Towering Over All
The Italianate Villa in the Colonial Landscape

Volume One
(Text)

by

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Submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Deakin University
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I certify that the thesis entitled

Towering Over All: The Italianate Villa in the Colonial Landscape

submitted for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

is the result of my own work and that where reference is made to the work of others, due acknowledgment is given.

I also certify that any material in the thesis which has been accepted for a degree or diploma by any other university or institution is identified in the text.

Timothy Fletcher Hubbard

Full Name.................................................................(Please Print)

Signed.................................................................Date..........................
Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to the Badger, a well educated and much travelled gentleman who has retreated to the country. Now he works in his garden, eats fruit from his orchard and reads books from his library. Wearing old slippers beside the hearth, he cares for his friends and family. He is at home and loved.
ABSTRACT

The Picturesque aesthetic emerged in the later 18th century, uniting the Sublime and the Beautiful and had its roots in the paintings of Claude Lorrain. In Britain, and in Australia, it came to link art, literature and landscape with architecture. The Picturesque aesthetic informed much of colonial culture which was achieved, in part, through the production and dissemination of architectural pattern books catering for the aspirations of the rising middle classes. This was against a background of political change including democratic reform.

The Italianate villa, codified and promoted in such pattern books, was a particularly successful synthesis of style, form and function. The first Italianate villa in England, Cronkhill (1803) by John Nash contains all the ingredients which were essential to the model and had a deeper meaning. Deepdene (from 1807) by Thomas Hope gave the model further impetus. The works of Charles Barry and others in a second generation confirmed the model’s acceptability. In Britain, its public status peaked with Osborne House (from 1845), Queen Victoria’s Italianate villa on the Isle of Wight. Robert Kerr used a vignette of Osborne House on the title page of his sophisticated and influential pattern book, *The Gentleman’s House* (1864, 1871). It was one of many books, including those of J.C. Loudon and A.J. Downing, current in colonial Victoria. The latter authors and horticulturists were themselves villa dwellers with libraries and orchards, two criteria for the true villa lifestyle.

Situation and a sense of retreat were the two further criteria for the villa lifestyle. As the new colony of Victoria blossomed between 1851 and 1891, the Italianate villa, its garden setting and its landscape siting captured the tenor of the times. Melbourne, the capital was a rich manufacturing metropolis with a
productive hinterland and international markets. The people enjoyed a prosperity and lifestyle which they wished to display. Those who had a position in society were keen to demonstrate and protect it. Those with aspirations attempted to provide the evidence necessary for such acceptance. The model matured and became ubiquitous. Its evolution can be traced through a series of increasingly complicated rural and suburban examples, a process which modernist historians have dismissed as a decadent decline. These villas, in fact, demonstrate an increasingly sophisticated retreat by merchants from 'the Town' and by graziers from 'the Country'. In both town and country, the towers of villas mark territory newly acquired. The same claim was often made in humbler situations.

Government House, Melbourne (from 1871), a splendid Italianate villa and arguably finer than Osborne House, was set in a cultivated landscape and towered above all. It incorporated the four criteria and, in addition, claimed its domain, focused authority and established the colony's social status. It symbolised ancient notions of democracy and idealism but with a modern appreciation for the informal and domestic. Government House in Melbourne is the epitome of the Italianate villa in the colonial landscape and is the climax of the Picturesque aesthetic in Victoria.
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PREFACE

Terminology in the thesis includes the terms “Italianate” and “villa” which are discussed in detail in the text. The terms “Beautiful”, “Sublime” and “Picturesque” are used largely in their eighteenth and nineteenth century sense. “Gothic” and “Classical” should be understood to mean the great division in Western architectural history into two streams. These five terms are always capitalised when they have this meaning, except in quotations when the original author’s spelling is used, although to a lay reader this may seem stilted. “Landscape” and “colonial” are used in their general senses. Other chances for confusion, such as the change of name from Van Diemen’s Land to Tasmania are dealt with in the text. Quotations have been as exact as possible and have included idiosyncratic spelling and punctuation.

The geographical and historical focus of the thesis is the colony of Victoria. Much still needs to be understood about the use of the Italianate villa model in the rest of Australia (and New Zealand), especially if Melbourne was something of a powerhouse for the model’s development and dispersal. The role of women in what is essentially a domestic building type has been almost ignored, not because it is not important, but because almost all the owners, clients, architects and landscape designers were men. Similarly, the landscape which was claimed in Victoria was not uninhabited. More deserves to be researched about the attitudes and sentiments of those who claimed the landscape, whether as individual homesteaders or a community of urban dwellers, and those who were dispossessed. It was frustrating not to be able to do more research in Britain for architectural and horticultural connections. The research done on Britain had to rely, for the most part, on secondary sources. And, of course, the United States of America is an enormous landscape, once colonial, where the Italianate villa came to assume a deep significance.

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A very wide range of sources has been used. Some of these are traditional. Others are relatively novel, made available through the Internet. Much more needs
to be done to collect information about architectural pattern books published after 1840. John Archer's weighty research into British books is most helpful and James Broadbent's research on their use in Australia is ground-breaking. Both stop with the early 1840s, about the time when major changes were happening in architectural and horticultural publications. Similarly, little work seems to have been done on American books since Henry-Russell Hitchcock's bibliography, although research into American examples has not been pursued for this thesis. I do wish to acknowledge the extent and the reliability of the information available through certain databases. These include those of the National Trust of Australia (Vic.), the Australian Heritage Commission, the Heritage Council of Victoria and especially the 'Melbourne Mansions' on-line database created by Dr. Miles Lewis with the assistance of Terry Sawyer. The latter is a marvellous tool for understanding the city and must be developed further. Still, many sources were not pursued, which await harvesting, particularly in Tasmania. Those remarkable men, James Blackburn and William Archer deserve more attention.

All tasks have their limits. It was hoped, at the beginning, that this thesis could embrace more fully the issue of Victoria's democracy and its representation, metaphorically, through the architecture of Government House. Wise counsel prevailed and that theme awaits further research and confirmation. The thesis is presented, therefore, as a contribution to a continuing debate about the application of the Picturesque aesthetic through architecture and landscape including its political dimension.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

It seems that not only has this thesis has been gestating for many years but that the experience, values and connections of a whole life have also prepared for it. My interest in the Western District and Tasmania stem from my mother and father’s introduction to those places. I remember my first visit to Highfield, in the far North West of Tasmania which is connected with my family in the mid-1960s and my mother’s frequent phrase, in capital letters, “The Beautiful Western District!” My family’s roots, on both sides, ensured an interest in Tasmania. I grew up in Melbourne, so the tower of Government House was at the centre of “my day’s circle”. As a citizen, Government House has always been at the centre of my understanding of Melbourne, the city and Victoria, the state. My connections with what is now Heritage Victoria and with the Shire of Southern Grampians consolidated and developed my interest in the Western District and the rest of Victoria. Living in Rome confirmed me as an Italo-phile. More personally, to have used books and other resources collected over a professional lifetime has been especially rewarding. Now, living in the country, cultivating an orchard, trying to grow vegetables and to encourage chickens which lay eggs only intermittently, I do reflect on the writings of J. C. Loudon and A. J. Downing. It is ironic that, because of circumstances yet without design, my home is thought by others to be ‘Tuscan’.

There are many people who deserve to be acknowledged for their support and understanding. My extended family across three generations has, of course, been quietly interested and knowingly calm. My friends have been equally tolerant. The sad deaths of certain individuals who were important to me has reminded me of true values during the writing of this thesis.
Librarians have helped in Australia and overseas in libraries large and small. The reliability of the Deakin Library off-campus and inter-library loan staff and the librarians at the Warrnambool campus was a great primary strength in the task of researching. Many challenges were met professionally and with good humour, and items delivered promptly. I would like to mention individual librarians whose special support has meant a great deal. At the State Library of Victoria, Ms. Judith Scurfield and Mr. Des Crowley, in particular, went well beyond their regular duties. The SLV, which features in the thesis, is one of the great cultural assets of the nation. Dr. Peter Macauley at the Deakin Waterfront campus extended his role as a librarian beyond the norm and continued his interest afterwards. Curators too have been helpful, especially at the Birmingham Art Gallery, the Australian National Gallery, the Australian National Library and the National Gallery of Victoria. I would like to mention Mr. Danny McOwen of the Hamilton Art Gallery who has been supportive throughout the research.

The owners of many properties in different states of Australia and in England have welcomed me and offered their assistance. Those individuals are acknowledged in the text as they certainly deserve. Of special help were the owners of properties in the Western District: Wando Dale, Gringegalgona, Wooriwyrite, Kolor, Narrapumelap, Meningoort, Mount Noorat and Glenara. Conversations with Mr. Roderick Agar at The Gums were stimulating and enlightening. There are others such as Mr. and Mrs. James Affleck of Minjah who often welcomed me to their home and provided a typescript of the Kolor Clerk of Works' journal. Many others whose properties in Victoria and Tasmania were not included by name contributed nonetheless by providing the bulk of sites confirming my opinions. In England, the visit to Cronkhill in March 2001 was a special
highlight which answered questions, resolved doubts and spurred my interest. I am especially indebted to Mrs Patricia Tay, the lessee at the time. The staff at Government House, Melbourne and at Osborne House on the Isle of Wight were interested and helpful.

Many colleagues encouraged me to begin and supported me throughout my studies such as Dr. John Rickard, Dr. Phillip Goad and Dr. Karen Olsen. Their valuable advice was about process as much as content. Paul Fox was especially helpful providing copies of his work and, more importantly, discussing shared interests. Dr. Anne Neale's excellent research into Edward La Trobe Bateman greatly assisted in the present thesis but there is still much to be learnt about the man. Mr. Andrew Klenke kindly provided copies of his research into the South Australian architect, W. T. Gore. Mr. Alan Willingham gave free access to his notable architectural library and offered interesting suggestions. Mr. And Mrs. Winter-Cooke of Murndal gave free access to the library, perhaps the most important surviving in situ in Victoria.

In London several people were gracious with their time. These included Dr. David Watkin whose research over many years is the foundation for much of the first chapters of the thesis. Our stimulating conversation one morning in London provided fresh insights and important cautions. Dr. Matthew Hardy of the Prince's Foundation, London was helpful with his comments, advice and copies of essential sections of his thesis which, to some degree, parallels my own. Dr. Michael Turner of English Heritage directed me to the latest research on Osborne House.

Particular thanks must go to Mr. George Tibbits and Dr. Jan Penney who fostered my interest in undertaking postgraduate study from the beginning. Both contributed to my background understanding of the topic. George has been a role
model providing wise counsel for over thirty years. Jan has been most practical and dedicated. Her effort reading the final draft was an act of special friendship.

The shifting role of supervisor cannot be easy. Prof. Mark Burry, perhaps because he is an architect, was always on my wavelength. I wish to thank Dr. Judith Trimble for her contribution. I am particularly grateful to my principal supervisor, Dr. Ursula de Jong for her patience, support and comments. There were many times beyond the routine when, looking at art together, my understanding of it was informed for the better. Her contribution has been to my very great advantage and I thank her sincerely for it.

Nobody has been more patient, tolerant and supportive than my partner, Roger Borrell.
### LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

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1. INTRODUCTION

When the better-educated colonists of New South Wales, Van Diemen’s Land and Western Australia, and subsequently those of Victoria, South Australia and Queensland, came to build substantial houses in their new environments, they were imbued with more than a century and a half of British appreciation for Italian landscape painting and interpretation of Palladian architecture. The colonists were also subject to the emergent Picturesque aesthetic, the waning fashion for the Greek revival, and the rising fashion for the Gothic revival. A sense of Imperial mission empowered them.

Their domestic architecture took the form of villas—whether Georgian, Greek, Gothic or otherwise—placed in a landscape which was at once alien but also full of potential. Their responses were, of course, varied, but it is possible to discern a common cultural approach if not a unified political ideology. This both justified the occupation of an ancient country, at a national and a personal level, and created a new, notionally civilised, British order over it. Outside towns, this colonial order was largely domestic and pastoral or agrarian, but it was not without ancient allusions and nationalistic connotations. Within towns and the capital cities of each colony, and especially in the suburbs of metropolitan Melbourne, the villa was triumphant as a building form. In Melbourne the Italianate style was ubiquitous.

As if to symbolise the different cultures of the six colonies, each produced a government house which reflected its history, tastes, values and, possibly, its political climate. The difference seems to fall into two neat categories: those early colonies which enjoyed the benefits and liabilities of convict transportation, New South Wales, Van Diemen’s Land and Western Australia, and those which did not,
South Australia and Victoria. Queensland, the last colony to be established which had convicts, is less clear. The strongest distinction is between the grand Gothic piles which are the Government Houses in Sydney and Hobart, and the equally grand Italianate villa which is the Government House in Melbourne. But there is much more to understand about the choice of an Italianate villa as the model in Melbourne than the single factor of transportation and the convict 'taint'. With that choice, the Italianate villa reached a highpoint in the later nineteenth century in Victoria, the richest colony in the Empire, and a colony which strongly influenced the other Australian colonies as well as New Zealand and Fiji though its trade, business, professional and social contacts.

The Italianate villa, which travelled on these currents, is a product of nineteenth-century culture. To understand its origins, associations and significance, it is necessary to understand the relationship between Britain and Italy in the previous centuries and between Britain and the rest of the world in the nineteenth century. Indeed, the Foreign Office in London, the branch of British government which dealt with the outside world, took the form of an enormous Italianate villa.

Italy was a Mecca for the British in the eighteenth and nineteenth century. It represented much that Britain was not. Obvious differences are climate, topography, and history. Equally obvious are different religious, political and economic systems. These differences were enjoyed by the upper class and others in the form of the Grand Tour. All sorts of people travelled to Italy: people who could afford to go in search of culture; young men with their tutors for the sake of completing a classical education; people on the margins or ostracised from Society; people on business and in diplomacy; intellectuals, artists and architects keen to discover the truth of classical culture, and, to start with, a few young women. There
were also the inevitable hangers-on. Only the very adventurous travelled further to Greece, Turkey, the Levant, Egypt and Morocco. For the majority of British travellers, Italy provided more than enough.

Italy was not an easy place to get to. Travellers had to pass either through France, cross the Alps and then ‘descend’ into Italy or otherwise travel by sea. In the eighteenth century both routes were expensive, hazardous and arduous. Once there, it was important to maximise the experience culturally, financially and socially. One way of doing this was to collect small souvenirs such as medals, coins and cameos. Sculpture and furniture provided more of a logistical challenge. The most culturally sophisticated souvenirs were works of art such as paintings and drawings. The drawings were often architectural drawings. The paintings, when they were not religious subjects or portraits, were almost always landscapes or seascapes. Not surprisingly, the paintings reflected both the journey and the destination of the Grand Tour.

Two broad genres emerged. One, reflecting the journey there and back, included wild scenery heightened by storms, dangerous situations peopled by brigands, and treacherous seas and shipwrecks. Buildings, if they were depicted, were ruinous and in the Gothic style. These paintings were described throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth century as ‘Sublime’. The opposite genre was described as ‘Beautiful’. In these paintings the landscapes and seascapes were benign. Ships might be anchored safely in a harbour. Cattle, sheep and goats might graze safely in a field. Peasants gathering corn were well-fed, colourfully dressed and friendly. The buildings in Beautiful paintings reflected the Classical past of Italy and, even if in ruins, their neo-Classical imagery was positive, of interest and available. The Beautiful and the Sublime became so well understood and
appreciated that they came to form separate aesthetic theories. From the middle of the eighteenth century these aesthetic theories, apparently so different, began to merge into the Picturesque aesthetic. All three were supported by the concept of Associationism, a theory which proposed that objects and images could evoke deep meaning for the spectator or participant, whether intrinsically or through his or her intellect and imagination. The Picturesque aesthetic had its roots in the Beautiful paintings of Claude Lorrain and the Sublime paintings of Salvador Rosa, as well as in poetry, literature and landscape gardening. By the end of the eighteenth century it began to be expressed in architecture and the buildings in landscape paintings provided suitable models.

The difference between buildings which were Beautiful, that is Classical, and those which were Sublime, that is Gothic, came to be known in the nineteenth century as the ‘Battle of the Styles’. There was an inherent tension in this dichotomy. When it came to the rebuilding of the Houses of Parliament after a disastrous fire in the late 1840s, the government, by this time the conservative Tories, required the buildings to be in the nationalistic Gothic style. While the Houses of Parliament at Westminster are Gothic in appearance they were designed around a Classical plan. The capitol buildings of the American states and of Congress, on the other hand, are strictly neo-Classical.

The same sort of differences emerged in other building types. It became a matter of great importance when choosing the style of a church, for example. While the Gothic stream enjoyed an increasing domination of High Church of England and Roman Catholic ecclesiastical architecture, Dissenters built in the Classical stream because Gothic architecture was associated with the worst aspects of popery. Synagogues were designed in the Classical stream, even in the rare
Egyptian revival style, because the Gothic stream represented European oppression. One stream was an architecture of metaphysical Faith, the other an architecture of the rational Word. The same dichotomy emerged in domestic architecture, but with an extra ingredient, the new Picturesque aesthetic.

The Picturesque aesthetic allowed for the novel combination of informal planning and massing with the use of the vocabulary of Classical architecture. This extended to the situation of a building, its location, setting and siting. A building, such as a house, could be placed in a landscape rather as it might be represented in a picture, which is the origin of the word ‘picturesque’. It is not difficult to imagine how revolutionary this was but the Picturesque aesthetic also brought with it the concept of Associationism, including the associations inherent in the Sublime and the Beautiful. Domestic architecture could reflect associations with both the political traditions of monarchical Britain and of the new republics and can be interpreted as an expression of the political tension of the times. The development of domestic architecture from the end of the eighteenth until the end of the nineteenth centuries is complex but the Picturesque aesthetic helped to resolve the tension. The Italianate villa was the most successful model in that achievement.

The Italianate villa, including its setting and siting, was codified and promoted in architectural pattern books. This publishing genre grew from several long traditions but, from the end of the Napoleonic Wars, it was boosted not only by the lifting of restrictions on imports and technical improvements but also by changes in marketing and the introduction of journals with parallel interests. It also benefited, of course, from a bigger and more affluent market, the middle classes. Because there was a wide range of taste, values and incomes across the middle classes the books became increasingly diverse. Some advocated just the Gothic
stream, almost to the point of jingoism while others advocated the Classical stream for its associations. Most books offered both streams. A few even continued to offer examples of the Greek revival from which the Italianate style had emerged.

Pattern books also provided practical advice on lifestyle. This was very much the villa lifestyle. Suburban villas mushroomed on the outskirts of existing and new cities and towns and they appeared at further distances in coastal and lakeside situations, rather like holiday houses. Few people in the middle classes aspired to a formal country seat so the villa was an appropriate and achievable goal. This represented a middle-class retreat from the growing urbanism of Britain. A sense of retreat became an important criterion for the villa lifestyle.

One of the most prolific authors of pattern books, and their parallel journals was John Claudius Loudon who had a horticultural rather than an architectural background. As well as giving advice on buildings, he also gave detailed advice on landscaping including decorative and practical landscaping and horticulture. This was often directed towards self-sufficiency, in the form of cut-flower and vegetable gardens, orchards and facilities for domesticated animals. Self-sufficiency was another important criterion for the villa lifestyle.

The villa in Britain had a long tradition, especially the Palladian tradition which was itself a result of the Grand Tour. In the later eighteenth century the formal Palladian villa began to change. Apart from becoming smaller and therefore more affordable, it was ‘lowered’ so that the occupants could pass more easily between the inside and the outside. It became more informal in its internal planning, demonstrating a sort of internal asymmetry. This became expressed as external asymmetry, a remarkable change which was only possible because of the application of the new Picturesque aesthetic to architecture.
All this was happening against a backdrop of great change in Britain, some of which was bad and some of which was good. On the one hand, the Enclosure Acts were dispossessing tenant farmers, especially in Scotland. The Napoleonic Wars were dragging on, sapping the nation through increased taxes, embargoes on certain goods and the 'war effort', while the threat of invasion was real. There was famine in Ireland. On the other hand, hygiene was improving in cities with a consequent increase in life expectancy. Educational reform was underway, not only in the teaching of children at school but also in the instruction of adults through new galleries, libraries, public gardens and mechanics' institutes. Technical advances were improving transport and communications. Mass production was beginning so that books, for example, became cheaper and more attractive. These and similar factors both reflected and served perhaps the greatest overall change, the rise of the middle class.

With the rise of the middle class came demands for political and social reform and more religious tolerance for both Dissenters and Catholics. These were dangerous demands in the light of the American and French Revolutions which had been fuelled by Rationalism and the Enlightenment. The ascendancy of the Whigs in the British Parliament during the eighteenth century, the passage of the Reform Act in 1832 and other legislative reforms to improve municipal government and reduce the power of the Church of England, defused the danger of political revolution in Britain. In the later 1840s another, more democratic threat emerged with the Chartists who eventually marched on London. Loosely described as trade unionists, they had a charter of political demands to implement further democratic reforms. They were crushed as was the Young Ireland movement. Then the
political turbulence of Continental Europe in 1848 and 1849 reawakened fears of mob rule and too much democracy.

At the same time as all this change, Australia was being colonised. New South Wales was founded in 1788 as a penal settlement for several reasons, including the obvious need to find an alternative destination for convicts after the loss of the American colonies in 1776 and for strategic reasons in the South Pacific. By 1803 another colony, Van Diemen’s Land was established simultaneously in the north and the south of the island later renamed Tasmania. An attempt in 1803 to settle at the southern end of Port Phillip Bay, about 70kms [45 miles] due south of the future site of Melbourne had failed. Another isolated colony was established at Swan River, now Perth, on the far west of Australia in 1829. These early convict colonies were ruled under military law. Most of the governors and senior officials were military men, including officers who had fought against Napoleon. They were convict colonies but they also attracted free settlers to whom land was granted and convicts were assigned. It is also true that, having served their sentences, some convicts succeeded economically, socially and politically.

There had been political unrest in Scotland and in Ireland but it was an uprising by settlers in Canada in the early 1830s which most alarmed London. This brought the prospect of distant colonial revolution both in Canada and in Australia. The uprising was put down and many of the insurgents, including some Americans, were transported to Van Diemen’s Land and New South Wales as political prisoners. A Royal Commission into the matter found that there was some justification for the uprising and recommended that those colonies which demonstrated the ability should become self-governing in every way except for defence and diplomacy.
The Royal Commission made a remarkable recommendation in the context of the times. It proposed that self-governing colonies should have written constitutions. This was not just the opposite of the British Constitution which was unwritten, but anathema to those who feared the republicanism espoused by the Americans and the French, and later, by other countries in Europe. Put simply, rationalist constitutions written over a short period of time were dangerous, especially if they included a democratic Bill of Rights and used Napoleonic law which was based on ancient Roman law. The British Constitution which had evolved organically over time with its roots deep in British history and with the strength of Common Law to protect the individual was much to be preferred. In the broadest terms, modern democratic constitutions were internationalist and could be associated with the Renaissance and Rationalism and their roots in classical culture. The British Constitution was nationalistic and associated with all that was specific to Britain or at least what was emerging as Britain’s image of itself.

The Royal Commission’s recommendations were introduced in 1854 and when the Victorian Parliament sat for the first time in 1854 it was according to the new and relatively democratic written constitution. It established a bi-cameral system functioning more or less along Westminster principles. It included principles already enjoyed under the great Reform Act of 1832. Importantly, it incorporated some of the demands of the Chartist who had marched on London in the 1840s but the franchise was strictly limited and Members of Parliament were not paid. The Governor, as ‘head of state’, represented the interests of the Home Government as much as his titular vice-regal role representing the Queen.

Before the new constitutions were implemented in Australia, the earliest settlers in the Port Phillip District, later Victoria, had, at first, just squatted illegally
on 'their' land. The occupation was legitimised by the Crown under NSW Acts of Council in 1836 and 1839 and especially under the 1847 Order-in-Council which allowed for formal squatting leases. After Separation from New South Wales in 1851 the squatters had consolidated as an archly conservative political force. By the 1860s, the term 'Squattocracy' represented their dominance, by now patrician if not senatorial, of the Upper House when it opposed the unlocking of their vast estates into small scale farms under the Land Selection Acts.

From before Separation squatters were establishing homesteads. At first these were crude huts pragmatically sited but, from the beginning, it is possible to see an aesthetic sensibility at work as well. These sites were consolidated and developed and, depending on certain historical events, ever more elaborate homesteads were constructed. By the 1860s these were becoming relatively sophisticated, sometimes designed by architects and with grounds laid out by landscape gardeners. Layers of proprietorship and history, such as it was, were laid down over the decades with new accretions being added to early structures rather than the demolition of the old. From the 1850s if not before, and certainly by the 1860s, the Picturesque aesthetic was being applied with knowledge, sensitivity and success throughout the Western District. This sensibility was imported from Tasmania whence many of the squatters had come as 'Overstraiters'. Others, the 'Overlanders' who were equally ambitious and conservative, had driven sheep and cattle from the settled districts of New South Wales.

Meanwhile, the capital of the colony, Melbourne was undergoing an extraordinary transformation because of the discovery of gold. The gold rushes began just after Separation and, so, also coincided with the introduction of self-government. The extraordinary influx of population brought a very different sort of
settler from that which had migrated to the earlier colonies. This group was much more varied in its background, more democratic in its aspirations and substantially middle-class.

One of the most important decisions Superintendent La Trobe had made, before Separation, was to reserve land on the south side of the Yarra River for a permanent Government House. The governors from 1854, when Lt.-Governor Charles Joseph La Trobe departed, lived at the temporary official residence, Toorak House some five miles or eight kilometres into the country from Melbourne. Toorak House, a fine Italianate villa in extensive grounds, was always considered inadequate, expensive and inappropriate accommodation. There were two architectural competitions for a new Government House, one in 1854 and one in 1864. Both were within the Gothic revival stream. Both failed to materialise, not least because they were estimated to cost a great deal of money, even for gold-rich Victoria. Eventually, at a time of great political turmoil, it was decided to build a new Government House on the spot reserved in the 1840s by La Trobe. Rather than having another competition, the Commissioner for Public Works, a Minister in the Government of the day, required a design from the Public Works Department.

A design was produced by the Superintendent of Public Works, the architect and engineer, William Wilkinson Wardell. Throughout the design process and construction, Wardell, his design and the Government were subjected to strong popular criticism. This was especially so when there was a Royal Commission into the administration of the Public Works Department under Wardell's control and into the benefits of competitions for major public buildings. The Commission, it could be argued, was triggered by the machinations of Wardell's arch professional rival, the President of the local Institute of Architects, Joseph Reed. Reed had
participated in the winning team in the first competition in 1854 and had led the winning team in 1864.

Out of this turmoil rose the present Government House. It was occupied by the Governor in 1876 and continued to be the official vice-regal residence until 1901 when it was taken over by the new Federal Government. It reverted to the state Government House after 1927 when Canberra, the national capital was established. Since then, it has been continuously occupied by a succession of Governors. From being described as ugly in the nineteenth century it has become recognised for the excellence of its architecture, the beauty of its setting and the symbolism of its role.

The thesis is divided into three parts. In the first part, the Introduction provides an intentionally non-academic overview and the first four chapters address the British sources of the Italianate villa as a model. Chapters 1 and 2 place Cronkhill, the first British example of the model, within the context of the Picturesque aesthetic and then trace how the model changed and developed over the generations in Britain. Amongst others, Osborne House emerges as a significant example for its relationship with Government House, Melbourne. Chapters 3 and 4 consider the production and dissemination of architectural pattern books. The development of the Italianate villa model in these books is seen to parallel their evolution. The use of British (and some American) pattern books in Australia, particularly in Victoria, is a springboard for the second half of the thesis. The significance of Robert Kerr's *The Gentleman's House*, published in 1864 and republished in 1871, begins to emerge.

The second part of the thesis addresses the Italianate villa model in the Australian context. Chapter 5, about the development of the Italianate villa in
Australia, is a ‘bookend’ to Chapter 2. Chapter 6 notes the discovery of the Western District, then called Australia Felix, and investigates the range of settlers’ appreciation of its landscape according to the Picturesque aesthetic. Chapter 7 deals with rural examples of the Italianate villa located within the vast and, at that time, ‘empty’ landscape of the Western District, a vast area stretching from Melbourne to the South Australian border, from the southern coast to the Grampians and Dundas ranges. Chapter 8 deals with suburban examples in metropolitan Melbourne. It is important to understand that town and country life were linked at many levels.

The final part of the thesis deals specifically with Government House, Melbourne. Themes identified and examined throughout the thesis come together in this one example of the Italianate villa in its landscape setting. The lineage of the model from its relatively simple beginnings at Cronkhill to its almost palatial epitome at Government House and its meaning should appear clear. The Conclusion examines how a splendid yet domestic villa, which does tower over all, can claim the landscape actually and metaphorically.
1 CLAUDE LORRAIN AND THE PICTURESQUE: A VILLA IN A LANDSCAPE

The Picturesque aesthetic emerged in the later eighteenth century, uniting the Sublime and the Beautiful, and had its roots in the paintings of Claude Lorrain. It came to link art, literature and landscape with architecture in Britain and in Australia. In domestic architecture, this is best seen in the ascendancy of the villa as a building type. Beginning with aristocratic connections, by the end of the eighteenth century, the villa had become thoroughly middle-class. At that time, there were three possible major models to follow: a villa in the Greek revival style, a villa in the Gothic revival style or a villa in the Modern Italian style. Each had its own associations with certain ideas and values and each had its own connections with important individuals, whether owners, architects or authors. The last of these models, now generally described as ‘Italianate’, proved to be remarkably successful and enduring in Britain and in Australia. It was also successful in Canada and New Zealand and it was very successful in the United States of America where it even came to be known as the American style.

The Italianate villa model and the continuing appeal of British Palladianism strongly influenced the architecture of the colony of Victoria, especially in the better suburbs of Melbourne, its capital, and that part of the colony called the ‘Western District’. Metropolitan homes and Western District homesteads demonstrate a continuity with, rather than a direct influence from, late eighteenth-century sensibility within the colony. This culminated in the construction, between 1871 and 1875, of a new and permanent Government House in Melbourne, probably the finest example of an Italianate villa in the British Empire. Imperial in
scale, and perhaps more an English country house than a colonial villa, it is possible to find in its architecture not only the earliest physical characteristics of the model but also its deep associations and early connections. It is a significant expression of transferred culture, souvenired first by Britain from Italy and then imported from Britain to Australia. The medium for this transfer was the Grand Tour and the fuel was a search for the Picturesque.

The landscape paintings of Claude Lorrain (1600-1682) have been consistently linked with the Picturesque aesthetic and the Italianate villa.¹ One in particular, Pastoral Landscape with the Ponte Molle, painted by Claude in Rome in 1645, has been linked with Cronkhill,² the lodge built on the Attingham Park estate in Shropshire in 1803 for Francis Walford (c.1779-1856),³ agent to the second


³ Francis Walford is buried in the grounds of the Anglican church, St Eala’s at Atcham.
Lord Berwick (1770-1832).\(^4\) Cronkhill is acknowledged as the first Italianate villa in Britain.\(^1\)

Its architect was John Nash (1752-1835), a rising star and a champion of the Picturesque.\(^6\) Nash knew Richard Payne Knight (1751-1824),\(^7\) one of the key theorists of the Picturesque and who, in his Analytical Enquiry, published in 1805, recommended 'The best style ... for irregular and picturesque houses ... is that mixed style, which characterizes the buildings of Claude and the Poussins.'\(^8\) The commission, however, came through Humphry Repton (1752-1818) whom Lord Berwick commissioned in 1797 to produce one of his Red Books for the park.\(^9\)

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\(^4\) Thomas Noel Hill is mentioned in various early biographical dictionaries. Lord Berwick seems more likely than Walford to have commissioned Nash. He was about eighteen years of age when Cronkhill was designed and had, according to H. J. Rose, New General Biographical Dictionary, vol. VIII, p. 324, entered the army in 1801, at the age of seventeen as a cornet in the 10th Hussars. In 1805 he purchased a troop in the same regiment, and in 1806 he exchanged to the 53rd Foot.

\(^5\) Summerson, Architecture in Britain, p. 293. Pevsner, Shropshire, p. 116, "The earliest Italianate villa ever built". It must also be noted that Cronkhill is the first of some half dozen 'Campagna' villas, built throughout Nash's career. The others are: Sandridge Park, Stoke Gabriel, Devonshire (1805); Lissan Rectory, near Cookstown, County Tyrone (1807); Southborough Place, Surbiton, Surrey (1808); Wood Hall, Ellerby, Yorkshire (1814-15); and various villas in the Park Villages, Regent's Park, London (1823-34). And, at a larger scale and with a more formal disposition, there is Witley Court, Great Witley, Worcestershire (1805), which foreshadows the grander designs of Barry, in the 1830s and 1840s. Drawings held in the British Architectural Library (RIBA) of at least two villa designs by the architect, James Playfair (1755-1794) dated 1792 and 1793 are described in its catalogue as "Italianate" but these have not been sighted.


\(^8\) Quoted in Summerson, Architecture in Britain, p. 303, n. 2.

Repton, already in partnership with Nash for a year, introduced the architect to the client.

The ‘Campagna’ villas appear at just the same time as, if not before, the emergence of the Italianate villa in architectural pattern books. David Watkin notes the similarities between Nash’s design and the designs in J. M. Gandy, *Designs for Cottages, Cottage Farms and other Rural Buildings* and *The Rural Architect*, both published in London in 1805; and the sketch design, not built, for a villa by Thomas Hope.¹⁰ The design of Sandridge Park, exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1805 and later engraved by the important topographical artist, Thomas Hosmer Shepherd (1793-1864),¹¹ could have inspired the design promoted by Francis Goodwin (1784-1835) as ‘Artist’s Villa’ in his book, *Domestic Architecture*, not published until 1833.¹² The familiarity of the later versions of the Italianate villa model, especially its American incarnation, should not obscure the innovations of Cronkhill.

Michael Mansbridge has suggested Claude’s painting of the Ponte Molle as the source for the novel form of Cronkhill and, to a lesser extent, its style.¹³ The link between the painting and the villa is shown to be close and intimate. The painting is not merely a source for Cronkhill’s Picturesque architecture; it provides a template for the whole design and its setting both topographical and chronological. Beyond their physical and historical similarities, there are metaphorical parallels between the painting and Nash’s villa. Later examples

¹⁰ Watkin, *Thomas Hope*, fig. 46 plan and fig. 47 elevation.
demonstrate that the architecture of the villa in the landscape is imbued with meaning.

The Influence of Claude Lorrain

Claude Lorrain was born in France in 1600 and had moved to Rome by 1626.14 By the 1630s he was famous for his landscapes—idyllic pastoral scenes mostly painted around Rome, which included architectural ruins and other structures, the River Tiber and the hills surrounding the ancient city. Most importantly, these landscapes, and especially his seascapes, were filled with a sense of light, an effect achieved by the time of day depicted, usually dusk or dawn, and the use of contrasting dark foregrounds. Other characteristics, details and devices foreshadow the Picturesque aesthetic, such as variety, irregularity and roughness, a sense of decay, and overgrown vegetation. Generally described as Sublime, these landscapes were especially characteristic of the paintings of Salvador Rosa (1615-1673), which also influenced the Picturesque.15 The content of Claude’s paintings is often drawn from classical mythology and literature or the Bible. Along with

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15 Mansbridge, John Nash, p. 101. Other paintings by Claude show round towers, bridges and pastoral scenes, but none shows a villa of quite the same sort as this painting or depicts the Ponte Molle so clearly.


13 Salvador Rosa was an Italian painter, a master in the Baroque style of the Napolitana school. He is remembered particularly for his Sublime landscapes and seascapes, scenes inhabited by shepherds, sailors, soldiers and outlaws, typical of the best Romantic poetry in the late eighteenth century. Rosa was also a poet, a master of satire, an actor and a musician.
smoothness, regularity and symmetry, generally described as the Beautiful, these were the characteristics of paintings by Nicholas Poussin (1594-1665) and his brothers.\textsuperscript{16} Claude’s paintings transcend the division between the Beautiful and the Sublime, a concept proposed by Edmund Burke (1729-1797) in 1757.\textsuperscript{17} While most of his patrons were Italian or Continental, including royalty, Claude developed a clientele amongst the milordi, the British aristocrats visiting Rome on the Grand Tour.\textsuperscript{18} They also collected works of Salvador Rosa, who painted the Sublime and the Poussin brothers, who painted the Beautiful, as well as certain Dutch artists.

The fashion for Claude’s paintings in Britain increased and consolidated in the eighteenth century becoming something of an industry with imitators, copyists and engravers supplying it.\textsuperscript{19} A special lens, the Claude glass, was invented to convert real scenery into a Claudian landscape to serve the new Picturesque aesthetic that emerged from a combined appreciation for landscape painting and poetry with an emphasis on pictorial composition.\textsuperscript{20} It was a reaction to the

\textsuperscript{16} Nicholas Poussin was born in France but, apart from two years as the Court Painter to Louis XIII from 1638-39, he spent his entire career in Rome where he died in 1665. He was a master of the Baroque painting in a Classical style with subjects drawn from the Bible and Graeco-Roman antiquity.

\textsuperscript{17} This was in his famous and influential essay, \textit{Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful}. In his essay, Burke proposed firstly that the Sublime and the Beautiful were different aesthetics and, secondly, that the spectator’s delight in and appreciation of the Sublime depended upon a sensation of pleasurable pain.


\textsuperscript{19} The painters Richard Wilson and John Glover and the water-colourist, Paul Sandby are often described as ‘English Clauses’ and their work is clearly a response to the demand created by the fashion. The paintings and home of John Glover (1767-1849), who migrated to Tasmania late in his life are discussed in Chapter 6.

\textsuperscript{20} This was a black convex glass used by artists to reflect the landscape in miniature and, in doing so, to merge details and reduce the strength of colour so that the artist is presented with a broad picture of the scene and a certain tonal unity. Claude Lorraine is credited with the invention of the glass, which was widely favoured by artists of the 17th and 18th centuries and is used occasionally today. ‘Claude Lorraine glass’, \textit{Encyclopædia Britannica Online}. For further
formality of neo-Classicism and bridged, or even amalgamated, the Sublime and the Beautiful. At first limited to art and poetry, the Picturesque finally appeared as an architectural expression by the end of the eighteenth century and the buildings in Claude’s paintings were an obvious source for inspiration.

The Reverend William Gilpin (1724-1804) proposed the Picturesque as a new way of observation for the traveller and amateur artist. But it was Sir Uvedale Price (1747-1829), in his An Essay on the Picturesque, and Richard Payne Knight in his epic poem, The Landscape, both published in 1794, who gave it a firm theoretical basis. All three authors were critical of the false ‘improvements’ of the landscape designer, Lancelot ‘Capability’ Brown (1716-1783). They argued that Brown’s naturalism was as contrived and artificial as the most formal landscapes of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and argued that wild, rugged, exotic features were more appropriate if a landscaped garden were to be natural. Accident and surprise, they wrote, should be used to create interest, along with historical references.

There was also an uneasy relationship between them and Brown’s successor, Humphry Repton. The difficulty was over the role landscape painting had to play in landscape gardening, a difficulty which came to a head at

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21 He wrote many books including: William Gilpin, Observations, relative chiefly to picturesque beauty, made in the year 1772 on several parts of England, particularly the mountains and lakes of Cumberland and Westmoreland, R. Blamire, London, 1786; Observations on the river Wye: and several parts of South Wales, &c. relative chiefly to picturesque beauty, made in the summer of the year 1770, R. Blamire, London, 1789; Remarks on forest scenery, and other woodland views (relative chiefly to picturesque beauty): Illustrated by the scenes of New-Forest in Hampshire, R. Blamire, London, 1791; and Three essays: On picturesque beauty; On picturesque travel; and On sketching landscape; to which is added a poem, On landscape painting, R. Blamire, London, 1792.

22 Their full titles were Essays on the picturesque: as compared with the sublime and the beautiful; and, on the use of studying pictures, for the purpose of improving real landscape, 2 Vols., Hereford, 1794-8; and The Landscape, a didactic poem, in three books, London, 1794.
Attingham. Repton was influential in Australia as well. The Picturesque aesthetic, including these tensions, influenced the appreciation and interpretation of landscape in the colonial landscape. Claude's direct influence is obvious in the construction and depiction of landscapes with buildings.

Claude maintained his personal Libro di Verità or Libro d'Invenzioni as a check against forgery, but it became a work of art in its own right. It was a bound volume of one hundred and ninety-five drawings—copies he made of paintings after they were completed. Perhaps to take advantage of the 'Claude industry' in Britain in the eighteenth century, Richard Earlam engraved the drawings and published them in 1777 as two volumes under the title Liber Veritatis. A third volume of engravings of other drawings, some of which were from nature and many of which were from Richard Payne Knight's collection, was published in 1818. Lord Berwick owned a copy of the first two volumes by Earlam, which were held in the library at his Attingham Park estate about the time

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23 Price, for example, published in London in 1795, A Letter to H. Repton ... on the application of the practice as well as the principles of landscape-painting to landscape-gardening; intended as a supplement to the Essay on the Picturesque. To which is prefixed Repton's letter to Mr Price, in which he criticised Repton and addressed Repton's criticisms of him. In 1801, he published in Hereford, A Dialogue on the distinct characters of the Picturesque and the Beautiful. In answer to the objections of Mr. Knight (in the second edition of The Landscape). Prefaced by an introductory Essay on Beauty, with remarks on the ideas of Sir Joshua Reynolds and Mr. Burke, upon that subject, in which he criticised Knight. Repton is almost tedious in the defence of his position throughout his writings, but used the Attingham Red Book and then Chapter IX of his second treatise in particular to attack Knight.

24 Conrad Martens, for example, was active in Sydney from 1835. 'His awareness of the European tradition of landscape, deriving from Claude, his curiosity about his new environment, and his reaction to light all combined with his technical skill to create water-colour landscapes of an extremely high order'; Douglas Dundas, 'Martens, Conrad (1801-1878)', in Douglas Pike, gen. ed., ADB, Vol. 2, pp. 212-3. One settler, Alfred Arden, who owned paintings by Claude, even called his property "Claude Lorraine". See Chapter 6.

25 This is according Claude's early biographer, Baldinucci. The sketchbook has been reproduced with a detailed introduction as M. Kitson, Claude Lorrain Liber Veritatis, British Museum Publications Ltd, London, 1978.

26 It eventually came into the collection of the Duke of Devonshire and is now in the British Museum.

27 The State Library of Victoria holds the three volumes in its Rare Books Collection.
when Cronkhill was built.\textsuperscript{28} The engraving of the painting \textit{Pastoral Landscape with Ponte Molle} is included in \textit{Liber Veritatis} as number ninety and the drawing corresponds exactly with the painting. The influence of Claude continued well into the nineteenth century as demonstrated by the republication of the \textit{Liber Veritatis} in 1872.

**An Ideal Pastoral World**

The painting, \textit{Pastoral Landscape with Ponte Molle} is a masterful, lyrical and sophisticated composition. Painted in 1645 it is a mature rather than a late work in Claude’s \textit{oeuvre}. The content includes many elements to delight, interest and even educate the spectator. The content is composed deliberately to produce a sense of controlled order and established calm within the landscape.

The elements are placed consciously within the landscape and relate to an ideal world beyond. On a rise to the left of the scene here is a villa with two towers, one massive and circular, the other smaller and square, creating an irregular silhouette. The former appears defensive and mediaeval while the latter are like the Italian church campaniles dating from the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.

There is no doubt that the vernacular building is domestic because of the chimneys, the windows, the courtyard enclosed by a low wall and the absence of any formal architectural detail. In the centre foreground a herdsman watches goats and cattle, some of the goats crossing a rough and broken rustic bridge, its two halves linked by no more than a plank. One goat has fallen off the bridge and two more are fighting on the nearer bank. Oblivious to this is another group of figures, a man

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\textsuperscript{28} Sutherland Lyall, \textit{Dream Cottages, from Cottage Ornée to Stockbroker Tudor}, Robert Hale Ltd., London, 1988, p. 99. I am grateful to Mr Julian Gibbs, Historic Buildings Representative, Attingham Park for confirming that there is an entry in the \textit{1809 Library Catalogue}, p. 10, at
playing a flute and a woman dancing with a small dog standing on its hind legs. In
the middle distance are the River Tiber and the Ponte Molle, a five arched masonry
bridge with a defensive tower at the far end. Beyond this and out of view is the
city of Rome and in the far distance are the eastern hills of Rome and the Colli
Albani. Two trees dominate the upper half of the picture—or perhaps a tree with
two parts—one mature, the other a young offshoot. In the bottom right of the
painting, the darkest part, there is what appears to be a dead tree, which has fallen
although one new shoot springs forth. The spectator’s eye is led back from this tree
and the group of figures in the dark foreground diagonally across the rustic bridge
to the villa, then in the opposite direction to the Ponte Molle and, intriguingly,
downstream behind the high ground of the villa and into the evening’s light. The
triangulation of the composition is not unusual. The sum of the content and the
composition of the painting together create an ideal pastoral world. Indeed, this
painting is typical of Claude’s landscapes and a perfect example of the genre which
so appealed to and influenced the British. The content and composition, being
almost timeless, are transferable. Harriet Edquist has developed this argument and
applied it to a specific case in Victoria, Australia. Claude’s landscapes suited the
early British colonists of Australia, because they reinforced the image they had of

Attingham Park for ‘Claude Lorraine (Earlom’s prints from) Two Volumes, printed London 1777’;
e-mail dated 15 May 2001.

39 The bridge appears in a schematic but similar form in fifteenth century maps of Rome.
The tower is on the “inside” of the bridge’s defences concentrating attackers and using the Tiber as a
moat. This, as well as the flow of the water and the painting’s various historical titles, one of which
includes the word ‘sun-set’, confirm the topography of the scenery.

39 It would be simplistic to say that Claude just painted to a formula, but Kitson notes the
similarities between this drawing of the painting and other drawings in Liber Veritatis. “The
pictorial design is developed out of a combination of LV 83 and LV 85, by way of a finished
preparatory drawing in the Louvre (RD, 578), while the principal tree and the figure-types recall LV
64.” Claude may well have used his Libro Veritatis as a source book since details such as trees and
figures recur. His seaport paintings are also formulaic and there are some paintings which straddle
the landscape and seascape genres.
themselves as creators of new ideal pastoral landscapes in a country of very different and untouched landscapes.

A Metaphysical World

Beyond this depiction of an ideal, timeless pastoral world the painting has a metaphysical content which allows it to be read at a symbolic, allegorical and metaphorical level.\(^\text{32}\) Through its iconography, storytelling and commentary it shows something beyond the real world. Reading the painting at this level was important for the cognoscenti of the later eighteenth century and their successors in the nineteenth. The same level of interpretation can be found in those who modified the landscape and built villas in the colonies of Australia.\(^\text{33}\)

Both the content and the composition hold significance. The villa represents an accretion of parts from different periods, possibly from ancient Rome, certainly from the Middle Ages and probably from the early Renaissance.\(^\text{34}\) It symbolises history in its various layers and the passage of time. The rustic bridge, decayed and precarious, can be contrasted with the sturdy masonry bridge so busy with day-to-day activity. The Ponte Molle is otherwise known as the Milvian

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\(^{32}\) For a discussion of the interpretation of Claude’s art see Russell, Claude Lorrain.

\(^{33}\) The Surveyor-General of New South Wales, Major Thomas Mitchell, a better than average amateur scientist, artist and architect was imbued with such an interpretation as he explored ‘Australia Felix’, what was to become the Western District of Victoria. Not many years later, an equally sophisticated man, Cuthbert Fethersonhaugh built his villa, Correagh, on a hilltop overlooking a landscape Mitchell had discovered, by then transformed into a pastoral ideal with the rugged Grampians Range as its backdrop.

\(^{34}\) Some art historical literature plays down the significance of buildings in Claude’s paintings. See Rühlisberger, Claude Lorrain, p. 26, ‘As for the buildings, they are rarely predominant in Claude’s late work, and being man-made objects, not part of nature, they have no elaborate affinity with the themes.’ This is an unusual comment in that there is no shortage of buildings although there is an increasingly metaphorical content in the paintings’ (and drawings’) themes, particularly of exodus and exile and specifically of the Aeneid.
Bridge where Constantine fought with his rival, Maxentius in 312AD under the Sign of the Cross which had appeared to him in a vision. After winning the battle, Constantine converted to Christianity so the bridge featured in the painting might be read as a symbol of the conquest of Christianity over Paganism. The goats fighting in the foreground may even represent Constantine and Maxentius. The trees are easily and traditionally interpreted as the three stages of man or as symbols of death and renewal. Their species is not clear, but the main tree may be a tortured Stone Pine, *Pinus pinea*—the ‘Pine of Rome’. The other tree, which is growing almost horizontally, appears to be deciduous while the older tree shelters the younger. In other paintings by Claude the various depictions of trees are said to represent human or divine characters or their emotions. The identity of the figures in the painting is less certain and no related theme has been proposed in the modern literature. In other paintings by Claude very similar figures are Classical gods, characters from ancient literature, such as Ovid’s *Metamorphoses* and Virgil’s *Aeneid, Georgics and Eclogues*, or characters from the Bible. Perhaps these figures are gods in an allegory; the herdsman tending his flock as though they were humans just like the couple playing music and dancing with the dog as though it were human and under their control. The blue clothing of the woman may provide a clue, in that the colour of clothing in Claude’s paintings is significant,

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[^23]: It has had an eventful history. Christopher Hibbert, *Rome, The Biography of a City*, Penguin, Harmondsworth, 1987, p. 332 states, ‘Pons Milvius: Built or rebuilt by the Censor Marcus Aemilius Scaurus, this bridge was restored by Pope Nicholas V (1447-55) and again in 1805 by Valadier for Pope Pius VII. It was again restored by Pius IX after having been partly destroyed in 1849 when Garibaldi’s forces were retreating from the French. It is now the Ponte Milvio. End of second century B.C.’

[^26]: Fighting goats appear in other paintings and drawings by Claude. The symbolism of the falling goat has not yet been determined, but, since goats are associated with the Devil, it may represent the fall of Lucifer.

[^27]: For the significance of trees, see Röthlishberger, *Claude Lorrain*, pp. 24-6.

[^29]: For a discussion of these sources, especially the *Aeneid and Metamorphoses*, see Russell, *Claude Lorrain*, pp. 83ff.
with blue representing divinity and serenity. Finally, there is the pervasive light of the painting. Light was most important for Claude, not only for the composition of paintings (and their inter-relationship when paired), but also for their interpretation. Sunlight in seventeenth-century landscape painting is generally taken as a metaphor for the good in Christianity. The light may be from the setting sun, but this, in turn, suggests renewal on a daily basis. In any case, the well-educated and well-travelled gentleman of the eighteenth or nineteenth centuries would have drawn deeper meanings from this painting through its iconography according to the eighteenth-century theory of Associationism, which complemented the theory of the Picturesque. The painting can be read as a metaphor for an enlightened post- Classical and Christian world but one which still draws on ancient values.

Lord Berwick brought back to Attingham Park at least two paintings by Claude, but not the painting *Pastoral Landscape with the Ponte Molle.* The painting’s provenance is known. Lord Berwick had collected many paintings on

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40 Russell, *Claude Lorrain*, p. 84.  
41 The light in this painting is generally taken to be the sunset, but a ‘morning atmosphere’ is suggested by Röthlisberger, *Claude Lorrain*, pp. 246-247, because of the yellow sky above the horizon with light blue above.  
42 The theory of Associationism ran parallel to but was subservient to the emergence of the Picturesque. In some ways, it was more important for the Gothic Revival. For a discussion of Associationism, see G. L. Harsey, *High Victorian Gothic, A Study in Associationism*, John Hopkins University, Baltimore & London, 1972; and especially Ch. 1 ‘Pre-Victorian Associationism’.  
43 Repton mentions one Claude and one Ruisdale in his Attingham Red Book. It is not known if Berwick, John Nash, Humphry Repton or Francis Walford knew the painting as an original work of art.  
44 I am indebted to Mr Brendan Flynn, Curator (Paintings and Sculptures), Birmingham Art Gallery for confirming the provenance of the painting, certain references and other useful research leads. Originally, it was painted for a collector in Paris, possibly a M. du Tramblay or Tramblay. According to Kitson, *Claude Lorrain*, p. 110, the words ‘quod pour paris’ and ‘Cludio fecit / in V’ appear on the verso of the painting in Claude’s own hand. Conservation works in 1967 revealed the name M. du Tramblay in an old hand ‘though probably not Claude’s. Whether or not this was the original patron is impossible to say.’ Bernard Flynn states the name as Tramblay. It came up for sale in London in 1743, when it was described as *View of the Ponte Molle* and was purchased by a Mr. Furness or Furness. This was probably the Bragge sale, as lot 30, on the third day. According to Richard Earlom’s *Liber Veritatis*, Robert Dingley Esq. owned the painting when a T. Major
the Grand Tour and John Nash designed major alterations at Attingham Park to accommodate them in a new gallery soon after Cronkhill was built. Nash had access to other works by Claude through Richard Payne Knight and Sir Uvedale Price, for whom he did designs. Knight and Price were close friends (except for a long period of estrangement), neighbours, fellow members of the Society of Dilettanti and two of the key theorists of the Picturesque. Knight owned paintings and drawings by Claude and had access to more works through his uncle, the poet and collector, Samuel Rogers, who was another Dilettante. Genuine works of Claude, as well the copies, imitations and engravings after him, were well known and accessible to the 'dress circle' of the Picturesque theorists and practitioners, including those around Lord Berwick.

engraved it in 1753. The contemporary owners of the paintings, where known, are tabulated in Liber Veritatis as 'The late, or present Possessors of the Pictures with the names of their Engravers'. Richard Houlditch sold it in London in 1760 when the second Earl of Ashburnham bought the painting. It remained in the Ashburnham Collection, by descent, until 1953 when it was sold in London at Sotheby's, 24th May 1953, as lot 62 and purchased by E. E. Cook who bequeathed it in 1955 through the National Art Collection Fund to the Birmingham Art Gallery.

Colvin, Biographical Dictionary, p. 583-4, gives the years as 1807-10; while Mansbridge, John Nash, p. 80, states 'between 1805 and 1807'.

Nash designed Castle House, Aberystwyth (c. 1795) for Uvedale Price, which has an extraordinary triangular plan, according to Mansbridge, John Nash, p. 59. Nash worked on Knight's own home, Downton Castle, (1773-1778) the first asymmetrically designed house in Britain, according to Mansbridge, John Nash, p. 36. There is a possibility that Nash was related to Knight. Mansbridge, John Nash, p. 36 quoting A. Rowan, 'Downton Castle', The Country Seat, eds. Colvin and Harris, 1970, states, 'It is recorded that Knight consulted a cousin in the building trade named Nash and Rowan also points out that the prominent octagonal tower was altered between 1782 and 1805 with a particular form of mastication that later became a trademark of Nash's castles. Therefore it is possible that Nash originated this feature instead of, as previously thought, copying it.' J. Summerson, in his introduction to Davis, Architecture of John Nash, p. 10, speculates that Nash may have claimed 'some remote relationship' with Ursula Nash, the wife of Richard Payne Knight.

Rogers is rather neglected today but he was a central and controlling figure in artistic circles in late 18th and early 19th century London. For biographical details see, J. R. Hale, The Italian Journal of Samuel Rogers, Faber and Faber, London, 1956. For the family connection to Richard Payne Knight, see Balfatyne, Architecture, landscape and liberty. For a broader cultural (as well as political and social) analysis see O'Connor, The Romance of Italy, pp. 33ff.
Cronkhill and Its Landscape

Nash's Cronkhill is a seminal building more significant for the Italianate villa model and influential on the Picturesque than its modest scale and relatively remote location might suggest.\(^{48}\) It was the first of a series of 'Campagna' villas which continued until the end of Nash's career including the villas in his masterpiece, Regent's Park, London.\(^{49}\) It was eclipsed by the later development of the Italianate villa, through the work of another generation of architects such as Sir Charles Barry (1795-1860), Henry Edmund Goodridge (1797-1864), and Lewis Vulliamy (1791-1871).\(^{50}\) Osborne House, Queen Victoria's Italianate villa, which was neither modest in scale nor remote, was even more influential at a popular level. Still, there is no doubt about Cronkhill's Picturesque credentials, associated as it is with Humphry Repton and John Nash directly, and at only one remove from Richard Payne Knight and Sir Uvedale Price.

The villa which John Nash designed is an extensive alteration of an earlier farmhouse, itself dating from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, on a site which may even have been Roman. He exhibited a drawing of the proposed villa at the Royal Academy in 1802 and an original drawing survives in the Soane Museum.\(^{51}\) The design is slightly different from what was built in that

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\(^{48}\) I am indebted to Mrs Patricia Tuy, the tenant of Cronkhill which is owned by the National Trust, for allowing me to visit Cronkhill in March 2001, for her elucidating comments and for some interesting research leads. The village of Atcham, on the banks of the Severn River, is not all that remote being 6.6km from the city of Shrewsbury and, perhaps more importantly for its Picturesque connections, it is 12km from Wales and the River Wye.

\(^{49}\) See Mansbridge, John Nash. They were: Cronkhill, Shropshire (1802-3); Sandridge Park, Devonshire (1805); Witley Court, Worcestershire (1806-7); Lissan Rectory, Tyrone (1807); and Wood Hall, Yorkshire (1814-5) although the latter is attributed to Charles Mount in and given the date 1820 by Davis, John Nash. 1973, p. 42.

\(^{50}\) See Colvin, Biographical Dictionary, pp. 89-92, 351-2, and 856-9. Their work is discussed in detail in Chapter 2. It is important to trace and understand the British development of the Italianate villa as model because, once transferred to the Australian colonies it develops further and in different ways.

\(^{51}\) Watkin, Thomas Hope, p. 140.
the loggia stood forward of the tower, but the main elements are there as well as the intended sense of place. The view is frontal and is taken from a position perpendicular to the east or garden elevation which means that the entrance on the northern side is not shown. The view emphasises the irregular silhouette created by the two towers, one large, tall and circular, the other slightly smaller, lower and square. The circular tower is notionally of three storeys, the third being a low attic with elliptical windows and delineated by a simple string course. The single-storey loggia is L-shaped and uses simple columns with no bases and plain capitals which might be read as ‘abstracted’ from any formal sense of the Orders. The loggia has a balustrade and this is repeated over the solid porch at the entrance. The view also shows the original farmhouse and how it was modified to be more compatible with the Italianate style of the new wing. The southern elevation betrays the changes which must have occurred. This wall is half-timbered and there is a steep gable and the east wall has been raised thereby reducing the roof pitch on its east side to match that of the new wing. The extra height allowed for taller windows, arched and glazed to match the windows in the new wing. The blackened arches of the windows betray the original floor and ceiling levels of the farmhouse. The simple doorway in this altered elevation still may still mark the original front entrance. This wing remains ‘face’ brickwork while the new is stuccoed. Whatever the changes the result was typically rather like a stage set with the tall new wing dominating the long old wing but both are in balance.

52 The first floor level coincides with the level of the springing of the arches of the ground floor windows and the original roofline coincides with the springing of the arches of the first floor windows. Presumably, the structure if not the surface of the original roof survives beneath the existing.
The new villa is depicted within an open garden with a backdrop of dark vegetation. Cronkhill sits on an elevated but levelled site with the ground floor almost at ground level. There is a slight falling away to the main lawn and beyond that, a ha-ha divides this terrace from the adjacent fields. The front field, through which the drive passes diagonally, falls steeply to the road and the main gate and beyond that to the floodplain of the River Severn. To the north, opposite the new front door and beyond the drive, there is a wilderness area. To the south, there are further terraces, former kitchen gardens and a formally planted orchard. To this degree, Cronkhill must have been self-sufficient in fruit and vegetables. Service buildings enclose the west side and from this position it is possible to see all three major periods of construction in an irregular massing of the many parts. Stables, possibly built in 1803, complete the outbuildings at the rear. There were probably poultry yards and a milch cow, again providing self-sufficiency in food. All of this is depicted in the first Ordnance Survey map of the district which was prepared in 1843 and confirmed in the 1888 survey.\textsuperscript{53}

The 1888 survey map indicates schematic plantings as well as the general layout of the site. It is difficult to say exactly what the plantings were in the early nineteenth century but several major trees deserve comment. One, a \textit{Sequoia sempervirens} or Coast Redwood, is planted in the wilderness opposite the front door and is mature enough to date from the early 1800s. Another tree, in this case deciduous, survives in the front field near the gate and appears to be even older. A grove of younger Alders has grown up to obscure the view from Cronkhill north-east towards the village of Atcham. The map shows substantial massed plantings to

\textsuperscript{53} Shropshire, Sheet XLI N.E., Ordnance Survey Office, Southampton, 6 inches to 1 mile, surveyed 1881, published 1888.
the north and to the south-east leaving the front field relatively open as the drive
rises on its diagonal approach.

There is a possibility that the landscape designer, Humphry Repton,
contributed to the siting and setting of Cronkhill as part of his commission in 1797
but Repton makes no comment about the site in his Red Book.\footnote{Repton’s
comments rarely go beyond the main road which passes in front of Attingham
and through the village of Atcham. He does mention the Severn, the tower of the
church at Wroxeter, suggesting it would be better with a steeple, and the Wrekin, but not the
hillside to the west of the main house.} He was in
partnership with John Nash from 1796 at least until 1800 and possibly until 1802,
the year that Nash exhibited his drawing of Cronkhill at the Royal Academy but the
dissolution of the partnership was acrimonious.\footnote{The exact timing and reasons for the
dissolution of the partnership are not certain. Colvin, \textit{Biographical Dictionary}, p. 579, states that it was ‘by 1802’ and Summerson, \textit{John Nash}, p. 41, states ‘After 1800 he [Nash] was on his own.’ But in his introduction to Mansbridge, \textit{John
Nash}, p. 11, Summerson states, ‘In 1802 a disagreement with Repton resulted in the
dissolution of the partnership’.} Repton later claimed that Nash
had stolen his ideas for the Brighton Pavilion, amongst other claims. Their
estrangement must be seen in the light of the contemporary estrangement between
Richard Payne Knight and Uvedale Price over their different interpretations of Rev.
Gilpin’s primitive version of the Picturesque and Repton’s theorising on landscape.

So, Cronkhill was designed and built at a time of personal and national
transition, perhaps enhanced by a sense of opportunity from the dawn of a new
century and certainly overshadowed by the culmination of the Napoleonic wars.
Repton may have advised the client on the siting of Cronkhill, as he did elsewhere,
and on the planting of trees—advice which would have been early in the design
process. But Repton is not recognized for introducing the rich intellectual content
to be found at Cronkhill. In fact, there is never any mention of a deeper,
metaphorical content in his notion of the landscape, painted or otherwise.
Yet the broader landscape beyond Cronkhill is important and deserves consideration. It is not known what John Nash thought about it, but John Summerson, in his most detailed assessment of its form, style, siting and setting, states

Cronkhill is apprehended at once as a comment on the landscape in which it stands, a landscape of sweeping fall and rise from the dawdling meadow above which the house stands to the far distant Wrekin. There had been nothing quite like this in English architecture but it is not difficult to account for it. One thinks of Payne Knight's speculations on the architecture appropriate to the Picturesque and his recommendation of 'that mixed style which characterizes the buildings of Claude and the Poussins'. That may indeed be the answer; or part of it.  

Standing in the loggia, or perhaps on the balcony above it, the spectator is presented with three main points of view from the north-east to the south-east. One point of view extends perpendicularly due east on axis through the central French door of the drawing room and the loggia, across the garden, over the river and into the landscape. This is the equivalent of the view from the study or library, which is framed by the loggia. It terminates on the distinctive hill and landmark called the Wrekin, which rises some 370 metres [1200 feet] above the flood plain of the Severn. Another point of view, to the left, extends on the diagonal towards the village of Atcham. As an axis it might be said to pass through the circular tower in which case it would intersect with the perpendicular axis within the house in the stairwell. It extends north-east across the lower fields, along the river which has now turned northwards, and passes over the Atcham Bridge through the entrance gates of Attingham Park and terminates with the main house. The other diagonal point of view, on the right, extends towards the south-

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56 Summerson, *John Nash*, p. 41. In fact, few writers have said much about Cronkhill as a villa in a landscape.
57 The altitude of the Wrekin is 1334 feet or 410 metres.
east and is less distinct. If it were an axis through the house, rising in the stairwell, it would pass through the corner of the loggia. It passes through the main gate, follows the lower reaches of the Severn valley and, notionally, terminates at a crucible of the Industrial Revolution, the townships of Coalbrookdale and Ironbridge some eight to nine miles (14kms) away. These towns held some personal significance for Lord Berwick and Nash in their relationship as client and architect.

The Metaphysical Landscape of Cronkhill

This triple axis arrangement at Cronkhill was not new, extraordinary or even unusual. Triangulation as a device to claim and control the landscape is to be found in the architecture and settings of Palladio’s villas in the fifteenth century. In the Baroque period, under the urban improvements of the reformist Pope Sixtus V, triangulated views across Rome were created along major new streets which terminated at obelisks and major public buildings and axial planning using avenues is a common device in formal gardens of the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. Triangulation appears at its grandest in the approach through the new town to the Palace of Versailles designed by André Le Notre (1613-1700) and others for Louis XIV. It can also be seen in the landscaping at Stowe in England.

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a garden highly charged with political content. Triangulation appears in the planning of the new American capital, Washington, in the late eighteenth century where it was expressly used to demonstrate democratic principles. What may be unusual in the case of Cronkhill is the application of such a sophisticated arrangement to what was merely an estate lodge. The origin of the Picturesque use of the ‘diagonal view’ deserves to be explored beyond the mere congruence of its creators.

The axial triangulation in three more humble examples of villas designed by Nash can be compared with Cronkhill. The first example is Castle House, the marine villa designed by Nash for Sir Uvedale Price in 1795 at Aberystwyth in Wales. It has a triangular plan generated by the three axes, which spring from a point in the kitchen, on the lower floor, and, presumably, a more important room on the upper floor. The central open viewing room or balcony on the principal floor demonstrates that the points of view were all-important. More subtle details such as the placement of chimney breasts and the tripling of windows reinforce the axes internally. A letter written by Price to a friend demonstrates that this plan and the way it addresses the landscape are at the root of the Picturesque aesthetic and are the essence of its sensibility. It also shows that Price had taught Nash who was a willing pupil. The letter is worth quoting at length:

At first I thought merely of running up two or three nutshell of rooms, and got a plan from a common Welch carpenter; then Nash was mentioned to

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63 Mansbridge, John Nash, p. 59. It was destroyed by fire in 1895. The drawings did not survive but Mansbridge shows a reconstructed plan, an early photograph and an a contemporary engraving. There is another awkward drawing held in the National Library of Wales and reproduced in Davis, John Nash, pl. 4.
me, & he had a mind to build me a larger house indeed, but a square bit of architecture. I told him however, that I must have, not only some of the windows but some of the rooms turned to particular points, & that he must arrange it in his best manner; I explained to him the reasons why I built so close to the rock, showed him the effect of the broken foreground & its varied line, & how by that means the foreground was connected with the rocks in the second ground, all which would be lost by placing the house further back. He was excessively struck with these reasons, which he said he had never thought of before in the most distant degree, & he has I think contrived the house most admirably for the situation, & the form of it is certainly extremely varied from my having obliged him to turn the rooms to different aspects.  

The second example is the small villa, Point Pleasant, built at Kingston-on-Thames in 1796. More conventional in plan it still has three axes, including a diagonal which passes through an octagonal room on the ground floor and another open viewing room on the first floor. ‘It was sited to enjoy several views of the River Thames according to the Picturesque precepts of Uvedale Price as taught to Nash at Castle House, Aberystwyth.  

The octagonal room is a precedent for the circular tower at Cronkhill and, this sort of triangulation foreshadows later colonial examples in Victoria, Australia well beyond Cronkhill.

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64 Summerson, John Nash, p. 21. Summerson, in his footnote, p. 197, cautions that ‘The original of this letter is in the Pierpoint Morgan Library, New York, but access is temporarily restricted and I have been unable to check the text printed here.’ I am grateful to Ms Christine Nelson, Curator of Literary and Historical Manuscripts, Pierpoint Morgan Library for providing a photocopy of the whole of the original letter. As quoted here, the letter has been corrected. Of the slight differences, most important is the emphasis on ‘windows’ as well as ‘rooms’. The letter, just one of 106 letters (about 400 pages) from Price to Beaumont in the collection and dated 1794-1827, is cited as The Pierpont Morgan Library, New York, MA 1581 (Price) 16. Price goes on to encourage Beaumont to rent and eventually buy the house. He includes a description of it by him in Italian. He also mentions that he can see Mount Snowden.

65 Mansbridge, John Nash, p. 69. It was destroyed by fire in 1907 but again, Mansbridge has reconstructed the plan and provides an 1826 view which shows the river and sailing boats well within view.
The third example is Sundridge Park, at Bromley in Kent, built in 1799 for a corn merchant and banker, Claude Scott. Its triangular plan, in a sense the reverse of Castle House, is more sophisticated in the generation of its axes, as three axes intersect at the centre of the library, which is treated externally as a circular temple. The principal staircase and the central window of the library generate the central main axis, reinforced by the columns of the *tempietto* on the outside, and the anteroom and drawing room generate the diagonal axes. Another axis, perpendicular to the main axis, is generated by the shorter dimensions of the hall and dining room. These are reinforced externally by temple fronts on those elevations. From these various examples, and Sir Uvedale Price’s letter to his friend, it is clear that Nash was conscious of the location of villas within the broader landscape and was almost certainly aware of earlier famous examples of triangulation. And, through Price, Nash was influenced directly by the theories of the Picturesque.

The same axial triangulation can be applied to Claude’s *Pastoral Landscape with the Ponte Molle* and the results compared with Cronkhill. In the painting the perpendicular axis extending from the villa may or may not terminate with a hill like the Wrekin. The modern spectator does not know because the termination is beyond the right hand side of the scene. The well-informed eighteenth century spectator or Grand Tourist might surmise, if it were a hill and because it would be on the western edge of ancient Rome, that the termination must be the Janiculum.

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66 Mansbridge, *John Nash*, pp. 84-5. Mansbridge states, ‘Sited by Humphry Repton on a hillside, the house was planned by Nash as a triangle, with the apex *tempietto* facing across the valley, and the canted sides looking down its length. Repton and Nash, still partners, were beginning to disagree. Repton claimed the credit for the plan, whereas the philosophy—of taking advantage of all the natural attributes of the site—can be traced through Nash’s designs from Castle House ... where he received his schooling in the Picturesque from Uvedale Price, to Point Pleasant.’
the site of St Peter’s and the Vatican. Whatever the hill might be the city of Rome certainly lies in that direction. At Cronkhill the perpendicular axis crosses the Roman road, Watling Street, just where is crossed the Severn and passes over the site of the ancient Roman town, Viroconium, a site still visible with substantial ruins and now marked by the steeple of the village church at Wroxeter, all of which would have been known to Nash, Repton, the occupants of Attingham Park and anyone in the area with Picturesque sensibilities.

Taking the strongest axis in the painting, the view from the villa to the bridge, the parallels with Cronkhill are even more telling. The Ponte Molle has five arches; so does the Atcham Bridge. The defensive tower at the end of the bridge can be compared with the tower of the church at Atcham which aligns with the end of the bridge when viewed from Cronkhill. Indeed, the correlation of this view may have been enhanced. The village of Atcham was replanned at this time and Nash certainly designed new cottages for Lord Berwick. Not all were built but the inn, the use of which dates from about 1735, was probably rebuilt. Francis Walford,

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67 Repton claimed the siting and general plan of Sundridge Park and the design of the main staircase has been attributed to Samuel Wyatt; see Colvin, *Biographical Dictionary*, p. 958 and Summerson, *John Nash*, p. 37.

68 Strictly speaking, the Janiculum or il Janicolo, because it was outside the city walls, is not one of the traditional seven hills of Rome, even though it dominates the western aspect of the city. The seven were the Palatine, the Esquiline, the Viminal, the Quirinal, the Capitoline, the Caelian and Aventine. The Pincio, like the Janiculum was outside. See Christopher Hibbert, *Rome, The Biography of a City*, Penguin Books, Harmondsworth, 1987, various references.

69 This was located on the famous Roman road, Watling Street, which must have crossed the River Severn immediately in front of the site of Cronkhill at a point about one quarter of the distance to the summit of the Wrekin. The town’s walls came down to the river in exactly the same way as at the Ponte Molle or Milvian Bridge in Rome.

70 Mansbridge, *John Nash*, p. 74. ‘In 1802 Lord Berwick had the public roads crossing the grounds of Attingham Park ... re-routed and the village buildings on his side removed. Nash designed for him a village of picturesque cottages surrounding a green in front of a new inn and facing the entrance to Attingham Hall’. Mansbridge quotes N. Temple, *John Nash and the Village Picturesque*, 1979. Confirmation that Nash rebuilt the inn, the Mytton and Mermaid has not been received from the administration at Attingham Park.

71 This would have provided the bulk of building mass necessary to be noticed from Cronkhill.
the agent of Lord Berwick for whom Cronkhill was built, lies buried in the churchyard of St Eala’s at Atcham and in view of the villa.\footnote{His tomb, a circular plinth, is distinctive and suggests a well-informed incumbent. As yet no one seems to have researched Walford’s role in the commissioning of Nash as Lord Berwick’s architect or the intellectual content of the design.}

The third point of view from the villa in Claude’s painting is directed outwards and at the modern spectator. While it may seem the weakest in a physical sense it may have the strongest metaphysical value. Again, there are topographical parallels with Cronkhill and the most obvious is that both points of view look along the river valleys. The grazing animals of the painting would be located somewhere in the front field at Cronkhill, kept from the house by the ha-ha, with the figures being more or less at the front gate. They represent the entrance even if they do not proceed up the open slope to the villa. A stream flowed by the former entrance and would have required some sort of simple bridge to be crossed. That would make the correlation with the painting even closer in the early nineteenth century.\footnote{The 1888 Ordnance Survey map shows the former position of the drive. The modern Ordnance Survey map shows the former drive as an alternate route for the present drive. It parallels the existing and would fulfill the usual requirements of a Picturesque approach.} A spectator looking out from Claude’s villa would look past the modern gallery visitor and towards the source of the Tiber. The spectator looking out from Cronkhill, would look towards Coalbrookdale and Ironbridge.\footnote{These were very important towns in the industrialisation of Britain, having some of the first iron foundries.} These towns were known and important to Nash because he had designed very early iron bridges which had been cast there. They were important to Nash and Lord Berwick together because the iron brackets of the new art gallery at Attingham Park—designed by one for the Grand Tour trophies of the other—were also cast there.\footnote{It is not known, but it is possible that Lord Berwick also had financial interests in the towns.}
But there is still a practical connection with Repton. In the second chapter of his second treatise, Repton makes the point, with the aid of a diagram, Figure 9, that to maximise the views from a villa there may need to be a corner window, a bow window.\textsuperscript{76} The round tower of Cronkhill may act as such a bow window. So, the important ‘diagonal view’ came from Price directly and for Price, Knight and Nash, it could have been loaded with a metaphorical content, if the detail and enthusiasm of Price in his letter to his friend are any guide.

Such a close correlation between the painting and the villa may seem strange but there is a precedent which demonstrates the essentially eighteenth-century intellectual context of Cronkhill. Robin Simon has drawn attention to the parallels between Claude’s \textit{Pastoral Landscape with the Ponte Molle} and the painting \textit{A View of Holt Bridge on the River Dee}, by Richard Wilson (c.1713-1782) which exhibited in 1762.\textsuperscript{77} Wilson, ‘rightly regarded as the father of British landscape painting’ was one of the ‘English’ Clauses.\textsuperscript{78} The parallels, and the differences, between the two paintings are significant and, according to Simon, deliberate. He states:

\textit{In Holt Bridge} Wilson produced what his 18th-century contemporaries would have recognised as an ‘imitation’. This was a word which had a very particular meaning at the time, especially in literary circles, and Wilson simply, but brilliantly, adapted the practice to painting. Dr Johnson defined ‘imitation’ in his \textit{Dictionary} (1755) as ‘a method of translating looser than paraphrase, in which modern examples and illustrations are used for ancient, and domestick for foreign’. This use of ‘modern’ and ‘domestick’ landscape in place of an ‘ancient’ and ‘foreign’ example exactly describes the relationship of \textit{Holt Bridge} to Claude’s \textit{Rome and the Ponte Molle}. In his \textit{Life of Pope} Johnson said of imitation, ‘It is a kind of middle composition between translation and original design, which pleases when thoughts are unexpectedly applicable and the parallels lucky.’ Again, that

\textsuperscript{76} Repton, \textit{The Art of Landscape Gardening}, J. Nolcn, ed., p. 85.


\textsuperscript{78} Simon, ‘Seeing Double’, p. 51.
last phrase, 'the thoughts are unexpectedly applicable and the parallels lucky', is certainly true of Wilson's artfully drawn parallel with this particular Claude. 79

This analysis of View of the Ponte Molle and Cronkhill shows that they share the same topographical and chronological templates, indeed, that the latter 'imitates' the former. It seems reasonable, therefore, to transfer the metaphorical content of the painting to the villa or, at least, to allow generally that a villa in a landscape can have some metaphorical content. These same tests, applied to villas in colonial Victoria, show that domestic architecture in Victoria was informed by the Picturesque aesthetic. Before they can be understood properly, it is necessary to understand what happened to the Italianate villa model in Britain and how it was transferred to colonial Australia.

2 THE ITALIANATE VILLA IN BRITAIN:

A PICTURESQUE SYNTHESIS OF STYLE, FORM AND FUNCTION

The Italianate villa, as a model for domestic architecture, represents a particularly successful synthesis of form, style and function in the Picturesque aesthetic. It was adaptable externally in its siting, setting, scale and form, it was flexible and practical in its internal arrangements, and it was suitable for the tenor of the times. The villa form, which had emerged in Britain in the early eighteenth century at an aristocratic level, matured as an increasingly middle-class phenomenon in the early nineteenth century. While still used by the aristocracy, especially those with new money, the model was also well suited to the middle classes as they increased in number, diversified in taste, consolidated in wealth, and rose in power. Its private use by the young Queen Victoria gave it great social authority.

Neo-Palladianism dominated the eighteenth century and endured into the next. Two other Classical styles became fashionable as the century turned: the Greek Revival and, slightly later, what was variously called the Italian, Modern Italian, Anglo-Italian, Roman or Tuscan style which is now generally called Italianate. The Gothic revival style was their main rival. Indeed, this was the beginning of a period called, even in the nineteenth century, the ‘Battle of the Styles’. It was a battle which meant a great deal to the combatants. This synthesis of form, style and function in villas which were Greek, Gothic or Italianate would not have been possible without the emergence of the Picturesque aesthetic in the eighteenth century. And it does not take much delving before clear agenda are
revealed for each style: philosophical divisions, religious symbolism, social aspiration and political content.

It is possible to trace the emergence and development of these qualities in the Italianate villa through both built examples and architectural pattern books. Completed buildings provide thoroughly concrete evidence while books, which included some real buildings, provide an insight into the theory behind the model.¹ The pattern books were vehicles for propaganda in the Battle of the Styles. Certain books also emphasised the link between horticulture, in the form of orchards, productive and recreational gardens and the broader landscape and the villa's essential domesticity.

