

## Ballan Homestead Site – Historical Background

Ballan homestead was originally established by Robert William von Stieglitz (also spelled Steiglitz in various Australian documents) in 1838.

Robert von Stieglitz, born in County Tyrone, Northern Ireland in 1816, emigrated to Tasmania with his brother, John Lewis Stieglitz in 1833; following in the footsteps of older brothers Frederick, Francis, and Henry von Stieglitz, who had arrived in Tasmania in 1829-1831 and received grants of land. In 1835, Robert von Stieglitz heard news of the fine, well-watered country of the Port Phillip district (Victoria) that was attracting numerous Tasmanian sheep farmers and beginning to open up to colonial settlement. With companions John Anthony Cowie and David Vere Stead, von Stieglitz decided to travel to Port Phillip in search of good grazing land, transporting a flock of three-hundred and sixty sheep and several horses. The group landed in mid 1836 and headed to Bell Post, north-west of Geelong, to live on a station recently set up by some of von Stieglitz's business partners (von Stieglitz 1876).



Figure 1: Studio portrait of Robert William von Stieglitz, (nd) (RHSV P-71.001-Pi).

In early 1838, von Stieglitz, in his own words, “got a strong desire to form a station of my own, as our sheep were getting too numerous for the run, being hemmed in on all sides, watered by new settlers....” (von Stieglitz 1876). von Stieglitz shared his views with companions Cowie and Stead, and together they decided to set out north to find grazing land away from the developing Geelong town. Within two days they reached a spacious grassland along the upper Moorabool River and drew lots between them to claim it. It fell to Cowie and Stead, who thereafter set up a run they named “Bungeeltop.” Continuing north for about eight miles (12.9 km), von Stieglitz came upon a chain of ponds on the Werribee River; and finding the water fresh and surrounded by grassy banks, he decided to settle. He applied to the Commissioner of Crown Lands for a pastoral licence, and in April 1838, was permitted occupancy over 4836 acres between Werribee and Moorabool Rivers (Figure 2) for an annual fee of £10 for every 4000 sheep and a police tax of ½d per head (von Stieglitz 1876). von Stieglitz named the station “Ballan” (“Ballen”), which according to several historians was the name of his home estate in Northern Ireland (Billis & Kenyon 1932, Blake 1976). von Stieglitz family records, however, also refer to the property “Balindyeapp” (or “Ballindyapp”), which may actually be a name of Aboriginal origin, thereafter shortened to “Ballan” (Clark 2014).

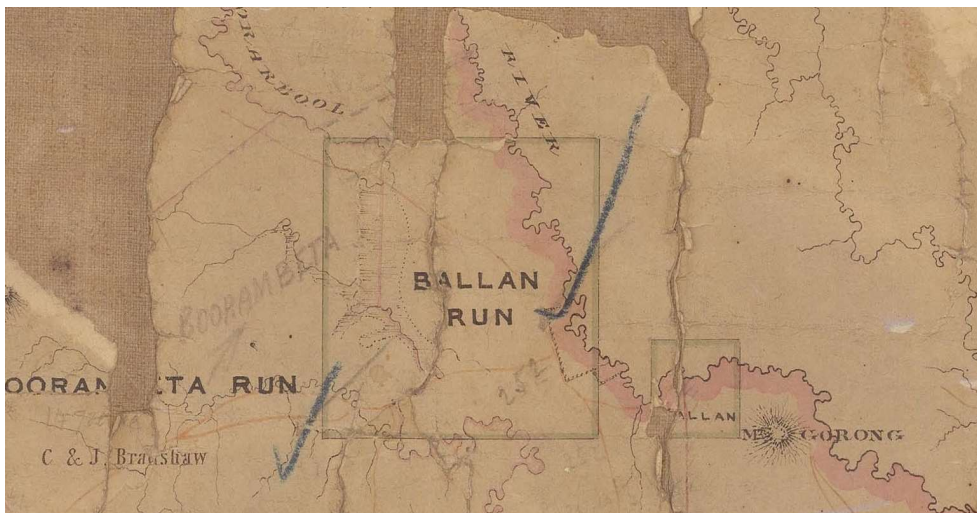


Figure 2: Map of Portland Bay district pastoral holdings (Surveyor General's Dept nd.), showing Ballan Run.

von Stieglitz subsequently returned to Bell Post to remove his flocks of sheep to Ballan Station, and then set about building sheep pens and a dwelling on the land above the western bank of the Werribee River. He initially constructed a “sort of tent” for himself:

*I could not stand straight even in the centre, and it was just my length when stretched on the ground. I thatched it with reeds from the creek close by, and put some coarse grass at one end with a row of pegs in the ground to keep it from moving, for my bed, and this, covered with a blanket, I lay on for months (von Stieglitz 1876).*

He then employed two shepherds and a hutkeeper to help him build up the station, and constructed a more permanent residence for himself:

