



# 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.

### 11.1 AESTHETIC VALUE

Du Cane's L-shaped construction is simple in its domestic scale and style, which complements that of the larger neighbouring Commissariat Store. The building was in keeping with the scale and character of the streetscape; however, intrusive renovations and extensions have detracted from the appearance of the place. (Criterion 1.4)

### 11.2. HISTORIC VALUE

The house is important as being closely associated with the Commissariat Store and the other Colonial buildings of the 1850s and being an integral part of the administration of public works and convict activity for Guildford and the colony's agricultural areas in the Swan Valley. (Criterion 2.2)

The building was the residence of the officer in charge of the Guildford Convict Depot and the Commissariat Store during a period when convict labour for public works contributed greatly to the growth of the town of Guildford and the Swan Valley. (Criteria 2.2 & 2.3)

The place was designed by and constructed for Lieutenant Du Cane of the Royal Engineers, an important figure during the era of convict construction and road building in Western Australia, who later gained prominence in the British Civil Service. (Criterion 2.3)

### 11.3. SCIENTIFIC VALUE

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### 11.4. SOCIAL VALUE

The place is valued by the community of Guildford and the National Trust (WA) for its association with Du Cane and the convict era. (Criterion 4.1)

The place contributes to the other convict era buildings in Meadow Street, a number of which were also built with convict labour. (Criterion 4.2)

## **12. DEGREE OF SIGNIFICANCE**

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

Residential buildings with detached stables have largely disappeared from the townscape. (Criterion 5.1)

### **12. 2 REPRESENTATIVENESS**

The place is characteristic of the simple domestic architecture of other convict built places within the townscape of Guildford and the Swan region. (Criterion 6.1)

### **12. 3 CONDITION**

The condition of the place is sound.

### **12. 4 INTEGRITY**

Although the domestic intent of the place remains, the original ambience of the house has been very much obscured by changes to the structure and that of the stables has been seriously compromised. The place has a moderate degree of integrity.

### **12. 5 AUTHENTICITY**

The place has a low degree of authenticity with little of the original fabric remaining. Although the original five rooms of the house and the stables remain, there has been much disturbance to the fabric of the house and intrusions to the property that have lessened its cultural heritage value. The original aesthetic value of its red brick walls and encompassing verandah has been lost due to extensive rendering, concreting and the additions that have occurred largely from the 1970s. Nevertheless, these unsympathetic alterations have affected the building's historic, social and representative values to a lesser extent, since its place in the historical and cultural landscape of Guildford remains intact through its association with Lieutenant Du Cane and the convict era.

### 13. SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

The documentary and physical evidence has been compiled by John Pidgeon, Architect, from the files of the National Trust of Australia (WA). The documentary evidence has been expanded from research by Natasha Georgiou, BA.

#### 13.1 DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

*Lieutenant Du Cane's House*, a single-storey domestic house, with detached stables, situated at 14 Meadow Street, Guildford, was constructed for 2nd Lieutenant Edmund F. Du Cane of the Royal Engineers in 1852.

Western Australia was in a state of economic depression during the period prior to the convict era, a depression affecting all areas of the colony including the Swan district. The town of Guildford, which had flourished in its formation, was being deserted by many of its inhabitants, who preferred to live closer to the main towns of Perth and Fremantle where there were more business opportunities. By the middle of the nineteenth century, only a handful of the original large landowners remained, including W.L. Brockman, Edward Barrett-Lennard, George Fletcher Moore and Colonel F.C. Irwin.<sup>1</sup> The situation in Guildford worsened when, in 1850, fires wreaked havoc on several homesteads. Rate books show that, during this period, many of the large estates were tenanted or owned by members of the labouring class.<sup>2</sup> Archdeacon Wollaston wrote of the Swan, after his March 1850 visit, that:

stagnation, or rather retrogression, and utter failure, is manifesting among all the better classed. The labouring sober servant and shepherd are the only persons doing well, and these have all stepped into their quondam masters' shoes.<sup>3</sup>

This state of affairs was reversed by the introduction of convict transportation in 1850. Convict labour was to be used to improve conditions in Western Australia, and in so doing, improve the economy. The first convicts arrived at Fremantle aboard the *Scindian* on 1 June 1850.

Lieutenant Du Cane, R.E., arrived in the colony in December 1851 in the *Anna Robertson* with Lieutenant Wray and a party of 65 Sappers and Miners with their wives and children.<sup>4</sup> Du Cane was, at that time, only 21 years of age. He was assigned to design and supervise construction of convict works in the Guildford, Toodyay and York district, with his base at Guildford. His first duties were to construct a commissariat store, a gaol, a depot for the ticket-of-leave men and quarters for himself. These buildings, situated along Meadow Street in Guildford, were all completed by the end of 1852. The establishment of the new convict depot gave an immediate boost to the town's economy and social life. As a reporter commented in September 1852:

In place of the dull monotony formerly experienced, the sound of the axe and hammer, and the sharp clink of the mason's trowel, meet the ear of the visitor; neatly built and substantial brick houses and well cultivated gardens are rapidly replacing former temporary and unsightly wattle-and-daub dwellings and deserted wastes;

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<sup>1</sup> Bourke, Michael *On The Swan* UWA Press, Nedlands, 1987, p.159.

