



# HERITAGE PLACE

**NAME OF PLACE:** GLENISLA HOMESTEAD COMPLEX

**ADDRESS/LOCATION OF PLACE:** Henty Highway GLENISLA

**STUDY NUMBER:** 079

**HERITAGE OVERLAY NUMBER:**

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## **PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:**

The house, although fine and well built, is quite conventional for its time. The style is a simple interpretation of the standard symmetrical Italianate villa with the façade divided into two sixteen foot wide sections on either side of an eight foot wide door. The plan has a central passage with principal rooms off it. The timber verandah, decorated with brackets forming stylised trefoils, is on three sides. The rendered brick chimneys are capped with polygonal terra cotta chimney pots with heart shaped perforations typical of the 1860s and earlier. The most distinctive feature of the house is the large glazed front door.

The interiors are similarly conservative. The ceilings are approximately sixteen feet high with standard plaster cornices and roses in the principal rooms. Marble mantels are opposite the front windows. The rear door of the central passage is also distinctive. Service rooms are ranged around the rear courtyard with a detached store room closing the quadrangle. The courtyard is paved with sandstone and has a gutter around its perimeter.

## **HISTORY:**

Glenisla squatting run was established in June 1843 by a Scotsman named Hector Norman Simpson (c.1820-80) who named the run after an area, known as a kirkdom, near Balmoral in Scotland. The run was No. 269 in the Portland Bay District and consisted of 96,000 acres, with 500 head of cattle and 25,000 sheep (B&K, 213). It was located on the Glenelg River, 16 miles east of the settlement of Balmoral. In 1847 the lease was transferred to Donald Campbell Simson, as trustee for Jane Charlotte Simson and John Coghill Simson when it was subdivided into Glenisla North and South (B&K, 213).

Hector Norman Simson was the son of Hector Simson and his wife Margaret Campbell and the brother of Donald Campbell Simson (De Serville, PPG, 437). According to de Serville, he married Marian Bryant and they had three daughters: Marion, Ella, and Anne. Hector Norman Simson (1820-1880) actually married Jane Bryant in the Church of England, Kilmore in 1850 (PIV, Reg. No. 25519 & 25652). They had four children: twins Edmund and Marion (1852), Isabella (1854) and Edith (1857) (PIV, Reg. No. 9468 & 9469, 7252, 7744). Simson was in partnership with his brother and with Henry Darlot, Henry Dutton, George Coghill, John Duerdin, John Purcell and others. He was troubled by Aborigines and was himself wounded. By 1845 he had left Glenisla in the hands of an overseer. Simson died at Wangaratta in 1880.

While Charles Carter and Sons may have acquired an interest in the run as early as 1860, they are more likely to have come to Glenisla in 1864. Billis and Kenyon note their interest in North and South Glenisla only from September 1874. Bailliere's 1865 Victoria Gazetteer states: GLENISLA, NORTH, STATION (Co. Dundas), on the Glenelg river, 20 miles E. of Balmoral; occupiers, Simpson, J. and S.; area, 47,000 acres; grazing capability, 17,625 sheep; and GLENISLA, SOUTH, STATION (Co Dundas), on the Glenelg river, 16 miles E. of Balmoral; occupier, Simpson, D.C.; area, 117,000 acres; area not available; 20,000 acres; grazing capability, 36,375 sheep. Hiscock's map of the County of Dundas notes the run on the map as East Glenisla but includes it in list in the top margin as Glenisla S.: 117,000 acres, C. D. Simpson, 36,375 sheep and Glenisla N.: 47,000 acres, J. S. Simpson, 17,025 sheep.

Charles Carter and his wife Thomasina, nee Matthews, were pioneers in Van Diemen's Land and Port Phillip (De Serville, 437). Their eldest son, Samuel Carter (1834-1910) was in partnership with his brothers William Carter (1836-1904) and John Carter. From the 1870s the Carter family owned or leased vast tracts of Grampian and Wimmera pastoral lands, including the sheep and cattle stations at Rosebrook, Moora Moora, North Brighton, Walmer, Kelwell, Wartook, Pine Plains and North Walmer. The brothers took over their father's stations after his death in 1875 but the partnership was dissolved. Billis and Kenyon note that the Glenisla run was transferred to Samuel Carter in June 1884 (B&K, 213).

The Carter family played an important role in the improvement of sheep. In 1885, a newspaper report stated that "Samuel and the Carter Brothers are credited with having the first stud sheep in the Wimmera and on the

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Carter properties of Glenisla, North Brighton and Rosebrook. The stud was started with Curries ewes (Currie being an early successful breeder). The ewes were mated to French Rambouillet Rams and later purchasing a "Wanganella Ram" (Barber, HHC, research notes). But, it seems, Samuel Carter had good sheep before the 1880s and, at a local [Horsham?] agricultural show, won first prize for a fine wool Merino ram (ibid.).

