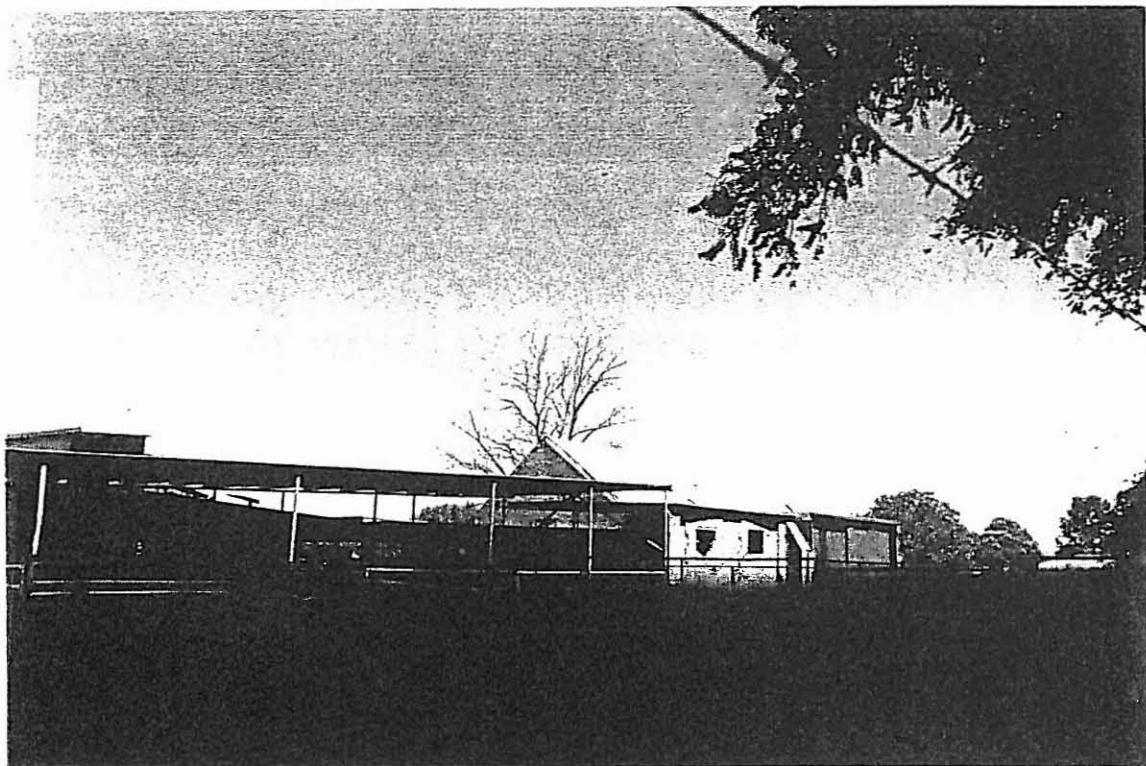


**BACCHUS MARSH HERITAGE STUDY.**

Ref: 174

Richard Peterson Architect &amp; Conservation Consultant. Daniel Catrice Historian 1994.

**NAME:** Bacchus Marsh Abattoirs and Meats Pty. Ltd.**PREVIOUS NAME:** Woolpack Inn.**ADDRESS:** Avenue of Honour (SW cnr Woolpack Road).**TITLE DETAILS:****USE:** Abattoir.**PREVIOUS USE:** Hotel and stables.**SIGNIFICANT DATE:**      **CONSTRUCTION DATE:** 1850      **SOURCE:** 4 & 7**ALTERATIONS/ADDITIONS:**      **DATE:**      **SOURCE:****DESIGNER:** ?      **BUILDER:**      **SOURCE:****CRITERIA:** H1; H6; H1, So3.**HISTORIC THEME:** Industry; transport; community life.**DESCRIPTION:**      **STYLE:** Colonial Regency.      **STORIES:** 1      **DETACHED.****MATERIALS:**      **WALLS** Brick & Sandstone      **ROOF** Iron      **STRUCTURE** Lb.**CONDITION:** Reasonable.      **INTACTNESS:** Stables: good.      **THREATS:** Demolition.**SIGNIFICANT INTACT ELEMENTS:****MATERIALS. FORM.****OUTBUILDINGS. WALL DECORATION. SIGNS. EQUIPMENT. WINDOW.****ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITE/RUIN.****TREES.****SIGNIFICANCE:****TYPE:** HISTORICAL. SCIENTIFIC.**LEVEL:** STATE.**DESIGNATION EXISTING:** NIL.**RECOMMENDED CONTROL/NOMINATION:** HBR. RNE. PLANNING SCHEME.**MAP NO:** R2.05      **SURVEY:** RP, GV, AR.      **DATE:** 24.1. & 27.8.94**NEGS:** 14.5-7, 32.2-24.

