

HERITAGE PLACE

NAME OF PLACE: BRANXHOLME CEMETERY

ADDRESS/LOCATION OF PLACE: off Henty Highway BRANXHOLME

STUDY NUMBER: 372

HERITAGE OVERLAY NUMBER:

PRECINCT: outside

LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA: Southern Grampians Shire

ALLOTMENT: 7 **SECTION:** XXXIV

ACCESS DESCRIPTION:

CFA 473 A; VicRoads 72 E7; located on a gravel road on the west side of the Henty Highway about 5.5kms north-east of Branxholme and overlooking the Arrandoovong Creek

SIGNIFICANCE RATING: Local



McLachlan Tombstone, Branxholme Cemetery.

Image Date: 26/03/02

EXTENT OF LISTING:

To the extent of: 1. All the surviving graves, monuments, fences, etc., plantings and the whole of the cemetery reserve.

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PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:

The Branxholme Cemetery is located on a rise to the north of the Arrandoovong Creek, approximately six kilometres north east of the township of Branxholme, on the Glenelg Highway.

The graves are grouped in the conventional manner. According to denominations. There are no structures on the site. No formal plantings or landscape elements are visible, although there are many natives planted around the site.

The graves of many families who made important contributions to the development of the Byaduk community are located in the cemetery.

HISTORY:

The passing of the English Metropolitan Intermments Act granted the Board of Health in London to provide burial grounds. This seems to have influenced legislation in the Australian colonies. Cemeteries were usually developed in association with particular churches or as a result of public meetings of concerned citizens. "In 1854, an 'Act for the Establishment and Management of Cemeteries in the Colony of Victoria' was passed by the Victorian Government forming the basis of cemetery management as we know it today. The Government had the power to appoint and remove trustees and lend or pay money for the establishment of cemeteries. The trustees were charged with the responsibilities to construct structures and avenues; impose rules and regulations to manage and protect the cemeteries; allow ministers of religion free access and religious denominations to build mortuary chapels; have the right to veto and remove inappropriate vaults and monuments; and to keep accounts and statements." [Sagazio, 'Our Heritage', p. 13] The passing of the 'Municipal Institutions Establishment Act' in 1854 became the basis of Victoria's local government. Local councils were given control over amenities including roads, bridges, streets, sanitation and public health. The 'Public Health Act' was also passed in 1854 and it was envisaged that local councils would also have the responsibility for management of public cemeteries. "Under the provisions of the Public Health Act 1889 the Minister for Health and the Department of Public Health became responsible for the management of cemeteries and the responsibility has remained within the Health portfolio since that time." [Sagazio, 'Our Heritage', p. 15]

Most small suburban and country cemeteries were simple in layout with graves in straight lines in either a grid or a design of winding paths. The latter was an influence from English cemetery design, particularly from John Claudius Loudon, and to a lesser extent American cemetery design, from such landscape garden designers as Calvert and Vaux. Plantings were typically those with a funereal iconography such as *Cupressus funebris*, *C. sempervirens*, various *Pinus* species, Laurels, Yews and Junipers. Their common quality was their evergreen and sombre foliage. In special cases trees, shrubs or minor plants were planted with specific association for the deceased. Cemeteries were subdivided into sections according to the major Christian denominations. In rare cases there were also sections for non-Christians, such as the Jews.

Narrawang run. The land was subdivided several times for closer settlement in the mid nineteenth century, until allotment 7 of Section XXXVI was taken up Branxholme Publican, William Gough in July 1874.

William and Agnes Gough were licencees for the first hotel in Branxholme, the Travellers Rest between 1853 and 1856, later purchasing the Branxholme Hotel in 1861, where they remained until 1881. It is likely, although not proven, that William Gough donated part of the allotment as a cemetery after he purchased it. However, since the earliest gravestones in the cemetery date from the 1850s, it is likely that the site had long been used for burials, and may have already been gazetted and subdivided when he purchased the land in 1874. The graves of several important local people survive in the cemetery, such as the families of Begg, Best, Black, Cameron, Devereux, Fraser, Gough, Philip, MacLean, McNicol and Tully.

THEMATIC CONTEXT:

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Theme 9: Marking the phases of life

9.7 Dying

9.7.1 Dealing with human remains

9.7.3 Remembering the dead

CONDITION:

Good

INTEGRITY:

High degree of integrity

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE:

What is significant?

The Branxholme Cemetery, located some six kilometers north east of the township of Branxholme, to the north of the Glenelg Highway, is a large reserve on an elevated site. It is the only cemetery associated with Branxholme, and its earliest burials date from the mid 1850s. There are several important memorials within the cemetery, particularly to those from early Pastoral Runs surrounding the township. The graves are grouped in the conventional manner, according to denominations. There are no significant plantings. The cemetery is in very good condition, and retains a very high degree of integrity.

How is it significant?

The Branxholme Cemetery is of historical, social and architectural significance to the district of Branxholme and the Southern Grampians Shire.

What is significant?

The Branxholme Cemetery is of historical significance as an enduring record of those who have lived and died in the community, as a reflection of passing phases, ways of life and death, particular events, and as documentary evidence.

The Cemetery is of social significance for reflecting the customs and tastes of the community, for reflecting different religious values, and for reflecting different economic and social status. It is also important as a place of passive recreation.

The Cemetery is of architectural significance for its range of tombstones, memorials and iconography reflecting the aesthetics of different periods and groups within the community. It is also of interest for its overall design and position within the broader landscape.

COMPARISON:

- 145 Coleraine Cemetery, Lower Hilgay Road, Coleraine
- 074 Tarrayoukyan Cemetery, Tarrayoukyan Rd, Tarrayoukyan
- 309 Glenthompson Cemetery, Scott Street, Glenthompson
- 233 Old Cemetery, Scott Street (extension), Cavendish,
- 178 Balmoral Cemetery, Cemetery Road, Balmoral

ASSESSED BY: AEN

ASSESSMENT DATE:

14-Jan-04

EXISTING LISTINGS:

HERITAGE STUDY RECOMMENDATIONS:

Include in VHR Include in RNE Include in Local Planning Scheme

No Recommendations for Inclusions

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