
SETTLER GRAVESITES

Location

30 LIDGETTS LANE GREENDALE, MOORABOOL SHIRE

Municipality

MOORABOOL SHIRE

Level of significance

Heritage Inventory Site

Heritage Inventory (HI) Number

H7722-0088

Heritage Listing

Victorian Heritage Inventory

Statement of Significance

Last updated on - February 6, 2025

What is significant?

The southwest corner of Thomas Lidgett's paddock, overlooking the creek, and below where the old homestead stood (as stated by two different sources in the 1917 article, they were buried on the station in what is by that time).

Based on information from land records, the Lidgett family first owned the property on which the Settler Gravesites point is located in 1892, when Robert Lidgett bought the property. The land was passed on to his son Thomas Lidgett after Robert's death in 1912. This suggests that the location of the Settlers Gravesites point is towards the southwest boundary of the property owned by the Lidgetts, Allotment 5 of Section 3. This location concurs with the description of the location of the burials by Catherine Cooper (nee Pyke) and a Mr Densley, provided in 1917.

How is it significant?

The Settler Gravesites is of local historical and archaeological significance.

Why is it significant?

The Settler Gravesites has the potential to provide information about the way in which early pastoralists, landholders and other residents were buried following death prior to formalised cemeteries being established in early Victoria, or where these were otherwise unable to be accessed. This information may relate to the type, style and materials of headstones and grave surrounds, and to remains of grave goods, coffins or style of burial.

Interpretation
of Site

According to the Policy for Determining Low Archaeological Value (Heritage Victoria 2018), for an archaeological site to have more than low archaeological value, and be approved for inclusion in the VHI, it must address both Threshold A (archaeology) and Threshold B (history). From the available background history of this place, the location of Settlers Gravesites does meet the definition of an archaeological site under the Heritage Act, as there is documentary/oral evidence that there is a likelihood that there is artefacts, deposits or features 75 or more years old, that would provide information relating to the former use of the site, that requires archaeological methods to reveal such information. None of the early survey plans or maps indicate a formalised location for burials, gravesites or cemeteries, however the area has long been occupied by pastoralists and farmers on both sides of the Korjamunip Creek, beside which the Settler Gravesites point is located. One of the key landholders of the area was TH Pyke, whose children in 1917 (presumably by then in their old age) recounted their memories of burials and gravestones on their family property during their time residing there in the 1850s (The Ballan Times, 22 February 1917). As stated by two different sources in the 1917 article, they were buried on the station in what is by that time the southwest corner of Thomas Lidgett's paddock, overlooking the creek, and below where the old homestead stood. Based on information from land records, the Lidgett family first owned the property on which the Settler Gravesites point is located in 1892, when Robert Lidgett bought the property. The land was passed on to his son Thomas Lidgett after Robert's death in 1912. The location of the Settlers Gravesites point is towards the southwest boundary of the property owned by the Lidgetts, Allotment 5 of Section 3. This location concurs with the description of the location of the burials by Catherine Cooper (nee Pyke) and a Mr Densley, provided in 1917. While there is no physical evidence visible in historical or recent aerial imagery, given the age of the burials, and that the headstones were described over 100 years ago as being difficult to read due to weathering, any physical remains may either have disintegrated altogether, or simply be too small or inconspicuous to be seen in aerial imagery, or has subsequently been buried by sediments. Pedestrian survey of the area surrounding the Settler Gravesites may identify potential evidence of surface remains of headstones, grave surrounds, or related memorial materials. Further, ground penetrating radar in this location may also identify the presence of anomalies associated with grave cuts for burials. As there are historical oral accounts from firsthand witnesses which identify the location of burials in the vicinity of the Settler Gravesites data point, and that the data for the location of the site came from the community, it is considered that there is the potential for physical remains of the grave surrounds or headstones, as well as physical evidence of burial cuts on the surface and subsurface, as well as potential for human remains to be present. They may be in a condition that enables information to be obtained that will contribute to an understanding of the site. The Settler Gravesites site therefore meets Threshold A (archaeology). The Settler Gravesites has the potential to provide information about the way in which early pastoralists, landholders and other residents were buried following death prior to formalised cemeteries being established in early Victoria, or where these were otherwise unable to be accessed. This information may relate to the type, style and materials of headstones and grave surrounds, and to remains of grave goods, coffins or style of burial. Therefore, the Settler Gravesites meets Threshold B (history).

