

Heritage Overlay No.: 019
Citation No.: 018
Place: Cornwall Park Stud

Other Names of Place: Former: ‘Gnotuk Park’ (or ‘Notuk Park’) farm, guest house; former: ‘Toolern Park Stud’.
Location: 2389-2485, Diggers Rest-Coimadai Road, Diggers Rest
Critical Dates: Construction: 1897. Major internal remodelling: 1960s, 1980s.
Existing Heritage Listings: Identified as a ‘place of interest’ in Western Region, Rural Heritage Study (M20).¹
Recommended Level of Significance: LOCAL



Statement of Significance:

Cornwall Park Stud, 2389-2485 Diggers Rest-Coimadai Road, Diggers Rest, is significant as a moderately intact example of an unusual Federation styled main house and former coach house buildings associated with the turn of the century break-up of the *Melton Park* estate. Although the interwar Bungalow styled cottage appears to have been relocated to this site, it now

¹ ‘Rural Heritage Study, Western Region’ (Context Pty Ltd, Western Region Commission, 1994), p.176

contributes to the setting of the place. One of the prime pastoral and farming properties in the district, the (former) *Gnotuk Park* property became more prominent when its main homestead was adapted for use as a guest house in the early twentieth century.

The main house at Cornwall Park Stud, Diggers Rest-Coimadai Road, is architecturally significant at a LOCAL level (AHC D.2). It demonstrates original design qualities of an unusual Federation style. These qualities include the prominent, elongated gable roof form that traverses the site, together with the substantial gable that projects towards the rear, the minor verandah gable that projects towards the front and continues along the side and towards the rear and the front verandah formed as an extension of the main roof. Other intact or appropriate qualities include the asymmetrical composition, single storey height, surviving slate tile roof cladding with terra cotta ridge decoration (verandah gable), hipped roofed wing (possibly representing a significant early addition), two prominent face red brick, strapped and corbelled chimneys, modest eaves, timber verandah posts with projecting capitals and decorative solid curved timber brackets, open timber lattice fretwork valances between the corner verandah posts, rectangular bay window with timber framed casements and highlights, paired timber framed double hung windows, turned timber finials on the gable ends, timber ventilators in the gable ends, stuccoed gable ends, and the terra cotta ridge decoration on the gabled verandah.

The former coach house/stables at Cornwall Park Stud, 2389-2485 Diggers Rest-Coimadai Road, is architecturally significant at a LOCAL level (AHC D.2). Although altered and converted into a residence, it still demonstrates original design qualities of the Federation era. These qualities include the elevated gable roof form (with attic space) and the side single storey hipped roofed wing. Other intact or appropriate qualities include the asymmetrical composition, horizontal timber weatherboard wall cladding, face brick and multi-corbelled chimney, modest eaves, timber framed multi-paned windows, and the timber framed single door opening on the hipped wing.

The nearby interwar Bungalow styled cottage, although possibly relocated to the site, also contributes to the significance of the setting of the place.

Cornwall Park Stud, at 2389-2485 Diggers Rest-Coimadai Road, is historically significant at a LOCAL level (AHC A4, B2). Known as ‘Gnotuk Park’ for most of its history, it is one of the best-known of the Melton farm properties established in the historic break-up of the large pastoral estates at the turn of the twentieth century. The property had been part of the well-known *Greenhills* and *Melton Park* estates, at various times associated with Victorian identities Sir Samuel Gillot, the Hoadley family, and Denis Gowering. During the ownership of Robert Ennis the property became a local centre for innovation in agricultural machinery, with various patented devices trialled on the property. The large homestead, built for grazier J Black in 1897, was used by the Swan family as a guest house for holiday-makers in the 1930s and 40s, further adding to the local prominence of the property. Its late twentieth century conversion into a horse stud, and its community use as part of the Djerriwarrh Festival under the present Trescowthick ownership, continue the historical prominence of the property within the local community.

The homestead and coachhouse complex is of social and aesthetic significance at a LOCAL level (AHC E1). ‘Gnotuk Park’, as it is still known by many locals, was identified as being a place valued by the community at a heritage study forum.

Overall, Cornwall Park Stud, Diggers Rest-Coimadai Road, is of LOCAL significance.

