

Heritage Overlay No.: 083
Citation No.: 221
Place: ‘Raglan’s Cottage’, High Street

Other Names of Place: ‘Raglan’s Cottage’
Location: 237 High Street, Melton. (Allotment 7, Section 20, Township of Melton.)
Critical Dates: Nineteenth century (c.late 1850s).
Existing Heritage Listings: Western Region Heritage Study.¹
Recommended Level of Significance: LOCAL



Statement of Significance:

Raglan’s Cottage on High Street, Melton is significant as a now rare and prominent nineteenth century building in Melton. Although its renovation in c.1980 required some alterations, the existing external form and construction is a physical embodiment of the development of the residence/store in the nineteenth century. The building has low integrity due to recent renovations.

Raglan’s Cottage on High Street is historically significant at a LOCAL level (AHC A4, B2). It is a rare nineteenth century building in the township of Melton, the only other remaining examples being the churches, the state school, and the buildings associated with The Willows. It is the only non-recent commercial building in Melton. Its rarity, its prominent siting (on the

¹ Walker, M, Johnston, C, Boyce, C, ‘Melbourne Western Region Heritage Study: Evidence of Change’ (Melbourne Western Region Commission, 1986), p.262

main road, and freestanding in an open setting), together with its characteristic nineteenth century construction materials (coursed-rubble bluestone and handmade brick), distinguish it as a key heritage building within the town. It is also situated near the Mechanics Institute, which is the only other building remaining in High Street built before the late twentieth century. It is also historically significant as a gold-era wayside facility, either a shop in its own right, or (likely) for its association with the former Lord Raglan Hotel ('The Raglan'), now demolished, which was Melton's second hotel and a major coach staging point, with large stables to accommodate the teams. Together with the walnut tree opposite it on High Street, marking the site of a former blacksmith, this place would appear to constitute the only remaining evidence of Melton's development as a wayside service town, originally *en route* to the Ballarat and Blackwood goldfields, and lasting until the opening of the direct Melbourne to Ballarat railway in 1889.

Raglan's Cottage on High Street is architecturally significant at a LOCAL level (AHC D2). Although altered it continues to demonstrate some Victorian vernacular design qualities. These qualities include the front hipped roof form, coursed, squared rubble bluestone wall construction, red hand-made brick quoinwork, window and door openings, single storey height and the narrow eaves. The rear hipped roof form that projects at the side is sympathetic to the front portion, as is the recent corrugated sheet metal roof cladding.

Raglan's Cottage on High Street is of social and aesthetic significance at a LOCAL level (AHC E1). The Melton Shire has contributed significantly to its restoration, and to the preservation of its amenity (setting and traffic access). It was also identified as a building significant to the Shire in the community workshop held as part of the heritage study.

Overall, Raglan's Cottage on High Street is of LOCAL significance.

Description:

Raglan's Cottage on High Street, Melton, has an open setting on reserve land comprising grassed areas, asphalt car park and some surrounding eucalypts.

The asymmetrical, single storey, coursed, squared rubble bluestone, Victorian vernacular styled building is characterised by an early hipped roof form, together with another hipped roof that appears to have been introduced, given that a more contemporary verandah is formed on the side projection and is supported by introduced timber posts. These roof forms are clad in recent corrugated sheet metal roofing.

The construction details of the building confirm its alterations and extensive repair in c.1980. This included replacement (with bluestone from High Street gutters) of the top course the stone work.

A feature of the design is the hand-made red brick quoinwork about the building corners and openings. These bricks have been sandblasted. The lower portions of the quoinwork have cream brickwork which may have been introduced (replacing early red brick quoinwork?). There is also a face brick wall on the rear, projecting, hipped roof form that may have been introduced. The face red brick chimney has been altered.

A new weatherboard wall has been introduced on the east end of the front façade. This was in about the location of the timber part of the building which was removed in the c.1980 renovation.

Early features of the design include the window and door openings.

History:

Raglan's Cottage has been known as the 'Honey Shack' and is situated on Allotment 7, Section 20, Township of Melton.² This was a half acre allotment –one of eight similar allotments with frontages to the south side of High Street between Smith and Yuille Streets, sold by the Crown in August 1857. Allotment 7 was purchased by B Martin on 10th August 1857. Adjacent allotment 6 was purchased by JM Ross on 14th August 1857.³ The former Lord Raglan hotel was situated on these allotments.

