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## Place Name SUMMARY (PNS) 5.02.01/02

### YARNKALYILLA

(last edited: 9.9.2016)

#### 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*This essay has not been peer-reviewed or culturally endorsed in detail.*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, 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) 5.02.01/02

### YARNKALYILLA

(last edited: 9.9.2016)

#### Abstract

*Yarnkalyilla* (or perhaps *Yangkalyilla*) is the Kaurna name of a site at or near Section 1001 at the mouth of the Yankalilla River Gorge (at Lady Bay where Colonel Light's survey team camped in 1836).

It can also refer by extension to the entire Yankalilla Plains.

Its meaning is *probably* 'the place where [something] keeps on hanging down' (or 'imparting or infecting'). This might perhaps refer to the dangerously overhanging rock strata on the seaward side of Yankalilla Hill (on Main South Road from Lady Bay to the Little Gorge on Sections 1080, 1081, 81 and 80).

In the immediate vicinity of *Yarnkalyilla* was a well-used camping area at the mouth of the Yankalilla River, watered by a spring in the Big Gorge, with abundant fishing in the Bay and plentiful game nearby on the fire-managed Plains.

The area was a junction where travellers from the more remote south (Rapid Bay) met the travel routes from Encounter Bay to the east and Aldinga to the north.

There was a Ramindjeri version of the name, *Yangkalyawangk*; but this was probably derived from the Kaurna original.

There is no linguistic or historical credibility in any of the following theories about the derivation of 'Yankalilla', some of which are widely reproduced:

- *Ngangkalya-illa* 'the place of the woman's tragedy', citing a woman who allegedly swam here (40 km!) from Kangaroo Island.<sup>1</sup>
- *Njengalilla* 'women's tragedy nearby', citing the woman's body excavated in Kongarati Cave.<sup>2</sup>
- *Njengari alya illa* 'sister's son tragedy nearby', citing the corpse of Tjiilbruki's nephew.<sup>3</sup>
- nor 'Long Walk', 'Tall Trees', 'Place of Water', 'Bitter Wailing'.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Noel Webb 1921, 'Before the Whites Came...' *The Mail*, 14/5/1921: 3e.

<sup>2</sup> Shirley Mulcahy 1992, *Southern Fleurieu Historic Walks: Tjirbruke Country*, Somerton Park, the author: 54.

<sup>3</sup> Mulcahy 1992, *ibid*.

<sup>4</sup> Anon., n.d., typescript 'Yankalilla', digital archive 2977, Yankalilla & District Historical Society archives.

Coordinates	-35.470789° Latitude, 138.299181° Longitude (Garnet Kelly Reserve)
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## Language Information

Meaning	1. PROBABLY 'place where [something] kept on hanging down' OR perhaps 2. 'at <i>Yangkalya</i> ' [meaning unknown]
Etymology	1. PROBABLY <i>yarnkanthi</i> 'to hang down, join, impart, infect, depend on [someone]' + <i>alya</i> 'continuous action' (verb suffix) + <i>-illa</i> 'at, place of' > <i>Yarnk'aly'illa</i> 'place where [something] kept on hanging down, joining, etc.' OR perhaps 2. <i>Yangkalya</i> [meaning unknown] + <i>-illa</i> 'at, place of' > 'at <i>Yangkalya</i> '
Notes	The derivation from <i>yarnkanthi</i> given here is the only credible etymology available, and is likely on balance of probabilities. It assumes that the early linguists all misunderstood a retroflex <i>m</i> and transcribed it as a velar <i>ng</i> . However, it is also <u>possible</u> that the root word could be <i>Yangkalya</i> and have no meaning.
Language Family	Thura-Yura: 'Kaurna'
KWP Former Spelling	1. PROBABLY Yernkalyilla OR perhaps 2. Yangkalyilla
KWP New Spelling 2010	1. PROBABLY Yarnkalyilla OR perhaps 2. Yangkalyilla
Phonemic Spelling	/yaNkalyila/
Pronunciation	1. PROBABLY "Yarnkal-yilla": OR perhaps 2. "Yangkal-yilla":
Pronunciation tips	Stress the 1 <sup>st</sup> syllable. Secondary stress on the 3 <sup>rd</sup> syllable. Every 'a' as in Maori 'haka'. 1. <i>m</i> = 'n' with tongue curled back (retroflex); <i>mnk</i> <u>not</u> pronounced as in 'yank' or 'bunk', but more like 'yarn cull'. 2. <i>ngk</i> as in English 'yank'.

## Main source evidence

Date	[18 Sep 1836] / 1838
Original source text	"After a fatiguing walk [from <i>Second Valley</i> ] over large stones on the sea-side for about one-third of the distance, we arrived at <b>Yanky-lilly-valley</b> ."
Reference	W Light to Colonization Commissioners, 'REPORT Of the Survey of the Coast of South Australia, by Colonel Light, Surveyor General (Second Series)', <i>The South Australian Record</i> , Vol.1 No.4, 13 Jan 1838: 27b.
Informants credited	
Informants uncredited	William Cooper for this 'sealer' version of the name



<i>Date</i>	27 Sep 1836
<i>Original source text</i>	“In four or five days (D.V.) I shall go over [from Kingscote] to Cape Jervis with the view of Discharging the ‘Emma’ on her arrival at ‘ <b>Yankalilla</b> ’ & there forming forthwith an Agricultural Establishment, for which purpose I think of employing that Vessel to fetch up Stock.”
<i>Reference</i>	Samuel Stephens to GF Angas, in Letters to George Fife Angas, PRG 174/1 ‘Letters Relating to SA, 1832-1842’, SLSA: 460-1.
<i>Informants credited</i>	
<i>Informants uncredited</i>	probably Captain George Martin: who probably obtained it either from Condoy and Sally, or from Light’s team at Rapid Bay.

<i>Date</i>	6-7 Oct 1836
<i>Original source text</i>	“6 <sup>th</sup> October:... made a start for <b>Yankelilah</b> [? ‘ <b>Yankalilah</b> ’]...” “7 <sup>th</sup> October... at <b>Yankalilah</b> .”
<i>Reference</i>	John Woodforde, ‘Abstract of a Voyage to SA in the Surveying Brig Rapid’, PRG 502/1/1, State Library of SA: 26.
<i>Informants credited</i>	
<i>Informants uncredited</i>	Kaurna-speaking informants at Rapid Bay, and/or Doughboy.

<i>Date</i>	10 Oct 1836
<i>Original source text</i>	“Oct.10.– Weighed and stood to the southward, resolving, that should the next river not answer Jones's description of the harbour, to run at once for <b>Yankalilly</b> and water the ship.”
<i>Reference</i>	Light to Commissioners 10/10/1836, <i>SA Record</i> 1(4), 13 Jan 1838: 28a.
<i>Informants credited</i>	
<i>Informants uncredited</i>	Kangaroo Island ‘sealers’ + Kaurna-speaking informants at Rapid Bay and/or Doughboy.

<i>Date</i>	3 Nov 1836
<i>Original source text</i>	[ <i>main map</i> ] “11 <sup>nd</sup> [ <i>anchorage</i> ] <b>Yanky lilly Bay</b> .” [ <i>inset sketch</i> ] “The Coast as seen from [ <i>anchorage</i> ] at <b>Yanky-lilly</b> ”; “ <b>Yanky Point</b> ”.
<i>Reference</i>	William Light, hand-coloured map dated ‘Nov 3 <sup>rd</sup> 1836’: reproduced in D Elder ed., <i>Light Brief Journal</i> : 89; cp. Arrowsmith map 26/1/1838 ‘A survey on the coast on the east side of St Vincents Gulf made by Col Light, Surveyor General’, in <i>BPP: Colonies: Aust, Vol. 5: Appendix to 2<sup>nd</sup> Report of Colonial Commissioners 1837</i> : 196.
<i>Informants credited</i>	
<i>Informants uncredited</i>	Kangaroo Island ‘sealers’ (probably William Cooper) from early 1830s.



<i>Date</i>	25 Nov 1836
<i>Original source text</i>	“ <b>Yanky Lilly</b> ’, according to the sealers, is a valley about eight miles to the north of Rapid Bay.”
<i>Reference</i>	John Morphett 1836, <i>South Australia: Latest Information from this colony, contained in a letter written by Mr Morphett, Dated Nov. 25<sup>th</sup>, 1836</i> , London, John Gliddon, 1837: 8.
<i>Informants credited</i>	
<i>Informants uncredited</i>	George Bates and/or William Walker (from early 1830s).

<i>Date</i>	Dec 1836
<i>Original source text</i>	“Survey of Rapid Valley... 26 <sup>th</sup> Dec... 15 above <b>Yankally</b> [ <i>sic</i> ]... 28 <sup>th</sup> Dec... North nob <b>Yankally Hill</b> ”.
<i>Reference</i>	BT Finniss 1836, Field Book 73, GNU: [26].
<i>Informants credited</i>	
<i>Informants uncredited</i>	Kurna-speaking informants at Rapid Bay and Yankalilla (Doughboy? and/or ‘Peter’, ‘Jim’).

<i>Date</i>	Feb 1837
<i>Original source text</i>	“There is a spot near Cape Jervis with one of the sweetest sounding names I ever heard, pronounced <b>Yoongalilla</b> [ <i>error for ‘Youngalilla’?</i> ], which, like all their other words, is extremely liquid in its sound. Colonel Light, I am sorry to say, in his letter to the Commissioners, has adopted the Kangaroo Island Whalers cognomen of <b>Yanky-Lilly</b> . I thought it was some place that had been frequented by the American Whalers”.
<i>Reference</i>	Governor John Hindmarsh 1837, despatch as quoted in Roy Williams 1981, <i>To Find A Way</i> : 6.
<i>Informants credited</i>	
<i>Informants uncredited</i>	Survey team (Light, Finniss, Field, etc).

<i>Date</i>	March 1837
<i>Original source text</i>	“We left them in charge of the little garden in Rapid Bay, and anchored seven miles further up the Gulph off an extensive plain called by the natives <b>Yankallilah plain</b> , which separates the mountainous ranges of Mount Lofty and Cape Jervis, but which ranges have the appearance from the Sea, of one continuous range. The plain just mentioned, is very fertile, and beautiful to look upon, and at the present time has three brooks running through it...”
<i>Reference</i>	Lt WG Field 1837, in <i>Sydney Monitor</i> 13 March 1837: 3e.
<i>Informants credited</i>	‘the natives’
<i>Informants uncredited</i>	Kurna-speaking informants at Rapid Bay and Yankalilla, and/or Doughboy.



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> ], Palbungi [ <i>sic</i> ], Morialbo [ <i>sic</i> ], Aldinge [ <i>sic</i> ], and <b>Yankeedilly</b> [ <i>sic</i> , probably <i>mistranscription of ‘Yankeelilly’</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	Kaurna informants for Adelaide names; for ‘Yankeelilly’ probably by personal communication from Morphett.