*At this time servants could not be got except from Van Dieman's Land, and then they were very expensive, and I could not afford to keep any but two shepherds and one hutkeeper, who had to cook and remove the folds (sheep pens) back for me, and build himself a kitchen or go without. He built a hut like mine. There was no fireplace, but a good wood fire was kept burning outside the open shed.*

*... I soon set to and built a better house, four posts in the ground, eight feet by 10 apart (2.4 x 3 m), filling up the openings with sods, the roof being thatched with reeds from the creek. I forgot a window; the loss was small as the door was open all day. I made a bed and really felt myself very comfortable in this little hut (von Stieglitz 1876).*

In 1839, von Stieglitz received a letter from his brother John, informing him that he and his wife, Emma (nee Cowie; sister of John Anthony Cowie), were moving to Victoria and hoping to visit Ballan Station, along with their companion E. R. Bostock. von Stieglitz quickly commenced building another, larger house at Ballan to cater for them:

*So I set to work to build another with three rooms, but before it was finished the party arrived. I made every provision for my brother and his wife, and the hut was then so small, the door could not be opened till all rose and stood aside; fully seven people in a hut, eight feet by ten feet. But soon we had the other hut ready. (von Stieglitz 1876).*

John von Stieglitz subsequently took up a pastoral licence on the eastern side of Werribee River, opposite Ballan station, and established a sheep run and homestead he named “Ballynee” (von Stieglitz 1876, R. V. B & A. S. K. 18 July 1936). During their time at Ballynee, Emma von Stieglitz drew several sketches of Robert von Stieglitz’s Ballan homestead.

In these sketches, von Stieglitz’s 1838 four-post timber and sod hut is shown situated facing east on the top of a slight rise above the western bank of Werribee River. The hut has a thatched hip roof, and an external stone chimney against the southern wall. To the south of the hut is a rectangular timber shed or store. See Figure 3 and Figure 4.

The three-room house that von Stieglitz built in 1839 for John and Emma’s visit is shown situated above and to the west the 1838 hut, on the crest of a more elevated slope above the Werribee River. The house is rectangular in design and faces towards the river, with a central door flanked by two windows. Two matching windows also occur in the rear, western wall. The house appears to be constructed of timber framework with a combination of horizontally and vertically timber clad walls and a thatched bark gable roof. The front and rear walls also appear to be plastered with lime-washed mud or clay. A large, external stone masonry chimney is situated against the southern wall – this chimney appears to be supported via diagonal braces dug into the ground. A second, smaller external stone masonry chimney is located against the rear, western wall, near the north-western corner of the house. A timber post-and-rail fence runs to the north of the house, and a sheep yard enclosed in a diagonally braced timber fence occurs to the south. See Figure 4 and Figure 5.



**Figure 3:** Sketch of Robert von Stieglitz's first hut (built 1838) and shed / store at Ballan, by Emma von Stieglitz, 1839 (reproduced in von Stieglitz, E.; K. R. von Stieglitz. (ed.) 1964). The sketch is orientated facing broadly west away from Werribee River, and appears to have been drawn early in Emma's visit before the larger three-room house was completed. The beginnings of its construction appear to be visible in the background, along with timber-fenced sheep yards.



**Figure 4:** Sketch of Robert von Stieglitz's Ballan settlement by Emma von Stieglitz, 1839 (reproduced in von Stieglitz, E.; K. R. von Stieglitz. (ed.) 1964). The sketch is orientated facing broadly west from Werribee River and shows von Stieglitz's with original hut and shed / store in the foreground, and the three-roomed house on the crest of the hill in the background.



**Figure 5:** Sketch of Robert von Stieglitz’s residence at Ballan by Emma von Stieglitz, September 1839 (reproduced in von Stieglitz, E.; K. R. von Stieglitz. (ed.) 1964). This sketch shows the larger three-room house that von Stieglitz built in 1839 to prepare for John and Emma’s visit – view facing broadly east with the Werribee River valley in the background.

In 1845, Robert von Stieglitz married Marcella Belcher (born in Dublin, Ireland, in 1828), who then came to live with him on Ballan Station (Anon 28 May 1845). It is likely that von Stieglitz had moved into the main three-room house on the station by this time, and possibly carried out additional improvements to the property in order to provide for the comfort of his new wife.



**Figure 6:** Studio portrait of Marcella Willian von Stieglitz (nee Belcher), (nd) (reproduced in von Stieglitz, E.; K. R. von Stieglitz. (ed.) 1964).

