

THE MARGARET GRAHAM NURSES HOME, ROYAL ADELAIDE HOSPITAL

Frome Road

The Margaret Graham Nurses Home reflects the development of the Royal Adelaide Hospital in general and developments in nursing in particular. It was made possible by a benefaction from Thomas Martin, and was named after a former matron and superintendent of nursing. Work started on the project in 1908 and the building was opened in 1911. T.L. Brown was the contractor.



(CD Ref 1725/11)

The predecessor to the Royal Adelaide Hospital was the Colonial Infirmary established in 1837 by Dr T.Y. Cotter near Holy Trinity Church in a hut of pressed earth measuring 12 feet by 18 feet. Governor Gawler had the first Adelaide hospital built. A second one was built in 1856. At that time the nursing staff comprised a matron, three nurses and four wardsmen. By the 1880s when Margaret Graham was

being trained, there were twenty-four nurses and probationers, two night nurses, nine wardsmen and two night wardsmen. Margaret Graham was an individual of high principle and dedicated to her profession. She started her career rebelliously, the centre of the notorious 'Hospital Row' of 1896. Refusing to retract statements she made regarding promotion of one nurse over others better qualified and more efficient, she was dismissed for insubordination but reinstated, after a royal commission into the affair. This in turn brought the resignation of the entire honorary medical staff, the dismissal of the hospital board and the disruption of all clinical teaching. When reinstated, Graham was made charge nurse and in 1898 promoted to matron, a position she held until 1920. She was actively involved in the South Australian branch of the Royal British Nurses Association and was their consul for twenty years, as well as being in the Australasian Trained Nurses' Association. She became the state's first superintendent for the Australian Army Nursing Service in 1904, and enlisted in August 1914 in the AANS, Australian Imperial Force. For her work overseas in Egypt and in hospital ships during the war Sister Graham was mentioned in despatches and was awarded the Royal Red Cross, 1st Class.

Margaret Graham was ' . . . an Englishwoman, who, throughout her long life, never deviated from her intense devotion to the British tradition'. She undoubtedly had immense influence over the early development of the nursing profession. One of Florence Nightingale's three principles seems to be very apt when applying it to the Margaret Graham nursing home:

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. . . while undergoing training, nurses should live in a home which should be a place of moral, religious and practical training; a place of training of character, habits, intelligence; a place to acquire knowledge both technical and practical.

Such a home was considered when a bequest of £80 000 was made by T. Martin in the early 1900s. The superintendent of Public Works C.E. Owen Smyth was approached by the hospital board to design a suitable building. The board decided on the amount of accommodation to be provided, the quality of the work, and the site. Part of the Martin



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bequest paid for one-third of the cost of the building whilst the charities commissioners accepted responsibility for two-thirds of the cost.



(CD Ref 1725/14)

The building is of minor interest architecturally, but in streetscape terms it forms an important element in a complex of buildings situated at the corner of Frome Road and North Terrace which, with Brookman Building opposite, frame and enclose Frome Road. The building is dominated by tiered balconies supported on Doric and Ionic columns. The roof form with wide eaves, projecting rafters, and neat dormers is consistent with that of adjacent hospital buildings to the south.

Australian dictionary of biography, Vol. 9, 1983, pp. 68-9; Hughes, J.E., *A history of the Royal Adelaide Hospital* (rev. ed.), 1982, pp. 2, 7, 11, 108-11, 112; MLSA, Annual reports of the Board of Management of the Adelaide Hospital, 1907-10; Old Parliament House Library, Lands Department photographs; SAPP, No. 29, Public Works report, 1909-10.

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The property described in this Information Sheet is included in the Register of State Heritage places.
A heritage listing does not mean or imply right of access by the public to such properties.

The heritage related Principles of Development Control as well as the Precinct specific objectives and Principles of Development Control are contained in the Adelaide (City) Development Plan. These should be referred to in whole when contemplating any development.

Further information on the Heritage Incentives Scheme, an initiative of Council to sponsor timely and appropriate conservation action is available upon request of the Customer Service Centre.