While there was continuity amongst those who had established the Picturesque aesthetic in the later eighteenth century, in the nineteenth century, important new individuals emerged. William Beckford (17) is a direct link from one century to the other. Thomas Hope was an amateur architect who created Deepdene, (often called The Deepdene) the most important example of the Italianate villa after Cronkhill. Beckford's architect, Henry Edmund Goodridge, was responsible for a group of influential Italianate villas built on the outskirts of Bath. The work of Sir Charles Barry makes him a key figure in British architecture in the nineteenth century, including his major works at Trentham Hall and Cliveden for the Duke and Duchess of Sutherland.² Through his partners, and his son, his influence continued into a new generation and beyond.

¹ See Appendix 1 for a list of examples of the Italianate villa built in Britain in the nineteenth century. See Bibliography (Pattern Books) for a list of architectural pattern books from the nineteenth century, with their provenance in Australia where known.
² Some authors suggest that it was the Duchess rather than the Duke who was the client.
Britain.

In Britain, the United States, colonial Australia, and elsewhere, the Italianate villa succeeded as a model for domestic architecture because it proved to be more flexible in its application, more adaptable in its scale, more universal in its associations and more enduring in its popularity than the Greek and Gothic models. It also had political and social connections suitable for the times. With Osborne House, Queen Victoria's private residence on the Isle of Wight, the Italianate villa reached its epitome of domestic bliss and the zenith of its acceptability.

A few architectural historians dominate the discussion of domestic architecture in Britain in the nineteenth century. This chapter relies and builds on the pioneering work of: Sir John Summerson; Mark Girouard, especially his book, *The Victorian Country House*; J Mordaunt Crook who has tackled the difficult question of style in *The Dilemma of Style and The Rise of the Nouveaux Riches*;

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1 The literature on British domestic architecture is vast. The reader is directed to two texts in particular. The first is John Archer, *The Literature of British Domestic Architecture, 1715-1842*, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge MA, 1985. It is the bibliography of the period. The second is Michael Holmes, *The Country House Described, an index to the country houses of Great Britain and Ireland*, St Paul's Bibliographies, Trustees of the Victoria and Albert Museum, London, 1986 which provides an index of country houses with their specific references based on a bibliography of books searched, which are listed at the beginning and a select bibliography is listed at the end. The majority of these houses are of a status above that of a villa. For a useful start to the literature on American domestic architecture, see Henry-Russell Hitchcock, *American Architectural Books, a list of books, portfolios, and pamphlets on architecture and related subjects published in America before 1895*, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis, 1962.


David Watkin\(^7\) who rivals Christopher Hussey in his exploration of the Picturesque, Neo-classicism and Thomas Hope; and James S Ackerman\(^8\) for his synthesising work *The Villa*.

**The ‘Battle of the Styles’**

There is no doubt that the ‘Battle of the Styles’ was increasingly important for the architecture of the nineteenth century, both in Britain and internationally.\(^9\) It was important for all building types including villas. The main division was between the Gothic and Classical streams or, as is sometimes proposed, the sacred and profane.

The Greek revival started with the publication of Stuart and Revett’s *The Antiquities of Athens* in the late 1790s.\(^{10}\) As early as 1812, Thomas Rickman tried to provide a systematic approach to Gothic architecture in *An Attempt to Discriminate the Styles of English Architecture*, finally published in 1817. Many other authors wrote analytically on the subject of style such as James Fergusson (1808-1886), Joseph Gwilt (1784-1863), Robert Kerr (1823-1904) and George Wightwick (1802-1872).\(^{11}\)

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\(^9\) For the emergence of the Battle of the Styles see Summerson, *Architecture in Britain*, Chapter 28, ‘The Picturesque and the Cult of Styles’ and Chapter 29, Greek and Gothic: Architecture After Waterloo’. He considers the Gothic and Greek movements to be really as one ‘with the mainspring of style-conscious antiquarianism’, p. 319.

\(^{10}\) See Watkin, *Athenian Stuart*.

\(^{11}\) For biographical information on Gwilt and Wightwick, see Howard Colvin, *A Biographical Dictionary of British Architects, 1600-1840*, Facts on File, Inc., New York, 1978, pp. 371-2 and pp. 888-90. George Wightwick, *The Palace of Architecture: a romance of art and history*, James Fraser, London, 1840, a most idiosyncratic text in which the author provides ‘as it were, a palace of congress, wherein you will be successively addressed by humble (but, it is hoped, characteristic) representatives of the great families of Design in ancient and Mahomedan [sic], India, China, Egypt, Greece, ancient and modern Italy, Turkey, Moorish Spain, and Christian Europe’, p. 3; Joseph Gwilt, *Notitia Architectonica Italiana, or Concise Notices of the Buildings and Architects of Italy*, 1818, and *An Encyclopaedia of Architecture: Historical, Theoretical & Practical*, 1842, with further six eds.; James Fergusson, *History of the Modern Styles of Architecture* 1862, which was
The great counter attack on the Classical stream was fought by A. W. N. Pugin in his polemic, *Contrasts*, published in 1836 and 1841, in which he deplors the current decay in taste and promotes the exclusive use of the Gothic style for every building type. The battle continued, intensified and shifted throughout the century and is still discussed today.\(^\text{12}\)

There was a parallel search for a 'new' style appropriate for the times. The 'Modern Italian' and 'Anglo-Italian' were seen as possibilities for this. Indeed, James Fergusson thought that Italian was the 'tertium quid' and, being incomplete, 'should be called the common sense style' because it 'admits of progress' unlike the completeness of the Classical and the perfection of the Gothic.\(^\text{13}\) There was an emerging interest in materials and construction as determinants of style and in the notion that a building's function could determine its style. 'Fitness' became an issue. Perhaps there should have been a parallel 'Battle of the Forms'. To some extent there was, at least with the difference between symmetry and asymmetry, but also depending on the function of a building. In ecclesiastical architecture, for example, the battle was not just between styles but also between preaching and sacramental churches, that is between the Protestant and Catholic forms and functions of worship. Generally, the Gothic stream prevailed in ecclesiastical architecture beyond the nineteenth century. The Classical stream, whether the informal Italianate or the more formal Greek and Palladian revival styles, at least held their own against the Gothic in domestic architecture. In the end, however, as

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\(^{12}\) The references on the topic are too numerous to list here but some pertinent sources are J. Mordant Crook, *Dilemma of Style, Architectural Ideas from the Picturesque to the Post Modern*, John Murray London, 1987; J. Mordant Crook, *The rise of the nouveaux riches, style and status in Victorian and Edwardian Architecture*, John Murray, London, 1999; and Girouard, *Victorian*
Mordaunt Crook observes, 'Regency ... architects fell back on the comforting thought that attempts to discover a wholly new style were no more likely to succeed than attempts to discover a fourth primary colour. So they gave up'.¹⁴

Definition of the Villa Form

The notion of a 'villa' is complicated, multi-layered and continuously evolving.¹⁵ Defining the word and understanding the built form of a villa is difficult because the intellectual concept and its physical expression change over more than two thousand years. Yet, there are continuing characteristics. The word's use in Antiquity is not consistent. Further variations and interpretations emerge during the Renaissance then, in England in the eighteenth century, the word was used to describe an increasingly wide range of houses. These confusions continued into the nineteenth century and, with only vestiges of the word's intellectual origins, the most dramatic changes occur from the mid-nineteenth into the twentieth centuries. The word is now quite debased in the twenty-first century.

Words and drawings were as important as bricks and mortar in the evolution of the villa. Robert Castell published his important book, *The Villas of the Ancients Illustrated*, in 1728. It was dedicated to Lord Burlington which demonstrates the direct intellectual link between the Roman source, the Palladian version and the English interpretation. For the Georgians, Virgil's *Eclogues* and *Georgics* and

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¹⁴ Crook, Dilemma of Style, p. 195.
Pliny's villas and letters were perhaps the most important ancient sources.\footnote{Ackerman cites ‘Cato, Varro, Virgil, Horace, Pliny the Younger, Vitruvius and others’, \textit{The Villa}, p. 10. See also his Ch. 2, ‘The Ancient Roman Villa’. There is a large ‘sub-set’ of literature on Pliny’s villas from the 18th century especially. See Pierre de la Ruffinière du Prey, \textit{The Villas of Pliny from Antiquity to Pósterity}, University of Chicago Press, 1994; and, of course, Pliny’s own writings which were translated, loosely, into English by William Melmoth for publication in 1746. See the Introduction by the translator, Betty Radice to the modern Penguin Classics edition of \textit{The Letters of the Younger Pliny}, 1963, for a history of translations of Pliny’s writings. A new, improved and enlarged children’s version of Pliny came out in 1803. For a more theoretical analysis of ancient literature, see Anthony C. Antonides, \textit{Epic Space, Towards the Roots of Western Architecture}, Van Nostrand, 1992.}


Villas may be considered under three different descriptions—First, as the occasional and temporary retreats of the nobility and persons of fortune from what may be called their town residence, and must, of course, be in the vicinity of the metropolis; secondly, as the country houses of wealthy citizens and persons in official stations, which also cannot be far removed from the capital; and thirdly, the smaller kind of provincial edifices, considered either as hunting seats, or the habitations of country gentleman of moderate fortune. Elegance, compactness and convenience are the characteristics of such buildings ... in contradistinction to the magnificence and extensive range of the country seats of nobility and opulent gentry.\footnote{Quoted by Summerson, ‘The Idea of the Villa’, pp. 539-87. This article is reprinted in Summerson, \textit{The Victorian Castle}, Thames and Hudson, London, 1990, as Chapter VI.}

At the end of the Georgian period and with a rising metropolitan middle class, James Elmes distinguished between the mansion and the villa in his detailed description of Regent’s Park in \textit{Metropolitan Improvements}.

The villa, on the contrary is the mere personal property and residence of the owner, where he retires to enjoy himself without state. It is superior to the ornamental cottage, standing, as it were between the \textit{cottage ornée} of the French, and the mansion or hall of the English. The term is never more properly applied than when given to such suburban structures as those that are rising around us, serving as they may well do from \textit{situation} as to the town, and from \textit{position} as to rural beauty.\footnote{James Elmes, \textit{Metropolitan Improvements, or London in the Nineteenth Century}, 2 vols., Jones and Co., 1827, republished B. Blom, New York, 1968, p. 26. Elmes continues, providing a}
Soon after the great author for the middle classes, John Claudius Loudon (1783-1843) gave a definition in his *Encyclopaedia of Cottage, Farm and Villa Architecture*, first published in 1833, republished frequently, and disseminated internationally as

a gentleman’s residence in the country ... a place of agreeable retirement [a house to] be situated if possible, in a beautiful country, within reach of a public road, and at an easy distance from the metropolis ... the principal front as to be seen from the public road, and to command a beautiful and extensive prospect over a fertile country; having in the middle distance a town or village, with its “heaven-direct spire”.  

By the middle of the nineteenth century, Peter Nicholson had a much more Picturesque definition but one still rooted in ancient Rome. It is interestingly devoid of class, scale and gender, nor does it include comment on a sense of retreat, self-sufficiency or intellectual content. The definition is thus

VILLA, (from the Latin) a country-house; of which the situation ought to be agreeable, commodious, and healthy, with winter and summer apartments; and surrounded by trees, to yield a cool refreshing air and shade during the heat of summer, and break the stormy cold winds of the winter. The Roman villas were very magnificent. See the description of Pliny’s villas, under the article HOUSE.  

Modern dictionaries provide both an etymology and a definition. The relatively modern introduction of the word into English is interesting and shows that the word villa is not derived from mediaeval Latin. There is no doubt, however, that the use of the word brought connotations of both ancient Rome (but not necessarily

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Greece) and the Renaissance. The *Shorter Oxford Dictionary* offers this etymology and definition:

Villa (vi.la). 1611. [Partly - L. villa country house, farm; partly - It. villa from the same source.] orig. A country mansion or residence, together with a farm, farm-buildings, or other houses attached, built or occupied by a person of some position and wealth; a country seat or estate; later, a residence in the country or in the neighbourhood of a town, usu. standing in its own grounds. b. Hence, any residence of a superior type, in the suburbs of a town or in a residential district, such as is occupied by a person of the middle-class; also, any small better-class dwelling, usu. one which is detached or semi-detached 1755. Hence Villadom, the world of villas; suburban villas or their residents collectively.  

James Ackerman’s definition and explanation of the villa are amongst the most recent and perhaps most important here. In his book devoted to the villa’s form and ideology, he states ‘a villa is a building in the country designed for its owner’s enjoyment and relaxation’ and he adds that this function has not changed in two thousand years. A sense of luxury is often mentioned. But he does not stress the intellectual core of the villa, its library, nor the self-sufficiency of the grounds, perhaps more important for the colonial villa than the villas in the developed British countryside. This difference is explored further when villas in colonial Victoria are considered in detail in a later chapter. Importantly, Ackerman states that the villa’s basic program ‘was first fixed by the patricians of ancient Rome’ and not by the Greeks. There seems to have been no parallel term in ancient Greek for a villa. The ancient Greek word *oikos* translates to *domus* in Latin, *maison* in French, *Haus* in German and house in English. This is significant because it shows that there could be no precedence from Greek archaeology for a villa to be built in a rigorously correct interpretation of the Greek revival style.

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22 Ackerman, *The Villa*, p. 9.
Most recently, J. Mordaunt Crook asks ‘What is a villa?’ He answers using important references to the great Romantic, John Ruskin because of the location of his topic, New Money in the Lake District. His most important conclusion, which is not new, is that a villa is not a seat, i.e. the focus of a great estate. Even so, it is “a dwelling of wealth and power”; it needs “a domain to itself, at once conspicuous, beautiful and calm”. And therein lies a difficulty: “the cottage enhances the wildness of the surrounding scene, by sympathising with it; the villa must do the same thing by contrasting with it.”

As with Ackerman this distinction may work well in the Lake District but will be seen to fail in the Western District of Victoria.

Villas emerged as an important building type in the eighteenth century and developed well into the nineteenth, in Britain and then in Australia. The British villa has been well documented by Summerson, Hitchcock, Arnold and others. As well as linking it firmly with the emerging middle class, Summerson links it with “that new kind of urban expansion which characterized the post-Waterloo period and whose architectural type is the villa”. There has been very little discussion about the villa and its situation as a building type or as a particular lifestyle in Australia and none at a sustained academic level.

There were three main types of villa: the continuing Palladian form or symmetrical box with or without supporting wings; the new asymmetrical form with a Picturesque massing of parts; and the hybrid ‘double-façade’ form with an

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21 Crook, Nouveaux Riches, pp. 79-80.
entrance and a garden façade at right angles. Alternatively, the villa might be subdivided according to place and function. This was equivalent to the ancient division into the villa suburbana, the villa pseudo-urbana, the villa maritima, and the villa fructuaria.

Summerson claims that villas in the later eighteenth century ‘besides being smallish … were strikingly symmetrical and decidedly classic’ and ‘their planning was very different from the earlier villa, or indeed of … early eighteenth-century village mansions’. The Italianate villa was one of the first formal domestic models which could combine Classical architecture with asymmetrical form. The only other was the so-called Greek villa but it had serious limitations, as will be seen. Because the Italianate villa so easily accommodated asymmetry it loosened further, if not completely liberated, the internal planning of the freestanding house which had started late in the eighteenth century. And, paradoxically, it could still accommodate symmetrical façades and massing in its more Palladian interpretations, which became important in its second phase after 1835. It was also best at resolving the integration of the villa and its landscape setting. Loudon wrote

_The union of architecture and gardening_ has been better managed in Italy than in any other country; for, as G. L. Meason observes, the gardens were often designed by the same hand as the architecture and the sculpture; and hence all “concur in the general effect to produce perfect harmony. The gardens are frequently laid out in different stages following the slope of a hill, and presenting a great variety of stairs, fountains, alleys of trees, and flower plots, the whole terminated by a summer-house or casino.”

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27 Summerson, _Architecture in Britain_, p. 319.
Asymmetrical planning existed before the nineteenth century in eighteenth-century villas with formal facades and irregular interiors. John Summerson notes that 'Much ingenuity was needed to combine this more open planning with a perfectly trim exterior, but here the architects achieved wonders.' He shows six key examples of such plans from 1720 to 1780.

Sir John Soane (1753-1837) came to be a master at this innovative planning and, at the age of seventeen, had been connected with the fourth example, Claremont, built for Lord Clive of India between 1770 and 1774 under Lancelot 'Capability' Brown as the architect and landscape designer. John Nash was also very clever at this internal asymmetry as seen at Ffynone, Pembroke, c.1793, for example. Downton Castle, built between 1774 and 1778, the home of one of Brown's chief critics, Richard Payne Knight, was highly irregular and developed strong internal axes which reached out into a wild landscape. Notwithstanding its neo-Classical interiors, it was castellated externally and belonged, to that degree, to the Gothic stream.

This still allowed different parts or wings and especially the tower to express different functions, rather than to be contained within a perfect box. Furthermore, it allowed for a complex of buildings, either linked or more

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31 Summerson, 'The Idea of the Villa', pp. 539-87, and fig. 95.
32 See du Prey, *John Soane*, Ch. 13 ‘Soane’s Place in the Genesis of the “Villa”’.
33 See Terence Davis, *John Nash, The Prince Regent’s Architect*, David and Charles (Holdings), London, 1973, figs. 2 - 6, which are plans of villas symmetrical on the outside and freely planned on the inside.
35 One of the most extraordinary examples of the ‘proto’ Italianate style which is not a villa must be the Radcliffe Observatory, Oxford, designed by Henry Keene and James Wyatt and built between 1772 and 1794. In a symmetrical design, it uses a four-storey octagonal tower, a two-storey semi-circular central mass and single storey side wings. Its function as a modern academic observatory is very specific and obvious. The use of the Italianate style here may have influenced the choice for the Melbourne Observatory in 1863.
usually disparate, to sit within a Picturesque landscape setting. As David Watkin observes, Knight and his best friend Uvedale Price, were dissatisfied not merely with Brown’s landscaping ‘but with the dichotomy between the regular Palladian villa and the irregular landscape park’.\(^{36}\) Something had to give and, after a brief experiment with the Greek villa, the Italianate villa resolved that dichotomy for the Picturesque aesthetic in the nineteenth century by accommodating asymmetrical massing comfortably. Finally, internal asymmetry could burst forth and reach out into the landscape.

Francis Goodwin provides the recipe for an irregular, if not wild, setting for an Italian villa. Writing about an Italianate villa with three towers, he proposes the most picturesque parts of Britain for its setting. He advises that it

\[...\] is suited to the scenery of the lakes of Cumberland and Westmoreland, or the romantic parts of Derbyshire, or still further north; as innumerable sites are afforded in these districts, of similar character to the compositions of the celebrated landscape painters of Italy; particularly those of Nicolo and Gaspar Poussin, in which the Italian Villa is so frequently and so congenially introduced. ... The Villa is designed to occupy a spot on elevated ground, its general character being suited to a conspicuous site. It should however be observed, that it is necessary to select a spot, sheltered on the north and east, by contiguous woods, and still higher grounds. The timber moreover should be chiefly of the fir species, the Italian pine, and the larch. The oak and the beech, if near the house, combine well with the building. A mixture of other trees of inferior height, particularly the birch and mountain ash, or others of a hardy nature, which together with a judicious selection of shrubs, unite to adorn the site with corresponding fitness and beauty.\(^{37}\)

Asymmetrical planning also accommodated growth and change. Knight justified the planning of Downton Castle ‘by claiming that it possessed “the advantage

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\(^{36}\) Watkin, *Thomas Hope*, p. 133.

of being capable of receiving alterations and additions in almost every direction, without injury to its genuine and original character". New wings could extend out from the irregular core and otherwise awkward towers, conservatories and terraces could be added. Parts of a building could even be demolished. This led to a sense of accretion, of age and of history.

Asymmetrical planning also brought practical advantages. Thomas Hope was concerned about draughts, smells, privacy, lighting and coalholes. ‘This immense concern for the practical conveniences of the day-to-day running of a small house is one of the most noticeable contributions to architecture of the Picturesque aesthetic and its preoccupation with the genius loci’. Nor did it compromise other factors inherited from the ancients via the Renaissance, which were important in the eighteenth and nineteenth century, such as ventilation, sanitation and orientation.

The corollary was also true. The planning and form of a symmetrical Italianate villa could unite two dwellings as one building. Loudon himself lived in half of an Italianate duplex in Bayswater, London and, in his Encyclopaedia, he offered a symmetrical design for two four-roomed dwellings under one roof which ‘though it is full of faults, it contains the germs of great beauty and interest’. Watkin writes that these early attempts at creating the Italianate villa as an alternative to the Greek revival villa ‘represent an attempt to achieve Picturesque irregularity in the classical tradition.

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38 Watkin, Thomas Hope, p. 139.
39 Watkin, Thomas Hope, p. 138.
40 Matthew Hardy investigates just these issues in colonial Australia in his ‘Temples of the Four Winds: airs, waters, places and health in the Colonial Villa from Cato to Cobbett’, Ph.D. thesis, University of Wales, 2000. I am grateful to him for meeting with me and providing access to his thesis in March 2001.
41 Loudon, Encyclopaedia of Cottage Farm and Villa Architecture, Design LVII, p. 193.
whereas the overwhelming majority of such attempts fell back on the Gothic style as a ready-made answer, as an easy way out.  

But the Italian influence was not without its critics. James Elmes paused with his imaginary lady companion on their tour of Regent’s Park to ‘chat a little about our opinions as to what a villa is and should be.’ In florid prose with quotes from Byron’s *Childe Harold*, he states that the Italians are ‘the bastard successors’ of the Romans. Of contemporary architects, Messrs. Nash, Gwilt and Ware fall into the Italian camp and Messrs. Soane and Smirke into the Grecian.

‘They, the Italian architects I mean, … attempted too much variety in compositions which are to be seen at once, and in such cases, too much variety creates confusion. Hence their architecture like their language possesses all the vices of beauty, and is too rich, too redolent of charms, too redundant in variety, has too many parts “joined” as the noble poet says.’ And another critic, T. F. Hunt (c.1791-1831), in the preface to the second edition of his pattern book *Half a Dozen Hints on Picturesque Domestic Architecture* published in 1826, wrote

> In these Designs the Old English Domestic Style has been preferred to every other, as admitting of greater variety of form and outline, and as being better suited to the scenery of this Country, than the Greek Temple or Italian Villa. Of this fact, Bromley Hill presents a striking example; one side of the beautiful road upon it being disfigured by a most heterogeneous bulk of the latter description, and the other adorned by two Lodges of very picturesque character, arranged with great taste, and executed with an attention to detail too rarely exercised. These Lodges are said to have been built under the immediate superintendence of Lady Long.  

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43 Elmes, *Metropolitan Improvements*, p. 25.
44 Elmes, *Metropolitan Improvements*, p. 25.
But that did not stop Hunt from cashing in on the increasing taste for the Italianate by publishing *Architettura Campestre* just one year later. He covers himself by stating in its preface

> In adopting a style of Architecture different from that of my former publications, I yield rather to the suggestions and wishes of many patrons of those works than any inclination of my own; persuaded that in the event of succeeding in my object of illustrating the character of Modern or Italian Architecture, as applied to simple domestic structures, I shall do little more than render manifest its inferiority to that beautiful and appropriate style miscalled [sic] Gothic.\(^{46}\)

**Definition of the Italianate Style**

The 'ingredients', the physical characteristics which make up the Italianate style include: masonry construction; more or less architectural detail from the Classical vocabulary but eschewing the Orders; an exposed roof with a shallow pitch; bracketed eaves; bay windows and clustered windows; a loggia or verandah substitute; and a tower or its substitute. Buildings may have symmetrical or asymmetrical massing. The massing creates cross axes and, when present, a tower creates a third or vertical axis. Together, these characteristics should be found in a garden setting, preferably on a rise or hillside. The Picturesque villa should be approached along a winding drive with anticipatory glimpses, preferably over a body of water. Not all the ingredients are required nor are they static as the style evolves. The range in scale might be from a small lodge to a palazzo but it is the why and how these characteristics come together that creates the essence of the Italianate style.

J. C. Loudon does not define the style precisely. He writes confusingly,

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This [Italian] style as it is called though in reality it is only a sub-style or manner, is founded on the Roman variety of Grecian architecture with some forms, dispositions and ornament belonging to the castellated Gothic, but it is by no means definite in its characteristics. In buildings of the humblest class it may be characterised by flat and far projecting roofs, massive walls and windows broad rather than deep, which are generally carried up close to the eaves, in order to be shaded as much as possible from the sun. In adapting the Italian style to England, this last characteristic is generally somewhat modified as in this Design [X IX].

Loudon expected the Italian style to be more attractive to those who had toured Italy or were conversant with Italian art. While the style may provide an initial pleasure for others, ‘It is evident, however, that the great beauty of an Italian cottage, that in which the imagination is engaged, can only be fully realised by those minds in which it will call up associations connected with Italy’.

Loudon does give several examples of buildings designed and even constructed in the Italianate style. His indicative sketch, numbered 300, the first example in the Encyclopaedia, has many, but not all, of the characteristics one expects: hooded windows, large roof tiles, bracketed eaves, a low pitched roof and the building is apparently smoothly rendered but there is no tower or a porch. His first formal example, Design 1 is an ‘Inn in the Italian style, having besides Public Rooms, Thirty Bedrooms, and Stabling for Twenty Horses’. He offers another inn and ‘A Country School in the Italian Style, including a Dwelling for the Master and Mistress’. This design is attributed to a Mr. Lamb and ‘with respect to the architectural style of this Design, the genius of the manner is finely kept up by the

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47 Loudon, *Encyclopaedia of Cottage Farm and Villa Architecture*, p. 82. His comment on the castellated Gothic connection may be a reference to Richard Payne Knight’s Downton Castle.

48 Loudon, *Encyclopaedia of Cottage Farm and Villa Architecture*, p. 92

49 Some were designed by Charles Barry.
masses of unpierced walls in some places, and the groupings of openings in others; thus producing strong contrasts both in construction and in effect.¹⁵⁰

The tower of an Italianate villa is a significant component of its form and a benchmark for its style. It is not the defensive tower of mediaeval fortified houses but the ecclesiastical campanile so familiar in Italy. Instead of slit windows, machicollations, battlements and a platform for fighting, the campanile has increasingly large windows, definite storeys, an exposed low-pitched pyramidal roof, and sometimes a belfry or belvedere. The Italianate villa tower is usually like this, especially in Italianate paintings of the time. More rarely, it is a round or octagonal shaft in the earliest buildings.¹⁵¹ In the grandest examples it is balustraded.

The tower is important because it provides both aspect and prospect; the owner could see and be seen. Loudon writes

The Prospect-tower is a noble object to look at, and a gratifying and instructive position to look from. It should be placed on the highest grounds of a residence, in order to command as wide a prospect as possible, and to serve as a fixed recognised point to strangers in making a tour of the grounds.²²

Usually placed over the threshold, a tower provides a vertical axis which makes a statement of proprietorship. The axis is also at the crux of the horizontal axes. In an

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¹⁵⁰ There is only one reference to an architect with the name Lamb in Colvin, Biographical Dictionary, p. 501, which is for a William Lamb who was a ‘builder-architect’ from Leith in Scotland.

¹⁵¹ Some of the best examples of campanile towers used to evoke the Italian landscape are in the paintings of Paul Sandby, one of the artists called an ‘English Claude’, although he also uses defensive towers. Apart from the Royal Collection, one of the best public collections is held at the Hamilton Regional Gallery, Victoria, which happens to be at the centre of ‘Australia Felix’ or the Western District of Victoria.

²² Hunt quoting from Loudon, in Architettura Campestre, 1827, p. 18. The design is for a detached garden folly rather than a tower which is part of a villa. It includes a large ‘Loudonesque’ semi-circular ached alcove with a seat which might also have been inspired by the Vestibule at Laxton Hall, Northamptonshire designed by George Dance the Younger in 1811. Hunt’s quotation of Loudon continues ‘It may very properly be accompanied by a cottage; or the lower part of it may be occupied by the family of a forester, gamekeeper, or any rural pensioner.’
asymmetrical house this can be crucial for anchoring the three coordinates inside the house and from which they can extend into the landscape. The tower provides not just a focus but also a locus in the landscape.

Innovative materials lent themselves especially to the style. T. F. Hunt, writes positively and at length about terra cotta tiles in his preface to Architettura Campestre, published in 1827. J. C. Loudon discusses materials and promotes the use of ‘Peake’s Grecian tiles’. Summerson cites one manufacturer in particular: ‘There were innumerable patent tiles ... An early and very successful patent was John Taylor’s which he sold to the Broomhall Brick and Tile Company in 1865. Taylor’s tiles were instantly recognizable — a flat, Italian-looking affair with an interlocking device; described as indestructible but now rarely seen’. A villa at Clapham, designed by J. K. Colling was faced in George Jennings’ patent terracotta. ‘The various decorative Italianate components could be purchased from Jennings from stock moulds. The appearance of masonry could easily and economically be achieved by bricks rendered with stucco and even timber mock ashlar. Writing about mass produced mouldings and commenting on an Italianate villa, The Builder’s Practical Director noted ‘The asymmetrical design was intended to be built in stock brick with Roman cement dressings, at an estimated cost of 1,500 pounds. Rendcombe, dating from 1863 had concrete floors on iron girders and Down Hall, Essex, dating from 1871, was built entirely in

53 Hunt, Architettura Campestre, pp. xvii-xviii. Hunt is equivocal in his support for ‘Modern or Italian architecture’, stating explicitly in the Preface his preference for the ‘appropriate’ Gothic.

54 Loudon, Encyclopaedia of Cottage Farm and Villa Architecture, pp. 176-7.

55 Summerson, Utopian Castles, p. 163.


concrete. The use of concrete in part of the construction of Osborne House was very well known and it was criticised for being built in old-fashioned brick and stucco and for imitating stone.  

Mark Girouard writes ‘It was concrete that was interminably discussed in the architectural press of the 1860s and 1870s’. Plate-glass, a product of British industrialization, was another suitable new material.

The adoption of these new, mass-produced and therefore cheaper materials shows how the middle classes, and the manufacturers, benefited from industrialization. More expensive materials could be replicated cheaply, such as with cast iron and cast cement, and paid for by the newly prosperous middle classes. Improved transport, especially by rail, allowed for a larger market and a wider distribution. Improved communication allowed for the introduction of trade catalogues and modern advertising. This is a less obvious link between the Italianate villa, as an appropriate home for the rising middle class, the Industrial Revolution and the general background of democratic change at the beginning of the nineteenth century.

The Italianate style did not use obviously traditional materials such as thatch, slates, shingles, rustic joinery, face brick, rough stone and small-paned windows all of which were associated with the cottages ornée, the Gothic revival style and British Nationalism. These, of course, were the very materials along with steep roofs, tall chimneys, and even more Picturesque irregularity, which characterised the ‘vernacular’ Old English style pioneered by Philip Webb and Norman Shaw from the 1860s. It eventually outran the Italianate style.

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It is well to highlight here that the domestic function of a villa is more than just its residential occupation. There is the all-important sense of retreat, where a learned man might recreate himself, his family and his friends. This was a characteristic of the villa lifestyle which had existed from ancient times but it was possible for many more people because the Industrial Revolution brought increased leisure. Moreover, the sense of retreat and recreation brings with it the notion of self-sufficiency. The villa’s setting, and the owner’s supervision if not participation, brought produce from the vegetable and flower gardens, the orchard and from domesticated animals, such as a milk cow and poultry. There is also a sense of community including a sense of hierarchy from master and mistress, staff indoors and outdoors and farm labourers. This developed into the notion of the English term village, the French term ville, and the Italian term villeggiatura. This combined had a vernacular quality, rustic but refined, irregular perhaps but also well-ordered.

Creation of the Italianate Villa Model

It must be remembered that there was always a range, a spectrum of examples, of the Italianate villa model from perfectly symmetrical versions, or at least villas which appeared to be symmetrical externally to the deliberately asymmetrical. The symmetrical end of the spectrum can be described as a continuation of Palladianism, which had never really gone out of fashion and which, indeed, enjoyed with the Renaissance revival style, something of a revival of its own in the middle of the nineteenth century. The asymmetrical end of the spectrum was more innovative.

The synthesis has its own sense of place through setting and siting. Indeed the siting, orientation and background of an Italianate villa were critical for its success. George Wightwick in The Palace of Architecture, published in 1840, gives two possibilities for siting villas: either in a valley or on a rise. John Archer notes
that 'Two vignettes near the end of the text illustrate appropriate landscape settings
for Old English mansions and Italian villas. The former is shown in a cultivated
valley and the latter is set up on a hillside with a prospect of mountains in the
distance.'\textsuperscript{60} This 'Anglo-Italian Villa,' ostensibly designed according to meet
certain laws of 'fitness', was two stories high, with a campanile projecting above,
and nine principal rooms including a chapel on the ground floor.\textsuperscript{61} Wightwick's
description was anthropomorphic, with the villa speaking in the first person. The
soliloquy concluded: 'What am I, then, but an English mansion, adapted to my
locality, and to the climate and customs of my country? [sic]\textit{taking} my
arrangements from my owner, my leading external features from modern Italy, and
my complexion from fair Greece.'\textsuperscript{62}

But none of the synthesis or sense of place would have been possible without
the Picturesque aesthetic. Nor was it the first combination of Classical architecture
with asymmetrical forms for domestic purposes. That was achieved in one branch
of the Greek revival but not in the mainstream branch which was monumentally
symmetrical. Thomas Hope had commented that the owners, 'by building houses in
the shape of temples have contrived for themselves most inappropriate and
uncomfortable dwellings'.\textsuperscript{63} William Wilkins, a protégé of Thomas Hope, designed
Grange Park in 1804, one of the most severe Greek revival houses. As David
Watkin notes, 'it was already out of date on its completion in 1809 since by 1808
Hope had moved on to a position of attacking those "modern architects [who] apply

\textsuperscript{60} Wightwick, \textit{Palace of Architecture}, James Fraser, London, p. 203, quoted in John Archer,
\textit{Literature}, pp. 834-5.
\textsuperscript{61} The Picturesque generally is linked with the emotion of religion and the Italianate villa, of
course, had 'overtones' of Roman Catholicism.
\textsuperscript{62} Archer, \textit{Literature}, pp. 834-5.
\textsuperscript{63} Quoted by Watkin, \textit{Thomas Hope}, p. 144.
the vigorous symmetry of the ancient temple ... to the private habitation" of a modern Englishman. 64

In the 1820s, 'The happy solution at the Grange was to call in C. R. Cockerell to add a lower 'L'-shaped wing at the south-west end of the Wilkins house and then to link the whole yet more firmly to the setting by means of a conservatory and architectural gardens.' 65 James Elmes illustrated the many new villas of Regent's Park in *Metropolitan Improvements*, published in 1827. It has a massive, quatra-style Doric temple front awkwardly 'glued' onto the façade.

Some authors have suggested another source for the Italianate villa, the *Rundbogenstil* of Germany and the work of Shinkel. 66 Again, David Watkin links it through Thomas Hope and 'his detailed studies of Early Christian, Italian Romanesque and Gothic ... formed ... the bulk of the illustrations to his *Historical Essay on Architecture*'. 67 Michael Turner has established a link between German architecture and Osborne House through Prince Albert. 68

**The Connections of the Model**

It can be argued that the Italianate villa was connected with a different type of people from those who led or favoured the Greek and Gothic revivals. While there must have been some common ground, the Italianate villa model's connections were artists and poets especially and members of the new middle classes generally. Everyone was living in the new democracy, but some people enjoyed increased

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65 Watkin, *Thomas Hope*, pp. 144-5
wealth, new religious freedom, better education, higher social aspirations and a loosening of traditional ties. It would not be surprising if these people preferred a ‘Modern’ Italian style of architecture over a traditional Gothic style. More and more would have seen the genuine article in Italy on the Grand Tour.

John Ruskin wrote in *The Stones of Venice* that, while many British travel on the Continent, ‘the noblest born, the best taught, the richest in time and money’ went to Italy.\(^69\) He might have added that, once there, they would see both Classical and Gothic buildings, and especially Romantic Gothic buildings in Venice.\(^70\) Travel certainly increased after the end of the Napoleonic Wars. The new railways of the 1840s made travel faster, safer and cheaper. John Pemble makes two comments about who went on the Grand Tour and how in the later nineteenth century.\(^71\) Firstly, the upper class and the powerful continued to travel southwards. ‘Victorian and Edwardian cabinet ministers, peers, dowagers, heirs to landed fortunes, and members of the Royal Family all travelled to the Mediterranean—not, like the Grand Tourists of the eighteenth century, as strangers on a unique excursion; but rather as regular visitors coming to a home from home.’\(^72\) Secondly, a new and more democratic sort of traveller was emerging. ‘But Victorian and Edwardian visitors to the Mediterranean were not exclusively or even predominantly aristocratic, because in the second half of the nineteenth century rising incomes and facilitated travel


\(^70\) As an aside, it is interesting to note that while the Venetian Gothic style was much used for commercial buildings in Melbourne, a city which saw itself as a new Venice, the style was not used domestically.


combine to bring more and more members of the middle classes to the South'. He blames the mobilisation of the British bourgeoisie, not surprisingly, on Thomas Cook. Both these groups brought back the Italianate villa model in their consciousness as a souvenir.

People who lived on the edge of or beyond society would do so in Italy. Artistic individuals famous at the time for sojourns in Italy are easy to cite, such as Lord Byron, Keats and the now neglected Samuel Rogers. Others lived in Italy in self-imposed exile. The aristocrat William Bankes who had inherited Kingston Lacy, in Dorset jumped bail in 1841 over a charge of 'indecently exposing himself with a soldier of the Foot Guards in Green Park'. It was not the first occasion. He remodelled Kingston Lacy from his exile, sending back artwork for his increasingly 'Italian' villa. It was a relatively modest but deeply sincere expression of the fashion for all things Italian.

One of the first Italianate villa designs to appear in pattern books is Plate XVII 'A Villa, Designed as the Residence of an Artist', in Rural Residences by J. B. Papworth (1775-1847). The book was published in 1818, fifteen years after Cronkhill, about ten after Deepdene but before Thomas Hope's article about Deepdene in the Repository in 1823. The text links the design with the great Italian masters and suggests who an owner might be.

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73 Pemblie, Mediterranean Passion, p. 2.
74 Pemblie, Mediterranean Passion, pp. 2-3.
75 The Protestant cemetery on the then edge of Rome contains the graves of many British expatriates.
76 Guide to Kingston Lacy, National Trust, 1994, p. 25. I am indebted to Mr Brian Groshinski for giving me his copy of the booklet.
77 Kingston Lacy, National Trust, p. 51. Homosexuality was sometimes referred to as the 'Italian' disease but the Italians called it 'French'.
Claude Lorraine, Poussin, and other celebrated landscape-painters of the seventeenth century, introduced forms of buildings in their compositions that were well suited to the poetic feeling obvious in the works of those great masters. ... From these artists our own painters have adopted a similar contour in their representations of buildings in pictures of ideal scenery, in which the higher or poetic class of landscape is represented, and at length, it may be termed, in consequence of its frequent use, the painter's style of buildings: thus the subject of the annexed plate being a design for a residence of one of our first artists, the forms have been selected from works of pictorial beauty. This villa is also suited to the man of literary study, or to the amateur of taste, as the apartments arranged for the painter's accommodation are equally well disposed for a library, or for a collection of works of art.\textsuperscript{79}

This quotation confirms the link, from the beginning, between the Italianate villa and the great artists working in Italy in the seventeenth century who were so avidly collected by the British abroad, and the artists and would be artists working in Britain in the nineteenth century. It also confirms the importance of a library in a villa. A Picturesque perspective illustrates the text.

The Italianate villa came to have particular political connections, and the Gothic revival villa had others. The former was associated with the Whigs and the latter was associated with the Tories.\textsuperscript{80} In Cronkhill’s case there may have been no immediate connection. In relation to its architect, John Nash, John Summerson states that

Among thirty-six patrons [of Nash] we find six lords (or lords to be), three baronets and a mixed bag of affluent country gentry: an assemblage of no particular colouring and certainly no political colouring at all. Nash built indifferently for Whig or Tory. Nor in any single instance does this patronage connect with either the old King's twilight court at Windsor or the livelier court of the Prince at Carlton House. It is a clientele typical of any London architect who had made his name.\textsuperscript{81}

\textsuperscript{79} Papworth, \textit{Rural Residences}, p. 68.
\textsuperscript{80} There is always the caution that the upper levels of both parties may have shared more in common culturally than what divided them politically.
\textsuperscript{81} Summerson, \textit{John Nash}, p. 42.
But the truth may not have been so simple. The link between John Nash and Richard Payne Knight and Sir Uvedale Price is clear. These latter gentlemen were Whigs, informed by the Enlightenment and liberal in their politics, although frightened by the threat of a French invasion near their country villas near the coast. The Whig party was in its ascendency during the later eighteenth century and came to the forefront in political reform with the passage of the Reform Act in 1832. Perhaps the political connections of the Italianate villa, especially with those in favour of democratic reform, did begin at Cronkhill, the first example in Britain.

Mark Girouard divides the generation after Nash, the famous architects of the mid-nineteenth century, into two political camps depending on their clients and notes the broad division in the styles adopted.

Upper-class society in early Victorian times was highly political, and it was not surprising that architects who worked through personal recommendations should have not only a cohesive body of clients, but one with a particular political flavour. Blore’s and Salvin’s clients were predominantly Tory; Burn’s were more mixed though with a Tory bias; Barry was the favourite of the Whigs.

Edward Blore (1787-1879) who had completed Nash’s work at Buckingham Palace made his reputation working in the Gothic stream. Sir Charles Barry, apart from the Houses of Parliament, worked in the Classical stream. The best domestic example of this is his massive reworking of Trentham Hall for the Duke, a Minister in the Whig government, and the Duchess of Sutherland in 1834.

Girouard even sees a difference between the Christian Gothic stream, preferred by the aristocracy and landed gentry and the secular Classical stream, preferred by the new middle-class money of industry and the professions. The Whig versus

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82 See Ballantyne, Architecture, landscape and liberty.
83 Girouard, Victorian Country House, pp. 18; and see also, pp. 50-53.
Tory division has its background in the Whigs’ Reform Act of 1832 which brought important political reforms for local government in Britain’s new cities, and the celebration of its passing in Barry’s Reform Club of 1838. The Club is certainly not a villa, but an Italian palazzo, with a hint of asymmetry from the main entrance and a hint of domesticity from the chimneys. It was influential, however, at the more formal end of the spectrum of the Italianate villa model.

J. C. Loudon’s comment on the model’s appropriateness, especially for people who had been to Italy, was always relevant. In that sense, Italianate villas were built in a more ‘souvenir’ style different from the archaeological basis of the Greek and Gothic revivals and was quite different from the Nationalistic roots of the Gothic revival. As Robin Wyatt sums it up

John Loudon, in his Encyclopaedia of Architecture of 1833, speaks cautiously of ‘The Modern Italian Style of Architecture’, which has ‘Painter like effect’ with ‘in this country the recommendation of novelty; a quality which always makes a strong effect on the observer’. He feels it is not a style which can be trusted in ‘the hands of any Architect not a master in the art of composition’. The picturesque asymmetry ‘requires a much higher degree of talent than to compose in any species of regular architecture’. He concludes that it is a style ‘suited to people in moderate circumstances, to a democracy ... From the irregularity of its masses, which admit of a house receiving additions in every direction, it is suited to a prosperous and improving people—such as the Americans’.

So, the Italianate villa model, which was paid for by new middle-class money brought with it not only old aristocratic associations with the Italian masters of the seventeenth century but also modern associations of tourism in the Mediterranean, the sunny South, and the deeper associations of rationalism, idealism, and democracy.

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85 Quoted by Wyatt, ‘A Fine Prospect’.
Emergence of the Italianate Villa Model

J. C. Loudon was the first writer to recognize that the Italianate villa emerged from the fashionable Greek revival villa. The fact that Greek ruins existed relatively close to Naples at Paestum and elsewhere in Italy, which were visited by Grand Tourists, meant that the amateur division between ancient Greece and Rome was not precise. Stuart and Revett had published their landmark book on Greek antiquities over a long time, feeding the fashion for all things Greek including the theory of democracy. Richard Payne Knight went on the Grand Tour twice, in 1776 and 1778, before the French Revolution temporarily halted such travel, including Greece in the journey but that was a very dangerous place to visit. Italy, on the other hand, had been a destination on the Grand Tour for centuries and was even considered safe for ladies.\(^6\) As well as the authoritative and glamorous illustrated texts now available, there was also a sense of exoticism, allure, novelty and even danger in the Greek revival.

But the Greek revival villa was actually limited and held back by archaeological rigour, by the few buildings forms available and by the limited range of details suitable for domestic architecture.\(^7\) Importantly, there was no archaeological or documentary source for an ancient Greek villa (let alone for Greek towers) as there was from ancient Rome. As Elmes asserts, 'With the Greeks we can have but little to do. We know but little of their domestic architecture, save and except, about their palaces and hovels; and these indeed more from their writers than from their ruins.'\(^8\) Nor was there a tradition of

\(^{6}\) See O’Connor, Romance of Italy, for a feminist analysis.

\(^{7}\) Watkin, Thomas Hope, p. 70, lists Stratton Park, Osberton, Belsay Castle and the Grange as examples of 'uncompromising classic cubes' and illustrates others including pl. 27, Doric House, Bath, pl. 28 Storrs Hall, and pl. 29, Letheringsett.

\(^{8}\) Elmes, Metropolitan Improvements, p. 25.
Greek landscape painting like the ‘Claude’ industry which English ‘milordi’ had
been collecting for nearly two centuries. The more a Greek revival villa moved
away from the temple form and became deliberately asymmetrical and
obviously domestic, the more it lost its credibility.

In fact, the same applied to the Gothic revival ‘villa’. The intensity of
mediaeval archaeology increased especially under the Ecclesiologists.

Notwithstanding the richness of detail and the immediately available precedents for
Gothic villas, there were similar limitations. The brilliant but decadent folly of
Fonthill was intellectually hollow and the spectacular collapse of its tower in 1807
must have seemed symbolic. Mark Girouard sees it as the end of the fashion for
the Sublime, and the domestic Gothic revival moved on to a more pragmatic basis.

The Tudor, Elizabethan and ‘Muscular’ Gothic styles dominated.

The Italianate villa model was documented and developed in architectural
pattern books which both led and followed the model as it matured. It gained
authority from certain texts which were loosely ‘archaeological’ in that they went
in search of and aimed to offer genuine Italian examples. These books include:

Thomas F. Hunt in *Architettura Campestre* (1827); Robert Wetten in *Designs for
Villas in the Italian Style of Architecture* (1830); Parker in *Villa Rustica* (1832),
and John Ruskin Waring in *Examples of Architectural Art in Italy and Spain*.

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89 The oxymoron has to be accepted.
90 See Andrew Saint, *The Image of the Architect*, Yale University Press, New Haven and
London, 1963, pp. 30, 36, for some discussion about archaeology, mediaeval scholarship and the role
of the architect. Interestingly, he notes, however, that the movement was largely secular in post-
revolutionary France.
91 In a footnote to his ‘Introduction’, Hunt in *Architettura Campestre*, p. xvi, defends
the architect and blames the client. ‘It ought to be known to every body, that the falling of the beautiful
tower at Fonthill was caused entirely by the decay of the timber of which it was constructed, it
having only a thin casing of stone. This celebrated work was raised with extraordinary rapidity, the
men working by torch-light as well as day-light, to gratify the impatient desire of Mr. Beckford, who
is said to have replied to the remonstrances of his architect, that he cared not if it fell the day after he
had seen its completion. To those who know Mr Wyatt’s great powers of construction and extensive
practical knowledge, this Note is unnecessary.’
and John Burley Waring in *Examples of Architectural Art in Italy and Spain: Chiefly of the 13th and 16th Centuries*, (1850). It was further supported by the publication of Gilbert Laing Meason’s *On the Landscape Architecture of the Great Painters of Italy*, (1828). Indeed Meason believed that ‘We may safely allow the Grecian School the first place in Architectural Rank, but for domestic application the Italian is decidedly more useful, and within the reach of our habits and comforts.’ The fountainhead of Italy must be seen as the principal source of the Italianate villa model rather than the local Greek revival buildings in Britain.

**Evolution of the Italianate Villa Model**

Cronkhill, designed in 1802, is generally regarded as the first example of the Italianate villa to be built in Britain. Its architect, John Nash went on to design a series of other ‘Campagna’ villas: Sandridge Park, Devonshire for Lady Ashburton in 1805; Witley Court, Worcestershire for Lord Foley in 1806; Lissan Rectory, Co. Tyrone for Rev John Staples in 1807; Wood Hall, Yorkshire, for Mr. Henry William Maister in 1814-15. The architect, James Playfair developed a ‘Design for an Italianate villa for Mr. Balfour, 1792’, one of several such proposals now held in the Soane Collection. His son W. H. Playfair, noted as a Greek revivalist, designed and built several examples in the late 1820s in Edinburgh. The Northern Gate Lodge at Chatsworth, Derbyshire is of uncertain date but was built before 1836. It is obviously early and possibly influential because of the client, the Duke of

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95 The six drawings are catalogued as ‘Italianate’ villas or country houses and date from 1792 and 1793. They have not been sighted, but the curator has advised the author that, although not Gothic, they are barely Italian in detail.
Devonshire and the architect, Sir Jeffry Wyatville (1766-1840).\textsuperscript{56} The most important early example after Cronkhill was Deepdene, the new home in the countryside of the arch Greek revivalist, Thomas Hope.

A banker by profession, Thomas Hope was born into a family of Scottish merchants in Amsterdam and was brought up in the country near Haarlem. 'As a young man he travelled extensively in Europe and the Near East and acquired a considerable knowledge of architecture and sculpture.'\textsuperscript{97} Forced to leave Holland 'in or about 1795', he bought and transformed a house in Duchess Street, Portland Place, London which had been designed by Robert Adam. In 1820 he added a Greek revival gallery which was publicised by John Britton and Pugin, the Elder, in their Public Buildings of London, published in 1825. He had led the Greek revival fashion as the author, in 1807, of the very influential book, Household Furniture and Interior Decoration. In the same year he purchased the late eighteenth century house, formerly owned by the Duke of Norfolk, called Deepdene near Dorking in Surrey. David Watkin has researched Hope's work on the house and garden there in great detail and put it into the broader context of the Picturesque.\textsuperscript{98}

Hope did not rush into the alterations. Nothing much seems to have been done until 1818 when a mausoleum was built in the garden. But from that time on much was done. Hope, as well as redecorating the interiors of the original house 'added on to it two side wings, one capped by a tall tower; formed a new entrance-front and staircase hall; and constructed the detached and irregular groups of offices.

\textsuperscript{56} It is illustrated in Sutherland Lyall, Dream Cottages, from Cottage Ornée to Stockbroker Tudor, Robert Hale Ltd, London, 1988, p. 103 with the comment 'J.C. Loudon, writing in 1836, described it, slightly unfairly, as a "specimen of what, twenty years ago, was reckoned the Italian style."' See also Colvin, Biographical Dictionary, p. 959.

\textsuperscript{97} Colvin, Biographical Dictionary, pp. 431-2.

\textsuperscript{98} Watkin, Thomas Hope.
and stables'.

In 1823 another wing was added, this time 'at an angle of forty-five degrees to the body of the house, an orangery, conservatory, sculpture-gallery, and amphitheatre forming one bizarre unit'. Works were also under way in the garden. This created a house with an extraordinary floor plan, a complex massing, a variety of scales and styles and a dramatic skyline all integrated with the Picturesque Italianate garden and broader landscape. Watkin sums it up thus:

The house itself now partakes of the same sudden contrasts of height, level, shape, and style as the garden, and moves with astonishing versatility from Gothic to Classic, from Greek to Italian, from a style combining elements of both to another style of such originality that it can be pinned down to neither. The function of this whole setting is likewise the result of a new and varied synthesis.

Deepdene received much public attention. Thomas Hope wrote about it himself in his journal, the Repository in an article published 1823. The prolific author of illustrated topography books, John Britton, was involved in its recording and promotion and prepared a History of Deepdene in two volumes, dated 1821 and 1826 but it was never published. Brayley and Britton mentioned it in their Topographical History of Surrey published in 1850. Watkin states that 'The best and longest contemporary account is that of 1826 in Neale's Views of Seats. Neale thought so highly of this, or perhaps it was Hope who did, that he also published it separately in the same year, bound up as a book on its own.' More popular perhaps, would have been J. C. Loudon's promotion of what was happening at Deepdene in his Gardener's Magazine in 1829 and in his Encyclopaedia of Cottage Farm and Villa Architecture published in 1833, reprinted many times and used.

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69 Watkin, Thomas Hope, p. 164.
70 Watkin, Thomas Hope, p. 164.
71 Watkin, Thomas Hope, p. 172.
around the world. Loudon writes 'As graphic illustration of the principles which we have endeavoured to lay down we shall refer to the villa of the late Thomas Hope, Esq. at Deepdene, Surrey ... the finest example in England of an Italian villa, united with the grounds by architectural appendages.'\(^{104}\) Deepdene was more influential in the development of the Italianate villa model than Cronkhill because, not only was it the home of, and deliberate expression of taste by, one of the leaders of the Picturesque aesthetic, but it was much better known.

The city of Bath was one important 'birthplace' for the Italianate villa. This is not surprising because of the strength and continuity of its ancient Roman connections, the city's surviving 'clientele' who probably had been on the Grand Tour and some loose topographical similarities between Bath and the cities of Rome and Florence. There had been a decline in speculative building because of bank collapses in 1793 but, more pertinent perhaps, was the social change the city was experiencing in the early nineteenth century.\(^{105}\) Firstly, after the Napoleonic Wars, it became less fashionable with the rise of Cheltenham as a spa and Brighton as a seaside resort enjoying royal patronage.\(^{106}\) Secondly, it was changing from a city of townhouses to one of suburban villas.\(^{107}\) Thirdly, significant individuals in Bath were ready to use and develop the model like William Beckford,\(^{108}\) and his architect, Henry Edmund Goodridge,\(^{109}\) and another young architect, Edward Davies.\(^{110}\)

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103 Watkin, *Thomas Hope*, p. 166.
104 Hope quoted in Watkin, *Thomas Hope*, p. 175.
105 Christopher Woodward makes these points in his article, 'Aerial Boudoirs of Bath', *Country Life*, 4 September, 1997, pp. 68-71.
106 The Bath Assembly Rooms closed in 1807 for lack of patronage.
108 There are many biographical references on William Beckford, the first being written in the mid-nineteenth century.
Beckford, a very rich man through inheritance, was famous for his extraordinary exercise of the Gothic revival style in the construction of his folly, Fonthill Abbey between 1796 and 1807 but it had wearied him. He was also infamous for a youthful sexual scandal which led to his ostracism from Society. From 1822 he took up residence in Bath and lived in semi-retirement. There, from 1825 and into his old age, he created another folly. The young architect, Goodridge designed the remarkable rooms and tower on Lansdown Hill which came to be known as Lansdown Tower, capping it with a replica of the Choragic Monument of Lysicrates. A gatehouse by Goodridge was added some time later and a cemetery developed around it. Not strictly a villa, although there were day rooms for entertaining, the building was more a museum and library with a tower for contemplating both aspect and prospect.

Described by the architect’s son in 1864 as ‘Graeco-Italian’ in style, it demonstrates the close link between the two but was actually the third design prepared by Goodridge. The first was described at the time as a ‘Saxon Tower’ and the second was ‘fully as castellated as the first, but this time with a pronounced Italian Romanesque flavour’. Philippa Bishop writes that Beckford ‘instructed his architect that he wanted something altogether more classical. It was not however to hark back to Palladianism, nor yet to adhere too strictly to current Greek Revival forms, but should demonstrate his own abiding fondness for the idiosyncrasies of

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111 See Philippa Bishop, 'Beckford in Bath', Bath History, Avon County Library, pp. 85-112. Bishop cites and quotes from the more important biographical references.
112 I am grateful to the Bath Historical Society for providing unlimited access to both Lansdown Tower and all its available documentation during a visit to Bath in March, 2001.
114 Bishop, 'Beckford in Bath', p. 90.
the Picturesque". The result was an asymmetrical plan, a massing of three forms, including the tower, and a restrained use of Classical detail, apart from the dramatic termination of the tower.

Although not a campanile, it is indeed an example of the Picturesque aesthetic. Beckford himself compared Lansdown Tower and its prospect with the Roman Campagna which he had experienced on the Grand Tour. Importantly, he combines Sublime and Beautiful associations.

I shall never forget how I first passed over that land of the Dead, strewed with ruins and covered with green turf ... This scene [Lansdown] recalls to me my dreams and meditations there. The surface is smoother, but it has the same dun colour, the same "death-like stillness" and "dread repose". Bishop continues "This in turn brought to mind the landscapes in the paintings of Claude, which own much of their appeal to their associations with the Campagna—and in which can be found Italianate buildings very similar to Lansdown Tower".

In the Lansdown Tower Beckford established an extraordinary exercise in Picturesque architecture. If Cronkhill was the first example of the Italianate villa model in England, Beckford's tower was more prominent and dramatic and so far more famous and influential. It was also an extraordinary exercise in Picturesque planning with an approach to the structure up the hill from his terrace in town, past a gateway and through a farm with vernacular buildings. Later, other villas, including some in the Italianate style were built along the nearby road. Of these, the

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117 Bishop, 'Beckford in Bath', p. 93.
118 This deserves much more attention but cannot be discussed here for the sake of brevity.
most interesting is Glen Avon, the home of the architect James Wilson.\textsuperscript{119} But the cluster on Bathwick Hill is the earlier and purer development.

Henry Edmund Goodridge was born just before Cronkhill was built.\textsuperscript{120} The first villa he built on Bathwick Hill in 1828 was in the Greek revival style, Bathwick Hill House. It was ‘pure Greek’: symmetrical, very plain and used columns for the porch which ‘are a variant of the Corinthian order of the Choragic Monument of Lysicrates, as illustrated in the first volume of Stuart and Revett’s \textit{Antiquities of Athens}.\textsuperscript{121} He built his own home, Montebello on the upper side of Bathwick Hill in 1829. It was the first of his houses in the Italian style built on Bathwick Hill and was built immediately after his Grand Tour in 1829. Goodridge also built the semi-detached pair Villa Bianca (later Casa Bianca) and La Casetta of 1846 and he built a new home for himself called Fiesole in 1848.\textsuperscript{122} All survive and are situated on the southern slope of Bathwick Hill above the road.

Goodridge and Wilson were not the only architects to use the Italianate villa model in Bath. Recent research by Michael Forsyth has established another early example which was previously attributed to Goodridge.\textsuperscript{123} The evidence is the remodelling of an existing house, originally the home of the landscape painter, Benjamin Barker, for a new owner by the architect, Edward Davies.\textsuperscript{124} Indeed,

\textsuperscript{119} Neil Jackson, \textit{Nineteenth Century Bath Architects and Architecture}, Ashgrove Press, Bath, pp. 113, 115-6. Jackson gives no date, but it may have been built around 1833 and was possibly influenced by Loudon’s \textit{Encyclopaedia of Cottage Farm and Villa Architecture}.\textsuperscript{120} Colvin, \textit{Biographical Dictionary}, gives the year of his birth as 1797, p. 351, although previously it was stated as c.1800.\textsuperscript{121} Woodward, ‘Aerial Boudoirs of Bath’, p. 69. The Monument had already informed the design of Lansdown Tower, it will be remembered.\textsuperscript{122} Fiesole now provides backpacker’s accommodation. I am grateful to the manager of the hostel for allowing access in March, 2001.\textsuperscript{123} Forsyth, ‘The Conservation of a Regency Italianate Villa’.\textsuperscript{124} The Picturesque credentials of the existing house are of interest. Forsyth writes that ‘Benjamin was the brother of the more famous Thomas Barker of Bath, who had commissioned Joseph Michael Condly (1771-1843) to design the Greek Revival “Doric House” at Son Hill, Bath in 1817. Benjamin bought the land in 1814 jointly with his brother-in-law the flower painter James Hewlett. He began straightway to lay out the seven-acre garden in the irregular picturesque manner
Forsyth considers it to 'represent a remarkably early example of the newly emerging style of villa architecture as propagated by the contemporaneous publication of numerous and widely read pattern books. These books portray an image of Tuscany as seen through the paintings of Claude, with towers and campaniles, picturesque asymmetry, loggias and French windows opening directly onto terraced gardens.' Smallcombe Villa, on the downhill side of the Goodridge villas, directly opposite Montebello and later called Smallcombe Grove, was transformed in 1833. Other cities in Britain were experiencing similar social and architectural changes to Bath but it was the remarkable combination of Beckford and Goodridge which gave impetus to the development of the Italianate villa model there.

The Italianate villa model matured over the next century, while the Greek villa, with a few very special exceptions, declined from the 1830s. The model increased in sophistication and symbolism with an increasing complexity, range of scale, and use of ornamentation over two generations. It was used for both new places and for the reworking of existing places, sometimes amounting to a complete overhaul.

As early as 1838 there were signs of ennui. One of the most prolific pattern book authors, Peter Frederick Robinson wrote 'Buildings in this [Modern Italian] style of architecture have of late years been erected as villas in various parts of the

of his own landscape paintings. Barker's perception of the picturesque is well illustrated in a series of forty-eight scenes around Bath, which were published as aquatints, and depict a rather overgrown landscape of rocky crags, gnarled trees, dramatic skies, flowing water and rustic bridges and rural dwellings', 'Conservation of a Regency Italianate Villa', pp. 77-8. This house can be compared with Fortis Green, Muswell Hill, London, the Italianate villa home of W. A. Nesfield, landscape painter and landscape gardener. It was designed before 1840 by Nesfield's brother-in-law, Anthony Salvin.

The exceptions were the very interesting works of Alexander 'Greek' Thompson in and around Glasgow, which are discussed elsewhere.
Kingdom, each a servile copy of its neighbour, and it is difficult to create new features, and produce variety in a worn out subject. However, pattern books continued to promote the model and, responding to public demand, to devise evermore elaborate designs into the 1860s and beyond. Charles Wickes in *A Handy Book of Villa Architecture* published in 1859 and 1862 provides a full-blown example of the model in his Design No. 5, its asymmetrical massing crammed with details and devices including, of course, a tower over the entrance.

E. L. Blackburne in *Suburban and Rural Architecture*, provides a design for 'A Pair of Villas – Italian' which are highly coloured with bands of polychrome brick. The tower has a more steeply pointed roof than usual which is covered by terra cotta tiles.

Towers, the most distinctive characteristic of the model, were often added to establish the key associations of the Italianate style. The most fantastic tower is surely that in Design 13 of Francis Goodwin's *Rural Architecture*. Goodwin advises on their many practical advantages in that

Where the design admits of it, and the cost of erection is not a material consideration, a tower or other lofty belvedere is a pleasing addition to a country residence, especially if near the coast, or in any situation to command an extensive and varied prospect. To a Hunting Lodge it is certainly no inappropriate appendage, as it affords an opportunity to the ladies of the family to accompany the sportsmen in the chase, with their eyes, if not more amazonically on horseback. In like manner, too, as such a belvedere, adds to the attractions of a villa, so are telescopes very suitable and agreeable articles of furniture for one; which besides other uses, will enable the inmates of such a watch tower to espy the approach of unbidden, undesired visitors – of any bores, for instance, which being biped ones, are not recognized as beasts of chase [sic], —they enjoy all the perfect security from their intrusion. Should other furniture be desired, a book-stand, and a

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128 Goodwin, *Rural Architecture*, pl. 27.
harp would suffice to render such a place a delightful snuggery—a kind of aerial boudoir, equally fitted either for speculation or for meditation.\textsuperscript{129}

The proposed tower is an extraordinary tapering structure of about five storeys, with balconies at the penultimate level and an external promenade under its peak. A flagpole surmounts the top. This is of extra interest because the garden tower at Deepdene tapered and had a similar promenade.\textsuperscript{130} Goodwin's tower was probably never built.

Between 1835 and 1839, Sir Charles Barry made extensive changes at Walton House and added a massive entrance tower, said to be based on the tower at Deepdene.\textsuperscript{131} He juxtaposed it against a humble two-storey wing less than half its size. The vernacular pan tiles of the main roof are in marked contrast to the High Renaissance aedicule window of the tower's top floor. Usually, the grander the house, the more formal and refined was the vocabulary of its architecture but the Picturesque aesthetic and a deliberately asymmetrical massing could accommodate much irregularity. The architect, Henry Clutton added an extraordinary clock tower to Barry’s stables at Cliveden in 1862.\textsuperscript{132} Goodridge even proposed additions to Lansdown Tower which would have destroyed the simplicity of its Graeco-Roman style but they were never built.

The Buildings of Sir Charles Barry

Sir Charles Barry (1795-1860), the most influential British architect in the revival of Italian Renaissance architecture in Britain, travelled throughout the Mediterranean between 1817 and 1819. De Jong, quoting from Watkin and Mellinghoff, notes that “Barry in turn was not oblivious “to the fundamental Neo-classical desire” of much

\textsuperscript{129} Goodwin, \textit{Rural Architecture}, p. 3.
\textsuperscript{130} Watkin, \textit{Thomas Hope}, fig. 69, p. 188.
of German speaking Europe, “stimulated by a passion for Italy, to create a new classical synthesis in which images culled from antique and Renaissance sources would combine suggestively in a landscape setting.”\(^{133}\) She continues

In Prussia, Karl Friedrich Schinkel and Leo von Klenze were the most widely known and highly respected architectural exponents of this ideology. The idea of using asymmetrically placed towers to provide massive vertical accents for large plain mansions was much copied. At Osborne the Prince Consort would have wished to emulate Prussian as well as English endeavour.\(^{134}\)

Barry’s designs, being houses for aristocrats, were on a very grand scale and consequently he preferred the palazzo form and High Renaissance detail rather than the simpler rural vernacular. These examples were well beyond the scope of most pattern books catering for the middle classes. Being at one end of the continuum of Classical architecture, the success of Barry’s designs show the flexibility of the Italianate villa model.

Barry and his clients had other concerns, including what would now be called conservation. When he was in Egypt in January 1819, he met the English aristocrat, William Bankes, noting his ‘brilliance and talent’.\(^{135}\) While his client lived in exile in Italy, Barry remodelled Bankes’ stately home, Kingston Lacy, Dorset between 1835 and 1841, reinstating lost elements from the original design, which they considered to be by Inigo Jones. While respecting what he had inherited, the client, with Barry as architect, introduced a range of Italian details and materials at the Palladian end of the spectrum.

\(^{133}\) Watkin and Mellinghoff, *German Architecture*, p. 194.
\(^{135}\) *Kingston Lacy*, National Trust, 1994, p. 25.
Barry’s most important Italianate design was the remodelling of Trentham Hall from 1834 to 1842. He also remodelled Dunrobin Castle in Scotland for the Sutherlands in the Scottish Baronial style, from 1844 to 1850 and remodelled Cliveden in Buckinghamshire in the High Renaissance revival style, from 1849 to 1851. The main blocks of Trentham and Cliveden used the *palazzo* form with giant order pilasters. The political connections and values of the Sutherlands, which have already been mentioned, cannot be underestimated. They were both close to the young Queen and the Duchess was her Mistress of the Robes until 1841.  

She rode with the Queen to the coronation in 1838. The Duchess was involved in finding the Queen an appropriate suitor and, on the occasion of her marriage to Albert, again rode with Victoria in her carriage. The Duchess was a cultivated woman … she was deeply interested in philanthropic and social movements, such as the Abolition of Slavery, and had a strong sympathy for national movements, which she showed by entertaining Garibaldi in 1864. According to Dixon and Muthesius ‘Queen Victoria admired the taste of the Duke and Duchess of Sutherland’. Within a few years, Prince Albert had designed two new royal residences, Osborne House in the Italianate style and Balmoral in the Scottish Baronial style.

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136 There was a political crisis over the Ladies in Waiting when the Tories required the right to choose them, rather than the Queen, when the government changed. The Duchess of Sutherland, not surprisingly, was considered too close to the Whigs, and eventually was not re-appointed. See A. C. Benson and Viscount Esher, eds., *The Letters of Queen Victoria*, John Murray, London, 1908, vol. 1, p. 268.

137 Benson and Esher, *Letters*, vol. 1, p. 120-1.

138 Actually, the Duchess of Sutherland supported another suitor but, ‘after the Prince Consort’s death she was for some weeks the Queen’s constant companion’, Benson and Esher, *Letters*, vol. 1, p. 101, fn. 1.


Osborne House

In 1845, some eight years after her accession to the throne and five years after her marriage to Prince Albert, Queen Victoria purchased 800 acres of land surrounding a modest house called Osborne Cottage on the northern side of the Isle of Wight. More land was added successively to total eventually over 2,000 acres: 600 acres of parkland, 400 of woodland and 700 of arable land. The views over the Solent and towards Portsmouth, the great naval base were described at the time as 'extensive, and of varied beauty'. Victoria knew the Isle of Wight and the existing house from her childhood. Both she and her husband hoped that the Osborne estate would be a retreat from London and Windsor, providing more privacy and, importantly, a home for their expanding family.

Prince Albert immediately began work to remodel and enlarge the existing building. Edward Blore, more or less the official architect to the Crown and well-connected with the Tories, 'was asked to do a design for the alterations' but it did not proceed. This is not surprising considering the Duchess of Sutherland's poor opinion of Blore as 'the cheap architect'. Albert was not an architect and sought assistance from Thomas Cubitt (1788-1855), the very successful London builder. Queen Victoria laid the foundation stone of the new wing on 23rd June 1845 and, by mid-September 1846, the royal family had moved into Osborne House and had enjoyed a traditional house warming as if to emphasise their

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domesticity.

While Barry's work may be one of the strongest sources for the architecture of Osborne House at a superficial level, who was the real author of the architecture of Osborne House? All writers have associated Thomas Cubitt with the design.\(^{146}\) There seems no doubt about the veracity of Cubitt's contribution, at least to the technical aspects of the project's construction. He was very successful in his speculative developments of the aristocratic estates around Buckingham Palace and had revolutionised the building industry in London, but he had no formal training as an architect.\(^{147}\) His contribution seems to have been to the logistics and documentation rather than the aesthetics of the project.

One of Prince Albert's more recent biographers, Robert Rhodes James, introduces a third player, Ludwig Gruner (1801-1882). Gruner and the Prince had met and travelled together in Italy around the time when marriage to Victoria was under real consideration. James perhaps overstates his case when he writes 'The two young men became close friends, and it was Gruner who opened Albert's eyes to the glories of the Early Renaissance, then much ignored, and indeed despised in fashionable circles. Thus began a friendship and a collaboration, which' according to James, was 'of incalculable value to English art and architecture.'\(^{148}\) Gruner designed some of the artwork within the house and the two fountains, one of Venus and the other of Andromeda, on the terraces of Osborne House. Gruner was unlikely to have been the 'architect' of Osborne, but it is likely that he reinforced Prince Albert's taste for Italy and what was happening in Germany.

\(^{146}\) These are too numerous to list but see especially Hobhouse, *Thomas Cubitt*, Ch. 18 'Our Cubitt' – Osborne; and Michael Turner, 'From Coburg to Osborne'.


One other architect who may have contributed seems to have been ignored. Thomas Cubitt’s younger brother, Lewis Cubitt (1799-1883) was trained as an architect and prepared many designs for him. These included the plans and elevations for the Italianate houses in Lowndes Square, Belgravia, built between 1837 and 1839 which were published in *The Surveyor, Engineer and Architect* in 1841. But a part of Eaton Square was attributed to “T. and L. Cubitt” by Britton and Pugin in *The Public Buildings of London*, published in 1828. Later, he designed the Bricklayer’s Arms Station and King’s Cross Station in the Italianate style both of which use the *campanile* as clock towers. Just before the construction of Osborne, Lewis Cubitt designed a tower for the Victoria Hotel at Colchester which was very similar to those at Osborne. But Colvin notes that Lewis was “always regarded by the family as the laziest and least satisfactory of the three” Cubitt brothers.*151* The design of Osborne House would have required the full range of architectural drawings for its construction, even if it were not built according to the competitive tendering process that Thomas Cubitt had introduced. Lewis may have played a subservient but important role, even to the point of providing, through Thomas, worked-up drawings from the Prince’s initial sketches.*152*

Girouard states of Osborne “The house (it was deliberately a house, not a palace) became one of the best known, most illustrated and most imitated in the world ... In the country house field a sudden rush of mini-Osbornes in the late 1840s was followed by a decreasing number of offspring until as late as the 1870s.”*153* One of the last Italianate villas to be built in Britain was also for an

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150 It is illustrated in *The Builder*, 1843, p. 350.
152 This conjecture deserves further research.
artist, Lord Leighton, who lived and worked in a relatively simple but very fashionable red brick version in Holland Park, London. Girouard quantifies the decline in the use of Classical styles thus: ‘My sample of Victorian country houses shows that 41 per cent were classical in 1840-4, 32 per cent in 1850-4 and only 16 per cent in 1860-4’. While in Britain the Italianate villa model may have declined quantitatively, it endured qualitatively because the circumstances which created and nourished it continued. In later chapters, the model’s success in the colonial context will be seen to flourish, especially in Victoria and most significantly in the example of Government House, Melbourne, which is so often compared with Osbourne House.

The Italianate villa model was so successful because it was adaptable externally in its siting, setting, scale and form, was flexible and practical in its internal arrangements, and was suitable for the tenor of the times. The model became available just as the middle class was increasing, diversifying, consolidating in wealth, and rising in power. Its acceptance by the aristocracy, and especially by the young Queen, gave it great social authority. Its success is self-evident: it became widespread, was popular, and was enduring, well outlasting its ‘first cousin’—the Greek revival villa.

Most importantly, the Picturesque aesthetic realised three key qualities of the Italianate villa: asymmetry in plan, the scenographic role of a villa in a landscape and, by its use of the vocabulary of classical architecture, certain associations of ideas and values. These were the depiction of a particular lifestyle, including the notions of retreat and self-sufficiency, and something of the rationalism of classical civilization. The Italianate villa introduced a pictorial approach to landscaping with

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a shift in the appreciation of backgrounds and foregrounds. It confirmed the notion of aspect and prospect. And it allowed the combination of different gardening styles in one setting. It overrode the earlier changes which had occurred under Lancelot (Capability) Brown in the idealisation of landscape by introducing a new appreciation for roughness, irregularity, and the darker forces of nature. A new sense of approach, more axial planning, formal terraces and plantings which deliberately triggered particular associations and reactions were combined in Picturesque landscapes.

Richard Payne Knight, one of the fathers of the Picturesque, might have the last word, just as the Italianate villa began:

The best style of architecture for irregular and picturesque houses, which can now be adopted, is that mixed style, which characterizes the buildings of Claude and the Poussins; for as it is taken from models, which were built piecemeal during many successive ages; and by several different nations, it is distinguished by no particular manner of execution, or class of ornaments; but admits of all promiscuously, from a plain wall or buttress, of the roughest masonry, to the most highly wrought Corinthian capital.\(^{155}\)

The proliferation of pattern books offering promiscuous designs for Italianate villas, and their accompanying ‘theory’, began with the turn of the nineteenth century and continued to its end if not beyond. The last examples might seem, in Knight’s view, to have little in common with the beginning of the model at Cronkhill. The model went from being a small but archly sophisticated souvenir for the liberal upper classes and their connections to being a thoroughly middle-class souvenir all but stripped of its associations for the majority, whether in Britain or colonial Australia.

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3 MARKETING THE ITALIANATE VILLA:

THE POPULISM OF PATTERN BOOKS

The Italianate villa was well suited to the Picturesque aesthetic and it was an ideal subject for pattern books, being attractive, wide-ranging and adaptable. Its physical characteristics were comfortably domestic, it required a situation which was easily achievable and it suggested a lifestyle which was not only desirable but offered an antidote to increasing urbanism. This was all codified, developed and promoted in the rush of architectural pattern books from the beginning of the nineteenth century which served an eager market, a rush which continued into the twentieth century. The Italianate villa was not the only model disseminated by pattern books but it was, for about one hundred years, the most enduring.

Pattern books were produced to appeal to the rapidly increasing middle classes and they succeeded admirably. There were two main types, the 'sampler', a collection of representative designs, and the 'compendium', a collection which strived to be all-embracing, if not exhaustive. Their production and marketing were deliberately populist in format, content and advice. The authors were almost all middle-class themselves. They knew their audience well and they took advantage of improved industrial techniques to provide attractive illustrations which appealed to those with a less sophisticated education. But what was omitted is as revealing as what was included. The popular success of pattern books is most obvious in the broad distribution of the genre particularly through public and private libraries.

This chapter deals with the production and content of pattern books, especially in Britain and with a spotlight on the Italianate villa. The following chapter deals with the market such pattern books enjoyed, with a focus on colonial Victoria.
The Genre

The architectural pattern book genre emerged in the later eighteenth-century as one of three distinct types of books on architecture in the eighteenth and nineteenth century: general treatises on architecture; treatises on the orders; and books of picturesque cottage and villa designs. The latter are sometimes called ‘hand-books’, ‘model books’, ‘villa books’, ‘cottage books’ or ‘house pattern books’. They were produced in Britain, in the United States and on the Continent. No true pattern book appears to have been produced in Australia. The genre was derived from three early eighteenth-century sources. These were the large, expensive, limited-edition books on architecture such as Vitruvius Britannicus and Vitruvius Scoticus; travelogue and topographical books which showed ‘country seats’ such as Britannia Illustrata; and the small but still

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1 Archer, Literature of British Domestic Architecture, 1715-1842, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge MA, 1985, 23. This is by far the most comprehensive and scholarly discussion of architectural publishing yet produced.


3 One possible example, produced by the Melbourne firm of architects, Terry and Oakden, What to Build and How to Build It, George Robertson & Co. Melbourne, 1885, is discussed in Chapter 4.

4 Colin Campbell published the first edition of Vitruvius Britannicus in 1715, which was republished subsequently. John Woolfe and James Gandon added further volumes in 1771. Other parts and volumes were published until the mid-nineteenth century when the final volume by P. F. Robinson was published in 1847. William Adam wrote Vitruvius Scoticus, collection of plans, elevations and sections of public buildings, noblemen’s and gentlemen’s houses in Scotland which was published in Edinburgh and London 1780. For recent discussion of the interrelationship of books and architecture in Western Europe in the 17th and 18th centuries see Giles Worsley, Classical Architecture in Britain, the Heroic Age, Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art, Yale University Press, New Haven and London, 1995.

5 See Tim Clayton, in ‘Publishing Houses: Prints of Country Seats Around 1700’, Ch. 3, and p. 45, in Dana Arnold, ed., The Georgian Country House: architecture, landscape and society, Sutton Publishing Ltd. Stroud, 1998. ‘A similar scheme was proposed by Leonard Kniff who invited owners to sponsor a series of much larger plates of ‘One Hundred Noblemen and Gentlemen’s Seats’. This was not a complete success either. Having failed to reach his target of 100 subscribers, Kniff sold his plates. But his prints were soon selling well on the open market. The eighty completed plates were first published as Britannia Illustrata by the print and bookseller David Mortier in 1707 but Mortier, the
relatively expensive manuals on building such as The Art of Sound Building. The market for the first two sources, like the theoretical texts, was the aristocracy, the gentry and professionals. The market for the third source was working-class tradesmen. The pattern book genre had less to do with publications on Vitruvius and Palladio which sought to establish whole theories of architecture than with practical advice, an awareness of economy, some discussion on taste and style, and a general sense of self-improvement.

