



St Kilda's Historic Mansions Photographs by Donald McDonald

Curated by Peter Johnson



Corvey 1872
79 Brighton Road, Elwood
Donald McDonald (Photographer)
Port Phillip City Collection sk0456



Peter Johnson

Peter has been a resident and practicing architect in St Kilda for over 32 years. He comes from a long line of architects, engineers and builders going back at least 5 generations with various branches of his family having lived in the South Melbourne and St Kilda area since 1859.

Peter has researched and written on a range of architectural and local history subjects and has contributed to the *Australian Dictionary of Biography* and the *Encyclopedia of Australian Architecture*.

Peter has also served on many professional, municipal and community committees including the City of Port Phillip's Cultural Heritage Reference Group and the St Kilda Historical Society of which he was president of from 2009 to 2015.

St Kilda's Historic Mansions: Photographs by Donald McDonald
Curated by Peter Johnson, 2018

Port Phillip Heritage Centre 2018 ©Peter Johnson and the Port Phillip City Collection





Introduction

This is an important collection of photographs created by Donald McDonald (c.1830-1880)¹ illustrating some of the best St Kilda houses built during the period from 1850 until 1872 and highlighting the growing prosperity of the colony of Victoria.

The large influx of new money arriving with the wealthy middle-class immigrants from around the world, coupled with wealth creation caused by the gold rush and later by the pastoral boom, led to a growing demand for new housing stock and household goods. This expanded economic activity led to increased prosperity for the citizens of Melbourne and particularly benefited the growing middle classes.

This was a period of great architectural and social change. The gothic style that had been popular since the 1840's was largely abandoned. This was replaced for a short while by the new Lombardic style, using polychromatic brickwork, and then by the all-conquering Italianate style. These new houses incorporated a vast range of new products created by the technological and industrial innovations that were occurring in Britain, Europe and North America at the time.

Each owner most probably commissioned these images separately. We know that 12 were part of a set of 17 St Kilda images sent to London and Vienna for the International Exhibitions of 1873.²

Donald McDonald was an important Melbourne photographer specialising in landscape and architectural subjects. From 1867-1880 his studios were in various locations in High Street, St Kilda.³ McDonald exhibited his works regularly. A photographic *Album of Australian Moths and Butterflies* was also included in the Victorian Exhibition at The London International Exhibition of 1873.⁴

This set of 15 images is part of larger collection of McDonald images held by the City of Port Phillip and the State Library of Victoria. Most of the remaining images have been excluded because, due to municipal boundary changes that occurred in February 1876, they subsequently fell outside the area controlled by the St Kilda Council.

Peter Johnson, 2018

References:

Michael Cannon, *Life in the Cities*, Thomas Nelson (Australia) Ltd, Melbourne 1975, pp71-75.
Graeme Davison, *The Rise and Fall of Marvellous Melbourne*, MUP paperback, 1988, pp6-9

¹ *Leader Newspaper* (Melbourne), Sat 31 Jul 1880, p7

² State Library of Victoria, provenance record, accession no. H87.91/1-50

³ *Sands & McDougall Postal Directories*.

⁴ The London International Exhibition of 1873, *The Victorian Exhibition official catalogue of Exhibits*, <http://handle.slv.vic.gov.au/10381/167586>



Charnwood House 1872
Charnwood Grove, St Kilda
Donald McDonald (Photographer)
Port Phillip City Collection sk0447

Charnwood House was built as a residence for Octavius Browne (d.1876), importer & land speculator, in 1851.¹ It was designed by the local St Kilda resident and architect Samuel Jackson (1807-1876) in the Renaissance Revival style and stood in 13 acres of grounds on one of the highest positions in St Kilda at the corner of High Street and Alma Road.

