CHAPTER 4: ‘JACKSON’S PADDOCK’ & THE ROAD TO A CHURCH

‘Particularly fine is the scene … from the balconies and towers … in Kooyong Road.’

From the 1850s Toorak was the natural choice for a newly rich Melbourne citizen to build his home. Clustered around ‘Toorak House’ other substantial homes appeared, yet east of Boundary Road, purchasers had to wait twenty years to secure a share of Crown Portion 26, otherwise known as ‘Jackson’s Paddock’. When Samuel Jackson died in 1851, Mary his widow, returned to England with her large family and lot 26 was leased for pasture. Oliver Edwards was Mary Jackson’s last tenant, before the land was finally sold and subdivided in 1872. Jackson owned land both sides of Kooyong Road and the subdivision, named Yar-Orrong, created Albany Road. Successful merchants, James Lorimer and William Bayles, saw the potential of this fine elevated land, and purchased several large allotments.

Social commentator Richard Twopeny judged that the largest section of the wealthy class were squatters, although those with ‘new money’, acquired through gold-mining and commerce, ‘contributed a large quota’. William Bayles had acquired his wealth through extensive pastoral, political and business interests. In 1852, he had established the Victorian shipping firm of Bayles & Co., was elected to the Legislative Assembly in 1864 and was an Alderman for the City of Melbourne for thirty-nine years where he filled the position of Mayor ‘most hospitably to the great satisfaction of the citizens.’

For those in Melbourne society wealthy enough to make an impression, It was

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2 The term ‘Jackson’s Paddock’ was used to describe lot 26. Malvern rate books, 1850-70.
3 James Jackson died 9 February, 1851. Argus, 23 August 1851.
4 Oliver Edwards moved to Toorak Road to the old hut at the corner of Malvern Hill Road. Gardiner Road Board, rate books, 1868-1872.
5 Gardiner Road Board, rate books, 1873, no. 215.
6 Twopeny, p.112.
7 de Serville, Pounds and pedigrees, p. 373.
important that houses were built on a grand scale, ideally approaching mansion status.\textsuperscript{9} When Bayles purchased twenty-two acres of elevated land at the corner of Toorak Road, he commissioned architect Lloyd Tayler to design a mansion imposing enough to display his newly acquired wealth and large enough to house his family of six children.\textsuperscript{10} To be considered a mansion, the house would be two-storey with any number of bedrooms upstairs, and include a grand entrance hall (possibly skylighted), the usual grand reception rooms, plus one or more of the following - ballroom, billiard room, conservatory, library and breakfast room and in a rear wing the servant’s quarters and kitchen wing. Bayles named his new mansion ‘Yar Orrong’.\textsuperscript{11}

Lloyd Tayler, had previously designed a handsome building for the Melbourne Club and he subsequently designed the new clubhouse for the Australian Club in William Street.\textsuperscript{12} The Australian Club was the rich businessmen’s equivalent to the Melbourne Club and members included importers, agents, bankers, brokers and pastoralists. Bayles joined the Australian Club, along with Tayler who was one of only a small number of professional men who were members in the early years.\textsuperscript{13} Bayles was also a member of the Union Club, membership of which was based on wealth, but with a leaning towards members with mercantile and commercial interests.\textsuperscript{14}

‘Yar Orrong’, was built in 1873 on the prominent rise at the corner of Toorak Road. Twenty years later ‘the view in the direction of the Glen Iris valley [was] beautiful, the eye travelling across a wide stretch of country dotted with trees, hedgerows, gardens, and picturesque habitations, with the Dandenong Ranges on the

\textsuperscript{9} Kiddle, p. 336.
\textsuperscript{10} Shire of Gardiner rate book, Western Riding, 1873, no. 215; Tender notice for erection of a villa at Toorak for Hon. William Bayles, Argus, 14 August 1873, p.3. MLAAI.
\textsuperscript{11} No pictorial record of ‘Yar Orrong’ was located, but given Tayler’s design of ‘Kamesburgh’ the same year (1872), a description of this Brighton mansion, with its parapeted tower and stuccoed, collonaded two storey verandah, may provide a clue to ‘Yar Orrong’. ‘Kamesburgh’ is described in Miles Lewis, ‘The Victorian House’ in Irving (ed.) The history and design of the Australian house, (Melbourne 1985), p.75.
\textsuperscript{12} de Serville, Pounds and pedigrees pp. 257, 373.
\textsuperscript{13} Ibid., p. 367-8.
\textsuperscript{14} Ibid., p. 356.
horizon.'  

‘Yar Orrong’ had all the amenities of a fine gentleman’s residence and family home, including a billiard room, tennis court, gardener’s cottage, detached kitchen, orchard, formal garden, stables, coach-house, outbuildings and pasture. Even so, while architects and owners spent considerable time and money improving the public appearance of villas and mansions, little effort was made to improve kitchen facilities and servants were expected to make do with basic facilities.

Large gardens were well suited to garden parties, fetes and outdoor entertaining. Given the Bayles’ commitment, both spiritual and financial, to the new Presbyterian Church at Toorak, ‘Yar Orrong’ became the venue for charity fund-raisings. By the 1870s the need became clear to the prosperous developing suburb, for a new Presbyterian Church to serve the districts of Malvern and Toorak. The Anglicans were well served with St John’s in Toorak Road, which had opened for service in 1862 and St George’s in Glenferrie Road, established in 1865.

