

EARLY ARCHITECTS OF THE HUNTER REGION



JESMOND HOUSE, Barker Street, Newcastle, architect unknown,
addition of tower by James Henderson, architect, 1885. Ink sketch by L. Reedman 1/1/56.

EARLY ARCHITECTS OF THE HUNTER REGION

A HUNDRED YEARS TO 1940

By

LES REEDMAN

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The photography is by the author
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ALTERATIONS & RENOVATIONS

It may be obvious that some buildings have been altered from the original or renovated. Unfortunately it is beyond the scope of this work to give acknowledgement.

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Dedicated to the memory of
Emeritus Professor Dr John Turner
Historian
Friend of Architects and of Architecture.

Acknowledgements.

An undertaking of an original historical work of this kind brings together information from many sources. One can consult books and papers, visit locations and rely on one's own limited recall of the subject, gained only as a student architect, in Newcastle, in the 1950s.

Above all the most valuable resource has been the people and organisations who contributed willingly and generously with their knowledge or gave valuable assistance.

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My special thanks to John Sara of Castleden & Sara, Architects, of Newcastle, whose parent practice commenced with F. B. Menkens in 1882, for allowing me to incorporate some examples of Menkens drawings.

Not least the relatives of the 'Architects of the Hunter' who obliged with photographic portraits where possible and with whom I talked. I have tried to incorporate much of what they recalled:

Castleden, Frederick G. – Peter Langwill, Merewether
Mrs Elizabeth Spencer, Inverell

The Gannons – Mrs Pam Gannon, Merewether
Peter J., John P., Sister Louise Gannon, Lochinvar
Peter Jerome, Kevin J. Paul Gannon, Lismore

Merewether, Edward R. H. – E. J. (John) Merewether, Sydney

The Penders – Andrew Pender, Sydney
John W., Walter H., Ian W.

Pitt, Nigel B. – Mrs Jenny Pitt, Merewether

Porter, Wallace L. – Elsie Porter, Neutral Bay
Ada Porter (deceased), Newcastle

Scobie, James W. – Jim Crawford (deceased), Millfield
Emelia Tompson, Sydney
Josie Stevenson, Lorn
Robert Stevenson, Lorn

Sara, Edwin C. – John Sara, Newcastle

Silk, Thomas W. – Mr and Mrs Thomas E. Silk,
Longueville

Stone, Frank G. W. – Marc Stone, Sydney

Tingle, Ernest – Nancy Christmas, Coal Point
Tony Caldersmith, Sydney
John Tingle, Sydney.

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Many thanks to all.
Les Reedman
July, 2008

Foreword

Books are like the people who write them: they reflect the mind and personality of the writer – even their constitutions. The apposite of this is that a book is also a reliable introduction to the man.

Les Reedman's father came from Adelaide, his mother from Newcastle. The Reedman family came originally from Norway, via Germany and England. His great-grandfather was a brick maker in Adelaide and his grandfather was a test cricketer for Australia in the 1890s.

I met Les at the Newcastle Public Works office, in the early 1960s, where he was a junior architect. Those were the days when architects were colourful characters: the District Architect there, Lloyd Lucas – a former Lieutenant Colonel – was known as 'The Bushranger' for his loud outspoken confrontational manner.

Like many young, newly wed architects, Les was short of cash but was determined to build a house (1959). He acquired a site on the newly opened Merewether Heights Estate. His chief concern was manual 'buildability' (he had no power tools) – this meant it had to be a simple post-and-beam frame of hardwood for a mine subsidence affected and sloping site. It was a very original and innovative construction for the 50s, influenced by Russell Jack's award winning house at Wahroonga (1957) which he saw on an Architecture Club excursion.

During his stay at the NSW Department of Public Works, Les rose to become Assistant Government Architect (1985-88), he supervised the development of the University of New England (1966-71) and, in 1972, he was appointed Principal Architect for Tertiary Education (Colleges) and School Education (Schools) in 1980. He was Project Director for the Government's Central Bicentennial Projects from 1984, jointly with Design Architect Andrew Andersons.

Reedman was a member of the notorious group of 13 senior architects 'carpeted' for signing a petition opposing the Minister for Public Works, Sir Davis Hughes, over his treatment of Joern Utzon in 1966, interpreted as an act of rebellion, and threatened if they did not sign a prepared counter statement. None did, to the emotional displeasure of the Government Architect, E. H. Farmer.

Newcastle (f. 1804, coal having been found in 1797) is Australia's second city: it was established as a punishment centre for the Vinegar Hill rioters (six weeks after the riot). Historically it is frequently treated as a lesser secondary appendage to Sydney. This lesser status as a provincial outpost of the Greater Metropolis does not do it justice. Newcastle is fascinating for its intermixing landscape of mining, heavy and light industry, farming, vineyards and wilderness. Individual settlements were scattered, being sited close to coal pitheads; this left swathes of bushland in between – the town as such was a dispersed entity comprised of small villages, reminiscent of Yorkshire as so many of the local names attest.

It was long regarded as a one-industry town – the BHP steelworks (opened in 1913 but only began making steel in 1916) at Port Waratah on the Hunter, provided a focus of employment and shaped outside perceptions of the city as a rough, dirty, industrial city. Little of this is reflected in the architecture. Not even the independent establishment of the University of Newcastle in 1965 (it soon replaced BHP as the single largest local employer) was sufficient to shift this Sydney fixation – it was a case of guilt by association.

The reality is different. Ignored were the magnificent wild landscapes of the Watagans and the Barrington Tops; the 'valley' possessing a remarkable heritage of early pastoral properties and homesteads accessible from the Hunter River, early vineyards, industrial archaeology and a largely uncharted and diverse practice of architecture in the region now exposed by Reedman's book.

The 'valley' was only 60 nautical miles from Sydney by sea. It was first connected by sea up to Maitland, then Mitchell's road via Wiseman's Ferry was completed in 1831, the same year that a steam packet sea service commenced. Everything depended on this umbilical sea connection; later road and still later rail linked it more securely to the great southern metropolis.

With Morton Herman's encouragement, Les completed his undergraduate thesis on Frederick Menkens in 1956. His study continues to be a seminal source on this important architect and notable contributor to Newcastle's civic fabric. Reedman has extended the Morton Herman style of architectural scholarship, established by Herman's classic *The Early Australian Architects and Their Work*, first published in 1954.

Retired since 1988 and living on Dangar Island on the Hawkesbury, Reedman began work on *Early Architects of the Hunter Region*, in 1997 spurred on by support from the Newcastle Division of the RAIA. It was one of three projects, the others being Professor Barry Maitland & David Stafford's *Architecture Newcastle, A Guide* and Robert Donaldson & Don Morris's *Newcastle School of Architecture: A History*.

Of the three, his is the most significant because it researches the early obscure beginnings of architecture in the valley. He builds in detail an account of the architecture of Newcastle and the valley from little known sources, lifting it into focus through personal interviews, linked practices, builders and architects who are either little known or whose works are frequently miss-attributed through ignorance spread by newspaper accounts among others. Reedman's book will do much to draw aside the fog curtain of the past and give prominence to the professional architectural effort invested in its considerable built heritage. There is much research yet to be done. *Early Architects of the Hunter Region* sets the bar high and will encourage others who follow to fill in dark corners of the Hunter Valley's past.

One of the most fascinating contributions in the book is an examination of the architect's equipment, not meaning to be salacious. In early days architects drew everything by hand and produced what were often admirably precise and beautiful images – rather like early cartography. Today architects employ 3-D CAD and rarely draw anything! This is not neutral as some would have it – the means we use to visualise architecture affects how we see and evaluate ideas and hence impacts on the character of the architecture that is the result. Since many computer operators know little about actual construction their digital drawings are truly 'virtual' without much 'reality' – ethereal or belonging properly to the air and hence tenuous.

The architect in the 19th century was influenced by what he could draw and, in this connection, his drawing instruments placed definite limits on his imagination. Culture is always the determining factor, whether it is in the way a community is organised, its skills, or limits to its vision of what is possible, acceptable and proper to society.

The new unconstrained freedom in architecture in the 21st Century is mostly illusionary; in the 19th Century, t-squares, French curves, brass compasses, Indian ink, pens and ebony scale rules were handled with great delicacy to render the plans and elevations of the new architecture. These are now invaluable historical documents as well as evidence of what buildings were intended to be like. What could be imagined was, to an extent, limited by the means used to express the forms: hand drawn for an architecture based on hand made craft details and manual work. These days architecture has an impersonal quality untouched by hands.

Newcastle architects were also constrained by what they knew or thought architecture should be, by custom and by fashion – in a word by location. Fashion derived from Sydney and, wider afield, from London and Europe. Increasingly, as the century matured, sources were drawn from the USA as a growing commercial power.

The First & Second World Wars took architects beyond their provincial limits, opened their minds to new international influences and to new technical possibilities. There are profiles of some 57 architects and 96 practices in the period from 1842 to 1940, broadly a century, over a diversity of styles and construction advances such as the cavity wall in the late 1880s, reinforced concrete at much the same time and steel which only started to come in after 1916. Bond store loads and lifts all encouraged advances.

Newcastle set an example for the rest of the state in its attempts at planning and improving the urban environment with the example of its Newcastle Betterment Board. Its architects also exerted their influence beyond the region since Newcastle was the transport gateway to a wider agricultural region extending west of the valley and north-west to the New England region.

The mining (a standard miner's hut was a distinctive feature of the cityscape around 1900) and industrial backdrop was ignored by architects in the main; they appear to have reacted against its presence instead of seeing it as a source of innovation and new opportunities preparing the way to modern architecture. Reedman has rescued a number of important and significant architects who are less well known and reputed simply because their activities fell outside the range of the Metropolitan gaze: names such as the Scot, John W. Pender of Maitland, the Saxon, Frederick Menkens from Hanover and locals such as Ernest George Yeomans, J. Warren Scobie and Thomas Silk to an expanded list of worthy architects.

It is to be hoped that this thorough and substantial work with its detailed pictures of the development of architecture in this important and productive region will receive the interest and attention it manifestly deserves.

Philip Drew, Annandale.
July 4, 2008.



*Prominent edge of city landmark –
'Brewery' building, Parry Street at Wood Street, Hamilton East.
Bennett & Yeomans, architects, 1888.*

Introduction.

The story of the early, local, architectural profession in the Hunter is told in these pages. Sydney architects designed many major commercial buildings in the Newcastle area, but not exclusively under a general maxim 'Sydney money, Sydney architect'. They are not the subject of this work, nor are the Government architects who, although regarded as practicing professionals, were nonetheless governed in design from Sydney or Canberra and did not have their own local private practices.

The first part of the book describes the historical background in which architects worked given the customs and limitations of the day. From the post-Colonial period to the early modern era architects created some interesting buildings, illustrated by photographs and drawings in this book.

The principal part of this book is given to biographies of the private architects, presented in chronological order of start of practice. There are 57 profiles of various lengths out of 96 architects who were recorded in the region up to 1940. During the course of a practice an architect could design hundreds of projects. The buildings listed can only represent the known or the more significant of the architect's work.

Notable omissions are the builders of the projects. Space and time did not permit this. However, a tribute must be paid to the skills of the reliable builders, who took the financial and physical risks, had hands on knowledge of construction and organisation, negotiated with unions and suppliers and often got architects out of trouble. Early builders like John Straub for the Earp Gillam Bond Store, Telford Street; John R. Rogers for the Baptist Tabernacle; Raymond Dumbrell for St Andrews Presbyterian Church; John Frogley for Woods Chambers, Scott Street, and, later, Charles Davis and Son for Burkes Warehouse, King Street, and Cliff Towers, Church Street, are enough for another story.

Another omission is the associated specialist consultants who latterly provided valued advice and design on a whole range of components for a project: such as structure, electrical and mechanical work, these services mostly being introduced in the early 20th century.

There are many stories to tell. Among so many biographies there are bound to be some of note. One architect was born at sea, en route to Australia, another kept a diary of life, practice, weather and travels in 1873. Then there was one who went to gaol for a year having refused to pay 40 shillings slander damages plus 126 pounds court costs. Another went gold digging in the Yukon in 1898 at the age of 42. Yet another was a soldier who was Professor of Architecture at the 'University of Changi' and he held that position for three and a half years as a 'guest' of the Japanese Imperial Army. Another became a knighted Australian painter of some controversy. The stories and practices of the architects will be all the more interesting when interwoven with their historical contexts and the illustrations of their achievements.

Building and its expression as architecture has had many influences reflecting fashions, technologies, historical events and philosophies to name some. Buildings usually are the barometer of the economy, plentiful in boom times falling away in times of depression and war. Each building results from a client or owner's need or statement and becomes hard evidence of the story of itself and of its time. The Hunter Region, a mixed rural and industrial community, contains all these factors, making it possible to observe more clearly the evolution of its local architecture with the activities of its architects.

This work is written for general historical interest although with an emphasis on architecture. Architects will probably wish to gloss over topics familiar to them. I hope it is of some value to all.

Les Reedman, July 2008.



Christ Church Cathedral, Church Street, The Hill, Newcastle. Based on Sydney architect Horbury Hunt's walls started in 1883-95 and continued in 1909 by J. H. Buckridge of Brisbane, the completion of the Cathedral was entrusted to Newcastle architects. Permanent nave roof, flying buttresses and crossing by F. G. & A. C. Castleden in 1926 and raising of transepts and great bell tower by Castleden & Sara in 1979.

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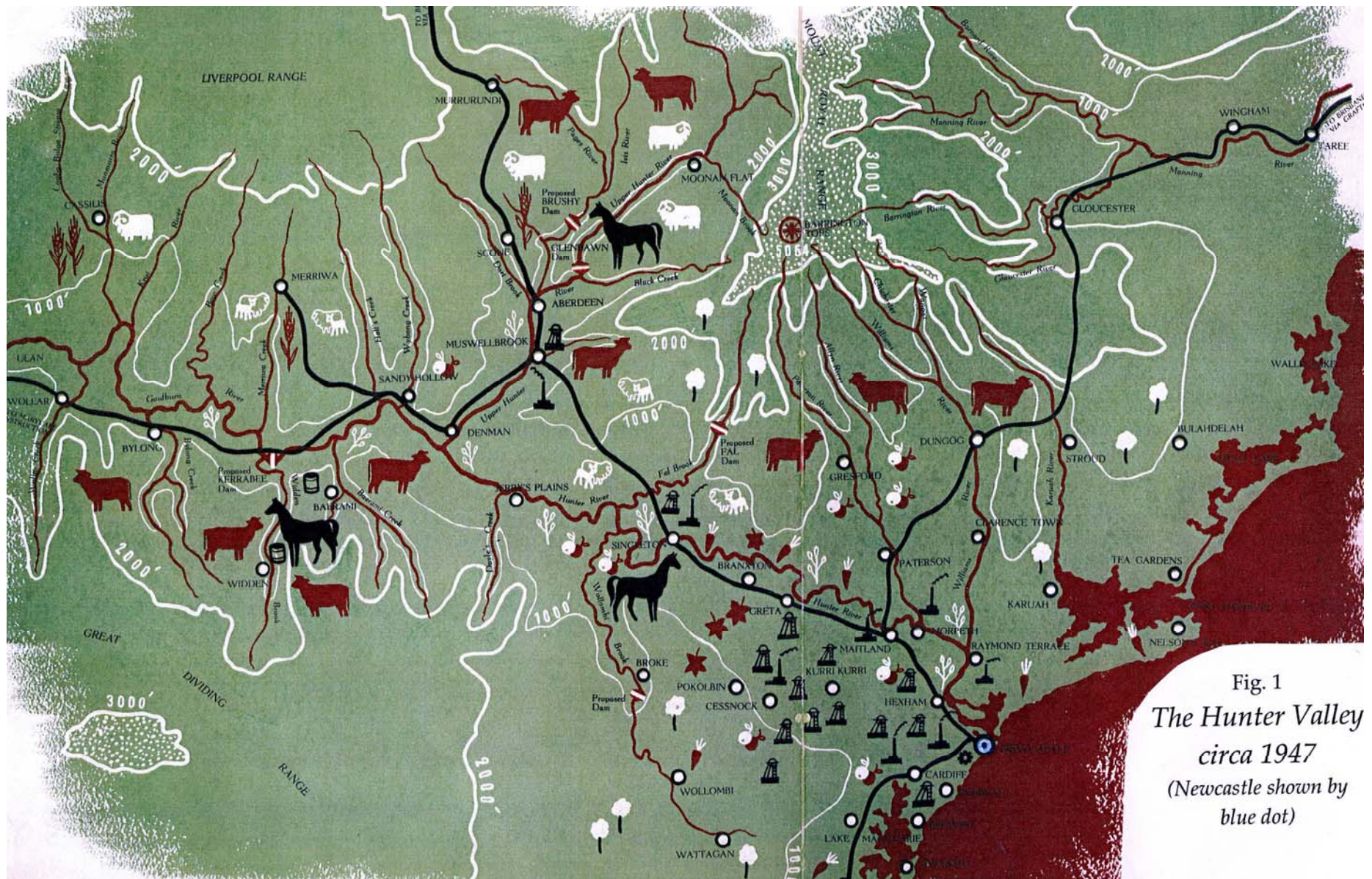
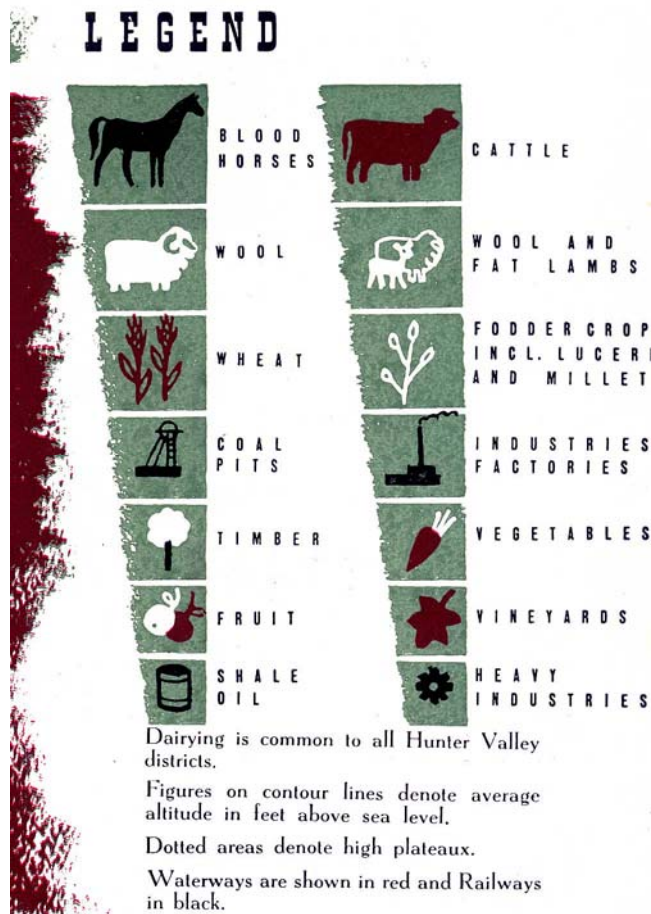


Fig. 1
The Hunter Valley
circa 1947
(Newcastle shown by
blue dot)



*Map taken from 'Newcastle 150 Years'
 published by the Council of the City of Greater Newcastle
 to commemorate the 150th Anniversary of the landing of
 Lieutenant Shortland, R.N.,
 at the mouth of the Hunter River.
 Scale as reproduced 1mm = 1 km.*

A LITTLE FURTHER NORTH or EXPANDING THE BOUNDARIES

A big valley

The Hunter Valley, with the associated Karuah watershed, is the largest catchment on the east coast of Australia and only the Hawkesbury system is longer. The valley is a diverse landscape from coastal wetlands, rich alluvial soil flats and undulating broad valleys rising to the rugged terrain of eroding sandstone to the west and south and volcanic extrusions to the north. Interestingly, the prehistoric Wollemi Pine genus is found only in the upper reaches of the valley.

The Hunter River, now badly silted, is fed by major tributaries from Wollombi in the south, Merriwa in the west, Murrurundi in the north-west and the Mount Royal Range and the Barrington Tops in the north. In pre-historic times great floods deposited soils of sedimentary and volcanic origin down on to a delta in which the course of the river meandered. A little known outlet to the sea was at Bar Beach, Newcastle. The river settled on a course past Nobbys after the last ice age, about 10,000 years ago.

The indigenous people

At the time the first Europeans arrived, there were two Aboriginal tribal groups in the region and they had prospered there for 23,000 years or more. The Woromi occupied the north to Port Stephens and the Awabakal went as far south as the Hawkesbury River, moving inland or to the coast depending on the seasons.

Captain Cook, on his 1770 voyage up the east coast of Australia, observed generally, of the Aborigines, that: *'they are far more happier than we Europeans... the earth and sea of their own accord furnishes them with all the things necessary for life. They covet not Magnificent Houses, Household-stuff, etc; they live in a warm climate, and enjoy every wholesome Air, so they have very little need of Clothing.'* (Ironically this is the quote highlighted at the entrance to the Great Hall of Parliament House, Canberra.)

Little did Cook realise that within a few decades Europeans would change the timeless rhythm of the region forever.

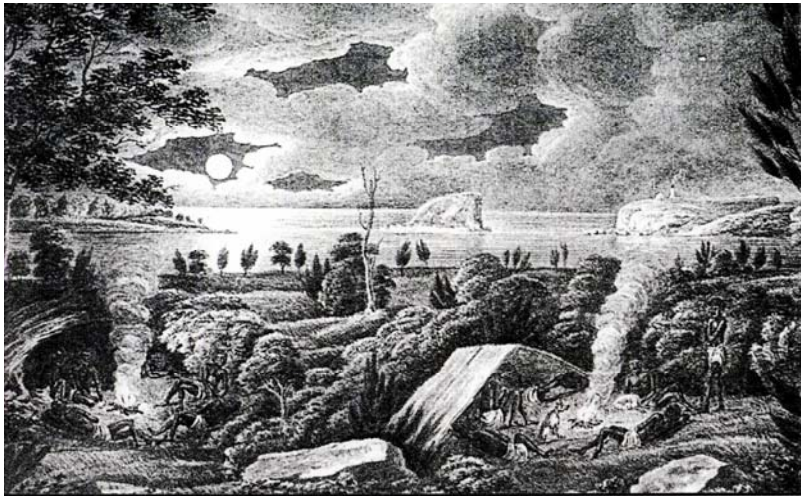


Fig. 2 Watercolour by Joseph Lycett, circa 1810, Aborigines in the foreground, the Hunter River and Nobbys beyond to the north east. (Mitchell Library)

Coal and other Things

The Hunter Valley is located on the northern edge of a vast coal basin where inclined coal seams emerge near the surface in various parts of the valley. Coal was quite obvious to Lieutenant

John Shortland when he visited the Hunter River on 9th September 1797, while returning from Port Stephens to Port Jackson, after a futile coast search for escaped convicts. The existence of coal in the area was known, apparently, to escaping convicts Mary and William Bryant several years earlier. By 1798 coal was being dug from the cliffs by traders but it was not until 1801 that the Government showed real interest. In June, newly appointed Governor King sent his Lieutenant Governor, Colonel Paterson, from Port Jackson to the Hunter River (Coal Harbour) with a composite party on the busy survey ship HMS 'Lady Nelson'. Paterson sent back ample coal and recommended his perceived virtues of the area, proposing a permanent settlement. He saw the principal potential in coal and pasture lands and added a future for salt, shell for lime, and fish, all readily available resources for a permanent white settlement.

The party was not well prepared and lacked on-going leadership after Paterson's early return to Port Jackson and the first attempt at permanent white settlement was abandoned after six months.

But the idea of settlement, just to the north, made an impression on Governor King.

The permanent settlement

It was the Vinegar Hill Rebellion, of 5th March 1804, that provoked King into thinking further. The armed insurrection, occurring between Castle Hill and Parramatta, involving over 200 mostly transported Irish, was quickly put down by the military. Fearing lawlessness and insurrection in the colony, the Governor hastily instructed that preparations be made for the immediate establishment of a punishment settlement at the Hunter River with the express purpose of sending there some prisoners from the uprising.

On 28th March 1804, just three weeks after the rebellion, a modest fleet comprising HMS 'Lady Nelson', an armed brig of 60 tons, plus the colonial cutter 'Resource' and the sloop 'James', set sail for the 60 sea mile journey north, under the command of Lieutenant Charles Menzies. The landing party comprised, in addition to the Commandant, 5 staff, 10 soldiers and 34 prisoners. The Governor directed the geographical names of Newcastle, Coal Harbour and Hunter River in the County of Northumberland, extending south to Broken Bay.

Arrival

Among the prisoners were '2 carpenters, 3 sawyers, a gardener, a salt boiler and miners', basic skills that would soon be put to work. They arrived in Coal Harbour at 12 noon on 30th March 1804, Easter Eve. Menzies later reported:
'I found ... a most delightful Valley about ¼ mile from the entrance and South Head and close to the Mines. I immediately ordered a disembarkment to take place and began to unload the three Vessels' – a logical choice of site and naturally sheltered from the southerly weather.

It is probable that from the first unloading point ashore a main track was made and progressively extended uphill, roughly assumed to be in the line of Watt Street today.

From previous surveys, it was known that cedar would be available. It was easier to fell and saw, lighter to carry, floated in water when green, had minimal shrinkage, was richly coloured and was wonderful to work. So cedar became popular and thus, eventually, scarce everywhere on the east coast of the colony. Within three weeks some of the party had gone up river to where they called Cedar Arm, later called the Paterson River, and felled some cedar trees. They loaded 26 logs on to the "Lady Nelson" and, with the other vessels filled with coals, the ships returned to Sydney Cove on 20th April 1804 and the white development of the Hunter Valley commenced.

The HMS 'Lady Nelson' made many voyages from Sydney town. Errant prisoners for punishment were shuttled by chance – North to Newcastle, East to Norfolk Island or South to Tasmania – an uncertain future indeed. For several years the numbers at the tiny Newcastle penal settlement remained at about 100. Coal was mined at the town, shell was burnt for lime at Fullerton Cove and the hinterland was progressively penetrated via the rivers for its cedar and prime hardwoods by convict labour and by enterprising traders. In 1811 Governor Macquarie made a visit which included an inspection of 20 miles up river. He was impressed with progress and gave his imprimatur to more land being used for farming. Unlimited expansion was a problem to him in enforcing law and order, with limited spare martial personnel, but on the other hand the colony required more food to be grown.

Shelter – First Buildings

During the Macquarie years the settlement grew tenfold but up to around 1816 no substantial buildings had been built in the Hunter. Small cottages and barracks, branching out from a track from the harbour wharf, were mostly single storey, framed with pit-sawn timbers, the pitched roofs being covered with available materials of bark, reeds or, later, timber shingles and the walls made of timber slabs or lath and plastered with clay or a mixture with lime. No doubt much repair and upkeep was necessary. It is interesting that Commandant Menzies originally brought with him a small prefabricated timber building from Parramatta, either for his own personal comfort and protection or perhaps as a model to demonstrate construction.

Larger buildings

It was not until the command of Captain Wallis, from 1816 to 1818, that more permanent buildings were erected.



Fig. 3 *Newcastle around 1818*
looking to the north east from the Hill

Governor Macquarie was an advocate of emancipation and saw an advantage in free settlement. He forwarded to London his ambitious requests for Sydney's development. He was told by Lord Liverpool, the Colonial Secretary, that if free settlers could not pay for buildings, wharves, bridges and roads, then the Colony was not sufficiently advanced to need them. As His Honour had said nothing too specific, Macquarie used his authority and adopted a policy of employing much convict labour to construct permanent necessary buildings for the colony, for example some of the Francis Greenway buildings in Sydney. Although there is no comparison with early Sydney, it is not too long a bow to draw that Macquarie's policy intended to extend to Newcastle but there is no evidence to hand.

In 1818 the brick and stone Christ Church replaced a wooden structure on the Hill, followed elsewhere by a gaol, hospital, stores and barracks. None of these buildings survive today, demolished by re-development in the expanding town of East Newcastle or because of deteriorating masonry walls in an aggressive and damp marine environment.

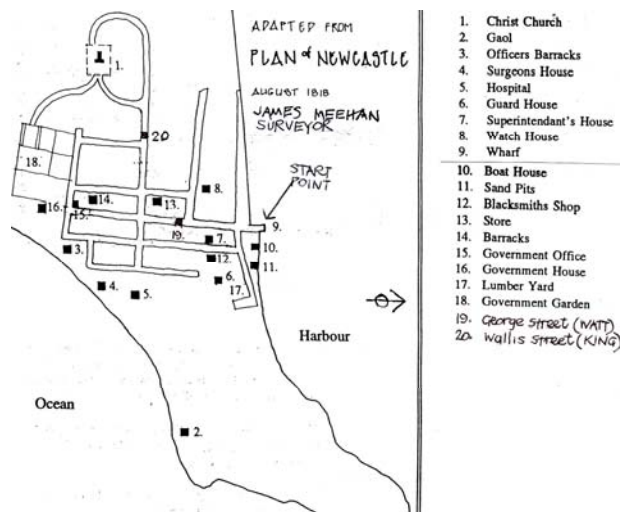


Fig.4 Newcastle town around 1818, Captain Wallis commandant.

Just as the colonising Roman Empire legions had design skills for works, so was the British Military, in their colonial expansion, familiar with the erection of fortifications and buildings. It is likely then that the early basic masonry buildings were designed in some way by Corps officers, perhaps assisted by carpenter convicts. Convict, Joseph Lycett, the early landscape and scene painter, who copied out plans from books brought out by Mrs Macquarie, was said to have had a hand in the design of Christ Church, Newcastle.

In Sydney, convict brick maker James Bloodsworth built early buildings to his own design in the 1790s. The first trained architect in the colony was D. D. Matthews, a free settler in 1813. Convict Francis Greenway, free settler Henry Kitchen and army Lieutenant John Watts were three architects arriving together on the convict transport 'General Hewitt' in 1814. No doubt they were too busy in Sydney Town or not required for Newcastle, although Greenway did visit, with Governor Macquarie, in 1818, and claimed that he, Greenway, and not Commandant Wallis, had suggested a causeway to connect Nobbys Island with Colliers Point, construction of which soon started. The causeway became a significant breakwater protecting the harbour and provided the popular Nobby's Beach to seaward.

The beach became nationally famous when the bulk carrier 'Pasha Bulker' was driven onto the beach during a storm in 2007, sticking fast between the flags.

Explorers and Surveyors

Sea going navigators had no monopoly on white exploration of the region. Surveyors and explorers too were accumulating land information. Under Government instructions, Surveyor Charles Grimes spent a week at Port Stephens in 1795 and James Meehan with Grimes went on a boat survey on the Hunter River in 1801. Surveyor John Oxley, having given up the Royal Navy for the land in 1818, approached the Liverpool Range and plains from

the west, just beyond the head of the Hunter Valley. In 1823, Explorer William Lawson, who was familiar with crossing mountains since 1813, came across the Goulburn River, the Hunter's western-most tributary. In 1824, a Government surveyor, Henry Dangar, followed the Hunter to Muswellbrook and recorded much of the plains country north of there. Thus, by the mid-1820s, all the extent of the valley was known to white officialdom. Settlements had already grown along the Hunter and its branches as land was taken up by settlers. Maitland, the limit of navigation by river, and Morpeth served as ports for arriving settlers, workers and families, and as return transport for timber and produce. The pace quickened after 1822 when the Newcastle penal settlement was closed, martial law lifted and Newcastle declared a free town. Maitland had already been a free town since 1818.

Enter the A A Co.

Following Commissioner Bigge's 1822 report to the British Government, the potential of the Hunter valley came to the notice of commercial interests in London. In 1824, with the approval of the British Government, the Australian Agricultural Company received its Royal Charter to take up a large area of land in NSW and the sole right to work the coal at Newcastle, royalties to be paid to the Government for the coal extracted. For this purpose a grant of land was provided surrounding the south and west boundaries of the government town of Newcastle. With the sea to the east and the harbour to the north, the company held the key to the growth of the town, later owning and selling subdivided land. The involvement of such a company in Newcastle and Port Stephens gave legitimacy to further development and exploitation of the valley.

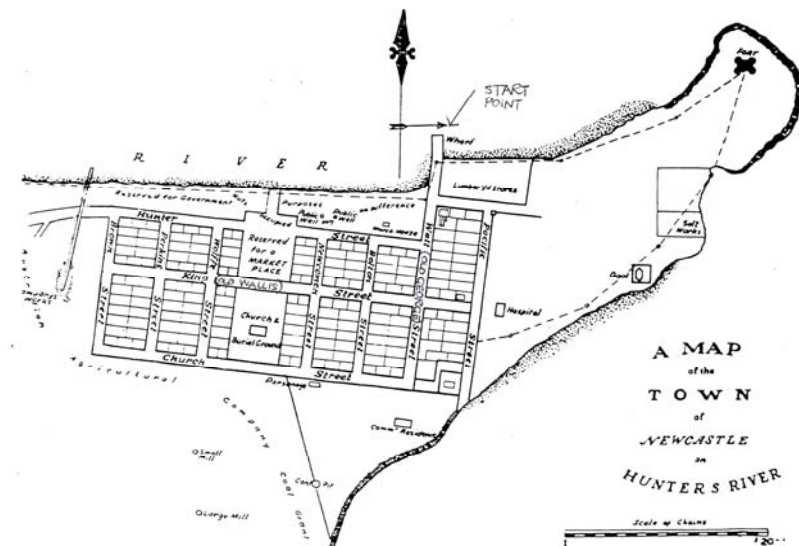


Fig. 5 Assistant Government Surveyor Henry Dangar's layout of Newcastle town 1824.

Later Building

In the late 1820s and early 1830s many substantial buildings began to appear in the recently declared river towns and the countryside. The first generation buildings were, of necessity, of a temporary nature until fortunes improved to afford a cottage, farmhouse or homestead. A typical settler who arrived from England in 1824 was William Sparke who, with his wife Mary, five sons and workers, took up 2000 acres (810 hectares) with river access at Hexham. They grew wheat and maize and soon built a large house, 'Barralimber', later to become a hotel. It was two storeys, built of brick with ten rooms, a brick kitchen and dairy at the rear, stables and a chaise house.

It was highly unlikely that these second generation buildings had, or needed, trained architects. The pattern of buildings, which could be said to be based on Georgian principles of symmetry, was commonly known and simple in concept. The basic unit was

the room averaging three or more metres square, provided with a door for access and with a window one tenth of the floor area for light, a half opening for ventilation, . The deeper the room the higher the window was placed to light the interior. The rooms were usually arranged on either side of an entrance to form a symmetrical composition, the whole being linked together by a verandah. Economy of construction or lack of ground led to additional stories, dormer rooms and attics. The range of materials and finishes were limited, plain, simple and of utility with very little embellishment. Walls were, more desirably, made of brick of a thickness depending on height. Floor and roof timbers were appropriate to the spans. Roofs were split shingles, ceilings were either sawn boarding or lath and plaster and floors timber, stone, brick or tile, sometimes rammed earth.

Not all buildings were ordinary. Major early homesteads, such as Windeyer's 'Tomago House' (1841-47) were almost certainly designed by architects only available via Sydney. George Hobler's 'Aberglassyn', near Maitland, (1840), was designed by prominent architect John Verge from Sydney

The Early Building Trade

Demand for houses, shops, stores, farm buildings and hotels soon led to a new and growing industry. The buildings, being simple and modest, relied mostly on the manual craft of building and did not require complex design.

Much early trade labour, to around the 1850s, employed convicts either settler assigned, ticket-of-leave, Government or freed. These skills were supplemented with builders who sometimes styled themselves as architects and designed their own projects, such as George Pender of Maitland, uncle of John W. Pender a later prominent architect of historic Maitland.

Architects providing a service in the district were very rare and probably deferred to Sydney architects, who could travel conveniently by steam-boat to the Hunter from 1831 and who had more expertise and training in designing larger buildings such as homesteads and the more prevalent banks.

West Maitland, being a private town and centre of commerce, had a head start on Newcastle town. In the 1841 census the Maitland area had a population of 3355, including convicts, three times that of Newcastle.

After the late 1840s, when coal was free from the AA Company monopoly, Newcastle's growth surged ahead resulting in frenetic development and the demolishing of most of the early buildings. A lesser scale of re-development in the Maitland area has saved many of its pre-1850s buildings.

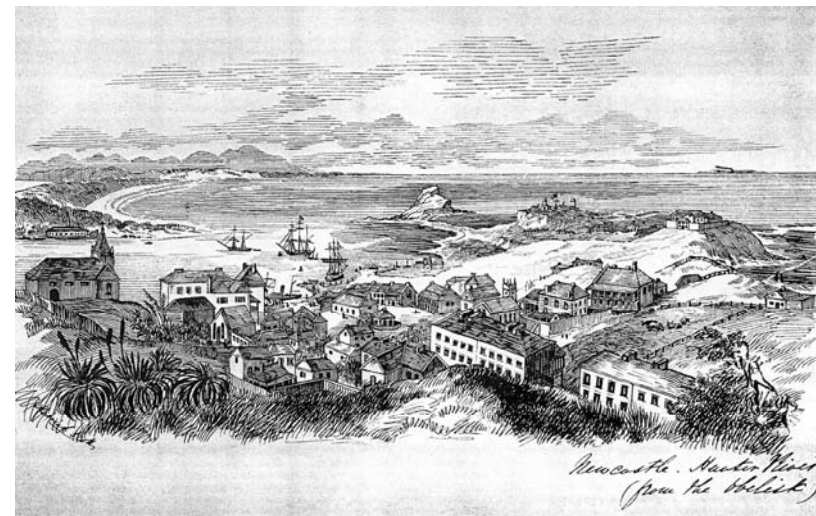


Fig. 6 Newcastle in the 1850s – gaol extreme right, Christ Church on the left, again looking north east from the Hill.

Transport

The growth of white settlement of the Hunter Valley was influenced a great deal by the evolution of transport. Up to 1831 only sailing ships plied between Maitland, Morpeth and Sydney, the smaller vessels only from Maitland. The one way journey to Sydney could take several days depending on wind and tide. Even the navigation of the river would often wait upon the tide or several tides. The boats provided transport for the developing farms around Maitland and along the Paterson and Williams rivers. The lower Hunter soon became the granary of the colony.

The Steam Age

The coming of the steam engine was a stimulant to development. During the time of Cook's voyages, 'back home' Newcomen's steam engine was being perfected by James Watt. At the time of Newcastle's permanent settlement, in 1804, the first steam locomotive was running on rails in England and steam engines were being fitted in sailing ships. With the new Steam Age, it is not surprising that assistant Government Surveyor Henry Dangar's plan of 1824 renamed some Newcastle streets after the engineers: for example – Watt, Perkins, Boulton (Bolton), Newcomen and Telford.

Coal was now a commodity in demand. The journey time between Morpeth and Sydney was considerably shortened by the 'Sophia Jane', the first steam boat to make the run, in 1831.

By co-incidence the Great North Road from Sydney, via Wiseman's Ferry and Wollombi to Maitland, was completed in the same year but land travel was no competition for the sea route, reason enough for the road to be neglected as a principal route to the valley and almost abandoned.

Travel

The first steam line in the Hunter ran between Maitland and Newcastle in 1857 although there was still river traffic until well into the 20th century. The railway was easily extended to Singleton in 1863 and on to Murrurundi, then over the more difficult Liverpool Ranges to Tamworth in 1878. Newcastle was then connected with a convenient transport route to a vast productive hinterland. Boom times followed with world wide demand for wool, wheat and coal and the port of Newcastle grew in importance. Commerce also increased in the valley with the direct rail link from Sydney over the Hawkesbury River in 1889.

It was said of prominent Maitland Architect, John W. Pender, at his death, in 1917, that *'he knew Maitland in the days when it was the Emporium of the north, in the roaring days when bullock teams from the north and north-west brought wool-laden wagons to Morpeth... He saw the decline of Maitland's great commercial centre following the extension of the Great Northern Line.'*

The boundaries had indeed expanded from Sydney town.

References Include –

Damaris Bairstow – *A Million Pounds A Million Acres*
City of Newcastle – *150 Years 1947*
Cox, Tanner, Walker – *The Hunter Valley*
W J Goold – *The Birth of Newcastle*
W J Goold – *The Growth of Newcastle*
Morton Herman – *Early Australian Architects*
Turner and Sullivan – *From Nobbys to Paterson*

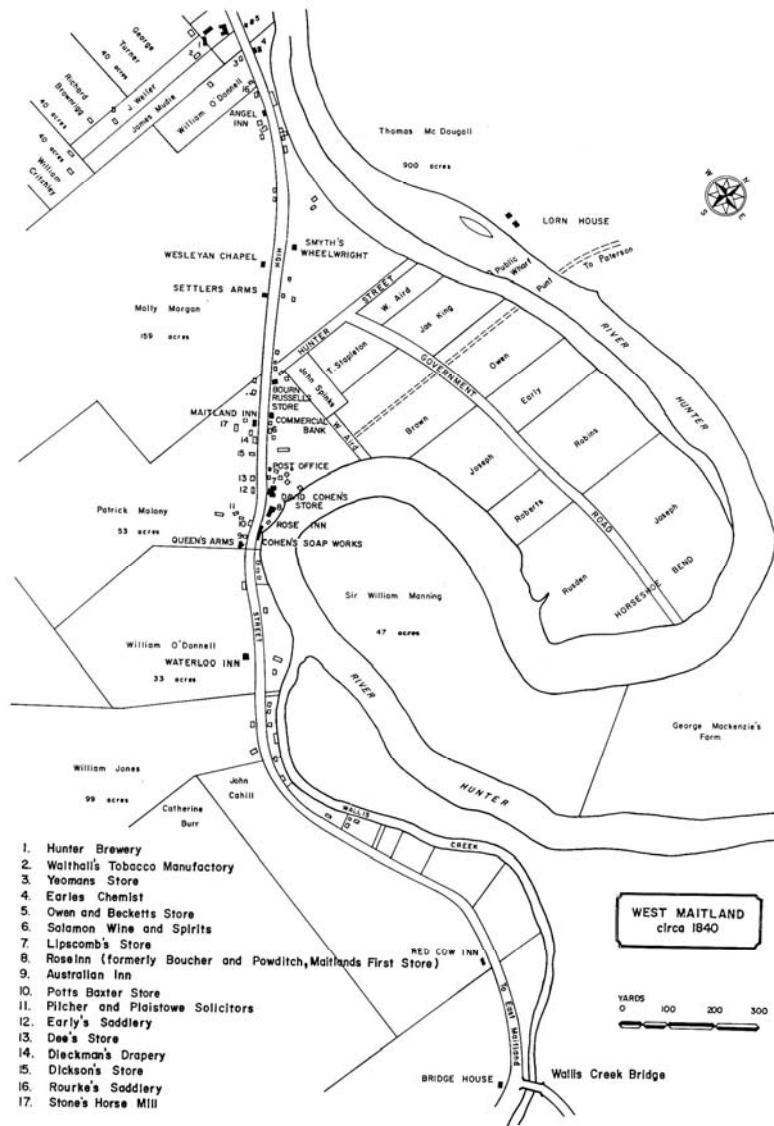


Fig. 7 Plan of West Maitland
 taken from
'The Rise of the High Street, Maitland' by John Turner.



Fig. 8 View of West Maitland from the Hunter by F. Terry (1853)
 taken from
'The Hunter Valley' by Cox, Tanner and Walker.



*Villa Residence 'Cintra', 34 Regent Street, Maitland. J. W. Pender, architect, 1878.
(Historical photograph)*



Tower addition 'Jesmond House', Barker Street, Newcastle. James Henderson, architect, 1885.

THE COMING OF THE ARCHITECT

or

HELP IS ON THE WAY

The Architect

The name Architect comes from antique Greek and designates a director of works or overseer technician as distinct from an artisan. It also later came to apply to a master mason.

Other than with buildings, the name has widely become to mean a creator or an initiator of something. In Elizabethan times, Shakespeare used the phrase '*Chief Architect of these woes*'.

The media has phrases such as '*the General was the architect of the Marshall Plan*' or '*the Minister was the architect of the Legislation*'.

The first recorded architect in history was reputed to be the Egyptian, Imhotep, about 2800 BC. His finest work was the Step Pyramid of Sakkara, for which he used new ideas in a grouped arrangement of chapels and courts, a departure from earlier isolated or single pyramids of Egypt.

It seems that prominent architects in more recent history have been known for their ideas, philosophies or art forms. The influential renaissance Italian architect Andrea Palladio (1508-80) was preoccupied with the classical proportions of ancient Roman architecture and composed the elements of facades by combining attached and freestanding columns with arches accordingly. Sir Christopher Wren (1632-1723) in London relied on geometry and mathematics, Frank Lloyd Wright (1867-1959) was known for 'organic' architecture in his 'natural' houses in the USA, and so on.

Thus, architecture involves more than drawing skill although the ability to visualise space in simple three dimensions and so to illustrate graphically and present ideas was, and is, necessary for success.

The first Local Architects

In the 19th century, when the first professional Hunter architects appeared, the skills of an architect were acquired in various ways. The Scott brothers, Robert and Helenus of Singleton had an early amateur interest in building design in the 1830s but had had no training. Among the early architects, John W. Pender was articled to an architect in Scotland and attended, part time, the Royal Academy of Inverness and he worked with his builder uncle when he came to Maitland in 1857. James Henderson, also from Scotland, was said to be trained as an architect and was a builder first in Newcastle in 1863. Peter Bennett was apprenticed to a London building firm and started his building business in Newcastle in 1875.

The only early architect who had a thorough building and architectural training was German born Frederick Menkens, who from the age of 13 worked for 5 years at building trades in the summer and attended technical school in the winter, after which he claimed to have completed a 4 year full time architectural diploma in Hannover in 1876, also with some work experience in architect's offices. He set up practice in Newcastle in 1882. There were though, many in the 1880s who nominated themselves publicly as architects who, no doubt, had only a passing knowledge of architecture and could not sustain a public practice beyond a year or two, as is revealed in the list of architect's practices.

Evolution of Practices

Pender of Maitland, and Henderson, Bennett and Menkens of Newcastle, formed the basis of the architectural profession in the Hunter from which a second generation of architects would gain their training. The first locally born architect was Ernest George Yeomans of Newcastle who is assumed to have been articled to Bennett and later became his partner in 1884. J. Warren Scobie of



*Keightley Villa (built 1885), The Terrace, Newcastle
Frederick B. Menkens, architect.*

Maitland was articled to Pender around 1881. Thomas Silk, who was born in Eden NSW, was articled to a Sydney firm and came to Maitland to join Pender in 1890. Further experience came when Frederick Castleden, who had his training in England articled to an architect, arrived from Sydney to join Menkens in 1907.

A major firm between the wars was Pitt and Merewether. E. H. R. Merewether was from Newcastle and was articled, with N. B. Pitt, to a Sydney firm in 1909, while attending, part-time, the Sydney Technical College Architecture School which was formed in the 1890s. At that stage the school did not extend to Newcastle and students had to make their own arrangements to acquire the skills of an architect.

E. C. Sara became an articled student to Pitt and Merewether around 1918, while taking the American International Correspondence School's course in architecture as did William Dobell when articled to Wallace Porter. From 1925, after the passing of the Architects Registration Act 1921, Newcastle's



*Mechanics Institute (built 1894), Elder Street, Lambton
Peter Bennett, architect.*

architecture students attended Newcastle Technical College part-time and travelled to Sydney for the final years of the course, all while working in an architect's office.

N. B. Pitt was the teacher-in-charge at Newcastle until 1938 when the course temporarily ceased. These arrangements for Newcastle applied after the war into the 1960s after which the autonomous School of Architecture was formed within the

University of Newcastle providing a full time course in Architecture.

In the 1870s architects in Australia began to form themselves into Institutes or Associations. The New South Wales Institute of Architects was formed in Sydney in 1871 with just a few of the City's prominent architects. Among those leading Sydney architects were George Mansfield, Thomas Rowe, Sir John Sulman and Horbury Hunt to name a few.

It is interesting that the organisation was first named '*The NSW Society for the Promotion of Architecture and Fine Art*' with an objective being 'Scientific knowledge and the promotion of friendly intercourse between its members'.

With the formation of the rival 'Academy of Arts' the Society changed its name to the more formal name of the NSW Institute of Architects.

It was not until the late 1870's that the Institute began to have regular meetings. F. B. Menkens was an early member and most others from Newcastle gradually followed under the proposer system. The Institute federated with other states and received its Royal Charter in 1929.

Local Association

Separately, in December 1925, the architects of Newcastle and Maitland formed their own association as suggested by Sir Charles Rosenthal, the NSW President.

Twenty leading Newcastle and Maitland architects attended a meeting and elected F. G. Castleden, President; H. P. Cranna and W. H. Pender, Vice-Presidents; E. C. Sara, Secretary; N. B. Pitt, Auditor; and a committee of T. J. Pepper, E. R. H. Merewether and A. C. Castleden.

The Architect's Act

Another event was to impact on architects. With development of technology and the manufacture of industrial materials, new buildings were becoming more complex. Governments required standards from the profession. A Bill to register architects was put forward to the British Parliament in 1888 but it was not until 1908 that such a bill was formulated in NSW, although there had been talk about it at the Registration of Surveyors in 1857.

After much argument, not least among the subjects of the Bill, the Architects Registration Bill NSW passed into law on 10th November 1921. The Bill set up a Board and mainly required that architects be registered and that registration depended on qualifications. It protected the name Architect and allowed only architects to practice architecture – whatever that was to mean.

The first NSW registration roll was published in 1923 and, out of 380 architects, 23, or 6%, were from the Hunter. In more recent times the proportion has steadily increased to a constant 10%, probably indicating that it had been much more difficult to become a qualified architect in Newcastle than in Sydney. One early proviso was that an architect without formal qualifications or long standing practice had to have 5 years experience in an existing architectural office prior to 1923. Whether by design or co-incidence this allowed soldiers returning from the war to join an office and qualify. Such a soldier was A. C. Castleden.

Architects and Regional Growth

The region's growth was principally influenced by coal mining for export and by the rapidly expanding manufacturing and heavy industries. The construction of buildings was a necessary and equal response to growth. Maitland assumed its role earlier to serve agriculture and settlement of the valley whilst, later, Newcastle became the port for export and industry.

Both centres developed substantial buildings, many of which still serve a useful purpose.

Although Sydney architects designed most principal non-government buildings, for example St Mary's Star of the Sea Church, Perkins Street, Newcastle 1866 by William Munro or AMP Building, Hunter Street, Newcastle 1927 by Apperly and Wright, local architects were commissioned for some equally major projects. These are illustrated in the various biographies and include the Mater Hospital, Waratah, 1935 by P. J. Gannon, the Menken's Newcastle warehouses and the Town Hall, High Street, Maitland 1889 by Lee and Scobie. It is notable that in 'Architecture Newcastle - A Guide' (by Maitland and Stafford of the University of Newcastle), of buildings of interest and quality in Greater Newcastle, 127 in the period 1840 to 1940, half are by local architects. The others are by Sydney architects including the Government Architect of NSW.



*Maitland Town Hall (built 1889), High Street, West Maitland.
A. C. Lee & J. Warren Scobie, architects.*



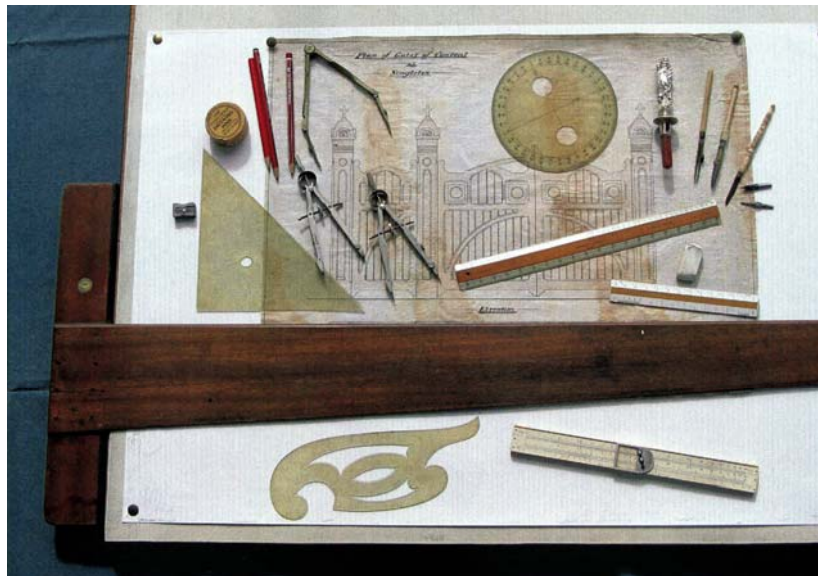
*Court Chambers (built 1898), corner King & Bolton Streets, Newcastle.
Ernest G. Yeomans, architect.*

The position of an effective architectural profession in the Newcastle region was confirmed. Considering that Newcastle was within reasonable travel time from the centre of the State's activity (eight hours or so by sea from 1831 and three by rail from 1889) Sydney architects could probably have provided more input to the region's buildings. As it turned out the local community had sufficient confidence in the local profession for it to make a significant contribution to the architecture of the region.

ARCHITECTS AT WORK or IN THE OFFICE.



*above: inks and equipment for colouring plans.
below: instruments for drawing and measuring.*



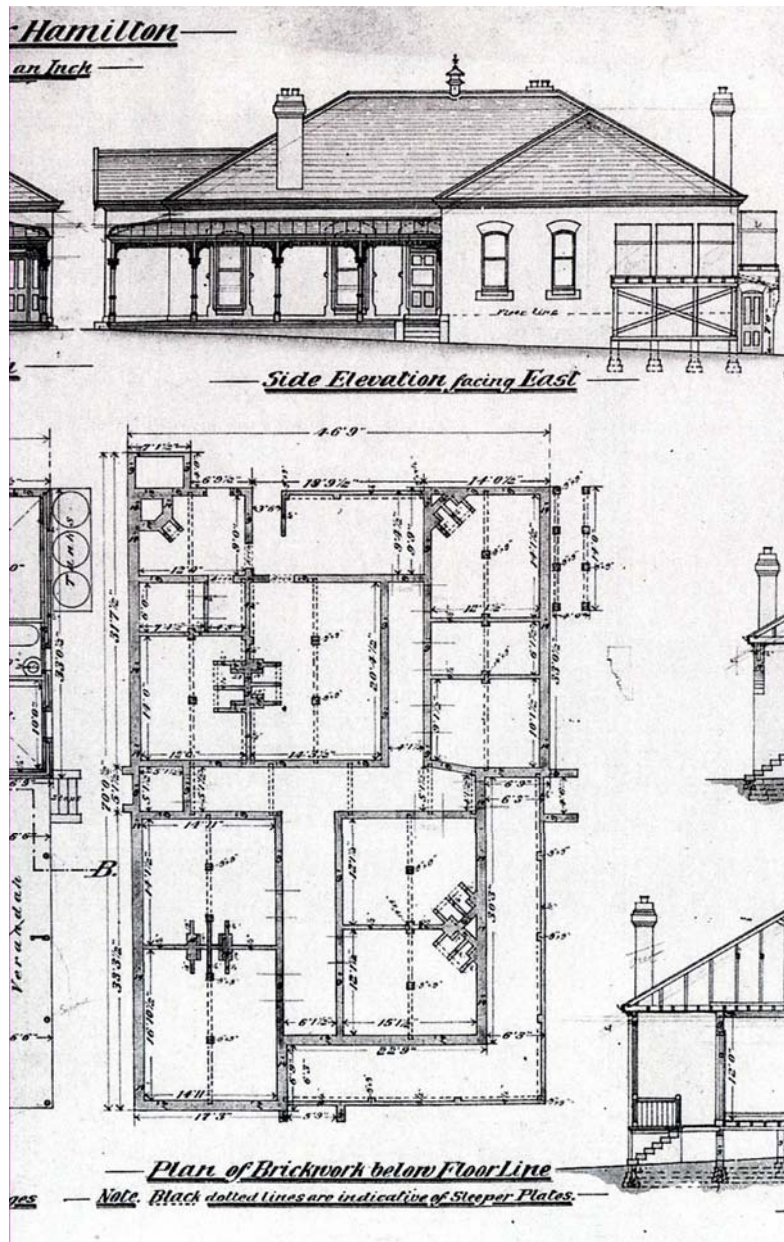
Today's office.

The contemporary architect's office is infinitely more complex and sophisticated than in earlier times. As well as normal business office technology of word processing and dispatch and receipt of information by post, fax, electronic mail or internet, architect's drawings can be made on computer screens, magnified or reduced at will. Clients expect instant computer images that can 'walk' them through their project. Even voluminous contract drawings and specifications for large projects, which once almost needed a trolley, can be put on disc or tape for convenience.

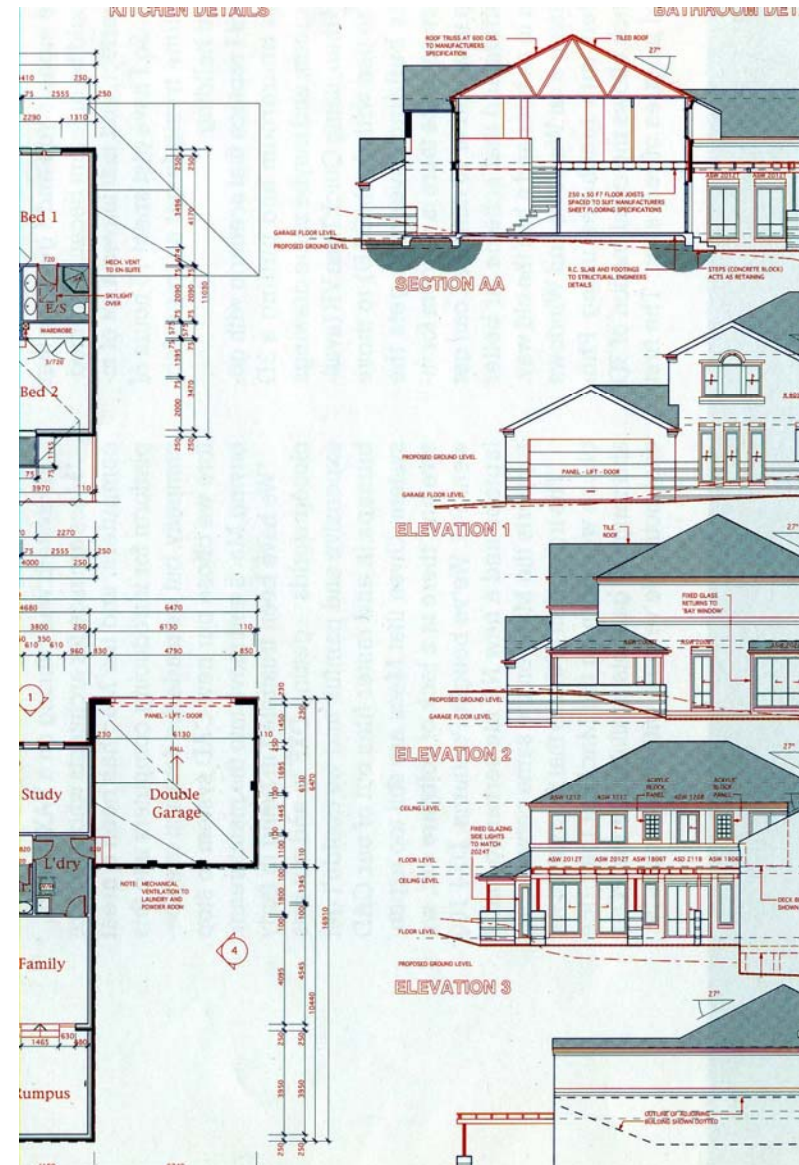
Early tools of trade.

The early architects were limited to manual means. There was the drawing board slightly tilted on a table and reached from a high stool, a tee-square for horizontal lines or later a parallel rule, a set-square for verticals and angles, sometimes finely adjustable for angles and a measuring scale. Later drawing could be made with the swivel drafting arm which was able to provide angles and measurement.

To draw there was a whole range of graphite pencils both hard and soft, adjustable tweezers like pens for ink work, a compass for circles and water colours and brushes for artwork. Just as important were scrapers and rubbers, always at the ready.



Menken's drawing from 1907 for the Rectory at Hamilton



compare a drawing circa 2007 drawn with computer aided design.

For outside work there was the dumpy level and graduated staff and tape for simple surveying of land and buildings.

The drawings.

Rough sketches could be made first on thin cheap translucent 'butter' paper which could be overlaid on other drawings or a previous drawing for tracing in pencil. Outlines could be transferred to white paper by the 'rubbing' method before final drafting.

They usually drafted in ink for final presentation drawings, mostly in black Indian though sometimes coloured, on to hot (smooth) or cold (textured) pressed paper, usually 'Whatmans' or 'Kent' of Imperial or Double Elephant sizes. Copies, if needed, were laboriously made by hand as training for articulated students. Often one original would serve many purposes for client, contract and job, usually gathering a 'dog-eared' character. It was customary that the architect retained the original as recognised copyright. Only the completed project belonged to the client/owner.

Menken's five large drawings of 1892 (see appendix) for Newcastle Town Hall competition (not built) are an extraordinary exhibition of accurate drafting in coloured inks on pressed paper. On close examination of the floor plan the diagonal lines depicting the floor tiles of the concourse meet exactly at opposite walls. It is all the more noteworthy as this medium did not allow any corrections. Many of Menken's drawings have been preserved and show a thoroughness he could only have developed from his early full time training.

J. W. Pender too was a classic draftsman having spent some time at the Royal Academy of Inverness. His many early

drawings have a fineness of line appropriate to his elegant sense of design. The Pender drawings, which include those of his son Walter and grandson Ian, have been preserved in the archives of the University of Newcastle.

The J. Warren Scobie drawings of nearly 50 years of practice filled a shelved room in his 'Scobies Chambers', Maitland, and were discarded in 1946 at the changeover to a new practice – a time in which little importance was given to things historic. Few drawings still exist.

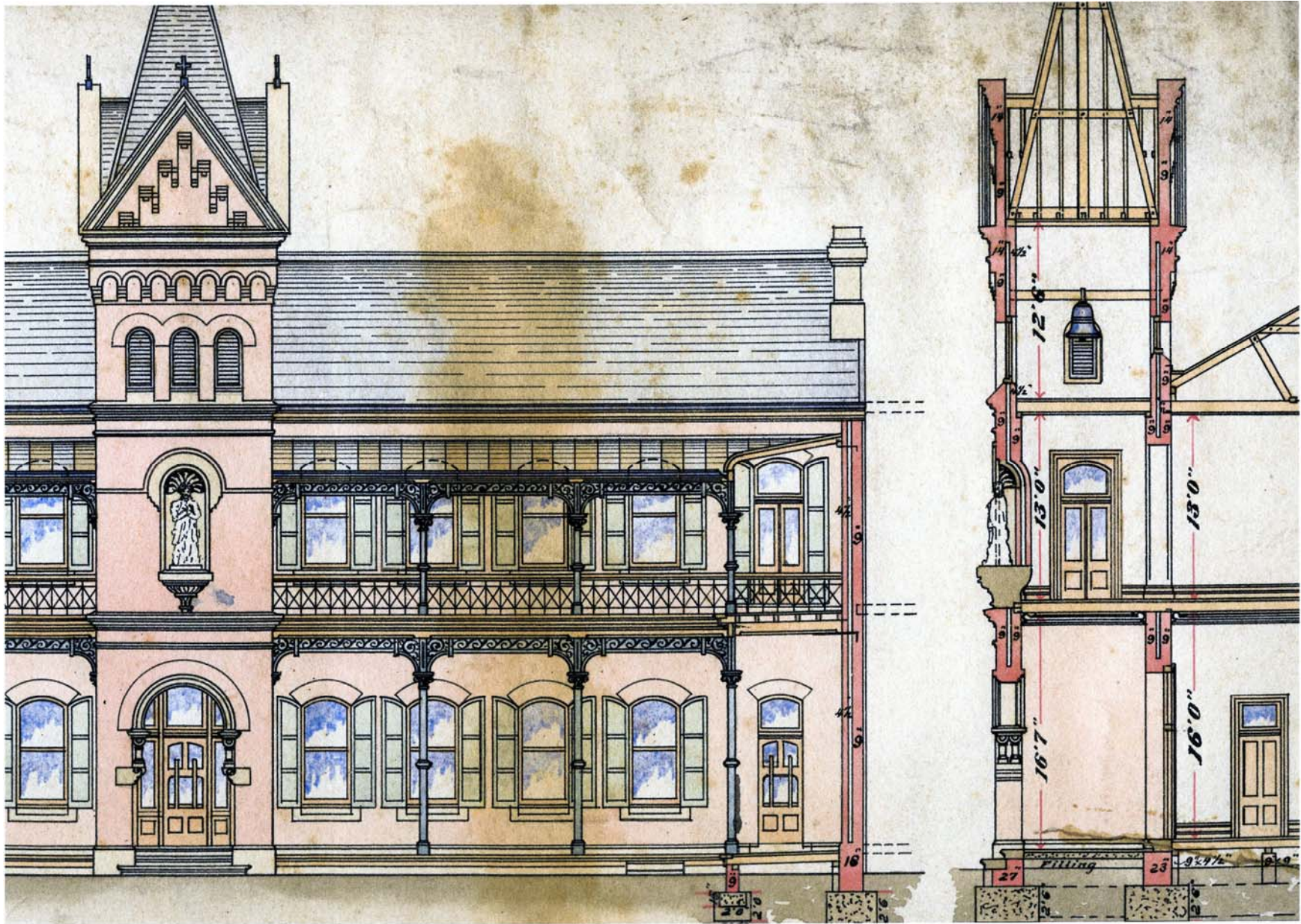
Thomas Silk was also a competent draftsman, as shown by his 1923 coloured drawings of the Lochinvar Chapel. Later drawings by E. C. Sara, who trained at Pitt & Merewether's office, such as the Awaba House (1926) are also examples of craft in drafting.

The Pitt & Merewether drawings 1914-1940 are held in the Newcastle Regional Library and show a variety of drawing styles mostly on linens and tracing paper for plan printing. Although individual authorship cannot always be proved, the early architect's drawings were more of a work of art than an outline for a building.

The final drawing, which showed almost every detail, normally formed the basis of the early contract. The various parts of the building were usually picked out in water colours for clarity to a standard code – yellow for timber, red for brick and so on.

From about the early 1900s when plan printing became available, the originals were drawn straight on transparent backgrounds such as waxed linen or tracing paper. With the advent of plan printing techniques the drawing ceased to take on the appearance of a 'work of art'.

