

West Moorabool Shire Heritage Study stage 2A: 2014-16

PLACE NAME: Dwelling

Place No. GP01

ADDRESS: 4 Albert Street, Blackwood

Assessment Date: Feb 2016

Historic Themes:

- Theme 4.2: Gold Mining
- Theme 6.1: Building Towns
- Theme 6.2: Building Homes in the Shire



Condition: Fair

Integrity: Altered

Photograph Date: 2009 & 2015

CURRENT HERITAGE STATUS ON STATUTORY REGISTERS

Victorian Heritage Register:	No
Victorian Heritage Inventory:	No
Local Planning Scheme:	No

CURRENT HERITAGE STATUS ON OTHER REGISTERS:

National Trust (Victoria) Register:	No
--	-----------

RECOMMENDED LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE:	Local Significance
---	--------------------

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Recommended for inclusion in the Victorian Heritage Register: **No**
- Recommended for inclusion in the Victorian Heritage Inventory: **No**
- Recommended for inclusion as a Heritage Overlay in the Planning Scheme: **Yes**

Schedule to the Heritage Overlay

External Paint Controls Should Apply?	No
Internal Alteration Controls Should Apply?	No
Tree Controls Should Apply?	No
Fences &/or Outbuildings of Note?	No
Prohibited Uses May be Permitted?	No
Incorporated Document	Yes (see recommendation below) - <i>Moorabool Shire Heritage Precincts and Places Incorporated Plan Permit Exemptions, May 2021</i>

Other Recommendations

It is recommended that permission is sought from the owner to carry out an on-site inspection of the dwelling to confirm the condition, integrity and significance of the place.

~~It is recommended that an Incorporated Plan is prepared to provide permit exemptions for: construction of an outbuilding (no greater than 10 square metres and no higher than 3 metres above ground level and which is behind the significant building); construction of a rear verandah or pergola not visible from a street; construction or extension of a rear deck no higher than 800 mm; demolition of side or rear fences, installation of domestic services not located on the front roof and wall planes of a dwelling (and set back from the front wall by no less than 4 metres) or project beyond roof ridgelines; and the construction or extension of a domestic swimming pool, spa, mechanical equipment and fencing at the rear of significant buildings. The Mitchell Shire HO Permit Exemptions Incorporated Plan 2014 could be used as a basis for the preparation of the Incorporated Plan for permit exemptions for places under individual heritage overlays.~~

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE:

What is Significant?

The dwelling at 4 Albert Street, Blackwood (Golden Point), has significance as one of few surviving mid 19th century Victorian vernacular timber dwellings constructed soon after the height of the gold rush in the original central township area. It was built for William and Harriet Vigor, pioneers of Blackwood, in c.1860. William Vigor had established a butchering business at Golden Point in early 1855 which was continued after his death by his son, Thomas, until the early 20th century. While the dwelling has been altered, the original Victorian vernacular design is still readily discernible in the steeply pitched hipped roof forms, encircling post-supported broken back verandah, weatherboard wall cladding, face brick chimney and timber framed 12 paned double hung windows. The dwelling appears to be in fair condition when viewed from Albert Street.

The dwelling at 4 Albert Street, Blackwood (Golden Point) is significant.

The non-original alterations and additions to the dwelling are not significant, nor are the modern outbuildings.

How is it significant?

The dwelling at 4 Albert Street is historically significant at a LOCAL level of local historical and representative significance to the Moorabool Shire.

Why is it significant?

The dwelling at 4 Albert Street is historically significant as a physical embodiment of residential life within the original township area of Blackwood (Golden Point) in c.1860, during the height of the gold rush (Criteria A). It also has significance for its associations with the Vigor family between c.1860 and 1897, with the original owners, William and Harriet Vigor being pioneers of Blackwood, having established a family butchering business at Golden Point in early 1855 (Criteria H). This business was continued by Vigor's sons, and particularly Thomas Vigor from the 1880s. He contributed much to community life in Blackwood, serving as a local Councillor with the Ballan Shire Council from 1895 until 1904, as well as being a member of the State School Board of Advice, Blackwood Cricket Club and Blackwood Sports Committee, and a Trustee (including a term as Chairman) of the Blackwood Cemetery Trust. Although the dwelling has been altered, its historical significance is embodied in the physical fabric, in the surviving Victorian vernacular stylistic qualities include the hipped roof forms, single storey height, encircling post-supported broken back verandah, timber weatherboard wall cladding, face brick chimney and the timber framed 12 paned double hung windows. (Criterion A)

