


From: [Official Information](#)
To: 
Subject: Woodhead, Mornington Enquiry
Date: Thursday, 15 October 2020 11:52:38 a.m.
Attachments: [image001.png](#)
[Woodhead.pdf](#)

Kia ora

I am writing in regards to your information request below received 22 September 2020.

The Dunedin City Council Heritage Advisor, Dr Andria Farminer, provided the below statement with regards to your request.

“Woodhead, 5 McGeorge Avenue, Mornington, is not included on the Dunedin City District Plan Heritage Schedule. I’ve attached an excerpt from Ray Hargreaves book (1983) which discusses Woodhead. I’ve also undertaken a quick check in Papers Past, and can confirm that the MacNeils lived in their first house there (a large stone and tinned roof house) from 1869 until the new Woodhead (the present house) was constructed c. 1875-6 (the old house was put up for sale and removal in 1876-78 from adverts placed in the Otago Daily Times). I’m not sure where the attribution to the architect William Vahland derives from but he appears to have had a very short-lived (1862-63) practice with a Mr Monson in Dunedin (doing pretty low-end work). He disappears from the record after 1863 so I suspect he returned to Australia. So I’m fairly certain from this that Vahland was not responsible for the design of the 1876 Woodhead house. I’ve also looked into the WH Reynolds and Shadrach Jones, and neither are associated with the Mornington Woodhead site; there was another, earlier Woodhead at Waikouaiti that WH Reynolds was associated with in the 1850s.”

We hope this is of assistance, if you have any questions with regards to your request, the Heritage Advisor is happy for you to contact her direct on Andrea.Farminer@dcc.govt.nz

Ka mihi

[Rebecca Murray](#)

**GOVERNANCE SUPPORT OFFICER
CIVIC**

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Dunedin City Council, 50 The Octagon, Dunedin

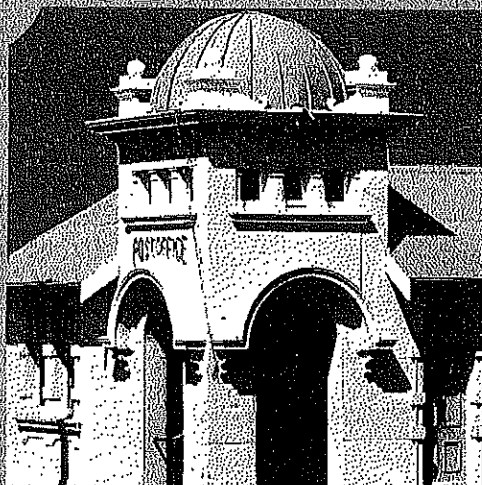
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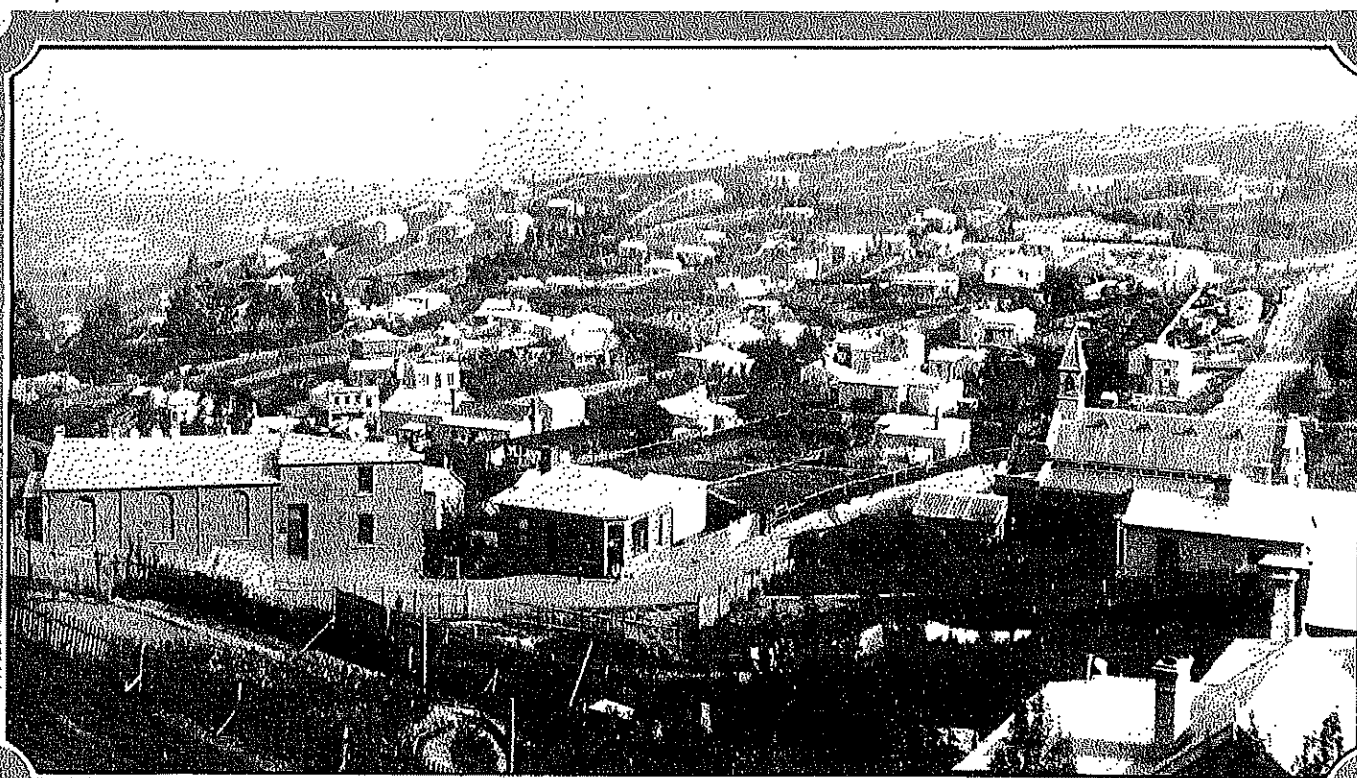
Request Text

