. Hundred of Handyside.



https://maps.collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/series/hundreds_SA_63360/H/handyside/zsmf_830bje63360_handyside1892_ds.jpg

4. Hundred of Jenkins. Telegraph line to Point Lowly.



https://maps.collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/series/hundreds_SA_63360/J/jenkins/zsmp_830bje63360_jenkins1892_ds.jpg
Later telegraph line to Point Lowly, Hummock Hill (Whyalla.)

Hundred of Cultana. Earliest map is dated 1967, so it doesn't show the telegraph line to Point Lowly and then to Hummock Hill (Whyalla).

Port Augusta Dispatch, Newcastle and Flinders Chronicle (SA : 1885 - 1916),
Friday 5 February 1892, page 2
<<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article197595152>>

POINT LOWLY TELEPHONE SERVICE.— Direct communication has now been established between Port Augusta and Point Lowly lighthouse, the necessary instrumental connection having been completed yesterday (Thursday) morning. The opening ceremony was quietly conducted, the Mayor (Mr. C. E. Robertson) being invited in the presence of several citizens, to send along the inaugural message. A representative from the Dispatch office, together with several other gentlemen were, by the courtesy of Mr. Beatton, allowed to inspect the new instrument and use the wire. Conversation was freely carried on from both ends for about a quarter of an hour. Miss Franks the daughter of the lighthouse keeper and Mr. Unbehaun of the telegraph department were felicitous and profuse in their utterances, and waited untiringly on the "voice" of the citizens, which kept up a running fire of questions and compliments. An introduction between a certain Augustan gentleman and Miss Franks, given by Mr. Beatton, threatened at one time to develop into mutual understandings of a cordial nature; the negotiation were however somewhat abruptly and sarcastically brought to a conclusion, by the young lady asking a rather pertinent question regarding the domestic status of her apparent admirer. Congratulatory messages from Mr. Unbehaun to Mr. Todd [Postmaster General] brought the visit of inspection to a close. The instruments Mr. Beatton has since informed us are the very best and latest improved, and the line one of the clearest and easiest spoken in the colonies.

Port Pirie Recorder and North Western Mail (SA : 1898 - 1918), Saturday 22
November 1902, page 2
<<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article95247584>>.

THE IRON KNOB.
NECESSARY COMMUNICATION.
WHAT IS REQUIRED,

Considering the importance of the Iron Knob to the Broken Hill Proprietary Company's Works and to Port Pirie there is little or no necessity to expatiate on the necessity of better means of telegraphic or telephonic communication between the two places. This is not a new question. In January last the Town Council prepared a memorial on the subject for the Federal Postmaster-General, worded thus: —

" Sir—We the undersigned members of the Port Pirie Corporation, in the State of South Australia, and also rate payers of the said town, respectfully urge to

you the necessity of having telegraphic or telephone communication with Hummock Hill and the Iron Monarch in the said State known as the Broken Hill Proprietary Company's flux works, on the western side of Spencer's Gulf. At present a message to Port Pirie from Hummock Hill has to be taken 12 miles on horse back to Point Lowly Station, then sent to Port Augusta; thence to Adelaide and return to Port Pirie, making a total distance of 410 miles, as against 24 miles to Port Germein, or 23 miles from Port Pirie. All the business for the said places is done through Port Pirie, and it will, no doubt, be apparent to you that we should have direct and speedy communication. In case of any serious accident direct communication is advisable to enable the patient to be brought over to the local Hospital promptly. A case happened a week or so ago when a man lost his life through delay. Your petitioners respectfully suggest that you cause a survey to be made from either Port Pirie or Port Germein to the places mentioned. We can assure you that a good revenue would result from the construction of such a line."

This was forwarded to the Minister of Trades and Customs (Mr. Kingston) with a request that he would place it in the proper quarter. Mr. Kingston duly acknowledged the receipt of the communication and sent it to the Postmaster General. This was at the end of January. Nothing further was heard of the matter, and then on April 18 Mr. Grey wrote to Mr. Kingston asking him to enquire into the facts of the petition. The answer received was that the Federal Postal Department had referred the matter to Sir Charles Todd for report. Since then nothing whatever has been heard of the matter—nearly a matter of six months.

The line suggested in a plan attached to the petition was direct across the Spit by a land line and by a cable to Hummock Hill. The land line would be 22 miles long and the cable 4 miles. The land line to the Iron Knob would be 32 miles long.

Port Augusta Dispatch, Newcastle and Flinders Chronicle (SA : 1885 - 1916), Friday 7 July 1911, page 1
<<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article202955712>>.

Country Letters.

IRON KNOB June 27.

<clip> A Government party have also come over to Hummock Hill to erect the telephone line out to Point Lowly, the old rails to be used for poles have arrived and are being carted out and the work ought now to soon be completed. The people here are wondering when a start is to be made with the Iron Knob

telephone line, hopes being freely expressed that it will be completed before next wool season. <clip>

Advertiser (Adelaide, SA : 1889 - 1931), Tuesday 29 August 1911, page 9
<<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article5305355>>

THE COUNTRY.

<clip> YORK (Eyre's Peninsula), August 24.— <clip> Recently a telephone line was erected connecting Hummock Hill with Port Augusta. <clip>

Observer (Adelaide, SA : 1905 - 1931), Saturday 21 October 1911, page 40
<<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article164736371>>

TOWNSHIP OF HUMMOCK HILL.

The Treasurer informed the Hon. J. V. O'Loughlin that the Government would make provision for surveying a township at Hummock Hill. The land at Hummock Hill was held under miscellaneous lease, and portion of the area (4,800 acres) could, if desired, be resumed on six months' notice being given.

MT LAURA Homestead Museum.

<https://www.whyalla.com/mt-laura-homestead-museum>

THE MUSEUM IS OPERATED BY THE WHYALLA BRANCH OF THE **NATIONAL TRUST** AND IS IN THE CENTRE OF THE CITY. THE MUSEUM GROUNDS INCLUDE THE GAY STREET COTTAGE - BUILT BY THE BHP COMPANY IN 1914 FOR RENTAL TO ITS EMPLOYEES.

The building was constructed as a homestead forming part of Mount Laura Station and continued as a sheep station for some 30 years until the homestead was handed back to the Lands Department.

Attractions include a steam locomotive which in 1902 hauled iron ore from Iron Knob to Hummock Hill, the Nicolson and Lions Engine Sheds which house more than 60 stationary engines, the first police "lock up," a blacksmith's display, a telecommunications museum featuring items from the Overland Telegraph era of 1872 to modern day satellite communications, and a collection of horse drawn vehicles and agricultural implements in "Barber's Barn". Enjoy the beauty and serenity of the heritage rose garden featuring the Women's Memorial Sculpture.

<https://www.nationaltrust.org.au/places/mount-laura-station/>

Telecommunications Museum houses an extensive collection of items from Electra House transferred when the King William Street facility was

dismantled. A joint venture between the National Trust of South Australia, Whyalla Branch and the Whyalla City Council it features exhibits from the Overland and East West Telegraph construction from 1872 and 1877. In 2015 the Museum was extended to house the history of telecommunications on the Eyre Peninsula as well as examples of the evolution of Australia's communication networks.

Following are some of the displays at the museum-



2021 September. Mount Laura Homestead Museum, Whyalla.



THE EAST-WEST TELEGRAPH ADELAIDE TO PERTH

The East-West Telegraph linked Western Australia to the other Australian colonies and, through the Overland Telegraph, to the world. The 2428 kilometre single iron wire line which completed the link had repeater stations at Port Lincoln, Streaky Bay, Smoky Bay, Fowlers Bay, Eyre, Israelite Bay, Esperance and Bremer Bay. The first poles were erected in Albany on 1 January 1875 and Port Augusta on 25 August 1875. When the line was joined at the Eucla border station on 8 December 1877, the first message was sent to Perth: "Saturday, 7 p.m. Eucla line opened. Hurrah!". Richard Randall Knuckey supervised the South Australian section which was completed on 15 July 1877. Other commemorative plaques may be found at Albany and Esperance.

Dedicated by
The Institution of Engineers, Australia
City of Whyalla and the National Trust of South Australia
2001 — The Centenary of Federation

2021 September. Mount Laura Homestead Museum, Whyalla.

<https://portal.engineersaustralia.org.au/system/files/engineering-heritage-australia/nomination-title/East-West%20Telegraph.pdf>

(to see the full nomination paper including-

Section 6. Telegraphy in the Colonies.

Section 7. Decision to build the line.

Section 8. Choosing the route.

Section 10. Construction - Western Australia.

Section 11. Completing the line.

Section 12. Operating the telegraph.)

NOMINATION FOR AN

NATIONAL ENGINEERING LANDMARK:

THE EAST-WEST TELEGRAPH, ADELAIDE TO PERTH, 1877

9. CONSTRUCTION - SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Port Augusta to Fowlers Bay

The South Australian Government called for tenders in January 1875 but no offers were received. The Port Augusta to Fowlers Bay section was then divided into two sections - Port Augusta to Port Lincoln (317 kilometres or 197 miles) and Port Lincoln to Fowlers Bay (536 kilometres or 333 miles) - and the tender was readvertised in February.

This time, tenders were received for those two sections (but not the Fowlers Bay to Eucla section which was recognised as the most difficult). They varied from £18/16/0 to £75/0/0 per mile. The work included clearing a strip six metres (20 feet) either side of the line. The successful tenderer was Walter Thomson, an experienced line contractor from O'Halloran Hill.

The availability of timber for poles again a problem in South Australia (echoed many years later when the economical distribution of electricity required the invention of a cheaply manufactured concrete and steel pole in lieu of suitable local wood). Oppenheimer galvanised iron poles, as used on the Overland Telegraph Line, were to be used in South Australia. Materials were made available to Thomson at Port Adelaide and he was responsible for getting them to the site.

The coastal vessel *Ferret* took the first load of material to Port Augusta and work commenced on 25 August 1875 when the first pole was planted in Loudon Road, Port Augusta West, by the Mayor, Thomas McTurk Gibson.

The route was surveyed and pole positions pegged by Government surveyors working under the direction of G J McMinn (who had been one of the Overseers on the Overland Telegraph). Poles were spaced at intervals of five chains (10 poles to the kilometre or 16 poles to the mile).

The third section was advertised yet again in March, this time divided into two parts. Thomson was the sole tenderer but his prices of £13/15/0 and £35/0/0 were considered too high and so Todd (Charles Todd, Superintendent of Telegraphs) decided that his Department would build this section itself.

The man chosen to supervise the project was Richard Randall Knuckey, an experienced surveyor and line inspector. In 1870, Knuckey had been transferred from his job as surveyor with the Crown Lands Department to the Posts and Telegraphs Department to work on the Overland Telegraph. He was appointed South Australia's first Line Inspector on 1 August.

As Overseer of the East-West line, Knuckey was required to have "... active and immediate supervision of the erection of the line, to certify that all work was carried out and completed according to specifications, and to examine and initial all progress returns before any instalments could be passed for payment."

Water and other supplies were carted from Port Augusta. When the line clearing reached Franklin Harbour (Cowell), this port became the entry point for supplies. (At first the telegraph line bypassed Franklin Harbour, much to the disappointment of local settlers, but a few years later Charles Todd decided that a connection could be justified on the grounds that "... it would greatly facilitate the inspection of the line ... which, owing to the absence of water and the dense scrub passed through, is often exceedingly difficult and even a rather dangerous matter..." The line was looped in and out of Cowell in 1885.)

The line to Port Lincoln was completed on 17 January 1876.

The line to Fowlers Bay was completed on 26 September 1876.

The difficult construction had been completed in just 13 months, averaging 16 kilometres (10 miles) per week.

Fowlers Bay to Eucla.

The third section to Eucla was again advertised on 1 March 1876, this time in two sections. Only one tender was received (from Walter Thomson) and it was considered too expensive (£46 per mile to Yeer Coman Cowie at the head of the Bight then £56 to Eucla). Instead, the Government decided to erect the line itself and Richard Randall Knuckey was put in charge. His team included his brother John, G R McMinn, Frank Marchant, A T Woods, John Thomson (son of Walter Thomson) and 38 men.

The rugged coastline west of Fowlers Bay afforded few suitable landing places and so the 4000 poles and 40 tons of wire had to be carted overland through sand dunes and dense scrub. Sufficient material was landed at Fowlers Bay to reach 90 kilometres beyond the Head of the Bight (a total of 250 kilometres); material for the remaining 130 kilometres was landed at Eucla.

As expected, the hot, dry conditions proved to be the major obstacle. The major task which consumed the greater part of the transport resources was the carting of fodder and water. At three places between Fowlers Bay and Eucla, iron tanks were placed underneath a butterfly roof to collect water.

Work commenced on 1 September 1876 and was completed on 15 July the following year, the linesmen having worked through the searing summer so that the connection to Western Australia was not delayed.



2021 September. Mount Laura Homestead Museum, Whyalla.



2021 September. Mount Laura Homestead Museum, Whyalla.



2021 September. Mount Laura Homestead Museum, Whyalla. Wedges in base plate.



2021 September. Mount Laura Homestead Museum. Wedges in base plate.

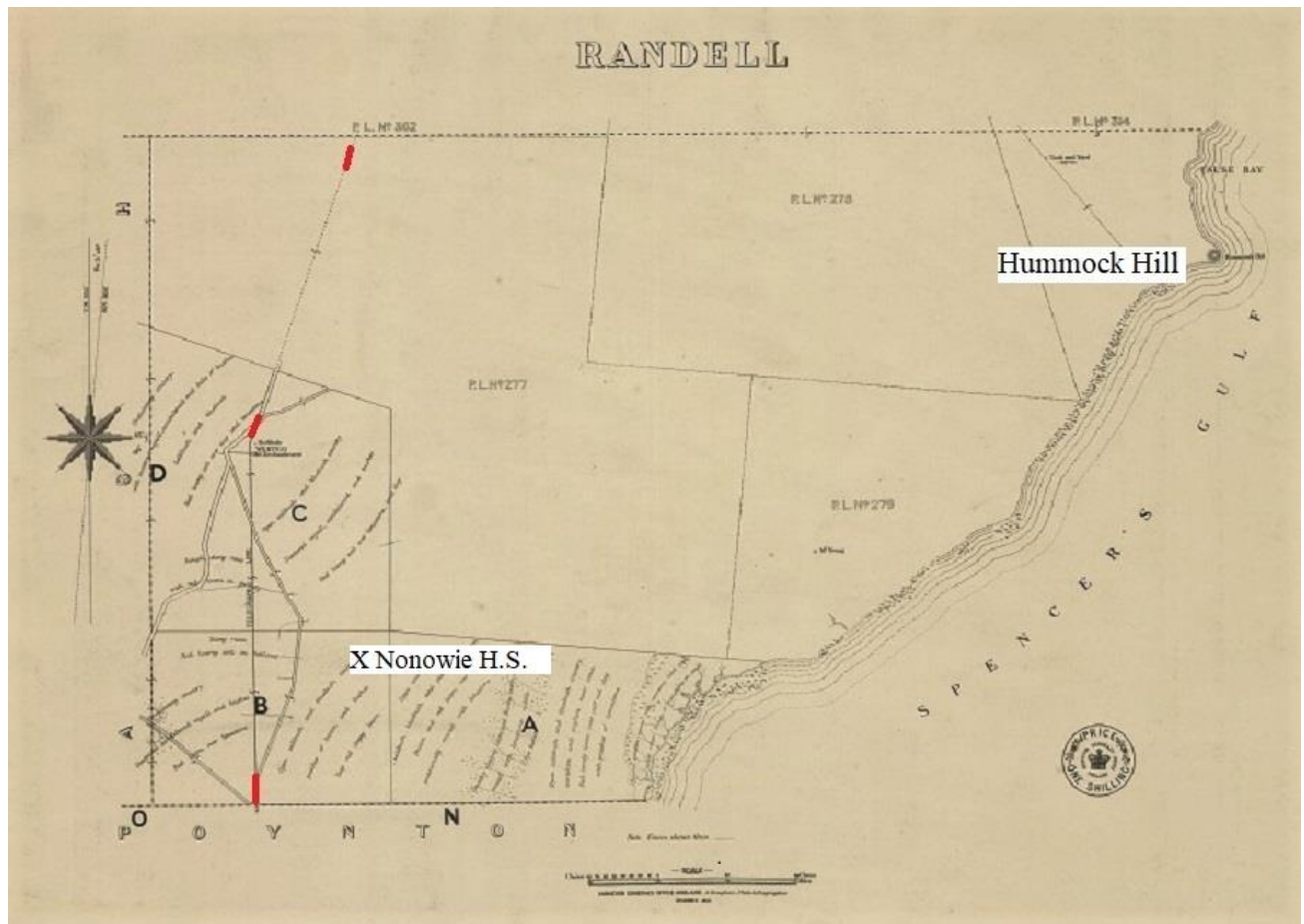


2021 September. Mount Laura Homestead Museum, Whyalla.



2021 September. Mount Laura Homestead Museum, Whyalla.

5. Hundred of Randell.



https://maps.collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/series/hundreds_SA_63360/R/randell/zsmf_830bje63360_randell1895_ds.jpg

The Nonowie Story of Ernest Leslie Cowled written in his 85th year at Victor Harbor, 1969.

(State Library of SA. Pamphlet 994-238 c875 Cowled E.L.)

P4. <clip> In 1896 the Government cut up for closer settlement a large area of land west of Spencer's Gulf (west and south of where Whyalla now stands). Father and eldest brother Oswald drove around Spencer's Gulf 150 miles to inspect the land, came back with glowing reports <clip>

<clip> In 1897 the menfolk went over and sunk the first dam, <clip>

P5. <clip> In 1898 the family moved over from the Port Pirie district. <clip>

<clip> When the family moved over to "Nonowie" (no water) <clip> Our nearest point to get the mail was at Lincoln Gap, 14 Miles from Port Augusta. The post office was kept by the Mould family, <clip>

P6. <clip> My job (age 13) was to ride up to Lincoln Gap once a month - 40 miles - collect the mail from the Moulds, camp the night in the scrub, hobble my horse out for the night and ride home next day. At that time there were no other settlers or fences, so we had the run for about 5 or 6 square hundred miles, with the Middleback Ranges our western boundary. <clip>

P8. <clip> 1900 now. We come to the year 1900 when the B.H.P. Company built the jetty at Hummock Hill and laid the railway line to Iron Knob. <clip>

P9. <clip> The coming of Hummock Hill made a great difference to us for we could get a weekly mail by driving only 16 miles, also could get our goods at the shops (one ran a post office) instead of getting them over by sea every six months, as before. <clip>

P10. <clip> New Settlers. Mr. J. Ferry, <clip> took up some blocks south of our place, (Mullaqhana). The Broadbent family took up land west of us, also Arch Cook, his wife and daughter, a brother Claude took up land to the west, south west of us. <clip>

(More information of the Cowled family can be found in "Badcocks of Watervale with the Cowleds of Nonowie story." Adelaide State Library, SA ready reference 929-2099423 B132.)

Daily Herald (Adelaide, SA : 1910 - 1924), Thursday 29 December 1910, page 3

<<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article103917734>>

MAIL TENDERS ACCEPTED. FOR TERM JANUARY 1, 1911, TO DECEMBER 31, 1913.

Hummocks Hill and Poynton, Ferry & Cowled, one a week, vehicle, one horse, £26.

Cowell & Arno Bay, H. S. Robinson, two a week, vehicle, four horses, £118 10/.

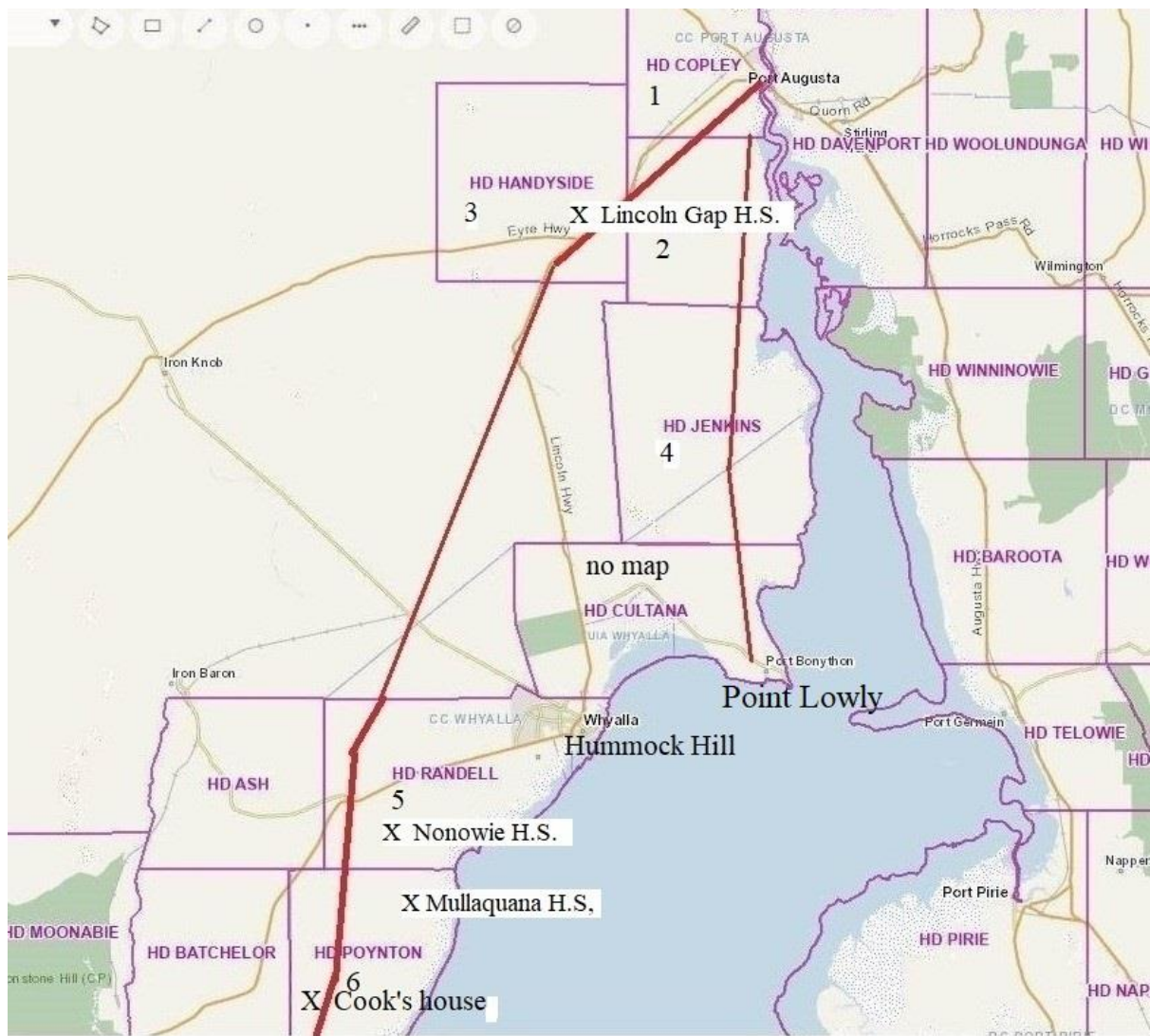
Cowell and Glynn, J. Guidera, weekly, vehicle, one horse, £50.

Cowell and Mitchellville, W. F. Franklin, weekly, vehicle, two horses, £52.

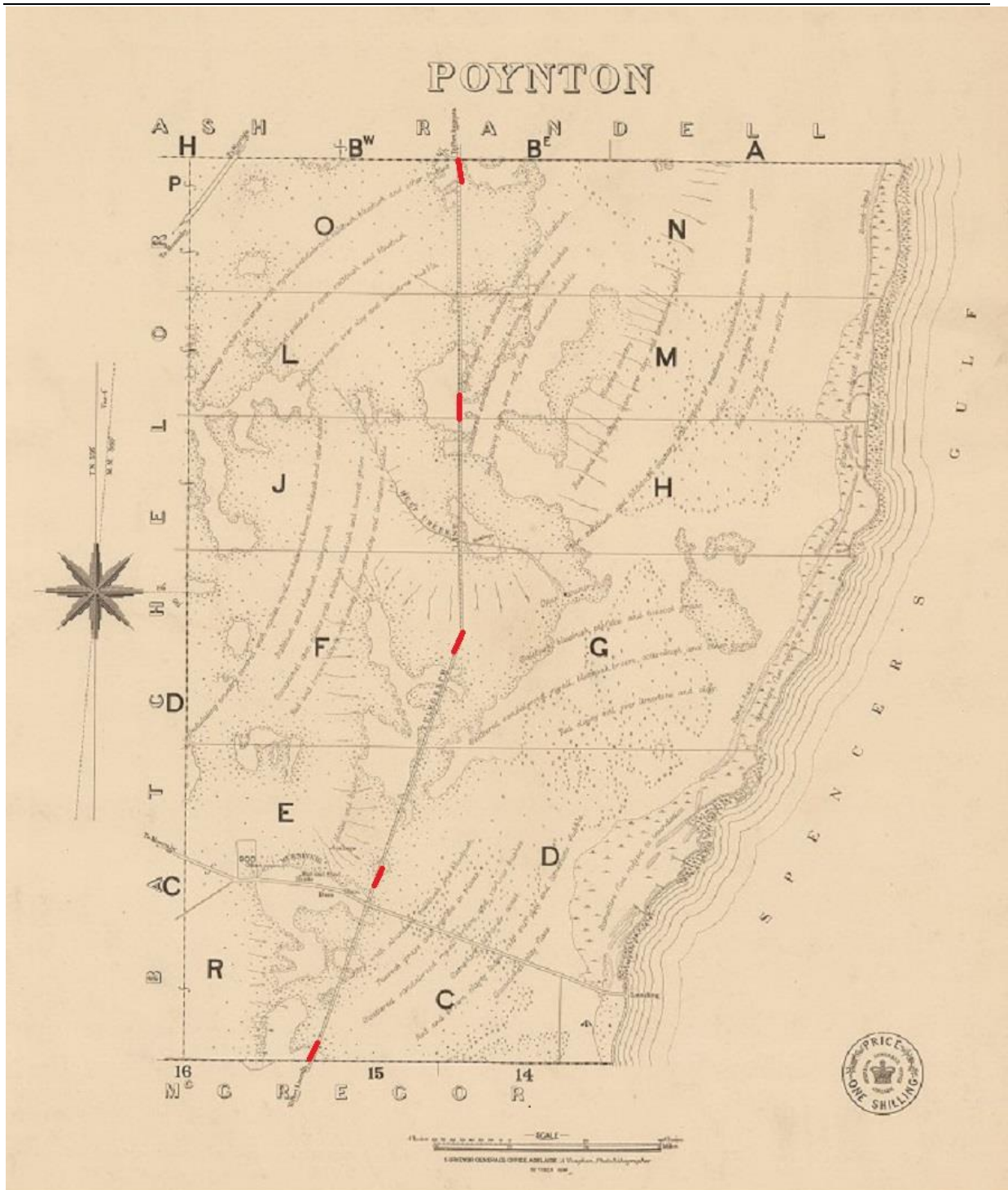
Cowell and Watchannie, F. L. Grund, weekly, vehicle, two horses, £55.

Cleve and Arno Bay, F. H. Gilling, twice a week, vehicle, two horses, £90.

Fowler's Bay and Eucla, M. J. Allen, every four weeks, vehicle, two horses, £175.

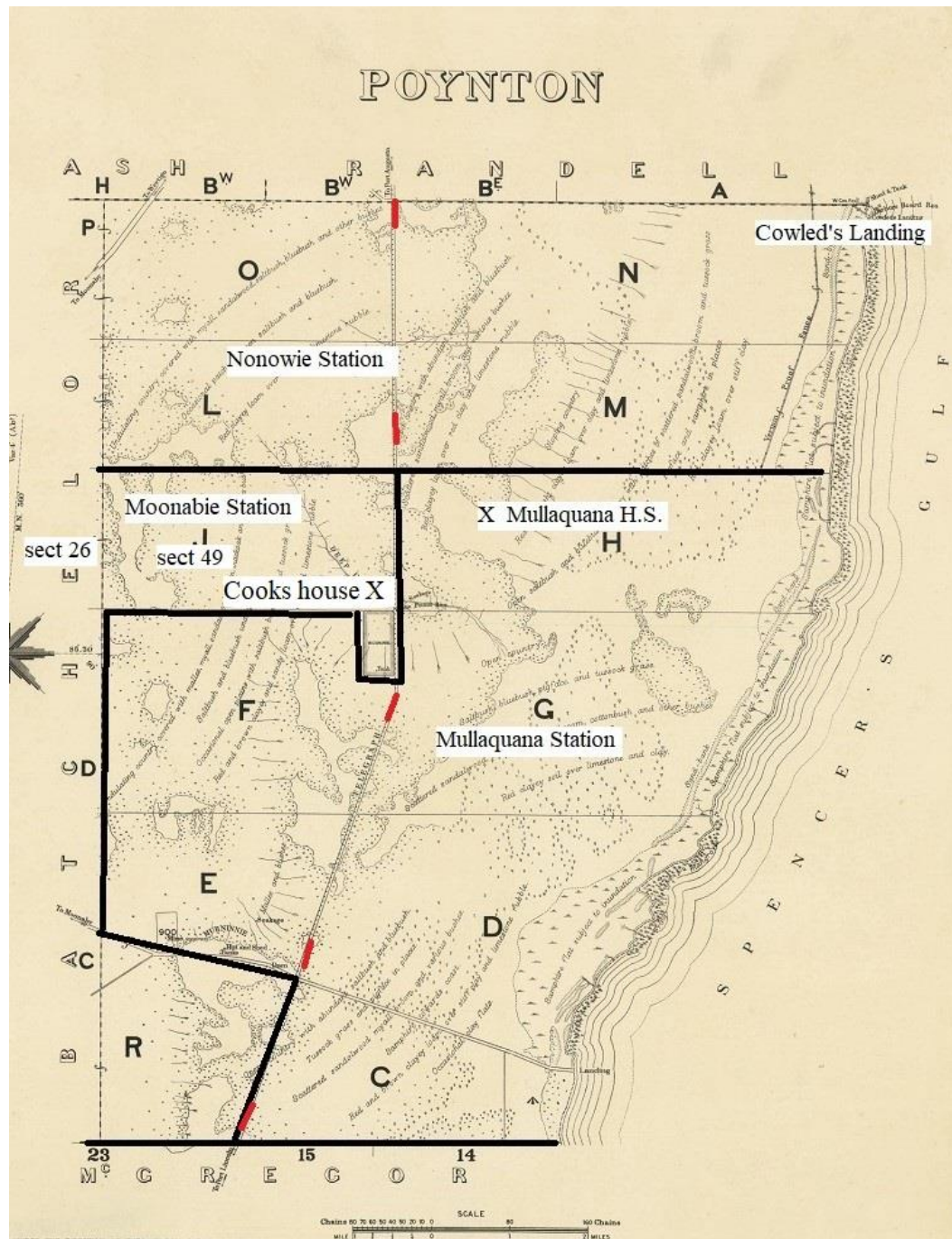


6. Hundred of Poynton.



https://maps.collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/series/hundreds_SA_63360/P/poynton/zsmp_830bje63360_poynton1896_ds.jpg
Nonowie & Moonabie Stations.

In private information of the current owners of Moonabie and part of Nonowie (whom I am related to) there is reference to-
 Section 26, Hundred of Batchelor, and Section 49, Hundred of Poynton.
 14/01/1908, owner James Bowen.
 11/05/1910, owner Archibald Paul Cook.
 24/10/1910, owner mortgage to Goode, Knox, & Miller.
 31/03/1914, owner mortgage to Settlers Board.



2021.



2021. Cook's house cellar.



2021. Cook's house. Underground water tank.



2021. Cook's house. Underground water tank.



2021. Cook's house floor.



2021. Cook's house. Telegraph pole anchor plate.



2021. Cook's house. Telegraph pole anchor plate.

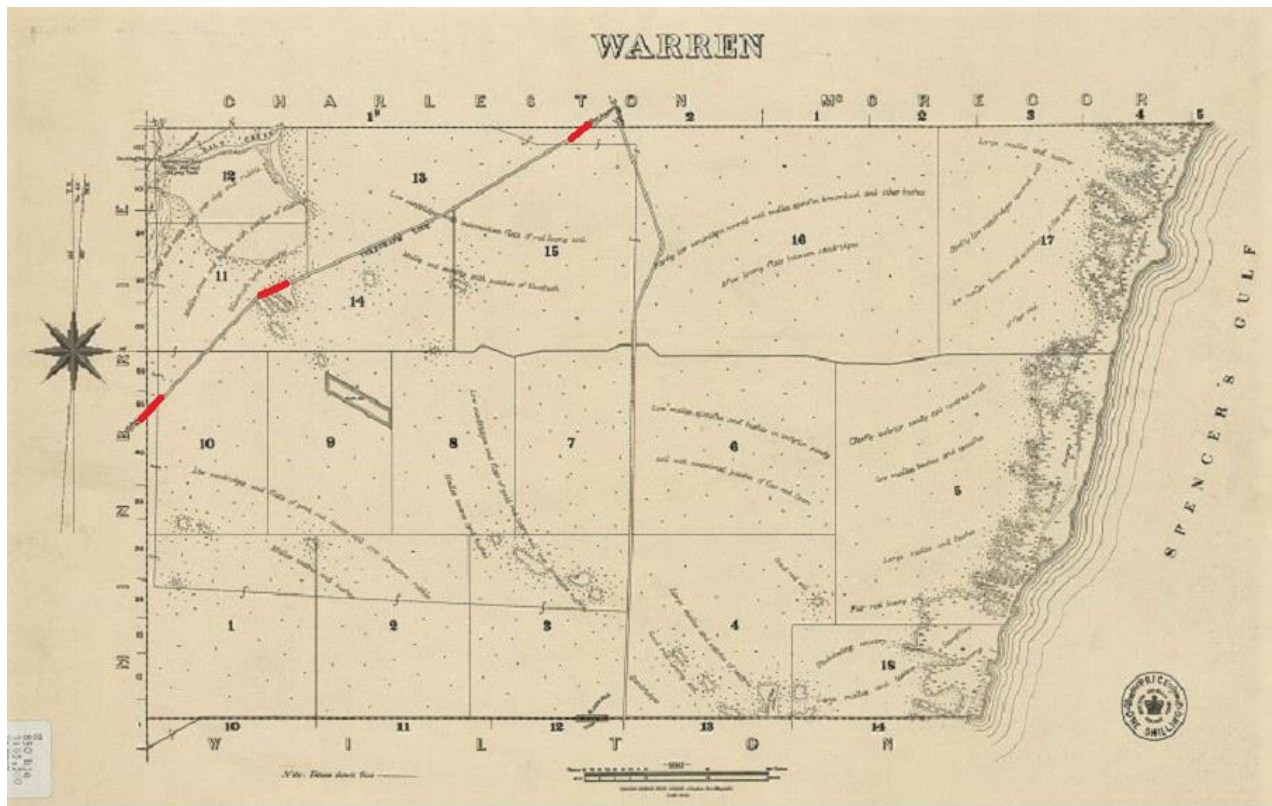


2021. Cook's house. Anchor plate attached to telegraph pole base section.

[illegible]

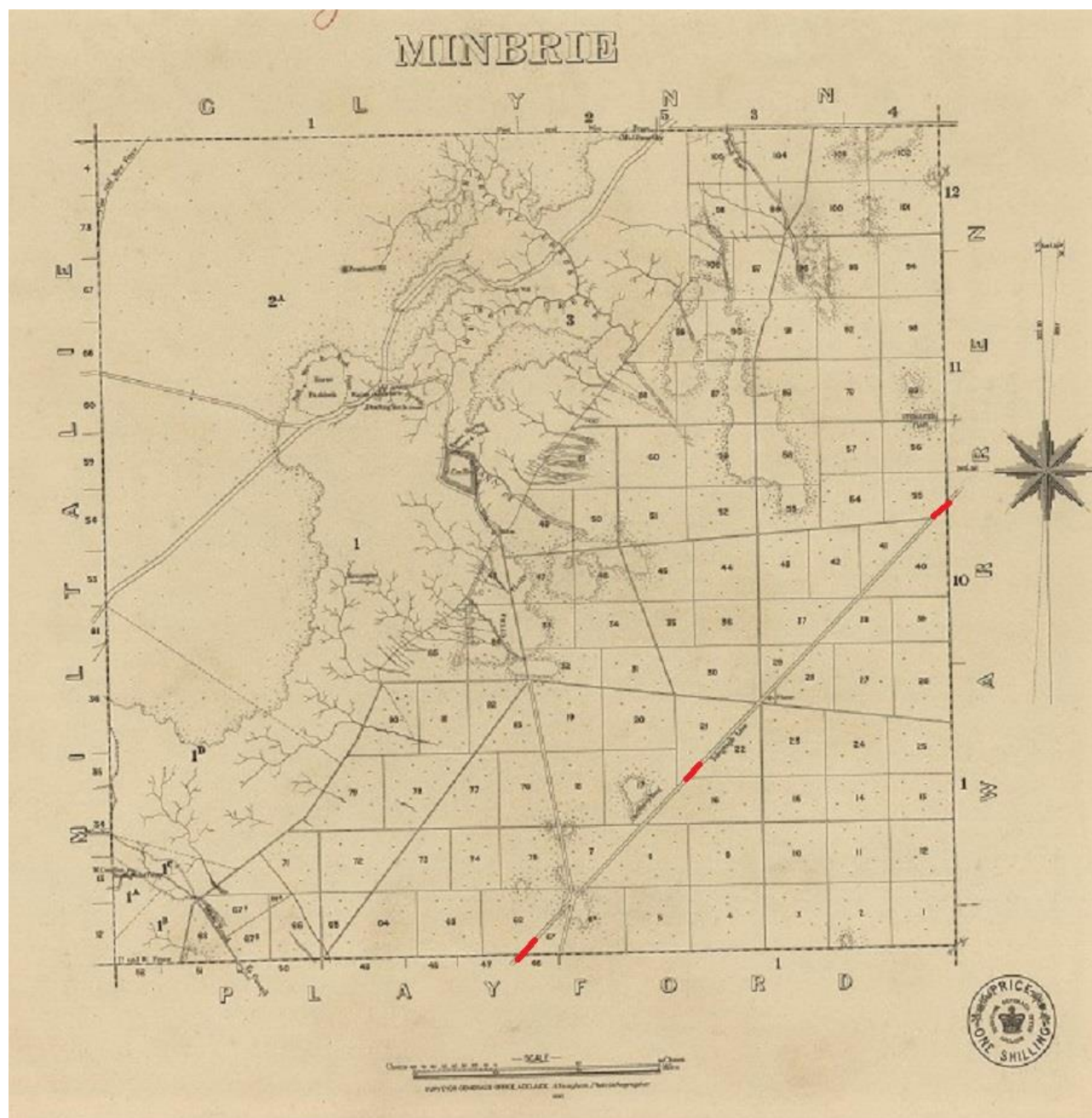
75

8. Hundred of Warren.



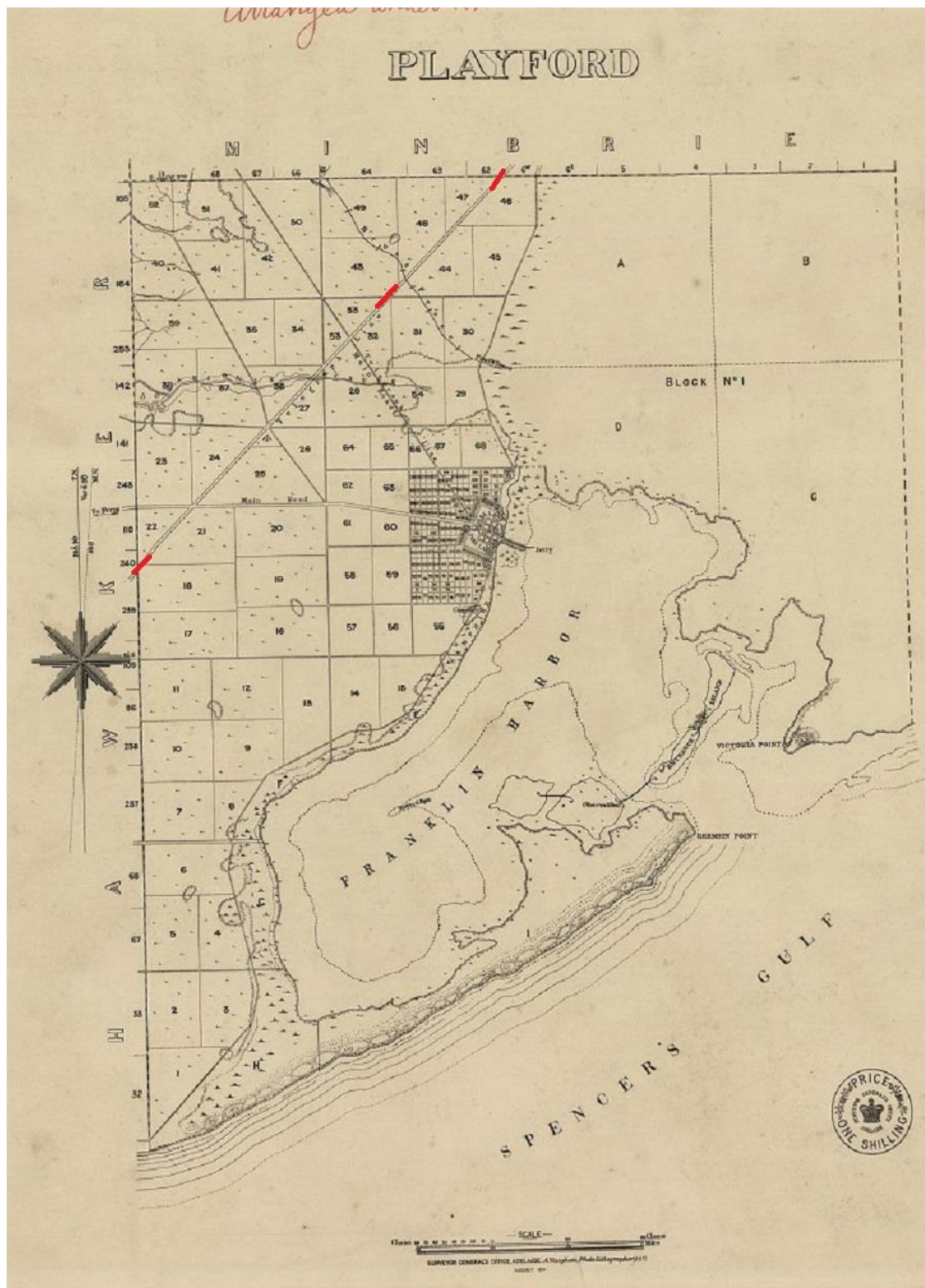
https://maps.collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/series/hundreds_SA_63360/W/warren/zsmp_830bje63360_warren1903.jpg

9. Hundred of Minbrie.



https://maps.collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/series/hundreds_SA_63360/M/minbrie/zsm_p_830bj63360_minbrie1897_ds.jpg

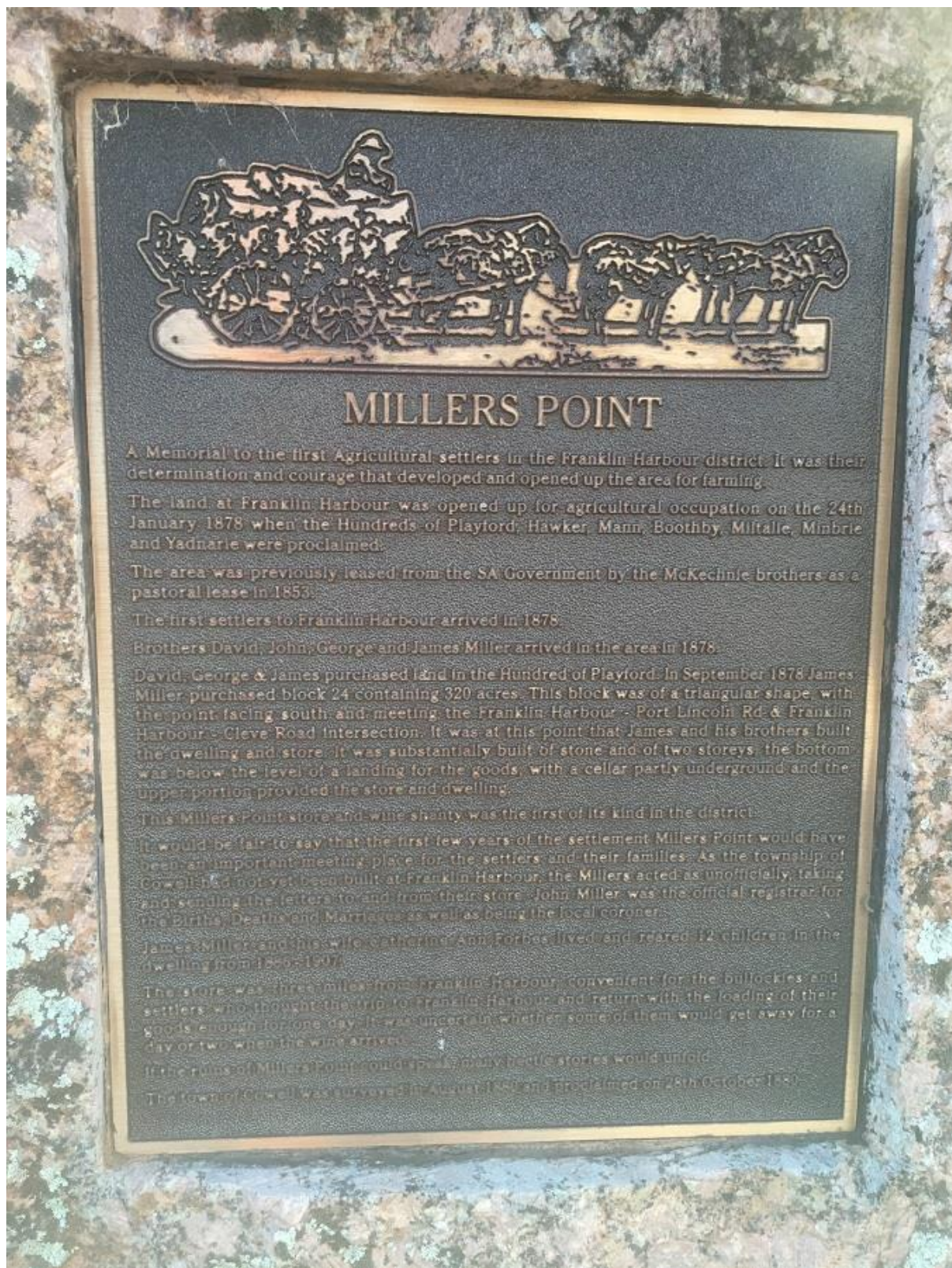
10. Hundred of Playford. (Cowell on Franklin Harbour.)



https://maps.collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/series/hundreds_SA_63360/P/playford/zsmp_830bj63360_playford1891_ds.jpg
Cowell on Franklin Harbour.



2021. Miller's Point, Cowell. At Cleve Road turnoff.



MILLERS POINT. (transcription of plaque)

A Memorial to the First Agricultural settlers in the Franklin Harbor district. It was their determination and courage that developed and opened up the area for farming.

The land at Franklin Harbour was opened up for Agricultural occupation on the 24th. January 1878 when the Hundreds of Playford, Hawker, Mann, Boothby, Miltalie, Minbrie and Yadnarie were proclaimed.

The area was previously leased from the SA Government by the McKecknie brothers as a pastoral lease in 1853.

The first settlers to Franklin Harbour arrived in 1878.

Brothers David, John, George and James Miller arrived in the area in 1878.

David, George & James purchased land in the Hundred of Playford in September 1878. James Miller purchased block 24 containing 320 acres. This block was a triangular shape with the point facing south and meeting the Franklin Harbour - Port Lincoln Rd & Franklin Harbour - Cleve Road intersection. It was at this point that James and his brothers built the dwelling and store. It was substantially built of stone and of two storeys, the bottom was below the level of a landing for the goods, with a ceiling partly underground and the upper portion provided the store and dwelling.

This Miller's Point store and shanty was the first of its kind in the district.

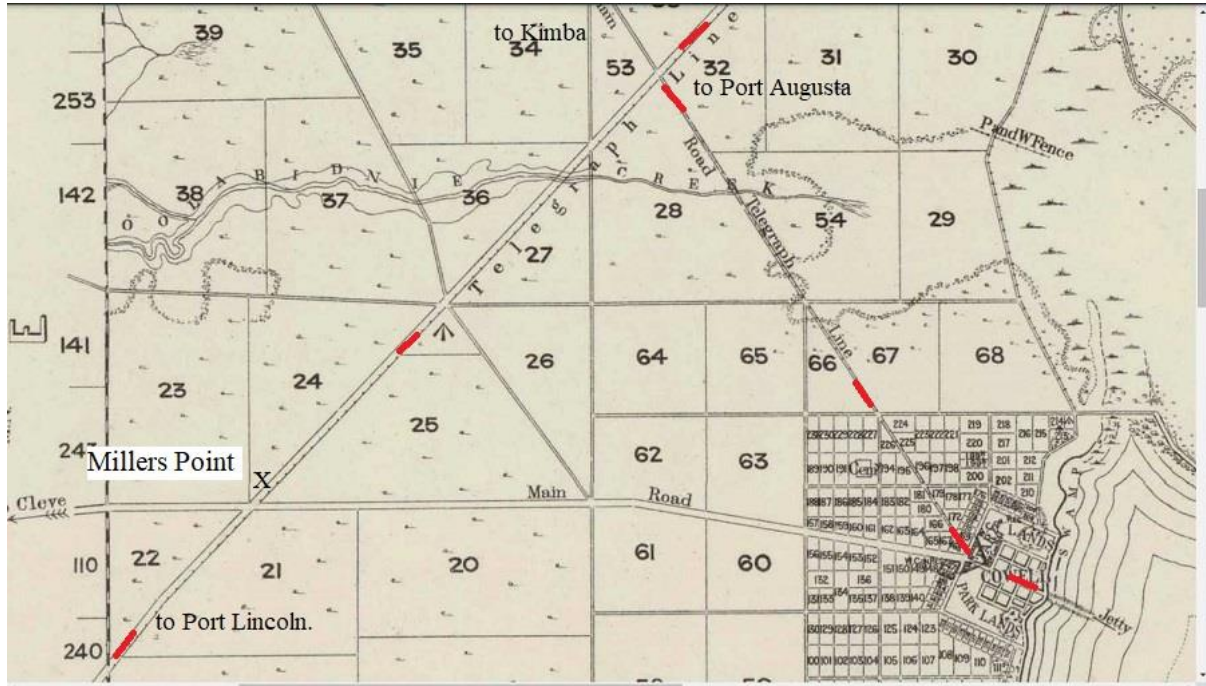
It would be fair to say that the first few years of the settlement Millers Point would have been an important meeting place for the settlers and their families. As the township of Cowell had not yet been built at Franklin Harbour, the Millers acted as unofficially taking and sending the letters to and from their store. John Miller was the official registrar for the Births, Deaths, and Marriages as well as being the local coroner.

James Miller and his wife Catherine Ann Forbes lived and reared 12 children in the dwelling from 1886 - 1907.

The store was three miles from Franklin Harbour, convenient for the bullockies and settlers who thought the trip to Franklin Harbour and return with the loading of their goods enough for one day. It was uncertain whether some of them would get away for a day or two when the wine arrived.

If the ruins of Millers Point could speak, many hectic stories would unfold.

The town of Cowell was surveyed in August 1880 and proclaimed on 28th October 1880.



Hundred of Playford, Cowell.



2021. Millers Point, Cowell. Information board.



2021. Millers Point, Cowell. Telegraph line from Port Augusta to Port Lincoln.

THE WANTS OF FRANKLIN HARBOR.
TO THE EDITOR.

Sir—I hope you will be good enough to allow me space for the following, to let the community know how the inhabitants of Franklin Harbor and surrounding hundreds are treated by the Government. For the last four or five years, although we are only forty miles across the gulf from Wallaroo, we have had to depend on a sailing boat once a week for our mails, and that is always at the mercy of the wind, very seldom arriving at the proper time, thereby causing the people great inconvenience and loss of time. Had we a telegraph office it could be ascertained at once whether the mail-boat had left Wallaroo, and then if not we need not be losing our time hovering around the post-office at Miller's Point, climbing ladders, and looking across the gulf to see if the mail could be sighted. Last year, before tenders were accepted for the conveyance of the mails, a memorial from here numerously signed was presented by Mr. Tennant, M.P., to the Postmaster General, Mr. Todd, praying that the mails to Franklin Harbor might be conveyed by a steam-launch, and not by a sailing boat. Mr. Todd kindly promised that the matter would receive due consideration, and that unless there was great difference in the tenders between sail and steam the latter would be accepted. However, when the time arrived, whatever the difference might be I cannot say (but I have been informed the difference was only £50), the tender from a sailing boat was accepted, thus leaving us for a term of three years dependent on the mercy of the wind for our mails. Now, situated as we are, I think you, the general public, and the Government, will agree with me that we are very badly in need of a telegraph office for the dispatch of business. Wheat buyers have refused to transact business with us on account of our mail arrangements being so bad; the delay caused might entail great loss on either side, whereas if business were transacted by telegraph we would all know what we were doing. This place is becoming of great importance, and a large quantity of wheat is to be shipped from here after harvest. There are none here who have not many friends and relatives on the Adelaide side, and therefore in case of accidents, deaths, &c, a telegraph office is much required. Our indefatigable member, Mr. P. B. Coglein, has lately asked in the House if it was the intention of the Government to open a telegraph office at Franklin Harbor, but he was put off with an evasive reply. Every gentleman who visits Franklin Harbor expresses astonishment that we are left so long without a telegraph office. Therefore it is to be hoped that our worthy members, Messrs. Coglein, Tennant, and Mortlock, will use their influence with the Government, and never cease

asking until our request is granted. I think if our wants are fairly represented to the Government they will see at once that our claim is a just one.—

I am, &c., MARTIN McCARTHY. Carpa, Franklin Harbor, November 10, 1883

South Australian Register (Adelaide, SA : 1839 - 1900), Friday 2 May 1884, page 6

<<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article43659328>>.

FRANKLIN HARBOUR. - A NEGLECTED DISTRICT.

To THE EDITOR.

Sir— I have always read with great interest the experiences of your talented contributors <clip>

<clip> One of these gentlemen some time back visited Kangaroo Island, and expressed his surprise that the islanders did not agitate for some of the conveniences of civilization. My dear Sir, Kangaroo Island has it all beer and skittles compared with this place. The Hon. the Treasurer went to the island a short time ago, saw some of the islanders face to face, and made promises. Neither he nor any one of his colleagues ever thinks it worth while to come here and make promises. Kangaroo Island has telegraphic communication with the rest of the colony. Franklin Harbour has the wire running through the district, but Mr. Todd is deaf to all entreaties to establish a station. He was very much shocked at the sad loss of life in the interior a short time ago, but he seems tolerably indifferent to any calamity that may occur at Franklin Harbour. A man may be struck down with apoplexy, a family may be roasted alive in a hut, a stone may fall and crush a miner's foot, an accident may happen with firearms, but no message shall be sent by the wire. If you want medical aid, ride 100 miles to Port Lincoln or wait a week for the mail boat. The estimated revenue will not warrant the expense of an operator, and as for Christian charity, let it remain as heretofore— an unknown quantity. <clip>

<clip> From present appearances the matter will not progress beyond the stage of hope.

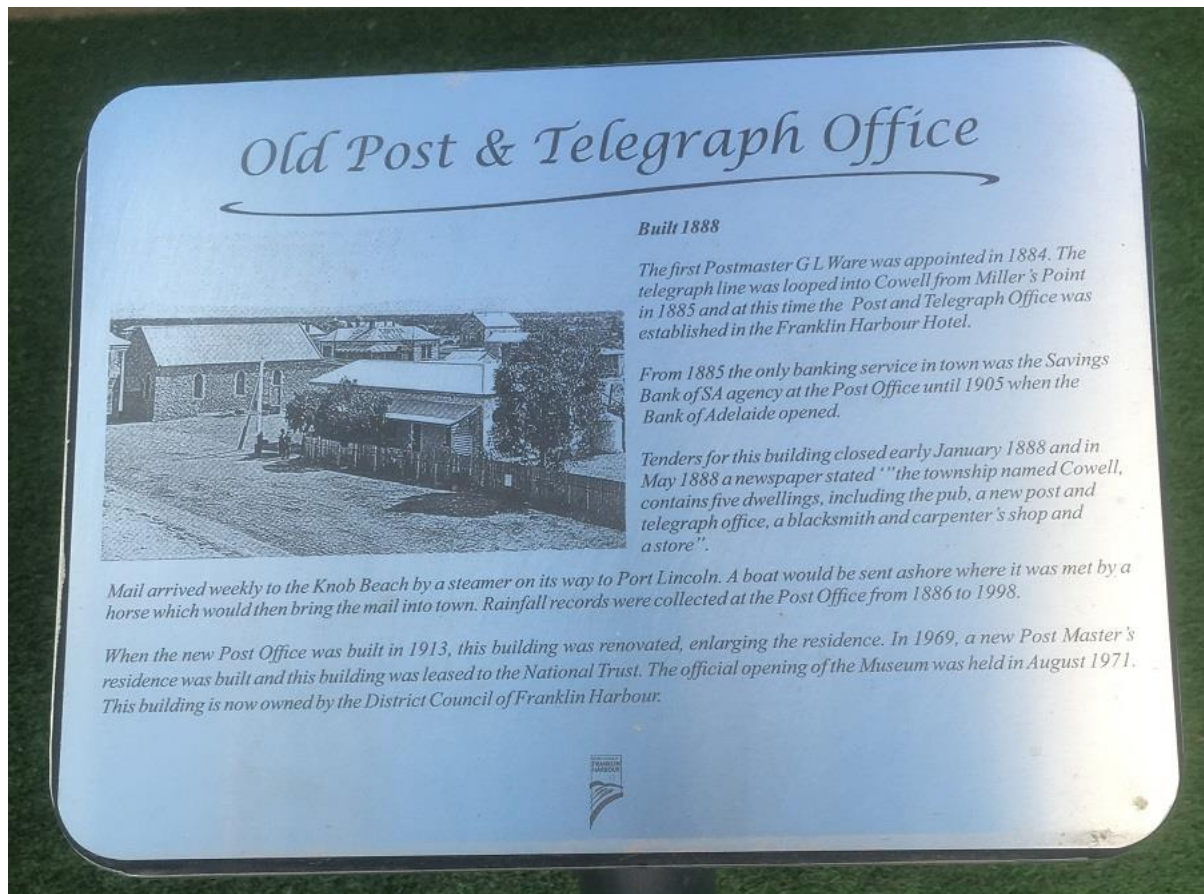
I am, Sir, &c., J. A. F

Wallaroo Times (Port Wallaroo, SA : 1882 - 1888), Saturday 14 June 1884, page 2

<<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article110375152>>

TELEGRAPHIC COMMUNICATION WITH FRANKLIN HARBOR.- This want, which has long been felt, is shortly to be provided, as we understand Mr.

Todd has sent an operator to that place for the purpose of making the necessary preliminary arrangements for the establishing of a telegraph office, the opening of which will confer a great boon on the settlers in many ways, and will assist materially in settling the Franklin Harbor district, where there are thousands of acres of splendid agricultural country unoccupied.



2021. Cowell Old Post Office and Telegraph Office.

Old Post & Telegraph Office. (Transcription of information above)

Built 1888.

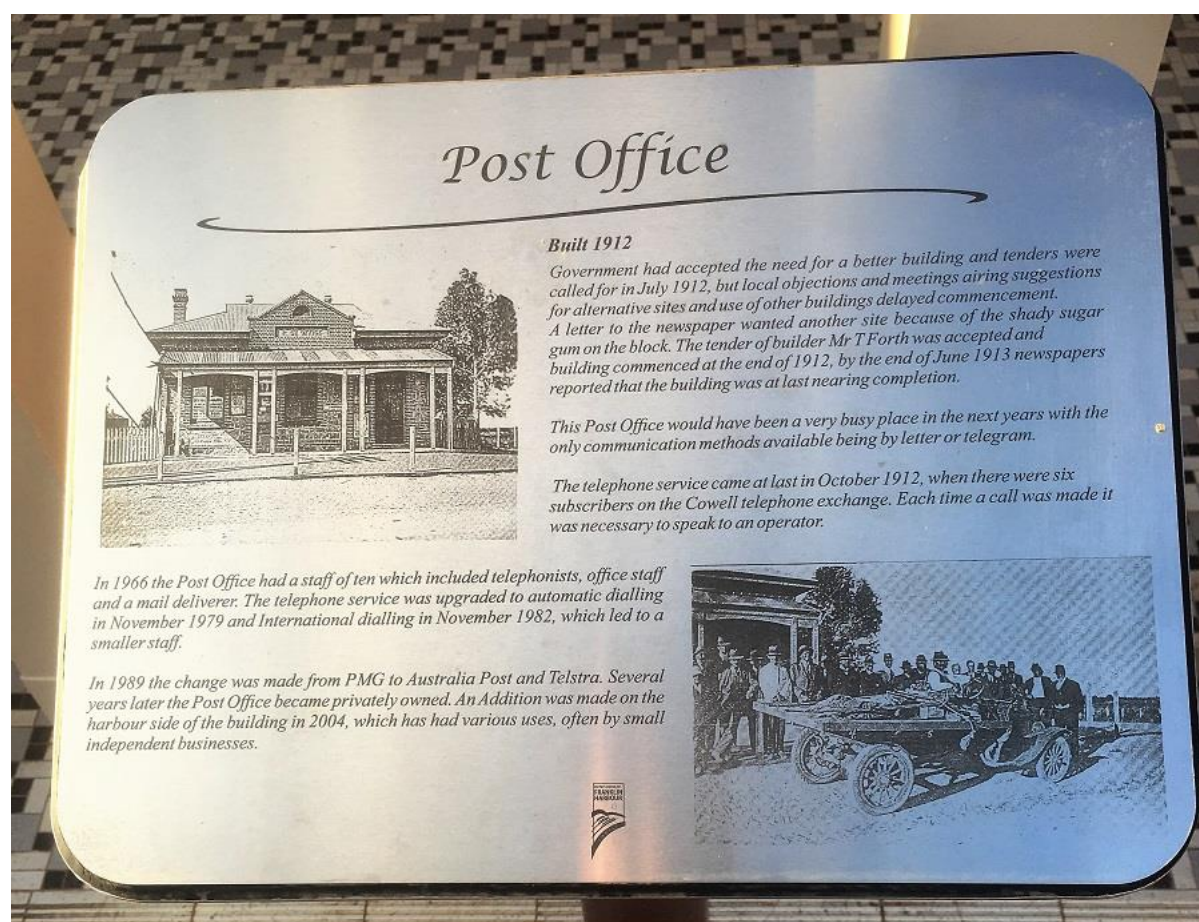
The first Postmaster G.L. Ware was appointed in 1884. The telegraph line was looped into Cowell from Miller's Point. In 1885 and at this time the Post and Telegraph Office was established in the Franklin Harbour Hotel.

From 1885 the only banking service in town was the Saving's Bank of SA agency at the Post Office until 1905 when the Bank of Adelaide opened.

Tenders for this building closed early January 1888 and in May 1888 a newspaper stated "the township named Cowell, contains five dwellings, including the pub, a new post and telegraph office, a blacksmith, and carpenter's shop and a store."

Mail arrived weekly to the Knob Beach by a steamer on it's way to Port Lincoln. A boat would be sent ashore where it was met by a horse which would then bring the mail into town. Rainfall records were collected at the Post Office from 1886 to 1998.

When the new Post Office was built in 1913, this building was renovated, enlarging the residence. In 1969, a new Post Master's residence was built and this building was leased to the National Trust. The official opening of the Museum was held in August 1971. This building is now owned by the District Council of Franklin Harbour.



2021. Cowell Post Office.

Post Office. (transcription of information above)

Built 1912.

Government had accepted the need for a better building and tenders were called for in July 1912, but local objections and meetings airing suggestions for alternative sites and use of other buildings delayed commencement. A letter to the newspaper wanted another site because of the shady sugar gum on the block. The tender of builder Mr T. Forth was accepted and building commenced at the end of 1912, by the end of June 1913 newspapers reported that the building was at last nearing completion.

The Post Office would have been a very busy place in the next years with the only communication methods available being by letter or telegram.

The telephone service came at last in October 1912, when there were six subscribers on the Cowell telephone exchange. Each time a call was made it was necessary to speak to an operator.

In 1966 the Post Office had a staff of ten which included telephonists, office staff, and a mail deliverer. The telephone service was upgraded to automatic dialling in November 1979 and International dialling in November 1982, which led to a smaller staff.

