

# Bourgoyne Cottage – by Ruth Dwyer

**B**ourgoyne Cottage, a double-fronted symmetrical dwelling on basalt footings, with tuck-pointed brickwork and a bull-nosed veranda, and cellars beneath <sup>1</sup>, was built for François Monichon by Thomas Wright. The basket arch, or *anse de panier*, to the front door gives the building a French appearance. The dwelling stands at 49 Agnes Street in Jolimont, part of East Melbourne. The land, 33 feet by 124, purchased by Monichon in 1865, was previously part of the kitchen meadow gardens of Governor Charles Joseph La Trobe. By 1866, a brick cottage of four rooms had been erected. Additions to the dwelling provided a comfortable cottage of a parlour and three bedrooms leading off the central passage, then a dining room, and down a stairway, a kitchen with pantry, and, perhaps later, a wood-fire stove with a copper for piped hot water. Stables and coach-house, now demolished, gave on to Jolimont Lane with grazing for the horses opposite. The property was originally numbered 3 Agnes Street <sup>2</sup>.

François Monichon was born c. 1817 in Chalon-sur-Saône, Burgundy, France, and emigrated from St. Malo arriving in Melbourne aboard the *Admiral Baudin* on 4 January 1855. He had been one of the chefs of Napoleon III, and in Melbourne opened a restaurant at 98 Flinders Lane East becoming known as a chef, baker, confectioner, and pastry cook soon after his arrival. Later premises were at 101 Flinders Street. He became *chef-de-cuisine* at the Melbourne Club in Collins Street after which he filled the

same position at Scott's Hotel. It is also said that Monichon acted as *chef-de-cuisine* at functions given by the Governor. François was the son of Jacques Monichon and Marie Grace. *Bourgoyne Cottage* was so named in memory of the native place of his father <sup>3</sup>.

François Monichon died intestate on 8 August 1879. After the untimely passing of the elder son, also François, the younger son, Louis Alexandre Jean Monichon, then the owner and licensee of the *Hawthorn Hotel* in Burwood Road, Hawthorn, applied for letters of administration of the estate in 1884 <sup>4</sup>. The subsequent papers contained a comprehensive inventory of the contents of the six-roomed brick cottage, quite clearly described as *Bourgogne Cottage*, using the French spelling of Burgundy <sup>5</sup>.

Inventory and particulars of the furniture of the late François Monichon of *Bourgogne Cottage*, Agnes Street, Jolimont, Cook.

## Parlor (sic)

Six horse hair Chairs  
One rocking chair cane seated  
One easy chair, Horse hair couch  
Once cedar Loo Table  
One carpet  
Looking Glass (Mantelpiece)  
Gild 8 day Clock and shade  
Two pair Curtains, pole & appendages  
One Velvet pile table cloth  
Fender & fire irons  
Six pictures (Engravings)  
Two vases  
Venetian blinds



**Bedroom No. 1**

Half Tester Double Iron Bedstead, pair pillows

Mattress & bedding

One chest drawers

Washing Stand & ware

Carpet

Fender & fire irons

Looking Glass

Round deal table & Cloth

Sundry chimney Ornaments

Two oil paintings

Two pictures Two

vases

Cornice pole

Two pair curtains & appendages

Venetian blinds

Hearth rug

Three cane seated Chairs

One cane seated Rocking chair

**Passage**

Oilcloth

**Bedroom No. 2**

Double Iron Bedstead, pair palliasses

Mattress & bedding

Washstand & ware

Dressing table

Three bedroom chairs

Looking glass

Three pictures

Venetian blind

Pair curtains

Four chimney ornaments

Carpet

**Bedroom No. 3**

Double iron bedstead

Pair palliasses mattress & bedding Three

Oil paintings

Two chairs

Looking glass

Pair curtains

Venetian blind

Sundry ornaments **D**

**iningroom**

Sewing Machine "Wheeler & Wilson" Six

Cane seated chairs

Colonial sofa

Deal table & cloth

Venetian blinds

Pair curtains

Five pictures

Four Oil paintings

Common Clock

Household Linen

**Kitchen**

Two Kitchen tables

Two Meat safes

Cupboards

Crockery

Glassware

Boiler, Saucepans

Frying pans, &c., &c Six

common chairs

The few sets of probate papers containing such an inventory usually pertain to grander establishments. This set gives a glimpse of the furnishings of a more humble but comfortable dwelling of the mid 1880s, perhaps showing the influence of a French heritage. The valuation of the contents, unfortunately not itemized, totalled £100<sup>6</sup>. This inventory of 1884 adds to our knowledge of *Bourgoyne Cottage*, the dwelling built in 1865-6 for François Monichon and now numbered 49 Agnes Street, Jolimont. The cottage is classified as of local importance by the National Trust. It would be appropriate to amend the spelling of the name reverting to the original, *Bourgogne Cottage*.

Notes –

(1) In a memoir held by the National Trust it is recorded that from one of these cellars a tunnel leads beneath Agnes Street ending roughly where La Trobe's cottage once stood. This memoir, written by a descendant of François Monichon, Snr., suggests that contact with La Trobe may have resulted. This would not have been possible as La Trobe left Melbourne on 5 May 1854. Monichon did not arrive until 4 January 1855. According to Burchett, after La Trobe's departure, the military moved in, Sir Robert Nickle and Lieutenant-Colonel Macarthur and some of their staff.

(2) National Trust of Australia (Victoria), *Tasma Terrace*, 22 Parliament Place, East Melbourne, File No. 5248, *Bourgoyne Cottage*; City of Melbourne Rate Books 1866-1870, Agnes Street File, East Melbourne Library.

(3) Naturalization Papers, Series A712, Item 64/F 1961, Australian Archives, Canberra, ACT; *Argus*, 11 August 1879, p.1; File No. 5248, op. cit.

(4) Probate Index, Victoria, 28/271, François Monichon, Snr.; Borough of Hawthorn Rate Book, 1884-5, p. 8, No. 210, Louis Monichon.

(5) Public Record Office of Victoria, VPRS 28 Unit 335 28/271 François Monichon, Snr. It is, however, somewhat disappointing to find that the contents of the cellars were not listed in the inventory.

(6) *Ibid.*; File No. 5248, op.cit.