My enquiry should possibly be directed to your planning department. It concerns the mansion formerly known as Woodhead, now at Eglinton Street, Dunedin. I last visited it in 1988, at which time I was in correspondence with historian Hardwicke Knight about the property. It is on record that it was built by WH Reynolds and owned by Shadrach Jones in the early 1860s and later by Hugh MacNeil. As one of the earliest brick buildings in Dunedin, I am expecting that it has some form of protected status in the planning scheme of the city. Could one of your staff confirm that for me and would they be willing to exchange notes about this building. I am currently writing about the architect William Vahland, who was in Dunedin in 1862 and has been credited with designing Woodhead. I doubt this but would like also to know about the nearby property Osborne, which was part of the Woodhead estate. I attach an article by Lois Galer concerning the property at Woodhead, some of which is incorrect.



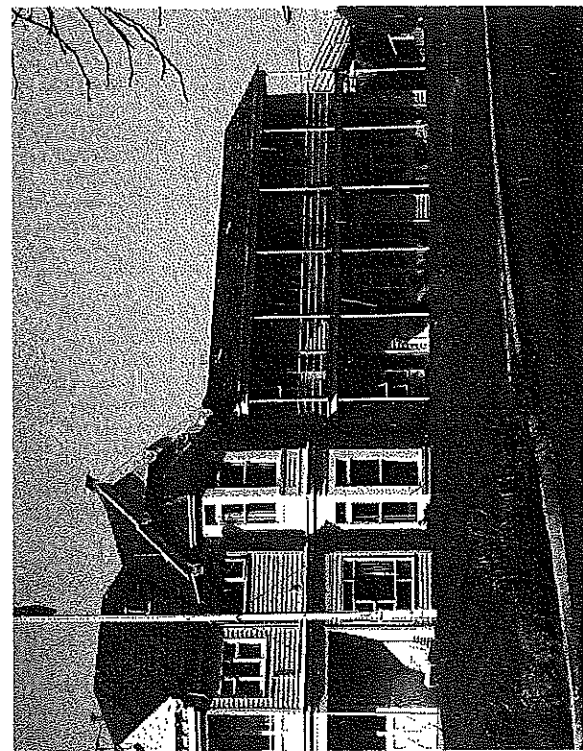
The Top of the Hill

The Story of Mornington
as seen through its streets and buildings



The Glen (c.1883)

