

SECTION 2

Wellington to Glenorchy

PART A: via Reedy Creek and Mt Arapiles**PART B:** via Reedy Creek and Officer's Station**PART C:** via Bordertown - 'northern route'**SECTION 2, PART A:** Wellington to Glenorchy via Reedy Creek and Mt Arapiles

In late January 1852 a 'suggested route' to the goldfields was published in the Adelaide press. It described a 'main route' with several short-cuts. Although it is difficult to follow them on today's roads, the details are provided for comparison

The **suggested route** was: Adelaide to Wellington, south along the coast to Madntosh's (Mosquito Plains), east to the Border, Mt Arapiles, Horsham, along the banks of the Wimmera River to Mt Cole and east to Mt Alexander. Estimated distance: 461 miles

Variation 1 - travelling further inland from Tilley's Station joining the first 'main' route at Omerod's Station close to MacIntosh's - saving 13 miles - total 448 miles

Variation 2 - turn east at Salt Creek and passing through Lawton's Station (Tatiara) and to the Border - saving 16 miles - total 445 miles

NB: "Neither of these variations would be safe for travellers unaccustomed to the Bush"

Variation 3 - to the south-east from Wellington, further inland, and through the Hundred Mile Scrub, where the miles are marked on trees and hands are placed pointing to the water holes. The border crossing is 'considerably to the north of the former point near MacIntosh's station, probably near Scott's Station'. A saving of 63 miles - total 398 miles. NB: "By the Hundred Mile Scrub, impracticable during the summer months for want of water".

For the Victorian section, references to station identification numbers on Ham's Map of Australia Felix were included. It was first published in 1847 and updated in 1851 and 1853

After crossing the ferry at Wellington follow the road to the Princes Highway and turn right towards the Coorong. This takes you through low scrubby country. Occasionally visible on the right is **Lake Alexandrina**. Some distance along, the road crosses a line of low hills and there are some good views to the south and east from here, so it is worth taking the opportunity to pull off the road. Further on, **Lake Albert** will appear on your right, and at one point the road runs very close - marked by a 'camera' viewing spot.

Meningie, on the shores of Lake Albert, is the first town on this road and offers a range of services and facilities. The centres along the Coorong between here and Kingston are considerably smaller, and in some cases are easy to miss. Between Meningie and Kingston, or Naracoorte, Salt Creek is the only place you will be sure to find fuel and food

Not far from Meningie, the road rounds a corner at **Magrath Flat** where there is a substantial stone house on the left, on the bend. Not far past this is a turn-off to the right to Parnka Point, where the northern and southern lagoons of the Coorong meet, known as Hell's Gate. If it is a clear day, the rough road in is worth it. There are several camping areas. The next turn off, at Hacks Point, is to the Ngarrindjeri Coorong Wilderness Lodge
Guided tours and other activities are available by prior arrangement
(www.coorongwildernesslodge.com/)

Continue on along the Coorong, through Stony Well and Woods Well. Not far south of Woods Well, there is a turn off to Jack Point Pelican Observatory (check calendar for breeding times etc) (www.australiannationalparks.com/southaustralia/coorong/default.htm).
The walk to the viewing point from the car park takes approximately 10 minutes
Continue on via Policemans Point to **Salt Creek**.

Meals, fishing and camping supplies and accommodation are available from The Coorong Roadhouse at Salt Creek. Pick up a copy of news-sheet 'The Tattler' for information from the SA Govt Department for Environment and Heritage for the Coastal Parks of the Limestone Coast - or visit their website for camping information - (www.environment.sa.gov.au/parks/Find_a_park/Browse_by_region/Limestone_Coast/Coorong_National_Park/Camping)

There are several walking trails in the Salt Creek area, taking from 20 minutes to two days

From **Salt Creek** continue on the Princes Highway travelling south.

