

Heritage Overlay No.: 062
Citation No.: 146
Place: Mount Kororoit Farm Homestead Complex

Other Names of Place: Moylan's former *Brookville* homestead.
Location: 2-88 Leakes Road, Plumpton
Critical Dates: First house/kitchen unknown (probably c.mid 1850s); present homestead c.early 1870s; shearing shed 1897.
Existing Heritage Listings: None.¹
Recommended Level of Significance: LOCAL



Statement of Significance:

Mount Kororoit Homestead, 2-88 Leakes Road, Plumpton is significant as an important surviving example of a nineteenth century farm complex defined by the intact grouping of Victorian styled timber buildings (main house, detached kitchen/cottage, small outbuilding,

¹ The property was assessed as being of Regional heritage significance in Johnston, C, 'Rural Heritage Study: Western Region of Melbourne' (Context Pty Ltd, Melbourne Western Region Inc, 1994), pp.34, 161. Johnston described the property as being:- 'Of regional if not state significance, as a fine example of a pastoral property retaining an extraordinary range of buildings and features.' The dry stone walls of the wider property (at least) are definitely thought to be of State heritage significance, and are recommended as being of such in the Melton Dry Stone Walls Heritage Study.

stables, and shearing shed) within a rural setting enhanced by the layout and location of buildings and yards, and as further distinguished by the dry stone walls, peppercorn and palm trees and the quarry faced sheep holding yard beside the Kororoit Creek. The property was built up in the mid to late nineteenth century by John Moylan; the house was likely built in the early 1870s.

Mount Kororoit Homestead, 2-88 Leakes Road, is architecturally significant at a LOCAL level (AHC D2, E1). Collectively, the small complex defined by the main house, detached kitchen/cottage, small outbuilding, stables, and shearing shed, demonstrate original and early design qualities that reflect the era and technology when the farm was established.

The main house has architectural significance as it demonstrates original design qualities of a Late Victorian style. Possibly the second main house on the site, these qualities include the hipped roof form and encircling verandah, single storey height, and the rendered brick chimney with elaborate dentillated coursing and cornice. Other intact or appropriate qualities include the asymmetrical composition, horizontal timber weatherboard wall cladding, galvanised corrugated steel roof cladding, timber framed front doorway, and the timber framed double hung windows with six paned upper sashes.

The rear detached timber kitchen/cottage has architectural significance as it demonstrates original design qualities of a Victorian vernacular style. These qualities include the elongated hipped roof form and the rear skillion wing. Other intact or appropriate qualities include the single storey height, unpainted and lapped galvanised corrugated steel roof cladding, horizontal timber weatherboard wall cladding, lack of eaves, substantial masonry chimney, timber framed doorway and the timber framed window openings.

The rear small outbuilding has architectural significance as it demonstrates original design qualities of a Victorian vernacular style. These qualities include the steeply pitched hipped roof form clad in green painted galvanised corrugated steel and the horizontal timber weatherboard wall cladding. Other intact or appropriate qualities include the single storey height and the two timber framed door openings.

The stable building has architectural significance as it demonstrates original design qualities of a Victorian vernacular style. Although substantially deteriorated, these qualities include elongated hipped roof form clad in galvanised corrugated steel, large timber posts that support the structure and which are particularly visible on the open, longitudinal side, and the horizontal timber weatherboard wall cladding.

The 1897 shearing shed has architectural significance as it demonstrates original design qualities of a Victorian style. A large landmark building reflecting its functional importance for the farm, these qualities include the elevated gable roof form flanked by skillion wings and the elevated single storey height. Other intact or appropriate qualities include the horizontal timber weatherboard wall cladding, galvanised corrugated steel roof cladding, small, horizontally proportioned timber framed multi-paned windows on the gable ends and as clerestorey lights on the upper side walls of the main central gabled section, vertical timber boarded doors and the turned timber finials on the gable ends. Internally, the timber stud construction, open timber deck floor and sheep pens defined by the timber framed and clad partition walls is typical for the shearing shed design of the nineteenth century and very early twentieth centuries.

Mount Kororoit Homestead, 2-88 Leakes Road, has aesthetic significance at a LOCAL level (AHC G1). It demonstrates important visual qualities that reflect the nineteenth century

character of the farm complex, as defined by the layout and location of buildings and yards, dry stone walls, quarry faced stone holding yard beside the Kororoit Creek, peppercorn and palm trees and the water tower behind the main house.