In 1989 the change was made from PMG to Australia Post and Telstra. Several years later the Post Office became privately owned. An addition was made on the harbour side of the building in 2004, which has had various uses, often by small independent businesses.

Cowell Post Office and Telegraph Office history.

Notes taken from Heritage Survey of the Eyre Peninsula and West Coast. 1987.
<https://data.environment.sa.gov.au/content/heritage-surveys/eyre-peninsula-heritage-survey-dc-franklin-harbour-1987.pdf>

P24. Telegraph Office / Residence. (now the National Trust Museum.)
Historical Summary.

Built by the S.A. Government in 1885-6 of limestone as four rooms. In 1910 a new room was added to left hand side which became the Post Office until the present one was built in 1913. Until 1968, it was used as a residence. A new room was added in May, 1963 by Mr. McDonald of Peterborough. It is now used by the National Trust as a Museum.

P23. Post Office. Historical Summary.

Built as the second Post Office. (1913) A mail had been established between Cowell, Cleve and Arno Bay, coinciding with the steamers now calling at the latter port, giving regular inter communication throughout the whole district.



<https://collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/resource/B+17882/1>
c1890. Cowell Main Street leading to Millers Point. Telegraph Office on right. Franklin Harbour Hotel on left.



1950. Cowell old telegraph office & Post Office.
Scott Duncan photo. (facebook 2021)



<https://collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/resource/PRG+1480/7/121>
1900-1915. Cowell Post & Telegraph Office.

Adelaide Observer (SA : 1843 - 1904), Saturday 7 June 1884, page 14
<<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article160097312>>

BIOGRAPHICAL.

THE LATE MR. MORTLOCK.

Mr. R. Anderson, of Port Lincoln, has sent us the following particulars concerning the late Mr. Mortlock, which he believes will please many of his friends" <clip>

<clip> This was in 1866. About the same period much inconvenience was felt and no little loss sustained by stock holders, owing to the difficulty of getting

stock overland from here via Franklin Harbour and Port Augusta to market. The chief desideratum was water for the travelling parties in charge and their horses. The Surveyor-General's Department had frequently advertised for the construction of dams, but no tenders so far as I remember were ever presented; at all events no dams were constructed, the country being unsuited. Mr. Mortlock, Mr. Frank Buttfield, and another gentleman suggested a method for conserving the winter rains, and the result was that from plans and specification supplied by myself we have now the "tank houses", not only on the route from Port Lincoln to Port Augusta, but I believe on the line of telegraph between Streaky and Fowler's Bay and Eucla. At any rate; Mr. Todd, at Mr. Knuckey's suggestion, applied for the use of my plan and specification, and I hold a most courteous letter of thanks from those gentlemen. The plan is simply two half-gable roofs, brought together at the eaves, and a line of 400 gallon tanks set up under the joined eaves. These tanks have admirably answered their purpose, even to the saving of life during drought. When the advertisement calling for tenders for the construction of the Western Australian telegraph line appeared in the newspapers and Gazette, I was for a few days in Adelaide. The notice was for the line to go via Yardea to Streaky Bay, thus shutting out the entire coast route between Port Augusta and Streaky Bay, which is now a good paying route, if I am correctly advised. Immediately on seeing the notice I drove to Mr. Mortlock's residence, showed him the notice, informed him the steamer would arrive that day with about ten of the most representative men of Port Lincoln district, amongst them being Mr. Andrew Tennant, E. Oswald, A. Baird, J. Telfer, G. Moller, H. Crawford, and others already in town. I waited on these gentlemen, and subsequently on Mr. Mortlock, who arranged for a deputation to wait on Mr. Todd. The deputation included Mr. Coglin and Mr. Cooke; and at Mr. Mortlock's suggestion Mr. Todd agreed to call for alternative tenders, namely, via Yardea and via Franklin Harbour and Port Lincoln, with what result we all know, although we may forget the narrow squeak we had of being possibly inadvertently more isolated than ever, thanks to Mr. Mortlock's promptitude in the matter. <clip>

(Author. Below is an example of shed tanks (tank houses) mentioned in this article. They were built by the Government all over Eyre Peninsula and often, by filling in the sides with hession, they became settlers first houses.)



Port Augusta Dispatch and Flinders' Advertiser (SA : 1880 - 1884), Friday 27 June 1884, page 2

<<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article195913892>>

FRANKLIN HARBOR TELEGRAPH STATION. —The inhabitants of the Franklin Harbor district have long been agitating for a telegraph station at Cowell, but so far without result. The Eucla line passes about 4 miles from the township and it has been represented that the expense of erecting a branch line to Cowell would be trifling. A deputation has waited on the Minister of Justice, and received from him a promise that a temporary office should be opened at Miller's Corner, the nearest point on the telegraph line, and that provision should be made in next year's estimate for the construction of a branch line to Cowell, where in the meantime a temporary post office would be opened at Mr. G. L. Ware's store.

South Australian Advertiser (Adelaide, SA : 1858 - 1889), Thursday 31 July 1884, page 9

<<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article35964817>>

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY.

WEDNESDAY, JULY 30.

<clip> POST-OFFICE AT COWELL AND TELEGRAPH STATION AT MILLER'S CORNER. Mr. MOULE asked—" When will the post-office at Cowell and the telegraph-station at Miller's Corner be opened? "

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. J. Colton) replied— " It is not proposed to build a post-office at Cowell or a telegraph-station at Miller's Corner this year." <clip>

South Australian Weekly Chronicle (Adelaide, SA : 1881 - 1889), Saturday 9 August 1884, page 21

<<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article93313464>>.

GOVERNMENT GAZETTE.

THURSDAY, August 7. PROCLAMATIONS.

<clip> Dedicating land in the town of Cowell and in the township of Port Augusta West for use as sites for post and telegraph-offices. <clip>

Adelaide Observer (SA : 1843 - 1904), Saturday 23 August 1884, page 31

<<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article160100060>>.

FRANKLIN HARBOUR.

[From our own Correspondent.]

August 18.

The Township of Cowell (Franklin Harbour) in the Hundred of Playford, is about thirty miles from Yadnaree, (Cleve) three miles from the nearest settlement, and thirty seven from Wallaroo. It boasts one stone building (the hotel), an iron store, black smith's and wheelwright's shop, and other shanties, besides a large tank. The Post-Office, a large stone building, with every convenience, is at Miller's Point, four miles from the township. The telegraph line passes within a stone's throw of the Post Office, which is at four crossroads leading to the township. But notwithstanding the promises of the late Minister of Education that a Telegraph Office should be opened at once at Miller's Point, pending the erection of Post and Telegraph Offices in the township, nothing has been done, although the Government declared that the telegraph master at Kadina had been sent to make arrangements. It transpires that the influence of the people of Cowell, about thirty, has been the means of causing this delay, which creates loss and inconvenience to the whole district, merely because they desire that the line should be extended to that place and the station opened there. The necessity for a telegraph station increases daily. For instance, the steamer came in on Thursday evening instead of Friday morning (quite an unusual thing

at this season of the year), and was off again by day light, thus disappointing several intending passengers, and here we are isolated for another fortnight—the telegraph line at our doors and we cannot make use of it. The walls of the large Government tank are nearly finished, and the roof will soon be on.

Evening Journal (Adelaide, SA : 1869 - 1912), Friday 5 September 1884, page 2
<<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article197800908>>

CORRESPONDENCE.

" A Traveller" writes :—" Having lately visited Franklin Harbour I experienced in a day or so something of the great disadvantage which the people living there labour under. They have only a mail service once a week and no Telegraph Station. The most annoying part is that the Eucla line passes within four miles of the Government township, yet a distance of eighty miles has to be travelled before a message can be sent oftener than once a week. In the event of an accident this is very severe. Two Ministers of Education, I am informed, have promised that an office should be opened, but as yet the assurance is unfulfilled. If commerce is to develop in that part of the country, at present so little known, but which has every promise of a bright future, it can only be done by speedy communication. Places of less importance and with far greater advantages in postal facilities have had luxuries conferred upon them in a most prodigal manner, but the cry of this people for the common necessities of life has so far failed to obtain a practical response."

Adelaide Observer (SA : 1843 - 1904), Saturday 7 March 1885, page 15
<<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article160735901>>

FRANKLIN HARBOUR, March 2.

The want of telegraph facilities has been seriously felt during the busy season, and although it was understood before December that the line would shortly be connected and an operator appointed, we have heard nothing more of the matter. The necessity of an office has been more apparent than even during the wheat season, but although the matter has been repeatedly represented to the authorities, they have postponed the opening simply to please two or three individuals in the Township of Cowell.

Port Augusta Dispatch, Newcastle and Flinders Chronicle (SA : 1885 - 1916), Wednesday 27 May 1885, page 3
<<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article197581334>>.

COUNTRY TELEGRAMS.

THE FRANKLIN HARBOR TELEGRAPH OFFICE.

COWELL (late Franklin Harbor), Tuesday. With pleasure I inform you that a Telegraph Station was opened here to-day, which will relieve a want that has long been felt. A good number of the leading residents attended to witness the opening, and congratulatory messages have been sent to his Excellency the Governor, the Minister of Education, the Postmaster General, and the members for the district. A free dinner is given by Mrs. Trevorrah, of the Franklin Harbor Hotel, this evening in celebration of the opening. It is raining, and promises to continue for a while.

South Australian Register (Adelaide, SA : 1839 - 1900), Friday 5 June 1885, page 3

<<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article44526792>>

FRANKLIN HARBOUR, May 28.

Our new Post and Telegraph Office is at last opened. This telegraph will be a great benefit to the district. The building in the hotel, or rather the office, is the room that was used for bagatelle (kindly given by the proprietors of the hotel), which is nicely fitted up. In order to complete telegraphic communication with the metropolis, a line had to be constructed from the Port Augusta line to Cowell. This was completed by Mr. Knuckey, of Adelaide, in about three weeks. The Office was opened on Tuesday last by the Post and Telegraph Master (Mr. W. H. Smith). As the people about here are busy tilling there was no demonstration.

South Australian Register (Adelaide, SA : 1839 - 1900), Wednesday 24 April 1895, page 4

<<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article54463614>>.

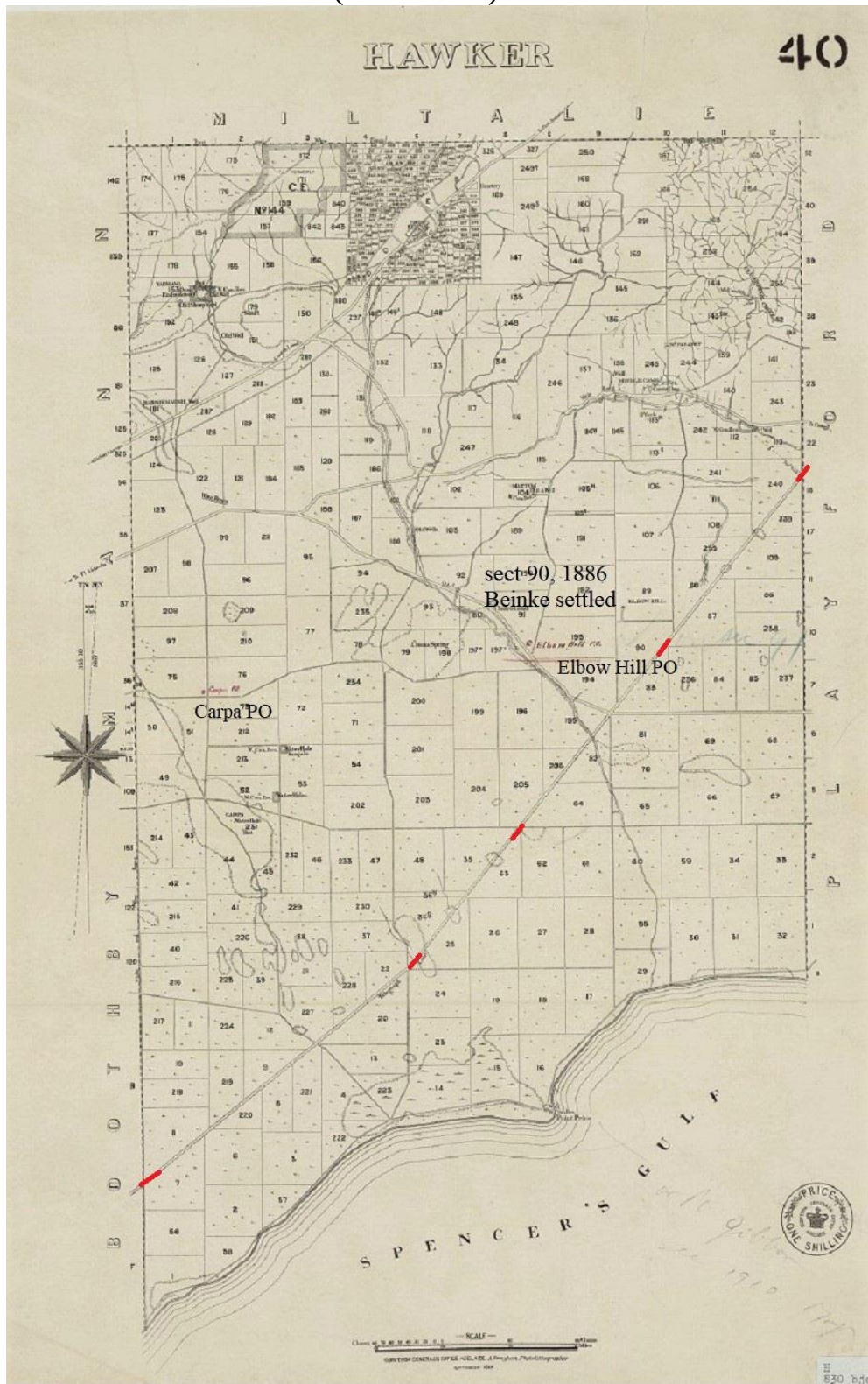
Telegraphic Communication with Western Australia. — Mr. Wittenoom, the Minister controlling the Post and Telegraph Departments of Western Australia, has not yet received from our Government a reply to the Western Australian proposal that a duplicate line should be laid between Perth and Port Augusta. He and Dr. Cockburn have had long conversations on the subject this week. Sir Charles Todd mentioned on Tuesday that over 900 messages passed over the line to Western Australia on Monday, and the line was all clear by about 1 o'clock on Tuesday morning. The above figures convey an idea of the volume of telegraphing done between South Australia and Western Australia. The expansion of the number of messages had been remarkable. A few years ago, the operators would not have to deal with more than eighty or ninety messages a

day, whereas now the average is considerably over 600. Sir Charles also stated that the cause of the partial interruption which occurred last week on the Western Australian line was due to peculiar causes. It was between Port Augusta and Franklin Harbour, and the party sent discovered that a piece of fencing wire which had been thrown over the telegraph wire was touching the iron pole, thus bringing the line to earth and destroying the circuit. Another contributing cause to interruption was a snake, which had crawled up the post and become jammed between the wire and the top of the iron pole, thus leading to a heavy leakage.



Cleve museum

11. Hundred of Hawker. (Elbow Hill)



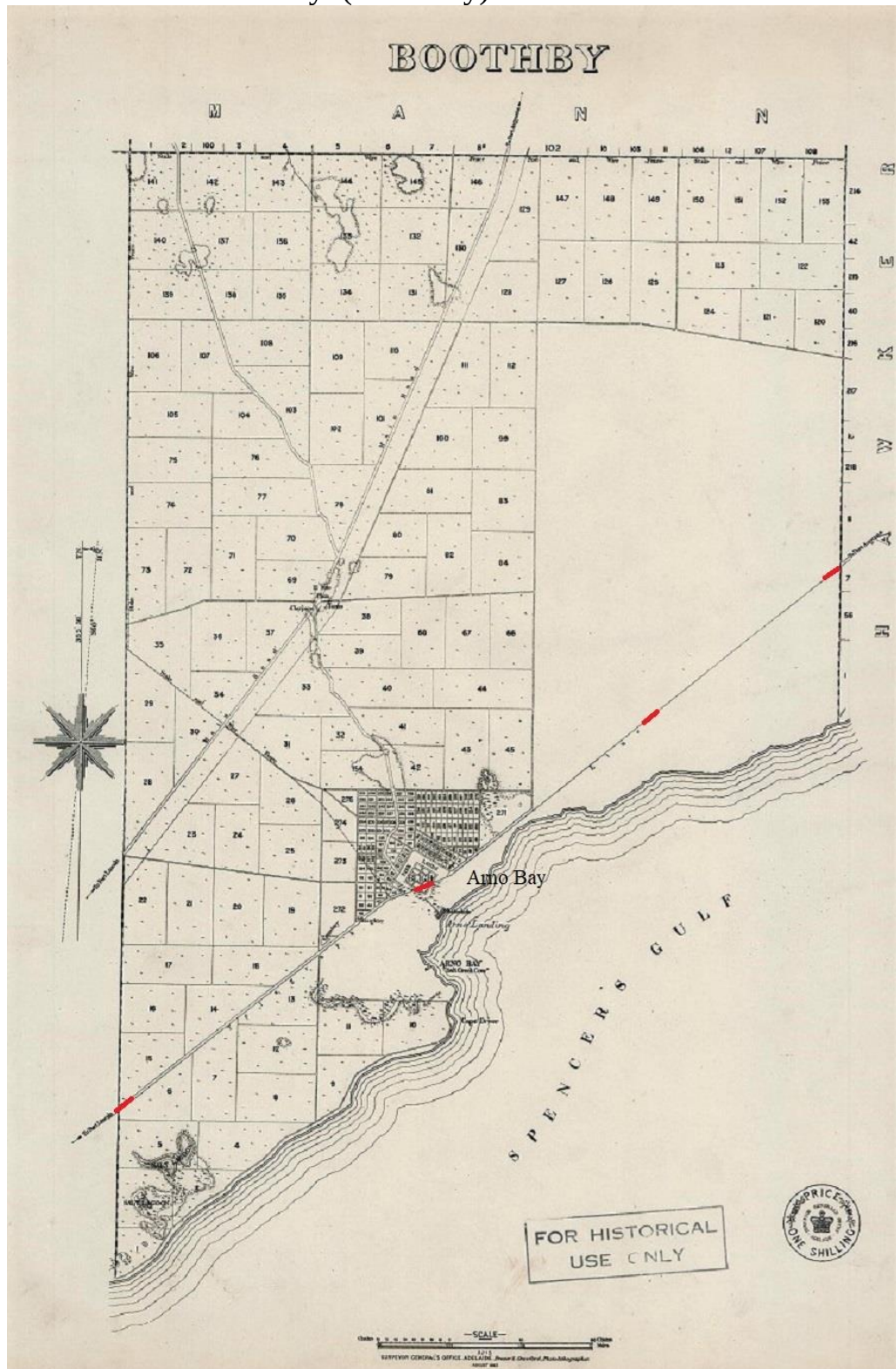
https://maps.collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/series/hundreds_SA_63360/H/hawker/zsmp_830bje63360_hawker1897.jpg
(Elbow Hill.)



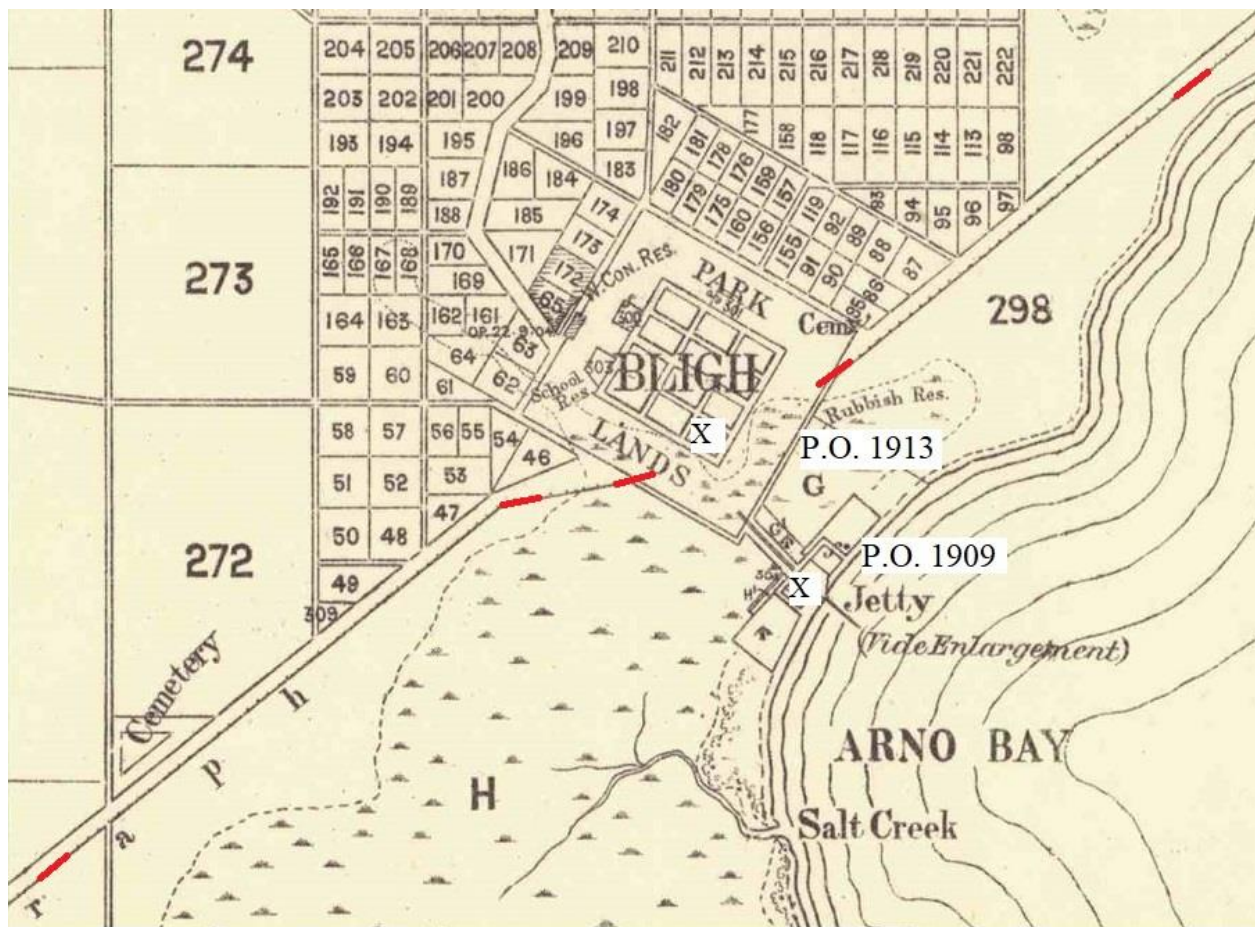
B 71737/104 Reproduction rights: State Library of South Australia

<https://collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/resource/B+71737/104>
Elbow Hill Post and Telegraph office and General Store

12. Hundred of Boothby. (Arno Bay)



https://maps.collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/series/hundreds_SA_63360/B/boothby/zsmp_830bj63360_boothby1883_ds.jpg
(Arno Bay)



https://maps.collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/series/hundreds_SA_63360/B/boothby/zsmpt_830bje63360_boothby1937.jpg
 Bligh, renamed Arno Bay.

communication from the Deputy Postmaster-General to the effect that the office was to remain in its present locality. Another meeting will be held shortly with the object of asking Members of the district to bring the matter under the notice of the Federal authorities, in hope of securing more satisfactory arrangements.

Advertiser (Adelaide, SA : 1889 - 1931), Wednesday 1 December 1909, page 10

<<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article5202924>>

THE COUNTRY.

<clip> ARNO BAY POST OFFICE.

ARNO BAY, November 26. A petition from residents of the township (the second) was sent to the Deputy Postmaster General last week requesting the removal of the post and telegraph office from its present position to the town, and in reply a letter has been received from Mr. Waddy stating that his officer reported that the office had been removed to more convenient premises at considerable expense to the department and the acting postmaster (Mr. Leonard). As no removal has taken place up to the present, the petitioners cannot understand the above statement, and a public meeting is to be held to deal further with the matter.

Chronicle (Adelaide, SA : 1895 - 1954), Saturday 8 January 1910, page 13

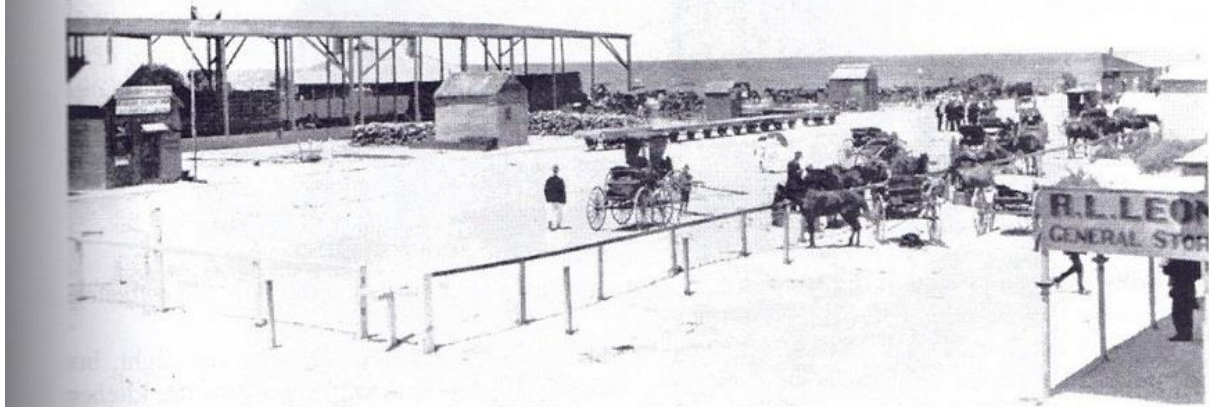
<<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article88392047>>

PROGRESS AT ARNO BAY.

ARNO BAY, January 1

<clip> As an instance of the increased postal business at Arno it may be stated that the inland mails to Cowell and Cleve have been so heavy as to monopolise all the space in the coaches to the exclusion of passengers who have been forced to find other means of transit. The need for a proper post and telegraph office is daily becoming more acute. One o'clock is the only time during business hours that the local post-office and telephone office is officially opened for the transaction of business, and were it not for the unremitting courtesy and consideration of Mr. M. Leonard, who often neglects his own business in order to oblige patrons of the post-office, the position would be unendurable.

Business Houses



New Year's Day at the Landing (R.L. Leonard's store on the right)

PIONEER STORE On allotment 196 and 197 was situated the general store at the Landing, known as the 'Pioneer Store' it was first owned and operated by Michael Leonard in 1908.

Arno Bay and District. 1883 - 1983. Editor - Janice Clements. P85.

Chronicle (Adelaide, SA : 1895 - 1954), Saturday 16 April 1910, page 15
 <<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article88390496>>

<clip> ARNO BAY. April 8— The post-office and telephone has been removed from the jetty to the township. The residents have been endeavoring to obtain this convenience for a considerable time. Mr. Johnstone, who made the transfer, will return to Adelaide by the Rupara to-night.—The decision of the Marine Board to improve the jetty is appreciated here. <clip>

<clip> FRANKLIN HARBOR, April 8.— Mounted-Constable O'Connell returned yesterday from a visit to Arno Bay, where it was reported that the local post-office had been broken into on election night. The constable made enquiries and hopes to capture the offender. The cash-box, which contained £2, was left on the ground near the door of the office, after having been rifled. Postal notes and registered letters remaining untouched. <clip>

Eyre's Peninsula Tribune (Cowell, SA : 1910 - 1950), Friday 9 August 1912, page 2
 <<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article224354361>>

District News.
 ARNO BAY.
 (From Our Own Correspondent.)

August 7.

New post and telegraph office.

The installation of a telegraph instrument at the Arno Bay station marks a new era in the progress of this district. Hitherto we have had a telephone service and could only use it at 8.30 a.m. and 1 and 6 p.m. which often caused delay and annoyance when important messages had to be sent. Now we will have a continuous service between the hours of 8.30 a.m. and 6 p.m., also at 9 p.m. by paying double rates. This places Arno Bay on equal terms with the rest of the State so far as telegraph communication is concerned. The new office has been placed under the management of Mr. F. Riddle. <clip>

Eyre's Peninsula Tribune (Cowell, SA : 1910 - 1950), Friday 19 December 1913, page 2

<<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article224359841>>

ARNO BAY.

Dec. 15.

<clip> Residents of this town are pleased to know that after long delay, (incidental to Government concerns) that the Postal Department have approved of the purchase of more up-to-date postal premises for this town and have approved of the stone building lately used as a post office being again secured, and purchased as a permanent official residence. This fact no doubt is gratifying to our new postmaster who in the past has had to labour in a stuffy box-like room at all hours of the night and it is to the Postmaster's credit that at all times and under great disadvantages as to means of expeditious work, he is most punctual and obliging and residents are pleased, (apart from the benefit the town gets) that Mr. Ferguson will be able soon, to work in some degree of comfort. <clip>



B 44018

<https://collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/resource/B+44018>
1947. Arno Bay Post Office & telephone box.

POST OFFICE From Australia Post comes the following information. Before 1908 the mail was landed by steamer at Arno Bay and transported to Cowell for sorting. A Receiving Office was opened on 1.1.1908 and the first Postmaster was Mr M.Leonard. The mail was received by steamer once a week from Wallaroo, Tumby Bay, Port Lincoln and twice weekly from Cowell. In addition, road mail was sent to Cleve and Cowell.

The Receiving Office was at 'The Pioneer Store' at the Landing.

1.12.1909 (*West Coast Recorder*) Petition to move telephone exchange into town of Arno Bay.

12.12.1909 Meeting held to discuss the telephone exchange. Chairman T.A.McEwen, it was proposed Mr Burford, seconded Mr Anderson that Federal Authorities be approached re shifting of telephone to Bligh.

1.7.1910 Several houses built, population double twelve months ago. As many as thirty mail bags – need a Post Office.

The Post Office was rented from J.H.Scarce in 1912 on allotment 25.



Arno Bay Post Office

9.8.1912 (*Eyre Peninsula Tribune*) Installation of a telegraph instrument at the Arno Bay station. Continuous service between 8.30 am and 6.00 pm. Managed by the first official postmaster Francis W.Riddle. The telegraph line connected Port Lincoln to Arno Bay and to Port Augusta.

From Mr L.G.Boakes The Postal Department rented the building on allotment 25 while Mr Riddle was Postmaster, however, the Postmaster-General could not come to an agreement so, Mr Riddle and family were transferred. The Post Office was operated from a small lean-to on the side of Smallacombes shop, with a relieving postmaster. The Post Office had a telegraph instrument and most business was by telegram at sixteen words for 9d (8c). It was connected to Adelaide by one galvanised iron wire which continued right through to Western Australia.

19.12.1913 (*Eyre Peninsula Tribune*) Postal Department have approved the purchase of more up-to-date postal premises for Arno Bay and have approved of the stone building lately used as a Post Office being again secured and purchased as a permanent residence (Postmaster Mr George C.Ferguson).

19.6.1914 Letter boxes (for which residents petitioned) have been placed at the new Post Office building and should prove a boon to businessmen of the town.

In 1914 Guy Boakes was a telegraph messenger, followed by George Ashton in 1915 and Hector Clements 1916 to 1918. The telephone list : 1923 – 9.00 am to 6.00 pm.

Engineer-in-Chief's Department 2

Gower Thos Harbourmaster 3

Hotel Arno 1

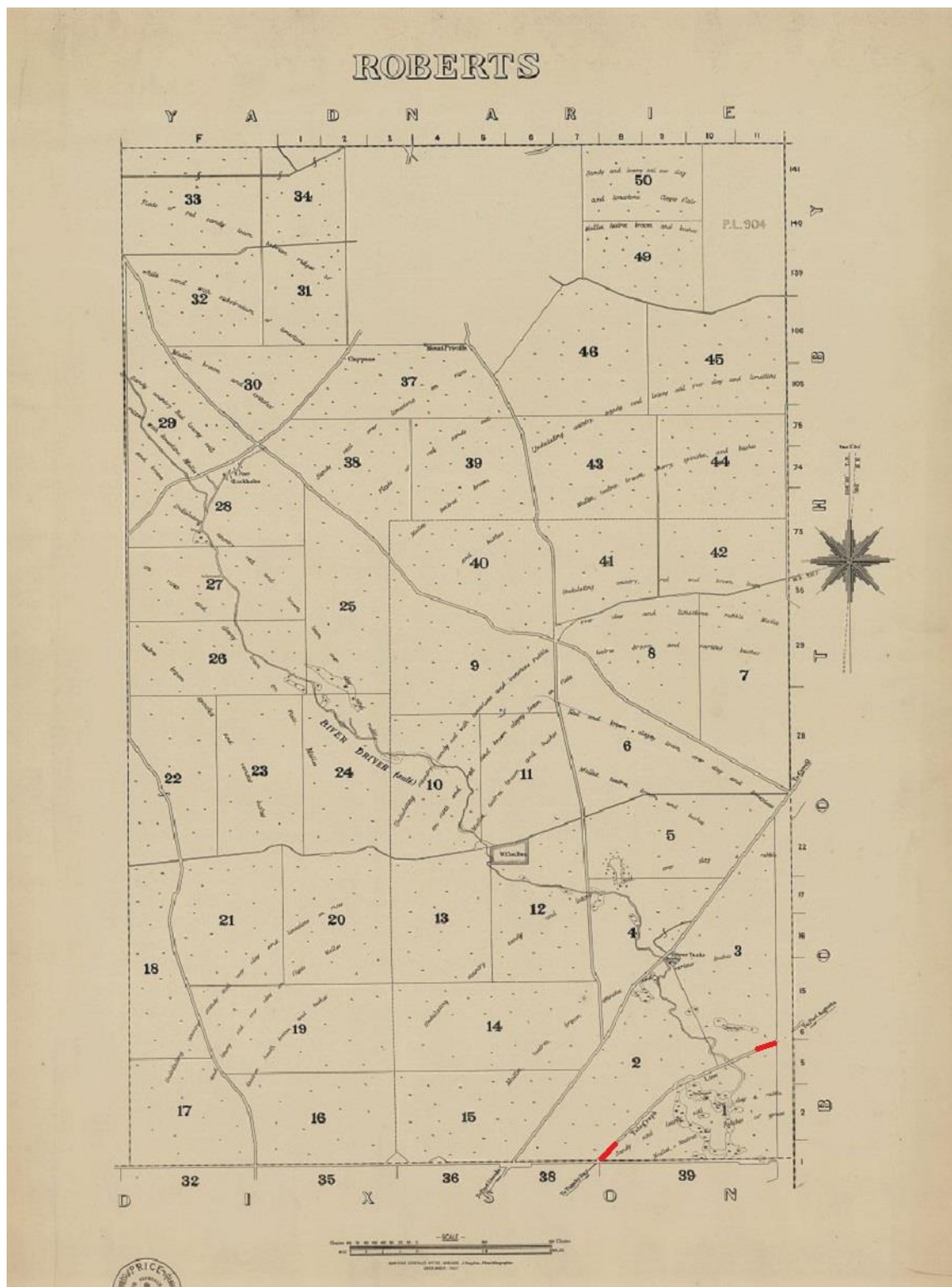
Arno Bay Public Telephone (hours same as exchange).

1918 Mr Cyril F.Bradford was the postmaster. In 1925 he was given a farewell smoke social. He was a returned soldier and has been postmaster at Arno Bay for the last seven years. In 1925 Miss May Rayson became the first postmistress with Miss Maud Henderson as her Postal Assistant.

Oliver Rowe became the postmaster in 1927 for thirty-five years until April 1963.

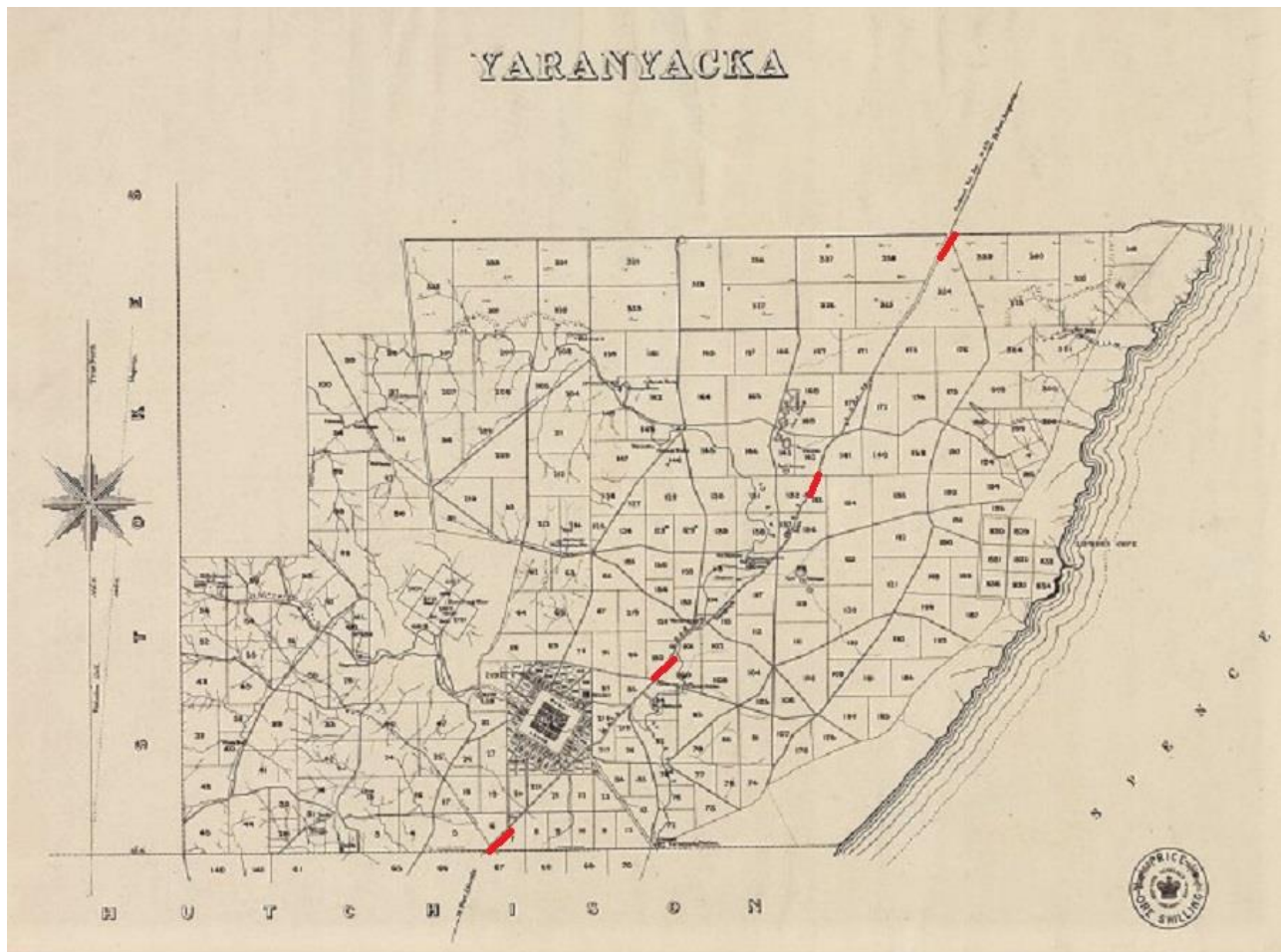
'Upon 1.4.1963 a continuous service will be provided at Arno Bay. At present the telephone hours are 8 am till 1pm, 2 pm till 10 pm, Saturday 8 am till 1 pm and Sundays 9 am till 10 am.'

13. Hundred of Roberts.



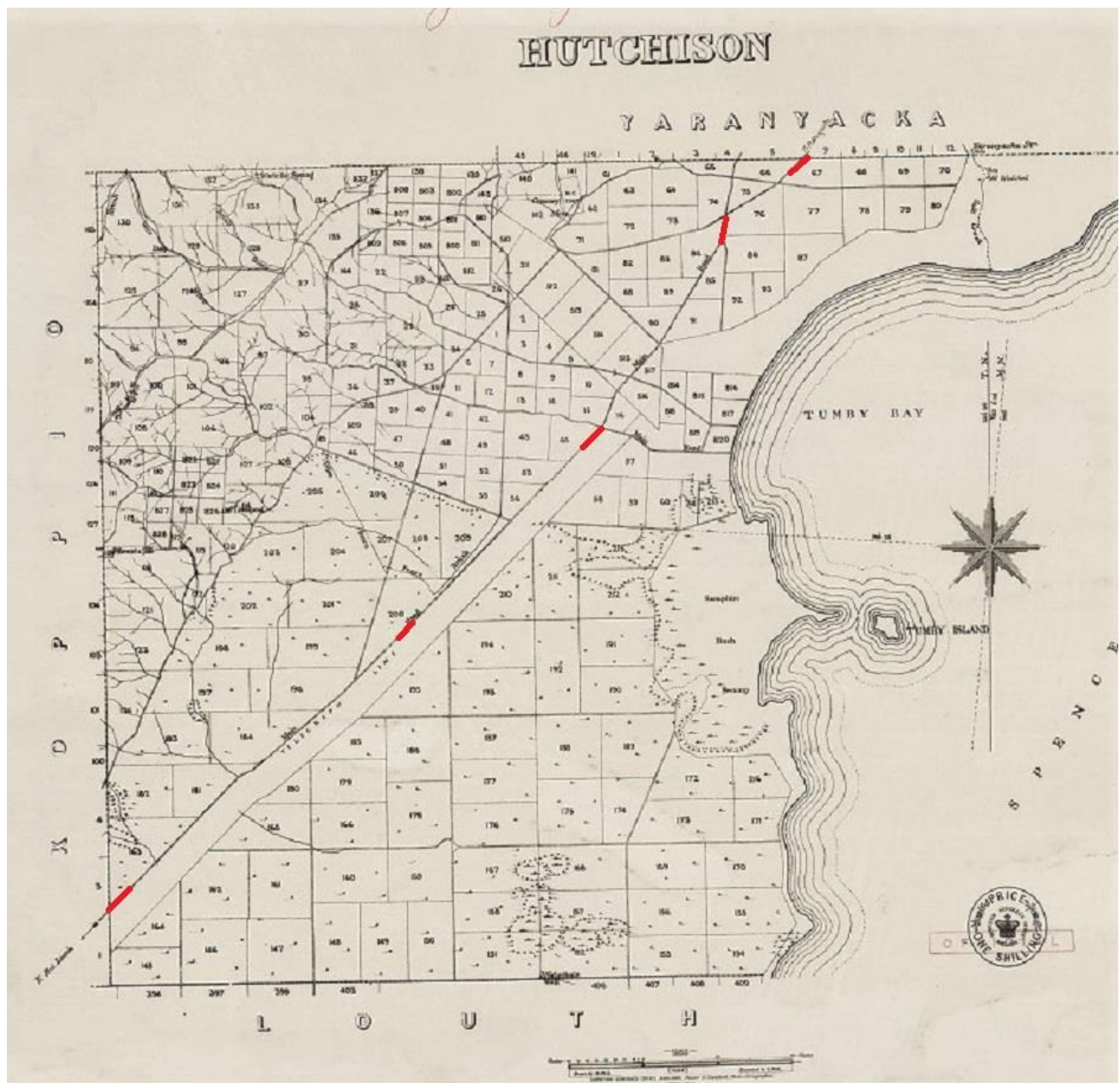
https://maps.collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/series/hundreds_SA_63360/R/roberts/zsmp_830bje63360_roberts1907.jpg

14. Hundred of Yarrantyacka. (Lipson)



https://maps.collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/series/hundreds_SA_63360/Y/yarrantyacka/zsmp_830bje63360_yarrantyacka1883_ds.jpg
(Lipson)

15. Hundred of Hutchison. (Tumby Bay)



https://maps.collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/series/hundreds_SA_63360/H/hutchison/zsmp_830bje63360_hutchison1879_ds.jpg
(Tumby Bay)



<https://collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/resource/PRG+458/1/2/58>
c1900. Tumby Bay Post Office.



<https://collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/resource/B+18405>
Tumby Bay Post Office. c 1940

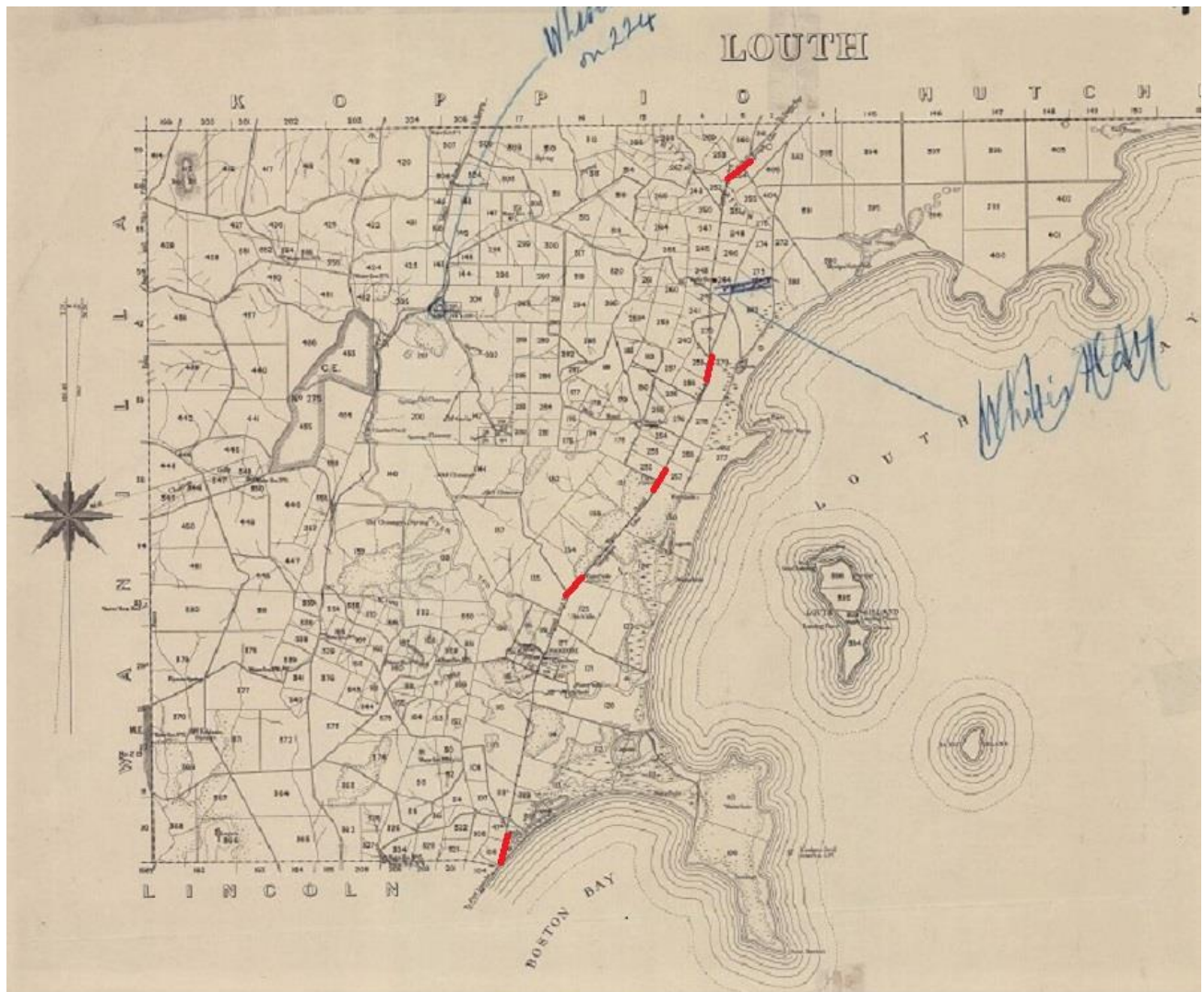


<https://collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/resource/B+18406>
c 1940. Tumby Bay Post Office. Mail day.



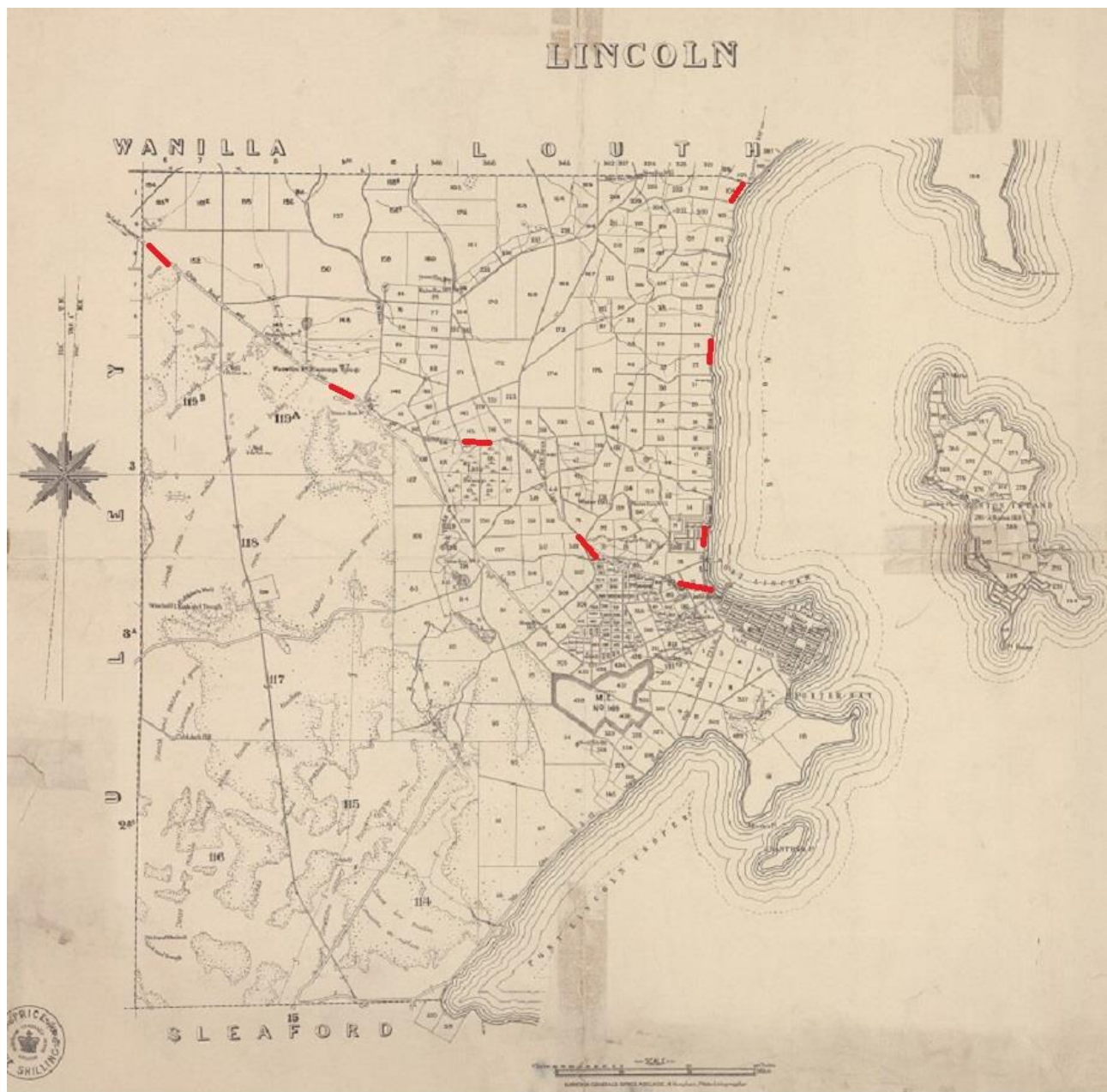
<https://collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/resource/B+18404>
Tumby Bay Post Office.

16. Hundred of Louth.



https://maps.collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/series/hundreds_SA_63360/L/louth/zsmp_830bje63360_louth1894.jpg

17. Hundred of Lincoln. (Port Lincoln)



https://maps.collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/series/hundreds_SA_63360/L/lincoln/zsmp_830bje63360_lincoln1898.jpg
Port Lincoln.

Evening Journal (Adelaide, SA : 1869 - 1912), Tuesday 7 December 1875, page 2

<<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article197686586>>.

TELEGRAPH CONSTRUCTION.

<clip> The last news from Mr. Knuckey, which was received a day or two ago by telegraph, states that the line was completed for 135 miles, or nearly as far as Dutton Bay. The party had been very hard up for water, and had found the section difficult to construct in consequence, but still greater difficulties may be expected between the Bight and Eucla. It is expected that the line will be completed as far as Port Lincoln early in January, and tenders for the last division will be called for almost immediately. <clip>

Evening Journal (Adelaide, SA : 1869 - 1912), Friday 24 December 1875, page 2

<<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article197687046>>.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE WEST AUSTRALIAN TELEGRAPH.—Mr. R. Knuckey, who returned to the city by the steamer Kangaroo on December 22, informs us that he with a staff of six men surveyed the line from Port Augusta to Port Lincoln, a distance of 200 miles, and the party are now proceeding westward under the temporary charge of Mr. McMinn. The contractor, Mr. Walter Thomson, has 24 men at the work, which is being pressed forward. The distance to Eucla, about 700 miles, will not be spanned for a long while yet.

South Australian Register (Adelaide, SA : 1839 - 1900), Saturday 1 January 1876, page 1

<<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article42999340>>.

TELEGRAPH CONSTRUCTION.

The telegraph line which is to connect Adelaide with the capital of the neighbouring colony of West Australia is progressing satisfactorily. The work may be divided into two main parts. The first, in South Australian territory, is being carried out at the expense of this province, and will absorb about £63,000; and the second, within the boundaries of West Australia, is being prosecuted at the cost of that colony. The South Australian portion of the line is divided into three sections, viz., from Port Augusta to Port Lincoln, 200 miles; Port Lincoln to Fowler's Bay, 340 miles; and Fowler's Bay to Eucla, 240 miles— making a total of 780 miles. The sections in West Australian territory are — Albany to Mount Barren, 120 miles; Mount Barren to Esperance Bay, 166 miles; Esperance Bay to Culver, 202 miles; Culver to Eyre, 146 miles; and Eyre to Eucla, 160 miles— a total of 794 miles. Out of the three sections in South Australia the construction of the first two has been let, and Mr. Walter Thomson, the contractor, is now pushing on the work under the oversight of Mr. R. R. Knuckey, who, when engaged on the great transcontinental telegraph

undertaking, proved himself to be a most efficient officer. The last news from Mr. Knuckey, which was received a day or two ago by telegraph, states that the line was completed for 135 miles, or nearly as far as Dutton Bay. The party had been very hard up for water, and had found the section difficult to construct in consequence, but still greater difficulties may be expected between the Bight and Eucla. It is expected that the line will be completed as far as Port Lincoln early in January, and tenders for the last division will be called for almost immediately. Nearly all the wire required has been received, and 11,100 iron poles, some of which are intended for this route, and some for renewing the Port Darwin Telegraph, have arrived or are on the water on their way to South Australia. The latest advices from Perth state that the first section of the line at that end had been poled, and it is probable that progress has by this time been made nearly as far as Esperance Bay. The wire and instruments have already arrived, and as the poles for the West Australian part of the line are to be wood our neighbours are saved the expense to which we are put in importing. <clip>

South Australian Register (Adelaide, SA : 1839 - 1900), Thursday 6 January 1876, page 5
<<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article43012038>>

THE WESTERN TELEGRAPH.— A telegraph construction party are now within less than 18 miles of Port Lincoln, consequently the residents will soon be in a position to communicate with Adelaide by wire. It is hoped that the Superintendent will at once arrange for stationing an operator at the place, as the line will probably be largely used, and the important district has waited long and patiently for the extension of telegraphic facilities.

Express and Telegraph (Adelaide, SA : 1867 - 1922), Thursday 13 January 1876, page 2
<<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article207730372>>

The telegraph line to Western Australia is progressing in a most satisfactory manner. It is now within a mile or two of Port Lincoln, and permanent communication with that place will very soon be established. A field operator is stationed at the end of the wire, and communicates with the head office as the work proceeds. Mr. A. Howley, late Stationmaster at Daly Waters, will have charge of the Port Lincoln Station.

Express and Telegraph (Adelaide, SA : 1867 - 1922), Friday 14 January 1876, page 2

<<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article207730403>>

GENERAL NEWS

We have seen a telegram from Mr. Walter Thompson, of O'Halloran Hill, the contractor for the telegraph line between Port Augusta and Fowler's Bay. This telegram is dated Port Lincoln, January 14, and announces the welcome intelligence that the line is completed to that point. The progress made in the construction of the line is creditable to the contractors and to all connected with it.

South Australian Advertiser (Adelaide, SA : 1858 - 1889), Thursday 20 January 1876, page 7

<<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article31964509>>.

COUNTRY NEWS.

[From our Country Correspondents,]

PORT LINCOLN, January 17. The telegraph wires were brought into the township on Saturday last, (15) and communication was opened with Adelaide. Mr. J. S. Browne, S.M., congratulated Mr. Todd on the satisfactory completion of the line, Mr. Todd replied. There was no formal opening. There will be a temporary building erected by the Institute. — Mr. Knuckey proceeds to-day to survey the line to Eucla.

South Australian Advertiser (Adelaide, SA : 1858 - 1889), Monday 14 February 1876, page 5

<<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article31965407>>.

A TRIP ROUND THE COAST.

No. I.

The President of the Marine Board on a recent occasion, in referring to the importance of the Marine Department, mentioned that its jurisdiction extended over more than 2,000 miles of sea coast. This, it should be remembered, is irrespective of the coast-line belonging to the Northern Territory. <clip>
<clip> (Port Lincoln) Along the western road the telegraph is now being erected to Eucla to join the Western Australian line. Outside the township the poles are of iron, which are light, and well adapted for the purpose. Mr. Knuckey, who happened to be in Port Lincoln at the time of our visit, stated that the telegraph had been erected for 20 miles beyond that place, and that his camp was 60 miles further on. <clip>

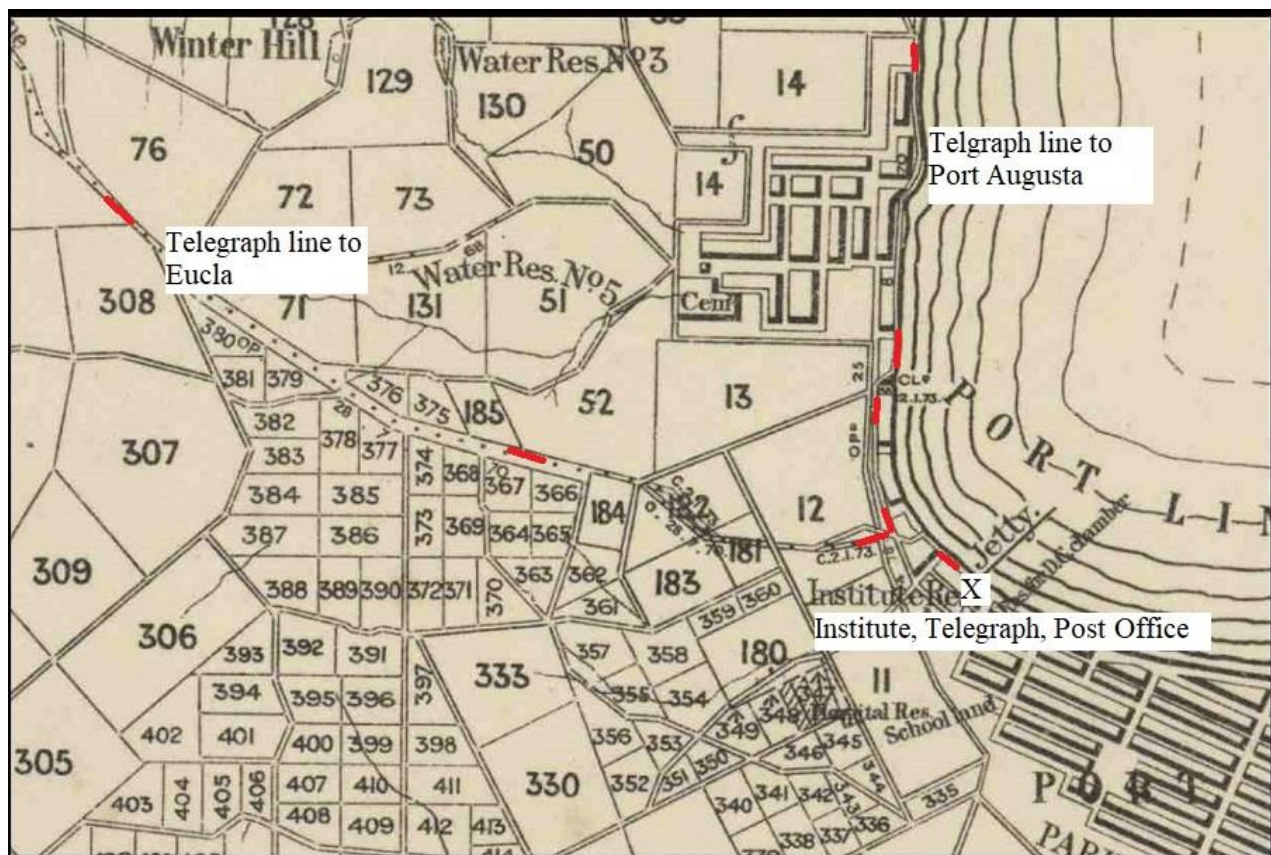
South Australian Register (Adelaide, SA : 1839 - 1900), Tuesday 15 February 1876, page 6
<<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article43012982>>.

A CRUISE IN THE GOVERNOR MUSGRAVE.
(Concluded.) PORT LINCOLN.

Port Lincoln Township is situated on the western shore of Boston Bay, <clip>
<clip> The telegraph line to Western Australia passes through Port Lincoln, and as the section between this place and Port Augusta has been completed the residents are now in direct communication with the capital. The poles used are of iron, similar to those placed on some portions of the Port Darwin line, and have a light and graceful appearance. The wire is also up for 20 miles westward from Port Lincoln, and the work on this portion is being vigorously pushed forward by Mr. Knuckey. <clip>

South Australian Weekly Chronicle (Adelaide, SA : 1881 - 1889), Saturday 4 June 1887, page 11
<<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article94954781>>

<clip> A request that a permanent post-office and telegraph station should be erected at Port Lincoln was preferred to the Minister of Education by Mr. J. Moule, M.P., on Tuesday morning. At present a room in the local public-house serves the purpose. The Minister replied that he had already placed a sum on the Estimates for the purpose, but the matter had yet to be considered by the Cabinet. <clip>

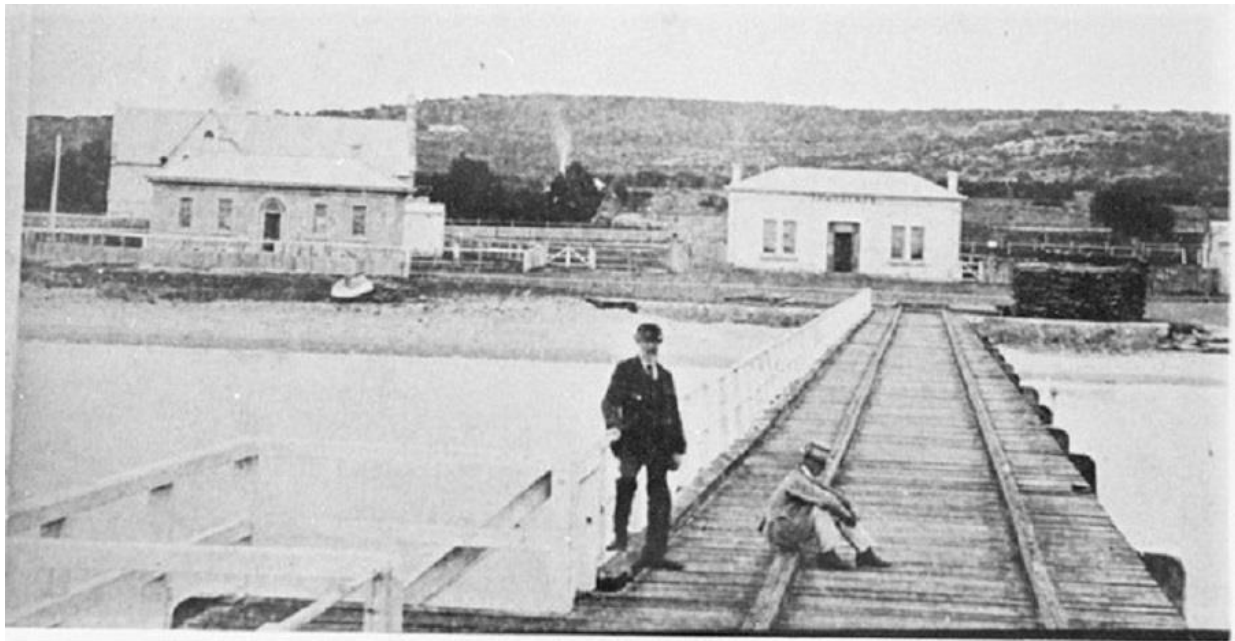


Port Lincoln.

