

Land Based Whaling Activities
On The West Coast Of South Australia
1829 - 1845

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

CONTENTS	I
FIGURES	M
TABLES	IV
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	IV
1. INTRODUCTION	1
Research Aims	1
Prior Research Into Australian Land Based Whaling Activities	2
Prior Research Into South Australian Land Based Whaling Activities	5
Historical Weights, Measures And Terminology Associated With The Whaling Industry	7
Whaling Terminology	7
Historic Measurements	14
2. THE HISTORY OF THE GLOBAL WHALING INDUSTRY	15
Definition Of Specific Whaling Activities	15
Pelagic Whaling	15
Bay Whaling	16
Shore Based Whaling	18
Use Of Shore Based And Bay Whaling Terminology	18
Whale Species Hunted For Commercial Gain	19
Evolution Of The Whaling Industry	20
3. WHALING ACTIVITIES IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA	27
Areas Of South Australia Utilised By Land Based Whalers	27
Who Were The South Australian Whalers	29
Economic Impact Of Whaling Activities	33
Contribution Of Whaling Activities To Colonial Expansion	33

Importance Of The South Australian Whaling Industry	35
Economic Viability Of Whaling Activities	36
4. WEST COAST WHALING STATIONS	38
Location Of Land Based Whaling Stations	38
Spalding Cove	38
Sleaford Bay	49
Thistle Island	56
Point Collinson	60
Fowlers Bay	72
5. THE LAND BASED WHALING INDUSTRY OF THE WEST COAST OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA : DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS	79
West Coast Whaling Stations As Frontiers	79
Essential Site Location Criteria	80
Site Similarities - Geographical	81
Site Similarities - The Built Environment	82
Conclusion	82
BIBLIOGRAPHY	85

FIGURES

1.1	Areas Of Land Based Whaling Activity In Australia - 19th Century Only	4
1.2	Location Of Land Based Whaling Activities Positively Identified In South Australia	6
1.3	Cutting-In : Shore Based	8
1.4	Cutting-In : Shipboard	9
1.5	Mincing The Horse Pieces	10
1.6	Skimming The Scraps	11
1.7	Typical Trypot	12
1.8	Shipboard Tryworks	13
2.1	Baleen / Whalebone	17
2.2	Map of The Spitsbergen Fishery	21
2.3	Whaling At Spitsbergen - Detail	22
2.4	Whaling At Spitsbergen - Detail	23
3.1	South Australian Land Based Whaling Locations	28
3.2	Henry Reed	31
3.3	Captain William Young	32
3.4	Captain Richard Copping	32
4.1	Location Of Spalding Cove Whaling Station	39
4.2	Hearth Remains - Spalding Cove	45
4.3	Hearth Remains - Spalding Cove	45
4.4	Hut Remains - Spalding Cove	46
4.5	Hut Remains - Spalding Cove	46
4.6	Possible Flensing Platform - Spalding Cove	48
4.7	Ships Tank - Spalding Cove	48
4.8	Location Of Sleaford Bay Whaling Station	50
4.9	Overview - Sleaford Bay Whaling Station Domestic Area	52
4.10	Hut Remains - Sleaford Bay	52
4.12	Unidentified Wall - Sleaford Bay	54
4.13	Whalers Well - Sleaford Bay	54
4.14	Location Of Thistle Island Whaling Station	57
4.15	Location Of Point Collinson Whaling Station	61
4.16	Captain Gardiner Of The <i>Camilla</i>	63

4.17	The Brigantine <i>Camilla</i>	63
4.18	Captain James William Robinson	64
4.19	Overview Of Point Collinson Whaling Station Site	64
4.20	Structural Remains - Point Collinson	69
4.21	Copper Sheathing - Point Collinson	69
4.22	Case Gin Bottle Fragments - Point Collinson	71
4.23	Location Of Fowlers Bay Whaling Activity Remains	73
4.24	Ground Plan - Point Fowler Shelter	78

TABLES

1.1	Imperial & Metric Measures	14
3.1	South Australian Exports 1838 - 1840	33
3.2	South Australian Exports 1841 - 1846	35
4.1	1838 Thistle Island Crew List	58

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

The arrival of the H.M.S Buffalo at Glenelg in 1836 marked the beginning of South Australia's official European settlement. Seven years before that, in 1829, Launceston based whalers had begun the first semi-permanent European settlement at Spalding Cove on the tip of the Eyre Peninsula. These first European residents on the mainland coast of South Australia were whalers.

The whaling industry played a pivotal role in the successful colonisation of South Australia. Whilst it will be seen that it was a particularly short lived and generally not very profitable industry, it provided the infant colony with an export income at a time when it had no other. On a more ephemeral level, the very prospect of successful whaling enterprises being based in the new South Australian colony was helpful. Firstly it helped to convince the British Government to legislate in favour of the colony and secondly it helped to persuade people to invest in the new colony.

This thesis will primarily use the historical record backed up by archaeological survey results to assess the significance and independence of South Australia's first export industry, with a specific focus on the whaling activities located to the west of Spencer Gulf.

Research Aims

This thesis has a number of research aims, the principal of which are as follows:

Elucidation of the physical and operational differences between shore based and bay whaling sites. These differences, as well as the associated similarities are examined in chapters one and two.

Discovery of the role which South Australia's west coast fishery played both within the global and domestic whaling industries.

Was the whaling Industry a serious economic contributor to the South Australian colony?. If so how did it contribute and was its only contribution economic or did the influence of the industry reach further?.

Who orchestrated the South Australian whaling industry?. Previous research(Hosking,1973; Austral Archaeology,1993) has tended to focus upon the activities of the South Australian Company and a handful of high profile South Australian whalers. Whilst the South Australian Company and its associates was undoubtedly a serious competitor within the local whaling industry, it was by no means the only one.

More specifically, was it a different group of entrepreneurs that were utilising the west coast of South Australia compared with those who were exploiting the whale populations along the coastline east of Port Lincoln?

Did the Spalding Cove whaling station really exist?. If it did, what is its history, who operated it and why has it not been located during previous surveys?.

Is there enough similarity between the Eyre Peninsula and west coast sites included in the survey, both in the form of physical geography and built environment to generate a typical blueprint of a whaling station?

Prior Research Into Australian Land Based Whaling Activities

Throughout Australia, there have been numerous archaeological surveys conducted which have focussed upon the location and recording of land based whaling stations. Not all of the station sites surveyed are relevant to this thesis as they belong to the modern whaling period which occurred after the introduction of steam powered whale chasers in the late nineteenth century. Therefore, will not be included in this review.

The most recent and comprehensive research has been carried out in Western Australia by Martin Gibbs in his PhD thesis (Gibbs, 1995). This extensive work covers the shore based whaling activities occurring in the Western Australian colony from 1839-1876. Gibb's research relies upon a comprehensive survey of sites as well as the archaeological excavation of the Cheyne Beach whaling station.

Tasmanian shore based whaling activities have been comprehensively documented in a series of reports commissioned by the Parks and Wildlife Service of Tasmania. Initially, this took the form of an historical research project in order to discover how many sites existed within the documentary record (Evans, 1993a&b).

Following on from the historical research project an extensive, non-intrusive archaeological survey project (Kostoglou, 1995a&b). The aim of this survey being to ascertain how many of the sites which were located during the documentary research still possessed extant archaeological remains.

In her 1988 PhD thesis (Chamberlain, 1988), Susan Chamberlain examined the pelagic whaling industry operating out of Hobart between the years 1830 and 1900. While this thesis does not specifically focus upon the operations of shore based whaling stations, it does provide a valuable insight to the colonial whaling industry and its method of operation.

A survey of possible whaling sites was carried out by Karen Townrow in Victoria during 1989 (Townrow, 1997). This survey is of particular interest as it addresses the question of whether it is possible to construct a predictive model which can be used in the location of land based whaling station sites.

There has been no comprehensive site surveys conducted in N.S.W, although the location of the sites located on Twofold bay are known and the sites themselves have been recorded.

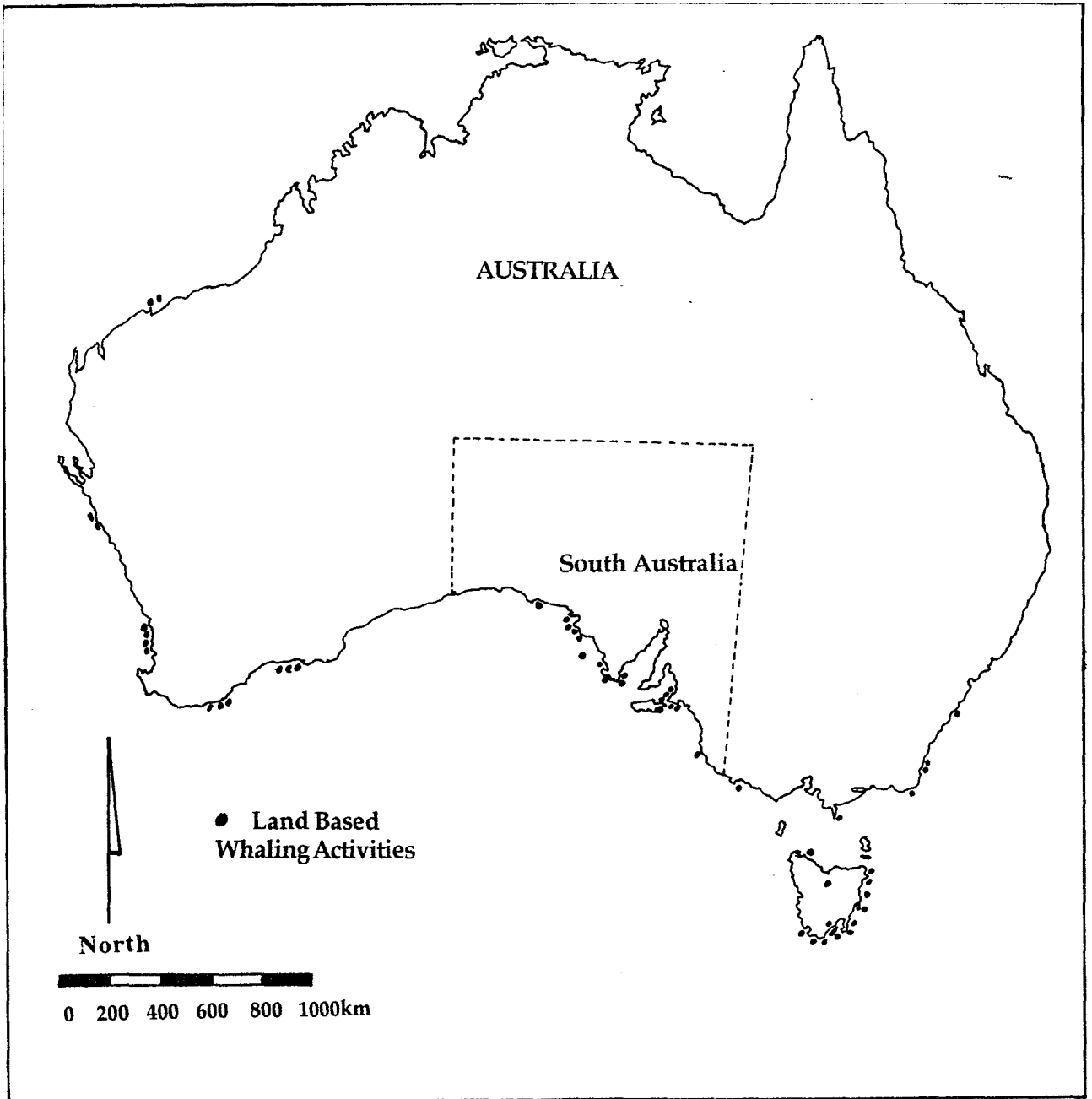


Figure 1.1
Areas of Land Based Whaling Activity
In Australia-19th Century Only

Prior Research Into South Australian Land Based Whaling Activities

The South Australian whaling industry has been the subject of various forms of research over the past three decades. The principal research work to be completed thus far, is the B.A.(Hons) thesis by William Hosking in 1973(Hosking,1973). This thesis focuses primarily upon the whaling activities of the South Australian Company. The orientation and methodology of this thesis are historical rather than archaeological.

A broad based documentary search and field survey was carried out in the late 1980's by the State Heritage Branch, the results of which are published in Parry Kostoglou and Justin McCarthy's *Whaling and Sealing Sites in South Australia*(Kostoglou&McCarthy,1991).

Recommendations which resulted from the initial survey work of Kostoglou and McCarthy, led to what is at this time the only formal archaeological excavation to be carried out on a South Australian whaling site.

The results of this excavation are detailed in the unpublished draft report to the State Heritage Branch *Thistle Island Whaling Station Excavation Report*(Austral Archaeology,1993). Unfortunately, at this point in time no work has been carried out on the artefacts which were recovered during the excavation process. This therefore precludes any comparison of surface artefact scatters located and recorded at other sites with the excavated artefacts from Thistle Island. This is problematic in that the Thistle Island whaling station artefacts have excellent provenance and once analysed will provide an excellent comparative and diagnostic collection. As this is yet to occur, it is not possible to use these artefacts to assist in the identification of whaling station remains based upon the surface artefact scatters present.

In 1994, in co-operation with the South Australian Museum and ANZSES, Michael Jones and Mark Staniforth from Flinders University undertook a survey and recording program at Fowlers Bay located on the far west coast of South Australia(Jones&Staniforth,1996). The objective of this survey was to discover whether or not there were archaeological remains which could be directly associated with the whaling activities which were recorded as having occurred there during the early to mid nineteenth century.

South Australia

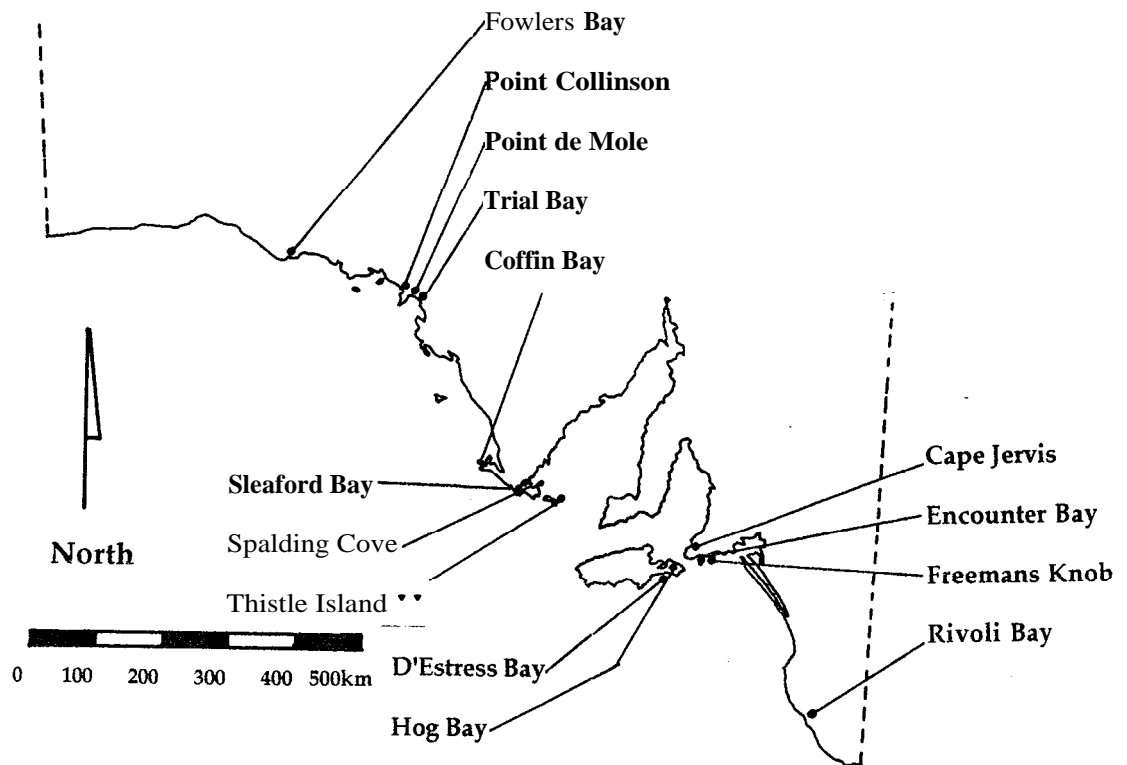


Figure 1.2
Location Of Land Based Whaling Activities
Positively Identified In South Australia

In addition to the activities previously mentioned, research into the shore and bay whaling industries operating along the South Australian coast during the nineteenth century has become an area of specific research interest to the archaeology department at Flinders University.

The result of this research focus will be a great deal of information being generated over the next few years in the form of undergraduate course work and post graduate research activities.

During the 1997 academic year, a number of whaling sites located on the Eyre Peninsula and west coast of South Australia have been recorded and studied by undergraduate field methods students from the university. These survey and recording exercises will prove to be invaluable to further research in the area once they are completed and become freely available.

Historical Weights, Measures And Terminology Associated With The Whaling Industry

Throughout the period associated with the whaling industry, a mixture of standard imperial weights and measures as well as specific whaling industry related terminology was in operation. In order to preserve some degree of continuity between the historical record and the present, it is necessary to provide some information as to nomenclature and measures to enable these terms to be understood.

Where it is appropriate, such as the reporting of archaeological surveys and the like, contemporary language and measures will be utilised for the sake of efficiency.

Whaling Terminology

The following is a list of frequently encountered whaling industry related terms, along with a concise explanation of their meaning and context:

Bible Leaves, Book Leaves and Sliver Pieces

Bible leaves book leaves or sliver pieces as they are also known are the final form which the whale blubber is cut into before being placed into the trypot. They were made by making parallel cuts almost all the way through the

horse pieces, thus increasing the surface area of the blubber in order to increase the efficiency of the trying out process.

Blanket Pieces

The term blanket pieces refers to the extremely large sheets of blubber removed from whale carcass in a spiral motion. The removal of the blanket pieces forms the first step in the cutting-in process.

Cutting In:

Cutting-In refers to the entire process of removing the whale blubber from the whale carcass in preparation for the trying out phase of the whaling process.