Built in c.1860 for William and Harriet Vigor, who arrived in Blackwood and established a butchery business in 1855, the dwelling is an excellent representative example of a middle class residence on the gold fields. The historical significance of the dwelling (although somewhat altered) is embodied in the physical fabric which includes the surviving modest Victorian stylistic qualities such as the hipped roof forms, single storey height, encircling post-supported broken back verandah, timber weatherboard wall cladding, face brick chimney and the timber framed 12 paned double hung windows. (Criterion D)

Heritage Overlay Map

It is recommended that the heritage overlay is confined to the following portion of the property at 4 Albert Street: (Photo 1):

West Moorabool Heritage Study (Stage 2a) Review, 2021

PLACE NAME: Dwelling

Place No. GP01

ADDRESS: 4 Albert Street, Blackwood

Assessment Date: Feb 2016, updated May 2021



[Photo:1 Aerial map.](#)

Source of base Map: Interactive Map, Land Services online.

DESCRIPTION:

The dwelling at 4 Albert Street, Blackwood, is set on a contextually large rectangular allotment on the west side of the street. The dwelling has a modest front setback and has an angled orientation to the property boundaries. At the front are mature trees, and towards the rear are cypress trees. There are gravelled driveways from the north-east and south-east corners of the site, together with open grassed areas and perimeter garden beds. The property is bound at the front by a modern timber post and wire fence, approximately 1200 mm high.

The modestly scaled, single storey, timber weatherboard, Victorian vernacular styled dwelling is characterised by hipped roof forms and an encircling broken back verandah supported by square timber posts. The roofs are clad in galvanised corrugated steel. The verandah fascias and posts appear to have replaced earlier fabric. Other features of the design include the timber framed 12 paned double hung windows and the face brick chimney on the south side (this chimney has been altered and a chimney on the north side is missing). The southern portion of the verandah has been infilled, and a new timber framed window has been inserted on the northern elevation.

West Moorabool Heritage Study (Stage 2a) Review, 2021

PLACE NAME: Dwelling

Place No. GP01

ADDRESS: 4 Albert Street, Blackwood

Assessment Date: Feb 2016, updated May 2021

To the south of the dwelling are gabled outbuildings set amongst open grassed areas punctuated by trees.

Overall, the dwelling appears to be in fair condition when viewed from the street. It has moderate integrity, having experienced some alterations and additions including changes to the verandah. However, the original Victorian vernacular design and construction is clearly discernible.

HISTORY:

The Early History of Blackwood

The Blackwood goldfields originally comprised four distinct townships. The earliest was Golden Point, closest to the original gold finds and rush in early 1855.¹ Red Hill (now the central township of Blackwood), Simmons Reef and Barry's Reef (originally known as the township of Bayup) formed other nearby settlements. Initially there were also other camps, including Tipperary Flat and Ballan Camp.²

As the earliest and main camp on the Blackwood diggings, by April 1855 Golden Point was the most crowded locality on the field and the place where government officials were stationed.³ At this time, permanent buildings were few in number and included no more than five stores and two butcher shops.⁴ All other structures were mainly tents, including apparently many grog shops.⁵ It was also during the mid 1850s when Golden Point was officially surveyed and the township laid out following a grid pattern. This township was officially known as Blackwood.