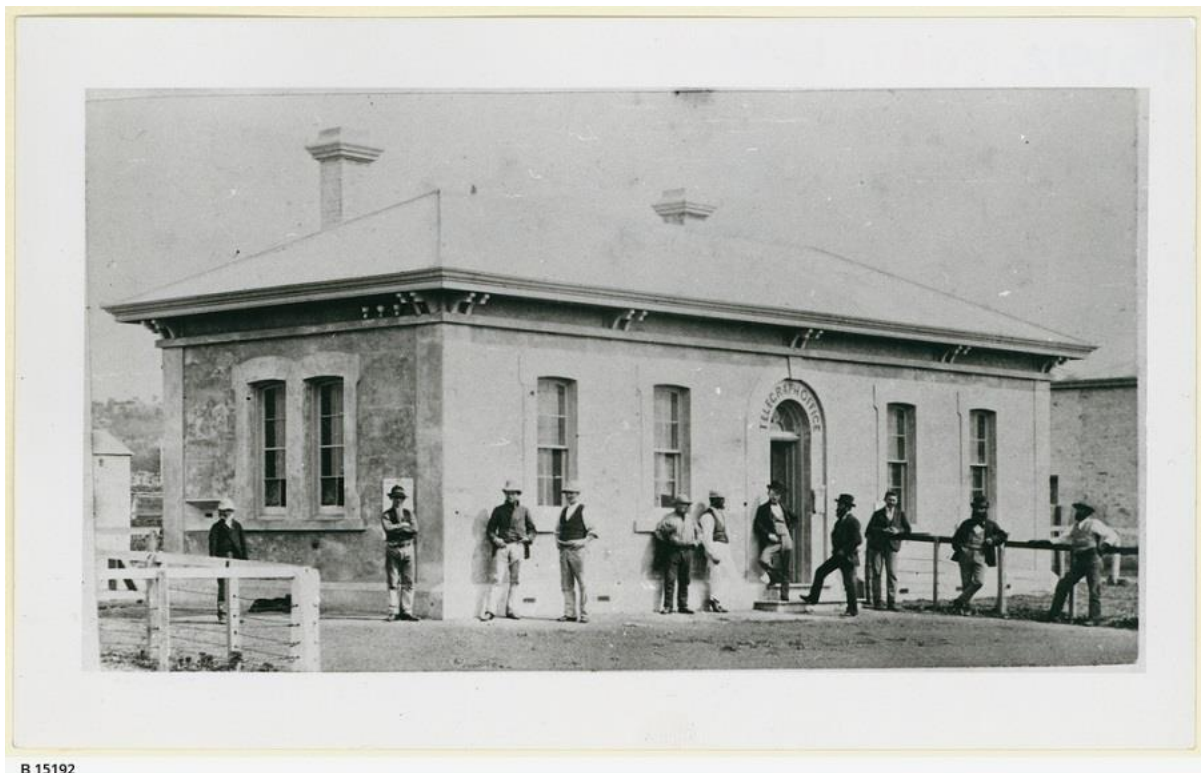


B 19009

<https://collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/resource/B+19009>
c1900. Port Lincoln Post Office and stores. E. J. Hastwell.



<https://collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/resource/B+46042>
 c1880. Port Lincoln. Telegraph office (left), Institute (centre), St Thomas Church of England behind Telegraph Office.



B 15192

<https://collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/resource/B+15192>
 c1900. Port Lincoln Telegraph Office, located opposite the jetty.



B 10806

<https://collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/resource/B+10806>
c1907. Port Lincoln Post Office & Institute.



B 23342/1

<https://collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/resource/B+23342/1>
c1900. Opening of the Town Clock at the Port Lincoln Post Office.



B 23342/2

<https://collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/resource/B+23342/2>
c1900. Opening of the Town Clock in Port Lincoln.



B 9629

<https://collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/resource/B+9629>
In 1924 the former Civic Hall was rebuilt and named the Soldiers Memorial Hall. It was gutted by fire in 1934. A newly completed replacement hall was opened in 1936. At the time of photograph which was taken in 1927.



B 4447

<https://collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/resource/B+4447>
c1911. Port Lincoln Post & Telegraph Office.



B 23342/8

<https://collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/resource/B+23342/8>
c1910. Port Lincoln Post & Telegraph Office and Institute.



B 23342/22

<https://collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/resource/B+23342/22>
c1905. Port Lincoln. 2 telegraph poles, single insulator, lightning conductor.



B 23342/23

<https://collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/resource/B+23342/23>
c1905. Port Lincoln. Single insulator telegraph pole.



PRG 280/1/34/104

<https://collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/resource/PRG+280/1/34/104>
c1922. A Royal Mail motor vehicle outside the Post and Telegraph Office at Port Lincoln, South Australia.



<https://collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/resource/B+46050>
c1924. Mail contractors & vehicles at Port Lincoln Post Office.



B 4503 Reproduction rights: State Library of South Australia

B 4503 Port Lincoln post office. c1927. New Post Office in Tasman Terrace. (LH side)

Ian McGillick photo.



Source - Facebook 2022 April.

A mail run on the Westcoast of SA



Source - Facebook 2021.

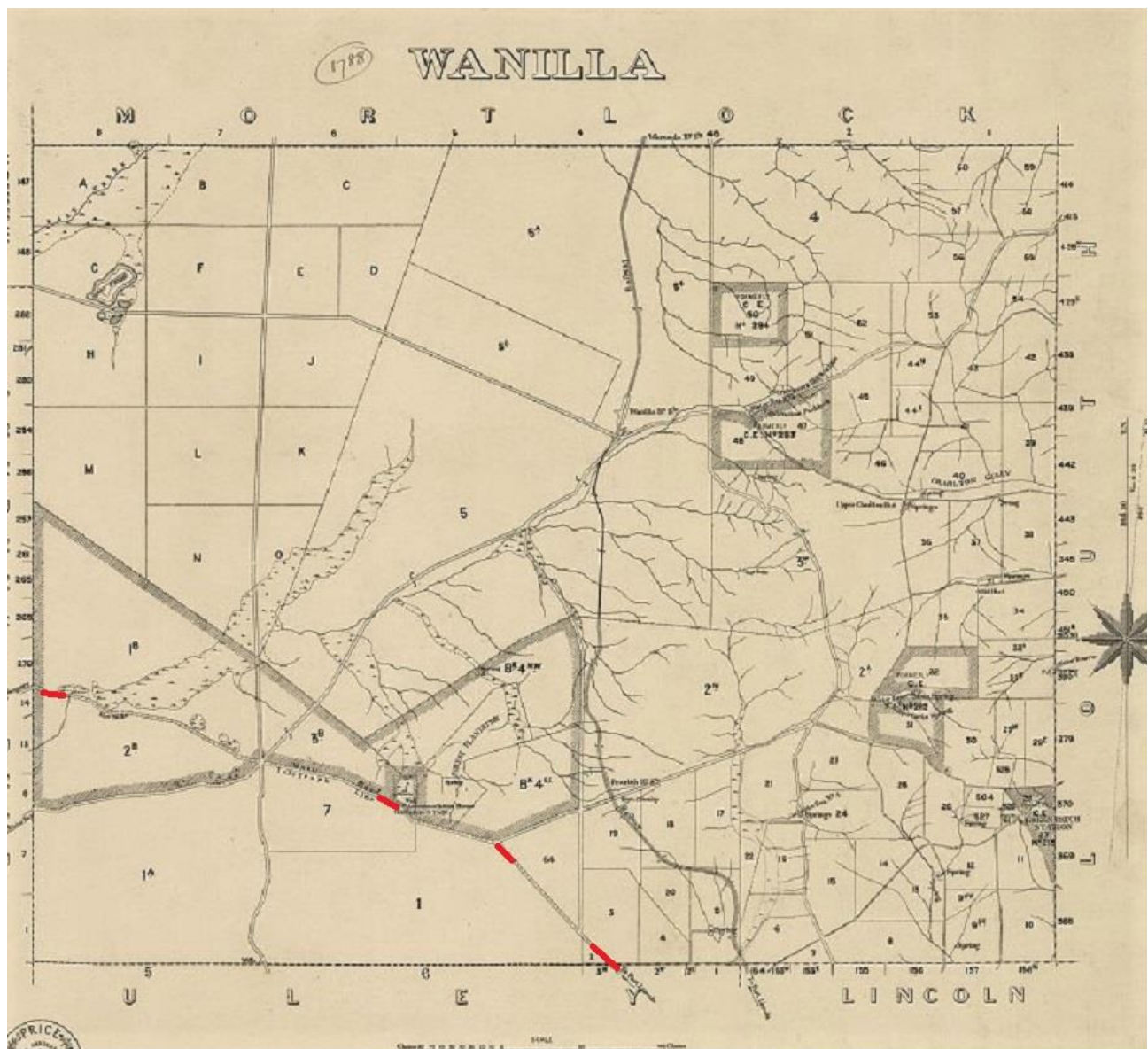


Roger Trevor on facebook 2021. it means something special for my wife Patsy. The vehicle was a Chevy, bought by her Grandma Simounds so that her son Charlie, Patsy's uncle, could do the mail run from Port Lincoln to Fowlers Bay. He did it for several years apparently and Patsy's mum, Margaret Lucas sometimes went with him and helped him. He was a bit of a character old Charlie. He was sometimes able to fit in passengers and he loved to tease the green-horns from Adelaide with stories like if he saw kangaroos on the side of the road he'd tell them they were well educated on Eyre Peninsula as they were there to collect the mail and when he got up near them he'd yell 'No mail today!' and the 'roos would run off. 'There you are' he'd say, 'They understand what I said'. I remember in about 1972, Patsy and I were getting petrol at the Mataranka pub in the NT and as we talked to him, Patsy mentioned she was visiting her Uncle Charlie Simounds in Alice Springs. 'Old Whingin' Charlie' said the publican as he served us the petrol. He was well known all over that part of the country, although obviously for doubtful reasons.

Roger Trevor on facebook 2021. Photo with story.

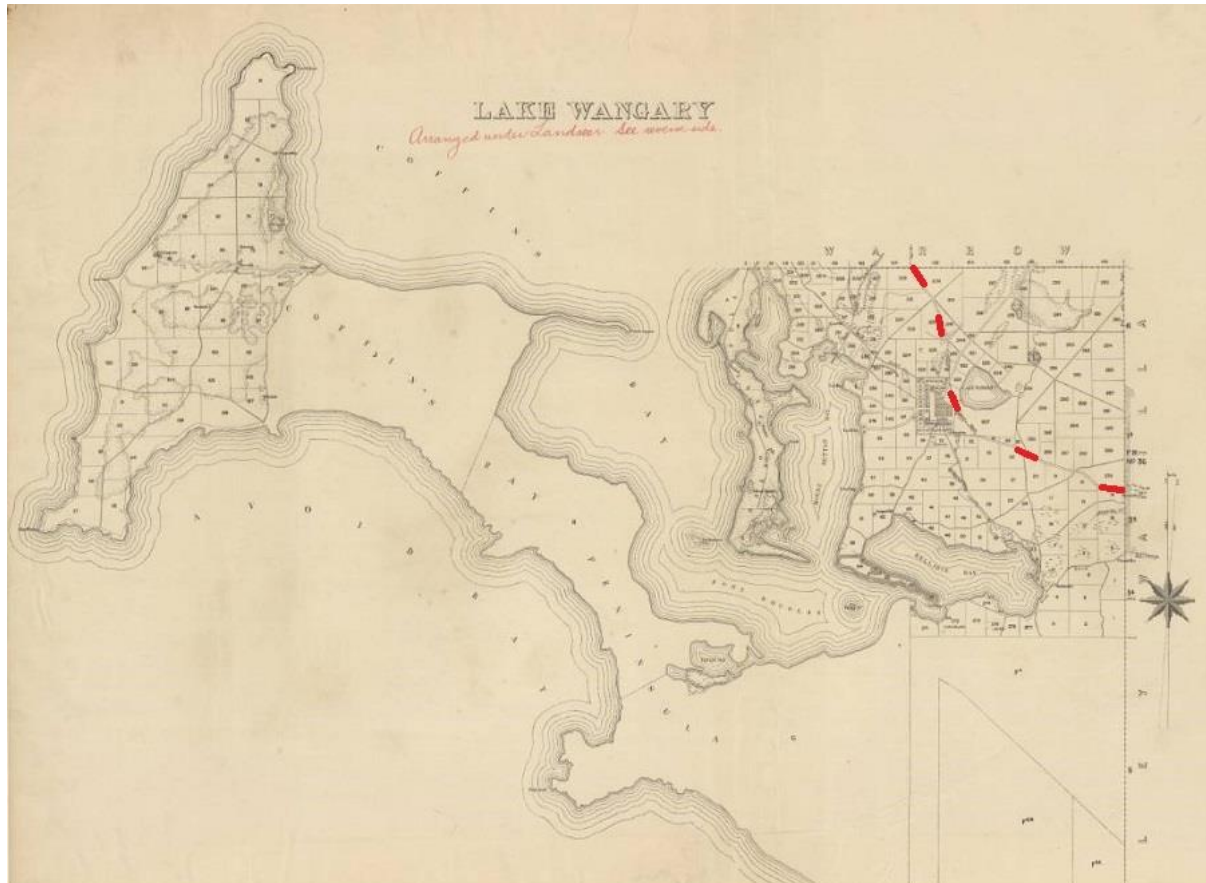
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18. Hundred of Wanilla.



https://maps.collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/series/hundreds_SA_63360/W/wanilla/zsmf_830bje63360_wanilla1911.jpg

19. Hundred of Lake Wangary.



https://maps.collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/series/hundreds_SA_63360/L/lake_wangary/zsmp_830bje63360_lake_wangary1892_ds.jpg
Wangary near Dutton Bay.

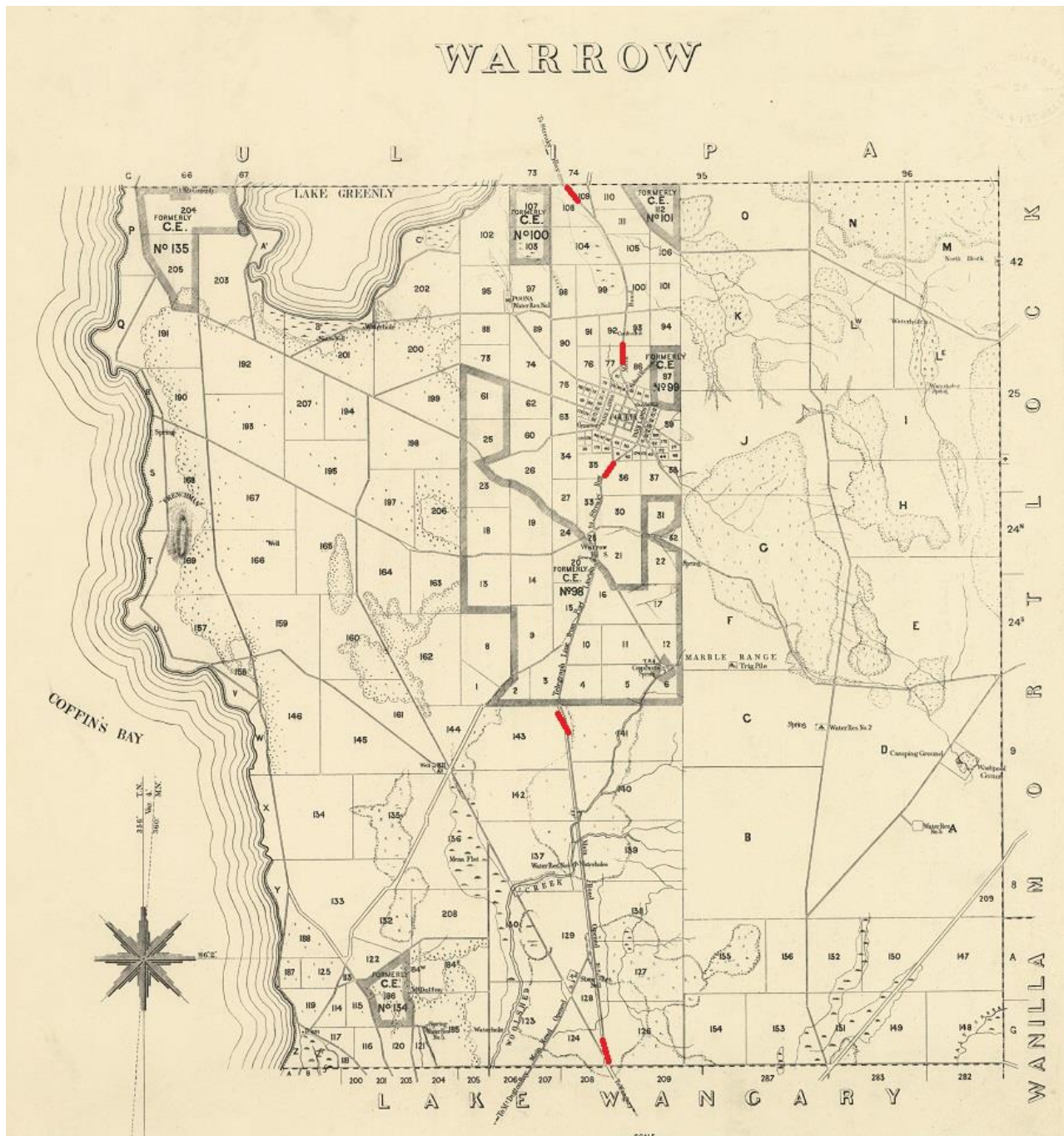
Evening Journal (Adelaide, SA : 1869 - 1912), Tuesday 7 December 1875, page 2

<<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article197686586>>.

TELEGRAPH CONSTRUCTION.

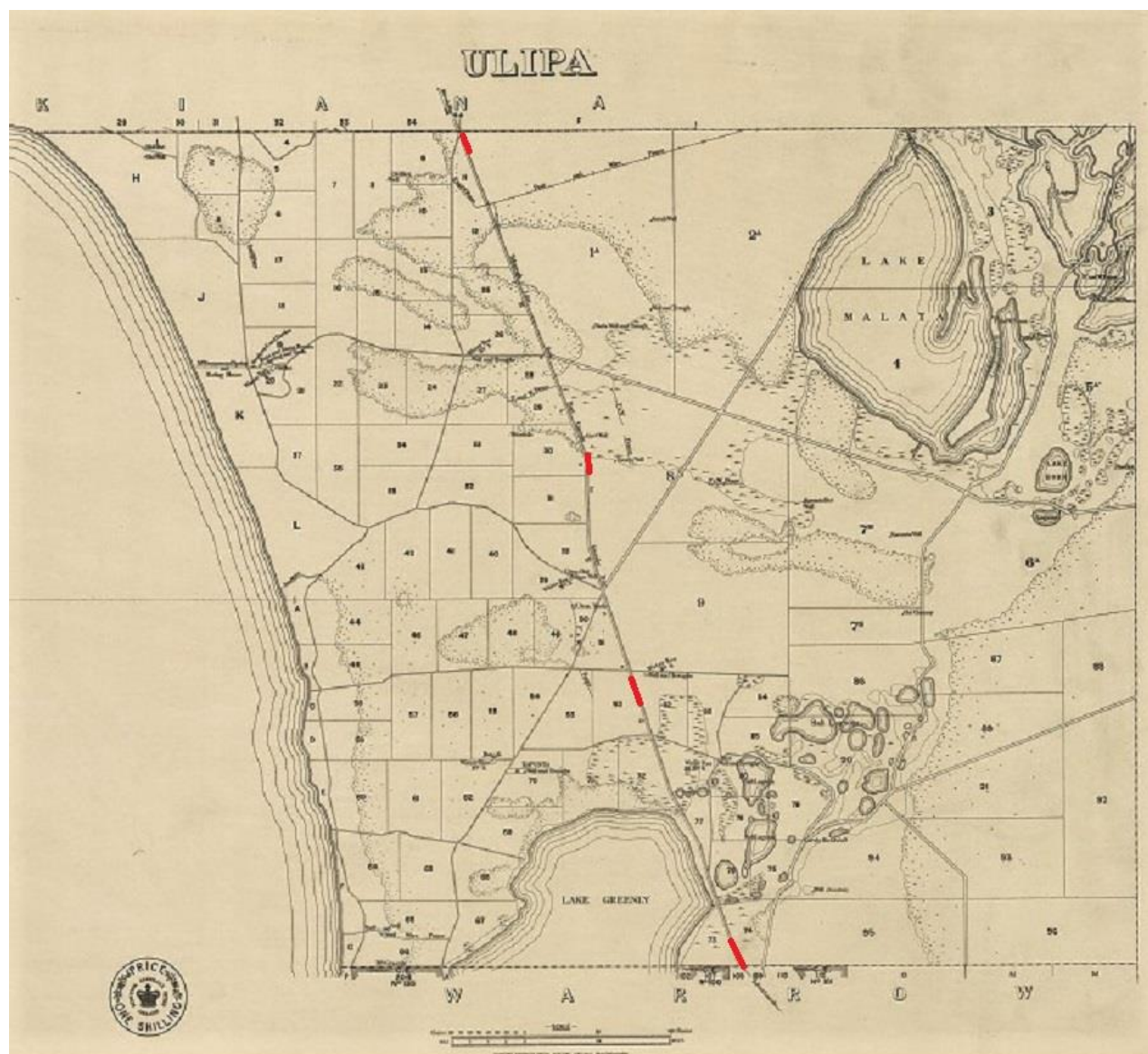
<clip> The last news from Mr. Knuckey, which was received a day or two ago by telegraph, states that the line was completed for 135 miles, or nearly as far as Dutton Bay. The party had been very hard up for water, and had found the section difficult to construct in consequence, but still greater difficulties may be expected between the Bight and Eucla. It is expected that the line will be completed as far as Port Lincoln early in January, and tenders for the last division will be called for almost immediately. <clip>
(Dutton Bay is Wangary.)

20. Hundred of Warrow.



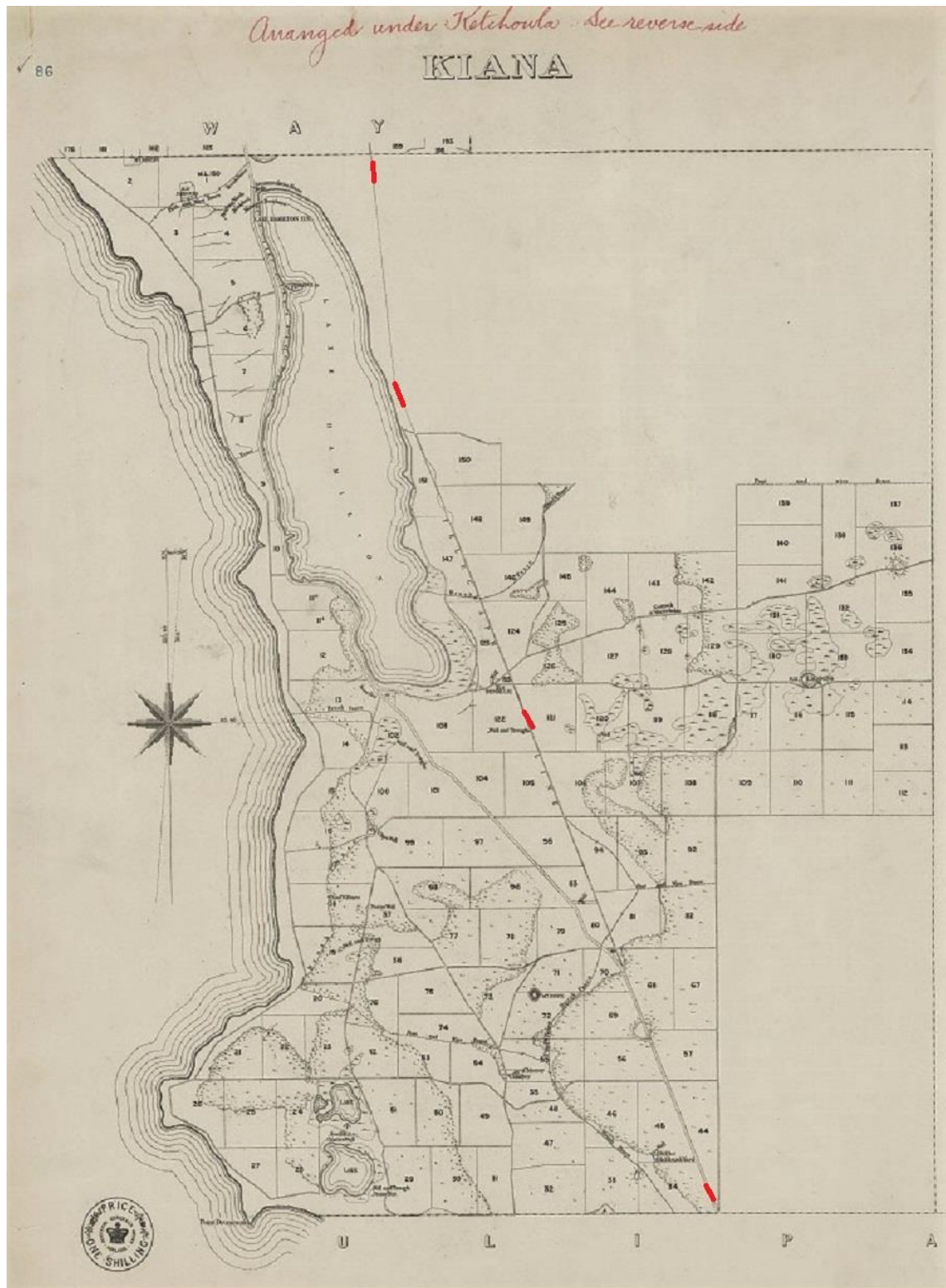
https://maps.collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/series/hundreds_SA_63360/W/warrow/zsmp_830bje63360_warrow1913.jpg
(Coult)

21. Hundred of Ulipa.

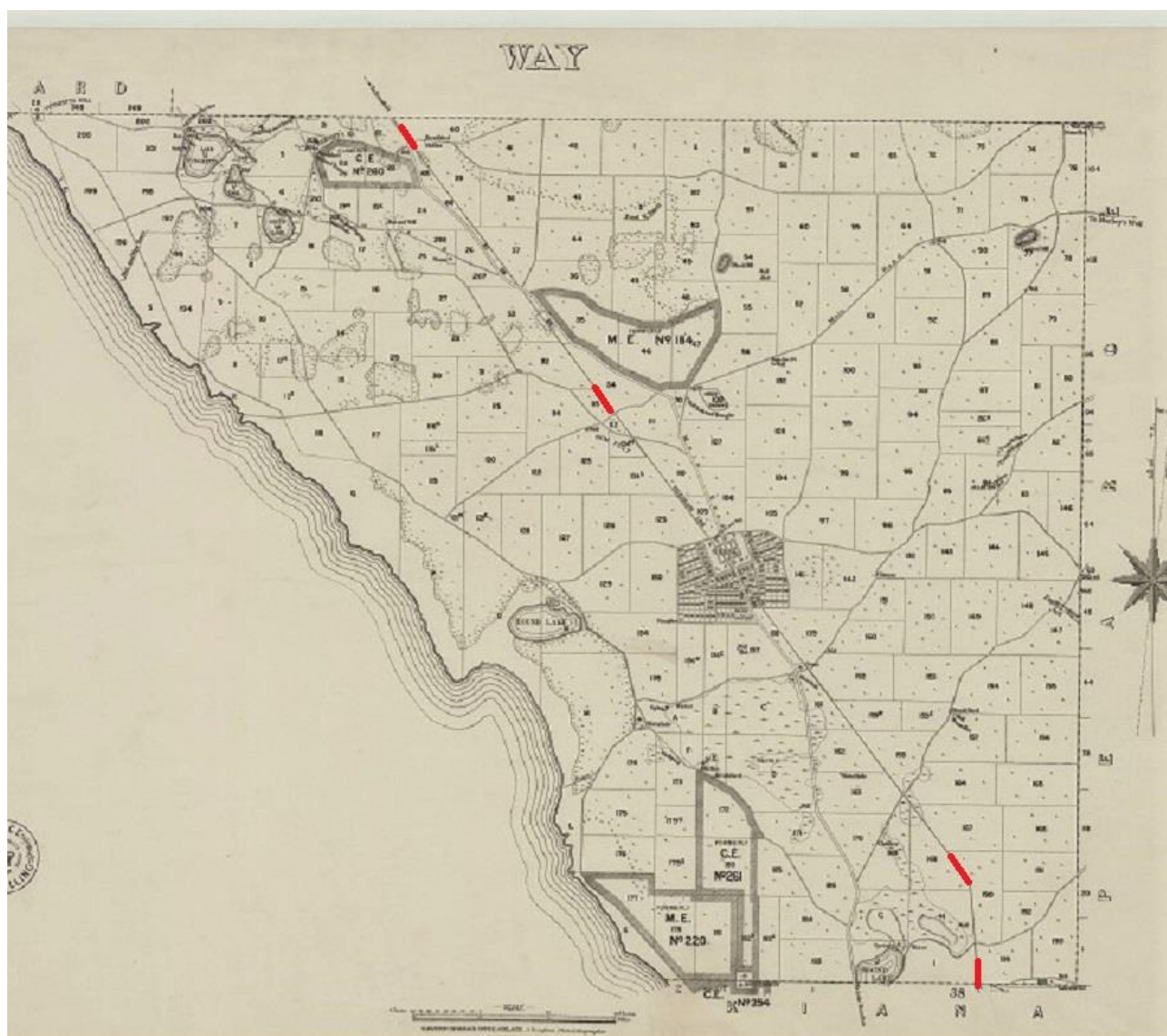


https://maps.collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/series/hundreds_SA_63360/U/ulipa/zsmp_830bje63360_ulipa1900.jpg

22. Hundred of Kiana.



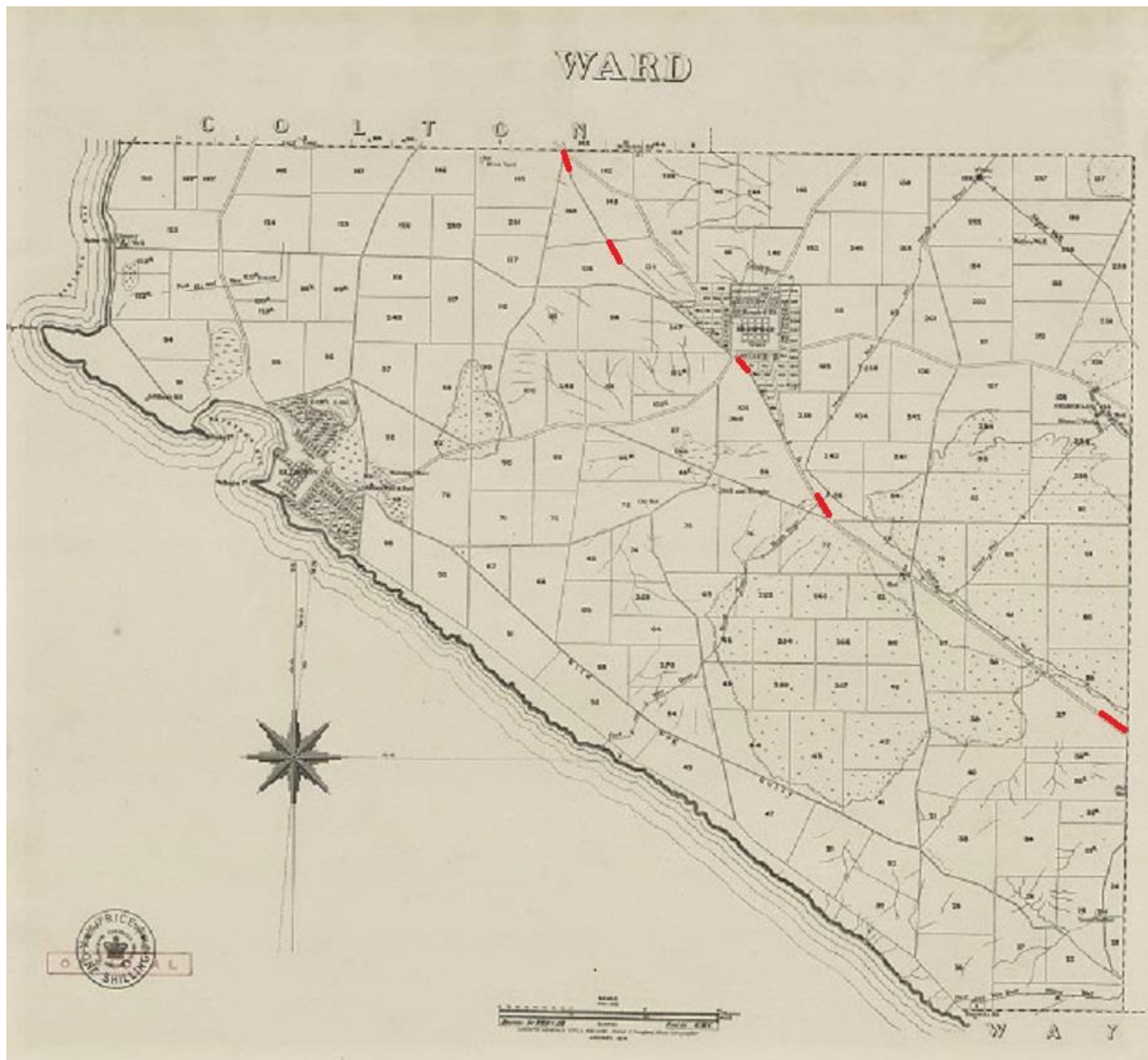
23. Hundred of Way.



https://maps.collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/series/hundreds_SA_63360/W/way/zsmpt_830bje63360_way1896.jpg
(Sheringa)

(No map available for Hundred of Hudd which joins to the North of Way.)

24. Hundred of Ward. (Elliston & Bramfield)



https://maps.collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/series/hundreds_SA_63360/W/ward/zsmpt_830bje63360_ward1879_ds.jpg
Elliston & Bramfield.

(No map available for Hundred of Hudd which joins the eastern side of Ward)



B 8646

<https://collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/resource/B+8646>
Elliston PO. Built 1880

Evening Journal (Adelaide, SA : 1869 - 1912), Wednesday 8 June 1892, page 2
<<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article204480640>>

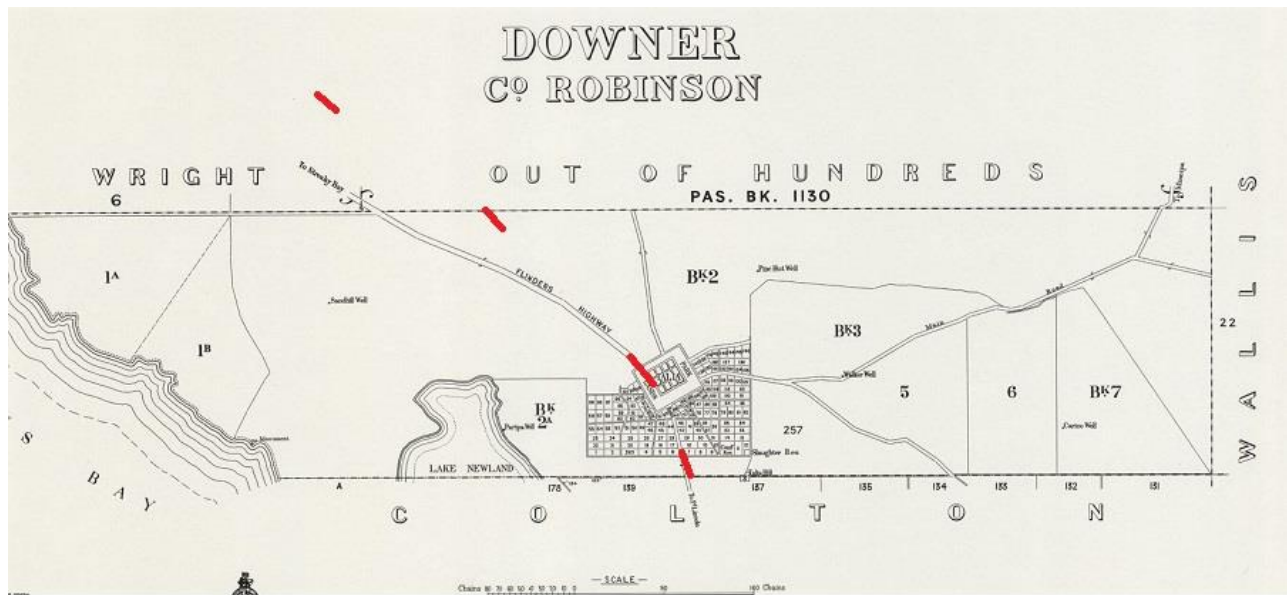
TELEGRAM: WIRES FUSED BY LIGHTNING.— About a fortnight ago during a severe storm on the west coast telegraphic communication between Elliston and Streaky Bay was interrupted. Parties started from the stations at each of these places to ascertain the locality of the interruption. They met near Talia on May 29, and there found 120 yards of the wire on the ground completely fused. Evidently the wire was struck by lightning. The parties had no wire with them, and in order to temporarily restore communication they cut some fencing wire and made it do service until proper wire was secured from the Elliston telegraph station. Mr. Todd has received specimens of the fused wire.

25. Hundred of Colton.



https://maps.collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/series/hundreds_SA_63360/C/colton/zsmf_830bje63360_colton1876.jpg

26. Hundred of Downer.

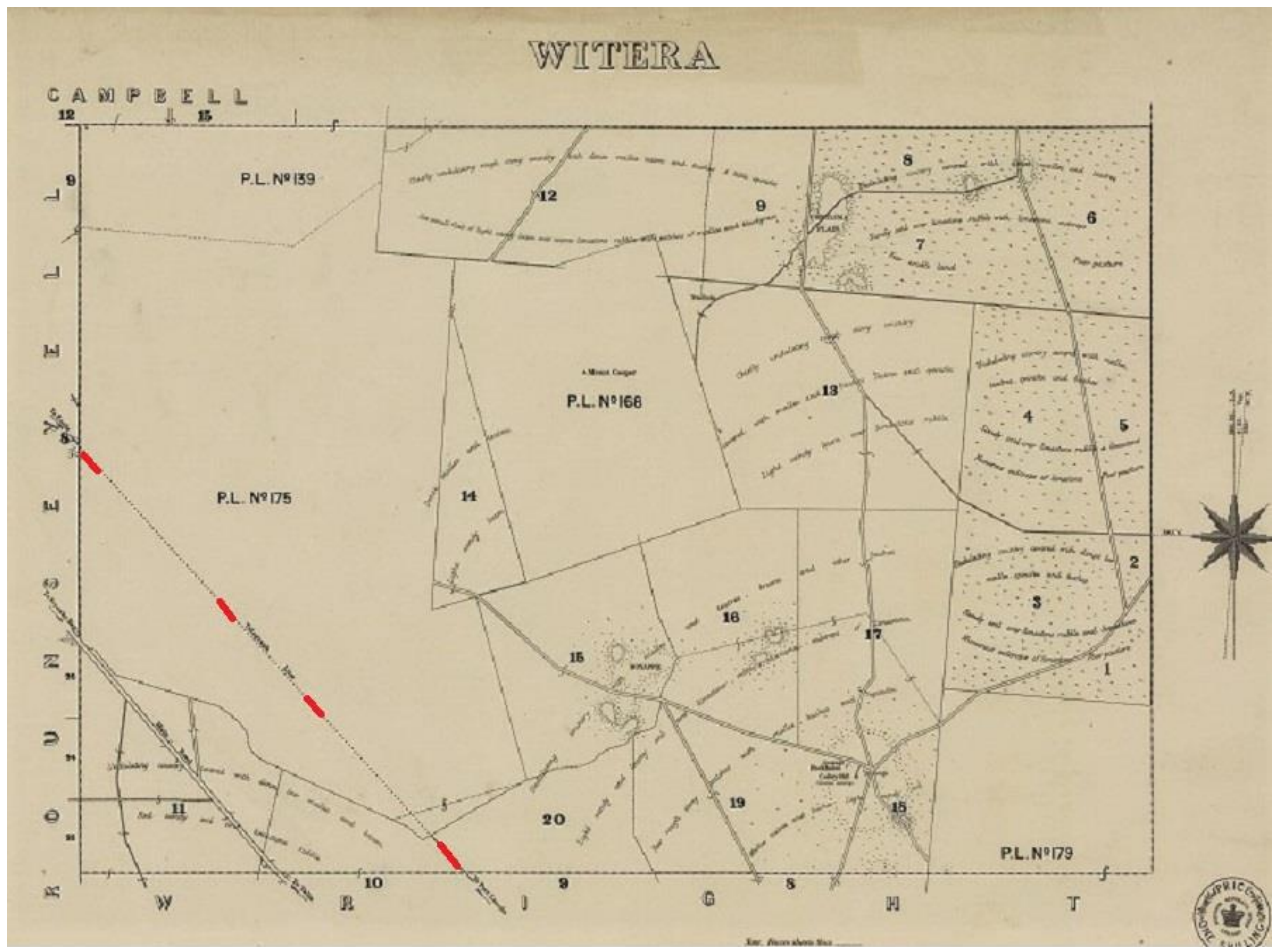


https://maps.collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/series/hundreds_SA_63360/D/downer/zmp_830bje63360_downer1967.jpg
(Talia)

1967 map too recent to show telegraph line. Approximate line shown. See Colton & Wright maps.

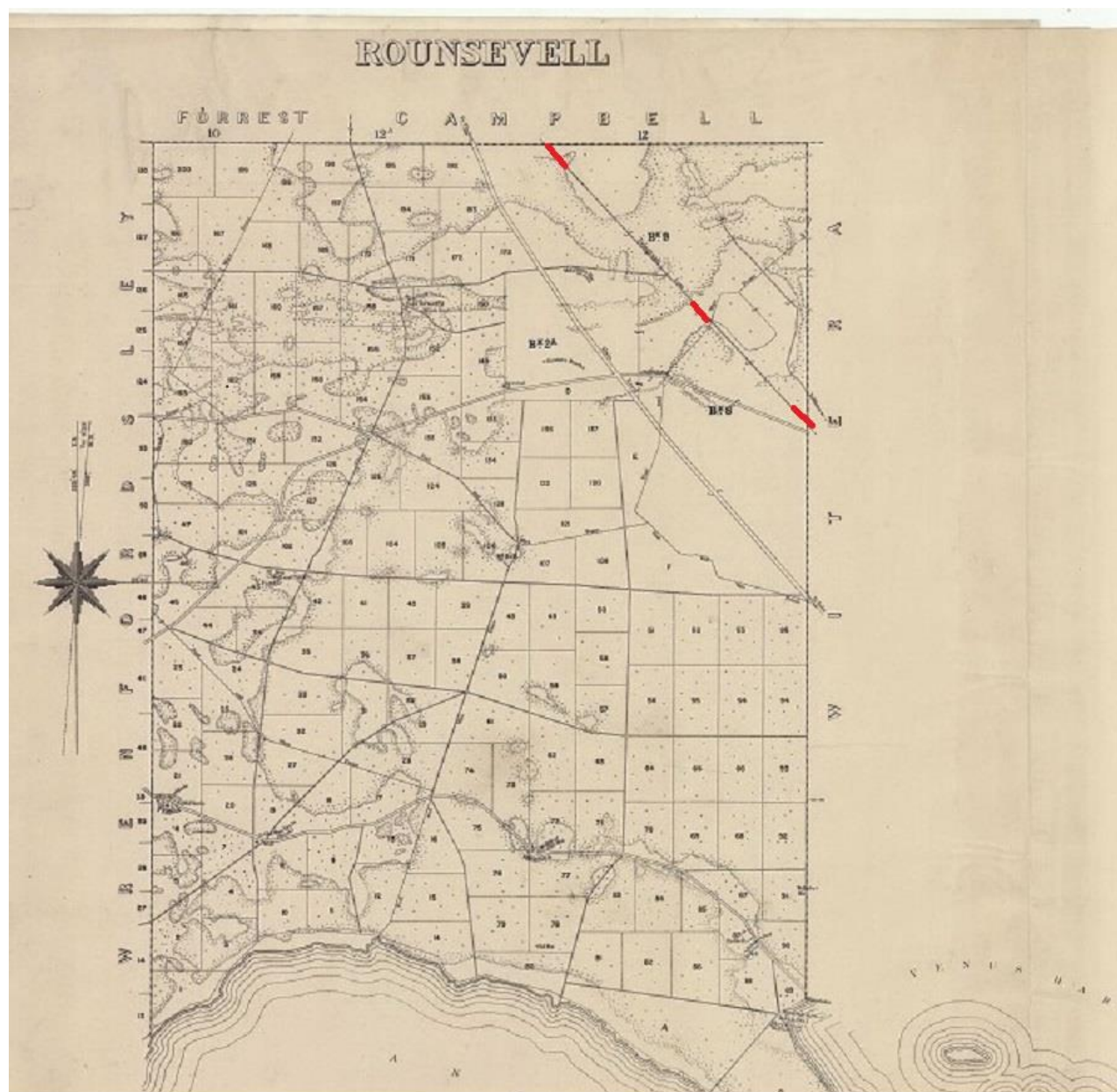
139

28. Hundred of Witera.



https://maps.collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/series/hundreds_SA_63360/W/witera/zsmp_830bje63360_witera1896.jpg

29. Hundred of Rounsevell.



https://maps.collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/series/hundreds_SA_63360/R/rounsevell/zsmf_830bje63360_rounsevell1893_ds.jpg

CAMPBELL

MURRAY

WATERA

Bk N° 9

R O U N D S E V E L L

SCALE

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17°

Middlegate Hill

14

16

13

Kondala

Vernon

Yarra

Cuthbert

New Borehole Well

Borehole Well

Vernon Well

Yarra Well

Cuthbert Well

WATERA

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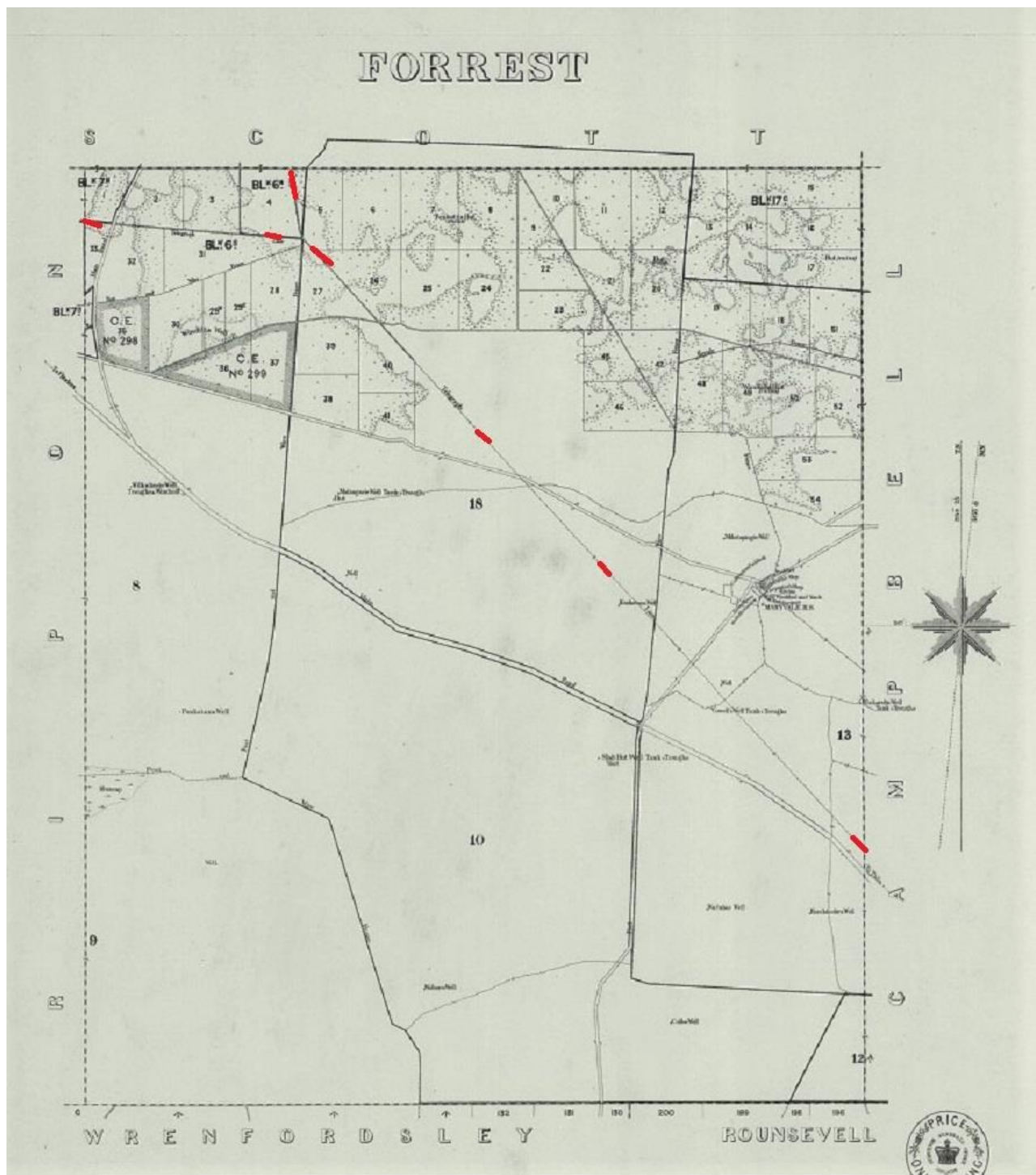
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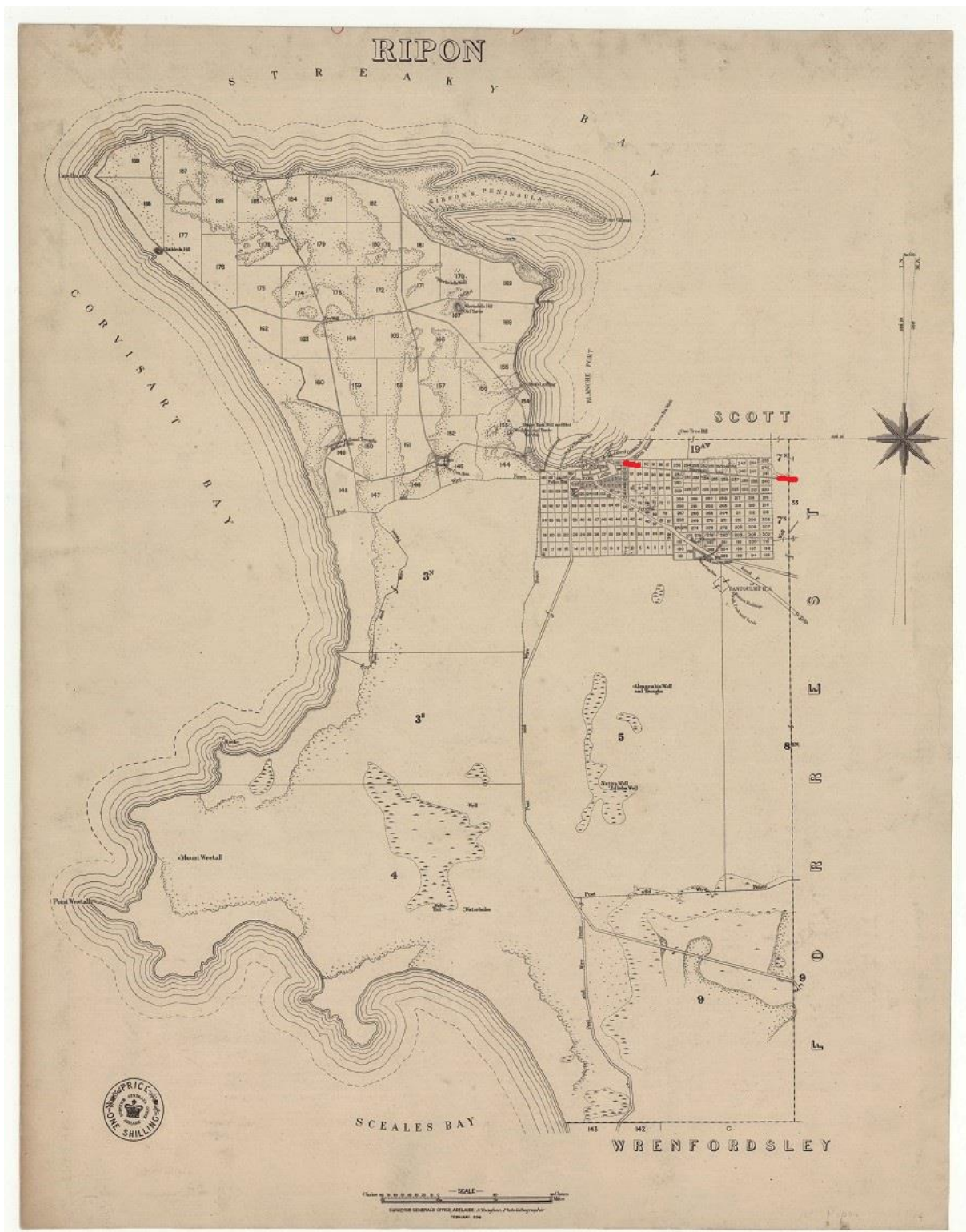
142

31. Hundred of Forrest.



https://maps.collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/series/hundreds_SA_63360/F/forrest/zsmpr_830bje63360_forrest1889_ds.jpg

32. Hundred of Ripon. (Streaky Bay)



https://maps.collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/series/hundreds_SA_63360/R/ripon/zsmpr_830bje63360_ripon1894_ds.jpg (Streaky Bay)



<https://collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/resource/B+54060/78>
1905. Streaky Bay Post Office.



PRG 1555/1/41

<https://collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/resource/PRG+1555/1/41>
c1910-33 Streaky Bay Post Office.



B 78480

<https://collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/resource/B+78480>
1925 Streaky Bay to Fowlers Bay mail van.

Evening Journal (Adelaide, SA : 1869 - 1912), Friday 2 June 1876, page 2
<<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article197691071>>

THE EUCLA TELEGRAPH LINE — "A telegram was received in Kapunda on Thursday," says the local paper of June 2, "from Mr. Knuckey who has been surveying the line of route for the telegraph from Streaky Bay to Eucla, announcing his return to Streaky Bay, to which place the telegraph line from Port Lincoln was finished on Wednesday."



Siemen's Brothers tapered telegraph pole information
Streaky Bay Museum. 2022



Siemen's Brothers tapered telegraph pole and insulators
Streaky Bay Museum. 2022



Siemen's Brothers tapered telegraph pole.
Streaky Bay Museum. 2022



Siemen's Brothers tapered telegraph pole base and wedges
Streaky Bay Museum. 2022



Siemen's Brothers tapered telegraph pole split wedge in base
Streaky Bay Museum. 2022

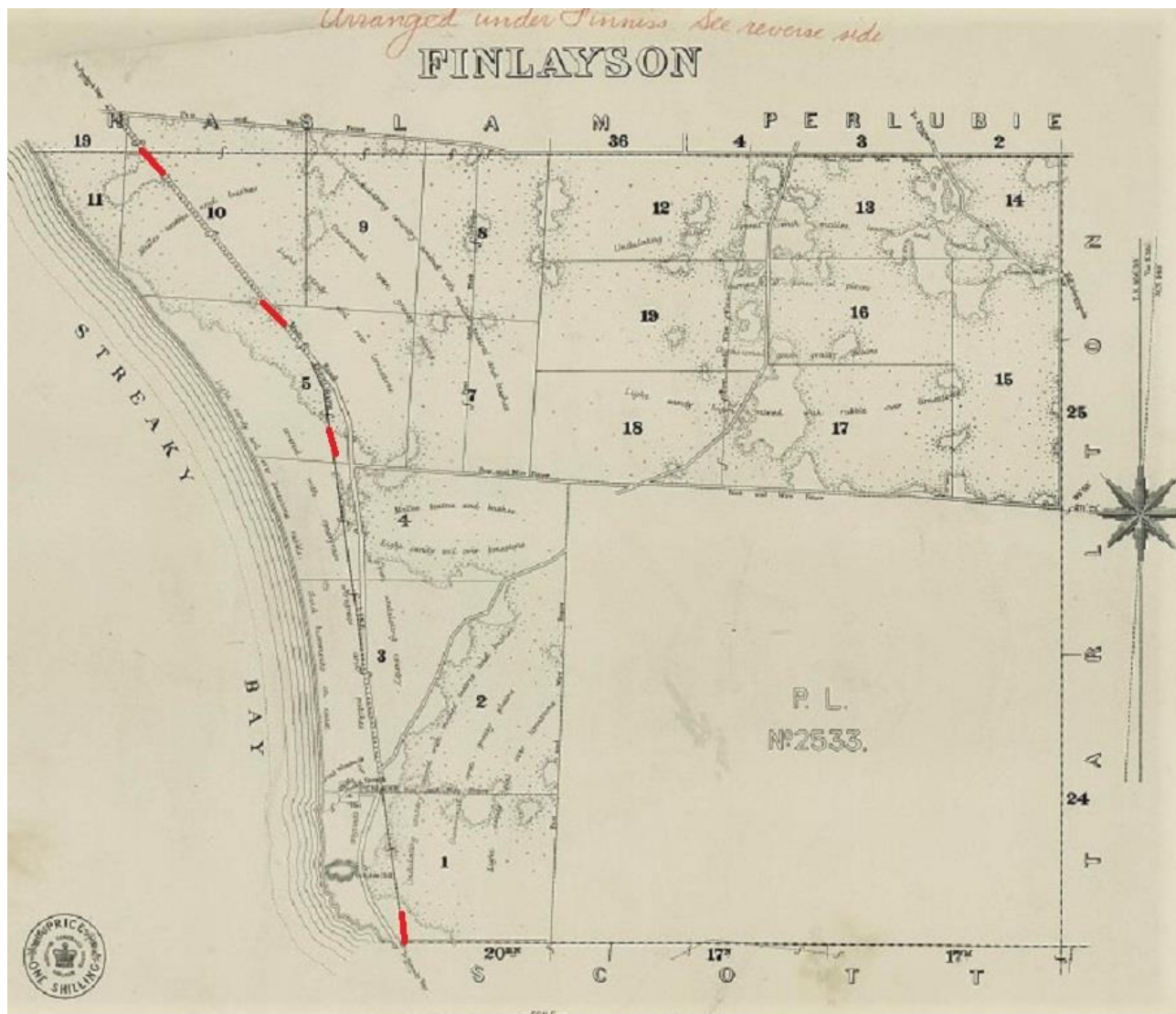


Siemen's Brothers Patent No 268
Streaky Bay Museum. 2022

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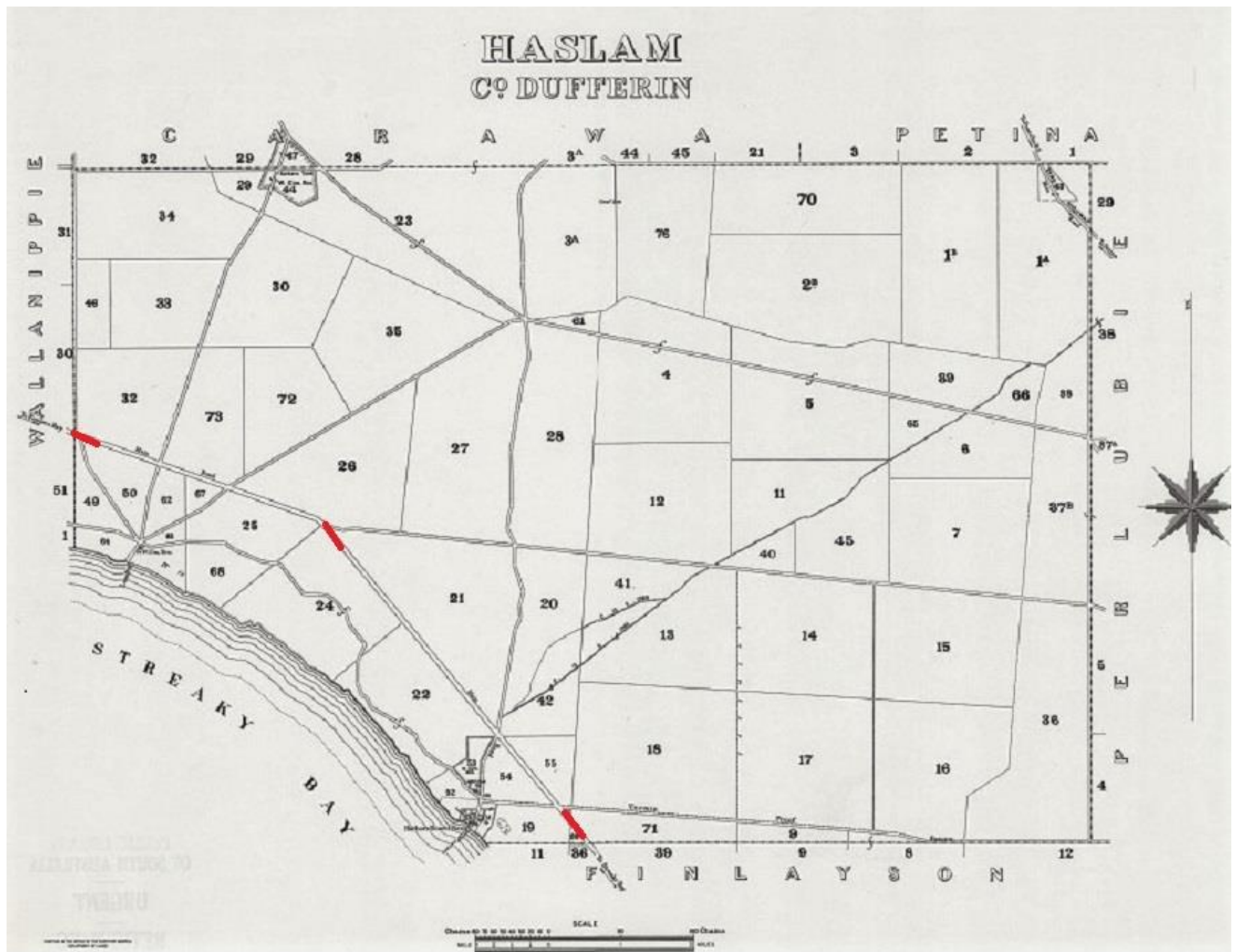
https://maps.collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/series/hundreds_SA_63360/S/scott/zsmp_830bje63360_scott1889_ds.jpg

34. Hundred of Finlayson.



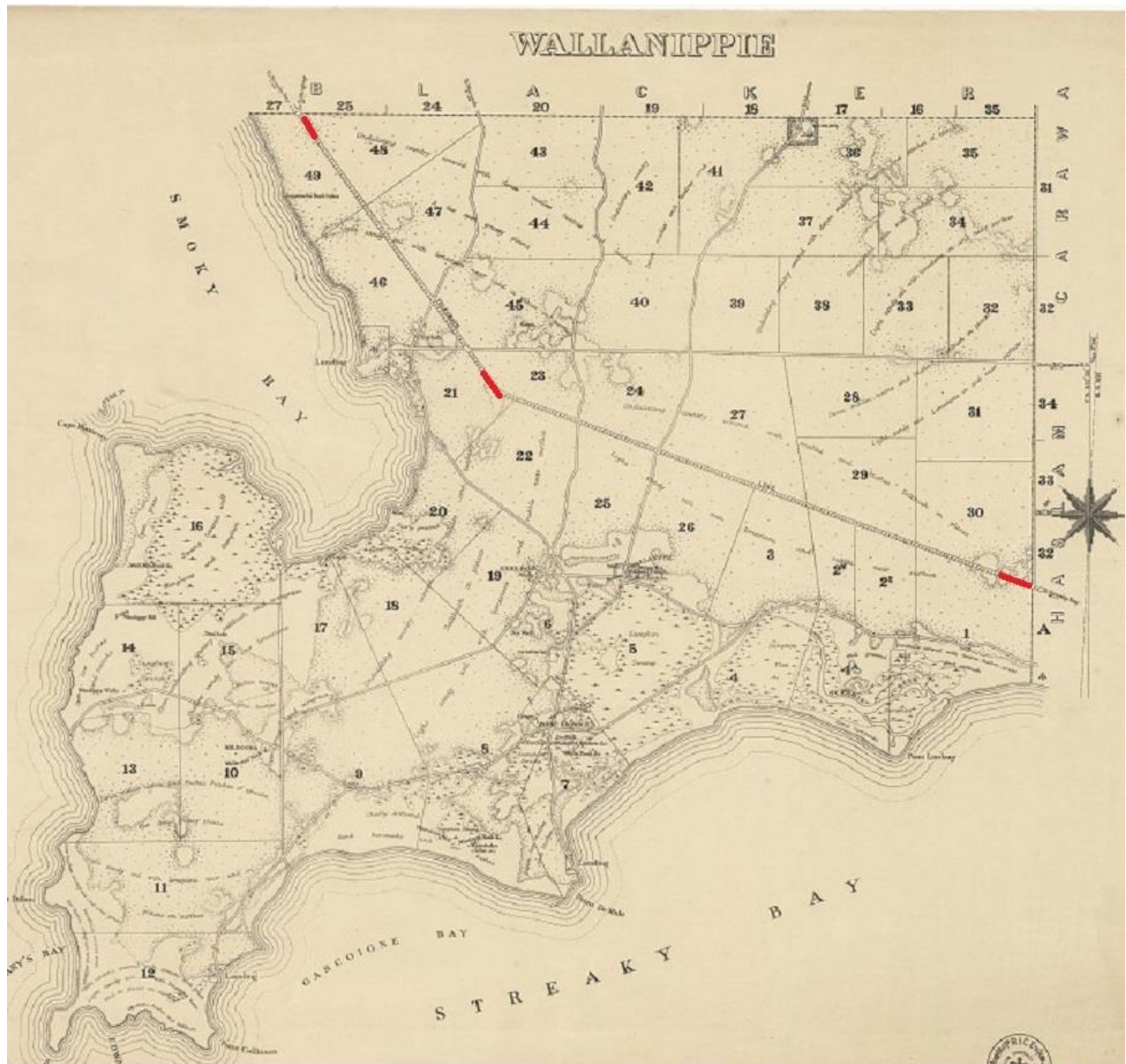
https://maps.collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/series/hundreds_SA_63360/F/finlayson/zsmp_830bje63360_finlayson1895_ds.jpg

35. Hundred of Haslam.



https://maps.collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/series/hundreds_SA_63360/H/haslam/zsmp_830bje63360_haslam1965.jpg

36. Hundred of Wallanippie. (Smoky Bay)



https://maps.collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/series/hundreds_SA_63360/W/wallanippie/zsmmp_830bje63360_wallanippie1907.jpg
(Smoky Bay)

①
G Burnett

SMOKY BAY
SOUTH AUSTRALIA

THE TELEGRAPH STATION
AND
THE NEARBY AREA

Smoky Bay is a small farming community in the Far West of South Australia.