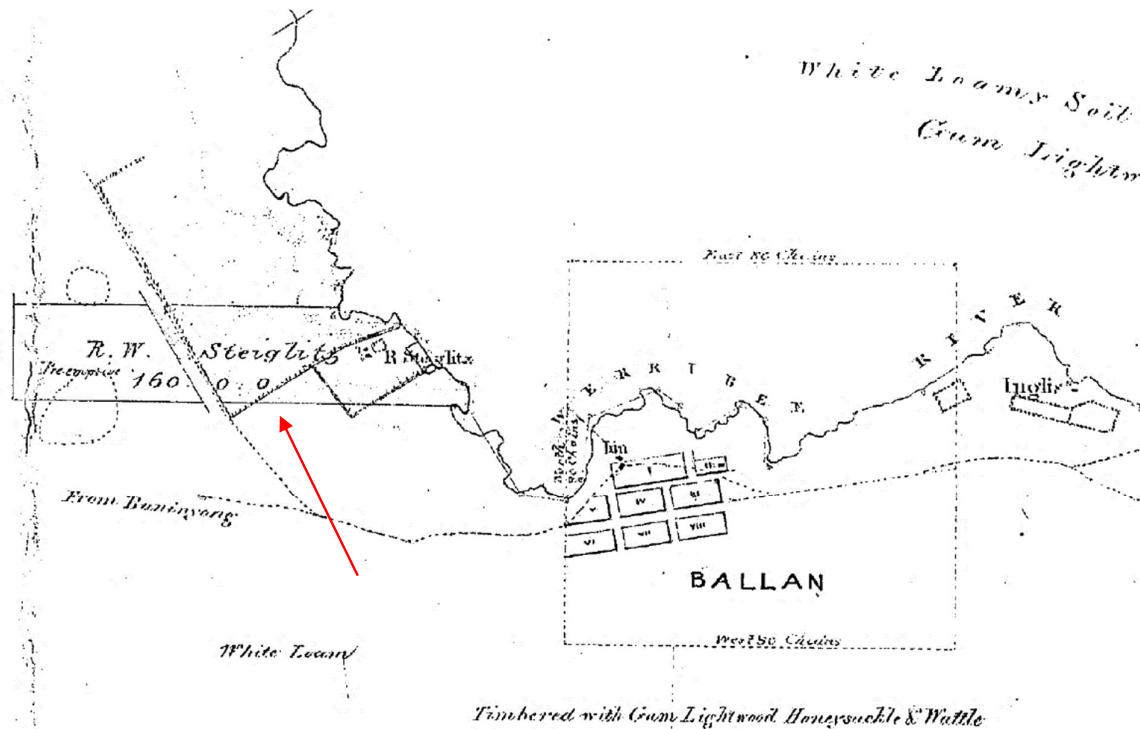
In 1847, land tenure laws in Victoria changed significantly with the proclamation of the Imperial Statute of 28<sup>th</sup> August 1846 and subsequent Order of the Queen in Council of 9<sup>th</sup> March 1847. These orders gave pastoral licensees the opportunity to obtain secure leases of their holdings for a period of up to fourteen years, with fees fixed according to the size of the holding and the number of livestock. During the continuance of any such lease, the land was not open to purchase by anyone except for the lessee. The 1847 order also established the principle of pre-emptive right, whereby the lessee could purchase freehold a portion of the holding not exceeding 160 acres, at a minimum upset price of £1 per acre. Under this system, a homestead and / or other improvements on a pastoral station could be permanently secured (Quick 1883).



Following these changes, von Stieglitz made an application to obtain a lease over Ballan Station – described at the time as 4836 acres 76 chains in area, with grazing capability of 500 head of cattle or 4,000 sheep, and boundaries as follows:

*Bounded by the west branch of the river Weirabee, a plough line (Mickle's boundary,) to the river Moorabool, down the Moorabool to the marked boundary of the County of Grant, by that boundary across to the Weirabee river; on the south by Labilliere; on the north by Meikle; on the east by John Von Stieglitz; on the west by C. and J. Bradshaw. (La Trobe 28 March 1849).*

He also applied to claim his pre-emptive right to purchase 160 acres of Ballan Station. The claim – thereafter known as the “Ballan Pre-Emptive Right” – was surveyed, extending west from the Werribee River and containing his Ballan homestead complex – see Figure 7.



**Figure 7:** 1850 plan of cultivation allotments along the Werribee River at Ballan (Malcolm 1850a), showing Robert von Stieglitz's 160 acre pre-emptive right claim.

The Ballan homestead complex was also surveyed in detail as part of von Stieglitz's claim – see Figure 8. This plan, prepared in 1850, depicts six structures grouped together on a rise above the western bank of the Werribee River. Three rectangular structures – two large and one small – are shaded red and shown enclosed within a fenced area. Red shading of structures on 19<sup>th</sup> century survey plans often denoted stone buildings or composite timber and stone buildings – i.e. timber frame buildings with stone chimneys and fireplaces. One of the larger red-shaded buildings on the plan is likely the three-room house von Stieglitz built in 1839, with the other similar sized building possibly being a second dwelling, and the smaller red-shaded structure possibly a detached kitchen. Another large rectangular building is shown to the north, outside the internally fenced area. This building is shaded yellow, which often indicated a timber only structure, and is likely a shed or store. Finally, two small buildings occur to the west, which may be von Stieglitz's original four post hut and shed / store built in 1838, and / or detached outhouses. A large, fenced garden is shown on the eastern side of the homestead buildings and a small fenced yard – likely a sheep yard – occurs to the north. A “cultivation paddock” is located to the south of the homestead complex, and the whole area is enclosed within a boundary fence.



