
Bill Glennies Hut c1865-1930s

Alternative names: *Glennys (4 Mile, Four Mile)*

Location Kosciuszko National Park Centre
Coordinates: **633451 E 6022297 N** [GDA94/WGS84 datum]
Accuracy: GPS on site (+/- 5m)
Topo maps: Cabramurra 25k/Yarrangobilly 100k

Summary



Site of early gold miners hut built by William 'Bill' Glennie c1865, situated in open woodland on the east bank of Four Mile Creek ~540m south of Four Mile Hut. The hut was a single room, with walls of timber slabs and a bark roof.

Glennie was a Scotsman who enjoyed the cool mountain weather, and resided in the hut for 45 years whilst working ground sluicing claims in the Four Mile Valley. He made a reasonable return and moved into Kiandra upon his retirement c1910. The hut became a ruin during the 1920s-30s.

The site is currently defined by a large pile of chimney stones and a rectangular grassy footprint. A large earth-walled dam, racelines and diggings associated with Glennie are located nearby.

Description of Place

Site of c1860s gold miners hut, situated in open woodland on the east bank of Four Mile Creek ~540m south of Four Mile Hut.

The hut comprised a single room of approximate size 10' x 14' (3.3 x 4.6m) with timber slab walls and a bark roof. Currently defined by a collapsed pile of fireplace/chimney stones, a level rectangular area defining the hut footprint, and some broken shovel heads (at 2008). Previous reports describe an enamel pot at the site along with *“shards of coloured glass and some food and rubbish dumps in the gullies leading down to the mining sites. Unfortunately, the latter have been very disturbed by rare bottle seekers, making later archaeological work very frustrating and confounding the evidence.”*¹

Over his 45-year occupation of the Four Mile valley, Bill Glennie would have prospected and ground sluiced numerous sections of the valley floor. Unfortunately, there is no record of where individual miners worked within the valley. The best indicator of the location of Glennie's workings is his hut site, which would have been situated on or adjacent to his initial claim. Consequently, the existing evidence of alluvial gold workings extending along the east bank of Four Mile Creek from a point ~100m southwest to ~200m north of the hut is highly likely to have been that worked by Glennie, although this area could also have been previously worked in the rush of 1860 and/or subsequently worked by Bob Hughes during the 1930s.

Evidence of these workings include racelines and spoil heaps consistent with ground sluicing. An extensive area of bare earth 170m northwest of the hut site is visible on Google Earth and generally traversed by parties heading from Four Mile Hut to Elaine Mine.

60m northwest of the hut site is a substantial header dam ~50 x 30m, probably built by Glennie. This is fed by a raceline extending 1.8km up Bloomfield Ck to a point above the Elaine Mine. This race was likely excavated in the 1860 rush — 1944 airphotos suggest it led into the creek workings near the base of Four Mile Sluice 'A' — but a diversion channel off it into Glennies Dam was later put in. A head race from this dam extends 1km along the east bank of Four Mile Creek, and may have been used to supply water to a number of workings within the creek bed over many years.

[Refer Appendix A for list of site features and coordinates.]

[Refer Appendix B for plan of site features]

¹ Hueneke, K: *Huts of the High Country* 1982 p91

Historical Background

William 'Bill' Glennie was a Scotsman, born around c1829². Tom Yan recalled Glennie disliked the general heat of Australia and was attracted to the cool climate of the mountains.³ He might have spent time in Kiandra before moving out to the Four Mile, where he pegged his first claim about 1865.⁴ Soon after he appears to have built a single-roomed hut, of timber slabs with a bark roof,⁵ at the present site on the east bank of Four Mile Creek. Here he lived whilst ground sluicing the watercourses and banks of the valley over the next 45 years.

Unfortunately there is no record of where individual miners like Glennie worked within the Four Mile valley. The best indicator of the location of Glennie's workings is his hut site, which would have been situated on or adjacent to his initial claim. Hence the alluvial gold workings along the east bank from a point 100m southwest to 200m north of the hut are highly likely to have been worked by Glennie, although they could have also been worked in the rush of 1860 and/or subsequently worked by Bob Hughes during the 1930s.

