

Nathan Wilkinson's notes on the naming of Glenara:

This is what I think can be said with confidence.

There's no sign of a Glenara or Glen Ara Castle, ruined or not, but in the latter half of the 19th century Glenaras started popping up all over: a Scotsman's 1857 estate outside Melbourne (<https://balancearchitecture.wordpress.com/2017/12/29/glenara-estate-the-clark-familys-home-for-over-100-years/>), an 1873 home in Adelaide (said to be named after a Scottish Chieftain, <https://data.environment.sa.gov.au/Content/heritage-surveys/2-Glenelg-Heritage-Survey-Stage-1-1983.pdf>), an 1881 name for a home in Cape Town (https://artefacts.co.za/main/Buildings/bldgframes_mob.php?bldgid=3088), possibly an 1870s spike in use as girl's name (<https://en.geneanet.org/first-name/Glenara>).

This happens to be after a romance poem called "Glenara" (about a "chief of Glenara") was often anthologized during the early 19th century (<https://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Glenara>), and a novel called The Dawsons of Glenara: A Story of Scottish Life, set in a fictional village called Glenara, came out in 1887 (https://en.m.wikisource.org/wiki/Author:Henry_Johnston). Glenara was in the air as a Scottisshy place.

There does seem to be a real place behind the fictions: An 1885 Scottish history (https://archive.org/stream/cu31924087975813/cu31924087975813_djvu.txt) says the poem was inspired by a tradition about the Aray River valley, aka the glen of the Aray (variously spelled Glen Ara, Glenara, or today Glenaray), which had a local chieftain or laird of Glenara (<https://www.bholliman.com/files/McKnight-Family-History-by-Walter-O-Holliman-1994-2pp.pdf>). But there was no Glenaray Castle, either. There's the iconic Inveraray Castle there - but hardly a ruin, then or now (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Inveraray_Castle).

All in all, there's no clear evidence for the ruined castle cited by the Virginia sources, but there is a globally popular name from poetry and fiction.