Samuel married Jane Muirhead and they had six children: Samuel Alexander (1869), Frederick (1871), Alexander (1872), Thomasina (1874), Jessie (1877) and Samuel Glenisla (1882) (PIV, Reg. Nos. 748, 7207, 21415, 20933, 532, 21760). According to de Serville they also had a son William who married Mary Weatherly. Samuel Carter became a very important figure in the Wimmera and Western districts (de Serville, 437). His entry in *Victoria and Its Metropolis*, Vol. 2, (Sutherland, 95) provides full biographical details: "Carter, Samuel, JP, Horsham, was born in Tasmania in 1834, and came to Victoria in 1839 with his father, who went to the Wimmera, and took up North Brighton station, near Horsham, for Mr. Darlot. Leaving that, they took up the Brim Springs station, containing 35,000 acres, for themselves, and carried it on under the name of Carter and Sons. They bought Rosebrook station of 100,000 acres, Glenisla station of 95,000 acres, Moora Moora station of 100,000 acres, and then the North Brighton station from Mr. Jervis, the Walmer station of 30,000 acres purchased, and 15,000 acres of Crown lands; also the Kewell station of 5000 of purchased and 15,000 of Crown lands, and sold this block in a fortnight making £3000 by the transaction. They continued as Carter and Sons until 1875, when Mr. Carter senior died, and afterwards went on as Carter Brothers until 1885, when they divided the property, Mr. Samuel Carter taking, as his share, the Walmer and Glenisla stations. He has since bought the Pine Plains and North Walmer stations from his brother. He now holds a total of 23,000 acres of purchased and 44,650 acres of Crown lands, and about 2000 square miles of mallee country. He runs 40,000 sheep and 400 head of cattle, and 100 horses. In 1881 Mr. Carter was appointed a justice of the peace for the western bailiwick. He has been Black Protector for the Glenisla district, and eight years a member of the Wimmera shire council (having once occupied the presidential chair), chairman of the Wimmera Shire Water Trust, president of the Pastoral and Agricultural show held at Horsham, president of the Horsham Race Club, vice-president of the hospital, member of the Dimboola Vermin Board, and for two years one of the commissioners for the Wimmera United Waterworks Trust."

William James Carter (1836-1904) married Caroline Hunt and they had five children: Thomasina (1869), Caroline (1871), John (1874), Ethel (1876) and Victoria (1887) (PIV, Reg. Nos. 9149, 11,303, 2933, 23, 673, 29077). He later held the Tarrington Estate established by Stephen Henty. "When Tarrington came up for sale in 1886, a local syndicate was formed to purchase and subdivide the land but was outbid by William J Carter who moved to the property and lived there until his death in 1904" (Garden, 143). John Charles Carter married Elizabeth Carter, possibly outside Victoria, and had four sons: Thomas, Samuel (1861), John (1864) and George (1866) (PIV, Reg. Nos. 9031, 7549, 8753). No record has been found of their marriage or the birth of Thomas.

The Carter family was interested in the natural history of the surrounding area and Glenisla played host to Baron von Mueller when he explored the Grampians. Von Mueller's guide was a local schoolteacher, a Mr McIntyre. The last Aborigines in the area camped at a swamp on the Glenisla run near the present homestead. Eventually some were resettled at Lake Tyers while others moved into the Grampians. There is still a collection of significant Aboriginal artefacts held at Glenisla.

The original Glenisla run was vast and complex. The main shearing shed which was located about 2.5km east of the present homestead on the south bank of a lake fed by Cultivation and Red Rock Creeks was lost in a fire in the 1960s. The first sheepwash was located on Cultivation (formerly known as Billiminah) Creek, a tributary of Cattle Station Creek, about 10km south of the present homestead and the second sheepwash. It was a simple arrangement comprising an unlined trench, holding ponds at either end, and dams in the creek beside the sheepwash. There were probably holding yards and grass drying areas associated with the sheepwash but not other structures. This primitive arrangement appears to date from as early as the 1840s and to have been used for at least two decades. It survives as an archaeological site. The new name of Cultivation Creek came from

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the nearby vegetable gardens cultivated by Billy Wing, the Chinese cook on the Glenisla Station. Another small sheepwash and sheep dip with yards was established some distance to the north-east of the homestead and the shearing shed. It survives in better condition.

This was superseded in turn, possibly about 1874, by a very large and elaborate hot water sheepwash located immediately to the west of the shearing shed. It was fed by water from the lake channelled into a stone lined pit. Sheep were assembled on a paved area and then driven into the pit where men stood in special clothing and barrels ready to wash them. The washed sheep moved out of the water and onto another standing area where they drained. Once drained, they moved on a specially constructed board-walk towards holding yards near the shearing shed. The whole was perhaps the most largest and sophisticated arrangement developed for washing and shearing sheep in Victoria. The It can be compared with the Bessiebelle sheepwash. There is the lone grave of a shepherd beside the lake near the sheepwash.