Description:

Cornwall Park Stud, at 2389-2485 Diggers Rest-Coimadai Road, Diggers Rest, overlooking the Djerriwarrh Creek, has a landscaped setting with open grassed areas, several mature and substantial exotic and native trees and perimeter garden beds, and consists of a main house, converted coach house/stables and an interwar Bungalow cottage.

The asymmetrical, single storey, horizontal timber weatherboard, unusual Federation styled house is characterised by a prominent, elongated gable roof form that traverses the site, together with a substantial gable that projects towards the rear and a minor verandah gable that projects towards the front and continues along the side and towards the rear. A minor hipped roof wing that also projects towards the front may have been introduced at an early period. A verandah is also situated at the front (between the gabled verandah and the hipped wing), formed as an extension of the main gable roof. Most of the roof forms are clad in introduced deep red corrugated Colorbond, although the gabled verandah that extends along the side and to the rear is clad in slate tiles, the original roof cladding for the entire house. Two prominent, face red brick, strapped and corbelled chimneys adorn the roofline. Modest overhangs are features of the eaves.

Early features of the design include the verandahs at the front and side. They are supported by early timber posts with projecting capitals and decorative solid timber curved brackets. The corner posts also feature open lattice timber fretwork valances.

Other early features of the design include the rectangular bay window with timber framed casements and highlights, paired timber framed double hung windows, turned timber finials on the gable ends, timber ventilators in the gable ends, stuccoed gable ends, and the terra cotta ridge decoration on the gabled verandah.

The gabled verandah is interrupted at the front by an introduced flat roofed walkway that extends along the side.

Nearby is the former coach house/stables building that has been converted into a residence. This building appears to also date from the Federation period and has an elevated gable roof form (with attic space) and a side single storey hipped roofed wing. These roof forms are clad in introduced tiles, which have replaced original galvanised corrugated steel cladding. An early face brick and multi-corbelled chimney adorns the roofline towards the rear. Modest overhangs are features of the eaves.

Other early features of the former coach house/stables are the horizontal timber weatherboard wall cladding, and the timber framed single door opening on the hipped wing. The large multi-paned window forming a gabled dormer, other multi-paned windows and the large ground floor window openings have been introduced/altered as part of the conversion of the building into a residence.

Near the south-western corner of the main house is a small cottage. This single storey, horizontal timber weatherboard, interwar Bungalow styled building has a gable roof form that traverses the site, together with a central verandah gable that projects towards the rear and another gable at the rear. These roof forms are clad in corrugated sheet metal. The lack of a front chimney and the elevated nature of the building suggest that it has been relocated to this site.

Other early features of the design include the timber framed double hung windows, timber framed front doorway, broad eaves, and the timber ventilator/s in the gable end/s.

The timber verandah posts and fretwork valance appear to have been introduced, replacing earlier timber posts.

The garden, thought to have been completely removed in the 1980s, does appear to retain some older trees. A row of mature trees, probably cypresses, has been removed from the creek side of the house. There is now an attractive and large Chilean or pencil willow (*Salix humboldtiana*)² in the garden, an unusual planting for the region but not old or significant. The golden cypress beside it is of modest size and not significant.

History:

History of the Place

While the complete subdivision and sale of *Melton Park* to small farmers did not occur until around the First World War, in 1897 owner Harvey Patterson subdivided off and sold the present property. The prime property, beside the Djerriwarrh Creek, was purchased by a John Black, 'gentleman, of *Harkwood*, Bay Street, North Brighton.'³ Black is believed to have come from Gnotuk in the Western District.⁴

In February 1897 the *Melton Express* reported that Mr Black was building 'a large house' on the property.⁵ The Melton Shire ratebooks of 1898 and 1899 record John Black, 'grazier', as owner-occupier of the property, described as 'house and 782 acres, Yangardook'.⁶

In 1900 Black was engaged clearing, or thinning, the box forest, advertising for teams to cart 'Box blocks' from *Gnotuk Park* to Melton railway station at 30/- a truck.⁷ Carters were invited to apply to J Black personally.

