

HERITAGE PLACE

NAME OF PLACE: SPRING VALE

ADDRESS/LOCATION OF PLACE: Hillview Road (Coleraine-Brit Brit Rd) COOJAR

STUDY NUMBER: 084

HERITAGE OVERLAY NUMBER:

PRECINCT: outside

LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA: Southern Grampians Shire

PARISH: PARISH OF TARRAYOUKYAN

ACCESS DESCRIPTION:

CFA 387 D8; VicRoads 54D7; behind the modern home 'Springvale', approx 50 metres north of Hillview Road,

SIGNIFICANCE RATING: State



Spring Vale Homestead Complex, Hillview Road, Coojar. Dining Room & former Post Office

Image Date: 03/12/01

EXTENT OF LISTING:

To the extent of: 1. All the homestead including all sections of the complex, the remnant garden and the surrounding land to the extent of 10,000 sqm based on Hillview Road but excluding the modern house.

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PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:

Springvale Homestead is a complex of interlinked buildings, of various dates, demonstrating a range of different building techniques and materials. All are single storey and all have corrugated iron roofs although some original shingle roofs survive under the iron. A two roomed vertical slab hut with a shingle roof, perhaps dating from the 1840s, appears to be the earliest stage. It has the lowest floor level. The four corners of the hut are supported by large, hand-adzed timber posts. The walls consist of vertical slabs overlaid with horizontal split laths, with a tongue in groove, beaded edge dado. The ceiling consists of beaded edge lining boards. The dado and ceiling are probably of a later date. The west wall of the slab hut has been removed, and replaced by a wall of handmade bricks, which are part of the 1850s brick section.

Immediately to the north of the primitive hut is a substantial section of pisé, used as a kitchen, measuring approximately 12 metres by 6 metres, with a verandah of about 1.6 metres in width, originally on all sides. An imitation ashlar finish has been rendered over the pisé. Two windows and a door on the east side appear to be original, while a second door in the east wall has been created during the 20th century when the room was enlarged by infilling the verandah. A 20th century timber wall is the only internal partitioning, dividing the space into a parlour with Edwardian fireplace and mantelpiece, and a kitchen. At the north end of the kitchen are three large ovens, and extensive shelving, which would appear to date from Springvale's era as an inn. The verandah on the west side has been enclosed to create two bathrooms.

The next phase of development appears to be the construction of a substantial brick building to the south of, and at right angles to the slab hut. The handmade bricks, with timber nogging, appear to date from the 1850s. The brick section contains three substantial rooms with open fireplaces. The remains of a verandah which extended along the front of the brick section can be seen. This verandah, with paired timber posts, is clearly visible in photographs from the 1880s in the possession of the Botterill family.

To the east of the brick section is a later section built in dressed granite blocks, finely tuckpointed, which consists of a formal sitting room with fireplace and a finely crafted bay window, which faces north. To the east, two 12 pane double hung sash windows have surrounds made of pre-cast cement in a classical design of arch with keystone, with simple pilastered side columns. The remains of Edwardian wallpapers can be seen on the walls, badly affected by damp. The east facing verandah on this side utilises a simple Edwardian fretwork decorative motif. The chimneys of this section also have pre-cast cement detailing.

Another well-made bay window, this time extending from floor to ceiling, is the dominant feature of the adjacent east-facing dining room, constructed in timber, possibly at a later stage again. A timber gallery, of similar materials, has been built along the south and east sides of the buildings, creating a link between all of the separate phases of construction.

The last section of building appears to be a two roomed timber structure built on the south end of the pisé section, which was known as the old Coojar Post Office. Various outbuildings survive on the site. The stables, which had 8 stalls, buggy shed and harness room have not survived (HHC file note). The present woolshed, on the south side of Hillview Road has replaced the original.

The whole is in a delapidated condition, including some collapsed parts, although it retains a very high degree of integrity to the Interwar period.

There are several over mature senescent Monterey Pines, *Pinus radiata* to the east which appear to have been planted in a curve, possible the turning circle of a drive. The drive is lined on the east side with a row of young Sugar Gums, *Eucalyptus cladocalyx*. There are the remnants of an orchard on the west side. There are no other significant plantings although the ground appears to have been disturbed through major earthworks.

