

# HERITAGE PLACE

**NAME OF PLACE:** MUNTHAM MAINS

**ADDRESS/LOCATION OF PLACE:** Cnr Glenelg Hwy and Den Hills Road CARAPOOK

**STUDY NUMBER:** 120

**HERITAGE OVERLAY NUMBER:**

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**OTHER NAME/S OF PLACE:** OLD TEMPLETON HOMESTEAD, THE MODEL FARM

**PRECINCT:** outside

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA:** Southern Grampians Shire

**PARISH:** PARISH OF MUNTHAM

**ACCESS DESCRIPTION:**

CFA 430 near C3; VicRoads 72 C3; Located on the Glenelg Highway in the north-west corner with Den Hills Road, about 5.5kms west of the township of Coleraine

**SIGNIFICANCE RATING:** HERITAGE INVENTORY



Muntham Mains archaeological site, corner Den Hills Road & Glenelg Highway, Carapook.

**Image Date:** 19/03/02

**EXTENT OF LISTING:**

To the extent of: 1. All the original homestead site and a radial area of 100m from the domed well.

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## **PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:**

Muntham Mains is an archaeological site, with few above ground remnants of a previously extensive homestead complex. The site is marked by a pair of mature *Cupressus torulosa* (Bhutan cypress), a *Shinus molle* (Peppercorn tree), and an old well. No footings of buildings are intact, although some old bricks are visible in the pasture. The site is presently used as a sheep paddock.

## **HISTORY:**

Muntham Mains was an important local farm, renowned for its use of scientific principles and modern farming practices. The land on which Muntham Mains stood was originally part of the Muntham Pastoral Lease, owned by Edward Henty. In the 1860s, the Nicholson Act was responsible for throwing open large portions of the most substantial runs in the Western District, to sell them to selectors. Muntham had 11 000 acres thrown open for selection. Thomas Templeton purchased his initial holding of 100 acres of this land for six pounds per acre in 1861 (Smith, Vol. II, 548).

Thomas Templeton is noted in the *Cyclopedia of Victoria* (1903) as a person of note in the district. The entry in the *Cyclopedia* states that Templeton was born in Ayrshire, Scotland, on the 12th of January, 1834, and arrived in the Colonies in 1844. When he arrived in Australia, his first employment was with a farmer at Moonee Ponds, and Mr. Templeton relates that he ploughed the field where the Moonee Valley racecourse is now situated. The entry goes on to say that "...In 1857 he was sent back to Scotland to bring out some Durham cattle and some draught horses. This he accomplished satisfactorily, and on his return the wages he had earned during the trip enabled him to purchase 100 acres of his present property...For many years he enjoyed the reputation of being one of, if not the finest ploughman in the district. He was the first farmer in the Coleraine district, and was elected to a seat in the Wannon Shire Council in 1890. He likewise occupied the presidential chair for one term, and retired in 1898. He has also filled the position of president of the Pastoral and Agricultural Society" (Smith, Vol. II, 584-9).

In 1867 Templeton married Rosina Lander, the daughter of the Wannon Shire valuer, Edward Lander. Together they had a family of two boys and six girls while at Muntham Mains, the descendants of the Templeton family continue to flourish in the district.

From the entry in the *Cyclopedia of Victoria*, dated 1903, it seems clear that Templeton had become a very successful grazier, his property described as "Muntham Mains, well known as the 'Model Farm'... situated three miles from Coleraine. It comprises 500 acres of freehold land, well watered by permanent creeks. About 100 acres are under cultivation, the residue being sown with English grasses, principally rye grass. The sheep carried are cross-bred, the stud rams being pure Lincolns, from Mr. Forsyth's celebrated flock. The annual shearing is about 800 sheep, most of the lambs being sold for export. Mr. Templeton breeds a considerable number of draught horses, some of which have been prize-takers. The property has been managed according to scientific methods from the commencement, and the efforts of the owner have been well rewarded (Smith, 549).

Thomas Templeton was interested in the application of scientific and modern farming practices to animal husbandry and pastoralism. He is renowned as one of the first people to introduce pasture fertilization into the district. McGaffin notes "Fertilizers had been tried as early as 1893 when Mr. Templeton of Muntham Mains imported the German "Kainit" fertilizer from Strassfurt which was a mixture of 30% common salt and sulphate of potash. He claimed splendid results, having been dissatisfied with earlier spreadings of bonedust and guano" (McGaffin, 36).