Hermes
Number

212659

Property
Number

History

SiteCard data copied on 06/02/2025: Squatting and pastoralism Cupumninip run The land on which the Settler Gravesites location is situated was originally part of a large squatting lease of 15,000 acres known as the Cupumninip run. The run was first officially leased to Sir John Lewes (Lewis) Pedder, the chief justice of Van Diemen's Land, who in 1836 became an 'overstraiter' absentee speculator, having sent a flock of sheep across Bass Strait to Port Phillip. His flock appears to have been situated in the Williamstown area, where other

'overstraiter' flocks were kept until suitable runs could be acquired. Pedder leased the Cupumninip run from 1838 until 1855 (Fox 2012, p. 152; Rowe and Jacobs 2016, p. 13). The Cupumninip run, the purchase of which was made through James Simpson, Pedder's friend (Fox 2012, pp. 64, 128), was described in the publication of the claims to leases of Crown land in 1848 as: 'No. 152. Sir John Lewis Pedder (per James Simpson) Name of run – Cupumninip, Mount Blackwood Estimated area—15,000 acres Estimated grazing capabilities—5,000 sheep Bounded on the east by a marked tree line and ploughed furrow extending from the summit of Mount Blackwood, native name Moonia, to the junction of the Yablinballah creek with the north branch of the river Weirriby, on the south by the Weirriby, on the west by the Weirriby to its source, on the north by the Mount Blackwood or dividing range to the top of Mount Blackwood ; estimated distances east line 5 miles, south line 1½ miles, west line 5 miles, north line 7 miles situated between Charles McLachlan and Pyke's runs' (The Argus, 3 October 1848, p. 4). Another name associated with the run was Thomas Hamilton, whose name is inscribed on the Western District runs plan (Anonymous c.1840s-1850s), and was listed as holding sheep on the run in 1857 (The Argus, 11 May 1857, p. 1). Hamilton seems to have purchased the run from Pedder in 1855, around the time that much of the squatting run was subdivided for sale, and was residing at Cupumninip, which he had renamed as 'Glen Pedder' (Glenpedder), by the time he was married to Jane McLeod in 1858 (The Argus, 6 March 1858, p. 4). After his death, the Glenpedder property was subdivided, with two larger allotments being sold, around 364 acres to H Densley, and around 355 acres to T Clark (The Ballan Times and Blackwood, Blakeville and Myrniong Standard, 21 June 1894, p. 3). Pyke's property The location on which the Settler Gravesites is noted in the pinpoint dataset is shown on the earliest illustrated survey as part of land owned by TH Pyke; this being the 1840 survey of 'the Western heads of the Werribee River' by Darke. On the map, Darke has noted the location of potential huts owned by 'Simpson' and 'Campbell', both to the north of the location of the Settler Gravesites. Simpson could be James Simpson, who was listed as Pedder's representative on the 1848 claims to the lease. The 1840 survey plan also shows a location of a hut or dwelling noted to belong to 'Gray' on the pre-emptive run owned by 'T H Pyke'. A letter written by Pyke in 1853 describes that he took up the Upper Weirriby run from John Gray (Grey) in 1842, and that he also purchased the adjoining Ballanee (Ballenee, No. 180) station from a Mr Kinnear, who in turn had bought it from John Stieglitz in 1852 (Bride 1898, pp. 19-20; Spreadborough and Anderson 1983, p. 151). As such, Pyke owned a great deal of land surrounding Cupumninip station on the north, west and southwest (Anonymous c.1840s-1850s). Within the Ballan district, the land was unfenced barring 'a few paddocks at T. H. Pyke's homestead' (The Ballan Times, 22 February 1917, p. 3). Pyke (Pike)'s station was described in the 1848 claims to leases of Crown land as follows: 'No. 149. Pike Thomas Henry Name of run – Upper Weirriby or Grey's old run Estimated area—6,500 acres Estimated grazing capabilities—300 head of Cattle, 9,000 Sheep. Near Mount Blackwood; bounded on the north by a tributary of the River Weirriby; south by the River Weirriby to the junction; west north-west by the run of Mr. C. Von Steiglitz, and the Mount Blackwood Ranges' (The Argus, 3 October 1848, p. 1526). Pyke's run (which was named as 'Upper Werrabee and Ballanee Station') was broken up for sale in 1852. The sale also included Pyke's sheep, cattle, and horses, with applications being taken by Pyke at Upper 'Werrabee Station' near Ballan. The station had accommodation for at least six servants, as well as for the station's farm hands (Vines 1993, p. 26). The following description from an advertisement of sale appears to relate to Pyke's pre-emptive rights allotment (on which the location of the Settler Gravesites is situated): 'The pre-emptive right to this station is purchased and will be disposed of with the stock and runs. The improvements are—a seven-roomed cottage, with kitchen and outbuildings, garden house and cultivated paddocks, &c., and every requisite for the residence of a respectable family' (Geelong Advertiser and Intelligencer, 4 December 1852, p. 2). After the Pyke family left, the station was purchased by Lyon and Ferrers, who were listed as the licensees of 'Upper Werribee' and 'Balleenee' stations by 1857 (Mount Alexander Mail, 15 May 1857, p. 2). It does not appear that the application for pastoral leases was ever activated (Wright 1989), and County and Parish plans of the County of Bourke show the land had been surveyed by 1855 and divided into individual rural and township lots and a number of parcels. Related deaths and burials A history of pastoral pioneers suggests that Pyke subsequently returned to England with his family after the sale, but he returned in 1860 (The Australasian, 27 March 1937, p. 4). He was buried at Old Ballan Cemetery (Find a Grave 2017), approximately 7.2 km to the southeast of the location of the Settler Gravesites. According to an interview with Mr Densley, an early resident of the area who took up one of the two larger subdivisions of the Cupumninip run, the Old Ballan Cemetery was established in 1853. Prior to that: 'Almost every station had its burying ground in those days, and station hands as well as members of the squatter's family were buried in it [...] At "Tregothnan," a whip named Daniel Hopkins, who was killed on the southern slope of Mount Steiglitz while hunting, through his horse carrying him against a projecting limb, is buried opposite to where the old homestead stood, in what is now the corner of Mr Thomas Lidgett's paddock. A child of the Pyke family, who died from injuries received when the original homestead was burned, as well as some others whose names Mr Densley cannot recall, are also buried there. All those burials took place in T. H. Pyke's time, and some of the tombstones are still to be seen, but their inscriptions are now undecipherable' (The Ballan Times, 22 February 1917, p. 3). The occurrence of burials in the vicinity of the Settler Gravesites location is backed-up by Catherine Ann Cooper (nee Pyke), TH Pyke's daughter (who was born in 1845 (Roberts n.d.)): 'She recalls that several deaths at the