In 1873 when it was agreed to form a Presbyterian Church in Toorak, William Bayles was elected to the interim committee, which was given the task of finding a suitable site for a church. Soon after, the subdivision of Jackson’s Toorak (House) Estate presented the ideal opportunity and land was purchased on the crest of the hill in Toorak Road. Within a year planning was complete, designs were drawn, money was raised and in May 1875 William Bayles laid the foundation stone for the Toorak Presbyterian Church.

The new church attracted parishioners from Toorak’s rapidly expanding upper

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15 Ixion, in the Australasian, p. 232.
16 Shire of Gardiner rate book, Western Riding, 1876, p.42; ‘Tenders wanted for billiard rooms and other works at Toorak for Hon. William Bayles’, Argus, 26 May1885, p. 3. ‘Tenders wanted for additions to Yar Orrong, Toorak, the residence of William Bayles’, Argus, 27 September 1887, p. 3. MLAAI
17 A window in the east wall of the Toorak Presbyterian Church commemorates Mary, one of the six children of William and Isabel, who died in 1888. A brass plaque presented in 1917 records William and Isabel’s service to the church and in 1935 the fence and gates were gifted by their daughter Elizabeth. John Wischer, (ed.) The Presbyterian of Toorak, A centenary history of Toorak Presbyterian Church 1876 – 1976, (Melbourne 1975.), p. 122.
18 Ibid., p. 2-7.
class, who could well afford the required pew rents, appropriate clothes and ‘a buggy for the journey’. This fashionable church provided a focus for the benevolent and charitable activities in which the wives and daughters from the parish became involved. Supporters of the new church at Toorak included a number of Scottish pastoralists and merchants who were establishing their homes nearby, including Archibald Fisken, Colin Simpson and James Lorimer.

Meanwhile Melbourne was flourishing. The frontier town had been transformed with substantial brick and stone buildings gradually replacing earlier timber and iron dwellings. Between 1860 and 1880 Melbourne’s population, which doubled to over half a million people, advanced into the rapidly growing suburbs. In the boom years of ‘Marvellous Melbourne’, land values spiralled and in 1889, ‘Yar Orrong’ was valued at £3000 and its land at £1000 an acre. Following the bank crash three years later, William Bayles appealed against the valuation of his property, which was reduced from a total of £40,100 to £32,000. After William’s death in 1903, the Bayles family continued to live at ‘Yar Orrong’.

Bayles’ fellow parishioner and free trade supporter, James Lorimer, built his new home ‘Belcroft’ in 1877 in Albany Road. Scottish born Lorimer had arrived in Victoria in 1853 and founded Lorimer, Mackie and Co., agents for the White Star line of ships, becoming President of the Chamber of Commerce and one of the founders of the Free Trade League. Lorimer joined the Australian, Union and Victorian Clubs. In his position as President of the Shire of Gardiner, Lorimer was responsible for Gardiner being renamed Malvern in 1878, the same year he was elected to the Legislative Council. In 1887 on a trip to England as Government

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19 Davison, p. 209.
20 Wischer, p. 3.
21 Susan Priestley, The Victorians making their mark, (McMahons Point, 1884), p.45.
22 Shire of Malvern rate book, Western Riding, 1889, no. 23.
23 Bayles gave notice of intention to appeal to the County Court. Bayles refused to settle on the terms offered by the Council. Shire of Malvern council minutes 19 March 1892, 5 April 1892 and 3 May1892.
24 Gardiner Rate Book, 1877, no. 306.
25 de Serville, Pounds & Pedigrees, p. 356.
representative to the Colonial Conference, Lorimer was knighted.\textsuperscript{26}

‘Belcroft’, an imposing brick mansion of twenty rooms was built to the design of architect Levi Powell.\textsuperscript{27} As a successful merchant, company director and politician, James Lorimer fulfilled all the criteria to justify his meteoric rise in society and his membership of the Melbourne Club. His success in business, political and financial circles entitled his family to a lifestyle of luxury and leisure. The splendid grounds and formal gardens of ‘Belcroft’ included a tennis court, stables, orchard and coach-house, surrounded by nineteen acres of partly cultivated land and shrubbery.\textsuperscript{28} The mansion comfortably housed Lorimer, his wife Eliza, whom he had married in 1858 and their eleven children, along with the retinue of servants, including maids, nurses, cooks, grooms and gardeners, necessary for a desirable lifestyle.

The smooth running of the house depended on capable staff and their numbers and efficiency were important to the financial reputation of their employer.\textsuperscript{29} In spite of constant shipments from England however, servants were always at a premium.\textsuperscript{30} During the 1880s, opportunities increased for girls to work in factories and many girls preferred this independence to entering the ties of domestic service.\textsuperscript{31} Mistresses were often heard to be complaining about the shortage of servants.\textsuperscript{32} Yet the wives of successful industrialists, merchants and politicians, concerned as they were about social status, considered the size of the house as well as the choice of suburb, just as important as it was to their husbands.