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, <b>Yankudilly</b> [ <i>sic</i> , probably <i>mistranscription of ‘Yankeelilly’</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	Kaurna informants for Adelaide names; for ‘Yankeelilly’ probably by personal communication from Morphett.

Date	June 1837
Original source text	“Said the country where she came from was called BAT.BUN.GER <b>YANG.GAL.LALE.LAR</b> . It is situate at the west point of St Vincents Gulf... It is on the sea coast; there is a long sandy beach with three rivers... MAN.NUNE.GAR is the name of the country where she was born.”
Reference	GA Robinson journal, Flinders Island 2 June 1837, in NJB Plomley 1987, <i>Weep In Silence: A History of the Flinders Island Aboriginal Settlement</i> , Hobart, Blubber Head Press: 445.
Informants credited	‘KAL.LOON.GOO’ (Kalunggu) = ‘Sarah’ = ‘Charlotte’, who was the source of Robinson’s Kaurna wordlist.
Informants uncredited	

Date	Early 1838
Original source text	<b>“Yankalilla B.”</b> [= <i>Yankalilla Bay</i> ]
Reference	Map [n.d.], “The maritime portion of South Australia from the surveys of Cap <sup>t</sup> Flinders & of Col. Light, Surv <sup>r</sup> . Gen <sup>l</sup> ”, SLSA C 1023; cp. Arrowsmith May 11th 1838, ‘A new map of South Australia’, London, SLSA C 929; and other versions.
Informants credited	Light.
Informants uncredited	Surveyors, Kaurna informants.



Date	5 May 1838
Original source text	“We descended then into Mipunga Plains, which are about a mile in breadth, consisting of rich land watered by a stream which appeared to find its way to the sea through a ravine between Deception Bay and <b>Yanka Lilla</b> .... With <b>Yanka Lilla</b> the communication is probably easier...”
Reference	BT Finniss handwritten letter to W Light, Adelaide 5 <sup>th</sup> May 1838, SA Company papers BRG 42/53 (= ‘Survey Report on the Capabilities of Encounter Bay’, <i>Southern Australian</i> 2/6/1838: 4c).
Informants credited	
Informants uncredited	

Date	1838
Original source text	“ <b>Yankee Lilly Bay</b> ”
Reference	Map [no author, no date], ‘The Eastern Coast of Gulf St Vincent’, H Capper 1838 <i>South Australia, Containing Hints To Emigrants</i> , 2 <sup>nd</sup> Ed., London, Robt Tyas: frontispiece.
Informants credited	
Informants uncredited	Light

Date	1839
Original source text	“The spot near Cape Jervis, called by the sealers ‘ <b>Yanky Lilly</b> ’, as though it were a place that had been frequented by American whalers, is pronounced by the natives <b>Youngalilla</b> .” [probably error for ‘Youngalilla’]
Reference	J Stephens 1839, <i>The Land of Promise</i> : 77.
Informants credited	
Informants uncredited	Governor John Hindmarsh despatch, Feb 1837.

Date	[17 Sep 1836] / 1838-9?
Original source text	“Pullen, Claughton, Jacob & Woodforde (surgeon) landed to walk to <b>Yankalilla</b> ... We walked to <b>Yankalilla</b> ”.
Reference	William Light <i>Brief Journal</i> , 17/9/1836.
Informants credited	
Informants uncredited	Kaurna-speaking informants at Yankalilla, and/or Doughboy, and/or Finniss later.



Date	[Sep 1836] / 1838-9?
Original source text	"View at <b>Yankalillah</b> ".
Reference	Title of William Light watercolour 'View at Yankalillah', Art Gallery of SA; reproduced in D Elder 1987, <i>Art of William Light</i> , Adelaide, Corporation of City of Adelaide: 110-1.
Informants credited	
Informants uncredited	Kurna-speaking informants at Yankalilla, and/or Doughboy, and /or Finniss later.

Date	[1837-9] / 1879
Original source text	" <b>Yangkallilla</b> - Yankalilla."
Reference	W Wyatt [1837-9], in JD Woods 1879, <i>Native Tribes of SA</i> : 179.
Informants credited	
Informants uncredited	Kurna informants

Date	1839
Original source text	- [26 July at Encounter Bay] "The small numbers of the Wirramumejo came about from the fact that the majority were detained at <b>Jankaljila</b> " [= <i>Wirramumeyo</i> ; <b>Yankalyila</b> ]. - "So we travelled on 16 <sup>th</sup> October together with the intention of visiting <b>Jankaljila</b> which was just three miles out of our way... Since neither of us had ever been at <b>Jankaljila</b> , we depended on a guide whom we were to meet on the track. The problem was that we did not know the area where the guide was to be and we missed him".
Reference	CW Schürmann diary, 26 July and 16 Oct 1839, tr. G Noller.
Informants credited	
Informants uncredited	Kurna guide Wauwitpinna (in July).

Date	1839-40
Original source text	" <b>Yankalilla R</b> "
Reference	Kentish 1839-40, 'Map of the District comprising Curracullinga, Bungala, <b>Yankalilla</b> , & Ingullilla', Plan 6/32, GNU.
Informants credited	
Informants uncredited	Kurna survey guides.





Date	1839-40
Original source text	- "Plan of <b>Yankalyilla</b> ". - " <b>Y_nka__lla</b> " [district title, partly illegible: along the vicinity of Yankalilla River, from south of Normanville to Hay Flat plain].
Reference	Kentish & Poole [1839-1840], 'Plan of Yankalyilla', Plan 6/16B, GNU.
Informants credited	
Informants uncredited	Kaurna survey guides.

Date	June 1840
Original source text	- "Plan of <b>Yankalyilla</b> ". - " <b>YANKALYILLA</b> " [district title: from south of Normanville, across Yankalilla River to Hay Flat].
Reference	Map "N <sup>o</sup> . 55 / Plan of Yankalyilla / surveyed by Messrs Kentish & Poole" - 'fin <sup>d</sup> 25 <sup>th</sup> June 1840', SLSA C 243.
Informants credited	
Informants uncredited	Kaurna survey guides.

Date	1840
Original source text	- " <b>Yangkalyilla</b> , in <b>Yangkalya</b> ". - " <i>wenendi</i> to go, walk; used only by the natives of <b>Yangkalya</b> and Rapid Bay". - " <b>Yankalya-illa</b> – Yankalilla".
Reference	Teichelmann & Schürmann 1840, <i>An Outline of a Grammar...</i> , 1:21, 2:55, 76.
Informants credited	
Informants uncredited	Mullawirraburka, Kadlitpinna, Ityamaitpinna, etc, 1838-44.

Date	1840-1
Original source text	" <b>Yankalyilla River</b> ".
Reference	Map 1841 [no title, no author], 'Received 20 <sup>th</sup> Jan 1841 / BT Finniss', Plan 12/129 GNU.
Informants credited	
Informants uncredited	Kaurna survey guides.

Date	[Sep-Oct 1836] / ?1842
Original source text	[17 Sep] "From Rapid Bay we proceeded to a spot about 9 miles to the North <sup>wd</sup> (up the Gulf) where we remained 4 days the Native name was <b>Yankalila</b> which the Colonel retained... [6 Oct] ... abreast of <b>Yankalila</b> we saw a boat standing out from under the land it turned out to be Mr Stevens... & Mr Morphett..."
Reference	WJS Pullen, 'MS Journal', PRG 303/31, SLSA: 16, 23.
Informants credited	
Informants uncredited	Kaurna-speaking informants at Yankalilla, and/or Doughboy.



<i>Date</i>	1843
<i>Original source text</i>	“ <b>Yangkallyaw-angk: Yangkalilla.</b> ”
<i>Reference</i>	Meyer 1843: 50.
<i>Informants credited</i>	Ramindjeri Aborigines of Encounter Bay.
<i>Informants uncredited</i>	

<i>Date</i>	[Oct 1836 – Jan 1837] / 1892
<i>Original source text</i>	“I was accordingly ordered to examine the country inland in the direction of Encounter Bay and <b>Yankallyilla</b> ... I took walks into the country with generally one or two men and one or two black fellows, who were useful as guides in finding water... My two sable friends (one of whom always attended me) were called Jim and Peter... On one occasion, at <b>Yankallyilla</b> , I encamped for the night near Peter’s wurley, for it was his district...”
<i>Reference</i>	BT Finniss MS 1892, ‘Some Early Recollections’, transcribed by G Dooley, Flinders University Library: 5-6.
<i>Informants credited</i>	
<i>Informants uncredited</i>	Kurna informants at Rapid Bay and Yankalilla, and/or Doughboy, and/or ‘Peter’ and ‘Jim’.

<i>Date</i>	[1872] / 1928
<i>Original source text</i>	“In and about 1872 I used to see a good many of the Encounter Bay blacks; there were then a fair number encamped near Victor Harbour, and they had their own names for many of the white fellows, as well as for places. I am pretty certain their name for Yankalilla was <b>Yang Kal-Ya-Wong, with the accent on the Kal.</b> ”
<i>Reference</i>	‘White Fellow’ letter, <i>Register</i> 3 March 1928: 16f.
<i>Informants credited</i>	Ramindjeri-speaking informants at Encounter Bay.
<i>Informants uncredited</i>	

<i>Date</i>	n.d. [after mid-1960s]
<i>Original source text</i>	“ <b>Jangkaljawangk</b> place where Tjirbuki shed tears; the river with its slightly bitter water is composed of his tears. He wept here for his dead sister’s son.”
<i>Reference</i>	New note added to photocopied map (Tindale annotated map AA 338/24/102, which is a photocopy of AA 338/224/101, Hundred of Yankalilla).
<i>Informants credited</i>	The text above is not found in any of the references credited (i.e. Milerum 1934/1941 and Karlowan 1935 on the original map 24/101; Milerum 1936 on the photocopy 24/102).
<i>Informants uncredited</i>	Probably Tindale himself.

Date	1986
Original source text	“Yankalilla:... Professor N.B. Tindale says ‘it is derived from the Aboriginal word <i>jankalan</i> , meaning ‘falling’, from an incident in the myth of Tjilbruke, whose sister’s [sic] mummified body began to fall into pieces here, as he was carrying it from Brighton to Cape Jervis for burial’.”
Reference	Geoffrey H Manning 1986, <i>The Romance of Place Names</i> , Adelaide, The Author: 237.
Informants credited	Tindale
Informants uncredited	

### SWEET NAME, ‘FULL MOONSHINE’: Discussion:

The place-name Yankalilla has been the subject of more debate and conjecture than most. People have been fascinated by the name itself – its inherent beauty, and its odd connotations for English speakers – and by its romantic associations with SA’s early history.

On the one hand Governor Hindmarsh wrote in February 1837, “There is a spot near Cape Jervis with one of the sweetest sounding names I ever heard, pronounced Youngalilla, which, like all their other words, is extremely liquid in its sound”.<sup>5</sup>

On the other, place-name compiler Rodney Cockburn wrote in 1908, “The word has defied all efforts to trace its meaning... The story goes that its derivation is traceable to the supposition that a Yankee mariner settled in the locality and had a daughter named Lily. That story is full moonshine”.<sup>6</sup>

### THE PLACE (1):

The name came into general use very early, when the settlers had very few place-names by which to mentally map the land.

