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Place Name SUMMARY (PNS) 4.02/04

NGANGKI-PARINGGA

(last edited: 4.8.2017)

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This essay has not been peer-reviewed or culturally endorsed in detail.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

Place Name SUMMARY (PNS) 4.02/04

NGANGKI-PARINGGA

(last edited: 4.8.2017)

Abstract

Ngangki-parri (KWP New Spelling *Ngangkipari*) means 'women's river', and is normally expanded to *Ngangki-parringga* (New Spelling *Ngangkiparringga*), 'place of the women's river' – i.e. the Locative *ngga* 'at' is optional.

It is the Kurna name for a part of the Onkaparinga River: probably the extreme northeastern part of the 'horseshoe' loop at Old Noarlunga, around the ford on Section 71 and the campsite a few yards upstream on Section 61.

The name may also apply in Kurna culture to the whole flood plain and estuary system of the lower Onkaparinga River.

The name and its meaning were obtained definitively from the Dresden missionary linguists Teichelmann and Schürmann in 1839-40, but by then many versions of it had been collected by a number of explorers and surveyors as well as Protector William Wyatt. The spelling 'Onkaparinga' seems to have become official during the government of George Gawler (1838-41).

The small area at Old Noarlunga contained

1. a ford, which was an unavoidable crossing point for all north-south travel along the coastal plains, so that Aboriginal tracks converged on it from all directions.
2. a major campsite located at the mouth of Onkaparinga Gorge immediately upstream from the ford.

The town site as a whole was a magnificent 'pound' for game, and the river there was a prime fishing place. It also contains a large burial site. It was a place for meeting groups from further south, notably Encounter Bay, for trade and ceremony.

As the name *Ngangki-parringga* suggests, the area near the Gorge mouth is associated with a number of Aboriginal stories involving women, which are outlined in the Discussion. The whole estuary continues to be important to Kurna women today.

For the *name* there is no linguistic credibility in the spelling 'Ngangkaparri'; nor in the alleged meanings 'mother river', 'plentiful', 'muddy or dirty water', 'eagles' home', or 'place of fish'. The last two items were probably intended as commentaries on aspects of the *place*.

<i>Coordinates</i>	Latitude -35.178193°, Longitude 138.503971° (at campsite near Gorge)
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Language Information

<i>Meaning</i>	'women's river place'
<i>Etymology</i>	<i>Ngangki</i> 'woman' + <i>parri</i> 'river' + <i>ngga</i> 'at, place of'
<i>Notes</i>	Also recorded as <i>Ngangki-parri</i> , 'women's river'.
<i>Language Family</i>	Thura-Yura: 'Kaurna'
<i>KWP Former Spelling</i>	Ngangki-parringga, Ngangki-parri
<i>KWP New Spelling 2010</i>	Ngangki-paringga, Ngangki-pari
<i>Phonemic Spelling</i>	/ngangkiparingka/ /ngangkipari/
<i>Pronunciation</i>	"Ngangki-paringga", "Ngangki-pari"
<i>Pronunciation tips</i>	<i>Ng</i> as in ' <i>singing</i> ' (practise it by saying 'singanki', then omit the 'si'). Every <i>a</i> as in Maori 'haka'. Stress the 1 st syllable. Secondary stress on the 3 rd syllable.

Main source evidence

<i>Date</i>	[May 1831] / 1833
<i>Original source text</i>	" Ponkepurringa Cr. " [<i>leading back into "Hay's Range" = Mt Lofty Ranges</i>].
<i>Reference</i>	Maps in Charles Sturt 1833, <i>Two Expeditions into the Interior of Southern Australia</i> : Vol. 1 'Map of the Discoveries', & Vol.2: 228.
<i>Informants credited</i>	
<i>Informants uncredited</i>	Kalinga (Sally) and/or Condoy &/or George Bates (May 1831); John Kent.

<i>Date</i>	[Feb 1837] / 1839-40
<i>Original source text</i>	"1837 Feb 1 st . Started off to Enkeperinga to look for Polly". [<i>Polly was a missing horse</i>]
<i>Reference</i>	From a 6-page outline chronology in Charles W Stuart MS Diaries Vol. 5, D6872(L), State Library of SA.
<i>Informants credited</i>	
<i>Informants uncredited</i>	Kangaroo Islander Nat Thomas, and/or Mulliakkiburka ('Tam O'Shanter') with other Kaurna informants.

Date	[May 1837] / Jan 1838
Original source text	“Their name for Glenelg is Corvandilla [<i>sic</i>], which, being interpreted, means <i>good water</i> ; Adelaide, the city, they call Walinga: Ouhe-peringa [<i>sic</i>], Palbungu [<i>sic</i>], Morialbo [<i>sic</i>], Aldinge [<i>sic</i>], and Yankeedilly [<i>sic</i>], are all names of places in this neighbourhood.”
Reference	Stephen Hack letter from Adelaide, 1 May 1837, <i>South Australian Record</i> , Vol.1 No.4 (13 Jan 1838): 29c.
Informants credited	
Informants uncredited	Kurna informants for Adelaide names

Date	[May 1837] / 1838
Original source text	“Their name for Glenelg, is Corrandilla [<i>sic</i>], which being interpreted means ‘good water’. Adelaide, the city, they call Wallinga. Onkeperinga , Oatbunga [<i>sic</i>], Morialta, Aldinga, Yankudilly [<i>sic</i>] are all names of places in this neighbourhood.”
Reference	Stephen Hack letter from Adelaide, May 1837, in Henry Watson 1838, <i>A Lecture on SA</i> (Gliddon, London): 18.
Informants credited	
Informants uncredited	Kurna informants for Adelaide names

Date	n.d. [June 1837 and later]
Original source text	- [<i>caption of sketch of camp at Horse-shoe</i>] “Tuesday June / Camp at Field’s River”. - “ Unkaparinga ” [<i>river marked in undated and untitled sketch maps of 1. lower Onkaparinga river, 3. whole of Fleurieu Peninsula</i>].
Reference	William Light, Notebooks & Sketchbooks, State Library of SA microfilm PRG 1/4/177.
Informants credited	
Informants uncredited	Kurna informants via surveyors?

Date	July 1837
Original source text	“A party of natives made their appearance there were young & old nearly 20 of them, wild savage looking fellows enough. I know enough of the language to be able to chatter with them a little and we travelled on in very good humour to the Onkeperinga river ... I have been twice to Onkeperinga after the remainder of these fat bullocks...”
Reference	Stephen Hack letter to Maria Hack 20/7/1837, PRG 456/1/18, SLSA.
Informants credited	
Informants uncredited	Kurna informants

Date	July-Aug 1837
Original source text	“End of Ancaporinga Range .”
Reference	BT Finniss 1837, angles for Sturt River survey, in ‘Bases & angles B Finniss 1837 to 1839 x ^d WC,’ Field Book 76 ‘Bases & Angles, Journal by BT Finniss’, p.[40].
Informants credited	
Informants uncredited	Kurna informants



Date	Aug 1837
Original source text	"T. 1st [Aug 1837]. Fine morning cloudy afternoon and showery night walked down to Glenelg Wilkins had caught the horses, rode back on my own mare. When I got home found all the Bullocks which had been so long astray on the Enkeperinga river in the stock-yard. Mr Brown's Jones stock keeper servant having brought them home".
Reference	Charles W Stuart MS Diaries Vol. 3, D6872/3(L), State Library of SA, transcript Anon c2012.
Informants credited	
Informants uncredited	

Date	[5 Sep 1837] / Aug 1838
Original source text	"On the 5th of September I started from Adelaide for Encounter Bay, in company with Mr Mann, the Attorney-General, and Mr Powys, with my interpreter, Cooper, who has been some years in Kangaroo island, and a man to take care of the horses. On our way we picked up a family of natives belonging to a well-known and excellent man, commonly called Oakaperinga Jack , and they went the remainder of the journey with us."
Reference	W Wyatt to JC Mathews, quoted in, <i>South Australian Record</i> , Vol.1 No.8 (8 Aug 1838): 29c.
Informants credited	
Informants uncredited	'Onkaparinga Jack' (Mullawirraburka or 'King John') and other Kurna informants.

Date	[5 Sep 1837] / 1838
Original source text	"On the 5th of September I started from Adelaide for Encounter Bay... On our way we picked up a family of natives belonging to a well-known and excellent man, commonly called Oakaparinga Jack , and they went the remainder of the journey with us."
Reference	W Wyatt letter [to JC Mathews], quoted in John Stephens 1839, <i>The Land of Promise</i> , London: Smith, Elder and Co.: 75.
Informants credited	
Informants uncredited	'Onkaparinga Jack' (Mullawirraburka or 'King John') and other Kurna informants.

