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Placenames Australia

Newsletter of the Australian National Placenames Survey

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Point Hicks (Cape Everard)

James Cook's Australian landfall

Early in the morning of 19 April 1770 Lieutenant Cook and the crew of *Endeavour* had their first glimpses of the Australian continent on the far eastern coast of Victoria. At 6 a.m., officer of the watch Lieutenant Zachary Hickes was the first to see a huge arc of land, apparently extending from the NE through to just S of W. At 8 a.m. Cook's journal records that he observed the same arc of land and named the 'southermost land we had in sight which bore from us W ¼ S' Point Hicks. The southernmost land was at the western extent of the arc, but unfortunately for Cook what he saw in this direction was not land at all, but a cloudbank. Cook's Point Hicks is a position out at sea in water 50 fathoms deep and 12 miles from the nearest land. Map 1 (page 6, below) shows the coast as laid down by Cook, the modern coastline and the course of *Endeavour*.[1]

Today's maps show Point Hicks, the former Cape Everard, as a land feature on the eastern coast of Victoria, but this is not, as so many people still believe, the point that Cook 'saw'. At Cook's 8 a.m. position it would certainly have been the closest real land, but because of the curvature of the earth *Endeavour* would have been too far out to sea for today's Point Hicks to be seen. Cook would have seen the higher land behind it, and this was his first real landfall on the Australian coast.

Cook's Australian landfall: obelisk at Point Hicks, looking east towards Ram Head—the first land Cook saw (Photo: Trevor Lipscombe)

Much confusion has arisen about the whereabouts of Cook's Point Hicks and an acrimonious debate has flared up from time to time. The Point Hicks controversy is recounted in detail elsewhere.[2] Following Cook, a number of navigators (including George Bass, Matthew Flinders and John Lort Stokes) realised Cook's error and it does not appear on any of their charts. Cook was much revered by British seamen and it seems none of them was prepared to write about his error.

In 1880, Philip Gidley King, grandson of his namesake Governor King, recognising but not revealing Cook's error, proposed

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From the Editor

The naming of places by Captain Cook in 1770 seems to have generated a surprising amount of controversy. We are doing our best to resolve the outstanding issues.To that end, we commissioned the late Rupert Gerritsen to deal with **Point Danger** (June 2013); we asked Trevor Lipscombe to resolve the issue of **Rame Head** (September 2013); and we promised that we'd ask Trevor (whom we fondly regard as our in-house international expert on James Cook) to help us with identifying what Cook meant by **Point Hicks**. Hence our lead article in this issue.

The article on the opposite page also fulfils a promise. We've been trying to sort out the origin of **Thredbo** for some time; so Dr Harold Koch of the Australian National University has come to our rescue.

In other news—we are pleased to be able to say that *ANPS Placenames Report No 2* is now available. Tony Dawson's paper on 'Estate Names of the Port Macquarie and Hastings Region' was the winning entry from the Port Macquarie Historical Society in the 2013 Placenames Australia Award. This, along with our other e-publications, is downloadable from our website at www.anps.org.au/publications.html.

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Placenames in the media

In our previous issue we made note of several placename-related broadcasts on the ABC's radio program *Lingua Franca*. Although the program no longer goes to air, the transcripts are archived and available from the ABC website. Two further programs may be of interest:

The Politics of Place-Naming (Tim Bonyhady)

A story from Tasmania about the politics of place-naming. *Words for Country*, edited by Tim Bonyhady and Tom Griffiths, brings together a collection of essays that show how the words we use to name or describe or discuss landscape powerfully influence and shape the way we experience and manage our environment. http://www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/linguafranca/the-politics-of-place-naming/3501690

Dutch in America (Charles Gehring)

With the settlement, in 1609, of New Netherland centred on New Amsterdam (now New York), America has a significant Dutch past. For the 400th anniversary of Henry Hudson's exploration of the river named after him, this episode of *Lingua Franca* tells about the linguistic influence of 17th-century Dutch on American English. http://www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/linguafranca/dutch-in-america/3089002

Annual General Meeting

The 2014 AGM of Placenames Australia (Inc) will be held in Sydney on Saturday 11th October, commencing at 11 a.m. Our meeting will be held in conjunction with an ANPS Workshop in which we'll review the design and style of our *Placenames Reports*.The location is Room W6B357 Macquarie University, and all supporting members are cordially invited to attend. Do let the President know if you're planning to come, and we'll send you details and supporting papers. (And many thanks to those of you who've sent us your 2014-15 subscriptions already!)

We invite nominations for positions on the Management Committee: we are seeking to fill the positions of President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer and up to five other members. It would be helpful if nominations were emailed to the President (*pa@anps.org.au*) before the meeting.

