

HERITAGE PLACE

NAME OF PLACE: WOODHOUSE HOMESTEAD COMPLEX

ADDRESS/LOCATION OF PLACE: Woodhouse Lane WOODHOUSE

STUDY NUMBER: 338

HERITAGE OVERLAY NUMBER:

PRECINCT: outside

LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA: Southern Grampians Shire

ALLOTMENT: 5 **SECTION:** B **PARISH:** PARISH OF COREA

ACCESS DESCRIPTION:

CFA 475 B-12; VicRoads 73 H6; located at the north-east corner of Woodhouse Lane and the Hamilton-Chatsworth Road, on a slight rise immediately east of Muston's Creek

SIGNIFICANCE RATING: Local

Woodhouse Homestead, Woodhouse Lane, Woodhouse, façade

Image Date: 7/03/02

EXTENT OF LISTING:

To the extent of: 1. All the exterior of the homestead, the coachhouse, the stables, the garden, the woolshed, the ruins of the men's quarters, and all of the land within a 100m radius of the main house.

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PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:

The original dwelling at Woodhouse is a simple vernacular cottage of two rooms. It has since been incorporated into the larger bluestone house, itself substantially altered and extended. The walls of the house are rockface bluestone with dressed edges set in 12 inch courses. This has been very carefully replicated in the extensions. The windows are 12 paned, double hung sashes. The main entrance is a simple four panelled door with a rectangular fanlight above but with no side lights. Many internal joinery details such as mantels, doors and skirtings survive from each period. There are extensive pressed metal and coved ceilings from the circa 1900 alterations and extensions. The whole of the roof appears to have been rebuilt and is now contiguous with the verandah. The bluestone chimneys, which are now distinctive features, may have been extended. Skylights in the verandah section provide light to the main windows. The verandah has paired timber columns and a red concrete floor. The house, which looks towards the Grampians, is set in an extensive mature garden, overlooking a dam created as an ornamental lake.

Near the rear of the house there is a small bluestone coachhouse with a shallow pitched corrugated iron roof. The rockface stonework with dressed edges matches the main house. The ends of the masonry are unfinished indicating that the building was to be larger. Hinges survive indicating that there were doors across the main opening which is divided by a chamfered timber post.

The nearby stables are timber and include some walls which are horizontal or drop slab construction. The structure appears to have been substantially extended, probably about 1900 when major alterations were made to the house. The slab walls may date from the 1850s if not earlier. The slab construction is in very good condition. Some of the roof above the slab walls is lined with boards above the rafters.

The woolshed is rectangular in plan and very large. It has low bluestone walls with full 12 inch courses and a low pitched corrugated iron roof. There is a corrugated iron extension at the eastern end. The board is on the long north side and there are six outlets for sheep with doorways to either side of them. The yards are all new. On the south side there is a 1950s sheep dip, now disused. The bluestone men's quarters is in ruins some distance from the woolshed towards the south-west.

HISTORY:

The Woodhouse squatting run, Portland Bay No. 253, was first taken up by Adolphus Sceales in March 1848. Located at the head of Muston's Creek about 12kms north-east of Mount Rouse, it comprised 16,000 acres and had 8,000 sheep. Sceales died in 1854, aged 45 (VPI, Reg. No. 5906). Consequently, in June of 1854, the run passed to James Ritchie who passed it on to his brothers, Daniel and Simon Ritchie in September 1858 and, from February 1860, Simon Ritchie held the licence on his own (B&K, 302). The Ritchie brothers were in partnership with James Sceales, the brother of Adolphus in the neighbouring Blackwood run. The Sceales who were from Perthshire and the Ritchies had emigrated on the same ship. In 1856, Adolphus Sceales' widow Jane, nee Paton married Robert Hood of Merrang, north of Warrnambool (VPI, Reg. No. 3810).

Margaret Kiddle states that James Ritchie arrived from Scotland in 1841. In November 1842, Ritchie, his brothers and James Sceales "purchased the station on the Deep Creek with 16,000 sheep for 400 pounds. The sheep was [sic] in a shocking state with scab, poverty and foot-rot" (Kiddle, 139). By 1844 that partnership was dissolved and the Ritchie brothers formed Blackwood from the larger run of Deep Creek, the licence being transferred in 1845. In 1846 the brothers parted and became independent owners, Daniel staying at Blackwood and Simon moving to take up the adjacent run, Woodhouse. Simon Ritchie was born in Scotland in 1820. He married Jane, the daughter of James Sanderson and they had six children (De Serville, 484).

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The Shire of Mount Rouse Rate Book of 1870 names James Alexander, sheepfarmer, as the occupant and Simon Ritchie as the owner of the Woodhouse Estate, Dunkeld for three sites with a total nett annual valuation of 1,625 pounds (SMRB, 1870, No. 4). The rate book of 1872 names only James Alexander and gives a total area of 8,146 acres with a nett annual valuation of 1,626 pounds on which he paid a rate of 81 pounds 6 shillings (SMRB, 1870, No. 1). De Serville, on the other hand states that the Woodhouse Estate totaled 14,203 acres (De Serville, 484).

