



THE ROYAL GEOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA

GLOBALISING AUSTRALIA - ADELAIDE'S ROLE IN THE 19TH CENTURY



GPO Adelaide 1880

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GLOBALISING AUSTRALIA - ADELAIDE'S ROLE IN THE 19TH CENTURY

CHALLENGING COMMUNICATIONS, FROM 1836

TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS WERE A VITAL PART OF THE 18TH AND 19TH CENTURY'S ORGANISED SETTLEMENT AND TRADE.

AUSTRALIA AS AN ISLAND CONTINENT NEEDED MARITIME MAIL COMMUNICATIONS, VITAL FOR ACCESS TO THE EUROPEAN COMMODITIES MARKETS AND IMMIGRATION.

BY THE 1870S ADELAIDE, WAS THE ELECTRONIC TELECOMMUNICATIONS HUB OF OUR PART OF THE SOUTHERN HEMISPHERE RELAYING MESSAGES FROM EUROPE AND ALL COUNTRIES EN ROUTE TO THE REST OF THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL CITIES AND NEW ZEALAND. THIS HAD THE EFFECT OF PUTTING ADELAIDE, AND SOUTH AUSTRALIA, ON THE WORLD MAP.

THE INFRASTRUCTURE SET UP AT THAT TIME BY PRIVATE ENTERPRISE AND COLONIAL GOVERNMENT STRETCHED OUR ABILITY TO COPE WITH THIS DEMAND, BUT WE DID, AND THE ECONOMIC BOOM LASTED UNTIL THE 1890S. THE BOOM STARTED WITH THE SIGNIFICANT ORE DISCOVERIES, PARTICULARLY GOLD, COAL AND TIN. SUBSEQUENTLY THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE STOCK EXCHANGE, INCREASED WOOL AND MEAT PRODUCTION, AIDED BY REFRIGERATED SHIPPING, AND THE EXPANSION OF PASTORAL HOLDINGS, LED TO A DEMAND FOR TRANSPORT TO GET THE PRODUCTS TO THE COAST, AND TO LOCAL OR OVERSEAS MARKETS, AT THE BEST PRICE, AT THE BEST TIME.

DURING THIS BRIEF PERIOD AS A HUB, 1870-90, ADELAIDE WAS IDEALLY PLACED TO BE AT THE FOREFRONT OF NEW IDEAS ON INDUSTRIALISATION, COMMERCE AND TRADE. INNOVATION FLOURISHED, RAIL AND SEA TRAVEL EXPANDED AT A RATE NOT SEEN AGAIN UNTIL THE 1950S.



This is a copy of a sketch map, No. 2, held in the Public Record Office, Kew U.K. dated 1837 made by Colonel Light detailing his reasons for placing the city where he did. At about this time the Port River was found to be navigable for shipping and 'Port Misery' became the main port.

Many large houses in the eastern area of the Adelaide Plains had towers, suitable for placing telescopes, trained on the Flagstaff at Holdfast Bay (near where the marina is at Glenelg today). The raising of the flag on the Flagstaff indicated that the mails from England and interstate had arrived at Holdfast Bay.





There would no doubt have been a rush to collect that mail by residents to find out how families, products exported and news from other countries via the European papers effected business in the young free colony of South Australia.

Light has written on the map a part which says;


"FROM THE HARBOUR NEAR [CURRENT PORT ADELAIDE] TO [WHAT IS NOW THEBARTON], ON THE RIVER A DISTANCE OF ONLY 5 MILES AND A HALF, IT IS [A] VISTA OF THE MOST LEVEL PLAINS I EVER SAW AND A CANAL MAY BE EASILY MADE TO CONNECT THE RIVER TO THE HARBOUR, BY DAMMING THE RIVER 20 FEET AT [THEBARTON] COULD SEE PRESERVED WITH ALL THE YEAR ROUND AND SHIPS OF LARGER BERTHEN MIGHT COME UP TO THE MIDDLE OF THE TOWN"



