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Historical Research Notes

Ellerslie Terrace

No. 41 Ballast Point Road

Birchgrove

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Reference edition prepared with author permission

28th June 2025

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1.0 Introduction

1.2 Author identification

This report has been prepared by Dr Raymond Stevens B.Arch, (Hons.), M.Arch, PhD, AIA, of Oikos Architects on behalf of the owners of the residence.

1.3 Methodology of SOHI

The general principles established by the Australia ICOMOS *Burra Charter* and the NSW Heritage Office Heritage Manual, have been adopted in the preparation of the SOHI component of this submission including:-

- *The Burra Charter (2013)*,
- *Assessing Heritage Significance (2023)*,
- *Statement of Heritage Impact (2023)*.

1.5 Documentary Evidence

The following sources have been used in the preparation of this SEE and HIS:-

General references;

- Peter Reynolds, Balmain: *Half a Thousand Acres- The History of a Land Grant*, (Sydney: The Balmain Association, 1976).
- Max Solling and Peter Reynolds, *Leichhardt: On the Margins of the City* (St Leonards: Allen & Unwin, 1997).
- Richard Apperly, Robert Irving & Peter Reynolds, *A Pictorial Guide to Identifying Australian Architecture*. (Sydney: Angus & Robertson, 1994).

- Davidson, Yvonne, and Hamey, Kathleen, *Streets, Lanes and Places 1836-1996: An Index of the Origins of the Street Names of Balmain, Birchgrove and Rozelle*. Balmain (Balmain: The Balmain Association Inc., 2005).
- Inventory Listings for *Ellerslie Terrace*, Department of Planning & Environment: Heritage NSW.
- David Logan, *The Life and Work of Edward H. Buchanan (1859-1943): Architect & Builder*. Thesis submitted as part-requirement for the Degree of Bachelor of Architecture, The University of New South Wales, 1977.
- Dr Ray Stevens, *Miss Rose Adcock and Her Iron Houses of Snails Bay* (Balmain Association, Balmain 2025).

Newspapers & Blogs;

- Various, refer to specific listings.

1.6 Limitations

The pre-European occupation of land of the *Wangal* clan and their neighbours, the *Cadigal*, whose territory extended from Sydney Cove along the southern side of Port Jackson to the Parish of Petersham is not covered in this Statement.

Inspections of the property were carried out at various times during September to February 2025 by the author and staff of Oikos Architects at which time the site was investigated, measured and photographed. The inspection was undertaken as a visual inspection only. No invasive demolition or opening up of cavities has been undertaken. No archaeological assessment has been undertaken at this stage.

1.7 Definition of terms

For the purposes of this report the following definitions are adopted from Article 1: Definitions of *The Burra Charter* 2013, the Australian ICOMOS Charter for the Conservation of Places of Cultural Significance.

Place	means a geographically defined area. It may include elements, objects, spaces and views.
Cultural significance	means aesthetic, historic, scientific, social or spiritual value for past, present or future generations. Cultural significance is embodied in the place itself, its fabric, setting, use, associations, meanings, records, related places and related objects. Place may have tangible and intangible dimensions.
Fabric	means all the physical material of the place including elements, fixtures, contents and objects.
Conservation	means all the processes of looking after a place so as to retain its cultural significance.
Maintenance	<i>means the continuous protective care of a place, and its setting. Maintenance is to be distinguished from repair which involves restoration or reconstruction.</i>
Preservation	means maintaining a place in its existing state and retarding deterioration.
Restoration	means returning a place to a known earlier state by removing accretions or by reassembling existing elements without the introduction of new material.
Reconstruction	means returning a place to a known earlier state and is distinguished from restoration by the introduction of new material.

<i>Adaptation</i>	means changing a place to suit the existing use or a proposed use.
<i>Use</i>	means the functions of a place, including the activities, traditional and customary practices that may occur at the place or are dependent on the place.
<i>Compatible use</i>	means a use which respects the cultural significance of a place. Such a use involves no, or minimal, impact on cultural significance.
<i>Setting</i>	means the immediate and extended environment of a place that is part of or contributes to its cultural significance and distinctive character.
<i>Related Place</i>	means a place that contributes to the cultural significance of another place.
<i>Related object</i>	means an object that contributes to the cultural significance of a place but is not at the place.
<i>Associations</i>	mean the connections that exist between people and a place.
<i>Meanings</i>	denote what a place signifies, indicates, evokes or expresses to people.
<i>Interpretation</i>	means all the ways of presenting the cultural significance of a place.

1.8 Acknowledgments

The following individuals and organisations are gratefully acknowledged for their assistance in preparation of this document.

- State Library of NSW.

2.0 Background

The premises at No. 41 Ballast Point Road Birchgrove require significant restoration work due to its dilapidated and uninhabitable state of repair. Also, in conjunction with restoration and repair work, the house needs significant adaptation to make it a dwelling that is suited for the owners and ongoing generations, taking due regard for its heritage significance. There is a need for the owners to include additional accommodation and amenities to provide a contemporary living environment.

4.0 Site & Adjoining Building Description

The subject site is known as No. 41 Ballast Point Road Birchgrove and has been historically known as a terrace style house within *Ellerslie Terrace*. The row of seven terrace houses are listed as scheduled items of heritage in the IWC LEP 2023. The title of the subject property is Lot 4, DP 913645. The subject site is the middle terrace house in the row of 7 terrace houses that run along Ballast Point Road between Lemm Street and Short Street on the northern side of the road. The site is a regularly shaped lot with a frontage width of 5.8m onto Ballast Point Road and a depth of 30.91m. The area of the site is 249.7 m². The site is orientated south/north, facing Ballast Point Road and overlooks Mort Bay. The rear of the subject property faces Wharf Road. The terrace house is built with a front set back 1.7m from the boundary to the verandah, with entry steps leading to the front entry. There is a substantial change in level of about 1.5 m falling toward the rear boundary and Wharf Road (Images 4.1-4.6).

Ballast Point Road is one of the most historic streets in Birchgrove and has a long history of development with a historic mix of mainly Mid-Victorian and Late-Victorian houses. There are numerous scheduled individual items of heritage, the most significant being *Clifton Villa* at 73 Ballast Point Road; *Yerroulbin Terrace*, with *Breeza* and *Yerroulbin* at No. 46-56 Ballast Point Road; *Ellerslie Terrace* at No. 35-47 Ballast Point Road; *Lerna* at No. 1 Ballast Point Road. There are also pockets of mid and late 20th century development in the form of new individual houses and blocks of apartments.



Image 4.1

Location plan for No. 41 Ballast Point Road Birchgrove shown in yellow and edged in red (Courtesy of Six Maps).



Image 4.2
Aerial view of No. 41 Ballast Point Road Birchgrove indicated with a red arrow (*Courtesy of Six Maps*).



Image 4.3
North at the Ellerslie Terrace row Nos. 35-47 Ballast Point Road. The subject property is indicated with a red arrow.



Image 4.5

View looking south toward Mort's Dock and Mort Bay Park from the upper floor of the subject property.



Image 4.6

Aerial view of Ellerslie Terrace. The subject property is indicated with a red arrow¹.

¹ Photograph courtesy of Harris Partners Balmain

5.0 History of Ballast Point Road & Ellerslie Terrace

5.1 The history of the site

According to the Inner West Council Inventory Listing for No. 41 Ballast Point Road;²

Surgeon William Balmain was granted 550 acres and most of the area now encompassing Balmain in 1800. In 1801 the entire grant was transferred to fellow surgeon John Gilchrist. Gilchrist never actually lived in NSW and advertised the land for sale in 1823. However, the sale was not a success. He gave power of attorney to his Sydney-based agent and merchant, Frank Parbury, who commissioned Surveyor John Armstrong to subdivide part of the land. This subdivision and sale of this land took place in 1836 and commenced from the eastern end of the suburb (East Balmain) due to its proximity and convenient water access and later spread west. The early subdivision was, however, suspended in 1841 due to difficulties associated with Gilchrist's will, but was resumed in 1852 when Surveyor Langley divided it into 46 later 47 sections. Langley used existing routes such as Darling Street and other tracks such as Beattie and Mullens Streets, which followed the local topography and contours, to delineate the parcels. The sections were purchased over the next 30 years by wealthy investors, local speculators and builders.

The site is located in Lot 31 of the 1852 subdivision. The early site ownership is not known. The group, known as "Ellerslie Terrace", was constructed in c.1881. The buildings were designed by architect E.H. Buchanan in the Victorian Filigree style.

Edward Harman Buchanan arrived in Balmain in 1877 and began to practice here in 1880. He was a leading figure in the creation of Birchgrove Park (from 1882), was elected Alderman in 1883 and in 1888 became the youngest Mayor in the Colony.

A Sydney Water Plan dated 1887 (Balmain Sheet 5) show the group with front verandahs setback from the street frontage, rear tunnel back wings and long narrow sites extending back to Wharf Road.

Since that time it would appear that alterations and additions have been undertaken to the rear wing.

The name 'Ballast Point' historically derives from the plentiful supply of accessible sandstone on the Waterview Bay side of the peninsula that was used for ship ballast. The name was first recorded in the SMH in 1837, but no doubt, it was in use much earlier.³ Ballast Point was located at the very end of the southeastern end of the peninsula, with land fronting Waterview Bay and Snails Bay. In 1840, the land comprising lots 30-34 of Langley's plan was transferred from Gilchrist to George Cooper and John McLean, including the unnumbered lot at the very end of the peninsula (Image 2.16).⁴ Cooper was the Comptroller of Customs and Landing Surveyor in the Department of Customs for the colony. Around the same time, Cooper was appointed Colonial Treasurer and Collector of Customs for New Zealand and relocated there. These grandiose purchases of land by speculators were financed by mortgages to those financial individuals who were more risk averse. Cooper attempted to service his purchase by selling the smaller parcels of land from his lots. In 1842, Cooper's mortgagee commissioned young colonial architect and surveyor John Frederick Hilly (1810-1883) to survey Ballast Point and lay out a subdivision named "Glenelg Crescent". Hilly, planned the allotments fronting a broad avenue which curved around the headland of Ballast Point, but the sale did not survive the 1842 financial crash. The economic climate ensured a slow return, and Cooper's mortgagees circled and foreclosed. Cooper was

² Inventory Listing No. 1835 included in Appendix B.

³ SMH, Thu 23 May 1837, 3. A reward was offered for the salvage of 'A Bower Anchor and twenty-five fathoms of chain cable, lying underwater off Ballast Point, and having a buoy attached to it'.

⁴ LRS, Bk. U, 863. For a more detailed history of the the peninsula refer to Dr Ray Stevens, *Miss Rose Adcock and Her Iron Houses of Snails Bay* (Balmain Association, Balmain 2025).

declared insolvent in 1842.⁵ The Ballast Point lot was sold to James Tod Goodsir, Assistant Commissary General and then transferred a year later to A. B. Smith and H. Smith.⁶

Sections 30-34 of Langley's survey remained mainly as defined by Langley's subdivision plan and included a spinal road that gently followed the central ridge line from Bay Street down to Ballast Point. Each section contained a notional subdivision into several lots. Sections 31 and 32 on the northern side facing Snails Bay were particularly favourable as they faced north onto Snails Bay, Port Jackson, and the Parramatta River beyond. A further subdivision was shown with a dotted line indicating a potential road later known as Wharf Road (Image 5.1).

While a large part of Balmain remained in deadlock, the legal battle over the Gilchrist Trust was fought out in England. That portion which had been developed had undergone a rapid period of further subdivision and development was mainly restricted to East Balmain. By 1846, about 20% of the suburban population of Sydney lived in Balmain, the largest residential place in the colony at that time.⁷ The resolution of Gilchrist's will on 6th March 1852 provided more surety of tenure to release land for sale. The purchasers were of two types: the opportunist speculators willing to take significant risks and those conservative financiers willing to sit back and offer mortgages to be taken out with less potential gain but with an assured guarantee when the inevitable downturn came. Like the rest of Balmain, land in Snails Bay was bought, sold, mortgaged and traded like a property stock market or Colonial Monopoly.



