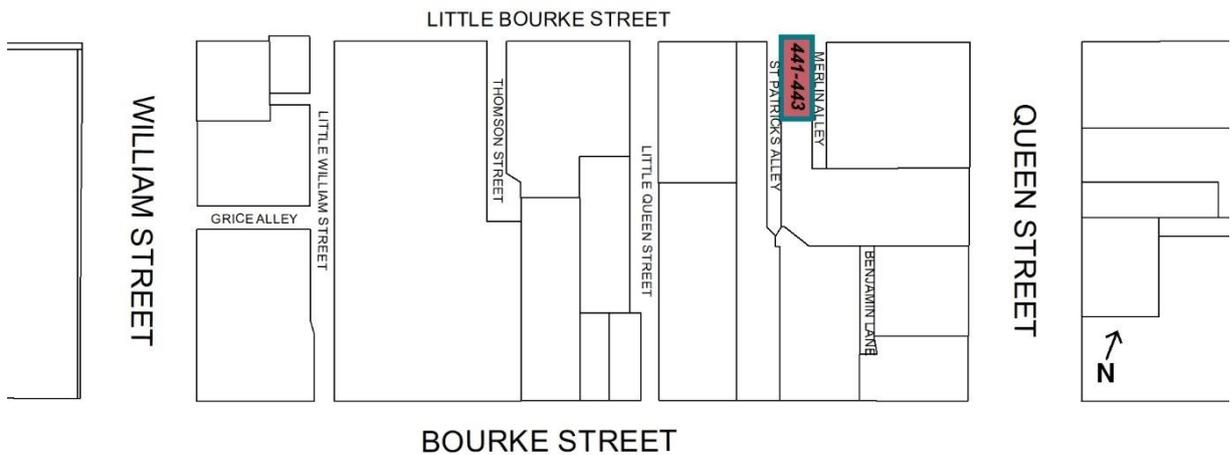


<b>SITE NAME</b>	Downs House
<b>STREET ADDRESS</b>	441-443 Little Bourke Street Melbourne
<b>PROPERTY ID</b>	105853



SURVEY DATE: October 2018		SURVEY BY: Context	
<b>HERITAGE INVENTORY</b>	N/A	<b>EXISTING HERITAGE OVERLAY</b>	No
<b>PLACE TYPE</b>	Individual Heritage Place	<b>PROPOSED CATEGORY</b>	Significant
<b>DESIGNER / ARCHITECT / ARTIST:</b>	Norman Hitchcock	<b>FORMER GRADE</b>	C
<b>DEVELOPMENT PERIOD:</b>	Victorian Period (1851-1901)	<b>BUILDER:</b>	Farnsworth
<b>DATE OF CREATION / MAJOR CONSTRUCTION:</b>			1884

**THEMES**

<b>ABORIGINAL THEMES</b>	<b>SUB-THEMES</b>
Research undertaken in preparing this citation did not indicate any associations with Aboriginal people or organisations.	Aboriginal Themes (Hoddle Grid Heritage Review, Volume 3 Aboriginal Heritage, March 2019) have therefore not been identified here.
<b>HISTORIC THEMES</b>	<b>DOMINANT SUB-THEMES</b>
5 Building a Commercial City	5.5 Building a manufacturing capacity

**LAND USE**

<b>HISTORIC LAND USE</b>	
<b>Archaeological block no:</b> 27	<b>Inventory no:</b> 433
<b>Character of Occupation:</b> Commercial	
Land sale details not provided.	
1866 Cox	Building on site.
1880 Panorama	
1888 Mahlstedt	Two-storey building, J M Anderson Coppersmith.
1905/06 Mahlstedt	Two-storey building, Victorian Printing Works.
<b>THEMATIC MAPPING AND LAND USE</b>	
1890s	Warehouses
1920s	Warehouses
1960s	Office

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

Recommended for inclusion in the Schedule to the Heritage Overlay of the Melbourne Planning Scheme as an Individual Heritage Place.

