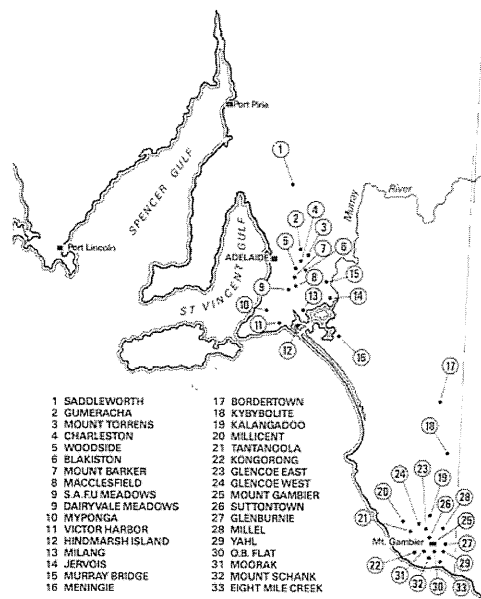


SOUTH AUSTRALIAN CHEESE FACTORIES

During the period 1960 to 1970, major changes took place in the dairying industry in South Australia. Many small historic cheese factories were closed and a few more favourably located ones were enlarged, re-equipped and modernised to handle the new technology of cheese making.

In a short period time, some thirty cheese factories ceased to manufacture, in some cases causing considerable social and economic stress to small communities involved in these employment and group centred factories.

In many cases, these factories had become outstanding in the art of cheese making and South Australian cheese became renowned for its quality throughout Australia and in Europe, England and Japan.



An account of these factories and their cheese makers has been published in Pickhaver, G.S. and Marshall J. DeZ., – “People, Places and Cheese in South Australia 1842-1984”, Wakefield Press, (1986), from which this map is reproduced.

During the 1950s, cheese “starter cultures” were being provided to many of these cheese factories by the Department from its small dairy laboratory in Gawler Place. The cultures were sent to the factories by bus and were used in a genetically distinct rotation to minimise the development of phages. These could develop if a single culture were used continuously for a length of time and could result in “starter failure”. The starter service was subsequently transferred to the Northfield laboratories in 1964. A developing dairy technology research team facilitated the adoption of new cheese technologies involving increasing mechanisation, and the progressive transfer of cheese “starter” technology to the factories through the adoption of commercially available lines. The change process was supported by Departmental technical staff who also had responsibilities for export cheese inspection and also through their participation in the Australian Society of Dairy Technology and the Institute of Dairy Factory Managers and Secretaries.