This paper is about the former telegraph repeating station at Smoky Bay, its people and their activities. The station was in operation from 1911 to 1927 but the supplementary information about the district in general spans a much longer period.

Ref: TMA 422

Issue 2
MARCH 1982

Prepared By

M J Gooley, OAM
for the Telecommunications Museum
ADELAIDE

Information from Murray Colin's, Ceduna

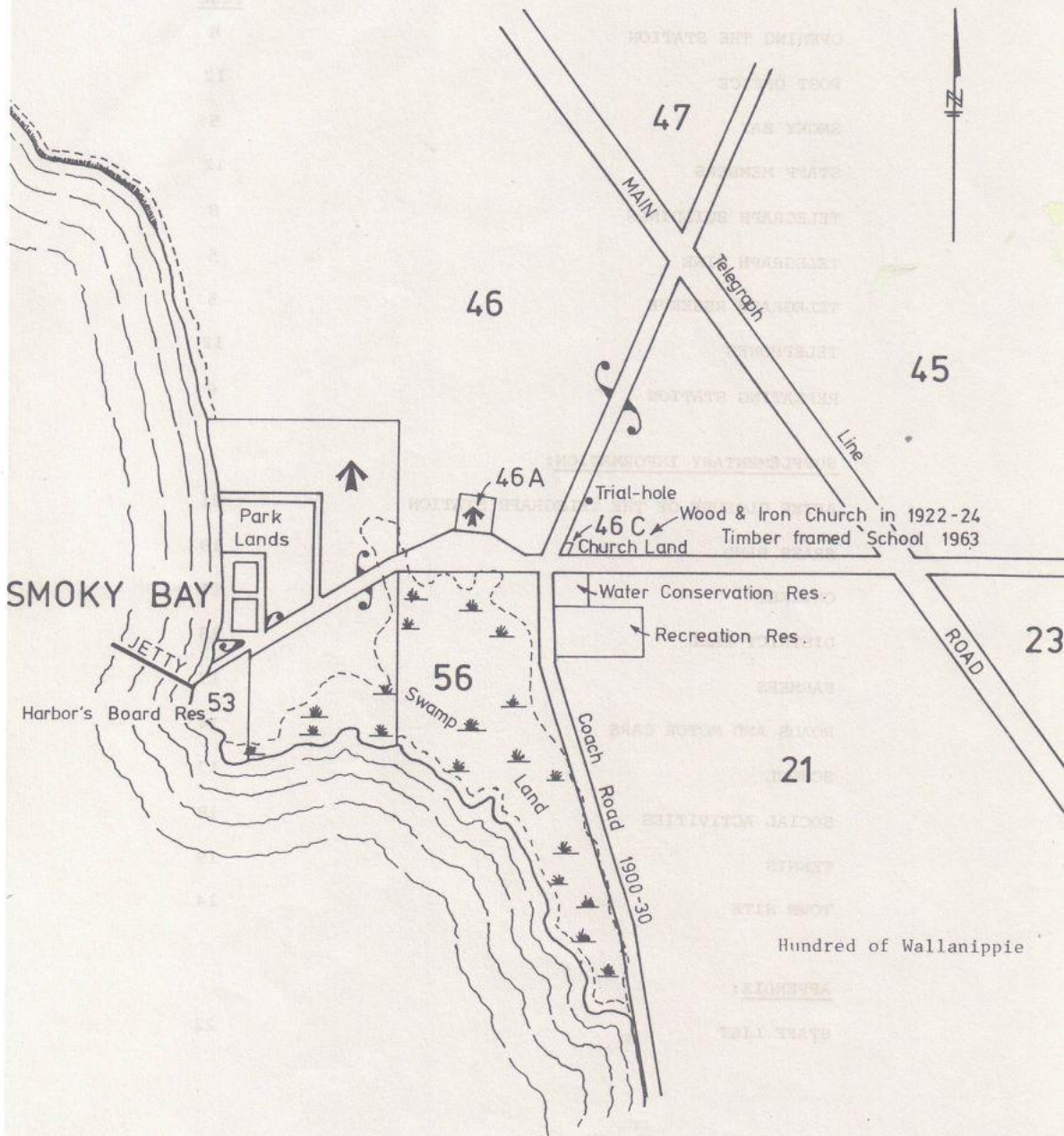


Fig.1.

SMOKY BAY
LOCATION OF TELEGRAPH STATION

Section 46 A

SMOKY BAY

Smoky Bay is located in the Hundred of Wallanippie, County of Way in South Australia. It is located on the far western coast of Eyre Peninsula about 1000 km from Adelaide.

The Bay itself was so named by Captain Matthew Flinders in 1802 when he was sailing westward along the southern coast line of Australia. He wrote; "there was smoke arising from a number of fires on the shore..... (I resolved)... to give it the name of Smoky Bay...so dense, that the true horizon could not be distinguished..." (Cockburn, 1908).

THE TELEGRAPH LINE

The first telegraph line between South Australia and Western Australia passed through the Smoky Bay district. It was opened for service on 8th December 1877. The line consisted of a single 400 lb per mile (8 S.W.G.) galvanized iron wire on galvanized wrought iron poles to Oppenheimer patents. The poles were erected at about 100m intervals. A total of 147 tonnes of wire and 12,474 poles were required from Port Augusta around the coast to Eucla, just west of the South Australian border.

The difficulties in operating and maintaining a route near the coast and the increases in telegraph traffic particularly that arising from the development of the Western Australian goldfields resulted in the revival of an earlier scheme to build a line direct from Port Augusta to the vicinity of Streaky Bay through the Gawler Ranges. This copper line was completed in 1896 with a telegraph station at Yardea. The new pole line joined the existing one near Flagstaff Landing (See Fig 6). Work on the existing pole line included respacing of poles to reduce the spans to 80 metres.

The excessive leakage of electricity from the line continued to be a problem with the coastal sections of the route. It was therefore decided to divide the Port Augusta to Eucla section of this interstate line by providing a repeating station at Smoky Bay which is west of the junction of the two lines at Flagstaff Landing.

THE TELEGRAPH RESERVE

The Hundred of Wallanippie was first surveyed in 1894 including a Section numbered 46 in the vicinity of Smoky Bay (see Fig 1). On 27th June 1895, a 21 year Crown Lease (No 8155) over Section 46 was granted to John Gregor, of Curramulka, a Farmer, for the annual rental of £6:10:2 (\$13.02) payable in advance on 1st July in each year and a penalty of five pounds per centum was to be added if the rent was not paid on or before the due date. The lessee had the right to purchase the lands at any time during the first six years of the Lease at a price of seven hundred and eight-one pounds (\$1562) being ten shillings (\$1.00) per acre (0.4 ha). W.J. Crocker witnessed John Gregor's signature on the Lease document.

Early farming of the Section does not appear to have been very successful because the rental was reduced to four pounds seventeen shillings and eight pence (\$9.76) on 26th April 1901.

On 17th February 1905, the purchase price of the Section was halved, with the price per acre being set at five shillings (50 cents).

The TELEGRAPH RESERVE came into being when a portion of Section 46 containing five acres (2.0 ha) was surrendered for telegraph purposes to the Crown on 15th December 1909 (S.G.O. 8415/08) and the purchase price of the remainder reduced proportionately.

John Gregor surrendered the 2 ha of land from his Lease hold, free of cost but all was not smooth sailing. When returning the signed transfer document on 4th December he drew attention to the fact that his father was also John Gregor of Curramulka and he should be described as being "of Smoky Bay" - "If you don't make the alteration, it is very probable it will cause complications later on". His request was not acted upon. His envelope of documents was returned to him because of insufficient postage. He responded angrily "I drove nearly 30 miles to AJP to witness my signature on the transfer... (This is) a rank piece of Departmental foolery... if it comes back again I will be done with it." The PMG Department had refused to accept delivery of his letter without full postage having been paid. (When I was principal PMG Engineering officer at Murray Bridge, there was an unofficial arrangement with Norman Wauchope the Postmaster there that letters to us with insufficient postage were not to be sent back to the sender but forwarded to my office without delay - we regarded all letters as urgent to the sender).

The Commonwealth of Australia paid one pound five shillings (\$2.50) to the South Australian Government for the transfer of the Telegraph Reserve to it.

The Reserve was located on a stony rise overlooking the top end of a swamp, the nearby farm land was light and sandy. The road along the southern boundary of Section 46 was widened (as shown in figure 1) to provide public access to the Reserve.

The Commonwealth agreed to comply with John Gregor's request for the site to be securely fenced and wire-netted - "to keep the rabbits from swarming in on my land", he wrote. Rabbits were very numerous in the locality. When he was Station Master, Mr Hoar made a sport of shooting rabbits by first firing one shot into the air to disturb them. As they ran for the cover of their burrows, he ran wildly after them over the swampy flats and finally blasted away at the nearest of the creatures.

THE REPEATING STATION

At the repeating station, electromechanical repeaters received weak line signals and sent on renewed strong signals to the next station.

If the equipment was not working satisfactorily because of changed line conditions, a Wheatstone receiver could be temporarily connected into the circuit and the incoming signals recorded on a narrow paper tape in the receiver. After he had studied the recorded signals a telegraphist adjusted the repeater to suit the changed line conditions. The receiver was then disconnected from the line and the trial paper tape later burnt. No record was kept of the traffic passing through the repeating station.

Telegrams from local people were written on forms for delivery. There was no messenger service, the first person going near the addressee's home would take the telegram to him. Telegraph Forms (form ET No 2) in use at about 1920 had a space on them for a "portage" fee to be added to the costs for the delivery from the receiving office to the addressee in country districts. There were no private telephones connected then to permit the telephoning of telegrams.



Fig 2.. Smoky Bay Telegraph Station - 1911 - H Woodards, photo.

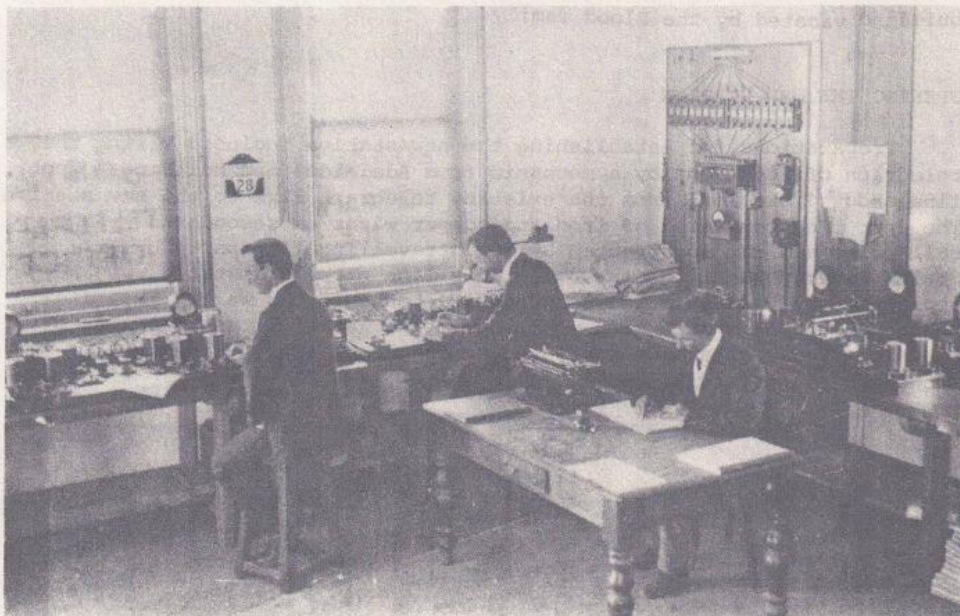


Fig 3. The Telegraph Office - 1912 - A.E. Bartlett, photo
(L to R) Jack Blood, Bert Bartlett, Charles Willington.
P h L

THE TELEGRAPH BUILDINGS

The specifications and plans for the construction of the buildings were prepared by the Commonwealth Department of Construction in Adelaide. The three main buildings were placed in a line facing south and about 20 metres apart. They as well as two earth closets were constructed of locally quarried limestone with red brick quoins and chimnies by workmen who came from Adelaide. The work was completed during 1911 (See Fig 2).

A wood and iron store shed was erected close to the northern side of the centrally-placed office building.

Water supply was from rain collected in galvanized iron tanks whose overflows were connected to a large stone tank of about 50 kl capacity constructed mainly underground. Extra iron tanks were added in 1922.

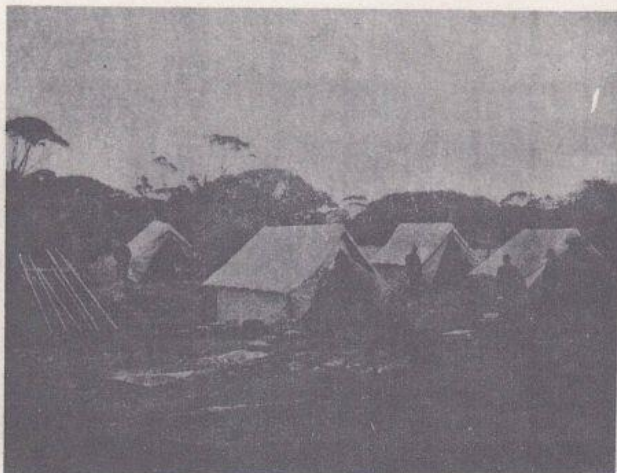
The eastern building was the residence for the Post and Telegraph Station-master and his family. The western building was divided into two approximately equal parts, one used by the Lineman and later, the Senior Mechanic and his family while the other section was used as quarters for the single men, usually two in number. There was of course no question of "boarding at the local hotel"; there was none.

Ray Fabian was the government Clerk of Works during the building of the station.

There was no spare residential accommodation at the station. This caused a problem when there was a change of staff as occurred in 1922. Bill Gooley and his family (Ella and children Milton and Jean) arrived on the "SS Wookata" and had to set up home temporarily in the unlined store shed. Jack Blood, his wife Kate and their children: Margaret (5), Audrey (4) and John (2), left when the "SS Wookata" returned from Eucla several weeks later. Then, the Gooleys moved into part of the western building vacated by the Blood family.

OPENING THE NEW STATION

Preparations for establishing the new station included wiring the telegraph office (done by a mechanic from Adelaide) and building a spur line about 1.6km long from the existing telegraph line to the new station. The spur line consisted of iron and copper wires on secondhand tramway rail poles and was constructed by No 7 travelling line party under Senior Lineman Hughie Hagen. This line party's district was the whole of Eyre Peninsula and Port Augusta township, as well. They did maintenance and construction work on all the aerial lines apart from the minor fault clearance work done by the local staff, linemen, mechanics or operators.



Line Party No 7 at Smoky Bay
Sept 1913 - G. Fitzgerald, Foreman



Telegraph Station Staff about 1912

Standing: George Galpin (Lineman);
Seated: Bert Bartlett (Operator), Jack Blood (A/g S/M)
On rug: Alfred Charles Melrose Willington (Operator)

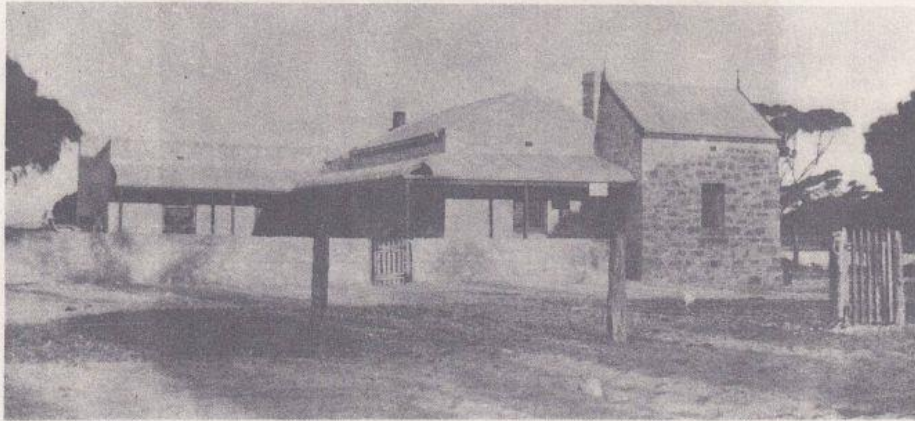
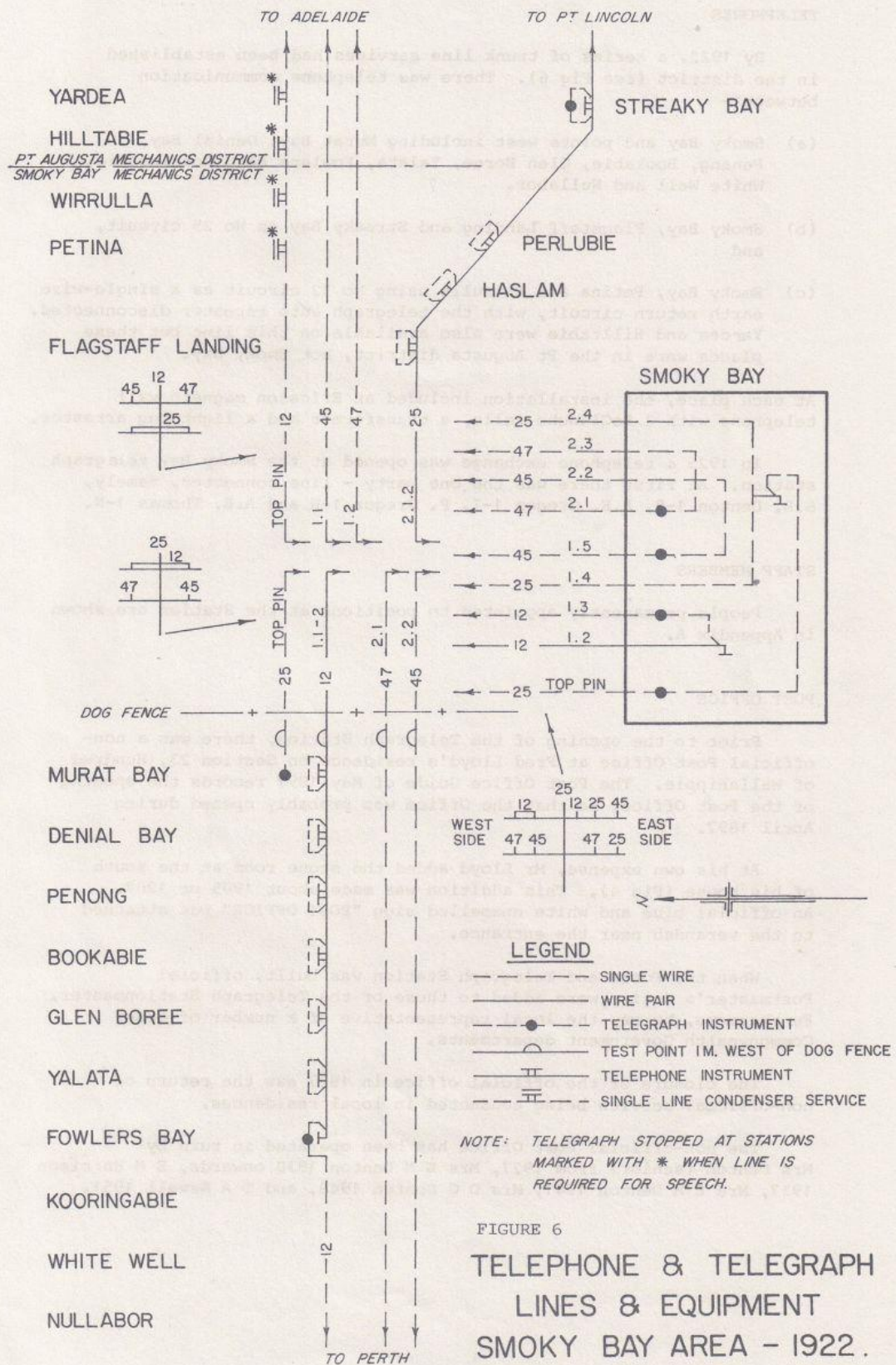


Fig 4. "Non-Official" Post Office at Mr Fred Lloyd's Home
1897-1911 (from J Tremaine)



Fig 5. No 7 Line Party Travelling to Their Next Camp Site - 1912
(L to R seated) Ted O'Donnell, Gerald Fitzgerald, Tom Saddler.



TELEPHONES

By 1922, a series of trunk line services had been established in the district (see Fig 6). There was telephone communication between -

- (a) Smoky Bay and points west including Murat Bay, Denial Bay, Penang, Bookabie, Glen Boree, Yalata, Fowlers Bay, Koorringabie, White Well and Nullabor.
- (b) Smoky Bay, Flagstaff Landing and Streaky Bay on No 25 circuit, and
- (c) Smoky Bay, Petina and Wirrulla using No 12 circuit as a single-wire earth return circuit, with the telegraph auto repeater disconnected. Yardea and Hilltabie were also available on this line but these places were in the Pt Augusta district, not Smoky Bay.

At each place, the installation included an Ericsson magneto wall telephone with 2 LeClanche cells, a transformer and a lightning arrestor.

In 1925 a telephone exchange was opened at the Smoky Bay telegraph station. At first there was the one party - line connected, namely, S.B. Denton 1-S, A.E. Gregor 1-I, F. Gregor 1-H and A.E. Thomas 1-N.

STAFF MEMBERS

People permanently appointed to positions at the Station are shown in Appendix A.

POST OFFICE

Prior to the opening of the Telegraph Station, there was a non-official Post Office at Fred Lloyd's residence on Section 23, Hundred of Wallanippie. The Post Office Guide of May 1897 records the opening of the Post Office, so that the Office was probably opened during April 1897.

At his own expense, Mr Lloyd added the stone room at the south of his house (Fig 4). This addition was made about 1905 or 1907. An official blue and white enamelled sign "POST OFFICE" was attached to the verandah near the entrance.

When the Posts and Telegraph Station was built, official Postmaster's duties were added to those of the Telegraph Stationmaster. Furthermore, he was the local representative of a number of other Commonwealth Government departments.

The closure of the official office in 1927 saw the return of non-official service being conducted in local residences.

The non-official Post Office has been operated in turn by Mrs Denton (senior) from 1927, Mrs E M Denton 1930 onwards, E M Harrison 1937, Mrs E M Denton 1941, Mrs D G Denton 1948, and T A Newell 1951.

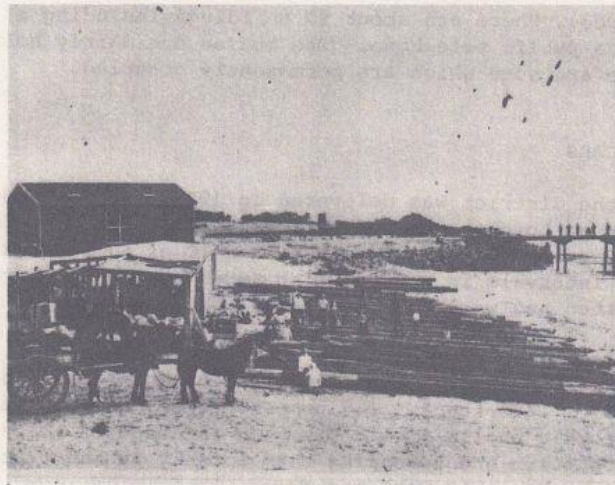


A. Blumson Photo

Smoky Bay Jetty - 1913

Mrs Blumson, Lucy Blumson holding Rose, Lucy Salmon (nee Howie).

Men?



Smoky Bay Foreshore

Poles for Telephone Lines

The easterly portion (about 1.6ha) included the telegraph station office building and the station master's residence. Mrs Gertrude Denton transferred (No 1151311) this portion to her sister -in-law Ethel Mary Denton of Smoky Bay, on 3rd May 1933. This transfer (No 1151311) was followed nearly twenty years later by one (No 1733531) to Ralph McNicol Denton.

Although many of these details refer to times beyond to occupancy of the Telegraph station, they are included herein for general interest.

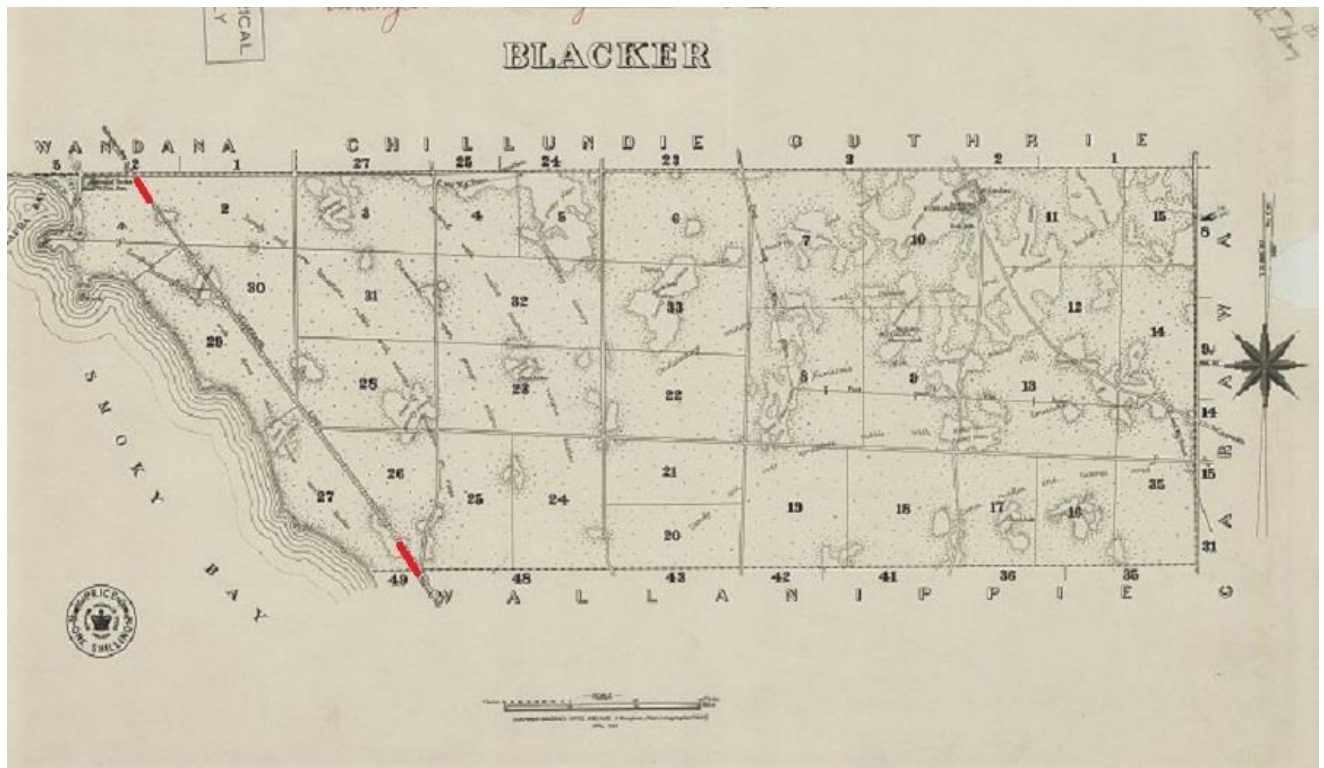
APPENDIX A

STAFF AT SMOKY BAY TELEGRAPH STATION - 1911-27

1912	Woodards H	Senior Telegraphist (in charge)	
	Blood J S	Telegraphist	
	Bartlett A E	Telegraphist	
	Galpin G	Lineman	
1914	Page C H replaced Bartlett		
1915	Flinn T P replaced Galpin		
	Page - salary increased from £84 to £102 (age 20)		
1916	Squire P J	Senior Telegraphist	
	Blood J S	Telegraphist	
	Woodard A	Telegraphist (acting)	
	Flinn T P	Lineman	
1917	Collins P replaced Woodard		
1919	Davies W H replaced Flinn		
1920	Hoar R P became Station Master - "Telegraphist Grade 3"		
1921	Position of lineman replaced with one of Senior Mechanic		
1922	Hoar R P	Telegraphist Grade 3	£280pa
	Milne D H	Telegraphist	120 "
	Dale R C M	Telegraphist	108 "
	Gooley W	Senior Mechanic	228 "
1924	Schraeder V A replaced Hoar		
1925	Schraeder V A	Senior Telegraphist	
	Kennedy J B	Telegraphist	
	Kessel L	Telegraphist	
	Crosby G F	Senior Mechanic	
1927	Office closed.		

NOTE: These are the recorded appointments extracted from the printed books, "Permanent Staff Lists"; in addition, other people would have worked at Smoky Bay for relief periods.

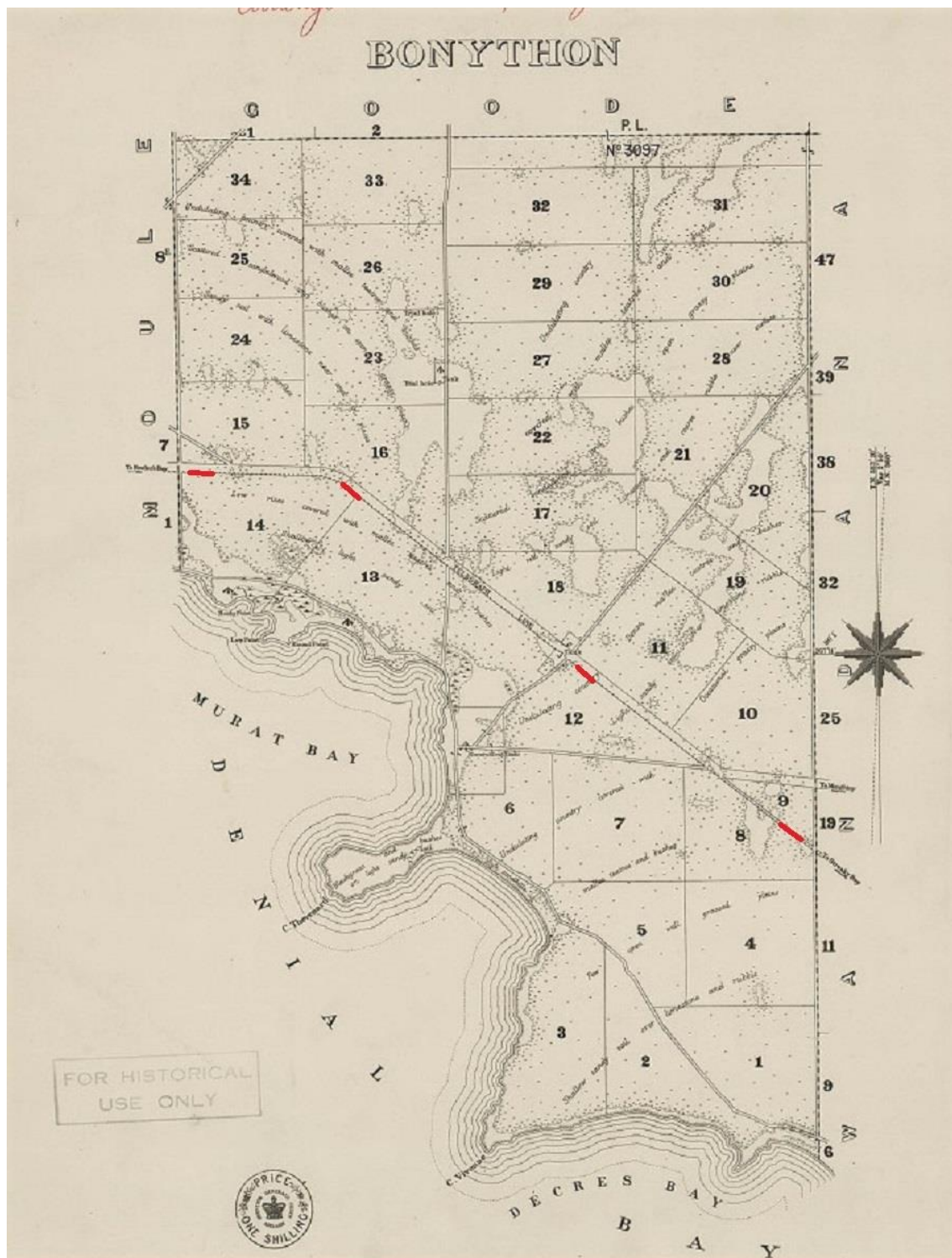
37. Hundred of Blacker.



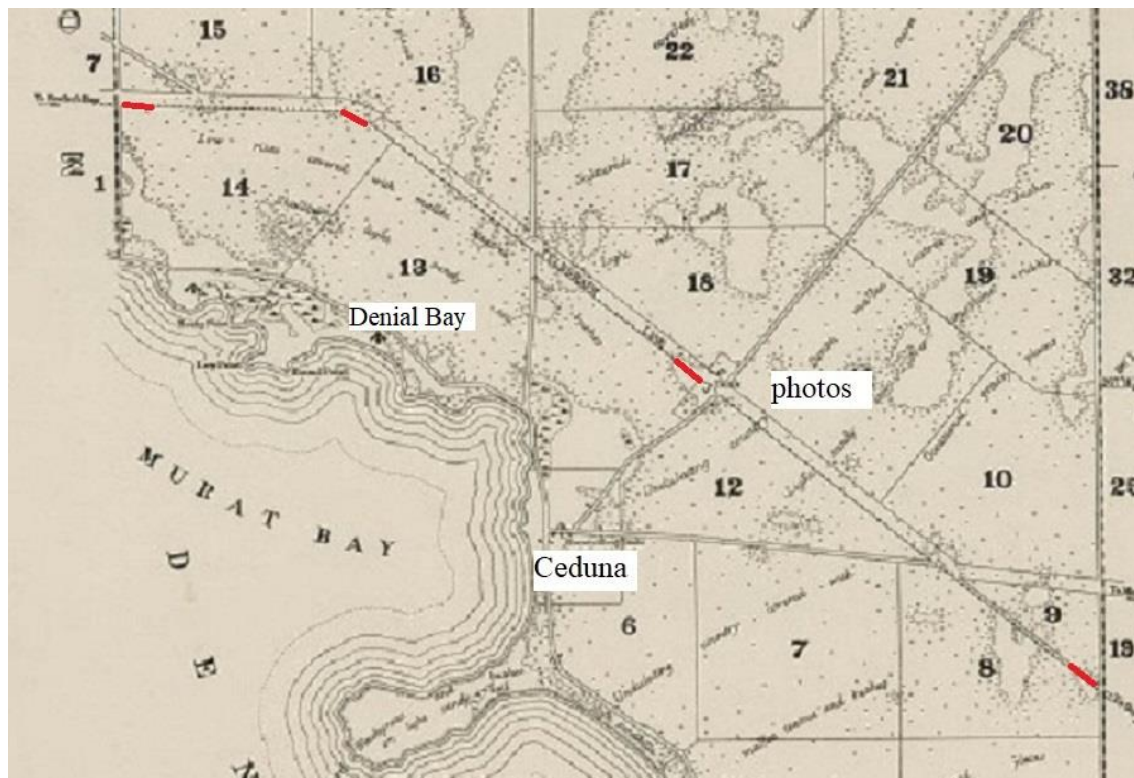
https://maps.collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/series/hundreds_SA_63360/B/blacker/zsmp_830bje63360_blacker1894_ds.jpg

The map is titled "WANDANA" at the top center. It features a grid of numbered plots, each with a unique number from 1 to 47. The grid is bounded by coordinates 48 to 52 and 1 to 31. The map includes a compass rose on the left side, a scale bar, and labels for DECRES BAY, LAURA BAY, and BLACKER. The map shows a network of roads, rivers, and various types of vegetation and land use. The plots are numbered as follows: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47. The map also shows various geographical features such as DECRES BAY, LAURA BAY, and BLACKER. The map is a detailed representation of the WANDANA area, showing the layout of the plots and the surrounding environment.

39. Hundred of Bonython.



https://maps.collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/series/hundreds_SA_63360/B/bonython/zsm_p_830bje63360_bonython1893_ds.jpg
(Ceduna)



2021. Ceduna. Type of native scrub that the Telegraph Line went through.



2021. Ceduna. Side of Trading Stock Route road that originally followed Telegraph Line.



2021. Ceduna. Salt bush plain on Trading Stock Route road that originally followed Telegraph Line.



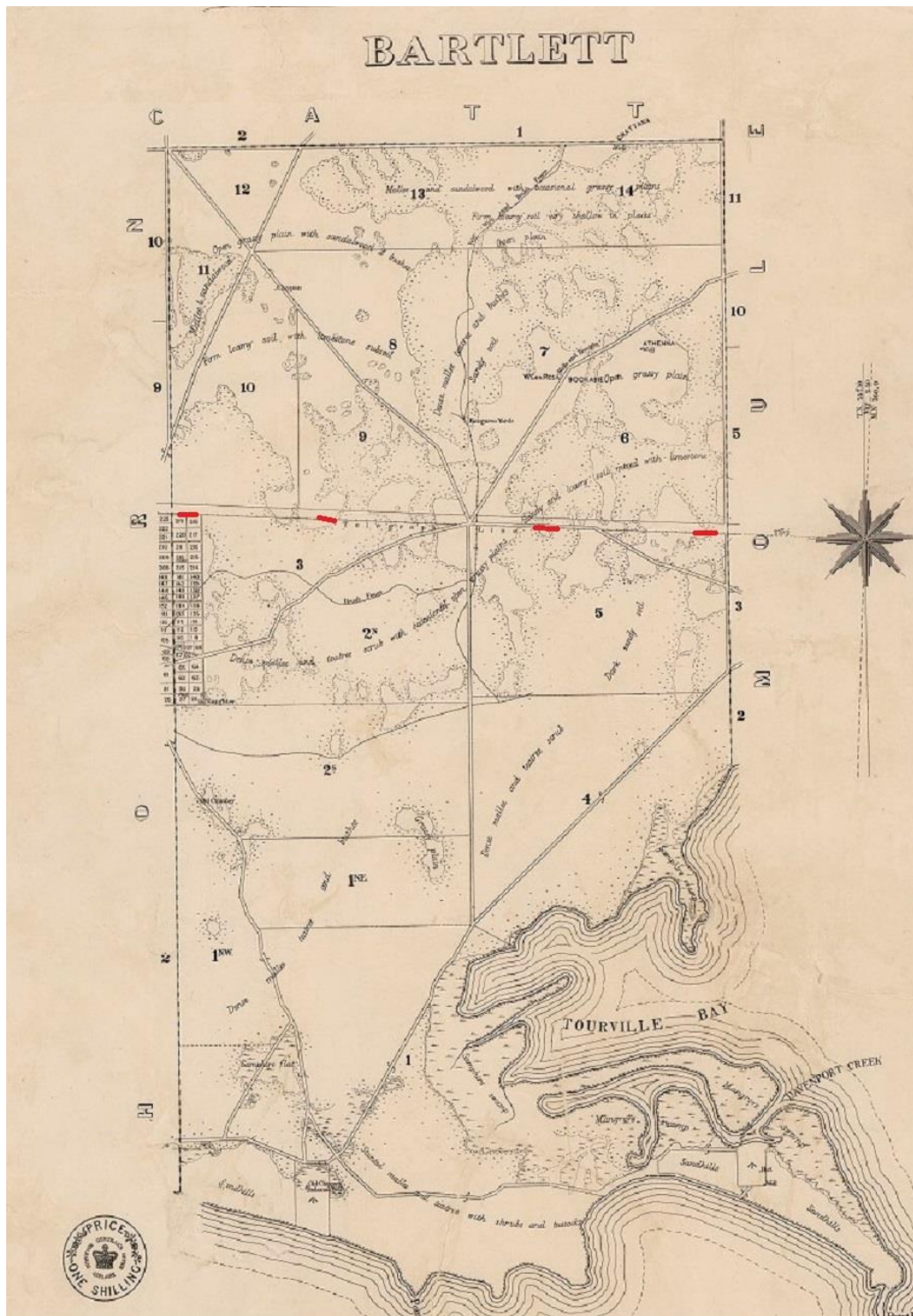
2021. Ceduna. Current road where the Telegraph Line to Eucla went.



1913. Denial Bay post office. Miss J.M. Skinner, Post Mistress. Denial Bay is 12 kilometres NW of Ceduna. Population 179 in 1913. Photo: Linda Warry. Permission to post (on Facebook) (Telegraph pole on right. Single insulator at top of building.)

175

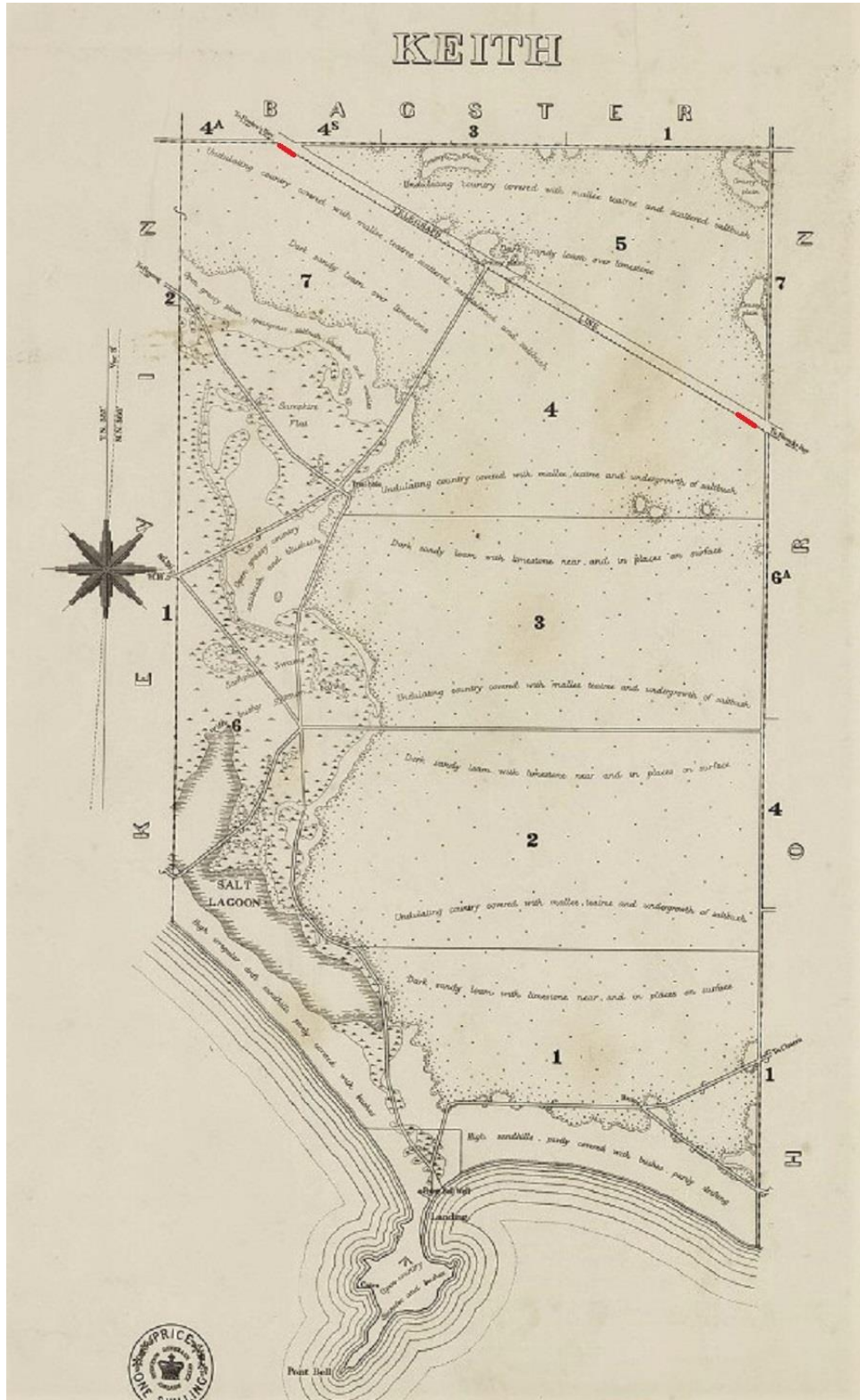
41. Hundred of Bartlett.



https://maps.collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/series/hundreds_SA_63360/B/bartlett/zsmg_830bje63360_bartlett1891.jpg

(No map available for Hd of Horn.)

42. Hundred of Keith.

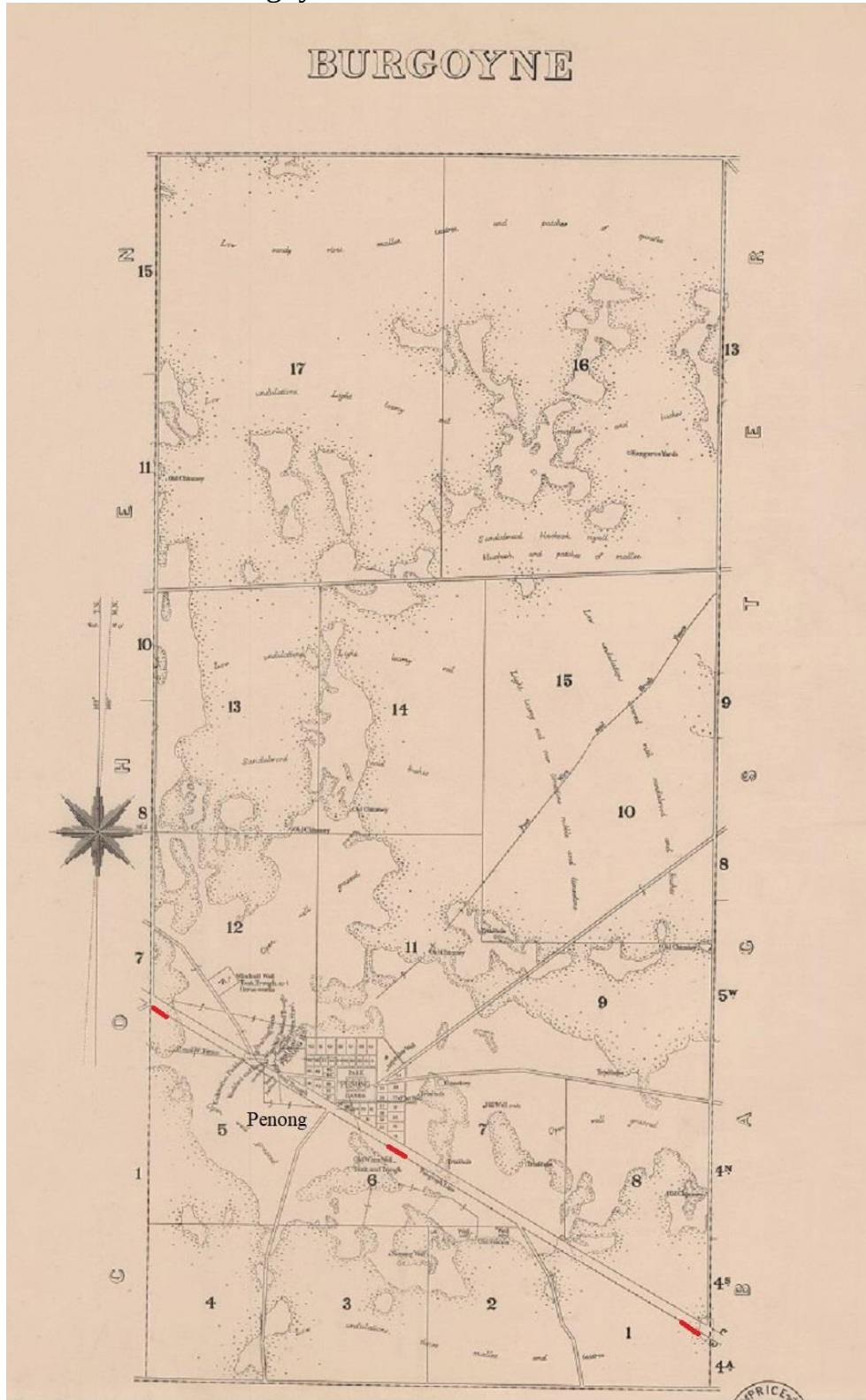


https://maps.collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/series/hundreds_SA_63360/K/keith/zsmg_830bje63360_keith1894_ds.jpg

(No map available for Hd of Horn.)

BAGSTER

44. Hundred of Burgoyne.



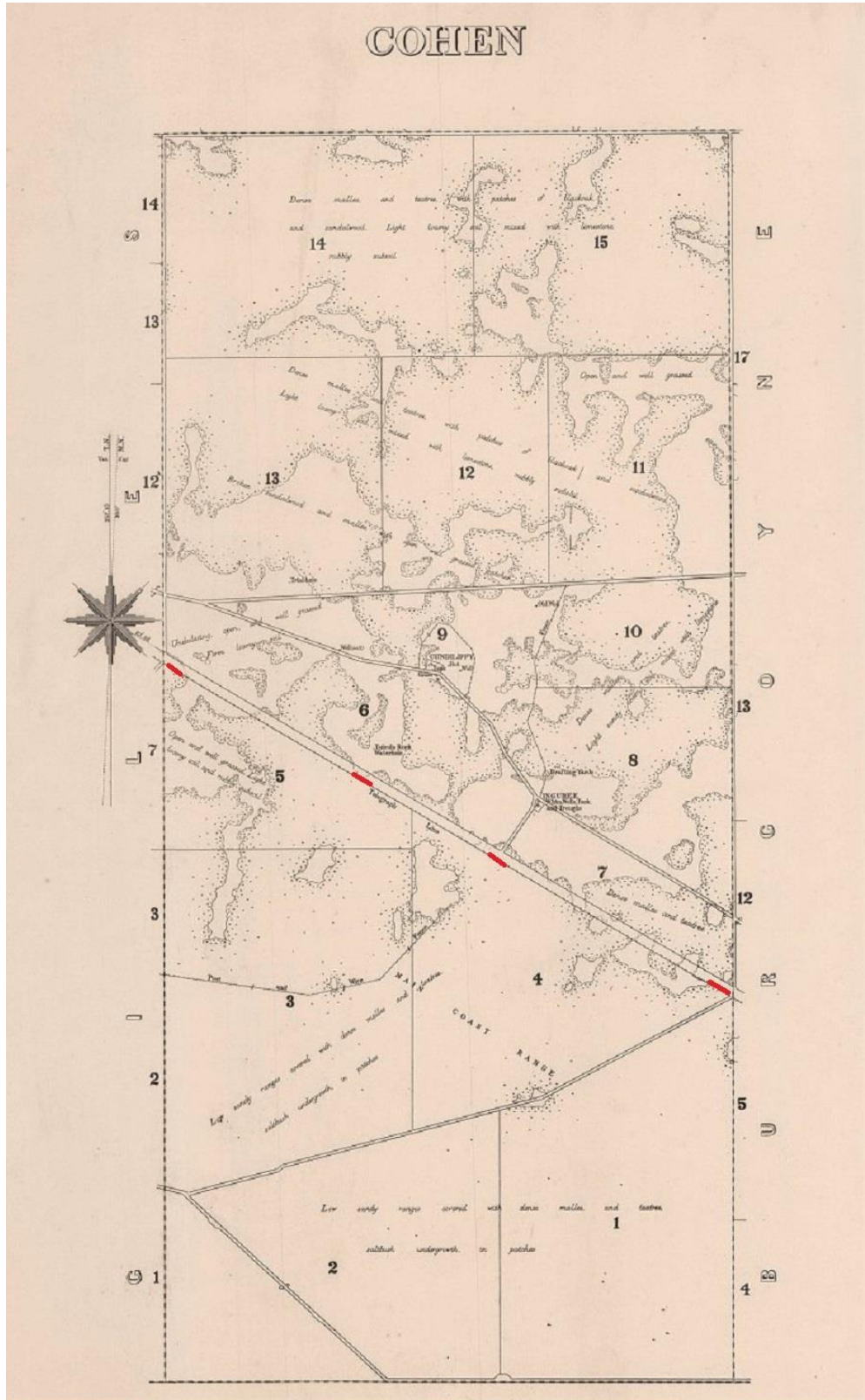
https://maps.collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/series/hundreds_SA_63360/B/burgoyne/zsmpr_830bje63360_burgoyne1891_ds.jpg
(Penong)



B 33652

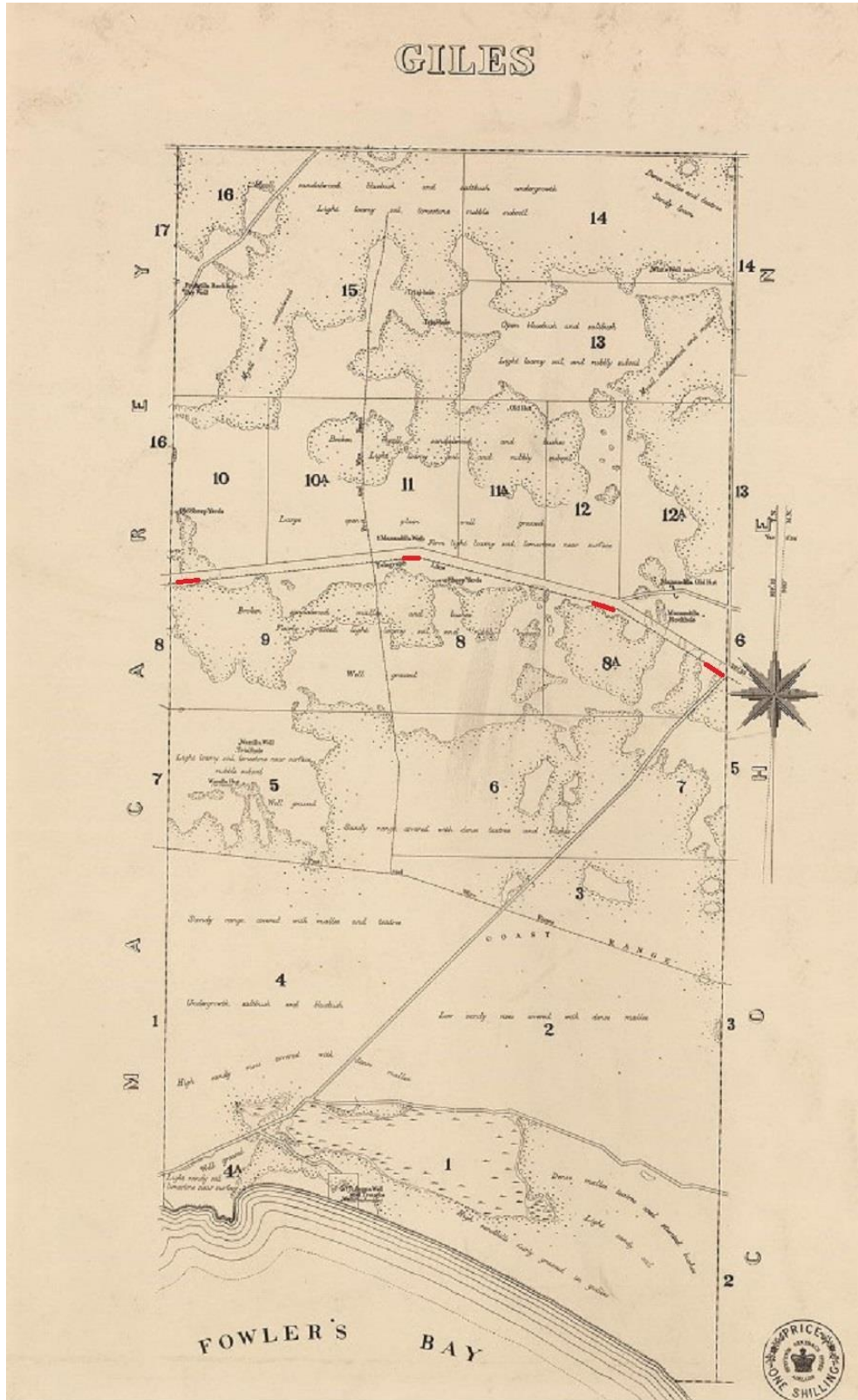
<https://collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/resource/B+33652>
1925. Water catchment shed at Penong.

45. Hundred of Cohen.



https://maps.collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/series/hundreds_SA_63360/C/cohen/zsmpr_830bje63360_cohen1891_ds.jpg

46. Hundred of Giles.



https://maps.collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/series/hundreds_SA_63360/G/giles/zsmp_830bje63360_giles1891_ds.jpg

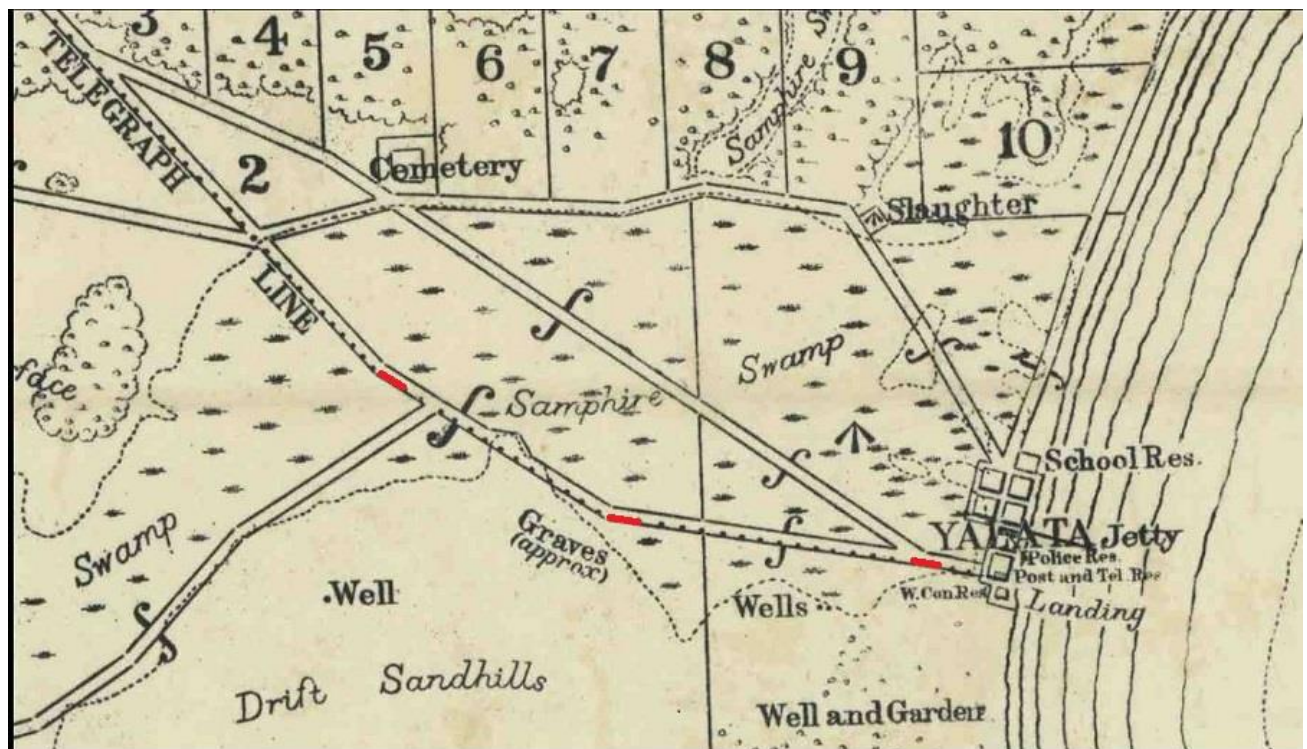
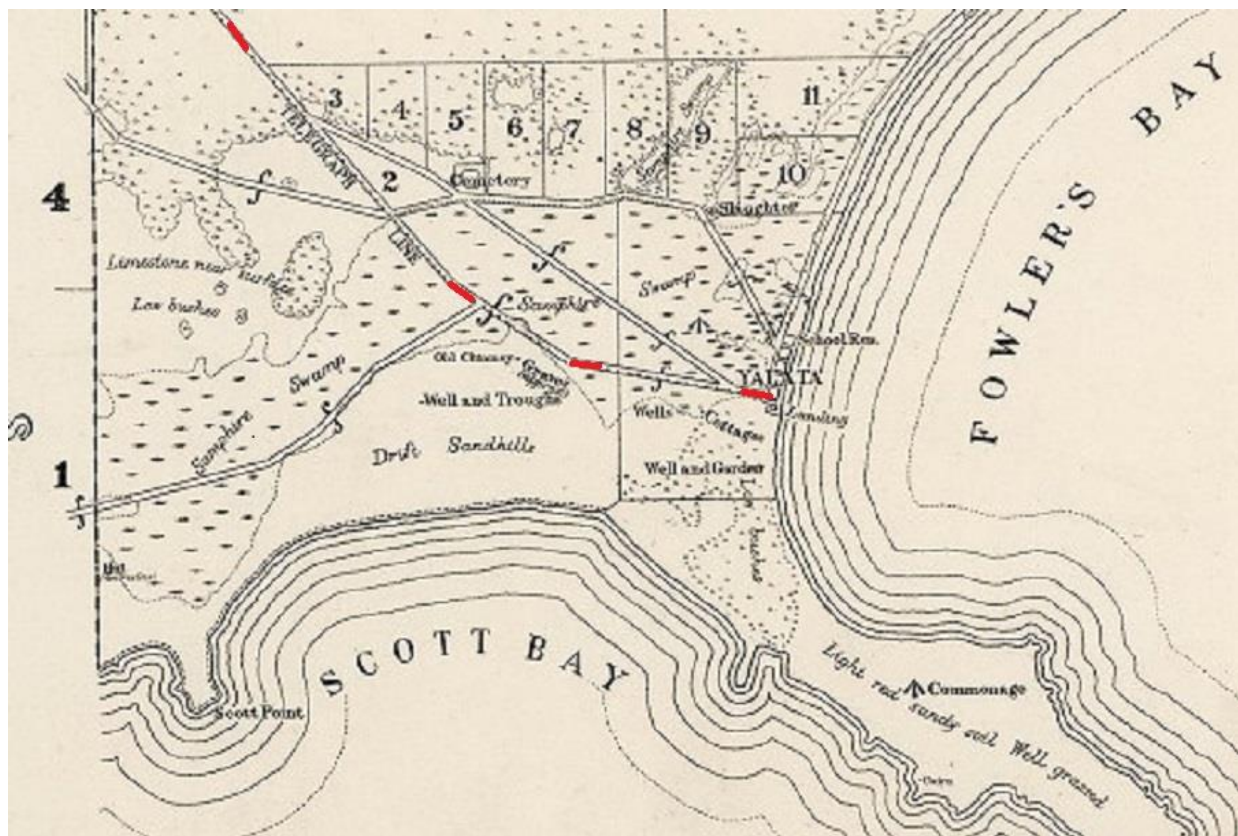
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(Bookabie)

184

[illegible]

185



https://maps.collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/series/hundreds_SA_63360/C/caldwell/zsmpt_830bje63360_caldwell1915.pdf

Fowlers Bay history.