60m northwest of Glennies Hut is a large holding dam, still evident today. This was fed from a race that can still be followed 1.8km, across into the adjoining Bloomfield Creek catchment and upstream to a point above the Elaine Mine.⁶ The race was probably excavated by miners working Four Mile Creek around April 1860, and later diverted into a new dam by Glennie. Excluding the mid 1880s, when hydraulic sluicing was being undertaken at South Bloomfield and Four Mile valleys, this would have provided Glennie with a continuous and copious supply of water for his ground sluicing, and it's routing away from any other mining claims would have helped Glennie avoid disputes over water rights.

Beyond 1860, the Four Mile appears to have been generally worked by a handful claimants each year. During the late 1870s this included Glennie, Neil Taylor, William Wyeboe, George Cox, ? Venteman and ? Bowerbank.⁷ Most of these claims were abandoned by 1880,⁸ however a resurgence of activity was reported in the Mines Dept Annual Report of 1881 with the *"principal claim-holders being Messrs Glennie, Sharp, Cox, Patterson, Powell, Patrick, Mullins, Boggertitch, Taylor, O'Brien,*

*and Greenway . . Glennie has worked here for many years; therefore I presume he has good returns, otherwise he would have tried fresh ground . . Here also Mr John M Lett has pegged out two 10-acre blocks, and is constructing long races to work the above claims."*⁹

The following year the Department reported: *"Patrick, Mullens, Bogertitch, Patterson, Cox, Powell and Glennie are still at work and getting payable gold."*¹⁰ Glennie appears to have continued to work his claim through the mid-1880s, when the valley was disturbed by hydraulic sluicing operations on the head of Four Mile Creek and at North and South Bloomfield. As for most parts of the Kiandra goldfield, there were disputes over water supply — in 1893 Taylor made an unsuccessful claim that Glennie had abandoned his head and tail races.¹¹

Glennie is believed to have generally worked alone. Tom Yan states Glennie made a reasonable return, and bought a hotel in Kiandra at one stage.¹² An 1891 newspaper article portrayed Glennie in a romantic light: *"a Scot of frugal mind intent, he is now in very comfortable circumstances, and has lived on through frost and snow ground-sluicing year after year, content with a good yield one season, and perhaps a meagre one the next, always putting by a muckle wee penny for the bad time that may come; so that, though he is now bidding fair for four score years of age, he is still a fine specimen of the vigorous, honest, healthy, and hearty old digger, one of a type now nearly extinct."*¹³

The main track from Kiandra to the Nine Mile via Commissioners Gully passed close to Glennie's Hut, so it is likely visitors frequently dropped in. One report has a party of snow-shoers calling in on their return from the Nine Mile: *"A very severe snow storm accompanied by a dense fog, occurred here on Sunday last. Thirteen townspeople in all were lost. The early morning was clear, and a party, consisting of J Eastwood, junr, W Bourke, T Ottley, G Irwin and two lads, W and A Hetherington, started for the Nine Mile on shoes. The party started early in order to have the benefit of the hard frosty snow, and arrived at their destination in two hours and a half. Leaving again at 2 o'clock they called at Mr Glennie's Four Mile, and then decided on taking the table-land track."*

"The fog was exceedingly dense, and after four hours hard travelling they had completely circled and were again on their own tracks. As it was now dark and snowing they decided on sliding on to a sheltered sidling. After much trouble a fire

² Wilkinson & Pebesma and NSW Register of Births Deaths & Marriages has Glennie aged 88 upon his death in 1917

³ Yan, Tom (pers comm) cited in Hueneker, K: *People of the High Country* 1996 p118

⁴ Sydney Mail 11 Apr 1891 p838

⁵ Yan, Tom (pers comm) cited in Hueneker, K: *People of the High Country* 1996 p118

⁶ Hutchison, Greg: field survey 2012

⁷ Manaro Mercury 26 Nov 1879 p3

⁸ Mines Dept Annual Report 1880

Original text: David Scott 5/2016 Last updated:

⁹ Mines Dept Annual Report 1881

¹⁰ Mines Dept Annual Report 1882

¹¹ Evening News 3 Oct 1893 p6 and SMH 2 Nov 1893 p7

¹² Yan, Tom (pers comm) cited in Hueneker, K: *People of the High Country* 1996 p118

¹³ Sydney Mail 11 Apr 1891 p838

was made on the top of three feet of snow. The six then huddled round the fire to watch through the twelve hours. Sleet and snow fell continuously.