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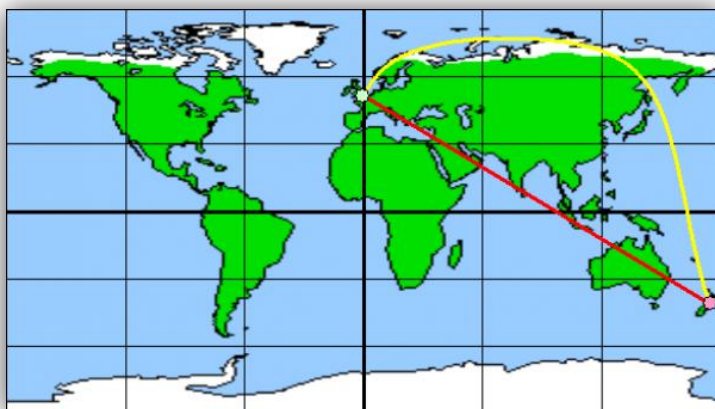
<p><u>Cabinet 1.</u> <u>Colony growth needed communications</u></p>	<p>Item</p>	<p><i>RGSSA Collections:- this level was used with other equipment to survey from Rapid Bay, through the Adelaide Plains and up through to Gawler by Colonel William Light from late 1835 - October 1839</i></p>	
<p>Cabinet 1.</p>	<p>Item</p>	<p><i>RGSSA: Copy of Light's original 1837 map of the site of Adelaide. He says to the S.A. Company Office at the Alephi in London he did not expect his reasons to be fully understood for some considerable time, this dated 1837! Lights layout progressed order, law and communications.</i></p>	
<p>Cabinet 1.</p>	<p>Item</p>	<p><i>RGSSA Collections: Another view of Hindley Street looking west from South Australia Illustrated by George French Angas, 1847.</i></p>	
<p>Cabinet 1.</p>	<p>Item</p>	<p><i>RGSSA Collections: Police troopers delivered the mail by foot in early Adelaide!</i></p>	

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<p>Cabinet 2. <u>The English Mails</u></p>	<p>Item</p>	<p><i>RGSSA Collections: Private Mail -. Sea captains or their agents – by the 1850's Royal Mail ships took 60-80 days to reach Australia from Europe The ships were designated RMS***** to indicate that they carried the mail from the United Kingdom to the empire. Pictured is Port Adelaide, McLaren Wharf circa 1870.</i></p>	
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"EASILY THE MOST IMPORTANT POSTAL SERVICE IN COLONIAL AUSTRALIA WAS THE ENGLISH MAILS. COLONIES BY DEFINITION DEPENDED ON THE MOTHER COUNTRY FOR CAPITAL, MANAGEMENT, NEWS AND DECISIONS, SO THE ENGLISH MAILS HAD A STATUS WHICH NO OTHER POSTAL SERVICE COULD EMULATE." (LEE)

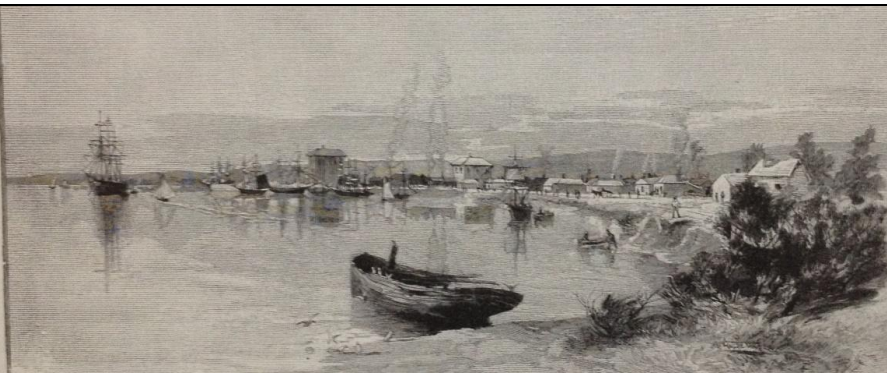

*Great circles - Matthew Skues' website
www.matthewskues.co.uk 600 × 339 Search by image
 Although the red line might look like the shortest route connecting the two cities on the map, the yellow line is in fact the shortest path.*



THE GREAT CIRCLE ROUTE, THE SHORTEST COURSE BETWEEN TWO POINTS ON THE SURFACE OF A SPHERE. IT LIES IN A PLANE THAT INTERSECTS THE SPHERE'S CENTRE AND WAS KNOWN BY MATHEMATICIANS BEFORE THE TIME OF COLUMBUS.


