



**HERITAGE  
COUNCIL**  
OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

## REGISTER OF HERITAGE PLACES ASSESSMENT DOCUMENTATION

### 11. ASSESSMENT OF CULTURAL HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

The criteria adopted by the Heritage Council in November 1996 have been used to determine the cultural heritage significance of the place.

#### PRINCIPAL AUSTRALIAN HISTORIC THEME(S)

- 8.14 Living in the country and rural settlements
- 3.5 Developing primary production
- 3.5.1 Grazing stock

#### HERITAGE COUNCIL OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA THEME(S)

- 100 Demographic settlement and mobility
- 301 Grazing, pastoralism and dairying
- 602 Early Settlers

#### 11.1 AESTHETIC VALUE\*

*Tibradden Homestead Group* is a good example of substantial mid-nineteenth century pastoral station, illustrating the traditional setting of the Homestead within a working farmyard, and has a strong agrarian aesthetic. (Criterion 1.1)

*Tibradden Homestead Group* has a strong agrarian aesthetic, relating to both the visual relationships between the historic buildings and their relationships with the wider rural setting. (Criterion 1.1)

The extensive plantings of Pepper Trees (*Schinus molle*), the retention of scattered eucalypts, and the planting of sentinel Morton Bay figs (*Ficus macrophylla*) and palms, have created shaded areas around the buildings and to the perimeter of the stock yards. These provide a contrast to the adjacent open paddocks and contribute to the traditional character of the Homestead farmyard. (Criterion 1.1)

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For consistency, all references to architectural style are taken from Apperly, R., Irving, R., Reynolds, P. *A Pictorial Guide to Identifying Australian Architecture. Styles and Terms from 1788 to the Present*, Angus and Robertson, North Ryde, 1989.

For consistency, all references to garden and landscape types and styles are taken from Ramsay, J. *Parks, Gardens and Special Trees: A Classification and Assessment Method for the Register of the National Estate*, Australian Government Publishing Service, Canberra, 1991, with additional reference to Richards, O. *Theoretical Framework for Designed Landscapes in WA*, unpublished report, 1997.

The original portion of the Homestead, the Kitchen, Stables/Cart Shed, Mill, Post Office, Lodge and the brick and stone farmyard walls are good examples of simple Victorian Georgian farm structures that were functional, but also well crafted and designed to represent prosperity and stability. (Criterion 1.1)

The Stables/Cart Shed, the Mill, the spine wall of the Shearing Shed and the farmyard walls provide excellent examples of craftsmanship in the construction of rural stone buildings in the mid-nineteenth century. (Criterion 1.2)

*Tibradden Homestead Group* is a rural landmark, which is prominent in public views from Sandsprings Road. (Criterion 1.3)

## 11. 2. HISTORIC VALUE

*Tibradden Homestead Group* is indicative of the early settlement of the Victoria district from the 1850s, which occurred as a consequence of the pressure exerted on the Colonial Government by the settlers during the 1830s and 1840s to extend the limits of the Swan River Colony and allow for a greater availability of land. (Criterion 2.1)

*Tibradden Homestead Group* is significant as the site of an Aboriginal camp for many years, as well as the site of occasional clashes between local and other Aboriginal groups. (Criterion 2.1)

The Flour Mill at *Tibradden Homestead Group* is indicative of the prosperous period between 1860 and 1890 when the Victoria district was considered the 'breadbasket' of the State, due to the quality and quantity of its wheat production. (Criterion 2.2)

*Tibradden Homestead Group* is one of the earliest homesteads to be established in the Victoria district following its opening for settlement in 1850. (Criterion 2.2)

The Post Office at *Tibradden Homestead Group* is indicative of the country postal system in the late nineteenth century, which utilized pre-existing structures within established stations as an unofficial post office, used for the drop off and distribution of items, in order to service sparsely populated areas. (Criterion 2.2)

*Tibradden Homestead Group* was established by John Sydney Davis, one of the first pioneers to arrive in the Victoria district after it was opened for settlement in 1850. Davis was also associated with a number of the district's other pioneers including: Thomas Brown of Glengarry Station (P3726 *Glengarry Station Complex*); William Burges of the Bowes (P3270 *The Bowes*) who was Resident Magistrate for the Champion Bay district from 1851 to 1860; James Walcott of Minnenooka (P13928 *Minnenooka Homestead and Graveyard*); and Major Logue (P3725 *Ellendale Homestead*). (Criterion 2.3)

*Tibradden Homestead Group* is significant for its association with 'The Pastoral Company', a group of early pastoralists which included John Sydney Davis, James Walcott and Major Logue, who worked cooperatively to erect homesteads, infrastructure and generally gave one another assistance. (Criterion 2.3)

Elizabeth Susan Davis, the first daughter of John Sydney Davis, was born at *Tibradden Homestead Group* in January 1855, and is reputedly the first white girl born in the Champion Bay district. (Criterion 2.3)

### **11. 3. SCIENTIFIC VALUE**

Archaeological material at *Tibradden Homestead Group* has the potential to provide information about the development and occupation of a mid-nineteenth century pastoral station. (Criterion 3.2)

### **11. 4. SOCIAL VALUE**

The Post Office at *Tibradden Homestead Group* has some social significance for the local population of the area, having operated as an unofficial post office during the 1890s and into the first decades of the twentieth century. (Criterion 4.1)

*Tibradden Homestead Group*, and in particular its Flour Mill, is considered a local landmark, and is valued by the local community for its contribution to the community's sense of place. (Criterion 4.2)

## **12. DEGREE OF SIGNIFICANCE**

### **12. 1. RARITY**

The Flour Mill at *Tibradden Homestead Group* is one of the few wind powered flour mills known to have been constructed in Western Australia between 1830 and the 1890s, and is one of only four extant examples remaining in Western Australia. (Criterion 5.1)

The original portion of the Kitchen is rare for being constructed using cob, a traditional building method used in areas of England, but not widely recorded in Australia. The original cottage of *Tibradden Homestead Group*, which is no longer extant, is also known to have been constructed of cob. (Criterion 5.1)

### **12. 2 REPRESENTATIVENESS**

*Tibradden Homestead Group* is representative of a substantial a mid-nineteenth century pastoral station. (Criterion 6.1)

The Flour mill at *Tibradden Homestead Group* is representative of the prosperous period in the Victoria district between the 1860s and 1890s, when the area was renowned for the quality and quantity of its wheat production. (Criterion 6.2)

The various construction materials used at *Tibradden Homestead Group* is indicative of the skills that the early colonists brought with them, and the increased availability of skilled tradesmen in later years. (Criterion 6.2)

### **12. 3 CONDITION**

Overall *Tibradden Homestead Group* is in fair condition.

