

POONINDIE MISSION - ANGLICAN CHURCH OF ST. MATTHEW
POONINDIE, NEAR PORT LINCOLN

HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

Historically, the item is important because it epitomises the ideology of mid 19th century colonialism.

Architecturally, the item is important because it is a rare example of a well built and detailed secular/educational building type.


Environmentally, the well-known historical item is an important landmark which establishes and enhances the character of the area.

The Integrity is good for its age.

NOMINATION SOURCE/THREAT/OWNER

This report has been prepared in response to the Branch's continuing programme of evaluating items on the Register of National Estate items which led to a detailed study of the Poonindie area in general. There is no known threat to the item although preventative maintenance and stabilization is required. The item is owned by the Synod of The Church of England in the Diocese of Willochra Incorporated of Gladstone.

HERITAGE CONSERVATION BRANCH RECOMMENDATION:


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Manager

It is recommended that this item be included on the Register of State Heritage Items, and that it be categorized A1, A2, H1, H2, H3.

SOUTH AUSTRALIAN HERITAGE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

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Chairman

South Australian Heritage Act 1978-82	Register of State Heritage Items ITEM EVALUATION SHEET Buildings and Structures	Ref. No. 6028-12591
	Item POONINDIE MISSION - ANGLICAN CHURCH OF ST. MATTHEW NEAR PORT LINCOLN.	Status N.TR. (CL) N.E.R.
Age 1854-55	Subject CONTACT, EXPLORATION AND SURVEY - Early Contact EDUCATION AND CULTURE - Formal Learning	Style Colonial/ Early Victorian

History

Architecture

Environment

Integrity

Context Associated with the development of and was the focal point of South Australia's most successful mission.

Person/Group Associated with Archdeacon Hale, the founder of Poonindie Mission

Event Not yet established.

Architect/Builder Reputed to have been designed by Hale, but not yet substantiated.

Design Unusual two storeyed bay windowed church/school room with fireplace to each level. Later sympathetic vestry and porch design gives balance to central bulk.

Construction Random stone construction with brick quoins and offsets. Brickwork fairly advanced for the period.

Interior Fairly plain interior with visual relief afforded by bay, stained glass windows

Representation Rare example of combined educational/secular buildings with two levels where chimneys tend to dominate visual appearance.

Continuity Significant in establishing the mission character of the complex.

Local Character Significant in establishing the character of the area of Poonindie in the broader context.

Landmark An important visual and historical element not only in the Poonindie district but also on Eyre Peninsula.

Alterations Original thatch and shingle roof covering has been replaced with corrugated iron - some structural timbers replaced - otherwise intact.

Condition Numerous structural failures are evident from the cracked and knuckled walls - some stabilisation is required.

Compatibility Present religious use is the original, no longer used as a school however.

E	VG	AG	FP	NA
X				
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History and Sources

THE IDEOLOGY OF POONINDIE MISSION

1. Origins

Matthew Blagden Hale, a widower with two children in Wiltshire, emigrated to South Australia in 1847 to become Archdeacon to the Bishop of Adelaide. Hale had spoken zealously before meetings of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel : "I thought much and deeply upon the great responsibility which rested upon us, as a nation, with reference to those heathen races, which, in various parts of the world, had become subject to British rule."¹

In his new diocese he found that the colonial government had not been "altogether unmindful of their duty to the aborigines". The Adelaide Native School, at the Native Location near Government House, lodged and boarded aboriginal children, teaching the boys and girls in separate schools to read, write and cast accounts, and gave them a grounding in the Christian religion. By 1850 three sets of children had graduated from the Adelaide School. That year, the government granted Mr. Schurmann, a Lutheran missionary who had lost financial support from the Dresden Mission Society, £1,000 to establish a school half way between Port Lincoln and the Poonindie Sheep Station. Dr. Matthew Moorhouse, who held the office Protector of Aborigines, concurred with Archdeacon Hale that the problem with the educational system was that graduates soon regressed from their civilized state once in contact with their tribal elders and the vices of European society. In consultation with Lieutenant-Governor Henry Young during the winter of 1850, Archdeacon Hale proposed that an institution be formed near Port Lincoln as part of an experimental scheme for the religious instruction and moral training of aboriginal natives. The concept, readily given financial support by the government, represented a paradoxical marriage of secular interest in philanthropic assimilation with the Church of England's notion of grace through segregation.

