



ACT Heritage Council

BACKGROUND INFORMATION TIMOTHY BEARD'S STATION SITE (BLOCKS 21 AND 2081, JERRABOMBERRA)

At its meeting of 12 November 2020 the ACT Heritage Council decided that the Timothy Beard's Station Site was not eligible for provisional registration.

The information contained in this report was considered by the ACT Heritage Council in assessing the nomination for the Timothy Beard's Station Site against the heritage significance criteria outlined in s10 of the *Heritage Act 2004*.

Timothy Beard was among the first group of Europeans in the early 1820s to occupy land around what is now the ACT. His men squatted on the land near the modern-day suburb of Beard to run his small stock of cattle. However, his tenure was not long as others soon took advantage of the land sales system to purchase the land and force him out. In the following decades the land underwent a number of uses from various owners, but there is little evidence of any long term occupation surviving the ploughing, quarrying, rail works and other later development.

HISTORY

The Ngunnawal people are traditionally affiliated with the lands within the Canberra region. In this citation, 'Aboriginal community' refers to the Ngunnawal people and other Aboriginal groups within the ACT who draw significance from the place. Whilst the term 'Aboriginal community' acknowledges these groups in the ACT, it is recognised that their traditional territories extend outside contemporary borders. These places attest to a rich history of Aboriginal connection to the area. The Aboriginal history of the ACT extends from the present day back many thousands of years, and is evidenced by both the tangible and intangible aspects of Aboriginal culture and history; with the earliest evidence of Aboriginal people in the region dating back to over 25,000 years ago (Flood, 1995:116; and Theden-Ringl, 2016:26).

European colonisers sought locations with good access to food, water and shelter – and the means of reaching them. In many cases the settlers found or were shown the pathways that Aboriginal people already used through their use of country. In 1820, with the help of Aboriginal guides, Charles Throsby and his exploration party were the first Europeans to see the Limestone Plains. Further excursions extended Throsby's recording of the area. Under his instructions, James Vaughan, Joseph Wild and Charles Throsby Smith (Charles Throsby's nephew) followed the Molonglo River to the junction with the Queanbeyan River, near what is now the suburb of Oaks Estate, on Friday the 8th of December 1820. Their reports of fertile plains and well supplied rivers soon attracted settlers to the area. (Brown, 2014: 10-11; Lea-Scarlett, 1968:3 and 1981:1; Watson, 1927; and Australian Bureau of Statistics, 1931).

The first European settlers in the region were the employees of John Joshua Moore, who set up a large stock grazing station in what is now the suburb of Acton. Soon to follow and acquire most of the land that now comprises the ACT were Robert Campbell, James Ainslie (Campbell's overseer), George Thomas Palmer, John Macpherson, Thomas Walker and Terence Aubrey Murray. These landholdings were primarily used for grazing of stock by overseers. Apart from Macpherson, it was not until the mid- to late-1830s that many of the landowners actually lived on their holdings and began to form a community.

In the immediate area of Oaks Estate was the location of Timothy Beard's squatting station, and it was his employees that established the station in in the early- to mid- 1820s. His station huts were located between what was later the Queanbeyan-Cooma Railway line and the Molonglo River, a little over 2kms downstream from the Molonglo/Queanbeyan River confluence where Oaks Estate was created in the late 1880s. Beard's station was called 'Queenbeeann' on Robert Hoddle's 1832 survey of the Limestone Plains, but it and the origins of the name of today's city of Queanbeyan has variously been spelled "Quinbean", "Queenbeean", "Queenbeearm", "Queinbein", or other variations according to various sources so it could variably be written Que[i][e][a]nbe[e][y][a][n][e] all of which are used interchangeable throughout this document.

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Joined spatially by the Molonglo River are Kowen and Quinbean, which Koch (2009:151-153) notes have a similar root meaning tied up in the word *Kuwin*. Koch also notes that Beard's run was probably pronounced "*Kuwinbiyan*" (the station name being the earliest known example of the use of the word, it is likely to be the closest to the actual name of...well, *something* in the area – we can't actually be sure what *Kuwin* was really referring to); but that the secondary element *-biyan* relates more to the type of place being described by the name and is likely linked to the river or landforms that they share in common; although it should be noted that the *Ngunnawal Language Handbook* does not provide any clues to a possible meaning.

First Grants 1789-1825 and the Introduction of Land Sales from 1825

European land tenure in Australia started in 1789 with a system of land grants administered by the Governor. This was essentially an autocracy where the Governor could choose who was given a grant and include conditions dictating what the land was to be used for or requiring the grantee to provide certain services (CBCS, 1911:235-236). In 1825, a system of sales via private tender was introduced and by 1831, it was decided that Crown land would only be sold by auction (CBCS, 1911:236).

