

1 Sorrett Avenue - S

1887: Subdivision of Umphelby's land & carriage drive to form The Avenue (Sorrett Avenue)

1888: Only one house in street, then No 16

1889: Stone Foundation on lot 50, brick house in progress. Owned by National Mutual Society. Most of the original brick & w/b houses in the street were built during this & the following year.

1890: No 1 Bck. & stone house in progress sold to Mr George Jobbins (architect)

1891: Jobbins, Stone house of 10 rooms

1892: Henry Noyes (occupier)

1894: Thorpe, Charles. Clerk. (Owner George Jobbins, Architect)

1895: Craig, Alfred. (Alexander?) Gentleman

1896-1905: Hall, George M. Secretary (Malvern Rate Books)

c.1900: Three early photographs showing the original gable prior to the porch being created, the picket fence with the cast iron frieze and timber capping, the pine trees in the street and the adjacent timber house, No 3, built with a similar gable truss, and the home of Arthur Fisher (Malvern Historical Society Inc)

1905-1940: Bailey, Arthur. Chemist o/o. Stone house 9 rooms (Malvern Rate Books)

It is likely that 1 Sorrett Avenue was designed by Arthur Fisher who also developed and lived at 3 Sorrett Avenue and 125 Manning Road East Malvern and also developed Nos 127 and 131 Manning Road East Malvern, houses of a similar design to 12,14, and 16 Mercer Road and 3, 5 and 7 Myamyn Street. He was also responsible for Westford at 2 Ash Grove East Malvern, another mediaeval influenced design.

In contrast with these other brick houses, this house is constructed of coursed rubble basalt with cement details to the quoins, has a projecting window bay with castellated parapet, and hood moulds to windows and projecting entry porch. The steeply pitched slate gable roof is punctuated by Tudor style chimneys, one is extremely tall, also finished in render. The gable ends have a open truss and finial. The later pointed arched opening creates a sleep-out porch on the front bay which replaced the earlier circular roof vent in this location. The top floor was added in the ceiling space and a cast iron circular stair installed some time after the early photographs, apparently dating from 1906. Other than the sleep-out alteration and the later cast iron fence (which replaced a far more interesting timber picket and cast iron design) the house is relatively intact. Virginia creeper has covered this house since at least 1906 (the date of the early photograph) although the extent was far more limited at that stage. It is likely to be causing some damage to the building if these are allowed to continue to grow unchecked.

1 Sorrett Avenue is of state significance for its apparently unique design and picturesque design with Tudoresque detailing. It has some stylistic relationship to the six speculative villas constructed by Bowes Kelly at 12-16 Mercer Road and 3-7 Myamyn Street, to the west of Glenferrie Road. However, the use of basalt and Tudoresque detailing gives this house a distinctive ecclesiastical character.