



**HERITAGE
COUNCIL**
OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

REGISTER OF HERITAGE PLACES

Assessment Documentation

11. ASSESSMENT OF CULTURAL HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

Cultural heritage significance means aesthetic, historic, scientific, social or spiritual value for individuals or groups within Western Australia.

In determining cultural heritage significance, the Heritage Council has had regard to the factors in the *Heritage Act 2018* and the indicators adopted on 14 June 2019.

11(a) Importance in demonstrating the evolution or pattern of Western Australia's history

De Grey – Mullewa Stock Route No. 9701 is significant for its role in opening up and sustaining the development of the Northern districts for pastoralism from the late 1860s. The formal establishment of *De Grey – Mullewa Stock Route No. 9701* in 1883, and as part of a stock route network in 1905, is indicative of the number and importance of stock being driven to Mullewa and from there either as livestock or meat to the Metropolitan Region and the Eastern Goldfields.

De Grey – Mullewa Stock Route No. 9701 was influential in the development of pastoral stations that had important implications for interstate and international trade, bolstering an emerging Western Australian economy.

De Grey – Mullewa Stock Route No. 9701, in directly facilitating the development of settlement and pastoralism, disrupted the lives of Aboriginal people who occupied the lands that the route passed over for at least 40,000 years and were faced with a level of conflict in using and traveling over that land unlike that known before. Water sources along the route that were relied upon and were likely culturally significant were directly impacted by stock drinking, fouling and trampling areas, which would likely have resulted in emotional and spiritual disturbance.

De Grey – Mullewa Stock Route No. 9701 is a physical reminder of the incredible difficulties encountered in driving stock through uncleared land over long distances in the nineteenth century.

De Grey – Mullewa Stock Route No. 9701 demonstrates Government responses to the needs of pastoralists by gazetting common land for the movement of stock and the construction of many wells to water the stock.

De Grey – Mullewa Stock Route No. 9701 provides insight into the lives and activities of the drovers and stockmen, both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal, who lived and worked on the stock route.

De Grey – Mullewa Stock Route No. 9701, is identified as probably carrying a greater number of stock than all other known Western Australian routes combined.

11(b) Importance in demonstrating rare, uncommon or endangered aspects of Western Australia's heritage

Because of the limited amount of development along the route, *De Grey – Mullewa Stock Route No. 9701* is a rare example of a stock route that comprises predominantly unchanged land tenure and landscape, which provides rare insight into the journey travelled by drovers using the stock route since the 1860s.

The De Grey Station Group along the *De Grey – Mullewa Stock Route No. 9701*, is rare as the first pastoral lease and station established in the North West area and the first station to introduce windmills for watering livestock and fencing to control livestock. Prior to this, sheep were often driven into makeshift yards at night.

The Stone Yards within the *De Grey – Mullewa Stock Route No. 9701* are an example of dry stone wall construction, which is particularly rare in Western Australia.

11(c) Potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of Western Australia's history;

De Grey – Mullewa Stock Route No. 9701 has the capacity, through archaeological and physical investigation, to reveal information about the construction of wells and the differing well technology of the late 1800s.

Any artefacts relating to the early development of the *De Grey – Mullewa Stock Route No. 9701* have the potential to shed light on the lives and activities of early drovers or occupants along the route.

De Grey – Mullewa Stock Route No. 9701 has archaeological potential to reveal information about the lives and spiritual connections of the Aboriginal groups who appreciated and utilised water sources and land areas prior to, and continuing through, the colonial use of the land.

11(d) Its importance in demonstrating the characteristics of a broader class of places;

De Grey – Mullewa Stock Route No. 9701 is an excellent representative example a stock route, in both in Western Australia and Australia as a whole, as land set aside by government gazetted for the common purpose of moving stock.

The 55 evenly spaced government wells along *De Grey – Mullewa Stock Route No. 9701* are a good representative example of the types of wells of the time, which were essential to the survival of drovers and their stock using the route. .

The homesteads along the *De Grey – Mullewa Stock Route No. 9701* demonstrate the characteristics of large pastoral stations which have a centralised area in close proximity to the stock route where the homestead and outbuildings were located.

11(e) Any strong or special meaning it may have for any group or community because of social, cultural or spiritual associations;

The many waterholes and water sources along *De Grey – Mullewa Stock Route No. 9701* were and continue to be spiritually and practically important to local Aboriginal people.

De Grey – Mullewa Stock Route No. 9701 is valued by the local communities, particularly station leaseholders that abut the place, as a reminder of the pastoral development of areas north of Perth and the ongoing continuation of pastoralism along the route since it was originally developed and utilised.

De Grey – Mullewa Stock Route No. 9701 is valued as a route linking people today to past movements of stock, and the romantic notions of the drover, with sections having been included in tourist drives.

11(f)¹ Its importance in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics valued by any group or community;

De Grey – Mullewa Stock Route No. 9701 runs through vast, open landscapes of low-lying scrubland and rich, red soils, distinctive of the Mid West, Pilbara and Gascoyne regions, that instil a profound sense of isolation and contribute to the ambitious and impressive nature of the journey taken along the route.

The presence of rivers, small waterways and wells along the *De Grey – Mullewa Stock Route No. 9701* are important landmarks that demonstrate the importance of water as a matter of survival throughout the journey along the route.

11(g) Any special association it may have with the life or work of a person, group or organisation of importance in Western Australia's history;

De Grey – Mullewa Stock Route No. 9701 is associated with pastoralist, E. T. Hooley who pioneered the movement of stock along the route in 1866 and constructed some of the earliest wells in the southern portion of the trail.

De Grey – Mullewa Stock Route No. 9701 is associated with Charles Straker who was engaged by the State Government to sink a series of government wells along the route from 1895.

De Grey – Mullewa Stock Route No. 9701 is associated with pastoralist, George Gooch, whose advice was relied on by the State Government in developing the initial gazetted route in 1891.

De Grey – Mullewa Stock Route No. 9701 is associated with prominent Western Australia pastoralist, merchant and philanthropist, Walter Padbury, who established the first pastoral lease and station in the North West area on the De Grey River in 1863.

11(h) Its importance in demonstrating a high degree of creative or technical achievement;

De Grey – Mullewa Stock Route No. 9701 demonstrates an innovative use of boring technology to sink the series of Government wells at greater speed and lower cost than had previously been achievable.

The wells along *De Grey – Mullewa Stock Route No. 9701* demonstrate the dominant mid to late nineteenth century and early twentieth century methods and techniques of locating and retrieving water.

12. DEGREE OF SIGNIFICANCE

12.1 CONDITION

In its entirety, *De Grey – Mullewa Stock Route No. 9701* is in a fair condition. The route runs through vast, isolated country, which has meant little development has occurred in the area. As a result, the condition of the route itself has not changed in most sections.

The built features of the route vary from poor to good condition, with some having been restored or conserved, while some have deteriorated or remnants have disappeared.

12.2 INTEGRITY

This section explains the extent to which the fabric is in its original state.

De Grey – Mullewa Stock Route No. 9701 has a moderate to high degree of integrity. The majority of the route has not changed since the place was in use as a stock route, with most areas remaining undeveloped. The land tenure in majority of the route is still Reserve 9701 and recognised as a stock route that was defined by survey. At the northern end of the route there are residential or commercial areas that the route passed through prior to their development. These areas have been omitted from the curtilage due to lack of tangible remnants or an intangible sense of the route.

Features along the route vary from moderate to high integrity. Many of the wells are in their original state, albeit deteriorated. Perkins No.2 Government Well, Well 19, Well 9 have undergone some restoration.

Most homesteads/stations included in the curtilage have a moderate to high degree of integrity having had some restoration works or additions. The original homestead at P4002 Boodarrie Station is no longer extant, but the later dwelling which was constructed in c.1910 remains. Many of the original buildings of P4001 De Grey Station Group have been destroyed in cyclones, however the Manager's Cottage and Station House from the 1800s still remain, although are in poor condition.

12.3 AUTHENTICITY

This section explains the extent to which the original intention is evident, and the compatibility of current use.

While most of the stock route remains present in the cadastre as Reserve 9701 demonstrating a continuation of land tenure use, due to the nature of the place, as a stock route that is no longer travelled, the route itself is not easily discernible within the landscape. Rather, the features along the route indicate the presence of the stock route. Due to their isolation within the landscape the features remain relatively unchanged or restored and so continue to demonstrate their original intention. They therefore have a high degree of authenticity, which as a result means the stock route also has a high degree of authenticity.

The homesteads included within the curtilage for the place have a high degree of authenticity, as they continue to function as dwellings and outbuildings on the pastoral stations that were originally established along the stock route. While they still function as pastoral stations, some stations such as P4001 De Grey Station Group and P4002 Boodarrie Station Homestead have moved away from rearing sheep to cattle.

13. SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

The documentation for this place is based on the heritage assessment completed by Eddie Marcus of History Now, in May 2021, with amendments and/or additions by the Heritage Council and the Department.

13.1 DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

The *De Grey-Mullewa Stock Route No.9701* extends from just north of Mullewa townsite to Pardoo, just east of the De Grey Station Group through a vast, arid landscape. The majority of the route is recognised through land tenure as Reserve 9701, which was gazetted in 1905 as designated stock route. The route which would later become Reserve 9701 was initially formally gazetted as a stock route in 1893 but was in use since 1866.

Aboriginal History

Archaeological evidence suggests Aboriginal people have occupied Australia for at least 65,000 years, with evidence in the Pilbara specifically indicating at least 50,000 years.¹ Aboriginal people believe the connection is much longer.

Within the Mid West region there are various Aboriginal language groups collectively known as Yamatji, which include the Amangu, Naaguja, Wadjarri, Nanda, Badimia and Widi people. Additionally, the region includes the Western Desert people known as the Martu people.² The stock route runs over the Widi and Wadjari tribal lands. It also runs through the Gascoyne region and the language groups of the, Yinggarda, Thiin-Mah, Thudgari and Warriangka people.³ In the Pilbara Region, there are 31 language groups. Many of these languages have between two and five dialects.⁴ The stock route runs over the lands of the Pinikura, Thalanyji, Jadira, Noala, Nhuwala, Marthudunera, Yapurarra, Ngarluma, Kariyarra and Ngarla people. Each group lived virtually undisturbed until colonial settlers began exploring the regions. The importance of the land for these various groups is evidenced by the numerous Aboriginal Heritage Sites of cultural importance.⁵ They were impacted by pastoralism at different times and in different ways, although the ultimate impact was the privatisation and Government control of their land, which in many cases led to conflict.

Pastoralism brought a sudden increase of livestock in the region, watering at freshwater springs which polluted traditional water sources. To survive, many Aboriginal families had to move closer to pastoral homesteads, or else face starvation.⁶ As a consequence, Aboriginal people were forced to rely on pastoralists

¹ The National Museum of Australia, 2021, Source: <https://www.nma.gov.au/defining-moments/resources/evidence-of-first-peoples#:~:text=Aboriginal%20occupation,of%20Europe%20and%20the%20Americas>, accessed 30 March 2021; ABC News, Parke, E., 19 May 2017, 'Artefacts found in Pilbara cave show Aboriginal life in northern WA dates back 50,000 years', <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2017-05-19/cave-shows-aboriginal-life-50000-years/8541302> accessed 30 March 2021.

² City of Greater Geraldton, 'Aboriginal Culture', www.cgg.wa.gov.au/live/my-community/aboriginal.aspx (accessed 4 April 2021)

³ Take a Look at Mid West WA', Regional Development Australia Mid West Gascoyne, <https://www.rdamwg.com.au/mwg-region.html> . Accessed 11 March 2022.

⁴ 'Information on Pilbara's Languages', Wangka Maya Pilbara Aboriginal Language Centre, <https://www.wangkamaya.org.au/about-languages/information-on-pilbaras-languages> Accessed 11 March 2002.

⁵ See Schedule B for list of intersecting Aboriginal Heritage Places.

⁶ Webb, 'Indigenous History': 4. For a history of mid-20th century Aboriginal labour in the Pilbara see: Hess, Michael, 'Black and Red: The Pilbara Pastoral Workers' Strike, 1946', *Aboriginal History* Vol 18. No. 1: 65-

and worked as stockmen, builders, fencers, horse breakers, gardeners, child minders and servants.⁷ They were exploited as cheap labour, sometimes only receiving rations instead of cash.⁸

While there are limited sources, it is likely Aboriginal guides were used to locate water sources along what would become the *De Grey – Mullewa Stock Route No. 9701*.⁹ Two wells on the Stock Route were given Aboriginal place names in H. Russel's Field Books in 1902, which indicates they were probably traditional water sources: Well 47 known as *Bulaloo*, Mardie Plains and Well 46 known as *Warngoolal*, Robe River.¹⁰

Colonial Exploration of Mid West and North West

While the earliest colonisation of Western Australia was focused on the Swan River, it was not long before the potential for pastoral activities north of the colony was touted as offering potential for capitalist exploitation. The first European explorers to explore the North West coast were Captain Phillip King in the *Mermaid* in 1818 and John Clements Wickham and John Lort Stokes in *HMS Beagle* between 1838 and 1841. These surveys of the North West were primarily to identify harbours.

