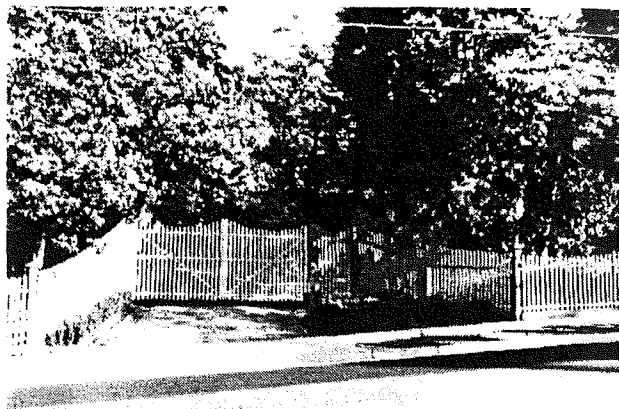


## Camberwell Conservation Study 1991

### BUILDING CITATION

**Astolat,  
630 Riversdale Road**



National Trust of Australia (Class/Rec.): Recorded  
NTA File Number: 969

Study Grading: A  
Construction Date: c1884-5  
First Owner: Derham, Thomas

#### History

A typical large Italianate villa of the period, Astolat's first occupiers appear to have been far from the ordinary. Its first owner-occupier Thomas Plumley Derham, was junior to his better known industrialist brother, Frederick but suffered the same indignities at the 1893 bank moratorium<sup>6</sup>. Both were involved in the subsequent 'secret composition' and Thomas's house and four acre grounds went to a new owner, engineer Michael Spencer, in 1895<sup>7</sup>. Dugold Little followed in 1898 and early this century, the Trustees Executors and Agency Co leased it to William Reilly<sup>8</sup>.

James Martyn, an iron founder, owned Astolat soon after; his widow Lucy Martyn occupying the house, on its reduced allotment of 152 x 531 feet. Astolat was converted to flats by the 1930's<sup>9</sup>.

In the brief period the Derhams occupied Astolat, Thomas's financial career peeked and troughed but the future Major

Generals Francis and Alfred Derham were either infants or, in Alfred's case probably born at the house during this period. Alfred, a doctor, and Francis a solicitor in the wake of his father, both

gained military honours during World War I, Alfred serving as Assistant Director of the 8th Division AIF Medical Service and Francis receive the DSO and *Croix de Guerre*. Francis became a director of G J Coles and Co, McEwans Ltd., the Metropolitan Gas Co and Rocke Tompsitt and Co Pty. Ltd.

Both boys and their similarly distinguished sister, Enid, were infants during the brief period at Astolat and hence little light is shed on their subsequently successful careers by the house.

Peter Watts reconnaissance of Victoria's historic gardens describes these grounds as extensive with well planted beds and a superb setting for the house. Mature specimens of Kauri, Bunya Bunya, Silky Oaks and the more typical English Oaks create an exotic skyline unrivaled elsewhere in the city. The tennis court and early pavilion building compliment the remarkable survival of a typical large suburban house of the 19th century still set in extensive grounds and served by its leisure facilities.

Its association with the Derham family apart, the house has significance for its long history of occupancy by leaders of Melbourne society. Its conversion to flats in the 1930s marks an historically important transition.

#### Description

1

The house is virtually as it was at its construction albeit a typical villa type (see a similar single storeyed house at 19 Mangarra Road, and two storeyed at 7 Victoria Avenue, 10 Trafalgar Road and 3 Fermanagh Road). The carriage sweep garden and its accompanying pavilion distinguish this house among its peers, illustrating well the comfortable home life of its era. A cast iron two-level verandah and cement detail are typical of the type.

#### Comparative Examples

The following Camberwell sites may be compared with this site.

- 35, PROSPECT HILL ROAD, 1881
- 2, BERWICK STREET, 1885<sup>c</sup>
- 53, PROSPECT HILL ROAD, 1886-7
- 320, CAMBERWELL ROAD, 1886
- 3, FERMANAGH ROAD, 1887
- 57, SEYMOUR GROVE, 1887

6 CFL 969  
7 ibid.  
8 ibid.  
9 ibid.

1 inspection required

## Camberwell Conservation Study 1991 BUILDING CITATION (Continued)

33, ALMA ROAD, 1888  
 19, CANTERBURY ROAD, 1888  
 46, PARLINGTON STREET, 1888  
 635, RIVERSDALE ROAD, 1888  
 89, UNION ROAD, 1888  
 2, PEPPIN STREET, 1889 (?)  
 25, ALMA ROAD, 1889(?)  
 54, MONT ALBERT ROAD, 1889-9  
 36, ALMA ROAD, 1889  
 208, CANTERBURY ROAD, 1889  
 15, IRILBARRA ROAD, 1889  
 21, IRILBARRA ROAD, 1889  
 43, KENT ROAD, 1889  
 2, MOLESWORTH STREET, 1889  
 137, MONT ALBERT ROAD, 1889  
 32, PROSPECT HILL ROAD, 1889  
 10, TRAFALGAR ROAD, 1889  
 26A, WANDSWORTH ROAD, 1889  
 50, WANDSWORTH ROAD, 1889  
 42, WARRICAL ROAD, 1889  
 322-394, CAMBERWELL ROAD, 1890-1  
 262, UNION ROAD, 1890/1900  
 15, ALMA ROAD, 1890  
 544, BURKE ROAD, 1890  
 27, INGLESBY ROAD, 1890  
 7, VICTORIA AVENUE, 1890  
 13, VICTORIA AVENUE, 1890  
 57, YARRBAT AVENUE, 1890c?  
 7A, ALMA ROAD, 1891-2  
 13, BALWYN ROAD, 1891-4  
 73-79, BALWYN ROAD, 1891  
 320, CAMBERWELL ROAD, 1892  
 622, RIVERSDALE ROAD, 1892  
 6, TRAFALGAR ROAD, 1892  
 125, WATTLE VALLEY ROAD, 1892  
 136, CANTERBURY ROAD, 1893  
 668-670, BURKE ROAD, 1895  
 690, BURKE ROAD, 1895  
 816-822, RIVERSDALE ROAD, 1895  
 30, HOWARD STREET, 1895c  
 29, CANTERBURY ROAD, 1897  
 52, PROSPECT HILL ROAD, 1897  
 15, KASOUKA ROAD, 1898  
 150, MONT ALBERT ROAD, 1899  
 26, VICTORIA AVENUE, 1899

### Significance

Architecturally, a large and externally near intact (?) example of a common 19th Century villa style which is greatly enhanced by its exotic and ornamental landscape setting; of regional importance.

Historically, linked briefly with the Derham family but, as the first owners, very expressive of the tastes and expectations of their like both in choice of garden and home; of local importance and regional interest.

### External Integrity

2

The picket fence has been replaced in a slightly different pattern.

### Streetscape

Unrelated to the nearby villas in Riversdale Road but perceivable, together with its western neighbour, as presubdivision properties: the garden and fence (replaced) contribute a sense of period at the street alignment.