

# THE WOOLSHED, TOTTINGTON HOMESTEAD AND STONE COTTAGE



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H0305 Tottington Homestead  
courtyard



H0305 Tottington Homestead  
stone cottage



H0305 Tottington Homestead  
woolshed

## Location

5018 ARARAT-ST ARNAUD ROAD TOTTINGTON, NORTHERN GRAMPIANS SHIRE

## Municipality

NORTHERN GRAMPIANS SHIRE

## Level of significance

Registered

## Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) Number

H0305

## Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO21

## VHR Registration

October 9, 1974

## Amendment to Registration

September 29, 1981

## Heritage Listing

Victorian Heritage Register

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## Statement of Significance

Last updated on - June 4, 1999

What is significant?

Tottington consists of a rare surviving single storey brick and weatherboard homestead constructed in the 1840s and 1850s around a courtyard, later additions including the ballroom constructed in the 1880s; the timber meat house and a brick building adjacent to the homestead; the timber slab woolshed constructed in 1845 and still in use; a stone cottage dating from the 1840s or 1850s; an early timber slab blacksmith's shop which retains the forge, bellows and some implements: a small cemetery; an early eighteenth century steam engine: the remains of the brick school house and the archaeological site of the winery. The property is located on the original pre-emptive rights of the original Tottington and Ramsbottom pastoral runs. The buildings are sited near the Avon River and retain their pastoral setting.

Laurence Rostron, the son of a wealthy Lancashire cotton manufacturer, took up Tottington in 1844. He had disgraced himself by falling in love with a mill worker and he was sent to manage the family interests in Rio de Janeiro. He returned to England and married his sweetheart and took her and his daughter to Rio de Janeiro and amassed a fortune. Returning to England he found the family disapproval had not waned so he departed for Australia. He first took up Holcombe run near Daylesford, but found this too small and in late 1843 made an expedition to the Northern Pyrenees where he took up 160,000 acres on the Avon River which he named Tottington after his village in England. In 1844 the station was established and flocks moved up. Rostron's diary notes the progress of the construction of the river red gum slab woolshed, which was finished in time for the first shearing on October 16th 1845. The building was extended with a lower ridgeline soon afterwards. Rostron did not live on the property but installed supervisors Daniel and Joel Pennington to manage Tottington and the neighbouring run Ramsbottom. It appears that during the later 1840s or early 1850s the stone cottage and the beginnings of the stone and brick homestead were constructed. In 1852 the property stores book notes a large amount of stores drawn by building contractors John Henderson and John Cope which coincides with the marriage of John Reid Rostron, who managed the run for his father. This is believed to be the date of the construction (enlargement) of the main brick and timber section of the homestead, which surrounds the courtyard. The 640 acre pre-emptive right section of the Ramsbottom run was purchased in 1857 and in 1861 he purchased Tottington.

In 1866 Tottington was sold to Grice, Benn and Sumner who sold it to Andrew Anderson and the Count de Castelnau in 1873. Anderson, who had already made a name for himself at neighbouring Wallaloo Station provided the management and the Count provided the capital. In 1874 the Travelling Correspondent of The St Arnaud Mercury described Tottington including "The house of red brick. The outbuildings are very numerous and substantial. It possesses a blacksmith's shop, which would not disgrace any town in Victoria". An 1888 report in The Australian stated "I never saw so many substantially built houses on a squatting run. The school, the blacksmith's shop. The men lived in one spot and the overseer in another". It is believed that the brick bedroom wing extension which formed the south courtyard was constructed during Anderson's occupation. This latter courtyard was infilled in the late 1880s to make a ballroom.

Andrew Anderson died at Tottington in poor financial circumstances and the property passed to the Union Bank. The property was owned by the Edwards family from 1907 to 1954 when it was purchased by the Small family.

How is it significant?

Tottington is of architectural, historical, social and scientific significance to the State of Victoria

Why is it significant?

Tottington homestead and outbuildings are architecturally significant for their sequence of development from the pre-gold rush period through to the late nineteenth century. The courtyard section of the homestead, substantially intact and unaltered from the 1850s, is significant. The late nineteenth century additions to the homestead contribute to the appreciation of the site as an evolving complex and are of social and historical significance.

The unsawn timber framed and slab timber walled woolshed, with some minor alterations, is historically and socially significant as a rare working example of an early woolshed.

The outbuilding, including the meat house, blacksmith's shop, stone cottage, brick cottage, remains of the schoolhouse and the site of the winery, each contribute to the appreciation of the site as an evolving complex and are of social and historical significance.

Tottington is historically significant for its association with Lawrence Rostron, a pioneering pastoralist, racehorse stud breeder and sheep breeder. Rostron is credited with having first introduced artificial fertiliser to Australia.

Tottington is historically significant for its association with Andrew Anderson, Member of Parliament, Chairman of the 1890s Royal commission into Water supply in Victoria and sheep breeder.

Tottington is historically significant for its association with the Count de Castelnau, naturalist, consul and landowner. Tottington is scientifically significant for the early eighteenth century steam engine which was used to power equipment from the 1850s to the early 1900s.