Ray Hargreaves



formerly the home of the Reynolds family, 79 Eglinton Rd. (R.P.H.,

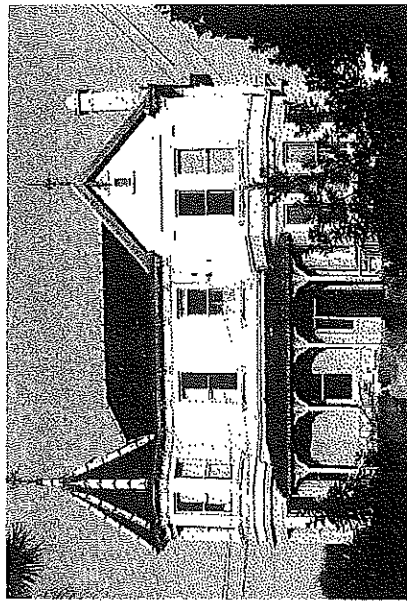
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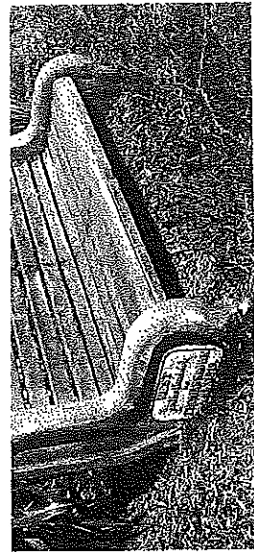
Tripney, who was manager of the Bank of Australasia
(now part of the ANZ Banking Group).

Broomlands

Nearby, at 88 Eglinton Road, a large two storied
house—complete with a tower in the eastern cor-
ner—still stands as a monument to another Dunedin
businessman and active member in Mornington and
community affairs. Thomas Brown, co-founder and



55. Broomlands, 88 Eglinton Rd. (R.P.H., 1980)



56. One of the seats in the Town Belt provided in
1919 through the generosity of Thomas Brown.
(R.P.H., 1982)

subsequently (1893) sole proprietor of the former
Dunedin drapery firm of Brown, Ewing & Co., was born
in Wooler, Northumberland, in 1840, arrived at
Invercargill in early 1863, moved to Dunedin two years
later and entered the drapery trade. Brown was married
twice, his first wife Margaret dying in 1910 and his se-
cond wife Lillian (whom he married in 1910) surviving
him for a further 16 years after his own death in June
1919.