Exploration of the country opened up new tracks into rich pastures that attracted many graziers to take their stock out past the limits of settlement, but more importantly, beyond the Government's ability to make people pay for the land they were using – in the early 1830s, this was the initial usage of the term 'squatter' in which it meant someone who settled on Crown Land without licence and was akin to a bushranger; however, by the end of the 1830s, it had become associated with successful and well-to-do pastoralists with vast tracts of land and was an altogether respectable term (King, 1957: 46).

In 1829, the NSW government proclaimed that the recently discovered area, today the ACT, formed part of two counties, Murray and Cowley. The Murrumbidgee River that runs north-west to south-east through the region was the boundary between the counties. The counties were divided into smaller cadastral units called parishes.

Meanwhile, between 1826 and 1838, other large pastoral estates, including Ginninderra, Jerrabomberra and Yarralumla, were established in the best grasslands on river flats and basal valley slopes in the County of Murray (Navin Officer 2004, 20). Shortly after learning about the fertile plains of Ginninderra Creek, in the Parish of Ginninderra, from his uncle, Robert Campbell, George Thomas Palmer Senior, also established a station there in 1826 (Gillespie 1991: 10). He would later in 1829 submit a formal application to purchase the land. In the Parish of Queanbeyan, John Palmer, who arrived with the First Fleet, established Jerrabomberra (Lea Scarlett 1968: 10).

Timothy Beard

In Gloucester County Court, Timothy Beard, a carpenter (notably a trade in demand in the colony of Australia at the time), was sentenced to Transportation for Life on 13 March 1805 (Monaro Pioneers). It was not until 12 July 1806 that he arrived in Australia on the *Fortune*. He was assigned to Thomas Jamison, Surgeon General for NSW and located in Cabramatta. After eight years he was transferred to Jamison's son John, who was Superintendent of Government Stock. In 1818, Beard was conditionally pardoned, but continued to work for Jamison for some time, while also opening The Beehive Inn (later renamed The Bay Horse Inn) outside of Liverpool. (Meyers, 2010:77-80; Monaro Pioneers; Lea-Scarlett, 1968:14)

In 1821, Beard married Elizabeth Hennigan and the two purchased the Robin Hood Inn on Campbelltown Road near Varroville (Meyers, 2010:78; Monaro Pioneers). He remained in the Sydney area and it is not known if he personally visited his squatting runs in the Canberra region; he was certainly not at Quinbean for any length of time as he appears in court proceedings several times from being robbed at his residence at the Bay Horse Inn in 1824, 1827 and 1829 with him appearing in the trials of the offenders several months after each event (Monaro Pioneers).

As noted by the *Monaro Pioneers* website, a number of assumptions have to be taken to continue the the story of Timothy Beard. By 1830, his stepson, Joseph had come of age (turned 21) and had moved to the Limestone Plains area to run the properties in that area. There were two parcels of land, one is the present-day Lanyon (a name given to the property by its later owners) about 30 kilometres south of Canberra on the Murrumbidgee and the other was near the abattoir at Queanbeyan and the property was named Queanbean. Around 1830 it is believed Timothy and Joseph moved further afield to the Cooma region (Monaro Pioneers).

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Who was at the station?

Tim Beard had a "...string of squattages ... conducted by his convict stockmen while he carried on his business of the "Bay Horse" Inn near Campbelltown (Lea-Scarlett, 1981). In the mid-1820s, Beard sent some of his stock and convict workers to the recently reported Limestone Plains at the junction of the Queanbeyan and Molonglo Rivers. By 1826, he had 120 cattle in the region, although how many were at Quinbeen is unknown as he had other squattages nearby. Beard had three men working for him at the time: Sambal Hall (dairyman – on ticket of leave), William Carter (herdsman – assigned convict worker) and Simon Mills (free, having served 7 years) (Williams, 1997:2-3); although the Monaro Pioneers note that the 1828 Census had only two people named as working for Beard at Limestone Plains where he had 200 acres on which he had 10 horses and 230 horned cattle with William Carter as a herdsman and Sambel Hall as a dairyman; while Meyers (2010:77) uses the same resource to suggest all three were still there while Beard was noted as being in Cabramatta as an innkeeper.