Homestead

The Homestead generally appears to be structurally sound and weather tight, but there is localised evidence of termite damage. General maintenance, including repainting of external timberwork, is also required.

The front verandah, which was recently described as being in poor condition, is currently being reconstructed. Other works to upgrade the facilities and conserve the fabric are being planned to enable the place to be reoccupied.

The brick walls that enclosed the homestead garden on the western and southern sides have largely collapsed and some of the bricks to the remnant fabric are severely fretted.

#### Kitchen

This building generally appears to be structurally sound and weather tight, but there is evidence of a low level of maintenance over an extended period of time, which is currently being addressed. Recent works include lime-washing walls.

The floor of what is reputed to have been the meat room, remains as a broken concrete slab near the south-eastern corner of the Kitchen.

The brick walls that surrounded the kitchen yard have collapsed and only sections of the base of the wall are still evident. The bricks to this remnant fabric are severely fretted.

#### Lodge

This building appears to be structurally sound, but it is generally in a poor condition with missing doors allowing weather penetration and access for birds (including swallows nesting in the living area). Externally there are areas of cement patching to the lime washed walls of the western addition, indicating some previous deterioration to the stonework. There is also evidence of termite damage to the fireplace surround, timber ceilings and roof framing.

Some repairs to localised cracking and deteriorated lintels are currently in progress. The roof has been replaced and is in a good condition.

#### Post Office

The Post Office has been extensively renovated and is in good condition.

#### Flour Mill

The external stonework of the former Mill is in good condition, but there is evidence that the roof shingles (last replaced in the late twentieth century) are deteriorating. Internally there is some evidence of termite and damp damage to timber framing for the first floor. Localised brick and cement patching appears to relate to repairs to the mounting of joists to the first floor.

#### Stables/Cart Shed

This building generally appears to be structurally sound and is in a fair condition overall. The unpainted stone walls to the gable ends and the western façade are in good condition. However, some of the brickwork framing the openings to the stables is severely fretting and previous damage is evidenced by cement patching to the lime washed eastern walls.

The roof sheeting is generally in a fair condition, but some sheets are starting to lift and there are localised areas of rust damage. Gutters are deteriorated and sections have been removed.

The timber block floors to the stables (formed from sections of tree trunk) are deteriorating through wear and tear, rot and termite damage.

#### Shearing Shed

The Shearing Shed is still in use and has been generally well maintained. The main stone wall that forms the spine of the building was well constructed and is in

a sound condition. There is localised evidence of termite damage to the timber framing to the remainder of the building and some areas of rust to the corrugated iron cladding.

#### Stone Walls to the Stable and Shearing Shed Yards

The extant sections of the stone walls are generally in a fair condition and deterioration is mostly restricted to the rough rendered finish (particularly along the lower sections of the walls) rather than the underlying stone work. Some small sections have, however, been damaged by the growth of adjacent trees.

#### Outbuilding – Animal Stall (aka Milking Shed)

This small building has not been used in recent years and is in a very poor condition, including partial collapse of the stone wall at the south-eastern corner. The roof sheeting is rusting and timber fabric dilapidated.

#### Animal Pens (aka Piggery)

The animal pens are in a very dilapidated condition, although sections of the stone walls and the concrete trough appear to be relatively sound. The site is overgrown and all timber framing and fencing (including both sawn timbers and bush palings) is severely deteriorated.

#### Twentieth Century Sheds

The shed to the east of the Shearing Shed is in a poor condition, with sections of deteriorated framing and cladding. The shed to the west of the Shearing Shed also has rusted roof sheeting, but otherwise the large sheds are generally in good condition.

#### Well

The top layer of the timber lining (above the water level) appears to be sound. The palms around the well were recently burnt and have collapsed in this area. The former terraced productive garden area has otherwise been cleared and is overgrown with grass.

#### Cemetery

The small cemetery has been enclosed with a pipe rail fence and the grass is managed within the enclosure. The two late nineteenth to early twentieth century headstones are standing and the inscriptions are still clearly legible.

#### Pise Building

There is evidence of fine cracking to the face of the rendered ashlar finish to the external walls (at the level of the lower lifts to the pise walls), the corrugated iron roof sheeting has surface rust, and the doors have been removed.

Overall the building remains in a fair condition.

#### Stone Ruins

The old stone building in the paddock to the north of the Homestead farmyard was not inspected. However, from a distance it is clear that the walls are in ruins with only small sections remaining up to the former roof height (including one gable end). Other parts of the walls have fully collapsed and overall the place is in a poor condition.

#### Site of original Homestead

The site of the original cob walled homestead is reputed to have been in the area of the rear (western) extension to the current Homestead, possibly extending into the adjacent rear yard.

This area has been cleared and levelled (by cutting back the slope) for the extension and adjacent lawn. There is no above ground evidence of the original house.

#### Site of Former Tennis Courts

The ant-bed tennis courts have been redeveloped as the site of a large modern farm shed. Primary evidence remains in the material that forms the base for this structure, although this has been disturbed as part of the construction process.

### 12.4 INTEGRITY

Overall the integrity of *Tibradden Homestead Group* is high. The use of the place as a station and homestead, and the use of its component parts, can be readily understood from the extant fabric and interpretation of the archaeological resource.

### 12.5 AUTHENTICITY

Overall the integrity of *Tibradden Homestead Group* is moderate to high, with alterations reflecting changing farming practices and living standards since the 1860s.

#### Homestead

The current Homestead had replaced the original cob house by the 1870s and has been extended in at least four stages since that time. These extensions included brick additions at either end of the original two-roomed brick building (almost certainly as two separate building campaigns), a weatherboard addition to the northern end of the verandah (early twentieth century) and fibrous cement additions to the northern end of the verandah and along the western side (mid twentieth century).