<sup>5</sup> Hindmarsh to George Fife Angas, Feb 1837, quoted in Roy Williams 1981, *To Find A Way*: 6; cp. J Stephens 1839, *The Land of Promise*: 77.

<sup>6</sup> Rodney Cockburn 1908, *Nomenclature of South Australia*, Adelaide, WK Thomas & Co: 143. Half a dozen other ‘spurious etymologies’ have been proposed for the name since then. I list them on p1, but forbear to analyze them here in detail. They are discussed in a ‘Folklore’ section of the Data File in the Complete version of this document (available to researchers by arrangement with KWP).

As a result, it was sometimes applied to a very large area; at times the almanacs might include everywhere from Myponga to Rapid Bay and Encounter Bay in 'Yankalilla District'.<sup>7</sup> But when first recorded it sometimes referred to a very specific place at Lady Bay. Sometimes it is hard to be sure which of the two references was meant.

The site of Yankalilla *Town* on the Bungala River – the "Section 1181" given by Tindale in some of his place-name cards<sup>8</sup> – is irrelevant to the location of the Aboriginal Yankalilla, as it was not laid out until about 1857,<sup>9</sup> and took its name from the big 'Yankalilla District' of the previous 20 years.

Since the 1820s the Kangaroo Island 'sealers' had often been visiting the general area when trading or raiding on the mainland. Yankalilla Bay and Rapid Bay were the nearest safe landings for whaleboats, and well-populated Yankalilla was perhaps their readiest source of women. Though they did not record any name for Rapid Bay, they called this area "Yanky-lilly": their best imitation of what they had heard from Aborigines, either the women they abducted or the men with whom they traded. This version – inspiration for the yarns quoted by Cockburn, which they themselves may have encouraged – was obtained from them by the first colonists who hired them, such as Colonel Light.<sup>10</sup>

After Rapid Bay, 'Yankalillah' was the second place where Light and his surveyors worked for a week in September 1836. Light's painting of his campsite identifies the place very clearly as the swampy flat at the mouth of the Yankalilla River:<sup>11</sup> a well-favoured Aboriginal camping area below Yankalilla Hill, with a permanent spring a short distance up the Yankalilla Gorge.<sup>12</sup>

Through most of the 19<sup>th</sup> century settlers used the name to refer to a locality much used by Aborigines, but to us now it is rarely clear exactly where they meant.

<sup>7</sup> Especially in the SA Almanacs; see e.g. the landowners at 'Yankalilla' in Bennett 1842: 126; Macdougall 1843: 17; the first census (see Allen 1844: 237); Stephens 1847: 125; Murray 1848: 104, 112; Murray 1850: xlii, lxiv. The name 'Encounter Bay' could also include Yankalilla sometimes in those years.

<sup>8</sup> Tindale Kurna place-name cards 488/2 'Jankajawanĵ' and 489 'Janĵalĵila'.

<sup>9</sup> Manning 1990: 350.

<sup>10</sup> During their respective surveys from KI up the Gulf, it was probably George Bates and William Walker who told John Morphett, and William Cooper who told Colonel Light. Nat Thomas was also present in the Kingscote colony around that time (see my forthcoming history *Feet On the Fleurieu*).

<sup>11</sup> W Light 1836, watercolour 'View at Yankalillah', Art Gallery of SA; reproduced in David Elder 1987, *Art of William Light*: 110.

<sup>12</sup> Since colonial times Yankalilla Gorge has also been called 'Big Gorge', to distinguish it from the 'Little Gorge' two km southwest on the Main South Road.



How big was Yankalilla in Aboriginal minds?

One locally-raised Kaurna speaker – the young woman Kalunggu, kidnapped by Islanders and taken to Bass Strait where she was rescued by Protector Robinson – identified “YANG.GAL.LALE.LAR” by its “long sandy beach with three rivers”: a clear reference to the whole of Yankalilla Bay with its rivers Carrickalinga, Bungala and Yankalilla.<sup>13</sup> Was this a normal referent? Or did Aboriginal culture usually restrict it to a small site like Light’s camp?

While records of Aboriginal presence are scarce at most other sites around the Yankalilla plains and coast, there is abundant information about this site at Lady Bay. When Light first walked up the Gorge in September 1836 he “was enchanted with this spot” and “found it plentifully supplied with fresh water... the whole distance fine soil”.<sup>14</sup> In the 1840s the painter and travel writer George French Angas depicted the flat backed by the striking scarps of Yankalilla Hill at the entrance to the Big Gorge. He wrote:

*In one of the dark recesses of the Gorge there is a spring which even during the parched months of February and March, is never dry; hence the vicinity of this spot has become a favorite camping place with the natives, and at the period of my visit<sup>15</sup> their huts were numerous upon the sea shore.*<sup>16</sup>

Here was shelter and water; here was good fishing. Campsites in the dunes here were used in spring and summer.<sup>17</sup> Archaeological evidence at Lady Bay dates back more than 1600 years.<sup>18</sup>

The nearby Yankalilla Plains were one of the areas which surprised and entranced the first colonists because they resembled an English nobleman’s park. Here were grasslands with scattered large trees and no underbrush. At ‘Yanky Lilly’ Morphett saw “a fine rich soil with abundant herbage, and some very fine trees... We measured one of these lords of the Australian

<sup>13</sup> GA Robinson journal 2 June 1837, in Plomley 1987, *Weep In Silence: a history of the Flinders Island Aboriginal settlement*: 445.

<sup>14</sup> Light, *Brief Journal*, 20 Sep 1836.

<sup>15</sup> 14 March 1844.

<sup>16</sup> George French Angas (Giles lithograph) ‘The Gorge at Yankallillah’, in Angas 1847, *South Australia Illustrated*, London, Thomas McLean, Plate XXIX; cp. original watercolour Angas 1844, ‘Entrance to the Gorge of the Yankalilla’, Art Gallery of SA 0.602.

<sup>17</sup> cp. the “summer / spring camp” mapped at what seems to be Lady Bay (Berndt & Berndt 1993: 330-1).

<sup>18</sup> Betty Ross 1984, *Aboriginal and Historic Places Around Metropolitan Adelaide and the South Coast*, Anthropological Society of SA: 20, 25.

forest, and found it twenty-one feet in girth. Fourteen and fifteen feet is a very common size, with a straight trunk in many instances sixty feet high”.<sup>19</sup> Light enthused about Hay Flat in a note on his first map: “I never saw a more beautiful little valley than this... it is full of fresh water springs and covered with very fine grass”.<sup>20</sup> This was Kangaroo grass, pasture for kangaroos even in late summer. The landscape had been shaped by centuries of firestick farming into country which was sustainable for both hunting and gathering.<sup>21</sup>

In summer the Yankalilla locals were often visited – here or at Rapid Bay – by their Encounter Bay relatives. Yankalilla (perhaps here, perhaps the plains in general) was a junction for travellers from the north, south and southeast. According to Berndt, “Because of the spread of kin relationships... [Ngarrindjeri-speaking] people could move freely over the country of language groups other than their own, with the full expectation of aid in terms of shelter and food... Another [trade] route ran from Encounter Bay up the Inman River... to Yankalilla, meeting other parties from Rapid Bay... and continuing to Myponga... to Aldinga”.<sup>22</sup>

The Yankalilla Gorge was the standard route for these barefoot walkers thousands of years before it became the first standard route for the bullock wagons of the settlers.<sup>23</sup> Until a less difficult road was built via Little Gorge, the Big Gorge route from Lady Bay was so well-used – and the eight crossings of the stony creek so thirst-making for wagon drivers – that the ‘Two Storey’ hotel was built there;<sup>24</sup> its ruins can still be seen.

In colonial times Encounter Bay people still used the Inman route, with Lady Bay often their destination. Doubtless their Kurna relatives had used it in earlier times: “over the Bald Hills and

<sup>19</sup> John Morphett letter 25 Nov 1836, *South Australia: Latest Information*, London, Gliddon: 8-9.

<sup>20</sup> W Light hand-coloured map 3 Nov 1836: reproduced as Arrowsmith map 26/1/1838, ‘A survey on the coast on the east side of St Vincents Gulf made by Col. Light, Surveyor General’, Appendix to 2<sup>nd</sup> Report of Colonial Commissioners 1837, *BPP: Australia* Vol. 5: 196. Also reproduced in D Elder (ed.) 1984, *William Light’s Brief Journal*, Adelaide, Wakefield Press: 89.

<sup>21</sup> Cp. Bill Gammage 2011, *The Biggest Estate on Earth: how Aborigines made Australia*, Allen & Unwin: 32-3, 108-9; Bill Gammage 2012, ‘The Adelaide District in 1836’, in R Foster and P Sendziuk, *Turning Points: Chapters in South Australian History*, Adelaide: Wakefield Press: 17-19.

<sup>22</sup> Berndt & Berndt 1993: 19-20. Other sources show that they went north via Wattle Flat and often to Myponga Beach.

<sup>23</sup> The settlers’ route ran up the Gorge as far as its first sharp left turn, then (to avoid an impassable section of the Gorge) over the ridge to follow the Main South Road briefly, back up to Tonto, and down to the Yankalilla River again at Hay Flat (Mulcahy 1991: 54-5; cp. the journey from Normanville to Tunkalilla described in Roy Williams 1982, ‘The History of Parawa’, digital archive 1776, Yankalilla & District Historical Society. Thanks also to Des Gubbin for help in identifying this probable route).

The Aboriginal foot route probably eliminated the detour towards Wirrina. From Hay Flat they had a choice of routes to Encounter Bay: either northeast to Bald Hills and Inman Valley, or southeast past Mt Robinson to Back Valley.

<sup>24</sup> Roy Williams 1981: 51.

down the Yankalilla River valley to the beaches near the Gorge. This is most likely to have happened at the time of the year when yabbies were most plentiful in these rivers and fish were plentiful off the beaches near the Gorge”.<sup>25</sup>

Another old resident recalled ceremonies and bush banquets:

*I was quite young when my father carried me all the way to Normanville to see a corroboree. The aboriginies from Encounter Bay came through this district on their walkabout shortly before Christmas each year. The attraction was the abundance of yabbies in the waterways, the secretion exuded from the Manna Gums (a substance that tasted like Turkish Delight) in the Yankalilla Valley and the water cress in the creeks near Manna Farm.<sup>26</sup> Also along the beaches, particularly near the Gorge, was a plentiful supply of shellfish, which was one of their favoured foods.<sup>27</sup>*

There were burial sites in the sandhills close to the mouth of the Yankalilla River.<sup>28</sup>

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## THE NAME (1): INTRODUCTION:

Like the place, the name is clear in general but less clear in some details.

From the linguists in 1840-3, supported by Finniss and his surveyors from 1836 to 1840, we know that its general form was *Yankalyilla* or *Yangkalyilla* (the early linguists were ambivalent about the second consonant and gave it as both *n* and *ng*). This is clearly Kurna because of the uniquely identifiable Kurna locative *-illa*. Its root word is approximately *Yangkalya*; but the etymology and meaning (if any) are a matter of weighing probabilities.