Mount Kororoit Homestead, 2-88 Leakes Road, is historically significant at a LOCAL level (AHC A4, H1). Together with the Grant's *Glen Elgin*, the Beaty family's properties in the north of the Shire (*Pinewood*, *Glencoe* and *Rocklands*), and Hopkins' *Rocklands* at Truganina in the south, it was one of a few successful nineteenth century large farms / small grazing enterprises in the Shire of Melton; with them it was a major contributor to the dry stone wall heritage of the Shire. It is significant for its association with the Moylan family, noteworthy participants in the sporting, social, religious, and political life of the Melton district. The property was always known for its hospitality. Its paddocks were said to have been a favourite hunting ground in Victoria, and in this capacity the property hosted a Vice-Regal party. The property had bred coursing dogs for the Sir WJ Clarke's Diggers Rest Plumpton; later, during John Moylan junior's presidency of the Melton Coursing Club the paddocks of Mount Kororoit Farm hosted greyhound coursing. John Moylan junior also kept racing horses. In 1913-14 he also hosted a significant early aviation event on Mount Kororoit Farm. The Moylan family had also been active in the local Catholic church, and both John senior and Michael junior had been Councillors of the Shire of Melton. He had also been known locally for his inventiveness, evidence of which may survive on the property in the form of the partial remains of a wool press. Some of the very well constructed all-stone dry stone walls on the homestead block are very rare within Victoria for their placement of large stones above smaller fieldstones; their condition attests to the effectiveness of this technique. Others are very rare examples within Victoria of the 'galloway' or 'filigree' form. They are significant parts of a broader Mount Kororoit Farm dry stone wall precinct that is of State significance.

Mount Kororoit Homestead, 2-88 Leakes Road, is socially significant at a LOCAL level (AHC E1). It was identified as a place of heritage significance to the local community in a community forum held as part of this heritage study.

Overall, Mount Kororoit Homestead, off Mount Kororoit Road, is of LOCAL significance.

Description:

This report relates to the Mount Kororoit Farm homestead block, which is part of the much larger Mount Kororoit Farm property. It comprises the homestead complex, shearing shed, and some dry stone walls. The bluestone cottage (Place No.144) and dry stone walls situated on other parts of the property are the subjects of separate reports. In addition, much of the larger Mount Kororoit Farm is included in a major dry stone wall cultural landscape identified in the concurrent and related Shire of Melton Dry Stone Walls Study.

Mount Kororoit Homestead, accessed from Mount Kororoit Road (although its address is Leakes Road), Plumpton, is a small farm complex that consists of a number of late nineteenth century timber buildings (main house, detached kitchen/cottage, shearing shed, stables, and small outbuilding), dry stone walls and other fencing, and native and exotic trees within a rural setting. The property is situated on the south side of the road, east of the Kororoit Creek. However, this citation includes the highly significant dry stone wall at the west end and on the north side of Mt Kororoit Road. This very finely built, high and long wall, is built in a very similar style as a wall to its south on the title of the Mt Kororoit homestead. The two walls may have been constructed at the same time.

Main House: The principal building on the site is the main house, which is possibly the second main house on the site. The single storey, asymmetrical, horizontal timber weatherboard, Late Victorian styled house is characterised by a hipped roof form and an encircling verandah. These roof forms are clad in lapped, green painted galvanised corrugated steel. An early rendered brick chimney with elaborate dentillated coursing and cornice adorns the roofline. Narrow overhangs are features of the eaves.

The encircling verandah has been altered. It is supported by introduced square timber posts and has an introduced concrete floor that appears to be blocking subfloor ventilation for the house.

The asymmetry of the design is especially realised on the front façade. There is an early, timber framed doorway that is flanked by a pair of early timber framed double hung windows on one side, and a single window on the other. These windows also have six paned upper sashes. Similar early windows feature on other elevations.

Adjoining the house at the rear is an introduced skillion addition. It is clad in horizontal timber weatherboards.

Outbuildings:- Detached Kitchen/Cottage

Behind the main house is an early detached kitchen/cottage building. It is believed to have been the first house on the property.² It has an elongated hipped roof form with a skillion wing at the rear. These roof forms are clad in unpainted and lapped galvanised corrugated steel. There are no eaves. The roofline is adorned by an early masonry (fieldstone and brick) chimney. The walls are clad in horizontal timber weatherboards that show signs of deterioration throughout. There is an early timber framed doorway and window openings, although the window on the skillion wing appears to have been blocked up.

Small Outbuilding: Nearby the main house is also another small outbuilding. It has a steeply pitched hipped roof form clad in green painted galvanised corrugated steel. The building has horizontal timber weatherboard wall cladding and two timber framed door openings and is Victorian vernacular in style. The wall cladding has deteriorated. The floor also appears to be at ground floor, probably exacerbating the deterioration of the timber fabric. The southernmost of the two rooms was apparently a meat room, having a chopping block, fly-wire screens, and interior (asbestos cement) lining.

Stables: The single storey, horizontal timber weatherboard, Victorian vernacular styled stables building forms another important building in the small farmstead precinct. It is characterised by an elongated hipped roof form clad in galvanised corrugated steel. The building is supported by large mortised timber posts, which are particularly visible on the open, longitudinal side. Overall, the building shows evidence of structural creep in the substantial lean, and deterioration in wall fabric. It has a stone cobbled floor and old almond and peach trees beside it.

On the north side of the stable is a garage, and further to the north again a former blacksmith which retains a remnant shingle roof and blacksmiths bellows. It has a new concrete floor.