<https://www.fowlersbay.com/fowlers-bay-history/>

Post & Telegraph Office Building

The Fowlers Bay Non-official Post Office was opened in May 1865 and the first recorded Postmaster in January 1866 was ENB Catchlove, who rejoiced in the full name of Edward Napoleon Bonaparte Catchlove. He and his two successors, Thos Waugh and Thomas P Richard, were policemen. Although postal records date back to 1865, it can not be established exactly when the Post Office was built, however extensions were made to accommodate the telegraph facility at the completion of the East West Line in 1877. The building is currently undergoing restoration as a private residence.

Telegraph

Some 10 years after the establishment of the Fowlers Bay settlement, the initiative for an East-West Telegraph line came from Western Australia which wanted to be connected to the Adelaide-Darwin (and thence overseas) link completed in 1873. The South Australian Government approved the construction of an East-West line in 1874 and invited tenders in February 1875. Walter Thompson, an experienced line builder, was given the contract for a line from Port Augusta to Port Lincoln and one from Port Lincoln to Fowlers Bay. The third section, Fowlers Bay to Eucla, attracted no competitive tenders, so it was undertaken by the Posts and Telegraph Department itself, led by overseer RR Knuckey.

The erection of the East-West Telegraph Line was carried out in sections and on 12th January 1876, the Port Augusta to Port Lincoln section was completed. This was followed on 26th September 1876 by the completion of the Port Lincoln to Fowlers Bay section. This line, which passed through the Far West, came up from Port Lincoln via Mount Hope, Sheringa, Bramfield, Streaky Bay and Penong to Fowlers Bay and set the lines of communication up the Coast thereafter. The contractors blazed a pathway, it then became a bush track and later, in many places, it became the main road. The Fowlers Bay to Eucla link was a long and torturous project which Richard Knuckey began in July 1876 with thirty eight men and eighty nine horses. A large supply base was built at Fowlers Bay and all poles and provisions had to be sent along the line from either this base or one set up at Eucla. The section from Fowlers Bay to Eucla was completed on 15th July 1877.

The length of the line from Port Augusta to Eucla was 759n miles and 12,474 iron poles and 147 tons of wire were used. Because Eyre Peninsula had no suitable timber, galvanised iron poles were used and were spaced five chains

apart. Beneath the line, the scrub was cleared for 20 feet on either side and this work was done with axes.

The Western Australian section of the line was completed in December 1877, Jarrah poles being used throughout. Communication was effected between Adelaide and Perth on 8th December 1877, a distance of 1986 miles.

During the ensuing years and particularly during the period of the gold rushes to Coolgardie and Kalgoorlie, the galvanised wires carried an enormous amount of traffic.

Closure

After 50 years of service, in 1927, the Telegraph equipment was removed following the completion of a new, more northerly route which followed the East-West Railway line.

50 years later, more than 100 years of postal service in Fowlers Bay came to an end when, on 12th May 1967, the Fowlers Bay Post Office was temporarily closed. Subsequently, permanent closure occurred on 18th September 1967.

Police Station & Court House – Est 1883

The Township of Yalata 1890 later Township of Fowlers Bay 1940.

The first community in the Far West and one of the first of the surveyed townships (what is now called Fowlers Bay), was the outlet for the pastoral leases taken up 1860. It was the nearest landing spot to the original leases and the first buildings of Yalata Station were on the beach at Port Eyre, Fowlers Bay. As the station prospered, it employed many people and a number of facilities were established to serve them. The original Town of Yalata was surveyed by NW Pethick in March 1890 and proclaimed in Government Gazette on 10/07/1890. The town then comprised allotments 1 – 42. In November 1910, addition allotments 43 – 62 were surveyed by AE Poyntz and the Town of Yalata was extended by the inclusion of these allotments, by a proclamation notice published in Government Gazette 19/01/1911. The name Yalata was changed to Fowlers Bay in Government Gazette on 19/09/1940. In 1990 a further ten allotments of crown land were reclaimed from the samphire swamp.

<https://collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/resource/B+11377>

Info of photo of Fowlers Bay 1909.

View over a portion of the township at Fowlers Bay, with the jetty extending out into the water. The building in the centre is the Globe Hotel, with the Telegraph Station on the extreme left.



<https://collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/resource/B+11377> Fowlers Bay. 1909. PO far left.



<https://collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/resource/B+54057/7>
Fowlers Bay 1902. PO in centre.

South Australian Advertiser (Adelaide, SA : 1858 - 1889), Monday 12 June 1876, page 4

<<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article31969808>>

Mr. R. R. Knuckey, who has charge of the Western Australian line for this Government returned to Adelaide last week. We understand he has made a flying survey of the country between Eucla and Fowler's Bay. He found the country very dry, and had to make one stage of 130 miles without water. The

sinking and clearing between Fowler's Bay and the head of the Bight is likely to be very heavy. The line is at present finished up to Streaky Bay, and Mr. Thompson's contract, which goes as far as Fowler's Bay, is expected to be completed by the end of September.

South Australian Register (Adelaide, SA : 1839 - 1900), Thursday 15 June 1876, page 4

<<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article43004777>>

THE MONTH'S NEWS.

Telegraph to Perth.— We understand that the South Australian portion of the line to Western Australia is being carried on with as much speed as can be expected, considering the difficult nature of the undertaking. The line has been completed to a distance of twenty miles past Streaky Bay, or about 400 miles past Port Augusta. The contractor is Mr. Walter Thomson, who engaged to erect the poles and wires on the 530 miles of country between the latter place and Fowler's Bay. So far, we believe, he has done his work remarkably well, and there is a prospect of the remaining 150 miles of his contract being completed at the end of September, or six months before the time agreed upon. There is still, however, a section of 230 miles between Fowler's Bay and Eucla to be provided for. Tenders have been twice invited, but no one is inclined to take the work in hand at a moderate price. Mr. R. R. Knuckey, the Government Superintendent of the line, who has traversed and surveyed the whole of the country, found a stretch of about 130 miles between the head of the Bight and Eucla almost destitute of water. He managed to get enough for his own horses in rock holes, but the supply would be quite insufficient for such a large party as would have to be employed in the erection of the line. Under these circumstances, Mr. Todd has recommended the Government to authorize him to undertake the work, and he has recalled Mr. Knuckey to Adelaide with a view to making final arrangements for carrying it out. In all probability Mr. Knuckey — who has shown great ability in connection with telegraph construction — will be dispatched to Fowler's Bay in the course of two or three weeks with a party of about 30 men and 60 horses, and in eight or nine months from the time of starting we may expect to be in communication with Eucla. The whole of the South Australian portion of the line will be supported by iron poles. Thus far the progress made is greater than that made by our neighbours in Western Australia, although they began their work three months before us. The latest information from that colony is that the Mary Ann arrived at Fremantle on May 6 from Orleans Bay, bringing news that the poles had been placed beyond Thomas River, and that the third station would be erected by the end of June or the beginning of July. The fourth section, between Point Calver and Eyre Station,

would then be commenced. The poles on the western side will be of jarrah timber, and the wires will be about ten or eleven feet from the ground. The wires on the South Australian portion of the line will be at a height of fourteen feet. One advantage which the line will give to us will be that we can receive intimation of the arrival of the English mail at King George's Sound four or five days before it is due at Glenelg. The completion of this undertaking, which will perfect our telegraphic communication with the Australian Colonies, will be anticipated with general interest.

Kapunda Herald and Northern Intelligencer (SA : 1864 - 1878), Tuesday 20 June 1876, page 3
<<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article108371026>>

<clip> The construction of the telegraph to Western Australia is proceeding satisfactorily. Mr. Watty Thomson, the jocose Scotchman, is busy with his men upon the line from Port Augusta to Fowler's Bay- a distance of 530 miles. Of this he has finished 400 miles, and the other 130 will be done by September. The section from Fowler's Bay to Eucla is not commenced yet. Mr. Knuckey, the popular little Government surveyor, is going to construct this section, which is perhaps the most difficult of the lot. The country is bad, and almost waterless, but Mr. Knuckey has pluck and energy, and I have no fear of his accomplishing the work expeditiously and satisfactorily. <clip>

Express and Telegraph (Adelaide, SA : 1867 - 1922), Tuesday 4 July 1876, page 2
<<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article208304831>>

<clip> As we have mentioned before, the Overland Telegraph line is being slowly re-poled with iron poles. These poles now extend alternately or continuously for some 660 miles, and in the course of a few years, the Superintendent of Telegraphs informs us, the whole of the line will be re-poled. Mr. R. Knuckey, who has been in Adelaide for the last fortnight, has nearly completed the organization of a party to proceed to Fowler's Bay to construct the telegraph line from that point to Eucla. Mr. Thomson's contract to erect the line between Port Augusta and Fowler's Bay is almost finished. <clip>

Border Watch (Mount Gambier, SA : 1861 - 1954), Saturday 8 July 1876, page 2
<<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article77486057>>

OUR ADELAIDE LETTER.

(From our own Correspondent.)

Adelaide, July 4.

<clip> Mr. Knuckey, one of the pluckiest little telegraph surveyors and constructors in the country, is busy equipping his party for the Western Australia line. No contractor can be found who is brave enough and enterprising enough to undertake the construction of the section stretching from Fowler's Bay to Eucla, and so Mr. Knuckey has undertaken to do the work on behalf of the Government. Dangers which appal others only stimulate him; difficulties at which others stand aghast only serve to nerve him to increased exertions. Let us wish the plucky little fellow all success in his perilous undertaking. <clip>

South Australian Register (Adelaide, SA : 1839 - 1900), Wednesday 9 August 1876, page 1

<<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article43012629>>

<clip> Advertising. <clip> Electric Telegraph Department.
Chief Office, Adelaide, August 8, 1876.

THE MEN forming Mr. R. R. KNUCKEY'S PARTY, PORT AUGUSTA and EUCLA TELEGRAPH LINE, will please ASSEMBLE in the Court Yard of the General Post-Office, at noon, on Thursday, 10th August.

CHARLES TODD, Postmaster-General and Superintendent of Telegraphs.

<clip>

Evening Journal (Adelaide, SA : 1869 - 1912), Thursday 10 August 1876, page 2

<<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article197692812>>

WEST AUSTRALIAN TELEGRAPH - On Thursday morning the remaining members of Mr. Knuckey's construction party, to the number of 17, assembled in the yard of the Government Post-Office. A likely lot of men answered to their names when the roll was called, consisting of Northern Territory veterans and stout young fellows, who seemed good for any amount of work. The party with those already gone will number about 25. The detachment now brought together will start on Friday by the schooner Lillie Hawkins, direct for Fowler's Bay. The horses have previously been sent to Port Lincoln, from whence they will travel overland.

South Australian Register (Adelaide, SA : 1839 - 1900), Thursday 31 August 1876, page 4

<<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article42999065>>

<clip> West Australian Telegraph.— A correspondent writing from Fowler's Bay, under date August 14, states that "Thompson's telegraph party is now within 50 miles of Fowler's Bay, and going on splendidly. Mr. Knuckey is expected here daily with men for the work between here and Eucla, and Mr. Frank Marchant is on the road via Port Lincoln with 60 horses for the same work. The line is surveyed some 70 miles from here, or within 80 miles of the Bight."

News from Eucla.— We have been favoured with the following items. Mr. Andrew Muir, one of the settlers at Eucla, writing under date July 14, says:— "We have had the finest rainfall here last Sunday I have seen since I came. Half an inch fell during the night, and it came from the south-west." Mr. McGill, another of the settlers at Eucla, writing under the same date, states that "the natives have been very troublesome. I have been stuck up with them for a fortnight. They have been spearing and stealing sheep. They threw two spears at me at night. One of them just shaved my head." <clip>

South Australian Register (Adelaide, SA : 1839 - 1900), Saturday 28 October 1876, page 6
<<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article43007306>>.

THE WESTERN AUSTRALIAN TELEGRAPH.

The following despatch was laid before Parliament on Friday:—

" Western Australian Postal and Telegraph Department. General Post-Office.

"Sir— In reply to your letter No. A 3777-76 of the 7th instant, informing me of an absurd rumour which had obtained currency in your colony to the effect that it would be some years before this portion of the Eucla Telegraph line is completed, and asking for information upon the progress being made, I have the honour to inform you that at the beginning of last month (August) there were five hundred miles of this line poled and three stations erected, leaving about two hundred and fifty miles and two stations (including Eucla) to erect.

" The first two stations, Bremer Bay and Esperance Bay, have been opened to communication with Perth; and the third station, Israelite Bay, will likewise be opened soon, the wires and insulators being already distributed over that section and the party at work erecting.

" This briefly is the actual progress made up to the time mentioned when the Superintendent of Telegraphs returned from viewing the works, and his very latest report.

" With reference to any future progress, I have every reason for believing that communication will be established between Perth and Eucla by the middle of next year; and but for the loss of time occasioned by the stranding of a vessel on

the coast engaged in carrying poles and materials greater progress would have been made.

"The Governor, to whom your letter has been submitted, learns with much regret, as well as from what you say as from the reports of the details in the South Australian Parliament, that your Government has been misled by the statements put forward on this subject by one of our local papers— the Fremantle Herald. From what I have said you will observe that such statements are wholly unfounded. They are made for a purpose, and in the colony are received for what they are worth; and His Excellency hopes that your Government will attach no importance whatever to any further statements of a similar nature which may emanate from the same source. — I have, &c,
"A. Helwich, Postmaster-General.

" The Postmaster-General, Adelaide.

" Subjoined is a minute by Mr. Todd attached:—

"Forwarded to the Hon. the Minister of Agriculture and Education for the information of Government.

" The progress made by the West Australian section is most satisfactory, and so far as I can at present judge there is every reason to expect that the line will be completed throughout by the end of April next year, if not before.

"With reference to the South Australian section, the contractor finished to Fowler's Bay, 530.½ miles, last month, and Mr. Knuckey informs me that he has erected 30 miles of line west of Fowler's Bay, and the poles and wire are carted as far as Tallovan, sufficient to reach the head of the Bight.

" The season is most unfavourable, the country being utterly destitute of feed. We have therefore to depend upon forage supplied from Adelaide. Between Fowler's Bay and the Bight the line passes over heavy sandhills and through dense scrub. From the Bight to Eucla the country is open, but the sinking will be very heavy, and there is no surface water for a distance of 130 miles— the few rock holes, which at best hold but a scanty supply, being everywhere else dry. Notwithstanding these great difficulties we are making good progress, and have no doubt of our line being completed as soon as the Western Australian section. I was greatly disappointed in not being able to land any materials at Yur Cambra Currie (the head of the Bight). An attempt was made by a vessel going to the spot, but the heavy surf and rollers rendered it impracticable. This has involved the cartage of 100 tons of materials to a distance of more than 100 miles over a most heavy country, destitute, as I have said, of feed and with waters far apart. It is necessary to bear in mind these great difficulties in estimating the progress made with this work up to the present time.

" C. TODD, P.M.G., &c."

South Australian Register (Adelaide, SA : 1839 - 1900), Thursday 7 December 1876, page 4
<<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article42999234>>

The West Australian Line.— Mr. John C. H lap,(Hamp?) writing from Port Lincoln on December 2, gives us the following account of a trip he made Overland from Albany, West Australia, to Port Lincoln, in South Australia:—"I, with three gentlemen, Messrs. Miller, McDonald, and Smith, being interested in that portion of the country lying to the west and north-west of Eucla, organized a party for the purpose of ascertaining the water capabilities of that country; <clip> On the journey through in many places we travelled along the Western Australian Telegraph Line, and as any information respecting its progress may be of service to you, you are at liberty to publish the following few remarks. <clip>

<clip> I also met Mr. McMinn and party surveying the route of the South Australian Telegraph Line a few miles the other side of the Bight. They were pushing on towards Eucla as quickly as possible, the country they have to go over being in a very dry state, and totally destitute of water; this requirement will have to be carted part of the way from the Bight and part of the way from Eucla. This will be no easy task. I also met Mr. Knuckey and the constructing party forty miles this side of the Bight. They will, I imagine, by this time be at the Bight. The cartage of the poles and wire will be something enormous, as the road for a great part of the way between Fowler's Bay and the Bight is a very heavy one, being very sandy. However, as Mr. Knuckey seems to be the 'right man in the right place,' there is no doubt but that he will accomplish his task in a manner that will be a credit to himself and to the Government." <clip>

Express and Telegraph (Adelaide, SA : 1867 - 1922), Thursday 17 December 1891, page 2
<<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article208579807>>.

SUICIDE AT FOWLER'S BAY.

Mr. W. F. Andrews Hangs Himself.

The Postmaster-General (Mr. C. Todd, C.M.G.) has received the following telegram from Mr. H. S. Rumball, the post and telegraph master at Fowler's Bay.—"10 a.m. Just found Mr. Andrews dead in his room, hanging to a rafter. I am communicating with a justice of the peace, as there are no police here. Have not advised any relatives." Mr. Todd informed a representative of this office that Mr. Andrews, who was employed as an assistant in the local-department, had just returned to Fowler's Bay after a fortnight's leave in Adelaide. He left Port

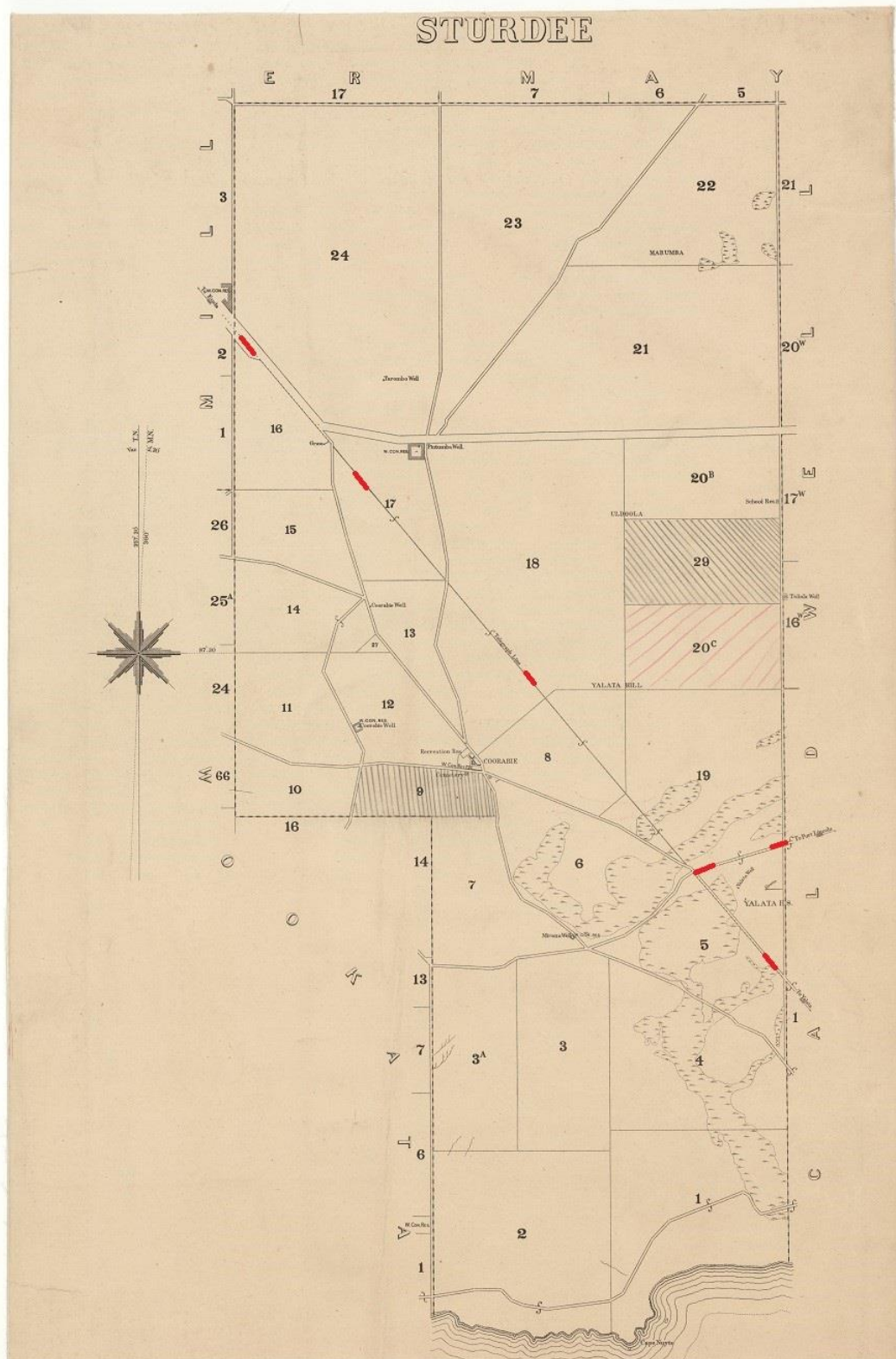
Adelaide by the steamer for Port Lincoln on Tuesday week, being then quite well, and arrived at his destination on Monday last. It is supposed that financial embarrassments drove him to suicide. He informed Mr. Rumball a short time ago that he was going to be married at an early date.



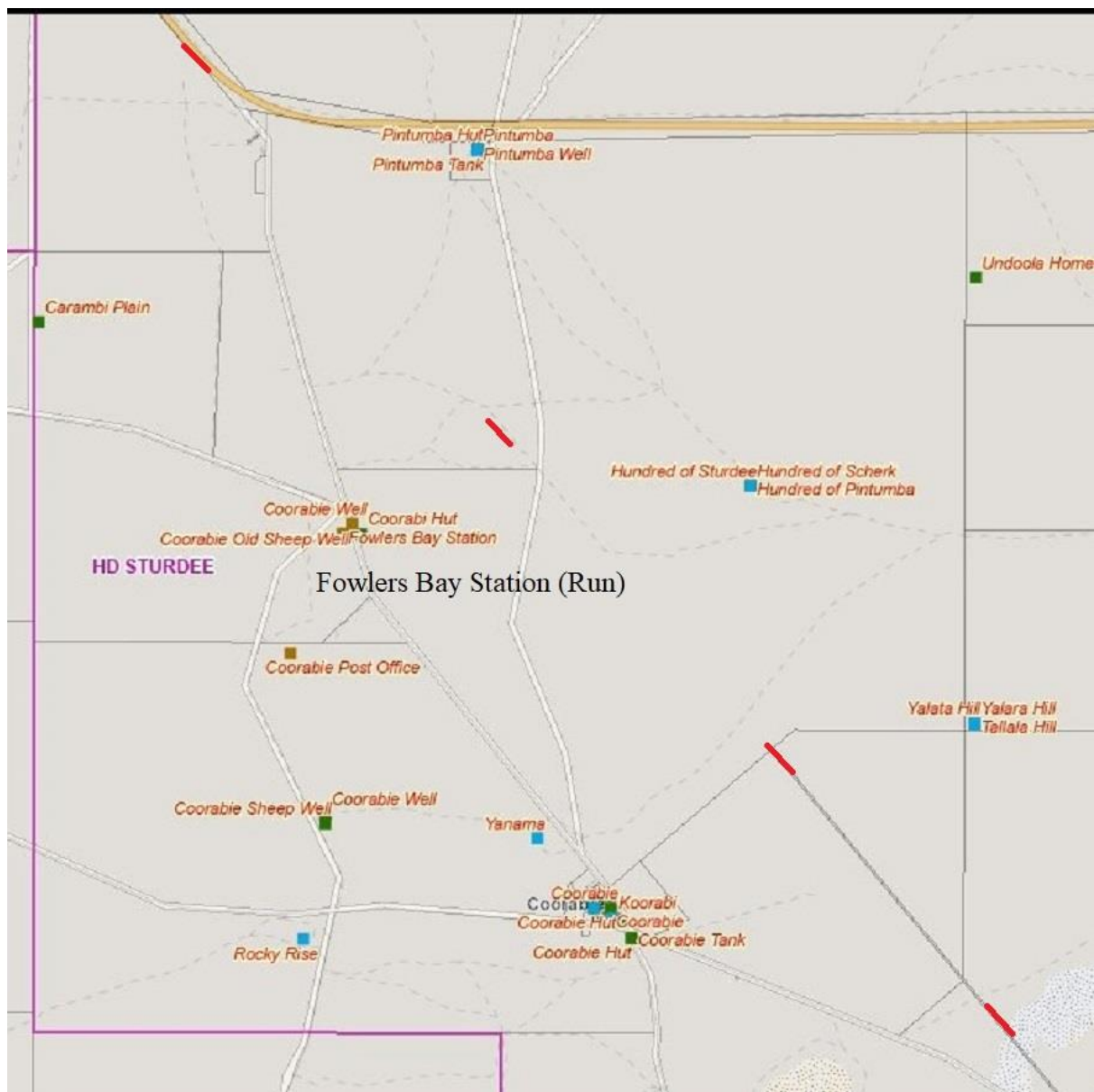
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<https://collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/resource/B+54060/15>
1905. Mail Fowlers Bay to Eucla.

50. Hundred of Sturdee.

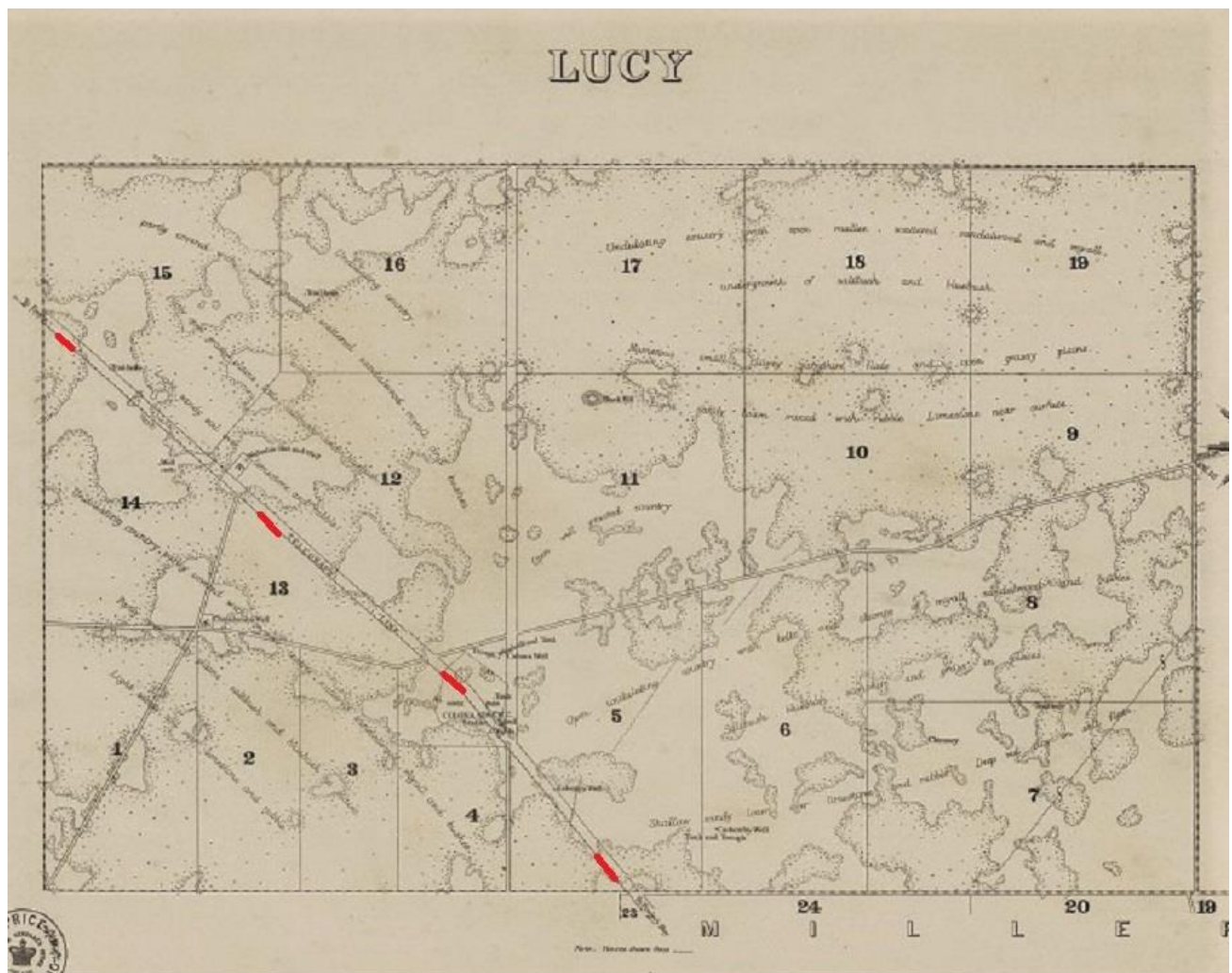


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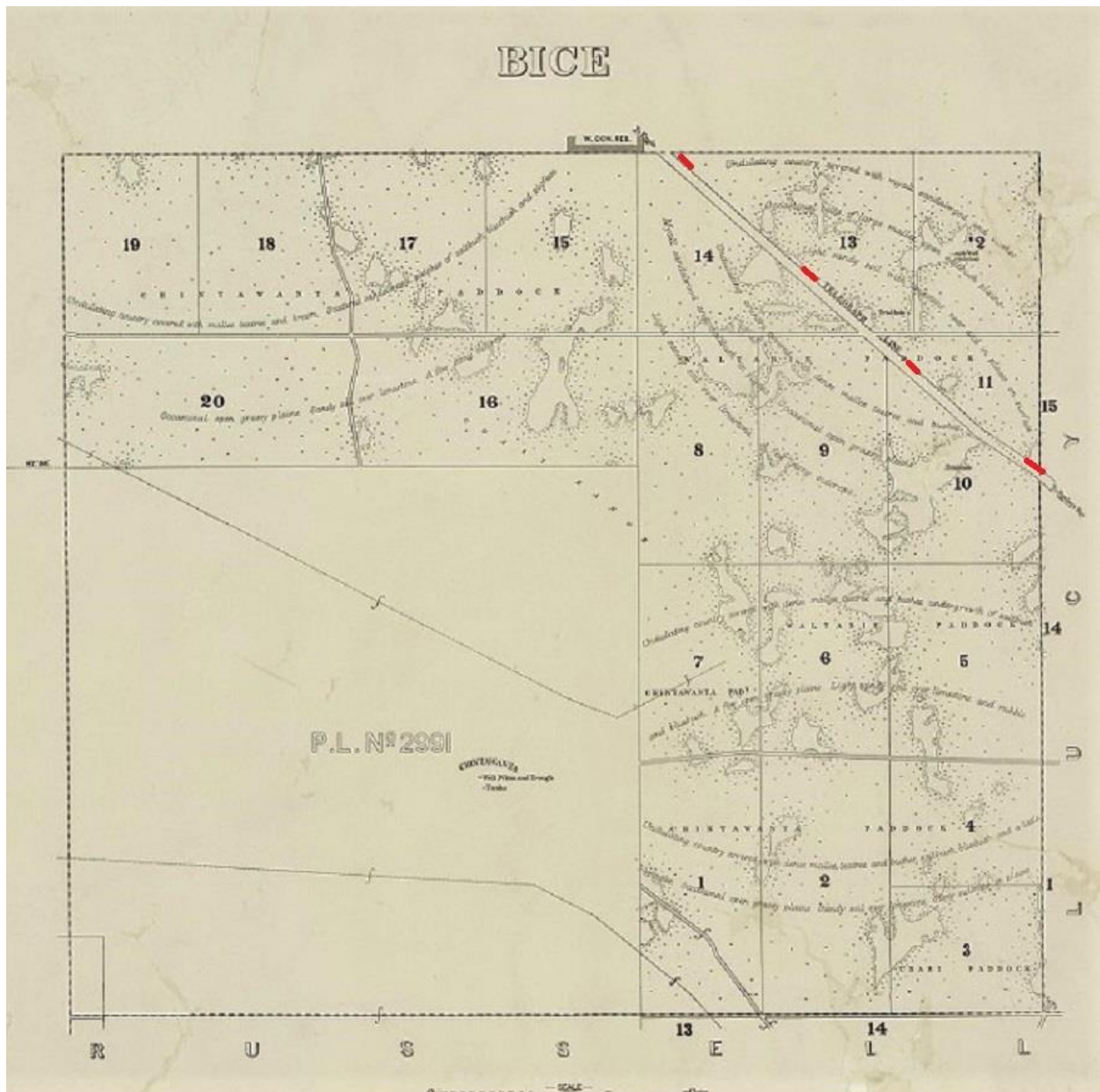
https://maps.collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/series/hundreds_SA_63360/M/miller/zsm_p_830bje63360_miller1897_ds.jpg

52. Hundred of Lucy.



https://maps.collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/series/hundreds_SA_63360/L/lucy/zsmp_830bje63360_lucy1894_ds.jpg

53. Hundred of Bice.



https://maps.collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/series/hundreds_SA_63360/B/bice/zsmf_830bje63360_bice1896.jpg

(This is the end of surveyed land.)



E W telegraph line where it crosses Eyre Highway
Broken insulators



E W telegraph line where it crosses Eyre Highway
Looking west. Highway at end. July 2022

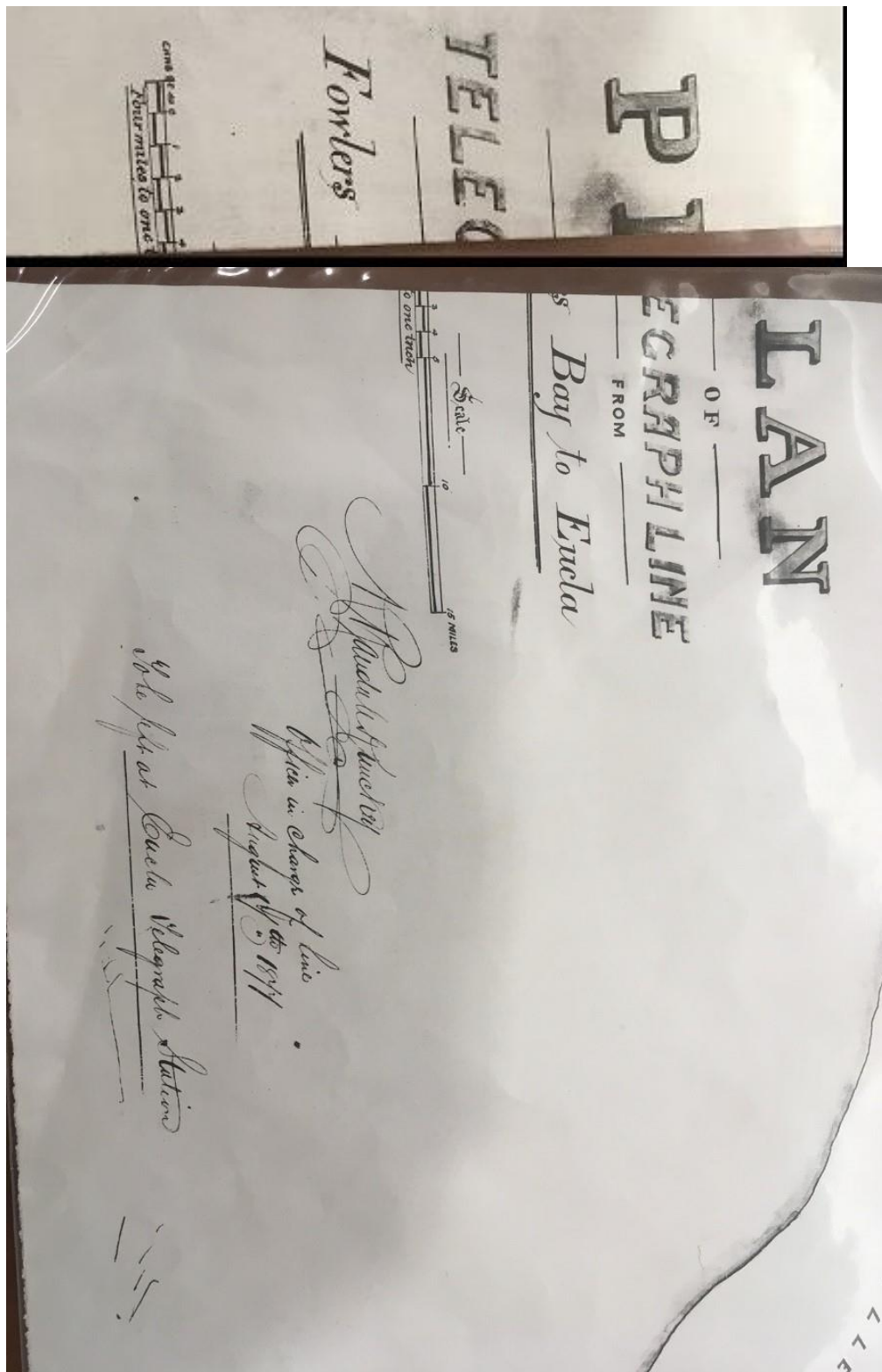


E W telegraph line where it crosses Eyre Highway
Looking east. Modern underground cable down centre

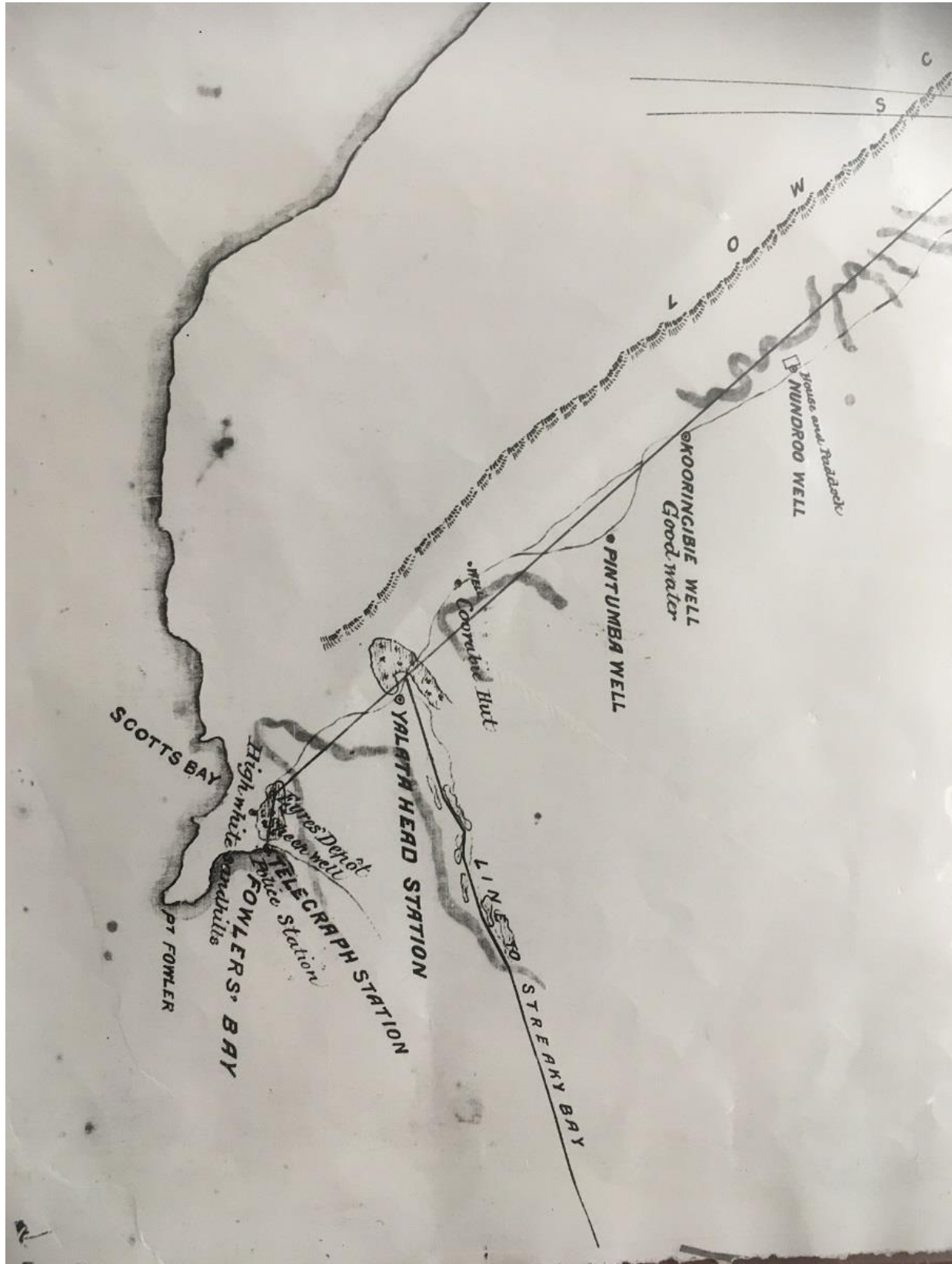


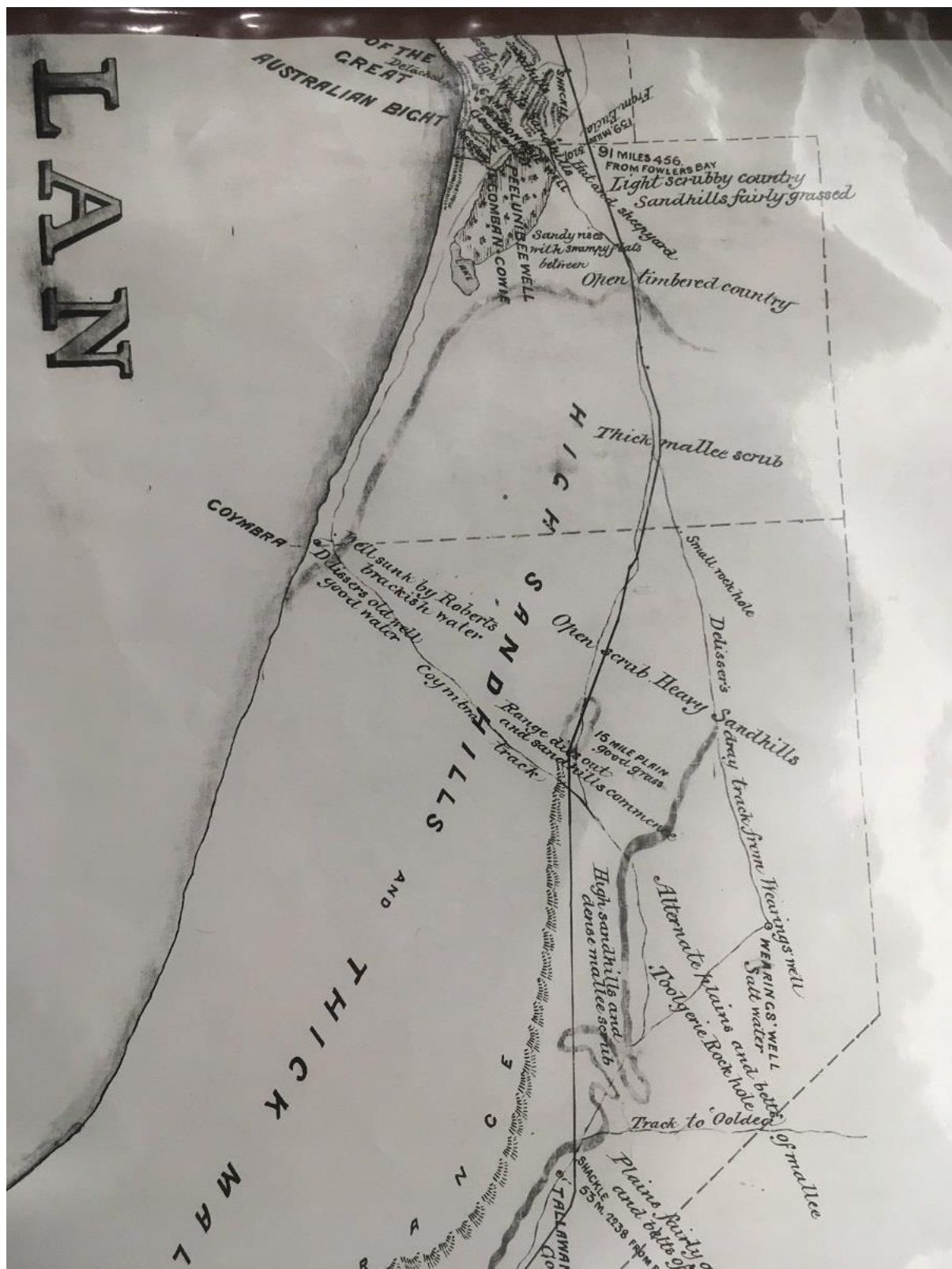
E W telegraph line where it crosses Eyre Highway
Looking west. Typical scrub that construction crew cut through
and has grown again

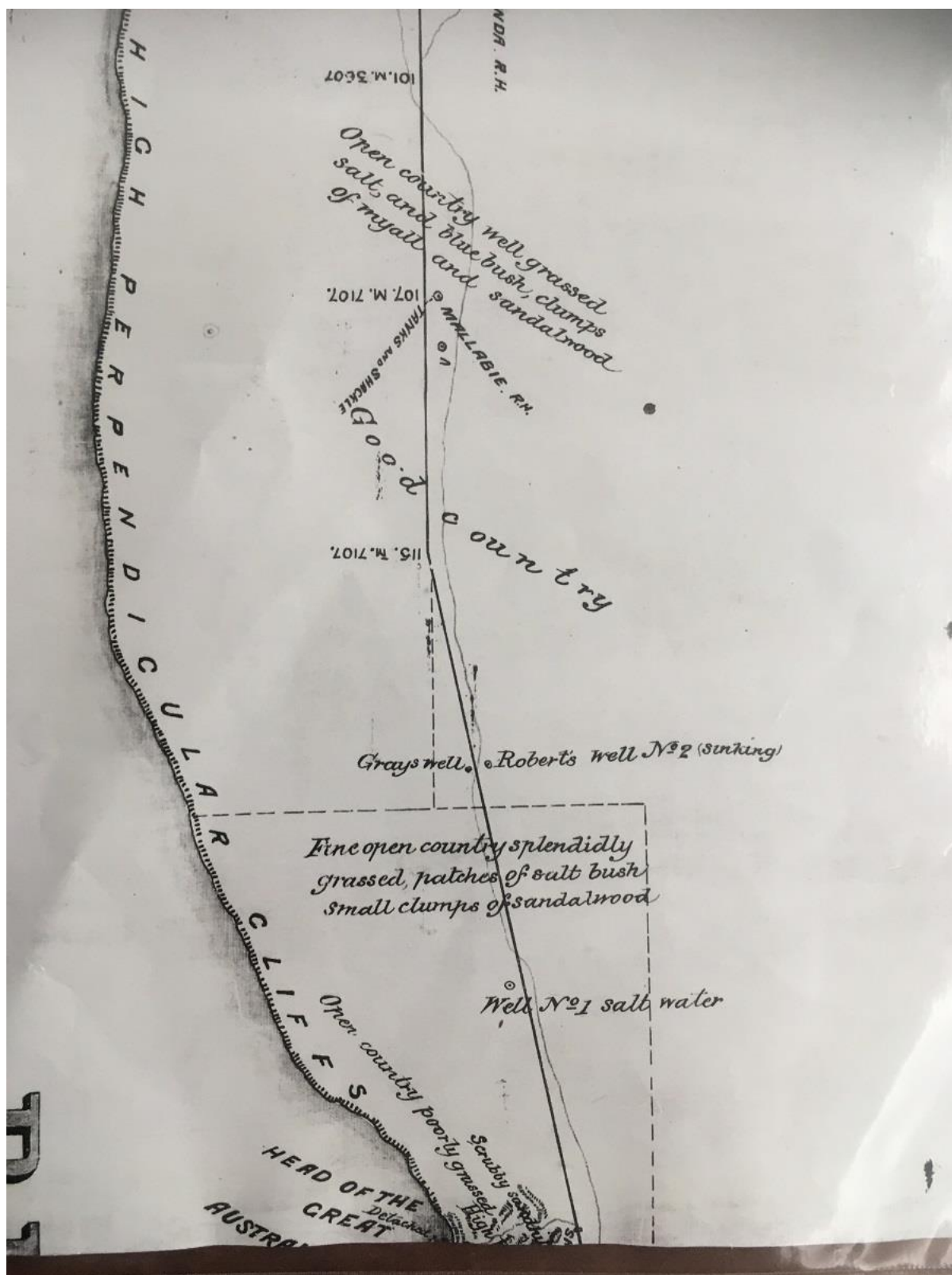
54. Eucla Telegraph Station.

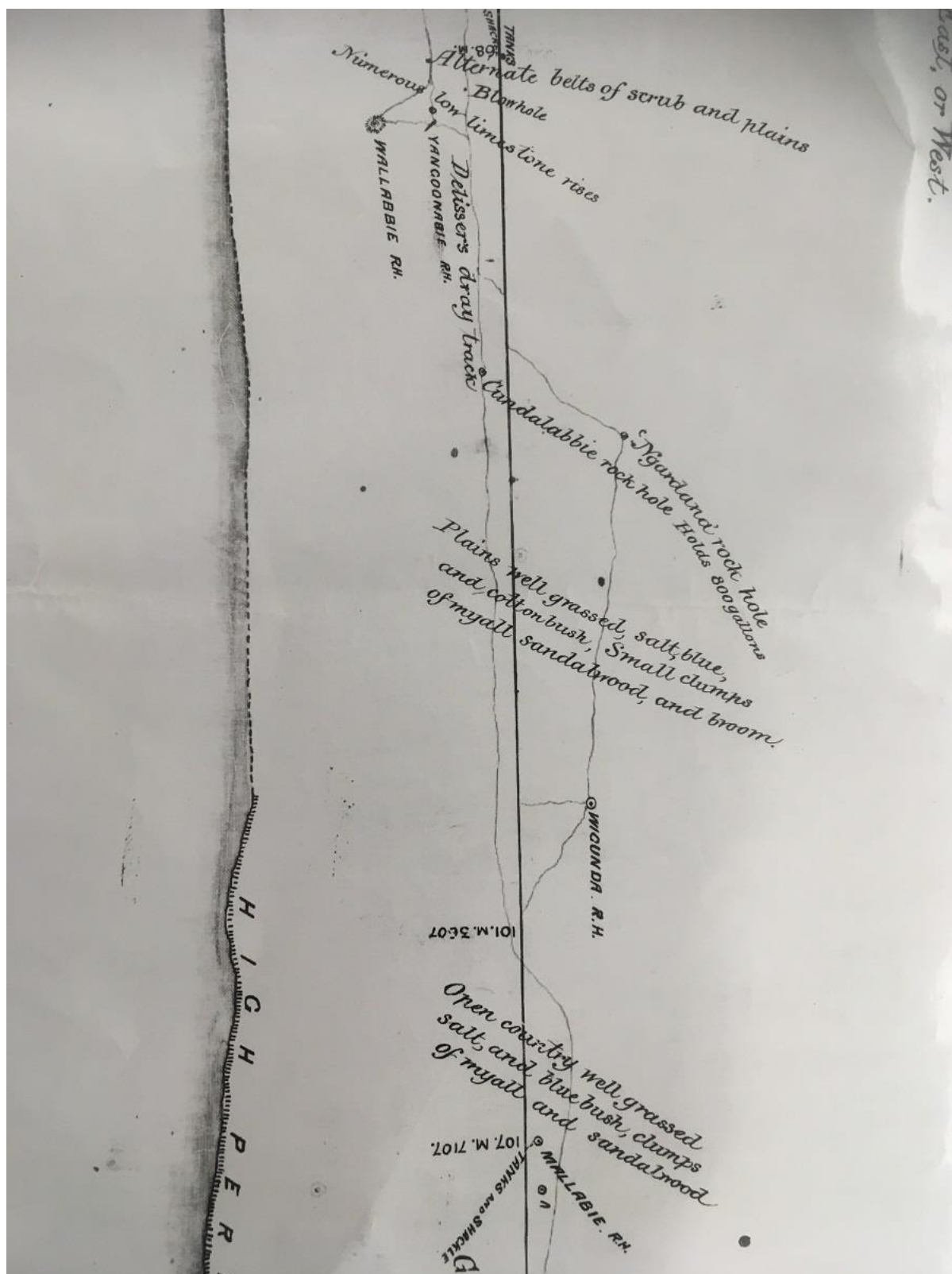


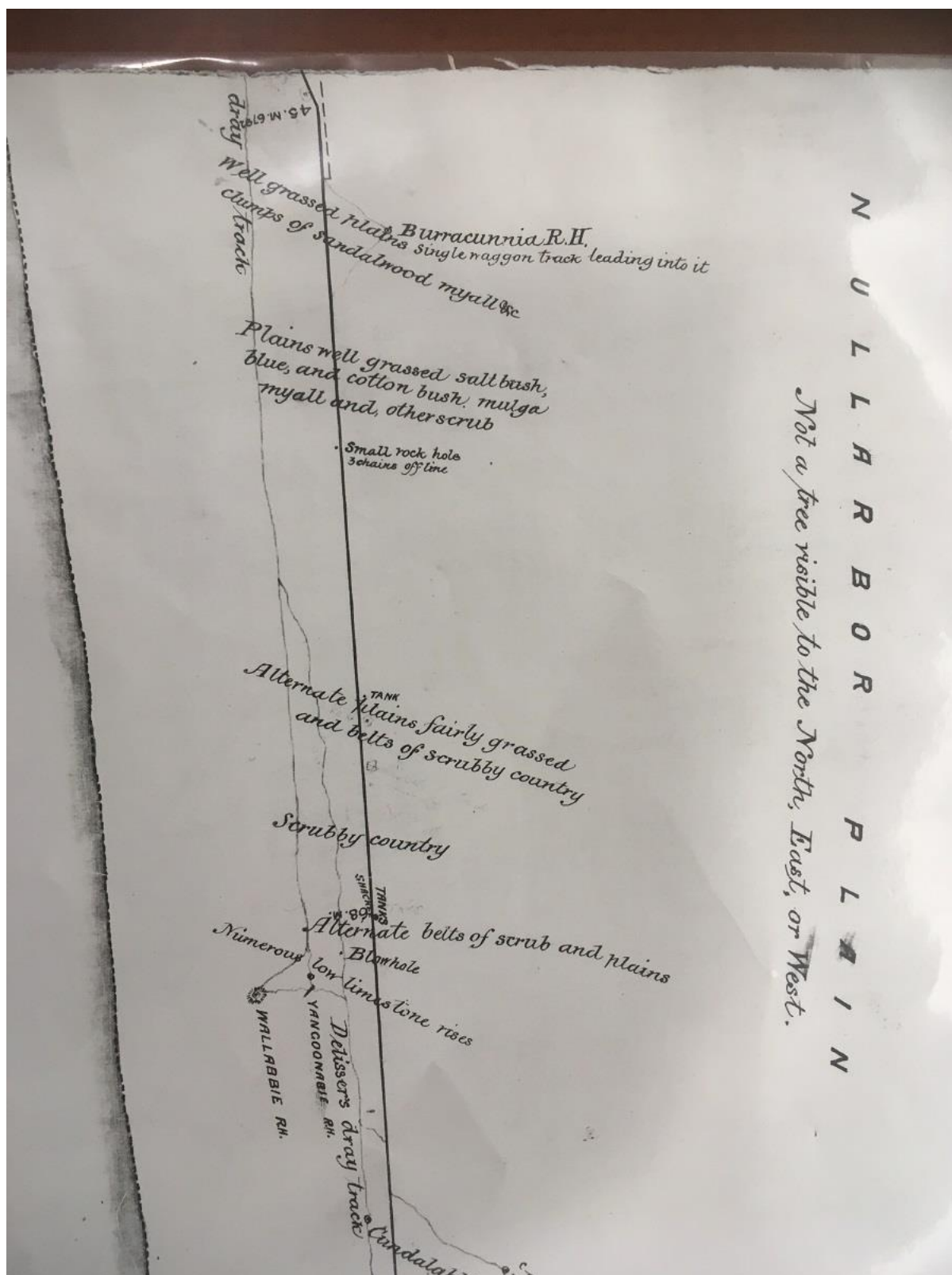
SLSA C448/2 Plan of telegraph line from Fowlers Bay to Eucla by R. Randall Knuckey.

