

side walls (cavity) extending to become the store/bakery (English bond and earlier- 1860-70s?) which faces west. A side lane provides the service link between the two premises, the bakery originally visible from Whitehall Street, presumably combined with a wood yard.

An unusual combination, the residence appears to extend over the downstairs shop and part of the store/bakery while still providing a typical bayed row-house front at ground level. The remnants of a concave roof iron verandah are further indicators of the residential function of this part of the complex. Valuable shopfront details survive, as does the unusual iron palisade in front of the residence. Cement ornament is sparse but includes panels, vermiculated keystones and acanthus capitals at the window bay. One distinctive element is the arched entrance recess, with flanking colonettes and etched glass visible in the door lights. A paneled stallboard, paneled pilasters and a moulded string, comprise the shop details. Three of the four terra-cotta chimney stacks survive.

Perhaps the most intriguing element in the complex is the store/bakery. It faces away from the street to a private service yard but once extended through to Whitehall Street adjoining Mitchell's Exchange Hotel. Attached to the north-west corner is a long single-storey former stable and cart shed (?) comprised of at least two building stages. The gabled bakery elevation is distinctively detailed (dog-toothing) with a now blank name panel set centrally above vertical-boarded loading doors.

#### External Integrity

Much of the house verandah is gone. Early joinery colours remain in parts but one chimney stack is gone.

#### Streetscape

Isolated between a vacant block with a notable (for the area) mature Pepper Tree and a former service station, but perceivable as once part of a contemporary group comprising the Exchange Hotel and 67 Whitehall Street. A much altered but old timber cottage to the north also relates.

#### Significance

Architecturally, a superficially altered but apparently essentially original complex which demonstrates one integrated building mass, an unusual combination of uses for metropolitan Melbourne and it also possesses distinctive and old brick detailing (bakery/store) and original details and finishes (shop, residence). Historically, today probably Footscray's oldest business premises, associated with a prominent local family and reputedly enjoying a metropolitan-wide reputation for its produce.

#### Shop and Residence

28 (once part 26-30) Murray Street

#### History

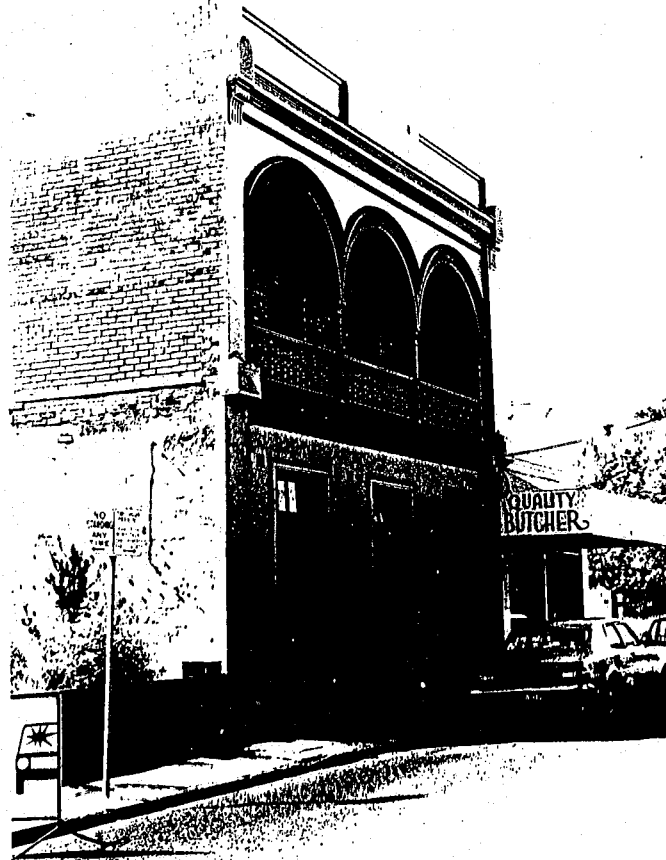
W.H. Roberts (William Henry Roberts, solicitor) owned land in both Murray and Goulburn Streets during the late 1880s, much of it occupied by vacant housing. The Honourable Roberts, along with other parliamentarians, was a director of one of the infamous land boom shelf companies (Essendon Land & Finance Association) formed in 1888 to bail out the Essendon Land & Tramway Co. Ltd., allowing it to escape most of its liabilities owed to naive stock holders.<sup>1</sup> Roberts sat in the Legislative Council until the end of the boom period (1886-92)<sup>2</sup> and, given his financial dabblings, it is not surprising that the ownership of the site went to the County of Bourke Building Society also in c1893, around the time of the bank moratorium.<sup>3</sup> Roberts, the member for North Yarra, resided in Tudor House, Electra Street, Williamstown, during this period<sup>4</sup> (now 52-54 Pasco Street), which was built in 1884 to the design of John Beswicke.<sup>5</sup>

This building began as a 'brick house and shop' in 1887, apparently as a centre-piece for a row of similar but one-storey shops and dwellings,<sup>6</sup> now partly demolished (see 26 Murray Street).

- 1 Cannon p.73
- 2 VGP 'One Hundred Years of Responsible Government' p.255
- 3 RB1893-4, p.165
- 4 WD1891-2
- 5 Kinhill-Stearns, Williamstown Conservation Study, 4-220
- 6 RB1887-8, p.126; RB1888-9, p.142; Frances Smith photo

The first persistent tenant was Robert Grant (an engineer) who sold second-hand furniture there, from the mid-1890s until c1909, when a post office commenced a brief tenure. The Union Co-operative Society Grocers (offering shares at one pound each) operated there from c1919 until changes made to the tenancy (c1927) and the lower facade (c1931) made way for twenty odd years of banking, as the Bank of Australasia under manager, G.L. Daniel (later George Palmer).<sup>1</sup>

Early photographs show it as the middle of a trio, with a central recessed shopfront entry and a post-supported street verandah continuous across the three shops. As with the surviving 26 Murray Street, there was a raised, arched entablature central to the parapet, now gone. Continued occupation by the bank caused the substitution of the present office facade for the shopfront and a new side entrance which allowed separate entry to the level above. The verandah was removed, leaving the two flanking verandahed shops, one of which has since been demolished and the other



4-79 28 Murray Street, west wing demolished

1 D1900-1955; Frances Smith. advertisement (n.d.)

altered.<sup>1</sup> Internally, the bank vault, monogrammed door mat and office remain.

#### Description

Today the building is a combination of two eras, both far-removed chronologically but nevertheless mutually sympathetic. The dominant feature of the original design remains in the form of the three-arch upper arcade although the parapet from this era has been severely treated. At ground the bank facade is bland but respectful of the tripartite nature of the floor above. Architrave mouldings from the first period are distinctive and those from the second, bland.

#### External Integrity

Given the changes already outlined, the parapet entablature has been removed, the upper level stucco also.

#### Streetscape

The focus of a long vista up Ballarat Street, itself a repository of individually notable buildings. Its two-storey form is dominant but its upper arcade suggests some transparency and accentuates the European townscape character of that part of the precinct.

#### Significance

Architecturally, altered and expressive of two eras but successful as a streetscape termination. Historically, given the two eras, it is expressive of the public building status it once possessed, the boom era speculation of its first form and thus a slender link with the renowned Mr. Roberts.



4-80 28 Napier Street

1 Frances Smith photographs c1927.c1931