The genre itself varied. The earlier type, which continued and developed throughout the nineteenth century, was the sampler. The slim, small volumes of the early nineteenth century by such British writers as Thomas Dearn (1777-1853), Richard Elsam, Joseph Gandy (1771-1843), Edward Gyfford (1773-1856), David Laing (1774-1856), Thomas Malton (1748-1804), John Plaw (c.1745-1820), William Pocock (1779-1849), and Peter Frederick Robinson (1776-1858) are typical of the sampler type. They contrast with J. C. Loudon’s various large encyclopaedias and with Robert Kerr’s, The Gentleman’s House which are of the compendium type started by Loudon but the two types cross-fertilised each other. A. J. Downing’s American Rural Residences falls in between and there were further variations and changes in the later American pattern books. That the genre developed is not

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8 William Halfpenny published this manual for workers as well as architects and owners in 1725. Halfpenny and his son were amongst the most prolific pattern book authors.
surprising as the market for pattern books also developed and matured. But the format, content and avowed purpose of each type remained relatively the same.

The general market for pattern books, as a genre, waxed and waned, but was increasingly middle-class. The architectural profession and the building trade continued to produce, and to use, pattern books. John Archer states "These volumes are generally quarto in size, usually embellished with handsome aquatinted or lithographed plates, often hand coloured, and served as architect's advertisements or idea books for potential middle-class clients in Britain's growing provincial towns, suburbs, and resort communities." Pattern books were not only populist but also very popular. In addition, both types of the genre were ideal additions to private and public libraries and while private libraries were usually professional, the latter were nominally open to all. Furthermore, a general decline in quality can be traced which represents a broadening, if not a lowering, of the middle-class market for pattern books.

The Authors

Most of the early authors were aspiring architects from the middle classes and were connected through the Royal Academy Schools and apprenticeships to senior architects. Of this group, Sir John Soane (1753-1837), the son of a brick layer, was to achieve the greatest prominence. He published Designs in Architecture in 1778

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8 This is the consistent assessment of all writers on the subject. For example, see Christopher Hussey, The Picturesque, Essays on a Point of View, G. P. Putnam's Sons, London, 1927, Ch. 6; Michael McEordie, "Picturesque Pattern Books and Pre-Victorian Designers", Architectural History, vol. 18, no. 1, 1975 p. 45 & 47.
9 Archer, Literature, p. 23.
10 For the social and economic status of the authors, see McEordie, "Picturesque Pattern Books", pp. 47-52.
at the age of twenty-five, 'a youthful work which Soane afterwards did his best to suppress', and at least three other pattern books up to the turn of the century. Another author, T. D. W. Dearm, described himself as 'Architect to the Duke of Clarence' on the title page of *Sketches in Architecture*, published in 1806 and dedicated his *The Bricklayer's Guide* of 1809 to Sir John Soane. His many books, rather than his few buildings, mark Dearm's contribution to the profession. Richard Elsam, who wrote three successful pattern books, was surveyor to the Corporation of Dover but suffered from professional litigation and, possibly, incompetence. Other authors fared better professionally, but none so well as Soane.

Most author-architects succeeded modestly in a middle class way. Joseph Gandy, one of three brothers who wrote on architecture and antiquities, was the son of a man in service at White's Club, St. James where the celebrated architect, James Wyatt (1746-1813) had noticed him. Gandy wrote *Designs for cottages, cottage farms, and other rural buildings*, and *The rural architect*, both published in 1805, and contributed drawings to Britton's *Architectural Antiquities* and appears to have had a successful career as an architect. John Plaw was one of the most successful early authors, whose *Rural Architecture*, said to be the first pattern book, went through six editions between 1785 and 1804. His built works appear to have been modest, the largest being a villa at Vauxhall, exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1781, and St

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12 He also published *Plans, Elevations and Sections of Buildings in the County of Norfolk, Suffolk, etc.* (1788), *Sketches in Architecture* (1793), and *Designs for Public and Private Buildings* (1828).
13 Colvin, *Biographical Dictionary*, pp. 255-6, who gives no information on his background which was, presumably, not even the gentry.
Mary's, Paddington, built between 1788 and 1791.\textsuperscript{16} Plaw later immigrated to Canada where he continued to practise until his death in 1820. William Pocock was the son of a London builder who 'eventually acquired a widespread practice which extended to Ireland, Canada and other parts of the world'.\textsuperscript{17} He wrote *Architectural Designs for Rustic Cottages, Rural Dwellings and Villas, with appropriate scenery*, in 1807, and *Designs for Churches and Chapels* in 1819 as well as other texts.\textsuperscript{18} All these examples could be best described as samplers, small books with perhaps a dozen designs.

Peter Frederick Robinson was the most prolific writer of pattern books and used the most eclectic range of styles.\textsuperscript{19} He wrote at least six pattern books as well as other books, pamphlets and papers. Many of his own diverse designs appear in the books. In the introduction to the third and 'greatly improved' edition of *Designs for Ornamental Villas*, published in 1836, Robinson expresses surprise at his own success. He notes 'the more solid advantage, however, arising from my publication, has appeared in the number of professional engagements which the Work has produced; and it is my intention shortly to publish a Supplement, containing the Plans and Elevations of Houses erected from my Designs, and under my superintendence, since the Second Edition appeared.'\textsuperscript{20} Of all the aspiring architects from the early nineteenth century, and the list above is only a small sample, Robinson seems to have succeeded the best through his publications, rising to the position of Vice-President of

\begin{footnotes}
\item[18] He also wrote *Modern Finishings for Rooms: a series of designs for vestibules, halls and staircases ... to which are added some designs for villas and porticos* in 1811, republished in 1823.
\end{footnotes}
the Institute of British Architects. Again, the Robinson pattern book examples are of the sampler type.

J. C. Loudon and A. J. Downing, among the most prolific authors, were also middle class. Their lives and achievements are discussed later in the context of their political views. Here it is sufficient to note that they were of middle-class, even humble origins, that they were self-taught within a family context, and that they were very successful in a classic, self-made-man way. Their aspirations were relatively modest and, in a nineteenth-century sense, suburban. They provided a model of the middle-class ideal, as authors and as individuals.

Their Production

Architectural pattern books for the nineteenth-century middle class differed from eighteenth-century aristocratic and professional publications in their size, format, distribution and content.\footnote{See Archer, 'Architecture and the Book Trade', \textit{Literature}.} While the difference in size, format and distribution may be attributable, in part, to the increasingly mechanised production of books, to the introduction of new printing techniques, and to better transport, the difference in content clearly addresses a new, middle-class market rather than an aristocratic or professional market. The differences in size, format and distribution can also be attributed to the expectations and demands of the new middle-class market. Smaller, more charming books were cheaper to produce, were more attractive to a range of purchasers, and could be distributed more widely.

The charm of early pattern books suited the times and it is enduring. New printing techniques were developed in the late eighteenth century and were soon used
in pattern books. Aquatint and lithography, which could be hand-painted, and chromo-lithography, which was printed colour, were used to provide a soft, dreamy and indeed picturesque effect which is in contrast to today’s colour photography. These illustrations were certainly in contrast to the strict delineation of buildings in the steel and copper engravings of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. They had used hatching and sharp shadow lines to create architectural forms. Windows were often depicted as solid black. If landscaping was shown, it was usually stiff and formal. The new printing techniques were ideally suited to the new Picturesque aesthetic and accommodated a more painterly approach. Indeed, aquatints and hand-painted lithographs rivelled watercolours and complemented the fashion for out-of-doors painting advocated by such authors on the Picturesque as the Reverend Gilpin, whose market was middle-class. But the special charm of the early pattern books was lost as the genre developed during the nineteenth century.

The Sizes

The change in the size of architectural books from the eighteenth to the nineteenth century is obvious. Grand compilations of drawings and letterpress in hand-bound folios, including atlas and elephant folios, collected by or for the aristocratic and professional market were, for the most part, superseded by quarto and octavo books.  

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22 For an excellent collection of illustrations using a wide range of techniques over two centuries, see Worsley, Classical Architecture. For a brief discussion about the technicalities of the printing processes, see Archer, Literature, pp. 30-2.  
23 The conversion of approximate traditional sizes, from The Whole Library Handbook, American Library Association, Chicago, is as follows:

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<th>Double Elephant Folio</th>
<th>over 125cms</th>
<th>over 50ins</th>
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<td>Atlas Folio</td>
<td>62.5cms</td>
<td>25ins</td>
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<tr>
<td>Elephant Folio</td>
<td>57.5cms</td>
<td>23ins</td>
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<tr>
<td>Folio</td>
<td>37.5cms</td>
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<tr>
<td>Quarto</td>
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In the eighteenth century, folios were made up from private collections, which may have been assembled abroad, from fascicles or 'numbers' published as instalments, or as a series of volumes. Special expensive editions continued to be published but pattern books for the mass market became smaller and were rarely, if ever, published in several volumes. John Claudius Loudon, who came to dominate the popular press in gardening, agriculture and architecture, first published *Illustrations of Landscape-Gardening and Garden Architecture ... in Twenty Parts*, on his own account in fascicles, but actually published no more than three of the proposed twenty parts.24 Loudon's first edition of *Encyclopaedia of Gardening* which appeared in 1822 was in the handy duodecimo size. It was the first attempt at a compendium of knowledge on the subject and was followed in 1825 by his *Encyclopaedia of Agriculture*.

One of the more common, later pattern books, *Villa and Cottage Architecture*, published in Edinburgh and London in 1868, is folio in size and sampler in type.25 This collection of suburban villas, as well as addressing an obviously middle-class market, was also directed to professionals. In addition to well-written and informative text, the drawings include the construction details and the sections through buildings normally missing from lesser books. In a sense, it harks back to the aristocratic books and trade manuals of a century before. It is the

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25 *Villa and Cottage Architecture*: select examples of country and suburban residences recently erected, with a full descriptive notice of each building. Blackie and Sons, Edinburgh and London, 1868. It was popular enough for a second edition in 1871. Research for this thesis has shown that it is one of the most commonly held pattern books in public and private libraries in Australia. See Appendix XX.
most sophisticated of the sampler type of pattern book. This book was so successful it was reprinted at least four times.26

It certainly provides the information a professional would require both in words and pictures. Materials are instructively detailed as to type, origin, manufacturer and application almost sufficient for an architect’s specification. For example,

The roofs are first covered with Croggan’s patent asphalted felt upon a rough boarding, and then slated with Cumberland slates of a delicate green colour, having ornamental bands and figures executed in darker shades of slate. The ornamental ridges are of Staffordshire blue tile. All hips and valleys are covered with 6lbs. lead. The eave-gutters and rain-water pipes are of cast-iron.27

All this is clearly visible in the perspective, four elevations, and one section. As well there are two floor plans and some twelve details. The drawings are meticulously engraved, an old fashioned and expensive technique for pattern books, and they convey much more precise information than Loudon’s woodcuts.28

As an indication of the quality of this pattern book, the engravings are generally consistent notwithstanding the variety of engravers. Nineteen architects, including Alexander ‘Greek’ Thompson, contributed to the collection and their executed works give much credence to its production.29

Architects continued to publish pattern books to promote themselves and their profession well into the nineteenth century. One late pattern book, by the Edinburgh architect James Bogue, Country and Suburban Cottages and Villas, offers wise

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27 Villa and Cottage Architecture, pp. 10-11.
28 Villa and Cottage Architecture, pls. IX, X & XI.
29 The firm A. & G. Thompson was responsible for four of the villas, including one of the ‘double villas’, and Holmwood at Cathcart near Glasgow, the penultimate design which is clearly one of the most impressive in the book. Holmwood was replicated in Adelaide, South Australia, some two decades later.
counsel to those members of the middle class who are about to build concerning the
engagement of an architect. The architect, and Soane Medallist, R. A. Briggs,
FRIBA wrote *Bungalows and Country Residences*, one of the last British pattern
books published in the nineteenth century. The sampler format of the book is
conventional with some twenty designs in a loosely British vernacular which
combines Old English details, such as half-timbering, with some Classicism but none
are Italianate. The book is of interest for several reasons. Firstly, it introduces the
new term 'bungalow' as a substitute for villa. Secondly, it is a very late example of a
book with a royal dedication being 'inscribed to HRH Princess Mary Adelaide,
Duchess of Teck'. Thirdly, and most importantly, it is a very late example of a book
sold by subscription. Nearly one hundred and fifty people subscribed, of whom
sixteen were aristocrats (or at least titled) in the old tradition. Five people were civil
engineers, two were doctors of medicine and one subscriber was a Member of
Parliament. The largest group was twenty-five architects (or at least members of the
RIBA) and this shows the link between pattern books and the architectural profession,
both through their authors and their readers.

Architects were strong supporters of the serious pattern book and that the
profession owned pattern books is clear. The provenance of many can be traced not
only through signatures, inscriptions, bookplates and various forms of stamps but also

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Illustrated handbook containing thirty-three plates*, Edinburgh, Robert Symon and London, Crosby
Lockwood & Son, 1888. James Bogue also wrote *Domestic Architecture. A Fullarton & Co.:*
Edinburgh & London, 1865.

41 R. A. Briggs, *Bungalows and Country Residences. A series of Designs and Examples of
Recently Executed Works*, B. T. Batsford, London, 1891. This is not to suggest that pattern books were
not written afterwards. See also R.A. Briggs, *Homes for the country: a series of designs, and examples
of executed works, with plans of each*, B. T. Batsford, London, 1904. The genre could be said to
continue healthily up to the present day.
through auction catalogues and other documentary sources. Research for this thesis has established a range of owners, some easily identifiable, including architects as individuals and as professional practices. Nonetheless, the survival of individual books is haphazard.

Furthermore, the motive for purchasing, obtaining, collecting or even selling a book or a library is usually impossible to deduce from a sale catalogue. Some book auction catalogues cite the departure of the seller as the reason for the sale. For example, the architect, Henry Ginn sold his books when he left Sydney early in 1841, only to return in June 1842. Books might be passed on with an ulterior motive.

Frederick Sargood’s father was given a copy of John Starforth’s, The Architecture of the Farm, a Series of Designs, which included two designs in the Italianate style out of ten, inscribed ‘F. J. Sargood with J. W.’s best regards, Melbourne March 30th 1854’. Decades later, the bookplate of Harold Desbrowe Annear (1865-1933), an architect from a very different period, was added to a copy of Richard Brown’s

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34 This is held at Rippon Lea, Elsternwick, the home of Frederick Sargood, an Italianate villa, although not typical of the type, designed and altered by the architect, Joseph Reed with later additions, including the Italianate tower by Lloyd Taylor. It is discussed in detail in Chapter 8. It is interesting to note that the book was only published in 1853 so it reached Melbourne quickly. Might J. W. have been the builder, James Webb, brother of the architect Charles Webb with whom he was in partnership, and notionally an architect himself since he was one of the founding members of the Victorian Architects’ Association? Freeland, Making of a Profession, p. 21. The other members who came together on the 12th May 1851 were Robert Rogers, Charles Laing, Charles Webb, Samuel Jackson and Henry Ginn who was elected president.
Domestic Architecture which was published in 1842. Did Annear obtain this book to use it, which seems unlikely, or as a collectable object? It would be unwise to draw general and unqualified conclusions about provenance on the research to date except to note that architects not only wrote pattern books, they also bought and collected them.

The Market for Pattern Books

Evidence of the middle-class market for pattern books can be found in their brief, and extended, titles. The fact that the titles include the words ‘villa’, ‘cottage’, ‘parsonage’ and ‘lodge’, terms which overlap to some extent, suggests that the scale of the designs is modest and their status moderate. It is standard, in the sampler type, for the scale and status of the buildings illustrated to increase toward the end of the pattern book. There is other evidence, however, that the range of building owners who used pattern books was wide and went beyond the middle class.

The aristocracy and their architects might have also used pattern book designs for small villas on large estates. There is evidence of Italianate designs being used in this way for lodges at Trentham, one of the country estates of the Duke of Sutherland, designed by Charles Barry, and at the village of Edensor, near the estate of the Duke of Westminster, designed by Jeffrey Wyatville. Barry was ‘perhaps the best known contributor’ to Loudon’s Encyclopædia of Cottage, Farm and Villa Architecture.

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34 The full title is Domestic Architecture: containing a history of the science and the principles of designing public buildings, private dwelling houses, country mansions and suburban villas, from the choice of the spot to the completion of the appendages. The copy is held in the Architecture and Building Library, University of Melbourne.

35 Sutherland Lyall, Dream Cottages, from Cottage Ornée to Stockbroker Tudor, Robert Hale Ltd, London, 1988, Ch. 5. ‘Villa Rustica: the making of the Italian vernacular style’, quotes several other examples of lodges on estates.

36 Melanie Simo, Loudon and the Landscape, Yale University Press, New Haven and London, 1988, pp. 127-8. The designs were both Classical and Gothic.
Two examples of lodges on the Shrubland Park estate are remarkably similar to authentic Italian buildings from Charles Parker's *Villa Rustica*. Cronkhill, designed by John Nash in 1803 and acknowledged as the first Italianate villa in England, was a lodge on the Attingham Estate, at Atcham near Shrewsbury, owned by Lord Berwick. As discussed in Chapter 1, a copy of Richard Earlm's *Liber Veritatis*, or a collection of Prints after the original designs of Claude Le Gellée, 'was in the Attingham library at the time of designing'. Earlm's book, published in 1777, which used the Duke of Westminster's collection of paintings, was not so much a pattern book as one of the aristocratic sources from which pattern books were derived. This aristocratic use of pattern books does not negate their middle class orientation but, rather, it adds credibility and fashionability to their designs. Indeed, it might be said that as the middle class prospered it appropriated not just pattern books but had the money, confidence and wisdom to commission architects to design domestic buildings but used pattern books to inform and prepare itself.

Many pattern book writers include a notional range for their audience in the extended title to identify their audience. Early nineteenth-century English titles include phrases such as 'calculated for persons of moderate income' as in John Plaw's *Sketches for Country Houses*, published in 1800 and 'suitable to persons of moderate fortune' in T. D. W. Dearn's *Sketches in Architecture*, published in 1805. At the

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39 *Liber veritatis*, or, A collection of two hundred prints, after the original designs of Claude Le Lorrain; in the collection of His Grace the Duke of Devonshire executed by Richard Earlm, London: Published by the proprietor, John Boydell, engraver, 1777. A copy of this book is held in the SLV.
40 A shrewd purchase for the prospective client might have been George Wightwick's *Hints to young architects: comprising advice to those who, while yet at school, are destined to the profession, to such as, having passed their pupilage, are about to travel and to those who, having completed their education, are about to practice: together with a model specification*, Lockwood, London, 1846 and 1875.
same time, terms like 'noblemen', 'nobility' and even 'gentry' fall away. By the 
1860s in the United States, typical titles include the word 'suburban', first used in 
1838 by J. C. Loudon in *The Suburban Gardener and Villa Companion*. One typical 
title is *Homes for the people, in suburb & country: the villa, the mansion & the 
cottage adapted to American climate and wants*, by G. Wheeler, published in New 
York in 1867. And there is the same concern about 'moderate cost', as in *Village and 
Farm Cottages*, by H. W. Cleveland, W. Backus, and S. D. Backus, published in New 
York in 1869.

Further evidence of the middle-class orientation of pattern books appears in 
their introductions and general text. The editor, curiously not named, of *Villa and 
Cottage Architecture*, states specifically:

> It seemed to the projectors of the VILLA AND COTTAGE ARCHITECTURE 
that whilst there were certain well-known volumes illustrative of palatial 
residences, and many others giving minute particulars of the construction of 
dwellings of the lowest cost and most restricted accommodation, there was a 
great deficiency of publications supplying examples of houses of intermediate 
cost, including habitations of several distinct classes. The present Work is 
devoted to houses of moderate dimensions, or erected at a cost (ascertained in 
early nearly every one of the cases) ranging from £500 to £2500, but including some 
examples of more expensive character.\(^{41}\)

### The Text

Three titles, two early and one late, mark the shift in taste and underlying values 
discernible in architectural pattern books. *Rural Residences* was published in London 
in 1818.\(^{42}\) *Architettura Campestre* was published in London in 1827,\(^{43}\) and *Hobbs's

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\(^{41}\) *Villa and Cottage Architecture*, p. viii.

\(^{42}\) John Buonarotti Papworth, *Rural Residences*, consisting of a series of designs for Cottages, 
Decorated Cottages, Small Villas, and Other Ornamental Buildings, accompanied by hints on 
situation, construction, arrangement and decoration in the theory & practice of rural architecture 
terspersed with some observations on landscape gardening, R. Ackermann, London, 1818.
Architecture: containing Designs and Ground Plans for Villas, Cottages and other Edifices was re-published in Philadelphia in 1876. These in turn can be compared with the designs in Andrew Jackson Downing’s The Architecture of Country Houses, published in New York in 1850, a book which fills the middle ground.

Furthermore, an analysis of the development of the designs, and the texts which accompany them, shows how the Picturesque aesthetic is used to synthesise irregular forms with a vocabulary of Classical details. This synthesis invokes specific Italian associations and offers a certain lifestyle, the basis of the Italianate villa model.

The text associated with designs in early nineteenth-century pattern books is usually brief and limited to the siting, style and appropriateness of the design—a safely populist mixture. There is usually a description of the rooms and, perhaps, extra advice on some practical matter. The cost of a design might also be included but theory is usually superficial and specific to the design. Papworth and Hunt are useful because they are more expansive than most.

Papworth included ‘A Cottage Orné, Designed for an Exposed and Elevated Situation’ as Plate XIII in his Rural Residences, published in 1818. The dwelling is approached from dark shrubbery on the right and figures look out from a light terrace on the left. The design is loosely Italianate, with remarkably relaxed and convenient planning, and the dwelling is all but surrounded by a two-

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44 Isaac Hobbs and Son, Hobbs’s Architecture containing Designs and Ground Plans for Villas, Cottages and other Edifices, both suburban and Rural, adapted to the United States, with rules for criticism, and introduction, J. B. Lippincott & Co., 2nd ed. revised and enlarged, 1876.

storey verandah. The text is broadly typical. Papworth theorises on the need to combine utility with picturesque beauty at a moderate expense ... This consideration has led to the devising of irregular plans for the cottage orné, in which symmetrical arrangements of pure architecture are not observed, and the parts are so disposed as to form pleasing combinations of form, in which, of course, some intricacy occurs, and to produce varied effects of light and shadow. Additions to old buildings are sometimes made in this way, with great advantage to the interior of the house, and to the beauty of the building externally.  

There follows a room by room description of the villa and a Picturesque perspective illustrates the text. His discussion about filtration and how water is collected in Venice has been mentioned and the advice for this design is also mostly about water. Papworth seems to have been a pragmatic populist rather than a theoretician. The most important observation about this design is, however, how freely asymmetrical the internal planning and external massing are. A full generation after its emergence in the later eighteenth century, asymmetry is made available to the middle classes.

Other authors were more pompous in tone. In Architettura Campestre, Hunt expresses a personal disdain for 'the character of Modern or Italian Architecture'. Then he indulges in some rambling theory in the introduction, amplified by some heavy name-dropping, and concludes with notes on roofing materials and his opinion that the mansion and lodges of an estate can be in different styles. Twelve designs follow, combining a perspective and a plan, interspersed with literary quotations.

46 Papworth, Rural Residences, p. 53.
47 Papworth, Rural Residences, pp. 54-6.
48 According to Colvin, Biographical Dictionary, pp. 436-43, Papworth wrote extensively: such as the two series of papers, Architectural Hints the second of which became Rural Residences; Hints on Ornamental Gardening in 1823; descriptive texts for illustrated works; a farce entitled The Artist, or Man of Two Masters (unpublished); and an Essay on the Causes of Dry Rot in Timber in 1803. Perhaps his most theoretical text was An Essay on the Principles of Design in Architecture, with nine plates, illustrative of Grecian Architecture, published in 1826.
49 Hunt, Architettura Campestre.
Literary and other allusions, such as to Vitruvius, continue in the text but these are balanced by practical advice such as the temperature of a dairy, glazing and insulation for an orangery, and the advantages of economy in design. What is telling about his text is that he seeks authority in eighteenth-century authors.

Downing, who was also populist and certainly not pompous, covered a qualified middle ground in the text which accompanied his designs. His text is measured, informative and longer than usual for pattern books of this type. He proposes in his *Cottage Residences*, as Design VI, 'An Irregular Villa in the Italian Style, bracketed'. He admits that it will not appeal to everyone but if not, there are other designs neither so highly irregular nor incurring the extra expense 'on account of the great picturesqueness and variety growing out of this circumstance'.\(^{50}\) There is a limited theoretical discussion on informed taste and the Italian mode 'capable of displaying a rich domestic character in its balconies, verandas, ornamental porches, terraces, etc. The square tower, or campanile, is a prominent feature in villas of this style, and frequently confers on the Italian compositions a character of great boldness and dignity'.\(^{51}\) Siting is important and, in this design, the views from the drawing room are notable. This comment introduces the usual description, room by room, of the house. He concludes this section of the text with another significant comment on siting and links it back to the Italian style.

A building in this style will be greatly heightened in effect by being well supported by trees, the irregular forms of which will harmonize with the character of the architecture. A Lombardy poplar or two, judiciously introduced in the midst of groups of round-headed trees, will have a happy effect. The

\(^{51}\) Downing, *Cottage Residences*, p. 115.
beautiful wooded situations on the banks of our fine rivers are, many of them, admirably suited for an Italian villa of this kind.\textsuperscript{52}

There are some helpful notes on construction and an estimate of costs. For somebody contemplating building a home, a major investment, all of this is useful advice.

The major difference between Downing's text and most others is his discussion on the laying-out of the grounds. This actually follows the same system as the discussion of the house in that there is a limited analysis of the site, a description of the parts of the estate and how they correspond, some theory about general landscaping and an extensive discussion about the orchard and fruit garden. It is here that the theoretical discussion of horticulture occurs. 'A fine orchard and fruit garden, producing an abundant supply of fruit in all seasons, is one of the greatest sources of enjoyment in a country life.'\textsuperscript{53} It is so easy, in his opinion, that everyone ought to have access to a first rate collection of fruit. This is Downing, writing for and appealing to, most ordinary middle-class Americans, when the majority lived outside cities and towns. Downing's advice is practical and reasonable and his populism is subtle, tolerant, and discreet.

The text accompanying the designs in Hobbs's Architecture, is quite different from Downing's. It is brief, to the point that the rooms are listed with dimensions in note form with letters of the alphabet matching the plans and, for some reason, the position of the point of view is often described.\textsuperscript{54} Such text as there is usually names the style, mentions materials for the walls, joinery, glazing, and roof, and may include

\textsuperscript{52} Downing, Cottage Residences, pp. 116-7.
\textsuperscript{53} Downing, Cottage Residences, p. 121.
\textsuperscript{54} Design LXXI is typical stating 'This design is in the Italian style and its situation is ninety feet back, and viewed from a point six feet above the ground and one hundred and five feet from its nearest point.' Hobbs's Architecture, p. 162.
prices. The latter, it might be argued, is important for the middle class. The text includes descriptive words such as ‘compact’, ‘airy’, ‘well-arranged’ for smaller designs, and ‘ample’, ‘fine’ and ‘superior’ for larger designs. These are easy, middle-class words and allow for a degree of euphemism. Even the terms used for the many different styles are not intimidating, although they are confusing. The text for a modest but typical example, Design LX states

This design is in the Italian style, Americanized. That it cannot be otherwise will appear from the following reasons: it is not Roman, as most of its details are Greek; neither is it Athenian, for some of its windows have round heads. It is covered with a Tuscan roof, which is Roman. An Italian composition adapts it to the climate, wants, and customs of the United States, to which all the internal arrangements can be made to suit.55

The author might as well have said that the Italian style had been sanitised. No explanation is given about how ‘an Italian composition’ can suit the wide range of ‘climate, wants and customs’ to be found in the United States. The implication from the text seems to be that the designs will be ‘safe’ from the darker side of the Picturesque aesthetic.

The Designs

The designs in pattern books, as well as the text provided, show how an increasingly middle-class taste was accommodated. Architettura Campestre was published in 1827 and the author, Thomas Frederick Hunt,56 who was well known, noted on the title page that he had already published two pattern books, one ‘on domestic architecture’, in 1825 and the other ‘for parsonages and almshouses’, in 1827.57 He published two more, one on Tudor architecture, in 1830 and one on small rural

55 Hobbs’s Architecture, p. 140.
57 Hunt, Architettura Campestre.
residences, posthumously in 1836. These four books had a wide circulation but
Architettura Campestre seems to have had only a small print run.\textsuperscript{58} Colvin notes that
Hunt was in the public service and Architettura Campestre is dedicated to Lt. Colonel
Stephenson, Surveyor-General of His Majesty’s Office of Works and Public
Buildings.\textsuperscript{59} According to Colvin, ‘Hunt was among the earliest serious students of
mediaeval architecture, particularly the Tudor period’ which would explain the
depreciating remarks in his preface against the influence of Italian architecture.\textsuperscript{60}

The twelve designs are rural, even pastoral. All except for the bridge and
orangery are residential, including the dairy. Most are very small with two or three
rooms and no service areas. Hunt admits that the ‘Garden Cottage’ design is not
strictly Italian, but, stretching credibility since it is thatched, half-timbered and uses
rustic details, actually claims that it ‘partakes of a temple form’.\textsuperscript{61} The last two
designs, ‘A Small Villa’ and ‘A Casino’ are ‘for a gentleman’s residence on a small
scale’ with nine rooms on two levels and the services in the basement, and ‘the
residence of a gentleman … arranged on the same principle’. The garden front view
given ‘as a conclusion, is more architectural than any other plate in the book’.\textsuperscript{62} The
simpler plans show an elementary symmetry although with irregular forms while the
plans of last two designs show more ingenuity with cross axes and principal rooms \textit{en}

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\textsuperscript{58} As discussed elsewhere, it is perhaps the rarest survivor, but it deserves consideration here
because of Hunt’s reputation, its specific attempt to provide Italianate designs when Hunt preferred the
Gothic revival, and its typical format as a small early sampler pattern book.

\textsuperscript{59} Colvin, \textit{Biographical Dictionary}, 1978, p. 439. Curiously, Colvin states that Hunt designed
‘a house at Sydney, New South Wales “for one of the principal government officers”, “in the old
English domestic style”, 1828’. Neither this building nor Hunt as a pattern book author is mentioned in
the index to Broadben, \textit{Australian Colonial House}.

\textsuperscript{60} Colvin, \textit{Biographical Dictionary}, 1978, p. 439. Hunt writes that he will ‘do little more than
render manifest its inferiority to that beautiful and appropriate style miscalled Gothic’, \textit{Architettura
Campestre} p. v.

\textsuperscript{61} Hunt, \textit{Architettura Campestre}, p. 4 & pl. II.

\textsuperscript{62} Hunt, \textit{Architettura Campestre}, pp. 22 & 23, pls. XI & XII.
filade. It may be unfair to analyse the grander plans too closely especially without the benefit of the main elevations, but there are anomalies. Access to the tower bedchambers above the principal floor, for example, appears impossible, notwithstanding the stairs which lead to them.\textsuperscript{63} These early designs are transitional in that they might be used for small buildings on large estates, a tradition which continued into the nineteenth century, or they could be used as models, especially the last two designs, for middle-class villas whether rural, suburban, marine or even colonial.

The designs are transitional in a chronological sense as well. Hunt sees himself as drawing on the aristocratic villa tradition of the eighteenth century and earlier. In the Introduction, he mentions such architects as Inigo Jones, Sir John Vanbrugh, Sir William Chambers, Lord Burlington, and Hawksmoor and many of their works. Of James Gibbs, he states that he ‘seems seldom to have exercised on domestic buildings; but his “Book of Architecture” abounds in rural designs.’\textsuperscript{64} The translation of the Italian word ‘campestre’ is ‘rural’. Hunt’s designs are all rural. The adept external symmetry and internal asymmetry in the plan of Hunt’s last design, at a much reduced scale, can be compared with the planning of any number of villas by the great architects of the late eighteenth century, and of Soane and Nash in particular.\textsuperscript{65} The provision of a façade and a garden front also looks backwards. Design X ‘A Bridge, etc’ is particularly neo-Palladian and can be compared with that

\textsuperscript{63} The perspective views show small square towers which do not align with the staircases below. Either there is an Escher-like impossibility or the towers should be rectangular in plan. The very low roof pitch would not provide sufficient headroom for the bedchambers.

\textsuperscript{64} Hunt, Architettura Campestre, p. xii.

\textsuperscript{65} Many authors deal with the planning of 18th century villas by these architects, and their sources in the 17th century. See especially John Summerson, ‘The Idea of the Villa: the Classical Country House in 18th C England’, Journal of the Royal Society of Arts, 107, 1959, pp. 539-87; and du
in the garden at Stourhead. With little modification, Design XII could be rendered more asymmetrical externally and would be typical of later examples of the Italianate villa. The tower above the Gentleman’s Room, already slightly different in plan from its identical twin, could be as different as the prospect tower is from its fraternal twin in Design IX. Certain details, such as the large arch in Design IX and materials, like the pan tiles in eight of the Plates, as well as the general, almost utilitarian simplicity of the architecture, anticipate the Italianate designs in Loudon’s *Encyclopaedia of Cottage Farm and Villa Architecture* published five years later. Hunt combined irregular if not asymmetrical domestic forms with a vocabulary of Classical detail. The designs are rooted in the past, but they stand at the beginning of the nineteenth century and anticipate further developments in the Italianate style and the villa form. This is a synthesis only possible with the Italianate and Grecian revival styles and the introduction of the Picturesque aesthetic. Hunt, who died at the age of forty in 1831, was not to see how middle-class and suburban the Italianate villa was about to become.

By the 1870s, the American pattern books had developed a distinctively national character, such as those produced by A. J. Bicknell, a character which would develop further into the Stick and the Shingle styles of the late nineteenth century. There is also evidence, however, that the middle-class market on both sides of the Atlantic had broadened to the point that vulgar, inept and plagiarised designs were included in pattern books.\(^6\) Presuming that the former drove the latter, one indication of this trend is that, as the quality of the architecture of

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latter, one indication of this trend is that, as the quality of the architecture of designs declined in pattern books, their quantity increased. In 1876, Hobbs's *Architecture* offered no less than one hundred and twenty-two designs including two churches, a schoolhouse and a triumphal arch. Indeed it was a second edition, revised and enlarged. At best, these are a debasement of the designs proposed by J. C. Loudon, A. J. Downing, and Calvert Vaux (1824-1895). At worst, they are no more than a stylistic mishmash presented in no particular order. Some twenty are either specifically or stylistically 'Italian', and Italy, as a source, wins on a nationalistic count. There are eleven 'American' designs which align with the Italianate. 'Suburban Residence' is the largest group of forty-four designs, not including those which have a nationalistic qualification or some other description such as 'village' or 'country'. These are predominantly Italianate confirming the ascendancy of this style in America.67 There are seven 'French' designs, one 'Franco-Italian' and one 'Swiss'. Only one design is 'Grecian', confirming the demise of that style by 1876.

Isaac H. Hobbs and Son describe themselves as architects on the title page and, in the Preface, they claim that the majority of the designs has been executed. There are some interesting details in the designs. Very large coupled brackets support the eaves in many cases, and they are so large in some that they accommodate a third or attic storey.68 Perhaps the most preposterous and confused is Design LXX, 'Mansion in the Elizabethan Style', which combines Flemish gables, a bay window as

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67 The authors also claim to have invented the 'American Octavo' style, that is, buildings with octagonal plans, but this was first promoted by Orson Squire Fowler in *The Octagon House: A Home for All*, New York, S. R. Wells, 1848 and in a revised and enlarged edition in 1853.
68 *Hobbs's Architecture*, Design LVII, pp. 134-5 and LVIII, pp. 136-7. Both are described as 'Italian villa'.
a Romanesque apse, two Italianate towers and two principal entrances with oriel windows above. Whether this change for the worse, where it happened, was driven by or forced onto the market is not as important as the character of the designs which were offered.

The text and designs of Hobbs's Architecture make it perhaps the most blatantly populist of the later pattern books. Its jingoism appeals to the lowest level of middle-class taste. The dedication 'to the many ladies throughout the United States' is condescending. Its stated intent, 'not only to assist those who may be about to build, but ... to aid its readers in the cultivation of taste and the love of the beautiful, that they, too, may read "sermons in stones"' is pompous. It is not known if it found a market in Britain, but at least four copies reached Australia.70

The Illustrations

The illustrations in pattern books were consciously appealing in a populist way. Certain technical advances in printing towards the end of the eighteenth century allowed for the more attractive presentation of designs with light and shade, advance and recession, depth and texture, and, most importantly, colour. These were the inventions of aquatint and lithography, both of which could be more easily coloured than hand-tinted engravings.71 Such techniques also allowed for a softer delineation of the designs which suited the deliberately picturesque perspective drawings which, along with a floor plan, were the minimum provided.

69 Hobbs's Architecture, p. 21.
70 They are held in the Public Library of NSW, the State Library of Victoria, Victoria University and the University of Melbourne.
71 Archer, Literature, pp. 30-32
John Plaw's *Rural Retreats*, the first part of which was issued in 1785, is considered the earliest true pattern book and it was also the first to use aquatint.\(^72\) As Archer explains

Advance, recession, and irregularity in plan and elevation could be emphasized by gradations of light and shade, and deeply textured materials such as thatch and tree bark could be rendered very effectively in aquatint. Between 1785 and 1819 well over half of all newly issued architectural books included aquatinted plates, with the highest concentration occurring in the years 1800 through 1811.\(^73\)

These pretty pictures were very different from the formal *intaglio* engravings of the grandly aristocratic folios of the eighteenth century.

The technique of aquatint was perfected in France in the late 1760s and further refined in England by the artist Paul Sandby (c. 1731-1809).\(^74\) Sandby was one of several British artists called 'the English Claude' because of his skill in representing the Italian countryside in that artist's style.\(^75\) The technique had its heyday in the first three decades of the nineteenth century but then fell away as a means of illustration. Almost no pattern books had coloured illustrations after 1840.

Illustrations in pattern books became even more populist with the re-introduction of woodcuts which were not fine art. As well as being cheaper to produce, they had the added advantage of being able to be incorporated directly into the text, hence saving on printing costs.\(^76\) They could not be coloured however,

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\(^72\) Archer, *Literature*, p. 31.

\(^73\) Archer, *Literature*, p. 31.


\(^75\) For a brief biography and a representation of his work, see Julian Faigan, *Paul Sandby Drawings*, Australian Gallery Directors' Council, Sydney, 1981. There is a substantial collection of Sandby drawings and miniature watercolours in the Hamilton Art Gallery (Victoria), which clearly demonstrates his claim to the title. John Glover (1767-1849), who immigrated to Australia in 1831, was another who was given the title.

\(^76\) The intaglio techniques used in the eighteenth century such as engraving, etching and mezzotint relied on ink remaining below the surface of the plate. Woodcuts allowed the ink to be on the raised surface, like typeface, and could therefore be included in the same process as printing.
except by hand. Woodcut was a traditional technique, as old as printing itself, but it enjoyed a revival in pattern books from the 1830s. But quantity, for the most part, replaced quality judging by the number of illustrations.

John Claudius Loudon was the great proponent of woodcuts. He interspersed thousands of small illustrations throughout his encyclopaedias in a generous manner, so that today they might be described as ‘lavishly illustrated’. It is clearly a populist approach. The character of the woodcuts varied greatly, some being relatively fine, while most were simple and almost diagrammatic. The range of artistic quality reflects, to some extent, the subject matter and may reflect the source of the illustration. In his *Encyclopaedia of Gardening*, in the section on ‘The History of Gardening, Italian Gardens’, five woodcuts show the transition from Roman villas to the Italian castles or monastic establishments of the middle ages. These are not refined but they convey a robust, down-to-earth imagery which is eminently picturesque and attractive. They match the simple, broad-brush approach of the text and their lack of precision also allows the reader’s imagination some licence. Here are romantic castles with plenty of tall spires, machicolated towers, battlemented walls and arched entrances each in a wildly picturesque landscape. On the other hand, in the *Encyclopaedia of Cottage, Farm and Villa Architecture*, Design XLVII illustrates two four-roomed cottages which Loudon described as ‘comfortable,

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77 No example of a pattern book with hand-coloured woodcuts illustrations has come to light in the research for this thesis.
79 J. C. Loudon, *Encyclopaedia of Gardening*, new edition by Mrs Loudon, Longman, Brown, Green, and Longmans, London, 1850, pp. 26-27, figs. 9-13. Contrast also fig. 14 with fig. 15 or the even more naïve fig. 22 showing Petrarch’s house at Arqua.
80 It is interesting to note that the towers are defensive and not the campanile towers of Italian churches which were the common model for the Italianate villa.
unobtrusive dwellings, expressive of nothing more than what they are". They are indeed plain and almost devoid of setting. Loudon's publications were not vulgar, but they had a common touch which made them very accessible.

Parallel Publications

Pattern books became increasingly accessible, and therefore populist, by leaving out the more serious theory and scholarship of treatises on architecture, the orders and the increasingly important archaeology of architecture. This theorising and analysis was left to authors who were more serious and whose publications parallel pattern books throughout the nineteenth century. Stuart and Revett had published the first volume of *Antiquities of Athens* as early as 1762, which began a more academic approach to architectural archaeology that continued into the nineteenth century. Further volumes appeared, actually after James Stuart's death, in 1789, 1795, 1816 (of miscellaneous papers and drawings), and 1830 (a supplementary volume). Exactly one century after Stuart and Revett, James Fergusson, despairing of the trend, wrote in his *History of the Modern Styles of Architecture* ‘Archaeology is not Architecture'. That Joseph Gwilt's *Encyclopaedia of Architecture, Historical, Practical and Theoretical* went through seven editions, three published posthumously, indicates that theory could still be popular. Gwilt published many other works including, in 1818, *Notitia Architectonica Italiana, or Concise Notices of the Buildings and Architects of Italy*, but this seems to have been intended for a different market from Parker and Hunt’s pattern books with titles in Italian.

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82 Colvin, *Biographical Dictionary*, p. 582.
Wightwick's quasi-theoretical *The Palace of Architecture* was actually meant to follow the format of a novel by Sir Walter Scott whose popularity was immense.\(^{84}\) James Fergusson used the compendium form when he wrote the *History of Architecture in All Countries* which had two editions, in 1867 and 1874. Pugin's writings on the Gothic and Ruskin's writings on aesthetics were also immensely popular. But they were a very different genre from pattern books, even if Pugin's *Contrasts* included illustrations of buildings. The journal, *The Ecclesiologist*, took heart from Pugin's writings and published detailed texts on the archaeology and iconography of Gothic architecture. John Peter Gandy (afterwards Deering), brother of pattern book author Joseph Gandy, travelled in Greece on behalf of the Society of Dilettanti and contributed to the *Unedited Antiquities of Attica*, and the third volume of *Ionian Antiquities*. He also co-published *Pompetana* in 1817-19 which became a standard work.\(^{85}\) This is only a sample of the architectural press in the nineteenth century but it shows that, while pattern books were constructed for a specific niche, they were part of a broader picture in which an increasingly literate public created an informed market.

As well as leaving out theory and scholarship, most pattern book authors left out the technical detail of interest to the building trade although some authors wrote for both the middle class market and for the trade. Richard Elsam, as well as producing two pattern books, in 1828 published *The Practical Builder's Perpetual*.

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\(^{85}\) *Archer, Literature*, p. 8, who states that 'the 10,000 copies in the first edition of Sir Walter Scott's *Rob Roy* sold out in three weeks; thereafter, 10,000 copies became a minimum run for a Scott novel.' The normal minimum in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, it seems was as low as 250 copies and 'in the 1770s and 1780s the maximum run was approximately 4,000.'  
\(^{85}\) *Colvin, Biographical Dictionary*, p. 222.
Price Book which still contained some designs for houses by the author. William Pocock published Observations on Bond of Brickwork in 1839. The publication of pattern books, both as sampler and compendium, paralleled other, more serious writing on architecture, sometimes with the same authorship.

The populist production and marketing of pattern books did much to codify and promote the Italianate villa model, not exclusively, but very successfully. The most important conclusion is that pattern books were the medium for the popularization of the model, for its adaptation, even downgrading, to middle-class values and tastes, and for the extensive dissemination of the model across the world. This went well beyond its rather rarified beginnings in Britain’s new Picturesque aesthetic and the second generation of examples from the mid-nineteenth century. The following chapter explores the popularity of pattern books, both British and American, as a basis for understanding the model’s ubiquitous success in colonial Victoria.

86 Colvin, Biographical Dictionary, p. 194.
4 WHAT TO BUILD AND HOW TO BUILD IT:¹

THE POPULARITY OF PATTERN BOOKS

Pattern books of both the sampler and the compendium formats enjoyed great popularity, extraordinary popularity in certain cases, and their popularity in the market can be measured in different ways. Certain titles enjoyed many reprints, a phenomenon of the mid- and late-nineteenth century rather than of its first three decades. The market for pattern books continued, broadened and diversified throughout the nineteenth century, even in the face of competition from popular journals and perhaps because of them. Furthermore, pattern books and journals were available to people through public libraries and mechanics' institutes which flourished in the nineteenth century, in Britain and especially in Victoria.

This chapter focuses on books in the colony of Victoria as a prelude to the following chapters about the influence of the Picturesque aesthetic and the introduction of the Italianate villa as a model for domestic architecture. Before a detailed analysis of the popularity of pattern books, it is important to understand something of the two most popular authors, not so much for the specific content of their publications but for the values they espoused. John Claudius Loudon and Andrew Jackson Downing had much in common. Downing modelled himself and his writings on the older Loudon and they shared a mutual respect. They also shared the same values.

¹ This title, What to Build and How to Build it, a few hints on domestic, ecclesiastical and general architecture, comes from the book written by the Melbourne firm of architects, Terry and Oakden, and published by George Robertson & Co., in 1885. It is the closest that the architectural profession in Victoria came to producing a local pattern book. It is held by the SLV at RARE LTF 720.22 W.55. See Miles Lewis, 'Oakden, Percy (1845-1917)', in Douglas Pike, gen. ed., ADB, Vol. 5, pp. 348-9.
John Claudius Loudon

John Claudius Loudon was a democratic reformer but he was not party-political in any public way. He expressed no specific party-political views in his writings and it is not possible to find any formal affiliation in his writing. However, as his biographer, Melanie Simo states, 'Through his writings, Loudon ... made contributions to social and political reform, national education, and regional planning'. Indeed, she continues:

As Loudon matured, his political and social views became more liberal and his editorial tone more tolerant. His optimism and idealism were confirmed, rather than shaken, by the experience of political and social revolutions. A man who embraced the ideals of democracy, he considered George Washington and Thomas Jefferson "the greatest men that ever lived, or, speaking relatively to age and county, probably ever can or will live".

His political leanings were evident through his friendships and associations and his personal values as a Benthamite were well known. He referred to Bentham as 'the greatest benefactor to mankind, in our opinion, since the commencement of the Christian era'. Loudon's early writings 'caught the eye of one of his most memorable clients—William A. Madoxes, a Radical Member of Parliament and

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3 'During these years [the passage of the Reform Act, 1832], Loudon never publicly espoused political movements such as Radicalism or Chartism ... Outspoken about political ideas, he remained aloof above party politics'; Simo, Loudon, p. 12.
4 Simo, Loudon, p. xxii.
5 Simo, Loudon, p. xxiv.
6 'He had met Jeremy Bentham, whose concern for the "greatest happiness of the greatest number" became Loudon's own standard for assessing change', Simo, Loudon, p. 1. Simo also mentions that Adam Smith and Jean-Jacques Rousseau 'had nurtured his mind'.
devotee of the Picturesque.\textsuperscript{9} These connections were the foundation for his early
image of the master of a country estate and later image of, as he was himself, the
master of a suburban villa. "The earlier works had been dedicated to royalty, the
nobility, and the gentry. The later works, though still purchased by the upper
classes, would tend to speak directly to self-educated, self-improving young
gardeners, craftsmen, and middle-class householders."\textsuperscript{9}

In her memoir of her husband, Jane Loudon mentions no party-political
activity on her husband's part. This might be due to a widow's sense of discretion
but she admits frankly to Loudon's addiction to laudanum for pain relief.\textsuperscript{10} The
admission is followed by the matter-of-fact way that he dealt with it. She says of
him 'there never lived a more liberal and thoroughly public-spirited man than Mr.
Loudon'.\textsuperscript{11} Two specific incidents demonstrate Loudon's sensitivity to the
sufferings of others. In 1813, immediately after the Napoleonic Wars, he travelled
in northern Europe including Russia, a journey described at length by Jane
Loudon.\textsuperscript{12} The concern her husband showed for the survivors indicates a care for
others and a concern that their condition should be addressed. On his fourth tour of
the Continent, Loudon encountered an aged couple, peasants working in the fig
gardens of Argentueil, north of Paris. 'With an unusual tenderness he afterwards
described their wretched condition and their painstaking methods of tending and

\textsuperscript{9} Simo, \textit{Loudon}, p. 6.
\textsuperscript{10} Simo, \textit{Loudon}, p. 9.
\textsuperscript{11} Jane Loudon, 'Memoir of John Claudius Loudon', reproduced in E. MacDougall, \textit{John
Claudius Loudon and the early nineteenth century in Great Britain}, Washington D. C., Dumbarton
Oaks Colloquium on the History of Landscape Architecture 1978, pp. 26-7. It is true that the use of
opiates was more acceptable at the time.
\textsuperscript{12} Loudon, 'Memoir', MacDougall, \textit{Loudon}, p. 11.
pruning the figs. The improvement of the people must be seen as one of
Loudon’s fundamental values.

Jane Loudon singles out one of her husband’s friendships, in particular, that
of the philosopher, economist, codifier of laws and constitutional reformer,
Jeremy Bentham. He was the first and chief advocate for Utilitarianism, a
theory taken up and developed by Loudon. Bentham proposed that society
and individuals should strive for ‘the greatest happiness of the greatest
number’. Bentham’s views were considered controversial, radical and even
dangerous in the early decades of the nineteenth century. With Loudon’s
support, they contributed to the Reform Act of 1832. Jane Loudon notes
how he was deeply moved at the death of Bentham. Her memoir concludes
with the observation, which must have been important to the widow and her
husband’s amanuensis, that her husband died on the anniversary of George
Washington’s death.

Since Loudon was a reformer in so many ways, he would most likely have
shared the general sense of political reform current during the whole of his lifetime.
Loudon’s first reform was in agricultural practice, which was affected so much by
the Enclosure Acts, but he showed concern for the landlord as much as for the
condition of the agricultural worker. His second reform was in gardening. Again,
his sense of reform was directed to improved horticultural practice, a wider range of
plantings, and better buildings. His third, and perhaps most important reform,
was in publishing when he realised the opportunity to publish for the middle class
market. Loudon started publishing in the conventional eighteenth-century manner,
using subscriptions and a dedication to a patron, but soon changed to issuing
fascicles and fully edited books. He also initiated the journal. James Ackerman, in

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13 Simo, Loudon, p. 11.
14 In 1811, at the age of twenty-eight, he published Designs for Laying Out Farms and
Farm-Buildings in the Scotch Style: Adapted to England: including an Account of Tew Lodge Farm,
Oxfordshire, with an Opinion on the Subject of Breaking Up Grass lands, London Harding, 1811.
Fourteen years later he published An Encyclopaedia of Agriculture: Comprising the Theory and
Practice of the Valuation ... of Landed Property: ... a General History of Agriculture in All
Countries; and a Statistical View of Its Present State, London, A. and R. Spottiswoode for
Longman, 1825.
15 Loudon had a particular interest in better conservatories and devised a better cast iron
gazing bar, an invention on which he failed to capitalise.
his definitive study of the villa, sums up the career of John Claudius Loudon, 'the herald of the villa’s democratic age', thus

He was the first villa and garden specialist to see that the emerging commercial, industrial, professional and laboring classes rather than posing a threat might offer an opportunity— to democratize the villa and to raise the level of taste on a global scale.

Andrew Jackson Downing

It is not certain what Andrew Jackson Downing’s political views might have been. He was a conservative, a democrat and a republican but without, it seems, the need to capitalise those names. There can be no doubt about his popularity with the emerging middle class which paralleled that of Loudon.

In James Ackerman’s opinion, Andrew Jackson Downing’s ‘influence on the way Americans visualized and built their homes was greater than that of anyone in the history of the nation’. While acknowledging the popularity of the writings of the ‘master publicist’, who could take advantage of technical advances, Ackerman makes three important distinctions. He notes the brief period of twenty years, but the ‘great chasm’ of culture separating the end of the Jefferson’s country seat, Montecello, and Downing’s suburban home, Highland Gardens. He states that ‘Downing’s writings were not quite in the millennial tradition of villa literature in which the villa is represented as the retreat of the pressured city dweller: most of his readers were rural already’. Finally, Downing’s audience did not respond to the pastoral ideal of ancient Rome although the solemnity of Downing’s own

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17 Ackerman, *The Villa*, p. 225.
19 Ackerman, *The Villa*, p. 229.
20 Ackerman, *The Villa*, p. 229.
library 'was underscored by busts of Scott, Linnaeus, Milton, Dante and Petrach'.

In short, Downing wrote, at a time when America was becoming rapidly suburban and middle-class, and when publishing was newly industrialised and cheaper, and he wrote directly to this audience.

Downing emphasises the appropriateness of the villa for the American way of life: that of a republic. ‘In our republic there are neither the castles of feudal barons nor the palaces of princes’. He continues, even the President lives in a house and, in the United States, anything above the status of a farmhouse or cottage rises only to the dignity of a villa or mansion. After defining what a villa is in various ways, he states that ‘It is therefore in our villas that we must hope in this country to give the best and most complete manifestation of domestic architecture’. His personal preference was for the Rural Gothic, a sort of Elizabethan style, but he easily admitted the Italian, whether Tuscan or Venetian, style and even the Greek style, to which he was usually averse, for certain individuals. Of the Italianate villa model, he wrote

As a rural style, expressing country life, the Italian is inferior to pointed and high-roofed modes. If it is not so essentially country-like in character, it is however remarkable for expressing the elegant culture and variety of accomplishment of the retired citizen or man of the world, and it is capable of the most varied and irregular as well as very simple outlines, it is also significant of the multiform tastes, habits, and wants of modern civilization. On the whole then, we should say that the Italian style is one that expresses not wholly the spirit of country life nor of town life, but something between both, and which is a mingling of both.

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21 Ackerman, *The Villa*, p. 229.
22 Ackerman, *The Villa*, pp. 229-30.
24 Downing, *Country Houses*, p. 259. It is interesting to compare Downing's various definitions for the villa with the range of definitions given at the beginning of Chapter 2.
Indeed, it was individualism which was most important to Downing but an individualism which helped to build up the nation. In Downing’s ideal republic, a man’s home could be his ‘castle’, all villas had libraries, and the surrounding land should be turned to practical purposes for self-sufficiency. There was time to enjoy the view across the enhanced landscape from the verandah. This was the model lifestyle which he led, and so he could say ‘Happy is he who lives this life of a cultivated man in the country’.26 Downing struck a chord with many people with similar aspirations.

The Print-Runs

The print-run of an edition is one simple indication of the popularity of a particular pattern book. Information on print-runs is scarce, according to Archer, who uses subscription lists in the eighteenth century to determine a minimum print-run.27 These lists are for more specialised and expensive books and the subscription system falls away in the early nineteenth century with the introduction of deliberately populist, mass-produced books.28 Loudon adopted the subscription system at first, but soon abandoned it. Bungalows and Country Residences by R. A. Briggs, one of the last pattern books published in the nineteenth century, was sold through a subscription list of one hundred and fifty names. This would be a remarkably small print-run at that time, although individuals may have ordered several copies. Even at the beginning of the nineteenth century the normal

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26 Downing, Country Houses, p. 258.
27 Archer, Literature, pp. 7-8. There seems to be no discussion in the literature of the size of print-runs in the later nineteenth century.
28 Archer, Literature, pp. 9-10.
minimum print-run was two hundred and fifty copies and "for books with a modest popular appeal seven hundred and fifty copies was more common".  

Reprints of editions—revised or otherwise—provide somewhat better evidence. The promptness or delay between reprints is an indication of the popularity of a book and many books enjoyed reprints and new editions within a year or two. Some very popular books were reprinted several times, such as Robert Kerr's *The Gentleman's House* first published in 1864, again in 1865, and after revisions and additions, in 1871. Villa and Cottage Architecture, a joint Scottish and English compilation, was reprinted four times. The authors who enjoyed the most reprints were J. C. Loudon and A. J. Downing, with reprints even after both their early deaths. Loudon's *Encyclopaedia of Cottage Farm and Villa Architecture* was reprinted at least fifteen times, nine times posthumously and twice in the United States. His *Encyclopaedia of Gardening* was reprinted nineteen times, seven times posthumously, and was published before he died in German and French editions in 1826 and 1842. Downing's *Cottage Residences*, first published in 1842 was reprinted regularly until the mid-1870s. The extraordinary popularity of these two authors, and to a lesser extent, others such as Kerr, adds special weight to their prognostications and political positions.

**Catalogues as Evidence**

Print-runs and re-prints are still not a failsafe guide to the influence of British, nor American, pattern books in British colonies such as Victoria. Advertisements and catalogues for book sales provide other evidence. When the early Sydney architect,

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40 For a contemporary review, which is not particularly complimentary, see *Building News*, 23rd December 1864, p. 935.
Henry Kitchen (c.1793-1822) died, his estate put fourteen of his mostly architectural books up for auction.\textsuperscript{31} See Appendix 2 which lists the advertised authors and titles and their possible full titles and publication details. The list is impressive, with Kitchen owning some key texts on architecture. The early Sydney architect, Henry Ginn sold his architectural books in 1841 before returning to England but advertisements for the sale of books by individuals rare.\textsuperscript{32} So, other, less direct means are needed to establish their popularity. Some research as been done into the catalogues of booksellers and auctioneers.\textsuperscript{33} The State Library of Victoria holds some forty catalogues of book auctions in the nineteenth century and they appear to be representative. But, without more detailed research, conclusions drawn from these must be treated with caution. A few are for the sale of booksellers' stock and about one third are for the collections of named individuals. Most are anonymous and very general. Middle-class collectors with small libraries are unlikely to have 'named' sales, even if their collections were put up for auction, nonetheless, some general conclusions can be drawn from these and other catalogues.


Gemmell, Tuckett and Co. was the principal firm of auctioneers which sold books in Melbourne. A typical catalogue for an anonymous sale on Saturday, 22nd January 1876 ‘of [a] superb assortment of first-class standard books’ included twenty-one titles associated with architecture. As well as two copies of Loudon’s Encyclopaedia, at least four other titles are typical pattern books. They were Brook’s *Cottage and Villa Architecture* first published in 1839, Lugar’s late work, *Country Gentleman’s Architect* first published in 1838, *Hall’s Select and Original Modern Designs for Dwelling Houses* first published in 1840, and an entry simply described as ‘123 Thomas’s Designs, consisting of 27 copper plates, 4to ... I’ [Volume]. Apart from the last title, about which there is some doubt, these books were all over twenty-five years old when they were put up for sale.

Others have researched the libraries of private individuals. Only two catalogues for the sale of private libraries have any direct association with the architectural profession. One catalogue is for the sale of James Blackburn Junior’s library in 1889 which is discussed later. The other is for the earlier sale, in 1868, of

34 Some other booksellers were H. T. Dwight who, according to his regular advertisements, was located ‘near Parliament houses’, and his successor, J. Brooks; Stubbs, Oxtoby & Co., 81 Collins Street West, Melbourne; James J. Blundell & Co., 44, Collins Street West; Chas. Rich & Co. at first in Fitzroy and later in Russell Street ‘opposite Temperance Hall’; and George Nichols, ‘opposite corner to Post-Office’. The SLV holds many examples of their various catalogues including several naming the auctioneer’s client.


36 These are entries 118, 119, 120 and 123. The last may be John Jacob Thomas, *Rural Affairs: A Practical and Captiously Illustrated Register of Rural Economy and Rural Taste, Including Country Dwellings, Improving and Planting Grounds, Fruits and Flowers, Domestic Animals, and All Farm and Garden Processes*, Albany, Luther Tucker & Son, 1858. Only one private copy he owned has been located in Australia and none is held in a public library. It is the only pattern book discovered whose author’s name is Thomas.

the library of Sir George Verdon when he moved to London as Victoria's Agent-General. From a modest background, Verdon became a very successful banker, stood as a radical politician, and, as an amateur architect and one of the very few members of the Victorian Institute of Architects who was not professionally qualified, he was elected its President in 1888. According to his biographer, he was a close friend of William Wardell, the architect of Government House, Melbourne and of A. W. N. Pugin. Together, as client and architect, Verdon and Wardell designed the Gothic revival English, Scottish and Australian Chartered Bank, the bank's Australasian headquarters, in Collins Street, Melbourne (1883-1886).

The manuscript catalogue of Verdon's library survives as well as the auction catalogue for its sale in 1868. The collection consists of about six hundred and fifty titles. One was the 1866 Supplementary Catalogue of the Public Library of Victoria which lists donations to the library by colonists. Considering his amateur interest in architecture, there are surprisingly few titles related to architecture and there are no pattern books. The list does include Fergusson's Manual of

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40 A Catalogue of the Books of George Verdon, Letts, Son & Co., Royal Exchange [Melbourne?]. This is held as a rare book at SLV. It is bound with a printed title page and preface, includes manuscript quotations on literature and entries listed alphabetically. While it is dated 1856, it appears to have been used up to 1868 when Verdon left Melbourne for London and sold his library. Catalogue of a magnificent library of most carefully selected editions of the best authors in the various departments of literature, and a suite of library furniture, in oak, to be sold by auction by Gemmell, Tucker & Co.; under instructions from the Hon. G.F. Verdon, C.B. Melbourne; Printed by Fergusson and Moore, [1868], held as a rare book at SLV.
41 The copy is now held in a private collection.
42 There is a copy of Viollet-le-Duc's *Dictionnaire*, once owned by Verdon, in the Architecture Library of the University of Melbourne, but this appears to have been in his library after he returned from London as Victoria's Agent-General.
Architecture. Otherwise, art, furniture, ornament and decoration are the topics closest to architecture. The oldest book was a mid-eighteenth century translation of the first century Greek author, Longinus' text about rhetoric, *On the Sublime*, in which he expresses concern for a loss of freedom and democracy. The other entries worth noting here are catalogues of the various art collections in the Melbourne Free Public Library, three of which were given to Verdon by Sir Redmond Barry. Of course, the catalogue does not include books which Verdon may have valued so highly that he took them with him to London. The absence of many standard books on architecture in the catalogue, let alone pattern books, is surprising.

A catalogue of the library of the Parliament of Victoria was published in 1857 which lists eighteen titles on or associated with architecture. Three are pattern books: *Domestic Architecture* by Francis Goodwin, first published in 1830 with a third edition in 1850; London's Encyclopaedia of 'Rural Architecture'; and A. J. Downing's *Architecture of Country Houses*, published in 1854. If this seems a small sample, the three could not have been more significant for the emergence of the Italianate villa. Goodwin's book is of the

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42 This may be Fergusson's *Illustrated Handbook of Architecture* or his *History of Architecture*. Verdon's catalogue notes that it was published by Murray in London in 1859 and cost sixteen shillings.

43 These include, for example, *The Decorator's Assistant*, 2 vols., London, Gibbs, 1847; Ralph Wornum, *Analysis of Ornament*, London, Chapman, 1856; John Winkelman, *History of Ancient Art*, London, Chapman, 1850; and five titles by Henry Shaw all published by Pickering in London before 1851 which cost £2/2/0 each, about the most expensive books in the collection.

44 Dion Longinus, *On The Sublime*, London, Brown, 1757 which was donated to him by A. Seddon and was 'the best edition by Smith'.

45 These are catalogues of ceramic art, coins, medals and casts of statues. For a discussion of these see Anne Galbally, ed., *The First Collections*, Melbourne, University of Melbourne Museum of Art, 1992.

46 Catalogue of the Library of the Parliament of Victoria, by authority, John Ferres, Government Printer, [Melbourne], 1857. A supplementary catalogue was published in 1871; another catalogue in 1888; and a further supplementary catalogue in 1899. The SLV holds many other parliamentary library catalogues including for Tasmania (of Blue books, 1866), New South Wales (1866), Queensland (1862, 1864 and 1883) and even Canada (1857).
sampler type and advocates the Italianate villa. Loudon describes the Italianate villa as appropriate for democratic countries like the United States. And Downing, the most important American author, was the strongest advocate of the Italianate villa in all its forms. Importantly, the catalogue did not include a copy of Robert Kerr’s *The Gentleman’s House*, one possible source for the design of Government House, Melbourne.\(^{48}\)

**Professional Libraries and Pattern Books**

In 1896, the Public Works Department of New South Wales published a catalogue of the two thousand books in its library. It contained several standard pattern books of the early sampler type including F. T. Hunt’s *Exemplars of Tudor Architecture* published in 1836 and C. Parker’s *Villa Rustica* published in 1848.\(^{49}\) *Bungalows and Country Residences* by R. A. Briggs, published in 1891, is an example of the later sampler type with Loudon’s Encyclopaedia of Architecture, published in 1835 representing the compendium type.\(^{50}\) Robert Kerr’s late book, *The Consulting Architect*, published in 1886, is included in the catalogue but his book *The Gentleman’s House* is not. Despite rigorous research, no such catalogue has come to light indicating what books the Public Works Department of Victoria might have held in a comparable library.\(^{51}\)

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\(^{48}\) The link between this book and Government House is discussed in Chapter 9.


\(^{50}\) *Catalogue of the Library of the DPW*, p. 73.

\(^{51}\) No catalogue survives in a public or academic library in Australia. No one knows of such a catalogue nor does anybody have any knowledge of a nineteenth-century PWD library. I am indebted to Virginia Stagg, librarian at the Department of Human Services, one of the ‘official’ descendants of the PWD, for checking government and other libraries for PWD books and Kerr’s in particular. Ann Atherton, the last librarian of the PWD has confirmed that its modern library, started only in the early 1980s and since disbanded, held no historical books. Bruce Trewbwan who undertook the first scholarly research into the PWD in his *The Public Works Department of Victoria - 1831-1900: an architectural history*, University of Melbourne, 1975, recalls no books but feels that ‘there was an undercurrent that books must have been used’, personal conversation 25 January 2001.
By comparison architects in private practice in Victoria did own pattern books and their ilk. A copy of Downing’s *A treatise on the theory and practice of landscape gardening*, now in the State Library of Victoria, has the name ‘Webb’ written on the title page. Could this be Charles Webb, one of the most distinguished architects in colonial Victoria, who was certainly interested in horticulture? There were well-established gardens at both his Italianate villa residences in Brighton, at Chilton from 1853 and subsequently at Farleigh from 1865. The Library acquired the book in 1901. Webb died late in 1898 and his brother James, the only other likely contender, had died in 1870 but no other books in the State Library of Victoria collection have been linked to Webb.

Other research has been done into the provenance of books which are now held in public collections and accessible through modern catalogues. This too must be qualified since the names, as signatures or bookplates, are not necessarily those of local people or of architects and the majority of books includes no such evidence. The results of this search are tabulated in Appendix One of this thesis. The results are so random that no firm conclusions can be drawn other than to show that some architects, indeed significant architects for Victoria such as A. E. Twentyman and Harold Desbrowe Annear, owned pattern books. Twentyman owned the early sampler by Robert Lugar, *The Country Gentleman’s Architect* and the common text, a later sampler, *Villa and Cottage Architecture*, first published by Blackie and Sons in Edinburgh in 1868. Annear owned Richard Brown’s *Domestic*.

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Nor does Susan Balderstone, who headed the Heritage Branch of the PWD and its subsequent descendants, recall any historical books, personal conversation 19 January 2000.

32 Held at SLV and acquired 5 May 1901.

33 His great-grandson, Charles Bridges Webb notes this in his memoir, SLV MS 8734, and has confirmed it in several personal conversations. Photographs survive of the latter garden. Weston Bate describes the self-sufficient gardens along the cliff top at Brighton where Webb lived in *History of Brighton*, pp. 172 and 331.
Architecture, first published in 1842. Both owned Samuel Brooks' Designs for Cottage and Villa Architecture published in 1839. The firm Twentyman and Askew designed many Italianate villas, particularly during Melbourne's boom of the 1880s. Annear, on the other hand, working later and in a different idiom, may have collected the books as artifacts rather than as professional sources. He had a great interest in the Arts and Crafts movement.

James Blackburn's Library

The most important professional library about which information is available is that of the James Blackburns, father and son. An immediate caution must be expressed because it is clear that some of the books listed in the catalogue were published after Blackburn senior's death in 1854. Still, this remarkable document provides great insight into the values, tastes and aspirations of both father and son.

James Blackburn Senior was convicted of forgery and transported to Van Diemen's Land, now Tasmania, in 1835. While a convict, he worked in the Public Works Department of the colonial government of Van Diemen's Land when, as one of a series of proposals, he designed a new Government House in the

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54 There are two copies in the Architecture Branch of the Baillieu Library, University of Melbourne. Annear owned one while a James Dell in 1854 and then a L. G. Vill, neither of whom were architects in Melbourne, owned the other.
55 The two copies are in the Architecture Branch of the Baillieu Library, University of Melbourne. The one donated by A. E. Twentyman was previously owned by Charles H. Horrell.
56 See Appendix 5 for a list of examples of their more important works which are discussed in subsequent chapters. The firm practised over many years and at least two generations with intermarriages between the two families. Edward Twentyman married Margaret Askew in 1867, Pioneers Index of Victoria, Reg. No. 184, for example.
Italianate style. Having served his sentence, he established a private practice in the Midland of Van Diemen’s Land. In the late-1840s, he supervised the substantial remodelling of the homestead, Rosedale transforming it into an Italianate villa. The next year, through the partnership of his son and another architect, Arthur Newson, Blackburn designed Bishopscourt, the Anglican Bishop’s residence in East Melbourne, Victoria.\(^{59}\)

There is no doubt that James Blackburn Senior owned and used a wide range of pattern books as sources for his designs.\(^{60}\) The catalogue of the library which James Blackburn Junior sold in 1889, including the titles published after his father’s death in 1854, boasted over three thousand volumes, about the average number for ‘named’ catalogues of book auctions.\(^{61}\) It was ‘the lifetime collection of the late James Blackburn, C.E.’.\(^{62}\) Of these, at least one hundred titles are directly related to architecture, engineering and construction.\(^{63}\) And of these, eight are pattern books for domestic architecture, which present designs for whole houses. Five are British, two American and one is French. Other titles are pattern books for churches, such as Barr’s *Anglican Church Architecture*\(^{64}\) or building

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\(^{59}\) Rosedale and Bishopscourt are discussed in detail in Chapter 5. Bishopscourt surfaces in subsequent chapters as one of the most important examples of the model in Victoria.

\(^{60}\) This was established by J. Grove, ‘James Blackburn, a note on his sources’, *Historic Environment*, 2, 1982, pp. 17-28, with particular emphasis on his Tasmanian churches.

\(^{61}\) *Catalogue of the library formed by the late James Blackburn, C.E.: for private sale*, Fitzroy, Vic.: Robert Barr, printer, [1889]. The Blackburn family holds an original of the catalogue and another copy is held at the SLV. James Blackburn senior was educated as a hydraulic engineer rather than as an architect.

\(^{62}\) *Catalogue of Blackburn*, preface, p. 2.

\(^{63}\) These are re-listed in the bibliography of J. Grove, ‘The Architecture of the Blackbourns’, Research Report, Architecture and Building, University of Melbourne, 1981. However, she only lists eighty titles and omits many which could be included.

\(^{64}\) Grove has marked this entry in the catalogue, with an asterisk in her list to denote ‘the book was not available in Melbourne Libraries or insufficient information was given in the catalogue to determine exact title or author’. This may be James Barr, *Anglican Church Architecture, with some remarks upon ecclesiastical furniture*, J. H. Parker, Oxford, 1842 1st ed., 1846 3rd ed.. Two copies are held in the Australian National Library.
details, such as Paley's *Gothic Mouldings* and Edwards', *Our Domestic Fireplaces*, or Whitlock's *Shop Fronts of London*. The eight domestic pattern books are each of interest. The British titles are three by T. F. Hunt including the rare *Architettura Campestre*, J. C. Loudon's *Encyclopaedia of Cottage, Farm and Villa Architecture* and Robert Kerr's *The Gentleman's House*. James Blackburn Junior must have purchased the latter which was first published in 1864. The American titles are by A. J. Downing, *The Architecture of Country Houses* and one by Downing's disciple, C. Vaux, *Villas and Cottages*. The French title, number 522 in the catalogue, is *Villas, Maisons de Ville et de Campagne* by Leon Isabey et Leblan. Many more titles deal with antiquities, architectural 'travelogues' and Pugin and Ruskin's theorising on Gothic architecture. The quantity and quality of the architectural books in the library is manifest.

Their buildings are evidence that the Blackburns designed on both sides of the Battle of the Styles and their books' titles give the Blackburndes' sources. There is a strong emphasis on the theory and detail of Gothic architecture, both ecclesiastic and domestic. Indeed, the collection is comprehensive with almost all of the published works of A. W. N. Pugin, his father Augustus Pugin, and John

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65 Frederick Aithorp Paley, *A Manual of Gothic Mouldings, with full directions for copying them and for determining their dates*, first published in London in 1845 and reprinted for the sixth time by Gurney & Jackson: London, 1902. This is one of the most common pattern books on Gothic detailing.


68 *Villas, maisons de ville et de campagne: compoastées sur les motifs des habitations de Paris moderne dans les styles des XVIe, XVIIe, XVIIIe, & XIXe siècles, et sur un choix des maisons les plus remarquables de l'étranger*, Paris, A. Levy, 1867. This is not included in Grove's list. One copy has been located in Australia in the Victoria University library.
Ruskin included, the latter being so numerous that they are listed separately.\textsuperscript{69} It also includes, as a sample, W. Roger Smith’s *Gothic Architecture*, two copies of Rickman’s *Gothic Architecture*, T. H. Turner’s *Domestic Architecture in the Middle Ages*, G. E. Street’s *Gothic Architecture in Spain*, Bedford Hope’s *The English Cathedral of the 19\textsuperscript{th} Century*, T. Inkersley’s *Romanesque and Pointed Architecture in France*, and Brayles and Britton’s *The Ancient Palace and Houses of Parliament*, Westminster. On the Classical side, the collection includes *The Architectural Antiquities of Rome measured and delineated by G. L. Taylor* and *Edward Cresy* which was self-published in London in 1821-22, *Prolusiones architectonicae: or, essays on subjects connected with Grecian and Roman architecture* by William Wilkins published in London in 1837 as part of John Weale’s Architectural Library, and the *Memoir of Sir Charles Barry* by his son, the Rev. Alfred Barry.

The Classical and Renaissance side of the Battle might seem to be under represented but the several monographs on diverse ancient monuments and the titles on Italian painting at least compensate in numbers. They actually suggest the Blackburns’ appreciation of the sources of the Picturesque aesthetic and of the Italianate villa. Classical literature, both Greek and Latin, is well represented. They appear not only to understand the tension between the Sublime and the Beautiful but also to have appreciated and enjoyed it. If an interest in the Sublime, and beyond, requires confirmation, there are F. von Tschudi’s *Sketches from Nature in the Alps*,\textsuperscript{70} Sir Walter Scott’s *Demonology and Witchcraft*,\textsuperscript{71} Thomas Keightley’s

\textsuperscript{69} There are fifty-five titles by Ruskin listed separately without numbers between nos. 76 and 77, but they include repetitions. All the standard works by Pugin Senior and Junior appear to be included.

\textsuperscript{70} *Catalogue*, no. 218.

\textsuperscript{71} *Catalogue*, no. 220.
Fairy Mythology, and Smedley’s Occult Sciences as well as the usual Romantic novels and poetry. The title Sublime Society of Beefsteaks by W. Arnold appears to be a spoof. The range of books in James Blackburn’s library indicates that when he died he was a well-educated, moderately successful, middle-class professional with broad interests in the arts and sciences and not without a sense of humour.

His library also indicates Blackburn’s political views and suggests that these were democratic and reformist. Political theory is represented comprehensively by the classic works of John Stuart Mill and Thomas Carlyle. There are many books on the Scottish and Irish rebellions, which sought political reform if not independent republics, as well as the French Revolution. Other titles, such as How We are Governed and The British Constitution show a more pragmatic approach to politics. Political history is represented by the History of the Italian republics in the Middle Ages by J. C. L. Sismondi. One book by H. Lushington, The Italian

72 Catalogue, no. 251, listed as ‘by Smedley and others’ and must be The occult sciences: sketches of the traditions and superstitions of past times, and the marvels of the present day, by Rev. Edward Smedley ... W. Cooke Taylor ... Rev. Henry Thompson ... and Elihu Rich, Esq. which was published in London and Glasgow by R. Griffin and company, 1855. So, it must have been purchased by Blackburn’s son. The previous titles were published before James Blackburn Senior died.

73 The latter category is represented throughout the catalogue by the Romantics, Byron, Coleridge, Shelley, Southey and Wordsworth, by the transitional Picturesque poet Samuel Rogers (uncle of Richard Payne Knight), and by the Victorians, Robert and Elizabeth Browning, Keats, and Tennyson, and by the American, Henry Longfellow.

74 Catalogue, no. 290. It is not held in any public or academic library in Australia.

75 Catalogue, no. 1229, Albany Fonblanque, the Younger, How We are Governed, London, first published in 1858 with at least fourteen subsequent editions.

76 No author is given for this entry, Catalogue, no. 1083, and it could be any of several books published in the early nineteenth century. Some candidates are the late-Georgian political satire The British constitution triumphant, or, A picture of the radical conclave sometimes attributed to William Hone; The British Constitution, its origin and history written by two members of Gray’s Inn and published in London in 1835; or a tract written by Brougham and Vaux, under the superintendence of the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge and published in London in 1844.

77 Catalogue, no. 854.
war, 1848-9 and the last Italian poet, links politics with poetry, but this was not published until 1859 and must be attributed to James Blackburn Junior.\textsuperscript{78}

James Blackburn Senior’s political views must have been tested just when he was designing a new Government House for Governor Franklin, one version of which was in a style with democratic associations.\textsuperscript{79} Political prisoners transported from Upper and Lower Canada for rebellion and sedition had arrived in Hobart in 1840, the French Canadians from Lower Canada being sent on to Sydney. The British Canadians and their American sympathisers remained in Van Diemen’s Land. The French and British Canadians had been fighting for representative government, a sore point in New South Wales. ‘The Americans [who were] articulate and outspoken in their republicanism, would certainly have been more dangerous in New South Wales.’\textsuperscript{80} It is impossible to say what Blackburn thought about the rebels’ cause, their conviction and transportation, but, on the basis of his private library, it is possible to speculate that he would have been a sympathiser.

