

### Houghton—an English Village in the Para District

The village of Houghton, a private town, was laid out on land owned by Sir John Morphett in 1841 by lessee John Richardson who named it after his nearby property, *Houghton Lodge* on Section 5510. The town was located on Section 5519 which was subdivided into 50 allotments (38 lots of approx 1 acre) and a 10 acre common. The village, the earliest settlement in the area, was modelled on a typical English village. With extensive planting of oaks and elms the town became even more English-like. It had an early advantage of being on the most favoured route for heavy loads to Adelaide and Port Adelaide. In April 1842 a publican's licence was granted to the *Travellers Rest* which was located on Allotment 1, a triangular piece of land surrounded by roads and in the village centre. By 1843 the Union Chapel, so named because it was jointly constructed by the Congregation- alists, Wesleyans and Episcopalians, had been built on Allot- ment 18. In 1844 the village had a blacksmith, a general store, a butcher, and about six houses. In 1847 the Chapel was being used during the week as a school with 26 students. A regular postal service to the town was established in 1848.

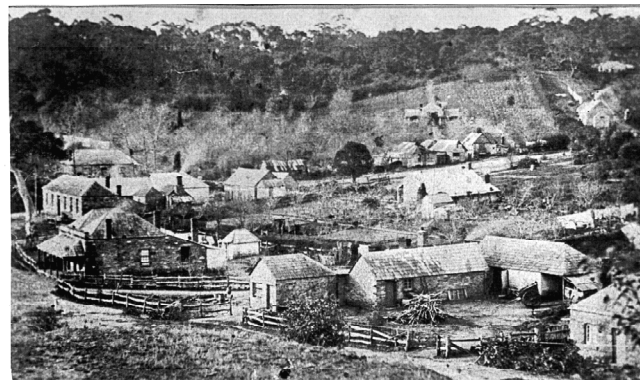
Top: *Travellers Rest*.  
Above: Stoke's black- smithy.  
Remaining headstone in Union Chapel yard  
Right: Possingham's Store.



### Walking tour

- 1 Starting point—War Memorial (1917). This monument is located in the yards of the former inn, *Traveller's Rest*, that filled the whole triangle we see today. The first licensee was Thomas Neale 1841 and the last was William Arthur Stevens 1934. In 1852 the inn was known as *Rising Sun* and in 1855 as *Houghton*. Ironically the site was purchased for an Anglican Church but initially leased to Thomas Neale by the Church for 5 years. Lots 40-43 now the *Memorial Oval* site were also owned by the church.
- 2 At the bottom of the hill to the west, we can see attached to a larger 2-storied building (1927 construction) an 1847 cot- tage. The iron roof covers the original thatch. The front yard was occupied by Stoke's blacksmith shop.
- 3 To the north on Houghton Hollow Road stands *Bristol House* built in the 1840s as a residence with butcher shop for William Reeds.
- 4 At the end of (King) William Street, you will find the com- mon—a rare feature in SA towns. The gardens are the result of the late Allan Possingham and continued by Bob Day.
- 5 Looking south from the War Memorial, note two churches on Horn Street. The higher one was the Wesleyan Method- ist Church built in 1866 on Lot 8 originally owned by the publican, Samuel Pearce, and transferred to the local church elders on 16 March 1865 and the lower one on Lot 6, a Con- gregational Church (1875) houses the original Bible used in the community in the 1840s.
- 6 Between the two churches stands a private home on Lot 7 which (in parts) pre-dates the churches.
- 7 On the opposite side (north) on what is now called Black Hill Road, but was originally known as Main Road, the new home up on the hill replaced *Hazelern*, known as *The White House* or *Government House*, which occupied most of Lots 19-21. The front portion of Lot 21 and some of Lot 20 was the site of Battersby's store built in 1844 as a shoemaker' shop becoming the 1st PO in 1848 and later drapery in 1856.
- 8 Walking up hill (east) the CWA Rooms are on Lot 18 and behind this building we have the remains of the Union Chapel, so-called because it was built by the community in 1843 as a non-denominational place of worship. Prior to the school being opened in 1878, this was also the school room. The trustees leased the room to William Squibb at 10/- pa from 1847. In front of the chapel we can see the remains of the village's first cemetery. Only one headstone survives and the burial register has been lost. The rest were of wood and burnt in the Black Sunday fires. Properties west of this point except the store on Lot 20 were destroyed in these fires.
- 9 Nothing remains of the Robinson's house to the rear of Lots 15-17. On the street was his carpentry and garage for the vil- lage's horse-drawn hearse. All were lost in the 1956 fires.
- 10 Continuing up the hill and along John Street (Cemetery Road), you will come to the cemetery (est 1871). This is well worth a visit.

