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## Place Name SUMMARY (PNS) 4.02/03

Names of Port Noarlunga (3):

**WITJALANGK**

(last edited: 18.5.2021)

See also

- (1) PNS 4.02/05 'Ponkepurringa'
- (2) PNS 4.02/02 Tainbarangk and
- (4) PNS 4.02/01 Pirrangga

### 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*This essay has not been peer-reviewed or culturally endorsed in detail.*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: i.e. Aboriginal researchers who are linking their oral traditions with other up-to-date and best available knowledge, and associated archaeologists, geographers, ecologists, anthropologists and historians.*

*Chester Schultz [10/7/2020].*

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### Abstract

*Witjalangk* is the Ramindjeri name given in 1934 by Reuben Walker for 'Port Noarlunga', according to Tindale's notes from interviews with him and a typescript copied by Mark Wilson from Walker's manuscript.

Walker was then in his 70s, remembering the period between the 1860s and perhaps the 1890s. He had lived among the "Ramingeri" most of his life, and believed that they "had been a powerful tribe", having a large territory with "a sea front from Port Noarlunga to the Murray Mouth", including the whole of Fleurieu Peninsula, and inland to Clarendon. He also believed that "Wicharlung" (*Witjalangk*) marked a border between Ramindjeri hunting lands and their *tawuli*, i.e. adjacent hunting lands belonging to a different clan but allowing special mutual permissions to travel and hunt; and that these *tawuli* lands extended north to 'Brighton'.<sup>1</sup>

This view of territory conflicts with those of some of his contemporaries, with historical evidence from first contact times, and with the views of Tindale, who ignored and suppressed most of Walker's information. But a few old records do include hints of some kind of social border between Adelaide and the southern region, including one at the Onkaparinga River. Berndt's construction of material from Albert Karlowan seems to include a border in the vicinity of Port Noarlunga, Karlowan's 'Tainbarang', a name which was known to Encounter Bay people in 1843.<sup>2</sup>

The arrangements understood by Walker and others in their late 19<sup>th</sup>-century years may *perhaps* imply something about an analogous earlier situation at first contact, when the territories from far north of Brighton to far south of Port Noarlunga were all part of Kaurna Language Country, and communication between groups north and south of Port Noarlunga was much less frequent than it became later. More work needs to be done to elucidate Tindale's notes from Walker which are sometimes ambiguous or confusing, to compare these with other material, and approach a synthesis which takes into account all the available stories and recognizes historical change.

<sup>1</sup> I will examine this 'Brighton border' in more detail in PNS 2/23 Tulukudangk.

<sup>2</sup> RM Berndt, CH Berndt & John Stanton 1993, *A World That Was*; see PNS 4.2.02 Tainbarangk.



In his unpublished papers Tindale mapped Walker's place-name correctly at Port Noarlunga, spelling it both "*Witjarlarj*" (correct) and "*Witjarluj*" (incorrect).

When preparing material for his long account of 'Tjirbruki', he inexplicably recast "*Witjarlung*" as a Kurna 'clan', whose alleged territory extended north to Brighton, south to Carrickalinga, and inland to Clarendon; Port Noarlunga is not mentioned. But there is no primary evidence anywhere for the existence of such a clan, whether Kurna or Ramindjeri, nor any other clan of such large size; and no explanation anywhere of why a Kurna clan would have a Ramindjeri name. This hypothetical 'clan' is either Tindale misreading his own notes, or simply an extra piece of interesting fiction which he invented for his own 1987 version of the 'Tjirbruki' story.

<i>Coordinates</i>	Lat. -35.150494°, Long. 138.474005° [nominal centre of area near Port Noarlunga campsites]
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### Language Information

<i>Meaning</i>	Unknown
<i>Etymology</i>	<i>witja/V</i> [meaning unknown] + <i>angk</i> 'at, place of'
<i>Notes</i>	The Locative <i>angk</i> replaces the final vowel of the root noun, which is unknown (represented by the capital V) because there is no known vocabulary or grammar (either Ngarrindjeri or Kurna) to explain <i>witja-</i> . Place-names do not always have a dictionary meaning.
<i>Language Family</i>	Yaraldic: 'Ramindjeri-Ngarrindjeri'
<i>KWP Former Spelling</i>	Witjalangg
<i>KWP New Spelling 2010</i>	Witjalangk
<i>Phonemic Spelling</i>	/witjalangk/
<i>Syllabification</i>	"Witjalangk":
<i>Pronunciation tips</i>	Stress the first syllable only. Every a as in Maori 'haka'.

### Main source evidence

<i>Date</i>	[1925] / 1930
<i>Original source text</i>	"Then the brothers [ <i>Eurowie and Pithowie, brothers of Koolatowie, nephews of 'Chirrbookie' = Tjirbukij</i> ] thought of another plan; they suggested that as certain animals and birds were becoming scarce it would be well to station men <b>at the boundary of their country</b> , in order to prevent these creatures from departing and wandering away into the land of another tribe... That afternoon they... caught an emu... Late in the evening they took it <b>beyond the boundary to Horseshoe-Bend, just across the river [<i>Onkaparinga</i>]</b> , and let it loose. They waited till they saw it recover itself and set off toward



	<p>Aldinga... [N]ext morning... they were at the Onkaparinga river. <b>At Horseshoe Bend</b> they... cooked their breakfast... ready to do battle <b>should they be challenged for trespassing. They followed the track of the emu...</b></p> <p><i>[Later, the two brothers are speaking to Koolatowie after he has killed the emu] "... It was many moons since they had eaten emu-flesh. Koolatowie said, 'O my two brothers, did you not send a messenger to Uncle some two moons back saying that if he would like an emu you would send him one? Is that so, or am I mistaken?' Then Pithowie answered, 'Perhaps the messenger made a mistake. If emus were plentiful <b>do you think we should dare to come over the boundary-line</b> hunting one?'..."</i></p>
Reference	'Chirr-bookie, the blue crane', in William Ramsay Smith 1930, <i>Myths and Legends of the Australian Aboriginals</i> , London, George G Harrap: 333-4, 337.
Informants credited	
Informants uncredited	David Unaipon (collector and author) MS c.1925; informant unknown.