Date	[Sep 1837] / 1879
Original source text	" Ungke perre, Ungke perringa - Field's River, Onkaparinga."
Reference	W Wyatt [1837-9] / 1879, 'Vocabulary of the Adelaide and Encounter Bay Tribes', in JD Woods 1879, <i>The Aboriginal Tribes of South Australia</i> : 179.
Informants credited	
Informants uncredited	'Onkaparinga Jack' (Mullawirraburka or 'King John') and other Kurna informants.



<i>Date</i>	Nov-Dec 1837.
<i>Original source text</i>	“Nov.28 [1837] ... to take the bullock cart along the beach to the bar of Unkaparinga creek... ” “Sunday Dec 17... Halted 10 minutes at Unkaprainga [sic] creek where it meets the fresh water”.
<i>Reference</i>	YB Hutchinson 1837, ‘A Hasty Account of an Expedition to Encounter Bay’, PRG 1013/1/4/1, SLSA: 9.
<i>Informants credited</i>	
<i>Informants uncredited</i>	

<i>Date</i>	Nov 1837, April 1838
<i>Original source text</i>	“Nov.28 [1837]... Halted at Unkaparinga Creek at 6.30 pm without having rested during the day”. “Sat. 7 th [April 1838]... Arrived and slept at Sladdens at Unkaparringa... 9 th ... Halted at Unkaparinga. ”
<i>Reference</i>	Journal of Young Bingham Hutchinson, PRG 1013/1/1, SLSA.
<i>Informants credited</i>	
<i>Informants uncredited</i>	

<i>Date</i>	May 1838
<i>Original source text</i>	“[No.] 10 - Sladen’s at Onkaperinga ”. “Adelaide 14 May 1838, Samuel Stephens to John Morphett... The Unkeparinka River... the Horse-shoe bend, on which Sladdon at present resides.”
<i>Reference</i>	Samuel Stephens MS 1838, ‘Reports Of Country Lands’, BRG 42/51, SLSA.
<i>Informants credited</i>	
<i>Informants uncredited</i>	

<i>Date</i>	July 1838
<i>Original source text</i>	“...reached Onkeperinga that night & camped in a fine bend of the river of about 300 acres in extent with at the very very outside 100 trees on it in the way of cultivation & all of it superexcellent land it might be securely fenced with about 200 yds of post & rail....
<i>Reference</i>	Stephen Hack letter to Maria Hack 20/7/1838, PRG 456/1/25, SLSA.
<i>Informants credited</i>	
<i>Informants uncredited</i>	Kaurna informants



<i>Date</i>	April? 1839
<i>Original source text</i>	- “ Onkaparinga River ” [<i>at Horse-shoe</i>]. - “ Onkaparinga ” [<i>at mouth</i>]. - “Field River”. [= <i>Onkaparinga River in National Park area</i>].
<i>Reference</i>	Richard Counsel 1839, Field Book 94 (Hundreds of Noarlunga & Willunga), SA Geographical Names Unit: 96, 98, 102.
<i>Informants credited</i>	
<i>Informants uncredited</i>	Kurna survey guides.

<i>Date</i>	8 June 1839
<i>Original source text</i>	“Many [natives] have gone away [from Adelaide] for a long time to Ngankiparringa for a kangaroo hunt”.
<i>Reference</i>	Clamor Schürmann diary 8 June 1839, Schürmann diaries (translated by G Noller), Lutheran Archives, Adelaide.
<i>Informants credited</i>	
<i>Informants uncredited</i>	Mullawirraburka, Kadlitpinna, Ityamaitpinna, etc, 1838-9.

<i>Date</i>	12 Sep 1839
<i>Original source text</i>	[<i>returning from Murdoch’s station at Mt Barker where he had bought cows</i>] “Tues 12 th [September] ... accompanied the men with them [<i>cows</i>] across the Enkeperinga... ”
<i>Reference</i>	Charles W Stuart, ‘Journal commencing Augt 22 nd 1839’, CW Stuart MS Diaries Vol. 5, D6872(L), State Library of SA.
<i>Informants credited</i>	
<i>Informants uncredited</i>	

<i>Date</i>	Nov 1839
<i>Original source text</i>	“Nov 14 th ... Cart left at Unkaparinga to be brought in by the first return dray & repaired”.
<i>Reference</i>	Counsel & Loveday n.d. [1839-55], Field Book 99, GNU: 21b.
<i>Informants credited</i>	
<i>Informants uncredited</i>	

<i>Date</i>	Sep 1840
<i>Original source text</i>	“Proposed Road to Unkaparinga ”.
<i>Reference</i>	J McLaren map 1 Sep 1840, ‘Country South of Adelaide from O’Halloran Hill to Mt Terrible’, London, Arrowsmith, BRG 42/120/28, SLSA.
<i>Informants credited</i>	
<i>Informants uncredited</i>	Kurna survey guides, surveyors.



Date	Sep 1840
Original source text	"... we have an excellent road, except about half a mile, which will in a few months be avoided by a bridge over the Horse-shoe or Onkaparingo River , where the township Nourlunga is begun." [<i>'Onkaparingo' is probably a mis-transcription of 'Onkaparinga'.</i>]
Reference	J Colton and CD Hewitt (McLaren Vale pioneer settlers) letter to Directors of the South Australian Company 2 Sep 1840, published in Second Report of Select Committee on South Australia, Minutes of Evidence p45, in <i>British Parliamentary papers: Australia</i> Vol.2.
Informants credited	
Informants uncredited	

Date	1840
Original source text	" Ngangkiparri: the Onkaparinga River ".
Reference	Teichelmann & Schürmann 1840, <i>An Outline of a Grammar...</i>
Informants credited	
Informants uncredited	Mullawirraburka, Kadlitpinna, Ityamaitpinna, etc, 1838-40.

Date	1842
Original source text	" Nounkaparinga River " [= upper Onkaparinga River from Woodside to Charleston].
Reference	F Nixon & V Cross, April 1842, 'Plan of the Combined Special Surveys of the Sources of the Nounkaparinga', Plan 4/53, GNU.
Informants credited	
Informants uncredited	

Date	1843
Original source text	[<i>place-names</i>] "Tāinbari-angk, Ngangkipariŋga , Tiiruŋga, Horse-Shoe".
Reference	Meyer 1843, <i>Vocabulary of the language spoken by the Aborigines...</i> , Adelaide, James Allen: 50.
Informants credited	Ramindjeri informants 1840-3.
Informants uncredited	

Date	Sep 1844
Original source text	"Sunday the 15 th [Sep 1844]. After breakfast rode to the river Nganki (Nganki parri i.e. women's river; English Ongeparringga i.e. Nganki parringa or the women's river translated). "
Reference	CG Teichelmann diary 15 Sep 1844, translated by Marcus Krieg, Lutheran Archives, Adelaide.
Informants credited	
Informants uncredited	Mullawirraburka, Kadlitpinna, Ityamaitpinna, etc, 1838-40.

Date	1857
Original source text	“ Ngangkiparri – the Ladies river , which the English call Angkaparringga ”.
Reference	Teichelmann 1857, <i>Dictionary of the Adelaide Dialect</i> (unpublished MS, transcribed by Jane Simpson 1994).
Informants credited	
Informants uncredited	Mullawirraburka, Kadlitpinna, Ityamaiitpinna, etc, 1838-44.

Date	[1840s] / 1893
Original source text	“ On-ka-paringa (eagle’s home), / No-orlunga (place of fish).”
Reference	‘A Native’ [Faith Lockwood, nee Hewett] 1893, ‘Aboriginal Nomenclature’, <i>Register</i> 11/10/1893: 7e.
Informants credited	
Informants uncredited	Kurna informants at McLaren Vale in 1840s.

Discussion: **NGANGKI-PARI, THE WOMEN’S RIVER:**

THE ONKAPARINGA COASTAL FLOOD PLAIN: LANDSCAPE AND ABORIGINAL USES.

Until built-up highways and cars obliterated our sense of space, the lower flood plain of the Onkaparinga River was one of the main landmarks of the coastal plains south of Adelaide. Its ecology and Aboriginal heritage have been studied and described in loving detail by its friends.¹ Concerning the former I need only summarize.