The physical evidence relating to each building campaign has generally retained a high level of authenticity. There have, however, been some changes to the original section, including the removal of one wall of the central hall and the construction of a second door into the main living room from the western corridor.

The brick garden walls to the Homestead and kitchen yards have a low degree of authenticity due to the extensive loss of original fabric.

#### Kitchen

The physical evidence suggests that the kitchen was originally constructed as a single room with a large fireplace (from which the wood stove has been now removed). This was extended at an early date with an additional two rooms at the northern end and one room at the southern end. The original timber (or earth) floors have been replaced with concrete. Some joinery, including the casement windows to the original room and traditional board and brace doors, remain intact but other windows have been replaced with louvers. What is reputed to have

been a timber framed meat house has been demolished and its location is now marked by a broken concrete slab.

Overall the building retains a moderate to high level of authenticity.

#### Lodge

The basic structure remains in an authentic state, but a lack of maintenance (resulting in the loss of some fabric), twentieth century upgrades to the kitchen and bathroom, the replacement of timber floors with concrete and the extension of the roofline over a southern verandah addition, have all compromised the authenticity of this building.

The overall authenticity is low to moderate.

#### Post Office

The basic structure remains in an authentic state, but the physical evidence indicates that the Post Office was renovated in the late twentieth century, with major works including re-roofing, reconstruction of the verandah and the replacement of timber floors in concrete.

Overall the building retains a moderate degree of authenticity.

#### Flour Mill

The external stonework of the Flour Mill remains in an authentic condition and the roof form is still the same as shown in a 1928 photograph.<sup>1</sup> Major alterations include the removal of the mill machinery and sail apparatus, and the replacement of the original flooring with concrete.

Overall the place has a moderate level of authenticity.

#### Stables/Cart Shed

The Stables and Cart Shed have a moderate to high level of authenticity, with the major change being the replacement of the timber posts to the cart shed with steel posts.

#### Shearing Shed

The Shearing Shed was originally constructed as a hay shed and later converted to its current use. The only significant fabric relating to the original structure is the stone wall that runs along the western side of the main shearing room and returns along the southern side. As part of the conversion, this had four large new openings with concrete lintels cut into the stone work. The area was then extended with timber-framed, corrugated iron clad walls, which enclosed the holding pens, shearing run, and fleece handing area. Additional pens and a garage were added in the late twentieth century.

The place has a low level of authenticity as a nineteenth century hay shed. It has a high level of authenticity as a twentieth century shearing shed.

#### Stone Walls to the Stable and Shearing Shed Yards

The stone walls to the yards generally have a high degree of authenticity, although some modifications have been made (primarily the construction of a

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<sup>1</sup> *Sunday Times*, 29 July 1928, p 21

concrete water trough which was cut into the stone wall near the northern end of the stables).

#### Outbuilding – Animal Stall (aka Milking Shed)

This small building has been altered over time and is now in a deteriorated condition. Its original detailing and use is not clear and the authenticity is generally moderate to low.

#### Animal Pens (aka Piggery)

The animal pens have been compromised by the various alterations over time. However, original stone walling remains in situ and, despite the current dilapidated condition, the layout is capable of interpretation through the extant fabric and archaeological evidence. Overall the authenticity is low to moderate.

#### Twentieth Century Sheds

The shed to the east of the Shearing Shed has been altered in a number of stages and its authenticity is low. The authenticity of the other sheds is high.

#### Well

The authenticity of the well is high, but there is little evidence of the extensive productive gardens that were laid along the surrounding slope (east of the Homestead).

#### Cemetery

The cemetery is of moderate authenticity. While it retains its two known original headstones, the enclosure is of a functional modern nature.

#### Pise Building

The use of the pise building has not been confirmed, but the building retains very low timber benches to one of the rooms (and evidence of the same detailing to the other room), wire mesh screening to the window openings and evidence of hinged doors.

Overall the fabric appears to have retained a moderate degree of authenticity with no obvious evidence of any major alterations.

#### Stone Ruins

The old stone building is in a state of collapse and has a low level of authenticity.

#### Archaeological Sites

The sites of the original Homestead, former tennis courts and the twentieth century shearing quarters have all been compromised by ground works for later development. More invasive investigation would be required to determine if any archaeological evidence has survived.

Other archaeological evidence relating to former structures, such as a blacksmith shop (location not determined), and to the early use of the place (such as subfloor deposits to the Homestead and in refuse sites) is likely to have survived in a number of locations.

Old farm machinery and metal items are stored in sheds and discarded items are scattered around the farmyard (although the latter are now being gradually cleared as part of site management).



### 13. SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

The documentation for this place is based on the Greenough Municipal Heritage Inventory entry for 'Tibradden Homestead Group' (2012), with amendments and/or additions by the State Heritage Office and the Register Committee.

Additional physical information has been provided by Greenward Consulting in 2012.

Comparative information has been compiled by State Heritage Office.

#### 13.1 DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

*Tibradden Homestead Group* is a substantial nineteenth-century pastoral station established in 1852 by John Sydney Davis.

By the late 1830s, the Colonial Government was under pressure from pastoralists to extend the limits of the Swan River Colony in order for more land to be available for settlement, cultivation and grazing. Due to the poor economic position of the colony, Governor Stirling was reluctant to allow settlement to spread as it would increase government expenditure through the provision of soldiers to protect settlers; the appointment of Resident Magistrates; the establishment postal and police services; and the construction of roads.<sup>2</sup>

As pressure for land increased and it became evident that the colony was starting to recover from economic depression, the potential for settlement to the north of the Swan River Colony started to be explored. Explorations were undertaken, firstly by George Gray in 1839 and later by the Gregory brothers in 1846 and 1848. These discoveries determined that the Victoria district was 'one of the most fertile in Australia'.<sup>3</sup> In 1850, Governor Fitzgerald introduced new pastoral regulations, which allowed for the settlement of the agricultural area to the north of the Swan River Colony, and in January 1851 the Victoria, or Champion Bay, district was opened for settlement.<sup>4</sup>