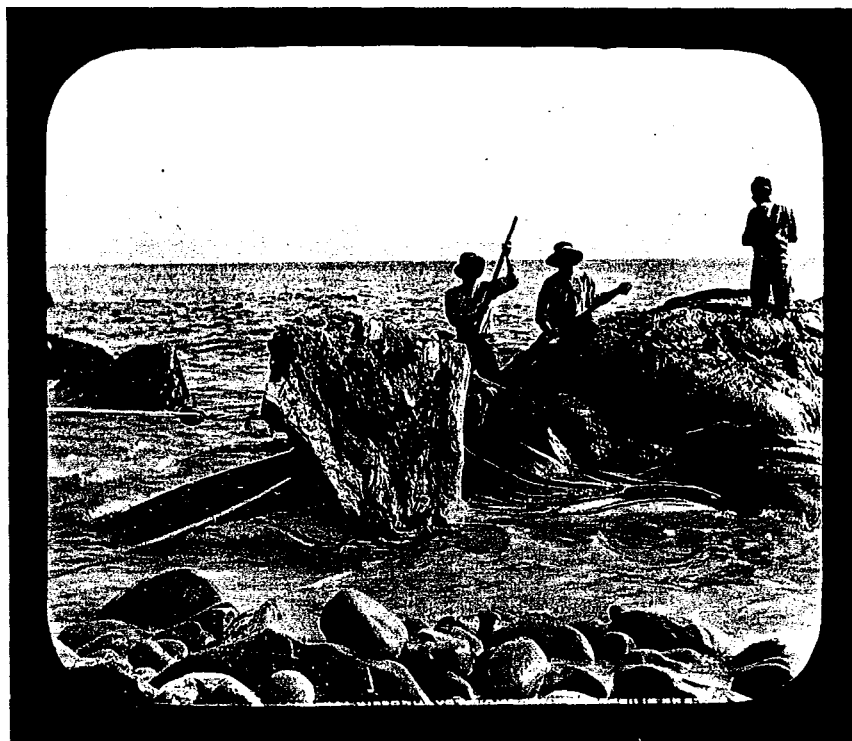


Figure 1.3
Cutting-In : Shore Based
(Queen Victoria Museum,Launceston Tasmania)

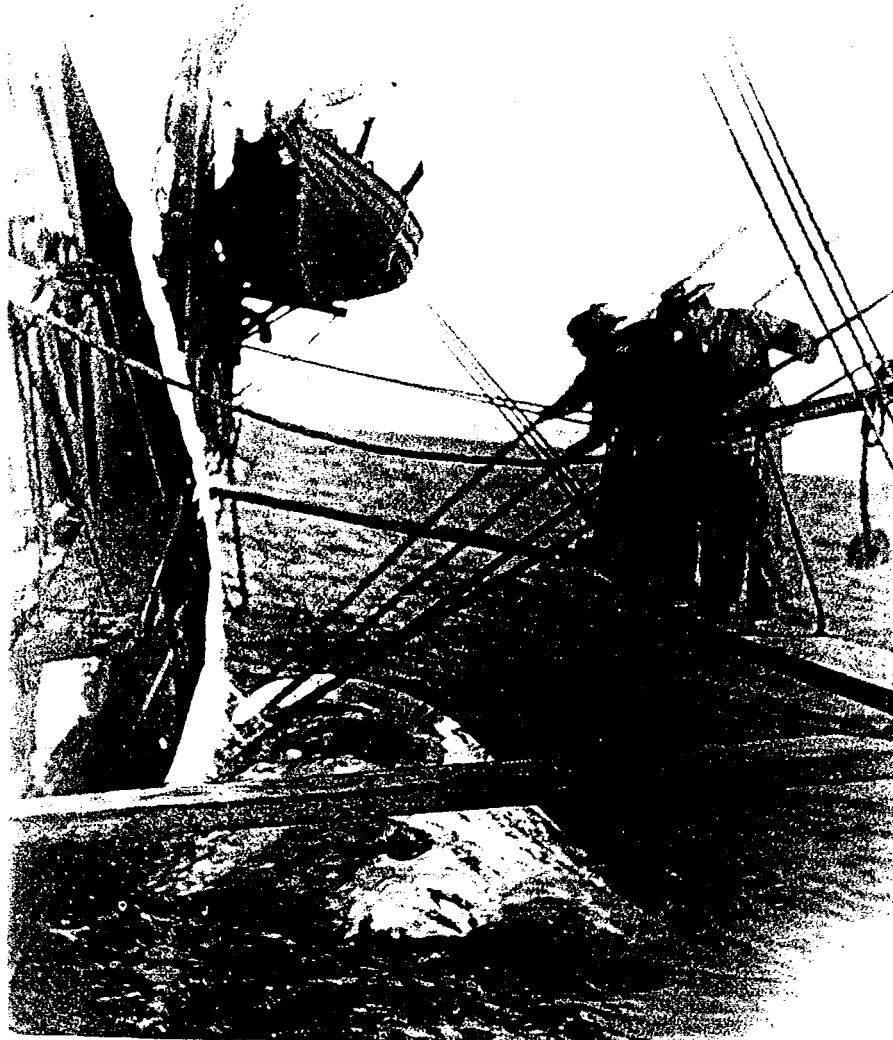


Figure 1.4
Cutting-In : Shipboard
(Crowther Collection: State Library Of Tasmania)

Fishery

The term fishery has multiple meanings which are dependant upon the context in which it is used. It can refer to the entire whaling industry, a specific whaling station or a geographically specific whale population.

Headsmen

The headsmen was in charge of the boat crew and was responsible for the harpooning and lancing of the whale. Due to the skill required and the responsibility undertaken, the position of headsmen was inferior only to the station supervisor or owner.

Horse Pieces

The horse pieces were made by cutting the large blanket pieces into strips approximately 15 inches long and 4 inches wide. They were referred to as horse pieces because they were then placed on the mincing horse to be cut into bible leaves.

Mincing Horse

The mincing horse was a simple wooden trestle upon which the horse pieces were placed to be cut up into bible leaves.



Figure 1.5
Mincing the Horse Pieces
(Crowther Collection: State Library Of Tasmania)

Pelagic

Within the context of the whaling industry, the term pelagic is used to refer to the self contained, ocean going whale ships which hunted the pelagic whales.

Scraps

The term "scraps" refers to the pieces of whale blubber after the oil has been boiled out of them. After the oil is removed from the blubber, a membranous material(not unlike honeycomb!) is left behind. This material was then utilised as fuel for the tryworks, thus ensuring a very smoky, smelly fire.

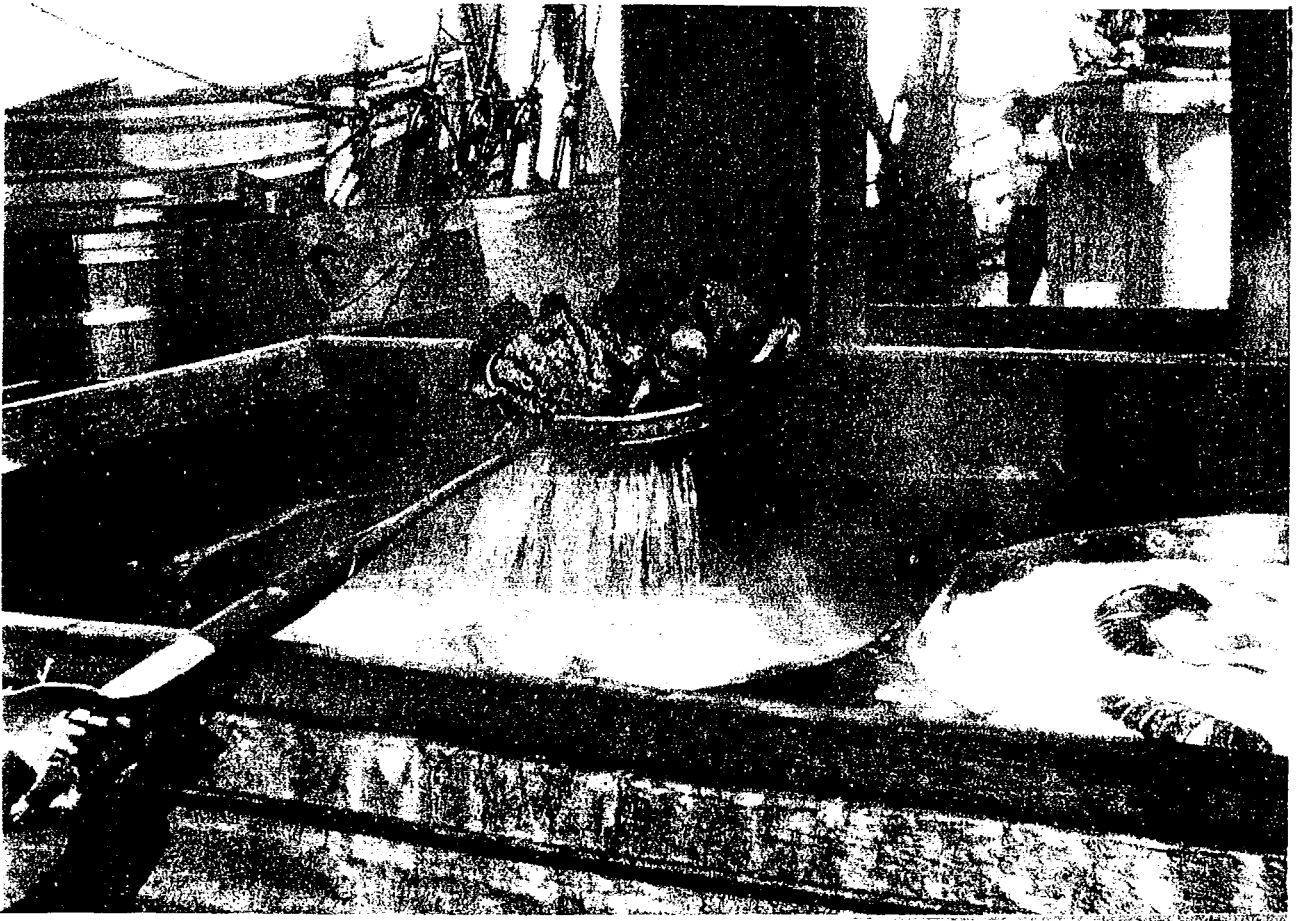


Figure 1.6
Skimming The Scraps
(Crowther Collection: State Library of Tasmania)

Sheer Legs

Long wooden beams used to provide a fulcrum, over which winch lines could be run to assist in peeling the blubber from the whale carcass during shore based cutting-in procedures.

Trypot

A large cast iron cauldron, typically of 150-250 gallon capacity, in which the whale blubber is heated in order to remove the oil. Trypots generally sat on three short legs and had on side flattened off so they could be placed close together. Many trypots also incorporated spouts running from one pot to another.

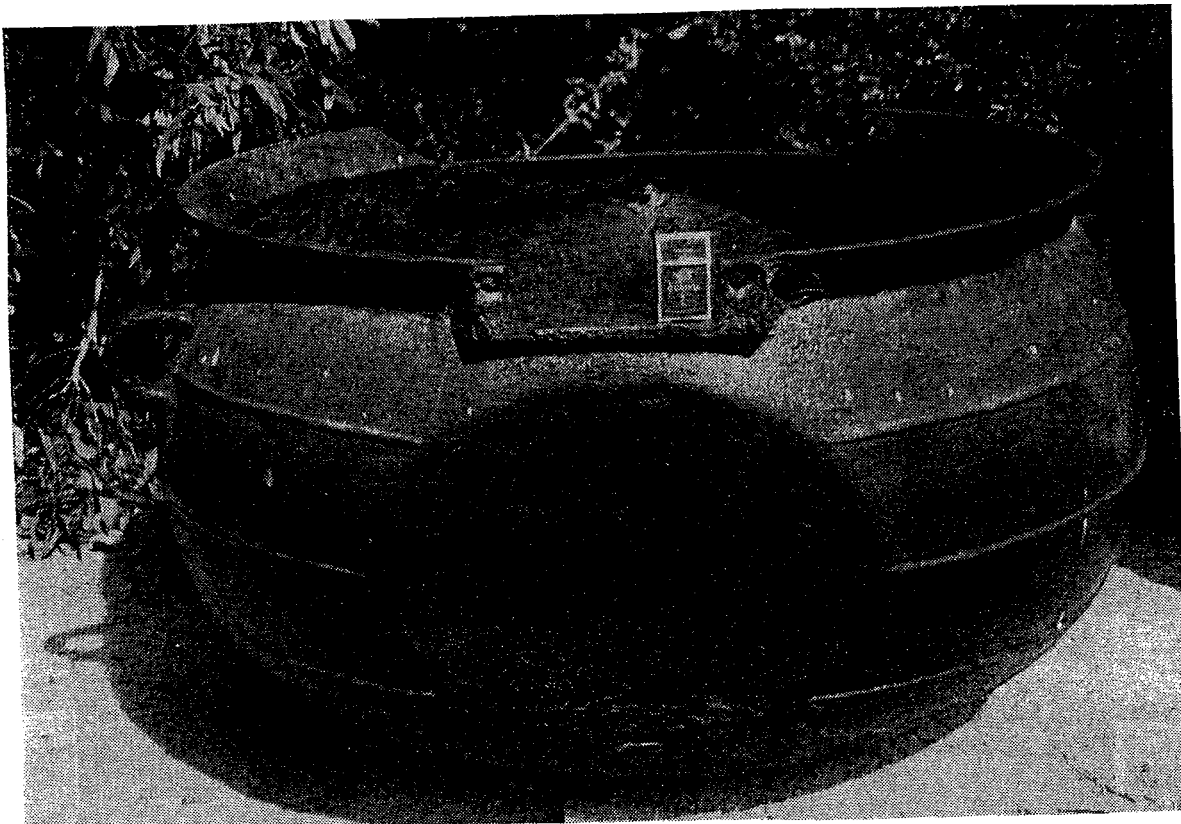


Figure 1.7
Typical Trypot

Tryworks

The tryworks are industrial complex built around the trypots. This usually consists of some sort of hearth structure to support the trypots and to enable

careful regulation of the fires to ensure the whale oil was not burned or damaged in any way.

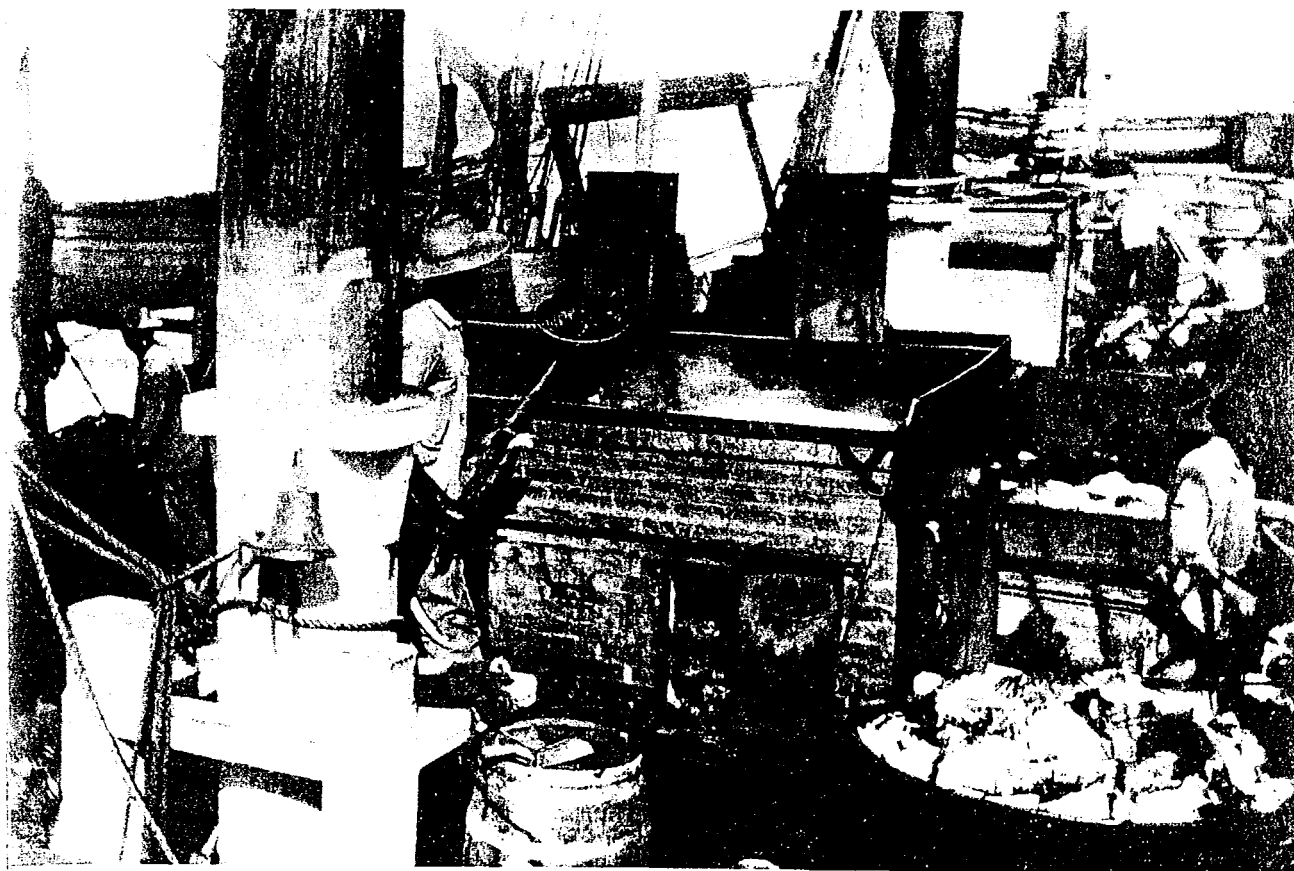


Figure 1.8
Shipboard Tryworks
(Crowther Collection: State Library Of Tasmania)

Trying Out

The term trying-out refers to the process of rendering down the whale blubber into oil through the application of heat.

Whaleboat

The term whaleboat refers to double ended open wooden boats; generally with a length of approximately 30 feet and a beam of 6 feet which were used in the pursuit, capture and transportation of whales.

Whalecraft

The term whalecraft is used to describe all pieces of equipment used in the pursuit, capture and processing of whales.

Historic Measurements

With specific relevance to the whaling industry are the measurements of tun and ton. The tun is the standard unit in which whale oil is measured, whilst the ton is the standard unit in which whalebone is measured.

Whilst the tun was the standard measure for whale oil and contained 252 gallons(1146litres), the standardised manner of its storage and transport was by barrel, the capacity of which was 36 gallons(164 litres). There were seven barrels to the tun.

Distance	1Foot	0.305Metres	
	1Yard	0.914Metres	
	1Chain	20.117Metres	
	1Mile	1.609Km	
Area	1Acre	0.405Hectares	
	Weight	1Pound	0.453Kg
		1Stone	6.35Kg
		1Cwt	50.8Kg
Volume	1Ton	1016Kg	
	1Gallon	4.55Litres	
	1Barrel	163.66Litres	
	1Tun	1146Litres	

Table 1.1
Imperial & Metric Measures
(After Gibbs,1995)

CHAPTER TWO

THE HISTORY OF THE GLOBAL WHALING INDUSTRY

Definition Of Specific Whaling Activities

The whaling industry is divided into three quite separate sub industries. The role and organisation of these individual sectors is of paramount importance in the understanding of the role of the whaling industry at any one point in time or space. Whilst all aspects of whaling related industries are interconnected, they do however, operate with differing technologies and expectations.

Pelagic Whaling

Ship based deep sea whaling, predominantly focusing upon the sperm whale (*Physeter catadon*), although other species were also taken when the opportunity arose, particularly those species such as the finback whale (*Balaenoptera physalus*) the oil of which could apparently be mixed in with sperm whale oil to bulk out the volume, thus greatly increasing the profitability of the voyage (Crowther, 1966).

Prior to the appearance of the steam powered whale chasers in the latter part of the nineteenth century, the advent of the pelagic whaler probably represents the greatest technological leap within the industry. The pelagic whaling vessels were very sturdy ocean going ships of between 250-300 tons in the case of British and colonial based whalers and up to 600 tons for some British and American vessels (Jones, 1981:25-26; Wace & Lovett, 1973).

The operation of these ships was extremely efficient. They had on board try works for rendering down the whale blubber into oil. Their almost total self sufficiency, except for water and firewood, allowed the crews of these ships to concentrate their efforts upon the income producing activity of whaling. From a business perspective, the pelagic whalers were a far more efficient utilisation of resources than were the various shore stations of the nineteenth century.

The pelagic whale fishery appears to have been by far the most profitable area of the overall industry. This was the case due to the extremely stable nature of the sperm whale oil market throughout the greater part of the nineteenth century (Chamberlain, 1988:20-25)

The principal products of the pelagic whaling industry were spermaceti from the head of the sperm whale which was used to manufacture high quality smokeless candles, sperm whale oil which was used for indoor lighting and the lubrication of fine machine parts and ambergris which was used as a fixative in perfumes and other cosmetics.

Bay Whaling

Bay whaling can be further sub-divided into two chronological categories, early and late.

The early bay whaling operations involved the usage of large boats to assist the whaleboats in the capture of the whale and in transporting the carcass back to the shore based trying out facilities. The main species targeted during bay whaling operations were right and bowhead whales (*Eubalaena glacialis* & *Balaena mystecetus*) in the northern hemisphere and right whales in the southern hemisphere.

The late period bay whaling operations revolved around opportunistic usage of down time by pelagic whalers. During the winter months a whale ship would be moored in a reasonably well protected bay or inlet. The whale ship would then be used as a base for hunting species such as right whales during the winter months when they move into the warm, sheltered coastal waters to calve.

