



# REGISTER OF HERITAGE PLACES - ASSESSMENT DOCUMENTATION

## 11. ASSESSMENT OF CULTURAL HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

The criteria adopted by the Heritage Council in September, 1991 have been used to determine the cultural heritage significance of the place.

### 11.1 AESTHETIC VALUE

*Henry Bull's Cottage*, the valley containing the house, mill race, mill pond, grape pickers' quarters and lime kiln, together with the bridge over Ellen Brook in the adjacent Public Open Space, constitutes a landscape with aesthetic qualities valued by the community. A strip of Public Open Space on the valley slope above, and following the course of, the mill race allows people to walk from the mill dam at the head of the valley to the bridge at the confluence of the valley with Ellen Brook and enjoy the landscape. (Criterion 1.1)

The house contributes to the aesthetic qualities of the landscape through the massing of its architectural elements within a rural valley setting. (Criterion 1.3)

The house, mill race, mill pond, grape pickers' quarters and lime kiln, together with the bridge over Ellen Brook in the adjacent Public Open Space, form important related elements in a nineteenth century landscape setting. (Criterion 1.4)

### 11.2. HISTORIC VALUE

*Henry Bull's Cottage*, the mill race and mill pond, demonstrate the early nineteenth century European settlement of the Swan River Colony for agricultural purposes. (Criterion 2.1)

*Henry Bull's Cottage* is representative of the system of land grants and land tenure instituted by the first European inhabitants of the Swan River Colony. (Criterion 2.2)

*Henry Bull's Cottage* was associated with the Leake family for some 65 years from 1829, and then with the Barrett-Lennard family for the subsequent 90 years. Both families were resident in the colony from its inception, the Leake family becoming prominent in public and business life, the Barrett-Lennard family as pastoralists and vignerons. (Criterion 2.3)

The mill race, mill pond and lime kiln are examples of technical achievement at a time of economic struggle during the nineteenth century. (Criterion 2.4)

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

The mill race, mill pond and lime kiln are important for their potential to reveal information contributing to the method of milling flour and the burning of lime in the colony during the nineteenth century. (Criterion 3.2)

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

The place contributes to the community's sense of place by providing a link with the colonial development of the area. (Criterion 4.1)

## **12. DEGREE OF SIGNIFICANCE**

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

The related elements of the place; the house, mill race, mill pond, grape pickers' quarters, lime kiln and their setting together form an early nineteenth century colonial rural landscape, now uncommon. (Criterion 5.2)

### **12. 2 REPRESENTATIVENESS**

The place demonstrates the way of life and technical achievements of the colonial farming era.

### **12. 3 CONDITION**

The condition of the place is good.

### **12. 4 INTEGRITY**

Despite the place no longer functioning as a working farm, the original purpose of its related elements remain evident. The place has a high degree of integrity.

### **12. 5 AUTHENTICITY**

The place has a moderate degree of authenticity. The house was extensively restored in 1988 with the introduction of a new kitchen and bathroom within the building and the reconstruction of the two-storied front verandah and large parts of the brick work at the north-west and south-east elevations. The lath and plaster ceilings were reproduced. Timber in the grape pickers' quarters has been replaced but the original iron cladding was retained. The bridge over Ellen brook was largely reconstructed and is now a footbridge.

### 13. SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

The documentary evidence has been compiled by Irene Ham-Sauman. The physical evidence has been compiled by John Pidgeon, Architect, from material in the files of the National Trust of Australia (WA).

#### 13.1 DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

*Henry Bull's Cottage* is situated on part of Swan Location 1 in the Upper Swan District. Swan Location 1 was a grant of some 15,000 acres made to George Leake, in 1829. Leake was a merchant who came out to the colony with £2,000 in cash and goods, as well as five indentured servants.<sup>1</sup> He did not work his grant himself, nor reside on it. A financial return from agricultural production could take several years to achieve, so Leake set himself up in a more profitable business, as a merchant at Fremantle. In July 1831, he formed a partnership with Henry Bull in which Bull would improve Leake's grant in return for half of it.<sup>2</sup> In this way, Leake could ensure that the necessary improvements were made on the property within the stipulated four year period in order to gain title to the land.<sup>3</sup>

Henry Bull was a lieutenant in the navy, on half-pay, who had arrived in the colony in 1830. He worked Leake's grant, known at that time as the 'Ellen Brook Estate', building a house for himself and farming the land.

