

HERITAGE PLACE

NAME OF PLACE: WARRAYURE HOMESTEAD COMPLEX

ADDRESS/LOCATION OF PLACE: Rudolph's Road WARRAYURE

STUDY NUMBER: 109

HERITAGE OVERLAY NUMBER:

OTHER NAME/S OF PLACE: MOUNT STURGEON PLAINS NORTH

PRECINCT: outside

LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA: Southern Grampians Shire

ALLOTMENT: 11 & 12 & 13 **SECTION:** A **PARISH:** PARISH OF JENNAWARRA

ACCESS DESCRIPTION:

CFA 432 F33; VicRoads 73 E5; on the south-west side of Rudolph's Road at the junction with Hayes Lane and about 10kms south-west of Dunkeld.

SIGNIFICANCE RATING: Local



Warrayure Homestead Complex, Boundary Road, Warrayure.

Image Date: 09/01/02

EXTENT OF LISTING:

To the extent of: 1. All the building, including the homestead, woolshed, stables, men's quarters, shepherds hut and all of the land.

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PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:

The homestead is a single storey, almost symmetrical stone dwelling with pavilion rooms on either side of a central verandah. The verandah has cast iron columns and a simple neo-classical frieze. The walls are rock-faced bluestone with rock-faced quoins, probably of Grampians sandstone, now painted. The windows of the façade are framed by sandstone architraves, since painted, with panels beneath the double hung sashes. The side windows are casements with each leaf divided into three panes. The roof is corrugated iron with a low pitch. The windows, which are 4 paned double hung sashes except that opening onto the verandah, are outlined with simple classical architraves of cement render. The plan of the house is interesting in that the front door is asymmetrical in the façade and the passage is transverse. Simple steps lead up to the verandah and front door from the drive. There is a substantial kitchen wing at the rear with a timber verandah, possibly renewed, on two sides. The interiors of the house have been modernised and altered, especially since the Second World War. The house is in excellent condition.

Near the end of the kitchen wing there is a small detached building acting as a lodge or office at the gate across the lane leading to the woolshed. A long range of rooms, offices, stores, sheds and a dairy (partly newer) is opposite the house. One room, with bars over the window, is said to have been used as a lock-up and another as the pay office. Completing the courtyard there are stables and a coach house, a blacksmith's shop and a meat house. All the outbuildings are built in bluestone. They have corrugated iron roofs and many of the short sheets of iron are stamped "Best & Best". The outbuildings all retain a high degree of integrity and are in good condition.

The woolshed is large, T-shaped in plan and standard in its layout. The shallow hipped roof includes a timber louvred monitor along the ridge line. The wing closest to the house has a small opening leading to a loft. The woolshed retains a high degree of integrity and is in fair condition. Large skillion shelters have been added to the north-west side.

The original drive appears to have been abandoned. On the present drive leading towards the rear courtyard, there is a small cottage, perhaps a shepherd's hut, which is intact and in fair condition. The garden of the homestead is relatively modern with few major mature plantings surviving although it is clear that the grounds around the house were once extensively landscaped. The house looks towards the Grampians.

HISTORY:

Warrayure is perhaps unique in Victoria for its interconnection with two great pioneering families who took advantage of the discovery by Major Thomas Mitchell of the country which he called "Australia Felix" and which is now known as the Western District. Warrayure was formerly part of the squatting run Mount Sturgeon Plains which had been taken up by the Cameron family, Scottish Overlanders who arrived in Sydney as early as 1839 (B&K, 254). By 1857 it had been subdivided into Mount Sturgeon Plains North and South. Stephen George Henty took up Mount Sturgeon Plains North in May 1860 and Mount Sturgeon Plains South in 1863. This brought together both parts of the original Mount Sturgeon Plains. He renamed the property Warrayure to prevent confusion between Mt Sturgeon Estate and Mt Sturgeon Plains. Henty had already purchased land in the first Hamilton Town sales and land at Tarrington before he purchased Mt Sturgeon Plains. He built a four room stone cottage at Tarrington, which was later developed into Tarrington House, and he may have lived there before living at Warrayure.

