

DEANS CREEK PRECINCT STRUCTURE PLAN

HERITAGE ASSESSMENTS

FINAL

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1. INTRODUCTION

This report was commissioned by Colac Otway Shire through Erin Sonogo Senior Strategic Planner

The commission sought a review of an area of land to the west of the town of Colac which was subject to the preparation of a Precinct Structure Plan (see plan at Illustration 1 below). The brief sought a broad review of potential heritage sites within the designated area and documentation of the history and significance of those sites to a level that would enable them to be covered by a heritage overlay in the Colac Otway Planning Scheme.

2. METHODOLOGY

The methodology underpinning this report addressed two main questions:

1. What is the history of this part of Colac and how does it sit within the broader historical context of the Shire?
2. What sites are of sufficient significance to represent this history and warrant protection within the planning scheme?
3. Do these places meet the thresholds for the imposition of a Heritage Overlay in the Colac Otway Planning Scheme?

This exercise involved:

- site inspections to assist in the preparation of descriptions of the places.
- research into the history of each identified place.
- a review of the relationship of the properties to the history of the area;
- assessment of each place against the heritage criteria to ascertain significance to the Colac Otway Shire.
- preparation of citations (including Statements of Significance) for the places.
- preparation of a table for incorporation into the Schedule to Clause 43.01 of the Colac Otway Planning Scheme
- preparation of recommendations for the development and future management of identified places.

The study included detailed research and preparation of a history of the area along with detailed histories of identified sites. This history (Mills, 2022) is included in its entirety at Appendix A. The contextual and place histories included in the body of the report are largely summarised from that detailed history. The references from Mills are not included in the body of the report and reference should be made to the Mills report to obtain those detailed references.

Only two places were considered of sufficient significance to warrant the application of a Heritage Overlay. They were the Rifle Range and associated infrastructure and the property at 250 Irrewilpe Road. Assessments were completed for the properties at 315 Princes Highway and 510 Murray Street, but neither were considered of any special importance.

3. DESCRIPTION OF STUDY AREA

The Deans Creek (Colac) Precinct Structure Plan (PSP) area is located at the western interface of the town of Colac and is characterised by extensive areas of inundation. The precinct has a high level of Indigenous cultural heritage significance in part due to the presence of Deans Creek and proximity to Lake Colac. The project area is largely comprised of rural and low density residential development.

The brief for this piece of work delineated the area with the following plan.

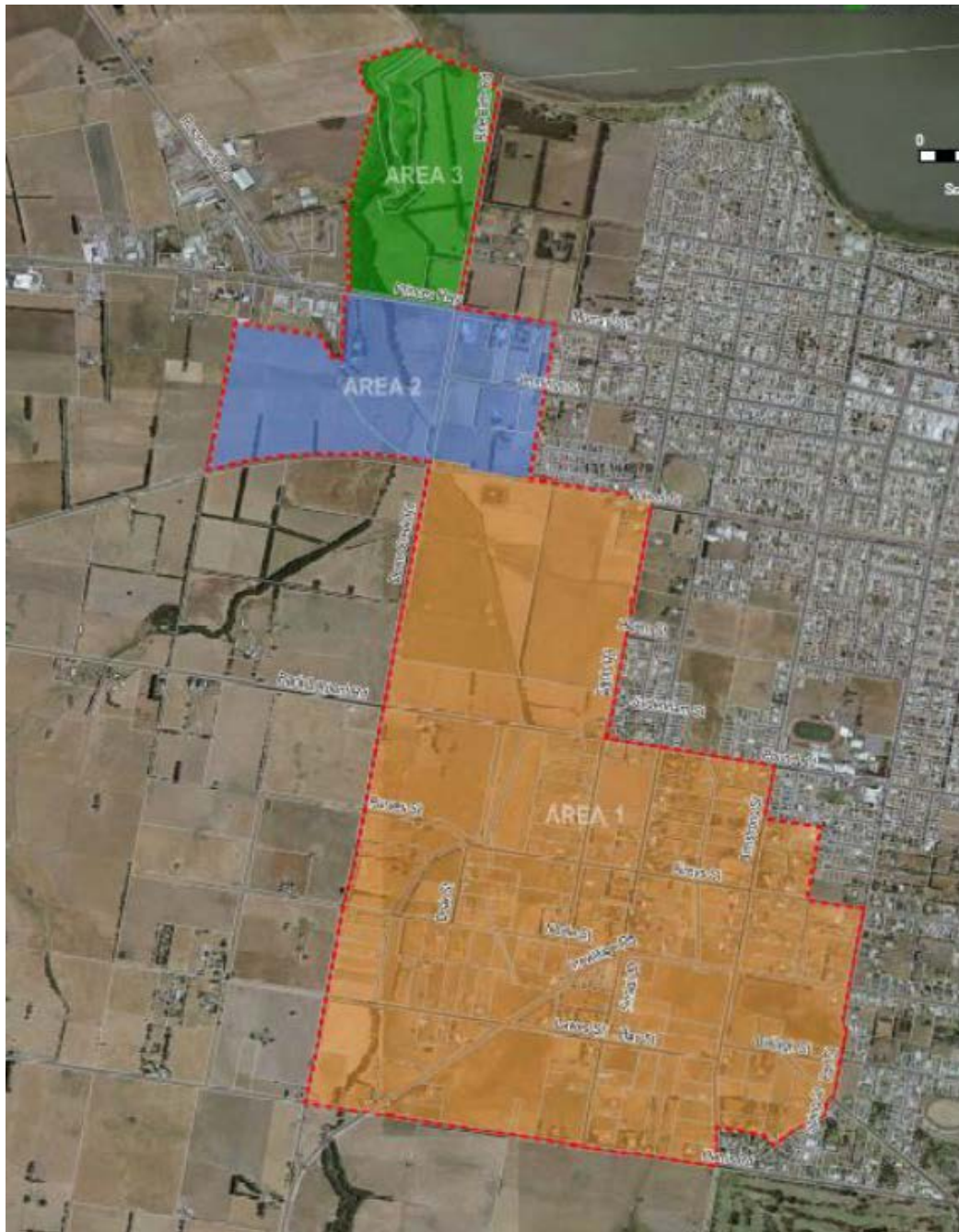


ILLUSTRATION 1: AERIAL PLAN OF STUDY AREA (From Project brief)

For the purposes of researching the history Dr Peter Mills utilised the following plan. His detailed history (included at Appendix A) refers to this plan. It includes an area of land numbered 1 which was not covered by the description in the brief. Otherwise the two plans are identical. The Project brief plan is included for completeness.

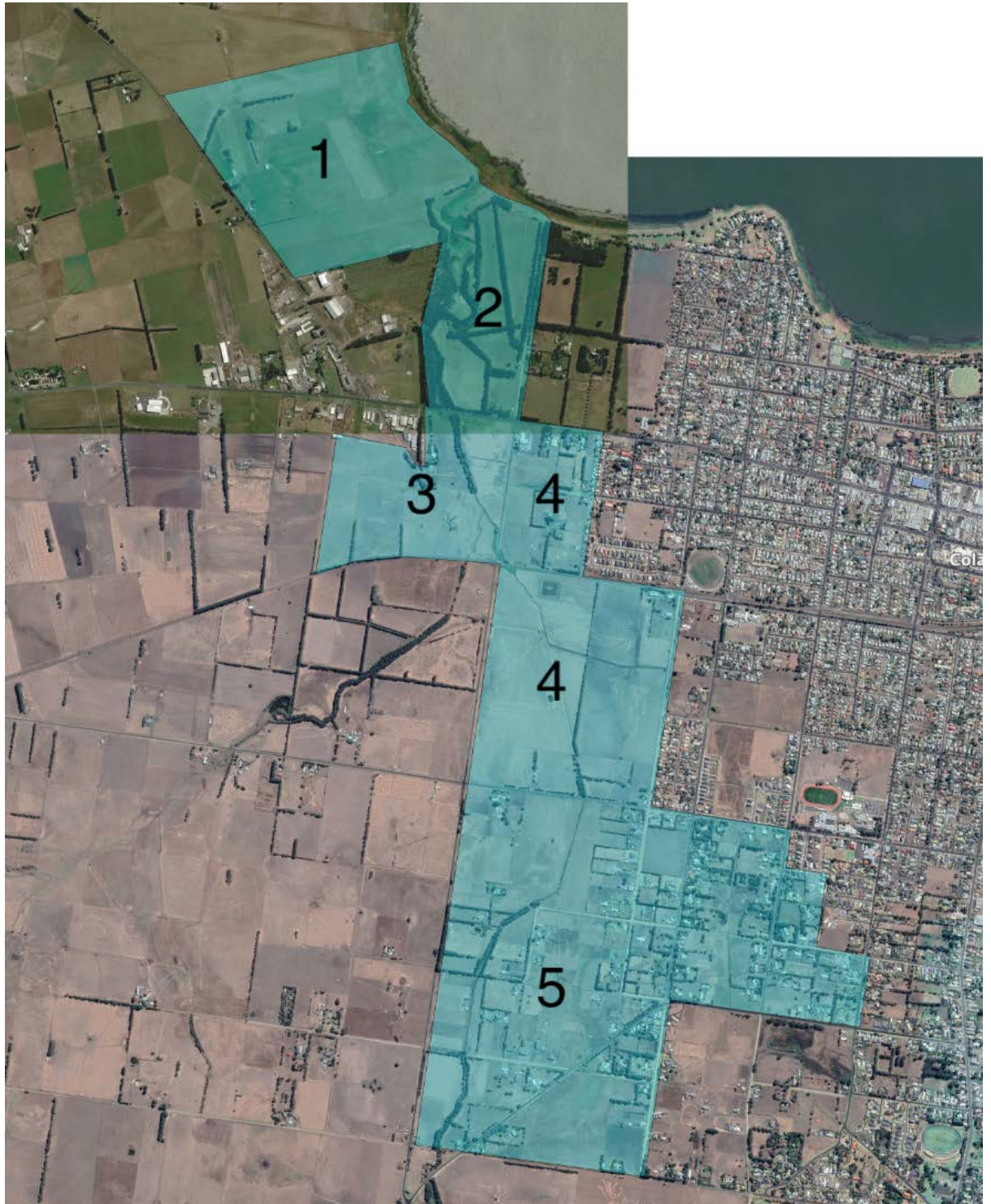


ILLUSTRATION 2: DEANS CREEK GROWTH AREA SHADED IN LIGHT BLUE OVER GOOGLE EARTH SATELLITE VIEW. NUMBERS INDICATE THE FIVE O AREAS COVERED IN SEPARATE SECTIONS IN THE HISTORY.

4. HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Reverend John Dunmore Lang, Sydney's first Presbyterian minister, left his account of the impact of European settlement on the clans of the Lake Colac area:

Before arrival of the white man the Aborigines of the Coladjin tribe inhabited an extensive tract of country having the beautiful Lake Colac as its centre, and of that country each family had not only its own portion, but also its own separate and well-defined frontage on the lake. But within a short space of ten years (from 1836 to 1846) this rude framework of society had been entirely broken up; their pleasant land has been seized by strangers, and they are now a band of outcasts among their fathers' graves; the warriors of their tribe have fallen successively in unequal strife, and the goodliest of their youth have pined and died away under unknown and horrible diseases, the wretched fruits of their intercourse with the European ... (Sheehan, .)

The first squatters to claim land in the Lake Colac region were young men in their early twenties, with little capital. Women and children accompanied only a few. Hugh Murray was one of the first. He took 100 sheep to Lake Colac in 1837 and settled on the land now occupied by Colac. He named his run Barongarook. It was a lonely life at first. Murray wrote: We were the only occupants of the country for about six months, our nearest neighbours being Thomas Ricketts who occupied a station on the Barwon River about ten miles from Colac (Sheehan, 2003)

Following is a summary of the area's history taken from Mills, 2022.

The Crown land sales of 1842 resulted in squatters J. & W. (William senior) Robertson purchasing Portion 1 of Section 16 Parish of Nalangil and W. Murray purchasing Portions 2, 3 and 4.

William Robertson senior accumulated an estate of 32,000 acres at its height. It is not known exactly when he purchased Murray's land, but probably by 1845 and certainly by 1848.

The four lots combined became known as "Robertson's racecourse paddock (area 1 in Illustration 2). This racecourse continued to be used up to the date of the gazetting of the racecourse reserve south of the Town Common in 1863.

The Colac Rifle Association set up a rifle range in the racecourse paddock in 1884. It was "marked off from the rise near the Camperdown Road, adjacent to the entrance gate, and the butts and targets are erected close to the mouth of Deans Creek". William Robertson was the president of the Colac Rifle Association

Area 2 Portions 1 and 2 Section 9 Parish of Elliminyt, comprising 75 acres, were sold to squatter William Robertson at a Crown land sale in 1847. These portions were bounded by Dean's Creek (also known as Boork Creek) on the west, Lake Colac on the north, a road reserve on the east and the highway to Camperdown on the south.

This is the area that contains the current Colac Rifle Range (area 2 in Illustration 2), the detailed history for which is included in Mills (Appendix A)

This area supported at least two of the succession of rifle ranges in Colac with the Rifle Club setting up a range on what is now Rifle Butts Road in 1904. This followed the Commonwealth Defence Department taking control of rifle clubs, so that they effectively became the military reserve force of the Commonwealth. One of their first actions in Colac was to condemn the earlier range at Barongarook Creek. The club was concerned that the new range on the current site would be dominated by the military and sought Council approval to set up the range on the disused road. The new range was established by 19134 and was managed by the Commonwealth up until the 1990s.

Within area 3 of Illustration 2 is located Section 9 in the Parish of Elliminyt. This was included in the earliest Crown land sales in the district, in 1841 and Portion 22 was bought by squatter William Murray and Portions 19, 20 and 21 were bought by H. McKinnon.

The railway from Colac to Camperdown opened in 1883. This created a north-south division of the western part of Section 9 which appears to coincide with the establishment of a separate property to the north of the railway reserve out of a number of existing holdings. These were put together by the owner John James.

The next owner of the 133 acres of land was John Shaw, who acquired it in late 1886. In the local newspaper report it was understood that Mr Shaw intended to build on his new land. In May 1887 Shaw offered his "agricultural farm" for lease. Mr F. Spriggs of Geelong took the lease for a term of five years. Shaw invited tenders to build a four-roomed house, dairy and stable, all weatherboard buildings, to be erected on the property as part of the lease package. This would appear to be the core of the property described below and located at 315 Prince's Highway.

In area 4 Allotments 7 to 14 Section 9 Parish of Elliminyt were purchased at Crown land sales in the early 1840s.

By 1885 Alfred Guinn is known to have owned 122 acres land without a dwelling.

Thomas Bent, parliamentarian and notorious boom-period land investor, purchased the land from Guinn in 1888. He offered the property known as 'Lakeside' for sale between April and May 1889, divided into lots of from one to ten acres. This sale was unsuccessful and the land "known as Guinn's" was offered for lease as grazing land for six months. Again, in November 1889 the land was offered for lease, but this time a four-roomed cottage had been added. It is possible that this cottage formed the basis of the residence at what is now 510 Murray Street.

By July 1893 the subdivision of 'Lakeside Estate' was offered at public auction. The eventual subdivision when sales started was of over 70 lots of various sizes. These sold between 1894 and 1898 in groups of lots making up around 14 parcels.

The 1916 topographic map shows four residences within the Growth Area part 4. The only residence of interest is 510 Murray Street which appears to have been constructed in the Victorian and Edwardian periods. The residence at the northwest corner of Pound and Cants roads which shows on the 1916 topographic map may be extant. Its form is consistent with early twentieth century construction but most of the detail such as windows and verandah have been modified. The other two houses on the 1916 map are not extant.

Much of Area 5 is occupied the Colac Town Common, which was gazetted in 1862. The common operated as commons normally did, as pasturage for the townsfolk, with annual fees for depasturing, appointments of herdsman and managers, and quarterly musters up until 1871.

From the early 1870s a peculiar form of selection began on the Colac Town Common, which would eventually see it divided into over 500 three-acre freehold lots. The particular form of land use began under the Land Act 1862, where Section 50 licenses had allowed occupation of Crown land for a range of rural activities other than pastoral or agricultural. One instance was the Rural Store License, which enabled three acres to be taken up for the purposes of erecting a store. By the late 1860s many of these licenses were being taken out around Victoria, most by licensees with no intention of conducting a store.

A survey of the Colac Town Common area published in December 1872 showed 48 Rural Store License blocks of three acres taken up, with a further 68 three-acre blocks laid out. Totalling 336 acres, these were concentrated in the central and northeast parts of the common. None of the land had been alienated at this point

Only 500 acres of the Common remained by September, 1878, but licenses continued to be issued and compliance with the occupancy requirements was a problem. In the end the Common was abolished on 23 December 1884.

The only residence observed within the PSP area retaining a clear relationship to the Rural Store License era of the Colac Town Common was the cottage at 250 Irrewillipe Road. Another intact cottage from that period was observed outside the PSP area to the west, on Allotment 33 Section L Parish of Elliminyt, part of 260 Deans Creek Road.