**Extent of overlay:** Refer to map

**SUMMARY**

Downs House at 441-443 Little Bourke Street, Melbourne was built in 1884 as a two-storey brick and stone warehouse to a design by architect Norman Hitchcock, for J M Anderson, coppersmith. It was associated with Melbourne's printing industry, including the Victorian Printing Works (1892-c1925), F W & F A Tucker, printers and lithographers (c1925-30s), and the Victorian Printing Works Pty Ltd (1935-37).

## HISTORICAL CONTEXT

### Building a commercial city

#### *Building a manufacturing capacity*

As economic historian Tony Dingle states, for much of its history Melbourne has been Australia's largest single centre of manufacturing. In the nineteenth century the industry was based on the processing of primary products produced in rural Victoria, often for export, and the making of products for local consumer demand. Dingle continues:

After the gold rushes of the 1850s increased Melbourne's population more than fourfold in a decade and a policy of import protection was implemented in the 1860s, manufacturing became the biggest sector of the Melbourne economy and the main source of employment. By 1871 more than 30 out of every hundred male and female wage-earners in Melbourne worked in manufacturing, by far the largest single category. By 1881 two-thirds of Victoria's 2500 factories were in Melbourne. On the eve of the depression of the 1890s a quarter of the Victorian manufacturing workforce was in the categories of metals, machinery and carriages, another 23% were in building materials and furniture, 19% in clothing and textiles, 15% in food, drink and tobacco, 9% in books, paper and printing, and 4% in leather products and tanning (Dingle 2008).

Manufacturing was relatively inefficient and labour-intensive, providing large numbers of jobs. The economic depression of the 1890s slowed production, but in the first decade of the twentieth century, economic growth resumed.

Although affected by World War One in the period 1914-1918, by 1921, 38 per cent of Melbourne's workers were employed in industry with almost all new factory jobs in Australia between 1921 and 1947 created in Sydney and Melbourne. The growth of manufacturing, assisted by a new federal tariff in 1921, stimulated urban growth and by the end of the 1920s, Melbourne's population had reached one million people. The expansion of new sectors in the manufacturing industry was maintained by buoyant levels of domestic demand (Marsden 2000:29; Dingle 2008).

In the first decades of the twentieth century, the demand for residential development declined in central Melbourne as many residents moved out of the city to the suburbs, and the booming retail and manufacturing sectors rapidly took up available city properties (Marsden 2000:29-30). Multi-storey factory, workshop and warehouse buildings, some designed by architects, increasingly took over the city.

Development in the city slowed with the Great Depression that commenced in October 1929 and continued through the early 1930s. Because of a lack of finance over this period, instead of new construction, some city buildings were substantially re-modelled to create new office, commercial and industrial spaces, and also for use by government.

From the 1930s, like the rest of Australia, an increasing proportion of the city's workforce took up jobs in manufacturing, an industry that led Australia's recovery from the economic depression and a time when, the *Encyclopedia of Melbourne* notes, a

*steep rise in tariffs, devaluation of the Australian pound, falling wages and electricity costs all made local producers far more competitive internationally. Textiles benefited first, then the metals industries and engineering took over as pacemakers* (Dingle 2008).

From the end of the World War Two to the beginning of the 1970s, Melbourne underwent the most sustained growth in its history, mostly based on the manufacturing industry (Tsutsumi and O'Connor:80.3-80.4, 80.11).

## SITE HISTORY

The subject land at 441-443 Little Bourke Street, Melbourne is part of Crown Allotment 8, Block 19, originally purchased by Henry Elmes (CoMMaps).

In 1884, a timber boarding house on the site was replaced by the current two-storey brick and stone warehouse. The new warehouse was constructed for J M Anderson, coppersmith, by Williamstown builder Farnsworth to a design by architect Norman Hitchcock (MCC registration no 853, as cited in AAI, record no 73248).

