



**EDGECASTON,**

1 TOWER AVENUE.

J W Gosling's Crown Portion 116, of 1840, became Perry's Fulham Grange farm of the 1860's. Brothers, George and William Perry and finally Emma and Elizabeth Perry owned the farm until the early 1880's when the land was subdivided<sup>1</sup>.

On seven acres of this land Thomas Stokes, then of the die-sinking and electroplating firm of Stokes and Martin, constructed Edgecaston during 1883-86<sup>2</sup>. Stokes had come to the Colony, seeking gold, in the 1850's. He was successful and was able to establish a firm in Melbourne. During the 1860's, when legal tender was in short supply, Stokes struck most of the copper tokens which were issued by Melbourne tradesmen and businesses as a substitute. F G Martin joined his firm, then situated in Collins Street, and a new factory was opened in Collingwood East. After a disastrous fire there, in 1893, Martin left the firm and Stokes continued in partnership with his sons at Post Office Place<sup>3</sup>.

After Stoke's death, in 1910, Edgecaston was occupied by John Towers and later, Thomas A Rodde (possibly of Preston Grammar House)<sup>4</sup>. By the late 1920's, Tower Avenue was created and Edgecaston's grounds subdivided<sup>5</sup>. Presumably at the same time extensive renovations were carried out to the house: arches were added and rough cast stucco applied.

Edgecaston still retains its general shape; being a two-storey stuccoed brick house with window bays to two facades. However, what may have been timber or iron verandah's have been replaced with masonry arches, on two levels, and the roof-shape has been changed to suit.

Edgecaston is prominent, being the only two-storey house in the locality and is sited axially to Tower Avenue. It thus terminates a vista and retains the historical associations of the large houses which formerly were located both north and south of Heidelberg Road, along the Yarra River, prior to the suburban development.