By the end of July 1855, Golden Point and Red Hill had made noticeable progress as gold towns. By September 1855, the population of the broader Blackwood goldfields had reached 13,000 people.⁶ In one week, the Police Warden issued 457 miners rights and 95 business licenses.⁷ The rapid pace of town development also continued as by October there were over 12 hotels 'capable of affording every possible convenience' and there was also, albeit belatedly, a post office.⁸ Yet, just a year later, the bulk of the goldmining population had left the Blackwood district and by 1858 the population had fallen to 950.⁹ Although the township was maligned for some years as a consequence of the depressed mining activity,¹⁰ this did not prevent the further development of infrastructure including businesses, churches and schools, possibly as a consequence of sawmilling enterprises established by former miners. Although the township of Blackwood was proclaimed in 1872 with the town reserve centred around Golden Point,¹¹ most of the building development appears to have occurred in the Red Hill area, indicating the initial developmental shift towards this settlement as the central hub of community, cultural and commercial activity that was sustained into the 20th century.

History of the Dwelling at 4 Albert Street

William and Harriet Vigor (nee Kingham) were two of the earliest residents to Golden Point at the height of the gold rush in early 1855.¹² It was at this time when William (c.1827-1886) arrived and commenced his butchering business.¹³ Harriet (c.1827-1897) followed from Adelaide six months later with their young child.¹⁴ Four other children were born at Golden Point, Blackwood in the ensuing years, including Thomas (c.1856-1924).¹⁵

On 28 December 1859, William Vigor, with John Cann, purchased the freehold of 32 roods in Albert Street, Golden Point, comprising allotment 6 of Section A in the Township of Blackwood.¹⁶ It appears that Vigor had built a four-roomed weatherboard dwelling on this site by 1860 (Figure 1),¹⁷ and it was here where William and Harriet raised their family. In 1867, the dwelling was listed as having a net annual value of £7.¹⁸ By 1876, Vigor had acquired more land, amounting to 100 acres, which he used to graze cattle, presumably for his butchering business. It seems that by this time he had taken up the adjoining allotments immediately north and south of his dwelling. The land to the north of Vigor's original property had been developed by 1860, with small buildings on the Albert Street frontage.¹⁹ It might have been from these buildings where Vigor established his butcher shop.



Figure 1: T. Nixon, Assistant Surveyor, The Township of Blackwood, 27 September 1860, showing the Vigor family dwelling and the property immediately north that was later acquired.

Source: VPRS 440 Unit 204, PROV.

By 1876, there were six butchers in the Blackwood District, serving a population of 4000 people.²⁰ By 1880, Vigor had taken into the business his son, Thomas, and later at least one other son, the business becoming known as Vigor and Sons, butchers.²¹ In the ensuing years, it would appear that Thomas Vigor took increased control of the business.

William Vigor was also a shareholder in local mining companies. They included the Great Tunnel Quartz Mining Company (1864), Green Hills Gold Mining Company (1865) and the Morning Star Gold Mining Company (1879).²² Such interests appear to have proved successful, as he had employed a servant by 1867.²³ Throughout their years at Blackwood, William and Harriet Vigor and their family were members of All Saints' Anglican Church at Red Hill.²⁴

In May 1886, following a lengthy illness, William Vigor passed away at the age of 59.²⁵ The family business was continued by his son, Thomas. At the time of his death, the Vigor's property in Albert Street was described as follows:

A piece of land situate in Albert Street Golden Point Mount Blackwood having a frontage of about 66 feet by a depth of 120 feet on which is erected a four roomed weatherboard and hard wood dwelling house erected 26 years ...

A piece of land situate at Albert Street Golden Point Mount Blackwood having a frontage of about 66 feet by a depth of about 120 feet on which is erected a four roomed Wooden dwelling, erected 8 years ...²⁶

This suggests that the earlier buildings (including the butcher shop) to the north of the original dwelling had been replaced with a four roomed dwelling by this time. This dwelling is partially shown in a photographic view of Golden Point (as is a rear portion of the existing dwelling at 4 Albert Street) ([Figure 2Photo 4](#)).

