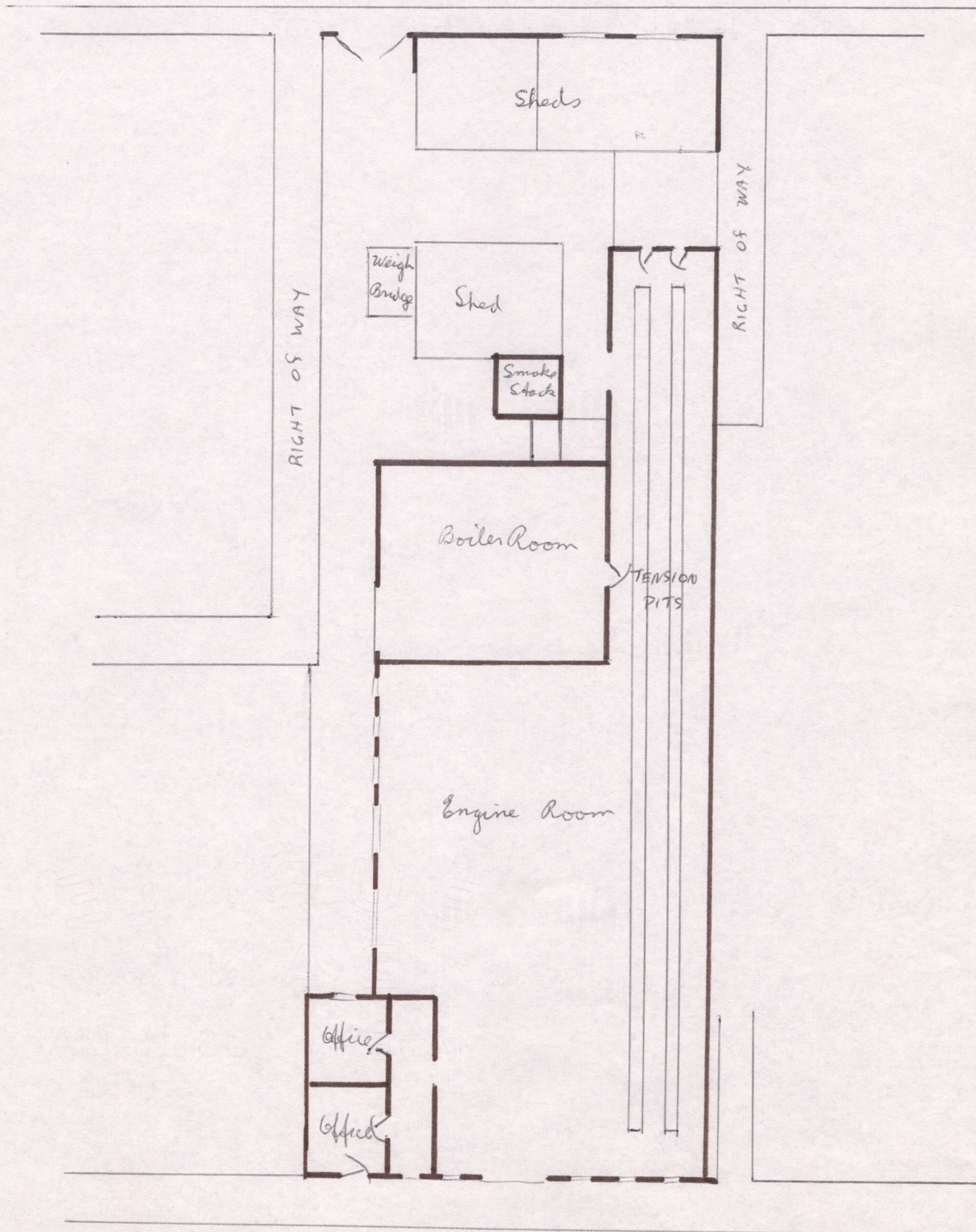


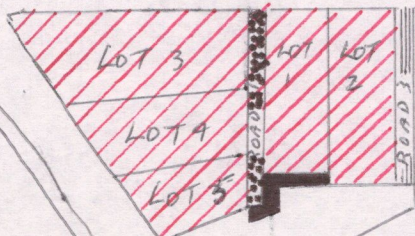
ARGYLE STREET



JOHNSTON STREET

DOMAIN RD

BROMBY ST



ST. KILDA RD

ARNOLD ST

ADAMS ST

DOMAIN ST

WAY ST

TOORAK RD



Nearly ten months after the opening of Johnston Street an Engine House situated at the corner of St. Kilda Road and Bromby Street, South Yarra, commenced operations. This was the sixth Engine House under control of the Trust and the first to operate as part of the southern system. It was known as the St. Kilda Engine House.