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Thredbo -- an Aboriginal placename

In our March 2013 issue, we noted that Thredbo, a village in the Snowy Mountains, bore an unusual name; while it seemed likely that it was Aboriginal in origin, the case had not properly been made. We promised to investigate, and asked for help from our readers in the meantime. Some interesting leads were suggested, and several readers have asked us whether we've made any progress. So we've asked Dr Harold Koch (Australian National University) to bring us up to date and to give us an authoritative summary of what is known.

The name *Thredbo* is surely of Aboriginal origin, although no specific meaning can be given for it. The name is attested as early as 1840. The amateur surveyor Stewart Ryrie in February 1840 camped at a place named Thredbo, which Alan Andrews identifies as 'a hidden valley at the junction of the China Creek with the Little Thredbo River', some distance downstream from the current Thredbo Village.[1] The name *Thredbo* was extended as an alternative name to the Crackenback River and its valley. A minor goldfield in the valley was worked as the Thredbo Diggings in the 1860s. In 1909 the NSW Tourist Bureau opened a fishing lodge called 'The Creel at Thredbo' at the junction of the Thredbo and Snowy Rivers.[2] The current site of Thredbo Village was selected as the location for a ski resort in 1957 by the Kosciusko Chairlift and Thredbo Hotel Syndicate.[3]

The form of the name *Thredbo* invites comparison with *Bredbo*, which was mentioned as early as 1834 by John Lhotsky,[4] and which gave its name to a river, ranges, rural properties, and a village in the Monaro. The spelling of an early property name 'Braedbow' (Andrews 1998: 124) suggests the original existence of a long vowel in the name.

A third name in the region should be compared. The Byadbo Wilderness adjoins the Victorian border and includes *Byadbo Mountain*, which has alternative names *Big Edbo Mountain* and *Mount Bradbo*. I have not found early reference to the forms of these names.

It appears that all three names may involve a compounding element of the form *-edbo* or *-yadbo* and that the vowel *-e-* of *Bredbo* and *Thredbo* may result from a contraction of, say, *Breyadbo*. The sequence *-db-* is well attested in the Ngarigu language of the Monaro (e.g. *badbu* 'water rat'). Word-initial consonant clusters with *-r-* as the second element are also well attested: *br* in *bralung* 'Pleiades'[5], *kr* in the name of *Krackenbak Peak* (as spelled by Ryrie), and *dhr* in the personal name *Dhraub*. Variant spellings such as *birriny* and *brinj* for 'ashes' suggest that such forms originally contained a vowel before the *-r-*, which could be variably omitted.

Harold Koch

References

[1] Andrews, Alan E.J. *Kosciusko: The mountain in history.* Canberra: Tabletop Press, 1991: p. 85. For a description of Ryrie's route, including a map and quotations from his journal, see Andrews, Alan E.J. Earliest *Monaro and Burragorang: 1790 to 1840.* Canberra: Tabletop Press, 1998: 147-159.

[2] Swinbourne, Helen. *Accordions in the snow gums: Thredbo's early years.* Thredbo: Thredbo Historical Society, 2006: 3.

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[4] Lhotsky, Dr. John. *A journey from Sydney to the Australian Alps, undertaken in the months of January, February and March, 1834.* Edited by Alan E.J. Andrews. Hobart: Blubber Head Press, 1979: 84.

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Thredbo--a summer panorama (Photo: Toby Hudson)

Placename signs in Auslan (Part 3)

***Jane van Roekel** and **Jan Tent** began this series of three articles on Auslan by introducing the notion of sign-names for toponyms among the deaf community. In our previous issue, they outlined the methodology and results of a small study conducted by Jane on variation in sign-names among various deaf Auslan signers. We now complete the study with a discussion of the results. (You will need to refer to Tables 2 and 3 in the previous issue to fully appreciate the discussion.)*

Discussion

Of the 85 signs collected, 14 turned out to be lexical variants. This means that lexical variation in place sign-names is 14%. Johnston (2003) recorded a lexical variation rate of 9% when he was compiling the *Dictionary of Australian Sign Language*. The results of this small survey then suggest that placename signs are more variable than other signs. Phonological variation over the whole list of signs was not assessed but of the 33 placename signs given, 12 (36%) showed phonological variation. This is also noticeably higher than the dictionary average of 27%.

Much of the phonological variation seems to be due to natural processes proceeding at different rates amongst signers. The sign for *Cronulla* has two variants, one signed in between the fourth and fifth fingers, and one between third and fourth. The first sign is a more accurate depiction of the location of *Cronulla* and *Gunnamatta Bay*, but the location of the sign on the body is not phonemic. The space between third and fourth fingers is phonemic in Auslan, so it is natural that the sign would move there. Individual signers may resist this change if they feel it alters the meaning of the sign.

