

Heritage Citation



9 Errington Street, Moorooka

Key details

Also known as	Forestmount
Addresses	At 9 Errington Street, Moorooka, Queensland 4105
Type of place	House
Period	Federation 1890-1914
Style	Queenslander
Lot plan	L11_RP55265; L11_RP55265
Key dates	Local Heritage Place Since — 1 January 2004 Date of Citation — June 2002
Construction	Roof: Corrugated iron; Walls: Timber

This timber and tin residence is significant as a rare remnant of nineteenth century development in Moorooka. It was constructed circa 1890 when Moorooka was first beginning to evolve from a farming area to a residential suburb of Brisbane and helps demonstrate the pattern of development of Brisbane and the local area.

History

Historical evidence indicates that this house was built circa 1890 for Austin Errington Ffrench, a Belgian architect.

Ffrench was born in Brussels, Belgium, circa 1859, the son of “gentleman” John Errington Ffrench and Elizabeth Rogerson Butler. Austin Ffrench trained as an architect, working as a draftsman in the Queensland Titles Office from 1885 to 1910. Postal records for this period give his occupation variously as clerk, draftsman or architect. Prior to establishing himself in Moorooka, Ffrench lived in South Brisbane and Huessler Tce, Paddington. In 1887, he married Elizabeth Ann Hare.

The Moorooka district was first subdivided for sale in the 1860s. The land on which this house is situated was part of a parcel of 26 acres sold by Deed of Grant to Edward Barrymore in 1862. This land was subdivided into smaller blocks from 1863 and three allotments (totalling around 3 acres) were sold to Thomas Murray. Murray became insolvent with a couple of years and the land passed to Alexander Raff, a pastoralist and businessman.

After several further changes of ownership, this parcel of land was purchased by Austin Errington Ffrench in March 1888. Ffrench mortgaged his property for ?130 in June of that year and again, the following year for ?400. It is possible one or both of these mortgages helped to finance the construction of a home as postal records first list Ffrench as a resident of “Beaudesert Rd” in 1891. (Errington Street was not yet constructed). As an architect, it is possible Ffrench designed his home himself.

At this time, Ffrench was one of only three residents listed in Beaudesert Road, an area then part of Stephens Shire which was carved from Yeerongpilly Shire in 1888. The other residents listed were William Colebrook, carpenter, and George Pegg, who owned the nearby dairy farm, Mayfield. The Moorooka/Rocklea area had been settled by farmers since the 1860s and the thoroughfare of Ipswich Road had provided a route for bullock drays and Cobb and Co coaches travelling between Brisbane and Ipswich since the convict days of the 1820s-1840s. The opening of the Beenleigh railway line in 1885 provided a further impetus to development in the district as it would now be possible for white collar workers such as Ffrench to commute daily to the city. A railway platform was constructed at Moorooka in 1885. For residents in the area of Ffrench's property, however, Yeronga and Yerongpilly stations were within easier walking distance. During the 1880s, when Brisbane was experiencing a boom in immigration and land development, Moorooka was subdivided for residential estates but sold slowly. This was probably due to the availability of land closer to the city and the floods and economic depression of the 1890s. The tramline arrived at Chardon's Corner (corner of Cracknell and Ipswich Roads) in 1897 providing another mode of public transport to the city. Although development in the area continued during the interwar period, parts of Moorooka and the surrounding suburbs remained semi-rural until the 1940s with bushland, paddocks, creeks and waterholes. The children of Moorooka families walked to school at Yeronga or Rocklea until 1929 when the Moorooka State School opened.

Today, there are only around half a dozen houses in Moorooka that have survived from the 19th century. Most are workers' cottages situated in the streets between Beaudesert and Ipswich Road such as Keats and Brier Streets.

By 1910, postal records indicate that Austin Ffrench had moved to Rockhampton, where he continued to work as a draftsman. There appear to be no other members of the Ffrench family living in Moorooka after 1910, although Austin Ffrench continued to own the land until 1938, mortgaging it in 1920 (?500) and 1931 (no amount given).

A 1936 aerial photograph of the area shows the property as a mostly cleared block with only the one residence and undeveloped land to the east and west. Immediately to the north, the streets of the Clifton Hill war service estate are almost completely lined with houses. At some stage between 1936 and 1946 when another aerial photograph was taken, an interwar style porch was added to the eastern side of the front of the house. The front door appears to have been moved since then to the western side of the front. By 1946, there were seven other houses in Errington Street, which was apparently named after Austin Errington Ffrench.

The Ffrench's property remained as the original parcel of 3 acres 1 rood and 31 perches until 1938 when it was transferred to Constance Aileen Ffrench and Madeline Isabel Ffrench. Some six months after the transfer, nearly 3 roods were dedicated for road purposes and the remaining land was subdivided into mostly 21 perch allotments. It is likely that Errington and Millicent Streets were constructed at this time.

Madeline Ffrench died in 1944. She was survived by Constance who passed away in 1969. In 1970, the property was sold. It has since had several owners.

The house at 9 Errington Street is known to local residents as one of the earlier houses in the area. It provides valuable evidence of the development of Moorooka during the late 19th century when it began changing from a rural community to a more densely populated suburb.

Statement of significance

Relevant assessment criteria

This is a place of local heritage significance and meets one or more of the local heritage criteria under the Heritage planning scheme policy of the *Brisbane City Plan 2014*. It is significant because:

Historical

CRITERION A

The place is important in demonstrating the evolution or pattern of the city's or local area's history

for the evidence it provides of the transition of Moorooka from a rural community to a residential suburb which began during the late nineteenth century.

Rarity

CRITERION B

The place demonstrates rare, uncommon or endangered aspects of the city's or local area's cultural heritage as a rare surviving example of a nineteenth century residence in Moorooka.

References

1. Brisbane City Council, aerial photographs, 1936 and 1946
2. BCC Building Registers
3. Brisbane City Council Detail Plans
4. Brisbane City Council Heritage Unit. Moorooka District Character Study. May 1996
5. *Brisbane Centenary Official Historical Souvenir 1924*, Brisbane Centenary Celebrations Committee, Brisbane
6. Department of Natural Resources. Titles information
7. Waterson, D.B., *A Biographical Register of the Queensland Parliament 1860-1929*, Australian National University Press, Canberra, 1972
8. Watson, Donald and Judith McKay. *A Directory of Queensland Architects to 1940*. (St. Lucia: U of Q Press, 1984)
9. Donald Watson and Judith McKay, *Queensland Architects of the Nineteenth Century*, South Brisbane: Queensland Museum, 1994
10. Queensland Post Office Directories

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Note: This citation has been prepared on the basis of evidence available at the time including an external examination of the building. The statement of significance is a summary of the most culturally important aspects of the property based on the available evidence, and may be re-assessed if further information becomes available. The purpose of this citation is to provide an informed evaluation for heritage registration and information. This does not negate the necessity for a thorough conservation study by a qualified practitioner, before any action is taken which may affect its heritage significance.

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