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# WARBY FALLS WOOLSCOUR



Warby Falls Complex



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## Location

WARBY FALLS TRACK TAMINICK, BENALLA RURAL CITY

## Municipality

BENALLA RURAL CITY

## Level of significance

Heritage Inventory Site

## Heritage Inventory (HI) Number

H8125-0034

## Heritage Listing

Victorian Heritage Inventory

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Interpretation of Site	The site was utilised as a wool scour.
Archaeological Significance	The site has high archaeological significance.
Hermes Number	192322
Property Number	

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## History

### Exploration

The plains surrounding the Warby Ranges were occupied by Aboriginal people from the Waveroo Language Group or tribe. The local clan, Pallengoillim, were described as belonging to the Ovens tribe by G.A. Robinson and others. The clan's head man was Weeng.er.bil and had met Robinson, the Protector of Aborigines in the Port Phillip District in the early 1840s (Wesson 2000:70).

Both Hume and Hovell and Major Thomas Mitchell, would have passed near this area in 1824-5 and 1835-6 respectively. They found plains of rolling grassland and woodland which were enticing to squatters wanting to take advantage of grazing land for their ever growing flocks of sheep. Mitchell gave the country on the Ovens River the name Oxley's Plains and the hills to the south, Futter's Range. A tree on the Ovens River at Wangaratta supposedly marks his camp site on the return journey of his Australia Felix expedition.

### Settlement

The first to follow the Major's Line into his Australia Felix were George and William Faithful who had a number of servants killed by Aborigines and were driven off their run at Bontherambo. Many more Aborigines were killed in subsequent fights and massacres.

The first permanent white settler in the Warby Ranges was Ben Warby (after whom the park and range is named) who had established his pastoral run by 1844. His Taminick Plains Run (No. 110) was gazetted on July 26 1848 with an original area of about 23,000 acres. The run extended from just north of Glenrowan for most of the length of the Warby Ranges, to Gnarite Creek with Killawarra Run to the north and Springs B to the south. Taminick Plains was licensed 12 months prior to the New South Wales Orders-in-Council in October 1847, to Ben Warby.

From 1 June 1858, the Licence was in the name of Benjamin Warby Junior, but was transferred to Evan Evans on 7 July 1871. There followed a period of instability with the run being left out of Lists of Published Rents for December 1873, then transferred to the Bank of New South Wales, suggesting the insolvency of Evans, and then to William Newcomen of Glenrowan on 5 May 1876 (Spreadborough and Anderson 1983:71).

The local tradition has it that Ben Warby constructed the wool scouring plant as well as the weirs and race, fed with water from Warby Falls. This would suggest that the weirs would have to have been commenced before 1875, when the property had passed from Warby to Evans. The current landowner, Cliff Booth is quite clear on this point. According to him, the site was definitely a wool scour, and included a shearing shed beside the creek. Cliff also has said that the circular pit is a sheep dip in which sheep were treated for ticks. The shearing shed had been demolished and little sign remained of the scouring plant by the time Cliff was old enough to have reliable personal recollections. Cliff is now 83, so the shearing shed is unlikely to have survived beyond 1920 or so.

As there was only 25-30 years between the Warby and Booth ownerships with one short and one long occupier between, it is plausible that the historical associations were passed down accurately.

Evan Evans also had the adjoining Ovens Crossing Place run from March 1872. Taminick Plains appears to have originally been part of the Ovens Crossing Place (also known as Wangaratta and Junction). Taken up as early as 1837-8 and held by William Clark (Billis & Kenyon 1974:262).

*This place/object may be included in the Victorian Heritage Register pursuant to the Heritage Act 2017. Check the Victorian Heritage Database, selecting 'Heritage Victoria' as the place source.*

*For further details about Heritage Overlay places, contact the relevant local council or go to Planning Schemes Online <http://planningschemes.dpcd.vic.gov.au/>*