All land acquired for building on, except road 1, was purchased at various dates by the Melbourne Tramway and Omnibus Company. The land was then subdivided as seen on the site plan.

Now lot one and lot two were bought by the Company on the 9th July 1884 - quite early, as the first tram wasn't to run until eighteen months later. On lot one it can be seen that there was the creation of an easement (coloured black) on the 1st September 1884, to a Mr. John Mathew. This is labelled road 2.

Then lot six was purchased by the Company on the 1st September 1884. Just nine days later, on the 9th September 1884, the Company also purchased lots three, four and five. Now up until the time the Company transferred their land to the Trust; road 1 (shaded brown) and road 2 (shaded black) remained easements. Then on the 20th of August 1885, when the Trust took over all the Company's land, road 1 and road 2 were now both included in the title as land to be built over - that is, after the 18th August, these roads were no longer easements. Road 3, however, remained a right of way, which was eventually bought by the Melbourne and Metropolitan Tramway Board on the 8th February 1926. The total cost of this land was £2,363.9.7.

Now although the Melbourne Tramway and Omnibus Company bought most of the corner in the early stages of cable tram development, it had no assurance that the site would be used for an Engine House, for as late as February 1887, the councils governing St. Kilda, South Yarra, Prahran and Toorak, were still deciding whether to have horse, cable or motor power, to propel their trams. In that year, however, they decided in favour of a cable system. It appears that for the Trust to take over the whole of the site in August 1885 there must have been some "inside knowledge" of the future southern cable system.

The first tram ran on the 11th October 1888. The directory of 1888 does not list the Engine House - therefore, as the survey would have taken twelve months to compile, it appears that it wasn't until late 1887, or early 1888, that the work commenced.

Associated with the St. Kilda development were the contractors Brown and Beck, and James Cook who laid the lines. Construction of the building alone cost £15,077.14.2; the total cost (including machinery) being £39,978.2.6. Of this, £1,185.0.0 was incurred in legal, administrative and other expenses.

As with many of the other Engine Houses, in 1917, an auxillary plant was added to the engine room. This policy of supplementing power continued sporadically until September 1922. Then in late 1924, and 1925, plans were being prepared for the closing of the Engine House. This eventuated on the 26th December 1925, after 37 years of service.