All of these buildings form a rear courtyard to the house. Evidence of the original large underground tank is also likely to survive in this area, likely near to the tankstand.

² *ibid*, p.161

A Fowl House or Pigsty at the front of the shearing shed has collapsed, only the hipped roof remains. Of drop slab walled construction with cobbled floor, it had vernacular architectural interest.

Shearing Shed: Another important building in the farm complex is the four-stand shearing shed. It has a central, elevated gable roof form flanked by skillion wings. These roof forms are clad in galvanised corrugated steel. The contextually large Victorian styled building is clad in horizontal timber weatherboards and has small, horizontally proportioned, early timber framed multi-paned windows on the gable ends and as clerestorey lights on the upper side walls of the main central gabled section. Other early features include the vertical timber boarded doors and the turned timber finials on the gable ends. Internally, the timber stud construction, open timber deck floor and sheep pens defined by the timber framed and clad partition walls is typical for shearing shed design of the nineteenth century and very early twentieth centuries. The rear extension is modern. A painted timber plaque inside the gable has a date '1897'. There are stone walls behind and in front of the shearing shed.

Landscape Features: Mount Kororoit Homestead has an important rural landscaped setting nearby the Kororoit Creek. Contributing to this setting is the arrangement of the yards and layout of buildings, which is also distinguished by the early dry stone walls, post and rail fences and the mature peppercorn and gum trees surrounding the farmstead. A significant landmark that assists to define the location of the main house is the mature palm tree. An early water tower (tank-stand) nearby the main house (behind the butcher) is another landmark. A ford over Kororoit Creek connects the homestead to the bluestone cottage and weatherboard ruin west of the creek. There is reputed to have been a sheep-race/woolwash on the creek.

To the south of the immediate farm complex (but on this same title), is a sizeable bluestone quarry. The quarry is large, and given that there is only one small bluestone building (on the opposite side of the creek), it may have been the source of material for some of the extensive dry stone walls on the property. It may also have been the source of stone to be crushed for 'metal' used for late nineteenth / early twentieth road construction. A dry stone wall created between it and the creek has since converted the quarry into one boundary of a stock holding yard. The quarry also served as the household tip, with domestic rubbish, and also the remains of a woolpress (which could be the innovative one referred to in historical sources as the invention of gifted amateur engineer Michael Moylan).

History:

The Mount Kororoit Farm homestead complex is situated on Crown Allotment B, Section 27, Parish of Kororoit. This parcel of 159 acres 2 roods and 8 perches, was purchased from the Crown by 'T & J Moylan', on 9th June 1854 for £638.0.4 (c. £4/acre).³ T & J Moylan also purchased the similar sized property immediately south - Crown Allotment C at the same time.

Thomas, John and Michael Moylan were brothers from County Waterford Ireland.⁴ John and Michael apparently set up on the land as soon as they purchased it, for the 1856 Voters Roll lists both John and Michael as being registered in the Keilor A and Keilor Plains divisions, and each owning property of value exceeding £1000.⁵

³ Parish Plan, Parish of Kororoit; and Torrens Application files.

⁴ Alex Cameron, 'Melton Memoirs' (M&DHS), p.4

⁵ J Bilszta, M&DHS, Moylan family research notes.

Crown Allotment B, Section 27 Parish of Kororoit, on which the homestead was established, and adjacent CA C, were the first of numerous contiguous allotments that the brothers purchased from the Crown and from neighbours. In 1855 John Moylan purchased from George Morris (at c.£5/acre) the 102 acre allotment immediately north of his homestead.⁶ In 1858 he purchased a 131 acre allotment that Martin Sullivan had just purchased from the Crown; this allotment, situated on the south east corner of Holden and Leakes Road, had no water frontage and was purchased for c. £3.10 acre.⁷ In the same years 'John Moylan of Brookville', also purchased two properties of total area c.280 acres (Crown Allotments B and C, Section 1, Parish of Holden), which were also contiguous with his northern boundary.⁸ In 1864 the Crown sold the allotments upon which Mount Kororoit was situated (Allotment D, Section 1 Parish of Holden, and Allotment E, Section 27 Parish of Kororoit): John Moylan was the purchaser of these allotments, c.179 acres in area.⁹

In the meantime Michael Moylan was purchasing small new allotments to the immediate south of the main Moylan holdings. These were being off-loaded by the victims of the Victoria Freehold Land Society, which had subdivided Section 22 and part of Section 27 (Kororoit) into small and awkwardly shaped allotments. These purchases occurred as early as 1855 and continued until at least 1866.¹⁰ In 1879 John Moylan (who the conveyancing document advises was 'illiterate and unable to write') sold to Michael Moylan several of the family allotments, including the Allotment C, Section 27, Kororoit, which was adjacent to the homestead that Michael had established from his previous purchasers. This bluestone property overlooking the Kororoit Creek and set in a terraced garden of large trees, named *View Monte* by Michael, is now in ruins. Many of its mature exotic trees remain.