The main produce of bay whaling operations was black whale oil and whalebone. Black whale oil was considered to be of poor quality compared with sperm whale oil. The whalebone referred to is the baleen plates taken from the mouth of the various species of baleen whales. Whalebone was used in situations where a light, strong and flexible material was required.

The bay whaling industry was not as profitable as the pelagic industry during the nineteenth century due to the large fluctuations in the price of both black (right whale) oil and whalebone on an almost year to year basis. In

the second half of the nineteenth century, the high price of whalebone, caused the economic value of a black whale to achieve parity with that of a sperm whale(Robinson,n.d;Chamberlain,1988:24). However, this \vas offset by the severely depleted black whale population by this stage(Robinson,n.d).



Figure 2.1

Baleen J Whalebone

(Crowther Collection: State Library Of Tasmania)

The principal use for black whale oil was as lighting oil for street lamps. black oil was considerably less valuable in the marketplace than sperm whale oil, principally because of its inability to produce a clean, smoke free flame when used as lamp oil. This in itself would not necessarily stopped its use for indoor lighting, however, the nauseous and in some cases toxic nature of the smoke would have.

Shore Based Whaling

Shore based whaling is the least capital intensive of all the whaling activities as it does not require the presence of an ocean going whale ship. This presents an interesting conundrum however, as it is the remains of the generally under financed and ill equipped shore based whaling stations which are most visible within the confines of the archaeological record, due to their need to place all whaling related facilities on the land.

What is also interesting, is that because of the similar nature and venues of both shore based and bay whaling operations, it is extremely difficult without the aid of corroborating documentary evidence to differentiate between these types of site within the archaeological record.

The principal products of the shore based whaling industry are the same as those for bay whaling.

Use Of Shore Based And Bay Whaling Terminology

As stated above, it is extremely difficult, without the aid of corroborating documentary evidence to differentiate between shore based whaling sites and bay whaling sites. Due to this uncertainty as to the actual nature of many of the whaling sites involved in this research, where a site does not possess accurate provenance regarding its nature, it will be referred to as a land based whaling site. Whilst the creation of yet another designation relating to whaling site typology is not necessarily desirable, the incorrect labelling of a site is considered to be of far greater detriment. This is particularly important when addressing the types of whaling sites encountered along the South Australian coastline west of Spalding Cove.

These sites in general have very little surviving information about their operation existing within historic records. Thus, often the only thing that is known about them is that they are located in an area where a whaling station is known to have existed. Due to this paucity of information, it is important that they are not simply ascribed status as either bay whaling sites or shore based sites because it is thought that is what they should be. It is prudent therefore, to refer to them as being land based sites until such time as their provenance can be ascertained.

Whale Species Hunted For Commercial Gain

Firstly, in order to have a whaling industry it is necessary to have an exploitable whale population.

As with most things in life, not all whales were considered equal by those involved in the whaling industry, with the result that some species were targeted more heavily than others. Although in many instances the whalers were happy to take whatever they could get their hands on.

The following is a not a complete list of commercially exploited whale species but rather a guide to those which were most important to whalers up till the middle to late nineteenth century, which is the period of interest associated with this **research project**.

Sperm Whale (*Physeter catadon*)

The sperm whale is a true open ocean whale which spends its life far out to sea with the result that until the technology was developed to enable the pelagic whaling ships to operate and process whales whilst at sea the sperm whale went almost completely untouched by whaling activities.

Northern Right Whale (*Eubalaena giacialis*)

Southern Right Whale (*Eubalaena australis*)

It was believed that the northern and southern right whales were actually two separate species of whale. Current scientific thinking now suggests that rather than being separate species, they are in fact geographically separate populations of the same species(Carwardine,1995:22).

Thus, the designation of *Eubalaena australis* has ceased to be used in the identification of right whales which frequent the coastal waters of Southern Australia as they are in fact simply " right whales".

The right whale is also known as the black whale and developed the name of right whale because they were considered to be the right whales to catch as they were relatively slow swimming and did not sink after they had been harpooned and killed. Right whales were also considered easy prey by the whalers due to the fact that the whale calves were a particularly easy

targeted. Once the calf was killed or injured, the mothers would not leave them making it much easier for the whalers to capture and kill them.

Humpback Whale (*Megaptera Novaenlgiae*)

The humpback whale is the largest of the baleen whales and has been the focus of extensive commercial predation, principally by pelagic whalers and to a lesser extent by land based operations.

Finback Whale (*Balaeoptera physalus*)

The finback is a large, ocean dwelling baleen whale which was predominantly hunted by the pelagic whaling fleets in association with the sperm whale.

Bowhead Whale (*Balaena mytecetus*)

The Bowhead whale is not unlike a very large Right Whale and found generally in sub arctic waters. The bowhead proved to be the focus of the Dutch and British whale fisheries located at Spitsbergen in the seventeenth century.

Evolution Of The Whaling Industry

The initial expression of whaling as a European based industry, as opposed to a primarily opportunistic exploitation of whale strandings and the like, is attributed to the Basque whale fisheries beginning in the eleventh century. This first commercial whaling enterprise began with local exploitation of black, or right whales(*Eubalaena glacialis*).

This involved pursuing the right whales in small open boats during their annual southerly migration when they visited the relatively warm, sheltered waters of the Bay of Biscay to calve (Evans,1993:14; Gibbs1995;Jenkins,1921:38).

What is particularly interesting about the whaling activities of the 11th century Basque's is that although pre-dating the various Australian shore based whale fisheries by some 700 years, both the method of operation and the whale species exploited are almost identical as those of the colonial shore based whalers(see figures 2.2,2.3&2.4).

By the fifteenth century, the Basque whaling operations had moved from the old to the new world. Along the Labrador coast of what is now Canada, Basque whaling stations were set up during the summer months (Gibbs, 1995:6; Evans, 1993:14). This endeavour is very similar to that which occurred in Australia during the nineteenth century as it involved the setting up of semi-permanent stations in remote locations which were then supplied by ship.

In 1611 the British and later the Dutch began to exploit the population of bowhead whales (*Balaena mysticetus*) which frequented the Arctic waters off Spitsbergen (Evans, 1993:14; Jenkins, 1921:38). The procedure for whaling at the Spitsbergen fishery is depicted in a series of drawings by Hans Egede entitled "Beschryving van Oud-Groenland" and appears to follow the same procedure as that used by the Basques along the Labrador coast during the fifteenth century.

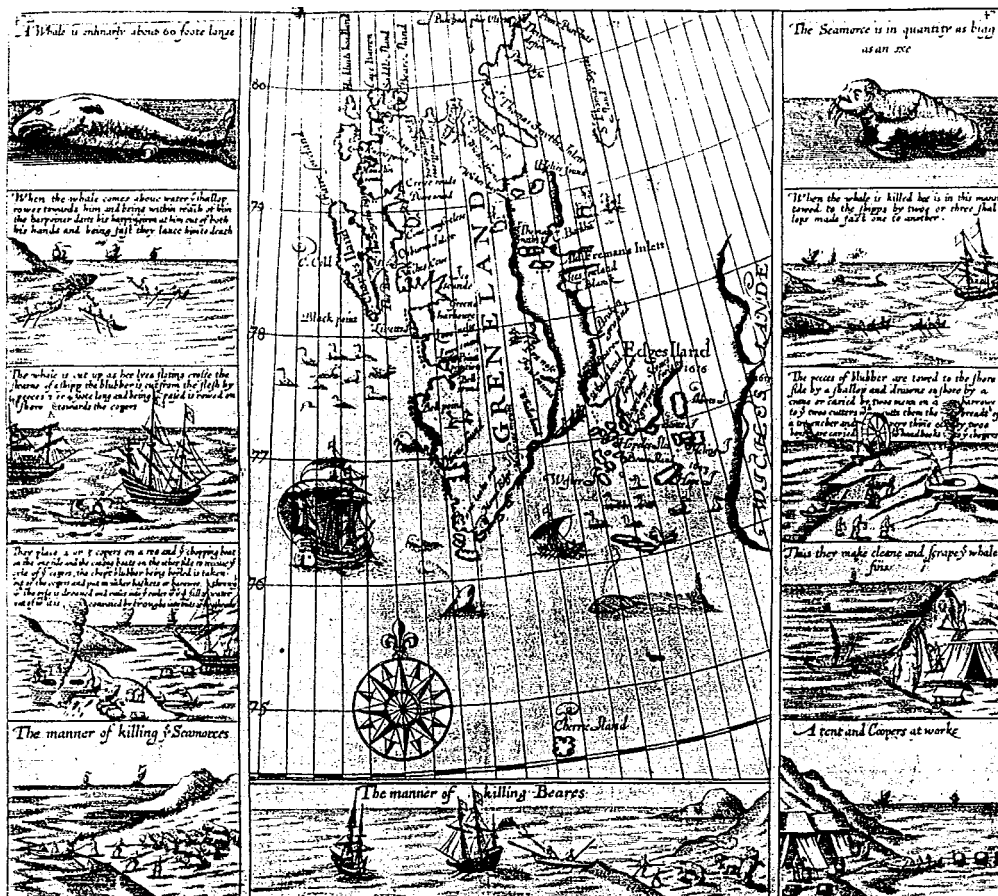


Figure 2.2
Map Of The Spitsbergen Fishery
(G.F.Dow: Whaleships and Whaling)

<p>.A] e is ordinarily about 60f one tone</p> <p>_____d _____</p>	<p>The 'whale is cut up as bee !yesflotk g crofse the fleame of a^hipp thrhlutberu tfr'ol theflcffi by peeces 3 or 14 ote logy and betnj u raid is rowed on %Jhore towardrthe corn .</p> <p>/1 _____ AID _____ C"</p>
<p>y/l./Ij/.V</p> <p>_____ e'</p>	<p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>
<p>When the whale comes about walery rosves towards him and beuewithin reach o lrtm the bargainer dartshisbap i prron a thi tn ouzo o th his hands and &tin JJ" they lance bintodeath</p>	<p>?b place 2.or 3_c on, a we and, choppily boat once oneftdeandthc coo bate on theotherJulete rcceiuej og le al y cojps, the chops blubberbe^y lw ed is ken b out'tle co^rrsa'ndputth kerhActsor''atoms hrord w then e is dreaued and nerves into caoler w u fira ater out o w tt is' cont,aud , troughs t : liso' ..4</p>
<p>_____ A-</p>	<p>_____ lt €: f^T^</p> <p>_____ 4-1</p> <p>VWS</p>

[19] WHALING AT SPITZBERGEN IN 1611. PLATE I.

Figure 2.3
Whaling At Spitsbergen-Detail
(G.F.Dow: Whaleships and Whaling)

<p><i>r-/hen tbe'whale ts killed bee is in ^{this}'nano towed to thebipps by twoe or three'hal: lops made fas one to another.</i></p>	<p><i>This they make cleane and ferapey wAde ftlts</i></p>
<p><i>The recces o blubber arc towed to the ore fide by a alto and druwne oilhor ► a crane or carted b^b twoe menu on .. barrowe toy tiVOeentter.rt .,c utts them tbe--,, beat o a · ` cbcran· ' tarz·thine . e tuwe bqy asr Carr ^r·d w handbooks toy ebojperr</i></p>	<p><i>te.ntanti Carpets at Ivor e</i></p>
<p>.....</p>	<p><i>at chi</i></p>

[20] WHALING AT SPITZBERGEN IN 1611. PLATE II.

Figure 2.4
Whaling At Spitsbergen-Detail
(G.F.Dow:Whaleships and Whaling)

Prior to the seventeenth century, commercial whaling activities had been generated from European countries. However, from 1640 the nation which was to become the dominant force in the whaling industry began operations with the establishment of shore based whaling stations on Long Island on the Atlantic coast of North America(Ingalls,1987:15;Dakin,1963:41).

The next major advancement occurred as a direct result of the success and effectiveness of the shore based whale fisheries operating along the migratory routes of various species of whale. To combat this, larger and larger whaling ships were used, with their form changing from small open boats to sizeable ocean going ships. However, even with this increase in effective range, the reduction in whale population had been so severe that it was no longer economically viable to hunt only those whales which could be processed at the shore based trying out facilities(Ingalls,1987:20).

In an attempt to broaden the whale populations which could be exploited, the larger whaling ships began to be constructed so as to have the tryworks situated on board the vessel. This dramatic technological change brought about the age of the pelagic whalers which dominated the industry throughout its zenith during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (Evans,1993:15;Ingalls,1987:20). This alteration to pelagic whaling also changed the target population from right and bowhead whales to sperm whales and rorquals(*Balenoptera Spp.*) which had previously gone almost untouched by the shore based whalers.

The initial fisheries exploited by the pelagic whaling fleet were those of the North Atlantic(Evans,1993:15). In this way it can be seen that the advent of pelagic whaling was simply an extension of the earlier shore based activities. However, it was not long before the pelagic whaling fleets were harvesting the waters off the coast of South America. In turn, it was only a matter of time before the pelagic whale fleets would travel around Cape Horn and enter the whaling grounds of the South Pacific(Wace&Lovett,1973:14). This occurrence can be seen as nothing but a logical progression , in the same way that pelagic whaling was the logical progression from bay whaling which in turn was the logical progression from shore based whaling.

Throughout the eighteenth century, the competition within the pelagic whaling industry was fierce with French, British, American , Dutch and

German fleets " all competing for a share of the industry(Gibbs,1995:41;Wace&Lovett,1973:12-14). Toward the end of the eighteenth century, it was the British whalers who became the dominant force in the North Atlantic fishery. This came about due to two primary factors.

Firstly, the American whaling fleet was to all intents and purposes eliminated during the war of independence and more specifically during the British offensive of 1775. The obvious result of this being that there were very few American whale ships left which were able to compete in the North Atlantic fishery.

Secondly, and of particular importance in the demise of the European whalers was an act passed by the British Parliament in 1784, the purpose of which was to impose an import duty of 18 pounds per tun on whale oil entering England which was not from British whalers(Gibbs,1995:42). The overall effect of this act, was to deny access to all but British whalers, to the most important market for whale oil at the . time i e. the British market(Gibbs,1995:42).

This domination of the marketplace did not however completely destroy the American whaling industry. There was still a domestic demand which they were able to fulfil as well as export markets in Europe. Although the largest and most profitable marketplace was denied to the American whalers, they were able to survive and to slowly rebuild their pelagic whaling fleet.

However, it was not until after the Anglo-American war of 1812-14, that the American whaling fleet was able to make serious inroads into the South Sea Fishery which it did, effectively dominating the industry through the sheer **number of American vessels operating in the fishery** (Wace&Lovett,1973:14;Hosking,1973:6).

It is well documented that pelagic whaler *Emilia* , owned by Samuel Enderby and Sons of London was the first British whaler to enter the South Seas Fishery(Evans,1993:15;Wace&Lovett,1973:12). The *Emilia*'s voyage was successful, with an abundance of sperm whales being reported.

The *Emilia* had a considerable number of American crew members aboard, who no doubt wasted little time informing their fellow American whalers as to the nature of the south seas fishery. The end result of the *Emila's* succesful voyage into the South Pacific was the opening up of what was to become known as the "South Sea Fishery".

What this brief historical synopsis of the global whaling industry highlights, is the holistic and geographically evolutionary nature of the industry. Each chronological step which the industry has made has come about as a result of the industry's past actions. Unlike other endeavours, the whaling industry has only changed its focus when it has been forced to by its own actions. The only reason that the Basques stopped hunting in European waters and moved to the New World was because they had extinguished the right whale population. Similarly, the only reason the pelagic whaling fleets moved from the North Atlantic to the South Atlantic and then the South Pacific was because they had to. This was the case because they had eliminated the commercially viable whale population in each area in turn.

Whilst the industry in a geographical sense was continually evolving, technologically it made use of old and new techniques simultaneously. This occurred primarily because as the whaling industry followed in the footsteps of colonial expansion, it was exposed to whale populations of a type which had not been seen for centuries in the Northern Hemisphere. The result of this is that whilst the pelagic fleet which represented the peak of nineteenth century whaling industry technology was operating in the South Sea Fishery; techniques identical to those of the eleventh century Basque whalers were being re-learnt and utilised in the infant Australian shore based whaling industry.

CHAPTER THREE

WHALING ACTIVITIES IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Areas of South Australia Utilised By Land Based Whalers

Throughout the first half of the nineteenth century, extensive use was made of the South Australian coastline for the pursuit and capture of whales. The predominant target was the right whale which migrates along the South Australian coastline each year. This migration occurs between April and September and is generally referred to in this thesis as the whaling season. The cause of this migration is for the right whales to move into the shallow and relatively warm and sheltered bays which dot the South Australian coastline in order to give birth. Due to the fact that right whales have been known to frequent almost the entire length of the South Australian coastline, land based whaling stations were operated along almost the entire coastline. The easternmost being located at Rivoli Bay in the southeast and Fowlers Bay in the west.

The west coast of South Australia was also an important location for non-colonial and non South Australian pelagic whaling vessels. The log books of several Tasmanian pelagic whale ships show that they spent a considerable amount of time cruising up and down the South Australian coastline in pursuit of whales. Interestingly, the logbooks do not mention the whalers going on shore to collect supplies of water and or firewood which would have been required due to the length of the voyages undertaken. What is also of interest, is the fact that the logbooks quite often do not make any mention of the capture and processing of right whales; yet at the end of the voyage, the ships discharge a quantity of black whale oil, in addition to the principal cargo of sperm whale oil(Logbooks of *Flying Childers*, *Terror*, *Australasian Packet*, *Runnymede*, *Islander*). The west coast of South Australia was also a popular haunt for American and French pelagic whaling vessels, with many of them "wintering" or bay whaling at various locations along the coast during the right whale season(Parsons,1990:22).

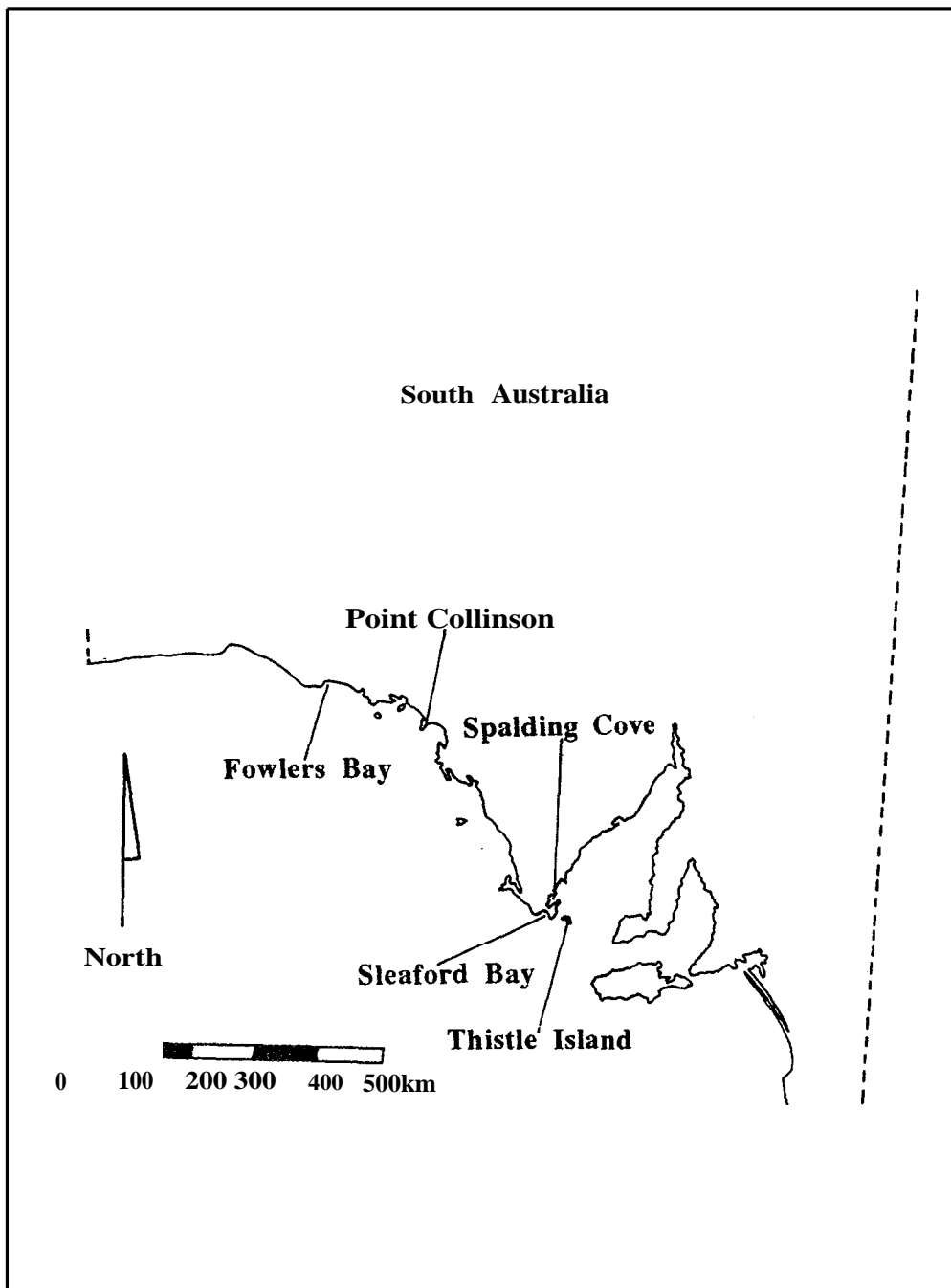


Figure 3.1
Verified South Australian Land Based
Whaling Locations

Who Were The South Australian Whalers?