<p>Cabinet 2.</p>	<p>Item</p>	<p><i>RGSSA Collections: In the early 1840s Governor Gawler assisted with the design of a new port for Adelaide, replacing 'Port Misery', which had replaced Holdfast Bay anchorage used in the late 1830s. This sketch is dated march 1840.</i></p>	
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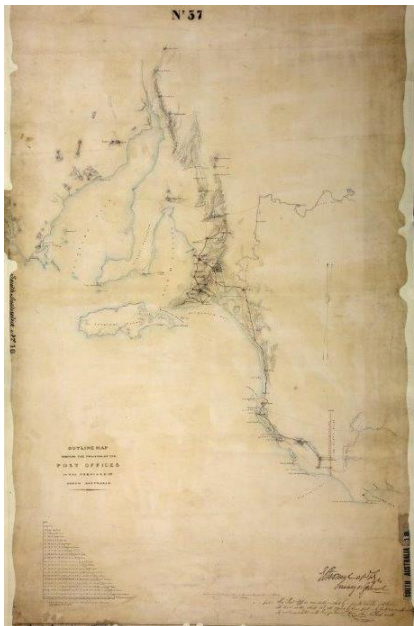

Cabinet 2.	Item	<p><i>RGSSA Collections: 'Port Misery' - the new port alleviated the difficult Holdfast Bay (Glenelg) site unloading and loading where goods and passengers were ferried by lighter and then carried ashore to waiting bullock carts.</i></p>	
<p>Cabinet 3</p> <p><u>The Golden Age of Colonial Postal Services</u></p>	Item	<p><i>RGSSA Collections: W A Cawthorne's sketch of Rounsvelle's Coach services in the mid north of South Australia, circa 1847 going along a dusty road.</i></p>	

IN 1887, PORT ADELAIDE BECAME THE TRANSHIPMENT POINT FOR ALL THE EASTERN COLONIES. SPECIAL MAIL TRAINS RAN FROM LARGS JETTY (NEAR PORT ADELAIDE) TO THE ADELAIDE GPO. THESE TRAINS WERE ARRANGED AS SOON AS THE LIGHTHOUSE KEEPER AT CAPE BORDA (ON KANGAROO ISLAND) SIGHTED THE STEAMER FROM COLOMBO AND TELEGRAPHED ADELAIDE WITH NEWS OF THE SHIP'S IMMINENT ARRIVAL.

FROM ADELAIDE, A SPECIAL MAIL TRAIN RAN TO MELBOURNE WITH THE MAILS FOR VICTORIA, NEW SOUTH WALES AND QUEENSLAND. THE VICTORIAN POST OFFICE SORTED THE MELBOURNE MAILS ON BOARD THE TRAIN AS SOON AS IT CLEARED CUSTOMS AT SERVICETON ON THE SOUTH AUSTRALIA-VICTORIA FRONTIER, SO THEY COULD BE DELIVERED THE DAY AFTER THEIR ARRIVAL IN ADELAIDE. "(LEE)

Cabinet 3	Item	<p><i>RGSSA Collections: S.T Gills image of the Bush Mail services in the 1840s. Private contractors were used for delivery to town post offices.</i></p>	
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Cabinet 3	Item	RGSSA Collections: The postal map shows routes around the mainly settled areas of South Australia in the early 1840s.	
Cabinet 4 <u>The</u> <u>Telegraph</u> <u>in</u> <u>Colonial</u> <u>Australia</u>	Item	RGSSA Collections: A Whitworth Wesley Richards Rifle 2509, used in the 1864-66 expedition to the Northern Territory, belonging to RH Edmunds who accompanied John McKinlay as surveyor to the expedition. Prior exploration by John McDouall Stuart opened up the country for settlement and the consideration of an eventual iconic Overland Telegraph to be built allowing Adelaide.	

Exploration was undertaken by many brave explorers who mapped the continent by degrees, particularly the 'Outback' and the Territory from the 1830s until the 1900s.

