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Place Name SUMMARY (PNS) 4.03.03/08

NGULURILLA(?) and PATHA-YAKINGGA(?)

(last edited: 4.11.2016)

NOTE AND DISCLAIMER:

This essay has not been peer-reviewed or culturally endorsed in detail.

The spellings and interpretations contained in it (linguistic, historical and geographical) are my own, and do not necessarily represent the views of KWP/KWK or its members or any other group.

I have studied history at tertiary level. Though not a linguist, for 30 years I have learned much about the Kurna, Ramindjeri-Ngarrindjeri and Narungga languages while working with KWP, Rob Amery, and other local culture-reclamation groups; and from primary documents I have learned much about the Aboriginal history of the Adelaide-Fleurieu region.

My explorations of 'language on the land' through the Southern Kurna Place Names Project are part of an ongoing effort to correct the record about Aboriginal place-names in this region (which has abounded in confusions and errors), and to add reliable new material into the public domain.

I hope upcoming generations will continue this work and improve it. My interpretations should be amplified, reconsidered and if necessary modified by KWP or other linguists, and by others engaged in cultural mapping: Aboriginal people, archaeologists, geographers, ecologists and historians.

Chester Schultz, 21 July 2017.



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Abstract

Ngulurilla (or perhaps *Ngurlarilla*) was given as the name of a campsite somewhere just south of the McLaren Vale swamp: i.e. somewhere around the older parts of McLaren Vale town.

Advocate-General Charles Mann and Protector William Wyatt camped there on the night of 6th September 1837, shortly after crossing a swamp during an expedition from Adelaide to Encounter Bay. They were accompanied by the well-known man of the Adelaide tribe, Mullawirraburka ('Onkaparinga Jack', later known as 'King John'), and it was presumably he who gave them the name of this place. Mann's hand-written journal recorded it rather illegibly as "Orlarilla" (my reading, in which several characters are debatable).

Wyatt included the name in a letter whose published version gave it as "Olorilla Rottiakinga". This is actually two names rather than one, and they probably do not refer to the same entity.

Both words are clearly in Kurna language, since they use correctly the two standard Kurna Locative suffixes *illa* and *ngga*, both meaning 'at, place of'.

1. 'Orlarilla' and 'Olorilla' both represent the same word, but Kurna words never begin with 'o'. Untrained English speakers often failed to recognize the sound *ng* at the beginning of a word. Thus the original could have been something like *Ngurlarilla* or *Ngulurilla*. This name's meaning (if any) is unknown.

2. In the printed word 'Rottiakinga' – the only known source – the capital 'R' must be a typographical error (probably for 'P'), since Kurna words never begin with *r*. The word is clearly a compound. The second word is certainly *yakingga* ('valley place'). The full compound might have been a general name for the whole valley area (rising grounds define it around the creek from Section 125 to 147); or it might have been a description which Wyatt mistook for a name.

But the first word of the compound is conjectural:

(1) Wyatt's original manuscript may have read "Potti" or perhaps "Patti".

(2) Since the written 'i' is followed by the sound *ya*, the original second vowel as spoken could have been either *i* or *a*.



(3) The Kurna word originally spoken could therefore have been *Puti*, *Puta*, *Pati* or *Pata*.

(4) From these possibilities the most likely words from known Kurna vocabulary are *barti* (edible grub'), or *patha* ('Swamp gum tree') or *batta* ('Red gum tree').

(5) The full compound *Patha-yakingga* ('swamp-gum valley place') is especially credible in the swampy valley of McLaren Vale, and so becomes a probable etymology.

But these interpretations of the first word in the compound remain uncertain. Their accuracy would need to be confirmed or questioned by more research: e.g. Which species were *patha* and *batta*? Were they dominant in this valley?

It is likely that *Ngulurilla* was a particular campsite within the larger 'valley place': on flood-free ground somewhere on the southern side of the creek on Sections 134-135, 145-147, or 156-158, in the older parts of McLaren Vale town.

Other named sites around the valley were probably *not* the same place as *Ngulurilla*: see PNS 4.03.01/01 Tarniyandingga, 4.03.01/02 Tarangga, 4.03.01/03 Taringga, and 4.03.01/04 Turangga.