One of the first pastoral leases to be granted in the Victoria district was allocated to Thomas Brown, a successful pastoralist who went on to establish Glengarry Station (P3726 *Glengarry Station Complex*) in 1850, which was only the second property to be established in the Victoria district.<sup>5</sup> In October 1850, Brown moved his first stock northwards, driven by a party which included his son, Kenneth Brown, John Sydney Davis, James Walcott, Major Logue, Daniel Hetherington, an

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<sup>2</sup> Bain, Mary Albertus., *Ancient Landmarks: A Social and Economic History of the Victoria District of Western Australia 1839-1894* (The University of Western Australia Press: Nedlands, WA: 1975), p.10, 13

<sup>3</sup> Gray, George., *Journals of Two Expeditions of Discovery in North-West and Western Australia during the years 1837-39* (Hesperian Press: Victoria Park, WA: 1941), Vol. 2., pp.28-29., as cited in Bain, *Ancient Landmarks* (1975), p.11,

<sup>4</sup> de Burgh, W. J., *The Old North Road* (University of Western Australia Press: Nedlands, WA: 1986), p.46.

<sup>5</sup> 'Glengarry Station Stables Complex Conservation Plan', for Faye Smart, by Considine and Griffiths Architects Pty Ltd with Erickson and Taylor (Considine and Griffiths: Subiaco: 1999), p. iv.

Aboriginal named Correll and two other Aboriginal people assigned to them from Rottnest, named Arkal and Judy.<sup>6</sup>

Davis, Walcott and Logue worked in partnership under Brown at Glengarry Station until 1852, when they were granted a lease of 40,000 acres of land to the east of Glengarry.<sup>7</sup> During the 1850s, a number of other pastoralists joined their partnership, and together they became known locally as 'The Pastoral Company'.<sup>8</sup> The Company initially joined forces owing to the expected hostilities in the new district, as some settlers had come to fear the natives, due to frequent attacks, trespassing, and the stealing of goods and stock.<sup>9</sup>

The Company decided that each man could take a portion of the original lease, and would independently build up his station by taking out additional leases. The Company worked co-operatively to erect a homestead and associated infrastructure for each division, and generally gave one another assistance.<sup>10</sup> As this land was divided between the Company members, Walcott, Logue and Davis established Minnenooka (P13928 Minnenooka Homestead and Graveyard), Ellendale (P3725 Ellendale Homestead) and Tibradden Homesteads respectively.

John Sydney Davis had arrived in Western Australia from Ireland, on the ship *Trusty* in 1842.<sup>11</sup> After initially working in Australind, Davis moved to Hotham River, where he managed a Station owned by William Burges.<sup>12</sup>

Burges and Davis both moved north to the Champion Bay area in 1850, and while Davis joined Thomas Brown's party and moved further northwards, Burges went on to established the first pastoral station in the district in 1850,<sup>13</sup> known as The Bowes or Knockbrack (P3270 *The Bowes*). Burges is also noteworthy for his appointment as the Resident Magistrate for the district of Champion Bay from 1851 to 1860 and as a Member of the Western Australian Legislative Council between 1875 and 1876.<sup>14</sup>

Davis' Tibradden originally comprised approximately 25,000 acres of leasehold property, and was named after a family estate located near Dublin in Ireland known as 'Tibradden Hall', where Davis stayed as a boy.

The original homestead was built in 1852.<sup>15</sup> The building, which is no longer extant, was a long, low cottage of cob wall construction,<sup>16</sup> with a roof thatched using rushes found growing around the nearby springs.<sup>17</sup>

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6 Bain, *Ancient Landmarks* (1975), p.54,

7 *ibid.* pp.54, 176.

8 Bain, *Ancient Landmarks* (1975), p.177,

9 *ibid.* p.175,

10 *Ibid.* p.177, 178.

11 Erickson, R., *The Bicentennial Dictionary of Western Australians 1829-1914, Volume 2, D-J* (University of Western Australia Press: Nedlands, WA: 1987), p.782.

12 Erickson, *The Bicentennial Dictionary of Western Australians 1829-1914, Volume 2, D-J* (1987), p.782.

13 'Four Homesteads Conservation Plan: Oakabella, the Bowes (Knockbrack), Willi Gulli and Trevenson Northampton District' for the Northampton Historical Society Inc, Property Management Committee by Considine and Griffiths Architects Pty Ltd (Considine and Griffiths: Cottesloe, WA: 1995), p31.

14 Black, David., and Bolton, Geoffrey., *Biographical Register of Members of the Parliament of Western Australia, Volume One 1870-1930 (Revised Edition)* (Western Australian Parliamentary History Project: Perth, WA: 2001), p.7.

15 Bain, *Ancient Landmarks* (1975), p.178,

In 1854, Davis married Sarah Heal, the eldest daughter of Lieutenant Charles Heal R.N., in Fremantle,<sup>18</sup> and brought his new wife to live in the thatched cottage at Tibradden. The couple had two daughters, Elizabeth Susan (born 2 January 1855, and claimed to be the first white girl born in the Champion Bay area),<sup>19</sup> and Amy Mary (born 1856, died 1866 and buried at Tibradden Cemetery); and four sons, Lionel Richard (born 1857), Charles James (born 1859), Geoffrey (born 1861) and Sydney (born 1863).<sup>20</sup>

During these early years, Aboriginal groups sometimes camped near *Tibradden Homestead Group*, and the area became the site of occasional clashes between local Aboriginals and northern tribes. Local histories tell that after a conflict, women from the station would bandage Aboriginal people from either side of the clash who had been wounded.<sup>21</sup> In addition, local Aboriginals also suffered from diseases brought by the new settlers. It is recorded that hundreds of local Aboriginals died at the Tibradden camp due to an outbreak of measles in 1853 and another in 1911.<sup>22</sup>

During the 1860s Davis continued to take up land around Tibradden until eventually his pastoral property spread from Nangetty in the south to Mullewa Spring in the east.<sup>23</sup> Also during the 1860s, a larger brick and stone homestead was built at *Tibradden Homestead Group*, along with an extensive range of stone outbuildings, including a wind powered Flour Mill.