The explorer John McDouall Stuart found the way across the Australian continent from South to North after several attempts in 1862/63. He mapped reasonable reliable water supplies from the Artesian Basin's mound springs that enable the Overland Telegraph Line's installation, and the proposed routes for steam trains, although the latter was not finally realised, then by diesel, until 2004.

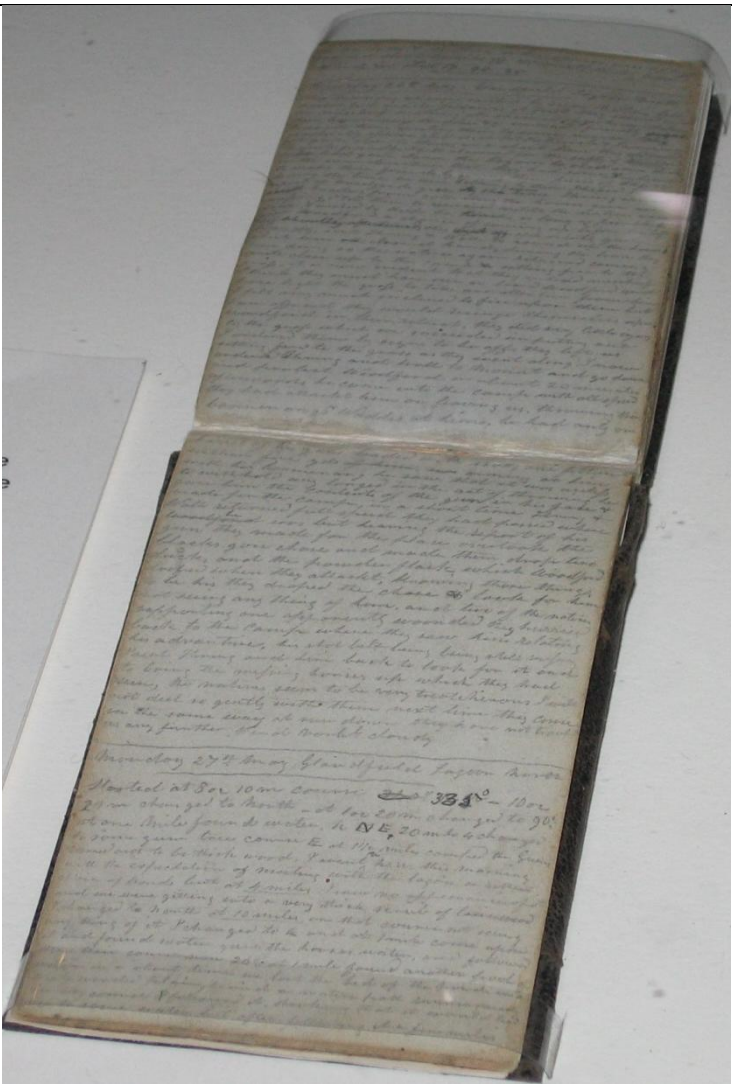
The Government had chartered a fine new steamer, the South Australian, and on October 29 the party sailed from Port Adelaide. There were two other officers— Messrs. H. Packard and C. Young. Escape Cliffs was reached on December 5, 1864.

While in the Territory Mr. Edmunds acted as surveyor and second in command of the party under the late Mr. John McKinlay, who was sent out to explore the country between the Victoria River and the Gulf.

The Northern Territory was administered by South Australia from 1863 to 1911 after three failed attempts to establish a settlement (1824–1828, 1838–1849, and 1864–66). Success was achieved in 1869 with the establishment of a settlement at Port Darwin.

Under the administration of colonial South Australia, the overland telegraph was constructed between 1870 and 1872.