The place was almost certainly associated with the passing traffic on the Ballarat Road, either as a shop in its own right⁴ or, as many believe, as a shop, or accommodation for stable hands or blacksmith, associated with the adjacent 'Raglan' hotel. The hotel would appear to have been immediately west of the 'Honey Shack'.⁵ 'The Raglan' was the second hotel in Melton, after the Melton (or Old Melton) as it became known, situated east of Yuille Street. It had been built in 1855 by James Strachan on the south-west corner of Yuille and Unitt Streets, land occupied today by the Melton Shire offices carpark.⁶ An *Argus* correspondent travelling by coach through the town in the 1850s relates that the 'Lord Raglan' was the town's 'superior hotel, with good food and accommodation ... The 'Peoples' Telegraph' calls at this establishment. The coaches pull up, change horses and are off again in a few minutes.'⁷

After a few years (no doubt when the present main road was established) the weatherboard Raglan was moved to the south side of High Street, either by Mr Strahan, or by Mr John Ross, brother-in-law of Melton's celebrated nurse Mrs Hannah Jane Watts, and the next owner of the hotel, who is said to have 'had energy enough for "two Yankees."' ⁸

It is likely that the Raglan Hotel was used for early meetings of the Melton Roads Board (Shire Council) up to December 1863.⁹

By the early twentieth century there were different memories as to whether Ross passed the hotel to his nephew, the well known Daniel Ross, who also purchased the Old Melton Hotel, or to Mr Beardmore senior, 'who besides having the hotel kept a farm'.¹⁰ It is likely both D Ross and Beardmore owned the hotel around the same period. The Shire ratebook lists D Ross as a

² Shire of Melton, *Ratebooks*; Lands Victoria 'Interactive Map', and Aerial photograph 'Greater Melbourne Series, 2001'.

³ Parish Plan: Township of Melton.

⁴ Numerous of Melton's prominent nineteenth century families were associated with early Ballarat Road shops or wayside facilities. For example, in 1869 James E Barrie advertised that he had taken over from a Mr James Boatman. This building might have been such a place.

⁵ The 1892 map 'Township of Melton' (Shire Map Series, No.25, SLV 821.1A, 1892) shows the hotel in the location of the present Honey Shack building, opposite the Post Office. In the 'Reminiscences of Melton, from the Memoirs of Mr Tom Collins' (in M&DHS Newsletter, 20/12/2000) Mr Collins notes that the Raglan was opposite the Post Office. In 'Old Melton Times' (anonymous, in *Melton Express*, October – November 1905), it is reported that Mr Ferris once had a store (no longer extant) between the Golden Fleece Hotel, and The Raglan. Mrs E Barrie also believes that the Honey Shack was either on the grounds of or part of the former Raglan Hotel (personal conversation, 30/5/2002).

⁶ Lands Victoria, Put Away Plan M101 (1857) 'Plan of Town Lots in the Township of Melton'

⁷ Pollitt, JH, *An Historical Record of Melton* (Shire of Melton, nd), p.24; also Bob Macdonald, 'History of Melton' (unpublished typescript, October 1969, M&DHS), p.3

⁸ Alex Cameron, 'Melton Memoirs' (M&DHS), pp.13,18; and 'Old Melton Times', anonymous, *Melton Express*, October – November 1905 (edited by JA Bilszta, Melton, 1982)

⁹ Pollitt, *op cit*, p.30

¹⁰ *ibid*

‘hotel keeper’ in 1863-64.¹¹ Anders Hjorth, writing of the period 1861-1867, also recalled that the Raglan was ‘conducted by Mr Beardmore’.¹²

Cameron relates that, on Mr Beardmore’s death, the hotel and farm was passed to his son Edwin, who ‘closed the hotel, went into dairying ...’ The hotel was then sold to Mr Richard Manning who made a success of the business ‘with the capable help of his wife (Mary Kilpatrick).¹³

An early photograph of the Kilpatrick family standing in front of the hotel shows a wooden typical hotel form with the sign ‘Raglan Hotel’.¹⁴

An advertisement for the hotel in 1856 listed among its outbuildings ‘two stables capable of containing 30 horses, stockyard, bullock yard, and blacksmith’s shop at present occupied by a respectable tenant and doing an excellent trade. The bakehouse is in excellent working order and capable of producing an almost unlimited supply of bread.’¹⁵