In the variant signs for *Kings Cross*, one half of the sign is sometimes modified to match the other half. In the sign **K-X** the **K** can be made onto the back of the hand, in the same place as the **X** is made, instead of on the front, as it usually is. With the translated version of the sign **KING CROSS**, one signer made the sign for **CROSS** near her head, where the sign for **KING** is made, rather than out in front of her. Other signers made the **K** and the **CROSS** normally.

With the sign for *Cairns*, one version of the sign uses two fingers to mimic opening a can with a pull tab, while the other hand holds the imaginary can. The modified version uses the same handshape for both hands. The handshape used is the **C** handshape, which has similar curves but may also be influenced by the written form of the name, starting with **C**. The suburb of *St George* was signed both **S-T-G** and **S-G**. Elision (the omission of letters) in finger-spelling is very common in Auslan usage.

At other times, phonological variation seems to reflect uncertainty. This is particularly noticeable with the sign for *Darwin*. Most respondents acknowledged that there are several signs for *Darwin*, and that the community had not yet settled on a form. One person said:

My sign for Darwin *changes every week.*

Several people were curious as to which signs other people had chosen as their preferred sign. Similarly, the **ZOO** sign for *Dubbo* is not well known in Sydney, and several variants were suggested. In the end, a number of people preferred to finger-spell the name, most likely due to uncertainty about the sign. If the sign becomes more established, these variations may disappear. *Redfern* had two variants, **RED** and **RED + F**. Signers who used the **+F** form showed some hesitation about the sign, which may indicate that it is not a commonly used sign and they felt that more information was required to distinguish the suburb correctly.

Lexical variation showed an interesting correlation with type. Externally motivated signs were rarely in competition with translated signs. This occurred only in the case of *Dubbo*, probably as Sydney signers were simply unaware of the externally motivated sign **ZOO**. Externally motivated signs did alternate with compound signs, in the case of *Manly* and *Darwin*. In these cases, the externally motivated sign was preferred by most people. An externally motivated sign based on the football team name (**DRAGON**) alternated with an initialised sign in the case of *St George*. Here, the initialised sign was strongly preferred, which may be due to **DRAGON** being a somewhat unusual sign; it may of course simply indicate a lack of interest in (or knowledge of) the St George football team. Overall, there seems to be a preference for

externally motivated signs over other kinds of signs.

Initial signs did occur in variation with translated signs, and with compound signs that included translations. This was the case for *Central Coast, Hornsby, Kings Cross* and *Redfern*. For two of these places, *Kings Cross* and *Hornsby*, the numbers for each variant were fairly close. *Central Coast* is weighted towards the initialised sign, but the translated sign was well recognised even by those who did not use it. Interestingly, people who used the translated version of *Kings Cross* did not necessarily use the translated version of *Hornsby*. Signers apparently decide which sign to use on a sign-by-sign basis, rather than adhering to a preferred mechanism, though further research into this detail would give a fuller picture.

This study is not large enough to determine definitively the cause of this variation. It is, however, evident that older women fingerspell more than other respondents. This fits with the historical educational trends in NSW schools. Even if the women were not taught by the Rochester method (fingerspelling every word), they had regular contact with those who were. One woman said:

I always finger-spell. That's the old deaf way. Young people nowadays have signs for everything but we older deaf use finger-spelling. Some places I use a sign for, if I'm talking to a younger person. But if I'm talking to my parents, I use finger-spelling.

Although no particular correlations were found between the participants in the youngest age category, deaf people themselves expect younger people to sign differently. CENRAL + C for *Central Coast* was said to be a young people's sign. Another signer said that he varied his signs according to who he was talking to, because young people use different signs. He considered KING + CROSS to be the young people's sign for *Kings Cross*. The notion appears to be that younger signers are more likely to use semantic translations instead of initial signs, which fits with educational trends. Signed English, used in many NSW classrooms, emphasizes a one-to-one translation between English words and signs. Young people may also have less connection and experience with the deaf community and may draw more on their experiences with the majority culture. If that is the case, people's attitudes to signs may change over time. They may decide to abandon certain signs to follow the community consensus. It is also possible that Auslan may change, and older signs will be replaced by new versions.

Also noticeable was the use of one particular variant of the Balmain football jersey sign by three of the male respondents. This sign is indicative of the heavy black V on the upper half of the football jersey. Most signers signed this with one hand in a v-shape, tracing the outline from the left shoulder down to centre of the chest, and back up to the right shoulder. The alternative version, used only by these three men, uses both hands in v-shapes, starting at the centre of the chest and moving simultaneously up to the shoulders. Signers produced the variation confidently, with no hint of confusion. It is not clear why this variant exists, though it has the same motivation as the more common version and conveys the same visual effect. Both signs are well-formed. This may be an example of gender variation in Auslan, but more data would be needed to verify this. It may be associated with a specific social group that enjoys watching sport together and that have developed their own signs.