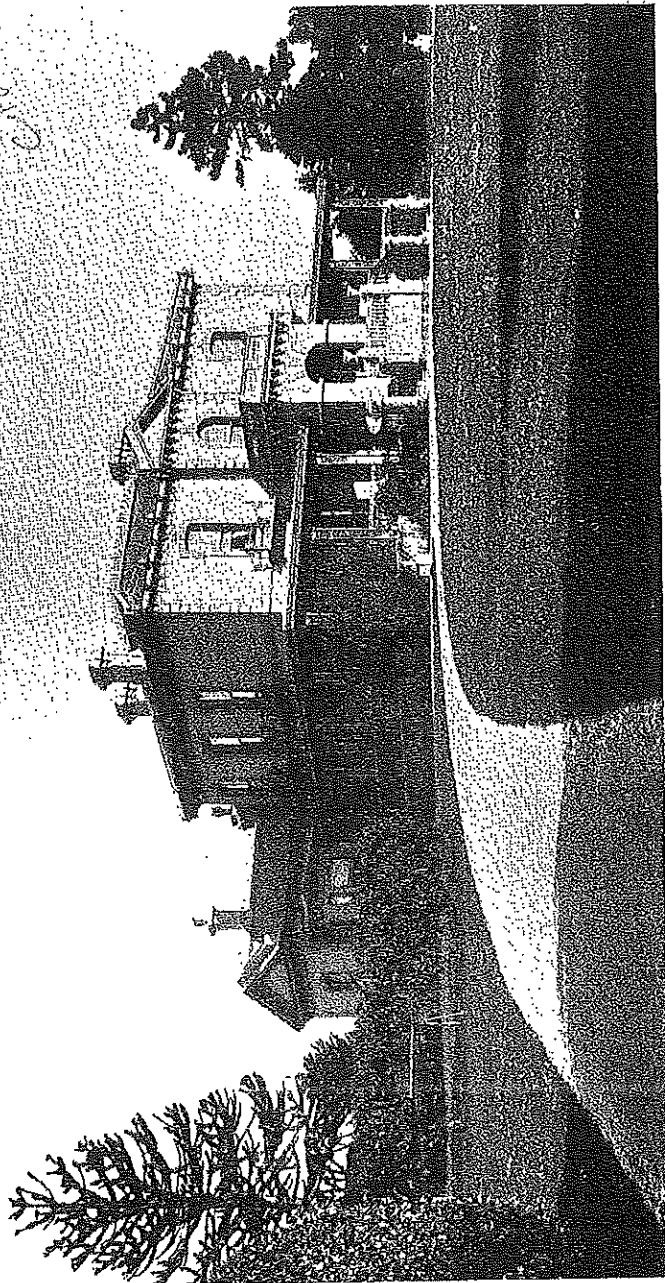
In his will Brown gave a number of generous bequests

of the Society Fraternization Society (which was a
Amities Society). About 1907 a number of seats were
placed in the Town Belt as a result of Brown's genero-
sity, and in 1919 further seats were provided, which still
dot the Town Belt fronting Eglinton Road. 'Broom-
lands' was built about 1881-82, and stood then in just
over an acre (0.4 ha.) of land. In 1937 the executors of
Brown's estate sold off most of the grounds and today
'Broomlands' is divided into flats.

Woodhead/Avalon

At 5 McGeorge Avenue another large two-storied house
retains its impressive appearance, even though it is
crowded in by surrounding houses, and stands close to
the street. This is the side view of the home originally
built for Hugh MacNeil, a partner in the Melbourne
firm of Briscoes, who had crossed from Victoria to
Dunedin in 1862 to start a branch of the firm in New
Zealand. MacNeil bought the land at Eglinton in 1868
and for some years lived in the original 'Woodhead'
which stood immediately in front of the McGeorge
Avenue home.

The house at 5 McGeorge Avenue was built, it is
thought, in the late 1870s or early 1880s and it now took



57. Woodhead/Avalon, as it was originally designed to be seen. (Otago Witness, July 30, 1902. Otago Daily
Times)

over the name 'Woodhead'. It originally had a portico entrance from Eglington Road and it fronts in that direction. MacNeil died in August 1900, and his widow continued to live in the home until her death in 1909.

John McGeorge, a civil engineer who had been associated with his brother in the gold-dredging boom of the 1890s and early 1900s, now purchased the home, and renamed it 'Avalon'. In 1928, some five years after her husband's death, Mrs McGeorge subdivided much of the property, and the new access street was named after her. The land in front of the house was subdivided into sections after Mrs McGeorge's death in 1951 and the proud 'Avalon' was subsequently converted into flats, although much of the attractive outside appearance of the home is being maintained.