From the 1860s to the 1890s, the Victoria district was known as the 'breadbasket' of the State, as it was renowned for the quality and quantity of its wheat production. A total of nine mills were known to have operated during this period, including four steam powered mills, four horse powered mills and just one wind powered mill, which was located at *Tibradden Homestead Group*. Wind powered mills, unlike those powered by steam and horse, were reliant upon favourable weather conditions for success. It was essential that wind mills could be rotated into the wind to maximise production, and therefore, masonry tower mills, such as

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16 Cob (also known as 'pug' or 'mud and straw') was a traditional building method in a number of areas of England. The consistency of the cob and the method of construction varied in different locations, but in general the main materials (loamy or clay soil, plus hay) were put into a trench with water and then trodden into a malleable mixture by horses, oxen or human feet. A number of variations exist, including the additional of small stones or cow dung, and the use of local vegetation and hay. Description sourced from: Green, A. L., 'Unfired Earth Walls – the Promotion and use of Sod, Sun-dried Brick, Cob and Pise Walling in New South Wales from 1788 to 1960', Project Report for the Master of the Built Environment (Building Conservation), University of New South Wales (1989), cited in Heritage Council of Western Australia, State Register of Heritage Places Assessment Documentation for P17882 *Chitterying Park Homestead* (2009), p.12.

17 Halley, E.M. & Wilson, H.H., *Roundabout Geraldton and the Victoria District* (1978), p. 26.

18 'Family Notices', *The Perth Gazette and Independent Journal of Politics and News*, 10 March 1854, p.2.

19 *Geraldton Express*, January 19, 1906 & March 19, 1924.

20 Erickson, *The Bicentennial Dictionary of Western Australians 1829-1914, Volume 2, D-J* (1987), p.782.

21 Wilson, Helen H., *Geraldton Sketchbook* (Rigby: Perth, WA: 1976), p.54.

22 'John Sydney DAVIS', *Australian Stockman's Hall of Fame and Outbreak Heritage Centre*, cited by ehive, sourced from [http://ehive.com/account/3492/object/77493/John\\_Sydney\\_DAVIS\\_b\\_23rd\\_December\\_1817\\_Galway\\_IR\\_ELAND\\_d\\_30th\\_September\\_1893\\_Geraldton\\_WA.](http://ehive.com/account/3492/object/77493/John_Sydney_DAVIS_b_23rd_December_1817_Galway_IR_ELAND_d_30th_September_1893_Geraldton_WA.), Accessed on 29.10.2012., and 'Geraldton', *The Sydney Morning Herald*, sourced from <http://www.smh.com.au/travel/travel-factsheet/geraldton-20081113-6036.html>. Accessed on 13.11.2012.

23 Bain, Sr M.A., *A Life of its Own* (City of Geraldton: 1996), p.88.

the example at *Tibradden Homestead Group*, incorporated a rotational 'cap' which could be moved to angle the sails into the wind.<sup>24</sup>

By the 1870s, it was recorded that Mr Davis had a fine large house built of stone, with a natural water supply, and springs that enabled him to grow all kinds of vegetables and fruit, especially oranges.<sup>25</sup> Tibradden was described as, 'one of the social centres of the district, and governors and other distinguished visitors were entertained there, as it was the last port of call for travellers to the Murchison'.<sup>26</sup> One of those visitors in 1874 was the explorer John Forrest who spent the first night of his overland trip at Tibradden.

In March 1884, Davis was elected to the Western Australian Legislative Council in a by-election, and held the seat of Geraldton until October 1884.<sup>27</sup> Davis was also a Justice of the Peace and served as an honorary magistrate for many years.<sup>28</sup>

In September 1893, Davis died at *Tibradden Homestead Group* and was buried at the property.<sup>29</sup>

After the death of Davis, Tibradden was considerably reduced in size. Land was resumed for the construction of both the Walkaway-Midland and the Geraldton-Mullewa Railway Lines, and more land to the east around Mullewa was taken for agricultural purposes.<sup>30</sup>

During the 1890s and into the first decades of the twentieth century, one of buildings at *Tibradden Homestead Group* served as a postal facility. The fabric of the building indicates that it was not constructed for this purpose, as there is no evidence of any traditional post office fixtures and fittings, such as a service area, countertop or sorting room. The earliest reference to a post office at Tibradden is the acceptance of a government tender for mail delivery, extending from Geraldton to Walkaway Railway Station via Tibradden, in December 1894.<sup>31</sup> *Tibradden Homestead Group* was one of a number of established Stations cited as a stopping point along the route,<sup>32</sup> which the contracted mailman travelled once a month, partially in a 'spring vehicle' and partially on horseback.<sup>33</sup>

The once-a-month service to the Tibradden Post Office, suggests that it acted as a general drop-off and pick-up point for local mail, which was then likely to have been distributed to the local population by another individual. A Postmaster's residence was at one time located on a property adjacent to *Tibradden Homestead Group* on the other side of Sandsprings Road. It is likely that, as the postmaster's responsibilities would not have taken up a massive amount of time,

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24 Kevin Palassis Architects, *Flour Mills of Western Australia 1830-1890* (Palassis Architects: Cottesloe, WA: 1994), n.p.

25 Hammond, J.E., *Western Pioneers – The Battle Well Fought* (Hesperian Press: 1993), p. 37.

26 Halley, E.M. & Wilson, H.H., *Roundabout Geraldton and the Victoria District* (GHS: 1978), p. 26.

27 Black, and Bolton, *Biographical Register of Members of the Parliament of Western Australia, Volume One 1870-1930 (Revised Edition)* (2001), p.10.

28 Ibid.

29 'Death of Mr J.S. Davis, in 'The Victoria Express, 6 October 1893.

30 Keeffe, B., *Eastward Ho – To Mullewa and the Murchison* (Mullewa Shire Council: 1995), p. 125.

31 'Government Tenders Accepted', *The West Australian*, 11 December 1894, p. 6.

32 Ibid.

33 'General News', *The Inquirer & Commercial News*, 30 April 1892, p.2.

that the residence was not used frequently, and only served the purpose of housing the postmaster before touring the district distributing mail. This property burnt down and nothing remains of it.