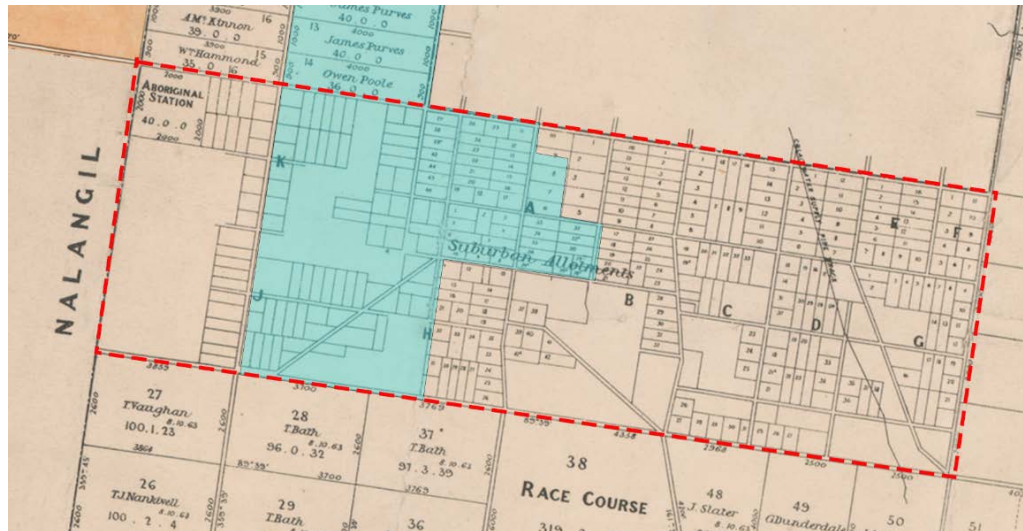


ILLUSTRATION 3: PSP AREA SHADED IN LIGHT BLUE OVER ENLARGEMENT OF 1880 ELLIMINYT PARISH PLAN, WITH BOUNDARY OF COLAC TOWN COMMON IN RED. NOTE PARTIAL DEVELOPMENT OF WESTERN END OF THE COMMON (DEPARTMENT OF LANDS AND SURVEY MELBOURNE, 1880).

CITATIONS

The following citations are prepared following a review of the existing documentation, further research and site visits.

These citations provide current and historic information about each of the properties and, importantly include an updated Statement of Significance.

COLAC RIFLE RANGE

CONTEXTUAL HISTORY

The Colac Rifle Association was formed in early 1884. With nearly fifty members at the start, the association included prominent townsmen such as the Shire President. The Association aimed not only to encourage the members to shoot, “but also to undergo voluntarily a certain amount of discipline and drill, and practice many of the details of a military character whenever practicable.

The original range was part of Robertson’s property ‘The Hill’ in an area known as the ‘Robertson’s racecourse paddock’, named after its use for that purpose in the early years of the town. It was “marked off from the rise near the Camperdown Road, adjacent to the entrance gate, and the butts and targets were erected close to the mouth of Deans Creek.

The threat of war between Russia and England in the mid-1880s, acted as inspiration for rifle clubs and it was proposed that they should be affiliated to the militia.

By 20 June 1885 the Colac Rifle Association was being wound up, and the assets including targets and markers’ butt handed over to a new Rifle Cub.

The club was flagging again by March 1896, when it was reported that it had “not been a very live institution”. When Colonel Price, the officer in command of the Victoria Rifles visited that month, only six riflemen attended. Price’s visit prompted a revival, with new members, a proposal for a new range and arrangements for matches with Warrnambool and Port Fairy.

With the outbreak of the Boer War the Colac Rifle Club took the wave of patriotism as another opportunity for revival. The distance of the Colac butts from the town was considered a disincentive, and it was proposed to find a new site at Barongarook. In 1901 permission was gained to use part of the Barongarook Estate and the new range on 10 acres was formally opened in October 1901.

Following Federation, the Commonwealth Defence Act 1903 tied the colonial defence forces into one and gave the Commonwealth Defence Department control of rifle clubs, which effectively became the military reserve force of the Commonwealth. Having taken control of rifle clubs and their ranges, in 1904 the Defence Department condemned the Colac range at Barongarook Creek for the liability of bullets to fly over adjacent private property. The Rifle Club and the Colac Detachment of the Australian Light Horse sent a deputation to the Colac Shire Council asking for permission to occupy a section of unused road on the west side of Colac as a rifle range. The deputation noted that only a handful of clubs in Victoria owned their ranges. The proposed site was described as “on the road between Messrs Balls and J.G. Johnstone’s paddocks and leading to the lake” (now Rifle Butts Road). The Council was supportive.

By the beginning of September 1904, the club had removed its infrastructure from the range on Barongarook Creek and re-erected it on the road reserve near the lake (Rifle Butts Road). The lake at the rear of the mantel provided a clear expanse of 2000 yards for stray bullets

PLACE HISTORY

As the prospect of war became more urgent, the Commonwealth moved to have its own range at Colac. In the 1912 Defence budget £1,150 was allocated for land and construction at Colac.

By 1913 the Defence Department had acquired 19 acres of land immediately to the west of the existing range. The Colac Rifle Club wanted to retain its existing range in the road reserve, as there was apprehension that the military range next door would be monopolised for defence purposes. The club range continued to be used beside the military range, with musketry courses conducted on both.

By August 1914, twenty-eight members of the Colac Rifle Club were to be drafted into the 71st Infantry Regiment Ballarat East Battalion.

An aerial photograph taken in 1946 indicates that the rifle range in the road reserve was still in place, with the road made along the southern third of the reserve as far as the entrance to the range. Four buildings are visible in the 1946 photograph, two at the southeast corner of the Commonwealth land, and two smaller buildings a little to the north. It is not clear that these were the buildings that we see on the site today but there is every chance that they, in part are.

It is not known when the use of the range in the road reserve stopped. After World War II the Commonwealth gradually disengaged from rifle club activity and the clubs once again became purely sporting organisations. The Commonwealth disposed of the rifle range land in the 1990s.

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

The place is essentially a large open area of land (Parcels 1 & 2 of TP834612) with the butts and mantel sitting immediately to the south of Lake Colac. Immediately behind the mantel are target lifting gear which appear to have been adapted over time with the introduction of additional metal components.

The butts appear as a major geographical feature rising above the flat landscape in front of the lake.

At the southern end of the range is located several buildings; a small weatherboard clad clubroom with a metal clad annexe and a longer metal clad structure running east west which appears to be a small bore indoor range.



ILLUSTRATION 4: CLUBROOMS



ILLUSTRATION 5: CLUBROOMS WITH METAL CLAD ANNEXE AND SMALL BORE RANGE IN BACKGROUND.



ILLUSTRATION 6: RIFLE BUTTS IN DISTANCE



ILLUSTRATION 7: TARGET LIFTING GEAR



ILLUSTRATION 8: PLAN SHOWING EXTENT OF RIFLE RANGE LAND
(Parcels 1 & 2 of TP834612)



ILLUSTRATION 9: AERIAL INDICATING LOCATION OF FEATURES (GOOGLE MAPS, 2022)

ASSESSMENT AGAINST HERITAGE CRITERIA

Criterion A: Importance to the course or pattern of Colac's cultural history.

It is obvious that the existence of Rifle Clubs and their associated ranges were an important feature of town and district life from the 1880s and were initially established as sporting clubs. Colac had shooting ranges in at least 3 locations until the Commonwealth Defence Department established the current site in 1912/13. From that time, it became an important feature of the town's contribution to the WW1 effort. This military association continued through WW2 with the Commonwealth subsequently disengaging from the site and it becoming a local sporting club.

Criterion B: Possession of uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of Colac's cultural history.

This is the only surviving rifle range in Colac and is the successor of a number of ranges used by the local sport shooting fraternity. The other gun club in Colac (adjacent to the racecourse) is quite different to a rifle range such as this. In Australian usage from the late nineteenth century a rifle club was a club that used rifles to shoot at fixed targets on a rifle range. A gun club (sometimes 'shotgun club') used shotguns to shoot at live pigeons and later clay targets. The infrastructure requirements were quite different to that of a rifle range.

As a result, it is the only instance where the form and features of a Rifle Club with the historic associations with the Commonwealth Defence Department can be found in Colac

Criterion C: Potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of Colac's cultural history.

Not applicable

Criterion D: Importance in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of cultural places/objects.

This would appear to be the sole surviving rifle range in the town, being the successor of a number of ranges used by the local sport shooting fraternity. As a result it is the only instance where the form and features of such an establishment can be found in Colac.

Criterion E: Importance in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics.

Not applicable

Criterion F: Importance in demonstrating a high degree of creative or technical achievement at a particular period.

It is assumed that the target lifting gear is not unique or a particularly creative response to the need and therefore this criterion is not applicable.

Criterion G: Strong or special association with a particular present-day community or cultural group for social, cultural or spiritual reasons.

It would appear that the various Rifle Clubs have not been particularly significant community organisations. However, whilst the involvement of the Commonwealth Defence Department was clearly an important part of community life in the past this does not continue. It continues to be an important site for the Colac sport shooting community.

Criterion H: Special association with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in Colac's history.

This place has a special association with the recruitment of men to serve in both world wars. However, the community would not see it as a memorial to that group.

STATEMENT OF CULTURAL HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

What is Significant?

The land (including the open space between the clubrooms and butts), clubrooms, small bore range (the metal clad building) mantel and butts (the large mound behind the targets constructed to absorb bullets) as delineated in Illustrations 8 & 9 above. Tree plantings on the site appear to have been made in the 1990s and are not of significance. Rifle Butts Road despite its earlier use as a range is not significant.

How is it Significant?

The place is of historical and social significance to the Shire of Colac Otway

Why is it Significant?

The place is historically important as the sole remaining rifle range in Colac. Rifle clubs and their associated ranges were an important feature of town and district life from the 1880s. Initially established as sporting clubs in Colac they used shooting ranges in at least 3 locations until the Commonwealth Defence Department established the current site in 1912/13. From that time it became an important feature of the town's contribution to the WW1 effort. This military association continued through WW2 with the Commonwealth subsequently disengaging from the site and it becoming a local sporting club (Criterion A)

The place is important for its rarity being the sole surviving rifle range (as opposed to a gun club) in the town and being the successor of a number of ranges used by the local sport shooting fraternity. This range was also the one associated with the Commonwealth Defence Department for approximately 80 years. As a result, it is the only instance where the form and features of such an establishment can be found in Colac (Criterion B)

The involvement of the Commonwealth Defence Department was clearly an important part of community life in Colac and district, particularly in the recruitment and training of soldiers during the two world wars. The place continues to be an important site for the Colac sport shooting community. (Criterion G)

PROPOSED HERITAGE OVERLAY SCHEDULE

The recommended Section 43.01 Schedule to the HO should be:

PS ma p ref	Heritag e place	Extern al paint control s apply?	Internal alteratio n controls apply?	Tree control s apply?	Solar energy system control s apply?	Outbuilding s or fences not exempt under Clause 43.01-4	Include d on the Victoria n Heritag e Registe r under the Heritag e Act 2017?	Prohibite d uses permitted ?	Aborigin al heritage place?
	Colac Rifle Range, Rifle Butts Road	No	No	No	No		No	Yes	No

DEVELOPMENT AND MANAGEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

The Rifle Range consists of a large area of open space. The buildings at the southern end of the range are relatively small and at the far northern end are the mantel and target elevators with the butts behind. The key objective of a heritage overlay should be to retain all of these elements. To that end the following specific recommendations are made:

- Retain the existing buildings and repair and develop in such a manner that its relationship with the rest of the range is maintained.
- Retain the open space that constitutes the greater part of the range as open space. A proposed use as a stormwater treatment basin would be appropriate.
- Ensure that any new buildings are sited to the edge of the open space (preferably along the western boundary)
- Retain and maintain the existing target mantel, ensuring that it is a stable structure.
- Retain the existing target elevators and repair as necessary without damaging their fundamental structural integrity. An engineering assessment of the condition, safety and operability of these items of equipment is desirable.
- Retain and maintain the target service building adjacent to the mantel.
- Retain and maintain the butts ensuring that they remain structurally stable and not subject to erosion.
- Provide interpretive signage at the southern end of the site which explains the history, elements, form and operation of the range.

250 IRREWILPE ROAD

CONTEXTUAL HISTORY

This property is located on what was known as the Colac Town Common.

From the early 1870s a peculiar form of selection began on the Colac Town Common, which would eventually see it divided into over 500 three-acre freehold lots. This began under the Land Act 1862, where Section 50 licenses had allowed occupation of Crown land for a range of rural activities other than pastoral or agricultural. One instance was the Rural Store License, which enabled three acres to be taken up for the purposes of erecting a store. By the late 1860s many of these licenses were being taken out around Victoria, most by licensees with no intention of conducting a store. In 1872 the Board of Land and Works determined that no rural store license sites occupied since 1870 would be offered for sale unless the improvements included a dwelling occupied by the licensee. Clearly this had become a mechanism to gain ownership of large sections of land and as we will see from the Place History below families took out multiple licenses so that they could gain ownership of many contiguous lots.

A survey of the Colac Town Common area published in December 1872 showed 48 Rural Store License blocks of three acres taken up, with a further 68 three-acre blocks laid out. Totalling 336 acres, these were concentrated in the central and northeast parts of the common. None of the land had been alienated at this point.

PLACE HISTORY

The only residence observed within the study area retaining a clear relationship to the Rural Store License era of the Colac Town Common was the cottage at 250 Irrewillipe Road on Allotment 34 Section J Parish of Elliminyt. It should be noted that another intact cottage from that period was observed outside the study area to the west, on Allotment 33 Section L Parish of Elliminyt, part of 260 Deans Creek Road.

The first to select this lot was the Prigg family. J. Prigg and C. Prigg obtained grants for Lots 34 and 35 in 1881, indicating they had obtained Rural Store Licenses in ca1878. James Prigg (or successor) sold Lot 34 to Louis Brooks in 1885.

George Nicholas, labourer, purchased Lot 34 from Louis Brooks in 1887. The 1888 Shire of Colac list of valuations of properties had George Nicholas on 3 acres of pasture and a dwelling at Elliminyt, probably Lot 34. In the same valuation James Nicholas owned 9 acres pasture and a dwelling at Elliminyt, probably Lots 27, 32 and 33. John Nicholas was listed as owning 3 acres pasture at Elliminyt, probably Lot 23

It appears that James Nicholas began to accumulate various family lots in Section J under his own name in the 1890s, and that these lots were transferred to John Nicholas in the early twentieth century. James Nicholas, then farming of Warrion, took over ownership of Lot 34 in 1899. John Nicholas, labourer of Colac, took over in 1903. Similarly, Martha Nicholas's freehold of Lot 24 Section J was transferred to James Nicholas in 1890 and to John Nicholas in 1903. James was a farmer at Yeo, a few miles to the east of Colac, when he died in 1923.

John Nicholas's farm may have been named 'Brookvale'. His eldest daughter Grace Nicholas was living at 'Brookvale' Elliminyt when she married in 1911. William Nicholas, second son of William and Martha, died at Elliminyt in 1913 aged 64. The funeral procession departed from John Nicholas's residence at Elliminyt. John Nicholas's wife Annie also died at Elliminyt in 1913. When brother James died in 1923, probate of his estate went to John Nicholas, retired farmer of 'Brookvale' Elliminyt. This was probably the period when the extant dairy building on Lot 34 was constructed.

On John Nicholas' land when he died was an "old" weatherboard house of six rooms. Presumably this was the extant cottage at 250 Irrewillipe Road. This house appears to be an assembly of three two-roomed cottages put together in an L shape with skillions added, and it is possible the component parts were moved on to this lot once the various holdings became a single farm. At John Nicholas's death the property was valued at £803. Lot 34, and presumably the rest of John Nicholas's surrounding lots, passed out of the ownership of the Nicholas family after his death in 1927.



ILLUSTRATION 10: JOHN NICHOLAS'S HOLDINGS AT HIS DEATH IN 1927 SHADED IN GREEN. THE CURRENT CADASTRAL BOUNDARY OF THE PROPERTY 250 IRREWILLIPE ROAD IS OUTLINED IN BLUE (DS&E, 2002, ELLIMINYT -2 PARISH PLAN).

