

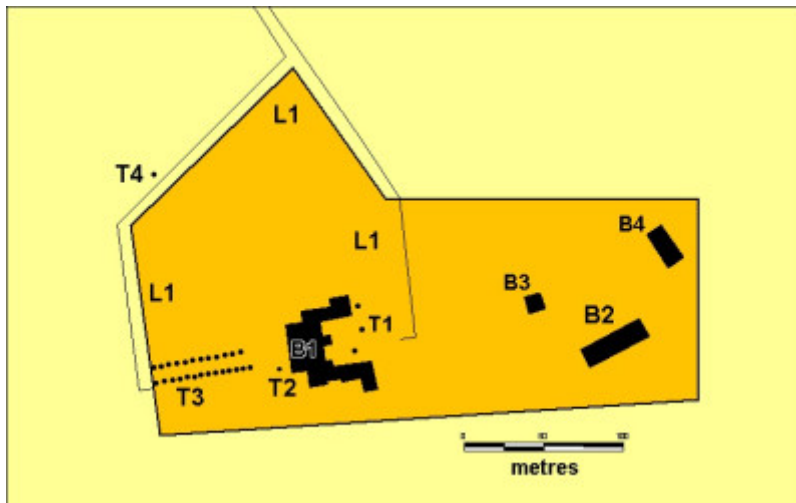
# KILLEEN HOMESTEAD



1 killeen homestead with verandah august2000.jpg



Killeen Stables August 2000



killeen h1908 extent of registration dec 2000

## Location

224 LONGWOOD-MANSFIELD ROAD CREIGHTONS CREEK, STRATHBOGIE SHIRE

## Municipality

STRATHBOGIE SHIRE

## Level of significance

Registered

## Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) Number

H1908

## Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO24

## VHR Registration

March 15, 2001

## Heritage Listing

Victorian Heritage Register

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## Statement of Significance

Last updated on -

What is significant?

The pastoral run of Killeen, then known as Five Mile Creek, was acquired by the squatter Charles Ryan in 1849. In that year it comprised 40,000 leased acres stocked with 1200 cattle. Ryan later added sheep to the stock. In the same year Ryan built the homestead as part of the improvements he carried out before purchasing 160 acres of freehold land under his pre-emptive right in 1852. He expanded to 640 acres of freehold in 1854.

The single storey house was built of pise, comprising clay or earth mixed with gravel, rammed between boards or formwork which was removed as the earth hardened. The walls are about 600mm thick. Early settlers knew this form of construction from books published for emigres to the colonies on how to build cottages. Pise was a craft favoured by amateur builders, but nonetheless was a skilled technique and was not altered, unlike timber construction, by local tradition or conditions. Due to the materials and the thickness of the walls, it was theoretically cool in summer and warm in winter.

The significant elements of the homestead are the four-room cottage of 1849 with the shingle roof and verandah, the 1850s kitchen wing and the dining room of c1870. The homestead in 1849 was a simple four-room house, although the three-sided layout around a courtyard was already realised by 1854, when Ryan purchased the remainder of his pre-emptive right. The verandah, which originally encompassed the whole house, is now mostly built in, leaving only the verandah to the west garden exposed. Corrugated iron now covers the original shingle covered hipped roof. The shingles are still partly visible beneath the verandah roof.

A substantial brick stable building is located about one hundred metres to the east of the homestead. The plan of the shed is in the manner of a basilica, with a main two-storey nave space for buggies and storage. Subsidiary single storey side aisles are fitted out with horse stalls. The construction is of red brick, on a stone plinth, with stone quoins at ground level. The bricks are supposed to have been made on site. A bituminous dampcourse dates the building as post 1870s. George Chomley purchased the station in 1885, plus the freehold to several thousand acres of the land surrounding Killeen. The stables were probably constructed in this period, as the grandiose design would have been appropriate for a large sheep station.