**HISTORY:** James Elijah Crook, first proprietor of the Woolpack Inn, settled in Bacchus Marsh in 1841, and soon after, held a licence for a lodging house on the Portland Road.<sup>1</sup> About 1845, Crook built the first Woolpack Inn, a slab building of eight rooms. Here, from 1846, members of the Werribee Hunt would gather to toast the hounds before setting off in pursuit of the native wildlife.<sup>2</sup> Here, also, from 1847, was Bacchus Marsh's first post office, with J.E. Crook, Postmaster.<sup>3</sup> He also became auctioneer, then farmer, and established a coach service to the gold fields.

In 1850, a new Woolpack Inn was erected for J.E. Crook. Built of brick and stone, the Inn was said to be more like a "stately country villa" than a public house.<sup>4</sup> A travelling correspondent for the *Argus* agreed, describing the establishment as "a magnificent house for a country village - the stables, unequalled in the colony".<sup>5</sup> The stables, also built in 1850, accommodated twenty horses. A small moulded effigy of Crook's face peered benignly at these equine lodgers, and in the hotel proper, the real J.E. Crook dispensed fiery colonial liquors to thirsty patrons. The Inn was noted for its cellarage and the comfort of its rooms. Door and window frames were made of cedar, and some of the walls featured murals of landscapes and castles.<sup>6</sup>

J.E. Crook resided at the Woolpack Inn for several years, then leased the premises to various licensees, including Robert Pyke, George Galpen Reeves, Henry Living, and Alfred Ottoway.<sup>7</sup> In 1851, Crook established a coach service to the goldfields, and between 1851 and 1853, his hotel was used as a Court of Petty Sessions.<sup>8</sup> Business gradually moved from the east end of Bacchus Marsh, and in 1862, the Woolpack Inn lost its licence and closed.<sup>9</sup>

After 1862, Crook pursued an interest in horse-breeding. The stables, now part of the Woolpack Estate, were used to accommodate his horses, the most notable of which was Saladin, a winner of the Australian Cup. By 1880, additional stables were erected with boxes for sixty horses (demolished).<sup>10</sup> James Elijah Crook died in 1889. The former Woolpack Inn and stables, and two and three-quarter acres (1ha) of land, were sold to Albert Miller in 1896. Miller let the stables as a hay and corn store.<sup>11</sup> In 1910, the property was leased to Edward Simpson for use as an abattoir. After 1927, the abattoir was owned by W.R. Vigor. The disused Woolpack Inn was (mostly) demolished in 1931, after it had

<sup>1</sup> Moore and Oomes, *Bacchus Marsh: A Pictorial Chronicle*, p.12.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p.6.

<sup>3</sup> Williams, *A History of Bacchus Marsh and its Pioneers*, p.79.

<sup>4</sup> Osborn, *The Bacchus Story*, p.37.

<sup>5</sup> *Argus*, ?? March 1853.

<sup>6</sup> Osborn, op.cit., p.37.

<sup>7</sup> *Cole Collection of Hotel Records*, State Library of Victoria.

<sup>8</sup> Paynting and Grant, *Wheels in Victoria*, p.33; *Back to Bacchus Marsh*, 1957, p.7.

<sup>9</sup> Moore and Oomes, op.cit., p.12.

<sup>10</sup> *Bacchus Marsh Express*, 18 September 1880.

<sup>11</sup> Williams, op.cit., p.79.

become "unofficial doss house" for itinerants.<sup>1</sup> Bacchus Marsh Meat Supply have been here for over twenty years.

**VISUAL DESCRIPTION:** A gable-roofed brick commercial stables building of three bays, parallel to the Avenue of Honour, with a skillion extension to the south-west corner. There is a timber roof structure, mezzanine floor joists and dressed and tooled sandstone quoins to corners and openings, which also have dressed sandstone cills. There are four(?) wrought iron cross tie rods terminating in 'S' stays. Some posts are in their original position, others are evident from the foundation stones, and mortices cut in the underside of the upper joist.