station, one man from injuries received through his horse running him against a tree, another whom she thinks was bitten by a snake, and a bright boy who drifted on to the station and was appointed whipper-in, in connection with the hounds [...] All these, as well as the young brother who died from burns, as already related, were buried on the station in a picturesque nook in what is now the south-west corner of Mr Thomas Lidgett's paddock, facing the creek below where the old homestead stood. The mounds are still traceable and tombstones exist, but the ravages of time have rendered the inscriptions of the latter undecipherable' (The Ballan Times, 21 July 1917, p. 2). Catherine's brother, William Collyer Pyke (who was born in 1851 (Roberts n.d.)), concurred with this information: 'In connection with his sister's statement, in reference to the graves in what is now Mr Thomas Lidgett's paddock, Mr Pyke says that he has often read the inscriptions on the tombstones, and heard older residents than himself talking of the people buried there. One was a man named Stephen Hopkins, who was employed on the station, and Mr Pyke's older brother informed him that he was killed while returning from the Werribee Hunt hotel through his horse carrying him against the limb of a tree in what is now the front Tregothnan paddock. Another was named Stephen Toogood, who died in a violent fit, it taking two or three men to hold him down. Possibly this is the man referred to by Mrs Cooper as having been bitten by a snake. His brother, who died from injuries received at the time the original homestead was burnt, is also buried there, as are three young children of an early resident of the district, a carpenter named George Fields' (The Ballan Times, 19 February 1917, p. 3). The child mentioned in the accounts appears to have been a son of TH Pyke (Catherine Ann and William Collyer Pyke's brother) who was born on 26 April 1847, and died in a fire which destroyed the Pyke family homestead (Roberts n.d.).