The Moylans had come to stay, and were building up a large farm and grazing property. It was not all smooth sailing however. In 1870 John and brother Thomas (whose address was always given as 115 Little Lonsdale Street West¹¹) let the Supreme Court resolve a dispute they had over the original two allotments in which they had an 'undivided moiety'. The court awarded the homestead allotment to John and that to the south (allotment C) to Thomas. In 1874 (through intermediary William Sincock), John purchased allotment C from Margaret, the widow and administrator of Thomas' estate.¹²

In 1871 John Moylan had taken out a mortgage of £500 on his homestead block; this was discharged just a few years later - in 1874.¹³ It is possible that, as often occurred, this mortgage was used in part for property improvements, including construction of the weatherboard homestead that remains on the site today. Cameron records that John Moylan had a family of five sons and two daughters.¹⁴

In 1876 the *Australasian* 'Travelling Reporter' provided a lengthy description of the activities and development of the property:

⁶ VPRS 460/P0/33210. Torrens Application (John Moylan): 5/1/1902

⁷ *ibid*

⁸ *ibid*

⁹ Parish Plan, Parishes of Kororoit and Holden.

¹⁰ VPRS 460/P1/32416, Torrens Application (Michael Moylan). Also TA No.2933. One of the persons who sold to Michael Moylan was a Mr Tudgey. Perhaps this was the 'Mr Tugby' who is thought to be buried on View Monte (Mr Charles Finch, personal conversation 24/1/2002). Tudgey may have stayed on to work on the property.

¹¹ Moylans Lane was named after his family (Finch, *op cit*)

¹² VPRS 460/P0/33210. Torrens Application (John Moylan): 5/1/1902

¹³ *ibid*

¹⁴ Cameron, *loc cit*

‘... we pass along the foot of a lofty hill called Mount Kororoit, and after travelling for about a mile and a half arrive at the fine grazing farm belonging to Mr John Moylan, who is resident of about 21 years standing. This property contains about 2000 acres and it is divided into 17 paddocks, the total length of fencing being 23 miles. Though now this farm is used entirely for grazing, a few years back it was usual to have 60 or 70 acres under crop every season and good returns were generally obtained. Within the last few years however it has been found more profitable to feed sheep and cattle, a less outlay being required for labour and the return being more certain.

The number of sheep kept is 2500, principally crossbred between merino ewes and Leicester rams. Mr Moylan is gradually working to the pure long wool class and has for several years been using imported Tasmanian rams from Mr Field’s celebrated flock, many of the sheep at the present time being nearly pure Leicesters. Some few years back, a trial was made with Oxford and South Downs, but though they were found to be very hardy and gave a good carcass, the wool was much shorter and less valuable than that obtained from animals with the Leicester blood in them. According to Mr Moylan’s experience Leicesters are the most profitable kind of sheep being hardy in their constitutions yielding a large quantity of wool and producing a heavy carcass for the butcher.

There are about 90 head of cattle, a mixed herd but the Hereford breed predominating as this class is found to be more hardy and better adapted to the locality which is very much exposed, than shorthorns or other breeds. A good proportion of the herd are milking cows and dairying is carried on to some extent, buttermaking being the specialty.

About 70 acres of the pasture has been improved by the sowing of rye grass and white clover and it is the intention of the proprietor to lay down more land with them every season.

The proprietor’s residence is a neat and commodious building, very pleasantly situated, the various outbuildings being substantial and conveniently arranged. In front of the residence is a garden and orchard of about two acres planted with a good variety of fruit trees, a belt of blue gums and native oaks [casuarinas] which are doing very well and answer the purpose admirably. Provision is made for a good supply of water by means of a large underground tank, measuring 16 feet in diameter by 18 feet in dept, bricked and cemented, which is never dry.¹⁵

This report confirms that the present ‘commodious’ homestead, as well as the property’s extensive walls and fences, were built by 1876. The date of construction cannot be definitively ascertained from Melton Shire ratebooks, which only begin in 1872, and do not contain descriptions of improvements to properties at this stage. It is also difficult to tell from variation in net annual valuations, as land parcels are so frequently divided up between members of the large Moylan families, many of whom have the same names. However John Moylan’s homestead allotment is almost certainly that listed as being 349 acres (the total of allotments A, B & E of Section 27, Parish of Kororoit). It is highly likely that the house was built between 1872-1876, as this parcel’s valuation was £66 in 1872, and by 1878, by which time the house is known to have been built, it had risen significantly to £86.¹⁶

¹⁵ The *Australasian*, 28th October 1876

¹⁶ Shire of Melton, *Ratebooks*, 1872-1899

The report goes on to note that:

‘Mr Michael Moylan, a son of the proprietor [John Moylan], is a very clever self taught mechanic and devotes a good deal of his spare time to the making of useful articles required about the farm and also shoes all the horses. The work that has been accomplished by him would, in many cases, not discredit a professional engineer and in several instances he has displayed a good deal of ingenuity and perseverance.’¹⁷

Alec Cameron also noted that Michael Moylan would have made a first class mechanic, having:

