

‘Bournedale’, Selkirk House and Garden **Statement of Significance, May 2023**

Heritage Place:	618 Howitt Street, Ballarat North	PS ref no:	HO227
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What is significant?

‘Bournedale’, the Selkirk house and garden, at 618 Howitt Street, Ballarat North, is significant including the following elements:

- An early or original attached double garage, which retains timber sliding doors, at the north-east corner of the house.
- The front porch which retains the original varnished finish on elements within the front porch including the front door and screen, pictorial windows and ceiling strapwork.

- The interwar-era garden including the front and east side garden layout, the former tennis court, the materials (concrete) and form of the curved driveway and straight entry pathway, the brick front fence and gates, and spacious lawns.
- The mature specimen trees (the Cedar, Cottonwood, Copper Beeches, Liquidambar, Chinese Windmill Palms and Pin Oak), and shrubs, including the Highclere Holly. The three Hedge Maples (*Acer campestre*), the mature privet hedge, and the mature eucalypts at the rear of the property (Table 1).

Later additions and alterations to the house, including the flat-roofed rear additions and the expansion of the attic storey (including new dormer windows, and leadlight glazing), and brick terraces, landscaping and brick fences in the rear garden are not significant.

Table 1: Significant vegetation.

REF NO (refer to image)	BOTANICAL NAME	COMMON NAME	FAMILY NAME
6	<i>Fagus sylvatica</i> 'Purpurea'	Copper Beech	Fagaceae
14	<i>Liquidambar styraciflua</i>	Liquidambar or American Sweet Gum	Altingiaceae
15	<i>Liquidambar styraciflua</i>	Liquidambar or American Sweet Gum	Altingiaceae
16	<i>Quercus palustris</i>	Pin Oak	Fagaceae
22	<i>Ligustrum ovalifolium</i> 'Aureum'	Golden Hedge Privet	Oleaceae
25	<i>Populus deltoides</i>	Cottonwood	Salicaceae
27	<i>Ilex x altaclarensis</i>	Highclere Holly	Aquifoliaceae
41	<i>Fuchsia</i> cv.	Fuchsia	Onagraceae
46	<i>Fagus sylvatica</i> 'Purpurea'	Copper Beech	Fagaceae
47	<i>Acer campestre</i>	Field or Hedge Maple	Aceraceae
51	<i>Trachycarpus fortunei</i>	Chinese Windmill (or Chusan) Palm	Arecaceae
52	<i>Trachycarpus fortunei</i>	Chinese Windmill (or Chusan) Palm	Arecaceae
53	<i>Acer campestre</i>	Field or Hedge Maple	Aceraceae
70	<i>Cedrus atlantica</i> Glauca Group	Blue Atlas Cedar	Pinaceae
78	<i>Acer campestre</i>	Field or Hedge Maple	Aceraceae
79	<i>Eucalyptus cladocalyx</i>	Sugar Gum	Myrtaceae
80	<i>Eucalyptus cladocalyx</i>	Sugar Gum	Myrtaceae
81	<i>Eucalyptus cladocalyx</i>	Sugar Gum	Myrtaceae

How is it significant?

'Bournedale' house and garden are of historical (associational), representative and aesthetic significance to the City of Ballarat.

Why is it significant?

'Bournedale' is significant for its association with James Selkirk and the Selkirk Brickworks. James' father, Robert Selkirk, began making bricks by hand in 1883 in Allendale, near Creswick. In 1900 he moved his Selkirk's Brick, Pipe and Tile Works to the Howitt Street site in Ballarat North. Selkirk Brickworks, known under various names over the decades, was a major local manufacturer with a private railway siding and a Hoffman kiln. By 1920, most of the substantial public and private buildings in Ballarat were constructed of Selkirk brick, and a large trade existed with Geelong, Horsham and other districts to the west of Ballarat. By 1925, the firm was despatching 15,000 tons of bricks annually by rail. James Selkirk joined his father at the brickworks in 1902, and inherited it after his father's death in the early 1920s, allowing the creation of 'Bournedale'. The proximity of 'Bournedale' to the Selkirk Brickworks demonstrates the traditional co-location of home and work, even in the case of wealthy businessowners, as was necessary before private car ownership became common. The fine brickwork can be considered a showpiece for the company's products, and the use of red face brick and hung terracotta tiles was likely influenced by James Selkirk as they not seen elsewhere the interwar oeuvre of the architects. (Criterion H)

The house is of aesthetic significance as a fine and intact Arts & Crafts attic-storey bungalow of substantial size and fine craftsmanship, materials and detailing, and original finishes. Externally, it retains the original varnished finish on elements within the front porch, including the front door and screen, pictorial windows and ceiling strapwork. The house shares some signature decorative details with other 1920s houses designed by PS Richards, Coburn & Richards, but is one of the most substantial houses of their oeuvre in Ballarat. Its presentation is enhanced by the retention of original and early elements of its setting, particularly the brick front fence and gates, and the attached garage. (Criterion E)

The house, and auxiliary structures (front fence and garage) are significant for their association with the important Ballarat architectural practice P.S. Richards, Coburn & Richards, which was in existence from 1922 to 1932. During this decade, the practice was responsible for a huge number of medium to substantial houses in Ballarat's suburbs, particularly the west side of the city in the Lake Wendouree area. 'Bournedale' is one of the most substantial residences designed by the practice. Practice founder, Percy S Richards worked in Ballarat from the early 1890s until 1946, and was the designer of many important public buildings in Ballarat and the Western District, as well as many substantial homes. Herbert Coburn was a renowned Ballarat architect, practising from 1905 to 1956. He is noted for the many Moderne style houses and civic buildings he designed in private practice in the 1930s through the 1950s. (Criterion H)

The large, interwar suburban garden is of representative significance as the setting for the intact interwar house. The significance of the garden is enhanced by its relationship with the original house and for its retention of its original extent and key aspects of its interwar layout, plantings including several mature large trees and complementary shrubs, and the elaborate brick front fence and gates which echo the materials of the house. (Criterion D)

The substantial extent of the garden, the elaborate front fence and the surviving footprint of the early tennis court are important as indicators that this was a garden (and house) belonging to a successful family, and owners of the long-standing brickworks next door (established as Ballarat North Brickworks in 1900 by Robert Selkirk junior). (Criterion H)

Primary Source

'Bournedale' the Selkirk House and Garden Heritage Citation (Landmark Heritage Pty Ltd, May 2023)