Location of Settler Gravesites pinpoint - Allotment 5, Section 3 of the Parish of Blackwood By 1855, the land on which the location of the Settler Gravesites is situated had been surveyed as allotment 5, section 3, Parish of Blackwood. It was bought by David Mairs in the Parish of Blackwood land sale in 1856, along with the adjacent parcel, allotment 4 to the north (The Argus, 23 July 1856, p.5). The original selector 'D. Mairs' is shown on later Parish Plans, notably, the 1883 Parish plan, however by this stage, certificates of title indicate that portion 5 had sold to Edwin Trenerry in 1869, along with four parcels of land to the west of Korjamunip Creek in Parish of Gorong. David Mairs was an Irish immigrant who opened a store on the goldfields and bought 600 acres of land at Pentland Hills, living with his wife, Sarah, and family at the property (situated on land known as Pike's Flat) until they moved to Balnarring on the Mornington Peninsula in 1868 (Mornington Standard, 26 Jul 1902, p.2). Two of his children, David and Sarah Jane, died of diphtheria while the family was living on the property in 1865 (The Age, 25 July 1865, p. 7). While the family was buried at Tyabb Cemetery, the burial place of the two children is unknown (Find a Grave 2020). After acquiring the land from Mairs, including allotment 5, section 3 of the Parish of Blackwood (on which the Settler Gravesites pinpoint was situated), in the late 1860s, Edwin Trenerry leased the land to local farmers from Ballan, William Kugg and Levi Maidment, for an initial period of four months (Certificate of Title, volume 324 folio 656). By the time of his death in 1880 the land was under lease to a Donald Stewart (20/846 Edwin Trenerry: Grant of Probate, 1880). Trenerry was a gold miner who had chased the gold rushes in Victoria. He was described as a 'well known mining property holder at Ballarat', owning multiple parcels of land in Ballarat and Ballan (Ballarat Star, 15 April 1881, p.2). He had arrived in Blackwood in the mid-1850s after there was a rush on the area with the discovery of gold in 1854, but soon moved to the diggings at Ballarat (Warwick Argus, 17 April 1879, p.5). Trenerry became the largest shareholder in the Golden Gate Mining Company in 1860 and became a property speculator, purchasing land in Ballan, Ballarat and Melbourne, including the 2,639-acre pastoral estate 'Tregothnan' in Ballan and later Dight's Paddock in Collingwood. He eventually returned to the England, where he passed away on 21 April 1880 (20/846 Edwin Trenerry: Grant of Probate, 1880). The location of the Settler Gravesites was situated on allotment 5, section 3 of the Parish of Blackwood, which comprised the eastern part of Trenerry's Tregothnan estate. It was sold at auction in 1888, described as follows: 'Tregothnan Estate, comprising a total area of 2430a 1r and 35 p, or thereabouts, of the richest agricultural and grazing land, in one lot; and if not so sold, then in three lots as under: - Lot 1. Being allotment 1 of section VII., parish of Gorong, comprising 161a or 27p, or thereabouts, having a long frontage to the main road from Ballan to Greendale. Lot 2. Being allotment 5 of section III., parish of Blackwood, having a frontage to Pyke's Creek, a permanent stream of fresh water, and comprising 246a. 3r 8p, or thereabouts Lot 3 Being Crown portion A and seven and part of Crown portion 8 or section 5, and crown allotments 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9 of section 10, and allotments 1, 2, and 3 of section 9, parish of Gorong (including Pyke's pre-emptive right) – a total area of 2022a 2r or thereabouts 'This property has been continuously in the hands of the late E. Trenerry and his executors for many years. It comprises some of the richest land in the far-famed Ballan and Pentland Hills district, and is admirably adapted for sub-division, being so well situated on the main Melbourne and Ballarat road ... also, a frontage of over three miles to Pyke's Creek – a beautiful stream of pure water, permanent in winter season. The property is all fenced (post, rail, and wire), divided into convenient paddocks, and on the land is a comfortable four roomed wooden dwelling-house and necessary outbuildings' (Ballarat Star, 3 May 1888, p.3). The land was acquired as one lot by the investment company, Alliance Freehold Company of Australia Ltd., and ownership was transferred in 1889 (Certificate of Title, volume 214 folio 956). The area included the large parcel of land to the southwest, land originally granted to Pyke under a pre-emptive right, where Gray's property has been noted on early plans. The location of the four roomed