"At 6.30 am, a fresh start was made for the tableland to await the clearing of the fog in order to take land marks. At 10.30 the fog slightly lifted, when the Eucumbene River was sighted. Points were taken and the party stubbornly shod back round steep sidlings towards the town and arrived home at noon after being 22 hours continuously on shoes without food or extra clothing."¹⁴

Around 1910¹⁵ Glennie, aged 80, moved into Kiandra, occupying a two-bedroom house between the present locations of Wolgal Lodge and Jim & Fanny Pattinsons House.¹⁶ In 1911 he joined the committee for the Kiandra School of Arts¹⁷ and around this time befriended a young Bill Hughes, who lived in a house opposite and later described Glennie: "*Bill liked his whisky and hearty roars could frequently be heard coming from his house late into the night. As he was perfectly normal during the day I have since come to the conclusion that it was just his way of voicing disapprobation to the world in general of the quirks of fate which had led him, a braw Scottish laddie, to such straits.*"¹⁸

Bill Hughes would bring food, and at one time when Glennie was received a bad foot infection, Bill came daily to re-bandage Glennie's feet, "*but the cantankerous old man would tear the bandage off again as soon as Bill had gone out the door.*"¹⁹ On the night of 1 February 1917 Glennie, aged 88 and probably in a state of intoxication, collapsed into his fireplace and died. Next morning Bill, aged 14, "*found him lying in the fireplace with his head burnt off.*"²⁰

Glennie was buried in the Kiandra Cemetery on 2 February 1917.²¹

Glennie's hut became a ruin sometime in the 1920s or early 1930s. It is possible Bob Hughes may have stayed in the hut whilst mining the valley and building the current Four Mile Hut.²² The site of Glennies Hut is currently defined by a collapsed pile of fireplace/chimney stones, a level rectangular area defining the hut footprint, and some broken shovel heads. It is situated on the popular walking route from Four Mile to the Elaine Mine.

¹⁴ Wagga Express 14 Jul 1896 p3

¹⁵ Hueneker, K (pers comm) cited in Gregors, G: *A Survey of Alpine Architecture 1860-1910*, 1979 p63

¹⁶ Hueneker, K: *Kiandra to Kosciusko* 1987 p42

¹⁷ Manaro Mercury 18 Aug 1911 p2

¹⁸ Bill Hughes (pers comm) cited in Hueneker, K: *Kiandra to Kosciusko* 1987 p42

¹⁹ Hueneker, K: *Huts of the High Country* 1982 p91

²⁰ Bill Hughes (pers comm) cited in Hueneker, K: *Kiandra to Kosciusko* 1987 p42

²¹ Wilkinson & Pebesma: *Graves of the Tumut District* 1999 p82

²² Gregors, Gatis: *Four Mile Hut Conservation Study*, 1989, p4

Original text: David Scott 5/2016 Last updated:

[For further information refer Sources/further reading, Appendix C & D for copies of primary source material and Appendix E for copies of secondary source material]

Sources/further reading

Department of Industry, Resources & Energy (former Mines Dept) resources:
Mines Dept annual reports viewed
online <http://digsopen.minerals.nsw.gov.au/>

Google Earth aerial imagery dated 2013, overall image © CNES/Astrum 2015

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<http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~hcastle/grevilles/lists/jkl/kem.html#Kiandra>
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Hueneker, K *Huts of the High Country*, ANU Press 1982
Kiandra to Kosciusko, K Hueneker 1987
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Hutchison, Greg field survey 2012-3, recorded in 4 Mile survey notes