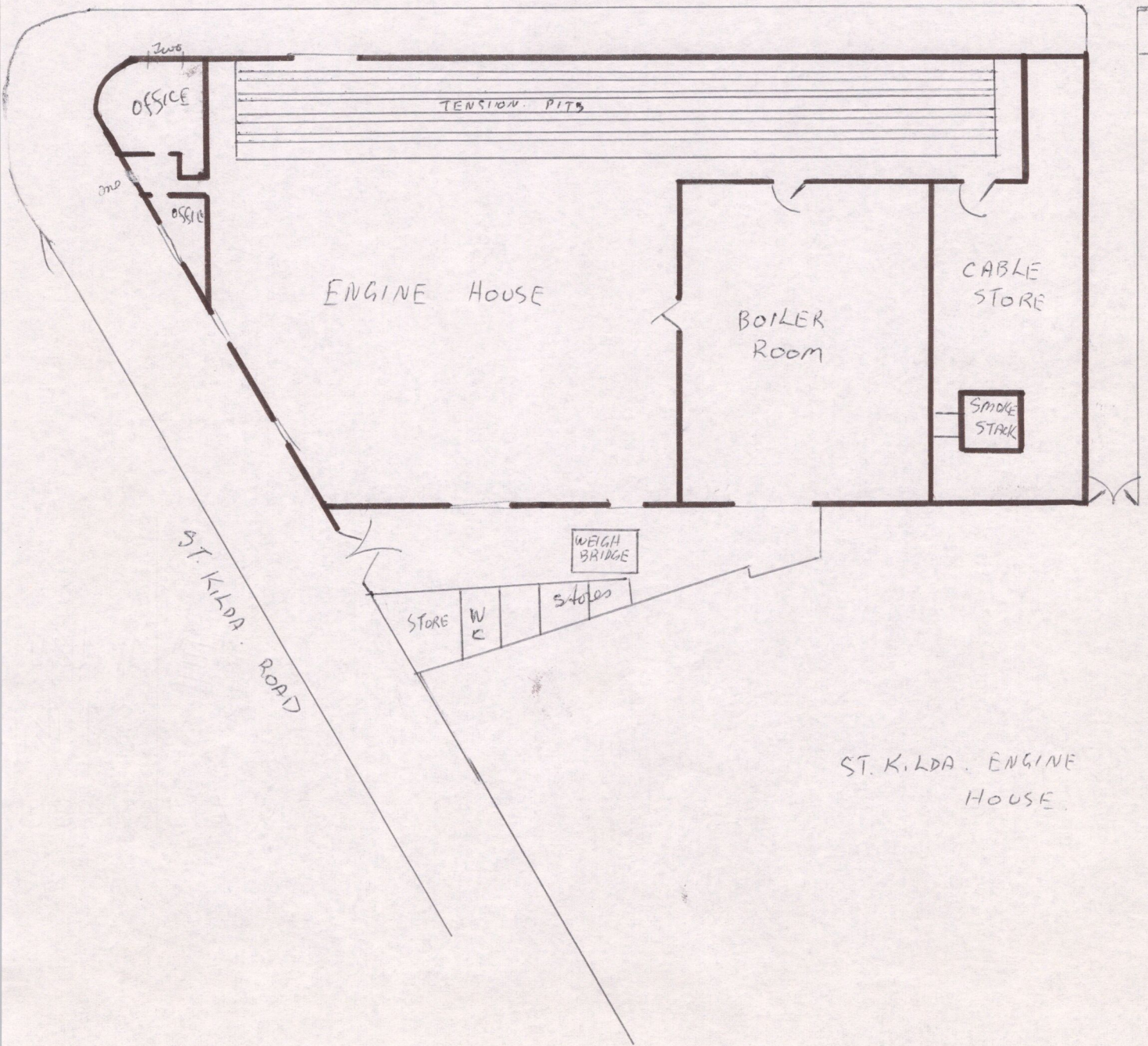
After its closing, there was some controversy as to what should become of it. As reported in the 'Argus', dated the 31st August 1926, it was the intention of the Melbourne and Metropolitan Tramway Board to offer it for sale, by public auction. At the same time the Board requested the City Council to consent to the use of the site by a prospective buyer as a motor garage. But generally the councillors were opposed to the idea, stating that "the site could be put to better use, and that unsightly buildings should not be allowed to detract from the beauty of 'Melbourne's most beautiful road", nor such buildings be tolerated in selected residential areas".

However, the motor firm Kellow and Falkiner Pty. Ltd., eventually bought the Engine House on the 10th January 1928. Today the building still stands on that corner site, and although I am not positive of the effects of the councillors statements, it does appear that they were heeded, for the facades have been completely remodelled beyond recognition as a cable tram "power plant".

Because of limited space, it can be seen from the following plan that there was no coke stack on the site. This, however, was situated in nearby Arnold Street.

BROMBY ST

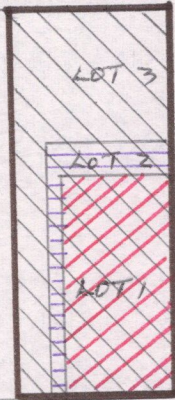
EUREKA  
BANK  
MADE IN AUSTRALIA



ST. KILDA. ENGINE HOUSE.



ALEXANDRA CRES



RIVER ST

TOOPAK RD.

CHAMBERS ST


OXFORD ST

FOASTER ST

CUNNINGHAM ST

Just thirteen days after the opening of the St. Kilda Engine House, another commenced operations on the corner of Toorak Road and Chapel Street, Prahran. This was referred to as either the Toorak or Prahran Engine House, and was the seventh to be opened under the control of the Trust. The front of this faced onto Toorak Road.

As shown on the site plan, the land acquired extended from Toorak Road back to Alexandra Crescent - thus quite a large block. The site for the Engine House itself however, extends just a little over 200 feet along Chapel Street from Toorak Road. On the rest of the block a Melbourne Tramway and Omnibus Company car bar was built. This actually was an unusual practice, for car barns were most often situated at a terminus.

On the 15th August 1881, a Mr. Richard Dawson of Canfield purchased the whole of this corner site. Some three years later, on the 11th June 1884, this land hatched thus  was then transferred to the Melbourne Tramway and Omnibus Company. Soon after this it was subdivided into the various blocks as shown on the plan.