Date	13 Feb 1934
Original source text	<b>"Rapid Bay to Brighton = RaminZeri tribe of C.L.'s time.</b> Comment: Later. The Ramindjeri had established a route to Adelaide to get their annual supply of Govt. blankets, in days before C.L.'s time."
Reference	Tindale, 'Notes on Tribes' from Milerum (Clarence Long) at Bosun Point on the Coorong, 'SE of SA' journal Vol.2, AA 338/1/33/2: 41.
Informants credited	Milerum (Clarence Long)
Informants uncredited	

Date	18 Feb 1934 [with later edits]
Original source text	<p>"Ramin. Kangarilla McLaren Vale to <b>Horseshoe, to Rapid &amp; Encounter Bay</b> Nangkita and Blackfellows Creek into Finniss as far as Milang... <b>In Reuben's eyes Kurna are also Ramindjeri.</b> He belonged to Rapid Bay side...</p> <p><b>Wituwatuŋ = Brighton</b>                      all spoken <b>were the RaminZeri</b>                      `kerli = `kali    dog Ram. dog Adel."</p>
Reference	Tindale 'SE of SA' journals Vol.2, AA 338/1/33/2: 87-88.
Informants credited	Pulpumini (Reuben Walker)
Informants uncredited	

Date	22 April 1934
Original source text	<p>“... Reuben Walker, the ¼ Rapid Bay man who had been reared among the Lewurindjeri clan who lived with the Ramindjeri at Encounter Bay. Reuben was born about 1859 or 1860.                  22.4.1934... Reuben Walker                  pulpumini = outcast i.e. RW                  Born 1859-60 of [?at] Rump<sup>3</sup>                  reared by LewurinZeri                  some married into <b>RaminZeri</b></p> <p><i>Contradicted by other data re clans &amp; hordes NBT</i> } <b>area Wituwataj to Brighton</b> } all one tribe                  } <b>Clarendon to Murray Mouth</b> } no clans</p>
Reference	Tindale ‘SE of SA’ journals Vol.2, AA 338/1/33/2: 149.
Informants credited	Pulpumini (Reuben Walker)
Informants uncredited	

Date	22 April 1934
Original source text	<p>“People from Noarlunga  <b>the natives from Pt Willunga</b> Noarlunga Horseshoe = Witjarlun <b>to Brighton</b>  <b>were the `tawuli of the real RaminZeri who came from the Rapid Bay to Goolwa.</b> The LewurinZeri were not RaminZeri but some lived among them in later days...”  <i>[margin:] ‘this contradicted previous statement of [?his] in vocabulary’</i></p>
Reference	Tindale ‘SE of SA’ journals Vol.2, AA 338/1/33/2: 161.
Informants credited	Pulpumini (Reuben Walker)
Informants uncredited	

Date	Aug 1934
Original source text	<p>“Personal story: ... reared among the Lewaringeie... <b>The Ramingeris</b> a tribe that had been a powerful tribe. They had a <b>Large scope of country from Wicharlung (Port Noarlunga) to Encounter Bay and the Muray [sic] Mouth...</b> They had a sea front from Port Noarlunga to the Murray Mouth...”</p>
Reference	Typescript by Mark Wilson as dictated by Reuben Walker, in Tindale ‘SE of SA’ journals Vol.2, AA 338/1/33/2: 186.
Informants credited	Pulpumini (Reuben Walker)
Informants uncredited	

<sup>3</sup> Rumply Point on Lake Albert.



Date	n.d. [?1980s]
Original source text	“ <b>Witjarlanj (Reuben Walker 19__ [?1934])</b> [arrow to Port Noarlunga <i>north of mouth, approx. Witton Bluff</i> ]
Reference	Tindale annotated map ‘Tindale S Map / Summary of Kurna area’, AA 338/16/8.
Informants credited	Pulpumini (Reuben Walker)
Informants uncredited	

Date	n.d. [1980s]
Original source text	“ <b>[‘Witjarlung] (R.Walker 2:186)</b> [arrow to coast <i>south of jetty at printed ‘Port Noarlunga’]</i> ”
Reference	Tindale annotated map County Adelaide, ‘Place names from Tindale mss’, AA 338/24/107.
Informants credited	Pulpumini (Reuben Walker)
Informants uncredited	

Date	1986
Original source text	“ <b>Kurna Clans as worked out for the Tjirbruki story ...</b> ✓ <b>Witjarlung</b> Sellicks Hill north to <sup>near</sup> Brighton, and inland to Clarendon S. to Karikalingga; ‘ <b>Witjarlung ✓ ...</b> ”
Reference	Tindale MS 1986, in Kurna place names index cards, SA Museum AA 338/7/1/12; from a photocopy reproduced in James Knight 2003, ‘Testing Tindale Tribes’, Ph.D. thesis, University of New England: 468.
Informants credited	
Informants uncredited	‘Clan’ and its territory introduced by Tindale himself in 1980s, without evidence.

Date	n.d. [1980s]
Original source text	“ <b>ˀnɛjara`tawi</b> Kurna Tr Rapid Bay S.Aust fiddler, Southern (Trygonorhina fasciata). A totem (ˀnaitji of <b>the Witjarlung clan of the Kurna</b> ; in mythology a man speared by the Kurna ancestral being Tji:rbruke for failure to deliver a message to his nephew (sister’s son) Kulutuwi; three other men shared in the spearing. Tindale ms SESA.J 2:49.”
Reference	Tindale Kurna vocabulary cards, AA338/7/1/12.
Informants credited	Milerum (Clarence Long) 1934
Informants uncredited	‘Totem’ and ‘clan’ introduced by Tindale himself in 1980s.



<i>Date</i>	1985-7
<i>Original source text</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- “The help of several informants is acknowledged. In addition to Milerum, Karlowan (Jarildekald tribe) supplied much data, and Reuben Walker spoke for the Ramindjeri and the people of Rapid Bay...</li> <li>- <i>[From camping near Rapid Head]</i> “Tjirbruki... shifted his camp more leisurely, moving through <b>the ruwe of the [Witjarlung] clan which began near [Karika:linga],</b> a name still on the map as Carrickalinga...”</li> <li>- “When this false story reached him at Rapid Bay, Tjirbruki asked several members of <b>the Witjarlung clan</b> living north of his country to give a message of forgiveness to Kulultwi. Although they knew of the death of Kulultwi they, with malice, did not tell him the truth.”</li> <li>- “While there <i>[at Sellicks Beach]</i>, Tjirbruki began to think of further grudges, and as he was passing through <b>the pangkarra of the Witjarlung families</b> it disturbed him that they had failed to pass on his message of forgiveness...”</li> <li>- “He turned inland and climbed over Sellicks Hill. He kept Maitpanga on his left and climbed another high hill (it may have been Mount Jeffcott or Black Hill)... People... were camped at a place called [Warabari]... The men saw that Tjirbruki meant mischief and all took headers into the water and turned into fish... These fish became the <i>ngaitji</i> or totems of members of <b>the Witjarlung clan of the Kurna tribe...</b>”</li> </ul>
<i>Reference</i>	Tindale 1987, ‘The Wanderings of Tjirbruki’, <i>Records of SA Museum</i> 20: 5b, 7a, 7b, 8b, 9a.
<i>Informants credited</i>	Milerum, Karlowan, R Walker
<i>Informants uncredited</i>	‘Clan’ and ‘totems’ introduced by Tindale himself in 1980s.

<i>Date</i>	n.d. [after 1987]
<i>Original source text</i>	<p>“ `Warabari                      Kurna Tr. Rapid Bay S.Aust.  place name not localised but in the area around Mt Jeffcott or Black Hill where the Myponga Reservoir is now. <b>It appears in the Tjirbruki story as a place of the Witjarlung clan about Myponga.</b>  Tindale ms.  Tindale 1987:9”</p>
<i>Reference</i>	Tindale Kurna place-name card [#634/2] in AA338/7/1/12.
<i>Informants credited</i>	
<i>Informants uncredited</i>	Milerum 1934 for ‘Warabari’ (AA338/1/33/2: 48).



