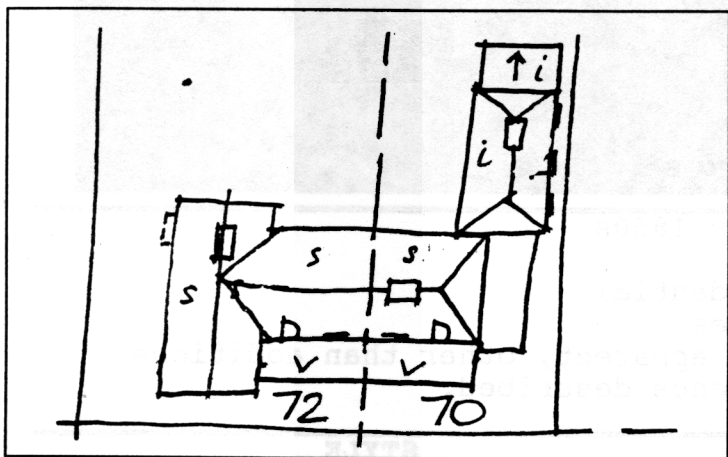


DESCRIPTION

Early timber hip-roof semi-detached cottages. They have generally slate roofs, with wide (200mm) Regency mould fine weatherboards and fine 12-pane double-hung windows. A side-window has a hood. It has an L-shaped plan, with a gable-facing attached to a hipped roof wing across which forms part of No. 72 and part No. 70. Behind this on the right-hand side is a hip-roofed perpendicular addition with a further skillion attached. These have corrugated iron roofs. Each of the three wings has a polychromatic internal chimney. There is a shared verandah in the angle. It is convex, with a bold scrolled fretwork end decoration. There is a further skillion partly-enclosed verandah in the right-hand corner angle.

The right-hand hip extension is brick and appears to be the earliest section built. The documentary evidence appears to contradict this and indicates this section as late 1880s). It has stone quoins, forming a double-fronted symmetrical cottage. The ogee spouting survives, but the brickwork is painted. This has a corrugated iron roof. It is all extraordinarily close (300 mm) to the right-hand boundary. Especially so, since the brick cottage section faces this direction.



HISTORY

This pair of early timber cottages, or a portion of them, dates from the early 1860s⁴⁹⁹. The cottages were added to over the years, notably in 1875-77 and in the 1880s. The pair has significance because of a long association with the Pile family, early Newtown builders, carpenters and stonemasons, at a time when the building trade was of great importance in the Geelong district.

In 1861 a pair of two roomed wooden cottages with shingled roofs, and with kitchens, each with an NAV 8 pounds, stood in West Fyans Street, owned by James Pile⁵⁰⁰. James, listed as a carpenter, owned the pair of houses until the early 1870s when William Pile, builder, was recorded as the owner of a wooden building and kitchen, NAV 12 pounds; the two rate entries had been consolidated⁵⁰¹. This building was identified in 1871 as a wooden building of four rooms owned and occupied by Pile⁵⁰². In 1873 James Pile, stonemason, became owner/occupier of the four roomed wooden building and kitchen⁵⁰³. During James' ownership a new five

499. Newtown rate book 1861-62, South Ward, Nos 985, 986.

500. Ibid.

501. Ibid 1870 Nos 902, 903.

502. Ibid 1871-72 Nos 902, 903.

503. Ibid 1873-74 Nos 902, 903.

roomed wooden wing was added to the property. By 1877 the NAV of this new wooden building was given as 23 pounds. In that year Pile owned and occupied the earlier building, a wooden building of four rooms with a brick kitchen, and let the new building to Charles Scott, teacher⁵⁰⁴. In the late 1880s and later when James and James William Pile, stonemasons, owned the pair of cottages, they continued to own the four roomed wooden and brick cottage and let the other, listed as a wooden cottage of six rooms, to a series of tenants⁵⁰⁵. These tenants were mainly labourers and bootmakers⁵⁰⁶. The Pile family were owners of the cottages until 1911, when the property was owned by the estate of William Pile and described as a pair of four roomed wooden dwellings⁵⁰⁷.

The Pile family's contribution to the building history of Geelong awaits a study of local builders. However, James Pile, builder, was associated with at least one known important Newtown building, the Noble Street Wesleyan Methodist Church. Opened in May 1859, Pile and Brimblecombe were responsible for the construction of this Norman Romanesque bluestone building using Marnockvale basalt.

Willingham describes the structure as "one of the earliest and most substantial of the structures erected by the Wesleyan Methodists in the first two decades of settlement in Victoria"⁵⁰⁸. According to Seaton, in the 1850s and 1860s there were some hundreds of Methodists in Newtown and Chilwell, the majority being Wesleyan, the oldest branch of Methodism in Australia⁵⁰⁹.

Building workers continued to be associated with the West Fyans Street cottages. In 1916 Harry B. Brown, bricklayer, owned them⁵¹⁰; Charles Grinter, labourer, owned them in 1919⁵¹¹. During the 1920s and 1930s Robert Fraser, retired labourer, owned and occupied 70 West Fyans Street and Alfred Ackerman, stonemason, owned and occupied 72 West Fyans Street⁵¹².

SIGNIFICANCE

This pair of early timber cottages, portion of which dates from the early 1860s, with additions in the 1870s and 1880s, has regional historical significance for a long association with the Pile family of builders, carpenters and stonemasons. The building trade was of great importance in the Geelong district from a very early time. James Pile, owner of the property in 1861, built the Noble Street Wesleyan Church, which has been described as "one of the earliest and most substantial of the structures erected by the Wesleyan Methodists in the first two decades of settlement in Victoria". Building workers were associated with the pair of cottages at least until the 1930s. They have regional architectural significance as a remarkably intact pair of cottages, partly early, but illustrating the developing needs of one family over 50 years, with their various visible additions. Their unusual relationship to their site is of particular interest. They also evidence the settlement pattern of this part of Newtown 130 years ago.

504. Ibid 1875-76 Nos 899, 900, 902, 903; 1877-78 Nos 899, 900, 902, 903.

505. Ibid 1888-89 Nos 948, 949.

506. Ibid 1890-91 Nos 998, 999; 1895-96 Nos 1138, 1139.

507. Ibid 1911-12 Nos 1291, 1292.

508. A. Willingham, Geelong Regional Commission Study, Sheet 322.

509. Gladys Seaton, Model Borough, City of Newtown, 1983, p.34.

510. Newtown rate book 1916-17 Nos 1433-34.

511. Ibid 1919-20 Nos 1455-56.

512. Ibid 1927 Nos 1766, 1767.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Existing Listings NONE

Recommend'ns RNE LPS
Place