

TRANSPORTING THE CROP

*Information kindly provided by
Dr John Radcliffe AM FTSE,
RA&HSSA Grain and Fodder Committee*



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ROYAL AGRICULTURAL & HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY
OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA INCORPORATED

Traditionally, grain was packed into jute bags which were mostly imported from India. The weight of bags varied with the crop. Three bushel bags filled with wheat weighed 180 pounds (80 kg); barley weighed 150 pounds (68 kg) while oats weighed 120 pounds (54 kg). Superphosphate fertiliser, used from the 1880s, also came in bags which weighed 187 pounds (85 kg). All these bags were handled manually until the end of the World War II. Nearly full bags from the harvester were placed in heaps for sewing.



Awaiting sewing, 1959 – JC Radcliffe

Bags were sewn manually by teams of bag-sewers using hemp twine. Often the bag-sewers worked as teams in the summer twilight after finishing their regular jobs. Two men could load sewn bags from the ground into a trolley or truck using between them a pick-handle on which they tipped the bag, lifting it end over end for a third person to position on the load. Bags were carried on the backs of the “lumpers” at the storage terminals



Lumping barley to the wharf trolley

Grain was housed in simple open-sided sheds at railway stations and ports. A wall about 1.5 metres high, often of sheet metal, surrounded the stacks to try to discourage mice.

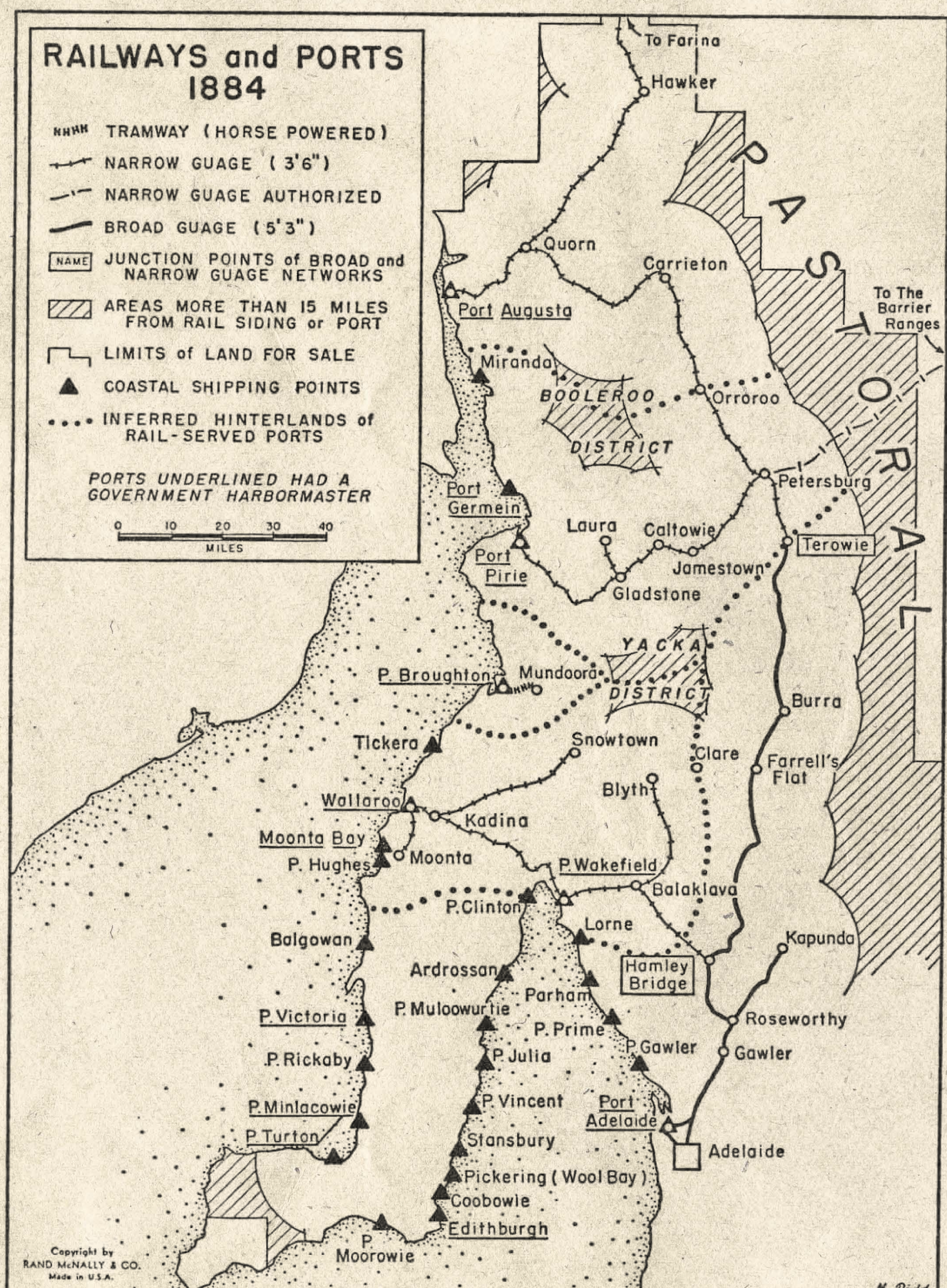
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With small ports around the gulfs and building railways from 1856, the government sought to ensure that there was a railway or port within 15 miles (24km) of every farm.



For many years, South Australia was the nation's granary. Grain was soon exported to Europe. Until 1947, windjammers were in regular use, Port Victoria on Yorke Peninsular being a popular loading port. Others went from Port Adelaide, Wallaroo, Port Broughton or Port Lincoln.



Pamir, last of the grain windjammers