

## 15 Darling Street, South Yarra



### History and Description

This small brick cottage, one of the earliest remaining in Darling Street, was rated first in 1863 when Thomas Kerr Grieves, warehouseman, was its owner and William Georgeson, importer, the occupier. The cottage was described in that year as a new six-roomed brick and slate house in Prahran Street, the earlier name for that street.<sup>54</sup> George H. Ulrich, geologist, occupied the house in 1874-75.<sup>55</sup> By this time the house was listed as 9 Darling Street. Clement Jarrett, insurance broker, owned the house in the late 1870s. At this time it was described as a six-roomed brick and wood house. Its valuation increased during this decade to 80 pounds.<sup>56</sup>

George Knipe, surveyor, made the Darling Street cottage his home from 1889.<sup>57</sup> A drainage plan drawn during Knipe's owner/occupancy shows the house with its front verandah and outbuildings at the rear.<sup>58</sup>

Development in the area south of Domain Road was stimulated in the late 1850s and early 1860s by the arrival of the railway. Allotments in Caroline, Avoca, Murphy and Prahran, (now Darling) Streets had generous frontages.<sup>59</sup>

This Darling Street house is a simple brick cottage with unusual timber verandah columns, valence and brackets and an elaborate and intact cast iron fence. It is a rare

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- 54. Prahran Rate Book 1863 No. 174.
  - 55. Prahran Rate Book 1875 Vol. 1 No. 191.
  - 56. Prahran Rate Book 1876 Vol. 1. No. 191.
  - 57. Prahran Rate Book 1889-90 Toorak Ward No. 247.
  - 58. MMBW House Cover No. 4823.
  - 59. Betty Malone, *The North-West Corner*, p.6.

and intact example of an early residence built in the area. The verandah features geometric timber fretwork decoration with flat rectangular columns. To the rear of the house, there is an additional brick room with verandah facing the side alley. The building, simple in form, has a hipped slate roof. Today, the face brickwork has been painted. The architect and builder remain unknown. In 1982, the house was described as a 'classic Victorian brick and slate villa containing many original features'.<sup>60</sup> At the rear of the property, there stands a building in the original position of the stables, which appears to contain early wall fabric.

Remaining large mid-century homes have been identified in Caroline, Avoca, and Murphy Streets. However, remaining Darling Street houses like No. 15, are smaller.<sup>61</sup> It is believed that the garden at No. 15 Darling Street most probably dates from the late 1860s, that is, during the ownership of T. K. Grieves. The property 'retains most of the shrubs, materials and detailing of the original garden' and is considered to be of local significance.<sup>62</sup>

## Significance

This late 1860s substantially intact villa has state significance as one of the earliest 19th century homes remaining in this area which developed in the 1850s as a residential area after the arrival of the railway. The building has design significance as an intact example of an 1860s brick house, enlarged and improved over the years with successive building stages remaining intact, and including significant fence and former stables. It has additional architectural significance for its unusual timber verandah decoration. The garden, which is thought to date from the 1860s, is of local significance, regarded as one of the better surviving 'terrace house gardens' in the municipality.

## Sources

*Age*, 11 Sept. 1982.

City of Prahran, Valuers records Windsor Ward.

City of Prahran Rate Books, Toorak Ward.

City of Prahran, *Significant Tree and Garden Study*.

Malone, Betty, *The North-West Corner*, 1987.

MMBW House Cover No. 4823.

## Analysis and Recommendations

It is recommended that this property be retained at A1 level.

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60. City of Prahran Valuers records Windsor Ward Book 4T.

61. Betty Malone, *The North-West Corner*, p.7.

62. City of Prahran, *Significant Tree and Garden Study*.