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION



ILLUSTRATION 11: SOUTH ELEVATION



ILLUSTRATION 12: NORTH WEST VIEW

DEANS CREEK PSP HERITAGE ASSESMENTS



ILLUSTRATION 13: NORTH EAST EXTENSION



ILLUSTRATION 14: WINDOW DETAIL



ILLUSTRATION 15: DAIRY



ILLUSTRATION 16: OAK TREE

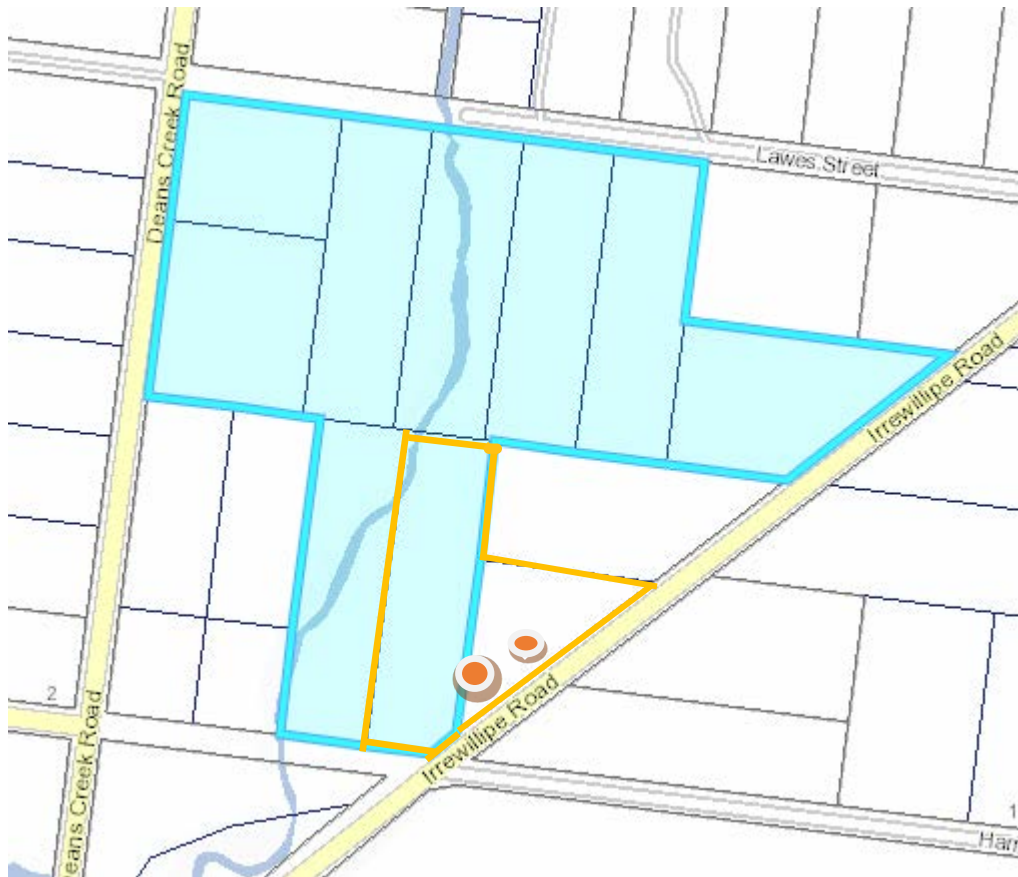


ILLUSTRATION 17: CURRENT PLAN OF 250 IRREWILLIPE ROAD MARKED IN BLUE AND PROPOSED HERITAGE OVERLAY OUTLINED IN YELLOW (Lots 33 & 34) WITH TREES MARKED IN orange. .

ASSESSMENT AGAINST HERITAGE CRITERIA

Criterion A: Importance to the course or pattern of Colac's cultural history

The history of the Colac Town Common is an important aspect of the history of Colac. Along with the alienation of the land through the issuing of Rural Store Licences this is an important story and physical remnants of this story are significant in telling it. The cottage, dairy and large oak trees are the remains of the acquisitions of first, the Prigg family and then later the Nicholas family and are demonstrative of the process that allowed individuals to acquire large tracts of land through the Rural Store License scheme.

Criterion B: Possession of uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of Colac's cultural history

This cottage and its surrounds are a rare example of the development that was possible under the Rural Store License scheme. The cottage as seen today is an amalgam of 3 buildings either added incrementally through construction or moving to the site. The existence of the timber shingle roof on the first gable roofed section would be rare in the Colac district. The large oak trees on the street frontage are rare survivors and are of significance in their own right

Criterion C: Potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of Colac's cultural history.

Not applicable

Criterion D: Importance in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of cultural places/objects.

Not applicable

Criterion E: Importance in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics.

The cottage as seen today exhibits evidence of early forms of design and construction in the Colac area.

Criterion F: Importance in demonstrating a high degree of creative or technical achievement at a particular period.

Not applicable

Criterion G: Strong or special association with a particular present-day community or cultural group for social, cultural or spiritual reasons.

Not applicable

Criterion H: Special association with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in Colac's history.

Not applicable

STATEMENT OF CULTURAL HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

What is Significant?

The land at 250 Irrewillipe Road, Elliminyt as outlined in Illustration 17 above being Lots 33 & 34 Section J Parish of Elliminyt, along with the cottage, dairy building and 2 oak trees.

How is it Significant?

The place is of historical and aesthetic significance to the Shire of Colac Otway

Why is it Significant?

The place is historically important in demonstrating the role of the Colac Town Common and the alienation of the common land through the issuing of Rural Store Licences. This physical remnant of this process is significant in telling that story. The cottage, dairy and 2 large oak trees are the remains of the acquisitions of first, the Prigg family and then later the Nicholas family and are demonstrative of the process that allowed individuals to acquire large tracts of land through the Rural Store License scheme. (Criterion A)

This cottage and its surrounds are a rare example of the development that was possible under the Rural Store License scheme. The cottage as seen today is an amalgam of 3 buildings either added incrementally through construction or moving to the site. The existence of the timber shingle roof on the first gable roofed section would be rare in the Colac district. The large oak trees on the street frontage are rare survivors and are of significance in their own right. (Criterion B)

The cottage is aesthetically important as it exhibits evidence of early forms of design and construction in the Colac area. (Criterion F)

PROPOSED HERITAGE OVERLAY SCHEDULE

The recommended Section 43.01 Schedule to the HO should be:

PS ma p ref	Heritage place	Extern al paint control s apply?	Internal alteratio n controls apply?	Tree control s apply?	Solar energy system control s apply?	Outbuildin gs or fences not exempt under Clause 43.01-4	Include d on the Victoria n Heritag e Registe r under the Heritag e Act 2017?	Prohibite d uses permitted ?	Aborigin al heritage place?
	250 Irrewilpe Road, ELLIMINY T	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No

DEVELOPMENT AND MANAGEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

This place embraces two allotments. One that supports the house and former dairy and the other that supports the two large oak trees. The key objective of an HO should be to ensure that the elements (house, former dairy and trees) retain their relationship to each other. The following specific recommendations are made:

- Retain the house and restore to its early form. Ultimately a Conservation Management Plan would be useful in coming to a more detailed understanding of the sequence of development of the building and guiding further works to the place.
- Retain the former milking shed (dairy) and ensure that the open space relationship between it and the house is retained.
- Ensure the longer-term conservation of the two oak trees. This would be assisted by completing an arboricultural report on their condition and seeking recommendations for their practical management.

- Retain the visual relationship between the house and the trees.

315 PRINCE'S HIGHWAY

CONTEXTUAL HISTORY

Section 9 in the Parish of Elliminyt was included in the earliest Crown land sales in the Colac district, in 1841. Portion 22 Section 9 was bought by squatter William Murray and Portions 19, 20 and 21 were bought by H. McKinnon.

The railway from Colac to Camperdown opened in 1883. The routing of the railway created a north-south division of the western part of Section 9 Parish of Elliminyt which appears to coincide with the establishment of a separate property to the north of the railway reserve out of a number of existing holdings. These were put together by the owner John James.

The next owner of the 133 acres of land was John Shaw, who acquired it for £21 10s per acre in late 1886. In the local newspaper report it was understood that Mr Shaw intended to build on his new land. In May 1887 Shaw offered his "agricultural farm" for lease. Mr F. Spriggs of Geelong took the lease for a term of five years. Shaw invited tenders to build a four-roomed house, dairy and stable, all weatherboard buildings, to be erected on the property as part of the lease package.

PLACE HISTORY

In 1889 Shaw offered 130 acres for sale but by April 1893 the property was being offered for sale by the Land Mortgage Bank of Victoria (presumably Shaw's mortgagor) Improvements included a six-roomed cottage, detached kitchen, stable and outhouses, two wells of good water and a garden,. It is likely that these improvements form the core of the existing dwelling.

In September 1893 Shaw's farm was offered to let for one year. The improvements on the farm, then in the occupation of Mr McCaffrey and as reported in the Colac Herald, included "a good cottage, garden, outhouse and two wells of beautiful water. The property continued to be leased until 1899 when the Land Mortgage Bank again offered it for sale. On this occasion the sale was successful with Edward Garner acquiring it.

Garner died in 1905 at the age of 82. Title to his 126 acres at Deans Creek transferred after his death to his son-in-law James Henry Chapman and local solicitor William Guy Sewell. James Chapman had been residing at Deanes Creek before his father-in-law's death and was still there in 1907.

The 126 acres was purchased in 1913 by Timothy McGrath, the owner of 'Holm[e] Park' Colac West. He subdivided the property as the "Dean's Creek Estate". The northeast part, lots 1, 2 and 3, totalling 31 acres and including the existing residence, went to dairyman Charles MacTaggart in 1917.

A house is shown in the current position on the 1916 topographic map. A survey for the Colac to Alvie railway line, which was constructed in 1922 shows a house in the current position.

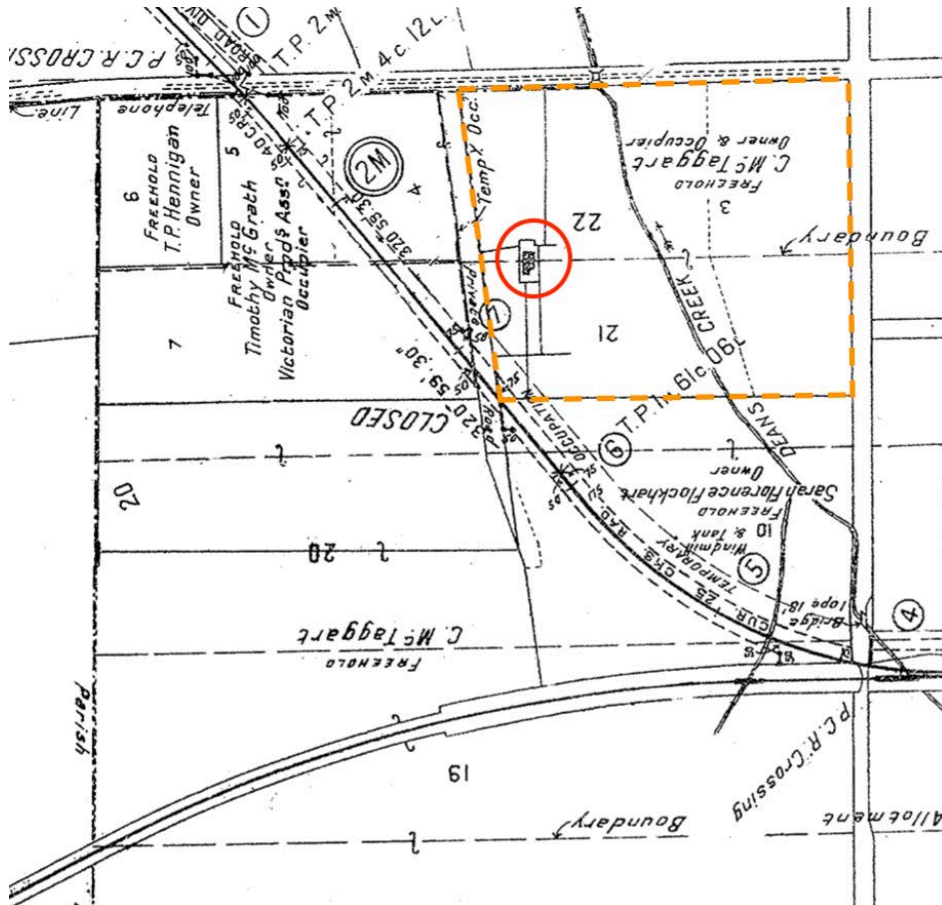


ILLUSTRATION 18: : DETAIL FROM 1922 COLAC-ALVIE RAILWAY SURVEY PLAN WITH CHARLES MCTAGGART'S 1917 PURCHASE OUTLINED IN ORANGE AND FARMHOUSE CIRCLED IN RED (VICTORIAN RAILWAYS, 1922).

Nancy and Peter Murihy became the titleholders in 1989. It is now known that a planning permit was issued by the Shire of Colac in 1990 to construct additions to the residence on the site. This explains the current rather unusual architectural form of the place. The form of these additions is described in the drawings at Illustration 19 below. These changes would appear to include the addition of rooms to the east and front of the existing dwelling (the major original chimney is located in the western portion of the house). All of these works were undertaken in a manner to emulate a late Victorian/ Edwardian weatherboard house. The verandahs included in the plans have now disappeared, but the original external kitchen mentioned in 1893 remains on the site. Other outbuildings have been removed. There are large trees around the house but none of them seem to have any special age or significance and whilst the driveway has been in place for some time the existing avenue appears to date from the 1990s.

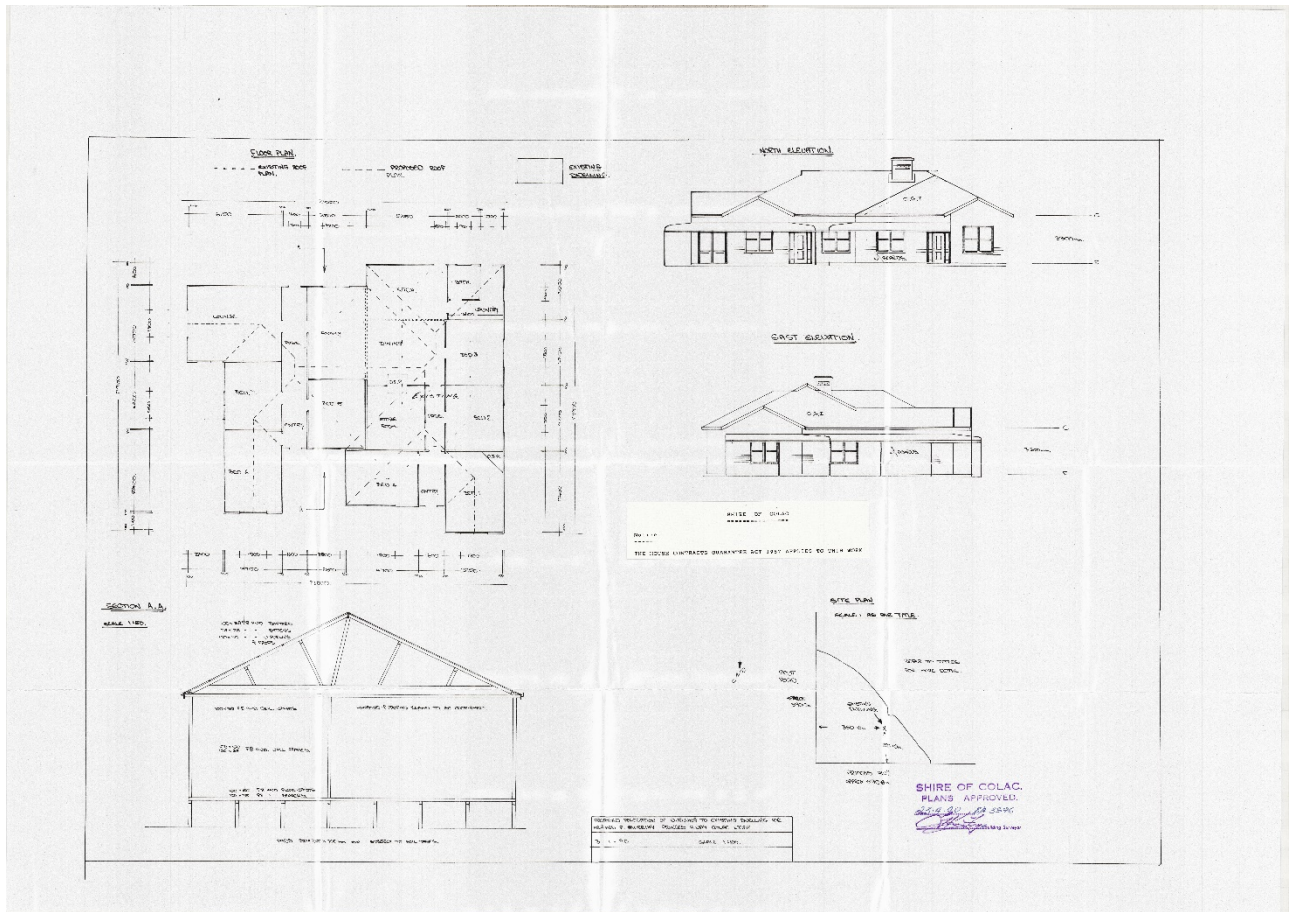


ILLUSTRATION 19: PLAN ATTACHED TO BUILDING PERMIT ISSUED FOR THE HOUSE IN 1990.

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION



ILLUSTRATION 20: NORTH ELEVATION.



