



REGISTER OF HERITAGE PLACES - ASSESSMENT DOCUMENTATION

11. ASSESSMENT OF CULTURAL HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

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

PRINCIPAL AUSTRALIAN HISTORIC THEME(S)

- 3.4 Developing sheep and cattle industries
- 7.5.1 Developing local government authorities

HERITAGE COUNCIL OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA THEME(S)

- 301 Grazing, pastoralism and dairying
- 401 Government and politics

11.1 AESTHETIC VALUE*

The place has considerable aesthetic value, both in the design, scale and materials of the individual elements of the structures, and as a sizable collection of pastoral buildings built in the Victorian Georgian style. (Criterion 1.1)

The homestead and associated outbuildings demonstrate considerable achievement in construction in a remote environment through the use of local materials, including stone, mud brick, mulga and ant bed. (Criterion 1.2)

The buildings and structures which make up the *Boolarly Homestead Group* inter-relate closely to form a significant and substantial pastoral precinct. (Criterion 1.4)

11.2. HISTORIC VALUE

Boolarly Homestead Group is associated with the beginnings of pastoral settlement in the Murchison Region, being located on a lease taken up in the 1870s. (Criterion 2.1)

The place is closely connected with the operations of local government in the area as the office of the Murchison Road Board/Shire was located within the homestead precinct for over thirty years. (Criterion 2.2)

The place is associated with a number of Aboriginal people who worked and lived on the property, and whose stories require further investigation and understanding. (Criterion 2.3)

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

The place was closely associated with the Wittenoom and Lefroy families for over 100 years. Edward and Frank Wittenoom were both well known and respected throughout the district and served as members of the Murchison Road Board. (Criterion 2.3)

The place is also associated with builder Alf Couch, well known throughout the Murchison for his unique curved corrugated iron roof constructions. (Criteria 2.3 & 2.4)

11. 3. SCIENTIFIC VALUE

Through investigation and interpretation of its built fabric, the place has the potential to yield information regarding the evolution of the pastoral industry in the Murchison Region, from its establishment through to the present. (Criterion 3.2)

11. 4. SOCIAL VALUE

Boolardy Homestead Group is highly regarded in the Murchison Region as an important pastoral property and also for its historically important social role in the administration of the local government, the Vermin Board and the Murchison Patriotic Funds Committee. (Criterion 4.1)

As the focal point of one of the oldest pastoral properties in the Murchison region, *Boolardy Homestead Group* contributes to the Murchison community's sense of place. (Criterion 4.2)

12. DEGREE OF SIGNIFICANCE

12. 1. RARITY

Boolardy Homestead Group is unusual in that the full development of the pastoral property from the original shepherd's cottage of the late 1870s to the plane hangar of the 1960s is evident in its built fabric which remains largely intact. (Criterion 5.2)

12. 2 REPRESENTATIVENESS

Boolardy Homestead Group is a fine and characteristic example of a pastoral homestead and associated outbuildings of the Murchison Region. Due to the completeness of the collection of buildings, the place is unusual. (Criterion 6.1)

12. 3 CONDITION

Generally all the buildings described in the assessment are in sound to good condition. The Homestead appears to be in good condition. Due to the ongoing use of most of the buildings they continue to be maintained.

12. 4 INTEGRITY

The place as a whole has high integrity having retained its original intention since its establishment. While the specific use of a number of the individual buildings has changed over the years as the operations and lifestyle of the pastoral station has evolved, generally the new building uses remain compatible with the former usage. Nevertheless, the long term use of the smaller buildings such as the old store, shepherd's cottage and blacksmith's shop, requires further consideration.

12.5 AUTHENTICITY

Since its construction c.1888, Boolardy Homestead has been considerably altered and extended. However, this work has been thoroughly documented and is therefore clearly identifiable. The core fabric of the original mud brick homestead and kitchen remains largely intact.

While the Homestead has moderate authenticity, the highly significant stone outbuildings remain close to their original state and therefore have high authenticity.