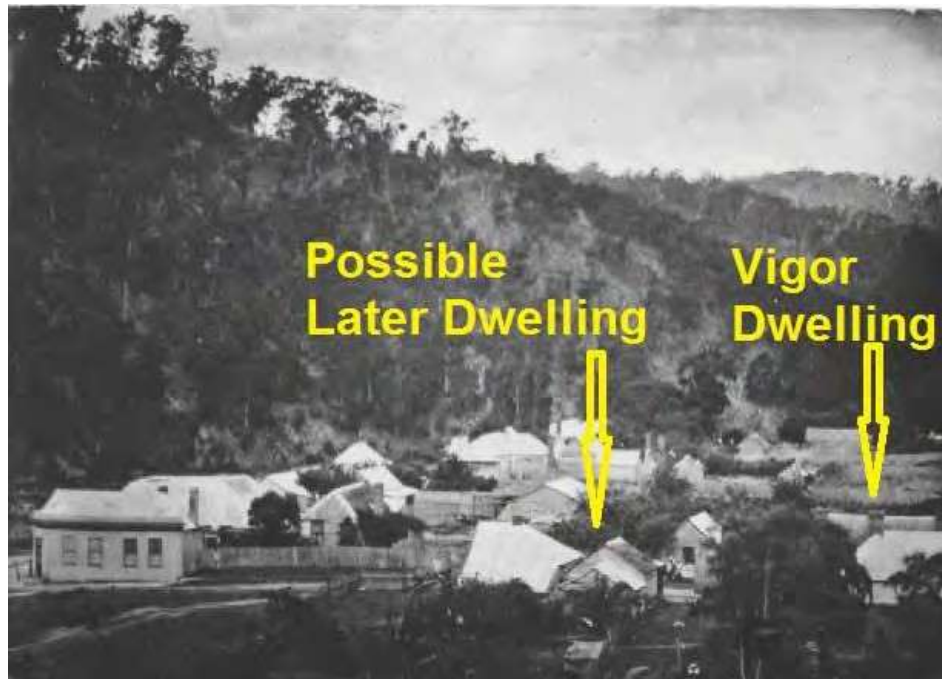


Photo 4: View of Golden Point, c.1870-1915 [c.1900], showing Vigor family properties.
Source: La Trobe Picture collection, State Library of Victoria, accession no. H97.272/51.

The Vigor family continued to reside at and operate their butcher shop in Albert Street, Golden Point, for the next 11 years, until the death of Harriet Vigor in February 1897.²⁷ The *Bacchus Marsh Express* reported her death as follows:

Mrs. H. Vigor, one of Blackwood's oldest residents, and mother of Cr. Vigor, who resides here, and of Mrs. E.G. Jones, of Bacchus Marsh, died on Saturday last, at the age of 70 years. Mrs. Vigor had been a confirmed invalid for many years, and for the last three had been completely bedridden. The name of Vigor has been prominently identified with the butchering interest from the very first days of Blackwood ...²⁸

Eight months after the death of Harriet, Thomas Vigor and family purchased the late James Wyatt's stone dwelling at 6 Terrill Street, Red Hill. It was from this location where Vigor continued the butchering business. The purchase was reported in the *Bacchus Marsh Express*:

Mining communities are noted for curious shiftings of their population, and a rather remarkable one is the removal of Mr. T. Vigor, with his family, from Golden Point – where his home has been for over 40 years – to the house at Red Hill which he purchased at Wyatt's sale last week.²⁹

Thomas Vigor married Jane Cameron in 1883 (born 1847)³⁰ and they had six children: Robert, Belle, Elsie, Kate, Arthur and Percy.³¹ He contributed much to local community life. By 1876, he was a member of the Nil Desperandum Lodge of the Grand United Order of Oddfellows.³² In 1895, he was elected a Councillor for the East Riding of the Shire of Ballan Council.³³ He continued to represent the rate payers of the East Riding until 1904, during which time he was a Justice of the Peace.³⁴ Vigor was also an elected member of the State School Board of Advice in 1893, a position he held until at least 1902, when he was Chairman, with meetings held at his residence.³⁵ Other positions held by Vigor in the community include being a Trustee of the Blackwood Cemetery Trust (including a term as Chairman in 1909),³⁶ playing member of the Blackwood Cricket Club,³⁷ and Honorary Secretary of the Blackwood Sports Committee that was responsible for arranging the annual sports fixture for New Year's Day in the mid-late 1890s.³⁸ Thomas Vigor died on 18 January 1924, aged 67.³⁹