As the Western Australian population expanded the need for new pastoral land within the Colony grew. In response to this, in 1848, Assistant Surveyor Augustus, together with brother, Charles Frederick Gregory, Lockier Burges, J. Walcott, Augustus Bedart and 'a soldier' took twelve horses and three months' provisions to explore northward 'in search of fresh grazing ground'.¹¹ In 1850, pastoralists brought flocks overland to Geraldton and Northampton, following the route that Augustus Gregory and his brother Charles had taken.¹²

In 1858, the Government despatched surveyor Francis Thomas Gregory (brother to Augustus and Charles), to examine the 'unknown' (to colonists) country north of the Irwin, which had been unfavourably reported on by King and Stokes. Although his initial report was also unfavourable regarding pastoral potential, he was sent again, this time by sea, in 1861. Gregory's party used Nickol Bay (near present day Karratha) as a base and described several large areas of land suitable for pastoral purposes. His party travelled over the Ashburton, Yule, Shaw, Oakover and De Grey Rivers, which they named, and this time he reported back positively.¹³

Pastoralism in the Region

To encourage settlement in the North West, land regulations offered applicants blocks of about 8,000 hectares with a lease running for eight years.¹⁴ Charles Nairn, on behalf of his brother-in-law Walter Padbury, established the first pastoral lease in the North West area in 1863. Nairn brought sheep 260km overland from the harbour

⁷ Quin, Bill, 'The Pilbara—Cradle of an Ancient Civilisation', produced for the Pilbara Tourism Association and Aboriginal Affairs Department WA (2000)

⁸ Webb, 'Indigenous History': 4.

⁹ Further research with the assistance of local knowledge would be essential to complete an Aboriginal heritage survey of the wells on the route.

¹⁰ Russel's Field Book is referenced in Sharp, Eloise, E. T. Hooley: *Pioneer Bushman* (West Perth, 1985)

¹¹ *Perth Gazette* 2 September 1848: 2

¹² Keefe, Bert, *Eastward Ho: To Mullewa and The Murchison* (Mullewa Shire Council, 1995): 71

¹³ Richardson, Alexander Robert, *Early Memories of the Great Nor-West, And a Chapter in the History of WA* (ES Wigg & Son, 1909); *Western Mail* 21 December 1917: 21; van Vreeswyk, A. M., Leighton, K. A., Payne, A. L., & Hennig, P., 'An inventory and condition survey of the Pilbara region, Western Australia', Department of Agriculture and Food, Western Australia, Perth. *Technical Bulletin* 92 (2004): 13

¹⁴ Webb, M., & Webb, A., *Edge of Empire* (Artlook Books, 1983)

at Cossack the west to establish the De Grey Station.¹⁵ Later that year, S. Hall and John Wellard took up land on the Harding River.¹⁶

At first, livestock in the North West obtained water from permanent or semi-permanent freshwater pools. In time, to assist with more productive use of the land, wells were dug away from the rivers. De Grey Station was the first to introduce windmills for drawing water from sunken wells into troughs to water livestock, as well as fencing to enclose sheep but still allow them to wander throughout the night. Prior to this, sheep were often driven into makeshift yards at night.¹⁷

In 1863, Walter Padbury shipped 1,600 ewes to his station on the De Grey River, along with 'a few cows', although he was to abandon this project in 1868. Other pastoralists in the area included John Wellard, John Withnell and Thomas Lockyer. One consequence of Gregory's report was that it attracted Victorian pastoralists, the first being L. L. Mount of the Mount, Orkney & Smith Co., who sailed from Melbourne in 1864 with 1,600 sheep, landing near Roebourne with a loss of 500. This party took up country on the De Grey River. They were followed by the Portland Squatting Company, from Portland Bay, Victoria.¹⁸

Further south, by 1865, pastures within 100 km [69 miles] of Geraldton were being occupied. One of the earliest colonists of the Murchison Region was Thomas Burges, who sent three men out in 1869 to explore potential pastoralist country in this area. They departed with 2,400 sheep to test whether the area had good grass and, equally importantly, whether there were poisonous plants to a dangerous degree. After twelve months of exploring areas previously known only to the traditional owners, the party returned with the loss of only seven sheep and reported that the country was 'admirably adapted for pastoral purposes'.¹⁹ Consequently, settlement soon followed.

The demand for 'new' land grew in the 1860s and 1870s, sometimes causing conflict with local Aboriginal people whose water and food supplies were depleted by pastoralism. Occasionally this became violent, such as in 1864 when a Mullewa shepherd, John Lewis, shot a 'native dog' he thought was worrying the sheep and was fatally speared in the ensuing conflict.²⁰ Three Aboriginal men were taken into custody and sent to Perth for trial. One man was found guilty of manslaughter, receiving a sentence of twelve years penal servitude, while the other two were acquitted.

These events led to further conflict in the Mullewa area, with the spearing of Thomas Bott who had begun to clear and build on the lands of the Wajarri people. Wajarri men, Wangayakoo, Yourmacarra, Garder, Charlacarra and Williacarra were arrested and charged with the murder of Bott. The men were sentenced to death and executed and buried at the property where the altercation took place at P5109 *Butterabby Graves* (RHP).

The Wajarri and neighbouring Nhanhagardi/Wilunyu suffered greatly from the murder, execution and imprisonment of so many of their men. Disease took a heavy toll along with the depredations brought about by the pastoralists. Water holes were

¹⁵ For more on this station see: Edgar, I., & Edgar, Nancie, 'History of the De Grey Station, 1863-1913', in Weller, Helen (ed.), *North of the 26th* (Nine Club, 1979): 75-79

¹⁶ van Vreeswyk et al, 'Inventory': 13

¹⁷ van Vreeswyk et al, 'Inventory': 15

¹⁸ Richardson, *Early Memories*

¹⁹ *Geraldton Express* 9 March 1921: 1

²⁰ *Perth Gazette* 8 April 1864: 2-3

fenced in, causing the wildlife to decline, and the sheep and cattle destroyed many plants that were traditional staple foods. Within a few decades of European settlement, the Nhanhagardi/Wilunyu of the Greenough area and the Wajarri in the Mullewa area were decimated.²¹

The Establishment of the Stock Route by E. T. Hooley

With the aim to look for more pastoral areas, the State Government encouraged the overlanding of stock further north in 1864 when it offered a bounty to the first person to drive 100 head of horses or 200 sheep from below the Tropic of Capricorn to the north before 1 August 1865. Such a person would be 'entitled to a remission of all rents which may accrue in respect of any land he may take up for pastoral purposes... to an extent not exceeding 100,000 acres'.²²

This challenge to establish a stock route northward was taken on by Edward Timothy Hooley when he overlanded sheep to his leases on the Fortescue River, although it was not until 1866 that he finally received a favourable decision from the Government.²³ After an initial failed attempt along the coast in November 1865, Hooley left the Geraldine copper mine, on the Murchison north of Northampton. He travelled to his destination, on the Ashburton River at the junction of the Henry River, between May and August 1866.²⁴ He was accompanied by a small party of men including an Aboriginal man, known as Tommy. Hooley's lease here later became Minderoo Station when it was taken up by the Forrest brothers in 1878.²⁵ The route from the Geraldine mine has been detailed as tracking

'the course of the Murchison River, which was followed for a good distance until where it turns east beyond Mt. Dugal. Then they struck north till they cut the Gascoyne, which was entirely unsettled at that time. Still on they went north, and at last struck the Henry, which they followed until they reached the Ashburton.'²⁶

Where water was scarce, Hooley excavated wells on the track to Minderoo Station. Despite the difficulties in being one of the first to attempt this route with stock, Hooley arrived having lost only eight of his flock of 1,945.²⁷ Hooley advised drovers they should always be aware of the next water source, of which there were many, because backtracking the track was ill advised.²⁸ His route benefitted other pastoralists since it demonstrated sheep could be overlanded at a more reasonable cost than the alternative, which would have involved taking them to a nearby port and shipping them along the coast to their ultimate market at Perth.²⁹

While Hooley had not encountered conflict with the traditional Aboriginal owners of the land while overlanding to his destination, this was not always the case at his station. In 1869, resistance to colonisation by Aboriginal people resulted in the death of a shepherd named Hill. The death was reported to the authorities at Roebourne,

²¹ *The Inquirer and Commercial News*, 'Execution of the native murderers of Bott, at Butter Abbey, on the 28th of January.' 15 February 1865.

²² *West Australian Times* 28 July 1864: 2. See also Taylor, Nancy E. Withnell, *Yeera-Muk-A-Doo: A Saga of The North-West* (Hesperian Press, 1987): 106

²³ Taylor, *Yeera-Muk-A-Doo*: 106

²⁴ Keffe, *Eastward Ho*: 71; Sharp, Eloise, *E. T. Hooley: Pioneer Bushman* (West Perth, 1985): 141

²⁵ *Sunday Times* 20 October 1918: 8

²⁶ *Sunday Times* 20 October 1918: 8

²⁷ Keffe, *Eastward Ho*: 71; Sharp, *Hooley*: 79-151

²⁸ Taylor, *Yeera-Muk-A-Doo*: 107

²⁹ Keffe, *Eastward Ho*: 72

and a 'punitive expedition' was organised involving Hooley, resulting in a surprise attack on a party of Aboriginal people, of which 20 were killed on Minderoo Station.³⁰

One of the wells at Hooley's station was the site of another conflict in 1871. Lockier Burges was droving sheep southwards and had a saddle taken from his camp. An Aboriginal man was shot and killed by Burges, who was arrested when he arrived in Geraldton. However, the Police Magistrate, W. E. Landor, declined to prosecute for murder, and opted for the lesser charge of manslaughter. This resulted in Landor being suspended by Governor Weld, although he was reinstated to the position by Earl Kimberley, in London.³¹ Perhaps because of the occasional conflict with Aboriginal people, Hooley abandoned his station, and it was not taken up again by pastoralists until utilised by John and Alexander Forrest.³²

By the 1870s 'runs', or pastoral stations, had been taken up in the Mullewa area and a main route from the port at Geraldton was established to provide access for travellers on foot, cart, or horseback. Sheep and cattle were walked out from established runs around Geraldton and the Irwin River by shepherds. The sheep were later taken back to their parent runs for shearing utilising tracks which became recognised stock routes that featured resting and watering points 10 to 15 miles (16 to 24 kilometres) apart. Some of these sites were natural springs or rock holes while others were wells dug by shepherds.³³ Many early wells were sunk along creeks with the hope of obtaining water at shallow depths.³⁴

Stock Routes from the De Grey area were, therefore, established informally through local practice well before the State Government gazetted the *De Grey-Mullewa Stock Route No. 9701* in 1893. There are few detailed accounts from drovers using these routes, but one from 1890 illustrates a number of important details. William Cream overlanded 200 bullocks from De Grey through Mullewa to the Irwin district, assisted by 'young Miller' and an Aboriginal man. This shows Aboriginal people had begun working as drovers in the 1880s and 1890s.³⁵

On arrival, it was noted the animals were in 'splendid condition' and did not show signs of having completed a journey of nearly 2000 kilometres.³⁶ The drovers left the De Grey on 5 March 1890 and reached the Fortescue River on 5 May. Here they encountered a 'tornado of exceptional violence' with rainfall recorded as 67cm in 24 hours.³⁷ The cattle and horses were taken to a small hill they later named 'Mount Safety'. Trapped there for five days, and having had to abandon their supplies, it was only when they reached the Fortescue Telegraph Station they could rest and attempt to recover some of their lost belongings.

The party reached the Ashburton on 1 June, where they celebrated Foundation Day with 'real current dumplings', before following the trail to the Lyons River, which they struck on 18 June, then onto the Murchison on 5 August, and then to the Mullewa

³⁰ *Sunday Times* 20 October 1918: 8; Minderoo, Pilbara, Colonial Frontier Massacres in Australia, 1788-1930, The Centre for 21st Century Humanities, The University of Newcastle, <https://c21ch.newcastle.edu.au/colonialmassacres/detail.php?r=894>

³¹ Keffe, *Eastward Ho*: 72; *Inquirer* 23 October 1872: 2

³² *Sunday Times* 20 October 1918: 8

³³ City of Greater Geraldton, 'The Old Stock Route Trail' (leaflet, using resources from WA Heritage Committee 1988 leaflet for the Commonwealth/State Bicentennial Project)

³⁴ 'Shire of Murchison Municipal Inventory of Heritage Places', 1995-1996; 2003, Shire of Murchison.