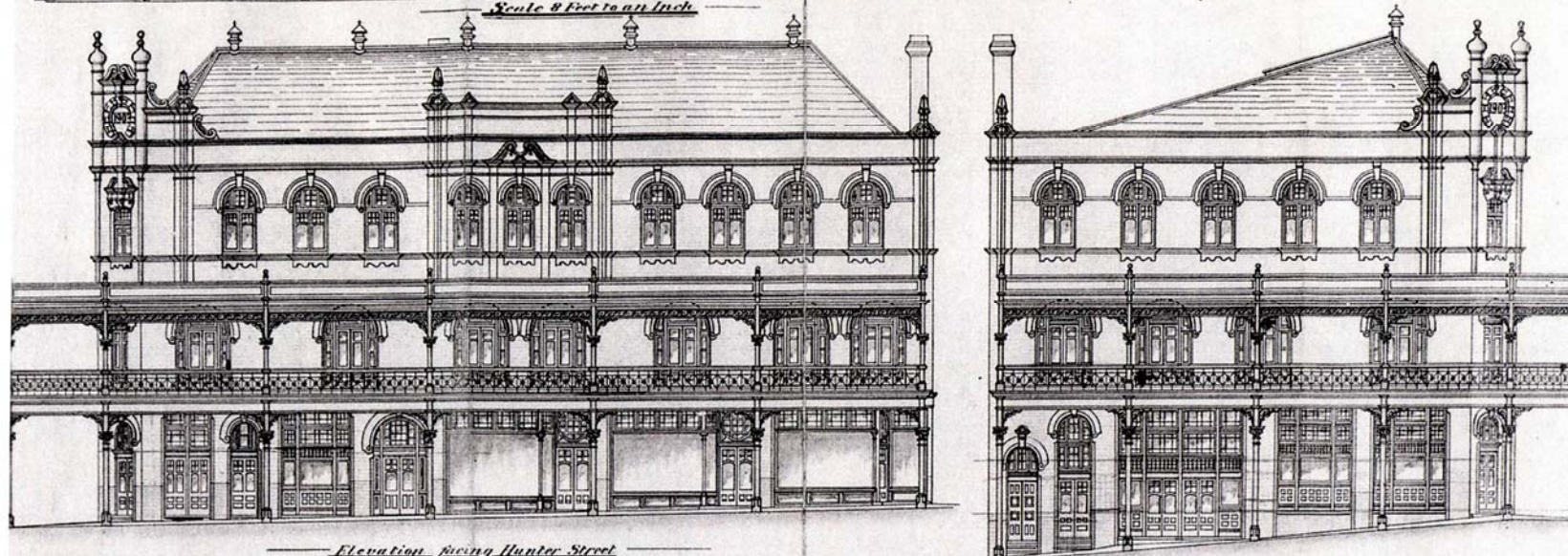
text resumes page 26



*Sample of Menkens' drawing 1892. CONVENT OF OUR LADY OF MERCY, Singleton
Pen and ink with water colour on cold pressed paper. Drawing size reduced to 80%.*

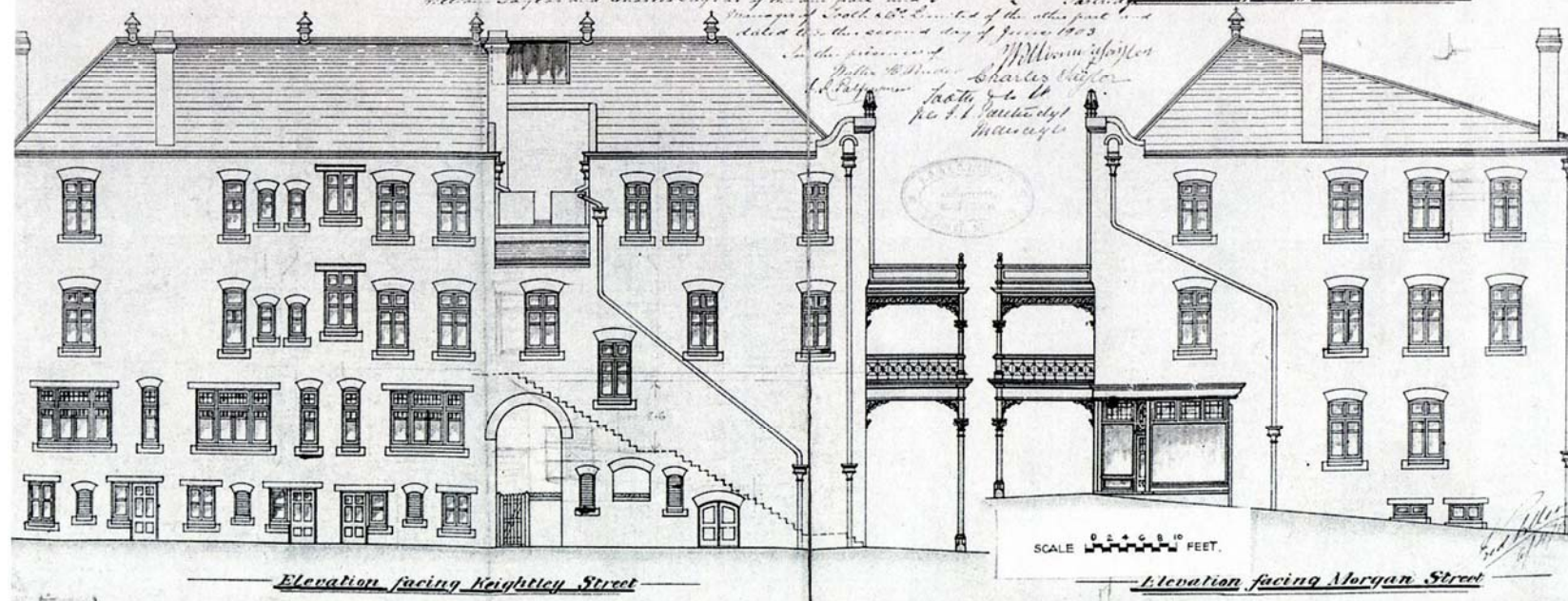
Plan of Buildings at Newcastle for MESS^{rs} ROBIN & CO. LONDON.

Scale 8 Feet to an Inch



Elevation facing Hunter Street

Exhibit Elevation facing Market Street

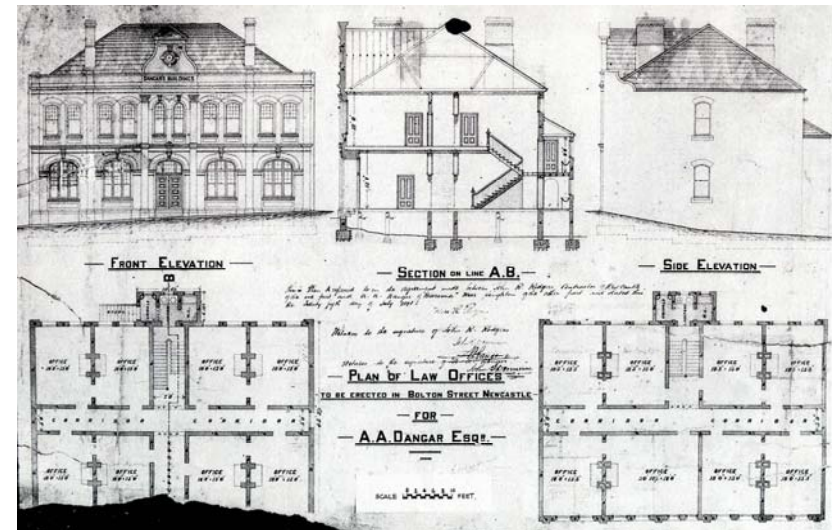
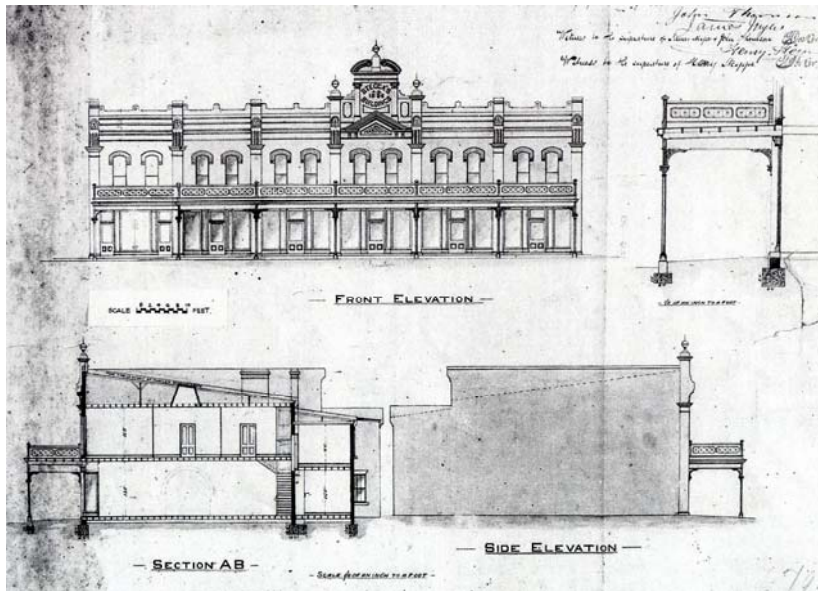


Elevation facing Keightley Street

—Elevation facing Morgan Street

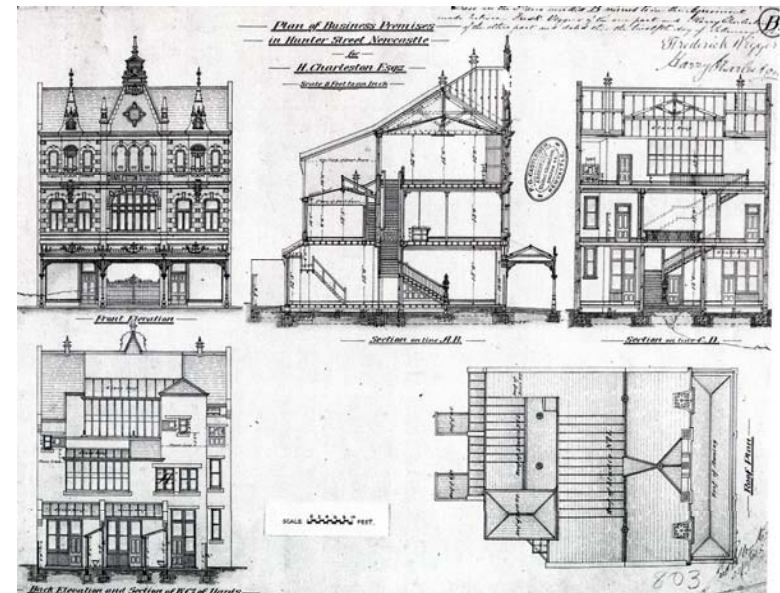
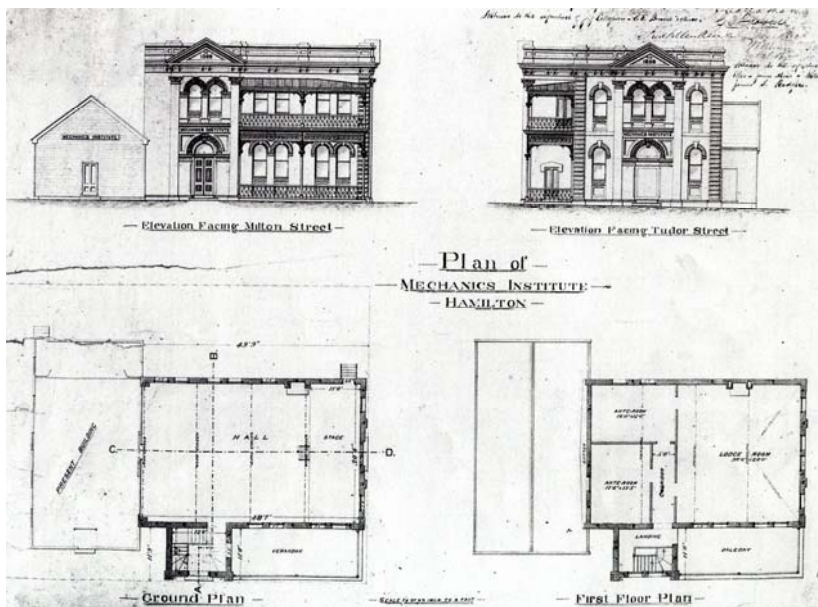
SCALE 0 2 4 6 8 10 FEET

Menkens' drawing of 1903. Hotel on corner of Hunter & Market Streets, Newcastle.



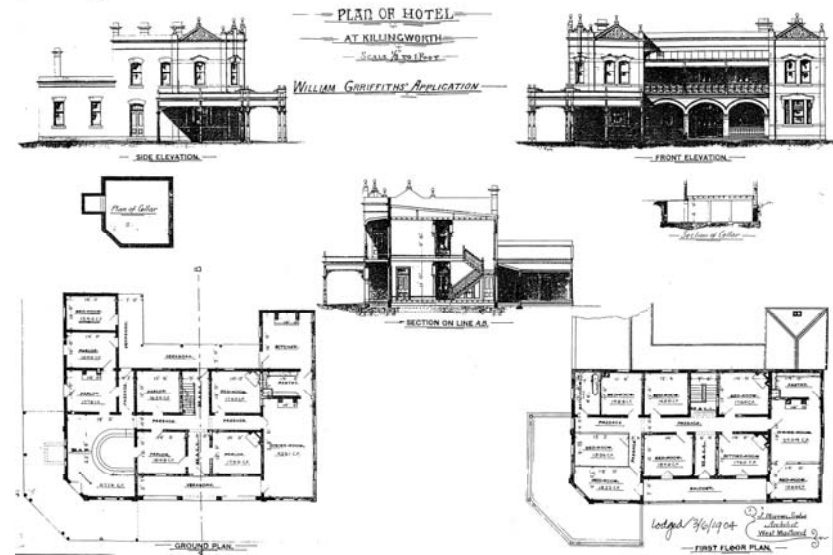
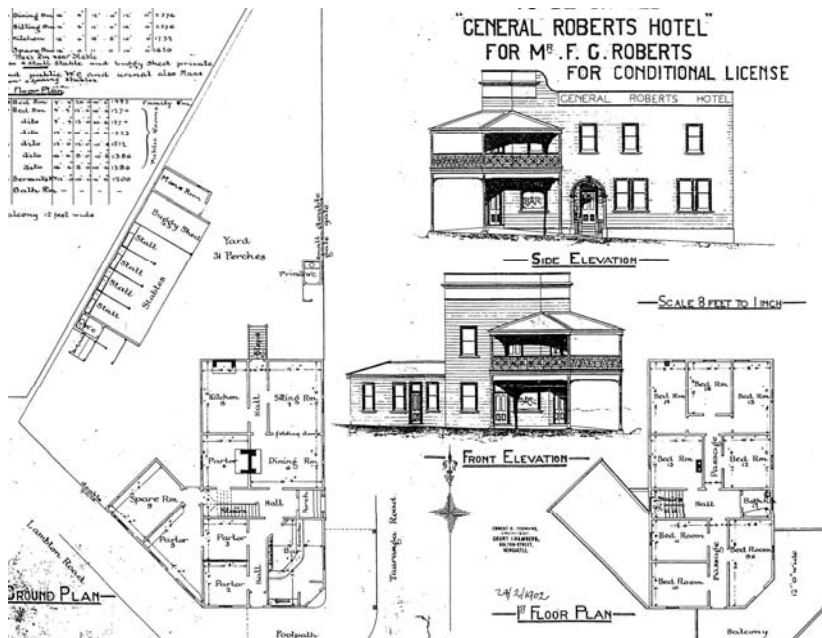
Four Menkens drawings. Above: Steggas Buildings, 1886.
Below: Mechanics Institute, Hamilton, 1888.

Above: Law Offices for A.A. Dangar, Bolton Street, Newcastle, 1891.
Below: Charleston Photographic Studios, Hunter Street, 1906.

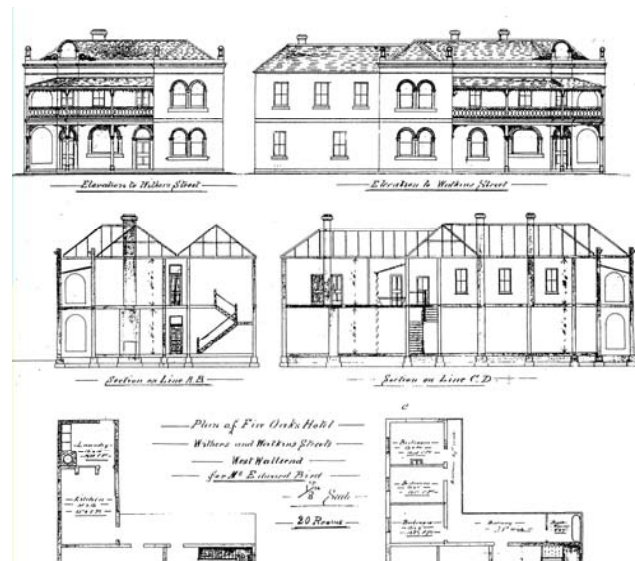


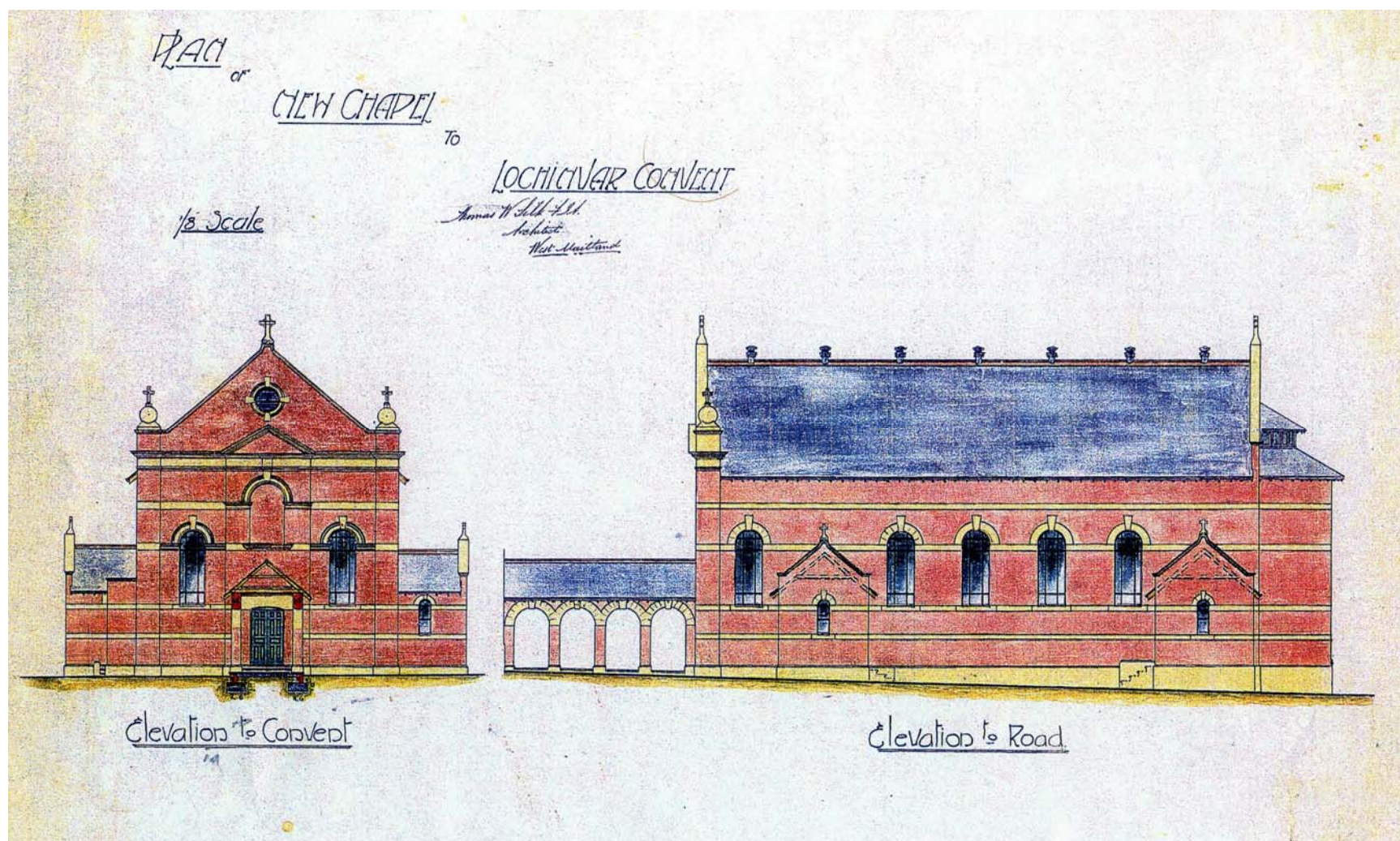


Four hotel drawings: above, Islington, James Henderson architect, undated. Below: Lambton Road, Ernest Yeomans architect, 1902.



Above: Killingworth, J. Warren Scobie architect, 1904
Below: West Wallsend, Peter Bennett architect, 1904





This page and opposite: Chapel drawings by T. W. Silk, architect, 1923.

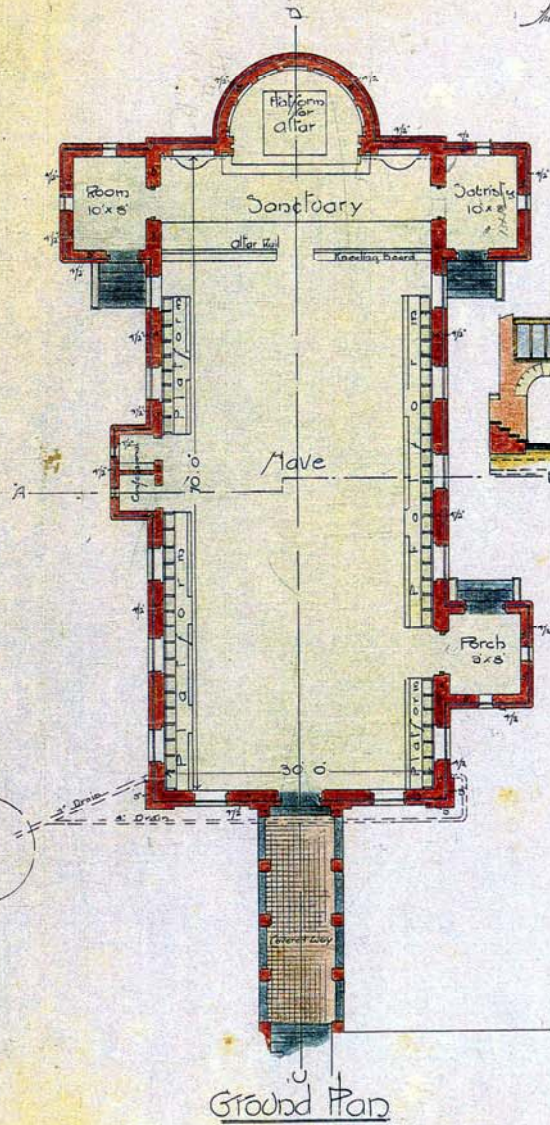
Ink and watercolour on cold pressed paper. Reduced size.

Courtesy of St Josephs Order, Lochinvar.

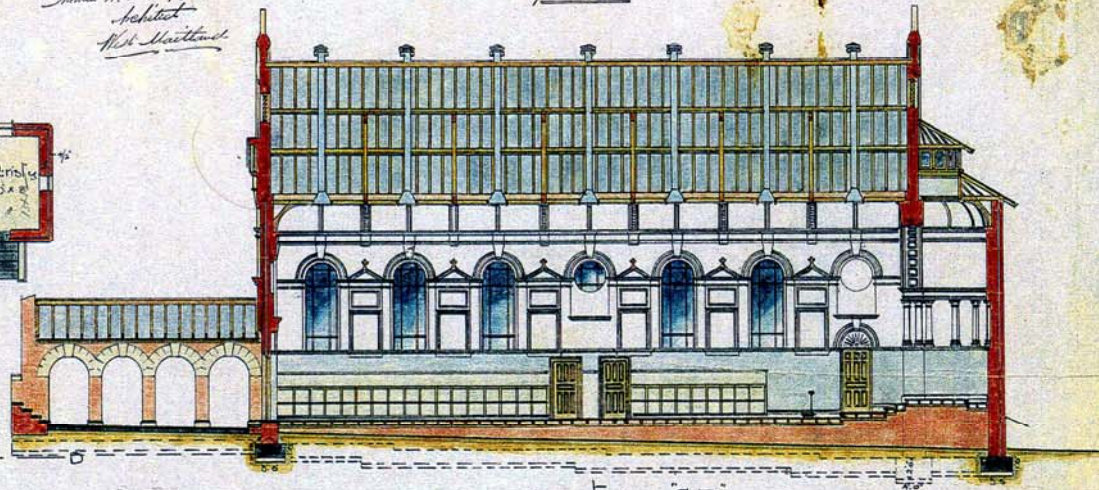
PLAN OF
NEW CHAPEL TO LOCHINVAR CONVENT

James W. Smith & Co.
Architects
1111 Madison St.

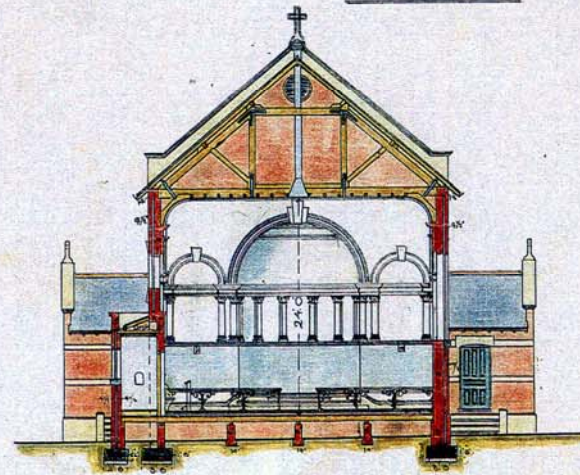
1/8" Scale



Ground Plan



Section C.D.



Section A.D.



Section



Plan of Underground Tank

TO BE RETURNED ON
COMPLETION OF THE WORK

The Specification.

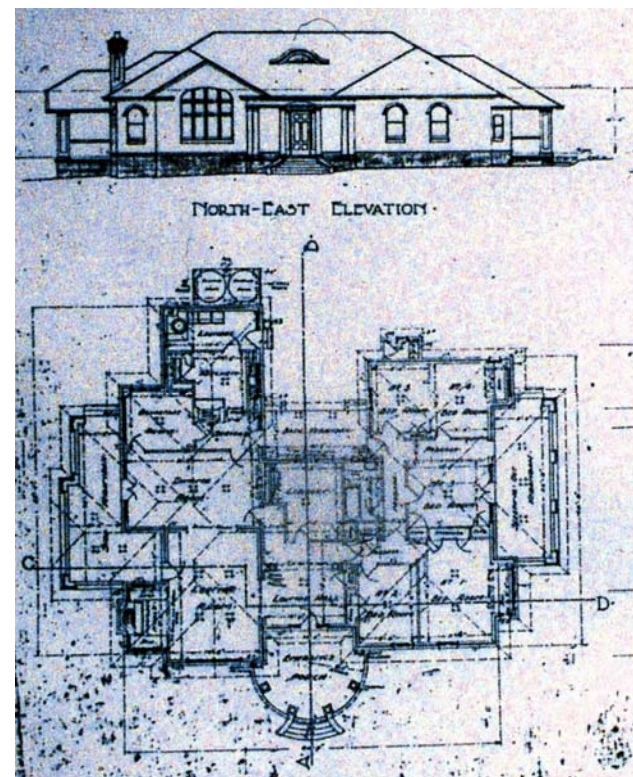
As well as drawings, more detailed written notes became necessary to describe materials and work required. Early drawings sometimes had no notes, the parties to a contract relying on the normally used items of the day, where there was little choice. For example there was only one kind of framed and panelled internal door. Later in the 1800s when choice was expanded and quality became an issue, a long detailed specification was required. These were written longhand and could occupy more time than the drawings. All documents had to be laboriously copied by hand, again a good learning but tedious experience for the student.

Plan Printing.

It was not until around 1900 that reproduction of documents was commercially available resulting in many changes to office practice. Drawings could be on waxed linen or tracing paper and copied onto a coated paper by exposing to light. Light sensitive chemicals were known in 1790s as a prelude to photography, but it was not until 1842 that Sir John Herschel discovered the 'Blueprint' process in England although it originally applied to book printing. Paper sensitised with ferric salts was exposed to light under a translucent or transparent drawing. When immersed in a solution the drawing lines became white on a bluish background in reverse image and, after washing, the paper was hung to dry. In ordinary practical terms the exposure could be done in a glass frame using the sunlight, on a roof or in a window.

A development on the blueprint or cyanotype was the dyeline or diazotype which was demonstrated in France in 1885. The process was improved in 1890's by Green, Cross & Bevan in America possibly to serve the needs of the boom in major multistorey construction. The dyeline process had the

advantage in that washing was not required and it needed only a brief drying period for the liquid developer and later no drying at all if developed with gas. The outline was as positive as the drawing and the process gradually replaced blueprints. These two processes were the main types to come to commercial use. Although the first commercial cylindrical electric plan copier was made by B. J. & B. F. Hall & Co. of London in 1896 it was not until the early 1900s that Newcastle architects began to change their ways of copying drawings so obviously required to reduce the amount of labour and tedium in manual copying.



AWABA HOUSE, BOORAGUL
Drawing by E. C. Sara 1927, pen and ink on linen.

Copying documents.

For written documents, the typewriter was not in general use until the early 1900s or so. The early models of the 1850s were for the blind. In 1867, the American Gunsmith Co., Remingtons, manufactured the first, capitals only, typewriter, changing it to shift keys in 1878 before it came into general use in 1904. Prior to the typewriter, letters and specifications were copied by laborious 'scribing' or by letter press.

Paul Thelander tells that when he bought J. Warren Scobie's Maitland practice in 1945 an item left behind was the screw down letter press. The letter, being written in ink, was placed in face up first, a spirit moistened cloth next, followed by a thin tissue like paper. When the 'sandwich' was pressed together the spirit cloth transferred an ink impression to the underside of the 'tissue' paper. It was better than nothing but only a temporary record.

With the typewriter came carbon paper providing only limited copies, followed, in the 1920s, by the stencil which allowed copies to be printed in inks on the American made 'Gestetner' press and later also on the 'Fordigraph' machine using a spirit. The patent for photo-copying was taken by Chester Carlson, in America, in 1937 although it was not until the 1960s that photocopying provided any choice of copies – a pity for the early architects.

Client Commissions Advertising.

An early architect's work was gained by many means. Apart from projects from friends and social contacts, the architects advertised their services liberally in the tender columns of newspapers. As well as highlighting their names in the usual practice of advertising for public tenders, they would typically insert a message offering 'Portfolios of Choice Designs in all

Classes of Architecture, always open for inspection. Plans forwarded and an arrangement made for supervision of work in any part of the colony.' This practice of advertising was discouraged by the Institutes of Architects until the Architects Act of 1921 disallowed it altogether. Only since the Trade Practices Acts of the 1980s is there tolerance of self promotion.

APRIL 14, 1888.

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Plans of Designs always open for inspec-
tion. Communications by letter attended
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Northumberland Building Society's
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Blane-street, Newcastle.

TENDERS are hereby invited for the
erection and completion of a FEN-
RACE, in Brick and Stone, of THREE
HOUSES, containing eight rooms each, in
Laman-street, Newcastle.
Tenders to be enclosed and endorsed,
"Tender for Terrace, Laman-street," and
delivered to the undersigned not later than
Saturday, 28th inst., at noon sharp.
Plans and Specifications to be seen, and all
information obtained at our office.
The lowest or any tender not necessarily
accepted.

BENNETT & YEOMANS,
Architects.

5216

TENDERS

Bennett and Yeomans,
ARCHITECTS.

OFFICES:
Central floor, Northumberland Building
Society's New Premises, Blane-street,
Newcastle.

ARCHITECTS to Northumberland Per-
manent Land, Loan, and Building
Society.
Plans of Designs always open for inspec-
tion. Communications by letter attended
to. 5435

Architects' Office,
Northumberland Building Society's New
Offices, Blane street, Newcastle.

TENDERS are hereby invited for the
ERECTION and COMPLETION of a
WESLEYAN PARSONAGE, in BRICK, at
Hamilton.

Tenders to be enclosed and endorsed,
"Tender for Wesleyan Parsonage, Hamil-
ton," and delivered to the undersigned not
later than MONDAY, 10th September, 1888.
Plans and specifications to be seen, and all
information obtained at our office.
The lowest or any tender not necessarily
accepted.

BENNETT & YEOMANS,
Architects.

5335

Architects' Office,
Northumberland Building Society's New
Offices,
Blane-street, Newcastle.

TENDERS are hereby invited for the
ERECTION and COMPLETION of a
20 ROOMED BRICK HOTEL, at West
Wallend, for Mr. William Johnston.
Tenders to be enclosed and endorsed,
"Tender for Hotel, West Wallend," and de-
livered to the undersigned not later than
SATURDAY, 16th day of September, 1888.
Plans and specifications to be seen, and all
information obtained at our office.
The lowest or any tender not necessarily
accepted.

BENNETT & YEOMANS, Architects.

5054

**Repairs, &c. Telegraph Office, Nelson's
Bay.**

Department of Public Works,
Sydney, 2nd September, 1888.

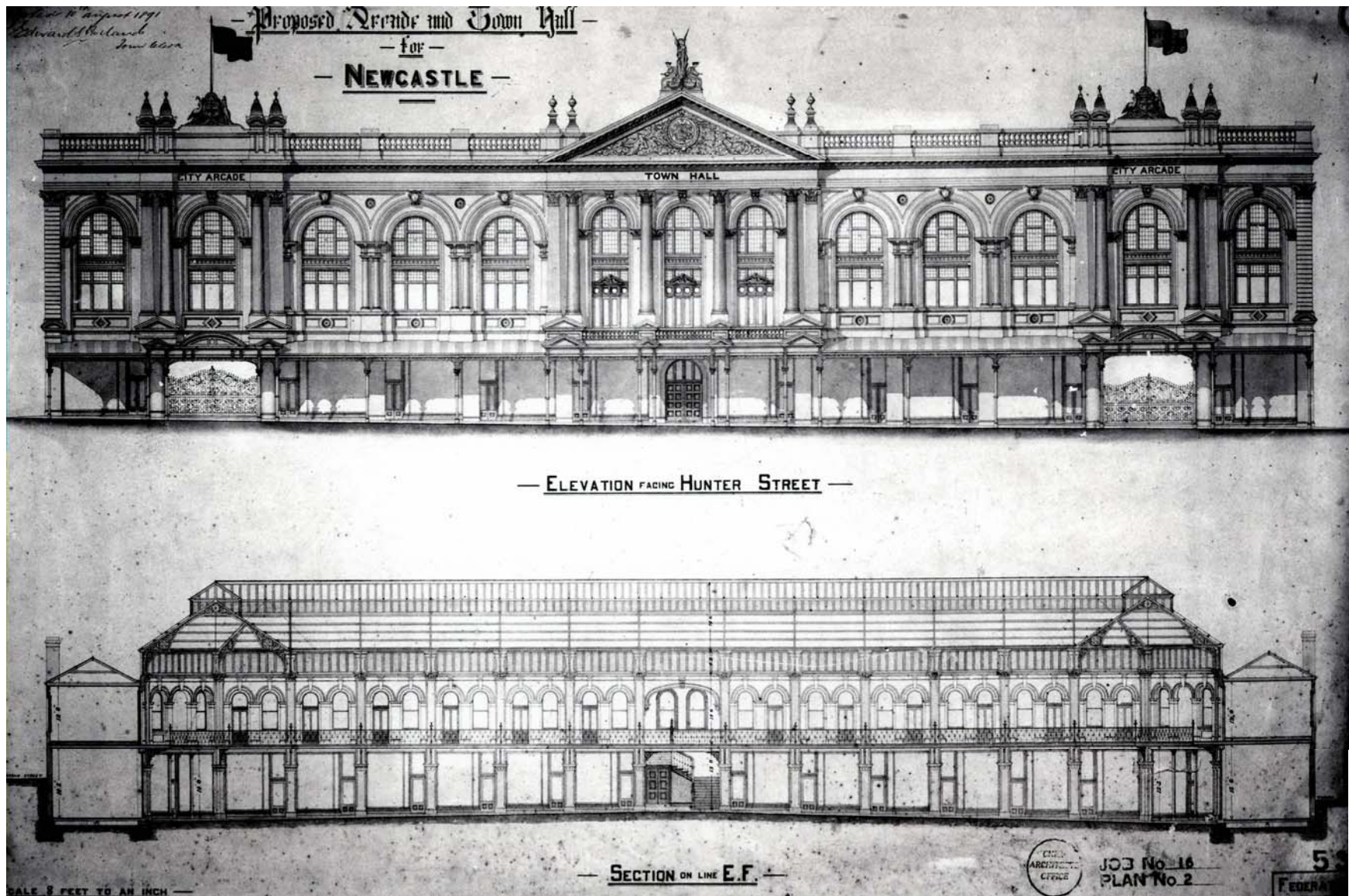
TENDERS will be received at this office
until 11 o'clock on WEDNESDAY, the
12th September next, for REPAIRS, &c.,
TELEGRAPH OFFICE, NELSON'S BAY.

For full particulars see Government
Gazette, a file of which is kept at every Police
Office in the colony. 5570

TENDERS.

SEPARATE TENDERS are required for
transmission to the Colonial Architect,
on or before the 11th inst., for the under-
mentioned works, viz:—
Painters' repairs, &c., Post and Telegraph
Office, Lambton; ditto, Arcade, &c.,
front of Post Office, Newcastle.
Specifications can be seen and Forms of
Tender obtained at the C.P.S. Office, Court
House, Newcastle.

MORTIMER LEWIS, C.W.
Newcastle, 1st September, 1888. 5441

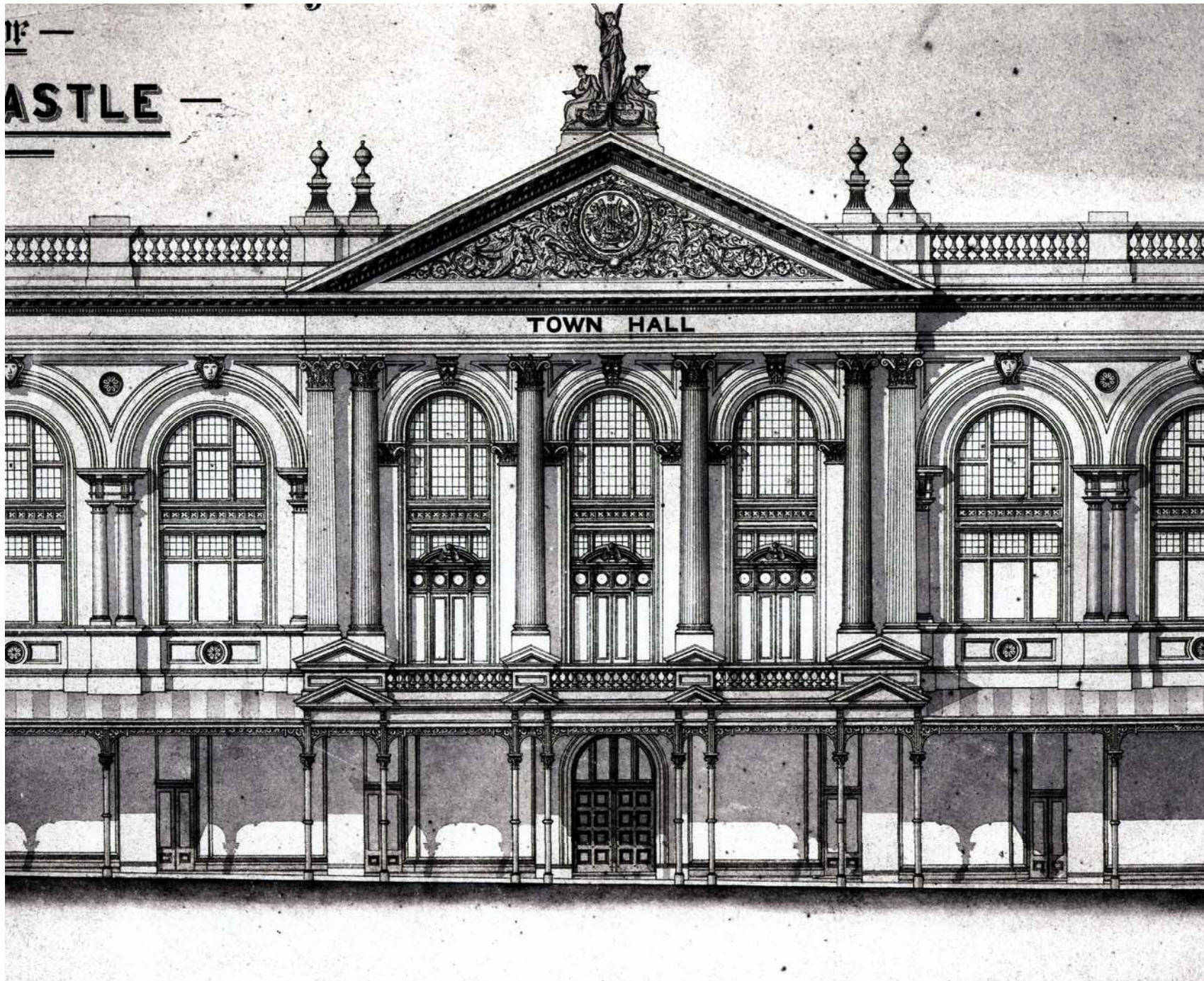


Competition drawing, Menkens, 1890.

NEWCASTLE TOWN HALL, Hunter Street – not built (At the Hub on the centreline of Christ Church Cathedral)

Scale of drawing 1/96 full size, pen and coloured inks on hot pressed paper, water colour tints. Detail opposite.

See Appendix for all five drawings.



Competitions.

Many architectural competitions were held in earlier times for public and church buildings. Examples of winners were:

Keightley Municipal Buildings, Hunter Street, Peter Bennett, 1884;

St Pauls Tower, Maitland, Arthur C. Lee, 1887;

Maitland Town Hall, Lee & Scobie, 1888;

St Andrews Church Newcastle, Frederick B. Menkens, 1890;

Newcastle Town Hall, Hunter Street, Newcastle,
Frederick B. Menkens (not built).

Controversy was common mainly because of accusations of prior knowledge of the entrant's 'nom de plume' and because judging was usually done by the client councils without professional help. When Peter Bennett won the Newcastle Municipal Building out of seven architects, the Newcastle Herald reported *'it is no light matter to ask skilled men to devote valuable time to preparing plans and making calculations which take them weeks of anxious thought and mental labour and then to decide on the merits of them out of hand in a few hours.'* The controversy was compounded as Peter Bennett was a former respected clerk of works for the council. Most amateur juries were unable to explain their choice but for Lee & Scobie's winning entry out of 35 for Maitland Town Hall the choice was suitably articulated by Mr Hennessy, City of Sydney Architect: *'The sky outline is good, the grouping is well arranged as regards mass and light and shade. The design is dignified and monumental in character, as a public edifice should be, being free from petty or meretricious treatment and detail, as is characteristic of many of the designs sent in.'* The popularity of competitions declined most likely because of controversy within the architectural profession more than from public apathy.

Architect's Skills.

Early buildings in the Hunter before the 1860s were relatively simple, being combinations of rooms arranged around an entrance and sometimes a verandah. There were no utility services. Room sizes were dependent on available timbers which provided the simple structure. The economy was bare and particularly harsh in the depression of the 1840s. There did not appear to be much desire for labour intensive ornament.

By the 1860s, in the third decade of the Victorian era, the manifestations of the steam driven 'industrial revolution', in which incidentally Newcastle played no mean part, were being expressed. Ornaments embellished all sorts of mass-produced popular items and it would only be a matter of time before decoration would flow on to buildings. There was now a clearer role for the architect, being the member of the building industry most skilled to translate or interpret the fashions of the time into building design, for which they were being trained in the great traditions.

Up to the centenary of NSW, architects provided a total design and supervising service, including structure and took all risk without help. F. B. Menkens designed the renovated Earp Gillam Bond Store in 1888: brick external walls containing four high storeys of heavy post and beam construction. The basic structure of the building survived the 1989 earthquake, with most wall collapse being due to corrosion of inbuilt ironwork.

Three storey buildings designed entirely by architects were common in the Hunter, the only usually installed service being gas for heating, cooking or lighting which was readily attended to by the Gas Company or a plumber. Of course, Sydney buildings were larger and taller, perhaps with lifts, but the same applied.

'Jack of All Trades'

Early architects relied mostly on their knowledge and experience of common practice in building construction. For large buildings involving numbers of floors, usually three 'walk-up', as well as larger spans, structural integrity was a critical requirement.

Overseas, of course, much larger buildings were being designed and measures were required to control the structural elements for public safety. It was much more necessary when ferro-concrete and steel became available.

The architect's office was not without a Companion volume of Molesworth's *'Pocket Book of Engineering Formulae'* (1862, G.B.) or Frank E. Kidder's *'The Architect's and Builder's Pocket Book'* (1884, USA). Reference to these and other manuals provided reassurance for their daily practice.

New Developments.

The mid 1890s saw the introduction of electricity as a competitor to gas. Water, sewer and telephone soon followed. Structural technology developed rapidly to include ferro-concrete, iron and steel for which there were new design rules and structural principles, permitting larger and taller buildings. These developments heralded the emergence of the specialists, particularly structural engineers, whose assistance in the design process was necessary in a progressively complex industry. The architect's 'Jack of all trades' role gave way to team leader and co-ordinator of the design team. Only much later, particularly post WW2, did the industry evolve further where the builder or developer provided a total design and build service which employed specialist consultants including the services of the architect.

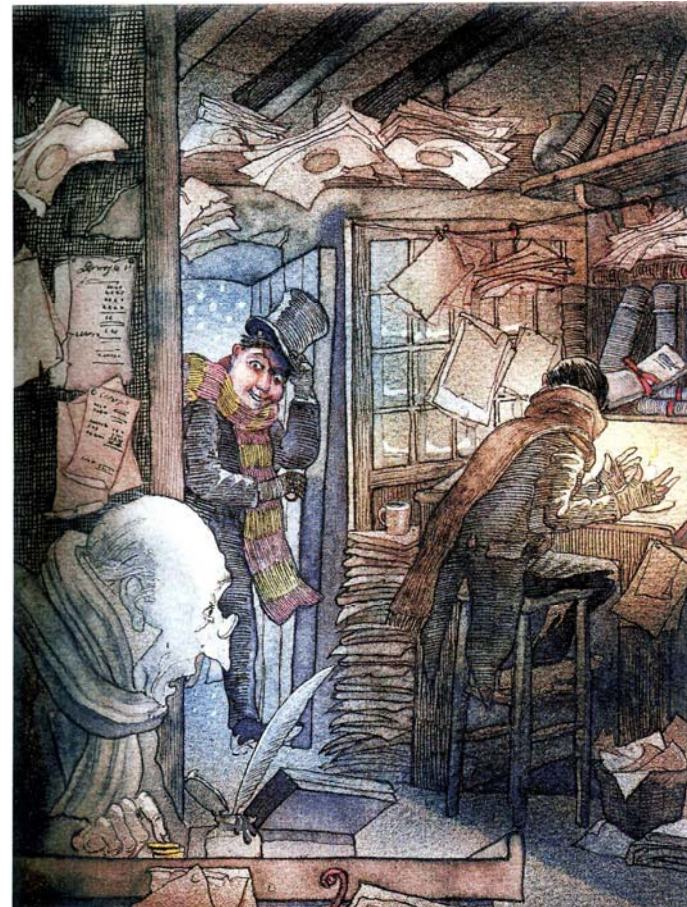
Fees.

Fees for services of early architects were simple and modest. J. W. Pender appearing as an expert witness for the Newcastle Council against Joseph Backhouse in 1872 stated: *'there is no rule in the profession authorising any architect to demand more than the usual charge for any builder's delay, he gets his percentage and that is all... The charge throughout the world is 5% to draw the plans and to superintend.'* Fees for Sydney architects could be higher. Prominent architect, G. A. Mansfield levied a fee of 200 pounds for his service to the Wesleyan Church, Tyrrell Street, Newcastle, which cost 3,345 pounds, a fee of 6%. After the introduction of the Architects Registration Act of 1921 the Newcastle and Maitland architects sought to establish a common standard fee. *'We, the undersigned Registered Architects, practicing in the Newcastle district hereby announce that on and after August 1st 1923 our fees for Professional Services will be raised to conform to the general scale used throughout the State and will be based on a standard of Six percent on the cost of the works.'* Signed: Pitt & Merewether, F. G. & A. C. Castleden, Thomas J. Pepper, Ernest Tingle, E. C. Sara, John W. Oldham, W. L. Porter, Alfred G. Ackroyd (signed and withdrawn), Walter H. Pender, Thomas W. Silk, J. W. Scobie & Son, Robert Wilkins.

Competition in fees.

The setting of a standard fee, it was argued, would lead to improved standards where architects competed only on the basis of design skills and service. A reduced fee would lower the standards of architecture. The 6% fee, which became mandatory for members of the Institute of Architects, applied until the introduction of the Federal Trade Practices Act in the 1970s allowed only guideline indicative fees and forbade mandatory status.

It is contemporary common practice for architect's services to be tendered by clients whereby price and quality of service can be considered together. Early architects had a simpler professional life where clients only considered the quality or reputation of the architect.



*Early Architect's office before the 6% minimum fee rule –
apologies to Charles Dickens.*

Illustration by Michael Foreman for 'A Christmas Carol'.

TOWN PLANNING

or

ARCHITECTS AROUND TOWN.

The military mind knew best when the settlement of Newcastle was finally established in 1804 with Lieutenant Menzies in charge. From a suitable landing place on the sheltered south shore of Coal Harbour a settlement for a party of 100 was founded. By 1816, when Captain Wallis took over as Commandant, there were three hundred, growing to almost one thousand in Major Morisset's term, 1819 to 1822.

First Planning

Depending on topography, land was allocated for key purposes as a matter of practicality or custom. An elevated Commandant's Residence, a church on the hill, a hospital, a public well, a gaol set apart, a watch house, a windmill, a fortified headland with flagstaff and so on. As, like the Roman military, the British military had a long history in land planning and Commandants Menzies, Wallis and Morisset were no different. Although government surveyors Charles Grimes and later James Meehan visited the Hunter as early as 1797, they were probably far too preoccupied with coastal land as far south as Tasmania to be consulted about planning decisions in early Newcastle. By 1818 Meehan had recorded a plan with a predominantly north-south street pattern, centred on George (now Watt) Street, which had extended uphill from the anchorage.

The Commissioner Investigates

Commissioner Bigge, investigating the colony in 1820, found that the Newcastle settlement had grown to 945 officials, convicts and

children, living and working in the most basic conditions. He wrote:

'The settlement and town are situated on the slope of a hill that presents a front of abrupt sandstone rock towards the sea, gradually receding into barren clay and sand towards the interior...The houses of the convicts are placed at irregular distances from each other, but preserve an even line towards the streets, which are well laid out and kept in good order. There are seven in number (streets) and contain altogether 12 houses that belong to the government and 71 that belong to the prisoners.'

Free Town

Governor Macquarie visited the Hunter two years earlier and saw the advantage to the colony of opening development to free settlers who were eager to take up land in the valley. Prisoners were moved to Port Macquarie in 1822 and Newcastle was declared a free town, ending martial law the year Macquarie returned to England. In 1823 the Sydney Gazette stated that Newcastle was *'to be no longer considered a place of banishment for our own felons, but to be favoured with the immunities of the capital'*.

Dangar's Plan (see page 8)

Macquarie's successor, Governor Brisbane, noted in the same year Newcastle *'to be in a rapidly improving way'*. Surveyor-General Oxley's assistant, Henry Dangar, was instructed in 1823 to produce a plan that would improve the layout of Newcastle much required as a Port Town. His plan of 1824 was a neat rectangular grid of six 90 metre long 'city' blocks running east – west with two north – south. The layout was centred around the then existing Christ Church on the hill, with a generous market square below, on its northern axis. The northern end of the square was accessible from the river and adjacent land was wisely reserved for government purposes. The streets were made to Macquarie's

standard width of 1 chain (20 metres) and the layout primarily incorporated George and Wallis Streets which became Watt and King respectively. Dangar would have known of contemporary coal driven industrial progress in England and possibly after making the coal connection at Newcastle, he may have prophetically named six cross streets after pioneering engineers Watt, Bolton (Boulton), Newcomen, Wolfe, Perkins and Brown. Governors King and Hunter got a mention too. Earlier, during the withdrawal of convicts, regulations allowed land-owning settlers in the Hunter a conditional lease for town lots, leading to ownership.

The realigning of streets made Dangar's plan unpopular but nonetheless it was implemented. He commented: *'as the huts of the convicts were held by free men, he had great difficulty in making his survey and as the plan necessitated the removal of many dwellings, considerable discontent prevailed.'*

Dangar's plan was an outstanding example of matching a disciplined town plan to topography. Had the plan been fully implemented and preserved, particularly its market square, the character of Newcastle's east end would have placed it today, first among Australia's colonial towns. With its produce harbour on the north and the church dominating on the south axis, perhaps with steps rising up to the church, the square would have rivalled any European waterside town – a lost opportunity.

Privatisation

Bigge's report of 1820-21 on the colony created interest in London, probably leading to the floating in 1824 of the Australian Agricultural Company, whose shareholders included, among others, colonial land owners such as Captain John Macarthur, an advocate for British capital and many members of the British Parliament, Colonial Office and bankers. Their interest was

pastoral for which the company was granted land in various large runs at Port Stephens and later northern NSW with headquarters eventually at Stroud from 1826. However there was a clear need for coal for shipping and Newcastle was strategic to Britain's increasing trade. The Home Government was concerned that Newcastle's mines were inefficient and, as a condition, suggested that the A.A. Company take over the Newcastle mines on lease, but through various manoeuvres it was instead granted the mines and two thousand acres of land to the west of Dangar's plan, with sole mining rights in return for a royalty on coal won. This could easily have been the first case of 'privatisation' of Government assets in Australia.

Monopoly no more

The A. A. Company land grant blocked development west of Newcastle town which had the effect of forcing development on to the other side of the river at Stockton. The Company mines competed for convict labour with the breakwater in the early 1830s, mining progress was only steady and the town stagnated. In 1844, the A .A. Company was advised by its Commissioner, Captain King, that if it did not sell some land for development, 'a village already commenced called Stockton, on the opposite side of the port, will have preference'.

Further factors influenced the release of land immediately to the west of Newcastle Town. In 1845 vigorous competition started in the coal trade when James Brown of Four Mile Creek, near Maitland, produced cheaper coal. This led to a lawsuit which concluded that the A. A. Company had no monopoly, allowing other entrepreneurs to open mines at Minmi and Merewether. What followed was almost 80 years of chaotic unco-ordinated development in the Newcastle district, driven by the mining and transportation of coal, by then a world wide premium commodity. By the 1880s there were over eighty mines or collieries as far as West Wallsend and south to Lake Macquarie. Although vertical

shaft mining was preferable to reach down to the thicker coal seams, the hilly terrain provided easy access to the inclined seams which emerged at the necks of the valleys, allowing underground roadways to follow the seams in at a convenient slope. The district became an intricate network of rail lines from pit head to harbour, most decisions on other land use taking second place.



Newcastle c.1889 showing the various railways terminating at the harbour front.

Land allocation

The earlier piecemeal approach to the allocation of land is illustrated by local surveyor Charlton Horace in his letter to the Newcastle Magistrates in 1849. 'Having received instructions from the Surveyor-General [Sir Thomas Mitchell] 8.2.1849 to consult the Bench of Newcastle Magistrates and other well informed inhabitants of Newcastle as to the propriety of making a reserve for the depasturing of the townspeople's milch cows, I forward herewith a map of the lands in the vicinity of the city and shall feel obliged by receiving your opinion as

to which of the lands still vacant beyond Throsby Creek will be most suitable for the purpose.' In the event land was allocated in the areas of Adamstown, Broadmeadow to Lambton. By the 1880s the 'commonage' had informally extended to Wallsend with parts of the Crown land near collieries being occupied by squatting miners. The situation was so critical that Sir Henry Parkes visited Wallsend in 1887 to prepare an enabling Bill for Parliament, the Newcastle Pasturage Reserve Bill, to legitimise with some payment, the ownership of claimants.

Surveyors and Planning

The concept of Town Planning did not develop in Australia until well after Federation. The Surveyors were mostly the overseers of early land planning. The proper location of boundaries was also essential in a colony where there was much disputation among settlers about the ownership of land, sometimes casually sold without title. The government was so concerned to maintain public confidence that surveyors were required to be registered under an act of parliament as early as 1837, to the general standards set by the Surveyor-General. Surveyors were entrusted with the necessary service of land planning and the setting out of subdivisions, to suit the functional requirements of the time. Layouts were usually based on the simple grid pattern, mostly without reference to topography or natural features, which the community generally accepted as adequate.

A local Council for Newcastle

The first move for self determination for inner Newcastle came in 1858 when the Governor was petitioned for a local council. The population had more than doubled in the last five years to about three thousand, a portent for the years ahead. Citizens had formed basic institutions such as a Chamber of Commerce,

Mechanics Institute and more obviously a volunteer Fire Brigade in the town, most known in the colony as the 'city of blazes.' The following year the Governor had no difficulty in declaring the town a Municipality, with Church and Laman Streets as southern boundaries and extending west to Honeysuckle Point (now Civic) where the rail from Maitland terminated. (The 11 suburbs were declared from 1871 to 1889.)

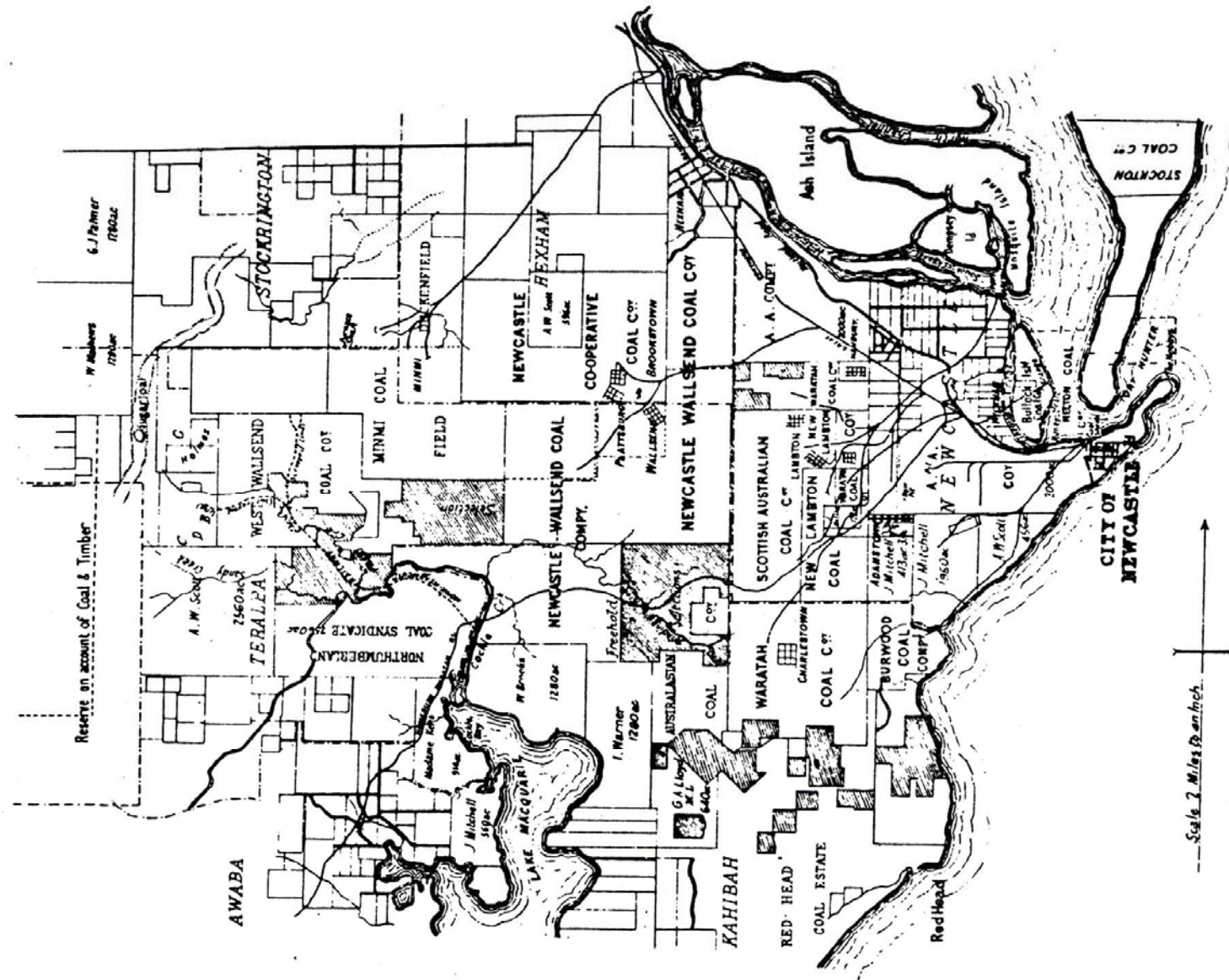
Within a few years the population of Newcastle and suburbs trebled and then doubled every decade to around 49,000 in 1890. The Council of itself was unable to make many local planning decisions. The Colonial Government, only sixty sea miles away, selected sites and soon built, in sequence, among others, a Police Station and Telegraph Office 1861, (extended in 1873 and now in the Post Office group Hunter Street); Harbour Navigation lead Towers 1865, (Tyrrell Street one still remaining); Railway Workshops, Honeysuckle Terminus, 1874; The Customs House, Watt Street, 1877, and the Railway Station and extended line from Honeysuckle, 1878.

The case of the disappearing square

The local council's options for sites however were limited. In 1868 the large Market Square reserved in the Dangar Plan of 1824 was officially granted to the Newcastle Borough Council. It was a paddock collecting rubbish. The square was never really considered for its nominated purpose. A year later the Council subdivided the square into 30 allotments and all were sold at auction. The Council built its Municipal Market building in 1870 on the epicentre of the square, probably replacing earlier attempts to 'fill the square in'. As a prelude to its city status of 1885, besides its new Chambers in Watt Street in 1884, the Council built another Municipal Building (architect Peter Bennett) named after Mayor Keightley, also on the reserved square. By 1905 the further permanent developments of Cohen's Warehouse (F. B. Menkens

showing the position of the Collieries at Work and Opening out in the

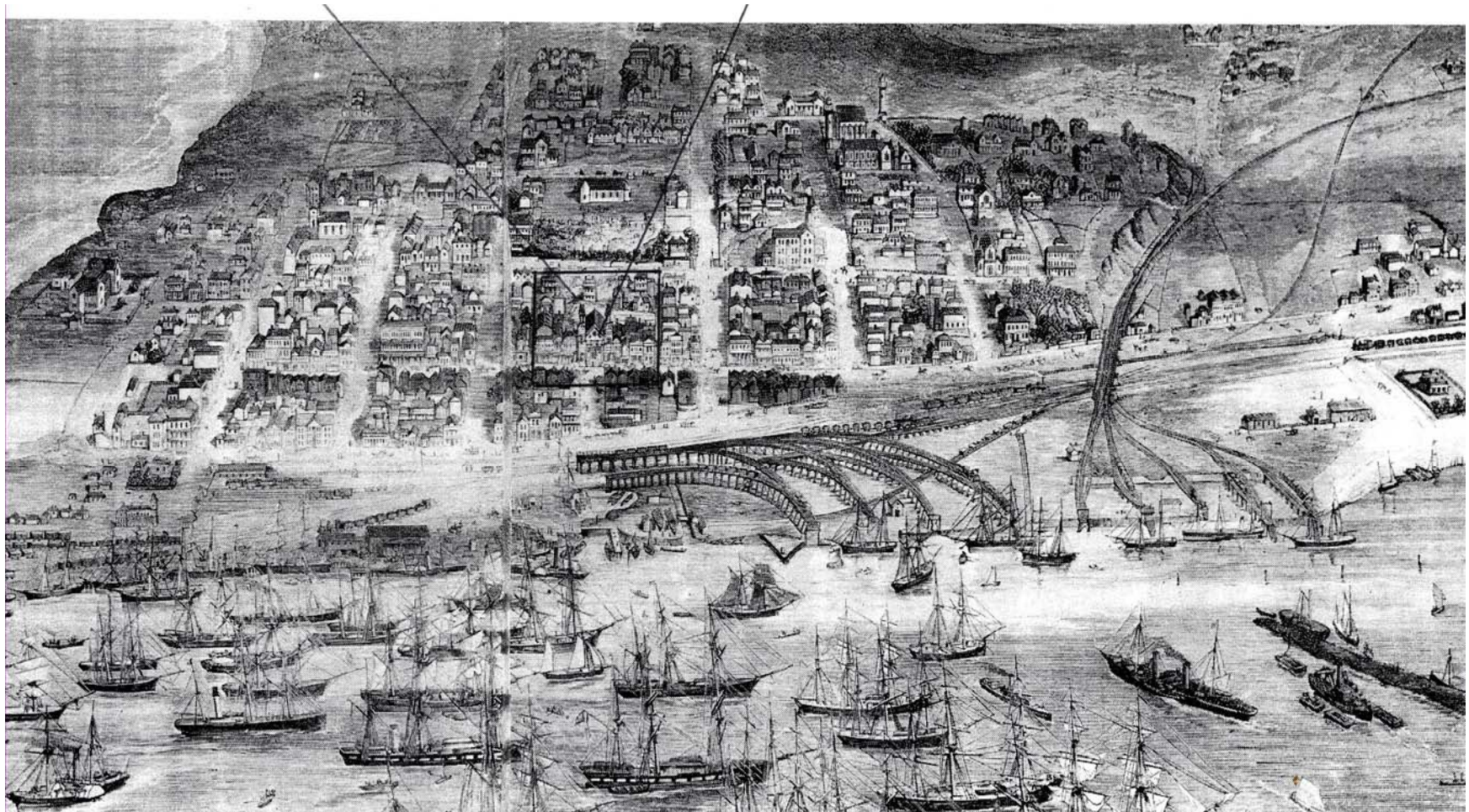
Newcastle District



The plethora of coal leases lead to an inevitable intricate and uncoordinated network of rail lines from pithead to harbour, over-riding other land uses. Planning had no role in the rush for coal with unsatisfactory long term consequences.

Dangar's 1824 Market Place

Municipal Market Building 1870



Sydney 'Packet' Wharf

Boat Harbour

Coal staithes

A.A. Co.'s staithes

*Newcastle Town and Harbour front showing coal loaders.
Drawing taken from the 'Sydney Illustrated News' dated 1875*

Architect 1897, later rebuilt after a fire as Bebarfalds), The Market Wharf Inn (F. B. Menkens Architect 1903), and another Municipal Building (T. W. Silk Architect 1905), sealed the fate of the square leaving only a short Market Street stopping at the railway – a dismal fate indeed. This loss of opportunity apparently made little difference to the Newcastle Morning Herald in 1890, which waxed lyrical about the merits of the city:

‘The Beautifying of the City’ December 1st 1890

‘The recent erection of many beautiful buildings in and around Newcastle is pleasing evidence that the utilitarian stage of existence has been passed, and that there is a general desire on the part of the people to minister to these cravings towards the beautiful which are akin to man’s highest spiritual aspirations. Many residents appear to be insensible to the natural pleasantness of the place in which their lot in life has been cast, whereas Newcastle possesses many advantages with regard to position and surroundings which demand that man should do his part in co-operation with nature. TENNYSON, in addressing the shade of his dead friend in noble poem ‘In Memoriam’ speaks of the time when he and HALLAM walked

*“Beside the river’s wooded reach,
The fortress, and the mountain ridge,
The cataract flashing from the bridge,
The breaker breaking on the beach.”*

If Newcastle does not possess all the attractions portrayed by the Poet Laureate in connection with the old town in England, yet with a background of hilly country, a noble stretch of sea beach, a broad river, and a commanding position, this city has a beauty of its own which may some centuries hence inspire a poet to make it his theme in flowing numbers. Up to a recent period there was but little attempt to have the buildings of the place in keeping with its surroundings, but it is satisfactory to notice that another era is inaugurated and that the new buildings which are being put up have considerable claims to attention, not on the score of utility alone but from an architectural point of view.

The Presbyterian Church of St Andrew’s, which was opened for public worship on Saturday, is a building eminently suited for the solemn purpose for which it has been dedicated and shows that people are awakening to the conviction that, while handsome buildings for secular purposes are being built all around it is seemly that ecclesiastical fanes should be an outward indication of the spirit that animates the worshippers. The new Baptist Church, not far from St Andrew’s, is also a building highly creditable to the people of that denomination who, though few in number, are courageous in spirit; while in St Paul’s, Stockton, there is an evidence that the people of the Church of England on the north shore are determined to have public worship conducted amid proper surroundings. The new Cathedral will soon be a notable addition to the number of churches in the diocese; while the Roman Catholic churches and church-schools built throughout the district during the last few years are very numerous.

In buildings of another character, progress is also to be reported. The new court house, though it will not be a highly ornate structure, will nevertheless be in keeping with the progress generally manifested throughout the city. The great range of dwellings in course of erection opposite the new court house is evidence that the value of property in the older portions of the city is rapidly increasing.

The new Victoria Theatre is now approaching completion and St George’s Masonic Hall is a structure of imposing dimensions, which manifests the strength of one lodge of the brethren of the mystic tie. While in the city proper the art of architecture, which SCHLEGEL described as “frozen music”, is being cultivated with great ardour, similar advancement is being made in the outside municipalities; indeed in many respects the residents of Wallsend, Lambton and Waratah have shown the way in the path of improvement to the people of the parent borough. At the close of the year the electric light will show all the architectural beauties of Newcastle and also its monstrosities and as it will as effectually perform the latter as the former it is hoped that, when the time for alterations and improvements arrives, with regards to the

buildings in our principal thoroughfares, the new edifices will be in harmony with the aesthetic impulses of the age.

It is high time that our railway station and its surroundings were made worthy of the second city of the colony. And what shall be said of the disgraceful want of accommodation for the public at the present terminus of the tramway? This crying shame has been brought to the notice of the Railway Commissioners times without number during the last three years, but the bad old state of things exists. The proposals of the Railway Commissioners for the improvement of the railway yard are still unexecuted and it is utterly impossible to find out how the Borough Council intends to get over the difficulty contained in the suggestion of the Railway Commissioners with regard to level crossings. The general appearance of the city is bound up with the proposals of the Commissioners and a final decision on the subject would permit of owners proceeding with improvements on their own properties. It would be a great advantage for Newcastle as a place of resort for persons from the country if some portion of the Sandhills overlooking the sea were re-claimed and made into a park, instead of remaining a place into which all the old boots, bottles and jam tins of the community may be cast. There is not the slightest reason why Newcastle should not be one of the cleanest, healthiest and pleasantest places under the line and there are a thousand reasons, even from a pecuniary point of view, why it should be made a town of which every inhabitant should be honourably and reasonably proud.'

