

**BACCHUS MARSH HERITAGE STUDY.****Ref:** 89

Richard Peterson Architect &amp; Conservation Consultant. Daniel Catrice Historian 1994.

**NAME:** Cowan Cottage (no. 20).**ADDRESS:** 18-20 Taverner Street (NW cnr Bond Street).**TITLE DETAILS:****USE:** House**PREVIOUS USE:** Orchardring farmhouse and outbuildings.**CONSTRUCTION DATE:** 1904**SOURCE:** 2**ALTERATIONS/ADDITIONS:****DATE:** 1912**SOURCE:** 3**CRITERIA:** H1,6; Ar1.**HISTORIC THEME:** Agriculture**DESCRIPTION:** House **STYLE:** Edwardian **STORIES:** 1 **DETACHED.****MATERIALS:** WALLS Timber **ROOF** Iron **STRUCTURE** Stud.**CONDITION:** Excellent **INTACTNESS:** Poor **THREATS:** -**SIGNIFICANT INTACT ELEMENTS:**

FORM. VERANDAH. ROOF FORM.

EAVES DECORATION.

CHIMNEYS. WINDOWS.

**SIGNIFICANCE:****TYPE:** HISTORICAL. ARCHITECTURAL.**LEVEL:** LOCAL.**DESIGNATION EXISTING:** Nil**RECOMMENDED CONTROL:** PLANNING SCHEME.**MAP NO:** U4.08 **SURVEY:** DC & RP **DATE:** 7.1.94 **NEGS:** 7.27, 8.1,2 & 7

**HISTORY:** A lease for this one-acre (.4 ha) property in Taverner Street was granted to James Cowan in 1903.<sup>1</sup> Cowan erected a weatherboard house 30' x 30', (9.1x9.1m), and lived here from May 1904.<sup>2</sup> By 1912, Cowan had built a two-stall stable 44' x 16', 13.4x4.9m) at the corner of Bond and Taverner Streets.<sup>3</sup> This weatherboard stable, used also as a feed-house and cart-shed was later converted for use as a packing shed.

The first commercial orchardist in Bacchus Marsh, James Cowan and his wife Maria (née White) worked a nine acre (3.6 ha) property in Fiskin Street, growing apples for the export market.<sup>4</sup> A son, Harley 'Curly' Cowan later acquired the property and developed the area opposite the house and packing shed as an apple orchard.<sup>5</sup>

#### **VISUAL DESCRIPTION:**

1. The 1904 house is Edwardian, and timber. It has double symmetrical gables facing Taverner Street with a central entry door and a skillion verandah on three sides. The gables have decorative barges, pressed metal finials, latticed vents, timbering with roughcast and turned spindle brackets. The verandah has a rail valance. There are remnant garden elements.
2. *Cottage.* Timber with a double asymmetrical gable, gable vents and decorative barges. The right hand side is set back with a skillion verandah in the angle. There is a central entry door with 12 - paned double-hung early sashes. The turned verandah posts are aligned on the boundary with a picket fence between. The Cottage appears to have been developed from an earlier shed which may have been similar in form to 3.
3. The shed is gable roofed and parallel to Bond Street. It has decorative barges with latticed vents. The front is symmetrical with 12-paned double-hung early sashes. Centrally placed, are large vehicular doors. This, presumably is the stable.

**COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS:** There are 44 Edwardian houses identified in the Shire, however this is the earliest associated with orcharding, and retaining evidence of this activity.

**SIGNIFICANCE:** A characteristic Edwardian timber house, a former timber stables and another timber outbuilding built in 1904 and 1912 respectively, occupied by James Cowan, the first commercial orchardist in Bacchus Marsh.

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<sup>1</sup> Application for Perpetual Lease, 27 November 1903. VPRS 5714 Box 1365 (PRO).

<sup>2</sup> Report, 6 June 1906.

<sup>3</sup> Statement of Lessee, June 1912.

<sup>4</sup> Camm, *Bacchus Marsh by Bacchus Marsh*, pp. 361-363.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

Of local historical significance as pioneering of its type and representative of an agricultural practice of its time.

The house is also of architectural significance as a representative example of an Edwardian farmhouse, now remarkable for its location so close to the centre of Bacchus Marsh.

**INTACTNESS:**

1. Windows to the house have been replaced and the verandah floor replaced with a concrete slab. There is an unsympathetic brick wall with metal gates on the boundary.
2. *Cottage.* Altered and extended from shed to cottage. The garage and all of the verandah and fence have been added. The garage door at the side is new but the opening may be early.

**CONDITIONS & THREATS:** Excellent.

