

The land on which no. 31 now stands was originally part of the section owned by Matthew Campbell and sold by him ~~to~~ in 1861 to Henry Hounsell, a wine and general merchant of Bridge Street. Hounsell built the two-storeyed house on the corner of Alton and Nile~~s~~ Streets opposite Griffins factory. In 1877 he sold it to Mrs Mary Elizabeth Gibbs whose son Frederick was the first headmaster of the Central School.

He was a wellknown personality around Nelson and among other things was a longstanding trustee of the Suter Art Gallery. The gallery's archives contain an interesting biographical thesis on him. He planted the lime trees that are now such a feature of the School grounds.

It is not clear to an unskilled reader of the Lands Dept records exactly when Mrs Gibbs subdivided the land on which no. 31 now stands, but it was almost certainly 5 June 1905. The general style of the house would correspond with that period. On that date the new section was bought by one Ellen Harriet Rutherford or Rutherford. On 9 February 1906 Ellen sold to Mrs Annie Bennett, and it is rather confusing to find Mrs Gibbs back in the act, selling what seems to be the same property to Millicent Arnold Boor on 12 May 1911.

On 1 June 1922 it was taken over by Richard Waine Gibbs, who may or may not have been related to Headmaster Frederick, and on 12 January 1922 F.W. Gibbs sold to Effie Gray Gilkison and Norah Kilmeny Gilkison.

On 10 October 1963 (might be 1943, the figure is not clear) the Gilkisons sold to Geoffrey Aldous Kempthorne of Waimea West, who in turn sold to Mrs Yvonne Wilson on 29 June 1976, from whom I bought the place on 12 December 1978.

Mrs Wilson tells me she bought it at auction and it was then in a very rundown state. She had it repiled, modernised kitchen and bathroom, and turned the two small rooms, the original livingroom and diningroom, into one. The sideboard standing in the hall had belonged to the Kempthornes, and I bought it from Mrs W when I took over.

My very old friend Stanley Northcote-Bade, whose childhood home was at 204 Brook Street, remembers this house very well when the Boors had it and recalls that an oil portrait of the poet Matthew Arnold used to hang above the door from hall to kitchen -- Mrs Boor was related to the poet in some way. He also thinks that Kempthorne was Mrs Boor's son-in-law, and that the Gilkisons were in some way related to her.

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Added 2/89

① Like a fool I didn't secure a copy of the following photo - saw it among TREE photos at Nelson Museum in 1977 - it must still be there, if only