# Historic Houghton



A walking tour of Houghton village to see the remaining 19th century features and the impact of the 1956 bush fire of Black Sunday.

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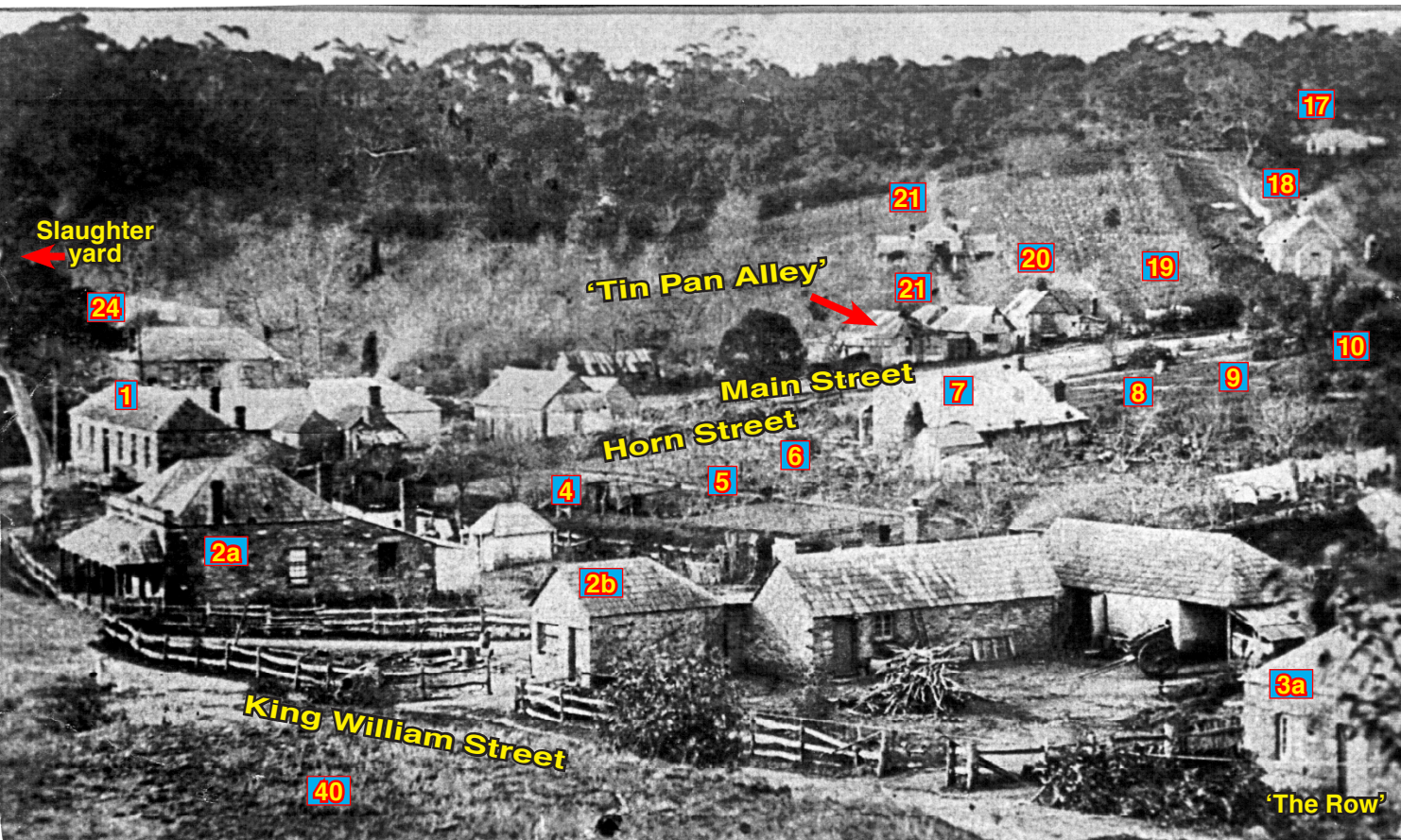
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*Ancestral and Local History Researchers*