Another sign used only by men is the sign of M + BRA for *Maroubra*. Apart from the man who uses it, another man referred to it as a joke sign, a third indicated awareness of it, but said he did not use it. No women mentioned this sign, which may indicate that women are more affected by social taboos when discussing personal apparel. This may be the case as bras are more personal to women than to men.

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...Placename signs

Comments from signers indicate that the choice of sign is influenced by who else they see using the sign:

I know other people use a different sign, but I learnt it from my mother, and I follow her way.

I used to use [Cairns sign] but I know the Cairns people don't like it, so I don't use it any more.

When I went to Dubbo, I saw that that's the sign that they use in Dubbo. That is why I use it.

*I don't use that sign [**CENTRAL + C**]. It's a young person's sign.*

These statements reflect the value that is placed on fitting in with the community. A person's identity and connections in the community will play an important role in determining their choice of signs because they are used to support group identity and indicate allegiance. By aligning themselves with other deaf people, individuals reinforce their sense of community and identity. More simply, however, ease of use may also be a contributing factor:

I go there [Hornsby] all the time, so I want to have an easy sign.

It's so long to fingerspell, you may as well use [sign].

*The sign doesn't make much sense , but **L-E-I**-whatever, it's too hard to spell.*

Further studies into variation will need to factor in these issues. Educational background and experience with the deaf community are also important variables that this study did not consider. Further investigation into age-related differences should also be fruitful.

Variation is a fact of Auslan and especially so in placenames. It is affected by sociolinguistic factors as well as the process of language evolution. Study of social networks in the community seems a key issue for resolving the complexities of Auslan placename variation.

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Johnston, T. 'Language standardization and signed language dictionaries.' *Sign Language Studies*, 3:4 (2003), 431-468.

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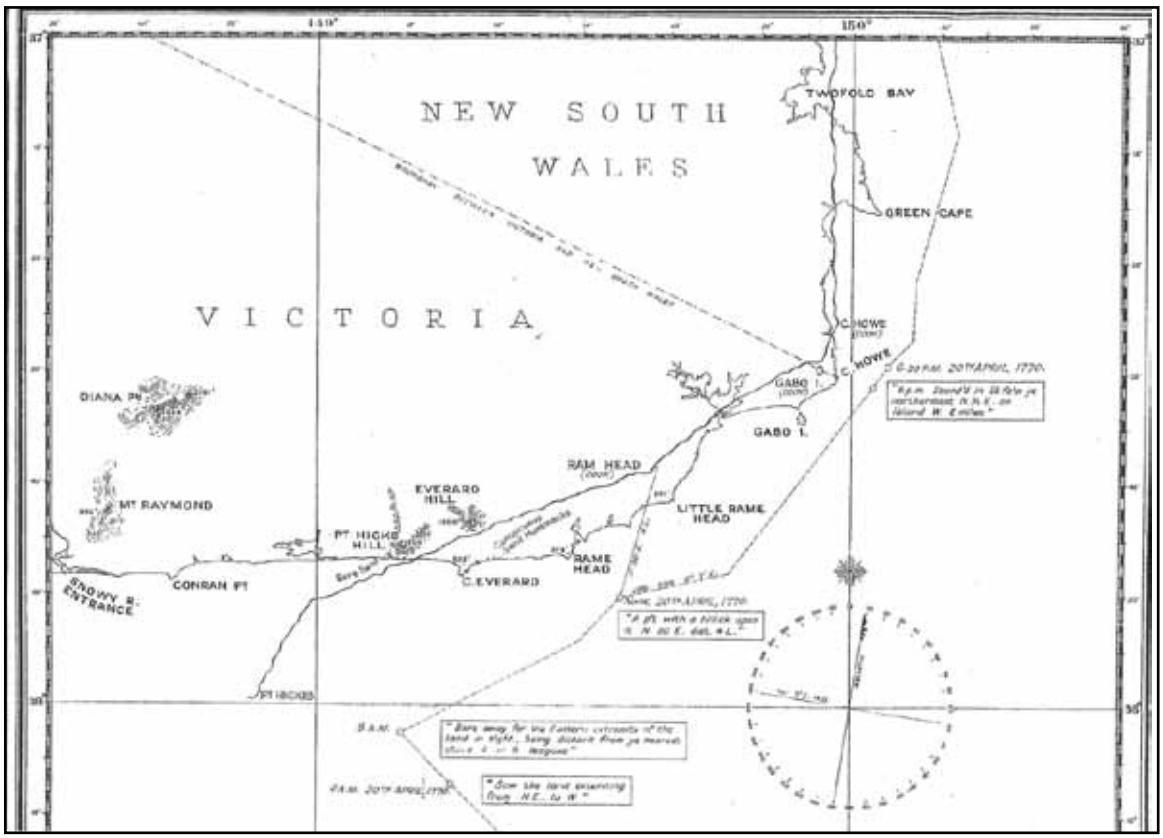