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<sup>25</sup> R Williams 1982, 'The History of Parawa: Aboriginals', digital archive 1782, YDHS. Williams notes that they were "following the lesser grades of the rivers".

<sup>26</sup> Kemmiss's Manna Farm (or Manor House) still stands at Yankalilla town on the Bungala River. See Mulcahy 1991: 81-2, 88.

<sup>27</sup> Doris Parkes n.d. [1980s], as told to Roy Williams, 'Doris Parkes Recalls Local Aborigines', digital archive 3884, YDHS.

<sup>28</sup> *Chronicle* 13/5/1911: 13-b-c; *Register* 26/9/1914: 8f; *Advertiser* 28/5/1915: 11.

In order to become as sure as possible about the sound and spelling of the name, the location of the place, and the cultural provenance of both, we must take several lengthy detours.<sup>29</sup>

First we will follow in some detail the processes by which both place and name were ‘discovered’ and recorded by a number of independent observers; this leads to a conclusion about the place.

Then we will analyze the name itself.

And finally we will address some spurious issues raised by influential recent authors, notably Tindale.

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### PROCESS (1): EUROPEANS ‘DISCOVER’ THE PLACE AND THE NAME:

Yankalilla was nameless to Europeans until the ‘sealers’ – and probably some of the captains who employed them in the early 1830s – called it “Yanky-lilly”. They had heard local Aborigines name it, either the women they abducted or the men with whom they traded.

In September and October 1836 John Morphett visited “Yanky Lilly” which (he said) “according to the sealers, is a valley about eight miles to the north of Rapid Bay”.<sup>30</sup>

At about the same time Colonel Light was learning the same version from sealer William Cooper during his survey of the Gulf coast. His first map named the place as “Yanky lilly Bay” but also (in an accompanying sketch) as “Yanky-lilly” alone.<sup>31</sup>

While ‘Yanky Lilly’ of the sealers could have referred to anywhere in Yankalilla Bay, Light’s painting leaves no doubt about the place he was referring to. The title “View at Yankalillah” uses a new spelling; but this came at least two years later than his onsite sketch, and we cannot read this back to September 1836. Likewise his journal for that month records how “Pullen, Claughton, Jacob and Woodforde (surgeon) landed to walk to Yankalilla”; but his original diary was lost in a fire and we have only the version he worked up for publication in 1839.<sup>32</sup> He was using the new spelling retrospectively.

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<sup>29</sup> The cultural provenance of the place Yankalilla (and of the entire Gulf coast up to Adelaide) has been contested recently by the Ramindjeri Heritage Association.

<sup>30</sup> Morphett 1836: 8.

<sup>31</sup> My emphasis: Light map 3 Nov 1836; with accompanying sketch ‘The Coast as seen from [anchorage] at Yanky-lilly’. The application to the whole Bay was probably Light’s own idea as a surveyor.

<sup>32</sup> See D Elder 1984: 38, 49, and boundforsouthaustralia.net.au.



On the same survey Light's team was learning the new version from Aboriginal people. He employed Cooper's two 'wives', the Tasmanian 'Sall' and the local woman 'Doughboy', and the surveyors also formed a relationship with a group of 'Cape Jervis' people at Rapid Bay, some of them Doughboy's relatives. Rather than Light himself, who was not much interested in either Aborigines or names, it was other members of his team who became clearer about the vowels. "The native name was Yankalila which the Colonel retained", wrote his Second Officer Pullen.<sup>33</sup> On board the *Rapid* in Holdfast Bay, ship's surgeon John Woodforde diarized: "'6<sup>th</sup> October:.. made a start for Yankelilah.... 7<sup>th</sup> October... at Yankalilah".<sup>34</sup> Chief Officer Field wrote a letter six months later telling of "an extensive plain, called by the natives *Yankallilah* plain... [It] is very fertile, and beautiful to look upon, and at the present time has three brooks running through it".<sup>35</sup>

Like all surveyors, Light was inclined to press the name into use for his main professional categories such as 'Bay'. But he and his team also reinforced how it belonged to the immediate locality, giving related names to two features within two km of their camp: "Yankally Hill" (as marked in December 1836 by assistant surveyor BT Finniss in his field book)<sup>36</sup> and "Yanky Point" (marked by Light on a sketch with his first map: the projecting first scarp of Yankalilla Hill immediately southwest of Lady Bay).<sup>37</sup>

Yet it seems that Light's team on the *Rapid* was not the first to record the standard spelling 'Yankalilla'. This was not the 'sealer' version but included an accurate rendering of all the vowels. It was known on Kangaroo Island by 27<sup>th</sup> September, only ten days after Light first set foot on the Yankalilla plains; but it could not have come not directly from the *Rapid*. On that day Samuel Stephens – Colonial Manager of the South Australian Company's settlement at Kingscote – wrote to his London employer Angas: "In four or five days (D.V.) I shall go over to Cape Jervis with the view of Discharging the 'Emma' on her arrival at 'Yankalilla' & there forming forthwith an Agricultural Establishment, for which purpose I think of employing that Vessel to fetch up Stock". At this date Stephens had not visited the mainland, and Light's team had been out surveying the Gulf and uncontactable since the 7<sup>th</sup>. Who told Stephens this name? The only people who might have

<sup>33</sup> WJS Pullen 1842, MS Journal, PRG 303/31 (SLSA): 16-17; but possibly first recorded in September 1836.

<sup>34</sup> Woodforde diary 6 Oct 1836, *Abstract of a Voyage to SA in the Surveying Brig 'Rapid'*, PRG 502/1/1 (SLSA).

<sup>35</sup> Lt WG Field, letter to *Sydney Monitor* 13 March 1837: 3e. This letter was reprinted in 'Second Supplement to the First Report of the Directors of the South Australian Company', 29<sup>th</sup> June 1837 (p.35), where 'Yankalilah' was misprinted as "Youkallelah".

<sup>36</sup> "26<sup>th</sup> Dec... 15 above Yankally [sic]... 28<sup>th</sup> Dec... North nob Yankally Hill" (BT Finniss, 'Survey of Rapid Valley', Field Book 73 (SA Geographical Names Unit): [26]). This was today's Yankalilla Hill, strikingly scarped above the south end of Lady Bay, and occupying the middle ground of Light's painting. It is not clear whether Finniss was here abbreviating 'Yankallyilla' (as in his late 'Recollections'), or whether he meant '-ally' as in 'rally' (in which case perhaps he had heard the name *Yankalya* without the locative, and interpreted *lya* as *li*).

<sup>37</sup> Light hand-coloured map 3 Nov 1836.

known it and could have passed it on to him before the 27<sup>th</sup> were Captain George Martin and the crew who on the 7<sup>th</sup> had sailed from Kingscote in a whaleboat to explore the eastern coast of the Gulf, and on the way back stayed at Rapid Bay with Light on the 15<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup>.<sup>38</sup> Martin had been ferried up the Gulf by a party including three Islanders, one Aboriginal man and two Aboriginal women; and these almost certainly included William Walker, Condoy and Sally Walker.<sup>39</sup> It was a place called 'Yankalilla' about which the Captain Martin enthused the most, and Stephens used the new information in choosing a site for his Company stock.<sup>40</sup>

Perhaps Martin heard the correct Kaurna name at Rapid Bay in the company of Light and his hired KI sealer William Cooper, Cooper's local wife 'Doughboy', or perhaps even the Aboriginal men who had just come in from Encounter Bay on the 15<sup>th</sup> to look after Light's garden. Martin's stopover with Light lasted for more than a whole day immediately before the Colonel proceeded north to Yankalilla on the 17<sup>th</sup>. No doubt they spent much of the 16<sup>th</sup> discussing this next bay, especially with their local guides.<sup>41</sup>

Or perhaps it was Martin's hired 'natives', probably Condoy and his daughter, who quoted the correct Kaurna name to Martin independently during their voyage a few days earlier.

It seems likely that at this stage Light himself, under extreme pressure from his responsibilities, did not really absorb the more accurate version. On 10<sup>th</sup> October he was apparently spelling the name "Yankalilly",<sup>42</sup> which (if not a misprint) looks like a combination of both the versions he had heard; but otherwise throughout 1836 he used the sealers' "Yanky lilly", right up to his chart finished on November 3<sup>rd</sup>.<sup>43</sup> It must have been others of his team such as Pullen, Field or Finniss who eventually clarified the "native name" to Light so that eventually "the Colonel retained" it (Pullen's expression) as "Yankalillah"<sup>44</sup> and "Yankalilla".<sup>45</sup>

<sup>38</sup> See diaries of Samuel Stephens, Woodforde and Light.

<sup>39</sup> The party set out intending to sleep the first or second night at "Kangaroo Head", i.e. probably Walker's farm at Hog Bay (Samuel Stephens Journal 6 Sep 1836).

<sup>40</sup> As it turned out, Light later chose a different site and the stock ended up in Adelaide.

<sup>41</sup> See diaries of Woodforde and Light. For the whole story see my history *Feet On the Fleurieu* (in progress, unpublished).

<sup>42</sup> Light letter to Commissioners 10 Oct 1836 (*SA Record* 1(4), 13/1/1838: 28a).

<sup>43</sup> Light hand-drawn chart 3/11/1836, reproduced in Elder (ed.) 1984, *William Light's Brief Journal*, Wakefield Press: 89; cp. early published version 'A survey on the coast on the east side of St Vincents Gulf', London, Arrowsmith 26/1/1838, Appendix 9 of 2<sup>nd</sup> Report of Colonial Commissioners, *BPP: Colonies: Australia* 5: 196.

<sup>44</sup> W Light watercolour, 'View at Yankalillah' (Art Gallery of SA, gift of SA Company 1931; reproduced in D Elder 1987, *Art of William Light*, Adelaide, Wakefield Press: 111). This was first sketched onsite in September 1836; but it was certainly not finished, and probably not titled, until 1837 at least.

<sup>45</sup> Light's *Brief Journal* as revised in 1838-9 for publication.

All of these records were made by men who had obtained the name onsite from local Aboriginal people. But the new version of the name was passed on into settler culture as soon as they reached the new settlement at Holdfast Bay.<sup>46</sup> One of them must have given it to Hindmarsh by February 1837, who spelled it (probably) “Youngalilla”.<sup>47</sup>

In the following few years those colonists who had not visited the area used the spellings which became familiar through the writings and personal reports of Light’s team and Morphett: ‘Yankylilly’, its oral equivalent ‘Yankee Lilly’, and ‘Yankalilla’.<sup>48</sup>

But some records were still being obtained firsthand from Kaurna informants.