As was common practice for rural post offices, the Post Office building also provided banking facilities for the Commonwealth Bank.<sup>34</sup>

During the first decades of the twentieth century Tibbradden's landholdings reduced in size again with parts being sold and areas being divided into separate ownership. In October 1928, *Tibbradden Homestead Group* was finally sold out of the ownership of the Davis family.

Local histories of *Tibbradden Homestead Group* note that the Station underwent significant changes during this period. The quantity of men employed was reduced, as it became difficult to secure the labour to one place.<sup>35</sup>

In 1955, the property was purchased by Major Rubens of De Grey Station (P4001 De Grey Station Group) and was later re-sold to Eric Fitzgerald who subdivided the land into five blocks. The original cob and thatch homestead was bulldozed during this time because it was considered unsafe while Fitzgerald modernized and extended the 1860s brick and stone homestead, which had been built alongside.

In 1967, the present homestead block comprising approximately 5,400 acres was bought by the Collins family, who continue to own the property today.

In 1996, the place was classified by the National Trust, and in 2012, the place was added to the City of Greater Geraldton's Greenough Municipal Heritage Inventory.

In 2012/13, *Tibbradden Homestead Group* is in fair condition. The property continues to be maintained and conserved.

## 13.2 PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

*Tibbradden Homestead Group*, is a substantial nineteenth-century pastoral station located in picturesque undulating farm country to the east of Geraldton, which comprises a Homestead, Kitchen, Lodge (second house), Post Office, Mill, Stables and Cart Shed, Shearing Shed, timber lined Well, Cemetery, associated outbuildings and farm structures, and established trees.

### Original Homestead

Nothing remains above ground of the original cob and thatch homestead which was located immediately behind where the 1860s Homestead (see below) was constructed.

### Homestead

Located on a gentle slope down to a small creek, the Homestead is of brick construction with stone foundations. The first two-roomed section was constructed in 14" Colonial bond, the southern addition in 9" Flemish Bond, and the northern

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<sup>34</sup> Greenough Municipal Heritage Inventory of Heritage Places record for 'Tibbradden Homestead Group' (2012).

<sup>35</sup> Interview with Michael James Culloton [sound recording]: Interviewed by Carol Cahill, 28 August 1996.

addition in 9" Random bond. The homestead is topped with a corrugated iron combination hip and gable roof.

A separate verandah roof is supported on stop chamfered timber posts with a simple timber balustrade. Access to the front (east facing) verandah is via five centrally positioned stone steps with alternative access to the southern end of the verandah. The verandah flooring is still timber, but in poor condition and, in 2012, was being reconstructed. The northern end of the verandah is partly enclosed with a combination of weatherboard and fibrous cement wall sheeting to provide for additional accommodation space.

The homestead has a combination of doors including low-waisted panelled doors to the original two-roomed section, and French doors with multi pane timber framed windows to the southern extension.

A cellar is accessed via a doorway at ground level to the north elevation. Two brick chimneys punctuate the roofscape which is painted red, like most of the building roofs in *Tibradden Homestead Group*. There is a c.1960s fibro clad addition to the rear of the original homestead with a skillion roof.

Internally the homestead features both pressed metal and timber lined ceilings and decorative fireplace surrounds in the original section of the building.

The Homestead appears to be in sound condition, some general maintenance works are required.

### **Kitchen**

The Kitchen is situated immediately to the south of the Homestead. The walls of the original (central) portion of the building were constructed of cob (also known as 'pug') (as per the original homestead which is no longer extant), and have been recently repaired and rendered. The building has a later (southern) extension, constructed of stone. The original shingle roof covered with corrugated iron sheeting, painted red in part. The combination hipped and gable roof extends broken back to cover the front verandah which is supported on bush timbers.

The building consists of three rooms accessed via doors off the verandah, the building has a central chimney. Internally, the northern room still retains its timber lined ceiling, while the other rooms have mini orb metal ceilings. Original timber floors have been replaced with concrete. The adjacent meat house has been removed with only a remnant cement slab evident of the simple fibro and wire net structure.

The Kitchen appears to be generally in sound condition.

### **Lodge (second house)**

The Lodge is located to the west of Homestead, and is of local limewashed stone construction with a hipped corrugated iron roof which extends to cover the surrounding verandahs. The verandahs are supported on timber posts with a lattice infill balustrade.

The original building consisted of three rooms but has been enlarged with some verandah enclosures including a bathroom to the front (east) verandah and a stone addition to the rear (west). Internally the original timber floors have been replaced with concrete while there are also some replacement aluminium framed

square windows. The rooms have timber lined ceilings, parts of which are in poor condition. A stone chimney punctuates the northern roofscape.

The Lodge is in a poor condition with missing doors allowing weather penetration.

### **Post Office**

The Post Office is a small two roomed building of local stone construction with a red corrugated iron hipped roof. Each room has its own entry door and casement window facing east, both of which feature brick quoining. The separate verandah roof to the front (east) façade is supported on decorative stop chamfered timber posts. A timber handrail has a lattice infill while simple timber brackets adorn the top of the verandah posts. The ends of the verandah roof feature scalloped timber bargeboards trimmed in white paint. A brick chimney punctuates the centre of the roof while an old metal letter box is attached to the front façade from the time the building was used for local postal services.

Internally the northern room has a simple arched fireplace and the southern room has an old cooker indicating it was used as a kitchen. Both rooms have no ceilings and there are metal grills on the inside of each window. The original timber floors have been replaced with concrete

The Post Office has been extensively renovated and is in good condition.

### **Mill**

The two-storey circular mill is constructed from thick local rubble stone walling (approx. 700mm thick), and has an external diameter of approx. 4.5 metres, rising to a height of approximately 7 metres.

The roof form is a square timber structure covered with lapped timber boards (shingles). There is evidence of some brick patching just above door height. The structure has a concrete floor with the entry door facing north, a small window to the east, and a first floor window (now covered with corrugated iron) facing south. The timber lintels to the doorway and window opening have been hewn to form a curve to correspond with the shape of the building.

One side of the roof still bears evidence of the housing for the wind powered sail apparatus which is no longer present.