³⁵ *Victorian Express* 4 October 1890: 2

³⁶ *Victorian Express* 4 October 1890: 2

³⁷ *ibid.*

district.³⁸ It was noted that the water supply on the route was 'fair' although there was sometimes a scarcity of feed. The entire journey was reported as being a 'droving exploit of no mean order' and credit should go to Cream as well as his assistants.³⁹

Not every droving expedition was successful. George Gooch, who was later to be influential in determining the course of the *De Grey-Mullewa Stock Route* lost many sheep in 1880 due to lack of water and the presence of poisonous plants.⁴⁰

State Interest in the Stock Route and Formal Gazettal

As the Eastern Goldfields expanded, the population of Western Australia boomed. Consequently, in some populated areas meat was both in short supply and excessively priced.⁴¹ Meanwhile, stock numbers had increased along runs in the north. One response to this was to formalise more stock routes to enable an easier supply of sheep and cattle from the North West. For the Goldfields, the options were to overland animals to the metropolitan area and then transport meat by train, after the line had been established, or to overland from the Pilbara or Kimberley regions to Leonora. George Gooch took the latter option with sheep during the height of the gold rush.⁴²

Gooch had started his pastoralist career as a shepherd at Mingenew at the age of 14, before later relocating to Greenough and then heading out to establish Wandagee Station in the Gascoyne District around 1880. Later accounts said he was the 'first to induce the Government of the day to experiment for artesian water in the North-West', which he agreed to subsidise.⁴³ When the State Government sought a route to the De Grey district, it wrote to Gooch in December 1891 seeking his opinion. He drew up a map showing the tracks favoured by drovers and drew attention to Mullewa and Mingenew as potential rail trucking centres. Gooch rejected a purely coastal route as having long stretches without water, little feed between the Wooramel and Murchison, and poisonous plants between the Murchison and Northampton.⁴⁴ However, the choice of stock routes could be determined as much by self-interest from pastoralists as practicality. For example, when Horace Sholl and others offered self-interested opinions on a route in 1891, they advised against going through Roebourne because it would be a drain on commonage and 'would necessitate the resumption of Messrs Scholl & Co freehold land'.⁴⁵

The *De Grey-Mullewa Stock Route* was formally gazetted on 1 June 1893:

The following are the particulars of the stock route from DeGrey River, southwards, as gazetted on Thursday last: -- "A strip of land, starting from the DeGrey River, and extending in a West-South-Westerly direction to Roebourne, *via* Moorambine Pool, Mackay's Homestead at Mundabullangana Pool, Peeawah Trigonometrical Station, Coorinjinna Pool, Terena Pool, Boona Booka Jacka Pool; thence in a Westerly direction to the Fortescue Telegraph station, *via* Cowaranda Pool, Gimriki Pool on the Yannarie River, Erramurra Pool; thence in a general Southerly direction to

³⁸ *Victorian Express* 4 October 1890: 2

³⁹ *ibid.*

⁴⁰ Keffe, *Eastward Ho*: 73; Gunning, F. W., *Lure of the North: Seventy years' memoirs of George Joseph Gooch and his pioneer friends of Western Australia* (WA Newspapers, 1952): 36-37

⁴¹ Grimwade, Gordon, 'The Canning Stock Route: Desert stock route to outback tourism', *Australasian Historical Archaeology*, vol. 16 (1998): 70-79

⁴² *West Australian* 11 July 1931: 5

⁴³ *West Australian* 11 July 1931: 5

⁴⁴ Keffe, *Eastward Ho*: 76; Gunning, *Lure of the North*: 149

⁴⁵ *Nor'West Times & Northern Advocate* 26 December 1891: 2

Chalyarn Spring in the Robe River, via Mardie Pool and Woolhouses' Homestead in North Location 57; thence passing near Red Hill to Reserve 1108, at Duck Creek, and along the right bank of the said Creek to its junction with the Ashburton River, and along the right bank of the said river to Reserve 1235; thence crossing said Ashburton River and along the right bank of the Henry River upward to the crossing near Survey mark **A** 108; thence to Blue Rock Pool and Southward to the crossing at the junction of the Alma River with the Lyons River, and along left bank of said Lyons River downwards to Binthanbooka Pool; thence crossing Davis's Creek, Arthur River, Wyndham River, and the Gascoyne near its junction with the Dairie Creek, and along left bank of said Dairie Creek to survey mark **V** 47, and thence to Bilung Pool; thence crossing the Wooramel River at Pandara; thence crossing Yarra-Yarra Creek near Mearearbundie, and thence in a South-South-Easterly direction passing near Chearlie Well and crossing the Murchison River at Elizabeth Springs and downwards along its left bank crossing the Roderick and Sanford Rivers and Coollarburloo Brook near its junction with the said Murchison River; thence Southward to the Greenough River at Coolinga Spring and along its right bank downwards crossing it near Indindie Spring; thence South-South-West to Wooderarrung, via 'The Rocks' and Bedan Well; thence via Mullewa to the Northernmost boundary of Reserve 2138.⁴⁶

When the Midland Railway Company's line opened for traffic in 1894, the use of stock routes all the way to Perth became less economically viable and Mingenew developed as the major centre for selling stock overlanded along the *De Grey-Mullewa Stock Route*.⁴⁷

Sinking of Government Wells

Despite having gazetted the route, it appears the Government did not have sufficient information to determine its ongoing viability. A letter was sent to Roebourne Roads Board requesting details on the 'present state of wells, water-supply, troughs, etc.' and an estimate of the cost for putting the route into 'good order'.⁴⁸ The Board wrote to Mr Seabrooke, Charles Mitchinson Straker and others pastoralist asking for recommendations for additional wells and the 'general state of the road'.⁴⁹ However, by 1895 there were reports of insufficient wells on the stock route and those that did exist had sometimes fallen into disrepair.⁵⁰

The immediate reaction was to send Charles Straker to construct 'government wells' along the *De Grey-Mullewa Stock Route*, which he commenced in May 1895.⁵¹ In August that year, he reported that three wells had been completed and his camp was now some 40 miles [65 km] from Mullewa. No. 1 well was 'fenced in with a jam stake picket fence', while Nos. 2 and 3 were secured with 'stout posts and rails of salmon gums'.⁵² At each well was a set of 52ft [16m] galvanised iron troughs,⁵³ with their own fencing, to allow cattle, horses, or sheep to drink. Each well had a strong windlass, two seven-gallon [32 litre] iron buckets. Straker claimed the wells should 'remain serviceable for years without further expense'.⁵⁴

⁴⁶ *Government Gazette WA* 1 June 1893: 594. Note there are variant spellings of some of these places in other sources.

⁴⁷ Keffe, *Eastward Ho*: 77

⁴⁸ *Nor'West Times & Northern Advocate* 3 June 1893: 4

⁴⁹ *ibid.*

⁵⁰ *Northern Public Opinion and Mining and Pastoral News* 10 August 1895: 2

⁵¹ *Geraldton Advertiser* 28 October 1895: 3

⁵² *ibid.*

⁵³ Another report indicated the troughs were 45ft (*Geraldton Advertiser* 28 October 1895: 3).

⁵⁴ *West Australian* 23 August 1895: 2

The process for locating and developing wells was described by Frank Wittenoom in his memoirs of 1978,

'It must not be thought this well sinking was an easy or soft job. A spot would be chosen, often by certain plants that grew around, trees, ants, and other infallible signs ... Dynamite was not known, so until water was struck, loose blasting powder was alright. When water was reached, the powder had to be encased in paper or piece of old moleskin trousers, well buttered with fat, and formed into a cartridge to fit the hole... Many of these wells were sunk to about 10 ft without water, when we would leave them then and try another place.'⁵⁵

Although Straker only described one type of well in an interview, a survey of them in the early 1980s showed three variations. It is currently unknown if each of these types were constructed from 1895 or were later replacements, and archaeological investigation may provide clarification. The Windlass Type, which Straker mentions, was a slow way of drawing water, as someone had to wind the rope around the barrel by turning a handle. The Whip Type was faster and allowed for a horse to be attached to a rope to raise a full bucket before being backed up to lower the rope again. Finally, the Fork and Lever Type was a simple counterweighted pivot, suitable only for very shallow wells.⁵⁶

When Straker was interviewed by a journalist in October 1895, he had completed 160 miles [260 km] of the stock route. He outlined the details of his project, noting each well was approximately 12 miles [20 km] apart, allowing for an 'easy' day's travel. The capacity of the wells was to service either 3,000 sheep or 300 head of cattle, although he had reports that 4,000 sheep and 40 horses had been successfully watered at one.⁵⁷ Straker also reported that striking water had been made easier by the purchase of a hand-boring machine, which had saved the Government 'hundreds of pounds'. He advocated for pastoralists to obtain their own machine, which could go down 70ft [21m] in just a few days. The machine had a pump attached so the operator would know when they had struck water.⁵⁸ As noted above, the private interests of pastoralists could sometimes conflict with the common nature of a stock route, and Straker was keen to point out that his wells were constructed as far from private wells as possible, so drovers would not be tempted to use the latter.

By 1898, it was reported that the stock route had been opened to a distance of 400 miles [645km] north of Mullewa, with the water supply maintained and improved.⁵⁹

Despite Straker's optimism about the longevity of his wells, in 1902 the stock route was described as being in a 'disgraceful state'.⁶⁰ The monopolists (Connor, Doherty, Durack) were least affected as they had their own centres of distribution, but smaller producers relied on driving stock to Mullewa. Reports in June 1902 indicated 2,000 cattle were *en route*, but some wells were only capable of watering 300 head. The *Sunday Times*, alleged the large producers had an interest in keeping the stock route unusable to maintain high prices for meat.⁶¹

⁵⁵ Wittenoom, Frederick Francis Burdett, *Frank Wittenoom's Memoirs of Murchison Pastoral & Goldfields Areas* (Geraldton Historical Society, 1978)
⁵⁶ Sharp, *Hooley*: 228-29
⁵⁷ *Geraldton Advertiser* 28 October 1895: 3
⁵⁸ *Geraldton Advertiser* 28 October 1895: 3
⁵⁹ *West Australian* 17 June 1898: 5
⁶⁰ *Sunday Times* 29 June 1902: 8
⁶¹ *ibid.*

It is of interest to note that Martyn and Audrey Webb claim the wells would only have been necessary during bad droughts, and natural water sources would normally have sufficed for overlanding. Further, they note the wells' 'most useful service at this time [1890s] was to provide water for miners departing south for better prospects'.⁶²

1905 Gazettal of Stock Route Network

In 1905 the entire network of northern and eastern stock routes at the time were gazetted as reserves, 80 chains wide, from the Kimberley to Perth. The stock route between the De Grey River and Mullewa was allocated Reserve 9701. Other stock routes in the network included Reserve 9697 Kimberley – De Grey Stock Route, Reserve 9698 Fortescue – Cue Stock Route, Reserve 9699 Peak Hill – Leonora Stock Route, Reserve 9700 De Grey – Peak Hill Stock Route.⁶³

The Commonwealth Government reported in 1908 that the De Grey-Mingenew [sic] Route was over 900 miles [1450km] long, with about 80 wells in addition to permanent pools in the riverbed, with no watering stations being more than about fifteen miles [24km] apart.⁶⁴

In 1908, the largest mob of sheep to travel the stock route was reported, when Alf Cream moved 5,400 sheep from Clifton Downs and Maroona Stations to Mingenew without any losses.⁶⁵ The annual influx of cattle and sheep helped Mingenew thrive. Several pastoralists obtained property around Mullewa and Mingenew to fatten stock before sales to increase their prices. Mingenew, however, remained the centre for northern stock until the Wongan Hills to Mullewa Railway line opened in March 1915.⁶⁶

Decline of the Route

The maintenance of the wells appears to have only been carried out in response to complaints from drovers. In 1911, pastoralist John Lewis wrote that the troughs were often broken, and some wells were dry. In response, the Government attempted to transfer responsibility for maintenance to the local authorities, an offer which was rejected at first because of inadequate compensation for the task.⁶⁷ Even so, the Mullewa Roads Board did accept £30 in 1915 to repair three wells on a one-off basis.⁶⁸

The annual traffic on the *De Grey-Mullewa Stock Route* is difficult to determine precisely, although various reports give some indication. For example, in the first six months of 1924, 80,000 sheep and 800 cattle used the route. In 1934, 137,000 sheep and 2,666 cattle were reported, although during the drought of the following year, only 26,536 sheep were on the track.⁶⁹ After 1934, the use of the *De Grey-Mullewa Stock Route* slowly declined.

⁶² Webb & Webb, *Edge of Empire*: 97. However, it should be noted the authors give no reference for this claim.

⁶³ Land Administration, 'Stock Routes: Reserve 9701 1826718938 22340 22338 22239, Various Locations De Grey Mullewa Stock Route, Shire of Murchison, Shire of Upper Gascoyne, Shire of Roebourne' (SROWA, Cons 3640 Item 11765)

⁶⁴ 'Official Year Book of the Commonwealth Government' (1908): 548

⁶⁵ Keefe, *Eastward Ho*: 77

⁶⁶ Keefe, *Eastward Ho*: 77

⁶⁷ Keefe, *Eastward Ho*: 79; *Western Mail* 19 June 1914: 15

⁶⁸ Keefe, *Eastward Ho*: 79

⁶⁹ Keefe, *Eastward Ho*: 79

When a 1942 report was commissioned into poisonous plants in the Gascoyne Region, it noted that 'many thousands of animals have been lost' especially on a key area of the De Grey River – Mingenew Stock Route.⁷⁰ This was described as 'between the Binthabooka Creek, which flows into the Lyons River, and the Gascoyne River crossing, and along the Gascoyne River from Bidgemia to Winnemia woolshed on Jimba Jimba Station'.⁷¹ Consequently, drovers were seeking an alternative route to avoid this area, and it is possible this reduced traffic even further on the *De Grey-Mullewa Stock Route*.

Alternatives to droving also contributed to a lessening of use of the stock route. It has been suggested that road transport of cattle may have been pioneered in Western Australia, in the area around Meekatharra, in the 1920s. The vehicles used, such as the Diamond 'T' truck, had a capacity of around fifteen bullocks. However, such ventures often proved uneconomical because of excessive wear and tear on the trucks and the relatively small load carried.⁷² In 1929, Meekatharra Road Board noted the additional costs they would have to bear with road transport of cattle, including increased clearing of surveyed roads and cutting back overhanging trees.⁷³

Nevertheless, by the 1950s the transportation of stock in motor trucks on prepared road systems had become common place. Many of the roads were developed along the old stock routes, as they followed the most suitable terrain and land had already been partially cleared.

Since then, some of the wells have deteriorated, while others have been restored and are included in heritage trails/tourist drives, such as 'The Old Stock Route Trail' developed by the City of Geraldton from Mullewa to the Greenough River Crossing as part of the Commonwealth/State Bicentennial celebrations in 1988.⁷⁴

13.2 PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

The physical evidence section is based on photographs of the route and a number of features along it, that were kindly donated to the Department by Ria and Trevor Baker after a private visit in July 2021. Descriptions of individual wells and other features were also based on those detailed in Eloise Sharp's, 1985 book *E. T. Hooley Pioneer Bushman*. Sharp located and described each well during her site visit taken in 1981/82. Historical mapping and aerial photography were also used to determine the location of features along the route.