In mid-1837, far away at Flinders Island in Bass Strait, another interview recorded the name from an exiled Yankalilla local. Twenty-year-old Kalunggu<sup>49</sup> told Robinson about “the country where she came from”. It “was called BAT.BUN.GER YANG.GAL.LALE.LAR... It is on the sea coast; there is a long sandy beach with three rivers”. Here she seems to apply the name to the whole coast of Yankalilla Bay, like Lt Field, while also placing it the context of *Patpangga* ‘south place’, the wider territory of the Kaurna-speaking people south of Sellick’s Hill.<sup>50</sup>

When the Country Surveys got underway in 1839 using paid Aboriginal guides,<sup>51</sup> the earliest maps from Kentish and Poole over the next year or two showed “Yankalyilla” as the title of a large district

<sup>46</sup> Field and Pullen, Chief and Second Officers of the *Rapid*, took the brig to Holdfast Bay on 4 Nov 1836, where Light and the first settlers arrived four days later in the *Africaine* (Light *Brief Journal* 4-8 Nov 1836). Woodforde arrived there with the Rapid Bay team in the *Cygnat* on 23 Jan 1837 (Woodforde diary 22-3 Jan 1837). Doubtless they told Light as well at this time; but his map had already been completed using the “whalers’ cognomen of Yanky-Lilly” – probably accompanied by the “letter to the Commissioners” referred to in Hindmarsh’s lament – and these would go back to England together with later despatches such as Hindmarsh’s.

<sup>47</sup> Hindmarsh’s despatch is the only source which appears to cast doubt on the first vowel a. Did he mean the sound *Yungg* rather than *Yangg*? (Tindale thought so on his place-name card 512 `Ju:ngkalil:a). I have not sighted his original MS. Roy Williams reproduced the note with the spelling ‘Yoongalilla’ (Roy Williams 1981, *To Find A Way*: 6), but John Stephens’ propaganda book paraphrased the same account using the spelling “Yooungalilla” (J Stephens 1839, *The Land of Promise*: 77). Most likely Hindmarsh originally wrote ‘Youngalilla’. In that form, ‘Young-’ would be intended as the English word, and its pronunciation would be *Yangg-*. Since in Aboriginal languages *g* and *k* are not distinguished from each other, this is phonologically the same as the other records giving *Yangk-*.

<sup>48</sup> ‘Yanky lilly’ (Light’s chart 3/11/1836); ‘Yankeelilly’ (Hack in letter May 1837); ‘Yankalilla’ (William Light Brief Journal 17/9/1836; Arrowsmith May 11th 1838, ‘A new map of South Australia’, London, SLSA C 929). See the tables of source evidence above. From their arrival the Hack brothers (John and Stephen) were in touch with other leading capitalists such as Morphett. Stephen did not visit the southern regions himself until so two months after his letter of 1 May 1837.

<sup>49</sup> Robinson’s spelling is “KAL.LOON.GOO”.

<sup>50</sup> See PNS 1/03 Patpangga.

<sup>51</sup> In August 1839 it was reported of the ‘natives’ that “Several of them are also employed in the Survey Department at Yankalilla and Aldingha, who receive rations and pay the same as the white laborers” (Register 10/8/1839: 6).

from south of Normanville to the Hay Flat plain.<sup>52</sup> This again was probably a professional shift of referent, using the handy local name for a new and much larger sale area. On other maps they also applied it to the whole “Yankalilla River”, and sometimes (following Light) to the wider Yankalilla Bay.<sup>53</sup>

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## THE PLACE (2): CONCLUSION:

From this survey of how and where the name was obtained at first contact, we may conclude with a fair degree of confidence that when Aboriginal people spoke of ‘Yankalilla’ they usually meant the Lady Bay site.

However, from a distance they might also use it as a short-hand for the whole Yankalilla Plain, with its varied resources of game and the seasonal ‘manna’. It was, no doubt, also Kalunggu’s thought from her exile at the Flinders Island Native Settlement in 1837. Clan identities may have reinforced this wider secondary application, especially after dispersal had removed the local Kurna speakers with their detailed knowledge of many other local place-names. One of the Berndts’ Ngarrindjeri informants in the 20<sup>th</sup> century (probably Karlowan) said that there was a “Yangkalindjera” clan named after the place whose location he does not specify. Their clan territory “came down to Yankie Hill and along the coast around Normanville”.<sup>54</sup>

Lt Field, whose informants were probably onsite or no further away than Rapid Bay, thought it was the name of “an extensive plain”. It seems that the Country Surveyors of 1839 gave it a double application to the whole River and the Plains, possibly adapting the tradition which had been ambiguously recorded earlier by Light, Field and their team.

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<sup>52</sup> See Plans 6/16B, (GNU); map C 243 (SLSA). The same maps name other nearby *districts* ‘Carrickalinga’, ‘Bungala’ and ‘Ingulilla’ (cp. Plan 6/32).

<sup>53</sup> See Plans 6/15, 6/32, 12/129 (GNU); C 218, C 381, C 801 (SLSA); Arrowsmith 1843 ‘SA shewing the division into counties’, *BPP Aust* 7: 362.

<sup>54</sup> Berndt & Berndt 1993: 311. ‘Yanky Hill’ was Light’s original name for Yankalilla Hill, and it is interesting to note Karlowan’s use of it so long afterwards.

## PROCESS (2): TRYING TO SPELL WHAT THEY HEARD:

Of the few close observers, Protector William Wyatt recorded it as “Yangkallilla” (sic).<sup>55</sup> Here ‘Yangk-’ represents the common pronunciation of the English verb ‘yank’.

From the German missionary linguists we learn that the name could also appear as *Yangkalya*, without its locative *-illa* ‘at’.<sup>56</sup>

They gave the fourth consonant as *ly* – an insight otherwise achieved only by the Country Surveyors of 1839.<sup>57</sup>

About the second consonant they seem to have been unsure, giving it three times as *ng* (like Wyatt), and once as *Yank*.<sup>58</sup> But they were probably mistaken in both; because there is a credible

<sup>55</sup> W Wyatt [1837-9], in JD Woods 1879, *Native Tribes of SA*: 179.

<sup>56</sup> cp. “in *Yangkalya*” (T&S 1840 1:21); “the natives of *Yangkalya*” (T&S 1840 2:55).

<sup>57</sup> i.e. the first *l* (the fourth consonant) was in fact a lamino-palatal *ly* (the sound in ‘million’). This sound had been missed by almost all the other colonists including Wyatt, with the possible exception of Finniss and his surveyors. In 1839 Schürmann, accompanied by an Adelaide Kaurna speaker named Wauwitpinna (one of his sources for learning the language), travelled on foot to Encounter Bay, where he found that “*the small numbers of the Wirramumejo [Encounter Bay locals] came about from the fact that the majority were detained at Jankaljila*”: i.e. were away visiting their relatives at “*Yankalyila*”. Schürmann here uses a Continental ‘j’ to represent the sound of a consonantal ‘y’. In October he diarized the same spelling in another visit south.

<sup>58</sup> The second consonant appears to have been ambiguous in their ears. Schürmann’s diary in 1839 gave it as *n*, and we tend to pass this without comment because we pronounce it intuitively as *ng* in English ‘yank’. But did he, as a linguist, mean exactly what he wrote: an ordinary *n* (alveolar) as in ‘yarn cull’, making a sequence which is less obvious to English ears? Probably he was still struggling to identify the sound.

When Teichelmann and Schürmann published their Kaurna grammar in 1840, they gave the name four times. Three times they used the consonant cluster *ngk*: “*Yangkalyilla*” to illustrate the Locative, and its gloss “*in Yangkalya*” (T&S 1840 1:21); and the English phrase “*the natives of Yangkalya*” (2:55). By contrast, in their list of place-names they gave it as “*Yankalya-illa*”, using the full root with Schürmann’s old spelling *nk*; and here they glossed it as “*Yankallilla*”, presumably the English form which was now familiar (2:76).

Was one of these alternatives – *n* or *ng* – a misprint, or an accident of haste? If so, it was probably the *nk*, because this spelling already existed in English. The *spelling -ngk-* was new and probably shows a later and more considered verdict. This is the velar nasal sound *ng* (as in English ‘yank all’), which was also recorded by Wyatt; but in 1840 he had not yet been published.

At about the same time, surveyors Kentish and Poole were also discovering the *lya* sound, from their guides and independently of the missionaries, as far as we know. From 1839 to 1842, several of their early plans mark the name as “*Yankalyilla*” (see Plans 6/16B, 6/19, 12/129, GNU; maps C 251, C 243, C 801, SLSA).

Surveyor BT Finniss left several different accounts of the name. His first record in December 1836, which must be independent, is noted above. But the rest of his versions are probably neither independent nor firsthand. By the time Teichelmann and Schürmann were published, Light had died and Finniss had become Surveyor-General and then Chief Draughtsman (HT Burgess 1907, *Cyclopaedia of South Australia*, Vol. 1: 224). In 1841 he signed at least one of the plans which spelt the river as “*Yankalyilla*” (Plan 12/129, GNU); but did he get this spelling from the linguists, or from the surveyors? Fifty years later when he came to write his ‘Recollections’, he remembered those early months – October 1836 to January 1837 – surveying at “*Yankallyilla*” in company with an Aboriginal man ‘Peter’ who said this was “*his*

gloss (the only one available) which comes from a root word *yarnkandi* and uses neither of *n* nor *ng* but a retroflex *m* (a sound not used in German or English).<sup>59</sup>

These subtleties never passed into colonial currency, of course. In the early colony, especially after the arrival of Captain Frome as the new Surveyor-General in September 1839, the standard spelling ‘Yankalilla’ rapidly became entrenched.<sup>60</sup>

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### THE NAME (2): A NGARRINDJERI VERSION, YANGKALYAWANGK:

All of the earliest records before 1843 show that the name as given then was in Kaurna language, because it uses the Kaurna locative suffix *-illa*. This was clearly the culturally accepted name of the place, signifying (among other things) that the ‘proper’ language of that place at that time was Kaurna.

But there was also a Ngarrindjeri-Ramindjeri version of it. In 1843 another German missionary linguist, HAE Meyer at Encounter Bay, published a version in the local Ramindjeri-Ngarrindjeri language: “Yangkallyaw-angk”, and glossed it as “Yangkalilla”.<sup>61</sup> The same form was used by Ngarrindjeri-speaking people through the 19<sup>th</sup> century and into the 20<sup>th</sup>. In 1928 a settler

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*district*”. Like Light, Finnis would have meant primarily Lady Bay (BT Finnis MS 1892, ‘Some Early Recollections’, transcribed by G Dooley, Flinders University Library: 5-6).

<sup>59</sup> Teichelmann and Schürmann had trouble distinguishing the various forms of ‘n’ in Kaurna. We cannot conclude anything from “Jank” in Schürmann’s diary; because (1) German pronunciation of this syllable could vary between *yangk* (as in ‘yank all’) and *yank* (as in ‘yarn cull’); and (2) Schürmann’s diary also has “Nganki” four times for the common word *ngangki* (about which they became quite sure that the second consonant is *ng*). The balance of the four records of the name in T&S 1840 (three times *Yangk*, once *Yank*) probably means that they had eventually decided it was *Yangk*. But even so, this conclusion was probably a mistake – because there is no credible etymology using *yangk* or *yank*, only from the verb *yarnkandi*. They gave similar variations in *mankondi* / *marnkondi*. But in this arena of place-names nothing is completely certain (Rob Amery p.c. email 6/12/14).