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Cabinet 4	Item	<p>RGSSA Collections: The original diary of John McDouall Stuart made through his second to last trip from north to south in 1861. He successfully crossed from South to North and came back to Adelaide in 1863 to public acclaim.</p>	
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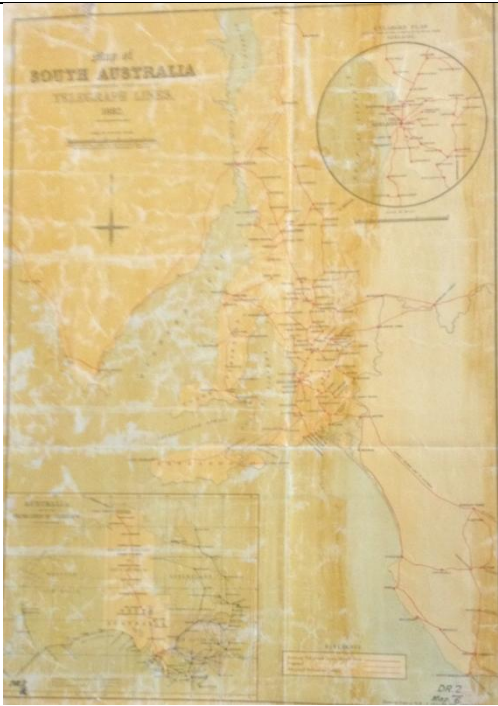

Cabinet 4	Item	<p>RGSSA Collections: The estaffette bag used by John Lewis in the 1870s to relay messages from one end to the other of the near completed Overland Telegraph Line.</p>	
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The first commercial electrical telegraph, the Cooke and Wheatstone telegraph, was co-developed by William Fothergill Cooke and Charles Wheatstone. In May 1837 they patented a telegraph system which used a number of needles on a board that could be moved to point to letters of the alphabet. An electrical telegraph was independently developed and patented in the United States in 1837 by Samuel Morse. His assistant, Alfred Vail, developed the Morse code signalling alphabet with Morse. The first telegram in the United States was sent by Morse on 11 January 1838.

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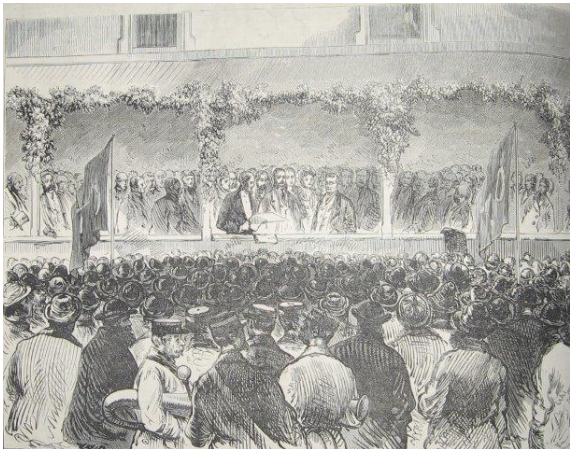
The telegraph lines from Britain to India were connected in 1870 (those several companies combined to form the Eastern Telegraph Company in 1872).

CAMELS WERE FIRST IMPORTED INTO SOUTH AUSTRALIA FROM AROUND 1846 BY JOHN AINSWORTH HORROCKS. BURKE AND WILLS USED CAMELS AS DID MOST EXPLORATION PARTIES INTO THE DESERTS. A LARGE IMPORTATION OF CAMELS AND THEIR HANDLERS (CAMELEERS KNOWN LOCALLY AS AFGHANS) WAS UNDERTAKEN IN THE LATE 1850S. CAMELS WERE ABLE TO CARRY ITEMS AND OTHER SUPPLIES FOR THE OVERLAND TELEGRAPH LINE FROM 1871. IN 1901 THE WORKING CAMEL POPULATION WAS ASSESSED AS 4,000 WESTERN AUSTRALIA, 1,500 SOUTH AUSTRALIA, 2,000 QUEENSLAND AND 500 IN WESTERN NEW SOUTH WALES. IMMIGRANT CAMELEERS REACHED THEIR MAXIMUM NUMBER AT 393 IN THAT SAME YEAR. THERE IS NO DOUBT THAT THEY RENDERED A SERVICE TO THE EXPLORATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF AUSTRALIA OUT OF ALL PROPORTION TO THEIR SMALL NUMBERS AND, HAD IT NOT BEEN FOR THE CAMLEEERS AND THEIR CAMELS, THE DEVELOPMENT OF OUR HARSH AND DRY INTERIORS WOULD HAVE BEEN DELAYED BY AT LEAST A CENTURY.¹