The land was owned by John Danks, who also owned two adjoining allotments on the east and south sides of the subject site (RB 1884-86). The property was advertised for sale in 1887 as a 'very substantial two-story brick store...with white ornamental brick facings on bluestone foundations' (*Age* 17 December 1887:16). J M Anderson's Australian Copper Works occupied the building in 1888 (Mahlstedt Map section 1, no 19, 1888).

Between 1889 and 1892, the building housed the Australian Ventilating Company, managed by H B Clarendon (*Age* 20 July 1889:5; S&Mc 1890). By c1892, the factory was occupied by Victorian Printing Works, printers, lithographers and stationers, who remained at the premises until c1925. Between c1925 and the mid-1930s, F W & F A Tucker, printers and lithographers, occupied the building (Mahlstedt Map section 1, no 16, 1923; S&Mc 1923-27, 1933). In 1935, the Victorian Printing Works reappeared as the tenant at 441-443 Little Bourke Street (S&Mc 1935). The firm had been registered as a company, Victorian Printing Works Pty Ltd, in 1934 by Frederick Augustus Goodson Tucker, Mary Green Tucker and Edwin Thompson Tucker (*Argus* 27 July 1934:6). Victorian Printing Works Pty Ltd moved to new purpose-built premises in Wills Street in 1937 (*Age* 28 December 1937:11)

Mahlstedt Fire Survey plans dated 1910 and 1925 show the early footprint of the building consisting of single- and two-storey structures. The building was accessed from Little Bourke Street, with a staircase leading to the first floor. A carriageway was also located on the west. The south (rear) section was a single-storey building with three entries from St Patricks Alley (see Figure 1).

The building was listed as vacant in 1938, around the time when it was acquired by the merchant John William Cavanagh Downs and named 'Downs House' (S&Mc 1938). J W C Downs, was director of the Downs & Son Pty Ltd, rope and twine manufacturers, Preston Motors Pty Ltd, Jarke Pty Ltd, sporting goods merchants, and an advisory director of the National Assurance Co of New Zealand Ltd. He died in 1944 aged 77, and was also:

*Past president of the Royal Society of St Georges, chairman of the Empire day movement, under the Lord Mayor; vice-president Royal Victorian Leidertafel, life governor Royal Melbourne Hospital, and a council and executive member of the Overseas League...past-president of Brunswick Technical School and honorary secretary of the Brunswick Park recreation reserve committee for 25 years...a past-grand master of the Independent Order of Oddfellows; a past-master of the Freemasons' Thistle Lodge, and was one of the oldest members of the Royal Automobile Club of Victoria (Age 24 June 1944:3).*

During the 1940s and 1950s, the building housed various manufacturers including firms owned by J W C Downs: Downs & Son Pty Ltd, and Jarke Pty Ltd; H Sutcliffe & Co, textile mercers; and Longwear Boot & Shoe Lace Co, shoe lace manufacturers (S&Mc 1940, 1945, 1950, 1955, 1960).

In 1950, 441-443 Little Bourke Street, described as a 'substantial two-storey brick building suitable [for] offices or warehouse' was sold for £16,250. It was auctioned again in 1959 (*Age* 5 July 1950:6; 19 August 1959:19).

In December 1959, an application to make alterations to the value of £2,000 was lodged with the City of Melbourne (MBAI 32824). The 1948 Mahlstedt Fire Survey plan (amended post-1948), shows alterations to the internal spaces. The construction of a second storey over the southern section may have also occurred at this time. As the result of these alterations, the side entries to the single-storey section were blocked, but the carriage way was retained (see Figure 2).

In 1979, another major alteration to the building was made at a cost of \$55,000 (MBAI 49994). The sixth version of the 1948 Mahlstedt Fire Survey plan shows the changes made to the building, which included alterations to the internal party walls, the installation of a new entrance from St Patricks Alley, and the in-fill of a window facing Merlin Alley (see Figure 3).

In 1989, an 'alteration and addition to existing restaurant' was made to the building at the cost of \$100,000 (MBAI 67273).

Currently the building houses one business and one food and drink outlet (CoMMaps).