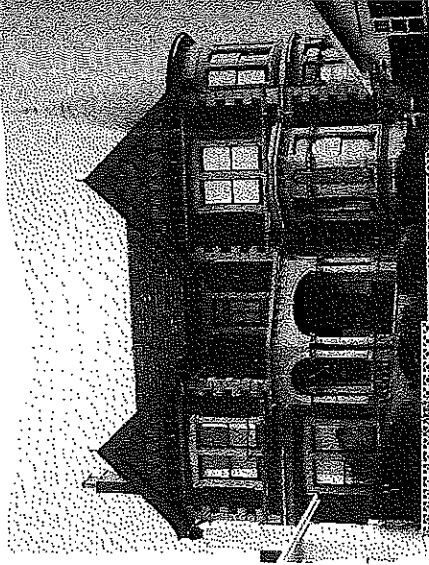
151 Kenmore Road

From Kenmore Road only a glimpse of the back of No. 151 can be seen, but in the 1870s this house was the only one on the large parcel of land—some 35 acres, or 14 ha.—stretching well below present Jubilee Street. This house was built by the pioneer nurseryman George Matthews, who had arrived in Dunedin in 1850 together with a small collection of seeds and trees he had brought from Britain. His first home and nursery were in Moray Place, but he took up land in Mornington in the early 1850s and about 1870 he built a brick 11-roomed home on the land to which he then moved. This property he named Hawthorn Hill, and here he planted an extensive nursery. For some years Matthews was a member of the Mornington Road Board and later the Borough Council, and was an active member of First Church.

Before Matthews' death in October 1884, he had begun to sell off part of his property as building sites. His son Henry carried on the nursery for several years, and George Matthews' widow continued to live in the house until her death in 1911. Since then only four families have lived there: Dr. Irwin Hunter (1911-30), Edmund Smith (1930-60), G. G. Sutherland (1961-68) and the present owners Mr and Mrs F. Campbell. Smith extensively remodelled the house so that the exterior

now has many characteristics of an early 1930s house, rather than the 1870s. Over the years the land surrounding the home has been continually diminished, the last sections being sold in 1965.

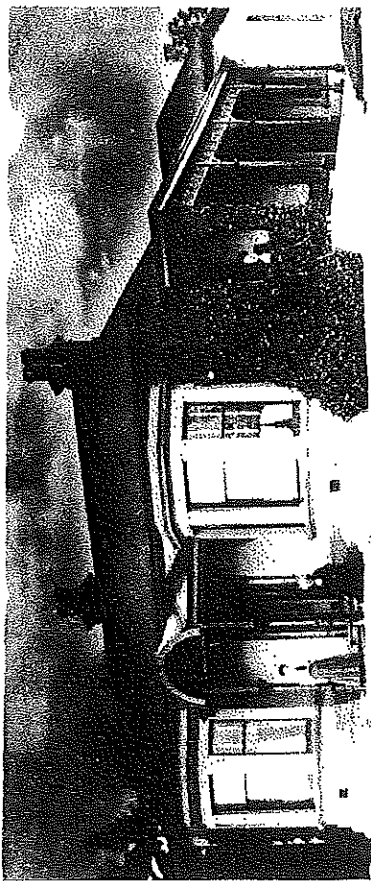
Venard



58. Venard. (R.P.H., 1980)

Towards the top of Hawthorn Avenue the setting is dominated by a large two-storied house with a small round tower topped by a squat spire. Although the entrance is now off Jubilee Street, for many years its address was Hawthorn Avenue. The house was built in 1898 on part of the old Matthews' property for William A. Moore, Dunedin manager for Turnbull, Martin and Co. the New Zealand agents for the Federal—Houlder—Shire line of steamers. The architect was J. L. Salmon.

Moore named the house 'Venard', after his own home in Pollokshields, Glasgow, and it means 'the house on the hill'. It was in 'Venard' as guests of Mr and Mrs Moore that Captain Robert Falcon Scott spent his last night in New Zealand with his wife before sailing on 29 November 1910 for Antarctica.



59. George Matthews' home, Hawthorn Hill, as it was in the early 1900s. (Mrs W. Campbell)

In 1926 Moore sold the house to E. A. McDougall and moved to another part of Dunedin, and over the years until after World War II other Dunedin businessmen occupied the house, including J. H. Johnson, H. C. Campbell and M. Stewart. From about 1956 to 1959 the house was used for receptions and other functions by a company known as Manor House Caterers.

