

Place Name SUMMARY (PNS) 4.01.01/03

KAUWE-MARNILLA

(last edited: 14/4/2013)

Abstract

Kauwe-marnilla is a Kaurna descriptive phrase, perhaps also a place-name, for waterholes on the tributaries of Field River in the vicinity of Old Reynella or Happy Valley. By 1840 it had been recorded as 'Cowie Manilla'.

It means 'two good waters'.

<i>Coordinates</i>	General area -35.087643° Latitude, 138.539958° Longitude.
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Language Information

<i>Meaning</i>	'two good waters [waterholes or springs]'
<i>Etymology</i>	<i>kauwe</i> '[fresh] water' + <i>marni</i> 'good, fat' + <i>-rla</i> 'two' (Dual suffix).
<i>Notes</i>	
<i>Language Family</i>	Thura-Yura: 'Kaurna'.
<i>KWP Former Spelling</i>	Kauwe-marnilla
<i>KWP New Spelling 2010</i>	Kauwi-marnirla
<i>Phonemic Spelling</i>	/kawimarnirla/
<i>Pronunciation</i>	"C owee -ma-rni-rla":
<i>Pronunciation tips</i>	Stress the 1 st and 3 rd syllables; 'au' as in 'cow'; 'rn' and 'rl' are <i>n</i> and <i>l</i> with tongue curled back (retroflex).

Main source evidence

<i>Date</i>	Sep 1840
<i>Original source text</i>	[printed] "526 T Morgan" + [written in red pen on section 526] "Cowie Manilla".
<i>Reference</i>	Arrowsmith map 1/9/1840, 'Country South of Adelaide', London, [special edition] 'Sold by J Wyld, Geographer to Her Majesty', BRG 42/120/28, SLSA.
<i>Informants credited</i>	
<i>Informants uncredited</i>	Kaurna survey guides 1839; surveyors.

Date	Dec 1840
Original source text	“[section, District B] 526 - Cowie Manilla - William Sharples – [water supply] Well, 20 feet deep, with 4 feet of water.” “524 – Reynella Farm – John Reynell – Tea-tree swamp, with abundant supply of water... A handsome and commodious dwelling-house on the section, with sheep-pens, stockyard, andc.”
Reference	‘Statement of the extent of cultivation.... at the termination of the year 1840’, <i>BPP: Colonies: Australia</i> , Vol. 7 (1841-4): 112, 116.
Informants credited	
Informants uncredited	Kurna survey guides 1839; surveyors; settlers.

Date	1844
Original source text	“I think I could go from Adelaide to the Slate Quarry at Piltongga and obtain surface water on an average of four miles. Distances measured from Government-house, Adelaide. Number Two* - 12.5. / Cowemanilla, Hurtle Vale - 13.5.”
Reference	‘L.P.’ [Louis Piesse], <i>Observer</i> 13/4/1844: 8a-b.
Informants credited	
Informants uncredited	

Date	1893
Original source text	“Hurtle Vale ... native name ‘ Kowie Munilla ’”.
Reference	Charles H Harris 1893, <i>Geographical Nomenclature of SA</i> , Australasian Association for the Advancement of Science, Sep 1893 [SLSA photocopy]: 483.
Informants credited	
Informants uncredited	?surveyors; ?settler memories.

Discussion: TWO GOOD WATERS:

THE WORD:

‘Cowie Manilla’ has five syllables, which means that the root word has four (2 + 2); and therefore in the Kurna system its Locative suffix would be *-ngga*, not *-illa* which is used only on three-syllable roots and replaces the final vowel with *i* – e.g. ‘Cowandilla’: *Kawanda* > *Kawand-illa*.¹

¹ See PNS 1/2.

Accordingly, the final '-lla' given in 'Cowie Manilla' must be analysed not as a Locative but as a Dual, 'two'.

This works easily. 'Cowie' is *kauwe*, the word for 'fresh water': inevitably one of the first words learned from Kurna guides and helpers by the first Europeans who travelled over this land. *Marni* is 'fat, rich, good'. Adjectives normally follow the noun in Aboriginal languages, so *kauwe marni* is standard Kurna for 'a good water', any good source of drinking water. Two of these are *kauwe-marni-lla*.

This may be a descriptive phrase rather than a real place-name. On the other hand the site was probably a significant landmark on the main Kurna route southward, and frequent useage may have turned the phrase into a place-name.