As a young, middle-class professional who had erred and was paying the consequences, he probably kept his thoughts to himself. In 1841, he received a free pardon, the reward of hard work and good behaviour. By 1848, he had satisfactorily redesigned Rosedale, the home of Henry Leake, a successful pastoralist and politician, at Campbell Town transforming it into an Italianate villa.\textsuperscript{81} It seems clear that he synthesised ideas from pattern books, particularly

\textsuperscript{78} Catalogue, no. 1002.
\textsuperscript{79} The exact timing and sequence of the various designs is not certain but they date from the very late 1830s and ‘lay on the table’ effectively until the Franklins were recalled in 1843 when an amended version of the Gothic proposal was built under William Porden Kay in the early 1840s.
\textsuperscript{81} Grove, The Blackburns, p. 45 where she states ‘Leake obviously happy with the work, wrote a testimonial for Blackburn prior to his departure to Port Phillip, where he expressed his pleasure with the work, ‘The additions and improvement now nearly completed from your designs, to my residence at this place, and which have proceeded under your direction, have afforded me to
Loudon's *Encyclopaedia of Cottage Farm and Villa Architecture*. Within a year, he had designed Bishopscourt in the new colony of Victoria, which resembles Loudon's example of an Italianate villa suitable for democratic people such as in America, but is more likely a cross between Downing's Design XXII in *Country Houses* and Design VI and Design VIII in *Cottages Residences.* Bishopscourt also resembles Design No. 19 in Calvert Vaux's *Villas and Cottages.* It is not surprising that the design might be an amalgam, since competent architects were more likely to have used pattern books as sources for principles and details rather than just as copy books. In fact, very few pattern book designs were replicated in colonial Australia.

Public Libraries and Pattern Books

Pattern books were available to the general public through public libraries. The Melbourne Free Public Library was the colony's metropolitan library and was also the model for the local free public libraries provided by municipalities. These were in addition to, and sometimes in competition with, those associated with fee-paying mechanics' institute libraries. Other public and private libraries also held pattern books. The establishment of libraries in the nineteenth century was itself a democratising phenomenon. The notion of universal education and self-

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82 Downing, *Country Houses*, p. 287 and *Cottages Residences*, pp. 115 and 141. There is a copy of *Country Houses* listed in Catalogue, No. 796.


84 Holmwood at Cathcart near Glasgow, designed by A. and G. Thompson and featured in *Villa and Cottage Architecture*, Blackie & Son, Edinburgh, 1868 and 1871, was replicated in Adelaide, South Australia, some two decades later.
improvement, which public libraries and mechanics institutes supported, was
central to democratic political reforms throughout the nineteenth century.85

Redmond Barry, a Justice of the Supreme Court and Hugh Childers,
Auditor-General of the Colony founded the Melbourne Public Library in 1854,
only three years after Separation and the discovery of gold.86 The recently arrived
architect, Joseph Reed who had won the public competition, designed a building
in the Renaissance revival style. As that building rose, Reed also designed a new
house for Barry, called Carlton Gardens.87 Like Bishopscourt, it looked across a
public park, was set in a large allotment and was surrounded by a garden. It was
not an asymmetrical Italianate villa but belonged rather to the Palladian end of the
spectrum.88 Childers, on the other hand, leased a Gothic revival house, well
within the pattern book genre, a villa in the relatively remote suburb of Hawthorn
called The Hawthorns.89 Barry and Childers were co-founders of the University

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85 See Mansfield, ‘Public Libraries in Ballarat’, for the most recent research. Ballarat is of
particular interest because it had three public libraries: the Ballarat East Free Library (1859), the
Ballarat Mechanics Institute Library (1859) and City of Ballarat Free Library (1878).
86 For a general background to the period, see Geoffrey Serle, The Golden Age, Melbourne
University Press, Carlton, 1963. For the establishment and history of the library see Edmund La
Touche Armstrong, The Book of the Public Library, Museums and National Gallery of Victoria,
1856-1906, Trustees of the Public Library, Museums, and National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne,
1906; and David McVilly, ‘A history of the State Library of Victoria, 1853-1974’, Master of Arts at
Monash University, 1975. More particularly, see Ann Galbally, Redmond Barry, Melbourne
University Press, Carlton, 1995 and her The First Collections, pp. 20-4, where she discusses the
separate roles of the two ‘founders’. For Childers’ biography, see H. L. Hall, ‘Childers, Hugh
87 Argus, 7 April, 1856, p. 6, Joseph Reed calls tenders for a large brick & stone dwelling
house in Rathdowne St, Carlton.
88 Having been converted in 1874 to become the Children’s Hospital, it was demolished in
the early twentieth century for a new building. A photograph of the house taken by photographer,
Charles Rudd (1849-1901), between 1892-1900 as the Children’s Hospital, is held by the State
Library. The house was grand and formal. It was two storeys with a loggia of piers on the ground
floor and a trellised and arced loggia on the upper floor. It appears to have been symmetrical
and a simple parapet hides the roof. A photograph of the hall is held by the Children’s Hospital
Archives and is reproduced in Galbally, Barry, opp. p. 149.
89 It was designed in the mid-1840s by the architect John Gill for Henry Creswick Esq.,
M.L.A. and is typical of the Gothic model in architectural pattern books. ‘We leave this house in
about a month from this time to go to a very pretty and comfortable house, nearly three miles from
town, on the river...[leased for two years from Mr Creswick, who is visiting England]... We have
about 7 acres of lawn and garden with it...’, letter from Hugh Childers to his mother, 20th January,
of Melbourne, the former its first chancellor and the latter its first vice-chancellor. The style chosen for its architecture was Tudor Gothic revival, drawing on the mediaeval associations of British universities.\textsuperscript{90}

From the beginning, Barry was directly involved with the collection of suitable books for the Public Library.\textsuperscript{91} And, from the beginning, the collection included key texts on architecture and horticulture such as those by Stuart and Revett, John Britton, Sir William Chambers, Joseph Gwilt, J. C. Loudon, Humphrey Repton, and A. W. and A. W. N. Pugin. Not all the texts were purchased immediately but the Library acquired them, sooner rather than later. Childers, who had returned to London in 1857 for personal reasons, 'bought books and exhibits for the library and arranged their dispatch.'\textsuperscript{92} It is not known who might have advised Barry and Childers on their selection of books about architecture. Appendix 3 lists the architectural books requested by Redmond Barry in 1853.

The Library also collected journals. By 1858, it held nineteen volumes of the \textit{Gardener's Magazine}, 'conducted' or edited by J. C. Loudon from 1826 and nine volumes of the \textit{Journal of the Horticultural Society of London}, published from 1846.\textsuperscript{93} The former was important for pattern books because Loudon published

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\textsuperscript{90} The architect, F. M. White who had won the competition was soon usurped by Joseph Reed whose firm and its descendants remained the university's architects until the later twentieth century. Reed and Barnes designed the first Wilson Hall, which burnt down and Bates Smart and McCutcheon designed its replacement in 1956.


\textsuperscript{93} Guillaume, \textit{Catalogue of Books}, pp. 22 and 28. There seems to have been a rash of books and journals on horticulture at this time just when the Royal Botanic Gardens were being established. Did Baron Ferdinand von Mueller or Edward La Trobe Bateman make informed recommendations to Barry or the Librarian, Augustus Tulk? The library also holds Joseph Paxton's
house designs in the journal before including them in other publications. A. J.

Downing, who edited the *Horticulturist*, did the same thing. 'Between July 1846, when he published in the inaugural issue a design for improving a common country house, and June 1850, the eve of his journey to Europe, Downing devoted the frontispiece and an article to architecture in thirty-three of the forty-eight monthly numbers of the journal.'

The Library collected architectural journals as well as those on horticulture and, most importantly, from its inception held copies of building journals published locally. Some local journals were transient but others endured. The first published in Melbourne were the *Australian Builder and Land Advertiser* from 1855-56 and the *Australian Builder and Practical Mechanic* in 1856. The *Australian Builder and Railway Chronicle*, 'an illustrated weekly journal' was published in Melbourne from 1859-60. The *Australian Builder* was published in Melbourne from 1861. A Sydney publication, the *Australasian Builder & Contractors' News* emerged in 1887 and lasted until 1895. The *Building, Engineering & Mining Journal* was published in Melbourne from 1897 until 1905. The only early holdings of British building journals were the *Builder*,

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*Horticultural Register*, published from 1832-36; the *Journal of horticulture, cottage gardener and country gentleman* from 1861-1904; and *The Gardener: a magazine of horticulture and floriculture* edited by W. Thomson and D. Thomson, Edinburgh, 1868-1882, as well as other titles from England, Scotland, France and the United States. It is not known from when these were collected and they do not promote architecture to the same extent.

*Schuyler, Apostles of Taste*, p. 132. It seems that the Public Library did not collect the *Horticulturist*.

*From its inception the library was obliged to hold all material printed within the Colony and there was an obligation on all publishers for the legal deposit of all their titles.*

*For a discussion of these journals see Miles Lewis, Australian Architectural Index, 2nd edition, University of Melbourne, School of Architecture and Building, microfiche, post 1970.*

*These seemed to have followed each other immediately and may have been affected by the post-gold rush depression in Victoria in 1856.*

*Australian builder: a journal of architecture, building, engineering, scientific and mechanical art*, Australian Builder, Melbourne.

*This was associated with the Building & Engineering Journal of Australia & New Zealand.*

The emergence of journals in the early nineteenth century both supported and competed with the publication of pattern books. On the one hand, designs could be tested in journals and a series of designs might be collected as a book. Sections of books were issued as fascicles in the style of journals eventually to be bound together and journals could cross-promote books when there was a common interest. On the other hand, journals stole market share. They were cheaper to produce, more responsive to changing taste, and could be sold reliably on subscription. Australian journals had the extra advantage of being topical.

The Melbourne Free Public Library was one of the great civic institutions of the Colony of Victoria, recognised even by the British Government. Barry had pressed a wide range of sources for donations in cash or kind, including the Secretary of State, the Duke of Newcastle. He agreed to provide government publications free of charge because of

Successful efforts made to form the Public Library, to the popularity it enjoys as indicated by the large and increasing numbers resorting to it, and to the opinion expressed by Governor Sir H. Barkly that it is one of the noblest and most extensively useful Institutions in Her Majesty's dominions, My Lords are of the opinion that an exception may be made ... and will be prepared to make a grant of each of the Government Publications at the disposal of the Treasury.  

This was very practical support but it may have been politically pragmatic as well. Ann Galbally, in her introductory chapter 'For the Instruction and Amusement of the Inhabitants' in *The First Collections* notes the emergence of libraries, museums and art galleries in the nineteenth century 'when the potent

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100 *Catalogue of the Melbourne Public Library for 1861*, p. 385.
alliance of greater literacy, democratic stirrings and the utilitarian belief in progress changed the very concept of a museum [library and art gallery]. Knowledge and learning, if made available to the middle and working classes, could lead to an individual’s better self-understanding and, beyond the individual, to better social cohesion. Cultural institutions, represented through their collections and epitomised through their architecture, could have a political purpose.

If the vision of the founders of the Melbourne Free Public Library was a democratic one, for bringing knowledge and learning as well as entertainment to the people, then it could be argued that the smaller municipal libraries and the libraries associated with mechanics’ institutes were just as democratic. However, three most important qualifications must be expressed about their real influence. Firstly, municipal libraries and mechanics’ institute libraries were often in competition with each other. Secondly, the regulations created by committees, and the demeanour of librarians, often alienated working-class readers and sometimes excluded them.

Thirdly, despite admirable collections, public use may have been low and it certainly had declined by the end of the nineteenth century. Peter Mansfield has explored these tensions in detail in his thesis which compares the three ‘public’ libraries of Ballarat. Barry himself was a critic of mechanics’ institute libraries for all these reasons.

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101 Letter signed by F. Peck, Treasury Chamber, London, 6 August 1862, Barry Papers, Box 2781 (12), State Library of Victoria, quoted in Galbally, Barry, p. 124 and ft. 27.
102 Galbally, First Collections, p. 8.
103 Galbally, First Collections, p. 8. She notes the speculation by Steven Moyano that Prussia’s support for the arts through Karl Friedrich Schinkel’s designs for the Altes Museum in Berlin ‘had a definite Kulturpolitik or political purpose’.
104 Existing members of the Australian Subscription Library, a private library in Sydney in 1830s, had the power to blackball nominees for membership. See George Nadel, Australia’s Colonial Culture, F. W. Cheshire, Melbourne, pp. 80-1.
105 Mansfield, ‘Public Libraries in Ballarat’.
The municipality of Prahran, a suburb of Melbourne which included all classes, established the Prahran Free Public Library in 1858 according to the model advocated by Barry. The catalogue published in 1869 indicates that the collection contained many books on or related to architecture. Seven of these titles were conventional pattern books dating from the second third of the nineteenth century. There were three volumes of Fergusson’s *Handbook of Architecture* and three titles on drawing by Ruskin. The library subscribed to two British journals, *The Civil Engineer and Architect’s Journal* and *The Cottage Gardener*. There was a copy of J. C. Loudon’s revised edition of Repton’s *Landscape Gardening* and a copy of A. J. Downing’s *A Treatise on the theory and practice of landscape gardening, adapted to North America: ...With remarks on rural architecture*. And there was a copy of Sir Uvedale Price’s classic text on the Picturesque. In contrast, the Prahran Mechanics’ Institute’s catalogue, published a decade earlier, seems to have had only one book on architecture, which is listed as ‘Garbett on Architecture’.

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107 It appears to have been typical of the type in the metropolis and, as at Ballarat, the public and mechanics’ institute library were independent.


Mechanics' Institute Libraries

The mechanics' institute movement started in Glasgow at the beginning of the nineteenth century and was soon adopted in London and in the industrial centres of northern England.\footnote{111} From there, it spread to the Australian colonies with the Melbourne Mechanics Institute founded as early as 1839, just a few years after settlement.\footnote{112} It failed to thrive and in the early 1850s the Argus condemned its library as 'a mere collection of novels'.\footnote{113} The Public Library soon eclipsed the library of the Mechanics Institute which subsequently developed into the Melbourne Athenaeum. Both still survive as active public libraries.

The rapid proliferation of mechanics' institutes in the Colony of Victoria is remarkable.\footnote{114} It seems that every provincial city, town and village strove to establish a mechanics' institute, athenaeum or lecture hall in the 1850s and 1860s.\footnote{115} Although intended for the ill-educated lower class and sponsored by the well-educated upper class, the middle class benefited most from mechanics' institutes.\footnote{116} Access by the lower class could be limited if not excluded by the

\footnote{111} The institutions were often short-lived and dependent on individuals. One of the founders of the movement, George Birkbeck ([1776-1841]), established what was effectively a mechanics' institute in Glasgow in 1800, then one in London in 1809. In 1817, Timothy Claxton founded the Mechanical Institution in London which lasted for three years until he migrated to the United States where he twice tried to establish the same institutions in Boston. In 1823, George Birkbeck helped found the London Mechanics' Institution in 1823. The Manchester Mechanics Institute was founded in 1825.

\footnote{112} For the earliest discussion of mechanics' institutes, and their equivalent, see Nadel, Australia's Colonial Culture, Part 4 'The Mechanics Institute Movement'. According to Nadel, the Van Diemen's Land Mechanics Institute founded in 1827 seems to have been the first in the Australian colonies. Sydney was founded in 1833, Newcastle in 1835, Adelaide in 1838, Maitland in 1839, Launceston in 1842, Auckland in 1843, Brisbane in 1849 and Perth in 1851.


\footnote{115} The strength of the movement in Australia, at least in quantity if not in quality, is in remarkable contrast to the US and even Britain but there seems to be little scholarship on it.

\footnote{116} George Nadel notes this as a problem with the Sydney Mechanics Institute, 'It became clear that the institution was to be primarily for mechanics—a hope which was soon to be falsified in the colony as it was in the mother country. From the beginning, neither the convict element nor a
application of rules and regulations, and even by small fees or charges. The upper class probably had other things to do once their institute was established, their conscience salved and provision made for distracting the idle worker. John Richard argues 'Universities, of course, were for the elite, and even mechanics' institutes, in spite of original intentions, soon became part of the middle-class landscape of urban Australia. While being promoted as appropriate to the democratic colonial environment, the institutes could still acknowledge the inherited structures of class.' They may have been instruments of political control. It could equally be argued that the mechanics' institute offered the perfect model of democracy because, potentially, it could bring together all classes.

In any case, a library was at the heart, and was usually the most successful part, of the nineteenth-century mechanics' institute in colonial Victoria. Few collections have survived. One of the few, that of the Belfast Mechanics Institute, is still held at the Port Fairy Library. The collection is representative of middle-class taste and includes both fiction and reference, Australian and non-Australian books. Authors of literature include Rolf Boldrewood, Eleanor Dark, Charles

sufficiently large proportion of the labouring element were drawn into the scheme. Indeed, the institution retained its middle-class character throughout, and most of the mechanics were eventually displaced by clerks, tradesmen, professional men, shopkeepers, publicans, and other members of the city bourgeoisie. Some clergymen, men in public life and colonial officials often supported the institution from behind the scenes, just as some of the wealthier squatters paid for life memberships without taking part in the life of the institution.' Nadel, 'Australia's Colonial Culture', pp. 114-5.

For information about the establishment of a mechanics' institute see the minutes of the meeting to establish the Glen Osmond Mechanics' Institute in South Australia quoted in R. W. Connell and T. H. Irving, 'Class Structure in Australian History', Melbourne, Longman Cheshire, pp. 174-5. A copy of its 1869 library catalogue is held in the State Library of Victoria.


Connell and Irving, 'Class Structure', pp. 123 and 127.


In 1982-3, Di Clanchy, a librarian, reviewed the collection with some limited de-acquisition. She catalogued the collection circa 1985 for the Friends of the Port Fairy Mechanics Institute. The original is held on a master computer disk at the Cohae branch of the library and in hard copy at the Port Fairy branch of the library. The aim of the review and catalogue was to create
Dickens, William Thackeray and Ethel Turner. Mark Twain appears as a travel writer. British and American references include Chambers’ *Cyclopaedia of English Literature*, the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, books on religion and spiritualism, chemistry and botany, and various atlases. Australian references include *Victoria and Its Metropolis*. The journals held were the *Illustrated London News*, the *Ladies Pictorial, Leisure Hours* and Cassell’s *Sunday Journal*. Only two books on architecture are still in the collection, which are John Ruskin’s *Lectures on Architecture and Painting*, 1891 edition and the *Dictionary of Architecture*, edited by Robert Stuart and published by Jones of London.

Mechanics’ institute libraries also held architectural pattern books. The most remarkable example is T. F. Hunt’s *Architettura Campestre* which was held by the South Australian Library and Mechanics’ Institute, remarkable because this is probably one of the rarest British pattern books. The South Australian Library also holds Hunt’s other works, *Half a dozen Hints on Picturesque Domestic Architecture* and *Exemplars of Tudor architecture, adapted to modern habitations*. Also rare is the library’s copy of the English edition of Calvert Vaux’s *Villas and Cottages*, published in 1857 by Sampson in London and Harper in New York.

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122 The State Library of Victoria holds some seventeen catalogues, mostly from Victoria, but also from places as diverse as Hobart Town VDL (1854 and 1860), Dunedin NZ (1869), Glen Osmond SA (1869), and Narrandera NSW (1899).

123 This is the single entry listed in ‘Kinetic’, the National Bibliographic Database of Australia. The copy is stamped on its title page. It was included in Donald Leslie Johnson’s *18th and 19th Century architecture books and serials held in South Australia*, Adelaide, Libraries Board of SA, 1981, entry 302. The only other copy known in Australia is a first edition in the private collection of Dr Miles Lewis.

124 3rd edition 1841.

Private Libraries and Pattern Books

Pattern books were also held in some private libraries. Like the collections in mechanics’ institutes, very few private libraries have survived intact from Victoria’s colonial period. Those private libraries which have survived are usually located in historic buildings with a continuous ownership from the nineteenth century such as at the homesteads Meningoort, Warrock and Murndal, in the Western District, Strathfieldsaye, Harewood House and Holey Plains in Gippsland, and Bontharambo in north-eastern Victoria.\(^{126}\) The library at Meningoort, the home of the McArthur family, is relatively small and appears to hold no books directly related to architecture.\(^{127}\) The library at Strathfieldsaye also holds no books on architecture.\(^{128}\) The other libraries do.

The Robertson family occupied Warrock, near Casterton in the Western District from the 1843 until the early 1990s. It is a ‘complex comprising fifty-seven

\(^{126}\) Homesteads with a continuous ownership from the 1850s are, in fact, quite rare and may be as few as half a dozen. Mrs Wendy Dennis of Tamdwarnecoort, Warrcoort confirmed ‘there seem to be no architectural pattern books still in the family’, personal correspondence dated 7 September 1998. Mr Robert Hood of Merrang, Hexham confirmed ‘we have no architectural pattern books’, personal correspondence dated 22 September 1998. Although Ms Peg and Ms June Hood presented a collection of 120 commercial souvenir photographs, taken in the 1880s, in an album titled Roma to the library of Clyde School, Macedon. It is now held in a private collection. Mrs Officer of Mount Talbot, Tooronga confirmed that there were no architectural books in that library, personal conversation on 3 October 2000. No libraries belonging to the Manifold family are believed to survive since the sale of Purrumbete, Camperdown in the mid-1980s. Mrs Crooke of Boisdale, Maffra could not recall any books on architecture, telephone conversation, 11 January 2001. Dr John Lack, who researched the books at Strathfieldsaye, Sale, could not recall any books on architecture, personal correspondence, 12 January 2001. One library has been reconstructed, that at Harewood House, Tooradin, first owned by William Lyall and actually designed by an Italian, Alessandro Martelli in 1858 who was a supporter of Garibaldi. Harewood, which is loosely Italianate, was Lyall’s third home, the second being Frogmore, an Italianate villa in the suburb of Caulfield, designed by Joseph Reed in 1856. Reed called tenders ‘for Italian villa residence near St Kilda’, Argus, 15 October 1856, p 7. The library at Bontharambo is believed to survive.


\(^{128}\) The library which survives at the homestead is not catalogued. Dr Dishier, who bequeathed the property to the University of Melbourne, is not known to have had any interest in architecture.
extant buildings and related structures built primarily of timber with an intentionally consistent and harmonious architecture'.

Warrock is significant as an exceptionally fine example of a surviving mid-nineteenth century farm modelled on the early nineteenth century writings of architectural and agricultural theorists in Britain such as J. C. Loudon and demonstrating the early implementation of agrarian and social reforms proposed by them.

And because

For the next forty-seven years Robertson designed and fastidiously erected thirty timber and three brick station buildings to form a two acre homestead complex without parallel in Australia. These timber structures, centred around the original weatherboard cottage of 1843, are consistently built in a style devised from mid 19th century pattern book sources.

George Robertson, a Scottish cabinet-maker owned, or at least used, a copy of J. C. Loudon's *Encyclopaedia of Cottage, Farm and Villa Architecture*, his *Encyclopaedia of Agriculture* and White's *Rural Architecture, Illustrated in a New Series of Designs for Ornamental Cottages and Villas*.

The library at Murndal is more extensive and has been continuously added to since the mid-nineteenth century. Murndal, one of the first squatting runs in Victoria, was established by Samuel Pratt Winter in 1837. The original slab hut survives and now forms the room in which the homestead's library is housed. The

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130 Huddle and Rowe, ‘Warrock’, Statement of Significance.

131 Citation, National Trust of Australia (Vic), No. B1342.

132 Huddle, Rowe and Lewis could not prove the existence of these titles at Warrock but it seems most likely. A copy of Loudon from Warrock was sold through Bellecourt Books, Hamilton when the estate was dispersed, according to the owners of the bookshop. There were also copies of Ferguson, *The Palaces of Nineveh and Persepolis Restored*, Murray, 1851, and Ferguson, *History of the Modern Styles of Architecture*, Murray, 1862 amongst the 200 books remaining at Warrock which were sold just before the commencement of the Conservation Study. The present author purchased the latter. I am indebted to Lorraine Huddle and David Rowe for supplying the ‘Statement of Significance’ and Appendix 20, ‘List of material from the Warrock library’ from their study. Personal correspondence with Lorraine Huddle, 12 January 2001 and David Rowe, 23 January 2001.

133 It was catalogued by Kenneth Hince, antiquarian bookseller, for the Winter-Cooke family, owners of Murndal.

Murdoal library holds various books on architecture, horticulture, hydraulic engineering and travel. The main architectural titles found are Charles Parker's *Villa Rustica*, J. H. Parker's *Introduction to the Study of Gothic Architecture*, and his *Glossary of Terms Used in Grecian, Roman, Italian and Gothic Architecture*. Cassell's *The Elements of Building Construction and Architectural Drawing*, Stagg's *Water Engineering*, Carfield's *Dwelling Houses*, and *The Grammar of House Planning*. Of further interest are certain travel guides including Hare's *Florence* and *Walks in Rome*, Mrs. Oliphant's *The Makers of Florence*, and Murray's *Handbook of Florence and Its Environs*. Apart from Charles Parker's pattern book which was authoritative and well regarded, none of these titles is of particular note. Rather, it is the combination of titles, brought together over a long time by two collectors, which indicates the cultural values and

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135 The then owners, Mr. and Mrs. Samuel Winter-Cooke, were most gracious in making their library available without reserve in April 1998.
lifestyle of the Winter family. They were well educated, travelled abroad extensively and saw themselves as transferred Anglo-Irish gentry.

The detailed provenance of pattern books in Australia has emerged as another indication of the extent of their influence amongst different classes. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, this seems to have been amongst the wealthy and well educated. The earliest pattern book with a recorded provenance in Australia is John Plaw’s Rural Improvement, published in 1796, which was owned by John Macarthur of Camden in New South Wales.146 He and other pastoralists owned Middleton’s The Architect and Builder’s Miscellany, 1799, and Laing’s Hints for Dwellings of 1800 or 1804.147 Mrs Elizabeth Macarrie owned Gyfford’s Designs for Elegant Cottages and Small Villas and Loudon’s Encyclopaedia of Cottage Farm and Villa Architecture.148 The colonial artist Conrad Martens may have owned Bartell’s Hints for Picturesque Improvements of 1804.149

Members of the NSW civil service also owned pattern books. Chief Justice Francis Forbes owned Papworth’s Rural Residences, but, according to James Broadbent, his country ‘seat’, Edinglassie, something between a cottage and a villa, may have been more influenced by Edmund Bartell’s book, Hints for Picturesque Improvements in Ornamental Cottages, published in 1804.150 Conrad Martens painted Edinglassie c.1835. The NSW Surveyor-General, Major Mitchell owned several pattern books and other books on architecture and was directly influenced

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146 James Broadbent in ‘Early Sydney Houses, examples of pattern-book architecture’ Art Association of Australia, 1976 conference papers, p. 64. See also his more recent and much more extensive research in Australian Colonial House, Hordern House and the Historic Houses Trust of NSW, Sydney, 1997, under the extensive index entry ‘pattern-books’.


148 Broadbent, Australian Colonial House, pp. 35ff.

149 Broadbent ‘Early Sydney Houses’, p. 64.
by them. More importantly for Victoria, because he moved from Sydney to Melbourne to work in the Public Works Department, the Colonial Architect, Henry Ginn owned Thomson’s *Retreats.* While the content of the NSW Public Works Department’s library in the later nineteenth century is known, that of Victorian PWD is frustratingly unknown.

Finally, some privately owned pattern books have been discovered as isolated cases. One, for example, is Charles Wickes’ *A Handy Book of Villa Architecture: being a series of designs for villa residences in various styles*, being two volumes in one, and published in 1859. E. J. McKinnon of 38 Delaware St, N.19 (now the Melbourne suburb of Reservoir) signed the copy in the Architecture Branch of the Baillieu Library at the University of Melbourne inside the cover. Intriguingly, this is the same address as for the 1879 edition of Isaac Hobbs & Son’s *Hobbs’s Architecture* in the same library, but for a different owner, one M. C. Nott. Neither of these people was a practising architect in the nineteenth century. The address is now an undistinguished modern bungalow but in the

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150 Broadbent in ‘Early Sydney Houses’, p. 64 and *Australian Colonial House*, p. 148 and colour plate 12.
152 Broadbent ‘Early Sydney Houses’, p. 61. ‘The architect Henry Ginn’s library included Papworth’s edition of the Decorative Part of Chambers Civil Architecture; Nicholson’s Principles of Architecture; Thomson’s Retreats with coloured plans, elevations etc. of cottages and villas; 61 plates in all of Roman Ornaments, Foliages and Friezes and Window curtains; The Carpenter and Joiner’s Instructor; and “Pagin’s” Illustrations of the Public Buildings of London.’
153 Susan Balderstone has stated ‘Copies of books like these came with the first architects to the new colony [of NSW], such as Mortimer Lewis, appointed as Colonial Architect in 1835. His elevation of Parramatta Police Office of 1837 demonstrates the connection. The influence of these designs on the Victorian Public Works Department can be traced back to Lewis via James Rattenbury and Henry Ginn’, Balderstone, ‘The National Estate: Australia’s Visible Identity’, 1997 Adjunct Professorial Lecture Series, Deakin University, p. 4.
155 A search of the PIV, MGS, 1998, reveals no appropriate birth before 1888.
156 Nor do they appear in the standard references, Alexander Sutherland, ed., *Victoria and Its Metropolis*, McCarron Bird & Co., Melbourne, 1888, and *Cyclopaedia of Victoria*, Cyclopaedia Co. of Victoria, Melbourne, 1903, which contain brief biographies of leading citizens.
nineteenth century, there was a substantial villa in the vicinity called Tambo Park.\textsuperscript{157}

Pattern books were popular and wide-ranging in colonial Australia. They were available and used by all classes, by professionals and their clients, and by people living in town and in the country. Beyond their obvious and perhaps superficial use as source books, there is an undercurrent of deeper values in their text and imagery. These are represented by the four criteria for the true villa lifestyle: an appropriate situation, a sense of retreat, a certain self-sufficiency and often a library as the intellectual heart. These are the values embodied in each example of a building's style, form and function.

The books provided knowledge in the form of information and advice which empowered their middle class clients. The books were made available to the middle class through libraries, themselves democratic institutions. Architects used them as source books for details and ideas, and the better books as sources for detailed advice and even theory. Beyond their populism and popularity, pattern books fostered the dream of home ownership, an ideal which was increasingly suburban. The Italianate villa, as a model for domestic architecture, was an essential ingredient in the democratic suburban ideal promoted by pattern books. As well as objective advice and pragmatic instruction, there was much subjective opinion with a presumption of self-improvement. Most importantly, there is a sense of democratic reform. Pattern books were essential for the dissemination of the Italianate villa model and all that it stood for.

\textsuperscript{157} See Miles Lewis, 'Melbourne Mansions' on-line database, quoting Harley W. Forster, 
5  THE ITALIANATE VILLA IN AUSTRALIA:

A THOROUGHLY PICTURESQUE POINT OF VIEW

It took two slow generations for the Italianate villa to appear in the Australian colonies after Cronkhill was built in 1803. The ground was prepared by the early use of the Greek revival style and a strong understanding amongst the elite and the design professions of the Picturesque aesthetic. From the governorship of Lachlan Macquarie in the 1820s onwards, it is possible to see elements of the Italianate villa and its Picturesque setting emerging.¹ The techniques which the model later used to claim the landscape had been adopted already in the colonization of New South Wales and Van Diemen’s Land. Captain John Piper’s Henrietta Villa, built about 1817, used diagonal symmetry, cross axes and abstracted Classical detailing. It was set in a Picturesque location and a landscaped garden overlooking Sydney Harbour. Other early houses in NSW and Tasmania hinted at Italianate details.

The only villa in early NSW which could be described as Italianate in style is Bungarribee, built about 1827, and it can be compared directly with Cronkhill. The design has been tentatively attributed to the convict architect, Francis Greenway who ‘had been employed in Nash’s office at about the time Cronkhill was being designed’.² But, as James Broadbent points out, Bungarribee bore no fruit. In NSW, ‘Colonists with aspirations to Picturesque taste were to prefer, as the governor’s wife, Mrs. Macquarie had preferred, the more ‘English’, patriotic,

associationally redolent Gothic style to Italianate. Gothic and Greek villas, usually in Picturesque settings, were the fashion in early New South Wales.

Van Diemen’s Land, known from the 1850s as Tasmania, was the second colony in Australia. Coincidentally, the colony was founded in 1803, the same year Cronkhill was built, after an aborted attempt to settle at what was to become Sorrento at the southern end of Port Phillip Bay in Victoria. Tasmania provides three early examples of the Italianate villa: Marion Villa built in the late 1820s, the designer of which is not yet known; Woolmers, designed by William Archer about 1845; and Rosedale, designed by James Blackburn also about 1845. Blackburn also designed a proposal for an Italianate Government House in Hobart, remarkable for its sophistication and very early date, but it was not built. Blackburn migrated to Melbourne and designed Bishopscourt there in the late 1840s, one of the most important early examples of an Italianate villa in Victoria. William Archer lived in Melbourne too, but much later, and his architectural practice was limited. Another Tasmanian ‘architect’, or rather a builder and businessman, Samuel Jackson designed two important early examples of the Italianate villa in the new colony of Victoria: Toorak House in 1848 and Charnwood in 1851.

The colony of Victoria, founded in 1851, offered a different milieu where a new generation of settlers, via Tasmania, embraced the Italianate villa. Indeed the Italianate villa became ubiquitous in Victoria, demonstrating a wide range in its scale, forms, details and sophistication. At a time when Victoria represented very different social and political values from the other colonies, especially

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concerning the transportation of convicts, the Italianate villa expands from its later British appearance, if not character, and becomes distinctively Australian, especially because of the introduction of the cast iron verandah. Victoria, colonized later and never a ‘convict’ colony, was more egalitarian and democratic. This was a direct effect of the extraordinary increase in population triggered by the discovery of gold in 1851 just after Separation from NSW. It prospered behind protective trade barriers and, via the new railways and other means of transport, spread its tentacles into the Riverina of southern NSW and the South-East District of South Australia. Family ties between neighbouring colonies through the connections of the ‘Overlanders’ and ‘Overstraiters’, were reinforced in the next two generations. In 1864 the railway, which had been built to the great gold city of Bendigo, was pushed northwards through to the port of Echuca on the Murray River, capturing the Riverina trade. Most importantly, secondary industry prospered behind the contentious political policy of Protectionism. In 1901, just after the death of Queen Victoria, the colonies federated to form the Commonwealth of Australia and Government House, Melbourne became the official residence of Australia’s first Governor General. Victoria had been a separate colony for fifty turbulent years.

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4 As well as Australian Colonial House, see Joan Kerr and James Broadbent Gothic Taste in the colony of New South Wales, David Ell Press, Sydney, 1980; and Broadbent and Hughes, Age of Macquarie, especially Ch. 12 ‘Building the Colony’.
5 The remarkable story is told best by Geoffrey Serle, The Golden Age, a history of the colony of Victoria, 1851-1861, Melbourne University Press, Carlton, 1963. The physical implications of the increase in population are discussed further in Ch. 8.
6 These were the two main groups who had rushed to claim the promising land opened up by the exploration in 1835 of Major Thomas Mitchell, Surveyor General of NSW. As late as the 1930s, Victoria and The Riverina, was published as a biographical and genealogical directory.
7 This was one of the most divisive issues within Victoria and between Victoria and the other colonies. Protective tariffs on the one hand favoured manufacturing in the colony but on the other acted as crutches and were one of the underlying reasons for Victoria’s depression in the early 1890s.
8 The gates of Government House were draped in black fabric for the duration of the festivities.
In time, the Italianate villa model was used in other colonies under the economic, industrial, social and, to some extent, political dominance of gold-rich Victoria. Pastoralists and businessmen in Victoria purchased investment properties, especially in the Riverina of NSW and in Queensland, Melbourne architects designed Italianate villas across the colony’s borders. The greatest number, however were in what came to be know as ‘Marvellous Melbourne’. A series of metropolitan examples can be traced reaching a zenith in the construction of Government House (1873-76) in Melbourne and its nadir in the sprawl of suburban villas of the 1880s.

A Picturesque Synthesis of Style, Form and Function

Just as in Britain, the Italianate villa model in colonial Australia was a Picturesque synthesis of style, form and function. Marion Villa is the first example in Tasmania. The exact date of construction of Marion Villa has not

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10 For example, Twentyman and Askew who had already designed Italianate villas in the Western District in Victoria designed Yallum Park, Penola, SA. A. W. Gore, a Naracoorte architect who designed Struan House, one of the grandest examples of an Italianate in SA, also designed Gringegalgon near Hamilton in Victoria.

11 See Graeme Davison, *Marvellous Melbourne*.

12 These are discussed in Chapter 8. Rural examples in Victoria, specifically in the Western District are discussed in Chapter 7. Government House is examined in detail in Chapter 9. The best modern source for research and references on these buildings is the on-line database in the web-page managed by Miles Lewis at http://finpro.arbl.d.unimelb.edu.au/melbhominions. It has been used extensively as a research tool for this chapter. Another excellent source, especially for interiors, is Terence Lane and Jessie Serle, *Australians at Home*, Oxford University Press, Melbourne, 1990.

13 I am grateful to Mr. Don Coleman for his assistance during a visit to Marion Villa in June 1998.
been confirmed but it probably dates from the late 1820s. Although small and simple and now in a depressed setting, its sophistication deserves more attention than it has received to date.

Marion Villa is of interest not just for its style but for its plan and form as an early example of the double-façade plan. The main entrance is through a porch detailed with Tuscan pilasters and plain arches. This elevation is symmetrical about the porch which is balanced by elaborate chimneys. The unusually detailed front door leads into a central passage off which the main rooms open to one side with substantial bay windows looking over the Tamar River and towards low forested hills on its far side. The porch and hall and the bay windows create cross axes through an entrance front and a garden front. The glazing of the sashes is also unusual being of fifteen panes rather than twelve. The semi-basement is rare in domestic colonial architecture in rural situations. There seems little doubt that an architect, or some competent person with a pattern book, was involved.

There is a deeper reading in its setting. Sited at the mouth of the Tamar River, the entrance to Port Dalrymple, Marion Villa represented one of the first images of civilization for seafarers after a dangerous passage through Bass Strait. The artist John Glover (1767-1849), who was called one of the English Clauses, migrated in his old age to Van Diemen’s Land landing at Launceston. His son

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14 The Australian Heritage Commission, in its preliminary citation, File No. 6/03/053/0010 gives the date as 1828, which is not unlikely. At that date, it would predate the construction of the Cox family’s ‘seat’, Clarendon and the Glover family’s own house at Patterdale, by about ten years. The scion of the Cox family was an Overstraiter who established himself as a merchant at Belfast, now called Port Fairy, and as a squatter at Mount Rosse.

15 With very little text, a photograph was included in the seminal work by E. Graeme Robertson and Edith N. Craig, Early Houses of Northern Tasmania, vol. 1, Georgian House, Melbourne, 1964, p. 293. It was included in the initial National Estate Register in 1975 and, much later, the Tasmanian Heritage Register but with no further research.

16 This question deserves more research.
noticed the Picturesque quality of dwellings when the family arrived in Tasmania. ‘As the Thomas Lowry ascended the Tamar in February 1831, young John Glover observed with great satisfaction “a rapid succession of little farmhouses, with pretty snug houses, all on rising ground, like so many little paradises, and immediately backed by undulating high hills, covered with woods”.’ These included Marion Villa, built by the pastoralist James Cox who was to be the Glovers’ neighbour at Mills Plain. This simple villa and its setting are imbued by the Picturesque aesthetic, combining the Sublime and the Beautiful.

**Tension between the Sublime and the Beautiful**

The tension between what was considered wild in Australia’s landscape and the civilization imposed upon it came to be understood through the Picturesque aesthetic. William Archer returned to Van Diemen’s Land from England in the early 1840s as a young architect and engineer with a keen amateur interest in botany. Soon after, William designed the extension to Woolmers, the Archer family ‘seat’ overlooking the South Esk River near Longford which, due to the family’s efforts, was fast becoming a benign pastoral landscape. This was his first exercise in the Italianate style and might be described as charmingly naïve. Archer’s last design was Mona Vale, the home of his brother-in-law, Robert

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18 Marion Villa seems to have been overwhelmed by the significance and scale of Cox’s later house, the stately Clarendon.
20 Woolmers is always most welcoming to visitors, but I am grateful to Mr. Brian Archer in particular who assisted and advised me on the most detailed visit in March 1998.
Kermode, which was completed in 1868. It is perhaps the grandest private example of an Italianate villa in Australia, the best example of the model used to establish a family ‘seat’, and remains the epitome of Tasmania’s Midlands pastoralism.

Archer’s extension at Woolmers has some claim to be the first full Italianate villa in Australia but the claim is less convincing than James Blackburn’s simultaneous reworking of Rosedale near Campbell Town, Van Diemen’s Land. Putting aside the doubt over the exact date of the extension’s construction, Woolmers is a less successful integration of the old and the new, it does not claim the landscape as well, and its architectural expression is superficial rather than intrinsic. While several of the model’s important ingredients are there, they are neither as convincing nor as scholarly. The squat proportions and awkward detailing of the tower are inelegant. The main axis crosses the circular drive and passes through the fountain. It terminates at the stables, Palladian in form, but actually slightly skew in plan with the house. The prospect of the villa is internalised; it is not outward looking.

Woolmers is still a most significant site and has values and associations of its own. Its various parts represent accretion over many periods. Its library reflects learning, culture and even a dynastic awareness which is not so evident at Rosedale. The Archers’ Romantic paintings, which remain at Woolmers, are a critical link with the seventeenth and eighteenth-century origins of the Italianate villa.21 While Woolmers is important as one of several villa designs by William Archer, there was much more to the man.

\[21\] Betty Churcher discusses these in a brief but insightful television program made for the Australian Broadcasting Commission.
We know that William Archer was a Romantic because his diary provides at least three examples of early nineteenth-century Romanticism. Firstly, he describes a botanical expedition in the mountains, looking for orchids to send back to Dr Hooker at Kew, an expedition which was rationally scientific in purpose but Romantic in its Sublime location. Secondly, he describes an experiment, again in a quasi-scientific tone, when with friends, he tries levitating a table. Thirdly, when his uncle, Thomas Archer lies dying, he takes the opportunity to visit The Gorge in Launceston. His description includes a classic appreciation of the Sublime and the Picturesque.

In the afternoon I hired a waterman to take me to the Cataract. The scenery, consisting of high rocks, towering into vast walls on each side of the river, fringed and enlivened with trees and shrubs, — huge rocks half topping forwards, — deep and rugged, ravines — and, skirting the East side, about 20 to 40 feet above the stream, the aqueduct of the Cataract Mills; — the scenery was grand, and interesting [but this word is ruled out in the manuscript and replaced with] romantic. We rowed close to the rapids, into a little quiet nook, from which we could see the course of the stream as it descended to them. As we returned I had a confined view of the low lands, called the Swamp, — and the trees beyond, and the distant mountains. I astonished the waterman by taking his sculls, and giving his boat a “spurt” which, he said the “amateur rowers” would be puzzled to beat. He charged me 4/-, which I considered, so moderate that I exceeded it in paying him.22

There is further evidence of the Romantic in William Archer. He went on a Grand Tour and brought back the paintings, supposedly by Salvador Rosa, which now hang in the hall and dining room at Woolmers. Even if these are not originals, but were painted for the English tourist market, the purchase is typical of the English upper middle class travelling in Italy. Joseph Forsyth’s travelogue, Remarks on Antiquities, Arts and Letters, in Italy, first published in 1816 is on the shelves at Woolmers. In 1861, William Archer was reading Baird Smith’s Italian

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22 William Archer, Diary (1847-1874), MS, 61/1, University of Tasmania Library, entry for 30th June 1853.
Irrigation. 23 Although William Archer was an architect sensitive to Romantic notions, he was also an eminently practical hydraulic engineer.

Furthermore, Joseph Forsyth's Remarks on Antiquities, Arts and Letters, *in Italy* is a typical and very successful traveller’s tale with some perilous adventures of the Sublime kind thanks to the Napoleonic Wars, including its author's imprisonment. 24 The book is of special interest because the great poet and uncle of Richard Payne Knight, Sir Samuel Rogers, refers to the ‘unfortunate Forsyth’ when he came to publish his own traveller's tale *Italy*, indicating an acquaintance at least with Forsyth’s book if not with the author personally. 25

William Archer appears to have designed several gardens and possibly influenced others. ‘For some years he was secretary of the Royal Society of Tasmania, a Fellow of the Royal and Linnean Societies in England, and a keen botanist, named many plants and assisted Dr Hooker who dedicated to him and Ronald C. Gunn, his work on the flora of Tasmania. From 1856 until 1858, he lived in England and worked at the Herbarium, Kew Gardens, presenting the library with a book of his drawings of Tasmanian orchids and mosses. 26 Perhaps he influenced the design of the garden at Woolmers. The plantings are certainly Mediterranean and are planned on a vast scale. An avenue of Lombardy poplars, *Populus nigra*, lines the drive up to the garden wall. Stone pines, *Pinus pinea*,

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23 Archer, Diary entry for 17th July 1861.
25 Rogers declined the position of Poet Laureate. He was a Dilettante and significant not just because of his writings and family connections but also for his private collection which included works by Claude Lorrain. His own travel book was illustrated by J. M. W. Turner. See J. R. Hale, The Journal of Samuel Rogers, edited with an account of Roger's life and of travel in Italy in 1814-1821, Faber and Faber, London, 1956.
26 Biographical notes with Archer Papers, University of Tasmania.
race across the hillside while more familiar plants to the English—willows, poplars and elms—tangle the river's banks below.

To understand the man as architect, engineer and gardener, it is worth looking at William Archer's own home, Cheshunt near Deloraine.\textsuperscript{27} He began building late in 1850. By 1852, the house was ready to receive his wife and three children. Later additions have changed the asymmetrical appearance of the original Italianate villa.\textsuperscript{28} There is a tower, built strongly to hold a water tank, but it is behind the façade and now not visible from the front. The quoins, pilasters and broken pediments evoke an association with Classical architecture and the grounds are certainly landscaped.

Cheshunt is an Italianate villa sited within a vast landscape. The approach began with a gate and avenue of Monterey Pines, \textit{Pinus radiata}, on axis with the front door but the drive then curved around to the left before it reached the front door. On the other side of the garden, there is a stream and the fall in the land creates a natural terrace. Hawthorn hedges combined with brick drains, a distinctive feature of William Archer's landscape design, border the garden.\textsuperscript{29} As well as the central axis, diagonal axes radiate towards the dramatic Quamby Bluff on the south side and a low hill on the north. Importantly, there is no topographical termination of the central axis. Rather, the axis passes through the lowest point on the horizon. The borders and axes claim the landscape. Within

\textsuperscript{27} I am grateful to Mr and Mrs Paul Bowman of Cheshunt for their assistance during a visit in June 1999 and to Mrs Marie Bacon of East Melbourne for her assistance with the Deloraine district generally.

\textsuperscript{28} The left wing, which balanced the original right wing, and the cast iron verandah were added after 1870 when Archer sold Cheshunt to the Bowman family. Actually, the left wing is slightly wider than the right.

\textsuperscript{29} They are used at Saunders, south of Longford and Cressy, the home of Robert Archer already mentioned.
the front garden, there are clumps of Stone pines, *Pinus pinea*, groves of Laurel, and assorted specimen trees arranged in a gardenesque style. At the sides and rear of the house, there are more specimen trees including American species. In an orderly row on the south side, there are various farm buildings with only the kitchen wing behind the house. On the north side on the lower, wetter ground, there is an orchard. The whole is a typically Italianate villa and garden, a self-sufficient retreat, with architectural pretension, designed by and for a cultivated man. William Archer could well have seen himself as a Renaissance man. He was educated in both the arts and sciences. He had a patrician background and came to act as the head of his family.\(^{30}\)

It could also be said that James Blackburn was a Romantic, or at least susceptible to Romantic notions.\(^{31}\) Like Archer, he was an architect and a hydraulic engineer. The best evidence of his range of interests is his library of one thousand, eight hundred titles catalogued as ‘over 3,000 volumes’ when they were sold.\(^{32}\) The catalogue includes a full set of the writings of John Ruskin, the champion of the Gothic revival; a comprehensive list of Romantic poets

\(^{30}\) He served as a politician in the colonial legislature and behaved as a squire in his district. He was a founder of the Hobart Museum. His only public disappointment must have been the family’s failure in banking in the 1840s. Financial difficulties in the late 1860s prompted him to sell Chestnut and move across Bass Strait to Melbourne where he practised, on a limited basis, as an architect. Directories and other sources show him living in Carlton and the St Kilda area but never for long at any address. The Miles Lewis, *Melbourne Mansions*, on-line database, and the Winston Burchett, *Index to Notification of Intentions to Build*, Melbourne: Melbourne City Council Archives, have no entries in his name. William Archer died in 1874 at Fairfield, another Italianate villa owned by the family at Longford, in Tasmania which he probably designed.


\(^{32}\) The catalogue for their sale by his son, James Blackburn in the 1880s survives, a copy of which is held by the State Library of Victoria. The catalogue boasted that ‘The Books ... cover a wide range of subjects, popular, scientific, and technical, including History, Biography, Poetry,
including Byron, Coleridge, Keats, Shelley and Rogers; travelogues from
romantic places such as Norway, Brazil, Africa and the Port Phillip District, and
some ‘ripping yarns’, such as Australia’s greatest convict novel, *For the Term of
His Natural Life*.\(^{33}\) Two further titles which suggest an appreciation of the
Sublime are *Sketches from Nature in the Alps* and *Demonology and Witchcraft*.\(^{34}\)
Architecturally, Blackburn could be described as a Romantic if only for the
eclectic range of styles he commanded, his understanding of their associations,
and for his sensibility towards the Picturesque landscape.

Blackburn’s contribution to the development of the Italianate villa in
Australia rests with two buildings—Rosedale near Campbell Town in Tasmania
in the mid-1840s and Bishopscourt, East Melbourne in the late 1840s—and a
proposal, not built, for Government House in Hobart. During his ‘service’ to the
Crown as a convict, Blackburn prepared a number of proposals for a new vice-
regal residence for Sir John and Lady Franklin. Among these were a Grecian, an
Italianate and a Gothic proposal.

The proposed site for a new Government House could not have been more
Picturesque. It was already recognised by Lachlan Macquarie, Governor of
NSW, on his visit to Hobart in 1812, as ‘grand and commanding’, the two

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\(^{33}\) Not all the books can have belonged to James Blackburn, senior who died in 1856.
James Blackburn, junior, also an architect, must have known the library’s copy of *His Natural
Life*, the original title of Marcus Clarke’s book, which was published in serial form from 1879. It
could be analysed for its tension between the Sublime and the Beautiful. Rufus Dawes, a good
man wrongly convicted is eventually forced to cannibalism in the wilderness of south-west Van
Diemen’s Land. There is a pitiful scene at Port Arthur when the beautiful daughter of the
Commandant comes face to face with the horrible convict. James Blackburn, junior was a minor
participant in the 1873 Royal Commission which inquired into the Victorian Public Works
Department and the capacity of William Wardell, who was responsible for Government House,
Melbourne.

\(^{34}\) Catalogue items No. 218 and 220. The first is Sir Walter Scott’s *Letters: on
demonology and witchcraft, address to J.G. Lockhart*, London: John Murray, 1831; and the
strategic qualities a governor and a military man would look for, especially such a man with Picturesque sensibilities. In 1826, Royal Commissioners reported to London. "Were it not foreign to the nature of an Official report here we would expatiate on the Beauty and Magnificence of the Scenery of the Island generally, and of this spot in particular, so judiciously chosen by General Macquarie for the Government Domain". The chance of retirement from the town is mentioned as well as the very practical advantage of the excellent stone on the site.

The earlier Greek revival design seems to have been recast in an Italianate mould. It has been linked with a design in Loudon's *Encyclopaedia of Cottage, Farm and Villa Architecture*, a book which both Lady Franklin and Blackburn owned. The asymmetrical plan is retained with its long northern wing. The elevations are treated even more austerely. New tower elements, appropriate for the Italianate style, are introduced. The treatment of the entrance is similar to the recessed porch of the southern elevation of the Greek revival version. Most interesting is the subterranean entrance derived directly from Loudon and, on a much smaller scale, the alcove in T. F. Hunt's design for a "Prospect Tower, Garden Seat, &c". The roofs of the towers are low pitched. The main roof is similar but concealed behind a balustraded parapet. This was a remarkably avant

second is not held in the Denkin, Melbourne or Monash University libraries nor in the State Library of Victoria.


37 Grove, 'Architecture of the Blackbourns', p. 34 and illus. 74 & 75. Grove quotes a letter from Lady Franklin to her father where she asks him to send more books. "It appears there is not a single book on architecture in all the Island except my own London's *Farm and Cottage Architecture*." She was probably wrong; James Blackburn owned a comprehensive library. His wife followed him to VDL arriving almost two years later, and, presumably, she brought his library with her.

garde design. It is clearly an example of the transition between the Greek revival and the Italianate styles. But it found no favour with the Franklins who, in a scandal over the costs of the project, were recalled to Britain. The architect William Porden Kay developed Blackburn’s Gothic design and it stands in the Hobart Domain today.39

After his emancipation—and his convict past clearly distinguished him from William Archer—Blackburn lived in the Midlands at Campbell Town. He established a private practice and continued to use a range of architectural styles with an awareness of their associations. In 1847, the successful pastoralist and recently appointed member of the Legislative Council, John Leake commissioned Blackburn to improve his four roomed cottage.40 It was a few miles north-west of Campbell Town, sat on a rise with the Western Tiers behind and looked over the Elizabeth River valley to the Eastern Tiers. Blackburn masterfully transformed the cottage into an Italianate villa.

James Blackburn was a clever architect and more talented than William Archer. He took Leake’s original single-storey cottage, replaced the verandah with an elegant loggia and, having converted the central doorway into two small windows, placed a tiny tower in the centre to mark the steps leading from the terrace onto the loggia. He added a two-storey wing to the left of the cottage and linked them with a three-storey tower, much larger than the other and thereby created a focus within the landscape. This tower marks the threshold of proprietorship. It also acts as the pivot for the two horizontal axes, one created by a square bay window, the other created across the original cottage. These axes

39 See Robertson, Early Houses, Ch. III.
reach out into and claim the landscape, across the ideal river valley and towards
the Eastern Tiers, the Beautiful and the Sublime.

We don’t know if Blackburn designed the garden. We can speculate
that he planned the sinuous drive, the terrace across the new façade and the
arrangement of outbuildings at the rear. Perhaps he organised the planting too.
Whoever did, the surviving major plants are typical of those complementing an
Italianate villa—a backdrop of dark conifers and greener elms, a grove of olives
near the loggia, and several Italian Cypresses, *Cupressus sempervirens*, which
suggest a geometric order along the drive. Hawthorn hedges define the drive and
the further parkland. Fruit, vegetables and flowers were grown around the villa.
One can imagine hens in the garden and cows in the yard. The stable and barn,
loosely Palladian in form and remarkably similar to that at Woolmers,
complement the house. The whole is a self-sufficient compound, truly a villa in
the ancient, and modern, sense.

So, in Rosedale, there is the first complete Australian example of the
Italianate villa, certainly Picturesque, and integrating the Beautiful with the
Sublime. It is an ideal villa with architectural pretension, set on a rise within a
broader landscape and against a backdrop of brooding mountains. It is
surrounded by appropriate plantings evocative of the Mediterranean and
suggesting both longevity and bounty. The garden and out buildings suggest self-
sufficiency. Its plan is asymmetric but controlled, with three axes claiming the
landscape, two reaching out as well as drawing in, and the tower securing the

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(Mar/Apr 1999), p. 20.
151, reserves this claim for Flemington House, Ascot Vale Melbourne, which is discussed in
Chapter 9.
observer's eye and marking the proprietor's ownership. There are deeper layers of meaning. There are layers of age, the accretion of parts from different periods. There is a sense of civilized administration which has tamed the wilderness into productivity. There is a sense of rational learning, indeed of culture. This is a nineteenth-century villa from the Renaissance as well as from ancient Rome.

Rosedale and Woolmers were built at exactly the same time as Osborne House, Queen Victoria's marine villa on the Isle of Wight and the apogee of the style's acceptance in Britain. Just when the fashion for the Italianate villa began its inevitable decline in Britain, its form and content took root in the colonial landscape. It suited the new gentry for its adaptability, its suitability, and its respectability. And the model was about to take another step.

The Italianate Villa's Form

As in Britain, the plan, the use of symmetry or asymmetry, the presence of a loggia or verandah, its massing and, when present, the Italianate villa's tower determined its form in Australia. While its scale changes over more than sixty years of development and its ornamentation becomes excessive, the core characteristics are constant. Two idiosyncratic changes are the increasing dominance of the polygonal or canted bay window and the introduction of stilted segmental arches. Another rarer detail is a balcony, usually cast iron, around the top story of the tower. The most common change was the substitution of cast iron for masonry and timber in the verandah. The model proved flexible, adaptable and enduring. Over time, it is possible to see examples which are humble, examples which are scholarly, and examples which are flamboyant in their architecture.
The core characteristics appear in one of the earliest and most curious examples in colonial Victoria. It is a humble version of a pattern book Italianate villa, a small house on a small allotment at 12 Union Street, Richmond, an inner Melbourne suburb which was then relatively rural. A person called James Robertson owned and occupied a house in Union Street as early as 1856. This appears to have been James Moeller Robertson, an architect and estate agent.\(^4\) The naivety, if not crudeness, of the design suggests an untutored hand and one which resorted to a pattern book rather than an architect’s professional inspiration. When it was offered for sale by auction in 1876, the notice read:

Substantial two storey bluestone residence with turret, containing six rooms and kitchen, with kitchen and laundry and bathroom etc. of wood at rear. Frontage of 130' [39.6m] to Union St by depth of 64' [19.5m].\(^4\)

An olive tree on the south side of the building appears to be very old and there are younger fruit trees on the northern side. The age of the dominating palms is not known. The small garden may not have contributed much to the occupant’s self-sufficiency but, in its form and setting, the house is a representative example of a humble suburban villa.

The Rev. Joseph Docker, a Church of England clergyman and pastoralist, lived higher up on Richmond Hill, only 500m from the previous example. In 1858, he built his homestead, Bontharambo near Wangaratta, which includes exactly the same characteristics but on a much grander scale, designed by the

\(^{43}\) Terry Sawyer, comp., in Miles Lewis, Melbourne Mansions, on-line database, cites the List of Electors; [House of] Assembly, 1856-1857 which shows James Robertson, architect, of Union Street, as owner of freehold property in Union Street. Robertson was in partnership with Thomas Hale between 1857 and 1860 and in the Directory for 1857 they are listed at 9 Elizabeth Street, Melbourne as estate agents as well as architects. Allan Willingham has suggested that James Gall was the architect but without supporting evidence; pers. comm., 4 July 2003.

\(^{44}\) Argus, 25 May 1876, p. 2. This is an area of only 8320 sq. ft. or 772.6m\(^2\).
Melbourne architect, Thomas Watts, designed it. Bontharambo is also well within the pattern book genre of the Italianate villa. While an excellent example of the sense of retreat, self-sufficiency and intellectual integrity of a rural villa, it is in contrast to the previous example on several counts. Bontharambo is of interest for the quality of its architecture, because it uses red brick instead of stone, including the loggia, and because it has a balustraded tower, an element which was not generally used until the 1870s and 1880s. Nineteenth century photographs taken from the tower look down onto a well-cultivated kitchen or vegetable garden. There were also a vineyard and an orangery. The house is one of the few in Victoria which still contains its original library. According to his biographer, 'Joseph Docker was a man of wide education, a classical scholar, an enterprising and successful farmer and pastoralist, well known in the Wangaratta district as a just and kindly man and a respected pioneer.'

The same characteristics were still present much later in Wombalano, Toorak, a very grand Italianate villa designed in 1884 by the architects,

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45 H. J. Samuel, 'Docker, Joseph (1793-1865)', in Pike, gen. ed., ADB, Vol. 1, pp. 310-11. Docker was amongst the first of the 'Overlanders' to reach what would become Victoria from NSW. He took up the Bontharambo run in 1838, deserted because the previous occupant was driven off by the Aboriginals' attacks. Samuel states that Docker's 'kind and understanding attitude to the Aboriginals was rewarded by their friendship and help, and for many years they held corroborees on the island in the lagoon not far from the house'. This harmony between 'savagery' and civilization, between the Sublime and the Beautiful, could be seen as falling within the Picturesque aesthetic. See also R. V. Billis and A. S. Kenyon, Pastoral Pioneers of Port Phillip, Stockland Press, Melbourne, 1974, pp. 59 and 177.

46 Formerly considered the first, it seems to have been preceded by the tower of the Cape Otway Telegraph Station, which dates from 1856 and which is discussed later in Chapter 9 under the Public Works Department. The towers on other telegraph stations, such as those at Williamstown, Geelong and Castlemaine may have had earlier flat roofs too. In any case, the Cape Otway tower has been crudely modified and Bontharambo is still the first purely domestic example.

47 These are reproduced in Peter Watts, Margaret Barrett, ed., Victorian Gardens, a reconnaissance, Oxford University Press, Melbourne, 1983.

Twentyman and Askew. Twentyman and Askew were prolific architects responsible for many Italianate villas in Melbourne and their client, in this case, was the merchant, J. M. Bruce, 'a man of utmost integrity and of unblemished character'. By this time, however, the two-storey house is heavy with decoration, cumbersome in its massing and pretentious in its scale. It is an example of a villa with two principal elevations. The tower, balustraded like that at Bontharambo, dominates the asymmetrical entrance elevation. At right angles, the garden elevation, which at first sight appears to be symmetrical, incorporates two pavilions, one with a square and the other with a canted bay, and a single storey loggia strung between them. A contemporary account, reviewing the mansions of Toorak, states

After Oma comes Wombelana [sic] (the aboriginal word for handsome), Mr. J. M. Bruce's place. It is an imposing building of excellent proportions, with a fine balcony and verandah facing the 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 of an excellent view being obtained of the mansion and its surroundings.

Bruce, whose firm dealt in softgoods, owned the largest warehouse in Victoria.

Robin Boyd, one of Australia’s first architectural historians, lampooned these late excesses which were so far from Cronkhill, Deependene, the modest pattern book houses of the 1830s and 1840s, and even the grander palazzi of the British aristocracy. In his innovative and very influential book *Australia's*

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49 Twentyman and Askew called tenders for a large two-storey residence at Toorak for John Munro Bruce, *Argus*, 13 June 1884, p. 8.
51 Ixion, 'A Saunter ... ', *Australasian*, 30 July 1892, p. 232.
53 His most sarcastic criticism was in a film he made in the 1950s with Peter McIntyre called *Your House and Mine*. The film is now rare but is available as a video at the Victorian Centre for the Moving Image, Federation Square, Melbourne.
Home, he divided the whole of the history of domestic architecture in Australia into eleven ‘Major Steps of Stylist’. A simple sketch of a standard dwelling accompanied each definition. He starts with the plainest cottages and then asymmetry arrives to stay with Step No. 3 Gothic Revival. Step No. 4 was called

*Italianate.* In the Classic School after 1850, the Italian influence increased greedily in competition with the Gothic revival. By 1880 the façade was more heavily ornamented ... but had undergone no basic change. Slate roof, iron porch with cast-iron lace, grey stucco, mosaic-tile porch floor, heavy four-panel door, and dark green venetian blinds were prominent characteristics.

But the metamorphosis continued and, with some exceptions, the ubiquitous Italianate villa became increasingly grand, elaborate and overblown. Boyd coined the term ‘Boom Style’ for those excesses which great wealth and rampant speculation brought, so Step No. 5 was called

*Boom Style.* In the late eighties and early nineties, ornamentation lay heavily on the façade. The slate roof was hidden behind a stucco balustraded parapet, brown red and cream brick patterning predominated, with a cast-iron verandah, brown venetian blinds, and vivid coloured glass side and top panels to the front door.

Boyd betrays the Modernist bias of his time when he states

After the cultivated Georgian of the early nineteenth century ran to seed in the forties, coarsened Renaissance and Gothic Revival hounded each other for half a century. The “Battle of the Styles” reached an inevitable climax in the bold, booming Italianate of the eighties.

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56 Robin Boyd, *Australia’s Home*, p. 51. This is much as Robert Kerr did in his book, *The Gentleman’s House* but in much more detail and much more seriously, one hundred years before. Boyd was almost as satirical as Osbert Lancaster.


As well as the ten sketches of houses, Boyd offers five standard plan types. The first two are simple and symmetrical, a ‘primitive cottage’ and a ‘bungalow’, meaning the colonial rather than the twentieth century bungalow. The third, which stands for the rest of the nineteenth century, introduces asymmetry and is the plan for at least six if not seven of his major steps of stylistism. With the important caveat that these are plans for small houses, he states ‘An infinite number of minor variations disguised the fact that nearly every small Australian house was based on one of these five plans—more than one million of them being based on No. 3 alone.’ It is clear that the third plan is the basis for the asymmetrical Italianate villa, and that the second plan type could be taken as the basis for symmetrical villas within the Palladian tradition.

Another plan type should be mentioned, which creates a double-façade form. It has two main elevations, one for the entrance and another at a right angle for the garden. A service wing would extend to the rear either attached or, in the earliest examples, detached from the main house. This plan may be relatively rare but it is important for understanding the Italianate villa and its setting. It creates a different sort of asymmetry. The entrance elevation, which may be symmetrical, leads into a central passage or hall. On one side of the passage, there are principal rooms along the second or garden elevation. On the other side of the passage, there are lesser rooms. Some examples have a tower, although not always at the entrance, and the tower can introduce an important asymmetrical note in an otherwise formal massing. This double-façade form is of

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59 Robin Boyd, Australia’s Home, p. 9.
60 Robin Boyd, Australia’s Home, p. 9, caption to ‘Five Principal Plan Types’.
special interest because of the way it addresses and claims the landscape through
the axes it generates.61

There is also a much rarer plan type, one so rare that it would be
unreasonable to expect Boyd to mention it. This plan is U-shaped with a short
central hall and a transverse passage appears in Melbourne at a very early date.
Robert Russell, one of the surveyors sent from Sydney to lay out Melbourne,
designed Yarra Cottage in Flinders Street in 1839.62 It continues into the 1860s
but remains rare.63 In the 1880s another rare plan type appears—or at least an
important sub-set of Plan Type 3—one which has a central octagonal hall beyond
the front hall or vestibule. Usually top lit, the hall facilitated access to rooms in
all directions. Perhaps the best example is Mynda, at Kew, designed in 1884 by
the architect, Lloyd Tayler for his daughter and son-in-law.64 At Mynda, Tayler
takes advantage of the octagonal entrance to the drawing room to create a
diagonal axis which passes through a small corner bay window and bisects the L-
shaped verandah. It is exactly the same Picturesque device advocated by Uvedale
Price and used by Nash at Cronkhill. Its use here is a precursor to the classic
diagonal device of the so-called Queen Anne/Federation house plan especially

61 Only one example, Barham House later known as Eildon, St Kilda has been
discovered in this research of a true or ‘palatial’ double façade, i.e. a principal façade and a
garden façade on the opposite side of the building. It was probably the result of later additions
rather than the original design. See Chapter 7.
62 Miles Lewis, ‘The Victorian House’, in Robert Irving, comp., The History and Design
of the Australian House, Oxford University Press, Melbourne, 1985, pp. 66-7. The same plan
type is shown in a house designed by T. J. Crouch in 1856.
63 For example, very similar plans appear in two Western District Presbyterian manses:
St Andrew’s, Port Fairy, designed by James Mason in 1854 and built in 1856, and St Andrew’s,
Branxholme, designed by James Fox and built in 1862. It was also used by the young architect,
Thomas Crouch who in 1856 ‘won a competition held by the Victorian Freehold Land Society for
the design of a suitable “home for colonists”,’ and illustrated in Peter Freeman, Homesteads of the
64 Suzanne Forge, Victorian Splendour, Oxford University Press, 1981, pp. 82-7, gives
the date of construction as 1882 but Miles Lewis, ‘Melbourne Mansions’, on-line database, cites
tender notices, backed up by the family’s oral history, for two years later, Argus, 1 March 1884, p.
15, or 16 September, 1884, p. 2.
common for the style in Melbourne. The octagonal hall is used most dramatically at Kiora, a very large two-storey house in Brighton Beach. John Russell Brown, the first owner, was an architect with the Public Works Department between 1877 and 1900, and he possibly designed Kiora for himself by 1890. It uses the same diagonal axis from the centre of the octagonal hall as Mynda. Kiora is hardly a villa, in that it overwhelms its relatively small allotment, it had no garden to provide self-sufficiency and the ostentation of the ornamentation suggests a lack of refined taste and intellectual pursuits. It stands at the end of Melbourne’s economic boom and demonstrates clear American influences as much as the British roots of the Italianate villa model.

To be fair, appreciation of the importance and early use of the diagonal in Picturesque architecture is recent. Nonetheless, Boyd’s omission of the diagonal axis is a weakness in his distillation of plan types. Even when it comes to defining the Queen Anne Major Step of Stylist No. 6, he fails to mention the perpendicular realignment of the central passage towards the side


66 ‘Kiora’, Heritage Council of Victoria, Statement of Significance, on-line database. Miles Lewis, ‘Melbourne Mansions’, on-line database, states ‘Although this is a very grand house for a public servant, it is possibly the design of its owner J R Brown, a talented architect with the Victorian PWD.’

67 As early as 1892, a new owner appears in the rate books, Abraham Crawford a successful Scottish merchant, in a move typical of the depression which followed the boom, Crawford’s wife Margaret became the owner in 1896. Lloyd Taylor also lived in Brighton and there are several examples of his use of the octagonal hall in Brighton.

68 The house has since had its American Stick style verandah reconstructed.


70 Robin Boyd, *Australia’s Home*, p.11.
and the introduction of a corner feature on the verandah. However, Boyd's distillation of styles and plans is clever, fair and still stands.\(^7\)

There were bound to be some changes in the superficial characteristics of the Italianate villa once it was transported to the Australian colonies. Despite attempts at making terra cotta tiles for example, slate and corrugated iron dominated as roofing materials.\(^2\) Not even the patent tiles manufactured in Britain seem to have been imported in any quantity.\(^3\) Cast iron, manufactured from an early date in Melbourne, other capitals and provincial cities, soon took over as the preferred material for verandahs, themselves the consistent substitute for masonry loggias.\(^4\) Timber was often shaped to imitate stonework as 'mock ashlar' and more complicated details.\(^5\) Caution should be expressed about the influence of the few seminal examples. BishopsCourt was built with dark exposed bluestone, but this is as likely to be the result of labour and material shortages during its construction as much as a conscious decision in its design. The most important change over four decades was the gradual increase in scale, decoration, ornamentation and ostentation.

Miles Lewis discusses the Italianate villa, its arrival, sources and evolution in his Chapter, 'The Victorian House' in *The History and Design of the*


\(^3\) This is rather surprising. Terra cotta shingles were imported from England along with the famous fashion for 'Marseilles' tiles from France but not, it seems traditional Italian tiles.


\(^5\) Two of the most curious examples of this are not domestic but the Mechanics Institutes at Buninyong near Ballarat and at Tamagulla in Victoria which have lavish Classical details made of wood.
*Australian House.* He makes many important points in his analysis. Firstly he states that the Italianate style is part of the persistence of Georgian form in colonial conditions. This is not just the simple, symmetrical 'good taste' Georgian domestic architecture admired by Boyd and his post World War Two contemporaries but also the late Georgian search for the Picturesque. He concurs that the Italianate style emerges, at least in part, from the Greek revival style. He emphasises pattern books as the medium for the transference of its form to Australia, citing the usual key examples. He mentions innovations, such as the arcuated and trabeated 'cardboard' verandah of Bishopscourt, 'a proper Italianate loggia' and the balustraded parapet, 'a device unknown to Greece and Rome, explicitly invented in the Renaissance, and rare in Australia [after 1847] for another three decades'. The balustraded tower of Bontharambo, already mentioned, is

a factitious nineteenth-century combination that immediately gives the whole building a much more formal air. An important antecedent of this form is Sir Charles Barry's remodelling of Highclere Castle, Hampshire, designed in 1837 and executed in 1842-44 ... Far from being Italian, it was Elizabethan. ... It is largely through this unlikely prototype that the parapeted, and more specifically the balustraded parapet, reached Australia.

Lewis emphasises the position of Government House, Melbourne suggesting that its tower may have influenced the subsequent renovation of the tower of its predecessor, Toorak House by the addition of a belvedere. He concludes with a list of the influential later examples by such architects as J. H. Fox (supervising

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76 Lewis, 'The Victorian House'.
77 Lewis, 'The Victorian House', pp. 69 and 70.
78 Lewis, 'The Victorian House', p. 72. He also mentions Thomas Parker's *Villa Rustica* and his illustration based on the Poor House at Bruges in Belgium. 'This second source is also not Italian'.
79 Lewis, 'The Victorian House', pp. 73, 75.

The use of the Italianate style in Australia is included in Richard Apperley et al’s *A Pictorial Guide to Identifying Australian Architecture, Styles and Terms from 1788 to the Present*. Covering several building types, it provides a very good potted history of the Italianate style and the asymmetrical villa form it assumed. The public buildings, including a single ecclesiastical example, are important parallels to the dominant use of the style in domestic architecture. It should be read in conjunction with the entry, which the authors call ‘Victorian Filigree’, covering the same period and including some examples which are at least first cousins of the Italianate style. The chief weaknesses of the authors’ definition of the Italianate style are the emphasis on asymmetry and the failure to accommodate the Palladian end of the Italianate spectrum.

The plan, the use of symmetry or asymmetry, the presence of a loggia or verandah, its massing and, when used, the Italianate villa’s tower were constant in the model’s development in Australia and especially in Victoria. The Italianate villa model introduced the important use of the diagonal and, in this, it prepared the way for a major shift in style and form at the turn of the century.

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80 Apperley, et al., *Pictorial Guide*, pp. 70-73. While useful, this book falls into some of the pitfalls of a taxonomic approach to style, such as over-categorization and a lack of ‘weighting’ between styles. It includes ‘Victorian Italianate’ as one of the major styles citing appropriate examples of seminal buildings, tracing the style’s evolution and giving a fair analysis the its qualities. It incorrectly names Halcyon as Mymong Hall, in Acland Street, St Kilda, fig. 144, the architect of which is known, being Frederick de Garis and Son.

81 See Apperley, et al., *Pictorial Guide*: Christ Church, Brunswick, fig. 141 is apparently unique in Victoria. It is necessary to go to James Blackburn’s Romanesque churches, William Archer’s ‘Italian’ church, and the chapel at Mount Pleasant in Tasmania to find anything comparable, see pp. 75 & 76. It should also be noted that Christ Church may have become more Italianate with its additions and alterations.

82 ‘Palladio’ is not listed in the Index of Apperley, et al.

83 This is the so called Federation/Queen Anne style, the former term referring to the period of Australia’s federation and the latter to the supposed origins of its forms, details, use of colour and materials. See Howells, *Towards the Dawn*. 
The model was appropriate for the time and proved to be not just flexible, adaptable and enduring but more successful in colonial Victoria even than in Britain. This may reflect the large proportion of self-made men in Victoria, even more than in Britain perhaps, rushing to build new residences appropriate to their prosperous circumstances.

The Italianate Villa’s Setting

One of the most important differences between the Italianate villa in Britain and colonial Victoria is its setting. Perhaps it is the novelty of a villa in what might be described, at least by the first settlers, as a ‘primeval’ setting, which appealed to them. A settler’s first step in claiming the colonial landscape was to clear the land and to define it geometrically, as a square, a rectangle or, rarely, as a circle.84 This might be seen as the imposition of rational or ‘Cartesian’ control. The wild, indigenous bush was kept at bay by a post and rail fence while the wood of the forest became the timber of the homestead.85 The rock of the quarry became the stone of the villa. The second step was to plant exotics and, possibly, to retain some indigenous vegetation because it was useful aesthetically.86 The rough fence gave way to the clipped hedge.87 These plantings might form the simplest of axes,

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84 This can be seen in any number of early illustrations such as those included in the exhibition catalogue by Howard Tanner, The Art of Gardening in Colonial Australia, Converting the Wilderness, Sydney: Australian Gallery Directors Council, 1979; and in Watts, Historic Gardens. The rarest example of a geometric shape is that of a hexagon. The Grange Burn No. 2 Run included a vast hexagonal ‘Grass paddock’ shown in Section II in Allotments in the Parishes of North Hamilton and Warravure, County of Dundas, Lindsay Clarke, Surveyor, Surveyor General’s Office Melbourne, 1851.

85 This and the following points are elaborated by Paul Fox in ‘Over the Garden Fence’, Historic Environment, IV, 3, Australia ICOMOS and Council for the Historic Environment, 1985, pp. 29-36.

86 This was what the early Sydney landscape gardener and nurseryman, Thomas Shepherd suggested. His role is discussed in detail in Chapter 6. Later, when drought gripped the altered landscape, there was scientific concern for the environmental effects of land clearing. See Fox, ‘Over the Garden Fence’, pp. 32ff.

87 These were almost always exotics, such as the classic Box hedging, Buxus sempervirens. See Paul Fox, ‘Victorian Historic Gardens’, Open to View, Historic Gardens and...
and an old tree became a picturesque reference to the past. A vegetable garden set out in rows and an orchard set out in a grid indicated the beginnings of self-sufficiency. A milk cow and poultry would be kept close to the house. A site might have been chosen which was elevated and offered both aspect and prospect so an owner could see and be seen. A site might be chosen with a dramatic backdrop, wild mountains perhaps which presented a sublime contrast to the cultivated garden—a nascent villa in the landscape.

With economic success a settler could take the next step and rebuild, incorporating the old into the new, consolidating one's proprietorial claim. This was all the more likely after the passage of the increasingly successful Land Selection Acts from the early 1860s, with the irony that most of the best land went to the squatters under the unsuccessful early Acts.88 When a house replaced a hut, an appropriate architectural style had to be chosen—either the formal, that is the Classical or the informal, that is the Gothic.89 And an appropriate form had to be chosen, either symmetrical or asymmetrical. The Italianate villa straddled both of these but it was not the only choice.

James Broadbent has explored this process in New South Wales in his book *The Australian Colonial House*. Van Diemen's Land provides other important early examples. Highfield House at Circular Head was built between 1835 and 1837 as the residence of Edward Curr (1798-1850), the first chief agent

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88 See *Victoria The First Century*, Historical Sub-Committee of The Centenary Celebrations Council, Robertson and Mullens, Melbourne, 1934, pp. 126ff, which is still one of the best brief analyses of a complicated process.

89 For a discussion of this choice in NSW see Broadbent, *Australian Colonial House*, under index references on Classical, Gothic (and Gothick) and Italianate styles and Greek Revivalism.
of the Van Diemen’s Land Company. By no means formal and certainly not Gothic, it is loosely an Italianate villa. Its Picturesque setting is one of the most dramatic in Tasmania. Perched on a high plateau, from its delicate verandah and principal rooms the villa overlooks the wild seascape of Bass Strait and addresses The Nut, a monadnock or volcanic core, which rises dramatically from the sea. The fishing port of Stanley nestles beneath its Sublime cliffs. The Nut is linked to the mainland by a narrow isthmus and on the isthmus there is a cemetery, a classic Romantic image. It is one of the first uses of the double-façade plan type.

