

Avington, 3 Illawarra Crescent, Toorak



History and Description

In July 1927 Francis M. Burnside, engineer, was rated for a brick residence in Lot 3, Illawarra Crescent, Toorak.¹⁸² The following year, the Burnside's house was identified as Avington, an eleven-roomed brick house.¹⁸³

The designing architects are thought to be Walter and Richard Butler.¹⁸⁴ Walter Butler was in partnership with his nephew after the First World War and until the 1930s. An architect of great talent, Butler was responsible for the design of a number of large houses in Melbourne suburbs, and particularly in Toorak. The most notable are Warrawee (1906) for A. Ruttee Clark and Kamillaroi (1907) for Clive Baillieu (later Baron) and Edzell (1917) for George Russell. The last two were both

182. Prahran Rate Book 1926-27 Toorak Ward No. 1917. NAV 325 pounds.

183. Prahran Rate Book 1928-29 Toorak Ward No. 1580.

184. *Toorak Residential Character Study*.

in St. George's Road, Toorak. These Toorak houses have been described as all 'fine examples of picturesque gabled houses in the domestic revival genre'.¹⁸⁵ Butler died at his Toorak home on 31 May, 1949.¹⁸⁶

Former Avington is a highly accomplished example of a large residence designed in the Old English style. The influence of the Arts and Crafts movement can be seen in the use of different textures and materials and the predominance of romantic architectural forms. Half-timbering is employed in the upper storey sections with tapestry brick or rendered infill. These walls project over the lower walls and porch area in a manner imitating medieval building techniques. The roof and upper gable ends are clad in flat terracotta tile with splayed hood over a long vertical vent. The double hung windows contain diamond leadlight panes. A carport with heavy curved timber brackets spans the driveway leading to a rear garage. The brick driveway complements the fence and garden wall and shrubs, creeping vines and an established oak in the front garden contribute to the picturesque character of the garden.

Significance

The former Avington has significance as a fine example of an inter-war residence designed in the romantic tradition of Old English style architecture, one of a number built at this time for wealthy Toorak businessmen. Picturesque features include the brick driveway, fence and garden wall.

Sources

Australian Dictionary of Biography, (ADB), Vol. 7, pp. 510-511.

City of Prahran, Rate Books, Toorak Ward.

John Curtis Pty. Ltd., *Toorak Residential Character Study*, City of Prahran, 1991.

MMBW House Cover No. 157304.

Analysis & Recommendations

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

185. ADB Vol. 7, pp. 510-511.

186. ADB Vol. 7, pp. 510-511.