wooden dwelling described in the advertisement is unclear, but was likely located on the main road, rather than in the location noted as being Settler Gravesites, which is on the flat below the escarpment running down to Korjamunip Creek. After Alliance Freehold Company of Australia Ltd acquired the Tregothnan Estate, the land was progressively subdivided into multiple smaller lots of between 50 to 400 acres, and sold in the late 1880s and 1890s. The location of the Settler Gravesites, as Crown allotment 5, section 3, Parish of Blackwood, was again offered for sale in December 1889 (Bacchus Marsh Express, 14 December 1889, p. 2) and in 1892, Robert Lidgett is recorded as the owner of the 246-acre parcel of land (Certificate of Title, volume 2454, folio 634). He was described in the Certificate of Title as a grazier of Bullan [Ballan]. He was also a prominent member of the Bacchus Marsh and Myrniong communities, serving as a councillor on two local councils, and was the co-founder of the Myrniong Cooperative Butter Company (Bacchus Marsh Express, 29 September 1912, p.3). Twentieth century occupation Location of Settler Gravesites pinpoint - Allotment 5, Section 3 of the Parish of Blackwood Robert Lidgett, who owned allotment 5 from 1892 into the early 1900s, died in 1912. The land was transferred into the name of his two sons, Robert (junior) and Thomas Lidgett, both farmers of Myrniong, before being solely transferred to Thomas in 1914 (Certificate of Title, volume 2454 folio 634). The Grant of probate for Robert Lidgett's will lists the land on allotment 5 section 3 as 'vacant land fenced with posts rails and wires in the occupation of Thoms Lidgett' (127/213 Robert Lidgett: Grant of probate, 1912). Of the seven parcels of land in his estate at the time of his death, a number were described as containing houses in the Parish of Korkuperrimul (Bacchus Marsh). The location of the burials discussed in the 1917 article in the The Ballan Times is described as being 'in the corner of Thomas Lidgett's paddock'. An adjoining property belonging to Lidgett in the Parish of Blackwood, Allotment 4 Section 3, was described as including 'a weather board house' of eight rooms, with stables, bull pens, hay sheds and fowl house (127/213 Robert Lidgett: Grant of probate, 1912). The most likely location of this house is that shown on military sketch mapping dating to 1917 and 1936. This shows a house as being to the north of the location of the Settler Gravesites along Greendale Road, west of the unnamed roadway, within what would be allotment 4 of section 3. Geological mapping from 1937 shows that the land at the location of the Settler Gravesites comprises a slope from Rae's Hill down to Korjamunip Creek, on older volcanic basalt lava and tuffs. Several areas of tuff are shown nearby. The slope can also be seen on modern aerial imagery of the area dating to 2024. High resolution aerial imagery from 2022 shows that the location of the Settler Gravesites comprises a rocky slope just above the adjacent river flat, with no evidence of any grave markers. The land on which the location of the Settler Gravesites is situated then remained in the Lidgett family, transferring three more times to other family members, listed in the certificates of title as farmers from around the area, up to the 1982, when 'widow, Jillian Rosemary Lidgett of 'Highton', Greendale is registered as proprietor. The land is still in the Lidgett family today (Certificate of Title, volume 2140 folio 956).

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/>