The Hon. Stephen George Henty was one of the original Henty family from Tarring, Sussex (Bassett, var.). The family migrated to Western Australia, then went to Van Diemen's Land and finally arrived in Portland in 1834, the first Overstraiters to arrive in Victoria. Taking advantage of information about the hinterland from Major Mitchell, they were able to established the key squatting runs of Merino Downs, Muntham and

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Sandford along the Glenelg and Wannon valleys.

As soon as he had purchased Mount Sturgeon Plains North, Stephen Henty began to build a new homestead. He appointed John Shanks Jenkins (1834–1913) as his architect in 1860. Construction of the new homestead was superintended by a Mr. Pearson. Bluestone quarried on the property and freestone for the windows and other details came from the Grampians. Most of the work was done by local craftsmen.

Based in Hamilton, Jenkins had a mixed and extensive practice with important clients. In June 1860, Jenkins designed the Balmoral Presbyterian Manse for Mr. Robert Officer of Rocklands, who was acting for the congregation, and he designed the present Mount Talbot homestead for the Officers in 1862 (Harris, 24). Jenkins designed St Luke's former Presbyterian Church at Cavendish in 1862. He designed the Mount Rouse Shire Council Chambers in 1864. At Coleraine he called tenders for the construction of a store for Thomson & Co. of Hamilton in January 1866 and the next year he called tenders for alterations and additions to the Black Horse Inn (Troeth, 61 & 39). He possibly designed the new billiard room at Skene for the Robertsons in the 1880s but he had left the district by that time. The commission to design Warrayure must have been an important step in his career.

Jenkins, who described himself as a civil engineer as much as an architect, was born in Elgin, Scotland in 1834. "He served his apprenticeship with Messrs. McKenzie and Matthews, of Aberdeen and Elgin, architects, and arrived in Melbourne in 1854" (Sutherland, Vol. 2, 521). He soon went to Warnambool where he traded as a timber merchant, building contractor and machine maker. "In 1858 he became town surveyor of Port Fairy, went to Hamilton in a similar capacity in 1860, to Mount Rouse as shire engineer in 1870, and to Richmond as town surveyor in 1876" where he was also a councillor for five years (Sutherland, Vol. 2, 521). In 1861, John Shanks Jenkins married Emma Wright in Victoria (PIV, Reg. No. 3595). At first they lived at Hamilton but moved to Peshurst. The couple had seven children. Jenkins died in Richmond in 1913, aged 78 (EIV, Reg. No. 3413). As well as winning first prize with Charles D'Ebro and John Grainger (father of Percy Grainger) for the present Princes Bridge, Melbourne, Jenkins was proud to be one of the pioneers of the eight hours' movement in 1856.

Robert Stapylton Bree (1839-1907) came to Victoria from Cornwall in 1865 and soon after his arrival took charge of Warrayure for Stephen Henty, remaining for six years (Sutherland, 59). "In 1871 he married Henty's daughter Annie, and when Henty sold up in 1872, Bree moved into Hamilton and purchased the auctioneering business of J. A. Learmonth" (Garden, 72). According to official records they married in 1874 and the couple gave their names as Anna Maria Henty and Robert Edwin Sandys Bree (PIV, Reg. No. 2581). The couple had seven children between 1876 and 1885, all of whom were born in Hamilton. Robert Bree went on to have a very successful career, being appointed a Justice of the Peace and being Mayor three times "in which capacity he opened the railway to Hamilton and the State-school (Sutherland, 59; Garden, var.).