Extending from just north of Mullewa townsite to Pardoo, just east of De Grey Station, the *De Grey – Mullewa Stock Route No. 9701* is approximately 1500 kilometres, running through vast, sometimes dry landscapes and including a series of wells and other stopping points along the way. The route within the landscape is largely contiguous, predominantly demarcated as Reserve 9701 and designated as stock route. However, it also passes through reserve tenure that has been re-numbered and/ or reclassified or through areas that have been leased for pastoralism or mining. There are no clear examples of the former stock route track, which is no longer in use. However, the government wells, which were laid

⁷⁰ *Northern Times* 27 November 1942: 4

⁷¹ *ibid.*

⁷² Bureau of Agricultural Economics, 'The Economics of Road Transport of Beef Cattle' (Canberra, 1959): 5

⁷³ *Daily Telegraph and North Murchison and Pilbara Gazette* 20 April 1929: 4

⁷⁴ e.g. City of Greater Geraldton, 'The Old Stock Route Trail' (leaflet, using resources from WA Heritage Committee 1988 leaflet for the Commonwealth/State Bicentennial Project)

approximately 12 miles apart, as well as remnants of stockyards or presence of homesteads, are a physical indication of the route once travelled.

The southern portion of the route at Mullewa is characterised by scattered vegetation of small trees, shrubs and grasses. Water systems, such as creeks and small rivers run perpendicular over the route at intervals at this portion of the route. Red laterite stone and dirt is also characteristic of the area. The Carnarvon-Mullewa Road runs adjacent to the stock route, veering out at points.

At the junction of the Greenough River and Bangemall Creek the route follows the creek northwards. When it reaches the Murchison River it then follows along adjacent to it northwards. Mulga (*Acacia aneura*) and small Gum trees are characteristic along the river banks. The route continues to follow the Murchison River, veering away from the Carnarvon-Mullewa Road.

It eventually reaches Mount Narryer where landscape is characteristically rocky and red. It is at this point the stock route veers to the west away from the Murchison River through to Mount Dugel, following smaller creeks that run along the route. It meets up again with the Carnarvon-Mullewa Road near P16575 Byro Station before eventually veering off west again from the road at Well 20A. Vegetation comprises low, shrubs growing in red sandy soils.

The route travels through expansive areas with no roads or tracks allowing direct access to vehicles. It travels along Daurie Creek, where the vegetation of Mulga (*Acacia aneura*) trees, Acacia trees and Flooded Gums (*Eucalyptus rudis*) becomes thicker. The route then meets up again with Carnarvon-Mullewa Road near Well 23 and the junction of Daurie Creek and the Gascoyne River, which it then follows.

Vegetation along the Gascoyne River comprises larger trees and low scrub, making some wells in this area harder to find. The route leaves the Gascoyne and heads further north along the Lyons River and Ulawarra Road. Some wells in this area have been affected by flood levels and so are in poorer condition or also hard to find. The stock route follows the Lyons River until Well 34 where it forks away from the river running east and continues north.

The Maroonah South Road runs adjacent to the stock route at this point and water systems and creeks run perpendicular through it. The soil is very rocky in this area and the vegetation is sparse comprising grasses and small shrubs. The stock route continues east, whereas the Marronah South Road veers west at Yannarie River.

The route again travels through expansive, dry land with few roads or tracks allowing access to vehicles. Upon reaching the Telfer River the route then follows along it northwards before it reaches the Ashburton River, which it follows north east. The route veers north from the Ashburton River and follows north moving through country characterised by rich, red earth. The Mount Stuart- Red Hill Road follows along the route northwards.

As the route reaches Fortescue and edges nearer to the Robe River there is little vegetation and the landscape is vast and dry. Mining becomes more prevalent in this area, and some sections of the route appear to be affected by some mining ventures. Where significant impacts have occurred due to mining and development at the northern portion of the route, these areas do not form part of the curtilage, as they do not contribute to the Cultural Heritage Significance of the place. This includes areas in Maitland, Fortescue and the Port Hedland City Centre/South Hedland.

The route runs along the North-West Coastal Highway shortly after it crosses the Fortescue River. It veers away from it and travels south below the Roebourne townsite before joining the highway again just before it reaches the Little Sherlock River. At this portion, the route follows along the coast, through expansive land with few roads. It continues through Port Hedland City Centre/South Hedland, before reaching the De Grey River and Station. The stock route follows the designated Reserve 9701 until it ends in Pardoo.

Wells and Other Features Along the Route

The wells along the *De Grey – Mullewa Stock Route No. 9701* that are included and highlighted within the curtilage of the place are representative examples of the series of government wells along the stock route, of which there were at least 55 in total. A number of private wells were also sunk and used along the route by drovers, and some have been included in the curtilage when their location is known.

Recent physical information was not available for all wells and site visits would be needed in some cases to gather more detailed information.

The 66 features referenced in the assessment are listed in order from south to north. Small amounts of documentary evidence are also included in this section of the assessment to provide adequate contextual information to understand each well or feature.

The main route of the *De Grey – Mullewa Stock Route No. 9701* followed the Murchison River as far as possible, where water was more easily obtained from gnamma holes.⁷⁵ As the number of stock increased along the route along new runs further north, the government employed well sinkers and construction gangs to establish water stops along the way. Wells were positioned approximately 12 miles (19.3 kilometres) apart, as this was recognised as a day's travel for the stock who grazed along the way.⁷⁶ An unfenced reserve of 80 chains (1.6 kilometres) wide was gazetted encompassing the wells to ensure development of the route was limited.

At the time of construction, many of the wells were equipped with a windlass only. In the 1920s Public Works gangs erected gin poles and swivels to raise water.⁷⁷

Well 1A (Perkins No.2 Government Well)

Perkins Well was originally sunk by Charles Straker, in 1897 where the main road crosses the Wooderarrung River. After this well turned salty and was unusable, a second Perkins Well was sunk by Frank Field in January 1934. It was dug to 10.4 metres deep and supplied 73 litres per hour of fresh water.⁷⁸ The two wells were known as Wooderarrung No. 1 and 1A on Public Works documentation. The second well was restored by the Shire of Mullewa and included in the De Grey-Mullewa Stock Route trail, which was established in 1988 as part of the Bicentennial Western Australian Heritage Trails Network Project.⁷⁹ It continues to be a popular tourist attraction/drive, along what is now known as the City of Geraldton's Old Stock Route Trail.

⁷⁵ Suba, T., 'Shire of Murchison Municipal Inventory of Heritage Places', 1995-1996; 2003, Shire of Murchison.

⁷⁶ *ibid.*

⁷⁷ *ibid.*

⁷⁸ 'The Old Stock Route Trail', City of Greater Geraldton, p. 6, https://library.cgg.wa.gov.au/Profiles/library/Assets/ClientData/Stock_Route_Trail_Brochure_PROOF_002_-_Version_18_Oct_2017.pdf Accessed 22 December 2021.

⁷⁹ *ibid.*

To access the well, turn into Sutherland Road, west off the Carnarvon-Mullewa Road. Vegetation surrounding the well includes York Gum (*Eucalyptus loxophleba*), Waitabit (*Hakea recurva*), Kurara (*Acacia tetragonophylla*) and wattle species. The restored rectangle well is lined with timber, likely jarrah, for the first metre or so. A timber frame surrounds the well and metal mesh covers the top. Located close by is a timber post with metal fixtures, which may have formed part of the well whip. The metal trough is in an average condition leading away from the well for roughly two to three metres. At the front of the well, which has been fenced in with timber posts, is interpretive panelling detailing the well's history and rusted steel sculptures of drovers at their campsite. The original 1988 bicentennial plaque is fixed to stone, to the left of the artwork.



Waterfall

Used as a watering point and resting place along the stock route, Waterfall is a natural pool that collects water that flows from the Bingangwah Brook after rain. Water flows from the brook over a laterite stone ledge into the pool, hence the name 'Waterfall'. During the years when the stock route was in use, drovers constructed bush yards between Waterfall and Wooderarrung Spring to hold stock at night.⁸⁰ Due to the picturesque scenery and fresh water, the place has also been a popular picnic site since the early 1900s.

Access to Waterfall is down Nubberoo Road, west off the Carnarvon-Mullewa Road. Old Man Saltbush (*Attriplex nummularia*), Samphire (*Tecticornia bulbosa*), Flannel Bush (*Solanum lasiophyllum*) and Mulla Mulla (*Ptilotus nobilis*) grow along the Brook.

The place is included in the De Grey-Mullewa Stock Route trail, which was established in 1988 as part of the Bicentennial Western Australian Heritage Trails Network Project.⁸¹ It continues to be a popular tourist attraction/drive, along what is now known as the City of Geraldton's Old Stock Route Trail.

⁸⁰ *ibid*, p. 8.

⁸¹ *ibid*.



Well 2 (Woodenooka Government Well)

Built in July 1895, the Woodenooka Government well lies near the Woodenooka Spring and creek bed. The square well is 2.2 metres wide and 12 metres deep. It provided an average supply of 150 gallons (682 litres) per hour of brackish water. The original stonework, which lined the well, is still visible in some areas. The well is in an average to poor condition.

Water has risen to the top of the well where it is lined with stone around the opening. Timber planks and metal pipes likely once relating to the function of the well that are scattered around. Likely due to the unsafe nature of the well, given its high water level, it is surrounded by wire fencing. Grasses, large shrubs and small trees surround the well, due to the presence of water. Access to Woodenooka Government Well is down a gravel track east of the Carnarvon-Mullewa Road.

The well is included in the De Grey-Mullewa Stock Route trail, which was established in 1988 as part of the Bicentennial Western Australian Heritage Trails Network Project.⁸² It continues to be a popular tourist attraction/drive, along what is now known as the City of Geraldton's Old Stock Route Trail.



⁸²

ibid.

Bedan Well

This well is not listed as a government well, so it is likely it was privately sunk. Shrub and low-lying vegetation cover the opening of the well making it hard to see the stone that lines it. Four metal pickets indicate each side. Access to the well is along Bedan Road, which leads west from Carnarvon – Mullewa Road.



Well 3

Well 3 is stone lined for the first 3 feet, and then is natural earth for the remaining depth. The round well is roughly one metre in diameter. Its water level was 12 feet from ground level in 1982, during Sharp's visit. The water trough leading from the well is in poor condition, having rusted at the base and is broken in other parts. A wire fence surrounds the well to keep livestock from falling in. Various grasses and low shrubs surround the well.

The well is located 250 metres east of the Carnarvon – Mullewa Road, just north of the Urawa River in Nunierra.



Well 3A

Well 3A is rectangular in shape and approximately one by two metres. The well appears to originally have been lined with stone for the first metre, but much of the stonework has eroded, exposing the soil beneath. Water is approximately two metres from ground level. Three metal stakes are located at three sides of the well, inserted into concrete. The remains of what may have been a windlass lie to the side of the well. Flannel Bush (*Solanum lasiophyllum*) and succulent ground cover grows

around the well. The remnants of a rusted metal trough lie to one side of the well. On the other side is another trough and a concrete water tank.

Sharp refers to this particular well as Well 4 in her 1985 account, however it is known on maps as Well 3A. Sharp notes that, 'Well timbered 10 poles down then soils walls, water 20 ft from ground level, it stands near creek running into Greenough River'. The timbered poles no longer line the walls of the well.



Bangemall Well 4

Bangemall Well 4 is square in shape measuring approximately one by one metre. The well is lined with timber planks for the first metre and then natural earth for the remaining depth. Stone is scattered around the opening of the well, concentrated to one side at the base of a rusted and broken windlass. Metal and timber cover the top of the well, acting as a make-shift barrier. A black pipe leads from the well to a nearby windmill. The pipe also extends from the windmill to a concrete water trough. A concrete water tank is also located to the north of the well, roughly one to two metres away. Access to the well is west from Tallering Peak Road in Nunierria.



Drover's Pool

Located approximately 1.25km north of Well 4, Drover's Pool is a natural pool within the Bangemall Creek measuring approximately 300 metres long and 18 metres wide. The pool contains fresh water and was a watering point and camping area along the route. A sign is located nearby, which reads 'Drovers Pool one of the watering points on the De – Grey Stock Route 1800s.'



Well 4A

Further research and a site visit is required to determine the current physical evidence of this well.

Access is north along an access track leading from Tallering Peak Road. The well is approximately 4 kilometres east from Bangemall Creek.

Well 5

Well 5 is likely square or rectangular in shape. Corrugated iron sheeting, timber and possibly asbestos sheeting cover the opening of the well. A small tree grows to one side of the opening and a windmill stands at another side. Metal fencing and a gate surround the well, tree and windmill. A black plastic pipe leads from the well and mill to a metal trough that is rusted at the bottom. Access to Well 5 is west from Carnarvon-Mullewa Road.

As noted in Sharp's 1985 account, Well 5 had 'plenty of good water, it has been cement lined down about 6ft and a mill set over it, the old brush yard stands not far from the well – the area looks to have been in drought for some time. The trees are mainly Sandalwood (*Santalum spicatum*), Mulga (*Acacia aneura*), and *Acacia* varieties.'⁸³

Well 5 is approximately 4.9 kilometres north east of P1667 Wandina Station Homestead group, comprising the original c. 1880 homestead, the 1920 homestead and various outbuildings. The homestead group is located one kilometre outside of the stock route reserve, and therefore is not included in the curtilage of the stock route or assessment...'⁸⁴

⁸³ Sharp, *Hooley*: 235.