While a number of the other outbuildings, including the jackeroo's quarters and the cart shed, have been greatly altered in form and fabric and now have low authenticity, they do illustrate the evolution of the property.

13. SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

The documentary evidence and physical evidence has been compiled by Tanya Henkel, Historian, in conjunction with R.F.B. Lefroy.

13.1 DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

Boolardy Homestead Group comprises the main homestead (from c. 1888) and a series of outbuildings, including the old store (c. 1876), shepherd's cottage (c. 1876), blacksmith's shop, feed, fuel and windmill rooms, saddle, harness and motorcycle rooms, store, office and bookkeeper's room (1954), jackeroo's quarters (c. 1910), meathouse (1919), engine room (1949), married couple's quarters (1952), cart shed (1918), and F. Wittenoom House (1952).

The Victoria District was explored and named in 1839 by Lieutenant George Grey. Lt Grey, whose expedition party was the first to enter the Murchison area, also named the Murchison River after Roderick Impey Murchison, President of the Geographic Society, London. Grey was impressed with the pastoral and agricultural potential of the land he inspected. However, a further decade was to pass before any settlement occurred in the Victoria District, and this was ultimately spurred on by the discovery of galena in the Murchison River. Subsequently several pastoral stations were established in the vicinity of Champion Bay, including Knockbrack (later *The Bowes*) by William Burges and Glengarry by Thomas Brown.¹

In 1854 the Robert Austin expedition reached the Murchison district with intentions to explore the Gascoyne. However, the party was forced to abandon those plans at the beginning of October and instead travelled through the area, traversing land which later formed part of Boolardy Station. Meanwhile, the pursuit of good pastoral lands for the grazing of sheep and cattle resulted in further expeditions along the Murchison River in the late 1850s. In 1856, John Perks, employed as a master shepherd by Thomas Burges of *The Bowes*, examined country 300 miles north east of Champion Bay and reported favourably on the area for sheep grazing. Subsequent expeditions made by F.T. Gregory in 1857 and 1858 noted the suitability of the country for cattle grazing.²

¹ Nixon, M. & Lefroy, R.F.B., *Road to the Murchison*, Vanguard Press, Perth, 1985, p.35; Bain, M.A., *Ancient Landmarks: A social and economic history of the Victoria District, Western Australia, 1839-1894*, UWA Press, Nedlands, 1975, p.12.

² Nixon & Lefroy, op. cit., pp.35 & 89.

The first station taken up in the Murchison district was Yuin Station, settled in 1867 by Thomas Burges and John Perks. Despite Robert Austin's earlier venture in 1854, the potential of the rich grassy plains of Boolardy and importantly, the Ngatta water hole (the only water hole in the area) was not appreciated until after John Perks explored for further sheep grazing country in 1873.

In 1874, the first leases in the area were taken up by Perks and Edward Wittenoom, following a further exploration trip which took them approximately 30 miles to the north of the Ngatta water hole. That same year Thomas Burges leased Yuin Station to his nephews, Edward and Frank Wittenoom for a period of ten years. In 1875 Frank Wittenoom continued exploring for potential grazing country to the north-east of where his brother, Edward, had turned back. In doing so he found what is now known as the Yabboo, Nookawarra and Mileura country. The first cattle were taken overland to Nookawarra in 1876, at which time Ngatta Pool was only a shepherd's camp.³

Using the Ngatta Pool lease A4695 for grazing sheep, the Wittenoom's soon found that the site lacked horse feed and subsequently, in 1876, moved to the present Boolardy Homestead site. The first buildings are believed to have been constructed at Boolardy around this time and comprised a stone shepherd's cottage and store (Building Nos. 3 and 2 respectively). It is believed that the store was used as the first homestead on the site for a number of years until the present homestead was built.⁴