<sup>2</sup> Guildford Rate Books, 1840-1850.

<sup>3</sup> Quoted in Bourke, Michael op. cit., p.160.

<sup>4</sup> *Perth Gazette* 26 December 1851.

and the number of persons and vehicles that are continuously passing and repassing, can not fail to convince him that the town is gradually rising into significance.<sup>5</sup>

In a letter to his mother in April 1852, Du Cane wrote:

On Lot 45 about the middle I am building myself a house (or office) consisting of two rooms, a big office, a kitchen and servant room, stable and garden, as much of that allotment as I wish. Each of these lots are about 40 yards wide. Of course the house is built by me for the Government, for myself to live in. It faces from the road, looking up the Helena Valley to a distant glimpse of the Darling Hills.<sup>6</sup>

A drawing of the house was enclosed with the letter. It was thought by residents of Guildford that this drawing depicted Devenish's Hotel. However, it is now clear that it is a drawing of Lieutenant Du Cane's house on Lot 45.

The house designed and built by Du Cane, which is still standing, faces away from the road, as mentioned by Du Cane in his letter. Du Cane decided on this arrangement partly so that his sitting room would look out on the view of the hills, and partly because it was easier to put horses and vehicles in the front yard than to bring them around the back.

Lieutenant Du Cane designed and supervised the construction of most of the buildings associated with the convict depot in Guildford, as well as building the first bridge over the Swan River at Guildford, at the site of the public wharf in Meadow Street. Of these works only the Commissariat building, the Pensioner's Cottage, West Guildford, and his own house remain.

Archdeacon Wollaston met Du Cane and visited his home while on an archidiaconal tour in March, 1853. He wrote:

I felt exhausted by the heat and required some repose, which I obtained in the comfortable quarters of Lieut. Du Cane, R. E., a pleasing young man who was very attentive to me, and had been a communicant in the morning.<sup>7</sup>

Du Cane was promoted to the rank of First Lieutenant in February 1854, and, on a trip to Busselton the following year, met Mary Molloy, daughter of Captain John Molloy, an old colonist. The two were engaged a few weeks later and were married in the old church of St John's, Fremantle, which faced down High Street. They spent their honeymoon in the house at Guildford, which shows how fond Du Cane must have been of the place. Mary Molloy's sister, Mrs E. R. Brockman, later wrote:

We stayed with the dear bride and bridegroom a fortnight. He was like a brother to me, as well as Amelia; we used to go for walks and one day had a boat and rowed on the river. We took the oars and Mr Du Cane sat in the stern and sang 'Ben Baxter was a Boatman.' He brought me one day Macaulay's 'Lays of Ancient Rome'; it was my first introduction to those inspiring poems, and I have loved them ever since.

Du Cane emerges as a person of considerable intelligence and charm, and this is reflected in the design of his house and other buildings at Guildford. He was transferred to Fremantle in 1855 and made a Justice of the Peace. In March 1856, he and his wife left for England in the *Esmerelda*, never to return to Western Australia. Once back in England, he was assigned to design most

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<sup>5</sup> *Inquirer* 22 September 1852.

<sup>6</sup> Battye Library, Acc. No.909A.

<sup>7</sup> Wollaston, Rev. J.R. *Wollaston's Albany Journals* p.148.

of the new forts and land works for the defence of naval bases. In 1863, he was appointed Director of Convict Prisons for the whole of Britain, and in 1869, he also became Director of Colonial Convict Prisons.<sup>8</sup> He was a strong advocate of the use of prison labour for national public works. He was responsible for the drawing up of a scheme of prison reform which was embodied in the Prisons Act of 1877. He also inaugurated the registration of criminals and the use of fingerprinting as a system of identification.<sup>9</sup> He suggested to Sir Francis Galton the identification system known as Identikit.<sup>10</sup> In July 1877, he was made a Knight Commander of the Order of the Bath and attained the rank of Major-general in the Royal Engineers. The *Dictionary of National Biography* describes him as 'an accomplished man of wide interests, embracing archaeology, architecture and Napoleonic literature, and a clever painter in water colours.'<sup>11</sup> He died in London on the 7th June, 1903. A painting of him as a young man is reproduced in *Unwilling Emigrants* by Alexandra Hasluck.

With the benefit of hindsight, Du Cane's unprecedented sway over prison administration in the last third of the 19th century in Great Britain was neither enlightened nor reformist. As the Government's chief adviser on prisons, he advocated and was largely responsible for the nationalisation of local prisons on the basis of flawed and misleading calculations of the financial benefits of the change. He was also instrumental in increasing the severity of punishment given to prisoners by subjecting them uniformly to long hours of meaningless labour, a near-starvation diet and rigorous living conditions.<sup>12</sup> These practices were later discredited as inhumane and ineffective.