There is no evidence of mill machinery either within the structure or nearby.

The external stonework of the Mill is in good condition, there is evidence that the roof shingles are deteriorating, and internally there is evidence of termite and damage.

### **Stables and Cart Shed**

The Stables and Cart Shed is located immediately to the south of the Flour Mill. It is a long building of local stone construction with a gable corrugated iron roof in short sheets, painted red.

The stables run along the eastern side of the building while the open cart shed is located on the western side. On the northern end of the building are a saddle room, complete with shelving and bridle/saddle rails, and a storage room while a large feed room runs the full width of the southern end. Used to facilitate the feeding of the horses, there is an access way, or feed alley, from the feed room along the back of each separate horse stall, with the timber half wall dividers still

in situ. The flooring to the stables is wood stump and remains relatively intact. The original timber support posts to the cart shed side have been replaced by metal railway sections.

There are stone yards to the east of the stables.

The Stables and Cart Shed is in fair condition.

### **Shearing Shed**

The Shearing Shed is situated to the immediate south of the Stables and Cart Shed and has interior walls of stone construction while the exterior walls are clad with corrugated iron. The gable corrugated iron roof is painted red and has lean to roofs at a lower pitch to both the west and east sides – the latter being where the shearing stalls are located.

The interior stone walls have brick quoining and large concrete lintels over the wide openings. An old set of metal scales are located in a later corrugated iron clad addition to the southern end of the shearing shed adjacent to a stone wall which features the stencilled names of, presumably, local farm workers. The original wool press has been dismantled and is stored in a nearby shed

The Shearing shed is in good condition and has been well maintained.

### **The Cemetery**

Located on the other side of a small creek, the Cemetery is approximately 150 metres to the east of the Homestead.

The small square cemetery is surrounded by a pipe rail fence and contains several graves, including that of John Sydney Davis (died 30 September 1896, aged 76 years), his wife Sarah (died 16 January 1906, aged 84 years) and their daughter Amy Mary (died 20 May 1866, aged 10 years) – the resting place of all three being marked by one marble headstone with a gothic arch top. A second marble headstone with a simple arched top marks the burial place of Edward Wardle Holbrooke (died 6 March 1907, aged 69 years), who was J.B. Percy's half-brother. Located in between the two marble headstones is a low lying grave marker for the resting place of Rachel Leta Josceline Lejeune (nee Percy), granddaughter of J.S. Davis (1892-1972), her ashes having been buried here.

The grass within the enclosure is maintained. The headstones are standing and still clearly legible.

### **Associated outbuildings, farm structures and established trees.**

*Tibradden Homestead Group* also includes a number of associated outbuildings and sheds, a garage, animal pen, animal stall, shelter shed, a generator shed, pump house, well and windmill, pise outbuilding, the stone ruins of a former workers residence, stone walls that once enclosed a garden and yards around the stables and shearing shed, and several new farming structures.

Established trees at *Tibradden Homestead Group* include an extensive number of Pepper Trees (*Schinus molle*), 5 large Moreton Bay figs- 4 framing the entrance drive between the Lodge and garage, and two palms trees in the Homestead garden.



### 13.3 COMPARATIVE INFORMATION

#### The Victoria district's earliest Stations/Homesteads

The area which was once known as the Victoria district now roughly encompasses the local government areas of Greater Geraldton, Irwin, Morawa, Mingenew, Perenjori, Carnamah and Three Springs, and parts of the local government areas of Chapman Valley and Northampton.

*Tibradden Homestead Group* was one of a number of stations/homestead constructed in the Victoria district during the 1850s following the opening of the area for settlement in 1850. Other stations/homesteads established in the area during this early period were:

- P3270 *The Bowes*, Northampton (1850-)
- P1215 *The Grange*, Yardarino (1850-)
- P3726 *Glengarry Station Complex*, Moonyoonooka (1850-)
- P12245 *Irwin House Group*, Milo (c.1850-)
- P6353 *Narra Tarra Homestead, Outbuildings & Cemetery*, Howatharra (1853-)
- P13900 *Belay Farm Group*, Walkaway (1858-)
- P13929 *Windarra*, Moonyoonooka (1860s-)
- P3944 *Sandsprings Homestead Group* (1860-)

The above shows that as *Tibradden Homestead Group* was established in 1852, it was one of the earliest homesteads to be established in the Victoria district.

#### Homesteads of 'The Pastoral Company'

John Sydney Davis, who was responsible for establishing *Tibradden Homestead Group*, was, during the 1850s, part of a group of early pastoralists known locally as 'The Pastoral Company'. The Company originally comprised Davis, James Walcott and Major Logues, and members worked cooperatively to erect homesteads, infrastructure and generally gave one another assistance. Although other pastoralists joined the Company in the following years, Davis, Walcott and Logues, as the founders of the Company, were the first to establish their stations following the Company's grant of a 40,000 acre lease in 1852.

Other Stations/Homesteads associated with these members of the 'The Pastoral Company' are:

- P13928 *Minnenooka Homestead and Graveyard*– Established by James Walcott in c.1879, the place includes a homestead, substantial shearing shed, four stables, a number of farm-outbuilding, and a graveyard. The condition of the group is noted to vary from very good to ruinous. This place has never been reviewed by the Register Committee.
- P3725 *Ellendale Homestead* – Constructed from the 1860s for Major Logue, the place comprises a two storey homestead, various outbuildings including a dairy and staff quarters. It is noted that the homestead has not been lived in since 1953, and it, as well as a number of the other structure

on site, have fallen into disrepair and are now in a ruinous condition. This place was added to the Assessment Program in 1999.

As well as being the earliest homestead to be erected by 'The Pastoral Company', *Tibradden Homestead Group* is also the most substantial and most intact.