ILLUSTRATION 21: NORTH EAST VIEW



ILLUSTRATION 22: ORIGINAL KITCHEN WING



ILLUSTRATION 23: SOUTH EAST VIEW

The structure as we see it today is an unusual amalgam of several buildings, all clad in standard 7-inch weatherboards and roofed with corrugated galvanised iron. From the plan at Illustration 19 it would appear that the core of the building is the 6 roomed cottage reported as existing in 1893. The separate kitchen identified at that time is still in existence at the rear of the house. Presumably the wells remain on the property.

In 1990 the place underwent significant change with the addition of what appears to be another house on the east and north of the existing building. At this time an original verandah would appear to have been removed and significant changes made to windows and doorways.

There are large and mature trees surrounding the house but the avenue along the driveway from the Prince's Highway is of recent plantings.



ILLUSTRATION 24: AERIAL VIEW WITH HOUSE ALLOTMENT OUTLINED.

ASSESSMENT AGAINST HERITAGE CRITERIA

Criterion A: Importance to the course or pattern of Colac's cultural history

There is no evidence that this place has any great historical importance. It would appear to have been originally constructed for a local farmer, Mr Shaw when he was offering the property for lease in the late 1880s. Since then, the place has been significantly altered.

Criterion B: Possession of uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of Colac's cultural history

Not applicable

Criterion C: Potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of Colac's cultural history.

Not applicable

Criterion D: Importance in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of cultural places/objects.

The house demonstrates elements of a late nineteenth century weatherboard dwelling but not at a significant level and the twentieth century changes create a confusing architectural amalgam.

Criterion E: Importance in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics.

The original dwelling would appear to have been a typical example of a weatherboard villa, but the modifications from the 1990s have obscure much of this and created an odd combination of period features. It is not of any particular aesthetic importance.

Criterion F: Importance in demonstrating a high degree of creative or technical achievement at a particular period.

Not applicable

Criterion G: Strong or special association with a particular present-day community or cultural group for social, cultural or spiritual reasons.

Not applicable

Criterion H: Special association with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in Colac's history.

None of the owners or lessees of this place appear to have any special role in the life of the Colac community.

STATEMENT OF CULTURAL HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

This place is not of any particular significance to Colac. It is an unusual amalgam of an original late nineteenth century weatherboard farmhouse with a late twentieth century addition and significant alterations. The original external kitchen to the late nineteenth century farmhouse remains but this alone doesn't give the place any special significance.

510 MURRAY STREET

PLACE HISTORY

Allotments 7 to 14 Section 9 Parish of Elliminyt were purchased at Crown land sales in the early 1840s. In 1885 Alfred Guinn applied for transfer to Torrens Title of Lots 7, 8, 9 and part of 10, and by 1888 Shire of Colac List of Valuation, notes Alfred Guinn owning 122 acres land (no dwelling).

Thomas Bent, parliamentarian and notorious boom-period land investor, purchased the land from Guinn in 1888 and he offered the property known as 'Lakeside' for sale in 1889, divided into lots of from one to ten acres. This sale was unsuccessful and the land "known as Guinn's" was offered for lease as grazing land for six months. Again, in November 1889 the land was offered for lease, but this time a four-roomed cottage had been added. It is possible that this cottage formed the basis of the residence at what is now 510 Murray Street.

The land was offered for sale in October 1890 as Thomas Bent's "magnificent suburban property known as 'Lakeside'" The land did not sell. Richard Champion purchased 10 acres of Section 7 with a frontage to Murray Street in 1900. Champion was a butcher and stock dealer. It appears that Champion's ten acres included Bent's 1889 cottage, as Laird & Barlow architects invited tenders for alterations and additions to Champion's residence at Colac in 1904. This may explain the Edwardian features on a residence with an otherwise Victorian form.

DESCRIPTION

This property was only viewed from the street (Illustration 25 below) and appears to be an altered late Victorian villa. It does not demonstrate any earlier Victorian features that may be associated with the "Lakeside" period and if the Laird and Barlow reference is accurately attached to this house we could assume that the current dwelling largely dates from 1904 (with later alterations).



ILLUSTRATION 25: NORTH ELEVATION.

ASSESSMENT AGAINST HERITAGE CRITERIA

Criterion A: Importance to the course or pattern of Colac's cultural history

There is no evidence that this place has any great historical importance. It is possible that the core of the house is the original 4 roomed cottage built during Bent's ownership, but this was built as part of his speculative ventures and of no great significance.

Criterion B: Possession of uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of Colac's cultural history

Not applicable

Criterion C: Potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of Colac's cultural history.

Not applicable

Criterion D: Importance in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of cultural places/objects.

The house demonstrates elements of a late nineteenth century weatherboard dwelling but not at a significant level.

Criterion E: Importance in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics.

The dwelling has no particular significant aesthetic characteristics.

Criterion F: Importance in demonstrating a high degree of creative or technical achievement at a particular period.

Not applicable

Criterion G: Strong or special association with a particular present-day community or cultural group for social, cultural or spiritual reasons.

Not applicable

Criterion H: Special association with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in Colac's history.

None of the owners or lessees of this place appear to have any special role in the life of the Colac community. Thomas Bent was well known but he was a land speculator who was active across Victoria. There is nothing to suggest that he had any special relationship or importance to Colac.

STATEMENT OF CULTURAL HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

This place is not of any particular significance to Colac Otway Shire.

REFERENCES

Colac Otway Shire; Building Permit records.

Google Maps; 2022

Landata; 2022

Dr Peter Mills; Deans Creek Growth Area Heritage Assessment – History; 29 January, 2023

Mary Sheehan and Associates; Colac Otway Heritage Study; 2003

APPENDIX A.
DETAILED HISTORY OF STUDY AREA

Deans Creek Precinct Structure Plan (PSP) Heritage Assessment - History

Dr Peter Mills

3rd draft 29 January 2022



Figure 1: Deans Creek Growth Area shaded in light blue over Google Earth satellite view. Numbers indicate the five areas covered in separate sections in the history.

The history is divided into sections based on five parts of the Growth Area defined by original land grants and early land use.

Growth Area part 1: Parts of portions 1, 2 & 3 Section 16

Nalangil



Section 16 Parish of Nalangil was sold in Crown land sales in 1842. Squatters J. & W. (William senior) Robertson purchased Portion 1 and Squatter W. Murray purchased Portions 2, 3 and 4 (Figure 2). William Robertson senior, who was an early squatter in the Colac area, accumulated an estate of 32,000 acres at its height. It is not known when William Robertson purchased Murray's land, lots 2, 3 and 4, but probably by 1845 and certainly by 1848. The four lots combined became known as "Robertson's racecourse paddock", after its use for that purpose from as early as 1845 (*Geelong Advertiser and Squatters' Advocate*, 12 November 1845:3). In 1848 the self-appointed "gentlemen" of the town decided to exclude the rowdy working classes and hold a private 'picnic' at the racecourse, which was on the estate of William Robertson and on the south-west end of Lake Colac (*Colonial Times (Hobart)*, 7 March 1848:3). This racecourse continued to be used up to the date of the gazetting of the racecourse reserve south of the Town Common in 1863 (*Colac Herald*, 16 May 1890:3).

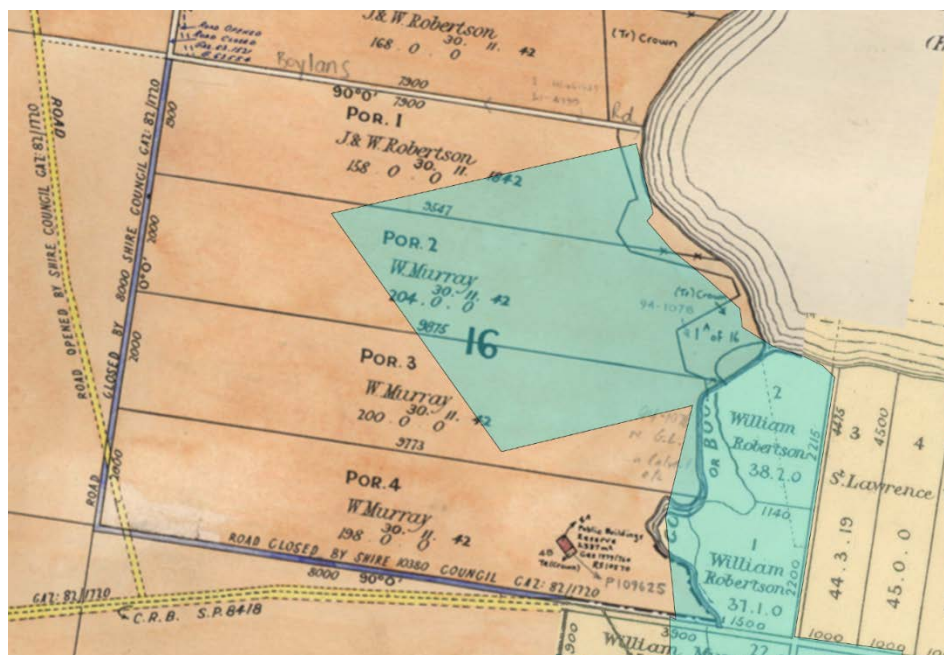


Figure 2: Enlargements of Nalangil and Elliminyt Parish plans with Growth Area shaded in light blue. The location of the (DS&E, 2002, Elliminyt -1 Parish Plan & Nalangil Parish Plan).

William Robertson senior divided his 24,762-acre property between his sons before his death in 1874. William Robertson junior inherited the 5875-acre property called ‘The Hill’, which included the Racecourse Paddock (*Australasian*, 23 May 1885:11; *Colac Herald*, 22 September 1885:3).

The Colac Rifle Association set up a rifle range in the racecourse paddock in 1884. It was “marked off from the rise near the Camperdown Road, adjacent to the entrance gate, and the butts and targets are erected close to the mouth of Deans Creek”. William Robertson was the president of the Colac Rifle Association (*Colac Herald*, 18 March 1884:3; 16 January 1885:3; 17 March 1885:3). Polo was also played in the Racecourse Paddock in the 1880s (*Colac Herald*, 17 November 1885:3). The Shire of Colac opened a new road, now Corangamite Lake Road, through William Robertson’s land in 1882, and closed off the road reserves on the west and south of Section 16 (*Colac Herald*, 14 February 1882:3).

A Melbourne syndicate including Thomas Bent purchased 2500 acres of William Robertson’s ‘The Hill’ estate in a private sale in 1885, with the intention of subdividing into small blocks (*Colac Herald*, 17 November 1885:3). John Edols, a grazier residing in Melbourne, purchased the 2500 acres, which included paddocks known as the Hamilton, Lake and Racecourse paddocks from the Melbourne syndicate in November 1885 (*Geelong Advertiser*, 13 November 1885:2; *Colac Herald*, 17 November 1885:3). Edols employed a stockkeeper and caretaker and built a house for him on the land (*Colac Herald*, 1 January 1886:3; 28 September 1886:3). The subject paddock now became known as “Mr Edols racecourse paddock” (*Colac Herald*, 5 November 1886:2). The 1888 Colac Shire property valuation had Edols owning 2639 acres in the Parish of Nalangil (*Colac Herald*, 7 February 1888:1). Edol’s Racecourse Paddock at Deans Creek was offered for grazing lease in 1889 (*Colac Herald*, 26 November 1889:3).

By 1891 the Racecourse paddock was owned by Mesdames Connor and Gillespie (*Colac Herald*, 5 June 1891:2). The paddock was subdivided into farms of from 50 to 75 acres for sale in 1892 (*Colac Herald*, 1 November 1892:3). The attempted sale appears to have been unsuccessful, as the 900-acre paddock was offered for lease in two parts in 1894. Improvements included a new farmhouse and outbuildings, suitable for carrying on dairying, on the western portion (not including any of the Growth Area) fronting the Camperdown Road (*Colac Herald*, 6 November 1894:3).

Two houses are shown on the 1916 topographic map within Area 1 (Figure 3). One was in the middle of the paddock (within the Growth Area) and the other was on Dean's Creek at its mouth. The house on the creek mouth is gone on the 1946 aerial photograph, and the house in the middle of the paddock is accompanied by a number of sheds and a driveway to the nearby new road (now Rossmoyne Road) (Landata Historical Aerial Photography, 1946). The house position appears to correspond to the location of a surviving windbreak planting, but the house and sheds are not extant. The area to the northeast of Rossmoyne Road was designated as an emergency landing ground (E.L.G.) on the 1949 topographic map but there is no obvious trace in the current landscape (Figure 4). By 1944 there were 40 emergency landing grounds in Victoria. These appear to have been simply level paddocks with good approach angles and with obstructions cleared by the Volunteer Air Observer Corps (*Horsham Times*, 20 June 1944:1).

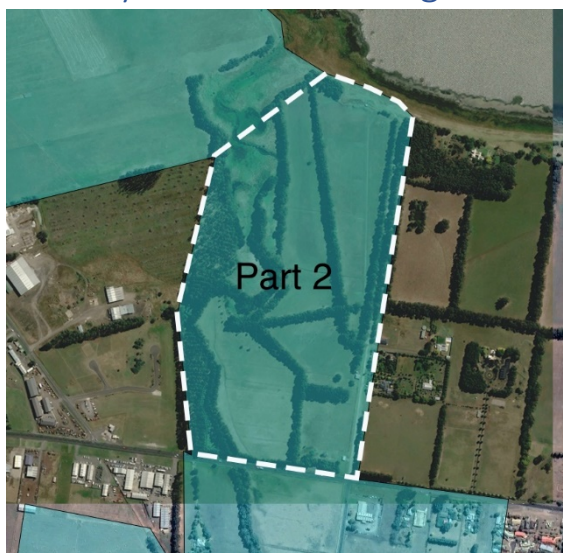


Figure 3: Area 1 over 1916 topographic map with Growth area shaded in light blue (Commonwealth Section Imperial General Staff, 1916).



Figure 4: Area 1 over 1949 topographic map, showing homestead group (not extant) off Rossmoyne Road. 'E.L.G.' denotes a wartime Emergency Landing Ground. Growth area shaded in light blue (Royal Australian Survey Corps Australian Army, 1949).

Growth Area part 2: Allotments 1 and 2 Section 9 Parish of Elliminyt - Colac rifle range



Portions 1 and 2 Section 9 Parish of Elliminyt, 75 acres, were sold to squatter William Robertson at a Crown land sale in 1847 (*Melbourne Argus*, 2 February 1847:4). These portions were bounded by Dean's Creek (also known as Boork Creek) on the west, Lake Colac on the north, a road reserve on the east and the highway to Camperdown on the south (DS&E, 2002, Elliminyt -1 Parish Plan).

History of rifle clubs/associations in Colac and district

With fears of Russian invasion in the 1870s, there were several calls for formation of a volunteer rifle rangers corps in Colac in 1878, though there is no evidence in the local newspapers that such a force was formed (*Colac Herald*, 29 March 1878:3; 16 April 1878:3; 23 April 1878:5; 28 December 1878:12; *Camperdown Chronicle*, 16 April 1878:3). A 1928 history of Colac stated that the Colac Rifle Club was started in 1878 and that as such it was "one of the oldest in Australia, being No.14 on a list of

clubs, which totalled 1114” (*Colac Herald*, 1928, p.71). No other sources for this date of founding have been found. The calls for a militia were renewed in 1882 but again appear to have been unsuccessful (*Colac Herald*, 31 March 1882:2).

The Colac Rifle Association was formed in early 1884. With nearly fifty members at the start, the association included prominent townsmen such as the Shire president. The Association aimed not only to encourage the members to shoot, “but also to undergo voluntarily a certain amount of discipline and drill, and practice many of the details of a military character whenever practicable”. Adjacent towns would be expected to raise a company each, and a cadet section would be formed for schoolboys. The government had been approached to provide rifles and ammunition (*Colac Herald*, 5 February 1884:2).

Within two weeks of formation of the Rifle Association, Captain Judd announced a meeting at the Agricultural Society’s showground shed for rifle instruction and drill (*Colac Herald*, 22 February 1884:2). The Colac Rifle Club’s rifle range was formally opened by Mr W. Robertson on 14 March 1885, although it was in use before that date (*Colac Herald*, 14 March 1884:2). The range was part of Robertson’s property ‘The Hill’ in an area known as the ‘Robertson’s racecourse paddock’, named after its use for that purpose in the early years of the town (*Colac Herald*, 16 May 1890:3). The rifle range in Robertson’s Racecourse Paddock was “marked off from the rise near the Camperdown Road, adjacent to the entrance gate, and the butts and targets are erected close to the mouth of Deans Creek” (*Colac Herald*, 18 March 1884:3; 16 January 1885:3). There were initially plans for two divisions in the Association - one for those who wanted to wear uniforms and one for those that didn’t wish to (*Colac Herald*, 14 March 1884:2).

Parallel to the Rifle Association, the Colac Gun Club was formed in 1882 (*Colac Herald*, 18 July 1882:3). In Australian usage from the late nineteenth century on a rifle club was a club that used rifles to shoot at fixed targets on a rifle range. A gun club (sometimes ‘shotgun club’) used shotguns to shoot at live pigeons and later clay targets. The infrastructure requirements were quite different to that of a rifle range. Many country towns had both types of clubs, but the two pursuits typically operated independently. There was never any militia or Commonwealth involvement with gun clubs. A Colac Gun Club match was held in 1882 at Stodart’s Point near Lake Colac (*Colac Herald*, 1 September 1882:3). The Colac Gun Club would secure land at the Colac Racecourse at Elliminyt in 1908 and would erect a pavilion and fencing designed by architect D.C. Dunoon of Colac (*Colac Herald*, 24 February 1908:3; 11 March 1908:11).