Charles Harris is late evidence. He was a surveyor but not until 1869, a very late date for our purposes.² His spelling is independent but confirms the earlier one, as his 'u' in 'mun' is probably intended to be as in 'but', making the same sound *marn*.

WHERE WAS 'HURTLE VALE'?

Harris thought 'Kowie Munilla' referred to the whole of 'Hurtle Vale' (named after James Hurtle Fisher, the Resident Colonization Commissioner); but this large area is unlikely, especially for a *kauwe* 'water', as opposed to a *parri* 'river'.

Historical records and commentaries have not been clear which valleys were counted as 'Hurtle Vale'.

Manning says it was '*east of Morphett Vale*',³ but this is clearly wrong. The maps from the 1839 McLaren surveys show 'Hurtle Vale' on the Field River below the junction at Trott Park of its two large tributaries. Upstream the tributaries themselves are much less clear to us now, and the application of 'Hurtle Vale' even less clear. The northerly branch was then 'Happy Valley' which extended far up into today's Aberfoyle Park as the main stream.⁴ The southerly watercourse (named 'Panalatinga Creek' at an unknown date)⁵ was not shown at all on these maps; but its valley also shared the name of 'Hurtle Vale', "*an alluvial flat running down to the teatree scrub swamp, near the township of Reynella*".⁶ Much of the true geography of this area is now hidden

² Manning, 'Nomenclature of SA', www.slsa.sa.gov.au/manning/sa/nomenclature/nomenclature.htm.

³ Manning 2006: 209.

⁴ R Counsel 1839, Field Book 94: [118b]; maps BRG 42/120/28 and C 218, SLSA.

⁵ See PNS 4.1.1/04 (forthcoming 2013).

⁶ *Gazetteer* 1866, in Yelland, *Colonists, Copper and Corn*, 2nd ed 1983: 81, n.10.

from the modern car commuter. The creeks are largely invisible from the main roads, obscured by embankments built up for housing developments, a highway and an expressway; and Happy Valley reservoir has almost dried up the lower reach of original main course from there to Trott Park.

THE PLACE:

The name was almost certainly obtained by the first surveyors from Kurna guides in early 1839, as we know some Aboriginal men were employed later that year on the Aldinga survey in which Piesse was also involved.⁷ But they and their successors did not know its meaning, and it is fairly clear that in usage by the settlers the name was very quickly dissociated from its original 'two good waters'.

Most of the earliest records of *Kauwe-marnilla* identify it with a property on section 526, owned first by one T Morgan, but very soon by William Sharples, a big land-holder who was later one of the first pastoralists on Southern Yorke Peninsula. This section was on the southern side of today's Panalatinga Creek around the Reynella East School.⁸

Several map versions survive from the first surveys of this area under John McLaren in early 1839.⁹ They carefully mark many waterholes with the word 'water', sometimes indicating this by a small broadening of the watercourse like a tiny lake; but not on 526, where Sharples had to go down 20 feet to get water.¹⁰ So where exactly were those 'two good waters'?

These maps mark 'water' at four sites within a mile of Sharples. A careful comparison with today's topography on a Google-Earth image shows the following:

One was on Section 524, near the bicycle trail at the centre of Old Reynella in the Panalatinga valley, downstream and almost a mile west of 526. By 1839 John Reynell had planted 'Reynella Farm' in this vicinity on a "tea-tree swamp with abundant supply of water", and had built "a handsome and commodious dwelling-house... with sheep-pens, stockyard, &c".¹¹

⁷ Register 10/8/1839: 6a. The surveys of District B (including the Old Reynella area) were done in early 1839.

⁸ See Arrowsmith map 1/9/1840, 'Country South of Adelaide', London, {special edition} 'Sold by J Wyld, Geographer to Her Majesty', BRG 42/120/28, SLISA; cp. 'Statement... of the extent... at the termination of the year 1840', BPP: Colonies: Australia 7 (1841-4): 112.

⁹ n.d. [1839?], 'South Australia No. 13', C 256; Burslem 1840, 'Plan of the country south of Adelaide... / Survey Office, Adelaide, SA – FH Burslem Draftsman', C 236; Arrowsmith' London 1/9/1840, 'Country South of Adelaide / Sold by J Wyld, Geographer to Her Majesty', BRG 42/120/28 [all SLISA].