Date	[c.1941] / 1993
Original source text	<p>“It is true that clan members did hunt and collect food at some distance from their home camps, had hunting rights in adjacent clan territories, and even had their winter and summer camps... The <i>talwali</i> or <i>talwuli</i> relationship seemed to exemplify the concept of boundary. Two clans were <i>talwalar</i> (their members called each other <i>talwali</i>) when their boundaries ran out into a lake or a stretch of water. It was said that they were ‘joined by water’ (<i>talwali</i>) and that members of the clans concerned, although not possessing <i>ngatji</i> [totem] in common, called each other brother and sister... Two <i>talwali</i>, on meeting, would hold hands, indicating their oneness of interest, as in the expression:</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Morokun thern lambula yamalai-orongan lewul mandin angan talwulutu.</i> Hold hands for their clans to be one, sit down therefore for that talwali... <i>Talwalar</i> people always exchanged food and did not fight.”</p>
Reference	RM Berndt, CH Berndt & J Stanton 1993, <i>A World That Was</i> , Melbourne University Press: 27-8.
Informants credited	Karlowan
Informants uncredited	

### Discussion: WITJALANGK, REUBEN WALKER, TINDALE, AND BORDERS:

In this essay I use the place-name given by Reuben Walker as a springboard into a preliminary discussion of this under-reported informant, his view of Ramindjeri territory, and how this compares with the views of his contemporaries on the same matter.

#### REUBEN WALKER AND WITJALANGK:

On 18<sup>th</sup> February 1934, returning from his long camping trip on the Coorong with Milerum (Clarence Long), Tindale visited Goolwa and met the Ramindjeri man Reuben Walker. Born in 1859,<sup>4</sup> his language name was Pulpumini, which he said means ‘outcast’ or ‘friendless’.<sup>5</sup> He was keen to tell Tindale about his people and their territory:<sup>6</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Tindale “Southeast of SA’ journal Vol.2, AA 338/1/33/2: 186.

<sup>5</sup> *ibid*: 149, 215.

<sup>6</sup> *ibid*: 87.





*Ramin. Kangarilla McLaren Vale to Horseshoe, to Rapid & Encounter Bay Nangkita and Blackfellows Creek into Finniss as far as Milang... In Reuben's eyes Kurna are also Ramindjeri.*<sup>7</sup>

Tindale made another cryptic and seemingly contradictory note:

*Wituwatun = Brighton*

*were the RaminZeri.*<sup>8</sup>

“Wituwatun”, the name given for ‘Brighton’, is certainly a Ramindjeri adaptation from a Kurna place-name recorded at first contact, *Witawattingga* (New Spelling *Witawartingga*). Those two names are the subjects of other essays.<sup>9</sup>

Walker's very large definition of Ramindjeri country is repeated with variations in his other entries below.

On 22<sup>nd</sup> April of the same year Tindale visited Walker in Goolwa again, and recorded another cryptic note:

*RaminZeri – area Wituwatun to Brighton – Clarendon to Murray Mouth – all one tribe – no clans... Every one had wu`ruldi ngaitje right down to Brighton = `Wituwattun.*<sup>10</sup> *All Rapid Bay people were RaminZeri.*<sup>11</sup>

This note is particularly confusing, because if *Wituwatang* is Brighton, then there cannot be a boundary line *from* *Wituwatang* to Brighton.<sup>12</sup>

On the same occasion Tindale recorded another note.<sup>13</sup> He originally wrote,

<sup>7</sup> In this note ‘Kurna’ probably refers to the people of Rapid Bay, McLaren Vale and ‘Horseshoe’ (Old Noarlunga), and it is very likely that Tindale introduced the term to this conversation in response to Walker's assertion that those places were Ramindjeri land. Tindale's notes do not contain anything which looks like an unprompted mention of ‘Kurna’ by Walker.

<sup>8</sup> *ibid*: 88. In ‘RaminZeri’, I use a capital ‘Z’ for Tindale's phonetic symbol, which means a *zh* sound like the ‘z’ in ‘azure’.

<sup>9</sup> *Wita-wartingga* was the Kurna name recorded in 1837 for an area around Seacliff Park: see PNS 2/21 *Witawattingga* (Seacliff Park). In Walker's lifetime ‘Brighton’ was the best-known English place-name nearby; see also PNS 2/22 *Witawattingga* (Brighton).

<sup>10</sup> *wuruldi* = wattle tree; *ngaityi* = totemi. To this sentence Tindale added a marginal note “?misunderstanding here”. It is not clear to me exactly what part of it is misunderstood, and by whom, Walker or Tindale.

<sup>11</sup> *ibid*: 158. Here Tindale uses a phonetic symbol which I have represented by a capital Z; it means the sound of the ‘z’ in ‘azure’.

<sup>12</sup> James Knight has a theory which tries to explain this contradiction, citing a place called *Wituwang* on Lake Albert, and conjecturing that Walker really meant to describe a boundary from this place to Brighton, similar to his other phrase ‘Port Noarlunga to Murray Mouth’ (James Knight 2003, *Testing Tindale Tribes: a re-assessment of Tindale's work on the Aboriginal Tribes of Australia, with reference to the written records of the southeast of South Australia*: Ph.D. thesis, University of New England: 428-9; and see below).

<sup>13</sup> AA 338/1/33/2: 161.

*The natives from Pt Willunga to Brighton were the `tawuli of the real RaminZeri who came from the Rapid Bay to Goolwa. Not same njaitje.*<sup>14</sup>

But 'Pt Willunga' is crossed out and replaced in smaller print above by the words

*Noarlunga Horseshoe = Witjarlung.*

plus another illegible word also crossed out. Evidence from Tindale's index cards makes it fairly certain that 'Witjarlung' was crammed in below 'Noarlunga' at some later time, probably the 1980s.<sup>15</sup> If so, it is an inaccurate transfer of information by Tindale, because Walker identified the name not with the Horseshoe (Old Noarlunga) but with Port Noarlunga, as our next item below makes clear.

In August 1934 Tindale received a long typescript made for him by Mark Wilson from a pencil draft by Walker, probably with supplementary dictation by the author. It was titled 'Personal Story'.<sup>16</sup> Among the wealth of information contained in it is the following:

*The Ramingeris a tribe that had been a powerful tribe. They had a Large scope of country from Wicharlung (Port Noarlunga) to Encounter Bay and the Muray [sic] Mouth (Waite-ang). Only think what a happy time they must have had. They had a sea front from Port Noarlunga to the Murray Mouth. I was reared among them. They were dying out fast.*

Here Brighton is not mentioned, and the long coastal boundary of Walker's Ramindjeri territory (previously implied only) is clearly stated.<sup>17</sup>

This coincides with the boundaries as mapped by Berndt and Stanton in 1993 (constructed around Karlowan's data);<sup>18</sup> but not with Karlowan's specific view as recorded elsewhere by both Berndt<sup>19</sup>

<sup>14</sup> The *tawuli* (*tawali*, *talwali*) was an individual or clan having a close mutual relationship with a neighbouring clan whose hunting territory adjoined his, despite having no blood ties or shared totem. There a *tawuli* had special hunting rights. e.g. "*Tawali... on occasions of seasonal food gathering... permission to trespass was given without demur*" (Milerum, in Tangani vocabulary cards, quoted in Gale 2009, *Ngarrindjeri Dictionary, First Edition*, Raukkan Community Council: 136). *Ngaitji* is a person's or group's totemic 'friend'. *Wuruldi* is 'wattle tree'. (All in Ramindjeri language).