As stated in the introduction, one of the aims of this thesis is the exposure, or discovery of the entrepreneurs who were behind the expansion of land based whaling activities into South Australia. Previous whaling industry related research carried out has tended to focus predominantly on those entrepreneurs with definite South Australian connections (Austral Archaeology,1993; Kostoglou&McCarthy,1991 ;Hosking,1973).

The earliest shore based whaling operations in the Australian colonies began in Tasmania, or Van Dieman's Land as it was called at that time. The first recorded Tasmanian shore based whaling station was set up by William Collins at Ralph's bay near Hobart. The station was established some time prior to September 1805 as the Reverend Samuel Knopwood records the site in his diary dated 27 September 1805 as being fully operational(Evans,1993a:19;1993b:10). Due to this early entry into the land based whaling industry, it is not unrealistic to assume that some of those entrepreneurs associated with the Tasmanian stations would expand their interests to the south coast of mainland Australia(Dakin,1934:42).

Hobart was very definitely the dominant port for Tasmanian based whalers, both pelagic (Chamberlain,1988:45-55) and land based(Kostoglou,1995a:2). In both instances, the domination of the industry is based upon the size of the whaling activities being operated out of Hobart. Whilst Hobart was the largest base for whaling activities, it was not the only Tasmanian location from which both pelagic and land based whaling activities were conducted(Dakin,1934:43). William Dakin had the following to say about the activities and nature of the whaling entrepreneurs operating out of the northern Tasmanian port of Launceston:

"We must not forget the men of Launceston in connection with Bay whaling although their deeds are shrouded in secrecy compared with the stories of Hobart Town. It was the Launceston men who made the southern coast of Australia their happy hunting ground. They were the men who reached Western Australia and they initiated the first settlements on what was eventually to be Victorian coast."

(Dakin,1934:43)

In logistical terms, what Dakin suggests in the above passage makes perfect sense. Relying upon sea travel to establish and then service the land based whaling stations on the mainland, Launceston merchants were considerably closer to the coast of what is now South Australia and Victoria than were their counterparts.

The possibility of land based and in particular shore based whaling stations being set up and maintained on the pre-colonial shores of South Australia by Launceston based whalers is particularly exciting. Up until this point, the only known land based whaling station on the mainland coast to be set up and maintained by Launceston based whalers, was the station or stations located at Portland Bay on the south-west Victorian coast. As a note, whilst Portland bay is the only mainland site ever mentioned to have been occupied by Launceston whalers, this fact is not elucidated in any of the published or non-published material which has been reviewed during the research and compilation of this thesis.

One of the elusive Launceston merchants to which Dakin refers, is Henry Reed. Henry Reed was born in Yorkshire and arrived in Launceston in 1827 aged 21. By 1831, Reed is described as being well established in several businesses including the whaling industry, both directly as a result of his involvement whaling activities and indirectly as a merchant selling oil on the London market.

As the owner of the Spalding Cove whaling station, Henry Reed appears to be responsible for the first shore based whaling station to be operated in South Australia, some seven years prior to the founding of the colony. This is not suprising as many of the whaling stations which operated on the South Australian coast were not set up by people who are generally considered to have serious ties with the South Australian colony.



HENRY REED

Figure 3.2
Henry Reed
(Queen Victoria Museum, Launceston Tasmania)

In addition to Henry Reed, Captain William Young of Hobart Town was heavily involved along with his various business partners in land based whaling activities on the west coast of South Australia. The station's that Captain Young is known to have established are Streaky Bay and Trial Bay. As with Henry Reed, the activities of Captain William Young are far less well known those of the people associated with the whaling stations located east of Spalding Cove on the Eyre Peninsula. The fact that these remote west coast whaling stations were supplied and controlled out of Tasmania also suggests that the statistical returns which relate to these stations may well not be particularly accurate.



Figure 3.3
Captain William Young
(W.Lawson:Whale Ships of Tasmania)



Figure 3.4
Captain Richard Copping
(Crowther Collection: State Library Of Tasmania)

Captain Richard Copping was involved in the daily operation of the Fowlers Bay whaling station during the 1843 and 1844 whaling seasons. During both of these years it was utilised by the pelagic whaler Captain Copping was working on, as a winter bay whaling base(Copping,n.d:20-22).

Economic Impact Of Whaling Activities

The whaling industry, in all its forms is considered by many researchers to be one of the first economic enterprises to be established in the various Australian colonies(Jones&Staniforth,1996:1;Kostoglou&McCarthy,1991:1-2; Hosking,1973:1). Undoubtedly, other forms of industry and commerce also began operation during the early days of the new colonies. It was however, the whaling and sealing industries which provided them with their first export earnings(Little,1969:21).

Contribution Of Whaling Activities To Colonial Expansion

As has been stated previously, the whaling industry was one of the first contributors to the gross national product of colonial Australia. Looked at from a more parochial viewpoint; the whaling industry provided the fledgling colony of South Australia with much needed export earnings.

			# Q
Whale Oil	3450	ot 8500	45500
Whale Bone	1. 820	et 315	1410
Wool	4 770	350	4 8740
Total	01.5040	t 9165	.1,15,650
Whale Products-% of Total	84.7%	96.2%	44%

Table 3.1

South Australian Exports 1838 - 1840

(Source: South Australian Government Gazette,15 February 1844)

As can be seen in the above table, during the first few years of the South Australian colony it is the whaling industry which provided the colony with any serious levels of export income.

The year 1838 was the first year of serious, documented whaling operations in South Australia. The official government statistics show that whale oil exports for 1838 generated a revenue of 3,450 pounds and whalebone exports a further 820 pounds. In total, whaling related exports for 1838 totalled 4270. The only other export earnings for the year 1838 were from wool sales and totalled 770 pounds. By comparing these two figures, it is quite obvious to see the importance to the growth and prospects of the fledgling colony which the whaling industry provided.

In 1839, the results show an even greater disparity between whale products and other exports. The total export income from whale products in 1839 was 8815 pounds, 8500 being from whale oil and 315 from whalebone. as with the previous season the only other recorded export revenue was 350 pounds generated as a result of wool sales.

The 1840 season is of great interest because in the space of twelve months, the situation was almost completely reversed. The export figures for 1840 show that total export income produced from whale products was 6,910 pounds, 5,500 being from whale oil and 1,410 from whalebone. As with the 1838 and 1839 seasons, the only other recorded export revenue came from wool sales. However these had jumped from and insignificant 3,50 pounds in the 1839 season to a quite staggering 8,740 pounds for 1840.

Only three years after export statistics began to be kept and a scant four years since the official colony of South Australia had been founded, whaling was no longer the prime export earner. Whaling had been replaced by an industry which truly benefited from capital and labour investment. The wool industry, within certain parameters relies upon the exploitation of a resource which is relatively simple to cultivate ie. sheep. On the other hand, the whaling industry while being able to return enormous profits during its initial phase, began to falter once the relatively non-renewable resource of right whales had their populations severely depleted.

Whale oil	ot 2780	863	i 4669	3375	1390	/ 2205
Whalehon	745	108	, ^.1566	.590	d^ 544	699
wool	X35,500	A.22,035	145,568	442,769	72,235	82,972
Copper	---	---	° 23	-e 4009	,i.17,179	x,58,395
Others	1539	6073	414,334	.31,525	40,452	*.46,398
Total	40.564	29,079	0 66,160	44 82,268	131,800	(190,669
Whaling % of Total	8.7%	3.33%	9.42%	4.8%	1.46%	1.5%

Table 3.2
South Australian Exports 1841 - 1846

(Source 1841-43: South Australian Government Gazette, 15 February 1844)

(Source 1844-45: South Australian Statistical Returns, 1846)

(Source 1846: South Australian Statistical Returns, 1848)

As can be seen by examining table 3.2, the whaling industry never recovered its early position as the dominant export earner for the South Australian colony. In fact as time went by, the whaling industry very quickly became a virtual non contributor to the colony's export earnings. What is quite significant is that this decline in the whaling industry's proportion of export income is caused predominantly by the growth of terrestrial industries such as grazing and mining. The actual monetary value of whaling products exported from the South Australian colony, whilst suffering some seasonal variation stays relatively stable during the 1838 - 1846 period. Therefore the decline in the significance of the South Australian land based whaling industry was not caused by mis-management and inefficiency, rather by the success of the colony itself.

Importance Of The South Australian Whaling Industry

An impartial analysis of the returns from the whaling industry in South Australia do not, on the surface justify its being considered an industry which was of prime importance to the economic health and welfare of the

fledgling colony. It was however, of great importance to the growth, both in economic and geographical terms of South Australia. This importance is the result of several factors which are equally valid for all the Australian colonies which possessed land based whaling activities.

Firstly, whilst the export revenue of the whaling industry was quickly surpassed by that of pastoral and mining interests, it had provided a **substantial export income at a critical time in the colonies genesis**(Little,1969:21). What the returns of the whaling industry had done, was to provide a way of financing some of the imports which the colony desperately required(Little,1969:21). In other words, the whaling industry assisted in keeping the South Australian colony's balance of payments under control.

Secondly, the whaling industry had caused a rapid expansion into areas well outside the zone occupied and explored by agriculturists and pastoralists during the first few years of the colony. As a result, much information with regards to the nature of South Australia's west coast and Eyre peninsula was initially derived from the returned whaling parties.

The earliest example of this utilisation of whalers knowledge in the settlement of South Australia by Edward Gibbon Wakefield in a series of publications aimed at convincing the British government as to the viability of the proposed colony of South Australia(South Australian Land Company,1832;Wakefield,1832&1834). In these publications, a statement from Mr Frederick Hamborg (or Homburg depending upon which edition is being quoted) is used to describe the landforms and conditions around the Spalding Cove area near present day Port Lincoln. Why this statement is of interest in this context is because Hamborg's statement revolves around his most recent visit to Spalding Cove, the purpose of which was to deposit a party of whalers along with their supplies etc. for the 1832 whaling season.(Wakefield,1832:70;1834:70).

Economic Viability Of Whaling Activities

The branch of whaling which is of specific interest in the South Australian instance is that of shore based whaling, as it appears to be the most popular method employed here. It is important to examine the motivation of the whaling station proprietors and also to examine what actually happened to

them as a result of their involvement in the shore based whaling industry. Did they actually make a profit from their investment and if so, was it an acceptable level of return?. It has been previously stated in this thesis that the shore based whaling activities did in fact make a significant contribution to the success of the South Australian economy as a result of the export income which they generated. Unfortunately for the primary investors in the enterprise, because the overall effect of the whaling activities provided a nett gain to the South Australian economy, it does not mean that they actually made any significant profits themselves.

The following is a brief account relating to the financial status of some figures associated with the South Australian whaling industry.

Henry Reed, the Launceston merchant responsible for the establishment of South Australia's first shore based whaling station knew when to get out of the whaling industry and did so in 1836(Fysh,1973:28). Henry Reed was phenomenally successful in all aspect of his business life as well as being heavily involved in the Baptist church. Whaling provided the foundation on which his fortune was built.

The South Australian Company was engaged in both the South Australian land based whaling industry and the pelagic whaling industry. The South Australian Company divested itself of all interest in whaling and whaling related activities by the end of the 1841 whaling season after having failed to return a profit on its various whaling enterprises(Hosking,1973: Chptl:53).

J.B. Hack and Henry Watson, partners in Hack & Company took over the South Australian Comapany operations at the end of the 1841 season. By the end of the 1842 season, both were financially "embarrassed" and had to abandon their share in Hack&Comapany to their partners Jacob Hagen and Captain Hart(Hosking,1973: Chpt2: 4).

Suffice to say that in the research undertaken for this thesis, the stories of the South Australian Company and Hack & Comapany are far more representative of what the realistic returns of the land based whaling industry were in the South Australian instance. Those like Henry Reed, who were financially better off for their involvement in South Australian whaling, were so because they knew when to sell out of the industry.

CHAPTER FOUR

WEST COAST WHALING STATIONS

Location Of Land Based Whaling Stations

The specific sites which have been included for study in this thesis are located along the South Australian coastline, from Spalding Cove in the east; to Fowlers Bay(see figure 4.1) in the west. This area is generally referred to as the west coast of Eyre Peninsula and the far west coast.

Spalding Cove

Spalding Cove is located 13 kilometres south-east of the township of Port Lincoln on the northern side of the Jussieu Peninsula. The Jussieu Peninsula is a small south-easterly projection extending from the south-eastern tip of the Eyre Peninsula. Spalding Cove is the most easterly site which is included in this study.

Spalding Cove is also the oldest land based whaling station known to have operated along the South Australian coastline on a semi-permanent basis.

Site History

Very little is known about the operations of the whaling station located at Spalding Cove. In fact, until the result of research carried out as part of this study, most researchers believed that the Spalding Cove whaling station did not exist, with the general belief being that South Australia's whaling industry commenced at Encounter Bay in 1837(Hosking,1973:Chptl:7). Prior to this study, the most concerted attempt to verify the site's existence was an aerial survey, during which no discernible remains were located(Kostoglou&McCarthy,1991:22).

The only documentary evidence which actually states that there was a whaling station located at Spalding Cove is a statement made by a Frederick Hamborg (or Homburg depending on the text) which was used extensively by E.G.Wakefield and the South Australian Association during the lobbying of the British Government to legislate in favour of the proposed South Australian Colony.

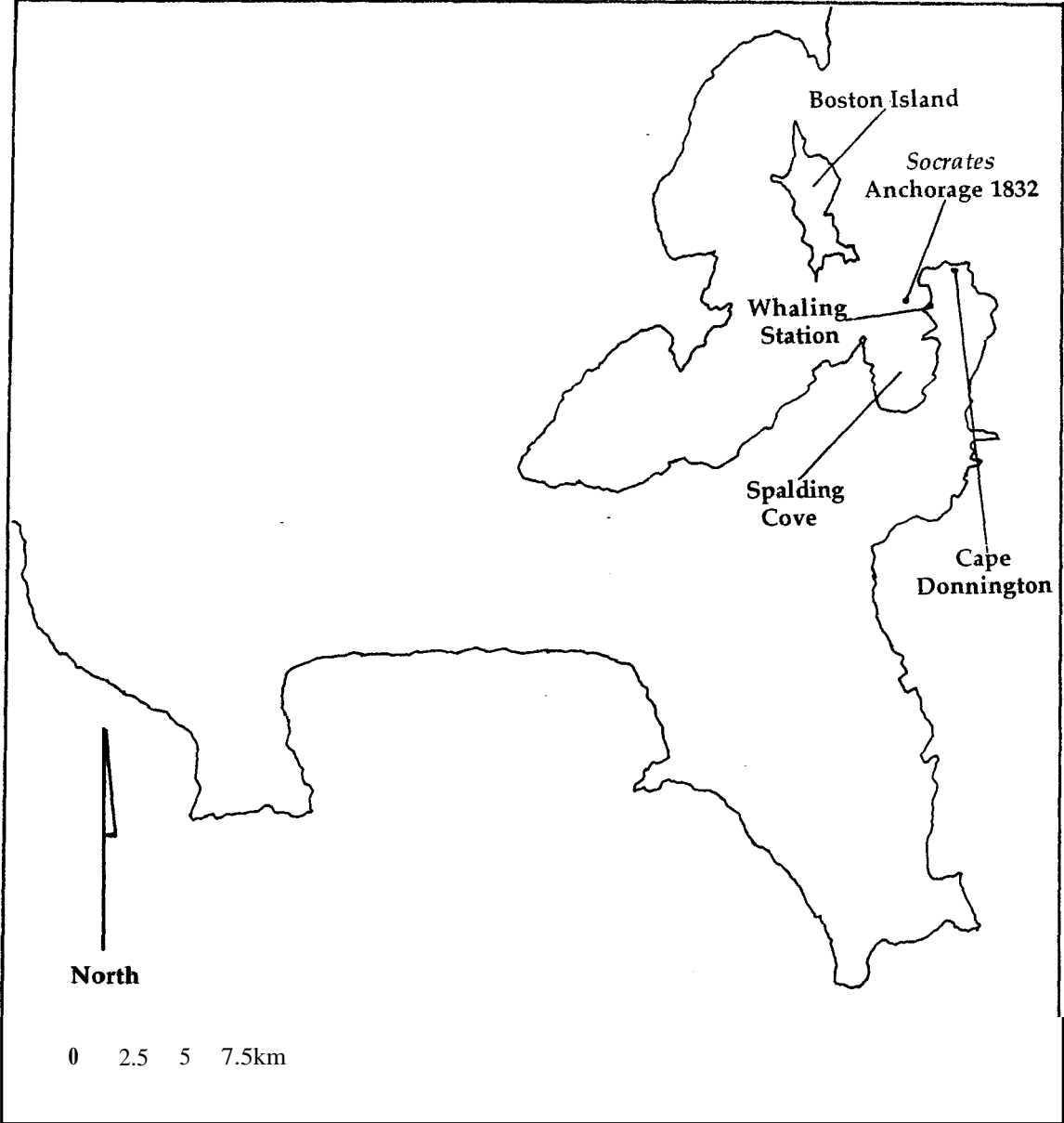


Figure 4.1
Location of Spalding Cove Whaling Station

The following is the text of the original version of Frederick Hamborg's Statement, made to to the South Australian Association on 26 December 1833:

" Q. Have you visited the South Coast of Australia?

A. Yes, I visited Port Lincoln in May 1832, in the Socrates brig, belonging to Mr Reed, of Launceston.

Q. Where did you anchor?

A. On the Eastern side of Spalding Cove in seven fathoms water-it was good holding ground, being blue clay.

Q. Is the anchorage safe from winds?

A. Yes, it is safe from all winds, being nearly landlocked.

Q. How long were you sailing from Launceston?

A. We went right before the south-east wind to the harbour, and were only two days and a half on the voyage; the usual passage is about six days. When we returned, the wind blew from north-west, and we made the passage in the same time. We sailed to the southward of Kangaroo Island.