Beard loses the land

John Stephen, from an influential Sydney legal family and son of a Puisne Judge (one of the lower ranked judges) of the Supreme Court of new South Wales, tried to take over Beard's 'Quinbean', but apparently it "...was withdrawn because that station was not large enough to fill his grant..." and it was swapped for another squatting site further south (Lea-Scarlett, 1968:13); although Martin (1978:36) suggests the attempt may have been in partnership with Beard; regardless, the claim was not accepted on a technicality and was unsuccessful.

The second, and successful, attempt to legally acquire the land came from John Palmer. In 1828, when Beard had three men caring for his land beside the river at "Quinbean", he was officially ordered to quit and a report on the affair added that "Quinbean is a hackneyed native name, of a part of the country not yet surveyed" (Lea-Scarlett, 1981). It seems that beard had plenty of time to get his affairs in order as it was not until 5 December 1832 that the Government Gazette advertised John Palmer's application to purchase 640 acres at Quinbeane and this was not finalised until the middle of 1833.

What happened to Beard?

A number of assumptions now have to be taken to continue the saga. By 1830, Beard's stepson, Joseph, had come of age (turned 21) and had moved to the Limestone Plains area to run the properties in that area. There were two parcels of land, one is the present day Lanyon (a name given to the property by its later owners) and the other the Quinbeane squattage. Around 1830, Joseph concentrated on the Lanyon property while Timothy moved further afield to the Cooma region at Ironmungy with 600 head of cattle. Over the next decade followed a series of acquisitions of land around Sutton Forest eventually leading to the family owning almost 100,000 acres of land by the time of his death (Monaro Pioneers).

Timothy Beard died on 20 December 1848 at the age of 86 and is buried at Liverpool Pioneer Cemetery. His epitaph reads (cited in *Monaro Pioneers*):

***An industrious man I have been
Many troubles I have seen
In this world I have done my best
And here I lay my bones to rest***

The story of Timothy Beard during this time is certainly incomplete and more research would certainly prove interesting. What role did the station have in hiding stolen goods for the bushranger Tennant? What was Beard's connection to the Reverend Marsden who supported his application for emancipation and are their appearances in the Governor's despatches related (Marsden is noted as "Discontented, intriguing and vindictive" in opposition of Governor Macquarie while Beard is noted several times in 1820, 1830, 1832, 1833 and 1835). The lack of reference to early sources can be seen in the 1938 *The Story of Queanbeyan 1838-1938*; while this is one of the earlier histories that note Beard's run, it is clear that not much is remembered about him and that later histories make greater use of official records. Here it is assumed that he had a small flock of sheep and that it was Beard himself who was taking them around the region. It did note however, the attempted takeover by John Stephen Jnr and includes Surveyor Dixon's notes that the station "...is at present occupied without any permission from the government, by a man named Timothy beard, who lays claim to about a dozen other stations in this part of the country" although in this

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version of the story Stephen's claim as successful. However, resolving the complete history of Timothy Beard is beyond the scope required to assess the possible remains of his Quinbeen station site and is left to other researchers in the future.

DESCRIPTION

Surveyor Robert Hoddle's map of February 1833 (Figure 1) shows the site of Timothy Beard's station huts had by then, become part of Lot 4 (later portion 14 in Parish of Queanbeyan) County of Murray, which would have been part of the Goulburn Plains District, at 'Queenbeeann', and that it was now part of John Palmer's 640 acre parcel of land. The location is described by Lea-Scarlet (1968:14) as sited on the "...flat beside the Queanbeyan River... just where a natural terrace gives entry to the Limestone Plains".



Figure 1 excerpt of Hoddle (1833) survey map overlain on modern aerial imagery showing "Queenbeeann"

Cross (1985, cited in Williams, 1997:2-3) describes the huts at Quinbeen as being of bark and the 1834 White survey shows three buildings and some yards (Figure 2); while Williams notes other material remains, such as sandstock bricks and sawn timber, in the area suggesting that there was habitation for quite some time, although not necessarily in the same location or reusing the same buildings. However, it is also noted that the area has been used as a dumping spot and that it has been subject to extensive ploughing and erosion, while Moriarty's valuation for the land did not mention any buildings (Williams, 1997:2-3).



Figure 2 White, H. F. (1834). Excerpt of *Survey of part of the Morumbidgee and country south of Lake George*

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Current field examinations show no clear sign of the original location, either as per the georectified Hoddle map or exploring nearby locations that would follow early European settler patterns (e.g. flat areas or created platforms, in protected areas or with commanding views near to resources such as water and tracks); however, the area is quite overgrown even in the few small locations of high potential (Figure 3 and Figure 4).