### Flour Mills

The Flour Mill at *Tibradden Homestead Group* is one of nine identified as operating in the Victoria district between the 1860s and 1890s, however it is the only which was wind powered. Of the eight other flour mills in the district, four were steam powered and four were horse powered.<sup>36</sup>

As wind powered flour mills were reliant upon suitable weather conditions, horse, water and steam were more frequently used to power flour mills. For this reason, few wind powered flour mills were constructed in Western Australia, and just eight have been identified as operating between 1830 and 1890.<sup>37</sup>

Of these eight wind powered flour mills, only three remain extant. These are:

- P421 *Chapman's Mill (Inlet Park Farm)*, Busselton (1850).
- P1771 *Cooper's Mill (fmr)*, North Yunderup (1843).
- P2394 *Old Mill*, South Perth (1837).

Both *Chapman's Mill* and *Cooper's Mill* were masonry tower mills, such as the example at *Tibradden Homestead Group*, and both incorporated a rotational 'cap' which could be rotated to angle the sails into the wind. Evidence of the rotational mechanism remains extant at *Chapman's Mill* and *Cooper's Mill*.<sup>38</sup>

### Homesteads associated with the postal system

A search of the State Heritage Office database has revealed seven other Homestead groups or sites, which are believed to have functioned at one time for postal services. Two of these seven are entered in to the Register of Heritage Places. These are:

- P4184 *Korrailla Homestead Group*, Greenhills (1867-) – An unofficial post office operated from the homestead from c.1865 until 1891, when it became the official Greenhills Post Office. The post office continued to function until c.1910.<sup>39</sup>
- P12245 *Irwin House Group*, (1850s-) – An unofficial post office was established at the property from 1853, functioning from a building that was possibly purpose built and included living quarters. The post office continued to function until the c.1910s.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> Kevin Palassis Architects, *Flour Mills of Western Australia 1830-1890* (1994), n.p.

<sup>37</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>38</sup> 'Old Cooper's Mill Yunderup: Conservation Plan' for Shire of Murray by Considine and Griffiths Architects Pty Ltd with Helen Burgess, Historian (Considine and Griffiths: Subiaco: 2001), p.11., and State Register Assessment Documentation for P421 *Chapman's Mill (Inlet Park Farm)* (1999), p.4.

<sup>39</sup> State Register Assessment Documentation for P4184 *Korrailla Homestead Group* (2001), p.2.

<sup>40</sup> State Register Assessment Documentation for P12245 *Irwin House Group* (2002), p.5.

Of the other five, only two have information entered into the database relating to the function of the place for postal purposes. These are:

- P168 Red Hill Homestead, Marradong (1882) – The place was used as the district post office (1883), weather recording station (1889) and telegraph station (1895). This place has never been reviewed by the Register Committee.
- P1703 Murgoo Station Homestead, Murchison (1877) – A post office operated from the homestead from 1890s, which in c.1903 became a telephone exchange.<sup>41</sup> This place was added to the assessment program in 2007.

It is likely that there are many more places (homesteads or otherwise) which have functioned at one time for postal services or as an informal post office, and that this information has not been recorded or included in heritage lists such as Municipal Inventories, and therefore the information has not been entered in to the State Heritage Office database.

The Post Office at *Tibradden Homestead Group* is known to have been one of a number of stopping points on the postal route between Geraldton and Walkaway Station. Others included Newmarracarra (P3443 *Newmarracarra*), Sandsprings (P3944 *Sandsprings Homestead Group*), Ellendale (P3725 *Ellendale Homestead*), Minnenooka (P13928 *Minnenooka Homestead and Graveyard*), and Glengarry (P3726 *Glengarry Station Complex*).<sup>42</sup>

Research has uncovered no information as to whether specific buildings at the abovementioned homesteads were set aside for postal use, like at *Tibradden Homestead Group*.

Although there are a few other homesteads on the State Register of which are believed to have functioned at one time for postal services, few have been identified overall. Therefore *Tibradden Homestead Group* is rare as a place where an unofficial post office was known to have operated.

### **Cob buildings**

The original homestead cottage of *Tibradden Homestead Group*, which is no longer extant, and the original portion of the Kitchen (which is extant), were constructed of cob (also known as ‘pug’ or ‘mud and straw’), a traditional building method used in areas of England.<sup>43</sup> The use of cob in Western Australia has not been widely recorded, and only a small number of cob buildings have been identified.<sup>44</sup>

The State Heritage Office database records eleven places of cob construction, including three which are entered on the Register of Heritage Places. These are:

- P17882 *Chittering Park Homestead*, Bullsbrook (1855).

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<sup>41</sup> Preliminary Review for P1703 Murgoo Station (2007), p.2.

<sup>42</sup> ‘Government Tenders Accepted’, *The West Australian*, 11 December 1894, p. 6.

<sup>43</sup> State Register Assessment Documentation for P17882 *Chittering Park Homestead* (2009), p.11.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, p.11-12.

- P3145 *St John's Church Group*, Albany – Rectory (1850) constructed of Devonshire cob.
- P2284 *St Werburgh's Chapel and Cemetery* (1874) – Chapel constructed of Devonshire cob.
- P1593 *Berkshire Valley Farm* – Stables (1867) constructed using cob.<sup>45</sup>

Of the other eight places, four are no longer extant. The remaining four places, which have never been reviewed by the Register Committee, and therefore the State Heritage Office has not been able to confirm as cob construction, are:

- P722 *Anchor & Hope Inn*, Donnybrook – Original 1845 homestead was constructed of cob. The building was pulled down and rebuilt in 1865, however it is unclear if the construction materials (i.e. the cob) were recycled and reused.
- P1708 *Wooleen Station Homestead*, Murchison – The original 1890s cob and stone kitchen building is still extant (new homestead added in 1919-20). The kitchen is now used as a museum.
- P17140 *Manna Flat Church Services Site*, Cartmelcup – Remnants of sheoak cob walls remain.
- P17275 *Yelyelling Homestead*, Glencoe (1902) – Exterior walls of the homestead were constructed of stone, and interior walls were constructed of cob.

The above demonstrates that the original portion of the Kitchen at *Tibradden Homestead Group* is rare for being constructed using cob, a traditional building method used in areas of England, but not widely recorded in Western Australia.

#### 13.4 KEY REFERENCES

No key references.

#### 13.5 FURTHER RESEARCH

Further research may determine how and when the Post Office building functioned as a facility for Commonwealth Bank.

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<sup>45</sup> Bush, Fiona. Pers. Comm., 1 March 2013.