Firstly lot one, shaded red, was transferred to the Melbourne Tramways Trust on the 20th August 1885. Then the narrow strips of land around it, lot two and shaded blue, was similarly transferred to the Trust, but some two years later on the 4th November 1887.

According to the titles, the rest of the land (not shaded) on which the car barn was situated was kept in the name of the Melbourne Tramway and Omnibus Company until the 8th June 1928, when it was transferred over to the Melbourne and Metropolitan Tramway Board. This, of course, was consistent with tramway policy which as I have stated previously, authorized the Melbourne Tramway and Omnibus Company to control those matters connected with the rolling stock and lines. Therefore, excluding this land, the price paid for the Engine House site was £3,387.0.7.

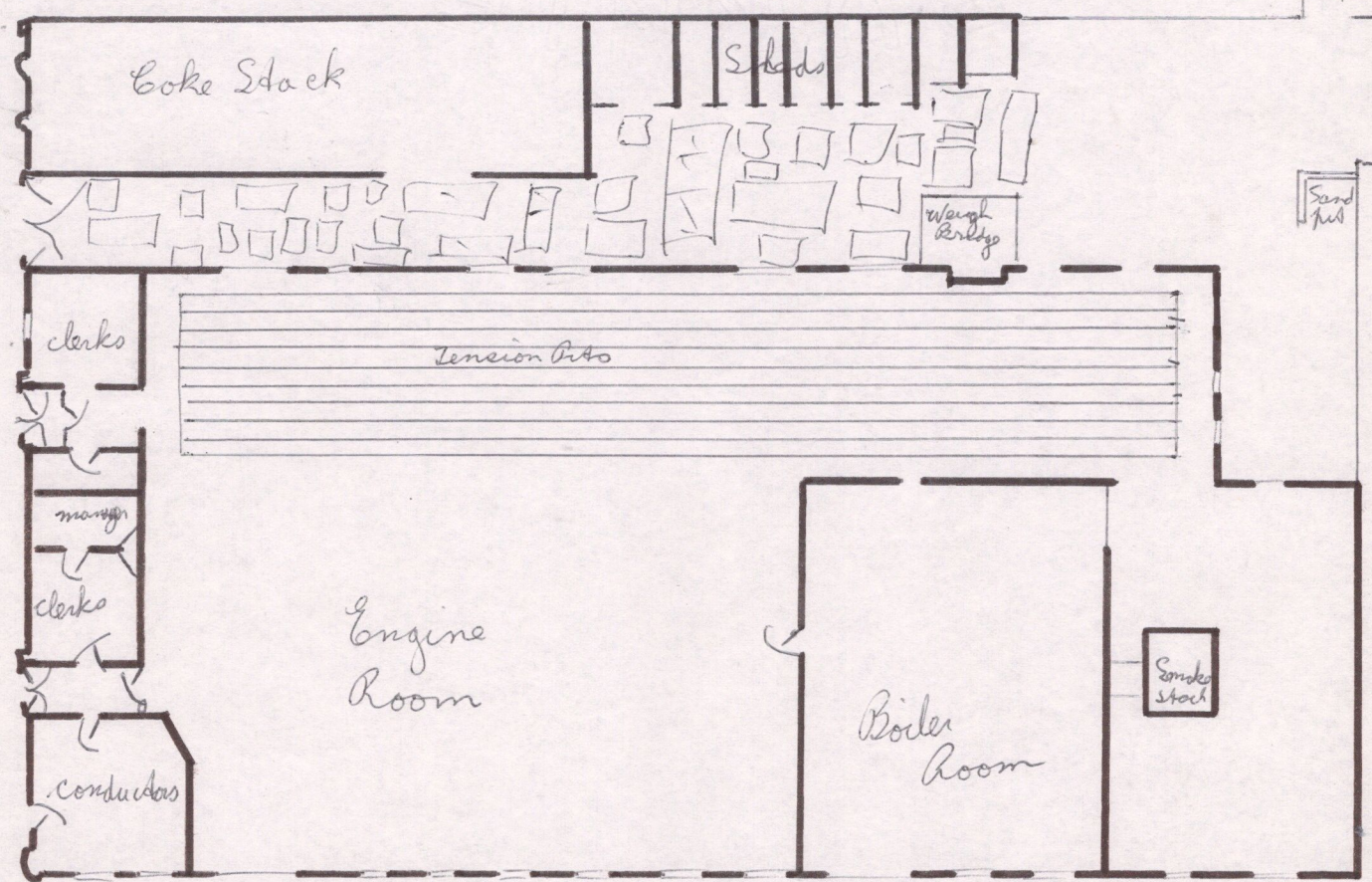
With the Engine House commencing operations of the 24th October 1888, and the Trust acquiring land in November 1887, it appears that the works would have commenced sometime around the latter six months of 1887. The Engine House alone was erected for a cost of £18,985.5.1, while the total cost (including machinery) was in the order of £50,389.2.7. Out of this, £1,493.18.9 was incurred in various expenses including legal and administrative.