[Online Data Upgrade Project 2001]

## Permit Exemptions

### General Exemptions:

General exemptions apply to all places and objects included in the Victorian Heritage Register (VHR). General exemptions have been designed to allow everyday activities, maintenance and changes to your property, which don't harm its cultural heritage significance, to proceed without the need to obtain approvals under the Heritage Act 2017.

Places of worship: In some circumstances, you can alter a place of worship to accommodate religious practices without a permit, but you must **notify** the Executive Director of Heritage Victoria before you start the works or activities at least 20 business days before the works or activities are to commence.

Subdivision/consolidation: Permit exemptions exist for some subdivisions and consolidations. If the subdivision or consolidation is in accordance with a planning permit granted under Part 4 of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* and the application for the planning permit was referred to the Executive Director of Heritage Victoria as a determining referral authority, a permit is not required.

Specific exemptions may also apply to your registered place or object. If applicable, these are listed below. Specific exemptions are tailored to the conservation and management needs of an individual registered place or object and set out works and activities that are exempt from the requirements of a permit. Specific exemptions prevail if they conflict with general exemptions.

Find out more about heritage permit exemptions [here](#).

### Specific Exemptions:

General Conditions: 1. All exempted alterations are to be planned and carried out in a manner which prevents damage to the fabric of the registered place or object. General Conditions: 2. Should it become apparent during further inspection or the carrying out of works that original or previously hidden or inaccessible details of the place or object are revealed which relate to the significance of the place or object, then the exemption covering such works shall cease and Heritage Victoria shall be notified as soon as possible. Note: All archaeological places have the potential to contain significant sub-surface artefacts and other remains. In most cases it will be necessary to obtain approval from the Executive Director, Heritage Victoria before the undertaking any works that have a significant sub-surface component. General Conditions: 3. If there is a conservation policy and plan all works shall be in accordance with it. Note: A Conservation Management Plan or a Heritage Action Plan provides guidance for the management of the heritage values associated with the site. It may not be necessary to obtain a heritage permit for certain works specified in the management plan. General Conditions: 4. Nothing in this determination prevents the Executive Director from amending or rescinding all or any of the permit exemptions. General Conditions: 5. Nothing in this determination exempts owners or their agents from the responsibility to seek relevant planning or building permits from the responsible authorities where applicable. Minor Works : Note: Any Minor Works that in the opinion of the Executive Director will not adversely affect the heritage significance of the place may be exempt from the permit requirements of the Heritage Act. A person proposing to undertake minor works must submit a proposal to the Executive Director. If the Executive Director is satisfied that the proposed works will not adversely affect the heritage values of the site, the applicant may be exempted from the requirement to obtain a heritage permit. If an applicant is uncertain whether a heritage permit is required, it is recommended that the permits co-ordinator be contacted.

Construction dates            1850,  
Heritage Act Categories    Registered place,  
Hermes Number                1084  
Property Number

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### History

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SOURCE: FINDINGS OF THE SUB-COMMITTEE

AFTER EXAMINING THE MATERIAL PRESENTED TO IT, THE SUB-COMMITTEE FOUND THAT THE COURTYARD SECTION OF THE TOTTINGTON HOMESTEAD WAS BUILT FOR PASTORALIST LAWRENCE ROSTEN DURING THE 1850'S OR 60'S. THE BALLROOM AND SOUTH WING WERE ADDED IN THE 1880S FOR ANDREW ANDERSON.

THE HOMESTEAD CONSISTS OF A SINGLE-STOREYED HOUSE WHICH IS PLANNED AROUND A THREE SIDED COURTYARD WITH A PERIMETER VERANDAH. TO THE REAR IS THE FORMER BALLROOM WITH FLANKING BEDROOMS. THE HOUSE IS CONSTRUCTED IN BRICK WITH HIPPED CORRUGATED IRON ROOFS AND IS BELIEVED TO HAVE MUDSTONE FOOTINGS. IT IS LARGELY INTACT.

THE STONE COTTAGE IS IN A MUCH DETERIORATED CONDITION, ALTHOUGH STILL POSSESSING A GABLED CORRUGATED IRON ROOF. THE WINDOWS AND DOOR HAVE BEEN REMOVED.

THE COMPLEX IS PART OF THE DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATED WITH THE EARLY VERNACULAR WOOLSHED AND IS OF HISTORIC IMPORTANCE IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE AREA NORTH OF ST. ARNAUD. THE COTTAGE REPRESENTS, WITH THE WOOLSHED, THE VARIETY OF VERNACULAR CONSTRUCTION EMPLOYED IN THE AREA.

### **Extent of Registration**

Historic Building No. 305 The Woolshed, Tottington Homestead and Stone Cottage, via St. Ardaud.  
[*Victoria Government Gazette* No 101 7 October 1981 p.3334]

*This place/object may be included in the Victorian Heritage Register pursuant to the Heritage Act 2017. Check the Victorian Heritage Database, selecting 'Heritage Victoria' as the place source.*

*For further details about Heritage Overlay places, contact the relevant local council or go to Planning Schemes Online <http://planningschemes.dpcd.vic.gov.au/>*