The distinctive gable ends of the stables are in the Flemish manner and the lines of the parapeted gables to the side aisles mimic the curve of the horse stalls inside. Small semi-circular brick holes link the aisles to the main space of the building. These provided access to the horse stalls for the feed that was dropped from the loft via hessian shutes located against the walls.

Landscaping and gardens surround the homestead on all four sides. A formal avenue of twenty-six Italian Cypress trees (*Cupressus sempervirens*) leads from the old homestead drive to the house. This avenue was probably planted in the 1930s. The avenue of pines along the old homestead drive comprises pairs of Monterey Pines (*Pinus radiata*) and Canary Island Pines (*Pinus canariensis*). At the southern end of the avenue is a very large Chinaberry (*Melia azederach*), which may be the largest in Victoria. The earliest planting, including the three Irish Strawberry trees (*Arbutus unedo*), the large Wisteria (*Wisteria sinensis*) and the pines along the old homestead drive, probably date from the 1880s.

How is it significant?

Killeen Homestead is of architectural, historical and aesthetic significance to the State of Victoria.

Why is it significant?

Killeen Homestead is architecturally significant as a very rare and early example of a house of pisé construction. Few comparable examples survive in Victoria; the most notable is Exford Homestead built on the banks of the Werribee River in the 1840s.

The stable building is architecturally significant as a highly unusual and distinctive pastoral outbuilding. The building has a degree of architectural pretension not normally associated with rural stables, especially in the context of the vernacular and unpretentious Killeen homestead.

Killeen Homestead is historically significant as evidence of land settlement in rural Victoria before 1850. The house is unusual as evidence of a substantial improvement carried out by a squatter before the pre-emptive right was secured. The outbuildings demonstrate the later improvements carried out by squatters as part of their purchase of freehold land. The stables and shearing shed shows the evolution of the run, which was originally a cattle station but later became a large and important sheep station in the district.

Killeen Homestead is aesthetically significant for its landscape and garden plantings. The area of primary importance in the garden is the rectangular enclosure around the homestead and the dense perimeter planting of laurustinus, privet, roses, lilac, olive, a large Chinese Wisteria and three Irish Strawberry trees. One of the Irish Strawberry trees is an atypical example having grown to form a single trunk. It is the largest recorded in Victoria. The avenue of Italian Cypress at the front of the house is an impressive landscape feature and a planting of this scale is uncommon in Victoria.

## 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.
2. Should it become apparent during further inspection or the carrying out of alterations 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 alteration shall cease and the Executive Director shall be notified as soon as possible.

3. If there is a conservation policy and plan approved by the Executive Director, all works shall be in accordance with it.

4. Nothing in this declaration prevents the Executive Director from amending or rescinding all or any of the permit exemptions.

Nothing in this declaration exempts owners or their agents from the responsibility to seek relevant planning or building permits from the responsible authority where applicable.

Exterior of homestead, stables, manager's house and shearing shed

? Minor repairs and maintenance which replace like with like.

? Removal of extraneous items such as air conditioners, pipe work, ducting, wiring, signage, antennae, aerials etc, and making good.

The registered land and landscape features and trees

? General horticultural maintenance.

? Repair, replacement or installation of water systems.

? Repair, replacement or installation of seating and other outdoor furniture.

? Erection or construction of roads and tracks and of fencing, gates, stockyards or any other forms of access and enclosure necessary for the continuation of agricultural or pastoral activities on the property provided that the works do not adversely affect the fabric or appearance of the registered buildings.

Interior of homestead

? Painting or wallpapering of previously painted walls and ceilings provided that preparation or painting does not remove evidence of earlier paint or other decorative scheme. Evidence of earlier schemes should be reported to Heritage Victoria.

? Removal of paint from originally unpainted or oiled joinery, doors, architraves, skirtings and decorative strapping.

? Replacement of carpets and floor coverings.

? Removal or replacement of curtain track, rods, blinds and other window dressings.

? Installation, removal or replacement of hooks, nails and other devices for the hanging of mirrors, paintings and other wall mounted artworks.