Image 5.1

Part extract of Langley's survey (Image 5). The Estate of Birch Grove and Birch Grove House is shown to the right of Sections 30-34. 'Gilchrist to Cooper' is noted on the unnumbered lot at the tip of Ballast Point.

⁵ *Australasian Chronicle* (Sydney), Tue 14 Jun 1842, 3, INSOLVENT ESTATES.

⁶ Christine Costin and Lori Sciusco (Heritage Concepts Pty Ltd), *Archaeological Assessment and Statement of Heritage Impact and Research Design for "Menevia" (1864-c1928) Former Caltex Site, Ballast Point, Birchgrove*, December 2005, 8-9.

⁷ Wendy Thorp, *Historical Analysis of 'Clifton Villa' - 73 Ballast Point Road Balmain*, (Cultural Resources Management, March 2003), 8.

Advertisements for lots 30, 32, 31, 33 and 34 continued to appear as on September 1852:

Blocks 29, 30, 31, and 32, are situated on the north side of the road leading to Ballast Point; 29 and 30 adjoin the Birchgrove property; 31 and 32 have a large water frontage to Snail's Bay. These comprise in the whole 13 acres 1 rood 2, perches. Blocks 33 and 34, on the south of Ballast Point Bond, have an extensive frontage to Waterview Bay, and contain altogether seven allotments, measuring in all about 11 acres. N.B.-These, as all must know, are exceedingly desirable allotments, having deep water at frontage, and in immediate contiguity to Miller's Point.⁸

Similar advertisements ran in newspapers until October 1852. However, the lots did not sell in the uncertain economic climate and trading bank failures and partly due to the difficulty of land access and limited access by boat.

Didier Numa Joubert & Captain Charles Smith's subdivision

On 1 April 1853, Section 31 and 32 of Langley's Subdivision, approximately six acres, was transferred to Captain Charles Smith, (Master Mariner) and Didier Numa Joubert (Merchant) for £1,368, 5s, 7^{1/2}d from the Trustees of the Gilchrist Trust, Joseph Hume, Charles Holland, John MacGregor, John Bowring and Robert Verity.⁹ The date they placed a deposit agreeing to purchase the lots is unknown and may have been even the previous year. On 8 September 1853, Joubert sold his part interest in the land to Smith for £1,684 (Image 2.20).¹⁰ Didier Numa Joubert (1816-1881) and Captain Charles Smith (1816-1897) were close business associates who collaborated on multiple commercial, trading and mercantile projects. Joubert realised a substantial nett profit in just five months, allowing him to finance further projects in Hunters Hill. Why Joubert sold his share is not known. Joubert also had an interest in *Birch Grove House*, which he purchased in November 1854, or perhaps he had too many grand commercial visions to realise at the time, even for a mercantile Joubert. Smith's estate comprised all the land north of Ballast Point Road, bound on the west by Birch Grove Road, on the east by a cross street, Ronald Street and on the north by Snail's Bay. This landholding was known as Smith's Subdivision. Within a week of his purchase, Smith had subdivided his land into 48 allotments to the north and south of a reserved road, now Wharf Road (Image 5.2 & 5.3).

Charles Smith (1816-1897) was a successful trader and shipping merchant and was born at Kirriemuir, Forfarshire, Scotland. His father, John Smith, migrated to New South Wales in 1832 and became a grazier and a founder of the wine industry in the Riverina.¹¹ Charles Smith joined the merchant navy and served in the Baltic and West Indies. He returned to New South Wales in 1836, turned to whaling, and became Flower, Salting & Co.'s whaling fleet manager. In 1843-50, he was master of the colonial barque *Woodlark*. Captain Smith made the transition from whale oil to coconut oil and tortoise shell around 1849, trading in the Gilbert Islands either competing with or alongside Didier Joubert. In 1851, he paid £750 for the schooner *Supply*, and next year, as captain of the whaler *Chieftain*, he made his final voyage. Smith acquired a wharf at Millers Point, known as Smith's Wharf in the early 1850s, and maintained a regular service to the Gilbert Islands.¹² In 1875, Captain Charles Smith had moved from Snail's Bay to the mansion known as 'Goderich Lodge' and died there in 1897 at the age of 81, leaving an estate of approximately half a million pounds.¹³

The original plan for Smith's Subdivision was most likely similar to the sales plan for Waterview Estate but has been lost in time. However, a subdivision plan kept at the Land Registry Office has

⁸ *Empire* (Sydney), Wed 1 Sep 1852 4, Advertising.

⁹ LRS, Book 27, No. 374.

¹⁰ LRS, Book 28, No. 94.

¹¹ H. E Maude, *Of Islands & Men: Studies in Pacific History*, (Melbourne University Press, 1968), 247.

¹² Details paraphrased from the *Australian Dictionary of Biography*. Entry for Captain Charles Smith. <https://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/smith-charles-4600>.

¹³ Maude, *Of Islands & Men*, 280.

a running series of amendments that updated the plan from the original lots when sales occurred and further subdivisions were undertaken.

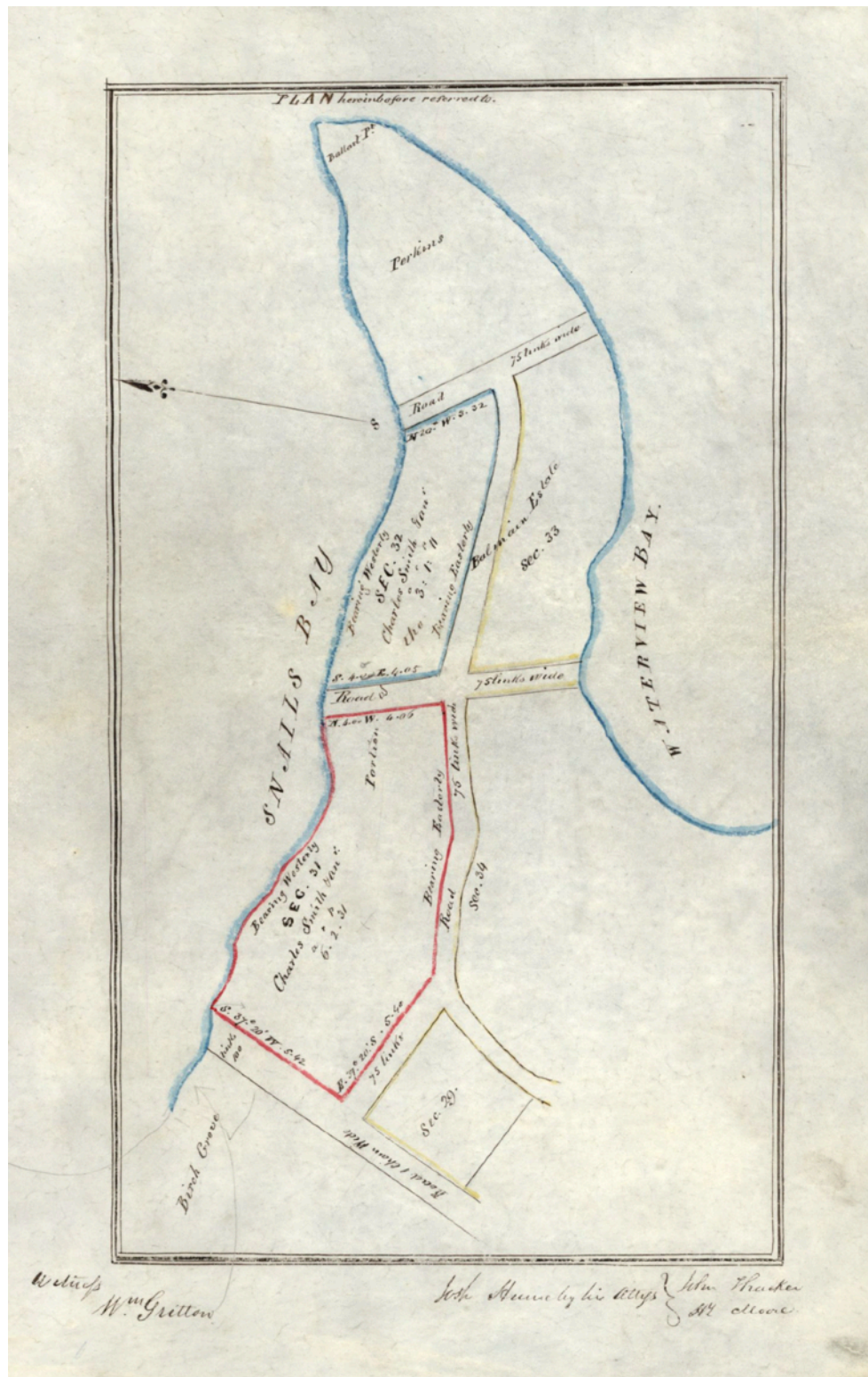


Image 5.2

Survey of lots 31 and 32 as transferred to Captain Charles Smith and known as Smith's Subdivision.¹⁴

¹⁴ Land Registry Services (LRS), Book 27, No. 374.

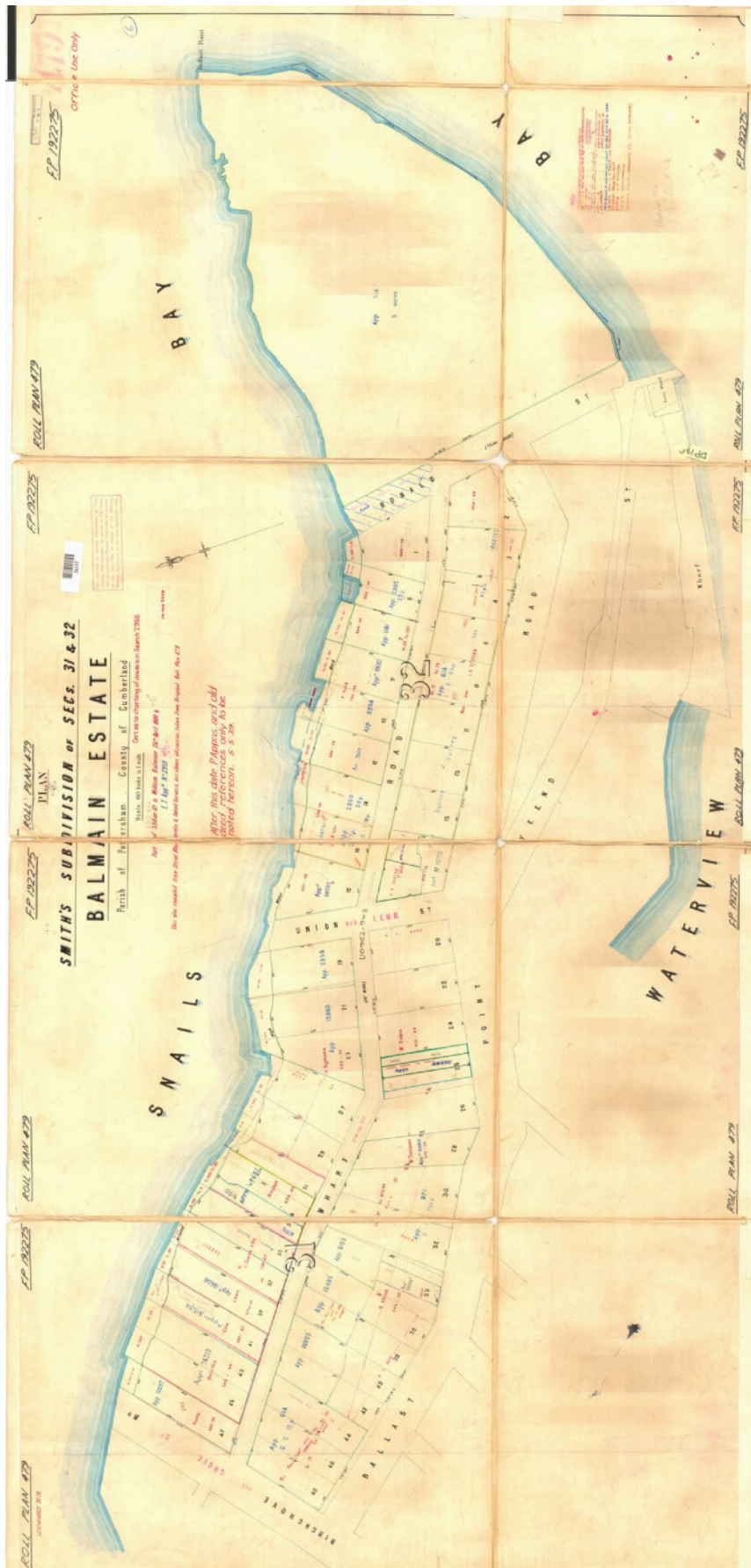


Image 5.3

Survey of lots 31 and 32 as transferred to Captain Charles Smith and known as Smith's Subdivision.¹⁵ The plan was updated with the names of the new lot purchases as the sales continued.