In April 1854 Matthew Hervey MLC, pastoralist purchased the property for £30,000.² After heavy losses in speculative ventures Hervey's lenders forced him to sell the land fronting High Street and Alma Road from 1866 onwards. For a short time in 1867 it became the governor's residence for John Manners-Sutton while *Toorak House* was undergoing renovations.³

David Moore (1824-1898) MLA, merchant, company director and politician owned *Charnwood* at the time this photo was taken.⁴

The grounds were sold off over time and the house demolished in 1963.⁵

¹ Tender Notice, *Melbourne Herald*, 22 May 1851 p2

² Commercial Intelligence, *The Argus Newspaper*, 6 Apr 1854 p4

³ *Geelong Advertiser*, 20 Sep 1867 p3

⁴ Description on mount, State Library of Victoria image no. H87.91/10

⁵ John T Collins, photographs of demolition 1 Jan 1963, SLV image no. H98.251/11-15



Yanakie 1872
161 Alma Road, St Kilda East
Donald McDonald (Photographer)
Port Phillip City Collection sk0442

Yanakie was built as a residence for William Wilmot Couche (1829-1890) probably in 1869.¹ The architect was Lloyd Tayler (1830-1900) and it was designed in the polychromatic Lombardic style that had been introduced to Melbourne by the architect Joseph Reed (1822-1890). See also *Euro-Reko* at 29 Burnett Street.

Couche was a prominent merchant and businessman. He founded the firm Couche Calder & Co, was director of several insurance companies and a member of the Melbourne Harbour Trust for many years².

From about 1900 the house was renamed *Wavenhoe*. In the 1920s Wavenhoe Avenue was constructed through its gardens and most of the land sold off including the blocks at the corner of Hotham Street and Alma Road. The house still stands at 161 Alma Road.

¹ Likely tender notice, *The Argus Newspaper*, 19 Jun 1869, p3

² Obituary, *The Argus Newspaper*, 7 Jul 1890, p5



Ascog 1872
2-10 Southey Street, Elwood
Donald McDonald (Photographer)
Port Phillip City Collection sk446

Ascog was built as the residence for William Kaye (c.1820-1893) in c.1865 and designed in the Italianate style, replacing an earlier 1853 portable iron house by William Hutchinson & Son.¹ The architect is unknown. It stood in grounds of about 15 acres.

William Kaye was the senior partner in Kaye & Butchart, stock and station agency. He was MLC for Eastern Province 1856-7, a member of the provisional committee of the Melbourne Mount Alexander and Murray River Railway Company² and president of the Melbourne & Hobson's Bay Railway Company.³ He also acquired extensive pastoral properties in Victoria and NSW.

Gavan Gibson (c.1823-1888), footwear importer, purchased the house on reduced grounds of 6 acres in 1868. He named the house *Ascog* probably after the village on the Isle of Bute in Scotland.

In 1907 Ascog Street was formed and the gardens subdivided⁴. From about this time *Ascog* became a guesthouse. It was demolished in 1939⁵.

¹ State Library of Victoria image no. H42137

² Public Notices, *The Argus Newspaper*, 30 Aug 1852, p7

³ Parliament of Victoria, <https://www.parliament.vic.gov.au/about/people-in-parliament/re-member/details/24/727>, accessed 29 Jan 2018

⁴ Great sub divisional sale, *The Age Newspaper*, 26 Jun 1907, p2

⁵ St Kilda landmark demolished, *The Argus Newspaper*, 19 Jan 1939, 8



Evora 1872
18 Milton Street, Elwood
Donald McDonald (Photographer)
Port Phillip City Collection sk0448

Evora was built as a residence for Francis Grey Smith (1827-1900) in 1865. It was designed in the Italianate style by the architects Crouch & Wilson¹ and stood in grounds of 3 acres on the northeast corner of Milton & Tennyson Streets.

Smith was at various times manager of the Bank of Australasia, chief manager of the National Bank of Australasia, lay canon and treasurer at St Paul's Cathedral, president of the Melbourne Club and Melbourne Cricket Club (1886-1900).² A grandstand at the MCG was named after him.³

Smith's executors sold the property in 1908 by which time the house had been renamed *Craigmoore*⁴. It was demolished in about 1980.

¹ Tender Notice, *The Argus Newspaper*, 30 Jun 1865, p3

² Paul de Serville, *Pounds and Pedigrees: the upper class in Victoria 1850-80*, Oxford, 1991, p338

³ Keith Dunstan, *The paddock that grew*, Hutchinson, 1988, pp59-60

⁴ Auction Notice, *The Argus Newspaper*, 8 Feb 1908, p3



Herford 1872
203-211 Alma Road, St Kilda East
Donald McDonald (Photographer)
Port Phillip City Collection sk0453

Herford was built as a residence for Frederick Christian Lange (1832-1888) and family in 1870¹. The architect Lloyd Tayler (1830-1900) designed it in the Italianate style. Over time adjoining allotments were purchased until the gardens covered nearly 15 acres.