? Refurbishment of existing bathrooms, toilets and en suites including removal, installation or replacement of sanitary fixtures and associated piping, mirrors, wall and floor coverings.

? Removal and replacement of existing kitchen benches and fixtures including sinks, stoves, ovens, refrigerators, dishwashers etc and associated plumbing and wiring.

? Installation, removal or replacement of electrical wiring provided that all new wiring is fully concealed and any original light switches, pull cords, push buttons or power outlets are retained in-situ. Note: if wiring original to the place was carried in timber conduits then the conduits should remain in-situ.

? Installation, removal or replacement of smoke detectors.

Interior of Manager's House

? The interior of this building is permit exempt. No permit is required for alterations that do not effect or alter the external appearance or fabric.

Construction dates            1849,

Heritage Act Categories    Registered place,

Hermes Number                11244

Property Number

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## History

#### History of Place:

Killeen Homestead stands on pastoral run which was originally (from 1837 to c1849) was known as Five Mile Creek. Some details are available at the Public Records Office in the Pastoral Run Papers, jacket nos.360 and 361 and jacket No. 472. Five Mile Creek was known as Pastoral Run No.425 and later as Killeen, Pastoral Run No 631. It was first operated by William Abraham Creighton as a cattle station. Creighton was a squatter, later a licensee of the Crown.

From 1839 squatters were required to pay a fixed annual licence fee of £10 to the government. The fee defrayed the costs of the Border Police, who were appointed under the control of the Crown Commissioner of Lands. An additional fee was levied on stock, which were assessed half-yearly. (Pastures New, Billis & Kenyon, pp 5-6). In July 1845 Creighton's return declared 4 horses, 620 cattle and no sheep, a total fee of £3 18 shillings and 6 pence. He also declared 10 acres under cultivation, which were noted as being watered by creeks. Creighton had two male and one female servants, William and Eliza Smith and Luke Edge.

The return in January 1848 declared 798 cattle and 21 horses on a run estimated at 35 square miles (Pastoral Run No.425, Pastoral Run Papers, Jacket Nos. 360 and 361, PRO).

In April 1848 Creighton applied for a lease on his run under provisions of the Disposal of Waste Lands Act 1847 (Pastoral Run No 631 Pastoral Run Papers Jacket No. 472, PRO). Creighton provided a detailed description of the boundaries around his 60,000 acre run, which was stocked with 1200 cattle.

A neighbouring squatter of Creighton was John Cotton. Cotton arrived in Port Phillip in 1843 and acquired Doogalook Station in the Goulburn River Valley, comprising almost 27,000 acres and stocked with 1800 sheep and 400 cattle (The Correspondence of John Cotton, Victorian Pioneer 1842-1849, part 1 p 7). One of Cotton's daughters, Marian, married Charles Ryan, the future owner of Killeen, in 1847. Marian was aged 18 and Charles was 29 (M Casey, An Australian Story 1837 – 1907 p 89). Ryan had overlanded from Sydney in 1840 and taken up a run called Kilfera on the Broken River. He lived there as a bachelor in a comfortable homestead, described by a visitor as having a distinctly 'Galway' look about it (R Boldrewood, Old Melbourne Memories p 77).

After the marriage of Charles Ryan and Marian Cotton in October 1847, Ryan went to Mt Gambier to look for a station (Cotton Vol 3 p 7). No purchase appears to have eventuated and Ryan purchased the Five Mile Creek Run in 1849 (Casey p 72). Billis & Kenyon claim that it was in June of that year (Pastoral Pioneers of Victoria p 135), and that Killeen was originally part of a larger cattle run of 60,000 acres called Wanghambehm, located north of Longwood. The Pastoral Run papers suggest that Ryan purchased the run from the executors of Creighton's estate, who applied to transfer Creighton's Station to Ryan in a letter dated 26 June 1849 to the Crown Commissioner of Lands.

In July 1849 Cotton wrote to his brother in England that Charles and Marian Ryan were shortly to move to their new station, which they had just purchased from Creighton for £1200. The station included 900 cattle (Cotton, part 3 p 43).