Figure 4 North of the railway line, along the break of slope for the top of the spur is concrete box drain/water-race with a number of sluice gates to control where the water comes out. This feature has been here since at least the mid-1950s. (ACT Heritage, 2020)



Figure 3 Heavily vegetated remnant in the highest probability area, wedged between a small creek, quarried areas and industrial development. (ACT Heritage, 2020)



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Figure 5 Between the railway and the Molonglo River, the high point of the low spur is mostly intact but does not show evidence of the huts. (ACT Heritage, 2020)

The area to the north of the train tracks was included in the field examination as it is in an area of high potential based on early European settler patterns and because Houghton's 1866 survey map of Yass Road (Figure 6) shows a small track leading to the open paddock and a crossing of the Molonglo River, which could equate to an early access track to possible huts. The path leads around the contours of the spur that occurs there and makes the upper part of the spur (being protected from flood waters and located above the fertile alluvial soils) a potential location for settlement; however field inspection as well as historical research into maps and aerial imagery does not indicate the presence of any structures in that area; however, if this was the location of the huts, then it has remained relatively undisturbed by ploughing or other development.



Figure 6 Houghton 1866 excerpt of Yass Road survey with access track (highlighted)

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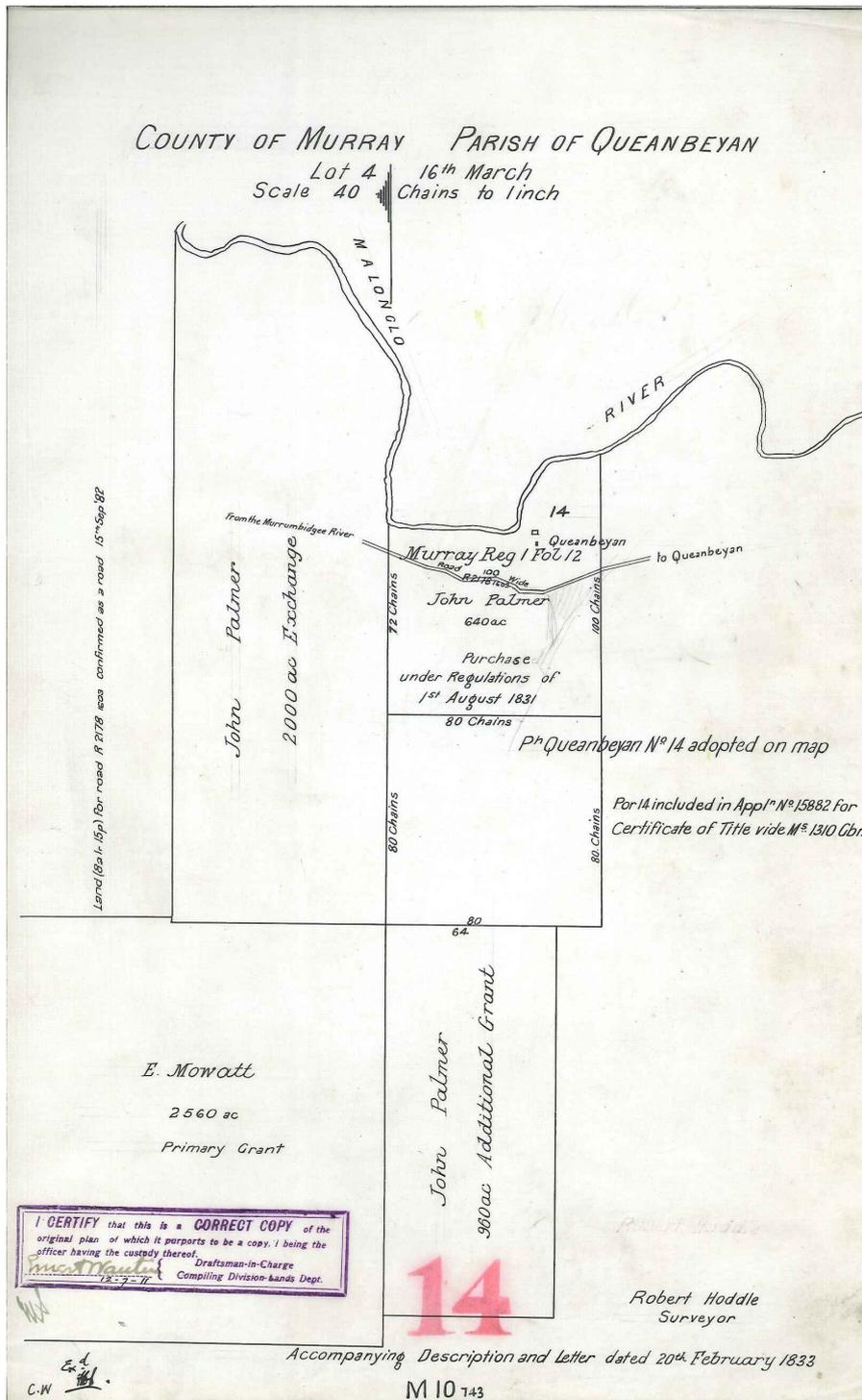


Figure 7 Portion Plan Lot 4 County of Murray Parish of Queanbeyan, surveyed by Hoddle 1833.

