

BACCHUS MARSH HERITAGE STUDY.

Ref: 132

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

NAME: Millbank.		
ADDRESS: 37 Grant Street.		
TITLE DETAILS:		
USE: House		
PREVIOUS USE: Homestead		
SIGNIFICANT DATE: 1850-1973	CONSTRUCTION DATE: 1855	
SOURCE: 2		
ALTERATIONS/ADDITIONS:	DATE: 1930	SOURCE: 3
CRITERIA: H1,3,5,6; Ar1,3	HISTORIC THEME: Pastoralism	
DESCRIPTION:	STYLE: Early	STORIES: 1 DETACHED.
MATERIALS: WALLS Masonry	ROOF: Iron	STRUCTURE: Lb
CONDITION: Very good	INTACTNESS: Reasonable	THREATS: -
SIGNIFICANT INTACT ELEMENTS: FORM. VERANDAH. CHIMNEYS. MATERIALS FENCES/GATES. OUTBUILDINGS GARDEN. TREES.		
SIGNIFICANCE:		
TYPE: HISTORICAL. ARCHITECTURAL.		
LEVEL: STATE.		
DESIGNATION EXISTING: HBCR. RNE. PLANNING SCHEME.		
RECOMMENDED CONTROL/NOMINATION: HBR. RNE. PLANNING SCHEME. AREA 1.		
MAP NO: U3.08	SURVEY: DC, RP, JS	DATE: 15.1.94 NEGS: 11.4-7



HISTORY: William Grant (1813-84) purchased this property, originally 205 acres 91.6 ha), from William Easey in April 1850.¹ A native of Berwickshire in Scotland, Grant arrived in Melbourne in 1841; he worked as a baker, then opted for a farmer's life in the valley of the Werribee River at Bacchus Marsh. William, his wife Jane, and their three children moved into a wattle and daub hut (partly extant as the outbuilding) overlooking the Border Flour Mill. About 1855, the first section of the homestead was constructed of local freestone with a shingle roof.²

Numerous alterations and additions were carried out over subsequent decades. Two brick rooms were constructed on the north side of the homestead, and the kitchen was enlarged by the removal of a dividing wall. In 1930, a brick room with double-doors was erected on the south side of the house, a dividing wall between the two front bedrooms was removed, and the entrance hall was enlarged. At the same time, the sitting room was extended and a front verandah was erected.³

William Grant died, aged 71, in 1884. Millbank passed to a son, William, a progressive farmer, benefactor, and Shire President in 1892-93, 1900-1, and 1904-5.⁴ William Jnr. died in 1924 and the property, now much reduced in terms of acreage, passed to a son, Thomas Grant⁵. Thomas died in 1964, and his widow died in 1973, ending three generations of family ownership of Millbank.⁶

VISUAL DESCRIPTION: An early homestead complex consisting of house, early outbuilding, early "dairy", fence and gates, and garden remnant elements.

The homestead is masonry generally with hip roofs. The early (c1855) section has stone walls, said to be locally quarried. This consists of two parallel roofs, the rear being L-shaped. This was extended on both sides in polychromatic brickwork (c1900). There is a skillion verandah at front, returning at right, and another in the angle at the rear. Barges are loopy and at front are French windows. The outbuilding has a small section of internal partition in rare wattle and daub construction, however the wattles are not true basketweave configuration and the horizontal members are not grooved to receive them, as they should properly be. The "dairy" building has south and east walls of drop-slab construction, which is uncommon, but not rare.

The drive is approached from Grant Street through a fragment of picket fence, with triangular section rails. It has V-shaped and spearhead picket heads, which are arranged in a catenary curve. The substantial timber posts have moulded caps, and others have axed spearhead tops. There are also H.V. McKay Sunshine vehicular iron gates.

¹ Moore and Oomes, *Bacchus Marsh: A Pictorial Chronicle*, p.50.

² "A Walking Tour of Bacchus Marsh", typescript, BMDHS.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Moore and Oomes, op.cit., p.50.

⁵ Shire of Bacchus Marsh, Rate Book, 1925-26.

⁶ Letter, Mr B. Bartley to National Trust of Australia (Victoria). National Trust File No.3398.

Close inspection of the buildings was not possible.

Garden: The garden of Millbank slopes steeply to the front of the house with a curving gravel driveway to the north side of the property.⁶ The garden is dominated by two Bunya Bunya pines in the front garden which can be seen along Grant Street. The garden has an informal path leading to the front door, under a rose covered arch halfway up the slope. Ageing fruit trees are planted as specimens in the lawns and cottage perennials and bush roses are currently being rearranged into stone edged garden beds. The rear garden is dominated by a magnificent Peppercorn tree of approximately eight metres diameter, with branches weeping down to the lawn below. A new orchard has been planted in the north west corner. Over the years storm damage has severely altered the shape of the two cypresses at the front entry gate.