Map 1: Cook's coastline depiction, with the track of the Endeavour

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...Point Hicks: Cook's Australian landfall

that a hill just to the north west of today's Point Hicks be named *Point Hicks Hill* and this name appeared on some later maps. So the name *Point Hicks* moved out of the sea and onto the land. Admiral W.J. Wharton (1893) concluded that the location of Point Hicks Hill 'seems to agree with the position' of Cook's Point Hicks. This is a huge leap from King's view of events, and Wharton offers no evidence to support his contention.

The first published assertions that Cape Everard was Point Hicks seem to have occurred in the 1890s. Historians F. Bladen (1893) and A.C. Macdonald (1897) each claimed that Cook's Point Hicks was probably Cape Everard (today's Point Hicks). It is not clear how they arrived at this conclusion, but possibly it was based on an 1872 map showing 'Cape Everard' in bold with 'Point Hicks', beneath, and beneath that 'Cook'.[3] Later editions of the same map show only Cape Everard and no other maps of the period showing Point Hicks have been found.

In 1907 Thomas Walker Fowler plotted Cook's track on a modern chart and published for the first time a map showing Cook's Point Hicks in the position Cook himself puts it in his journal and on his chart—out at sea from today's coast.[4] He was taken to task by eminent historian Professor Ernest Scott who claimed Cook must have made an observational error and that Cook's southernmost land in sight at 8 a.m. must have been Cape Everard, as it was the nearest land to him at that time and lay to his north (see Map 1, left).[5] Scott apparently overlooked Cook's clear statement that this land bore W ¼ S from his position and not N 20° W as Scott claims. This would have been an error by Cook of 76 degrees, which all the evidence suggests is impossible. Furthermore, Cook could not have seen Cape Everard from his 8 a.m. position because he was too far away.

Later, Barker (1933), Ingleton (1970) and Hilder (1970), all land or marine surveyors, came to the same conclusion as Fowler and earlier navigators, that Cook's Point Hicks did not exist on land.[6] Similarly, a number of influential historians including Wood, Cramp, Beaglehole and Blake accepted Scott's view and influenced other historians and politicians.[7] Despite incontrovertible evidence, the views of historians prevailed over those of navigators and surveyors and in 1970 the Government of Victoria decided to rename Cape Everard as *Point Hicks*, the name it retains today. Scott's view still dominates, and most recent publications still associate Cook's Point Hicks with Cape Everard.

Mystery surrounds the naming of Cape Everard. Many sources, including Scott, assert that it was named by John Lort Stokes who surveyed the area in 1843. However the name does not appear in Stokes' journal or on his charts. It is now known to have been named by George D. Smythe, a Victorian Department of Crown Lands and Survey surveyor who surveyed this coast in 1852, or a senior officer of the department.[8] Stokes' supposed naming is linked with Sir John Everard Home, a senior naval officer of his period. Others have linked the name with a local politician John Everard, though he had not arrived in Australia at the time of the naming. The derivation remains a mystery.

Trevor Lipscombe

Endnotes

[1] Barker, L. 'Chart: Snowy River to Twofold Bay with Lieutenant Cook's Coast line and the track of H.M. Bark "Endeavour"', Property and Survey Branch, Commonwealth Department of Interior, 1933, Series A876, GL400/14, Item barcode 172111, National Archives Australia, Canberra (NAA).

[2] Lipscombe T.J. 'The Point Hicks Controversy – the Clouded Facts', *Victorian Historical Journa*l, 85.2 (December 2014).

[3] Victoria. Department of Crown Lands and Survey, *Map of Victoria,* Melbourne, 1872, National Library of Australia, NLA Map RM1945.

[4] Fowler, T.W. 'Captain Cook's Australian Landfall', *Victorian Geographical Journal*, 25 (1907): 7-12.

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[7] Wood, G.A. *The Discovery of Australia* (1922), Revised by J.C. Beaglehole. Melbourne: Macmillan,1969: 314; Cramp, K.R. 'Point Hicks Mystery', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 29 April 1939: 21; Beaglehole, J.C. *The Journals of Captain James Cook on his Voyages of Discovery, Volume 1 The Voyage of the Endeavour 1768-1771*, Cambridge: Hakluyt Society, 1955: 299; Blake, L.J. 'Fixing position of Point Hicks', *The Age* (Melbourne) 2 May 1970: 12. For Blake see also Perry, W. 'Captain Cook Celebrations', *Victorian Historical Magazine* 41 (May 1970): 298-305.