A Building Act

With the granting of Municipal status in 1859, the council took up, perhaps unknowingly, the onerous responsibility of local public health. By 1863 the City Surveyor was reporting appalling conditions of land and buildings mostly created by lack of drainage, rising damp and rain penetration. There were no building regulations and standards were set by local acceptability. The insanitary and unhealthy conditions and 'laissez faire'

attitudes to town development prompted the only media, the Newcastle Chronicle and later the Newcastle Morning Herald and Miners Advocate, to a constant campaign for a Building Act for Newcastle. The suggestion was unpopular in a free frontier community, most, including aldermen, having vested interests to protect. Only the Health Act was used by the Council, after submissions by Medical Officers, to condemn degraded buildings for demolition, often with little effect. Although Sydney had a Building Act in 1860, it was not until the Local Government Act of 1919 that regulations in Newcastle became binding and the Council approval of building plans to standards was necessary.

Example of Sydney

As with many towns and particularly cities in the Colony, growth outpaced planning decisions made somewhat *ad hoc*. Sydney, as an example, had many kinds of unconnected grandiose schemes for the major public buildings and spaces. The public was pre-occupied with designs for a bridge across the harbour as early as the 1850s. Convict architect, Francis Greenway, who must have had knowledge of English cast iron bridges of Darby and Telford of the late 18th century, claimed he was the first to suggest a bridge between Sydney and the North Shore.

There was a proposal for a large public square around the Town Hall and St. Andrews Cathedral, 1887, which included the largely vacant site of the QVB. In 1884, with the 'roll out' of telephone and telegraph, schemes were put forward which integrated the cables under standard pavement balconies, continuous along all city streets. Sir Henry Parkes, probably with Federation in mind and Sydney as the Capital, cleverly proposed a grand new State Parliament House for Centennial Park for 1888 which attracted many imposing designs. A scheme to locate the Central Rail terminal at Hunter Street was revised back to north Hyde Park and then after some cutting work in Hyde Park was abandoned.

Many grand proposals lapsed either from disagreement, expense or political expediency and many opportunities were lost.

The stirrings of Planning

The early part of the 20th Century demanded new expertise in land development. A national capital was required, a Sydney harbour bridge was thought absolutely necessary, public infrastructure for water, sewerage, electricity, gas, telephone and transport everywhere was urgently in need of expansion, as well as large areas for housing, commerce and industry.

Sir John Sulman, a prominent Sydney architect, was an early advocate of town planning and authored 'The Improvement of Sydney' in 1907. He was an expert witness at the third Royal Commission in 1909 into Sydney's 'improvement'. With gathering concern the Town Planning Association of NSW was formed in Sydney in 1913 and Sulman was elected its President.

Sulman and Hamilton South

In the same year Newcastle's A. A. Company consulted Sulman and John F. Hennessy, formerly City of Sydney architect, for the design of a suburb on some of their south Newcastle land. The area south of Hamilton was swampy and towards Bar Beach, where the Hunter flowed out in geological times, there were sand dunes. The proposal was to fill the swamps with the sand from the dunes and create a garden suburb, then in vogue in England. With tree lined avenues, parades and parks, and incorporating open stormwater drains with nature verges, the new suburb demonstrated a new character to the city.

Sulman had an earlier connection with Newcastle in his impressive design of the 1889 domed Bank of NSW at Bank

Corner, affectionately known as the 'peppercot', demolished for a new building in 1938, sadly without public comment.

Town Planning to Act of Parliament

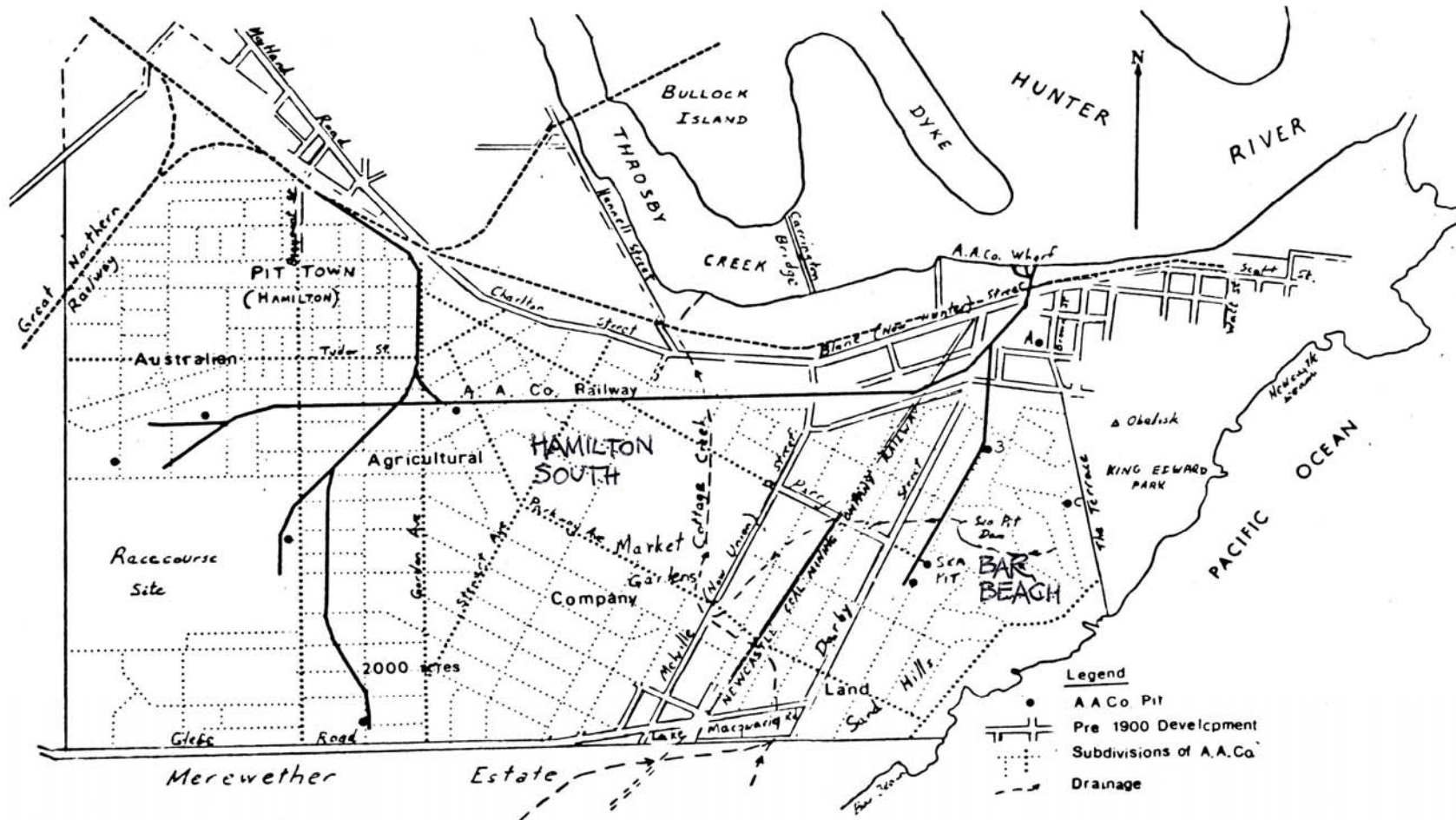
Others vitally interested in the new Town Planning Association, included Labour advocate J. D. Fitzgerald who wrote 'Greater Sydney and Greater Newcastle' (1906), Dr Bradfield, engineer for the North Shore Bridge and the newly arrived Walter Burley Griffin, who had won the National Capital Competition, Sulman being one of the judges.

The Canberra Plan, which was probably the first example of new town planning principles in Australia, most likely had an influence in the forming of the Town Planning Association and a link to the planning of Hamilton South Garden Suburb. Essentially it was a gathering together of idealists whose concerns were for the public good. Fitzgerald who, as Labour's Minister for Local Government, was responsible for introducing the 1919 Local Government Act which, he said, would bring:

'The control of new roads, subdivisions and building – and, with that improvement, the power to control the number of houses per acre that may be erected in a residential area ... the building provisions ... will enable us to have town plotting or planning on scientific lines ... If a council declares a district a residential district no one will be able to intrude into that district.'

Most councils considered many provisions of the Act restrictive. To counter criticism the Government issued a series of Bulletins, the first being 'Town Planning' written by Sulman. It included sections on 'Planning a New Town, Canberra, an Example', 'Design of Daceyville' and, of more practical value, 'Playgrounds, Parks and Gardens' and 'How to Keep a Town Bright, Clean and Healthy'. The Town Planning movement gathered pace in the

HAMILTON - GARDEN SUBURB - BAR BEACH
AUSTRALIAN AGRICULTURAL COMPANY



Sulman and Hennessey, Architects, c.1913. Street pattern shown in dotted line.
A serious attempt to plan a 'garden' suburb with generous provision for parks, avenues, roads and tree planting and building lots integrated with landscaped drainage. The plan fulfilled expectations.

growth period after WW1. In 1924 Sulman, at the age of 75, was one of the Commonwealth delegates to the second International Town Planning Conference in Amsterdam.

Interest in Newcastle

In Sydney, the Master Builders Association of NSW, which had been formed in the 1870s, suddenly took an interest in these new events in planning. In 1925 they published 'Newcastle Construction', a weekly Newcastle edition of their magazine dealing with 'Building, Engineering, Local Government and Real Estate Development'. It had specific policies for Newcastle, one being that *'this journal will keenly advocate that all town planning schemes shall be under the control of Newcastle City Council, allied with the councils of the surrounding suburban areas.'*

Growth Pressures

This external interest must have had an immediate positive effect on Newcastle's City Council. Mayor Morris Light was only too aware of growth pressures on Newcastle, particularly with the rapidly expanding BHP Co. Ltd., from 1913, on its nearly 400 acre site. He noted too that with so many other industries expanding, such as the Dockyard and the Sulphide Corporation, that *'there is a promise of Newcastle becoming one of the great productive cities of the world... one must not forget that Newcastle has the cheapest of world power producers in almost unlimited quantities. Maitland area alone has 12,000,000,000 tons awaiting mining... Rix's Creek 10,000,000,000 ... so with the world using up its coal supply in the rapid way it is doing, one may reasonably conclude that many great countries of the world will look towards Newcastle for power supply.'*

Mayor Light, with the help of local engineer H. P. Trenchard, acting as honorary secretary, sponsored a public meeting of those

interested in Newcastle and District's development. At the meeting on August 26th 1925, the Mayor outlined the vital need to improve the city and suggested that a Newcastle Branch of the Town Planning Association of NSW be formed. In that way, he said, *'the locality would be very much improved... and with the assistance of the association the council would be in a better position to beautify the city.'*

Local Architects

Architects featured in the association. Local architect Frederick G. Castleden was elected President, Bill Jeater, Honorary Treasurer and John Oldham and Harry Wardle were on the committee. Castleden's son, Archer, was an alderman. The Mayor, anxious to give the new branch total support, invited the Sydney association to Newcastle.

Visit from Sydney

Newly elected Mayor Cornish presided at a combined association meeting on 2nd October 1925, at Tyrrell House. Colonel Dr. J. S. Purdy, President, an ex-army surgeon and affordable housing advocate and Colonel Spain, a Sydney architect, whose firm had just completed the Newcastle Club, Newcomen Street, were the principal speakers. The message was that Town Planning was a factor in national health and prosperity. It was the Newcastle District President, architect F. G. Castleden, who advocated a combined approach for the district including the surrounding suburban councils.

The Betterment Board

Mayor Cornish astutely recognised the district's political landscape involving the amalgamation of suburban Councils

issue and suggested a motion, and all agreed, that effectively created what he called 'The Newcastle and District Betterment Board', a term meaning a change for the better, first used by George A. Taylor, Sydney Editor of the weekly 'Newcastle Construction'. The Board set a precedent for Town Planning in Australia and comprised representatives from all local councils, authorities and business and professional organisations. F. G. Castleden was appointed to the Education Committee and he and fellow architect Nigel B. Pitt were on the Town Planning Committee. The Board had no power but could advise councils and petition government.

A Town Hall for Newcastle

The City Council had built its Chambers in Watt Street in 1884 and in 1892 had sponsored a competition for a large Town Hall, Office and Market Building to replace the 1870 Municipal Market Building in Hunter Street, opposite Market Street.

The competition was won by F. B. Menkens under the *nom de plume* 'Federation' with a plan format along the lines of a contemporary scheme for the QVB in Sydney. The project unfortunately lapsed in the depression of the next few years for, had it been realised, the City precinct with its other Municipal buildings would have been splendid.

By 1909 the Menkens scheme gave way to a more modest Town Hall proposal on the Market Street site. In January 1920 a Poll of citizens roundly approved of the Council spending three thousand pounds on the smaller Town Hall. However, there was a community attitude that the site was too restrictive for a rapidly expanding steel making city and a further Poll, eight months later, voted for locating a new Town Hall, 238 for the eastern site and 212 to the west. The issue lay dormant until 1925 when the recently formed Betterment Board took an interest. The Board

had identified and quantified the extraordinary growth potential of the district and the demand for its resources and coal related manufacturing. The issue of the Town Hall location, which had had no clear support for years, was quickly precipitated by the Board. The Council gave no further consideration to its eastern land and readily settled for a site further west, known as the current Civic Site and included the Civic Theatre.

The Spirit of the Board

The Board was very active and generally voiced enthusiasm for Newcastle's growth, as much linked with opportunism as with altruistic motives. The 'Newcastle Construction' in November 1926 advocated '*Newcastle citizens must get the spirit of development into their outlook. There should be a general movement for "Betterment of Our City and District" to make the best possible; to win wide attention to its prosperities possibilities and do one's best to have them realised; for after all you are working for yourself. Local progress means increased business, which means local wealth...Join up with that fine body of patriots on the Newcastle District Betterment Board...They make a fine body of unselfish experts with the love of Newcastle in their hearts. They are out to make their city the "Queen City of the Pacific".*' George A. Taylor, its Sydney editor, changed their passive slogan 'Watch Newcastle Grow' to 'Make Newcastle Grow'. Such was the fervour of the time. Taylor was the husband of Florence Taylor, the first woman architect in Australia, and she was similarly interested in the early planning of Newcastle as well as Sydney.

Rail lines and land

The extensive railway land from 'Bank Corner' Hannell Street, Wickham to East Newcastle did not escape the notice of the Board. The area was under used now that shipping operated more into

the port. The area was unsightly to train, ferry and ship passengers who crossed daily the dividing rail lines from town to harbour front. A transport scheme was developed by Board member A. G. Tewksbury and the Council, making use of trams and trains serving most suburbs, including Dudley, and was based on financial principles of costs and returns.

The Betterment Board strongly advocated the scheme even to urging a State Parliamentary Inquiry. The hub of the proposal was to relocate the Terminal Station marshalling and yards back to Bank Corner, Wickham, and to release vacant land on the north side of Hunter Street for commercial development. The Railway Commissioners had a long held reputation for retaining land. Even the Premier, Sir Henry Parkes, had to intervene in 1894 to provide a small block of land in Hunter Street West for a Trades Hall. The Commissioners visited Newcastle in September 1927 and, although some land was released over time, the hub of the proposal was never realised. The issue of the retraction of the rail line to a western position is still alive today, even though the Government has decided a status quo.

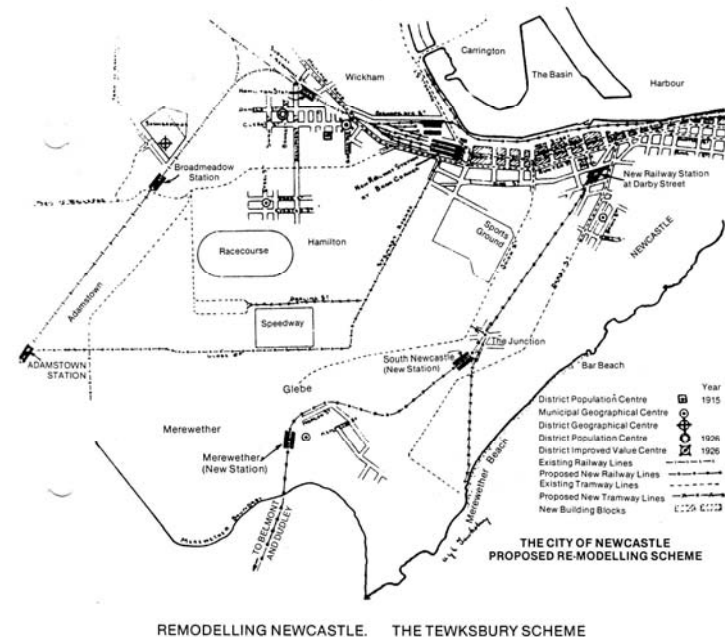
Board's Work

During 1927 the Board had assisted suburban councils with information and opinions on planning, with a view to co-ordinating overall land use and infrastructure decisions.

It directly achieved such projects as the drainage of the Newcastle Pastoral Reserve and the granting of a 2000 acre reserve at Fraser Park for recreation.

Sydney member, George Taylor, reported this progress to the Town Planning Association in Sydney which had been embroiled in more extreme, diverse and frustrating issues with many more independent suburban Councils.

THE TEWKSBURY PLAN, 1926



Source: *Newcastle Sun*, 16 December 1926, p. 6.

Note: This is the expanded version of Tewksbury's original plan: the additions are three new railway stations serving the southern suburbs. It is given here because unlike the original plan it shows the central area in relation to the surrounding suburbs.

Newcastle an Example

The Association, impressed with the Newcastle example and the leadership, including Dr. J. J. Bradfield and Sir John Sulman, urged the Government to form the 'Sydney Betterment Board' with the idea of co-ordinating planning for the whole of Metropolitan Sydney. Although the idea of town planning had been contemplated at the time of Labour's Local Government Act of 1919, the proposal relied on amalgamation of Councils to form 'Greater City' area. The 'Betterment' proposals of the late 1920s



An aerial view of Newcastle published in 1929. In the foreground Fort Scratchley with the Zaara Street power station behind it.

The railway yards still claim the river's foreshore.

(Photograph from the Milton Kent Collection, Newcastle Region Public Library)

approached planning with economics in mind and not from a political viewpoint which involved the emotive issue of amalgamation. The 'Betterment' idea lost momentum in the trail of the 1930s depression, although Newcastle suburbs were amalgamated in 1938 which, undoubtedly, was influenced by the Board's aims and activities.

Legislation at Last

It was not until after World War Two that State planning legislation was adopted. The Local Government (Town and Country Planning) Amendment Bill of 1945 set up County Plans and Councils over the State.

Northumberland Planning

The Planning ideas for Newcastle had come full circle with the formation of the Northumberland County Council, which carried out the planning functions of seven Local Government Councils of the region. The first Chief Planner until 1958, architect Frank G. D. Stone, who had been Shire engineer, health inspector, architect, planner and President of Stroud, NSW, set an aggressive agenda. The Council produced plans over the next 15 years to address many issues including flooding, port facilities, 'green belts' and 'slum' clearance. It was only to be expected that these issues became highly controversial and political and after disagreements with member councils and the public the Council's powers were taken over by a new central State Planning Authority in 1963.

It is interesting to consider that Newcastle's Betterment Board played an early role in the development of town planning in New South Wales and that Newcastle architects Frederick G. and Archer C. Castleden and Nigel B. Pitt were there at the start.

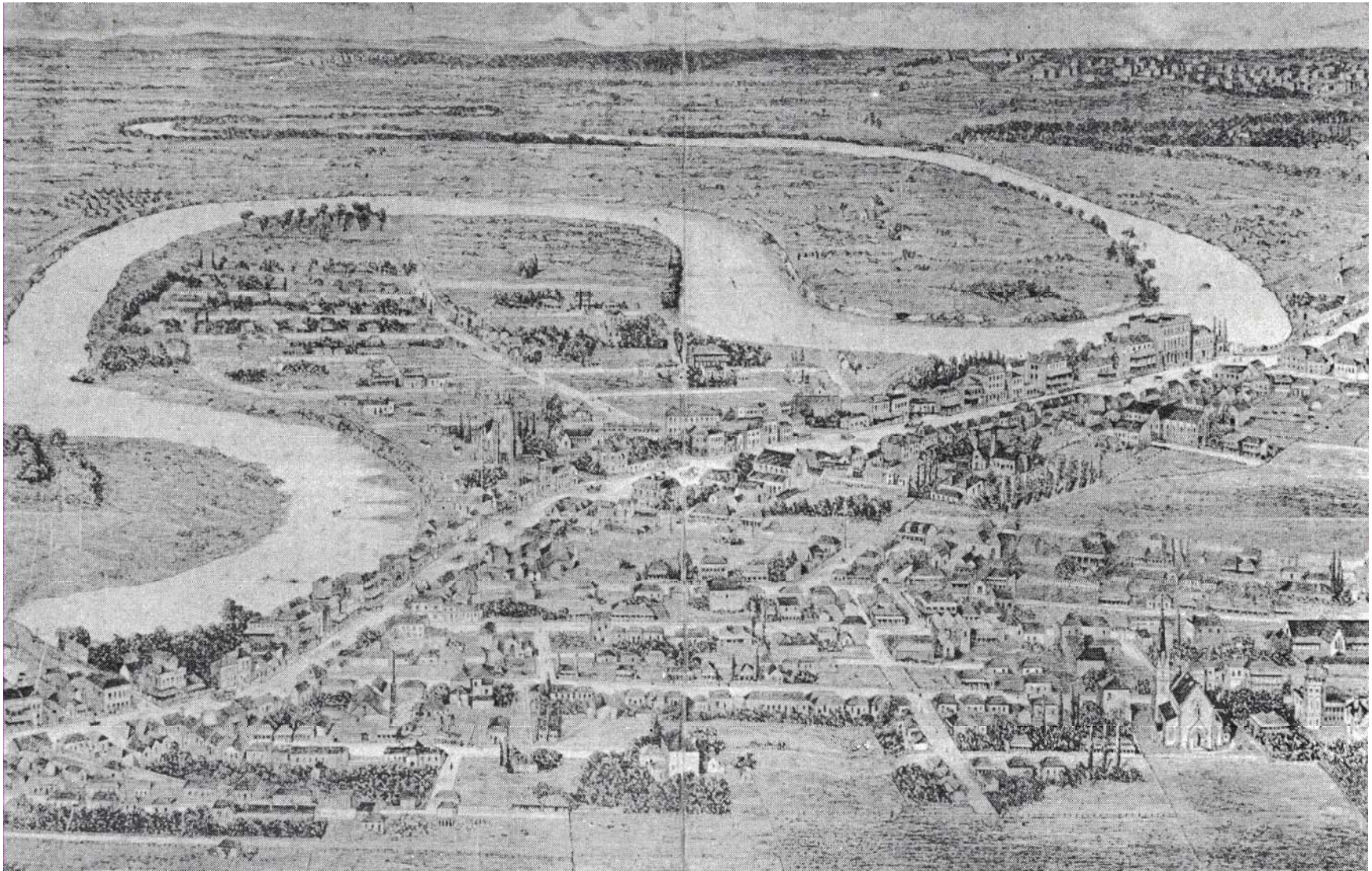
Early Maitland.

Early planning of Maitland evolved differently from Newcastle. Governor Macquarie had supported small lower Hunter River land grants from 1818 for the purpose of farming. At the limit of navigation, at the site of West Maitland, a small settlement formed within a few years. Problems became evident. The location was flood prone and the river was too shallow and convoluted above the river town of Morpeth. There were pressures to have a government town to serve the rapidly developing Hunter hinterland. The Governor preferred the site of Morpeth but had already granted the land to Major E. C. Close who was loath to co-operate. The Governor settled on East Maitland as the official town and insisted on the relocation of those from the settlement at West Maitland. Forced planning is almost always bound to fail and West Maitland continued to grow as a private town. The High Street began as a beaten track over leased farmland, the route typical of that taken by a bullock driver. The winding line of the track, generally at an angle to farm boundaries was accepted in surveys, result in many irregular shaped and perhaps confused allotments in side and back streets.

Maitland larger than Newcastle.

Early growth pressures in the Maitland area up to 1840 resulted in a population of over 3,000 compared to under 1,000 in Newcastle. Maitland was accessible by road from Wiseman's Ferry and its terminus for small shipping secured its role as a provisionary town, being known as 'The emporium of the north'.

The rapid expansion of the coal trade in the district and the links to Newcastle in 1857 and to Singleton in 1863, gradually reduced Maitland's potential in preference to Newcastle as a port particularly after the 1870s.



High Street, West Maitland, in 1878.
(provenance unknown)

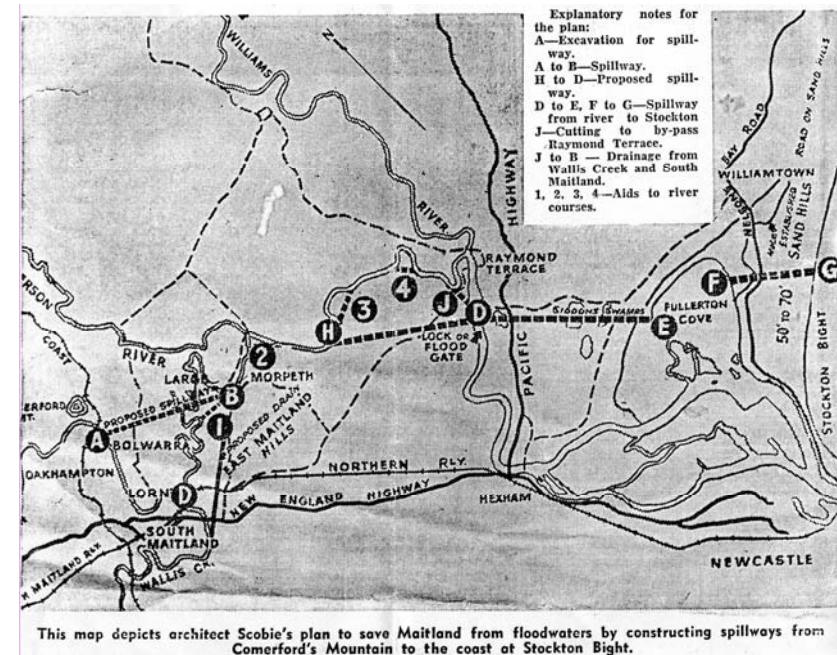
Consequently, Town Planning, for flood prone Maitland, did not occur to any great extent and opportunities for architects to participate were limited. The Penders, Scobies and T. W. Silk were all architects who worked from West Maitland. John Wiltshire Pender arrived in West Maitland to join his parents after the peak flood of 1857. He started an architectural practice in 1863, the first in the region, and over the next forty six years designed hundreds of buildings around Maitland and in the north. So many buildings are his in High Street, West Maitland that the fine character of the street is owed to him more than any other. Pender supported advancement of the district especially with education. He pushed for and achieved a Technical School for Maitland and was founder of the Maitland Scientific and Historical Research Society and School of Arts. He was a keen observer of local flood conditions, a constant threat to the area and, in 1868, won a competition for the design of flood gates at Wallis Creek, in preference to engineering advice of the day.

Scobie's Flood Levies

James Warren Scobie was a grandson of a Maitland pioneer, Michael Scobie. James was articled to architect John W. Pender in the 1880s before commencing his own architectural practice in 1888. He was probably the first home grown architect in the region. In that year he and Arthur C. Lee won a competition for the design of Maitland Town Hall. It was highly praised and was a major contribution to the town. His practice extended over 59 years, probably the longest in Australia for an individual. He too made a significant contribution to flood control. In the absence of government interest, the way was open for local suggestions and theories.

Scobie studied the river levels for the Lorn embankment and, according to his theory, designed the bank to conform to the fall

of the river after the 1899 flood. His advice was taken and the bank resisted the 1913 flood successfully to public acclaim. He asserted that it would have remained intact in the 1955 flood had it not been for rabbit burrows and cattle tracks. Like his parliamentarian father before him, Scobie put forward a scheme for the protection of Maitland by building a diversionary spillway channel at Bolwarra. It was not until 1956 that authorities came to the same conclusion and reformed the embankments.



Scobie's flood plan for Maitland 1894
As republished in the Maitland Mercury 11 July 1962.

THE ARCHITECT'S BIOGRAPHIES and THE INFLUENCES ON THEIR ARCHITECTURE

It is simplistic to say that normally every building project has to have a visual appearance, whatever it is. Architects have no other way than to give significance to each project in architectural expression using their skills and knowledge in various ways of defining space and surfaces. Of course architecture is not confined to this prosaic traditional concept and its quality and meaning can sometimes transcend the physical.

The task of these Hunter architects was to design a broad range of buildings in an evolving commercial, agricultural and industrial community. Their work expresses all the familiar styles from late Colonial through mainly Victorian to Federation, ending with traces of the early modern movement and everything in between.

The biographies are arranged in order of start of practice and the changes can be easily seen over the period as well as within a practice. Some influences on the architects are interesting to consider.

Education and training

It was fortunate that the first significant architects had formal architectural education before coming to Australia. J. W. Pender in Inverness, Scotland in the 1850s and F. B. Menkens in Hannover, Germany in the 1870s, were two such architects. James Henderson was in the building trade in Scotland in the 1850s and Peter Bennett was apprenticed to a building firm in London in the 1860s.

With first hand knowledge of European building, these four architects formed the basis of the profession in the Hunter. The local profession also benefited later with other architects coming originally from overseas such as F. G. Castleden in 1907 and from Sydney originally such as N. B. Pitt and E. A. M. Merewether in 1913.

It was common in early times for a student wishing to be an architect to be 'articled' to a practicing architect who then had a legal obligation to pass on skills and knowledge to the student over an agreed term in return for a payment or token wage or board and lodging. This system was still partly in existence even up to 1956, although discouraged by the Institute of Architects as by then a formal course in architecture served the purpose of education.

The course commenced at the Sydney Technical College in 1906 but was not available in Newcastle until 1926, following representations by the recently formed Association of Newcastle Architects, and then only in part.

The early years of the course were tutored locally by N. B. Pitt and W. D. Jeater but students had to travel regularly to Sydney for the more advanced stages of the course. This was still the case until 1961 when an autonomous School of Architecture at the University of Newcastle offered the degree course in Architecture. The 1930s student was allowed leave one day per week to attend Sydney Technical College.

Initially travel was by the overnight 'sixty miler' steamer, leaving Newcastle at 11.00pm and returning next day at 11.00pm ready for the next day's office work. Train could be an option with the only convenient return being on the 2.00am paper train from Sydney Central, sleeping on a seat or luggage rack if lucky. Road was not an option, even if the student owned a car, there was the 9 hour return journey, allowing for the Hawkesbury's Peat's

Ferry. It was hard to get an architectural education in Newcastle then. Only nine students graduated with diplomas before 1940 when the War caused suspension of the course until 1945.

Registration

The passing of the Architects Registration Act NSW in 1921 required persons wishing to practice as an architect to register with the 'Board'. Two years were allowed for Registration, the first Roll being issued in 1923. The Act required five years experience in an existing architect's office, by design or co-incidence allowing soldiers returning from the war to qualify, such as A. C. Castleden. After 1923 there were restricted ways to be registered, either by completing a recognised course or, for a mature age professional, to pass the almost impassable Board's exam. J. P. Gannon, F. G. D. Stone and P. Jerome Gannon were architects who succeeded.

Professional

As for occupations with common objectives, architects had their associations. In 1871, in Sydney, the 'NSW Society for the Promotion of Architecture and Fine Arts' was formed with objectives including 'scientific knowledge and the promotion of friendly intercourse between its members'. It soon became the Institute of Architects but it kept its objectives.

Architects in Newcastle had an opportunity to engage in or observe the vigorous discussion of architecture during the height of Sydney's frenetic Victorian period.

Such leading architects as Edmund Blacket, (St Andrews Cathedral 1846-74); James Barnet, (Customs House 1885, GPO 1865-87); Thomas Rowe, (The Central Synagogue 1873); William Wardell, (St Marys Cathedral 1865; George McRae, (QVB 1893-98); Horbury Hunt and George Mansfield were in the news of the

time with disagreements and arguments in the busy competitive commercial life of the city. Mansfield, Blacket and Hunt had projects in the Hunter and would have been noticed by the local architects. F. B. Menkens was an early member of the Institute and was Hunt's local agent at the start of Christ Church Cathedral in 1892.

Although local architects formed their own association in 1925 it was not until 1934 that Newcastle joined the newly federated Royal Australian Institute of Architects as a division of New South Wales. Membership of an association, participation and observation of other member's activities would have been useful to Newcastle architects, both in keeping informed and in impressing clients and peers.

Newspapers, Books and Publications

The early architect was assisted by printed material describing and illustrating, by woodcuts or etchings, building images and details. Pattern books were available in Colonial times. Text books such as 'Gothic Architecture' by John Henry Parker, 1836, London or 'Cassell's Popular Educator' (12 volumes), London, 1850, and containing very detailed instruction in architecture, were useful references. In the early 1900s the American International Correspondence School provided a course in architecture. Sara and Dobell were students.

The architects kept folios of published drawings featuring the various styles, as well as their own work, from which a client could choose either by suggestion, request or demand.

Before the publication of photographs, around the turn of the century, newspaper reports of proposed and completed buildings were described in absolute detail, usually lauding the architect in congratulatory tone. The newspaper satisfied public interest in architecture and building and was a source of information for

architects. It was normal, from the 1850s, for architects to advertise public tenders, proudly announcing who was building what and where. The monthly magazine *'Newcastle Construction'* edited from 1913 by George Taylor from Sydney was invaluable, not only for local information, but also for national and international building news. The publication ceased in the 1930s depression.

Other NSW publications at the time were the monthly *'Building'*, the weekly *'Construction'*, from the Master Builders Association, and monthly *'Commonwealth Home'*, organ of the Town Planning Association of NSW, to name a few. Much later the Institute of Architects published news for its members.

Although dwarfed by Sydney by a factor of ten and culturally isolated to some extent, the architecture of the Hunter developed from a base of immigrant architects who were gradually supplemented by 'home grown' practitioners. The profession kept itself adequately informed and it seems provided a competent and useful service in the life of the community on a par with the big city architects.

Travel

Travel can also influence the work of an architect. Of the 'home grown' architects, Silk made a world tour in 1898 for a year, Merewether and Jeater served in France in WW1, Sara worked in London for five years in the 1930s and W. H. Pender visited Japan in 1938.

In particular a 'French Romantic' influence can be seen in Merewether's 'Orient Hotel' and in the 'Crown & Anchor'.

Sara absorbed the early modern idiom of the thirties and the change is obvious from his 'inter-war Mediterranean' 'Awaba House', 1927, to the 'Fairhall House', 1938, after returning from overseas.

The Styles

The local architects came well after the Old Colonial Georgian buildings of Francis Greenway and the Colonial Regency period of John Verge in the early 19th century. The Hunter locals designed a kaleidoscope of fashionable styles from the 1860s on with vernacular variations appropriate to the time. Their building styles appear in *'Identifying Australian Architecture'* (Apperly, Irving & Reynolds) which also covers chronologically the idioms of national architecture.

The longest individual practice, J. W. Pender, 1863-1909, designed a large range of buildings. Starting with the Colonial Grecian School of Arts (Morpeth, 1863), Victorian Italianate 'Cintra' (Maitland, 1878), Victorian Free Classical School of Arts (Wallsend, 1879), Victorian Free Gothic St Jude's (Scone, 1883), he shows the shifts in building design. He was a very successful exponent of Victorian Filigree: 'Greenwood' (Singleton, 1888) and the Imperial Hotel (Armidale, c.1890) and later Federation Filigree at 'Saumarez' (Armidale, 1906), and 'Belltrees' (Scone, 1907) are examples where he liberally used his 1885 patented cast iron verandah decoration.

Over the 28 years of James Henderson's practice his buildings are mostly of Victorian Italianate influence as in 'Jesmond House' tower of 1885. There are some decorative variations but all his buildings show a strength and solidity with a quality of permanence.

Peter Bennett in the 1890s preferred Victorian Free Classical, strangely changing in 1913 to Federation Warehouse for the Newcastle Trades Hall which was similar in character to but not as successful as Menkens' warehouses 1897-1906.

The works of Frederick Menkens show a competence and quality above others. The difference in styles cannot better be illustrated than by two churches opposite each other in Laman Street, built

at the same time in 1889. St Andrews, in brickwork, is Victorian Free Gothic, the winner of a competition. The Baptist Tabernacle is strictly Victorian Italianate/Grecian, appropriate to a tabernacle, and is of applied or cast plaster of the Corinthian order. How the façade was constructed and finished is still a mystery. Of note also is Woods Chambers, perhaps reminiscent of his homeland near the Dutch border. The façade seems to cram together as many decorative stone details as possible, as if to show off his dexterity to the public, his clients and his peers.

Menkens' turn of the century, seven brick warehouses of various multi storeys with street facades are Federation Warehouse of which all but one are unique to Newcastle. The major brick piers are carried above the parapet and topped with large projecting capitals, giving the piers a dominance.

The many Hotels in the coalfields by J. W. Scobie and his competitor W. H. Pender are an extraordinarily inventive mix of styles: Scobie using various decorative parapets and Pender content with broad plain work with pleasing proportions.

The work of Silk cannot be overlooked, from the clean and well-preserved banded brickwork Federation Gothic of the Catholic Church at Morpeth, 1898, to his later Federation Free Style and Mannerist buildings of the 1920s such as the Municipal Building in Newcastle.

F. G. Castleden's ecclesiastical work cannot be underrated – such as the text book Gothic of All Saints Church, Singleton. His understanding of Federation Bungalow is exceptional and, after his son joined the firm in 1919, the firm's competent commercial work in Inter-War Free Classical can be observed.

Towards the end of the 1930s the Inter-War Functionalist, Early Modern and Art Deco characters become apparent. The new

firms of Hosking & Pilgrim, as well as Jeater, Rodd & Hay did their best in the limited time before the war intervened.

These are only examples of the shifts in architectural expression over time. The reader will be able to observe the quality of the local architects' work and, without making comparisons with the late 20th century and contemporary ideas, judge their efforts accordingly.

Early Architects of the Hunter Region

A Hundred years to 1940

INDEX OF BIOGRAPHIES

The following biographies of varying lengths have been arranged in order of start of practice dates to give some historical context to the changing architecture over 100 years.

See Appendix for full list of practices.

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SCOTT brothers, Robert (c.1799 – 1844) & Helenus (born c.1802)

The Scott brothers, Robert and Helenus, arrived in NSW in 1821 and were each granted 2000 acres (809 ha) of land on the Hunter River at Singleton. They were both well educated young men and soon mixed easily into Sydney society. Governor Brisbane and later Governor Darling were impressed. Their mother Maria, in London, was friendly with John Macarthur's sons, who lived nearby. The Scott brothers made themselves known to Macarthur and visited his homesteads at Parramatta and Camden.

As well as taking note of the kinds of buildings being built in the colony they regularly received building literature from London. They showed an educated interest in architecture. By 1825, in their twenties, they were building their small house/homestead 'Glendon' at Scott's Flat, Singleton. It was in the simple vernacular style of the period, rectangular in plan form with a verandah on one long side and a shorter central verandah and corner rooms on the other. The roof was pitched ridge to verandah edge. There were later, larger additions in another style.

During the 1830s they became known in the Hunter region and were consulted by or produced various designs for fellow settlers. In 1830 Helenus visited George Wyndham, the wine grower at 'Dalwood', near Braxton, while his Greek Revival 'Dalwood' house was being built and probably was asked for some opinion or advice.

In 1838 they would have known that a new settler, George Hobler, was planning to build the two storied Georgian mansion, 'Aberglassyn', near Maitland. John Verge, architect of 'Elizabeth Bay House', Sydney, was the designer and Verge would have been known in the area, including to the Scotts, as he went to live briefly nearby on his land grant at Dungog in 1838. There is no

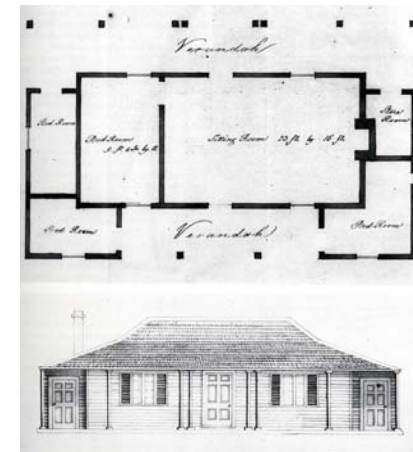
doubt that the Scott brothers understood the principles of architecture to the benefit of their neighbours and friends in the valley.

In 1842 commodity prices crashed in Europe and many of those who had borrowed heavily from the banks, in order to build up their colonial properties, were not able to repay. George Hobler relocated to Goulburn leaving 'Aberglassyn' half finished. George Wyndham temporarily went north to grow produce. The Scott brothers ceased their activities in the following severe depression. Robert died in 1844 after a failed tallow venture and, in 1848, Helenus, with their huge debts at over 15,000 pounds, sought refuge under the Insolvency Act.

According to James Broadbent the pedimented addition to 'Glendon', Scott's Flat, Singleton, is the only work remaining that was certainly by the Scott brothers.

Reference:

James Broadbent 'The Australian Colonial House 1788 – 1842' published 1997.



'Glendon' drawings from the Scott papers,
Mitchell Library, State Library of NSW.

PENDER, John Wiltshire

1834-1917



Architect, John W. Pender started another three generations of architects. Walter H. was his son, Ian W. was his grandson, and Andrew is his great grandson and now lives and practices architecture in Sydney. Given some temporary closures, the 1890s depression for John and WW2 then two years of 1960s travel for Ian, the successive practices of John, Walter and Ian kept the family firm's doors open in Maitland for 125 years, (1863 – 1988) confirmed as an Australian record.

John Pender was born at Tobermory, on the Isle of Mull, Scotland, not far from James Henderson's birthplace and at about the same time. He had his early education on Mull and then went to Inverness where he served an apprenticeship as a carpenter and joiner. Later he was articled to Mr James Ross ¹, a well known architect there, as well as having some complementary instruction at the Royal Academy of Inverness. He had then a thorough understanding of the art of architecture.

He came to Australia with his parents and other family, first to Melbourne in 1855, after a sea voyage of 90 days. His family went to Maitland but gold fever was strong then and he remained in Victoria and, with a friend, worked a claim at Mount Blackwood,

but made more money by sharpening tools. They tried their luck also at Tarradale, Bendigo and Beechworth. ² This connection with gold was to resurface nearly 20 years later with a journey of curiosity to Hill End, NSW, and with the fever that later enthused his partner, Thomas Silk, to journey to the Klondike fields of the Yukon. In 1873 Pender described his visit to Hill End to see how gold fortunes were at Hawkins Hill. From Maitland he travelled by river and sea to Sydney and then by train to Bathurst. It was during the long, hot days of January, as he wrote:

'Started for Hill End on horseback by bush track at 11 am, Hill End 8 pm, weather hot.' The round trip back home took ten days and on his return, on a Saturday, he went straight back to work in his office.³ Such was the discipline of Mr Pender.

Much earlier, in 1857, there was a mammoth flood in the Hunter Valley and Pender decided to rejoin his family. In Maitland, at age 24, he went to work for his Uncle John, who had started a building business, and became his foreman for the next six years. Their projects included Davidson's Hotel (now demolished), Bolwarra House and The Manse (now a school) and a Church in Freechurch Street, Maitland. He had the opportunity and talent to do some design work for the business and this took more of his time until, in 1863, he set up as an architect in the town. ⁴ It is also said that a contributing factor could have been a disagreement he had with his Uncle about the pulpit design for the Church. His practice was to last another 46 years, providing buildings all over the Hunter Valley and beyond the mountains to Tamworth and Armidale and the north-west, travelling by train as far as Singleton and later Tamworth, and then by Stage Coach or horseback for places beyond.



Above: School of Arts, Morpeth, architect J.W. Pender, built 1862.

*Below: School of Arts, Wallsend, architect J.W. Pender, built 1879.
now Commercial Chambers after many previous uses.*



He designed hundreds of buildings, most of enduring quality. So many buildings are his in High Street, West Maitland, that the fine character of the street and Mall is owed to him more than to any other. The Australian Joint Stock Bank, 1882 (now the City Cultural Centre), the AMP offices, 1883 (now the Queensland Insurance Company), and the Masonic Hall, 1877 (now the AML & F Co. Ltd.) and the Maitland Mercury office of 1882, which has only a small portion remaining, are his.

Other buildings which show his versatility are the Jewish Synagogue in Church Street, 1879 (now a Credit Union) and the ornate Masonic Hall, 1886, in Victoria Street. The firm's buildings were in such numbers in Maitland that they came to express a local style with typical repeated details of stairs, cast iron, chimneys and the like which can be recognised, apart from others, as Pender's. He had a way of serving his clients to achieve satisfaction both for his client and himself. He would often prepare several designs to show his client before choosing the final design, which was usually conservative. His buildings show that he was sensitive to the character of the location and nearby buildings, a commendable ability and attitude for an architect.⁵

His ecclesiastical work was no lesser in quality. He was held in much respect in religious circles and, although he was a Presbyterian and Episcopalian himself, his clients also included other denominations. He designed Churches at Morpeth and Merriwa, and the Convent and Chapel at Tamworth (now the Conservatorium of Music), for the Catholic Church. His other churches were at Vacy for the Episcopalians, Armidale for the Presbyterians and Scone for the Church of England.



Above: Verandah at 'Greenwood', Singleton, J. W. Pender, architect, built 1888. Cast iron panels designed by J. W. Pender.

Perhaps the most substantial and consistent of his buildings are the noted large Victorian houses such as 'Benholme' and 'Cintra' at Maitland, 'Brandon' at Seaham, 'Saumarez' at Armidale, 'Greenwood' at Singleton and the Bishops House, Cathedral Street, Maitland. 'Leeholme' at Woodville was similar to 'Cintra' but has since been demolished. The common feature of these houses is the generously decorated bay windows thrust out beyond the main house and verandah lines. After 1885 the cast iron work on the verandahs often incorporated his own registered design, with some panels marked:

'J. W. Pender, Maitland (11-5-1885)'.

For many years he did various works at 'Belltrees', the property of Mr H. L. White, an early relative of the writer, Patrick White, but his most notable work there was the main homestead, built in 1906 when Pender was 73. It was his last work before retirement, which was purely nominal until his death in 1917. Family notes quote *'the strong wills of White and his architect seemed to clash over the scheme. Pender tried to convince his client of the merits of highly Italianate designs but White would not concede.*

*The architect was forced to simplify his scheme and only managed to satisfy White after some ten or more well developed sketch plans. It appears, however, the Pender had his own back with the main staircase. Although White signed the contract drawings he did not, apparently, see the nature of the scheme clearly and he was quite annoyed, on its completion, to see that the staircase was so ornate.'*⁶



Above: 'Cintra', Maitland, J. W. Pender, architect, built 1878.

Below: 'Benholme', Benevolent Asylum, Maitland, J. W. Pender, architect, built 1884. Now named the 'Pender Building'



Many architects and students worked with him. Pender and Coulton operated briefly in the 1870s and F. B. Menkens joined him when he first came to the district in 1881. Thomas W. Silk came from Sydney in the 1890s and the partnership lasted until 1905. Locally born J. Warren Scobie was articled to Pender in the 1880s until he formed his own firm in 1888. Pender's son, Walter H., who was articled to an architect in Newcastle, joined him in 1906 and continued the firm when his father retired a year later at the age of 75. Another son, William Samuel, served his articles in his father's firm of Pender & Silk but soon left to join two of his brothers who had started a sawmilling, joinery and steelwork firm. Pender Bros. also made beekeeping equipment which was in strong demand from apiarists Australia wide. William became a world expert on bees.⁷

Outside his practice Pender was involved in community movements aiming at the advancement of the district, especially in educational matters. He campaigned for and achieved a Technical School for Maitland, was a member and one of the founders of the Maitland Scientific and Historical Research Society and School of Arts. He was described as '*a well-read and brainy man*,⁸ and in times of flood, like so many other Maitlanders, rendered splendid service to the homeless'.⁹ He took time off on New Year's Days '*to officiate as a judge for dancing at gatherings of the Scots clans in Newcastle and Sydney*'.¹⁰ He was also a treasurer of the Maitland Town Band, a director of the Maitland Ice Company and of the Great Northern Building, Investment and Loan Society. For several years after 1883 Pender was appointed as a part-time magistrate, an office usually held then by a notable and influential member of the community. He was a keen early observer of the local flood conditions and, in 1868, he won a competition for the design of flood gates at Wallis Creek, in preference to the engineering advice of the day.¹¹ His ideas worked at the time.

He was also keenly interested in agriculture. He had a farm, 'Drumfin', at Oakhampton, not far from Maitland. During the national financial disaster of the mid 1890s he found temporary refuge there with his wife and some of their 10 children. He became noted for his Ayrshire cattle, pedigreed pigs and improved strains of poultry.¹²

John Pender lived in a vibrant time. *'He knew Maitland in the days when it was the Emporium of the north, in the roaring days when bullock teams from the north and north-west brought the wool-laden wagons to Morpeth...He saw the decline of Maitland's great commercial prosperity following the extension of the Great North Railway Line and lived long enough to see the dawn of another era of prosperity brought about by the development of the great Maitland Coalfield.'*¹³

He wore his full Scottish regalia often to various occasions. Local Maitland identity, Harry Boyle, tells the story of a drunk in Scone who was weaving his way home in the morning after a night out. When passing Pender's recently completed St Lukes Church he saw the fully kilted Scotsman clambering over the high ridge of the roof in the mist. The drunk never drank again.

Pender nominally retired in 1909, at age seventy five, and went on a world trip, with his daughter Martha, to the scenes of his boyhood in Tobermory and Inverness, toured the United Kingdom and returned via the United States.

In 1913 he went for a holiday to New Zealand with another daughter, Jessie. He had been in good health most of his life but in his last months was confined to his residence in Church Street, Maitland.¹⁴ He lived to 83 and died in 1917, the same year as Les Darcy, another local but pugilistic hero.



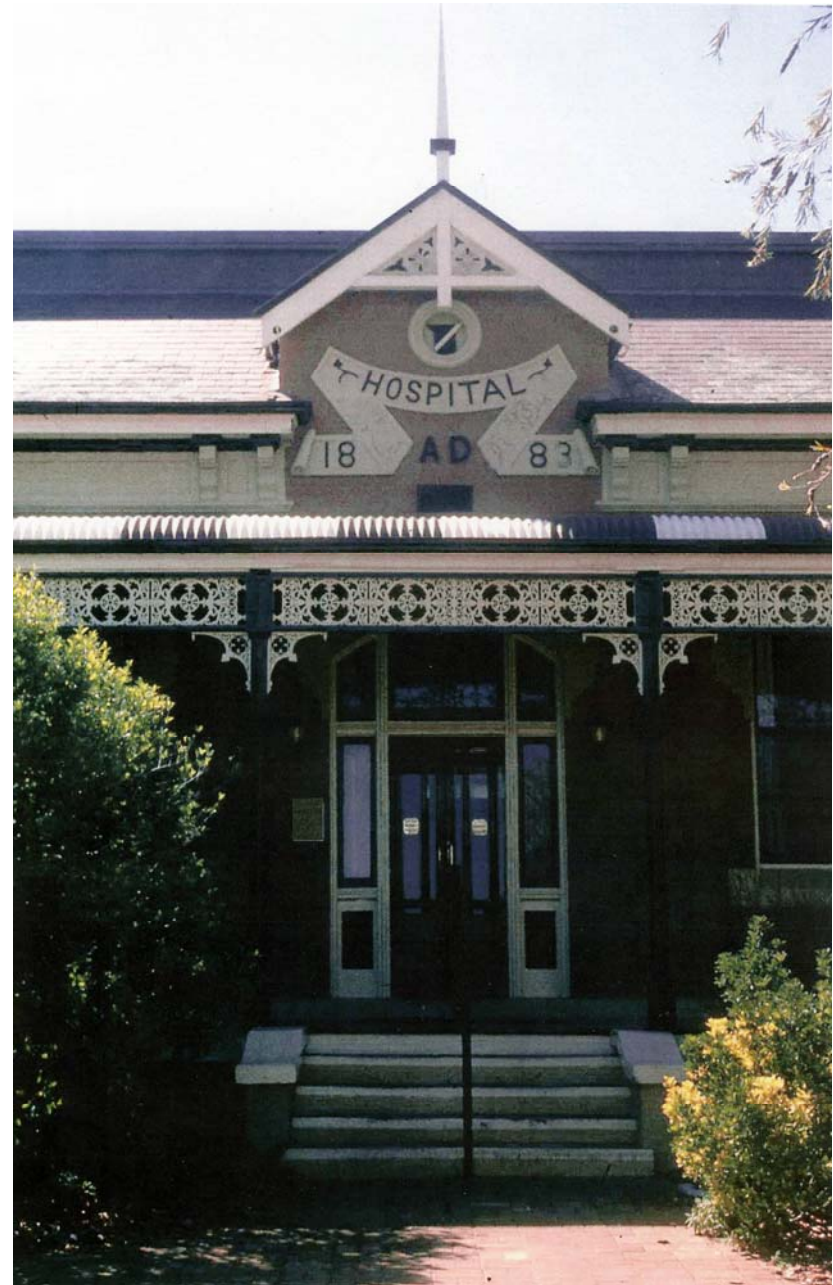
Above: 'Greenwood', Singleton, J. W. Pender, architect, built 1888.



Above: St Lukes Church of England, Scone, J. W. Pender, architect, built 1883.

PENDER, J. W. – BUILDINGS

- c1857 Dominican Convent, Victoria Street, Maitland
Bolwarra House – supervising foreman
- 1862 School of Arts, High Street, Morpeth
- 1870 Floodgates, Wallis Creek, Maitland
- 1876 'Kangory' – formerly 'Dulwich'
St Johns Presbyterian Manse, 106 High Street,
Muswellbrook
Austral Band Hall, Campbell Street, Inverell
(Pender & Coulton)
Nos 352-359 High Street, Maitland
- 1877 Old Masonic Hall, 280 High Street, Maitland
- 1878 'Helyhurst', 76 Regent Street, Maitland
Co-op Bakery, 16-18 Elgin Street, Maitland
School of Arts, Cowper Street, Wallsend
'Cintra', 34 Regent Street, Maitland
- 1879 Synagogue, Church Street, Maitland
Catholic Church, Merriwa
- 1880 Showground Pavilions, Maitland and Singleton
Dominican Convent and Chapel, Oxley Highway,
Tamworth
- 1881 The Parsonage, 63 Church Street, Maitland
Presbyterian Church, Armidale
'St Elmo', 87 Elgin Street, Maitland
The Chancel, Sisters of Mercy Convent, Singleton



Above: District Hospital, Tamworth, J. W. Pender, architect, built 1883.



*Above: Australian Joint Stock Bank, Maitland,
drawing by J. W. Pender, architect, built 1882.*

(Maitland City Library collection)

Below: 100 years later, now a Cultural Centre.



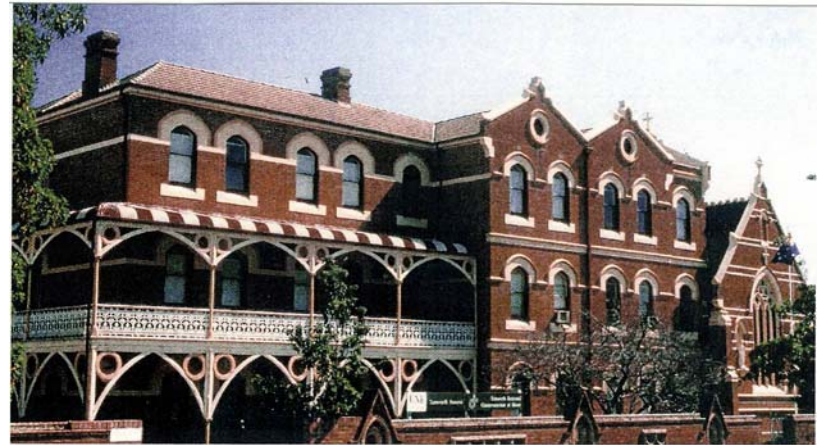
- 1882 Maitland Mercury Office, 258 High Street, Maitland
AJS Bank, 248 High Street, Maitland (now the Cultural Centre).
- 1883 'Brandon', Seaham
Bishop's Residence, Cathedral Street, Maitland
'Leeholme' Paterson River
District Hospital, Johnson Street, Tamworth
St Lukes Church of England, Scone
CBC Bank, 257 Dowling Street, Dungog
AMP Offices, 267-277 High Street, Maitland
- 1884 'Benholme', Benevolent Asylum, 30 Regent Street, Maitland (now named the 'Pender Building')
- 1885 Catholic Presbytery, 27 James Street, Morpeth
446 High Street, Maitland
- 1886 Masonic Lodge, 5 Victoria Street, Maitland
St Johns Anglican Church, Vacy (Episcopalian)
360 High Street, Maitland
- 1887 Chapel, 'Belltrees'
Barden & Ribee Shop, 467-473 High Street, Maitland
- 1888 'Greenwood', Greenwood Lane, Singleton
Convent, Scone

Cappers Store, High Street, Maitland
355 High Street, Maitland
473 High Street, Maitland
- 1889 Presbyterian Manse, Dowling Street, Dungog
'Anambah', Gosforth

- 1889 Mechanics Institute, Singleton
 'Atherstone', 5 Sowerley Street, Muswellbrook
 Presbyterian Church, Aberdeen
- c1890 Dymocks, 359-363 High Street, Maitland
 Imperial Hotel, corner Beardy and Faulkner Streets,
 Armidale (Pender & Silk)
- 1895 House, 22 Elgin Street, Maitland
- 1897 Catholic Church, James Street, Morpeth
- 1900 Shearing Shed Additions, 'Belltrees', Scone
- 1901 Stabling, 'Belltrees', Scone
- 1902 Enright's Chambers, 467 High Street, Maitland
 (Pender & Silk)
- 1903 Entertainment Hall, 'Belltrees', Scone
 Central Methodist Mission, King Street, Newcastle –
 completion (Pender & Silk)
 Maitland District Hospital, Female Public Ward
- 1906 'Saumarez' Homestead, near Armidale (1888 start)
- 1907 'Belltrees' Homestead, Scone.

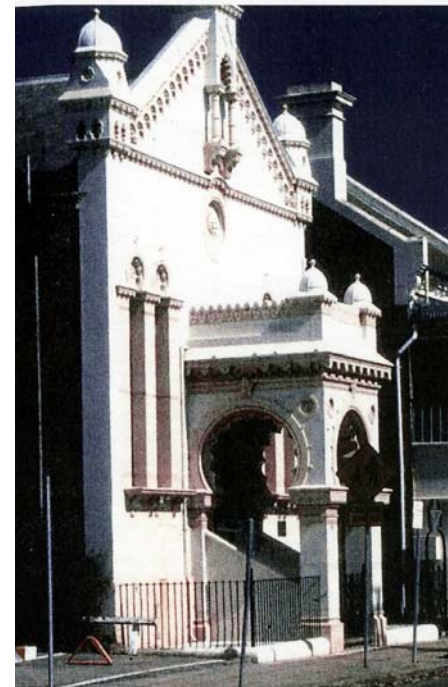
OTHER BUILDINGS (including Pender & Silk)

Royal and Central Hotels, Tamworth
 Brunkers Sale Rooms
 Gunnedah Hospital
 St Johns School, 288 High Street, Maitland
 Sacred Heart College
 AMP Armidale
 Tattersalls Hotel, Armidale
 Rourkes Arcade



*Above: Catholic Convent and Chapel, Tamworth,
 J. W. Pender, Architect, built 1880.*

*Below: Old Masonic Hall, High Street, Maitland,
 J. W. Pender, Architect, built 1877.*



References:

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1 NMH 14/1/1909 | 7 NMH 13/10/1931 |
| 2 NMH 14/1/1909 | 8, 9 & 10 NMH 8/3/1917 |
| 3 Diary of J. W. Pender – 1873 | 11 K. Charlton – unpublished thesis 1961 |
| 4 NMH 14/1/1909 | ‘Architecture of High Street, Maitland’ |
| 5 NMH 8/3/1917 | 12 RAHS Morton Herman -1954 |
| 6 Hunter Region Heritage Study,
Plans & Notes – Penders’ Practices | 13 & 14 NMH 8/3/1917 |
| | 15 Barry Maitland – Pender Index 1999 |

Author’s Note:

The above biographical profile was compiled in 1997 by independent research without access to the Pender family. A more detailed and extensive research was subsequently undertaken by Professor Barry Maitland, of the University of Newcastle, with access to the Pender office records by permission of the widow of Ian Pender.

The Pender Index, a guide to the Architectural Work of the Pender Practice of Maitland NSW (1863 – 1988) identifies 2,562 individual projects for the period.



*Above: Imperial Hotel, Armidale, J. W. Pender, architect, built c1890
The extensive cast iron balustrades and valances are of Pender’s registered design of 11 May 1885 – used on many of his buildings see ‘Greenwood’, Singleton*



Old Masonic Hall decorative details.

Below: corner and cast iron detail





*Bishop's Residence, Cathedral Street, Maitland.
J. W. Pender, architect, 1883*



*'Saumarez' Homestead near Armidale.
J. W. Pender, architect, begun 1888, completed 1906.*

*Below: 'Belltrees' Homestead, Scone.
J. W. Pender, architect, 1907.*



Below: 'Saumarez' in earlier times.



SMITH, Thomas

1841-1922

Thomas Smith was a well known and respected identity in the building industry in Newcastle for nearly 60 years and, in that time, was a builder, contractor, architect, alderman, mayor, respected arbitrator and, at one time, President of the Builders and Contractors Association.

He was born in Sydney where he received his education and business training. At the age of 18 he went gold digging to Rockhampton but returned, after a month, to Sydney and continued in his father's building business. In 1864, aged 23, he commenced on his own account and built the Wesleyan Church at Bulli. He went to West Maitland in 1866 and, after carrying out several contracts, settled in Newcastle.¹

He was a builder for 35 years and built many projects in Newcastle, including the New Zealand Banking Company building and, more notably, the Borough Markets² in Hunter Street, a building designed by the well known Sydney architect, G. A. Mansfield and supervised by Joseph Backhouse in 1870. The project was brought to public attention when a principal arch collapsed due to movement of one buttress and the incident and roles are discussed later in Backhouse's profile.

Tooth and Company was one of his clients for hotel work and he carried out considerable structural work at Fort Scratchley and other places for the Government.

Around 1900 he retired from building and practiced as an architect. His most notable work is Tooth's Cosmopolitan Hotel at Carrington, 1905, a charming example of Federation Classical Freestyle.³

He was an alderman of Newcastle Borough Council for 15 years and was Mayor in 1896. For many years he was part of the musical life of Newcastle and always gave his services freely for charitable causes.⁴ He became one of the oldest members of Lodge St George, Masonic Order,⁵ and was earlier a member of Marine Lodge, E. C. He was married in 1870 and fathered four sons and three daughters.⁶



*Newcastle Borough Markets, Hunter Street, Newcastle,
opposite Market Street.*

George A. Mansfield, architect, 1870.

Thomas Smith builder.

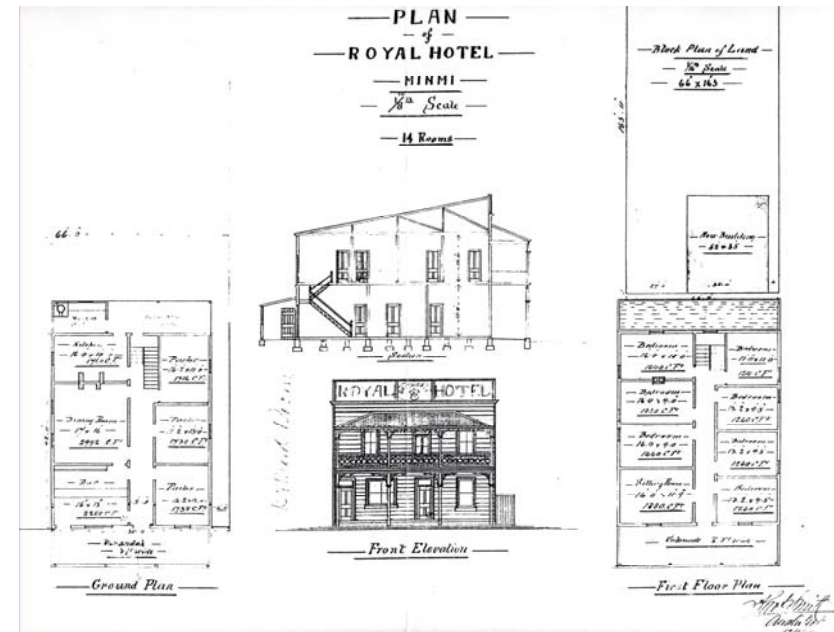
Joseph Backhouse superintendent.

Photograph: The Snowball Collection.

After the introduction of Arbitration clauses in building contracts, in 1902, Smith offered his services as an arbitrator and he became well known in this role. Whether he was biased in favour of builders is not known but as the clauses were added at the behest of the builders⁷ and he had been a builder it is hoped his rulings were not biased. His reputation would indicate not. He died in Newcastle at age 81.

References:

- 1 W. F. Morrison – *Aldine Centennial History of NSW, 1888*
- 2 NMH 21/6/1922
- 3 Maitland & Stafford – *Newcastle Architecture*
- 4 W. F. Morrison op cit
- 5 NMH 21/6/1922
- 6 ibid
- 7 NMH 23/10/1902



Plan of hotel at Minmi drawn and built by Thomas Smith, 1905.



*Former Cosmopolitan Hotel, Young Street, Carrington.
Thomas Smith architect & builder, built 1905. Now Strata Units.*



Smith's own house, The Terrace, Newcastle, commenced in 1870s and added to several times. Thomas Smith, architect & builder.

COX, George H.

George Cox first advertised in 1864 as a builder. He *'was prepared to furnish plans and specifications for every description and class of buildings, or improvement to existing buildings and execute the same on economical terms.'*¹

Four years later he publicly declared himself an architect in notices for tenders whilst also offering a building service. In 1874 it is believed he teamed up with Sydney architect, Oswald Lewis – son of Mortimer Lewis (senior) one time Colonial Architect, to design the Brewery in Hunter Street West which later became the Regional Museum.

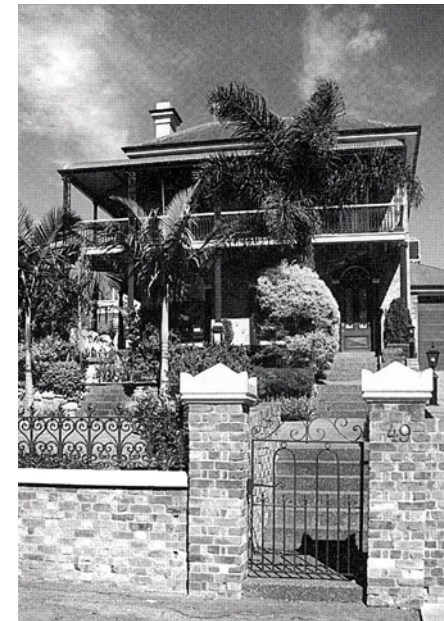
In 1873 he called tenders for the School of Arts, Hunter Street, for either the whole, Wolfe Street, or Hunter Street sections.² The whole project must have been too expensive as, in 1874, tenders were again called for the Hunter Street portion only.³ The previous building had been built a few years earlier to a competitive design of Sydney architect Benjamin Backhouse, but it burnt down in December 1872. His younger brother Joseph supervised the work,⁴ apparently, when he came to Newcastle in 1869. He stayed, doing architectural work for himself and his brother, until 1872 and left Newcastle within weeks after the fire. John Guy observes that during this period George Cox did not advertise for tenders, resuming one month after Backhouse's last tender notice.⁵ It is possible that there was some business arrangement with Backhouse. Cox's involvement indicates he was more a builder than an architect. The 1875 School of Arts building is a competent and noble statement of the aims of the movement and *'ranks next to that of Sydney.'*⁶ It is more likely that it was substantially rebuilt to the original plans of Benjamin Backhouse. Cox disappeared from the building scene in 1875.

COX, George H. – BUILDINGS.