Although now called a ‘river’, it is really a tidal ‘inlet’ (as described by Barker’s party in 1831)² on a flat 4 km wide:³ more like the Port River than the other freshwater creeks down this coast, and much bigger than the other tiny local estuaries such as the mouth of Pedler’s Creek.

For colonists its focus was not the more visible Estuary but the remarkable bend of the river as it leaves the Gorge: an almost closed loop of 700 by 400 metres. Because of its shape it was known throughout colonial history as ‘The Horse-shoe’.⁴

¹ e.g. Department for Environment and Heritage (SA) 2005, *Onkaparinga Estuary Information Package*; and Rhondda Harris 2001, ‘Aboriginal Heritage Survey, Old Noarlunga Township: a report to United Water’, unpublished typescript.

² Sturt 1833, Vol. 2 :233. He also referred to the Port River as an ‘inlet’ (p.237). .

³ From River mouth to Gorge mouth is about 3.5 km as the eagle flies, but about 8 km by river.

⁴ Sometimes ‘Horseshoe Bend’; not to confused with Horseshoe Bay at Port Elliott.

There were three features of the Horseshoe which made it important both to Aborigines and colonists.

First was the ford. This was near the beginning of the loop, about 300 yards downstream from the mouth of the gorge.⁵ This, the only place where foot travellers or vehicles could cross the river conveniently or sometimes at all, was quite unavoidable, even though it could be difficult and dangerous in a wet winter.⁶

Secondly, the loop itself was prime hunting territory: a tiny enclosed gift-sample of the lushest kind of country on these costal plains: the fire-managed grasslands with many big scattered trees which blessed the eyes of the first colonists as 'just like a gentleman's park'.⁷ There was very good fishing, especially for bream and crayfish.⁸ Here, nearly surrounded by a river with cliffs or steep scarps on the other side of it, it was almost an enclosed Pound, ideal habitat for small game such as possums, to attract large game such as kangaroos while hindering escape, and ideal for hunting them all only a few yards from camp.

Thirdly, the foot travellers living off the land and necessarily using the ford were well compensated here. Only a few yards upstream lay a first-rate campsite on a second smaller but even more sheltered flat. Here you had protection from most winds. While at the estuary campsites you had to dig for water, here you had abundant fresh water, permanent above the camp and intermittent below it.⁹

⁵ The ford is easy to find, immediately below the very visible Winnaynee Horseshoe Inn Reserve on the main road. The Reserve contains artworks and interpretative signs about the Aboriginal history of the area. Strictly speaking there have been two fords. A second ford "about a mile further upstream" was "used mainly by horseback riders" after 1836 (Max Colwell 1972, *The History of the Noarlunga District*, Adelaide, Scrymgeour & Sons: 49). This must have been within the Gorge.

⁶ On the return trip of Light's expedition to Encounter Bay in June 1837, Stephen Hack found it "so much swelled that I was obliged to make the natives carry everything over on their heads and then run the empty cart in and swim the bullocks over, and try to drag the cart out by a long rope, the cart swum away and I had to swim the bullocks backwards and forwards 4 times before I succeeded in getting the cart safe out, I then got one of the blacks to lead the old mare over while I went down to a ford and stripped and waded across with the water nearly up to my armpits and a tremendous current running which in fact nearly carried me down the stream. I was three hours getting over that stream in that place not more than 6 or 7 yards wide" (S Hack letter to Maria Gawler 20 July 1837, PRG 456/1/18: 2).

⁷ Explorer Stephen Hack, writing to his mother in 1838 about one of his trips south, enthused that he had "camped in a fine bend of the river of about 300 acres in extent with at the very very outside 100 trees on it in the way of cultivation and all of it superexcellent land it might be securely fenced with about 200 yds of post and rail" (Stephen Hack letter to Maria Hack 20 July 1838, PRG 456/1/25, SLSA).

⁸ 'Old Colonist' 1851, quoted in R Harris 2001: 5; cp. pp.10, 12.

⁹ Under average conditions the salt and fresh waters met in the vicinity of Paringa Parade, just downstream from the campsite. See e.g. McLaren's map: "Fresh W." is marked just within the Gorge, and "Salt w." at the south end of the loop opposite what is now Paringa Pde (McLaren 1840, 'Country South of Adelaide', C 236, C 803, C 274, State Library of SA). However, in the wet winter of 1837 Light "found the water at ebb tide fresh to within a mile of the sea" (D Elder (ed.) 1984, *William Light's Brief Journal*, Adelaide, Wakefield Press: 121). Survey assistant Piesse, who had probably lived in the survey camp there in 1839, wrote: "The tide flows up to the Horse-shoe, so that except when there is a set of the fresh down the river the water is salt" ('L.P.' [Louis Piesse], *Observer* 13/4/1844 :7a).

This campsite was situated right in the mouth of the Onkaparinga Gorge, a deep and very steep gully with no useable or conveniently approachable crossing places until Clarendon in the hills more than 15 km upstream.

'Native tracks' converging on this campsite from all directions were mapped by the first surveyors in 1839. The dotted lines come from Adelaide to the north (the Adelaide people visited this place often), from the hills to the northeast, from Encounter Bay to the southeast, and from Aldinga to the southwest.¹⁰ The Horseshoe was a notable place for meetings between the 'Adelaide tribe' and the 'Encounter Bay tribe', and for trading, especially in red ochre. There was also a large burial site within the loop.¹¹

Downstream from the Horseshoe, the Estuary – with its large tidal mudflats, salt marshes and reedbeds – was a major barrier to north-south travel, especially in winter. Hydrologists estimate that before the river and all its tributaries were dammed (notably by the Mount Bold reservoir) there was about four times as much water on the flood plain as now.¹² There were a number of Aboriginal campsites along it,¹³ served by several springs in the neighbouring high sand dunes;¹⁴ but if you wanted to cross the river and go south you used the ford.

All this was almost as true for the settlers as for the nimble barefoot travellers before them. The ford was therefore one of the first landmarks to suffer. Until the first bridge was opened in 1841,¹⁵ every dray that went south – loaded high with explorers' provisions or a settler's family and complete worldly possessions – had to be hauled across this ford by hard-hoofed bullocks, after a steep and dangerous descent down one scarp, followed by another even steeper ascent up the opposite one. They would have churned the ford very quickly into a rutted mess.

In the first half of 1839 the base camp of the first survey of the area was located at the prime campsite. As remembered by the camp commander James Hawker, it was "on the flat just across

¹⁰ J McLaren map 1840, 'Country South of Adelaide'.

¹¹ R Harris 2001: 2-3, 8-9, 10, 11.

¹² "Approximately 75% of pre-settlement flows have been diverted away from the estuary" (*Onkaparinga Estuary Information Package*: 8, cp. 24-5).

¹³ There was a 'major occupation site' on the river nearby, immediately west of Main South Road, and Draper identified four occupation sites along the estuary, and more have been found in the sand dunes near the mouth (Harris 2001: 6-7). One historical camp was on the north side, probably in the vicinity of the western end of Goldsmith Drive, Noarlunga Downs; it was used for a large gathering in February 1837 as described by Stuart ('Noarlunga' [CW Stuart] 1875, *Advertiser* 28/12/1875: 5e; cp. Bull 1878: 32-3, and my analysis of this incident in *Feet On the Fleurieu*). A large burial site has recently been discovered nearby (*Advertiser* 18/2/2011: 10).

Tindale marked an ancient "*Murundian type campsite*" near two waterholes on the south end of the southern billabong east of the Port Noarlunga oval (Tindale map Hundred of Noarlunga, AA 338/24/72).

¹⁴ See McLaren's map, on which a "Well" is marked at two locations in the coastal dunes north of the mouth (J McLaren 1840).

¹⁵ Max Colwell 1972: 47.

the ford”.¹⁶ By April 1840 the South Australian Company was advertising allotments for “a township under the native name of No-orklunga”.¹⁷ One of its first buildings was an inn, naturally called ‘The Horseshoe’.

Today in the compulsion for haste the Main South Road bypasses this secluded spot, one of the chief joys of the old road. A new generation of commuters cannot see the river loop as they speed from the Southern Expressway over the recent bridge reading their GPS (‘turn left in 1 km for Victor Harbor’); many do not know it exists.

.....