During the next decade Edward and Frank Wittenoom established a substantial sheep-run on the Boolardy lease which was part of their whole enterprise incorporating the nearby stations of Murgoo and Nookawarra, the later being their main base. Gradually the Boolardy country was utilised more efficiently for grazing through fencing paddocks and sinking wells and consequently the dependence on shepherds diminished.⁵ Based on photographic evidence and information contained in Boolardy Ledgers, it is believed that the original mud brick Boolardy Homestead was built c.1888. Although two other homesteads built by the Wittenooms had thatched roofs (Murgoo and Nookawarra), there is no evidence that the Boolardy Homestead roof was ever anything but corrugated iron.⁶

The stone outbuildings, including the blacksmith's shop, are also believed to have been built in the late 1880s. In addition, the first shearing shed at Boolardy, known as the Bottom Shed, is thought to have been built around the same time at Ngatta Pool, approximately 10 kilometres south of the Homestead.⁷

Circa 1892 Frank Wittenoom established a sheep stud at Boolardy, with rams from Boonoke Stud in New South Wales. The stud was later moved to the Wittenoom property, Cranmore Park, near Moora, in 1909.⁸

3 *ibid.*, pp.36 & 89.

4 *ibid.*, p.92.

5 *ibid.*, pp.89-90.

6 *ibid.*, p.93; Lefroy, R.F.B., 'Boolardy Homestead Complex', 1998.

7 Nixon & Lefroy, *op. cit.*, p.93.

8 *ibid.*, pp.90-1.

In 1894, George Thompson commenced managing the property until Frank Wittenoom's nephew, Langlois Lefroy took over in 1903.⁹ Wittenoom's two other nephew's, Edward and Frank Lefroy, also had turns at managing Boolardy. Frank Wittenoom had no children of his own and set about restructuring his estate in 1919, forming the Boolardy Pastoral Company Limited, with Langlois as General Manager and Frank as Chairman. When Frank Wittenoom died in 1939, the Lefroys continued to manage the property, although there were other managers who worked on Boolardy at different stages. Following his uncle's death, Langlois Lefroy became the Chairman of Directors of the Boolardy Pastoral Company Limited.¹⁰

In the meantime, additional accommodation for station workers was constructed c.1910 in the form of the weatherboard clad jackeroo's quarters to the south of the homestead (Building No. 8). A number of Aboriginal people were employed on the property.

In 1917, work to the Boolardy Homestead included the installation of ripple iron and stamped iron ceilings.¹¹ The following year, the addition of two bedrooms was made possible by the enclosure of the west verandah. Not long afterwards, the central passage of the homestead was removed and a timber framed partition was erected to form a separate dining and lounge room.

In 1918, Murchison builder Alf Couch built the cart shed (Building No. 12), which originally had one of the first of his distinctive curved iron roofs, also in evidence at the Top Shearing Shed, built by Couch in the early 1920s. Couch carried out a lot of building work in the Murchison area including the curved-roofed shearing sheds at Woolgorong Station (1917) and nearby Wooleen Station (1922) and the meathouse at Boolardy (1919). The cart shed also incorporated several rooms to house workers on the property. Initially used for camel wagons, the Cart Shed was later adapted to accommodate motor vehicles and in more recent years has been expanded to provide additional workshop space.¹²

In the early 1920s, Alf Couch returned to Boolardy to carry out work which included the joining of the detached stone kitchen to the Homestead and reroofing it.¹³ Alf Couch's reroofing of the kitchen probably coincided with his work on constructing the second shearing shed at Boolardy, known as the Top Shed, located approximately 25 kilometres north of the Homestead. The Top Shed is noted for its curved corrugated iron roof. Alf Couch, well known throughout the district for his construction work, was a carpenter, plumber, grano worker and stone mason. His unique construction methods for his curved roofs is described in *Road to the Murchison*:

He curved all the iron for the roofs. His method was to rivet together two curved sheets for each side of the roof, so that each riveted pair formed an 'S'. Over the gap on the hip of the roof between the two curved sides, he fitted a fifth sheet, smaller and curved. This made a rain proof cap.

9 Frank Wittenoom's sister, Rose, had married Henry Lefroy of Walebing in southern Western Australia. Rose and Henry had three sons: Langlois, Edward and Frank Lefroy.