It was probably named *Herford* after the village in North Rhine-Westphalia district in Germany. Lange probably had some family connection with this locality².

Lange was in partnership with Emil Thoneman trading under the name of Lange & Thoneman [see Thoneman's house *Corvey*]. They were merchants and general importers. Lange was also one of the local Australasian directors for the Swiss Lloyd Marine Insurance Company.³

William Officer (1835-1913) pastoralist, bought the property from Lange in 1888 for £23,500.⁴ Following Officer's death, the grounds were subdivided in 1914⁵. The house was finally demolished in 1940⁶.

References:

Album of photographs of Herford and its gardens [attrib. Nicholas J. Caire], Royal Historical Society of Victoria, AL062

¹ Tender Notice, *The Argus Newspaper*, 20.10.1870 p3

² Herford, <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Herford>, accessed 28.1.2018

³ Advertisement, *The Argus Newspaper*, 27.10.1875 p1

⁴ Commercial Intelligence, *The Argus Newspaper*, 23.3.1888 p10

⁵ 60 allotments for sale, *The Argus Newspaper*, 12.9.1914 p8

⁶ Demolition sale, *The Argus Newspaper*, 1940.7.13 p12



Westphalia Villa 1872
182-190 Alma Road, St Kilda East
Donald McDonald (Photographer)
Port Phillip City Collection sk0441

This large single-storey villa was built for William Alexander Brahe (1825-1917) in 1870 and designed by Leonard Terry (1825-1884), architect¹. Brahe was a solicitor and founder of the Melbourne legal practice now known as Garland Hawthorn Brahe. He also acted as the Prussian Consul until 1871, then Imperial German Consul until c.1900.

The house stood on grounds of 8 acres at 182-190 Alma Road. It had an “elegant drawing room with bay window, spacious dining room, magnificent ballroom 24’ x 36’, library and three large bedrooms...”².

Brahe sold the house on six acres in March 1876 for £5,000³ moving to St James Park, Hawthorn. Sir Archibald Michie (1813-1899) barrister and politician, purchased the property soon after and lived there until his death. He renamed the house *Treceare*.

The land fronting Alma Road was sold early in the 20th century. The house then took the address 24 Lansdowne Road and was finally demolished for a block of flats in 1970s.

¹ Tender notice, *The Argus Newspaper*, 20 Dec 1869, p3

² Sale description, *The Argus Newspaper*, 19 Feb 1876, p12

³ Property Sales, *The Argus Newspaper*, 22 Mar 1876, p3S



Rondobosch

25 Chapel Street, St Kilda East
Donald McDonald (Photographer)
Port Phillip City Collection sk0443

Rondobosch was built as a residence for Israel Bloomington (c.1825-1878) in 1868 on land subdivided from John Foxton's property *Cintra* next door. The designers were Thomas Crouch (1833-1889) and Ralph Wilson (1827-1886), of Crouch & Wilson architects, both prominent St Kilda residents and designers of many St Kilda mansions.¹ It was designed in the Renaissance Revival style.

Bloomington was a wealthy boot and shoe importer, and founding member and treasurer of the St Kilda Hebrew Congregation².

The property is now part of the St Michael's Grammar School campus.

¹ Tender Notice, *The Argus Newspaper*, Sat 18 Jul 1868, p7

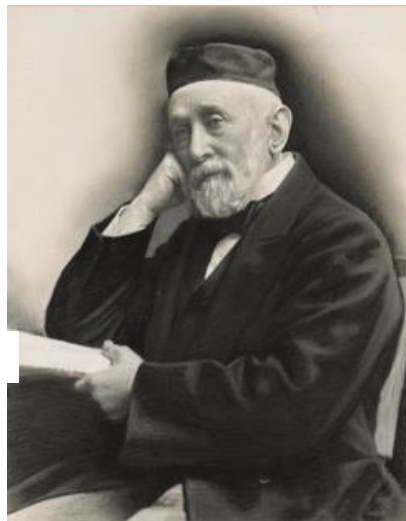
² Laying foundation stone for first St Kilda Synagogue, *The Argus*, Tue 2 Jul 1872, p6



Linden 1872
26 Acland Street, St Kilda
Donald McDonald (Photographer)
Port Phillip City Collection sk0444



H2010.73/33
State Library of Victoria



Mortiz Michaelis 1901
H29636
State Library of Victoria

Linden was built for Moritz Michaelis (1820–1902) in 1870¹ and designed by the architect Alfred Frederick Kursteiner (c.1829-1897) in the Italianate style. The land, which had previously been owned by William Hoffmann, stretched down to and along Robe Street measuring 199 x 196 feet on which William Guilfoyle (1840-1912), celebrated botanist and landscape designer, laid out a magnificent garden².