**Figure 8:** 1850 plan of Ballan village showing details of Robert von Stieglitz's Ballan homestead complex (Malcolm 1850b) – enlargement below



A sketch of Ballan homestead by Emma von Stieglitz in late 1852 shows these additional buildings – see Figure 9. The sketch appears to have been drawn facing broadly north from an entrance gate in the timber post and rail boundary fence, with the homestead complex buildings viewed from the side. What appears to be a lime-washed timber dwelling with a large window on the southern face is visible in the foreground, abutting the internal picket-fenced area. This building has a tall chimney on the western side and a hipped timber roof. Behind this is what appears to be a larger lime-washed timber house with a wide gable roof and possibly a verandah looking out over the Werribee River valley. This may be the three-room house von Stieglitz built in 1839, with extensions added since that time. The roof of a smaller building is just visible in the south-western corner of the internal fenced area. Finally, at least three small buildings occur in a line behind the main homestead buildings – possibly including von Stieglitz 1858 hut and store, and additional stores or outhouses. On the eastern side of the homestead, the garden area surrounded by a picket fence is visible extending down the slope towards the river.



**Figure 9:** Sketch of Robert von Stieglitz’s residence at Ballan by Emma von Stieglitz, November 1852 (reproduced in von Stieglitz, E.; K. R. von Stieglitz. (ed.) 1964). This sketch appears to be facing broadly north, showing the homestead complex as viewed from the side.

In early 1853, Robert von Stieglitz and his wife Marcella left Ballan Station and returned to live in Northern Ireland. However, von Stieglitz maintained ownership of the 160 acre Ballan pre-emptive right allotment, renting the homestead out to a tenant, and kept up the lease over the Ballan Station. Shortly after settling back in Ireland, he met up with his brother-in-law (via Marcella), George Frederick Belcher. Belcher had emigrated to Victoria in 1839 and spent several years working with von Stieglitz at Ballan Station before acquiring his own pastoral run, “Coonangamool,” on the Wimmera River near Jeparit (Brown 1969). After a casual conversation over breakfast during this visit with von Stieglitz, Belcher purchased Ballan homestead and the surrounding pre-emptive right allotment as an investment property. As described by Belcher:

*....“Any news from Melbourne?” said Steiglitz. “Oh, nothing very particular, save that the yield of gold was falling and matters commercial were somewhat depressed.” “That does not trouble me much, thank goodness,” he remarked. “I hold little interest now in Australia. The only property I can call my own is old Ballan, and that is let on lease to a good tenant.” “What rent are you getting for it?” I asked. “One hundred and twenty pounds a year.” “Well,*



*will you clear out altogether and sell the place to me?" "I would at a price." "What do you want for it?" "I'll take fifteen hundred pounds." "It's a bargain," I said, "if you will take my cheque on a Melbourne bank for the purchase money." "All right, the place is yours." Getting writing material, I drew up a bill of sale, which we both signed, and I handed over my cheque on Melbourne. The look of utter astonishment on our host's face beggars description. Selling a property at the end of the earth during a repast and completing the transaction within a few minutes was an experience somewhat new to him. "Why," he said "a similar purchase in Ireland would takes months to complete." "Ah, you forget we know and trust each other. Besides, we do not require the intervention of lawyers on either side." The old historical homestead was mine with rent from the day of purchase, and my unproductive balance at the Melbourne bank reduced one half." (G. F. Belcher quoted in Walsh 25 October 1917).*

von Stieglitz's pastoral lease over Ballan Station was due to be renewed in March 1853. George Belcher was still travelling in Ireland at the time, and his brother, Joseph Henry Belcher, living in Victoria since 1842, renewed the lease in his name (Billis & Kenyon 1932, Brown 1969, R. V. B and A. S. K. 18 July 1936).