‘made his own wool press which simplifies the work, a model of a reaping machine and the gates of the farm which are light and easy to handle, besides some improvements to the homestead.’¹⁸

The *Australasian* reporter then went on to report on Michael Moylan’s farm immediately to the south:-

‘The adjoining farm belongs to Mr Michael Moylan; a brother to the owner of the last mentioned one and has been occupied by him for about 21 years. About 45 acres are under cultivation this season, but formerly it was usual to have about twice as much cropped every year. The land is subdivided into several paddocks by substantial fences and with the exception of the area under crop is all used for grazing. About 70 head of cattle are kept at the present time – a mixed herd with a good proportion of cows amongst them, whose produce is made into butter. There are several very good farm horses amongst them being a promising colt by Mr Lyle’s Young Lord Clyde and another by Mr Fell’s Scottish Chief.

An acre has been sown to lucerne which is doing very well and furnishes a good supply of food for the pigs who thrive upon it, receiving scarcely anything else except the refuse from the dairy. There is a very comfortable residence on this farm attached to which is a small garden; the various outbuildings are of a substantial description.’¹⁹

During the 1860s the family had also been busy staking out c.80 acre allotments on the opposite (west) bank of the Kororoit Creek that had been opened up for selection. It is difficult to know exactly which Moylans were actually purchasers, as many names are repeated amongst the two generations of the three families. At least one of the selections appear to have been taken up in the names of a second generation family member:- MH (Michael Henry). M (Margaret) Moylan was apparently the sister of Michael.²⁰ MP (Michael Patrick) and T (Thomas) Moylan appear to have been the elder brothers themselves. By the end of the century the Moylan family had also acquired the balance of the allotments originally taken up by the seven other selectors west of Kororoit Creek, as far as Ryans Road.²¹ It would appear in fact that this land was all acquired by the Thomas Moylan family. Thomas Moylan had always given his address as Little Lonsdale Street, but he was somehow able to take up at least one of the selections prior to his death in 1871.²² According to

¹⁷ The *Australasian*, 28th October 1876

¹⁸ Cameron, *loc cit*

¹⁹ *ibid*

²⁰ PROV VPRS 627/P/42 (File 4136/31)

²¹ Shire Map Series (1892), Parish of Kororoit.

²² The *Melton Express*, 21/12/1918; Finch, *op cit*; Shire of Melton, Ratebook, 1899.

Cameron, writing in the early twentieth century, two of the three elder brothers owned farms on the east side of Kororoit Creek, while the farm of one (obviously Thomas) was on the west side of the creek.²³ By the turn of the century the several branches of the family owned all the land north of Finches Road, south of Holden Road, west of Leakes Road and east of Ryans Road.²⁴

Thomas Moylan died in 1871 (his farm on the west side of the creek was put up for sale in November 1873²⁵), and Michael Moylan of *View Monte* died in 1882. In 1879 and again in 1888 John Moylan senior transferred his farm to his sons Michael (the mechanic mentioned above) and John junior. John senior's wife Margaret died in 1885 aged 68.²⁶

John senior died in 1893, aged 83 years. He had been a Melton Shire Councillor, and a Trustee of the Melton Cemetery. He was described in the local paper as being 'highly respected'.²⁷

His sons, bachelor brothers Michael and John junior shared the house with their unmarried sister Elizabeth. The *Express* carried the following report on the property in 1899:

'Brookville the residence of Messrs Moylan Brothers is situated on the east bank of the Kororoit Creek and at the foot of Mount Kororoit. It is a beautiful wooden building containing eight rooms with about an acre of garden which is tastefully laid out near the house with flowers and fruit trees.

There is a plantation of pine and blue gums. Some of the pines were killed during last summer's heat.

The outbuildings which consist of stable, buggy shed, carpenter's shop, store room, etc., are all well worth looking at. There is a place for everything and everything is in its place.

Mr Moylan has had a new wool shed erected which, I am sure may be termed the model shed of West Bourke. Everything that could be thought of is there to lighten the labour of the shearers.

The wool press I may mention can be worked easily by one young man through some patent invention of Mr Moylan's own handiwork.

Mr Moylan keeps to sheep but he also has some cattle. I saw two young shorthorn heifers just calved and had been reared in Gippsland. All would tip the scale at between 9-10 hundredweight.

There is a splendid view in every direction.

The Messrs and Miss Moylan are noted for their hospitality and I am sure they would give anyone a cordial welcome who wished to see their beautiful homestead.

²³ Cameron, *loc cit.*

²⁴ Finch, *op cit.* This is generally confirmed by the 1892 Shire Map Series (except that it shows that several of the northern allotments had been sold to WJ Clarke by 1892).

²⁵ The *Express*, 22/11/1873

²⁶ The *Express*, 31/10/1885

²⁷ Melton *Express*, 29/7/1893

Their paddocks are also the favourite hunting grounds in Victoria.’²⁸

In addition to its size, the beauty of its redgums, mount and creek, and the hospitality of its owners, the property’s plenitude of substantial dry stone walls would have contributed greatly to its popularity amongst hunt clubs.