Black sold the property on 28 January 1902 to William Hyem of Melton, grazier.⁸ Reports of sales of fat lambs, ewes, and bullocks by Hyem of *Gnotuck Park* Coimadai at Newmarket market reveal that at this time the property was used for fat lamb and beef production.⁹ In February 1904 there was a report of a fire through Hyem's paddock, adjacent to Djerriwarrh Creek.¹⁰

Shire ratebooks in the period 1904 to 1906 record William Hyem 'grazier', as the owner-occupier, of a house and 760 acres at Yangardook. The Net Annual Value of the property had by this time risen from £200 in 1899 to £228 in 1904, which would relate either to general rate increases, or improvements, such the house extension, or the cottage to the south of the homestead.¹¹

² Lord, E, Willis, J, *Shrubs and Trees for Australian Gardens* (Lothian, Melbourne, 1982) describe this species as 'stiffly upright, narrowly columnar of more recent introduction to Australian gardens.' (p.75)

³ Certificate of Title

⁴ Mr Mel Swan, undated typescript (M&DHS).

⁵ *Melton Express*, 20/2/1897

⁶ Shire of Melton, *Ratebooks*, 1898, 1899.

⁷ *Melton Express*, 15/9/1900

⁸ Certificate of Title

⁹ *Melton Express*, eg, 17/5/1902.

¹⁰ *Melton Express*, eg, 16/2/1906.

¹¹ Shire of Melton, *Ratebooks*, 1904-1906

In February 1906 William Hyem Esq advertised a clearing sale of all stock, implements, household furniture etc, as he was selling *Gnotuk Park* and leaving the district. These included 25 dairy cows and heifers, a pure Lincoln ram, 32 pure Shropshire and Southdown ewes, and 7 tons of oaten hay.¹²

Gnotuk Park was purchased on 15th March 1906 by Robert Ennis, farmer, of *Merryfield*, Barrake (near Charlton).¹³ The property was held under mortgages.¹⁴ A farmer, Ennis invented a device for seed drills to ensure the seed was sown at a selected depth to increase likelihood of germination.¹⁵ The *Express* thought the invention warranted a lengthy report:

‘Ennis’s Patent Depth Regulator is a regulating device attachable to any make of seed drill and fills a long-felt want. As farmers know every seed drill sows unevenly and too deeply to such an extent that a portion of the seed never sees daylight again. Being sown too deep the seed moulds away and thus the farmer, after tilling his land at great expense losses his seed, manure and labour. The loss to farmers in Australia every year from too deep sowing is enormous as every farmer knows. A plant of corn has knots in its stem at short intervals near its basil roots. Consequently, if the seed is sown too deeply one, two or even three of these knots are under the surface of the soil and of course, every knot of root shoot is thereby weakening the plant which in dry seasons will dry off much quicker than the plants given roots only.

Ennis’s Patent Regulators should fill this want. They consist of a small roll attached to each shoe with two arms or carriers to carry the wheel which is attached to sides of hose with small bolts, the top bolt being supplied with a long hole in the arms which provides for the raising or lowering the wheels to fit the hose for sowing at the proper depth. The wheel can be set to either the back or the front of the hose, simply by reversing the arms. Each hose running on its own wheels lessens the draft and saves the points.

Having a wheel on every hoe enables each to work quite independently of the other. For instance, one hoe might be on a rise and its mate at the bottom of a furrow and both are sowing at the same depth, impossibility without a depth regulator.

Mr Ennis has worked on his invention on his own seed drill for some time and has filed testimonials from several farmers in Victoria. He intends holding a Public Trial on his farm at an early date.¹⁶

The depth regulator was first demonstrated on *Gnotuk Park* on 15 March, and again the *Express* covered the event:-

‘... the trial held by Mr Ennis on the 15th of the Seed Drill Regulators was a success. Mr Kenyon, Engineer for Agriculture and Mr Lee, Superintendent of Agriculture and several local farmers were present; all of who were greatly interested and acknowledged the Regulator did all that it was claimed to do by the inventor, Mr Ennis, who explained a great many features. But as it was Bulla Election Day, many

¹² Melton Express, 24/2/1906

¹³ Place names of Victoria – Les Blake 1977

¹⁴ Certificate of Title

¹⁵ Starr, J, *Melton: Plains of Promise* (Shire of Melton, nd, c.1985), pp.223, 230

¹⁶ Melton Express, 9/3/1907

said if another trial was held they would be pleased to attend. Mr Ennis therefore advertises the Trial to take place on Thursday next, 28th inst., at *Gnotuk Park*.¹⁷

In the Ennis era *Gnotuk Park* was also used to demonstrate other local innovations to agricultural implements. In July 1911 the *Express* gave notice of a ‘public trial’:-