Plant Species include:

<i>Araucaria bidwillii</i>	Bunya Bunya Pine
<i>Pinus pinea</i>	Stone pine
<i>Cupressus macrocarpa</i>	Monterey Cypress
<i>Melia azaderach</i>	White Cedar
<i>Populus sp.</i>	Poplar
<i>Morus nigra</i>	Mulberry
<i>Maclura pomifera</i>	Osage Orange
<i>Eriobotrya japonica</i>	Loquat
<i>Koelreuteria paniculata</i>	Golden Rain Tree
<i>Schinus molle</i>	Peppercorn Tree
<i>Grevillea robusta</i>	Silky Oak
<i>Cedrus deodara</i>	Hymalayan Cedar
<i>Vitis sp.</i>	Grape Vines
<i>Agapanthus orientalis</i>	Agapanthus

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS: There are thirteen early farmhouses identified in the Shire. Most of these are single cottages. Only four, including this, are masonry construction. None show the complex development pattern within the same family as Millbank. Early primitive construction is found also at Rosehill (ref: 293, split paling weatherboards), Manor House (ref: 218, log), and Yurnga (ref: 323, split timber barn).

SIGNIFICANCE: An early stone and brick homestead complex built in 1855 by William Grant, with outbuildings, fences and garden, including important trees. One outbuilding contains some early rare wattle and daub construction and another, the "dairy" has early drop split slab construction. The property remained in the Grant family for 123 years.

⁶ Inspection with permission of the owner, Mrs Annie Hudson, 24 January 1995.

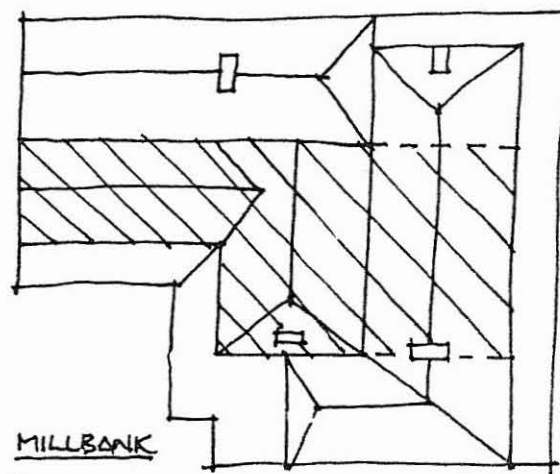
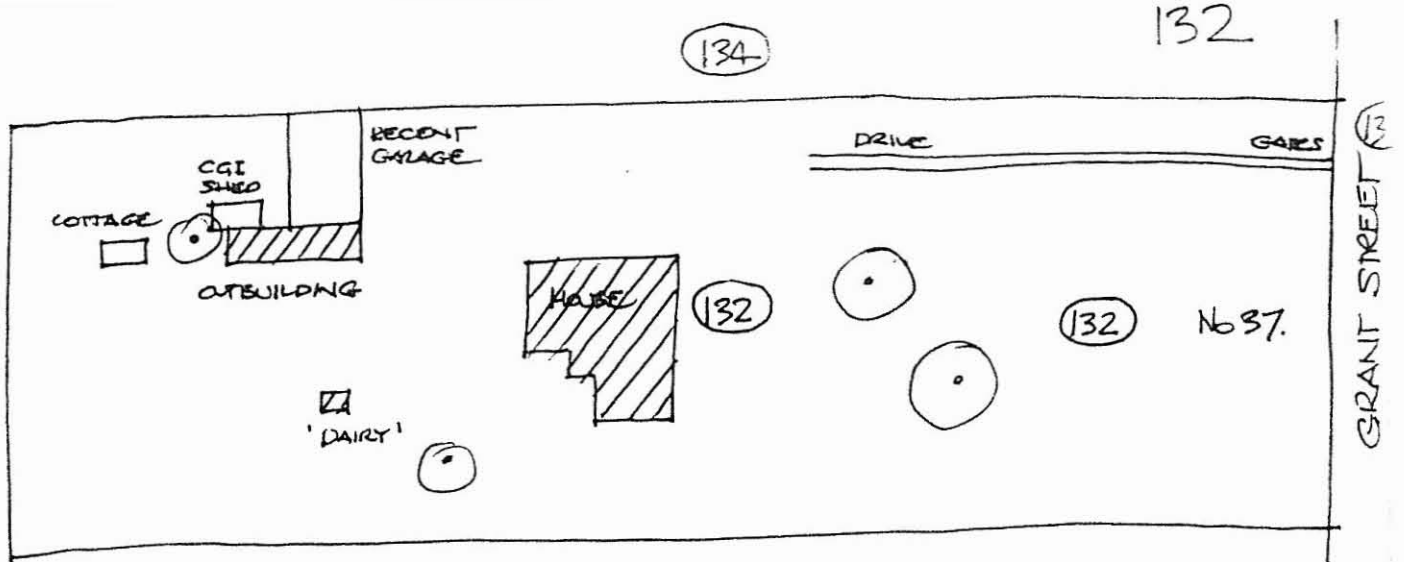
The property is of state historical significance as a representative embodiment of a way of life, demonstrating the changing sequence of patterns of occupancy, over time. It demonstrates an association with an important Bacchus Marsh family. It is a pioneering homestead in Bacchus Marsh.