Coordinates	Ngulurilla: -35.217549° Latitude, 138.537705 Longitude [nominal centre of town] Patha-yakingga: Latitude -35.210949°, Longitude 138.536096° [nominal centre of valley]
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Language Information

Meaning	1. 'place of <i>ngulurV</i> or <i>ngurlarV</i> etc [last vowel unknown, meaning unknown] 2. '[unknown, possibly Swamp gum] valley place'
Etymology	1. probably <i>ngulurV</i> or <i>ngurlarV</i> etc [last vowel unknown, meaning unknown] + <i>illa</i> 'at' 2. [unknown morpheme, possibly <i>patha</i> or perhaps <i>puti</i>] + <i>yaki</i> 'valley, deep or low place' + <i>ngga</i> 'place of'
Notes	These notes illustrate only the conjectural interpretation <i>Patha</i> .
Language Family	Thura-Yura: 'Kurna'
KWP Former Spelling	1. Ngulurilla or Ngularilla 2. Patta-yakkingga
KWP New Spelling 2010	1. Ngulurilla or Ngularilla 2. Patha-yakingga
Phonemic Spelling	1. /nguLVRila/ 2. /CVTVyakingka/
Syllabification	1. "Ngu-lu-ri-lla": 2. "Patha-yakingga":
Pronunciation tips	1. Stress the first syllable. Secondary stress on third syllable. 'ng' as in 'singing'. Every <i>u</i> as in 'pull'. 2. Stress the syllables <i>Pa</i> and <i>ya</i> . Every <i>a</i> as in Maori 'haka'. 'th' = <i>t</i> with tongue between teeth (interdental).



Main source evidence

Date	6 Sep 1837
Original source text	<p>“6 Sept^f... we came to Onkaperinga – passed the River- We passed on thro’ a regularly picturesque country till 6 o’clock when we bivouacked at Orlarilla[?] with a range of low hills – We had to pass a Swamp here & a difficult matter it was.</p> <p>7 Sept^f. The morning clear & fine, and the general scene singularly pretty – passed from the plain by a gentle slope into forest land – in which the She oak for the most part predominated covered with the Wattle. After passing some gentle sloping hills we came to a plain which terminated in a fine open forest, where the gum tree Eucalyptus again became predominant. This forest opened into the Aldinga plains. Deception Bay to the S.S.E. and a range of beautifully wooded acclivities stretched along, height about 5 or 600 feet. Before us stood Koolta Kourga [<i>Mt Terrible</i>], a very high hill, over which our track lay.”</p>
Reference	Charles Mann manuscript, ‘General Description of The Country from Adelaide to Encounter Bay... Extracts from Memoranda, made by Hon. Charles Mann while travelling from Adelaide to Encounter Bay, SA on 5.6.7 & 8 th Sept ^r /37’, State Library of SA BRG 42/52: 2.
Informants credited	
Informants uncredited	Mullawirraburka and his family, who accompanied the journey.

Date	[6 Sep 1837] / Aug 1838
Original source text	<p>“On the 5th of September I started from Adelaide for Encounter Bay, in company with Mr Mann, the Attorney-General... On our way we picked up a family of natives belonging to a well-known and excellent man, commonly called Oakaperinga [<i>sic</i>] Jack [<i>Onkaperinga Jack</i>] = ‘King John’ = Mullawirraburka], and they went the remainder of the journey with us...</p> <p>Sept. 6 – Left Weta-wertunga after breakfasting, fell in with Jack and his family above-mentioned, passed Oakaperinga [<i>sic</i>] or Field’s River, a very beautiful stream, and put up for the night on the farther side of a large swamp, in the district called by the natives Olorilla Rottiakinga. In the course of the day had a magnificent view of the gulf, sea-coast, hills, and plains.</p> <p>7th – Crossed a noble forest of gum trees, &c., traversed the extensive large hills, one of which [<i>Mt Terrible</i>] was so steep and long, nearly half a mile, that we had to stop twice in the descent, and bivouaced at Missunga [<i>mis-transcription for ‘Mipunga’</i>] in a bush-hut...”</p>
Reference	William Wyatt, “extracts of an ‘Expedition into the Interior of South Australia’”, in letter to JC Mathews, <i>South Australian Record</i> Vol.1 No.11, 8/8/1838: 83c.
Informants credited	Mullawirraburka and his family
Informants uncredited	

‘SWAMP GUM VALLEY’? Discussion:

THE JOURNEY:

In the early spring of 1837 two representatives of the colonial government in Adelaide walked and rode from Adelaide to Encounter Bay. They were the Advocate-General Charles Mann and the newly-appointed Protector of Aborigines William Wyatt. Both of them left accounts of their journey. They were visiting this five-months-old whaling outpost in order to investigate first-hand the ‘native evidence’ in the killing of whaler Driscoll by a Ramindjeri man. Language was very much on their minds, and they had with them the Kangaroo Islander William Cooper, who claimed he could interpret for them at their destination.¹

Somewhere a few miles south of O’Halloran Hill they were joined by ‘Onkaparinga Jack’, the man who would later be known as ‘King John’. His real name was Mullawirraburka; he was a leading man of the ‘Adelaide tribe’, and also had country of his own as far south as Aldinga Plain and Myponga valley.² He and his family accompanied the expedition the rest of the way to Encounter Bay, giving Mann and Wyatt a number of place-names as they travelled.

On their first night (5th September) they camped at a place called “Weta Wertinga” in the vicinity of O’Halloran Hill.³ Next morning they headed south from there, rejoicing in the “pleasant knolls & declivities covered with flowers, the blossom of the wattle prettily contrasted with the Sheoak... beautiful forest land”. They were impressed by the “most splendid country” for prospective landowners, and “came upon the grass-tree”: no doubt an object of wonder at first contact, though doomed to the axe when farming got under way. That afternoon when they crossed the Onkaparinga River, it would have been at the ford just outside the mouth of the Gorge. Shortly after this they camped for their second night at the place we are examining, and were given its name or names by one of their Aboriginal guides, most likely Mullawirraburka. It was probably Wyatt who asked. He was still fresh to his job and spent the trip enthusiastically collecting language information.⁴ By the end of it he had probably collected most if not all of the place-names south of Adelaide which he later listed for publication in 1879.⁵

¹ As it turned out, Cooper was wrong about this. Faced with an unexpected second Aboriginal language which was quite different from the one Cooper knew and which was spoken in Adelaide, they had to enlist the services of the local Ramindjeri man Tammuruwi (‘Encounter Bay Bob’). For the story see my history (in progress) *Feet On the Fleurieu*.

² See T Gara 1998, ‘Life and Times of Mullawirraburka’, in Simpson & Hercus (ed) 1998, *History In Portraits*, Aboriginal History Monograph 6.

³ See PNS 2/21 Wita-wartingga. Mann spelt more correctly “*Weta wertinga*”, Wyatt less correctly as “*Weta wertunga*”.

⁴ Three weeks after returning from this expedition he wrote that he had “*been enabled to acquire a tolerable knowledge of the words in most common use, both at Adelaide and Encounter Bay. Several hundreds compose my present vocabulary, some of which are as yet doubtful.*” (Wyatt 1st Quarterly Report, 1 Oct 1837, GRG 24/1/1837/38: 2).

⁵ Wyatt [1837-9] / 1879, ‘Vocabulary of the Adelaide and Encounter Bay Tribes’, in JD Woods 1879, *Native Tribes of South Australia*: 179.



Mann recorded the name of their campsite in his hand-written 'General Description of the Country'.⁶ So too did Wyatt in his published letter containing extracts from his journal.⁷ These are the only two known sources for this place-name.

Mann's manuscript tells us how, somewhere after a "plain" which is probably Morphett Vale, they

traversed a most splendid country from this, till we came to Onkaperinga – passed the River – We passed on thro' a regularly picturesque country till 6 o'clock when we bivouacked at Orlarilla[?] with a range of low hills – We had to pass a Swamp here & a difficult matter it was.

As it often happens with cursive manuscripts, the Aboriginal words which Mann wrote are sometimes much harder to decipher than his English words.⁸ Part of this crucial word is only semi-legible: it also looks rather like "Onlaulla", "Oulaulla", "Onlarilla" or "Oularilla". My preferred transcription "Orlarilla" is based on a painstaking comparison with Mann's hand-writing in the rest of this MS and in his MS record of the case evidence in Adelaide several weeks earlier.⁹

For Wyatt's record the newspaper publication is all we have. It says that they

*passed Oakaperinga [sic] or Field's River, a very beautiful stream, and put up for the night on the farther side of a large swamp, in the district called by the natives Olorilla Rottiakinga. In the course of the day had a magnificent view of the gulf, sea-coast, hills, and plains.*¹⁰

Even though we have no MS of the letter, here too we are obliged to consider hand-writing. In "Oakaperinga" there is at least one typographical error, since 'Oaka' must have been 'Onka'.¹¹ Accordingly we must be on the alert for other such errors, especially since this letter is the only known source for the name "Rottiakinga" and so we have no cross-checks.