Michael (the mechanic/inventor) died in 1901 after three days illness, and transferred his substantial real and personal assets to his brother John.²⁹ He was 40 years old. In recording the death, the Melton *Express* commented that:-

‘The deceased had good mechanical ideas and had many things about the place made to his design amongst which was a wool press which one man could operate easily, also self operating gates, etc and also many other things which would take a more able pen than mine to particularize. He was unmarried and resided with a brother and sister up to the time of his death which took place on Monday.

He was also an ex-Councillor of the Melton Shire Council and was much respected by all who knew him.’³⁰

As with all of the John Moylan family, he was interred in Melbourne. His sister Elizabeth, at ‘Mount Kororoit’, died in 1917, aged 66 years.³¹

Bachelor John junior died in 1924, after which a sale notice for the ‘Mount Kororoit Estate, Melton’ appeared in the *Express*:

‘... Mt Kororoit comprises the richest volcanic and red chocolate soils, the greater portion being level to slightly undulating, with nicely sheltered creek gullies. Portions of the land have at times been cultivated and the whole estate is in great heart, thoroughly cleaned up for grazing and carrying luxuriant pasturage.

... The Homestead on No.1 Lot comprises comfortable weather board dwelling of six rooms, kitchen, extensive outbuildings, substantial woolshed and wool press, stabling, machinery and buggy shed etc., all well planned in the homestead yard. Stock yards, large underground tank, garden, ornamental trees, etc.

On Lot 5 there is a structure while all the boundaries of the blocks are fenced, except the line between Lots 2 and 3

‘ ... The Kororoit Creek runs through the Estate affording an abundant supply of beautiful water to all the blocks, except Lot 2, and windmill.

Sale Lots comprised Lot 1 315 acres; Lot 2 284 acres; Lot 3 284 acres; Lot 4 181 acres; Lot 5 251 acres. Lot 6 152 acres. ‘³²

The accompanying Melton Report notes the estate has been in the hands of the family for over 75 years. The Clearing Sale notice lists the estate’s interest in Border Leicester sheep.

²⁸ The *Express*, 30/9/1899

²⁹ VPRS 460/P0/33210. Torrens Application (John Moylan): 5/1/1902

³⁰ The *Express*, 1/6/1901

³¹ The Melton *Express*, 15/2/1917

³² The Melton *Express*, 29/11/1924

John Moylan had bred from ewes of the Sutherland, Staughton and Hodge flocks. A number of Shorthorn cattle and dairy cows were also featured.

In 1905 their southerly neighbour, Margaret (widow of Michael senior), sold *View Monte* to Frederick Finch, a Beaufort labourer who had struck it rich in the ‘Sons of Freedom’ mine at Eurambeen. Mrs Moylan is said to have thought her sons wouldn’t look after it.³³ She died at her son-in-law’s residence in Newmarket in 1918, aged 88.³⁴

Frederick Finch’s son Charles reports that Irishman Steve O’Callaghan was building walls for the Moylans at that time. His son Steve met Frederick Finch during World War One. In 1905 O’Callaghan was camped in the bluestone cottage (Place No.146) that had previously been occupied by Arthur Moylan.³⁵

And so the Moylan families’ association with the properties ended. Ratebooks indicate that there had been approximately five separate dwellings on the property during the nineteenth century. By 1916, as now, there were three: *Mount Kororoit Farm*, *View Monte*, and the adjacent bluestone and weatherboard cottages (Place No.144).³⁶

Visitors had always been made very welcome when they came to visit John and John junior.³⁷ The Moylans had long been associated with the development of the Catholic Church in the locality, and the men were noted sportsmen participating in the early Queen’s Birthday sports held in Melton. (Michael Moylan was one of three foot runners in a hurdle race to break a leg.)³⁸

All had been associated with the Hunt Club meets on the Keilor Plain, including entertaining the Vice Regal party at the Mount Kororoit Farm homestead.³⁹ John junior was also interested in racing and owned several jumpers.⁴⁰

They (along with a great number of the male population of the Melton district) had also been interested in greyhound coursing. The Plumpton Paddock was developed with their assistance, coursing dogs having being bred on the property.⁴¹ Later, John junior was President of the Melton Coursing Club; he allowed the Club to have meetings on his property, and also donated several cups as prizes.⁴²

John Moylan junior appears also to have been active, at least as a host, in the development of early aviation in Victoria. A combination of the Moylans’ technical mindedness, their hospitality, and Houdini’s first controlled sustained Australian flight at nearby Diggers Rest in 1910, were probably the background to a major early aviation gathering held at Mount Kororoit Farm. Photographs dated 1913-14 record the ‘Austin Equitorial Balance Aeroplane camp’ on ‘John Moylan’s Mt Kororoit estate’. This event was probably associated with a local historical record that a plane flew off the top of Mt Kororoit in 1913.