Cabinet 4	Item	<p>RGSSA Collections: Australia was first linked to the rest of the world in October 1872 by a submarine telegraph cable at Darwin. This brought news reportage from the rest of the world. The telegraph across the Pacific was completed in 1902, finally encircling the world.</p>	
Cabinet 4	Item	<p>RGSSA Collections: Bringing the telegraph cable ashore at Port Darwin 1871. 'S.S. Niagra' at anchor in the bay.</p>	

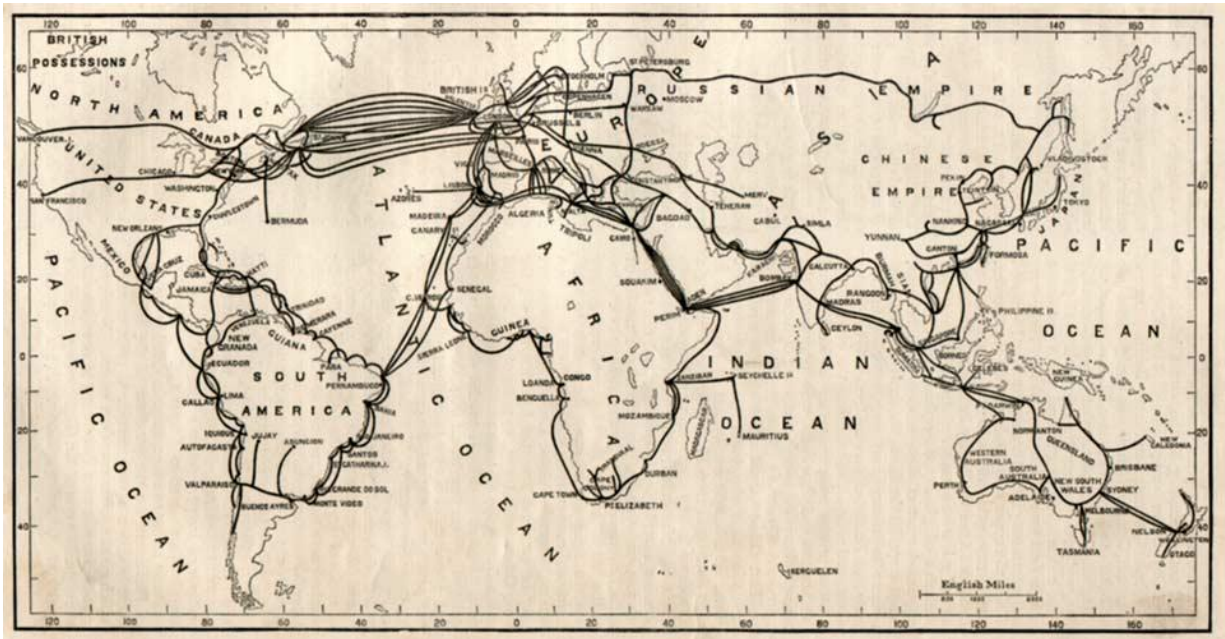
¹ J.W. Fiddman, Camel and Cameleers, 1940 private publication RGSSA.

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Cabinet 5	Item	<p><i>RGSSA Collections: Charles Todd demonstrating the Overland Telegraph operations in Adelaide in 1872. Melbourne Post 1872</i></p>	
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The Overland Telegraph hub was Adelaide in the 1870s and 1880s. Then the latest commodity prices overseas, Arctic and Antarctic exploration, the fall of dynasties, war and rebellion was all relayed through Adelaide. This gave the daily press and local business at least 12 hours advantage, from the other states, which South Australia capitalised on for a while.

BY 1894, SEE MAP, 20 YEARS AFTER THE SUBMARINE TELEGRAPH CABLE REACHED AUSTRALIA, MOST OF THE MAJOR CITIES WERE CONNECTED.






SIR SIDNEY KIDMAN (1857 - 1935)- USED THE TELEGRAPH TO HELP CREATE HIS WEALTH AND LEGEND, HIS MANSION 'ERINGA' STILL STANDS AND HAS BEEN A PART OF KAPUNDA HIGH SCHOOL SINCE 1921 , AT HIS BEQUEST.