Panshanger, to the south of Longford in northern Tasmania and one of the important seats of the Archer family, is perhaps the most elegant example of the Greek revival villa in Australia. Captain William Lyttleton and other artists depicted it in the bosom of an ideal pastoral landscape and their paintings were published as tinted lithographs. The Classically beautiful house is set within a vast Claudean valley with the Sublime cliffs of the Western Tiers as the ultimate backdrop. Cattle graze on the meandering river’s meadows. The rustic buildings

90 A. L. Meston, ‘Curt, Edward, (1798-1850)’, in Pike, gen. ed., ADB, Vol. 1, pp. 269-72. Curt settled in the Port Phillip District, across Bass Strait, in 1842 and argued so strongly for separation from New South Wales that he was called the ‘Father of Separation’. He was also in favour of the transportation of convicts to Port Phillip, an extremely sensitive and divisive issue, which endeared him to the squatters of the Western District. He died just five days after the news of separation reached Melbourne. There is no doubt that Highfield was a famous place because of its connection with the very important VDL Company, for Curt’s role in the development of the Far North West and for his later activities.

91 Unknown Artist, Highfield Circular-head (Stanley Tasmania 1840), watercolour on paper, State Library of Tasmania, reproduced in Converting the Wilderness, front cover and p. 40.


93 Robertson includes a photograph of the lithograph of Lyttleton’s watercolour, c.1835, Allport Library and Museum of Fine Art, State Library of Tasmania. There is another lithograph by Louis Haghe, Panshanger [sic], The Seat of Joseph Archer Esq. County of Cornwall Vandieemen[s] [sic] Land, c.1835, Rex Nan Kivell Collection (NK 468), National Library of Australia.
on axis with the house survive, although the mature elm trees now bordering the main lawn compromise the effect. The watercolour is held together by the contrast of the dark trees in the centre foreground which is suffused with the golden light of an ideal day.

Nearby, other Archer homesteads were developed. Woolmers, already mentioned, and Brickendon, still owned by the family, are sited to look across a river valley at each other. The former has the Eastern Tiers as its rugged backdrop and the latter the Western Tiers. When a new 'dowager' house was built at Woolmers it too was built to look across the valley at Brickendon. In the 1850s, the architect, William Archer, third son of Thomas Archer, the eldest of the four brothers who established the Archer dynasty in northern Tasmania, designed Saundridge, a symmetrical Italianate villa and its garden, for his cousin, Robert Archer. In 1862, Northbury, possibly also designed by William Archer, was built on the edge of the township of Longford for Edward Archer. It is one of the best examples of the 'pattern-book' Italianate villa in Australia. There is a sense of dynasty in these properties, created as family seats, which is significantly different from the more informal use of the villa form in Britain.

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94 I am grateful to Mrs George Mills, for her assistance during a visit to Panshanger in August 1999.
95 These and Panshanger are illustrated in Robertson and Craig, *Early Houses of Northern Tasmania*, vol. 1.
96 I am grateful to Mr. John Archer, Mr. Brian Archer and Mrs. Louise Archer for their assistance during visits to Brickendon and Woolmers in March 1998.
97 I am grateful to Mr. and Mrs. Rod Thirkell-Johnston for their assistance during a visit to Saundridge in June 1999 and for supplying copies of photographs subsequently.
Libraries survive, as small collections of books, at both Woolmers and Brickendon kept in the dining rooms of the houses.\textsuperscript{99} No architectural pattern books survive but the collections are representative of the nineteenth century and, at Woolmers, include works by Loudon, Burke, Gendall and Forsyth. J. C. Loudon’s books on gardening and Burke’s \textit{Peerage} are well known and frequently found. John Gendall’s \textit{Views of Country Seats of the Royal Family. Nobility and Gentry} is rare and provides direct evidence of the family’s dynastic aspirations at the time.\textsuperscript{100}

Paul de Serville sums up the relationship between the villa and its landscape in colonial Victoria.

Almost as important as the house was its setting. Necessity dictated proximity to water (river, creek, lake or spring) which could then form a picturesque element in the design. Protection from heat, and on the treeless open plains from the wind, led to the planting of stands of evergreens (pines, araucaria). A natural love of trees and a nostalgia for England and Scotland caused the creation of parks around the house doubling as a home paddock, planted with specimen trees, deciduous or exotically evergreen, their colours and changing shapes contrasting with the monotony of the eucalypt. The park-like nature of much of Western Victoria and other districts of open country had brought to so many colonial minds the comparison with a nobleman’s estate that it had become a cliché. Pastoralists with taste, interest, money, and labour could now bring the comparison closer to reality. Trees had purposes beyond the utilitarian and aesthetic; they were symbols of strength and longevity, they summoned forth the association of a venerable estate, historic and long-held, and as such they appealed to the dynastic urge of the major pastoralists.\textsuperscript{101}

This is one of the most important differences between the use of the villa model, whether Italianate or some other style, in Britain and Australia. Rather than the

\textsuperscript{99} The dining room, the other main reception rooms and, indeed, most of the house at Woolmers are amongst the most intact mid-nineteenth century interiors in Australia.

middle-class informality it expressed in the "home" country, in Victoria the middle class used it to express at least home ownership and sometimes much more, even the aspiration of a few to the founding of a family seat. Paul Fox takes the differences further when he states

the homestead garden existed within a contested landscape ... not only was there contestation between Aboriginal people and Europeans; after the gold rushes of the 1850s, squatter (later known by the respectable euphemism 'pastoralist') and selector (would-be small farmers) both claimed the same landscape by using house and garden as symbols to assert economic power and dominance.\textsuperscript{102}

Fox also notes another difference, the amateur interest in aclimatisation of flora and fauna from Britain. Much of this was nostalgic rather than truly scientific, like the efforts of Baron von Mueller at the Botanical Gardens, but it led to the devastation of the landscape by millions of rabbits, foxes and sheep, and by innumerable weeds. There was definitely a strong Italian influence on gardens in Australia.\textsuperscript{103} The Mediterranean climate was perceived to be similar to south-east Australia and the "trade" in plants was, in fact, two-way.\textsuperscript{104} Italian gardens were possible in Britain only in a stylistic sense and horticulturally only for the most avid, and rich, amateur.

\textsuperscript{101} Paul de Serville, Pounds and Pedigrees, Oxford University Press, Melbourne, pp. 171-2.
\textsuperscript{102} Paul Fox ‘Homestead Gardens’ in Aitken and Looker, eds., OCAG, pp. 308-10.
\textsuperscript{104} The Boyd family, famous for their artistic sensitivity and who lived in a Gothic revival villa in Caulfield, exported Blue Gums, Eucalyptus globulus to Rome because they were fast growing, could drain the marshes and help overcome malaria. The monastery called Abbazia delle Tre Fontane, near E.U.R. and founded in 641, had been abandoned because of malaria but, in 1868, Trappist monks could re-inhabit the monastery. They still make a liqueur flavoured with eucalyptus oil. Some members of the Boyd family are buried in the Protestant Cemetery in Rome.
The Italianate Villa’s Owner

In colonial Victoria, the owner of an Italianate villa was most likely to be a member of the broad middle class. There is no ‘indigenous’ aristocracy in Australia although there was pressure to establish inherited titles in colonial Victoria and to create an Upper House modelled on the House of Lords. There was an elite, an oligarchy based on the intermingling factors of birth, wealth and power. Indeed, there were many who bore British and Continental titles and many more who were members of the British gentry. There was enough demand from the local ‘gentry’ to be defined and recognized for Sir Bernard Burke to publish two volumes of colonial gentry in 1891 and 1895. Paul de Serville has quantified this group, which he calls the ‘upper class’, as being nominally ten thousand people. More precisely, he has established that there were some 140 ‘cadets of titled, landed or ancient families’, some 160 ‘Victorian entries in Burke’s Colonial Gentry’ and some 335 ‘landowners of Victoria in 1879’ who possessed over 500 acres. Allowing for many overlaps, the fact that three banks were amongst the biggest landowners in the last figure, and the return to the home country or further migration of settlers over the years, the total of these figures conservatively might be no more than 600 people. Almost all of them were men.

108 de Serville, Pounds and Pedigrees, these figures are the totals in his Appendices 3, 4 and 5.
De Serville is not interested in the middle class so his lists do not include the many who were occupants of more modest villas, whatever the style, the suburban or marine villas in metropolitan Melbourne or on the edges of the provincial cities of Geelong, Bendigo and Ballarat. These, rather than the pastoralists and mercantile princes, were the middle class of colonial Victoria. Nor does his tally account for the very much greater number of villas, almost all of which are Italianate in style, which still survive in metropolitan Melbourne. But, as he states, it is his upper class, which set the fashion, and that influence trickled down.

The model of the palatial residence was Toorak House, built for James Jackson, who died before he could move in. ... with its Italianate tower and its fashionable style of architecture, and its decided air of announcing to the world the success of its owner, Toorak House was the prototype of the mansions built by the rich in Melbourne during the next forty years. The houses, which were in a jumble of styles ("from the Turkish cupola to the Italianate villa, the cottage ornée, the Gothic and the Elizabethan") reminded one visitor of the suburban retreats built by wealthy London citizens (not usually noted for their gentility).109

Michael Cannon notes the "growing middle class of merchants and manufacturers [who] copied the social leaders. Unable to afford elaborate mansions, they decorated their more modest homes with mass-produced cast-iron and stucco ornamentation."110 As to what the fashion was, de Serville continues

Owners, or their architects, drew upon many styles: Gothic, Jacobean, Italianate, Renaissance Revival, among others. In view of the large number of Scottish settlers, it is surprising that so few sought to recreate buildings they had known at home. ... It was the rare pastoralist who embraced the Picturesque principle.111

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109 de Serville, Pounds and Pedigrees, p. 19. This assessment needs to be taken cautiously. Unless he is relying on Louisa Meredith who published her comments in 1861 and was only visiting from Tasmania, de Serville's other sources are all from the 1850s. The great rush of Italianate villas came later.

110 Cannon, Land Boomers, p. 17.

111 de Serville, Pounds and Pedigrees, pp. 170-1.
This is a remarkable claim since the siting of colonial villas was very strongly influenced by the Picturesque aesthetic and de Serville himself mentions many highly Picturesque examples, such as Kolor, Barragunda and Narrapumelap, which were influential at the time.

And if there was no aristocracy, just an upper class and a burgeoning nouveaux riches middle class, was there a lower class? Richard Twopeny, the South Australian journalist who published *Town Life in Australia* in 1883 thought that colonial society too equal to have such a level.

Again, the distribution of wealth is far more equal. To begin with, there is no poor class in the colonies. Comfortable incomes are in the majority, millionaires few and far between. This is especially the case in Adelaide, where the condition of the poorer class is better, and that of the richer worse than in the other colonies. In Melbourne the masses seem worst off, and the display of riches, if not the actuality thereof, is most noticeable. In Sydney the signs of wealth are not wanting to an examiner, but a superficial observer would say that there were not half as many wealthy men as in Melbourne.¹¹²

One leveller must have been the new availability of books.¹¹³ A library was a component of the villa lifestyle—part of its sense of retreat and its intellectual core—whether it was a room set aside for the importance and pleasure of books or just a collection of them.¹¹⁴ If a villa did not have a specific room dedicated to books and their paraphernalia, books might be housed in the dining room, sitting room, study or, that ultimate masculine retreat, the smoking

¹¹³ This has been discussed in Ch. 3 and Ch. 4.
¹¹⁴ Perhaps the oldest and finest surviving collection and room is at Camden Park, the home of John Macarthur, the founder of the wool industry in colonial Australia, and designed by the Sydney architect, John Verge between 1831 and 1835. But Camden is a Palladian house with Greek overtones, established as a seat, rather than an Italianate villa. See Helen Blaxland, 'Camden Park, New South Wales', in *Historic House of Australia*, Vol. 1, Australian Council of National Trusts, Cassell Australia Ltd., pp. 78-87; and Lane and Serle, *Australians at Home*, pp. 105-6, pl. 70.
room.115 When the Melbourne Punch journalist with the pseudonym ‘Lauderdale’ visited the homes of Victoria’s ‘Representative Men’, all members of de Serville’s upper middle class, they often ended up in the library to continue the interview.116 Even though the interviews were conducted early in the twentieth century, all of the houses he visited date from the mid- to late-nineteenth century. The libraries at both the Anglicans’ Bishopscourt and the Roman Catholics’ Palace are photographed.117 Sir Henry Wrixon is photographed in his library at Raheen, Kew, one of the more interesting late Italianate villas in Melbourne’s eastern suburbs. ‘His appetite in his leisure hours is for “the dainties that are bred in a book”’ and Lauderdale states that ‘his library is his playground’.118 Alfred Deakin, then the Prime Minister of the newly federated Australian Commonwealth, is photographed in a dressing gown in his library in a standard Melbourne Italianate villa.119 Lauderdale is invited to ‘Come to my library, “the only room in the house that belongs to me.”’120 He continues

> On entering that sanctuary it was evident to me that the many choice volumes that lined the walls on all sides were there for use, not for ornamental purposes, which is only too often the case. “You have a fine library, Mr Deakin?” “Yes, these books are my tools, my pleasure, and this is my playground. It has been the labour of about thirty years’ gathering, and every volume I have purchased personally, with the

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115 See Forge, *Victorian Splendour*, Ch. 4 ‘The Library’; and Lane and Serle, *Australians at Home*, various references, including fn. 3 to pl. 70 for its reference to this ‘country habit’ of having a library.

116 These have been brought together in facsimile by Michael Cannon, ed. as *Victoria’s Representative Men at Home, Australia’s Upper Middle Class in the Edwardian Age*, Today’s Heritage Publications, Melbourne, [1980]. The companion volume, with slightly later photographs and no accompanying text, *Our Beautiful Homes, Australia’s Upper Middle Class in the Edwardian Age*, is less fruitful both for photographs of libraries and for examples of Italianate villas, confirming the preference for other styles in NSW.


118 Cannon, *Victoria’s Representative Men*, p. 11. Wrixon was the President of the Legislative Assembly. His wife and daughter were photographed in the fernery, a woman’s domain.

119 Now demolished, its date of construction and architect cannot be discovered.

exception of many presentation copies, of course. Now I will show you something. Where is my ‘Sartor’? Oh, here it is. Now, this is the foundation-stone of my library—‘Sartor Resartus,’ by Thos. Carlyle. It is the first work, I may say, that turned my thoughts to more serious channels.\(^{121}\)

Indeed, a library could be a gentleman’s ultimate retreat, his intellectual sanctuary. Late in the nineteenth century, Robert Sticht, an American, was the Mount Lyell Company’s mine manager at Queenstown. In a landscape made as bleak as the moon’s by the mining process there, a house was established on a rise some distance from the town and surrounded by the only greenery in the landscape.\(^{122}\) Inside, Sticht had two libraries. As Lane and Serle comment, the average visitor was received into the first, a cluttered library

The walls of which were covered with shelves containing the works of modern authors, particularly books on travel and discovery, in which he was keenly interested. The other library was a sanctuary which he jealously guarded. No one was allowed to see it unless Mr. Sticht was satisfied that he was a highly interested party. But once a visitor was accorded the honour of entering the sanctuary he was certain of a couple of interesting hours amongst books and documents centuries old.\(^{123}\)

While it may seem surprising, the Picturesque aesthetic was at play even here in the library. There are many examples of libraries where European civilization, as represented by books and learning, is juxtaposed against specimens of primeval Australia.\(^{124}\) Aboriginal implements and weapons are

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\(^{121}\) Cannon, *Victoria’s Representative Men*, p. 21.

\(^{122}\) The house and this contrast still exist.

\(^{123}\) Lane and Serle, *Australians at Home*, pp. 344-5, pls. 395-6, quoting T. H., ‘Robert Sticht: the Man of Lyell. Memories of the “G. M.”’, *World*, 3 May 1922. The second, from the photograph taken c.1903, was austere by comparison with the first.

\(^{124}\) Robert Sticht’s first library was cluttered with weapons, but not necessarily aboriginal. Some of the better known examples in house designed in the Classical styles are: the smoking room at Martindale Hall, Mintaro, SA where Aboriginal weapons are displayed with family memorabilia, eunus from other countries and Egyptian decorations; the library and hall at Collingrove, Angaston, South Australia; Burrundulla, south-east of Dubbo, New South Wales; and Eeyenok, Terang, Victoria. Other places with libraries are discussed elsewhere.
displayed as curios if not as trophies. Capt. J. P. Chirnside is photographed by Lauderdale, ‘inside to have a cigarette’, in front of a formidable display of weapons and photographs of the family and its properties. Stone tools, such as grinding stones, discovered as the plough converted the land from dirt to soil were collected and displayed. Weird animals and beautiful birds from the primeval ‘Bush’ are stuffed and mounted. Floral displays were created from feathers. Even mummified heads were collected. Thus the Beautiful and the Sublime were brought together inside the Italianate villa, usually in the library or, more confronting, in the hall, according to the Picturesque aesthetic.

Later Italianate Villas Beyond Victoria

Although used consistently, the Italianate villa model was not as popular in other Australian colonies as it was in Victoria, nor did it reach such overblown extremes in the late 1880s. In New South Wales and Tasmania there was a persistence of simpler Georgian forms and a continuing preference for the Gothic revival. South Australia was more akin to Victoria perhaps because, like Victoria, it was not a ‘convict’ colony but settled in its own right from the 1840s according to the Wakefield system of assisted immigration. Queensland,

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125 See Lane and Serle, Australians at Home, pp. 310-12, 327. Compare the extraordinary collection, much formerly belonging to Sir George Verdon, of Sylvester John Browne II ‘who had a taste for the exotic and raised the art of trophy arrangement to new heights’ in pls. 250-52 with the sobriety and lack of primeval decoration in pl. 349, the library of Scots Church, Sydney or the smoking room cum library in the villa of a scientist in pls. 371-2.

126 Cannon, Victoria’s Representative Men, p. 32. His home, The Manor Werrinee, designed in 1895 by the Colac architect, Alexander Hamilton, is of interest as a transitional example of the Italianate villa. It is picturesquely asymmetrical, with a tower over the front entrance, a polygonal two-storey turret at the corner of the house to emphasis the diagonal and divide the verandahs, and equal projecting wings to contain the double facade. The detailing is heavily Romanesque but the tower is still capped with a typical low-pitched roof. The house is demolished.

127 Dr Jan Pennyc, pers. comm., 22 July 2003.

separated from NSW after Victoria, did not enjoy the flush of wealth and increase in population from gold until much later in the nineteenth century. It remained largely pastoral and examples of the Italianate villa are few. The same applied to Western Australia although it had always been a separate colony. Many people, including out-of-work architects, fled the 1890s depression of Melbourne and went to Perth and the Western Australian goldfields.

As early as 1858, Henry Gwynne commissioned Melbourne architects, Crouch and Wilson, to design his homestead at Werai on the Colligen Creek near Forbes in the Murrumbidgee district of the Riverina. The firm was newly formed but the partners were already competent and had experience in Tasmania before migrating to Melbourne. Without a tower and only single-storey, the central house at Werai is neither grand nor a remarkable design for its style, which might be described as 'reduced' Italianate, but its form and the complex as a whole is an excellent example of the homestead and its setting as a villa. It was added to and developed over the years and, in 1882, the Sydney Mail used it to illustrate a typical Australian homestead.

125 Peter Freeman, The Homestead, A Riverina Anthology, Oxford University Press, Melbourne, 1982, p. 266-73. As an aside, it is interesting to note that a book about homesteads in the Riverina by an architectural historian based in Canberra was still published in Melbourne in the later twentieth century.

126 In fact the partnership was enduring and highly regarded, lasting until Crouch's death in 1889, working much for the Methodist denomination and preferred Jewish architects for the design of synagogues. See Peter Bolger, 'Crouch, Thomas James (1805-1890)' in Pike, gen. ed., ADB, Vol. 3, pp. 500-1. Crouch had impeccable Methodist and Quaker connections. He designed the first Wesley College, for the congregation which was in the Italianate style, having a grand symmetrical façade and two towers, since remodelled. When he first arrived in Melbourne he was commissioned to design the new Presbyterian Church in St Kilda, choosing the Gothic revival over a Classical style and causing much controversy. He also designed James Bonwick's school in St Kilda in 1865, effectively a Gothic revival villa reminiscent of pattern book architecture. And he won a French pattern book as first prize in French in his undergraduate degree in Launceston.

131 Illustrated in Freeman, The Homestead, p. 272.
The architect, Percy Oakden (1845-1917) was born in Tasmania and migrated to Victoria in 1868 where he eventually became a partner of the distinguished and older architect, Leonard Terry (1825-1884). In 1860, he had received a copy of the French pattern book *Paris Moderne or Choix de Maisons* as first prize for French in his Degree of Associate of Arts by the Tasmanian Council of Education. The book included conventional examples of the Italianate villa model. In the early 1880s, W. Gibson Esq., a major pastoralist in northern Tasmania, commissioned the Melbourne firm, Terry and Oakden to remodel his Italianate villa, Eskleigh, at Perth in northern Tasmania. The house, started in 1870, was already an asymmetrical Italianate villa sited in an ideal pastoral landscape beside the South Esk River and close to the Archer estates around Longford. Terry and Oakden reinforced its existing character and setting, making it one of the best examples of an Italianate villa in Tasmania. The firm included an illustration of the ‘Hall & Staircase’ in their self-promoting book, *What to Build and How to Build It*, published in 1885. Stone Pines, *Pinus pinea*, the famous ‘Pines of Rome’, still line the winding drive beside flocks of

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133 *Paris Moderne or Choix de Maisons*, The book with its elaborate book plate is in the collection of Mr. Alan Willingham. I am grateful to him for making his collection available for this research.

134 Photographs survive at Eskleigh taken during construction, which are remarkable in showing the extent of the renovations. It seems very likely that the tower was already existing. The tower provides excellent views of the further landscape with each cardinal point closed by a specific feature. I am grateful to the staff of the Eskleigh Nursing Home for their assistance during an inspection of the house on 24 August 1999.

135 The alterations have not been dated precisely but appear to be after 1880. The National Estate Register citation, No. 6/03/071/0084, states ‘The house conforms closely with designs by Robert Kerr in his book “The Gentleman’s House”, who describes the type as “a picturesque composition with Palladian detail”. The portico, tower and irregularity in plan are highly characteristic. The house and its outbuildings occupy a fine site on the South Esk River.’

136 Terry and Oakden, *What to Build and How to Build It: a few hints on domestic, ecclesiastical, and general architecture*, G. Robertson & Co., Melbourne, 1885. This is the closest that the colony of Victoria came to an architectural pattern book.
sheep.

Pastoralists from the Wimmera—the northern reaches of the Western District in Victoria—and businessmen in Melbourne developed Murray Downs from 1866 to 1884, on the NSW side of the Murray River near Swan Hill in Victoria. The brothers Charles and Suetonius Officer who had migrated from Van Diemen’s Land were based originally at Mount Talbot, north of Balmoral and, later in their retirement, in villas in Melbourne. Their architect, John Shanks Jenkins who was based in Hamilton, the capital of the Western District, designed the present Mount Talbot homestead for the Officers in 1862. The local newspaper, the Hamilton Spectator noted “We learn that a fine villa residence in the Italian style of architecture, where broad eaves and projections are so suited to the requirements of this sunny land, has been completed for C. M. Officer Esq.” Alfred Felton was a chemical and drug manufacturer and, on his death, a great philanthropist. He owned Murray Downs, with his partner Charles

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137 See J. Ann Hone, ‘Officer, Charles Myles (1827-1904) and Suetonius Henry (1830-1883),’ in Pike, gen. ed., *ADB*, Vol. 5, pp. 357-8. They also held the Riverina properties called Melfool, Willakool, and Kallara. In Melbourne, the brothers lived in Italianate villas: Charles at Landcoo, Brighton and Suetonius at Leighwood, Toorak, which are discussed below.

138 In June 1860, Jenkins had designed the Balmoral Presbyterian Manse for Mr Robert Officer of Rocklands acting on behalf of the building committee; Lyall Harris with the Balmoral Historical Society, *Welcome Back to Balmoral, Back-to-Balmoral Executive Committee, Balmoral*, p. 24. There may have been a direct connection between John Shanks Jenkins and the London architect and author, John Jenkins, who ‘appears to have been the younger son of the Rev. William Jenkins’. Howard Colvin, *A Biographical Dictionary of British Architects, 1600-1849*, revised ed., Facts on File Inc., New York, 1978, p. 458. Colvin states that William Jenkins gave up architecture as a profession to become a Wesleyan Methodist minister and continues, ‘In company with his father’s pupil William Hosking [and John Jenkins] travelled in the Mediterranean in 1823-5, and subsequently exhibited several drawings of temples at Rome, Pompeii, Paestum and Athens at the Academy. In 1827, he and Hosking were the joint authors of *A Selection of Architectural Ornaments, Greek, Roman and Italian*. At this period he was living with his father in Red Lion Square.’ Colvin cites few works and none after 1841. In 1861, John Shanks Jenkins married Emma Wright in Victoria; ‘Victorian Pioneers Index’, Reg. No. 3595. He died in the Melbourne suburb of Richmond in 1913, aged 78, in 1913 when his father’s name was recorded as James not John; ‘Victorian Edwardian Index’, Reg. No. 3413.


Campbell, from 1884 to 1891. Both periods saw major building works undertaken. Unfortunately, no architect has definitely been associated with the works although it may be that Shanks designed early parts of the homestead. Murray Downs demonstrates the accretion of parts over time, one of the last sections being a tower-like two-storey wing. The villa addresses the river with extensive formal and kitchen gardens. The Officers installed pumps and irrigated 'orchard and groves of Jaffa oranges'. These were souvenirs because 'The Officers ... had shipped back from their Mediterranean honeymoon [in the mid-1860s] oranges from Jaffa, cedars from Lebanon and palms. They also brought back from their Grand Tour paintings, furniture and other souvenirs. The colonial garden became a place where the journey from and to the colony could be recalled and where in one's isolation up-country one could be linked to a wider world.'

In Melbourne, the brothers lived in Italianate villas: Charles at Landcox, Brighton and Suetonius at Leighwood, Toorak. As early as 1857, the architect Charles Webb designed Landcox, which is symmetrical about a 50-foot high tower. It was described in 1881, when proposed for subdivision, as being on one hundred and nine acres, nineteen acres of which appear to have been landscaped

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141 Hone, 'Officer' ADB, vol. 5, p. 358.
142 Dr Jan Pennyc, pers. comm., 30 August 2003.
143 Paul Fox, 'Over the Garden Fence', p. 31; and 'Victorian Historic Gardens', p. 7.
144 Lewis, 'Melbourne Mansions', on-line database, who suggests that the architect may have been Lloyd Taylor. There is some confusion about this house. Built between 1865 and 1870, it was located at the northern or river end of the original Toorak House allotment between Grange Road and Orrong Road, near the kink in the much later Hill Street. It was a two storey asymmetrical dichrome (or polychrome) brick house, set on the diagonal and facing northwest. The drive approached the house up a steep hill from the northern end of Grange Road. The style was loosely Gothic but the interiors were detailed in a neo-Classical manner. In 1931 it was purchased by the Christian Brothers and converted into a boys' school. For several photographs and the later history of the house, see Chris McConville, St Kevin's College, 1918-1993, Melbourne University Press, Carlton, 1993. McConville states that Leighwood, later called Barbazon and Glenervie, was 'once owned by Suetonius Officer, a Riverina Grazier' and that 'after his death it was bought by Charles Fairbairn', p. 68.
including an orchard, flower beds, shrubberies and a small lake.\(^{145}\) In 1884, in another auction notice, the description included a beautifully laid out garden, fernery, large tennis lawn, and extensive shrubberies, the whole having been designed with great taste by a landscape gardener from England.\(^{146}\) The house survives, as does much of the garden as a public park.

In 1878, the Melbourne architects, Twentymans and Askew, were commissioned to design a new homestead for the pastoralist, John Riddoch near Penola in the south-east of South Australia.\(^{147}\) Yallum Park was very grand indeed for Penola but quite typical of Melbourne mansions. It is interesting for its lavish interior decoration, which survives, including Italian marble fireplaces, and its setting in a landscaped garden of great botanical interest at the end of a long drive. The very flat topography gave little opportunity for a Sublime setting.\(^{148}\) The new house was added to the second, built by Riddoch in 1861 with the first and the third nearby, together reflecting historical accretion.

The Italianate villa became the model for the monied, well-connected and powerful classes and those who aspired to status whether as a suburban estate, a

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\(^{145}\) Lewis, 'Melbourne Mansions', on-line database. There is serious confusion about the owners and occupants of this house as well. Hone, 'Officer' *ADB*, vol. 5, states that Sentinouius Officer 'moved permanently to live at Landcox, Brighton', p. 357 and 'died at Landcox on 1 January 1904', p. 358. While Lewis, with Terry Sawyer, states that Landcox was put up for auction as the property of 'the late A.[chibald]' and Mrs. Kate McMillan, Lane, and Serle, *Australia at Home*, p. 33, state that it was furnished for William McMillan by the decorator, Cullis Hill. Lewis then cites several other reliable sources which state it was owned by Thomas Bent, politician and land developer. Finally, Andrew C. Ward & Associates, 'City of Brighton Urban Character and Conservation Study', states that it was put up for subdivision sale in 1904, 'being the estate of the late Sir Robert Officer' in 1904, the year that Charles Officer is said to have died there. Charles had been in financial difficulties for many years. Perhaps his older brother had owned Landcox all along.

\(^{146}\) Lewis, 'Melbourne Mansions', on-line database.

\(^{147}\) See Ashley Cooper, 'Yallum Park South Australia' in *Historic Homesteads of Australia*, Vol. 1, Australian Council of National Trusts, Cassell Australia Ltd., pp. 126-131. Others give the date of construction as 1888, perhaps more likely on stylistic grounds.

\(^{148}\) The property is even more interesting for its direct connection with Adam Lindsay Gordon, one of Australia's great Romantic poets, although he had died tragically several years
pastoral run or even a vice-regal residence. As in Britain, the Italianate villa was particularly successful as a Picturesque synthesis of form, style and function in colonial Australia. This can be claimed at both a superficial and a deeper level.

There are many similarities between what had emerged and developed in Britain, and the model’s interpretation in colonial Australia. Asymmetry is still the most important component of its massing. The usual ingredients are found: masonry construction; the low-pitched roof and bracketed eaves; the loggia (usually transformed into a verandah); and the all-important tower. Certain materials are less frequently found such as terra cotta roof tiles, which were substituted by slate or iron, and stone, which was substituted by timber mock ashlar. There are many gradations of scale, from the small and informal villa to the large and formal ‘palazzo’. The garden and park settings are as similar as possible with a mixture of native and exotic species in a sometimes very different and notionally primeval landscape.

It may be that the differences between the Italianate villa in Britain and in colonial Australia are more interesting and telling than the superficial similarities. Whether in metropolitan Melbourne or in the country, villas were more self-sufficient. As homesteads they even tended towards the ‘village’ or Renaissance meaning of the word. Effectively there was no established aristocracy or gentry but still the villa model was used to establish family seats. Although detached from urban centres, the sense of retreat in colonial villas was less recreational than opportunistic. Squatters went up to town for the season and stayed in Italianate villas in other situations, especially in the seaside resort of St Kilda.
The Italianate villas of metropolitan Melbourne, including several owned and occupied by squatters, are discussed in Chapter 8.
RESPONSES TO THE COLONIAL LANDSCAPE:

FROM CRONKHELL TO THE COLONIAL VILLA

Before examining the Italianate villa in the colonial landscape in closer detail, it is useful to consider more broadly how individuals interpreted the colonial landscape in the nineteenth century.\(^1\) If there was a difference of opinion about the suitability of particular revival styles, colonists in south-eastern Australia were at least united in their appreciation of the landscape in which villas were sited. Their appreciation was informed, even overwhelmed, by the Picturesque aesthetic. By the 1830s, there had been a subtle, but consistent and increasing shift of emphasis away from the scientific and exploratory purpose of landscape appreciation towards a more expansive view.\(^2\) One individual, Thomas Shepherd who was based in Sydney, is a direct and practical link with eighteenth-century landscape gardening in Britain.

Four individuals—Major Mitchell, James Bonwick, John Glover and Alfred Arden—were active spectators in the landscape, each on his different mission within it. They demonstrate how they were influenced by not just the recent Picturesque aesthetic but by nearly two centuries of Italian landscape painting.

Alfred Arden who was a sheep farmer in the far Western District, was so

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\(^2\) This trend is noted in Smith, *European Vision*. The topographical, botanical, ethnographic and other illustrations of early Australia are well known.
enamoured with Italian landscape painting that he called his property ‘Claude Lorraine’. ³

There were other spectators of the landscape. Some were close to political power, such as Lady Franklin, the wife of the Governor of Van Diemen's Land, and Louisa Anne Meredith, also in Tasmania but a close friend of Edward La Trobe Bateman and his circle in Victoria including Lt. Governor Charles La Trobe. Ada Cambridge in *Thirty Years in Australia*, less guidebook than reminiscence, includes Claudean descriptions such as

> We travelled beside the river for some hours, and my recollections are of particularly lovely views. Doubtless the radiant morning gave them much of their charm—Australian scenery is really a matter of light and atmosphere—and allowance must be made for that enchantment which distance lends; still, it was a pretty country.⁴

Throughout her book, Cambridge is keen to impress, ever so discretely, how close she is to the Governor's wife, even though she is merely a writer and a humble parson's wife.

**Thomas Shepherd**

Thomas Shepherd (1776-1835), a landscape gardener and nurseryman, demonstrated in theory and in practice how the colonial villa should be sited and set picturesquely within the Australian landscape.⁵ He gave two series of lectures, one on horticulture in 1834 and one on landscaping in 1835.⁶ In these lectures,

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³ The spelling of the name with an 'o' seems to have been preferred and used here for the place.
⁶ There were four lectures on horticulture and then seven lectures on landscape gardening only one of which was actually given before Shepherd died. Crittenden reprints this one, as Appendix B, "Landscape Gardening in Australia, The First Lecture" given at the Mechanics' School
Shepherd referred continuously to landscape painting and poetry. He claimed a direct link with the origins of the Picturesque in British landscape gardening both generally and through his study of key personalities such as Humphry Repton. By associating himself with the landscape painting and poetry of the seventeenth and eighteenth century, Shepherd hints at a metaphorical dimension to his theory and practice. His lectures show that the 'gentry' of the colony or, at least, the gentlemen members of the Sydney Mechanics School of Arts were interested in these topics as intellectual as well as economic pursuits. Indeed, Shepherd cites the gardens of several of the leading colonists, including Elizabeth Bay House, owned by Alexander Macleay (1767-1848) and Lyndhurst, owned by Dr James Bowman (1784-1846), both of whom were keen, well informed and more than 'amateur' gardeners. The respect in which Shepherd was held as a person is confirmed in the long list of distinguished citizens who attended his funeral.

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of Arts, Sydney. Another is reprinted as Thomas Shepherd, 'On Planning the Gardens of the Marine Villas of Port Jackson', Documents on Art and Taste in Australia, The Colonial Period 1770-1914, Bernard Smith, ed., Oxford University Press, Melbourne, 1975, pp. 40-49. The landscaping lectures were published posthumously as Thomas Shepherd, Lectures on Landscape Gardening in Australia, William McGarvie, c.1836. The horticulture lectures were published as Thomas Shepherd, Lectures on the Horticulture of New South Wales, William McGarvie, Sydney, 1835. McGarvie was a close friend of Shepherd and a member of the same Presbyterian congregation.

7 Shepherd, Lectures on Landscape Gardening, First Lecture, p. 12. Crittenden, Shrub in the Landscape, p. 9, states that 'Repton was known personally to Shepherd and they worked on neighbouring properties'.

8 The Australian Subscription Library was the upper-class opposition to the Mechanics Institute. It had subscription fees of up to five guineas, and it enjoyed substantial financial patronage from Governor Darling. See George Nadel, Australia's Colonial Culture, F. W. Cheshire, Melbourne, pp. 80-1.

9 Macleay (or McLeay) was a senior public servant and highly regarded scientist, specialising in entomology. Bowman was a surgeon and pastoralist. See 'McLeay, Alexander (1767-1848), Douglas Pike, ed., Australian Dictionary of Biography, Vol. 2, Melbourne University Press, pp. 177-80, which states 'Meanwhile McLeay had completed his house at Elizabeth Bay in 1837 and his garden became famous for its rare plants. He continued to send specimens to the Royal and Linnean Societies, experimented in horticulture at Brownlow Hill [his country estate], gave active support to the Sydney Botanic Garden and found time to serve on charitable committees and missionary societies.' And see N. Gray, 'Bowman, James (1784-1846), Pike, gen. ed., ADB, Vol. 1, pp. 137-8.

10 Obituary, Sydney Morning Herald, 2nd September 1835.
It is clear from his lectures, the journal he kept of his time in New Zealand and other writings that Shepherd was well versed in aesthetics, well read in the theory written on the landscape, and well aware of the profession of landscape design. In one lecture he stated, ‘I have taken particular notice of the different opinions, and recommendations of the following gentlemen, who have professed the art, and who have been approved of for their superior ability in the art or style of Landscape Gardening. The names of these gentlemen are as follows, viz: Brown, White, Repton, Wheatley, Knight, Mason, Lord Kaimes, Shenston, Lawrence, Loudon, and others.’ He stresses that ‘a very close connection subsists between the Landscape Gardener, Landscape Painter, and Pastoral or Landscape Poet.’ The aim of the landscape gardener’s design is ‘to bring the whole into one harmonious perspective,—overawing the mind by its sublimity, if the necessary is sublime; delighting the mind, if it is varied, picturesque and soothing; and pleasing the mind, if the landscape is beautiful, solemn and still.’

In his final lecture, Shepherd had advice to give to people laying out the grounds of marine villas around Port Jackson (Sydney Harbour) and along the Parramatta River specifically. He regrets that, amongst numerous newly rich persons and gentleman establishing villas, ‘a great lack of knowledge exists amongst them, of the principles and rules which have been established by Landscape Gardeners for their construction and improvement’. He describes his style as ‘modern’ and it is clear that he is a disciple of the Picturesque when he notes, ‘The fantastic rocks, covered with trees and shrubs, forming [Port Jackson’s]

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11 Shepherd, Lectures on Landscape Gardening, First Lecture, p. 12. Shepherd does not mention William Gilpin and Uvedale Price anywhere as authors, nor does he mention Claude, the Poussins, Rosa or any British painters by name.
12 Shepherd, Landscape Gardening, First Lecture, p. 7.
13 Shepherd, Landscape Gardening, First Lecture, p. 10.
outline, and the islands in the stream cannot be exceeded in picturesque beauty and
grandeur. Elsewhere he refers to "irregularity", an "abrupt slope", and the
"second-distance". He contrasts dark bowers and small spaces with the bright
light reflected off the waters of Sydney Harbour, which must be filtered through
trees.

Towards the end of his lecture on marine villas, he exhorts the owner or
designer "to go in search of" and to discover other Picturesque opportunities.
Without stating any intellectual motive, but instead arguing on practical, economic
and aesthetic grounds, Shepherd advocated at least four ways of modifying,
controlling, using and therefore claiming the colonial landscape. He uses the villas
of the Hon. Alexander Macleay, Elizabeth Bay House and of Dr James Bowman,
Lyndhurst as his examples for how best to compose landscapes. These men were
well-educated, well-known and well-placed in society and their estates were
considered landmarks.

Firstly, he advocated the placement of a villa on the middle ground, not on
the highest point, but "in the bosom of a gentle elevation" to provide an unbraggish
framework from overarching trees. A well-proportioned building should, if
possible, be the principal object in a landscape. "I picture to myself these

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14 Shepherd, Landscape Gardening, Seventh Lecture, p. 86.
15 B. Smith notes, p. 49, n. 3, that "The term 'second distance' belongs to the special
vocabulary of the picturesque and quotes an extract from Chapter 14 of Jane Austen's novel,
Northanger Abbey.'
16 Shepherd, Landscape Gardening, Seventh Lecture, p. 93.
17 The architect, John Verge, designed both houses. They survive on much reduced sites
and are now owned by the Historic Houses Trust of New South Wales. For discussion of them see J.
Broadbent, Ch. 10 'Architects of the 1830s', The Colonial House, Hordern House with the Historic
18 Shepherd, Landscape Gardening, Seventh Lecture, p. 89.
19 This principle is depicted perfectly in Conrad Martens' oil painting, View from Rose
Bank, 1840, National Gallery of Australia, Canberra, which shows the various villas of
Woolloomooloo Hill. It is illustrated in Elizabeth Johns, et al., New Worlds from Old, National
probably designed most of the villas, including Rose Bank.
residences placed upon the middle elevation, the richly picturesque and wooded
hills forming a background, each with a carriage and garden front, with lawns,
walks, and shrubberies.\textsuperscript{20} Here, he stresses the general sense of approach and
presentation of a villa and he evokes the conventional, diagonal drive which
heightens expectations, increased by rising ground, with tantalising glimpses of the
house through the trees. The coach house and stables are judiciously out of sight.

Secondly, Shepherd strongly encouraged the retention and use of existing
indigenous vegetation. His reasons are aesthetic, as well as practical, because trees
are an embellishment not an obstruction to the prospect and should be kept when
that land is good for nothing else.

Sensible that his land is not calculated for pasture, Mr. McLeay has very
judiciously applied but a small space of it for that purpose, and has
preserved his native trees and shrubs to extend his Landscape Gardening.
From the first commencement he never suffered a tree of any kind to be
destroyed, until he saw distinctly the necessity for doing so. He thus
retained the advantage of embellishment from his native trees, and
harmonised them with foreign trees now growing. He has also obtained the
benefit of a standing plantation which it might otherwise have taken twenty
or thirty years to bring to maturity.\textsuperscript{21}

It is perhaps disappointing that, in all his enthusiasm for conserving the
existing vegetation, Shepherd does not mention the curiosity, contrast, sense of
age, and decay that existing trees might provide. Rather, the natural indigenous
vegetation is to be ‘harmonised’ to make a ‘standing plantation’ equal to those
trees which will actually be planted. The opportunity to use an old, if not dead
tree as a conventional Picturesque device seems lost on him. Or, perhaps, it was
so obvious to him and his audience that the device and any metaphorical content it
might have were simply understood.

\textsuperscript{20} Shepherd, \textit{Landscape Gardening}, Seventh Lecture, p. 87.
\textsuperscript{21} Shepherd, \textit{Landscape Gardening}, Seventh Lecture, p. 88.
Thirdly, Shepherd advocates the introduction of foreign species. These are of two sorts, the useful or productive, and the exotic and scientifically curious. Alexander Macleay was a more than competent "amateur" scientist and a member of the Linnean Society who supported the Sydney Botanic Gardens in the tradition of an eighteenth-century gentleman. So, it is not surprising that Elizabeth Bay House as a villa has both sorts, the former in the flower, fruit and kitchen gardens and the latter disposed through 'polished' scenery and shrubberies. The ornamental lawns will be "furnished with choice trees and plants from England, China, the Mauritius, the East Indies, North and South America, and from Moreton Bay, Norfolk Island, the Cape of Good Hope, and other places." This is, of course, the Gardenesque style advocated by John Claudius Loudon editor of the two great encyclopaedias discussed in Chapter Three and principal advocate at this time of 'modern' landscape gardening. These plantings are not just introduced into the landscape, but are imposed upon it physically and intellectually.

The fourth piece of advice which Shepherd offers is the most detailed, so clear in its steps, in fact, that it is possible to imagine him striding around the grounds of a proposed villa assessing its capabilities. He advocates linking the villa to its situation by the use of axes and states specifically 'the extension of view would terminate with high land, or hills." He describes "a proceeding that will enable any gentleman to judge for himself, what openings it may be necessary to make in his natural woods to give effect to the landscape." Views can be set up and tested by using stakes in the ground, a compass in one's hand and sight lines to

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22 Shepherd had gone into detail about appropriate species and varietals of trees, shrubs, berries, vines and flowers and their cultivation in his earlier lectures.
23 Shepherd, Landscape Gardening, Seventh Lecture, p. 89.
24 Shepherd, Landscape Gardening, First Lecture, p. 10.
25 Shepherd, Landscape Gardening, Seventh Lecture, p. 92.
ensure their best exploitation. Firstly, the views through the proposed windows of the principal rooms must be determined. Along these lines of sight, indigenous vegetation must be removed to take advantage of the best views. ‘Let all, or the greater part, of the trees be cut down, without reservation, wherever they obstruct the view, so as to form an irregular expanse, in width agreeable to the extent of the landscape, at irregular distances from ten to a thousand yards.’

The axes so created must terminate on something, preferably a topographical feature, even if a tree must be saved or planted to enhance the view. Along with other ideas, he makes the suggestion ‘to complete Elizabeth Bay in a style of the first magnificence ... I would recommend an ornamental Summer house, to be placed at the most conspicuous point upon the promontory.’

His use of triangulation to compose a landscape is not surprising. Three of the seven professional disciplines which Shepherd had taught himself were firstly, arithmetic, geometry and trigonometry, secondly, land-surveying and mapping and finally, landscape painting. But there was much more to the man. His study also included ‘a slight knowledge of music and poetry, for the purpose of raising my imagination to effect sublime scenery’.

Shepherd’s final argument is not aesthetic, pragmatic or philosophic, but an economic one. If villa owners do the right thing, the value of their property would increase. ‘If the directions ... which I have given are followed up, a handsome profit may, at very small cost, be realised, by disposing of an improved portion of ground, fit for a mansion of large size, to other persons who either do not know

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26 Shepherd, Landscape Gardening, Seventh Lecture, p. 94.
27 Shepherd, Landscape Gardening, Seventh Lecture, p. 90.
28 Shepherd, Landscape Gardening, First Lecture, p. 15. The other disciplines were reading and writing English, a knowledge of architecture, a knowledge of horticulture.
29 Shepherd, Landscape Gardening, First Lecture, p. 15.
how to improve it, or prefer an estate already improved, to the trouble and expense of clearing it. 30

So, Shepherd's lectures are clear and direct evidence of the mid-eighteenth-century version of the Picturesque aesthetic being considered to site and set colonial villas within the Australian landscape. Implicit in his theory and practice is a sense of acquisition, control, improvement, management and benefit all leading to a proprietorial claim over the landscape, well beyond legal title, by the villa's owner. Thus, the same devices used at Cronkhill were used in New South Wales and were also used in Victoria. It may be too much to claim a metaphorical content in Shepherd's writings but, by linking his theory and practice to the painting and poetry of the seventeenth and eighteenth century, Shepherd also tries to imbue them with a sense of refinement and culture. 31 This too applied in Victoria.

Major T. L. Mitchell

The Surveyor-General of New South Wales, Sir Thomas Mitchell (1792-1855), was another well-educated, well-known and well-placed gentleman in Sydney's society. 32 His mission, in 1836 during the winter of what seems to have been a very wet year, was to explore the area which he later called Australia Felix and which became the Western District of Victoria. 33 He took time off from his routine duties

30 Shepherd, Landscape Gardening, Seventh Lecture, p. 94.
31 Gina Crandell, Nature Pictorialized, "The View" in Landscape History, The Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore and London, 1993, p. 129, cautions that 'Unlike the early landscape gardens, Brown's parks are not calculated to stimulate philosophical or historical reflections. He succeeded, however, in enshrining an ideal image of the Virgilian pastoral'.
33 His enthusiastic reports of the country he discovered led to the immediate occupation of Australia Felix by 'Overlanders' from around Sydney and 'Overstraiters' from Van Diemen's Land,
of observation, triangulation and note taking to indulge in some philosophical contemplation. Standing on top of Pyramid Hill, on 30th June 1836, he described the experience thus:

... the view was exceedingly beautiful over the surrounding plains, shining fresh and green in the light of a fine morning. The scene was different from anything I had ever before witnessed, either in New South Wales or elsewhere. A land so inviting and still without inhabitants! As I stood, the first European intruder on the sublime solitude of those verdant plains, as yet untouched by flocks or herds; I felt conscious of being the harbinger of mighty changes; and that our steps would soon be followed by the men and the animals for which it seemed to have been prepared.\textsuperscript{34}

And two weeks later, on 13th July, he repeated his philosophical assessment of Australia Felix when he wrote

We had at length discovered a country ready for the immediate reception of civilised man, and destined perhaps to become eventually a portion of a great empire. Unencumbered by too much wood, it yet possessed enough for all purposes; its soil was exuberant, and its climate temperate; it was bounded on three sides by the ocean; and it was traversed by mighty rivers, and watered by streams innumerable. Of this Eden I was the first European to explore its mountains and streams—to behold its scenery—to investigate its geological character—and, by my survey, to develop [sic] those natural advantages, certain to become, at no distant date, of vast of vast importance to a new people.\textsuperscript{35}

From his journals, his library and his houses, there can be no doubt about Mitchell’s credentials in the Picturesque aesthetic. In his journals, he uses the

\textsuperscript{34} Mitchell, Three Expeditions, Vol. II, p. 159. This is a famous quotation. It is quoted, incorrectly, for example in Victoria, The First Century: an historical survey, Historical Subcommittee of the Centenary Celebrations Council, Robertson & Mullens, Melbourne, 1934, p. 60.

\textsuperscript{35} Mitchell, Three Expeditions, Vol. II, p. 171. This is also quoted incorrectly in Victoria, The First Century, p. 60.
words 'sublime', 'beauty' and 'picturesque' regularly with an understanding of their late eighteenth-century meanings. More importantly and with some irony, he seems to understand the origin of the word picturesque and its potential for metaphorical content when he writes 'In the dawn, however, all lower objects were blended in one grey shade, like the dead colour of a picture. ... I hastily levelled my theodolite, but the scene, although sublime enough for the theme of a poet, was not at all suited to the more common-place objects of a surveyor.'

Broadbent's research has revealed that Mitchell owned and had access to many architectural pattern books and that he used them. His first home in Sydney was Craigend, a Greek revival villa built on, as he wrote, 'the most picturesque hill about Sydney.' From 1840, he built Carthona, a Gothic marine villa on the very shoreline of Sydney Harbour. Almost immediately he began Parkhall, another but simpler Gothic villa in the country at East Bargo above the gorge of the Nepean River. As well as providing a contrast to the homestead which were to be built in the Western District of Victoria, Mitchell's New South Wales villas and his published works demonstrate his informed appreciation of the Picturesque. As well they contain a sense of destiny. Standing on Pyramid Hill, he claimed the landscape for a new nation and an Empire. The next and natural

36 Stapylton's journal entries do not use such words and indeed, there is consistent private grumbling about the Major. They appear less literate with rough abbreviations, poor punctuation and misspellings. The copy in the Mitchell Library Sydney is, however just that—a copy. Its editor, Alan Andrews makes two comments in his introduction to the first published version. Firstly he states that although none of the journal is in Stapylton's handwriting 'yet it is clearly Stapylton's own—a record of his words, thoughts, and actions throughout the long expedition.' Secondly, he cautions that 'Over-emphasis of the Stapylton invective, though, could be as unfair to Stapylton as it would be to Mitchell.' Andrews, ed., Stapylton, pp. 5 & 6. By comparison, Mitchell's published journals were carefully crafted works with much revision, reflection and polish.


38 Broadbent has revealed the direct links between the architectural pattern books which Mitchell owned, or had access to, and his villas. See the many index references in Broadbent, Australian Colonial House, p. 397.

steps in claiming the landscape would seem to be the acquisition, control,

improvement, management and benefit by 'gentlemen' which are inherent in

Thomas Shepherd's theory and practice.

James Bonwick

James Bonwick (1817-1906) followed in the steps of his friend, Major Mitchell.40

Bonwick was a teacher, author, poet and historian who had a particular interest in

the science of geology.41 He recalled the Surveyor-General's expedition when he
toured the Western District in 1857 inspecting educational facilities as Victoria's
Inspector of Denominational Schools.42 In his narrative published the next year,
there are many colourful if not florid descriptions of the topography and

environment. He is also conscious of the human occupation of the country and its

potential. Bonwick demonstrates his awareness of landscape painting, aesthetics

and the pastoral ideal when he describes a squatting run, Wando Vale.43 He
describes it thus:

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40 Broadbent, Australian Colonial House, p. 296 quoting J. H. L. Cumpston, Thomas
Mitchell: Surveyor General & Explorer.

41 For biographical information see: G. Featherstone, 'Bonwick, James (1817-1906)', ADB,
Vol. 3, Pike, gen. ed., pp. 191-2; Beverley Maclellan, The Brothers Bonwick, B. Maclellan, South
Yarra, c.1996.; and Edward Edgar Prescott, James Bonwick: a writer of school books and histories,
H. A. Evans, Melbourne, 1939.

42 J. Bonwick, Western Victoria, Its Geography, Geology and Social Condition, the
Narrative of an Educational Tour in 1857, first published by Thomas Brown, Geelong, 1858,

43 Distinguishing between the many squatting runs along the Wando River is particularly
frustrating because not only do most include the name 'Wando' but their licenses changed
ownership frequently and several were owned by individuals called 'Robertson'. Mistakes are
frequently made. It seems likely that Bonwick is referring to the run, Wando Vale A, Portland Bay
License No. 239, which was owned by William and John Robertson from May 1854 to May 1867.
See R. V. Bills and A. S. Kenyon, Pastoral Pioneers of Port Phillip, Stockland Press, Melbourne,
1974, pp. 131 and 296. One extensive family of Robertson, apparently this one, had connections
well beyond the Wando River and its tributaries into the South-East of South Australia. This is
important because of the link at least between the Robertson property, Gringegalgon, discussed
shortly and the Robertson property Struan House, near Naracoorte which is perhaps the finest
Italianate villa in South Australia. They seem to have been designed by the same architect, William
Gore. See T. Hubbard, 'The Italianate Villa and Its Garden in Australia', Formulation Fabrication,
The rich black soil was covered with luxuriant grass and a few trees. Mr [John G.] Robertson's station is situated on the creek, in one of the delightful vallies of this Paradise of Victoria. It was truly a Claude scene of tranquil beauty. There was no stern ruggedness to astonish and alarm, but the soothing influence of softened shades of hills reclining on each other in sleeping sisterhood. Over these lovely slopes were the bolder and more erect rocks of basalt with their level tops, and which seemed to push themselves forward into the vale like frowning promontories.\textsuperscript{44}

This description is soon followed by an encounter with a nine-year old boy, a shepherd in 'the Vale of Cashmere'.\textsuperscript{45} Bonwick seems torn between his concern for the boy's lack of educational and spiritual opportunities and the young shepherd's potential for being a figure in a painting by Claude. The moment is leavened by the boy's innocent disrespect for his employer, Edward Henty, the first squatter in the District. As he continues along the Wannon River valley, Bonwick understands Mitchell's enthusiasm for the country and does not wonder at the Hentys' dash to settle it at Merino Downs. 'Such an enchanting hollow in the midst of plateau sterility inclines me to believe that some wandering and benevolent Spirit had once alighted and reposed there, and that ruggedness, barrenness, and deformity had fled at the presence of such purity, goodness, and beauty.'\textsuperscript{46}

Bonwick's response to the landscape is mixed. On the one hand, he eulogises its beauty generally and its picturesque features particularly. On the other hand, he cautions about the extremes of the climate and the dangers of living in such a landscape. He immediately makes a direct comparison between a narrow chasm through which the Wando flows and a place in the United States called Devil's Gate near Rock Independence. He conjures up images of their shared

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\textsuperscript{44} Bonwick, \textit{Western Victoria}, p. 150.
\textsuperscript{45} Bonwick, \textit{Western Victoria}, p. 151.
\textsuperscript{46} Bonwick, \textit{Western Victoria}, p. 154.
sublime qualities with words such as ‘lofty walls’, ‘dislocated masses’ and ‘a cleft in the slate rock’, which are contrasted with the ‘quartz and tourmaline in the bed of the crystal waters’. Bonwick sympathises with his friend’s frustration after heavy rain produced mud which hindered the Surveyor-General’s progress. But all this changes, as does Bonwick’s tone.

The Australian sun gathers strength, and then instead of assuming the graceful character of a cherisher of beauty, a restorer of fertility, a developer of life, he becomes a thorough exacting tyrant; not content with morning dews, he drains the earth of its springs and the plant of its juices, until beauty sickens, and her glory dies. In plain English, the grass withers, and the whole country has a parched appearance. ... This is the season of alarm about fires.

Bonwick’s tyrant might be the sun god, Apollo, in a fiery apotheosis. In any case, the light he describes is not the gentle sunrise or sunset of a painting by Claude. Bonwick’s response to this harsh environment is much more practical. The pastoral ideal is to be achieved by improving the pastures, by ring-barking the trees to reduce shade and to remove competition for the pasture’s nutrients. This will lead to increased stock capacity, presumably a benefit to all, and the presence of sheep will be marked on the landscape, even to the point that it enhances the picturesque view. For him Muntham is the most beautiful station in Victoria.

This primitive seat of the Messrs. Henty is charmingly situated. The whole country about it is a perfect Eden of Beauty. The slopes look like a series of petrified mountain waves. Around the hills are terraces of steps, being paths worn by the flocks in perambulation.  

So, for Bonwick, the squatters held the land as custodians, ‘usefully occupying the land until required for extended population’. The squatters had a different

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47 Bonwick, Western Victoria, p. 150.
48 Bonwick, Western Victoria, pp. 155-6.
49 Bonwick, Western Victoria, p. 157.
50 Bonwick, Western Victoria, p. 157.
opinion: they claimed the landscape as their own. When the Land Selection Acts of the 1860s threatened their tenure they retaliated as a class, both practically in the field and politically in the Upper House of Parliament.\footnote{The bicameral structure of Parliament was established under Victoria’s new democratic Constitution just as Bonwick embarked on his “educational tour.”}

The tension was inherent in the Picturesque aesthetic. One side, perhaps old-fashioned, tended towards Claude’s depiction of civilised Beauty. The other, more progressive side, tended towards Rosa’s depiction of the untamed Sublime. Paul Carter, in \textit{The Road to Botany Bay} has made an intriguing distinction between them based on movement and stasis.\footnote{Carter, \textit{Road to Botany Bay}, Ch. 8 ‘A More Pleasing Prospect’. Carter’s argument and evidence are sophisticated and credible but may suffer from over simplification and over interpretation. In an earlier chapter, for example, he shows Major Mitchell appreciated both versions. He presumes that the squatters were only ever transient and that the settlers were as well informed as the squatters about aesthetics. Nonetheless, his analysis is strongly recommended and deserves much more consideration than is possible here.} He proposes that the former appealed to the nineteenth-century traveller because the open plains, consistently described as like a gentleman’s park, made the going easy. Rugged mountains, impediments to travel and behind which anything may be lurking, appealed to the settler because they created borders, shelter and, by contrast, a sense of security in the homestead. It seems likely that both versions could be appreciated by an individual at different times depending on their situation, condition and purpose. Major Mitchell, on his next expedition, named a river after Claude and a mountain after Rosa. Bonwick, it has been shown, in a few lines shifted from ‘a Claude scene of tranquil beauty’ before him ‘in one of the delightful vallies of the Paradise of Victoria’ to a mighty cleft called the Devil’s Gate in the United States. The trigger was finding a similar rock which triggered memories and the association.
John Glover

The threat of the Land Selections Acts did not apply in Tasmania where vast estates were 'granted' to gentlemen with sufficient capital. John Glover was sixty-four when he migrated with his family to settle in Van Diemen's Land.\(^{53}\) He was a successful English painter who had a deep admiration for Claude's work, saw examples in Italy and had a direct link through his ownership of two Claude paintings. Bernard Smith notes how Claude influenced Glover's work both in England and in Van Diemen's Land. 'We know that throughout life Glover greatly admired the paintings of Claude. It is said that he would have liked to have been known as the English Claude.'\(^{54}\) Having migrated as an older man, Glover 'appears to have been deeply impressed by the primeval beauty of his surroundings at Patterdale [his home at Mills Plains to the south of Launceston] and there his work entered a final phase; a phase which depended less upon the picturesqueness and literary associations which mark so much of his English work, and relied more upon a clear perception of the characteristic features of the Australian scene.'\(^{55}\) According to Smith, Gaspard Poussin and Salvador Rosa, as well as Claude, continued to influence Glover in his interpretation of the wilder, more picturesque scenery of Tasmania's mountains but to a decreasing degree.\(^{56}\)

As to Glover's interpretation of the villa in the landscape, there are paintings of two of his several homes, one on a hill high above Hobart and the


\(^{55}\) Smith, *European Vision*, p. 199.

other on the flat ground of Mills Plains. The former, *Hobart Town, taken from the Garden where I lived*, painted in 1832 shows a plain, symmetrical, two-storey house with no verandah but a fenced terrace and steps leading into an informal and rather unkempt flower garden.\(^{57}\) The city lies beyond with Mount Wellington dominating the background. Glover himself wrote on the back of the picture, ‘taken from the garden where I lived. The Geraniums, Roses, etc. will give some idea how magnificent the garden may be had here. Government House is to the left of the church, the Barracks on the eminence to the right.’ The artist depicts a simple suburban domesticity, a long-settled city and, perhaps at a metaphorical level, the contented wisdom of an older man.

The latter, *A View of the Artist’s House and Garden, Mills Plains*, painted c. 1840, is more bucolic.\(^{58}\) Again, the house is simple and, with its outbuildings including Glover’s studio, it is a vernacular Georgian farmhouse. Actually, it was built in three stages and represents an accretion of history. The garden in the foreground is a profusion of meticulously painted and brightly coloured shrubs and flowers. The middle ground is cultivated and apparently planted regularly with fruit trees.\(^{59}\) The primeval landscape is represented by a distant hill covered with distinctively Australian trees. Again, there is a sense of success and contentment, the whole scene suffused by a clear light. Even if the day may have been hot to an antipodean degree, the transposed climate still evokes a Classical Mediterranean world. The same could be said for Glover’s 1835 painting, *My Harvest Home*,


\(^{58}\) It is illustrated in James Gleeson, *Australian Painters, Lansdowne, Dee Why West*, p. 45 under the title, *Glover’s House and garden*. The painting, under the title, *A View of the Artist’s House and Garden, Mills Plains*, is in the Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide.

\(^{59}\) Bonyhady, *Colonial Earth*, p. 95.
which actually depicts the harvesting of hay at the end of the day rather than a
dwelling.\textsuperscript{60} Smith notes “the subject is idealized by being painted against the
golden glow of a Claudean sunset”.\textsuperscript{61}

Again according to Smith, Glover became increasingly religious in his older
age.\textsuperscript{62} If the vegetation is so closely observed and correctly depicted, it may be
because of an appreciation for God’s Creation and the artist’s prosperity in a new
land rather than merely scientific curiosity. This is not the view of Helen Topliss
who contrasts Glover with his critic in England, the innovative artist Constable,
who was disgusted by his work and jealous of his success.

Glover represented and catered for the conservative taste of the eighteenth-
century amateur for an autumnal and classicizing landscape, which was a
composite of Old Master formulae and bore no resemblance to any local
landscape. This tendency was the very thing that Constable had decided to
avoid in his own work and the passage in the *Diary of an Invalid* that
roused Constable’s ire refers directly to the controversy over whether or not
landscapes should be painted as objectively seen or alternatively, according
to formulae learned from seventeenth-century painters.\textsuperscript{63}

However imprecise Glover’s observation might be, he was clearly happy in his
condition and he must be seen as a bridge between the seventeenth century in Italy
and the nineteenth in Australia via Britain in the eighteenth. This metaphorical
quality will be observed again in the house portraits of Victorian squatters by
Eugene von Guérard (1811-1901) whose roots in German Romanticism produced
an almost religious fidelity to God’s Creation.\textsuperscript{64} In concluding his remarks on the

\textsuperscript{60} The painting is illustrated in Johns, *New Worlds from Old*, p. 123. It is in the Tasmanian
Museum and Art Gallery, Hobart.

\textsuperscript{61} Smith, *European Vision*, p. 199. Smith attributes the painting to John Glover junior. I
am grateful to the senior curatorial staff of the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery for confirming,
in a telephone conversation on 20\textsuperscript{th} March 2002, that the painting is now strongly attributed to John
Glover senior.

\textsuperscript{62} Smith, *European Vision*, p. 199.

\textsuperscript{63} Topliss, “Our Own Glover?”, p. 260.

\textsuperscript{64} These are discussed later in the chapter.
artist, Smith writes 'Glover was himself a squatter and he has depicted in the earliest landscapes authentically Australian, a squatter's Arcadia.'

Alfred Arden

Deep in the Western District, at the very heart of its first settlement, there was the property named 'Claude Lorraine'. It dates not from the initial rush for land by the Hentys and the Winters at Merino Downs, Muntham, Sandford, Tabara and Murndal (Spring Valley) but was created afterwards with the subdivision under the Land Selection Acts of the Tahara run first taken up by George Winter in 1838. Alfred Arden purchased some 400 acres (160ha) in 1861 and one of his immediate neighbours was Samuel Pratt Winter of Murndal.

Arden had the credentials to be called an old colonist. He had managed the Sandford run before he had a brief interest in The Wilderness run from March 1852 until May 1853 and his purchase of the Hilgay lease in July 1854. Arden spoke two Aboriginal languages well enough to be understood and championed the Aboriginal cause. He had arrived at Melbourne with his brother, George (1820?-}

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55 Smith, European Vision, p. 201. But Glover was granted or bought his land. So, here Smith uses the word 'squatter' not in its earlier, pejorative sense but in its later sense, effectively meaning 'landed gentry', as it came to be used after the 1830s in new South Wales and Victoria.

60 Bills and Kenyon, Pastoral Pioneers, pp. 81, 162, & 285.

61 Tahara, County of Normandy, Parish Plan, Surveyor General's Office, Melbourne [but double check surveyor's name and date of publication]. Arden purchased allotments 1 and 2 of section 18 and allotments 1 and 2 of section 19 on 4 August 1861. Samuel Pratt Winter purchased allotment 4 of section 18 and allotments 3, 4 and 5 of section 19. There was a gazetted Water Reserve between them at the northern-most point of their common boundaries.


63 L. E. Huf, 'Happenings on Hilgay, 1848-1858', typescript notes taken from 'an old day book ... a form of ledger on the Hilgay station', Hamilton History Centre. Arden wrote regularly in his earlier days to the Hamilton Spectator about the condition of the Aborigines, perhaps to the annoyance of squatters on other properties. A woman called Barbara Arden, the daughter of Fanny, an 'Aboriginal' and Matthew Winter, possibly also Aboriginal, is recorded as dying at Lake Condah in 1886, aged 46 (VPL, Reg. No. 14230R). It was common for Aborigines to adopt the surnames of benign Europeans who owned or managed the squating runs which had been ancestral homelands.
1854) in 1839. They were of 'good stock', being the sons of Major Samuel Arden of the East India Company service and claiming a distinguished ancestry. George was the founding editor of the *Port Phillip Gazette*, an author and possibly Melbourne's first poet but he was also reckless, intemperate, proud and indiscreet. He died on the gold fields at the age of 34. His brother, Alfred appears to have had similar interests but been the opposite in character. His obituary states that

'Mr. Arden was of a literary turn of mind, as many years ago he was a constant correspondent of the [Hamilton] Spectator on all manner of subjects, and his letters, although full of eccentricities, were read with interest, containing as they often did, opinions and suggestions which gave thoughtful men something to ponder over.'

The property Claude Lorraine was described as 'near Tahara, a nice little estate of about 1,435 acres, containing some of the best of the grand country about there'. It is not known when the house was built but presumably it was soon after the purchase of the first blocks in 1861. The timber house burnt down in 1952 with all its records, except for a bible, being lost in the fire. Despite rigorous research, no image of the house has been discovered. All that remains is one chimney, the footings, the well, an outbuilding, some senescent trees and a scatter of very early bricks and pieces of iron stove. The house was sited along an east-west axis and

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70 Edmund Finn, *Garryowen*, *Early Melbourne Chronicles*, Vol. 2, p. 568 notes that they arrived as cabin passengers on the *William Metcalfe*, on the 15th November. George, at least, may have been in the colony the year before. Also on board were Jonathan Binns Were, who became one of the most successful businessmen and stockbrokers in Victoria and John and George Coldham, who took up the nearby Grassdale run in 1843 holding it until it was subdivided in 1870.


72 *Hamilton Spectator*, 14th January 1892, p. 2.

73 *Hamilton Spectator*, 14th January 1892, p. 2. According to the Parish Plan, Arden had purchased another 158 acres [63ha] as allotment 2A of section 18. It is not known where the rest of the land, some 877 acres [357ha] was held. He figure of 1,435 acres happens to be the same as that given in the very brief mention of Arden in Alexander Sutherland, *Victoria and Its Metropolis*, Vol. 2, McCaron Bird & Co., Melbourne, p. 52. Unfortunately, there is no biographical entry for Arden.

74 I am grateful to Mr Tom Arden, the present owner of the property for allowing access on 16th April 2002 and for providing some family background to the site.

75 These are softly fired, of small, English dimensions and certainly older than the later standardised German sized bricks which were introduced with the Hoffman process.
surrounded by a substantial garden. It appears that it faced east towards the township of Tahara—which never developed—and turned its back on the highly Picturesque view to the west. This view includes a small valley with two dams leading into the valley of the McLeod Creek and would have incorporated most of the original land purchases. The landscape is now largely devoid of trees except for windbreaks. It is disappointing that little can be deduced about Arden and his values from the physical evidence remaining. It is said that he was a particular admirer of the work of Claude Lorrain.\textsuperscript{76}

It is clear then, that the early settlers in colonial Australia, to some extent irrespective of the origin or reason for arriving, were imbued with the Picturesque aesthetic. Some were, in fact, very sophisticated interpreters of the landscape. And some settlers had not just a scientific, professional or amateur interest in the flora and fauna of their new home but a wonder for it which went beyond almost to the metaphysical.

\textsuperscript{76} This is family folklore and is said to be mentioned in his will, a copy of which has been sighted.
7 CLAIMING THE COLONIAL LANDSCAPE:

THE VILLAS OF AUSTRALIA FELIX

The Italianate villa proved to be an ideal, but not exclusive architectural model for dwellings in Victoria’s colonial landscape. Other revival styles were available but, by the time Victoria was a separate colony in 1851 and operating under its new democratic constitution of 1856, the Italianate villa with all its associations had clearly emerged and by the mid-1860s was increasingly dominant. Squatters’ homesteads demonstrate how that came to be and how it was recorded in the form of ‘house portraits’. They show how the model was used to claim the landscape, especially by Edward La Trobe Bateman (1815-1897).¹ Then any associations or metaphorical content the model may embody could flow automatically once it had been applied. If there was a tension between the Beautiful and the Sublime, there was also a frustration between the Picturesque aesthetic and practicality.

Aesthetic considerations were important and became paramount to siting the villa within the colonial landscape. The strongest aesthetic was the newly emerged Picturesque but this had been born of and was still influenced by an earlier appreciation of the almost opposite aesthetics, the Sublime and the Beautiful. Seventeenth-century landscape painting was an enduring influence, particularly the works of Claude Lorrain but also those of Salvador Rosa, the Poussin brothers and

their eighteenth-century descendants. Of these artists, the ideal pastoral landscapes of Claude were the most appropriate model for the colonists.

The heritage of eighteenth century aesthetic theory informed the pastoral settlement of colonial Victoria. The almost opposite aesthetics of the Sublime and the Beautiful, which emerged from seventeenth century landscape painting—especially Claude but also Rosa and the Poussins—and the subsequent Picturesque aesthetic affected those who explored and exploited the colonial landscape. In early New South Wales, the landscape designer, Thomas Shepherd set down the principles and devices for siting and setting villas in the colonial landscape. Other than shared values, no direct link has been discovered with Shepherd but the same principles and devices were used in the second half of the nineteenth century in the Western District of Victoria.\textsuperscript{2} Those few places which can be firmly attributed to Edward La Trobe Bateman employ them and other places support possible attributions. Eugène von Guérard depicted them in his house portraits. They are the same as those used at Cronkhill, the Italianate villa designed by John Nash two generations before. Nash had direct links with the theorists of the Picturesque aesthetic—Richard Payne Knight, Uvedale Price and Humphrey Repton—and was one of the first and most successful architects of the Picturesque. Cronkhill's siting and setting in the landscape of Shropshire have direct parallels not only with the homesteads of the Western District but with the landscape painting of Claude. It is reasonable to read those villas in the colonial landscape as being imbued with the same or similar metaphorical values.

\textsuperscript{2} None of his lectures have been referred to, for example in contemporary reports and discussions.
The Picturesque and The Practical

There was always a tension between the Picturesque and the ‘Practical’ in colonial Australia. Borrowing the title of a contemporary cartoon, Tim Bonyhady writes about the forays of artists armed with axes into the forests of colonial Australia.¹

He points out that some, such as Eugen von Guérard, worked together with tree-fellers and recorded the destruction of the native bush while others would despair.⁴ Nicholas Chevalier (1828-1902), whose father owned a sawmill, was probably the artist who drew a cartoon titled The Picturesque and The Practical.⁵

"Having made a pleasing sketch of a picturesque gum tree", the artist "returns two days afterwards to complete the picture, but finds the aspect of his subject has materially changed in the interval". The tree has become a stack of palings.⁶

Practical considerations must have been paramount in the minds of the first settlers in Victoria, known before Separation as the Port Phillip District of New South Wales. Squatters spread into the Western District in the great land rush after 1836 when Major Mitchell discovered and promoted his Australia Felix.⁷ The great story was first told by Margaret Kiddle in Men of Yesterday, a social history of the Western District.⁸ The squatters claimed thousands of acres of the lightly timbered

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⁵ The squatter, Thomas Browne wrote one easily accessible and highly readable account of the period as his memoirs, Old Melbourne Memories, first published by George Robertson and Co., Melbourne in 1884. Browne is much better known by his pseudonym, Rolf Boldrewood, a prolific author who wrote one of Australia's classic Romantic novels, Robbery Under Arms, first published by Remington and Co., London, in 1888.
⁶ This was a landmark text when published by Melbourne University Press, Parkville in 1961. However, Kiddle relied on fewer primary sources than are available today and relied heavily on the Niel Black papers which had just been deposited in the State Library of Victoria. She focused
grasslands which Mitchell eulogised as ideal for sheep and cattle. Primitive huts were soon erected. Proximity to a watercourse would provide a reliable source of water. An elevated site would provide good drainage and it would be sensible to avoid an obvious flood plain. An elevated site may have provided a strategic advantage against attack from Aborigines, although this threat had passed by the mid-1840s. Proximity to working buildings would also be a consideration. Sheep washes and dips, for example, were usually located close to water. But, even in the earliest days, other more theoretical notions concerning climate and the sitting and orientation of villas were brought to bear.

The fiery Annie Baxter was one person who seemed sensitive to the landscape. She and her first husband, Robert held the lease of Bongmire squatting on the squatters' occupation of the land rather than integrating them with the broader population both on the land and in the towns. She also wrote with the biases of her time. A close review of her sources shows an unfair prejudice against architects, and Niel Black's architect, Charles Webb in particular. Much has been written since to amplify and redirect her research, such as Don Garden, *Hamilton, a Western District History*, City of Hamilton in conjunction with Hargreen Publishing Co., North Melbourne, 1984. One of the more interesting responses is by Michael Stumfels, 'What Kiddle Forgot, a social history of the Mount Elephant District of Western Victoria 1860-1880', M.A. thesis, School of History, Faculty of Humanities, La Trobe University, 1996. It is excellent in its detailed research but disappointing in its broader analysis. The most recent theoretical analysis of the Western District is David S. Jones, 'Traces in the Country of the White Cockatoo', Degree of Doctor of City and Regional Planning, University of Pennsylvania, 1993. While it addresses certain cultural and aesthetic issues, this thesis provides 'an ethnogo-cultural analysis ... charted through vertical landscape themes, between the years 1800 and 1900' with a juxtaposition of Koorie [Victorian Aboriginal] and colonial cultures to discern 'influences and patterns in this landscape', p. v.

9 For the most recent and, to some extent, revisionist account of the interaction between Aboriginal and European culture in the Western District, see Jan Critchett, *A Distant Field of Murder*, Melbourne University Press, Parkville, 1990.

10 The British market came to prefer washed wool. It seems that the sites of woolsheds and other working buildings were rarely moved in later years.

11 Matthew Hardy has explored this in his doctoral thesis, 'Temples of the Four Winds: airs, waters, places and health in the Colonial Villa from Cato to Cobbett', University of Wales, Cardiff, 1999. The thesis covers the period up to 1830, somewhat earlier than the occupation of the Western District. It focuses on attitudes to climate and their manifestation in house plans. However, the introduction and chapters covering the villa in antiquity, the Renaissance, and in Enlightenment England indicate that the better educated of the squatters would have brought these notions with them as well as their sensibility to the Picturesque aesthetic.

12 Annie Baxter Dawbin was a remarkable woman: a close friend of the squatter Tom Browne (who wrote under the pseudonym of Rolf Boldrewood), a Romantic and remarkably frank in her memoirs. Lucy Frost has edited them as *A Face in the Glass: the journal and life of Annie Baxter Dawbin*, William Heinemann Australia, Port Melbourne, 1992; and *The Journal of Annie
run briefly in 1848. She describes the inappropriate situation of the homestead’s
cottage and the squalid condition of the servants in her journal. If the first occupant
had had but one small atom of taste in his composition, he would have built
his cottage and other improvements about a quarter of a mile off, where the
river is wide and could have been close to the door: but no! instead of this,
he has perched us on top of a hill, overlooking a swamp, and altho’ that is
pleasantly green even thro’ the intense heat of some of our January days,
still not a drop of water is to be seen.13

She continues, betraying something of her own prejudices,

The cottage is very nice as far as the number of rooms is concerned, but
shockingly dirty inside and out. The Servants, a man and his wife, to whom
we give £60 a year; and a little girl of 12, to whom I give £12 – are all Irish:
and one will see pigs, a kid, fowls and dogs, all issuing from the interior of
their—Cabin, I was going to say — but, Hut; and not this only, but the pigs
have a fancy when outside the door, of not moving far away, so they have
made a sort of hole in front of the Hut where they lie, and where Mrs.
Haslet, the Servant, throws any kitchen stuff for the dear animals to eat.14

After further colourful descriptions, Annie Baxter’s final thought was ‘how very
glad I was that nobody I cared for was likely to be here until I had at least tried to
make some alteration in the establishment’.15 She was expressing the frustration
between pragmatism and Romanticism that many early settlers who considered
themselves civilized and sensitive would have felt.

In 1870, a young girl called Rose Trangmar travelled from Coleraine to see
how the family’s new home, Toolang was progressing. In her memoirs, she
describes the homestead as having ‘stood on a high hill land running down to a
pretty creek’, which is Tulloch Creek.16 The house was situated to ‘look away to
Mount Napier from the front verandah and Melville Forest was in the other

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Baxter Dawhin: July 1858–May 1868, University of Queensland Press, St Lucia Qld., in association
with the State Library of New South Wales, 1997.
13 Frost, Face in the Glass, p. 212.
14 Frost, Face in the Glass, p. 212.
15 Frost, Face in the Glass, p. 212.
direction to our left’. The homestead had an extensive flower and fruit garden, which was described by Dr. Thornton, the Bishop of Ballarat as ‘an oasis in the wilderness’.\textsuperscript{17} The setting and siting of the house are typical of the Picturesque aesthetic current at the time. They can be compared with many homesteads along the escarpment of the Wannon River valley.\textsuperscript{18} Rose Trangmar’s comments are interesting. Even if she doesn’t recall that it is, in fact, a great declivity immediately ahead of her, she notices the diagonal views. A generation and much history separate the two women.