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HISTORY:

The date of the earliest development at the Spring Vale site is not known but it certainly pre-dates the separation of Victoria from NSW and the discovery of gold in 1851. Major Mitchell had passed close to the site in early August 1836 as he moved downstream along the Glenelg River noting the area's excellent potential. The land was part of the original Gringegalga run when it belonged to Simeon Cadden. According to the memoirs of the local pioneer William Moodie, his father, John Moodie had contracted to buy the property. 'Campbell had been Cadden's overseer and got Spring Vale in payment for wages due, but before the time of delivery became due Campbell offered my father one thousand pounds to cry off the bargain. His offer was accepted and my father started to look for another place' (Moodie, in Palmer, ed., 35) The first Spring Vale licence was issued to John Campbell in June 1845 (B&K, 280). John Moodie eventually ended up at Wando Dale. William Moodie recalls 'Spring Vale was [the] next nearest at eight miles' and that 'it changed hands more frequently than any other place I knew. The names as owners or tenants are John Campbell, John [Moodie, William's brother rather than his father], W. and J. McConachie, Fred Corney, D. Swan, M. L. and F. Compy, Andrew Brown (Manager), E. B. Wight, Joe Botterill, Dave Botterill, W. G. R. Moodie, Andrew Kerr, Mr. Wilson – also D. Morrison and H. Elkins' (Moodie, in Palmer, ed., 39).

The oldest surviving buildings, located on a rise overlooking Mather's Creek, seem to have been associated with the first occupation of Spring Vale, which was taken up by John Campbell in 1845 as the Portland Bay Run No. 67. It was described as being 10 miles south of Balmoral, comprising 13,960 acres with 5,000 sheep (B&K, 280). The pre-emptive right area shown in Hiscock's 'Map of the County of Dundas', 1874 is at the north-east corner of the junction of the modern Coleraine-Harrow Road and Hillview Road. (The home station is not indicated in the W. Owen 'Map of Pastoral Runs', 1868.) John Campbell had come from Devil's Elbow in the County of Bourke and went on to own Dunach Forest (or Mount Greenock) in Western Port, a much larger property, and Compton's Creek, also in Western Port (B&K, 41, 201, & 280) It seems likely that the slab and shingle section of the house was constructed at least during Campbell's ownership, if not as an out-station for the Gringegalga run. It is likely that the pisé section, a rare form of construction in the area, dates from Campbell's ownership as well. Campbell sold to W. & J. McConochie in May, 1853.

William and John McConochie, natives of Glasgow, had arrived from Scotland in 1841 and John first took up The Grange, the site of the present Hamilton (Sutherland, Vol. 2, 60). (Sutherland, Vol. 2, 60) They owned the Bryant's Creek run which was one impetus for the founding of Coleraine. From 1845 until 1891, they owned the Konongwootong Creek run purchasing the freehold about 1862. They also owned Wando Dale, known as the Three Wandos, between 1852 and 1853 which they may have sold to buy Spring Vale. John McConochie and his family lived at Spring Vale for three years (Sutherland, Vol. 2, 60). He sold the Spring Vale licence to Donald Swan in 1864 and the 1865 Victorian Gazetteer notes that he grazes 12,300 sheep on 12,300 acres. He lost it, presumably through bankruptcy to the National Bank, in 1870. He was the brother of the successful pastoralist, William Swan, who had owned the Konongwootong run. They had arrived in the area in 1857. Moodie writes about a dreadful bushfire, without giving the year but probably when Donald Swan owned Spring Vale, which burnt out much of the surrounding properties and which destroyed woolshed and fencing at Spring Vale but 'not many sheep' (Moodie, in Palmer, ed., 39-40) The event was called Red Sunday because the fire was at its height on Sunday the 23rd January. This event may account for the property passing to the National Bank.

