

**Heritage Overlay No.:** 102  
**Citation No.:** 282  
**Place:** House, ‘Glengallan’

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**Other Names of Place:** Butler’s Farm  
**Location:** 77-207 Greigs Road East, Mt Cottrell  
**Critical Dates:** c.1917  
**Existing Heritage Listings:** None  
**Recommended Level of Significance:** LOCAL



**Statement of Significance:**

The house known as *Glengallan*, 77-207 Greigs Road East, Mt. Cottrell, is significant as a predominantly intact example of a Late Victorian style, with rear interwar additions that further contribute to an understanding of the historical evolution of the place. The main front part of the house was most likely built c.1917. It is also significant for its representation of the Exford Closer Settlement Estate, and the historic break-up of Melton’s pastoral estates in the early twentieth century.

The house known as *Glengallan*, 77-207 Greigs Road East, Mt. Cottrell, is architecturally significant at a LOCAL level (AHC D.2, E.1). It demonstrates original design qualities of a Late Victorian style. These qualities include the hipped roof form, together with the encircling bullnosed verandah. Other intact or appropriate qualities include the single storey height, symmetrical composition, horizontal timber weatherboard wall cladding, front timber wall cladding simulating ashlar blockwork, corrugated profile sheet metal roof cladding, face brick

chimneys with rendered tops having projecting cement coursing and cornices, turned timber verandah posts, front timber framed doorway with sidelight and highlight – and flanking timber framed tripartite double hung windows, other timber framed double hung windows, and the narrow eaves. At the rear, the gable addition representing changes during the interwar period also contributes to the significance of the dwelling. The intact design qualities of this portion of the dwelling include the single storey height, gable roof form clad in corrugated sheet metal, horizontal timber weatherboard wall cladding, two face brick chimneys with soldier course tops, and the decorative gable infill (stuccoed panelling and vertical timber battening).

The house known as *Glengallan*, 77-207 Greigs Road East, Mt. Cottrell, is historically significant at a LOCAL level (AHC A.4). It is one of few remaining Melton Shire houses built as a result of the Closer Settlement Board's subdivision of prominent pastoralist HW Staughton's *Exford* Estate, one of the earliest, largest and best-known of the estates created under the Closer Settlement Act 1904. It expresses one of the major themes of Australia's history - the contest between large pastoralists and small farmers for the land - and the abiding power of the yeomanry ideal well into the twentieth century. The break-up pastoral estates was a major event in Australia's history, and the break-up of the huge area of land represented by the *Rockbank*, *Exford*, *Overnewton* and *Melton Park* estates represented a major turning point in the history of the Melton Shire. The farm was a model for pasture improvement and cropping in the region, and a regular venue of farmers field days.

Overall, the house known as *Glengallan*, 77-207 Greigs Road East, Mt. Cottrell, is of LOCAL significance.

### **Description:**

The house known as *Glengallan* 77-207 Greigs Road East, Mt. Cottrell, is situated within an open setting surrounded by grassed land and a recent front garden with geometrically laid flower beds. There are also flower beds around the perimeter of the house.

The single storey, symmetrical, horizontal timber weatherboard, Late Victorian styled house is characterised by a hipped roof form, together with an encircling bullnosed verandah. At the rear, a gable addition projects at the sides. This wing appears to have been added during the interwar (c.1920s-1940s) period. These roof forms are clad in corrugated sheet metal. Two early face brick chimneys adorn the roofline of the main early portion of the house and have rendered tops with projecting cement coursing and cornices (the cornice of one of the chimneys is missing). At the rear are two additional face brick chimneys with soldier coursing tops, a typical feature of interwar construction.

An early feature of the design is the encircling verandah. It is supported by turned timber posts and has lattice valances and timber brackets that appear to have been introduced.

Other early features of the design include the front timber wall cladding simulating ashlar blockwork, front timber framed doorway with sidelight and highlight – and flanking timber framed tripartite double hung windows, other timber framed double hung windows, and the narrow eaves. A feature of the rear gabled addition is the decorative gable infill (stuccoed panelling and vertical timber battening).