Q. For what purpose did you go to Port Lincoln?

A. To land a whaling party consisting of thirty persons with five boats, and the necessary implements for catching fish.

Q. Is it usual for parties to be left on shore with a view to catching whales?

A. Yes, the men whom I left had been over there during the three previous seasons; they had left their huts standing.

Q. Do they commonly succeed in this object?

A. Yes, whales are very commonly met with close in-shore - they are the black whales; the sperm whales are rarely met with, being further to the southward. Seals also are very numerous.

Q. Are any other kinds of fish abundant in the neighbourhood?

A. Yes, in great numbers and variety; I found the following amongst others. Grey mullet from 7 to 8lbs. in weight, red mullet from 2 to 3lbs; soles, mackerel, herrings, snappers, jew-fish, salmon, trumpeters, parrot-fish, sting-ray, muscles, oysters, cockles, rock rod(sic), turtle, &c.

Q. Did you find any fresh water?

A. Yes, abundance; two streams of fine water as clear as crystal run into Spalding Cove from the southward; they amply supplied us. The sealers depend for their supply of water on these sources.

Q. Did you go far inland?

A. About a mile and a half.

Q. What was the appearance of the country?

A. The country resembled port Augusta; there was plenty of wood, some of it very large. Amongst the trees I saw were Cedar, which would cut into two feet plank; beefwood, tulip wood, stringy bark very large, huon pine, and iron bark. There was plenty of wood which would answer for ship and boat building, and for spars.

Q. Was there any grass?

A. Yes, plenty of grass, about knee deep, it was quite green and numbers of kangaroos and other animals were feeding on it, the kangaroos were large and well fed, they were as fat as any I have ever seen.

Q. Did you see any natives?

A. Yes, they were very numerous and peaceful, they assisted us in carrying water to the ship and in other matters. For a little tobacco and with kind treatment I am convinced they would work well.

Q. Did you find any white people settled there?

A. No; but some had settled themselves on Kangaroo Island; they had, however, been very troublesome, and the Government therefore sent a brig down about two years ago and took them away. There are none there now, nor on the neighbouring islands.

I have read over this evidence, and declare it to be correct.

(Signed) Fred. Hamborg."

(Wakefield,1834:70-71)

It is obvious from the nature of the questions which were put to Frederick Hamborg by the South Australian Association and his replies to those questions that this was very much a public relations exercise. After all, the whole purpose of the statement was to engender positive feelings toward

the proposed colony of South Australia(Wakefield,1834:3-10). It is also obvious given some knowledge of the Spalding Cove area that not all of Hamborg's observations are correct. For example it is not possible for Hamborg to have observed Huon Pine(*Dacrydium franklinii*) growing in the area as it requires a temperate rainforest environment, not a semi arid one.

Even though Hamborg's statement must be considered to have been made with less than perfect knowledge, there is no reason to assume that his reference to the whaling activities at Spalding Cove are not accurate. Whilst no other direct documentary evidence relating to the existence of the Spalding Cove whaling station has been discovered during the compilation of this thesis, numerous pieces of supporting documentary and physical evidence have been discovered. At this point it is relevant to note that in the 164 years since Frederick Hamborg made his statement to the South Australian Association, it has been quoted, mis-quoted and borrowed in numerous texts(Moore,1923;Sexton, 1990;Nicholson,1983etc.). This has proven frustrating from a research perspective as everytime a new documentary reference to the Spalding Cove whaling station is discovered it turns out to be a rehash of Frederick Hamborg's statement.

Hamborg's statement is important not only for the fact that it alerts us to the existence of the Spalding Cove whaling station. The statement also provides information which assists in the location of the physical remains of the site as well as in the estimation of the actual size of the site.

Hamborg's evidence also states that the whaling party which was operating the Spalding Cove whaling station for the 1832 season had been there for the previous three seasons. That suggests that the whaling station at Spalding Cove was established by the 1829 season at the latest. This makes it the oldest shore based whaling station on the coast of South Australia that is currently known of. Prior to the discovery of the Spalding Cove whaling station, the oldest shore based whaling station on the South Australian coast was considered to be Encounter Bay, dating from 1837(Hosking,1973:Chptl:7). In addition to being the first annually occupied shore based whaling station on the South Australian coast, Spalding Cove is also significant in being a place of semi-permanent European occupation some seven years before the official proclamation of the colony of South Australia.

Frederick Hamborg states that he sailed to Spalding Cove on board the brig *Socrates* which was owned by the Launceston merchant Henry Reed. Henry Reed was involved in various whaling activities based out of Launceston up until 1836 when he sold out his remaining interest in the whaling brig *Socrates* along with his share of the Portland Bay fishery to Michael Connelly(Fysh,1973:28).

In a letter dated 25 September 1877, a former employee of Henry Reed, a Mr Thomas Umphelby states that he remembers Henry Reed as having whaling parties at Kangaroo Island and Portland Bay prior to 1831 and whilst the "Henty's" were still at Swan River(Umphelby,1877).

Henry Reed replied to this letter on 1 October 1877 and stated:

"Dear Sir

You are right about my whaling at Kangaroo Island and up Spencer's Gulf, also at Portland Bay before the Henty's arrived, to whom I afterwards sold the station"

(Reed,1877)

This correspondence and in particular, Henry Reed's statement that he did have whaling interests "up Spencer's Gulf " adds significantly to the veracity of Frederick Hamborg's claims regarding the Spalding Cove whaling station.

Henry Reed owned the brig *Socrates* (Fysh,1973:27) and he employed the crew including Frederick Hamborg whose position was whaling mate. Also on board the *Socrates* was a Mr Trimlett who was travelling to Kangaroo Island to attend to Reed's whaling interests there(Fysh,1973:27). Therefore, given that the *Socrates* was a whaling vessel, owned by Henry Reed who states that he was whaling in Spencer's Gulf at the time, it makes sense that the whaling party being deposited at Spalding Cove were in the employ of Henry Reed.

Henry Reed was a very successful merchant who appears to have deliberately conducted his whaling enterprises under a great deal of secrecy. His biographer Sir Hudson Fysh states:

"Unhappily records of Henry Reed's whaling activities are almost entirely absent. There are no logs of those wonderful adventurous trips, nor records of whales caught. "

(Fysh,1973:25-26)

"With his ever stated aversion to debt it has been a matter of conjecture as to how Henry Reed, with practically no assets, found the capital or credit to enter all these new endeavours within a mere three or four years of his arrival in Launceston."

(Fysh,1973:19)

Whilst it cannot be proven at this point, due to a lack of corroborating evidence, it would appear that Henry Reed used his early whaling operations as a source of income and later capital to embark upon his celebrated mercantile and evangelical career. As his biographer notes in the above passage, no-one can explain how Henry Reed managed to finance the bewildering array of personal and business interests which he had established by 1829-1830(Fysh,1973:19). It also fits that if Henry Reed was in need of a quick fortune on which to base his empire, whaling along the so-far un-colonised South Australian coastline would have given him the best chance of keeping the financial returns of this industry clandestine. This theory is also underpinned by the fact that Henry reed's whaling activities are the only area of his business, personal and evangelical affairs which are not meticulously documented.

Site Report

As was stated in the synopsis of the site's history, prior to this work being undertaken little effort had been made to locate the site. During the 1984 / 85 survey by Parry Kostoglou and Justin McCarthy they flew over the Spalding Cove area en-route to Thistle Island in a light aircraft(Parry Kostoglou,Pers.Comm.). The site was not located during this procedure(Kostoglou&McCarthy,1991:22).



Figure 4.2
Hearth Remains - Spalding Cove



Figure 4.3
Hearth Remains - Spalding Cove



Figure 4.4
Hut Remains - Spalding Cove



Figure 4.5
Hut Remains - Spalding Cove

The site was re-located on 17 April 1997 as part of field survey being conducted for this research project in conjunction with archaeological field methods students from Adelaide and Flinders Universities. As is generally the case, the site was located at the end of the final day of transect walking through the likely areas of Spalding Cove. As a result of this late discovery, there was only time for cursory photographic recording of the site.

It should be noted that during the final week of the 1997 academic term, a small team from flinders University will be travelling to the site in order to conduct a more comprehensive, non-intrusive survey of the site and surrounding areas.

The Spalding Cove whaling site appears to be divided into two principal areas, domestic and manufactory. The cluster of domestic hut remains as illustrated in figures 4.2, 4.3, 4.4 and 4.5 are located some 150 metres up a gentle slope from the shore line. Immediately below the cluster of hut remains, the shore of Spalding Cove comprises large sheets of granite sloping down to and continuing under the surface of the water at a very shallow angle. This geological feature providing the site with an almost perfect flensing platform. During the April 1997 survey, no area was located which displayed any indication of activities associated with the tryworks.

Located on the slope several metres above the termination of the sloping granite sheet was the remains of an iron ships tank. A ships tank is not a remarkable discovery given the wide association of ships tanks with the pastoral industry, where they were utilised a water storage tanks and vermin proof food stores. However, within the context of a nineteenth century shore based whaling station the ships tank represents a method commonly employed for cooling the whale oil after extraction, prior to its being decanted into wooden barrels for storage and shipment(Pearson,1983:48). Therefore, while the discovery of a ships tank, or its remains is not unusual, its location within the site precinct adds to the case for this site being the location of the Spalding Cove whaling station reported by Frederick Hamborg in 1832.

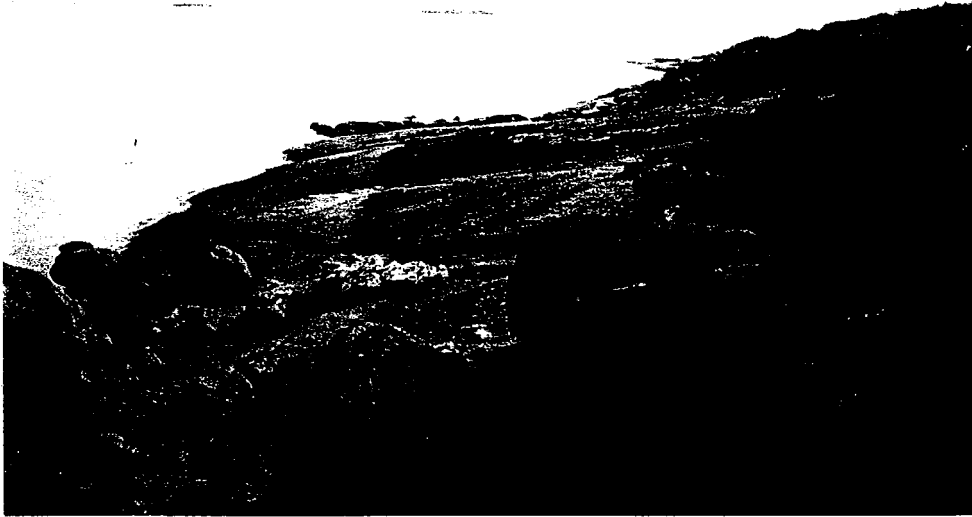


Figure 4.6
Possible Flensing Platform - Spalding Cove



Figure 4.7
Ships Tank - Spalding Cove

Sleaford Bay

Sleaford bay is located thirty five kilometres south-west of the township of Port Lincoln on the southern tip of the Eyre Peninsula.

Site History

The earliest date put forward for the occupation of Sleaford Bay as a land based whaling station comes from two accounts reported in the South Australian Register. On both 12 August and 11 November 1837, the South Australian Register reported that the schooner *Siren* had departed from Port Adelaide for the purpose of taking on a cargo of oil from the whaling station located at Sleaford Bay(South Australian Register,1837; Quoted in Kostoglou&McCarthy,1991:17). This reference is however the only documentary evidence encountered during the compilation of this thesis which refers to the Sleaford Bay whaling station having been in operation during the 1837 whaling season. Nor are there any government statistics relating to production and export of whale oil which include returns from Sleaford Bay in 1837(Kostoglou&Mccarty,1991:17). This lack of corroborating evidence does not preclude the possibility that the Sleaford Bay station was operating in 1837, as the oil may have been transhipped directly to Hobart or Launceston for sale on the London market. If this were the case, then the production figures would not have been available for inclusion in the colonies list of produce and exports for 1837.

No information is available at this time to indicate whether or not Sleaford Bay was in operation as a whaling station during the 1838 whaling season.

The 1839 whaling season saw a partnership between the South Australian Company and Hack & Company in an attempt to add some significant understanding of the whale fishery to the South Australian Company's whaling activities(Hosking,1973:34).

As a result of favourable remarks which had been made by Mr McFarlane, the supervisor of the Thistle Island whaling station in 1838 Sleaford Bay was chosen as a new whaling site by the combination South Australian Company/Hack&Company group(Hosking,1973:36). The assembled whaling crew departed Adelaide for the new station on board the *John Pirie* in April 1839(Hosking,1973:36). Hosking also states:

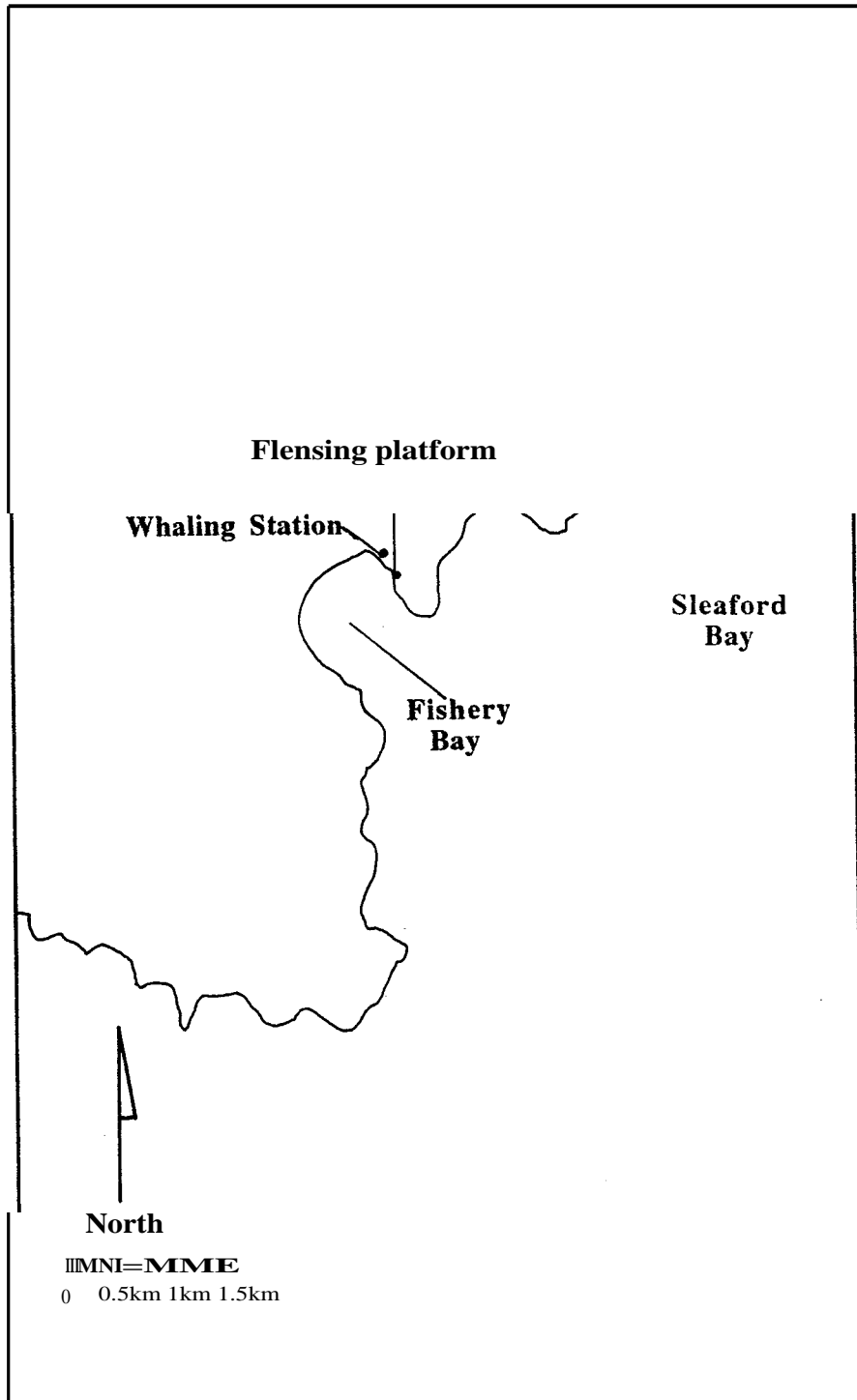


Figure 4.8
Location of Sleaford Bay Whaling Station

"In May, George Hutchinson, with the Hero, proceeded to Sleaford bay to await Captain Hart's arrival. Hart was to supervise preparations as Hutchinson collected men and supplies before proceeding to Thistle Island"

(Hosking,1973:36)

The above statement is interesting when considered in the light of the phantom 1837 season. If the whaling station was to be set up from scratch, would the crew have been sent there without Captain Hart, who was to supervise their preparation?. If, however, the remains of an old whaling station had only to be refurbished, it would make sense for Captain Hart to arrive at a later date in order prepare the crew for the actual act of chasing, catching, killing and processing a whale.

The outcome of the 1839 whaling season at Sleaford Bay was dismal, with only four whales being taken(Hosking,1973:37). There is some confusion as to the amount of oil produced with both 50 tuns and 55 tuns being mentioned(Hosking,1973:38&App. G)

The 1840 season at Sleaford bay proved to be the station's most successful and the last year in which the South Australian Company was involved in whaling activities(Hosking,1973:45-46). The number of whales captured is unknown for 1840 but the yield was 110 tuns of oil(Hosking,1973:49).

For the 1841 season, the Sleaford Bay station was under the sole control of Hack & Company. In a change from previous seasons, 1841 saw the employment of small vessels to carry personnel, stores, oil and bone between Adelaide and the fishery as well as assisting with cutting-in operations(S.A.Blue-Book,1841; Quoted in Hosking,1973:Chpt2:1-2). During the 1841 season 3 whaleboats and 30 men were employed at Sleaford Bay in addition to any vessels used for cutting-in purposes. In total, 35 tuns of oil and 1.5 tons of whalebone were produced by the Sleaford bay station in 1841(S.A.Blue-Book,1841; Quoted in Hosking,1973:Chpt2:1).

The 1841 season at Sleaford Bay is the last for which definite corroborating documentary evidence exists. At the end of the 1842 season, Hack & Company had been renamed Hagen & Hart when J.B.Hack and Henry Watson were forced, due to financial circumstances, to hand their share of



Figure 4.9
Overview - Sleaford Bay Whaling Station Domestic Area



Figure 4.10
Hut remains - Sleaford Bay

the fishery over to Hagen and Hart(Hosking,1973:Chpt2:4). Hosking states the following about the 1842 season:

"Hagen and Hart operated the Rosetta Cove station, finally abandoning Sleaford Bay".

(Hosking,1973: Chpt2:5)

Unfortunately, the above passage is not referenced therefore it is not possible to check what exactly is meant by Hagen and Hart finally abandoning Sleaford Bay. This statement could be taken to mean one of two things. Firstly, Hagen and Hart may have written off Sleaford Bay before the start of the 1842 season which would account for there being no oil and bone figures for Sleaford Bay in 1842. Secondly, Hagen and Hart may have abandoned Sleaford Bay either part way through, or at the conclusion of the 1842 season after not capturing any whales. This would also account for there being no oil and bone figures for the 1842 season. Whatever was the case, 1841 is recorded as the last operational season for the Sleaford bay whaling station.

Site Report

The site of the Sleaford Bay whaling station was the focus of a major recording exercise undertaken by archaeological field methods student from Adelaide and Flinders Universities during April 1997. As a result, the site report provided here should be considered a synopsis aimed at elucidating the nature of the site, rather than a comprehensive survey report. For comprehensive survey data etc., the reports from the 1997 field methods class should be viewed when they become available.

As with the Spalding Cove site, the Sleaford Bay whaling station can be divided into two geographically distinct areas. Firstly, the core of the domestic buildings and quite possibly some commercial operations are located in a cluster situated behind the fore dune which runs along the inland margin of Fishery Beach. Secondly, located 400 metres to the southeast of the domestic complex is a flensing platform and associated tryworks area.