It is of state architectural significance as a relatively intact example of an early homestead and garden and outbuildings, including rare surviving examples of early construction techniques.

INTACTNESS: Reasonable. The homestead appears to have been heavily restored.

Garden. The excision of the front flatter portion of land along Grant Street as part of a former subdivision will unfortunately detract from the garden and the views to the house once development takes place. The current owners of Millbank appear keen to retain the property in its original "cottage form".

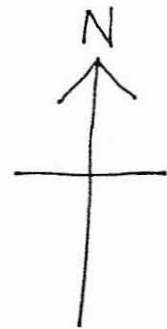
CONDITIONS & THREATS: Very good. It is well maintained. The garden near the front street may be threatened with road widening or subdivision.



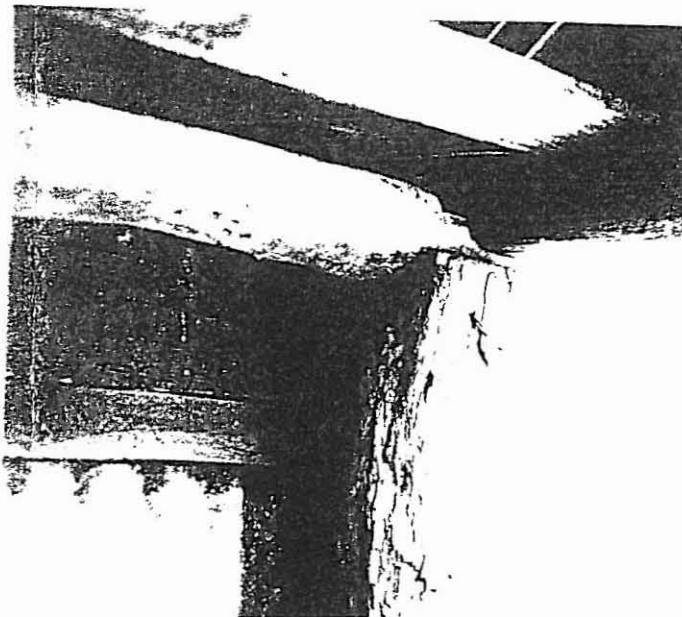
MILLBANK

HOUSE
(LARGER)

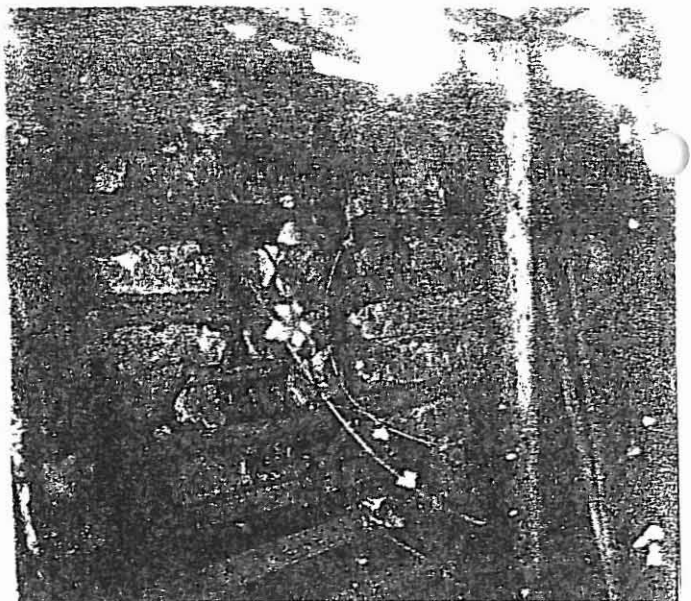
STONE EARLY HOUSE SHADED.



NTS.



THREE PEG JOINT.



EARTH CONSTRUCTION

PHOTOGRAPHS JOHN COUNS, 1978
NATIONAL TRUST FN 3398.