- c.1873 Marlborough House, 49 Church Street, Newcastle
- 1875 School of Arts, Hunter Street, Newcastle (attributed)
- 1876 Brewery, Hunter Street West, Newcastle.
With Oswald Lewis

References:

- 1 NC 2/9/1864
- 2 NC 4/7/1873
- 3 NC 9/5/1874
- 4 NC 9/4/1870
- 5 J. Guy – *Newcastle Architects Tenders 1850-1901.*
- 6 NMH 9/9/1897.



*Marlborough House, Church Street, The Hill, Newcastle,
George H. Cox architect/builder, c.1873
(Newcastle, A Guide, Maitland & Stafford)*



*School of Arts, Wolfe & Hunter Streets, Newcastle
George H. Cox architect/builder built 1875 (attributed)
(Photograph taken 1897 – The Snowball Collection)*

*Also below: (Photograph taken 1935 – Newcastle Regional Library)
Note altered parapet and new suspended awning. F. B. Menken's 1885 additions on the left*



BLAKE, J. B.

Nothing is known about Blake except that he advertised as an architect and building surveyor in April 1872.¹ He called tenders in the following three months for two weatherboard cottages, a paling fence, foundations for a hotel and a hole for a tank. Nothing is heard from Mr. Blake after that.² He was one of the many to put themselves forward to provide an architectural service only to realise that they had building skills but no knowledge of design.

References:

- 1 NH 25/4/1872
- 2 J. Guy – *Newcastle Architects Tenders 1850-1901*

SWINBURN, JAMES

Swinburn advertised himself as an architect in 1872,¹ occasionally calling tenders over the next ten years for houses,² although he dropped his reference to 'architect' later. John Guy notes that a J. Swinburn was the Colliery Manager of Waratah Coal Company in 1862, and probably had building experience. Nothing further has been traced.

References:

- 1 NC 8/8/1872
- 2 J. Guy – *Newcastle Architects Tenders 1850-1901*.

BACKHOUSE, Joseph

b. 1835

Joseph Backhouse came to Newcastle in 1869, initially to supervise the Newcastle School of Arts for his more famous older brother Benjamin, a prominent Sydney architect, who won a competition for its design. The building was finished in 1870 but burnt down in 1872, at about the same time that Joseph left Newcastle for Bathurst to live.

He was born in Ipswich, Suffolk, England and, as a young man, worked for his father who was a builder and stonemason. He arrived in Geelong, Victoria, with Benjamin, in 1853. Joseph became a timber merchant and the Ballarat agent for his brother's firm until around 1860.

For the next nine years he worked as an architect in Wollongong, an architect and surveyor in Ipswich and a Municipal Council surveyor in Ipswich and Maryborough, Queensland,¹ before arriving in Newcastle in 1869. His brother, Benjamin, also moved around from Geelong, to Brisbane and then to Sydney in 1868.

Joseph announced to the public of Newcastle that he was *'prepared to execute plans and specifications, or to superintend all classes of buildings, at moderate charges, in Town and Country'* and that he was *'Agent for B. Backhouse, Sydney'*.² During his almost three years in Newcastle he called tenders for 22 projects, mostly minor and some just for trades.

However he is notable for his role in one large project: the Newcastle Municipal Market Building, built, with lack of vision, in 1870 on the dead centre of Dangar's planned Market Square and facing down Market Street. The sorry story is fully exposed in a court case brought on by Joseph against the Municipality of

Newcastle in 1872.³ The Council had commissioned Mr Mansfield, a prominent Sydney architect, to design a building in Hunter Street and, after the 'plans' were adopted in 1870, Mr. Mansfield was paid his 2½% of the estimated cost of the work, 2,000 pounds. It was then that Joseph Backhouse was asked if he would superintend the work and at what cost. He said in the court that he quoted 2½% but, before the work was tendered, he held that Mansfield's drawings were inadequate for building. He then made revisions and apparently the opportunity was taken to make changes, including revision to the main structure above the market space. After the work was well under way he approached the Mayor to revise his fees to include a further 2½% for the changes to the design. He said the Mayor suggested he wait until the work was successfully completed to make his claim.

Meanwhile the cost of the work had more than doubled, pushing his total fee claim to more than four times in quantum than his originally quoted fee. Backhouse was claiming also that, as the building work took six months longer, he was entitled to compensation as he had foregone other work.

In the case the Council had retained John W. Pender, Architect of Maitland, as an expert witness. Pender said that the building plans were not materially different from Mansfield's.

*'The alterations are very trifling and are merely made on tracings from the original plans. Some 10 or 12 guineas would be ample to cover the trouble and expense.'*⁴ Pender also said that the architect's percentage on the final cost of the work of 5% for design and supervision, covered all charges. Backhouse had overplayed his hand. His Honour agreed with Mr Pender and Backhouse only got his original 2½% for supervision plus 10 guineas for plan changes.

The Market project had its other problems for Joseph. (See also Thomas Smith, page 66) During the building a major internal brick arch fell down, injuring a workman. The thrust of the arch

was taken by two brick towers acting as abutments. The towers had not been fully built and, when the arch scaffolding was removed, one half built brick tower moved and the arch collapsed.⁵

'The western tower resting against Mr Watt's New Market Hotel remained intact, but the eastern fell on the roof of Mr Hollinshead's premises, occupied by a glass and chinaware depot ... wrecking a walnut suite of furniture and considerably frightening two young girls.' There was no mention as to whether Backhouse, the superintendent, had given any instructions on procedure.

Mr. Mansfield claimed that the arch was not in his design and therefore Backhouse was to blame.⁶ Backhouse's reply⁷ was classically evasive. Writing to the Editor of the Newcastle Chronicle:

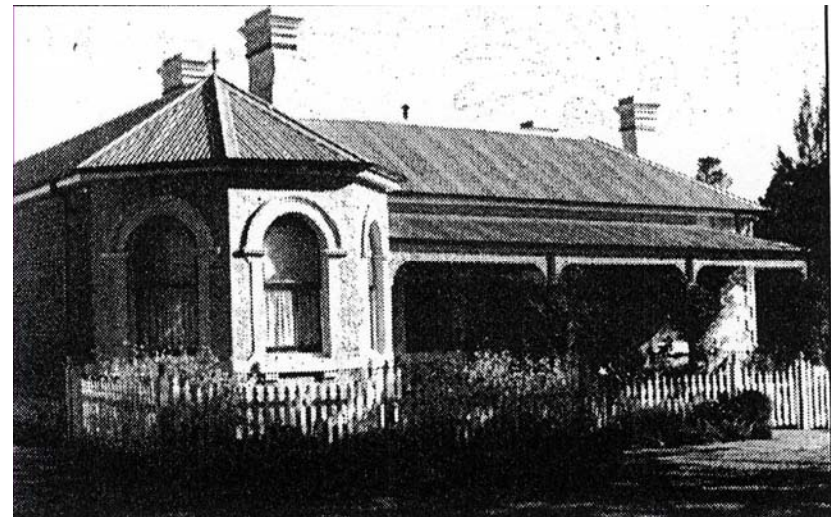
'Sir, in reply to Mr Mansfield's letter respecting the late accident to the Market Building, permit me to say it carries just so much truth with it as is expressed in its concise wording. An examination of his prize plans will show that he is indebted to their insufficiency for the position he assumes. Pending the investigation now proceeding I can hardly say more. Mr Mansfield makes it impossible to say less.'

It can be assumed that this incident did not incline the Council to agree to pay his extra fees. Perhaps his fortunes in Newcastle were sealed and he continued his nomadic life by moving to Bathurst in 1872 where he practiced for at least four busy years as an Architect, Surveyor and Agent for his brother's Sydney firm.⁸

As well as a prominent architect, his brother Benjamin was a social reformer in the 1890's as chairman of the Pitt Town Co-operative Settlement for poor families and an exponent of sanitary treatment and slum clearance, for which he was appointed to the NSW Legislative Council in 1895.

References:

- 1 Watson and McKay – A Directory of Queensland Architects
- 2 NC 4/1/1869
- 3 NC 9/3/1872
- 4 NC 9/3/1872
- 5 NC 20/6/1871
- 6 NC 1/7/1871
- 7 NC 4/7/1871
- 8 Watson and McKay – A Directory of Queensland Architects



This house at 247 Rankin Street, Bathurst, is attributed to Architects Benjamin and Joseph Backhouse and records show that the five roomed house was owned by Mr. James Backhouse in 1875. It was extended in the 1890's (a bay window) and further extensions were made in 1913.

(photograph Western Advocate 1995)

HENDERSON, James

1835-1902

James Henderson contributed in a remarkable way to the architecture of Newcastle in the late 19th Century. There are many significant and substantial buildings designed by him still existing. We can admire the unity of the continuous row of Terraces and Hotel in Church Street, just over from the Court House, or the unassuming little Scots Kirk in Tudor Street, Hamilton. By contrast, his was the tower added to Jesmond House in Barker Street for Mr J. R. Wood in 1885, a remarkable expression of grandeur appropriate to its site overlooking the sea.

He was born in Helensburgh, Scotland, and came via New Zealand to New South Wales in 1863 at the age of 28, with a Scots wife and a young family. He was a builder first in Newcastle and later became a partner, replacing his late elder brother William, in a firm of saw millers, Henderson, Laing & Wyllie.¹ He advertised for tenders for a 'Gentleman's Residence' in 1873 but it was not until 1874 that he described himself as an architect for an hotel in Plattsburg.² He sold his interest in the timber business and commenced practice as an architect. His obituary says he originally trained as an architect but where is not known. But it is clear from the quality of his buildings and the importance of his commissions that he had had some formal professional training.

It is probably no coincidence that he developed such a reliable reputation by 1888 that he was chosen to design the Centennial Hotel, a very significant project at the time. The paper reported at its opening *'the rapid strides that Newcastle had made in the erection of handsome business premises, in lieu of the old time honoured barn style of architecture has been very remarkable. It is not sufficient now-a-days, in the second city of the colony, to run up one of the old fashioned gloomy looking structures of a by-gone age for commercial purposes. Customers require not only attention, but also comfort, convenience,*

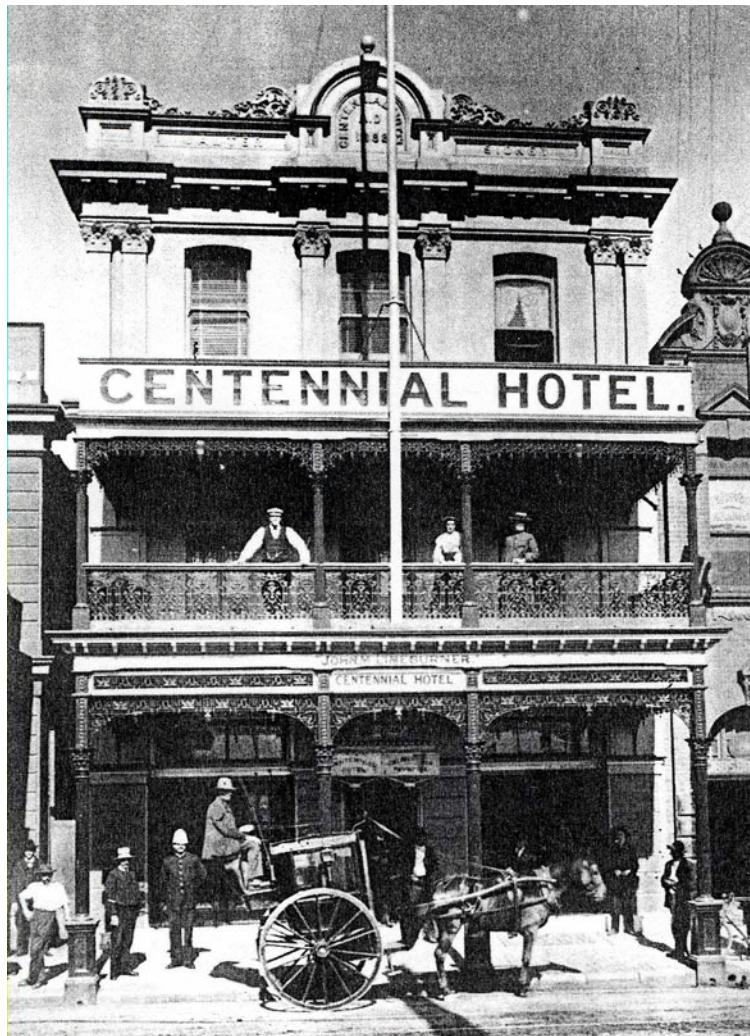
*dispatch and elegance in the various branches of business they may wish to patronise.'*³ The paper goes on to describe in great detail the building's lavish appointments featuring the Centennial Dining Room, 42 feet by 28 feet 6 inches (12.8 by 8.7 metres), the largest outside Sydney in the north and the 'Newcastle Jockey Club Room' which had Russian leather suites.

Rooms were furnished with 'Paton & Paton's' half-tester beds, wire spring mattresses and cretonne hangings, giving the whole a very '*recherché*' tone. There was liberal use of mirrors, marble tops and carved timbers for fitments. Heating was central from a hot water boiler and hot and cold taps were 'electro plated'. Flushing water closets were a feature and each bathroom had a 'fire Plug' with 50 feet (15 ¼ metres) of hose '*ready for use at a moment's notice*'. Mr Walter Sidney, a popular local entrepreneur, obviously produced the most up to date hotel of the day to mark the Centennial Year and Henderson was his architect.

The Victoria Theatre in Perkins Street underwent a major reconstruction in 1890 to Henderson's design. It was the largest and most popular full-stage theatre then, providing plays, concerts and operas until well into the 1950s. Its bold façade stands today in defiance of demolition.

Henderson practiced architecture for almost 30 years and called for public tenders for more than 250 projects of all types. The quality of his architecture is consistent. His buildings are boldly formal, of plain character, usually without ornament, relying for their success on simple classic proportions of the elements of door and window openings, columns, piers and parapets.

He was architect to the Newcastle and Permanent Building Society from its inception and did most of their early work. He was regularly consulted by the press in matters of building. It was reported that he was a man of genial disposition and was 'universally esteemed'.



*The Centennial Hotel, Scott Street (through to Hunter Street),
Newcastle. James Henderson, architect, 1888.
(Photograph c.1900 Snowball Collection)*



*The Victoria Theatre, Perkins Street, Newcastle.
James Henderson, architect, 1890
(Photograph 1896 Mitchell Library)*

He and his wife Mary Rodger, whom he married in Helensburg, Scotland, at the age of 21, had ten children, six still living at the time of his death.⁴ His sons, architects William and James John, carried on their father's business. He was buried in the Presbyterian Cemetery, Stockton, on 25th June 1902, the funeral having gone from Tyrrell Street and then across the harbour by special steamboat.



*Newcastle Permanent Building and Investment Society,
18 Bolton Street, Newcastle. James Henderson, architect, 1882.
(Photograph John Guy 1958)*

HENDERSON, James (Senior) – SIGNIFICANT BUILDINGS.

- 1882 Newcastle Permanent Building and Investment Society
18 Bolton Street, Newcastle
Additions to Northern Star Hotel,
corner Beaumont and Jones Streets, Hamilton
- 1883 Wall and railing, 'Woodlands' Church Street, Newcastle,
for Joseph Wood
- 1885 Terrace Houses, Alfred Street, Newcastle
Camerons Family Hotel, Blane (Hunter) Street, Newcastle
Major additions 'Woodlands'
Tower, 'Jesmond House', Barker Street, Newcastle, for
Joseph Wood
- 1886 Presbyterian Church, corner Tudor and Murray Streets,
Hamilton
Six Shops and Residence, Blane (Hunter) Street, Newcastle
Eight three-storied shops, 85-101 Hunter Street, Newcastle
- 1887 Gas Company offices, Steel Street, Newcastle
Residence, 29 Stevenson Place, Newcastle East for D.
Miller
Conservatory and Verandah, 'Woodlands'
- 1888 Stables 'Woodlands'.
Centennial Hotel, Scott and Hunter Streets, Newcastle for
Walter Sidney
- 1889 Hotel, corner George Street and Maitland Road, Islington
- 1890 Victoria Theatre – major reconstruction, Perkins Street,
Newcastle

- 1890 Terraces, Watt Street, Newcastle
- 1891 Terraces, Church Street, Newcastle
- 1893 Commercial Hotel, corner Scott & Newcommen Streets,
Newcastle
Hotel, Newcastle Pasture Reserve, Broadmeadow
(see pages 227-9)
- 1898 Colonnade Balcony, 20 Bolton Street, Newcastle
- 1899 School of Arts, Elizabeth Street, Tighes Hill
Bulk Store, Burwood Street, Newcastle, for Frederick Ash
Residence, 18-20 The Terrace, Newcastle
- c1905 Macquarie House, corner Watt and Church Streets,
Newcastle (constructed after James Henderson's death)

References:

- | | |
|------------------------|---|
| 1 NMH 25/6/1902 | 3 NMH 30/6/1888 |
| 2 J. Guy – Thesis 1962 | 4 Registrar's Death Certificate 25/6/1902 No. 439 |



Tower 'Jesmond House' Barker Street, Newcastle, 1885



*Shops and Commercial Premises, 87-101 Hunter Street, Newcastle.
James Henderson, architect, 1886.*



*Gas Company Offices, corner Steel and King Streets, Newcastle West.
James Henderson, architect, 1887*



*Villa 29 Stevenson Place, Newcastle East
James Henderson, architect 1887.*



*Villa Residence, 18-20 The Terrace, Newcastle
James Henderson, architect, 1890
(Photograph Snowball Collection)
Below: 18-20 The Terrace photographed c.1990*





*The Grand Hotel, corner Bolton & Church Streets, Newcastle, c.1893
also Church Street Terraces, 1891
and Macquarie House at the Watt Street corner, c.1905.
James Henderson, architect.
(Photograph: University of Newcastle)*



*School of Arts, Elizabeth Street, Tighes Hill
James Henderson, architect, 1899.*

CROPLEY, James C.

James Cropley had a relatively successful architectural practice from 1875 to 1884 with about sixty projects of various types and sizes.

He had been a builder with his son and left the firm to become an architect. ¹ He invited interested parties to *'have their plans, specifications and estimates for all kinds of buildings prepared by him with greatest accuracy and on moderate terms.'* In his office he had *'original designs of Gentlemen's Villas and Mechanics Cottages always on view.'*²

In 1887 he was complimented for his work in designing and building the Newcastle Protestant Hall. It was described in detail in the press and had every up to date convenience and features for the two storey building with large hall below and lodge rooms above. *'The building was most substantially and also most elegantly constructed of red and white bricks, manufactured by Mr. Bowtell of Glebe, and is on stone foundations. The bricks are neatly "tucked", the white with black mortar and the red with white mortar. The general effect is very good...'*³

His work was competent and he attracted a good range of clients including biscuit maker Mr William Arnott for whom he designed a large brick store.

He died in Sydney Hospital, of paralysis, aged 75. ⁴

CROPLEY, J. C. – BUILDINGS

From tender advertisements

- 1876 Wesleyan Church, Wallsend
Hotel at Hamilton
Newcastle Protestant Hall, King Street, Newcastle in the vicinity of the Central Methodist Mission (demolished)
- 1877 Hotel at Bullock Island for Mr. Lundy
- 1878 Hotel and two shops, Charlton Street.
Hotel at Tighes Hill
Primitive Methodist Church, Burwood.
- 1879 Hotel at Wickham
- 1881 House for T. H. Ingall
Nine Terraces Scott Street for the Northumberland Building Society
- 1882 Additions to the Northern Star Hotel, Beaumont Street, Hamilton
- 1883 Large brick store for W. Arnott
Manager's House, Waratah, for Hunter River Company

References:

- 1 NC 27/11/1875
- 2 NC 3/7/1875
- 3 NMH 13/5/1887.
- 4 Hunter Valley Register 1901-1905 Vol.4

LAMAN, E. C.

E. C. Laman advertised several times in 1875 as an Architect and Building Surveyor from offices in Blane Street, opposite the Railway Works, (Hunter Street West), Newcastle.¹

He repeated his announcement for a few months but there is no record of any of his projects.

Reference:

¹ J. Guy – Thesis.

FRANCIS, J. G.

Francis first advertised as an architect in the Newcastle Chronicle, in December 1875.

He said he had 35 years experience, prepares plans and specifications and had a folio of 300 designs for inspection at his office in Bolton Street, adjoining the Chronicle office. He offered to prepare specifications at 1½ %.¹

Within three months he had called tenders for five reasonably substantial projects, his last being for a two storied office building at The Junction for mining proprietor E. C. Merewether.²

He was probably in his fifties when he started in Newcastle. Where he came from and what happened to him has not been traced.

References.

¹ NC 4/12/1875

² NC 11/3/1876.

BOURKE, Thomas A.

Bourke was known to be an architect-builder in Dalby, Queensland, in 1866.¹ He advertised himself in Newcastle as an architect and surveyor in 1878 and had his offices at 'No 4, Hall of Commerce, Scott Street, Opposite the Newcastle Railway Station'² and later at Hamilton.³ His early work was related to the restoration of the Roman Catholic Church at Wallsend which seems to indicate that he may have come from a trade. In a 23 year period he called tenders for 20 projects, mostly residential around 1888. He was entrusted with the Shop and Store for the new Wallsend and Plattsburg Co-operative Store at Plattsburg in 1889⁴ indicating that he had more than trade skills.

BOURKE, Thomas – BUILDINGS

1882 Convent of Mercy, Lambton

1888 Five Terraces, Bull and Laman Streets, Cooks Hill.

1889 Co-operative Store, Nelson Street, Wallsend.

References:

¹ Dictionary of Queensland Architects, Queensland University.

² NMH 28/9/1878

³ NMH 10/12/1888

⁴ NMH 31/5/1889

FULLER, Francis

Fuller announced in September, 1878, that he was an architect and surveyor with offices in the Council Chambers, Watt Street, Newcastle.¹ He later said he was also a '*Civil Engineer, land cut up for sale, Boundaries marked, Plans, Specifications, Estimates prepared and all architectural work carefully conducted.*'² Over the next two years he called tenders for work at a Bank, as store and a few houses and miscellaneous civil works.³

However, his claim to fame may be that he designed the building part of the 1888 Corporation Swimming Baths, Newcomen Street, Newcastle. A public meeting was held in 1879 to gather support for the building of a public bathhouse and Fuller was appointed Honorary Secretary of a committee to report to a meeting involving the Council. Later he presented his report of the Provisional Committee referring to Plans being prepared by 'Mr F. Fuller' and also to estimates for excavation being prepared by the City Engineer, Mr J. Sharp.⁴

The proposal was adopted by the meeting but much discussion centred around funding. As the Government provided baths in Sydney, it was thought so should the Council in Newcastle, public subscription being an unpopular option. As the Corporation funds were insufficient, the project lagged for the next seven years after the land grant in 1881.

The vacant land before the Baths were built was reputed to be the outlet point of a spring but after '*water was laid on throughout the city the land became untidy, referred to by many as a plague spot.*'⁶

The swimming baths were 27.4 metres long and 10.6 metres wide (90 feet x 35 feet) and varied in depth from 1 metre at one end to 1.8 metres at the other end (3 feet 3 inches to 6 feet) and there were four plunge baths on the second floor. The water was pumped from the ocean at the eastern end of Scott Street, a

distance of almost a kilometre in a six inch (150mms) pipe supplied by a gas driven 'Tangye' pump which filled the baths in six hours.

Much feature was made of the electric lighting, particularly at night, the power being provided by a state of the art gas driven engine and generator, housed in the building.⁷

It is a sad commentary on the social conventions of the day that Council By-laws prohibited mixed bathing of the sexes. Thus it was that the swimming baths were initially used only by men and boys, women being later allowed limited use on two days a week.⁸ In any case the venue was very popular but after more relaxed segregation rules in the community and better safety at surfing beaches, the baths lost favour and were eventually demolished in 1938. In 1939 Newcastle's first shopping arcade was built on the site to a design by architects Jeater, Rodd & Hay. Still there today, the old concrete pool serves as a service space under the new shopping floor.⁹ It is almost certain that the original architect providing the design of the decorated Greek revival front building was Fuller and that the City Engineer, Mr J. Sharp, provided the technical expertise.

References:

- 1 NMH 28/9/1878
- 2 NMH 28/3/1879
- 3 J. Guy – Tenders 1851-1901.
- 4 NMH 9/1/1880
- 5 Norm Barney '*History in our Streets*'
- 6 Goold – Newcastle and Hunter District Historical Society Vol 1 1947
- 7 NMH 19/1/1888
- 8 Norm Barney '*History in our Streets*'
- 9 NMH 16/7/1938



Former Municipal Baths, Newcomen Street, Newcastle

Francis Fuller, architect (attributed), c.1888.

Remodelled in 1930s to the City Arcade.

(Photograph: The Snowball Collection)

BOYD, John

He advertised for tenders for a house in Cooks Hill in 1880.

He called himself an architect and building surveyor with offices at the corner of Blane and Union Streets. Nothing further is heard of him until 1887 and then nothing of consequence, as was often the case in the 1880s when *would be* architects tried their hand with the public.

BROWNE, George C. E. MVIA

George Browne came from Victoria where he designed Her Majesty's Theatre at Ballarat in 1875. He had set up in Maitland some time after that and in 1880 he opened a branch office in Newcastle. ¹ A few months later he noted that he had established other branch offices in Singleton, Murrurundi and Tamworth, ² presumably made practical by the recently made railway line, although there is nothing traced of his work.

In 1881 he was appointed architect for the new Sailors Home instigated by Presbyterian, Rev. James Coutts MA. The project was a special one for Newcastle to provide and care for seamen – *'Every inducement made to make the home more attractive so that Jack may not be tempted into evil company.'* ³

Browne offered to do the architect's work as a donation and it must have been good public relations for him as the foundation stone was laid on a specially declared public holiday for Newcastle *'when ships and the port and buildings were decorated with flags and bunting.'* ⁴ Some alterations and additions were made to the home in 1897 by F. B. Menkens.

Also in 1881 he transferred his head office to the Market Buildings, Hunter Street, Newcastle and said he was *a Duly Certificated architect, a surveyor and civil engineer and a member of the Victorian Institute of Architects.* ⁵ In 1882 he advertised for an articled pupil but nothing seems to have been heard of him locally after this.

By all accounts his Ballarat Theatre was a significant building at the time in 1875, the auditorium having a steep lyre-shaped gallery with three entries to different parts of the auditorium. Although now largely altered, the original balustrading, panels, ceilings and façade were richly ornamented in stucco. ⁶

BROWNE, George – BUILDINGS

1875 Royal South Street Memorial Theatre
(formerly Her Majesty's Theatre).

17 Lydiard Street, Ballarat, Victoria.

1881 Miners Arms Hotel, Waratah.

1881- 1883 Coutts Sailors Home, Scott Street, Newcastle.

References:

1 NMH 3/5/1880

2 NMH 25/9/1880

3 Register National Estate Data Base

4 Register National Estate Data Base

5 NMH 23/6/1882

6 Register National Estate Data Base.

HOLMES, Charles Wellington (1853-1943)

Charles Holmes was born at sea on the sailing ship 'Duke of Wellington', during the seven month journey from England to Sydney. His father, a builder, settled there and built several churches in the city and his tender was accepted to build the Sydney Town Hall. At a time of gold fever in the Bendigo fields, tradesmen became scarce and would not work for less than an exorbitant amount of '1 pound a day and wanted to be driven to work in hansom cabs.'¹ Holmes Senior could not go on with the contract and the work was handed to another contractor who also failed. Finally it was completed by a third.

Charles served his apprenticeship at a ship building yard at Eagleton, near Raymond Terrace. He left there at the age of 21 and worked for four years as a ship's joiner, travelling the world on sailing ships. It was a Gentleman's job, he said, repairing only damage done by heavy seas. He settled in Newcastle in 1878 and set up as an architect-house builder. After two years he moved to Maitland and worked as a tradesman on St Mary's Rectory, Church Street, for one year at twelve shillings a day, a more reasonable rate than that demanded from his father for the Town Hall. In 1881 at the age of 28 he opened his architectural business in High Street. He later also became an estate agent.

He was chiefly a house architect and prepared the plans and supervised the building of hundreds of houses between Newcastle and Tamworth in a working life of over 50 years, retiring in 1930. He was a well known personality of the district and was a member of West Maitland Council from 1901 to 1934. He was a keen sportsman being President of Maitland Water Brigade, Rowing and Swimming Clubs. He was a foundation member of the Maitland Bowling Club and played competitive bowls well into his eighties.

He recalled that one of the conditions of his shipbuilding apprenticeship (before he was 21) was that he '*must not go to the races or gamble*'. This must have stuck for he said at age 87 that he had attended the races only once. '*That was many years ago; I was induced by a friend, who promised to win me a fortune. I took 5 pounds and left with 9 shillings. I backed one winner and, after making enquiries how I collected, found that the bookmaker has welshed.*' Although none of his houses are particularly noteworthy he provided a practical service to the community and that was obviously much patronised.

References:

1 NMH 14/3/1940

BENNETT, Peter

1848-1921

Peter Bennett was a well known architect in Victorian Newcastle. Born in Brighton, England, he came to Australia when he was 20 after being apprenticed to a large London building firm. He came first to Queensland to start mining in the newly opened Pulman Fields.¹ He married in Cooktown and came to live in Newcastle in 1875. He was at first a builder and at one time was clerk of works to the Newcastle Borough Council until, in 1882, he started business as an architect.

Success came quickly and by 1884 he had 45 commissions on his books,² mostly residences and shops. In that year he won a competition, amid some controversy, for a 'Block of Buildings for Shops' for Newcastle Borough Council in the Hunter Street, Market Square. As was usual for Council architectural competitions, entries were submitted anonymously, by *nom de plume*, and the winner was selected by Council vote without independent Judges. Among the seven mottoes for this competition were 'Fidelity', 'Pro Bono Publico' and 'Advance Australia' but after a brief discussion of the merits of the 'lines of the elevations' and treatment of ornament, 'Alpha' was chosen. 'It turned out to be Peter Bennett, the Council's former clerk of works.'³ Some other architects were angered by the haste with which the Council made its decision, one complaining that they 'after a few moments of deliberation stamped their late clerk of works as the hero of the hour.'⁴ This was probably unfair criticism as, although the scheme had to be amended to provide for neighbour's access, the resulting building is a fine example of boldly detailed, high Victorian architecture, a credit to Bennett and a financial return many times over to the Council. It is Mayor Keightley's dominant building in the Hunter Street Mall however, built, with lack of vision, opposite the 1870

Municipal Market Building on land originally allocated for a Market Square in Henry Dangar's 1824 plan.

Late in 1884, Bennett took on a young partner, Ernest Yeomans⁵ and the fortunes of the firm are due in most part to the talent and energies of Yeomans. Before the partnership Bennett's work is of relatively undistinguished, moderately sized projects, but he was obviously providing a very useful service to his clients.



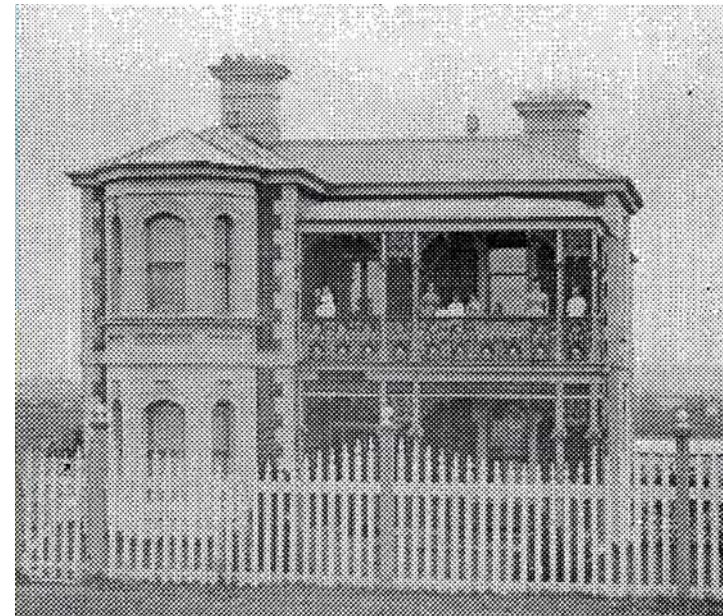
*Municipal Buildings, corner of Hunter & Market Streets, Newcastle.
Peter Bennett, architect (competition winner), 1887.
Balcony demolished in 1929 and replaced by suspended awning as
Council policy for Hunter Street.*

The joint practice was sensational in today's terms. After the practice closed in 1893, his projects diminished markedly in number. His first project of note in this period is the Mechanics Institute at Lambton. His main works to 1900 were a School of Arts at Carrington; 'Ingall House', Mayfield; and the Federal Hotel, Hunter Street West, Newcastle.

He became an alderman of Wickham Council in 1883 and was elected Mayor in 1887, an office he retained for several years. It may have been that during this period his efforts were diverted from his joint practice towards council affairs and, when his firm dissolved, he lost clients and his direction. Up to 1900 his work is typical of an eclectic High-Victorian style, competently and methodically carried out but with little innovation or imagination. In 1903 the local architects were consulted about building prospects. Bennett was gloomy about the future and said *'the increased cost of the necessities of life were keenly felt... the cost of living had practically been increased much beyond the proportion of the additional wage. Property values were decidedly lower and land was decreasing in value. In one case he knew of a house and land which, 25 years ago, cost 375 pounds, the same as today.'*⁶ He also complained about declining industry and investment and blamed the Federation of the States for the doubtful outlook.



School of Arts, Hannell Street, Wickham
Peter Bennett, architect, 1882 (Photograph: University of Newcastle)



Mr Ingall's Villa, Crebert Street, Mayfield, 1885
(Photograph: Snowball Collection, 1890)
(May be earlier, not by Bennett)



Ingall's Villa in 1996 after alterations.

Yeomans, his ex-partner, on the other hand, *'expressed the opinion that there was no justification for believing the future would prove dull ... Generally speaking there was a tendency to erect a better class of residence now than formerly and people demanded more comfort and greater conveniences than were found in the older style of dwellings ...'* He did not think the price of land was prohibitive, *'as at Hamilton land was being sold on easy terms at three pounds a foot.'*⁷ Yeomans, always the optimist and entrepreneur, contrasts with his older partner, the downcast politician.

In the early 1900s Bennett advertised frequently his *'Folios of Designs always open for inspection of all classes of buildings.'*⁸ His late major project was the Newcastle Trades Hall in Union Street which was a curious but imposing building of brickwork, with a large central arch to a first floor recessed balcony and large brick pier capitals, reminiscent of those on Menken's brick facades 15 years before. The building was built for the Newcastle Eight Hour Day Demonstration Committee and the Opening in February 1915 was a major Newcastle event attended by many Members of Parliament. Bennett was suitably congratulated.

He was a Freemason and with his local government work and architectural practices was one of the few early professionals to give good service to the community. He had eight children and lived in Wickham. He died in 1921 of asthenia after a six months illness, aged 73.⁹

References:

- | | |
|---|-----------------|
| 1 Aldine Centennial History of NSW - Morrison | |
| 2 J. Guy - Thesis 'Newcastle Architects' | |
| 3 NMH 19/3/1884 | 4 NMH 20/3/1884 |
| 5 NMH 20/12/1884 | 6 NMH 14/2/1903 |
| 7 NMH 14/2/1903 | 8 NMH 14/1/1905 |
| 9 Death Certificate 7085 -30/04/1921 | |

PETER BENNETT – BUILDINGS

- 1882 School of Arts, 22A Hannell Street, Wickham
- 1884 Brambles Butchery Establishment, Hunter Street West, Newcastle
- 1885 'Ingall House', 61 Crebert Street, Mayfield (may be earlier, not by Bennett)
- 1887 Masonic Hall, Newcomen Street, Newcastle
Municipal Building, corner Hunter & Market Streets, Newcastle
- 1888 Grandstand, Newcastle Racecourse
- 1889 Wickham Council Chambers, 22 Albert Street, Wickham
- 1894 Mechanics Institute, 68 Elder Street, Lambton
- 1896 School of Arts, Carrington
- 1900 Federal Hotel, Hunter Street West, Newcastle
- 1915 Newcastle Trades Hall, Union Street, Newcastle.



*Newcastle Trades Hall, Union Street, Newcastle.
Peter Bennett, architect, 1915.*



*Council Chambers, Borough of Wickham, Newcastle.
Peter Bennett, architect, 1889*



*Mechanics Institute, Elder Street, Lambton
Peter Bennett, architect, 1894.*

MENKENS, Frederick Bernhardt

1854-1910



German born, Frederick Menkens is the most significant of the architects working in Newcastle for the 20 years from the 1880s, and many of his buildings still contribute to the townscape of Newcastle.

Menkens was the only early Newcastle architect to have had full time architectural training. Others sometimes were articled as students to already practicing architects for four or five years after school education or worked as builders. Menkens studied building and architecture for a considerably longer period.

Starting at the age of 13 he worked for five years at all the building trades during the summer months and in winter attended the building schools of Nienburg and Holzminden in North Germany for theoretical studies. After trades training he entered the Royal Polytechnicum at Hannover ¹ and, after some work experience with architects Haase and later Oppler of that city, ² he claimed he received his Diploma of Architecture after four years at the age of 22. In the 1870s architecture training

involved painstaking study of all the styles, including the highly decorative, and success usually relied on the ability to reproduce a style or imaginatively to compose its parts to a design and draw them in detail convincingly. Menkens could do this very well. After his studies he travelled for six months, with a group of students, on a sketching tour of the continent and England. ³ He had then, not only a thorough understanding of architecture but also a practical knowledge of the building trades, which was to be to his advantage.

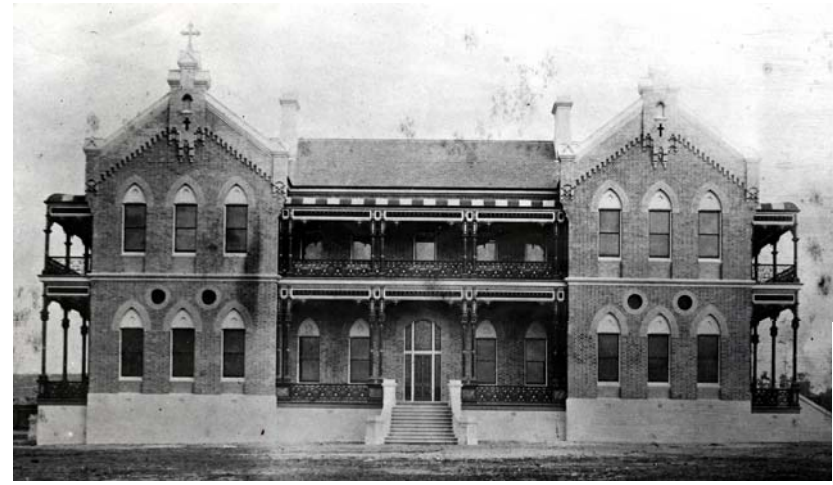
Menkens was born in Varel, a small Prussian town on the low sandy coastal plain of North Germany. His father, Hermann, was a Master Mason with respected skills in drawing and the crafts of brick and stone.⁴ No doubt Frederick grew up aware of the building business but it was a time of military conflict. Chancellor Bismarck's hostile policies resulted in successive wars with bordering Denmark, France and Austria. Frederick's later letters to his mother, Anna, reveal him to be strongly independent of mind and he abhorred war.⁵ After such a demanding education, and no doubt foreboding the prospect of military service, he decided to emigrate. As the oldest son of four, his father would have expected him to remain for honour as much as for the family business. Such was the break with tradition that they were never to communicate with each other again.

Frederick sailed from London in the square rigged, iron hulled 'City of Paris' on 24th August, 1876, arriving three months later in Adelaide. With only book knowledge of English and a near empty purse, he worked for a short time in the Colonial Architect's office before moving to Melbourne at a time of financial chaos when Victorian public servants like William Wardell, the Government Architect, were retrenched through lack of funds. As work was scarce he went up country to Echuca and worked around the Murray at the various building trades, at the same time improving his English. He made a short tour of Tasmania and after some work with Mr Pitt, a Melbourne

architect, came to NSW to work for a longer period with George A. Mansfield,⁶ an architect prominent in Sydney, a contemporary of Blacket, Backhouse, Hennessey and Horbury Hunt, to name a few. Menkens was later to work in association with Hunt.

About 1881 he joined J. W. Pender, architect of West Maitland, but soon set up his own practice there briefly at the town's peak of commercial growth. Perhaps he might have realised that with the recent connection of Tamworth to the Great Northern railway line Newcastle would become the more important port. He moved to Newcastle in 1882 but it was not until two years later that he advertised that he had the support in his practice of nine important citizens including four members of Parliament and the Catholic Bishop of Maitland. He offered '*Business conducted throughout the northern district*' and promised '*all communications will receive the most prompt attention.*' He claimed he had a '*Diploma as an architect from the Royal Academy of Arts and Sciences, Hannover,*' and was '*Author of several prize designs of Prominent Public Buildings.*'⁷

By 1885 he had gained a few influential clients. He designed a Redemptorist Monastery at Mayfield and the Deaf and Dumb Institute at Waratah, both key projects for the Catholic Church. The Monastery was three storeys in height on a prominent hilltop and was to be much the same in concept as St Joseph's College, Hunters Hill, in Sydney. It took two years to build, probably due to budget restrictions, even though there was a policy of stark finishes. Ornament and decorations were '*rigidly excluded from every part of the monastic buildings and it was only in the apartments reserved for guests that a cornice or a carpet could be seen.*' It was said that '*Menkens had been frequently compelled to yield, even in small matters, his taste and natural desire to introduce ornamental features.*'⁸ His other projects for the period were the Mechanics Institute, Hamilton, two main wards for Newcastle Hospital, clothing maker Stegga's Emporium and a large Villa Residence on The Hill



*Deaf and Dumb Institute, Bridge Street, Waratah.
F. B. Menkens, architect, 1886, for the Catholic Church.
Now St Catherine of Siena Nursing Home after substantial alteration.
Photograph 1890 Dr Champion Collection*



*The Keightley Villa, The Terrace, The Hill, Newcastle
F. B. Menkens, architect, 1885.*

for mine manager Stewart Keightley J. P., which is notable for the introduction of cavity brickwork to the south facing wall.

By 1888, at age 33, he considered his achievements worthy of a mention in Morrison's *'Centennial History of the Colony of NSW'*. At that time he called tenders for the first of his many large commercial warehouses, the four storey Earp Gillam & Company Stores in Telford Street. It was mainly for the storage and handling of imported goods and was fitted with the latest external and internal hoists. The façade had yellow brick piers and rendered and painted wall panels with every third panel in red brick. Although the building became dilapidated by corrosion and was badly damaged in the 1989 earthquake its new owners, in a brave act of faith, restored the building for offices and it stands today as a significant landmark in the east Newcastle townscape as a companion to the Customs House. Other buildings by other Hunter architects contemporary with the Store were the Centennial Hotel by James Henderson, the Wood Street 'Brewery' of Bennett & Yeomans and many of W. J. Pender's buildings in High Street, West Maitland.

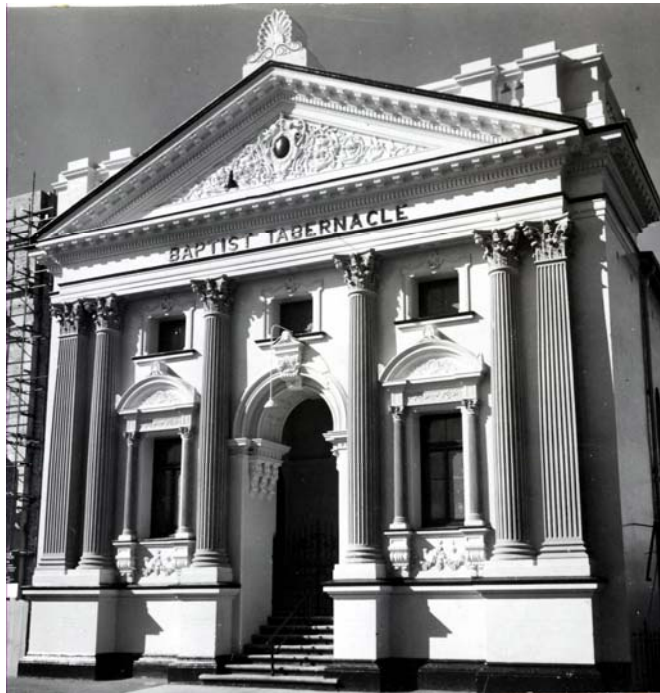
A year later Menkens won a competition for the design of St Andrews Presbyterian Church, Laman Street, and he was also architect for the Baptist Tabernacle nearby in the same street. The two buildings could not be more different, St Andrew's in the Gothic manner, in brick, and with a spire and the Tabernacle with an elaborately rendered and pedimental Corinthian façade. Both are superbly recreated examples of their style, no doubt the product of his thorough architectural training. The building of the Tabernacle is notable in that it has a foundation plinth stone under each of the four major pilasters. The two outer stones represented separately the girls and boys of the Sabbath School and the inner stones were laid by Mrs W. Arnott, wife of the popular biscuit manufacturer and the Rev Seth Jones, thus providing equal representation of the sexes at the ceremony.



*The Bond Store, Telford Street, Newcastle
F. B. Menkens, architect, 1888 Photograph 1890*



*St Andrews Presbyterian Church under construction, Laman Street,
Newcastle. F. B. Menkens, architect, 1889 –
winner of the design competition.
Photograph: The Snowball Collection*



*The Tabernacle, Laman Street, Newcastle.
F. B. Menkens, architect, 1889. Photograph 1956*



The capitals – the work of a clever artisan



Good proportions and details, cleverly executed.

The Tabernacle became the principal Baptist Church in Newcastle but was proposed for demolition in 1949 to make way for the War Memorial Cultural Centre. Church property being protected by the constitution and the church being unwilling to sell, the building was saved. It prompted an unnamed local architect to say 'I want no compromise with present buildings. The area lends itself more than anything to becoming Newcastle's Civic Square and we would pursue that ideal. It has been said that the Tabernacle is the finest type of Corinthian Architecture in Australia. It is not; it is merely pseudo-Renaissance with a cement rendered front.¹⁰ Today no one can explain how such decorative facades were fashioned out of cement and very little thought is given to the building workers who managed without machines but with skills, sweat and toil. The building is still proudly there today to remind us of honest labour and faith.

Early in 1890 the Newcastle Borough Council held a competition for the design of a new Town Hall and Shopping Arcade to be sited at Market Square in Hunter Street on the North-South axis of Christ Church Cathedral which was being built on The Hill at the time. Menkens won the premium with his topical *nom de plume* 'Federation' by six votes to four after the Aldermen, who were the judges, argued over the admissibility of his entry on technicalities.¹¹ Menken's scheme was immaculately drafted and was for a new building covering a whole city block with shops along Hunter Street and the Town Hall above with an internal two storey shopping arcade behind, in the manner of a modern supermarket complex. Its architecture was to be in the grand classical manner with a façade the equivalent of five stories and, if built, would have been to Newcastle what the Queen Victoria building is to Sydney. The Council considered the project for the next ten years but support waned due to risky returns for the shops and the fact that the Hall was on an upper floor even though one alderman pointed out that the Sydney Town Hall had the same condition.¹² By the 1920s the Council considered a site further west and, in any case, by then the scheme had become outdated due to new requirements of space and architecture. But it is interesting that the composition of Menken's major recesses of the façade is very similar to those of Henry White's Newcastle Town Hall built in 1928. Had Menkens scheme been built it would have been the centre piece of a market square close to a small boat harbour and in view of a cathedral on the hill above – an opportunity sadly lost for Newcastle.

(See drawings pages 28 & 29 & 242 – 246)

It was also in 1891 that he designed his first building for Albert Augustus Dangar, grazier and financier, the youngest son of Henry, the early surveyor. The Law Chambers in Bolton Street, just down from the then recently completed Court House, was typical of many buildings he designed for the prosperous Newcastle businessman. It demonstrates the up to date proficiency of Menkens the architect. The upper flooring had a

unique six inch (150mm) 'deadening course' of lime and sawdust. Rooms had polished marble fireplaces with gas heating and the joinery was polished cedar. The lavatories had '*silver plated high pressure taps and the latrines worked by an automatic flushing system*'. The façade of the building was described as Queen Anne with navy blue and white bricks, '*the brickwork being relieved by alternate stone and render dressings and the windows glazed with cathedral glass*'.¹³ The façade was unfortunately 'renovated' in the 1950s and is now Legacy House.



Legal Chambers for A. A. Dangar, Bolton Street, Newcastle.

F. B. Menkens, architect, 1891.

Built following the nearby Courthouse.

Photograph: Newcastle Regional Library

At the opening of Dangar's building, local brewer and merchant, Mr Joseph Wood, a guest of Dangar, said he was so impressed with the Law Chambers he announced that '*he had instructed Mr. Menkens to prepare plans for some property in Scott Street*',¹⁴ and within the year Wood's Chambers and Auction Hall was built. Prominently located opposite the Newcastle Railway Station, the building had an unique baroque façade, evocative of Menkens' homeland and, featuring decorative oriel windows, had an

elaborate array of expressive sculptures including the rugged heads of Atlas and Hercules, the gentle faces of Princesses and the lady emblem of Commerce holding her globe high in the niche above which is a grotesque keystone face. Menken's use of these expressive figures may have come from Government Architect James Barnett's controversial stone figures on the Sydney GPO a few years earlier. Both Dangar's and Wood's patronage would prove invaluable in Menkens' later practice and would influence other leading citizens to become clients.



*Woods Chambers, Scott Street, Newcastle
F. B. Menkens, architect, 1892*



Woods Chambers, oriel window details.



Façade details, Woods Chambers, Scott Street, Newcastle.

F. B. Menkens, architect, 1892.

Zeus, Atlas, Princess? – possibly prompted by the controversy caused by Barnett's sculptured figures on the Sydney GPO.

Soon after Wood's Chambers he added the tower at 'Baroona', Dangar's Singleton home, and, in 1894, carried out some additions to 'Jesmond House', Barker Street, for Wood's son John. Nine years earlier James Henderson had added the tower there and Menkens' job included making the tower safe from lightning. He contracted Mr Harry Hyde Kingsbury of Sydney, electrician and manufacturer, to supply five lightning rods with platinum points. Kingsbury represented General Electric of America and had installed the earliest street lighting in Newcastle at Lambton in 1889 and claimed he was the first to introduce the telephone to Sydney¹⁵ – it is interesting to speculate, as the owner was a director of the Gas Company, that any electrical work would have been thoroughly scrutinised. After Kingsbury's quote had been accepted, in mid 1894, Kingsbury wrote to Menkens advising that platinum points were not available in Australia and he would substitute nickel or he would have to charge more. Menkens insisted that he stick to the quote for platinum but allowed a small extra in good faith. During an inspection of the work Menkens became very angry and, thinking the points were not as specified, according to Kingsbury, told his workmen to *'take the points back to Sydney. They are not platinum, they are only silver. Mr Kingsbury may be thankful that I do not prosecute him for trying to extort money under false pretences.'*¹⁶

In June 1895 Menkens found himself in No.2 Jury Court in Sydney facing Mr Kingsbury who was seeking to recover 1,000 pounds for alleged slander. He claimed that the statement greatly injured his reputation. In defence Menkens produced expert evidence that the metals used were a combination of brass, zinc and platinum alloy and that he had said the words in anger and not maliciously. It was a close case but the jury found him guilty but that he did not speak the words with malice and awarded Kingsbury forty shillings.¹⁷ The judge later awarded 126 pounds costs against Menkens but he declared himself bankrupt and refused to pay. Two months later he was arrested for debt in his office and sentenced to 12 months prison as a debtor. He *'was*

*informed that there was no provision in any gaol outside Sydney for the accommodation of debtors and on payment of one shilling per mile to the Sheriff he could go to Sydney.'*¹⁸

He refused to pay and spent the first night in the Newcastle lockup. Mr. Dangar offered to pay his costs but he refused to accept, saying that the jury found he had done no wrong. At first he was imprisoned in Maitland gaol and was visited and feasted by his friends who supplied him with comfortable furniture and his drawing equipment until he was moved to Darlinghurst in Sydney.

Having no money in his own name, the Court directed that the contents of his office be sold. These were auctioned in October 1895 and included many pieces of fine furniture and hundreds of architectural books.¹⁹ It is possible that his friend A. A. Dangar bought these on his behalf. During his incarceration he carried on designing buildings, preparing plans for a large hotel and warehouse in Market Street, Newcastle, for Mr. Dangar.

On Menkens' return from Sydney, in August 1896, he was met at Newcastle Station by a group of his client friends and the party adjourned to the Great Northern Hotel to celebrate with wine and song. Menkens was acclaimed for having acted on such 'an honourable principle'.¹⁹ He responded by thanking them for their support and said *'he was no worse in his constitution but had lost a stone and a half which he felt sure would be easily regained.'* The company, which numbered 60, joined in singing 'For he's a jolly good fellow'.²⁰

Whether partly by design or chance, Menkens' term in prison coincided with a general economic depression and very few buildings were built in the mid 1890s. Building activity improved by 1897, which was the start of a very productive commercial period of ten years for Menkens. His earlier decorative buildings, so delicately drafted in ink and pastel coloured, now became progressively heavy handed. During this period he designed six

major warehouses, all in brick and most with semi-circular arched window and door openings. Another feature in common is the strongly expressed piers with massive heads, mostly of corbelled brickwork, giving the façade unmistakable strength, particularly in the 1901 Cohen Warehouse in Bolton Street. The first warehouse of the period, built in 1897 by A. A. Dangar for Cohen & Co. in Scott Street was burnt down in 1907. Its complete destruction was due to the buckling of the unprotected steel floor girders tearing the walls down. The building was soon rebuilt to a new plain design incorporating some flush decorative stones, probably the influence of F. G. Castleden who had just joined Menkens as a partner.



*The Hotel and Warehouse, Scott and Market Streets, Newcastle.
F. B. Menkens, architect, 1897. Destroyed by fire in 1907.
Photograph Dr Champion Collection*



*After the fire in 1907.
Photograph: Newcastle Morning Herald.*



*The Warehouse rebuilt, Menkens & Castleden, architects, 1908.
Note the corner gable masking a water tank behind. Photograph 1956.*

Other buildings of Menken's Commercial Period include the 1905 Charleston Photographic Studios which had glass in its roof and '*displayed to Hunter Street a richly decorated façade with central gable and flanking copper spires.*' The applied decoration differed from that of his earlier period. Window openings were heavily framed and had added quoin and keystone features, which was an innovation for Menkens, perhaps his way of responding with an alternative to the new Federation Style.

Although the Convent for the Sisters of Mercy at Singleton was designed by Menkens in 1892, it was not until 1902 that the main part, which included the tower, was built. The Sisters, numbering just 10, came there from Ireland in 1875 and declared as a policy that they would engage only the best architect to build their vision. ²¹ Their building, which was home to over 100 nuns, did not disappoint them, with its generous contemplative cloisters and a symmetrical entry court with a charming brick Flemish style tower at its centre. They repeated their policy in 1925 when they asked Thomas Silk to design their Chapel. It has a most beautifully lighted interior with its elliptical profiled ceiling featuring the Maltese Cross and semi-circular arches to side chapels and sanctuary.

By any standards Menkens achieved much as an architect and many of his buildings survive as testimony. By all accounts he presented a formal front to the world and acted on his principles, which attracted comment. But it is as a character he also made a mark. It was told that Menkens, having learned the trade of bricklayer, would often walk onto his jobs and, being unhappy with some brickwork, would fling off his top hat and alpaca coat, snatch the trowel from the bewildered bricklayer and proceed to show him the finer points of the art of bricklaying.

Again, builders would plead with him not to mount scaffolding: it was not proper that a gentleman of his immaculate dress should climb over the rough scaffold and expose himself to

danger. Suspecting something, Menkens would promptly demand a ladder and scale it two rungs at a time, to the amazement, and probably amusement, of the workmen. It is said that when the brickwork of the façade of the Cohen's Warehouse in Bolton Street was well under way he had it demolished as, he contended, it was half an inch (12mm) out of alignment.²² But it is easy for stories to obscure the worth of a person's character.



*The Tower, Convent for the Sisters of Mercy, Queen Street, Singleton.
F. B. Menkens, architect, 1892*

At his death in 1910 it was said *'that although combative when roused, he was essentially a peaceful man and in his work the good workman, the good and honest contractor was held by him in honour, but let a man under him once do bad work and his fate was sealed. He used to say above all complete confidence in my workers is my only hope of good work.'*²³ In 1902 he was thought to be the only architect in Australia not to agree with arbitration clauses in a new industry contract initiated by the Master Builders Association,²⁴ claiming unfairness. Some builders refused to tender for him. Menkens claimed he was the sole arbiter in any dispute on his work but his influence on subsequent contract clauses is not known.

His regular letters to his mother show another side of his character. Brian Suters, in the catalogue of the Menkens Centenary Exhibition, says his letters were full of compassion for his family, his friends, his colleagues and for mankind generally. He was highly incensed by the actions of the 'White nations against the Blacks'. His letter in November, 1905, to his mother, says *'Your small German SW African war with the revolting Hereras demands some sacrifices on both sides. My sympathy is with the poor Hereras. You can't imagine how the poor Blacks are treated by the White race everywhere. The methods of Englishmen and Americans towards these poor creatures are shocking enough. The Belgians are immoderately cruel and perhaps the greatest band of pigs on earth. The Germans are only a little better and your General von Throta is an insolent, haughty balloon.'*

He was married briefly in 1885, in Sydney, to a widow Maggie Downey and lived in Beaumont Street, Hamilton. She left the district after four months but it was not until 1891 that he petitioned for divorce.

Suters says *'No man is perfect and Menkens had his blemishes. His lifestyle as a bachelor, lodging in the Great Northern Hotel, was susceptible to drinking and, as he died of cirrhosis of the liver, it is*

reasonable to assume he was fond of liquor. And, as all true blue Aussie drinkers know, drinking often leads to gambling. It is recorded that in October, 1894, Menkens had borrowed 40 pounds from a William Rouse to cover losses on the Caulfield Cup. At the time of his incarceration in 1895 his assets were few, probably a legacy of his gambling exploits. But of course his gambling streak was evident in his decision to leave his native Germany.'

In 1907 he took F. G. Castleden as a professional partner for a fee of 530 pounds. He told his family in Germany that this was proof that the name Menkens was very valuable in NSW. He had earlier commented about belief in work to his mother on his nephew's exam passes: *'This good foundation will help him to get on in future as I hope and I advise him not to forget that a splendid success can only be realised by energy, perseverance, attention, punctuality and sincerity.'*

Leaving the business in the capable hands of Mr Castleden, he made a world tour principally to see his aged mother, in Germany, and, after wandering through the world, decided that New South Wales was the happiest place to live. He built his house in 1909, the "Chateau d'If", in Randwick, Sydney, in the vicinity of the racecourse, laid out his garden and settled down to enjoy his remaining years.²⁵ He was given very little time for his lifelong labours for he developed a severe liver complaint for which there was no cure and no relief and he died in agony in the care of the Sisters of Mercy, aged 55. He is buried at Waverley Cemetery, overlooking the sea.²⁶

MENKENS, F. B. – BUILDINGS.

- 1885 Additions to School of Arts, Wolfe Street, Newcastle
Keightley Residence, The Terrace, Newcastle
Monastery, Mount St. Alphonsus, Mayfield
- 1886 Steggas Emporium, Hunter Street West, Newcastle
(see page 22)
Deaf and Dumb Institute, Waratah
- 1888 Mechanics Institute, Tudor Street, Hamilton (see page 22)
Earp, Gillam & Co. Bond Store, Telford Street, Newcastle
(see pages 230 – 2)
- 1889 Convent of Mercy, Branxton
St Andrews Presbyterian Church, Laman Street, Newcastle
(see pages 240 – 2)
Baptist Tabernacle, Laman Street, Newcastle (see pages 238 – 9)
Convent of St Joseph, Maitland Road, Hamilton
- 1890 Lance Villa Residence, Church Street, Newcastle
Convent of St Joseph, Carrington.
- 1891 Boarding House “The Gunyah” at Belmont for
James Hannell (now demolished)
Dangar’s Law Offices, Bolton Street, Newcastle
(Legacy House) (see page 22)
- 1892 Wallsend Mining Hospital (now demolished)
Wood’s Chambers and Auction Room, Scott Street,
Newcastle
Convent for Sisters of Mercy, Queen Street, Singleton
(see page 20)
Convent, St Josephs, Lochinvar
- 1893 Tower for Dangar’s ‘Baroona’, Singleton
Catholic Church, St Michaels, Wollombi
- 1893 Catholic Church, Cassilis
- 1894 Additions to ‘Jesmond House’, Barker Street, Newcastle for
John R. Wood
- 1895 Joseph Wood’s Villa Residence, Lorna Street, Waratah
- 1897 Warehouse and Hotel, Scott Street, Newcastle, for
A. A. Dangar
Bell Residence, Pickering, Muswellbrook (see page 247)
- 1898 Monastery, Marist Brothers, Hamilton
- 1899 Warehouse, Scott Street, Newcastle, for R. Hall & Son
Store and Stables, ‘Gostwick’ for A. A. Dangar
- 1900 Newcastle Gas Works, sanitary additions
- 1901 Kitchen Wing, ‘Gostwick’ for A. A. Dangar
Warehouse, Bolton Street, Newcastle, for David Cohen &
Company (see pages 233 – 4)
- 1902 Additions to Sisters of Mercy Convent, Queen Street,
Singleton
- 1903 Central Hotel, Hunter Street, Newcastle, for Tooth &
Company (see page 21)
- 1904 The Boltons, Residences, off Church Street, Newcastle, for
Mrs Bode
Warehouse, Hunter Street, Newcastle, for
Frederick Ash Ltd
The Retreat, Residence, 31 Parnell Place, Newcastle East,
for Captain Reuben Rudolph MacIntosh
- 1905 Warehouse, Hunter Street, Newcastle, for T. Garrett & Son

- 1905 Warehouse, Scott Street, Newcastle for J. R. Hall & Son
(see page 236)
- 1906 Charleston's Photographic Studios, Hunter Street,
Newcastle (see page 22)
- Residence, Barker Street, Newcastle, for John R. Hall (248)
- Warehouse, King Street, Newcastle, for T. Burke & Sons
(see page 237)
- Palings Music Store, Hunter Street, Newcastle, for
A. A. Dangar (see pages 249 – 50)
- Bacon Residence, Queen Street, New Lambton



*Residence for W. S. Bacon (the author's grandfather)
corner Queens & Evescourt Roads, New Lambton.
F. B. Menkens, architect, 1906*

MENKENS & CASTLEDEN – BUILDINGS

- 1907 Anglican Church Rectory, Hamilton
Motor Garage, 'Baroona', Singleton, for A. A. Dangar
- 1908 Warehouse rebuilt, Scott Street, Newcastle, for
D. Cohen & Co
The Wansey House, The Terrace, Newcastle
- 1909 Residence for F. B. Menkens, Avoca Street, Randwick

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- 2 B. J. Suters – Menkens Centenary Exhibition 1978
- 3 NMH 12/3/1910
- 4 B. J. Suters – Menkens Centenary Exhibition 1978
- 5 B. J. Suters – Menkens Centenary Exhibition 1978
- 6 NMH 12/3/1910
- 7 NMH 19/4/1884
- 8 NMH 4/12/1885
- 9 NMH 21/12/1889
- 10 NMH 19/3/1949
- 11 NMH 10/8/1891
- 12 NMH 2/4/1901 ok perhaps
- 13 NMH 16/4/1892 ok
- 14 NMH 16/4/1892 ok
- 15
- 16 NMH 6/5/1895 ok
- 17 SMH 4/6/1895 ok
- 18 SMH 5/6/1895 ok
- 19 NMH 6/8/1896 ?
- 19 NMH 26/10/1895 ?
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- 20 ibid
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- 22 L. Reedman unpublished thesis 1956 – Menkens
- 23 NMH 12/3/1910
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- 25 NMH 12/3/1910
- 26 ibid.



*Mining Hospital, Wallsend (demolished)
F. B. Menkens, architect, 1892*



Warehouse, Hunter Street, Newcastle.

F. B. Menkens, architect, 1904

*Typical of Menkens warehouses from 1899 to 1906,
a period of rapid commercial growth.*

Photograph: John Guy, 1956.



Former Palings Music Store, Hunter Street, Newcastle

F. B. Menkens, architect, 1906.



Menkens in his later years reading a German newspaper.

His dog Mick stands by.

c.1908 – Photograph: The Snowball Collection.

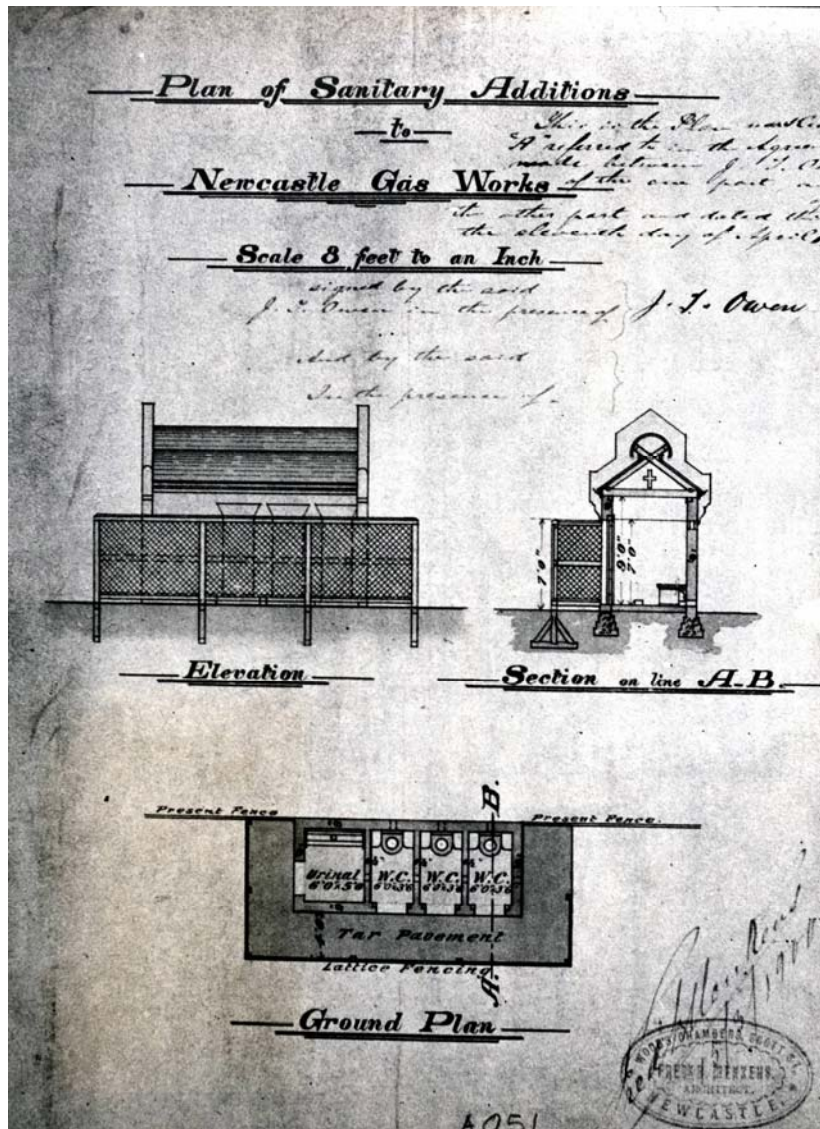
ELLIS, Thomas A.

In May 1883 he advertised as follows:-

Thos. A. Ellis
 Civil and Mechanical
 Consulting Engineer,
 Architect and Surveyor.
 Plans, Specifications, Estimates. Etc.
 Bolton Street, Newcastle.

In those days it was apparently possible to be many things. In that month he called tenders for two business premises at Plattsburg, after which nothing further is heard.

Reference: J. Guy - Thesis



Newcastle Gas Works, King Street, Newcastle West.

F. B. Menkens, architect, 1900.

Architects sometimes can design the most complex of projects:
 for example, solving ventilation and privacy with religious conviction.

YEOMANS, Ernest George

1861 - 1946



Ernest Yeomans was born in 1861, ¹ the son of George Yeomans who it was said opened the first Inn on the Wallis Plains at Maitland and had a small ship, the 'Monitor', trading with Sydney. Yeomans is first noticed in 1884 when the architect, Peter Bennett, announced in the press that he had taken Ernest as a partner, the firm to be Bennett & Yeomans. ² Yeomans was 23 and was the first locally born architect of any significance to start practice in the Newcastle area. James W. Scobie from Pender's office, Maitland, was the second, three years later. The new firm was very prosperous and in eight years had over 250 commissions for a whole range of buildings, mostly terraces and brick and timber houses.