⁸⁴ 'Place 056', City of Greater Geraldton Municipal Inventory, 2016.



Well 6

Well 6 is square in shape and lined with stone for at least half a metre before natural earth. Timber planks surround the well and cover some parts of the opening. The planks have deteriorated, likely due to insect activity, and there are holes, which have been covered by a door. The remains of a wooden windlass have fallen to the side, as well as metal piping and other scraps of metal sheeting. Small shrubs grow around the opening. A metal trough leads from the well for at least ten metres.

As noted in Sharp's 1985 account, Well 6 'stands in open country by a small creek in an area is sparsely covered with a low scrub and a few Minni-Richie (*Acacia cyperophylla*) and Snakewood (*Acacia xiphophylla*) trees. The well is unlined ample water only six feet from surface.'⁸⁵

The well is approximately 1.7 kilometres south-east of P1705 Pinegrove Homestead, which is located 800 metres outside of the stock route curtilage. Originally the Ryan Brothers took up a lease in the area in the 1870s, but no permanent buildings were erected at that time, as grazing sheep there were taken elsewhere for shearing. The Millar family later occupied the site and erected a pre-fabricated timber house in c. 1910. All the timber was marked and numbered for ease of erection and the walls were lined inside with pressed metal. The homestead has an iron roof and verandahs all around.



⁸⁵

Sharp, Hooley: 235.

Well 7

Well 7 is circular in shape and lined with stone for the first 18 inches before, what appears to be natural earth. Water is present up to the lined stone area, approximately 18 inches from the surface. A metal windmill is positioned directly on top of the well with metal piping leading to a concrete water tank approximately five metres to the north of the well. Timber planks cross the well, providing support to the windmill. A metal fence surrounds the well to keep anything from falling in. Several shrubs grow around the fence. A concrete water trough is located adjacent to the water tank. The well is located 50 metres east of Woolgorong Road in Woolgorong and the windmill can be seen from the road.

Remnants of stock yards are located across the creek approximately 500 metres south-east of the well that are within the stock route curtilage.



Well 8

Well 8 is rectangular in shape, measuring approximately one metre by two metres. As noted in Sharp's 1985 account, Well 8 'stands out on a salt flat, in low scrub – Saltbush (*Atriplex bunburyana*) and a few Mulga (*Acacia aneura*) trees. The well ... is lined 6 poles down the soil walls'.⁸⁶ The fork and lever, whip and windlass have fallen into disrepair. A fence made of locally sourced mulga poles bound by wire surrounds the well but no longer stands upright. A metal bucket, and metal trough still remain. The trough has mulga bracing along its length to provide stability. Access is roughly 1.3 kilometres east of Carnarvon-Mullewa Road in Woolgorong.



⁸⁶

Sharp, Hooley: 237.

P18199 Well 9

As described in the Shire of Murchison's Municipal Inventory, which was first compiled in 1995-1996 and reviewed in 2003, Well 9 is 'located approximately 53 kilometres south of the Murchison Settlement and on the east side of the Carnarvon-Mullewa Road. The location of the historic stock route well is marked by a sign on the side of the road. Access to the well is via a winding track within the stock route curtilage which passes the remains of a sheep enclosure, showing the remains of brush fencing forming a large circle, approximately 45 metres in diameter. The site [at this time was] marked by a small signpost with the words, "Historic Shepherd's Stock Yard".

At the time of construction, the Well 9 was equipped with a windlass only.⁸⁷ Some modifications were carried out to the historic well during the 2001 reconstruction works including the removal of the earth well mound and the installation of a concrete slab to replace the original timber plank well cover. At the centre of the concrete capping is a metal lid that can be lifted to view the well. Positioned over the timber cover is a metal framed windlass with a thick horizontal timber post at the axle. The original gin pole and swivel (of local blackheart timber) were disposed of in 2001 and replaced with telephone poles, however the original metal fittings were recovered and re-used. The well is surrounded by a square fence constructed of mulga poles bound by wire. The original semi-circular galvanised steel water trough extends for approximately 15 metres to the south of the well and is covered by original mulga bracing. A sign at the site states "E.T. Hooley Stock Route Well 9. Restored September 2001 by members North West District Rifle Clubs Association. Headquarters Bernard Clinch Memorial Rifle Range, Greenough".⁸⁸

Beneath the metal lid, the well is lined with stone for the first foot and then has natural soil walls. Around the well, the vegetation is comprised of low scrub with Prickly Acacia bushes as well as a few scattered gums. The well is approximately 26 feet, it stores approximately 4,500 gallons of brackish water quality and has a yield of 400 gallons per hour.⁸⁹ This information was written on a sign at the well viewed in 1982. The sign indicates that Well 8 is 17 miles away and Well 10 is 12 miles away.



⁸⁷ Findlay, C.L., 1930, *Surveyor's Field Book* 41.

⁸⁸ Suba, T., 'Shire of Murchison Municipal Inventory of Heritage Places', 1995-1996; 2003, Shire of Murchison.

⁸⁹ Sharp, Hooley: 237.

Well 10

A site visit is required to determine the current physical evidence of this well.

As noted in Sharp's 1985 account, Well 10 'stands near a small creek in scrubby country on the edge of a clay pan, vegetation is very sparse a few Prickly Acacias (*Accia nilotica*) and Flood gums (*Eucalyptus rudis*). The lining to the well is stone for about four feet then soil. It's in fair order there was water at about 10 feet.'⁹⁰ At this time, a notice was at the well, indicating the distance between Well 9 and 11, that being 12 miles and 18 miles. Also, it was recorded that Well 10 had a depth of 20 feet, storage capacity of 3000 gallons and could yield of 900 gallons per hour.

Photographs taken in 1982, indicate that at this time the well had a covering of bush timber planks. A wooden lid can be lifted to access the well. A timber windlass and gin pole of local timber remained at this time. A fence is constructed around the well of mulga timber poles.

Well 11

Well 11 is square in shape and has no lining, however there are stones surrounding the opening of the well. A mill is located over the well, but has fallen into disrepair and the blades have toppled over. The pole for the whip and part of the trough still stand. Mulga poles brace the trough and a mulga pole fence surrounds the well. Wooden planks have been placed over the surface of the well to act as a cover, but they have deteriorated due to insect activity and are in poor condition, falling into the well. Metal bracing appears to be at the corners of the well and a metal door extends partially over the opening.

A circular corrugated iron water tank atop a stone base stands immediately east of the well. An old brush yard is located close by where stock would have been kept. Low scrub and acacia trees surround the well. The Murchison River runs close by. Access to the well is roughly 700 west of Meeberrie-Wooleen Road, down a track from the road, one kilometre south of the point where the road crosses the Murchison River.



⁹⁰

ibid: 239.

Well 12

A site visit is needed to determine the exact location and current condition of the well.

In 1985, Sharp noted that at Well 12 'you may have a drink in the old way – letting the bucket down on the windlass and bring oneself up about 10 gallons of good water. This is a large round well about 6ft diameter stone lined to under water level, which is about 8 ft down. [There are] the remains of a whip – fork and lever. A small post tells you this is well 12, the trough was 42 feet long, this is partly buried. There is thick scrub making the well hard to find, there are River Gums (*Eucalyptus camalfulensis*), Mulgas (*Acacia aneura*) out on the flats and Acacias.'⁹¹

The well has timber planks neatly arranged over the opening and a batwing lid beneath the windlass that can be opened and closed. A sign located at the well in 1982 read that Well 12 reached a depth of 27 ft, could yield of 180 gallons per hour and stored approximately 7,500 gallons of water. It is 11 miles from Well 11 and 13 miles from Well 13.

Well 13

A site visit is needed to determine the current condition of the well.

In 1985, Sharp noted Well 13 is located 'on the west bank of Murchison North Impey Junction. The top foot is stone lined, but has broken away, the soil walls are holding well, it is a round formation, water at 15 feet. The trough is complete but half buried. There are some Mulga (*Acacia aneura*) and Ghost Gum (*Eucalyptus laeliae*) trees, with sparse scrub, the well stands on the edge of a clay pan.'⁹²

A sign located at the well in 1982 read that Well 13 reaches a depth of 23 ft, it has a yield of 500 gallons per hour and can store approximately 4,000 gallons of water. It is 13 miles from Well 12 and 15 miles from Well 14. A Mulga timber fence surrounds the well and Mulga is also used as bracing along the trough.

Well 14

A site visit is needed to determine the exact location and current condition of the well.

In 1985 Sharp noted that Well 14 is 'a very well hidden well. It is a round hole lined with four courses of stone, water only 5 feet from surface, has a whip – fork and lever, no windlass, no trough only the support posts remain. There are Ghost Gums (*Eucalyptus laeliae*) in the creek, some Mulga (*Acacia aneura*) and low scrub.'⁹³

Jailor's Out Camp

A site visit is needed to determine the current condition and archaeological remains at the site.

As noted in Sharp's 1985 account, 'this camp is just north of Well 14. The camp was once used as a temporary prison, when any person gave trouble along the stock route, they were taken here and held for the police to come from Mullewa and collect the offenders.'⁹⁴ The lock-ups are no longer extant, however rubble and potential foundations remain. From aerial photography a shed structure remains extant and

⁹¹ *ibid*; 241.

⁹² *ibid*: 244.

⁹³ *ibid*.

⁹⁴ *ibid*.

stock yards are located at the eastern side of the camp, all within the stock route curtilage.

Well 15

A site visit is needed to determine the current condition of the well.

As noted in Sharp's 1985 account, Well 15 is 'a circular well with 2 feet of stone lining, then natural soil a surprise as the well is very deep, the water level some 50 feet down. A mill has been set over the well, which stands on the bank of the Murru, Creek. No whip or windlass remain, but a peg told us that we were at well 15. Mulga, the odd Minni-Richi (*Acacia cyperophylla*) and *Acacia* trees are in the area, ground vegetation is very sparse'.⁹⁵

Metal sheeting was laid at the base of the mill in 1982, acting as a cover to the opening of the well. A timber fence, different from the usual mulga poles surrounds the mill and well opening. The remains of a stock yard are located to the east of the well, within the curtilage. A water tank may also be located directly to the south of the well. The well is located of Murrem Creek near Mount Dugel.

Well 16

A site visit is needed to determine the current condition of the well.

As noted in Sharp's 1985 account, Well 16 is located 'in a rocky creek, which appears to be the head waters of the Yarra-Yarra Creek, in low scrub, with Minni-Richie (*Acacia cyperophylla*), Mulga (*Acacia aneura*), and Curarra Bush (*Acacia tetragonophylla*) [surrounding]. The well is in good order, water at about 20 feet, a limestone rock lining for the first 2 feet, then the natural soil, an old Brush yard still remains about a mile from the well. The whip and windlass are in poor condition'.⁹⁶

A sign located at the well read that Well 16 is 44 ft deep, has a yield of 200 gallons per hour and can store approximately 4,800 gallons. It is 10 miles away from Well 15 and 11 miles away from Well 17. A fence of Mulga poles surrounds the well and is used in bracing of the trough, which extended roughly 15 metres south-east away.

Well 17

A site visit is needed to determine the exact location and current condition of the well.

As noted in Sharp's 1985 account, Well 17 is one of the most southern to have a 'fork and a lever... they can only be used at the shallow wells. Here there is also a whip and windlass the water is only 2 feet from the surface. It is stone lined for only the first foot, then natural soil walls, it stands in thick scrub on a small creek close to Yarra-Yarra Creek, the timber supports in fair order, the trough in poor order. There are many Mulga trees close by, many have been cut to timber the well with'.⁹⁷ The well is rectangle in shape and has no cover over the top.

Although the exact location of this well needs further investigation, its known distance between Well 18 and Well 19 places it near P16575 Byro Station, which was first settled by James and Sara Nairn in 1874. As noted in the Shire of Murchison's Municipal Inventory, which was first compiled in 1995-1996 and reviewed in 2003, 'there is no remaining evidence of the [first homestead at Byro].'

⁹⁵ ibid: 246.

⁹⁶ ibid.

⁹⁷ ibid: 248.

The second house was built by James and Sarah's son, William, in c.1895 and a third mud brick house was built by the new owners, the Darlots, in c.1915. Both homesteads still remain extant on the property.⁹⁸ P16575 Byro Station is contained outside of the stock route reserve and therefore is not included in the curtilage or assessment of the stock route.

Well 18

As noted in Sharp's 1985 account, Well 18 is a round well that 'stands on the bank of Yarra-Yarra Creek, it's stone lined for about the first 10 feet, then natural soil, about 15 feet to water. The trough and fittings are in a poor state, there is a picket fence running from the well on the south side for about 80 feet, also a brush yard close by. The scrub is low and very scattered, a few Mulga (*Acacia aneura*) trees in the area.'

A sign located at the well in 1982 read that Well 18 reaches a depth of 22 ft, has a yield of 500 gallons per hour and can store approximately 4,000 gallons of water. It is 12 miles from Well 17 and 9 miles from Well 19.

The well is located 10 kilometres north west of Byro Station, and 4.6 kilometres west from Carnarvon-Mullewa Road.