ABORIGINAL STORIES:

When Kangaroo Islander George Bates was living with an Aboriginal tribe around 1829, and hunting at the Onkaparinga, he learned about a monster which lived in an unspecified part of the river:

*When out hunting the Cape Jervis natives showed a mysterious dread of the Onkaparinga River, alleging as a reason that it was inhabited by some terrible animal which would exterminate the tribe if they came within range of his sense of smell.*¹⁸

An early colonist heard about a “Yahoo” (or ‘Yowie’) at one of the dune springs at Port Noarlunga.¹⁹ \

In Karlowan’s version of the Tjilbruki story, the hero created from his tears a dune spring at “Tainbarang” near the sea mouth.²⁰

The Kurna survivor Ivaritji (Amelia Walker or Amelia Savage) told at least two versions of a story about the reason for the reference to women in Ngangki-parringga.

¹⁶ J Hawker 1899, *Early Experiences in SA*, Part 1: 38. It is marked on McLaren’s map with five tent symbols on either side of the sharp southward bend of the river at the mouth of the Gorge.

¹⁷ SA Company advertisement 30/4/1840, quoted in Colwell 1972: 10.

¹⁸ *Advertiser* 27/12/1886 :6d.

¹⁹ Anon. [H Capper ed.] Feb 1842, ‘Superstitions of the Australian Aborigines: the Yahoo’, *Australian & New Zealand Monthly Magazine* Vol.1 No.2, London, Smith, Elder & Co: 94. Thanks to Des Gubbin for showing me this reference). This record of the ‘Yahoo’ or ‘Yowie’ monster at Port Noarlunga was third-hand, cited from “*Mungaroke, a native of a tribe near Adelaide*”, who heard it from others who had guided a “*gentleman... from Encounter Bay to Adelaide at the first settling of the colony*”. In the context of the Capper essay, written for an Empire-wide magazine, ‘near Adelaide’ could include Encounter Bay, and ‘Mungaroke’ could have been Ramindjeri.

²⁰ Tindale 1936: 501; Tindale 1987: 7a, 8b; Berndt and Berndt 1993: 234, 330-1. See also my PNS 4.02/02 ?Tayinparingga.

She gave one version to linguist JM Black in about 1919, who referred to it thus:²¹

ngangki, pari, River Onkaparinga. This name – ‘the women’s river’ was derived by Amelia from the fact that near the stream was a place of refuge for women and children during tribal wars.

Black also told this story to the lawyer Noel Webb, who re-told it for the *Mail* in 1921. From memory, he admits, it was “something like this”.²²

J.M. Black told me some time ago that he had been recently talking with the old woman at Point Pearce who is the sole survivor of the Adelaide tribe, and that from her he learned the meaning of Onkaparinga. The story was something like this. In the cliffs along the shores at Aldinga are deposits of ochre.²³ This substance was much valued by the natives for decorating their bodies at corroborees. Hostile tribes from the Murray would make excursions across the Willunga hills to obtain ochre. This would impose on the natives of the Adelaide Plains the duty of giving battle to the natives who had thus broken bounds. But first they would hide their women. They hid them in the ravines of the river above the Ngangki-parri, ‘the woman’s river’. The locality was called Ngangki-parri-unga, ‘The Place of the Woman’s River’.

This clearly refers to the mouth of the Gorge, and Black’s own reference shows that Ivaritji had given the story as the name’s ‘meaning’ in a social rather than linguistic sense. But to a reporter in 1927 she told what appears at first sight to be a quite different story, not necessarily located at the ford:²⁴

Onkaparinga, she said, was so named because a woman of some note who had a quarrel with some of the members of her tribe, jumped into the river in a rage and swam across, but died shortly later. They called it Onkaparinga on that account. The word really means ‘woman’s river’.²⁵

²¹ JM Black 1920, ‘Vocabularies of Four SA Languages’, *Transactions & Proceedings of Royal Society of SA* 44: 83.

²² N Webb ‘Before the Whites Came’, *The Mail*, 14/5/1921: 3e. Note Webb’s ‘unga’, a garbled version of *ngga* derived from older literature. He corrected this when he re-told it again in 1936 (N Webb 1936, ‘The Place Names of the Adelaide Tribe’, *City of Adelaide Municipal Year Book 1936-7*: 307).

²³ The deposits are at Ochre Cove near Moana. When Tindale refers to this story in his place-name Cards for ‘Ngangkiparingga’ (579/3 and 579/4 in Kurna Place Name Cards AA 338/7/1/12, SA Museum), he elaborates on this aspect: “In the upper reaches Kurna men hid their women during potentially hostile visits of red ochre obtaining parties of youths and older men at mining place called Potartang on the coast”. For Tindale’s ‘Potartang’ see PNS 4.03.02/01 ?Puretilla.

²⁴ ‘The Adelaide Tribe: a member still survives: Princess Amelia Walker’, *Advertiser* 8/12/1927: 13a. See also T Gara 1990, ‘Life of Ivaritji’, *Journal of Anthropological Society of SA* 28: 91.

²⁵ For the sake of completeness it is necessary here to rebut an idea publicized by lawyer Noel Webb during the 1920s when local newspapers used him as a guru on Aboriginal place-names. He thought that the story about swimming the Onkaparinga River was a ‘mistake’ by Ivaritji, and was really about Yankalilla and the woman who swam from Kangaroo Island. In 1928 he speculated about the place-name ‘Yankalilla’: “‘Ngangka’ means a woman, ‘alya’ signifies tragedy, ‘illa’ is a place terminal of Rodney’s tribe. I have thought that Ngangka-alya-illa means, ‘The place of the woman’s tragedy’”. Citing the recent interview with ‘Princess Amelia’ in the *Advertiser*, he continued: “I have thought that Princess Evertee

These two stories are incompatible only if we assume that both of them were intended as the 'origin' of the name in an exclusive historical sense. But 'origins' for Ivaritji of course had a wider sense, encompassing both the practical details of social life as well as the Dreaming stories which confirmed and explained them. Each of her stories here gives a reason why this is a woman's place: the first in current social experience, the second probably in ancient Creation Law.

For the quarrel story about a 'woman of note' is compatible with another fragment obtained by Tindale from Karlowan about an 'ancestral' woman. The only known records of it are two brief hand-written notes on one of Tindale's research maps, as given by the Ngarrindjeri elder Albert Karlowan while discussing place-names with Tindale in December 1935.²⁶

A pen circle around the western portion of the Horseshoe is connected with the following note:

*`Tjirunga "where in olden time a woman was assaulted; an old story which I only heard about"
Karloan Dec 1935.*

Nearby on the same map the name "'Dangki`pari`nga"²⁷ is marked along two stretches of the river, and another note is connected with it:

*woman's river / in ancient time the woman urinated hence the river is brackish from the
Horseshoe to the sea.*

Both entries appear to be about the same woman, and Tindale makes this explicit in a place-name

got mixed in these names and that the story of the woman jumping into the sea, swimming across the passage, and afterwards dying is the story of *Nyanka-alya-illa* and not the story of *Nyanka-para-ngga*" (Noel A Webb, 'Aboriginal place Names', *Register* 10/2/1928: 14c). Even after allowing for possible misprints and the unbelievable 40-km swim from KI to Yankalilla Bay, his analysis is mere 'folk etymology' and linguistically impossible. *Ny* is not the same as *ng*; there is no Kaurna word *nyangka*, and *ngangka* is not the same as *ngangki*. *Alya* is not a noun 'tragedy', nor even (on its own) "an expression of grief" (as Webb had claimed, *The Mail*, 14/5/1921: 3), but an interjection or adverb for which one use (among many others) is in exclamations like *yakk'alya* 'oh dear!' (see PNS 5.02.01/02 Yarnkalyilla).

²⁶ Tindale annotated map Hundred of Noarlunga, AA338/24/72.

²⁷ The phonetic symbol *ŋ* represents the sound *ng*. The signs which I have given thus – ` – are Tindale's stress marks. In this case he must have heard Karlowan's pronunciation. Note that he uses *three* stresses, "**Ngangki-pari-ngga**". (The same stresses are given for this name in Tindale 1974, *Aboriginal Tribes of Australia*: 29). This is not Kaurna practice but a foreign accent, probably deriving in this case from Karlowan's normal pronunciation of the corresponding Ngarrindjeri locative *angk*. If my analysis of Meyer's 'Tāinbariangk' and Karlowan's "'Tainbar`ang' is correct, Karlowan did the same with the locative in an unrecorded Kaurna original *Tayin-parringga*, but this time without recognizing the word *parri* (see PNS 4.02/02 ?Tayinparringga).