The Miasma theory concerning the spread of disease by noxious vapours, still current at the time, would have encouraged building on an elevated site. The nuisance of mosquitoes, and their emerging role in the spread of disease, may have influenced some settlers with ‘colonial’ experience.\textsuperscript{19} Matthew Hardy writes

Anxiety about air underlies the three ubiquitous characteristics of colonial villas—elevation, permeability to breezes, and verandahs—but that these are all classical elements derived from European practice. The minimal nature of Australian villas is found to be derived from contemporary perceptions of the climate as extraordinarily healthy: from its relative mildness, not its heat, and propagated by apprenticeship, as much as by pattern books.\textsuperscript{20}

At least one early homestead, Violet Creek south-west of Hamilton appears to be sited pragmatically but, at the same time deliberately, oriented towards the

\textsuperscript{16}See ‘Southern Grampians Heritage Study Stage Two’, Timothy Hubbard Pty. Ltd. for the Shire of Southern Grampians, Port Fairy, 2003, datasheet No. 0246

\textsuperscript{17}‘Southern Grampians Heritage Study’, datasheet No. 0246

\textsuperscript{18}These include, for example: Bochara and Ngretta which overlook waterfalls, the former on the Grange Burn and the latter on the Wannon, and Brung Brungle ‘where the river is wide’, as Annie Baxter noted, which overlooks the flood plain of the Wannon. See ‘Southern Grampians Heritage’, datasheets Nos. 0125 & 0128.

\textsuperscript{19} One homestead, Park Hill located on the floodplain of the Wannon adjacent to the great station Murndal and 20kms west of Hamilton, was finally abandoned about 1900 because of the mosquitoes according the current owner of the new Park Hill, Mr William Bailey. It overlooks the original from the plateau across the Grange Burn.

\textsuperscript{20} Hardy ‘Temples of the Four Winds’, p. viii.
nearby volcano, Mount Napier. The marine villa, Maretimo at Portland is an utterly Romantic example of Picturesque orientation. The house sits perched on the cliff top overlooking Portland Bay. It faces east-south-east so that, it is said, the rising moon creates a path of light leading away from the garden across the water. The planting of the garden reinforces this axis. The path would lead to Van Diemen’s Land, whence the original owner, the squatter John Norman McLeod M.L.A. had come. In any case, pragmatism and profit, at least, were the short-term goals of the squatters.

The early settlers’ pragmatism was soon balanced by other, more cultural concerns. Writing of her squatting forebears at Woori Wryte, on Mount Emu Creek near Camperdown, Mary Turner Shaw comments that

> With a modicum of capital and education as a firm base, it [the squatter’s social position] was inspired by that vision of ‘the Nobleman’s extensive domain’ in which to be a landholder was a goal at once practical and romantic. The men who built up their lives on it, a few with a ruthless self-interest but most with a sense of wider obligation, were the founders of what came to be known to their detractors as ‘the Squattocracy’.

As Harriet Edquist points out in her study of Angus McMillan’s Bushy Park homestead painted by Eugene von Guerard, the squatters sought to legitimise their

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21 Located about 22 kilometres west-south-west of Hamilton on the west bank of Violet Creek, the main homestead building was built some time after 1843 and before 1851. Violet Creek held Portland Bay Licence No. 84. Another example, Cheviot Hills just west of Penshurst is not so certain in date but may be of the same period as Violet Creek. (It should not be confused with the squatting run of the same name near Yea in central Victoria.) It seems to be oriented not just towards the nearby volcano, Mount Rouse, but with a diagonal view across a natural lake surrounded by rocks towards the dramatic peaks of the Grampians. Another, Brisbane Hill located 16km south of Hamilton and a subdivision of the Lyne ran, dates from soon after 1850 and is unequivocally oriented due west towards Mount Napier. See ‘Southern Grampians Heritage Study Datasheet Nos. 0111 & 0112.

22 This is the Saunders’ family folklore who managed Maretimo as a guest house from 1920 to 1962. I am grateful to Mr Noel Saunders who lived there with his aunts from 1957 to 1959 for this information. Maretimo which was erected c.1854 for John Norman McLeod has been tentatively attributed to Adelaide architect James Barrow who did design Burswood nearby.

23 The same cannot be said to apply to Burswood at Portland, the home of the squatter Edward Henty, who claimed to be the founder of Victoria. Built in 1853, it faces north across Portland Bay, is less dramatically sited and, notionally, turns its back on Tasmania.
claim on the landscape by more than just practical means.\textsuperscript{25} They imbued their homesteads with a sense of culture, including an appreciation for the Picturesque aesthetic, best shown in their 'house portraits'.

**House Portraits**

One way for squatters and others to record their success, if not their right to occupation, was to commission house portraits of their holdings.\textsuperscript{26} Apart from early pencil sketches, the more sophisticated portraits occur in two main phases. Firstly, around 1851, the earliest humble dwellings within their leased landscapes were depicted. Then, especially after the *Land Selection Acts* of the 1860s triggered the purchase of freehold title and the construction of grander homesteads, these were painted in their freehold landscapes. But, importantly, the depiction of a homestead might include much more landscape than was owned under freehold.

There are many examples of these painted by a number of artists, ranging from the naïve to the most accomplished. Thomas Clarke (1814?-1883)\textsuperscript{27} painted *Muntham Station* (1865) near Coleraine for the Henty family, which, with Merino Downs at Merino, was one of the first squatting runs in Victoria.\textsuperscript{28} William Tibbits (1837-1906), whose skills clearly develop during his career,

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\textsuperscript{24} Mary Turner Shaw, *On Mount Emu Creek, the Story of a Nineteenth-Century Victorian Sheep Station*, Robertson and Mullens, Pty. Ltd., Melbourne, p. 28.

\textsuperscript{25} Harriet Edquist, 'Culture and the Landscape of Colonisation', *The Culture of Landscape Architecture*, Edge Publications in association with the Dept. of Planning, Policy and Landscape, RMIT, Melbourne, 1994, p. 46.

\textsuperscript{26} The genre had flourished in N.S.W. and V.D.L. with artists such as Conrad Martens and William Lyttleton. The former's depiction of the villas of Darlinghurst from the terrace of Rose Bank, *View from Rose Bank* (1840) N.G.A., Canberra, could almost be anywhere in the Mediterranean. The latter's painting, *Panshanger* (1835) State Library of Tasmania, the Archer villa near Longford, Tasmania while indebted to the eighteenth-century also uses an axis down the hillside, across the river focused on the old mill and cottage.


\textsuperscript{28} The painting is in the Hamilton Art Gallery. Clarke also painted Konongwoolong Creek Homestead, 7kms north of Coleraine.
became something of a professional in the genre, painting both rural and urban properties. 29 Robert Dowling (1820-1914) 30 painted Thomas Ware’s station near Woolsthorpe as Minjah in the Olden Times, (1856) with a band of Aborigines grouped in the foreground and the first station in the background. 31 In 1870, Nicholas Chevalier painted Bontharambo, near Wangaratta as The Old and New Home Stations. 32 The rambling old house is exceedingly picturesque and deliberately contrasted with the new house, built in 1858, which was one of the earliest examples of an Italianate villa in Victoria. 33 Chevalier was a close friend of Edward La Trobe Bateman (1815-1897). 34 Bateman, was a prolific artist who sketched and painted many early homesteads. 35 Perhaps his most delightful portrait is Cape Schanck Homestead, (c.1855) which depicts a slab cottage with a classic ‘cottage’ circular garden in

29 For biographical information and a broad collection of illustrations of Tibbits’ work in several colonies, see George Tibbits, William Tibbits, 1837-1906: cottage, house and garden artist, Dept. of Architecture and Building, University of Melbourne, Parkville, 1984. Most of Tibbits house portraits in Victoria were of Italianate villas, including Toorak House in 1876, just when it ceased to be the official vice-regal residence and the new Government House, Melbourne in 1882 and 1886. Several of his house portraits are discussed in Chapter 8.
32 Illustrated in Andrew Sayers, Drawing in Australia, Australian National Gallery, Oxford University Press, Melbourne, 1989, p. 80; and as a lithograph (published in London in 1873-6) in Converting the Wilderness, the Art of Gardening in Australia, Australian Gallery Directors Council and Howard Tanner, Sydney, 1979, p. 74, fig. 96.
33 The homestead is discussed in Chapter 5.
34 Letter from Edward La Trobe Bateman to Georgiana McCrae, SLV MS 12248, 2 Vols.; letters in Vol. 1, Letter No. 3 dated January 12th 1870. He remarks that he had stayed recently with the Chevaliers in London. In the same letter he also notes ‘I called upon various old friends when I was in London. Millais whom I had not seen for seven and twenty years’. In the ensuing correspondence there are many references to the comings and goings of the Chevaliers and Bateman.
35 Bateman is discussed in detail for his work at Woori Woori and Kolor, and his possible work at Gringegalonga, The Gums, and Meningo in this chapter and in Chapter 8 for his work at Rippon Lea. The most extensive public collection of his drawings is in the State Library of Victoria. A typical drawing, thoroughly picturesque but also meticulous in its detail of the plantings, is his View of the Station Plenty, Port Phillip District; the Gardening Shed, illustrated in Sayers, Drawing in Australia, p. 79.
front. Bateman’s departure for England in 1869 to fight a court case—and never to return—meant that he did not participate in the second phase of house portraits.

The most important artist active in the Western District, however, was Eugen von Guérard (1812-1901). He painted in both phases of homestead building, from the first huts of the earliest settlers, such as the Manifolds at Purrumbete to the double towered Italianate villa, Woodlands, at Crowlands north of Ararat, built in late 1860s for the squatter John Wilson. One result of these house portraits is to document the sense of history and success of the Squattocracy. This can be read at a superficial level, as having the wealth, and taste to record the facts of history as the squatters saw them. At a deeper level, the portraits show the old contrasted with the new, not just to show success but to show progress—old homesteads are compared with new homesteads.

Eugen von Guérard painted Purrumbete, near Camperdown several times and from different positions. Although now much altered and extended, Purrumbete’s setting in the landscape can still be analysed using the paintings. One view, Purrumbete, across Lake Purrumbete (1858) looks towards the homestead. In the far distance is Mount Leura, the highest volcanic cone at the township of

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36 This small drawing, in continuous private ownership through the Anderson family, has just been donated to the National Gallery of Victoria at this author’s suggestion. It is illustrated in An Australian Gardener’s Anthology, McPhee Gribble Publishers, Melbourne, 1982, p. 24.
39 Woodlands homestead on the Wimmera River, Victoria (1869), Australian National Gallery.
40 Purrumbete is one of the oldest sites in the Western District. The Manifold brothers, Peter and John, took it up in 1837; Bills and Kenyon, Pastoral Pioneers of Port Phillip, pp. 110 & 267. The 1870s house at Purrumbete, the usual Western District bluestone version of an Italianate villa, has been subsumed into an early twentieth century design with its own significance.
41 It happens to be the illustration chosen for the dust cover of Margaret Kiddle’s Men of Yesterday and is used again opposite the title page. It is noted to be in the possession of w. G. Manifold and Mrs John Manifold.
Camperdown. In the middle ground, on the shore of the lake, there are several buildings. Rough working buildings, including the stables and horses, are clearly visible and are reflected in the still water. But trees, heavy with leaves and probably Weeping Willows, *Salix babylonica*, hide the homestead. Domesticity is represented by poultry in the yard, smoke rising from the kitchen chimney, flowers in the garden and a female figure with a parasol descending the stairs to the lake’s edge. In the foreground, there is a grassy outcrop of rock with grazing cattle. The spectator of this scene may not realise that it was on this rocky outcrop that the Manifolds built their first hut. But the message of the painting is not hard to discover. The primeval volcano, the rough stables and the rocky outcrop are in line, linked along a metaphorical axis within a vast landscape. It is an expansive and apparently benign pastoral scene, filled with light.\(^{42}\)

Another painting, *From the Verandah of Purrumbete* (1858) is different and not a house portrait in the usual sense. It is closed and intimate and represents domesticity of the homestead even more so.\(^{43}\) It looks out, past the flowers in the garden and over the lake towards the same rocky outcrop where a building can just be glimpsed through the branches of a young Weeping Willow tree, *Salix babylonica*. There is an implied contrast between the settled, civilized comfort of the new homestead and the rugged site of the first occupation. These two paintings

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\(^{42}\) Several other paintings by von Guérard show a vast open landscape. The most dramatic is his *Bushy Park*, 1861, discussed in detail by Edquist, ‘Culture and the Landscape of Colonisation’, pp. 46, which depicts the run of Angus McMillan, the explorer who discovered Gippsland, in the east of Victoria. It is illustrated in Elizabeth Johns, et al., *New Worlds from Old. 19th Century Australian and American Landscapes*, exhibition catalogue, National Gallery of Australia, Canberra and Wadsworth Atheneum, Hartford, pp. 134-5. However, given his background in German Romanticism, the landscapes may not be as benign as they appear. Rather, the fine details, which are painted with something like scientific precision, reflect an almost spiritual appreciation for Creation.

\(^{43}\) The painting is illustrated with notes in Bruce, *Eugen von Guérard*, pp. 78 and 110. It is in the Australian National Gallery, Canberra.
show the winsome sense of history which was emerging in the Western District at the time. Their art is different from the series of six historical murals by Walter Withers, in the later Art Nouveau style, painted for the ‘manorial’ hall which was part of the substantial renovations undertaken in 1901.\footnote{The series shows how the Manifolds reached, claimed and developed the run. The alterations were designed by the Melbourne architect, Guyon Purchas and included not only the paintings by Withers but excellent carvings with strong Australian motifs in Blackwood by Robert Prenzel.} The former paintings are metaphorical in their layers of meaning, while the latter are merely didactic.

Harriet Edquist has discussed how these house portraits, including von Guérard’s, were imbued with the cultural values of the eighteenth century. She writes ‘The colonisation of Australia occurred when the cultural forms of the pastoral landscape—garden design, landscape painting, pastoral/Georgic poetry—were at their zenith in England and their transportation to the colonies was inevitable, along with the ethical values inherent in them.’\footnote{Edquist, ‘Culture and the Landscape of Colonisation’, p. 46.} There are parallels, she argues convincingly, between the dispossession of people under the Enclosure Acts in Britain in the eighteenth century (and in earlier times) and the dispossession of the Aborigines in Victoria. She focuses on Gippsland rather than the Western District, and specifically on von Guérard’s painting Panoramic View of Mr. Angus McMillan’s Station, Bushy Park, Victoria, (1861) but small groups of Aborigines also appear in many of his Western District paintings.\footnote{Strictly speaking, this is not a house portrait since the homestead is so insignificant within the landscape. It might be described as an ‘estate portrait’. The painting is illustrated with Edquist’s published paper but also in colour in Johns, New Worlds from Old, pp. 134-5. The painting which is comprised of two long canvases, is in the National Gallery of Australia, Canberra.} Her argument can be applied across the whole of colonial Victoria. In Robert Dowling’s portrait of Minjah, already mentioned, the old ‘savage’ inhabitants are compared quite boldly with the civilized pastoral production of the new.
Most importantly, she highlights the contrast between the supposed pastoral calm of these paintings and the suppressed violence which the landscape ‘remembers’ in Picturesque devices such as old trees and native people. The homestead, and its owner, is minuscule in the landscape. Edquist does not address how early homesteads were placed within the landscape, but rather how they were painted, and what metaphorical significance that depiction holds. She concludes ‘this vision of peace and plenty is, in truth, a landscape of victory—the victory of modernity and capitalism won from the suppression and degradation of both nature and the land’s prior owners now rendered picturesque incidents within the new ‘natural’ order of the painting.’

Wando Dale, Coleraine

This sense of control and improvement, with the resultant financial, social and political rewards, are exactly the characteristics of the early homestead, Wando Dale, twenty kilometres north of Coleraine. William Tibbits painted it in watercolour in 1876 when the Robertson family owned the run. William Moodie (1840-1914), the elder son of the original owners saw Wando Dale for the first time, going home from boarding school for Christmas. He recalled in his memoirs, some seventy year later, that he ‘liked the look of Wando Dale which was given a sort of solemn grandeur by the density of the timber and long rough grass and I thought the mobs of kangaroos made the place even more picturesque.’ The house, apparently not much more than a simple symmetrical

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47 Edquist, *Culture of Landscape Architecture*, p. 51.
48 *Wando Dale Homestead* is in the Hamilton Art Gallery.
49 Joan Palmer, ed., *William Moodie, A Pioneer of Western Victoria*, Mortlake, 1973, p. 36. Moodie provides no dates or other clues, unfortunately, but this must have been in the mid-1850s. A generation later, when Tibbits painted the homestead, the dense bush had long since gone.
timber cottage, was sited on a slight rise within the folds of the hills and dales of
the Wando River valley.50 A dead tree, grazing cattle and men at work are a
distant echo of the pastoral imagery of Claude. The front garden in the portrait is
bordered on one side by a tributary of the Wando River but otherwise it is circular
in plan, one of the very rare examples of such a shape.51 Again, in his memoirs,
William Moodie could claim with quiet pride, 'The Wando Dale garden grew to
be famous under my wife's care and all our twelve children were born there.'52
In the front garden, there are geometric paths and plantings in the Gardenesque
style promoted by J. C. Loudon. In the back garden, there is an orchard and
vegetable beds laid out neatly. The 'old house was added to from time to time' at
the rear and outbuildings are ranged behind it.53

The Moodie family's squatting lease was cancelled in 1875 and they sold
the property to the Robertsons. The boy who had appreciated the picturesque
homestead and its setting was elected a councillor of the Shire of Wannon in
1873 and, between 1903 and 1909, he served three terms as president of the
Shire.54 This is all the more significant because of the financial collapse he had
just suffered. In 1894, William Moodie built a new, two-storey symmetrical
house with an encircling verandah in the conservative Italianate style, typical of

50 In his memoirs, William Moodie wrote 'The house on Wando Dale was a three-roomed
slab hut with an earth floor and shingle roof, while another hut of two rooms which had been Dr
Power's hospital was situated three hundred yards away. This was later moved and converted into a
men's [i.e. shepherds' or shearers'] hut. My father closed in the two ends and port side of the
verandah of the house which made two more rooms which had to do us for a while. We managed
with earth floors for some years.' Palmer, William Moodie, p. 35.
51 Extensive discussions with experts in the field of garden history and cultural landscapes
have brought forward no more than half a dozen examples of circular gardens, of different dates and
at different scales, but all curiously within about 75kms radius of Hamilton.
52 Palmer, William Moodie, p. 93.
53 Palmer, William Moodie, p. 93.
54 Palmer, William Moodie, pp. 5 & 80.
that time. The old cottage was retained until the later twentieth century. It is still possible to determine that it faced up the valley of the Wando River. The dead tree in Tibbits’ painting, or its equivalent, survives in an adjacent paddock.

**Gringegalonga, Balmoral**

James Bonwick enthused about the Wando River valley, its opportunities for settlement and Mr. Robertson’s squatting run, Wando Vale in particular. Another member of the same family, Mr. Duncan Robertson, a squatter and successful pastoralist was just such a settler as Bonwick and Mitchell anticipated. He took over the squatting licence of Gringegalonga in August 1862. From the mid-1860s, under pressure from the Land Selection Acts, the squatters were forced to purchase the land they had previously held under licence. Permanent occupancy was one of the factors which led people like Robertson to build a new house. Gringegalonga, near Balmoral in Victoria, was designed by the South Australian architect, W. T. Gore, probably in the late 1860s, but not built until 1873. It is an Italianate villa set within the broader landscape and has a remarkable garden plan.

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55 The architect was C. D. Figgis, of Melbourne and Ballarat.
56 Wando Vale A was at first taken up by John G. Robertson in 1840. See Billis and Kenyon, *Pastoral Pioneers*, p. 296. He had come from Van Diemen’s Land and, like William Archer, was a keen botanist who corresponded with Dr. William Hooker, Director of the Royal Botanic Gardens at Kew. He sent thousands of plant specimens back to England for scientific purposes. See Gordon Firth, ed., *The Biographical Dictionary of the Western District of Victoria*, Hyland House, Melbourne, 1998, p. 133. John G. Robertson went into partnership with his brother William in 1854 and then returned to Scotland where he died in 1863. So, when Bonwick passed by in 1857, William Robertson occupied Wando Vale A.
59 I am indebted to Andrew Klenke, architect of Stepney, South Australia for much of my information about W. T. Gore, Gringegalonga and Struan House, Naracoorte, SA.
The overall park is bounded by a circular fence and, partly, by mature conifer plantings which act as a backdrop to the house. A curving drive rises from a creek crossing (now disused) and terminates in front of the house as a turning circle with three circular beds. The symmetrical, two-storey house is on axis with Mount Melville, the source of the stone used in its construction. An avenue of conifers and other major plantings reinforce this axis. The area to the front and side of the house included fruit trees. Behind the house, outbuildings are arranged along the same axis and more conifers provide a dark, evergreen backdrop. That house and garden were to be seen as one within the landscape is demonstrated by the oeil-de-boeuf detail in the gable over the front door. An oversize keystone represents the house inside the circle. The axis of this motif is aligned with that of the house and garden—a metaphor for the villa in its landscape.

It is not known who designed the garden. Only three other examples of such circular plans have come to light: Wando Dale, already mentioned; Darriwill, on the Moorabool River near Geelong; and Riverside, at Wannon overlooking the Grange Burn. The first is clearly an amateur garden. The

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60 The garden was surveyed by Stephanie Potts, Rochelle Ruddock and Pam Jellie in 1989 as students at RMIT. A new conservation management plan of the garden to be prepared by Pam Jellie commissioned by the Heritage Council of Victoria was completed in 2003.

61 The earliest definite example of such an axial orientation found during the present research is at the little-known homestead, Violet Creek at Yulecart near Hamilton, which probably dates from the early 1840s and certainly from before 1851. A simple symmetrical vernacular house, it looks across Violet Creek, a tributary of the Grange Burn and subsequently the Wannon River, north-east towards the highest peaks of the Grampians. There may also be a deliberate diagonal view south towards Mount Napier. The house is sited on a slope and the garden is a simple square.

62 The surviving trees have been identified as Monterey Pine, Pinus radiata, two Deodar Cedars, Cedrus deodara and a Hackberry, Celtis occidentalis.

63 Tibbits painted Darriwill Homestead, c.1875 as well. This watercolour is in a private collection. A detail is illustrated in Gallery Members Magazine of the National Gallery Society of Victoria, Feb.-March, 1999, p. 26. The watercolour shows a substantial one-storey house, which survives, on a slight rise and surrounded by a vast circular vineyard. The vineyard is divided in half by a "road" which leads on axis directly to the house. The house is a simple symmetrical version of the Italianate style typical of the time. The existing cast iron verandah may have replaced an earlier
second is a working vineyard with an extensive designed landscape beyond the
circle including clumps of mixed Pine trees, *Pinus radiata* and *Pinus pinea* on
the river flats. The third is much smaller than the others and represents late
nineteenth and early twentieth century gardening styles. The quality and
content of Gringegalgonas’s pleasure garden plan suggest the hand of a
professional designer, possibly Edward La Trobe Bateman, who had been active
in the Western District in the previous few years. Most of the plantings at
Gringegalgonas are typical of Bateman’s work. So too is the use of a terrace for
siting a house. However, since no connection has been discovered between
Bateman and the owner, Robertson or with the architect, Gore at this stage, his
involvement at Gringegalgonas remains speculative.

Bateman is important because he combines the professions of artist,
architect and landscape designer. His connections were at the highest level; his
skills excellent. There is no doubt about his involvement in two villa designs in the
Western District: Wooriwyrite and Kolor, the former being well-documented in two
plans by Bateman and the latter being one of the best examples of the Picturesque
in the Western District.

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timber verandah. According to the National Trust research notes, the architect may have been J. L.
Shaw of Geelong who designed the cellar and winemaking house in 1863. These, although in
bluestone, take the form of a vernacular Italian farm building. There were also extensive orchards.
Dr. R. C. Hope, a noted early viticulturist who was also an archly conservative M.L.C. from 1856-64
and 1867-74, owned it from 1845. See Billis & Kenyon, *Pastoral Pioneers*, pp. 84 & 198; and
Riverside has just been ‘discovered’ as part of the ‘Southern Grampians Heritage Study’,
Datasheet No. 0913. The house dates from 1885, when the perfect circle and ‘architecture’ of the
garden must have been laid out, but much of the small scale planting in the garden dates from the
Interwar period when it was owned by the Falkenberg family. I am grateful to Mr. Michael
Falkenberg for allowing me access in November 2001.
52 See Daniel Thomas, ‘Bateman, Edward La Trobe (1815?-1897)’, in Pike, gen. ed., *ADB*,
case, an appeal to the Privy Council against Bateman by the squatter Moffat, whose gardens he had
designed at Clatsworth. The Hamilton architect, Charles Fox, designed the grand symmetrical
Italianate villa in 1858.
Wooriwyrite, Kolora

Clear insights into Bateman's design approach are given in plans for his proposal for the new house and garden at Wooriwyrite, at Kolora west of Camperdown. His design for this asymmetrical Italianate villa is a milestone in the development of the Picturesque aesthetic in Victoria. The house was not built exactly as planned, another design being substituted, but the garden was implemented.

Wooriwyrite is significant because it draws together several themes: the practical application of Picturesque aesthetic theory, the well-informed use of pattern books, the imposition of axial planning over the landscape, a library and a collection of paintings, the introduction of horticulture and the conflagrant introduction of the Italianate villa model into the colonial landscape.

Bateman produced the plans for "my Australian friends the Shaws from near Camperdown." Mr. Thomas Shaw (1827-1907), was a squatter, a leading sheep-breeders using scientific principles, and a local politician, who was the first president of the Shire of Mortlake, several times president of the Shire of Hampden but unsuccessful in standing for parliament. At different scales, both plans include the large and distinctive kidney-shaped bed marked 'kitchen

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68 There is an uncommon Arbutus x androgynoides in the front garden and an uncommon Pinus coulteri near the back entrance. The two orange trees may be uncommon cultivars.

67 The original plans are at Wooriwyrite and the State Library of Victoria holds copies. One is illustrated in Peter Watts, Margaret Barrett, ed., Historic Gardens of Victoria, Oxford University Press, Melbourne, 1983, p. 41. Shaw's, On Mount Emu Creek, is the history of the squatting run, Wooriwyrite and the Shaw family. 'Molly' Turner Shaw was one of the first women architects in Victoria, a Modernist who worked closely with Frederick Romberg and who was an active early member of the Classifications Committee of the National Trust of Australia (Vic.). I am most grateful to Mrs. Sandra Morrison of Wooriwyrite for giving me access to the plans and for a stimulating and very useful tour of the grounds in November 2001.


garden' which is still hedged with old Hawthorns, *Crataegus* species. Large geometric shapes were Bateman's hallmark. The kidney shape can be compared exactly with one in J. C. Loudon's *The Suburban Gardener and Villa Companion*, of which Bateman must have been aware. There are also similarities to the plans in Edward Kemp's *How to Lay out a Small Garden*, the third edition of which was published in 1864. Bateman had used a large circular bed, surrounded by a dense hedge, in his famous design for the System (or Botanic) Garden at the School of Botany, University of Melbourne. He also used a large circular bed at Barragunda at Cape Schanck, where the intersections of the diagonal paths and the circumference path were each marked by four Italian Cypresses, *Cupressus sempervirens* 'stricta'. At Wooriwyrie pomegranates, a few of which survive, defined the intersections of the paths.

The plans show much more than just this strangely shaped fruit, flower or vegetable bed. They show the structure of the garden: the approach, the levels, the watercourse, the axes reaching out into the landscape and even suggest the

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70 They are not dated but must have been prepared before 13 September 1867 when his right hand was severely injured in a buggy accident at Chatsworth House, another commission. Anne Neale, 'Illuminating Nature', notes that, through Eugen von Guérard, Bateman became acquainted with the Shaws as early as 1857, pp. 155-6.


72 There is a copy of this edition in the SLV held at S 710 K32, which was acquired from a Melbourne dealer in 1868, just when Bateman was resolving his legal case against the squatter Moffatt and preparing to travel to England for Moffatt's Privy Council appeal. It may be that the copy once belonged to Bateman. I am grateful to Ms. Pam Pride and Mr. Des Crawley of the SLV for their advice on the copy held by the Library. Alternatively, it may have belonged to George Verdon whose library was sold in 1868, as mentioned in Chapter 4.

73 Neale, 'Illuminating Nature', p. 132 and fig. 3.01.

74 Now all gone, most of these appear surviving in a photograph taken in the 1950s, in the possession of Ms Kate Misanable, the daughter of the owners at the time. There was no surrounding hedge in the early 1990s when the author visited Barragunda last and probably none in the 1950s.
internal layout of the proposed house. The plans reveal Bateman’s Picturesque sensibility and his awareness of the key late eighteenth-century devices the theorists, Richard Payne Knight, Uvedale Price and William Gilpin would endorse for siting a villa in the landscape as well as the latest nineteenth-century writings.75 There is an echo here too of the landscape of Cronkhill.76

The proposed house, aligned to the points of the compass, was to be sited on a plateau, sharply pointed and bounded on two sides by the river. It should be noted that, as Thomas Shepherd advised, at least one indigenous eucalypt was retained close to the house, some others in the parkland and all the trees along the creek. A curving footpath overlooking the bank delineates the edge of the garden. The new drive crosses the river, rises up the bank and approaches the house from the north-east on the diagonal. It terminates in front of the house in a circle before continuing past the service wing and on to the stables and the existing house, later called ‘cottage’. The house is asymmetrical with three equally important elevations and a verandah on three sides. The plan generates several axes, which clearly are intended to reach out into the landscape. Since the current house, built after a twenty-year hiatus, is slightly different in plan it is not possible to be certain, but Bateman’s general intention, is still discernible.

One, on a diagonal, passes from a front room, through the front gate, crosses the

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75 As well as through the books he might have owned, through his friends, Bateman was acquainted with key personalities involved with landscaping. Anne Neale even suggests a plausible link with A. J. Downing through Frederika Bremer, the Scandinavian author, who was mutual friends with Downing and with the Howitt family in London; see Neale ‘Illuminating Nature’, p. 120, n. 8.

76 At Barragunda there is much more than an echo of Cronkhill. The circular room at the south-west corner of the house generates a diagonal view down to the lighthouse at Cape Schanck, exactly as the circular room at Cronkhill looks over the bridge at Atcham and towards Attingham Park. That this was appreciated at the time is clear from the amateur sketches by the McCrae and Anderson families drawn in the 1860s and now held in the SLV. Neale suggests that Bateman saw Barragunda as his own home, ‘Illuminating Nature’, Ph.D. thesis, University of Melbourne, 2002, p. 157.
bridge over the river, and terminates on Mount Elephant.\textsuperscript{77} Another, on the opposite diagonal, passes through a gate, over the end of the kitchen garden and another twist in the creek, and terminates on a volcanic outcrop, known as Ewen’s Hill. Perhaps the most important was to pass through the house as the main hall and continue by the main drive and paths on the opposite side of the house. Another perpendicular axis passes through the substantial bow window of a reception room. The axis is also reinforced by the paths immediately around the house and continues across the longest part of the garden to cross Mount Emu Creek as it makes the sharp bend. Importantly, this axis terminates on the distant Cloven Hills, which, just at this point, appear to meet.\textsuperscript{78}

The planting is only indicated schematically. It is not possible to say what planting in the plans is existing, or even remnant and what is proposed. The plan does suggest how it might be used to create a sense of intrigue, as a visitor would approach the house along the sinuous drive and how it might create a backdrop for the house. Small clumps around the house rigidly reinforce the axiality of the plan. Within and around the kidney shaped bed, the vegetation is quite stiffly planted. A hawthorn hedge survives to define the shape and two miniature pomegranates survive to mark the entrance from the perimeter path.\textsuperscript{79} Again, a technique which Thomas Shepherd would endorse seems to have been followed. Gaps in the shrubbery allow views outwards and clumps of shrubbery close the views inwards.

\textsuperscript{77} The front gate has been reinstated felicitously by Mrs. Morrison.
\textsuperscript{78} Mrs. Morrison pointed out this coincidence, which reinforces the significance of the termination.
\textsuperscript{79} A similar device was used in the garden at Barragundra. The intersection of the diagonal paths through the circular kitchen garden with the outside path were each marked by four Italian cypresses, \textit{Cupressus sempervirens ‘stricta’}, which appear in photographs taken in the 1950s, now in the possession of Ms. Kate Miscamble, the daughter of the owners at the time.
The garden at Wooriwyrite may have been only partly completed when the new house was built in 1886. More conservative than the earlier proposal, it was designed by the Colac architect, Alexander Hamilton. It included a library with a copy of Robert Kerr's *The Gentleman's House*, annotated by Thomas Shaw, which shows that the design of the new house was directly influenced by the book. The drawing room had oil paintings of both Sublime and Beautiful landscapes: 'heroic panoramas such as those seen from Hall's Gap in the Grampians and Govett's Leap in the Blue Mountains. Europe was represented by Nicholas Chevalier's canvases of Capri, Naples, and the Alps.' There were also souvenirs of travel abroad: stereoscopic photographs of Pompeii, the Roman Forum, and the Holy Land; natural history curios from New Zealand, and Japanese objets d'art. 'On tables along the hall were alabaster statuettes and a large helmet shell covered in cameo carving from the Mediterranean.' Outside the house, the self-sufficient villa lifestyle was represented by the vegetable garden cultivated by a Chinese gardener who lived in a hut beside the creek and by the dairy, fowl yard, woodshed and meat house. There was also a tennis court and croquet lawn for recreation. Understood as a villa in the landscape, Wooriwyrite must be considered one of the most important and successful expressions of Picturesque landscape design in Victoria.

**Kolor, Penshurst**

The plans for Wooriwyrite help to understand the planning of Kolor, another

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80 The Bateman plan is not mentioned nor are reasons given for the change in Shaw, *On Mount Emu Creek*. Hamilton's involvement has now been confirmed by the discovery of a notice in the *Warrnambool Standard*, 22 February 1883, p. 3, c. f, calling tenders for a ‘residence at Wooriwyrite for Thomas Shaw Esq.’.
81 Shaw, *On Mount Emu Creek*, p. 146.
84 Shaw, *On Mount Emu Creek*, p. 150. Such facilities, even down to a Chinese gardener returned from the gold diggings, were standard at homesteads in the Western District.
house and garden with which Bateman was involved. The homestead, which was built in 1868 for Daniel Twomey (1832?-1891), is on the shoulder of Mount Rouse at Penshurst. Perhaps with a sense of dynasty, his father, the Port Phillip pioneer John Joseph Twomey laid the foundation stone. The design of the house and garden is another collaboration with the architects, Reed and Barnes.  

Bateman’s influence is revealed not only in the planning of the house and garden which includes all his usual devices, but also in the general Romanticism of the villa and its landscape.

Firstly, there is an enormous walled circle at the rear of the house coinciding with a cinder cone from the mount. Secondly, the choice of style, generally described as Romanesque revival, is unusual. Indeed, it is unique in the domestic architecture of colonial Victoria. The asymmetrical form of the house—with a plan remarkably similar to that proposed at Woori Woori—generates axes which link the house with the landscape. Three axes interact, two horizontally and one vertically. The east-west horizontal axis passes through the bow window of the drawing room and terminates on Mount Napier, the most perfectly shaped volcano in Victoria. The north-south horizontal axis passes

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85 Neale’s assessment seems correct; ‘Illuminating Nature’, p. 156, fl 141. She states that, though there is no mention of Bateman in the Clerk of Works’ journal for the construction of Kolor which survives, nothing is mentioned of the interior finishing either. The garden and the interior decoration are the two areas in which Bateman would have been involved.

86 His designs for Heronswood at Dromana and Barragunda at Cape Schanck, which has a similar tower to Kolor, are equally romantic.

87 It might be described more correctly as ‘Rundbogenstil’, the German version of the Romanesque revival.

88 This author knows of no similar example. The closest comparative examples are the polychromatic brick villas in a ‘Lombardic Romanesque’ revival style in Melbourne which were also designed by Reed Barnes: Cannally (1865), in East Melbourne and Rippon Lea (1868), in Elsternwick, a special branch themselves of the Italianate villa model. There is another polychromatic brick villa, Devonshire House (1866-8? & 1891), in Hawthorn with which Bateman was also involved. However, the architect John Flannagan, not Reed and Barnes, designed it and the subsequent alterations; see Lewis, ‘Melbourne Mansions’, on-line database.
through the bay window of the dining room. It terminates on the twin peaks of Mount Sturgeon and Mount Abrupt, the southernmost peaks of the Grampians among the most dramatic peaks in Victoria.

The tower creates the vertical axis. It rises above the threshold and marks the entrance in a proprietorial flourish. If the horizontal axes reach out and link Kolor with the landscape, the vertical axis anchors the villa to the landscape. Kolor, like Wooriwyrite, demonstrates the practical use of Picturesque aesthetic theory and the confidant introduction of an asymmetrical villa model, which is loosely Italianate, into the colonial landscape. Perhaps more importantly, Kolor demonstrates that the devices for setting and siting a villa in the landscape are independent of any particular revival style. This is proved conclusively by the next example.

Narrapumelap, Wickliffe, Victoria

Narrapumelap, completed in 1873 for the squatter John Dixon Wyselaskie (1818-1883), is a rare example of the influence of French Gothic revival in colonial Victoria. Two Scottish immigrant architects, Alexander Davidson (1839-1908) and George Henderson (1846-1905) designed it and the house is probably the best example of their domestic work. This is the view of Alan Willingham, who has

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90 It might be said to pass through the front door rather than the adjacent window but, unlike at Narrapumelap which is discussed shortly, there seems to be no planting or path to reinforce this axis 'on the ground' in the garden.
91 The property is well known to the author and was visited most recently in May 2001. I am grateful to Mr Kevin McIntyre for allowing access and for his comments and suggestions.
established their direct influence by Viollet-le-Duc whose books they owned. The architects themselves considered it ‘the best country house we have yet built—Picturesque characteristic and complete’. Notwithstanding its highly individual French rather than English Gothic character, Narrapumelap assumes the form of a villa and, like Kolor, ‘behaves’ as an asymmetrical villa in every way except for its superficial Gothic detailing such as shallow pointed arches and quatrefoil vents. Indeed, the shallow pitched roofs, the conventional cast iron verandah, and the circular bow window of the drawing room have direct parallels in the design of Kolor. Its triple elevation treatment can also be compared with the house proposed by Bateman at Wooriwyrite.

It is not known who designed the garden. The house plan of Narrapumelap is very similar to that of Kolor and that proposed by Bateman at Wooriwyrite. There is little doubt that Edward La Trobe Bateman designed those gardens and other gardens, such as Chatsworth and The Gums nearby. The sophistication of the landscaping at Narrapumelap suggests an equally professional hand. But, as with Gringegalgonha, the date of construction is well after 1869 when he departed for England. More importantly, to date no connection has been discovered by researchers linking Bateman with Davidson and Henderson, or with John Dixon Wyselaskie. Nonetheless, it is instructive to analyse Narrapumelap as a villa in the landscape.

The house is sited on a rise above the Hopkins River, the site of the first settlement and the shearing shed. As at Kolor, the asymmetrical plan of

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93 Letter from George Henderson to his mother, dated 25th March 1874 quoted in Willingham, ‘Early European Settlement’, p. 77.
94 The original roof of the tower was certainly Gothic but the tower’s windows have round arches traditional to the campanile.
Narrapumelap generates two axes which reach out into the landscape.\textsuperscript{96} The principal axis passes through the front door, down a small flight of steps between the famous cast iron lions of Narrapumelap, through a large circular flowerbed and into the surrounding parkland. The axis appears to be reinforced by Stone Pines, *Pinus pinea* planted regularly.\textsuperscript{97} It terminates with the river and a rugged cliff, a picturesque rock face. Beside the river are the shearing shed and other outbuildings—the site of the first settlement. These could well have a metaphorical value, the former representing the ancient past of the landscape and the latter its European history. It is not so easy to determine the function of the subsidiary axis, which passes through the drawing room bow window and the dining room bay window, because of Interwar plantings which have closed the views. Perhaps more interesting is that there is a diagonal view which terminates at the tower and spire of the local Presbyterian church at Wickliffe, which Wyselaskie had donated at the time the house was being built.\textsuperscript{98} Wyselaskie was a devout Presbyterian and left most of his estate to the church. So, the terminations of the principal and diagonal

\textsuperscript{95} The link may be through clients who were neighbours rather than directly through architects themselves. Willingharn and Neale are the key researchers.

\textsuperscript{96} The close parallels between the two plans, at least in the main parts of the houses, is remarkable and has yet to be explained. Their similarity with the plan of Woori Woori should also be explored.

\textsuperscript{97} Not all have survived but those that remain do ‘fall into position’ regularly on either side of the axis and their size strongly suggests that they were planted with the original garden. A large, but probably younger, conifer in the middle of the circular flowerbed now blocks the axis.

\textsuperscript{98} The church dates from 1861 and was designed by the architect, J. Ingles but it was Alexander Davidson who added the tower and spire in 1878. There is at least one other example in Victoria where the owners of Golf Station at Shiel Ford established the Presbyterian Church on axis in front of the house and beside the entrance to the homestead’s drive. There are two similar examples in Tasmania of churches built to terminate an axis. Hagley House at Hagley is set in a landscape more reminiscent of a gentle England, but still Picturesque. It is a symmetrical two-storey Georgian house, not really a villa, with a five-bay façade divided by abstracted pilasters. It dates from 1848 and the drawing room includes a rare example of panoramic wallpaper, intended to provide an ideal landscape. Hagley House is of interest here not so much for its architecture but for the axis created deliberately to link it with the real landscape. It looks towards the steeple of a Gothic church built in on a distant hill, a classic Romantic image. Other rural buildings, hedge rows and tree plantings combine to create a nostalgically English if not an ideal landscape. There is another, smaller example of such an axis at Franklin House, south of Launceston, which faces its private chapel across the former main Hobart to Launceston Road.
axes can be read for some metaphorical content. And, again, this parallels the
topographical and chronological templates found at Cronkhill including the steeple
of the church at Wroxeter.

Meningoort, via Camperdown

The triple axes which claim the landscape at Meningoort are extraordinarily
confident for their time. The house which still stands as the heart of the complex
was built in 1852, a remarkably substantial and carefully sited building for its
early period and remote location. The garden appears to have been laid out at
about the same time but it is not known who designed the garden. There is
increasing speculation, and that is all it can be at this stage, that the skill, content
and bravura of the design indicates a professional hand and that this may indeed
have been Edward La Trobe Bateman who arrived in Melbourne late in 1852. He
knew von Guérard and went on sketching trips with him. He was also very
friendly with the Shaw family who lived nearby at Wooriwyrite. When Eugen
von Guérard painted the property in 1861, the house and garden already appear
well established. For his point of view, the artist chose a position above the
house on Mount Meningoort and behind and to one side of it. This allowed von
Guérard to depict what Peter Watts has described as ‘perhaps the boldest piece of
garden design in Victoria’. A grand, indeed a very grand, central axis links the
house with the hills to the south-east beyond the nearby town of Camperdown.
The axis passes through the front door of the symmetrical house and terminates

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99 The architect for the first part is not known. Rather than being oriented to a cardinal
point, the house faces south-east.
100 The original of the painting hangs in the City of Geelong Art Gallery and a copy hangs
at Meningoort. It is reproduced in Watts, Historic Gardens of Victoria. I am grateful to Mr. and
Mrs. S. McArthur for allowing access to Meningoort in April, 1999 and again in October 2001.
101 Watts, Historic Gardens, p. 121.
on the smallest, but most perfect cone in the middle of the range of volcanic
hills. The axis is in line with steps from the terrace in front of the house,
crosses a large circular carriage drive and passes along a wide drive with a double
avenue of trees. Symmetrical extensions to the house and alterations to the
verandah, in 1877 and later, reinforced the axes and confirmed the original
Italianate style of the house.

Such a strong axial plan across the vast lava plain would be remarkable
enough, but subsidiary diagonal axes further link the house to the landscape.
These terminate on the small isolated volcanic cones of Mount Myrtoon to the
est and Ewen Hill to the south. The former if not the latter, with some artistic
licence, is visible in von Guérard’s painting. No river exists within this view, but
two lakes, Lake Bookar and Lake Colongulac, are at least notionally visible.

Two early roads pass across the landscape, one the Princes Highway and the
other, formerly much more important, the Camperdown-Foxhow Road. This is
not dissimilar, in Romantic terms, to the topographical template found at
Cronkhill. It might be argued that the chronological template, including the
accretion of layers of ‘history’ in the house, is also present if the volcanic cones
are substitutes for an ancient Roman city and the crucible of the Industrial
revolution. Indeed, the power of the triplet axes seems to stem from Mount

\[103\] Watts, Historic Gardens, p. 121, and Nexie, ‘Illuminating Nature’, p 168, suggest that it
is in line with Mount Leura, the highest of the hills, but this is not exactly true. In fact, it may be
this perfect cone rather than Mount Leura, which von Guérard used as the focus in his painting,
_Purrumbete, across the Lake_ (1858) referred to earlier.

\[104\] George McLeod, an architect formerly of Melbourne and practising in Warrnambool,
the nearest provincial centre, called tenders for ‘large bluestone additions to the residence of Peter
McArthur Esq., Meninoort near Camperdown’ in 1877, _Warrnambool Standard_, 3 April 1877. I
am grateful to Mr Ray Tonkin for making available his early research into Warrnambool
newspapers. The Melbourne architect, Charles D’Ebro, is believed to have designed the later
alterations but the date and architect have not been confirmed.

\[104\] Other lakes are perched inside the craters of the volcanic cones.
Meningoort itself. Cross axes also exist at Meningoort, but on a domestic scale. In von Guérard’s painting a horse and carriage, perhaps driven by the owner, are arriving from the right side along the drive which is this axis. These latter axial views are enclosed, in that they terminate with gates and garden features.

Anne Neale’s research into Edward La Trobe Bateman’s design of the garden at Melbourne University is of great interest here. She has established that, from 1856, Edward La Trobe Bateman introduced a ‘Baroque’ scheme of five axes radiating from the central university building, constructed in 1854, which accommodated the existing central axis towards the south. She writes that the ‘uncompromising line’ at Meningoort which is ‘comparable to that laid out by Bateman at the University of Melbourne, creates an extraordinarily bold vista ... across the plains to Mount Leura’.

Two aspects of this University scheme are of particular interest to Meningoort. Firstly, the avenues at the university were planted in ‘multi-layered’ rows of varied species as appears to have been the case at Meningoort. Secondly, the axes had symbolic terminations. The central axis passed across what was not much more than open waste land in the 1850s but terminated at the notional northern entrance to the city, the intersection of Elizabeth Street, the central street in the grid, with Victoria Street, then the northern boundary of the municipality. According to George Tibbits, it was hoped in the 1850s that a grand avenue would

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107 They appear in the von Guérard painting but, the present owners advise that there have been up to three programs for planting along the drive. It may be that native wattles were planted to form the original double avenue.
108 This point dates from the very earliest planning by the New South Wales surveyor, Robert Hoddle, in 1837. See Vivienne Parsons, ‘Hoddle Robert (1794-1881)’, in Pike, gen. ed., ADB, Vol. 1, pp. 547-8. The northern boundary was soon shifted further out.
extend from the university to the city along this axis. The diagonal axes were intended to terminate on specific public buildings recently constructed: the Gothic Benevolent Asylum on the hill in North Melbourne and the neo-Classical Melbourne Gaol on the hill to the south-east. These two buildings, in their differing form, function and style, and in their Picturesque situation, represent the Beautiful and the Sublime.

There is no evidence at Meningoort that the sections created between the avenues were planted ‘systematically’, as at the university where the avenues divide the continents. Neale traces this combination of grand avenues and systematic planting to the garden at Elvaston, near Derby, to which few people had access before 1851. J. C. Loudon did visit them in 1839 and described them briefly but enthusiastically. Anne Neale concludes that ‘The wide publicity given to this garden, combined with its extremely Romantic character and its eventual accessibility from 1851, make it highly likely that Bateman made use of his family visits to Derbyshire to see the garden for himself, and that his later landscaping reflected this experience.’

Other techniques were also employed at Meningoort to claim the landscape. As advocated by Thomas Shepherd, indigenous trees were retained to create the parkland while the usual exotics were also planted. Eucalypts were retained on the hillside behind the house at first, but a later photograph shows conifers, mostly

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109 Personal communication with George Tibbits, 14th September 2003.
110 In this she relies on George Tibbits, The Planning and Development of the University of Melbourne, University of Melbourne, Melbourne, 2000. However, she states that the buildings were the Gaedic Church in the south-east and the Benevolent Asylum in the south-west. George Tibbits concurs that the Melbourne Gaol and Redmond Barry’s Supreme Court are the likely south-east termination; personal communication with George Tibbits, 14th September 2003.
Radiata pines, *Cupressus macrocarpa*, forming the backdrop.\textsuperscript{114} There were the usual utilitarian orchard and vegetable gardens. In later years, tenant farms for agriculture and dairying were established within the broader pastoral estate. In von Guérard's painting there are precise rows of plantings, perhaps a rose garden, along the terrace.\textsuperscript{115} Ornamental features, such as steps and *tazze* have increased the Italianate character of the garden immediately around the house. Evidence that the picturesque and pastoral ideal was achieved is present in 1904 when a visiting journalist could write,

> Not unwillingly I settled myself comfortably in one of the chairs on the verandah, with a cigarette, and watched the beautiful landscape, which just then was in the interesting and romantic stage of sunset. It was in truth a picture, and one not easily forgotten. As far as the eye could see, one vast expanse of fertile country, here and there dotted with small farms, and in the foreground the peaceful and contented cattle browsing, the whole making up one of those pictures which remain vividly impressed in one’s mind.\textsuperscript{116}

Meningoort can be compared directly in scale, form and content with the later garden at Hopkins Hill (or Chatsworth), at Chatsworth, owned by John Moffat, where Bateman was definitely involved in 1867.\textsuperscript{117} There is a detailed description of the garden at Chatsworth under construction which mentions ‘pleasure grounds, intersected by drives in various directions’, ground works ‘to form a broad and extensive terrace’, ‘a dwarf wall ornamented by vases and

\textsuperscript{112} Neale, "Illuminating Nature", p. 131.
\textsuperscript{115} The accuracy of von Guérard's observation and depiction is well known. His painting of Tower Hill, now in the Warrnambool Art Gallery, has been used as a historical record to reconstruct the indigenous plantings, for example.
\textsuperscript{116} "Lauderdale", *Representative Men*, p. 91.
\textsuperscript{117} This is where the dreadful accident occurred, when Moffat was driving, and Bateman's right arm was crushed; see Neale, "Illuminating Nature", pp. 160ff
statuary' and 'various kinds of coniferae'. The report continues, commenting that 'some fine stands of indigenous trees are left standing' and that 'all the unsightly trees from the adjacent hills have been cut down, and the dead timber removed'. Like Meningoort, Chatsworth is a symmetrical single-storey house set on a podium and sited on a rise. Its conservative Italianate style is made more so by a remarkable neo-Classical portico of paired columns, notionally in antis, supporting dosseret blocks and orbs but without a beam between.

Meningoort can also be compared with The Gums, near Penshurst which Bateman visited in 1864, doing sketches of the original homestead, which are still held there. It was a pre-fabricated house, picturesquely sited beside a creek and possibly imported from Singapore by Henry Gottreaux, the owner in the 1850s. In May 1862, Gottreaux sold to Horace Flower and William Lilly Hawkins. They, in turn sold to William Ross in 1864, who immediately commissioned Reed and Barnes to design a new house some distance from the old. The house is two-storey, symmetrical and chaste in its conservative Italianate detailing. The single-storey verandah on three sides includes a central pedimented porch. Bateman was

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118 *Australasian*, 5th October 1867, quoting the *Gedong Advertiser*, 27th September 1867 and cited by Neale, 'Illuminating Nature', p. 160. In her footnote she states her belief that Bateman's name was deliberately omitted from the description because of the accident and the legal dispute it generated.


120 The architect was James Henry Fox of Hamilton.

121 I am grateful to Mr Roderick Agar and Mr William Agar, the present owners, for access to and advice about The Gums on several occasions.


123 There is an unconfirmed suggestion that John Moffatt may have had a brief proprietary interest in The Gums and, it seems, he was driving Bateman between The Gums and Chatsworth when there was an accident. Bateman, who had resisted going, was thrown from the vehicle, his right arm was crushed and rendered useless. The suspicion was that Moffatt, a notorious heavy drinker, was drunk. Bateman sued Moffatt under the *Master and Servant Act*. The case set a precedent for determining such issues and became something of a *cause celebre* in polite society. Bateman won against Moffatt in the Supreme Court of Victoria but the squatter appealed to the Privy Council. Both went to London for the appeal and Moffatt won. Moffatt died on his way back to Australia but Bateman never returned, instead retiring to Scotland where he continued to practise as an artist and as a landscape designer.
collaborating with Reed and Barnes on Kolor, less than 10 kilometres to the west, just at this time. The garden at The Gums includes triple axes with one termination to the right, created as a pinetum, another in the centre, as a small grove on a cleared hillside, and the third as the access over the river, as at Wooriwyrite. There is an elliptical drive in front of the house, and at some distance, a vast semi-circular terrace supported by a ha-ha. Other plantings and details are standard for Bateman.\textsuperscript{124} The Gums has not been confirmed as the work of Bateman but the coincidences are remarkable and the content, extent and quality of the design are there.\textsuperscript{125} William Ross, M.L.A. was also a most likely client, being a highlander Scot, who was well educated, well travelled and liberal in his political views.\textsuperscript{126}

As Anne Neale concludes in her discussion of Meningoort, 'The natural landscape is such that it would tend to swamp most attempts at improvement: only a supremely confident designer would attempt to enhance the Sublime!'\textsuperscript{127} Meningoort, with its various outbuildings, gardens and parkland, is a villa not only sited and set in the landscape, but also claiming it by the use of axes, the retention of indigenous trees and the imposition of cultivation for domestic purposes.

**Mount Noorat**

Margaret Kiddle might be criticised for relying too heavily on the papers of Niel Black (1804-1880) in her ground-breaking history of the Western District, *Men of

\textsuperscript{124} The garden has undergone substantial renovation in recent years with several senescent trees being removed, especially Pines close to the house and in the nearby pinetum through which the original drive arrived.

\textsuperscript{125} Neale does not include The Gums in her discussion of Bateman's work. More research is required to confirm Bateman's participation, but on balance, it seems most likely that he was involved.

\textsuperscript{126} Two ingredients of a gentleman's villa survive at The Gums, a library including books owned by Henry Gottreaux and the remnants of an extensive orchard. William Ross, who died tragically at The Gums, is buried in the Caramut cemetery facing his property and surrounded by *Cupressus finebris*.

\textsuperscript{127} Neale, 'Illuminating Nature', p. 168.
Yesterday, but there is no doubt that he was a leader amongst the squatters.\textsuperscript{128} When the partnership he had managed for nearly thirty years was dissolved, he moved from his former home, Glenormiston to Mount Noorat.\textsuperscript{129} He commissioned the well-respected, establishment architect, Charles Webb to design the new house for him.\textsuperscript{130}

Kiddle demonstrates some general prejudice against Victorian architecture, possibly excusable because she was writing at the height of twentieth-century Modernism, and against architects as professionals. More seriously, she may be incorrect in her analysis.\textsuperscript{131} There is no balanced assessment of Webb’s position although his letters to Black also survive.\textsuperscript{132} She writes ‘He had hoped the architect would copy a house he admired near Melbourne, but he was even talked out of this, and instead of the Gothic ‘peaks and towers’ he hankered for, he was given an

\textsuperscript{128} According to his great-grandson, Niel Black, the papers were ‘discovered’ when Kiddle approached Black’s descendants in her research. Recognising their value, she encouraged their deposition in the SLV. I am grateful to Mr. and Mrs. Niel Black of Mount Noorat for allowing me access to their property in November 2001 and to see the photographs which they still hold of the former house.

\textsuperscript{129} The single storey asymmetrical house dated from the later 1850s and, although very plain, Glenormiston could be generally described as an Italianate villa and was set in a well-developed garden. Years later, when S. G. Black repurchased the house, a second storey and tower were added in 1908 to convert it into the last great example of the Italianate villa in rural Victoria. A final triumphal gesture was to set the entrance tower on the diagonal, the only example known to the author anywhere in the world.

\textsuperscript{130} Charles Webb lived in what could be described as an asymmetrical Italianate marine villa with a tower at Brighton, a seaside resort suburb of Melbourne, where he cultivated a garden. He subsequently moved to another house nearby which was also an asymmetrical Italianate villa but without the classic tower. He designed both houses for himself. Both survive on much-reduced sites, the former in Wellington Street and the latter in Farleigh Grove.

\textsuperscript{131} She suggests in these pages that the profession always forces clients to spend more than they want to and that ‘Colonial Georgian’, of which there were too few examples, was superior to anything which came afterwards. The same bias is to be found in the works of contemporary authors, such as Robin Boyd, Morton Herman, and J. M. Freeland.

\textsuperscript{132} When one reads Webb’s letters to Black, it is clear that Webb was thoroughly professional about costs and that it was Black’s, and perhaps his wife’s, interference and indecision which caused much of the trouble. Black accuses Webb of ‘intentionally misleading both of us’ in a letter dated 4\textsuperscript{th} November 1877 to Robert Leadbetter. SLV MS, Niel Black Papers, Box 30, Letterbook, p. 298. I am grateful to Mrs Ruth Trait, a volunteer at the SLV, for transcribing five of Niel Black’s letters which are in his notoriously difficult hand. She advised me that ‘They were illegible in parts, and the one you seemed most interested in, dated 4.11.1877, has in part become so fragile that it is confetti-like and beyond anyone reading. There seemed to be no discussion of style at all.’ Personal correspondence dated 25\textsuperscript{th} June 2001.
‘elegant’ and graciously proportioned house. Bluestone, said Charles Webb, could not be cut in the way Black wanted’. Black says he showed Webb more than one house and drew up a plan. He actually wrote, in a different letter from that cited by Kiddle

I think the architect pressed me into unnecessary expense in the shape of decoration but it is a most substantial building and will [-] be an elegant house though different in style from what I w\textsuperscript{2} have liked but it would be impossible to cut the stone into peaks and [towers] such to my mind would harmonise with the surrounding scenery.\textsuperscript{134}

Yet, in a context where Black rails against the powers of a democratic government whose mission it is to crush the owners of freehold on a large scale’ in ‘a Colony where it is a crime to be prosperous by the [—] of skill industry or ability’ he is able to boast ‘my house has figured in all the Newspapers in town & country as being in advance of all country buildings.\textsuperscript{135}

In fact, Mount Noorat was at one end of the spectrum of the Italianate villa model. It was a conservative, if not august reinterpretation and well within the two hundred year-old British tradition of Palladianism.

The two-storey house sits in a very grand landscape.\textsuperscript{136} It is sited on the southern slope of Mount Noorat, not as high as Black may have hoped, but certainly more elevated than his house at Glenormiston.\textsuperscript{137} It is an example of the double-façade plan, which generates two principal elevations, one facing south looking down the drive, the other facing east looking over the garden and park. A single storey colonnade surrounded the house on three sides. The main

\textsuperscript{133} Kiddle, Men of Yesterday, p. 313 quoting a letter from Niel Black to Robert Leadbetter, dated 4\textsuperscript{th} November 1877. It has not been possible to confirm either Black’s or Webb’s positions nor to discover which ‘house near Melbourne’.

\textsuperscript{134} This quotation actually comes from the same letter written by Black to his partner, Thomas Stewart Gladstone dated 13\textsuperscript{th} March 1877. It seems to be unfinished and unsigned, suggesting that it may not have been sent, but it is the last in the copy book and pages may be missing. SLV MS, Niel Black Papers, Box 30, Letter-book, pp. 170-174.

\textsuperscript{135} SLV MS, Niel Black Papers, Box 30, Letter-book, pp. 299.

\textsuperscript{136} For illustrations see Watts, Historic Gardens, pp. 128-9.

\textsuperscript{137} There is a family story that Black investigated sites higher up the hill.
elevations, those to the drive and to the garden, are rigorously symmetrical. A shallow central pavilion marks the entrance and generated an axis through the usual turning circle of the drive. A semi-circular bow on the garden façade generated an axis which stretches out towards the hills behind Camperdown. The lawn in front of the house still slopes down to a ha-ha which repeats the shape of the semi-circular bow. It is not possible now to say if planting adjacent to the house once reinforced the sense of axis but there is a fully mature Moreton Bay Fig, Ficus macrocarpa in line. Of interest is a group of three Elms, Ulmus procera, to one side of the Fig. These are exactly the plantings recommended by Humphrey Repton in the eighteenth century. Many other identical groups throughout the parkland confirm that the group is not coincidental but deliberate.

Niel Black may have been disappointed that he did not get a house in the Gothic style and his hankering for the nationalistic Gothic style is perhaps surprising for such an ardent Scot. The surviving 'cottage' where he lived while the main house was being built is pattern-book Gothic. He might have also hankered for the Scottish Baronial style although this was a very rare choice in colonial Victoria. But his reluctant acceptance of a neo-Palladian villa, of

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138 These are noted by Paul Fox, who considers them rare, in 'Over the Garden Fence', Historic Environment, IV, No. 3, Australia ICOMOS and Council for the Historic Environment, 1985, p. 35. There are many more and larger groups beyond the immediate garden. Just such a group appears in the famous comparative sketches drawn by Thomas Hearne for Richard Payne Knight as illustrations in his poem The Landscape. The first is called A Brownian Landscape Garden, the second A Picturesque Landscape Garden. The former shows the three trees on a small knoll with grass beneath. The latter shows the same trees, slightly larger (because the garden is matured) but now surrounded by unkempt vegetation and rocks. The sketches are often reproduced.

139 Some distance away and close to Glenormiston there is a group of five Elms.

140 Black owned a copy of John Starforth, The Architecture of the Farm, Blackwood, Edinburgh, 1853. The book is now in the possession of Alan Willingham.

141 In fact, there is probably only one true example, Overnewton at Keilor, built after 1859 as an extension to a conventional homestead to plans drawn up in Scotland during a trip Home by its owner, William Taylor. Like Black, he was a Scot and a Member of the Legislative Council. Another homestead, which is usually described as Scottish Baronial is Erildoune at Burrambeet,
which he came to be proud, is more plausible if the work of architects such as the Adam brothers, who were Scottish, is considered. In fact, Mount Noorat is much like a typical eighteenth-century villa.

Mount Noorat, with its straight-line axes, claimed a colonial landscape, which by the mid-1870s, was civilised and well under control. Black has been linked to the dispossession of the Aborigines—as a witness rather than as a perpetrator. He stirred the anti-Transportation lobby by advocating and indeed personally ‘importing’ Pentonvillains. He was one of five members who represented the Western Province, effectively the Western District, as a Member of the Legislative Council from 1859 until his death in 1880. Through what amounted to a gerrymander, the ‘upper-crust’ Council maintained the Squattocracy’s control over the more democratic Lower House. As Don Garden, Victoria’s official sesqui-centenary historian writes, ‘This “party” was motivated by near Ballarat but it has less design integrity. It is not until the end of the nineteenth century that other clear examples emerge and these are complicated by overtones of the American Romanesque and Art Nouveau styles. Ironically, the best examples of these are post offices produced by the Public Works Department after the dismissal of its head, William Wardell for whom, one suspects, the style would have been anathema especially for post offices. Under his leadership, post offices followed the Italianate villa model.

142 Jan Critchett, A distant field of murder, Melbourne University Press, Parkville, 1990 gives many references including quotations from Black’s correspondence.

143 Don Garden, Victoria. A History, Thomas Nelson Australia, Melbourne, 1984, p. 61-2. ‘While visiting Britain in 1844 Niel Black offered to employ twenty-one Pentonvillains whom he brought back to Port Phillip on the Royal George. Their arrival caused a considerable stir in the District.’ The popular opposition to transportation increased around the time of Separation to the point that some in the colony advocated becoming a republic.

144 The Province comprised the Counties of Ripon, Dundas, Follett, Normanby, Villiers, Hampden and Heytesbury. There were many members in the Legislative Council who had direct squating interests such as Henry ‘Money’ Miller, Hugh Glass and John O’Shanassy, each of whom lived in Italianate villas in suburban Melbourne. William Skene and Thomas McKellar had extensive holdings in the Western District and were opposed to the Selectors. One of the most interesting members was Thomas Bromell who used the Land Selection Acts to rise to power. He began as a failed gold-digger turned carrier, carting materials from Geelong to Skene’s new house north of Hamilton. See ‘Southern Grampians Heritage Study Stage Two’, Timothy Hubbard Pty Ltd., 2003, datasheets 0345 & 0363. According to Garden, Hamilton, p. 107, he selected or purchased from other selectors up to 14,000 acres, much from Skene’s and McKellar’s runs, and then became President of the Shire of Dundas and member of the Legislative Council, both in 1874. Other squatters were active in the Lower House. A brother of Peter and John Manifold of Purrumbete, Thomas, who held Grassmere near Warrnambool, was a Member of the Legislative Assembly, for example.
a mixture of self-interest and an unsophisticated conservative determination to resist attempts to introduce land reform, protection, reform of the Legislative Council and other ‘democratic’ policies. In fact many of its members feared and hated democracy and were contemptuous of ‘mobocracy’, ‘demagoguery’, and the masses who it assumed did not know what was good for them, and even if they did their opinion was not important’.\textsuperscript{145} He continues, specifically commenting on the owner of Mount Noorat, ‘In 1859 Niel Black entered the Council to fight Selection, believing the “whole safety of the Country depends upon the Upper House and but for the check it affords we would have legalized spoliation, anarchy, confusion and destruction of property at the will of the Mob.”’\textsuperscript{146} Black even uses the word ‘revolutionary’ to describe proposed land reform measures.\textsuperscript{147}

Niel Black, a leader of the squatters, a self-made man, and a well-rounded gentleman ended his days at Mount Noorat. It is a conservative nineteenth-century villa in a landscape imitating that of the mid-eighteenth century with its roots in the sixteenth and seventeenth century. It expressed the power which came from his success and it claimed the landscape for which he had laboured.

\textbf{Glenara, Bulla}

The many previous examples, mostly of the Italianate villa model, have shown how the devices of the Picturesque aesthetic and the imposition of rational order—both in the name of European civilization and good government—were used to claim the colonial landscape. One final example shows the same devices

\textsuperscript{145} Garden, \textit{Victoria}, p. 136.
\textsuperscript{146} Garden, \textit{Victoria}, p. 137 quoting Kiddle, \textit{Men of Yesterday}, p. 228, who quotes a letter from Black to his partner Gladstone, dated 11\textsuperscript{th} November, 1859.
\textsuperscript{147} Kiddle, \textit{Men of Yesterday}, p. 228 who quotes an earlier letter from Black to his partner Gladstone, dated 9\textsuperscript{th} April, 1859.
and order but more importantly, through art, it also demonstrates its metaphorical content most clearly.

Glenara at Bulla is not deep in the Western District but on its edge, about twenty-five kilometres north-west of central Melbourne. The house, an Italianate villa, was built for the Scottish pastoralist, Walter Clark (1803-75) in 1857 to the design of the Melbourne architects, Purchas and Swyer. Albert Purchas (1825-99) and Charles Swyer (1825-76), who were engineers, surveyors and landscape designers as well as architects, probably designed the garden at the same time. By the time Eugen von Guérard did his oil painting and preliminary drawing in 1867, the garden was already well established. There is also a photograph taken by Charles Nettleton which is remarkably similar to the drawing, so much so that they could have been drawn and taken on the same day although the shadows fall in opposite directions. Taken as three documents the photograph, the sketch and the oil painting demonstrate not only how the villa was placed in the landscape but also how it was to be seen in the landscape. The photograph is factual but raw. The sketch is factual but softened at least by the artist's hand and the medium of soft pencil. The painting is a finely finished work, still factual and even delightful in the rich detail of homestead life, but clearly imbued with a deeper meaning to those who can perceive its symbolism.

148 Paul de Serville, Pounds and Pedigrees, Oxford University Press, Melbourne, 1991, pp. 185-6. It is an interesting coincidence that Clarke was born in the same year Cronkhill was built.
149 Argus, 30 May 1857, p. 7; Purchas & Swyer call tenders for a dwelling house 14 miles from town for Walter Clarke.
151 The drawing is in the Dixon Library, Sydney and the painting is in the National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne. The sketch and a detail of the painting are reproduced in Watts, Historic Gardens, pp. 116 & 117. The painting, owned by the NGV, is also reproduced in Tanner, Art of Gardening, p. 160.
As at Wando Dale, the artist has chosen a view from high on a hill as a spectator might to best observe the interplay of elements within the landscape. A picturesque rustic bridge leads to this vantage point where, a few years later, a Gothic tower would be built as a folly. The single storey, asymmetrical villa is central to the structure of the painting. As at Wooriwyrite, it is perched on a promontory overlooking the Maribyrnong (or Saltwater) River. As at Narrapumelap, the aspect is of a rocky gorge. The villa is surrounded on two sides by a cultivated garden of many parts. This is bordered by a pinetum. The family and the workers populate the landscape. To the bottom right, there is an orchard, to the bottom left, a vineyard. The service area is hidden from the spectator by trees and the house. The strongest contrast in the painting is between the light filled terrace, edged by a balustrade representing Classical Beauty, and the dark, indeed Sublime chasm of the steep gorge beyond the orchard. Axes link the villa with the landscape as at Gringegalgonan and at Kolor. The order of the orchard and vineyard impose a productive control. Exotic plantings contrast with the remnant vegetation. As at Meningoort, the owner arrives in his carriage down the drive.

Beyond this juxtaposition of ancient and modern, on the horizon, is Mount Macedon. Major Mitchell climbed this landmark on the 30th September 1836. He had looked over the future site of Glenara, trying to distinguish the head of Port

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152 The location of the photograph is not known but it is reproduced in Watts, *Historic Gardens*, p. 31.
153 Paul Fox makes the important point that a vineyard, and probably some of the trees in the orchard, would be a great novelty for a Scot; see *Victorian Historic Gardens*, p. 7.
154 Ironically, Walter Clarke was killed in a carriage accident at Glenara only a few years later.
Phillip Bay. With a sense of his own history as a military man, he recalled his arrival through the Heads of Port Jackson exactly nine years before and named the mount after the birthplace of the ancient Greek soldier whose father was Phillip II of Macedon. (He had already named Mount Byng, now Mount Alexander, after Field Marshall Lord Byng, a military acquaintance in the Peninsular War.) Gold was discovered there for the first time, officially, in the new colony Victoria in 1851. Bulla was on one of the routes to the Mount Alexander diggings and countless people would have passed Glenara's entrance. These names and references should have been fresh for von Guérard and his client, Walter Clark, who himself had overlanded from Sydney. The painting is full of metaphor, more than are elucidated here, with the early settler who had followed the footsteps of Mitchell, claiming the primaeval landscape on the basis of his pastoral wealth.

Gringegalgona, Wooriwyrite, Kolor, Narrapumelap, Meningoort, Mount Noorat and Glenara are the major examples which show that the Picturesque aesthetic was used to site and set villas within the colonial landscape. The principles and devices included the alienation of 'wild' land by subdivision into 'civilised' spaces and its subsequent contrast. Sites were selected for more than practical purposes, houses being sited especially to see and be seen. Houses were oriented to the view and the planning of their architecture and landscaping came to reinforce this by the use of axes. Ancient landmarks, the termination of these axes, were used as anchors in the landscape. Remnant vegetation was removed entirely or retained selectively. Exotics of all sorts were planted both for utilitarian and aesthetic reasons and the cultivation of these plantings reinforced the sense of order.

156 He was keen to determine if there was any occupation. Looking from south to north, he notes 'At that vast distance, I could see no signs of life about this harbour. No stockyards, cattle, nor
Gardens were developed for pleasure and beautification as well as self-sufficiency. Increasingly grand extensions and additions to houses, reinforced and consolidated the first selection of sites and, therefore proprietorship. These became layers of history, a history rapidly achieved in the absence of any other European history and the dispossession of the Aborigines.

An increasing sense of history and pre-history does emerge. So, by the time places are created within the landscape and depicted in fine art, a metaphorical relationship can be represented between the old and the new. Proud ownership is demonstrated in the form of the house portrait, which, as well as confirming the success of that occupation, makes a deeper claim over the landscapes which were claimed in a physical sense. Two artists stand out in this period, Edward La Trobe Bateman and Eugen von Guérard. The quality and integrity of their art reinforces the link between visual and metaphorical values. These representative Western District examples are villas, of various sorts but mostly the Italianate villa model, which claimed the colonial landscape.

The claim was based on a self-righteous, long and self-interested battle over sometimes-difficult odds. Early challenges included remoteness, the many diseases which affected sheep, the physical hazards of drought, fire and flood, chronic labour shortages, economic downturns and fickle markets. The discovery of gold and the subsequent ‘invasion’ of a democratically minded ‘mob’ brought political challenges. The battle culminated in the fight for tenure between the squatters and the selectors under the Land Selection Acts. These were administered by a Parliament divided not so much along party lines but between a radical Lower
House and an archly conservative Upper House. The battle was personified in Niel Black, leader of the squatters and long-time Member of the Legislative Council.

His house, Mount Noorat, built just as the new Government House was being built in Melbourne, is an example of an eighteenth-century landscape demonstrating political power.

Meanwhile, in Melbourne, the Italianate villa model was being adopted by the middle classes in a suburban context. Interestingly, some of the best examples were built, or substantially rebuilt by squatters who retired to town either for the summer ‘Season’ or, in their prosperous old age, more permanently. Most villas were built by the professionals, merchants and politicians who serviced Melbourne and its hinterland. And at the centre of the city and the colony, rose Government House.
8 TRANSFORMING THE SUBURBAN IDEAL:

THE VILLAS OF ‘MARVELLOUS MELBOURNE’

‘Marvellous Melbourne’

In 1885, the London journalist, George Augustus Sala called the capital of colonial Victoria ‘Marvellous Melbourne’.\(^1\) ‘He simply underlined a well-entrenched conviction among Melburnians that they had attained the glittering style of a proper metropolis.’\(^2\) Not surprisingly, the sobriquet was well received and has held fast. At the height of its nineteenth-century glory, in 1888, the local journalist, Alexander Sutherland (1852-1902) could reflect that ‘In this rustic-looking village the people familiarly spoke of it with easy confidence as the nucleus of what would certainly, in a generation, be reckoned among the world’s great cities.’\(^3\)

The city had expanded from being a primitive village in 1839 and an important centre of commerce and government in 1851 at Separation, to become one of the fastest growing, largest in area and first truly suburban cities in the world. As if to confirm this, Melbourne was also clearly divided between the desirable dormitory suburbs and the heavily industrialised suburbs.\(^4\) The boundary was the increasingly polluted Yarra River.\(^5\) At first, the river was appreciated as a

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Picturesque asset because of its natural Beauty, indigenous vegetation, abundant wildlife and rugged cliffs. By the end of the century the Yarra had become Sublimely horrible, 'nothing but a festering, stagnating ditch'.

In March 1841, the population of Melbourne was 4,479, of whom 2,676 were males and 1,803 were females, 152 being children under two years of age. The whole of the Port Phillip District totalled 16,671 persons which, by the end of the year had increased to more than 20,000 and by 1845 it was 31,280. The impressive increase was due to immigration, mostly assisted, and to a lesser degree by births outnumbering deaths. On the eve of Separation from New South Wales and the discovery of gold so soon afterwards, the total population of the Port Phillip District was 77,345. Then the population indeed exploded.

The discovery of gold in Victoria coincided with a time of political upheaval and depressed economic conditions of Continental Europe and in Britain, so it is not surprising that people rushed to Victoria.

It was a colony, bright in climate, hopeful in prospects, newly sprung into independence, with a Constitution free by comparison with any known in Europe. It was a land where the daily wage of the workman exceeded the weekly wage of the toilers in Continental Europe; and now it was a land where thirty thousand diggers earned on average twenty pounds a month, or as much as a hard-working man on the Continent of Europe would earn in a year. And besides that, there was a chance for every man of a prize in the lottery.

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7 These figures and the following are taken from Garryowen, pseud., (Edmund Finn), The Chronicles of Early Melbourne, Ferguson and Mitchell, Melbourne, 1888 and Heritage Publications, [1980], p. 493. The figures still need to be qualified with a caution. There was a very serious depression caused by the combined fall in wool prices in Britain and the over-inflated economy of the Port Phillip District, particularly from the sale of Crown land which had subsidised assisted immigration. See Sutherland, Victoria and Its Metropolis, Vol. 1, p. 203, who states that immigration had dwindled 'till in 1845 only a single vessel was despatched from England with assisted immigrants, and with her the tide of arrivals came to a close'. This was the ill-fated Cataragui which, after four months at sea and only one day from its destination, was wrecked on King Island, south-west of the entrance to Port Phillip Bay with the loss of over 400 lives, only nine people surviving.
8 The depression had passed and immigration increased steadily.
And rush they did, with hundreds of thousands of unassisted immigrants arriving in Victoria, many more than were arriving for New South Wales gold rushes. Using poetry, the *Argus* invited ‘the poor and suffering of all the earth’ to Victoria: ‘the disappointed citizens of France, the patriots of Spain, the sadly wakening dreamers of Germany, “the trampled one of Italy,” the “children of brave Poland”’. The poet continues Picturesquely ‘make your homes within her wilds, your cities in her wastes’. It is worth quoting Sutherland at length because, as well as demonstrating his marvel at the figures, he makes important observations on the results.

In the five years beginning 1852 there arrived about 100,000 from England, and 4000 from Wales; 50,000 from Scotland, and 60,000 from Ireland. There came 8000 from Germany, and 1500 from France; while Italy and Spain and Poland and Denmark and Norway and Sweden together sent 5000; the United States contributed 3000; China furnished 25,000 of her Tartar labourers, the British colonies scattered abroad sent 3500, and India sent of her dark-skinned races about 300. These mingling crowds raised the population in less than six years from 77,000 to 463,000. Large numbers of these arrivals were disappointed [by not succeeding on the gold fields] ... But the great majority found the colony on the whole to their taste. Of the 102,000 persons who came from Europe during 1852 and 1853, only 4000 departed.