<sup>60</sup> At this period the standard English pronunciation could still be spelled with or without a final ‘h’, and with variable numbers of ‘l’s. See e.g. Plan 6/15 (GNU); maps C 218, C 381 (SLSA); map Arrowsmith 1843, ‘SA shewing the division into counties’, *BPP Australia* 7: 362; Angas 1844, ‘The Gorge at Yankalillah’, AGSA 0.626; Angas 1847, ‘Rapid Bay with an encampment of Yankalillah blacks’, *SA Illustrated*, Plate 39.

<sup>61</sup> Here Meyer’s gloss ‘Yangkalilla’ was probably intended to represent the colonial pronunciation of the standard spelling ‘Yankalilla’, rather than a Kaurna pronunciation. In those years of fluid spelling, the German linguists sometimes represented the English pronunciation phonetically rather than according to usage; cp. “*Ngangkiparri – the Ladies river, which the English call Angkaparingga*”: = the contemporary English pronunciation ‘Unkaparinga’ (Teichelmann MS dictionary 1857; see PNS 4.02/04 Ngangkiparingga).

remembered being given it by Ramindjeri informants in 1872; he spelled it “Yang Kal-Ya-Wong”.<sup>62</sup> In the 1930s, Karlowan gave the same form *Yangkalyawang* to Berndt, and added an etymology,<sup>63</sup> while Milerum gave Tindale a “considered pronunciation” for it, “Jankalja`wa:ŋk”,<sup>64</sup> but said nothing else about it that we know of.<sup>65</sup>

Significantly, this Ngarrindjeri version has the same complete root word as the Kurna version, *Yangkalya*, not adapting it in any obvious way to fit the Ngarrindjeri sound-system. The fact is obscured by the recorded ‘w’. This adds no analysable morpheme and is probably unnecessary; it represents a pronunciation which probably originated from *Yangkallya-angk*:<sup>66</sup> a straightforward use of the Kurna root word *Yangkalya*, untranslated and unadapted, with the Ngarrindjeri locative *-angk* substituted for Kurna *-illa*.

<sup>62</sup> Letter by ‘White Fellow’, *Register* Saturday 3 March 1928: 16f.

<sup>63</sup> “The place *Yangkalyawang*. This was the Ramindjeri name for *Yankalilla*” (Berndt & Berndt 1993: 311). For the gloss see below. This record probably arose from Karlowan’s own knowledge independently of Meyer’s ‘Yangkallyaw-angk’, since the Berndts do not mention Meyer’s version anywhere in their book and may not have known his list of place-names (Meyer 1843: 49-50).

<sup>64</sup> Tindale, Kurna place-name cards 488/2 ‘Jankalyawa:ŋk’ and 489 ‘Jaŋkaljila’. In these two late cards the first syllable of the Ngarrindjeri version uses ‘nk’; but he has ‘ngk’ in other records, suggesting that ‘nk’ was merely a transcription error: cp. Tindale 1941: 242; and “*Jaŋkalja`waŋk*” [= ‘Yangkalyawang’] on Tindale annotated map Hundred of Yankalilla, AA 338/24/101. In his map annotations Tindale refers several times to Meyer’s list of place-names, and we might suspect that here he prompted Milerum by referring to it. But the name is marked opposite Second Valley, with an arrow added later to refer to Yankalilla town. This initial uncertainty supports the likelihood that it was field information.

<sup>65</sup> Tindale’s Ramindjeri informant Reuben Walker referred to Yankalilla as “*Jelkajawal*”, = *Yelkalyawal* (Tindale ‘Notes from Reuben Walker 21-24 April and July 1934’, SE of SA journal 2, AA 338/1/33/2: 153).

Neither Tindale nor Berndt seriously considered exactly *where* the name belonged. At first Tindale related the name only to Yankalilla town, whether in Ngarrindjeri or Kurna (maps AA 338/24/101 and 24/121; place-name cards 484/1 ‘Jaŋkalja’, 488/2 ‘Jaŋkalja`waŋk’); until his ‘Summary’ map on which “*Jaŋkaljawan*” (sic, with no final ‘k’) is first applied to the mouth of Bungala River and then corrected to the mouth of River Yankalilla (AA 338/16/8).

<sup>66</sup> My spelling. 1. The double ‘ll’ in Yangkallyawang has no new significance.

2. In writing “Yankallyaw-”, Meyer was not an Englishman who would rhyme it with ‘bally awful’. He was a German linguist for whom sequences like *alya* (as in ‘stallion’) were familiar in his and his colleagues’ work. The sequence ‘aw’ did *not* mean the sound in English ‘paw’.

3. The sound *w* has no apparent morphological significance in Ngarrindjeri. It probably arose as a physical convenience when adopting a word from Kurna language, to ease the pronunciation of the two consecutive *a*-vowels in the sequence *alya-angk*. It could even have been imagined by the foreign hearers (i.e. a ‘liminal’ consonant). If either of these is true, then ‘Yangkalyawang’ essentially represents *Yangkallya-angk*.

The inclusion of the root's final *a* is linguistically unnecessary,<sup>67</sup> and suggests two things: that this root *Yangkalya* was used alone, as well as with the locative; and that the usage was familiar to Encounter Bay people.<sup>68</sup>

At this location it is not surprising that these two extremely different languages should use an identical root word. In spite of the language barrier, the traffic between the southern Gulf coast and Encounter Bay was busy. Many of the inhabitants of one had relatives by marriage at the other, and often visited them. Yankalilla was the site most frequently visited by far, and its name would have been in constant use in both places.<sup>69</sup>

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**THE NAME (3): MEANINGS AND ETYMOLOGIES (if any) IN TWO LANGUAGES:**

*Yangkalya* / *Yankalya* may have no lexical meaning; it may be just a name, like 'Rome'.

The historical evidence for a form ending in *-illa* heavily favours a Kurna language provenance for the root word. So does its final vowel *a*, which is much less common in Ngarrindjeri.

But our evaluation is complicated by the fact that the word has a fairly credible etymology in both Kurna and Ngarrindjeri, involving verbs which are probably related in both form and meaning ('cognate'). This case is probably unique among the known place-names of the region.

We have a root in three syllables, *Yangkalya* / *Yankalya*. To this a Locative suffix ('at') can be added in either language: *-illa* in Kurna or *-angk* in Ngarrindjeri, and it seems that this was usually included.

<sup>67</sup> Another natural Ngarrindjeri version would have elided the third *a* to give *Yangkaly'-angk*. This would have been more typical of other adapted place-names on record; cp. 'Patawily'-angk' from Kurna *Patawilya-ngga* (see PNS 2/18); 'Witawat-angk' from *Witawarti-ngga* (see PNS 2/21), and 'Tar-angk' from *Tara-ngga* (see PNS 4.03.01/02 Tarrangga, 4.03.01/09 Tarangk). *Yangkalyawang*, *Yangkalya-angk* and *Yangkaly'angk* all have the same general meaning as Kurna *Yangkaly'illa*: i.e. 'at *Yangkalya*'. Kurna speakers too may sometimes have used the full root with the Locative: Teichelmann and Schürmann puzzlingly record the name as "*Yankalya-illa*" (1840, 2:76).

<sup>68</sup> Like all place-names using *-illa*, *Yangkaly'illa* omits the final vowel of the root. Ramindjeri-Ngarrindjeri speakers could not have known the final vowel of *Yangkalya* from hearing only the full Kurna version; they must also have heard the unadorned root. Nor would they be likely to deduce it by themselves, since a final *a* is rare in their language.

<sup>69</sup> See e.g. Schürmann's diary 26 July 1839; Angas watercolour 1844, 'Encounter Bay Women (Lubras) roasting Trochus, Yankalilla, 19 March 1844' (National Library of Australia).



## KAURNA ETYMOLOGY AND POSSIBLE MEANINGS:

In Kaurna there is no known word *yangkalya* / *yankalya*; so we need two words.

The only known word from which the first morpheme might be derived<sup>70</sup> has for its second consonant the unfamiliar retroflex *m*.<sup>71</sup> The historical records do not support this spelling of the name, but it would have been easy for the German linguists to mistake the *m* for either *n* or *ng*. This word, the verb *yarnkandi*, has been suggested before by Amery. It can take the suffix *-alya* (for Continuous Action) to produce *yarnk'-alya*, a three-syllable participle, which in turn would take the locative *-illa* to produce *Yarnk'-aly'-illa*.<sup>72</sup>

*Yarnkandi* can mean 'to hang down, depend on (someone), join onto, impart, infect'.<sup>73</sup> In this etymology *Yarnk'-aly'-illa* would mean 'the place where [it or he or they] kept on hanging down or joining or imparting or infecting'.

<sup>70</sup> A few other options might appear to work for the root, but none of them hold up under close analysis.

For instance *yarna* 'bald, naked' + *kalya* 'small, active' might be abridged to *yarn'kalya* 'small bald (thing)'. Cp. *Yarna-kauwingga* 'bald water place' > *Yarn'-auwingga*, an attested place-name at Wirrina a few km south of Yankalilla (see PNS 5.02.02/04). *Yarna* has topographical relevance to both names, since there are bald hills around both Yankalilla and Wirrina, and Ivaritji applied *Yarna* as a generic place-name in its own right, possibly in many places from Adelaide to Rapid Bay (Tindale Kaurna place-name cards 496 `Jørna and 499 `Jernauro; see my PNS 1/01 Yarna). But there is no obvious relevance for *kalya*.

Unfortunately the etymology *Yarn[a]* + *kalya* does not produce the attested outcome ending with *-illa*. The second and third syllables – whether *alya* or *kalya* – cannot be a noun, because that would change the Locative. The operative root for the Locative would have two syllables (*[k]alya*), not three (*yarnkalya*). The rules for *-ngga* and *-illa* then come into play, and the name would thus have to be *Yarn'-kalyangga* not *Yarn'kal-yilla*. Most of the available words for the Yankalilla root morpheme are nouns or adjectives and so are eliminated by this consideration. Note that the stress pattern here (underlined) would also be different from that of other etymologies. The name at Wirrina also illustrates this difficulty: the same elision of the same word produces the same stress pattern and Locative: *Yarn'-auwingga*, not *Yarn'au-willa* (see PNS 5.02.02/04).

An alternative stress pattern for the Ngarrindjeri version was given by 'White Fellow's Ramindjeri sources in 1872: "*Yang Kal-Ya-Wong, with the accent on the Kal*" (*Register* 3 March 1928: 16f). This might appear to support the likelihood of a Kaurna original *yarn'-kalya* as above. But it must be set against the different stress pattern *Yangkalya-wangk* in Milerum's "*considered pronunciation*" of the same word. Was one more 'right' than the other? This line of argument is tenuous and inconclusive.

<sup>71</sup> i.e. an *r* with the tongue curled back.