George Minns recalled Richard (Dick) Manning’s occupation of the Raglan, and that both it and the Royal had extensive stables where the various Melbourne to Ballarat stage coaches changed teams.¹⁶

In 1905 retired Shire Secretary James Luke Robertson also recalled that the Raglan and the Royal were the changing stations for the coaches ‘on their way from Bacchus Marsh to town’. Vance Greig and Jack Malcolm were together in charge of the coach teams at the Raglan for many years. The two best known drivers, said Robertson, were the obliging Sam Crisp, and Johnny Lovelock:

‘I always thought he got the wildest horses to drive and he could handle the ribbons. We all admired Johnny getting his team ready to spring away from the old Raglan for his 10 mile beat to Keilor Road Station or to Bacchus Marsh morning or evening. But the advent of the railway changed all that and the coaching days are over so far as this district is concerned and those happy times are only a memory.’¹⁷

The direct Melbourne to Ballarat railway had been completed in 1889. Tom Collins, writing of the period immediately after this, from 1890 to about 1913, recalled that in this period Kilpatrick had the licence of the hotel, and afterwards Tom Manning.¹⁸ Other early twentieth century occupants were WT Manning, Emma May Davis, Robert Corney, and finally, Alexander Robertson.¹⁹

¹¹ Pollitt, *op cit*, p.31

¹² Anders Hjorth, ‘Recollections of Melton 1861-67’, in M&DHS, February 2001.

¹³ Cameron, *op cit*, pp.9,13

¹⁴ Starr, J, *Melton: Plains of Promise* (Shire of Melton, nd, c.1985), p.45

¹⁵ *ibid*, p.47

¹⁶ ‘Mr George Minns – Looking Back’, M&DHS Newsletter, January 2001.

¹⁷ ‘Melton Reminiscences by JLR’ (James Luke Robertson), appeared in *Melton Express*, September-October 1905.

¹⁸ ‘Reminiscences of Melton, from the Memoirs of Mr Tom Collins’, in M&DHS Newsletter, 20/12/2000

¹⁹ Starr, *op cit*, p.43

Collins also noted that there was ‘a store attached to the hotel till about 1900’.²⁰ It is not clear whether the store was demolished at this time, or simply stopped operating. If the latter, it is possible that, despite its setback from the road, this store may have been the present Honey Shack store. This store may have been the bakehouse referred to in the 1856 advertisement. One present Melton resident recalls the Honey Shack building being ‘old’ in his young days (c.1930); he had heard that it was originally a store associated with the names ‘Ross’ and ‘Blackmore’.²¹

George Minns relates that both the Raglan and the Royal were ‘delicensed by the Licensing Amendment Act.’²² Temperance campaigners had been influential in this Act, whose Licences Reduction Board closed all but 818 of 2002 Victorian country hotels between the years 1906 and 1929.²³ Most hotels delicensed in this purge were either immediately or eventually demolished. The Raglan’s licence expired on 31st December 1918, and the Robertson family who owned it left Melton. In 1920 the building was sold for removal, but was destroyed by fire in the process of being demolished.²⁴

Many residents remember the Nolan family renting and living in Raglan’s Cottage in the 1930s.²⁵ It was used as a private residence, the Shotter family being one of the longer residents in the post WW2 period, but it fell into considerable disrepair. It was restored with Council financial support in c.1981-82, as part of the development of Hannah Watts Park. Some alterations were made, and some new materials (bluestone from the old gutters on High Street) introduced. Peter Bee, the stonemason who worked on The Willows, did the repairs after the original timber section of the building was removed.²⁶ Brick corners, and the bluestone course at roof level, were rebuilt or repaired (with old gutter bluestones), as was the roof. Drainage and paving works were undertaken. Vegetation around the house was also removed.²⁷ There is now no above ground evidence of an underground tank at the rear of the building.

The ‘Honey Shack’ building is also known locally as the ‘Raglan Cottage’,²⁸ again suggesting its association with the former hotel. Its date was given as 1858 in the Western Region Heritage Study, which would have been about the time that the original Lord Raglan Hotel was shifted by bullocks from Unitt to High Street.²⁹ If it was associated with the hotel, it might have been a cottage, perhaps for a worker associated with the hotel’s coaching business (similar to the liveryman’s cottage behind the Royal Hotel which was rebuilt on the Gisborne to Melton Road several decades ago). Or it could also have been a combined store and residence, or blacksmith’s residence.