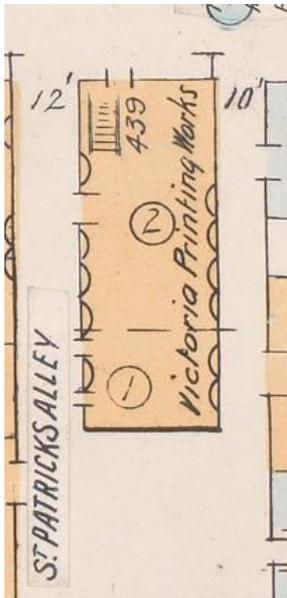


Figure 1. Extract of a 1910 Mahlstedt plan showing the subject building. (Source: Mahlstedt Map section 1, no 16, 1925)

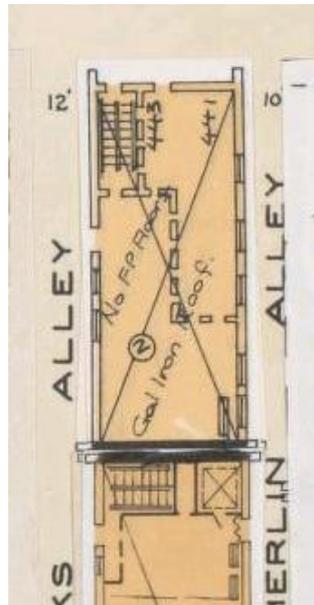


Figure 2. Extract of a 1948 Mahlstedt plan (version 1) showing the building after the first major alterations. (Source: Mahlstedt Map section 1, no 16, 1948)

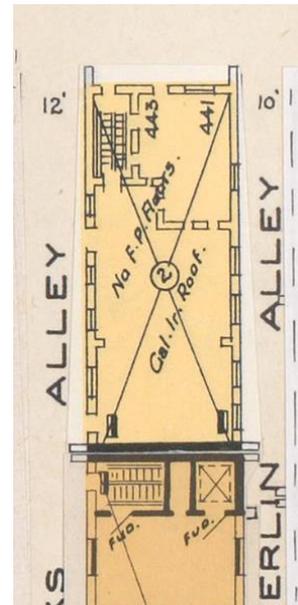


Figure 3. Extract of a 1948 Mahlstedt plan (version 6) showing the building after further alterations, possibly made in 1979. (Source: Mahlstedt Map section 1, no 16, 1948)

#### *Norman Hitchcock, architect*

Arriving in Australia in November 1854, Norman Hitchcock served articles with G M Mathieson at Portland, Victoria. Hitchcock moved to Melbourne to be involved with a building company before

commencing his own practice as a builder-carpenter in 1859. During the late nineteenth century, his practice mainly focused on terrace housing in northern inner suburbs, where his offices were established (Taylor 2014).

Hitchcock established a reputation in Melbourne with his distinctive use of decorative details for speculative terrace housing in the suburbs of Fitzroy, Carlton and Parkville (Taylor 2014). His notable works during this time includes the Melbournia Terrace, 1-13 Drummond Street, Carlton (1877) and terrace houses at 198-204 Faraday Street, Carlton (1886).

When the housing market in Melbourne collapsed in the early 1890s, Hitchcock extended his service and travelled weekly to Yea, 98 kilometres north-east of Melbourne (Taylor 2014).

By 1895, Hitchcock fled the economic depression in Victoria for gold-boom Western Australia, following his colleague Olaff Nichol Nicholson. Hitchcock established his practice at Fremantle, and continued the practice as Hitchcock & Son with his son Alfred. Hitchcock died in 1918 in Perth (Taylor 2014).

## SITE DESCRIPTION

Downs House at 441-443 Little Bourke Street, Melbourne is a Victorian-era two-storey commercial building or warehouse constructed in 1884. Located on the southern side of Little Bourke Street between Queen and William streets, it is on an 'island' site with a laneway on each side; Merlin Alley to the east and St Patricks Alley to the west. The land slopes steeply from west to east.