Mortiz Michaelis was German born and co-founder of the firm Michaelis, Hallenstein & Co tanners of Footscray. He was a prominent member of the Melbourne Jewish community and founding member of the St Kilda Hebrew Congregation in 1871.

The Michaelis family continued to occupy the house until it was sold in 1956/57³. The land was subdivided for flats in the 1960s. It was used as a guesthouse until the City of St Kilda purchased the property in 1983, converting it to its present use as a community art gallery.

References:

Victorian Heritage Database, <http://vhd.heritagecouncil.vic.gov.au/places/1089>

J. Ann Hone, 'Michaelis, Moritz (1820–1902)', Australian Dictionary of Biography, National Centre of Biography, Australian National University

¹ Tender Notice, *The Argus Newspaper*, Mon 16 May 1870, p3

² Auction this day, *The Argus Newspaper*, Fri 1 Dec 1865, p2

³ St Kilda mansion to be sold, *The Argus Newspaper*, Tue 18 Sep 1956, p1



Inverleith

12 Acland Street, St Kilda
Donald McDonald (Photographer)
Port Phillip City Collection sk0449

Inverleith was built as the residence of John F. McMullen, general manager of the Union Bank in about 1866¹. The architect is unknown. The house was designed in the Renaissance Revival style and stood on a site of three acres.

Thomas James Nankivell (c.1819-1899) merchant may have leased the house from McMullin about the time this image was taken.²

Harvey Patterson (1848-1931) purchased the property in 1887³ and added an unusual ballroom designed in the Mughal Revival style by William Pitt (1855-1918) architect.⁴

Patterson sold the house in 1913.⁵ Most of its land was subdivided off by the 1920s and the house demolished in 1960s.

¹ Adjoining the Beautiful Garden of McMullin Esq, *The Argus Newspaper*, 25 Mar 1867, p2

² Miles Lewis, *Melbourne Mansions Database*, record no. 2166

³ Auction notice; *The Telegraph, St Kilda, Prahran and South Yarra Guardian*, 8 Oct 1887, p4

⁴ Tender Notice, *The Argus Newspaper*, 10 Aug 1888, p3

⁵ Auction notice, *The Argus Newspaper*, 30 Jul 1913, p2



Herford 1872
203-211 Alma Road, St Kilda East
Donald McDonald (Photographer)
Port Phillip City Collection sk0453

Herford was built as a residence for Frederick Christian Lange (1832-1888) and family in 1870¹. The architect Lloyd Tayler (1830-1900) designed it in the Italianate style. Over time adjoining allotments were purchased until the gardens covered nearly 15 acres.

It was probably named *Herford* after the village in North Rhine-Westphalia district in Germany. Lange probably had some family connection with this locality².

Lange was in partnership with Emil Thoneman trading under the name of Lange & Thoneman [see Thoneman's house *Corvey*]. They were merchants and general importers. Lange was also one of the local Australasian directors for the Swiss Lloyd Marine Insurance Company.³

William Officer (1835-1913) pastoralist, bought the property from Lange in 1888 for £23,500.⁴ Following Officer's death, the grounds were subdivided in 1914⁵. The house was finally demolished in 1940⁶.

Reference:

Album of photographs of Herford and its gardens [attrib. Nicholas J. Caire], Royal Historical Society of Victoria, AL062

¹ Tender Notice, *The Argus Newspaper*, 20.10.1870 p3

² Herford, <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Herford>, accessed 28.1.2018

³ Advertisement, *The Argus Newspaper*, 27.10.1875 p1

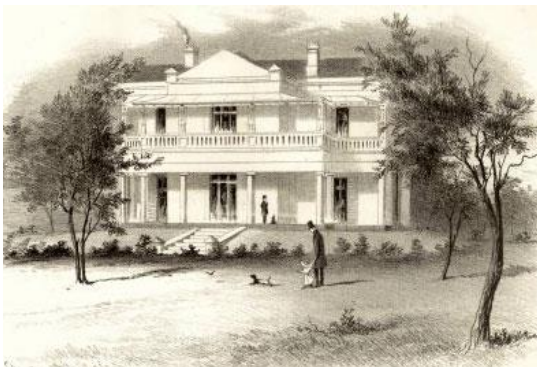
⁴ Commercial Intelligence, *The Argus Newspaper*, 23.3.1888 p10