By October 1884 recruitment for the Rifle Association (also referred to in the newspapers as the Club) was lagging, and a meeting was held to revise the regulations and elect a new committee. A reduction in the membership fee to half a guinea was expected to bring new members (*Colac Herald*, 3 October 1884:2).

With the threat of war between Russia and England in the mid-1880s, the Minister of Defence proposed that rifle clubs should be affiliated to the militia. Delegates of nearly eighty Victorian rifle clubs, including Colac’s, met the Minister in May 1885 to discuss the terms. Most supported a volunteer force rather than a militia. The president of the Colac Rifle Association, Mr William Robertson, proposed a mounted

infantry force to be trained by a government instructor, and a number of other clubs supported this approach (*Age*, 28 April 1885:6; *Colac Herald*, 5 May 1885:3).

By 20 June 1885 the Colac Rifle Association was being wound up, and the assets including targets and markers' butt handed over to the new Rifle Club. Financial members of the Association were admitted to the new club with no additional charge. Twenty-two members joined the new club (*Colac Herald*, 9 June 1885:2; 14 July 1885:2; *Camperdown Chronicle*, 20 June 1885:3). Members were requested to meet Lieutenant-Colonel Price, the officer in command of the Victoria Rifles, at a local hotel in July 1885 (*Colac Herald*, 3 July 1885:2).

The Colac Rifle Club was active for the following decade with trips to other clubs including Camperdown and Warrnambool, and competitions at the Racecourse Paddock range (*Colac Herald*, 7 December 1886:3, 7 February 1889:2; 12 November 1889:2; 23 October 1894:3; 13 September 1895:3). Before a meeting at the butts in the Racecourse Paddock in 1895 a warning was given to boaters on Lake Colac not to venture too close during the match (*Colac Herald*, 18 June 1895:3).

The club was flagging again by March 1896, when it was reported that it had "not been a very live institution". When Colonel Price, the officer in command of the Victoria Rifles visited that month, only six riflemen attended (*Colac Herald*, 13 March 1896:2). Price's visit prompted a revival, with new members, a proposal for a new range and arrangements for matches with Warrnambool and Port Fairy (*Colac Herald*, 24 March 1896:2). In August 1896 the club decided to undertake improvements to the Racecourse Paddock range including erecting a "back ground" behind the targets to block out reflections from the lake. The improvements had been completed by November (*Colac Herald*, 7 August 1896:3; 13 November 1896:3). Lieutenant-Colonel Price found all satisfactory when he inspected again in 1898 (*Colac Herald*, 4 February 1898:2).

With the Boer War starting in late 1899, a public meeting was called in Colac to consider forming a defence force of some kind, whether as mounted rifles, rangers, or as members of rifle clubs. Most of the prospective volunteers could not provide their own horse to join the mounted rifles, but they were willing to join the rangers (an infantry force). It seemed that the government was sending mounted rifles to the war rather than rangers, but prospective rangers could join the Rifle Club (*Colac Herald*, 27 March 1900:3).

The Colac Rifle Club took the wave of patriotism as another opportunity for revival. As an inducement the government was offering 140 rounds per year to each member of a rifle club. The distance of the Colac butts from the town was considered a disincentive, and it was proposed to find a new site at Barongarook Creek (*Colac Herald*, 6 April 1900:2). In 1901 permission was gained to use part of the Barongarook Estate and the new range on 10 acres was formally opened in October 1901 (*Colac Herald*, 21 July 1901:2; 10 October 1901:2). With the subdivision of the estate around the range, by May 1904 the club had purchased the range area for £150 (*Colac Herald*, 4 May 1904:4).

Following Federation, the Commonwealth Defence Act 1903 tied the colonial defence forces into one and gave the Commonwealth Defence Department control of rifle

clubs, which effectively became the military reserve force of the Commonwealth. Having taken control of rifle clubs and their ranges, in 1904 the Defence Department condemned the Colac range at Barongarook Creek for the liability of bullets to fly over adjacent private property. The Rifle Club and the Colac Detachment of the Australian Light Horse sent a deputation to the Colac Shire Council asking for permission to occupy a section of unused road on the west side of Colac as a rifle range. The deputation noted that only a handful of clubs in Victoria owned their ranges. The proposed site was described as “on the road between Messrs Balls and J.G. Johnstone’s paddocks and leading to the lake” (now Rifle Butts Road). The council was supportive (*Colac Herald*, 17 August 1904:3; 19 August 1904:3; *Camperdown Chronicle*, 18 August 1904:2; 3).

By the beginning of September 1904, the club had removed its infrastructure from the range on Barongarook Creek and re-erected it on the road reserve near the lake (*Camperdown Chronicle*, 1 September 1904). The first match at the new range, against a team from Lorne, was held on 17 October 1904 (*Colac Herald*, 17 October 1904:3). The official opening was held a couple of days later. The lake at the rear of the mantlet provided a clear expanse of 2000 yards for stray bullets (*Colac Herald*, 19 October 1904:3). A telephone was installed on the range in 1905, to improve communication between the marksmen and those changing the targets. The mantlet soon had to be rebuilt after it collapsed due to heavy rains (*Colac Herald*, 22 March 1905:3; 25 August 1905:3).

The first district rifle clubs were formed in Victoria from ca1897, with the aim of enabling smaller clubs to shoot at monthly matches on the same terms as Victorian Rifle Association matches, without having to travel to Williamstown (*Horsham Times*, 18 June 1897:3; *Ballarat Star*, 4 October 1900:2; 11 December 1900:6). The Colac District Rifle Clubs Union was formed in 1905, combining Colac with smaller clubs in its hinterland, including Beeac, Beech Forest, Lorne, Pomboorneit and Irrewillipe. The Colac Rifle Club’s range became the central range for the Colac District, necessitating the installation of another target to accommodate marksmen from visiting clubs, with a total of six now available (*Colac Herald*, 11 September 1905:3; 10 January 1906:3; 2 February 1906:3). The Colac Rifle Club was waning in 1906, with difficulty getting teams for matches with other clubs, despite over 100 members on the books (*Colac Herald*, 5 March 1906:3).

In 1909 the Commonwealth Defence Department invited tenders for repairs to the earthworks of the stop butt and mantlet, and extension of the slope at the range (*Argus*, 24 December 1909:5). The club purchased a building for a shelter shed in 1911 at the cost of £15 and it was placed on the range in 1912. The shed was for shelter in bad weather and also for storage of the telephone and “other range appurtenances” (*Colac Herald*, 31 July 1911:5; 26 July 1912:2).

As the prospect of war became more urgent, the Commonwealth moved to have its own range at Colac. In the 1912 Defence budget £1,150 was allocated for land and construction at Colac (*Leader*, 3 August 1912:38; *Colac Herald*, 5 August 1912:2). By 1913 the Defence Department had acquired a roughly triangular area of 19 acres of land immediately to the west of the existing range (*Colac Herald*, 16 July 1913:2). The land cost the Commonwealth £60 per acre (*Terang Express*, 13 March 1914:2).

The land was compulsorily acquired by the Commonwealth from John Ince who had purchased 99 acres of land on either side of Deans Creek, parts of Portions 3 and 4 Section 16 Parish of Nalangil and Portions 1 and 2 Parish of Elliminyt, in 1910. Ince was a stock agent from Geelong who frequently visited the sales at Colac. The land either side of Deans Creek had been owned since 1902 by Richard James Ball and David Ball, (the Ball Bros.), produce merchants of Colac (CT 2901/121; *Colac Herald*, 26 April 1915:9). In 1904 they were growing maize on their Deans Creek property (*Colac Herald*, 6 January 1904:2). The Ball Bros. offered the 'Zaretan Park' subdivision of six lots one mile from town, in February 1910 (*Colac Herald*, 11 February 1910:3). R.J. Ball remained on part of 'Zaretan Park' until at least 1931 (*Chronicle (Adelaide)*, 30 July 1931:9).

Ince died in 1915 and the balance of his portion of 'Zaretan Park', 82 acres, was offered for sale. It was described as rich grazing land, subdivided into numerous paddocks. Buildings included a milking shed, loose boxes and barn, and piggeries. No residence was mentioned. The land had been leased out for the previous year for grazing (*Colac Reformer*, 4 November 1915:2). The property went to Joseph Henry Ibbs, Edward Albert Ibbs and William John Ibbs in 1919 (CT 4255/842). E.A. Ibbs of Grassmere Junction (near Warrnambool) negotiated with Colac council of the straightening of Deans Creek in 1918 (*Colac Herald*, 17 April 1918:6). Historical aerial photographs from 1946 indicate that the land to the west and south of the rifle range was used for grazing, with evidence of ploughing to the south of the rifle range (Landata Historical Aerial Photography, 1946; 1969; 1982; 1990).

The Colac Rifle Club wanted to retain its existing range in the road reserve, as there was apprehension that the military range next door would be monopolised for defence purposes (*Colac Herald*, 15 July 1914:2). The club range continued to be used beside the military range, with musketry courses conducted on both (*Colac Herald*, 1 June 1914:2). By August 1914, twenty-eight members of the Colac Rifle Club were to be drafted into the 71st Infantry Regiment Ballarat East Battalion (*Colac Herald*, 7 August 1914:2; *Colac Reformer*, 8 August 1914:2).

In November 1914 the club gained tenure of its range on the road reserve from the Shire Council for another five years (*Colac Reformer*, 17 November 1914:3). The club had its range reconstructed by the Defence Department's Rifle Clubs Department in April 1915 (*Colac Reformer*, 17 April 1915:2; *Colac Herald*, 19 April 1915:9). The same year there was a move for establishment of a miniature rifle range at J.G. Johnstone & Co.'s pig mart, which had a building suitable for the purpose (*Colac Herald*, 6 July 1915:4). The Commonwealth relinquished control of rifle clubs in 1921, and they became purely civilian organisations, but the Commonwealth continued with some funding. The Colac Militia Rifle Club appears to have formed as a separate entity in ca1930 and held competitions up to ca1935. The membership was drawn from the local militia (*Age*, 7 July 1930:13; *Argus*, 24 July 1930:13; 8 July 1933:17; *Weekly Times*, 15 December 1934:71).

The Colac mantlet, presumably on the military range, was reconstructed in 1933 at a cost of £100, with part of the expense met by the Defence Department (*Age*, 27 October 1933:13). At the Colac District Rifle Clubs Competition in 1933, seven clubs participated, including Colac, Apollo Bay, Birregurra, Carlisle River, Gerangamite and Rickett's Marsh (*Weekly Times*, 7 October 1933:60).

An aerial photograph taken in 1946 indicates that the rifle range in the road reserve was still in place, with firing lines and the mantlet visible, and the road made along the southern third of the reserve only as far as the entrance to the range. One small building is visible right at the entrance to the range (Figure 5). The small-bore rifle range building was added between 1946 and 1969 (Landata Historical Aerial Photography, 1946; 1969). The 1946 aerial photograph shows the rifle ranges, both in the road reserve and on the Commonwealth land, devoid of trees (Landata Historical Aerial Photography, 1946). The situation remained the same in a 1969 aerial photograph (Landata Historical Aerial Photography, 1969).

After World War II the Commonwealth gradually disengaged from rifle club activity and the clubs once again became purely sporting organisations. It is not known when the use of the range in the road reserve stopped. While firing lines for that range were visible in the 1940s aerial photograph, they are not visible in the 1969 aerial, suggesting it had fallen out of use. The existing shed at the entrance point and the small-bore enclosed range to the west were in place by this time (Landata Historical Aerial Photography, 1969).

On a 1982 aerial photograph a few trees are located immediately to the north of the club room and small-bore enclosed range building (Landata Historical Aerial Photography, 1982). These are absent on a 1990 aerial photograph, and the rest of the rifle range is similarly bereft of trees (Landata Historical Aerial Photography, 1990). On a 2005 aerial photograph there are well developed plantings along the western fence, although it is unclear which side of the fence they are on. There are also trees along laneway side of the eastern fence (Google Earth historical imagery 21 January 2005). This suggests the trees were planted in the early 1990s.

The Commonwealth sold 3550sqm of foreshore land to the Lough Calvert Drainage Trust in 1987. This land was transferred to the Crown in 1990 (CT 9836/739). The remaining land was sold to Jillian May Madden and Justin Peter Madden in 1995 (CT 3714/739). This land is now described as Parcels 1 & 2 of TP834612 containing 66275sqm and 7467sqm respectively, totalling 73742sqm.

[History of rifle ranges in Victoria and comparative examples of ranges with land purchased/acquired by the Commonwealth](#)

The Commonwealth government took over control of all Australian rifle ranges in 1903. Prime Minister Deakin declared in a policy speech in 1910 that he was negotiating to obtain new rifle ranges of sufficient size all over Australia (*Ballarat Star*, 8 February 1910:1). Federal estimates for 1910-11 included £3107 for rifle ranges generally, and £699 for site and construction at Kerang (*Herald*, 7 September 1910:3). Federal estimates for 1912-13 included funding for purchases of rifle range land and construction in country areas of Victoria, including Camperdown (£700), Colac (£1150), Echuca (£4000), and Hamilton (£300) (*Leader*, 3 August 1912:38). It appears that these land purchases were made where existing rifle ranges were of insufficient size or unsuitable location for Defence requirements. On the already adequate sites, infrastructure was improved, including increasing the number of targets (*Age*, 20 August 1912:7).

The advertising of grazing leases over Commonwealth rifle range land provides a n indication of the extent of Commonwealth acquisitions in Victoria. By May 1915, the Commonwealth advertised grazing leases on twelve country rifle ranges that they owned. These were at Kyneton, Echuca, Colac, Camperdown, Ararat, Cobden, Hamilton, Inglewood, Malmsbury, Euroa, Drouin, and Merricks (*CAG*, 29 May 1915, No.47 p.992). A 1925 list of land on Commonwealth rifle ranges available for grazing leases included Ararat (93 acres), Bacchus Marsh (65 acres), Bairnsdale (154 acres), Camperdown (18 acres), Drouin (8 acres), Echuca (469 acres), Inglewood (162 acres unfenced) and Warracknabeal (46 acres) (*CAG*, 21 May 1925, No.41 p.827). By 1918 the Commonwealth was also offering rifle range land for grazing lease at Beaufort (33 acres), and Violet Town (14 acres). A Commonwealth range at Lake Bolac appears to have been located on privately owned land (*CAG*, 15 August 1918, No.125 p.1695). Grazing lease for the Commonwealth's range at Sale (29 acres) was offered in 1924 (*CAG*, 29 May 1924, No.33 p.1180). A grazing lease was offered for the Stawell rifle range in 1929 (*CAG*, 9 May 1929, No.45 p.1021).

List of Victorian country towns with Commonwealth owned rifle ranges

Country town	Date of acquisition	Acres	Current status
Ararat		93	
Avoca		49	Now a bushland reserve
Bacchus Marsh		67	
Bairnsdale			
Beaufort		346	
Camperdown	1913	18	Archaeological evidence remains
Castlemaine		34	
Cobden	1915	93	No evidence found
Colac	1913	19	Extant and active
Drouin			
Echuca	1914	459	Not extant
Euroa		26	
Hamilton	1911		Extant and active
Inglewood		161	
Kyneton		243	
Malmsbury			
Merricks			
Sale		29	
St Arnaud		32	
Stawell		394	
Swan Island (Queenscliff)			
Violet Town		14	
Warrnambool?			Extant and active
Warracknabeal			

These 24 rifle clubs with Commonwealth owned land should be set against a larger number of rifle clubs in the state generally. A survey of Victorian country towns in

the early 1940s found that 98 of 180 country towns in the state had rifle clubs (McIntyre & McIntyre, 1944, p.226).

Echuca rifle range

By 1914 Echuca's previous range had been closed for a number of years (*Echuca & Moama Advertiser and Farmers' Gazette*, 21 March 1914:2). The new range purchased by the Commonwealth in 1914 was 469 acres in extent compared to 19 acres at Colac (*CAG*, 31 July 1919, No.95 p.1204). The Echuca range was opened in April 1915 and featured six disappearing targets (*Riverine Herald*, 19 April 1915:2). The large area of land does not appear to have corresponded to a much more extensive range infrastructure. Improvements costing £100 were made in 1935 (*Argus*, 12 January 1935:26). Improvements costing £200 and using unemployed labour were planned in 1940 (*Age*, 10 January 1940:16). By 1944 a Defence aerodrome had been added to the land (*Riverine Herald*, 9 May 1944:3). The rifle range infrastructure was removed as part of the post-war development of the aerodrome for civil aviation (*Riverine Herald*, 24 July 1945:3).