The Little Bourke Street façade is of painted render over loadbearing brickwork, scribed to resemble stone coursing. While utilitarian in its nature, the architectural features of the façade are representative of a very restrained and late version of the Victorian Free Classical style. Typical elements of the style include the scribed render, a substantial pediment and expressed cornices, segmental arched openings (not utilised in this utilitarian building) and pilasters with simplified capitals, all of which derived from classical architecture.

The principal façade facing Little Bourke Street is divided into three equal vertical bays by four expressed pilasters, which terminate in a simple cornice and parapet with a central raised pediment. There is also a cornice at first floor level. At the upper level, there are three windows with (probably original) timber double-hung windows. The ground floor has two separate openings. The pilaster on the left-hand side is terminated above the wider shopfront opening. This opening is not shown on the 1948 Mahlstedt plan suggesting that this is a more recent intervention to the building. The narrower, arched opening to the western end of the façade appears to be original and provides access to the upper floor via an internal stair. Viewed from the street level, the ground floor is elevated a few steps from the Little Bourke Street entrance, to allow for the at grade entry from St Patricks Alley.

The side elevations along Merlin Alley and St Patricks Alley are of painted load bearing brickwork over a rusticated bluestone base. On the western elevation, the original or early openings are mostly retained, including a wide full height opening at each level that were probably for loading goods and materials, now infilled with multi-pane glazing. The other windows are typical vertically proportioned timber framed windows with flat arches and projecting sills, with six-pane double hung sashes. The windows on the eastern elevation are a mixture of original six-pane double hung sashes and later timber and steel windows, and three of the window openings have been infilled with brickwork.

To the rear (south) of the building, a second level addition made between 1925 and 1948 is distinguishable from the original section, having later industrial windows with brick sills.

## **INTEGRITY**

Downs House at 441-443 Little Bourke Street, Melbourne is largely intact with few changes visible to the original or early fabric. The building retains its original scale; painted render principle façade with pilasters, cornices and pediment to Little Bourke Street. It substantially retains its original fenestration, pattern of openings and timber frame windows. Alterations on the ground floor of the Little Bourke Street façade, including the insertion of a widened contemporary shopfront, has resulted in the termination of the pilaster above. Overall, the building is of high integrity.

## **COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS**

The construction of warehouses and industrial buildings was an important phase of development in central Melbourne, especially during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The buildings were usually low scale and located in minor streets and laneways with side or rear lane access to facilitate the movement of material in and out of the building. Today most of these early factory or warehouse buildings are no longer operating as such, and have often been adapted to house professional offices or other commercial functions.

The brick warehouses constructed around the late nineteenth century are generally of a simple utilitarian character with minimal decorative detail, utilising loadbearing face brick external walls with either a heavy timber or iron post and beam internal structure.

The following examples are comparable with 441-443 Little Bourke Street, Melbourne, being of a similar style, scale, construction date and use. The images and descriptions are provided by CoM Maps unless stated otherwise, with images dating from c2000 or later.

*582-584 Little Collins Street, 1873 (Interim HO1279 – Recommended as significant in the Hoddle Grid Heritage Review)*

A two-storey commercial building erected in 1873 by businessman, colonial magistrate and St Kilda councillor William Welshman. Designed by prominent architects Crouch and Wilson, the building retains much of the high-quality detailing to its front façade.



Figure 4. 582-584 Little Collins Street, built in 1873.

*212 Little Bourke Street, 1883 (HO695, Significant in HO507 Little Bourke Street Precinct)*

Two-storey brick building on of a row of three, built 1883.



Figure 5. 212 Little Bourke Street, built in 1883.

*Currie and Richards Building, 79-81 Franklin Street, 1875 (HO654)*

Three storey brick former factory. Designed in the Italianate manner and built by Martin & Peacock in 1875. Refurbished, subdivided and converted to offices with ground level parking in 1983. Further subdivided into upper level apartments in 1993.



Figure 6. 79-81 Franklin Street, built in 1875.

