

Little Milton, 26 Albany Road

Architect: Muriel Stott, Stephenson & Meldrum

Landscape design and construction: Edna Walling

1925-26: Malvern Building Plan No 8260

1926: Plan No 8664 lodged for 'Man's quarters, tools and fuel room'

1927: Article on the exterior and garden featured in *Australian Home Beautiful*, November 1927.

1928: Article 'Some Charming Home Interiors' by Ruth Lane-Poole in *Australian Home Beautiful*, June 1928.

1929: Edna Walling's description of the garden featured in *Australian Home Beautiful*, May 1929.

1932: Article in *RVI AJ*, March 1932, 'New residence for Sir Leslie Moran in Albany Road, Toorak, Victoria'.

1926-74: Moran, A L (Leslie) (1st owner)
(Sands & McDougall Directories)

Little Milton was built on part of the Whernside subdivision (refer 2A Whernside Avenue citation). The original sketch plans were produced by Muriel Stott, considered by Ruth Lane-Poole to be one of Victoria's best known women architects. (1) It was apparently based upon a Cotswold house after a visit to England to inspect possible precedents. The establishment architectural firm of Messrs. Stephenson and Meldrum produced the plans and working drawings in 1925. The house was apparently completed between then and 1927. It was referred to in three articles in *Australian Home Beautiful* between November 1927 and May 1929. Edna Walling was responsible for the landscape plan and its execution. It appears that the property remained in the hands of the Moran family until 1976 when some alterations such as the demolition of the derelict gardens cottage and a new extension to the house were undertaken; work on the garden was undertaken by Eric Hammond who formerly worked with Edna Walling on the original garden plan. (1)



Little Milton is constructed on an irregular block plan at the corner of Albany and Whernside Avenue with the house located close to Albany Road and with the orientation of the principal living and bedrooms overlooking the rear garden. This is dominated by the terrace at the back of the house, the open balcony at the first floor overlooking the garden and by the original tennis court which occupies the majority of the space of the garden. The house is a very large residence in the Arts and Crafts style with an imposing terracotta shingle roof, rendered walls which retain their original ochre wash, as well as casement windows and joinery which have retained their original black colour. It is a predominantly two story structure with a single story service wing and garage on the northern end. It has a main lounge hall off the small entry which opens directly onto a large dining room and a large lounge or sitting room. The entry hall also opens onto the loggia (which is repeated on the upper level) which in turn opens onto a herringbone brick paved terrace, covered with a pergola at ground level. The building is extensively described in three *Australian Home Beautiful* articles. The original plans show a ground floor plan and site plan (with the tennis court), an upper floor plan, sections and elevations. The loggias, the manner in which the building addresses the rear of the site, the modest entry, the external integrity of the building including finishes, the intactness of the landscaping and apparent intactness of most of the interior are of particular note.

The paths and landscape plan appear to have been retained from the original Walling construction. The original external fencing, comprises unpainted hardwood pickets with a contrasting Lutyens-style gate and large posts. This reflects the understated and refined rural English revival character of this outstanding property.

This building incorporates features found in a number of Arts and Crafts and Old English style houses constructed in Melbourne in the 1920s and 1930s although a number of aspects make this one of the most outstanding late Arts and Crafts revival mansions in Melbourne. It is one of the most picturesque surviving inter-war mansions in Melbourne on account of the integrity of the Walling garden, the external integrity of the masonry finish and the original building design as well as the striking massing and configuration of this building.

Refer to Appendix One for biographical notes on architect.

Little Milton, 26 Albany Road, constructed between 1926 and 1927 is of state and national significance as an intact Arts and Crafts revival mansion demonstrating an outstanding level of design. Attributes that contribute to its significance are:

- the siting and orientation of the building and massing;
- its modest presentation to its principal address;
- its understated character which represents its rural Cotswald genesis;
- the main roof gable form with terracotta shingle roof and projecting cross gables;
- the quality of external render and the remnants of the original ochre finish;
- the fenestration, especially the placement of windows of casement design;
- the rear facing terrace, pergola and loggia at ground and first level;
- the chimney massing;
- the design and configuration of the main rooms with simple detailing of a English country character; and
- the quality and intactness of the landscaping from Edna Walling's design including the unusual modest and intact hardwood timber picket fence with refined gates.

1 *Australian Home Beautiful*, June 1928.

2 Trisha Dixon & Jennie Churchill, *Gardens in Time - In the Footsteps of Edna Walling*, Angus and Robertson, 1988.