¹⁰ 'Statement... of the extent... at the termination of the year 1840', BPP: Colonies: Australia 7 (1841-4): 112.

¹¹ 'Statement... of the extent... at the termination of the year 1840', BPP: Colonies: Australia 7 (1841-4): 116.

To the north the figuration of the watercourses has been altered drastically. Immediately eastward the main course of the Field River through Trott Park and Happy Valley is a minor trickle, dammed upstream by the Happy Valley reservoir. But in 1839 three other 'waters' were marked within a one-kilometre stretch of it.

Two were on section 499 (in the valley of the Southern Expressway at Trott Park): one south of Lyons Circuit; the other half a km upstream east of Chifley Crescent, at the junction of the river with a northern tributary now called Minkara Creek.

The main course in this reach was then called 'No. 2 creek'.¹² From the junction it turns east, and a half-km further up the surveyors marked a fourth 'water' on section 518 where the SA Company would very soon establish their sheep station, 'No. 2'.¹³ This waterhole is now the little lake at Fountain Valley Drive, Happy Valley.

The last two of these 'waters' were about one mile from Reynell's Section 524, and roughly north of it: a point whose significance will emerge soon.

Which of all these were the 'two good waters'?

Louis Piesse, who had been a survey worker in 1839, was cataloguing 'surface water' on the route south from Adelaide to Willunga in 1844, and listed 'Cowemanilla, Hurtle Vale' as being one mile south of 'No. 2 station'.¹⁴

Piesse's site for 'Cowemanilla' was almost certainly Reynell's waterhole in the Panalatinga valley. By 1844 Reynell was a prominent landholder. The location of his farm was familiar to readers, and it appears that Piesse was content to attach the name there. However, it is doubtful whether he had obtained the name himself, as he did not include any version of it in his earlier list of place-names made during his stint on the surveys and accompanied meticulously by their Section numbers,¹⁵ and he gave no section number now.

From these ambiguous data, can we deduce where *Kauwe-marnilla* was?

¹² "The sheep station was formerly on No.2 Creek at the foot of O'Halloran Hill" (1866 Gazetteer, quoted in Yelland 1983, *Colonists, Copper & Corn*, 2nd ed: 11, 16 n.2).

¹³ The west part of Section 518 as shown on these maps was originally 491 (cp. Counsel 1839, Field Bk 94, GNU: [117b]), under which number the Company's Station No. 2 appeared in the Almanacs (Cotter 1844, *SA Almanac*: 168 "Edward, Wm sec. 491, No.2 Station"; 186 "Taggart, M, sec. 491, No.2 Station").

¹⁴ 'L.P.' [Louis Piesse], *Observer* 13/4/1844: 8a-b. He comments on the quick degradation of the waterhole at No.2 Station: "The Tea tree being cut down here, the water has dried up; but I imagine it could still be obtained at 2 or 3 feet deep".

¹⁵ Piesse letter 18 Oct 1839, *SA Colonist* 1(19), 1840: 296.

It seems to have been appropriated as the equivalent of 'Hurtle Vale' with its accompanying ambiguities. The farm at 526, lacking good surface water, had probably lifted the name from nearby. Even Piesse was probably generalizing it to the whole vicinity, like surveyor Harris a generation later.¹⁶

Perhaps there were once two good waterholes around Reynell's (though a second one was not shown on the first maps).

Perhaps *Kauwe-marnilla* referred to a larger area which included both Reynell's and Happy Valley.

Or the Kurna may have applied it only to the two choicest waterholes at Happy Valley, and the first landholders may have shifted it south.

At this late date even an intensive historical study of the hydrology of the whole area might not make us sure of the answer, as it depends also on Aboriginal travel patterns.

Like all other places in SA at first contact, it had traditional owners. According to Protector Moorhouse, the well-known Kurna leader Mullawirraburka ('King John') 'formerly belonged' here at 'Hurtle Vale' as well as at 'Adelaide, Glenelg and Sturt River'; but he 'exchanged' all of these for Aldinga and Myponga Plains in some kind of ownership deal.¹⁷

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End of Summary

¹⁶ CH Harris 1893, *Geographical Nomenclature of SA*, Australasian Association for the Advancement of Science, Sep 1893 [SLSA photocopy]: 483.

¹⁷ Moorhouse report 27/7/1840, *BPP Aust* Vol. 7: 'Papers Relative to SA... 1843': 355.