*380 Elizabeth Street, c1850s, façade 1888 (HO1020)*

A two-storey rendered brick shop and residence. Built in the mid 1850's substantial changes were made in its first 50 years. Initially a simple store and residence it was extended and converted into a hotel by the early 1870's. Originally known as the Prince of Wales it was further extended in 1888 and renamed the Federal Club. The resultant new facade is still in evidence today.



Figure 7. 380 Elizabeth Street, built c1850s, façade 1888

*525 Little Lonsdale Street, 1901 (HO1062)*

Two co-joined former warehouses. Fronting Little Lonsdale Street is a red brick building designed in the Queen Anne style by Thomas Dall and built by Thomas McLean for Frederick Tate in 1901. To the rear is a single storey bluestone building built by Amess & McLaren for Charles Cleve as part of bond store complex around 1855. Refurbished and converted to restaurant in 1988.



Figure 8. 525 Little Lonsdale Street, built in 1901.

*359-363 Lonsdale Street, 1873 (Recommended as significant in the Hoddle Grid Heritage Review)*

A pair of mid Victorian two-storey shops and offices constructed in 1872. The building utilises loadbearing face brick external walls with painted render to the principal façade, and exhibits Victorian Free Classical or Italianate style reflecting the Victorian taste for ornamentation derived from classical architecture.



Figure 9. 359-363 Lonsdale Street, built in 1873.

Except for the alterations to the ground floor, the subject building retains its original Victorian-period details such as rendered parapet and window joineries, and compares well with the above examples on the City of Melbourne's Heritage Overlay, in terms of the use, scale and the restrained use of classical motifs.

441-443 Little Bourke Street is a largely intact example of a modest late nineteenth century warehouse/factory building, utilitarian and functional yet refined in its design, of which there are several surviving examples within central Melbourne (often adapted to house new uses such as professional offices).

It is comparable with a number of other HO listed examples of the type, including 212 Little Bourke Street (HO695, HO507 Little Bourke Street Precinct) and 380 Elizabeth Street (HO1020), being of a similar scale and degree of intactness. These buildings, while utilitarian in their purpose, all exhibit a restrained Victorian Free Classical style reflecting the Victorian taste for ornamentation derived from classical architecture that was common even for small scale buildings of the period. It is also comparable to 359-363 Lonsdale Street which is recommended for HO in the Hoddle Grid Heritage Review.

**ASSESSMENT AGAINST CRITERIA**

✓	<p><b>CRITERION A</b> Importance to the course or pattern of our cultural or natural history (historical significance).</p>
	<p><b>CRITERION B</b> Possession of uncommon rare or endangered aspects of our cultural or natural history (rarity).</p>
	<p><b>CRITERION C</b> Potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of our cultural or natural history (research potential).</p>
✓	<p><b>CRITERION D</b> Importance in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of cultural or natural places or environments (representativeness).</p>
	<p><b>CRITERION E</b> Importance of exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics (aesthetic significance).</p>
	<p><b>CRITERION F</b> Importance in demonstrating a high degree of creative or technical achievement at a particular period (technical significance)</p>
	<p><b>CRITERION G</b> Strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group for social, cultural or spiritual reasons. This includes the significance of a place to Indigenous peoples as part of their continuing and developing cultural traditions (social significance).</p>
	<p><b>CRITERION H</b> Special association with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in our history (associative significance).</p>

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

Recommended for inclusion in the Schedule to the Heritage Overlay of the Melbourne Planning Scheme as an Individual Heritage Place.

Recommendations for the Schedule to the Heritage Overlay (Clause 43.01) in the Melbourne Planning Scheme:

**MELBOURNE PLANNING SCHEME**

EXTERNAL PAINT CONTROLS	No
INTERNAL ALTERATION CONTROLS	No
TREE CONTROLS	No
OUTBUILDINGS OR FENCES (Which are not exempt under Clause 43.01-3)	No
TO BE INCLUDED ON THE VICTORIAN HERITAGE REGISTER	No
PROHIBITED USES MAY BE PERMITTED	No
ABORIGINAL HERITAGE PLACE	No

**OTHER**

N/A

## REFERENCES

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*Argus*, as cited.

