

**Item name:** Vacy Creamery**Location:** 853 Gresford Road Vacy 2421

Dungog

**Address:** 853 Gresford Road**Planning:** Hunter & Central Coast**Suburb/nearest town:** Vacy 2421**Local govt area:** Dungog**Parish:****State:** NSW**County:****Other/former names:****Area/group/complex:****Group ID:****Aboriginal area:****Curtilage/boundary:****Item type:** Archaeological-Terrestrial**Group:****Category:** Other - Manufacturing & Processing**Owner:****Admin codes:****Code 2:****Code 3:****Current use:****Former uses:****Assessed significance:** Local**Endorsed significance:**

**Statement of significance:** The study site contains archaeological remains pertaining to a late 19th century creamery, which is considered to be of potential local archaeological significance. The site represents the first creamery known to have been established in Vacy, and furthermore exemplifies the development of the dairy industry within the greater Dungog region.

The establishment of these smaller, short-lived factories are representative of the growth and demand for dairy processing factories around greater Dungog, which at the same time provided local farmers with more regular income than the usual payments for wheat or tobacco. The dairy industry largely became one of the principle methods of income for farmers in this area throughout the second half of the 19th and first half of the 20th centuries. However by the turn of the 20th century, the establishment of both the railway and large scale cooperative companies disseminated small, independent dairy and creamery factories from operating; most pastoralists rather sending their stock to the cooperatives which likely offered a more lucrative price.

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**Historical notes of provenance:** By the second half of the 19th century, the greater area of Dungog experienced a significant shift concerning the main sources of income production for the community. Initially focused on tobacco production, wheat growing and sheep rearing during the first half of the 19th century, these agricultural exploits had predominantly dried up or relocated to more prominent and better suited inland areas.<sup>1</sup> As the community required more agricultural enterprises in order to sufficiently survive, a heavy shift in focus towards dairying and the production of milk by-products quickly became one of the largest and valued business enterprises to the Dungog region.

Vacy, located to the southwest of Dungog and north of Paterson, was a small township settlement which quickly identified the needs for their involvement within the dairy industry. Many small joint factories all around the greater areas of Dungog were initially created by various members of the community, primarily the farm owners themselves, as a means to be able to transport their milk to an offsite facility. This offsite factory would pay for the milk received, separate and process the milk into its new form and subsequently arrange transportation of the cream by road or river.<sup>2</sup> This system allowed farmers to be able to offload and sell their milk more frequently, thus providing more regular payments. The Vacy Creamery had such an arrangement.

The Vacy Creamery, located on the eastern side of Gresford road, at its intersection with Horns Crossing Road, was officially opened in December 1892.<sup>3</sup> Newspaper articles indicate that the proprietor at the time of the factory's opening was Mr Allman.<sup>4</sup> While no visual evidence has been found to indicate the appearance of the factory, a lengthy description of the factory was given at the time of its opening:

"The dimensions of the building are 35 feet by 16 feet and 13 feet high. The boiler room is 10 feet square, and the boiler of 6 horse power and the engine is of 4 horse power. The two separators are capable of holding 180 gallons of milk. There is also a reservoir for heating milk. The receiving tanks allow for weighing 120 gallons of milk at a time. A windlass is arranged to draw the milk from the carts and the water required is pumped up from the river, near which the creamery is situated."<sup>5</sup>

The creamery at Vacy was short lived. After only opening in December 1892, the factory was shut down for a short period in 1893 and subsequently re-opened after it was purchased by William Heap in July 1894.<sup>6</sup> Regardless of this short revival, the creamery permanently closed in September 1899. The exact reason for the factory's closure is unknown, however it can be suggested that perhaps the growing competition and force from larger cooperative dairy and butter factories cause local farmers in the Vacy region to sell to the larger factories for a higher return than what a small independent factory could offer.

1. Vacy Creamery", Paterson River History, online resource accessed 2nd March 2013  
<http://www.patersonriver.com.au/places/vacycreamery.htm>

2. Caste Studio Pty Ltd (April 2012), p. 51.

3. Maitland Mercury and Hunter River General Advertiser (22nd December 1892), p. 22.

4.. Ibid.