### Houghton before 1854† viewed from the Common.

Very few of these buildings remain today. The most significant of these is the Union Chapel ruin (18) behind the CWA Rooms and the private home (7) between the 2 churches on Horn Street.

Houghton rate payers 1854 District of Highercombe include:

1. Thomas Battersby—store, house, buildings, garden (2½ acres)
2. William Squibb—house and land (2½ acres)
3. James Cousins—stone house, garden and land (2 acres)
4. Henry Ellis—house, store and small garden (1⅛ acre)
5. William Drake—house and land (¾ acre)
6. Mrs Rule—slab hut (squatting)
7. Samuel Pearce—public house, paddocks, cottage and land (20½)
8. William Reeds—house, shop, cottage, paddocks &c (111 acres\*)

9. Thomas Hart—house and garden (1¼ acres)
10. William Kinnish—house and garden (1 acre)
11. John Possingham—house and land (1 acre)
12. John Miller—house and garden (12 acres)
13. W[illiam] P[orter] Horn—house and garden (2 acres)
14. Anna C[atarean] Rehn—house and land (151 acres\*)
15. Henry James—house and land (5½ acres)
16. Open land owned by John Morphet (2 acres)
17. William Winch—house, garden and land (4½ acres)
18. Thomas Pearce—house, shop and garden (1 acre)
19. Charles Bennet—house and land (4½ acres)

† 1854 because no house on Lot 4/5 \* also land ex-Section 5519

Early property owner/occupiers from Land Titles Office records listed by Lot number:

- 1: Thomas Neale, publican Apr 1842 (leased for 5 yrs from SPG)
- 2, 3: William Reeds, labourer 11 Mar 1851 £140
- 4, 5: William Porter Horn, 1852
- 6: George Cooper Morphet 6 Nov 1850 £1
- 7: Alice Esther Johnson 30 May 1854
- 8, 9: Anna Catarean Rehn, widow 1845
- 17: William Squibb 1850

- 18: Trustees for the Union Chapel 1843
- 19, 20, 21: Thomas Battersby, shoe maker £12 1 Jun 1844
- 22, 45: Charles Millar, yeoman £30 1 Oct 1841
- 23, 24; 25: George Barrass, blacksmith £11-7-6 1 Jun 1844
- 26, 27, 28, 31: William Reeds, labourer
- 40, 41, 42, & 43: Society for Propagation of the Gospel (SPG)

### Sources:

Auhl, Ian: *From settlement to city: a history of the district of Tea Tree Gully 1836–1976*, Adelaide 1976.

Jaunay, Graham: *A toast to the future: the story of George Johnson and his family*, Adelaide 1989.

Family of George Johnson Association Inc: *Johnsons Jottings*  
Records held in the Lands Titles Office, Adelaide.  
Unpublished research by David Prime and Graham Jaunay.

Photographs: Mavis Pitman and Alan Possingham.

The blue triangle is the area covered by the adjacent photograph.