[8] Middleton, C.E., Surveyor-General and Chairman of the Place Names Committee to Sir William McDonald, Minister of Lands, Victoria, 7 March 1969, PNC File 100, Department of Crown Lands and Survey, Victoria, Melbourne; and Haldane R. 'A Beacon on the Wilderness Coast: The Story of Point Hicks (Cape Everard)'. *Gippsland Heritage Journal* 25 (2001).

The origin of *Humula*: 'Every day is a journey...

Between Tarcutta and Tumbarumba (in the local government area of Wagga Wagga, NSW) lies the township of Humula. I often drive through it on my way to the Snowy Mountains. The toponymist in me motivates me to stop and take photos of interesting (and ordinary) roadside placename signs when driving, and then to research the origin of the more intriguing ones. *Humula* is one of those placenames.

Photo: Jan Tent

A brief history and background

The traditional owners of the region around Humula are the Wolgal people.[2] The region was first appropriated by Europeans in the 1820s, but in 1851 when alluvial gold was discovered in the district, the population mushroomed with many Chinese miners moving into the area and then later establishing market gardens. Humula was proclaimed a village in 1885, and from 1895 it had a police station with one mounted constable. A railway line to Humula opened in 1917, and an extension from Humula to Tumbarumba was completed in 1923. Passenger and freight traffic ceased in 1974 and in 1987 the line closed completely. From the late 1970s to the late 1980s, Humula's population peaked when logging was the main industry in the area, but when the local sawmill closed the place became a virtual ghost town. Much of the extensive farming land outside the town has been converted to pine plantations.

Like the names of many other towns, shires and parishes, Humula derives its appellation from a local property. The township and Humula Station (Run) were initially known as *American Yards* or *American Fields* due to the peculiarly American style of stockyards—'huge logs laid crosswise, till then almost unknown in Australia' (Frew & Frew 2012: 189). The township and run were referred to as *American Yards* up until the mid-1880s, as various newspaper references attest.[3]

The name *Humula* for the pastoral run started appearing in newspapers in 1865, when the property was put up for sale. But it was often followed by '(American Yards)'.[4] The Humula run, comprising 83,000 acres, was taken up in 1852 or thereabouts by the Sydney company William Walker & Co., and was managed by John Smith, also the manager of Kyeamba. In 1880 the site for the village of Humula was announced in the Government Gazette of 23 February 1880. At this time the run was owned by Hazeldean Pastoral Company in Cooma, and managed by Roger and Angela Scales.

Hanson (1889: 272) lists the Humula Run as N.S.W. Pastoral Holding No. 624, its leasehold area being 'Land District of Wagga Wagga; County of Wynyard. The Crown Lands within the boundaries of that part of Humula Run lying to the north and west of the dividing line, as notified in Gazette, 5th August, 1885.' The holders of the run at that time were the New Zealand and Australian Land Company of Glasgow.

The origin and meaning of *Humula*

So what is the origin of this interesting name? It certainly is not an indigenous name, at least not one from the district, where the local language was Wolgal. Besides, there are no words in any indigenous language that start with an /h/ sound. *Humula* must therefore be an introduced name.

Anne Rooks (1998: 30) claims *Humula* is 'a derivation of Hume' but gives no further information on it. Bradley (1979: 8) writes 'a tree marked with the initials "HUM" which stood on the bank of the Umbango Creek is

'...and the journey itself is home'[1]

believed to have been marked by [the explorer Hamilton] Hume and his party as they passed through the area. The tree was unfortunately swept downstream by the floodwaters of the 1974 flood.'

The HUM tree story was reinforced in a radio interview given by one of the then station owners, Jim Litchfield.[5] Although neither Bradley and Litchfield claim directly that the HUM inscription is the source of the station's name, they do imply it.

It is well known that Hume and Hovell carved their initials on the trunks of several trees during their expeditions. Indeed this was a common practice by explorers of the time. The two explorers inscribed their names on adjoining trees near Albury. Hume's tree burned down in 1840 (Peach, 2007), and so we don't know what Hume inscribed on the tree.

Neither Hume and Hovell's journal (Bland, 1837) nor other literature related to their explorations reveals the exact nature of any inscriptions they made on other trees.

Hamilton Hume (Photo: NLA)

I am, therefore, somewhat sceptical of the HUM tree theory because I cannot readily imagine HUM being the most logical inscription. If the tree near Humula was too narrow to carve HUME, then why not carve a simple HH for 'Hamilton Hume'? Without corroboration that the letters on the ill-fated tree were in fact HUM, the mystery remains. So what other possibilities should we examine?