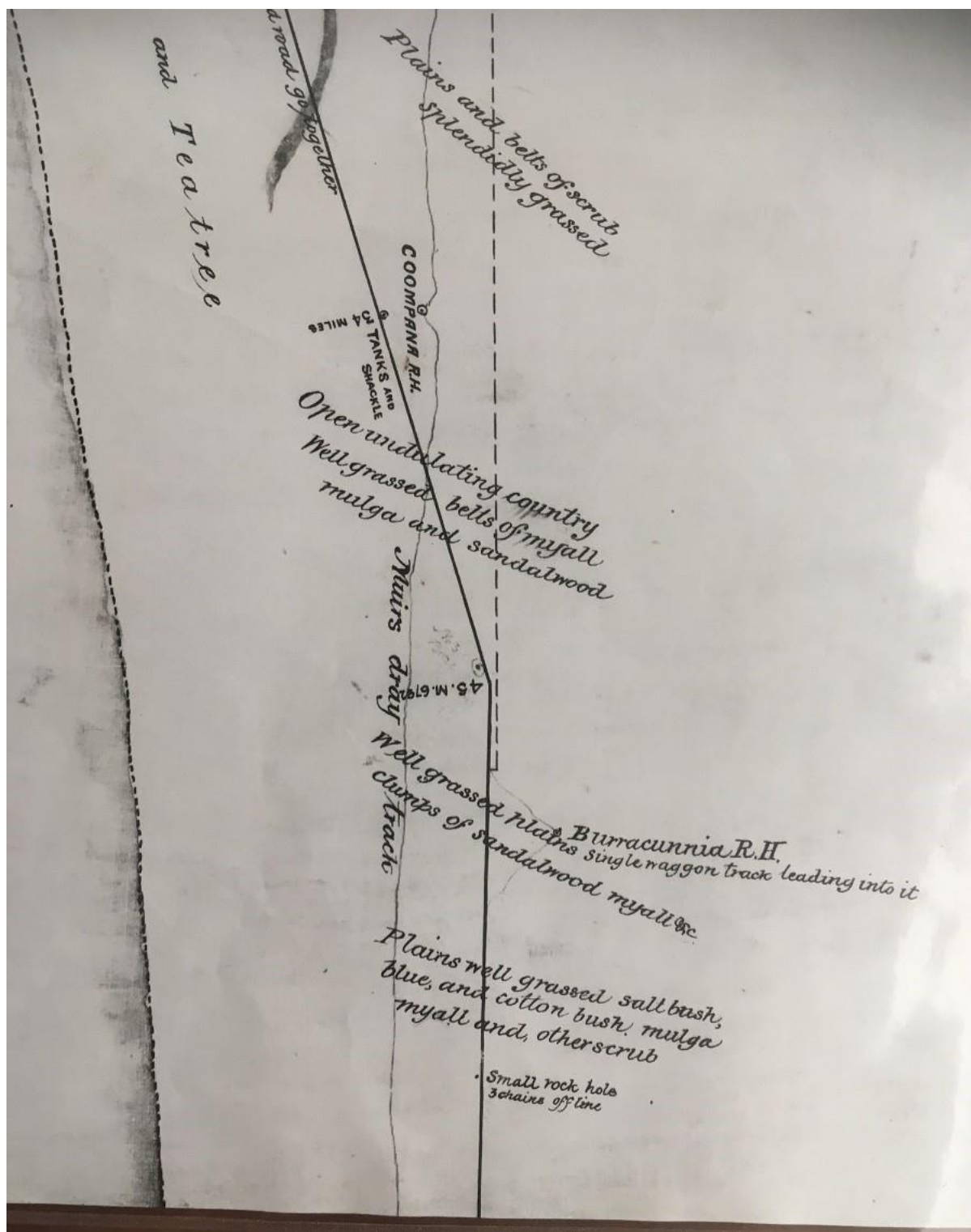


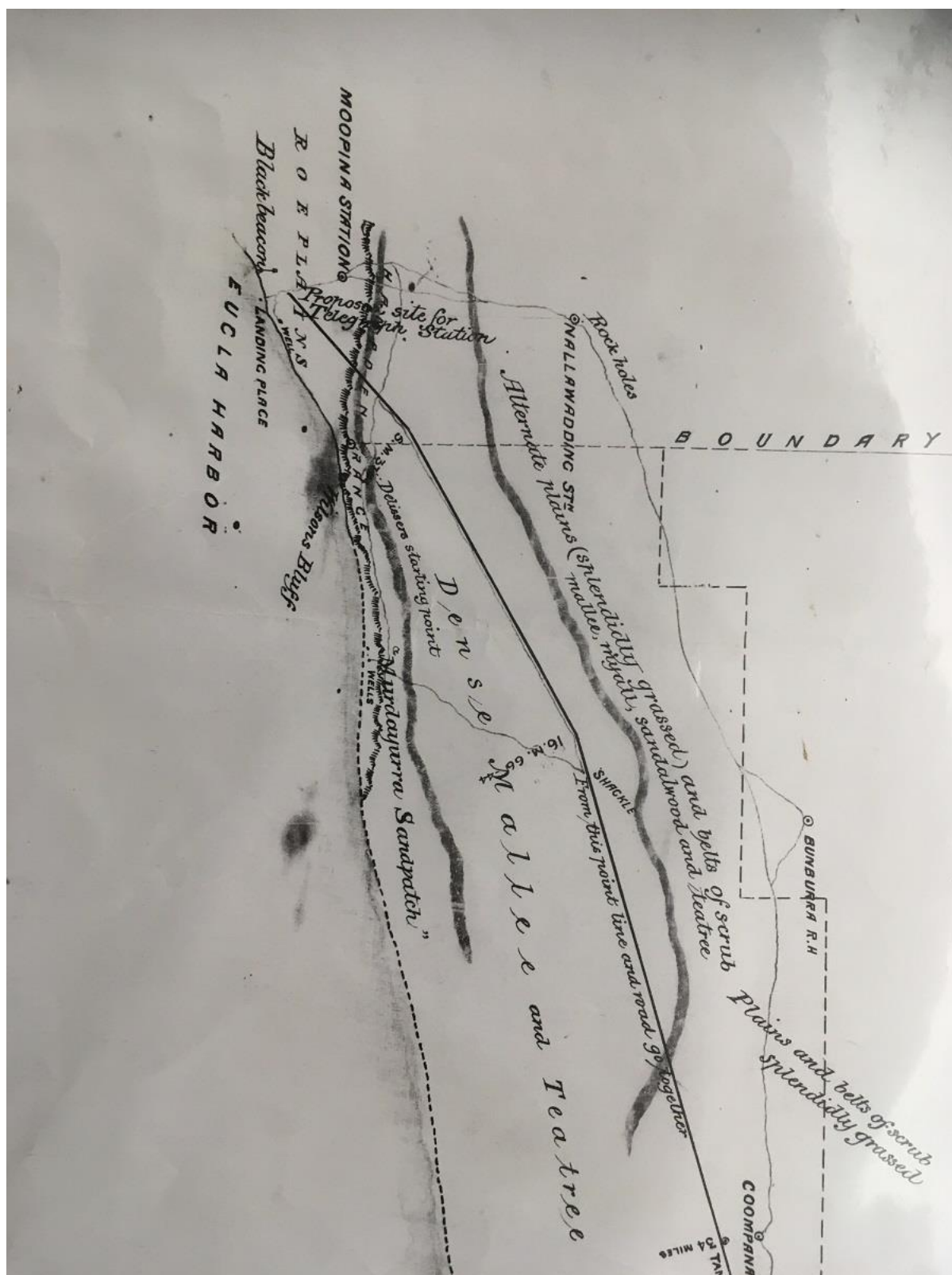






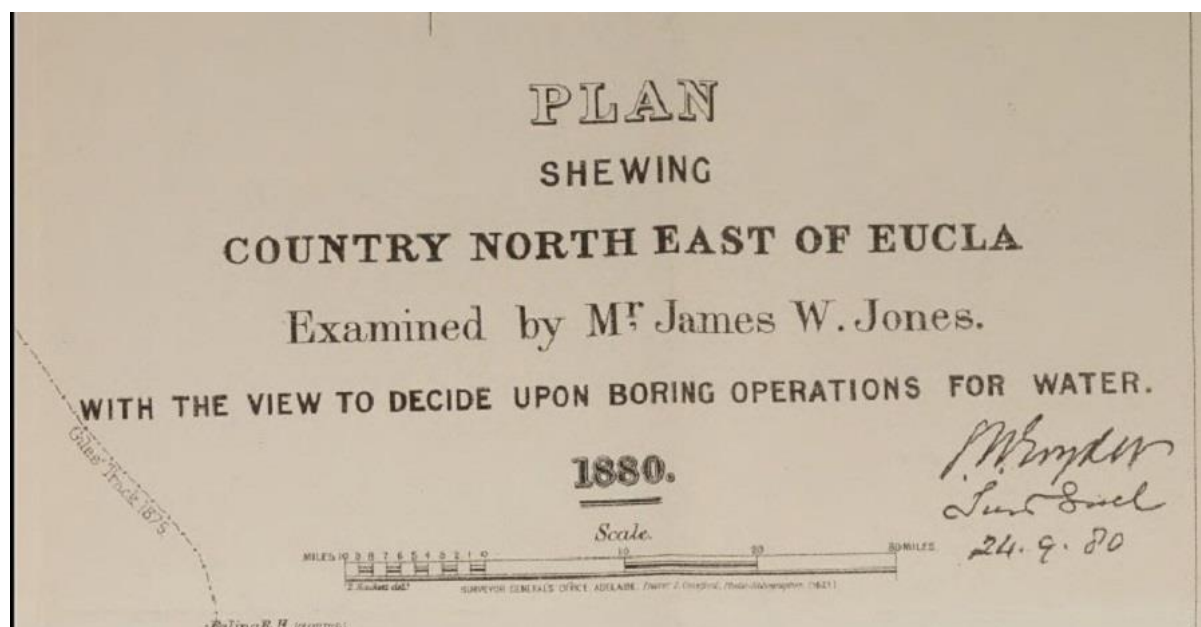




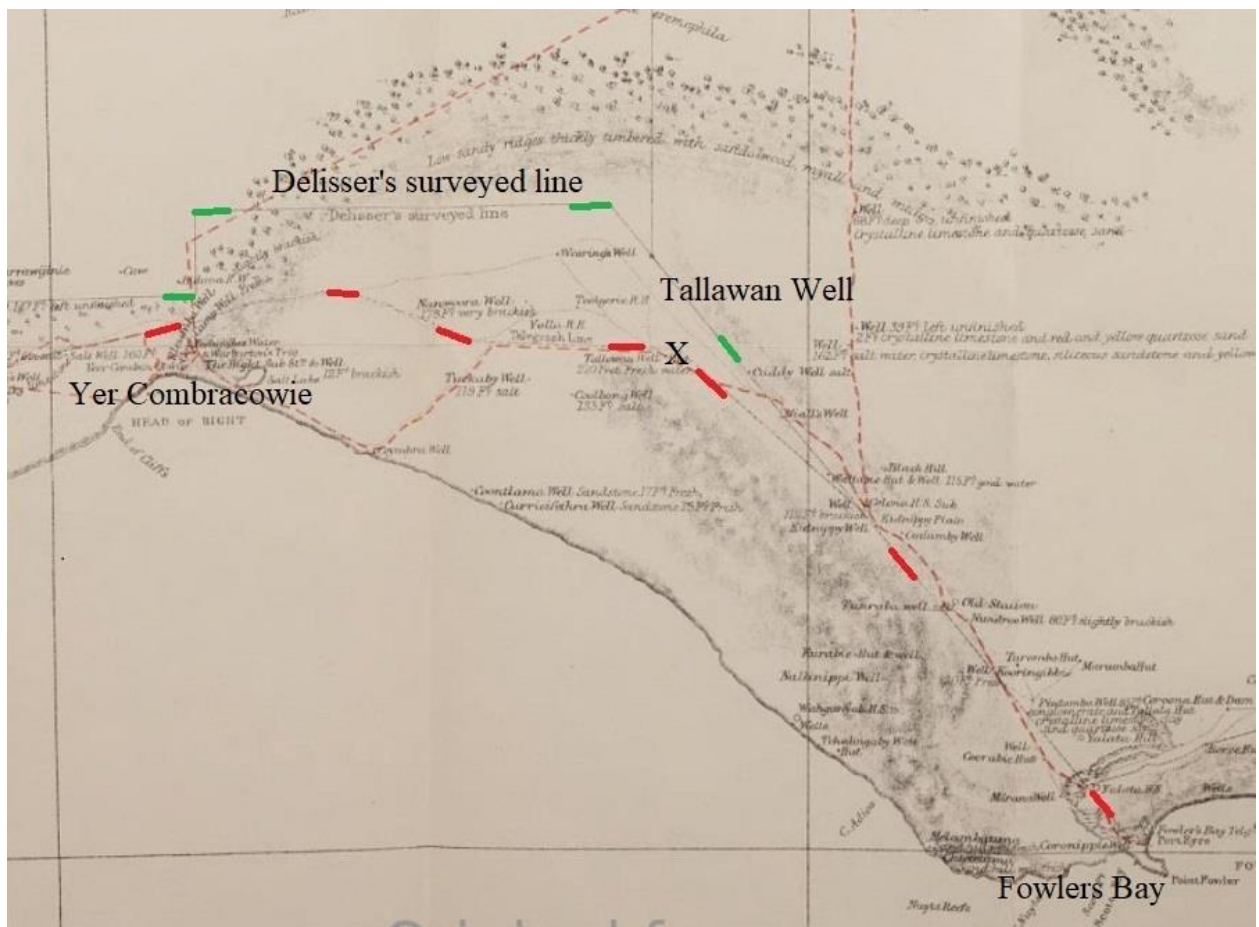


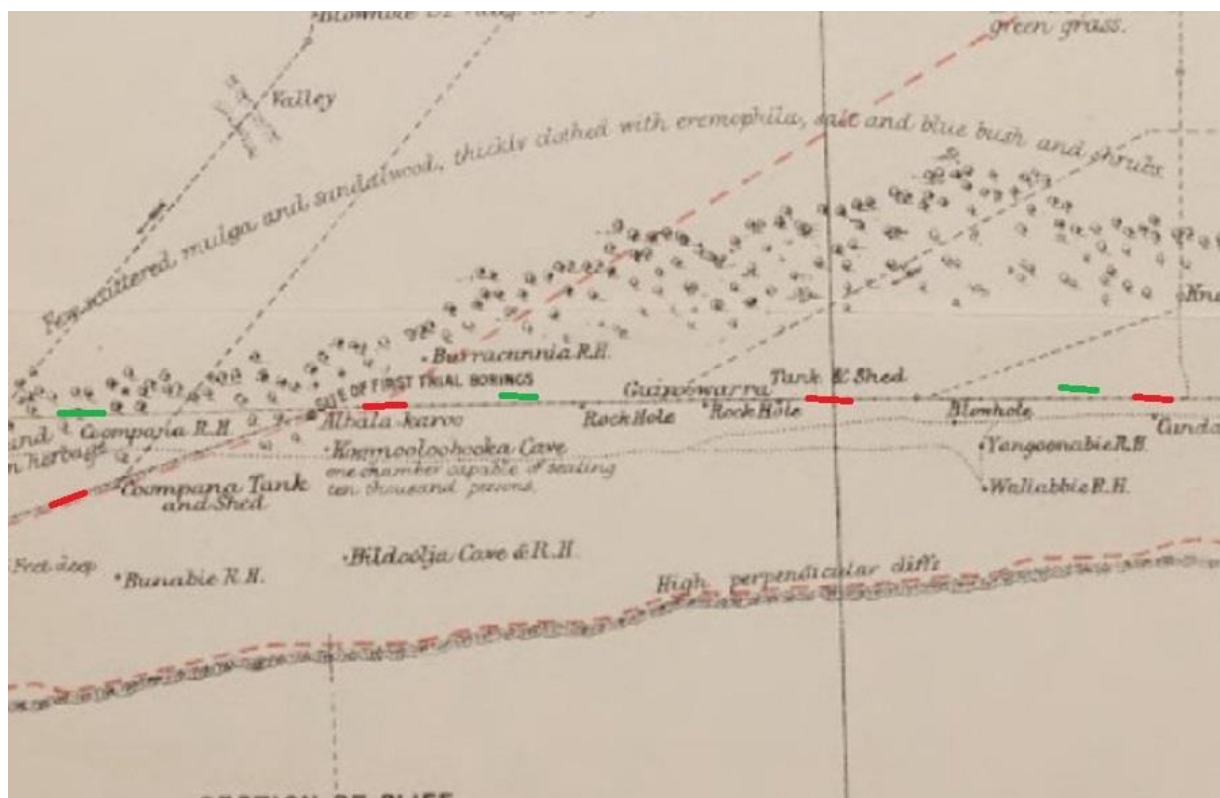
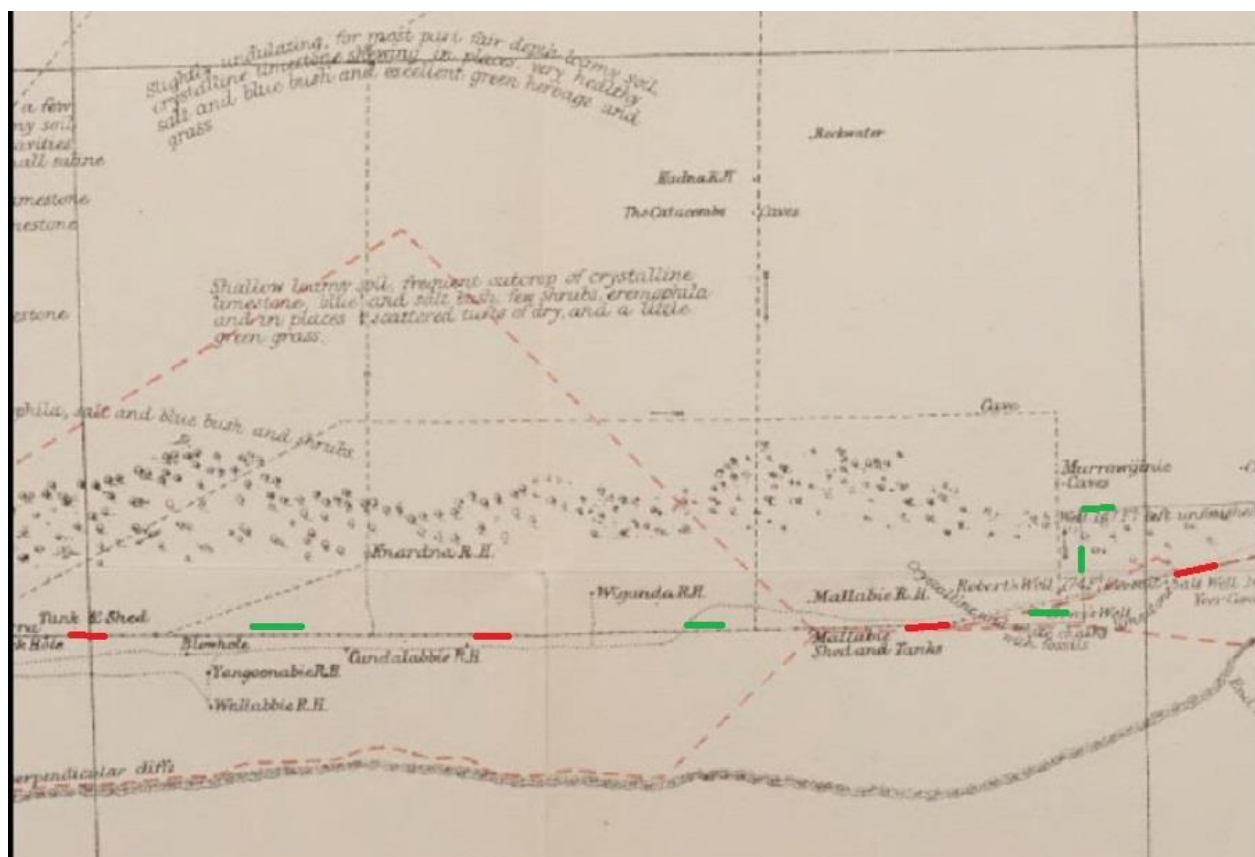
Telegraph to Eucla.—We have been favoured by Dr. Renner with a sight of a letter from Mr. R. R. Knuckey, in which that gentleman gives a most interesting account of his labours in superintending the construction of the telegraph line from this colony to Eucla, and which is to connect Western Australia with this colony. We make the following extracts, which we are sure will be read with interest:—"The work from Fowler's Bay to Eucla may be divided into two sections—first, from Fowler's Bay to Yencombracowie (or the head of the Great Australian Bight) to Deliser's boundary line, 132 miles ; but as the landing place—Eucla—is eight miles west of that I have recommended our Government to build the extra eight miles, and finish line to Eucla. You see we should have to cart over the ground, and it would take very little time building the line so close to the water and the landing place for the poles. I am interested in getting this done, as an extra eight miles would reduce the average cost very much, from Fowler's Bay to the Bight the line passes through medium country for the first 50 miles, going by several out stations belonging to Fowlers Bay Run. The carting up to here is not so bad; stages are about 20 miles without water. As a rule the wells are deep (this one is 220 feet) and water brackish, but still as far as Tallawan, line was very easy to put up, although the sinking was hard. Our next stage from Tallawan to Combracowie is 40 miles through dense mallee scrub and no water. The road is something awful. When I tell you that it is worse than any part of section B on the O.T. Line you can imagine what carting over that means. Through this infernal strip I must shift about 120 tons of line material and rations, &c., for my party. I tried to get some stuff landed at the Bight, but the skipper would not risk his vessel, so I shall have to cart out from Fowler's line material for 150 miles. I have all the poles laid to head of Bight, and am now carting the stuff to go 60 miles beyond. After leaving Combarcowie we have no water until we reach Eucla—146 miles between the two waters. My plan is I shall carry, as I said before, 60 miles of poles from this side, and then make an attempt to push through with the teams for Eucla, and finish the other part from that end. Our success depends upon whether the horses can stand the 146 mile journey. There is good feed, but no water. McMinn with the survey started through a fortnight ago. His first attempt was a failure, but I think he is OK now. I have been anxious about him, because if he gets stuck up in the middle lives might be lost. I hope to make my start about the end of February. It will be the worst time of the year, but I was kept in Adelaide during the winter, and let slip the best chance of doing the work, and now I must risk everything to make a success of it. It would never do for me to

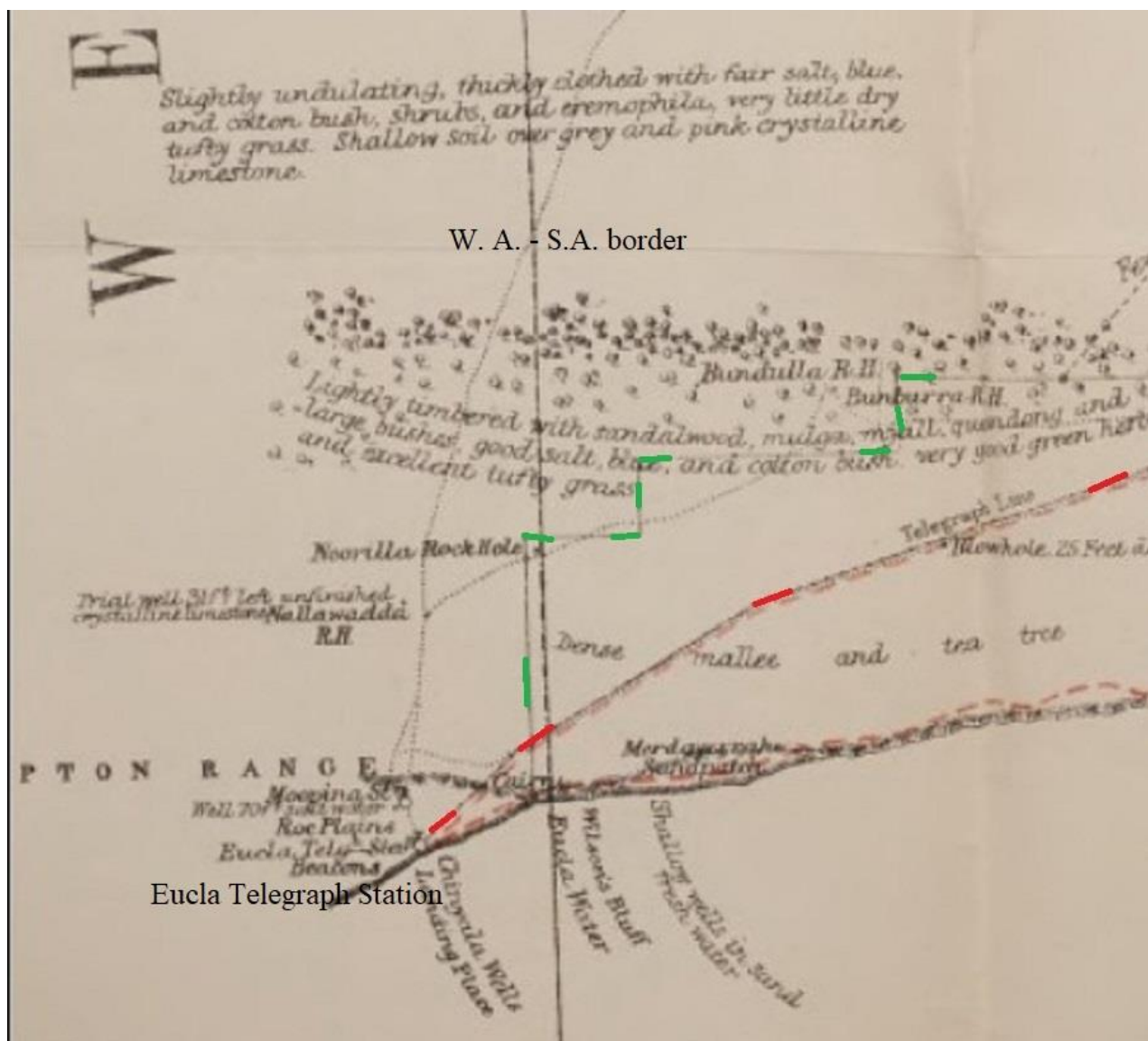
fail, and before I turn back from it I will see the end of every horse in the party. If good luck befriend us I think I shall finish our line about the end of May perhaps before. Hamp, a squatter from the Port Lincoln side, went over to Western Australia this winter, and made the journey overland back. He had an awful time of it, lost two horses from want of water between the Bight and Eucla. (Cheering news for me, eh ?) From his accounts I do not see how the Western Australia people can finish until about June or July, even if they do then, and they will have to reinforce their stock to do it at all. Hitherto they have plenty of landing places, and no distance to cart either water or poles, but when they reach Point Culver they will only have one landing place, ' Eyres sand patch,' for the last 280 miles. This is better than I have got, but from Hamp's account they have not stock to carry it over the 140 miles each way. They are only putting up 11 poles the mile now, going to fill up afterwards—stupid idea. Honestly I do not think communication will be established with Western Australia until August next year."



<https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=hvd.32044089908131&view=1up&seq=29&skin=2021>
Map attached to report







(The following two articles explain some of the history of the area before the telegraph line was erected, and the names on the map.)

South Australian Register, Tuesday 15 September 1863, page 2

<<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article50158369>>

Our Western Territory.— A correspondent has supplied us with the following respecting the country north-west of the Great Australian Bight : — "It may be interesting to your readers to know that a large tract of country north-west of the Great Australian Bight and of Fowler's Bay was claimed several months back by certain individuals for the purpose of eventually forming sheep runs thereon. Last year, in the month of July or August, Messrs. Delisser and Mackie started from Fowler's Bay, and arrived at the Bight with their horses in good condition. From the water in the sandhills called Yeercumbancowie they made journeys of

four days each. They describe the country six or seven miles N.W. from this water as one vast plain. Many parts have not a tree visible in any direction; but the soil being of a very stiff nature, they have no doubt reservoirs will be made easily and answer well. Although last year was a very dry season, they saw abundant proofs that more rain had fallen beyond the Bight. The grass was very plentiful and quite green, and the two explorers were delighted with the prospect. During the whole time of their stay in that part of the country they met but seven or eight blacks in one party, and these were very obliging, but apparently much frightened. On returning from the Bight Messrs. Delisser and Mackie examined the country more inland and north-west of Fowler's Bay, the result of which was that they found another large area fit to carry sheep during the winter months. On the return of these gentlemen to Adelaide they determined to raise a Company with a small capital in order to sink for water between Fowler's Bay and the Bight. This they eventually succeeded in doing, and from the result of the researches of a portion of the Company the members have resolved to form another Company with a larger capital. Water between Fowler's Bay and the Bight will be required only for cattle and horses travelling between those places, and this they can now ensure by distilling salt water if fresh be not found. Three wells will be sufficient for this purpose, and the teamsters will distil the water for their own use and that of the cattle. The present Company have not taken up all the good land seen by Messrs. Delisser and Mackie, so that we may look forward soon to see the area of the settled portion of the colony largely increased by additions in the West."

West Coast Sentinel, Friday 10 December 1926, page 7
<<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article168242787>>

EARLY PIONEERS.

TOM BROWN.

Historical records of the lives of the pastoral pioneers would be sadly incomplete without a reference to the valuable part which the late Tom Brown played in proving the possibilities of the vast Nullabor Plains for sheep farming.
<clip>

<clip> When they were in Adelaide the attention of Tom Brown and the Willis brothers was attracted to the Nullabor Plains by the late Mr. Gray, of the Reedbeds, who had put down a few shafts for water, and, failing to find it up to a depth of 150 feet, abandoned his interests in that region. The Nullabor Plains were discovered in 1860 by a surveyor named Alfred Delisser, who bestowed

the eognomen "Nullus-arbor," in token of the comparatively treeless nature of the region, although actually the name is a misnomer. The first real white settlers were the Muir brothers, of Adelaide. They took up land for pastoral purposes in the neighborhood of what is now Eucla, a corruption of the word "Yerkla," by which the aborigines knew the planet Venus as she rises in the east, a conspicuous object over Wilson's Bluff. The Muirs watered their stock at the sandhills where the explorer Eyre obtained his supplies during part of his memorable expedition to King George's Sound. For several years they received their goods and shipped their wool at a spot called Port Higgins, where Mr. J. L. Higgins had supervised the landing of a Government boring plant. This undertaking, however, proved too costly and dangerous, and the little port was abandoned. The Muir brothers were completely isolated from all civilisation for two years. Eventually communication with them was established by Mr. Armstrong, of Yalata Station, in the Fowler's Bay district, who forwarded letters received from Adelaide. These letters were carried by a native, who returned to Yalata in about three weeks, after having travelled a total distance of 480 miles on foot. The Muirs had Moopina Station, with headquarters under the cliff's in the vicinity of Eucla.

The Nullarbor Plains, at their eastern edge, commence in the south of the Great Australian Bight and in the north of Ooldea. They extend west about 160 miles to the border of Western Australia, beyond which the name changes to Hampton Plain, going towards Kalgoorlie and Belladonna. The country generally is of a limestone formation containing many weird caves, small and large rockholes and blowholes. The timber is confined mostly to an area within twenty miles of the coast and gradually thins out to the tree less region which influenced Delisser in the choice of a name. <clip>

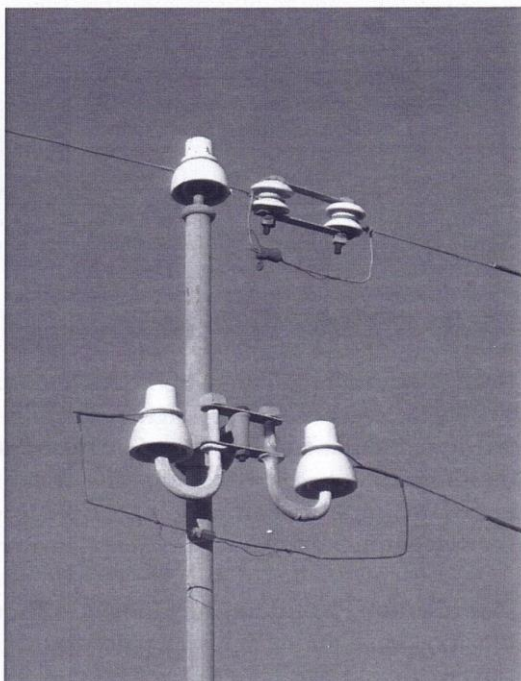
(Author. On Richard Knuckey's map's there is the word "shackle" approximately 30 to 40 miles apart. I was wondering what a shackle is? The following is an explanation of the shackle used on the Overland Telegraph Line.)

<https://www.telegraphpoleappreciationsociety.org/images/userImages/oz/the-overland-telegraph1.pdf>

P 30. <clip> The Shackle. I was sent out with a linesman to get a lesson on work of which I should have much to do in the future. As I could not read by sound, it was arranged, that when I 'spoke' from a shackle and single dots were sent to me, I was to go on, but if double dots were sent, it meant that the party from the other station had cleared the fault, and that I could return to my station. When operators wish to 'speak' on the line they can choose where there is a

shackle. This contrivance is made of specially shaped insulators, fixed about twelve inches apart by iron straps. The telegraph line is cut, and each end is fastened around one of the insulators. This is a permanent arrangement, but of course no current can pass. To overcome this a piece of line wire, about eighteen inches long is fixed to the telegraph line, one end on each side of the shackle, thus forming a bridge by which the electric current passes over the gap. Now when the operator wishes to 'speak', he unfastens one end of the bridge and leaves it clear of the telegraph line - then he attaches his instrument, by its two wires, one each side of the shackle and the instrument and its wires take the place of the bridge and he can do his speaking. When finished, he closes the bridge, disconnects his wires and instrument; the whole only occupies two or three minutes. In outback places, these shackles are placed in the lowest part of the sag in the line between two telegraph poles. This would be nine or ten feet from the ground. By throwing a cord or bridle rein over the wire, he can pull the shackle gently down to within his reach and when finished he can let it go easily back again. These shackles are placed at all permanent water holes or camping places, but in any case not more than ten miles apart. <clip>

The following photo is an example of shackles used on the OTL.
"Building The Line" "The construction of the Overland Telegraph Line" by Andrew Crouch. P 32.



A bridging shackle on a section of remaining line. This device enabled the circuit to be interrupted temporarily to allow portable keying equipment to be attached to the line to send and receive messages. *Author - 2018*

South Australian Register (Adelaide, SA : 1839 - 1900), Friday 29 December 1876, page 4

<<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article43003493>>

TELEGRAPH CONSTRUCTION AND MAINTENANCE.

The year which is now drawing to a close has been marked by considerable progress in the construction of new lines of telegraph as well as in other works.

<clip>

<clip> But the most important telegraphic event of the year has been the work done upon the line to Eucla, which will be connected with a wire now being erected by the Government of Western Australia, and will place us in telegraphic communication with the capital of that colony. The survey has been completed to Eucla, and the line has been erected to about 20 miles west of the Great Australian Bight, or within about 110 miles of Eucla. The South Australian part of the line was divided into two equal parts — from Port Augusta to Fowler's Bay, 530½ miles, and thence to Eucla, 230 miles. Mr. Walter Thomson, of O'Halloran Hill, was the contractor for the first section, and

he performed his work exceedingly well. The Postmaster General and Superintendent of Telegraphs was, however, unable to get any one to tender for the second section, which presented peculiar difficulties owing to the extreme dryness of the season and the fact that for about 145 miles no water was to be found. The Government had therefore to undertake the work themselves, and it is being carried out by Mr. R. R. Knuckey, who has had the oversight of the whole work from the beginning, and who will be remembered as having shown great ability and energy as one of the constructors of the Adelaide and Port Darwin Telegraph. Mr. McMinn having completed the survey to Eucla will return southwards with his teams and assist Mr. Knuckey in his difficult task. The Western Australian authorities have to erect 800 miles of new line in order to establish communication with us. <clip>

<clip> It is expected that through communication will be established by May next. Iron poles are being erected all through the South Australian sections, wooden ones being used in the adjoining colony. <clip>

<clip> Additional wires are also to be erected between Adelaide and Port Augusta, and between Adelaide and Clare. The new wire, to Port Augusta will be rendered necessary by the Western Australian business, and the cost will be defrayed out of the additional loan of £19,400 for the Eucla Telegraph. The cost of the extra wire from Adelaide to Clare will be £2,600. The money for the Kingston and Border Town line is to be borrowed. The total length of the new lines and wires will be 447 miles, and when these new works are completed the colony will have about 5,500 miles of telegraph. <clip>

South Australian Advertiser (Adelaide, SA : 1858 - 1889), Friday 2 March 1877, page 4
<<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article33745849>>.

We hear that the South Australian portion of the telegraph line to Western Australia, is finished up to within about 90 miles of Eucla, where the junction is to be effected with the work from the sister colony. Mr. Knuckey and his party are now some 30 to 35 miles on the western side of the Australian Bight, and are working on slowly, their operations being very much retarded by the scarcity of water and the length of cartage. Mr. Knuckey is, however, sanguine of success, and expects to form the junction before the end of June next, unless any unforeseen difficulties arise.

South Australian Register (Adelaide, SA : 1839 - 1900), Saturday 24 March 1877, page 5

<<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article40792788>>

The Western Australian Telegraph. — Advices received by the mail steamer from Western Australia state that the portion of the overland telegraph line being erected by the Government of the adjoining colony was probably poled within 100 miles of Eucla — the boundary station. Reports from Mr. Knuckey, the officer charged with the construction of the South Australian part of the work, show that the line is up to within 90 or 100 miles of Eucla, and nearly all the materials required for the remainder of the section had been carted. Great difficulties had been encountered owing to the absence of feed and water over a large extent of country. Feed and water had to be carted along the line of operations, and the effective strength of the party was therefore seriously interfered with. Mr. McMinn had finished all his preliminary surveys and had returned to Eucla, from which place he would push forward the poling to the east.

South Australian Register (Adelaide, SA : 1839 - 1900), Wednesday 28 March 1877, page 4

<<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article40779865>>

OVERLAND TELEGRAPH TO WESTERN AUSTRALIA. — There is every prospect of an early completion of this line, as from Mr. Williams, MP., who returned in the Nautilus, we understand that good progress has been made both in the South Australian and West Australian sections. Messrs. McMinn and Knuckey reached Eucla before the sailing of the Nautilus, and from them it was learned that an additional 50 miles had been completed, and as soon as rain set in the work would progress with renewed vigour. In some places the water had been drawn from natural reservoirs, the quantity being very slight indeed. The Nautilus has just taken 780 poles, 10 cases of insulators, and 136 coils of wire to Eucla, which will complete their portion of the work.

South Australian Register (Adelaide, SA : 1839 - 1900), Saturday 14 July 1877, page 4

<<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article40785185>>

Western Australian Telegraph Line. — We have been informed that the telegraph line to Eucla will be finished about July 17. The Government intend sending a vessel to Eucla to bring the bulk of the construction party back on the completion of the work, but the teams will travel overland. The vessel will take iron tanks, to be placed at different points on the line between the Australian Bight and Eucla. The distance will be divided into four stages of thirty-five

miles each, and sheds 24 feet by 20 feet will be erected over the tanks, which will be four in number and capable of holding 400 gallons each. The construction party, which is under the command of Mr. R. Knuckey, has had great difficulties to encounter in erecting the line, a great part of the country through which it passes being dense scrub, whilst at others it consisted of long stretches of arid ground destitute of water. The Western Australian line is 800 miles long, and the South Australian portion, including the one from Adelaide, about 970 miles. The Western Australian portion is being pushed on with vigour, and in order to carry out the work more expeditiously alternate poles only are being put up for the present. It is therefore hoped that in a few weeks the line will be complete.

South Australian Register (Adelaide, SA : 1839 - 1900), Tuesday 17 July 1877, page 5

<<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article40792893>>.

THE TELEGRAPH TO WESTERN AUSTRALIA.

On Monday, July 16, the welcome news reached Adelaide that the telegraph line to Eucla had that day been completed. South Australia has therefore fulfilled her portion of the task of placing Western Australia in telegraphic communication with the rest of the world. The cost to which we have gone to establish connection with Perth by wire may be set down at about £67,500, which is the net result of the loans raised for the purpose. This is rather a large sum to pay for a line 760 miles in length; but it must be remembered that in prosecuting the work the Government have had peculiar difficulties to surmount, and that special pains have been taken to make the line thoroughly substantial. This object has been secured by erecting iron poles 19 feet long throughout, and it is believed that the work within the South Australian boundaries will form one of the strongest, if not absolutely the strongest, in the world. The South Australian part of the line was begun in August, 1875, and has therefore taken one year and eleven months to complete. Strangely enough this was the exact time that the construction of the Adelaide and Port Darwin line occupied. The work was divided into two parts from Port Augusta to Fowler's Bay, 530½ miles, and thence to Eucla, 230 miles. Mr. Walter Thomson, of O'Halloran Hill, was the contractor for the first section, and he performed his work exceedingly well. The Government were, however, unable to get any one to tender for the second section, which presented peculiar difficulties owing to the extreme dryness of the season of 1876. They had therefore to under take the work themselves, and it has been carried out by Mr. R. R. Knuckey, who has had the oversight of the whole work from the beginning, and who will be remembered as having shown great ability and energy as one of the constructors

of the Adelaide and Port Darwin Telegraph. As the construction of the line has proceeded telegraphic communication has of course been established with the parties, and operations have therefore been carried out under the instructions of the Postmaster General and Superintendent of Telegraphs, under whose directions Mr. Knuckey has performed his task with remarkable energy and efficiency. The chief difficulty with which he has had to contend has been the want of water. Until the rains in the early part of this year, which facilitated operations wonderfully, there was scarcely any surface water to be found. The whole of the materials for the farther section had to be carted from Fowler's Bay, and before Eucla was reached the constructors had to pass over two absolutely waterless tracts of country respectively 130 and 50 miles in length, which of course were also almost destitute of feed. Another great obstruction, especially on the first section, has been the great extent of scrub, through which a road 30 feet wide has been cut. With the exception of the construction of a duplicate telegraph between Adelaide and Port Augusta, the only work now remaining to be done is the provision of tanks. A vessel will shortly be dispatched with four 400-gallon iron tanks, which will be placed at intervals of 35 miles between the Australian Bight and Eucla. They will be protected by sheds 24 feet x 20 feet, from the roofs of which the water will be conveyed to the tanks beneath. The object of making this provision is to facilitate the inspection of the line. We have yet to erect the duplicate line to Port Augusta. When this is up there will be 970 miles of wire between Adelaide and Eucla. South Australia will then have no less than 5,500 miles of telegraph wires. The Western Australian portion of the work will be about 800 miles long. It was begun about three months before ours was commenced, and it is expected that it will be finished by the end of September next. From Bremer Bay to Culver the line is within a very short distance of the coast. From that point to Eyre's Sand Patch it is a little distance inland, and thence to Eucla it will be close to the water. On the 10th of June the wire had reached the Sand Patch, but in order to save time only half the proper number of poles has been erected in some parts. The supports are of wood, and are 18 feet high. At Eucla a neat station of eight rooms has been erected for the use of both the Western Australian and the South Australian operators. Mr. Knuckey, with Mr. McMinn, his chief assistant, and the men with whom they have carried out their arduous duties, will return to Adelaide by sea in the course of a few weeks, when a hearty welcome will no doubt be given to them.

South Australian Register (Adelaide, SA : 1839 - 1900), Thursday 19 July 1877, page 5

<<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article40777545>>.

The West Australian Telegraph.— The following messages were exchanged between Mr. Walter Thomson and Messrs. Knuckey and Baldock upon the occasion of the completion of the telegraphic line to Eucla: — From R. R. Knuckey, Eucla, to Walter Thomson, O'Halloran Hill, July 16 : — "I have much pleasure in informing you the Port Augusta and Eucla line, begun by your party one year and 11 months ago, was finished on the 14th inst. It has been throughout a difficult piece of work; and I am very much pleased that it has been brought to a successful issue. We have beaten the West Australians. Hurrah for the Major." From W. Thomson, O'Halloran Hill, July 18, to Mr. R. R. Knuckey, Eucla : — "I congratulate you on having finished the line to Eucla, and having beaten the West Australians. I always thought we would; now I am sure of it. We will wet it at Aldridge's for you. Hurrah for the Major." To Mr. A. Baldock, field-operator, Eucla:— "I am glad you have got to Eucla through the terrible scrub. Will send the barrel. Lost Mr. Magill."



<https://collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/resource/PRG+280/1/40/132>

1860. Head and shoulders view of Mr. Baldock, a pioneer member of the South Australian Telegraph Department in Adelaide. According to a researcher, this may be Albert Baldock who arrived with his parents, Robert and Susannah, as a thirteen year old in 1854 on the ship "Evening Star". Albert took up the profession of telegraph officer and worked at Goolwa around 1867-1869. According to his great-granddaughter, Albert was born on 25 January 1842 on Jersey, Channel Islands, to Col. Robert Walters Baldock and Susannah (Harden). The family arrived in South Australia on the Evening Star on 24 Nov 1854 and took up residence near Port Elliot. Albert commenced service with the South Australian Telegraph Department on 1 September 1855, possibly at Port Elliot. He was appointed to Goolwa as telegraph clerk on 1 June 1864, at the age of 22, and was married to Margaret Naomi Lush on 6 November 1865. In 1873 Albert was Telegraph Station Master at Blinman (Flinders Ranges) on the Overland Line to Darwin. He was a field officer, part of the team extending the telegraph line from Port Augusta to Eucla via Streaky Bay in 1875-6. On 1 December 1878 Albert was appointed by the Governor as Postmaster at Cape Border on Kangaroo Island. Albert and Margaret's sixth and seventh children were born there. Albert's next appointment was at Meningie, from 1 May 1881 until his death on 2 April 1883 (41) in Strathalbyn. The year after Albert's death, his youngest daughter Catherine Susannah, known as Kate, was appointed to the Port Elliot Post Office and was transferred to Meadows in 1885 where she was postmistress until her marriage in 1887. Albert's son Albert Carey Baldock, known as Carey, was also employed as a telegraph officer in Eucla, then Cossack and Broome in WA. Son Walter (Joseph Walters Baldock) was probably also engaged in the Telegraph Department before his early death at the age of 22.

South Australian Register (Adelaide, SA : 1839 - 1900), Saturday 29 September 1877, page 5
<<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article40782089>>

Provincial Telegrams.

ADDRESS TO MR. KNUCKEY. Port Lincoln, September 28.

Previous to the departure of the Royal Shepherd this afternoon Mr. Holroyd, on behalf of the inhabitants, presented Mr. Knuckey with an address, congratulating him upon the successful accomplishment of his task of constructing the Western Australian telegraph line to Eucla. The reading of the address was followed by rounds of cheers.

(Author. Knuckey travelled by land back to Pt Lincoln. 2 months

South Australian Register (Adelaide, SA : 1839 - 1900), Monday 19 November 1877, page 4
<<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article40473733>>

MARRIAGE. KNUCKEY— HAWKE- On the 14th November, at Christ church, Kapunda, by the Rev. J. M. Donaldson, Richard Knuckey, of H.M.C.S., to Eva, eldest daughter of H. B. Hawke, Esq., of Kapunda.

South Australian Register (Adelaide, SA : 1839 - 1900), Saturday 13 October 1877, page 4
<<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article40471211>>

THE WESTERN OVERLAND LINE. — A difficult and important work has been carried out in a quiet, unostentatious manner, and very shortly now the whole of the colonies of the Australasian group will be connected together by the "sentient wire." In a few weeks the overland telegraph line between this province and Western Australia will be finished, and the electric chain will be thus complete from Rockhampton to Perth. A few days since Messrs S. Knuckey and H. S. Carey arrived in Adelaide after having dispatched their portion of what has really been a very arduous undertaking, and it is to the perseverance, pluck, and energy displayed by these gentlemen and Mr. C. D. Price, who had charge of the construction parties on the West Australian side, that the success of the undertaking is due. Mr. Carey is the surveyor employed by the West Australian Government to lay out the line in advance, and any one who knows what the country traversed is like will have some idea of the difficulties which have had to be contended with. On 122 miles of the route not a drop of water is to be obtained; yet the survey was pushed rapidly ahead, and a considerable amount of the country to the north-ward of the line was triangulated. Less services than those rendered by these gentlemen have been readily acknowledged before now, and it does not seem too much to suggest that their labours should receive public recognition in some form or other. A brief description of the country traversed from the westward to the South Australian Border will probably be found interesting. Starting from Albany, the first section is to Bremer Bay 100 miles. The land is of fair quality, patches here and there being available for agriculture, and some of which is taken up for that purpose; but there are no large farms, judged from a South Australian standpoint. Sheep farming is carried on, and the whole of the country is utilized in some way. From Bremer Bay to Esperance Bay, Dempster Brothers' head station, 169 miles, the land is suitable only for pastoral purposes. Messrs.

Dempster have 150 miles of coast-line, and their country runs inland to the Frazer Range, 100 miles, where the land is of excellent quality, but water very scarce. From Esperance to Israelite Bay, 125 miles, the country is fair, but not good, principally open mallee, with coarse grass. Most of it is taken up for sheep stations. Israelite Bay is the end of all settlement, and also the furthest point for an immense stretch where surface water can be procured, and the last watercourse is seen at Cape Arid, in the immediate neighbourhood. The granite country ends here, and thenceforward the formation is a stratified limestone. The western end of the long line of limestone cliffs, which are the distinctive feature of so many miles of the coast-line of the Australian Bight, begins 12 miles inland from Israelite Bay. From this place to Port Culver, 67 miles, are samphire plains, but water can be obtained of moderate quality by sinking. From Port Culver to Eyre's Sandpatch no water whatever is procurable. The country is limestone and open mallee, and lies about 300 feet above sea level. The main camp was fixed at Port Culver, and from thence the water had to be packed on horseback out for 60 miles, then the camp was changed to the other end, and the water carried backward to where the work was being conducted. Near Eyre's Sandpatch the cliffs recede from the sea, and leave a broken sandy coast, which continues on to within seven miles of the telegraph station at Eucla, 160 miles distant. At the foot of the cliff brackish water has been obtained in places, and between the cliff and the coast are first open saltbush plains and then dense mallee. On the top of the cliff open mallee is found, and the country becomes gradually more clear inland, with grass and saltbush, till Nullabor Plain is reached, which stretches inland without a tree or shrub for from 80 to 100 miles. If water could be obtained this would make excellent pastoral country. We have from time to time described the work carried on on the South Australian side of the boundary, so that it is unnecessary to repeat it. All who have been connected with this arduous undertaking are to be congratulated on the expeditious and successful termination of their labours.

ADELAIDE SCHOOL OF PHOTOGRAPHY.
S. SOLOMON, CABINET PORTRAIT. ADELAIDE.



B 16083

<https://collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/resource/B+16083> Construction employees of Fowlers Bay-Eucla Telegraph line 1876-77. From left standing are: Joseph McMinn, RR Knuckey, JR Knuckey. sitting: Frank Marchant, Walter Thompson (contractor. Fowlers Bay to Eucla), Carey (Western Australian contractor, Eucla area) and Woods. Eucla Telegraph Station was the largest station in the 1877 East-West Telegraph line. In South Australia workers unloaded supplies at the nearby Eucla jetty. Then the workers scaled the sand hills following the route taken by explorer Edward John Eyre along the tops of the Bunda Cliffs.

South Australian Register (Adelaide, SA : 1839 - 1900), Friday 12 November 1875, page 5
<<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article40089117>>.

The West Australian Telegraph.— The Perth Inquirer of November 2 says:—
"We have been gratified by the Hon. the Commissioner of Public Works (Mr.

Fraser) with an inspection of one of the 18,000 insulators required for the Eucla telegraph line, which arrived with the wire per Charlotte Padbury. This insulator, which is quite novel and ingenious in construction, is of highly-glazed porcelain, bell-shaped, manufactured in Berlin, and is mounted with a galvanized iron cap, carrying two projections and a pin to which a cam or eccentric nut is fitted, which on being turned round slightly bends the telegraph wire placed between the projections, and fastens it, like a vice, to the insulator, thus dispensing with binding wires and the after troubles attending them. The insulator is secured to the top of the pole by a galvanized iron plate, which is screwed down to and protects the end of the pole, and carries in centre a raised socket, into which the steel stalk of the insulator slips and locks, and by the side of which the lightning wire will pass for the protection of the pole. This insulator is the patent of Messrs. Siemens Brothers, telegraph engineers, London, and the socket-plate, designed by the Superintendent of Telegraphs (Mr. Fleming), is also the manufacture of that firm, and is supplied by the contractors, Messrs. King & Son, Fremantle. We look forward with great interest to the progress of this important work now that our South Australian neighbours have commenced at their end. We learn that the poles are up for about 140 miles from Albany, that another shipment of poles is on the way per Mary Ann, and that about 2,000 more are ready awaiting shipment. The first station, at Bremer Bay, is erected, and the second station, Esperance Bay, will be up, it is expected, in January next, and probably communication will be established as far as Esperance by the end of February. Mr. Fraser has organized and dispatched a survey party in charge of Mr. Price, of the Survey Department, to the scene of operations, there to commence a reconnaissance of the whole coast-country for a distance of about 40 miles inland, and upon which the telegraph line is defined. This survey will be made on a thoroughly scientific basis, and all the principal natural features of the country fixed, so that they may be utilized when the work is elaborated. Reserves and town sites will be defined, and harbours and landing places examined, and eventually—and at no very distant date—the valuable resources of this part of the colony will be thoroughly made known."

(Author. Description of insulators used in Western Australia. Different to ours. Also used wooden poles.)

(The following photos courtesy Murray Colins, Ceduna.)



Siemens Bros 1876? insulator and locking device on W A wooden posts and join in wire



Metal insulator & Siemen's insulator top with cam nut and spanner (at back)



Metal cap glued on broken insulator top

From "Whispering Wire" by Rosamund Burton. Tracing the OTL through the heart of Australia.

P89. <clip> At Fred Teagues Museum at Hawker Motors. "Beside it is a dark metal insulator. The sign below reads: "An insulator used to replace original insulator on the Nth. Section of the Overland Telegraph Line. Original was broken by Aborigines for tipping Spears." <clip>



Telegraph wire join



Telegraph wire join soldered centre & both ends

South Australian Register (Adelaide, SA : 1839 - 1900), Saturday 12 December 1891, page 4

<<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article48251891>>

Adelaide: Saturday, Dec. 12, 1891.

WELLS ON THE EUCLA ROUTE.

There is a serious discrepancy between the accounts given by Mr. Holder and the Chief Secretary respectively as to the conditions upon which Messrs. Davies and Wylie are willing to put down bores for water on the route to Eucla from Port Augusta. In the memorandum which Mr. Holder read when moving his motion last week, giving the general heads of the proposed agreement between the promoters of the scheme and the Government, it was distinctly provided that each bore should yield not less than 5,000 gallons of water fit for stock per diem. On this condition being complied with the Government were to grant areas of land extending up to 12,000 acres for each bore reaching to a depth of over 1,500 ft. and restricted to 4,000 acres for bores shallower than 1,000 ft. In other words the principle upon which Mr. Holder's version of the agreement

proceeds is that of payment by results. If at each interval of twenty miles along the route the promoters were willing to find or provide water, thus making thirty five or thirty six watering places for stock between Port Augusta and Eucla, the Government were asked to make the proposed grants on a graduated scale in accordance with the depth at which water was struck. The matter was, it will be remembered, first brought under the notice of the public during the latter portion of Mr. Holder's term of office as Treasurer, and doubtless that gentleman has as clear ideas on the subject as any one in Parliament. <clip>

(On some of the hundred maps there are "test holes". I wonder if they are part of this proposal?)

Evening Journal (Adelaide, SA : 1869 - 1912), Tuesday 30 March 1897, page 2
<<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article207892496>>

LATEST NEWS.

THE WARM WEST COAST COUNTRY.—The well-known pastoralist, Mr. T. Brown, who has just returned from a trip to the West Coast country, in the course of which he passed near Eucla, does not speak favourably of the conditions. The country from Port Lincoln to the edge of the Great Australian Bight, he says, is in a worse condition than it has ever before been within the memory of any one at present occupying the region. It is a desert in many places. The horses belonging to the farmers were wretchedly poor, and the stock are miserable in the extreme. There has been practically a three years' drought, although in the beginning of this month they had about half an inch of rain, which, not being continued, proved of no use. East of Eucla the country is suffering from a drought the like of which the people there have not known before. Wild dogs are vastly on the increase, and as "what is everybody's business is nobody's business" comparatively little is done to destroy them by poison or other means. They fatten on the rabbits, which breed rapidly, and on bigger game. A wild dog had killed a calf alongside the cow, a most unusual thing. It may be interesting to Sir John Forrest to know that the rabbits are 200 miles inside the Western Australian Border. They are very numerous about Eucla. The overground rain tanks between Fowler's Bay and Eucla are destitute of water, and are absolutely useless for the convenience of travellers going west. Moreover, most of these tanks are damaged. The mail and travellers going west, also telegraph repairers have to travel over an absolutely waterless stage between the head of the Great Australian Bight and Eucla, and this state of affairs must continue to exist until the Government put down underground tanks to enable travellers to go along at all seasons of the year. Mr. Brown also mentions a case of a youngster of ten years having been drowned in the

Mudamuckla Station tank, and he suggests that ladders should be placed in these cemented tanks, because they are practically death traps. Only a few years ago a man named McCrae was drowned in the same tank. At present there is very little traffic going through to the West, but there are numbers of parties waiting for the first rains. The shameless, selfish way in which some men "of the baser sort" tamper with the tanks is almost enough to weaken one's faith in human nature. Tanks have been perforated to draw off the water; they have been deliberately drained to fill the tanks carried by passing teamsters; and have, worse than all, been used as targets for rifles, bullet-holes right through having been found.



B 54057/25

<https://collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/resource/B+54057/25>
1902. Old weatherboard telegraph station at Eucla.



<https://collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/resource/B+22109>
c 1907. Eucla original Telegraph Station.

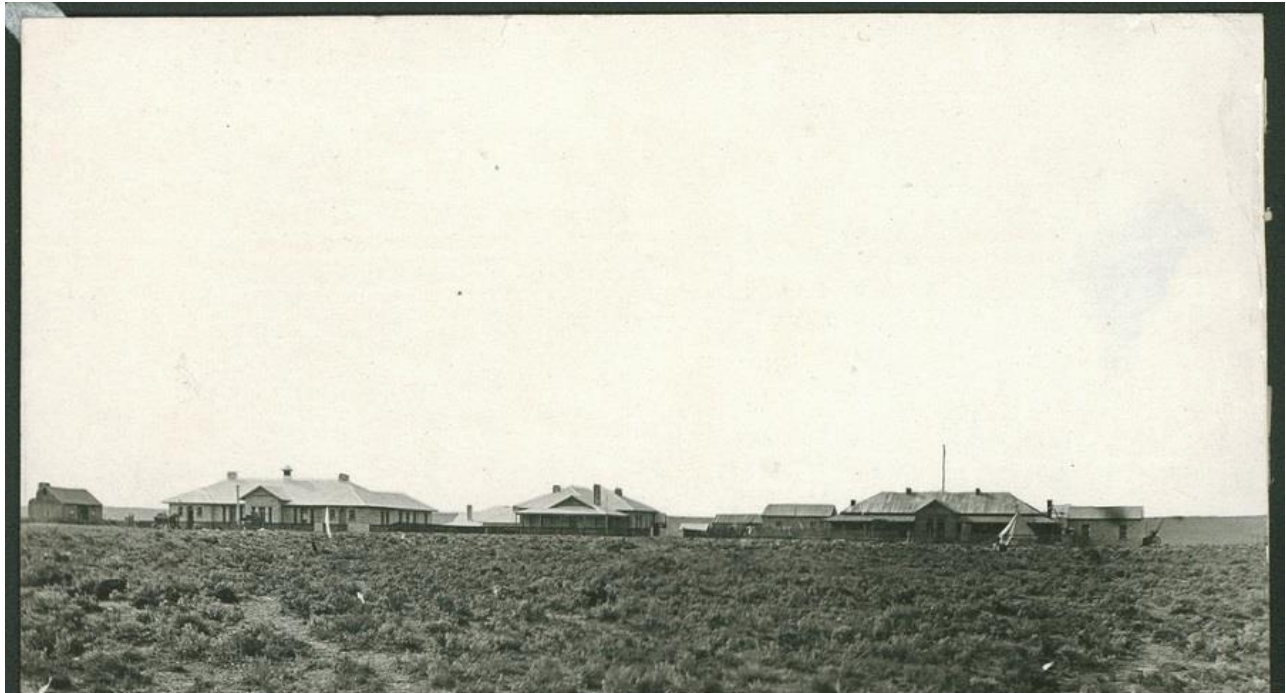


<https://collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/resource/B+22106>
c 1907. Second (and last) Telegraph Station at Eucla.



<https://collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/resource/B+13777>

c 1907. Eucla Telegraph Station. Eucla town gazetted in 1885. Telegraph line opened 1877.



<https://collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/resource/B+13775>
c 1905. Eucla. Left is new Telegraph Station. Right is old.



B 54057/12

<https://collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/resource/B+54057/12>
1902. Eucla telegraph station, South Australian operators.
(note hole in wall to Western Australian operator)



<https://collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/resource/B+22112>
c 1907. Eucla. New Telegraph Station operators room.



B 54060/6

<https://collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/resource/B+54060/6> 1905. S. A. Telegraph Station staff. Back row, third from left is possibly Albert Lionel Clayer, Middle row, fifth from left is possibly Thomas Bertram Harris.



<https://collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/resource/B+22113>
c 1907. Eucla. S.A. telegraph officer in charge residence.



<https://collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/resource/B+22117>
c 1907. Eucla. Residence of a W.A. telegraph operator.



<https://collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/resource/B+22123>
c1907. Mail conveyance, Fowlers Bay to Eucla.

Advertiser (Adelaide, SA : 1889 - 1931), Tuesday 29 October 1907, page 11
<<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article5102595>>

THE MAIL SERVICE.

SOUTH AUSTRALIAN ROUTES. THE ACCEPTED TENDERS.

In the latest issue of the "Commonwealth Gazette" it is intimated that the following tenders have been accepted for the conveyance of mails from January 1, 1908 to December 31, 1910 - <clip>

Port Lincoln and White's Flat, weekly, George King, vehicle, £31.

Port Lincoln and Streaky Bay, weekly, T. and C. Mudge, vehicle, £619.

Sceale's Bay and Benbarber, twice a week, H. H. Higgins, vehicle, £52.

Streaky Bay and Yardea, weekly, H. Sheridan, vehicle, £175 10/.

Parabba and Petina, fortnightly, A. E. Lovegrove, vehicle, £30.

Streaky Bay and Fowler's Bay, via Smoky Bay, fortnightly, T. and C. Mudge, vehicle, £225.

Streaky Bay and Fowler's Bay, via Petina, and Carawa, fortnightly, T. and C. Mudge, vehicle, £225.

Murat Bay and Goode, twice a week, H. A. Watson, vehicle, £28.

Fowler's Bay and Eucla, every four weeks, M. J. Allen, vehicle, £90.
Hog Bay and Cape Willoughby, weekly, W. Lashmar, horseback, £28.
Kingscote and Cygnet River, weekly, C. G. Palmer, horseback, £18.
Kingscote and Wisanger, weekly, B. H. Bell, vehicle, £24 19. <clip>
<clip> Port Augusta Post-Office and Railway-station, as required, John
Marshall, vehicle, £36. <clip>

Advertiser (Adelaide, SA : 1889 - 1931), Tuesday 17 December 1907, page 11
<<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article5114500>>.

CARRIAGE OF MAILS..

MORE TENDERS ACCEPTED.

MOTOR SERVICE FOR ADELAIDE.

The Postmaster-General (Mr. S. Manger) intimates that he has accepted the following additional tenders for the conveyance of South Australian mails from January 1, 1908 to December 31, 1910. <clip>

<clip> Port Augusta and Port Augusta West, twice daily, D. McCarthy, ferryboat, £40. <clip>

<clip> Watchannie and Carpa, twice a week, F. L. Grund, vehicle. £65.

Cowell and Glynn, weekly. James Guidera, vehicle, £40.

Tumby Bay and Yallunda Flat, twice a week. Robert Hogarth, vehicle. £114.

Port Lincoln and Poonindie, weekly, George King, vehicle, £30.

Mount Wedge and Elliston, twice a week, A. G. Dolphin, vehicle, £65.

Mount Wedge and Poldia, weekly, A.W. Dolphin, bicycle, £30.

Mount Cooper and Witera, weekly, Wm. Starkey, vehicle, £30.

Charra and Koonibba, twice a week, G. E. F. Schultz, horseback, £20.

Penneshaw and Salt Lagoon, weekly, Wm. Gray, vehicle, £43.

Kingscote and Cape Borda, fortnightly, Geo. Snelling, horseback, £85. <clip>



1954. Red X car trial at Eucla showing encroaching sand dunes.



B 54060/55

<https://collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/resource/B+54060/55>

1905. S.A. government tanks 16 miles east of Eucla.

Two telegraph poles in background.

South Australian Register (Adelaide, SA : 1839 - 1900), Friday 5 September 1873, page 4
<<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article39295898>>

Fowler's Bay and Eucla. — From the distant South Australian settlement of Fowler's Bay Mr. W. E. Davidson wrote thus to us on August 20 :— "The Messrs. Muir— two Eucla settlers— recently came here in a cart, and had a good trip, spending only nine days on the track from Eucla to Colona. Two of their horses, though small, were "rolling fat," and looked as if of a tolerably hardy stamp. They started back, accompanied by Trooper Richards and Mr. J. O'Donnell, and had to push on, as the black who was with them did not know all the convenient rock waters; but the return trip made by Mr. Richards and his companion only occupied seven days, and their horses looked well, as they were **piloted** by a Eucla aboriginal who had been carrying the mail between this place and there, and who was thoroughly acquainted with all the rocky waterholes, some of which are of large size and hold perhaps 1,000 gallons. The Messrs. Muir are sinking still for water inland, but as yet have been unsuccessful; and I am afraid that there will be considerable expense incurred before water is obtained, if at all. They have a boarded hut, and are as comfortable as most bush pioneers are. It is sincerely hoped that they may obtain good water, as the land being similar for a long way along the coast, it would be a sort of guarantee for other people to venture, and be the means of opening up hundreds of miles of pastoral country in Western Australia. We have had nice rains, which have done good, though the grass is much later this year than last.

(Mailman Jimmy was running the mail before the telegraph line.)

Saturday Journal (Adelaide, SA : 1923 - 1929), Saturday 25 August 1923, page 17
<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article199232745>

ROUND THE CITY.

GOSSIP ABOUT PEOPLE AND EVENTS.

MAILMAN JIMMY. "Waddikee" writes to me about "Mailman Jimmy," one of our black brethren who has passed into the great beyond. Jimmy was a wonderful example of the powers of endurance of the Australian aborigine. He was the Royal Mail between Fowlers Bay and Eucla for many years. He ran with the mail bags every fortnight from the Bay to Eucla, a distance of 280 miles, and returned during the following fortnight. He could do the journey in faster time than a man on horseback, owing, I presume, to his superior

bushcraft, and his knowledge of reliable water supplies. I can imagine those tough bare feet padding across the scorching sands in summer, through prickly tussock patches as if they never existed, and over rough limestone, with a contented smile on his old face, and seeking no bigger reward for his herculean task, than a stick of 'baccy'. What a marvellous bump of locality was needed during the first few trips to find his way over those endless plains of sand drift. The most amazing thing to me, was that he found sufficient food and water to carry him through the journey.

Mail (Adelaide, SA : 1912 - 1954), Saturday 8 December 1928, page 36
<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article58567579>

Hardy Mailman "Mailman Jimmy," an aborigine who died about five years ago, was a remarkable character well known on the West Coast. He had astounding endurance, and was recognised as "the Royal mail" between Fowler's Bay and Eucla for a long period. On foot he carried the mailbags from the bay to Eucla, about 280 miles. Owing to his wonderful knowledge of the country he could do the trip faster than men on horseback. Rough country did not daunt this plucky native, whose feet were as hard as the toughest leather. He was never greatly rewarded for his journeys, and the greatest titbit he looked for was "a bit of baccy, mister." How he was able to carry sufficient water and food for this long journey was a problem to many. — B. W. F.



PRG 280/1/14/517

<https://collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/resource/PRG+280/1/14/517/continue>
1874. Koolbiri or Mailman Jimmy.

Royal Colonial Institute
Report of Proceedings
Volume 17
1885-6
pp. 144-179

https://play.google.com/books/reader?id=SKQNAAAAQAAJ&pg=GBS.PP1&hl=en_CA

FOURTH ORDINARY GENERAL MEETING

The Fourth Ordinary General Meeting of the Session was held at the St. James's Banqueting Hall, on Tuesday, February 9, 1886.

Sir John Coode, Member of Council, presided. <clip>

<clip> The CHAIRMAN: I feel certain I may assure Mr. Todd that he will have a thoroughly sympathetic audience. It is perhaps well that I should inform you that Mr. Todd was formerly Assistant Astronomer at Cambridge and at the Royal Observatory at Greenwich, and in addition to having been Superintendent of Telegraphs and Government Astronomer in South Australia for upwards of thirty years, he has discharged the duties of Postmaster-General since 1871. I think you will see that he has been pretty fully occupied during the time he has held those offices. I will now call upon Mr. (Charles) Todd (C.M.G.) to read his paper on

TELEGRAPHIC ENTERPRISE IN AUSTRALASIA. <clip>

<clip> In South Australia, besides bridging the continent from south to north, concerning which I shall have more to say presently, and carrying a telegraph round the desolate shores of the Great Australian Bight to Western Australia, the Government, in 1876, laid a splendid cable to Kangaroo Island, and have established telegraph stations at Cape Borda, at the western end of the island commanding the entrance to Investigator Straits, and at Cape Willoughby, at the eastern extremity, commanding the entrance to Backstairs Passage, there being also stations at Cape Jervis on the mainland, and at Troubridge Shoal on Yorke's Peninsula ; and a heavy shore end cable will immediately be laid to the lighthouse on the rocky Althorpe Island, which, like Cape Borda, guards Investigator Straits. <clip>

<clip> Next to the overland telegraph to Port Darwin, our most difficult undertaking was the erection of the telegraph to Western Australia, as anyone who has read Eyre's account of his perilous journey to King George's Sound

will readily understand. Crossing the head of Spencer's Gulf at Port Augusta, the line traverses the waterless country on the western shores of the Gulf to Port Lincoln, thence to Port Elliston, Streaky Bay, Fowler's Bay, round the head of the great Australian Bight to Eucla. Throughout the whole distance there was no available timber, so that iron poles (Oppenheimer's) had to be imported from England, and distributed over the line. We had a protracted drought, there was no feed for the teams, and water could be obtained at only a few places far apart. Forage and water had, therefore, to be carted long distances. There were dense scrubs to cut through for a space of 40 feet wide, and long stretches of heavy sandhills to cross. The most difficult section was from Fowler's Bay to Eucla, 230¾ miles, where there was no intermediate point at which materials could be landed. From Fowler's Bay to the head of the Bight, 90 miles, the line for the first 53 miles alternately traverses clear plains and dense scrubs, and the rest of the distance heavy sandhills without water. From the head of the Bight to Eucla, 140 miles, an unbroken wall of high lime stone cliffs form the coast-line; the country is mostly open plains, lightly timbered with sandal - wood, mulga, and myall. In favourable seasons there is good feed and saltbush, but water is only to be obtained in small quantities, at distant intervals, in rock holes, a sort of natural tank. A few wells have been sunk, but water was not struck till the sea level was reached, and then it was salt as the sea. The construction party, under Mr. R. R. Knuckey, found the rock holes empty and the country bare of feed. Over this unbroken stretch of 140 miles of dry and barren country we had to cart, besides telegraph materials and food, all the forage and water required for the teams, and this, after the toilsome journey of 90 miles from Fowler's Bay. Notwithstanding all these obstacles, under a burning Australian sun and during this terrible drought, the work, commenced on August 25, 1875, was completed in July, 1877, the total length of wire being 979 miles from Adelaide, and 759 miles of new line, starting from Port Augusta. There are 12,474 iron poles, planted as a rule five chains apart, painted sawn timber poles being used in the townships. To secure good insulation the line was kept as far from the coast as possible, and, as we had no roads to confine us, we could avoid angles. Our longest straight run is 72 miles. Owing to the long stages without water, I have had to place tanks in some places along the line, to facilitate inspection and repairs. Thus between the head of the Bight and Eucla I have placed tanks, at 35, 70, and 100 miles from Eucla. These tanks are covered with galvanised iron roofs, which catch sufficient rain-water for our purpose. At the head of the Bight good water has been found by sinking.