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RAAF aerial imagery 1944-45 and 1961, proof sheets viewed in the map room (copyright held by private photographer)
Trove - various newspapers viewed
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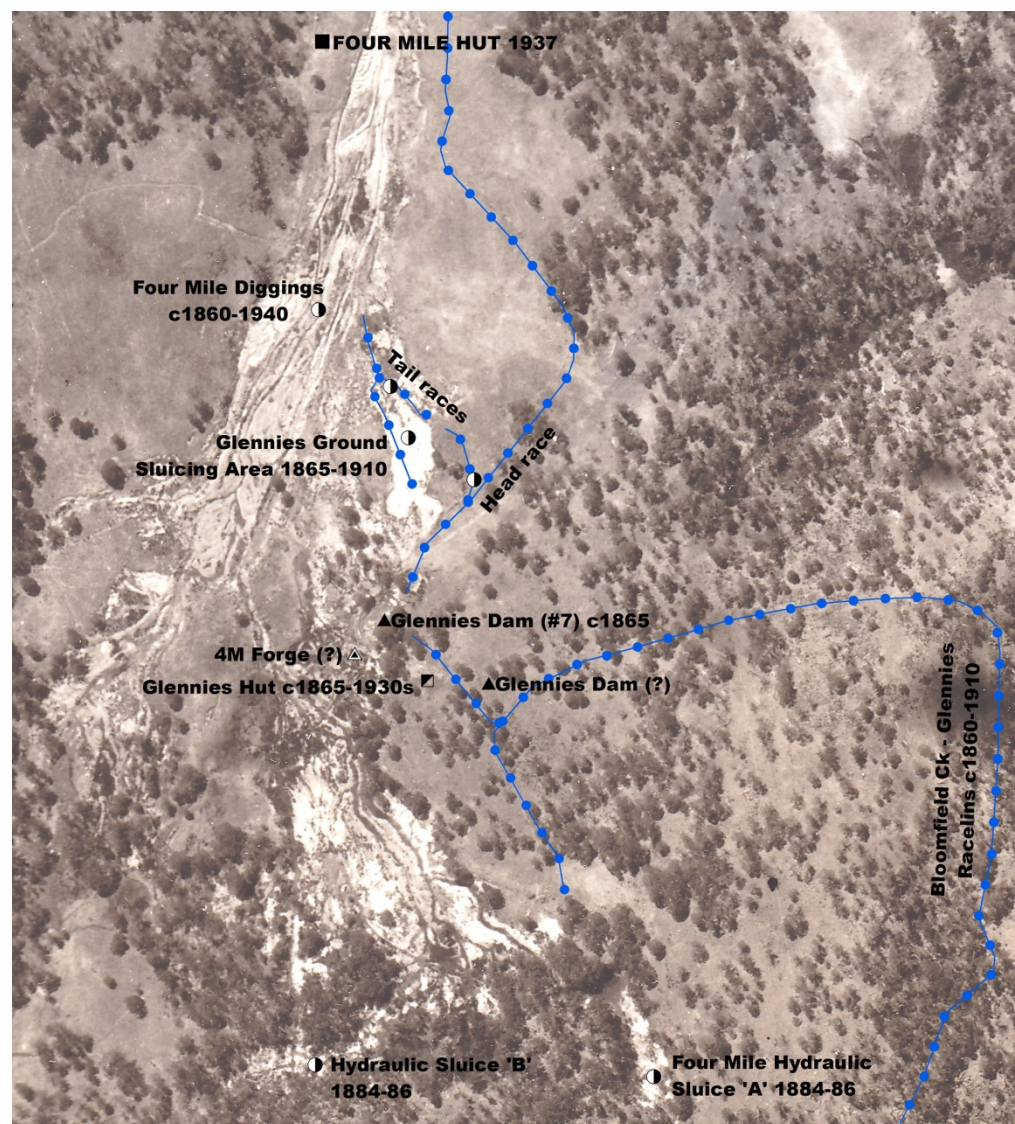
Williams, John: *Memories of Yesteryear*, Vol 1 2005, p158-160, unpublished report