The creek system, which drained from the western face of the Victoria Range, was dammed and channelled to maximise and maintain the water supply. A weir survives near Red Rock and the channelling is still evident. This was one of the largest and most sophisticated private water supplies in Victoria in the nineteenth century. Samuel and John Carter were also responsible for the first dam of what became the Wartook Reservoir in the upper reaches of the Victoria Valley (Barber, HHC, research notes). These and other works reflect Samuel Carter's interest and role in the Western Wimmera Irrigation and Water Supply Trust.

Samuel Carter built the present homestead between 1873 and 1875 with some delay because of a dispute over the siting of a government road reserve. It was strategically located on the overland gold route from Adelaide to the Victorian gold fields, as well as on the later north-south mail route between Horsham and Hamilton. This meant that the homestead, as many did, could serve the area as a post office, telegraph station and polling place, a service which continued into the late 1960s. The 1940s telephone equipment survives in a room off the rear courtyard. Interestingly, the homestead was oriented due east to face Mount Bechpa, the source of the pale pink/cream sandstone from which it is constructed. This has a direct parallel with the homestead at Gringegalgon, which faces Mount Melville from which its stone was quarried.

The architect for the house is said to have been Henry E. White (VHR, Reg. No. H444). Nothing has been discovered of other buildings designed by him and it may be that he was a builder rather than an architect. The distinctive front door is similar to that in the 1883 extension at Devon Park, which was designed by the firm Alexander Harris & Associates.

## **THEMATIC CONTEXT:**

Theme 3: Developing local, regional and national economies

3.5 Developing primary production

3.5.1 Grazing stock

3.5.2 Breeding animals

3.5.3 Developing agricultural industries

Theme 5: Working

5.8 working on the land

## **CONDITION:**

Excellent

## **INTEGRITY:**

Excellent degree of integrity for house, outbuildings, stable and twentieth century garden.

## **STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE:**

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## What is Significant?

Glenisla squatting run was established in 1843 by a Scotsman named Simpson who named the run after a kirkdom near Balmoral. In 1860 Charles Carter and Sons acquired the run. From the 1870s the Carter family owned or leased vast tracts of Grampian and Wimmera pastoral lands, including the sheep and cattle stations at Rosebrook, Moora Moora, North Brighton, Walmer, Kelwell, Wartook, Pine Plains and North Walmer. The current homestead was built for one of Carter's sons, Samuel. Among Samuel Carter's many public offices was an eight year stint as Protector for the Aborigines for the Glenisla district, Chairman of the Wimmera hire Water Trust, and Commissioner for the Wimmera Waterworks Trust. Construction of the homestead was commenced in 1873, but delayed because of a dispute over the siting of a government road reserve. It was completed in c1875. The homestead was strategically located on the overland gold route from Adelaide to the Victorian gold fields, as well as on the later north-south mail route between Horsham and Hamilton. The single storey homestead is constructed of Mount Bepcha Grampians sandstone and is formed by a symmetrically arranged group of four buildings - the house, the kitchen block, the servants quarters and a store building arranged around a large rear stone paved courtyard. The axis of the buildings runs directly north-south. In the courtyard are half cylinder sandstone spoon drains which lead to timber box drains and an ovoid water tank beneath the courtyard. The courtyard has a simple timber post verandah on three sides. A more elaborate verandah with moulded timber posts and brackets surrounds the front of the house. The stables behind the house are believed to have been constructed in the 1850s and are built of sawn horizontal slabs with a later corrugated iron roof. Two simple weatherboard clad mens huts stand close to the stables.

## How is it Significant?

Glenisla is of historical and architectural significance to the State of Victoria and to the Shire of southern Grampians.

## Why is it Significant?

Glenisla is historically significant as one of the original mountain stations on the slopes of the Grampians. The station has significant historical associations with the Carter family. Samuel Carter was of considerable importance in the development of the South Wimmera and in the development of the pastoral industry of that area of the state, particularly the irrigation scheme fed by Wartook Reservoir. Glenisla is historically significant as an important centre of communication. A post office was located at the homestead until 1970 and the c.1940s telephone exchange survives in a small room off the courtyard. The old kitchen was used as the district polling booth until 1968. Glenisla is architecturally significant as the northern most pastoral station in the region built of local sandstone. The formal planning of the homestead, with the rear offices forming a protected courtyard, is unusual. It bears some comparison to the two-storey sandstone homestead Gringegalgon, built at the same time about 50km to the south-west. The stables are an excellent representative example of 1850s horizontal slab construction.

## COMPARISON:

078 Gringegalgon, Gring Dip Road, Gringegalgon

**ASSESSED BY:** tfh

**ASSESSMENT DATE:**

27-Oct-01

## EXISTING LISTINGS:

## HERITAGE STUDY RECOMMENDATIONS:

Include in VHR  Include in RNE  Include in Local Planning Scheme

No Recommendations for Inclusions

## REFERENCES:

Author	Title	Year	Page
Alexander Sutherland, ed.	Victoria and Its Metropolis, Vol 2	1888	95

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Paul de Serville

Pounds and Pedigrees, the Upper Class in Victoria 1850-1880

1991 437

R. V Billis and A S Kenyon

Pastoral Pioneers of Port Phillip

1974 pp.  
43,  
140,  
213