

**Heritage Overlay No.:** 113  
**Citation No.:** 373  
**Place:** ‘Payne’s Cottage’

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**Other Names of Place:** ‘Paine Cottage’, ‘Former Payne/Paine House’  
**Location:** 638-688 Greigs Road East, Rockbank  
**Critical Dates:** c.1860  
**Existing Heritage Listings:** None  
**Recommended Level of Significance:** LOCAL



**Statement of Significance:**

Payne House at 638-688 Greigs Road East, Rockbank, has historical significance as a prominent and scarce legacy, relatively intact, of the community of small farmers who settled the Mt Cotterell-Rockbank district in the 1860s and 70s. It was also associated with a prominent personality of that place and era. Although almost ruinous, part of building has been partly restored and reoccupied, and the historical significance of the place is embodied in the surviving Victorian vernacular styled fabric, and its bluestone construction which is typical of small farm cottage construction in the western volcanic plains in that era.

Payne house at 638-688 Greigs Road East is historically significant at the LOCAL level (AHC D2, B2). The bluestone cottage is one of only a two of its type remaining in the Mt Cotterell-Rockbank area from this era, and one very few such places in the Shire. It had a long association with Mark Payne, a long serving Braybrook Shire Councillor, local farmer,

contractor, carter, and butcher, known widely as the ‘king of Mt Cottrell’, and after whom ‘Paynes Road’ is named. The building is also testimony to the historical importance of fire in the municipality, having been partly destroyed in the devastating 1965 fires.

Payne House at 638-688 Greigs East Road has architectural interest. The building has surviving Victorian vernacular fabric that includes the long, simple gable roof form clad in galvanised corrugated steel, bluestone wall construction, distinctive hand made brick lintels, window and door openings and the lack of eaves. Accurate restoration and reconstruction of the building may elevate the building to local architectural significance status.

Overall, Payne House at 638-688 Greigs Road is of LOCAL significance.

### **Description:**

The former Payne House at 638-688 Greigs East Road, Rockbank, is prominently situated in an open rural setting on the corner of a major road within the Shire. It has a small yard bound by an introduced timber picket fence. Nearby is a shallow earth dam with a deteriorated fieldstone wall. Surrounding the almost ruinous building are scatters of hand made bricks.

The single storey, bluestone, Victorian vernacular styled cottage is characterised by a long, simple gable roof form clad in galvanised corrugated steel. Half of the roof to the early northern end is missing, and the rear projecting wall of this section is ruinous.

Early features of the design include the distinctive hand made brick lintels above the early window and door openings, and the lack of eaves.

A huge stump which appears to have been a casuarina tree<sup>1</sup> - an important indigenous planting of the Keilor Werribee Plains, of which only pockets now survive, and which is of historical interest - remains in front of the building.

One room has been partly restored and is in use.

### **History:**

Mark Paine arrived from Buckinghamshire England with his wife in 1859.<sup>2</sup> In 1863 he purchased two allotments of land on the south side of Greig’s Road on the corner of Greigs and Paynes roads Rockbank, near Mt Cotterell (Parish of Pywheitjorrk: Allotment 8 of Section 19, 81 acres; Allotment 4 of Section 18, 85 acres; and Allotment 1 Parish of Pywheitjorrk of Section 18, 62 acres). By 1871 he claimed to own 62 acres (which would have been Allotment 1 of Section 18, on the north-east corner of Greigs and ‘Paynes’ roads, where the cottage is built), and to have selected 237 acres, and leased 223 acres.

Paine ran sheep, had a team of bullocks and carried goods across the Plains when not undertaking contracting work for the Melton Roads Board. He was responsible for the original construction of much of High Street under the supervision of Richard Lethbridge, Shire Secretary and Engineer. He was responsible for moving buildings around the Shire –

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<sup>1</sup> Pers. Con., Frances Overmars, 13/12/2001

<sup>2</sup> Olwen Ford, ‘Voices From Below: Family, School and Community on the Braybrook Plains 1854-1892’, M.Ed. Thesis, University of Melbourne, 1993, p.248  
*Consultants: David Moloney, David Rowe, Pamela Jellie (2006)*

Ferris's store was moved across High Street while the Royal Hotel was moved from Melbourne.<sup>3</sup> He had also obtained a slaughtering licence.<sup>4</sup>

Payne represented the Rockbank Riding on the Braybrook Council and was opposed only once during his long tenure, winning the election against W. Love, another Rockbank farmer, by a large majority. He was known by locals as 'the King of Mount Cotterell',<sup>5</sup> and comes across in memoirs as something of a character. He was remembered, a long time afterwards, by Anders Hjorth:

'Mark Paine had a small piece of land near Mt Cotterell; he had a couple of teams of bullocks with which he often came to Melton for wood. He was very keen on arguing, and although he might not himself believe in the cause he tried to defend, he would argue for arguments sake. He had a terrible set on the working capabilities of the native-born, although his eldest son, Willie, was an uncommon hard-working and industrious lad'.<sup>6</sup>

He and his wife raised a family of two sons and four daughters in the small stone cottage on Paynes Road. In 1873 four of his six children were of school age: Emma (13), Mary (12), Elizabeth (9), and Phoebe (6); the eldest William had left school, and the youngest, Mark, was 3 years old.<sup>7</sup> His children were one cause of his deep involvement in the local community – he was very active in the 'New Cambridge' (Rockbank) school where he was a member, later Chairman, of the Board of Advice. He apparently also owned or leased land adjacent to the school, as correspondence exists regarding his complaint to the Education Department that, whereas the land on which the school was situated had been 'a gift for State School purposes', the Department was preventing them from fencing it, making it difficult to herd his own cattle, 'and keep other pepals cattle of' (sic).<sup>8</sup>

Two daughters married local identities - William Kilpatrick, hotel owner, and Thomas H Collins, bricklayer. The younger daughters continued to reside in the cottage until their mother's death when they joined their brother at Toolern Vale. William Paine acquired a licence for an agricultural allotment of 25 acres in March 1901 and moved into a weatherboard dwelling thought to have been erected with the assistance of TH Collins (the building no longer exists).