On 3 January 1832, William Tanner of 'Baskerville', on the east side of the Swan River, recorded in his diary:

across the river lives Mr Bull, a lieutenant in the navy, he has commenced a good house and begun to farm on a large scale, he is in partnership with Mr Leake, a merchant of Fremantle to whom half the grant belongs.<sup>4</sup>

According to Captain Irwin of Henley Park, his manager, Richard Edwards, 'made the bricks and constructed the walls of a dwelling-house recently erected for Mr Bull'. Irwin describes Bull's establishment as 'really splendid', and describes the kitchen of the home as 'lofty and spacious...[with] a fireplace of corresponding dimensions'.<sup>5</sup>

Edwards was a brickmaker and builder, who built Irwin's own two-storey house as well as being credited with building the Upper Swan Church and other homes in the Swan district.<sup>6</sup> His sons, born in England, were active

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<sup>1</sup> Stannage, C. T. *The People of Perth: A social history of Western Australia's capital city*. Perth City Council, 1979, p.14.

<sup>2</sup> Deeds of Memorial: Book 1, Memorials 584 (1838) & 688 (1831).

<sup>3</sup> Tyman, J. L. *Surveys and Settlements in Western Australia. Part 1: Superstructure and setting* UWA Press, Nedlands, 1979, p.19; Bourke, Michael J. *On the Swan: A history of the Swan District, Western Australia*. UWA Press, Nedlands, 1987, pp.38, 60.

<sup>4</sup> Statham Pamela (ed) *The Tanner Letters: A Pioneer saga of Swan River and Tasmania 1831-1845*. UWA Press, Nedlands, 1981, p.34.

<sup>5</sup> Irwin, Frederick Chidley *The State and Position of Western Australia: commonly called the Swan-River settlement*. 1835, pp.59-60.

<sup>6</sup> Irwin, Frederick Chidley *The State and Position of Western Australia: commonly called the Swan-River settlement* 1835, p.57; *Bicentennial Dictionary of Western Australians* UWA Press, Nedlands, 1988, p.958; Burton, A. *The Story of the Swan District 1843-1938*. Swan Shire Council, p.7.

partners in the family building ventures. One son was a carpenter, according to Irwin.<sup>7</sup>

It is possible that the clay for the bricks for Bull's house, and others in the district, may have come from the Ellen Brook property. In April 1832, George Fletcher Moore recorded that he 'got home a thousand bricks to-day, made on Mr Bull's grant'.<sup>8</sup>

One of Henry Bull's servants, William Cruse, worked a flour mill on the property. The mill was built some time between 1832 and 1834, and was originally operated by horse power. According to Irwin:

His [Bull's] mill, which was constructed under his own direction, and is worked by horses, not only grinds the flour which is used in his own establishment, but returns him a considerable profit by what it grinds for other settlers.<sup>9</sup>

Irwin was impressed with Henry Bull's farming and management abilities. He reported that Bull grew wheat and other grains, ran numerous cattle acquired 'from the Duke of Bedford's famous breed from Woburn', provided an excellent home, and married a lady in the colony who managed his 'extensive' dairy extremely well. According to Irwin, 'butter and cheese from Mrs Bull's dairy are in great request in the market'.<sup>10</sup> Leake and Bull dissolved their partnership in 1836.