2. Principles

The general principles of the Poonindie Native Training Institute were summarized by the Lord Bishop of Adelaide: "They were isolation, industrial education, as well as the usual schooling; marriage, separate dwellings, hiring and service for wages; gradual and progressive moral improvement based on Christian instruction, Christian worship, and Christian superintendence. Without disturbing the school at Adelaide (which he proposed to leave as an elementary training establishment), he desired to draft, from time to time, the elder boys and girls to the Mission Station at Port Lincoln".² The fundamental immorality of separating children from their parents was not questioned, as the idea of "seclusion" was deemed necessary to create an ideal, and somewhat Utopian European social environment. As for any contact with "bush" aborigines on Eyre Peninsula, Hale remarked, "it is known from experience that natives who have been brought up as strangers to each other are by no means forward to associate together in the wild state."³ Still, Hale must have doubted this enough that he sought the total segregation afforded by Boston Island, only deciding to establish his mission on the peninsula once the island was found to have no supply of drinking water. Initially, for financial reasons, Hale left out the "juvenile department" of his scheme, and focused on turning the Adelaide School graduates into "settlers on their own account in the early stage of their training".

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ENDNOTES

1. Hale, Right Rev. Bishop. The Aborigines of Australia, London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, c1889, p.1.
2. Ibid. p. 51.
3. Ibid. p. 12.
4. Ibid. p. 18.
5. Ibid. p. 54
6. "Report On Poonindie Mission," S.A. Parliamentary Paper No. 30, 1859, p.5.
7. "Minutes Of Evidence On The Aborigines," S.A. Parliamentary Paper No. 165, 1860, p.4.
8. Ibid. p. 7
9. Ibid. p. 7
10. Ibid. p. 22
11. Ibid. p. 44
12. Ibid. p. 87

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Supplementary Information

Adaptation: Wide range of adaptation is possible but the external and internal - especially two storeyed integrity must be retained.

Interpretation: Excellent venue for Interpretation Centre for Poonindie and Port Lincoln related themes.

