

**TIMARU DISTRICT COUNCIL**  
**HISTORIC HERITAGE ITEM RECORD FORM**

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**HERITAGE ITEM NAME** Orari Gorge Station Woolshed  
**ADDRESS** 991 Tripp Settlement Road, Orari Gorge

**PHOTOGRAPH**



(www)

**FORMER DISTRICT PLAN ITEM No.** No. 61      **HNZ LIST No. & CATEGORY** n / a  
(at time of assessment)

**LEGAL DESCRIPTION** RS 3308

**VALUATION NUMBER** 2466002100

**DATE OF CONSTRUCTION** 1860 +

**ARCHITECT/DESIGNER/  
BUILDER** Robert Smith & others

**STYLE** Vernacular

**PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION**

Large, one and a half storey building with irregular L-shaped footprint and hipped or gabled roof forms. Oldest section is north of two later, rectangular additions. Casement windows, raised floors.

**MATERIALS/STRUCTURE**

Timber framing and cladding, corrugated metal cladding and roofing.

**ADDITIONS/ALTERATIONS**

Extensions (various, including 1983).

**SETTING**

The woolshed is located near the centre of a large rural property running along the western bank of the Orari River. Access is via a long drive that comes off the west side of Tripp Settlement Road, opposite its intersection with Howard Road and Andrews Stream Road. The station homestead (heritage item #60) is located to the south-west of the woolshed, with a group of historic farm buildings further west. The extent of setting is limited to the immediate setting of the woolshed, notwithstanding the potential archaeological values across the property and noting the separate settings for the homestead and farm building cluster.

## **HISTORY**

Charles George Tripp (1826-97) emigrated to New Zealand from England in early 1855 and within the year had taken up the Mount Peel, Mt Possession, Mt Somers and Orari Gorge runs. Initially in partnership JBA Acland, Tripp, who had trained as a lawyer, retained the Orari Gorge station when the partnership was dissolved in 1862. He had married Ellen Harper, a daughter of Bishop Harper, in 1858 and the couple had eight children. According to Acland, Orari Gorge was let by Tripp and Acland to Robert Smith between July 1859 and 1862. Meanwhile the Tripps lived at Mount Peel until 1861, then resided briefly at Mount Somers before making an extended visit to England. The family finally took up residence at Orari Gorge in September 1866. At its fullest extent the Orari Gorge Station extended from the Orari River to the Hae Hae Te Moana River. Over 20,000 acres of freehold land, and 50,000 acres of leasehold were stocked with more than 40,000 sheep. In 1885 it was reported that the woolshed could hold 2000 sheep, had room for 28 shearers and could store 350 bales of wool. The property was taken over by Bernard Tripp after his father's death in 1897. In 1898 Tripp junior called for tenders to paint the station buildings, the notice itemising the dwelling-house, men's house, blacksmith's shop, phuta, cowshed, shearers' hut, stables, woolshed, five cottages and a ram house. In 1910 the government bought some of the freehold and resumed most of the leasehold land of Orari Gorge for small farm settlement. The station property remains in Tripp family ownership today.

## **HISTORICAL AND SOCIAL SIGNIFICANCE**

The Orari Gorge Station woolshed has historical significance for its association with Charles Tripp, his descendants and the men who worked on the sheep station. One of Canterbury's early colonial sheep runs, Orari Gorge Station demonstrates the historical development and continuity of pastoralism in the region. The beams in the woolshed reportedly bear the stencilled names of farm cadets who worked on the property in the past.

## **CULTURAL AND SPIRITUAL SIGNIFICANCE**

The Orari Gorge Station woolshed has cultural value as a demonstration of the way of life of those who worked on the station, including Charles Tripp who was well-known for joining his men in the woolshed.

## **ARCHITECTURAL AND AESTHETIC SIGNIFICANCE**

The Orari Gorge Station woolshed has architectural value as a vernacular farm building, erected in stages, that provides a graphic illustration of the size and scale of the station's sheep farming activities.

## **TECHNOLOGICAL AND CRAFTSMANSHIP SIGNIFICANCE**

The Orari Gorge Station woolshed has technological and craftsmanship value for the surviving mid-19<sup>th</sup> century elements within the enlarged structure.

## **CONTEXTUAL SIGNIFICANCE**

The Orari Gorge Station woolshed has contextual significance as a landmark feature within the complex of historic buildings, including the homestead and farm building cluster, that constitute the Orari Gorge Station.

## **ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND SCIENTIFIC SIGNIFICANCE**

As the earliest section of the woolshed pre-dates 1900 its site has potential archaeological significance relating to the structure's construction and the early colonial development of the wider property.

## SUMMARY OF HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

The Orari Gorge Station woolshed has overall heritage significance to Orari Gorge and Timaru district as a whole. The woolshed has historical significance for its association with Robert Smith and the Tripp family since 1860 and cultural value as a demonstration of the way of life of the station's workers. The Orari Gorge Station woolshed has architectural value as a vernacular farm building and technological and craftsmanship value for its surviving mid-19<sup>th</sup> century elements. The Orari Gorge Station woolshed has contextual significance as a landmark historic feature on the property and its site has potential archaeological significance in view of the woolshed's mid-19<sup>th</sup> century origins.

## HERITAGE CATEGORY

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## REFERENCES

- *Timaru Herald* 16 September 1865, p. 5; 1 December 1866, p. 1; 2 January 1867, p. 4; 10 August 1867, p. 2; 12 November 1870, p. 1; 23 June 1876, p. 1; 8 July 1897, p. 3; 16 March 1898, p. 1; 9 January 1908, p. 6; 31 January 2009 (available online).
- *Temuka Leader* 13 January 1880, p. 2; 1 December 1885, p. 2; 14 January 1908, p. 1; 13 April 1926, p. 1.
- *Press* 8 August 1925, p. 13; 27 May 1939, p. 18.
- *Ashburton Guardian* 30 August 1918, p. 2.
- *Lyttelton Times* 14 June 1876, p. 1.
- <http://www.heritage.org.nz/the-list/details/7763>
- *Cyclopedia of New Zealand – Canterbury Provincial District* Christchurch, 1903; available online.
- HW Harper *Letters from New Zealand, 1857-1911* London, 1911.
- LGD Acland *The Early Canterbury Runs* Christchurch, 1946 (available online).
- <https://teara.govt.nz/en/1966/tripp-charles-george>
- B Harper *The Kettle on the Fuchsia – The Story of Orari Gorge* 1967.
- [http://sites.rootsweb.com/~nzlscant/orari\\_gorge.htm](http://sites.rootsweb.com/~nzlscant/orari_gorge.htm)



Extent of setting, limited to immediate environs of the woolshed, notwithstanding the potential archaeological values across the entire site.



Land parcel as a whole with woolshed marked by star.