Figure 4.12
Unidentified Wall - Sleaford Bay

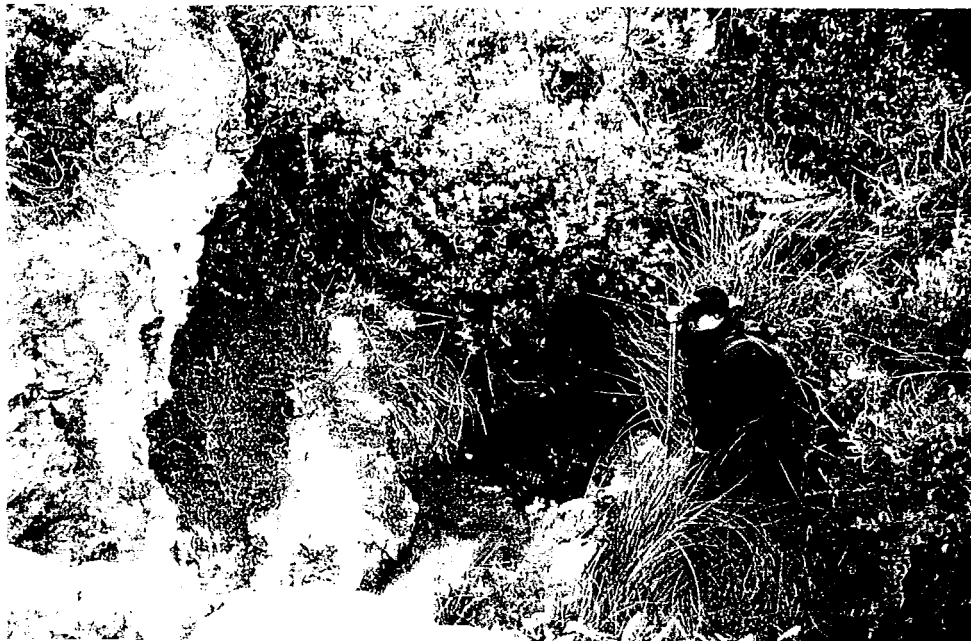


Figure 4.13
Whalers Well - Sleaford Bay

Unfortunately none of the photographs associated with the flensing platform and associated tryworks area at Sleaford Bay which were taken during the 1997 recording of the site by Adelaide and Flinders University archaeological field methods students can be located at this time.

This situation is most unfortunate bearing in mind the unique nature of this part of the Sleaford Bay complex. Due to the extreme difficulties associated with the cutting-in and trying out of a whale in a shore based setting, it is necessary for these operations to be carried out as close to the water as possible. Due to the high energy nature of the South Australian coastline, most flensing platforms and their associated tryworks have been washed away during storm activity.

Because the flensing platform and tryworks area at Sleaford Bay is still significantly intact, it has the potential, via archaeological investigation to provide a huge insight into the way in which the tryworks were constructed and how the trying out process operated in South Australia.

Even though the flensing platform and tryworks area at Sleaford Bay are somewhat protected from the worst storm action, a significant area had been washed away in the period since Kostoglou and McCarthy had surveyed the site in 1984/85.

At this point, there is little diagnostic information available regarding the nature of the structural remains present in the domestic area of the site. during the 1997 recording project, seven separate structures were recorded as well as one dry stone wall which was located some 100 metres away from the main site. No explanation for the existence of this wall is currently available.

Also located as part of the 1997 recording project was the well, located at the southern end of Fishery Bay. Originally this well was lined with Sheoak saplings which were removed some time prior to the 1984/ 85 survey by Kostoglou&McCarthy (Kostoglou&McCarthy,1991:17-18).

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Thistle Island

Thistle Island, is located thirty five kilometres to the south-east of the township of Port Lincoln at the foot of the Eyre peninsula. The whaling station is located at the north-eastern end of Whalers bay in the lee of Horny Point on the Island's eastern coast.

Site History

The whaling station located at Thistle Island was operated by the South Australian Company and commenced operations in time for the 1838 whaling season. Being essentially speculators as opposed to whalers, the South Australian Company employed a Mr H.B.T McFarlane from Hobart Town to act as station supervisor(Hosking,1973:24).

For the 1838 season four whaleboats were utilised. Table 4.1 provides some insight to the number of whalers required to operate a four boat shore based whaling station. It must be remembered that a number of ancillary staff are required to ensure the smooth and efficient operation of the whaling station. For example , table 4.1 shows that a Mr James Tibbs was employed as the station's cooper, a position of extreme importance to any whaling enterprise no matter whether it was bay whaling, shore based whaling or pelagic whaling. One thing shared by all these industries is the need for casks in which to store and transport the oil. Even in the event that casks are carried in prefabricated sections, the presence of a qualified cooper was still required to ensure that the precious cargo of oil was not lost or damaged due to faulty casks.

The Thistle Island whaling station produced 65 tuns of whale oil in its first season of operation, leaving the station in September having sighted no whales for some time(Hosking,1973: Chpt1: 26). Whilst this was a dismal return, the South Australian Company again tried the site for the 1839 whaling season even though their own company investigation had determined that the site was unsuitable, with "only stray whales frequenting that spot"(Hosking,1973: Chpt1: 30). The 1839 season was a total failure and was abandoned in June as no whales had been sighted(Hosking,1973: Chpt1: 37).

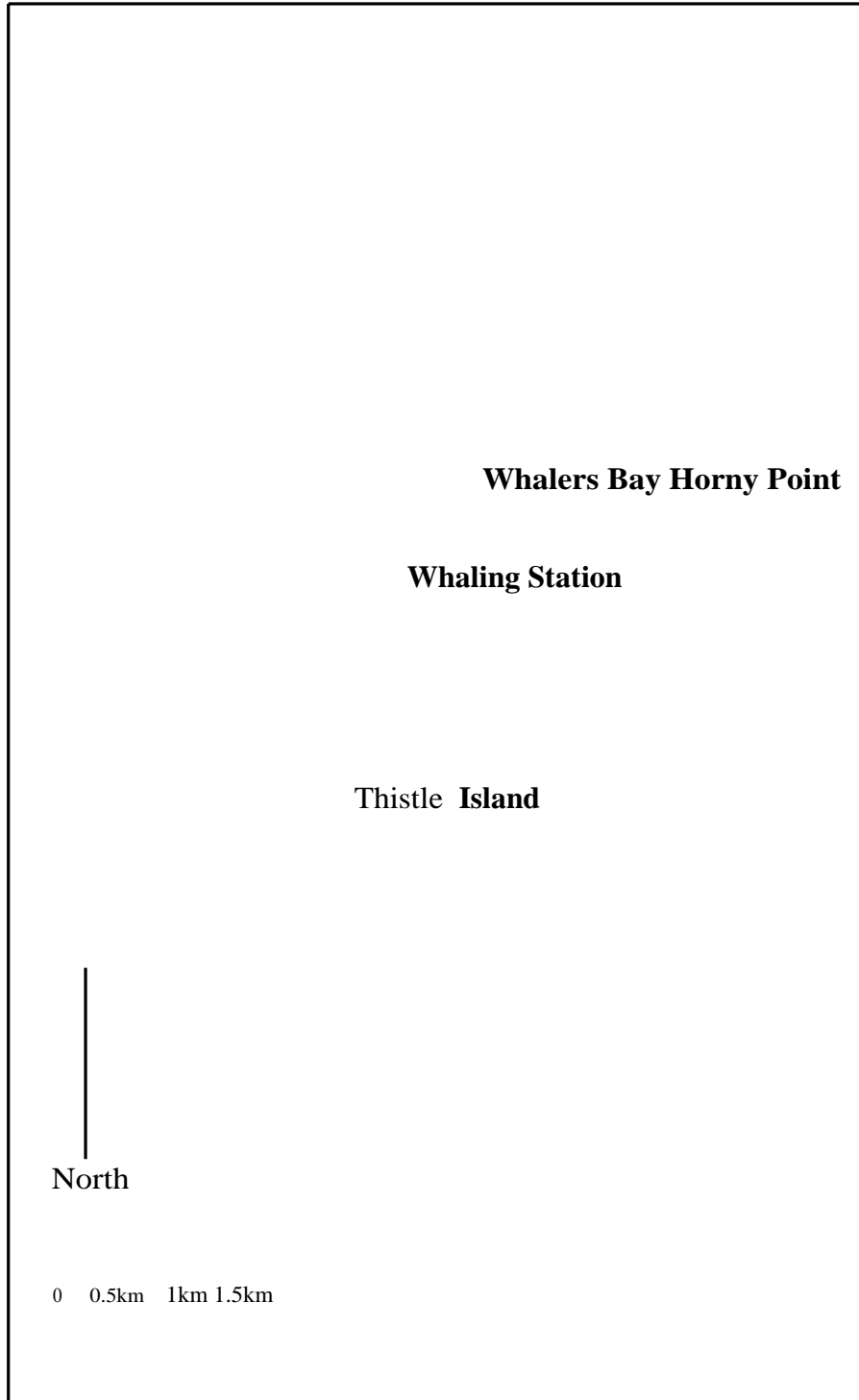


Figure 4.14
Location Of Thistle Island Whaling Station

H.B.T McFarlane	Supervisor
Henry Rodgers	Headsman
John McCoy	Headsman
Gilbert Hutchison	Headsman
James Parish	N/ A
Charles Doyle	Boat Steerer
William Wood	Boat Steerer
Peter Smith	Boat Steerer
William Jones	Boat Steerer
Joseph Perry	N/A
John Gardner	N/A
James Tibbs	Cooper
George Curnett	Cook
William Shottan	Pulling Hand
Thomas Peet	Pulling Hand
Arthur Annell	Pulling Hand
Henry Wiltshire	Pulling Hand
Arthur Ainslie	Puffing Hand
Charles York	Pulling Hand
William Chaplain	Pulling Hand
Henry Brooks	Pulling Hand
Joseph Thompson	Pulling Hand
Henry Dickison	Pulling Hand
James Atherton	Pulling Hand
W. Thompson	Pulling Hand
John Hardy	Pulling Hand
John Fielder	Pulling Hand
Henry Lilley	Pulling Hand
Daniel Andrews	Pulling Hand
William Wicks	Pulling Hand
William Reid	Pulling Hand
Edward Barron	Pulling Hand
William Richards	Steward
George Hubbard	Boat Builder
George Hubbard Jnr	Tonguer
James Hubbard	Tonguer

Table 4.1
1838 Thistle Island Crew List
Source: S.A.Company Pay List For Thistle Island
S.A.A. BRG 42.1176

Site Report

The site of the Thistle Island whaling station was not visited as part of this research project. The information regarding the whaling station at Thistle

Island is based upon the archaeological excavations carried out there during April 1993 by Austral Archaeology(Austral Archaeology,1993) on behalf of the State Heritage Branch of the department of Environment and Natural Resources, South Australia. The author of this thesis was also involved during the excavation process at Thistle Island during April 1993.

As with the Sleaford bay whaling station site report, the information presented here should be deemed to be a synopsis and the Austral Archaeology report(Austral Archaeology,1993) should be referred to for comprehensive details regarding the excavation of the site.

The Thistle Island site is subdivided into two functionally and geographically separate areas. Firstly a complex consisting of three individual hut remains represents the domestic portion of the whaling station. Secondly the flensing platform and associated tryworks area are located 250 metres eastward of the domestic hut complex.

Unfortunately, due to road building activities, the flensing platform and associated tryworks area have been buried and / or destroyed. There is some possibility that the remains of the tryworks remain intact under the roadbase but this is not known at this time.

The remains of three domestic buildings were excavated and proved to be rich in artefacts despite the fact that the station was only occupied for one and a half seasons. Based upon the archaeological evidence, the huts were determined to have been rectangular in shape and constructed using a timber frame with lightweight cladding(bark or canvas). The huts had a centrally located stone fireplace with a substantial chimney(Austral Archaeology, 1993:6).

The description of the hut style used at Thistle Island is very similar to what it is anticipated was present at the Spalding Cove whaling station site.

Point Collinson

The Point Collinson whaling station site is located approximately 700metres south of Point Collinson. Point Collinson is located at the western end of Streaky Bay some 40 kilometres to the southeast of the township of Ceduna on South Australia's west coast.

Site History

At the present time, there have been no documentary references uncovered which specifically refer to a whaling station located at Point Collinson, or even Point Brown which is located some five kilometres west of the Point Collinson remains.

There is some feeling amongst researchers that the remains which are located at Point Collinson are in fact the remains of whaling station referred to as the Streaky Bay whaling station in various documentary sources. As Point Collinson is located at the western margin of Streaky Bay it makes sense that during the early to mid nineteenth century it would have been referred to as the Streaky Bay whaling station. The name Point Collinson appears to have been appended to the whaling station remains during the 1984-1985 survey of whaling and sealing sites in South Australia(Kostoglou&McCarthy,1991) based solely upon its geographical location.

The streaky bay whaling station appears to have been operated by Captain William Young of Hobart Town(Arnott,1997). Captain William Young was involved in partnership with Nathan Moses & Company and James Gardiner. Together they owned several whaling vessels including the brigantine *Camilla* wrecked at Streaky Bay on 28 April 1844 and the *Elizabeth Rebecca* which was wrecked at Trial Bay 18 April 1845. Whilst William Young is referred to as having commenced the station, it is highly probable that the station was in fact controlled by the same consortium which owned the above mentioned whaling vessels *ie.* William Young in partnership with Nathan Moses & Company and James Gardiner.

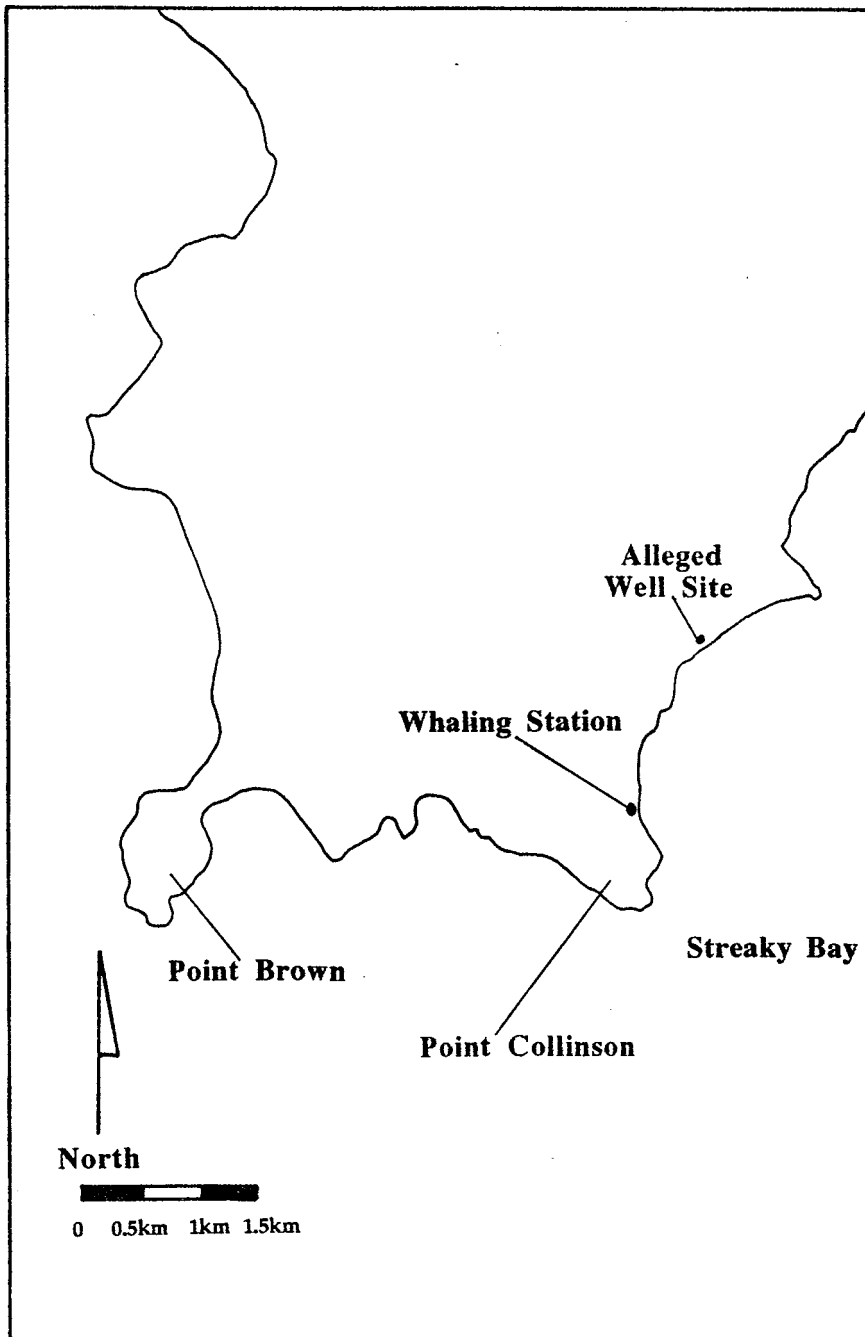


Figure 4.15
Location Of Point Collinson Whaling Station

The basis for stating that the Streaky Bay whaling station was in operation during the 1843 season is a comment made by Captain James Gardiner when he reported the loss of the *Camilla* in 1844. The following passage is taken from Captain Gardiner's letter, which was latter published in the Hobart Town Courier and Van Dieman's Land Gazette;

"On the evening of the 27th(April 1844) it was beautiful weather; on the morning of the 28th a moderate breeze from the S.S.E., with cloudy weather. Went ashore to fetch off some staves that were left last voyage, and the trypots; found the staves taken away by some vesel. I pulled down the huts, and burned the bark; sent the slabs on board for firewood; pulled the pots down, and cleaned them ready for going on board."

(Hobart Town Courier,2 August 1844
Van Dieman's Land Gazette,2 August 1844)

Captain Gardiner states that the reason for visiting the Streaky Bay whaling station had been to retrieve barrel staves, trypots and other whalecraft which had been left onshore at the close of the previous, 1843 whaling season. As a result of Captain Gardiner's letter we are aware that the station was in operation during the 1843 season. Unfortunately, at this point no documentary evidence has been uncovered which provides information regarding the number of whales caught and the volume of oil pxoduced.

There are no specific reports of the Streaky Bay station being operated during the 1844 season after the loss of the *Camilla*. However, when the brigantine *Maguasha* returned from Streaky Bay after collecting the crew of the *Camilla* it unloaded some 105 tuns of black oil and 3.5 tons of whalebone(Hobart Town Courier 15 October 1844, Quoted in Arnott,1997). As the *Camilla* had only just arrived on the whaling ground the only way that the *Maguasha* could have taken on the above mentioned quantity of oil and bone was if the crew of the *Camilla* had been engaged in shore based whaling activities whilst awaiting their rescue.

The actual events of the 1845 season are difficult to interpret with any great degree of accuracy as there are two possible scenarios which are supported by the available documentary sources.