## History:

The land on which the house *Glengallan* is situated was part of Simon Staughton's *Exford* estate in the nineteenth century.<sup>1</sup> In the early twentieth century it was included in the great Exford Closer Settlement Estate subdivision. It was subdivided from the *Exford Estate* c.1910, and sold as Allotment 6, Section 11, Parish of Pywheitjorrk, of area 315 acres, 3 roods and 33 perches, to PV Butler.<sup>2</sup>

### *Contextual History*

The sale of vast areas of previous pastoral leases in the 1850s exposed those pastoralists without the capital to retain their pastures. But those who had accumulated capital could acquire much larger areas once freehold became available.<sup>3</sup> As a result three owners – WJT Clarke, the Chirnsides, and Simon Staughton - soon dominated the whole Port Phillip district.<sup>4</sup>

Staughton and Clarke were by far the largest owners in the Melton Shire. Staughton was fortunate in that he had arrived, cashed-up, at Port Phillip during the depression of the early 1840s, and purchased the 'Brisbane Ranges and Exford' pastoral lease and stock at favourable prices. He prospered and so was able to start purchasing the freehold to his land as soon as it came up for sale.

The allotment on which the property is situated, Section 18, Parish of Mooradoranook, was originally purchased by Simon Staughton at the Crown land sales of the 1850s. Staughton purchased all but two allotments in the entire Parish of Mooradoranook, part of his vast Exford sheep grazing estate.

By the time of Simon Staughton's death in 1863 the *Exford* estate was said to be approximately 100,000 acres in extent.<sup>5</sup> His freehold now included land to the east of the Werribee River. At his death, this property was divided between his four sons. Apart from *Exford*, the home station, two of these new estates were situated in the Shire of Melton: *Eynesbury*, and *Brooklyn/Nerowie*.

The contest between pastoralist interests and popular legislators for the land had climaxed in the 1860s Selection Acts, the product of a movement by gold diggers to 'unlock the lands' dominated by the squatters. The success of these Acts in distributing Victoria's unalienated Crown Lands was mixed, and by the 1890s popular discontent revived, this time calling for the repurchase of much of these alienated Crown Lands which appeared too fertile to be wasted as 'sheep walks'. These should be subdivided and redistributed as small farms in fulfilment of the 'yeoman ideal'.

By 1898 the changes were abroad. To add to the inherent difficulties of the pastoral industry (when all William Taylor of *Overnewton*'s pastoral mortgages were discharged after his death in 1903 his estate was in deficit), the next generation of farmers restlessly surveyed the vast pastoral estates surrounding them. In 1897 the new owner of the Clarke empire, Sir Rupert Turner Havelock Clarke Bart had mused in Parliament about cutting up 40,000 acres of his

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<sup>1</sup> Shire Map Series, 1892, Map 29 (SLV 821.1A) shows the land as owned by HW Staughton, and is notated as 'Exford PR' (Pre-Emptive Right).

<sup>2</sup> Parish Plan, Parish of Phyweitjorrk.

<sup>3</sup> Peel, LJ, *Rural Industry in the Port Phillip Region, 1835-1880* (MUP, Melbourne, 1974), pp.56,133.

<sup>4</sup> Peel, *op.cit.*, pp.129-131.

<sup>5</sup> Peel, *op.cit.*, p.61.

estate to lease to dairy farmers. He was under some local pressure to make land available for farming, and declared he was keen not to ‘disappoint public expectations’ he said.<sup>6</sup> 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 Werribee Staughton, and Harvey Patterson to sell and lease (often under the ‘share system’) large portions of their estates to small farmers and graziers.<sup>7</sup>

This ‘break-up’ of the large estates coincided with the major developments that were occurring in farming in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, as new science, technologies, fertilisers, transport and markets enabled huge productivity increases. With inventions such as the Babcock separator, the development of local co-operative creameries and butter factories, and advances in refrigeration creating new export markets, dairying in particular suddenly boomed.

*Glengallon* is the product of these major changes in Australia’s history. In August 1905 the *Melton Express* reported on the local developments. While at that time the Closer Settlement surveyors were busy partitioning about 4000 acres of Harry Werribee Staughton’s *Exford* estate into farms, much of this property was already being farmed under the share system.<sup>8</sup> The arrival of the railway at Melton South in 1884 had changed the local economy, most notable being the development of the timber cutting industry, wherein the high quality heavy box forest on *Exford* was cut and railed to Melbourne for fuel. ‘Staughtons Rail Siding’ was established off Telephone Road for this purpose, in an area that had described as ‘forest’ in 1841, and ‘grey box and she-oak’ in 1907.<sup>9</sup>