<sup>72</sup> See R Amery 2002, 'Weeding Out Spurious Toponyms...', in Hercus et al, *The Land Is a Map*: 172. Amery says "*-alya* or *-lya* is a continuative suffix, cp. *pammalyarnendi* 'to continue, persevere in sawing', in TMs under *pammand*" (p.c. 21/1/2015).

<sup>73</sup> Cp. *yarnka-yarnkanya* 'hanging, sulky, contagious'.



We have no primary records which tell us what this could refer to in culture and story.<sup>74</sup> But it might perhaps refer to the local topography. The protruding and overhanging outcrops of dipping rock strata are a dramatic and characteristic feature of the seaward scarp of Yankalilla Hill above Main South Road.<sup>75</sup> At both approaches to the Little Gorge – from Lady Bay and at the inland end of Little Gorge itself – these ‘hanging’ rocks have inspired yellow road signs which warn of rock falls. Many fallen boulders from these strata can be seen below on the roadside and beach. *Yarnk’aly’illa* could be Yankalilla Hill, the ‘place where [they] keep on overhanging’. This would be a dangerous fact worth enshrining in a place-name.

Despite this interpretation which *implies* ‘falling’, we should note that the verb does not seem to *mean* ‘falling down’ or ‘falling apart’.<sup>76</sup> This point will become relevant in my consideration of Tjilbruki below.

#### NGARRINDJERI ETYMOLOGY AND POSSIBLE MEANINGS:

In Ngarrindjeri also there is no known single word *yangkalya*, and we need two words.

Karlowan gave a Ngarrindjeri gloss which is relatively believable because it accounts for every morpheme in the word while rightly ignoring the superfluous ‘w’. This is unusual for him when interpreting place-names on Kurna land,<sup>77</sup> but it seems to be the only barely-conceivable Ngarrindjeri gloss. His interviewer RM Berndt wrote:

*Yangkalyawangk... was the Ramindjeri name for Yankalilla, from yangka, meaning ‘becoming weary and stretching oneself at full length on the ground now and again to rest’ and alya or alджи meaning ‘here’.*<sup>78</sup>

<sup>74</sup> See later in this essay for a consideration whether this name is connected with the Tjilbruki story.

<sup>75</sup> An old 1871 engraving shows these strata at the inland turn into Little Gorge, jutting out even more dramatically than they do today (*Illustrated Australian News for Home Readers*, Melbourne, 10/5/1871: 97). Thanks to Des Gubbin for this reference. I do not know of another such feature anywhere else in the district.

<sup>76</sup> In his account Amery appears to import into this verb the extra meaning ‘falling [down or apart]’, which is unrecorded except as a speculation of Tindale’s on the *Ngarrindjeri* verb “jankalan” (see below in this essay). But in Kurna ‘fall down’ is *wornendi*, and ‘fall apart’ is *birki wornendi*.

<sup>77</sup> See e.g. his impossible folk etymology of Tortachilla (in PNS 4.03.02/04 Tartatyilla).

<sup>78</sup> Berndt & Berndt 1993: 311.



Is this a genuine etymology, suggesting a Ngarrindjeri origin for *Yangkalya*? Or is it merely a folk etymology for the Ngarrindjeri adaptation of a Kurna word?<sup>79</sup>

Karlowan was probably referring to Ngarrindjeri *yangkulun* or *yankulun*, ‘to fall off, be loose’, and/or *yangkundun* or *yankundun*, ‘to throw off or loosen [something]’,<sup>80</sup> and to *alya* or *aldji*, variants of the adverb ‘here’ which is found as *kalyan* in Meyer and *alye* in Taplin.<sup>81</sup> We might wonder whether *alya* (*alye*?) is redundant in a genuine place-name, especially when accompanied by the Locative which has a very similar meaning (‘at’).

The strict etymology of the Ngarrindjeri root *yangk-alya* might then be a short phrase, ‘here [he, they, it] fall off, or become loose, or loosen something’. Karlowan interprets the phrase as ‘[he, they] lie down and stretch out here’, with other details which are semantically irrelevant. The complicated gloss of ‘yangka’ (*yangkulun*?) is possible only if it is a metaphor, or another usage unrecorded.<sup>82</sup> It is not very convincing.

Strangely, a *non*-metaphorical Ngarrindjeri reading – ‘the place where [they] come loose or fall off here’ – would harmonize easily with my topographical interpretation of the cognate Kurna form *Yarnkalyilla*, ‘the place where [they] keep on overhanging’. Perhaps the Ramindjeri interpreted the name in this sense. But Karlowan, a Yaraldi man, has a *metaphorical* interpretation which is incompatible with this.

Perhaps his gloss is conceivable if the phrase is a quotation from a story: ‘go(ing) loose here’, or the like, with unstated narrative connotations. Perhaps something of this kind might be part of the explanation of both *Yarnk’aly’illa* and *Yangk’alyawangk*.<sup>83</sup> But if so, we are quite uncertain about the phrase and do not know what the story is.

<sup>79</sup> Strictly speaking, Karlowan was a Yaraldi (Lakes) man interpreting a name which (he admitted) was in the neighbouring dialect Ramindjeri (Encounter Bay), for a place which had been owned by Kurna speakers in previous generations. He was not working here within his mother-tongue dialect.

<sup>80</sup> It is likely that these verbs are related to Kurna *yarnkandi*; their forms and recorded meanings are related though not identical. Different language groups who are often in contact, as Yankalilla and Encounter Bay were, are especially likely to share vocabulary in this way.

<sup>81</sup> We note that only one of these Ngarrindjeri variants of *alye* has *a* after the *ly*; most have the typical Ngarrindjeri final *i*. Was Karlowan stretching a point in citing ‘alya’ as a variant of *aldji*? If so, this would support the likelihood that he was building a folk etymology, rather than interpreting a name in his mother tongue.

<sup>82</sup> In Ngarrindjeri records ‘become weary’ was *lameliwalun* or *nguldumulun* and ‘lie down’ was *yupun*.

<sup>83</sup> Both Amery’s and Karlowan’s etymologies might put the name in a category of which Hercus and Simpson write: place-names which consist of whole short phrases or ‘headless relative clauses’ referring to a traditional story – e.g. ‘digging with his foot’; ‘he blocked the track’; ‘(where) the Snakes stood up’; ‘(where) his waterbag fell down’ (Hercus, Hodges & Simpson 2002, *The Land is a Map*, Pandanus Books: 20-1).

A much simpler explanation would be that Karlowan was giving another rather forced folk etymology for a word adopted from Kaurna. Perhaps he was less familiar than the previous locals with the perils of Yankalilla Hill, and sought a different explanation.

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#### THE NAME (4): CONCLUSIONS:

We know some places which had a Kaurna name and a quite different Ngarrindjeri name: for example Rapid Bay is *Yarta-kulangga* in Kaurna, *Ngutarangk* in Ngarrindjeri. But in those early years this Kaurna place-name is unique in having a closely matching Ngarrindjeri name with a conceivable Ngarrindjeri etymology. Accordingly we might wonder: is there a case that *Yangkalyawang* was the original – the proper name in the proper language for Yankalilla – and *Yarnkalyilla* the foreign adaptation?

When we consider the historical process by which the Kaurna version was recorded (see above), *Yangkalyawang* has no credible claim to this status. Almost all the neighbouring place-names obtained at first contact are clearly in Kaurna language.<sup>84</sup> There are *no* records in which Aborigines living in Yankalilla used the Ramindjeri version *Yangkalyawang*. Meyer could not have obtained this version until after he arrived in October 1840. By that time the Kaurna version using *-illa* had been obtained from Aboriginal people on the other side of the range on at least seven or eight independent occasions, including several on the land at Yankalilla itself or Rapid Bay. Karlowan's derivation is questionable in its linguistics, and was recorded long after the Kaurna speakers had died or been deported and Ngarrindjeri speakers had taken over the land and culture at Yankalilla. On the evidence above, the original name was *Yarnkalyilla*, and the people who bestowed the name and told it to Europeans in the 1830s were Kaurna speakers.<sup>85</sup>

The only really credible etymology available is Kaurna *yarnkandi* + *alya* + *illa*, though this cannot be regarded as completely certain. Some place-names have no dictionary meaning, and *Yangkalyilla* (meaning unknown) remains a possibility.

*Yarnkandi* could *perhaps* imply continuous 'overhanging'. This could *perhaps* refer to the unstable rock outcrops observable at Yankalilla Hill.

While it might be tempting to connect these possibilities with Tjilbruki and Kulultuwi as Tindale did

<sup>84</sup> Within 10 km of Lady Bay we have at least 14 early-recorded place-names which are clearly Kaurna, and in the same period only one Ngarrindjeri and one uncertain. My evidence for this has begun to appear on the website [kaurnaplacenames.com](http://kaurnaplacenames.com).

<sup>85</sup> This point may seem redundant in view of current standard opinion; but it needs to be re-stated because there have been recent controversial assertions by the Ramindjeri Heritage Association that the language and ownership of the western Fleurieu was Ramindjeri. See my *Feet On the Fleurieu, Language On the Land* (forthcoming), which traces the history of Kaurna language records on the Fleurieu, and also the close ties between Yankalilla and the Ramindjeri speakers of Encounter Bay.

(see Postscript below), there seem to be no records of old knowledge to authorize this.

But we do know that it was an important and well-used “favourite camping place”, a junction of trade, travel and relationships across the range, blessed with water, shelter, fish and plentiful game nearby. And like Governor Hindmarsh we can continue to rejoice in “one of the sweetest sounding names I ever heard”.

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### POSTSCRIPT: CULTURAL ASSOCIATIONS: TJILBRUKI AT YANKALILLA?

We do not know the story (if any) behind *Yarnkalyilla*. But to speak of Aboriginal story today in this region is to speak of the ancestral hero Tjilbruki. Tindale left two late records which assert that Yankalilla featured in Tjilbruki’s story. Both items are almost certainly spurious.

#### THE ANNOTATED MAP:

An entry on one of Tindale’s annotated maps reads:

*‘Jangkaljawangk – place where Tjirbuki shed tears; the river with its slightly bitter water is composed of his tears. He wept here for his dead sister’s son.*

This note did not accompany his old record of ‘Jangkaljawangk’; it was added to a *photocopy* of his old annotated map of Yankalilla. It must have been written no earlier than the mid-1960s when photocopying became available, and more likely in the 1980s when he was working on his Place-names Gazetteer project and the Tjilbruki story.<sup>86</sup>

It presents an episode which is completely new to the published literature: “Tjirbuki”<sup>87</sup> weeps at Yankalilla, and his tears add salt to a river rather than create a coastal spring of fresh water. There is no other record of this (as far as I know) even in Tindale’s own archives. Unless something turns up (e.g. in his Milerum manuscripts, which I have not seen), we may say that it was probably Tindale’s own idea. He jotted it down on this map but later discarded it, for it does not appear in his published essay on ‘Tjirbuki’<sup>88</sup> in 1987.