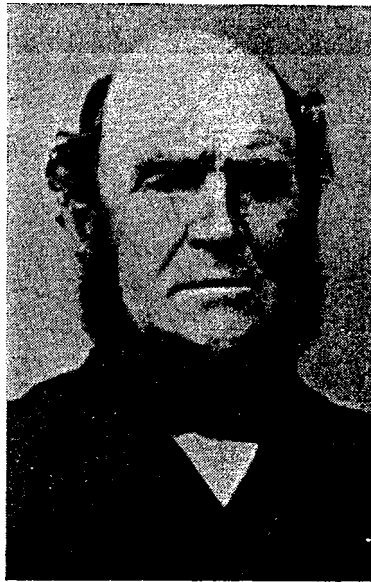


Figure 4.16
Captain Gardiner of The *Camilla*

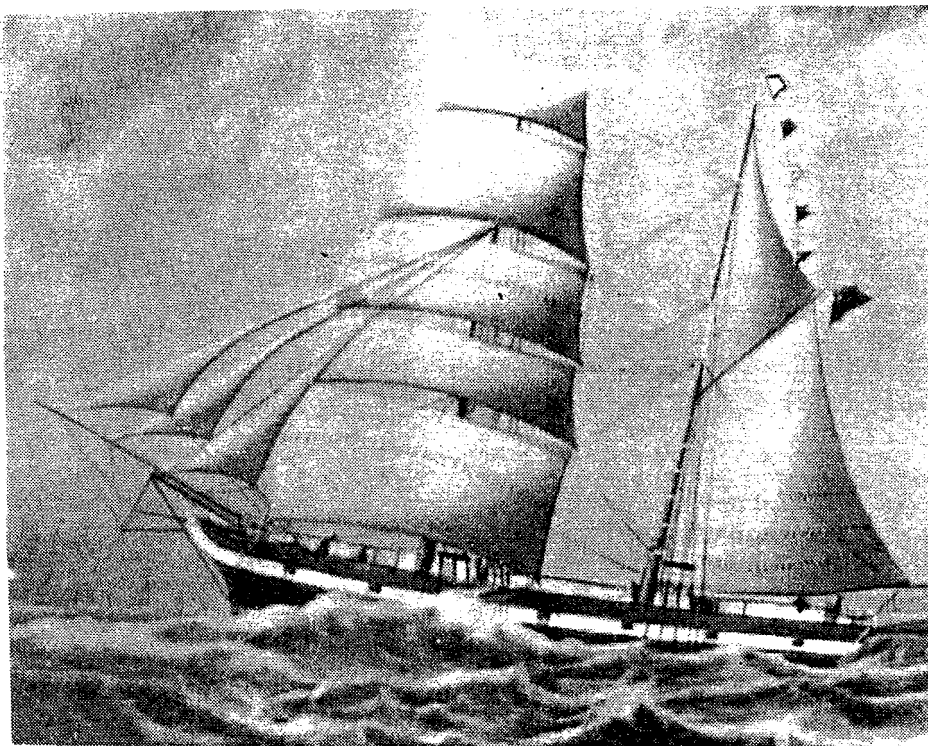


Figure 4.17
The Brigantine *Camilla*



Figure 4.18
Captain James William Robinson
(Crowther Collection: State Library Of Tasmania)



Figure 4.19
Overview Of Point Collinson Whaling Station Site

Firstly, is the report that Captain George Shepherd, after wrecking the whaling brigantine *Elizabeth Rebecca* at Trial Bay on 18 April 1845, proceeded with the majority of the crew to the whaling station at Streaky Bay, where they stayed in order to whale for the remainder of the 1845 season (South Australian Register, 14 May 1845, Quoted in Arnott, 1997). The *Sisters* is then reported to have collected 28 tuns of oil from Captain Shepherd's party at Streaky Bay for transshipment to Hobart Town (Sexton, 1990).

Secondly, Captain James William Robinson in his reminiscences provides the following information about the 1845 whaling season at Streaky Bay:

"The little vessel (the schooner *Abeona*) of only 96 tons had to proceed to Streaky Bay, near the Great Australian Bight; where Young had established a shore whaling fishery, during the winter months he had two or three hands in charge there, when the *Camilla* brig had been wrecked the season before. The schooner, after landing two boat's crews at Streaky Bay was to go anywhere along the coast where he could find whales, and take the season through."

(Robinson, n.d:54)

I found Streaky Bay a risky harbour, the entrance sheltered on the east by some nasty looking breakers, for boats to pass at times. I saw the wreck of the old *Camilla* brig a little way up the Bay. The country near the beach is skirted by low sand ridges, about from thirty to forty feet high. The natives were not allowed to come down off the ridges to the fishery without permission.

I landed Hungerford Luttrell, who had charge with his two boat's crews. Mr E. Kreemer was at the fishery, and two others. I also landed in good health Mrs Luttrell and her little girl, with all their stores, etc....as soon as convenient I ran back to Streaky Bay. I found Mr Luttrell and Freeman had got a lot of oil, more than I could carry, so I commenced taking in all the whalebone, and as much oil as I could store. I soon got all the

oil on board , and my lady passenger and her child and got all hands on board except three."

(Robinson, n. d:57-58)

The circumstances set out in Captain Robinson's reminiscences suggest a very different 1845 season to those alluded to by the South Australian Register of 14 May 1845. The information provided at first hand by Captain Robinson suggests a highly organised and very successful whaling operation during the 1845 season. Significantly, Robinson does not mention anything about the *Elizabeth Rebecca's* crew being present when he returned to take off the 1845 crew at the end of the season.

Given that Robinson's account is unlikely to be incorrect considering that he was recounting first hand experiences, it is likely that the crew of the *Elizabeth Rebecca* utilised a whaling station other than Point Collinson which was also located somewhere in Streaky Bay. The most obvious site is Point de Mole, which has previously been suggested as being the whaling station utilised by the crew of the *Elizabeth Rebecca* after its loss at Trial Bay(Kostoglou&McCarthy,1991:11-13).

There are no documentary sources available that would indicate the operation of the Streaky Bay whaling station after the 1845 season under the supervision of Mr Hungerford Luttrell. An unpublished draft of a survey of west coast shipwrecks, conducted by the State Heritage Branch of The Department of Environment and Natural Resources(Arnott,1997) states the following;

"The whaling station at Streaky Bay seems also to have been operated by William Young in the 1846 season as reported by Robinson in the brigantine *Abeona*.

(Arnott,1997)

Captain Robinson's reminiscences do not indicate that he had any direct contact with the Streaky Bay station after he collected the whaling crew and part of their oil shipment at the end of the 1845 season. Due to the rambling nature of Captain Robinson's reminiscences there is a considerable space between him relating the activities which **occurred at the beginning and end**

of the 1845 whaling season at Streaky Bay. The passage quoted by Arnott as evidence for the 1846 season in fact refers to the end of the 1845 season.

When Captain Robinson collected the whaling crew at the close of the 1845 season, he was only able to take on board a small portion of the oil casks(Robinson,n.d:57). He had made prior arrangements with William Young that if this were to be the case, he was to leave the cooper, Michael Sinnet plus two or three men to look after the oil and the fishery. *The Resolution* was sent to retrieve the three men along with the remaining 16 tuns of oil and equipment in January 1847(Arnott,1997). This makes little sense as by that time the three men had been left at Streaky Bay for some 14 months with no useful employment. This scenario would make more sense had the Streaky Bay station been operated during the 1846 season.

When the *Resolution* arrived at Streaky Bay, there was no sign of the three men and the oil casks had been mostly stove in by whaling lances and harpoons(Arnott,1997). Prior to departing from Streaky bay on 17 January 1847, the crew of the *Resolution* were "approached by a group of Aborigines carrying spears and waddies, but they were repelled after a few blank shots were fired at them."(Hobart Town Advertiser 16 February 1847, Quoted in Arnott,1997)

The fate of Michael Sinnett, John Williams(Cape Jack) and James Hawkins(Long Jim) was not discovered until November 1848 when the cutter *Jane Flaxman* discovered a whaleboat ashore on Franklin Island and went to investigate. Here they discovered the remains of a makeshift shed and the body of James Hawkins(Arnott,1997). Found with the body was a letter dated 20 October 1846 by John Williams to friends in Hobart along with Michael Sinnett's certificate of freedom issued in Van Dieman's Land and dated 24 November 1843(Arnott,1997).

According to Arnott, the letter written by John Williams was to advise his friends that he expected to see them in four to six weeks time(after 20 October 1846) as he had to wait at Streaky Bay until another vessel came to collect them(Arnott,1997). The contents of this letter do not make a lot of sense given the circumstances in which they allegedly occurred. Firstly why was John Williams writing to his friends in Hobart to advise them of his delay, when his first opportunity to send the letter would be when the ship collected him for the return journey to Hobart?. Secondly, the date of 20

October 1846 could well be a mis-recording of the original text of the letter. The letter would certainly make more sense and align with the available documentary evidence if it was in fact written in October 1845. However, even if written in 1845 it would still be illogical for Williams to have written it.

Also supposedly discovered by the crew of the *Jane Flaxman* was a "pencilled message on a scrap of paper"(Arnott,1997). In this note by James Hawkins, reference is made to Michael Sinnett having gone off to procure "a black woman" and never returning. After this, John Williams was speared through the hand, forcing he and James Hawkins to escape to Franklin Island in the Whaleboat. John Williams' wound mortified causing his death and it appears that James Hawkins died of dehydration and/ or starvation(State Records-S.A:CSO 1848/ 1907, Quoted in Arnott,1997).

Whatever the true circumstance of the above events turn out to be, they obviously ended tragically. They also indicate a less than peaceful co-existence between the whalers and the indigenous population. This is interesting because both Captain Richard Copping and Captain James Robinson indicate that relations with the indigenous people at Streaky Bay and Fowlers Bay were quite cordial(Copping,n.d:21;Robinson,n.d:57). What this may suggest is that whilst under the control of the ship's Captain or station supervisor the whalers treated the indigenous people with some degree of respect; once a skeleton crew was left alone their behaviour toward the indigenous population became abhorrent.

Site Report

The site of the Point Collinson whaling station site was visited and recorded as part of recording exercise undertaken by archaeological field methods students from Adelaide and Flinders University during April1997 in association with this research project. As a result, the site report provided here should be considered a synopsis aimed at elucidating the nature of the site, rather than a comprehensive survey report. For comprehensive survey data etc., the reports from the 1997 field methods class should be viewed when they become available.



Figure 4.20
Structural Remains - Point Collinson



Figure 4.21
Copper Sheathing - Point Collinson

The remains of the Point Collinson, or Streaky Bay whaling station which are visible above the current dune surface are of a very amorphous nature and difficult to quantify given the constraints of a non-intrusive recording project. The structural remnants which are visible on the surface are grouped into four individually discernible areas.

Three of those areas, located on the seaward margin of the foredune which runs along the margin of the beach at Point Collinson are considered to be hut remains of some description. Due to the nature of the remains it is not really possible to ascribe a function to any of the remains. However, the presence of fragments of window glass outside at least one of the structures would indicate that it was utilised as living quarters as opposed to a simple storage hut.

Presence of copper sheathing which is of a size which would only be of use in sheathing and repairing the hulls of whaleboats is highly suggestive that this site was a base for shore based whaling activities. This assumption is made on the basis that the only reason for the sheathing of whaleboats would be because they were being left in the water whilst not engaged in chasing whales. If the Point Collinson site had in fact been the base for bay whaling operations, then there would have been a whaleship, or sizeable transport and cutting in vessel in attendance. If this was the case, then the whaleboats would not have been left in the water as they would have been hoisted back on board ship once the whale had been killed or the chase had been abandoned.

Therefore, what the presence of the copper sheathing and associated copper tacks suggests is as follows. The procedure at the Point Collinson station appears to have varied significantly from that which is recorded at many other shore based whaling sites throughout Australia. The main point of difference is that the whaleboats would appear to have been left in the water when not in use.

This is very different to most documented procedures associated with the shore based whaling process, which stipulate that the whaleboats were stored out of the water when not in use and were carried to and from the water by their crews as was required(Kostoglou,1995b:33).

The western end of Streaky bay, where the Point Collinson whaling station remains are located is quite shallow with a relatively high tidal variation. The lightest estimate for the unladen weight of a 28 foot long whaleboat is 1000lbs or 454kilograms(Ansel,1978:9) combined with its load of whalecraft which Pearson estimated to weigh in the vicinity of 900lbs or 408 kilograms(Pearson,1983:44); a whaleboat ready for launching would weigh approximately 1900lbs or 862 kilograms.

It is highly unlikely that the whaleboat crews could be expected to efficiently launch and retrieve the whaleboats under these trying conditions. Therefore from a purely pragmatic perspective it makes very good sense for the whaleboats to be left permanently in the water, with the resulting need to have their hulls copper sheathed to withstand the marine borer *Teredos* *interialis*.

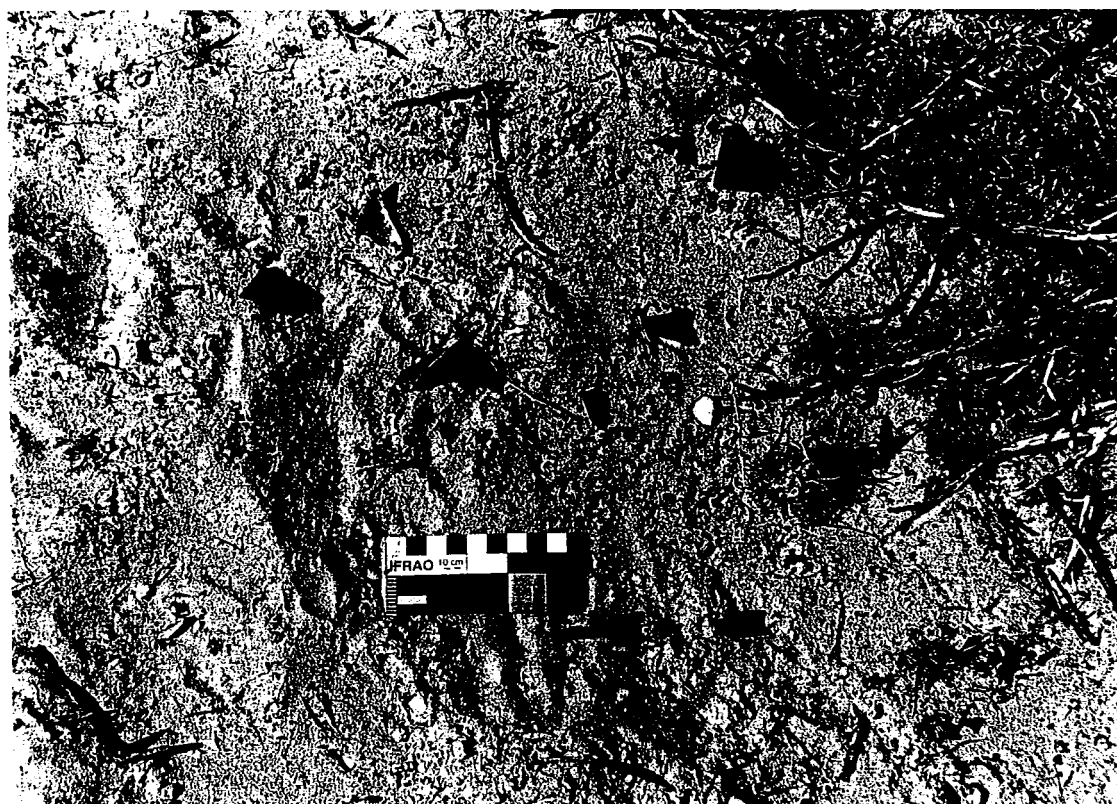


Figure 4.22
Case Gin Bottle Fragments - Point Collinson

Fowlers Bay

Fowlers Bay is located on the far west coast of South Australia, approximately 330 kilometres east of South Australia's border with Western Australia and 120 kilometres west of the township of Ceduna. Fowlers Bay provides the western most sheltered harbour along the South Australian coastline(Jones&Staniforth,1994:6). Fowlers Bay is also the westernmost whaling site to be included in this study as well as being the most westerly land based whaling site in South Australia that is known.

Site History

The earliest record of whaling activities in the vicinity of Fowlers Bay come from 1840 and are provided by two distinctly different sources.

Firstly, two American whaleships, the *Martha*, 369 tons out of New York and the *Amazon*, 318 tons out of Fairhaven, Massachusetts were anchored in Fowlers Bay from 26 May 1840 until 10 September 1840(Sexton,1990:57&64 Quoted in Jones&Staniforth,1994:16). The *Amazon* during this time took 41 whales, 33 being right whales and 8 humpbacks. No figures are available for the *Martha's* catch(Jones&Staniforth,1994:16).

Secondly, the explorer Edward John Eyre records in his journal that he made camp in the area of Fowlers bay on 17 November 1840 and describes the scene at Fowlers Bay as follows:

"Upon walking round the shore of Fowlers Bay, I found them liberally strewed in all directions with the bones and carcasses of whales which had been taken here by the American ship I saw at Port Lincoln, and had been washed ashore by the waves. To judge from the great number of these remains, of which very many were easily recognisable as being from those of distinct animals, the Americans must have had a most fortunate and successful season."

(Eyre,1845:219)

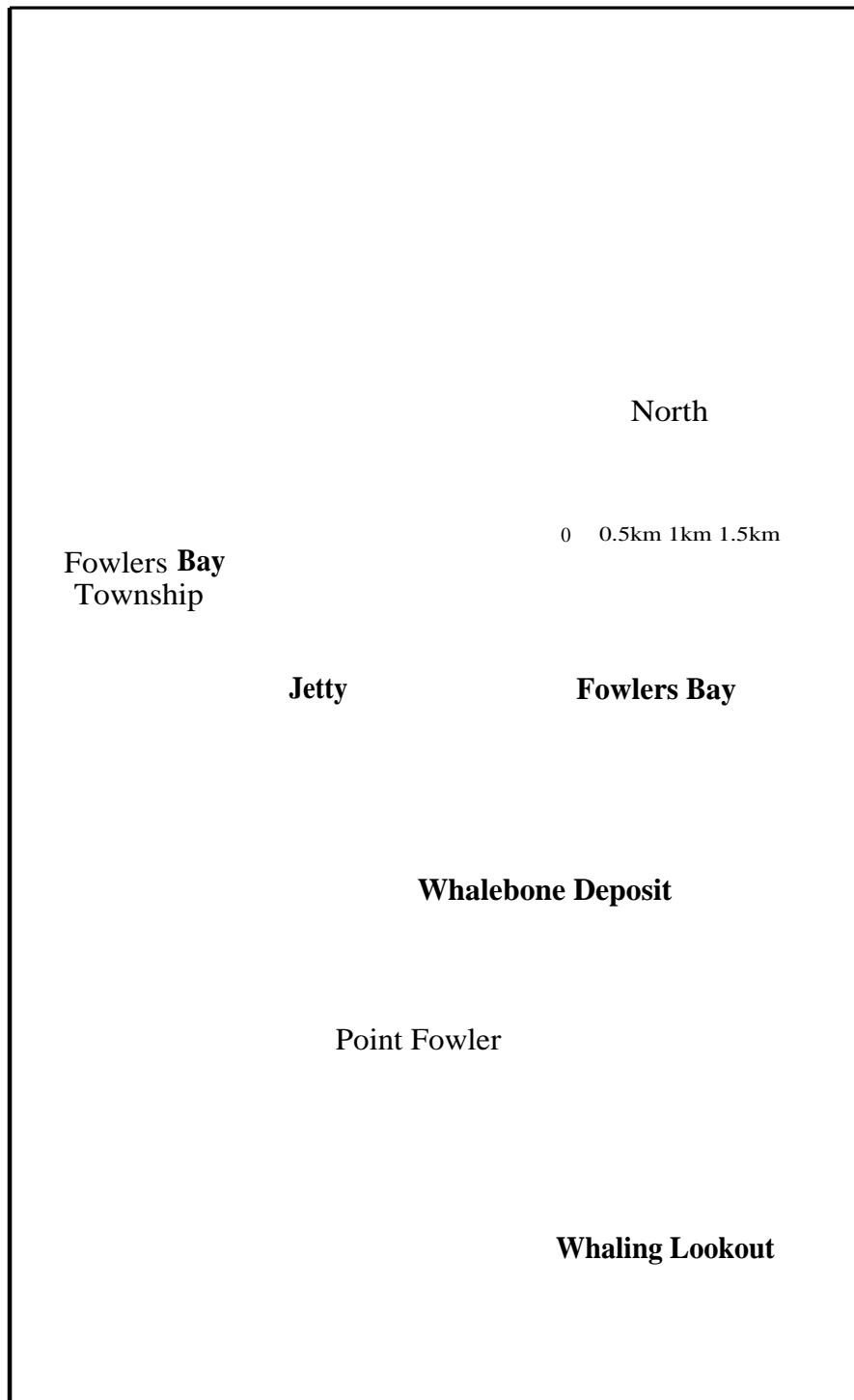


Figure 4.23
Location Of Fowlers Bay Whaling Activity Remains

The ship to which Eyre alludes to having seen in Port Lincoln was most likely the *Martha* and the whalebones which were strewn all around Fowlers Bay were no doubt the remains of the whales processed by the *Martha* and the *Amazon* during the 1840 season.