‘J Payne and Son Improved Patent – Double chaff filling dumper will be trialled at Mr Ennis’s farm on Saturday July 16th at 2 o’clock. All interested persons especially invited to attend. This is a new invention for filling chaff into bags and takes very little power to drive it.’¹⁸

In February 1909 the *Express* carried an advertisement for the sale of Mr Ennis’ *Gnotuk Park*, of ‘760 acres, or thereabouts, of agricultural and grazing land’:-

‘Fully 700 acres of this choice property can be cultivated and about 130 acres is lying fallow and 130 acres in stubble from which only two crops have been taken. The property is securely fenced with sheep proof fencing and wire netted on the western, northern and portion of the eastern boundaries and is subdivided into twelve paddocks. The land, which has a frontage to the Djerriwarrh Creek is of undulating character, well sheltered by box and gum and adjoins the *Melton Park Estate* and is considered by good judges to be the equal of any property in the district.

Homestead - weatherboard of six rooms in good order, lath and plastered, slate roof with detached kitchen, scullery and maid’s room.

Nicely situated with picturesque view over Djerriwarrh Creek, surrounded by garden and orchard.

Water laid on from a 1200 gallon water tank.

Outbuildings include 8 stalled stable; chaff house; machinery shed; coach-house; man’s room; harness room.

The situation is within 3 miles of the Toolern Vale township and 9 miles to Melton or Bacchus Marsh by splendid road and altogether the property should command the attention of intending purchasers having every improvement necessary for the working of the place.’¹⁹

At the auction bidding started at £6/10 per acre and very quickly rose to £8/10, when it was passed in for private sale.²⁰ It did not sell. Again in February 1912 the property ‘700 acres of land, stock and hay’ was put up for sale, due to Mr Ennis giving up farming owing to ill health.²¹ Again, there was no sale and in January 1914 the property was put up to let for three years.²² Finally, in February 1915 the *Express* announced that Ennis had let his farm, *Gnotuk Park*, for three years ‘to Mr Hoadley jun of jam fame. Mr Ennis will be greatly

¹⁷ *Melton Express*, 23/3/1907

¹⁸ *Melton Express*, 8/7/1911

¹⁹ *Melton Express*, 20/2/1909

²⁰ *Melton Express*, 27/2/1909

²¹ *Melton Express*, 10/2/1912

²² *Melton Express*, 31/1/1914

missed from the district. Mrs Ennis has acted as an organist for the church service since the inception of services by Mr Baillie.’²³

The reminiscences of Mrs RH Summers, nee Rene Ennis, daughter of Robert Ennis – in an undated paper in the Melton and District Historical Society tell that at Charlton her father and his father had bred Merino sheep as well as farming.²⁴ Mrs Summers had in her possession a silver cup which was won at the Charlton Sheep Breeders’ Show for the Champion Merino sheep.

Mrs Summers records that Ennis brought to *Gnotuk Park* a HV McKay harvester with which he believed that he had harvested the first crop of wheat in this part of Victoria ‘others already farming here believing that wheat would not ripen being so far south.’ (The complete loss of memory amongst the farming community is surprising, as Toolern Vale wheat had won prizes internationally in the 1850s, and wheat growing had only been replaced by dairying and mixed farming in the 1860s and 70s.)

Mrs Summers thought that the property had originally been named after a place in the Western District, and was an aboriginal for ‘black fella’s camp’. (Miss Moira Smith, of *Strathulloh*, remembered seasonal workers referring to it as ‘no tucker park’.) Mrs Summers recalled that two or three large gum trees stood at the left-hand side of the entrance gate, from which aborigines had cut out the bark to make a canoe or huts.

Mrs Summers’ memories of the house are as follows:

‘The roof was of slate. The drawing room was large and had a corner fire place. In addition to this room, the main section of the house consisted of a dining room, five bedrooms, hallway, etc. The other section of the house had a kitchen, bathroom, scullery, laundry and a large cellar. This section jutted out on the eastern side of the house and was enclosed by a paling fence.’