The Oxford English Dictionary tells us *hume* is just one of the many old spellings of *home*.[6] The word is of Germanic origin, and so has cognates in other Germanic languages, including Dutch, Swedish, Danish, and German. John Robert Hume, the author of *The History of the Hume Family* says: 'There long, however, [sic] have been and are yet to be found no less than twenty-five different ways of spelling the name. *Hume* it is, and *Hume* let it remain until the cycles of another millenium

Post office/general store in Humula (Photo: Jan Tent)

[sic] of its history have rolled by.' (Hume, 1903:7) [my italics].

Given these facts, the next question to ask is: Are there any other toponyms in Australia, and indeed anywhere else, that have the same type of structure? There is only one such toponym in Australia with an analogous morphemic structure (i.e. form) and meaning to *Humula*, viz. the Sydney suburb Casula, some 35 kilometres south-west of the Sydney CBD. The difference between the two names is in their stress patterns: Húmula /ˈhju:mjələ/ vs. Casúla /kəzˈju:lə/.

It was Richard Guise (1757-1821) who bestowed the name *Casula* to his farm (ca. 1810-11), which later gave name to the suburb.[7] The name itself is Latin, *căsŭla*, from *căsa* 'cottage, hut, house', plus the Latin diminutive suffix *-ŭle* (Lewis and Short 1879); hence *căsŭla* 'little cottage, hut, small house'.[8] It is commonly understood that Guise was born in Lorraine, France, and related to Marie Antoinette. Nothing else is known about his life before approximately 1784 when he was a private in the Horse Grenadier Guards in England (Frew & Frew 2012: 53-54). He and his wife came to Sydney Cove in 1790 and he joined the New South Wales Corps in 1791.

If it is indeed accurate that Guise had a French background, then he presumably was a francophone and, therefore, probably had some knowledge of Latin

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The origin of *Humula*...

or another Romance language. Indeed, if Guise were related to Marie Antoinette, he may have had a classical education and studied Latin, which might explain the linguistic motivation behind the name *Casula*.

I believe the motivation for the name *Humula* is founded along the same lines–*hum(e)* 'home; a landed property, an estate', plus *-ula* DIMINUTIVE. However, there are no records that reveal who might have bestowed that name on the property.

But wait! There is a very intriguing link between Richard Guise of Casula and the region around Humula, although whether this link connects the two placenames is yet to be established. Richard had three sons and a daughter. Two of the sons, Richard jnr. and William, moved to the property 'Jerribiggery' on the Yass River just north of Sutton in 1826. They grazed their cattle on the shores of Lake George and surrounding district and in 1829 they completed their homestead at Bywong, which they occupied permanently and is known as 'Bywong Station'.

The brothers expanded their holdings rapidly in the 1830s to include properties at Gunning, Gundaroo, Yass, Benenborough, Walwa, Bong Bong, Burra, Twofold Bay, Williamsdale and Hay. Further south they secured properties at Buluko (Beloco), Cunningdroo (1835) at the junction of Tarcutta Creek with the Murrumbidgee (the run was soon after merged into their Borambola holding), Glenroy (1836) on the Boggy Creek west of Tumbarumba, Mannus Creek, Guy's [Guise's] Forest (1837), and shortly after they laid claim on a large extent of the country south of the Murray, including the river frontage of Tintaldra, Wermatong (1837), Walwa (1838), Towong (1838), Khancoban/Swampy Plain and Bringembrong. Several landmarks owe their names to the Guise brothers: Guises Range, Guises Lake, Guises Ridge, Guises Creek, Guise Waterhole and more. The last is on the Mannus Creek run at the headwaters of the creek (Blackmore-Lee, 2006), and is only a stone's throw north of the village of Rosewood, and a mere 28-30km south-east of Humula. Given the closeness of the Mannus Creek run to 'Humula Station', it is quite tempting to speculate that the naming of that station was in some way influenced by the brothers Guise and their association with their father's original property 'Casula'. That, however, may be a too fanciful conjecture.

Nonetheless, I feel the toponym *Humula* most likely derives from the combination of the name *Hume* and its sense of 'home', and the Latin diminutive suffix *-ula*. The only matter to be determined is who actually bestowed the name on the grazing property.

Other *-ula* toponyms

There are dozens of placenames in Australia that end in *-ula*, the vast majority of which are of indigenous origin. There are also a few other toponyms that may have been transferred from elsewhere, for example, *Masula* (SA) < India? and *Isandula Plantation* (Tas.) < South Africa? Another small set comprise Latin terms, such as flower names: *Calendula* (Qld) and *Primula Street* (Sydney).