Details as to whether or not Fowlers Bay was utilised by whalers for the 1841 and 1842 either do not exist or have not yet been located (Jones&Staniforth,1994:16). In accordance with Jones&Staniforth, the only reference to either the 1841 or 1842 seasons at Fowlers Bay, which was available during the compilation of this thesis is as follows:

"...a report said that in 1844 ' four French whalers and one American fished between this and Fowlers Bay ' and in 1841 six foreign whalers were reported in the same area."

(Parsons,1990:22)

The above information sourced from Parsons is problematic in several areas. Firstly, Parsons does not quote the report from which the information was taken, therefore, it is not possible to check the veracity of the claims. Secondly, the statement is made that the various whaleships fished between Port Lincoln and Fowlers Bay. Nowhere does it state that they used Fowlers Bay as a bay whaling station. As a result of this, it is not possible to state with any degree of certainty that Fowlers Bay was utilised during the 1841 whaling season.

There has been no documentary evidence uncovered which indicates that Fowlers Bay was utilised as a bay whaling station during the 1842 whaling season.

Evidence relating to the usage of Fowlers Bay as a bay Whaling station during the 1843 and 1844 whaling seasons comes from the reminiscences of Captain Richard Copping of Hobart Town. Captain Copping was involved in the whaling industry out of Hobart Town, in various capacities from 1833 until 1852(Credland,1988:22-27). After 1852, Captain Copping left the by now floundering whaling trade and became involved in other aspects of the maritime industry(Credland,1988:27-31).

In his reminiscences, Captain Richard Copping provides the following information about the whaling activities at Fowlers Bay during the 1843 season:

" We now started for Fowlers Bay at the head of the Great Australian Bight to whale for the winter....we got to Fowlers Bay after some time hunting after it; here moored the ship, sent all our yards and topmasts down on deck so as to be prepared for bad weather as we were going to lay here all the winter. Here we took about 70 tons of oil during four months. In September we left to go to Portland Bay..."

(Copping,n.d:20-21)

Captain Copping provides some very interesting information in the above passages. Firstly, he states that they found it difficult to actually locate Fowlers bay which is very suggestive that the *Grecian* had not previously visited the location. This also rules out Fowlers bay having been used in the 1842 season by the Barque *Francis*, on which Richard Copping shipped as harpooner even though it was whaling along the southern coast of Australia during that time(Copping,n.d:18-20). Had Richard Copping previously visited Fowlers Bay, they would have not had trouble in locating it . Secondly, Copping states that all the yards and topmasts of the *Grecian* were taken down and stored on deck for the duration of the *Grecian's* stay at Fowlers Bay. Whilst this is indicative of just how marginal the anchorage is throughout the winter months, it also classifies Fowlers Bay as having been a bay whaling site operating along the lines of the Basque fisheries along the Labrador coast of Canada during the fifteenth century(Ross,1991:223-225).

Captain Copping had the following to say about the 1843 season at Fowlers Bay:

"...we started for Fowlers Bay to winter....We moored as usual and commenced whaling and secured about 90 tons...While we were here this season we had killed a whale a long distance from the ship late in the evening. The next morning went to tow the whale to the ship...."

(Copping,n.d:21-22)

Whilst providing information that confirms Fowlers Bay was again used by the *Grecian* during the whaling season of 1843, the above passages also assist in providing information as to the likely organisation of the whaling activities.

Copping states that after capturing a whale, the next job was to tow it back to the ship. This reference to towing the carcass back to the ship is important as it suggests that the ship was being used as a base for the cutting in of the whale carcass. Had the cutting in facilities been located on the shore, then it would be logical to assume that Captain Copping would have stated that they had to tow the carcass back to the shore, not the ship.

This is very significant from an archaeological perspective because it points to the ship being the focus of attention for a large part of the industrial processes associated with the whaling industry. Because of this information, it can be assumed that there is no flensing platform located beneath the dunes around the township of Fowlers Bay.

Unfortunately, Captain Copping does not relate any information about the trying out process. It is known that the *Grecian* was indeed fitted out as a pelagic whaling vessel (Copping, n.d.:21-25) and therefore had tryworks located on board for the trying out of whale oil at sea. Due to the lack of information provided by Captain Copping, it is not possible to determine whether or not the tryworks were removed from on board the *Grecian* and relocated on the shore for the duration of the bay whaling season.

Given the risk of fire associated with a fully functional tryworks operating on board a wooden ship, it is quite likely that captain Copping did not find anything unusual in relocating the tryworks on shore for the duration of the bay whaling season and therefore did not include the operation in his reminiscences. Whilst there is no evidence to suggest that the tryworks were in fact relocated on shore during both the 1842 and 1843 seasons, it would not be unreasonable to assume that they were. Based on this, it should be expected that some remains of the tryworks and associated processes does in fact remain beneath the dunes around the township of Fowlers bay.

Site Report

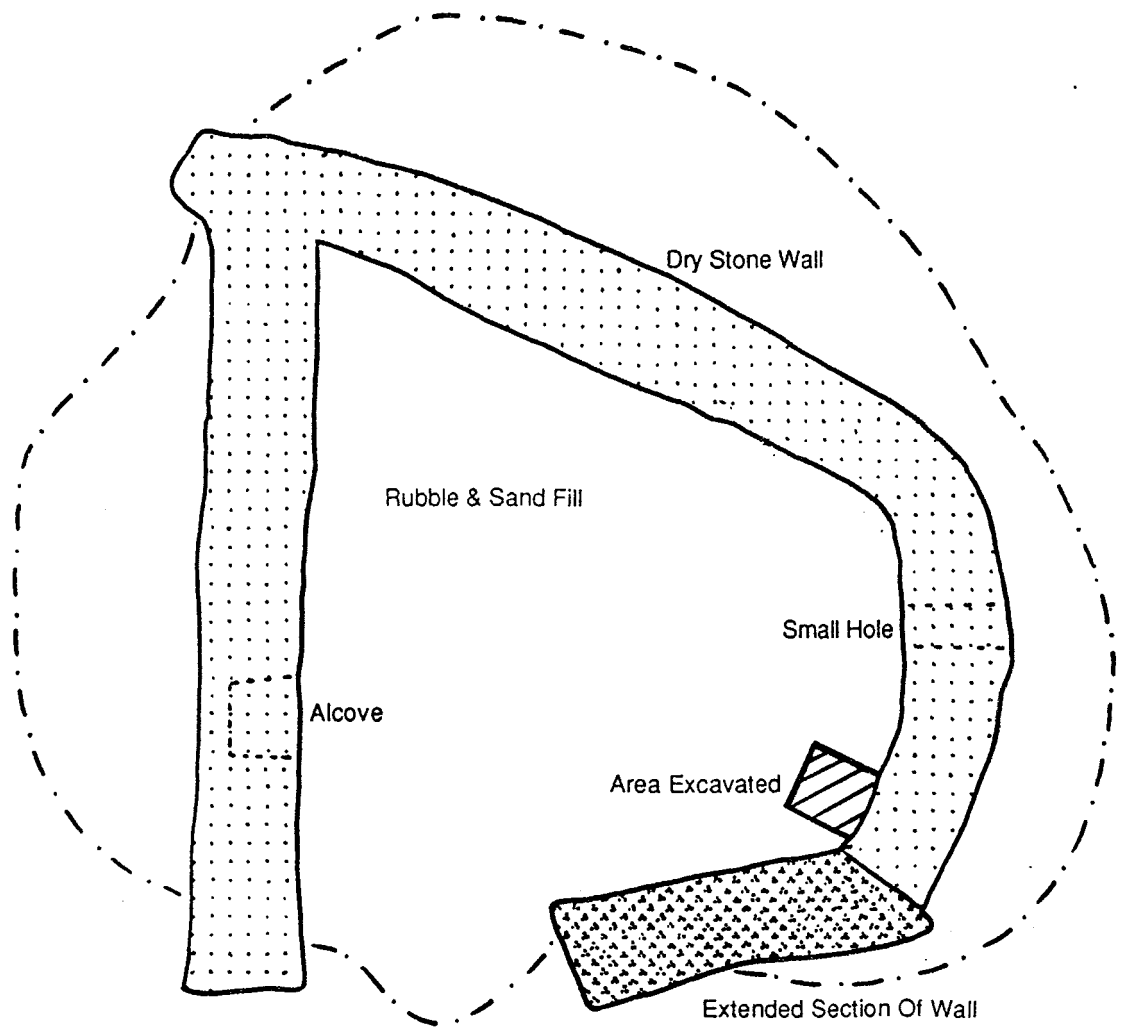
The site of the Fowlers Bay whaling station was not visited as part of this research project. The information regarding the whaling related archaeological features at Fowlers Bay is based upon the site survey and recording program carried out there in 1994 by Michael Jones and Mark Staniforth of Flinders University in conjunction with the South Australian Museum and ANZSES (see Jones & Staniforth, 1995).

Whilst Jones & Staniforth found no whaling station site per se, they did locate two whaling activity related sites.

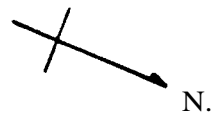
The first of these was a whalebone scatter located at the southwest corner of Fowlers Bay (Jones & Staniforth, 1994:2). It is assumed that this very large scatter of whalebone is that which Edward John Eyre referred to having seen when he visited Fowlers Bay in November 1840 (Eyre, 1845:219).

The second whaling related site located at Fowlers Bay was a substantial dry stone structure which was located at the eastern end of Point Fowler (Jones & Staniforth, 1994:2). Whilst no evidence was discovered to link the existence of the shelter directly with the activities of nineteenth century bay whaling activities, vantage points are one of the prerequisites when choosing and constructing a land based whaling station. The base of the dry stone structure was found to show signs of occupation and use by aboriginal people indicating that the structure has been present for quite some time (Jones & Staniforth, 1994:2).

The structure's dimensions measure six metres by six metres in the shape of a capital D. It was constructed from fine grained, semi dressed calcarenite blocks which were locally sourced. At the time of recording in 1994 the extant height of the structure's walls was approximately 1.1 metres (Jones & Staniforth, 1994:23). Two interesting features were present in the structure. Firstly there is an alcove built into the centre of the inner south wall, presumably for storage purposes. Secondly there is a small aperture in the structure's north western wall which could have served multiple purposes (Jones & Staniforth, 1994:23).



Cliff Top



0 1 2 Metres.

Figure 4.24
 Ground Plan - Point Fowler Shelter
 (Jones & Staniforth, 1994:36)

CHAPTER FIVE

THE LAND BASED WHALING INDUSTRY OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA'S WEST COAST: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

West Coast Whaling Stations As Frontiers

The whaling stations which were included in this research project are allocated both temporally and spatially where they are because of numerous factors. Given that these whaling station sites are remote even by the standards of 1997, it is interesting to note that their genesis and evolution was caused by an industry, or market located in Britain. With rare exception the products from these whaling stations were not marketed to, or consumed by the occupants of the Australian colonies. Whilst there was just as great a need for domestic lighting in colonial Australia, the black oil produced at the west coast stations could not be utilised for this purpose. Therefore what we see is an almost totally export oriented industrial process. Also, this industrial process, due to the nature of its marketplace is effectively controlled from outside of the colonial sphere. Even at a more parochial level, direct control of the day to day activities of three out of the five sites specifically looked at in this thesis was executed from without the South Australian locale. The South Australian whaling industry was in many respects a "remote control" industry.

This lack of integration between the control of the South Australian west coast whaling stations and the environment in which they were placed causes them in many respects to be poor examples for the investigation of frontier type concepts. Undoubtedly, the South Australian west coast whaling stations provided a platform upon which there was both a cultural and physical/ environmental frontier.

The greatest problem associated with considering these stations as frontiers is the very short term nature of their occupation and the industry itself. Certainly from the viewpoint of an industrial, or economic frontier the South Australian west coast whaling stations do not provide any answers to theories of adaptation and/ or cultural change. The principal factor here, is, as is the case with many aspects of these stations time. They were only occupied for very short periods over a very short time span, therefore they

had little need to modify their behaviour - to suit the prevailing environment.

An example of this is the fact that the techniques which were being utilised by the whalers on South Australia's west coast were little different to those utilised by the Basques in the eleventh century, or by the British at Spitsbergen during the seventeenth century. The techniques were not modified in order to better cope with the conditions of the South Australian environment because the industry was not around long enough to need to adapt.

Essential Site Location Criteria

There appear to be four primary factors which account for the location of the shore based whaling stations investigated as part of this research project. In order of importance they areas follows:

Proximity to the migratory routes of the right whale.

Proximity to a significantly elevated headland or similar geographic feature to enable approaching whales to be spotted in time for interception by the whaling party.

Proximity to an anchorage which is safe during the predominantly south-westerly gales of the whaling season and preferably safe from the south-easterly gales which occur during the whaling season on occasion.

Proximity to suitable geographical features to enable the efficient cutting-in and trying out of whale carcasses without the usage of a cutting in vessel.

Proximity to a reasonable source of fresh water.

These general site requirements are requisite components of site location regardless of the specific location, or zone where the whaling station is located. Kostoglou and McCarthy had the following to say with regards to site locations:

"Generally, preferred locations comprise a sheltered bay with a high hill and a freshwater source nearby; a rock platform or

shallow tidal reef area was also desirable to use as a cutting in area."

(Kostoglou&McCarthy,1991:2)

The above location requirements fit well with the actual site locations of the west coast whaling stations investigated for this research project. This suggests the importance of these basic requirements of shelter and accessibility as the conclusions of Kostoglou&McCarthy relating to site location requirements are base upon their survey of all the then known whaling station sites along the South Australian coastline.

The only area of discordance with their list of requirements and the one generated from the archaeological and documentary research conducted for this project is regarding flensing platforms. Kostoglou&McCarthy state that a rock platform or shallow tidal reef were desirable for utilisation as a flensing area (Kostoglou&McCarthy,1991:2). The results of this project would suggest that in the case of a shore based whaling station, the existence of a suitable geological feature for utilisation as a flensing platform is mandatory. This would not be the case where a Bay Whaling station was being established due to the usage of a ship to assist with the cutting-in process.

Site Similarities - Geographical

The one geographical aspect which all the sites included in this survey share, is that of protection from the south-westerly gales which are the dominant weather pattern during the effective right whale season from April until September. Whilst all the sites conform to this rather basic requirement of protection from the south-westerly winds, there is no common site orientation.

With the exception of the whaling station at Spalding Cove, all the whaling station sites included in this survey are located on geographically similar features. The sites at Sleaford Bay, Thistle Island, Point Collinson and Fowlers Bay are located on the beach foredune. The site at Fowlers bay cannot be considered as a whaling station, however the scatter of whalebone is reported as being present in the foredune. The whaling station site at

Spalding Cove is located on a hard surface of limestone nodules and soil underneath fairly thick and stunted eucalypt scrub.

Site Similarities - The Built Environment

Within the confines of the whaling stations investigated during this project, a number of similarities have been encountered. Not surprisingly, given that all the sites covered in this research project are located within a remarkably similar geological environment, there is a high degree of uniformity in the natural resources utilised in the construction of the station buildings. Most notably all the sites which possess extant building remains *ie.* Spalding Cove, Thistle Island, Sleaford Bay and Fowlers Bay utilise unworked nodular limestone blocks in the construction of architectural features. In rare instances there is some evidence of minor masonry dressing having been carried out on the blocks.

The most interesting similarity within the built environment at the various west coast whaling stations is the sub-division of the sites along functional lines. In the cases of Spalding Cove, Thistle Island and Sleaford Bay the domestic buildings are located between 150 and 400 metres away from the heart of the station's commercial activities. This is not really surprising given the environment which would surround the flensing and trying out areas.

Conclusion

To conclude, it must be stated that the South Australian land based whaling industry located west of Spalding Cove does not appear to have been a great economic success. In many other ways it was very successful and it contributed in a positive fashion to the growth and development of South Australia. From a purely financial aspect it is difficult at this stage to tell exactly how profitable the west coast stations really were. Except for Thistle Island and Sleaford Bay, we have no real idea what occurred.

At the beginning of this thesis, a number of research aims were presented and all of them have been achieved. Briefly, the research aims of this thesis have been met in the following manner:

The elucidation of the physical and operational differences between shore based and bay whaling sites. This was carried out in the first two chapters and centres on the requirement of a flensing platform and associated tryworks area to be present at a shore based whaling station site.

Discovery of the role which South Australia's west coast fishery played both within the global and domestic whaling industries. The role of the South Australian west coast whaling stations is highlighted throughout the thesis and specifically in chapter three and chapter five..

Was the whaling Industry a serious economic contributor to the South Australian colony?. If so how did it contribute and was its only contribution economic or did the influence of the industry reach further?. The economic and social contributions of the whaling industry in South Australia are addressed throughout chapter three and chapter five.

Who orchestrated the South Australian whaling industry?. Previous research(Hosking,1973; Austral Archaeology,1993) has tended to focus upon the activities of the South Australian Company and a handful of high profile South Australian whalers. Whilst the South Australian Company and its associates was undoubtedly a serious competitor within the local whaling industry, it was by no means the only one. This question is addressed in chapter three and chapter four.

More specifically, was it a different group of entrepreneurs that were utilising the west coast of South Australia compared with those who were exploiting the whale populations along the coastline east of Port Lincoln?. In chapter three and chapter four the importance and role of the Tasmanian whaling entrepreneurs is examined within the context of the South Australian west coast whaling industry.

Did the Spalding Cove whaling station really exist?. If it did, what is its history, who operated it and why has it not been located during previous surveys?. The results of extensive documentary research revealed that the Spalding Cove whaling station did exist, whilst an archaeological survey located the remains of the whaling station. This information is provided in chapters three and four.

One of the aims, as stated at the beginning of this thesis was to determine whether or not, based on information derived from the sites included in this research project, it was possible to predict where sites would be located along the South Australian coastline. Quite obviously, the knowledge gained from the study of these five west coast whaling stations does not provide enough information to predictively model the likely location of unknown whaling stations. However, what this research project does allow us to do, is to state categorically where a shore based whaling station will not be located based on the presence or absence of the five essential site location criteria outlined earlier in this chapter.

Finally, it must be stated that the land based whaling stations located west of Spalding Cove are of enormous research potential and cultural significance. They represent the first European settlement to occur on the mainland coast of South Australia as well as the first real industry. The five sites included in this study, Spalding Cove, Sleaford Bay, Thistle Island, Point Collinson and Fowlers Bay provide a unique research opportunity for the future, based upon the varied nature of their proprietorship and the role they played in the beginning of the South Australian colony.

The Spalding Cove site will allow the operations of a Launceston sourced whaling station to be investigated which is extremely important as at this time there is very little information available as to the operations of the Launceston based whalers. Further research into the operations at Point Collinson and Fowlers Bay whaling stations will provide a view on the operations of Hobart based whaling stations; whilst Thistle Island and Sleaford Bay will provide information on Adelaide sourced whaling stations.

Solid archaeological evidence from the five sites may also be able to provide information regarding site operations which may account for the failure of the Adelaide sourced stations relative to the Tasmanian sourced stations.

This thesis has attempted to investigate some specific aspects of South Australia's west coast whaling stations as well as synthesising and contextualising some of the mass of documentary evidence which exists on the subject of whaling. Hopefully, this research project will form the first step for a comparative, excavation based study of the whaling sites of South Australia's west coast.

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Terror

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