10 Nixon & Lefroy, op. cit., p.91.

11 It is believed that the material came from a building in the mining town of Cue. Most of these iron ceilings have since been replaced with plasterboard although one of the original bedrooms still contains a ripple iron ceiling.

12 Lefroy, 'Boolardy Homestead Complex', 1998; Boolardy Ledger, 1918.

13 Lefroy, op. cit.; Nixon & Lefroy, op. cit., p. 93. Refer to floor plans of Homestead for details on further alterations and additions to the Homestead.

To erect the sheets, they were laid out along the full length of both sides of the one hundred and thirty feet long shed, and movable scaffolding was erected in the centre section. With his off-sider on the scaffolding (and at the rate he worked, he had problems keeping an off-sider), Couch would put a pad on his head, place two sheets on the pad and walk up the ladder over the verandah and put the sheets in place. Then he would climb down and do the same on the other side. With rivets, he then joined the two sections at the top and sides, laboriously repeating the process until he finished.

The roofed building was high enough to take the raised ram of a Ferrier Wool press. It gave an uncluttered centre of thirty feet by one hundred feet, and an overall width of fifty feet. There is one timber support in the centre of the shed and it was said to have been put there only to please Frank Wittenoom who maintained that no roof would stand without some kind of support.

In the Boolardy shed, Alf Couch also did what was said to be impossible: he put glass skylights in the main roof as well as above the verandahs.

This shed and many others of similar standard in the Murchison would be recognised as quality buildings in rural areas anywhere in the world and the condition of this shed at the present time is a credit to Alf Couch's workmanship, and to the owners for maintaining it in such good condition.¹⁴

In 1924, George Clarke, the Boolardy Book-keeper was appointed Secretary of the Murchison Roads Board after H. Murphy of Wooleen resigned. Following on from previous procedure, the office of the Roads Board moved to Boolardy, into the Homestead office, as the station of the Secretary's residence. The Roads Board had also been based at Boolardy between 1915 and 1918, as well as at Murgoo, Milly Milly and Woolgorong Stations. The Murchison Roads Board continued to be based at Boolardy for 22 years until 1946 when George Clarke resigned to become manager of Boolardy and a member of the Roads Board. The Boolardy Homestead office was also used as the administrative office of the Vermin Board and the Murchison Patriotic Funds Committee.¹⁵

A visitor to Boolardy from England, Betty Worthington, described the Homestead in a letter to her mother in 1929:

Boolardy is quite an old homestead...The house is, as usual, one room thick, with a broad verandah up each side. Unlike Yuin, the rooms are joined into one building, with the kitchen in a wing at right angles, men's quarters, wash house, native camp etc, dotted about outside. It was very hot when we arrived and the cool green buffalo grass lawns looked most refreshing...¹⁶

While a telephone was first connected at Boolardy Station in 1919, electricity was not used until the late 1940s, prior to which lighting was by kerosene lamp. When Sir Edward Lefroy took charge of the company following the death of Sir Langlois in 1957, the 32 volt electrical system was upgraded to 110v DC. Subsequently 240v AC was added to the power supply and a dual system came into being - 110v for lights and 240v for power.¹⁷

Between 1930 and 1945 a combination of drought, depression, the Second World War and then flood took their toll on the operations of Boolardy Station. In January 1945, 8 inches of rain in 24 hours resulted in considerable damage at Boolardy, including the washing down of over 100 miles of fencing. However, in the late 1940s and early 1950s wool prices increased to

14 Nixon & Lefroy, op. cit., p.95.

15 *ibid.*, pp.43, 46 & 57; R.F.B. Lefroy, conversation with Tanya Henkel, 27 October, 1999.