Humula appears to be the only toponym in Australia in which the Latin diminutive ending *-ule* has been used as a productive suffix.

Envoi

I started this little chronicle with an aphorism as the title, and I shall end with one as well. The words of T.S. Elliot, '*Home* is where one starts from'—though perhaps expressed more aptly for us as '*Hume* is where one starts from'—seem quite apposite here. If only I had heeded Elliot's words, then I would not have gone off on a wild goose chase looking far and asunder (to mix a few metaphors) for the origin of *Humula*. The application of Ockham's Razor would have been very appropriate in this case.[9]

Jan Tent

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Endnotes

[1] From the opening paragraph of Matsuo Bashô's travel journal *Oku no Hosomichi* (1689), 'The Narrow Road to the Deep North' also known as 'Narrow Road to the Interior'.

[2] ANPS recognises the pre-colonial occupations of Indigenous people of the Humula area, as well as the ongoing history of human occupation from diverse areas.

[3] *Sydney Morning Herald* 2 December 1843; *Goulburn Herald & County of Argyle Advertiser* 28 February 1852; *Gundagai Times & Tumut, Adelong and Murrumbidgee District Advertiser* 25 April 1868, 18 September 1869; *The Empire* 20 September 1869, 22 March 1872, 13 October 1874; *Daily Advertiser (Wagga Wagga)* 23 September 1869; *Wagga Wagga Advertiser* 16 April 1885.

[4] *Sydney Morning Herald* 29 April 1865; *The Argus* 10 June 1865; *Empire* 22 March 1872; *Wagga Wagga Advertiser* 24 March 1885; *Maitland Mercury & Hunter River General Advertiser* 24 March 1885.

[5] *The World Today* (ABC, 22 August 2002), interview by Jo Mazzocchi.

[6] Recorded forms include: *ham, om, hum, heom, hoom, hown, hoome, whom, whome, hom, home, howme, wom, hoam, hoame, whoame, hwome, whum, hoom, hooam, hwom, hwum, whoam.*

[7] Richard Guise was granted two parcels of land of 300 acres each on 1 January 1810 in Minto. (Reference: NRS 13836 [7/447], Register 2, Page 5; Reel 2561. NSW State Records. <http://srwww.records.nsw.gov.au/indexsearch/searchhits_nocopy.aspx?table=LandGrants&id=78&frm=1&query=Surname:Guise;Firstname:Richard>).

[8] The Latin diminutive noun suffix occurs in hundreds of borrowings from Latin, but it is rarely a productive suffix within English formations (one example is *marimbula*). Some of the multitude of Latin borrowings found in English include: *capsule, casule, copula, cornule, cubicle < cubicule, fibula, fistula, formula, globule, macula, minuscule, module, nebula, nodule, particle < particule, primula, schedule, spatula, tabula, uvula, ventricle < ventricule.*

[9] Ockham's Razor was formulated by William of Ockham (c. 1287–1347) an English Franciscan monk, philosopher and theologian. As his name suggests, he was from the village of Ockham (Surrey) < *ock* 'oak' + *ham* 'see above'. Rather fitting for this narrative, don't you think!

Placenames Puzzle Number 51

Vegetable:

The clues reveal placenames of towns whose names contain reference to some type of vegetable i.e any plant or plant product. Clues marked with a question mark (?) have a cryptic element. Disregard spelling. (Watch for the Mineral *theme in our next issue.)*

e.g. (VIC) This tree's value..... Beechworth

1. (WA, ACT) A place for rest(?)
2. (QLD) A soft, smooth tree
3. (NSW) Philippine's capital
4. (SA) Architect Francis
5. (VIC) Nearly 'a' Doone(?)
6. (ACT) Swamp grass
7. (QLD) Bent by Queenslanders
8. (NSW, ACT) Places to play
9. (NT) A sad stream
10. (NSW) Agent of the Vietnam War(?)
11. (SA) Where this tree keeps its cash
12. (VIC) Flemington horse race
13. (WA) Steve's daughter by two
14. (SA) Timber on the edge
15. (QLD) Ms Stevenson's past cut short(?)
16. (WA) Snakelike
17. (NT, TAS) Have a cuppa under this bush
18. (TAS) Devon's neighbour
19. (QLD) A burning bush
20. (VIC) Receptacle for a princess(?)

Fun with Words Group, Westleigh Probus Club

1. Forrest
2. Silky Oak
3. Manilla
4. Greenway
5. Lorne
6. Reid
7. Banana
8. Parkes
9. Pine Creek
10. Orange
11. Oakbank
12. The Oaks
13. Bindi Bindi
14. Woodside
15. Pampas
16. Serpentine
17. Ti Tree/Tarree
18. Cornwall
19. Flametree
20. Bindi

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