In 1837, the mill dam, mill race, mill pond and waterwheel were completed and the mill was powered by water. A newspaper report in April 1837, stated:

We have a water mill at the head of the Swan just brought into operation. The construction of this mill owes its present state of forwardness to the ingenuity and perseverance of a man named William Cruize [sic], formerly in the service of Mr Bull. It is erected on Mr Leake's grant, where there is a fine stream of water, sufficient to drive 2 or 3 pair of stones.<sup>11</sup>

In 1838, Leake transferred title of 7,443 acres to Bull, keeping for himself the southern portion of the grant on which were situated the house and the mill.<sup>12</sup> The following year he surrendered some 5350 acres to the Crown, retaining 2904 acres.<sup>13</sup> Bull, meanwhile, became Government Resident of Leschenault and, in 1841, was a member of the Legislative Council. By 1844, he had quit the colony and put his colonial properties in the hands of agents.<sup>14</sup>

Such an action was not uncommon in the 1840s. The colony was suffering an economic depression and many of the large estates were tenanted or owned

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<sup>7</sup> *Bicentennial Dictionary of Western Australians* UWA Press, Nedlands, 1988, p.957; Irwin, Frederick Chidley *The State and Position of Western Australia: commonly called the Swan-River settlement 1835*, p.57.

<sup>8</sup> Moore, George Fletcher *Diary of Ten Years of an Early Settler in Western Australia*. Facsimile edition UWA Press, Nedlands, 1978, p.109.

<sup>9</sup> Irwin, Frederick Chidley *The State and Position of Western Australia: commonly called the Swan-River settlement 1835*, p.60.

<sup>10</sup> Irwin, Frederick Chidley *The State and Position of Western Australia: commonly called the Swan-River settlement 1835*, p.61.

<sup>11</sup> *Perth Gazette and Western Australian Journal*, Saturday 22 April 1837. Vol V, Number 225, p.888.

<sup>12</sup> Deed of Memorial: Book 1, Memorial 584 (1838).

<sup>13</sup> Deed of Memorial: Book 1, Memorial 713 (1839).

<sup>14</sup> *Bicentennial Dictionary of Western Australians* UWA Press, Nedlands, 1988, p.385; Deeds of Memorial: Book 1, Memorial 693 (1838) & Book 3, Memorial 308 (1844).

by labourers. Some were probably unoccupied and uncultivated.<sup>15</sup> No new immigrants with wealth arrived to replace those who died or left the colony.

According to Archdeacon Wollaston, writing in 1850:

the stagnation, or rather retrogression, and utter failure, is manifesting itself among all the better classes. The labouring sober servants and shepherds are the only persons doing well, and these have all stepped into their quondam [former] master's shoes.<sup>16</sup>

It was in this environment that William Cruse, Saul Spice and John Connolly leased 'Ellen Brook Estate' from George Leake, working the mill and the land.<sup>17</sup> George Leake died in 1849, and it is possible that the registration, in 1850, of the Deed of Memorial recording this lease was a formal registration, by Leake's trustees, of a situation that had existed for some years. Rents from the property were directed to George Leake's widow, Georgianna.

William Cruse had been working the mill since the early 1830s and almost certainly had his own home nearby. Local tradition has it that Saul Spice, a brickmaker, and his family occupied the house built for Henry Bull. The other lessee, John Connolly, was a discharged soldier who had married Saul Spice's daughter, Mary.<sup>18</sup> Both Connolly and Spice later farmed at Bindoon, and William Cruse and his wife Janet (Jesse) occupied the house, which became known locally as Cruse's house.<sup>19</sup> In November 1851, 'Ellen Brook Estate' passed to George Leake's nephew, George Walpole Leake, on his marriage.<sup>20</sup>

Photographs of the property, taken in the 1860s, show a substantial two-storey house with a shingle roof, unpainted brick walls and nine-paned window sashes.<sup>21</sup>

George Walpole Leake was a Crown solicitor, Acting Attorney General 1874-5, QC, JP and, in 1886, a Police Magistrate.<sup>22</sup> In 1897, after his death, 'Ellen Brook Estate' was purchased by George Barrett-Lennard who renamed it 'Belhus Estate' after the family estate, Belhus Manor, in Essex, England.<sup>23</sup> His father and grandfather had both been farmers in the Swan district, but George extended the family's property holdings in the area.