⁵ 60 allotments for sale, *The Argus Newspaper*, 12.9.1914 p8

⁶ Demolition sale, *The Argus Newspaper*, 1940.7.13 p12



Barham House 1872
51 Grey Street, St Kilda
Donald McDonald (Photographer)
SK0457 Port Phillip City Collection



The property of E B Green ca.1854,
lithograph by Samuel Thomas Gill,
Pictures Collection, NLA

Edward Bernard Green (1809-1861) was a successful land speculator. In 1850 he commissioned John Gill (c.1797-1866) architect to design him a magnificent new house in Grey Street. It was set in landscaped grounds of 9 acres and included an ancient Swiss cottage¹. In James Sinclair's *Beauties of Victoria*, the property was described as 'one of the finest seats in the colony'².

William Nicholson (1816-1865) MLC, merchant and politician occupied the house during his time as premier in 1859-60, residing there until his death in 1865.

In 1869 John Lang Currie (1818-1898) grazier, purchased half the property on 4.5 acres. Two years later he employed Reed and Barnes architects to substantially alter and extend the house in the Italianate style³. At about this time the house was renamed *Eildon*.

Alliance Francoise now occupies the house.

¹ *The Argus Newspaper*, Mon 6 Sep 1869, p2

² James Sinclair, *Beauties of Victoria in 1856 containing notices of 200 of the principal gardens around Melbourne*.

³ Tender Notice, *The Argus Newspaper*, 26 May 1871, p3



Corvey 1872
79 Brighton Road, Elwood
Donald McDonald (Photographer)
Port Phillip City Collection sk0456

Corvey was built as the residence of Emil Thoneman (1832-1874) and family in 1868. The architect was probably Alfred Frederick Kursteiner (c.1829-1897).¹ Designed in the Italianate style it had an elegant balcony of timber columns and curved brackets with cast iron infill panels.

Emil Thoneman was a partner in the firm of Lange and Thoneman, [also see Lange's house *Hertford*] and was appointed a Commissioner for the 1873 International Exhibitions by the Victorian government.² For the last two years of his life he held the office of Austrian Consul. His widow remained in the house until at least 1885.³

This picture shows the whole family proudly standing in front of their house. Above the house flies an extremely large Imperial Austrian flag.

The site was subdivided in the 1920s when Wimbledon Avenue was formed. The house was demolished in the early 1970s and a block of flats now stands on the site.

¹ Likely tender notice, *The Argus Newspaper*, Fri 3 July 1868, p2

² International Exhibition London 1873, *Official record*, Mason, Firth & McCutchen

³ Short obituary, *The Argus Newspaper*, Sat 17 Oct 1974, p7



Braemar

56 Barkly Street, St Kilda
Donald McDonald (Photographer)
Port Phillip City Collection sk0445

Braemar was built for Thomas and Margaret Alston in c.1866 and was designed in the Renaissance Revival style. The architect is unknown.

Alston was the founding partner in Alston & Brown, silk mercers, and a director of various companies.

The Emilie Margaret King purchased the property in 1911 and renamed it *Karoola*. From 1918 until 1964 it was used as a boarding school for St Michael's School.²

In 1964 the house was demolished and the land subdivided for flats.

¹ Near the new mansion of T. Alston, *The Argus Newspaper*, 30 Apr 1866, p3

² Miles Lewis, *Melbourne Mansions*, record no. 3332



Euro-Reko
29 Burnett Street, St Kilda
Donald McDonald (Photographer),
Port Phillip City Collection sk0440

Euro-Reko was built as the residence of Peter Davis (1815-1879) in 1866.¹ The architects Reed & Barnes designed it in their polychromatic Lombardic Style and it was the second of their houses to use cream and white bricks.