<sup>15</sup> One of Tindale's Ramindjeri place-name cards is the following, written (unusually) in pencil (in AA 338/7/1/17):

*"Witjarlung Ramindjeri Tr. Encounter Bay S.Aust.  
Port Noarlunga  
Wicharlung Reuben Walker ms 1934  
Tindale ms SESAJ.2:186."*

Here Tindale gives his own re-spelling, "*Witjarlung*" with a 'u' for its last vowel, and attributes its source as p.186, i.e. Walker's typescript 'Wicharlung'. But Tindale's 'u' is incorrect if taken phonetically (as in 'pull'). From Walker's English 'u' (obviously intended as in 'lung') it should be an a (cp. 'haka'). This confirms that the phonetic spelling "*Witjarlung*" on p.161 was not an original note taken on that date by listening to live pronunciation, but a later addition taken from the p.186 typescript and respelled incorrectly. Tindale spelled it correctly as "*Witjarlan*" on one map (AA 338/16/8), but elsewhere continued (as on the card) to use the English and phonetic spellings as though phonetic *u* and English 'u' were the same; e.g. in his 1987 'Tjirbruki' essay.

<sup>16</sup> *ibid*: 185-221.

<sup>17</sup> As Knight reminds us, Tindale's hasty note-taking in Goolwa 1934 has left us to disentangle "*three different sets of boundaries for the same group*" from the same informant – though they were not obtained "*in the same interview*" as Knight says. Some items were obtained on two different interview dates (18 Feb and 22 April). Another (AA 338/1/33/2: 186) is in the typescript dictated by Walker and sent to Tindale on 9 August (see p.185); it must therefore be regarded as definitive of Walker's views, the others being subordinate because subject to possible error by Tindale. Knight mainly teases out their ambiguities and seeming contradictions (see Knight 2003: 428-432).

<sup>18</sup> Berndt & Berndt 1993: 304, 329.

and Tindale,<sup>20</sup> where he gives a Kurna-Ramindjeri boundary at or near Tunkalilla Beach on the south coast.

In June 1935 Tindale noted down more information from Walker and Mark Wilson, including their version of the story of Ngurunderi,<sup>21</sup> but within two months Walker was dead.<sup>22</sup> By then Tindale had met Albert Karlowan, and continued to work with him for several more years; and much more so with Milerum (Clarence Long) whom he had met in 1931, and with whom he and his mother shared a Coorong and Southeast background.<sup>23</sup>

.....

### THE NAME: LINGUISTICS:

Walker's own spelling was "Wicharlung". We can ignore the 'r'; he and Wilson were not linguists giving a Retroflex *rl* or an American sounded *r*, but speakers and writers of Australian English, in which 'ar' merely clarifies the sound *a*.<sup>24</sup> The last vowel is a written 'u' pronounced as in English 'lung'; i.e. the phonetic sound *a* as in 'haka', not *u* as in 'lunar' or 'pull'. We can assume that the word is in Ramindjeri language and that its ending represents the standard Ramindjeri Locative *angk*, 'at, place of'.<sup>25</sup> The proper transcription is therefore *Witjalangk*.

Contrary to his usual practice with Karlowan and Milerum, Tindale did not immediately enter the name on one of his maps of Hundreds. He only did so decades later when preparing material for his huge and unfinished 'Gazetteer of the Place Names of the Southeast of SA'. He spelled it right only once, the first time: "Witjarlanj";<sup>26</sup> but thereafter he fell into a careless error. He used Walker's

<sup>19</sup> RM Berndt 1940, 'Some Aspects of Jaralde Culture', *Oceania* 11(2), University of Sydney: 180.

<sup>20</sup> After 1974 Tindale changed his mapping of the Kurna-Ramindjeri border from Rapid Bay or Cape Jervis to Tunkalilla Beach (see Knight 2003: 197, 275, 418) – probably because he had now remembered more of his own early map data, and perhaps also Berndt's 1940 paper (above); but as so often, he does not credit his sources. On one of his early maps containing primary records, Tindale had mapped a very specific boundary-line from Karlowan: "*Keinari (boundary) / t. Karloan*" along First Creek (which runs into Tunkalilla Beach), then northeast to Mt Robinson, with a puzzling added note, "*went as far as Yankalilla on coast*" (Tindale map Hundred of Waitpinga, AA 338/24/93). However, this map also has a large group identity "RA:MINDJERI" and a clan identity, which both extend on either side of this line. This must be put alongside Berndt 1940, where Karlowan specifies a Tunkalilla border with the *Kurna*.

<sup>21</sup> Tindale 'Murray River Notes', AA 338/1/31/1: 98-125.

<sup>22</sup> AA 338/1/33/2: 185.

<sup>23</sup> Tindale 1986, 'Milerum (1869-1941)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/milerum-7572> [12/8/14].

<sup>24</sup> i.e. *a* as in 'haka', not as in 'hake' or 'hat'.

<sup>25</sup> Theoretically the written 'ng' could represent either one sound *ng* as in 'singer', or two sounds *ngg* as in 'finger'; but here it is obviously the latter.

<sup>26</sup> Tindale annotated map 'S Map Summary of Kurna area', AA 338/16/8.

written ‘u’ in “Witjarlung” in ordinary English text,<sup>27</sup> and then re-used the same spelling when he gave what was intended as a phonetic spelling (enclosed in square brackets), as though it was a phonetic *u*: “[Witjarlung]”. He now did (or had already done) the same in his journal, as we noticed above.<sup>28</sup>

There is no credible etymology for *Witjalangk* in either Ramindjeri-Ngarindjeri or Kaurna language. The root of the name is *WitjaIV*, in which *V* represents an unknown vowel; it could be *a*, *i*, *o* or *u*.<sup>29</sup>

We might wonder about two Ramindjeri nouns, *witjuti* / *witjeti* (‘the umbilical-cord relationship between two people’)<sup>30</sup> and *witjeri* / *witjuri* (‘pigface plant’); or Kaurna *wityu* (‘bone needle’). But all of these have a wrong second vowel, which must be *a* in order to qualify. The two Ramindjeri nouns give a different third syllable *ti* instead of the *-IV* in *WitjaI’-angk*. *Wityu* does not account for this extra syllable; nor does any known grammar in either language.