As the Governors entertained Melbourne’s \textit{nouveaux riches}, the social columns gushed with the latest round of entertainment. In 1885 the Lorimer, Bayles, Grice, Meares, and Edward Miller families joined hundreds of invited guests at Lady

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\item \textsuperscript{26} \textit{ADB} vol. 5, pp. 102-3; Sutherland, vol. 2, p. 484 & de Serville, \textit{Pounds & Pedigrees}, p. 312.
\item \textsuperscript{27} Sutherland, vol. 2., p. 529.
\item \textsuperscript{28} Shire of Malvern valuation book, Western Riding, 1880, no. 57.
\item \textsuperscript{29} Kiddle, p. 341.
\item \textsuperscript{30} Twopeny, p. 56.
\item \textsuperscript{31} Ibid., p. 58.
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Loch’s ‘At Home’ at Government House.\(^\text{33}\) The same year, Miss Bayles looked ‘very pretty in cream coloured Indian cashmere’ as did the Misses Grice ‘in cream coloured satin’ at Mrs Joseph Clarke’s ‘At Home’ at ‘Mandeville Hall’.\(^\text{34}\) By the 1880s ‘At Home’s’ were becoming more popular, not only with the upper classes. As *Table Talk* noted in 1885 -

> A few years ago reception days were almost unknown, except among the crème de la crème of society; but now every lady, whether of the inner circle of the upper ten or not, has her afternoon “at home” … each lady reserves a certain day of the week or month, when it is understood that she is at home to receive visitors.\(^\text{35}\)

When Sir James Lorimer died in 1889 part of the ‘Belcroft’ estate was subdivided and Lady Lorimer sold the mansion, (valued at £3000), with ten acres of land, to Albert Miller, eldest son of Henry ‘Money’ Miller. Miller, another successful merchant, re-named the house ‘Whernside’.\(^\text{36}\) Albert, Edward and a third brother Septimus were well known in Melbourne racing circles and Albert and Edward were Masters of the Findon Harriers.\(^\text{37}\) Hunting, a popular pastime with the English gentry, had been established in the colony by the 1860s, and Albert’s son Hubert, joined his family as a member of the club. Supporter, Lord Hopetoun reported that -

> A private pack of harriers is kept … by the Messrs. Miller. … Mr Hubert Miller, son of Mr Albert Miller, of Grand National fame, has recently undertaken the mastership. … His smart turn-out, with its well-appointed servants, makes it difficult to realise that the best traditions of sport are being carried out, not in England … but in a distant part of our Empire.\(^\text{38}\)

When James Lorimer built ‘Belcroft’ he sold five acres of land on the south corner of Albany Road to barrister Hartley Williams.\(^\text{39}\) In 1876 Williams commissioned

\(^{32}\) Henry Gyles Turner as cited in Davison, p. 144.

\(^{33}\) *Table Talk*, 7 August 1885, p. 8

\(^{34}\) *Table Talk*, 9 October 1885, p.10.

\(^{35}\) *Table Talk*, 3 July 1885, p. 6.

\(^{36}\) Shire of Malvern valuation book, Western Riding, 1889, no. 26; The land was valued at £1000 an acre. Shire of Malvern valuation book, Western Riding, 1890, no. 8; Shire of Malvern rate book, Western Riding, 1891, no. 580.


\(^{38}\) Lord Hopetoun *Badminton Magazine*, as cited in Smith (ed.), *Cyclopaedia*, vol. 2. p.122.

\(^{39}\) Shire of Gardiner rate book, 1876, no. 54.
Thomas Crouch and Ralph Wilson, one of Melbourne’s most successful nineteenth century architectural practices to design his new home, ‘Kenley’.\textsuperscript{40} Williams, the Australian born son of Sir Edward Eyre Williams of Como, was educated in England, called to the bar in 1867 and on the death of Sir Redmond Barry, was appointed to the bench of the Supreme Court. With his wife Edith, Williams lived at ‘Kenley’ until 1882, when the property was sold to Thomas King Scott, a pastoralist from Buninyong.\textsuperscript{41} After the sale of ‘Kenley’, Williams travelled to England and on his return, he moved into ‘Flete’ his new home nearby. Judge Hartley Williams was knighted in 1894.\textsuperscript{42}

Thomas Scott, ‘Kenley’s’ new owner, was one of a growing number of pastoralists who chose Toorak as their city headquarters. Social position was based on family occupation and squatters, with their extensive rural landholdings, held a high profile in Melbourne ‘Society’.\textsuperscript{43} ‘Kenley’ was a graceful single storey villa encircled by shady verandahs, with a tower, conservatory, stables and coach-house and extensive shrubbery and gardens.\textsuperscript{44} As Twopeny observed in 1883, ‘nearly every house that can afford the space has a verandah, which sometimes stretches the whole way round’.\textsuperscript{45}

‘Kenley’s garden was maintained by Thomas Pockett, a ‘first rate English gardener’, in the ‘most excellent order in every part’.\textsuperscript{46}

\begin{quote}
The house is of cottage form on a large scale, and is very agreeably situated as regards the distant view, being on the highest ground in the neighbourhood, with pure air and good drainage. The garden is laid out after an ornamental design. It is surrounded by a row of the usual pines, cypresses, Moreton Bay Figs ... rows of fruit trees. ... A hedge
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{40} ‘Crouch and Wilson. Erection of a villa residence’ in Boundary (Kooyong) Road for barrister Hartley Williams. Tender notice, \textit{Argus}, 19 January 1876, p. 3. MLAAl. ‘Crouch & Wilson connected with Williams’ house’, noted in Minutes of Gardiner Road Board, 19 October, 1876.