The clearing of the timber enabled the land to be ploughed. For the ‘first few seasons’ the crops had not turned out so well, ‘but latterly the returns have been good, and during the time of the South African War the prices were exceptionally good’, reported the *Express* in 1905. Mr Staughton had also provided eleven dairy farms on his land under the share system, with the farmers providing the ‘labour, vehicles and horseflesh’, ‘Mr Staughton providing the ‘farms, houses and cows’, the profits being divided. Each tenant had to crop a specified amount of land in order to feed the cows in dry weather, with any surplus being sold and the profit divided. Much more money was made in this intensive farming than when the property was a sheep station. ‘Some of these tenants are old servants of Mr Staughton, to whom he had given a helping hand to do for themselves and families growing up.’<sup>10</sup>

Whereas *Exford* had originally shorn 17-18,000 sheep, in 1905 it had no sheep at all. A large dairy had been built at the homestead, and the shearing shed (*Warrawong*, Place No.272) converted to a dairy.<sup>11</sup>

State legislators fostered these changes. The Closer Settlement Act was a revival of the Selection Acts, and it would be adapted after both the World Wars as Soldier Settler Acts. The Land Act 1898 had established the ‘closer settlement’ branch of the Lands Department, but it was not until the Closer Settlement Act 1904 that things really got moving. This Act introduced the possibility of compulsory acquisition by the government, and increased five-fold the amount that the Closer Settlement Board could expend on repurchasing land. The scheme

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<sup>6</sup> *Sunbury News*: 31/7/1897, 7/8/1897, 4/9/1897.

<sup>7</sup> *Victorian Municipal Directory*, 1898, and following years.

<sup>8</sup> *The Bacchus Marsh Express*, 19/8/1905

<sup>9</sup> Historical Plan: D/60A (28/2/1841) ‘Plan of the Lands in the Werriby [sic] District for sale under the regulations of March 1841’; *The Weekly Times*, 23/3/1907

<sup>10</sup> *The Bacchus Marsh Express*, 19/8/1905

<sup>11</sup> *ibid*

only commenced operations when the Board was appointed on 16<sup>th</sup> January 1905. The Board's second scheme was the repurchase of William Taylor's *Overnewton* in the north and east of Melton Shire in 1905.

By 1907 the surveyors at Exford had done their work and the Board was ready to put the even larger *Exford* estate of Harry Werribee Staughton up for sale.<sup>12</sup> Some 8000 acres, divided into 40 farms, was described as 'well adapted for cereal growing and dairying', with permanent water available from the Werribee River and the Toolern Creek, and the railway line adjacent. The property also contained 'dams and tanks and three bores.' There was a saw mill in full operation, and ample timber for fencing and firewood.<sup>13</sup>

At its Exford scheme the Closer Settlement Board was experimenting with new ideas. Here and at Colbinabbin it set aside 5700 acres especially for British immigrants. To prevent the loss of a season while awaiting their arrival, the land was 'put in a productive condition by sowing down 1825 acres at Exford, and fallowing 3947 acres at Colbinabbin.'<sup>14</sup>

The *Overnewton*, *Exford* and the *Werribee* (Chirnsides) estates were the only rural Closer Settlement Schemes close to Melbourne.<sup>15</sup> The Shire was transformed by the Closer Settlement and Soldier Settlement Acts of the early twentieth century. New roads were surveyed and 'macadamised', and the occasional bridge was thrown up (eg, the Bridge Road concrete bridge south of Melton). The establishment of new primary schools at places such as Exford, Melton South, Sydenham West, and Melton Park reflect the emergence of whole new communities. Some of Melton's most historically celebrated residents, such as international trap shooter Hector Fraser, were amongst the new settlers. Other sons of the new farmers are commemorated on memorials of the world wars.

### *History of the Place*

The first Council record of Butler and the *Glengallan* property appear in 1917, when according to the ratebook Percy V Butler 'farmer', owner of '27 Exford Ext. 158 acres 2 roods 27 perches and building' on Allotment 6 Section 11 Parish of Pywheitjorrk.

