

# HO62 - Mt Kororoit Homestead



Farm Homestead



(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.



Shearing Shed



Shearing Shed



Fowl House / Pigsty



Early coach house / stable



Dry Stone Wall A272



Dry Stone Wall A272



Dry Stone Wall A273



Dry Stone Wall A273



Dry Stone Wall A274



Dry Stone Wall A274



Dry Stone Wall A275



Dry Stone Wall A275



Dry Stone Wall A275



Dry Stone Wall A276



Dry Stone Wall A276



Dry Stone Wall A277



Dry Stone Wall A277



Dry Stone Wall A277



Dry Stone Wall A277

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## Location

2-88 Leakes Road DIGGERS REST, Melton Shire

## Municipality

MELTON CITY

## Level of significance

Included in Heritage Overlay

## Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO62

## Heritage Listing

Melton City

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### Statement of Significance

Last updated on -

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, 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.

Heritage Study/Consultant	Melton - Shire of Melton Heritage Study phase 2, David Maloney, David Rowe, Pamela Jellie, Sera Jane Peters, 2007;
Construction dates	1850, 1870, 1897,
Other Names	2-88 Leakes Road, Plumpton, Moylan's former Brookville homestead,
Hermes Number	30065
Property Number	

## Physical Description 1

Physical 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 facade. 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.[1] 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.

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).

[1] *ibid*, p.161

## **Physical Conditions**

Physical Condition -

Main House, Shearing Shed:- *Good*.

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

Stables:- *Poor/Unstable*

## **Integrity**

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

*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/>*