Ennis’s remained at *Gnotuk Park* until 1914. The Ennis family moved to Brighton where the family home was named *Gnotuk*. Robert Ennis died there in 1926.²⁵

In July 1920 the *Express* announced that Mr Gordon Swan ‘who has been leasing *Gnotuk Park* for some time’ has recently purchased the property.²⁶ The property appears in fact to have been owned by his father-in-law John West ‘grazier’, who died on the property in 1926:

‘Mr John West, 70 years of age, was born at Scarsdale near Ballarat. He followed a journalistic career for a time with the Mooroopna *Yeoman* and was Secretary of the hospital there. He then went in for grape growing in the Goulburn Valley and also had a nursery. Later he wrote for the *Argus* and became Agricultural Editor of the *Australasian*. He went to England with the late Hon Alfred Deakin and attended the Imperial Conference on behalf of the *Argus*. He was also sent by the Government to California to investigate irrigation schemes there and he gave much valuable

²³ Melton *Express*, 20/2/1915. The Ratebooks refer to Mr James Hoadley as the occupying tenant. The church referred to was the Toolern Vale Wesleyan Church. The early Hoadley company made jams and many related products, and was famous through its Rising Sun trademark; in 1913 Hoadley’s Chocolates formed, resurrected in the post war period by candy bars, notably the Violet Crumble. (Nairn, B, Serle, G, *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, Vol.9, MUP, 1983, pp.312-3)

²⁴ M&DHS, record prepared by Mrs Edna Barrie.

²⁵ Property files, J. Bilszta.

²⁶ Melton *Express*, 24/7/1920

information on his return, both by lectures and written articles. Mr West also had a political turn of mind and made several unsuccessful attempts to enter both the State and Federal Houses...’.

West was buried at the Melton Cemetery. Title to the property was immediately transferred to his widow Milvine Lawson West, his daughter Mabel Sylvia Swan, and his sons William Robert West and John Melville West.²⁷ Gordon Swan and his family ran *Gnotuk Park* as a grazing property with cropping as a side line.²⁸

Mr Mel Swan confirms that the Swan family occupied the property c.1919. Gordon Swan (his father) employed local men to cut most of the mainly grey box timber on the property. Suitable timber was split for fencing and provided for properties in the district, and the rest cut into foot long lengths and carted to Melton South railway station for consignment to Melbourne for firewood.

In the 1920s a reasonable acreage was sown to oats, the grain sold to Melbourne grain merchants and the straw pressed and also sent to Melbourne for manufacture of paper. The late 1920s saw a change to English Barley. Also about 300 cross ewes and Dorset Horn rams produced fat lambs sold at Newmarket. The running of sheep for fat lamb and wool production was continued by the Swans until they left the property in 1963. During the late 1940s Angus beef cattle were introduced, vealers being sold at Newmarket.²⁹

Early twentieth century maps identify the property as ‘Notuk Park.’³⁰

In about 1935 until the late 1940s *Gnotuk Park* became even more well-known as it was developed by the Swans as a Guest House.³¹ This was Mrs Swan’s initiative to help make ends meet during the depression. During the late 1930s to late 1940s the property provided holiday accommodation for convalescent guests and holidaying children, providing riding lessons and trail rides. There were also tennis courts and a nine hole golf course. The bungalow sleep-outs were built in the 1930s to help accommodate guests.³² In 1941 the *Melton Express* carried a report of a schoolboy on holiday drowning while bathing in a dam on the property.³³

From about 1939 to the late 1940s Mel Swan established a poultry farm, the eggs and meat sales providing ancillary income after years of depressed stock prices. When finished the sheds were sold to neighbour Anderson on the north side of the Toolern Road, put on sleds and pulled over intact (where some still remain).

The Swan family was active in the Toolern Vale and Coimadai communities. Mrs Swan was a foundation member of the Melton CWA and became State President of that organization. Both Mr and Mrs Swan were associated with the foundation of the Melton Golf Club. In 1963 the family purchased a property at Swanpool in the Benalla-Mansfield area; Mrs Swan senior intended to move to Melbourne. A send-off honored the contribution the owners of *Gnotuk Park* had made to local community life:

²⁷ Property title.

²⁸ Interview with Hugh Barrie, May 2005

²⁹ Swan, *op cit*.

³⁰ Army Ordnance Maps, Sunbury District: 1916 & 1938

³¹ Leo Tarleton, personal conversation, 27/12/2001

³² Swan, *op cit*

³³ *Melton Express*, 25/1/1941

‘The farewell evening extended to the Swan family last Friday evening really taxed the accommodation of the Toolern Vale hall. Besides the large gathering of Toolern Vale and Coimadai residents there were also friends and relatives and representatives from sporting bodies from Gisborne, Melton and Bacchus Marsh. This in itself showed quite clearly the esteem in which this family is held by all. The evening took the form of dancing and vocal items by Shirley Wallace and Mr George Vallance of Darley were well received.

