

External Integrity

An inappropriate but detachable glazed entrance canopy has been added and the fence (assumed pick-et) removed.

Streetscape

Part of a dominantly 19th. century streetscape.

Significance

Architecturally, a simple cottage design which displays well the stonemason owner's craft. Historically, as a quarryman's house it is closely associated with Footscray's premier role in the supply of basalt last century.

**St. John's Anglican Church
79 Paisley Street**

History

Designed in the Early English Gothic revival style by Footscray architect, Charles Polain, the church was erected by Jason Fraser & Son, using fancy red and white brickwork with stone dressings. The nave was to measure 37 by 70 feet and the unbuilt steeple was intended to rise 85 feet. Laying the memorial stone was done with due aplomb, in May 1891, by the Mayor, John Cuming, but the 'popular incumbent,' Rev. H.F. Scott, was absent through illness. *The Independent* hailed the new design with the usual praise: an *...imposing and commodious structure.*¹

Onlookers at the ceremony recalled the laying of the first Cowper Street Church by Dr. McCartney some 27 years earlier (1864) and its inscription dedicating the



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1 loc. cit. 9/5/91

building to St. John the Evangelist, '...according to the rites and ceremonies of the United Church of England and Ireland.'¹

The First Footscray Anglican Services were in 1855, continuing intermittently until the appointment of a stipendiary reader in the later 1850s and particularly after the Rev. T. Holme was encharged with the parish in 1867. The old timber Railway Hotel (demolished)

was reputed as one of the early meeting places in the 'promotion' of the Anglican church in Footscray².

The Rev. Scott's arrival in 1877, commenced an earnest building programme which included a stone church at Yarraville (1878), a parsonage (1881) and a Sunday School in Footscray (1886-). So valuable was the church site during the land boom that it was sold for Philip Bevan's cartage works and the stone church



4-95 79 Paisley Street, the Polain design

1 *The Independent* 30, 5 91
2 FFOY p57

rebuilt in Pickett Street as a parish hall and Sunday school (1889-).¹

Later work by that prolific designer of Anglican churches, Louis Williams, added a Norman style bell-tower in 1937, not altogether suiting the existing church. The Rev. T. A. Cair laid the foundation stone.²

Description

Polain's design had been the first in Footscray to use the brightly coloured bricks made fashionable since the Lombardic Romanesque Revival had been so successfully introduced at the Collins Street Independent Church. Equivalent to the Decorated stage of English Gothic, the style used here also had the coloured embellishment of the Italian Goths, a mode which became more common in parish churches of the 1885-90s. It is for that reason that the Early English cum Norman square tower was an inappropriate addition to the church in lieu of the (more expensive) spired tower of

its contemporaries. Williams was using this type of tower in many of his designs throughout the 1930s but there was a symbolic reason for the choice: it was a memorial for those who fell at Normanby in the First War³.

External Integrity

Fence gone.

Streetscape

Isolated in a mixed commercial/residential area but relates to Baptist church and residence opposite.

Significance

Architecturally, of mixed origin and hence the potential of the Polain design has not been realized. However some valuable brickwork and details remain. Histori-



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1 FFFY p.123; *Argus* 31-1-78/3 tenders Anglican school
2 F.ST. 2:1.8.37
3 FHS 'Notes on Historical Buildings...', 1969