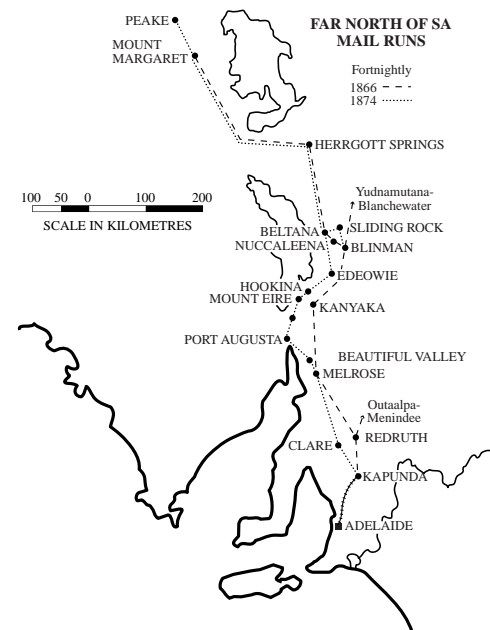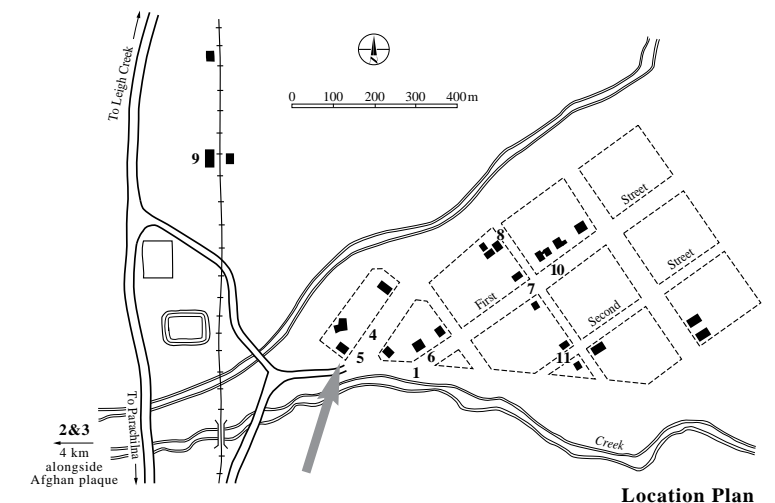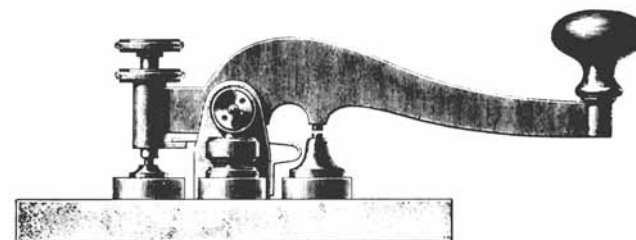# Early Mail Deliveries

EARLY MAIL DELIVERIES BY COACH IN THE FAR NORTH OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Early contracts for horse drawn coaches carrying passengers and delivering mail and small parcels were called every three years. At first, pastoralists on grazing leases may have arranged for their own mail collections by the teamsters who brought provisions to the homesteads from Port Augusta. The earliest record found of any official mail to Beltana Station dates from 1866. Contracts varied. The tender for Melrose to Blinman in 1866 stipulated *"....a 2 horse drawn vehicle; rate of travel 7 miles per hour; weekly; distance 153 miles."* This contract was given to Cobb and Co for £1,275/0/0d. This was higher than most and was recalled the next year. Once the railway reached Beltana in 1881, the mail came by train. It continued to do so, twice weekly for the next one hundred years.

FAR NORTH OF SA MAIL RUNS

Fortnightly
1866 – – –
1874 ....

PEAKE
MOUNT MARGARET
HERRGOTT SPRINGS
Yudnamutana-Blanchewater
BELTANA
NUCCALEENA
SLIDING ROCK
BLINMAN
EDEOWIE
HOOKINA
MOUNT EIRE
KANYAKA
PORT AUGUSTA
BEAUTIFUL VALLEY
MELROSE
Outaalpa-Menindee
REDRUTH
CLARE
KAPUNDA
ADELAIDE

100 50 0 100 200
SCALE IN KILOMETRES

BRIEF HISTORY OF THE AUSTRALIAN OVERLAND TELEGRAPH

In 1844 Samuel Morse sent the first message between Baltimore and Washington USA. His system involved tapping a 'Morse Key' to emit short or long pulses of electricity. Morse's telegraph system became universally popular. As early as 1862 discussions were in progress for an independent line from England to Australia. By June 1870 the Overland Telegraph Line Exploring Party reached Beltana Station and prepared for the "final departure". By the end of 1871, the cable had reached Darwin from London and was operating. It was not until 22 October 1872 that the Overland Telegraph was in full swing from London to Adelaide.

AUSTRALIAN OVERLAND TELEGRAPH
Depots &/or Repeater Stations

PORT DARWIN
YAM CREEK
KATHERINE
ELSEY CREEK
DALY WATERS
POWELLS CREEK
TENNANT CREEK
BARROW CREEK
ALICE SPRINGS
LADY CHARLOTTE WATERS
PEAKE
BRISBANE
STRANGWAYS SPRINGS
BELTANA
PORT AUGUSTA
PERTH
ADELAIDE
SYDNEY
MELBOURNE
HOBART

Location Plan

To Leigh Creek
To Puttapa
To Parachilna
Creek
First Street
Second Street
Street
0 100 200 300 400m
2&3
4 km
alongside
Afghan plaque

FIS 16416 2000