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End of the Long Paddock

Maiden's Punt was located at the end of a stock route that was part of a network later known as the Long Paddock. These tracks linked the stock-breeding areas of inland Australia with southern markets. Thousands of sheep and cattle were driven from Queensland and northern NSW to Melbourne and Bendigo markets, crossing the Murray River via Maiden's Punt. Some tracks later became three-chain roads providing good feed for travelling stock, particularly in drought years.

One such stock route ran through part of Moora Station and followed what is now known as Old Deniliquin Road, branching off the present Cobb Highway near Barnes Railway crossing. It then wandered through the bush to the river end of Victoria Street, Moama, where the approach to Maiden's Punt was located, close to where you are now standing. Another track from the 'Lower Murray' ran along present Pericoota Road and others from the east and west also met at this point.



Artist impression of cattle crossing the river at Maiden's Punt, seen from the Victorian bank, circa 1845.

This historic reserve includes the approach to Maiden's Punt crossing established in 1845. Today it is visible as a gully behind this sign.

James Maiden

Maiden, a former convict who settled on Pericoota Station in 1840, established a punt crossing here in 1845 and built the Junction Inn nearby. After gold was discovered at Bendigo Maiden became a big cattle dealer and made a fortune providing meat for the diggings. This resulted in 'Maiden's Punt' becoming a famous cattle mart from 1851-1856. After the gold petered out and miners moved away, Maiden's empire collapsed and in 1857 he was forced to sell his Moama assets. He died penniless at Bendigo in 1869.

Stock routes leading to Maiden's Punt, c.1845



Production based on Hammond's 1852 plan.