The firm had a great deal of local support judging from numerous compliments in the press. In 1885 they won a competition for the design of the Waratah School of Arts. It was to have a performance hall 75 feet by 36 feet (23 metres by 11 metres) and a large library, reading room and balcony on the first floor. *'The front of the building is of coloured bricks, neatly tuck pointed and nicely relieved with cement facings... The pediment looks bold and handsome with wave cornice and trusses (brackets) while it stands up in bold relief with broken pediment and figure in centre.'* ³ It was just what the public expected for an up-to-date School of Arts. The building was not built but, after the firm was dissolved, Yeomans called tenders for another School of Arts for Waratah in 1896. This gives

rise to speculation that the younger partner in the firm might have been responsible for winning the competition. Yeoman's later work would suggest he was more original in his thinking than his older and more traditional partner Peter Bennett who, during the partnership, was active in local politics in Wickham and was Mayor in 1887.



The Northumberland Permanent Building, Investment, Land & Loan Society, corner of Blane (later Hunter) & Burwood Streets, Newcastle. Bennett & Yeomans, architects, 1886 – first major commission.

The architects occupied the first floor offices.

Photograph: Newcastle Regional Library.

Bennett and Yeomans were architects to the Northumberland Permanent Building Society. The Society built major offices, occupied in 1887, on the acute angle of Burwood and Blane (Hunter) Streets. It was three storeys with an elaborate façade of string-courses and engaged piers, each panel having a pair of round arch topped windows. There was a heavy top cornice and each pier was capped with a lavishly decorated masonry pinnacle. The corner was crowned with an elaborate entablature and curved pediment. An impressive formal banquet was held at its opening.⁴ It was reported that *'the Public office is tastefully arranged' and that 'the counter is of American design and made of neat cedar, brightly polished. The manager's office is a little gem in itself... Upstairs the well known architects, Messrs Bennett and Yeomans, have taken a splendid suite of offices that will afford them more scope for carrying out the heavy work they have in hand...the entire building is a credit to the architecture of the city.'*⁵ The building was a curious city landmark and was demolished in 1938 to make way for a modern brick structure, which has also been demolished.

Again, in 1887, they designed a very large store for local merchant Mr F. Witherspoon in Blane Street which would *'prove a handsome and suitable addition to the thoroughfare, which bids fair soon to run Hunter Street very close in the race of architectural beauty.'*⁶ (Blane Street became Hunter Street later.) The façade was to be decorated with Roman coloured glazed tiles – *'an innovation in this city'*. It would also have a weighbridge and a steam elevator for taking goods to the first floor and the installation was considered the finest in the city. As was the custom, there was a fine balcony over the footpath, a feature that, sadly, was to be abolished by the Municipal Council in 1929.

The firm, probably with the influence of Yeomans, as can be seen from his later work, attempted to use innovations in decorations and in building features, in contrast to the classical plainness of Peter Bennett's own buildings.

Perhaps their building with the most impact on Newcastle skyline was the Brewery, built in 1888, in Hamilton, for the Northern Brewery Wine and Spirits Company, and set up as a Brewery but not used except briefly after Castlemaine took it over in the 1890s after which the equipment was sold.⁷ It is a fine example of load-bearing brick and heavy storey post construction. The building is in three main sections – a five storey tower with a segmental domed roof and two lower wings of exposed storey-post construction. The facades are plain brickwork of the most subtle texture, the openings have round or segmental headed arches and stone sills. The heavy cornice and stone quoins to the tower are seen as an attempt by the architect to introduce a neo-classical element and somewhat successfully too.

The building is an historic landmark, rivalled only by the Cathedral and Customs House. It was later owned by the Department of Technical and Further Education who attempted to demolish it in 1977. The case against it, apart from the number of storeys, was that the bricks varied in size and the openings were mostly 'out of square' by half an inch (12mm). The State Minister, Mr Paul Landa, after representations from a mysterious quarter, intervened and the building was refurbished and integrated into a larger new campus.⁸ Another aside: architectural classes were held there in the 1950s and also sometimes Building Construction examinations. When a question asked for a drawing of storey post construction the exam student had not far to look.

Bennett & Yeomans' last major commission was to prepare a design for a Town Hall for Hamilton Borough Council in 1892. It was a neo-classical composition of central tower with cupola flanked by pilastered and pedimental ends joined by a parapet. The whole design was richly ornamented, almost to a ridiculous degree. It was supposed to be constructed in stages as Hamilton grew, but it was never built. It would have been if gold had been found in Hamilton streets in those depression years.



*Brewery Building tower, corner Wood & Parry Streets, Newcastle
Bennett & Yeomans, architects, 1888*

The joint practice, probably affected by the 1890s depression must have lasted until early 1893, as Yeomans advertised on his own behalf in May of that year.⁹ Within a year his practice began to establish on mostly cheaper houses in timber and alterations and additions.

Newcastle's first Trades Hall, now part of the Institute of TAFE at Hunter Street West, was opened in June 1895, towards the end of the 1890s depression. Its architect was Yeomans – his first real commission on his own. Newcastle Trades Hall asked the Railways Commissioner for a piece of spare rail corridor land next to the proposed Technical College only to be refused. Sir Henry Parkes, who had a soft spot for Newcastle workers, instructed otherwise and the Unions had their first headquarters land. Although not a large building it is richly decorated with few motifs spared, even running to a change of brick colours for various small features. It is possible that he wanted to show a flamboyance perhaps lacking in his ex-partner.



*Winning design for Hamilton Town Hall, Beaumont Street, Hamilton.
(not built) Bennett & Yeomans, architects, 1892.*



Rotunda, Lambton Park, Bennett & Yeomans, Architects, 1890
Photograph: The Snowball Collection – miners combined meeting 1896.



One of a group of houses built for the Northumberland Building & Investment Society, 4-18 Eddy Street, Hamilton.
Bennett & Yeomans, architects, 1892
(attributed – in view of the close connection with the client)



Original Trades Hall, Hunter Street West, Newcastle.
E. G. Yeomans, architect, 1895

It had a large Banner Room for the banners of unions for street marches.

Then, in 1897, Yeomans advertised 'Vacancies for two pupils (moderate premium) with board and residence in own family'¹⁰ He also offered to provide plans for houses for rental investment. It said 'Money – Rusting at 3 per cent when 7 ½ per cent net may be realised from rental of 200 pound Cottages at Hamilton (The coming Suburb). New Cottages being rushed by the public to rent. One hundred designs to choose from.'¹¹

At the time when Menkens' large warehouse for Dangar was being built in 1898 near Market Street, Yeomans was busy arranging the final touches to Court Chambers, a corner group of

business offices and residences at Bolton and King Streets. The style is of Baroque and Flemish influence which could loosely be called Queen Anne. Almost every opening and gable has a varied form of decoration, playfully used. There is a final whimsical gesture on the corner wall cartouche which has the bust of a judge and the architect's name. According to the Newcastle Morning Herald the keystone over the entrance features the face of Justice Sir George Reid, later a Premier of NSW.¹² No matter what its style and frivolous design, it is a most successful corner building, particularly given that both streets rise from the corner - Yeomans at his best.

By 1899 '*Yeomans was found up to his eyes in architectural work*'¹³ and his popularity continued into the early 1900s. He was a good business bargainer. At a crisis meeting of all the building trades in 1903, the merchants complained that unfinancial builders were being given jobs leaving them unpaid and good builders idle. Yeomans proposed that if the architects should co-operate, then builders '*should undertake not to draw out plans and specifications.*'¹⁴ By 1908 he was lending trust money on new buildings, having had '*25 years experience, expert in originality of design and economy of construction - cheap cottage plans.*'¹⁵

He married in 1886, lived in Hamilton and had six children, the eldest surviving being Eric George, born in 1890. Eric, with the same initials as his father causing confusion, became an architect and no further buildings of his have been traced. Ernest disappears from the electoral rolls of the district in 1916 at the age of 55 and nothing else is known of him. He died at age 85 and is buried at the cemetery at Yarramolong in the Wyong Valley, NSW.¹⁶

Although Ernest Yeomans made a measure of lasting impact on the architecture of Newcastle he showed a flair for innovation in design and business in an otherwise conservative local culture, exemplary for a home grown architect.

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- 5 NMH 6/1/1887
- 6 NMH 19/8/1887
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- 8 Les Reedman, Principal Architect Colleges, Government Architects Branch, PWD 1974
- 9 NMH 13/5/1895
- 10 NMH 13/2/1897
- 11 ibid
- 12 NMH 4/3/1978
- 13 NMH 11/1/1899
- 14 NMH 11/7/1903
- 15 NMH 5/2/1908
- 16 Headstone, Yarramolong Cemetery, NSW



*Court Chambers, corner King & Bolton Streets, Newcastle.
E. G. Yeomans, architect, 1898
with His Honour presiding.*

BENNETT & YEOMANS – BUILDINGS

- 1885 School of Arts Waratah Competition (not built)
- 1886 Northumberland Permanent Building Society, corner
Burwood and Blane Streets, Newcastle
- 1887 Witherspoons Store, Hunter Street, Newcastle
- 1888 'Windeymere House', corner Kerr and Bull Streets,
Mayfield
Hotel at West Wallsend for William Johnson
Brewery, Parry Street, Hamilton for Northern brewery
Wine & Spirits Company
Skating Rink, 47 Bolton Street, Newcastle
(now Steels Parking Station)
- 1889 Wesleyan Chapel, Mayfield
- 1890 Rotunda, Lambton Park
- 1892 Council Chambers, Adamstown
Residence, corner Bennett and Donald Streets, Hamilton
Hamilton Borough Council, Town Hall Competition
Masonic Hall, Newcomen Street, Newcastle
Northumberland Building & Investment Society housing
group, Eddy Street, Hamilton.



*The Newcastle Suburban Co-operative Society Ltd Department Store,
Hunter Street West, Newcastle. E. G. Yeomans, architect.
Stage 1 – 3 bays on right, 1898
Stage 2 – 5 middle bays, 1910
Stage 3 – 3 bays on left (west) end, 1914.
Photograph: Newcastle Regional Co-operative Collection.*



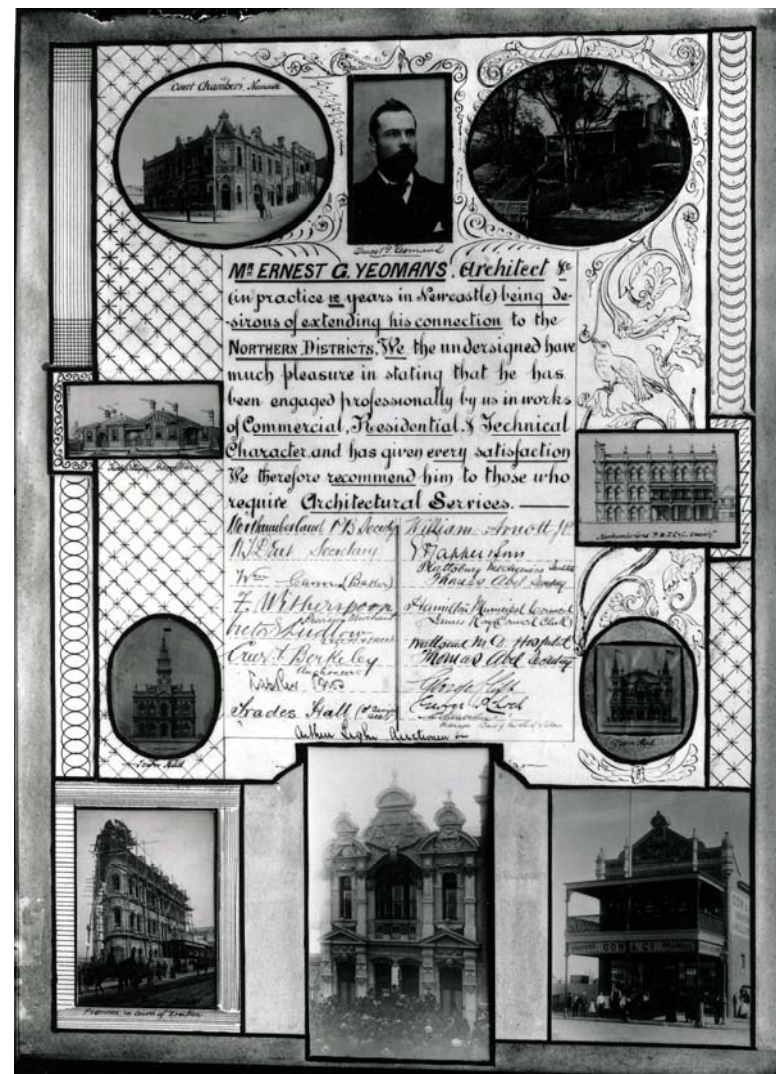
*Villa Residence 'Pipitea Pah', corner Zaara Street & Shortland
Esplanade, facing Newcastle Beach – demolished 1960
for a Tourist Hotel.
E. G. Yeomans, architect 1902.
Photograph: John Guy*

YEOMANS, Ernest George – BUILDINGS

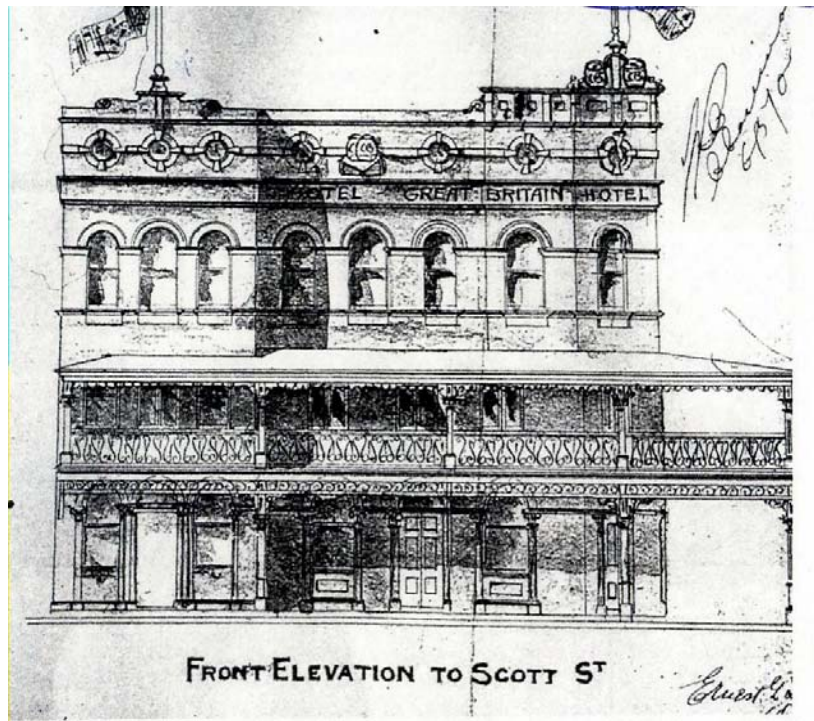
- 1895 Trades Hall, Hunter Street West, Newcastle
- 1896 Firkins Store, Wallsend
School of Arts, Waratah, (additions 1898)
- 1897 Hotel at Boolaroo-Cockle Creek for Thomas Sharp
- 1898 Court Chambers, corner King and Bolton Streets,
Newcastle
Co-op Store, Charlton Street, Newcastle West
(initial east bays)
- 1899 Four Terraces, Stevenson Place, Newcastle East
- 1902 Hotel at Adamstown
Villa Residence 'Pipitea Pah' for Mrs Kane, corner
Zaara Street & Shortland Esplanade, Newcastle Beach.
- 1905 Sorby & Company, Hunter Street West, Newcastle
School of Arts, Newcastle, (additions)
Trades Hall (additions)
Co-op Store, Charlton Street, Newcastle West
- 1907 Residence 'Cavanena', corner Cleary and Swan Streets,
Hamilton, for Mr. Sharp
Residence 'Felixstowe', 118 Everton Street, Hamilton, for
Mr. H. H. Thomson
- 1908 Winn and Company, Hunter Street, Newcastle
Two Residences, corner Wolfe and Church Streets,
Newcastle
- 1909 Hotel, corner Scott & Market Streets, Newcastle (not built).

1910-1914 The Store, 882 Hunter Street, Newcastle West
(extended bays).

1916 Memorial Gates, Lambton Park.



Yeoman's Testimonial c.1900



Yeomans drawing for a hotel, 1909 (not built)



*Residence, corner Cleary & Swan Streets, Hamilton.
E. G. Yeomans, architect, 1907.*

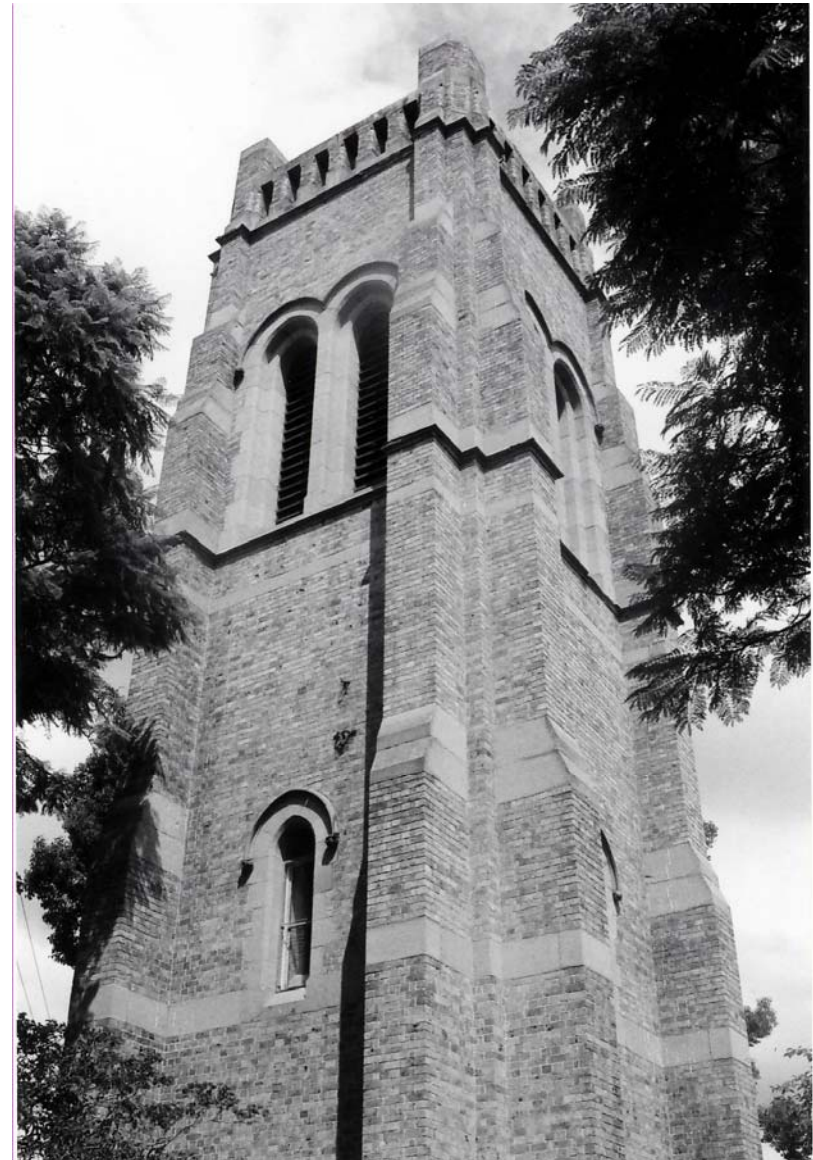
LEE , Arthur C.

Lee advertised as an architect with offices in Bolton Street, Newcastle, in September 1885. ¹ He had moved to High Street, West Maitland, when he called tenders for the belfry tower at St Pauls, West Maitland, in April 1888, ² a design competition he won over J. W. Pender.

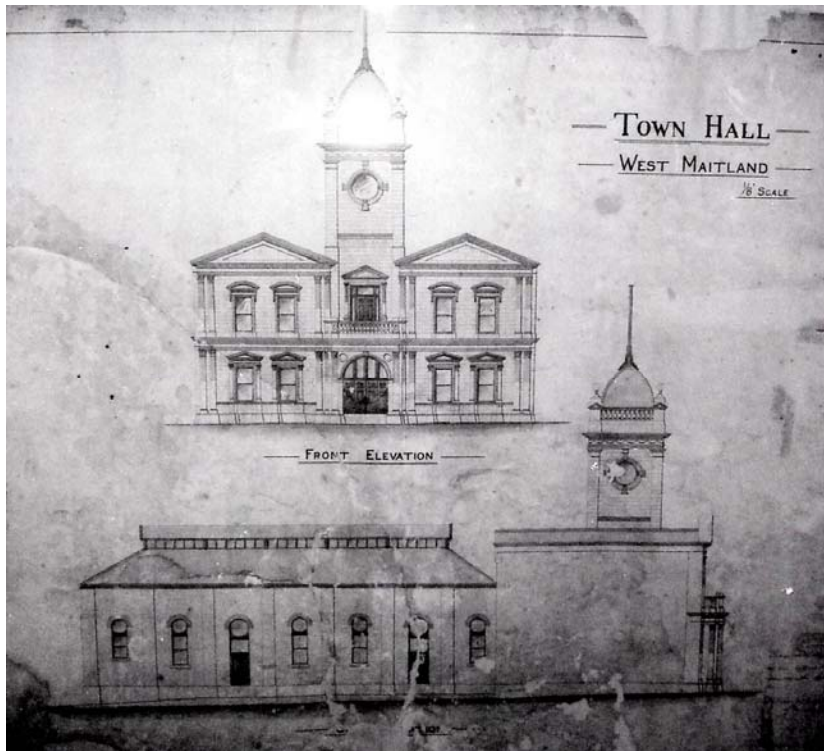
At about the same time he collaborated with J. Warren Scobie, formerly of Pender's office, on the winning design for a competition for Maitland Town Hall, to mark the centenary of New South Wales. ³ How much input each had in their project, which was opened in 1890, is not known but the design and importance of the belfry tower would indicate that Lee was well capable of significant input to the Town Hall. He formed a partnership with Scobie in 1890 ⁴ but this dissolved in 1892. ⁵ It is thought he stayed in Maitland and, with an agreement with Scobie, confined his single practice to the Singleton, Muswellbrook area. He designed 'Edenglassie' homestead on a White family property at Singleton around 1895 ⁶ but nothing further has been traced. ⁷ A work of that partnership was the Glebe Presbyterian Buildings, 479-489 High Street, Maitland in 1890, (east of St Andrews Street).

References:

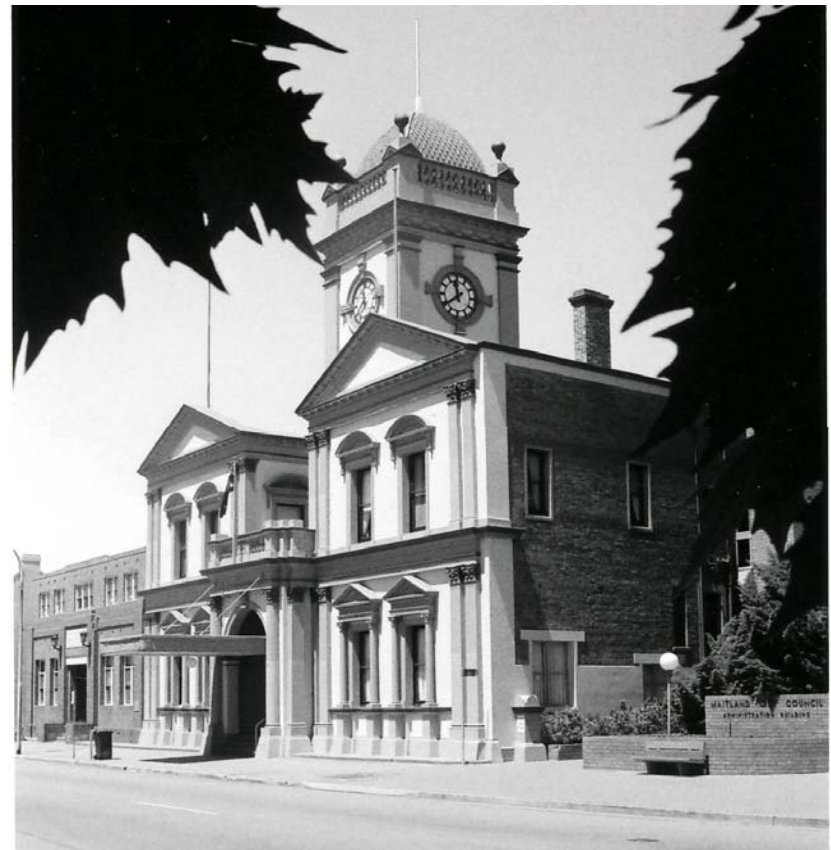
- 1 NMH 12/9/1885
- 2 NMH 18/4/1888
- 3 John Turner, *The Rise of High Street, Maitland*
- 4 NMH 8/3/1890
- 5 NMH 23/1/1892
- 6 Robert Stevenson, Scobie's grandson-in-law interview 10/4/1997
- 7 J. Guy – *Thesis*.



*The Tower, St Paul's Anglican Church, West Maitland.
Arthur C. Lee, architect, 1888.*



*Town Hall, High Street, West Maitland
 Lee & Scobie, architects, 1889
 Competition drawing
 Courtesy of Maitland City Council.*

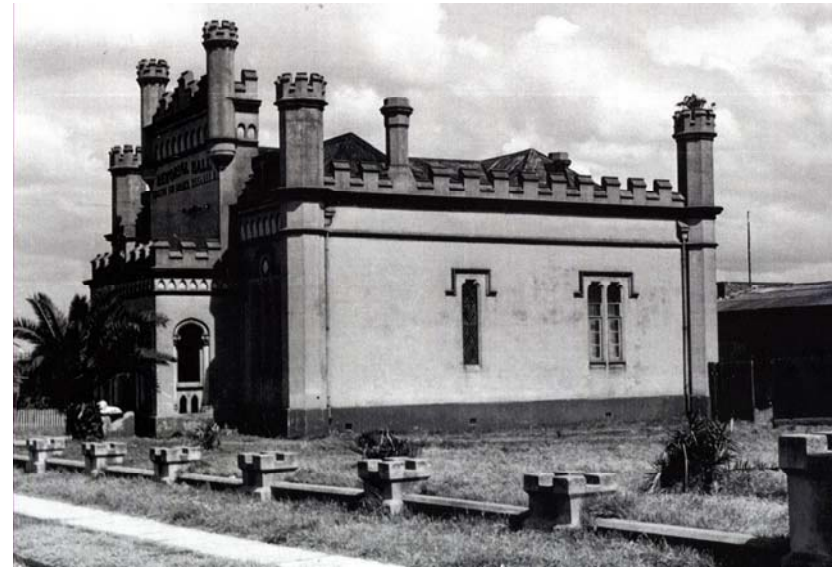


*Town Hall, High Street, West Maitland.
 Lee & Scobie, architects, 1889*

SANDERS, George C. 1843-1908

George Sanders, Architect, Building and Quantity Surveyor of Newcastle¹ advertised for Tenders locally from 1869 to 1889. It appears his son joined him in 1890 and, according to public tender invitations, the firm operated until 1900. The firm then became Sanders, Tingle & Mathison until G. H. Mathison left the business after four months. Sanders & Tingle operated then until 1909.² In 1894 Sanders was called as an expert witness in the Christ Church Cathedral litigation, declaring a value of work for payment to the builder. He was highly respected in the industry.

Each of Sander's surviving buildings is worthy of comment. The Stockton Church of England church is a fine example of 'neo-gothic' architecture in warm sandstock brickwork with carefully proportioned openings. The interior has finely crafted timber truss-work contrasting with lighter wall and ceiling finishes.



Stockton Borough Council Chambers, Douglas Street, Stockton.

George Sanders & Son, architects, 1891.

Used as the Council Chambers until Borough incorporated in Greater Newcastle in 1938.

A defence against attacking ratepayers?

The Stockton Council Chambers was a miniature curio of castellated style; only portions of the boundary dwarf walls remain today. By contrast, the Carrington Council Chambers, now a Community Centre, is a richly decorated building, painted today in interesting colours. His church at Fullerton Cove is a small 'gothic revival' building, all in timber and is in serious disrepair but now provides a storage space for the coloured wooden clowns of a travelling side show. 'Stanley Park' at Fullerton Cove is a grand example of a homestead.

Left: St Pauls Anglican Church, Stockton.

George Sanders, architect, 1890. Photograph: John Guy



*Carrington Borough Council Chambers,
corner Young & Hargraves Streets, Carrington.
George Sanders, architect, 1888.
(now a Community Centre)*



*Newcastle Benevolent Asylum, Turton Road, Waratah.
George Sanders & Son, architects, 1896.
Photograph from 1960 showing new administration building
under erection in the northern forecourt.*

Sanders & Son were chosen in 1896 by The Newcastle and Northumberland Benevolent Society to design their new expanded premises at Waratah. The origins and development of the society is a story in itself. Launched in 1884 by members of the Newcastle Relief Society and Women's Crusade, the committee requested a grant of land from the A. A. Company. Instead, temporary accommodation was offered in Cooks Hill from which, over the following years, much relief was provided for Newcastle's needy. 'In the first five years 25,199 families were given outdoor relief, 3452 meals were served, 989 steamer and train passes issued.'³

The demand was so pressing that, through Sir Henry Parkes, the Government granted two hectares of land at Waratah for permanent buildings in 1888 and eight years later granted 3000 pounds for the new building. The tender price was 5000 pounds, the shortfall being underwritten by vice-president William Arnott, of biscuit fame.⁴ The Governor, Lord Hampden, opened the new building on 6th May 1897, a major occasion for community health care in Newcastle.

The two storey building, with its two major gables flanking a small central gable in red brick, was a landmark in Turton Road. The Society responded to the needs of the time, made worse by the severe depression of 1893 combined with the rife diseases of the day for which medical relief was only partly effective. Many relied on the comfort and asylum provided by organisations like the Benevolent Society. The site was taken over by the NSW Hospitals Commission in 1932 and subsequent additions to the building have compromised its integrity. An insult to the work of George Sanders & Son.

References:

- 1 J. Guy – Thesis "Newcastle Architects Tenders 1850-1901"
- 2 Sands Directories Country 1902-32
- 3 NMH 3/7/1876
- 4 NMH 7/5/1897

SANDERS, George C. – BUILDINGS

SANDERS & SON after 1890



*Church of the Holy Trinity (Anglican), 40 Gooch Street, Merriwa.
George Sanders & Son, architects, 1899
(Replacing a wooden church of 1850)*

- 1887 Congregational Church, Stockton
- 1888 Council Chambers, Young Street, Carrington (now Community Centre)
- 1890 St Pauls Anglican Church, Stockton
- 1891 Council Chambers, Stockton – parts of fence remaining (now site of RSL Club)
YMCA Building, Hunter Street West, Newcastle
- 1896 Newcastle & Northumberland Benevolent Society, Turton Road, Waratah.
- 1898 Hotel at Cockle Creek for Mrs Jane Milner
Villa Residence, 24 Samdon Road, Hamilton (early part)
'The Laurels', 50 Fullerton Street, Stockton
Council Chambers, Waratah
Stone Memorial – Stockton Colliery Disaster
- 1899 Anglican Church, Fullerton Road, Fullerton Cove
Anglican Church, 40 Gooch Street, Merriwa
- c.1900 'Stanley Park', Fullerton Road, Fullerton Cove.



*Villa Residence 'The Laurels', 50 Fullerton Road, Stockton.
George Sanders & Son, architects, 1899.*



*'Stanley Park' homestead, Fullerton Road, Fullerton Cove.
Nominally George Sanders & Son, architects, c.1900*

SCOBIE, James Warren

1863-1956



When J. Warren Scobie retired in 1945, aged 82, he had been an architect, in Maitland, for 59 years and was probably the oldest practicing architect in the State.¹ He was born the same year as J. W. Pender, architect, commenced his practice in West Maitland.

He was a grandson of Michael Scobie who came to Australia from Stirling, Scotland, in 1839, with his family which included the then eight years old Robert, James's father. Michael Scobie settled on flood prone land at Oakhampton, Maitland. After ten years the family moved to better land at Mount Pleasant and successfully grew fruit and grapes.

Robert inherited the farm and became a prominent citizen and Member of the Legislative Assembly about the turn of the century.² He had an extra large traditional family of nine daughters and six sons, one of which was James Warren.

James Scobie was articled in the 1880s to Maitland's only architect also a Scot, J. W. Pender,³ at a busy time in his practice. Scobie advanced rapidly and, in 1888, he collaborated with Arthur C. Lee of Newcastle to win a competition for the design of Maitland Town Hall to mark the centenary of New South Wales. Thirty

five architects competed and the judges, one of whom was Sydney architect, Mr Hennessey, said:

*'The sky outline is good, the grouping is well arranged as regards mass, and light and shade. The design is dignified and monumental in character, as a public edifice should be, being free from petty or meretricious treatment and detail, as is characteristic of many of the designs sent in.'*⁴ At the building's opening, in 1890, the Maitland Mercury reported: *'The tower, from which a fine view can be had of the whole district – the winding river, the rich agricultural fields, and the comfortable homes of the farmers – is situate fully 16 feet from the street alignment, immediately behind the front portico. The top of the dome which is surmounted with flagstaff and brackets, is 84 feet 6 inches (25.75 metres) above the street level. The roof is surrounded by ornate balustrade, coping course, cornice and fascia underneath with what are known as swags. The openings of the clock dial are of plated glass, and it is possible, in due course, we shall have a clock which will be a great convenience to the town'*⁵ The clock was, eventually, provided.



*Maitland Town Hall, High Street, West Maitland.
Lee & Scobie, architects, 1889.*

With the competition success he struck out on his own and, by 1890, formalised a partnership with Arthur C. Lee⁶ who had come from Newcastle earlier for the building of the tower to St Pauls, West Maitland. The partnership lasted only two years.⁷ For the half century which followed this success Scobie designed every type of building in the Hunter and as far as the Queensland border and Gunnedah. It was said that he won 8 out of 11 competitions entered, but only the Maitland Town Hall has been traced.

In the eleven years from 1903 he designed 10 out of the 28 hotels in the Cessnock- Kurri Kurri Coalfields. One of these, the Kurri Kurri Hotel, built early in this period is a grand example of a three storied hotel with verandahs and stands dominant on the town's skyline. The keystone elements of the semi-circular headed window openings have been accentuated, giving the building much visual interest. By contrast, his later Hotel at Neath, of similar size, is designed with imposing facades and parapets. All his hotels are worthy of comment.



*Kurri Kurri Hotel, Kurri Kurri,
J. W. Scobie, architect, 1904-05.
Considered his best project.*



*The Neath Hotel, Main Road, Neath.
J. W. Scobie, architect, 1914-15*



*The Denman Hotel, Abermain.
J. W. Scobie, architect, 1912-13
Originally with high fronted decorated gabled parapets
in brickwork of three stories –
a much more imposing corner building.*



*The Criterion Hotel, 75 Cessnock Road, Weston.
J. W. Scobie, architect, 1903-04 (attributed)*



*Bellbird Hotel, Main Road, Bellbird.
J. W. Scobie, architect, 1914-15.*

Outside his work his major interests were the volunteer army, rifle shooting and bowls. In 1881, when he was 18, with patriotic fervour of the day, he joined the 4th Infantry Volunteer Regiment and served during the Boer War, rising later to the rank of Lieutenant-colonel but at the time of the WW1 he was in his fifties. His younger brother, Bob, also a Lieutenant-colonel, and sons

Ralph and Frank served in WW1. Bob was wounded and died at Lone Pine, Gallipoli, Ralph re-enlisted in WW2.

Scobie was a crack rifle shot, winning many trophies and coaching younger members of the Maitland Rifle Club. He was a keen bowler and, in turn, a member of the Maitland, Stockton and Lorn Clubs. He was still rolling bowls up to ninety years of age.⁸

Floods always were on every Maitland mind but in the early days the Government showed no interest. The way was open for local suggestions and theories. Scobie studied the river levels for the Lorn Embankment and, according to his theory, designed the bank to conform to the fall of the river after the 1893 flood.¹⁵ His advice was taken and the bank resisted the 1913 flood successfully to public acclaim. He asserted that it would have remained intact in the 1955 flood had it not been for the rabbit burrows and the cattle tracks. In that flood he refused to budge from the upstairs room of his Lorn house after pulling his army rank on an indignant Captain in charge of the evacuation. Scobie, like his father before him, put forward a scheme for the protection of Maitland by building a diversionary spillway channel at Bolwarra. It was not until 1956 that Authorities came to the same conclusion and reformed the embankments.⁹

Out of his family of six boys and three girls, two of his sons were architects. Frank Maitland served articles with his father on his return from the WW1 and the firm became Scobie & Son in 1922. In 1932, Frank, who was gassed in the war, was advised to have a job in the open air and in a drier climate and he went to Bathurst as a green keeper for the Golf Club. Scobie continued on his own. After WW2, at Scobie's retirement in 1946, the firm was taken over by Captain Paul Thelander, a Queenslander, then recently returned from war service in New Guinea.¹⁰ Another son, Edward Boyd entered the School of Architecture at Sydney University in the early 1920s, at the time the course started with Professor Leslie Wilkinson. After some work with his father, Edward went on to a successful career in the Commonwealth

Department of Works in Sydney, Brisbane and Darwin, retiring as Government Architect in Port Moresby in 1965.¹¹

Not only his sons worked in his office. His eldest child, Susannah (1889-1965), who was talented at drawing, helped on the Gunnedah Hotel in 1910 and was often sent there on errands by train. In 1912, at age 23, she worked on the drawings for the Denman Hotel, Abermain, which was built as three storeys. When the top floor was removed later she would exclaim in outrage to her children when riding past. She also worked on the Chelmsford, Neath and Bellbird Hotels and other projects up till about 1923 when she left at her father's urging to get married and start a family. At about that time her brother Frank had joined the firm and it was the cultural expectation of the day that a son in a business had preference over a daughter. Had Susannah continued in the office she would have qualified as an architect under the new Architects Registration Act 1921, and probably would have been the first female architect in New South Wales and possibly Australia, on a par with Florence Mary Taylor (1879-1969) of Sydney. Later another daughter, Lorna, (1908-1948), the youngest child, also worked for her father in the early thirties and was reputed to be an excellent drafter. She too left to get married.¹²



Scobies Chambers, High Street, West Maitland – built by Scobies father Robert c.1880. Scobie's architectural offices.

His office was in Scobies Chambers, built by his father in High Street, West Maitland, for rental. He lived most of his life at his two-storey house, 'Flagstaff' at Lorn, just across the river from his offices, although he took the family to live at Stockton from 1911 to 1917. He was a teetotaler and never had a driver's licence or owned a motor car, preferring horse and sulky, train or bicycle.¹³ He became a member of the Royal Australian Institute of Architects in 1954, aged ninety two, an amazing gesture to his profession.

When he died Scobie was in his ninety third year. Longevity was in the Scobie clan. His Scottish grandfather reached one hundred and one, and his mother was in her hundredth year when she died. He was never ill in his life and did not require the services of a doctor but in his last two years he was confined to his room. At his death it was said: *'he was an excellent type of citizen, making a full contribution to the life of the community, one of the old school, sound, self-reliant and dependable and a sportsman in the best sense of the term.'*¹⁴

References:

- 1 MM 2/11/1945
- 2 John Turner 'Who's Who in 1888'
- 3 MM 23/4/1956
- 4 John Turner *'The Rise of High Street, Maitland'*
- 5 MM 1/3/1890
- 6 NMH 8/3/1890
- 7 NMH 23/1/1892
- 8 MM 23/4/1956
- 9 ibid.
- 10 MM 2/11/1945
- 11 MM 13/6/1966
- 12 Jim Crawford, Millfield, grandson, interview 26/3/1997
- 13 Jim Crawford, Millfield, grandson, interview 26/3/1997
- 14 MM 23/4/1956
- 15 MM 11/7/1962



Lieutenant Colonel J. Warren Scobie c. 1914



*'Flagstaff', Scobie's home, Roxburgh Street, Lorn.
Second storey added c.1918*



*May & J. Warren Scobie with family c.1918.
Frank back row right, Susannah fourth from right, Lorna beside her
mother, all worked at some time in their father's office.*



*'The Camp', Stockton c.1911
Scobie's other house*



*Presbyterian Glebe Trustees Building, High Street, West Maitland.
East of St Andrews Street.
Lee & Scobie, architects, 1891*



*Presbyterian Glebe Trustees Building, High Street, West Maitland
West of St Andrews Street.
J. W. Scobie, architect, 1910*

SCOBIE, J. W. – BUILDINGS

- 1889 Maitland Town Hall (Lee & Scobie)
- 1891 Presbyterian Glebe Trustees Buildings, High Street,
West Maitland – east of St Andrews Street (Lee & Scobie)
- 1894 Flood Plan for Maitland (see page 49)
- 1896 Wesleyan Church, Largs
- 1901 Presbyterian Church, Largs
- 1903 Heddon Greta Hotel, Heddon Greta
Criterion Hotel, Weston (attributed)
- 1904 Station Hotel, Kurri Kurri
Kurri Kurri Hotel, Kurri Kurri
Aberdare Tavern, Vincent Street, Cessnock
Butter Factory, Raymond Terrace
Killingworth Hotel, Killingworth
- 1905 Aberdare Hotel, Weston
Abermain Hotel, Abermain
- 1906 CBC Bank, Cessnock
- 1909 Goodwin Offices, Gunnedah (now Services Club)
'Ruvigne' Homestead, Gunnedah
- 1910 Hotel Mullaley, Mullaley, Gunnedah
Presbyterian Glebe Trustees Buildings, High Street,
West Maitland – west of St Andrews Street
- 1911 Showground Pavilion, Gunnedah

- 1912 The Denman Hotel, Abermain (originally three storeys)
- 1914 Chelmsford Hotel, Kurri Kurri
Hotel Neath, Neath
Bellbird Hotel, Bellbird
- 1921 Masonic Temple, Church Street, Gloucester (demolished)
- 1933 Maitland Town Hall – additions
Band Rotunda, Greta



*Scobie, around 90 years of age, c.1953
dressed for bowls.*

A sad note is that when the new owners of the firm took over, in 1946, the contents of the Drawing Store, containing hundreds of drawings, were discarded – not an unusual practice in the post War period.

SHARPE, Alfred

1836-1908

Alfred Sharpe had an extraordinary life. Reportedly a deaf mute he was one of New Zealand's most distinguished watercolourists of the colonial period and came to Newcastle in 1887, late in his life. One of his pursuits was also as a domestic architect with a passionate interest in tree planting and parks. It is after Sharpe that the annual Hunter Landscape Award is named.

He was a native of Birkenhead, England, and settled in New Zealand at the age of 25. Disillusioned with the art scene there and saddened by a failed marriage he came to Newcastle, probably to be near his brother William, who had a shipping business. In December, 1887, the Newcastle Morning Herald made its first note of him saying that he *'intends, we learn, to open art classes in Newcastle shortly. He is the holder of two gold, three silver and two bronze medals from various Art Exhibitions, besides numerous Certificates of Merit. He has been spending several weeks sketching on our northern coasts and his first Australian picture is on view at Messrs Knaggs and Co.'s, Hunter Street. It represents a "Golden Eve" at St Johns River, Camden Haven, and is steeped in the golden languor so characteristic of our Australian sunsets. It has been purchased by Mr Alex. Brown, of Dalgety & Co., who has allowed it to remain on view for two or three days.'*¹

This highlighted the situation for artists and painters at the time in Newcastle where there were no art galleries for exhibitions apart from the annual town shows. Sharpe advocated the need for an Art Gallery for Newcastle, *'in which to preserve the pictured transcripts of natural beauties with which we are surrounded, those beauties are wiped out by the exigencies of the coal industry and the spread of population.'*² He did not achieve the opening of organised art galleries but took any opportunity to paint illuminated addresses for important public and private occasions. He became

known in Newcastle more for his art and his writings than for his architecture.

He first called tenders as an architect in May 1888 for a Villa residence at the corner of Cliff and High Streets, The Hill (since demolished). He went into partnership with a Mr Shaw in 1889 but it seems that this only lasted six months and was for a weatherboard house at 'Longlands' on the Williams River.

Over the next ten years tender advertisements in the Newcastle Morning Herald suggest that he was not a busy architect. His work included additions to a few residences, minor additions to Newcastle Hospital, shopfronts in Perkins Street and a 'billiard room and lavatory screen for the Newcastle Club, King and Watt Streets,'³ but examples of his work have not been traced.

Newcastle was in recession in 1895. Sharpe wrote that *'not a single Building Society or Bank'* was prepared to advance money for building construction. *'I know that dozens of completed plans of proposed buildings are now lying idle in our architect's offices, simply because the owners of the properties cannot build without some assistance of the sort in these hard times.'*⁴

Although he lived in various places in Newcastle he said that he had an office in Wood's Chambers where his young brother, William, had a thriving shipping office.⁵ Obviously, with one small project a year, he could spend time in writing about painting and to the newspapers about the shabby condition of the town and the vanishing greenery. Probably the first to make persistent public comments, he would be labelled a *'greenie'* today. It was not as an architect that he made a contribution to Newcastle, it was as a landscape designer. He was a strong advocate of the creation of parks and the planting of trees and he had some success. In 1890 the Herald announced that: *'Mr Alfred Sharp(e), the designer of the Islington, Wickham, Lake Macquarie and Hamilton Parks, is the successful competitor for the design for laying*

out of Hill Reserve,'⁶ now known as King Edward Park. The Hill Reserve of 30 acres (14 hectares), also known as The Upper Reserve was provided to the Borough Council by the Government in 1865. The decision to develop the park came with the building of the 'Hill' Villas nearby, particularly along the adjacent Terrace, with their ocean views. The design of the park, incorporating broad easterly grassy slopes, valleys, elevated headlands, commanding views of the ocean to the east and the surf of Newcastle Beach to the north, can be attributed to Alfred Sharpe. The sunken flower garden, 'Garside Gardens', which is traditionally planted annually for the spring display, is located in the valley, protected from southerly weather. A most remarkable scenic park for passive recreation, it is well maintained by the City Council and is regarded by some as Australia's best 'belvedere' urban park

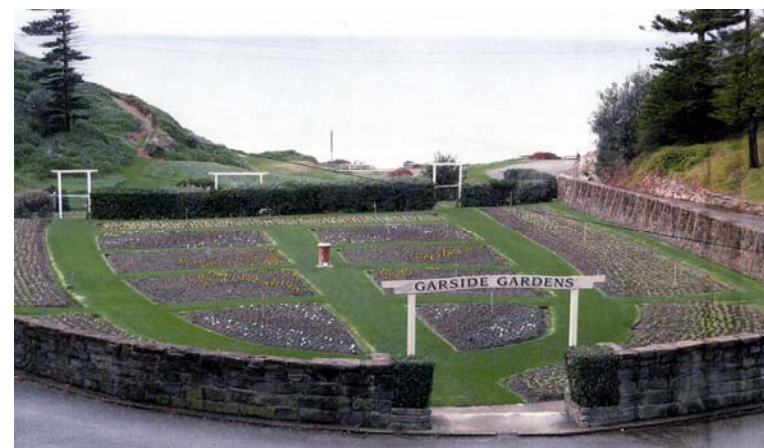
His drawings have not been found but, judging from his painting technique, they would have been lavishly illustrated. His paintings show an abiding interest in the natural Australian forest, depicted in fine detail and with glowing light. Although most of his paintings are in New Zealand, some are in the Newcastle Art Gallery and in the Beauchamp collection in the Mitchell Library, Sydney. Newcastle was fortunate to have in its community such a multi-talented person and all the more for his persistent public commentary on the environment. He died, after a short illness, at the age of seventy three and is buried at Sandgate.⁷ It is fitting that a local Landscape Design Award is named in his memory.

References:

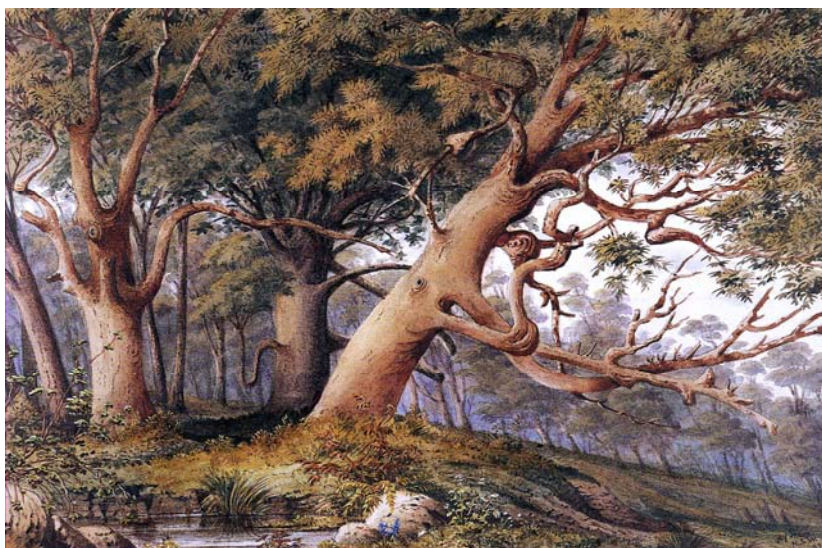
- 1 NMH 8/12/1887
- 2 NMH 3/9/1892
- 3 NMH 3/5/1888
- 4 NMH 16/1/1892
- 5 Roger Blackley 'The Art of Alfred Sharpe'
- 6 NMH 27/8/1890
- 7 NMH 13/12/1908



Nobby's Newcastle
Alfred Sharpe, architect & artist, watercolour 1892
Private Collection



Garside Gardens newly planted for the Spring display.
View looking out to sea.



Red Gums (*angophora costata*), Merewether Hills, Newcastle.
 Alfred Sharpe, architect & artist, watercolour, 1899
 Beauchamp Collection, Mitchell Library, State Library of NSW, Sydney.

Right: Illuminated address to Test Cricketer, Victor Trumper, on his triumphant return to Newcastle from the 1903 Tour of England.
 Alfred Sharpe, architect & artist, 1903. Mitchell Library

Extra note – the author's grandfather, Adelaide test cricketer J. C. Reedman, played an exhibition match with Victor Trumper in 1898 to choose the last member of a touring team to England. Victor Trumper was selected.



M'COSKER, T. J.

On Christmas Day of 1889 an advertisement appeared in the pages of the Newcastle Morning Herald which ran as follows:-

*'J. T. M'Cosker
(for six years in the office of Fredk. B. Menkens)
Has commenced the practice of his profession
as
Architect and Building Surveyor
in the
London Chartered Bank Chambers,
Scott Street,
Newcastle.'*

As Menkens first started in Newcastle in March, 1884,¹ it can be assumed that his first student was M'Cosker, whose job it would have been to trace copies of his master's drawings among other minor tasks. As Menkens was the only architect in the district at the time who had had a full time architectural education, M'Cosker was indeed fortunate.

Although he started well with nine projects in his first two years, his work dropped away by the end of 1893 and he moved, to Singleton, and was last heard of when he called tenders from his address in Bourke Street, Singleton, in March 1894.² He was most likely a casualty of the severe economic depression of the mid 1890s.

References:

- 1 L. A. Reedman – 'Menkens', unpublished Thesis. 1956
- 2 J. Guy – Thesis

COUTTS, Thomas 1859-1918

Coutts called tenders as an architect for a cottage in 1891 while working from an office over 58 Hunter Street, Newcastle.¹

This is all that is known of him locally, except that he had part of his education in Newcastle. He was born in Queensland and started business training in Brisbane and between 1875 and 1885 was a draftsman in the Queensland Works Department working on roads and bridges. He later went into partnership with G. C. Hamilton, Engineers, Architects and Surveyors of Brisbane before joining E. M. Myers, a prominent Brisbane architect, as his chief draftsman.

He was re-employed twice by Queensland Works in his career and in his last period from 1905 to 1918 was inspector of Works in Townsville, Toowoomba, Wide Bay and Burnett.² Just what he was doing in Newcastle was probably part of his roving nature.

References:

- 1 J. Guy – Thesis.
- 2 Watson & McKay – A Directory of Queensland Architects to 1940.

KENDALL, John H.

He referred to himself as a consulting engineer and architect¹ and was operating in the district in 1891 doing mostly small range projects.

Reference:

- 1 J. Guy – Thesis.

CAMPBELL, Samuel

Samuel Campbell was a Canadian and he came to NSW from the rural great lakes town of London, Ontario in 1876. He was by profession an architect and engineer and he joined the Colonial Architect's office of James Barnett in time to assist in the construction of the Sydney International Exhibition of 1879 in the Sydney Botanic Gardens. (This epic building covering five acres – nearly two hectares – was sadly burnt down three years later.) In 1880 he was appointed to Newcastle to superintend the fortification works at Fort Scratchley. In 1882 he married Miss Margaret Russell, daughter of the contractor for the works, James Russell, a prominent building and engineering contractor of Newcastle.

In 1884 he resigned from his Government position and joined in partnership with his father-in-law. ¹ A year later they built the well appointed Imperial Hotel, corner of Scott & Telford Streets, (since demolished), a grand three storied corner pub with full upper street front balconies in cast iron. ² Campbell designed two Victorian style villas for Russell, 'Denver', 86 Victoria Street, East Maitland (1888) and a mirrored variation, 30 The Terrace, The Hill, Newcastle (c.1895).

He advertised his services last in 1896. ³ It is probable that he and his family went to live in the Young area in NSW around 1900. ⁴

References:

- 1 W. F. Morrison-Aldine Centennial History of NSW
2. Illustrated Sydney News June 1885
- 3 J. Guy – Thesis Tenders
4. NMH 8/6/1903.



The Imperial Hotel. corner Scott & Telford Streets, Newcastle.

Samuel Campbell, architect, 1885.

Illustration from the Illustrated Sydney News, June 1885.



'Denver', 86 Victoria Street, East Maitland.

Samuel Campbell, architect, 1888.

HENDERSON, William

1862 – 1940

The eldest son of James Henderson senior was an architect in his father's practice and continued the business with his brother James John when his father died in 1902. ¹ The joint practice ceased in 1914 but he kept his name registered in directories until 1922. There are press releases occasionally but not much is known about the practice. According to Mr M. Henderson, a grandson of James Henderson senior, William later took a job as a joiner at the steelworks of BHP Co. Ltd. ² which started steel production around 1914.

References: 1 NMH 25/6/1902 2 J. Guy – Thesis 1962

HENDERSON, James John

1866 – 1915

The second eldest son of Henderson senior was an architect in his father's practice and continued the business with his elder brother, William, when his father died in 1902. ¹

The practice was dissolved in 1914 and, according to Mr M. Henderson, a grandson of James Henderson senior, James John took a job as a clerk of works at the Newcastle Abattoirs at which he worked for only a short time before he died. ²

References: 1 NMH 25/6/1902 2. J. Guy – Thesis 1962

ACKROYD, Alfred Walter Goldsmith

1880-1962

First mention found of Alfred Ackroyd is an entry in a competition to design three flats in Watt Street for the Newcastle Borough Council in 1904.

There were ten entries and he narrowly won the 25 pounds premium by Council vote ¹ possibly on the basis of estimate as his was on the cheaper side at 2,200 pounds. His *nom de plume* was Sun Homo, others being *Utility, Economy, Capper, Civis 1 & 2* and *Experience 1 to 4*, as was the custom.

It seems he preferred cheapness in his small practice, designing mostly timber cottages ² and was one of the first to build in brick veneer in 1940 ³ after legal controversy. Sometimes he would arrange to supply basic materials for a contract ⁴ presumably with savings in mind to the benefit of the client or himself it is not known but it was unusual for the architect to supply materials. He designed a range of buildings including the Masonic Hall in Auckland Street in 1907, now demolished.⁵

His major project was the new motion picture house in 1913 for Union Pictures, the 'Roxy' in Beaumont Street Hamilton, seating 2400 and the most modern in equipment at the time. ⁶

Reporting the opening on the 5th May the Newcastle Herald said: *'Every seat was occupied and many patrons had to be content with standing ... before the doors were opened the band of the Hamilton Superior Public School rendered musical selections in front of the building ... The new structure, which is centrally situated, is within very easy distance of trams and trains ... it is 134 feet (40.8 metres) in length with a width of 84 feet (25.6 metres) and has a comfortable Dress Circle... the entrances and exits are all up to the requirements for the safety of the public. The machinery is of best character, the engine being a 15 horse power "Bolinder" and the generator 100 amps.'*

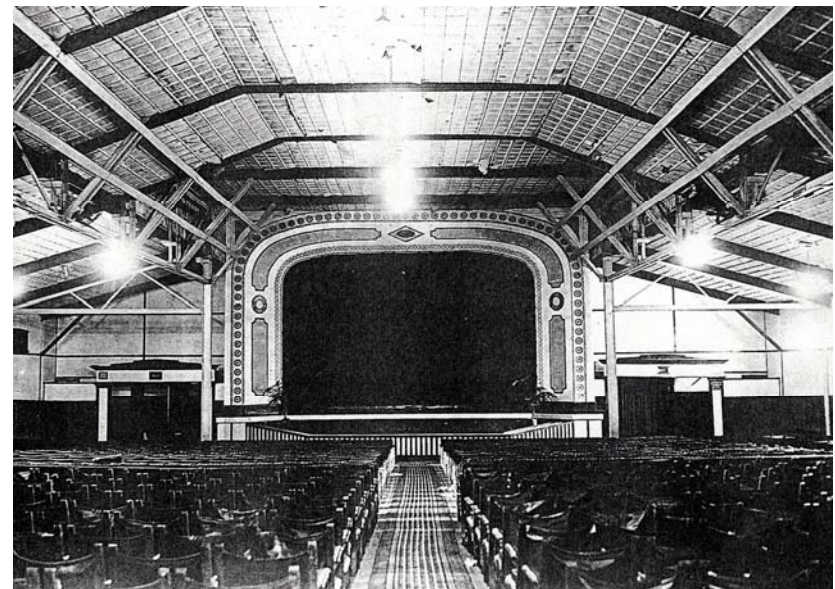
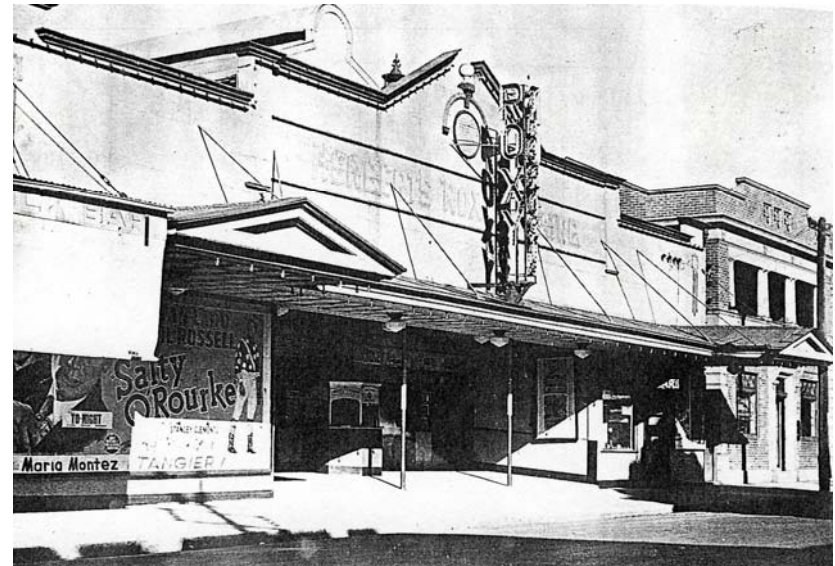
It was built of cheap materials, by day labour, and featured an unique Wunderlich pressed metal façade and entrance on a timber framework, brilliantly coloured and lit. The interior was also liberally decorated with pressed metal and the ceiling was of battened cloth. Nevertheless, for all its economy of materials, it created the right impression for a public eager to be entertained by the new medium. It was a very popular venue for all kinds of productions well into the 1960s.

In July 1923, after the local architects registered under the new Architects Act, 14 local architects, including Ackroyd, signed a statement announcing a raised standard fee of 6% of the cost of the works, to conform with the general scale throughout the state. He was tenth to sign but apparently, on reflection, withdrew before publication.⁷

He moved to Sydney in 1943, first to Woollahra, and then to Clontarf in 1958. Apparently he was not popular with his peers as, according to John Merewether, he often appeared as expert witness for litigants against fellow architects.

References:

- 1 NMH 24/11/1904
- 2 NMH 5/9/1936
- 3 NMH 30/3/1940
- 4 NMH 10/3/1917
- 5 Wall plaque north end Nesca House
- 6 Cork & Todd – ‘Front Stalls or Back?’
- 7 Plan book LHQ 720 92/Pitt



The 'ROXY'— late 1940s street façade and interior.

Photographs courtesy Hoyts Corporation Pty Ltd.

SILK, Thomas Wilfred

1856-1938



Thomas Silk was among the first Australian born architects with articulated training to work in the Hunter region. He came from an English-Irish background, the son of Joseph Walpole Silk and his wife Maria who had the 'Shamrock' Inn at Eden, and the grazing properties 'The Boco Run' and 'The Square Range' in the highland country, near Nimmitabel, NSW. ¹ Born at Eden, New South Wales, he was the tenth child of fourteen and had his early education within his large family. His interest in becoming an architect may have been influenced by two of his elder sisters marrying Sydney architects, Messrs Green and Hennessey. It was probably around the mid 1870s that he went to Sydney and trained with the firm of Green & Green. He was fortunate to be in the middle of much building activity at a time when some of Sydney's landmark 'Victorian' buildings were being designed or under construction. He may have seen the GPO taking shape and must have heard such leading architect's names as Barnett, Backhouse, Blacket, Horbury Hunt, Rowe and Mansfield.

He went into partnership in the 1888 with John Wiltshire Pender of Maitland and the firm, Pender & Silk, practiced there and from Newcastle until about 1904, when he continued on his own from

West Maitland for nearly 30 more years. Most of his major work is in this period.

During the Pender partnership he took a 12 month world trip with his wife and her child in 1898. Leaving his family in Vancouver he joined two New Zealanders in an adventure to the Goldfields of the Yukon. He was forty two at the time and the journey involved crossing the Mountains from Skagway, on Canada's west coast, then following the Yukon River northwards to the famous Klondike and Dawson fields, altogether nearly six hundred kilometres.

The party had to take camping gear and tools for a stay of four months at the diggings. They were not alone as the trek was a well known 'rush', with hundreds of hopeful souls going and 'only one in a thousand returning with a fortune'.² The gear had to be carried over Chilkoot Pass by tramway then by sled to the river where they built a boat from parts brought with them. It was a hazardous passage down the river, notorious for its rapids, particularly at a time of melting ice. They took a claim at Klondyke but barely made expenses. The gold was alluvial on bedrock under varying depths of gravels, sometimes to 30 metres. The ground was permafrost and could not be dug unless it was melted first by burning wood to deepen a hole. Half a metre a day was good progress for a shaft. He was disappointed.

On return to Vancouver he went, with his family, on the Canadian-Pacific Railway to Toronto, then on to Buffalo and New York. He saw buildings 26 storeys high *'while others alongside are but four or five storeys, so that the picture presented was incongruous'*.³ Otherwise he was impressed with the layout of New York City and its transport. In England he went to see the cathedrals and was much impressed with *'the age, beauty, vastness and grandeur of these old Gothic Structures'*. He commented that St Pauls, London, was a *'grand building but entirely spoilt by being hemmed in by tall buildings'*.⁴ After Paris they joined a ship at Marseilles and arrived back home after being away almost a year to the day.

His lengthy reports in the *Maitland Mercury*, in April 1899, covering the dangers of the frontier land of the Yukon to the leisurely tours of the cities, reveal him to be resourceful, robust, and with a critical interest in architecture and cities.

Five years later his partnership with Pender ended and he practiced on his own. He designed many buildings in the Hunter and as far away as Armidale and Inverell. Notable examples are the Monte Pio Catholic Convent, Maitland (now a Motel and Convention Centre), the Federation homestead 'Warramean', Singleton, and the Municipal Building in Newcastle. His 1920s Chapels at St Josephs, Lochinvar, and the Sisters of Mercy Convent, Singleton, both have resplendent interiors, evidence of his exceptional skill and his loving commitment to his Catholic faith. The Lochinvar Chapel has a flat coffered ceiling, paired semi-circular headed side windows and a semi-circular apse. Singleton has an elliptically shaped ceiling featuring the Maltese Cross and the profile contrasts with the semi-circular arches of the side chapels and sanctuary: resulting in interesting visual effects. (see drawings pages 24 – 5)

An individual style can be seen in his buildings. His semi-circular arches are usually rendered flush with the brick walling and continued as a broad band between openings at the springing line, giving the façade a unified character. Edges of openings are often rounded and there is the occasional playful Art Nouveau motif which he was not afraid to introduce. Even in earlier practice with Pender, Silk's inventiveness can be seen in the flowing ornament on the parapet of the Imperial Hotel, Armidale, decoration not usual for Pender himself. Silk's buildings have his 'stamp' and many are of such quality as to be included in the Institute of Architect's list of 'Twentieth Century Buildings of Significance.'



Church of the Immaculate Conception, corner of High & George Streets, Morpeth. Pender and Silk, architects, 1898. (attributed more to Silk)





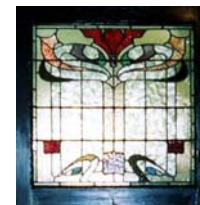
*Solicitor's Chambers, 467 High Street, West Maitland
Pender & Silk, architects, 1902 (attributed more to Silk)*



*'Warromeau' homestead, Scotts Flat Singleton.
T. W. Silk, architect, 1910*



*Porch & Balcony, 'Hillside' 24 Tyrrell Street, The Hill, Newcastle.
T. W. Silk, architect 1907.*



Door glazing.

In 1908 he became in dispute with Mr E. H. Banks, the builder of the new Hunter Street Municipal Building which Silk had designed and was supervising the contract. It was a large three storey brick structure built for rental. There were some builder's extras, but Silk would not authorise the final payment to the builder and insisted on overtime deductions. The dispute was arbitrated by Thomas H. Smith, architect/builder, and the Council was ordered to pay almost the amount claimed by the builder.⁵ Silk came in for some undeserved criticism at a subsequent Council meeting, but feelings also ran high because the supposed delaying joinery subcontractor, Mr Cook, was an alderman⁶ of the Council and he was owed money by the builder. Conflicts of interest, in this case on the part of Mr Cook, must have been prevalent as many councillors came from the building business. Silk cannot be blamed for doing his required duty.

He became a Fellow of the Institute of Architects of NSW in 1908 and was registered as an Architect at the introduction of the Architects Act of 1921. As was common among architects at the time, he supplemented his activities as a local agent for the Norwich Union Insurance Company. He continued to practice to near his death in 1938.

He designed his own home, 'Gunya', a two storey Federation house at Lorn, West Maitland, where he lived for over 30 years. He was keenly interested in sport, having won distinction in his youth as a rifle shot, a skill no doubt useful in his Yukon adventure. He was a member of Newcastle and Heddon Greta Jockey Clubs and a good bowler with office bearing positions throughout the district. He was also involved in the Star Bowkett and Maitland Building Societies and gave his advice freely on housing.⁷

His first wife died and he married again, late in life. He left a widow and three young children when he died, aged eighty two,⁸ one of whom, Thomas Eugene Silk, was just eleven years old.

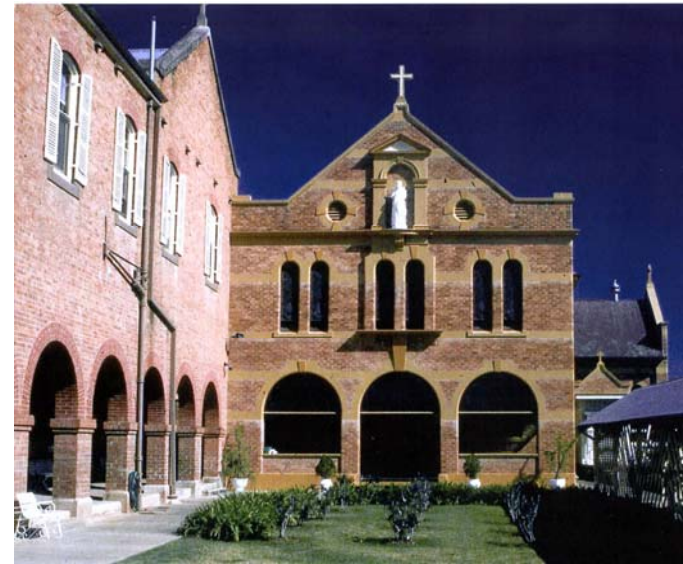
This son also became an architect⁹ and, as it happened, in 1967 carried out large extensions to St Joseph's College, Hunters Hill, Sydney, adjacent to the main College building for which Hennessey, husband of his aunt, was the architect some 80 years previously. Thomas E. Silk lives in Sydney and has a daughter, Kathryn, who is also an architect – a third generation.