Crouch and Wilson also designed Prahran Town Hall, the Deaf and Dumb Institute, the Blind Institute and numerous churches. Sutherland, vol.2 1888, p. 515.

\textsuperscript{41} Malvern rate book, western riding, 1882, no. 81.

\textsuperscript{42} \textit{ADB}, vol. 6, p. 403-4.

\textsuperscript{43} Russell, p. 18.

\textsuperscript{44} Malvern valuation book, western riding, 1883, no. 62.

\textsuperscript{45} Twopeny, p. 35.

\textsuperscript{46} \textit{Leader}, 29 December 1888, p. 13.
separates the kitchen garden ... A well gravelled drive traverses the ground to the front door on the west side of the house, opposite which is a small lawn bounded by flower beds. ... The lawn [on the north side] is ... terraced for two series of croquet grounds. ... The gravelled walks are as smooth as rolling can make them; the lawns are in excellent condition ... The flower gardening is extensive ... small beds are ... placed in front of the drawing room windows ... the lawn opposite the front door is bordered with flowers.47

With Scott’s encouragement, Thomas Pickett won the first prize of 3 guineas offered by the Horticultural Society of Victoria, ‘for the best arranged and best kept gentleman’s garden within four miles of the Melbourne G.P.O.’48 Although Pickett grew Chrysanthemums for exhibition, flowers were not required at ‘Kenley’ in summer as the Scott family retreated to their country residence at Buninyong.49 In 1888 the gardener relinquished his position at ‘Kenley’ and was appointed Curator of Malvern’s Gardens, a position he held for thirty years.50 Pickett went on to achieve world acclaim in the breeding and growing of Chrysanthemums.51

In 1889, the sale was announced of the ‘elegant family residence known as ‘Kenley’ with 5½ acres of land’.52 ‘Kenley’s’ prize-winning garden would have been a selling point and pastoralist William Leonard who, with his wife Maud, was leasing ‘Kenley’, was the successful bidder. Irish born Leonard was a partner with Hepburn and Rowe in a stock and station agency, was a member of the Australian Club and was also on the committee of the VRC.53

To the south of ‘Kenley’, five acres of pasture had been purchased by merchant John Munro Bruce in 1883.54 Born in Ireland of Scottish descent, Bruce had arrived in Melbourne in 1840. His hard work and sound business judgment led to

47 Ibid.
48 Ibid.
49 Ibid.
51 Ibid. p. 30.
52 Prahran Telegraph, 23 November 1889, p. 3.
54 Shire of Malvern valuation book, Western Riding, 1883, no. 63.
the offer of a position at Laing and Webster's. On becoming a partner in the well-established softgoods firm in 1879, the company changed its name to Paterson, Laing and Bruce. Towards the end of the nineteenth century, there were large profits to be made in warehousing in Australia, as most of the required softgoods had to be imported. Business increased so rapidly that the company took a ‘foremost rank among the businesses of the colony’ becoming one of the largest importers of softgoods. This success allowed Bruce the time to play a leading role in community affairs and provided the income to build his mansion in Boundary Road.\(^{56}\)

In 1884 Richard Twentyman and David Askew Bruce were commissioned to design ‘Wombalano’, an imposing ‘stone’ mansion of thirty rooms.\(^{57}\) In common with many Italianate buildings ‘Wombalano’s’ cement render was designed to imitate stone.\(^{58}\) ‘Wombalano’, (meaning ‘beautiful’ or ‘handsome’) was located ‘on the crown of the hill at Toorak, commanding one of the finest panoramas in the neighbourhood of Melbourne.’\(^{59}\) In 1892 ‘Wombalano’ was an:

> Imposing building of excellent proportions, with a fine balcony and verandah facing north. The house is placed well in the grounds, which have been laid out and planted judiciously. The entrance-gates are light and open in design, and permit an excellent view being obtained of the mansion and its surroundings.\(^{60}\)

When mansions and villas were built on large estates, land at the rear was often used for domestic farming. Cows, pigs and poultry, were kept for the use of the household; vegetables were grown and orchards were common.\(^{61}\) By contrast formal gardens at the front, with rose gardens, fountains, archways, conservatories and winding paths, were designed to impress the visitor. ‘Wombalano’s’ carriage-drive led from the entrance gates in Boundary Road, past

\(^{56}\) Bruce was Commissioner of the Harbour Trust and the Centennial Exhibition, and President of the Young Men’s Christian Association and the Melbourne Hospital. *ADB*, vol. 3, p. 277.
\(^{57}\) *Sutherland*, vol. 2, pp. 534-6; Shire of Malvern valuation book, Western Riding, 1884, no. 67
\(^{58}\) Boyd, p. 39.
\(^{59}\) Ixion, in the *Australasian*, 1892.
\(^{60}\) Ibid.
the tennis court, to the stables and coach-house fronting Albany Road.