About 40 years ago the land fronting Hawthorn Avenue was subdivided. For a number of years the house was converted into flats, but today is once more a family home, owned by Allan and Jill Binnie.

46 Hawthorn Avenue

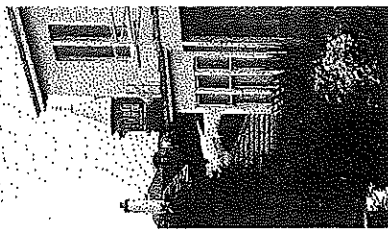


60. 46 Hawthorn Ave. (R.P.H. 1982)

In the heyday of goldrush Dunedin, money was to be made by providing liquor and accommodation to the continually moving population. In late 1863 or early 1864, John Aikman, a Scotsman who had spent a number of years in Australia, took over the recently-built Glasgow Arms Hotel in Princes Street, and ran it successfully and profitably until he retired in 1876. He then built a house in Mornington on land purchased from George Matthews, and lived in retirement until his death in 1911 aged 84. His widow Janet continued to live in the house, at 46 Hawthorn Avenue, until 1934. Rooms were added as a second story while Dr. Charles Jerram lived in the house, from 1945 to 1960. In 1960 the present owners Mr and Mrs Alex Black bought the home, Mr Black being well-known as the skipper of the research vessel *Acheron*. The old stables near the house may still be seen from Jubilee Street.

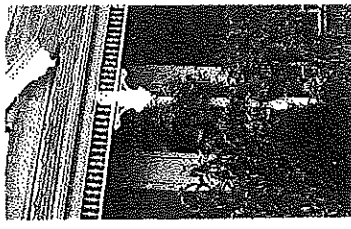
11 Napier Street

On a neighbouring property at 11 Napier Street stands a two-storied home which dates back to 1888, when it was built for the Rev. Andrew Bett, a Presbyterian minister. Arriving in Otago from Scotland in 1859, Bett was licensed in 1861, and ordained in 1872 when he took over the parish of Tanamui. In 1885 relations became



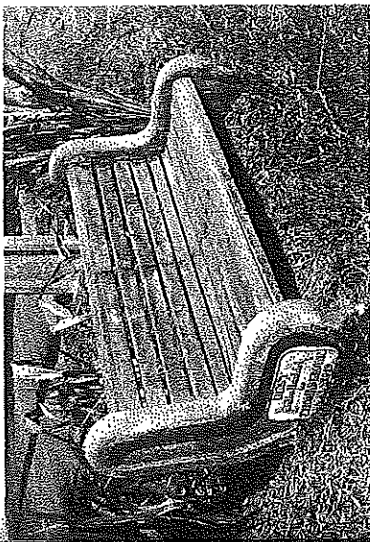
61. 1 Napier St. (R.P.H. 1982)

19 Rosebery Street



62. 19 Rosebery St. / One of Rosebery Street by Judy and Neil Moore. The house has a number of attractive a geometrically-patterned rectangular windows. Inside, three of the pressed-zinc ceilings.

The land at the end of Dunedin bookseller James Fenwick's property in 1903 by George Fenwick property fronting Archibald Mitchellson probably built the house



6. One of the seats in the Town Belt provided in 1919 through the generosity of Thomas Brown. (R.P.H., 1982)

subsequently (1893) sole proprietor of the former Dunedin drapery firm of Brown Ewing & Co., was born in Wooler, Northumberland, in 1840, arrived at Invercargill in early 1863, moved to Dunedin two years later and entered the drapery trade. Brown was married twice, his first wife Margaret dying in 1910 and his second wife Lillian (whom he married in 1916) surviving him for a further 16 years after his own death in June 1919.

