

Place No. 61 Stone Yards on Harding River



Panorama view of the stone yards

LOCATION	
Name of Place	Stone Yards on Harding River
Other Name (1)	Stone Yards (ruin)
Location/Address	
Suburb/Town	Roebourne
Other Locational descriptor (text)	Mt Welcome Station, 517492 mE, 7692958 mN (MGA94 Zone 50) Longitude: 117.1682 Latitude: -20.8634

OWNERSHIP & LAND DESCRIPTION				
Owner	Address	Phone/fax	Status	Item No.
Mt Welcome Pastoral Co PL	PO Box 135, Roebourne			
Reserve No.	Lot/Location No.	Plan/Diagram	Vol/Folio	Item No.

LISTING AND ASSESSMENT	
HCWA Reference Number	8686
State Register of Heritage Places: (Y/N)	No
Classified by the National Trust (Y/N)	No
Register of the National Estate (Y/N)	No
Local Town Planning Scheme (Y/N)	Yes
Management Category	B

DESCRIPTION	
Construction Date (1)	Unknown
Construction Date (2)	
Site Type (Place Type)	Other Structure
Use(s) of Place	
Original	FARMING\PASTORAL: Stockyard (Sheep)
Present	VACANT/UNUSED: Vacant/Unused - Ruin
Other	
Construction Materials:	
Walls	6. STONE 601 Local Stone
Roof	
Other	

Condition	Poor
Integrity (how much of the original fabric is intact?):	Much of the walls are intact
Physical Description	
<p>Situated near a granite outcrop, the stone yards are near Roebourne on the Woodbrook Station lease, on the West Harding River. Nearby rocks have distinctive Aboriginal engravings etched on them.</p> <p>The construction of stock-yards from stone is characteristic of several nearby sites, such as Springs Station (further upstream), Chirrita Station and Inthanoona Station (on the nearby Jones River). These are rectangular in design and thus resemble those at Springs and Chirrita stations. The use of stone at the others sites suggest these were used for holding densely packed stock during shearing. However, there is no evidence for shearing at this site and these structures may have been used to pen sheep at night during the early colonial period, to keep the stock safe from wandering off and from predators.</p> <p>The presence of engravings may relate to either pre-colonial or colonial-era artists, as both are common in this vicinity.</p>	
History	
<p>These early stone yards would have been used by shepherds to herd sheep. The yards appear to have been maintained since these early colonial times and through into the twentieth century.</p> <p>There is some potential for confusion around these yards. They have been attributed to Gregory's Camp 49 (part of John Wellard's Lease 1). However, this site is more likely at the nearby Andover station site, being upstream of the branch of the East and West Harding. The site is also referred to as 'McCourt's Camp'. The attribution is part of the significance of the site. Stone yards such as these must date from the early colonial period and are thus part of the early colonial landscape.</p> <p>The yards were close to the Stock Route and may have been used in later years as part of the overland use of that route.</p>	
Archaeology	
<p>There is clear potential for archaeological evidence of the very earliest colonial period and of contacts between local Aboriginal people and the Europeans. The rock art could be historical, through the use of steel for engraving, as has been seen elsewhere and deserves comparative analysis with the art in the vicinity.</p> <p>Archaeological survey would better determine whether there were ever permanent structures at the site and thus potentially its original use. The materials at the site seem to consist of 19th century items, including 'dot and spot' soldered food cans and dark olive (black) glass bottles, typical of the 1800s and not the 20th century.</p>	

SIGNIFICANCE	
Historic theme (s)	3. OCCUPATIONS 301 Grazing, pastoralism & dairying
Statement of Significance:	
<p>The use of stone for sheep and stock-yards is rare evidence of the arrival of pastoralism to the region. The yards represent vernacular design that can be compared with other similar sites in the Pilbara and around the country. The site may reflect the very earliest colonial period and the ensuing contacts between Aboriginal people and the outsiders.</p>	

ASSOCIATIONS	
Architect/Designer (1)	John Wellard
Architect/Designer (2)	William Shakespeare Hall
Other Associated Person(s)	

MHI 1996	Site assessed, Place Name Record created
MHI Review 2012	Entry updated



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