Built at a cost of £20,000, the entire mansion was built to impress and artist Robert Reid co-operated with the architects to produce a stunning result.

The special feature of the house is the large central hall, into which, and into the gallery above it, all the principal apartments and passages open. ... ceilings, mouldings and capitals of columns ... In the entrance hall, a light terra cotta, brightened and relieved by a band of ornaments, placed as the same height as the capitals of the pilasters, supporting the arch ... This ornament, like the panels of blue-green, cream, and gold mosaics, into which the ceiling is divided, is hand worked, and of purely Italian design ... the sombre red of the entrance hall passes into sage green in the lower part of the central hall ... the lantern in the roof ... filled with stained glass. All the doors to the various apartments are stained ... and the panels are enriched with various designs. ... [as are] the skirtings, architraves and dado ... Gold ornaments flowing from the centre, embellish the deep blue green ground of the roof of the lantern. ... in the drawing room a deep dado of blue green satin cloth is enriched with designs representative of the four seasons. ... The mantelpiece[s are the work of] Mr Hitzler, cabinetmaker. ... it has been necessary to import from England carpets and hangings specially designed for the purpose ... most of the cabinet work, gas brackets, the brass 'furniture' of the doors ... are of local handicraft. ... In the dining room the massive furniture is carved walnut and the panelled dado. ... The window blinds ... exclude or greatly soften the light by day. ... All the details ... the hearth-tiles, door handles, bell-pulls, and wall ornaments are carefully thought out.63

John Munro Bruce had married Mary Anne Henderson in 1872 and in the warmer months the family migrated to their country residence at Fern Glen near Scoresby.64 As a trade delegate, Bruce travelled to England with his family in 1888, where the elder sons went to school and a governess was employed for Stanley, the youngest son.65 On his return to Melbourne however, Bruce was plunged into the Depression.

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61 Kiddle, p. 336.
62 Shire of Malvern valuation book, Western Riding, 1884, no. 67. (The net annual value of the property rose from £250 in 1883 to £710 in 1884).
63 ‘The decoration of domestic furniture’ in The Argus, 8 December 1885, p. 8.
Bruce had learnt to play golf at school at St Andrews in Scotland and on his return from England, he brought back a large collection of golf clubs. At that time Melbourne had no golf course and despite the ravages of the depression, when the warehousing business was almost wiped out, Bruce, along with (Sir) William Knox, (Sir) Matthew Davies and Hon. James Munro, determined in 1891 to form the Melbourne Golf Club. A committee was formed and land at East Malvern, which had remained unsold during the depression, was leased. John Bruce became Club Captain and signed up eighty of his friends. Foundation members were predominantly successful businessmen and pastoralists, including many of Bruce’s Toorak neighbours including John Catto, Simon Fraser, Robert Harper, Henry Higgins and Bowes Kelly.

Personal wealth decreased dramatically following the bank crashes of the 1890s. Assets were frozen in the various financial institutions, shares became valueless, manufacturing and trading slowed down and building ceased. Even so, it appears that in this part of Toorak most home-owners, often having secure investments in interstate pastoral runs, managed to retain their family homes. The only apparent signs of enforced frugality came from the increase in resignations from clubs; the reduction of domestic servants along with lavish entertainment, including the use of luxury items such as tobacco, alcohol and fancy carriages; and the withdrawal of children from private schools. As Davison explains ‘austerity was becoming the fashion and those who continued to ride in splendid carriages, dispense lavish entertainment and generally behave as “great personages” were accused of “bad taste”’.

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66 Edwards, p. 9.
69 According to rate book entries, in most cases home ownership remained consistent before and after the depression.
70 Davison, p. 226.
71 Ibid., p. 226.
However some families, particularly those with mortgages, moved to more modest accommodation and their mansions either remained empty or were sold or leased. ‘Wombalano’ illustrates this clearly. Mortgaged to the Savings Bank, the mansion was leased to Albert Miller. When Miller moved to ‘Whernside’, the mansion remained vacant except for a resident caretaker. The mansion was then re-named ‘Torbain’ and leased to pastoralists and wool brokers, James and George Aitken, managers of the firm of shipping agents and general merchants, Dalgety & Co.\(^72\)

During this difficult period, Bruce’s devotion to the golf club was extraordinary and he ensured that the club’s funds were securely invested. For a time, his sons were withdrawn from school, but Stanley Melbourne completed his education at Melbourne Grammar School and later became Prime Minister of Australia.\(^73\) Bruce worked hard and the business survived the depression and gradually expanded. By the time of his death on a trip to Paris in 1901, the family fortune was rapidly being restored.\(^74\)

Successful merchants such as Bruce, Lorimer and Bayles had acquired their wealth not only from the economic benefits brought about by the discovery of gold but also from the success of the wool industry. By the 1870s high wool prices meant that money was available to install managers on country properties and for squatters to acquire a house in town, where they could spend several months a year.\(^75\) A combination of town and country living combined all the best features for the wealthy squatter who attempted to replicate his bluestone mansion in the Western District, by building a cement rendered mansion in the city. Consequently Melbourne businessmen were joined by squatters in favouring the outer suburb of Toorak as a place to build or buy their mansions.