Well 19

As described in the Shire of Murchison's Municipal Inventory, Well 19 is 'located to the north of the Byro Station entrance and approximately 7 metres to the east side of the Carnarvon-Mullewa Road. The earth and stone lined well, [which was originally constructed in 1896] measures approximately 2.5 metres in diameter and is covered by timber planking. The well mouth is situated on the mound of earth taken from the well, to give height for the bucket of water, pulled up to the well by a horse or camel, to be manually poured down the lauder to the trough.'⁹⁹

The well was restored in by the Geraldton 4WD Club and the Foot Hills 4WD Club Inc. in June 2007. The existing bat wing well cover was kept in place and timber planks were laid around it to prevent anything falling in. The original windlass, [which is constructed from Quandong (*Santalum acuminatum*) and wire] stands over the well with a metal wire attached. A bucket was added to the well, as the original was lost. The laundry chute is in place to the trough (likely replaced), which is supported by Mulga poles. A gin pole, [of Blackheart (*Eucalyptus camaldulensis*)], is situated on the eastern side of the fenced area and the swivel post [also of Blackheart (*Eucalyptus camaldulensis*)] were restored or replaced as the originals had fallen down. The wire rope was missing at the time of restoration so was also replaced. A Mulga pole fence surrounds the well.

Interpretive signage has been erected by the Shire of Murchison, replacing the original tin sign that had fallen from its forked post. The original sign read that Well 19 reaches a depth of 36 feet, has a yield of 150 gallon per hour and can store approximately 4,500 gallons of water. Well 18 is 9 miles away, the Wooramel River is 10 miles away, Belang Pool is 16 miles away and Well 20 is 30 miles away.¹⁰⁰ A

⁹⁸ Suba, T., 'Shire of Murchison Municipal Inventory of Heritage Places', 1995-1996; 2003, Shire of Murchison.

⁹⁹ *ibid.*

¹⁰⁰ Sharp, Hooley: 250.

concrete and iron Department of Lands marker reading 'Dept of Land Admin WA WJA BM' is located on the ground to the west of the well.



Bilung Pool (Belang Pool)

Approximately 150 kilometres north of the Murchison Settlement on the Carnarvon Mullewa Road is Bilung Pool (Belang Pool), which was a well visited stopping and watering point along the stock route.

A rocky outcrop surrounds all sides of the pool, with a sandy section at the base where stock could be led and watered. Ghost Gum (*Eucalyptus laeliae*) trees surround the banks providing shade over the pool, which is full of water all year round.



Well 20A

As noted in Sharp 1985 account, Well 20A 'is about 2 miles north of Belang Pool. [The walls of the well] are lined with Mulga poles.'¹⁰¹ At this time in 1982, a mill was set over the well but was no longer in use. During the 2021 site visit all that remained of the mill was portions of metal sheeting, likely the mill tail, and a metal pole used in the framework.

¹⁰¹ ibid; 253.

Rusted metal batwing covers partially cover the opening. They are no longer fixed to the timber and are slightly out of place. A Mulga pole extends over the opening of the well and a metal pipe is attached to it leading to the water. The remains of what may have been a gin pole or windlass lie close to the opening of the well, having deteriorated significantly from insect activity. Stone and cement that has broken apart lead away from the well, possibly once acting as a trough. A tire is also located at the well as well as portions of metal sheeting and a metal pole.

'Vegetation in the area is scarce, what there is mainly – Blue bush (*Maireana sedifolia*), Kurarra bush (*Acacia tetragonophylla*), a type of Mulla-Mulla and Mulga (*Acacia aneura*) trees.'¹⁰²The well is located 142 metres west of Carnarvon -Mullewa Road.



Well 20

A site visit is needed to determine the location and current condition of the well.

As noted in Sharp's 1985 account, Well 20 is located in a 'very open area, with a rocky promontory to the south. The well stands some 200 yards from the Daurie Creek, it is lined with Mulga poles and in good order, with plentiful water supply. The vegetation is mainly Blue bush (*Maireana sedifolia*) and Acacia tree varieties with very scattered Snakewood (*Acacia xiphophylla*) and Mulga (*Acacia aneura*) trees.'

The well is rectangular in shape and in 1982 had a metal windlass standing over the opening. A gin pole and swivel were also standing. A Mulga pole fence surrounded the well and a rusted metal trough led away from it.

A site visit is needed to determine the location and current condition of the well.

Well 21

A site visit is needed to determine the location and current condition of the well.

As noted in Sharp's 1985 account, Well 21 is located amongst 'mainly Acacia and Snakewood (*Acacia xiphophylla*) and some Mulga(*Acacia aneura*), in a limestone clay type soil. The well is lined with timber poles to about 8 ft, water is about 12 ft down, only the remains of windlass, no trough but most of the trough timbers remain. The depth of the well in 1982 was 22 feet, could yield 900 gallons per hour and store approximately 1,400 gallons.'¹⁰³ A partial Mulga pole fence also remained around the well in 1982.

¹⁰² ibid.

¹⁰³ ibid: 253.

Well 22

A site visit is needed to determine the location and current condition of the well.

As noted in Sharp's 1985 account, Well 22 stands 'to the west of Daurie Creek. A mill has been set over the well, and is still being used by the station. The top timbers have been replaced, the lower ones in poor repair, the water level is about 30 feet down, the area is made up of sandy flats with Acacia and Needle bush (*Hakea preissii*), White Gums (*Eucalyptus alba*) along the creek banks.'

Well 23

A site visit is needed to determine the location and current condition of the well.

As noted in Sharp's 1985 account, Well 23 is located on the 'west side of [Daurie Creek]'. During her 1982 visit, Sharp noted two wells at this location. 'The first was only an indentation in the ground, after scratching around [they] found the timber rests where the trough had once rested. The second well [was] in little better state, it [had] fallen in, only the top lining timbers show, a mill was erected over this well, the mill rests on its side, a whip post stands erect on a very slim piece of unburnt timber, close by in the creek are several small pools where quite a number of sheep were watering.'¹⁰⁴ A concrete water tank is located close to the well.

'In the area are Mulga trees, a silver grass and a native plant succulent type which has been eaten to ground level. Cross the Daurie Creek, then the Gascoyne River, in all of about 1 ½ miles, and on the north bank, there are the ruins of what must have once been quite a settlement, in the days when Minganoo Station was a prosperous lease.'¹⁰⁵ This is located outside of the stock route curtilage.

From aerial photography it appears the area around well 23 has since been used recently. Stock yards are located to the north of the well within the stock route curtilage.

Well 24

A site visit is needed to determine the location and current condition of the well.

It is unclear the exact location of Well 24. As noted in Sharp's 1985 account, 'after much searching the location given by the Lands Department, we concluded that the maps showed incorrectly No. 24 well. We found what is locally thought to be No. 24 – four miles south of 24A. The well stands west of the Gascoyne River, not far from a very old bench mark, (H. 34 & Gov; type arrow) walking on we came to some flat rock, here you could see the wagon tracks clearly, there are the indentations where the iron rims have cut quite a rut into the rock. The well is timber lined, there was no water, the trough partly buried still rests on its wooden chocks and is in fair order. It is flood country here, plenty of Flood Gums (*Eucalyptus rudis*) and some Prickly Acacia (*Acacia nilotica*).'¹⁰⁶

Well 24A

A site visit is needed to determine the location and current condition of the well.

As noted in Sharp's 1985 account, Well 24A 'stands on the South side of the Gascoyne River, 9 miles east of P15415 Bidgemia Station (located outside of the stock route curtilage) and a few hundred yards from the river bed – at this location

¹⁰⁴ ibid: 257.

¹⁰⁵ ibid.

¹⁰⁶ ibid: 260.

in the river bed there is a strange rock formation, which looks like dead coral. The timber lining of this well is in a very poor state. A mill has been erected over the well, plenty of water. Flood Gums (*Eucalyptus rudis*) and Prickly Acacia (*Acacia nilotica*) are the main vegetation, some grass near the river.¹⁰⁷

P15415 Bidgemia Station was established in 1880 by Robert Edwin Bush, who held a number of leases in the area and was the first Chairman of the Upper Gascoyne Road Board. The current homestead is located on the site of the original homestead and was built in 1948 out of home-made bricks from river sand.¹⁰⁸

Well 25

A site visit is needed to determine the location and current condition of the well.

As noted in Sharp's 1985 account, Well 25 is located 'north of the Gascoyne River East of Bidgemia Homestead, on the Koondoo road, 11 miles out stands the remains of Well 25. Close by is a rocky out crop, the top timbers have fallen away, but about 12/15 ft down the timbers still hold firmly to water level. The timber frames that held the trough are still standing amongst the scrub, at some time there has been a mill set over the well. There are flat top hills in this area, the vegetation is mainly a low scrub, Mulga trees (*Acacia aneura*) and some scrub that looks like a member of the Wattle family.'¹⁰⁹

Well 26

A site visit is needed to determine the location and current condition of the well as well as the original mapped location of the well.

As noted in Sharp's 1985 account, Well 26 'is incorrectly located on maps. It's on the north side of Grays Creek, about half a mile west of a long piece of picket fence, once part of some yards. The whole set up is in good order, the well is timbered with poles to below water level (in 1982) this being about 20ft from the surface. It has a whip and windlass, stands in thick scrub making it very hard to find. There are rich red sand hills to the north and south and Grays Creek runs close by.'¹¹⁰

In 1982, a metal lid and wooden planks cover the mouth of the well to ensure nothing falls in. Engraved on a post nearby is an arrow with the number 26 indicating the presence of the well close by.

Despite Sharp's account, aerial imagery indicates the presence of a potential well at the location that was historically mapped.

Well 27

A site visit is needed to determine the location and current condition of the well.

As noted in Sharp's 1985 account, Well 27 is located 'close to Damper Creek, 1 mile north of Lyons River. A mill has been set over the well, [which] is timbered below water level, about 18 ft down (1982). Scrubby type country with Mulga (*Acacia aneura*), a few Snakewood (*Acacia xiphophylla*) trees, not much ground vegetation.'¹¹¹

¹⁰⁷ *ibid*: 261.

¹⁰⁸ Henkel, T., 'Shire of Upper Gascoyne Municipal Inventory of Heritage Places', 1998-99; Shire of Upper Gascoyne.

¹⁰⁹ Sharp, Hooley: 262.

¹¹⁰ *ibid*: 264.

¹¹¹ *ibid*.

The well is round in shape and reasonably narrow in comparison to other wells. A water tank structure and large tree were located close by in 1982.

Well 28

A site visit is needed to determine the location and current condition of the well.

As noted in Sharp's 1985 account, Well 28 'is in poor repair, the windlass is very damaged, also the trough and fittings, but [in 1982] there [was] water in the well, which is timber lined. It stands 2 ½ miles north of the location given by the Lands Department; standing on the west bank of the Lyons River, and on the north bank of a deep creek coming in from the west. The well is very well shaded by River Gums (*Eucalyptus camaldulensis*) and low scrub, all this makes it very hard to find'.¹¹² The Mulga pole bracing to the trough still stood in 1982, although was also in very poor condition.

Although the exact location of this well needs further investigation its known approximate distance between Well 27 and Well 28 place it near P15416 Lyons River Station, which is located 230 metres outside of the stock route. The station was originally part of large tracts of land first taken up by well-known pastoralists George Hamersley and Thomas Simms. Following a period of drought the leases were transferred in 1887 to S. J. Phillips and P. Ryan, who also held Jimba Jimba Station to the south and west. No development work was carried out on the property until after 1906 when William Hatch purchased the lease. The Hatch family were responsible for most of the pioneering work on the property.¹¹³ As the homestead is contained outside the reserve, it is not included in the curtilage or assessment of the stock route.

Well 29

A site visit is needed to determine the location and current condition of the well.

As noted in Sharp's 1985 account, Well 29 is located on the 'east bank of Lyons River, standing in the wash with plenty of River gums (*Eucalyptus camaldulensis*). The well is dry and in very poor condition, it's timbered with a pole lining, trough, windlass and whip still all there, but floods, white ants and the general environment are taking a heavy toll as the years pass. There is a hole close by – this was once a well, it has fallen in but a few of the timbers that lined the hole still show, and you can see where the trough lay.'¹¹⁴

Well 30

A site visit is needed to determine the current condition of the well.

As noted in Sharp's 1985 account, Well 30 'is set in a wash close to where the Calbrajacka Creek joins the Lyons River, 2 miles south of Gnalbarrajunga Hill. The well has fallen in but the windlass has stayed intact, just lowered itself down the well. There is water here [in 1982]. It stands in very sandy country, each good flood is taking its toll of all the fittings and the white ants have done a fair job on the timber'¹¹⁵. The timber bracing surrounding the trough was still standing in 1982,

¹¹² ibid.

¹¹³ Henkel, T., 1998-99, *Shire of Upper Gascoyne Municipal Inventory of Heritage Places*, Shire of Upper Gascoyne, p. 53

¹¹⁴ Sharp, Hooley: 267.

¹¹⁵ ibid.

however was in very poor condition. It appears from aerial photography it continues to stand whilst this assessment was being written in 2022.

Well 31

A site visit is needed to determine the location and current condition of the well.

As noted in Sharp's 1985 account, Well 31 'is 5 miles south of the location given by the Lands Department. It stands on the east bank of the Lyons River, not far south of where the Ulura Creek comes into the Lyons River from the west. Many floods have passed over the well, the result is the well has silted up. The windlass and bucket are in good order, the trough and timber fittings are all still there, but partly covered with silt. It stands amongst the Flood gums (*Eucalyptus rudis*) with a low scrub running out east from the river.'¹¹⁶ In 1985, thick timber poles used for the bracing around the trough still stood.

Well 32

A site visit is needed to determine the location and current condition of the well.

As noted in Sharp's 1985 account, Well 32 is accessed 'after passing through thick scrub [where] you arrive at the bank of the Lyons River. The well is timbered 14 poles down, it's about 18 ft to water level, the bucket and windlass are in good order. Near this well stand some handsome yards not in use now.'¹¹⁷

Stockyard

Stockyards near Well 32 are located approximately three kilometres north. They are comprised of bush timber in a rectangular formation

Well 33

A site visit is needed to determine the location and current condition of the well.