¹⁵ Land Registry Services (LRS), Book 27, No. 374.



Image 5.4

Part of *Plan of the Town and Municipality of Balmain*. At the time of the maps publication in 1861, lots 20, 22, 24 and 26 remained unsold and are still remained in the ownership of Charles Smith.

The first purchaser of lots 20, 22, 24, 25 & 26 of section 31 was William Henry Evans of Sydney, Marine on the 28/9/1853.¹⁶ The lots were then sold to Frederick Vale of Balmain, Licensed Victualler & James Cornelius Peters of Sydney, Merchant on the 20/2/1866.¹⁷ After transferring the lots to Vale the lots were then conveyed to John Laing of Balmain, Engineer on 8/7/1870. John Laing died at home

5.2 John Laing

John Laing was a Scottish Engineer who immigrated to Australia in the 1850's from Scotland. After various appointments, he worked with Thomas Mort at Mort's Dock. Thomas was the developer that constructed *Ellerslie Terrace*. It appears this was an investment as John Laing lived nearby at 14 Wharf Road in a house he built on lot 20 of section 31 (as per Smith's Subdivision Image 8).¹⁸ Laing was instrumental in setting up the Engineering Association of NSW, along with Norman Selfe who also worked for a period with P. N. Russell & Co Engineering along with Laing. John Laing died in late April 1910.¹⁹ An obituary records that:

THE LATE MR. JOHN LAING.

A REMARKABLE CAREER.

On Sunday morning at Balmain a very old resident, Mr. John Laing, died at the ripe age of 89 years. He was an interesting figure in the engineering life of this State for the last 60 year. Born at Johnstone, Scotland, he entered the engineering business, and later in London he became a delegate of the men during the great engineering strike of 1851, which was brought about by pressure of work owing to the British wars of that time. Employers were unable to execute their contracts, except by working night and day, and they declined to increase their establishments to meet requirements. This led to the formation of an association of men who decided to leave England and seek their fortunes in Australia. A number of them arrived in Sydney and established an engineering business, of which Mr. Laing was the general manager. About 1862 he accepted an appointment with the Wallsend Coal Company, where he installed the first steam cranes used for loading coals at that port.

These cranes were eventually taken over by the Government, and Mr. Laing found employment with Messrs. P. N. Russell, engineers, of Sydney, who sent him to New Zealand with a full complement of men to erect and run three gunboats, which they had undertaken to construct for the British navy to assist in the relief of the army at a critical period of the Waikato war. Commodore Wiseman, then in charge of the British warships, gave him a very complimentary letter on the completion of the work, and the New Zealand Minister of Defence offered him an appointment in connection with the New Zealand railways. Mr Laing, however, returned to Sydney, where he found employment with Mort's Dock and subsequently entered the Public Works Department in connection with the dredging service, becoming senior dredge master and acting superintendent.

He was one of the first members of the Amalgamated Society of Engineers in this State, for many years a Freemason, one of the promoters of the Engineering Society of New South Wales, and in connection with this society one of the first promoters of technical education in this State.

¹⁶ LRS, Bk. 28, No. 418.

¹⁷ LRS Bk. 97, No. 220.

¹⁸ The lot numbers of Smith's Subdivision changed considerably and if one compares the lot numbers on Smith's original plan of subdivision and the lot numbers on the Municipal Plan, it can be confusing.

¹⁹ SMH, Mon 2 May 1910, Page 14, Family Notices.

5.3 Edward Harmon Buchanan architect

The architect selected by John Laing was the young Edward Harmon Buchanan.²⁰ The Buchanan family lived in Ballast Point Road and no doubt were known to Laing. Edward Buchanan was born to parents William Buchanan and his wife, Sarah Annetta (née Clare), in 1859, on his grandfather's farm, off Lane Cove Road on Sydney's North Shore. At the age of six, Edward was enrolled at St. Thomas' School at St. Leonards, where his uncle, James Buchanan, was the headmaster and his grandmother, Kate, kept house.²¹ By all accounts, Edward was a good student, was popular, and was held in esteem by his peers. Edward stayed at the school until 1873, when he reached the age of 14. In 1877, Buchanan's parents moved to Iron Cove Road (now Cove Street), Balmain, and in 1879, settled in Ballast Point Road, Snails Bay, likely in one of the houses owned by Mary and Frederick Lemm, where they were to remain for many years.²²

Albert Bond, a friend of Thomas Buchanan, Edward's uncle, had just been appointed City Architect for Municipal Council of Sydney. Bond had need for an articled pupil to work in his office at 175 Pitt Street. Following the advice of his uncle, Edward accepted the position, and after a six month trial period, became articled to Albert Bond on 6 December 1873 for a period of five years to become an architect. After completing his articles, Buchanan stayed on at the office for approximately fifteen months as a junior architect and had three pupils working under him.²³ It appears that Edward Buchanan was still living with his parents during this period in Ballast Point Road. After six years of training (between 1874 and 1880) under Albert Bond, and three years living in Snails Bay, Buchanan gained the confidence to commence his own architectural practice in the very street he lived in. Edward at this time was a young man and only 21 years of age.

In 1880, Buchanan was running his architectural practice from Ballast Point Road with numerous tenders advertised at that street location.²⁴ The same year, Edward married Sophie Mary Lemm, the eldest daughter of Frederick Lemm, the well-known builder, and near neighbour of John Laing living only 3 doors away on Lemm Street. It is not known if Buchanan was architectural practice from the house and workshop of Frederick Lemm, his father-in-law at 27A Ballast Point Road or from 57 Ballast Point Road a portable iron house he and wife Sophie purchased on the 1 May 1880 purchased from Annie Russell.²⁵ Most likely given the design of the workshop with the extensive upper floor windows it was located there.

During this period, Buchanan was responsible for several projects within walking distance along Ballast Point Road and Rowntree Street including a shop and two dwellings at the corner of Rowntree Street and Bay Street, (130 Rowntree Street) and *Ellerslie Terrace*. *Ellerslie Terrace* was one of the largest residential projects of Buchanan's architectural career commissioned by Masonic brother, Mr John Laing within his first year of establishing his practice. Laing had purchased the site in 1870 and resided near by on an adjoining lot. The builder of *Ellerslie Terrace* is not known but was probably Frederick Lemm, a member of the same masonic lodge and living less than 50m from the site.

²⁰ The primary work on E. H. Buchanan is David Logan, *The Life and Work of Edward H. Buchanan (1859-1943): Architect & Builder*. Thesis submitted as part-requirement for the Degree of Bachelor of Architecture, The University of New South Wales, 1977.

Unfortunately, the thesis along with many other important works from the Faculty of Architecture at UNSW have been disposed of. I am grateful to David Logan for allowing his personal copy to be digitally reproduced. Other shorter important works are the obituary by Florence Mary ('Hats') Taylor CBE, architect, engineer, 'The Late Mr. E. H. Buchanan', in *Building & Engineering*, January 24, 1944, 55-56; John Williams, Edward Harman Buchanan (1859-1943), *The Peninsula Observer*, Vol. 53 No 3, Issue 348, published by the Balmain Association.

²¹ Logan, *The Life and Work of Edward H. Buchanan*, 2.

²² Ibid., 3.

²³ Logan, Ibid, 3.

²⁴ For example two advertisements in the *SMH*, for the tender of a villa in Smith Street and also another for carpentry and joinery to a villa in Ballast Point Road, *SMH*, Sat, 17 Apr, 1880, 9, Advertisements. Both give his details as Snails Bay, Balmain.

²⁵ LRS, Vol. 283, Fol. 189.

According to heritage architect David Logan, during 1887 and 1888 Edward served as the Worshipful Master of Lodge Southern Cross and in 1889 he was elected to the position of Grand Architect of the United Grand Lodge of N.S.W. However, according to Taylor it was on a trip to England in 1890 that his Masonic Brethren in London declared Buchanan, 'Grand Architect'. It is possible the ceremony was some form of additional conferring that took place as Buchanan is referred to as Grand Architect in a gathering of members of 'the Craft' June 1889.²⁶ Like Lemm, his father-in-law, belonging to such fraternal societies was a regular part of being a professional and doing business. The support and standing associated with being a member of societies for a young Buchanan starting out as an architect in his own practice at the age of 21 cannot be underestimated—nor can it be fully known. It is most likely the majority of his early clients were fellow Masonic Brothers. Buchanan's first major project, *Ellerslie Terrace*, was effectively launched by engineer John Laing, who was also a Freemason. A large part of Buchanan's social contribution was nurtured by such associations with fellow Brothers' support.

Edward Buchanan has also an alderman of Balmain Council and mayor for a period. He pressed for kerb and guttering, lighting and drainage improvements in the streets of his North Balmain Ward. He was most vigorous in securing improvements to Ballast Point Road and Rowntree Street and later trams to serve Balmain and Birchgrove. Troubled by the gradual encroachment of Mort's Dock onto civic amenity (and his own), that went beyond the original Mort's Bay Improvement Bill [2nd May, 1884], to 'enable Mort's Dock and Engineering Company (Limited) to close certain streets through their property at Mort Bay and to establish new streets in lieu thereof', Buchanan bravely contested a resumption of public streets (College and Trouton Streets) in the vicinity of the dockyard entrance.²⁷ Not supported by Council, Buchanan stumped up for the legal costs from his own pocket for the passage of a private enactment through the colonial legislature in 1891 to block the authorized street-closures but was defeated and this hurt Buchanan financially.²⁸

In 1911, the Buchanans moved from their home in Ballast Point Road Snails Bay where they had lived for most of the previous thirty years to a house named 'Arn Pryor' at number 10 Drummoyne Avenue, in Drummoyne. Arn Pryor or 'Arnpryor' related to the Buchanan lineage in Scotland²⁹ and possible Scottish Free-Mason connections. A death notice in February 1915 lists a Mr J. H. White of 44 Ballast Point Road Balmain as also residing in a house called Arn Pryor³⁰ indicating Buchanan likely named the house such before moving to his new house 'Arn Pryor' in Drummoyne. With Edward's relocation to Drummoyne it opens a whole new history related to his other activities not immediately related to Snails Bay and to Rose Adcock's iron houses with the NSW Master Builders Association, of which he became President and Buchanan's commercial and industrial projects.

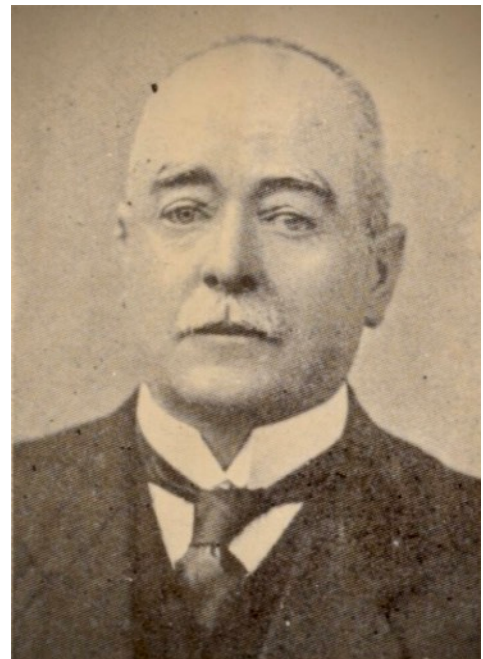


Image 5.6
Edward Harman Buchanan when he was President
of the Master Builders Association.³¹

²⁶ *Bathurst Free Press and Mining Journal*, Thu 4 Jul 1889, 2. LAYING THE KEY-STONE

²⁷ Mort Bay Improvement Act 1884, http://classic.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/nsw/num_act/mbia1884nm295/.

