

7 BARRY STREET, 'DESTAVILLE'

Original Use: Residence
Date of Construction: 1858¹
Architect: Knight and Kerr²

DESIGNATION A
CITATION NO.4



HISTORY AND DESCRIPTION

This two-storey fourteen roomed mansion was built for Sir William Foster Stawell, the first Attorney-General and later Chief Justice of Victoria³. It was designed by the architects of the Melbourne Parliament House, Knight and Kerr, who called tenders for a '... large stone house at Kew for Sir W.F. Stawell' in February 1858⁴. It is a very imposing house built in exposed Footscray basalt and has picturesque massing with Italianate detailing. The walls are in coursed basalt with rockfaced raised quoins to the windows and corner walls, while around the entrance door there is a shallow pilastered entrance porch with a broken pediment above. The roof line is dominated by the gable units and deep eaves, both decorated with closely set timber brackets. The house was originally set on a large tract of land, now greatly reduced. In its styling, D'Estaville compares with few houses of the 1850s in Victoria, the (basalt) Bishops court in East Melbourne constructed by James Blackburn about five years previous, being one of the few. Like Bishops court, it is possible that this house was originally intended to be rendered over the basalt between the raised quoining blocks.

Rate Books record that the initial N.A.V. of the building was £600⁵ although by 1860 the valuation had fallen to £350⁶. Stawell's property was occupied during the early 1870s by Niel Black⁷, a Western district pastoralist, and although it was used as the Ruyton Kindergarten Training School during 1904-1906⁸, the current ownership has reverted to a private residence.

SIGNIFICANCE

'D'Estaville' is of significance as having been built for Sir William Stawell, for being a rare example of the private work of Knight and Kerr, as a very fine and early example of Italianate design in Victoria, and for the rarity of its exposed basalt construction as applied to a domestic structure.

HERITAGE LISTINGS

HBR: Registered No.201

GBR: N/A

RNE: Registered

National Trust: Classified No.1111

¹ National Trust of Aust.(Vic), Building Citation: 'D'Estaville'

² Architects' Index, University of Melbourne.

³ National Trust of Aust.(Vic), Research into "D'Estaville"...', 6 December 1976

⁴ Architects' Index, University of Melbourne, *Argus* 15 February 1858, p.8

⁵ *ibid.*

⁶ *ibid.*

⁷ *ibid.*

⁸ *ibid.*

D'Estaville has already been registered with the Historic Buildings Council, thus anticipating and justifying its A classification within the Kew Urban Conservation Study.

Subsequent to correspondence from the owner, Ms Figuerola, discussions have been held with the Heritage Advisor concerning the implications of registration and the works required on the building.