

THE MOOK 25 ALPHINGTON STREET

Charles 8 James and Percy Dobson declared their subdivision of Vidal's Grown Portion 114 in 1883. They called it the St James Park Estate,

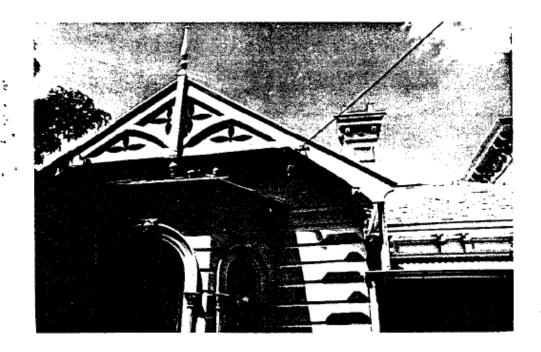
By the 1890's, Sammal Steele of Glem Perrie Road, New held lots 16-18 of this estate₂. He sold to J W Beveridge, an accountant, who in turn wold part of lot 17 and all of lot 18 to Slizabeth and Richard Heron₃. The Berons had built a house there by 1993 however this was incomplete until the following year₄. By 1901 Richard Heron was leasing 25 Alphington Street to Jace Pettinson and it appears that significant improvements were made to the house in that year₅.

In the following year, Noel 2 Ruck purchased it and in those years it was named The Nook. Subsequent occupier, Robert H Simpson, was replaced in 1913 by a new owner-occupier, the Alphington Presbyterian Hinister George M Connor, whose former residence had been burnt, along with his Heidelberg Road Church.

The Conners stayed at the Nook for over sixty years, in that time adding a bedroom wing at the south east.

The Nook is a towered timber house in the Italianate style which had developed in Regency England as a picturesque revival of Italian domestic architecture. The house

23



consists of the normal double-fronted versandahed and assymmetrically planned villa, common alsewhere in Northcots, which faces west and has been attached to an assymmetrically placed tower and a south-facing gabled bay, similar to that facing Alphington Street, Corniced, semi-escaponal window bays, with arched openings, architraves, colonettes and keyston have been attached to both of these c gabled beys whilst the gables themselves have decorative king post trueses which have panels with trefoil piercings. Turned pendant novoldings and finials are applied to the king posts.

The cladding to the tower and house walls is an uncommon form of shiplapped board which escalates quoined ashlar whilst the typical bracketted eaves, and cornice detail alternates around the house, relating to the roof shape. The upper level of the tower has matching details in respect to openings and cladding but with further enrichment to the entablature, below the cornics, in the form of swegs and rosettes. A cast-iron finial survives on the typical Italianets hipped roof of the tower.

Studened chimney shafts with panelling, bracketted cornices barelled tope and rosettes repeat this detailing above a patterned slate roof.

The return versidah is decorated with cast-iron friezwork of a quilloche pattern and attached brackets which rest on foliated column capitals. Frazing in the concave roof of the versidah and bracks in the frieze suggest that arches were originally placed, in the roof, central to each versidah bey. The crossing of the entrance door with the variandah roof and visible flashing alterations above

suggest possible alterations to the original roof line.

The doorway has penalled side lights and top lights with the original coloured glazing intact. Alterations to the exterior are sinor. Now open spouting has replaced the original of the same profile and some boarding has been replaced with con-matching sections on the tower. Extensive elements and additions have occurred at the rest, internally and externally.

The interior matches the etuberance of the external detail with ornate plasterwork and intert mantels. Minor interior alterations are apparent from early this century; undertaken procusedly by the Common family. The garden contains mature species from a number of eras; the boundary hedge (Pittosporum unfulctum) which has replaced what was presumedly the original picket fence is notable and a large Morus alba (white Nulberry) at the rear was possibly a part of the earliest garden at the Nook.

The Hook is a rare and original example of timber Italianate which may be seen repeated in stucce on a grander scale at Caroline Souse, 74 Caroline Street, South Yarra and Toorak at 21 St Georges Spad, Toorak. It also repeate a towered vernacular which, inspired by river views, was current from a 1890 in Fairfield and Alphington (Anderbach of the Nook and the two towered hotels on Heidelberg Road.