COMPARATIVE

Other Similar Dwellings at Blackwood

~~The dwelling at 4 Albert Street is comparable to a number of other hipped roofed, modestly scaled, timber dwellings constructed at Blackwood (and particularly Golden Point and Red Hill) from the 1860s. They include those at: 14 Clarendon Street (former court house), 15 Golden Point Road, 111 Golden Point Road, 5 Old Golden Point Road, 10 Prayer Hill Lane, 8 Simmons Reef Road, 189 Simmons Reef Road (Garden of St Erth) and 6 Terrill Street. Some of these dwellings have also experienced alterations to the verandahs, as well as additions.~~

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

Note: places which were identified in the West Moorabool Heritage Study Stage 2A have been referenced with their unique study identifier (i.e: BLA01). Places which are already included in the Heritage Overlay are referenced by HO number. Places which are not included in the Heritage Overlay nor identified in the West Moorabool Heritage Study Stage 2A have no reference or identifier included.

Victorian

Numerous conventional Victorian styled dwellings were built in the Shire from the 1860s onwards. With hipped roof forms, they were often adorned with decorative cast iron front and/or return verandahs, reflecting the prosperity of the owners. A number of the dwellings of this stylistic type were also built in the late 19th and very early 20th centuries, for newcomers to different parts of the Shire, and for second and later generation owners of the Shire's pioneers.

Victorian Vernacular – Hipped

A dwelling type that was common to the western region of the Moorabool Shire and particularly to the goldfields townships were the hipped Victorian vernacular styled dwellings, following the steeply-pitched hipped roof forms of the earlier Victorian Georgian designs elsewhere. Most of these dwellings were constructed of timber with corrugated sheet metal roof cladding. In the study area, the hipped Victorian Vernacular style was adopted at 65 Inglis Street, Ballan (BLA012)(c.1892-94), 4 Albert Street, Blackwood (GP01) (c.1860), 5 Old Golden Point Road, Blackwood (BLA22) (c.1860), and 111 Golden Point Road, Blackwood (GP04) (c.1860).

Other Similar Dwellings at Blackwood

The dwelling at 4 Albert Street is comparable to a number of other hipped roofed, modestly scaled, timber dwellings constructed at Blackwood (and particularly Golden Point and Red Hill) from the 1860s. They include those at: 14 Clarendon Street (former court house) (GP03), 15 Golden Point Road, Blackwood; 111 Golden Point Road, Blackwood (GP04) (Photo 5); 5 Old Golden Point Road, Blackwood (BLA22) (Photo 6); Ambleside 10 Prayer Hill Lane, Blackwood (recommended for inclusion in the Prayer Hill Lane Precinct in the West Moorabool Heritage Study); 4 Recreation Reserve Road, Blackwood (recommended for inclusion in the Simmons Reef Road Precinct in the West Moorabool Heritage Study); 189 Simmons Reef Road (Garden of St Erth) (HO51) (Photo 7); and 6 Terrill Street, Blackwood (BLA52) (Photo 8). Some of these dwellings have also experienced alterations to the verandahs, as well as additions.

West Moorabool Heritage Study (Stage 2a) Review, 2021

PLACE NAME: Dwelling

Place No. GP01

ADDRESS: 4 Albert Street, Blackwood

Assessment Date: Feb 2016, updated May 2021



Photo 5: Dwelling, 111 Golden Point Road, Blackwood, 2014.
Source: David Rowe.



Photo 6: Dwelling, 5 Old Golden Point Road, Blackwood, 2009.
Source: David Rowe.



Photo 7: Former Mine Manager's House, 189 Simmons Reef Road (Garden of St Erth), Blackwood 2009.
Source: David Rowe and Wendy Jacobs.



Photo 8: Dwelling, 6 Terrill Street, Blackwood 2014.
Source: David Rowe and Wendy Jacobs.

In conclusion, 4 Albert Street, Blackwood belongs to a small group Victorian hipped roof vernacular timber dwellings in the locality, built after the height of the c.1855 Gold rush in the Blackwood area. Although somewhat altered, 4 Albert Street compares well with other similar building types in Blackwood proposed for inclusion in the HO in so far that it has a similar degree of integrity, and the original design is still readily discernible in the surviving fabric, demonstrating the form and scale of early residential development in Blackwood.