Templeton was heavily involved in the local community in Coleraine and the surrounding district. He held

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office as a Wannon Shire Councillor from 1888-1899, and as Shire President in 1898-99 (McGaffin, 15), as well as being President for the Pastoral and Agricultural Society (Smith, 549). It is likely that Thomas Templeton donated the land on which the former Coleraine Masonic Lodge was built in 1875, and may have been a founding member.

It is not known why Muntham Mains ceased operation as a Homestead and model farm, or when this occurred. It may be related to the death of Thomas Templeton in 1909, or that by 1903, two of his son's had left the district, and were already running their own 5 000 acres on the Lachlan River in New South Wales. A G. L Templeton who died in World War Two is the only Templeton recording as having fallen in War from the district, and several of Thomas Templeton's sons went on to live, marry and die in Coleraine. It may be that as farming progressed, and more land was required to make a living from farming, the family moved to a larger holding, or built a new house elsewhere.

The Templeton family continue to be an important presence in the Coleraine and District community.

## **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:**

The remnants of the homestead are minimal. The Bhutan Cypress and the Peppercorn are in good-fair condition. The well dome is also in good condition.

## **INTEGRITY:**

Very low degree of integrity above ground, possible archaeological potential.

## **STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE:**

What is significant?

The archaeological remains of Muntham Mains is located on the north west corner of the Glenelg Highway and Den Hills Road, approximately five kilometers west of the township of Coleraine. The archaeological potential of the site is unknown, but there are no footings or buildings which survive above ground. Several trees are located around the original homestead site, including several Cupressus torulosa (Bhutan Cypress) and a Shinus molle (Peppercorn). A concrete domed well also survives on the site. Muntham Mains was an important local farm in the later nineteenth Century, owned by the first selector in the Coleraine area, Thomas Templeton. Templeton was a pioneer of modern farming practice, interested in applying scientific principles to animal husbandry and pastoral practice. Muntham Mains was widely held up as a 'Model Farm' for the adoption of modern practice and experimentation with scientific pasture and stock management. It was also a renowned Lincoln sheep and draught horse stud. Templeton was considered to be an important and influential member of the Coleraine and district community, a founding member and long term councillor of the Wannon Shire Council, and later served as President. For many years he was also President of the Pastoral and Agricultural Society.

How is it significant?

The archaeological remnants of Muntham Mains are of scientific, historical and archaeological significance.

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## Why is it significant?

The archaeological remains of the Muntham Mains homestead and farm are of scientific significance as what remains of one of the most modern farms run on scientific principles of the later part of the nineteenth century. The farm was considered to be a 'Model Farm', for others to learn from. Historically, it is important as the first farm selected in the district after the Nicholson Act, and for its associations with Thomas Templeton and his family. Templeton was an important member of the community, and seen as a leader by other small farmers in the area. It is of further historical significance as for its association with an important event, the Nicholson Act of 1860 which opened up much of the land 'locked' by large squatting runs, and allowed smaller selectors to purchase this land for small scale farming. It is also of historical significance as it demonstrates a farming practice which has now been lost, the small land holder. Muntham Mains at the height of its success as the 'Model Farm' was only 500 acres. The abandonment of the homestead and farm represents the change in farming practices, where larger amounts of land were required to obtain a sufficient income. It is of archaeological significance for the information it may reveal about the early selectors generally.

## COMPARISON:

019 Old Monivae Homestead Site, Hamilton-Port Fairy Rd, Hamilton

045 Park Hill (original site), Yulecart

313 Riverside (original site), Falkenberg's Road, Wannon

**ASSESSED BY:** AEN

**ASSESSMENT DATE:**

9/07/2003

## 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
G. McGaffin	History of the Shire of Wannon, 1872-1972	1972	36
James Smith, ed	The Cyclopaedia of Victoria	1905	548-9
Macbeth Genealogical Services	Pioneer Index Victoria 1836 - 1888 (reg. No. 1505)	1998	