

Tel. Colac 4051

Mr Robin Boyd A.R.A.I.A.

158 Riversdale Road
Camberwell EC

Tarndwarncourt

Warncourt

17 July 1956

Dear Mr Boyd

We were sorry we were not at home when you called with our friend Chic Winter-Living. and when I say not at home you must understand we were actually elsewhere.

As to the dates of the building, I must revise my friends ideas somewhat. There are relics in the garden of the first house built in 1842 by the Dennis Bros, when they had to vacate the first small building, which was about $1\frac{1}{4}$ miles to the East on land that the Govt of the day, in Sydney, allotted to the Wesleyan mission to the aborigines - "Burntongdale".

The 1842 building of which you may have noticed a pencil drawing, was built of wooden slabs with a wood shingle roof.

The yellow stone portion of my home built of a rather soft sort of clay or sandstone occurring at the surface on the spot was completed end of Dec 48. My grandfather, an amateur at the trade was architect, and they must have had quite a good stone mason, any sawn timber would be cut in a pit saw, and the roof was originally split shingles which are still there under the iron. The marks of adze or broad axe can still be plainly seen on the cross pieces, lintels?

over the back doorways. The blue stone portion was added as far as I can ascertain around 1867. architect Hamilton of Colac who built a number of Western District homesteads such as Ingleby.

Eyrent, Woorioyrite, and I judge Poligolet and Irrewarra. His houses seemed to be recognisable by their large square windows and high walls - quite a pill in these times labour scarcity.

The pendulum seems to have swung to the other extreme.

The stone of the newer part is of exceptional quality as you would have noticed, quarried about 4 miles along the Ballong road. Of the old yellow stone part, the 2nd storey of the back portion was put on in 51 & on the discovery of gold at Ballarat the workmen left and my people had difficulty in completing it. You may have

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noticed that in the old part the hardwood floors show up under the floor coverings which ^{Tarndwarncourt} ^{Warncoort} suffer undue wear in consequence. They would be local gum and how the seasoning was achieved must have been quite a problem. Blackwood, which abounded on the spot was usually used for the shingles. I have seen tons of beautiful furniture stuff on this property cut up for firewood - @ 4/- per ton of 48 c. feet. 2 foot, @ 10/- per ton 740ft³ 1 foot stove wood.

Although I have had some trouble with water forming under the windows through wind pressure on the western side there are as yet no cracks in the main walls except in the upper part of the yellow stone at rear. (the gold rush job).

I do not think there is anything more to be told about the old place which had quite a scorching on 14 Jan 1944 when we lost most of our shelter from the storm and much property. After that fire a number of my friends said, "thank God Tarndwarncourt was saved" while others said "what a pity for Alex Dennis it was not taken" Anyhow I have planted fresh shelter belts.

Yours sincerely
 AW Dennis