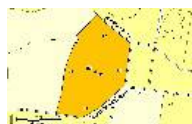


Victorian Heritage Database Report  
**DARRA**

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**Location:**

490 SLATE QUARRY ROAD MEREDITH, GOLDEN PLAINS SHIRE

**Heritage Status / Level of Significance:**

Registered

**Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) Number: H0268**

**Listing Authority: VHR**

**Heritage Overlay Number: HO11**

**Statement of Significance:**

What is significant?

Darra, originally known as Durdiwarrah pastoral station, was licensed with 24,000 acres to Charles Augustus Von Steiglitz in 1842. Charles Augustus Von Steiglitz, who arrived in Port Phillip in 1839, was a member of a family whose father and brothers were prominent pastoralists in Tasmania. Steiglitz, after whom the gold mining township is named, sold the run in 1853. In 1854 the property was advertised as containing the Eclipse

Hotel.

W T N Champ acquired the run in 1864. In 1856 Champ was first premier of Tasmania when responsible government was granted. Champ, also formerly the commandant of Port Arthur Penal Settlement, came to Victoria in 1857 to be Inspector-General of Penal Establishments, and was to oversee the development of Pentridge Prison. He maintained an interest in farming and pastoralism from his time in Tasmania and when he retired in 1868 he focussed his attention to Darra.

There are two significant buildings at Darra. An 1840s structure, probably an early residence, survives as an outbuilding close to (and formerly linked to) the main house. It is built of rubble sandstone walls, and divided into three rooms including a kitchen with fireplaces and external chimneys. Shingles are visible internally under the later corrugated iron roof. There are a variety of finishes, including hard plaster walls, a hessian lined ceiling with early wallpaper remnants, and a lath and plaster ceiling.

The first date of construction of the main house was in 1849 by a Scottish stonemason, James Watson. It has also been extended at various dates. The core of the house retains the clear plan of four main rooms symmetrically arranged about a central passageway leading to the front door with a graceful Georgian style fanlight. The main rooms have timber dados and panelling with an Edwardian character. The sitting room with a canted bay window located at the south-west corner of the house was added in the c1890s. Any trace of an original rear service wing has gone, replaced by single storey wings added in the 1950s and 1960s. The front verandah is a trellis for a large wisteria, and is overlooked by a pair of large Dutch elms on the front lawn.

How is it significant?

Darra is of architectural and historical significance to the State of Victoria.

Why is it significant?

Darra is architecturally and historically significant for the intact 1840s outhouse. This structure is evidence of improvements carried out by squatters before security of land tenure was acquired. It is a building from the first era of settlement in Victoria. The simple construction contains important evidence relating to early decorative finishes. The main house, although progressively altered and improved, survives with its essential Colonial Georgian character intact.

Darra is historically significant for its associations with the Von Steiglitz family, particularly with Charles Von Steiglitz after whom the nearby gold mining township of Steiglitz was named. Darra is also historically significant for its associations with W T N Champ, a notable figure in the development of the penal system of Victoria.

Heritage Study / Consultant	
Construction Date Range	1840 -
Architect / Designer	
Municipality	GOLDEN PLAINS SHIRE
Other names	
Hermes number	834
Property number	

*This place/object may also be State heritage listed. Check the Victorian Heritage Database. For further details, contact the local Council or go to Planning Schemes Online*