

The lost mausoleum of Matthew Goggs

JONATHAN PRANGNELL¹ and IRENE HOWE²

In 2010 a search by members of the Centenary Suburbs Historical Society identified possible structural debris within the grounds of Wacol Prison, close to Wolston House, in the western Brisbane suburb of Wacol. The authors undertook archaeological and historical investigations to identify the remains. The footings of a stone building and adjacent walls were unearthed. This building was identified as a mausoleum constructed by Matthew Buscall Goggs, the second owner of Wolston House, in 1871, that was subsequently demolished by the Prisons Department in the 1960s.

Wolston House, a Queensland Heritage Register State Heritage Place, is a large sandstone, timber and brick pastoral dwelling located on a small remnant of Wolston Estate at Wacol, halfway between Brisbane and Ipswich in southeast Queensland (Figure 1). Wolston Estate was originally a one square mile pastoral property established on the banks of the Brisbane River by Dr Stephen Simpson in 1851 (Sinnamon 1980:29). Simpson built a small brick and timber house on the property. In 1860 Simpson sold the property to Matthew Goggs who extended the house to accommodate his family which included ten children (Sinnamon 1980:30). He also extended the property to 5000 acres by buying out his neighbours. The house is now the property of the National Trust of Queensland. In 2010 some sandstone was found exposed above the ground surface approximately 300m from the homestead building. It was conjectured by the National Trust of Queensland that this material related to a mausoleum that Goggs constructed in 1871. A mausoleum can be defined as a 'substantial, discrete funerary structure' (Pearson 2002:3) containing above ground burials (Sagazio 1992:130). It is the fact that the coffins are placed above the ground in mausolea that differentiates them from crypts.

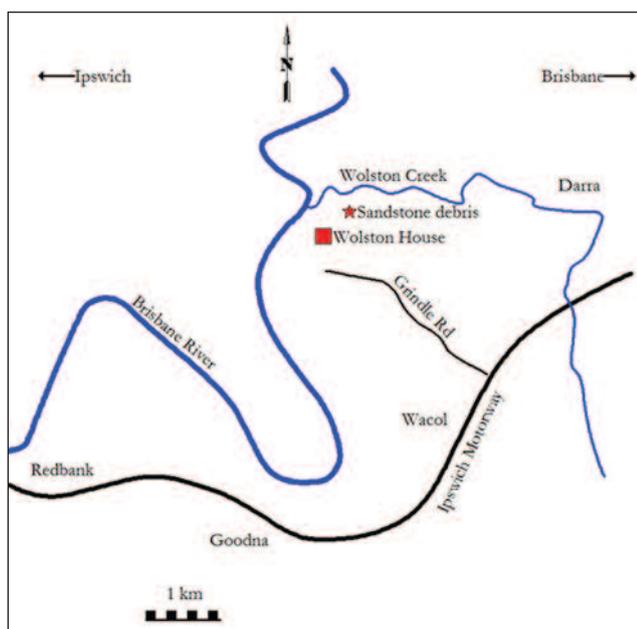


Figure 1: Location of Wolston House.

Matthew Goggs was 21 when he migrated to Australia aboard the *Duckenfield* arriving in Hobart Town on 1 June 1831 with a capital of £500 (Gordon and Young 2010). He invested in a successful whaling venture and by the early 1840s Goggs owned pastoral runs on the Pages River, Isis River and the Liverpool Plains in the Upper Hunter Valley, New South Wales. By 1849 he had obtained the lease to the Chinchilla run of approximately 36,000 acres and the adjoining Wongongera station (*New South Wales Government Gazette* 1949:210). These two properties obtained a depasturing capacity of up to 60,000 sheep (*The Darling Downs Gazette and General Advertiser* 1859). In 1859 Goggs sold the combined properties for £25,000. After a trip home to Norfolk, England, he returned to Sydney in 1860 and by the end of the year had purchased Wolston Estate (*Moreton Bay Courier* 1861).

Goggs died at Wolston House on 13 May 1882, aged 73 years (Goggs 1882). On his death, Matthew was buried alongside his two children, Phillis and Richard Cromwell, in the mausoleum which he had built in 1871 as his last resting place (*The Queenslander* 1882:629). Sharp (1998) has claimed that Goggs' intention for building the mausoleum was as a precursor to a public cemetery on the site. The mausoleum was later damaged by the 1893 floods, and the burial remains were removed and reinterred at Toowong Cemetery, Brisbane, on 10 December 1894 (Cilento 1968; Sharp 1998). They were interred with Matthew's son William, who had died in August of that year. The building was never restored, but over time the remains of the mausoleum were used for other purposes, such as a grain silo, and then it was finally demolished by the Prisons Department in the late 1960s – left forgotten, its exact location unknown (Sharp 1998).