²⁸ Williams, *The Life and Work of Edward H. Buchanan*.

²⁹ <https://www.theclanbuchanan.com/clan-history-2>.

³⁰ *SMH*, Sat 6 Feb 1915, 14 Family Notices.

³¹ *Construction*, Wed 2 Feb 1944, 4, THE LATE MR. E. H. BUCHANAN.

5.4 Construction date of *Ellerslie Terrace*

The date of completion of *Ellerslie Terrace*, which would have been on the central pediment of the row, has been removed, likely due to the pediment's collapse possibly around the 1920s. The first occurrence of *Ellerslie Terrace* in the newspapers was Saturday 9 July 1881.³²

BALMAIN, ELLERSLIE-TERRACE, Ballast Point Road.—HOUSES, 5 rooms, with bathroom, kitchen, washhouse and coppers, large yards, back and front entrance, gas laid on. Apply at Mr. LAING'S, or to Mr. BUCHANAN, Architect.

Also, an advertisement for the rent of a house two months later in September 1881 reads:

*BALMAIN. ELLERSLIE-TERRACE, HOUSE,
Ballast Pt. Rd.*

5 rooms. balcony back and front, bathroom, kitchen, washhouse, good yard, &c. GAS LAID ON, ABUNDANT WATER. Apply for keys next door (Mr. Laing).³³

It is possible it was for a single terrace or house or it may have been for multiple houses but listed as a single house in the advertisement. It seems for a greater part of the first part of the history of the row the houses remained in the Laing family's ownership and let until 1925.

5.5 Owners and residents

A title search of the NSW Land Registry Services records has produced the following records.³⁴ Commencing with original Land Grant to William Balmain, the title to the subject premises has evolved as follows:

- | | |
|------------|--|
| 26/4/1800 | Grant of 550 acres in the District of Petersham Hill to William Balmain — Serial 3 Page 38. |
| 7/7/1801 | Bargain and Sale Book K No. 260 to John Gilchrist (said 550 acres). |
| 1/4/1853 | Conveyance Book 27 No. 374 to Charles Smith of Sydney, Esquire & Didier Numa Joubert, of Sydney, Merchant (i.e. Section/Block 31). |
| 8/9/1853 | Conveyance Book 28 No. 94 to Charles Smith of Sydney, Esquire (of the share of Didier Numa Joubert). |
| 28/9/1853 | Conveyance Book 28 No. 418 to William Henry Evans of Sydney, Mariner. |
| 20/2/1866 | Conveyance Book 97 No. 220 to Frederick Vale of Balmain, Licensed Victualler & James Cornelius Peters of Sydney, Merchant. |
| 28/2/1867 | Conveyance Book 102 No. 909 to John Fitzpatrick of Balmain, Freeholder. |
| 3/4/1867 | Conveyance Book 102 No. 910 to Frederick Vale of Balmain, Freeholder. |
| 8/7/1870 | Conveyance Book 120 No. 139 to John Laing of Balmain, Engineer. |
| 9/10/1891 | Conveyance Book 472 No. 840 to Charles Walter Laing of Walgett, Surveyor. |
| 30/9/1925 | Conveyance Book 1402 No. 204 to William Archibald McDonald of Neutral Bay, Retired Estate Agent. |
| 30/10/1950 | Conveyance Book 2148 No. 380 to Norman Roger Pepperell of Balmain, Shipwright |
| 20/1/1960 | Conveyance Book 2560 No. 583 to William R. Bradley Pty Limited. |
| 30/3/1961 | Conveyance Book 2570 No. 878 to Paula Popoff of Balmain, Widow, Maria Popoff of Balmain, Spinster & Vladimir Popoff of Balmain, Marine Fitter (Lot 4). |

³² The Sydney Mail and New South Wales Advertiser, Sat 9 July 1881, Page 80, Advertising.

³³ SMH, Sat 24 Sep 1881, Page 18, Advertising.

³⁴ Search carried out By Robert Williamson Title Researcher.

The Sands Directories (SD) provide a wealth of information on the residents of Sydney largely on a street by street basis. While being an important resource, they do present difficulties in interpretation of information, particularly in the earlier additions. Apart from typographical errors, early colonial Sydney did not have street numbers. In Balmain, numbered houses appeared relatively late around 1888. However, many street numbering arrangements have changed over the years with lots being subdivided, making it difficult to track occupants. Initially *Ellerslie Terrace* had their own numbers 1-7. Later, they were given individual street numbers. The row does not appear in the 1880 edition. In 1881 the SD were not published. In 1883 the listed occupants starting from No. 1 included: Lipscomb, Frederic; Vacant; Camper, John W.; O'Meagher, Mrs Sarah; Kebblewhite, Alfred G.; Creer, Edward Smith, Hugh, T.

The following table has been compiled from the Sands Directories for No. 41 Ballast Point Road in its earliest phase. If a year is not listed it remains the same as the previous year above.

Listings within the Sands Directories for 41 Ballast Point Road³⁵

Year	SD Street # or House Name	Resident/occupants	Trade/ profession	Notes
1883	Ellerslie Terrace - 4	Mrs Sarah Meagher		
1885				Appears vacant
1887	Ellerslie Terrace - 4	Albert Robertson	Solicitor	
1889	41	James Eley	Boardinghouse	
1890	41	Chas H. Shaw	Shipwright	
1891	41	John Hamilton	Master Mariner	
1893	41	W. H. Dalrymple	Agent	
1899	41	Richard R. King		
1903	41	Mrs. Oakes	Private Hospital	
1904	41	Mrs. Louisa Davis		
1906	41	William Stacey		
1908	41	Remo Tornaghi Miss Leila Walker	Turnstile maker Music Teacher	
1910	39-41	Charles W. Laing		
1912	41	William Winter		
1914	41	David Isblster		
1917				Appears vacant
1918	41	Ernest Burton		
1919	41	John A. Parr		
1921	41	John A. Parr Mrs. Mary Trengrouse		
1924	41	John A. Parr Mrs. Mary Trengrouse		

There is a significant turnover of occupants which is indicative of the house being rented. It appears also Charles Laing also sided in No. 39 and 42 for a couple of years between 1910-1912.

³⁵ The Sands Directories were published from around 1865 but are not available on line. Also their listing is not entirely reliable and is more problematic in researching than actual titles searches in the years prior to 1880.

5.6 Remo Tornaghi

Of the short-term residents of 41 Ballast Point Road, not much is known except for Remo Tornaghi. Remo was the son of the noted clock and instrument maker Angelo Tornaghi (1824-1906).³⁶ Angelo Tornaghi was born on 7 April 1824 in Milan, Italy, and immigrated to Australia, arriving in 1858. Tornaghi's core business was retailing scientific instruments and clocks, and he supplied many to NSW Government public buildings under the supervision of Colonial Architect James Barnet. He died at his house 'Milano', named after his birthplace, in Hunters Hill on 15 October 1906.³⁷ Tornaghi also worked extensively with Henry Russell of the Sydney Observatory. The most important scientific event of the 1874 calendar was the Transit of Venus, scheduled to occur on 9 December, not long after the opening of the Post Office. Tornaghi's expertise as an instrument maker and photographer ensured he was part of the team that invited Sydney Observatory Government Astronomer, H. C. Russell, to help with observations. Officially, he was listed as the photographer on the group that went to Goulbourn, but he also worked on fixing the damaged wires of the transit circle Captain Hixson and Professor Liversidge had taken to measure the exact location of the town.³⁸ It may be pure coincidence, or there may be an actual connection, but Henry Russell lived at 57 Ballast Point Road, just 4 houses along from Ellerslie Terrace, prior to moving to the Sydney Observatory in 1873.³⁹

Remo Adice Tornaghi was born in 1864. In the 1900 Sands Street Directory, Remo Adice Tornaghi, was in Business in Pitt St Sydney, New South Wales, Australia, as a Clock Maker Mathematical Instrument Maker and Turnstile Maker. Like his father, Remo worked on various civic clock towers, for the Department of Public Works to construct and supply a turret clock, for the Court House, in Bathurst, on 23 August 1892. The Balmain Post Office clock was also a Tornaghi installation. The reported opening of the new post, telegraph office and law courts sated: "The glory of the building is the clock tower by which it is surmounted. This stands 112 ft. high from the ground; it has a lookout from the top and is ornamented with cement enrichments. In the tower is a clock, having a dial 7ft. in diameter, supplied by Mr. Tornaghi, of Sydney, and the face is illuminated by night."⁴⁰ While it is not reported if it was Remo or Angel Tornaghi it was likely both. However, Remo was credited for the clock and bell installed in the Leichhardt Town Hall completed in 1897.⁴¹

Remo Tornaghi died tragically at 41 Ballast Point Road. It was reported that: "Remo Adige Tornaghi, 43, was found yesterday lying dead in his bed, in a house where he had been living by himself in Ballast Point-road, Balmain. He had not been seen since Saturday night. The neighbours reported his disappearance to the police, who made the discovery."⁴² It was further reported that he died likely of natural causes.

5.7 Maria & Vladimir Popoff

The electoral role of lists a Maria Popoff, Pavla Poppof and Vladimir Ilch Popoff, fitter living at 41 Birchgrove Road in 1968. An ancestry entry for Vladimir Ilch Popoff gives the date of his birth as 1926 in Omsk, Russia.

³⁶ Geoff Baker "AngeloTornaghi – Scientific Instrument Maker, Sydney – 1831-1906". <https://geoffbarker.wordpress.com/2014/09/02/angelotornaghi-scientific-instrument-maker-sydney-1831-1906/>

³⁷ Roslyn Maguire, "Angelo Tornaghi's tiles". *Australiana Nov.* 2006, Vol. 4, Pages 15-20. https://australiana.org.au/assets/issue/November_2006_Vol_28_No_4.pdf

³⁸ Geoff Baker "AngeloTornaghi"

³⁹ Refer to Stevens, *Miss Rose Adcock*, chapter 9, The Russell Family.

⁴⁰ Sydney Morning Herald 22 August 1887 p.4. A comprehensive list of Tornaghi clocks and bell towers is given in CLOCKS AND BELLS IN AUSTRALIA. [/anzab.org.au/info/AustralianClocksAndBells.php](http://anzab.org.au/info/AustralianClocksAndBells.php).

⁴¹ *SMH*, Wed 23 June 1897, Page6, LEICHHARDT TOWN HALL.

⁴² *SMH*, Wed 7 October 1908, Page 12, MAN FOUND DEAD.

6.0 Physical description & other documented evidence

6.1 Physical description of the house.⁴³

The subject property is the middle terrace house in a row of seven similar terrace houses known as *Ellerslie Terrace*. The row are is setback from the street frontage which has a timber picket gate and fence. The facades of the row step down following the grade of the street. The row are two stories in height with a stuccoed facade and stuck ashlar joints emulating coursed stone. There is a high decorative parapet with bold cornice string mouldings and corbel blocks. There are typical terrace house front verandahs with cast iron balustrading. There are several stuccoed chimneys with profiled capping and terracotta pots. There are two curved pediments located over Nos. 45 and 47 and Nos. 37 and 39 with decorative incised *sgraffito* (also *sraffiato*, *sgraffiato*, or *scraffito*), meaning simply to scratch into the surface. The part walls also have incised. The open verandah has a concrete floor, and the first-floor timber balcony extends between the two party walls and is in poor condition. The roof of the verandah is straight galvanised corrugated steel sheeting.

The front façade also has a timber flush-faced non-original door with curved fanlight. On the ground floor, there is a typical Victorian triple "palladian window" with timber-framed double-hung window set with arched heads, bracketed rendered sill, rendered label moulds, and twisted "barley stick" cast iron columns. On the upper floor, there are two openings to the verandah with French doors and fanlights above.

The site extends back to Wharf Road. There is a skillion roof behind the parapet falling toward the rear. The rear wing has the typical "breezeway" setback to the kitchen wing. There is a deep upper-floor balcony off the first-floor rear bedroom currently enclosed as a kitchen. The rear upper-floor bedroom steps out onto a large deck that extends over the rear ground floor addition that appears to have been added around the 1980's.