According to George's grandson, John Barrett-Lennard, his grandfather planted table grapes at 'Belhus Estate' watering them from the mill dam constructed by William Cruse. Before it burnt down, the mill building was

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<sup>15</sup> Bourke, Michael J. *On the Swan: A history of the Swan District, Western Australia*. UWA Press, Nedlands, 1987, pp.159-160.

<sup>16</sup> Bourke, Michael J. *On the Swan: A history of the Swan District, Western Australia*. UWA Press, Nedlands, 1987, p.160.

<sup>17</sup> Deed of Memorial: Book 4, Memorial 329 (1850).

<sup>18</sup> *Bicentennial Dictionary of Western Australians*. UWA Press, Nedlands, 1988, p.2796.

<sup>19</sup> Bourke, Michael J. *On the Swan: A history of the Swan District, Western Australia*. UWA Press, Nedlands, 1987) pp.108-111.

<sup>20</sup> Deed of Memorial: Book 5, Memorial 4 (1851).

<sup>21</sup> Photographs, 1860s. Battye Library Photograph Collection; 21405P & 21411P.

<sup>22</sup> *Bicentennial Dictionary of Western Australians*. UWA Press, Nedlands, 1988, p.1822.

<sup>23</sup> Bourke, Michael J. *On the Swan: A history of the Swan District, Western Australia*. UWA Press, Nedlands, 1987, p.109; *Bicentennial Dictionary of Western Australians*. UWA Press, Nedlands, 1988, pp.142-143.

used for the storage of wine.<sup>24</sup> At the height of vineyard activity, the estate employed 120 women cleaning the grapes and about 20 men picking them.

People who worked on the farm, lived on the farm. We had old humpies (single men's quarters) and then we had four married couples who lived in the old house.<sup>25</sup>

After the property was subdivided in 1954, the vineyard operated on a smaller scale. In 1970, two new homes were built on the estate. Another subdivision, in 1988, reduced the area to 5.7 hectares, and separated the two recently built homes from the original property.<sup>26</sup>

The bridge over Ellen Brook, built by convicts, was completed in 1851. It was 14.6 metres long, 2.7 metres high and 3.6 metres wide, built on a causeway of ironstone.<sup>27</sup> The causeway was needed to provide a firm base over low-lying, muddy flats.

The bridge was built as part of a project that also included the Upper Swan Bridge and a road linking the two bridges. Their construction meant that farmers on the east side of the river could cart their wheat to Cruse's Mill instead of transporting it all the way to Perth for milling.

In 1896, the bridge was rebuilt.<sup>28</sup> In 1988, the Barrett-Lennards spent \$25,000 'doing up' the bridge - one of the Shire conditions for subdivision to proceed. The buildings under discussion are within Lot 106 of this subdivision, and are currently owned by Multiplex Constructions Pty Ltd of which the principal is Mr John Roberts.<sup>29</sup> Upon acquiring the property Mr Roberts commenced a program of restoration and reconstruction.

A report by the National Trust in January 1977 describes the house as having a corrugated iron roof and white washed walls. This description is supported by a photograph, dated 1971, which also shows a timber verandah and a covered balcony with asbestos panel infill.

Restoration work on the house included the removal of paint from the brickwork of the central core of the house, the reconstruction of brickwork to the north and south lean-to sections, the fixing of a new sheoak shingle roof covering, the reconstruction of the west facing verandah, the refurbishing of the internal finishes, the repair of plaster work, the replacement of plaster sheet ceilings with lath and plaster and the replacement of rusted ripple iron ceilings. A kitchen and bathroom were installed in the eastern lean-to section.

The mill race was repaired and reconstructed and a new working flour mill was construct over the site of the old mill. The fire damaged remains of the water wheel were excavated and used as evidence in the construction of a replica. The design of the mill; however, was made up from old photographs and much conjecture on the part of the architect, J. A. Pidgeon. The mill workings are of the mechanism traditional to the period, though, in the

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<sup>24</sup> Oral evidence of John Barrett-Lennard in the Swan Shire Bridges Project (1993), Battye Library Oral History Collection. p.6.