²⁰ ‘Reminiscences of Melton, from the Memoirs of Mr Tom Collins’, in M&DHS Newsletter, 20/12/2000

²¹ Mr Pat Joengebloed, personal conversation, 2/12/2005.

²² ‘Mr George Minns – Looking Back’, M&DHS Newsletter, January 2001.

²³ Priestley, Susan, *The Victorians: Making Their Mark* (Fairfax, Syme and Weldon, McMahons Point, 1984), p.184

²⁴ ‘Reminiscences of Melton, from the Memoirs of Mr Tom Collins’, in M&DHS Newsletter, 20/12/2000; also Starr, *op cit*, p.43

²⁵ For example, Mrs E Barrie, Mr P Joengebloed. The family were Mrs Barrie’s cousins. She also has a photograph of her relations the Kilpatricks at the hotel in a previous era.

²⁶ Interestingly, another old nearby cottage - the former ‘Ned Toohey’s Cottage’, on McKenzie Street (demolished late 1960s) – was described as having been constructed of ‘bluestone at the back and timber in front’, apparently similar to the Honey Shack. (M&DHS, 20/12/2005)

²⁷ J Bilszta, M&DHS

²⁸ Melton Heritage Study ‘Community Workshop’, held 7/9/2001; Walker et al, *loc cit*.

²⁹ Walker et al, *loc cit*.

The date of the building is unknown. If it was an independent store it could date from as early as the early 1850s, as gold-rush traffic poured along the road. It is more likely however to date to the late 1850s, after freehold to the the land was obtained, and when the Raglan hotel relocated adjacent to it. The only clue found thus far is a jump in valuation from £20 to £40 on Crown Allotment 7 at some stage between the years 1877 and 1881. This may have been due to other improvements on the property.³⁰

Thematic Context / Comparative Analysis:

Shire of Melton Historical Themes: ‘Community’; ‘Farming’; ‘Transport’

Comparable Places in Shire of Melton:

Historically, there are no comparable commercial buildings (shops or offices) of heritage significance within the Shire of Melton. The only other known nineteenth century buildings (of any type) remaining within the town of Melton are *The Willows*, *Dunvegan* (relocated and altered), the Melton State School, and the Uniting, Catholic, and former Methodist churches.

Raglan’s Cottage is an altered example of the few remaining nineteenth century stone cottages, or ruins of stone cottages in the Melton Shire. Intact (but modified) examples of small stone cottages include:

- The small cottage on Blackhills Road (Place No.061), which has been substantially repaired (including chimneys, roof, and verandah).
- The abandoned bluestone cottage on the former *Mt Kororoit Farm* property, west of Kororoit Creek (Place No.144);
- The half derelict, half intact bluestone Paynes Cottage (Place No.373).
- The small cottages on *Glen Elgin* (Place No.039) opposite *The Elms*, also of sedimentary stone, were apparently built in the mid twentieth century.
- The stone cottages and outbuildings that are part of the large pastoral stations of *Rockbank* (Place No.428), *Exford* (Place No.269), and *Eynesbury* (Place No.281).
- The considerably altered former *Fulham Park*, on Beatty’s Road, Rockbank (Place No.316)
- *Yandardook* Cottage, 575 Gisborne-Melton Road, Toolern Vale (Place No. 037) is moderately intact, modestly scaled, single storey, squared coursed bluestone, Victorian vernacular styled dwelling characterised by a hipped roof form clad in recent corrugated sheet metal, later brick chimney early window openings, central front doorway and timber framed multi-paned double hung windows.
- *Evansdale* (Place No.327): an abandoned early stone cottage and earlier stone outbuildings.
- *Dunvegan* (Place No.228): a relocated and altered township dwelling.

³⁰ General Law title search, Allotments 7-9, Section 20, Township of Melton. (CAs 8 and 9 by comparison remained at £25 and £20 well into the twentieth century.)

Condition:

Good

Integrity:

Low

Recommendations:

Recommended for inclusion in the Melton Planning Scheme Heritage Overlay.

Recommended Heritage Overlay Schedule Controls:

External Paint Controls:	<i>Yes</i>
Internal Alteration Controls:	<i>No</i>
Tree Controls:	<i>No</i>
Outbuildings and/or Fences:	<i>No</i>