The Butler family carried on general farming at *Glengallan*.<sup>16</sup> In 1942 the *Melton Express* carried an obituary for Percy, who had died at Bacchus Marsh hospital, 'beloved husband of Alison Isobel, of *Glengallan*, Rockbank loved father of Robert, Doris, Jack, Barbara, and the late Jean and Grace. Late 22AASC A.I.F., and South African veteran. Aged 65 years.' It described his life:

'The death last Saturday in a Bacchus Marsh private hospital of Mr Percy V. Butler of Rockbank after a year's illness has removed one of the stalwarts of primary industry when the nation can ill afford to lose at the present time. He was regarded as one of the ablest farmers in the Melton district where he had been a very successful hay grower for the past 36 years

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<sup>12</sup> Victorian Parliamentary Papers, 1905, Vol.3(1), 'Report of the Lands Purchase and Management Board'

<sup>13</sup> *The Weekly Times*: 16/3/1907, 23/3/1907

<sup>14</sup> VPP, 1907, Vol.2, pp.175-186

<sup>15</sup> VPP, 1908, Vol.2, pp.31-42

<sup>16</sup> Albert Evans, 'From the Early Settlers to the 1969 Fires' (Manuscript, recording Mt Cottrell, Rockbank and Truganina landowners)

A native of Sandon, Victoria, the late Mr Butler was a brilliant footballer in his youth and played in Rockbank and Melton teams. Throughout his life he was always interested in sporting activities.

He was one of six brothers who served in the Boer War and he joined up again with one of his brothers in the Great War in which his brother was killed. In the current war his patriotism took the form of generous financial support of the war effort and his daughters success in the Melton Queen Carnival was not unconnected with his liberality. The death of two of his daughters were heavy blows to him.

He is survived by a widow, formerly Miss Greig of Rockbank, two sons and two daughters for whom much sympathy is felt. The funeral took place at Melton cemetery following services in the home and in Christ Church and was largely attended.<sup>17</sup>

It is remembered that the original hut, used by Percy Butler and his brother before the house was erected, was later used as the man's room.

A large weatherboard home of six rooms erected on the property. The kitchen was a detached building. Hugh Barrie, who purchased the property c.1955, thinks the house was set on wooden block foundations. He does not recall any stone or brickwork. Later a kitchen and living room were added to the rear of the original floor plan. Verandah on two sides were trimmed with a cast iron frieze. House water was collected from roof run-off.<sup>18</sup>

Another property, formerly Moloney's (a property directly to the south, near to Boundary Road), was purchased and the house moved to *Glengallan* where it was used for storage purposes. It contained one very large room which was used for parties and functions. This house was removed to Bacchus Marsh during the Second World War, where it became the home of Robert Butler (and is still standing).<sup>19</sup>

Robert Butler became interested in pasture improvement procedures and the farm was geared toward cropping, with the running of a few sheep. Much of the land was sown down to pasture using clover and various grasses. The first bale of grass hay in the district was cut on the property. Field days involving hundreds of farmers observing pasture improvement were conducted on *Glengallan* twice a year. Reports of these events appear in the *Melton Express*<sup>20</sup>, and there are many photographs of working hay on PV Bulter's *Glengallan* in Starr's history of Melton.<sup>21</sup>

Robert left the farm to set up his own business in Melton dealing in the construction of wireless sets. Arbee Wireless was established in an empty building attached to the Golden Fleece hotel, and also in Bacchus Marsh. Later, he became an agent for Mobil oil and had an ice round, which was so successful he left to reside in Bacchus Marsh. After the war Robert established Arbee Real Estate while at the same time managing *Glengallan*, which by now totalled 650 acres. The property was sold c.1955, bringing £55.15 an acre, a then unheard of price for Melton land.

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<sup>17</sup> *The Melton Express*, 3<sup>rd</sup> May 1942.

<sup>18</sup> J. Bilszta interview with Hugh Barrie, May 2005

<sup>19</sup> Robert Butler in Geoffrey Camm (compiler) *Bacchus Marsh: An Anecdotal History* (Hargreen Publishing, 1986)

<sup>20</sup> Butler, *loc cit.*

<sup>21</sup> Starr, J, *Melton: Plains of Promise* (Shire of Melton, nd, c.1985), pp.226, 228, 229.

PV Butler's other son Jack joined with BJ Trethowan in 1950 to take over the Robinson Brothers (formerly Ebbott Kebby) Chaff Mill in Melton.<sup>22</sup>

Hugh Barrie, son of AW Barrie was the successful bidder. He cropped much of the property, except for acres on the southern boundary, which were stony. Barrie established his well-known *Cairnlee* Clydesdale Stud, breeding award-winning stock. The stud has moved to Diggers Rest where Hugh's daughter continues to breed champion stock.<sup>23</sup>

Sheep were added to the farm's operations in the post World War Two period. A woolshed was situated south of the hut with provision for shearing at one end and wool sorting the other. A two-cow bail was attached to one of its walls, and there were sheep yards behind. A freestanding machinery shed was located to one side.