In 1854, George Belcher returned to Victoria with his new wife, Julia Maria (nee Pepper), and settled in Geelong. The Ballan Station pastoral lease was transferred to Julia's brother, John Henry Pepper, who had been living in Victoria since the mid 1840s, and Pepper's business partner and Robert von Stieglitz's nephew, William Atkinson, in February that year (Billis & Kenyon 1932). In early 1855, Belcher advertised "Ballan House" and the majority of the 160 acre pre-emptive right allotment for sale or lease, with the following description:

*To be sold upon a long credit, or to be let for a term of years, Ballam House, with 140 acres of excellent agricultural land fronting the River Werribee, adjoining the township of Ballarat, and distant about twenty-eight miles from Benalla. The house is commodious; rent moderate. (Belcher & Inglis 22 March 1855).*

The property apparently did not sell, for Belcher advertised it for sale at auction again in early to mid 1856 (Forster 20 March 1856, Anon 17 May 1856). Shortly thereafter, William Atkinson purchased "Ballan House" and the surrounding pre-emptive right allotment. At the time, Atkinson's widowed mother, Elizabeth Caroline Atkinson, his younger brother Edward, and younger sisters Marian (Marianne) and Agnes, were living in the main residence "Ballan House", whilst William lived in second dwelling close to it on the same property – likely the second, smaller dwelling shown in Emma von Stieglitz's 1852 sketch of the homestead complex. Atkinson and Pepper still held the Ballan Station pastoral lease, and continued to run sheep on the land (Billis & Kenyon 1932, Walsh 24 January 1918).

An 1856 plan of Ballan township, based on the 1850 survey with updated revisions, shows the Ballan homestead as unchanged during this time.



**Figure 10:** 1856 plan of Ballan village showing details of structures at Ballan homestead (Malcolm & Philp 1856).



In 1857, William Atkinson and his family left Ballan homestead, moving into a new residence “Carween” he had constructed within the developing township of Ballan. Atkinson and Pepper also relinquished the pastoral lease over Ballan Station in January that year, and it was transferred back to Joseph Henry Belcher. Atkinson subsequently leased Ballan homestead and the pre-emptive right allotment to Geelong farmer, saddler and storekeeper, John Short.

Over the following decade, Short, his wife, Alicia Ann (nee Turpin), and children Caroline, Ann, James, William, and Emily, lived in the main residence at Ballan homestead, whilst Short’s brother, William, and his wife Sarah, lived in a second nearby dwelling on the property (Billis & Kenyon 1932, Walsh 24 January 1918). In 1859, William Short was shot and killed whilst sitting in front of the fire in his Ballan home by William “Bill” salt, an employee of John Short. Salt was later found hiding in the homestead stable, and when asked why he had killed William Short, his only reply was “God only knows” (Anon 27 May 1859).

John Short and his wife Alicia continued living at Ballan homestead until at least 1867 (Anon. 16 July 1867). In 1868, it appears that Short and his wife moved to a residence he had constructed on Inglis Street in Ballan township, where he also established a general store (Anon 19 July 1900, Rowe & Jacobs 2016).

Shortly thereafter, the 160 acre Ballan pre-emptive right allotment was purchased by Robert Cameron McQualter. McQualter, born in Forfashire, Angus, Scotland in 1824, emigrated to Victoria with his wife Elizabeth (nee Barty) in 1853 and lived for several years at Glen Pedder, Greendale, north-east of Ballan (Walsh 25 January 1917, Walsh 27 June 1918). From ca. the late 1860s to the mid 1890s, McQualter lived with his wife Elizabeth at Ballan homestead, raising their eight children Andrew, Margaret, Robert, Jessie, Alexander, Caroline, Elizabeth, and Mary Anne. McQualter ran a successful sheep and dairy farm on the property, and over the years expanded his holdings to include two additional grazing lots (allotments 14 and 15) on the northern side of the Ballan pre-emptive right (Anon 11 April 1888, Anon 14 February 1895, L. A. Fairburn & Co 19 April 1890, Walsh 25 January 1917, Walsh 27 June 1918).