Later in the evening Mr Bert Storey invited the guests of honour on to the stage along with the following representatives: - Mr George Robinson, Toolern Vale, Cr Stan Brocchi of Gisborne, President of Region 14 Rural Fire Brigade Association and Cr E. Holt of Coimadai. Each spoke in glowing terms on the excellent citizenship shown by the family during their 45 years residence at *Gnotuk Park*.

Special words of gratitude were extended to Mel on his excellent contribution both as a conscientious rural fireman and to the regional Fire Brigade Association during his term as original secretary also on being an active playing member of the Coimadai Cricket Club some time ago and a highly respected Coimadai school committeeman, while Mrs Swan was a member of the Coimadai Mothers’ Club. It was said, with a great deal of truth that at every local fire outbreak Mel Swan was the first there and the last away. Compliments were extended to Mrs Swan senior on her marvellous art of basketry, which is notable statewide.

As a farewell memento from their many friends, Mrs Swan senior was made the recipient of an electric steam iron, Miss Joan Swan an overnight case and Mr and Mrs Mel Swan a lovely silver tea and coffee service to which Mel responded most feelingly.

A home made supper was served and the evening concluded with the singing of Auld Lang Syne and the National Anthem.³⁴

Despite land falling to the south-west, the property experienced problems with drainage. A low lying swamp area in the centre was formed into a lake feature on the adjacent *Melton Park*. The local paper and Council reports in 1900 refer to drainage works in the area. A drain was eventually cut across the property in a south westerly direction to Djerriwarrh Creek. After WW2 this drain was blocked at a number of points. A ‘dry’ creek (which ran only following good rain) commenced at a point near this drain and ran through *Melton Park*, across *Kipenross* and Bulmans Road, to Arnolds Creek. Much of this system has been altered following various subdivision earth works. The ‘problem of Swan’s Sour adjacent to the Diggers Rest Coimadai Road’ was still taxing the Council and the Soil Conservation Authority in 1969.³⁵

George Lang, an Essendon plumber, and his wife Shirley purchased *Gnotuk Park* from the Swans. The Langs lived in the homestead and the farm was worked by a number of tenant farmers. Lang gutted the interior, removing walls to enlarge rooms and altering kitchen and bathrooms. At some stage during their occupancy the coach house was renovated to take guests.³⁶ A new tile roof replaced a corrugated iron roof, and multi-pane windows have been introduced (including into the hay loft opening). Otherwise the exterior, including

³⁴ *Melton Express*, 30/5/1963

³⁵ *Melton Express*, 10/4/1969

³⁶ Information supplied by Lorraine Gillespie, April 2005

doors and corbelled chimney appears to be original or sympathetic. Most of the orbs on the gable-end finials (similar to those on the homestead building) have been removed or weathered away since the 1970s.³⁷

Dennis Gowering (of the formerly well known Kevin Denis Motors) became the owner of the property in the 1980's. He undertook extensive renovation of the building back to its early form, removed all fencing, and removed the garden trees, beginning afresh. New horse boxes, horse paddocks, miles of fencing, new schooling yards, sale ring and other structures related to its new stud use, appeared. Gowering did not stay long owing to ill health. When he sold *Gnotuk Park* he is thought by locals to have taken the name with him, preventing its continued use on the property. The owner advises that since 1986 a partnership between Norma, Lady Trescowthick and Sir Donald Trescowthick have developed the estate under the name Cornwall Park. The Trescowthicks made some alterations, including glassing in part of the verandah.

The property is open to the local community during the annual Djerriwarrh Festival when 'Singing with the Stallions' has become an established feature on the Festival program.

The property (still known as *Gnotuk Park* by long-term residents of the Shire) was identified as a place of local historical significance in the Community Workshop undertaken as part of Stage One the Melton Heritage Study.³⁸

Contextual History

The property is situated on Crown Allotments 58 and 59, Parish of Yangarook, some 782 acres purchased 20th August 1855 by J&R Nowlan.³⁹ The surveyor noted the 'dray track from Bacchus Marsh' (the present Coimadai-Diggers Rest Road) impinging over the boundary of the property; it continued past Greenhills and northwards to Gisborne. The surveyor described the eastern part of the property as 'open forest of eucalyptus, casuarinas, and cherry tree.'⁴⁰