Internally, the plan is typical for a large terrace house of its type with an entry and side hallway, front parlour, ground floor dining room and stairs at the front of the house and two large bedrooms on the floor above. The staircase remains intact, but the balustrade and newel post on the ground floor level have been chopped away to allow the top floor to be partitioned from the ground floor at some time in the past. The floor joist and flooring on both levels show evidence of serious termite damage and are unsafe in areas. Parts of the original lath and ceiling have collapsed, and other areas show signs of poor repairs. An original cast iron fireplace and surround remain in the front parlour on the ground floor, and a matching fireplace in the main bedroom on the first floor. The chimney breasts remain in the dining room and bedroom above, but the fireplaces have been removed and are blocked in. Most of the original joinery and doors remain in place but also suffered termite damage.

The rear yard is cleared of any vegetation, and there is a small modern prefabricated shed halfway down the yard with several concrete slabs indicating other structures now removed. There is a dilapidated timber paling fence and gate that extends along the Wharf Road boundary.

6.2 Old surveys

The Sydney Metropolitan Series of Drawings (SMSD) prepared by the NSW Department of Lands for Balmain and Rozelle, prior to the sewer system being developed, provide a comprehensive and very accurate snapshot of development at the time. Sheet 5 show seven terrace houses incorrectly named "*Ellesmere Terrace*" located along Ballast Point Road. The drawings are dated 1887 but the drawings were based on field work carried out several years prior. The subject property is on lot 4 in the middle of the row and the plan shows conjoined dunnies with lot 3. Also shown are the individual wells on each lot (Image 6.1).

⁴³ Refer also to the images in Appendix B and included measured drawings.

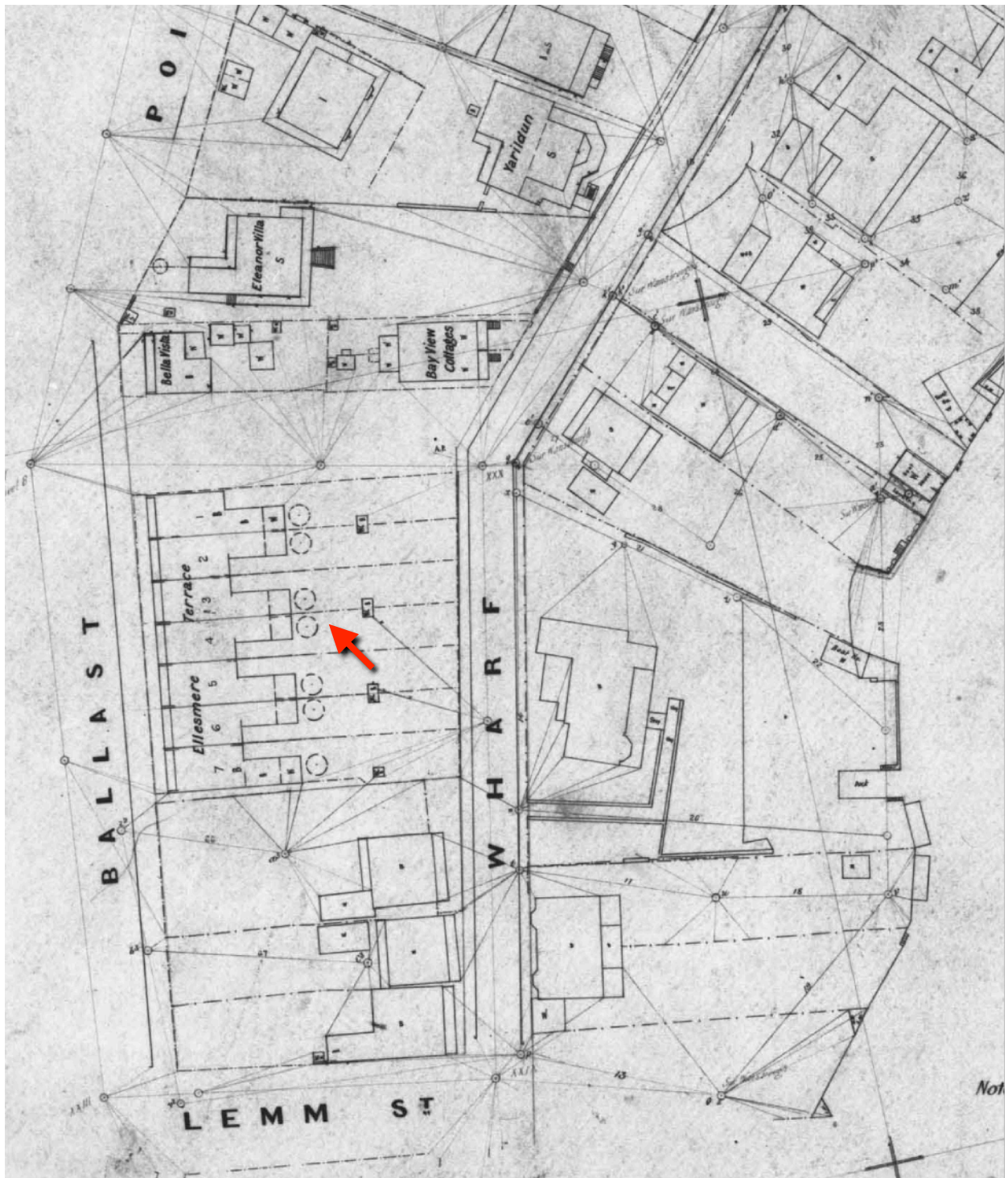


Image 6.1

Sheet No. 5 of The Sydney Metropolitan Series of Drawings for Balmain (SMSD) prepared by the NSW Department of Lands. The plans show the development in 1887. The row is incorrectly named "Ellesmere Terrace".

Sydney Water individual sewer service diagrams also provide useful information particularly when they have not been updated. Image 22 shows the row of seven terrace houses connected to a joint sewer line and connection to Wharf Road. Curiously the dunnies are not connected suggesting at the time of the sewer connection around 1888, the toilet pans moved inside (Image 6.2).

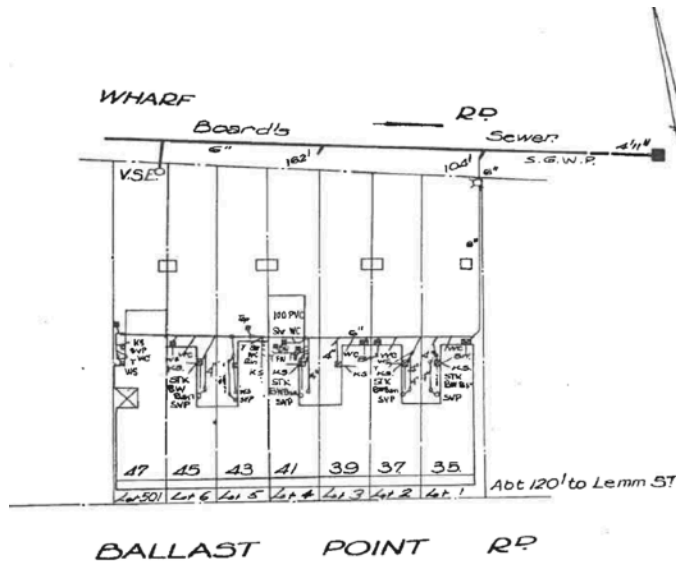


Image 6.2

Sydney Water sewer service diagram for the row of seven houses. By the time the sewer was installed, the house had street numbers.

The Primary Application to register the terraces under the Real Property Act shows a complex series of lots from 1-7 and may indicate that the row was built progressively and lots 1-3 were not completed at the time and only shown in pencil (Image 6.3)

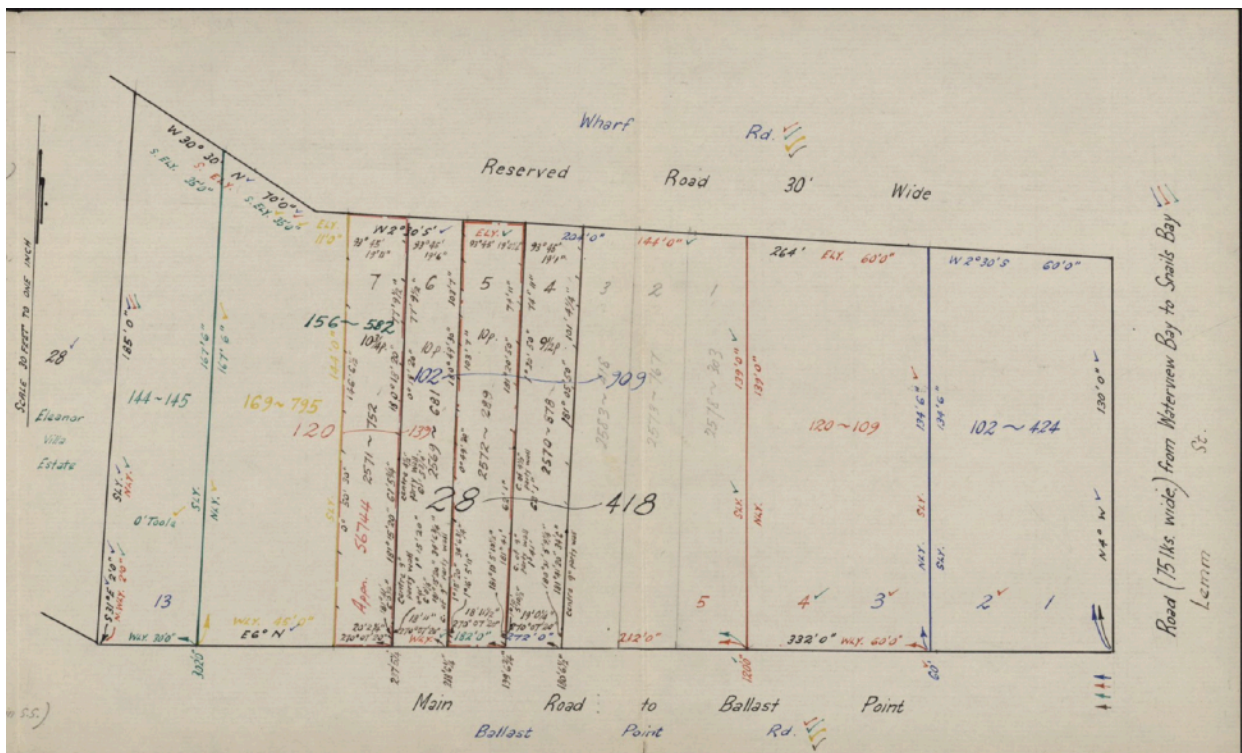


Image 6.3

The survey included in Primary Application 48276. Lots 1-3 are in pencil and may not have been surveyed. Lots 4-7 are defined from field measurements.

A survey carried out in 1960 of *Ellerslie Terrace* shows the row of seven terraces c. November 1960. What is shown here but not shown on other plans, is the rear laundry is constructed in weatherboards (Image 6.4).