After Du Cane was transferred to Fremantle in 1855, his former house was used as quarters for the Director of the Commissariat Store in Guildford, Deputy Assistant Commissary-General Horace Travers.<sup>13</sup> When the convict depot in Guildford closed in 1878, the buildings were handed over to the Municipality of Guildford which eventually sold *Lieutenant Du Cane's House*, and the section of Allotment 45 on which it stands, to a private buyer.

Later occupants are known to be Isaac Wood-Forrest in 1900, then William B. Wood in 1901.<sup>14</sup> The latter had a butcher's shop in James Street, Guildford.<sup>15</sup> The Certificate of Title was transferred to Margaret F. Wood, widow, in 1920, then to Bryers Wood Read in 1942.<sup>16</sup> When he died soon afterwards, his estate was inherited by his wife, Sarah Ellen Read.<sup>17</sup> She lived there until she died and the land passed to her three children. In 1955, the estate was purchased by Gladys May Haines, a widowed hotel proprietress of

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8 *Dictionary of National Biography* Second Supplement, Vol.1, pp.528 & 529.

9 *ibid.*

10 *ibid.*

11 *ibid.*

12 McConville, S. 'The Victorian Prison' in Morris, N. and Rothman, D.J. (eds.) *The Oxford History of the Prison : the practice of punishment in western society* New York, Oxford University Press, 1995, pp. 141-154.

13 Battye Library 'The Convict System', Vol.VII, p.111.

14 Battye Library 'Postal Directories' 1900 & 1901.

15 *ibid.*

16 Certificates of Title, DOLA.

17 *ibid.*

Guildford, who subdivided the land and sold the southern portion in 1960.<sup>18</sup> Mrs Haines ran the hotel across the street and is said to have converted the store-room at the rear of the stables to a cool-room for the hotel.<sup>19</sup>

It was during the 1960s that the place was altered unsympathetically, both internally and externally. The property was purchased by Joseph and Ana Anderson in 1965<sup>20</sup>, and the main roof was raised above the original and covered with concrete tiles. The verandah posts were bricked around and linked with a single leaf brick wall dividing the verandah from the yard. Much of the garden was concreted over, a small laundry and bathroom were added outside the original sitting room, and many original windows and doors were removed and placed in different areas of the house. In 1967, the place was transferred to Ana Anderson, married woman, and Thereza Anston, a widow, as tenants in common in equal shares.<sup>21</sup> Around this time, the large room, originally the office, was divided into two. This dividing wall no longer exists.

In 1974, David and Kathryn Padgham purchased the property.<sup>22</sup> They too, have altered the place. A pool was installed in the back yard, and an extension of rooms was added along the south wall in place of the verandah. Extra windows have been installed to provide more light. An open garage with large timber shingles was also added to the front of the house. These additions have been intrusive and have reduced the simplicity of the original building.<sup>23</sup>

In 1991, the place was transferred to Kathryn Padgham.<sup>24</sup> She is attempting to restore and renovate the place, replacing old doors in their original positions, opening up old fireplaces, and even trying to remove the rendering of the exterior walls. Unfortunately, the house has been altered too extensively for it to be brought back to its original condition, and it would be impractical to change the functions of modified rooms such as the kitchen, which used to be the sitting room. However, there have been attempts to highlight the original fabric.<sup>25</sup>

The house is still a private residence owned by Mrs Kathryn Padgham.

## 13. 2 PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

The original parts of the house have been largely hidden by recent additions. The roof has been replaced and clad with cement tiles; additions have been made to the east, south and west sides of the original core and a carport with a sloping shingle cad fascia has been added, joining the house to the stables. There are corrugated iron roofed verandahs to the north side and part of the east elevation.

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18 Certificate of Title Vol.1180, Fol.613, DOLA.

19 Information from Kathryn Padgham.

20 Certificate of Title Vol.1239, Fol.478, DOLA.

21 *ibid.*

22 *ibid.*

23 Information from Kathryn Padgham.

24 Certificate of Title Vol.1239, Fol.478, DOLA.

25 Information from Kathryn Padgham.

The stables, which are now used as a garage, are more or less intact on the street alignment, but have had a metal roller door inserted in the wall facing the street and the walls are covered with a sprayed-on cement finish. The timber shingles are visible beneath the corrugated iron.

In a report of September 1854, Lieutenant Du Cane described his house as follows:

A quarter consisting of two rooms, kitchen and servant's room, with an office attached, has been erected for the officers of engineers in charge of the works in the district, for whom also has been built a stable and storeroom.<sup>26</sup>

Of these rooms, the office is being used as a lounge room. Du Cane's sitting room with the French window has been turned into a kitchen. The French window has been restored and is used regularly. Du Cane's bedroom is used as a dining room. The old kitchen, which was detached from the main house, has been demolished. Most of the original doors, windows and skirting boards of the house still remain. The internal walls are very thick and panelled jamb-linings cover the reveals. Some of the walls are slightly off-perpendicular. The ceiling height is greater by several centimetres in the front part of the house than in the back. The external walls of the house are of brick, in some areas, rendered over and grooved to resemble stone. This appears to have been the original treatment. A low wall has been added at the edge of the verandahs.

### **13.3 REFERENCES**

National Trust of Australia (WA) files.