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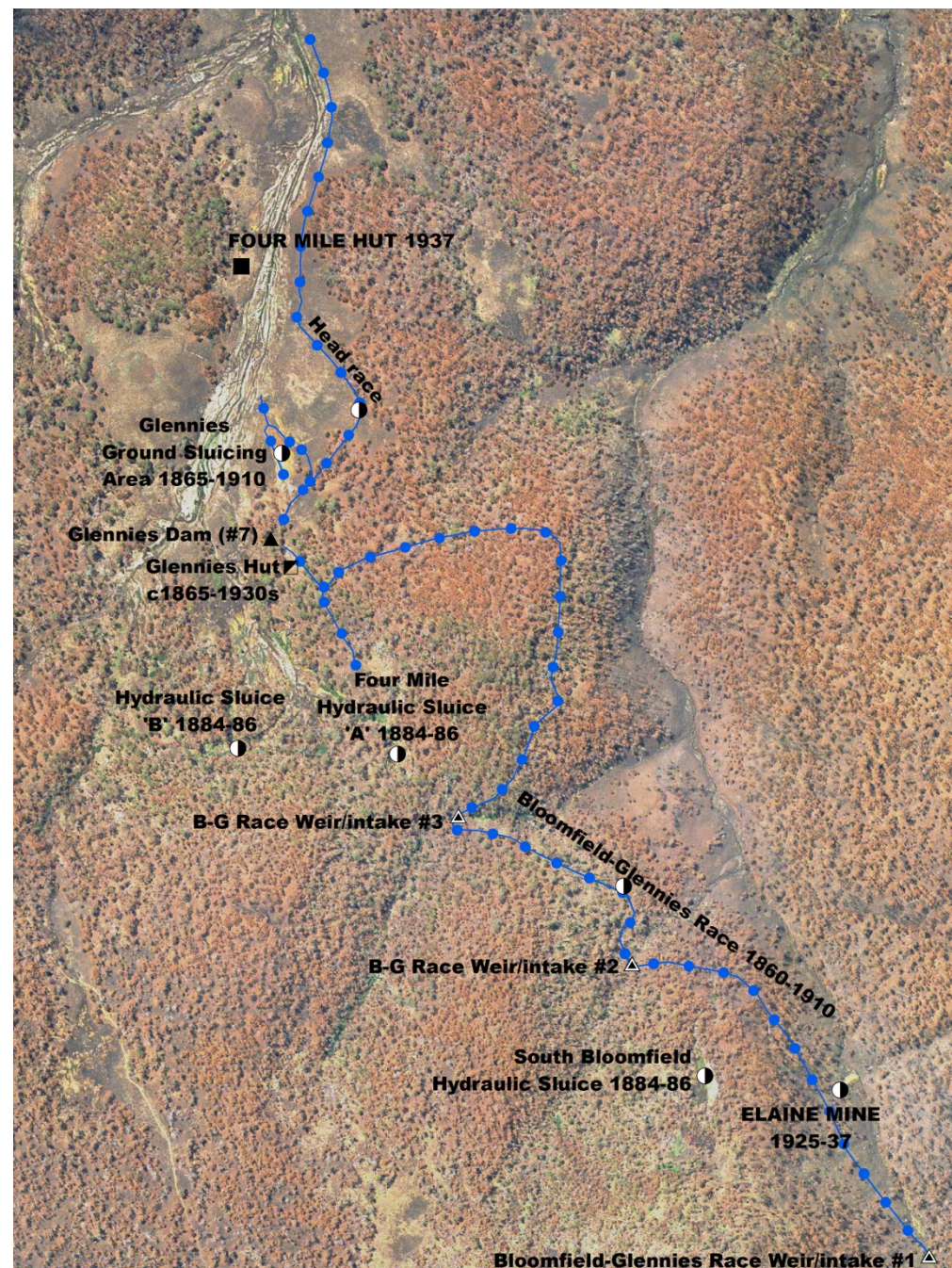
APPENDIX A: COMPONENT FEATURES OF THE PLACE