⁶ Charles Mann 1837, 'General Description of The Country from Adelaide to Encounter Bay...', BRG 42/52: 2.

⁷ W Wyatt to JC Mathews, *South Australian Record* Vol.1 No.11, 8/8/1838: 83c.

⁸ The hand-writing is the same in English and Aboriginal words, but the latter have little or none of the context from which we make guesses about the former, such as other known vocabulary or function within a sentence.

⁹ Mann 28 July 1837, 'Advocate-General: enclosing his opinion on the murder of John Driscoll', GRG 24/1/1837/259. In the name which I transcribe as 'Orlarilla':

1. the second letter 'n/u/r' is very unclear, but the second and third letters here are more similar to 'ri' elsewhere than to 'nl' or 'ul'.

2. Between 'a' and 'll' are some squiggles which *might* be a single letter 'u'. However, I interpret them as 'ri', despite only a tenuous similarity with other examples of 'r' and 'i' in Mann. This is because Wyatt's record, originating from the same occasion, makes it clear that the suffix here was *illa*, the common Kurna Locative meaning 'at' or 'place of'.

¹⁰ 'Oakaperinga' is clearly a mis-transcription of 'Onkaperinga'. The Onkaperinga was called 'Field River' for a short time before the Kurna name was reinstated at the request of Governor Gawler, after which Captain WG Field's name was transferred to the small creek now known as Field River flowing into Hallett Cove.

¹¹ All records of the name other than this letter have 'n' after the initial vowel (see PNS 4.02/04 Ngangkiparingga).

WHERE WAS 'OLORILLA'?

Where exactly did the party camp that night?

Neither account is very clear how far the site was from the Onkaparinga ford. Mann says that after Onkaparinga they “passed on thro’ a regularly picturesque country” (he does not say how far) before they bivouacked at ‘Orlarilla’. The ridge immediately south of the ford answers this vague description – it gives south-bound travellers their first wide views of the McLaren Plains and the Sellicks Range – but the phrase would apply equally well to many other places over the next several kilometres. Another clue in Mann is that “here” at ‘Orlarilla’, or very near it, there was a “difficult” swamp.¹² This tends to confirm the impression in Wyatt that they stopped more or less immediately on reaching the other side of the swamp (no doubt very ready by now for food and rest).

Next day they continued south over the Aldinga plain – which Mann mentions by name, one of its earliest records¹³ – and crossed the Sellicks Hill range at the pass near its highest point (later named ‘Mount Terrible’ and known colloquially as ‘Sellicks Hill’). Can we deduce how far along this route was the camp they had just broken?

Wyatt’s narrative of the 7th says nothing about what they saw between ‘Olorilla Rottiakinga’ and a “noble forest of gum trees”, and his account reads as though the forest came immediately before Sellicks Hill. But Mann shows that they had covered quite some distance and varied country before this particular forest, and that it was some distance from Sellicks Hill:

7 Sept^r. The morning clear & fine, and the general scene singularly pretty – passed from the plain by a gentle slope into forest land. – in which the She oak for the most part predominated covered with the Wattle. After passing some gentle sloping hills we came to a plain which terminated in a fine open forest, where the gum tree Eucalyptus again became predominant. This forest opened into the Aldinga plains. Deception Bay to the S.S.E. and a range of beautifully wooded acclivities stretched along, height about 5 or 600 feet. Before us stood Koolta Kourga, a very high hill, over which our track lay.¹⁴

Mann’s ‘Orlarilla’ was on a “plain”, on which his ‘swamp’ was presumably located. From here they passed “by a gentle slope into forest land” which was dominated by sheoaks and wattles; then “some gentle sloping hills” (the downs south of Tatachilla Road?), followed by another ‘plain’. Only at the end of all this was there a “fine open forest” dominated by eucalypts, as in Wyatt. It “opened

¹² Mann: “We had to pass a Swamp here & a difficult matter it was” (my emphasis).

¹³ See PNS 4.04.01/01 Ngalingga.

¹⁴ Mann 1837: 2-3. “Deception Bay” was Light’s name for Aldinga Bay. For “Koolta Kourga” (Mt Terrible) see PNS 5.01/04).

into the Aldinga plains”; which tells us that the gum forest must have been somewhere around upper Maslin Creek,¹⁵ separated only by one low gentle ridge from the plains which extend southward to Sellicks Beach.