An eight stall stable, with chaff room housing chaff cutter was rebuilt by Hugh Barrie post 1955. He added a concrete floor onto which the chaff fell directly. Barrie also attached another shed to the end of the stables. There was evidence of a small length – a 'few chains' – of drystone walling, however all fencing was post and wire. The stock was watered by a large dam on the original purchase. After Moloney's 150 acre paddock was acquired another dam became available.

The Melton Sewerage Authority, constituted in 1969, undertook a survey of the district and prepared plans. Because the basaltic Werribee plains with a slope to the south very little pumping was needed if a site to the south was selected. *Glengallon* was consequently acquired by the Sewerage Authority and is now farmed on a lease arrangement.

### **Thematic Context / Comparative Analysis:**

Historically, *Glengallon* is most comparable with other farm houses established as a result of the Closer Settlement Board's subdivision of the Exford Estate. Surviving examples identified in this study, and recommended for planning scheme controls, are:

- Place No. 274: House at 1180 Exford Road is a late Victorian style house that was relocated to the site c.1907. Retains a rural context. Prominent from the road in an open landscape.
- Place No. 276: 865 Exford Road, Exford. A smaller house, relocated early, and altered. Visible from the road.
- Place No. 195: House at 56 Exford Road Melton South (former *Glenloth*). Is an original house of one of the most successful local farms. No longer retains its rural context. Visible from the road.
- Place No.288:- (the Hickey House) although within the Exford Estate, pre-dated the CSB subdivision and is not directly comparable historically. Retains a rural context. Visible from the road.
- Place No. 298: former Cochrane house on Mt Cottrell Road, 1200-1220. Not visible from the road.

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<sup>22</sup>

<sup>23</sup> Hugh Barrie, *op cit*

Examples identified in this study, and not recommended for planning scheme controls at present are:

- Place No. 271: House on Exford Road, opposite Exford main gate. Only moderate integrity. Retains a rural context. Visible from the road.
- Place No. 478: *Riverside*, 105 Murphy's Road Exford. Barely visible from the road among plantings.
- Place No. 273: House, 1055 Exford Road, built from parts of different houses, and reclad in false brick. Recently demolished. Original handpump beside underground tank may remain.

There were originally 28 houses in the Exford Closer Settlement Estate. No.865 Exford Road is one of nine original or early Exford Estate identified in Stage One of the Melton Heritage Study, eight of which now remain, and six of which have been subject of citations in this heritage study with a recommendation for planning scheme controls.

Architecturally, the dwelling known as *Glengallan* off Griegs Road, represents one of a small number of surviving rural Late Victorian styled dwellings in the Melton Shire constructed in timber that are predominantly intact. Other examples include:

- *Hickey*, 30 Hickey Road: a single storey hipped roof dwelling with a hipped verandah that projects towards the road frontage. This dwelling has a decorative timber fretwork verandah valance more typical of the Federation era. The house appears to be substantially intact although it is in fair condition.
- Dwelling, 161 Bulmans Road: a modest single storey symmetrical dwelling with a hipped roof form and skillion verandah that projects towards the front. Like *Glengallan*, the symmetry of the design is promoted by the central doorway with single timber framed double hung windows. Like *Glengallan*, the dwelling at 161 Bulmans Road appears to have introduced verandah detailing and balustrade.
- Dwelling, 53-105 McPherson Road, Toolern Vale: a single storey homestead featuring a hipped roof form and encircling convex verandah clad in galvanised corrugated steel. The dwelling features a face brick multi-corbelled chimney and decorative eaves brackets, together with the symmetrical front doorway and flanking timber framed double hung windows. Like *Glengallan*, there is a gabled addition that probably dates from the interwar period and contributes to the significance of the dwelling.

The dwelling known as *Creighton* at 1618 Gisborne-Melton Road, Melton, is a brick version of a rural Late Victorian style. It features a similar hipped roof form, symmetrical front façade, encircling verandah, face brick chimneys, timber framed double hung windows and front doorway, and a rear gabled addition of the Federation era.

The gabled additions at *Glengallan* contribute to the significance of the dwelling, like the additions on the comparable Late Victorian styled dwellings mentioned above.



**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>No</i>