As noted in Sharp's 1985 account, Well 33 is 'near the junction of Minnie Creek and Lyons River, it's in poor repair, little remains of the fittings, there is water in the well, it is lined 14 poles down then natural soil walls. The area is sparsely covered with Snakewood (*Acacia xiphophylla*), Beefwood (*Grevillea striata*), Sandalwood (*Santalum spicatum*) and Mulga (*Acacia aneura*) trees, ground cover mainly spinifex'.¹¹⁸ The well is square in shape, and at the time of the 1982 visit had a metal lid closing into the well. Timber planks surrounded the opening. The bracing to the trough, comprising thick, short timber poles still remained also at this time.

Although the exact location of this well needs further investigation its known approximate distance between Well 32 and Well 34 place it near P15418 Minnie Creek Station.

P15418 Minnie Creek Station

'Pioneered by Kenneth Durwent Messer, Minnie Creek was once part of the Gifford Creek lease which was owned by Septimus Burt. Taking its name from the nearby Minnie Creek, in 1913 a stone homestead was built on the property in which Kenneth lived with his wife Hilda.'¹¹⁹

¹¹⁶ ibid: 268.

¹¹⁷ ibid.

¹¹⁸ ibid.

¹¹⁹ Henkel, T., 1998-99, *Shire of Upper Gascoyne Municipal Inventory of Heritage Places*, Shire of Upper Gascoyne.

The station consists of the main homestead, kitchen/dining building to the left of the homestead, meathouse and a number of outbuildings that include a laundry, brick bathroom, jackeroos' quarters, stone store and workshop, cement brick cottage and airplane hangar. The homestead is constructed of stone, which has been rendered with concrete. It has a hipped, corrugated iron roof. Verandahs surround the outside of the homestead which are supported by bush timber posts.

The station buildings are partially within the stock route reserve 9701 and partially outside of it, it is therefore included in the curtilage and assessment of the place.

The station has had a number of owners over the years and continues to operate at the time of assessment in 2022. A site visit is needed to determine the current condition of the place.

Well 34

As noted in Sharp's 1985 account, Well 34 'is just on the north side of Lyons River near the junction of the Alma [River] and Lyons. The well is in poor repair... The well is timbered twelve poles down, then soil walls. The country is light timbered with Snakewood (*Acacia xiphophylla*) and Mulga (*Acacia aneura*) trees, little ground cover.'¹²⁰ A gin pole with cable attached still remains, as well as the remnants of a timber pole fence to one side of the well. Timber planks surround the opening of the well but have been damaged by insect activity.



Well 35 'Coorabia'

As noted in Sharp's 1985 account, Well 35 is located 190 metres north of the Maroonah South Road. It 'stands about a mile east of the Alma River, it's limestone country, with Blue Bush (*Maireana sedifolia*). [There] are very few shade trees near the well... there was water in the well April 1982.'¹²¹ At this time the mill, which is set over the well was derelict. A new mill has since been constructed that has a pipe leading from it to a round rusted water tank that sits on a stone base. Towards the other side of the water tank is a concrete trough, which has stone struts and ends supporting it. Various pieces of scrap metal and fence poles are scattered around the well. The square opening of the well has been edged with concrete. Timber poles

¹²⁰ Sharp, Hooley: 268.

¹²¹ *ibid*: 273.

and corrugated iron lie over the opening, beneath the. A metal bucket previously used to draw water remains at the site.

Aerial photography indicates that within the curtilage a stock yard may be located to the south of the well and water tank.



Well 36 'Deepwell'

The position of Well 36 as indicated by Sharp and identified by the Bakers in 2021, differs from that identified on historic maps.

As noted in Sharp's 1985 account, Well 36 is located on Hooley's original route, which is why the alignment may differ from that prescribed in the 1893 gazette. 'The Well is timbered with Mulga poles and stands near a small creek, a clay pan runs close to the well, which is very deep as its name implies. Plenty of water about 20 ft down in April 1982'.¹²²

A rusted water tank stands close to the well opening, which has caved in slightly. The mulga poles that lined the well have deteriorated due to insect activity and the mill has been removed. All that remains are the 4 metal rods at the base, which have been cemented into the rock surrounding the well opening. The trough bracing has also fallen into disrepair and is no longer standing.



¹²²

ibid: 273.

Well 37

As noted in Sharp's 1985 account, Well 37 'is about 2 miles north east of the location given on maps. It stands... close to the bank of a small creek. It has its number clearly marked, a perfect Mulga pole lining with a good supply of water (1982).'¹²³

The well has deteriorated significantly since Sharp's visit. The Mulga pole lining is no longer perfect with many of the lower poles having fallen away and only earth remaining. The timber planks around the square opening have been subject to insect activity and are falling apart. The piece of metal that was placed over the mouth of the well has rusted and partially fallen away. The timber bracing around the trough has also fallen away, likely due to insect activity.



Well 38

A site visit is needed to determine the location and current condition of the well.

As noted in Sharp's 1985 account, Well 38 is located 'close to Mullarra Creek...the well itself is in good order, timbered with Mulga poles, water level is about 15 ft down, there is good drinking water (1982). There only remains a few bits and pieces of the windlass, we found nothing to identify parts that might have been a whip. The trough is gone and most of the timbers are only the shell after the white ants have passed that way. The ground vegetation is very sparse, for shade there are plenty of White Gums (*Eucalyptus alba*), Minni-Richi (*Acacia cyperophylla*), and Mulga (*Acacia aneura*) trees. The Yannarie River runs about 3 miles south west of here.'¹²⁴

Well 39

A site visit is needed to determine the location and current condition of the well.

As noted in Sharp's 1985 account, there is a large variation of soils, vegetation and terrain between Well 38 and Well 39. 'After crossing many little creeks which all run into the Telfer River we reached Mountain Creek where on the North side stands [Well] 39, in some very thick scrub and plenty of spinifex. In the creek there is lots of good shade – Minni-Richi (*Acacia cyperophylla*), Prickly Acacia (*Acacia nilotica*), Snakewood (*Acacia xiphophylla*)... The well itself is in good order lined with Mulga timber, the water is about 20 ft from the surface (1982).'¹²⁵

¹²³ *ibid*: 275.

¹²⁴ *ibid*: 275.

¹²⁵ *ibid*: 277.

In 1982, a windlass was in good order over the opening of the well, which was covered with a metal lid and surrounded by stonework. Mulga timber poles were used as bracing of the trough leading away from the well. Grasses around the trough were overgrown, making the trough difficult to see.

‘Just south of [the area, in the 1930s] Tom Derby’s wagon broke down and a wheel came off, he buried his belonging near the wagon and walked on’.¹²⁶ The hub and axle of the wagon were found during the 1982 site visit. There is the potential for archaeology at the site.

Well 40

A site visit is needed to determine the location and current condition of the well.

As noted in Sharp’s 1985 account, Well 40 is located on ‘the East bank of the Telfer [River]. [The well] is timber lined and in fair order, with a good supply of water.’ Timber posts line the rectangular well and a metal sheet covers the opening to stop anything falling in. In 1982 a windmill was set over the top of the well, which is set amongst shrubs and small trees. ‘The surrounding country is rocky with Spinifex (*Triodia pungens*) as main ground cover’.¹²⁷

Well 41

A site visit is needed to determine the current condition of the well.

As noted in Sharp’s 1985 account, Well 41 ‘stands about ¾ mile East of the Henry River and about ½ mile North of Ballads Well. The trough and a few of its [timber] supports still stand, the well has fallen in, no lining to the well shows. A mill was at some time put over the well, but this has fallen on its side. No water here, but plenty at Brangoola Pool, which is close by in the Henry River... plenty of shade in the area, mainly White Gums (*Eucalyptus alba*). The hills are a marble type rock.

A metal water tank is still present at the site immediately to the west of the well. The trough extends from the north of the well.

The well is located 1.3 kilometres north of the Uaroo-Glenflorrie Road.

At Well 41 the route was later diverted a different way to Well 42 via Mt Elizabeth to the east to avoid a large poison patch. The route for this portion was gazetted as Reserve 17373.

Well 42

As noted in Sharp’s 1985 account, Well 42 is located ‘on Urandy Creek [just south of Nanutarra Road] and about five miles west of Mt Stuart Homestead, [which was established in the 1930s]. [In 1982] the well was in good order with water about 15 ft from ground level. The well has been cemented, and there once was a mill set over the mill, which has since gone.’

Several timber remnants remain around the site in poor condition, possibly part of the whip.

‘The well is on a flood area with Flood gums (*Eucalyptus rudis*) and thick scrub’.¹²⁸

¹²⁶ ibid.

¹²⁷ ibid.

¹²⁸ ibid: 283.

In 2021, the well appeared to be completely covered with metal sheets. Timber posts were still in place but had deteriorated significantly due to insect activity. A large circular concrete pad where a water tank would likely have sat remained. Metal artefacts relating to the well, such as buckets and pieces of the mill were scattered around the site.



Well 43

A site visit is needed to determine the location and current condition of the well.

As noted in Sharp's 1985 account, Well 43 'stands at the head of Urandy Creek about 5 miles south of Cane River... The well is [also] known as Mistake Well. It's in poor repair (1981), but [still pumps] water to the surface from about 30 ft down. It's timber lined and part of the [thick] timber frame can still be seen amongst the bushes.'¹²⁹

In 1982, a windmill had been set over the well and bushes and vines were growing up it.

In 2021, using aerial photography, a possible location for the well has been found and it appears to be in use and stock yards within the curtilage have been constructed around it.

Well 44

As noted in Sharp's 1985 account, Well 44 'stands about 1 mile south east of 'Red Hill' hill, and is placed close to the south side of the Ten Mile Creek. Only the well itself remains, no fittings or timbers. It has been lined with cement and the cover is still intact. Water in the well is about 20 ft down.'¹³⁰

In 1981/82 a sign indicating that it was Well 44 was fixed to a long piece of bush timber.

¹²⁹ *ibid.*

¹³⁰ *ibid.*

In 2021 the well had not changed significantly. A metal bucket and other metal scrap was found next to the well.



Well 45

As noted in Sharp's 1985 account, 'Well 45 stands in a creek lined with Bloodwood trees (*Corymbia terminalis*) and White (Eucalyptus alba) gums. There is very little of the well left, only the top 6 ft of timbers show. The trough and stand are all gone.'¹³¹ At this time a metal lid covered the opening of the well also.

Although the exact location of this well needs further investigation it is the closest well located to P15375 Red Hill Homestead, which was gazetted as part of the stock route in 1893, but not included within Reserve 9701 in 1905. As Red Hill Station is located outside of Reserve 9701 it is not included in the curtilage or the assessment of the place. Red Hill Station was first leased by the Dalgety family in the 1870's. The stone section of the Red Hill Homestead was built in the 1880's, while the weatherboard section was built in c1909 when the station was under the management of the Barret-Lennard family. The station still operates today.¹³²



¹³¹ ibid: 286.

¹³² O'Brien Planning Consultants, 1999, *Shire of Ashburton Municipal Heritage Inventory*, p.117.

P15398 Deepdale Station (Yarraloola Homestead)

H. & W. Woolhouse took up the lease for Yarraloola (Deepdale Station) in 1878 and ran sheep, horses and donkeys. The shed and outbuildings are no longer extant, although some blackheart fence posts from the late nineteenth century remain. An Aboriginal workforce of approximately 60 people was employed at the Station by the Woolhouses. In 1898 the property was sold to G.P. Paterson and A.R. Richardson. The Paterson family constructed the Yarraloola Homestead in 1919. The house is a single-storey stone and iron homestead, constructed with stone from the nearby Robe River, with ant hill clay for mortar. The interior walls are plastered with mud and lime plaster. It is surrounded by a wide verandah with concrete floors.¹³³ On the property is also a single-room stone cook house.

The Homestead is included in the curtilage and assessment of the stock route, with majority of it included in Reserve 9701. Access to the Homestead is down Yarraloola Road north west from North West Coastal Highway.

A site visit is needed to determine the current condition of the place.

Well 46

As noted in Sharp's 1985 account, 'Well 46 is 3 miles north of Yarraloola Homestead, out on the coastal plain. The well itself has fallen in, leaving no sign of any hole.' At the time of the 1982 site visit 'the metal trough and timber supports [were] still in fair order, also pieces of iron which would have been part of a windlass; timber and iron fittings that look like part of a whip. The Robe River is just south of here, white River Gums (*Eucalyptus camaldulensis*), Snakewood (*Acacia xiphophylla*), are the main shade trees, Spinifex (*Triodia pungens*) and various grasses are the ground cover.'¹³⁴

At the time of the site visit in 2021, the metal trough had been broken and portions had been moved out of place. The timber supports had deteriorated significantly due to insect activity. Grass covers the well and a single tree marks its place within the landscape. Pieces of the windlass, whip and other metal were still at the site.



Well 47

A site visit is needed to determine the current condition of the well.

As noted in Sharp's 1985 account, Well 47 is 'out on the open grass plain country... The well has fallen in and only the top 6 ft of timber lining shows.'¹³⁵ At the time of

¹³³ ibid., p.165.

¹³⁴ Sharp, Hooley: 286.

¹³⁵ ibid.

the 1982 site visit the two metal lids to the well were intact, the windlass was still fitted and the timber supports for the trough were still in place, however there was no trough.

This well is recognised by the City of Karratha as a part of a discontinuous heritage place, P25267 Old Stock Route Wells.