It is therefore fairly certain that Mann’s ‘picturesque country’ on the evening of the 6th was indeed the ridge south of the Onkaparinga; and that their campsite after that was in the valley or small plain of Pedler Creek, at what is now the town of McLaren Vale. Since it was early spring after a very wet winter,¹⁶ the swampland here was probably still wet and ‘difficult’ as they crossed the creek. With Mullawirraburka as their guide, they may have crossed at *Tarangga* (the name means ‘crossing place’) near today’s Field St. If they did not consult him and in their ignorance tried any other place, the swampland would have been much wider and more ‘difficult’.¹⁷

WHAT ARE THE WORDS, AND WHAT DO THEY MEAN?

We have here two separate place-names in Kurna language, whose originals were heard by the foreigners Mann and Wyatt as being (according to our sources) something like *Uulurilla* (or *Urlarilla*)¹⁸ and *Rottiakingga*.

1. The reasoning around this first assessment is laid out below; along with
2. some linguistic snags which have fairly clear resolutions;
3. some deductive theories which might enable us to interpret the puzzles in the recorded spellings; and
4. my conclusions about the words.

‘Olorilla / Orlarilla’:

1. ‘Olorilla / Orlarilla’ is a self-contained word, and its language is Kurna, because the Kurna suffix *illa* is used here correctly with a three-syllable root.
2. Although the Kurna language does not allow words to begin with the vowel *o/u*, this is a familiar issue in colonial records. In most cases where a colonist records such a word, comparison with

¹⁵ From McLaren Vale the party seems to have travelled south where the land is flatter, probably somewhere between Victor Harbor Road and Main St.

¹⁶ – as Light’s party had found while travelling to and from Encounter Bay in June (see my *Feet On the Fleurieu*).

¹⁷ For the McLaren Vale swampland see PNS 4.03.01/02 *Tarangga* and 4.03.01/03 *Taringga*’.

¹⁸ ‘Ol’ and ‘Orl’ could indicate an original long vowel *uu*; or ‘Orl’ could indicate a Retroflex consonant / (with tongue curled back).



better records of the same word shows that the English speaker failed to ‘hear’ the sound *ng* at the beginning because this does not happen in English.¹⁹

For the first vowel, the sounds *o* and *u* are interchangeable in Kaurna; and the spelling ‘Orl’ might indicate either that this vowel was long (*uu*), or that the following consonant was retroflex (*r/*).

The second vowel is unstressed and therefore easy to mistake; Mullawirraburka’s pronunciation could have been either *u* or *a*.²⁰

The original word could therefore be (probably) *Nguulurilla*, *Ngurlurilla*, *Nguularilla* or *Ngurlarilla*, with a slight preference for *u* as the second vowel.²¹

3. But no roots *nguluri*, *ngulari*, *ngurluri* or *ngurlari* are recorded in Kaurna language.²² Though we cannot pinpoint the form of the word, henceforth for simplicity’s sake I will use only the form *Ngulurilla*.

4. Thus there is no known meaning for this name beyond ‘place of *nguluri* etc’. In any case, place-names need not have any dictionary meaning beyond themselves: consider ‘London’ or ‘Rome’.

‘Rottiakinga’:

1. We may suspect that this longish word is a compound, a combination of two shorter words.

For the final syllable the most likely interpretation by far is the other standard Kaurna Locative suffix *ngga*. We shall find below that this is used correctly with a two-syllable root.

2. English assumptions about pronunciation would tend to place the stresses as ‘Rottia-kinga’. But remembering Kaurna language habits, we see and hear a different pattern, ‘Rotti-akinga’.²³ Then it is not hard to identify the second word from the last half of the given spelling. The sound of ‘i-a’, if treated as two separate vowels, actually includes the consonant *y*: i.e. what Mullawirraburka said was “*i-ya*”. This gives us a fully intelligible second word: *yakingga*, ‘deep place’ or ‘place of the valley’.

¹⁹ e.g. Wyatt recorded *ngadli* as “Adle”, *Ngangki* as “Ungke”, etc. Colonists would have heard the initial *ng* physically, but understood it only as a stammer or non-verbal noise.

²⁰ We know that sometimes a recorded ‘o’ represents an original *a*, and sometimes a recorded *a* is the hearer’s default for a different unstressed vowel (each is illustrated in the first two vowels of ‘Onkaparinga’, from *Ngangki-parringga*).