CITY OF ADELAIDE HERITAGE STUDY

The City Heritage Register-Definition of Items

Prepared by the Dept. of Planning and Development

Item	THE MARGARET GRAHAM NURSES HOME	Building N^o
Address	corner North Terrace and Frome Road	

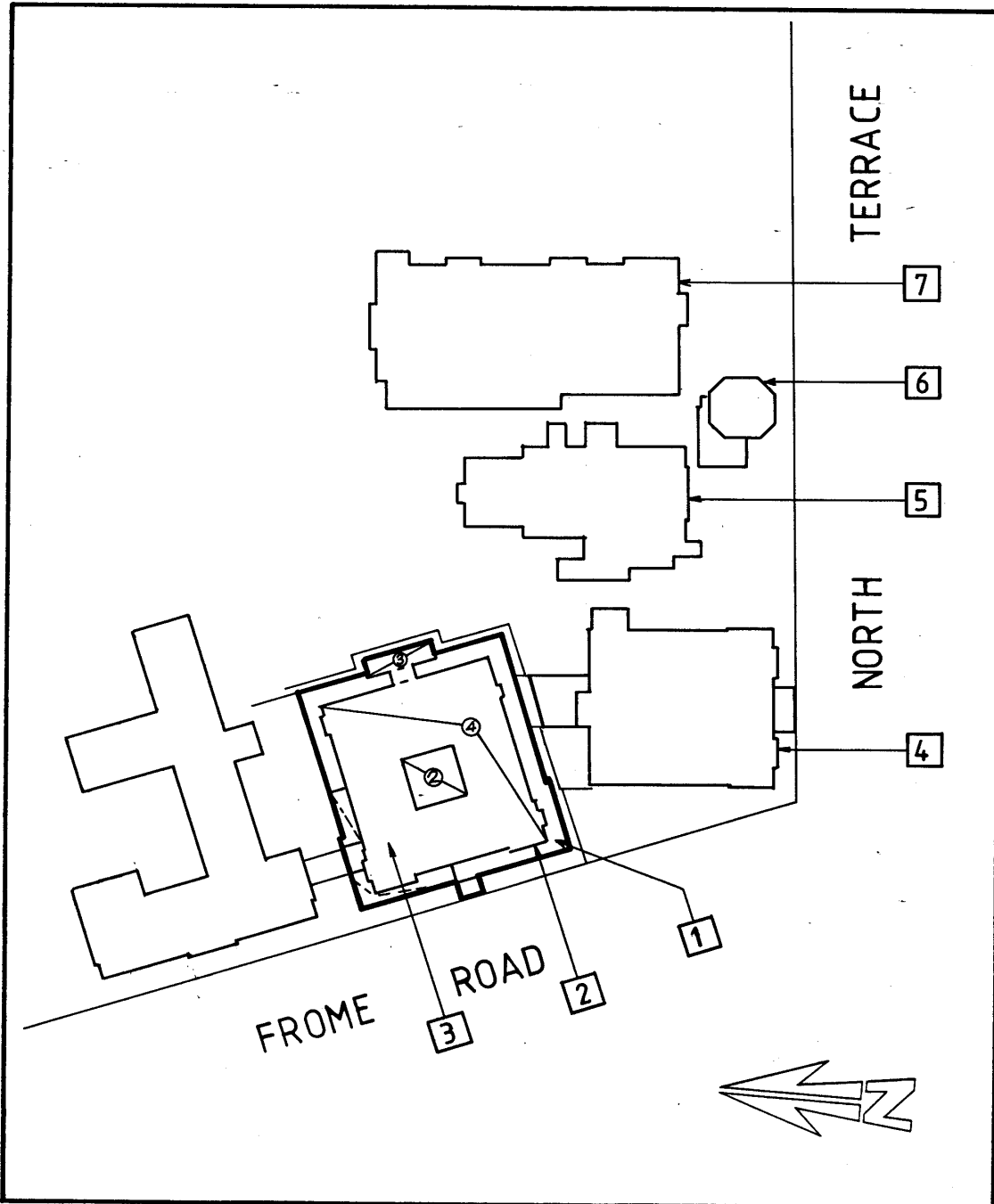


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NOTES:

1. Perimeter balconies.
2. Main structure.
3. Nurses Home.
4. Nursing School.
5. Physiotherapy Department.
6. Kiosk.
7. McEwin Building.
8. Bice Building.