Karlowan also appears to have given to Berndt a different pronunciation, "*Ongkeperinga*". The Berndts tell us of a trade route which ran from McLaren Vale "down to *Tainbarang* (Noarlunga) River (the *Onkaparinga* or *Ongkeperinga*)" and then to Red Ochre Cove (Berndt & Berndt 1993: 20). Here 'Ongkeperinga' (a spelling which does not occur anywhere else) probably represents Karlowan's pronunciation of 'Onkaparinga'. Perhaps Berndt did not pick up the initial *Ng*; or perhaps Karlowan did not know the name *Ngangkiparringga* from his own tradition, so that when working with Tindale, he either read it from Meyer or perhaps heard it from Tindale.

card 'Onkaparinga'. Here he also says that she was "ancestral".²⁸

Probably all three accounts – two by Ivaritji and one by Karlowan – are part of the same inclusive cultural perception of the place. It does not require much imagination to harmonize them within a story-telling framework.²⁹

There have been colonial memories of women's ceremonies held nearby, on the flat now called Market Square.³⁰ This confirms the connection of the eastern part of the Horseshoe with women and their activities.

This connection may have extended wider geographically than the old fragments suggest. The flood plain is clearly visible as a single unit from the surrounding hilltops. It is quite likely that there was an Aboriginal view or metaphor which unified the whole area from Horseshoe to sea coast, even though there is very little in the early records to suggest it. In recent times Kaurna Elders have discerned such a unity, in which *ngangki* ('woman') is the key to the entire local *parri* ('river'), and its windings on the flood plain and around the islands of the estuary embody the female reproductive organs.³¹

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THE HORSE-SHOE AND THE SPELLING: EMERGING EUROPEAN KNOWLEDGE OF THE AREA, AND OF THE NAME *NGANGKI-PARRINGGA*:

KANGAROO ISLANDERS:

Some of the pre-colonial Kangaroo Islanders knew the area. George Bates had hunted there with an Aboriginal tribe with whom he lived for a while.³² Others such as Nat Thomas visited these

²⁸ Tindale, Place Name Card 'Onkaparinga', quoted in R Harris 2001: 12-13 from another author. Tindale wrote most of his place-name cards fifty years after he had recorded the original data on maps in the 1930s. But since he had heard for himself what Karlowan said about it, we may trust his memory this time and accept that the assaulted woman was 'ancestral' (from the Creation time) rather than merely a historical person (as might have been implied by his early notes 'olden time' and even 'ancient time').

²⁹ As a hypothetical example: "Here is the place where we hide women and children when there are raiding parties around. It's a good place for women to hide – like when that lady quarrelled with the men who had assaulted her. She urinated in the river while swimming to safety in the Gorge. Now you know why the water gets salty downstream from here". Of course I claim no authority for this reconstruction. I have invented it only to illustrate my caution against premature scepticism.

³⁰ See e.g. Rhondda Harris 2003, 'Notes from meeting with Mr Darrell Furler...', unpublished typescript: 1, 3. Mr Furler recalled how his mother had watched women's ceremonies "on the flat area which is Market Square", and that the northeastern part of the loop near the ford was "the women's part of the river".

³¹ See Lewis O'Brien and Georgina Williams 1992, 'The cultural significance of the Onkaparinga River', *Kaurna Higher Education Journal* 2, April 1992: 67-70.

³² *Advertiser* 27/12/1886: 6d; *South Australian Register* 6/10/1887: 7b.

middle parts of the Gulf as members of gangs for commercial sealing ships. Thomas knew about wells but was not confident of finding them.³³ But if they knew a name for this place, nobody recorded it directly from them.

BARKEK 1831:

A name which Islanders *may* have known was recorded as “Ponkepurringa Cr” in the aftermath of Captain Barker’s visit to the gulf in April 1831.³⁴ Barker took a boat up the river and camped at the Horse-shoe.³⁵ From the sea he had thought it was “a small river with a bar entrance”, but now found that it was “a narrow inlet”:

The party were quite delighted with the aspect of the country on either side of the inlet, and with the bold and romantic scenery behind them. The former bore the appearance of natural meadows, lightly timbered, and covered with a variety of grasses. The soil was observed to be a rich, fat, chocolate coloured earth, probably the decomposition of the deep blue limestone, that shewed itself along the coast hereabouts. On the other hand, a rocky glen made a cleft in the ranges at the head of the inlet; and they were supplied with abundance of fresh water which remained in the deeper pools that had been filled by the torrents during the late rains. The whole neighbourhood was so inviting that the party slept at the head of the inlet.

Basing his party here, he explored north to Mt Lofty. The soldiers left behind in the ‘bivouac’ “amused themselves by fishing during Captain Barker’s absence, and had been abundantly successful. Among others they had taken a kind of salmon.” Commenting on the report, Sturt added, “I have no doubt that the lake is periodically visited by salmon”.³⁶

As far as we know Barker did not meet any Aborigines, and in any case would not have been able to speak with them unless the others knew some English. But his commissariat officer Kent relayed to Sturt the name “Ponkepurringa Cr” for this ‘inlet’. In another essay I consider whether or not this name is a variant of ‘Onkaparinga’.³⁷

LIGHT 1836:

³³ See the incident with Nat Thomas at the Onkaparinga in 1837 (*SA Advertiser* 28/12/1875: 6; cp. Bull 1878: 32-7).

³⁴ Sturt’s map ‘Chart of Cape Jervis’, Sturt 1833 2: 228. While this name may have been given by Bates or Thomas, it was more likely given by the Aboriginal woman Sally or her father Condoy (see my *Feet On the Fleurieu* (forthcoming 2015?).

³⁵ Sturt 1833, Vol. 2: 233.

³⁶ Sturt 1833, 2: 236.

³⁷ See PNS 4.02/05 ‘Ponkepurringa’.

In September 1836 Colonel Light passed the river on the way up the Gulf without seeing it, and found it on October 10th only after being alerted by the Aboriginal woman on board ('Doughboy', no doubt) so that he turned back specifically to look for it. Doughboy had only heard of the river from her Encounter Bay relatives, and had never visited it,³⁸ and did not give its name. Light named it Field River after the captain of his brig *Rapid*.

EXPLORATIONS IN 1837:

So government surveyors were marking it 'Field's River' on their official maps of SA for more than three years after this. Yet at the same time the location was being so constantly remarked upon during explorations southward, that travellers were obtaining many independent versions of the real name, presumably from Aboriginal guides whom they hired in Adelaide. Some of these versions were circulating among the settlers alongside 'Field River'; some were published in early propaganda pamphlets and eventually on the first maps drawn up from the Country Surveys of 1839.

The spellings vary wildly, especially in the vowels. Until the German linguists arrived in 1838 nobody could hear or understand the initial *ng*; it does not occur in English, and doubtless they regarded it as a mere stutter or noise. A better linguist than I could make a fascinating study of the possible variant Kurna pronunciations of *nga* and *par*, and of the collectors' own English dialect pronunciations of written spellings like 'enk', 'onk', 'anc', 'unk', 'per', 'por' and 'par', by which they tried to represent what they heard from the lips of Kurna informants.³⁹

The first version on record is "Enkeperinga", given by the SA Company's stock overseer Charles Stuart.⁴⁰ We have only his retrospective record of this unique spelling; but almost certainly he obtained it when on 1st February 1837 he took a small party south, with Nat Thomas as guide. He may have obtained the name from Nat, who knew at least the Kurna word "Cowie" (*kauwi*, 'water'); or from a large camp of Kurna-speaking people whom they met near the estuary. Later this group accompanied Stuart's party up to the Horseshoe, but did not cross the ford or camp there.⁴¹ Stuart's spelling is a relatively good effort and gets the second vowel 'e' (= *i*) right.

³⁸ William Hodges 1902, in 'Old-time Memories: A Fine Old pioneer', *Observer*, 26/4/1902: 4b. I am indebted to Max Raupach, a descendant of Hodges, for this reference.

³⁹ Consider the ambiguities of 'farther/further', 'perilous/parlous', 'person/perish', 'parson/parish', and American dialect pronunciations such as 'Noo Yark', 'durn' for 'dam', 'clark' for 'clerk', 'hut' for 'hot', and those immortalized in the song 'Surrey With the Fringe on Top' which all rhyme with 'blurry': 'scurry', 'surrey', 'worry', 'hurry'.

⁴⁰ From a 6-page outline chronology in Charles W Stuart MS Diaries Vol. 5, D6872(L), State Library of SA. Stuart seems not to have kept a journal during the first six weeks of 1837. He also used this spelling in his original diaries on 1 Aug 1837 (Vol. 3), and again on 12 Sep 1839 (Vol. 5 in his 'Journal commencing Augt 22nd 1839').