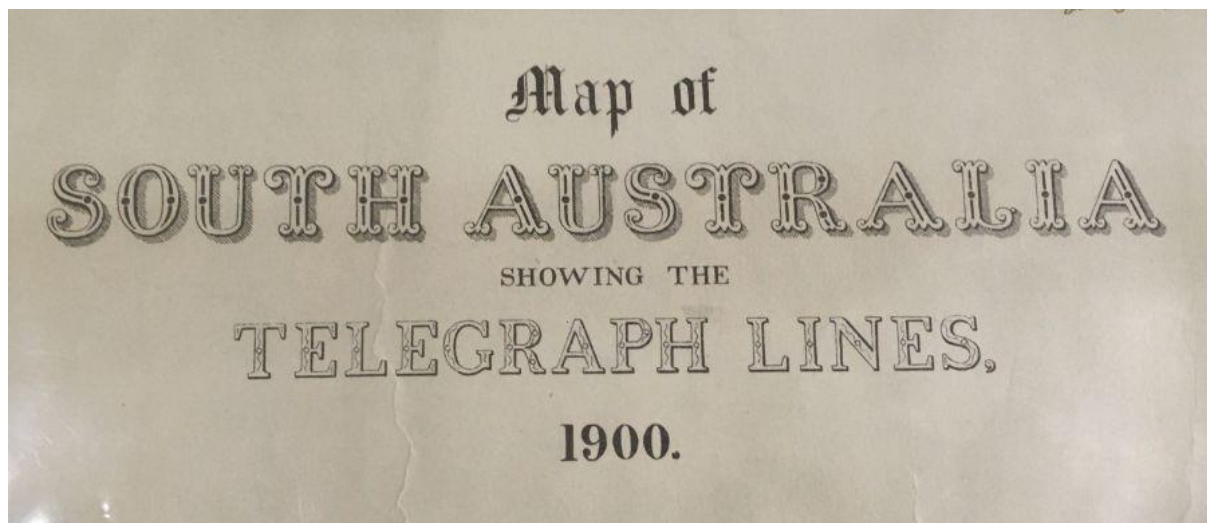
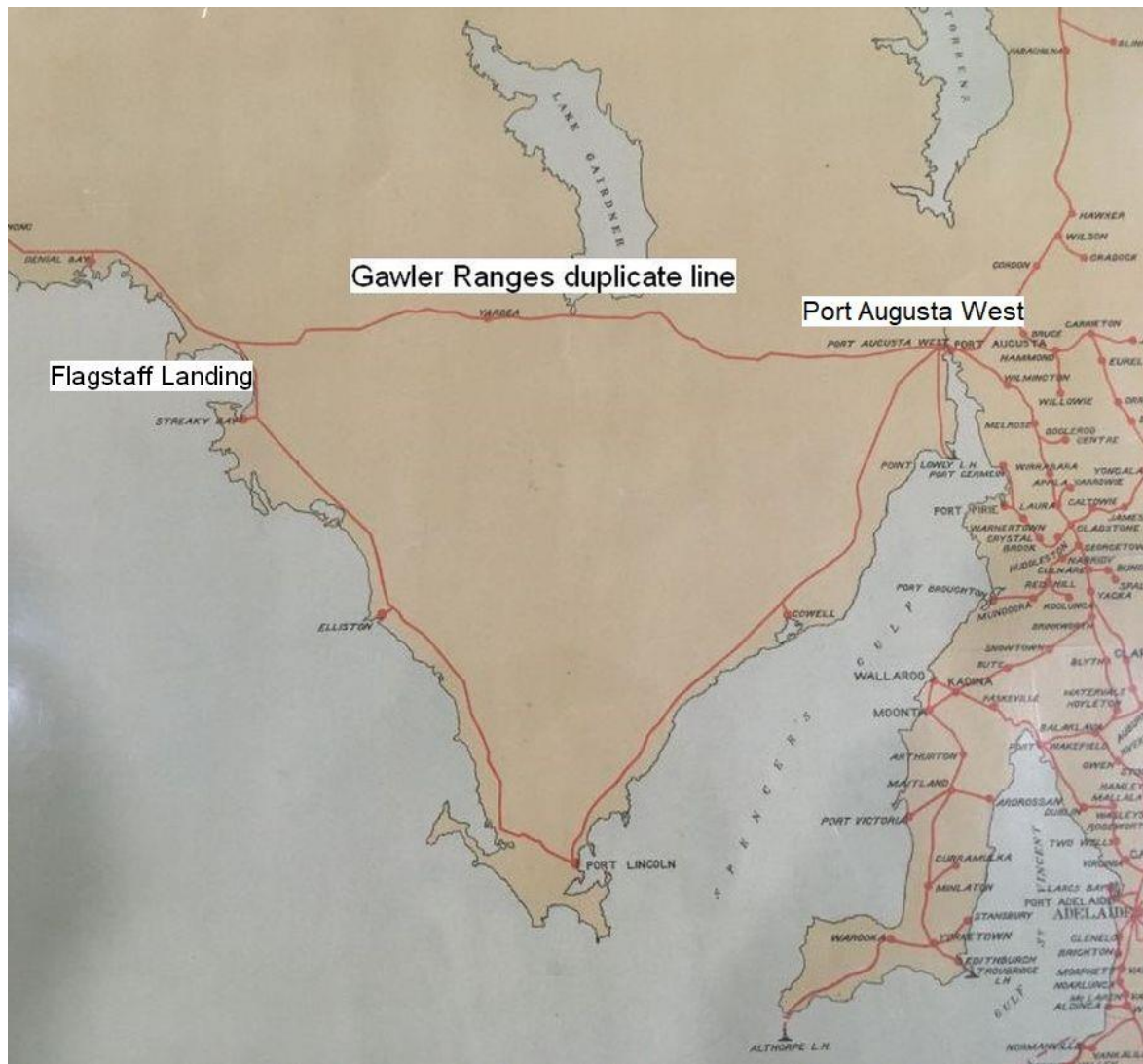
The cost of the work was £68,205 58 1d. The Western Australian section, from King George's Sound, 752 miles, was commenced nearly simultaneously with the South Australian section, and was completed in December, 1877,

communication being open with Perth, 1,986 miles from Adelaide, on the 8th.
There are stations at: -

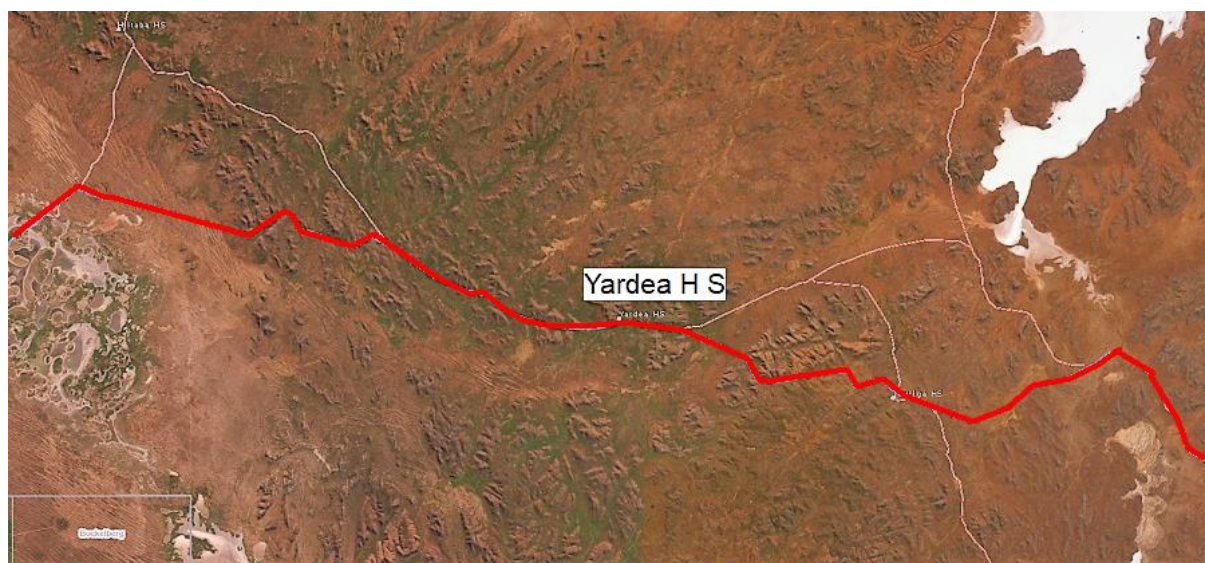
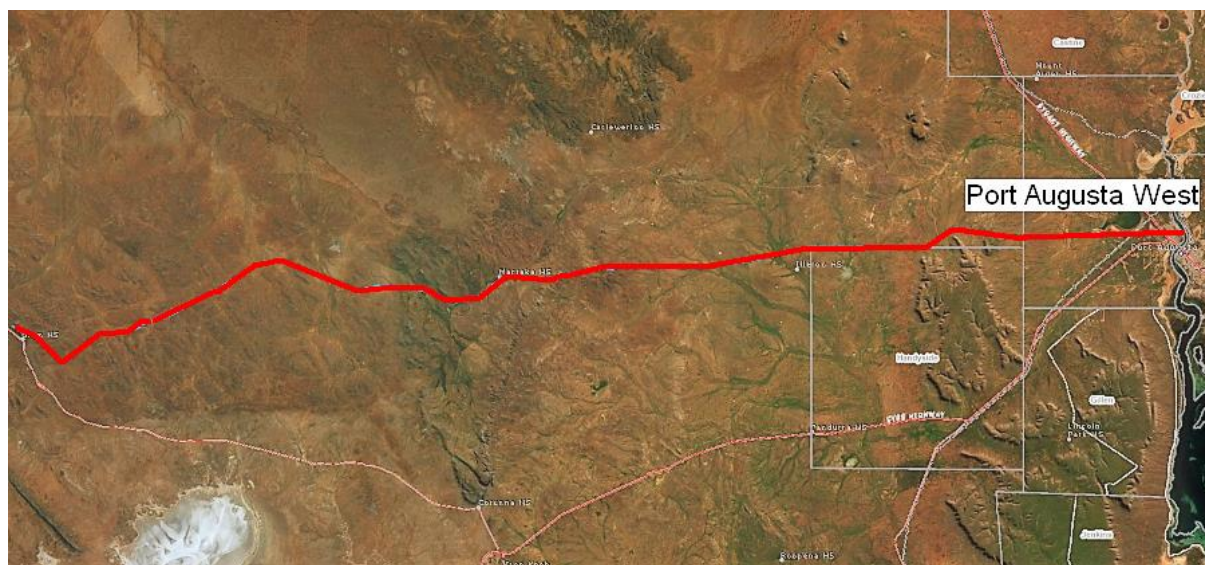
Bremer	104	miles from Albany.
Esperance Bay.....	273	
Israelite Bay	399	
Eyre's Sandpatch	592	
Eucla	752	

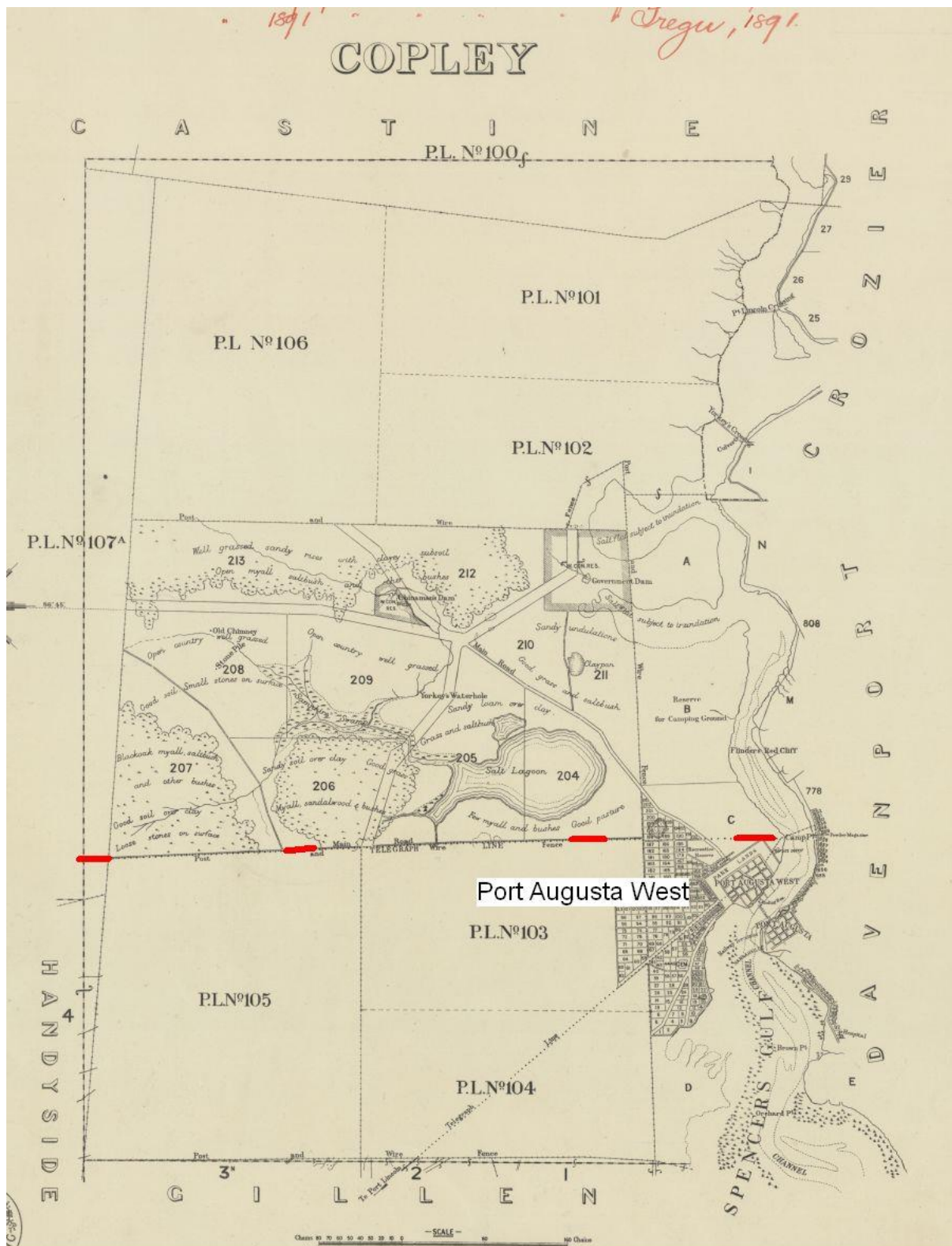
And in South Australia at Fowler's Bay, Streaky Bay, Port Elliston, Port
Lincoln, Franklin Harbour, and Port Augusta. <clip>

55. Duplicate telegraph line via the Gawler Ranges.



Drawn by E.K. Baker. SLSA zmp 830 sa/y 1900





https://maps.collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/series/hundreds_SA_63360/C/copley/zsmpl_830bje63360_copley1903.pdf

Evening Journal (Adelaide, SA : 1869 - 1912), Thursday 26 December 1895,
page 2

<<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article198464551>>

LATEST NEWS.

THE DUPLICATE TELEGRAPH LINE TO WESTERN AUSTRALIA.—The Minister of Education states that the construction of the duplicate telegraph line to Eucla will be begun soon after the holidays. Mr. Hanley, an officer now at Alice Springs, will have charge of the work. For 100 miles west of Port Augusta wooden poles will be used, pine from desolate Angipena being in requisition for the purpose. Some time will elapse before the iron poles for the remainder of the line can arrive from England.

Express and Telegraph (Adelaide, SA : 1867 - 1922), Thursday 16 January 1896, page 2

<<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article209055565>>

WEST AUSTRALIAN TELEGRAPH.

The work in connection with the duplication of the telegraph line between South and West Australia is now being carried out. The iron poles necessary for the construction of a portion of the line have been ordered from England, as also, have other materials required, and some of these will arrive shortly. The line will be taken from Port Augusta along the Gawler Ranges to a point west of Streaky Bay, and thence it will run on the same posts as the present line. The distance from Port Augusta to Streaky Bay is about 230 or 240 miles; and by taking the line that way instead of carrying it all the way from Adelaide on the old posts, a distance of something like 400 miles will be saved. The distance which South Australia has to carry the line is 570 or 580 miles, and her terminal point is Eucla, situated just a little on the West Australian side of the border. It is expected that the South Australian portion of the contract will take eight or nine months to carry out, the delay arising from the necessity for getting the materials from England. The posts along the first hundred miles of the route between Port Augusta and Streaky Bay will probably be of wood, but where there is no timber iron posts will be used. In thickly wooded country the posts will be of wood, and in order to prevent any risk of their being destroyed by fire a track 30 ft. in width will be cleared along the line. The erection of a telegraph line from Coolgardie to Norseman and Dundas is being proceeded with,

whereby Esperance will be placed in telegraphic communication with these places.

Port Augusta Dispatch, Newcastle and Flinders Chronicle (SA : 1885 - 1916), Friday 7 February 1896, page 4
<<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article197602460>>.

CARTERS WANTED TO CART 2,100 TELEGRAPH POLES from Port Augusta out Westward. Specification and Particulars at Messrs Young & Gordon's, Port Augusta. F. J. BRADFORD.

South Australian Register (Adelaide, SA : 1839 - 1900), Friday 14 February 1896, page 3
<<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article53674793>>

THE GOVERNMENT GAZETTE.

[From the Government Gazette for February 13.]

TENDERS ACCEPTED. <clip> By Supply and Tender Board. — Supply and delivery of 2,100 native pine telegraph poles, Port Augusta West, F. J. Bradford, £2,493 15s., <clip>

Evening Journal (Adelaide, SA : 1869 - 1912), Thursday 27 February 1896, page 2
<<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article199887673>>

LATEST NEWS.

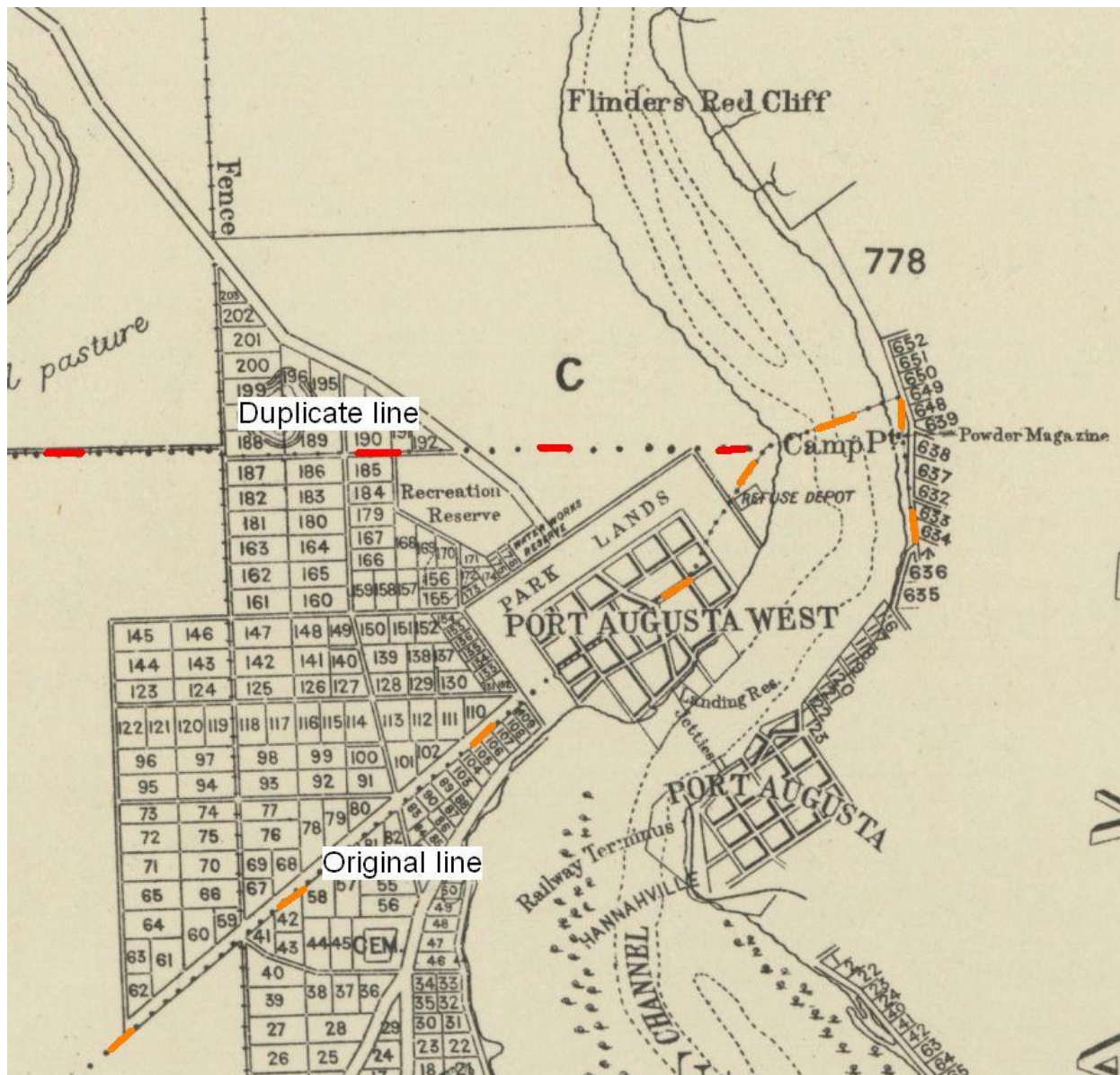
THE WESTERN AUSTRALIAN TELEGRAPH LINE. — In order to cope with the enormous amount of traffic on the telegraph line between Western Australia and this colony it has been found necessary to provide another wire, and on Wednesday the Superintendent of Telegraphs, Sir Charles Todd, dispatched a party to the West Coast to carry out portion of the undertaking. The party, consisting of eight men, left by the brigantine Wollomai, and Mr. T. Hanley, who has been employed in connection with the Adelaide and Port Darwin telegraph line since its construction, is in charge. A party is at present clearing the line recently surveyed from Port Augusta to Flagstaff Landing direct, and another party will shortly be engaged in constructing the telegraph line on this route. The object of the party which left on Wednesday is to continue this line from the junction at Flagstaff Landing to Eucla, where the Western Australian line is met. This second wire from the Landing will be run on the existing telegraph poles, and the work will also strengthen the line, as the span between the poles is to be reduced from five to four chains. A large

quantity of gear and material necessary for the work was taken away by the Wollomai, besides eight horses. The shipping of the material was supervised by the Inspector of Lines, Mr. J. B. Richards. The distance between Flagstaff Landing and Eucla is 380 miles approximately, and it is expected that this section of the work will be completed by October next.

South Australian Register (Adelaide, SA : 1839 - 1900), Monday 20 April 1896, page 4

<<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article53684440>>.

The Western Australian Telegraph Link. — The increased activity in the share market during the past few days has again put considerable pressure on the telegraph line between Adelaide and Perth. Early in the week a mishap to the South Australian portion of the line caused the operators on this side of the border to get 600 messages behind, but once the line was set right they quickly overhauled arrears. Since Wednesday messages have been transmitted at the rate of one per minute, and the energetic operators have been hard pushed to keep abreast of their work. Satisfactory progress is being made with the new duplicate line. Sufficient wood poles to construct 100 miles of line beyond Port Augusta have already been cut, and some have been delivered. In a few weeks the building of the line will be actually begun, but Sir Charles Todd is anxious that his men should not start with it until enough poles are available to keep them going straight ahead. The iron poles which are to be used further inland have not yet arrived from England.



Port Augusta Dispatch, Newcastle and Flinders Chronicle (SA : 1885 - 1916),
 Friday 1 May 1896, page 4
<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article197602865>.

Planting the First Pole of the New Telegraph Line to West Australia. AN INTERESTING CEREMONY.

The commencement of the construction of the new telegraph line from Port Augusta to Eucla, in West Australia, was made the occasion of a very interesting ceremony yesterday afternoon at Port Augusta West.

By the invitation of the Mayor of Port Augusta West (Mr Alex. Rothwell) Messrs R. W. Foster and Thos. Burgoyne (members for Newcastle), the Mayors

of Port Augusta and Davenport, and a number of prominent citizens attended to witness the erection of the first pole, which function was celebrated on the west side of the gulf at the junction crossing—opposite the Powder Magazine. Mr Jas. Beatton, post and telegraph master of Port Augusta, with Mr J. B. Richards inspector of telegraph lines, ganger Murphy and his men were also present.

After the pole had been duly placed in position,

Mr ALEX. BOTHWELL, the Mayor, declared it well and truly set, and said he could congratulate the Government on the commencement of a most important work — the beginning of a new telegraph line to West Australia—a work that was urgently required, as letters had very often reached their destination in both the colonies of West and South Australia in consequence of defectiveness in the old telegraph line running, as it did mainly round the coast in quicker time than a telegraph message could be got through, and which was not always caused by pressure of work. The colony had passed through and which was not always caused by pressure of work. The colony had of the Burra and Moonta mines discoveries by Teetulpa and Broken Hill, and now the West Australian goldfield discoveries bid fair to again advance South Australia. He hoped to see this new telegraph line followed by a line of railway to the West. He was pleased the Government had seen fit to use locally grown timber, and no finer posts could be obtained anywhere for the work than those brought from Angipena. The Government were also doing the work with experienced Government men, which would be a guarantee of the stability of the line. He regretted the absence of Mr Poynton, the member for Flinders, as he would have been pleased to be there, but he was glad to welcome the members for Newcastle and the other gentlemen present. The interests of both Port Augusta east and west and Newcastle and Flinders were identical and bound up together, as it were. He also regretted the absence of Sir Charles Todd, but was pleased to see his worthy representative, Mr Jas. Beatton. He felt highly honored at having the privilege of planting the first pole of this most important telegraph line.

(Cheers).

Mr R. W. FOSTER congratulated His Worship the Mayor on the commencement of the new line. He was sorry Mr Poynton was not present, and in the absence of Sir Charles Todd he was pleased to see present Mr Jas. Beatton, one of the oldest and most respected officers of the Telegraph Department. As to the line itself, he believed it was only the fore-runner of a line of railway from Port Augusta West direct to West Australia. He also believed that Esperance Bay would in time become the outlet of the West Australian goldfields, and the telegraph line now being erected would so greatly facilitate business between the two colonies as to increase it to an extent at present unknown. He congratulated the district on the important event.

Mr T. BURGOYNE cordially agreed with all his colleague had said, and it gave him great pleasure to be present. But for the greater part of the day his thoughts had been fixed on another poll, where he was nearly at the top; but on this auspicious occasion (looking up at the top of the 25-foot erection) he was only too glad to be at the bottom of such a handsome pole! (Laughter) He missed the worthy representative for Flinders, Mr Poynton. He considered the new line would be found of great advantage, and that it would be the precursor of a railway that would convey Queensland cattle across to the West. Here he would like to say that he was entirely opposed to the Stock Tax on Queensland cattle—it was a great mistake and hampered and hindered the immense prospective cattle trade between the colonies of Queensland and West Australia. He congratulated Mr Beatton on the progress of his useful department, which was one of the best in the colony. He hoped the line would be constructed speedily and well. (Applause).

Mr JAS. BEATTON, telegraph master of Port Augusta, said he had seen some of the very first, if not the first, lines of telegraph constructed in the colony, he hoped this line when completed, would remove obstructions to West Australian traffic.

Mr N. A. WEBB, Mayor of Port Augusta, thought on this occasion they could congratulate each other on the commencement of a new era. All lines of telegraph connecting the colonies were but hastening federation which would be for the welfare of all the colonies, and we, being in the middle, must benefit. They would all agree with him that there were great difficulties in the way of a railway to West Australia, except it be constructed upon a federal basis or by a federal government. The prospective profits were not such as would warrant a colony like South Australia undertaking such a gigantic work, but it would be perfectly justifiable if taken in hand by a combination of all the colonies. Brighter things were in store for Port Augusta, and the days of desolation were at an end and the people were watching developments with sanguine expectations.

Mr B. THOMPSON, the Mayor of Quorn, congratulated the district on the starting of the new line, and was glad the Government had utilized local timber. He considered there was plenty of cattle and stock in the north to load two vessels weekly at Port Augusta for the West Australian markets.

Mr G. B. RICHARDSON addressed the gathering in a facetious manner, and congratulated Port Augusta West and the colony on the new undertaking. The MAYOR, in a few complimentary words, thanked the visitors for their presence, and declared the function at an end. Several of those present had to return to catch the 4.30 train to Quorn, but several remained at the invitation of Mr Bothwell. when adjournment took place to the Western Hotel, where the health of the Mayor was drank with musical honors.

(Author. After the planting of the first pole in August 1875 of the original line, “those present adjourned to Host Fitt’s Western Hotel” also.)

Advertiser (Adelaide, SA : 1889 - 1931), Saturday 2 May 1896, page 5
<<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article34545611>>

COMMUNICATION WITH THE WEST.

THE NEW TELEGRAPH LINE. AN INTERESTING CEREMONY.

Port Augusta, April 30.

An interesting ceremony took place at Port Augusta West to-day, the event being the erection of the first post of the new telegraph line to the West. The old line crosses the gulf about a mile north of Port Augusta West. The party, consisting of the Mayor of Port Augusta West (Mr. A. Bothwell), the Mayors of Port Augusta (Mr. U. A. Webb) and Quorn (Mr. B. Thompson), and the members for Newcastle (Messrs. R. W. Foster and T. Burgoyne), Mr. J. Beaton (postmaster) and Inspector Mr. J. B. Richards of the Telegraph Department went out at half-past 2 o'clock to the spot where Mr. Murphy and his men had the pole ready for placing in position.

After it had been erected Mr. Bothwell declared it truly placed, and said he was glad the Government had seen fit to construct the line. It would be of great assistance in facilitating business between South Australia and the West. The line, he knew, was needed, as letters often reached their destination in West Australia before telegrams did. This difficulty would now be overcome, and he hoped to see the day when a line of railway as well as telegraph would go through the Port to the West. (Cheers.) Depression existed, but in days gone, when the colony had been at its lowest, something had always turned up to help her out. The Burra, Teetulpa, and Broken Hill mines were instances, and now the West Australian trade was helping us. He was pleased that the poles had been obtained from Angipena at a low cost. He was sorry that Mr. Poynton was not there that day. He knew he would have liked to have been. He was gratified that the members for Newcastle were there, as the interests of Newcastle and Flinders were identical. (Cheers.)

Mr. Foster said he was glad to be present. With the mayor he regretted Mr. Poynton's absence, but he knew that absent or present Mr. Poynton always had the interest of his district at heart. He congratulated Mr. Beaton as the representative of the department on being there to see the line started. He felt that next to Sir Charles Todd no man was held in higher esteem by the department and its officers than Mr. Beaton, and it was only fitting he should be there that day. The commencement of the line was a sign that in the future Port Augusta West and the district would be connected by railway with West Australia. He hoped the line would be a success in every way, and he

congratulated the department on its energy in carrying out the work, and the district on having it pass through it. (Hear, hear.)

Mr. BURGOYNE said he was glad to be there. He had, however, been very much concerned of late about another "poll." He regretted Mr. Poynton's absence. He hoped to see in addition to the line, the West Australia rail way, but before that was made the stock tax should be repealed, so that cattle could be sent at cheap rates through the district, and Port Augusta be the centre of a large cattle trade. (Hear, hear.) He congratulated the department and Mr. Beaton and his officers on the occasion. The Telegraph department was one of the most useful and best conducted of the Government departments. He hoped the line would be a success and bring business to the colony. (Cheers.)

Mr. Webb supported the remarks of the previous speakers. He congratulated the district on the line, and hoped it would be the forerunner of a railway which should be constructed by a Federal Government. It was a federal work, and he hoped to see the time when federation was an accomplished fact and all the colonies connected by rail. When that time came about there would be thousands of people in the north instead of the hundreds now. (Cheers.)

Mr. Thompson said he was glad of the opportunity to be present as he believed the line would benefit the colony. He was pleased the Government were using native timber for the work, and he was sure that the line would result in good. Mr. Gilbert Richardson supported, and hoped the line would be the forerunner of a railway.

Mr. Beaton suitably replied to the speakers, and the gathering dispersed.

Adelaide Observer (SA : 1843 - 1904), Saturday 9 May 1896, page 16
<<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article162316668>>.

THE NEW WEST AUSTRALIAN TELEGRAPH LINE. CEREMONY AT PORT AUGUSTA WEST.

Port Augusta, April 30.

An interesting ceremony was performed at Port Augusta West today, the occasion being the erection of the first post of the new telegraph line to Western Australia. The old line crosses the Gulf about a mile to the north of Port Augusta West, and the junction of the new line is effected at this point. The Mayor of Port Augusta, <clip>

Advertiser (Adelaide, SA : 1889 - 1931), Friday 22 May 1896, page 4
<<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article34547619>>

WEST AUSTRALIAN TELEGRAPH.

The work of duplicating the telegraph line from Port Augusta to Eucla is proceeding apace, and the Postmaster-General expects the iron poles, which will be used for a portion of the route, to arrive from England very shortly. About 100 tons will be landed at Streaky Bay, and 30 at Flagstaff landing. Sir Charles Todd is inviting tenders for the carriage of the material from Port Adelaide to Streaky Bay and Flagstaff landing

Evening Journal (Adelaide, SA : 1869 - 1912), Thursday 4 June 1896, page 2
<<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article199894581>>

LATEST NEWS.

<clip> The Duplicate Western Australian Telegraph Line. The Postmaster-General. Sir Charles Todd, is visiting Port Augusta for the purpose of inspecting the route of the new telegraph line to Western Australia. On Wednesday evening our Port Augusta correspondent telegraphed:—"The Postmaster-General drove out with Inspector Richards to the head of the line to-day. Twenty-two miles of posts have been erected, and between sixteen and seventeen miles of wire have been fixed. A telephone instrument was taken. Port Augusta being spoken over the line. The party, in charge of Mr. J. Murphy, is erecting the poles at the rate of nearly nine miles per week. Sir Charles reports that the line so far is a splendid piece of work, the poles, which were brought from Angipena, being exceptionally good. The first hundred miles will be constructed of wooden poles, and the remainder to Fowler's Bay of iron. The Fowler's Bay party has already strengthened sixty miles of the present line. Sir Charles states that if the poles come to hand promptly the present rate of construction will be maintained." <clip>

<clip> A RECORD MONTH FOR TELEGRAMS.—Sir Charles Todd has advised the Minister of Education and Agriculture that the number of telegrams dispatched between this colony and Western Australia during May—on twenty five working days —was 31,450, which was the highest number on record. This immense business is due, of course, to the lively interest taken in the Western goldfields. <clip>

Advertiser (Adelaide, SA : 1889 - 1931), Thursday 4 June 1896, page 5
<<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article34548914>>

WEST AUSTRALIAN TELEGRAPH.

Sir Charles Todd, the Postmaster-General, is at present on a visit to Port Augusta on business in connection with the construction of a duplicate telegraph wire to Eucla, which the department is making every effort to complete at as early a date as possible so that the large amount of work with

West Australia may be more expeditiously performed. Sir Charles is expected to return to the city on Saturday. Good progress is being made in clearing the track for the line west of Port Augusta, and tenders are being called for the conveyance of the material required for the further section to the west coast from Port Adelaide. When the estimate of the distance between Coolgardie and Eucla was first made by the West Australian officials the figures were much greater than those which have since been found to represent the correct distances. According to the survey recently completed the distance between Coolgardie and Dundas was set down at 125 miles, and between Dundas and Eucla at 525 miles. The first mentioned distance was found to be only slightly in excess of that which has now been covered by the line, but a considerable reduction has been made between Eucla and Dundas. The principal difference was between Dundas and Ponton's Station, which proves to be 115 miles instead of 170 miles. The length of the line will be 436 miles. There is one stretch, from Ponton's Station almost to Eyre, where the line runs 140 miles in a straight line.

Express and Telegraph (Adelaide, SA : 1867 - 1922), Monday 8 June 1896, page 3
<<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article209066198>>.

THE WEST AUSTRALIAN TELEGRAPH.

The Postmaster-General (Sir Charles Todd) returned on Friday from Port Augusta. He inspected the duplicate telegraph line which is being erected to Western Australia, and is very well pleased with the work that has been accomplished. The line is being carried from Port Augusta via Yardea to the Flagstaff Landing at the north-west corner of Streaky Bay, a distance of 237 miles. The line for the first 100 miles from Port Augusta is being erected on wooden poles, and the remainder with iron poles; while iron poles will also be put up between Flagstaff Landing and Eucla. Iron poles and a large quantity of wire are being shipped at Port Adelaide for Port Augusta, and tenders have been called for cartage of the material from the northern port. A large number of iron poles for the line are also being forwarded to Streaky Bay. Sir Charles noticed on coming back to the city that there was considerable improvement in the appearance of the country after the rains which had fallen since he journeyed north last Monday.

Advertiser (Adelaide, SA : 1889 - 1931), Tuesday 9 June 1896, page 5
<<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article34549317>>

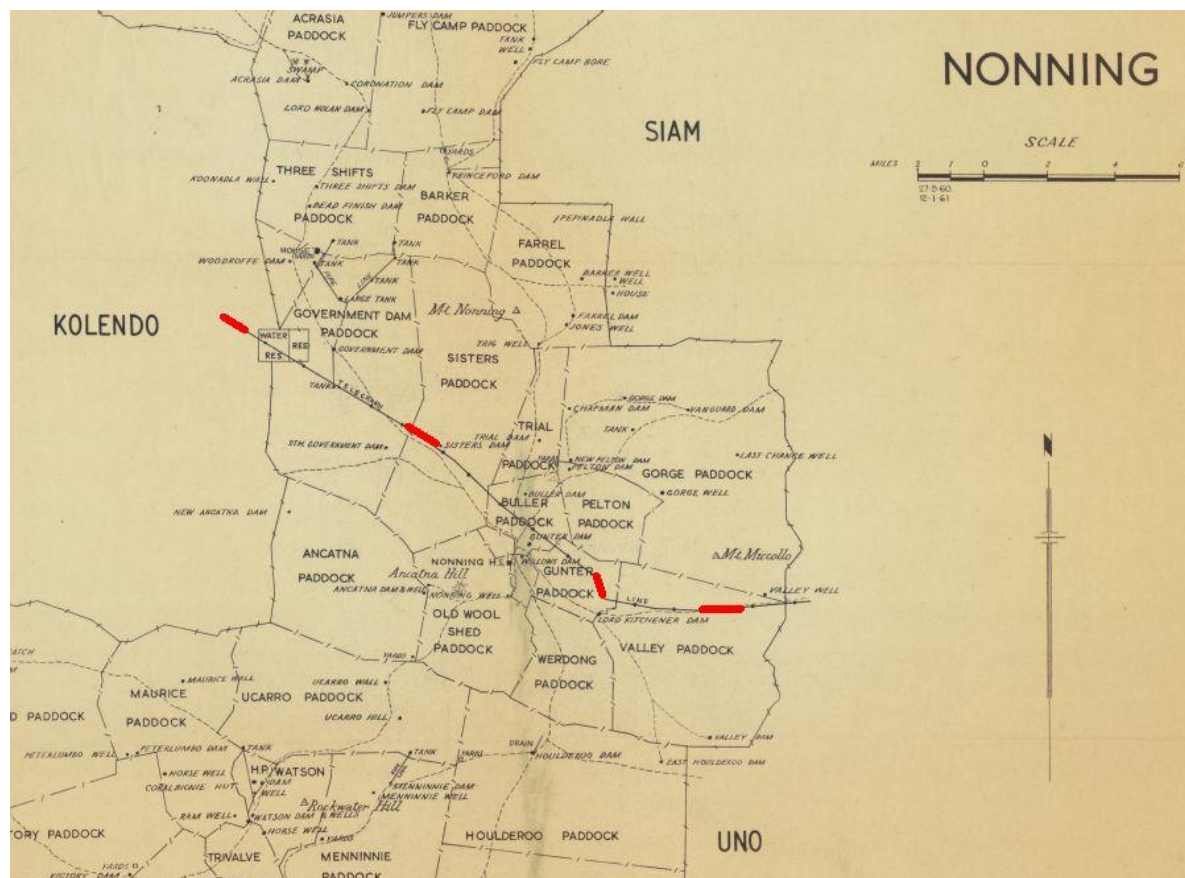
<clip> On Monday afternoon Sir Charles Todd received three tenders for the cartage of telegraph wires and poles from Port Augusta to Yartoo, (Yardea) on

the west coast, for the South Australian section of the new telegraph-line between this colony and West Australia. <clip> (Iron poles?)

Advertiser (Adelaide, SA : 1889 - 1931), Tuesday 15 September 1896, page 5
<<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article34558961>>

THE WEST AUSTRALIAN TELEGRAPH.

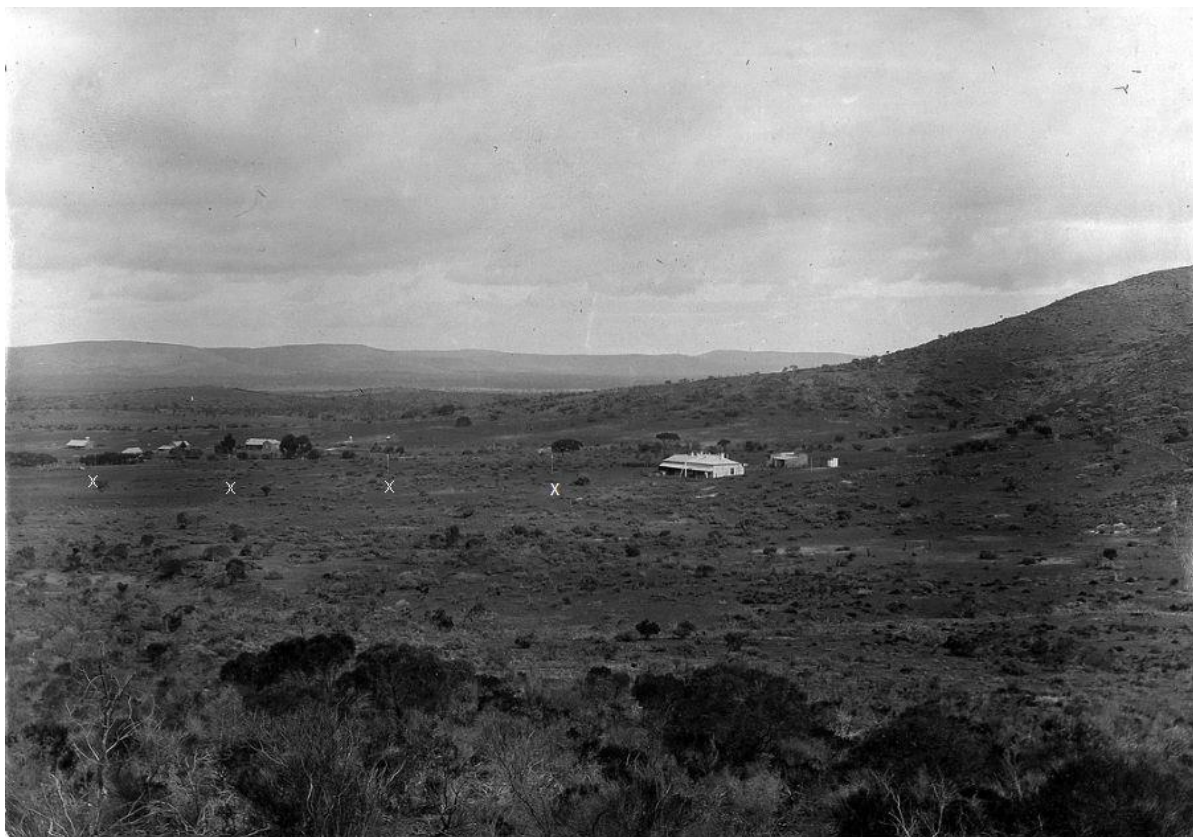
The Work of erecting the new telegraph line to Eucla is proceeding satisfactorily. The West Australian authorities are getting anxious on the subject. They recently asked Sir Charles Todd when the South Australian section will be completed, and were informed that that event will take place at the end of the year. Although the whole line will therefore not be available for traffic for nearly four months some relief will be experienced at the end of October on the completion of the West Australian section, which is generally subject to more interruption than that on this side of the border.





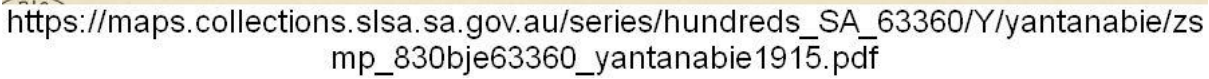
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<https://collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/resource/B+54060/86>
Yardea Telegraph Station. 1905.

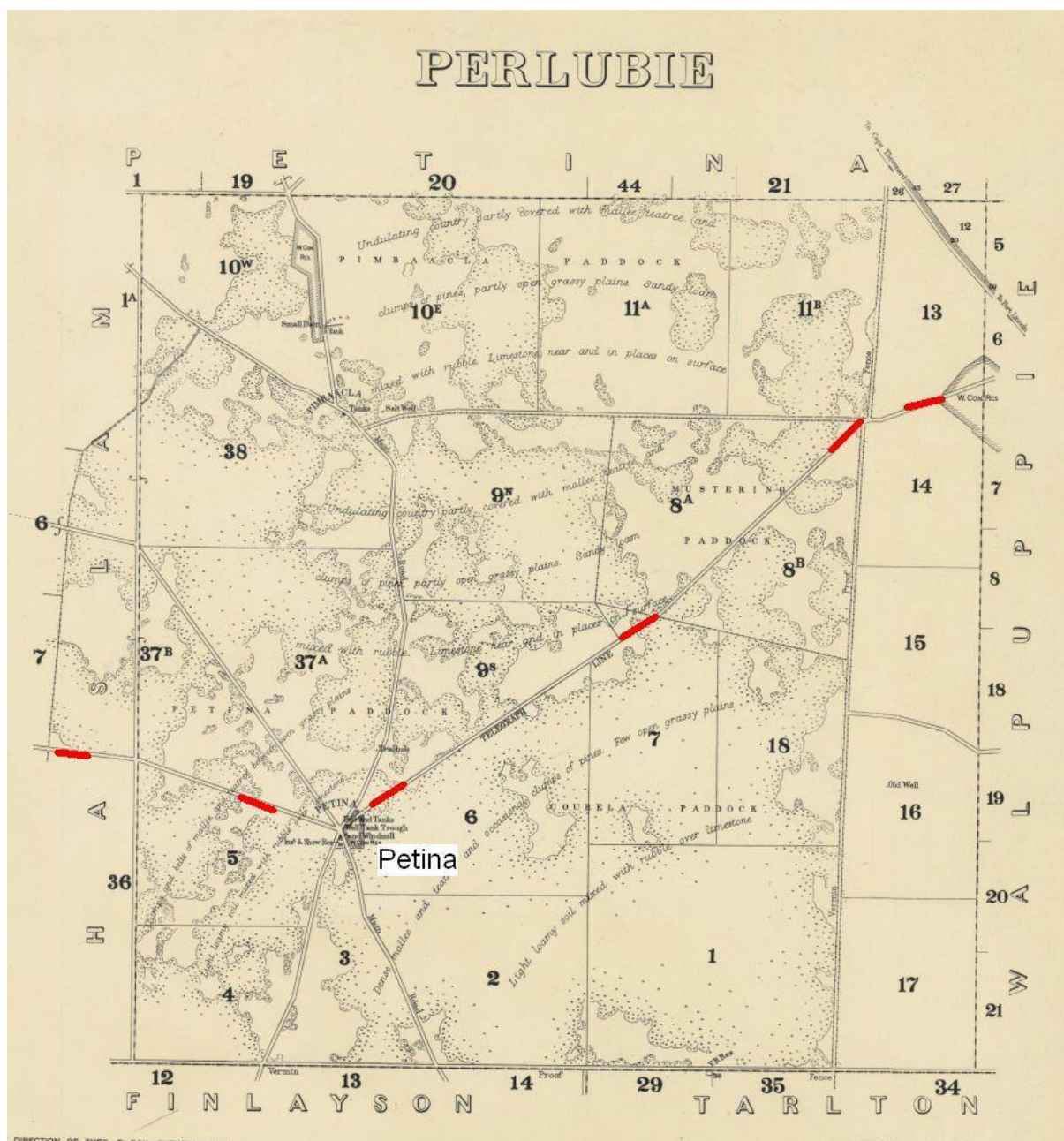


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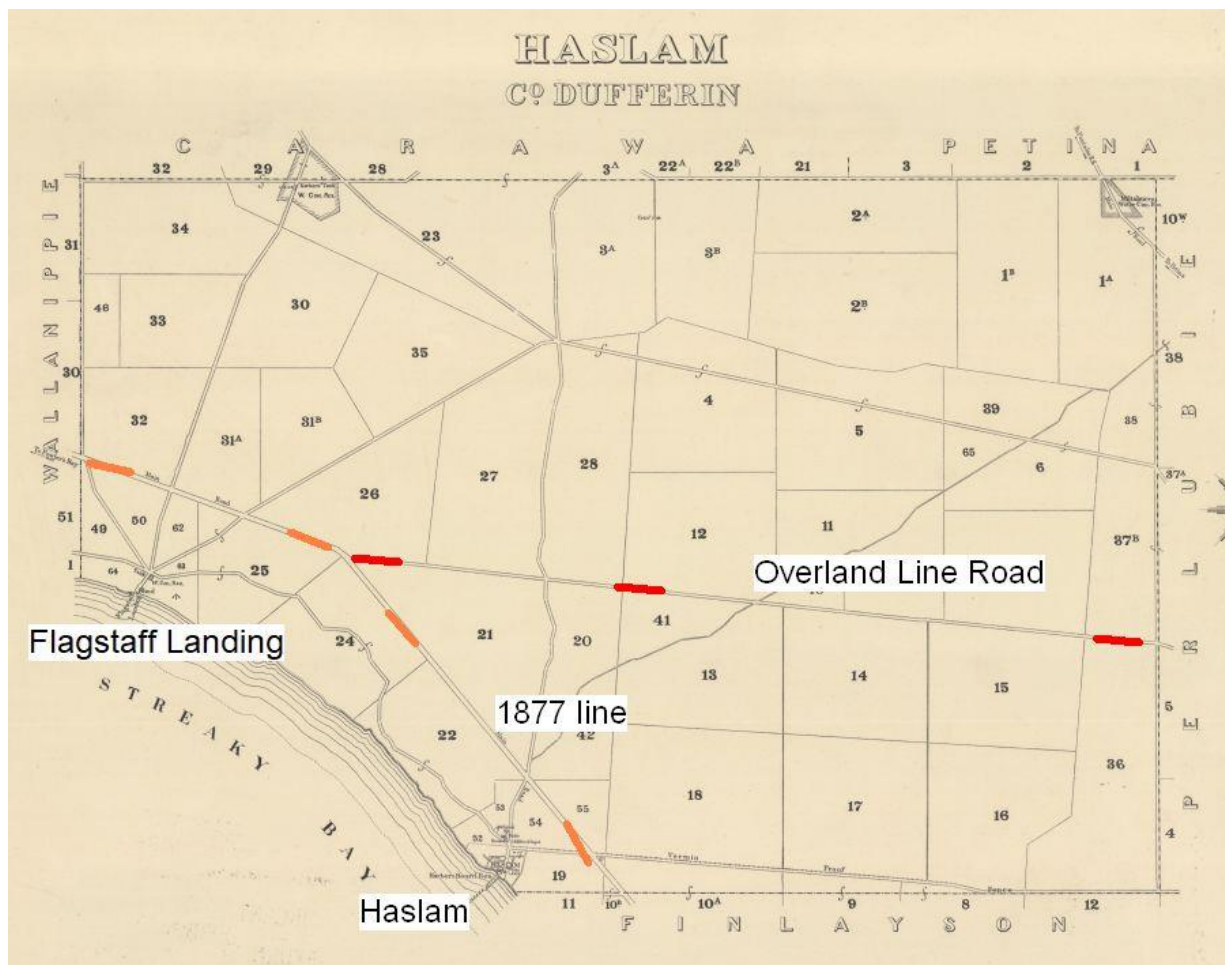
C 1902. Yardea sheep & Telegraph Station







https://maps.collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/series/hundreds_SA_63360/P/perlubie/zsmp_830bj63360_perlubie1895_ds.pdf



Express and Telegraph (Adelaide, SA : 1867 - 1922), Thursday 26 November 1896, page 2
 <<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article209078603>>.

WEST AUSTRALIAN TELEGRAPH LINE.

The South Australian portion of the new telegraph line between this colony and Perth has been completed, and but for the atmospheric disturbances congratulatory messages would have passed between the Ministerial heads of the Telegraph Departments of the two provinces on Wednesday. The West Australian portion has been ready for a few weeks — an exceptionally good season having been experienced in the locality through which the line passes. The construction of the South Australian portion of the line was approved by Parliament on October 3, 1895, and it was soon after authorised by the Minister of Education. It was planned by Sir Charles Todd, and it has been carried out most successfully without loss of life or accident. The estimated cost was £23,000, and it is expected when all the accounts are sent in that this sum will be nearly reached. The length of the new line from Port Augusta West to

Flagstaff landing is 229 miles, and a station will be opened at Yardea 143 miles from Port Augusta West. For the first 100 miles of line 2,052 wooden poles are used, and 2,702 iron poles are used between the 100th milepost and the junction of old line at Flagstaff landing. The average number of poles to each mile is 20. From Flagstaff landing to Eucla, 353 miles, the existing line is strengthened by increasing the average number of poles per mile from 16 to 20. Both sections of the work have been carried out by Government overseers and line parties—that from Port Augusta West to Flagstaff Landing by Mr. J. Murphy and a party of twelve men; and from Flagstaff Landing to Eucla by Mr. T. Hanley with eight men in his party. The survey of the new line was commenced on October 16, 1895, the strengthening of the line between Flagstaff Landing on March 13, 1896, and the first pole of the new line was planted at Port Augusta West on April 30, 1896. The country has been very dry, consequently water has been carted for long stages, and the contractors for the carting of the material met with great difficulties. The new line will avoid the influence of sea fogs, and will work much better than the coastal line. The wire joins a direct wire from Eucla to Coolgardie, which has been erected by the West Australian Government.

Evening Journal (Adelaide, SA : 1869 - 1912), Monday 30 November 1896, page 2

<<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article199921206>>.

THE WEST AUSTRALIAN TELEGRAPH.

THE DUPLICATE LINE. COMMUNICATION OPENED.

The construction of the duplicate telegraph line to Western Australia has been completed, and communications opened direct with Perth. The new line owes its origin chiefly to the development of the goldfields, and the increased trade with South Australia consequent upon the progress of the western colony. Its construction was authorized by the present Minister of Education, the Hon. Dr. J. A. Cockburn, who is Minister controlling the Post and Telegraph Services, and Parliamentary approval was given on October 3 last year. Sir Charles Todd, the Postmaster-General, planned a new line, which has been completed very successfully, and without serious accident or death. The wire joins the direct wire from Eucla on the South Australian border to Coolgardie, which has been erected by the Western Australian Government. It runs from Port Augusta almost direct west to Streaky Bay, and is therefore free from the influence of sea fogs to which the coastal line is subject. The sea fogs of summer are perhaps more injurious than the storms of winter. The old line traversing the coast to Eucla is 780 miles in length, while the length of the South Australian section of the new duplicate wire is 582 miles. The first pole of the old line was planted on

August 25, 1875, by Mr. T. McTurk Gibson, the first Mayor of Port Augusta. The survey of the new line from Port Augusta to Eucla was begun on October 16, 1895. It has been constructed in two sections by Government overseers and line parties—one section being from Port Augusta West to Flagstaff Landing, and the other from Flagstaff Landing to Eucla. Mr. J. Murphy overseered the portion to Flagstaff Landing, having with him a party of twelve men, and Mr. T. Hanley, with eight men, was the overseer of the other part. The distance from Port Augusta West to Flagstaff Landing, Streaky Bay, is 229 miles. A station will be established at Yardea, 143 miles from Port Augusta West. This portion of the telegraph passes to the north of Coralbignie Run and Thurlga to Yardea, and thence westerly through many of the new hundreds, which are not yet settled. The first pole was planted at Port Augusta West on April 30, 1896. For the first 100 miles 2,052 wooden poles have been used, and 2,072 iron poles are employed between the 100th milepost and the junction of the old line at Flagstaff Landing. The average number of poles to each mile is twenty. From Flagstaff Landing to Eucla, a distance of 353 miles, the old line has been strengthened by increasing the average number of poles per mile from sixteen to twenty. This strengthening of the line was begun on March 13. The estimated cost of the line was £23,000, and the expenditure will come well up to the estimate.

South Australian Register (Adelaide, SA : 1839 - 1900), Monday 30 November 1896, page 4

<<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article54468403>>

<clip> The Duplicate Telegraph Line to Western Australia. — On **Sunday night** Sir Charles Todd informed us that the duplicate telegraph line to Western Australia had been **connected** through at Eucla at 10 o'clock that morning. Both lines to the West were working splendidly. <clip>

Evening Journal (Adelaide, SA : 1869 - 1912), Tuesday 19 January 1897, page 2

<<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article207887567>>

The Overland Wires to the West.

A BREAK DOWN.

WEST AUSTRALIAN TELEGRAPH LINES.—On Monday morning the newly erected telegraph line between Adelaide and Eucla broke down at a point between Port Augusta and Yardea. Sir C. Todd, on learning of the mishap, at once caused repairing parties to be dispatched from each end. Owing to the interruption, telegraphic business was confined during the day to the old coast

wire, which worked very badly, and as both the Adelaide and the Western Australian stations had heavy business, a large number of messages had to be delayed. Early on Tuesday the new line was restored, the breakage having been discovered twenty eight miles from Yardea. No news has come to hand in explanation of the interruption. Sir Charles states that the arrears of work, which here and in the West represent some 900 messages, will quickly be got through.

Advertiser (Adelaide, SA : 1889 - 1931), Tuesday 19 January 1897, page 5
<<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article34570990>>.

WEST AUSTRALIAN TELEGRAPH LINE.

The Postmaster-General (Sir Charles Todd) yesterday morning received information that the recently erected telegraph line between Adelaide and Eucla had broken down at some point between Port Augusta and Yardea. Immediate instructions were issued for parties to proceed from each end in search of the fault, but as the distance between the two stations is 140 miles it is anticipated that some little time may elapse before communication is restored. No news has come to hand in explanation of the interruption, and no storms have been reported from the district which would in any way be likely to have caused a breakage. As a consequence of the unfortunate accident all the telegrams to the West had to be transmitted yesterday on the old line, and, telegraphic business being brisk, when Sir Charles left his office in the afternoon there was an accumulation of about 400 messages to be cleared off. The Postmaster General anticipated, however, that these would all be sent through during the night, provided the collection of telegrams waiting to be transmitted from the West to this colony had not been too great. Every effort will be made to restore communication on the new line as speedily as possible.

Relocation of the telegraph line to follow the railway line.

Advertiser (Adelaide, SA : 1889 - 1931), Wednesday 19 January 1927, page 12
<<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article40757977>>

NEW TELEGRAPH AND A RAILWAY.

A gang of about 100 men employed at the Postal Department, is installing a new telegraph circuit from Port Augusta along the East-West line. A party from Western Australia is also connected with the work, and it is expected that they will meet near Cook. The South Australian party will work under the supervision of Line-Inspector Grant; who is at present at Port Augusta. On

Thursday last Mr. W. F. Mitchell (construction engineer), accompanied by an assistant engineer and a clerical staff, left Port Augusta for Oodnadatta where Mr. Mitchell will have charge of the construction of the 21 miles of line to be built along the first section of the Oodnadatta-Alice Springs railway. It was stated that about 300 men will be employed at the work.

Observer (Adelaide, SA : 1905 - 1931), Saturday 5 February 1927, page 48
<<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article165626808>>

OVERLAND PERTH TO ADELAIDE BY MOTOR.

<clip> The little settlement of Eucla—it has a population of six men, two women, and five children—is a repeating telegraph station, and after being established for 50 years will in a few months go out of existence. About May next it is anticipated that the laying of the new overland telegraph line along the route of the Great Western railway will be completed, when the staff at Eucla will be all transferred, and its portable paraphernalia dismantled. It may be that it is the misfortune of Eucla that it is situated nine miles on the westward side of the border. After its discovery as a fine roadstead in 1867. the Adelaide Marine Board dispatched its President (Capt. Douglas) to survey the port, and when it was found that it lay in another State nothing further was done to exploit the harbour. <clip>

Recorder (Port Pirie, SA : 1919 - 1954), Thursday 24 February 1927, page 2
<<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article95870402>>

NEW EAST-WEST LINE.

Carrier Wave System.

<clip> The erection of the Port Augusta-Kalgoorlie line along the route of the overland railway in substitution for the line around the coast, is now well under way, about 600 miles of the line being already erected. In about six weeks this line will have been completed, and will link up with the Kalgoorlie-Perth line, which is also operating. The carrier-wave system will be put into operation on this line, and telegrams will be despatch ed over it between Perth and Cairns. The line will therefore be one of the longest, if not the longest, in the world.

The coast telegraph line around the Australian Bight, which will no longer be required for communications between the capitals, will be used for the purpose of opening up the Eyre Peninsula, which Mr Gibson pointed out, is an extensive wheat growing district capable of development. Branch lines will be run out from the main telegraph route, and settlers in the district will have telephone and telegraph communication with Adelaide. <clip>

Transcontinental (Port Augusta, SA : 1914 - 1954), Friday 15 April 1927, page 3

<<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article168157613>>.

TALKING ACROSS AUSTRALIA.

Overland Telegraph Line that will enable People to Telephone from Cairns to Albany.

What is claimed to be the greatest achievement in telegraph line construction in Australia, and one of the greatest in the world, has been completed within the past few days, says the Melbourne "Age." Since September 22 last, when the Government approved of the scheme for constructing the main East-West telegraph line along the transcontinental railway, as a substitute for the old line along the southern coast, the Postal Department has erected the new line over the whole route between Perth and Adelaide, a distance of 1676 miles. **On March 21**, the line was in operation for the despatch and receiving of commercial telegraph message, by way of a trial, between Perth and the eastern States, and in a few days the line, it was expected, would be in full working order.

In making this announcement the secretary of the Postal Department said that only six months had passed since the scheme had been approved, and in that time the whole of the material, with the exception of the pole, had been assembled, distributed and placed in position. The material included over 670 tons of wire—almost 5,000 miles in length—together with cross arms, insulators and building material. The poles, which were of tubular iron, had been erected by the Commonwealth Railways Department, when the East-West railway was being constructed some years ago, the Railway Department requiring the poles for a single line of telegraph wire for its signal system.

Telegraph repeaters have been installed at Port Augusta, Cook, and Kalgoorlie, and buildings had been erected to accommodate the staff and apparatus. The cost of the undertaking, apart from the poles, was about £140,000. It is intended by the Postal Department to operate on the line mostly with the Creed high speed telegraph system, but the ultimate end in view is telephonic communication between Perth and the eastern States, which would be introduced when there was ample evidence that it would be justified as a business undertaking. The whole of the Department's plans are said to be based on the providing of a telephone service which would enable people in any part of Australia to communicate directly with people in any other part of Australia, from Cairns to Albany.

Institution of Engineers, Australia – SA and WA Division.

The East – West Telegraph Plaquing nomination. P20.

<clip> In 1901 a cable from South Africa via Mauritius and the Cocos Islands was brought ashore at Cottesloe (Perth). This cable largely superseded the Broome cable which was closed in 1914. In the following year (1902) the Cottesloe cable was extended to Adelaide which to some degree reduced the traffic through Eucla. In 1906, the Automatic Wheatstone transmission system was introduced and through working between Perth and Adelaide was inaugurated. Eucla station was then operated by Western Australia telegraph staff only and its function was gradually downgraded to that of an automatic repeater station.

Although the Trans-Australian Railway was completed in 1917, it was not until 1927 that it was possible to add a three circuit line with copper wire to the railway telegraph poling. This replaced the old East West telegraph by a line well away from the baleful influences of the coast.

This new line, coupled with the growing use of wireless telegraphy, meant that the old East West line was no longer needed. After 50 years of faithful (albeit sometimes erratic) service, the line was closed in 1927 as were all the Western Australian stations on the East West line along with the telegraph stations at Smoky Bay and Yardea. However, the line continued to provide a service to wayside stations in South Australia as well as providing a bearer for two three-channel telephone systems and a four-channel telegraph system to Ceduna.

In 1970, a broadband microwave system across the Upper Eyre Peninsula and the Nullarbor, part of a network encircling the continent, was completed. <clip>

56. Kangaroo Island cable.

SAPPA Report

The SA Property and Planning Atlas is available on the Plan SA website: <https://sappa.plan.sa.gov.au>

Cable

Date created:

May 5, 2022



Disclaimer: The information provided above, is not represented to be accurate, current or complete at the time of printing this report. The Government of South Australia accepts no liability for the use of this data, or any reliance placed on it.

