

It looks more like a village than a city. There is only one stone building in the town, all the rest are of bricks or wood but the greatest number is of wood. Some of the houses are got up with great taste & notwithstanding their diminutive dimensions, they have rather an imposing effect. . . .

Edward Ashworth, an architect and surveyor in Exeter, was in his twenties when he sailed for Australia in May 1842. After a few months in Melbourne he went on to Auckland where he stayed until February 1844, then returning to England via Sydney where he stayed a further three months. Ashworth comments in great detail about the places he visited and the life there. He was interested in all aspects of the physical environment, taking particular note of architectural features and vegetation whether wild or domestic. On 29 September he first saw Melbourne 'much resembling an English brick built town with wide streets . . .' noting the regularity with which the streets were laid out in contrast to the irregularity of their appearance:

a brick house of 3 stories often alternates with a wood edifice of one, at the N end of Elizabeth St. is the Roman Catholic chapel, near it the theatre a plain boarded front with 3 green doors, the post office which has plenty of business, at the west end of Collins St. is market square occupied by a few boarded boxes as vegetable stalls, near it is the protestant church, a small prison guarded by a soldier, also 2 steam flour mills with tall circular chimneys.

In the outskirts of Melbourne there are some very tasteful dwellings, with verandahs, projecting rooms, trellises, and other fancies of ornamental architecture [see plate IV] the sash doors open from the sitting rooms into the garden plots in front. . . .

Melbourne is certainly a wonderful place for its age viz 4 years, but trade is quite overdone, the shops seem too numerous & showy: the plum cakes & pound cakes, tarts, cheesecakes, gingerbread & gingerade & lemonade of the pastry-cook ill accounts with the simple tastes of the inhabitants of the bush. There are plenty of smart ironmongers, linen drapers, grocers, stationers & *outfitters* whose names Levy Alexander &c remind us of London. . . . The principal cart traffic in the streets consists in firewood, oxen simply yoked with an iron collar, are used much more than horses.

Thomas Collinson also commented on Sydney in his reminiscences:

The aristocracy of Australia were, are & will be the sheep and cattle farmers. It is a business that requires capital and intelligence and a good constitution of mind and body; and therefore specially suited to the English gentleman. In 1846 some of them were little princes in their dominions, like the patriarchs of old; producing