Well 48

As noted in Sharp's 1985 account, 'here you have a joint water supply with the permanent pool on the creek bed and just north the well. This is timber lined and in poor order. The water is about 15 feet from the surface, there was no windlass a windlass on the well and the usual lid covers. A gum tree grows almost in the well, doing some damage to the timbers of the well. Snakewood (*Acacia xiphophylla*) and gums are the main trees and ground cover is Spinifex (*Triodia pungens*).'¹³⁶

In 2021, the gum tree had grown significantly, and thick grass now covered the well making it hard to see. The well and tree are now located in the middle of a carpark.

This well is recognised by the City of Karratha as part of a discontinuous heritage place, P25267 Old Stock Route Wells and located at a resting stop along Fortescue River Road.



Spot Well

A site visit is needed to determine the current condition of the well.

As noted in Sharp's 1985 account, Spot well was sunk by the Roads Board. It has since been edged in cement and in 1981 there was plenty of water in the well about 20 feet down. The mill and tank, however, were in disrepair and the trough had nearly rusted away. Spinifex (*Triodia pungens*) and a few Snakewood (*Acacia xiphophylla*) trees are characteristic of the area.¹³⁷

This well is recognised by the City of Karratha as part of a discontinuous heritage place, P25267 Old Stock Route Wells. It is located approximately 2.7 kilometres west of North West Coastal Highway.

¹³⁶ ibid: 289.

¹³⁷ ibid.

Well 49

Well 49 is in good condition. The square shaped well opening is surrounded by wooden planks that have deteriorated due to insect activity. But the windlass is in good order with metal braces and wooden struts intact. Half of the metal door over the well opening remains. Prior to Sharp's 1981 visit, the whip had fallen over. A wooden fence surrounding the well is partially intact. The trough and its supports remain, albeit deteriorated.

This well is recognised by the City of Karratha as part of a discontinuous heritage place, P25267 Old Stock Route Wells. It is located approximately 2 kilometres west of North West Coastal Highway.



Well 50

As noted in Sharp's 1985 account, Well 50 once had a mill set over it. The well itself is timber lined and in 1981 had water about 15 feet from the surface. There is a large permanent pool close to the well and plenty of large trees. In 2021, vegetation had grown over the well opening making it almost impossible to see. Only a metal stake potentially indicating the remnants of the mill remains visible.

This well is recognised by the City of Karratha as part of a discontinuous heritage place, P25267 Old Stock Route Wells and located approximately 2.3 kilometres north west of the North West Coastal Highway.



Well 51

As noted in Sharp's 1985 account, Well 51 is located 'out on marsh-land country, only a short distance from the coast.' The well is in poor repair, and is falling in. The timber lining and timber lid have deteriorated due to insect activity and the windlass has fallen on top of it. The trough has rusted away and few of the timber supports remain intact.

This well is recognised by the City of Karratha as part of a discontinuous heritage place, P25267 Old Stock Route Wells. It is located 2.7 kilometres west of the North West Coastal Highway.



Well 52

As noted in Sharp's 1985 account, Well 52 has a stone lining and its surroundings at the opening comprise of timber, which has deteriorated due to insect activity. In 1981 'little remained of the trough and stand.'¹³⁸ The whip was in good order and water level was about 15 feet in July 1981. The well stands in an open plain with few trees. The ocean is visible towards the west. This is the last government well along the route that was sunk in 1905.

This well is recognised by the City of Karratha as part of a discontinuous heritage place, P25267 Old Stock Route Wells and is located approximately 1.5 kilometres south of the North West Coastal Highway. City of Karratha noted in their Local Heritage Survey that this well is Well 51, however the coordinates they provide match with Well 52 and the condition matches Sharp's description.



Well 52 and remains of water trough, Shire of Roebourne (now City of Karratha) Local Government Heritage Inventory¹³⁹

¹³⁸ ibid, p. 293.

¹³⁹ Eureka Archaeological Research & Consulting and National Trust of Australia (WA), 2013, Shire of Roebourne Local Government Heritage Inventory, Shire of Roebourne, p. 247.

P8686 Stone Yards

A site visit is needed to determine the condition of the stone yards.

As identified in the Shire of Roebourne, now City of Karratha, Local Government Heritage Inventory, 'Situating near a granite outcrop, the stone yards are near Roebourne on the Woodbrook Station lease, on the West Harding River. Nearby rocks have distinctive Aboriginal engravings etched on them.

The construction of stock-yards from stone is characteristic of several nearby sites. These are rectangular in design and thus resemble those at Springs and Chirrita stations. The use of stone at the other sites suggest these were used for holding densely packed stock during shearing. However, there is no evidence of shearing at this site and these structures may have been used to pen sheep at night during the early colonial period, to keep the stock from wandering off and safe from predators.¹⁴⁰

The stone yards appear to be an example of dry stone wall construction, which is particularly rare in Western Australia.



Stone yards, Shire of Roebourne (now City of Karratha) Local Government Heritage Inventory.¹⁴¹

P4004 Mundabullangana Station (RHP)

For further, more detailed information see the Heritage Council's P4004 *Mundabullangana Station* assessment documentation, 16 May 2008.

Mundabullangana Station is included within the curtilage and assessment of the stock route. Mundabullangana Homestead was the first pastoral lease taken up in the region south west of Port Hedland by European settlers, the MacKays, who between 1872 and 1923 developed it into one of the largest and most successful enterprises of its kind that has continued pastoral use into the twenty-first century. The MacKays organised labour in the latter part of the nineteenth century, with the use of Asian indentured labourers, mainly Malays and Cantonese Chinese, which was not a widespread practice in the pastoral industry, and was the first station in the Pilbara to introduce the payment of award wages for Aboriginal workers, in the mid 1940s, under the management of R. F. Lukis, and maintained a longstanding use of Aboriginal labour, from the 1880s to the 1960s.

¹⁴⁰ ibid, p.332
¹⁴¹ Ibid, p. 333.

The single-storey homestead is comprised of bluestone and concrete and has an expansive single pitched roof and a surrounding verandah supported by cast iron posts.

A site visit is needed to determine the current condition of the place.



Mundabullangana Homestead and Old Post Office & Store, taken by Department staff 2008.

P4002 Boodarie Station Homestead

Boodarie Station Homestead is contained within the stock route reserve and therefore included in the curtilage and assessment for the place. Fred Arunder and Charlie Upton took up the Boodarie lease c.1880. A Homestead was known to exist in 1880, but a more substantial dwelling was constructed in c.1910. The Hardie family have been associated with the place since 1901. The station is currently a cattle station with livestock sent to Malaysia and Indonesia.

The homestead is comprised of stone and has a corrugated iron roof. A verandah surrounds the exterior.

A site visit is needed to determine the current condition of the place.



Boodarie Station Homestead, taken by Department staff 2008.

P4001 De Grey Station Group (To be Assessed)

De Grey Station Group is contained within the stock route reserve and therefore included within the curtilage and assessment of the place.

As identified in the Town of Port Hedland Municipal Inventory of Heritage Places, 2007, 'The De Grey Homestead and support buildings are situated on the De Grey

River, 20km inland from the ocean and 85 kilometres north of Port Hedland. The buildings have suffered over the years from cyclones and storms as well as vandalism from the periods of vacant possession. Many of the buildings are reduced to frames and rubble.

Two significant remaining buildings are the Manager's Cottage and Station House. Both buildings feature the early stone masonry of the 1800s, although in poor condition, and many walls still show the locally made bricks used in construction. The main house has four separate eating areas which catered for the class distinction in the early years of the pastoral industry. The house has three bedrooms and an accountant's room.

The main house faces south with 3 visible stages of construction that extend the building eastwards. The western and middle stages are brick and the most recent (and eastern-most) section is timber framed with walls equipped with steel shutters. Lower brickwork has been cement rendered on the original section of the building. The Managers cottage has brickwork that is identical to that of the original section of the Station House and is also rendered. Other structures include one shed which is brick while the others are corrugated galvanised iron.

The De Grey station was the first settled pastoral station in the area. It was taken up by Walter Padbury in 1863, and the next owners were a syndicate of Messrs McKenzie, Grant and AW Anderson, who later sold a one-third share to Charles Harper. The owners and syndicates have altered over the years, but De Grey Station has always been significant to the district. The station represents the pastoral industry and the influences which settlement had over the land and the Aboriginal people. The station also represents the social aspects of the early settlers, having hosted race meetings and other functions for station and town people. Primarily set up as a sheep station, it boasted 74 000 sheep in 1890. In 1979 the owners converted to cattle, as have most of the large stations in the area.¹⁴²

A site visit is needed to determine the current condition of the place.

13.3 COMPARATIVE INFORMATION

Principal Australian Historic Theme(s)

- 2.1 Living as Australia's earliest inhabitants
- 2.2 Adapting to diverse environments
- 3.3.2 Looking for overland stock routes
- 3.5.1 Grazing stock
- 3.5.2 Breeding animals
- 3.8.5 Moving goods and people on land
- 3.11.4 Clearing vegetation
- 3.11.5 Establishing water supplies
- 3.14.2 Using Australian materials in construction
- 3.16 Struggling with remoteness, hardship and failure
- 5.1 Working in harsh conditions
- 5.8 Working on the land

¹⁴² Gray, L., 2007, *Town of Port Hedland Municipal Inventory of Heritage Places Review*, Town of Port Hedland.

Heritage Council of Western Australia Theme(s)

- 102 Aboriginal Occupation
- 105 Exploration and surveying
- 106 Workers (including Aboriginal, convict)
- 108 Government Policy
- 112 Technology and technological change
- 204 Droving
- 301 Grazing, pastoralism and dairying
- 602 Early settlers

Comparative Analysis

As new areas of Western Australia were opened up for grazing, stock routes were established to facilitate the transport of livestock, goods and people, particularly before the introduction of railway network, better roads, road trains as well as air transportation and an increased reliance on shipping. In 1905, the eastern and northern stock routes at the time were designated as reserves. As well as De Grey – Mullewa Stock Route No. 9701, other stock routes in the network included P26456 Kimberley – De Grey Stock Route (Reserve 9697), Fortescue – Cue Stock Route (Reserve 9698), Peak Hill – Leonora Stock Route (Reserve 9699), De Grey – Peak Hill Stock Route (Reserve 9700). Stock routes that were significant to the development of the State and comparable to the *De Grey – Mullewa Stock Route* include:

- P05517 Canning Stock Route (1906-08)(Assessment Program): The Canning Stock Route stretched between Wiluna and Halls Creek, approximately 1850 km. The wells along the route include bores, lined wells, and modified natural water sources. The route is reputed to be the longest stock route in the world. Several the wells may still be in extant and in their form. A few wells are known to have been modified.
- P25092 North West Stock Route (Assessed – Stakeholder Consultation): North West Stock Route is a stock route in use from the 1850s and formally defined by survey in 1889, following much of the original Old North Road to Geraldton, which extends from Star Swamp, North Beach to Allanooka Swamp, Allanooka (54km south east of Geraldton), and comprises sections of the former route, including a series of wells, homesteads, natural water bodies, resting points, bridges and crossing points.
- P15873 *North West Stock Route (fmr) Stage 1* (RHP): It extends from Yanchep to Neergabby and forms part of the southern portion of a former stock route reserve that ran between Star Swamp, North Beach and Allanooka, and includes an excavated timber banked soak at Boongarra and the timber Junction Bridge at Neergabby.
- P26456 Kimberley De Grey Stock Route and Wells: In 1879, Alexander Forrest surveyed a route from the De Grey River to the Kimberley where he took up several pastoral stations. Later in 1895 the route was established as a stock route with the sinking of 27 wells. The route was important in opening up the northern portions of the state and allowing pastoralists to move stock from these areas.

- P8906 Geraldine – Port Gregory Stock Route: Established in 1850, the stock route initially ran between Geraldine and Port Gregory, however the route was later extended to Champion Bay. The stock route is marked by a series of wells, including the Barrel Wells (Site No.12). The former Trevenson Homestead (Site No.23) was a halfway house on the original stock route to Port Gregory.

Several minor stock routes have also been identified by Municipal Heritage Inventories. These include Hassell's Stock Route (Shire of Tambellup), the stock route from Yerecoin to Wedge Island (Shire of Victoria Plains), Pauley Stock Route (Shire of Wickpin) and a few stock routes in the Shire of Wickpin.

The comparative information reveals that *De Grey – Mullewa Stock Route No. 9701* is a rare example of a stock route that was instrumental in the development of the pastoral industry north of Geraldton through the Mid West, Gascoyne and Pilbara. As much of the terrain remains unchanged and many of the original wells are intact the *De Grey – Mullewa Stock Route No. 9701*, is therefore a good representative example of such a place.

13.4 KEY REFERENCES

Sharp, Eloise, *E. T. Hooley: Pioneer Bushman* (West Perth, 1985).

13.5 FURTHER RESEARCH

Several government wells sunk along the route were not visited during the 2021 site visit. While a description of some of these wells has been included in the assessment based off information from a 1982 site visit, further research is required to determine the exact location and current condition of those wells.

Furthermore, many other non-government wells are recognised from historical maps to potentially still be included in the curtilage. Further research and a future site visit are required to determine the location and condition of these wells to detail in the physical evidence section of the assessment.

Homesteads are included as features when they were located within or adjacent to Reserve 9701 and the curtilage of the stock route. There are a number of homesteads located just outside of the reserve and as a result have not been included as features within the place. Further research is required to detail the homesteads associated with the route both within and outside of the curtilage. Site visits are required to detail the physical evidence.