In 1896 the *Express* carried a report on the magisterial inquiry conducted by Mr Hornbuckle JP 'touching upon the death of a very old resident of the district, Mr Mark Paine.' On Saturday evening he had got a ride part of the way home from Deer Park with Mr W Missen; he had been tendering his vote for an election. After leaving Mr Missen he had to walk between 3-4 miles, and got to within ½ a mile of his own home 'when he appeared to have lain down and fallen asleep'. He was not found until Monday, by his son. Dr Vance certified that death was due to heart failure and exposure. The deceased had been a Braybrook Shire Councillor, and was 'well liked by all who knew him and was commonly called the "King of Mount Cotterell"'.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Alex Cameron, 'Melton Memoirs' (M&DHS), p.22, and introduction.

<sup>4</sup> Ford, *loc.cit.*

<sup>5</sup> *The Melton Express*, 1/9/1896

<sup>6</sup> Anders Hjorth, 'Recollections of Melton 1861-67', reproduced in M&DHS Newsletter, Feb.2001. (Presumably he was collecting the Melton greybox timber to cart to Melbourne for firewood, which was an important Melton industry in the nineteenth century.)

<sup>7</sup> Ford, *op.cit.*, p.252

<sup>8</sup> Ford, *op.cit.*, p.251

<sup>9</sup> *Melton Express*, 1/9/1896

Consultants: David Moloney, David Rowe, Pamela Jellie (2006)

The *Express* also carries reports of his 31 year old daughter Phoebe's death at her brother's Toolern Vale home in 1898,<sup>10</sup> and his 85 year old wife Mrs E Paine's death, and burial at Melton Cemetery, in 1911. She had lived at Rockbank for 'over half a century'.<sup>11</sup> Mark, the last member of the family to live in the bluestone cottage at Mt Cottrell died in 1916 aged 46. He was remembered as 'the youngest son of the late Ex Cr Mark Paine'. He had been of a 'very retiring disposition taking no part in public matters, but was respected by all.' The bluestone cottage in which he apparently lived alone may have contributed to his cause of death: he had been 'suffering of pleurisy when pneumonia supervened with a fatal result.'<sup>12</sup>

The Paines' Rockbank property eventually passed to a grandson, William Collins who married Mary Nixon, daughter of Charles and Sarah Nixon of *Mowbray*, formerly the Sports Paddock, now the Melton Golf Course.

The Rockbank cottage had few amenities. A timber detached kitchen was destroyed by fire. The building remained vacant for many years. Vandals removed windows and doors and wrecked the building which was burnt in the 1965 fire.

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

*Melton Historical Themes:* 'Community'; 'Farming'.

*Known Comparable Examples:*

Historically, this is one of a small number of nineteenth century small stone cottages remaining in Melton Shire.

Similar places which are recommended for heritage overlay controls in this study:

Place No.037	Yangardook Cottage.
Place No.373	Paynes Cottage, Rockbank. (Half intact, half derelict).
Place No.061	Cottage, Blackhill Road. Also a likely Selection Act place
Place No.144	Cottage on 'Mt Kororoit Farm', in context of dry stone walls.

Similar places which are not recommended for heritage overlay controls in this study:

Place No.392	Tibbermore, Hopkins Road (rear of larger house).
Place No.327	Evansdale cottage, Boundary Road, (derelict)
Place No.316	Fulham Park. Considerably altered.

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<sup>10</sup> *Melton Express*, 9/7/1898

<sup>11</sup> *Melton Express*, 11/3/1911.

<sup>12</sup> *Melton Express*, 13/5/1916.

Architecturally, there are more intact examples of bluestone Victorian vernacular styled dwellings in the Melton Shire that are considered to meet the relevant Australian Heritage Commission aesthetic/architectural criteria. These comparable examples include:

- Stable at Evansdale farm complex, 678 Boundary Road, Truganina (Stage One Place No.327). This building has a gable roof form clad in galvanised corrugated steel and bluestone wall construction.
- Faord's Shepherd's Hut, Blackmill Road, Gisborne South (Stage One Place No.061). This hut is an altered example of the Victorian vernacular style with random rubble wall construction, although there is considered to be sufficient surviving fabric to justify its architectural significance.
- Bluestone dwelling, off Mt Kororoit Road (Stage One Place No.144). A Victorian vernacular styled bluestone dwelling with a steeply pitched hipped roof clad in galvanised corrugated steel. The openings in the building are missing, but there is also considered to be sufficient surviving original fabric to justify its architectural significance.
- Outbuilding, 1397-1457 Diggers Rest-Coimadai Road (Stage One Place No.019). Although the southern wall has been repaired, this random rubble Victorian vernacular outbuilding, with its gabled roof form and surviving walling, is a representative example of a surviving nineteenth century farm building in the Shire.

This is one of the most prominently located of the few small cottages in the Shire that were built in bluestone in the 1860s. It is situated on a corner block, in an open landscape, on a busy road. One room has been partly restored and is in use. Other small stone cottages include that on Blackhills Road (Place No.061), the 'Honey Shack' in High Street Melton (Place No.221), *Dunvegan* at The Willows Park (Place No.228), *Evansdale* on Boundary Road (Place No.327) and the cottage on the former *Mount Kororoit Farm* property (Place No.144).

**Condition:**

Poor – ruinous

**Integrity:**

Substantially altered

**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>