²¹ This is because Wyatt’s ‘o’ might indicate more careful listening than Mann’s default ‘a’.

²² – nor *Ngulura*, *Nguluru* etc. Because the suffix replaces the last vowel in the root word, this eliminated third vowel is unknown and could be *a*, *i* or *u*.

²³ cp. ‘Onkapa-ringa’ (English pattern) and ‘Onka-paringa’ (Kaurna pattern).



3. The first word, published as “Rotti”, is much more problematic.

The Kaurna language does not allow words to begin with the consonant *r*. Did Wyatt mistake some other sound for *r*? At the beginning of a word we may rule this out as extremely unlikely.²⁴

Therefore the printed initial ‘R’ is probably a mis-transcription or typographical error. If we examine Wyatt’s available hand-writing in his other letters and reports, we find that his capital ‘P’ is very similar to his capital ‘R’ except for the diagonal stroke; so that ‘P’ may sometimes be easily mistaken for ‘R’ if it is followed by a character which begins under the loop.²⁵

The first morpheme of the word might therefore have been spelled by Wyatt as ‘Potti’, representing *puti* or perhaps *pati*.²⁶

But that same recorded ‘i-a’ transition to *yaki* could also disguise an unstressed second vowel *a*. That is, the first word might easily have been *puta*; and *puta-ya*, spoken quickly and heard by someone who does not know the language, can very easily be mistaken for *puti-ya*.²⁷

So we might have *puti*, *puta*, *pati* or *pata*.

With *u* as the first vowel, in Kaurna *puti* is the word for ‘hairy’; *purta* is ‘ashes’; *putaputa* is ‘a bottle-shaped sponge’; and otherwise we could only guess remotely at connections with verbs such as *putanthi* ‘to be cooked’ or *purthinhi* ‘to rejoice’. None of these sound at all likely in combination with ‘valley’.

Using *a* instead, and recognizing that *p* and *b* are interchangeable in Aboriginal languages, we could have *barti* ‘edible grub’; *parta* ‘sexual intercourse’; *batta* ‘the red gum tree’;²⁸ or *patha* ‘swamp gum tree’.²⁹

²⁴ – especially as Kaurna almost never uses consonant clusters at the beginning of a word (*kr*, *tr*, etc).

²⁵ e.g. the first two characters in “Protector” on p.8 of GRG 24/1/1837/372 and p.8 of 24/1/1837/389. For samples in Wyatt see the password-protected ‘Complete’ version of this essay.

²⁶ In Wyatt a written ‘o’ most often represents *u*; but it can sometimes represent an original sound *a*, even in a stressed syllable: e.g. ‘Popalto’ = *papaltu*; ‘Kotpa’ = *katpa*; ‘Toltarne’ = *taltharni*; ‘Wotpane’ = *watpanthi*. It is possible that the second printed character ‘o’ could also be a typographical error, arising from a carelessly-written ‘a’ or ‘u’ in the manuscript: i.e. that he wrote not ‘Potti’ but ‘Patti’ or ‘Putti’ (both of which would represent *pati*). But judging by his handwritten ‘a’ elsewhere this is less likely. Wyatt’s hand in his reports is usually quite careful, the ‘a’ and ‘o’ being easily distinguished from each other (unlike many other 19th-century manuscripts). But occasionally, even in the official reports (see GRG 24/1/1837/372: 2 ‘statement’, 4 ‘natives’, 5 ‘that of the’), his ‘a’ is less careful and *might* be mistaken for an ‘o’ – especially in an unknown word, and by an editor who was habituated to the more careless hands of many other writers in whom ‘at’ and ‘ot’ often look identical. His ‘a’ and ‘u’ are sometimes similar. Such lapses might also happen in his informal letter to Mathews, his brother-in-law. For samples of Wyatt’s hand-writing see the password-protected ‘Complete’ version of this essay.

²⁷ cp. ‘Cowealunga’ = *Kauwa-yarlungga* (PNS 5.01/02). There is no *putu* on record, and in any case the *u* in *putu-ya* would probably have been noted, as it is much easier to distinguish.

²⁸ Teichelmann MS 1857.