Sutherland notes that most became city and town dwellers. If the ‘skilled mechanic’ for six pounds a week or ‘stalwart labourer’ for three could work ‘why, then, should he trouble himself about the goldfields?’ Melbourne grew rapidly to become the largest city in Australia and, importantly because of the improvement of transport technology and other services and infrastructure, grew as a truly suburban

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10 Still the best reference for this extraordinary period is Serle’s *The Golden Age*.
12 Sutherland, *Victoria and Its Metropolis*, vol. 1, p. 325.
13 Sutherland, *Victoria and Its Metropolis*, vol. 1, p. 325.
city. Within a wide-ranging scale, most of its dwellings could be and were described as villas in form and most were Italianate in style.\(^\text{14}\)

Melbourne became one of the least densely populated cities in the world. Graeme Davison compares it with other great cities in 1889 thus: Melbourne had 3 people to the acre or 7 people to the hectare; Chicago had 10 or 25; London had 53 or 131; and Paris had 122 or more than 300 people to the hectare.\(^\text{15}\) This was not just because the population was diversely democratic, as noted by Sutherland, but because of the rapid provision of transport infrastructure such as trams—eventually the largest tram system in the world—and trains which stretched out from the city centre in every direction. The first suburban railway in Australia was built between the centre of the city and Port Melbourne in 1854. It was so successful that a branch line was built to St Kilda just two years later. New suburbs popped up at distant stations promoted by real estate agents subdividing rural land for the construction of villas. In Moreland, in the 1880s, the architects Crouch and Wilson were commissioned to design model villas for The Grove Estate, many of which were built.\(^\text{16}\) Tram lines and railway stations prompted the development of shopping strips while rural railways improved the supply of foodstuffs from distant

\(^\text{14}\) Any number of examples could be quoted but perhaps the most consistent uses of the term ‘villa’ are in the calls by architects for tenders to construct, notices of intention by owners and their agents to build, and the advertisements (often embellished) by real estate agents to sell villas. These are used extensively as evidence for the examples in this chapter.

\(^\text{15}\) Davison, *Marvelous Melbourne*, p. 12, quoting the Victorian Yearbook, 1888-9, p. 488 but he adds in a footnote the important caution that ‘These figures take no account of differing boundaries and are useful only for illustrative purposes’. In the mid-1950s, Robin Boyd with Peter McIntyre made exactly the same observation, comparing Melbourne with London, Paris and Rome, in their film, *Your House and Mine*, by superimposing the outline of Melbourne on those of the other cities.

\(^\text{16}\) Vale Collection of Subdivision Plans, Map Collection, SLV.
country centres. Melbourne became a city of mostly middle-class home-owners and the ideal was an Italianate villa set on a quarter acre block.\footnote{17}

\textbf{A Model Transformed}

Against this background, it will not come as a surprise that the Italianate villa model was transformed. In fact, it survived well by adapting to suit the tenor of the times. The model’s essential Picturesque qualities such as its garden setting, its siting for aspect and prospect (preferably with a tower), and its use of the diagonal axis continued limited only by increasingly smaller allotments. Greater prosperity meant that existing houses could be ‘Italianized’ by the addition of towers if not whole new wings. The Classical vocabulary of the model became more ornate and sophisticated, even Mannerist. Asymmetry came to be the norm, especially with the addition of new wings and towers. The result was that villas were transformed from semi-rural establishments comprising small buildings on large estates to very grand, even overblown houses on relatively small blocks of land.

The villa lifestyle of the owners also changed. With the increasing sophistication of the urban food supply, self-sufficiency from the orchard and kitchen garden changed to an interest in decorative and recreational gardening, with the leaders of Society forming the Victoria Horticultural Society as early as 1848 and competing in its annual shows.\footnote{18} Professional landscapers and gardeners provided advice and labour, while nurserymen provided the plants.\footnote{19} A few

\footnote{17} Davison, \textit{Marvelous Melbourne}, Ch. 8 “A City of Freehold Homes”. See also Table 11 ‘Percentage Houses Owner- or Purchaser Occupied by suburb 1881-1901’, p. 181.

\footnote{18} Garryowen, \textit{Chronicles of Early Melbourne}, pp. 429-32. The membership could not have been more distinguished although the names of gardeners are included along with the gentlemen and a few ladies.

\footnote{19} The largest nurseries was located off Brighton Road, on the rich alluvial flats of St Kilda, ideally situated to serve the villas of the fashionable south-eastern suburbs. George Brunning, former gardener at Somerleyton Hall, Suffolk, England, ‘founded the nurseries, that afterwards were
orchards were even planted as decoration and to be seen from the house. The sense of retreat, with increasing wealth and leisure, is demonstrated by home-sports such as tennis, croquet and archery. These recreational elements in the garden were often linked by axes to the house. Private libraries are superseded by public libraries and the local mechanics institute. Improved transport allowed people to work in the city and sleep in the suburbs.

Notwithstanding the closer sub-division of large semi-rural allotments into suburban villa sites, many early and most middle examples of villas survived into the early twentieth century. To understand the quantity, quality and distribution of the villas that mushroomed around Melbourne from its beginning to its boom years, it is best to refer to the extremely detailed and accurate plans prepared by the Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works (MMBW). From the early 1890s, the MMBW prepared the plans in anticipation of the sewerage of the city. They show suburban villas of all sizes, often named, set in their Gardenesque grounds with sweeping drives and paths in vast estates or tight little plots on small allotments. Service areas are included in intricate detail, materials of construction are shown, and, from the layout of larger estates, it is possible to imagine just how self-sufficient the villas could still be. The plans provide a remarkable snapshot of a metropolis, which was derided by the Sydney press as ‘Marvellous Smelbourne’ because of its notorious need for a sewerage system.

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21 This was principally the *Bulletin* magazine. It also called Sydney’s arch rival ‘Smellboon’, *Garden, History of Victoria*, p. 209.
The surfeit of examples of the Italianate villa model in Melbourne makes the choice of examples difficult. Some are important for their early date and direct link with the model’s emergence in Tasmania. Certain examples deserve to be mentioned because they were well known for their prominent scale and location. Others are of interest as extravagant examples of the model. All are of interest for their owners. There were, of course, villas built in the Gothic stream, some of which are mentioned in passing, but they were always fewer and earlier. See Appendix 4 for a list of representative examples.

After exploring the direct link with Tasmania through James Blackburn and Samuel Jackson, the discussion considers three significant samples. The first group of Italianate villas, a string along the high ground of South Yarra, has been chosen for its early representation of the villa form and semi-rural lifestyle, as a geographical and topological cluster and for the type of person who occupied the villas. The group terminates at Toorak House. The house ‘portraitist’ and self-titled ‘landscape painter’, William Tibbits painted Toorak House in 1876 and Government House in 1878, 1882, and c.1886. Other watercolours by him form the second group of villas. They represent the middle period of Melbourne’s development when the first settlers, professionals and merchants, consolidated their positions, which became precarious so soon after. The third group is of late examples, although built in an early suburb, and has been chosen for its representation of the luxury and excess of Melbourne’s boom years and for the rather different class of people who occupied them. The discussion concludes with

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22 It is important to note that no examples have been chosen from central Melbourne, the inner grid of streets bounded by Spencer, Spring, Victoria and Flinders Streets or its immediate vicinity in Fitzroy, Carlton, North and West Melbourne. There were examples of houses in the Italianate style in this inner zone, some of great interest such as the remarkable Rostella in Lonsdale Street, Melbourne but none is truly suburban in a villa sense.
Rippon Lea, in Elsternwick, an Italianate villa, which dates from the early period, was modified in the second period and reached its peak in the boom years. It draws together the values which constitute the Italianate villa model, demonstrates its architecture and setting and survives as an epitome of the model.

**James Blackburn in Melbourne**

In April 1849, James Blackburn and his family migrated to Melbourne, then in the Port Phillip District of New South Wales, 'where he immediately set up practice as an engineer and architect'. Within six months, he had been appointed the city surveyor of Melbourne, a position which prevented him practising privately. His son, James Blackburn Junior formed a partnership with another 'builder architect', Arthur Newson. It was this firm which was officially responsible for the commission from the Church of England Diocese to design a residence for the Anglican Bishop of Melbourne. Newson and Blackburn called tenders for Bishopscourt in 1849. Construction was delayed by the discovery of gold in Victoria in 1851 immediately after the colony's Separation from New South Wales. The layout of the grounds has been attributed to the Blackbourns or to the architect, Charles Swyer. The house was completed under the supervision of others but it is generally accepted that James Blackburn Senior was responsible.

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24 Tenders were called twice, firstly in the *Melbourne Herald*, 19 December 1849, p. 2, 'N&B tenders for residence for Lord Bishop of Melbourne' and then the *Port Phillip Gazette*, 27 December 1849, p. 2 'tenders for artisans works on residence of Bishop'. Then a 'Notice of Intention to Build' was submitted to the Melbourne City Council on 21 May 1850, fourteen days before construction started, nominating William Standing as the builder, and Newson & Blackburn as the architects, 'Burchett Index', Historic Buildings Preservation Council [now the Heritage Council of Victoria], 1979.
for the design. Bishopscourt was briefly the third Government House in Melbourne when it was leased from 1874 until 1876 when the present Government House in the Domain was first occupied.

Bishopscourt’s setting is certainly Picturesque and was seen at the time to combine the Sublime and the Beautiful. The eminent landscape designer, James Sinclair, who lived in a cottage nearby in the Fitzroy Gardens, described it in 1865 using classic Picturesque terms and imagery. He begins with the importance of retaining remnant vegetation providing the contrast of old and new, indigenous and exotic, before the advance of Christian civilization.

“Honour unto whom honour is due,” and may it never be withheld from those who spare a few beautiful gums or other trees in the general wreck of a forest at the formation of a city or township, to ornament a building, as has been done in this case, and not only in this particular, but in the rearing mansion, and making a garden around it fit for any monarch, prince or peer in Christendom. In the distribution of the items of natural and artificial beauty the contrast is most pleasing between the dark foliage of the Australian trees, the stone walls of the substantial buildings, and the tower attached to the body of the principal one; all being high and healthily placed. Among other fine spreading trees there are some fine specimens of the acacia and other pinnate leaved plants now (in the evening), going to sleep, as the golden sun of Australia on one side is sinking beneath the hills and the blue sea, and the silver moon is lighting up the horizon on the other, becoming like the grey locks of a good old man, brighter and brighter. In the intervening space the church spires of various creeds, upheld and reared to their height by the powerful among men, form a conspicuous part in the open space before us. ... 

Although the famous ancient River Red Gum, Eucalyptus camaldulensis in the front lawn has now been cut down, Bishopscourt is still set within a large

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26 Garryowen, Chronicles of Early Melbourne, p. 306. Finn links Blackburn with the design directly and mentions the “trouble” he was in for the conflict of interests between his official position as City Surveyor and the construction of the building. This has never been refuted despite intensive research into Bishopscourt, its garden and the architects involved with their design.

27 James Sinclair, ‘The Victorian Cottage Gardener’s Guide’ being the 11th Number of the Gardener’s Magazine, Melbourne, 1856, pp. 7-8. Interestingly, his description of the Catholic Bishop’s garden is quite different, being prosaic in its vocabulary and critical in its assessment; p. 11. Sinclair donated the copy of the magazine to the Public (now State) Library of Victoria in 1865.
garden and sited on a rise overlooking the Fitzroy Gardens. In the nineteenth century it enjoyed a wide prospect from Port Phillip Bay to the south-west, the flourishing new city to the west, and Mount Macedon to the north-west. Blackburn was crucial to the introduction and early development of the Italianate villa in colonial Australia. Blackburn’s extensive library, which included many pattern books has already been discussed in Chapter 4. He was clever in his amalgamation of not just the styles, forms and details they offered but in his adoption of the ideas behind them. His influence in Victoria was limited because he died young.

Samuel Jackson in Melbourne

About the same time, Samuel Jackson, the other Tasmanian architect who had immigrated to Victoria, designed Toorak House, which was to become its second official Government House in 1854. He built the villa for his brother, James Jackson between 1848 and 1851 on the highest part of Toorak in virgin bush land overlooking the Yarra River. With his brothers James and William, Samuel was amongst the first settlers in the Port Phillip District. An ‘observant youth’ living in the district in 1854 recalled the site thus:

These grounds stretched down to the Yarra, on the top of which, below a bluff, was then, or later, the Governor’s boathouse. When we were privileged to go into the Government House garden, we saw that it was full of fine fruit trees. Beyond was a block of land extending to the next cross road, which ran down to the river (I presume the present Kooyong-road),

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28 It is registered under the Heritage Act, Heritage Place No. 137, File No. 602986. The significance of the place and the extent of designation, including the garden, were confirmed in 2000 as a result of proposals to subdivide and sell parts of the garden.


30 James Jackson did not buy the land from the Crown until 27th June 1849, when he bought two allotments, Lots 27 and 28, both about 50 acres at £5 5s 0p and £3 0s 0p per acre, John Butler Cooper, The History of Prahran, Modern Printing Co. Pty. Ltd., Melbourne, 1924, p. 11. The next allotment, lot 29 of about 53 acres was bought by Jackson’s business partner, James Rae at £1 10s 0p per acre.
and noticeable on account of the immense size of the gum trees standing on it.\textsuperscript{31}

The house was much altered and improved after 1854 by the Public Works Department for its role as the vice-regal residence but always stayed within its original character as an Italianate villa.\textsuperscript{32} A rather crude vignette of Toorak House in its earliest condition is used to head Chapter XIX 'The Era of Democracy—1854 to 1860' in \textit{Victoria and Its Metropolis}, published in 1888.\textsuperscript{33}

\textsuperscript{31} Cooper, \textit{History of Prahran}, pp. 44 & 46. The youth grew up to become His Honour Frederick Revers Chapman, judge of the Supreme Court of New Zealand.

\textsuperscript{32} Charles Mapleton, \textit{Letter Book} held by the City of Melbourne Archives, p. 49. These included changes to the verandah by the addition of an upper storey and to the tower by the conversion of the low-pitched roof with eaves to a balustrade. The south elevation is of special interest with its alternate pediments over the windows, an early use of Renaissance revival detailing. Because of its status, changes to the villa are well documented in historical illustrations.

\textsuperscript{33} Sutherland, \textit{Victoria and Its Metropolis}, vol. 1, p. 357. By way of a 'bookend', the Governor's Chalet on Mount Macedon concludes Chapter XXV 'Recent Times', vol. 1, p. 490. It is interesting to note that, remarkably, the present Government House, occupied in 1876, is not illustrated, except for a 'glimpse' from the Botanic Gardens, vol. 1, p. 565. Rather, there are portraits of the Governor and his wife, Sir Henry Brougham and Lady Loch, vol. 1, p. 486. Otherwise there are nine close illustrations of villas in Vol 2B. The six in the Italianate style, all grand houses, are: Tara, Camberwell, the residence of Sir John O'Shanassy; Linden, Prahran, the residence of John Dunne; Wickhiffe House, town residence of J. D. Wyselaskie; Armadale House, Armadale, home of Hon. James Munro; Leura, Toorak, the residence of the Hon. R. Simson; and Wombalano, Toorak, the residence of J. M. Bruce. Interestingly, most of the houses are symmetrical, suggesting a preference for formality by richer owners. This is the same trend towards conservatism explored by J. Mordaunt Crook in \textit{The Rise of the Naveaux Riches}, John Murray, London, 1999. Only three examples are illustrated from the Gothic stream and they are much smaller. They are Avoca, South Yarra, then the residence of Mrs Elizabeth Kirk; Findon, the residence of the late Hon. Henry Miller; and Hilton Wood, Hawthorn, the home of Mrs Elizabeth Wood. It is interesting to note that, according to the accompanying text, the two humble Gothic villas where the widows lived were both homes of 'retiring' men.
Jackson also designed Charnwood, an Italianate villa with a tower, on top of the St Kilda hill for Octavius Brown in 1851. The villa, aligned on the diagonal, was set in the north-west corner of about 78 acres [31.4ha] and on the highest point of the suburb. It was surrounded by gardens and paddocks and had emus, kangaroos and goats roaming the grounds. As late as the 1890s, after subdivision, there was still enough room for an orchard, vegetable gardens and there was even provision for milk cows in a shed. The house was approached at an angle from the south. It would have enjoyed clear views to Port Phillip Bay in the distance and the billabong and Aboriginal corroboree ground below at the nearby St Kilda junction. The diagonal alignment of the house, and therefore of its tower, means that to the south-west it would have looked to the entrance, known as ‘The Heads’, of Port Phillip Bay, a particularly dangerous stretch of water. To the north-west it would have looked beyond the city to Mount Macedon. To the north-east it would have looked to the Yarra Ranges and, in the

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34 Tenders for quarrying & carting bluestone rubble from land of Octavius Brown called by Samuel Jackson, Melbourne Herald, 7 December 1850, p. 3; and, tenders for residence &c for Octavius Brown called by Samuel Jackson, Melbourne Herald, 22 May 1851, p. 2. John Butler Cooper, The History of St Kilda, Printers Proprietary Ltd., 1931, vol. 1, p. 94, states that Brown built the house in 1853 which may be the completion date. Then Cooper in History of St Kilda, vol. 1, at pp. 268-9, he ascribes it first to Brown and then to another, more elusive character. He states, relying on the memoirs of a Mrs. Knox, that Charnwood had been built for a successful, and then bankrupted squatter Matthew Harvey, ‘who spared no expense in the construction of the place’. There is no Matthew Harvey listed in Billis & Kenyon, Pastoral Pioneers, or in The Port Phillip Almanac and Directory for 1847, J. J. Mourtiz, comp., Melbourne Herald, Melbourne, 1847, facsimile ed., 1979, p. 99, although the Ambrose Kyte whom Cooper calls Harvey’s ‘partner’, is listed in the latter as a ‘dealer, off Bourke lane’, [i.e. Little Bourke Street], p. 103. According to Cooper, and other sources, Kyte lived in Oakleigh Hall, East St Kilda, which was completed in 1864. Ambrose Kyte died in 1868, Victorian Pioneers Index, Reg. No. 5097, but no comparable death can be ascribed to Harvey although Cooper suggests that they died about the same time. St Kilda is not included in the Sands and Kenny Directory for 1857.

35 MMBW, Detail Plan No. 1359, 40': 1", 1897.

36 This is the view chosen in the only known surviving photograph. The drive shown in MMBW, Detail Plan No 1359, 1897 probably continued to the intersection of Charnwood Crescent with High Street (now St Kilda Road) originally.

37 The waterhole and the dancing ground with one surviving Eucalyptus camaldulensis survive much altered at St Kilda Junction, one of the busiest road and tram intersections in inner Melbourne.
south-east, the mushrooming villas of the better suburbs of Melbourne.

Charnwood was the temporary home of the new governor, Sir Charles Manners Sutton when he arrived in 1866. Just as the presence of Toorak House had given that area social prestige so did Charnwood on top of St Kilda’s hill. It is not known if Samuel Jackson owned a professional library. But he had little training as an architect, was not innovative, nor even imaginative so it might be presumed that he used, and even relied upon, pattern books. There is no evidence that Jackson was sensitive to the tension between the Sublime and the Beautiful.

**Villas along the Yarra River**

The words of an early and worthy commentator on Melbourne and its suburbs deserve attention. The family of William Westgarth, merchant, financier, politician and historian were gentry from the north of England. Well-respected and liked, he became ‘a spokesman for the broad radical front ... which opposed the conservative, largely Anglican, official class’. Indeed, his reminiscences sound amiable.

In 1844 I lived in a little cottage at South Yarra, on the Dandenong or Gardiner’s Creek-road, then only a bush track, although considerably trodden. I had not many neighbours. Mr. [James] Jackson, at the far end,

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38 Cooper, *The History of St Kilda*, p. 268; and *Argus*, 20 June 1936, p. 8.
39 A search in the SLV catalogue for books, which he might have sold when he left Melbourne in 1862, proved to be fruitless. His books might have been sold in a general sale or auction. There is a SLV catalogue entry *Early Australia: an exhibition of books, pictures and objects of historic interest from the collection of Spencer Jackson Esq* at the Athenaeum Gallery, 1953.
40 Jackson’s own home, Wattle House on the lower part of St Kilda, is highly picturesque in the domestic Gothic revival style, again typical of pattern books. He is listed as living in St Kilda in the *Port Phillip Directory*, 1847, p. 99, but no street address is given. His daughter inherited the house; *Argus*, 22 June 1878, p. 2, auction notice for Wattle House, lately occupied by Miss Murphy, property of Mrs Mary Ann Lawson, daughter of the late Samuel Jackson.
41 Geoffrey Serle, ‘Westgarth, William (1815-1889)’, in *Nairn*, gen. ed., *ADB*, vol. 6, pp. 379-83. See also Garyowen, *Chronicles of Early Melbourne*, who includes many references to Westgarth and who was an important source for Serle. One suspects that Westgarth and Finn would have seen eye to eye.
had bought Toorak, but had not yet built [Toorak House] upon it; and the near end was graced by Mr. R. H. Browne's pretty villa, in its ample grounds, sold shortly before to Major Davidson, and constituting the palace of its time along the road.\(^ {43} \)

With Melbourne just coming out of the economic depression of the early 1840s, Westgarth rented 'the allotment next beyond the Major's' and he thought that he 'got a fairly habitable large cottage, with twenty-five picturesque acres, and the remains, such as they were, of a garden, for £30 a year'.\(^ {44} \) The land went down to the Yarra River and his was only one of many villas to be built along the ridge to take advantage of the location and topography.\(^ {45} \) Most survived on reduced allotments until at least the end of the nineteenth century and it is clear that they were aligned to take advantage of their ripine views.\(^ {46} \) In Westgarth's time, the cottage enjoyed the Classical name of Tempé but it had been advertised to let in the Government Gazette as 'Mary Villa House and Ground, situate in Suburban

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\(^ {43} \) William Westgarth, *Personal Recollections of Early Melbourne & Victoria*, George Robertson & Co. Melbourne, 1888, p. 30. However, Cooper, *History of Prahran*, p. 26, states 'Westgarth errs in his date. Jackson did not purchase until the Crown land sale of 27th June, 1849, when he bought two 54-acre blocks, and James Rae, his partner, bought the remaining block of 53 acres situated between Orrong and Kooyong roads, and Malvern-road and Toorak-road.'

\(^ {44} \) William Westgarth, *Personal Recollections*, p. 31.

\(^ {45} \) Punt Road was the north-south boundary between the City of Melbourne and the 'country' which became the suburb of South Yarra under separate municipal government. For those villas which were east of Punt Road, see George Tibbits, 'History of Prahran', *Prahran Conservation Study*, Nigel Lewis and Associates, for the City of Prahran, 1984; *Prahran Significant Trees and Gardens Study*, Timothy Hubbard Pty Ltd, for the City of Prahran, 1992; and *Prahran Conservation Study Review*, Context Pty Ltd for the City of Stonnington, Brunswick, 1996. Avoca, Tivoli, Blairgowrie, Rosemount, Bona Vista (later called Grantham), Rockley, Como, Mount Verdant, Balmerino, and Toorak House were the most important early villas. Some were demolished without trace. Others were rebuilt keeping their names. A few survive as the core of later houses. Como, now owned by the National Trust of Australia (Vic.) is resplendent in its late nineteenth century condition still with much of its semi-rural landscape. The Swedish Church now owns Toorak House, standing much reduced grounds but appearing more or less as it did when last used as Government House in 1874. There was also a small number of important villas on the west side of Punt Road, bordering the Botanic Gardens Reserve. These have all been demolished. Refer to Miles Lewis, 'Melbourne Mansions', on-line database.

\(^ {46} \) They appear in the MMIB Detail Plan No. 37, about 600m from the southern riverbank and set at slightly different angles but all are skew to the original cadastral subdivision and the later street subdivision.
Allotment 6, on the South side of the Yarra, close to the residence of P. W. Welsh, Esq., ... and Mr. Payne. 47

Westgarth must have appreciated gardens. When he moved to another 'pretty cottage' on the north side of Melbourne, in an area now called Coburg, and this time on the Merri Creek, he emphasises how lucky he was.

Besides the presentable cottage, there was a large, well-stocked garden, a ten-acre (?) cultivation field, and a small natural park (vulgarily, paddock), in all 46 acres, for £50, plus £300 of inevitable mortgage. I called it Maryfield, after my parental home in Edinburgh, and revelled in grapes, plums, and peaches, and much other country happiness. When a host of visitors, on a bright summer day, would rather strain the narrow larder, I used to divert the party into the garden, where they could complete their meal, although at times with inconvenient demand, from the male section at least, upon the brandy. 48

Avoca, the villa closest in this group to Melbourne, survives and is Gothic revival in style rather than Italianate. It began as a very early house on the north side of the South Yarra hill and was probably built for the barrister, E. J. Brewster. 49

George Kirk, who operated a tannery on the bank of the Yarra River below, purchased Avoca in 1860. Although altered and extended it retains the integrity of its origins and, in that sense, the house does not reflect the boom period of Melbourne. Kirk died in 1882 and his widow, Mrs. Elizabeth Kirk continued living in Avoca. 50 Early illustrations of the south bank of the Yarra at this point show extensive vineyards and other cultivation. The MMBW Detail Plan of 1899 shows a reduced allotment, with closer development crowding in but there is still a conservatory, fernery and a fowl house as well as the usual stables and other outbuildings.

47 Port Phillip Government Gazette, 1843, p. 72 as quoted by Lewis, 'Melbourne Mansions', on-line database.
48 Westgarth, Personal Recollections, p. 33.
49 See Lewis, 'Melbourne Mansions', on-line database, which quotes Kerr, Melbourne Almanac & Port Phillip Directory, 1841, 'Brewster, E J, Barrister at law, Chairman of Quarter Sessions, p.p. 'Avoca', South Melbourne (sic).' Brewster was the original purchaser of lot 2 on which Avoca stands.
50 Sutherland, Victoria and Its Metropolis, vol. 2, p. 482.
house as well as the usual stables, and other outbuildings.

Closer to where Westgarth first lived, there was a villa called Tivoli which was built, perhaps as early as 1840, by George Augustus Robinson, the Chief Protector of Aborigines.51 According to J. B. Cooper

The name of “Tivoli” was taken from that of the town in Italy, east of Rome, on the slope of the Sabine Hills. The name owed its selection to the “Protector” George Augustus Robinson, who built the house. He may have named the place so out of feeling of admiration, which most Britons felt towards Italy in the Italian liberation, which was more or less in progress in those years.52

Robinson competed in the first exhibition of the Victoria Horticultural Society, held in 1850 at the nearby Botanic Gardens, but failed to win a prize.53 His property Tivoli was so fine that the newly arrived Anglican Bishop of Melbourne ‘was anxious to get Mr. Robinson’s house … but was refused’ ending up instead at Bishopscourt in East Melbourne.54 There is some confusion as to the next occupants of Tivoli, however, or at least the sequence.

A Mrs. McLaren seems to have been the occupant in the early 1850s. James Sinclair described her garden in detail, in his typically florid style. In contrast to the self-sufficiency of the kitchen gardens, he makes a Picturesque and sentimental reference, by association, to a ‘weeping’ tree and death.

In every land under the sun there are some choice spirits, and in no case can this be more exemplified than in Mrs. McLaren’s villa, South Yarra, where thirteen acres are devoted to fruit, flower, vegetable and tree culture. Evergreens of all kinds, fruit trees of all kinds, winding walks and spreading lawns of gravel [sic] and grass surround a neatly built cottage, where a

51 See ‘Robinson, George Augustus (1788-1866)’, in Pike, gen. ed., ADB, vol. 2, pp. 385-7; Vivienne Rae-Ellis, Black Robinson: protector of Aborigines, Melbourne University Press, Carlton, 1996; Allan Drummond, George Augustus Robinson, Green Barrow Publishing, Mentone, c.1999. The house was also called Trivoria. Robinson is said to have built two other houses, Blairgowrie and Rosemount.
52 Cooper, History of Prahran, p. 53. Garibaldi actually visited Victoria in the 1860s.
53 Edmund Finn (Garryowen), Early Chronicles of Melbourne, vol. 1, p. 430.
54 Lewis, ‘Melbourne Mansions’, on-line database, quoting Sally Graham, Pioneer Merchant, Hyland House, Melbourne, 1985, p. 188.
beautiful weeping willow, with its pendulous branches, stands solemnly by a porch, telling us as plainly as possible, like that o'er the one resting place of Napoleon, of departed greatness. The hand which directed the noble work of decorating and enriching the Yarra's banks, was soon staid, but not before a lasting monument was reared to perpetuate the memory of a good man.\textsuperscript{55}

That she did live there until 1853 seems certain because a notice appeared in March of that year. 'Wm. Tennent and Co. have been favoured to sell by public auction, the elegant and handsome furniture pertaining to the residence of Mrs. McLaren, situated immediately beyond W. M. Bell Esq.'s property and adjoining that of Mr. Howey's.'\textsuperscript{56}

In the later 1850s, Tivoli may have passed to another distinguished occupant, William Montgomery Bell, the next-door neighbour mentioned in the auction notice. Bell was no less than the fifth Lord Mayor of Melbourne, a merchant in the city, a squatter with early interests in the northern part of the Western District and first President of the Horticultural Society.\textsuperscript{57} He is credited with establishing the first vineyards in the colony at his previous home, the Gothic revival villa Avoca, already mentioned. Quoting his daughter, J. B. Cooper states that "Tivoli," in the time of the Bell's occupancy, had its hayfields, poultry, pigs, beehives, rabbits, and flower garden, while in its vicinity bush nature was

\textsuperscript{55} James Sinclair, 'The Victorian Cottage Gardener's Guide' being the 12\textsuperscript{th} Number of the \textit{Gardener's Magazine}, Melbourne, 1856, pp. 10. Sinclair seems to be alluding to George Augustus Robinson in his comparison with Napoleon's greatness. Is Sinclair comparing Robertson's status with Napoleon's or, tongue-in-cheek, their similar statures?

\textsuperscript{56} The advertisement actually appears twice in the same edition, \textit{Port Phillip Herald}, 8 March 1853 p. 6, col. f and p. 8, col. f. All her household substantial goods were up for sale including a new stove.

\textsuperscript{57} For a frank assessment of his character, see Garryowen, \textit{Chronicles of Early Melbourne}, vol. 1, pp. 311 and 429 and many other references. See also Billis and Kenyon, \textit{Pastoral Pioneers}, pp. 25, 205 and 223. The two runs were Englefield and Hyde Park which were held briefly in the 1840s. Bell seems to have been the owner of Tivoli but may have rented it to another merchant, Charles C. Graham briefly in 1862. See Sands and MacDougall \textit{Directory}, 1862, which lists Graham as the occupant. The Bell family returns and occupies the house for some time afterwards. When William M. Bell died in 1867, at the age of 54, his second name was given as 'Montgomerie', a spelling which occurs elsewhere; \textit{PV}, Reg. No. 9352.
represented by snakes, wild cats, and oppossums.\textsuperscript{58} Some centuries-old remnant River Red Gum trees, \textit{Eucalyptus camaldulensis}, which would have stood between the villa and the river, survived in the grounds until very recently.\textsuperscript{59}

No architect has been connected with the original design and there is some doubt about the villa’s early appearance.\textsuperscript{60} A sketch by Captain Forrest, one of the very first occupants of the area, shows a single-storey symmetrical colonial bungalow with a verandah on three sides and openwork pilaster columns but no tower.\textsuperscript{61} A photograph taken in the 1860s of the ‘Residence of – Bell Esq. N’ Melbourne’ shows a classic symmetrical single storey Italianate villa with a columned and pedimented porch, a verandah on three sides with open pilasters, several segmental bay windows, and a tower at the rear, possibly over another entrance.\textsuperscript{62} The villa shows the double façade form.\textsuperscript{63} A photograph, held by the descendants of later occupants, the Graham family, shows the same house.\textsuperscript{64} The tower may have been added as late as 1876 when tenders were called by the architects, W. H. Elleker and Co. for alterations to the residence of Mrs. Barbara Bell, Tivoli, South Yarra, but this could also be a wing added to the south of the main house.\textsuperscript{65} To add further confusion, the 1860s photograph is remarkably similar to an unidentified house drawn by Ernest Stocks in two watercolours ‘Villa

\textsuperscript{58} Cooper, \textit{History of Prahran}, p. 53.
\textsuperscript{59} The trees were amongst the last surviving anywhere in central Melbourne. The site had become the Copelen Centre for Children run by the Uniting Church of Australia. It was demolished and subdivided for apartments in the late 1990s. It is perhaps ironic that the species is named after a district in central Italy, Camaldoli.
\textsuperscript{60} See Emily Maud Robb, \textit{Early Toorak}, Robertson and Mullens, Melbourne, 1934, pp. 20-23, and photograph p. 20.
\textsuperscript{61} This is held in the City of Stonnington Archives, No. 283 and, according to Miles Lewis, ‘Melbourne Mansions’, on-line database ‘resembles Robb’s photo of Tivoli’.
\textsuperscript{62} National Gallery of Australia, Photo. No. R4290.7, now attributed to Charles Nettleton and dated c.1867.
\textsuperscript{63} But this is not directly comparable to the footprint which shows a simpler building: MMBW, \textit{Sewerage Detail Plan No. 37, 160:1"}, 1897.
\textsuperscript{64} It is held by the Crooke family at Holey Plains, an Italianate villa near Sale in Gippsland.
\textsuperscript{65} \textit{Argus}, 30 October 1876, p. 3.
Port Phillip Bay; Entrance Front 1880' and 'Villa Port Phillip Bay; Garden Front 1880', but close inspection betrays important discrepancies beyond artistic licence.\footnote{These are illustrated in Converting the Wilderness: The Art of Gardening in Colonial Australia, Australian Gallery Directors Council, Sydney, 1979, pp 57 & 70. The former shows the Bay in relatively close proximity. There are also architectural details which are different, such as the doors leading to the tower balcony. It is also similar to Craigellachie, an Italianate villa at the corner of Orrong Road and Inkerman Street, St Kilda, extended for the pastoralist, William Pearson M.L.A. in 1876, probably to the design of architect, Sydney William Smith. More intriguing is the similarity with Charles Webb's first home, the marine villa Chilton in Wellington Street, Brighton, which he designed for himself in 1853. Webb moved to his larger second home, another Italianate villa called Farleigh, nearby in Park Street, in 1867 and adjacent to his brother's villa. Miles Lewis, 'Melbourne Mansions', on-line database quotes an auction notice 'instructed to sell by W. M. Bell, [William Montgomery Bell?] that gentleman's unique, tastefully furnished & well-known cottage in Wellington St, Brighton, in the immediate vicinity of the residences of Messrs J Webb, C Webb & L Cockburn. \textit{Argus}, 31 Oct 1860, p. 2.} There were so few men with the surname Bell living in or near Melbourne in the 1860s who could assume the title ‘Esquire’, that it seems most likely that the 1860s photograph is, indeed, of Tivoli.

So, in one of the earliest and most fashionable suburbs of Melbourne, Tivoli and its neighbours juxtaposed civilization, in the form of an Italianate villa surrounded by decorative and productive gardens, and the primeval in their bushland setting by the river—the Beautiful and the Sublime. The Italianate villa model was established not just in its synthesis of style, form and function but with its deeper domestic qualities and associations which gave it meaning within the Picturesque aesthetic and against the background of increasing democracy.

\textbf{Examples in Victoria in the 1870s}

The construction of Government House during the first half of the 1870s dominated the decade and confirmed the acceptability of the Italianate villa model for Melbourne’s finest domestic architecture. Government House offered not just a physical model but a domestic ideal. Government House obviously symbolised Royalty, as the vice-regal residence, but in style and form it was not disconnected
with that ultimate ideal of domesticity, Osborne House on the Isle of Wight where Queen Victoria lived with her children in dutiful retirement and continuing mourning, in absolute retreat.\textsuperscript{67} Before his early death, Prince Albert had supervised the estate’s productivity and the princes and princesses had played in their own cottage complete with a functioning kitchen. These associations worked both for the larger houses, the so-called ‘mansions’, and the countless small suburban villas.

While there may be a decline in the notion of self-sufficiency from orchards and kitchen gardens in smaller allotments—and few people would have kept pigs—there is clear evidence of an increase in the provision of recreation and entertainment on large estates, especially lawn tennis courts.\textsuperscript{68} There are references to rooms specifically used as libraries in large villas. The notion of retreat persevered, although the transport used was the modern tram, train or omnibus. These forms of transport helped to establish nodes for shopping centres and other services. Indeed, the few shops in Toorak soon came to be known as ‘the village’, a term whichendures to this day. It was where the most fashionable landscape gardeners, Taylor and Sangster had their nursery.\textsuperscript{69}

As part of a proprietor’s pride of ownership, many mansion villas were painted in the longstanding tradition of house portraits. The best known painter was the watercolourist, William Tibbits, whose works are of great value as

\textsuperscript{67} The exact relationship between the two places is discussed in Chapter 9, Government House Melbourne.

\textsuperscript{68} There may be a direct link between the increase in grass tennis courts and the introduction of the lawn mower. Unfortunately, the MMBW Detail Plans do not specify the surface of the tennis courts shown.

\textsuperscript{69} It was located on the north-west corner of Toorak Road, formerly Gardiner’s Creek Road, and Wallace Avenue. The site is now occupied by a petrol service station.
historical records. He was not a great artist but Tibbits captured that sense of pride and sense of place in his ‘subjects’ which evokes a deeper meaning than mere ownership. As well as painting the new Government House and its predecessor, Toorak House, Tibbits painted many examples of Italianate villas in Melbourne’s suburbs, others in the country and some in South Australia. They form a good sample of the houses built in those middle years, after the construction of Government House and before the decadence of the boom years which followed. In some cases, the owner’s pride came before the fall when, at the end of the boom, they were forced to abandon their mansions for more modest situations. One of the first and most important pastoral pioneers in colonial Victoria, Edward Henty built Offington in St Kilda Road in 1872. Indeed, he was the fourth son of Thomas Henty, considered the first permanent settler in Victoria, and he had been an early Member of Parliament. His architect was George Johnson. William Tibbits painted Offington in 1878 the year that Edward died at home there. The house is now demolished but it was a relatively modest Italianate villa and typical of how the model appeared in the

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71 Two rural examples, Wando Dale north of Coleraine and Darriwill near Bannockburn are discussed in Chapter 8.
74 Tibbits, William Tibbits. cover, and pl. 10 plan on p. 83. A few years before, the artist Thomas Clarke had painted Muntham, Edward Henty’s home station. That painting, in oils, goes beyond the genre of house portraits and is one of the best examples of the Claudian pastoral ideal from that period in the Western District.
75 MMBW, Detail Plan No. 905, 40° 1”, 1895; but see also Plan Nos. 643, 644, 649, & 906.
prosperous ‘middle’ years of colonial Victoria. Two-storeyed and symmetrical, it was surrounded on three sides by a two-storey cast iron verandah. There was no tower, just a projection at the centre of the verandah to mark the entrance. Attached to the verandah on one side there was a large semi-circular green house, another beside that and two more at the rear, which suggests some serious amateur gardening. Also at the rear, there is an extensive ‘fowl run’ while the space to the north of the house could have been a vegetable garden. The house sits on a bluestone podium with formal gardens laid out before it. Henty’s widow continued to live at Offington until 1900. Tibbits’ watercolour demonstrates the dignified and distinguished position which the Henty family enjoyed in the society of colonial Victoria, symbolised by a suburban Italianate villa in its garden.

Tyalla, now also demolished, was built in 1874 by the very early and venerable mercantile pioneer, J. B. Were. His architect was Albert Purchas. The two-storey villa was asymmetrical and had a tower over the entrance and bay windows looking out in three directions. It was set in vast grounds comprising eleven acres in Toorak, just east of Toorak House, situated on a slight rise with terraces, lawns and gardens to the north, west and east. From a contemporary plan, exact details can be discerned. The grounds included an aviary and fernery near the house, an extensive area to the south-east laid out in rectangular beds, possibly as a kitchen garden and, beyond the paddocks, a sunken tennis court in the north-west corner. The large grassed terrace may be a croquet lawn.

James Balfour purchased Tyalla in 1880, making a swap with Were for

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77 See MMBW, Detail Plan No. 994, 1895.
his home, Wellington, in Brighton, although there must have been other
considerations and it was Balfour who commissioned Tibbits to paint the house.

James Balfour was a merchant, churchman and politician who served both as a
M.L.A. and as a M.L.C.. Tyalla was described in 1888 in detail.

The house contains Entrance hall, Dining, Drawing & Breakfast rooms,
Library and Bedroom, on the ground floor & on the first floor are four (4)
bedrooms, 2 nurseries, & 2 bathrooms and 2 servants rooms & a small room
in the Tower which forms part of and is built into the house. There is also a
kitchen, scullery, laundry and day nursery. A stable (with 2 stalls & 2 loose
boxes) Coach house, Hay room, Man’s room & store room is built close to
the south boundary of the land & at a good distance from the house.99

Tyalla is of particular interest because it demonstrates how the mighty fell
as a result of the collapse of the boom years. Balfour was forced to lease his grand
mansion in 1895 and move to a more humble situation, another Italianate villa,
Illapa, in Kew. Its owner, Nicholas O’Connor had been forced to move in turn and
in 1901, Illapa was sold by O’Connor’s creditors with Balfour as the occupant.80

Balfour was associated with the infamous speculators, Sir Matthew Davies and his
brothers, whose grand schemes collapsed spectacularly and led to Balfour’s
‘financial humiliation’.81 In 1901, he had Tyalla, a ‘handsome two storey brick
residence’ and part of the 7½ acres of land for sale at the price of £13,000.82 He
finally sold to his second tenant, William Gibson of Foy and Gibson, one of
Melbourne’s major retailers, in 1906 without returning to Tyalla.83

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90 Davisson, ‘Balfour, James (1830-1913)’, in Pike, gen. ed., *ADB*, vol. 3, p. 81. See also
Cannon, *Land Boomers*, which includes many references to the brothers.
81 George E Henderson, auctioneer, to Bowes Kelly, 31 May 1901, cited by Lewis,
‘Melbourne Mansions’ on-line database.
82 Lemon, *Young Man from Home*, p. 137.
Lakeside, built before 1886 but now also demolished, was in Queens Road, Melbourne overlooking Albert Park Lake. Tibbits painted it in 1901.\textsuperscript{84} It was a single storey symmetrical house with a verandah on three sides and a two-storey balustraded tower over the entrance. It was one of ‘a number of noble residences in Queens Road, all with towers’.\textsuperscript{85} The house is raised on a higher than usual podium, perhaps to compensate for the flat, low-lying ground around the lake, formerly a swamp. When it was put up for sale in 1886 the ‘twelve room villa’ was described as ‘one of the most beautiful houses in the colony’, that it was designed by the architect Robert Dalton and that the footings were capable of holding a second storey.\textsuperscript{86} The owner in 1886 appears to have been William Webb and in 1887 it was James Cook.\textsuperscript{87} In 1895, it was occupied briefly by Rudolph Benjamin, perhaps because James Cook was in financial difficulties, but he at least returned to Lakeside and his widow finally sold the villa in 1926.\textsuperscript{88}

Yarra House, in Anderson Street, South Yarra, built for himself by William Cain in 1882, does survive as part of a girls’ boarding school.\textsuperscript{89} Cain was a building contractor, businessman, pastoralist and Lord Mayor of Melbourne when he was living at Yarra House.\textsuperscript{90} The confident design is very

\textsuperscript{84} Lewis, ‘Melbourne Mansions’on-line database; and Tibbits, William Tibbits, illus. 75.
\textsuperscript{85} Isaac Selby, Old Pioneers Memorial History of Melbourne, Old Pioneers’ Memorial Fund, Melbourne, [1924], p. 247.
\textsuperscript{86} Argus, 13 March 1886, p. 14.
\textsuperscript{87} Sands and Macdougall Directories, 1886 and 1887. Because street numbers are not used, the entries are not certain.
\textsuperscript{89} ‘Burchett Index’, Notice of Intention to Build, No. 8972, 20 October 1881 taken out in the name of William Cain. It is part of the Melbourne Girls Grammar School and is now called Phelis Grimwade House. Cain was a keen supporter of the Church of England and was on the council of the Melbourne Grammar School.
\textsuperscript{90} J. Ann Hone, ‘Cain, William (1831-1914)’, in Pike, gen. ed, ADB, vol. 3, p. 327. Cain is a good example of the Melbourne businessmen with pastoral interests in other colonies. He owned Coan Downs in the northern Riverina, two stations in Queensland and Madowlra Park on the Murray
interesting because of its strong asymmetry, complex massing, use of materials, and dramatic siting. Part of it is three storeys high and the tower, around which the massing pivots, is four storeys high. Unfortunately, the origin of the design is not known. On the one hand, the leading firm of architects in private practice, Reed and Barnes, has been named but without corroborating evidence. On the other, the villa is more reminiscent of pattern book designs than most villas built in Melbourne for many years. Perhaps William Cain owned appropriate pattern books as part of his construction background and used them to design his own house. The house and garden are aligned to maximise the view west across the Botanical Gardens towards the tower of Government House and north towards the River Yarra and Yarra Park. The tower, probably the highest structure in the area apart from Government House, would have had clear points of view in all directions. It was built to see and be seen.

Yarra House has a further aspect of interest. Edna Walling redesigned its garden in 1926 for the later owner, Mr. Norton Grimwade. Her plan shows a curving drive, garden beds confined by sinuous borders, plantings intended to be seen closely from the house on the north side and a vegetable garden beyond the tennis court at the rear. The plan shows how persistent the Picturesque

River near Echuca. Hone notes that 'Cain suffered heavy financial losses in the early 1890s but the rumours of his ruin circulated in 1891 were not justified', p. 327.

91 The well-regarded amateur local historian, Oscar Slater states in 'A Brief History of South Yarra West', that Joseph Reed designed the house. Miles Lewis, 'Melbourne Mansions', on-line database, states that Slater could not account for the attribution and expresses serious caution about it. However, Lewis also states that 'if this is true it is very important'. The original slip of paper lodged by Cain has been sighted. He clearly states that he is building the villa for himself and he mentions no architect.

92 No directly comparable model has been found in the current research into pattern books.

93 The plan, 'Suggested Improvements to Garden, "Yarra House" Anderson St, South Yarra for Mr. Norton Grimwade, is held at the State Library of Victoria, at H40521. Unfortunately, MMBW Detail Plan No. 891, which includes Yarra House, for once, provides very little indication of the garden's arrangement in 1896.
aesthetic was into the twentieth century and how the notion remained, at least nominally, of self-sufficiency in an Italianate villa so close to the centre of Melbourne.

The middle years of the colonial period in Victoria saw a consolidation of conservative wealth and taste which is reflected in the continuing use of the Italianate villa model. Early examples were retained and added to: new examples were built and celebrated in house portraits. It must be said that there was a decline in the self-sufficiency of the suburban villa lifestyle as the metropolis became increasingly sophisticated and previously remote places were more easily accessed and serviced. However, large villas were still built with libraries and there was an increasing emphasis on recreation, especially, it seems, in the playing of tennis.

As the middle years turned into the boom years and beyond, the probity of the owners of all those suburban villas was sorely tested. Few people in Melbourne of any class escaped the effect of the 1890s depression but, before it hit, there were some remarkably opulent if not fraudulent times.

Later Examples in Melbourne’s Suburbs

What is certain is that, after 1876 as Melbourne continued to boom as one of the fastest growing cities in the world, the Italianate style was adopted almost without exception in its domestic architecture. Again, its particular synthesis of style, form and function, adapted and matured with colonial confidence, suited the people and the tenor of the times.

Charnwood, the early Italianate villa at the top of the St Kilda hill, has been mentioned. Many other Italianate villas were built, or rebuilt, in the lower and more fashionable part of St Kilda, closer to the seashore. These are of special
interest for their connections as well as the resort ‘glamour’ of their architecture.

They have suffered a range of fates from demolition to conversion into cheap boarding houses.

Orcadia, now demolished, was small but in a prime position on the rise of the Upper Esplanade. The architects, Smith and Johnson designed the marine villa for Joseph Orkney in 1879. Its tower looked out over bathing establishments and the St Kilda Pier towards the distant You Yangs, distinctive low mountains rising from the flat pastoral plains across Port Phillip Bay. Between it and Wickliffe House, the marine villa of squatter J. B. Wyselaskie stands the Esplanade Hotel. Converted during its construction from three large townhouses, it is just one of several resort hotels which use the Italianate style if not the villa form. Here Alfred Felton, already mentioned as one owner of Murray Downs in the Riverina, lived in a suite of bachelor rooms. The owner of the Esplanade Hotel occupied Orcadia permanently but other villas, like Wickliffe House, were summer residences.

One of the earliest and finest Italianate villas in St Kilda, Barham House and the grandest summer residence, is now called Eildon. It is particularly significant because the stages of its history are so closely linked to pastoralism, squatters and their situation and because, through its two extraordinary ‘overhauls’, it epitomizes the development and later values of the Italianate villa

94 Smith and Johnson, tenders for villa residence, Esplanade, St Kilda for J Orkney, Argus, 7 June 1879, p. 3; Smith and Johnson, tenders for alterations and additions to residence of Joseph Orkney M.L.A., Esplanade, St Kilda, 13 May 1881.
95 There are three others at Queenscliff, two at Sorrento and one at Lorne.
model. John Gill was the original architect in 1852. As early as 1856, it was described as ‘the elegant mansion and grounds of E. B. Green, Esq.’, who was a businessman and pastoralist. At this stage, the house was a symmetrical, two-storey villa with a columned verandah of delicate proportions facing south-west towards Port Phillip Bay. From 1856, it was the leased home of William Nicholson M.L.C., another businessman and pastoralist, when it was described as ‘near the beach, St Kilda ... a magnificent white square building ... one of the finest seats in the colony’. Nicholson was a Radical and, as well as being associated with the introduction of the secret ballot, he introduced the first of the many Land Acts which tried to break the stronghold of the squatters and meet the

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66 Lewis, ‘Melbourne Mansions’, on-line database, which provides important new sources which supersede earlier research undertaken for the Historic Buildings Council, and from which the following references are drawn.

67 John Gill, tenders for the completion of a villa residence in the course of erection at St Kilda for Edward B. Green, *Argus*, 29 July 1852, p. 2. He also called tenders for alterations and additions to the Royal Mail Hotel and adjacent shops and dwelling houses which Green owned from about 1848, *Argus*, 9 April 1856, p. 7 and 4 June 1856, p. 7.

68 Notice of subdivision and sale by Dr Gummell of half of the nearby Gurner’s paddock, *Argus*, 9 April 1856, p. 7. According to Garryowen’s *Chronicles of Early Melbourne*, Edward Bernard Green was a mail contractor, before separation and the discovery of gold in 1851, carrying mail between Melbourne and Sydney by coach, p. 60; Honorary Secretary of the Melbourne Hospital; a Director of the Victorian Fire and Marine Insurance Company; and owner of the Royal Mail Hotel at the very centre of Melbourne; pp. 60, 227-30 and 971. Green also had substantial and long-standing squatting interests at Wanganella and Benalla, along the route to Sydney, and at Deniliquin, in the Riverina of NSW. See Bills and Kenyon, *Pastoral Pioneers*, pp. 73, 218, and 227 and Garryowen, p. 971.

69 See the watercolour by S. T. Gill, ‘Mr. E. B. Green’s Residence’, held in the Nan Kivell Collection of the National Gallery of Australia and reproduced in John Ritchie, *Australia as Once We Were*, Heinemann, Melbourne, 1975, p. 63. The differences in scale and detail trigger some doubt that this is the same house, but both are symmetrical, they appear to orientated the same way, and the disposition of rooms is similar. Barham House may be at the core of Eildon.

70 Peter Cook, ‘Nicholson, William (1816-1865)’, in Pike, gen. ed. *ADB*, vol. 5, pp. 338-339. See also many references to William Nicholson in Garryowen, *Chronicles of Early Melbourne*. Nicholson began as a retail grocer in 1842, was briefly Lord Mayor of Melbourne in 1850, a director of the Benefit Building Society and the Bank of Victoria and chairman of the Melbourne Chamber of Commerce. In 1853 Nicholson became chairman of directors of the Hobson’s Bay Railway Company, with its branch line to St Kilda, the terminus of which was only 250m from Eildon. The arrival of the railway transformed St Kilda into a dormitory suburb.

71 His bill and its passage through Parliament were not very successful. “This and other proposals seeped back and forth between the two Houses. The council returned the bill emasculated by a multitude of amendments. The assembly tried to restore the vital points but the council refused to budge. After public disturbances and two attempts by Nicholson to resign, the almost useless Act was passed in September 1860, leaving a pattern of conflict between the two Houses for the next twenty years” Cook, ‘Nicholson’, *ADB*, vol. 5, p. 339
popular call to ‘unlock the land’. 101

A year after Nicholson’s death in 1865, Richard Twentyman Esq. married Nicholson’s widow in 1866 and occupied Barham. 102 A contemporary photograph shows the villa transformed in the Palladian tradition. The house is still symmetrical and two-storeyed but it is shown with a seven-bay, trabeated and arcuated loggia across the façade, the outer two bays being much reduced. The loggia is balustraded but the roof with bracketed eaves appears at the side. A side entrance and bay window introduce irregularity into the south-east elevation while the grounds are laid out in the Gardenesque style.

By 1869, the executors of E. B. Green were preparing to sell Barham House and adjacent properties. The auction notice states that it is ‘one of the most desirable residences in the colony’. 103 John Lang Currie (1818-1898), 104 ‘one of the greatest sheep breeders and landowners of the Western District of Victoria’ purchased Barham House and within two years the most successful firm of architects in Victoria, Reed and Barnes were calling tenders for extensive

102 Sands and McDougall, Directories, 1867, 1868, and 1870. According to the Directory of 1871, Richard Twentyman moved to Mittagong, adjacent to Barham House. Twentyman had married Sarah Birkitt Nicholson, née Fairclough in 1866; Pioneer Index Victoria, 1836-1888, Reg. No. 1280. He was in partnership with a John Nicholson, almost certainly William Nicholson’s son John who was born in Melbourne in 1843; Pioneer Index Victoria, 1836-1888, Reg. No. 13323. No connection has been established between Richard Twentyman and the prominent firm of Melbourne architects, Twentyman and Askew, but the new façade is very much of their oeuvre. It seems likely that Richard and Edward Twentyman were brothers.

103 Auction notice, Argus, 28 August 1869, p. 2. One of the other properties is of interest. The lot is same size as that of Barham House and included ‘the ancient and desirable SWISS-VILLA’, long since demolished.

104 Extract from the ‘Statement of Significance’, Heritage Council of Victoria, File No. 605015 and Registered Historic Building No. H746. See also J. Ann Hone, ‘Currie, John Lang (1818-1898)’, in Pike, gen. ed., ADB, vol. 3, pp. 510-511. J. L. Currie, who owned the property Larra near Camperdown, effectively retired to St Kilda in the late 1870s. He also had other property interests around Mount Elephant and purchased Titanga near Lismore. See Bills and Kenyon, Pastoral Pioneers, pp. 54, 210, & 249. Before he came to Barham House, from 1863 Currie had occupied Osborne House, a marine villa on the shore of Corio Bay in north Geelong. A plain, symmetrical two-storeyed house, it had been built for the squatter, Robert Muirhead in 1858.
additions.  This is probably when the side wings were added, a new entrance façade with a balustraded parapet was built across the north-east elevation and the garden façade was completely transformed yet again.  The house remains symmetrical but it is more sombre. It was still set within very extensive grounds, long since subdivided, that stretched all the way down to the Gothic ‘village’ church beyond the paddock.  Close to the house, there was a path across the garden façade terminating in steps and two terraced lawns beyond reached by steps on axis with the central door. The view to the Bay has long since been built out. Currie retired to live permanently at Barham House which he called Eildon.

If some villas were developed in stages showing venerable accretions of age, others were built ‘from scratch’. Money from tobacco paid for one of the last great Italianate villas in St Kilda, Halcyon in Acland Street, built in 1886 for the widow, Mrs Annie Dudgeon shortly after the death of her husband, John Dudgeon. The architects, Frederick de Garis and Sons designed the asymmetrical, two-storeyed house.  As with later examples, the tower over the entrance is balustraded and the two-storeyed cast iron verandah is on two sides. It is of special interest for the opulence of its ornamentation and for the Gothic ‘sub-

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105 Argus, 26 May 1871, p. 3. They may have done further work ten years later if tenders they called for then are for Barham House; Argus, 4 January 1881, p. 3, and Argus, 10 October 1881, p. 2.

106 This is how it appears in the MMBW, Detail Plan No. 1366, 40'1", 1897.

107 The church was built between 1854 and 1857 to the design of architects, Purchas and Swyer. This was possibly the same sort of axis as seen at Narrapumelap and Golf Hill in Victoria and Hagley House and Franklin House in Tasmania.

108 F de Garis & Son called tenders for the erection of a family villa at St Kilda in the Argus, 9 Dec. 1885, p. 2, which may refer to this house. John Dudgeon, partner in Dudgeon & Arnell, tobacco importers, had bought the land. Dudgeon died in 1884 and his probate papers included an outstanding account of £84 for preparation of plans by F. De Garis. ‘Halcyon, 53 Acland Street, St. Kilda’: submission to the Classifications Committee of the Historic Buildings Council, Timothy Hubbard Pty Ltd, 1989.
themes' in its decoration, both inside and out. Around the house, there were extensive garden beds with sinuous paths, a tennis court, and a lawn, that novel feature possible because of the invention of the lawn mower. On the south side of the house, there was a fashionable fernery but, at this late date, there is no evidence of self-sufficiency such as an orchard or vegetable garden.

St Leonard's, a grand Italianate villa, in Church Square off Acland Street, St Kilda had direct links with pastoralism. There is some confusion about its earliest years but a small villa may have been built as early as 1850. The main house appears to have started in 1868 when John Matheson, the first general manager of the Bank of Victoria, occupied the site. He also had several pastoral interests including the properties Moranghurk, Maryvale and Mount Napier in the Western District and Kilfera, near Booligal on the Lachlan in the Riverina. He retired as the bank's general manager in 1881 and lived at St Leonard's until 1883 when George Armytage bought the property. Armytage was another squatter with extensive properties in the Western District.

It may be that the asymmetrical towered villa called St Leonard's was not built until 1883 and occupied in 1884. The design has been attributed to the architects, Smith and Johnson. While there are some superficial similarities with

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109 MMBW, _Detail Plan No. 1367, 40'1",_ 1897.
111 Mount Napier was discovered and named by Major T. L. Mitchell, Surveyor General of NSW in 1836. It is an almost perfect volcanic cone and is visible for long distances. Matheson's squating run takes its name from the mount, about 3.0km to its north-west. The mount becomes important in Chapter 6 as one of the most important Pictoresque elements within the pastoral landscape of the Western District.
112 The 1884 Sands and McDougall _Directory_ gives a Frederick Armytage as the occupant. Winchelsea Frederick Armytage was born in 1861 at Winchelsea in the Western District, the son of George Armytage Junior and Louisa Eulalia Armytage, née Flexmore; _Pioneer Index of Victoria_, Reg. No. 20907.
113 Smith and Johnson designed St Leonard's for George Armytage; National Trust of Australia (Vic.) _Trust Newsletter_, III, 6 (Feb 1975), p. 9. Terry Sawyer, a compiler of the 'Melbourne Mansions' on-line database has reservations about the dates and attribution.
the smaller Orcadia, this villa was two-storeyed, was set in very large grounds, had
two orchards, a lawn viewed from the large bow window on the south side, and a
‘paddock’ beyond the front door. 114 In any case, it was advertised to let in 1893, at
the nadir of the depression which followed Melbourne’s boom, as ‘St Leonard’s,
Church Square, a family mansion of fifteen rooms, stables, etc. Also, brick villa at
rear. Apply R. Molesworth ‘Mittagong’, or C. J. & T. Ham, 75 Swanston St.’. 115

By the 1880s, a bird’s eye view of Melbourne—or, indeed, that from the
tower of the new Government House—of the south-east and eastern suburbs would
have provided a semi-rural, heavily treed landscape of large estates with limited
cultivation. Villas of varying sizes would be dotted relatively randomly amongst
the grid of major roads and their tramlines. The villas’ towers claimed their
domain, such as it might be. Clusters of closer development would appear around
railway stations and at major intersections. The only irregularity would have been
provided by the meandering River Yarra, which became a major social division,
and the railways. Toorak, South Yarra, St Kilda, Balaglava, Elsternwick, Caulfield,
Brighton, Malvern, Kew and Hawthorn are all south and east of the Yarra and have
railway stations. The railways radiated out from the two central city stations. This
geographical and sociological pattern, laid down in the earliest years of the city,

114 MMBW, Detail Plan No. 1366, 40':1", 1897. The bow window almost certainly had
three double hung sashes, in which case the orchards were viewed on the diagonals and the back
lawn between them was approached by a flight of steps on axis with the centre. The south-west
orchard was laid out with paths suggesting it was for pleasure as much as production. The axis
generated by the front door passes through the lawn at the centre of the circular drive, across a
curiously winding fence and into the paddock, which is very much a rural term. The paddock was
contiguous with the paddock at the back of Eildon.

115 Argus, 9 December 1893, p 7.

116 MMBW, Detail Plan No. 1366, 40':1", 1897. The bow window almost certainly had
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generated by the front door passes through the lawn at the centre of the circular drive, across a
curiously winding fence and into the paddock, which is very much a rural term. The paddock was
contiguous with the paddock at the back of Eildon.
survives and has been extended almost without limit. Later villas, either debased versions of the Italianate model or in new styles, and then bungalows in twentieth-century styles filled the open spaces. The city's density has increased marginally with closer subdivision in the middle ring of suburbs but it has changed little in a numerical sense in the inner suburbs. Countless examples of detached houses survive. Much of the inner city terrace housing also survives, in a vernacular and sometimes lowly version of the Italianate style, saved from slum clearance in the 1960s by increasing gentrification.

As a final demonstration of the excesses of the 1880s, it is worthwhile looking at how the Italianate villa was used in extreme cases. Terrace housing in Melbourne had existed from the earliest times and, although varied in its forms, was ubiquitously Italianate in its style. There are certain extreme cases where Italianate villas are literally squeezed into inner urban allotments, oblivious to their need for surrounding space. In 1883, the architects of Halcyon, for example, had designed the terrace house, Ripplemere, in Grey Street, St Kilda (opposite Eildon) for John Dudgeon's business partner, Charles Carty Arnell. Ripplemere is extraordinary for its Mannerist application of ornament. It is the most elaborate example of a terrace house in Melbourne, a city famous for its terrace houses. Frederick de Garis and Son also designed Finn Barr, in Cecil Street, South Melbourne, one of the more curious of Melbourne's boom style

116 Gothic terrace houses are even rarer than Gothic villas. Those few which do exist use Gothic detailing superficially without any intrinsic Picturesque association. The most interesting example, although it is not truly a terrace house, is the town house built in 1861 for Clement Hodgkinson, and designed by Joseph Reed of Reed and Barnes, possibly with Edward La Trobe Bateman as a contributor. The terrace house is used loosely in Australia to mean both separate dwellings built boundary to boundary but independently of neighbours and the individual houses in a terrace row.

houses. Built in 1885, and part of a terrace, its very elaborate tower makes it look like a villa squeezed into a small city block. There are several other, less ostentatious examples of this hybrid form of terrace houses with villa towers, including the significantly intact Wardlow, Parkville. The towers of these villas could boast of little territory but could claim much status.

Although the Italianate villa model changed even further during the boom years, it is still possible to discern it physical characteristics, albeit grossly exaggerated in some cases. The very rich were still able to inhabit large estates where the villa lifestyle enjoyed its halcyon days. The majority of middle-class people prospered, even if bigger villas were squeezed onto smaller allotments. And the lower middle class and the working class lived in street after street of terrace housing, also in the Italianate style. The most important observation of the period is, however, the dispersion of the model through to the lower levels of the middle class and even to the working class. This may also be the greatest legacy—the humble villa and the terrace house. Most of the late villas, the great mansions of Marvellous Melbourne, have gone and very few of the earliest villas survive, but countless examples of modest suburban villas and terrace houses built during the boom years do remain. They still have their gardens. They are still the homes of workers who toil elsewhere, who return home at night and who garden on weekends. But now their travel to work, the shops, the plant nursery and the public library is mostly by car. And while the middle class might now live in a much

138 Heritage Council of Victoria, File No. 602652 and Registered Historic Building No. H. 1922. Built in 1888, the owner was John Boyes, an ironmonger who had prospered after immigrating during the gold rushes. The architects were probably Twentyman and Askew who designed a warehouse for him in 1891. By chance, the property remained in the same family’s ownership until it was purchased by the University of Melbourne in 1975, which meant that the elaborate interiors survived intact. The house is described and illustrated in Forge, Victorian Splendour, pp. 110-15.
appreciated terrace house and still admire a picturesque villa when they travel abroad, they are probably oblivious to any tension between the Sublime and the Beautiful in their own homes.

Rippon Lea

Rippon Lea, in the south-eastern suburb of Elsternwick, encapsulates all the characteristics and qualities of the Italianate villa model in metropolitan Melbourne and demonstrates the model's evolution during the colonial period. Rippon Lea was built in stages as the home of Sir Frederick Sargood, M.L.C., a most successful merchant and politician. He had arrived in Melbourne with his family in 1850 as a boy of sixteen, which makes him part of the first gold-rush generation of settlers. From being an office boy in the public service, he became a leader amongst the city's mercantile community, who believed they were 'nabobs of the south'.

Construction of Rippon Lea started in 1868 to the design of the prominent Melbourne architects, Reed and Barnes. Joseph Reed was arguably the most successful architect in private practice in colonial Victoria. The villa, described precisely as Lombardic Romanesque revival in style, is one of several early examples of the polychromatic brickwork which Reed introduced to Melbourne and which became so popular. Although polychromy became increasingly

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120 Davidson, Marvellous Melbourne, p. 24.
122 Other examples of polychromatic brickwork are: Independent Church (now St Michael's Uniting Church), Collins Street, Melbourne; St Jude's, Lygon Street, Carlton; National School, Carlton (now demolished); and Canally (now Koorine), Powlett Street, East Melbourne which was the home of Sir Benjamin Benjamin, MLC and Lord Mayor of Melbourne. He went bankrupt when the boom of Marvellous Melbourne crashed but was allowed to continue to live at Canally. Frederick Sargood was a prominent member of the Collins Street Independent Church
declasse in Melbourne, it continued to be used at Rippon Lea as the house was modified and extended. Eventually it comprised a total of thirty-three rooms. The ballroom was added in 1882 and remodelled in 1889. The cast iron porte cochere and northern conservatory were added in 1897, after the depression of the early 1890s. Perhaps the most important improvement was the addition of a tower in 1883 by a different architect, Leonard Terry to provide aspect and prospect as well as prosaically to house a water tank. All these improvements consolidated Rippon Lea as an Italianate villa.

Like Charnwood, some three kilometres to the north, Rippon Lea was aligned on the diagonal. Therefore, it enjoyed the same prospects. However, it was on lower, more level ground, had no special topographical features, and the indigenous vegetation was scrubby. The site required a competent landscape designer to maximise any Picturesque potential.

Edward La Trobe Bateman, who was closely associated with the firm, Reed and Barnes, is now generally acknowledged as the designer of the original garden at Rippon Lea. He used terraces, axial planning and circular beds in the planning, all distinctive motifs in his designs.

congregation. The use of dichromatic and polychromatic brickwork was particularly suitable for Melbourne because of the lack of good building stone other than dark basalts. Improved brick manufacturing techniques also helped it, allowing for a wide range of colours and much better quality. Builders and property speculators took it up as a cheap, easy and increasingly florid method of decoration.


124 There are many examples of his use of strong geometric shapes. At Barragundla, at Cape Schanck the kitchen garden was a double circle with radiating paths. The intersections of the straight paths with the circular paths were each marked by four *Cupressus sempervirens*. See Timothy Hubbard and John Hawker, *Barragundla Garden Conservation Management Plan*, prepared privately for the owners, Mr. And Mrs. Don Figgins, 1989. Bateman’s design for the System garden at the School of Botany at the University of Melbourne was a circle. Circles and other geometric shapes appear in the earliest plans of the Melbourne Botanic Gardens when Bateman’s close friend, Sir Ferdinand von Mueller, managed them. Bateman’s plan for Victoria Park, Collingwood was a circle with a square reserve intersected by diagonal paths. The Collingwood Football Ground has long since subsumed it.
twenty-seven hectares included pleasure grounds, service areas with kitchen
gardens, orchards, paddocks, and a rifle range.\textsuperscript{125} The great fernery, a remarkable
curved structure, may be his work. It may also be that Bateman introduced a
diagonal view from the house through the garden, over the lake, towards the
rockery and beyond to the You Yangs, the low mountains on the far side of Port
Phillip Bay. Anne Neale writes

The orientation of the original house at Rippon Lea was such that a north-
south line bisected it exactly on the diagonal. This orientation, unusual
today and probably not common in the 19\textsuperscript{th} century, had been strongly
advocated by J C Loudon in The Suburban Gardener and Villa Companion
for its numerous advantages “in point of solar light, warmth, ventilation,
and cheerfulness, and even dryness and healthy vegetation in the garden or
adjoining grounds”.\textsuperscript{126}

The earliest version of the house included a loggia, an out-of-doors or
garden room, a space within the volume of the building but open and arced on
two sides. This ‘pivotal point’ in the relationship between house and garden was
linked with the drawing room and dining room and has since been incorporated into
the dining room.\textsuperscript{127} Neale continues

While simultaneously visible from the loggia, each of these garden
elements also had a strong axial relationship to its own side of the house:
the central axis of the croquet lawn extended the drawing room axis via a
polygonal bay window, while the central axis of the citrus garden extended
the dining room axis via a rectangular bay. Within the house, this seeming
opposition of infinite axes extending outwards through the landscape was
counter-balanced by the cross axes of the same rooms: in each case, the
cross axis extended from the fire-place through French (?) windows to the
loggia, at the centre of which the two axes intersected. The result of this
strongly marked visual, axial and functional inter-relationship between
principal rooms, loggia and formal gardens, is that the whole composition
reads en suite, and it is almost impossible to conceive of them not having

\textsuperscript{125} Richard Heathcote, ‘Rippon Lea’, in Richard Aitken and Michael Looker, eds., Oxford
\textsuperscript{126} Neale, ‘Illuminating Nature’, p. 164, quoting J. C. Loudon, The Suburban Gardener and
\textsuperscript{127} Neale, ‘Illuminating Nature’, p. 165. I am grateful to Anne Neale for pointing this out
to me following her early research into the house and garden.
been designed from the first to do so. That is to say, the original house and
garden were designed as a unit, and the only landscape designer the
architect Reed worked with in this way was Bateman.\textsuperscript{128}

This system of axial views, integrating house, garden and landscape, is the same as
at Cronkhill, built sixty years before in Shropshire and as recommended forty years
before by Thomas Shepherd in Sydney.\textsuperscript{129}

The professional landscape designer and nurseryman, William Sangster
redesigned the garden in 1882 when the house was being altered.\textsuperscript{130} ‘He
introduced a more Picturesque style, sweeping away the previous formality of
general beds and paths, introducing a serpentine carriage drive and paths.
The new landscape, with enlarged lake, mount, waterfall, lookout tower, grotto,
and garden buildings, provided grounds suited to public entertaining and
functions increasingly held at the property.’\textsuperscript{131} According to John Foster,
William Sangster worked, and wrote, very much in the Picturesque style.\textsuperscript{132} He
was competent, had a strong work ethic and a flair for self-publicity. He wrote
about gardening and about himself under the nom de plume ‘Hortensis’. Direct
links can be made back to the codification of the Picturesque through Sangster’s
training in Britain and subsequent career in colonial Victoria. His version of the
Picturesque is more mediaeval than Italianate.

While the estate continued to produce food and had fowls, cattle and

\textsuperscript{129} The terminations of these axes are not certain but the existing rockery, much enlarged
from the original, is likely. The view to the You Yangs has long since been lost by the growth of the
garden and by surrounding development outside the property.
\textsuperscript{130} Heathcote, ‘Rippon Lea’, p. 508. ‘[It] remains perhaps the largest and most intact
nineteenth-century private garden in Australia and is exceptional for the quality of its landscaped
garden.’ In recognition, the book was launched at Rippon Lea, which is now owned by the National
Trust of Australia (Vic.).
\textsuperscript{131} Heathcote, ‘Rippon Lea’, p. 508.
\textsuperscript{132} John H Foster, Victorian Picturesque, The Colonial Gardens of William Sangster,
History Department, University of Melbourne, 1989.
pigs, recreational gardening came to complement this self-sufficiency. Sargood was a keen horticulturist and established the largest collection of exotic orchids in colonial Australia and maintained many specialised environments, including a vast shade-house of an elegant double-cusped configuration for his fern collection.\(^{133}\) A head gardener, Adam Anderson maintained the garden with staff. He was a Scot, whom Sargood engaged in 1882 in Britain on his trip abroad before the major renovations.

The grounds were turned over to pleasures that were more active. There was boating on the lake and archery, tennis and croquet on the lawns. Sangster’s improvements, which survive, are thoroughly Picturesque. The archery hut is made from tree fern trunks and timber shingles. The timber boathouse is hidden by vegetation and perched above the water. The bridges across the enlarged lake, although cast iron, simulated rustic timber. The most elaborate structure is the timber lookout tower on top of the rocky folly and grotto. It provides both aspect and prospect, being seen from the house and allowing good views to the Bay.

Of course Sargood maintained a library at Rippon Lea. His father was given a copy of John Starforth’s, The Architecture of the Farm, a Series of Designs, which included two designs for villas in the Italianate style out of ten in the book, inscribed ‘F. J. Sargood with J. W.’s best regards, Melbourne March 30\(^{th}\) 1854’.\(^{134}\) It is interesting to note that the book was only published in 1853, so it reached Melbourne quickly. Rippon Lea’s important and continuing ownership, its evolution and aggrandizement over the years and the lifestyle it allowed, show how successful the Italianate villa model was during the time of Marvellous Melbourne.

\(^{134}\) Neither design would appear to have influenced the architecture of Rippon Lea.
The model can be described as persistent as well as ubiquitous. The examples cited in this chapter not only demonstrate how, from the 1850s onwards, the Italianate villa was the first and became the preferred model for a suburban estate as Melbourne developed but they also prove that the model's underlying associations remained consistent during a period of remarkable change. This can be claimed at both a superficial and a deeper level. Its domesticity endured notwithstanding the increasing urbanity of Melbourne. Its secularism suited an increasingly profane society. Its amalgamation of informal asymmetry with the formality of Classical architecture, however much reduced or overblown, represented a democratic popularity. It continued to be imbued with Sublime and Beautiful associations even if these were lost on the majority of the population.

There are many similarities between what had emerged and developed in the expanding cities of Britain, and the model's interpretation in Melbourne.\(^{135}\) The antipodean garden and park settings are as similar as possible to their origins but with a mixture of native and exotic species in a sometimes very different and notionally primeval landscape. While symmetry was preferred by the most conservative, asymmetry is still the most important component of a villa's massing. The usual ingredients are found: masonry construction; the low-pitched roof and bracketed eaves; the loggia (usually transformed into a verandah); and the all-important tower. Certain materials are less frequently found such as terra cotta roof tiles, which were substituted by slate or iron, and stone, which was substituted by timber mock ashlar. Brickwork came to be accepted and celebrated in a distinctively Melbourne way. There are many gradations of scale, from the small

\(^{135}\) See J. Mordaunt Crook, *The Rise of the Nouveaux Riches*, John Murray, London, 1999, Ch. 2 'The Style of Millionaires and Ch. 3 Privilege and the Picturesque'.

and informal villa such as Tivoli, Bishopscourt and even Toorak House to the large and formal 'palazzo' type, such as Barham House (or Eildon), Wombalano, and Wickliffe House. Certain examples, such as Rippon Lea, adapted with the times where extra wings, conservatories and, eventually, a tower were added and the garden worked over to increase its Picturesque qualities. While the architectural detailing of a villa may have become increasingly ornate and its allotment smaller, the core qualities remain: a sense of retreat, a garden setting providing recreation, at least a notional self-sufficiency and an overall domesticity, all suitable to a democratic society such as suburban Melbourne and its pastoral hinterland.

These core qualities and their associations were to be embodied in Government House, Melbourne one of the finest examples of the Italianate villa model in the world.
9 GOVERNMENT HOUSE MELBOURNE:
MORE THAN A VILLA IN THE LANDSCAPE?

In 1871, at a time of crisis and contention, the Minister for Public Works, the Hon. William Bates had to choose an appropriate style and form for the new Government House in Melbourne.¹ There is clear evidence that he decided against yet another Gothic revival mansion like the Government Houses in Sydney, Hobart and Perth or like the 1854 proposal for a new Government House in Melbourne. Instead, he required his Inspector General of Public Works, William Wilkinson Wardell, to follow the model of Osborne House, the young Queen Victoria’s Italianate villa on the Isle of Wight, built a generation earlier.² The Minister’s requirement may have been welcome to Wardell, at least for the style and form to be followed, because the Public Works Department under Wardell’s direction had been designing buildings in the Italianate style and using the villa form since 1859. In choosing the Italianate style Bates eschewed the fashion for mediaeval nationalism sweeping the Empire and confirmed a different bearing for the maturing colony. In choosing the villa form, he rejected majestic symmetry in favour of domestic informality.

But the exact origin of and reasons for Bates’ choice have never been confirmed.³ Although Wardell was his architectural adviser, it will be seen that the

¹ Bates was the sixteenth person to hold the position in the seventeen years of its existence, and this included three periods when it was vacant totalling nearly three years. *Papers presented to Parliament by Command Session 1871 (3), Statistics for the Colony of Victoria for 1870. Part 1* of the Blue Book lists the names and dates of Ministers filling the position of Office of Commissioner of Public Works. Cited by Ursula de Jong, ‘One Man’s Vision: Government House, Melbourne’, *Regional Responses, Conference Papers, Society of Architectural Historians of Australia and New Zealand, 1991*, p. 70, n. 19.

² Wardell’s original title, once he had won a public competition for the position of Inspecting Clerk of Works, came to include ‘and chief architect’. By 1861, he was promoted to Inspector General of Public Works and Chief Architect. See de Jong, ‘One Man’s Vision’.

³ The architecture of Government House has, of course, been much written about. For a detailed and relatively recent analysis, see Ursula de Jong, ‘One Man’s Vision’.
Inspector General distanced himself from responsibility for the decision. Bates appears to have ignored precedents set by other colonies. Two competition entries which were not Italianate villas, but rather more like English country houses in the Gothic stream, were deliberately passed over. The Victorian Public Works Department had consistently designed buildings within the Classical stream since the early 1850s and used the Renaissance revival and Italianate styles in association with the formal, or symmetrical palazzo form to the informal, or asymmetrical villa form—the full spectrum of the Italianate villa model. If the PWD were the source for the choice, was it surprising? Furthermore, two houses which had been temporary government houses, Toorak House and Bishopscourt, were Italianate villas. Two houses, Flemington House and General Chute’s residence, which were seriously proposed as possible government houses, were Italianate villas. Although Ursula de Jong has consistently argued against it, was the source of Government House, Melbourne actually Osborne House as popularly believed? 

This splendid Italianate villa—arguably finer than Osborne House—was set in a cultivated landscape, towering above all. Its imagery was strong, complex and deeply redolent with associations. It symbolized the public and private presence of the Governor as viceroy as representative of the Queen. It symbolized ancient notions of democracy and idealism, filtered through the Renaissance, with a modern appreciation for informality. But the function of the building, albeit highly refined and palatial in scale, was still essentially domestic, one half public or ‘state’, the other private. It might be read, not as the country seat of an ancient estate but as a high Victorian country house in a great garden. Only the Italianate villa model could achieve this metaphorical bridge. The synthesis of form, style and function

\footnote{de Jong, ‘One Man’s Vision’}
resolved the tension between the Beautiful and the Sublime in the broadly accepted Picturesque aesthetic.