<p>1 Bill Glennies Hut c1865- 1930s Site of gold miners hut built by Bill Glennie c1865; ruined c1920s-30s. 1-room, slab walls, bark roof. Currently defined by large pile of chimney stones, several broken shovel heads and rectangular grassed footprint of building. 633451 E 6022297 N GPS on site (+/- 5m) DS 2008 GH 2012</p>	 <p>Glennies Hut chimney stones DS2008</p> 	<p>5 Glennies Dam (Holding Dam #7) Earth-walled header dam ~50 x 30m believed to have been built by Bill Glennie c1865; for ground sluicing his claim(s) along east bank of Four Mile Ck. Could date from 1860. 633415 E 6022348 N GPS on site (+/- 5m) GH 2012</p>	 <p>Dam 7 GHutchison2012</p>
<p>2 Glennies (?) Ground Sluicing Area c1865- 1910 Area of bare ground ~120 x 30m marks ground sluicing working, prominent in 1944 airphotos and Google Earth. Believed to be one of many areas worked by Bill Glennie; further workings extend S another 100-150m. 633435 E 6022500 N Shown on map/airphoto/GoogleEarth (+/- <50m)</p>	<p>(no image)</p>	<p>6 Bloomfield Ck - Glennies Race c1860 - 1910 Raceline from upper Bloomfield Ck (above Elaine mine) around to Four Mile Ck beside Sluice 'A', with diversion down to Glennies Dam (#7). Probably constructed in 1860 rush, later diverted & used by Bill Glennie c1865-1910. Reasonably evident over entire length. 633510 E 6022265 N 634041 E 6021732 N GPS on site (+/- 5m) GH 2012</p>	<p>(no image)</p>
<p>3 Tail Races Two tail races running S to N through ground sluicing area converge at this point; shown on 1944 airphoto. 633420 E 6022543 N Shown on map/airphoto/GoogleEarth (+/- <50m)</p>	<p>(no image)</p>	<p>7 Bloomfield Ck - Glennies Race Weir/intake #1 Commencement point for race to Four Mile Ck and Glennies Dam (#7). Likely to have been a small timber &/or earth-walled weir, possibly with a gate to control flow into race. No evidence remains. 634583 E 6021076 N GPS on site (+/- 5m) GH 2012</p>	<p>(no image)</p>
<p>4 Head Race A head race runs along the E bank of Four Mile Ck for nearly 1km from Glennies Dam (#7). A diversion leads into the ground sluicing area from this point. 633490 E 6022465 N Shown on map/airphoto/GoogleEarth (+/- <50m)</p>	<p>(no image)</p>	<p>8 B-G Weir/intake #2 Race crosses major watercourse; likely there was an earth walled weir to feed water into race. No evidence remains. 634056 E 6021594 N GPS on site (+/- 5m) GH 2012</p>	<p>(no image)</p>
<p>5 Head Race A head race runs along the E bank of Four Mile Ck for nearly 1km from Glennies Dam (#7). A diversion leads into the ground sluicing area from this point. 633490 E 6022465 N Shown on map/airphoto/GoogleEarth (+/- <50m)</p>	<p>(no image)</p>	<p>9 B-G Weir/intake #3 Race crosses major watercourse; likely there was an earth walled weir to feed water into race. No evidence remains. 633748 E 6021857 N GPS on site (+/- 5m) GH 2012</p>	<p>(no image)</p>
		<p>10 Glennies Holding Dam (?) Unconfirmed location of a small earth-walled dam, recorded in an early visit - possibly a misplot. 633502 E 6022295 N Reckoned on site using topo map (+/- <100m)</p>	<p>(no image)</p>
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APPENDIX B: PLANS & AIRPHOTOS



Context of Glennies Hut site to diggings along Four Mile Ck. RAAF 1944 airphoto, taken 20 years after hut was ruined



Glennies Hut site, associated racelines and possible diggings, On 2003 DLPI airphoto.