SAPPA Report

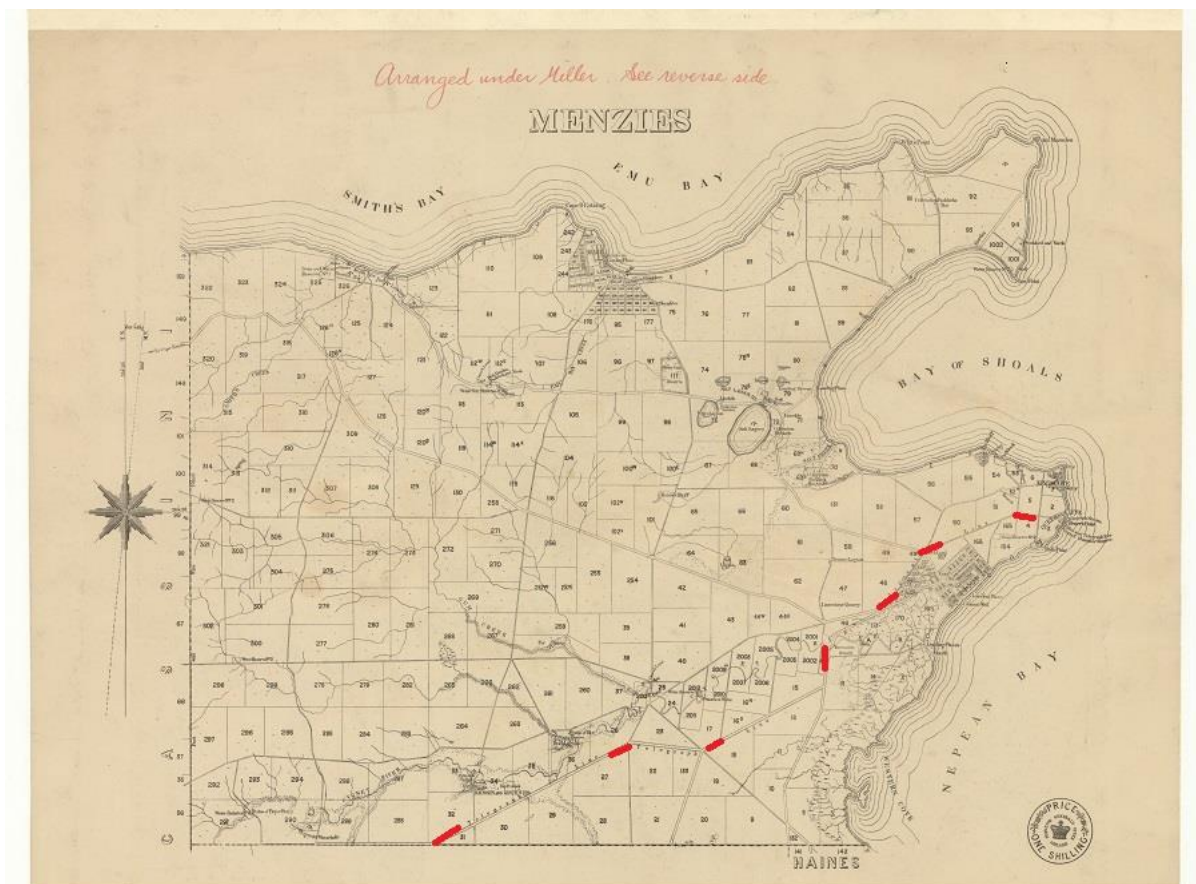
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Date created:

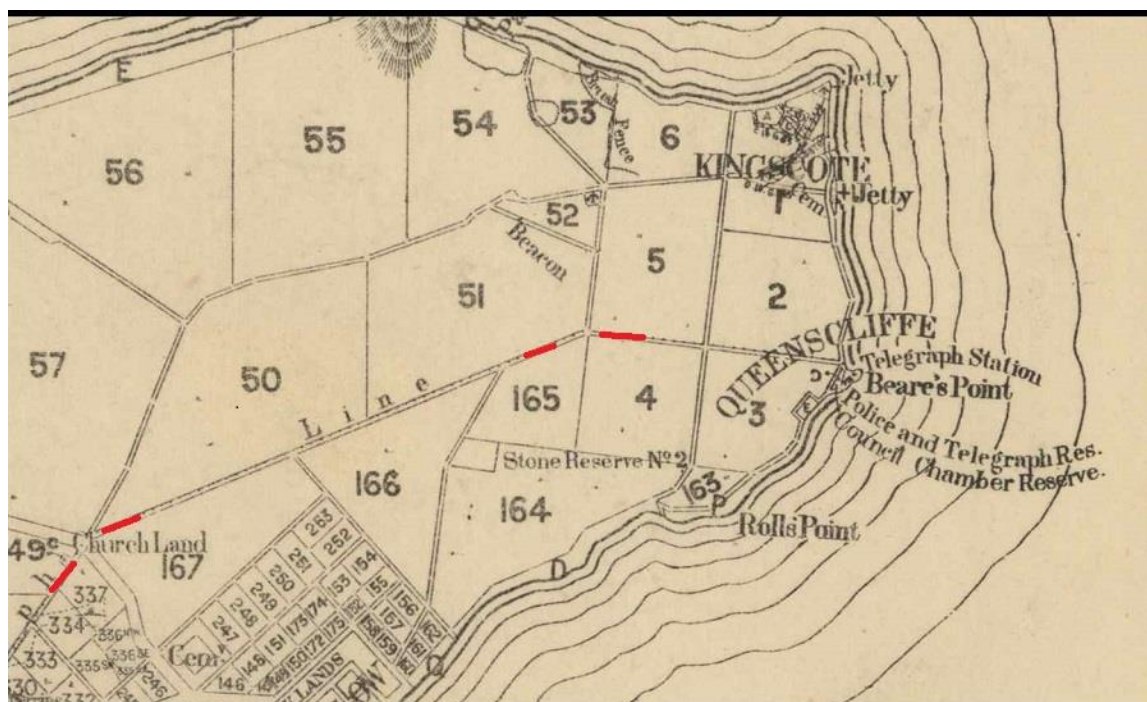
May 5, 2022

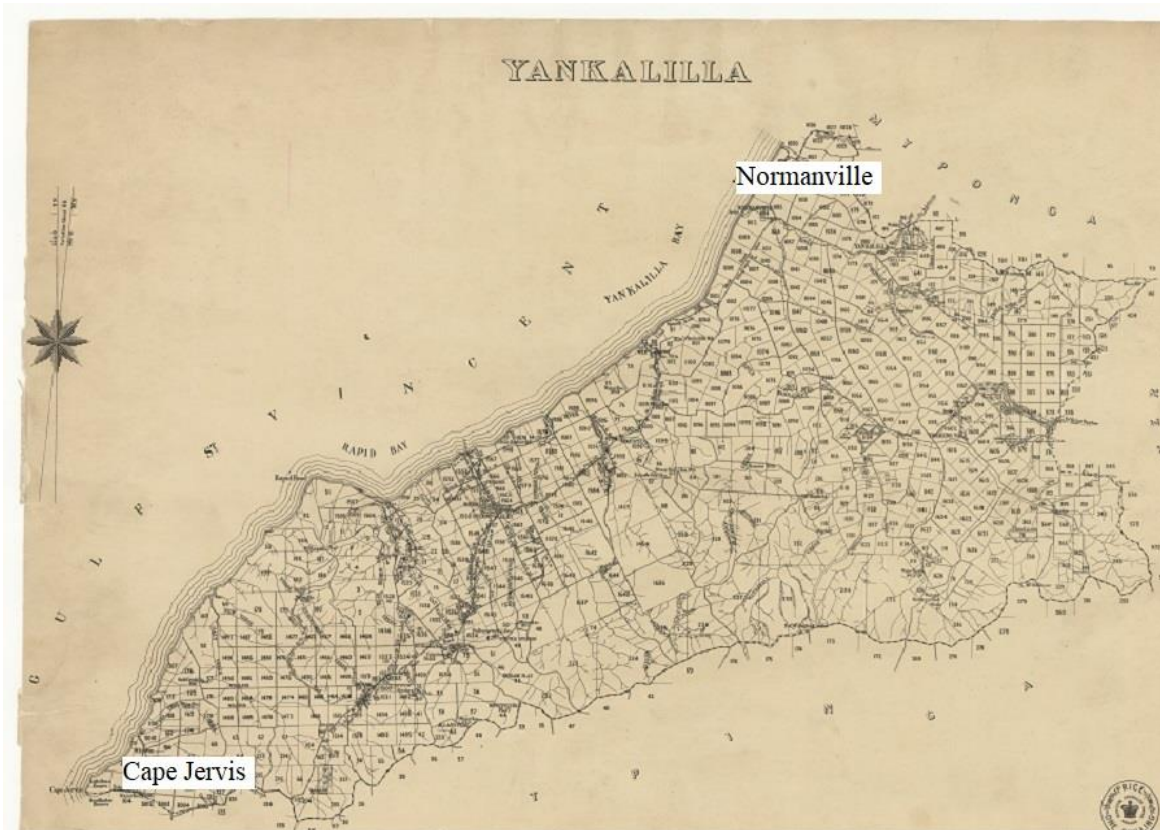


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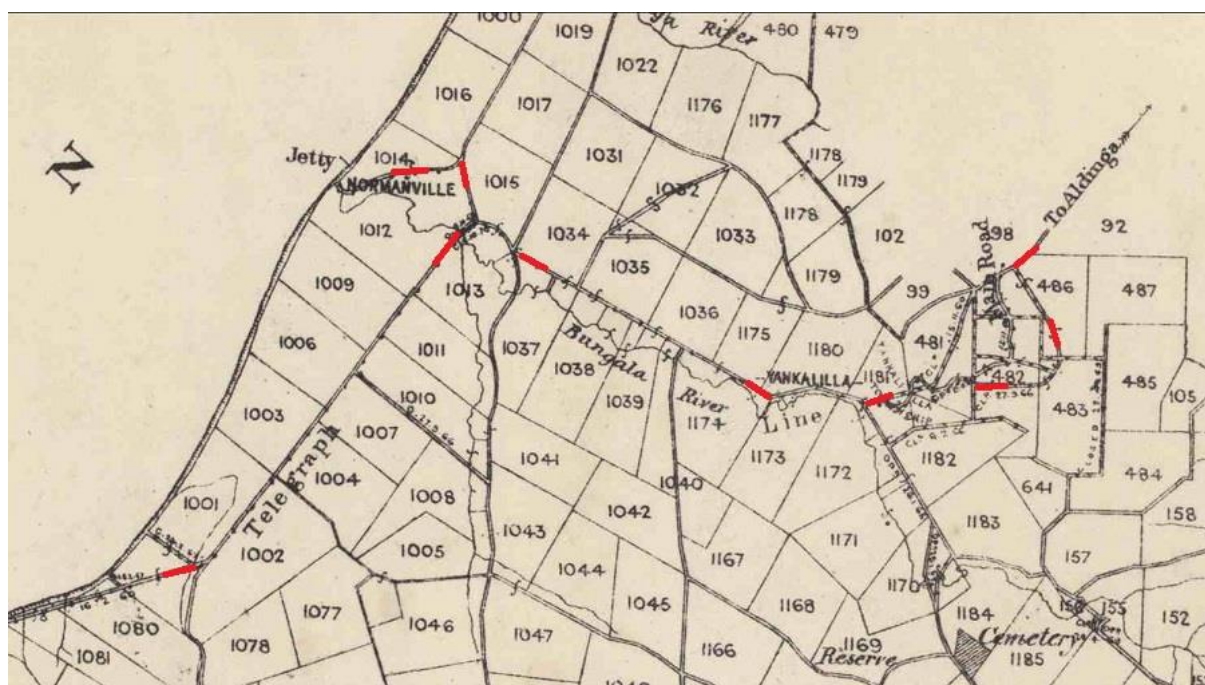


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https://maps.collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/series/hundreds_SA_63360/Y/yankalilla/zsmg_830bje63360_yankalilla1907.jpg



South Australian Register (Adelaide, SA : 1839 - 1900), Saturday 19 August 1871, page 6
<<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article39241587>>.

NOTICES AND ORDERS OF THE DAY.
HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY. Tuesday, August 22.

Questions:— <clip>

<clip> 6. Mr. Mildred will ask the Treasurer (Mr. Hart) to procure from Mr. Todd, the Superintendent of Telegraphs, the probable cost of laying down a line of telegraph from Cape Jervis to Kangaroo Island, and from thence to the most westerly portion of the said island. <clip>

South Australian Register (Adelaide, SA : 1839 - 1900), Thursday 27 November 1873, page 6
<<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article39306438>>.

THE PARLIAMENT.

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL Wednesday, November 26.

TELEGRAPHIC COMMUNICATION WITH CAPE BORDA. The Hon. J. FISHER moved "That it is desirable that telegraphic communication should be extended to Cape Borda."

He said this subject had long been a favourite one with him, and for years past he had mentioned the subject to various Ministers, who had agreed that it was a desirable work, but always pleaded the excuse that the state of our finances was not such as to justify the expenditure. He thought every hon. member would admit, that this objection, which was the only objection he had heard to the project, did not exist at the present time. <clip>

<clip> There was always, in this and the other colonies, great watchings for the mail on the jetty, at the Post-Office, Telegraph Office, newspaper offices, and everywhere else for the arrival of the mail. If the telegraph were carried to Cape Borda and they knew that the mail had not been sighted there at sundown they would know that she could not be up at the anchorage before daylight, and this would save a large amount of weary waiting and watching. It was the same in the other colonies, and if we could give them 12 hours' notice of the approach of the steamer it would be an acceptable thing to do. <clip>

<clip> With regard to the cost he did not think that would be very great—certainly under £10,000. This question was mooted some years ago, and Mr. Todd estimated the cable at £135 per mile. Many miles of cable would not be required. The land lines would be to Cape Willoughby on the one hand and to

Cape Borda on the other, and the cost would not be more than £10,000. He could not tell what the cost of maintenance would be, but he thought the keepers and their wives and daughters might be instructed in the science of telegraphing sufficiently to work the instruments at those stations. <clip>

<clip> The COMMISSIONER of CROWN LANDS (Hon. W. Everard) <clip> He thought the cost was considerably understated. The channel between Cape Jervis and Kangaroo Island he believed would require 20 miles of cable, which at £135 per mile would be £2,700, without the expense of laying. Then from Willoughby to Cape Borda Lighthouse was, he thought, from 90 to 100 miles, and the country was of a difficult nature, and very liable to bush fires, being covered with dense scrub, so that the line would be very likely to be expensive both in construction and maintenance. <clip>

<clip> The Hon. J. FISHER, if no other gentleman wished to address the Houses, would say with regard to the expense that the Commissioner had on his own basis over estimated it. The cost of 20 miles of cable at £135 amounted to £2,700. The cost of land line was well understood to be about £60 per mile, and 90 miles at that rate would be £5,400. It might go along the beach out of the way of fires, where poles and wire could be cheaply landed, so that he questioned whether the construction would cost more than in other parts of the colony. Those two amounts made the total £8,100, so that he was outside the mark when he named £10,000; and he did say that if the work could be done for £10,000 it would be the cheapest and most desirable work before the colony. (Hear, hear.) <clip>

<clip> He expected other hon. gentlemen would have spoken on what he considered a most important question; and not having done so, he asked then to pass the motion.
Carried. <clip>

South Australian Advertiser (Adelaide, SA : 1858 - 1889), Monday 20
December 1875, page 4
<<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article31963456>>.

SHIPPING NEWS.

<clip> The Telegraph Ship. It was announced in Saturdays paper that Mr. Todd having finished his clock was away down the coast devoting his energy and attention to the telegraph. The Governor Musgrave with the principal marine talent of the colony was at the observer's service, and all possible knowledge of the Marine Board of telegraph wires, and Morse's instruments, was pressed into the service. It was a singular circumstance that while Mr. Todd was absent the cable ship should arrive. It was early on Sunday morning when the look-out

descried a large steamer heading up the Gulf, and it was at once suggested that the Glenelg had put in an early appearance. On her nearer approach she was seen to be barque rigged without topgallant masts, and it was soon made out by her flags, the Edinburgh with the Backstairs Passage cable was to hand. She is a fine looking screw-steamer built by Tod, of Glasgow in 1855, and subsequently was adapted for purposes of telegraph cable laying in the service of the Construction and Maintenance Company. <clip> (Description of ship captured in Register article.)

South Australian Register (Adelaide, SA : 1839 - 1900), Monday 20 December 1875, page 5

<<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article40090952>>.

THE BACKSTAIRS PASSAGE CABLE.

Arrival of the Telegraph Steamer Edinburgh.

<clip> Her total tonnage is 2,315, but the reduction for engine space leaves her 1,817 register. She is 360 feet long by 39-8 breadth of beam, and 25 feet depth of hold. She has two compound engines of 275 horse-power, and has a moderate speed. The hull is that of a fine ship, but the jury masts do not add to her beauty, and instead of the cutwater ending in a figure-head it has on it an immense platform, upon which is part of the gear used for picking up purposes. On boarding the great size of the ship was apparent. Although there are large houses on deck there is ample space for working or promenade. The after deck-house contains a dining-saloon and quarters for the Telegraph staff. That consists of electricians, operators, clerks, and constructors, numbering in force 21 persons under the supervision of Messrs. Laws and Riddle. Further forwards, before the main mast, is another deck-house, in which the master and ship's officers have quarters. There also is space for the operating-room. This compartment is remarkable, for on three sides the appliances are to an outsider bewildering; but the courteous head of the department attempts, as far as possible, to make matters plain. By means of instruments of extreme nicety and sensitiveness the exact spot where any flaw exists in a wire can be found. The mode of reading the messages transmitted through the cable by the medium of a reflected ray of light is beautifully shown, and the whole apartment bristles with astonishing apparatus, and a few minutes there with Mr. Riddle may be very profitably and pleasantly spent. The delicacy of the apparatus in the electrician's cabin strikingly contrasts with some of the gear under the charge of the constructor, Mr. Law. On climbing to the bridge a platform leads to the topgallant forecastle, where the recovering machinery is placed. It is principally on the port side in the wake of the fore rigging, and looks like a combination of steam-engine and such a lot of powerful wheels as would make a patent slip.

These lead to the guide-sheaves, set in bearings over the stem head. Far away aft the paying-out machinery occupies more space, and has more wheels and heavier brakes. The covers will be removed from this machinery at once, and visitors will be permitted to inspect the whole. While the upper part of the vessel contains so much of interest there is a great deal worth seeing below. She has four tanks for the carriage of cable, and sometimes all have been in use. On her present voyage the ship has only part of one tank full, and that contains a total of 249 miles of cable, only 45 of which are intended for South Australia, the balance being for the New Zealand line. The 45 miles must, however, be first paid out. The tanks are immense receptacles nearly 30 feet in diameter, and 25 feet deep, built into the ship. They are perfectly watertight, and when in use have to be filled to cover the cable with water. There is one abaft the engine space, two amidships, and one forwards, which is of smaller dimensions, only reaching from the keel to the main deck. At present this is filled with gear in the shape of ropes, grapnels, buoys, and chains, together with a few anchors and seamen's tools. There is one coil of rope something over six miles long. There are coir hawsers and hawsers of wire and hemp; there are poles, lamps, and bars, with ill shaped implements scattered about, the use of which is only known to the initiated. The cable at present on board is about 700 tons, and as this only occupies about two-thirds of the midship tank some idea may be formed of the miles and miles the vessel could stow away. It was unfortunate that on the arrival of the ship the telegraph was not open. Mr. Todd had left word that he was to be communicated with at Kingston, but neither the Semaphore nor the Port station could be got to speak. The ship anchored near the Bell Buoy, and those on board intend landing to-day, when arrangements are to be made, for at once laying down the cable. It is computed that this operation will only require a couple of days. A few days, however, will necessarily elapse before the ship leaves the roads, and during her stay visitors will be afforded an opportunity such as may not occur again for many years of inspecting the varied and interesting equipment of a full commission telegraph ship. Of the passage out there is not much to be said. The master reports leaving London on October 9. On crossing the Bay of Biscay a heavy gale was experienced, but as the ship headed away down south she fell in with better weather, and touched at St Vincent to take in 500 tons of coals. Thence she coasted along the west shore of Africa, and crossed the Equator in the meridian of Greenwich on November 9. Moderate winds and weather marked the progress down to the Cape, off which she was in latitude 38° on November 23. Thence has had light variables, and sighted Cape Borda on the 18th at 11 o'clock.

South Australian Register (Adelaide, SA : 1839 - 1900), Tuesday 21 December 1875, page 3

<<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article40083406>>.

THE BACKSTAIRS PASSAGE CABLE.

Mr. C. Todd, C.M.G., Postmaster-General and Superintendent of Telegraphs; Mr. J. W. Lewis, Collector of Customs; Mr. DeMole; Mr. Knevett, representatives here of the Cable Company, and a number of other gentlemen, on Monday afternoon visited the telegraph steamer Edinburgh at the anchorage and inspected the apparatus for laying the Backstairs Passage line which she has on board. They were courteously shown over the vessel by Captain Manning, Mr. J. C. Laws, chief electrician, and other officers, and were greatly interested in the arrangements for laying down the cable by means of the appliances of the Telegraph Construction and Maintenance Company, to which Association's service the Edinburgh belongs. At the time of the visit the spare cable was being put into another tank to allow of the one required for the Passage being reached, as it lay underneath, and the regularity and speed with which the line passed over the guiding wheels and was coiled down into its place remarkably displayed the completeness of the apparatus. The strangers were first shown a deep iron tank, 28 feet in diameter, containing the spare cable, about 21 miles in length, and further forward was another tank, 32 feet across, holding the line that was being shifted. The cable, an inch and a half in thickness is known as of the Atlantic type, and has been tested, as all are, with the greatest care and nicety. It was laid down in the Flemish coil with the utmost regularity from the centre; thus fouling is avoided, and it goes out freely. There are on board 700 tons, or about 249 miles, of cable, and 120 tons of rope, made in a peculiar way of the best steel wire and Manila fibre, for grappling purposes. The rope, shackles, &c, have been subjected to the severest tests, and the electricians know to a nicety their exact weight. With the apparatus they recovered over three miles of cable between Lisbon and Madeira, and the accuracy with which the electric instruments record the power of the cables under all circumstances is remarkable. The cable is led up from the watertight tanks in which it is coiled over revolving drums to a combination of huge wheels, and "pays" itself by its own weight into the water, the utmost attention in testing and laying it down being given during the operation. When a break occurs and a cable is lost huge grapplers of various shapes and sizes are dragged about the spot, and long experience has enabled the operators to detect in an instant when the grapplers seize the cable, or are only obstructed by a rock. To the uninitiated it seems almost incredible that the tiny copper wire, enclosed in layers of Manila, wire, gutta percha, and other protecting coats, should be so effective an agent, and it is still more astonishing to see the readiness with which observations of the most delicate and intricate character can be made by means of the beautiful appliances on board. The greatest patience, vigilance, and skill are required to

avoid the many dangers that lie in the way of properly putting down or recovering a cable, and it takes years of study to master the details. The telegraphic staff on board the Edinburgh number 12, and the principal are — Mr. Law, chief electrician; Mr. E. Riddle, Chief Constructing Engineer ; Mr. R. E. Peake acting on behalf of Clark, Forde, & Co., Engineers for South Australia; and Mr. Donovan. The vessel it was understood will start on Thursday for Yankalilla, where the six-mile length of the shore end of the cable will be laid.

Express and Telegraph (Adelaide, SA : 1867 - 1922), Wednesday 5 January 1876, page 3

<<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article207730160>>

LAYING THE KANGAROO ISLAND CABLE.

For several years past the desirability of establishing telegraphic communication between Cape Borda and Adelaide has been a matter of discussion in Parliament, and has been urged upon the Government by commercial men and by the press. The Chamber of Commerce long ago took the matter up warmly, and during the session of 1874 the Legislature finally resolved that the work should be carried out. It was first proposed to take the sea line from Cape Jervis to the nearest point on Kangaroo Island, where a good and safe landing could be effected, but it was subsequently resolved to carry a land line from Moonta down to Edithburgh, and then lay a cable by way of the Althorpes to Cape Borda. The land line—about 90 miles in length—is in course of progress, but the cable portion of that project for sufficient reasons was abandoned, and ultimately the Government resolved, upon the best professional and scientific advice, to carry the cable from Yankalilla to Kingscote, in Nepean Bay, Cape Jervis being given up as the landing would be difficult and the bottom rocky. The distance from the mainland to the island, at the narrowest part of Backstairs Passage, is 11 miles; from Kingscote to Cape Jervis is 25 miles, and to Yankalilla Bay about 45 miles, but it was better to incur the extra cost of the cable now laid than run the risk of breakages and all the attendant expense and annoyance. Besides the bad landing and rocky bottom at Cape Jervis and the next Cape east ward, there is a heavy current in that part of the Passage, that it was most desirable to avoid. There can be no doubt whatever that the best line has been chosen, and there is little cause to fear that the cable will work otherwise than satisfactorily. From Kingscote to Cape Borda the distance is 52¼ miles, but by the route that the character of the country renders it necessary for the telegraph constructors to select, 67 miles must be traversed. The contract for this land line has been taken by Messrs. Hamilton & Haussen, at £49 10s. per mile, the Government finding wire and insulators, and the contractors every thing else, including freight and cartage.

They are to clear the line of timber for 25 feet on each side, and the whole work is to be completed within five months. The constructing parties experience great difficulty, on account of the roughness of the country they have to pass through, the denseness of the scrub, and the extreme scarcity—or it might almost be said of much of the route—total absence of feed. Provender has to be imported from Port Adelaide for the use of the working horses and bullocks. The poles will be wooden, and we believe there will not be much trouble in getting them along or near the line of sufficient size and straightness. A week ago 35 miles of the line had been surveyed. It follows the valley of the Cygnet to the table land, and then keeps to the back bone of the island, heading all the coast line till it reaches Cape Borda. When this work is finished and connected with the cable, we shall hear of foreign shipping arrivals from six to twelve hours earlier than we do now, and in case of sailing vessels and stormy or baffling winds the advantage will be still greater, for a vessel may be visible from Cape Borda and then delayed a week before it can beat up to the Port Adelaide anchorage. To make the undertaking complete the wire should be carried to Cape Willoughby, the opposite extremity of the island, and then we should have the earliest news of vessels coming from the eastern colonies. The distance as the crow flies across Nepean Bay and land is 20 miles; but of course a land-line would be chosen, and then the distance would be 35 miles, or allowing for some detours to avoid the worst ground, 40 miles. This is not so necessary a work as the wire to Cape Borda, but it is very far from unimportant, as ships would be seen sooner from Cape Willoughby than from Cape Jervis, and besides this it is advisable as a rule to have telegraphic communication with every lighthouse. Having gone to the expense of the cable and of the wire to Cape Borda, it would be a pity to leave the work incomplete on account of the comparatively small cost of the line to the eastern end of the island. Once made, the cost of maintenance will be trifling, and we presume the operative staff at these lighthouse telegraph stations is not expensive. The returns from the Kangaroo Island station or stations will be small, but it has all along been fully understood, that the work was undertaken upon the principle that it was amply justified by the indirect advantages that will be derived from it.

We will now come to the cable specially, which costs the Government £11,500. It was obtained from the Telegraph Construction and Maintenance Company, which supplies and lays it down for that price. This convenient arrangement is owing to the fact that the Company is sending by the Edinburgh a portion of the New Zealand cable; otherwise ours would have had to be laid by the Government. The positions for the shore ends, having been carefully fixed and buoyed off, and two officials having been left at Port Yankalilla, all was ready for the Edinburgh to start on the work, and it was arranged that she should sail before daylight on Friday morning, December 24. The Governor Musgrave was

also in readiness, with a little barge to sail in company, and render such assistance as might be useful. A small number of gentlemen, principally Government officials, went to the Semaphore, late on Thursday evening, ready to board one or other of the steamers. The night was cold and gusty; the wind seemed to increase as the hours passed on; and after consultation it was decided that the embarkation should not take place till half-past 3 o'clock next morning. At that time there was a stir among the excursionists, lodged in different quarters at the Semaphore, and a little after day light Mr. Todd, C.M.G., Superintendent of Telegraphs, Mr. Squire, Assistant Superintendent of Telegraphs, Mr. Burrell, Secretary to the Superintendent, Mr. Kneevett, agent for the Eastern Extension Telegraph Company, the representatives of the Press, and one or two other gentlemen, took their seats in one of Jagoe's large sailing boats. There was just enough sea on to treat the passengers to a little spray over the bows, but there was much less of the Bay of Biscay than had been expected, neither winds nor waves being so strong as a few hours previously. It was judged prudent, however, not to ship any Government instruments, and the wisdom of this decision was apparent when we reached the Edinburgh, as the task of going on board was not particularly easy to landmen, and luggage at all breakable or liable to injury by shaking or a few knocks could not have failed to sustain damage in the shipment. The Musgrave started about half-past 5 o'clock, having on board, besides her commander (Captain Lindsay), Captain Fergusson, President of the Marine Board, Mr. Sheppard, Under Treasurer, and Mr. Hyndman, City Surveyor, and others. About 6 o'clock we started, with the Government steamer ahead, and in view during the whole trip across. The Edinburgh, with her belongings, has been so recently described at length by our shipping reporter that we need not go into details upon these matters. She is a fine, long, roomy vessel, admirably adapted and perfectly fitted up for the work on which she is employed. She is commanded by Captain Manning, and the other principal officers are—Chief officer, Mr. G. R. Sims; second officer, Mr. A. Edwards; third officer, Mr. E. McKenzie; fourth officer, Mr. A. Forsyth; chief engineer, Mr. J. McLean, second engineer, Mr. Stark; third engineer, Mr. H. Manning; fourth engineer, Mr. J. Cooke. Dr. Vashan is the surgeon of the steamer. The officers of the Telegraph Construction and Maintenance Company are—Chief Engineer, Mr. Riddle; Assistant Engineer, Mr. Walters; Chief Electrician, Mr. Joseph Laws; Assistant Electricians, Messrs. Thomas Clark, A. Granville, Henry Donovan, and E. Stringer, the two last named being on shore at Yankalilla during the laying of the cable, and for some days previously during the preparations for the work. Mr. Peake is the Electrician acting for the South Australian Government, his duty being to test the cable. He was selected for this responsible office by Mr. Latimer Clark, the eminent Electrician, who, commissioned by our Government, passed the cable in England. The Edinburgh

is sold to the Eastern Extension Telegraph Company, and after assisting the Hibernia in laying the New Zealand cable, she will be taken to Sydney, and handed over to her new owners. Captain Manning and the T. C. and M. Co 's officers will then return to England, and Mr. Sims will take the command, the officers (the mates) under him each being promoted a step. Mr. Sims has been four years chief officer of the vessel, and was for some years previously second mate of her, when she ran as a mail steamer between England and America. The Edinburgh will remain on the Australian station as a cable repairing ship. The steamer being long and deep we did not feel the swell of the sea, and the motion was so slight that scarcely any one felt any sensation of *mal-de-mer*. The morning was chilly, but the weather became milder as we proceeded, and the run across was a pleasant one. We had gone but a short distance when, on our starboard, we were near enough to a fine ship to ascertain, by means of the telescope, that she was the Lady Jocelyn, with emigrants, who were crowding about the midships and the forepart of the vessel, while the sailors were perched upon the yards, doubtless thinking with agreeable anticipation of a pleasant run ashore. Besides smaller craft in various directions we observed, later in the day, another grand looking vessel coming up the Gulf, but too distant to be identified. The shipping, the Lighthouse, and Port Adelaide left behind, we had Mount Lofty in view for some hours, till, as we sped on our course, that object faded away, and our interest was taken up with other landmarks along the coastline as far as Cape Jervis. Next we caught sight of Kangaroo Island, which, as we neared it, looked dark, dreary, scrubby, with only here and there what appeared like small grassy patches, and slopes. We steamed up Nepean Bay, and, coming pretty close to the Governor Musgrave, which had taken up her position, anchored in six fathoms of water. Presently we saw from the south, a little craft approaching, which proved to be the little steamer Maggie, that had been engaged to assist in laying the shore end of the cable, her part being to tow the launch into the very shallow water. The bay looked quite cheerful with the three steamers and the launch, and contrasted strikingly with the desolate aspect and gloomy stillness of the island. To the south and south-east the hills were nearly all covered with dense scrub, a grassy patch or hillside showing occasionally. There was one small corn-field, on which we could distinguish, with the aid of a field-glass, fences and corn in sheaf. That paddock was the subject of a good deal of speculation during our detention in Nepean Bay, for we could observe neither dwelling-house, live stock, nor any sign of occupation or activity about it. Other topics running dry, questions were started as to whether this holding was freehold or on credit; whether, if the latter, it was dummied, or the conditions of the lease were complied with. We should be sorry to make any lessee uncomfortable, but at no time during a three days' stay opposite this small paddock could we observe any indication of either personal

or substituted residence. To the eastward from this spot the land became bolder and blacker looking, to the westward were steep banks, with a high background of the dreariest scrub, and away farther to the west still higher ground.

Next day was Christmas, and the occasion was to be celebrated by laying the cable, and such judicious and genial enjoyment as could fittingly be combined with important business. In our account of the Edinburgh, already alluded to, the cable and the machinery for pulling it out of the hold were described at some length, and we need only briefly refer to these matters here. The conductor, along which the message is flashed, consists of seven strands of copper wire, insulated by three coatings of Willoughby Smith's improved gutta-percha, with intermediate layers of Chatterton's compound, which consists of Stockholm tar, resin, and gutta-percha. All this makes about the thickness of a man's little finger or rather less. This core has a thick serving of tarred jute. Then over all this are ten iron wires, protected by a serving of Clark's bitumenous compound. In different portions of the cable there is some difference in its diameter, and in that of the protecting wires. The first two and a half knots from Yankalilla is of type A, and the sheathing consists of 10 B B, No. 00, Birmingham wire gauge. The deep sea portion, of which there is in all 35 knots, is covered with 10 B No. 6 wires, Birmingham gauge. The intermediate section, seven knots, which is laid from Kings cote, is covered with 10 No. 2½ Birmingham wire gauge. The Yankalilla shore end is about 2½ inches in diameter, the deep sea portion 1¼ inch, and the Kingscote section somewhere between these two. The weight of the deep sea portion is about two tons per mile. The ship is fitted out with machinery very simple compared with that used for the first Atlantic Telegraph, to pass the cable along over and between wheels, till it is delivered at the stern, and the vessel steaming steadily along deposits the electric girdle that encompasses more or less of the earth. Arched castings of iron, like segments of broad wheels with flanges on the upper surface, help to guide the cable and keep it off the deck. The most noticeable part of this machinery is at the stern end, where the cable passes over three wheels with three smaller wheels pressing on it, and then takes three turns round a large wheel or drum and on to another wheel at the stern, and so into the sea. Attached to the large wheel are two smaller ones, which work a beautiful instrument for recording the length of cable paid out by marking with its three hands the number of revolutions on a dial plate. This instrument strikes a bell at every revolution — the clear metallic sound having a very agreeable effect. The cable once placed on the wheels is drawn through, when the vessel moves, by the ever-increasing weight of that portion of the coil which is in the sea. In the fore part of the ship is machinery for picking up, and this can either be worked by hand or steam as required. There are several large circular tanks in the fore and middle part of the vessel, in one of which was our cable, lying above some

of the New Zealand coil. These tanks are 30 feet in diameter; that in the Great Eastern was 80 feet. The depth is 25 feet. In the centre of the tank is a frame of uprights, fixed circularly, and round these the cable is coiled, closely and regularly. In drawing it out serious accidents sometimes occur through kinks in the coil, but these misfortunes happen much seldomer than formerly before the art of dealing with ocean cables was brought to its present state of perfection. The action of the wheels between which it passes straightens out the cable. The Kangaroo Island shore end of the cable, seven miles in length, was delivered over the side into the launch at the rate of about two miles an hour, the rate at which this work is accomplished being sometimes $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles an hour. The machinery for this job was rigged, as usual, by the hands on board, and everything worked very smoothly. As there was no weight to draw the cable, two of the wheels were so fixed as to grip and pass it along. As the cable reached the bottom of the launch one man seized it and drew it towards its proper position, and half a dozen others stationed round about made it lie in a proper coil. This task was completed on the evening of our arrival; and on a pleasant Christmas morning, about 8 o'clock, all preparations being made for paying out from the launch, the Maggie took it to the Musgrave, which relieved her of the drag till near Kingscote, when the Maggie hooked on again, and towed the launch close in shore. The end was then hauled out to a small sand-spit, a short distance to the east of Kingscote, where a little galvanized testing house had been erected. Mr. Hamilton (one of the contractors for the land line), Mr. Abbot (who is carrying out that work), and several residents came down to welcome the party, but the landing of the cable did not draw a great concourse to the beach. The good people were keeping Christmas merrily, and their houses on a rise some distance away were decorated with evergreens in honor of the grand old festival. A few juveniles were cricketing on the flat, and the fairer portion of the population, overcome by bashfulness— arising doubtless from long seclusion in so quiet a spot from the garish eye of the world—were prettily clustered under the shelter of some trees. The work of landing was very simple and easy. The launch was taken very close in shore; a number of men jumped out and dragged the end of the coil on land, and in a very short time it was connected with the battery, and the whole length tested. The cable is frequently tested during a voyage, the electric current, if there is no flaw, passing through the wire with the same freedom and lightning rapidity when the cable is coiled as if it lay in a straight line. The testing is also kept up and conversation carried on between the two ends while the ship is paying out. The instruments of the electricians are wonderful triumphs of mechanism, and the art of the operators and the whole science of telegraphy seem more like magic than anything connected with the everyday life and concerns of men and nations. The business on shore being concluded, the launch was hooked on to the Maggie, the

Governor Musgrave soon took both in tow, and the coil was paid out to the end, when that was attached to a buoy, another buoy being placed to mark the spot. This was about a mile to the east of where the Edinburgh was lying at anchor. (To be continued.)

Express and Telegraph (Adelaide, SA : 1867 - 1922), Thursday 6 January 1876, page 3

<<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article207730185>>

LAYING THE KANGAROO ISLAND CABLE.

(Concluded.)

Leaving the cable for a time, we will now relate a few incidents of the trip not essentially connected with the extension of telegraphic communication. In the early morning an immense shark was observed sporting about the anchor buoy of the Edinburgh, and a strong hook and line, well baited, were thrown out from that vessel in the hope of catching the creature, but it preferred to move to the Maggie and Governor Musgrave, which were close together. At the former, some good sport had commenced, in the way of angling schnapper and smaller fish, but at the appearance of their natural enemy the lesser fry disappeared, and the two steamers contended, for the honor of capturing the giant of the deep, which soon took the bait thrown over the quarters of the Governor Musgrave, and was securely hooked. Its struggles were desperate, but its head being drawn out of the water, a rope was passed round behind the foremost fins, and another round the tail, and the monster was then made fast to the vessel and left floating in the water. It was 15 feet long, and when measured afterwards was found to be 9 feet in girth. Boat loads of persons put off from the Edinburgh to view this prize. After the Musgrave left for Kingscote on the cable business, taking the shark with her, it was hauled on board, cut up, and the flesh thrown overboard, only the backbone and teeth being preserved. These latter were as smooth as the finest ivory, triangular, and coming to a fine point, and serrated. Inside the shark was found a large stinging ray, its head little smaller than that of its devourer. It was not much broken up, the shark having apparently given it a crunch or two with its powerful jaws, and then gobbled it,...as a well remembered member of the Upper House said he did the Real Property Act, holus bolus. A morning or two afterwards, a small shark, measuring four or five feet in length was hauled on board the Edinburgh, and later in the week, at Yankalilla, five were caught by the Maggie, and two by the Governor Musgrave, all of about that size. Some of the excursionists and officers of the vessel and T. C. and M. Co., who had not gone to Kingscote, made up a party to visit the mainland, at the nearest point, about two miles and a half distant from the vessel. They took the gig and rowed for a small break in the rocky shore, where the landing was on white pebbles.

The boat might have been taken close in and made fast to a rock, but this being contrary to the instructions of the officer in charge, several of the party stripped and swam ashore, the water being deep almost to the edge. Two of these swimmers walked up the hill, and through the scrub for some distance, but the scenery being monotonous and the ground rather rough for naked feet, they returned to the boat, after a not very prolonged absence. They had expected to obtain a view of the cornfield, and the modest farm buildings they supposed to be connected with it, but *cui bono*? They could not have presented themselves in their Adamic costume before the family circle they would have perhaps surprised in the enjoyment of the festivities of the season. The ground they passed over was stony, but part of it bore sheaoaks and grass, and the sheep dung indicated that the farmer in the neighborhood was combining grazing with wheat growing. The two wanderers having returned to the boat, a pull was made for the steamer; which was reached after several rests and refreshers in honor of the day. In the evening the whole fleet was anchored pretty closely together, and a few pleasant hours were spent on board the Edinburgh.

It was arranged that next morning all the steamers should start for Yankalilla Bay, which would be reached before midday, and then make ready to land the shore end there. The following day this would be managed, and then, the Edinburgh would pay out the cable back to Nepean Bay, when the end of the cable there would be picked up, a splice effected, and the work would be over, except the testing. With this prospect all hands retired to rest, but in the morning it looked like a heavy blow. The glass had fallen, and Captain Fergusson signaled from the Governor Musgrave that no work could be done at Yankalilla, so it was properly decided that if the Edinburgh was to be idle she had better be so in smooth waters. The wind blew off the island, and increased in strength as the day wore on, so we were satisfied that Captain Manning had done the best thing in remaining at anchor. Every now and then there were smart showers of rain, and the weather altogether looked wild and unpromising. The barometer kept going down, and scientists and sailors speculated as to the probable length of our detention. When one of the officers informed us that when engaged in the recovery of the Atlantic Cable, through bad weather, they only had four working days out of sixty, the Adelaide excursionists and officials looked anxious, and not a pun or a frivolous remark was indulged in for nearly two minutes. All next day we were at anchor. The hours passed pleasantly enough. The weather was variable, with the barometer first rising and then going down again. The wind was cold, and we frequently were treated to a driving rain. The time was spent in fishing, in various games, and in conversation and anecdote, in which instruction was delightfully blended with amusement. On Tuesday the dawn was obscured by mist and rain, accompanied by a strong wind, but in the course of a few hours the weather became milder, and the Governor Musgrave

came up, bringing her Adelaide excursionists. She and the smaller craft, as expected, had put into the American River, where all hands had rosy times of it. They had splendid fishing, exchanged visits with the residents, and obtained supplies of fat sheep and garden produce. The appearance of the two steamers was quite an event in the everyday experience of the settlers in that quiet portion of the province, and the visitors received a hearty welcome. The vessels being now together again, a consultation was held. Most of the Adelaidean visitors were anxious to return to the metropolis and Captain Fergusson undertook to land them at Cape Jervis.

It was now decided to make a general move to Yankalilla, as, with the wind shifting to the eastward, it was considered the water would be smooth enough there. The barge was to be left behind, but the Governor Musgrave returned to the American River for the Maggie. At half-past 12 o'clock the Edinburgh weighed anchor, and we soon left the island behind us. We had some drizzling showers, but generally the day was favorable and the sea tolerably smooth. The portion of the mainland visible at starting looked like an island of elevated ground, but soon the coastline came more and more into view, and formed a really beautiful landscape. To the south-west precipitous rocky hills come to the very sea, and then succeed high steep ranges, for the most part thickly wooded, divided, in here and there by more open ground, till nearer the anchorage are gentler acclivities, lightly timbered and well grassed. Then away to the northward are grassy and cultivated slopes, timbered heights, and finally a cliff overhanging "the wild and wasteful ocean." In the background is a diversified prospect of forest, cornfield, and pasture, and the whole scene is exquisite in its variety of mountain ravine and water-course, long ridges, sharp spurs, smooth and easy declivities, jagged ascents, and treeless hillsides. The effect would have been still more pleasing two months ago, when all the vegetation was of a bright living green; but we viewed the landscape under peculiarly favorable circumstances—the changeable weather, and the sky, alternately clear and more or less overcast, presenting it under different aspects, all wonderfully attractive. We saw the hills at sunrise; in the glow and glory of noon; wrapped in clouds, which, as they cleared off, revealed the hilltops and the lower ground, partly in shadow and partly in the glorious light of Australian summer; but the most enchanting and delicious spectacle of all was when in the evening the coast line was veiled, but not hidden, by a thin mist, and the mild rays of the setting sun playing upon this vapory film produced the most delicate and beautiful tints and coloring, that would baffle the art of the painter to reproduce.

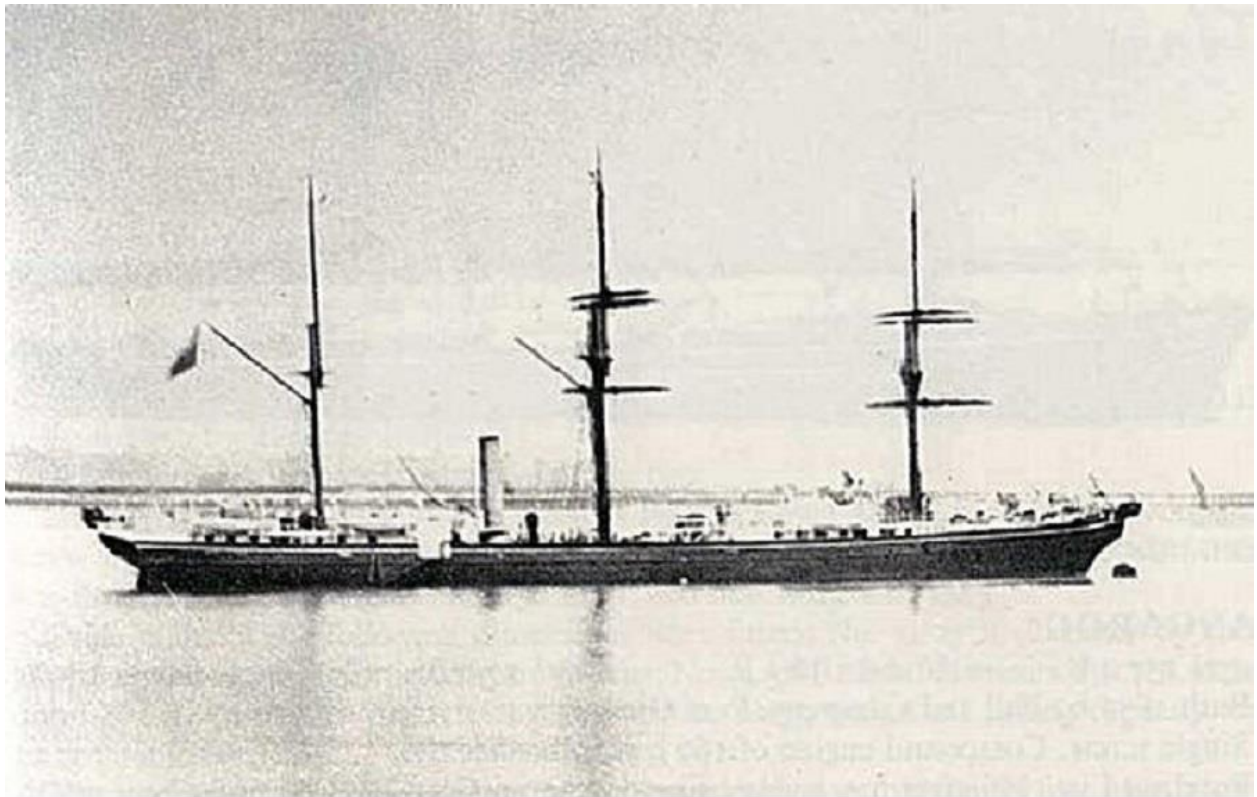
The Edinburgh cast anchor at half past 4 o'clock, and the Governor Musgrave and Maggie came up shortly after. The former had not called at Cape Jervis, but landed her passengers at Yankalilla, and they returned to Adelaide next morning by the mail coach. This place has not changed much during the last 15 or 20

years. Not half a dozen houses were visible from the vessel, except with the aid of the telescope. There are two jetties for boats, and of these one appears to have been constructed pointing in the wrong direction, so rendering the second necessary. When a high wind does not blow dead into the Bay, ships can ride pretty comfortably at the moorings. The small galvanized iron hut and tents of the electricians were prominent objects on the sandhills, and a couple of buoys had been placed to show the direction in which the cable was to be taken. It was to be landed a little more than half a mile north of the jetty, then go at right angles to the coast for three miles, and then turning to the left make straight for the end of the sandspit near Kingscote, in Nepean Bay; the distance from the Yankalilla to the Nepean Bay buoys being 35 miles. As soon as we had anchored all was activity on board the Edinburgh, the hands being busy making preparations for the work of the morrow. As soon as night came on a conversation was held by means of signal lights between the electricians on board and ashore. This was an interesting performance to those who had never seen it before. There is a complete code of signals, letters and words being indicated by momentary exhibitions of the lights, or by showing them for a longer space of time, as the case may be; in fact, the art is much on the principle of telegraphic spelling or reading. The lights are in a box with slides, which are moved up and down according to the effect intended to be produced.

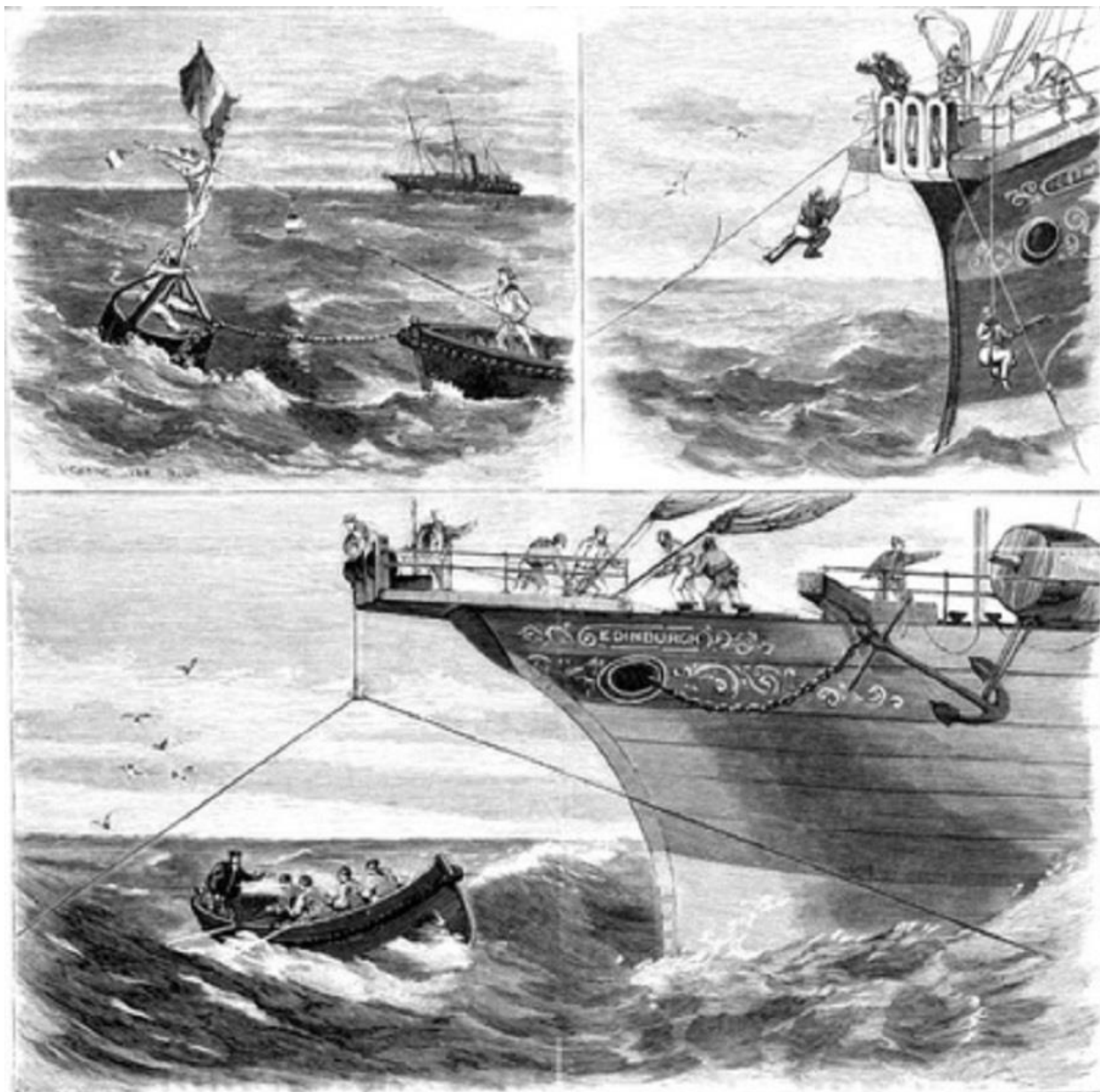
Wednesday morning broke cold and showery, but the sea was calm, and the day became fine and almost warm. It was found that no trench had had been dug ready for the reception of the cable, and 30 or 40 hands were sent ashore to accomplish this work, about which so much of the day was occupied that the landing of the cable was deferred till next morning. On Thursday, at 5 o'clock, the Edinburgh was shifted to the buoys and anchored there. A warp was carried by the Maggie and a boat to shore, and made fast round the stems of a cluster of teatrees, beyond the electricians' hut and tents. The Edinburgh's stern was then pulled round so as to point to the landing place. All was made fast, and about 7.30 the cable was passed into a boat, which, with a small portion intended for the shore, was pulled along the warp. Other boats followed, and taking hold of the cable also pulled along the warp. The Maggie then came and assisted. The line of boats, seven in all, and the little steamer presented a pretty spectacle, whether viewed from the vessel or the shore. It soon became apparent that something was wrong, but as to what it was there was a variety of opinions. Some people spoke of rocks, and the warp certainly caught against one; others thought too much cable had been let go, and that the weight of this on the bottom was too much for the boats to struggle against. The Edinburgh hauled on her warp till she dragged her anchor, and was in three fathoms water; but she was then hauled on her anchor and made safe, and the warp, which just then escaped from the rock, again tightened. Still the work did not progress, and

things looked disheartening till a team of six horses were obtained to assist. The horses were fortunately very stanch, pulling again and again as resolutely and persistently as bullocks, and after repeated breakages of swingletrees and other tackle, the first boat was pulled aground and the cable end landed amidst great cheering. It was found the portion allowed for the shore was not long enough, so the horses were hooked up and more slack pulled in -sometimes only yard by yard- till at last the job was done, the cable wire connected with the battery, and communication established with the ship. There were 20 or 30 residents of the district, including ladies, present. It was now too late to clear up the warps and other ropes and start for the Island that day. The Edinburgh weighed anchor, however, and paid out half a mile of cable and then anchored for the night. This was the first paying out with the vessel under steam, and excited great attention on the part of those to whom the process was novel. On Friday morning all hands were busy at daylight, and at 5 o'clock the steamer was on the move, and the cable was being passed over the stern, all the machinery working with the most perfect smoothness and regularity. Nothing could look simpler or easier, but the success of the operation is due to the perfection to which the machinery has been brought, and the constant care and watchfulness of the engineers and those under them. The wheels are kept cool with water, and the necessary lubrication is never neglected where it is required. In less than half an hour the man below called "splice," and we observed that the diameter of the cable had suddenly diminished from inches to inch, this being the size of the deep-sea portion. The speed we were going at was from 5 to 5½ miles an hour, one mile, which was timed, being done in 11 minutes and 11 seconds. It was an interesting sight to watch the cable from the tank up through the rings which guided it, then along the whole length of the platform which extends from forecastle to poop, over and between wheels to the stern, all going on without the slightest hitch or appearance of risk. The Maggie had gone back to Port Adelaide, and the Musgrave kept us company for some time and then went ahead. The Tararua and various sailing craft, with every stitch of canvas set, passing the Cape Jervis Lighthouse, and along the coast bound for Adelaide, and the vessels appearing in the neck of Backstairs Passage, would have made a pretty marine picture. As we went up Nepean Bay we had a fine view of Hog Bay on our left, with the corn fields, roads, and houses in that part of the island. At a quarter past 11 a.m. we were alongside the buoys, the Governor Musgrave being at anchor 300 or 400 yards off. The Edinburgh anchored, and a boat being lowered, picked up the end of the cable, which was hauled on board on the forepart of the vessel. The deep sea cable was cut and brought round on the port side, and hauled on board at the same place. The large protecting wires were unraveled on each end for a distance of 30 feet. The conducting twist of copper wires then had the gutta-percha and composition covering cut away a little. The

conductors were next rasped and fixed in a vice together, and soldered into a perfect splice. Very fine copper wire was then bound round the splice. The gutta percha was next melted for a little distance, so that it could be drawn together and joined. Then a coating of composition was put on the splice; then another piece of gutta percha; the composition was repeated, and one more layer of gutta percha completed this part of the job, which was altogether a most delicate and skilful piece of workmanship. Then came the tarred jute, and the 30 feet of iron wires of each end were spliced over by hand. Tarred hemp was tightly twisted over, and covered with compound. The ends of the splices were specially guarded by wire twisted round the large iron wires. The operation being completed at 2.45, word was given, and the cable was cast into the sea, amidst cheering renewed again and again. An adjournment was made to the cabin, where success to the cable and other appropriate toasts were briefly given and duly honored. Mr. Todd and most of the T. C. and M. Company's officers now went on board the Musgrave and proceeded to Kingscote, where they were met by a number of the inhabitants, including a fair muster of ladies. Messages were successfully passed through the cable by Mr. Laws and Mr. Clark. Mr. Riddell after this planted the first pole of the land line. Three cheers were given, and the party embarked, and picking up the barge at the American River, steered for Yankalilla, which was reached at midnight. The Edinburgh had sailed at five past 4 o'clock, and reached Port Yankalilla at 8 o'clock, so ending an eventful trip, which was made uniformly enjoyable by the genial hospitality of the Captain, and the unvarying kindness and courtesy of that gentleman and his officers and the officials of the Telegraph Construction and Maintenance Company. We are sure that the Adelaideans, including ourselves, who were privileged to enjoy this week on board the Edinburgh, will look back upon it as one of the pleasantest of their lives. Although the trip was connected with hard and important work, circum stances made it very much of a holiday, spent in innocent Christmas merriment and good cheer. Landing about 9 o'clock on Friday evening, we took up our quarters at Normanville, and started by coach for Adelaide at half-past 3 o'clock next morning, and reached the city before 10 a.m., so bringing our travels by sea and by land to an end on New Year's Day of 1876.



<http://www.clydeships.co.uk/view.php?ref=22565#v>
Edinburgh as a cable ship.



REPAIRING THE PORT DARWIN AND BANJOWANGIE CABLE
 1.—LIGHTING THE BOAT, 2.—CUTTING THE CABLE, 3.—GRAFTING THE CABLE.

<https://www.pastmasters.net/overland-telegraph-amp-undersea-cables.html>
 Edinburgh cable ship.

Adelaide Observer (SA : 1843 - 1904), Saturday 13 April 1895, page 13
 <<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article161819590>>

OBITUARY.

DEATH OF A GOVERNMENT OFFICER— On Tuesday the Collector of Customs received a telegram from Queenscliffe, stating that Mr. Robert McClure, the harbourmaster and lightkeeper, had died on the previous day. His

death was not altogether unexpected, as he had been ailing for some time past. He was also postmaster and telegraph-master at Queenscliffe, and was for some time in the telegraph service in the Northern Territory.

South Australian Chronicle (Adelaide, SA : 1889 - 1895), Saturday 13 April 1895, page 11

<<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article93977527>>

The president of the Marine Board has been informed of the death on Monday afternoon of Mr. R. McClure, post, telegraph, and harbor master and lightkeeper at Kingscote. Mr. McClure, who was in the prime of life, entered the public service on November 13, 1874. He was appointed telegraph operator on the overland line on July, 11 1875. In July, 1889, he received the appointment at Kingscote. The news of his death will be heard with regret in the Northern Territory, where he resided for some years.



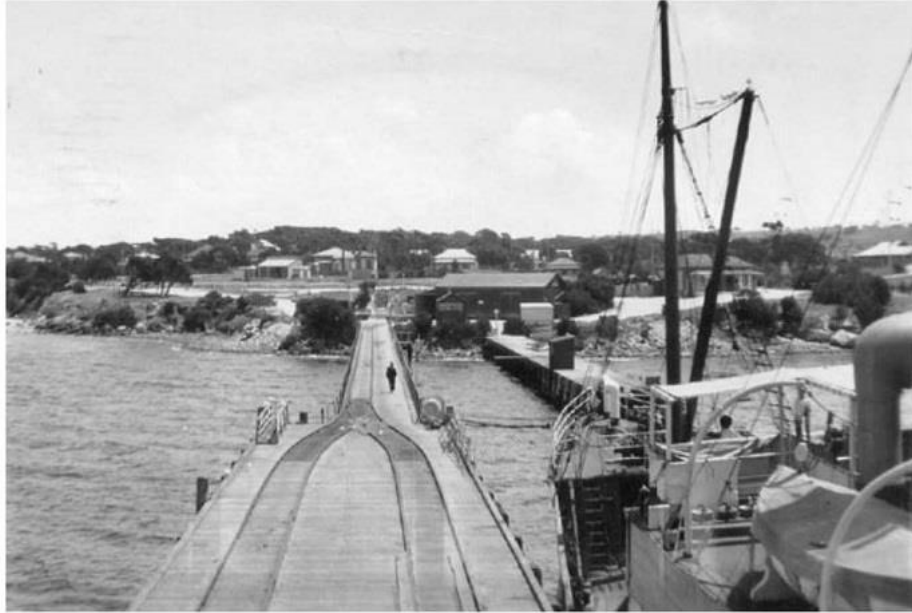
B 4875

<https://collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/resource/B+4875>
c1907. Kingscote PO, 1907-13.

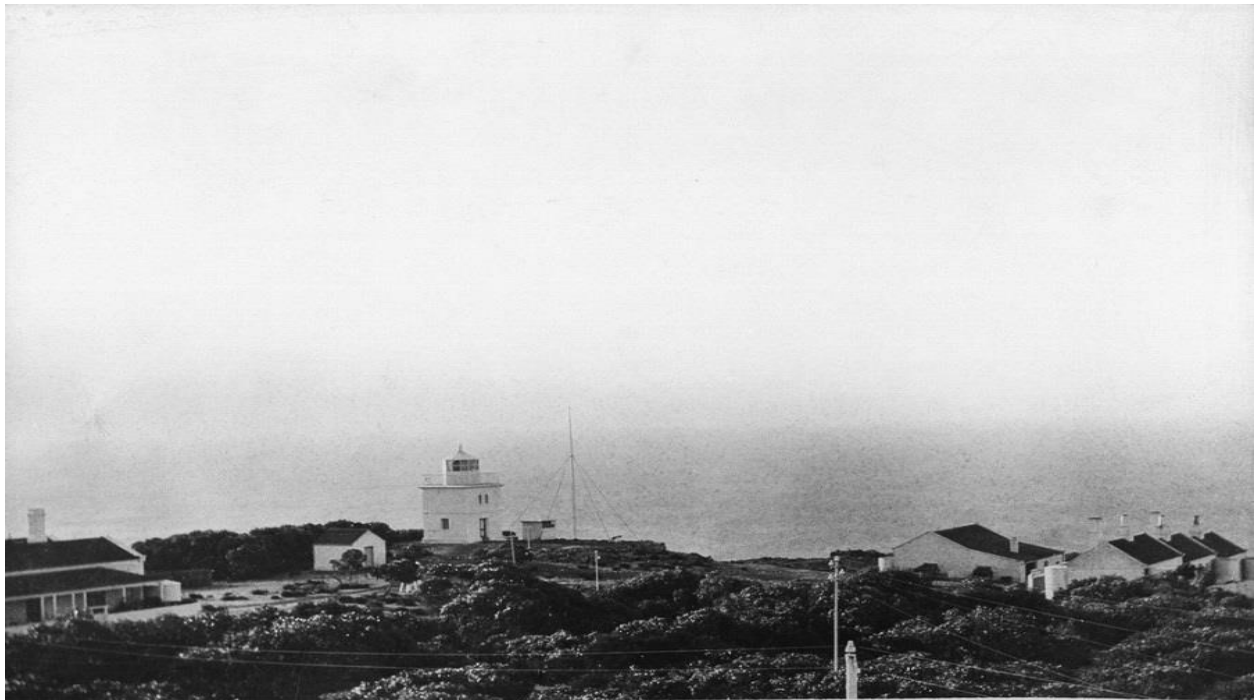
Kangaroo Island Centre Heritage Survey 2005.
Kingscote jetty, Beare Point.

<clip> The early Kingscote Post Office was located near the waterfront as evidenced in early photographs but this was demolished in 1954. This Post Office serviced the town from 1883- 1938 when the new Post Office was built on the current site in Dauncey Street. <clip>

**KINGSCOTE JETTY, CORRUGATED IRON WHARF SHED & ADJ
TIMBER STOCKYARDS, BEARE POINT, KINGSCOTE (cont)**



K.I. Heritage Survey 2005. P20. PO on right behind ship masts.



B 5626

<https://collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/resource/B+5626>
1914. Cape Borda lighthouse.



B 8424

<https://collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/resource/B+8424>
c1910. Cape Borda telegraph station.