Maie Casey, a descendent of Charles Ryan, described Ryan in An Australian Story 1837 – 1907 (1962):

"Charles Ryan arrived in Sydney and overlanded in 1840 to the Port Phillip District of New South Wales where he took up a run, Kilfera, north-east of the Broken River. In 1849, two years, two years after his marriage to Marian Cotton, he leased Killeen Station, Longwood, where they lived. He held it until 1854 when he came to Melbourne to establish the Stock and Station Agency of Ryan and Hammond." (Casey, p 72)

Ryan was described by his father-in-law, John Cotton, as "an Irishman but not a Roman Catholic." (The Correspondence of John Cotton, Part 2, p.69) Ryan's father was a solicitor in Dublin.

Marian described the homestead at Killeen, in a piece written when she was nearly 80, and reproduced by Casey:

"Our old cottage at Killeen was built of pisa, nearly sixty years ago now, and when I saw it last year it was as strong and good as ever and beautifully cool as the walls are two feet thick. To make pisa there is first a lattice work of wood, two foot in depth; the interior is filled with clay or earth and chopped straw and is rammed down very hard, then cemented all over outside, at least I suppose it is a sort of cement. It lasts forever, far better than brick or stone, is beautifully cool and looks much better than anything else, no leakage anywhere. Killeen is the loveliest bush house I have ever seen. The verandah in front is twelve feet wide and in our time had chairs, tables and couches on it. In front hang a curtain of creepers and asparagus fern; there were long pergolas covered with

vines and magnificent grapes. A hollow tree outside was made into a place for butter, milk, etc.: it was kept wet and the contents were always icy (sic) cold. The inside furniture of Killeen was made on the place and was quite original as we had a carpenter who was very artistic. It is mostly still there..." (Casey pp 89-90).

The windows, ledges and doors were originally constructed of Queensland cedar (C W Halsall, A General History of Euroa and District p 183).

In 1850 Ryan applied to purchase 160 acres "upon which my homestead stands" as a pre-emptive right. His application was dated 22 October 1850 and addressed from 'Five Mile Creek.' (Pastoral Run No.425, Pastoral Run Papers, Jacket Nos. 360 and 361, PRO). The pre-emptive right allowed only lease holders to purchase, in lots no smaller than 160 acres (Pastures New, p 10). A plan of the parish of Longwood in 1850 (L96 Historic Plans, Lands Registry, Department of Natural Resources and Environment) shows the old Sydney Road passing by Killeen Homestead, which is marked but not shown in detail.

Ryan made a return of the run in January 1851. He declared 40,000 acres, 62 horses, 1,100 cattle and 2347 sheep (Pastoral Run No 425 Pastoral Run Papers Jacket No. 360 & 361, PRO)

In November 1853 Ryan applied to purchase the remainder of his pre-emptive entitlement, a further 480 acres. The valuation of £1 per acre assessed by the surveyor was the minimum payable under the pre-emptive right entitlement (Pastures New, p 10). A survey made of Killeen in 1854 (Plan of Charles Ryan's pre-emptive right PR K18, Historic Plans, Lands Registry, Department of Natural Resources and Environment) shows the homestead with two wings forming a courtyard. Notes made by the surveyor describe box and stringybark trees. The soil is described as generally poor with only a very small portion being adapted for agriculture, but well adapted for grazing purposes. The improvements were described as a substantial dwelling house, offices, stables, men's huts, stock yards and cultivation and grazing paddocks.

It is interesting to note how at this early date the house has already attained its current layout around the courtyard. The plan appears to show the extant cool room nearest the house. A second building, detached from the cool room, may be the room that is now linked to form one continuous wing. This building, constructed of stone and locally made bricks, was said to have slept fourteen servants at one time (C W Halsall, A General History of Euroa and District p 183).