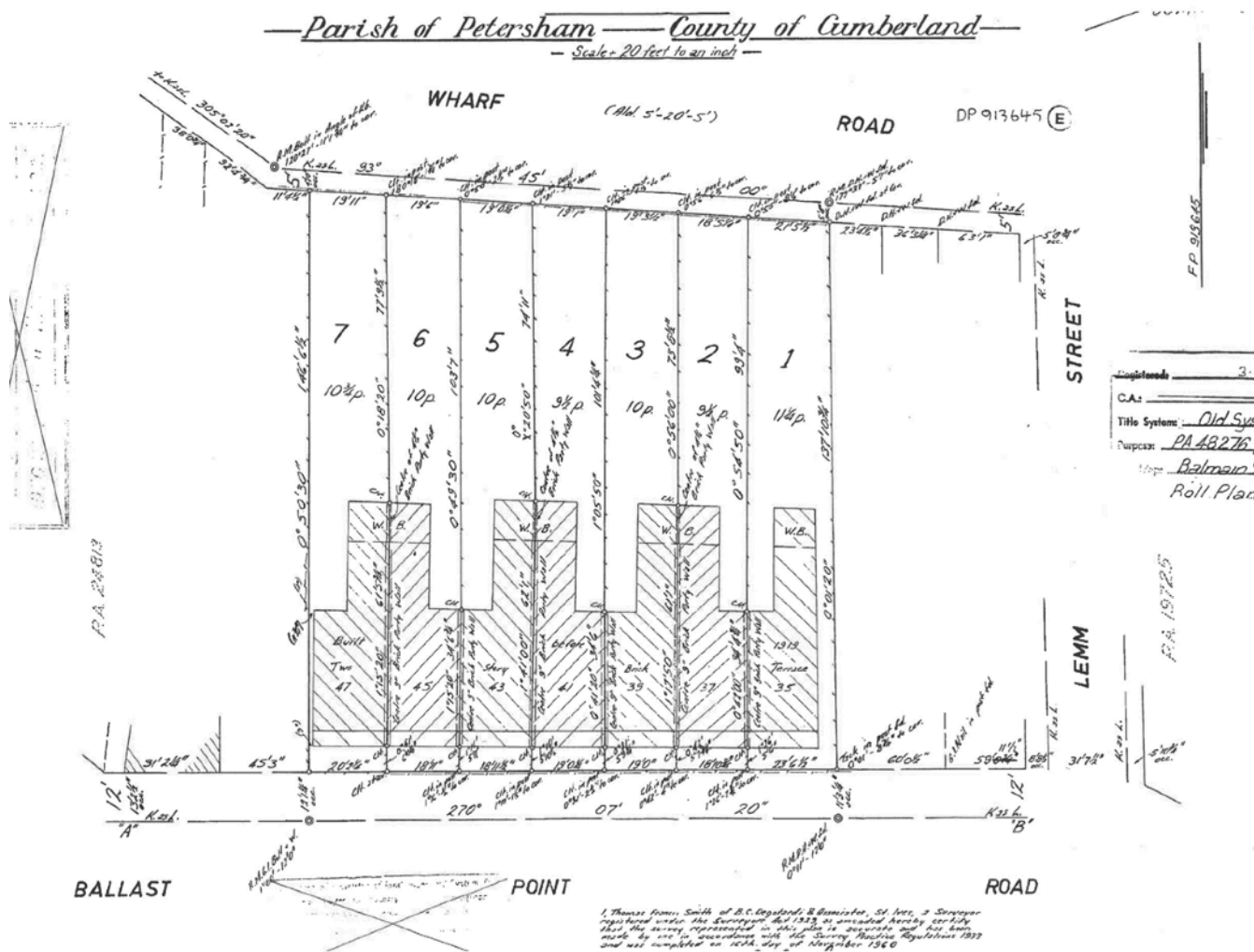


Image 6.4

Survey of Ellerslie Terrace showing the row of seven terraces c. November 1960.

6.3 Photographic evidence

The earliest photograph of the subject property and *Ellerslie Terrace* is from about 1900. The row is not the main subject of the photograph, which is of steamers being serviced in Mort's Dry Dock, but the row is visible above the fence on Ballast Point Road and the end of the stone wall on Short Street (Image 6.5-6.7).

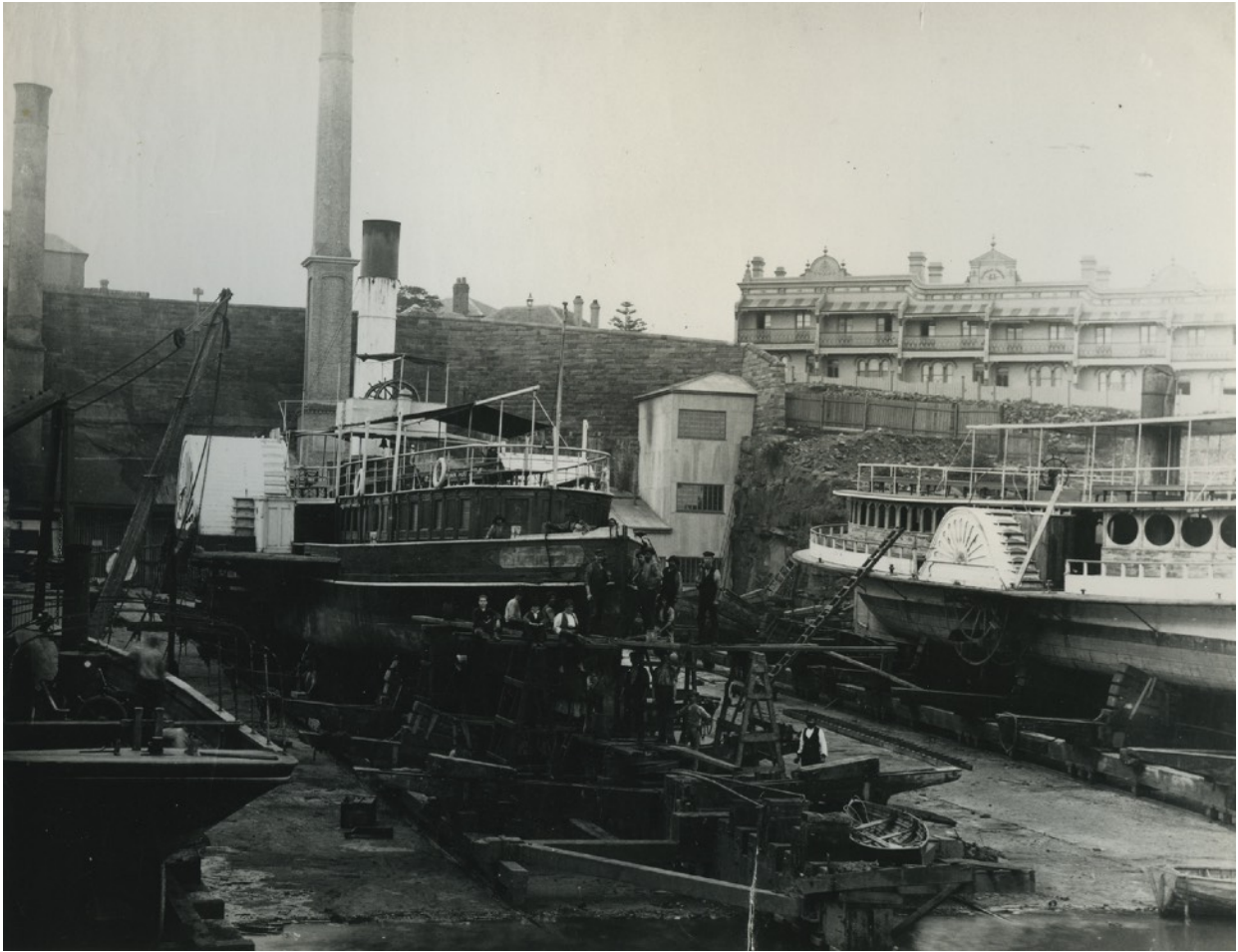


Image 6.5
Morts-Do6k c1900 and Ballast Point Road in the background.⁴⁴



Image 6.6
A detailed extract of the above photograph showing Ellerslie Terrace. Note the centre parapet is shown.

⁴⁴ There are several version of this photograph by an unknown photographer in the archives of the Balmain Association. This version which is a clearer copy is courtesy of the owners of No. 47 Ballast Point Road.



Image 6.7
Another photograph of ships being serviced in Mort's Dry Dock.⁴⁵

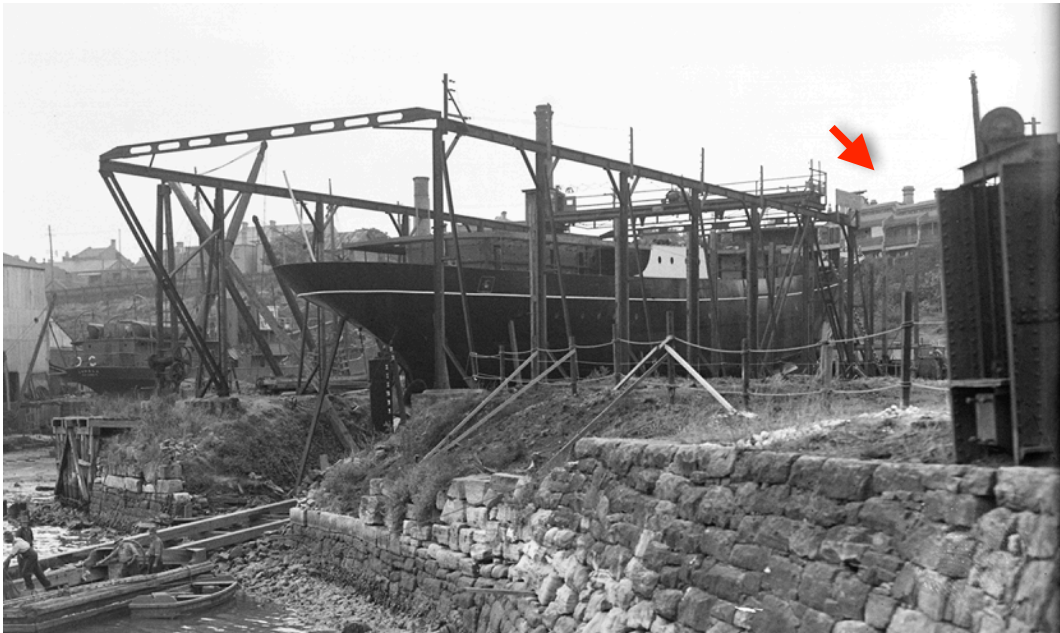


Image 6.8
Ellerslie Terrace can just be seen to the right above the fence of Mort's dock c. 1938.⁴⁶

⁴⁵ Included in Mort's Dock Fifty Years Ago and Today courtesy of the Balmain Association.

⁴⁶ Courtesy of the Museums of History. NRS-9856-2-38-4480. https://search.records.nsw.gov.au/primo-explore/fulldisplay?docid=ADLIB_RNSW115629235&context=L&vid=61SRA&lang=en_US&search_scope=Everything&adaptor=Local Search Engine&tab=default_tab&query=any,contains,morts dock&facet=tlevel,include,Digitally_Available&offset=10.



Image 6.9

An extreme enlargement of the photograph shows that in 1938 the pediment was missing.⁴⁷



Image 6.10

Ellerslie Terrace looking east along Ballast Point Road undated but likely c. 1970's.⁴⁸

⁴⁷ Courtesy of the Museums of History. NRS-9856-2-38-4480. https://search.records.nsw.gov.au/primo-explore/fulldisplay?docid=ADLIB_RNSW115629235&context=L&vid=61SRA&lang=en_US&search_scope=Everything&adaptor=Local Search Engine&tab=default_tab&query=any,contains,morts dock&facet=tlevel,include,Digitally_Available&offset=10.

⁴⁸ Peter Reynolds & Robert Irving, Photographs by Douglas Baglin. *Balmain in Time* (Balmain" The Balmain Association, 1971), p. 21.



Image 6.11

Ellerslie Terrace looking east along Ballast Point Road undated but likely c. 1970's.⁴⁹



Image 6.12

Ellerslie Terrace looking west along Ballast Point Road undated but likely c. 1990's.⁵⁰

⁴⁹ David Logan, *The Life and Work of Edward H. Buchanan (1859-1943): Architect & Builder*.

⁵⁰ Courtesy of the Balmain Association archives. .



Image 6.13

Ellerslie Terrace looking east along Ballast Point Road undated but likely c. 1960's.⁵¹



Image 6.14

Ellerslie Terrace looking from the rear undated but likely c. 1960's.⁵² The subject property is indicated a red arrow.

⁵¹ Courtesy of the owners of No. 43 Ballast Point Road

⁵² Courtesy of the owners of No. 43 Ballast Point Road



Image 6.15

Part of the aerial survey of Sydney taken in 1943 shows the subject property edged in red.⁵³ There is no shadow cast from the central pediment onto Ballast Point Road at this time.