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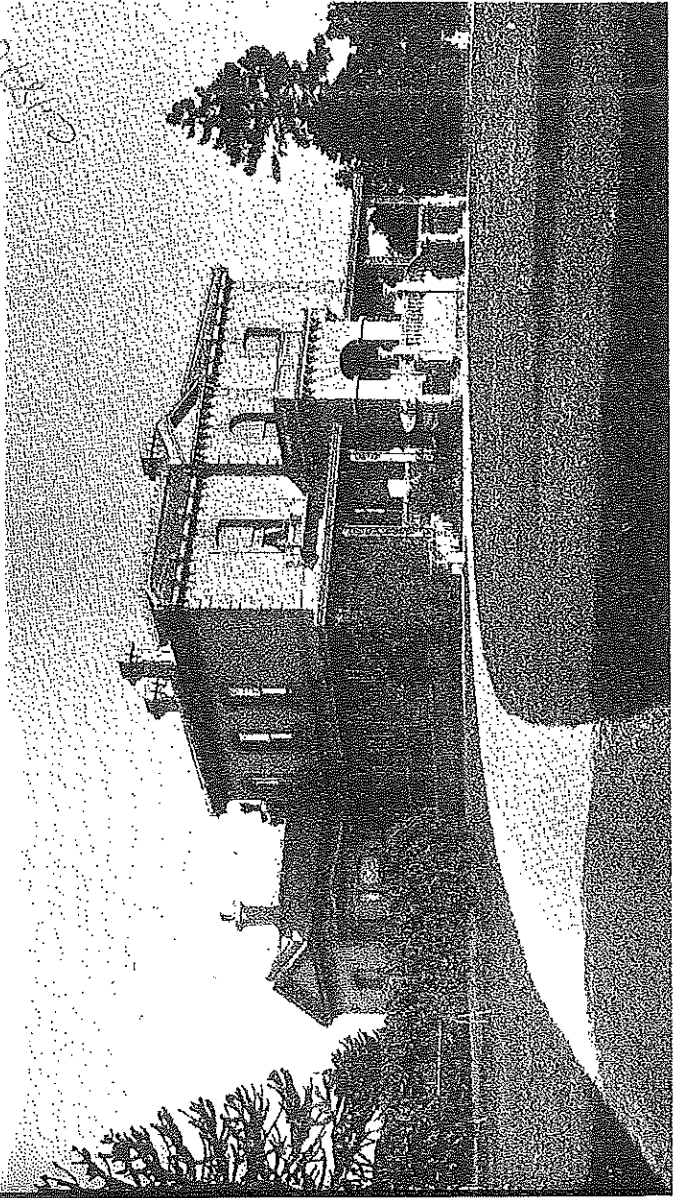
to local religious and charitable organisations. Of Thomas Brown's three children two had died in infancy, and a married son died childless in 1912.

Brown served as both councillor and mayor of Mornington and, in 1887, had been one of the promoters of the Scenery Preservation Society (later the Dunedin Amenities Society). About 1907 a number of seats were placed in the Town Belt as a result of Brown's generosity, and in 1919 further seats were provided, which still dot the Town Belt fronting Eglinton Road. 'Broomlands' was built about 1881-82, and stood then in just over an acre (0.4 ha.) of land. In 1937 the executors of Brown's estate sold off most of the grounds and today 'Broomlands' is divided into flats.

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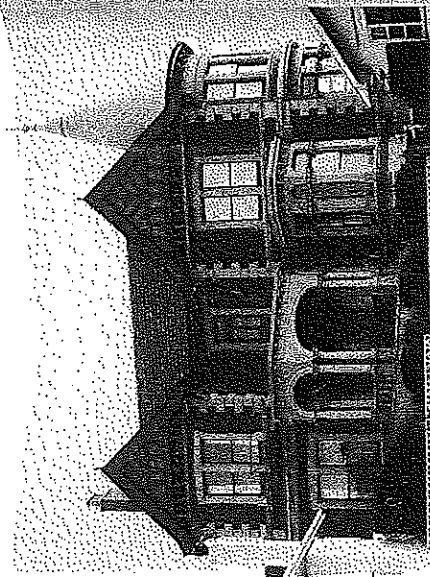
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