16 Betty Worthington, correspondence from 1929 as cited in Nixon & Lefroy, op. cit., p.93.

17 Lefroy, R.F.B., 'Lights, Power and Hot Water' & 'Social Activities', information on Boolardy Homestead Group, 1998.

record levels and resulted in a pastoral boom which was reflected in activity at Boolardy. An extensive building program commenced, new bores and watering points were established, fences were repaired and renewed, stone tanks were constructed, the tops of wells were stoned, access roads were cleared and a general upgrade was carried out.¹⁸

From the early-1950s through into the mid-1960s, considerable construction work also took place within the *Boolardy Homestead Group*. In January 1952, work commenced on the construction of a four roomed stone cottage for an overseer (Building No. 13 - F. Wittenoom House) by Italian migrants, Fermo Figaroli and Tony Bertei, who carried out the entire job, including loading the sand from the creek by hand, quarrying the stone, mainly granite, from around the station, the carpentry and roof plumbing. Their contract price for this work was £2,250. Figaroli and Bertei were responsible for carving the name 'F. Wittenoom' into the stone above the front door as a memorial to Frank Wittenoom. The pair undertook other renovation and construction work during their time at Boolardy, including building stone water tanks on the station and elsewhere in the Murchison. Figaroli was also responsible for constructing the low stone wall around the Homestead which replaced an earlier mud brick wall built to prevent rising flood waters reaching the building. The walls did not prove to be very effective, especially during the 1945 flood.¹⁹

In 1952, Figaroli and Bertei also carried out work on the Boolardy Homestead in an effort to counteract the damp problems being experienced in the building. According to R.F.B. Lefroy, the pair underpinned the whole house room by room, inserted a damp proof course and rebuilt some of the walls using granite. Other work carried out in 1952 included the construction of a timber framed fibro clad house to accommodate a married couple (Building No. 11).²⁰ In 1999, this building is used by the children of the resident managers for School of the Air classes.

Figaroli and Bertei were also responsible for the construction of the store, office and bookkeeper's room in 1954 (Building No. 7). Built of granite and cement brick, the building served as the office of the Murchison Roads Board from 1957 to 1961 and subsequently the Shire of Murchison until 1963, when it was moved to Wooleen. The bookkeeper's room was used for several years as a school room to enable the children to have access, through the Shire radio, to the Meekatharra School of the Air.²¹

The swimming pool at Boolardy was built in 1956 by Monty Scott and two helpers. Stone was gathered and the walls of the pool were formed against a masonite and timber formwork, which was later used to line the rooms in the cart shed. The swimming pool combined with the tennis court, which was originally made of ant bed and later resurfaced with clay, provided welcome relief from the station work. From very early on, various social and sporting activities were evident at Boolardy, including cricket, horse racing, tennis, music and card evenings.²²

18 Lefroy, 'Boolardy Homestead Complex', op. cit.

19 *ibid.*; Nixon & Lefroy, op cit., p.93.

20 Lefroy, 'Boolardy Homestead Complex', op. cit.

21 *ibid.*

22 Lefroy, 'Social Activities', op. cit., 1998.

When Langlois Lefroy died in 1957, his brother, Edward became the Chairman of Directors of the Boolardy Pastoral Company Limited, a position he held until his own death in 1966. At this time Charles Wittenoom assumed the position and was later followed by Frank Lefroy and then Peter Lefroy, thus maintaining the strong family linkages.²³

Meanwhile, Figaroli and Bertei returned to Boolardy in 1959 to construct a large bedroom extension onto the west end of the homestead. Built from solid granite the bedroom connected into the bathroom and the two existing bedrooms to form a separate family unit.²⁴

It was around this time that the Boolardy Homestead was reroofed by Ted King. Some of the old iron from the Homestead was used to build a hay shed and to reconstruct the killing pen and milking shed (Building No. 18), which was originally built by Fermo Figaroli c. 1952. The mulga posts on the front verandah had rotted from watering the adjacent lawn and these were replaced with brick pillars and a wall to keep the weather out. A section of the northern verandah of the homestead was also partly enclosed to form a sun room c. 1960.²⁵

In 1965, the windmill man's house (Building No. 19) was built across from F. Wittenoom House. The quartz for the concrete floor was graded locally from a quartz flat in Peedamulla paddock, and screened through an old bed frame. Since the 1970s, the timber framed building has been used as a residence by a professional kangaroo shooter who holds a license to supply meat for domestic use. Other work carried out in 1965 included the addition of two rooms to F. Wittenoom House, one to house a governess and the other to be used as a school room for the children on the station. The rooms were only used for this purpose for a short time.²⁶