⁴¹ The group at the estuary included Mulliakiburka ('Tam O'Shanter') visiting from his country at Port Gawler 60 km to the north. But the most likely informant for Stuart's place-name 'Enkeperinga' was one of the "two young blacks" who went out hunting wildfowl on that occasion with him and the hunting dog Hector: "One of the young blacks I before spoke of I met in Adelaide about 20 years after... He recollected me, and called me Onkaparinga. He spoke English very well, and recounted circumstances that happened on the river. I asked his name. He said 'Tector, all same as big one dog'"

Three months later the Quaker explorer Stephen Hack also heard this first *i* and recorded “Onkeperinga”.⁴² He reiterated this version in his letters over the next two years, in which he was always clearly referring to the ford⁴³ He had learned some Kurna language, and doubtless obtained his version directly from Kurna-speaking informants, with whom he was “able to chatter a little” during his 1837 visit to the crossing.⁴⁴

In July or August Light’s trusted surveyor BT Finniss referred in one of his field books to “the end of the Ancaporinga range” as a landmark for trigonometrical bearings.⁴⁵

After the SA Company established their whaling station at Encounter Bay in April 1837, the ford came into regular use by whalers and officials such as Light travelling between there and Adelaide.

In September, lawyer Charles Mann and new Interim Protector William Wyatt made this journey on legal business, guided by Kangaroo Islander William Cooper and (according to Wyatt) the “well-known and excellent man, commonly called Oakaperinga Jack” (sic):⁴⁶ i.e. ‘Onkaparinga Jack’ or Mullawirraburka, a leader of the Adelaide tribe, known later as ‘King John’. “Onkaparinga” was part of Mullawirraburka’s country, “his chief place of abode when in health”, and he was eventually buried in the hills not far east of the Horseshoe.⁴⁷ It is almost certain that on this trip place-names were obtained from Mullawirraburka rather than Cooper. Mann and Wyatt recorded “Onkaperinga”.⁴⁸ Elsewhere Wyatt gave a differently-Anglicized spelling “Ungke perre, Ungke perringga”.

(‘Noarlunga’ [CW Stuart] 1875, ‘An Adventure With the Natives’, *SA Advertiser* 28/12/1875: 6b). Perhaps this man ‘Hector’ remembered the macho Stuart not so much for his mastiff but especially for his amateur efforts to learn the difficult place-name *Ngangkiparringga*. Quite possibly for much of those 20 years he had been re-enacting Stuart’s linguistic contortions as a campfire comedy.

For more on this incident see PNS 4.02/01 Birrangga, and my forthcoming book *Feet On the Fleurieu*.

⁴² Stephen Hack letter, May 1837, in H Watson 1838, *A Lecture on SA* (Gliddon, London): 18.

⁴³ Stephen Hack letters to Maria Hack 20 July 1837, PRG 456/1/18, and 20 July 1838, PRG 456/1/25, SLSA.

⁴⁴ The Kangaroo Islander William Cooper was also with Light and Hack on this trip, but seems to have contributed little as either guide or interpreter (see my forthcoming book *Feet On the Fleurieu*).

⁴⁵ BT Finniss 1837, angles for Sturt River survey, in ‘Bases & angles B Finniss 1837 to 1839 x^d WC,’ Field Book 76 ‘Bases & Angles, Journal by BT Finniss’, p.[40].

⁴⁶ Wyatt letter to JC Mathews 2/8/1838, in *The South Australian Record* Vol.1(11): 83. Here a MS ‘n’ has been mis-typed as ‘a’, giving ‘Oakaperinga’ instead of ‘Onkaparinga’. The error was reproduced when J Stephens quoted this passage in 1839 (J Stephens 1839, *The Land of Promise*: 75).

⁴⁷ *Register* 6/1/1845; Wyatt 1879: 180; Moorhouse report 27 July 1840; Gara 1998: 121-4; R Harris 2001: 12. Was ‘King John’ perhaps the “*Ngangkipariburka*” to whom Tindale referred (Tindale 1974, *Aboriginal Tribes of Australia*: 29)?

⁴⁸ Mann 1837b, 6 Sep 1837, in ‘General Description of The Country from Adelaide to Encounter Bay SA’, BRG 42/52: 2; Wyatt to Mathews 2/8/1838, in *SA Record* 1(11): 83.

By December Mr John Wade, a Tasmanian visitor looking for land between Adelaide and Encounter Bay, had seen Wyatt's spelling and wrote of the "Onkaparinga plains", which contained "upwards of 100 square miles".⁴⁹ Here the modern spelling appears for the first time.

In the same month Strangways and Hutchinson undertook an official expedition to the Murray Mouth in company with Cooper, and recorded "Unkaparinga creek" for both the Onkaparinga mouth and the stopping place "where it meets the fresh water". Although this part of Hutchinson's account was never published, the spelling he used seems to have become popular, and appeared for several years even on official maps.

AFTER 1837:

By the time of this excursion, some of the travellers to Encounter Bay were beginning to consider Aboriginal guides to be no longer necessary, and accordingly their spellings were probably obtained from popular colonial usage, not directly from Kaurna speakers.

By 1838 Finnis was using Hutchinson's spelling 'Unkaparinga',⁵⁰ as was Light in at least two of his sketch maps.⁵¹ So was SA Company manager William Giles,⁵² though his travel companion William Randell used Wyatt's 'Onkaparinga'.⁵³ Colonial Manager Samuel Stephens wrote both "Onkaparinga" and "Unkeparinka" in his business for the SA Company.⁵⁴ During the first survey in 1839 surveyor Richard Counsel was already using 'Unkaparinga' in his field sketches;⁵⁵ but when his results were published as McLaren's map in 1840, the name reverted to 'Unkaparinga'.⁵⁶ 'Unkaparinga' first appeared on a published map in 1843;⁵⁷ while at the same time 'Unkaparinga R' was still appearing on closely-related maps from Frome's surveys.⁵⁸

⁴⁹ John Wade letter, in R Gouger 1838, *South Australia in 1837*, London, Harvey & Darton: 24, 26.

⁵⁰ BT Finnis letter 5 May 1838, SA Company papers BRG 42/53: 2. The *Southern Australian* (2/6/1838 p.4b) printed it as "Unkaporina".

⁵¹ "Unkaparinga" in undated and untitled sketch maps of 1. lower Onkaparinga river; 3. whole of Fleurieu Peninsula (William Light, Notebooks & Sketchbooks, State Library of SA microfilm PRG 1/4/177).

⁵² W Giles journal 27 April, 2-8 May 1838, Angas Papers PRG 174/1.

⁵³ William Beavis Randell to George Fife Angas 29 June 1838, Angas papers PRG 417/28 Vol. 3: 93-5.

⁵⁴ Samuel Stephens MS 1838, "[No.] 10" and letter 14 May 1838, in 'Reports Of Country Lands', BRG 42/51, SLSA.

⁵⁵ Richard Counsel 1839, Field Book 94 (Hundreds of Noarlunga & Willunga), SA Geographical Names Unit: 96, 98. On p.102 he still marks "Field River".

⁵⁶ "Proposed Road to Unkaparinga" (McLaren 1840, 'Country South of Adelaide').

⁵⁷ FH Burslem 1843, 'Outline sketch of the settled portions of the colony 1842', Adelaide 1843 (C 1018/1, SLSA). Versions of this map appeared in some of the Almanacs, and in the anonymous pamphlet *South Australia In 1842*, London 1843.

⁵⁸ Frome, 'South Australia shewing the division into counties of the settled portions of the province', Arrowsmith, London 10th July 1843, in 'Papers Relative to South Australia' 1843, *BPP Australia* 7: 362.

As late as 1842 surveyors were apparently still hearing the name and finding new ways to spell it, though they felt quite at liberty to apply it elsewhere on the 'same' river. Nixon and Cross marked "Nounkapinga River" on their map of the Woodside-Charleston area, 45 km away on the upper plains:⁵⁹ the only non-linguists who ever tried to represent the initial *ng*.