Despite the usual alterations to the plant for increased rope speed to offset increased traffic, the Engine House operated smoothly for 38 years. Its closing date was the 1st October 1926. After the machinery was scrapped, the building was sold about twelve months later on the 25th November 1927 to the firm A.E. Darkingsmith. Today the building still stands, but at the same time has notably changed. Remnants of the Engine House architecture can be seen on the Chapel Street elevation, while from Toorak Road, it reveals a complete change.

Original plans showed only two tension pits, that is, the Engine House was to cater for only two ropes. A revised plan though made provision for the third rope which was incorporated when built.



TOORAK ROAD



CHAPEL STREET

TOORAK  
ENGINE  
HOUSE

BRUNSWICK RD

RAILWAY

PARK ST

LOT 46
LOT 45
LOT 44
LOT 43
LOT 42
LOT 41
LOT 40

DRUMMOND STREET

RATHDOWNE STREET

AMES STREET

MARY STREET

In continuing the policy of surging ahead with cable traction, for the northern system; some two months after the opening of Toorak another Engine House commenced services on 21st December 1888, in the North Carlton area. This was known as the North Carlton Engine House or alternatively, as the Rathdown Street Engine House due to its location at the corner of Rathdown and Perth Streets. With its frontage to Rathdown Street, it was the eighth Engine House to be opened under the control of the Melbourne Tramways Trust. In all, as shown by the site plan, eight vacant blocks were acquired by the Tramways but two only were utilized for the Engine House itself. These were lots 45 and 46 which were purchased by the Tramways Trust. However, on the previous day, the Melbourne Tramway and Omnibus Company had purchased the adjacent lots 43 and 44, for use as car barns. It is interesting to note that the date of purchase of these two blocks from a Mr. William Robert Bentley of Carlton, was 25th November 1887.

Lot 46 (before purchase by the Tramways) was owned by a Mr. William Maine Heard of Swanston Street, Melbourne. In May 1881, he had bought Lots 46 and 45 - the actual date being 6th May and 28th May respectively.

After perusal of the titles of this land (lots 45 and 46), a Mr. Thomas Allen Roache of East Melbourne appears to have purchased them on 20th November 1887 - the very same day on which this land was transferred and registered in the name of the Melbourne Tramway Trust, at a cost of £2,542.3.9.

As a note of interest, the Melbourne Tramway and Omnibus Company bought the three remaining lots Nos. 40, 41 and 42, from a Mr. William Heath, on 22nd June 1903, some 5 years later, but for what particular reason, I was unable to discover.

With the purchase of the land at the end of 1887 and the line opening at the end of 1888, the Engine House undoubtedly must have been erected in the interim. The 1889 directory supports this by being the first to register the Engine House. It is interesting to note that David Govan Junior (who had arrived in Australia in 1856) supplied the stone for this Engine House, from one or two quarries at Footscray, and that the cost of the actual building was £6,857.0.9. Obviously, it can be deduced that the Engine House was quite a small one - as it pulled only two cables. Minor reconstruction occurred when an electric plant was installed in 1918 and 1919. Apart from this the North Carlton Engine House operated quite satisfactorily until it was decided by the Melbourne and Metropolitan Tramway Board in 1936 to abandon it. Much earlier, in fact in 1924, the 'Age' dated 9th December 1924, quoted in an article the Chairman of the Melbourne and Metropolitan Tramway Board, Mr. Cameron, as having said, "this line (the Rathdown Street - north of Johnston Street) passed between tramlines in Lygon Street and Nicholson Street. The district did not warrant the running of three lines and the Rathdown Street line was thought to be the least necessary of the three".

Following this, one rope ceased operating, but the other continued its service until 1st August 1936, when after 48 years of service, it at last ceased running and the Engine House sold to E.M.F. Electric Co. Pty. Ltd., seventeen days later.

As seen in the photograph, its architecture remains unchanged.