

ELDERTON COMMAND SHIRAZ

A PASSION & HISTORY OF EXCELLENCE



Make a wish for a great Shiraz...

Lorraine and Neil Ashmead took a huge gamble in being among the earliest pioneers to promote the excellence of old-vine Barossa Valley Shiraz, especially in a time where many were pulling the variety out of the ground. In 1984, two years after wines were first made under the Elderton label, the decision was made to produce and bottle a single vineyard wine from the oldest block on the Elderton Estate, that would, in time, become one of the world's most critically acclaimed and sought after wines. This is the story of Command...

The Elderton Command vineyard as it is known today, was established circa 1893, and is one of the most phenomenally special vineyards planted in Australia. Planted on the banks of the North Para River to assure its long term survival, in alluvial river flat soils over red and brown clay based earths, the vineyard today is surrounded by the growing township of Nuriootpa. Being honest, the vineyard is worth considerably more as a residential or commercial development, but remains as a testament to the Ashmead family's commitment to continue handcrafting one of the world's great wines, instead of searching for a fast return on investment.

Now farmed using organic methodology, the Command block is always the standout Shiraz fruit on the 72 acre Elderton Vineyard, and will always be the source for this single site, terroir driven wine. Yields are obviously small due to the ancient nature of these vines, generally sitting at around 1 -2 tonnes per acre.

In the winery, all care is taken to guide Command to become a rich and powerful wine, which has balance and poise to cellar into the long term. Traditional old concrete open-topped fermenters are used, which is back breaking work - but we simply do not think we can get results as good from any modern technology. Generally, ferments are quite fast, and the amazing colour is picked up in the wine almost instantly. After gentle pressing, Command goes into 100% new American (65%) and French (35%) oak puncheons where it will rest, develop and evolve for three years. Finally the wine is bottled using minimal filtering and it rests for 12 months before we release it to the public.

Elderton is now being run by the second generation of the Ashmead family. Allister and Cameron are rightly proud of their parents' achievements with this wine. Their commitment is to continue the tradition and to ensure future generations will continue to aspire to produce the best of the Barossa. They are fanatical about respecting the history of this wine and ensuring the future is as authentic as the past.

2006 is the twenty first release of this wine since 1984, as 1989 was not made for quality reasons and the 1991 was not made due to financial constraints on the company (where food on the family table was more important than the time and money required to make the wine).

...Your wish is our Command!

HISTORY OF COMMAND VINEYARD UNVEILED

Elderton recently commissioned Mike Krips, a leading local historian, to investigate the history of the Nuriootpa estate vineyards and in particular the flagship Command vineyard.

Mike trawled archival research in local libraries and information drawn from accounts from the Obst, King and Reusch families (locals to the Nuriootpa region throughout the 20th century) suggests that the history of the Elderton property dates back further than first anticipated.

It is now confirmed that the Tolley family arrived in the Barossa in the 1893, after seeing potential in the region for their spirits business and subsequent suitability for vineyard establishment. Their settlement in Nuriootpa led to the construction of a distillery tower, which is still present today south of the Elderton property, near Penfolds (who eventually absorbed the Tolley distillery business).

Evidence shows that the 1890s was a period of great viticultural growth for the Barossa, due largely to the outbreak of phylloxera (a crippling vine root disease) in the wine regions of Victoria. This was coupled with a growing acceptance of Australian wines both domestically and internationally and as a result, large tracts of vineyards were planted between Nuriootpa and Tanunda during this period.

It can then be assumed that at the time of the Tolley family's arrival in 1893, the current Elderton vineyard would have been established also – more than 10 years earlier than original estimates. This is also based on cross-checking titles and family histories for the owners of the current Command Vineyard. The vineyard's title was first recorded in 1843 and in 1889 it was sold to Johannes Heinrich Scholz who was recorded as a vine grower and wheelwright of Nuriootpa. It was then sold to Carl Heinrich Scholz in 1902, who was also recorded a vine grower. It was not until 1916, when the Tolley family actually took ownership of the Estate vineyard.

Title History For Elderton Command Vineyard

Lots 142 & 143

Date	Owner	Comments
1843	Charles Flaxman	George Fife Angus' SA agent
1851	Robert Smith Cooke	
1866	Matthias Pryzibilla	Farmer
1871	Regina Katherine Pryzibilla	Transferred on the death of Matthias
1889	Johannes Heinrich Scholz	Vinegrower & Wheelwright of Nuriootpa
1902	Carl Heinrich Scholz	Vinegrower of Nuriootpa
1908	Harrison Richardson	Horticulturalist of Nuriootpa
1916	Frederick Wilhelm Gursansky	
1916	Ernest Alfred Tolley	Distiller
1925	Ada Roselie Tolley	Transferred on the death of Ernest
1937	Sam Elderton Tolley	
1954	Elderton Ltd	Adelaide based company
1969	Elderton Pty Ltd	Adelaide based company
1977	Hervey Bay Milk Supply Pty Ltd	Purchased by Lorraine's father's company
2005	Elderton Vineyards Pty Ltd	Purchased outright by the Ashmead family