*Municipal Building for Newcastle Borough Council,
Hunter Street, Newcastle.
T. W. Silk, architect, 1908*



*St Josephs Chapel, New England Highway, Lochinvar.
T. W. Silk, architect, 1923. Apse, east end.
(For drawings see pages 24 & 25)
Below: detail of two level northern arcade.*



*Sisters of Mercy Chapel, Queen Street, Singleton
T. W. Silk, architect, 1925
From courtyard and interior.*





*Part Elevation The Royal Oak Hotel, Vincent Street, Cessnock.
T. W. Silk, architect, 1921*

References:

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1 Silk Family History | 7 Maitland Mercury 11/7/1938 |
| 2, 3 & 4 Maitland Mercury 13/4/1899 | 8 Death Certificate |
| 5 NMH 8/5/1909 | 9 Thomas E. Silk |
| 6 NMH 25/5/1909 | |



*Sisters of Mercy Chapel, Queen Street, Singleton, transept end.
T. W. Silk, architect, 1925.*

SILK, T. W. – BUILDINGS

- 1890 Imperial Hotel, Beardy Street, Armidale (Pender & Silk)
- 1898 Church of the Immaculate Conception, corner High & George Streets, Morpeth. (Pender & Silk)
- 1902 Solicitors Offices, 467 High Street, West Maitland (Pender & Silk)
- 1905 Monte Pio Convent, Maitland (now a Motel and Conference Centre)
- 1907 House, 'Hillside' 24 Tyrrell Street, The Hill, Newcastle
- 1908 Municipal Buildings, 113-121 Hunter Street, Newcastle
- 1909 Catholic School, Farquhar Street, The Junction
School Building, Dominican Convent, Maitland
Convent Building, Morpeth
Co-op Company Store, corner Hunter and Albert Streets, Cessnock
- 1910 Convent of Mercy, The College, Queens Street, Singleton
Homestead 'Warromean', Scotts Flat, Singleton
- 1920 St Patricks Church Towers and Side Chapel, Singleton
- 1921 Royal Oak Hotel, corner Vincent and Snape Streets, Cessnock
- 1923 Chapel, St Josephs Convent, Lochinvar (see pages 24 – 5)
- 1925 Chapel, Sisters of Mercy Convent, Singleton
- 1929 San Clemente High School, corner Crebert & Havelock Streets, Mayfield

PENDER, Walter Harold

1885-1943

Walter Pender, the youngest son of John Wiltshire Pender, served his articles with a Newcastle firm of Architects, probably Ernest Yeomans who started advertising for pupils from 1897. Walter's eldest brother, William, would have become a practicing architect too, but had no sooner finished his training with his father's firm of Pender & Silk than the 1893 depression closed the office for a while, and the family repaired to 'Drumfin' Ayrshire Stud, their farm at Oakhampton. William did not return to his father's office but instead went into the beekeeping and timber business with two of his brothers in Maitland.¹

In the late 1890s Pender senior resumed his Maitland practice with Silk until the partnership ceased in 1904. By then Pender senior was 72 years old and Walter joined the firm at age 21, the age his father had been when he qualified in Scotland before coming to Australia. Walter was a gifted draftsman. This is evident in the drawings he made for his father's major work, 'Belltrees' Homestead in 1906 for H. L. White. There were many schemes produced of varying elaborateness which must have taken much time and effort. The final design selected by White, which at his request had been simplified, was beautifully illustrated by Walter in a large drawing in ink and wash. Floor plans were coloured and each elevation was richly penned and rendered in colour with shadows and textured shade to the walls. The ink only drawings of internal joinery, including the elaborate staircase, have extraordinary detail.

In 1909 Walter became head of the firm, no doubt being advised by his semi-retired father until Pender senior's death in 1917. Walter's firm did work all over the Hunter Valley but only a few buildings in Newcastle, there being some kind of tacit understanding between Newcastle and Maitland architects not to

'poach' each other's ground. His large Federation houses, such as his own at Bolwarra, are the equal of his father's Victorian examples.



*'Dangaleer', corner of Paterson & Westbourne Roads, Old Bolwarra.
J. W. Pender, architect, 1909 (attributed to W. H. Pender).*



*Walter Pender's House, corner Addison & Bayswater Roads, Bolwarra.
W. H. Pender, architect, 1909.*

He produced ten out of the twenty eight large hotels built between 1922 and 1926 in the Cessnock-Kurri Kurri coal fields. The earlier group of coalfields hotels by J. W. Scobie from 1903 to 1914 differ in both plan form and elevations. Pender's layouts are

rectangular, Scobie's U or L shaped with rear courtyards. Pender's elevations are plain and horizontal with no decoration but with minor classical motifs, survivors from an earlier period. Scobie's treatment of facades is more ornamental with decorated parapets, an expression of an earlier period with an earlier architect, separated in time only by World War 1.



*The Australia Hotel, Wollombi Road, Cessnock.
W. H. Pender, architect, 1923*



*Khartoum Hotel, Cessnock Street, Kitchener.
W. H. Pender, architect, 1926.*



*Paxton Hotel, Millfield Road, Paxton.
W. H. Pender, architect, 1924*



*Ellalong Hotel, Helena Street, Ellalong
W. H. Pender, architect, 1924*

Walter went into nominal partnership with Gordon W. Lee, from Sydney, in 1925 and opened a second office in Newcastle.² It appears that Lee specialised in banks and the 1929 building at the corner of Tudor and Beaumont Streets, Hamilton, is an interesting example with its unsparing use of neo-classical elements of arches, false balconies and crowning cornices. The partnership lasted only to 1930, probably because of the Depression, Lee leaving the district for a few years and returning to Newcastle later, in 1935, to practice on his own.

It is interesting to note that Walter's long term and loyal assistant was Herbert Roy Pilgrim, son of George, the Maitland builder and elder brother of Max, of Newcastle architects, Hoskings & Pilgrim.

Walter was member of the West Maitland Council for six years and although a retiring personality, was much respected in the industry. He made a study of brick making and his 1935 design for brick kilns at Turtons East Maitland Brickworks³ was considered an improvement on existing technology⁴, producing more evenly burnt bricks. He was an enthusiastic and locally active member of the Royal Australian Institute of Architects.

Walter made a trip to Japan in 1937 with a group of Rotarians, as local secretary, on a goodwill mission. On his return he was liberal with his comments and was very impressed with new Japanese city buildings and admired their traditional and ancient architecture. He observed, among other things, that they *'had copied architecture from abroad, especially from the Continent, with ribbon architecture of the latest German type, where the upper structure seemed to float on air or perch on slender supports, had taken the fancy of the designer ... Steel and concrete were cheap in Japan ... architecture and building construction since the great earthquake was of a very high order ... the foundations and superstructure were designed (by law) to resist undulating earth movements as well as vertical and horizontal torsions.'*

The Japanese homes, he said, were sparingly furnished. *'People slept on a padding of rice straw...a small dressing table, with drawers, completed the furnishings in the average workman's home. Bright coloured curtains were hung on the window.'*⁵

His comments generally indicate that he admired Japan's new building technology and he probably expressed as much to his hosts in an attitude of goodwill. But he was not to know that four years later one of his Newcastle colleagues, Bill Jeater, was to be a prisoner of the Japanese at Changi for four years.

He carried on his practice until his death in 1943, not before he had seen his son, Ian Walter start at the School of Architecture at Sydney University, a third generation architect in the making.

References:

- 1 Hunter-Manning Magazine 6/12/1976
- 2 NMH 6/6/1925
- 3 NMH 1/6/1935
- 4 RAHS Vol 40 1954 p122
- 5 NMH 29/5/1937



School of Arts, corner Bridge & William Streets, Muswellbrook.
W. H. Pender, architect, 1913

PENDER, W. H. – BUILDINGS

- 1909 House 'Dungaleer', corner Paterson and Westbourne Roads, Old Bolwarra
Pender House, corner Addison and Bayswater Roads, Bolwarra
- 1913 School of Arts, Muswellbrook, corner Bridge & William Streets, Muswellbrook.
- 1916 Isolation Block, Maitland Hospital
- 1922 War Memorial, Maitland Park
Hotel Kearsley, Main Road, Kearsley
- 1923 The Australia Hotel, Wollombi Road, Cessnock
- 1924 Hotel Ellalong, Ellalong
Hotel Paxton, Paxton
Hotel Australia, Cessnock
United Services Hotel, Cessnock
Hotel Wentworth, Cessnock
Royal Federal Hotel, Branxton (Pender & Porter)
School of Arts, Cessnock, corner of Vincent Street & Maitland Road, Cessnock.
- 1926 Hotel Khartoum, Kitchener
- 1927 Hotel Abernathy, Abernathy (Pender & Lee)
- 1935 Brick Kiln, Turtons Brickworks, East Maitland
- 1936 Maitland Mercury Office, 260 High Street, Maitland (additions).
Woolworths Building, High Street, Maitland
- undated St Lukes Rectory, Scone.

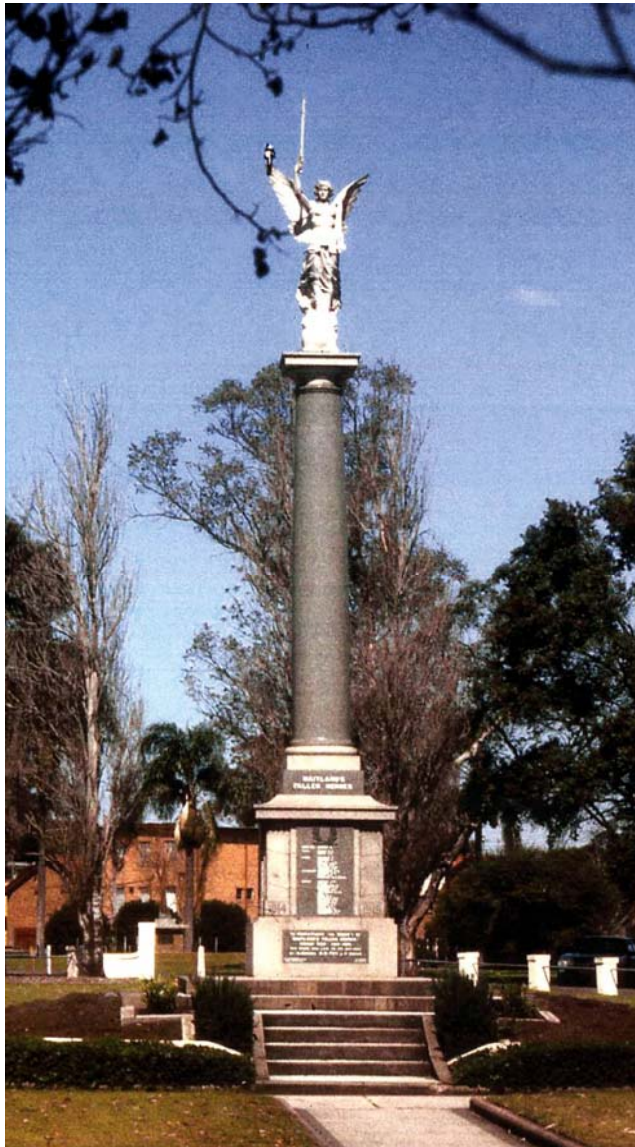
Author's Note:

The above biographical profile was compiled in 1997 by independent research without access to the Pender family. A more detailed and extensive research was subsequently undertaken by Professor Barry Maitland, of the University of Newcastle, with access to the Pender office records by permission of the widow of Ian Pender.

The Pender Index, a guide to the Architectural Work of the Pender Practice of Maitland NSW (1863 – 1988) identifies 2,562 individual projects for the period for the three Pender practices.



*School of Arts, corner Maitland Road & Vincent Street, Cessnock.
W. H. Pender, architect, 1924.*



*War Memorial, Maitland Park.
W. H. Pender, architect, 1922*

PENDER, Ian Walter

1923-1988

Ian Pender was the third generation of Pender architects since his grandfather John Wiltshire started practice in 1863 in Maitland. Ian completed the first year of the architecture course at Sydney University before enlisting in the Royal Australian Air Force in 1942. He was stationed in England where he served with Bomber Command as a navigator, flying in Lancaster bombers on many missions over Germany.

After the war he completed his degree in 1948 and worked for a time in the Newcastle office of Stephenson and Turner, on the new Nickson Wing of Royal Newcastle Hospital. After gaining experience which enabled him to register as an architect, he re-opened his father's office in 1950 after it had lain dormant since his father, Walter Harold Pender died in 1943. Ian was Diocesan Architect to the Anglican Church and designed work at St Lukes, Scone and St Johns, Morpeth. His major work was Stage 1 of the C. A. Brown Village for the Aged at Booragul. He also designed the Managers house at the Crematorium, Beresfield, a charming and understated design, complementary to the main buildings.

He temporarily closed his practice between 1962 and 1964 while he worked and travelled in England. This period, the closure of his father's office after his death during the war and the 1893 closure of his grandfather's office caused by the depression, were the only breaks in a continuous family architectural practice from 1863 for 125 years, the longest continuous practice in Australia. The firm produced many hundreds of new buildings, the drawings of which are in the University of Newcastle archives.

Ian died in 1988, the year before his son, Andrew, qualified in architecture from the same university. Andrew Pender, the fourth generation of Pender architects, is a principal in the Sydney architectural firm of PMDL Architecture and Design.

CASTLEDEN, Frederick George

1866 – 1944



Castleden about 1920

Frederick Castleden was born at Harbledown, Canterbury, Kent and, after his school education, was articled to architect E. L. Elgar of Ramsgate, later working in the office of Walter Stokes, architect, of London. He came to Sydney when he was 20 and was soon working in the architectural offices of John Kirkpatrick and of Backhouse and Smedley, both leading firms of Sydney.

In a very short while, in 1887, he began his own practice in an office on the corner of Hunter and Bligh Streets, Sydney.¹ During the next 16 years he designed some of Sydney's city buildings, including Palings in George Street and many houses on the North Shore rail line, newly opened from Milsons Point. It seems he was easily accepted into the business, professional and social life

of Sydney for as well as starting his own practice early, in the largest city in the Colony, in 1888 he married Ida Elizabeth Jane Cox of 'Hobartville', Richmond², a relative of the pioneering settlers. They lived in Chatswood, where several of their children were born including a son, Archer Cox, who was later to become an architect in his father's practice in Newcastle.

1903 was a time of protracted drought in the country and with the downturn of building in the city Castleden closed his office. He took a post with the Government Architect of NSW as district architect, serving first at Dubbo and then at Tamworth, later returning briefly to Sydney – after four years public service.³

Why he then moved, with his large family, to Newcastle in 1907 to join F. B. Menkens is a mystery. Perhaps it was the desire for private practice again, or maybe it was his reaction to conditions in the city of which Banjo Paterson wrote earlier in '*Clancy of the Overflow*', '*where a stingy ray of sunlight struggles feebly down between the houses tall*'.

Menkens was the most significant of the architects working in Newcastle for 20 years from the 1880s. His clients included many of the leading business houses, landowners and organisations, the financier A. A. Dangar, all the principal churches and the breweries were some of them. Castleden could not have made a better choice of firm and likewise Menkens of partner for Castleden was, at 41, similarly capable and well experienced. When Menkens retired in 1908, Castleden retained many of Menkens clients and gained many more on his own account.

The transition to Castleden is very interesting to observe. Menkens was acting out the last of the Victorian period when he designed the Hamilton Church of England Rectory, early in 1907. It was a heavy expression with projecting sills and rounded arches to windows and the usual cast iron and bull nose verandah. Castleden, by contrast, was younger and more

amenable to the contemporary Federation vernacular. He updated Menken's drawing. The verandah roof was extended from the main roof, timber posts and brackets replaced the cast iron, window arches became flat and corbel topped chimneys were converted to plain pebble and dash. Although this was a minor project it is a raw example of how an old expression is supplanted by a new vogue.

Castleden was to use this vernacular on most of the houses and flats he designed, which are easily recognised by the distinctive generous timber brackets on verandah posts and shingle infills.

By 1909 the firm, with Menkens retired, was planning at least a dozen major projects, including extensive work at the Cathedral.



The Rectory, Church of England, Hamilton.

Comparison:

top – East Elevation, F. B. Menkens 9/2/1907 (not built)
below – East Elevation, F. G. Castleden 6/11/1907 (built)



Left: The Rectory, Church of England, Hamilton.
F. G. Castleden, architect, 1908.

One notable project was a Coffee Palace on Zaara Street, Newcastle, for businessman, Mr. W. Longworth, who obviously seized onto the new popular pastime of 'taking' coffee. 'The Palace' had a view of the beach and *'the interior being enhanced by the use of glass and metal stands instead of ordinary wood counters'*,⁴ was as up to date as you could get at that time. His commercial work was extremely successful.

When a major fire destroyed Cohens Warehouse in 1907 he redesigned it, with Menkens, as a larger building, this time with a water tank featured on its roof, later to become common practice for fire fighting. (see page 96) Many hotels were built or altered by the firm in the next 20 years. The 'Cricketers Arms', Cooks Hill and 'Prince of Wales', Merewether (before renovation) are typical examples.

Scott's New Building of 1913 which still functions as David Jones today was hailed as the most up to date Department Store in the region. It was five stories high and contained all the functions of a universal store including a manufacturing floor and a packing shop for country customers, whose ordered goods were delivered by steam train. The owner, Mr. W Scott, was civic minded enough to allow the architect to design a domed tower at the corner with a lighted electric clock. The building had elevators and lifts by the Standard Waygood Company and wisely had a Grinnell automatic sprinkler system. The various departments were linked to the central cash desk by the 'Lamson' pneumatic cash tube system with 37 stations.

Mr Scott was proud that his business, with its customer tea rooms and staff amenities, had grown since 1889 from *'3 hands to now 300 employed.'* Scott said *'the firm acted on the principle of giving our patrons a square deal... the success has been the excellent buying facility at our disposal. For nearly 20 years we have had our buying offices in London. All goods are purchased for spot cash, we are able to buy at bottom prices. The great benefits of such buying facilities are given to*

*our everlasting customers.'*⁵ Castleden was fortunate to have such an innovative and enterprising client and Mr Scott was fortunate to engage such a competent architect.



Scotts Department Store, corner Hunter & Perkins Streets, Newcastle.
F. G. Castleden, architect, 1913. Corner element for a prominent location.

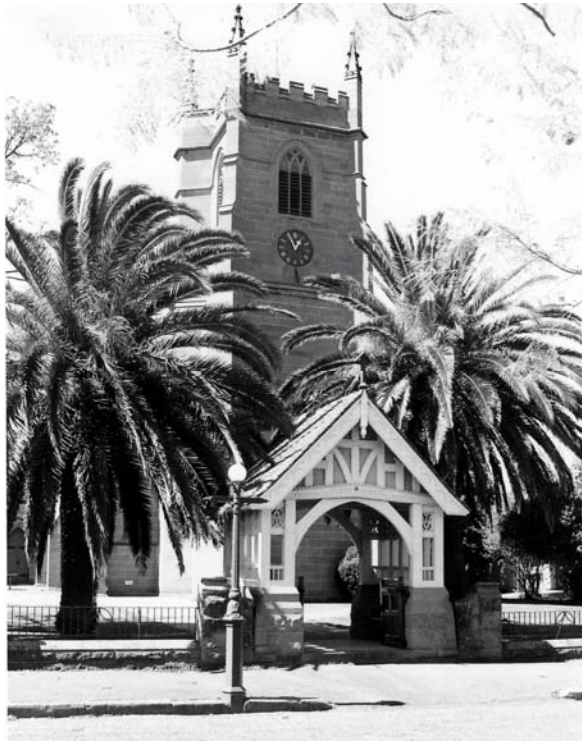


F. G. Castleden's lakeside house interior, Toronto, 1909.



*Residence, corner Regent & Victoria Streets, Mayfield.
F. G. Castleden, architect, 1911.
Below: detail showing chimney.*





*All Saints Church of England, High Street, Singleton.
F. G. Castleden, architect, 1912
A fine example of true Gothic.
Below: looking up the tower.*



*Church of England, Aberdeen.
F. G. Castleden, architect, 1913.
Federation Carpenter Gothic
below: lantern.*





*City of Sydney Bank, corner Church & Park Streets, Gloucester.
Visual stop at northern end of main street.
F. G. Castleden, architect, 1914.
below: entrance*



In 1919 his son, Archer, joined him as a partner after returning from the Great War.¹⁰ Federation influences disappear and their work shows a sign of Classic Revival. John's new Silk Store, 1927, at the corner of Hunter and Scott Streets and the offices of the Newcastle Morning Herald, 1929, Bolton Street, are examples. Of note is the Newcastle Ambulance Station, 1923, which still serves as an important symbol of ambulance service to the Newcastle public.



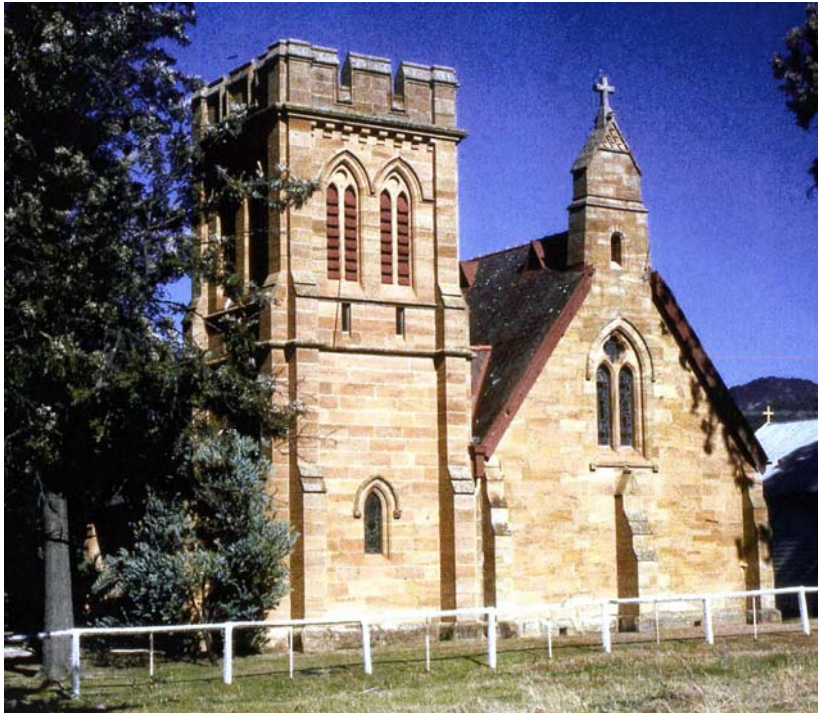
*Newcastle Ambulance Station, Denison Street, Hamilton
F. G. & A. C. Castleden, architects, 1923.*

Castleden's ecclesiastical work was important. He made additions to two of Horbury Hunt's churches. A Chapter House in 1908 and the brick tower in 1938 were added to St Peters Cathedral, Armidale.

Architectural Historian, Professor Max Freeland said: 'Castleden was an admirer of Hunt as an architect and an appreciator of the other's architectural successes. His additions followed Hunt's design faithfully. But the passing of 60 years could not be obliterated. The tower, a little larger than Hunt's in plan, is made of mechanically produced bricks. They are harder and more accurate and their colour is lighter than those

*in the original building. Despite Castleden's good intentions the addition, pallid and over smooth, lacks the strength and character of the early work.'*⁶ see page 149.

In 1918 Castleden designed the White Memorial Tower at St Pauls Anglican Church, Murrurundi, a stone church by Horbury Hunt. He based the design on Hunt's. Although somewhat short for a tower, it is complementary to the church in detail and proportion.



*F. R. White Memorial Tower, St Pauls Church of England, Murrurundi.
F. G. Castleden, architect, 1918.
(see drawing at end of this biography)*

The All Saints Church of England, Singleton, 1912, was Castleden's, replacing an earlier Blacket church, dating from 1845, which had become dilapidated. It was the first church project by

Edmund Blacket after his arrival in Sydney in 1842. He delivered the design for a church at Patrick Plains (Singleton) to Bishop Broughton soon after.¹¹ The building was of stone with a chancel, nave, west porch and a double bell belfry. In 1910, Bishop Stretch of the Newcastle Diocese asked Castleden to prepare a report for renovations. The roof required replacing and urgent repair work was needed caused by long term water penetration leading to wall settlement. At a site meeting the Bishop was of a mind to agree but the influential member of the Parish Council, Mr A. A. Dangar of 'Baroona', Singleton, would not accept renovation. Instead he, with his brother R. A. Dangar of London, would put up the money for a new, larger, stone church. The Bishop agreed. All Saints is Castleden's major, regional church, complete with full crossing, transepts and tower. It is a true and faithful example of the 'Gothic' manner, competently designed for the purpose and well built – deserving of more study.

Dangar, of 'Baroona', Singleton, had also donated the organ and his obituary describes how he had arranged to show his wife and daughters the completed building and to '*hear the tones of the beautiful instrument.*' He arranged for the Newcastle Cathedral organist and the architect to meet him at the church one Saturday. Dangar was never to hear the organ. He became ill while motoring down from Armidale the day before, was taken directly to 'Baroona' and shortly died.⁷ The Dangar family vault is in the church grounds.

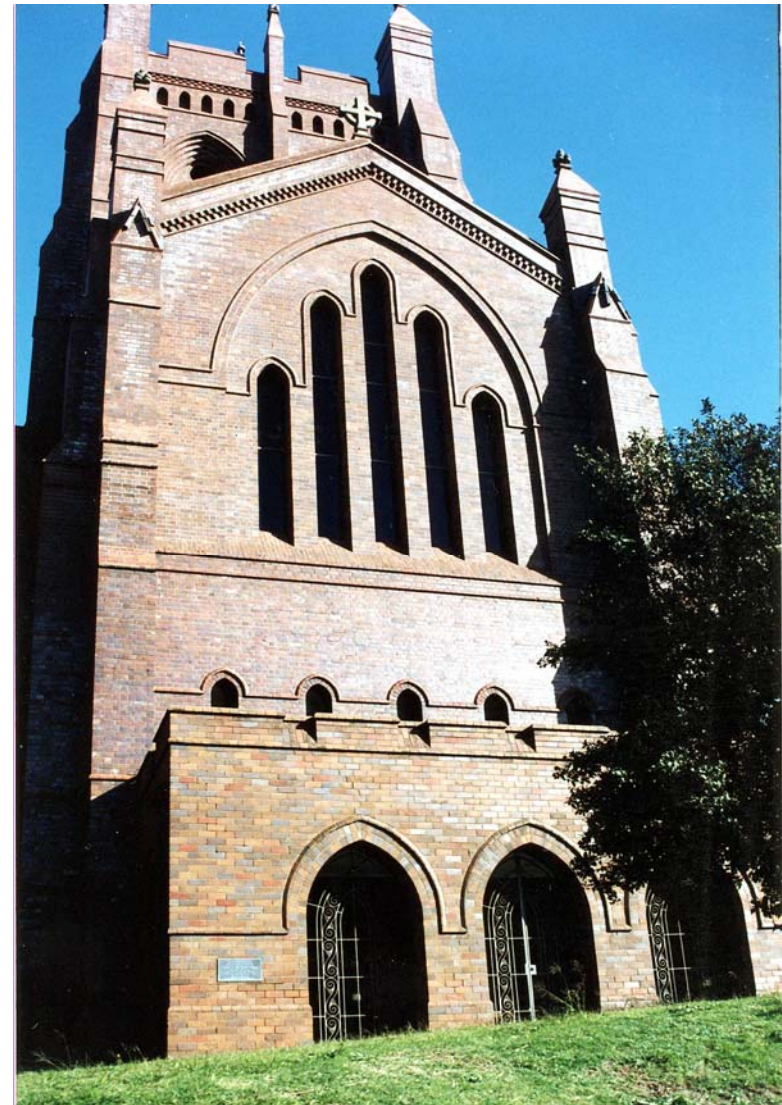
The most prominent building on Newcastle's skyline is Christ Church Cathedral. It seems that buildings are, at times, subject to controversy in direct proportion to their prominence for Horbury Hunt was dismissed in the early stages of construction, owing to disputes, and the work was abandoned in 1895. A Brisbane architect, J. H. Buckeridge, produced a new design for the Cathedral, based on Hunt's uncompleted walls, but this major work did not proceed. Instead a permanent roof over the aisles and a temporary roof over the nave was all that could be afforded.

In 1909 Castleden was asked to advance the work as funds permitted. Castleden's task, assisted by his son Archer after 1919, was an onerous one involving firstly provision of temporary roofing to the nave and aisles and the staging of work, to his own design, to complete the east end, finishing in 1926 with a major contract for a permanent nave and nave roof and substantial brick arches at the crossing, preparatory for a future tower. In 1926 he designed the Warriors Chapel to the memory of Australian soldiers who fell in the Great War. It would be a task with great meaning for him as his own son, Cyril, was killed in that war.

Newcastle architects often joined in various ways with capital city architects for some local projects. A. & K. Henderson of Melbourne combined with Castleden for the CBA Bank, Hunter Street, in 1917. In 1921 the leading Sydney firm, Spain Cosh and Dodds, hired Castleden & Castleden to participate in the building of the Newcastle Club, Newcomen Street. Eleven years earlier Castleden had designed a more modest building for the club in Pacific Street. His local service had a reputation for reliability. Castleden was often involved in city planning debates. His son and partner, Archer, was a city alderman for some years and no doubt brought his father up to date with local issues.

Newcastle had unique planning problems obviously not envisaged when Henry Dangar produced his grid plan for the town in 1824. The early town grew first on the east on a broad peninsula, a natural location close to coal workings and water transport. Growth was forced west towards broader, level land. For the next 100 years there would be constant debate about relocation of the city centre westwards.

The permanent Town Hall and Council Chambers achieved its new site in 1929 and debate is still alive to relocate the Newcastle Station to Civic. Castleden was in the centre of these debates in the 1920s and, as President of the Newcastle Town Planning Association, held pro go-west views.⁸



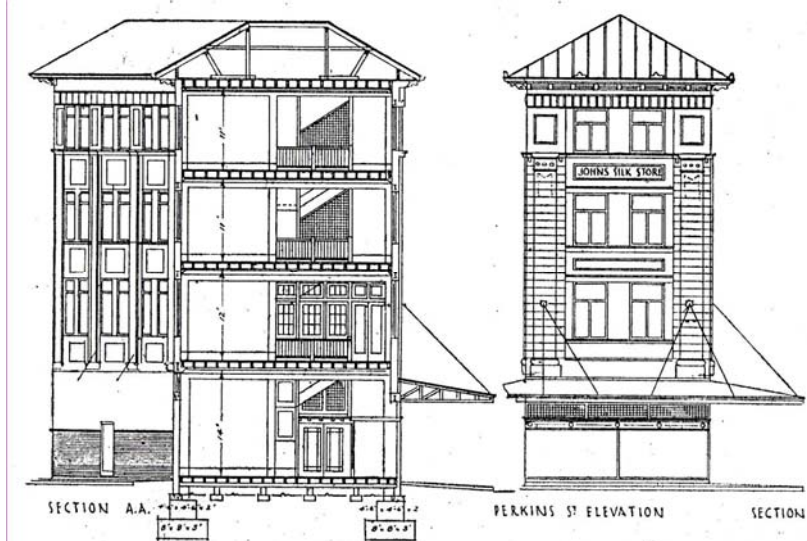
*Christ Church Cathedral – a sympathetic matching of brickwork.
Lower part of North Transept to main sill,
F. G. & A. C. Castleden, 1926.
Memorial Columbarium, Castleden & Sara, (E. C. Sara, 1955)
Transept raised and Great Bell tower above crossing,
Castleden & Sara (John Sara 1979)*

He was also a member, with fellow architect Nigel B. Pitt, of the Newcastle Betterment Board, which was a body chaired by the Mayor of Newcastle with representatives of borough councils and government departments. In the absence of Government Planning authorities, the Board was the local answer to dealing with growth pressures of industry and shipping after BHP Co. Ltd. started making steel in 1916, to name only one growth factor.

In 1938, after E. C. Sara joined the firm, Castleden retired from practice and moved to Inverell, not far from his sons James and Stafford, where he had bought a property, by all accounts the realisation of a long held dream.⁹ He had that dream for a further six years and died there at 79, during the war, a few months after his son and partner, Archer, died in Newcastle.

References:

- 1 NMH 5/10/1944 page 2
- 2 John Sara – F. G. Castleden, a Thesis (unpublished)
3. *ibid.*
4. NMH 8/4/1910
- 5 NMH 1/7/1914
- 6 J. M. Freeland 'Architect Extraordinary, The Life and Work of John Horbury Hunt'
- 7 NMH 7/4/1913
- 8 *Newcastle Construction* 8/10/1925
- 9 John Sara – F. G. Castleden, a Thesis (unpublished)
- 10 NMH 4/10/1919
- 11 Morton Herman 'The Blackets'



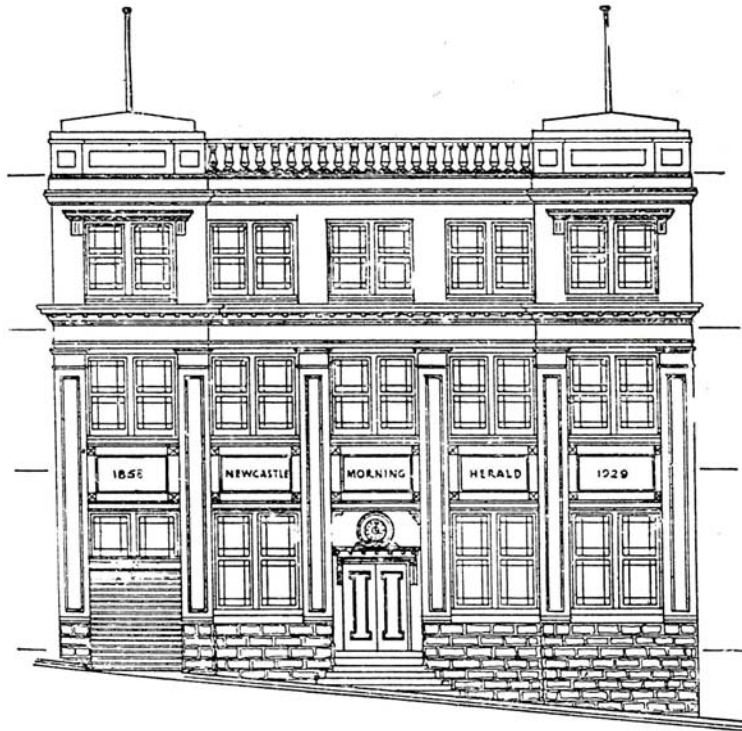
*Johns Silk Store, corner of Scott, Perkins & Hunter Streets, Newcastle.
F. G. & A. C. Castleden, architects, 1927*

Newcastle Morning Herald

and Miners' Advocate

(Published in Newcastle, N.S.W.)

The Second Oldest Morning Newspaper in the State.
The Largest Provincial Daily Journal printed in Australia.



BOLTON ST ELEVATION.

Photo. of Architects' drawing, which shows the Bolton Street frontage of the Company's new premises.

Newcastle Herald Building, Bolton Street, Newcastle.

F. G. & A. C. Castleden, architects, 1929

CASTLEDEN, F. G. – BUILDINGS – Newcastle and the Northern Region (INCLUDING F. G. & A. C. CASTLEDEN from 1919)

1907 Rectory, Church of England, Hamilton. (Menkens & Castleden)

1908 Chapter House, St Peters Cathedral, Armidale

1909 Coffee Palace, Zaara Street, Newcastle
A. W. Longworth House, 22 The Terrace, Newcastle
House for F. G. Castleton, Toronto

1910 Newcastle Club, cnr. Pacific & King Streets, Newcastle
Christ Church Cathedral – major work east end
Homestead, 'Palmerston' Dangarsleigh, Armidale
for N. N. Dangar
Cricketers Arms Hotel, Cooks Hill

1911 House, corner Regent & Victoria Streets, Mayfield
for Garretts
St Catherines College, Sisters of Mercy, Singleton

1912 All Saints Church of England, Singleton
Argyle House, Wharf Road, Newcastle – additions.

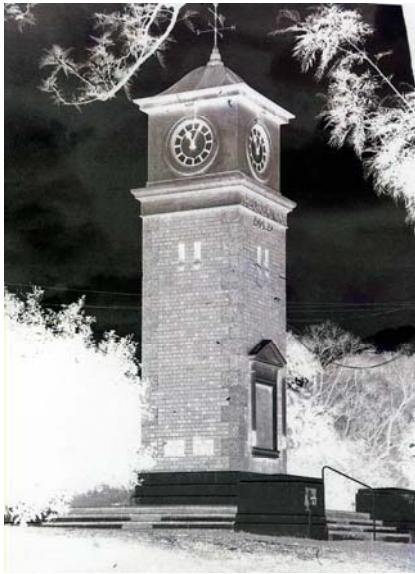
1913 Chelmsford Mission, Stockton
Castlemain Brewery, Hunter Street, Newcastle –
Bottling Station
Sulphide Corporation, Cockle Creek, major living quarters
Scotts Store, corner Hunter & Perkins Streets, Newcastle
Church of England, Aberdeen

- 1914 Extensions to Castlemain Brewery, Hunter Street West, Newcastle
Beveridge House, corner Gordon Avenue & Dumaresq Street, Hamilton
City of Sydney Bank, corner Church & Park Streets, Gloucester (now a solicitors' office)
- 1916 Memorial Gates, Morehead Street, Lambton Oval
- 1917 Christ Church, Dungog – Organ and Stalls
Vacuum Oil Company Store, Darby Street, Newcastle
Prince of Wales Hotel, corner Lingard and Railway Streets, Merewether
- 1918 Four Apartments, 45-53 Wolfe Street, Newcastle
Residence, corner Wolfe & Church Streets, Newcastle.
White Memorial Tower, St Pauls Church of England, Murrurundi (addition to Horbury Hunt church)
- 1920 St Marks Church of England, Islington
- 1922 Newcastle Ocean Baths, 30 Shortland Esplanade, Newcastle East (B. Blackwell, City Engineer)
- 1923 Replacement for Westminster Hotel, Hunter Street, Newcastle
Newcastle Ambulance Station, Denison Street, Hamilton.
- 1924 Yorkshire House Flats, Watt Street, Newcastle (page 251)
- 1926 Christ Church Cathedral, Church Street, Newcastle
completion of Nave and Transept
Warriors Chapel, Christ Church Cathedral
- 1927 John's Silk Store, corner Hunter and Scott Streets, Newcastle (now Commonwealth Bank)

- 1928 Oriental Hotel, Cooks Hill
New Clyde Inn, West Wallsend
- 1929 Newcastle Morning Herald, Bolton Street, Newcastle.
- 1931 Gloucester Soldiers Memorial, Memorial Park, corner Hume & Bent Streets, Gloucester.
- 1935 Corona Building, 269-283 Hunter Street, Newcastle
for the A. A. Company
- 1936 Northumberland Hotel, Lambton.
- 1938 Tower for St Peters Cathedral, Armidale (addition to Horbury Hunt's Cathedral).



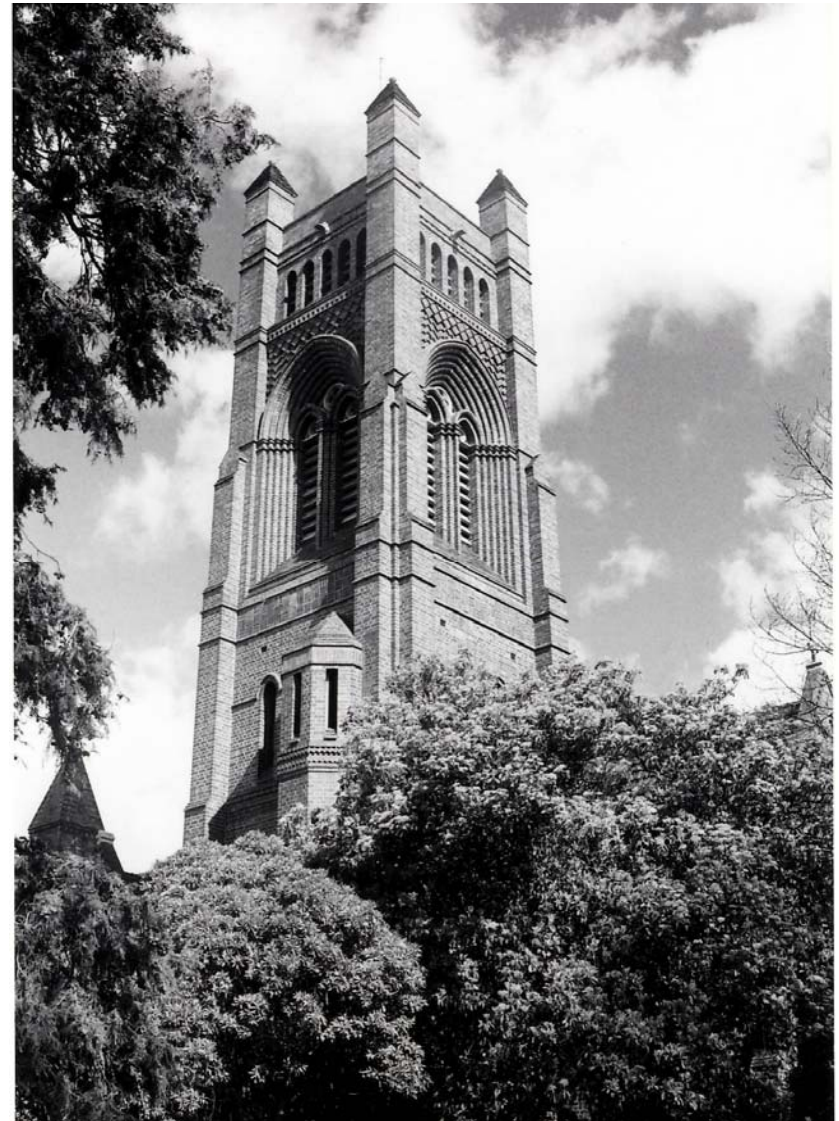
Newcastle Ocean Baths
F. G. & A. C. Castleden, architects, 1922
(attributed to F. G. Castleden)



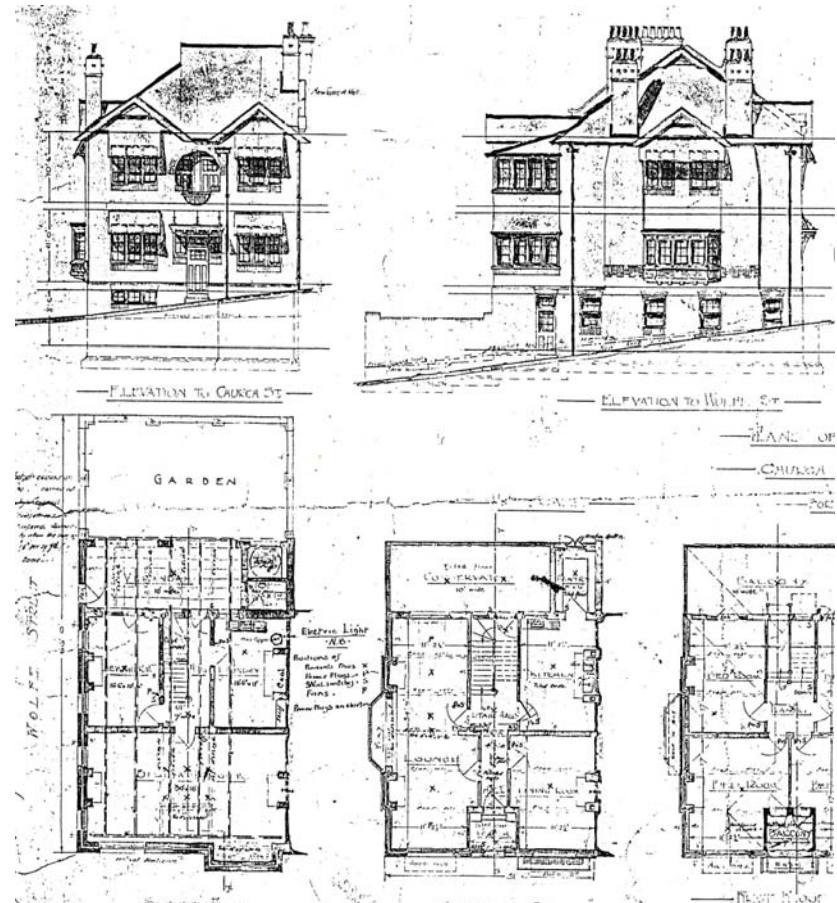
*Gloucester Soldiers Memorial, Memorial Park, Gloucester.
F. G. & A. C. Castleden, architects, 1931*



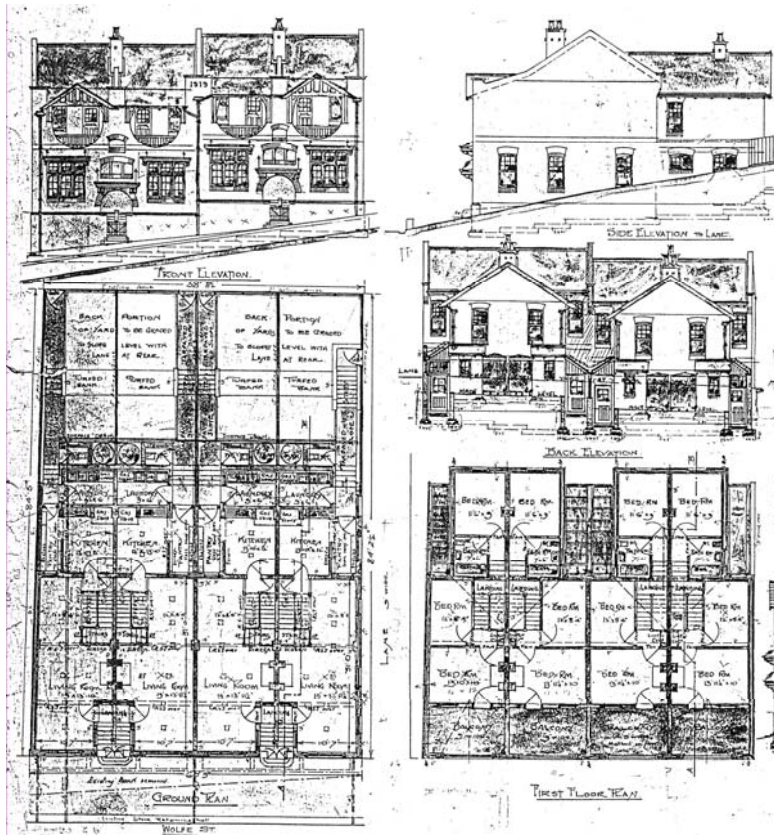
*The Corona Building, 269-283 Hunter Street, Newcastle
F. G. & A. C. Castleden, architects, 1935.*



*St Peter's Cathedral Tower, Armidale.
F. G. Castleden, architect Inverell, 1938.*



F. G. Castleden's drawings,
above: house at corner Church & Wolfe Streets, Newcastle, 1918,
typical of his 'Federation' designs.



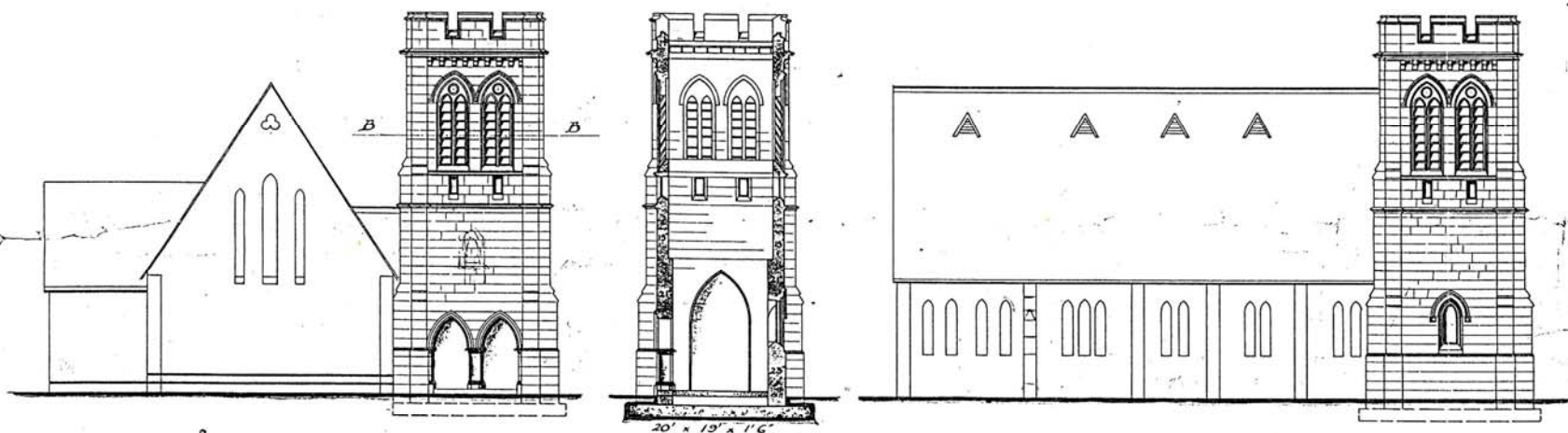
left: Flats 47-53 Wolfe Street, Newcastle.
F. G. Castleden, architect, 1918

Approved
 1/2 amount
 25-9-12

Fred & White Memorial Tower

St Paul's Church - Murrurundi

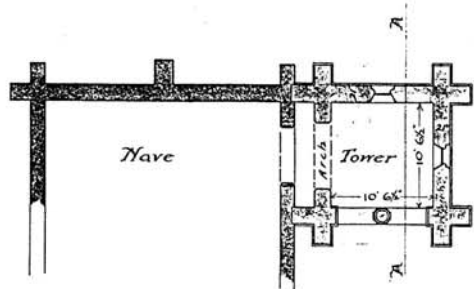
Scale 8 ft to 1 inch



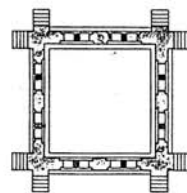
End Elevation

Section A A

Side Elevation



Ground Plan



Plan at B.B

F. G. Castleden
 7. 7. 18
 G. CASTLEDEN

Drawing for Fred. R. White Memorial Tower, St Pauls Church, Murrurundi, F. G. Castleden, architect, 1918.

PEPPER, Thomas James

1866-1953



Thomas Pepper was an architect and structural engineer in Newcastle for over 50 years, but, for all his efforts, very few of his buildings were distinguished enough for comment. His lasting contribution to Newcastle is his major alterations to the Lyricque (Lyric) Theatre in Wolfe Street in 1926, assisted by his newly arrived partner, Bill Jeater. The building was built in the 1890s as a Masonic Temple and the Hall fronting Thorn Street was licensed from 1910. Movies started in the Hall in 1915 and became so popular that the venue was expanded in 1926 to Pepper's design. The rear of the building in Wolfe Street became the façade of the Lyric theatre when the auditorium was reversed and the foyer and projection box were built at the Wolfe Street end. The stalls floor was lowered to allow for a new dress circle with carpet and sprung leather chairs and it was the most stylish in town. The top storey Masonic Temple, entered from Thorn Street, still functions today.

Pepper was born in Newcastle, his father being a Congregational Church minister.¹ In 1888, aged 22, Thomas was known to be working in Brisbane as an articled architectural student.² He moved back to Newcastle in the early 1900s. His first project traced is a group of three terrace houses at Stephenson Place,

Newcastle, which has some of the mannerisms of Federation. An important commission in 1911 was for the Newcastle Gas and Coke Company, to design their office and laboratory at Hamilton North.³ Coal gas for early lighting was being replaced by electricity but gas was still a competitor for cooking and heating. The new company headquarters are a bold statement of claim successfully designed by Pepper. The stone capitals, string courses, corbels and 'flame' topped apexes to the gables combined with brickwork are a commendable composition.

Then followed 'Kitchener Hall', Pacific Highway, Adamstown, a distinctive small meeting venue which was greatly altered by his firm in 1937 for Hoyts as a picture theatre.

By 1913 he had a considerable number of clients and was designing houses in Newcastle, Paterson and on Sydney's North Shore line. He designed Redfern Congregational Church and later in 1926 when Bill Jeater, from Sydney, joined him they designed the Epping Congregational Church. Also in 1926, he and Jeater designed major alterations to Redfern (then Darlington) Town Hall and they were heartily commended for it by a Certificate of Appreciation under Seal of the Council,⁴ a rare document today.

His partnership with Bill Jeater lasted five years to 1930 and, like so many businesses, foundered in the depression's hard times. Pepper continued to practice separately from Carrington Chambers, Watt Street, Newcastle. In 1937 he designed a prominent corner building at Tighes Hill, incorporating a fluted central vertical feature, peculiarly fashionable at the time in Newcastle.⁵

He was active in local affairs, being a member of the Town Planning Association in 1914. He was an inaugural member, in 1925, of the Newcastle Architects Association and was proposed by his partner, Bill Jeater, for membership of the Royal Australian Institute of Architects in 1928. He was involved in the Masonic

Lodge and a keen member of the Mayfield Bowling Club. He retired in 1945 and lived out his remaining eight years at his old home in Hanbury Street, Mayfield, till 87 years old.

References:

- 1 Death certificate
- 2 M. Freeland – *The Making of a Profession.*
- 3 NMH 3/7/1913
- 4 Councils Certificate Under Seal 12/7/1926
- 5 NMH 14/8/1937

PEPPER, T. – BUILDINGS

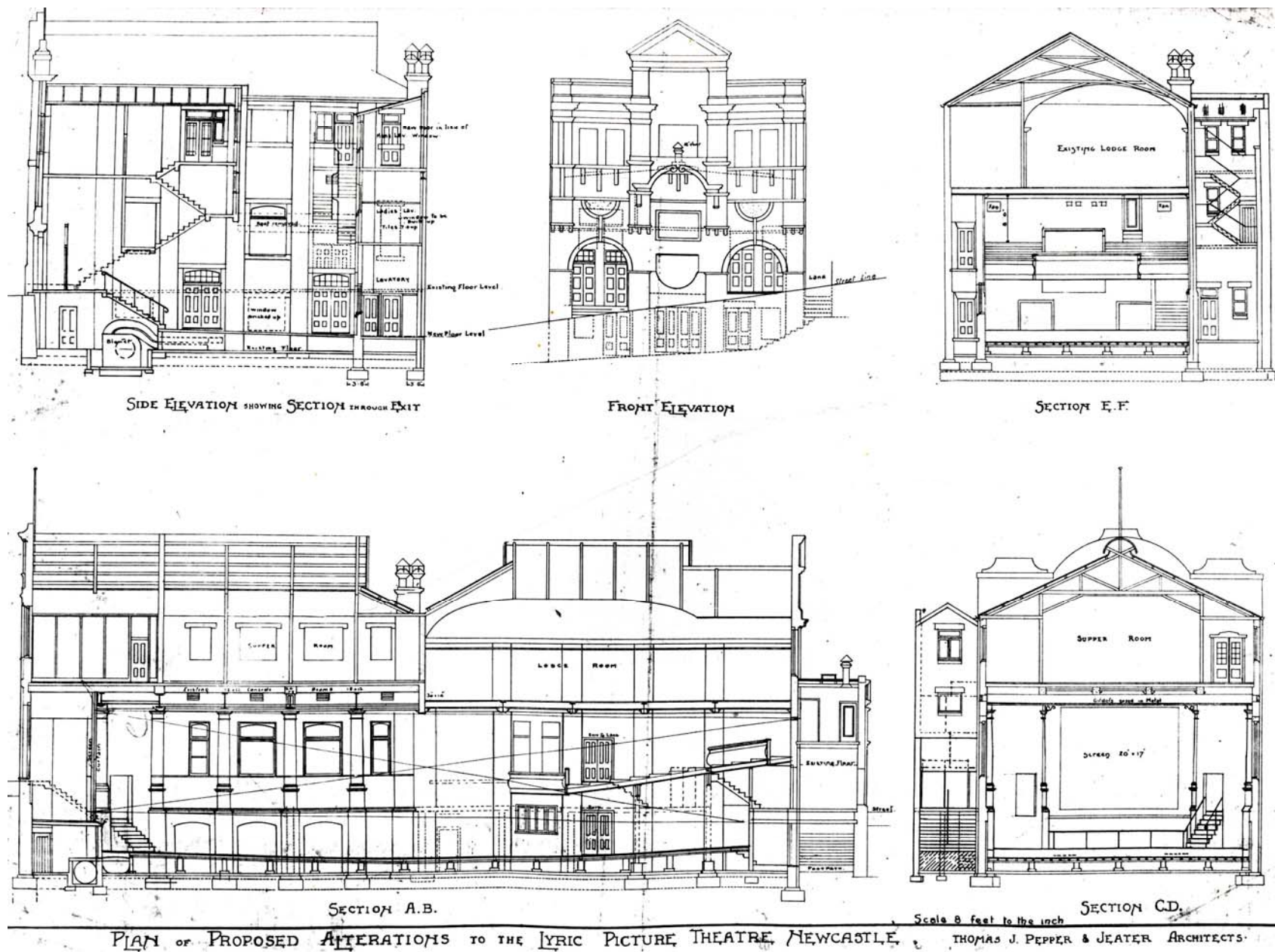
- 1911 Three terrace houses, 5-9 Stephenson Place, Newcastle East
Newcastle Gas & Coke Company Ltd., 1 Clyde Street,
Hamilton North
- 1912 Kitchener Hall, Bruncker Road, Adamstown
- 1913 Congregational Hall, Redfern
- 1915 School Hall, Lindsay Street, East Maitland
- 1926 Congregational Hall, Chester Street, Epping
Darlington Town Hall, Redfern
Major reconstruction Masonic Hall, Thorn Street, and
Lyric Theatre, Wolfe Street, Newcastle.
- 1927 Synagogue, Tyrrell Street, Newcastle
- 1937 Shops & Flats, corner Elizabeth Street and Maitland Road,
Tighes Hill



*Newcastle Gas Company Headquarters, Hamilton North
T. J. Pepper, architect, 1911*



*Synagogue, Tyrrell Street, Newcastle
T. J. Pepper, architect, 1927.*



Masonic Hall, Thorn Street & 'Lyric' Theatre, Wolfe Street, Newcastle. Pepper & Jeater, architects, 1926.
Major alterations reversing existing lower hall and lowering stalls floor for new dress circle – a bold project.

TINGLE, Ernest

1872-1960



Ernie Tingle was the acting Consul for Chile, in 1925, for the port of Newcastle as a local contact for Chilean trading ships, an unusual service for an architect. ¹ Always with a flower in his buttonhole, he was a well known personality in Newcastle for the forty five years he lived there. His main interests, apart from his work, was in the Masonic movement and he was a member of various lodges including Toronto and Royal Arch Masons of NSW and was the only one to attain highest office in the Lodge Commercial, Newcastle, up to 1952. ²

Tingle was born in Surrey, England, to Annie and Frederic, an accountant. ³ At the age of 17, Tingle was admitted to the Royal Institute of British Architects as a probationer requiring two years of study to be registered as a student. ⁴ He was articled to the firm of Gotch, Saunders & Surridge at Kettering, North of London in 1891 and 1892 and he boarded in the principal's house, a customary practice then. The firm, which still operates today, has kept its old records stating that Tingle's annual salary in 1891 was seventeen pounds, ⁵ about a quarter of that paid to an experienced architectural drafter.

It is believed that, due to a respiratory problem, it was suggested that he migrate to Australia, where he had a relative. In 1892, when aged 20, his friends of the Kettering Dining Club gave him a formal dinner of farewell. ⁶ He arrived in Australia later that year, first going to Adaminaby, and then to Sydney. At his marriage to Nellie Lewis, of Balmain, in 1898 he recorded that he was an architect in Pitt Street, Sydney. ⁷

He came to Newcastle in 1900 and, with respected architect George Sanders, formed the firm of Sanders, Tingle and Mathison. ⁸ Mathison withdrew in 1901. ⁹ When Sanders died in 1908, Tingle carried on his own practice from Parnell's Carrington Chambers in Watt Street. The same year he designed an extra two floors onto this existing two storey building. Tingle did not repeat the lower ganged semi-circular arch headed fenestration but added corresponding square windows in brick walling, extended the major piers and painted the piers as for the original building.



*Carrington Chambers, Watt Street, Newcastle – addition two top floors.
E. Tingle, architect, 1909. Demolished after 1989 earthquake.*

It was a successful unifying addition and it was noted at the time. The vestibule was *'beautifully finished with marble, the three colours of rouge, St. Ann and Sicilian white harmonising effectively'*.¹⁰ It was an early use of a 'Malthoid' membrane on a flat roof and the most modern safe-operating electric lift by Otis was installed for the then four storey building with one of the largest floor spaces in the city. When the building was inspected after some damage in the 1989 earthquake, engineers declared it at the limit of its structural capacity and it was demolished but with much local outcry

His practice became mostly residences of modest size. He designed the Church of England Rectory, Mayfield, in 1904,¹¹ when with Sanders, but his best known house is 'Plympton', 6 High Street, The Hill, built in 1914, of three storeys with verandahs and simply designed without conscious reference to style. His continuing contribution to the public life of Newcastle is the WW 1 Memorial and Honour Roll he designed, which stands prominently outside the former General Post Office on the corner of Hunter and Bolton Streets and is passed by hundreds of people daily.

When he lived at Carey Bay on Lake Macquarie his daily custom was to row his boat to Toronto and take the train to his Newcastle office. John Tingle MLC, of the 1990s Shooter's Party and a former journalist of Sydney, was a great nephew of Ernest. He remembers visiting him at Lake Macquarie, and says he was always prepared to spend much time with great-grand children, nephews and nieces. Ernest was a quiet, amiable and jolly man and was a remarkable chess player, always eager to pass on his skill. In 1945 he retired, with his wife, back to Sydney. He retained his registration as an architect until 1951.¹²

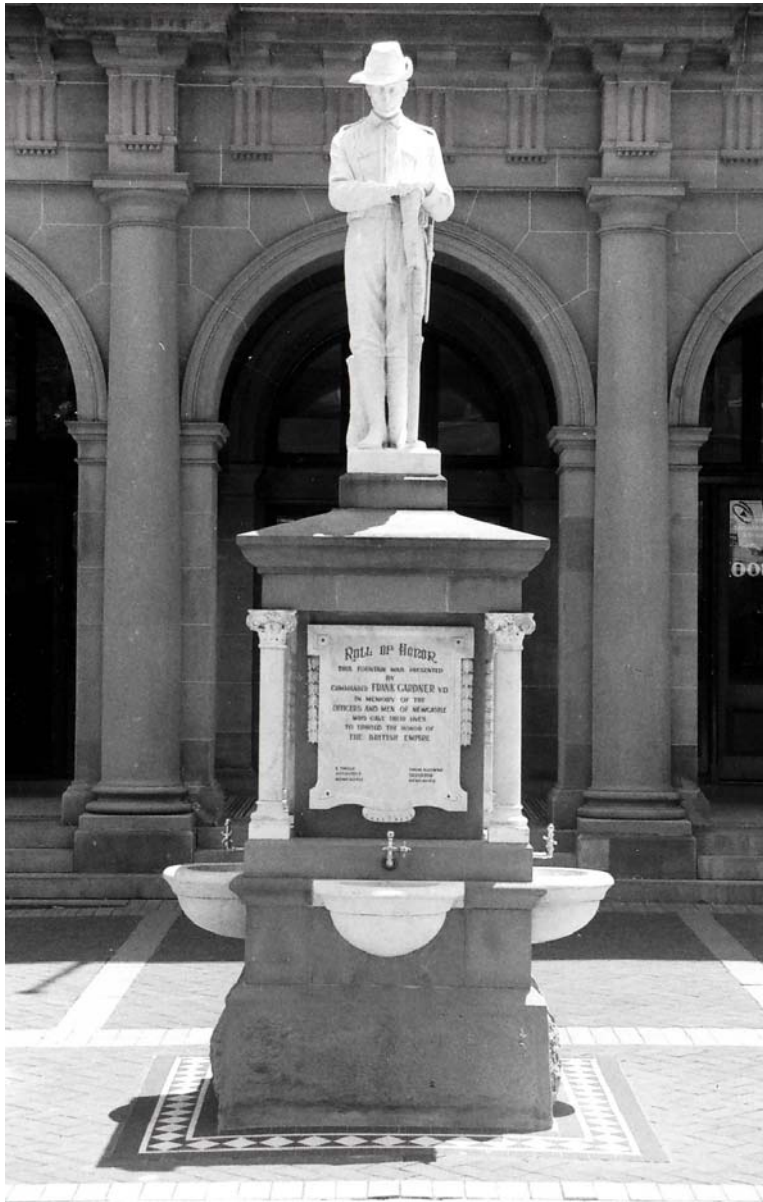
He died at 88 and donated his body to Sydney University for medical research, as did his wife later.

References:

- 1 Sands Directory 1925
- 2 Report, Lodge Commerce 1923-1952
- 3 Birth Certificate 12/9/1872
- 4 RIBA Preliminary Examination 4/12/1889
- 5 Gotch, Saunders & Surridge, Kettering U.K. Office records 1891-92
- 6 Kettering Dining Club Invitation 20/3/1892
- 7 Marriage Certificate 11/3/1898
- 8 NMH 2/6/1900
- 9 NMH 13/3/1901
- 10 NMH 6/7/1909
- 11 NMH 5/9/1904
- 12 Board of Architects NSW Register 1951



*'Plympton', 6 High Street, Newcastle.
E. Tingle, architect, 1914.*



*War Memorial and Roll of Honour,
corner Hunter & Bolton Streets, Newcastle.
E. Tingle, architect, 1920*

MEREWETHER, Edward Robert Hickson

1889-1964



Edward (Ted) Merewether's grandfather was E. C. Merewether (1820-1893) the Administrator who, from 1841, was a noted public servant in Sydney and moved to Newcastle in 1861 to manage the affairs of the Australian Agricultural Company which had leases in coalmining and pastoral land in NSW. He built a large gothic style house, 'The Ridge', later 'Hillcrest' on the Burwood Estate (now the suburb of Merewether) which was owned by his father-in-law, Dr James Mitchell, benefactor of the Mitchell Library of the NSW State Library. That estate passed to him in 1869 on Dr Mitchell's death and he retired from the A. A. Company and returned to Sydney leaving his eldest son at 'The Ridge' to manage the Merewether Estate.

That son was Edward's father, E. A. M. Merewether (1862-1924), the Engineer. He was educated in Newcastle and Sydney, finishing his studies at Sydney University in 1884 where he was one of three graduates first to receive a Degree in Civil Engineering as a separate strand of study.¹ His interest was mining and he applied his knowledge to develop operations as manager of the Merewether and Rothbury Estates.

Edward (Ted), the Architect, was born in Newcastle and had his education in Sydney at Barker College and Shore School, as a boarder, achieving a good Leaving Certificate pass in 1908. He showed an interest in sketching and drawing and in 1909 his father indentured him to the prominent Sydney architectural firm of Robertson & Marks² whilst he attended Sydney Technical College Architectural School under James Nangle. He regularly won yearly prizes for his course work³ and in 1912 received his Diploma in Architecture. During those early years he was considered sufficiently competent to design an extra 'bay' to his family home 'The Ridge'⁴ and a large two storied Federation house 'Trialba' in Frederick Street, Merewether, for a friend of his father. The weatherboard house, built in 1911, had generous verandahs, now filled in and dilapidated, which, at the time, would have had stunning sea views.



*'Trialba', 79 Frederick Street, Merewether.
Edward Merewether, architect, 1911.*



*Sketches of Town Hall and Church, Armentieres, Northern France.
Captain Edward Merewether, architect, 1916.*

On completion of his Diploma he went on a world tour with an elderly family friend, the main purpose of the trip being to do the 'Grand Tour' of the continent by car – an adventurous thing to do pre-WW1.

In the office of Robertson & Marks he worked with fellow student Mr N. B. Pitt who was his elder by a few years. They decided to set up practice in Newcastle late in 1913.⁵ At the time some of the 'Victorian' Newcastle architectural practices had run their course and Pitt and Merewether saw an opening for a new young firm in the expansion of Newcastle. Within a year world events intervened and, leaving the practice, Edward travelled to England to join the British Army. He served in the Garrison Artillery and took part in the development of anti-aircraft gunnery, then new in warfare. In France he was mentioned in dispatches and was posted as Adjutant to the 2nd Army Anti-Aircraft Group, with the rank of Captain.⁶ In London, at the end of the War, he contracted influenza and became very ill, his whereabouts temporarily lost to his concerned family. The damaging effects were thought to be a contributing cause of his early retirement 25 years later.

