

RECOMMENDATIONS:

It is recommended that this building be specified under the Town and Country Planning Act (Third Schedule).

Fitzroy Ratebooks 1888: Brick house, 8 rooms £100. William Ferrie Solicitor.

House

ADDRESS: 43 Alfred Crescent

CONSTRUCTION DATE: 1887  
ALTERATIONS: 1905  
ARCHITECT: unknown  
BUILDER: 1905 - D.R. Iwan and Co.  
PREVIOUS OWNER: William Hobbs  
CURRENT OWNER: E. & H. Farley  
CONSTRUCTION MATERIALS: Rendered masonry, slate roof  
CONSERVATION AREA: A5



BUILDING CITATION:

This house constructed in 1887 and altered in 1905 provides a unique expression of Art Nouveau architecture in Melbourne. The exterior is in contact with the original unpainted varnished cement work, ornate timber and cast iron decorative work, elaborate keyhole leadlighting to the window heads and a square tower with a double curved roof.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

It is recommended that this building be added to the Historic Buildings Register. Any future interior decoration and alterations should be closely scrutinised. It is recommended that a separate study be undertaken to determine original wall surfaces and any other decorative elements, before any new refacing or alterations are undertaken. This building is recommended for retention in the Register of the National Estate and be specified under Clause 6 of the Town and Country Planning Act (Third Schedule).

43 ALFRED CRESCENT: BUILDING ANALYSIS:

This house was constructed in 1887 for William Hobbs a coach builder.<sup>1</sup> In 1887 the property was sold to David Watson a dentist,<sup>2</sup> and in 1905 a builder (Mr. D.R. Iwan and Company) made alterations and additions to the house.<sup>3</sup> David Watson owned the property until 1914. It then passed into various hands, and in 1924 it was owned by Reginald T. Lloyd.<sup>4</sup> The house remained in the Lloyd family until 1974.<sup>5</sup>

The plan of the original facade is visible on the 1901 M.M.B.W. survey map and appeared to have been identical to number 41 Alfred Crescent but without the bay window. The facade, altered in 1905, is extremely ornate and presents an almost classical arts and crafts facade. The conspicuous feature is the rusticated square tower with a double curved roof of a late Mogul Imperial style, surmounted by a finial. The roof to the tower is clad in fish scale patterned zinc tiles. The corner tower windows are of a slightly oriental character with sloping timber bracket slats above.

1. Fitzroy Ratebook, 1887: Brick House 9 rooms William Hobbs, coach builder.  
 2. 1897 Directory 3. Fitzroy Council Permit Book: 7.4.1905, Additions  
 43 Alfred Cres. D.R. Iwan & Co. 4. Fitzroy Ratebook 1914  
 5. 1924 Directory 6. 1974 Directory

The verandah and balcony have delicate open work timber friezes supported on timber brackets, and the balcony comes out in a three sided bay, projecting from the front verandah line. The cast iron panels are of a late character.

The top lights of all the windows, except for the top tower windows, are in panels with a keyhole arch motif, again presumably of Moorish derivation. Piers dividing up the verandah and balcony, and supporting the tower, are built up in vermiculated blocks in cement work. The arch through the base of the tower which leads to the entrance door is divided not only by a keystone but by two blocks on the angle breaking into the archivolt, giving a sort of rudimentary rustication.

The interior is extremely ornate and lavish. The undergraduate thesis by Mario Bernardi<sup>7</sup> provides evidence of its former appearance in 1968 when it still belonged to the Lloyd family.

The front room is wall papered in panels and an elaborate timber fireplace surrounds a very lush mantle with mirrors. The front bay window has a timber Art Nouveau screen across with pleasing sinuous lines. There is ornate leadlighting across the top of the window. The skirtings are deep, and are picked out in different timber colours. The door surrounds, which defy architectural analysis, are extremely elaborate, in multi-colour timber work.

The hall walls have been redecorated but there are the same elaborate door surrounds and an elaborate Art Nouveau ceiling, which is constructed in either pressed metal or carton pierre<sup>8</sup> with subtle gradations of browns and greens with detailing picked out in gold. There is an ornate timber Art Nouveau screen/arch in the hallway.

The second room back again has a similar rather heavier timber fireplace overmantel and a less elaborate bay window and screen. The ceiling in subtle colours is superb and appears to be carton pierre.

The room further back has been redecorated and again has the mirrored over mantle with a coved top above a grey marbled fire place. The ceiling, painted white, is intact but it appears to be pressed metal rather than carton pierre.

Upstairs in the main bedroom on the east side of the front there is again a very elaborate relief ceiling, white marble chimneypiece and a very simple timber mirrored overmantle. Again there is a bay window with leadlight glazing and a fairly simple Art Nouveau timber screen across the top.

Above the space adjoining the master bedroom on the west side rises the stair to the tower. The tower itself is still intact internally with the original surviving seats. Next to the stair there is a master dressing room with panels of diagonal timber, mirrors and other decorative features.

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7. M. Bernardi "Art Nouveau Architecture in Melbourne", B. Arch. University of Melbourne 1968.

(Permission could not be obtained to reproduce the large colour photos contained in this report, but they provide an excellent reference.)

8. carton pierre - layers of paper successively pasted together.

The second bedroom back has a white marble chimney piece, and a mirror with a broken pedament over the top. The ceiling in original colours, is in relief, with no Art Nouveau screen across the window. On the landing there is a bathroom with its original ceiling and tiled walls. The bath has a marble surround and timber panelled sides with marbling in the panels.

The room behind is totally tiled, with another good ceiling and a built-in wardrobe in a variety of timbers. There are some intact timber window venetians and a simple marble fire place.

This house provides a unique expression of Art Nouveau architecture in Melbourne. The exterior is intact with the original unpainted vermiculated cement work, and ornate timber and cast iron decorative work. The interior has some intact features, and the overall impression is extremely lush.

NAME: House ADDRESS: 67 Alfred Crescent

CONSTRUCTION DATE: 1890  
ARCHITECT: unknown  
BUILDER: unknown  
FIRST OWNER: Alfred Mills, Fruiterer  
PRESENT OWNER: J. & J. Addis  
CONSTRUCTION MATERIALS: rendered brickwork, slate roof  
CONSERVATION AREA: A5



BUILDING CITATION:

A large two storey dwelling of a comparatively chaste design for the period (1890)<sup>1</sup> perhaps forshadowing the later depression. It comprises a simple hipped slate roof with eaves brackets over a square massing with a projecting wing on the right hand side which is terminated by a projecting bay - also finished with a hipped roof.

The cement rendered facade has maintained its original natural finish and has little decorative treatment except string mouldings at the springing height of the arcuated windows and cornices. A two storey verandah with intact iron lace is constructed in the space subtended by the projecting wing. The whole building is notable for its intactness, including the cast iron double palisaded fence, as well as for its streetscape value created by its scale, small setback and relationship to the adjoining neighbouring buildings.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

It is recommended that this building be specified under Clause 8 of the Town and Country Planning Act (Third Schedule).

1. Fitzroy Ratebook 1890: Brick house 7 rooms and workshop £60 Alfred Mills, Fruiterer.