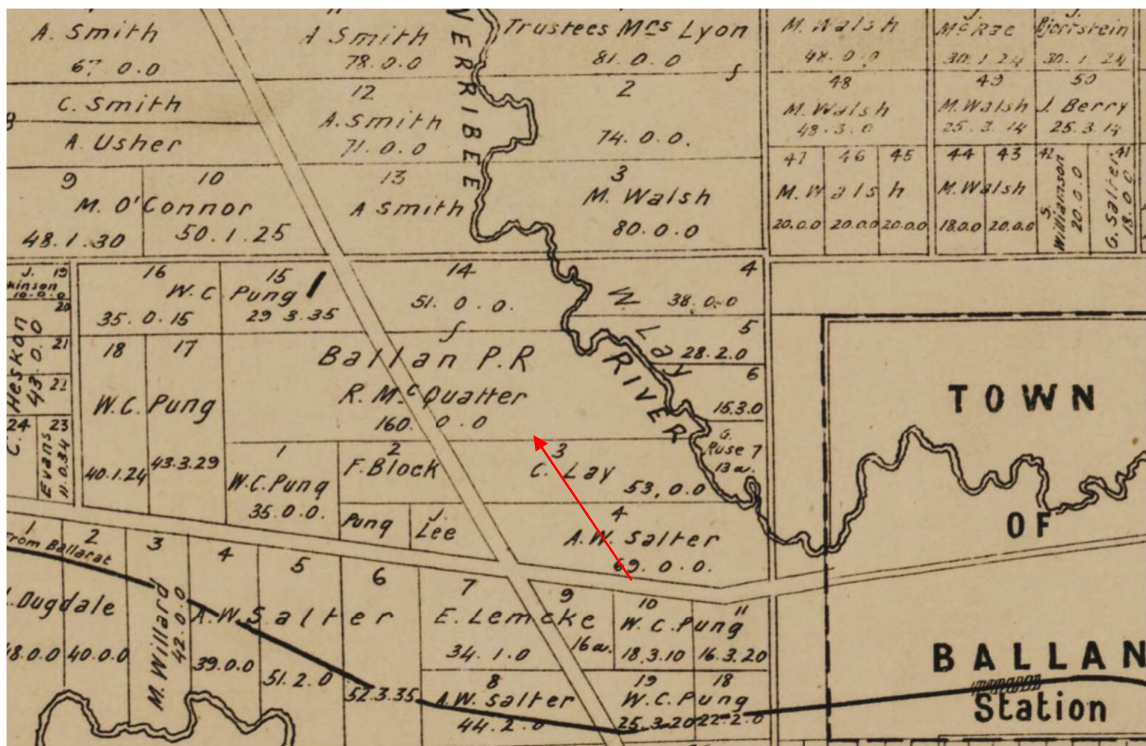


Figure 11: 1892 map of Gorong Parish showing R. McQualter as owner of the 160 acre Ballan Pre-Emptive Right allotment (Bonney 1892).

Robert McQualter died at Ballan homestead in 1895 (Anon 14 February 1895). The list of his assets prepared for the Grant of Probate of his Will described his Ballan property as follows:

*All those pieces of land being Allotments Fourteen and Fifteen and Portion A (Ballan Pre-Emptive Right) all of Section One parish of Goornong, County of Grant, containing two hundred and forty acres three rood and twenty five perches more or less with six room weatherboard cottage and dairy thereon covered with tin roof and in fair repair. Three stall stable of slab and shingle roof. Cow shed and Buggy house, fences of posts and rail and five wires. The property is divided into three paddocks. Half acre is laid out in garden. It is distant two miles from Ballan and is assessed at fifty pounds per annum. The value of the property as valued by Mr. L. A. Fairbairn, Auctioneer, Ballan is five pounds per acre. Total value of £1202.14.4. (Wilson 18 March 1895).*

It is likely that the six room weatherboard cottage is the main “Ballan House” residence constructed by Robert von Stieglitz in 1859, that had been updated and added to over the years. The dairy, three stall stable, cow shed, and buggy house are also possibly structures that were originally built by von Stieglitz and adapted or upgraded by McQualter; and the half acre garden is likely that established by von Stieglitz on the slope running down to the Werribee River on the eastern side of the homestead. However, no survey plans showing details of the property during the late 1800s have been found in the historical record, and it is also possible that some of the buildings and ancillary structures listed at Ballan homestead in 1895 were new additions or replacements constructed by McQualter.

The assessment of McQualter’s assets also included livestock – one hundred and sixty-seven sheep, ten milch cows, seven calves, three horses, and two pigs, along with numerous farming implements including plough and harrows, dray and buggy carriages, harnesses and saddlery (Wilson 18 March 1895) – indicating that he maintained a working farm right up until his death.

McQualter bequeathed the income of his estate to his wife, Elizabeth until her death, after which the residue would be passed equally to his sons Andrew and Alexander, and his daughters Jessie, Caroline (Carrie), Elizabeth (Jean), and Mary Anne (Annie) (Anon 5 April 1895). Shortly after McQualter’s death, it appears that his widow Elizabeth and daughter Annie moved from Ballan homestead into a residence constructed on a Ballan township lot that he had gifted Annie six months prior to his death. McQualter’s daughter Jessie and her husband John Taylor subsequently moved into Ballan homestead, living there until the late 1890s – early 1900s (Rowe & Jacobs 2016, Taylor 9 March 1899, Wilson 18 March 1895).

After this time, it appears that the Ballan homestead residences were vacant. In 1902, the main dwelling at Ballan homestead was sold at auction as a structure for removal – presumably for reuse of the building materials. The sale advertisement described the house as having a “splendid iron roof (about 220 sheets), and the material in the building is good” (L. A. Fairburn & Co 23 January 1902).

