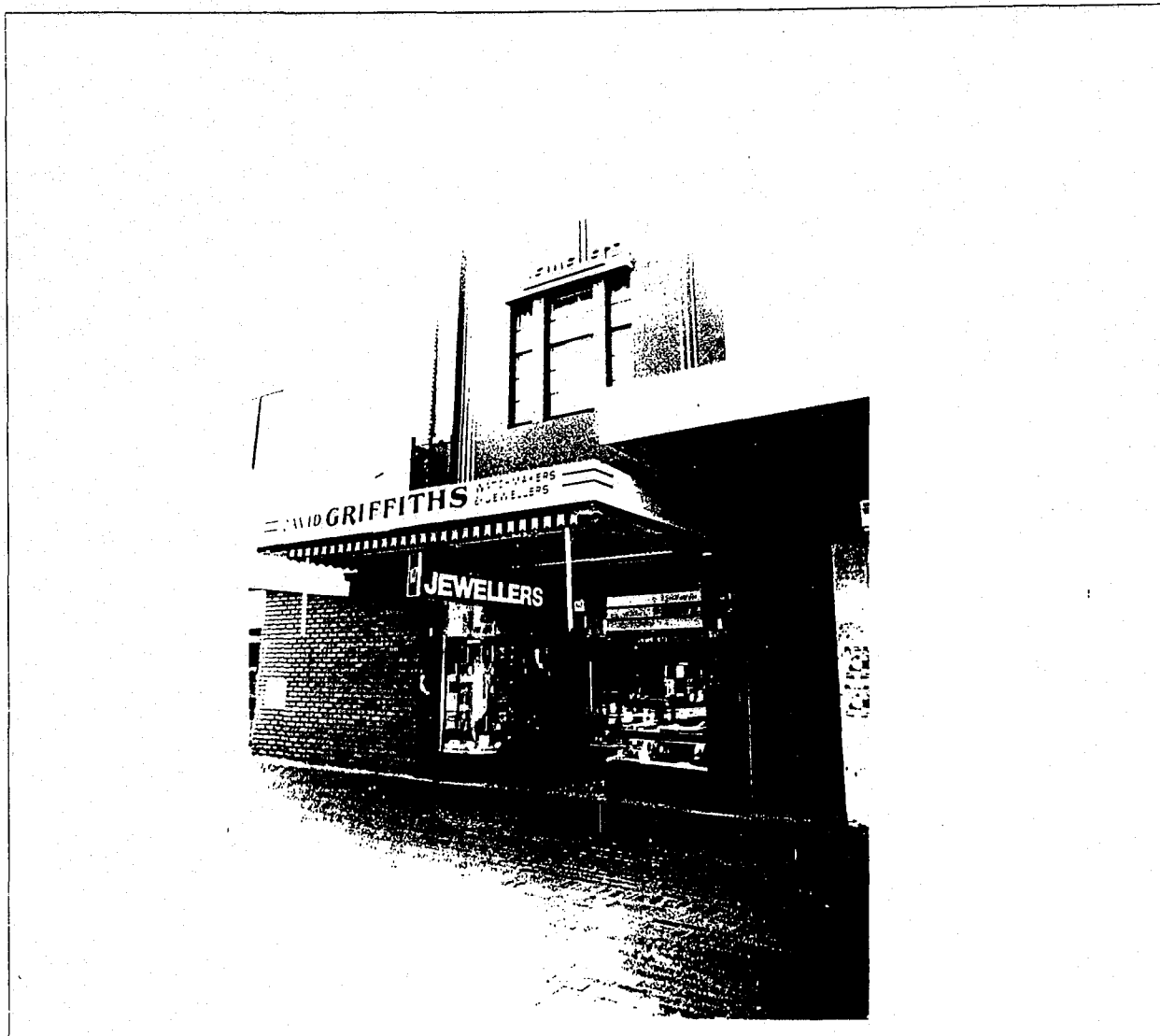


'The Working Man's Boot Palace.'¹ Its three-storey replacement remained as Maples until at least the 1960s.²

It is probable that the Nathans involved in Maples were connected with Maurice Nathan, later a major force behind the larger Patersons Pty. Ltd. empire. However, Maples adopted a lower profile than Patersons, having suburban branches here and in South Melbourne and in some rural towns.³

Description

A three-storey face brick stucco and stone (basalt) former corner store: the main upper fenestration is segment-arched with third level windows adopting a rectangular shape, divided into six lights. Most of the facade ornament is at the parapet, which is articulated between the nine facade bays in the form of an ox-bow scallop. The piers protrude above with cement balls and dentillated caps, in the frequently used manner of architects, the Tompkins Brothers.