'Onkaparinga' contained one of the less accurate spellings of the first morpheme, but it won legal recognition sometime during the governorship in 1838-41 of George Gawler, who was an enthusiast for beautiful 'native names'. 'Onkaparinga' then officially replaced Captain Field's name which was duly and permanently transferred to another of his landings in 1836 (the small creek which reaches the sea at Hallet Cove).⁶⁰ Depending on the date of the name change, he or the survey department probably got the spelling from one of the readily available and avidly-read propaganda publications such as Gouger's pamphlet (which quoted Wyatt)⁶¹ or John Stephens' book (which quoted Wade).⁶²

The spelling was reaffirmed when the Hundred of Onkaparinga was proclaimed in 1846.⁶³

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ABORIGINAL PLACE-NAMES IN THIS AREA:

Ngangki-parringga is one of five or perhaps six old Aboriginal place-names on record in this area, and doubtless these were only some of the names which were applied within this 12 square kilometres of frequently-used land in traditional times.⁶⁴

⁵⁹ F Nixon & V Cross 1842, 'Plan of the Combined Special Surveys of the Sources of the Nounkapinga', Plan 4/53, GNU.

⁶⁰ It has been said that "*in 1838 [Field's River] was changed to the Aboriginal name at the behest of Governor Gawler*" (e.g. Manning 2006: 319), implying a personal initiative for this particular name. But this idea was probably derived in the first place from the classic SA place-name chronicler Rodney Cockburn, whose write-up of 'Onkaparinga' associated the name change with Gawler's general edict about native place-names: "*It was the wish of Colonel Gawler to keep the native names of localities, so later on the river was given its proper designation of Onkaparinga*" (Cockburn 1908: 98). Cockburn may have got the idea from his adviser, the surveyor CH Harris. There was probably no official proclamation of the name change (Bill Watt p.c. 29/8/14), and so far I have not been able to discover when it became official, or any early source to confirm Gawler's initiative for it. Published maps continued to be confused. As late as 1840 one even showed 'Field's River' on the flood plain and 'Unkaparinga' on the hills reaches (e.g. Arrowsmith 5/2/1840, 'The Maritime Portion of SA', C 934, SLSA). For Gawler's general edict about Aboriginal place-names, see Government Gazette 31 Oct 1839, quoted in Cockburn 1990, *South Australia: What's In a Name?:* xviii.

⁶¹ R Gouger 1838, *South Australia In 1837*.

⁶² John Stephens 1839, *The Land of Promise*.

⁶³ Manning 2006: 319.

⁶⁴ There are also two or three other recorded Aboriginal names in the flood plain area ('Patapinda', 'Witjarlung' and perhaps 'Theodonga'), but their source information is scanty and (as at 2014) I have not yet investigated them. By comparison, on a similar stretch of the Goolwa Channel above the Murray Mouth Tindale alone recorded 12 place-names (map Hundred of Nangkita, AA 338/24/66) and the same number from one informant on a similar stretch of the Coorong (map Hundred of Baker, AA 338/24/6): names which were culled from the memory of only one or two individuals, many decades after practice of the culture had largely ceased.

Two of them were recorded authoritatively at first contact, and we are as clear about their correct form and pronunciation as we can ever be with place-names in a language which was not spoken for several decades. They are:

1. *Ngangki-parringga*, ‘woman river place’. I will discuss its exact location later.
2. *Nurlungga*, ‘bend place’. Nurlungga was clearly located at the ‘bend’ which it names.⁶⁵

The third and fourth were recorded in first contact times only at Encounter Bay, by missionary linguist Meyer. He gave a list of three including “Ngangkipariñgga”. These names (he wrote) “are known only to a few individuals who have been in the habit of visiting the Adelaide tribe, and who can speak both languages”.⁶⁶ He did not give an exact location for each but only a collective one, “Horseshoe”, leaving us to speculate which of them were *at* the loop and which were merely in its vicinity. The other two were:

3. “Tiiruñgga”. In the 1930s Tindale (and perhaps his Ngarrindjeri informant Karlowan) claimed that this was “Tjirungga” and was located within the Horseshoe.⁶⁷
4. “Tāinbari-angk”. Karlowan gave his version to Tindale as “Tainbarang”, describing it as a name for the whole stretch of river from the end of the Horseshoe to the mouth. Although both Meyer’s informants and Karlowan were Ngarrindjeri people and gave it in Ngarrindjeri form, linguistic analysis suggests there was probably a Kurna original, something like *Tayin-parringga*.⁶⁸

Another name was obtained by survey assistant Louis Piesse in 1839:

⁶⁵ See PNS 4.02/ 06 Nurlungga. There are plenty of other bends in the Onkaparinga River, but only a much-used bend would attract a place-name. Even if it was a generic descriptive name for any place with a notable river bend, it could still be used locally as ‘The Bend’, as Victor Harbor locals use ‘The Bluff’ and Sydney-siders use ‘The Rocks’. The Kurna word *Yartalla* (‘Yatala’ in English usage) seems to have been used in this way, both as a generic name for any ‘flooding’ and as a name for the specific flood-prone areas of the lower Torrens River and Dry Creek and perhaps the fringes of the Port River estuary (see PNS 1/04 Yertalla).

⁶⁶ HAE Meyer 1843, *Vocabulary of the... Aborigines of the Southern and Eastern portions of... South Australia*, Adelaide, James Allen: 50. These three names are in territory where Kurna was the local language, but Meyer’s informants spoke Ngarrindjeri. As a general comment about these ‘foreign’ place-names he added: “Several of these names, especially of those in the vicinity of Adelaide, belong to the Adelaide language, as their terminations show”. It is interesting that these few who travelled to Adelaide knew the Kurna name *Ngangkiparringga* accurately – no doubt because it was such an unavoidable and memorable place on all their journeys north. Likewise, ‘Tiirungga’ is in Kurna form. However, both Meyer’s ‘Tāinbariangk’ and Karlowan’s ‘Tainbarang’ are in Ngarrindjeri form, with the standard Ngarrindjeri locative suffix (*angk* = *ang*). Unlike ‘Tainbarang’ from Karlowan in 1935, the earlier record ‘Tāinbariangk’ comes from a time when Kurna culture was still functional and visitors still had to communicate with Kurna speakers. It has the morpheme *bari*, which is almost certainly the Kurna word *parri*, ‘river’. A few generations later Karlowan’s tradition had forgotten the *parri* in the five-syllable name *Tāinbariangk* (and the expanded diphthong *āī* = *ayi*) and adapted the word into a shorter pattern of three syllables, ‘Tainbarang’, which presumably sounded ‘more Ngarrindjeri’. Another example of this bilingual crossover is a name located at the head of Hindmarsh Valley: *Murtaparri* in Kurna (Teichelmann & Schürmann 1840) = *Mūtabariñgar* in Meyer’s spelling in his other list of Encounter Bay place-names (Meyer 1843: 49. He does not appear to have noticed that this name also ‘belonged to the Adelaide language’).

⁶⁷ See PNS 4.02/09 Tiirungga.

⁶⁸ See PNS 4.02/ 02 ?Tayinparingga.

5. “Pe-run-ga” (probably *Birrangga*). He located it explicitly on Section 1, on higher ground immediately west of the Noarlunga Centre complex and one km north of the Onkaparinga Recreation Park.⁶⁹

The last name is a challenging one to assess:

6. “Ponkepurringa”, marked on Sturt’s 1833 map.⁷⁰ Is this a strange variant of ‘Onkaparinga’, as most authors have assumed? Or is it a different compound name, though containing the same common word *parringga* (‘river place’)?⁷¹

.....

FOLKLORE OF THE NAME:

As usual with any well-known Aboriginal place-name, a body of folklore about the name’s meaning and derivation has grown up and been recycled by enthusiasts. Cockburn claimed that Wyatt had glossed his ‘Ungkeperringa’ as “Mother river; plentiful”, but I have been unable to find his source for this, and in any case it has no linguistic credibility.⁷² Another source probably mistakes a description of one aspect of the place – “dirty or muddy water” – with the meaning of the name.⁷³

When Faith Emily Lockwood (as ‘A Native’) wrote “On-ka-paringa (eagle’s home), No-orklunga (place of fish)” in 1893,⁷⁴ she was probably not giving the lexical meaning of the names but remembering the place as she had known it in her teens fifty years earlier. In fact the Horseshoe was then a home for eagles. The cliffs above the southern end of the loop “provide crevices clearly used as shelter by animals”.⁷⁵ James Hawker recalled when he was surveying in 1839 and based at the campsite above the ford: “Some distance down the river there was a little cliff, and this used

⁶⁹ See PNS 4.02/01 Birrangga.

⁷⁰ It was given to Sturt by Captain Barker’s officer Kent, who probably obtained it from the Aboriginal woman Sally while searching for Barker.

⁷¹ See PNS 4.02/05 ‘Ponkepurringa’.

⁷² Cockburn 1908: 98. His adviser on Aboriginal names was CH Harris. ‘Mother’ in Kurna is *ngangkitta*. I can find no word for ‘plentiful’ which resembles the name.