Hamilton Rifle Range

In Federal estimates in October 1911, £1260 was allocated for the Hamilton Rifle Range (*Age*, 27 October 1911:12). The opening of the range at "Monivale" was held in December 1911 (*Hamilton Spectator*, 11 December 1911:6; *Age*, 15 December 1911:15).). An additional 5 acres of private land was acquired in 1912 to provide access later in 1912 (*Portland Guardian*, 12 August 1912:3). The range on Rifle Road is extant and the club is still active.

Camperdown rifle range

The Camperdown Rifle Club was formed in 1884 and a range on the southern shores of Lake Bullen Merri was in use by 1885 (*Camperdown Chronicle*, 22 October 1884:2; 17 January 1885:3).

The Commonwealth compulsorily acquired a site for a rifle range on the southern shore of Lake Colongulac north of Camperdown in 1913. The land, Lot 17 of the 1909 Chocolyn Estate subdivision, cost the Commonwealth £38 per acre (*Camperdown Chronicle*, 3 April 1913:3; 8 April 1914:5; *Terang Express*, 13 March 1914:2; *Colac Herald*, 4 July 1913:4). The 19-acre range was opened in October 1913 (*Camperdown Chronicle*, 4 October 1913:2; 26 December 1913:4). A number of new members were receiving musketry training at the range in 1915 (*Camperdown Chronicle*, 23 March 1915:2). The Commonwealth provide £100 for improvements at the range, with unemployed labour to be used (*Camperdown Chronicle*, 5 June 1935:2). The range was used for a muster for the Camperdown troop of the 4th Light Horse in 1915 (*Camperdown Chronicle*, 23 May 1935:2). The Camperdown Unit of the Volunteer Defence Corps undertook rifle practice at the range in 1942, and mortar practice on the range and the shore of Lake Colongulac in 1944 (*Camperdown Chronicle*, 20 January 1942:2; 31 March 1944:1).

The Commonwealth renewed fencing at the range in 1969 and offered a grazing lease over the range in 1970 (*Age*, 4 October 1969:96; 14 February 1970:91). There is some remaining evidence of the north-south oriented rifle range between the Old Geelong

Road and the southern-most shore of Lake Corangulac, including firing mounds and possibly the butts.

Cobden Rifle Range

A Cobden Rifle Club started up and a range organised in 1901, but the club appears to have been short lived . The Commonwealth government recorded its disbandment in 1904 (*Argus*, 19 June 1901:6; *CAG*, .3 December 1904, No.71 p.1267). The Club was started up again in 1906 (*CAG*, *Age*, 25 January 1907:6). The Commonwealth acquired 93 acres of land for a new range on the back road to Cobrico, a mile and a half to two miles from Cobden and near the racecourse, and it was opened in November 1915. The site was north of the racecourse, on Mr Meagher's property. In addition to the shooting mounds, target pit and mound a clubhouse was built (*Cobden Times & Heytesbury Advertiser*, 10 November 1915:3; *CAG*, 27 May 1926, No.46 p.778; *Camperdown Chronicle*, 1 August 1914:2).

A competition was held at the Cobden range in 1960 (*Age*, 30 May 1960:21). The Commonwealth was still offering grazing lease over the range in 1967 (*Age*, 29 July 1967:56). There is no current club website, and no evidence was found of a range on current Google Earth

Warrnambool Rifle Range

A site beside the existing range had been acquired by the Commonwealth by May 1913 (*Colac Herald*, 9 May 1913:2). £5000 was budgeted by the Commonwealth for construction of the range (*Portland Guardian*, 12 August 1912:3).

A grazing lease for the 105-acre range was offered by the Commonwealth in 1961 (*Age*, 11 November 1961:31). The range was in use by the military for firing practice in 1985 (*Age*, 13 November 1985:63). The range is still in use and now includes the Gun Club and the Target Rifle Club in addition to the Rifle Club.

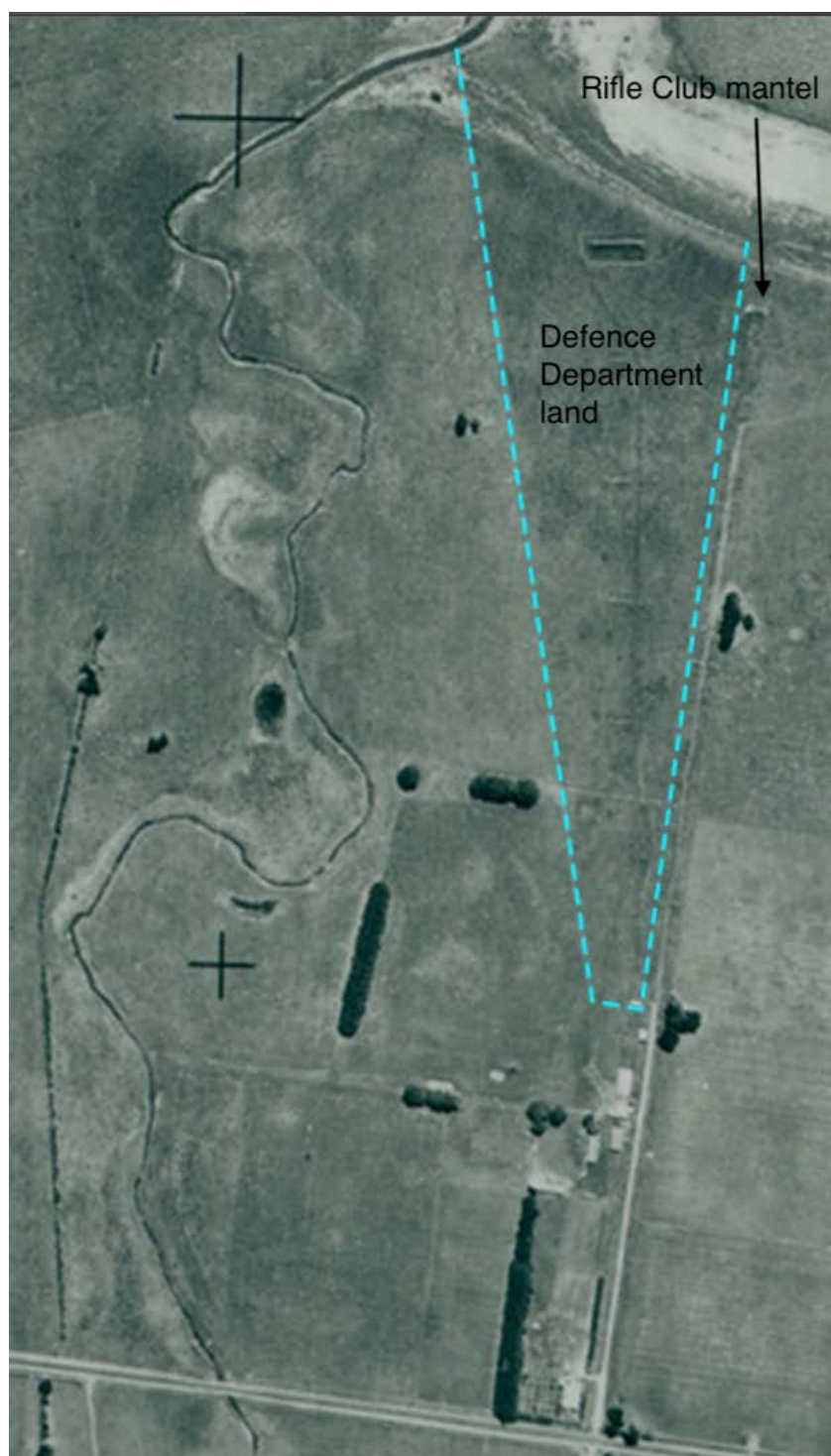
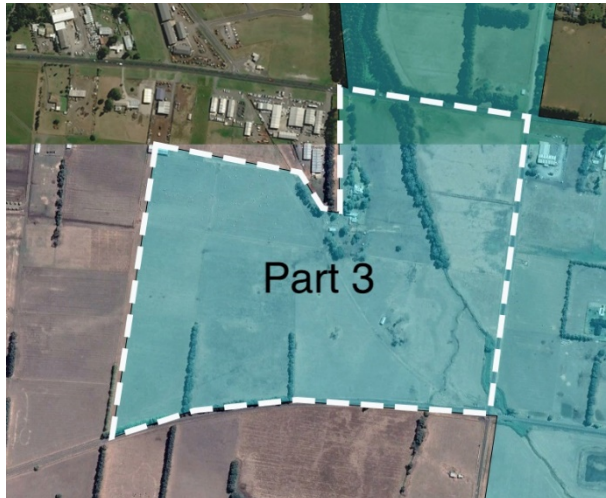


Figure 5: Enlargement from 1946 aerial photograph showing the two rifle ranges immediately after World War II (Landata Historical Aerial Photography, 1946).

Growth Area part 3: 315 Princes Highway, part of former 'Shaw's Farm', Lots 19-22 Section 9 Parish of Elliminyt



Section 9 in the Parish of Elliminyt was included in the earliest Crown land sales in the district, in 1841 (*Geelong Advertiser*, 17 July 1841 p.4). Portion 22 Section 9 was bought by squatter William Murray and Portions 19, 20 and 21 were bought by H. McKinnon.

The railway from Colac to Camperdown opened in 1883 (*Argus*, 7 July 1883:7). The routing of the railway created a north-south division of the western part of Section 9 Parish of Elliminyt which appears to coincide with the establishment of a separate property to the north of the railway reserve out of a number of existing holdings. These were put together by the owner John James (Edward Garner application under the Transfer of Land Act 1890, 1903).

The next owner of the 133 acres of land was John Shaw, who acquired it for £21 10s per acre in late 1886. In the local newspaper report it was understood that Mr Shaw intended to build on his new land (*Colac Herald*, 3 December 1886:2). In May 1887 Shaw offered his "agricultural farm" for lease. Mr F. Spriggs of Geelong took the lease for a term of five years. Shaw invited tenders to build a four-roomed house, dairy and stable, all weatherboard buildings, to be erected on the property as part of the lease package (*Colac Herald*, 27 May 1887:3; 21 June 1887:2 & 3).

The quality of the land for agricultural purposes was remarked upon in the local newspapers. Mr Spriggs grew mangolds (mangelwurzels) of nearly 40lbs. A subsequent tenant, Mr Charity, grew one of similar weight (*Colac Herald*, 9 August 1889:2; 11 October 1889:2). In 1889 Shaw offered 130 acres for sale (*Geelong Advertiser*, 28 September 1889:3).

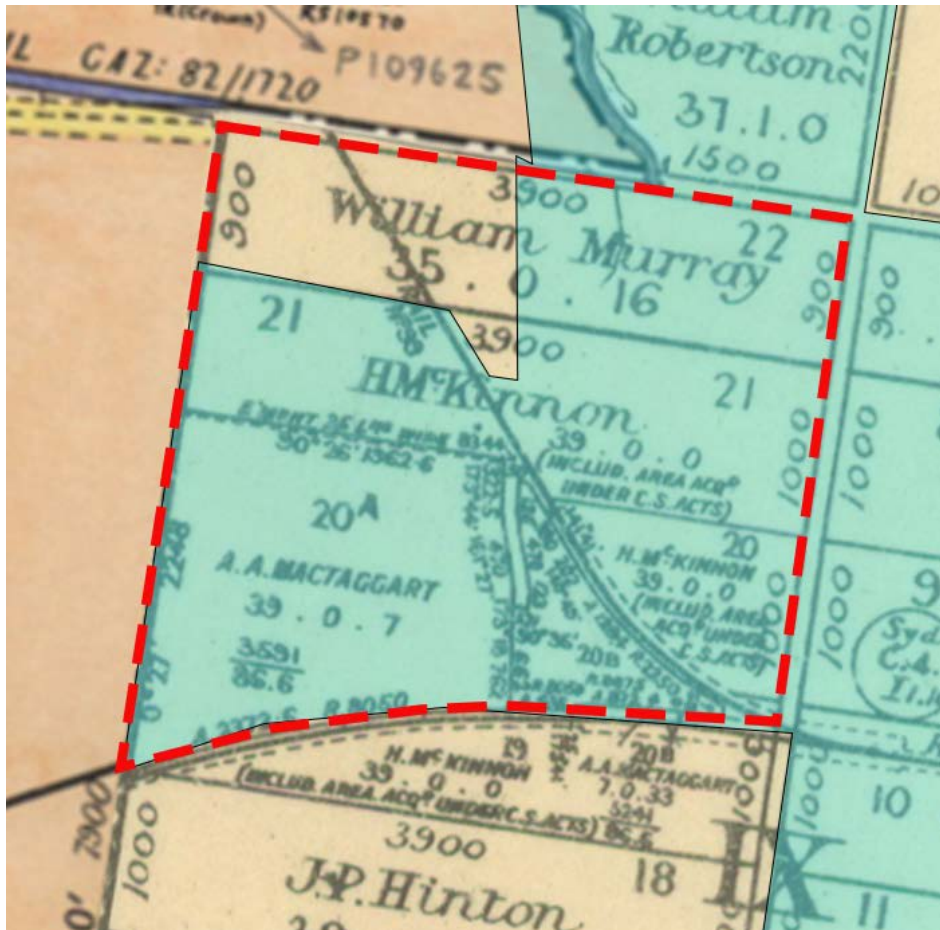


Figure 6: Enlargement of Elliminyt Parish Plan showing part of Section 9, with Shaw's Farm outlined in red and Growth Area shaded in light blue (DS&E, 2002, Elliminyt -1 Parish Plan).

Shaw must have come on hard times, as in April 1893 the mortgagee of the property, the Land Mortgage Bank of Victoria, offered the farm for sale. Improvements included a six-roomed cottage, detached kitchen, stable and outhouses, two wells of good water and a garden, with the land subdivided into three paddocks (*Colac Herald*, 28 April 1893:3). In September 1893 Shaw's farm was offered to let for one year. The improvements on the farm, then in the occupation of Mr McCaffrey, included "a good cottage, garden, outhouse and two wells of beautiful water" (*Colac Herald*, 19 September 1893:3). In 1894 the farm, then occupied by Mr W. Cumming, was offered for lease again (*Colac Herald*, 14 September 1894:3). In 1895 it was offered for lease by Mr H.M. Hearn (*Colac Herald*, 12 July 1895:3).

Mr P. Hayden, a dairy farmer, was the lessee when Shaw's farm was offered for sale again by the Land Mortgage Bank of Victoria in 1899 (*Colac Herald*, 28 February 1899:2; 12 May 1899:3). Edward Garner, who purchased the property, was born in Norfolk, England, and arrived in Geelong in 1852. He was a carter before becoming a farmer at Winchelsea. He moved to a farm at Cobrico near Camperdown in 1860. He sold the farm at Cobrico in 1889. Garner died in 1905 at the age of 82. Before his death he sold the 126 acres at Deans Creek to James Henry Chapman, and at his death the outstanding debt for that transaction was £2306. Title to the 126 acres at Deans Creek was transferred to James Henry Chapman and local solicitor William Guy Sewell in 1906. Presumably they had paid the rest of the purchase price (*Camperdown Chronicle*, 29 April 1899:3; *Colac Herald*, 28 February 1899:2; 21 June 1905;

Edward Garner probate papers, 1905; CT 3009/689). James Chapman had been residing at Deans Creek before his father-in-law's death, and was still there in 1907 (*Colac Herald*, 29 March 1907:2).

The 126 acres was purchased in 1913 by Timothy McGrath, the owner of 'Holm[e] Park' Colac West. He subdivided the property as the "Dean's Creek Estate". The northeast part, lots 1, 2 and 3, totalling 31 acres and including the existing residence, went to dairyman Charles MacTaggart in 1917 (*Colac Herald*, 16 February 1917:2; CT 3009/689).

A house is shown in the current position on the 1916 topographic map (Commonwealth Section Imperial General Staff, 1916). A survey for the Colac to Alvie railway line, which was constructed in 1922 shows a house in the current position (Figure 7).