Government House, Melbourne contains all the essential characteristics first found in Cronkhill, then in Deepdene and Osborne House. Its architectural vocabulary is Classical, but its details are drawn from the Renaissance revival and Palladian styles, rather than from ancient Rome. Although palatial in scale, its massing is irregular and its skyline is broken. It is asymmetrical, both externally and internally. It has a tower, to see from and to be seen. The tower, itself a vertical axis denoting the locus of the place, acts as a pivot for the horizontal axes which stretch out and claim the landscape. The siting and setting of the villa enhance its architecture.

The evolution of the Italianate villa in colonial Victoria has been traced through a series of increasingly sophisticated rural and suburban examples, a process which earlier Modernist historians, such as Robin Boyd, have dismissed as a decadent decline. These villas, in fact, demonstrated an increasingly sophisticated retreat by merchants from ‘the Town’ and by graziers from ‘the Country’. In both town and country, the towers of villas marked the newly acquired territory and status of the wealthy and powerful, as did the towers of Toorak House and Bishopscourt. The same claim to a sense of place was made in humbler situations. The lower middle class and even the working class imitated the Italianate villa model only on a much smaller scale.

The Picturesque aesthetic had emerged in a very different place and culture, at a time when political reform was likened to revolution. In Britain, around 1800, the Picturesque aesthetic finally linked art, literature and landscape with architecture. In the next half century, it came to evoke associations of political
reform but without revolution, financial success and what new money could buy, and secularism even to the point of rejecting Gothic nationalism. In Victoria, these associations also applied but the model matured and changed. Put very broadly, the Picturesque aesthetic was democratic in that it suited the majority of the people. In the more liberal climate of colonial Victoria and under a different, written Constitution, where egalitarianism was believed to exist even if it did not, the model came to differ from its Picturesque British roots. Government House, Melbourne is the epitome of the Italianate villa in the colonial landscape and the climax of the Picturesque aesthetic in Victoria. The choice in favour of using the Italianate villa model, and the responsibility for making it, is crucial to an understanding of the building’s cultural significance. The architecture of Government House symbolised the colony’s, and later the state’s, democracy.

Other Government Houses in Victoria

Three makeshift ‘government houses’ existed in the earliest period of colonial Victoria: at Sorrento in 1803; at Corinella from 1826-1827; and at what was to become Melbourne from 1837 to 1839, as the residence of Captain Lonsdale. The first substantial Government House was Superintendent, later Lieutenant Governor La Trobe’s prefabricated cottage in Jolimont, which he owned privately, occupied in 1839 and sold in 1854 at the end his appointment. Much altered, it now stands in the Domain near the present Government House. Toorak House, Toorak was the second official residence, which was leased from 1854 until 1874 by the colonial government. It was abandoned as too small and inconvenient when the lease
expired in December 1873. Bishopscourt, East Melbourne was the third, albeit temporary, Government House. It was leased from 1874 until 1876. The present Government House in the Domain was the fourth. It has been Victoria’s official vice-regal residence since 1876 except for two periods, firstly when the governor-general of Australia occupied it at Federation, from 1901 to 1927, and secondly from 1931 to 1934, when it was occupied by the Melbourne Girls High School. Stonnington, Malvern, was the fifth official residence and was occupied by the State Governor while the Federal Government sat in Melbourne. A residence at Mount Macedon designed by the Public Works Department and built for the Governor in 1886 was known as Government Cottage and could be described as the sixth vice-regal residence, lying somewhere between an official and an informal status. All six of these substantial buildings have been, more or less, within the Picturesque aesthetic. Discounting the vernacular cottages including La Trobe’s, five vice-regal residences have been within the Classical stream. The Mount Macedon ‘hill-station’ is the exception, being distinctly Mediaeval.

Alternative Government Houses

Perhaps two existing Italianate villas, proposed as possible government houses, established a local precedent for the new Government House. Flemington House, later called Travencore, an Italianate villa on a vast estate about three kilometres north of Melbourne, was once proffered to the colonial government as a possible Government House.

In passing we may notice that about this time Hugh Glass, a wealthy grazier, had built a house in Mount Alexander Road, Kensington with an

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5 See evidence by W. W. Wardell, Royal Commission on Public Affairs, answers to questions 53 and 56, 12th February 1873, p. 3.
6 The planning of Government House and the new MacRobertson Girls’ High School, built in 1936, as MGVHS became known, make an interesting comparison.
Hugh Glass, a squatter, businessman and notorious politician, and his wife had developed it in stages from ‘a former sheep run “quite out of town”, after their marriage in February 1852’, until it was probably the grandest Italianate suburban villa in Melbourne. It was all the more exceptional for being on the northern, less respectable side of the city. Simultaneously, the dramatic site, on a hillside sweeping down to the Maribyrnong River, was laid out by Edward La Trobe Bateman and attempts were made to acclimatize a staggering variety of animals, birds, plants and trees from all over the world. In 1856, its site offered excellent opportunities for terracing, a distinctive motif of Bateman’s designs, which were defined by balustrades and linked by stairs. Anne Neale suggests that Charles Barry’s Italianate remodelling of Trentham Hall, the home of the Duke and Duchess of Sutherland, may have directly influenced these—and the gondolas in the lake—through the book, The Gardens of England published in 1839.

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7 A. A. ‘The Seats of the Mighty’. Age, 6 June 1931.
9 See Marcus Breen, People, cows, and casks: the changing face of Flemington, Melbourne City Council, Melbourne, 1989.
10 Lane and Serle, Australians at Home, p. 284. Anne Neale, *History in the Making, Edward La Trobe Bateman (1816-1897)*, *Australian Garden History*, 9, 4, Jan/Feb 1998, p. 24. The estate was subdivided into small housing allotments in the 1930s and Flemington House was demolished. It is not correct that its grounds swept down to the Maribyrnong River. The house was on the western bank of the Moonee Ponds Creek which is now concrete lined and, at this point, all but covered by a freeway intersection. For a full description and important sources see Anne Neale, *Illuminating Nature*, Ph.D. thesis, University of Melbourne, 2002, pp. 151-4.
11 Many later nineteenth-century photographs of the house and garden survive and can be seen in the boardroom of I.C.H. Mental Health Service, Travencore, the Department of Human Services institution which is the descendant of Flemington House on the Travencore estate at Ascot Vale. Copies of 16 photographs by Johnstone and O'Shannessy, 1891-6, are held in the SLV at LTA 347.
1857. 12 Flemington House, 'constituted what was arguably one of the greatest Victorian era gardens in Australia, and what may well be the most remarkable 'lost' garden in the country'. 13 The offer to take over Flemington House was declined but its design, possibly influenced by Barry, did establish an important precedent for Government House in at least one detail. The roof of Flemington House is hidden behind a balustraded parapet, the first in the colony and an important digression from the exposed roof usually seen in an Italianate villa.

There was another seriously entertained proposal. It was to convert the residence built for Major-General Chute, the commander of the forces in the colonies, into a Government House. 14 Later called The Grange, the house was built in the south-west corner of the Domain in 1866 by the Board of Land and Works under William Wardell. 15 It was a symmetrical two-storey Italianate villa with a masonry arcaded verandah on three sides. 16 The central tower, with its balustraded parapet, was three storeys high. It was thought that the house required at least the addition of a ballroom and works to the approaches to make it suitable as a vice-regal residence. 17 This proposal did not proceed either and the Government put the

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14 Sir Trevor Chute (1816-86), although based in Melbourne at the Victoria Barracks in St Kilda Road, was Acting Governor of New South Wales from 24 December 1867 to 8 January 1868. He is also given the title Brigadier-General. He left Melbourne in November 1870, Illustrated Australasian News, 7 November 1870, p. 193.

15 In response to a question about money allocated in the budget for the conversion, Mr Francis stated that the land had been reserved “in an informal and illegal manner”—it was 8 acres and 2 roods in extent. On this piece of ground the residence of Major-General Chute had been erected but he believed that it was originally intended to build quarters on it for the officers connected with the observatory; Hansard, Assembly, 19 December, 1871, pp. 587-91.

16 It is illustrated in the Weekly Times, 4 April 1903, p. 10.

17 Hansard, Assembly, 23 November, pp. 291. The estimated cost was £12,000 or £13,000 but only £6,000 had been put down on the present Estimates, as it was probable that more would be expended during the first half of 1871. It had proved to be necessary to build a temporary timber ballroom at Toorak House.
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house up for sale. The Minister for Public Works sought the new design from his department.

Two earlier schemes were not followed as precedents. These were the two previous attempts at designing a new vice-regal residence, one in 1854 and the other in 1864, both as architectural competitions. The announcement of the results for the first competition, held in conjunction with a competition for the Legislative Council Building, is worth quoting in full.

THE NEW BUILDING FOR THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL AND FOR THE GOVERNMENT HOUSE— The design for the above important public edifices, have been inspected by the committee appointed by the Lieutenant-Governor, and yesterday their award was made as follows:—

Design for Legislative Council: 1st prize, Messrs. Smith and Pritchard: 2nd ditto, Mr. F. M. White. For the Government House, 1st prize, Messrs. Knight and Kemp; second ditto, Messrs. Downden and Ross. The designs sent in were twelve in number, some of which were of the most elaborate description. The prize design of Messrs. Smith and Pritchard is in the purest classic style, and is worthy of the first city in the southern hemisphere. The prize design for the Government House intended to be erected on the eminence to the left of Princes’ Bridge, by Messrs. Knight and Kemp is in the Elizabethan style, and is of a very high order, and when carried out, will be fitted for the accommodation of the future Governor of this important Colony. Mr. Knight was the gentleman who constructed the New Military Barracks and the Ball Room so expeditiously, under the direction of James Balmaine, Esq., the Colonial Architect. His colleague, Mr. Thomas Kemp, was a pupil of Sir Charles Barry, the architect of the Parliament House, England. We are assured that Mr. Pritchard has studied many years in Italy, where he had the opportunity of forming his taste by the inspection of some of the best examples of the classic style. The whole of the drawings will be exhibited in the course of a day or two, at the Mechanics’ Institute, in the exhibition of the Society of Arts, when we have no doubt that they will receive that attention from the public which their merit and importance entitle them to.

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19 It is interesting to note that William Bates, himself suggested that the Government should take over a Mr. Kyle’s mansion in Dandenong Road, Malvern; *Hansard, Assembly*, 1871, Vol. 13, p. 1830.
20 *Port Phillip Herald*, Saturday 27th August 1853, p. 5, col. e.
This report is of interest on several counts. Firstly, both proposals were very large in scale and looked to the future in their pretensions for the gold-rich colony. There is no comment that very different styles were chosen for the two buildings, which suggests that the choices were unremarkable. Sir Charles Barry is revered for his Classical planning of the new Houses of Parliament in London which were ‘dressed’ in the nationalistic Perpendicular Gothic exterior details provided by A. W. N. Pugin. The link to Melbourne, through the architect Kemp, is notable just as the conventional travel in Italy of Mr. Pritchard is considered a good thing. Finally, one of the most intriguing details about the competition is not mentioned. Knight and Kemp ‘shared the prize with a young Cornish architect, Joseph Reed, who had stepped onto the wharf at Melbourne just in time to help prepare their entry.’

Reed was to play a central role in the architectural profession in Melbourne in years to come.

The 1854 proposal for the new Government House was, indeed, Elizabethan in style and enormous in scale. It was not a Gothic revival villa but rather a great mansion or country house, a nationalistic monument much grander than those at Sydney and Hobart. As the journalist wrote, ‘It was worthy of the first city in the southern hemisphere’. It was stiffly symmetrical, three storeys high, had large conservatories on either side and two tall towers with open belvederes. The skyline was varied and enlivened by gables, finials and flagpoles. The proposal seems to have been abandoned because of lack of funds, as Miles Lewis states, ‘it was throttled by a sudden economic recession in 1854’. Even if it were handled in a

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21 Miles Lewis, “‘Like Queen Victoria’s but slightly reduced’”, in This Australia, Autumn, 1988, p. 83. This is a most important article for the understanding of the architecture of Government House, Melbourne.

22 Port Phillip Herald, Saturday 27th August 1853, p. 5, col. e.

23 Lewis, “‘Like Queen Victoria’s’”, p. 83.
‘masterly way’ as Lewis states, the design was pompous, ponderous and unexceptional. 24

Joseph Reed of the partnership, Reed and Barnes, led the winning team of architects in 1864. The proposal was described at the time as French Baronial in style. 25 It was symmetrical and had a strong hint of the Renaissance revival in its detailing. The French association comes from the steeply pitched roofs and turrets of the octagonal end pavilions, suggestive of chateaux. With a nominal budget of £25,000, it was smaller, being only two storeys high with a single storey ballroom annex to one side. 26 Interestingly, there is a five-storey detached tower, linked to the house by a screen wall, loosely Italianate in style and which hints at the campanile in the Piazza San Marco in Venice. Miles Lewis sums up this proposal as ‘more ambitious, in style if not in size’. 27

Unfortunately, the contemporary illustrations of the proposals show little if any landscaping. Both are presented on what appear to be level ground. Neither suggests that the proposals are located in the Domain on a hill. Nor do floor plans appear to survive to indicate the range and disposition of the accommodation provided. Again, economic factors and an increasingly volatile political situation mitigated against the construction of this second proposal.

So, with two false starts through competitions, other proposals for the conversion of existing buildings abandoned and a temporary Government House which had serious limitations, the situation in early 1870s was desperate. 28

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24 Lewis, ‘“Like Queen Victoria’s”’, p. 83. Lewis compares it with the much smaller and more provincial Government House, Perth built shortly afterwards.
25 This comment is given along with a contemporary illustration in the Illustrated Melbourne Post, 20 August 1864, p. 7.
26 In fact, the winning entry was estimated to cost as much as £45,000.
27 Lewis, ‘“Like Queen Victoria’s”’, p. 83.
Trode’s proposed site in the Domain was available, was looking increasingly attractive and was not contentious.\textsuperscript{28} But what model should be adopted?

**The Sources for Government House, Melbourne**

Government House was designed within the Public Works Department under the supervision of the Inspector-General of Public Works, William Wardell who was an outstanding architect and engineer. Several competent and loyal staff architects, notably J. J. Clarke and Peter Kerr, supported him. Many years later a junior colleague, J. H. Harvey confirmed that, while Wardell had overall and official responsibility for the design, J. J. Clarke did most of the work on Government House with Peter Kerr providing some of the details. Still, ‘Clarke himself repudiated it as having been “made according to orders”, and that some of his earlier schemes were much more attractive’.\textsuperscript{29}

The *oeuvre* of the P.W.D. must be the first source to consider.\textsuperscript{30} In fact, the Department under the direction of William Wardell designed many buildings using the Italianate villa model before Government House was designed. They ranged through the spectrum, from formal to informal, including symmetrical and asymmetrical examples. A few were remarkably Picturesque but none was as significant or ambitious as Government House.

\textsuperscript{28} In all the parliamentary debates and in the newspapers, for the most part, there was never criticism of La Trobe’s original action and foresight.

\textsuperscript{29} Lewis, “‘Like Queen Victoria’s’”, p. 83, quoting J. H. Harvey, ‘Historical Notes relating to Government House (Melbourne): *Journal of the Royal Victorian Institute of Architects*, XXXII, 3\textsuperscript{rd} July 1934, pp. 68-9. Drawings survive which are signed by Clarke and it is clear that he was fully responsible for some structures such as the Guard House and the Conservatory.

\textsuperscript{30} Bruce Trehowan, ‘The Public Works Department of Victoria, 1851-1900, an Architectural History’, Research Report, School of Architecture and Building, University of Melbourne, 1975 remains the best survey of the P.W.D. *oeuvre*. 
One of the first and perhaps most extraordinary examples of the model in colonial Victoria, is the small telegraph station at Cape Otway. It was built in 1856, two years before Wardell’s reign began. Originally, its tower was balustraded so it could be used as a lookout and it therefore predates the balustraded tower at Bontharambo. An engraving of the telegraph station which appeared in The Illustrated Melbourne Post emphasises the tremendous cliff, the wild ocean and fierce weather in contrast to the smart new building representing science and progress. There could be no more dramatic expression of the Sublime and the Beautiful. As well as its technical function, it was also residential with the officers living in the building. The Melbourne Observatory built in the Domain in 1862-3 is another combination of science and domesticity but without the dramatic landscape. The Observatory included a library and would have enjoyed fruit from the nearby orchard associated with the Botanic Gardens. The lodges for larger buildings such as the Parkville, Kew, Ararat and Beechworth Mental Asylums all constructed in the mid-1860s, are treated as gatehouses for great estates.

More influential though would have been the many standard public buildings throughout the suburbs of Melbourne and in country towns. Post

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31 The works provided a remarkably early submarine cable link between Victoria and Tasmania. The model was used for telegraph stations in country towns as well. Those at Geelong and Castlemaine survive intact. There was another good example at Williamstown which has been demolished.
32 In fact, all the early telegraph stations had balustraded towers when they were built separately.
33 Extensive shelving survives in one of the main rooms and there was an orchard about 100m away just inside the Gardens’ boundary which was later incorporated into the Government House grounds.
34 David Saunders, Historic Buildings of Victoria, The Jacaranda Press, Melbourne, 1966, p. 257. About the Beechworth asylum, he writes that ‘Its scale and architecture approach the palatial, as with the Kew Hospital … and the grounds were early made a show place.’
35 Concerning P.W.D. design before 1858, Sue Balderstone states ‘The designs were derived from English neo-Palladian buildings such as the lodges of 18th Century estates in Britain. These great houses, and smaller buildings, were constructed in this style as an expression of
offices were remarkably consistent in their use of the model from the earliest times to the end of the nineteenth century. They often show an interesting blend of formality, by adopting the palazzo form, and informality, usually introduced by an asymmetrical tower. Those at the early gold-mining towns of Smythesdale, built in the 1850s and Creswick, built in 1863, could have been taken from a pattern book. The first substantial post office in Hamilton was demolished, rebuilt on a hill overlooking the town, and used as a private villa residence from the 1880s. Other, later post office designs such as at Daylesford were more formal interpretations of the symmetrical palazzo model. It is typical for the separation between the half-official and half-domestic use which was to be so important at Government House. Railway stations using the model are relatively few and the best examples are the small stations on the early lines which linked Melbourne and Geelong with the goldfields. Again, there is a separation between official function and private residence. Most schools were designed in the Gothic stream, for its association with mediaeval learning, but some few are Italianate in style such as the school at Terang. Other more public and much more formal buildings, such as the Williamstown Customs House, the Treasury Buildings, and the Royal Mint were designed at the Palladian end of the stylistic spectrum.

While each includes domestic quarters, they are sophisticated carefully sited

democratic ideology by their Whig owners who, newly empowered under the British constitutional monarchy established from 1688, associated classical architecture with the founding of democracy.  

36 They did change and other styles were used. One of the more interesting complexes is that at Sale, where the post office, telegraph station and two courts were combined. While still within the Classical stream and even Italianate in its forms, it uses a sort of Greek revival detailing reminiscent of Alexander 'Greek' Thompson's work. By the end of the nineteenth century, the PWD had adopted a very different style, the Romanesque revival with nationalistic symbolism, Scottish buronial overtones and some American influence.

37 Only very small and remote schools incorporated a residence for a teacher.

38 Balderstone, 'Australia's Visible Identity', pp. 11-15
examples of civic architecture in the Renaissance Revival style.

William Wardell was in private practice for fourteen years before he migrated to Victoria 1858. This might be a source for his inspiration. A colleague and friend of Pugin, ‘Wardell had seen, experienced, participated and contributed not only to the beginnings but to the development of the Gothic Revival as a major revival style in England. He avidly read Pugin’s writings and had an enormous respect for the man.’39 While the bulk of his practice was in the Gothic revival style, Ursula de Jong introduces an important balance. She states that ‘Though Wardell was an ardent Gothic Revivalist, his views were tempered by examples from other contemporary architects, notably Sir Charles Barry, whose direct influence, however, was not evident until Wardell’s secular work in Australia. A small number of English designs in what contemporaries would have called an ‘Italian’ style, show Wardell’s detailed study of architecture to have been extensive beyond the Gothic sphere.’40 The most important of these five designs was a proposed design for the English Consulate at Smyrna, Turkey.41 It took the form of a symmetrical two-storey Italianate villa with a central tower.

The Link with Osborne House

One of the most important qualities of Osborne House is its domesticity. It cannot be overemphasised that Queen Victoria and Prince Albert saw the place as their home. It was privately owned by the Queen, designed by the Prince and especially developed for their children with the Swiss Cottage and the Fort. It was where Albert died and Queen Victoria spent much of the rest of her life there in mourning.

39 de Jong, 'One Man’s Vision', p. 64.
40 de Jong, 'One Man’s Vision', p. 65.
41 The design is not dated. The other four designs were all churches.
From the beginning, the house was divided into two wings, the Royal ‘Pavilion’ and the State Rooms. Much later the Durbar Room was added on the far side of the complex. Osborne House cannot be put forward as a symbol of democracy—Queen Victoria was as concerned about the Mob as Payne and Knight had been in their generation—but it can be put forward as a symbol of domesticity, ideal and deliberately public, even if it was not accessible except to the Court.

The Pavilion, as the private apartments were known, ‘the real part of Osborne’ was the first wing to be completed. The end of 1847 saw the completion of the Household wing and the main wing was constructed between 1849 and 1851. The terraces were constructed at the same time, first the upper and then the lower terrace. Other residences, such as that for Sir Henry Ponsonby, the Queen’s Private Secretary and Lady Ponsonby were located in the grounds.

There is no doubt that the Queen and Prince Albert saw Osborne as their own home and their own creation. Many references in their private correspondence and other documents reveal their happiness there. One early and often quoted comment appears in a letter dated 25th March 1845 from Queen Victoria to her uncle, King Leopold of the Belgians, ‘It sounds so snug and nice to have a place of one’s own, quiet and retired.’ It was to Osborne that the Queen retreated the day after Albert died and where she spent so much of her mourning.

It has long been assumed that Osborne House was the inspiration for Government House, Melbourne.

Osborne House has haunted the present Government House, Melbourne ... virtually since its inception in 1871. It has been assumed by journalists,

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historians, architectural critics and conservation architects since, that the
design of Government House was considerably influenced by that of Queen
Victoria’s Osborne House on the Isle of Wight.\textsuperscript{45}

So writes Ursula de Jong in her defence of the architect and architecture of
Government House against the assumption. Most architectural critics, including de
Jong, place it ahead of Osborne House.

The alleged link is enduring but it has been neither confirmed nor fully
explained. There are obvious superficial similarities in the use of the villa form of
the buildings and the Italianate or Renaissance revival style, indeed the full stylistic
spectrum of the Italianate villa model. Both are asymmetrical overall, picturesquely
sited and surrounded by extensive cultivated landscapes—classic examples of the
Victorian country house. Their towers are deliberately dominating. Both are
constructed from brick and stucco, materials for which each was criticised at the
time. Both have a clear separation between public and private parts. Just like
Osborne House, Government House has a ‘cottage’ in its grounds for the
Governor’s private secretary. And, obviously, both are associated with royalty.

The eminent British biographer, historian and journalist, James Froude
visited Australia in 1885 and described the experience in \textit{Oceana}.\textsuperscript{46} He stayed at
Government House as the Governor’s guest. His comments on the accommodation
are worth quoting at length.

Government House stands in a commanding position on a high wooded
plateau a mile from the town on the opposite side of the Yarra, overlooking
the park and the river valley. In the great days of the gold digging, when
Victoria was first rising into consequence, and the State had not settled into
its saddle, no official residence could be provided for the Governor, and the
Colony had munificently allowed, I believe, £15,000 a year, out of which

\textsuperscript{45} de Jong, ‘From England to Australia, the Architecture of William Wilkinson Wardell

\textsuperscript{46} James Froude, \textit{Oceana: or, England and her Colonies}, London, 1886; and Froude,
he was to furnish himself as he pleased. When the parliamentary constitution was conceded, a more dignified arrangement was resolved upon, better suited to the Colony’s ambitions. An architect was selected, a site was chosen, and the architect, as I heard the story, was directed to produce a plan. He sketched a Gothic construction, which was wisely disapproved as out of character with the climate. The minister of public works asked to look at his book of designs. On the first page was Osborne. ‘Something like that,’ the minister said, ‘on a scale slightly reduced’; and the result was the present palace, for such it is—not a very handsome building, in some aspects even ugly, but large and imposing. There is a tower in the centre of it a hundred and fifty feet high, on which waves the Imperial flag. There are the due lodges, approaches, porticoes, vast reception rooms, vast official dining-room, and drawing room, and the biggest ball-room in the world, all on a scale with the pride of the aspiring little State, with the private part of the house divided off by doors and passages, and having its own separate entrance.\(^47\)

This report is of great interest, coming from such an august and reliable source as Froude, but it also raises major difficulties. Firstly, it is disappointing that Froude fails to name key individuals, such as the ‘selected architect’ or the Minister. We must assume, with all the evidence from the Royal Commission, that he means Wardell and Bates. And it is not clear, from the use of pronouns, which of them owned ‘his book of designs’. Presumably, the book was Wardell’s but his private library and any library the P.W.D. had have been dispersed and no catalogues have been found.\(^48\) Certain details must be taken with a grain of salt, such as the ‘lack’ of an earlier official residence and the telescoped history of the search for an appropriate site. Froude’s reference to an earlier proposal in the Gothic style is intriguing. Does he mean one of the earlier competition entries or did Wardell produce a Gothic design before the present Italianate version?

Froude’s description of the building is clear and correct. Even his aesthetic


\(^{48}\) This is despite strenuous efforts to establish, firstly, if one existed as almost certainly it did and, secondly, what happened to it. The NSW P.W.D. had a very extensive library as has been noted in Chapter 4. A very small number of books owned by Wardell have been located.
criticism reflects contemporary comments. The link he makes with an image of Osborne House interests us most here.

The link he claims and its medium—the architect’s book of designs—are critical for understanding the relationship between Osborne House and Government House, Melbourne. The comment by Froude is well known but the book and image had not been identified. Research into nineteenth-century architectural pattern books for this thesis has revealed just one contender for such a book. The ‘first’ or title page of The Gentleman’s House published in 1864 by Robert Kerr includes a vignette of Osborne House. It is the only architectural pattern book discovered so far to have such an illustration. It was immediately reprinted in 1865 and published as a new edition in 1871. Kerr, who was born in Scotland and was, some say, pugnacious, was a prolific writer and a professor of architecture at the University of London. He was concerned with a range of issues including style, form and the quality of building construction.

Kerr’s particular interest was ichnography, or the science of planning a country house in two dimensions. Indeed, Kerr criticises Osborne House noting its ‘foreign’ and ‘Hotel’ characteristics. He laments its disparate planning generally, the combination of certain principal rooms, and the ‘clumsy and inhospitable’ disconnection of the Royal Pavilion from the Visitors’ quarters in particular which has aesthetic and practical results. ‘It is to be regretted that the aid of a proper

49 Lewis, “‘Like Queen Victoria’s’”, p. 84.
51 J. Mordaunt Crook wrote a very useful introduction to the facsimile edition, which includes biographical information on Kerr and sets him within the architectural profession in England in the second half of the nineteenth century.
architect was not had in this plan. He tempers his criticism with the qualification that ‘this may be exactly what is best in the circumstances’. In contrast, the cohesion of Wardell’s plan, as well as other qualities about his design, shows his professional hand. The various wings of Government House are skillfully united around the focus of its single tower.

So, if Froude is to be believed, the vignette in Kerr’s book may be the ‘smoking gun’, the direct link between Government House and Osborne House. But, although both are country houses in the Italianate style, the former is no mere imitation of the latter. And, in any case, what had informed the architecture of Osborne House?

European Sources for Government House

The net can be cast more broadly in a search for the source of the architecture of Government House. The search is international because of the close link between German and British architecture in the early nineteenth century, including through royalty. Queen Victoria was mostly German by blood, also Scottish and, in fact not very English at all. She was the niece of the King of the Belgians. Prince Albert was a prince of the House of Saxe-Coburg. Before his marriage to Victoria, Albert travelled in Italy with Ludwig Gruner, the German friend who ‘instructed’ the Prince in artistic matters and who played a central role at Osborne House.

The ‘official’ architecture of Britain at the time must be one possible source and that was divided into two camps. The Gothic stream was applied in Britain and Australia, more or less automatically, to the majority of ecclesiastical buildings for worship, teaching and habitation. It had a strong following for

52 Kerr, Gentleman’s House, 1864, p. 56.
general domestic architecture, including some of the increasingly grand country houses, which came to epitomise the upper middle class in nineteenth century and their camp followers. It was chameleon-like in it is ability to adapt to different buildings types, situations and scales. Its most important official use had been in the rebuilding of the Houses of Parliament, a nationalistic condition of the competition to find the best design. But within a short time, the Foreign Office, which was imperial rather than national, was built in the opposite stream, and more importantly it was an asymmetrical version of Classicism. It was, in fact, an enormous and very grand Italianate villa complete with a tower overlooking the landscaped gardens of St James Park. ‘It has no great merit, being irresolute and diffuse, perhaps for the reason that Scott was here obliged to adopt the Classical style against his will by the then Prime Minister, Lord Palmerston, who abhorred the Gothic.’

Ironically, Gilbert Scott, who was more comfortable in the Gothic stream, designed the Foreign Office and Sir Charles Barry, who was very comfortable in the Classical stream, designed the new Houses of Parliament with A. W. N. Pugin.

Sir Charles Barry was perhaps the most influential British architect in the revival of Italian Renaissance architecture in Britain. John Summerson states that ‘At the Travellers’ Club, in 1829, he turned away from Greek Revivalism and led English architecture back to a Renaissance opulence of texture and shadow’. Barry travelled throughout the Mediterranean between 1817 and 1819. Barry in turn was not oblivious ‘to the fundamental Neo-classical desire’ of much of


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German-speaking Europe 'stimulated by a passion for Italy, to create a new
classical synthesis in which images culled from antique and Renaissance sources
would combine suggestively in a landscape setting.' In Prussia, 'Karl Friedrich
Schinkel and Leo von Klenze were the most widely known and highly respected
architectural exponents of this ideology. The idea of using asymmetrically placed
towers to provide massive vertical accents for large plain mansions was much
copied. At Osborne the Prince Consort may have wished to emulate Prussian as
well as English endeavour'.

Barry's larger domestic designs, being houses for aristocrats, were on a very
grand scale. He used the palazzo form and High Renaissance detail rather than the
simple vernacular of rustic villas. These examples were well beyond the scope of
most pattern books. Being at one end of the spectrum of Classical architecture,
they show the flexibility of the Italianate villa model. At a less grand scale, Barry
remodelled Walton House from 1835 to 1839 and juxtaposed a mighty tower
against a humble two-storey wing less than half its size. The vernacular pan tiles
of the main roof, which is not hidden behind a parapet, are in marked contrast to the
High Renaissance aedicule window of the tower's top floor. Usually, the grander
the house, the more formal and refined was the vocabulary of its architecture. The
Picturesque aesthetic and a deliberately asymmetrical massing could, however,
accommodate much variety, irregularity and contrast.

The political connection between Barry, the Whigs and the Royal family is
well known. Barry's Reform Club, built between 1837 and 1841 to celebrate the

55 David Watkin and Tilman Mellinghoff, *German Architecture and the Classical Ideal*,
56 de Jong, 'From England to Australia', p. 492.
57 Mark Girouard, *The Victorian Country House*, Yale University Press, New Haven and
London, 1979, p. 49.
Whig political triumph in passing the Reform Act, is considered to be one of his most successful and influential designs. It also uses a High Renaissance palazzo form, actually the first club to do so, with spare but well considered detailing. Barry’s work may be one of the sources for the architecture of Osborne House at a superficial level, but the Prince and Cubitt did not necessarily understand his work at a deeper level. The Reform Club can also be compared directly with the main wing of Government House, Melbourne for similarities and differences. A slightly asymmetrical and very discrete version of the palazzo form was used for the façade of Government House. One important difference, however, is the lack of a full podium at Government House, the absence of which connects it to the emergence of the villa from the country seat in the late eighteenth century and a new domestic informality. And there is none at Osborne.

A limited Italian influence can be seen in the domestic architecture of Karl Friedrich Schinkel after his Italian tour of 1803, and generally in the villas of Potsdam, a prestigious semi-rural suburb of Berlin. Ackerman, states that Schinkel’s villas designed for the court of Friedrich Wilhelm III of Prussia were based on actual Italian, mostly Tuscan prototypes. Watkin and Mellinghof propose that, in designs for the court gardener’s house at Charlottenhof, Schinkel was inspired by ‘reminiscences of his Italian tour’ and by Plate XVII of Papworth’s pattern book, Rural Residences. Schinkel was Architect-in-Chief to Prussia. It is not unreasonable to presume that the Prussian Prince Albert, with a great interest in the arts, was aware of this domestic architecture. Schinkel’s Roman Baths at the

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Charlottenhof, adjacent to the Greek revival villa, are a more severe interpretation of the Italianate style than is evident at Osborne House. But the passage of time, the separation from Prussia, the different scale and purpose of the buildings and Thomas Cubitt’s involvement in the design process readily explain this shift.

One contemporary criticism of Osborne House was that it was too disparate, that the two main wings, the private and the public, were linked by just a loggia, an umbilical cord. This of course, may have been just what Queen Victoria and the Prince Consort wanted. It also parallels the division Barry provided at Trentham. Mark Girouard writes that

The basic division into a main block with a family pavilion attached to one side was almost certainly derived from Barry’s Trentham, for Victoria was a friend of the Sutherlands and knew the house well. But the professional ease with which Barry would combine symmetrical parts into an irregular whole is noticeably lacking at Osborne. The main block is like a vastly overgrown Belgravia mansion, to which the Royal Pavilion is uncomfortably attached by an umbilical cord of open arcading. 61

There was a deep convention in country house planning, of course, for separating the family (and their guests) from the staff and the services. There was also a convention to separate masculine rooms from feminine rooms. This could all be resolved according to the ‘science’ of ichnography espoused in Robert Kerr’s The Gentleman’s House. Notwithstanding these separations, the various functions and services had to be integrated. At Osborne, the reception rooms in the private Royal Pavilion are grouped unconventionally around the main stairwell with large openings screened only by columns in antis allowing a discrete yet informal separation. Girouard comments that this was probably the Prince Consort’s idea, borrowed from the Riesensaal at Schloss Ehrenburg in Coburg, and, although

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criticised by Kerr, it was advantageous for the Court. It was not adopted at Government House. Wardell did achieve each of the three necessary divisions in his plan of Government House as well as another, the separate entrance to the state ballroom. The mass arrival of guests was as far as possible from the private wing.

Who decided the quantity and quality of the accommodation in the new Government House and the disposition of the rooms? As to the disposition of the rooms, W. W. Wardell was quite clear. Producing a small plan at the Royal Commission, he stated that 'the principle has been to keep the private house separate from the official house'. In answer to a question about the number of rooms, he stated that 'there is a ball-room, dining-room, drawing-room, morning-room, billiard-room, library, gentleman’s room and a dressing-room attached, Governor’s audience room, private secretary and aide-de-camp, and the waiting room.' These rooms were all on the ground floor and there were bedrooms and suites on the upper floors. In later evidence, Wardell is equivocal about who proposed the amount of accommodation required. On the one hand, he stated that 'the accommodation was settled by the Governor and the Government, and submitted to Parliament'. On the other, he stated 'I was told to make a plan having the accommodation I thought was necessary. I did make such a plan, and it was submitted to the Governor, who approved it with a slight alteration. I suggested, for instance, a small open court, and the Governor altered that, thinking, and I believe judiciously, that it would be better covered over and made a billiard-

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61 Girouard, Victorian Country House, p. 149.  
62 Girouard, Victorian Country House, p. 150.  
64 See Wardell, Royal Commission, answer to question 218, 19th February 1873, p. 8.  
65 See Wardell, Royal Commission, answer to question 301, 26th March 1873, p. 11.
room. It seems most likely that it was Wardell, using his considerable experience and informed values, who listed and ordered the accommodation from the beginning. Thereby, he provided in the private apartments an appropriate sense of gentlemanly retreat, all disposed, presumably, according to the ichnography of Robert Kerr’s The Gentleman’s House.

Wardell travelled in Britain and on the Continent for almost a year in 1870, just before Government House was designed. There is every possibility that William Wardell knew the work of Schinkel where he may have seen it at first hand. It is not unlikely that he would have seen it published in the architectural press. Even more likely is that he read about and saw the work of Barry, perhaps Trentham at first hand, but more likely the Reform Club and Barry’s earlier Travellers Club in London. The private hall and stairwell at Government House has been likened to the entrances of both clubs.

The Design Adopted

By 1870, the need for better accommodation at a scale more appropriate to the prosperous colony of Victoria was urgent. Rather than hold another competition, the Commissioner (or Minister) for Public Works, the Hon. William Bates directed the Inspector General for Public Works, William Wardell to design a new building. Most importantly, Wardell gave evidence that Bates specifically rejected the previous scheme by Joseph Reed. ‘He said he did not like it; he described it in Parliament as being a rechauffé of Menzies’ Hotel’, 67 which Reed and Barnes had

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66 See Wardell, Royal Commission, answer to question 302, 26th March 1873, p. 11.
67 Hansard, Assembly, 19 December, pp. 587-91; ‘Mr Bates observed that some years ago competitive designs for a Governor’s residence were called for at a cost of something like 1,500, but for one half of the money better plans could have been prepared by a gentleman in the Public Works department. One of the designs, for which something like 750 was paid, resembled Menzies’ Hotel.
designed, and 'He said he wished to have a design in the Italian Style'.\textsuperscript{68} Shortly after, when asked if Reed's design was actually shown to Bates 'for his approval or rejection', Wardell stated 'I cannot say, but he spoke to me of it himself as not being what he wished, and that he desired more accommodation than it gave and a different style'.\textsuperscript{69}

The first sketch was ready in July 1871 and left in the Parliamentary Library for the benefit of members.\textsuperscript{70} By the end of 1871, Wardell himself was quoting Osborne House, in the debate on materials, as a precedent for the use of stuccoed brickwork because 'It will save from 30 to 35 per cent in the outlay and a precedent may be found for it in the Queen's Palace at Osborne.'\textsuperscript{71} According to Nigel Lewis, this, 'the earliest known reference is contained in a letter from Wardell to the Minister of Public Works, 12 December 1871 regarding the choice of materials.'\textsuperscript{72}

Work started in 1872 and the project proceeded in stages depending on Parliament's allocation of funds. Again, there were concerns raised in Parliament about costs and materials. Then, in 1873, a Royal Commission was held into the whole of the Public Works Department. Joseph Reed, Wardell's professional rival, was critical of the P.W.D. and Wardell's administration of it.\textsuperscript{73} Reed precipitated

\textsuperscript{68} See Wardell, Royal Commission, answers to questions 142, 142 and 144, 12\textsuperscript{th} February 1873, p. 5.
\textsuperscript{69} See Wardell, Royal Commission, answer to question 158, 12\textsuperscript{th} February 1873, p. 6. It was confirmed yet again much later in the Royal Commission when, asked similar questions, Wardell repeated 'He [Mr. Bates] said he did not like the style, and wanted more domestic accommodation' and three questions later he repeated 'and the style'. See Wardell, Royal Commission, answers to questions 402 and 406, 2\textsuperscript{nd} April 1873, p. 15.
\textsuperscript{70} de Jong, 'From England to Australia', p. 480; N. Lewis, 'Government House C.M.P.', p. 45.
\textsuperscript{71} de Jong, 'From England to Australia'; and N. Lewis, 'Government House C.M.P.', p. 6. See Wardell, Royal Commission, answers to questions 247 and 248, 12\textsuperscript{th} February 1873, p. 9, when he states that 'brick and cement would cost £64,000, freestone 'I think' would cost £100,000, and solid granite would cost 'a very large sum, over £170,000'.
\textsuperscript{72} Lewis, N., 'Government House C.M.P.', p. 60.
\textsuperscript{73} Saunders, Historic Buildings, p. 14.
the Royal Commission in his capacity as President of the local Institute of
Architects. Most of the Commission was devoted to matters of economy and
whether or not the designs for public buildings should be chosen by competition.74
For the most part, Wardell was on the defensive about his administration, while
Reed argued that it would be cheaper and better to have competitions.75 Years
later, J. H. Harvey gave an insider’s view of the criticism of Government House.
He had been a junior architect in the P.W.D. and, in the 1930s, spoke as a Fellow of
the Institute of Architects. “By some it was referred to as “that stocking factory in
South Yarra”. By others, it was said to resemble a large Idiot Asylum which
existed in England, and the three storey block, together with the position of the
tower, were said to have been inspired by Osborne House in the Isle of Wight.76
Notwithstanding the serious contemporary, and continuing, criticism, by mid 1876
Wardell’s new vice-regal residence was finished. The Governor, Sir George
Bowen, his wife and family moved in and held a grand ball to celebrate.77

Wardell may have been directed by his Minister William Bates to follow the
imagery of Osborne House and he may have incorporated the general planning
principles of a large country house, with extra vice-regal requirements, which also
appear at Osborne House. But it cannot be said that he followed the planning of
Osborne as a model. The apparent simplicity and continuing success of Wardell’s
design at Government House betrays his independently great skill as a planner.

74 See Wardell, Royal Commission, answers to questions 295 to 354, 26th March 1873, p.
11-13. Wardell was the first to give evidence.
75 Reed gave extensive evidence over two days, 23rd April and 7th May. Thomas Crouch of
Crouch and Wilson was examined on 14th May 1873.
76 Harvey, ‘Historical Notes’, p. 69.
77 Government House was occupied by successive governors until 1901 when the Governor
General occupied the building at Australia’s Federation and the Governor of the new state of
Victoria moved to Stonnington, Malvern, another very late ‘boom’ version of the Italianate villa
model. For three years during the Great Depression, a girls’ school occupied Government House.
In 1934, the house again became Victoria’s official vice-regal residence, as it remains today.
And how much he was influenced by Kerr's ichnography, if at all, may never be known.

**Popular Criticism of Government House**

While still in the planning stage, there had been some criticism that Government House would be only bricks and mortar covered in stucco and not built in stone. Wardell countered this, not only by pointing out that it would save a great deal of money, but that there was a precedent in Osborne House. Even before it was finished, there was carping criticism of the construction of Government House.

The contentious foundations were criticised with mocking allusion to the Sublime and the Beautiful in one comment.

HA! BY MY LIFE, A NOBLE RUIN!

In the singularly natural exclamation made by the hero of a deservedly-forgotten tragedy, on seeing his father emerge from a cave after being shut up there for twenty years. The same may be applied to the foundations of Government House, on Princes Bridge reserve, in their present state, stuck about picturesquely with notices to trespassers. The other day we saw the last melancholy load of planks and wheelbarrows being removed. There is now a companion ruin to the foundation to the Chief Secretary's Office, which have peacefully reposed in the Treasury Reserve for so many years, and will apparently lie until they rot. Taking another quotation from a play, we may adapt to Melbourne the criticism of sir Frederick Blount upon Rome - "Delightful place, Wome. Vowy fine Wuins." Where shall we build our next "Wuin"?

Just six months later, taking the opposite and a more populist tack, *The Port Philip Herald* was critical that works had stopped. It complained that 'a large number of men [about 230] who had expected regular work for some time, and made their arrangements accordingly, have been suddenly thrown out of work at the very worst time of the year—a season when people without funds are subjected

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78 This debate went on for a very long time and in many quarters, especially in Parliament.
79 *Port Phillip Herald*, 16 December 1872, p. 2, col. e.
to the greatest amount of hardship. The funds appropriated to the project had run out, exactly what Wardell feared could happen in 1871. And six months later again, it was “This “Modern Tower of Babel” still ... accumulating brick by brick and has reached its second storey”. The Age, a radical newspaper, fostered much of the criticism. “As for the building, it is a huge pile, bald and plain to downright ugliness.” Richard Twopeny, a South Australian journalist writing about Melbourne’s public buildings in 1883 stated that they were “All built on a truly metropolitan scale, which is even exceeded by the palatial hugeness of the Government House, the ugliness of which is proverbial throughout Australia.” In fact, earlier in the year, when asked how he felt about criticism in the press, Wardell had suggested that it was so common and so misinformed that he ignored it.

Then, when it was completed, Government House was criticised not only for its scale, form and style but also for its fitting out. Froude’s comment that the public thought it was ugly has been mentioned and it was generally thought that too much had been spent on it. The Age newspaper claimed that, in the end, more than £200,000 had been expended. It had previously called the style “Pecksniffian” and the design a “great haystack pile”. Presumably concerned about its asymmetrical villa form and interestingly comparing the rambling plan to a homestead with accretions, the newspaper stated

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80 Port Phillip Herald, 6 June 1873, p. 2, col. f.
81 Port Phillip Herald, 6 November 1873, p. 3, col. f.
82 Age, 17th April 1876, p. 3, col. c-e.
84 For comment on the furniture and furnishings, see Lane and Serle, Australians at Home, pp. 144-8.
85 Age, 17 April 1876, p. 3, col. d & e.
86 Age, 17 April 1876, p. 3, col. d & e.
that unless we take care to enlighten them, our grandchildren will believe
that it was built by one generation and enlarged by another. Like the
homestead of the squatter on the Lower Murray, who added to his house as
his family increased, here by a lean-to, and there by a slabbéd room,
displaying, when finished, what he styled the “rowly-powly order
architecture”, the new Government House is certainly unique in this way.⁸⁷

There was even popular criticism of the garden at Government House and
scepticism about its capacity for self-sufficiency. The *Port Phillip Herald*
commented sarcastically

To make the lawn comfortable for the “curled darlings” who patronise
Government House, it has been found necessary to cut away the crest of the
hill, no slight job, as many tons of earth had to be removed, which have
been utilised in forming a terrace at one (north) side of the mansion. The
orchard attached to the dwelling is of most eccentric shape, something like
the Greek *dolche*, and it has been sagely suggested that all the vegetables that
cannot be grown in the very limited kitchen garden can be purchased out of
His Excellency’s “screw”—a very sensible idea.⁸⁸

It is perhaps ironic that the building is now highly esteemed for its architecture
which is carefully protected and conserved.⁹⁹ The major changes are superficial,
for the building has needed very little to be altered in its history, are that the grey
stucco is painted a very light cream and the gardens are matured.

**Government House as a Villa**

There is no doubt that the situation and appearance of the new Government House
complied with the aesthetics of a Picturesque villa, albeit very grand. But was the
style appropriate and did it provide the other criteria of a true villa, the
quintessential qualities? Was there that sense of retreat which marks a well
educated and sociable gentleman’s occupation of his home. Were the grounds self-
sufficient? Was there a library? It is worth recalling Downing’s assessment of the

⁸⁷ *Age*, 17 February 1874, p. 2, col. f.
⁸⁸ *Port Phillip Herald*, 6 November 1873, p. 3, col. f.
Italianate villa. He considered the style to be ‘inferior to pointed and high-roofed modes’ but, if the villa were not rural and nor required to express ‘country life’, then ‘it is however remarkable for expressing the elegant culture and variety of accomplishment of the retired citizen or man of the world’. Moreover, Downing continues that the Italianate style ‘is also significant of the multiform tastes, habits, and wants of modern civilization’.

The new Government House was much closer to the centre of Melbourne than Toorak House but it was still removed. It stands across and above the Yarra River, which was much wilder in the nineteenth century, in relative isolation from other buildings. It was approached by a long drive, since much reduced. This detachment made it a retreat in a topographical sense and ‘sub-urban’ in the ancient or historical sense.

More importantly, a careful separation between the state, or public, and the private spaces within the building allowed for an ‘inner’ retreat. This separation is partly expressed by the massing of the building but not as obviously as might be expected. The state entrance is larger and more immediate than the private entrance but the wing to which it appears to give access does not hold the public reception rooms. Rather, it gives access to the hall which separates them. On the right of the hall, past convenient cloakrooms, there is the state drawing room, which opens out onto the fountain courtyard. This room is, in fact, one of the lowest parts of the massing. Its interest was increased by the addition of a conservatory soon after Government House was completed. Beyond, and well out of sight of the guest arriving, there is the State dining room. The ballroom, the largest space and

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99 The building was identified under the Government Buildings Act in the early 1970s, the first heritage legislation passed in Australia, and subsequently under the Heritage Act of 1995.
notoriously longer than the ballroom at Buckingham Palace, is beyond the fountain court. It has its own separate entrance at the far end and is as far as possible from the private entrance.

The private rooms are reached from the state hall on the left with a corridor leading to the private hall. Within the private suite, there was a library and what appears to be a smoking room associated with a billiard room, as well as private reception rooms. When the building was nearing completion, Wardell took a group of journalists on a tour of Government House. The reports in the *Argus* and the *Age* are similar and their tour begins with the library. The imagery of the room is masculine if not club-like.

The part of the building visited was the portion which is reserved for the Governor’s private use. The first room examined was the Governor’s library, which is situated at the northern corner of the building. The sides of the room are well furnished with bookcases, at present untenanted. The furniture is of Spanish mahogany, made by Messrs. Thwaites and Son. The most noticeable feature in this room is the centre table which is a really excellent specimen of cabinetmaker’s work. It is furnished with large drawers, and being a good deal filled up underneath, the table has the appearance of being lower than it really is. There are several extremely comfortable armchairs, two of which are of vast dimensions. All the chairs in this room are covered with morocco leather.91

Much of the furniture at Toorak House was removed to Government House via BishopsCourt.92 There must have been a collection of books at Toorak House because a substantial bookcase survives at Government House which appears in

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91 *Argus*, 20th May 1876, p. 8. See also *Age*, 20th May 1876, p. 5 which also mentions the mirror over the mantelpiece. There is a fuller description of the interiors, but no specific mention of the library, in ‘Decorative Art in Australia’, *The Journal of Decorative Art*, March 1890, pp. 44-5.
92 See ‘List of 19th Century Furniture at Government House, Melbourne’, Part I, prepared by Terence Lane (Senior Curator of Decorative Arts, National Gallery of Victoria), with the assistance of Jennifer Shaw, prepared for the Public Works Department, November, 1984. The built-in bookcases are listed as Number 61 in the inventory and the central table, apparently a desk rather than a table, is listed as Number 62.
engravings of the suite used by the Duke of Edinburgh on his visit there in 1867.\textsuperscript{93} 

The collection of books in the original library at Government House has been dispersed.\textsuperscript{94} The current library houses a modern collection, probably dating from the return of the state governors in the 1930s.

There were also substantial sections of the garden given over to self-sufficiency. Nigel Lewis notes that ‘a fruit garden and winery had been established at the boundary between the Botanic Gardens and Government House reserve’, which later coincided closely with the future orchard, kitchen and flower gardens of Government House.\textsuperscript{95}

The Landscaping of Government House

As early as 1845, Charles Joseph La Trobe, Superintendent of the Port Phillip District of New South Wales, reserved land across the Yarra River from the fledgling township of Melbourne as the King’s Domain and for the site of a government house.\textsuperscript{96} A large triangular area of 83 acres [37.7ha], it included all the land notionally in front of Government House and up to Princes Bridge, which had become the main entry to the city from the south. It also extended westwards to St Kilda Road, the main route to and from the southern suburbs, and eastwards to the Yarra River. In the 1840s, there were still extensive stands of remnant vegetation.\textsuperscript{97}

\textsuperscript{93} This is listed as Number 16 in the inventory. There is also a fine late eighteenth-century bookcase, listed as Number 1, possibly brought from Toorak House and now located in the Private Secretary’s House. Two other plain bookcases, listed as Numbers 136 and 137 are more prosaic in their design.

\textsuperscript{94} No catalogue appears to have survived nor is there any oral history of such an early collection.


\textsuperscript{97} Surveyors, preparing for possible subdivision, noted ‘gum trees, Eucalyptus camaldulensis and, possibly, Eucalyptus leucoxylon, ‘box trees’, Eucalyptus polyanthemos or
Baron Ferdinand von Mueller planted out the area as a dense pinetum, one of his proudest achievements but later criticised by a Board of Inquiry for being too dense and for some of the trees being sickly. He argued that the urban layout of the Domain during the period of the 1850s and 1860s was constructed as a symbolic geography, formed out of privileged views, vistas and alignments. He argues further that the form of the Domain corresponds in its geometry very closely to the surveyed but unrealised southern section of Robert Hoddle’s original grid plans for the township of Melbourne preserving, in addition, the hierarchical relationships implied by the twin grid layout. He also argues that the Domain’s 1850s layout cannot be attributed with certainty to Henry Ginn, the Government Inspector of Works and Architect at the time, but was more likely to have been a collaboration between the surveyor, Clement Hodgkinson and Edward La Trobe Bateman.

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Sara Maroske, ‘Mueller, Ferdinand Jakob Heinrich von (1825-1896)’, in Aitken and Looker, eds., OCAG, pp. 423-4. Lewis & Assoc, ‘Government House CA’, p. 44, states that ‘On a plan published in 1863 an inventory of trees in the vicinity of Government House was included. Plantings included Cupressus lawsoniana (80), Cupressus goveniana (80), Pinus excelsta (80), Elms (20), Cupressus macrocarpa (40), Pinus Nordmanniana (15), Wellingtonia gigantea (15), Pinus halepensis (100), Pinus pinaster (100), Pinus larico (100), Pinus deodara (100), Pinus maritima (15) and Pinus ponderosa (30) amongst others’.


Lewis suggests in his ‘Melbourne Mansions’ on-line database, referring to his report ‘Chatsworth House’, 1990, that Edward La Trobe Bateman, who definitely designed the landscaping at Chatsworth, prepared the landscape design for the 1864 Government House competition entry by Reed and Barnes.
Bateman, through his connections with Joseph Reed, designed the landscape for the 1864 proposal. Anne Neale states that 'the proposed landscape design can only be guessed at, but given the style of the intended house, it would not be surprising if the design had been in the formal French manner as revived in England by W. A. Nesfield'. In any case, the text which accompanied the illustration of the winning 1864 design for Government House, states:

We are glad to find that the government have been fortunate enough to secure the services of Mr Edward Latrobe [sic] Bateman to design and lay out the grounds around the proposed building. It is small praise to Mr Bateman to say no one here can approach him as an ornamental artist and his marvellous power over the pencil. We are, therefore, quite satisfied that, if left to him, it will be done in a way to reflect credit on the colony.

Nothing much happened in the Domain in the later 1860s. Then, in 1872, the Government decided to hold a competition for landscaping the Domain and the Government House reserve. The second condition of the competition required:

In the design a portion of ground about sixty acres in extent, to include the residence, court-yards, carriage stand, flower garden, orchard, kitchen garden, lawn, croquet and archery ground, site for one fountain, and site for one conservatory, must be laid out with a view to the private use by His Excellency, the Governor and his household: to comprise also some park land, whereon any young trees, standing in clumps or alone, will have to be protected, so as to admit of such park land being used for the grazing of horses and cows belonging to His Excellency's establishment.

Three professional but mediocre entries were given equal first prize but a later offer came from an unexpected quarter.

101 Lewis, 'Melbourne Mansions' on-line database, for the second Government House.
103 Illustrated Melbourne Post, 20th August 1864, p. 7.
Learning of the impasse, Joseph Sayce prepared two designs for landscaping the Domain, including the grounds of Government House, in 1873. Sayce had been a banker and retired on the strength of his mining investments. He was an amateur horticulturist and landscape gardener. He was certainly an excellent draftsman, if he drew the plans himself. There is even a chance that he was connected with Joseph Reed. He was definitely conscious of the topography of the site because contours as well as the nearby Royal Observatory and some fences appear on a preliminary plan provided to competitors. No trees are noted, however, despite the supposed problem of the pinetum.

Sayce first produced a broadly Picturesque design. It was highly structured, using strict axes and strong geometrical forms linking plantings, buildings, lakes and major features such as a rosary, statuary, steps, terraces, temples and urns. The private and public areas, although delineated by fencing, are almost without visual separation. There was an American Garden and, behind the Government House (at that time already well under construction) there were extensive service areas. These included an orchard, an orangery and a vegetable garden which already existed because ‘The kitchen garden was formerly part of the Botanic Garden and by the simple expedient of changing the public boundaries His Excellency had the benefit of Mueller’s careful trial plantings of fruit and vines.

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105 See Darren Watson, ‘Sayce, Joseph (1815-1876)’, in Aitken and Looke, OCA/AG, Oxford University Press, Melbourne, 2002, p. 536. There is nobody with the surname Sayce registered as dying in Victoria in 1876 nor anyone with the first name Joseph and the surname Sayce dying in Victoria before 1888.
106 There is an advertisement for an ‘art auction’ or limited raffle, which appears many times early in February and March 1872, just after Joseph Sayce retired from the bank, run by a person called Sayce ‘late Reed’; Port Phillip Herald, February 7, 1872, p. 1, col. g. Reed was giving evidence against William Wardell and the Public Works Department at just this time.
107 It was lithographed in 1872 and is held at SLV Maps 821.08 Melb. 1872, Sayce.
108 Lewis & Assoc., ‘Government House CA’, p. 229
The second plan is softer, simpler and more Gardenesque in style. The formal axes are no longer emphasised by rigidly straight paths, geometric flowerbeds and regular plantings but survive as links between points of interest along the axes. The main axis, for example, is generated in the lower stretches of the private lawn. It passes through the conservatory in the public section of the park, over some flowerbeds, across the sunken walk, and terminates on an orchestra stand at the edge of the lake. The sunken walk, a subsidiary axis perpendicular to the main axis, is generated by two statues. Many geometric areas such as circles and ellipses survive but these are subsidiary to the serpentine paths and drives. Sayce described his plan thus:

It has been a special aim, in the formation of this design, to produce, in its main features of lawn and landscape, breadth and grandeur of effect, to accord with the fine proportions and style of architecture of the mansion; that high ornamentation, congruous and kindred in character, should be the leading feature in the parts contiguous to the private portion of the residence. In the formation of the landscape (supposing the trees to have attained a moderate size) it has been endeavoured especially to combine, with picturesque arrangement in the grouping, and variety in the skyline, appropriateness of site, both as to position and aspect, for all the trees.

Sayce was engaged to implement the second plan but ‘funding difficulties with the Sayce plan led to his dismissal on 12 June 1873, only three months after his appointment to execute work at Government House and the Domain.’ The second plan was then changed further to make it more Picturesque. The Government, ever conscious about expenditure, appointed Clement Hodgkinson as Inspector General of Metropolitan Gardens, Parks and Reserves. He was given

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109 It was lithographed in 1873 and is held at SLV Maps 821.08 Melb. 1873, Sayce.
‘instructions to prepare new estimates for the Botanic garden and Domain. He drastically curtailed the Sayce plan by cutting £13,000 of the previous estimate, criticised Mueller’s shaded walks and argued for clumped planting.’

The Government appointed William Guilfoyle as Director of the Botanical Gardens with responsibility for the Domain.

It was Guilfoyle’s genius which ensured that the setting of Government House was so successfully Picturesque. He minimised the Gardenesque features of Sayce’s plan and retained most of the service areas which made the establishment self-sufficient in flowers, fruit and vegetables. These were conveniently close to the manure-producing stables. The cow paddock, to the north of the original entrance, where milk cows had been grazed from at least the early 1860s, was retained. But other things were changed, adjusted and enhanced.

Guilfoyle maximised the site’s Picturesque potential, first anticipated by Superintendent La Trobe in 1845. He simplified the paths and drives, and increased their curvature, most importantly for the main drive. This meant that Government House remained out of view until the last moment of approach and was seen from the full diagonal with the tower looming above its spreading masses. He created a dark backdrop of Araucarias, Pines and Cypresses, utilising some of the trees of Mueller’s pinetum. He closed smaller views by planting shrubs, aloes and other plants between trees, with the advantage of adding

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OCAG, p. 306. Hodgkinson, an engineer and surveyor, worked with James Blackburn on the provision of fresh water from Yan Yean for Melbourne in the early 1850s.

115 However, Lewis states ‘there seems little justice in the common attribution of the design to Guilfoyle’, in ‘“Like Queen Victoria’s”’, p. 85.
117 These changes are seen clearly marked in red on a republished version of Sayce’s second plan held at SLV Maps 821,08 Melb. 1873. Sayce.
shrubs, aloes and other plants between trees, with the advantage of adding contrasting and varied textures and colours. He improved the view to and from Government House.

In a stroke of genius, [Guilfoyle] created a masterpiece in the Domain; by levelling a ridge and judicious planting he allowed Government House to be seen from Princes Bridge. Consequently the city could see the Union Jack flying from the tower of the Governor’s house. This imperial resonance in the landscape was heightened by the placing of the front gates of Government House opposite the Department of Defence building in St Kilda Road.118

Importantly, Guilfoyle provides a clear insight into the Picturesque philosophy of his design. He wrote in a monthly report

The site chosen for the new Government House commands a charming view of the scenery around Melbourne for miles; and when the belts of trees now being planted at the lower end of the private ground are of sufficient height to shut out the heavier aspects of the distant city, giving, through the vistas formed by careful grouping, ever-varying scenery down to the lakes at Princes Bridge, the picturesque effect will be greatly enhanced.

One of the greatest essentials in landscape gardening is the variety of foliage and disposal of trees. Nothing can excel the glimpses afforded by the openings between naturally formed clumps of trees and shrubs, whose height and contrast of foliage have been studied. At every step the visitor finds some new view — something fresh, lively, and striking, especially when tastefully arranged. Where long sombre rows of trees are planted, and sameness of foliage exists, the very reverse is the case. Nature’s most favourable aspects then seem sacrificed to art, and that art often produces but a chilling effect.

The lodge drive approaches — in fact all the adjuncts to Government House — should, according to the principles of true landscape, be in proportionate

118 Paul Fox, ‘Victorian Historic Gardens’, Open to View. Historic Gardens and the Public, Proceedings of the Ninth Annual Conference of the Australian garden History Society, Melbourne, 1988, p. 12. At Osborne House, Queen Victoria looked from her private drawing room across the Solent to Portsmouth, the home of the British Navy. Guilfoyle was very much concerned about view lines and their terminations. Many years later, in 1898 and towards the end of his career, he advised the owner of Dalvui near Noorat in the Western District on the opening up of vistas, including a diagonal axis across a water feature, terminating on distant hills.
harmony with the size of the building. To narrow or dwarf the surroundings is simply to destroy the whole effect.\textsuperscript{119}

Guilfoyle also used other important Picturesque techniques. He introduced two features, one Beautiful and the other Sublime. On an outcrop overlooking the Yarra River, between the Botanic Gardens and the grounds of Government House, he built a temple to commemorate Charles La Trobe. This ‘Temple of the Winds’ was Claudean in its setting, sitting and Classical associations and represents the triumph of civilized Beauty in the landscape. Not far away, in a disused quarry, he developed Joseph Sayce’s idea of a fern gully.\textsuperscript{120} This he made wet, dark and primeval, a truly Sublime experience.\textsuperscript{121} Perhaps the ultimate expression was in the adjacent Botanical Gardens.

The sublime was also to be encountered within them. Guilfoyle had encountered the sublime, in all its awesomeness, when he had climbed to the top of a volcano near Port Resolution in Tana in 1867. This made a powerful impression on him, so much so that two years later, he remembered it as ‘perhaps the most sublime sight Polynesia can present’, adding that it would ‘never be forgotten’. Guilfoyle’s memory served him well when, in 1876, he constructed the Anderson Street Reservoir in the Melbourne Gardens; the reservoir took on the appearance of ‘a miniature crater of an extinct volcano’.\textsuperscript{122}


\textsuperscript{120} By 1873, J. Noone of the Crown Land Office (after William Guilfoyle) depicted the Fern Tree Gully at the Botanic Gardens, Melbourne in cross-section with the dramatic juxtaposition of the lush vegetation above, including exotics, and the scientific soil profile in strata below. Photolithograph, in the ‘Monthly Report of the Curator of the Botanical and Domain Gardens’, Victorian Parliamentary Papers, 1873/3, La Trobe Library, SLV.

\textsuperscript{121} Both these features are now outside the division between the private and the public parts of the Domain.

Government House, Melbourne is one of the finest examples of the asymmetrical Italianate villa in the world.\textsuperscript{123} A. J. Downing summed up the potential for the model's balanced massing and axial system when he wrote

Above all, when the composition is irregular, rises the campanile or Italian tower, bringing all into unity and giving picturesqueness, or an expression of power and elevation, to the whole composition.

Government House does tower over all and uses its axes to reach out and claim the colonial landscape and more.

\textsuperscript{123} Downing, \textit{Country Houses}, p. 286.
CONCLUSION:

CLAIMING THE LANDSCAPE

Government House claims and embraces its landscape. It is situated on the highest hill south and east of the Yarra River within five kilometres of the city which it faces. Its architecture and landscaping, once maligned, are now appreciated for their quality and recognised for their significance. The view of the tower from the Royal Botanic Gardens has become a classic image of central Melbourne. The asymmetrical form of the building generates three major axes, each far reaching and with deep symbolic value. The geographical and chronological templates discovered at Cronkhill also apply at Government House.

The single tower generates the vertical axis defining the locus of the place and indicates, when the Royal Standard is flying, the presence of the Governor. The massing of the building is skillfully balanced about its base. The building being set on the diagonal, the tower has the same orientation of Charnwood, the early Italianate villa on top of St Kilda hill and enjoys the same views. Even in the nineteenth century, the views from the tower were described as spectacular. There is no doubt how visible the tower still is, despite the development of the city around it. While not standing over any of the three main entrances, as is usual with the Italianate villa model, the vertical axis clearly represents proprietorship. The tower provides both aspect and prospect according to the Picturesque aesthetic.

\[1\] The next highest hills are: that of Toorak House and Leighbwood in Toorak; Studley Park, Kew with its many villas; and the site of Xavier College, Barkers Road, Kew.

\[2\] It is an obvious point, but one of the many important differences between Osborne House and Government House is that the former has two towers, slightly different and neither dominant, while the latter has one striking tower. It might be argued that this weakens the design of Osborne House and strengthens that of Government House.
One horizontal axis extends generally north-westwards from the principal façade of Government House towards Princes Bridge and is best described as the public axis. Rather than addressing Princes Bridge in the foreground, or the intersection of Swanston Street and Flinders Street at the northern end of Princes Bridge, the axis passes over the intersection of Flinders Street and Elizabeth Street, the central street of Melbourne’s grid. Flinders Street is the southern side of the grid. The grid was deliberately aligned by the surveyor, Robert Hoddle to be parallel to the Yarra River, centred on the Pool in the river, set between two low hills and divided a stream, called Williams Creek, in the valley between them. That stream, now an underground drain, could be interpreted as the Cloaca Maxima of Melbourne. It is not known if this association was in the minds of La Trobe, Wardell, Sayce or Guilfoyle. In any case, Swanston Street soon superseded Elizabeth Street as the principal thoroughfare because of the construction of Princes Bridge between 1846 and 1851. Nonetheless, this association adds an extra dimension to the symbolism of the principal horizontal axis and provides the southern end to the northern entrance of Melbourne at the intersection of Victoria Street and Elizabeth Street, which was once linked with the University of

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3 One of these hills, where Russell Street intersects with Victoria Parade, is where the Melbourne Gaol still stands. The other is not the hill where the former Benevolent Asylum stood in North Melbourne but the hill at the western end of the city grid. For a summary of the planning of Melbourne, see Miles Lewis, 2.5 ‘Frontier Town, Town Planning’ in Melbourne, the City’s History and Development, City of Melbourne, Melbourne, 1995. Garry Owen (Edmund Finn), The Chronicles of Early Melbourne, Ferguson and Mitchell, Melbourne, 1888 and Heritage Publications, [1890], p.109, states that it was also called Townend River after ‘a fat, comfortable-looking grocer’ who had a business nearby. Interestingly, it suggests the stream’s length was quite short. It soon became an open sewer and a nuisance.

4 The Cloaca Maxima is the ‘sewer’ which still drains the area of the Forum in Rome and beyond, emptying into the Tiber near the Ponte Rotto. It was a stream which also ran north-south and flowed through the marshy area between the Esquiline, Viminal and Quirinal Hills in particular but also the Capitoline and Palatine Hills. It was at first channeled c.200B.C. and then arched over. See Christopher Hibbert, Rome, the Biography of a City, Penguin Books, Harmondsworth, 1987, pp. 7 and 316.

5 Three sites for the new bridge were considered: at the ends of Queen Street, Elizabeth Street and Swanston Streets. See Lewis, Melbourne, p. 35.
Melbourne.

The principal horizontal axis extends further into the middle ground. The next major topographical feature along the axis is Flagstaff Hill, the highest point in the north-west quarter of the city. This eminence was particularly important in early Melbourne because it was used to send semaphore signals to ships at anchor in Hobson’s Bay and to the settlement at Williamstown at the northern end of Port Phillip Bay. Although the semaphore was superseded by the introduction of telegraphy, Flagstaff Hill remained significant as the site of the first cemetery in Melbourne. And beyond that, the axis passes over the position of the former Benevolent Asylum in North Melbourne.

The axis then passes into the background of the landscape to terminate on Mount Macedon, which Major Mitchell had climbed on his return journey to Sydney on the 30th September 1836. He wrote ‘I had two important objects in view ... one being to determine its position trigonometrically, as a point likely to be seen from the country to which I was going ... the other being to obtain a view of Port Phillip, and thus to connect my survey with that harbour.’ He did not realize that the mass of white objects ‘which might have been either tents or vessels’ that he saw at the head of the bay, was actually the beginning of settlement at Melbourne. Mount Macedon was also the site of the Governor’s hill station and it is the mountain on the horizon in the background of Eugen von Guérard’s painting of Glenara homestead at Bulla.

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6 The Pioneers Memorial, a Gothic revival monument marks the spot close to the site of the original flagstaff on the highest point in today’s Flagstaff Gardens. There is an interesting parallel with Government House, Sydney. The principal axis of that building terminates on the semaphore station at South Head, intriguingly hidden behind two headlands within Sydney Harbour.

7 T. L. Mitchell, Three expeditions into the interior of eastern Australia: with descriptions of the recently explored region of Australia Felix, and of the present colony of New South Wales, 2
The other horizontal axis, extending north-eastwards from the elevation overlooking the formal private garden in the foreground, is no less important. It must be remembered that the elevation includes a two-storey loggia. This private axis looks across the low lying areas beside the Yarra River towards a series of hills. The first is the Richmond Hill, covered by villas by the 1870s, and then a series of hills covered in trees which define the meanderings of the Yarra River between the flat industrial suburb of Collingwood and the salubrious suburb of Kew and its villas. The axis then passes into the broader landscape to terminate on the triple peaks of Mount Slide, Mount Tanglefoot and Mount Mitchell at the end of the Dandenong Ranges, the dominant range to the east of Melbourne.

Reinforcing this private prospect, there are diagonal axes of particular interest in the middle ground because of the associations they can claim.

One axis extends due north towards the Treasury Building and Parliament House, key public buildings with strong symbolic value. But these may or may not have been intended to terminate this view because, slightly higher on Eastern Hill, there was a cluster of churches: St Patrick’s, now the Catholic Cathedral, St Peter’s Church of England, Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, a Presbyterian church and a Unitarian Chapel. The last two have been demolished, the first was rebuilt as St Patrick’s Cathedral in 1858 (designed by William Wardell in private practice), and the other two survive altered and extended but at about the same scale as they were.

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8 These would have included Dr. Docker’s home, the small villa at 11 Union Street and, on the crown of the hill, the home of the famous actor and philanthropist, the ‘Great’ George Coppin, another large Italianate villa.
in the 1870s. The other diagonal axis extends across the eastern suburbs including Kew and, just as at Cronkhill, terminates in the far distance at the source of the Yarra River.

The principal horizontal axes can also be extended to the south. To the south-west, the axis passes Melbourne’s defences at Point Gellibrand and Williamstown, between the city of Geelong and Port Phillip Heads and then, notionally, terminates at the lighthouse on Cape Otway, well beyond the spectator’s vision but easily within his or her intellect and imagination. To the south-east, the axis passes over Western Port Bay, important in the early exploration and settlement of the future colony and, again notionally, terminates at the lighthouse on Cape Liptrap. The subsidiary axis which runs north-south terminates in the south at the lighthouse on Cape Schank, near the house, Barragunda and within its prospect.

How much this axially and triangulation is happy coincidence and how much is conscious design is difficult to determine. The capes, hills, rivers and plains have always been there and it is only European science and need which turns them into topography. Similarly, the historical and pre-historical associations they may evoke, whether intrinsic, intellectual or imagined, are cultural. There is a strong, multi-layered appreciation of the landscape from the earliest times of European settlement and the medium of that appreciation was the Picturesque aesthetic borne on a tide of Imperialism. The early officials and professionals who administered the colony were imbued with both. Even if pragmatism influenced the

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9 There was also a fire tower, since replaced by a late nineteenth century structure. Not far away in Albert Street, by the time Government House was built, there were also a Baptist Church, a Swedenborgian Church and a Synagogue.

10 This axis actually passes precisely over Corinella, the site of the second attempt at settlement along the Victorian coast in December 1826.
siting of early homesteads, it has been seen this was not the only factor taken into account. Pragmatism had little influence in the siting of early suburban villas and they too addressed the landscape. Something much deeper must have moved Superintendent La Trobe, as early as the 1840s, to choose the ‘best’ hill outside the town for a future Government House. Was it convenience or foresight?

Ann Bermingham, writing about politics and its representation in the English landscape around 1795, may provide the beginning of an answer. Using quotations from Uvedale Price and Richard Payne Knight in particular, she observes the shift from Claude’s paintings and the idyllic, ordered ‘prospect’ landscapes of ‘Capability’ Brown and Humphrey Repton to a wilder, more unkempt and intimate style of landscape gardening. By the end of the eighteenth century, she writes ‘The point of the picturesque aesthetic was not simply to build new gardens in this “style” but rather to preserve old gardens that were already picturesque.’ Quoting Price’s Essay on the Picturesque, she writes ‘Clearly systematic forms of gardening or government were distasteful, and the connection in Price’s mind between the two is a good example of the way in which landscape design functioned as a political metaphor.’ She highlights Price and Knight’s anxiety about revolution and their association of prospect landscapes with the ‘levelling’ democracy of the French Revolution. She writes ‘In a similar spirit of redefining liberty in terms of the picturesque landscape, Knight in his poem The Landscape describes the overgrown picturesque garden as a place “where every shaggy shrub and spreading tree / Proclaim’d the seat of native Liberty.”’


12 Bermingham, Landscape and Power, p. 83.

13 Bermingham, Landscape and Power, p. 85.
course, by ‘native Liberty’, Knight means the best of British nationalism or, at least, the political system which he personally enjoyed.

Significantly, Bermingham draws a parallel between the written constitutions of modern democracies like France and the United States, as represented by ordered, systematic, ideal landscapes, and the variety, individuality, and antiquity of the unwritten British Constitution, as represented by the Picturesque garden as it came to be. ¹⁴ This goes back to the tension in the dichotomy between the Beautiful and the Sublime. Her observations, however, raise two major issues which might compromise a reading of Government House as a metaphor for modern democracy.

The first issue is that the grounds of Government House were never an unkept garden, allowed to fall into disrepair, even while the Domain with its pinetum waited for its predestined development. This is because the appreciation for the Picturesque had moved on from Knight and Price’s early nineteenth century appreciation. There was, at least, a new scientific content in the mid-nineteenth-century interpretation of the landscape. And, as demonstrated in the paintings of Eugen von Guérard, this was not without a metaphysical wonder at God’s creation in his meticulously accurate depiction of flora and fauna, both native and exotic. Much too had happened historically in Victoria, Britain and the world since Knight and Price’s fears of a French invasion and mob rule. The new constitution in Victoria was consolidating despite the tension between political factions and the general political turmoil of the times. Government House and its grounds represented the second, if not a third generation of the Italianate villa model after Cronkhill, Deepdene, Trentham and even Osborne. The grounds of Trentham and
Osborne, with their Whig and Royal connections, had already returned to a much more formal Italianate style than the bosky woods favoured by Payne and Knight.

The second issue raised by Bermingham’s observations is that discussion about the great landscapes to 1795, for the most part, only considers the buildings in those landscapes as static objects. Knight’s Downton Castle, the first deliberately designed asymmetrical house in Britain, was being built about this time. The breaking forth of asymmetry which it allowed and the increasingly sophisticated combination of Classical architecture with that asymmetry offered a fresh re-interpretation of the Italianate villa model in the early nineteenth century. The model continued to bring with it its many associations. This all came to a special fruition in Government House, which albeit highly refined, still represented the criteria for a villa lifestyle. The principles of the Picturesque aesthetic had not changed. Their interpretation and adoption had just become more complex.

Traditional aspects of Imperialism survived but modernity was ascendant. The army may have been present at Victoria Barracks, directly opposite the entrance gates but the most important observatory in the southern Hemisphere was beside Government House. The scientific interest in the indigenous flora and fauna of Victoria was deliberately introduced into the landscaping of the Domain. The Botanical Gardens were laid out by Guilfoyle, not only for the pleasure of the public but also for scientific endeavour at the highest level. This is the Beautiful Rationalism of the Enlightenment.

There was also a Sublime darker side. Brief though the period was, a sense of colonial history had emerged, a history written by the victorious and, at that time, one mostly blind to that dark side. Alexander Sutherland was well educated, liberal
in his views and representative of his time. He wrote in 1888, 'Of ordinary history we have none. Battles, sieges, and rebellions; the death of kings and the change of dynasties; the dungeon, the axe, and the martyr's stake—all those incidents which form the picturesque in history are absent from our story. But in exchange we have those triumphs of peace which the world is more and more inclined to regard with Milton as being no less renowned than war.' Unaware of what was about to happen, Sutherland was right from his perspective and at that moment. Most Victorians and especially those who lived in Marvellous Melbourne were prosperous, comfortable, middle-class home owners about to reach the peak in a booming real estate market.

Whatever the motives of the players were, the choice in 1872 of the Italianate villa model for Government House, Melbourne has succeeded. It does tower above all but, doing so, it embraces the landscape. Through its architecture and situation, the building has come to symbolise the broad community and its shared values. While ideal, grand and detached, it is, nonetheless, constant, refined and available. It is essentially domestic and, to be at home in a democracy, is the quintessence of living in a successful one.

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15 See P. H. Northcott, 'Sutherland, Alexander (1852-1902)', in Nairn, ADB, vol. 6, pp. 222-3. He lived at Heronswood, Dromana designed by Edward La Trobe Bateman with all the usual ingredients of a Bateman design. Its principle axis looks due north to the city of Melbourne.

16 Alexander Sutherland, ed., Victoria and Its Metropolis, Past and Present, Vol. I, McCarron, Bird & Co., Melbourne, 'Preface'. This three-volume work was written as a celebration of and reflection on the extraordinary development which Victoria and Melbourne had enjoyed. It coincided with the 1888 International Exhibition held in Melbourne. Sutherland wrote a European history and is equivocal on the dispossession of the Aborigines. Firstly, he states, p. 15, at the beginning of his chapter on 'The Aboriginal Era', 'it is not out of egotism, or for contempt for his sable predecessors, that the Australian colonist dates the commencement of the history of his country from the arrival of white men.' Then, after some salacious details on cannibalism and chastity, he states that disease and a falling birthrate caused their decline. On p. 29, he states the question of dispossession 'is a problem incapable of absolute determination.' In any case, the Europeans were only acting 'in obedience to natural laws over which they had no control' when they 'settled side by side with the natives'. After all, they had to address the problem of over-crowded cities. The dispossession and decline of the Aborigines was the result of 'the working of a law above that which man makes for himself.'