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**PREVIOUS STUDIES**

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**Central Activities District  
Conservation Study 1985**

D

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**Central City Heritage  
Study 1993**

C

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**Review of Heritage  
overlay listings in the  
CBD 2002**

Ungraded

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**Central City Heritage  
Review 2011**

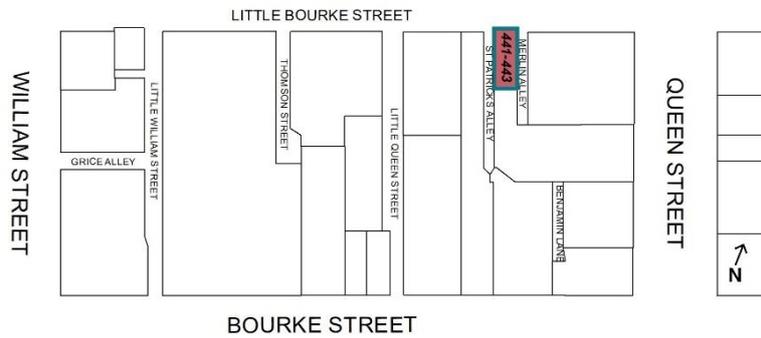
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**STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE**

**Heritage Place:** Downs House

**PS ref no:** HOXXXX



**What is significant?**

Downs House at 441-443 Little Bourke Street, Melbourne, built in 1884 to a design by architect Norman Hitchcock.

Elements that contribute to the significance of the place include (but are not limited to):

- The original building form and scale;
- The original painted render and face brick walls and pattern of fenestration including pilasters, cornice, cornices and pediment and pattern of window openings; and
- Original timber frame multi pane windows.

Later alterations made to the street level façade, such as the insertion of a wider shopfront, are not significant.

**How it is significant?**

Downs House at 441-443 Little Bourke Street, Melbourne, is of local historic and representative significance to the City of Melbourne.

**Why it is significant?**

The two-storey warehouse building at 441-443 Little Bourke Street, designed by architect Norman Hitchcock and built in 1884 for coppersmith J M Anderson, is historically significant as an early example of a factory building in Melbourne. Manufacturing firms occupied the building from the 1880s through to the late 1950s, evidencing the rise of manufacturing in the city in the 1880s and the boom years of the 1920s when manufacturing led the recovery from the economic depression of the late 1920s to the early 1930s. (Criterion A)

The building is historically significant for its association with printing firms that occupied the premises from 1892 to the late 1930s: the Victorian Printing Works from 1892 to c1925; F W & F A Tucker, printers and lithographers, from c1925 to the mid-1930s, and the Victorian Printing Works Pty Ltd again in 1935 to 1937. It provides important evidence of the long-term industry concentration in this part of the city which, by the interwar period, saw many printing and linotype companies established in the northwest part of the city. (Criterion A)

Downs House at 441-443 Little Bourke Street is significant as a largely intact example of a late Victorian warehouse/factory building constructed in 1884 as a component of Victorian-era industrial expansion in central Melbourne before the economic depression of the 1890s slowed manufacturing development. The building is an example of the many low scale warehouse/factory buildings of a simple utilitarian character constructed in central Melbourne, and commonly located in minor streets and laneways with rear or side lane access to facilitate the movement of goods and materials in and out of the building. Designed by architect Norman Hitchcock, Downs House exhibits key characteristics of its type, which are generally low scale using simple construction of loadbearing painted render and/or face brick walls with a heavy timber or iron post and beam internal structure., These buildings demonstrate a refined yet highly functional aesthetic with their symmetrical façades with simple pilasters, cornices and parapets and a regular pattern of windows. The lack of superfluous decoration reinforces this simple and disciplined industrial aesthetic. (Criterion D)

**Primary source**

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Hoddle Grid Heritage Review (Context & GJM Heritage, 2020)