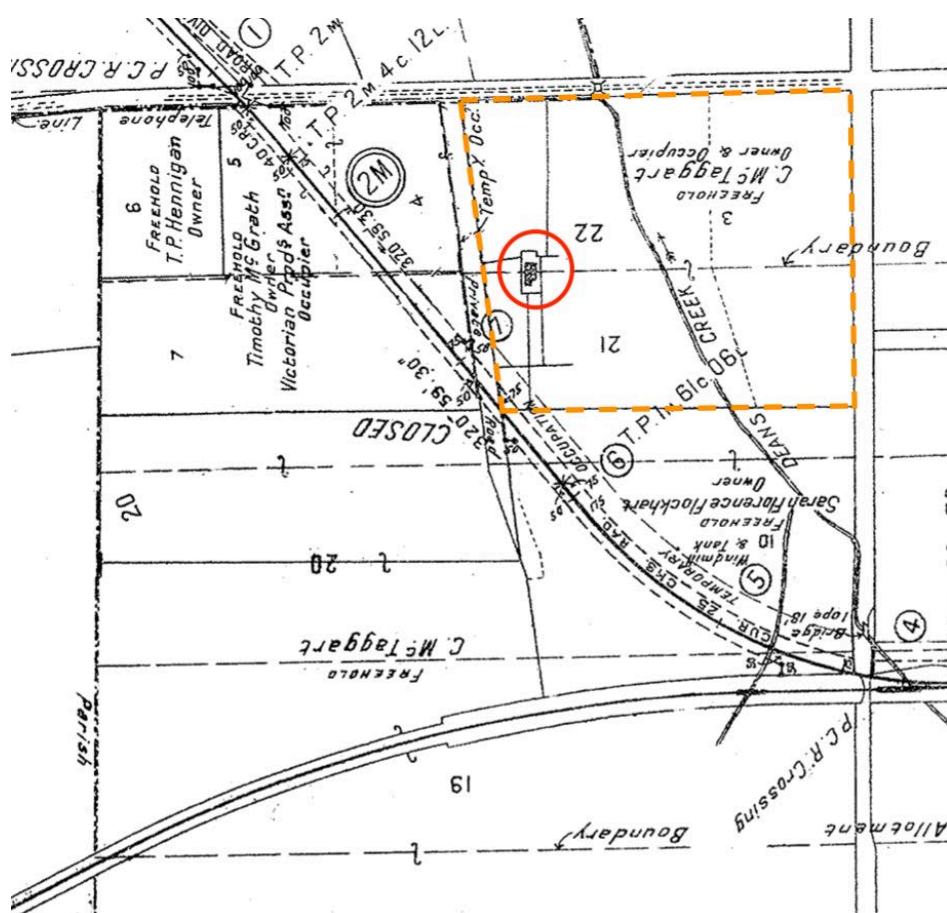


Figure 7: Detail from 1922 Colac-Alvie Railway survey plan with Charles MacTaggart's 1917 purchase outlined in orange and farmhouse circled in red (Victorian Railways, 1922).

Alexander Arthur MacTaggart, son of Charles, became the owner of the land containing the subject house in 1948 (CT 4006/170). Arthur had already acquired an adjacent block, 46 acres, the southwest parts of the 1917 subdivision, through the Soldier Settlement scheme, gaining title in 1944 (Figure 6). Alexander and Charles both died in 1954 (CT 4055/170; *Argus*, 8 September 1954:14). The extent of the homestead complex from this period is shown on the 1946 aerial photograph (Figure 8).

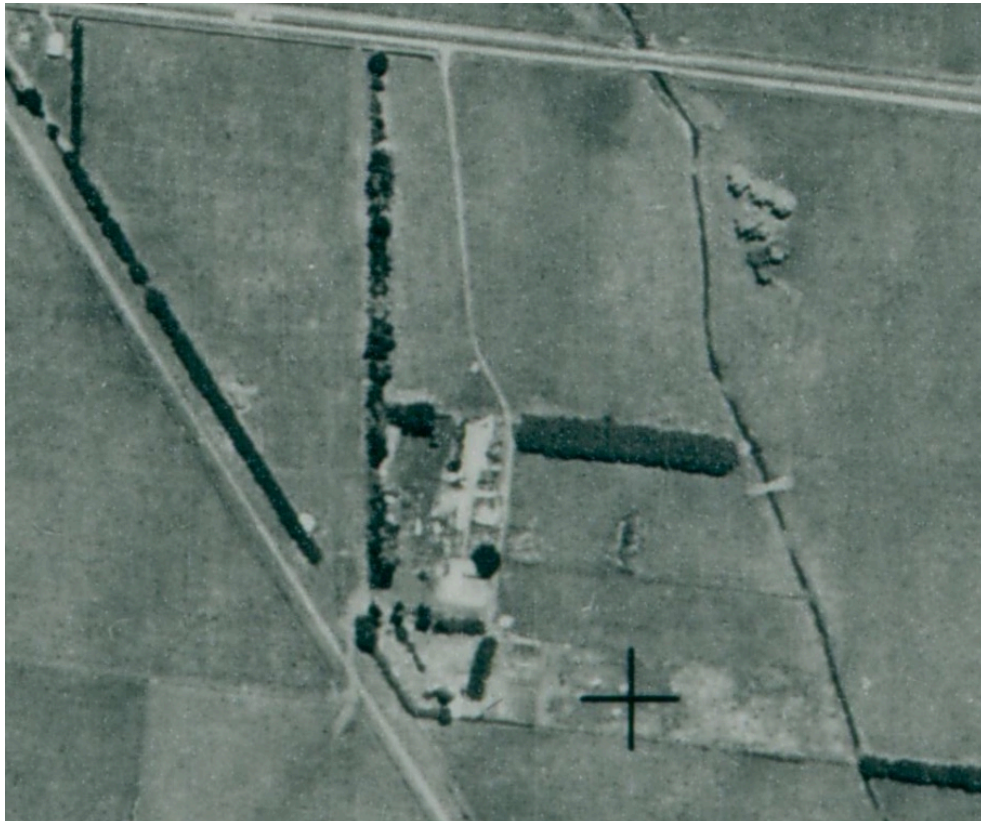


Figure 8: Enlargement of 1946 aerial photograph showing the homestead group (Landata Historical Aerial Photography, 1946).

Nancy and Peter Murrihy became the titleholders in 1989. Major additions were made to the east side of the residence in the late 1980s, with the nineteenth century roofline of the existing building also altered (Shire of Colac, 1990). The original kitchen building was retained but outbuildings to the south of the house were removed at the same time. The driveway had remained in the same place since the 1940s, but the avenue of trees on its east side was planted in 1990 or later (Landata Historical Aerial Photography, 1969, 1982, 1990).

Growth Area part 4: Allotments 7-14, Section 9 Parish of Elliminyt Parish of Elliminyt

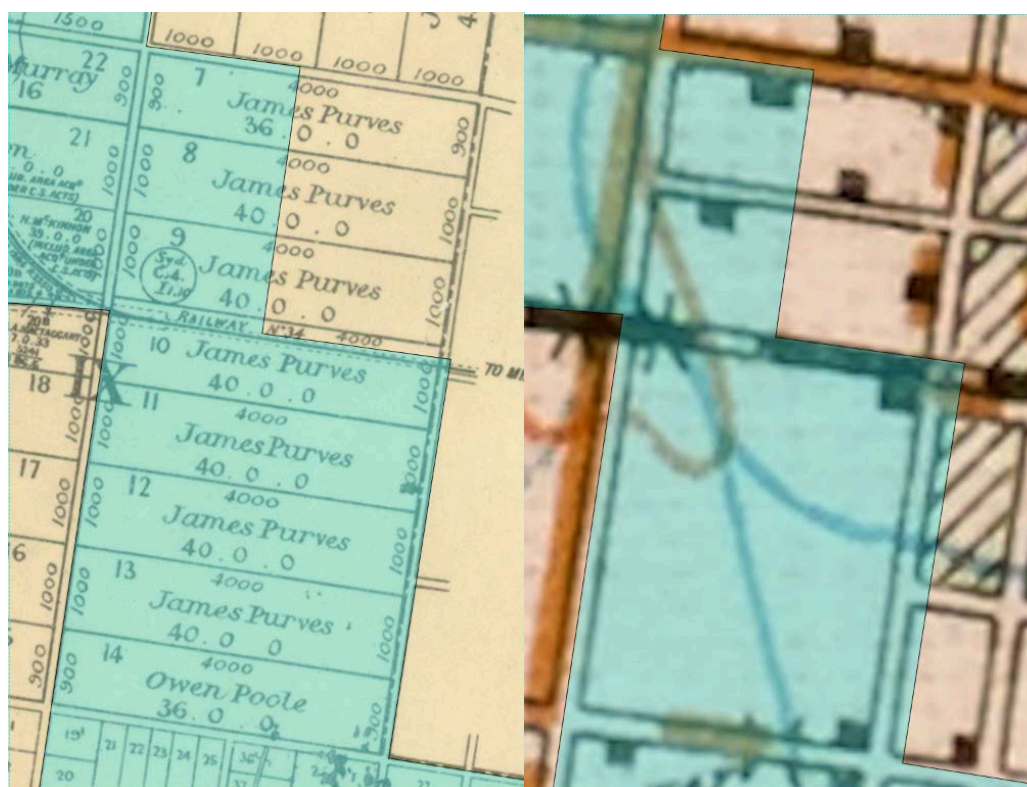


Figure 9: Left - Growth Area shaded in light blue over Elliminyt Parish Plan. Right – Growth Area shaded in light blue over 1916 topographic map (DS&E, 2002, Elliminyt -1 Parish Plan; Commonwealth Section Imperial General Staff, 1916).

Allotments 7 to 14 Section 9 Parish of Elliminyt were purchased at Crown land sales in the early 1840s (Figure 9 left). In 1885 Alfred Guinn applied for transfer to Torrens Title of Lots 7, 8, 9 and part of 10, Section 9 Parish of Elliminyt (*Colac Herald*, 31 March 1885:3; CT 1680/843). On the 1888 Shire of Colac List of Valuation, Alfred

Guinn owned 122 acres land (no dwelling) valued at £73 (*Colac Herald*, 7 February 1888 p1).

Thomas Bent, parliamentarian and notorious boom-period land investor, purchased the land from Guinn in 1888 (CT 1680/843). He offered the property known as 'Lakeside' for sale between April and May 1889, divided into lots of from one to ten acres (*Colac Herald*, 5 April 1889:3; 10 May 1889:3). This sale was unsuccessful and the land "known as Guinn's" was offered for lease as grazing land for six months (*Colac Herald*, 24 May 1889:3). Again, in November 1889 the land was offered for lease, but this time a four-roomed cottage had been added (*Colac Herald*, 19 November 1889:3). It is possible that this cottage formed the basis of the residence at what is now 510 Murray Street.

The land was offered for sale in October 1890 as Thomas Bent's "magnificent suburban property known as 'Lakeside'" (*Colac Herald*, 28 October 1890:3). The house was mentioned when the land was again offered for sale in one piece by Bent in 1892 (*Colac Herald*, 1 November 1892:3). The land did not sell.

In January 1893 Bent advertised his intention to offer "his farm at Colac West", "one mile from town" for private sale in paddocks of from 5 to 20 acres (*Colac Herald*, 31 January 1893:3). By July 1893 the subdivision of 'Lakeside Estate' was offered at public auction (*Colac Herald*, 25 July 1893:3). The title indicates that the eventual subdivision when sales started was of over 70 lots of various sizes. These sold between 1894 and 1898 in groups of lots making up around 14 parcels of from 4 to 20 acres (*Colac Herald*, 17 February 1893:3; CT 1680/843).

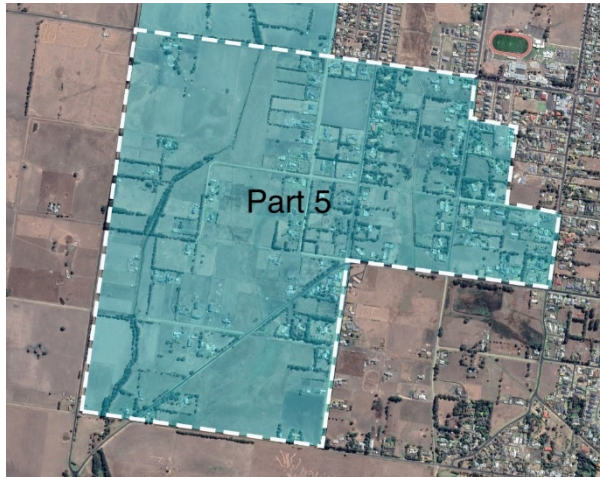
Richard Champion purchased 10 acres of Section 7 with a frontage to Murray Street in 1900 (CT 2774/730). Champion was a butcher and stock dealer. It appears that Champion's ten acres included Bent's 1889 cottage, as Laird & Barlow architects invited tenders for alterations and additions to Champion's residence at Colac in 1904 (*Colac Herald*, 26 October 1904:3). This may explain the Edwardian features on a residence with an otherwise Victorian form. Richard's wife Ethel died at their residence at Colac West in 1907 (*Colac Herald*, 15 March 1907:2).

The 1916 topographic map shows four residences within the Growth Area part 4 (Figure 9 right). The only residence of interest is 510 Murray Street which appears on inspection to have been constructed in the Victorian and Edwardian periods. The residence at the northwest corner of Pound and Cants roads which shows on the 1916 topographic map may be extant. Its form is consistent with early twentieth century construction but most of the detail such as windows and verandah have been modified. The other two houses on the 1916 map are not extant.

By 1919 Champion was trading insolvent. As a consequence of his situation, he transferred title of his land to one of his creditors, auctioneer Charles Stewart, and fled to Melbourne. Some of his other creditors including J.G. Johnstone & Co stock and station agents applied successfully for sequestration of Champion's estate. Dairyman John Charles Johnson became the proprietor in May 1920 (CT 2774/730; *Age*, 20 September 1919:18; 23 September 1919:10).

Emily Everett became the proprietor in 1927, followed by farmer Martin William Larpent in 1944. A small block on the northeast, now 510 Murray Street, was subdivided and sold to James Edward Dunn in 1957. The remainder was sold in 1963 (CT 2774/730; CT 8152/764).

Growth Area part 5: Part of former Colac Town Common



History of Rural Store License selection in the Colac Town Common

The Colac Town Common was gazetted in 1862. The common comprised sections 7, 8 and part of 10 of the original survey of the Parish of Elliminyt (*VGG*, 25 February 1861 Gaz. 29 p.411). The Common was increased by orders on 18 December 1865 and 1 March 1870 (*VGG*, 2 January 1885, Gaz. 2 p.110). The common operated as commons normally did, as pasturage for the townsfolk, with annual fees for depasturing, appointments of herdsmen and managers, and quarterly musters up until 1871.

From the early 1870s a form of selection began on the Colac Town Common, which would eventually see it divided into over 500 three-acre freehold lots. This form of selection began under the Land Act 1862, where Section 50 licenses had allowed occupation of Crown land for a range of rural activities other than pastoral or agricultural. One instance was the Rural Store License, which enabled three acres to be taken up for the purposes of erecting a store. By the late 1860s many of these licenses were being taken out around Victoria, most by licensees with no intention of conducting a store. The Minister of Lands commented on this practice around Smeaton in 1869, that “from the number of rural store license taken up in the Smeaton District alone, there should be many more stores than were sufficient for the whole of the colony”. (Nelson & Alves, 2009, p.53; *Ballarat Star*, 2 December 1869:3). Under the Land Act 1869, the Rural Store License provision was continued under Section 47. In 1872 the Board of Land and Works determined that no rural store license sites occupied since 1870 would be offered for sale unless the improvements included a dwelling occupied by the licensee (*Hamilton Spectator*, 3 April 1872:2).

Commons generally were not reserved from selection, but local Land Boards could control selection on commons to some extent through their power of approval or disapproval of applications. The Land Board at Colac appears to have decided that Section 47 was the most appropriate form of selection over the area of the Colac Town Common. A survey of the Colac Town Common area published in December 1872 showed that there were already 48 Rural Store License blocks of three acres taken up. A further 68 three-acre blocks had been laid out by the surveyors in anticipation of further selection of the same kind. At this stage the three-acre lots were concentrated in the central and northeast parts of the common. None of the land had

been alienated at this point (Department of Lands and Survey, 1872). This pattern would continue until the common was entirely selected in this way.

There do not appear to be any directly comparable instances of the selection under Section 47 of a town, goldfields or farmers' common in the planned, intensive and comprehensive manner that occurred at Colac. There are some comparable concentrations of use of other small acreage licenses under the land acts. One such example was a large concentration of twenty-acre Occupation Licenses on the auriferous lands around Hurstbridge, St Andrews and Kangaroo Ground. Over 800 of these licenses were taken up in this area under the provisions of a succession of land acts specific to auriferous areas, including Section 42 of the Land Act 1865, Section 49 of the Land Act 1869 and Section 65 of the Land Act 1884. These provisions similarly allowed purchase of the land after a period of occupation. The patterns of family accumulation of lots prevalent at Colac also occurred here (Mills, 2017).

The prevalence of such forms of land tenure is related to an understanding, prevalent from soon after the passing of the Land Act 1865 and ongoing into the 1880s, that there was a need to provide for a "poorer class of selectors" (*Ballarat Star*, 1 May 1867:2; 25 February 1869:2; *Geelong Advertiser*, 5 September 1876:3; *Bendigo Advertiser*, 18 October 1878:3). Similar concerns partly influenced the introduction of the Village Settlement schemes in Victoria from the early 1890s.

By 1873, Section 47 licenses on the Colac Town Common were being handed out at such a rate that the Colac Shire Council became concerned that the townsfolk were losing important access to pasturage, as well as suffering damage to the springs at the west end of the Common and general loss of trees throughout. The Council lobbied the Minister of Lands, Mr Casey, for a reserve of 640 acres at the west end of the Common, including the springs, and 320 acres at the east end. The Minister decided to allow this form of selection to continue, but he approved of a ten-acre reserve for the springs and a ban on tree felling on the Common (*Hamilton Spectator*, 19 April 1873:4). Again in 1875, after council objections to issue of Rural Store Licenses on the common, the Secretary for Lands declined to stop the practice (*Colac Herald*, 19 November 1875:2).