In the late 1960s, the vehicle and plane hangar was built (Building No. 14).²⁷ In the early 1970s, the management of Boolardy Station was taken over by Boordalla Pastoral Company, a subsidiary company of the Boolardy Pastoral Company.²⁸

Boolardy Station was classified by the National Trust of Australia (W.A.) on 2 September 1985.²⁹ Boolardy Homestead and outbuildings were included in the Shire of Murchison Municipal Inventory of Heritage Places, which was adopted on 27 June, 1996.

Several changes have been effected to the fabric of *Boolardy Homestead Group* in recent years. In 1998, the weatherboard walls of the Jackeroo's Quarters were removed due to severe white ant damage and replaced with a transportable building which sits under the original iron roof. The stallion's yard and stables to the rear of the feed room as described in the National Trust Assessment Exposition were removed in 1999 due to their poor condition. Damage to the western verandah of the cart shed caused by Cyclone Vance in 1999 resulted in it being removed.³⁰

23 Nixon & Lefroy, op. cit., p.91.

24 Lefroy, 'Boolardy Homestead Complex', op. cit.

25 *ibid.*; Nixon & Lefroy, op. cit., p.93.

26 *ibid.*

27 Mark Halleen, Manager, conversation with Tanya Henkel, 30 September 1999.

28 R.F.B. Lefroy. conversation with Tanya Henkel, 2 November 1999.

29 National Trust Assessment Exposition, 2/9/1985.

30 Mark Halleen, op. cit.

The *Boolardy Homestead Group*, currently owned by S.W. Richards and Company, continues to be used for the running of the pastoral station. The managers live in the Boolardy Homestead with their three children.

13. 2 PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

Boolardy Homestead Group is situated on very flat country close to the Moocher Creek, also referred to as the House Creek, a tributary of the Roderick River. The group consists of the main homestead and, within close proximity, about 17 other associated buildings of varying ages, usage, construction, and design styles. The main access to the homestead group is via a gate to the west.

Building 1 - Boolardy Homestead - from c. 1888.

The homestead originally comprised of a simple rendered mud brick building running east-west, containing 5 rooms with a separate mud brick and stone kitchen building immediately to the south. Since then various alterations and additions have resulted in a significantly larger house containing 18 rooms which incorporates the original homestead and kitchen into a rough 'U' shaped plan form around a paved courtyard and lawn area.

The rendered 18" thick mud brick walls of the original building have an ashlar effect and are covered by a steeply pitched hipped corrugated iron roof which extends broken-back to cover the verandahs to the north and south facades. The original mulga roof rafters and verandah posts remain intact to the south verandah however the posts to the north facade were replaced with brick pillars and a half wall in the 1950s. The main entrance to the house is located on the north facade and is enhanced by a small gable extending from the verandah roof. Access to the house from the north verandah is possible via several sets of French doors. The north verandah has been partly enclosed with aluminium framed windows to facilitate increased living area in the form of a sun room. This original section of the homestead now contains seven rooms; the lounge, dining room, office, two bedrooms, kitchenette and a guest bathroom which has recently been added by closing off one end of the office.

A large addition to the west end of the original homestead, comprising the bedroom and bathroom wing, was built in two stages in the 1920s and 1950s. Consisting of mud brick verandah enclosures, a granite addition and a timber framed corrugated iron clad section, it includes four bedrooms, a bathroom and toilet with verandah to the north. To the east end of the original homestead, reroofing undertaken in the 1950s and an infill of two rooms has linked the original homestead with the mud brick and stone kitchen building. Running north-south, originally the kitchen building consisted of 3 rooms. However, in recent times, the wall which separated the kitchen and men's dining room has been removed to create one large kitchen/dining/family room, with a separate storeroom to the south end. The steeply pitched corrugated iron roof extends to cover verandahs on both the east and west sides, with a cool room located on the eastern verandah.