At the west end is a dovecote, within the roof structure, with a timber structure forming part of the floor and boxes. In the south-west corner is a gablet over a gallows. This has a crab winch and pulley, certainly used for raising carcasses for butchering. Opposite, near the north-east corner is another winch over an iron-clad, firebrick lined boiling down vat in the north west corner, bearing the inscription "MARTIN'S DREADNAUGHT PATENT YARRAVILLE".

The surviving timber posts, supporting part of the roof structure, and evidence, from the early illustrations, suggest that this section was probably originally the strappers room. An early etching,<sup>13</sup> appears to show this part as the full extent of the building, the stables possibly being a later addition.

The sub-floor structure (ie. under the relatively recently installed raised floor in the western two thirds of the building, while the eastern third has cement rendered walls) has morticed and tenoned joints. It reveals the layout of the stalls. There were ten on each side, twenty in total, indicated by the posts separating them. The bricks are handmade and original: 220 x 105 x 60mm. There is one original louvred window.

The roof springs from an irregular dressed sandstone stringcourse on the south wall. Some of these stones on the south elevation have traces of signwriting ("LIQUORS, SPIRITS, PORTS", and scrolling). This may be the string course visible in illustrations of the Woolpack Inn itself.

External walls are rendered to half way up and formerly whitewashed. Over the north door is a sandstone bas-relief carved keystone of a bull's head with the date '1850' and indistinct letters 'J.E. Crook'. Other doors are in the east and west ends with two large windows and a smaller window in the north wall. One of these has been blocked up. The skillion-roofed section contains two stalls each with separate entrances, possibly horse boxes.

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<sup>1</sup> Osborn, op.cit., p.37.

<sup>13</sup> Moore & Oomes. p.13.

A two-bay section of (the hotel?) brick wall survives in front of the north-east corner of the stables. This has brick quoins. Another masonry remnant survives south-east of the stables, about a 1m cube. There is a grindstone lying near the Avenue of Honour boundary. There is therefore, a high probability of the survival of other archaeological evidence relating to the Woolpack Inn.

There are various mature trees and a cypress hedge along Woolpack Road. (North of the Avenue of Honour is a timber Italianate house).

(Note: The Woolpack Inn itself, was a charming Colonial Regency five-bay, double-storey, hip-roofed town house, with an impressive round-headed doorcase with fan and side lights. It had a stringcourse at first floor level and quoins at corners. A gable-roofed outbuilding is shown at the west side rear and a simple double-fronted, hip-roofed cottage is linked to the hotel with a crenellated wall).

**COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS:** Point Cook Homestead stables, 1853. There are an extraordinary seven known pre-gold rush buildings in Bacchus Marsh. (refs: 153, 172, 191, 218, 249 & 354). Comparable stables buildings in Victoria are:

- Point Cooke Homestead, stables (1853), basalt.
- 37 Walsh Street, South Yarra, stables (c1857)
- Rosedale Hotel, stables (1858?)
- Merino Downs, near Casterton, stables (date??) brick.
- Cobb & Co staging stable, Buangor (c1860)
- Guildford Hotel, stables (1860s).
- Plough Inn, Tarrawingee, stables (c1864)
- Werribee Park, stables (1867).

These stables are earlier than any of these.

**SIGNIFICANCE:** Built in 1850, of state level historical significance as rare pre-gold rush industrial building. (Potentially) the earliest surviving commercial stables in the state.

The stables are historically significant in providing evidence of the early development of commercial stables in Victoria, and locally of the abattoir industry. They illustrate early transport facilities in Victoria, on the route to the goldfields. They embody the earliest settlement of Bacchus Marsh and its way of life. They are also socially significant to Bacchus Marsh as a well known focal point and early meeting place at the junction of the Geelong and Ballarat Roads.