Thomas Scott was living at ‘Kenley’ when fellow pastoralist Albert Austin selected

\(^72\) Shire of Malvern valuation book, western riding, 1890, no. 8; Shire of Malvern rate book, North Ward, 1897-8, no. 7; de Serville, p. 270 and Who’s Who in Australia 1929, p. 832

\(^73\) ADB, vol. 3, p. 277.

\(^74\) Johnson, p. 45.
six acres of neighbouring land and built a fine ‘stone’ mansion in Albany Road. Austin’s town house, named ‘Eilyer’ after his country property, was designed in 1886 by architects Smith and Johnson. Successful pastoralists like Austin were more resilient to the economic disasters of the nineties than merchants and financiers, and by 1894 Austin owned a total of twenty-nine acres of elevated land, which in 1887, had been valued at £800 an acre.

English born Albert Austin came to Australia at the age of 17 to learn about Australian farming methods from Thomas Austin, his uncle at Barwon Park in the Western District. Thomas and James Austin assisted their nephews, Albert and Benjamin, in their purchase of a substantial crown leasehold in western Victoria. The property, ‘Eilyer’, was fully stocked with Merino sheep, and in 1871 Albert built a fine bluestone house where nine children were born to his wife Catherine. Albert increased his landholdings in Victoria and NSW, and his outstanding success with the breeding of Merino sheep has been well documented. Albert and Catherine Austin spent their last few years at ‘Eilyer’ in Albany Road where Albert died in 1916.

According to author Margaret Kiddle, the Scottish pastoralists of the Western District took over the public leadership of society, established themselves as a ‘colonial landed gentry’ and in Melbourne built ‘heavy palaces in the Italian manner’. In 1879 prominent Scottish pastoralist Archibald Fisken built a two-storey Italianate style mansion in Boundary Road. Designed by architect Francis Maloney White, the property included several brick and stone outbuildings,

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75 Kiddle, p. 336.
76 Smith & Johnson. Tender notice, Argus, 27 March 1886, MLAAl.
79 The Australian Mercantile Land and Finance Company considered the account they had with Albert and his sons to be the largest they had ever handled. Albert was chairman of the Deniliquin Freezing Co. and a foundation member of the Pastoralists Association of Victoria and the Southern Riverina, Joan Austin Palmer; de Serville, Pounds & pedigrees, p. 37.
80 Kiddle, p. 169.
a large cellar, tennis court and pavilion, stables and coach-house, situated on more than six acres of land at the corner of Malvern Road.\textsuperscript{81}

Fisken had arrived in Port Phillip in 1840 and commenced a prosperous pastoral career, by managing his uncle’s grazing properties at Lal Lal and Warrenheip. During the gold rush he made a fortune by slaughtering meat for the diggings and out of the profit bought his uncle’s stations. Fisken was a partner in a stock and station agency at Ballarat and director of a number of companies. In Melbourne he managed a Scottish wool brokering firm, supported the Pastoralists’ Associations and in 1877 he was appointed as a Land Tax Commissioner.\textsuperscript{82} Fisken joined his colleagues as a member of the Melbourne Club.\textsuperscript{83}

Fisken, his wife Charlotte and their six children lived at Boundary Road until 1886, when fellow pastoralist and club member, Colin Simpson, purchased the property and named it ‘Carmyle’.\textsuperscript{84} The same year the engagement was announced of Simpson’s daughter Lena to Thomas, son of George Fairbairn.\textsuperscript{85} With nine children, Emily Simpson would have enjoyed a large domestic staff as she was well known for her fine entertainment. Her ‘annual New Year’s ball [was] always one of the happiest social events of the season’.\textsuperscript{86}

As the boom years progressed, Boundary Road was re-named Kooyong Road and ‘Carmyle’ was increasingly surrounded by ornate mansions and villas. As Robin Boyd observed half a century later - ‘On each bare hill-top a great mansion appeared, threw a high iron fence around itself and withdrew behind a rising

\textsuperscript{81} F.M. White invites tenders for a dwelling-house in Toorak. Argus, 12 October 1878. MLAAI; ‘Carmyle’ 7 Carmyle Avenue, National Trust of Australia (Victoria), File no. 909; Shire of Malvern valuation book, western riding, 1889, no. 85.
\textsuperscript{84} Shire of Malvern rate book, 1886, Western Riding, No. 71.
\textsuperscript{85} Table Talk, 17 September 1886, p.10.
\textsuperscript{86} Table Talk, 8 January, 1886, p. 10.
cabinet of nurtured deciduous trees’. While Fisken’s house was more restrained in style, mansions and villas built a decade later were often embellished with turrets, urns, statuettes and cast-iron lacework. Interiors were cluttered with the paraphernalia of the period including aspidistras in brass bowls, framed pictures hanging three or four deep, pianos, Persian carpets, what-nots, tapestry and brass fire-screens, jardinières, epergnes, heavy wallpapers, marble mantles, gasoliers, and much more. In 1887, ‘Maringa’, a fine two-storey house designed by architect George Inskip, was built for gentleman Robert Morgan Sutherland. ‘Maringa’s’ bay windows, elegant verandahs and slate roof looked out onto Boundary Road. Since the 1860s, slate, brought out as ballast in wool clippers returning from Britain, had been the main roofing material.