Peter Davis was a Melbourne councillor and the mayor of Melbourne in 1856-57. His firm Peter Davis & Co. owned Naradhan East Station, a 192,000-acre pastoral lease in NSW.² He had extensive real estate investments and business interests including being a director of the Commercial Bank of Australia³ and president of the Fourth Victoria Building Society.⁴

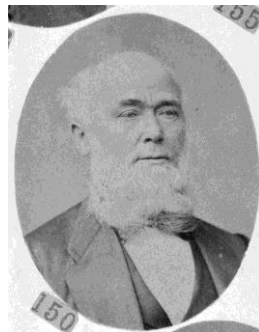
The house contained an important organ built by William Hill of London that Davis had commissioned in 1858. It now resides in St Peter's Lutheran Church, Stowell.⁵

Following his death his three sons continued to live in the house. One of his sons Alfred Davis was a St Kilda councillor from 1882 until 1887 and was still living in the house in 1910.

The house & gardens occupied about 13 allotments and was demolished sometime between 1910 and 1918 for land subdivision.



Peter Davis, SLV image H5056/150



Alfred Davis, Port Phillip City Collection SK0482

¹ Tender Notice, *The Argus Newspaper*, 21 Dec 1865, p6

² Auction notice for Naradhan East Station, *The Argus Newspaper*, 27 Jan 1881, p3

³ Election of directors, *The Argus Newspaper*, 8 Feb 1870, p6

⁴ Fourth Victoria Building Society's president absent, *The Argus Newspaper*, 4 Apr 1879, p4

⁵ Organ Historical Trust of Australia, Organ database, <https://ohta.org.au>, accessed 29 Jan 2018



Shawmut

287 Carlisle Street, Balaclava
Donald McDonald (Photographer),
Port Phillip City Collection sk0450

This house was built as the residence for Andrew Newell (1841-1927) and family in about 1870¹. The architect is unknown. Newell was born in Cambridge, Massachusetts and the house name 'Shawmut' probably refers to the Shawmut Peninsula in Boston². The design of the upper storey windows with their rounded heads, reflect the influence of the Lombardic style.

For over seventy years Andrew worked for Newell & Co. the firm that his father had established in the 1850s to represent American wool buyers and shipping interests in Melbourne. He later joined the board of directors of several public companies and was at one time chairman of the National Mutual Life Association of Australasia.³

In 1920s the site was subdivided and the house ultimately demolished.

References:

Paul de Serville, *Pounds and Pedigrees: the upper class in Victoria 1850-80*, Oxford University Press, Melbourne, 1991, p423

***The Leader*, Saturday 31 July 1880, page 7**

¹ Birth notice, *The Argus Newspaper*, Wed 7 Dec 1870, p4

² Shawmut Peninsula, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shawmut_Peninsula, accessed 27.1.2018

³ Obituary, *The Argus Newspaper*, Thu 31 Mar 1927, p10

A fatal accident occurred in the Long Tunnel mine, Sandhurst, on July 24, by which James Mitchell, a miner, lost his life. Deceased was working in the No. 5 stope, and a boulder, weighing a ton and a half, rolled against him and jammed him against the wall. He died as he was being brought up in the cage.

A sad accident occurred near the Ararat railway station on Saturday last, to Mr. Donald M'Donald, photographer, which unfortunately was attended with fatal results on Sunday evening. The *Advertiser* states that "the deceased, who had for fourteen weeks previously been engaged in this district by the borough and shire councils taking views for the coming International Exhibition, and who had almost completed his work, drove his conveyance (a travelling studio) to the railway station about mid-day on Saturday, and having tied up his horse at the fence in King street, was in the act of taking out a box of negatives which it was his intention to take to town by that afternoon's train when the horse took fright at an engine whistle and started back. Mr. M'Donald seized it by the head, but was unable to control it, and it broke away from him, and whilst he was falling the front wheel of the waggonette struck him on the back, knocking him completely over, whilst the wheel immediately afterwards passed over his neck. Dr. Simca, who witnessed the accident, went to the assistance of the injured man, and he was conveyed to the hospital, where he gradually sank, and died on Sunday night. An inquest took place on July 26, when a verdict of accidental death was returned. Mr. M'Donald, who is a well known photographic artist, with a studio on the St. Kilda-road, Melbourne, had so far completed his work that he had arranged with a boy to take back the horse he had hired and was using to Moyton, and, as we have stated, intended to go to town and return in about a fortnight to offer views for sale. The deceased was fifty years of age, and unmarried, and has a brother and sister in Melbourne."