Tilley / Tilley's Swamp is an area that features in many accounts of overland travel and is today represented by Tilley Swamp Conservation Park, located a short distance along Petherick Road, to the left (north) off the Highway (a rough gravel road) The area is clearly much smaller than it was in 1850 when many travellers described difficulty passing through. In the early 1850's Tilley Swamp Accommodation House was located in this vicinity

Blackford is the location of Baker's Station, referred to by several travellers. The homestead was right on the 'overland' track and provided accommodation. To reach Blackford, the route leaves the Princes Highway.

Approx 5 km south from Petherick Road, and the 28 Mile Crossing, turn left (gravel road) on the Henry Creek Road. After approximately 7 km turn right (south) into Tapfield Road and continue through the Taratap-Robertson Road intersection until you meet the Rowney Road West. Turn right and follow the road to **Blackford**, referred to in several accounts as 'Baker's Station'. Continue on to the south, veering off onto Bunkers Hill Road towards the small settlement of **Reedy Creek**.

Alternative route: Salt Creek to Reedy Creek via Loop Road south of Salt Creek

From Salt Creek there is a **Loop Road** that is believed to be close to the original route along the Coorong. It passes through an area of lagoons and lakes and there are several areas of clearly marked camping spots, in bush settings, along this road. It is gravel that can be rough in parts - check the condition at the Roadhouse in Salt Creek. This road joins the Princes Highway again at a bend, just north of Mike Lake

At Salt Creek, turn right onto Loop Road (gravel) and follow it until it re-joins the Highway
NB: You may notice signs to Chinamen's Well approx 16 km south of Salt Creek, just north of 42 Mile Crossing and not far from where the Loop Road joins the Highway. This is an interesting spot to visit, but it is not relevant to this project as it is believed to date from 1856
Follow the Princes Highway South towards Kingston, and follow signs to Naracoorte, to Reedy Creek. **Route re-joins Part A**

Alternative route: Salt Creek to Reedy Creek via Old Coorong Road

This road is believed to be an original route along the Coorong to the south, but does not appear to be part of the overland route to the goldfields. The properties established by several original settlers are on this road. It does provide glimpses of the natural state of the country in this area and is suggested as an alternative to the Highway. It is approximately 35 km of gravel and as conditions vary according to rainfall, it is perhaps only suitable for 4WD, or a very patient driver. It is not well-signposted at either end. Check at Salt Creek re the condition of this road, or try it but be prepared to turn back.

This option by-passes the site of Baker's Station at Blackford, mentioned in several accounts of travel overland to the goldfields.

Approximately 1 km south of the Keith-Cantara Road, near the 32 Mile Crossing, turn right onto a gravel road set at a diagonal to the highway. Pink ribbons mark the post (if still there).

This is the Old Coorong Road which winds its way south and re-joins the Highway approximately 15 km north of Kingston.

On reaching the Princes Highway, turn right and continue south to Kingston, and follow the signs towards Naracoorte to **Reedy Creek**. **Route re-joins Part A**

From **Reedy Creek**, follow the signs to Lucindale and **Naracoorte**.

Notice the series of ranges and flat areas running parallel with the coast - Avenue Range, East Avenue Range, Baker Range, Stewart Range, etc, also series of drains which drained the area for farming, beginning in the mid 1860's.

Keep a look out too for Jackie White Swamp, Mosquito Creek Water Course, and closer to Naracoorte, Lake Ormerod.

In **Naracoorte**, the site of McIntosh's mentioned in the majority of accounts, take time to visit the Naracoorte Visitor Information Centre and Sheep's Back Museum (www.community.history.sa.gov.au/organisations/naracoorte-branch-national-trust-of-south-australia)

There is a range of other visits and experiences available in Naracoorte and the surrounding area, including caves, fossil sites, wetlands, galleries and wineries.