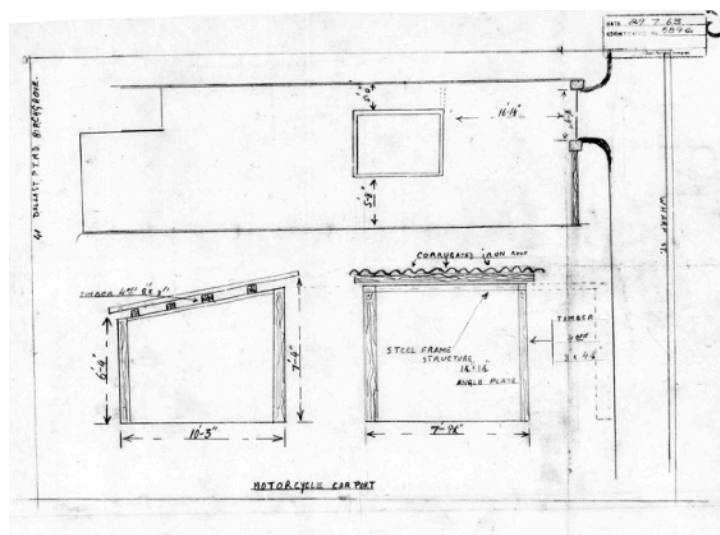
6.4 Previous approvals

A Development Application for a 'Motorcycle carport' in 1963 was submitted but not approved as it was not required at the time. There is no evidence of the structure other than a possible concrete ground slab in the rear yard (Image 6.16).

A more substantial Development Application (DA 458/84) was lodged "for permission to demolish existing laundry and erect new ground floor extension with timber roof deck at property known as No. 41 Ballast Point Road, Balmain". Approval was granted 7/1/85. The works were completed under BA 85/138 and the rear additions with the large deck were constructed and are part of the current building (Image 6.17).

Image 6.16

A proposal for a motorcycle carport was lodged in 1963.



⁵³ Courtesy of Six Maps.

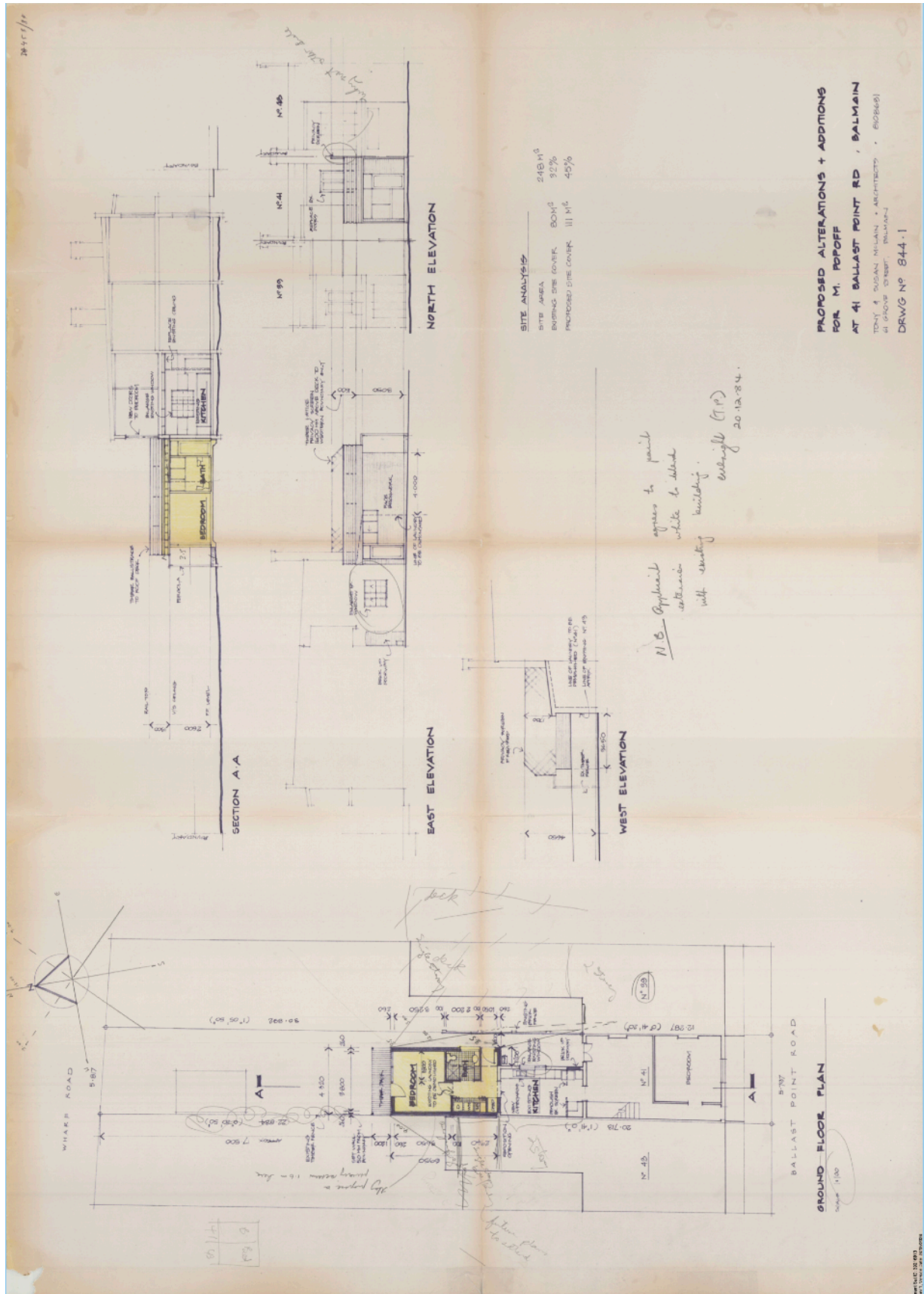


Image 6.17

Development consent granted to demolish the existing laundry and erect a new ground floor extension with timber roof deck above under (DA 458/84) prepared by architects Tony and Sue McLain.

7.0 Discussion on Available Material

7.1 Six, or seven terrace houses

Ellerslie Terrace, as it stands today, has seven terraces, three of which are paired. The seventh terrace at 35 Ballast Point Road stands as an adjoining terrace house. Each of the terraces has a floor level of about 275 mm lower than the adjoining terrace on the uphill side. As they are also paired the parapet steps down only at each paired party wall. In other words there are three steps of the parapet as the road falls toward the east between 47/45 steps down to 43/41 then to 39/37.

Buchanan was a competent architect, as displayed in his mature design of the Balmain Town Hall and the pair of grand terrace houses at 2 and 4 Rose Street and 6 and 8 Rose Street Birchgrove with well-mannered Victorian facades and details. Even at the tender age of 21, when *Ellerslie Terrace* was designed, such an odd number of terrace houses that have symmetry yet are not fully symmetric seems ill-considered. The lowest terrace house at 35 Ballast Point Road does not fit into Buchanan's balanced design of the facade. One possible explanation was that the row was once under construction, and if the row started at the high end of Ballast Point Road, Laing made further parts of his lots available to add a seventh terrace house. The details match, and there is no evidence that No. 35 was added at a later date.

7.2 The missing central pediment

There is a semi-circular pediment above the party wall of 37 and 39 and 45 and 47 but the central pair of 41 and 43 has the pediment missing. There is evidence still visible of a raised part of the parapet as a base where the pediment was removed. The only photograph that shows the central pediment, which would have had the name *Ellerslie Terrace* and most likely included the date 1881, was taken around 1900. By the time the later photograph of ships in Mort's Dock was taken in 1938 the pediment has been removed. No record of its demise has been found to date. The central pediment is larger than the remaining side pediments and, like most similar details on Victorian houses, was not braced back to the party wall or other structures, making them vulnerable to strong winds and earthquakes (such as in Newcastle in 1989). The ceiling of the front bedroom of the subject property has been replaced, indicating a possible collapse occurred, but it also could have been as a result of termites like elsewhere in the house. A severe storm did hit Sydney with gales up to 50 mph on 23 December 1924, and a house nearby at 17 Ballast Point Road lost its entire roof (Image 7.1).⁵⁴



Image 7.1

The base of the central pediment is visible from Ballast Point Road.

⁵⁴ SMH, Wed 24 Dec 1924, Page 10.

From the c. 1900 photograph it can be seen that the central pediment is the classical triangular tympanum not semi-circular like the outer minor pediments. The tympanum has a top sima cornice and sits on two pilasters with mouldings. There are *sgraffito* panels on the pilasters. The name *Ellerslie Terrace* is written likely in relief in a semi-circular panel with the date likely as A.D. 18 81. There are corbel brackets on either side of the pilasters and a crowning urn on top of the pediment (Image 7.2).

Image 7.2

An extreme enlargement from the c.1900 photograph of the central pediment.

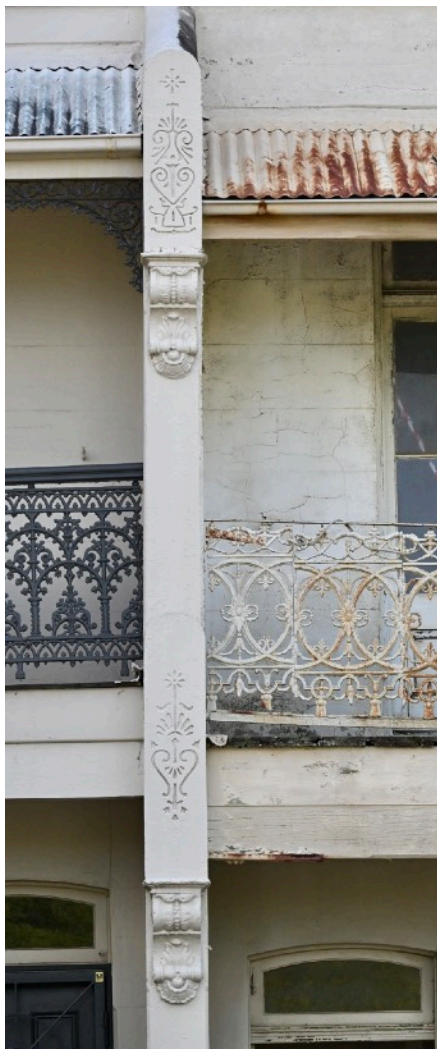


Image 7.3 (above)

The semi-circular pediment on top of the parapet wall on the front faced above No. 35/37 Ballast Point Road.

Image 7.4(left)

Decorative incised or *Sgraffito* designs are still visible in the stucco of the party walls and pediments. The detail would have been picked out in a contrasting colour.

7.3 Sgaffito

The use of *sgaffito* (also *sraffiato*, *sgraffiato*, or *scraffito*), is very rare in Balmain Victorian style houses. The few examples are on terrace houses of a similar age like such as 8-24 Reynolds Street Balmain. Ellerslie Terrace seems to be the only project carried out by Buchanan that incorporated decorative *sgaffito*. The traditional technique of *sgaffito* was carried out as a two stage process. The first coat of stucco was applied with a coloured pigment. The second coat was applied over the first and the pattern motifs were cut into the outer soft stucco exposing the colour substrate and a low-relief pattern or design. When applied as an outside decorative technique a similar effect could be achieved by a contracting paint finish. This incised technique was applied by Buchanan as apposed to "vermiculation" or adding precast half columns to the front-facing party walls but taken to a higher degree by applying the technique to the three pediments with low-relief embellishments. Buchanan must have been a keen advocate for the technique as he applied the same principle in designing a baptismal font at St. John's Church, Birchgrove, to commemorate the death of his young son Leslie Harmon Buchanan, who tragically died aged only 9 months while on a visit to Goulburn to visit grandfather Frederick Lemm (Image 7.5).



Image 7.5

Buchanan donated baptismal font at St. John's Church, Birchgrove, to commemorate the death of his young son Leslie Harmon Buchanan.⁵⁵

It was a decorative technique beautifully executed in the interior of the Glebe Town Hall in 1880 by architect Ambrose Thornley Junior. He also used it on houses built on Leichhardt's Excelsior Estate as well on Glebe Point's Toxteth Estate. The ornamental technique was likely adopted by popular residential architects and builders at the time and became the decorative architectural fashion in inner-city suburbs like Balmain and likely other suburbs. A young 21-year-old architect, Edward Buchanan, used it on his first major commission, *Ellerslie Terrace* in Birchgrove as an early adopter of the decorative motifs. It was likely a more economical treatment to details on terrace house party walls than applying precast elements like pilasters and half-columns on Victorian Filigree and Italianate style houses. There are many more examples of the same technique applied to "vermiculation" or "rustication" but the pure joy of decoration seems to be the motif for the possibilities of decorative *sgaffito*. Weather the individual designs where determined by the architect or by the skilled tradesman in discussion with the architect is not known 9Images 7.6-7.10).