The boom years had made Irish born piano manufacturer, Octavius Charles Beale a wealthy man. About 1884, Beale established Beale and Co. piano and sewing machine importers before establishing a large piano factory. He had been a partner in the Melbourne hardware firm of Brooks, Robinson and Co. and it was in Kooyong Road that he purchased land from Josiah Austin, (Albert’s brother), as a site for his new mansion home. In 1888 Beale commissioned architect William Salway to design ‘Oma’, large enough to house his family of thirteen children. ‘The big houses of the eighties were built for entertainment by the extroverted merchants on whom the boom had loaded its riches’, observed Boyd. ‘Oma’ stood between ‘Wombalano’ and ‘Maringa’ in -

Fine well-planted grounds, with handsome elaborate scroll-work entrance gates (set in ornamental brick walls) opening on to a serpentine drive. The style of the building is French, with red granite pillars ... The rooms are finely proportioned and well lit. ... ceilings, cornices, brackets, centre-pieces, mouldings are of thin metal (after

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87 Boyd, p.45.
91 Boyd p. 47.
the manner of répoussé work) ... The effect is very elaborate, and when decorated has a most handsome appearance.  

‘Oma’s’ thirty-four lavishly decorated rooms included a grand entrance, drawing room and main hall with first floor balconies. Extensive stabling, also designed by Salway, may have attracted merchant, pastoralist and company director James Grice to purchase this fine property around 1890. Grice was a keen horseman and became Chairman of the V.A.T.C.  

From the 1860s, the Mornington Peninsula was not only a popular summer retreat, but became a fashionable location for more permanent homes for the wealthy. James Grice lived at ‘Moondah’ outside Mornington and used ‘Oma’ for his town house. When Grice travelled to England in 1892 pastoralist John Catto leased the house in Boundary Road. ‘Oma’ was re-named ‘Nareeb’ when it became the home of Walter and Alice Simmons in 1906. 

To the east of ‘Oma’ with a frontage to Albany Road, stood ‘Inverbreakie’, a fine two-storey ‘stone’ house with stables, coach-house and orchard, built in 1883 at a cost of £2000 for squatter Jane Hamilton. When Hamilton returned to England, contractor, pastoralist and politician, Simon Fraser leased the house for two years from 1887, prior to moving to ‘Norla’, his new mansion in Irving Road. By the time of his retirement, Sir Simon had been knighted and appointed to the Victorian Senate.  

‘Inverbreakie’ was one of a cluster of ‘boom style’ mansions and villas, which graced the south end of Albany Road. Typical villas of the middle and upper middle classes were built of brick with slate roofs, usually single storey, with a central  

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92 Australasian, 13 August, 1892, p. 332.  
93 Ibid.  
95 de Serville, Pounds & pedigrees, p. 301.  
96 Ixion in the Australasian, 1892.  
97 Shire of Malvern valuation book, Western Riding, 1884 no. 25.
passage and bay window and included a drawing room, dining room and bedrooms. The service areas included a kitchen, pantry, scullery, bathroom, servant’s room, washhouse and at the rear of the property a water closet.\textsuperscript{99} With advances in plumbing towards the end of the nineteenth century, bathrooms and kitchens became more integrated into the main part of the house.

To the south of ‘Inverbreakie’ stood ‘Lesleigh’, built in 1891 for orchardist Thomas Lockwood.\textsuperscript{100} The garden featured a fountain, stables, and a small conservatory.\textsuperscript{101} To the south of ‘Lesleigh’ stood ‘Minden’, built in 1887 at a cost of £2000, for importer Max Schuchard and opposite was the ten-roomed villa built in 1889 for Dr. Henry Woolaston.\textsuperscript{102} Woolaston was later knighted for his work as the first permanent head of Trade and Customs of the Commonwealth, being closely identified with setting up the Customs machinery under Federation.\textsuperscript{103}

During the land boom, owners took advantage of rapidly increasing land prices and in 1887 part of James Lorimer’s extensive landholdings were subdivided and sold as fifteen ‘grand villa sites’ in the Albany Estate. Builder J.W. Stoddart built three brick villas facing Malvern Road and three timber villas in Gertrude Street.\textsuperscript{104} Solicitor Edward Klingender purchased three acres in Albany Road and built ‘Egoline’ a twelve-roomed brick house which was later sold to solicitor and importer, Charles Yencken.