Appointments of managers and herdsman for the Common continued, as did quarterly musters of horses and cattle grazing on the on the remaining unlicensed and unalienated parts of the Common (*Colac Herald*, 21 January 1876:2; 1 March 1876:3).

By 1878 holders of Section 47 licenses on the Common were questioning the system for purchase of the land when the license requirements had been fulfilled, whereby the three-acre areas be put up for public auction, with the option for the licensee to bid. In many cases bidders with more capital acquired the land at auction, and the former licensee, who had paid £5 per year for three to five years just for rent, was left homeless. This was also a problem for the economy of the district. The supply of labour from the license holders on the Common, upon which the local large landholders depended, was being lost. Many licensees went on paying the £5 per year rent rather than risk losing their land at the auction (*Colac Herald*, 16 July 1878:3).

Mainstream selectors under Sections 19 and 20 of the Land Act 1869 could already purchase their land outright if the appropriate improvements had been made. Another similar and popular form of license which preceded that of the Rural Store Licenses in providing for the labouring classes was the 20-acre occupation license in auriferous areas under Section 42 of the Amending Land Act 1865. At first a public auction system had applied to these licenses, but under Section 31 of the Land Act 1869 these license holders were given a pre-emptive right of purchase when they had fulfilled the requirements of the license (Nelson and Alves 2009, pp.52-53).

The lobbying in Colac had a brief side-effect. For a short period from August 1878, rent for Rural Store Licenses on the Colac Town Common was reduced to 2s 6p after £10 had been paid in license fees, or if it could be demonstrated that the sites had been used for residence purposes for the whole period of the license. This was revoked in March 1879 (*Colac Herald*, 27 August 1878:3; *VGG*, 14 March 1879, Gaz 32, p.563). More substantial concessions came on a State-wide level, under the Land Acts Amendment Act 1880. Under the new act Section 47 license holders gained exclusive right to purchase once the conditions of the license had been met (*Hamilton Spectator*, 14 February 1880:4).

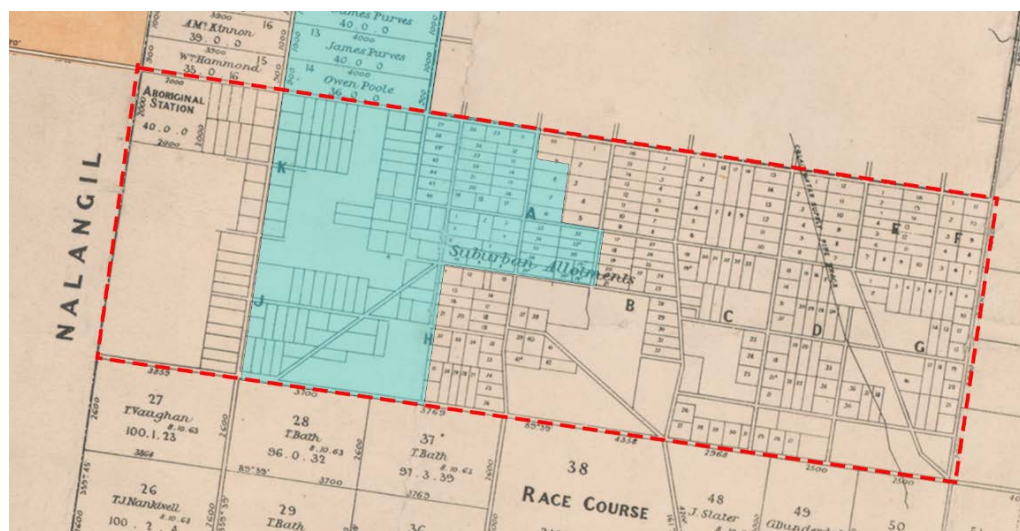


Figure 10: Growth Area shaded in light blue over enlargement of 1880 Elliminyt parish plan, with boundary of Colac Town Common in red. Note partial development of western end of the Common (Department of Lands and Survey Melbourne, 1880).

Only 500 acres of the Common remained by September 1878, and as around fifty applications for three-acre licenses were expected at the next sitting of the Colac Land Board, it was anticipated that the whole area would be taken up by the end of the year. There was still much evasion of the Act going on, and the Land Board planned to strictly enforce residence and other requirements for the remaining licenses (*Colac Herald*, 13 September 1878). In October, as a result of the curtailment of the Common area, the number of cattle allowed to be depastured by each licensee was reduced (*Colac Herald*, 22 October 1878:3). The Education Department opened the first State school on the Common in 1878 (*Colac Herald*, 14 May 1878:2).

By 1882 so much of the Common had been selected that the services of the herdsman were finally dispensed with (*Camperdown Chronicle*, 26 July 1882 p.2). Nonetheless, fifty licenses were to be considered at a Land Board sitting in January 1882, when

only 270 acres of the Common remained (*Colac Herald*, 17 January 1882:2). The western part of the Common was still only partially selected at this stage (Figure 10).

In March 1884 112 license holders on the Common were called to show cause at the Land Board why their licenses should not be revoked. The main problem was that they were not resident on their land. The licensees sent a deputation to the Minister of Lands, arguing that living within five miles of the land should be regarded as fulfilling the residence clause of the Act. After a long delay the licenses of the 112 were renewed (*Age*, 4 April 1884:7; *Colac Herald*, 28 March 1884:2; 22 April 1884:3; 27 January 1885:3).

The Colac Town Common was abolished on 23 December 1884 (*VGG*, 2 January 1885, *Gaz.* 2 p.110). A few of the Rural Store License holders took until 1886 to gain freehold on their lots. By this time a total of around 500 3-acre allotments had been created in Sections A to M, Parish of Elliminyt (DS&E, 2002, Elliminyt -2 Parish Plan) (Figure 11).

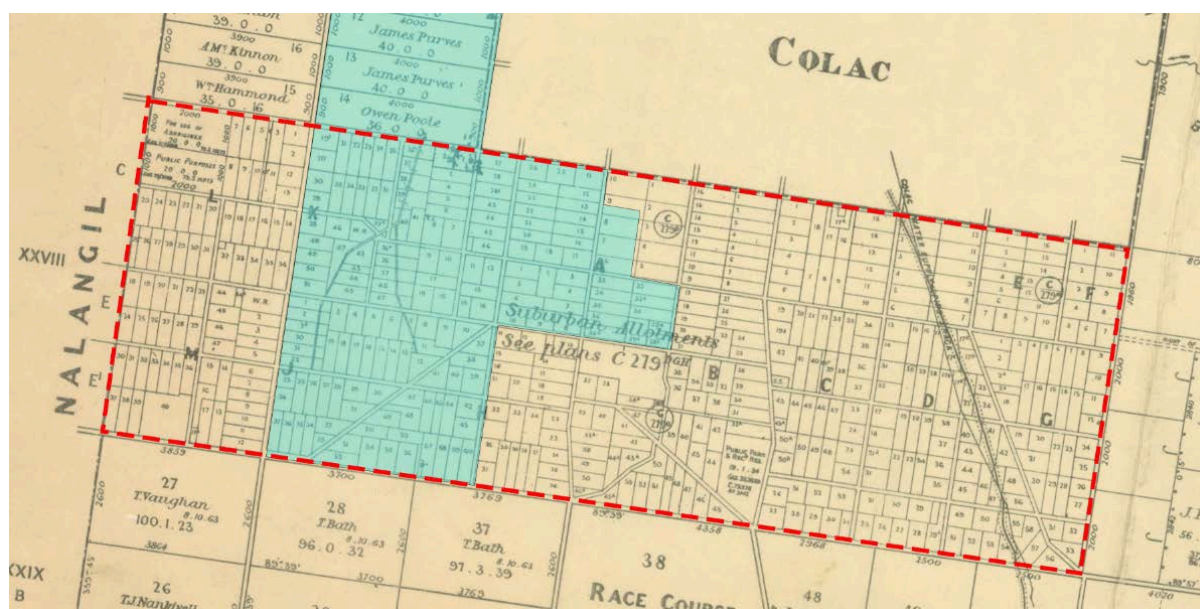


Figure 11: Growth Area shaded in light blue over enlargement of Elliminyt Parish Pan No.1, with area of Colac Town Common outlined in red. This shows the former Common completely selected in Section 47 Rural Store License lots (DS&E, 2002, Elliminyt -1 Parish Plan).

Survey of houses in Growth Area part 5 relative to 1916 topographic map

The houses in Area 5 were surveyed from the road and compared with positions of residences on the 1916 topographic map (Figure 12). The only residence observed within the Growth Area retaining a clear relationship to the Rural Store License era of the Colac Town Common was the cottage at 250 Irrewillipe Road on Allotment 34 Section J Parish of Elliminyt. It should be noted that another intact cottage from that period was observed outside the Growth Area to the west, on Allotment 33 Section L Parish of Elliminyt, part of 260 Deans Creek Road.

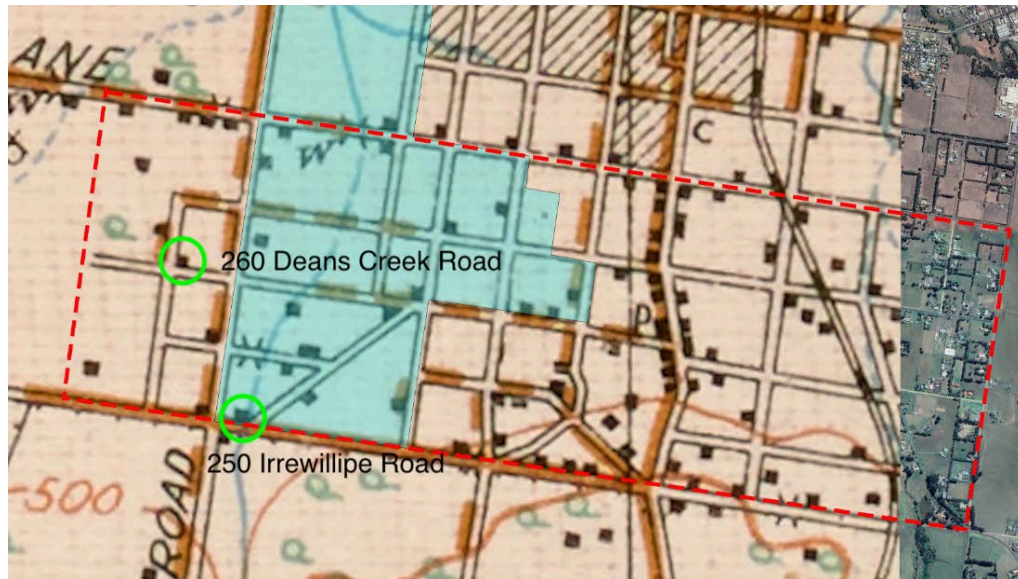


Figure 12: Enlargement of 1916 topographic map with Growth Area shaded in light blue and perimeter of Colac Town Common outlined in red. The two extant residences dating from the period of Section 47 selection are circled in green (Commonwealth Section Imperial General Staff, 1916).

[Detailed history of 250 Irrewillipe Road including cottage on Lot 34 Section J Parish of Elliminyt](#)

THE PRIGG FAMILY'S SECTION 47 SELECTIONS

The first to select Lot 34 Section J Parish of Elliminyt was the Prigg family. Charles Prigg senior operated a brickyard (*Colac Herald*, 6 December 1887:3). The first Colac Town Common Rural Store License grant in the family was obtained by J. Prigg over Lot 43 Section A in 1875. The family also obtained grants for adjacent Lots 44 (E. Prigg), 45 (C. Prigg) and 46 (E. Prigg) in Section A (DS&E, 2002, Elliminyt -2 Parish Plan).

J. Prigg and C. Prigg obtained grants for Lots 34 and 35 Section J in 1881, indicating they had obtained Rural Store Licenses in ca1878. James Prigg (or successor) sold Lot 34 to Louis Brooks in 1885. George Nicholas purchased from Brooks in 1887 (see below) (CT 1707/244).

The Priggs had another focus for their selection in the Common, in Section H, where I. Prigg obtained freehold to Lot 23 in 1883. In 1888 James Prigg sold lots 23-25 of Section H with 4-roomed cottage, shed and outhouses (*Colac Herald*, 31 January 1888:3).

THE NICHOLAS FAMILY'S ACCUMULATION OF SECTION 47 SLOT ON THE COLAC TOWN COMMON - 'BROOKVALE' FARM

The Nicholas family, who owned Lot 34 Section J from 1887, became long-term residents of a number of contiguous lots on Section J starting in ca1877. Martha (Davis) and William Nicholas [sometimes Nickless] senior had moved to Colac by 1857. William was born in Bristol in 1812 and emigrated to Tasmania, before moving to Victoria as an employee of the Henty family. Martha Davis was born in Berkshire

in 1818. William senior was a brickmaker in Colac and died in 1890 aged 78. Their children were John (b. ca1847), William junior (b. ca1849), James, George and Martha junior. Their cousins, also in Colac, were Robert, Alex and George Nicholas (*Age*, 20 May 1857:6; *Colac Herald*, 15 March 1878:3; 19 December 1890:3; 28 April 1913:2).

The Nicholas family was an even more assiduous pursuer of Section 47 licenses than the Prigg family, having by 1885 taken out licenses and gained grants for Lots 23–27 and 32–33, all contiguous in Section J Parish of Elliminyt (Figure 13). The applications of George, William, William and Martha for grants for three acres each were approved in 1881 (*Colac Herald*, 22 February 1881:2). Martha had applied for a license for Lot 24 Section J in January 1877 and obtained a grant after three years of continuous residence on that land in 1880 (Martha Nicholas Lot 24 Section J Lands Department file). James Nicholas obtained a License for Lot 33 Section J in 1882 and applied for a grant in 1885, by which time he had been residing continuously on his adjacent freehold block (presumably Lot 32) for five of six years (James Nicholas Lot 33 Section J Lands Department file).

George Nicholas, labourer, purchased Lot 34 Section J from Louis Brooks in 1887 (CT 1884/767). The 1888 Shire of Colac list of valuations of properties had George Nicholas on 3 acres of pasture and a dwelling at Elliminyt, probably Lot 34. In the same valuation James Nicholas owned 9 acres pasture and a dwelling at Elliminyt, probably Lots 27, 32 and 33. John Nicholas was listed as owning 3 acres pasture at Elliminyt, probably Lot 23 (*Colac Herald*, 7 February 1888:1).

It appears that James Nicholas began to accumulate various family lots in Section J under his own name in the 1890s, and that these lots were transferred to John Nicholas in the early twentieth century. James Nicholas, then farming of Warrion, took over ownership of Lot 34 in 1899. John Nicholas, labourer of Colac, took over in 1903. (CT 1707/244). Similarly, Martha Nicholas's freehold of Lot 24 Section J was transferred to James Nicholas in 1890 and to John Nicholas in 1903 (CT 1256/150). James was a farmer at Yeo, a few miles to the east of Colac, when he died in 1923 (*Argus*, 15 January 1923:16).

John Nicholas's farm may have been named 'Brookvale'. His eldest daughter Grace Nicholas was living at 'Brookvale' Elliminyt when she married T.G. Williams of Shepparton in 1911 (*Colac Herald*, 13 January 1911:2). William Nicholas, second son of William and Martha, died at Elliminyt in 1913 aged 64. The funeral procession departed from John Nicholas's residence at Elliminyt (*Colac Herald*, 25 April 1913:2). John Nicholas's wife Annie also died at Elliminyt in 1913 (*Age*, 38 January 1913:1). When brother James died in 1923, probate of his estate went to John Nicholas, retired farmer of 'Brookvale' Elliminyt (*Argus*, 15 January 1923:16). This was probably the period when the extant dairy building on Lot 34 was constructed.

John Nicholas died at the age of eighty in 1927. At his death he owned all of the properties that had been selected by his various family members in Section J and a few other adjacent lots besides, totalling 30 acres 3 roods and 5 perches. (Figure 13) The lots selected by the Nicholas family were 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 32 & 33, Section J (DS&E, 2002, Elliminyt -2 Parish Plan). Lots 34 & 35 of Section J had been selected

by the Priggs and later purchased by the Nicholas family, and Lots 51 and 52 of Section H had been purchased from the Scott family.

On John Nicholas' land when he died was an "old" weatherboard house of six rooms. Presumably this was the extant cottage at 250 Irrewillipe Road. This house is an assembly of three two-roomed cottages put together in an L shape with skillions added, and it is possible the component parts were moved on to this lot once the various holdings became a single farm. At John Nicholas's death the property was valued at £803 (John Nicholas probate papers, 1927; *Age*, 10 September 1927:22). Lot 34, and presumably the rest of John Nicholas's surrounding lots, passed out of the ownership of the Nicholas family after his death in 1927 (CT 1884/767).



Figure 13: Enlargement of Elliminyt Parish Plan No.2 with John Nicholas's holdings at his death in 1927 shaded in green. The current cadastral boundary of the property 250 Irrewillipe Road is outlined in blue (DS&E, 2002, Elliminyt -2 Parish Plan).

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