He rejoined Pitt in Newcastle in late 1918. The practice was to become perhaps the most productive architectural firm in Newcastle only to be rivalled by F. G. Castleden and later Rodd & Hay. Pitt & Merewether, in the 25 years to 1943, designed 29 new Hotels and renovated a further 31 for Tooth & Company Limited, and also completed 40 substantial projects for BHP Co. Ltd. and associated companies. It is interesting to note that, prior to 1924, the architect for Tooth & Co.'s northern work was Wallace Porter, with the exception of the West End Hotel, Newcastle, which had been designed by Pitt in 1915. After Porter's untimely death in 1924, Pitt & Merewether were indeed fortunate to be awarded Tooth's expanding hotel work.



*Tyrrell House, Telford Street, Newcastle (on the axis of Hunter Street).
Pitt & Merewether, architects, 1921
(built as The Diocesan Centre, now apartments.)*



*Crown and Anchor Hotel, Hunter Street, Newcastle.
Pitt and Merewether, architects, 1924.
(likely to be the work of Merewether)*

The firm's most significant early work was Tyrrell House in Telford Street in 1921, the Anglican Diocesan headquarters, now converted into home units. It is a landmark building in East Newcastle with its central gable and clock facing directly west down Hunter Street, a commendable contribution to the civic design of that part of the city. Following soon was the new Crown and Anchor Hotel, Watt Street, Newcastle, in 1925.

The character of these early buildings is more towards the 'romantic' than the formal neo-classical, the elements of the design being used to good effect to suit the location. It is more likely that Merewether had a hand in these. The partners took differing approaches to design. Although Merewether's equal in studentship, Pitt had not been overseas and had family commitments in the early days. Pitt was more the formalist and more the manager of office routine. Merewether had been overseas before and during the Great War and when the opportunity came, during his time in France and Belgium, he sketched streetscapes and buildings. This influence is apparent in some of his early designs for the firm.

Sydney Brewers, Tooth & Company's hotel rebuilding policy, after taking over local brewing interests, was mostly to demolish 19th century hotels if too small, or to renovate them to a new image. The newspaper commented in 1935⁷, at the upgrading of the Criterion Hotel, Islington, 'What was formerly a hotel of the "old timer" type, replete with balcony supported on iron posts and with iron balcony railings, with white walls and a highly ornate brick parapet, has virtually disappeared and its place has been taken by a brightly tiled building, with cantilever awning, smart tiled roof, with a bar room which is a typical example of what can be done with modern architectural practice and a determination on the part of the owners to spare nothing to secure effective results.' Probably much of the style of the rebuilding was due to the introduction of the '6 o'clock swill' regulations which required bars to have impervious floors and dados explaining also the liberal application of tiles to the

external wall in the street so that surfaces could be washed clean. In any case the policy evidently did not often allow for the alternative of restoration.

Apart from some minor work from 1919, Pitt and Merewether's major service to the Broken Hill Propriety Company and subsidiaries began in 1935. E. J. (John) Merewether, Edward's son, a Sydney architect, recalls that his father shared a sporting interest with Essington Lewis, who was to become a driving force behind the early development of the 'Steel Giant'. Also BHP Co. Ltd., as the operator of the Burwood Colliery at Kahibah, mined Merewether coal. These connections would have assisted in securing major industrial commissions for Pitt & Merewether not to mention their dependable record by 1935 for Tooth's hotel projects.

The first stage of the BHP Co. Ltd. main office building at the Steelworks had been designed by Sydney architects, Ross & Rowe, around 1921 and was a monolithic formal classical building in an industrial landscape. With the phenomenal growth of the steelworks, Pitt & Merewether designed two major additions, in 1936, to complete the courtyard building in a manner to relate to the first stage. Neo-classical designs followed in the 1930s for the offices and factories of Australian Wire Rope Works and Stewarts & Lloyds at Mayfield and Commonwealth Steel at Waratah, companies set up to process secondary steel products. It can only be surmised that the formal and conservative classical style of the buildings, rather than that of the new modern industrial character, was meant to impress upon the public and the Government the substantial nature of the new enterprise, which would very soon be engaged in production for war.

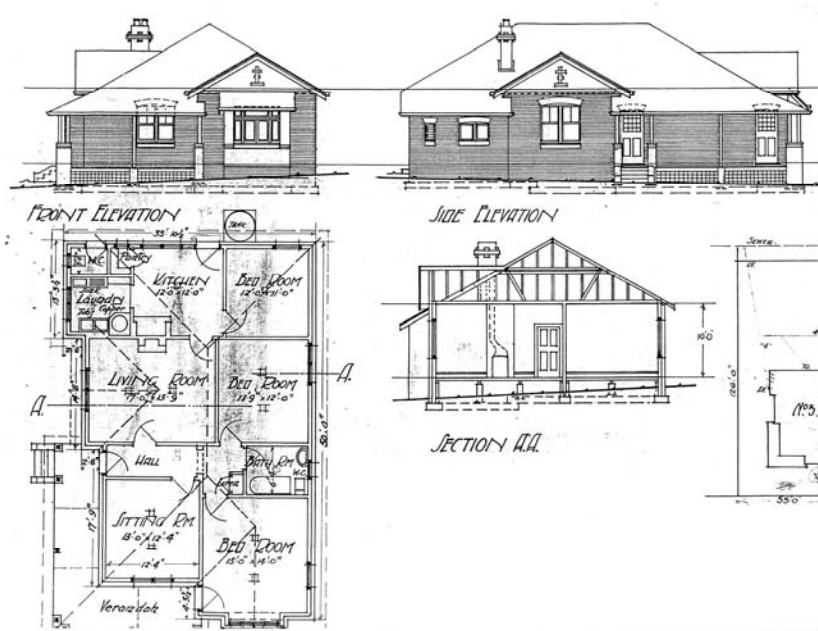
With the rapidly expanding local steel industry and the need for specialist trades to process the raw products from BHP, John Lysaght Ltd., from near Birmingham UK, built a sheet metal factory at Mayfield. The company imported its own tradesmen

and, in 1920, commissioned Pitt & Merewether to design and construct 50 houses for tradesmen and their families. The houses were of three bedrooms, a standard design in brick, fully furnished and provided with food and coal for the fireplace. The expansion of Mayfield became frenetic as other industries joined in and the rural character of the charming residential suburb inevitably changed as the steelworks expanded.

By mid 1937 the firm had sufficient experience and depth of practice to be considered as local agents for Sydney architects. Although being themselves considered, by Newcastle Council, for Stage 1 of the NESCA Electric Supply office building, next to the Town Hall, the Council opted for Sydney architect, Emil Sodersteen, who agreed that Pitt & Merewether be appointed as joint architects to supervise the construction. The firm had a similar arrangement for NRMA House, Civic, with Sydney architects, Robertson & Marks, their 'parent' firm.



*BHP Administrative Offices, Industrial Drive,
Mayfield North (Port Waratah).
Ross & Rowe, architects (Sydney), 1921.*



Cottage for John Lysaght Limited, 3 Kerr Street, Mayfield.

Pitt & Merewether, architects, 1921.

(Typical of 50 cottages built by the sheet metal manufacturer for immigrant employees.)



BHP Offices, additions to north-east side.

Pitt & Merewether, architects, 1936.



*Office Building, Tubemakers Limited,
Industrial Drive, Mayfield (Port Waratah).*

Pitt & Merewether, architects, 1934.

In 1943, after 25 years busy practice, Merewether's health deteriorated probably hastened by his WW1 Spanish Flu. He retired to Sydney but managed the Burwood Office of the Merewether Estate,⁸ keeping his interest in the firm ready for his son E. J. (John) Merewether. John had started in the firm in 1939 and enlisted for war service but after the war completed his architectural studies in Sydney. John elected to stay in Sydney and later formed his own successful firm of Merewether and Bagot. Edward withdrew entirely from Newcastle in 1949 and Pitt⁹ continued with his son Rowan, who also had been at the War, and founded the firm of Pitt & Pitt in 1952.¹⁰

Edward was a director of the Merewether and Rothbury Estates, Pogonoski Printers and the Gas Company. He was a keen sportsman and played cricket, tennis, bowls and golf as much as his years allowed.

His inherited privileges may have allowed him a life of leisure but his interest in architecture, probably inspired by his early travel experiences, led him to co-found the busiest inter-war practice in Newcastle.

At the instigation of his son, John, with the Pitt family, the firm's file records and drawings were offered to the Newcastle Regional Library in 1978 and are now in the Archives of the Local History Library.¹¹

References:

- 1 University of Sydney – Degree of Bachelor of Engineering 2/5/1885
- 2 Articles signed between father, son and Theodore John Marks 12/5/1907
- 3 SMH 15/1/1910 first year exam results
- 4 E. J. Merewether's son, interview
- 5 NMH 8/1/1964
- 6 E. J. Merewether's son, interview
- 7 NMH 9/3/1935
- 8 Board of Architects – registration roll
- 9 Dissolution of Practice Agreement 27/9/1949
- 10 Agreement for Partnership, 1951, Pitt & Pitt.
- 11 John Merewether, verbal 1997



*Orient Hotel, Watt Street, Newcastle.
Pitt & Merewether, architects, 1925 (demolished 1960s)
(Likely to be the work of Merewether)*

PITT & MEREWETHER – BUILDINGS

HOTELS Partial List

- 1915 West End, Newcastle (N. B. Pitt, architect)
- 1924 Crown & Anchor, corner Hunter and Perkins Streets, Newcastle
- 1925 Orient, Watt Street, Newcastle
- 1929 Boatrowers, Stockton
Burwood Inn, Merewether
Exchange, Lambton
Travellers Rest, Hexham
- 1930 Parkview, Islington
- 1934 Criterion, Islington – upgrade
Swansea, Swansea
- 1936 Beach, corner Watt and King Streets, Newcastle
- 1937 Station, Islington
Hamilton, Hamilton
Gladstone, Stockton
- 1938 Royal Exchange, Wolfe Street, Newcastle (later Duke of Kent)
Seven Seas, Carrington
- 1939 Volunteer, West Maitland
- 1940 Cambridge, Hamilton
Clarendon, Newcastle.

OTHER BUILDINGS Partial List

- 1911 'Trialba', 79 Frederick Street, Merewether for Ranclands
(E. H. R. Merewether, architect)
- 1921 Tyrrell House, Telford Street, Newcastle
Warehouse, Frederick Ash Ltd., Newcastle – major additions

- 1921 to 1923 Fifty standard houses for John Lysaght,
Crebert & Bull Streets, Mayfield.
- 1925 Master Builders Association of NSW, King Street,
Newcastle
- 1934 Office Building, Tubemakers Limited, Port Waratah
- 1935 Australian Wire Rope Works, Mayfield
- 1936 Merewether Beach Surf Pavilion
BHP Offices – major additions
Office Building, Stewarts & Lloyds, Mayfield
Office Building, Commonwealth Steel, Waratah
- 1937 Nesca House, corner Auckland & King Streets,
Newcastle – supervision of construction for
Sodersteen.
New Rectory, St Augustines, Merewether
- 1938 Major Warehouse, Stewarts & Lloyds, North Sydney
Major Buildings, A. I. S., Port Kembla
Seven Seas Hotel, corner Cowper and Hill Streets,
Carrington
- 1939 NRMA House, Civic, Newcastle – supervision of
construction for Robertson & Marks.
Rolling Mill for alloy steels, Commonwealth Steel Waratah.
(anticipating war production)



*Travellers Rest Hotel, New England Highway, Hexham.
Pitt & Merewether, architects, 1929
(Adjacent to south arm of the Hunter River –
1955 flood reached underside of the balcony.)*



*Boatrowers Hotel, Stockton.
Pitt & Merewether, architects, 1929.
(handy for industrial workers rowing
home across the river from Newcastle)*



*Burwood Inn, Merewether.
Pitt & Merewether, architects, 1929.*



*Seven Seas Hotel, corner Cowper & Hill Streets, Carrington.
Pitt & Merewether, architects, 1938.*



*Beach Hotel, corner Watt & King Streets, Newcastle.
Pitt & Merewether, architects, 1936.*

PITT, Nigel Bronte

1886-1972



Nigel Bronte Pitt, or 'Nig' as he was called, was said to have come from a family related by marriage to the sister of Lord Nelson, created Duke of Bronte, Sicily, by the King of Naples.¹

Pitt was born in North Sydney and went to school there. His father, Charles Brian Pitt, a Sydney solicitor, indentured him to Sydney architects, Robertson & Marks, in 1906.

E. H. R. Merewether, his future partner, was a student there too² and it is likely that both worked on the then maximum height, ten storey, former Trust Building (1912), corner of Castlereagh & King Streets, Sydney. Pitt received the Diploma in Architecture in 1912 from Sydney Technical College where he excelled as a student, as did Merewether in the same stages of the course.³

Pitt, with his wife, moved to Newcastle in 1913⁴ and formed a partnership in an architectural practice with Merewether, whose hometown was Newcastle. But, in 1914, Merewether enlisted in the war, delaying the firm's progress, although Pitt continued on designing a series of modest houses. Immediately Post War, after Merewether returned, the practice developed with a series of large houses, built mostly in Merewether, for business clients known to the Merewether family. It was not until 1924, after the untimely death of architect Wal Porter who was Tooth & Company's architect for the north,⁵ that their practice developed.

It was the start of the design of a string of 29 new and 31 renovated hotels to 1951. Pitt loved the classical tradition and frequently used its features in his work but specification writing and office routine was his preferred role in the practice.

By 1924 Pitt became very active in professional affairs after the introduction of the Architects Registration Act of 1921. The Act sought to regulate the practice of architecture mainly by introducing standards in the education of architects. He was a foundation member, and Auditor, of the Newcastle and District Architects Association and was appointed the first teacher-in-charge of the Architectural Diploma Course at the Newcastle Technical College in 1925, a position he held part-time until 1939,⁶ *History of Architecture* being his forte.

He was interested in town planning and was invited by the Newcastle City Council to be a member of the Town Planning Committee of the Newcastle Betterment Board, a local body set up in 1925,⁷ comprising Newcastle and district councils and State Government Departments to co-ordinate the planning of roads, railways, shipping and land use in Newcastle before State Government leadership. It was said that his planning contacts resulted in an invitation to attend the ceremony at the joining of the two spans of the Sydney Harbour Bridge in March 1930.⁸

Pitt became a highly respected elder statesman of the Newcastle architectural profession and when seen around town, even in the 1960s, he invariably wore the 1930s fashion of hat and a single breasted dark grey striped suit with matching waistcoat with watch & chain. He was a frequent, and reliable, client's advocate at the hearings of the Liquor Licensing Court which invariably respected his suggestions and advice. It is said he designed, in the 1950s, the first beer garden in the district for an East Maitland hotel, convincing the Court of the advantages of the inclusion of an outdoor space in which to sit and drink and eat in a friendly atmosphere.

He had a reputation for strict office procedures which would have been paramount considering the confidentiality required and the regularity of the closing of tenders at the firm's office. The story is told that it was the duty of a staff member to receive builder's tenders in person at precisely 9 a.m. on the closing day at the office. The sealed envelopes were to be date and time marked, registered and placed in a locked box before securing the box in the firm's strong room. Only Mr Pitt had the keys both to the box and to the strong room. ⁹Woe-betide the late builder or a late staff member.

For 50 years he belonged to St George Masonic Lodge for which he was Treasurer from 1947 until his death, and Master for the term 1939-40. He belonged to Merewether RSL Club. In the War years he worked with the volunteer Defence Corps and the Victoria League Soldiers' Canteen ¹⁰ as well as designing many air raid shelters.

He worked in his business until his death at age 86. He was fond of a beer or two after work and the story goes, but not true, that in his later years he would drop in to the Merewether RSL Club on his way home. On this particular day he finished his beer, walked to his nearby home in Janet Street, and died. His colleagues wondered if it was the beer.¹¹

References:

- 1 Jenny Pitt Interview 23/7/1997
- 2 E. J. Merewether Interview 20/1/1997
- 3 SMH 15/1/1910
- 4 NMH 13/6/1972
- 5 NMH 7/2/1924
- 6 NMH 21/10/1939
- 7 *Newcastle Construction* 28/10/1926
- 8 Mal. Ebbeck verbal
- 9 Mal. Ebbeck verbal
- 10 NMH 13/6/1972
- 11 Barney Collins story



*N. B. Pitt with Matchless Motorbike, sidecar and family,
Swansea, 1922 (family photograph)
(Toy or office transport?)*

OLDHAM, John William

1886-1950

John Oldham had an extensive architectural practice in Newcastle between the World Wars. He was a native of England and came to live in Newcastle in 1914, age 28.¹ He settled into the business and social life of the city and his clients included a broad range from the Miners Federation, the Methodist Church, the Co-operative Store movement not to mention many business and house clients.

He was innovative in his approach and respected for his general interest in building matters which he liked to share with the community. He told the story of the ship 'Clackmannanshire' which carried a cargo of bricks from Glasgow to New York, in 1910, for the Glenboig Fire-Clay Company, whose works he visited in 1930. The ship was never heard of again but years later some of the bricks were found, on the west shore of Washington State, pretty well intact, 'after rolling about the bed of the ocean for 24 years'.² Another story was his description of brick making and craft in the 18th century, and earlier, in rural England. The labourer dug and mixed the clay and the master brickmaker worked at his bench moulding the clay into forms 9" x 4 1/2" x 2 1/2" (230mm x 115mm x 63mm), which had been wetted and dashed with sand for ease of extraction before being stacked, dried and fired.³ The same traditional method was used to make early NSW colonial sandstock bricks until well into the 19th century.

In 1928 he designed the Wesley Church in Beaumont Street, Hamilton,⁴ which seated 750 and was the largest Methodist Church in Newcastle to be built since the Central Methodist Mission in King Street, designed by Sydney architects Chater & Chater in 1902.⁵ The Wesley Church is a fine example of the neo-gothic style of the period adopted by the Church. The interior is

impressive with interesting crafting of the exposed timber roof structure. The building, particularly the tower, was extensively damaged in the 1989 Earthquake and fortunately has been sensitively restored.



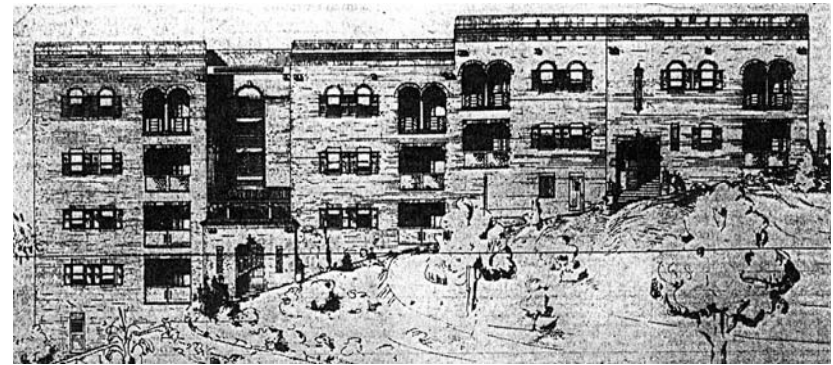
*Wesley Church, Beaumont Street, Hamilton.
John W. Oldham, architect, 1928*

About late 1929 he went back to England and to Scotland and made a study of local government, in which he was keenly interested, perhaps taking the opportunity afforded by the Depression downturn. On his return he was elected to the Newcastle Council in 1931 and, although only serving one term, served on many subsequent building related committees.

By 1935 he had enough experience to be entrusted with a major apartment building. 'Cliff Towers', has 11 generous flats and is built down the sandy slope from Church Street West to King Street. Its planning is ingenious, with two storeys at the higher end of the land, dropping to five storeys at the lower level whilst providing contour access to the entrances. The owner insisted on various 'historic' trees being retained and other trees planted,⁶ with the result that the building is not obvious today on its hillside site. The design is inter-war 'Mission', with semi-circular window heads and arches over balconies with splendid views over the harbour. The method of construction was the 'talk of the town' with doubt about the wisdom of building down a sandy slope. First the lowest floor was excavated and, as the sand was removed, whaling timbers were driven down to retain the higher sand. The footings and walling were constructed and the procedure repeated for the upper levels.⁷ The project must be regarded as an achievement in 1935 for Oldham and the builder, J. C. Davis & Sons (Charlie Davis).

A year later another project that brought him credit was 'Blackall House' in Newcomen Street for the Adult Deaf and Dumb Society. It was a public hall combined with offices and was a popular venue for meetings and concerts until the 1970s when it became professional offices. Although sombre, and formal in appearance, the building served its purpose well.

In 1935 a recently qualified architect, Robert G. Lees, who had served his articles with Pender & Lee, started his small architectural practice in the same building as Oldham's offices,



Cliff Towers, Church Street, Newcastle.

John W. Oldham, architect, 1934.

Sketch of West Elevation – Newcastle Morning Herald.

below: Cliff Towers – south west corner.

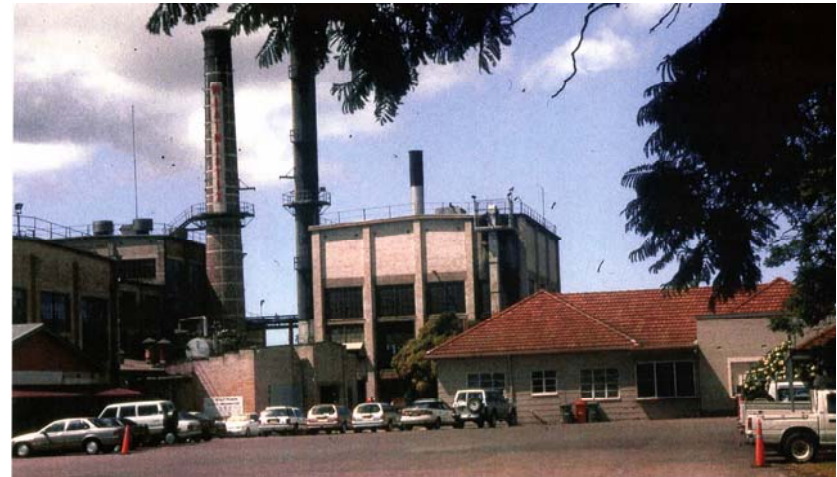


Tyrrell House, Telford Street. A year later they formed an informal partnership that lasted until the early years of the war, after which Bob Lees founded the firm of Lees & Valentine. It is interesting to note that the character of the firm's work changes, reflecting the influence of the younger architect who had learned the new expressions of the 1930s, with an emphasis on horizontal and rounded forms, as can be seen in the addition to the western end of the Hunter Street West, Newcastle Co-operative Store, designed earlier by E. G. Yeomans in the late Victorian style.



*Addition to Co-operative Store (foreground), Hunter Street West.
Oldham & Lees, architects, 1936.*

Their major work in 1938 was the factory for the Masonite Corporation at Raymond Terrace which made building board from local swamp timbers. The building was 400 feet x 165 feet x 28 feet high (122m x 50.3m x 8.5m) and the machinery, which was imported from the United States, included a 1200 psi boiler, the first of that pressure to be brought to Australia.⁸ It was a large undertaking on 1200 acres (485.6 hectares) located at Raymond Terrace for availability of ample bore water, coal and timber.



*The Masonite Factory, Raymond Terrace.
Factory buildings design by Oldham & Lees, architects, 1938.*

They had a busy practice, producing over 50 substantial projects, in the six years to the War. They were among local firms considered for the design of the new administrative building for Electric Supply in 1937. The City Council was not prepared to entrust the main work to a local architect but recognised some local input. Although Sydney architect, Emil Sodersteen and Pitt & Merewether, Newcastle, were declared joint architects, Oldham & Lees were awarded the suburban substation programme which resulted in a number of carefully detailed brick service buildings such as at Waratah and New Lambton.⁹

Their most impressive residence was built, in 1936, on the prominent site at the corner of Russell Road and Croudace Street, New Lambton Heights. The two storied dormer roofed house is set in a formal garden, all the more impressive for its corner position, and both house and garden compliment each other. The design of the house is entirely appropriate for its time and location, indicating that the firm was able to be progressive for its time. An example of other residential work is the large flats at

numbers 186-192 Beaumont Street, Hamilton, in 1939. This design shows a practice common at the time for street facades to introduce ad hoc vertical elements, sometimes corbelled and often protruding above the parapet line like a 'cocky's comb' – perhaps an attempt at decoration.

John Oldham died in Newcastle in 1950, age 64, and at the date of this biography, in 1998, Robert Lees was still alive in his late 80s but in a nursing home and not contactable.

References:

- | | | |
|-----------------|------------------|-----------------|
| 1 NMH 11/1/1950 | 4 NMH 30/4/1928 | 7 NMH 8/6/1935 |
| 2 NMH 2/3/1935 | 5 NMH 22/11/1902 | 8 NMH 18/3/1938 |
| 3 NMH 26/1/1935 | 6 NMH 16/3/1935 | 9 NMH 20/7/1937 |



*Residence, corner Russell Road & Croudace Street,
New Lambton Heights.
Oldham & Lees, architects, 1936*



*Dwellings & Shops, Lambton Road, New Lambton.
Oldham & Lees, architects, 1937.*



*Flats 186-192, Beaumont Street, Hamilton
Oldham & Lees, architects, 1939.*

PORTER, Wallace Lintott

1885-1924

Wallace Porter died prematurely at the age of 38. He had been an energetic young architect with a growing business. He was born at Hunter Street West, Newcastle, where his father had an extensive Produce Store, running through to King Street, where the Water Board is now.

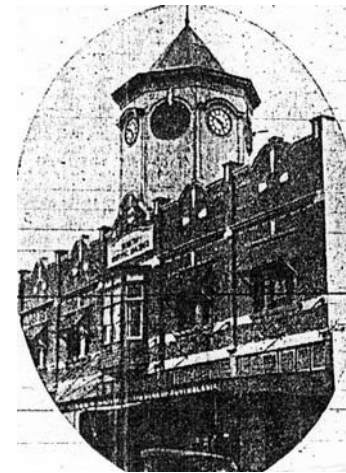
He was educated at Cook's Hill Public School and, on leaving there with an excellent reference, ¹ joined the office of Mr E. G. Yeomans, Architect, of Newcastle in 1901 and served his articles there. In 1908 he moved to the firm of Menkens & Castleden, at about the time Mr Menkens retired. His ability must have been recognised as he became 'Chief Draftsman' to Mr F. G. Castleden² in the most important architectural firm at that time. He would have worked on drawings for many projects including the restart of work at Christ Church Cathedral for which Castleden was commissioned in 1909. At age 24 he designed, on his own account, a two storey terrace house for his brother Herbert in King Street, on family property. Although late for a 'Victorian' terrace it is interesting internally for its original clear finished boarded ceilings which are elaborately and tastefully stencilled with floral and angel themes.³ During the 1989 earthquake the outer leaf of the brick cavity walling collapsed and some other minor damage occurred but the house has been restored. Known as Miss Porter's Cottage, it is owned by the National Trust.

After seven years with Castleden's firm he started on his own in 1915 and made rapid progress. A year later he employed, as an articled student, 17 years old William Dobell, later Sir William Dobell, the painter. Dobell became a registered architect in Porter's office in 1923. ⁴ Clarrie Sara, who worked with Porter and Dobell, said that Dobell designed the War Memorial at The Junction. Sara used to comment that he felt that the proportions

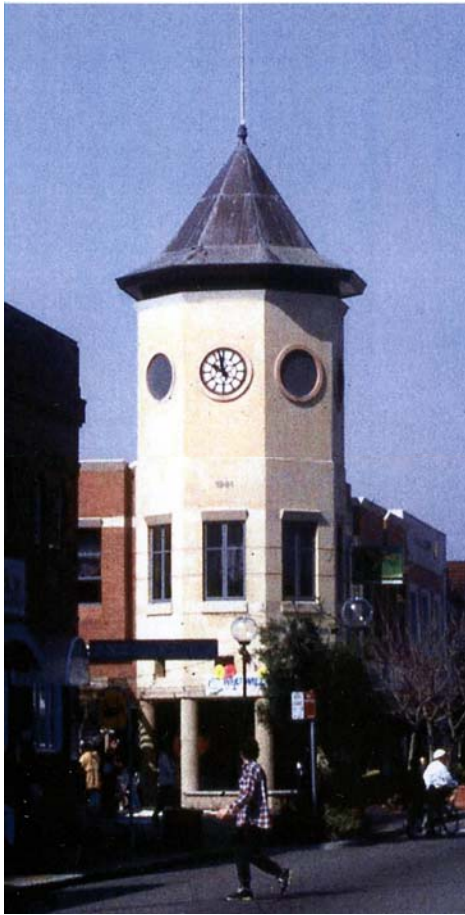
of Dobell's design of the base were wrong. ⁹Porter was the architect for Tooth's Breweries for the northern district, was also on the Abattoirs Board and was advisory architect to the Newcastle City Council.



*Porter's House, 16 Burwood Street, Merewether.
W. L. Porter, architect, 1917.*



*The Tower Motif,
Hamilton Borough Council Chambers, Beaumont Street, Hamilton.
W. L. Porter, architect, 1919.*



*The rebuilding of Porter's clock tower motif on a corner position.
Suters Architects, 1992.*

In 1922, when a new Town Hall for Newcastle was being discussed, he prepared sketches of his proposal, presumably to stimulate interest. Any influence on Henry White's built design in 1926 is not known. Porter gave of his time freely to the Newcastle Hospital for which he was Honorary Architect and a Board member. In 1919 he was Honorary Architect for the Returned Soldiers and Sailors Imperial League's War Memorials at The Junction and Gregson Park, Hamilton.

Early in his practice Porter adopted the 'post-Federation' influence, as in Junction House across from The Junction Memorial. His buildings give way to a rather more plain, less interesting expression in the early 1920s, not unusual for the period although his Commercial Hotel at Boolaroo, serving the Sulphide Corporation Works, is a good example of a two storied pub with a verandah on a prominent roadside site.



*War Memorial and Honour Roll, The Junction.
W. L. Porter, architect, 1919.
It is likely that William Dobell had a hand in its design.*

He was fond of sport, a member of the Newcastle Jockey Club and Tattersall's Club and, as a young man, was a keen cricketer, being a member of the 'Ironclads Club'. By all accounts he was a popular and amiable character. No one could foretell his tragic end in 1924. The Newcastle Morning Herald reported *'For the past eighteen months Mr Porter's health had been bad, and owing to serious eye trouble he had suffered much mentally.'*⁵ According to his family he was not in financial difficulty and had made visits to a German eye doctor in Sydney, but if it was surgery that was needed it was not available then. In a state of depression he ended his own life by hanging at his Merewether home. Novocastrians had great affection for him and he was a lovely man, judging by the numbers of friends from Councils, Clubs and businesses, including his fellow architects, who went to his funeral to pay their respects and to give sympathy to his widow and two year old daughter.⁶ The remaining work of the firm was shared co-operatively among other architects, acknowledging Porter's name for the project.

Although not many of his projects survive, he is notable for the design of a familiar Hamilton landmark. In 1919, in Beaumont Street, he designed an addition to the Council Chambers⁷ featuring an octagonal clock faced tower which became a familiar motif in the streetscape. The tower roof and clock were subsequently removed and stored and, after the 1989 earthquake, the tower was rebuilt using the roof and clock, so retaining Porter's 1919 landmark.

Postscript – His boss's death meant unemployment for Dobell, who must have been devastated. Dobell went to Narrandera briefly and then to Sydney where he became a draftsman for Wunderlich's Building Products while attending the Sydney Art School at Darlinghurst. He kept his registration as an architect until he went overseas in 1929.⁸

According to the Porter family, Wal Porter used to say that Bill was more at home with drawing than with the mathematical

calculations needed in architecture. One wonders though if Porter's death was a deciding factor in William Dobell's career as a painter.

References:

- 1 Headmaster's Reference 14/12/1890 held by Elsie Porter
- 2 NMH 8/2/1924
- 3 Hazel Porter's House, 434 King Street, Newcastle West
- 4 NSW Architects Registration Roll, 1924
- 5 NMH 8/2/1924
- 6 NMH 9/2/1924
- 7 NMH 11/9/1919
- 8 James Gleeson, 'Dobell'
- 9 E. C. Sara – verbal to Les Reedman



War Memorial, Gregson Park, Hamilton
W. L. Porter, architect, 1922

PORTER, Wallace L. – BUILDINGS AND CLIENTS

Miss Porter's House

- 1907 Single terrace house, 434 King Street, Newcastle West
Foggit Jones Ltd. Bacon Factory, Rutherford
Totalisator Building, Newcastle Racecourse
Offices, Nestle and Anglo-Swiss Company (Australasia)
Limited, Darby Street, Newcastle
- 1917 Porter's House, 16 Burwood Street, Merewether.
(demolished)
- 1919 Clock Tower and Additions to Council Chambers,
Beaumont Street, Hamilton
House, corner Glebe Road & Watkins Street, The Junction.
War Memorial, The Junction
- 1922 War Memorial & Main Gate, Gregson Park, Hamilton.
- 1920 to 1924 HOTELS:
Oriental, Carrington
Sunnyside, Georgetown
Commercial, Boolaroo
Grand Junction, The Junction
Mayfield, Mayfield
Royal Oak, Tighes Hill, major rebuilding
Albion, Wickham, major rebuilding
Teralba, Teralba (Pender & Porter, 1924)

right top: Commercial Hotel, Boolaroo, 1922

right centre: Albion Hotel, Hannell Street, Wickham, 1922

right below: Oriental Hotel, Carrington, 1922



CASTLEDEN, Archer Cox

1890-1944



Archie, as he was known, and Cox after his mother's pioneering family's name, was an Alderman of the Newcastle Council in the late 1920s.

His was the driving force behind the removal of street verandahs in Hunter Street and he had his reasons. The 19th Century street verandahs had served a good purpose, the roof or balcony provided weather protection and shade to shop windows and the posts, usually located at the kerb, were useful for leaning on or for hitching horses. With the introduction of motor traffic the posts were a hazard but, more importantly, most verandahs were in disrepair and sometimes collapsed on unsuspecting passers-by. Private structures on public space could no longer be allowed. After a balcony collapsed in Hunter Street in late 1927, critically injuring pedestrians, Castleden obtained Council support for an order requiring owners to replace verandahs with cantilevered awnings in Hunter Street.¹ As well The Newcastle Morning Herald said: *'the street continues to look like a forest of verandah posts. Many men imbued with the desire to improve their city have, in the past,*

*commented on these old-fashioned supports. One particular man went further to say that Hunter Street balconies in many cases were used as a drying place for women's apparel, which was not an edifying spectacle for visitors.'*²

As an example the Council removed the verandah from its Municipal building, Stegga's Store, in Hunter Street, designed by Peter Bennett in 1884, and replaced it with the model awning. It took until 1932 for all owners to comply with the Council order.³ The removal of verandah and balcony posts in busy streets was probably inevitable, given the emerging issues. Other councils in Newcastle followed the lead, such as Hamilton for Beaumont Street. An unfortunate consequence of this policy became evident in the 1989 earthquake when many parapets collapsed in Beaumont Street due to the extra strain on the hanging rods, for which the walls had not been designed. Several people in Beaumont Street were killed.⁴

Castleden was born at Thornleigh, NSW,⁵ and was educated at Fort Street Boys High School. He moved at the age of seventeen, with his family, to Newcastle and was articled in his father's architectural office. He joined the 1st A.I.F. in WW1 and served in Gallipoli and in Egypt. His elder brother, Cyril, was killed at Gallipoli. After the war Archie went, with Admiral Lord Jellicoe, to New Guinea in a party to report on fortifications there, prior to the handover of the German colony to Australia.⁶

In 1919 he rejoined his father and the new firm became F. G. & A. C. Castleden, both being registered as architects at the same time on the introduction of the Architects Act 1921.

Archer's influence changed the direction of the firm from his father's preoccupation with Federation style. The firm produced a number of notable buildings including the Newcastle Morning Herald offices in Bolton Street, Newcastle and the main Ambulance Station, Denison Street, Hamilton.

But the early inter-war years were not a rich architectural ground for the firm and the modern movement in Newcastle lost direction until after the 1930s depression. In 1937 E. C. Sara joined the firm on his return from England, allowing Castleden senior to retire to Inverell. The firm, Castleden & Sara, took on a new look with Sara's overseas influence. The Fairhall house at Hamilton, the Lindstrom house at Belmont and the Tattersalls Hotel at Armidale were produced in the new style of the 1930s. When Sara enlisted in the 2nd A.I.F. in 1940 the firm closed and Archie Castleden worked from his home in High Street, Newcastle.

Archer was a prominent member of the Newcastle Cathedral congregation and was a member of its vestry for years and its honorary architect. He was a member of the executive committee of the Missions to Seamen and was their honorary architect.⁷ Archer's diligent assistance to his father, from 1909 to 1926, in the completion of Christ Church Cathedral in preparation for the tower (later by 'Castleden & Sara') cannot be underestimated.

His unfortunate early death at 54, a few months before his father in 1944, was a shock also to his partner Sara who was away at the war. He died of heart and artery disease.⁸ Like many returned soldiers he died earlier than his peers. A student of the practice before the war, Sid Morton, told how one of his duties as a student in the office was to go down the street to the tobacconist regularly for a tin of Archie's favourite ready-rubbed tobacco.⁹

References:

- 1 NMH 29/1/1926
- 2 NMH 9/8/1928
- 3 NMH 2/7/1932
- 4 Poppin, Chandler, Coburn – Newcastle Earthquake Field Report 1991
- 5 Death Certificate
- 6 NMH 16/8/1944
- 7 NMH 16/8/1944
- 8 Death Certificate
- 9 Sid Morton interview 4/10/1994



Hunter Street, Newcastle, 1887, Peter Bennett, architect.

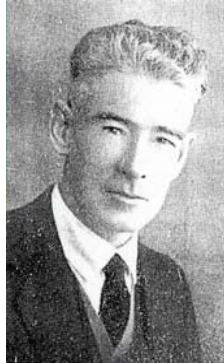
Typical two storey balcony and posts until 1929.

below: the same building with new style suspended awnings from 1929.



GANNON, Peter Joseph

1889-1935



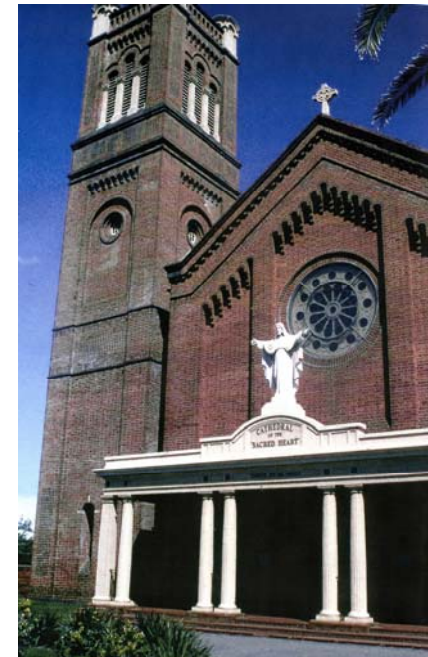
Peter Joseph was the senior of the Gannon architects. Others were John Patrick, his brother, son Peter Jerome and another son who worked as an architectural draftsman in the firm. In total the Gannons provided an extensive and devoted service to the Roman Catholic Church, mainly in the Diocese of Maitland, from around 1920 to 1986, comprising over one hundred and forty buildings.

Peter Joseph was born in Auburn, Sydney, and was educated at Christian Brothers, Lewisham, and Sydney Technical College, qualifying as an engineer. He worked in the construction industry in Sydney before coming to Newcastle in 1909 as a young naval architect at the Government Dockyard at Walsh Island.¹ The dockyard successfully tendered for many vessels in this period, including the Sydney ferry 'Kuttabul', later sunk, in 1942, in Sydney Harbour by a Japanese torpedo.

Although not trained as an architect he had sufficient experience to become a registered Architect when the Architects Registration Act applied in 1921 ² and he started his own practice. Over the

next fourteen years his work output was prolific and of high quality, a measure of his commitment and service to the Catholic church. He designed over 30 main ecclesiastical buildings, over half of which were new churches, for which he had a state wide reputation.³

Among his more significant work was the Church of the Sacred Heart, Hamilton, built in 1930, now the Cathedral for the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle. It is a building of handsome proportions, of strongly modelled and corbelled brickwork. Its somewhat sombre exterior belies the richly expressed and lighted interior. The high ceiling is barrel vaulted and panelled in silky oak, ⁴ and the cruciform plan form results in intersecting vaults displaying amazing design and woodwork.



*The Sacred Heart Cathedral, Maitland Road, Hamilton.
Peter Joseph Gannon, architect, 1930.*

His other churches are no less notable. The exteriors are usually in crafted brick work with corbelled gables and semi-circular arches over windows and door openings. His trademark is a different coloured key brick, sometimes white, at the crown and spring points of the arch, in an implied sign of the Cross. The interiors are invariably responsive to light, with the architectural elements of dados, cornices, arches, openings and natural timber panelling arranged within an ordered and well proportioned geometry, a discipline no doubt learned from his earlier knowledge of naval architecture.



Typical panel and window detail. The motif of key and thrust bricks applies to his many churches.

The Mater Misericordiae Hospital, Main Ward Block, opened in 1935, was his other major work. At the time it was doubtful whether there was any local expertise in major hospital design. That a local architect was selected for this complex work was testimony to his skill and ability. His brother John Patrick, who was an engineer, joined him from Sydney in 1932,⁵ to assist him in the design of the project.⁶ The exterior of the main block has a castle-like, yet ecclesiastical expression in brickwork, considered then appropriate to a Sisters of Mercy Hospital. The interiors

were the very latest, easy clean and functional, and featured rubber flooring extensively. It was a matter of great regret that he died just two months before the official opening.⁷



*Mater Misericordiae Hospital, Waratah.
Peter Joseph Gannon, architect, 1935.*

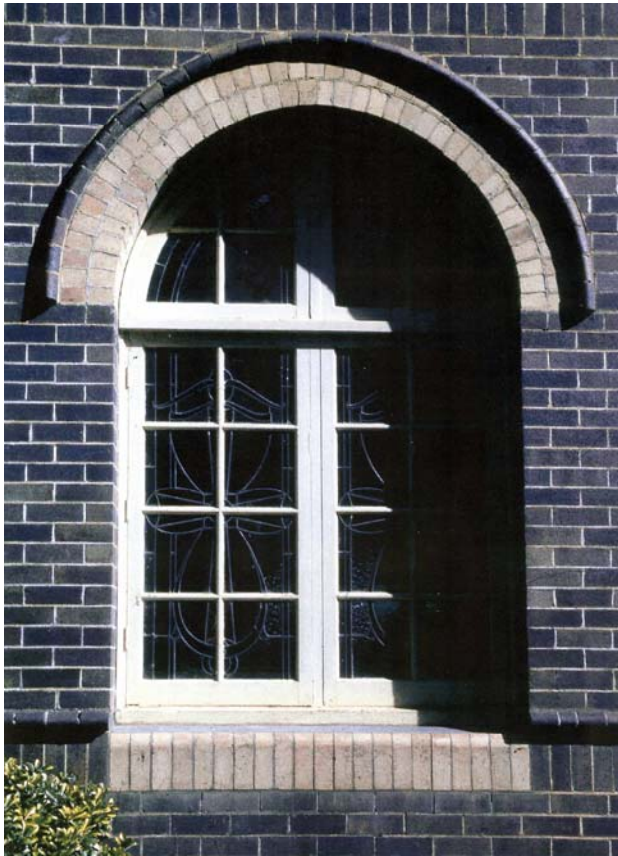
His first wife died in 1919 during the influenza epidemic, leaving two daughters. A second marriage produced a daughter and three sons. After his early death, age 46, his brother John Patrick carried on the business as well as supporting his brother's family. Projects that started immediately after his death are usually credited to Peter Joseph, as they were likely to have been in the design stage then. However some future confusion was inevitable as his younger brother's initials were in reverse order to his own.

He was a committed Catholic, was President of the St. Vincent de Paul Society for the last ten years of his life, and was regarded as an inspiration and an example to his fellow workers in the best traditions of the Society. At his death many remembered his personal services to themselves in time of need or distress and his readiness to sacrifice himself and his interests in the service of others. He donated the stained glass window behind the altar at St Joseph's, East Maitland.

It was said that *'his many business friends and others have acquaintanceship with his straightforwardness and integrity of character, and the amiable personal touch he possesses in business dealings.'*⁸

The President of the Master Builders Association said *'his loss was felt by a large circle of friends who had learned to appreciate his humane and gracious qualities. He won and retained the respect and goodwill of all connected with the building trade.'*

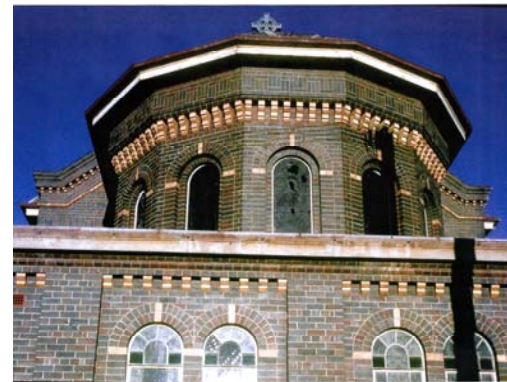
Unique praise indeed.



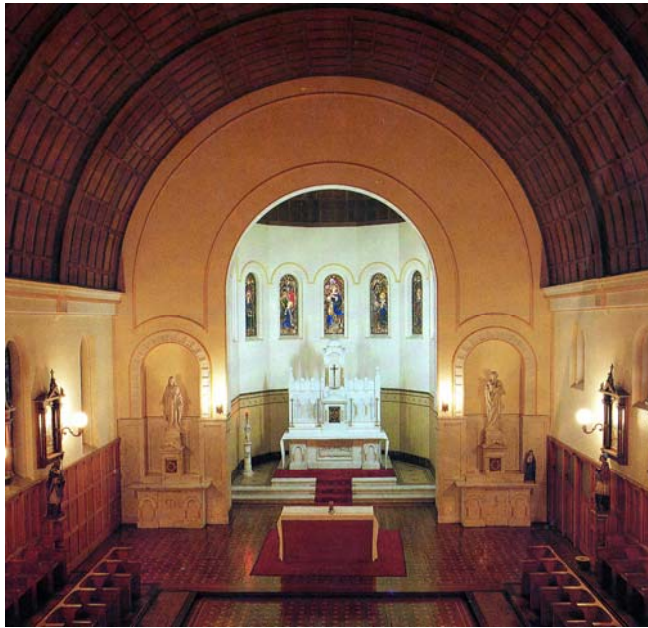
*De La Salle College, Chapel Street, Armidale, Window detail.
Peter Joseph Gannon, architect, 1926.*



*De La Salle College, Chapel Street, Armidale.
Peter Joseph Gannon, architect, 1926.*



*St Ursula's Chapel and Convent, Armidale, detail.
Peter Joseph Gannon, architect, 1930.*



St Ursula's Chapel, Armidale, interior.

Peter Joseph Gannon, architect, 1930.

Photograph from 'Images of Armidale' by Gilbert, Hope & Mulquiney.



Corpus Christie Church, corner of Bridge & Platt Streets, Waratah.

Peter Joseph Gannon, architect, 1932.

East end of nave completed by John P. Gannon, architect, 1954.

GANNON, Peter Joseph – BUILDINGS.

CHURCHES

	St Marys	Dungog
	St Columbans	Adamstown
	St Kevins	Cardiff
	St Therese	New Lambton
1925	Church of Our Lady of Peace	Scone
1926	St Laurences	Broadmeadow
1930	The Sacred Heart Cathedral	Hamilton
	St Patricks	West Tamworth
	St Pauls	Ben Lomond
	St Ursulas Chapel & Convent	Armidale
	St Brigids	Bulahdelah
	St Patricks	Wallsend
1932	St Augustines	Narromine
	Corpus Christi Church	Waratah (uncompleted until 1954)
1933	St Joseph's, Newcastle Road	East Maitland
	Church of the Holy Rosary	Taree
	St Henrys	East Moree
	The Novitiate, Sisters of Mercy,	Singleton

OTHER

	St Josephs Convent	Merewether
	St Francis Xaviers School	Hamilton
1926	De La Salle College	Armidale
	Convent of Mercy	Hamilton
	Convent of Mercy	Tighes Hill
	Convent of Mercy	Lambton
	St Mary's Presbytery	Newcastle
1934	Star Picture Theatre	The Junction
1935	Mater Misericordiae Hospital Main Ward Block,	Waratah
1936	Mortuary Chapel	Sandgate Cemetery.
	De La Salle College	Dubbo
	Presbytery	Cessnock.

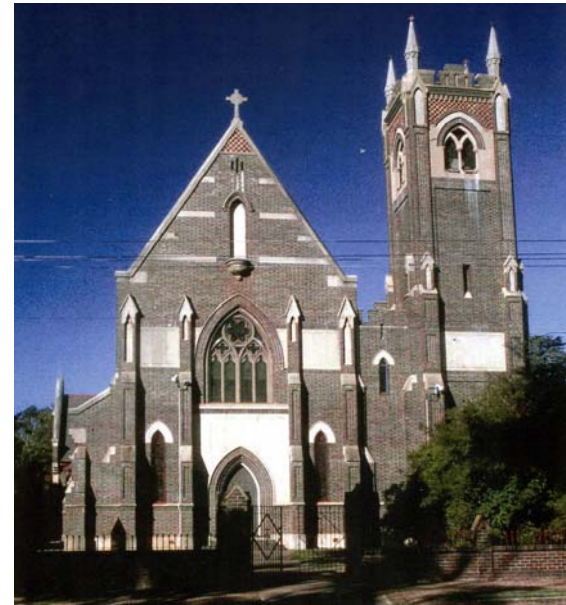
References:

- 1 NMH 2/2/1935
- 2 Board of Architects Registration Roll
- 3 NMH 2/2/1935
- 4 NMH 6/1/1930
- 5 NMH 16/8/1962
- 6 NMH 6/4/1935
- 7 NMH 6/4/1935
- 8 NMH 2/2/1935
- 9 NMH 2/2/1935



*St Josephs Catholic Church, Newcastle Road, East Maitland.
Peter Joseph Gannon, architect, 1933.*

(Previously the Cathedral Church for the Diocese of Maitland)



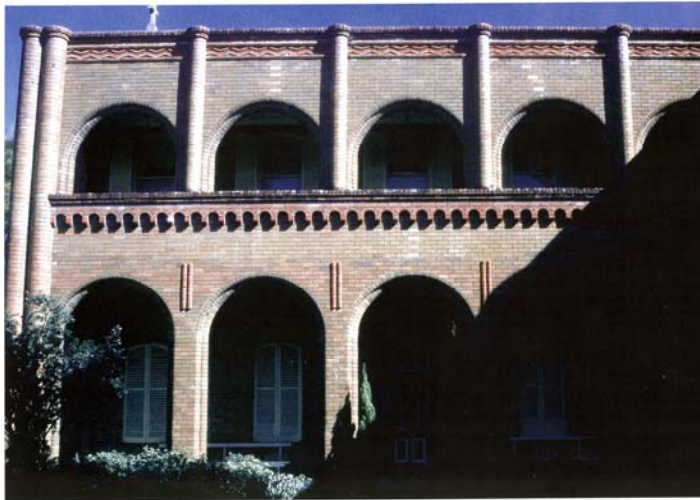
*Church of Our Lady of Peace, Guernsey Street, Scone.
Peter Joseph Gannon, architect, 1925.*



*Church of the Holy Rosary, Albert Street, Taree
Peter Joseph Gannon, architect, 1933.*



*St Augustines Catholic Church, Narromine.
Peter Joseph Gannon, architect, 1932.
(Replaces a church destroyed by a 'willie willie' in the 1920s)*



*Two storied arcade for the Novitiate,
Sisters of Mercy, Queen Street, Singleton.
Peter Joseph Gannon, architect, 1933.*



*The Star Cinema, Glebe Road, The Junction.
Peter Joseph Gannon, architect, 1934.*

SARA, Edwin Clarence

1899-1987

'Clarrie' Sara worked and travelled overseas for eight years from 1929. What inspired him to venture out of Newcastle to work in London? It may have been the work turndown of the Depression or it may have been that his wife's relative, the painter William Dobell, with whom he was a fellow architectural student in the 1920s, went to England at the same time. He attended the International Scouting Jamboree as a local representative. He worked in London and this experience had a significant impact on his later work in Newcastle.

He was articled to the Newcastle firm of Pitt & Merewether at a time when the Architects Registration Act was impending. There was no School of Architecture in Newcastle so he supplemented his training with the American based, International Correspondence School's course in Architecture. His qualifications were recognised and, after a short time with the office of W. L. Porter, he started practice for himself in 1923.



*'Strathmore Court' Flats, Wolfe Street, Newcastle.
E. C. Sara, architect, 1923.*



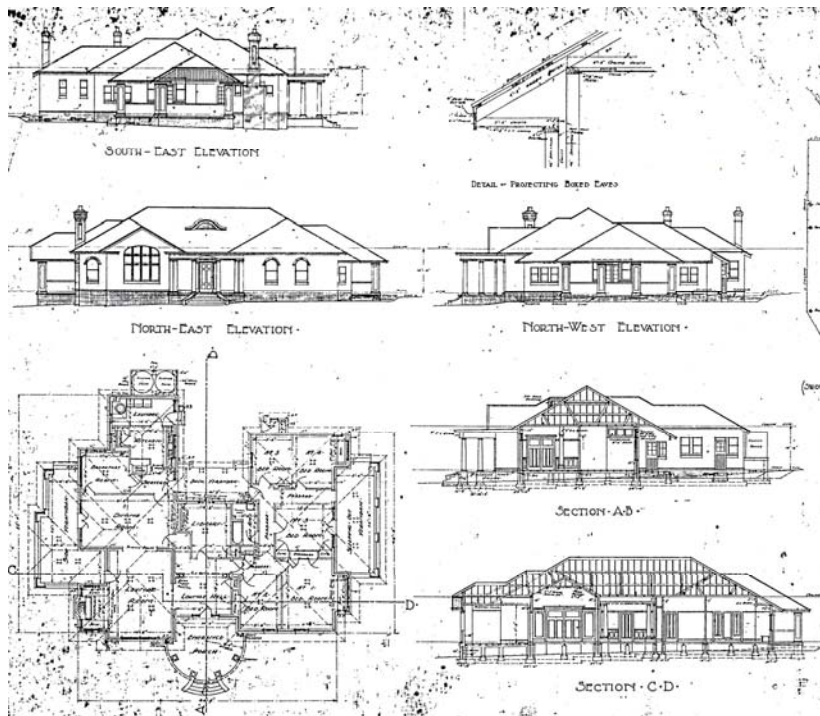
*McMaugh House, corner of Parkway Avenue & Light Street, Bar Beach.
E. C. Sara, architect, 1927.*

His early work was mainly housing. 'Strathmore Court' and the McMaugh House are early examples and show a careful use of classic design principles in the placement of windows, doors, courses and plinths. He was a consummate draftsman, attending to the smallest detail. He used to say 'every line means something'. Builders respected his work and the thoroughness of his drawings was a factor in the quality of his finished buildings.



*'Awaba House' Booragul.
E. C. Sara, architect, 1927
(now Lake Macquarie Council's Regional Art Gallery)*

His most important work of his early period was 'Awaba House' Booragul, built in 1927 on a grassy slope on the edge of Lake Macquarie. His deliberate, asymmetric composition gives prominence to the generous semi-circular portico and large arched window of the principal room. The walls are rendered panels between fluted classic pilasters, a technique he had tried earlier on the McMaugh house. Sara designed this fine house for a magnificent site and it is appropriate that it has recently been adapted for use as the Lake Macquarie Regional Art Gallery.



*'Awaba House', Booragul.
E. C. Sara, architect, 1927
above: drawing by E. C. Sara, 1/5/1927
above right: entrance porch.
right: window showing attention to detail.*

During his period in London he worked for a number of firms, two of which specialised in cinema design. It was a time when comfortable pre-war 'Edwardian' ideas of design were to be challenged by the modernists. The new movement which had been evolving since World War 1 was being stifled in Continental Europe. The closure of the Bauhaus School of Design in 1933 by the German Government was a clear signal of Nazi intolerance of modern design concepts. Eric Mendelsohn, a young German Jewish architect, fled to England. His work was characterised by a strong linear expression integrated with cylindrical forms as seen in the Bexhill pavilion. He discarded familiar romantic ideas of style and found a new plain machine age expression. The Dutch architect, Dudoc, also had new concepts of cubic forms for his civic buildings which were acclaimed in the late 1930s.

The work of Mendelsohn and Dudoc appealed to Sara and he attended lectures and seminars discussing contemporary architecture at the Royal Institute of British Architects in London. The old order of C. E. Voysey, the 19th century 'romantic' architect, and Sir Edward Lutyens was also of interest to Sara.

On his return to Newcastle, in 1937, he was welcomed by the Castledens and he became a partner in 1938 with Archer Castleden when Archer's father retired to Inverell. His work in his new firm of Castleden & Sara shows the modernist influence from his overseas experiences. The Fairhall House, 1938, is the best example. The main part of the house is a two storey plain cubic form with two lower projecting forms, one with a corner chimney stack and the other a north facing semi-circular ground floor room which he called a 'Solarium'. It was an innovation to have an all day sunroom adjoining the living room to provide optional use, depending on the warmth of the day. The outside walls of the house were originally of soft yellow face bricks with openings formed by concrete toe lintels and sills one course high. The anatomy of the façade is now obscured as it has been rendered and painted.



*Tattersalls Hotel, The Mall, Beady Street, Armidale.
Castleden & Sara, architects, 1937.
(attributed to E. C. Sara)*



*Fairhall House for Alan Fairhall MHR, corner Parkway Avenue &
Jenner Parade, Hamilton. Castleden & Sara, architects, 1938.
(design by E. C. Sara) Originally light yellow brickwork
with articulated concrete lintels and sills.*

After four and a half years war service where he rose to the rank of Army Captain in New Guinea, Sara returned to his practice in 1945. His partner, A. C. Castleden, had died a year before. The firm's post-war work shows less direct influence from the 1930s modernist movement but projects, such as the Williams Car Showroom, Hunter Street, and Baby Health Centres are simple in expression and detailed with care. In his buildings generally he introduced innovations such as recessed downlights or a formed plaster ceiling lit from behind cornices by coloured neon strip lighting for a café.

Building materials were restricted by Government policy in post-war reconstruction and bricks were rationed. In 1947 Sara designed a car showroom at Hunter Street West for P. & R. Williams – agents for classic MG cars and motor bikes. Sara designed a simple framed façade of British racing green coloured Carrara glass with a large central picture window, the whole framed with an aluminium rolled profile, not done in Newcastle immediately post war.

He applied design rules which required all items to be located in an orderly fashion with due regard for proportion and line. He required window openings to conform to the proportions of the 'Golden Mean' of 1.618 to 1 or a double square of 2 to 1. The standard height of a stair balustrade was to be 2'8½" (825mm) vertically from nosing to top of rail, step heights no more than 7" (178mm) with a going of 10" (254mm) minimum. Tiles roofs were always at 28 degrees. He was wary of the corrosive character of ferrous metals. Supports above window and door openings in brickwork were to be 'flat arch' where appropriate without metal arch bars. Steel reinforcement in concrete was to be protected by 3 inches (75 mm) of concrete for footings and 2 inches (50mm) elsewhere. Brickwork ties were to be bronze, a wise precaution in Newcastle's aggressive salt and industrial atmosphere. These proved to be good practical office standards.

He was architect to Newcastle Christ Church Cathedral for over 20 years, advising on regular maintenance and designing the suspended sanctuary lamp and the addition of the Columbarium attached to the northern transept which is designed with sensitivity. In his declining years, before retirement in 1980, he participated with his son John in the firm's major commission to raise the transepts and build the new great bell tower of Newcastle Cathedral, a work only envisaged by F. G. Castleden in 1909 and John Horbury Hunt and J. H. Buckridge before him.

In the 1950s he was secretary of a consortium of Newcastle architectural firms of Hoskings & Pilgrim, Lees & Valentine, Pitt & Pitt and Castleden & Sara, (NEWMEC), which designed the Newcastle War Memorial Cultural Centre, Laman Street. He was, at various times, an active member and Secretary of the Newcastle Architects Association when it was first formed in 1925, prior to joining the NSW Institute of Architects in 1928. He was a part-time lecturer in architecture at the Newcastle Technical College and University College for over 20 years and advocated, from personal experience, the relevance of history and theory of architecture in the training of an architect.

He used to amuse his students by giving them an idea of the height of the steps of the Great Pyramid which he had climbed on tour. At the teaching bench of the classroom he would demonstrate that the height was that of the bench by putting one leg up on the bench as if to scale the ancient stones: a hard effort for one of small stature. For all such antics, sometimes the butt of student's private ridicule, he knew his lecture subjects and never failed to impart the fundamentals to the lasting benefit of his students.

His overseas travels and work between 1929 and 1937, at a time of unprecedented political ferment in Europe, were regularly recalled with bemusement. He told the story that, around 1937, he went to Berlin and found himself watching, in amazement, a

Nazi parade. Hitler passed very close by, almost in touching distance. The next week Sara was in Rome looking at a religious procession in St Peters Square and the Pope passed by also in touching distance.¹ The irony stuck in his mind.

His journey around Europe was by train and he took many photographs of buildings of interest. He related how, on a train coming into fascist Italy, he was arrested in transit and interrogated as a spy at a police station. He was asked to open his late model Leica 120 camera and hand over the film. He told how he deliberately fumbled the camera trying to find the opening catch, then gave it to the guard, who had no idea about new cameras. They concluded he was a bumbling amateur and let him go.²

Besides photography, as a mentor of the Newcastle Photographic Society, Clarrie had a special interest in classical music. On his return from the war he put together his own stereo high fidelity reproduction system for the new vinyl records and built a state of the art valve amplifier himself before they were commercially available.

He was also interested in public affairs. He was President of the Newcastle Businessmen's Club for a term and was a founding member of the Newcastle East Civic Association.

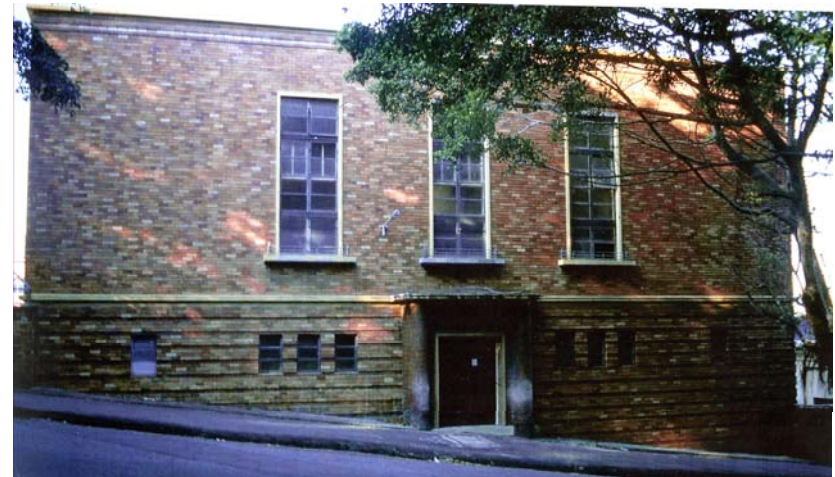
Another aspect of his public spirit was his help, at the request of Leo Butler, a senior Herald journalist, by employing a post-war refugee, Laurent Kubany, a qualified Hungarian architect who, with his wife, escaped from occupied Hungary. As a condition of immigration refugees were required to work, for a specified time as directed, in Post War industry and he was employed as a labourer at the BHP steelworks. After representations to authorities Sara agreed to employ him in 1953 and Kubany later became a successful architect in Sydney.

Sara's work was not without controversy. So the story goes around 1950 he had designed a house at Bar Beach for a doctor. The feature of the living room was a tile faced fireplace which smoked. Clarrie suggested that the chimney flue be extended to improve draw. Still it smoked. The solution he advised was to light a bigger fire. The doctor got carried away and the tiles fell off the fireplace.³ Clarrie was sued for damages.

In his retirement his recreation was bowling with Newcastle and Kotara Bowling Clubs. In his declining years he continued to take an interest in his firm. He contributed to the architecture of Newcastle and many who worked with him would probably agree that they were better informed by his high standards of design and detailing for buildings.

References:

- 1 E. C. Sara verbal to L. A. Reedman 1953 2 *ibid*
- 3 W. J. Reedman verbal to L. A. Reedman 1997



*Electricity Substation, Tyrrell Street, Newcastle.
Castleden & Sara, architects, 1938.
(by E. C. Sara)*

SARA, Edwin C. – BUILDINGS (CASTLEDEN & SARA starting 1937)

- 1923 'Strathmore Court' flats, Wolfe Street, Newcastle
- 1926 Coles flats, Tyrrell Street, Newcastle
- 1927 'Awaba House', Booragul for T. A. I. Braye, Solicitor.
(now Lake Macquarie Council Art Gallery)
- McMaugh House, corner Parkway Avenue and Light
Street, Bar Beach
- 1930 Cinema, Oxford Street, Manchester with F. T. Verity,
Architects, London
- 1935 Cinema Palace, Chatham with W. A. Kenyon, Architects,
London
- 1937 Tattersalls Hotel, The Mall, Beardsley Street, Armidale.
- 1938 Fairhall House, corner Parkway Avenue and Jenner Parade,
Hamilton
- Lingard House, Fenton Avenue, Bar Beach
- Electricity Substation, Tyrrell Street, Newcastle
- Golden Fleece Hotel, Scone
- 1939 Glasgow Arms Hotel, Carrington
- 1940 Sydney Junction Hotel, Beaumont Street, Hamilton
- Lindstrom House, Anderson's Hill, Belmont
- Kostakes House, Anzac Parade, The Hill (see page 252)
- 1948 Motor Showroom, Hunter Street, Newcastle West for
P. & R. Williams
- Dawkins-Tanner House, Skye Point Road, Coal Point
- 1949 Baby Health Centre, Belmont
- 1950 Baby Health Centre, Taree
- 1954 Columbarium, Newcastle Cathedral
- 1957 War Memorial Cultural Centre, Laman Street, Newcastle
with Hoskings & Pilgrim, Lees & Valentine, and Pitt & Pitt.

*above right: Lindstrom House, Andersons Hill, Belmont.
Castleden & Sara, architects, 1940. (attributed to E. C. Sara)
below right: south west corner detail.*



REEDMAN, Arnold John

1897 – 1965

Arnold was a self-made man of many talents. He was born and educated in Adelaide, the son of a turn-of-the-century Australian Test Cricketer, J. C. Reedman, and the grandson of a brick maker, first in the Barossa and later in Adelaide.

Arnold objected to war and although his older brothers joined up for the 1914-18 conflict he served in a non-combatant role in the Army's Quartermaster's Store in Adelaide. Post war he worked as a draftsman for the South Australian Ferro Concrete Company, building many wheat silos throughout the South Australian wheat belt. The company also manufactured concrete blocks for housing and he illustrated house designs with some talent using the American International Correspondence School course as a guide.

When he came to Newcastle in 1922 he opened a composite business of produce store and service station with his brother-in-law Sid. Bacon. With a builder associate he advertised to design and build houses, declaring himself an architect.

After the introduction of the Architects Act 1921 (first roll 1923) it was not lawful to call yourself an 'architect' unless registered, for which training or other requirement was necessary. He was challenged by local architect Mr N. B. Pitt that he could not so advertise as an 'architect'.

He complied and instead chose a life in business rather than attempt to gain architectural training which in any case was not available in Newcastle at the time. Moreover being articulated to an architect was no longer a way to qualification. Architectural education in Sydney was the only option until 1929 when the part-time architecture course started in Newcastle.

In the mid-1920s he started a building business as a project builder offering land and house as a package. His promotional material included the rhyme:

*'Mid pleasures and palaces, though you may roam,
You find the wife and we'll find the home.'*

Reedman was a committed Christian and his beliefs translated into actions to help others. He believed that everyone should have a place to live and what better than their own house that they could call home – a sentiment espoused by Abraham Lincoln, among others, in the history of social reform. His object in business was to provide a useful service and if it was of value, reward followed.

By both contracting for projects and designing and building individual houses he built up a business by 1925, with new trucks and equipment and established a small saw mill and joinery shop employing a team of carpenters and joiners. The business failed in 1930 with the great depression. With debts, and clients unable to keep up repayments, Reedman chose to trade out by selling assets rather than declaring bankruptcy. For the next few years he made over 30 journeys into country NSW in the 'Gospel Wagon of the New Era' on behalf of the Christadelphian movement giving hope and support to depressed rural communities.