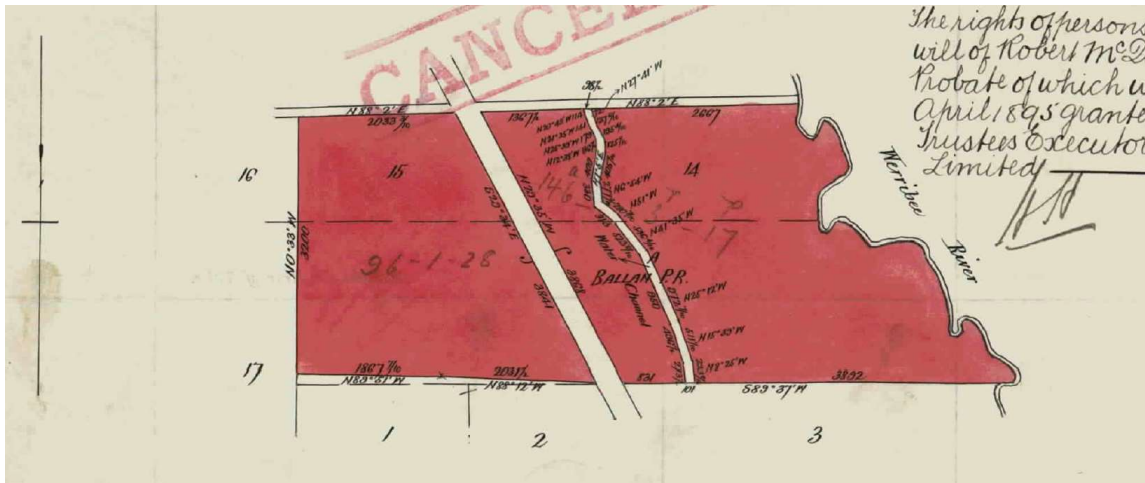
In 1904, title to Robert McQualter’s property, comprising 243 acres including the Ballan Pre-Emptive Right and adjoining allotments 14 and 15 to the north, was transferred to the Ballarat Trustees Executors & Agency Company Ltd., the executors of McQualter’s Will, to be held in trust for McQualter’s beneficiaries (CT Vol 2292, Fol 598213) (see Figure 12).

Elizabeth McQualter died in 1909, at the home she shared with her daughter Annie in Ballan township (Anon 25 February 1909). Ballarat Trustees, Executors & Agency Company Ltd. Subsequently organised for the property in Robert McQualter’s estate – including the Ballan Pre-Emptive Right – to be sold at auction. It appears that all residential buildings and facilities at Ballan homestead had either been removed or fallen into disrepair by this time, as McQualter’s property was advertised for sale by auctioneers L. A. Fairbairn & Co as pastoral and / or agricultural land only, with no mention of any domestic or ancillary structures:

*Those pieces of land situated on Main Ballan to Daylesford road, within a mile of the township, containing 243 acres 1 rood 5 perches, being Crown allotment 15, and parts of Crown allotment 14, section 1, and parts of Crown portion A, selection 1, known as the Ballan pre-*

emptive right, Parish of Gorong, County of Grant, adjoining Exs Pang and Mrs Laidlaw's properties. Permanently watered by the Werribee river and dams. Fenced and sub-divided into two convenient paddocks. Bounded on two sides by roads.

The sale of this land affords a very favorable opportunity to secure a desirable property adjacent to the township, and in close proximity to the markets. It has almost a mile frontage to an ever running stream of fresh water. Part is lightly timbered, affording excellent shelter for stock. Suitable for either agriculture or grazing, and capable of producing heavy crops. (L. A. Fairbairn & Co. 15 April 1909).



**Figure 12:** 1904 plan of the 243 acre property in Robert McQualter's estate, including the Ballan Pre-Emptive Right allotment (CT Vol 2292, Fol 598213).

The property did not sell as a complete 243 acre holding, and the following week L. A. Fairbairn offered it for sale as two separate lots, divided along the line of the Ballan-Daylesford Road. The land on the eastern side of the Ballan-Daylesford Road, incorporating the former Ballan homestead site, was designated as Lot 1 – “containing 146 acres 3 roods 17 perches, subdivided into two paddocks, with nearly a mile frontage to the Werribee river, also frontage to Daylesford road.” (L. A. Fairbairn & Co. 22 April 1909) (see Figure 13). Lot 1 was subsequently sold at £11 per acre to grazier, William John Andrew, of “Ingliston Farm,” Ballan (CT Vol 3342 Fol 668297, L. A. Fairbairn & Co. 6 May 1909).