At the end of 1871 Stephen Henty's financial position was grave. He died on the 18th December 1872 (PIV, Reg. No. 9373). Garden notes that both Stephen Henty and, after his death, his son and heir Richmond Henty (1837-1904), ran into serious financial difficulties. Richmond eventually lost all the properties and Warrayure was acquired by Alexander Cameron (c.1808-81). The Hamilton Spectator announced the proposed sale of Warrayure as early as January 1872 "Powers, Rutherford and Co. have been instructed by the Trustees of Stephen George Henty Esq., to sell by Public Auction at their rooms, no 100 Collins Street west, Melbourne...one of the finest Freehold Estates in the Western District known as Warrayure Home Station comprising 6400 acres of land...the whole securely fence and divided into 5 paddocks, well watered by dams and the Warrayure creek....16 000 sheep, all carefully bred....a number of valuable cross bred Cheviots...The Improvements are most complete, comprising a residence of 8 rooms with all necessary out offices, stabling, woolshed, huts, & c., all substantially built of Bluestone...also, that very valuable small

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Freehold Estate known as Tarrington, comprising 3800 acres of Land...with improvements consisting of four roomed stone house and out offices." The advertisement concluded with a preliminary notice that farms at Warrayure would be sold in early March.

In February 1872 the Hamilton Spectator announced that, according to the auctioneer, James A. Learmonth, "Forty farms at Warrayure on the banks of and surrounding Lake Linlithgow...2597 acres, in farms of 40 to 150 acres each" were for sale (HS, 21/2/1872). Reporting the sale it stated "There was a fair attendance of Germans and others, but the biddings were not so spirited as was expected. The farms, varying in extent from 40 to 130 acres, were put up singly, with the option of taking up two or three of the lots adjoining. The whole was knocked down to Mr. Alexander Cameron, the present owner of Warrayure Station at the average price of 5 pounds, 2 shillings per acres. The purchase money would thus amount to almost 11,000 pounds. At the former sale of farms on the banks of Linlithgow, some of them went as high as 15 pounds per acre" (HS, 30/3/1872, 2)

After his father's death in 1881, John Joseph Cameron purchased Warrayure having rented the family property, Strathfillan (Smith, Vol. 2, 530). He had married Mary Whitehead in 1877 (PIV, Reg. No. 1454 & 1809). He was born in 1850 in South Australia, where his father owned the Penola Station from 1842 to 1863 before purchasing four runs in Victoria (Sutherland, 62). Alexander Cameron came to be one of the largest landholders in the further Western District and one of the most successful Overlanders.

Again, it was proposed to subdivide Warrayure into small farms but the condition of the 11,700 acres of open undulating plains country was not as glowing as it had been 14 years before. "The absence of shelter is a great draw back, as there is in the whole estate less than 400 acres of open foremost country, and protection from the bleak winter winds is yearly making its necessity more apparent. With a view to supplying this manifest requirement, tree planting has been commenced on systematic lines. Up to date about twelve hundred young pines and blue gums have been planted in rows and clumps, the latter plan being decidedly preferable, as the trees protect each other. The seedlings are obtained from Melbourne in boxes, and this is the most economical manner next to rearing them at home, that can be adopted" (WA, 20/3/1886, 12)

The same article give a detailed and frank description of the homestead some 25 years after it was built and the garden established. "The homestead is approached by a graveled drive, quite half a mile in length, planted with rows of pines, that are doing fairly well. It is substantially constructed of bluestone, providing ample accommodation for a large family. The garden and orchard comprise an area of about two acres and a half, stocked with vines and fruit trees. The vines are thoroughly healthy, and yield abundantly, but the rows nearest the blue gums give ample evidence of the exhaustion of the soil by these trees as they are stunted and puny in comparison with those on the inner site of the plot. The fruits that appear to suit the locality best are pears, apples, figs and quinces, the blight having affected the peaches to such an extent as to render them worthless. In the garden and conservatory, which are nicely kept, there are some splendid dahlias, camellias, ferns and other choice plants that evidently are carefully attended to. In the absence of a local supply of water, the requirements of this portion of the establishment are furnished by means of a portable tank which, though rather slow is a capital substitute" (WA, 20/3/1886, 12)

The article continues and concludes on a positive note "The shed, which like the homestead is constructed of bluestone, provides accommodation for 15 shearers. ... The outbuildings consisting of stables providing accommodation for 15 horses, buggy sheds and men's huts are substantial and commodious, all of Bluestone with iron roofs. The railway runs through the estate and a siding has recently been opened at Moutajup within 2 and a half miles of the homestead ... thus affording exceptional opportunities for making Warrayure one of the most remunerative and economically managed properties in the district" (WA, 20/3/1886, 12).