³³ Finch, *op cit*

³⁴ Melton *Express*, 21/12/1918

³⁵ *ibid.* This is likely to have been Michael Moylan’s son Arthur. (Although it is also possible that Thomas had a son by the same name).

³⁶ Army Ordnance Map 1916: Sunbury

³⁷ Cameron, *loc cit*

³⁸ Bilszta, *op cit.*

³⁹ *ibid*

⁴⁰ Cameron, *loc cit*

⁴¹ Bilszta, *op cit*

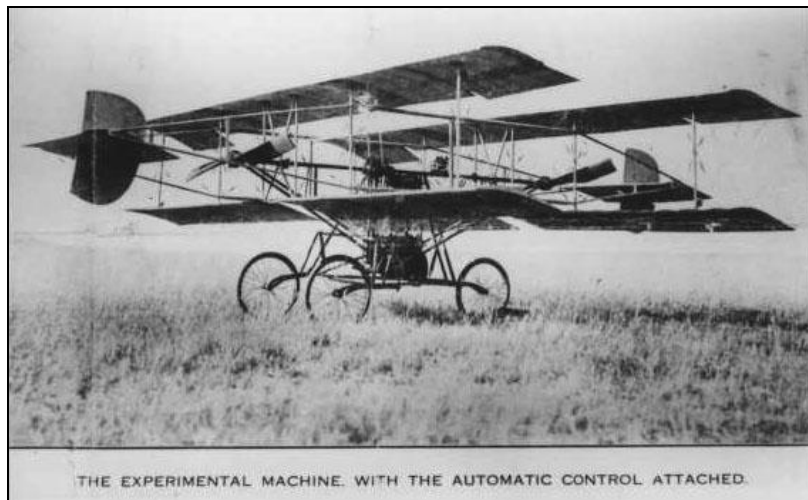
⁴² Cameron, *loc cit*

The photographs show a primitive bi-plane set in a paddock in front of a row of substantial tents (which may have been for aircraft). Captions of the photographs refer to ‘The Experimental Machine with the Automatic Control Attached’.⁴³



(J.T. Collins Collection, La Trobe Picture Collection, State Library of Victoria)

*John Moylan’s ‘Mt. Kororoit’ estate, Melton, 1913-1914.
(Houdini’s plane had been housed in a similar tent a few years before.)*



(J.T. Collins Collection, La Trobe Picture Collection, State Library of Victoria)

John Moylan’s ‘Mt. Kororoit’ Estate, Melton, 1913-1914.

In 1958 Mrs L Shelton sold 375 acres near Mount Kororoit, a portion of the Mount Kororoit estate. It was described as being well fenced into three paddocks, with a good water supply, and two dams, but without improvements. It is reported to have been sold to a Melbourne doctor.⁴⁴

⁴³ Australian National Library ‘Picture Australia’, State Library of Victoria photograph 1093259.

⁴⁴ The Melton *Express*, 8/11/1958

In 1973 photographer John T Collins took a series of photographs of the homestead buildings which would serve as a guide for future restoration work.⁴⁵

Mount Kororoit Farm was identified as being of significance at a community workshop held in association at Dunvegan, Melton, on 7th September 2001.

Thematic Context / Comparative Analysis:

The main dwelling at Mt Kororoit Homestead represents one of few surviving timber Late Victorian styled rural houses in the Melton Shire. Other comparable examples of this type include:

- House, 53-105 McPherson Road, Toolern Vale: this house shares a similar hipped roof form and encircling verandah, with timber framed double hung windows and a central timber framed doorway with sidelights and highlights. There is a gabled addition at the rear and the verandah appears to have been altered. Overall, the design, character, appearance and integrity of this house appears to be similar to Mt Kororoit Homestead.
- *Glengallon*, Greigs Road, Exford. This dwelling has the familiar hipped roof form, encircling verandah, construction and appearance as Mt Kororoit Homestead. There are also timber framed double hung windows, although the front façade features tripartite windows flanking the main timber framed doorway. The lattice verandah valance appears to have been introduced. There is a gabled addition at the rear.
- *Mt Ida* Homestead, 477 Benson Road, Toolern Vale. This house also shares the familiar Late Victorian design qualities with its broad hipped roof form and encircling verandah. There is a face brick multi-corbelled chimney, narrow eaves and timber framed double hung windows, together with a timber framed doorway. The dwelling appears to be moderately intact, with the verandah having been enclosed at two ends.

Other comparable homestead complexes in the Melton Shire considered to have cultural heritage significance include:

- *Glengallon*, Greigs Road, Exford. This property is not on the same scale as *Mt Ida* Homestead. There is a rear shearing shed that does contribute to the significance of the property, comprising a Federation vernacular styled 2-stand galvanised corrugated steel shearing shed having a simple gable roof.
- *Mt Ida* Homestead, 447 Bensons Road, Toolern Vale. This homestead has a Late Victorian styled main house, gabled underground tank, water tank and timber stand, rear hipped timber outbuilding, rare surviving draughthorse stabling and altered shearing shed. The homestead complex is enhanced by the mature Canary Island plums and other exotic trees and plantings that contribute to the landscaped setting. The property is possibly the most comparable locally significant farm complex with Mt Kororoit Homestead.