MacMurtrie’s daughter, Eileen, attended the neighbouring school, Strathclyde. From the early 1850s, wealthy families either employed governesses or tutors or

\textsuperscript{98} de Serville, \textit{Pounds & pedigrees} p. 394; \textit{Who’s who} 1929 p. 906.
\textsuperscript{100} Lockwood owned large areas of land, which became the sites of Monash University, and Wesley College at Syndal. Pers. Comm. Rod Lockwood, great grandson of Thomas Lockwood, 13 May 1997.
\textsuperscript{102} Shire of Malvern valuation book, \textit{Western Riding}, 1887, no. 27; In 1886 a notice from Wilson and Beswicke inviting tenders for a villa in Albany Road may well relate to ‘Minden’. MLAAI. Shire of Malvern valuation book, \textit{Western Riding}, 1889, no. 28 & 1891, no. 587. ‘Minden’ was re-named ‘Amesfield’ and then ‘Elleston’; Shire of Malvern valuation book, \textit{Western Riding}, 1889, no. 61
\textsuperscript{103} Fred John’s annual 1914, p. 226
\textsuperscript{104} Albany Estate subdivision plan. c.1887. SLV; Shire of Malvern valuation book, \textit{Western Riding}, 1889, nos. 62, 64, 65.
sent their children to the local private-venture schools. With the introduction of the Education Act of 1872, education became free, compulsory and secular, but well-to-do families avoided the newly opened government schools, preferring to send their sons and daughters to the privately run schools. These schools varied from humble establishments lasting only a few years to those run by well-educated principals.

With the influx of wealthy families to the area and rapidly rising incomes, Mrs Martha Connolly saw the need for a private boarding school, and the potential for its success, in this part of Toorak. Daniel and Martha Connolly had arrived in Victoria in 1884, five months after their marriage in Stockholm. Despite being blind since the age of sixteen, Daniel Connolly had qualified as a Bachelor of Arts at London University and married Swedish born Martha during his time as tutor to the British ambassador’s children in Stockholm. In Melbourne, Connolly obtained a position of classical master at the Presbyterian College and in 1887 the couple opened the Cornelia College for Ladies in Horsburgh Grove, Malvern. With Daniel’s death in February 1888, Martha Connolly had the resources to purchase land in the Albany Estate and seven months later Mrs Matthew Davies laid the foundation stone for the new buildings of the Cornelia College for Ladies in Albany Road.

In order to increase enrolments during the depression, boys were accepted at Cornelia College and children of wealthy pastoralists were targetted in promotions for the school. A staff of thirty well-qualified teachers, ‘of the highest professional standing’, taught in a range of subjects from Kindergarten to Matriculation. Classics, elocution, physiology, Italian, scripture, plain needlework and dressmaking joined the more traditional subjects. A ‘richly

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106 Architect George Parsons designed the two-storey brick house with attached weather-board school buildings. Building Engineering & Mining Journal. 22 September 1888. MLAAI; Shire of Malvern valuation books, Western Riding, 1889, no. 60. and 1890, no. 477.
107 ‘Cornelia College offers to a limited number of scholars greater advantages than large public schools.’ Advertisement in the Australian pastoralists review, 15 August 1892, p. xxi
equipped gymnasium’, tennis court, and a farm at Mulgrave, ‘which afford[ed] both riding and driving’, combined with the ‘sanitary inspection’ to declare Cornelia College a ‘model institution’.  

By 1896 the school had been taken over by Mrs Isabella and Miss Elizabeth Rudd and renamed Strathclyde. Additional subjects included astronomy, mythology and botany. Boarders were allowed to visit friends ‘approved of by their parents’ on the last Friday of every month, on the condition that they were under the ‘personal care of a suitable chaperon.’ In 1900 prizewinners at the Annual Distribution of Prizes included Eileen MacMurtie, and neighbours Violet and Waletta Stoddart.

The boom years were a time of prosperity and confidence and the mansions and villas displayed an opulence never before seen in the colony. From 1874 ‘Jackson’s Paddock’ was transformed by the grand homes of the gentry. At the same time, the sweeping curve of Albany Road, which cut a swathe through fine pastoral land, attracted the business associates and social equals of their Boundary Road neighbours. As the *Argus* noted in 1884 - ‘On the wooded heights of Toorak reside the crème de la crème of the upper classes, the magnates … of Victoria’. And so it was with ‘Jackson’s Paddock’, the two main roads comfortably housed ‘the crème de la crème of the upper classes’.

Perhaps one of the most delightful outings is to be had amongst the highlands of Armadale, Malvern and Toorak, especially the last, where imposing houses, trim lawns, gardens and shrubberies, and well-grown orchards are to be met with at every turn. In Toorak just at present, the almond trees are at full blossom, making pinkish-white patches in the bright sunlight against the dark wood of the other trees. In sheltered spots oranges are hanging to the boughs, and large groups of Aram lilies, with their dense green foliage as a background, are to be seen in all their glory. Yellow strips of daffodils and jonquils – for it is the custom

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108 Ibid.
109 Ibid.
110 *Sands and McDougall’s directory* 1896.
111 Strathclyde’s referees included locals Albert Austin of ‘Eilyer’, Alfred Ibbotson of ‘Mymong’, Henry Higgins of ‘Doona’ and Mrs Albert Miller of ‘Whernside’. ‘Strathclyde’, Albany Road Toorak, prospectus, Toorak file, RHSV.
now to plant bulbs in rows - help to make the gardens gay. ... Particularly fine is the scene that presents itself to the eye from the balconies and towers of the dwellings in the Kooyong Road.\footnote{Ixon, Australasian, 1892.}