The next section follows the Wimmera Highway from Naracoorte to Horsham - and closely resembles the 1851 route, winding through predominantly pastoral country with beautiful stands of trees. There are heavily wooded sections especially between Apsley and Edenhope and a number of shallow lagoons and lakes, both salt and fresh water. You can easily imagine the large numbers of birds and ducks referred to in some of the accounts.

Follow signs from Naracoorte along the Wimmera Highway to **Apsley**, the site of the Border Inn, which is still in existence, although not in the same location.

As you enter the township, there is a small park with an information board on the right hand side of the road accompanying a bullock wagon display.

Continue on to **Edenhope**, or Lake Wallace as it was known in the early 1850's. Take a detour one block to the left to visit the lake - not as full these days, according to one local, due to water being diverted elsewhere!

(Part B detours at Edenhope) - via Toolondo

Continuing **Part A**:

From **Edenhope** the road veers to the north east to pass close to Mt Arapiles, near the township of Natimuk and cross the Wimmera River to the west of **Horsham**. Take note of Sheepwash Lagoon to the west of the intersection with the Edenhope-Goroke Road, which is the last freshwater lake between Edenhope and Mt Arapiles.

Vectis Station or Major Firebrace's Station near Natimuk and a crossing point over the Wimmera River in this vicinity is referred to in several accounts. Many of the Street Names in Horsham refer to original (white) landholders.

Several local histories of Horsham refer to the first store and post office, on the corner of Darlot and Hamilton Streets, as being the logical choice for a site as it was near an 'established river crossing on an established track'.

Follow the Wimmera Highway into **Horsham**, where it intersects with both the Western Highway and the Henty Highway.

There was a well-travelled route along the northern bank of the Wimmera River from Horsham to its source near Mt Cole in the southern Pyrenees Ranges and on to Burnbank. This was where 'squatters' roads from Melbourne and Geelong met and branched out in various directions

Part B re-joins Part A at Horsham

Take the Henty Highway north from Horsham towards Dooen and turn to the right (east) to **Longrenong** and Drung Drung.

Longrenong Station is mentioned in several of the Overland Gold Accounts Follow signs through Marma State Forest and on toward Glenorchy, joining the Rupanyup-Glenorchy Road for a short distance. At various stages the Wimmera River will be visible as a line of trees on the right, and the Grampians in the distance. Turn left before the bridge over the Wimmera River to see a little of the town as it is today and take a closer look at the banks of the River.

Glenorchy was the site of the Four Post Inn which opened in 1847, followed soon afterwards by a store, a smithy and a post office - http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Glenorchy,_Victoria. It was located at the junction of four early landholdings in the area and became the intersection of early travel routes, one of which followed the northern bank of the Wimmera River to Horsham. The Four Post Inn is mentioned in the majority of accounts of overland travel in the early 1850's. The township was surveyed in 1851

An 1859 plan of the township shows the Four Post Inn on the corner of today's Forest and Carfrae Streets and at the junction of four roads.

Today, it is a paddock at the rear of the block on the corner of Bunbury and Forest Streets. At the eastern edge of town, at the intersection of Carfrae and Marl Streets, there are road signs to Gold Escort Route and Mt Alexander to Adelaide. Marl Street is now a No Through Road where a wooden bridge was demolished in recent times. One source mentions Glenorchy as being on the 'road' between South Brighton station near Longrenong and Charlotte Plains (Maryborough), which was the nearest supply depot.

A short distance upstream is a crossing, still in use today, thought to have been on the route to the south from Glenorchy. The turn off is from the Old Glenorchy Road not far south of the sign for Sheepwash Creek. The track winds through several bends on both sides, down to a crossing which was originally a ford. It is well worth a visit to get a sense of what some of these crossings might have been like. The route from this crossing to the north would have joined the route to the east from Glenorchy. A little further to the south there is a large waterhole just beside the road. This appears to have been a reliable source of water



One of the ranges between the south-east coast and Naracoorte



One of the swamps near Apsley



The Grampians from the north-east, Mt Zero on the right