Overall, Mt Kororoit Homestead represents one of very few surviving nineteenth century farm complexes in the Melton Shire with a contextually large complex of timber farm buildings, stone walls, quarry faced sheep holding yard beside the Kororoit Creek, and the mature palms and peppercorn trees.

⁴⁵ State Library of Victoria: 'Melton: Mt Kororoit' (2/3/1973)

Condition:

Main House, Shearing Shed:- *Good*

Detached kitchen/cottage, small outbuilding:- *Fair*

Stables - *Poor/Unstable*

Integrity:

Predominantly intact (both as a complex & each individual building)

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>Yes – peppercorn and palm trees</i>
Outbuildings and/or Fences:	<i>Yes – dry stone walls, shearing shed, detached kitchen/cottage, small outbuilding</i>

Other Recommendations:

- A Conservation Management Plan for the complex is recommended. This should include dry stone walls.
- Given the unstable state of the stables and dairy outbuildings, it is recommended that a photographic analysis of these buildings be prepared.



Shearing Shed



Early Coach-house / Stable



Drop Slab Fowl House / Pigsty



Homestead Dry Stone Wall

(Excellent condition and integrity, in very distinctive and unusual style, with larger stones on top. The upper courses have spaces in between (to dissuade animals from attempting to scale them, are similar to the Galloway style, rare in Australia.)



Mount Kororoit Farm Dry Stone Wall

(Composite low dry stone wall with post & rail fence was once a characteristic style within the Shire. This and a similar section on Mount Kororoit Road, both on the homestead block, and on Leakes Road on the larger farm property, are now rare remnants.)



Dry Stone Wall south west of Mount Kororoit Farm Homestead

(All stone dry stone wall in the distinctive style, with heavy stones, many quarried, higher on the wall than smaller fieldstones. Kororoit Creek redgums, and property quarry, in background.)



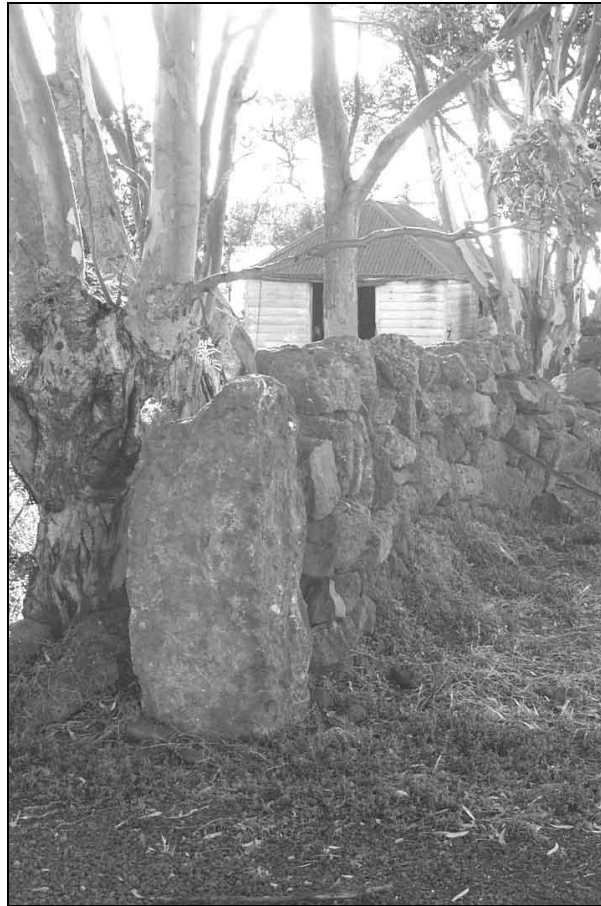
Dry Stone Wall north west of Mount Kororoit Farm Homestead

(All stone dry stone wall, situated on the north side of Mt Kororoit Road, at its western terminus. It may originally have been part of the above wall. It is probably the best wall in the Shire, in terms of its distinctive style, with heavy stones, many quarried, higher on the wall than smaller fieldstones. It is also a long and high wall in excellent condition.)



Dry Stone Wall north west of Mount Kororoit Farm Homestead

(A detail of the above wall.)



Dry Stone Wall west side of Mount Kororoit Road

Gate opening of wall providing access from Mt Kororoit Road to Mt Kororoit Homestead. The technique of using a massive vertical stone as the gate-post appears once to have been quite widespread, although only two examples are known to survive in Melton Shire.



Dry Stone Wall west side of Mount Kororoit Road

Detail of the wall on the west side of Mt Kororoit Road near Mt Kororoit Homestead. This is a rare surviving example in Victoria of an open 'filigree', or 'Galloway' style wall, with the top few courses open, providing an unstable look that dissuaded stock from attempting to jump or clamber over the wall.