In May 1872, Edward By[h]am Wight purchased the licence. By this time it was reduced to 9,484 acres (de Serville, 493). An Edward Byam Wight, who had arrived in Port Phillip in 1841, was a Melbourne merchant in partnership with Dr. Bailey and John Watson (de Serville, 451). It has always been presumed that it was this man who held the Spring Vale licence although it may have been his son. The licence was cancelled in 1874 but, according to the Coleraine Albion, whichever Wight it was, he continued as the tenant if not the owner of the freehold until 1887. A notice which appeared in the newspaper for a clearing sale stated 'Instructions from E. Bram Wright [sic] to sell: 8,370 merinos mixed sexes; the wool, cold-water washed, has realised in the

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London market upto 2s. 7½d. per pound, and last year 1s. 5d. per pound in the grease. Team working bullocks, milch cows and progeny, 10 horses. Has been managing the estate for the last [blank] years, leaving because of health. Property to be let. 14 sheep, 5 cultivation and 1 horse paddocks, 9,580 [acres] of freehold land. Highly improved and well watered by springs, creeks and dams. On the property is a commodious family house, kitchen, stables, good garden, woolshed, yard and everything required for the advantageous and economical working of the property' (CA, 30/07/1887).

The Wight family occupied Spring Vale for fifteen years. De Serville gives the names of a wife and five children for Edward Byam Wight but appears to have confused the two generations (de Serville, 451-2). Edward Byam Wight Senior had at least eight children with his wife, Catherine Philpott whom he married at St James Church in Melbourne in 1845: Catherine Marian (1846), Alice (1848) who died at the age of three, Edward Byam (1849), Theodore Frederick (1851) who died at the age of seven months, John Cain (1857), Gerrard (1860), Neville (1863), and Grace (1865) (PIV, Reg. Nos. 4910 and 14565, 15661, 26347, 26948, 8988, 626, 7791, 2270). All their children were born in the vicinity of Melbourne. His first son, Edward Byam Wight Junior had at least ten children with his wife, Ann Elizabeth Townend whom he married in Melbourne early in 1872: Edward Byam (1873), Reuben (1874), Margaret Alice (1876), William Byam (1878), Frederick Byam (1879), Edith Annie (1881), Herbert Selwyn (1883), unnamed male (1885) who died after just two days, Alfred Byam (1886) and Richard Harry Byam (1888) (PIV, Reg. Nos. 132 and 633, 20928, 13793, 464, 20897, 14065, 6927, 10475, 15735, 849). All were born in Balmoral or Harrow except the last who was born in Brighton.

Indeed it is quite likely that it was the newly married Edward Byam Wight Junior who took up the run in 1872, perhaps financed by his merchant father. The size and prosperity of the Wight family make it highly likely that major works were undertaken to turn the relatively primitive homestead into the 'commodious family house' during their occupation. The substantial northern part of the homestead, consisting of a formal sitting room built of finely pointed granite, and a timber dining room, and the timber galleries built along the south and east sides of the complex, linking each of the phases of construction, were probably built between 1872 and 1887. The homestead complex does not appear to have changed since other than for minor additions and alterations and the Edwardian remodelling in the pisé section used as the kitchen. Wight went to Tullich from Spring Vale and then returned to Melbourne, to reside in Kensington where Wight Senior died in 1890 (B&K, 160, 280 & 293; Garryowen, 16, 26, 960 & 116, 293).

Historical records indicate that the property was not sold but leased. As late as 1912, the Almanac of Western District (large) Land Owners Index shows that an Edward B. White [sic] owned Spring Vale, Coleraine, of 9484 acres (Fawcett, 2003) It was leased to the Broughton, Moffat and Edkins partnership (who also leased or owned Kout Narie and Wilderness), with the brothers David and James Botterill managing the property from as early as 1887 (Wood, et al, 149). Family records are confusing but they suggest that David Charles Botterill and his wife Thomazin (née Broughton) and Joseph Botterill and his wife Carrie (née Moffat) lived at Spring Vale at various stages between 1887 and 1896. In 1895, David and Thomazin purchased a dairy farm at Purnim near Warrnambool, called Bryan O'Lynn, and Joseph and his family moved to Branhholme to manage Bassett for Moffat and Edkins.

