



**Price House,  
31 Balliang Street**

**History**

S.A. Donaldson purchased the Crown Grant in 1839, at one of the earliest land sales in the city.<sup>1</sup> However, it was the Geelong pioneer, Simeon Price, who first owned what was described in 1854 as of brick, four-rooms with a weatherboard shop and stable.<sup>2</sup> The 1854 Geelong plan showed a similar outline to that of around 60 years later, when the Geelong Water Board's plan of 31 Balliang Street revealed a brick corner building, adjoining timber wing and a detached timber outbuilding to the north (workshop, stable?). A well was also shown under this structure.<sup>3</sup>

Throughout the 1850-60s, Price was listed in 'Little Forster Street' (Balliang Street), having previously lived in Foster Street during the late 1840s.<sup>4</sup> The 1856 elec-

toral roll cites a Yarra Street shop and three brick houses and a shop in Yarra Street, but notes that Price's later freehold qualification was a shop in Little Forster.<sup>5</sup> Later directory listings have him in Balliang Street until the 1886-7 directory describes him as a gentleman, resident in Yarra Street. Ratebooks list him (and his family) as owner-occupiers through the 1850-80s, with John Price as occupier in c1870.<sup>6</sup> While Price continued to own the property into the late 1890s, he leased it to John Minnoch (1880-90s) and Julius Marion (late 1890s), a gardener. Since 1858-9, the 'shop' content of the structure had merged with the house, but the basic description of weatherboard and brick and five or six rooms prevailed, including the note 'very old' in the 1920 rate book.<sup>7</sup> After Price's death, owners in the 1920-30s included Violet Smith of Deans Marsh and William Taylor, an owner-occupier and a joiner.<sup>8</sup>

- 1 CA 9/6
- 2 RB1854, 480; VB1854-5, 537
- 3 GW&SB DP c1914
- 4 INV. Vol.9, pp.67, 101; LC-ER 1849-50
- 5 ER1856, Barwon div.
- 6 VB1856-7, 728; VB1870-1, 104; VB1880, 124
- 7 RB1856-7, 728; RB1895-6, 1408, RB1920, 1972
- 8 RB1910, 1730; RB1920, 1972; RB1930, 2410

City of Geelong Urban Conservation Study  
Significant Sites

Although Simeon Price was an early Geelong resident, it was his son, John Longville Price, who was best known in the family. Boasting in the 1880s that his law practice was one of Geelong's largest, Price was also active in the volunteer defence regiment and an 'excellent shot.'<sup>1</sup> He lived at Longville, 2 Fitzroy Street, in a large house overlooking the bay, but now somewhat reduced in grandeur. Price was Geelong's Mayor in 1883 and Price Street in both Newtown and Torquay were named by him.<sup>2</sup>

When Simeon Price moved into 31 Balliang Street c1854, John would have been 16 and probably also resident there. John's name appears at least once as occupier of the house (1878) but it is possible that he spent only a few years there: at the latest 1868 when he was admitted to the Bar.<sup>3</sup>

**Description**

This is a double-fronted, but minute, gabled-roof face-brick Colonial Georgian style cottage which has been set on the building line with a weatherboarded wing to the west. This wing is apparently an addition, given the symmetry of the chimneys and the arrangement of openings in the brick section. The soft hand-made bricks are set in English bond, the sills are sandstone and the boards are square-edged, although some bead-edge boards exist in the rear skillion. A series of ruinous sheds and overgrown planting occupy the rear yard. Presumably the paling-clad gabled outbuilding is of a similar age to the main buildings.

**External Integrity**

The front door is new and the bricks painted.

**Streetscape**

Similar in scale, form and siting to 39 Balliang Street and an adjacent rowhouse pair in Yarra Street. It contributes to the old residential precinct 11.1.

**Significance**

Historically, built on one of the city's first Crown Sections to be sold and identifiably of an early date, corresponding with adjacent aged sites in Yarra and Balliang Streets. Also built for Simeon Price, a Geelong pioneer.

Architecturally, simply and typical of the colony's first modestly sized housing, using in this case brickwork rather than the more common timber construction.



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History

A. Davidson purchased the one of the earliest land sales in the Geelong pioneer, Simeon Price was determined in 1854 as of the weatherboarded floor and walls. showed a similar outline to that when the Geelong Water Board street revealed a brick corner in wing and a detached timber workshop (sheds?). A well was

1 Sutherland, p.155  
2 see Appendix; INV. Vol.7, p.88  
3 Sutherland, loc. cit.