Elise Clabburn states that "From 1854, "Woodhouse" stayed in the Ritchie family until 1928, when the owner, Major Ritchie, sold it, then 12,000 acres, to Mr. John Baillieu. In the large bluestone homestead, understood to have been built by the Ritchies, Scales' [sic] original 3-room homestead was retained as the kitchen. In the fashion of the time, this kitchen was a long way from the dining-room" (Clabburn, 40) The first extension beyond the original kitchen wing dates from 1857 (Plowright, pers. comm.) In March 1868, James M. Knight called tenders in the Warrnambool Examiner for four building projects for James Alexander (Tonkin, 69). The first was for additions to the dwelling, the second was for the masonry work of the woolshed, the third for a men's hut and the fourth for constructing a water tank. About 1900, based on stylistic grounds and the materials used, there were more substantial additions and renovations to the house with a full remodeling of the roof. The small bluestone coachhouse appears to date from the mid-1860s while the timber stables with their drop slab construction may be earlier although later modified about 1900. A sheep wash also existed to the west of the homestead complex but, after subdivision, is now located on a separate property.

The other important nineteenth century development was the landscaped garden around the homestead. This was a sophisticated exercise which included the construction of a large dam for practical and ornamental purposes, the planting of extensive groves of conifers and the planting of conventional trees and shrubs close to the house. About 1900, possibly as part of the reworking of the house, a very large plantation of Maritime Pines, *Pinus maritima* was established in an L-shape along Hamilton-Chatsworth Road and McPhea's Lane but, after subdivision, this is also now located on a separate property. The plantation is believed to be the largest of its type and species in Victoria.

Clabburn continues "After the 1939-45 War, the Soldier Settlement Commission acquired all of "Woodhouse", with the exception of a block taken up by the Station Manager, Jock Desailly and now known as "Woodhouse West", and cut up into 25 lots for soldier settlement. The block containing the original bluestone homestead, shearing shed, stables and coachhouse was allotted to Mr. W. C. Wawn." (Clabburn, 40). According to the Corea Parish Plan of 1966, the pre-emptive right was subdivided under the Soldier Settlement Act 1946. In 1948, after sub-division soldier settlement, the owners were the Baillieu family (Plowright, pers. comm.). The next major ownership was the Plowright family. Extensive plantings of *Radiata Pines*, *Pinus radiata* occurred which compliment the earlier plantations.

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:

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The homestead is in very good condition. The coachhouse and stables are in good condition. The woolshed is in good condition and has archaeological potential in the sheep dip and channel. The men's quarters are ruinous although they retain some archaeological potential. The garden and general landscaping are in very good condition.

INTEGRITY:

The homestead retains a high degree of integrity to its c.1900 stage of development. The coachhouse is intact to its original condition (although it is missing its doors). The stables retain a high degree of integrity to its c.1900 stage of development and include important early fabric. The woolshed is intact to its original condition. The men's quarters are in ruins.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE:

What is significant?

The Woodhouse Homestead Complex is located in the north-west corner of the intersection of the Hamilton-Chatsworth Road and Woodhouse Lane about 12kms north-east of Mount Rouse. It is at the head of Muston's Creek. The squatting run was taken up by Adolphus Sceales in March 1848 who died in 1854. The run then passed to James Ritchie who passed it on to his brothers, Daniel and Simon Ritchie in 1858 and, from 1860, Simon Ritchie held the licence on his own (B&K, 302). The Ritchie brothers were in partnership with James Sceales, Adolphus' brother, in the neighbouring Blackwood run. For much of the later nineteenth century, Woodhouse was occupied by James Alexander. The original dwelling survives and was later used as a kitchen. A new homestead was built immediately adjacent to it in 1857 and this was extended in 1868 by the architect J. M. Knight of Penshurst. It was extended and substantially modernised about 1900. It remains today much as it was at that time and is set in a large mature landscaped garden including an ornamental lake. The very large woolshed and the men's quarters were also built in 1868. The Ritchie family held the property until 1928 when it was purchased by John Baillieu. It was sub-divided under the Soldier Settlement Scheme and, in 1948, the block including the homestead complex was allocated to W. C. Wawn. The Plowright family were the subsequent owners. The homestead and garden are in very good condition and the various outbuildings and woolshed are in good condition, all retaining a high degree of integrity to the early twentieth century period.

How is it significant?

The Woodhouse Homestead Complex is of historical and architectural significance to the Shire of Southern Grampians.

Why is it significant?

The Woodhouse Homestead Complex is of historical significance for its associations with Adolphus and Jane Sceales, Scottish immigrants and early squatters who established the run. It is of further significance for its long term ownership by the important Ritchie family, although it was developed by James Alexander. The Woodhouse Homestead Complex is of architectural significance for demonstrating a sequence of development, each stage of which is still represented including the major developments in 1868 which were designed by the local architect, J. M. Knight.

COMPARISON:

092 Blackwood, Blackwood-Dunkeld Road, Penshurst
325 Nareeb Nareeb, Hamilton Chatsworth Road, Woodhouse
327 Brie Brie, Bundoran Road, Glenthompson
331 Lovatdale, Lovatdale Lane, Glenthompson

ASSESSED BY: TFH & MGT

ASSESSMENT DATE:

7/03/2002

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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
Department of Justice Victoria	Pioneer Index Victoria 1836 - 1888	2001	
Department of Lands and Survey	Parishes of Corea (County of Villiers)	1966	
Elise Clabburn, et al	Dunkeld & District, A Short History	1989	30
Margaret Kiddle	Men of Yesterday	1961	139
Paul de Serville	Pounds and Pedigrees	1991	484
R V Billis and A S Kenyon	Pastoral Pioneers of Port Phillip	1974	130, 302
Ray Tonkin	Tender and Other Notices from the Warrnambool Examiner	1973	69