*Witjajangk* then: ‘meaning unknown’, if any.<sup>31</sup> We might suppose that in Walker and Karlowan’s time this was the Ramindjeri name for Port Noarlunga, and *Tainbarangk* the Yaraldi name for the same place. But Meyer had recorded ‘Tāinbariangk’ in the 1840s while living at Encounter Bay among the “Raminjerar”<sup>32</sup> near the Bluff. The name was given by one or more of those who were “in the habit of visiting the Adelaide tribe”.<sup>33</sup> Why not *Witjalangk*? Was this a Yaraldi person? We don’t know.

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<sup>27</sup> Tindale map County Adelaide, AA 338/24/107; Kaurna vocabulary card “*nenjara tawi*” in AA 338/7/1/12; Ramindjeri vocabulary card “*Witjarlung*” in AA 338/7/1/17. Note that he seems to count the word as both Kaurna and Ramindjeri.

<sup>28</sup> AA 338/1/33/2: 161. This sequence of events is another reason to believe that the note ‘Witarlung’ was added later to this page of his journal.

<sup>29</sup> In Ramindjeri language, the locative *angk* replaces this final vowel.

<sup>30</sup> *Witjuti* is the same important lifelong social relationship as denoted by the more widely-used term *ngia-ngiampe* (Taplin and Tindale) or *ngenampi* (Berndt). See e.g. Berndt & Berndt 1993: 118-121.

<sup>31</sup> Place-names need not have any dictionary meaning; cp. ‘Rome’, ‘London’, ‘Sydney’.

<sup>32</sup> Meyer’s spelling of the plural of *Raminjeri*. In some of his writing he retains the German spelling ‘j’ for the English consonantal ‘y’. It would be an essay in itself to trace how and when the pronunciation *inyeri* changed historically to *indjeri*, e.g. *Narrinyeri* > *Ngarrindjeri*. Perhaps Meyer’s German ‘j’ played a part in this.

<sup>33</sup> HAE Meyer 1843, *Vocabulary of the Language...*, Adelaide, James Allen: 50.

## LANGUAGE COUNTRY AND AN ONKAPARINGA BOUNDARY?

‘CHIRR-BOOKIE’<sup>34</sup> AND TJILBRUKI:

Reuben Walker’s boundary at the Onkaparinga River has support from the earliest recorded version of the Tjilbruki story: ‘Chirr-bookie the blue crane’, written by David Unaipon in 1925<sup>35</sup> and published in 1930 by William Ramsay Smith under his own name.<sup>36</sup> As far as I know Unaipon’s manuscript version of ‘Chirrbookie’ has not been found; and according to MaryAnne Gale we can be sure that Smith has edited out some of the language terms and made other minor changes, as he did with other stories.<sup>37</sup>

We don’t know whether Unaipon wrote this version from his own knowledge or collected it from another informant, as with many of the other stories in his output. I have wondered whether he got ‘Chirrbookie’ from Reuben Walker, since the fairly explicit boundary details are consistent with Walker’s view of the northern Ramindjeri border.

Smith’s ‘Chirrbookie’ has been dismissed and largely ignored by most previous ethnologists, as part of their general dismissal of Unaipon’s entire output as “rather romantic” and “florid”,<sup>38</sup> “highly popular”,<sup>39</sup> Anglicized, mission-influenced, Biblical in style, and by implication questionably authentic. However, Gale believes that Unaipon had plenty of his own knowledge of local culture and stories of the Ngarrindjeri-Ramindjeri language group, and considers it likely that in this case he did write what he himself knew.<sup>40</sup>

<sup>34</sup> The spelling ‘Chirr-bookie’ represents the same pronunciation as Karlowan’s *Tjirbuki* (in Tindale & Mountford 1936, *Records of SA Museum* 5(4): 500-1).

<sup>35</sup> Gale 2000, Vol.2 Appendices: 92.

<sup>36</sup> W. Ramsay Smith 1930, *Myths and Legends of the Australian Aboriginals*, George Harrap, London, pp.331-341; can be accessed online at [https://openlibrary.org/books/OL6287617M/Myths\\_legends\\_of\\_the\\_Australian\\_aboriginals](https://openlibrary.org/books/OL6287617M/Myths_legends_of_the_Australian_aboriginals) [30/11/20]; facsimile paperback still available, *Aborigine: Myths and Legends*, Senate imprints, Random House, 1996.

<sup>37</sup> Mary-Anne Gale 2000, ‘Poor Bugger Whitefella Got No Dreaming: The representation & appropriation of published Dreaming narratives with special reference to David Unaipon’s writings’, Ph.D., Linguistics and English, Adelaide University: 231-2.

<sup>38</sup> Tindale 1987: 5b.

<sup>39</sup> Berndt & Berndt 1993: 233.

<sup>40</sup> “A number of the 21 additional narratives written by Unaipon (that appear in Ramsay Smith, 1930)” – [but not in the Mitchell MSS, and therefore not in Muecke & Shoemaker’s re-publication in 2001] – “were based on Unaipon’s own Ngarrindjeri culture, or the Dreaming narratives of his northern neighbours the Kurna, Narrunga and Ngadjuri people. My reading of them is not that of fictionalised, highly embellished hybrid texts. Instead they contain considerable cultural detail, and specific references to land, with which Unaipon was familiar (although Ramsay Smith would have edited out many of the vernacular terms included by Unaipon). I contest that Unaipon did not feel the need to embellish these particular narratives as fairy tale myths with Biblical themes, simply because his source material was more reliable and detailed. Two good examples of such narratives, the latter to be discussed in my analysis below, are: “Chirr-bookie, the blue crane”... and “Buthera and the bat”... Two more narratives in this category are the two important Ngarrindjeri Dreaming narratives: “Nurunderi’s wives”... and “The love story of two sisters”, which both appear in the Mitchell Ms., while Chirr-bookie was one of the three narratives forwarded to Ramsay Smith by Angus and Robinson in January 1927, along with the first instalment of the Mitchell Ms” (Gale 2000: 232-3).



Unaipon (or his unnamed informant) claims 'Chirr-bookie' as a Wimmera man who joins his sister's husband to become identified with the 'Raminyeri tribe', so that its territory is now described as "his home",<sup>41</sup> This homeland is not clearly defined in the story, but it is likely to be the same as in the account by Unaipon's brother Creighton, who said "on the coast by Cape Jervis".<sup>42</sup> Two of Chirrbookie's three nephews are exiled to the "Adelaide tribe", which is sharply distinguished from his own 'Raminyeri'. To the nephews, the Adelaide Tribe were "new people who spoke a strange language" which they took some time to learn.<sup>43</sup> The relevant incidents in this account unfold as follows, with the two exiled nephews in 'Adelaide-tribe' country and Koolatowie still back in Chirrbookie's country to the south:

*After Eurowie and Pithowie had become conversant with the language of the Adelaide tribe, and could speak it fluently, they began to plan ways and means of being revenged [on their brother Koolatowie]... Then the brothers thought of another plan; they suggested that as certain animals and birds were becoming scarce it would be well to station men **at the boundary of their country**, in order to prevent these creatures from departing and wandering away into the land of another tribe... That afternoon they took up their spears, left their homes, and went to the peninsula and caught an emu, and bound its legs and carried it back with them. Late in the evening they took it **beyond the boundary to Horseshoe-Bend, just across the river**, and let it loose. They waited till they saw it recover itself and **set off toward Aldinga**. They followed it*

<sup>41</sup> Ramsay Smith 1930: 331, 340.