While 'Grub Valley' is not impossible, the trees themselves seem much more promising. It is likely that *patha* and *batta* are the same word, and refer to a form of 'red gum' which prefers wetland habitats. The big River Red Gum is *karra*, which can also mean 'high'.³⁰ Some say that *patha* is the modern Swamp gum, *Eucalyptus ovata*, which prefers valleys, flats and poorly-drained soils.³¹

This Kurna tree is commemorated in the 'Patawalonga' wetland and creek at Glenelg (*Patha-wilyangga*, 'place of *patha* and foliage'), and in 'Battunga' at Meadows (probably *Pathangga*, 'place of *patha*'). Ivaritji's brother Koonari (James Phillips) described the famous Old Gum Tree at Glenelg as "Pudtha yukoona",³² i.e. *Patha-yukuna* ('the bent *patha*'). All of these places are (or were) swampy.

But here I must leave this aspect to the ongoing project of ecological and cultural regeneration. Collaborators might examine the evidence contained in these Kurna words, their early glosses, the geographical information surrounding their application in Kurna place-names, and the known habitats of eucalypt species, to attempt a more refined conclusion about the Kurna categories *patha* and *batta*. These might or might not be the same, and they might or might not coincide with any single species as defined by modern science; they might cover several species united (or divided) by appearance, habitat or use.

4. The end of this chain of observations and deductions is a conclusion which we can regard as modestly probable: *Patha-yakingga*, 'place of the swamp-gum valley'.

This interpretation could be upgraded to 'fairly certain' if it was discovered that the valley of McLaren Vale was notable for its *patha*, whatever this may turn out to be. Did the valley have many stands of Swamp gums or of swamp-friendly Red gums which were not *karra*?

NGULURILLA PATHAYAKINGGA? TWO NAMES OR ONE?

It is unlikely that 'Onkapinga Jack' regarded *Ngulurilla* as precisely the same place or entity as *Pathayakingga*, or that the two words were a single name. Both our sources recorded the first name, but only Wyatt recorded the second.

While nothing can be said about *Nguluri*, an obvious ecological meaning can be seen in *Pathayaki*.

²⁹ Wyatt "*Pāta, pāta, swamp gum tree*". In the more phonetic spelling *patha*, the 'th' represents an interdental *t*, with the tongue between the teeth.

³⁰ *Karra* – magnificent high River Red gums – were the defining feature of the forest near Adelaide's CBD, and that part of the Torrens River was named after them: *Karra-wirra-pari*, 'river of the red-gum forest' (see PNS 2/05).

³¹ Phillip Clarke 2013, 'The Aboriginal ethnobotany of the Adelaide region', *Transactions of the Royal Society of SA* 137(1): 118. *Euc. ovata* is known not only as Swamp gum but also as Black gum, White gum, etc. Cp. <http://www.ten.org.au/black-gum> [25/10/16] and <http://www.florabank.org.au/files/documents/provenance/20070824-03.pdf> [26/10/16].

³² Koonari cited in Thomas Anthony, *Glenelg Illustrated 1836-1896*, as quoted in Cockburn 1990: 87 under 'Glenelg'.



Both appear to be place-names; but as always in colonial sources, it is possible that one of them was a *description* of the place and the listener mistook this for its *name*. Perhaps Mullawirraburka meant 'This place is called Ngulurilla. It's a valley with swamp gums'.

Probably one of the names more was specific than the other, a small site contained within a larger named area, much as in English 'Glenelg' is contained within 'Adelaide'. If this was the case, then (in the absence of any more precise information) the 'swamp gum valley' probably was the larger entity, and *Ngulurilla* was the name of the small site within it where they were camping. This would certainly have been one of several named sites in the valley.³³

A MODEST CONCLUSION:

This thread of observation and reasoning has been stretched fairly thin. While we can be sure that both names are in Kaurna language, and sure of *yakingga* 'valley place', I must emphasize that for the moment all the rest is merely 'rather probable'. These details might be so, but we won't know for sure unless convincing new information and analysis turns up.

References to background documents

For more about McLaren Vale and its Aboriginal provenance, see also my password-protected document 'BACKGROUND6McLarenVale.doc' on the same website.

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End of Summary

³³ We know that there were at least two (possibly three) other place-names within the valley area of McLaren Vale: *Tarangga* near Field St in the eastern part of the town, *Turangga* at the valley's eastern extremity, and possibly *Taringga* near the homestead 'Daringa'. *Tarniyandingga*, located immediately west of the Victor Harbor Road, was probably not regarded as being part of the 'valley'. See PNS 4.03.01/01, /02, /03 and /04.