⁷³ “Onkaparinga’ is an aboriginal name: the meaning is said to be “dirty or muddy water” (CW Fowler, ‘The Onkaparinga District Council: a page of history’, *Advertiser* 27/8/1923: 6e).

⁷⁴ ‘A Native’ 1893, ‘Aboriginal Nomenclature’, *Register* 11/10/1893: 7e. This writer was Faith Emily Lockwood (daughter of McLaren Vale pioneer CT Hewett), who lived at McLaren Vale in the 1840s with her parents. For her identification see the unpublished MS by Rob Amery and Chester Schultz, ‘The Trail of Discovery of Historical Kurna Language Materials’.

⁷⁵ R Harris 2001: 6.

to be frequented by two fine eagles – or, as they are now called, eaglehawks. Mr Gould was most anxious to get one or both for specimens, but the birds were too wary for a gun”.⁷⁶

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THE NAME *NGANGKI-PARRINGGA*:

Ngangki-parri is a compound made up of two Kaurna words, *ngangki* ‘woman’ + *parri* ‘river’. As a place-name this translates as ‘women’s river’.

In Kaurna language the Locative suffix *ngga* (‘at, ‘place of’) is often optional, so that the name was recorded in two forms: with Locative (*Ngangki-parrin-ngga*: represented in the standard English ‘Onkaparinga’) and without (*Ngangki-parri*). The Dresden missionary linguists Teichelmann and Schürmann obtained a definitive reading and meaning for the name. They published it in 1840 as “Ngangkiparri: the Onkaparinga River”.⁷⁷ Four years later Teichelmann, after visiting the place itself on horseback, spelled it out again in his diary: “the river Nganki (Ngangki parri i.e. women’s river; English Ongeparringga i.e. Ngangki parringa or the women’s river [when] translated”.⁷⁸ He did so again in a comprehensive manuscript dictionary which he gave to Governor Grey: “Ngangkiparri – the Ladies river, which the English call Angkaparringga”.⁷⁹

All the other spellings recorded by other settlers have the Locative. It seems clear that in the 1840s the settlers were pronouncing their various versions of this name more correctly than we do today. Many of them knew that the first vowel sound was a (by contrast with our standard o). Probably all of them got the stresses right: on the first and third syllables, e.g. ‘Unka-paringa’ (cp. *Ngangki-par*ingga), not on the first and fourth as in today’s ‘Onkapa-ringa’.⁸⁰ Faith Lockwood’s published version “On-ka-paringa” probably implies this correct stress pattern.⁸¹

⁷⁶ James Hawker 1899, *Early Experiences in South Australia*, Part 1: 45; cp. p38. Gould was the famous naturalist, visiting Hawker. The eagles were probably Wedgetails.

⁷⁷ Teichelmann & Schürmann 1840, *An Outline of a Grammar...*

⁷⁸ CG Teichelmann diary 15 Sep 1844, translated by Marcus Krieg, Lutheran Archives, Adelaide.

⁷⁹ Teichelmann 1857, *Dictionary of the Adelaide Dialect* (unpublished MS No.59 from Bleek’s catalogue of the library of Sir George Grey [South African Public Library; transcribed by Jane Simpson 1994).

⁸⁰ Today’s English pronunciation ‘Onkapa-ringa’ uses a dactyl (a three-syllable rhythmic group in which the first syllable is stressed)* and stresses the *fourth* syllable instead of the third.

* In old analysis of poetry, a dactyl is the pervasive three-syllable rhythm in lines like “*Ride a cock horse to Banbury Cross, To see a fine lady upon a white horse*”, or “*My bonnie lies over the ocean, O bring back my bonnie to me*”. This is a familiar default rhythm of English speakers, and it deforms the popular pronunciation of many Aboriginal place-names. Cp. the usual pronunciations of ‘Patawa-lunga’, ‘Warripa-ringa’, ‘Carricka-linga’, ‘Yattago-linga’, ‘Congera-tinga’, ‘Kondopa-ringa’, all of which in Kaurna follow the same stress pattern as *Ngangki-parr*ingga. It can easily mislead us when we try to analyse unfamiliar old spellings such as ‘Cowealunga’, which probably represents *Kauwa-yar*langga (see PNS 5.01/02 ?Kauwa-yarlangga Myponga Beach).

⁸¹ Wyatt certainly meant the same stresses when he gave it as “Ungke perre”. Teichelmann gave the standard English pronunciation of his time as both “*Angkaparringga*” and “*Ongeparringga*”, representing the difference between Hutchinson’s ‘Unkaparinga’ and Hack’s ‘Onkeparinga’. He would have pronounced the stresses correctly as ‘Unka-



WHICH PLACE?

Our European habit has been to apply a single name to the whole length of a river. It is easy for us to forget that in Aboriginal traditions there were usually many different names at different sites along what we would call 'one river'. The idea would be inconceivable that river places at Clarendon and Woodside are 'the same Onkaparinga River' as at Port Noarlunga. Ecologies which were adjacent but as different as the Horseshoe and the Estuary would be very likely to have different names.

Therefore it is by no means self-evident that in Kaurna culture *Ngangki-parringga* was the name of the entire length of the Onkaparinga flood plain – even though the colonists would have begun to use the name in that way as soon as they obtained it, no matter where some individuals had seen it applied originally. Conversely, the writer is referring to the ford almost every time the name occurs; and it is hard to assess whether this is because the name belonged there, or because the ford was the only part of the river which concerned the writer. Of the first few collectors only Stuart associated the name with the estuary as well as the Horseshoe, and only after the event. Thus the bulk of the recorded evidence above from the first collectors suggests a relatively precise location at the Horseshoe. However, this does not prove it.

Of those sources who probably obtained this name directly from Aboriginal informants – Stuart, Hack, Finniss, Wyatt, Counsel, Schürmann, Teichelmann and Meyer – only Meyer apparently defined its location as "Horseshoe". Yet he groups two other names under the same referent, which can only be precise if 'Tāinbariangk' and 'Tiirungga' are also at the loop; and according to Karlowan this is not so for the former. Therefore Meyer was using the referent only in an approximate sense.

'Horseshoe' seems to be confirmed by the fact that all the old stories about *women* (quoted above) happen near the entrance to the Gorge. However, two considerations caution us against a premature conclusion. Firstly, while we know that *ngangki* applied at the Horseshoe we cannot be sure that it was *limited* to that area. Secondly, it is fairly clear that at least one other name (*Nurlungga*) also applied to the Horseshoe, and very likely that another named site was there too (the 'assault' site possibly called 'Tiirungga' or 'Tjirungga').

How may we resolve this? We must distinguish between 'large named places' and 'small named places'. The former may incorporate the latter, and this does occur in Kaurna naming practice.⁸²

paringa'. Probably most of the early settlers would have done likewise, as many of them had often heard the word pronounced correctly by their Aboriginal contacts and employees.

⁸² Ivaritji is said to have applied *Yarna* 'bald [thing]' "as a general place name", possibly "for the area between Adelaide and Rapid Bay" (Tindale Kaurna place-name cards 496, 498, in AA 338/7/1/12). This is an area which contains dozens of other known place-names. *Kawandilla* ('north place') applied to the Adelaide plains south of the Torrens, an area which



One way to apply this would be to see the 'bend' as the larger place and Nurlungga as the name for the *whole* of it, while Ngangkiparringga is that *part* of it concerned with women's matters, which in both the old records and oral history is the area nearest to the Gorge.

Another way would be to see the whole river from Gorge to sea as a large place named *Ngangkiparri*, 'women's river' – in consonance with Karlowan's interpretation of the miles of brackish water as a woman's urine, but with the core event happening at the ford campsite. The other five names refer to specific small sites within this larger area. As mentioned above, this view has already been publicized in 1992 by my colleagues, the Kaurna Elders Lewis Yerloburka O'Brien and Georgina Yambo Williams.⁸³

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End of Summary

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included many other places such as *Karrawirra-parri*, *Tarndanya*, *Ngurro*, *Witungga*, *Patawilyangga*, *Wita-wattingga* and *Warriparringga*. *Patpangga* ('south place') was mistaken for a specific site name at least twice, but actually applied everywhere south of Sellick's Hill and incorporated (among others) *Yarnkalyilla*, *Pangkarla*, *Kauwa-yerlongga*, *Kungaratinga* and *Yarta-kurlangga*. See my PNS on all of these.

⁸³ Lewis O'Brien and Georgina Williams 1992, *op. cit.*