Physical condition and integrity

No remains of the original squatting site were found.

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SITE PLAN

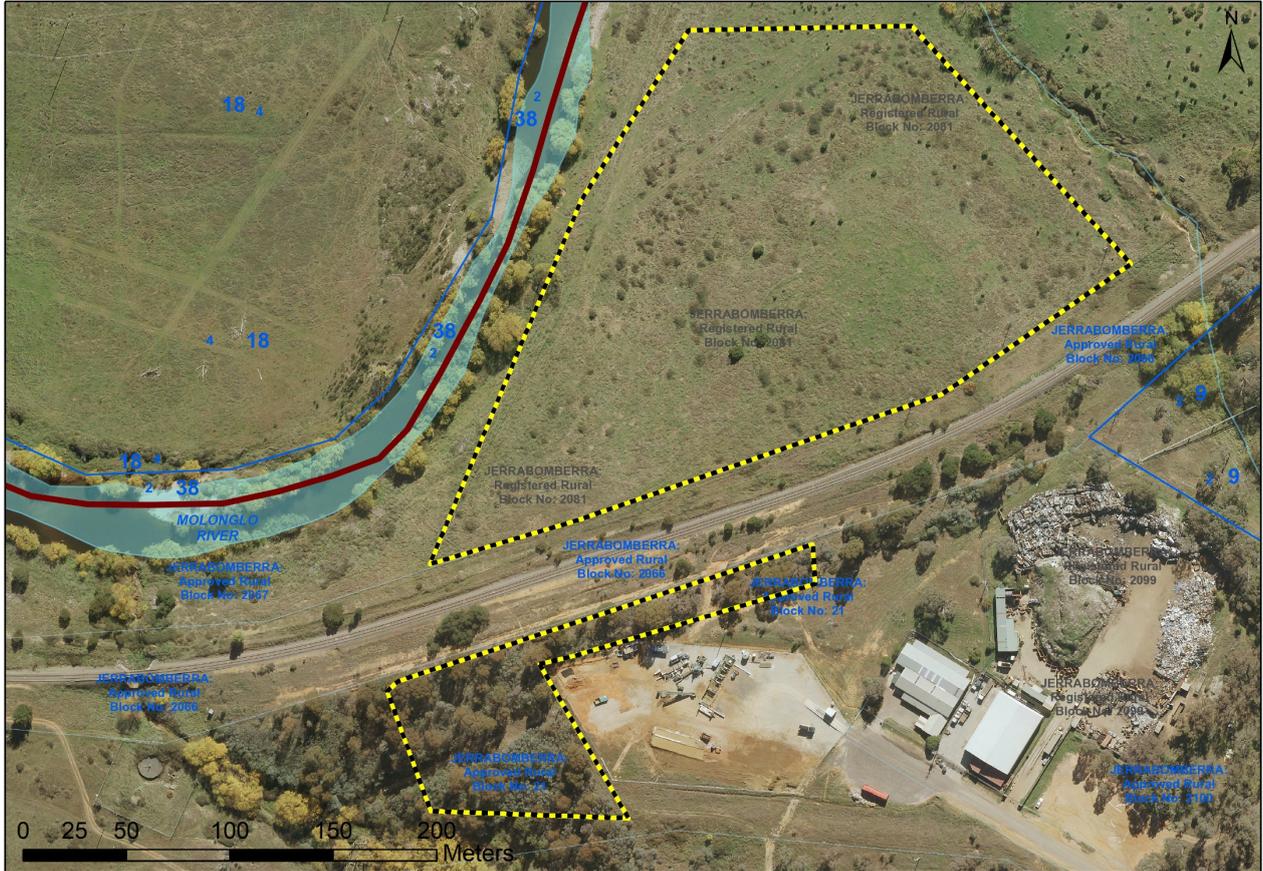


Image 1 Timothy Beard’s Station Site boundary (area indicates land surveyed for signs of the site)

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