<sup>42</sup> Creighton Unaipon tells us that "Tjilbuki... lived down on the coast by Cape Jervis" (Alison Harvey field notebook 1939: 5, in HK Fry papers, SA Museum AA 105, now lost; but Philip Clarke and I have copies). The sentence might be intended to mean something more specific, e.g. 'Rapid Bay' as in Milerum and Karlowan; but more likely it is a general 'southern Fleurieu'.

MORE ON TJILBRUKI'S HOMELAND AND IDENTITY GROUP:

Milerum in 1934 gives no group identity name for his 'Tjelbruke', but does give something like a homeland: "his place at Rapid Bay by Point" (Tindale AA 338/1/33/2: 44. 'Point' = Rapid Head).

Sustie Wilson did not remember the name of the "northern tribe" beyond his "RaminZeri Rapid Bay to Yankalilla" (AA 338/1/33/2: 79); but in his view and Reuben Walker's, a homeland based around Rapid Bay would have been in Ramindjeri country.

Karlowan says that 'Tjirbuki' was born and lives in the high ranges near Mt Hayfield, and has a summer camp at Rapid Head (Tindale & Mountford 1936, *Records of SA Museum* 5(4): 500; cp. Berndt & Berndt 1993: 233); but Tindale never mentions 'Kurna'. He subtitles the old Karlowan account as "A Legend of the People of Rapid Bay" (my emphasis) – showing that in 1936 he still realized that his informants had not given any definitive name for the tribes from Rapid Bay northward (but see also my comments below on 'Mereldi'). Karlowan also told Tindale that "Nutarang" at Land's End near the Cape was "in Kulultuwi & Tjilbruke's country" (Tindale annotated map Hundred of Waitpinga, AA 338/24/93). It does not appear that Karlowan had a name for 'Tjilbruke's country'; but much later Tindale interpreted this note thus: "i.e. Kurna tribe *fide* Karlowan" (map County Hindmarsh, AA 338/24/121). This is part of his recasting of the story in the 1987 essay as "A Tale of the Kurna People of Adelaide" (Tindale 1987: 5a; my emphases), claiming his 'Tjirbuki' as a Kurna man of the 'Patpangga clan', while admitting historical change based on Karlowan's *Nutarang* (p.8a). Some of this re-orientation from south to north reflects not so much what his informants said as his own later 'corrected' or self-authorized decisions about group identities and mapping. It is important to remember that Language Country (a valid anthropological category) is not the same as 'tribe' (an out-dated and discredited one); there was certainly a large Kurna Language Country, but this was never a political unity in traditional times, as Tindale presents it. Knight 2003 (*passim*) has much to say about the evolution of Tindale's mapping and naming of the group identities which he 'authorized' within his own work, and their often very tenuous relationship with what his informants and other sources actually said.

<sup>43</sup> Ramsay Smith 1930: 331-3. All the language words in this account are in Ramindjeri-Ngarrindjeri language, except the English / Pidgin-Kurna place-names 'Onkaparinga' and 'Aldinga'.



for a few miles, then turned back homeward, and reached their camp about midnight. Then they had a late meal. They rose next morning before the sun, and armed themselves each with a wunde, three waddies, and a kanake. When the sun rose they were **at the Onkaparinga river. At Horseshoe Bend** they speared a couple of fishes and lit a fire and cooked their breakfast. Now they felt refreshed, and **ready to do battle should they be challenged for trespassing. They followed the track of the emu**, knowing well that if it wandered **toward Cape Jervis** and Koolatowie saw it he would be sure to hunt it, and kill and cook it before taking it home to his mother and uncle...<sup>44</sup>

When Eurowie and Pithowie found Koolatowie, he had already found the emu travelling south in “a certain valley”, had killed it, and was cooking it:

*After some talk they told him how scarce emus were. They said they had seen the tracks of the one that Koolatowie had killed, and they had followed it, hoping to capture it, as they were anxious to taste the food. It was many moons since they had eaten emu-flesh. Koolatowie said, "O my two brothers, did you not send a messenger to Uncle some two moons back saying that if he would like an emu you would send him one? Is that so, or am I mistaken?" Then Pithowie answered, "Perhaps the messenger made a mistake. If emus were plentiful do you think we should **dare to come over the boundary-line hunting one?**"*<sup>45</sup>

These passages do not make it completely clear where this ‘boundary-line’ was. Was it the Onkaparinga River itself? Or was it located an unknown distance further north, so that the brothers had to go ‘beyond the boundary’ in order to carry the emu as far as the Horseshoe? Or were there two boundaries, perhaps of different kinds?<sup>46</sup>

### MILERUM:

In 1934 Milerum supported something rather like Walker’s view of the boundary, saying that Ramindjeri lands as he knew them were “Rapid Bay to Brighton”.<sup>47</sup>

<sup>44</sup> Ramsay Smith 1930: 333-4; my emphases.

<sup>45</sup> Ramsay Smith 1930: 336-7; my emphasis.

<sup>46</sup> cp. Reuben Walker’s two boundaries, one at ‘Wituwatangk’-Brighton or nearby *Tulukudangk* (see PNS 2/23 *Tulukudangk*), and another at Port Noarlunga.

<sup>47</sup> Speaking with Milerum at Bosun Point on the Coorong, 13 Feb 1934, Tindale noted: “*Rapid Bay to Brighton = RaminZeri tribe of C.L.’s time*” (‘Notes on Tribes’, AA 338/1/33/2: 41). To this record Tindale added a “*Comment*” (presumably his own): “*Later. The Ramindjeri had established a route to Adelaide to get their annual supply of Govt. blankets, in days before C.L.’s time*”. This note recognizes the transition from pre-contact days to a new social situation created by the colonial centre in Adelaide. However, Tindale never published anything which used this datum from his favourite informant.

‘SUSTIE’ WILSON AND TINDALE:

Other contemporaries had other ideas. John ‘Sustie’ Wilson, a very aged ex-whaler, told Tindale that his Ramindjeri people were “Rapid Bay to Yankalilla. Went to Encounter Bay but not their real country”; and that their *eastern* boundary with the *Yaraldi* was at “Bald Hills, middle of two coasts”<sup>48</sup> – presumably meaning ‘halfway between the Gulf and Encounter Bay’.

It is instructive to compare this with one of Tindale’s many attempts to map tribal boundaries. On one of the large-scale maps of Hundreds which he used in the early years of his research to enter geographical information from his informants, he marked a boundary in the immediate vicinity of Bald Hills, between an alleged “*Mereldi* people” to the northwest and the *Ramindjeri* clans to the southeast.<sup>49</sup> This represents another view (probably Milerum’s) from the same era rather late in the process of territorial breakdown.