There are very few mausolea in Australia (Spicer 1992: 130) and although Italian and other Catholic immigrants constructed some mausolea in cemeteries around Brisbane during the twentieth century the Goggs' mausoleum is important as it represents both the only one constructed in the Anglo-Scottish tradition, and the only one constructed in the nineteenth century, in southeast Queensland. The exact location of the remains of the mausoleum has been a matter of speculation for some time. Primary and secondary sources suggested that it been situated several hundred metres in a northeasterly direction from Wolston House, near the junction of the Brisbane River and Wolston Creek (Cilento 1968; Lord 1933; Sharp 1998). Ms Jenny Squire, Manager of Wolston House, recalled that in 2009 she had met Harry Josephs, a relative of the Grindle family, who owned the property in the first half of the twentieth century, and that he had pointed from the fence line to a remembered location of the mausoleum (Squire 2012: pers. comm.). In 2010, Ms Squire's information on the approximate location of the site was used by members of the Centenary Suburbs Historical Society to undertake a survey to find any evidence of the mausoleum. They identified a possible location for the mausoleum site over 300 m from the

1. School of Social Science, The University of Queensland, Brisbane, Queensland 4072: j.prangnell@uq.edu.au
 2. The Australian Literature Resource, The University of Queensland, Brisbane, Queensland 4072: i.howe@uq.edu.au

homestead (Gordon and Young 2010), in an area overgrown by tall grass and ground creepers where a few pieces of rock broke the ground surface on land now owned by Corrective Services (Figure 2). Subsequently, the National Trust of Queensland approached one of the authors (Prangnell) to excavate the site and to test whether or not the rock related to the mausoleum. The excavation took place in May 2011 with the assistance of a voluntary archaeological team consisting of several members from the National Trust of Queensland, and archaeology PhD and Honours students from The University of Queensland.

The mausoleum site is situated at 27.5682°S 152.9027°E at 13 m above sea level, and 332 m northeast of Wolston House. It is positioned approximately 200 m from the bank of Wolston Creek which feeds into the Brisbane River. The archaeological excavation was completed over three non-consecutive days, and stone footings of a rectangular building and a surrounding wall were unearthed (Figure 3). To identify the remains of the mausoleum, it was compared to the only two extant photographs of the structure. The photographs showed a small rectangular building with four buttresses supporting the longer walls. As the excavation preceded identification of the footings of these buttresses aligning with the base of the walls was confirmed. (Unfortunately the poor quality of the only known copies of these photographs means that they cannot be reproduced here.)

From the archaeology it is possible to determine the size and shape of the structure. The footings of the mausoleum were constructed of sandstone in blocks of varying sizes. The total area of ground covered by the mausoleum was 25.8 m²

with an internal area of 11.1 m² (4 m x 2.8 m). The walls measured 5.75 m (18 ft 10 in) (east to west) and 4.5 m (14 ft 9 in) (north to south), with a width of walls approximately 60 cm (2 ft). The foundations of the buttresses each measured 61 cm (2 ft) by 40 cm (16 in). Surrounding the mausoleum footings are the foundations of a free-standing wall constructed of the same sandstone and in the same method as the mausoleum. In the southwestern corner between the wall and the mausoleum there is evidence, in the form of badly cracked cement, that the 1.2 m (4 ft) space was originally paved. There are also two stoneware drainage pipes at ground level built through the southern and western walls to carry rainwater away from the mausoleum. The free-standing walls measure 8.5 m (27 ft 10 in) north/south by 7.4 m (24 ft 3 in) east/west and are up to 52 cm (20 in) thick at ground level. The sandstone in the northeastern corner of the wall has been robbed away. This may have occurred during the Grindle time to allow access to the structure by large farm machinery.

Further research is required to determine if Jeay's quarry, that operated from 1861 to the 1880s, the source of sandstone for Wolston House (Roberts 2009), was also the source for the mausoleum. Nonetheless, the location, dimensions and construction techniques of Gogg's mausoleum have now been confirmed as well as the discovery of a previously unrecorded stone wall enclosing the mausoleum. These findings will lead to changes in the interpretation of the site by the National Trust of Queensland and to an application to extend the heritage listing boundary of Wolston House to include the archaeological features of the only known nineteenth-century mausoleum in Queensland.



Figure 2: Sandstone on the ground surface.



Figure 3: Site plan of the 2011 excavation (dark grey = sandstone, light grey = cement, red = brick, hatched red = stoneware pipe).

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