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The sale proposed in the early 1880s did not proceed and, by the late 1880s, John Cameron was a member of the Western District Sheep Farmers Association. In its 1888 notice to shearers, at the height of the tension between the shearing union and the pastoralists, Warrayure is noted as having 13,000 sheep to shear and the rate offered was 14 shillings per hundred, amongst the highest and only beaten by the Winter-Cooks at Murudal who were offering 15 shillings. John Cameron sold Warrayure in 1892 and retired to live at Lynwood in Hamilton.

THEMATIC CONTEXT:

Theme 3: Developing local, regional and national economies

3.5 Developing primary production

3.5.1 Grazing stock

Theme 5: Working

5.8 Working on the land

CONDITION:

The homestead is in excellent condition. The outbuildings range from most being in good condition to some, such as the woolshed, being in fair condition.

INTEGRITY:

The homestead and outbuildings around the rear courtyard, the shearer's cottage the woolshed are substantially intact and, apart from the decoration of the interiors of the house, retain a high degree of integrity. The structures are variously in fair, good and excellent condition.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE:

What is significant?

The Warrayure Homestead Complex, halfway between Hamilton and Dunkeld, was established from 1860 by Stephen Henty, a member of the famous early pioneering family, the first Overstraiters. It represented the reunion of the North and South sections of the much earlier Mount Sturgeon Plains squatting run which had been subdivided in 1857 which had been settled first by Alexander Cameron. Henty lived at Warrayure until his financial collapse in 1871, the year before he died, when the property was sold to the Cameron family, amongst the first Overlanders. It stayed in their hands until 1891. Henty commissioned the recently arrived Scottish architect, John Shanks Jenkins who was important not only for his extensive private practice but also for his role as engineer in the surrounding municipalities and subsequently at the City of Richmond. Later he was a councillor of Richmond and won first prize with Charles D'Ebro and John Grainger for the present Princes Bridge, Melbourne. While chaste and conservative the house is not without interest in its planning, details and siting. It appears to have been set in an extensive landscape garden, now largely lost. Importantly, there is an extensive range of outbuildings around the rear courtyard, shearer's cottage and a large woolshed some distance from the house, all probably designed by Jenkins. These, with the house are substantially intact and, apart from the decoration of the interiors of the house, retaining a high degree of integrity. The structures are variously in fair, good and excellent condition.

How is it significant?

The Warrayure Homestead Complex is of historical and architectural significance to the State of Victoria and to the Southern Grampians Shire.

Why is it significant?

The Warrayure Homestead Complex is of historical significance for its interconnections with the great families, the Hentys and the Camerons, the former Overstraiters and the latter Overlanders, thereby representing the two major pioneering thrusts into Australia Felix. More specifically, it represents the

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declining fortunes of the former and the rising fortunes of the latter. Warrayure is of architectural significance for its association with the architect and engineer, John Shanks Jenkins, who was particularly important in the Western District until his move to Melbourne where he continued to prosper professionally and personally. Not only is the homestead one of his first substantial designs, the whole of the extensive complex appears to have been his responsibility.

COMPARISON:

108 Violet Creek Homestead, Hamilton Dartmoor Road, Yulecart
113 Audley Homestead Complex, Byaduk - Branhholme Road, Branhholme
201 William Howath's House, Monroe Street, Branhholme

ASSESSED BY: TFH & AEN

ASSESSMENT DATE:

09-Jan-03

EXISTING LISTINGS:

HERITAGE STUDY RECOMMENDATIONS:

Include in VHR Include in RNE Include in Local Planning Scheme

No Recommendations for Inclusions

REFERENCES:

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	A Biographical Dictionary of British Architects, 1600-1840, revised ed.	1978	458
James Smith	Cyclopaedia of Victoria	1904	530
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R V Billis and A S Kenyon	Pastoral Pioneers of Port Phillip	1974	254, 38