Some of the ant bed floors remain in the original section of the homestead, with carpet laid immediately on top. Elsewhere in the building floors are either timber or cement. Ceilings are generally plasterboard, however some ripple iron is evident. The garden to the front (north) of the main house is enclosed with a low stone wall topped with steel pole railings. This replaced the original mud brick wall and was built as a barrier to prevent the rising creek from reaching the homestead during times of flood. Immediately to the north of the homestead is a concrete swimming pool set amongst an

outdoor entertaining area featuring seating and a barbecue constructed of local stone. Recent work to the rear has seen a large pergola constructed over a paved area which was previously lawn. A tall, 90 year old palm tree is a dominant feature of the garden.

Building 2 - Old store - c. 1876.

Believed to be one of the two oldest remaining buildings in the *Boolardy Homestead Group* and used as the original homestead for several years. Situated immediately to the north-east of the main homestead, this simple one room hut is constructed from random sandstone, sometimes referred to as Murchison stone, collected from the nearby Moocher Creek and mud mortar. The small white washed building has a hipped corrugated iron roof and a corrugated iron lean-to at the rear; this being a later addition. A large stone chimney to the south elevation is a prominent feature of the simple hut which, in keeping with its use as a store, has no windows and, initially, only one door to the east facade. The timber for the door surrounds and all the roof timber is hand hewn mulga. Internally, the adzed mulga shelves remain in place and the floor is a combination of cement and stone pavers.

Building 3 - Shepherd's Cottage - c. 1876.

Purported to be the oldest building in the group, the cottage is also of local stone and mud mortar construction. The small building has a ripple iron clad door, one small window and a fireplace. Like Building 2, the timbers are hand hewn mulga and the external walls are white washed over a protective lime plaster.

Building 4 - Blacksmith's shop.

See Building 6.

Building 5 - Feed, fuel and windmill rooms. (fmr Chaff house, buggy shed and windmill room)

See Building 6.

Building 6 - Saddle, harness and motorcycle rooms.

Buildings 4, 5 and 6 are situated to the east of the homestead, in a rough line running north from the shepherd's cottage (Building 3) and are all of similar construction. Built of local stone with steeply pitched corrugated iron roofs and whitewashed walls coated with a protective lime plaster. The bellows are still in place in the blacksmith's shop. An interesting feature of the saddle room are the two saddle racks consisting of a central pole with saplings passed through a bored hole all of mulga construction. Each rack could accommodate about six saddles each and could be turned for easy access.

Building 7 - Store, office and bookkeeper's room - 1954.

This square building of granite and cement brick construction has a hipped corrugated iron roof which extends broken-back to cover surrounding verandahs, which are supported on timber posts. Granite has been used to lower walls. The building consists of three rooms which were used as a large storeroom, office and bookkeeper's room.

Building 8 - Jackeroo's quarters - c. 1910 and 1998.

Located immediately to the west of Building 7, this building was originally timber framed and clad with weatherboards with a hipped CGI roof. However, in 1998 all the timber walls were removed due to severe white ant damage and replaced with a transportable building which sits under the

original iron roof. The original chimney and bathroom remain intact to the south and south-west facades respectively.

Building 9 - Meathouse - 1919.

Situated immediately to the south of the homestead kitchen building, this timber framed structure has a steeply pitched dutch gable corrugated iron roof with a gable extending to the east to cover the entrance. The walls are of weatherboard construction to half height with fly wire extending up to the underside of the roof.

Building 10 - Engine room - 1949.

Situated immediately to the south of the Meathouse, the walls of this small timber framed building have been reclad with shadowline. There is a distinctive semi-circular corrugated iron roof to the main section with a lean-to roof extending to the south.

Building 11 - Married couple/cook's quarters - 1952.

Located immediately to the east of the Homestead kitchen, this building is of timber frame construction and clad with fibro sheeting and contains two rooms and a bathroom. The hipped corrugated iron roof extends broken-back to cover surrounding verandahs, which have been enclosed to the north-east corner to form the bathroom.

Building 12 - Cart shed - 1918.