<sup>25</sup> Oral evidence of John Barrett-Lennard in the Swan Shire Bridges Project (1993), p.10.

<sup>26</sup> Certificate of Title, DOLA, Vol 1735 Folio 637.

<sup>27</sup> Diary of Assistant Surveyor Hillman, 25 October 1850 to 31 May 1851.

<sup>28</sup> Public Works Department Plan No. 4631 (1896).

<sup>29</sup> Heritage Council File PD2536.

absence of evidence, save for the remnants of the water wheel, there was no attempt to reproduce the original.

The lime kiln was extensively restored. The whole structure of the grape pickers' quarters, being badly damaged by termites, was dismantled and reconstructed using the original materials where possible. The quarters may have been built for indentured Chinese labourers. The quarters were last lived in by grape pickers of Italian origin.

### **13.2 PHYSICAL EVIDENCE**

*Henry Bull's Cottage* is situated on a 5.7 hectare lot occupying a valley formed by a small stream which flows into Ellen brook. The valley runs on a north-south axis. At its northern end the brook has been dammed with an earth wall. A sluice gate in this wall allowed water to flow into the millrace which follows high ground at the west slope of the valley for some 500 metres until it delivered to the mill, since destroyed by fire. Currently, a new polythene pipe takes the water to the newly constructed water wheel and mill.

On the eastern slope of the valley opposite the mill is the house with a circular brick walled lime kiln to the south and the grape pickers' quarters to the north. Alongside the house to the east is a large cape lilac tree. To the north of this is a large corrugated iron clad shed constructed c.1988. To the south of the lime kiln is the bridge over Ellen Brook. The bridge is of timber, having been rebuilt in 1988, from the previous construction of 1896, as a footbridge, narrower than the original. The previous width of the bridge can be seen by the position of the piles and half caps supporting the present deck. The deck is constructed of jarrah railway sleepers. Currently, some of the sleepers show termite damage, and some are virtually destroyed.

With the subdivision of the property in 1988, a new road, Corona Way, was put in at the north end of the property providing access for motor vehicles. The bridge connects Cruse Road, the original access road to the mill and the estate, with the pedestrian pathway to the west of, and following the mill race. This pathway links with Corona Way. The buildings, mill race, lime kiln, dam and dam wall are all clearly visible from the pathway. Two small timber footbridges at the base of the dam wall provide a crossing over the mill race and the Ellen Brook tributary which runs through the valley. It is this tributary which was dammed by William Cruse.

The house has a two-storeyed core with a single-storey lean-to at the east and north sides and a two-storied verandah (reconstructed in 1988) along the west (front) elevation. The south elevation has a brick chimney serving fireplaces at ground and first floor levels. The footings are of granite and brick. The walls are of brick burnt on site, Flemish bond to the front, and English bond elsewhere. (The brickwork to the north side lean-to was reconstructed in 1988.) The roof of sheoak shingles, replaced corrugated iron in 1988. The front door leads to a hall with a steep staircase. On each floor there are two small rooms each side of the hall. The ground floor rooms have lath and plaster ceilings, replaced as such in 1987 and the first floor rooms have ripple iron ceilings. Windows are either double casements or pivoted sashes. The lean-to at the east side has a kitchen at the north end and a bathroom at the south end (both fitted out in 1988) and a vestibule between.



To the south of the house is a circular brick-walled lime kiln built into the side of a small escarpment so that the timber fuel could be lowered into the kiln from the higher ground and the burnt lime extracted from an opening in the kiln at the lower level.

To the north of the house is a row of corrugated iron grape pickers' quarters built near the turn of the century. These are a number of separate cabins, about 2.5 metres square, each with its own vaulted corrugated iron roof, separated from each other by a gap approximately 1 metre wide. The cabins, set in two rows and standing on a common timber boarded floor, are covered with a gabled corrugated iron roof supported on an independent structure of timber columns.

### **13.3 REFERENCES**

National Trust of Australia (WA) files.