5. Ibid.

6. Vacy Creamery", Paterson River History, online resource accessed 2nd March 2013  
<http://www.patersonriver.com.au/places/vacycreamery.htm>

<b>Themes:</b>	<b>National theme</b>	<b>State theme</b>	<b>Local theme</b>
	3. Economy	Agriculture	
	3. Economy	Agriculture	
	3. Economy	Industry	

**Designer:**

**Builder:**

**Year started:** 1892

**Year completed:** 1899

**Circa:** No

**Physical description:** Vacant piece of land situated at the intersection between Gresford Road and Horns Crossing Road. The creamery was demolished and removed some time during the 20th century, leaving a few visible archaeological remains. No building or structure appears to have been on the property since the removal of the creamery.

**Physical condition level:**

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**Physical condition:** Archaeological ruins pertaining to the creamery can be seen from aerial photographs. Based on the limited amount of disturbance to the site and its undeveloped nature, there exists a moderate to high archaeological potential for archaeological deposits and features related to the late 19th century occupation of the site. Archaeological evidence may be found in the form of footings for walls, basements or cellars, postholes for fencing, rubbish pits and yard deposits associated with the industrial nature of the site.

**Archaeological potential level:**

**Archaeological potential Detail:**

**Modification dates:**

**Recommended management:** Prior to the approval of any development of the study location an archaeological assessment and, if appropriate, relevant endorsements from the Heritage Branch should be sought where archaeological remains may be affected. Assessment of the site should be made prior to impact or disturbance being made to the current ground level surface.

**Management:** **Management category**

**Management name**

**Further comments:**

**Criteria a):** This site holds historical significance as documentary evidence reveals that the creamery present on the site was the first to be established at Vacy in 1892. The presence of the creamery indicates the changing and developing nature of the agricultural and industrial sectors in Vacy at the turn of the 20th century. This criterion can be considered to be of local significance to the study site.

**Criteria b):**  
[Historical association significance]

**Criteria c):**  
[Aesthetic/ Technical significance]

**Criteria d):** The site may hold local significance to the members of the Vacy community, as the factory was once an important economic factor in the development and sustainability of the Vacy township.

**Criteria e):**  
[Research significance]

**Criteria f):** It can be suggested that the presence of a creamery on the study site is not considered rare or uncommon to this area. Many small independent dairy factories and creameries were operating around the Dungog region during this time as agricultural ventures were readily progressing in this direction. This subsequently resulted in many small, short lived creamery and dairy factory sites opening and operating to keep up with the new production demands. This criterion can be considered to be of local significance to the study site.

**Criteria g):** The Vacy Creamery site represents the agricultural and economic change and development experienced by the Vacy community and also the greater area of Dungog during the second half of the 19th century. The shift to dairying practices was a direct result of the demise of the tobacco manufacturing industry and wheat growing industry, and also the advancement and availability of new machinery and technology allowing for wide spread production.

**Intactness/Integrity:** Built: No buildings standing Archaeological: Archaeological remains are present.

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References:	Author	Title	Year
	Caste Studio Pty Ltd: Williams, Micha	A History of Three Rivers. Dungog Shire Heritage Study- Ther	2012
	Maitland Mercury and Hunter River G Walsh, Brian	"Paterson; Opening of the Creamery at Vacy"22.12.1892 "Vacy Creamery" in Paterson River History, Last updated Febr	1892 2013

Studies:	Author	Title	Number	Year
	Carste Studio	Dungog Heritage Study Review		2013

Parcels:	Parcel code	Lot number	Section number	Plan code	Plan number
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**Latitude:****Longitude:****Location validity:****Spatial accuracy:****Map name:****Map scale:****AMG zone:****Easting:****Northing:****Listing: Name****Title**  
Heritage study**Number****ListingDate****Data entry:** Data first entered: 18/04/2013

Data updated: 11/07/2013

Status: Partial

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