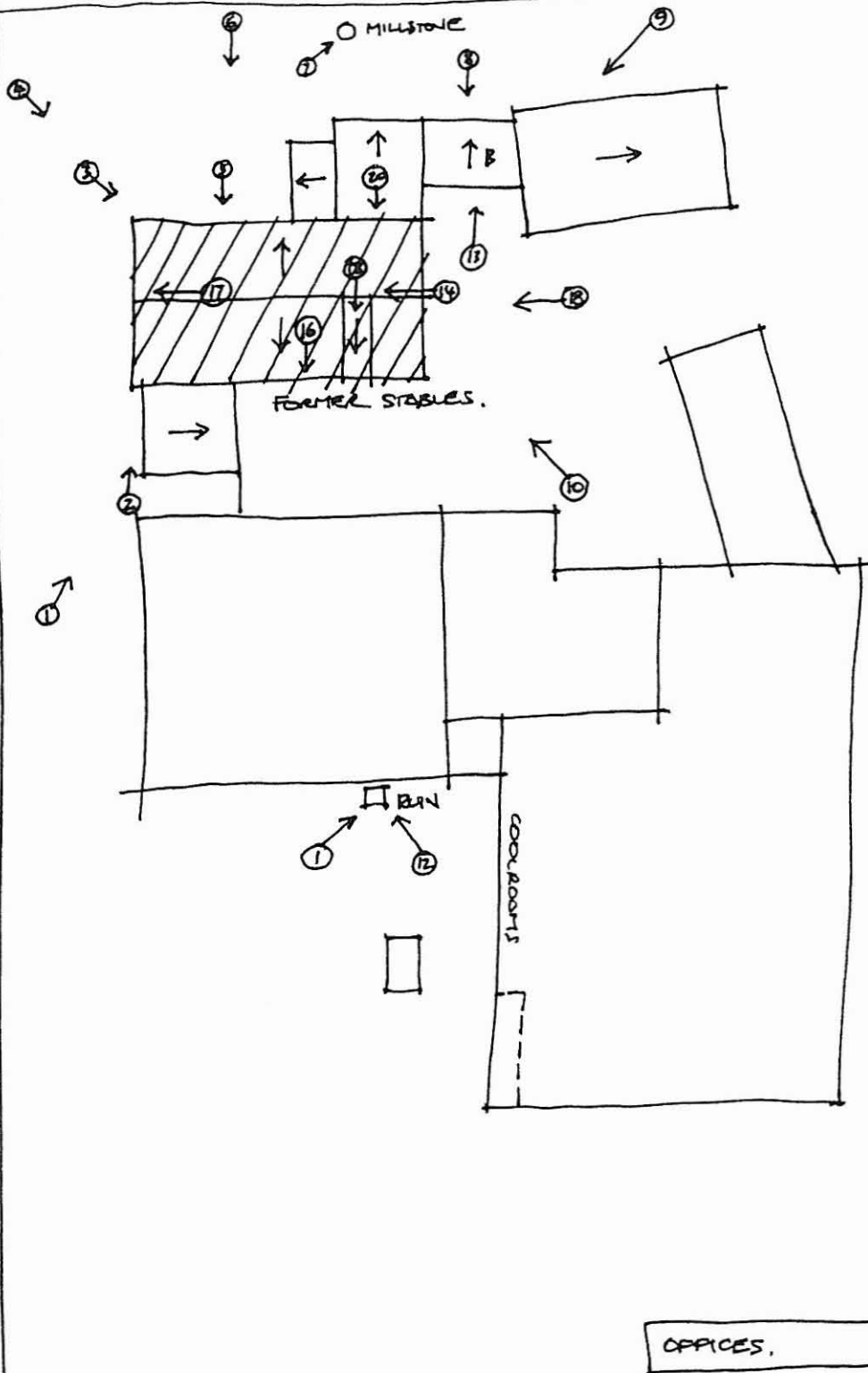
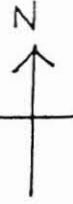
**INTACTNESS:** Good. The building has had considerable alteration at different times, however the entire form of the stables, most of original roof frame, a window and various

items of equipment and decorative elements survive. There is nothing to suggest these elements are necessarily later than 1850. Surviving elements include: west gable end (except a blocked former opening, wall apex and a small timber perch for the birds to roost) and dovecote, winch and boiling batt, winch, pulley, gallows, sub-floor structure (morticed & tenoned joints), whitewashed render (to half way up) to walls, louvred window, signwritten sandstone blocks, carved and dated keystone. The roof structure has been partly rebuilt over stringcourse level. Bargeboards have been removed. The stalls have been altered, parts of the walls reconstructed and a section converted for use as an abattoirs. The yard is on fill, possibly debris of the former hotel.

**CONDITIONS & THREATS:** Potential demolition due to expansion of the abattoir. A structural survey by an appropriate expert structural engineer is needed urgently, to assess the structural cracking. The keystone has been defaced and relaid.

GEELONG →  
WOOLPACK ROAD (FORMER GEELONG ROAD)

ENTRY ←



FORMER WOOLPACK INN STABLES.  
LOCATION OF PHOTOGRAPHS.  
RP. 27.8.94.