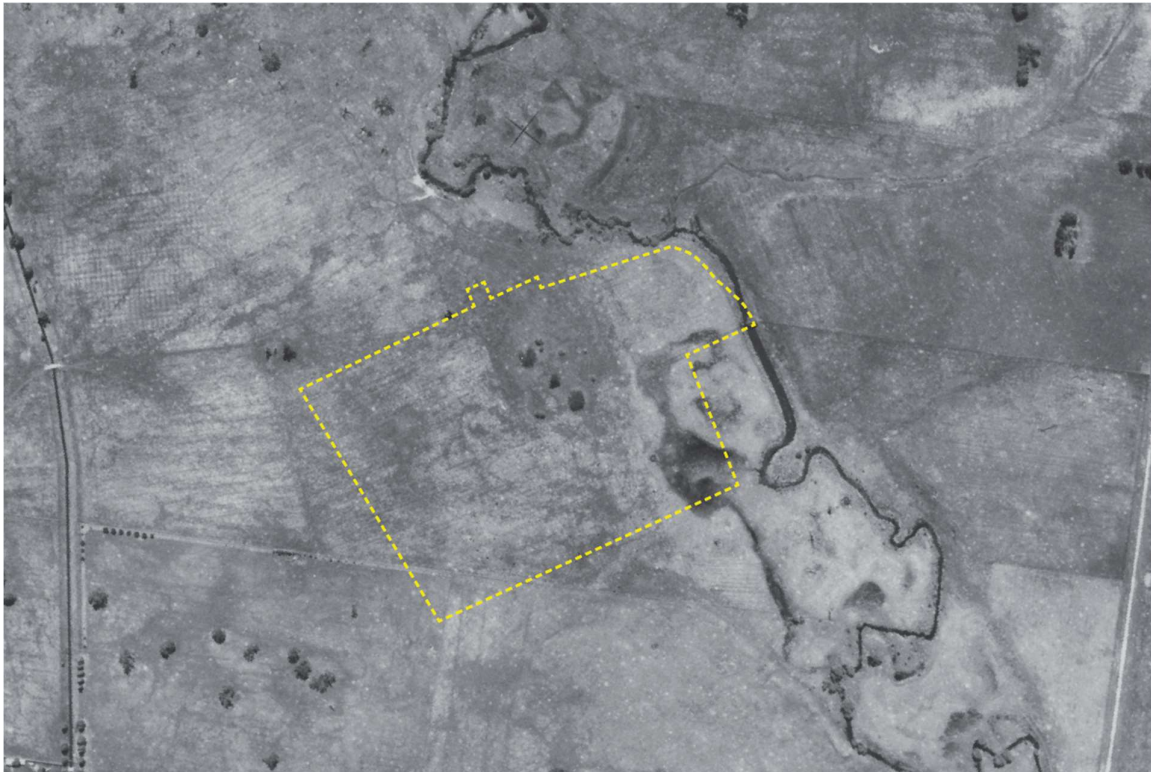
**Figure 13:** 1909 plan of the 146 acre lot in Robert McQualter's estate, including the eastern portion of the Ballan Pre-Emptive Right allotment, purchased by William Andrew (CT Vol 2292, Fol 598213).



Andrew appears to have used the 146 acre Ballan property for grazing purposes only, likely as supplementary pastures for his livestock at Ingliston Farm. Andrew died in 1918, and the list of assets contained in the Grant of Probate for his Will stated that the only improvements to the Ballan property consisted of “post and wire and post and rail fencing and divided into 4 paddocks.” (Glasson 20 May 1918).

Ownership of Andrew’s 146 acre Ballan property transferred to his daughter Matilda Davies (CT Vol 3342 Fol 668297), and was subsequently offered for lease as a “grazing farm” (Glasson 3 May 1918). For several years thereafter, it appears the property was leased by Ballan grazier and dairy farmer Albert Lay, who lived on the opposite side of the Ballan-Daylesford Road, and apparently erected a cowshed on or near the former Ballan homestead site (Walsh 21 March 1918). This shed, however, does not appear on any early to mid 1900s plans or topographic maps of the area.

From the early 1900s onwards, the allotment containing the former Ballan homestead site appears to have been used for pastoral purposes only. Matilda Davies retained ownership of the property until her death in 1942, at which point title was transferred to her daughter Jean Vincent (CT Vol 3342 Fol 668297). A 1949 aerial photograph shows the property as largely cleared, with a cluster of tree plantings, including at least three large, mature trees, within the area of the former Ballan homestead. No structures are visible (see Figure 14).



**Figure 14:** 1949 aerial photograph (LANDATA 1949) – the fenced boundaries of Ballan homestead complex as shown on the 1850 survey plan are overlain in yellow.

In 1967, Jean Vincent sold the Ballan property to grazier Donald Duncan Fraser and his wife Helen Muriel Fraser. A 1979 aerial photograph shows that a large, oblong-shaped dam had been established in the eastern part of the former Ballan homestead site, adjacent to Werribee River, by this time. The same cluster of mature trees within area of the former Ballan homestead is also visible (although at least two appear to have died since 1949), and what appears to be a circular ground feature, possibly a well or similar, occurs on the western side of the trees (see Figure 15).



**Figure 15:** 1979 aerial photograph (LANDATA 1979) – the fenced boundaries of Ballan homestead as shown on 1850 survey plan are overlain in yellow.

The 160 acre Ballan property, comprising the eastern part of the Ballan Pre-Emptive Right and adjoining allotment 14, has been subdivided several times since the 1960s. However, the eastern part of the Ballan Pre-Emptive Right containing the site of the former Ballan homestead, has remained in the Fraser family ever since (CT Vol 9815 Fol 972). The property has continued to be used as agricultural / pastoral land, and the area of the former Ballan homestead site is largely unchanged.

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