The topography remains constant, such as that high watershed of ‘bald hills’ and excellent lookouts, dividing Gulf country from South Coast country. Unaipon’s Aboriginal philosophy denied that boundaries could ever change.<sup>50</sup> But social arrangements and perceptions clearly *had* changed between the time of Meyer and Taplin, when the ‘Raminyeri’ were described as the people of Encounter Bay only,<sup>51</sup> and the 1930s memory culture of Milerum, Walker and Wilson; and there were differences even between those men and their contemporary Karlowan.<sup>52</sup> Clearly there were complex processes by which the Kaurna Gulf coast of the Fleurieu was appropriated – adopted? cared for? – by Ramindjeri-Ngarrindjeri immigrants during the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century under the impact of colonization, and varying ‘insider’ views of the resulting situation. It is beyond the scope of these essays to attempt a fuller understanding of them.

<sup>48</sup> AA 338/1/33/2: 79, 82.

<sup>49</sup> Tindale annotated map Hundred of Encounter Bay, AA 338/24/28. See also my PNS 5.03/08 Tuttokauwingga: 11-15; 5.03/04 Wataraparingga: 14; 5.03/10 Tuttongga: 12; 7.02/04 Murtaparingga: 33. ‘Mereldi’ or ‘Merildi’ language seems to have been the ‘*Rapid Bay talk*’ which Milerum remembered from the telling of the ‘Tjelbruke’ story in the 1880s (Tindale AA 338/1/33/2: 44).

<sup>50</sup> “*The hunting-grounds were given out to the different families and tribes by Narroondarie. The boundaries of the tribal hunting-grounds have been kept the same from remotest time*” (Unaipon, ‘Aborigines, Their Traditions And Customs: Where Did They Come From?’, in David Unaipon, ed. Stephen Muecke and Adam Shoemaker 2001, *Legendary Tales of the Australian Aborigines*, Miegunyah Press: 6).

<sup>51</sup> “*Each tribe derives its name from the district to which it belongs, and which they claim as their own property, as Ramong, the district belonging to the Raminjerar*”, one of a list of several local ‘tribes’ or “*large families*” (Meyer 1846, *Manners and Customs of the Aborigines...*, Adelaide, George Dehane: 1; cp. “*Raminyerar*”, Meyer 1843: 77). *Ramong* was the area immediately around the Bluff (Rosetta Head). Cp. George Taplin 1874, *The Narrinyeri*, Adelaide, JT Shawyer: 2. Neither of these early authors used the term ‘Yaraldi’.

<sup>52</sup> For Karlowan and Berndt, the western boundary of the Yaraldi was near the western shores of the River Murray lakes and estuary (Berndt & Berndt 1993: 304, 328-9).



## WALKER, TINDALE, AND TODAY:

The apparent discrepancies in Walker's descriptions of the northern Ramindjeri border – Port Noarlunga or Brighton? – probably arise from nuances in the *tawuli* which he did not spell out.<sup>53</sup> Since the Ramindjeri could readily hunt over these *tawuli* lands from the Onkaparinga to Brighton, did he sometimes count them as part of Ramindjeri territory, and sometimes not? But did he see this area as occupied by Ramindjeri, or by another tribe of a different Language Country, or by 'hybrid Ramindjeri' as opposed to the "real RaminZeri from the Rapid Bay to Goolwa"?<sup>54</sup> It is not clear to me whether *tawuli* could pertain between clans who were neighbours but belonged to different language countries, e.g. Ramindjeri and Kurna.

These understandings by Walker from his late 19<sup>th</sup>-century years may *perhaps* imply something about an analogous earlier situation at first contact, when the territories from far north of Brighton all the way to Cape Jervis were certainly part of Kurna Language Country. In that era communication between the groups north and south of Port Noarlunga was much less frequent than it became soon after settlement. Did pre-colonial Kurna culture already regard the Onkaparinga as something like the later Ramindjeri *tawuli* border?<sup>55</sup> Topography again: the river was a natural candidate as a border, a barrier to foot travel; its ford at the Horseshoe was unavoidable by anyone travelling between north and south on these plains.

I cannot pursue these matters any further here, and the answers may no longer be available.

We owe thanks to Tindale for obtaining much of the material, and for making it available to us in the SA Museum. But he wanted a neat and definitive 'correct version' of everything, and usually ignored whatever seemed to question the line he took. Moreover, he had a negative view of Reuben Walker's knowledge, regarding it as "limited to details of the days of the degeneration of the tribe", conceding only that "it gives us a few scraps of useful data which we could not have

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<sup>53</sup> For example: "The *talwali* or *talwuli* relationship seemed to exemplify the concept of boundary. Two clans were *talwalar* (their members called each other *talwali*) when their boundaries ran out into a lake or a stretch of water. It was said that they were 'joined by water' (*talwali*) and that members of the clans concerned, although not possessing *ngatji* in common, called each other brother and sister... *Talwalar* people always exchanged food and did not fight... The special relationships between members of particular clans, while having direct implications for marriage (limiting the range of potentially eligible spouses), enshrined rules of mutual aid" (Berndt & Berndt 1993: 27-8).

<sup>54</sup> AA 338/1/33/2: 161. Walker did not use the term 'Kurna'. It seems that Karlowan possibly did. According to Berndt's 1993 construction, this same area from Brighton to just north of Port Noarlunga belonged to the "*Lower Kona or Kurna*", the only 'Kurna' lands in the book, and their clan name was "*Walpara: name from the place Walpari (Sturt River)*". But Karlowan knew very little about this area, and Berndt acknowledges that these 'Ramindjeri' borders are a colonial "*expansion*" (Berndt & Berndt 1993: 312, 330).

<sup>55</sup> See *Feet On the Fleurieu* (passim), especially the evidence from 'Doughboy' at the Adelaide plains in 1836 (Chapter 3); also my report 'The Geography of Language Groups around Fleurieu Peninsula at first contact' (2017), <https://digital.library.adelaide.edu.au/dspace/handle/2440/110314>; and my comments on Berndt and Karlowan's boundaries in PNS 4.02.02 Tainbarangk.

obtained otherwise”.<sup>56</sup> Hence when Walker gave material which appeared to conflict with that of Tindale’s favoured informants, especially Milerum, Tindale usually registered the discrepancy alongside his notes,<sup>57</sup> and never mentioned those items again in his work notes or publications. Rather than investigate a diversity of viewpoints, he suppressed those which departed from his chosen line.

From Tindale and Berndt the public knows much about what Milerum and Karlowan said, and only a few small selected bits of what Reuben Walker said. But there is a lot of Walker in Tindale’s unpublished journals. Even he conceded that Walker “had a detailed knowledge of the Ramindjeri areas of his ancestry & of the Jarildekald people among whom he was brought up”,<sup>58</sup> and “he is in mind a pure Ramindjeri”.<sup>59</sup> Walker had a large store of information from a Ramindjeri perspective as immediate neighbours of the Kurna; while Karlowan saw things from further away on his Lower Murray country, and Milerum’s viewpoint was even further away on the Coorong.