The sawn timber frame of this large structure was originally covered by a distinctive corrugated iron curved roof which was removed following a cyclone in the 1960s. It has been replaced with a mono-pitched corrugated iron roof to the main central section of the shed. Open on both sides, the roof is supported on thick timber posts. The building has a large extension to the southern end. Adjoining the east and west ends are timber framed, weatherboard clad buildings with distinctive curved corrugated iron roofs. The western section contains four rooms of 10x12 and a bathroom. The verandah, which ran down the length of the western facade, was badly damaged and removed during Cyclone Vance in 1999.

Building 13 - F. Wittenoom House - 1952.

This square cottage, situated to the south-west of the Boolardy Homestead, is of local stone and iron construction. Originally consisting of four rooms, two further rooms were added c1965. The name 'F. Wittenoom' is carved into a stone above the front door.

Condition

The condition of the *Boolardy Homestead Group* is generally sound to good. Due to the ongoing use of most of the buildings they continue to be maintained, including the whitewashing of the walls.

Other buildings on site

There are a number of other buildings and structures within the *Boolardy Homestead Group* which contribute to a full understanding of the place and therefore are noted on the site plan. These items include the windmill man's

house, underground tank, vehicle shed and hangar and the killing pen, hay and milking shed.³¹

Associated sites

There are also a number of places located just outside the *Boolardy Homestead Group*, including two of the original six corrugated iron clad Aboriginal workers' houses, located approximately 100 metres to the south, and four wells.

Further afield from the Homestead group, but nevertheless very significant components of Boolardy Station are its two shearing sheds. Situated approximately 25 kilometres north of the Boolardy Homestead, the 'Top Shed' and adjacent corrugated iron clad shearer's quarters (built early 1920s), feature distinctive semi-circular curved corrugated iron roofs. Located at Ngatta Pool, approximately 10 kilometres to the south of the homestead, and no longer in use, the bottom shearing shed (c.1880s) is of mulga timber and corrugated iron construction. Nearby are the shearer's quarters, kitchen and dining room, all of local stone and iron construction.³²

Boolardy Station also contains a number of unmarked European and Aboriginal graves located near the airstrip as well as several stone water tanks which were built in the 1950s, including one on the northern boundary of the property which has an 8,000 litre capacity.

13.3 COMPARATIVE INFORMATION

Boolardy Homestead Group is characteristic of a number of station homestead groups in the Murchison district in terms of the grouping of the homestead together with a series of outbuildings to form a station complex. The use of local construction materials such as mud brick, stone and mulga is also evident in a number of other station buildings in the Murchison. Such use of materials is evident at Twin Peaks where the original homestead (c. 1900) is a two-roomed mud brick and stone building. This building is now incorporated within the larger Homestead built in 1919. Elsewhere in the Shire of Murchison, stone has been used as a major resource for building, as is evident at Yuin, Meeberie and Mt Narryer Stations. The distinctive curved roof buildings constructed by Alf Couch can also be seen at Wooleen Station. Similar shearing sheds on Woolgorong, Nookawarra and Meka Stations have been demolished.³³

13.4 REFERENCES

National Trust Assessment Exposition, 2/9/1985.

³¹ The site plan also indicates the location of buildings and structures that no longer exist, however are worthy of identification as they assist in mapping the overall development of the *Boolardy Homestead Group*. These items include the wash house and old bathroom.

³² The two shearing sheds and associated buildings were not inspected by the consultant as part of this assessment.

³³ Nixon & Lefroy, op. cit., pp.129, 180, 210 ; & Suba, T., 'Shire of Murchison Municipal Inventory', prepared for the Shire of Murchison, 1996.

13.5 FURTHER RESEARCH

The significance of the place to the local Aboriginal community should be investigated.

Further assessment work should be undertaken of the Ngatta Pool buildings and Top shearing shed.

The very detailed research carried out by Mr R.F.B. Lefroy should be used as an important source for any additional work into the history of *Boolardy Homestead Group* and the shearing sheds, including the preparation of a Conservation Plan for the place.