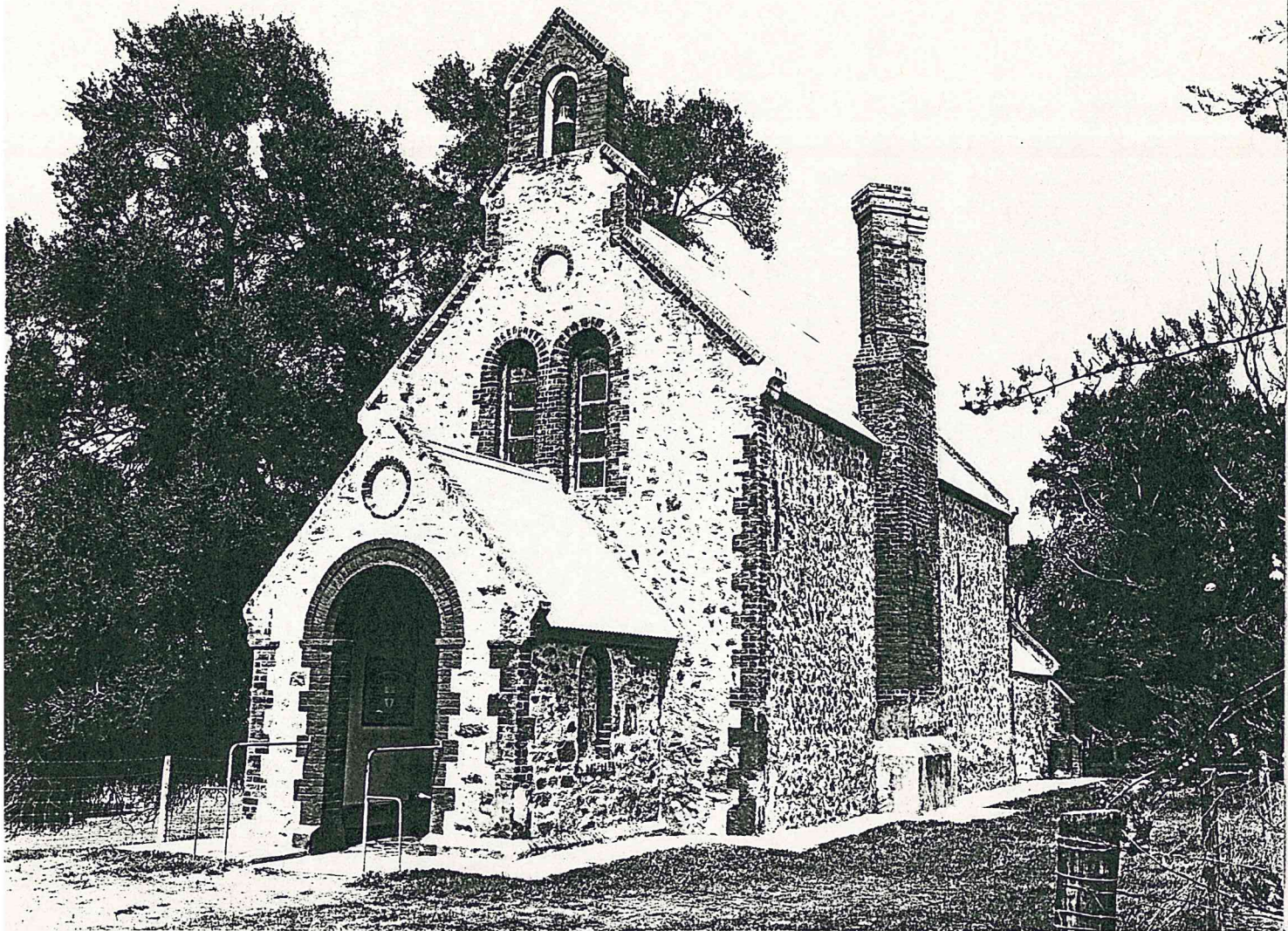
History and Sources

In the Parliamentary paper of April 12, 1856¹, the building was described in detail by Archdeacon Hale. "The school building (as he called it) was not commenced until 1854, and although we were able to use the loft in 1855 for Divine Service, the building was not completed until August of that year. The dimensions of the building are 36 feet by 18 feet with blue-stone granite walls, 18 inches thick with red brick quoin corners. The gable is 18 feet high and encloses a bell turret. There is also a large bay window of four lights. Four massive beams support the upper floor. The lower room is 11 feet high. The upper room can be used as a loft or a granary".

An omission of the southern room (now the vestry) as well as the northern porch from Hale's report tends to suggest that they were later additions. Archival photographs would then suggest that the originally thatched vestry was the second and the slate clad porch the third stage of construction.²

A church clock, which once adorned the front porch³, was donated by Hale after he left the Mission to become Bishop of Perth and the stained glass bay windows were erected in his memory in 1905.

1. As quoted by Baillie, P.J.: The Historic Native Mission Church at Poonindie, p.7.
2. See attached Archival photographs, S.A.A. 13 14665 (Film 361 No. 41) and B27581 (Film 361 No. 44)
3. Now placed in vestry - see photograph (Film 697, No. 2)



FILM
No 6~7

POONINDIE MISSION
SCHOOL/CHURCH

MARCH '83
LOTHIAN