I am not aware of any serious compilation and targeted study of Reuben Walker’s unpublished material apart from the work of the late Lance ‘Karno’ Walker of the Ramindjeri Heritage Association<sup>60</sup> and his wife Christine (to whom I am grateful for sharing some of their literature sources). I have not seen any of Karno’s detailed work apart from some of what he publicized, and (as will be obvious already) I disagree with some of his interpretations. But the Reuben Walker material constitutes a valuable and quite large archive from a knowledgeable man of the local Old People of the Fleurieu and South Coast; it cannot be ignored forever. Everyone’s story deserves to be told, heard, acknowledged, and taken into account – even when it does not fit the categories demanded by the political and legal machinery of Native Title, or by those who accept Tindale’s published material uncritically.

Berndt did not consult Milerum or Walker, and the published results of his extensive discussions with Karlowan contain explicit warnings about the limits about his informants’ knowledge of the clan

<sup>56</sup> Tindale ‘Murray River Notes Vol.1, AA 338/1/31/1: 107. Perhaps this negative assessment of Walker’s information may have led Tindale to be less careful to understand what Walker was saying, and in recording it; hence the ambiguity of some of these journal items.

<sup>57</sup> As James Knight points out, Tindale sometimes wrote down his objections to what Walker was telling him, almost in the moment of telling: “*This action implies that the ‘informant’ [Walker] was wrong. In this way, Tindale repeatedly disagreed with his own teachers*” (Knight 2003: 463-5). This comment is applied to a journal entry giving one of Walker’s definitions of Ramindjeri territory (Tindale ‘SE of SA’ Vol2, AA 338/1/33/2: 149).

<sup>58</sup> Tindale ‘Place Names: Drafts For Text’, AA338/10/2: 40. Reuben Walker was born at Rumply Point on Lake Albert and reared in the Lewurindjeri clan, some of whom by the “*later days*” (the 1880s?) “*almost became the same*” with the Ramindjeri (Tindale AA 338/1/33/2: 161), presumably including Walker himself. We can’t pursue here the matter of his mixed ancestry, which anyway is irrelevant to his mature identity and knowledge. According to him the Ramindjeri first began to die off in 1892-4, and by 1912 he was the only one left (ibid: 157).

<sup>59</sup> AA 338/1/31/1: 107.

<sup>60</sup> I also have to declare my interest here. Karno was an old friend of mine whom I first met in 1980 when he was a student at CASM (the Centre for Aboriginal Studies on Music, University of Adelaide), long before he ‘came out’ as a Ramindjeri ‘warrior’.

arrangements and place-names of the Gulf territory. Unfortunately the relevant map in his book<sup>61</sup> does not reflect this uncertainty, but shows ‘Ramindjeri’ land extending most of the way towards Adelaide, the lines giving a false appearance of certainty. Nevertheless, Walker’s perspective resembles this in some respects, and all the conflicting perspectives should be heard and analysed.

My three essays Tainbarangk, Witjalangk and Pirrangga – read them preferably in that order – expose a small amount of the neglected material, centring around the Port Noarlunga area as some kind of boundary. They make a small attempt to begin interpreting it in a non-partisan way which does justice to all the known facts. More work needs to be done to elucidate Tindale’s notes from Walker which are sometimes ambiguous or confusing, to compare these with other material, and approach a synthesis which takes into account all the available stories and recognizes historical change.

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#### AN UNFORTUNATE BUT NECESSARY DIGRESSION: TINDALE’S ‘WITJARLUNG CLAN’:

In the early 1980s Tindale was working on the material for his big essay ‘The Wanderings of Tjirbruki’, which he would finish in typescript by November 1985 and publish in 1987.<sup>62</sup> On a small piece of paper he made a note entitled “Kurna clans worked out for the Tjirbruki story”, each name given a ‘Geo.II’ spelling for normal texts, a summary of its ‘Localities’, and an ‘Int. Phon’ for phonetic spellings.<sup>63</sup> Three listings are ticked, “= used”: “Patpangga”, “Jatabiling” and “Witjarlung” (or “Witjarlung”). In the ‘Localities’ given for Witjarlung, the entry has been edited. First he wrote “Sellicks Hill north to Brighton”. Sometime later he inserted words to make it read “near Brighton” and “inland to Clarendon”; and added at the end, in smaller print because space was limited, “S. [i.e. South] to Karikalingga”.

‘Brighton’ and ‘Clarendon’ clearly come from Walker; but the rest is new. The first novelty is the idea that ‘Witarlung’ was a clan; this identification is not found anywhere in Tindale’s primary records, and as far as I know the name itself occurs only in Tindale. Comparing this note with the contents of the essay, it is obvious why he made ‘Sellicks Hill’ the initial boundary limit: it was in order to give a name to the group of people in an incident from Milerum’s 1934 ‘Tjelbruke’ story,

<sup>61</sup> Berndt & Berndt 1993: 330-1.

<sup>62</sup> Tindale 1987, ‘The Wanderings of Tjirbruki’, *Records of the SA Museum* 20: 5-13; available online at <http://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/bibliography/61893#/summary>. I have a copy of the 1985 typescript.

<sup>63</sup> This note is preserved among the index cards of Kurna place-names in AA 338/7/1/12. There is a scanned copy of it in Knight 2003: 467, with analysis of its contents. Knight lists it as ‘Tindale 1986’; but this date can’t be right, since the entire final choice of Kurna clans is already present in the 1985 typescript of the essay.



located “past Sellicks hill 1<sup>st</sup> point past there place called Warabari<sup>64</sup> past Myponga on coast (big point, cliff)”.<sup>65</sup> Here ‘Tjelbruke’ took revenge on a camp of people – no group identity given – who “were supposed to deliver message to Kulutuwi & didn’t”. It is also obvious in the 1980s note why Tindale later added ‘south to Carrickalinga’: ‘Sellicks Hill’ had been an approximation, and he wanted the given clan limits to include more accurately this incident which happened a few km further southwest.

But there is no primary evidence anywhere for the existence of a ‘Witjarlung’ clan, whether Kaurna or Ramindjeri, nor of any other local clan with such a huge territory; and no explanation anywhere why a Kaurna clan would have a Ramindjeri name. A charitable explanation would be that Tindale had completely misread his own old notes, or that he was quoting them from memory without checking. Or we might say that he used Walker’s place-name and his mention of Clarendon as springboards for a little fiction, an extra bit of interesting colour for the payback episode. Unfortunately this kind of thing is all too common in his seminal 1987 essay on ‘Tjirbruki’, which must be seen as very much his own ‘corrected’ version. As they say in feature films, it was “*based on the story by*” its original tellers. It’s time for us all to consult the tellers more directly in their primary records.

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*End of Summary*

<sup>64</sup> See PNS 5.01/06 Warabari.

<sup>65</sup> AA 338/1/33/2: 49.