

GINN COTTAGE

1 Ginn Street, Ipswich

History

'Ginn Cottage' is believed to be one of the oldest surviving brick cottages in Ipswich. Built for William Ginn, the exact date of its construction is unknown.



Ginn bought the land from the New South Wales Government in November 1858 and council rate books show the cottage was built by early 1860. The building is located at the corner of Ginn Street and Meredith Lane, with south walls and eastern verandah coinciding with the property boundaries. In 1886 Ginn complained to the colonial secretary alleging that the Government had bungled the land sale. He said, 'What is now an unnamed street in front of my house belongs to the courthouse property and my house is built on a portion of what should be the street'. The problem was resolved and the unnamed street became Ginn Street, with the cottage being right on the footpath.

This brick cottage on sandstone footings is small, simple and similar to other early Victorian buildings seen in old photographs. The front rooms each have a fireplace with a cedar chimney-piece. There is an attic with a sloping roof, reached by a steep staircase with simple square balustrading. Originally there was a detached kitchen and stable, however these no longer exist. The original timber shingle roof was replaced with corrugated iron and the external brick walls were rendered in the 1890s to lessen the effects of water penetration.

Ginn, a tutor, came from Eniskillen in Ireland and migrated to Sydney. It is thought that while in Sydney he met his first wife, a Miss Graham, who died in childbirth. In the 1850s he moved to Ipswich and managed the produce store of G.H. Wilson. While working for Wilson, Ginn met and married Eliza Jane Costly. 'Ginn Cottage' was built as a bridal home for Eliza. The Ginn's had six sons and five daughters. One daughter died in infancy and another as a small child. Ginn left G.H. Wilson and went into partnership to form the produce firm of Ginn and Hooper. Their store was located on the banks of the Bremer River between Bell and East Streets. The partnership dissolved around 1896 and Ginn decided to set up business on his own in premises on the corner of Nicholas and Union Streets. 'Ginn Cottage' was mortgaged for £3000 to help set the business up. All was in readiness to open one Monday in 1897. However, Ginn unexpectedly passed away on the Sunday and his business never eventuated. Apart from his partnership, Ginn was involved in a variety of other enterprises including, coal mining, raising race horses and a store in Augathella. He was also on the first board of the Ipswich and West Moreton Building Society, was a founding member of the show society and was interested in his church.

Description

'Ginn Cottage' is a single-storey structure at the corner of Ginn Street and Meredith Lane, opposite the historic Couth House. This brick cottage has a corrugated iron pyramid roof, with separate bull-nosed roofing over its front verandah which faces Ginn Street. The verandah features cross-braced balustrading, above which are lattice panels.

As stated in the National Trust citation, the building shows the symmetry typical of late Georgian cottages in, for example, the placement of its chimneys and dormer windows. The dormer windows service two attic rooms, accessed by a steep central staircase.

An original detached kitchen and stables no longer exist. Additions include a kitchen and bathroom, in 1910 and 1978 respectively, and a garage, in 1978.