The pre-emptive right claim was referred to the Land Board, who in 1854 permitted the claim, although the claim was not permitted to overlap the village reserve of Longwood. The official making the report also noted , "the road from Melbourne passes close to the homestead and must therefore be reserved." (Pastoral Run Papers, jacket 472, PRO)

In April 1854 the Ryans sold the run to Hugh Glass, who quickly sold on to John Peaton Rowe in December 1856 (Billis & Kenyon, Pastoral Pioneers of Port Phillip, p 208).

Isaac Younghusband and Andrew Lyell took over the homestead in c1873. A photograph by Charles Nettleton (dated c1876) shows the homestead from the south-west including the later dining room built adjacent to the verandah. A copy of this photograph is held by the State Library of Victoria, who date it 1880 and mistakenly call it the Seven Creeks Homestead, another historic property near Euroa.

The period of ownership by Younghusband is probably the earliest period for the construction of the brick stables. In 1877 Younghusband became sole proprietor, with a mortgage over the property to the Oriental Bank. The stables building has a bituminous dampcourse, a type of building technology that was not available until the 1870s.

Oral evidence of the current owners and published secondary sources suggest that the stables were used for shearing as well. According to C W Halsall the shearing shed had provision for 16 blade shearers and shearers used the hay loft as sleeping quarters until the 1930s (C W Halsall, A General History of Euroa and District p 183).

Killeen was bought George Hanna Chomley in 1885. Chomley purchased several thousand acres of the land surrounding Killeen over a period of time in the 1880s and 1890s (Parish Plan of Longwood, MF copy, PRO). In 1883 he had bought the small section of land directly to the north-west and south of the road to Longwood; in 1891 he bought land directly to the south of Killeen. He was prevented buying land to the west side of Nine Mile Creek because 242 acres were reserved in 1887 for the use of an agricultural college. With such a large area of

land to maintain, much larger than just the pre-emptive right of 668 acres, there is a strong possibility that the stables were built for the Chomleys.

The homestead and farm remained in the Chomley family hands for a long time, until 1955. A description by Chomley's daughter of plantings at the homestead before the turn of the century is as follows:

"I can remember as a child , an avenue from the top of the rise down to the stone steps. Pines, cedars, oaks, laurels with a thick undergrowth of lilacs, laurustinus and ?? There was an orchard below the house and three especially beautiful trees, a Spanish chestnut, walnut and cork oak." (C W Halsall, A General History of Euroa and District p 183)

In 1901 a disastrous fire swept through the station, destroying everything except the house, 'big stables' and men's huts. Buildings described as being destroyed were the station, store, laundry, workshop, haysheds and all fencing around the property for ten miles (C W Halsall, A General History of Euroa and District p 183). According to Chomley's daughter the fire gave the family 'heavy losses' and as a result they struggled for many years after. It was George Chomley who built in the verandah area to create more internal space (Halsall, p 183).

The current shearing shed, a simple timber frame clad in corrugated iron, is supposed to date from 1901. The manager's house is from a similar date. The presence of the corrugated iron shed dating from 1901 suggests that it replaced an earlier structure, although Halsall does not mention a shed in the list of buildings destroyed. However, its existence tends to contradict the evidence of the stables being used for shearing.

By 1934 Campbell Chomley was owner, having succeeded from his father George (History of Euroa, C De Boos, ?1934). Alastair Cameron's family have owned Killeen since 1955, when Alastair's father Ewen purchased the 668 acres. Alastair and Janet have been living at Killeen since 1982.

## **Extent of Registration**

1. All the buildings and structures being B1 Homestead, B2 stables, B3 Manager's House, B4 Shearing Shed as marked on Diagram 1908 held by the Executive Director.
2. All the land marked L1 on Diagram 1908 held by the Executive Director, being part of the land described in Vol. 8101 Fol. 775 part of Crown Section A, Parish of Longwood.
3. All the Trees and Landscape Features marked as follows on Diagram 1908 held by the Executive Director:

T1 Arbutus unedo (x3)  
T2 Wisteria sinensis  
T3 Cupressus sempervirens (x26)  
T4 Melia azederach

*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/>*