The property was soon incorporated into the *Greenhills* pastoral estate, which dominated the Toolern Vale area. It was part of a larger property that came to be known as *Melton Park*, subdivided off from *Greenhills* and sold first to solicitor Sir Samuel Gillot, and then to NSW pastoralist Harvey Patterson c.1889.⁴¹

Around the turn of the century historical changes were imminent. A new generation of farmers restlessly surveyed the vast pastoral estates surrounding them. In Melton there had long been a belief that the area was being held back by the large pastoral estates surrounding the town. In 1897 Sir Rupert Clarke Bart had mused in Parliament about cutting up 40,000 acres of his estate to lease to dairy farmers. He was under local pressure to make land available for farming, and declared he was keen not to 'disappoint public expectations.'⁴² In 1898 the Victorian Municipal Directory entry for Melton Shire made the first of a series of unprecedented reports on movements by big local landholders such as Rupert Clarke, Harry

³⁷ Photographs (c.1970), Mr Frank Greig, personal conversation 2/5/2005

³⁸ Held at the Willows Historical Park, 7/9/2001.

³⁹ Parish Plan, Parish of Yangarook.

⁴⁰ Parish Plan, Parish of Yangarook, L.2035

⁴¹ Cameron, A, 'Melton Memoirs' (M&DHS), p.24

⁴² *Sunbury News*: 31/7/1897, 7/8/1897, 4/9/1897.

Werribee Staughton, and Harvey Patterson (of *Melton Park*) to sell and lease large portions of their estates to small farmers and graziers.⁴³

However the property that became known as Gnotuk prime land. It was not sold to a yeoman farmer, but to Brighton ‘gentleman’, John Black.

Thematic Context / Comparative Analysis:

Shire of Melton Historical Themes: ‘Pastoralism’; ‘Farming’; ‘Horses, Hounds & Hares’; ‘Other Industries’.

Comparable Places in Shire of Melton:

Architecturally, although altered and extended, the main house at Cornwall Park Stud is a representative and contextually substantial example of a timber Federation style in the Melton Shire. Other comparable examples of the type include:

- *Bonnie Doon*, 339 Tarleton Road, Rockbank (place No. 438). Possibly one of the most intact examples, this dwelling is characterised by steeply pitched hipped roof forms, together with a broken back return verandah. The timber house has two red brick chimneys with rendered and projecting tops and early turned timber posts with decorative timber brackets and timber fretwork valance.
- *Stoneleigh*, 196 Sinclairs Road (place No. 435). A similarly altered example of this Federation stylistic type, *Stoneleigh* is asymmetrically composed and features hipped and gable roof forms, and a return bullnosed verandah. The roof forms are clad in deep red painted galvanised corrugated steel. Early face brick chimneys with corbelled tops adorn the roofline and there are modest eaves. A flat roofed verandah porch and door opening, and some corner windows have been introduced.
- Main house, 65 Griegs Road (place No. 372). A variant of the type being a Federation homestead example, this dwelling is predominantly intact and is characterised by a gambrel roof form, together with a broken back encircling verandah. A timber building, the house also features two minor gables that project within the main roof at the front and comprise rectangular bay windows below the verandah. This house appears to be more intact overall.

Historically, in terms of its early function as a guesthouse, the main house at Cornwall Park Study appears to be the only surviving former guesthouse in the Shire. Other comparable places that provided accommodation in the early twentieth century in the Melton Shire and which survive today are:

- Sundowner Caravan Park Office (former Rose and Crown Hotel), 2057 Western Highway, Rockbank (place No. 461). A nineteenth century building originally designed in a Victorian style, the existing building is more reflective of interwar design today.

⁴³ *Victorian Municipal Directory*, 1898, and following years.

- Diggers Rest Hotel, Calder Highway, Diggers Rest (place No. 067). A two storey face brick early twentieth century hotel building still serving its original purpose, the hotel is a local heritage landmark in a rural setting.

Condition:

Good

Integrity:

Moderately intact.

Recommendations:

Recommended for inclusion in the Melton Planning Scheme Heritage Overlay.

Recommended Heritage Overlay Schedule Controls:

External Paint Controls:	<i>No</i>
Internal Alteration Controls:	<i>No</i>
Tree Controls:	<i>No</i>
Outbuildings and/or Fences:	<i>Yes – former coach house/stables & intewar Bungalow cottage.</i>



'The Coachhouse'