4-88 117 Nicholson Street

- 1 FFOY p.152
- 2 D1915-65
- 3 D1962;branch also in Prahran?

External Integrity

Stone, glazing and bricks painted, the cantilever canopy and most shopfronts new. The upper wall played corner is assumed to have possessed openings once.

Streetscape

Major corner element (one of few three-storey buildings) with ornamentation which relates to the earlier commercial core of the centre.

Significance

Architecturally, of only intermediate worth but dominant and contributory to the commercial precinct with its bulk and period detail. Historically, one of the

early large tenancies forming part of a retail centre which held metropolitan status.

Shop

117 Nicholson Street

History

David Griffiths, jeweller, opened a shop next to this site in Nicholson Street around 1892, having just arrived from Maryborough. His early demise, in 1923, left his elder son, Reginald, to continue the already prosperous business.¹ His brother, Ronald, and their sister, Myrtle, expanded the business to include optician services and a new shop image, designed by architects H.W. & F.B. Tompkins in 1936.²



4-89 134-136 Nicholson Street

1 FFOY p.149f
2 ibid.: MMBW CF385399

On a site previously operated as a United Friendly Society dispensary (nominee John Greenwood), the Griffiths family rebuilt the front of the shop in 1936 and completed the modernization of the rear two years later.¹ The Tompkins brothers also designed a new house for Reginald Griffiths at 61 Droop Street, in 1940, (now demolished).² Griffiths' was, for a long time, the most stylish and up-to-date jeweller's (or any) shop in Footscray.

Description

Obviously a renovation, some of the row it once joined survives in nearer its original state at 121 and southward. Nevertheless, the renovation was complete and accomplished, introducing a full-blown Moderne styled facade to the then dominantly late Victorian streetscape. Vertical ribbing frames the upper level and wraps over the top as rounded shoulders for the otherwise austere parapet. The main window group is topped with a similarly rounded cement hood, the framing is steel and above it, the firm's trade (Jewellers) is spelt out in avant-garde surface-mounted metal lettering.

The canopy echoes this vernacular and, below it, the gleaming streamlined brass-framed and vitrolite shopfront provides a faithful expression of the 1930s and the Moderne art form. Terrazzo flooring is patterned and bears the firm's name. Internal fittings appear original.

External Integrity

Fluorescent batten fitting attached to window hood and a sympathetic illuminated sign under the canopy.

Streetscape

Although its design destroyed part of the 1890s period streetscape, it retains the parapeted stuccoed form of its former row and the 19th Century streetscape which extends to the south.

Significance

Architecturally, a masterly and complete Moderne shop design. Historically, identified with a locally prominent jeweller family.

Shops and Residences 134-136 Nicholson Street

History

Claimed as Footscray's first chemist cum dentist, John William Smith had established his business in Nicholson Street (opposite the Mechanics Institute) in 1854.³ Apparently prospering from his business, Smith engaged local architect, Charles Polain, to design a speculative shop and residence row in Anderson Street, Yarraville (q.v.) and this pair, all in the same era. Polain called tenders in 1889 and Smith (136) and bootmakers, Roelens & Burdett (134) were in place by 1890.⁴ The familiar name of T.H. Buzza opened his business in place of Smith, late in the 1890s, while Smith's grandson, William Osmond Smith, was to open other pharmacies in Footscray, Carlton and Brunswick.⁵

Hesse Brothers (furniture sellers) and F.V. Dean (dairy produce) occupied the pair during the c1920-35 period, prior to a long occupation of 134 by Herbert Adams Pty. Ltd. and 136 as a butchers shop.⁶ Hesse Brothers' slogans included *...That has only cheapness to recommend it is dear at any price and (We) sell Superior Goods at prices usually quoted for the inferior article, also, We have an Enormous Turnover ... This is no secret but it Counts!*

A photograph from c1907⁷ shows Hesse's occupation with cast-iron verandah complete, the pattern being similar to the Corporation type. The parapet is adorned with walls (entablature), cast-iron finials (alternate piers) and draped urns (alternate piers). Signs are very much in evidence, on the verandah fascia and as board signs on the verandah roof. The shopfront possessed a low stall board.

1 ibid.; MUA
2 MUA
3 FFOY pp.181,182
4 MUA: RB1890,2432-3; RB1891,2506-7
5 FFOY p.181; *The Advertiser* 20/1/1971
6 D1900-1955
7 FFFY