Kidman's pastoral empire stretched along the Murray/Darling into western N.S.W. and southern Queensland, almost drought proof, it was claimed for a while.




Only now, April 2016, is the pastoral empire being sold!

Once the stock was off their hands it was Kidman's job to get it to market and under his own handling, he proved to be pretty good at handling both, using his system of the telegraph to best advantage and, it has been said, instructing his drovers to pay the telegraph operators a little something they were headed extra for any information they could give about other mobs on the road – how big they were, in whose charge and where they were sold to make more favourable marketing decisions. (Bowen p119)



Cabinet 5	Item	Morse Code earpiece circa 1900. On loan from Mr B Challen.	
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Cabinet 5	Item	<i>Morse Code sender circa 1900. On loan from Mr B Challen.</i>			
Cabinet 5	Item	<i>Morse Code recorder circa 1900. On loan from Mr B Challen.</i>			
Cabinet 5	Item	<i>Morse Code Inclino-meter from Eastern Adelaide Telegraph Company circa 1890. On loan from Mr B Challen.</i>			

The Society's Volunteer Library Committee acted as exhibition curator. If you would like to find out more about joining and assisting the Society to advance public awareness and environmental issues, encourage research and scholarship, recognise and reward achievement and commemorate past achievements of significance, see below for contact details.

The Society is an incorporated not for profit registered charity, with Australian Taxation deductibility for donations to the library or scholarship fund.

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THE LIBRARY OF THE SOCIETY IS LOCATED IN THE MORTLOCK WING OF THE STATE LIBRARY OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA.

SPECIAL FEATURES

RARE BOOKS: INCLUDING TWENTY SEVEN BOOKS PUBLISHED BEFORE 1599. THE OLDEST IS A BEAUTIFULLY BOUND VERSION OF PTOLEMY'S *GEOGRAPHIA* (1482).

OVER 200 MANUSCRIPTS: INCLUDING A NUMBER OF AUSTRALIAN EXPLORER'S DIARIES, EIGHTEEN ORIGINAL GEORGE FRENCH ANGAS WATERCOLOURS AND THREE MANUSCRIPTS OF SIR JOSEPH BANKS INCLUDING HIS 1766 NEWFOUNDLAND DIARY.

OVER 800 MAPS: INCLUDING MANY SOUTH AUSTRALIAN MAPS WHICH PROVIDE A RECORD OF DISCOVERY, EXPLORATION AND SETTLEMENT.

PERIODICALS: INCLUDING THE JOURNALS OF MOST AUSTRALIAN GEOGRAPHICAL, HISTORICAL AND ROYAL SOCIETIES, THE LINNEAN SOCIETY FROM 1791 AND RGS LONDON FROM 1831.

PICTORIAL COLLECTION: OVER 2,000 PHOTOGRAPHS, PAINTINGS AND DRAWINGS INCLUDING FRANCIS YOUNGHUSBAND'S 'LOST' PHOTOGRAPHS OF TIBET.

ARTEFACTS/RELICS: COLLECTION INCLUDES COLONEL LIGHT'S BRASS SURVEYING LEVEL.

MOST LIBRARY ITEMS CATALOGUED AT: [HTTP://WWW.RGSSA.ORG.AU/CATALOGUE.HTM](http://www.rgssa.org.au/catalogue.htm)

THE OBJECT OF THE SOCIETY IS TO PROMOTE THE UNDERSTANDING OF GEOGRAPHY AMONG ITS MEMBERS AND THE COMMUNITY. SOME OF ITS ACTIVITIES INCLUDE:

COACH TOURS, DAY AND WEEKEND EXCURSIONS

MONTHLY TALKS ON GEOGRAPHICAL TOPICS

PUBLICATION OF AN ANNUAL *SA GEOGRAPHICAL JOURNAL* AND BI-MONTHLY NEWSLETTER (*GeoNews*)

OTHER OCCASIONAL PUBLICATIONS INCLUDING SOUTH AUSTRALIAN REGIONAL TOURIST GUIDES.