<sup>86</sup> Tindale annotated map Hundred of Yankalilla, AA 338/24/102; its base map is a photocopy of AA 338/24/101.

<sup>87</sup> ‘Tjirbuki’ is the spelling favoured elsewhere by Karlowan.

<sup>88</sup> Tindale’s own spelling, a hybrid of spellings from Karlowan and Milerum.

## THE COMMUNICATION TO GEOFFREY MANNING:

The second record about Yankalilla made its first appearance when Geoffrey Manning published his first book on SA place-names in 1986, the year in which Tindale completed the typescript of his big Tjirbruki essay. Manning included the following paragraph about Yankalilla:

*Professor N.B. Tindale says ‘it is derived from the Aboriginal word jankalan, meaning ‘falling’, from an incident in the myth of Tjilbruke, whose sister’s [sic]<sup>89</sup> mummified body began to fall into pieces here, as he was carrying it from Brighton to Cape Jervis for burial’.<sup>90</sup>*

Considered in isolation, this etymology from “jankalan” (= *yankalan*) ‘falling’, and the interpretation based on it, sound plausible. There is certainly a Ngarrindjeri verb *yankulun* or *yangkulun* (see above),<sup>91</sup> which means something not too distant from ‘fall into pieces’.<sup>92</sup> But Tindale’s use of it, as though it were a Kaurna word to which we may add the Kaurna suffix *-illa*, makes no linguistic sense.<sup>93</sup>

Manning seems to be quoting a personal communication from Tindale. It is the only primary record

<sup>89</sup> It was his sister’s son’s body which he was carrying. Presumably Manning knew this from other Tindale sources and inserted the ‘sic’ to highlight the error. Clearly Tindale had written this sentence in a careless hurry.

<sup>90</sup> GH Manning 1986, *The Romance of Place Names*, Adelaide, The Author: 237. This paragraph has continued to appear in every subsequent edition of Manning’s work.

<sup>91</sup> Manning’s spelling includes Tindale’s usual ‘j’ for y. The second and third vowels ‘a’ (unrecorded elsewhere) may have arisen if he misread a hand-written ‘u’ by Tindale. The spelling *yankulun* comes from Taplin; Meyer spells it *yangkulun*.

<sup>92</sup> In Ngarrindjeri records ‘fall down’ in the normal sense is *pingkun*, and ‘fall apart’ in some other sense is *lulun*.

<sup>93</sup> See also Amery 2002, ‘Weeding Out Spurious Toponyms’, in Hercus, Hodges & Simpson 2002, *The Land is a Map*, Pandanus Books: 170-2. Unfortunately this kind of confusion is not unique in Tindale’s work even on the name ‘Yankalilla’ alone.

Several of his late place-name cards record another of his transient ideas: that ‘Yankalilla’ is derived from a word for ‘hill’. In this *“latter day contention”* he begins with the Ngarrindjeri word *yangaiāke* ‘hill’ from Meyer. Perhaps he was also inspired by seeing ‘Yankalilla’ trig point on his map at Yankalilla Hill (‘Summary’ map AA 338/16/8). But on the strength of this he cites ‘hill’ as the meaning of the quite different Kaurna word *yangkalya* (often misrepresenting it without the second y, as “jangkala” or “jankala”), and then applies this implausible etymology indiscriminately to both Ngarrindjeri *Yangkalyawangk* and Kaurna *Yangkaly’illa* (Tindale Kaurna vocabulary cards ‘jaŋkala’ and ‘Jaŋkalja’ in AA 338/7/1/12; place-name cards 488/2 ‘Jankaljawaŋk’ and 489 ‘Jaŋkalji:l:a’; cp. Manning 2006: 473). There is no known single Kaurna word *yangkala* or *yangkalya*; and ‘hill’ is *mukurta*, *karnu* or *yartamalyu*.

Amery gives Tindale the benefit of the doubt by assuming that this ‘hill’ etymology was *“undoubtedly believed to be so by Tindale’s Ngarrindjeri informants, such as Milerum”* (Amery 2002: 172); but I think it is very unlikely that any of them told him either the ‘hill’ or the ‘falling’ story.

of a derivation in this form,<sup>94</sup> and of this second new episode in the Tjilbruki story when Kulultuwi's corpse 'began to fall into pieces'. But no other known source refers to this happening at Yankalilla or anywhere else.

Like the Yankalilla River tears, this etymology and this incident also seem to have been speculations by Tindale himself. Once more (and rightly) he did not include them in his published essay.

Perhaps they were all false memories,<sup>95</sup> at a time when his mind was buzzing with Tjilbruki and place-names.

#### ASSESSMENT:

None of these 'hidden' episodes and etymologies has any known support from his Aboriginal informants. All these connections between Yankalilla, the tears and the corpse seem to be inventions by Tindale.

Karlowan was the man who told both Tindale and Berndt about Tjirbuki's tears creating the springs as he journeyed down the coast. Had he known either of these alleged events at Yankalilla, surely he would have referred to them when giving his related but incompatible etymology of *Yangkalyawangk* to Berndt,<sup>96</sup> and when telling the story to both Berndt and Tindale.

Milerum's case is slightly different but equally unsupportive of the Yankalilla stories. In his original tale as noted hastily by Tindale in 1934 there is a puzzling sentence (never quoted publicly by Tindale) in which 'Tjelbruke', carrying the body, "came down almost to Normanville near Second Valley".<sup>97</sup> But nothing about a disintegrating body, nor brackish water, nor tears, nor the Bungala or Yankalilla Rivers.

In the four primary versions of the Tjilbruki story,<sup>98</sup> we find that Yankalilla is not even mentioned by any of Tindale's informants; only by Unaipon's, and even there only in passing, not in the context of

<sup>94</sup> The 'jankalan' etymology occurs nowhere else in Tindale's published or unpublished literature, as far as I know.

<sup>95</sup> By the 1980s, almost fifty very busy years of wide-ranging activity had passed since Tindale's informants originally gave him the snippets of information on which he was now building.

<sup>96</sup> It is not credible that his etymology would use a completely unrelated meaning for the root verb, 'lie down wearily', if at another time he believed it meant 'fall to pieces'.

<sup>97</sup> Tindale SE of SA journal Vol.2: 49, 50.

<sup>98</sup> I know of only three primary informants and four primary records for the Tjilbruki story: Unaipon uncredited in 'Chirr-bookie, the Blue Crane' (W Ramsay Smith 1930, *Myths & Legends of the Australian Aborigines*. George Harrap, London: 331-341); Karlowan in Tindale 1936 ('Story of [Tji:rbuki], a legend of the people of Rapid Bay', Tindale & Mountford 1936,

any tears or water source.<sup>99</sup> Certainly Tjilbruki must have walked through the core site at Lady Bay in order to travel from Carrickalinga to the little spring near the Congeratinga River, three or four km past the Big Gorge mouth.<sup>100</sup> But his story as recorded does not map this campsite, nor the permanent spring in the Big Gorge, nor the small spring at the top of Little Gorge.<sup>101</sup> Perhaps this was because they were all the wrong kind of spring, or not on the beach.

Tindale usually noted his speculations (however transient) in his card files. His records often fail to make clear distinctions between his own interpretations and original statements by his informants or sources. Apparently he relied on his own secondary records instead of referring frequently to the sources. As a result his theories tended to become 'facts'.<sup>102</sup> His 1987 essay on Tjilbruki contains many more examples of this.

Yet after all this necessary questioning of the sources, the possibility still remains that a story about Tjilbruki at Yankalilla may have been told, and that oral history may have preserved it outside the traditions Milerum and Karlowan. Elder Georgina Yambo Williams had this to say in 2002:

*As a Kurna person , I have grown up with oral traditions and understandings about places and their significance that do not necessarily appear in the historical record. As a child, I was in the presence of old people and my grandfather who shared the stories of the spirit beings. As a younger woman I travelled over the country with my dad to places on the Adelaide Plains and surrounding hills. He explained these things to me as he remembered stories which had been passed on to him.*

*The placenames that have survived in an Anglicised form are part of the story, law and lore of the land for nations and places in which they are situated. These placenames are the 'skeletal remains' of the historical surviving reality of Kaurna First Nation peoples, once a peaceful and intact body of lore/law of the land.*

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'Results of the Excavation of Kongarati Cave', *Records of SA Museum* Vol. 5 (4) :500-1); Karlowan in Berndt ('Becoming Ngatji: Blue Crane', Berndt & Berndt 1993, *A World That Was*: 233-4, 445-7); and Milerum 1934 in Tindale's journal ('Story of Tjelbruke of Encounter Bay to Cape Jervis, SE of SA', Tindale SE of SA Journal Vol.2, AA 1/33/2: 44ff). Tindale 1987 draws upon two of these, but is a much-expanded composite account shaped by Tindale himself (Tindale 1987, 'The Wanderings of Tjirbruki': a tale of the Kurna people of Adelaide', *Records of SA Museum* 20: 5-13).

<sup>99</sup> In Unaipon's version 'Yankalilla' is the site of a brief episode in which Chirr-bookie kills a man of the Shag totem who refused him fish (Ramsay Smith 1930: 340). Perhaps this does refer to the coast. In Tindale (from Milerum) the "Joldi" (*Yoldi*) man is far away at the Finnis River (near Milang) in a different incident (Tindale 1987: 8a). In Berndt (from Karlowan) Bald Hills is the home of the Shag totem, *Yaltu* or *Yaltung* (Berndt 1940, 'Aspects of Jaralde Culture', *Oceania* 11(2): 185; cp. Berndt & Berndt 1993: 292, 311, 330-1).

<sup>100</sup> Tindale 1936: 501; Tindale 1987: 9a-b.

<sup>101</sup> This was located at the south-eastern end of Section 80: "Kortu`gang: Camp at spring on Reserve no.4" (Tindale Kurna place-name card 545; cp. Tindale annotated map AA 338/24/101).

<sup>102</sup> For a detailed account of this fraught relationship between Tindale's record-keeping, his conclusions and his publications, see James Knight 2003, *Testing Tindale Tribes*, Ph.D thesis, University of New England, NSW.





*The word Yankalilla, derived from yernkandi,... is part of the law ceremony mortuary ritual and is of immense importance in reclaiming, through language recovery, the understanding of Kaurna Aboriginal people's rightful place and function in the framework of one's identity with the law of the land, and the spiritual and custodial responsibilities in everyday life. Tjirbruki, carrying the remains of his dead nephew's deteriorating and flaking body, falls to the ground at Yankalilla.*<sup>103</sup>

Was it Tjilbruki himself who fell to the ground, “becoming weary and stretching [him]self at full length”, as Karlowan said of the place-name (without associating it with Tjilbruki)? We should keep on listening.

.....

*End of Summary*

DRAFT 9 Sep 2016

<sup>103</sup> Rob Amery & Georgina Yambo Williams 2002, 'Reclaiming Through Renaming: the reinstatement of kaurna toponyms in Adelaide and the Adelaide Plains', Hercus et al 2002, *The Land Is A Map*, Sydney, Pandanus Books: 267.