Colloquial history suggests that the complex went through several owners and uses after 1912. A small timber building located at the northern end of the pisé section is still known as the Old Coojar Post Office and it also housed a telegraph office. The complex is said to have served as an inn at some time, but this may relate to the earliest days when all remote homesteads provided accommodation to travellers rather than in the twentieth century. It is known that the Eldridge family owned Spring Vale between 1920 and 1973. A new house was built in the later 1950s adjacent to the old which was abandoned. J. C. Watson purchased the property in 1973 (HHC, File Note). The current owners have held the property since 1992.

THEMATIC CONTEXT:

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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 whole is in a delapidated condition, including some collapsed parts, although it retains a very high degree of integrity to the Interwar period. The site has high archaeological potential.

INTEGRITY:

High degree of integrity to Interwar period.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE:

What is significant?

The former Spring Vale homestead, located in Hillview Road, Coojar and overlooking Mather's Creek is a substantial complex developed in many distinct stages using a remarkable variety of different building materials and methods. The earliest section, dating from at least the mid-1840s, is a small two-roomed vertical slab hut, possibly built as an outstation to the Gringegalgona run or as the first dwelling of Spring Vale run. Subsequent stages include: a large pise section built and always used as the kitchen, also probably from the 1840s; a range of brick rooms probably from the 1850s, a granite drawing room with rare 'manufactured' stone details, a weatherboard dining room and timber galleries linking all built after 1872. At the northern end of the pise section there is a detached weatherboard building dating from the early twentieth century which was built for and used as the Coojar post office and telegraph station. There have been many important occupants and owners of Spring Vale including: the first, John Campbell, formerly the overseer at Gringegalgona; John McConochie; Donald Swan; Edward Byam Wight Junior, the longest occupant and owner; and the partnership of Broughton, Moffat and Edkins when it was managed by David and Charles Botterill. These men and their families were influential within and well beyond the district, each leaving their mark as a stage in the sequential development of Spring Vale. The house remains substantially intact although parts are in a ruinous condition. The original coach house and stables have since been demolished and very little survives of the once substantial garden. The woolshed was replaced after a fire.

How is it significant?

The former Spring Vale homestead complex is of historical, social and architectural significance to the state of Victoria and to the Southern Grampians Shire.

Why is it significant?

The former Spring Vale homestead complex is of historical significance for demonstrating a remarkable sequential development, one of the clearest in the state, and for reflecting the major phases of pastoralism from its squatting origins, through the land selection period and beyond.

It is of social significance as a focus for the interconnection of the squatting runs and the important and influential extended families which developed them across the Western and Wimmera Districts and its further links with the metropolis of Melbourne.

It is of architectural significance for demonstrating a wide range of building methods and materials, some very rare, each reflecting the capacity and situation of the owner and occupant.

COMPARISON:

034 Wilderness, Wilderness Road, Gritjurk

050 Kongbool Homestead Complex, Coleraine-Balmoral Road, Balmoral

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322 Rosebank, Neate's Road, Victoria Valley
051 Englefield, Natimuk-Hamilton Rd, Balmoral

ASSESSED BY: tfh

ASSESSMENT DATE:

29-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
	Coleraine Albion	1887	30/7/1 887
	Spring Vale, File notes		var.
Alexander Sutherland, ed.	Victoria and its Metropolis, Vol 11	1888	66
Billis and Kenyon	Pastoral Pioneers of the Port Phillip	1974	41, 160, 201, 280, 293
Edmund Finn (Garryowen)	The Chronicles of Early Melbourne, Vol 1, 2, 3	1888	16, 26, 960 & 116
Jenny Fawcett	1912 Western District (Large) Land Owners Index	2003	
Joan Austin Palmer	William Moodie, A Western District Pioneer	1973	17, 35, 39-2, 43, 66, 79, 94
Macbeth Genealogical Services	Pioneer Index Victoria 1836 - 1888	1998	
Paul de Serville	Pounds and Pedigrees, the upper class in Victoria 1850-80	1991	280, 451-2
Robert P. Whitworth (compiled by)	Bailliere's Victorian Gazetteer and Road Guide, Containing the most recent and accurate information as to every place in the Colony	1865	349
Robin Wood, et al.	Fragments Together: the Botterills	1989	109, 201, 149