⁵⁵ Photograph courtesy of Joh Williams.



Images 7.6-7.10 (clockwise from top left)

Interior of Glebe Town Hall 160 St Johns Road, Glebe.

Row of terrace houses in Balmain 14-24 Reynolds Street Balmain.

28 Toxteth Road Glebe.

99 Renwick Street Leichhardt.

87 Renwick Street Leichhardt.

8.0 Statement of Heritage Significance

8.1 Discussion of 'significance'

The inventory listing for No. 41 Ballast Point Road states that;

No. 41 Ballast Point Road is of local historic and aesthetic significance as an example of a Victorian Filigree terrace constructed c. 1881. Despite alterations and additions to the rear, the terrace significantly retains its overall scale, form, character and details as it presents to the street including the rendered façade, parapet and associated rendered details, party walls and chimneys, pediment and rendered mouldings, open verandah and balcony and some associated decorative details and pattern of openings. The building is part of a prominent and large group of terraces (Nos. 35-47) constructed along the ridgeline which make a positive contribution to the Ballast Point Road streetscape.

Criteria a)

Historical Significance

The site is part of an early subdivision and late Victorian period of development in the local area constructed in c. 1881.

Criteria b)

Historical Association

The site is associated with a number of land speculators. The buildings are associated with local architect and later Mayor of Balmain, E H Buchanan.

Criteria c)

Aesthetic/Technical Significance

The building is of aesthetic significance as two storey late Victorian period terrace constructed in the Filigree style. Despite alterations and additions to the rear, the terrace significantly retains its overall scale, form, character and details as it presents to the street including the rendered facade and associated rendered details, party walls and chimneys, highly decorative parapet, pediment and rendered mouldings, open verandah and balcony and associated decorative details and pattern of openings. The building is part of a prominent and grand group of terraces constructed along the ridgeline. The group (Nos. 35-47) makes a positive contribution to the Ballast Point Road streetscape.

Criteria f)

Rarity

The group is the largest (but not longest) terrace row in the area.

Criteria g)

Representative

EH Buchanan designed a number of grand terraces in the area including Nos. 2-8 Rose Street, however, these were constructed later in c. 1888.

Integrity/Intactness

High

8.2 Discussion of listed Significance

The statements contained in the Inventory listing are generally supported. However, the historical significance should include a reference to engineer John Laing, who lived adjacent to the site and worked for Mort's Dock, directly overlooked by *Ellerslie Terrace*.

APPENDIX A: General images of the place & context.

(Refer also to the measured drawings for room references)



Image A1

Ellerslie Terrace row 35-45 Ballast Point Road Birchgrove. The missing pediment to 41/43 is apparent.

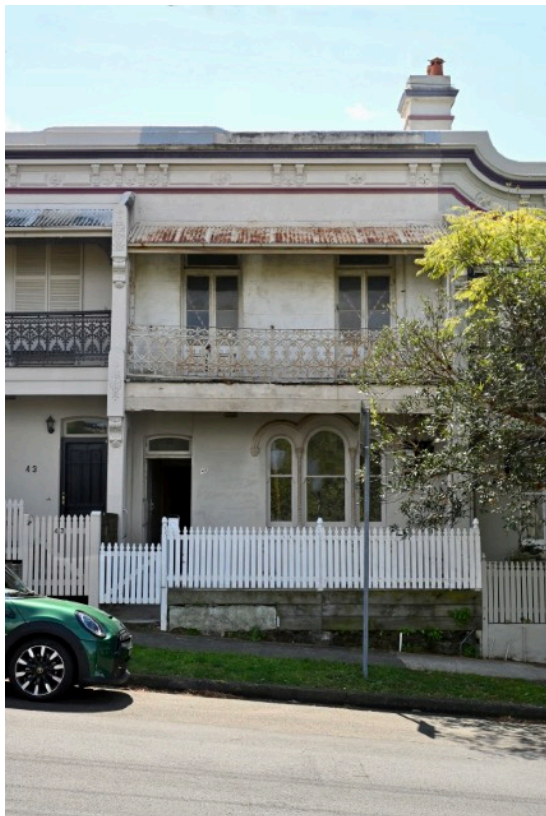


Image A2 (left) and A3 (right)

Ellerslie Terrace row 41 Ballast Point Road Birchgrove.



Image A4

View of the front verandah No. 41 Ballast Point Road (G.01).



Image A5 (above left)

View along the side of the addition toward the courtyard (G.09). No. 39 Ballast Point Road is to the left.

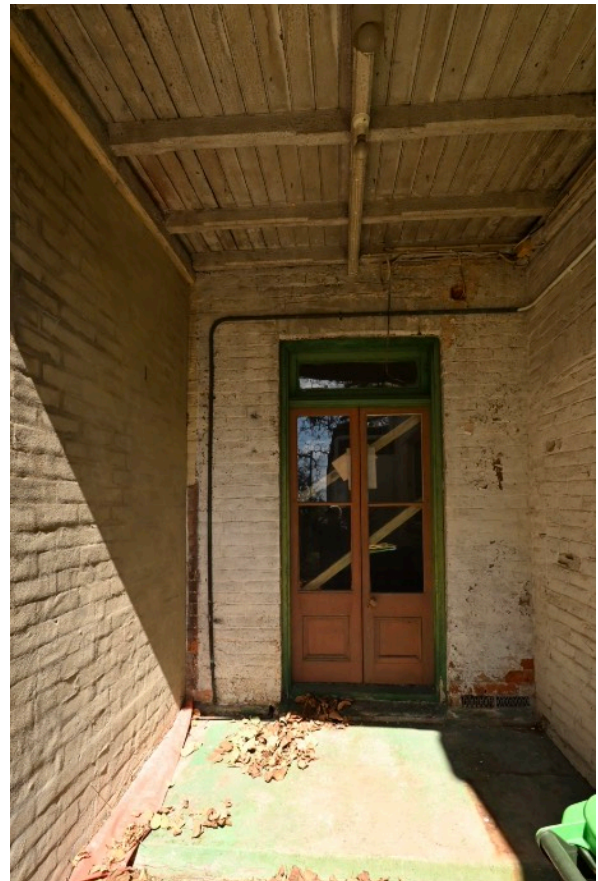


Image A6 (above right)

View from the courtyard (G.09). toward the french doors into the dining room (G.04).



Image A7

View looking south towards the 1985 additions. No. 39 is to the left and No. 43 to the right



Image A8

View looking south from the end of the yard. No. 39 is to the left and the rear garage to No. 43 is to the right.



Image A9

View looking south from Wharf Road. No. 39 is to the left, and the rear garage to No. 43 is to the right.

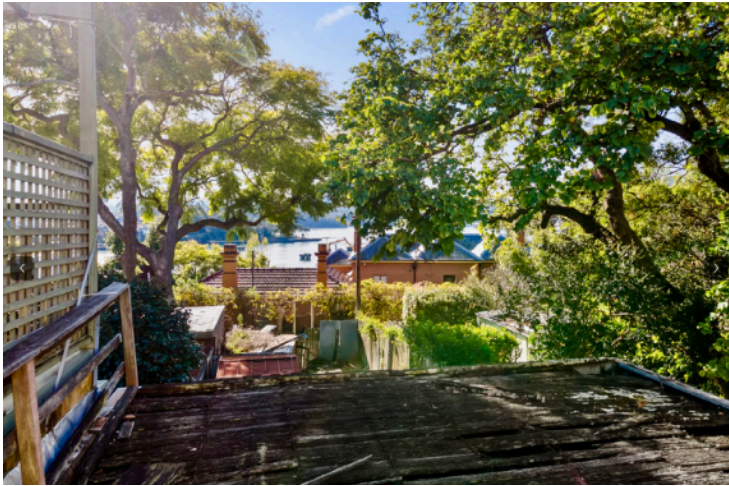


Image A10

View looking north over the top of the dilapidated roof terrace built in 1985 (F.07).



Image A11

View looking southwest from No. 39 toward No. 41



Image A12

View looking east from the roof terrace (F.07) toward No. 39 Ballast Point Road.



Image A13 (left)

View of the front living room (G.03).



Image A14 (left)

View of the dining room (G.04).

Image A15 (bottom left)

View of damaged and propped ceiling in the front parlour room (G.03).

Image A13 (bottom right)

View looking damaged stair (G.04).

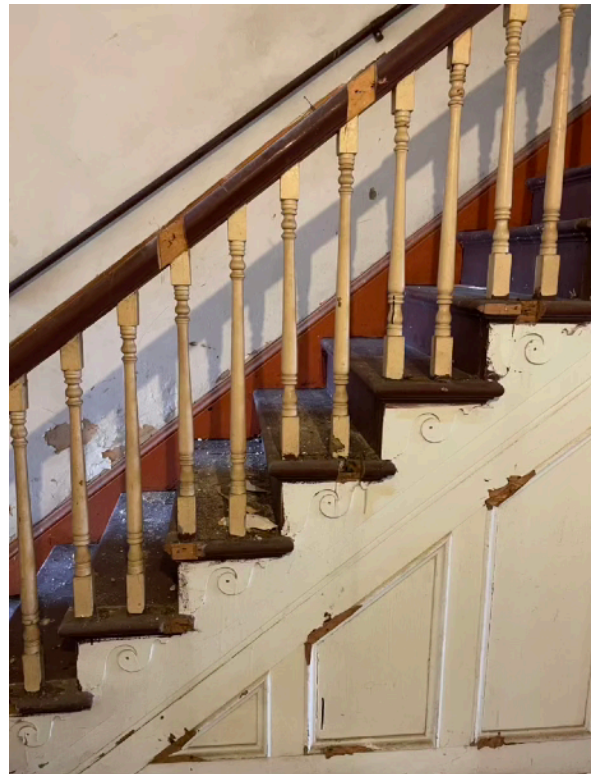




Image A14

View looking north in the kitchen (G.05).



Image A15

View looking east from the rear addition (G.08).



Image A16

View looking east in the main bedroom that still has its fireplace intact (F.01)



Image A17 (above left)

View south from the top of the floor landing.

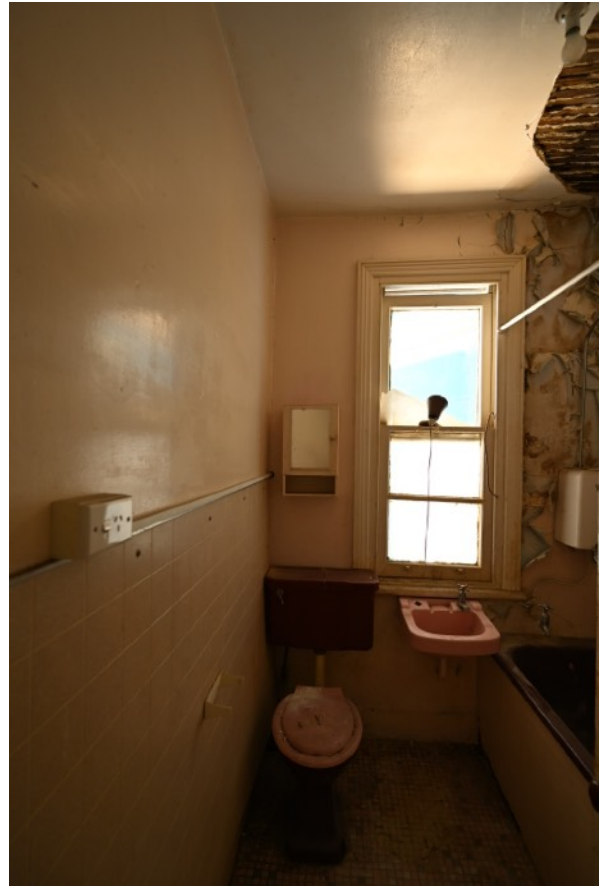


Image A18 (above right)

View of the bathroom room (F.04).



Image A19

View of the rear bedroom looking north to the French doors out to the roof terrace (F.06).