Reedman was an advocate of the Co-operative Housing Movement which had its roots in England in 1918 in association with the British Labor Party. In post World War 2, in Newcastle, he saw the urgent need for affordable housing and with other like-minded friends formed the Newcastle Building Society, a terminating mutual society providing housing loans by ballot to its members. He studied the principles of the Co-operative Movement and contributed to improvement in Government legislation dealing with housing co-operatives. As a talented orator he toured the district giving illustrated talks, particularly in the coal fields and industrial areas. He had a regular talk slot

on radio 2KO Newcastle explaining affordable housing and also advocated all night radio for shift workers.

During post war reconstruction building materials were restricted. He suggested and designed the half house policy whereby the building lot owner could erect a garage and live there while the back half of the house, providing kitchen, bathroom and bed-sitting room was being saved for and built. The completion of the modest house depended on the growth of the family and affordability. In the urgent circumstances, local authorities approved the system which provided a measure of employment and affordable housing to assist the start of the post war economy. By this means many young people were able to own their home much earlier and eventually to afford a car as well.

Reedman was a prominent member of the Masonic movement and a talented photographer. In the 1940s and 1950s he had a Photographic Studio, mostly portraits, and provided a Home Builders Plan Service which filled a niche in housing design leaving registered architects to cope with the larger more complex buildings for which they had been trained.

In architectural terms his early work reflected his interest in the 'Californian Bungalow' but no intact examples remain. His post war plan service provided what the market wanted and although generally of local vernacular character still provided a much needed service to provide affordable housing. Many older folk today owe it to Arnold Reedman that they own their own home in their retired years.

He died from complications of bowel cancer age 68 and was survived by wife Mabel (since deceased) and six children. His two sons – William John and Leslie Arnold – became qualified architects in 1950 and 1958 respectively in Newcastle. Both had been articled to Mr E. C. Sara of Castleden and Sara.

MADIGAN, Frederick John

1884 – 1970

Born in Sydney, Madigan was indentured to Alfred Allen, architect, in Sydney around the turn of the century. He was registered as an architect following the Architects Act in 1923, and until 1928, he was in practice from Scottish House, Hunter Street, Newcastle. He moved to Inverell and worked from there until 1942 and then again from 1947 for ten years, providing an architectural service locally as far as Tenterfield.

His son Colin, born in 1921 in Glen Innes, was a founder of the Sydney firm of Edwards, Madigan & Torzillo, (& Briggs later) architects for the National Gallery and the High Court, Canberra. Colin worked as a teenager in his Father's office in Inverell before moving to Sydney in 1939 to start the Architecture Diploma course at the Sydney Technical College. War interrupted and in 1941 he joined the Royal Australian Navy. In 1942 his ship, HMAS Armidale, was sunk by the Japanese in Indonesian waters north of Darwin. He was one of the survivors, another being fellow architecture student Eric Parker. They were rescued after several days adrift. Their connection survives today. Eric Parker became Professor of Architecture at the University of Newcastle and Colin is the patron of the newly formed 'The Architecture Foundation' in Newcastle which funds a travelling scholarship in memory of the late Eric Parker.

Fred Madigan was associated with his son's firm in the 1950s in various projects such as the Wellington Town Hall, NSW. He moved to Sydney in 1958 and spent his last years to age 78 colouring drawings, among other tasks, in his son's Sydney office. Some of Fred's drawings are retained by the Mitchell Library Sydney but most are at the National Library, Canberra, by permission of Colin Madigan.

Principal Reference: RAIA Architects biographical data base.

DOBELL, Sir William (Bill)

1899-1970



Self Portrait 1932

A little known fact is that Bill Dobell was a registered architect in NSW from 1924 to 1929.¹ He was born at Cooks Hill and went to school there until the age of 14. He took various jobs, one being as a footpath attendant outside Winn's Department Store, advertising and keeping the dogs from fouling the footpath or shopfront.

His father was in the building trade and Bill was good at drawing, particularly ornament. He was articled to Wallace L. Porter in 1916, the year after Porter set up his office. Dobell supplemented his articled training by taking the American Institute Correspondence Course in Architecture with his friend and relative, Clarrie Sara.² He liked drawing but avoided mathematics.

Porter's work over the next few years comprised many northern hotels and business premises. A familiar project of earlier times was the tower of the Hamilton Council Chambers in Beaumont Street which, although demolished, has been replaced with a similar motif and using the original roof timbers.³

Dobell designed the base of the WW1 Memorial at The Junction. Clarrie Sara, who worked with them briefly in 1922, said later: *'that's Wal Porter's job and Bill drew it up. I told Bill there was something wrong with the proportions.'*⁴

Dobell was traumatised early in 1924 when Porter, who was going blind, tragically killed himself.⁵ *'When my boss died I went to Sydney and got a job with Wunderlich's as a draftsman working on architectural metalwork and terra cotta for building facades. Then I went to art school.'* He later said that *'what held me back in Architecture was that I had no knowledge of mathematics.'*⁶

He went to England in 1929 and, although still sketching things to do with buildings, he gave up trying to be an architect. He returned to Sydney in 1938 and was a part-time teacher at the National Art School, Darlinghurst.

He became a war artist in 1941 and worked also at camouflage. The rest of the story of the controversy over his Archibald Prize Joshua Smith portrait is well known and trail-blazing in Australian art history.

He added a studio to his Wangi Wangi house with advice from Clarrie Sara⁷ and was very often seen at the Wangi hotel, sharing stories with his mates after a day at the easel. It is fitting that the house and studio is now a museum with much local interest and support.

References:

- 1 Board of Architects NSW Registration Roll
- 2 E. C. Sara – verbal to L. Reedman
- 3 C. McBriarty – Suters Architects – verbal
- 4 E. C. Sara – verbal to L. Reedman 1953 whilst driving past the Memorial
- 5 NMH 8/2/1924
- 6 James Gleeson – *'Dobell'*
- 7 E.C. Sara – verbal to L. Reedman 1953

LEE, Gordon Wynyard

Gordon Lee, probably not related to Arthur C. Lee, architect, of Lee and Scobie, Maitland, is best known for his many Banks of New South Wales, built in the 30s throughout the north. He came from Sydney to Newcastle in 1925 as a registered architect and joined practice with W. H. Pender of Maitland, Lee operating from Newcastle. During the next four years their projects included the Bank of NSW, corner of Beaumont and Tudor Streets, Hamilton and a large hotel at Charlestown, after which the practice lapsed at the start of the 1930s depression and Lee left the district.

He returned to Newcastle in 1935 to practice on his own, his first major project being three-storied apartments in East Newcastle,¹ now demolished. From 1937 to 1940 he designed a re-building programme of six new banks and alterations to two in the north of the State for the Bank of NSW. The facades are of brick and render, usually symmetrical in the arrangement of classically proportioned door and window openings which have carefully detailed plastered or brick surrounds. The formal designs reinforced quite successfully the substantial image required by the Bank.

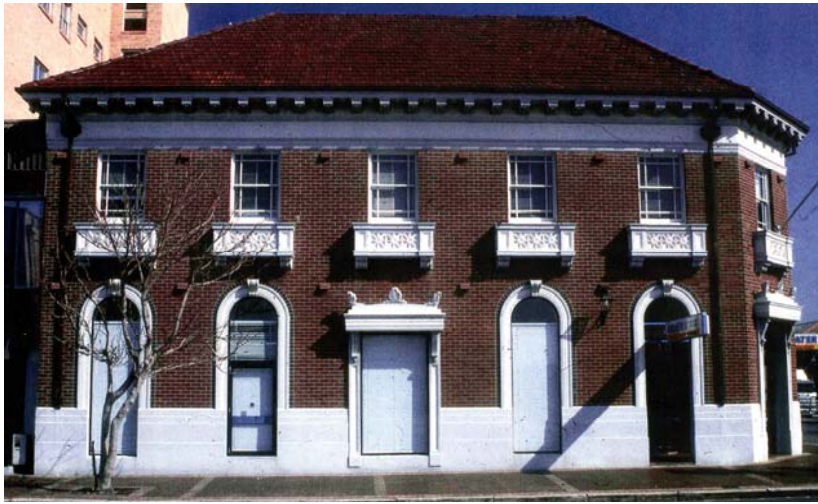
In the course of the construction of the banks he made many trips to the country. In 1938, after one trip of fifteen hundred miles by car, he reported on the brisk building activity at Inverell, Tenterfield, Lismore and Grafton.² He confirmed in 1940 that this was more so the case and was amazed commenting '*one would never know the war was on.*'³

His principal Newcastle building was the Bank of New South Wales, on the site of the 1889 domed Bank designed by Sir John Sulman of Sydney, and it was a significant landmark at the gateway to Wickham. The Sulman building had an impressive banking chamber and would have been protected today but it

had limited office accommodation for the bank's expanding business. It was said of the new building that '*the design of the façade is a simple modernised version of classical tradition, attractively set off with face bricks and relieved with pilasters, plaques, copings and dressings of architectural terra cotta, refined in detail, the spandrels between the pilasters and window railings to the first floor are in aluminium, satin finished.*'⁴ Quite a mixture of the latest materials but, although noteworthy, it in no way can be said to compensate for the qualities of the old bank. He left Newcastle for Sydney in 1945, presumably to retire there.



*The Bank of NSW of 1889 by Sir John Sulman (demolished)
corner of Hunter & Hannell Streets, Newcastle West. See next page.
Measured drawing by Max Hoskings, Architectural Diploma Course, Newcastle, 1933.*



*Bank of NSW, corner Beaumont & Tudor Streets, Hamilton.
Pender & Lee, architects, c.1930*



*Bank of NSW, Beardy Street, Armidale,
G. W. Lee, architect, 1938*



*Bank of NSW, Frome Street, Moree
G. W. Lee, architect, 1937*



*Bank of NSW, corner of Hunter & Hannell Streets, Newcastle West.
G. W. Lee, architect, 1939*

LEE, G. W. – BUILDINGS

1935 Three off three storied blocks of Flats, Hunter Street East
for Mr. L. Tendt.

1937 Eighteen flats, Zaara Streets, East Newcastle.

Banks of New South Wales –

c.1930 Hamilton (cnr. Beaumont & Tudor Streets) (Pender & Lee)

1937 Moree

Inverell (alterations)

1938 Dungog,

Bonalbo (near Queensland border)

Armidale

1939 Casino (alterations)

Lismore

Newcastle – Bank Corner, Hunter Street West

1940 Bangalow.

References:

- 1 NMH 9/2/1935
- 2 NMH 1/2/1938
- 3 NMH 12/10/1939
- 4 NMH 16/12/1939.



*Above: Bank of NSW, Deacon Street, Bangalow. Left: doorway detail.
G. W. Lee, architect, 1940.*

JEATER, William David

1896-1981

(Jeater & Rodd)

(Jeater, Rodd & Hay)



Lieutenant Jeater c.1925

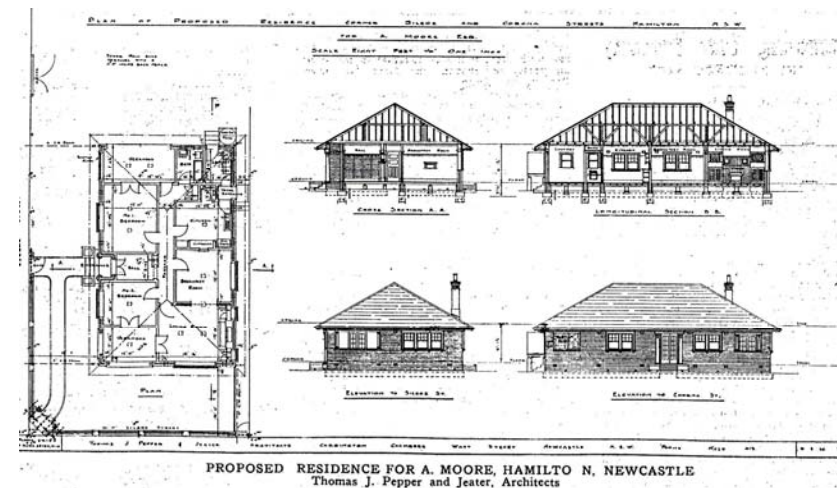
Bill Jeater was a 'Professor of Architecture' in the 'University of Changi' and he held the 'position' for three and a half years in Changi Camp, Singapore, in the 'care' of the Japanese Imperial Army.

He had his early architectural training in Sydney with the firm of architects, Tate & Young. He came back to Newcastle in 1925 as a registered architect to join the much older Thomas J. Pepper, architect, of Newcastle. Their link could have been that both belonged to the Congregational Church and it is interesting that, in 1927, Jeater designed, with Pepper, the Congregational Church at Epping, Sydney. He showed an early interest in Town Planning and, at the first meeting of the Town Planning Association of NSW, Newcastle Branch, in 1925 was elected Honorary Treasurer with architect F. G. Castleden as President.

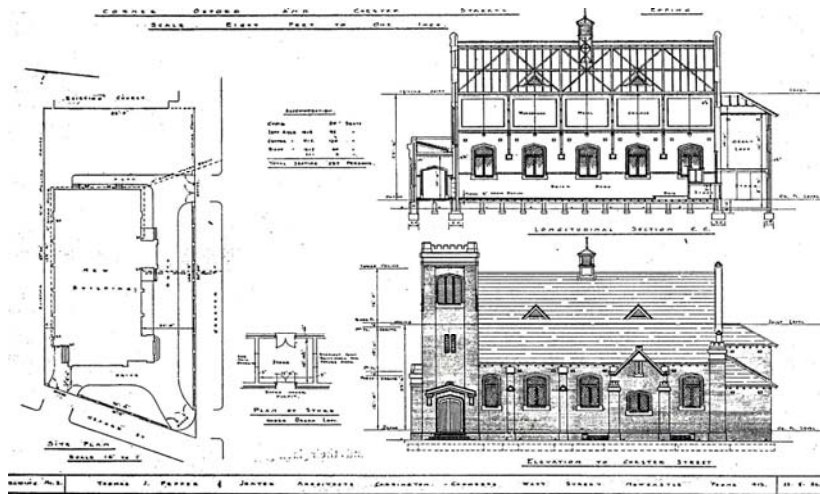
Perhaps the more plausible reason for his move back to Newcastle was that Pepper, a freemason, had secured the job of major alterations in 1926 for the Wolfe Street Lyric Picture Theatre for which he would have needed assistance, in fact Jeater's. The 800 seat theatre was integrated, together with a new dress circle, into the bulk of the 1890s Masonic Temple with the added complication of retaining upper storey Lodge Rooms.

Jeater apparently worked well with Pepper. His thorough drafting technique is illustrated in his 1926 detailed drawings of the Epping Church and a Hamilton house.

One of his interesting house innovations, probably brought from Sydney, was to place the box-framed windows directly on the outside face of the wall, instead of as usually within the wall, the advantage being that no sill flashing is needed to drain rainfall, the window head being protected by eaves.



*Residence, corner Silsoe & Corona Streets, Hamilton
Pepper & Jeater, architects, 1926 (drawn by Jeater)*



*Congregational Church, corner of Oxford & Chester Streets, Epping
Pepper & Jeater, architects, 1926 (drawn by Jeater)*

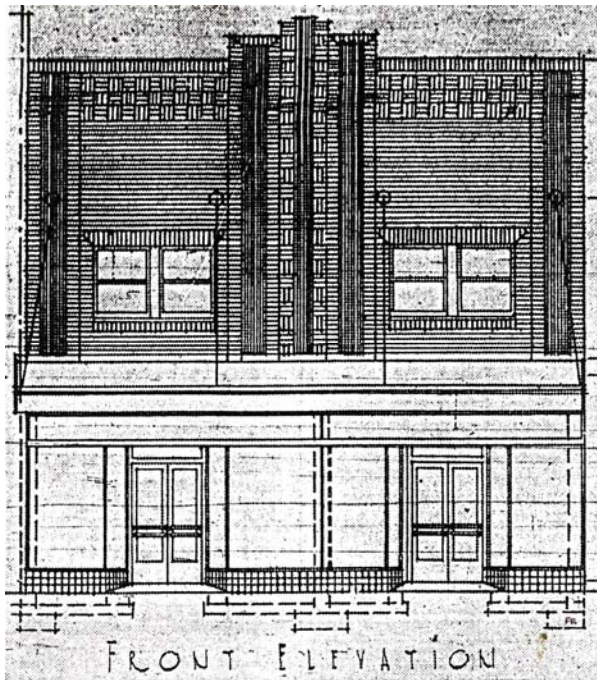
His partnership with Pepper finished in 1930, like so many businesses affected by the Depression. Whilst continuing to work from Carrington Chambers in Watt Street, as W. D. Jeater ARIBA ARAIA, he developed a number of commercial clients including Washington H. Soul & Co. for

whom he remodelled premises in 1931, the Charleston Studios in Hunter Street designed by Menkens in 1906. The project was done internally with planning skill ¹ but the elaborate façade was altered and updated, a common practice of the time which has eroded the quality of Newcastle streetscapes particularly in Hunter Street. In 1935 he altered a building for the Queensland Insurance Company at 59 Hunter Street and used on its face four inch (100mm) thick glazed terra cotta, appearing then on Sydney's Martin Place banks but not previously used in Newcastle. ²

Jeater must have developed a good client base for, by early 1936, he took recently qualified Frank Rodd into partnership. In their first year they designed at least a dozen substantial projects for the motor, retail and insurance industries including the South British Insurance Co. building at the corner of Scott and Bolton Streets, Newcastle, ³ typical of their rather formal style. Jeater was also a teacher in architecture at the Newcastle Technical College with N. B. Pitt up to 1939.



*Queensland Insurance Company, 59 Hunter Street, Newcastle
W. D. Jeater, architect, 1935. First use of terra cotta facing in Newcastle.*



*Shops & Flats, Maitland Road, Mayfield.
Jeater & Rodd, architects, 1936 (probably drawn by Frank Rodd)*

The design is typical for small business premises with dominant vertical fluted features projecting above the parapet.

Later that year Cecil Hay joined them from Sydney. He had done well in the Sydney Technical College with fellow student Sid Anchor and he brought with him new ideas of the 1930s which are expressed in the Arcade at Newcomen Street and the exceptional 'Wirraway' flats at the corner of Church and Watt Streets. The new practice was soon interrupted by the Second World War and Jeater and Rodd enlisted in the Army.

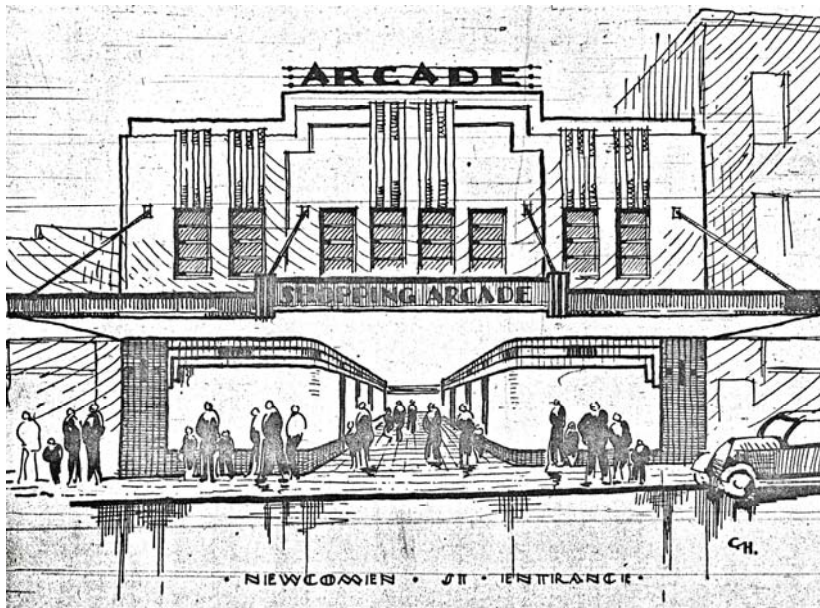
Jeater was a devoted and diligent soldier and served in the two world wars and in the Army Reserve between the wars, a total of over 20 years. At age 19 he joined the 1st A.I.F. 30th Battalion, 8 Machine Gun Company and, as a Private in France, in 1915, won a decoration for demolishing alone a German machine

gun.⁴ He was promoted rapidly in the field to a 2nd Lieutenant, probably as an alternative to receiving a medal, as could be the option, and was transferred to Battalion HQ before being demobbed in 1919. He joined the Army Reserve in 1924 and by 1937 held the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel while practicing as an architect. In June 1940, as a single man, he volunteered for service in the 2nd A.I.F. and sailed for Singapore from Sydney on His Majesty's Troopship "Queen Mary" in February 1941. The official War History says that

'the next day Col. Jeater addressed his men on board at sea on subjects which included the necessity for security measures, when the "QM" picked up a message that a German raider was within 39 miles' ⁵, a threat which did not eventuate. Two months after arriving in Malaya he became ill and, after a short convalescence, was appointed to command General Base Depot, Malaya.



*Esplanade Hotel, Telford Street, Newcastle Beach (demolished)
Jeater, Rodd & Hay, architects, 1937.*



*Shopping Arcade, Newcomen Street, Newcastle. Remodelling of Municipal Baths. (Design by Francis Fuller)
Jeater, Rodd & Hay, architects, 1938. Drawn by Cecil Hay.*

At the fall of Singapore to the Japanese in February 1942 he was listed in Australia as missing but was actually taken prisoner and held in Changi Camp, the error of notification not being corrected in Australia until a year later. ⁶

Within a month of capture the Australians formed the University of Changi. There was sufficient expertise available to offer courses in fourteen faculties from Agriculture to Medicine. There were over seven thousand students, three hundred and fifty instructors and a central unit of twenty. Colonel Jeater was appointed 'Professor' of the Department of Architecture which had nine staff and 87 students, eight of which had been civilian architectural students. The course proposed was for four staged years with a comprehensive list of building and architectural

subjects. The syllabus was from historical to modern with the latest subjects then of functionalism, environment, le Corbusier and Frank Lloyd Wright. Jeater's first report to the Camp's Education Centre, after one month of operation, mentions that 'students are keen but working parties such as "Singapore" interrupt the programme and instructions have to be changed.'⁷ Within a year the University had to be abandoned, not so much from lack of materials but from the disruption caused by the Japanese withdrawing prisoners, particularly instructors, for working parties in Burma and Thailand, although informal education groups continued at the Camp on an *ad hoc* basis. The University was a noble idea and Jeater must be commended for his part in it.

Jeater was recovered from the Japanese in September 1945, returning to Sydney in the rescue ship "Duntroon", a converted coastal steamer and, after some months in hospital, was discharged in February 1946. He was awarded the Efficiency Decoration and was 'Mentioned in Dispatches' in the two world wars. ⁸ One of his comrades said 'Mr. Jeater's example to his men was really something. He put up with a lot of abuse from the Japanese and was a very brave man.'⁹

On taking up his life again in Newcastle, aged almost fifty, he found difficulty, as with many thousands of POW's, in settling back into civilian life. Although he soon married and briefly rejoined his firm, Jeater, Rodd & Hay, he apparently could not relate to the new ideas of his younger partners and retired from the firm to run his own small practice from his home, in Merewether, designing mostly houses. He was a keen bowler and his design of the club building of the Newcastle District Bowling Association, was given as a gift and was so well appreciated that he was made a life member of the club. ¹⁰ Even though his health suffered from his wartime capture he lived to be 85 years old.

References:

- 1 NMH 7/6/1931
- 2 NMH 9/3/1935
- 3 NMH 3/4/1937
- 4 NMH 3/12/1981
- 5 Official War History AWM
- 6 Officers Record of Service
- 7 Taylor, Harold Burfield Brigadier. Acc. Number Pr 85/042 AWM
- 8 Officers Record of Service.
- 9 & 10 NMH 7/12/1981



*Wirraway Flat Building, corner of Watt & Church Streets, Newcastle
Jeater, Rodd & Hay, architects, 1939. Above: drawing by Cecil Hay,
above right: Wirraway Flats as built.*



Cec Hay (standing) and Frank Rodd in the 1950s.

SCORER, Frederick Abraham

c.1910-c.1968

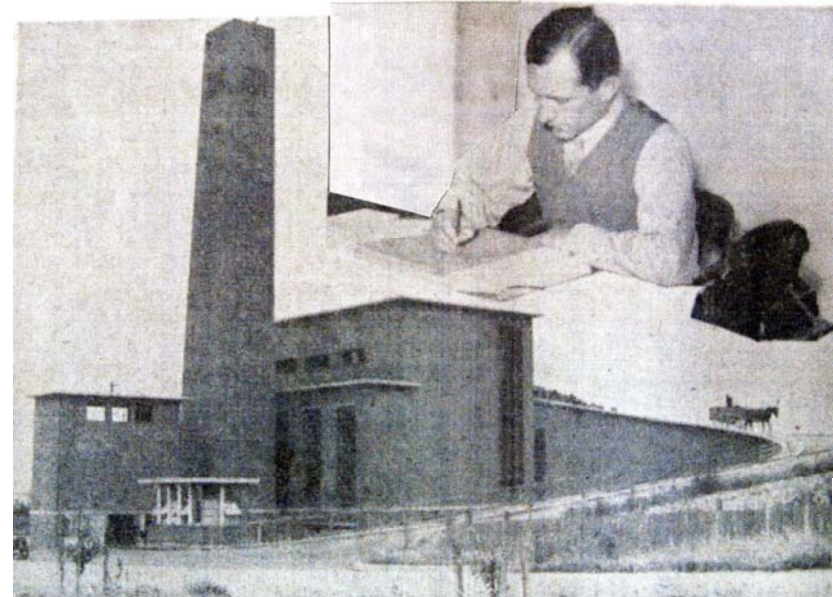
Fred Scorer was noted for his design of the Newcastle Incinerator, which won the 1938 Sir John Sulman Medal,¹ the first for Newcastle, awarded by the Royal Australian Institute of Architects NSW for a project of the highest architectural standard.

Since the mid 1920s local councils in NSW were turning to incineration of household garbage as a 'clean' alternative to land filling. Walter Burley Griffin designed major plants at Willoughby and Pyrmont (1934) and several smaller incinerators, one being at Waratah, Newcastle in 1931,² now demolished. In preparation for the formation of the Greater Newcastle Council from surrounding Councils in 1938, the Government suggested the building of a major incinerator for Newcastle.

The building was brick clad on a concrete frame and had two brick lined, very high temperature furnaces, quenching chambers, truck docks and a major load bearing tapered brick chimney. The composition of the direct forms of the building is complemented by a spiral semi-circular ramp which provides loaded vehicle access to the top of the furnaces. It was a simple industrial structure and applauded for bringing industrial design to a standard on a par with that of other prize winning buildings.

The operation of the plant was state of the art. After the furnace was progressively primed with wood and coke to a very high heat, the refuse became self burning being assisted by crude oil injection, depending on the wetness of the material. The clinker and ash residue was used to raise the levels of surrounding swampy sports grounds.³ The plant fell into disrepair when policies changed. It was used for some years as a motor body workshop and demolished after the 1989 earthquake. Architecture reviewers said at the time:

*'Probably the greatest value of this building lies in the practical demonstration that good architecture can be applied to structures whose purpose is most prosaic.'*¹¹



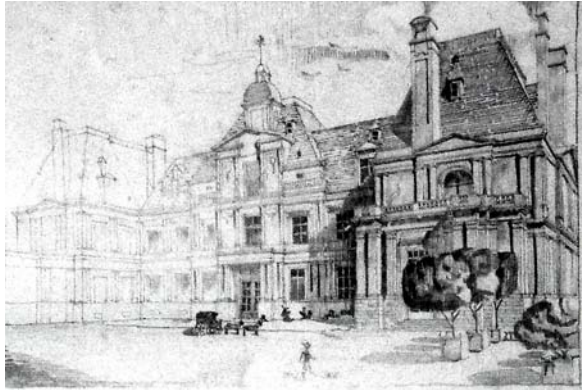
The Newcastle City Incinerator, Parry Street, Newcastle West.

F. A. Scorer, City Architect, 1937.

*1938 Sir John Sulman Medal for the Royal Australian Institute of Architects.
Collage Photograph: Newcastle Morning Herald, courtesy of the Local History Library,
Newcastle Council.*

Scorer was born in Newcastle and was educated at Wickham Junior Technical School. He was articled to the firm of Pitt & Merewether⁴ around 1928 and attended the Newcastle Technical and Sydney Technical Colleges, receiving his diploma in 1933.⁵ That year he joined the Newcastle City Council and became its City Architect in 1936 and Chief Architect of the Greater Newcastle Council on its formation, in 1938. War interrupted his career and he joined the Department of the Interior in Sydney in 1943, moving the next year to the Directorate of the Allied Works

Council, Brisbane, and, in 1945, to the Department of the Interior, Townsville. He returned to Brisbane after the war and worked for the Brisbane City Council. He had his own practice in Brisbane from 1948 to 1966⁶ and, during that time his brother, Nelson, an architect from Toronto, NSW, joined him in 1951 for seven years.⁷



Sketch by Fred Scorer, Year 3 Sydney Technical College Architecture Course, Newcastle College 1930.

Fred Scorer's early work was modest and traditional and thorough in its composition.⁸ The Nobby's Beach Pavilion of 1934 is a pleasing example of the inter-war 'Mediterranean' style with a gabled central block and two flanking wings with arched colonnades facing the beach. Within the next few years his work becomes 'Modernist'. It is interesting to note that his council employed a theatre consultant in 1937 to remodel its Hunter Street Strand Theatre.⁹ Scorer was required to liaise with Mr C. Bohringer, of Sydney, who was an exponent of the modern movement. It could be speculated that Scorer was inspired with new ideas after meeting a prominent Sydney designer. Scorer's Market Street Block building of 1939, next door to the Strand Theatre, gave a clue to a change in his approach.¹⁰

Most of his Newcastle buildings have been demolished. His Surf Pavilions constructed in the 1940s at Newcastle and South Newcastle beaches were boldly modernist with emphasised longitudinal elements and continuous promenade colonnades, integrated with cubic form, a new design idiom for Newcastle. The construction was of brick supported on a reinforced concrete frame with exposed 'toe' lintels. By the 1970s the steel reinforcement, which had minimal concrete cover, had become corroded by the aggressive marine environment. That, together with the growth of the brickwork in long runs without expansion joints caused the building fabric to disintegrate rapidly and demolition was inevitable. Had today's practice of using vibrators to improve concrete density and the knowledge that bricks expand and concrete shrinks been available the buildings would stand today. Their demolition was a sad loss for the beachfront of Newcastle.

By contrast, the Nobby's Beach Pavilion was of load bearing brickwork with no exposed concrete. The beach, and by location the Pavilion, became nationally famous when the bulk carrier 'Pasha Bulker' was driven onto the beach during a storm in 2007, sticking fast between the flags after causing some initial commotion as it seemed to be headed for the Pavilion, a declared Heritage Building.

In his brief pre-war career in Newcastle Scorer achieved a reputation as a competent, up to date architect of considerable ability.

References:

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| 1 NMH 16/11/1939 | 8 NMH 19/9/1936 |
| 2 NMH 13/5/1931 | 9 NMH 15/1/1936 |
| 3 NMH 13/8/1938 | 10 NMH 20/5/1939 |
| 4 NMH 16/11/1939 | 11 <i>Decoration & Glass</i> March 1940 |
| 5 Records – Sydney Technical College | |
| 6 Records – Board of Architects, NSW | |
| 7 <i>ibid</i> 9 NMH 15/1/1938 | |



*Nobbys Beach Surf Pavilion. F. A. Scorer, City Architect, 1934.
below: colonnade detail.*

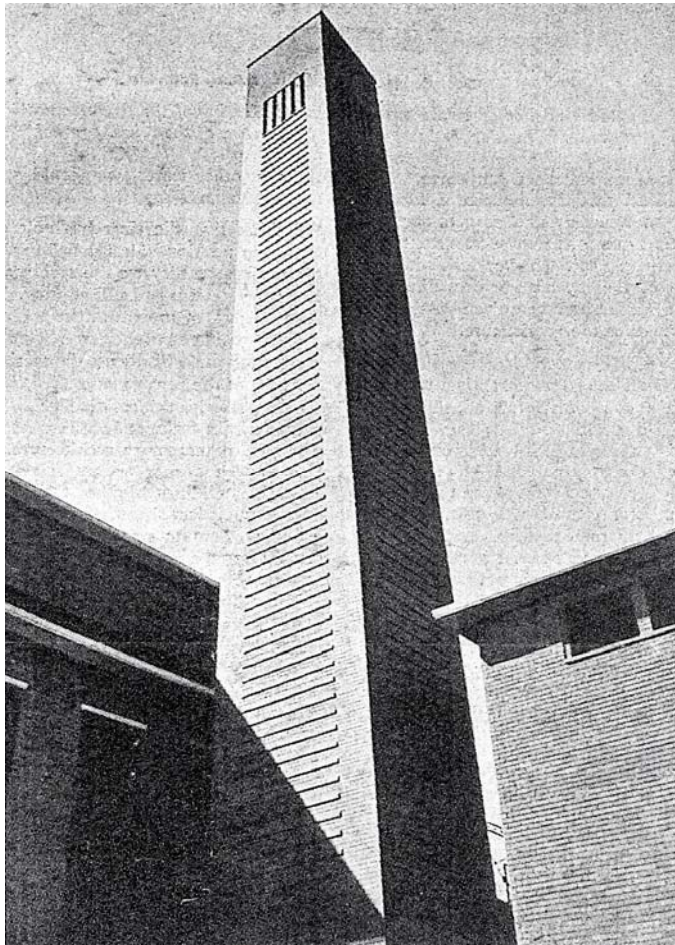


SCORER, Frederick A. – BUILDINGS

- 1932 Parish Hall, Presbyterian Church, Wallsend (demolished)
- 1934 Nobby's Beach Surf Pavilion
- 1936 Bowling Club House, National Park
- 1937 Newcastle City Council, Incinerator (demolished)
This won the 1938 SIR JOHN SULMAN MEDAL
- 1937 Surf Pavilion Bar Beach (attributed) (demolished)
- 1938 Strand Theatre, Hunter Street, Newcastle with
C. Bohringer (demolished)
- 1939 Market Buildings, corner Hunter and Thorn Streets,
Newcastle (demolished)
Tennis Pavilion, Centennial Park
- 1940 Surf Pavilion, Newcastle Beach (demolished)
Surf Pavilion, Newcastle South (demolished)



*The Municipal Block, Hunter Street, Newcastle.
Market Building on right. F. A. Scorer, City Architect, 1939.
Strand Theatre. C. Bohringer with F. A. Scorer, architects, 1939.
Municipal Building on left. T. W. Silk, architect, 1908.
(Photograph: 'Newcastle 150 Years' – Newcastle Council.)*



*The brick chimney of the Newcastle City incinerator,
Parry Street, Newcastle West.*

Fred Scorer, City Architect, 1937.

Photograph from 'Architecture' NSW RAIA 1/2/1940.

Winner of the Sulman Award, 1938.

**GANNON, John Patrick, 1903-1962 also
GANNON, Peter Jerome, 1925- 1987 and
GANNON, John Kevin, 1931-1979**



John Patrick Gannon (brother of Peter Joseph Gannon) c.1940

When Peter Gannon the elder was commissioned to design the new Mater Misericordiae Hospital, in 1932, it was probably on the basis that he sought assistance. The project was the first large modern hospital to be built in Newcastle and his younger brother, John Patrick, joined him from Sydney.¹

John was born in Auburn, Sydney and studied at the University of Sydney, taking degrees in Engineering, Science and Architecture.² Early in 1935 his brother, Peter, died, just before the opening of the Hospital, leaving John with the responsibility for the Mater project³ and for carrying on the extensive work of the practice. Although it was reported that he had a degree in architecture, it was not until 1938 that he was required to pass the Board of Architect's Examination⁴ to become a registered architect to continue the practice – many try but not many succeed which is testimony to his ability. Not only was his commitment to the practice, at the age of thirty two an onerous one, but he felt it his responsibility to provide for his brother's widow and six children. He remained a life long bachelor.

During the next 5 years, to the start of the war, he continued his brother's work but also on his own account added the Nurses Home and Convent to the Mater Hospital and designed the Murray Dwyer Orphanages at Maitland and Mayfield,⁵ a College at Aberdeen and new churches at Mayfield and Bulahdelah. Those completed in 1937 at Condobolin and Manilla are almost certainly designed by his brother, Peter.

The design of the Mayfield Catholic church, St Columban's in Church Street, in 1940, has many 1930s traits but avoids art deco and is a complete departure from other Gannon churches. The exterior is red textured face bricks with cream brick string courses every two feet (600mm) and around windows.

The nave is high in contrast to the deliberate low form across the front which comprises the foyer and baptisteries. The exaggerated proportions have surprising visual effects internally. The nave, which has a flat panelled ceiling, has round concrete columns 36 feet (11 metres) high, each row free of side walls by aisle width, giving the nave the illusion of being twice as high as wide. The effect is heightened by long clerestory windows providing interesting lighting effects to the space and accenting the roundness of the columns.

The pew joinery and doors are carefully detailed, there are 'Copperlite' fanlights and panels, fittings are Wombeyan marble with polished bronze infill panels, walls are plain plastered and flooring is Pacific Oak timber⁶ – a more than successful mixture of materials. The Church is an outstanding design. There is no doubt the project was by John's office but its actual design authorship cannot be confirmed.



*St Columban's Catholic Church, Church Street, Mayfield.
John Patrick Gannon, architect, 1940.*



St Columban's, northern elevation.



St Columban's, the nave with side aisles has cathedral like proportions.



St Columban's, west entrance door.



St Columban's, internal light and shade.



Peter Jerome Gannon c.1986



John Kevin Gannon c.1978

Peter Jerome Gannon started work with his uncle John in 1946 after service in the RAAF which he joined in 1944, serving as a radar technician in the Pacific and Borneo. ⁷

John Kevin Gannon joined his uncle and brother a few years later. Together they continued the practice which, with the growth of post war population, demanded many new schools and churches in newly created parishes, as well as additions to earlier buildings by Peter Joseph. They planned Pius X College, and the creative conversion of the Lustre Hosiery Factory, Adamstown, for school purposes as well as more than 10 new churches and many alterations and additions. For example, John Patrick completed the east end of the nave of Corpus Christi church, Waratah, a major addition to the original church by

Peter Joseph Gannon now involved his sons Peter and Kevin as well.

John Patrick was a respected member of the Boards of St Joseph's Aged Home, Sandgate, and the Mater Hospital and, like his brother, helped others less fortunate, which was paramount in their devotion to the Church. The Crucifix behind the high altar at Kurri Kurri Church is dedicated to John.⁸ His nephew, Peter, was also a member of the Boards of St Joseph's Home and the Mater Hospital after John.

When John Patrick died, in 1962, Peter and Kevin continued the work. Churches were designed at Kurri Kurri, Adamstown, Branxton, Cooks Hill, Denman, Booragul and Aberdeen by Peter and Shortland, Gateshead and Beresfield by Kevin. Due to ill health and family pressures Peter had not completed the full architectural diploma course at Newcastle Technical College but instead elected to do the Board of Architects exam which he passed to his credit in 1966 in order to continue the practice. Kevin, although working as an architect, did not complete formal qualifications. When Kevin died in 1979, Peter, because of deteriorating health, was required to reduce his work and continued to practice from home. He suffered a long illness and at his Requiem Mass great tribute was paid to his devotion to his family, his suffering and his special relationship with his Church.⁹

The Gannon architects did indeed, in a meaningful way, together and individually, contribute to the story of the architecture of the Hunter.

References:

- 1 NMH 16/8/1962
- 2 NMH 16/8/1962
- 3 NMH 6/4/1935
- 4 Board of Architects Registration Rolls
- 5 Catholic Education Reporter, September 1987
- 6 Newcastle and Maitland Catholic Sentinel, 1/8/1940
- 7 Mrs Peter Jerome Gannon
- 8 Mrs Peter Jerome Gannon
- 9 Catholic Education Reporter, September 1987



St Columban's, detail of ganged windows.

HOSKINGS, Maxwell

1910-1987



Max Hoskings c.1955

PILGRIM, Maxwell Galbraith

1909-1964

Hoskings and Pilgrim were enthusiastic young architects and they formed a partnership in Newcastle in 1937 soon after they qualified, Hoskings in 1934 and Pilgrim a year later, from the Newcastle Technical College.

Hoskings in particular had a fresh and straightforward approach to architectural design and he liked the new 1930s style. Pilgrim was more the office organiser and was thorough in business. They worked well together and had completed over 30 projects before the war intervened. Both had married and Hoskings had just built a house when the war came. Both enlisted in the Army at Victoria Barracks, Paddington, in December 1941. ¹

Their projects were interesting and innovative, mostly using a combination of glass bricks, plain painted render, brickwork and

graphics. Since demolished, the Lubritorium at the corner of Tudor and Parry Streets and Saddington's Warehouse in King Street illustrated their style. Their 1938 Exhibition House in Barker Street was promoted as '*a complete departure from the standard type of domestic architecture, this has but enhanced the dignity and comfort of the structure and will, no doubt, have an influence on similar work in this district.*' ² At a cost of 2500 pounds, the construction was of brick and concrete with a terraced flat roof. The special bricks had brown and purple flecks and glass bricks were featured internally, the design apparently using all the most up to date materials and fittings – a very modern house indeed for Newcastle. Although now extensively altered, the two-storied house combined a cubic and rounded form. The style did not have much influence on future housing but it is interesting that it was designed a year before Sara's Fairhall house at Hamilton, which is in the same idiom but more refined in proportion and detail. Their last pre-war project was Toni's Café in Hunter Street which used such state of the art materials as monel metal, 'karara' glass and aluminium.



*House, corner Parkway Avenue & Bruce Street, Hamilton South
Hoskings & Pilgrim, architects, 1937*



*The Kelso Exhibition House, Barker Street, The Hill, Newcastle.
Hoskings & Pilgrim, architects, 1937. Photograph: Newcastle Morning Herald.*



*The former 1938 Exhibition House, Barker Street, The Hill, Newcastle
altered in 1997.*

Hoskings and Pilgrim had an affinity with the popular picture theatre architects, Crick & Furze of Sydney and assisted in the remodelling of the 1930s style cinemas at Stockton, New Lambton, Scone and Maitland. In 1955-56 Pilgrim supervised the six-storied MLC building at Civic for Melbourne architects Bates, Smart & McCutcheon,³ which was an early use of the glass and sheet metal curtain wall. These local supervisory commissions entrusted from prominent, larger firms was testimony to their competence and reliability from the start.



*Cinema, Kelly Street, Scone.
Crick & Furze, architects, Sydney with Hoskings & Pilgrim, 1938.*

The firm resumed practice in 1946 and, with Bill Benson joining as senior draftsman, and later a partner, the firm carried out a large range of work. Benson, who had early training with the Housing Commission, was a very productive and efficient draftsman even to the extent of drying an ink line with the end of a cigarette to save time.

Hoskings had made contact with clients in the Pacific during the war and the firm designed department stores and resorts in New Caledonia and the New Hebrides. They designed, and constructed by day labour, the British Residency at Port Vila for the Colonial Office and, being designed for storm conditions, it was the only building to survive undamaged in the 1966 cyclone.

In 1952 they co-operated with Castleden & Sara, Lees & Valentine, and Pitt & Pitt, to design the War Memorial Cultural Centre in Laman Street, now the Newcastle Regional Library. The firm was highly regarded in Newcastle for their competence and integrity – Hoskings impressing that 'there are no degrees of honesty'. Hoskings gained work through his wide social and business contacts resulting in Bowling, Golf and RSL Club projects as well as a range of major commercial buildings. Pilgrim's clients were more domestic in scale such as churches, banks and houses. He was held in such high regard for his thoroughness and competence that Newcastle's largest building firm, Stronach, commissioned houses for two sons of the firm, Spencer and Bruce.



*Business Premises, corner John & Pitt Streets, Singleton.
Hoskings & Pilgrim, architects, 1939*



*Marfak lubritorium, corner Parry & Tudor Streets, Hamilton.
Hoskings & Pilgrim, architects, 1937 (attributed)*



*Warehouse & Offices, corner Cleary & Samdon Streets, Hamilton.
Hoskings & Benson, c.1975*

*The bowstring roof construction was often used by the firm.
It was Hoskings' opinion that it was the most
economical form of lightweight construction.*

MAX HOSKINGS was born in Newcastle, was articled to architect Mr E. C. Sara in 1926 and, after a disagreement, moved to Pitt & Merewether, architects, from 1929 to 1935, being employed for a short time by Jeater & Rodd in 1936. He became a registered architect in 1936 and a member of the RAIA in 1937.⁴ He served as a Lieutenant in the Royal Australian Engineers during the war and specialised in bomb disposal, (a hazard considering that he was rarely without a roll-your-own smoke), first in the Middle East and later at Milne Bay and Port Moresby.⁵ He had a clear idea of the principles of his profession and always operated in a climate of trust with his clients, builders and staff. He was a part-time lecturer in Structures, Specification writing and Professional Practice (Architectural) at the Newcastle Technical College. In his later years he had a part-time interest in his Hunter Valley farm.

MAX PILGRIM was born at West Maitland, the son of George Pilgrim, a respected local builder and a cousin of Herbert R. Pilgrim who worked as a draftsman for W. H. Pender. He was educated at Maitland Boys High School and, after employment with W. H. Pender, qualified in architecture, in 1935, at Newcastle Technical College. He became a registered architect in 1937 at the start of his practice. During the war he served as a Lieutenant with the Royal Australian Engineers and was sent to Darwin in the Reinforcement operation just after the bombing.⁶ He did survey work and drafting for fortifications and airfields. He was honorary architect for the C. A. Brown Homes for the Aged at Booragul. He was closely associated with the Church of the Good Shepherd, Kotara and All Saints Church of England, New Lambton.⁷ He supervised the churches' projects at Hamilton South and Adamstown.

He was energetic in the practice and a wise adviser to the more adventurous Hoskings. They served their clients well as a team until his untimely death of a heart attack at age 53.

HOSKINGS & PILGRIM – BUILDINGS (Pre-war)

- 1937 Lubritorium, corner Tudor and Parry Streets, Hamilton
Cinemas at Stockton and New Lambton (with Crick &
Furze, Architects)
James Mullan Offices, Clyde Street, Hamilton North
Peters Remould Tyre Centre, corner Maitland Road &
Bryant Street, Tighes Hill
Kelso Exhibition House, Barker Street, The Hill
- 1938 Saddington's Store, King Street, Newcastle West
Cinemas at Scone & Maitland (with Crick & Furze,
Architects)
Levey House, corner Fenton Avenue and Memorial Drive,
Bar Beach
- 1939 Post Office, South Singleton
Business Premises for Grainger & Faulkner, corner
John and Pitt Streets, Singleton
Hoskings house, Grinsell Street, Kotara

References:

- 1 Hoskings and Pilgrim – Army Service Records
- 2 NMH 7/2/1938
- 3 NMH 25/1/1956
- 4 NMH 9/9/1937
- 5 Hoskings – Army Service Record
- 6 Pilgrim – Army Service Record
- 7 NMH 13/8/1964



*Levey House, corner Fenton Avenue & Memorial Drive, Bar Beach.
Hoskings & Pilgrim, architects, 1938*



*Warehouse & Store, King Street, Newcastle West.
Hoskings & Pilgrim, architects, 1938.*

STONE, Frank George Dudley

1905-1984

Any review of Hunter Architects would be incomplete without Frank Stone. In his time he was a council engineer, a Shire President, Health Inspector, a town planner and architect and an enthusiastic entrepreneur. He began his career when he was 12 years old, in night school, in Brunswick, Melbourne, Victoria. He did well at drawing and, within two years, he was offered a job as a junior assistant to the Brunswick City Engineer. He completed the Civil Engineering course at the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology and was appointed assistant engineer in Albury. There he sat for the Local Government Engineers Examination and moved to Port Kembla. In 1929, aged 24, he became shire engineer and health inspector and, later, architect and town planner for the Stroud Shire Council. In 1936 he was awarded the George Taylor Memorial Medal for local government engineers, the first to a county outside Sydney.¹

He was popular and efficient and by then had many more skills. He was registered as a Municipal Surveyor in 1931² and the next year passed the Board of Architects examination for Registration,³ an exam rarely passed. He served for six years as Stroud Shire President, unusual in that officers of Council rarely achieve electoral popularity. The war interrupted his career and he spent five years as a commissioned officer at Allied Headquarters, Melbourne, planning demolition strategies for buildings, roads, railways and bridges in the event of a Japanese invasion – a futile task for an architect-engineer who built things.

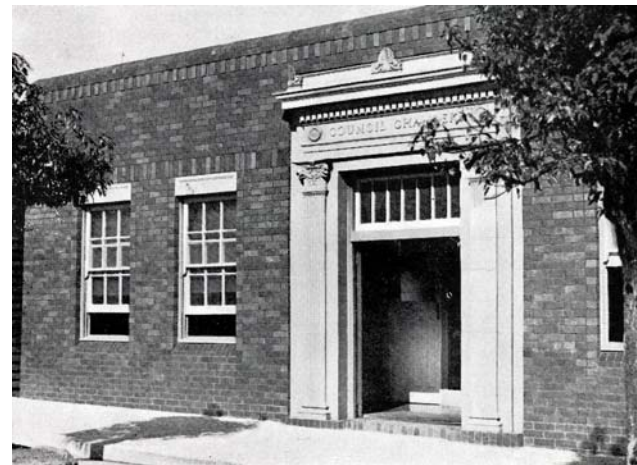
right: Various projects for Stroud Shire Council c.1930s

top: Forster Ocean Baths entrance (demolished)

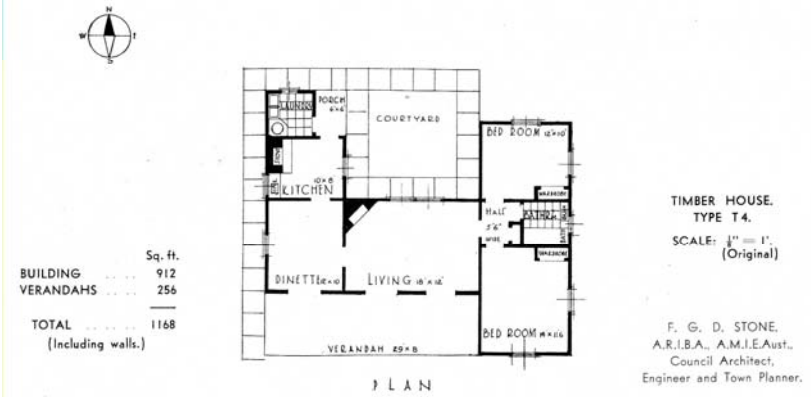
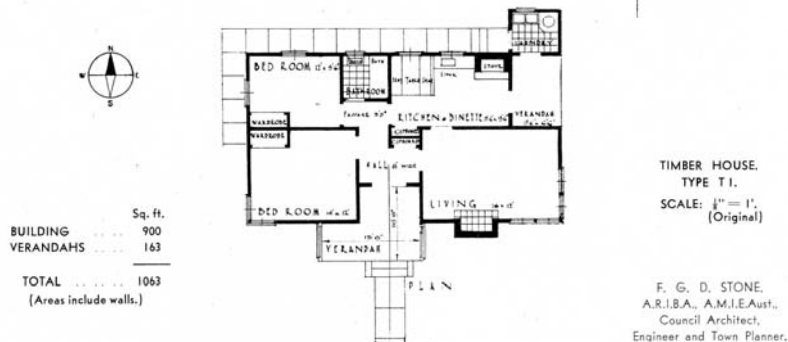
centre: Council Chambers, Stroud.

bottom: Pavilion, Hawkes Nest

F. G. D. Stone, architect.



On his return to Stroud in 1946 he devised a Development Plan for Stroud Shire as the Council's Architect, Engineer and Town Planner.⁴ The plan proposed extension of water, sewerage, electricity and roads and was liberally illustrated with his drawings for civic improvements in the towns of Stroud, Tea Gardens and Forster. The next year he formulated the Council's Housing Project, offering a range of six, low cost timber houses designed by Stone. The applicants had, preferably, to own their own land, pay 10% deposit and the finance was offered by the council at 4½% interest, with safeguards.⁵ It was a commendable scheme at a time of extreme post-war demand for housing and a shortage of materials. The scheme was short lived but the intent to assist was demonstrated.



Stroud Shire Council Housing Project 1947, typical house designs to left and above. F. G. D. Stone, architect, 1946.

The apex of his local government career came, in 1948, when he was appointed to the Northumberland County Council which carried out the planning functions for seven councils of the region. His scheme, which took five years in the making, envisaged the resiting of Maitland out of flood reach, the development of the Newcastle Civic Centre, the creation of deep-water berthing in Throsby Creek and the opening out of Newcastle East towards the sea and harbour. In 1956 a Newcastle Morning Herald editorial called the 'scheme's proposals stimulating examples of visionary planning. They provide an opportunity for redesign and improvement which will not be repeated and posterity will measure the foresight and courage of this generation by the way the challenge is accepted.'⁶

These were heady words considering that town planning at the time was piecemeal and had no direction for unprecedented post-war growth. The structure of the Northumberland County Council was used as a model for other regions but after ten years, due to disagreements with the member Councils, the powers of the County Council were taken over by the State Government and the region lost its planning autonomy.



*Proposed Memorial Clock Tower, Forster.
F. G. D. Stone, architect, 1946*

He was a part time lecturer in Town Planning at the Newcastle Technical College in the 1950s. In 1957 he was elected Fellow of the Royal Australian Planning Institute ⁷ and, in 1958, Stone set

up his own practice with his son, George. They designed civil works for land developments and buildings for local government, hotels and clubs. His culminating enterprise, for which he used his combined skills of town planning, engineering and architecture, was to plan and co-develop with a financier, the township of Mawson, on a stretch of coast between Swansea Heads and Caves Beach.

In his retirement years he took to painting at his bushland retreat outside Swansea. His paintings, oils and watercolours, were mostly of bush and landscapes and, in 1978, he held a successful exhibition of his work in Sydney. He was an excellent draftsman, a skill acquired early in his art training under Percy Everett, a Victorian architect and painter. ⁸

He lived the last years of his life in Ashburn House, a nursing home in Gladesville. At his death, in 1984, aged 79, a tribute was paid to him by the President of the Northern Parks and Playgrounds Movement, Doug Lithgow:

'Frank was one of the pioneers of town planning in Australia... His Northumberland County District Planning Scheme (1952) was one of the most far sighted and imaginative town plans in NSW. It is a shame that we have been unable to put in place, during his lifetime, the greenbelt of parks and open spaces, the tree lined boulevards and the beautification of the Newcastle harbour front which were such important features of the plan.' ⁹ Some ideas and proposals have been realised since.

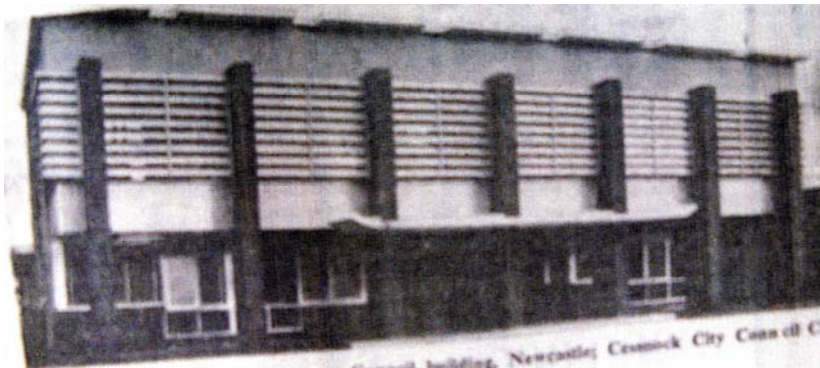
References:

- 1 NMH 18/11/1978
- 2 Certificate of Qualification 27/11/1931 Victoria
- 3 Registration Roll NSW Board of Architects
- 4 Stroud Shire Development Plan 1946
- 5 Stroud Shire Council Housing Project 1947
- 6 NMH 18/11/1978
- 7 Certificate RAPI 6/8/1957
- 8 NMH 18/11/1978
- 9 NMH 30/3/1984

STONE, F. G. D. – BUILDINGS



Frank Stone at home in 1978.



*above: Cessnock City Council Chambers,
right: Council Offices, Port Stephens Shire Council, Raymond Terrace.
(Now a library) F. G. D. Stone, architect, late 1950s.*

- 1937 Masonic Hall, Taree (with Rodd & Hay)
- 1938 Tourist Pavilion and Pool, Hawks Nest, Tea Gardens
- 1951 Northumberland County Council, corner Auckland and King Streets, Newcastle (with Rodd & Hay)
- Not Dated – Council Chambers at Cessnock, Lake Macquarie, Stroud, Coffs Harbour and Raymond Terrace
Municipal Library, Pacific Highway, Belmont
- Hotels, Not Dated – Country Club, Shoal Bay
Bel-Air, Kotara
Orana, Blacksmiths
The Federal, Hunter Street, Newcastle
Tea Gardens
Caves Beach
Warners Bay
Norfolk Island





APPENDIX

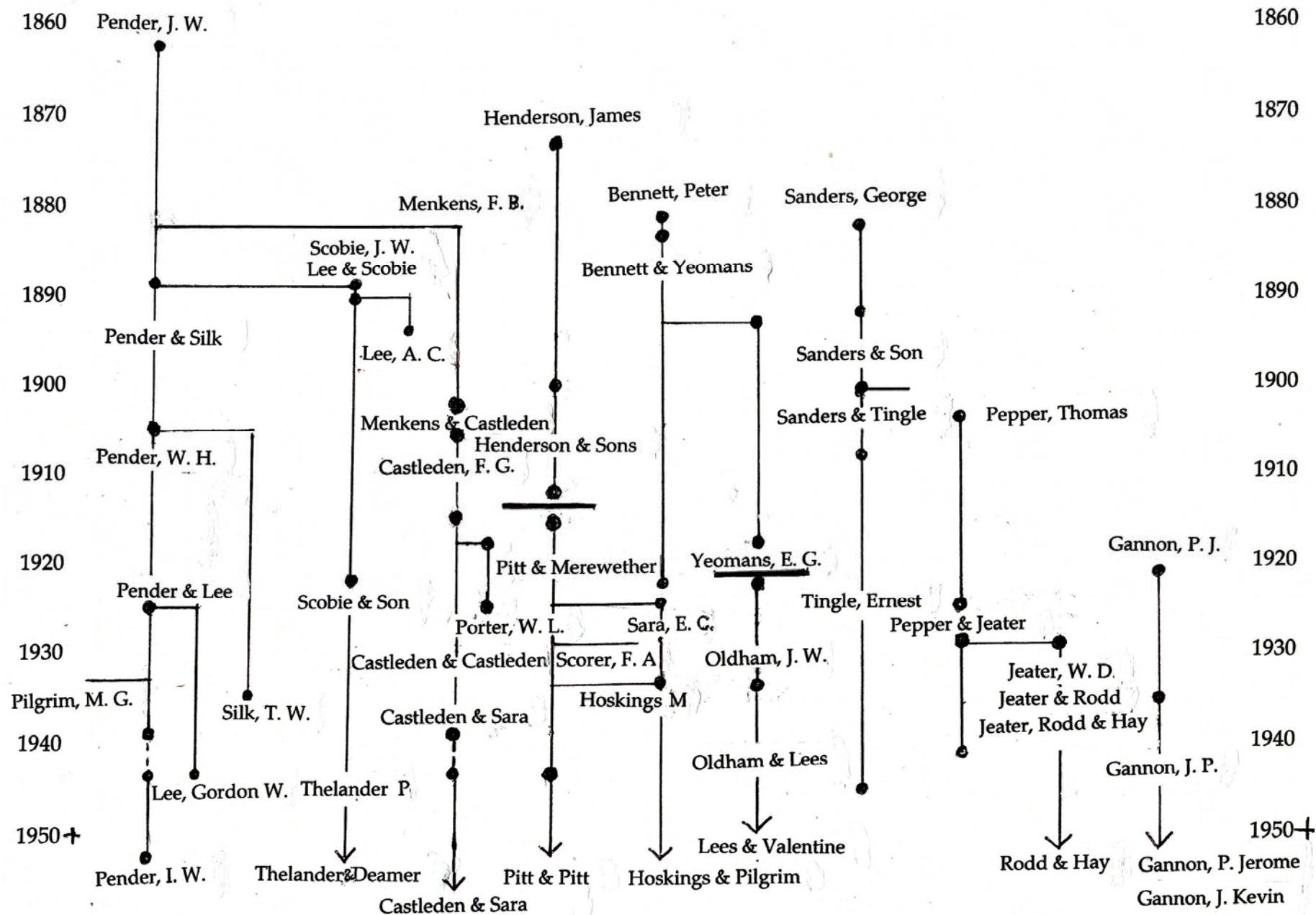
*above: Stroud Council Chambers,
below: Council Offices, Raymond Terrace,
entry porch detail.
F. G. D. Stone, architect.*



MAITLAND

THE PRACTICE TREE

NEWCASTLE



Architectural Practices of The Hunter Region in order of start date to 1940

*See Biographies Index for Architects in
Alphabetical Order and page numbers.*

Scott, Robert & Helenus	c. 1824-1842
Rees, Hy	1841-1841
Pender, John W.	1863-1909
Smith, Thomas	1866-1922
Cox, George H.	1868-1875
Backhouse, Joseph	1869-1872
Blake, J. H.	1872-1872
Swinburn, James	1872-1872
Henderson, James	1874-1902
White, W.	1874-1874
Cropley, James C.	1875-1884
Laman, E. C.	1875-1875
Francis, J. G.	1875-1875
Bourke, T. A.	1878-1901
Fuller, Francis	1878-1880
Boyd, John	1880-1880
Browne, George	1880-1882
Holmes, Charles W.	1881-1930
Bennett, Peter	1882-1921
Menkens, Frederick B.	1882-1908
Ellis, T. A.	1883-1883
Campbell, Samuel	1884-1897
Bennett & Yeomans	1884-1892
Yeomans, Ernest G.	1884-1916
Lee, Arthur C.	1885-1892
Sanders, George	1886-1890

Scobie, J. Warren	1886-1921
Sharpe, Alfred	1887-1908
McCosker, Thomas J.	1889-1894
Sharpe & Shaw	1889-1905
Pender & Silk	1889-1904
Lee & Scobie	1890-1892
Sanders & Son	1890-1900
Coutts, Thomas	1891-1891
Kendall, John H.	1891-1891
Sanders, Tingle & Mathison	1900-1901
Mathison, G. H.	1901-1901
Sanders & Tingle	1901-1908
Henderson, William	1902-1922
Henderson, James J.	1902-1914
Ackroyd, Alfred W.	1904-1942
Wilkins, Robert C.	1905-1932
Silk, Thomas W.	1905-1933
Menkens & Castleden	1907-1909
Pender, Walter H.	1909-1943
(Pender, Ian W.)	1948-1983
Castleden, Frederick G.	1909-1938
Anderson, Frederick D.	1910-1917
Pepper, Thomas	1910-1940
Tingle, Ernest	1910-1945
Merewether, Edward R.	1911-1942
Hicks, J.	1911-1925
Pitt and Merewether	1913-1950
Luscombe, J. C.	1914-1914
Rothwell, J.	1914-1926
Oldham, John W.	1914-1950
Yeomans, Eric G.	1915-1927
Porter, Wallace,	1915-1924
Pilgrim, Herbert R.	1916-1950
Hardyman, Thomas	1916-1925
Clarke, Thomas F.	1918-1961

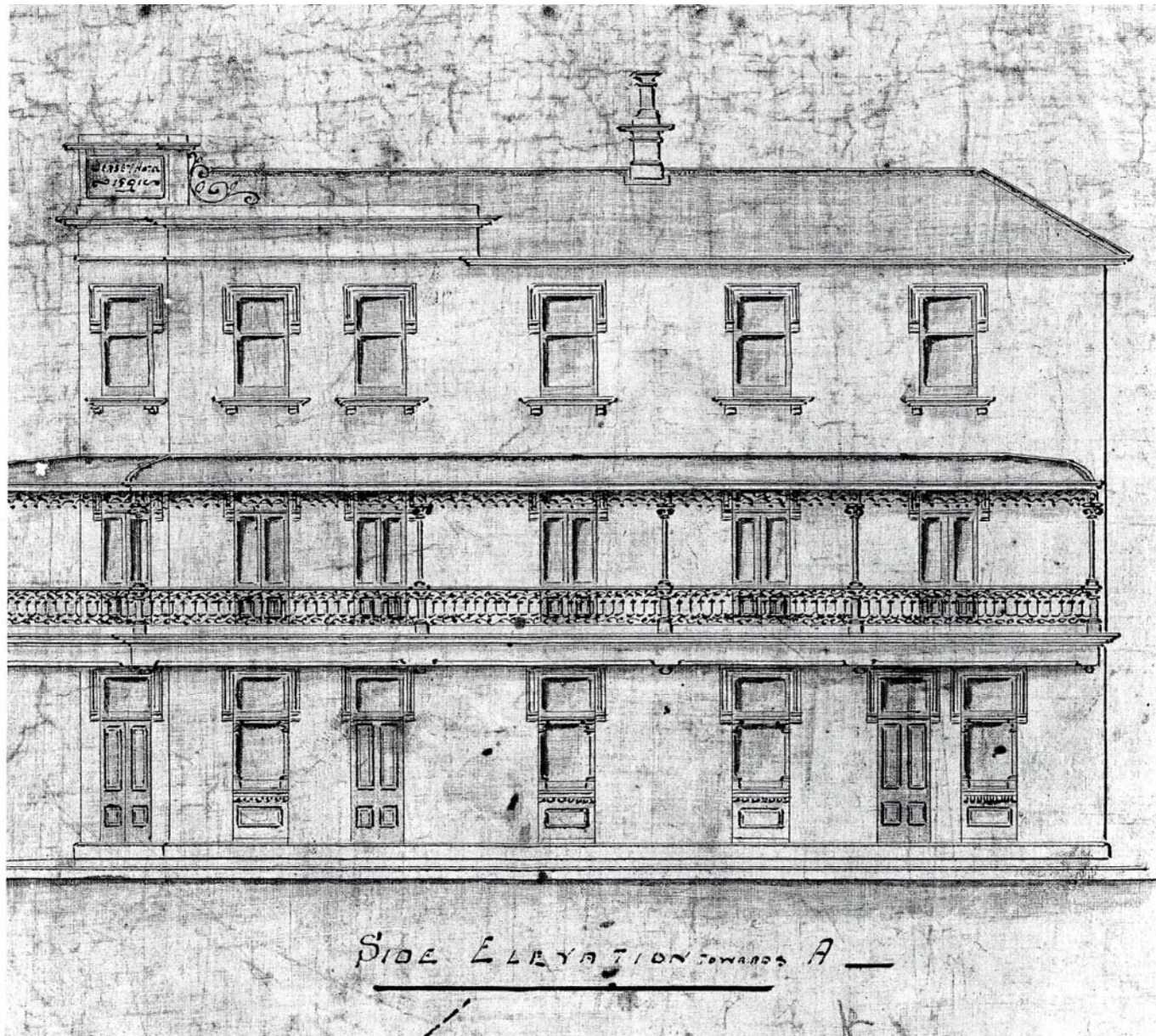
Roberts, Percy	1918-1929
Castleden & Castleden,	1919-1938
Moule, A. W.	1920-1939
Gannon, Peter Joseph	1921-1935
White, H. C. R.	1921-1932
Scobie & Son	1922-1956
Sara, Edwin C.	1922-1980
Sturtevant, Harold B.	1922-1931
Reedman, Arnold John	1922-1962
Madigan, Frederick J.	1923-1928
Pender & Porter	1923-1924
Scobie, Frank M.	1924-1930
Boekenstein, William A.	1924-1928
Denley, Edgar S.	1925-1939
Chiplin, Theo M.	1925-1961
Wardle, Harry	1925-1928
Pender & Lee	1925-1930
Fitzgerald, R. D.	1926-1930
Lee, Gordon W.	1926-1945
Pepper & Jeater	1926-1930
Denley & Chiplotin	1927-1929
Keldie, David G.	1927-1927
Jeater, William D.	1930-1950
Holmes, William G.	1930-1938
Scorer, Frederick A.	1934-1942
Sanders, G. (son of George)	1935-1940
Lees, Robert Godwin	1935-1936
Gannon, John Patrick	1935-1962
Jeater & Rodd	1936-1936
Jeater, Rodd & Hay	1936-1950
Oldham & Lees	1936-1950
Castleden & Sara	1937-1944
Hoskings & Pilgrim	1937-1964
Stone, Frank G.	1937-1985
Parkinson, Norman	1939-1965

Time Line – Newcastle & Maitland

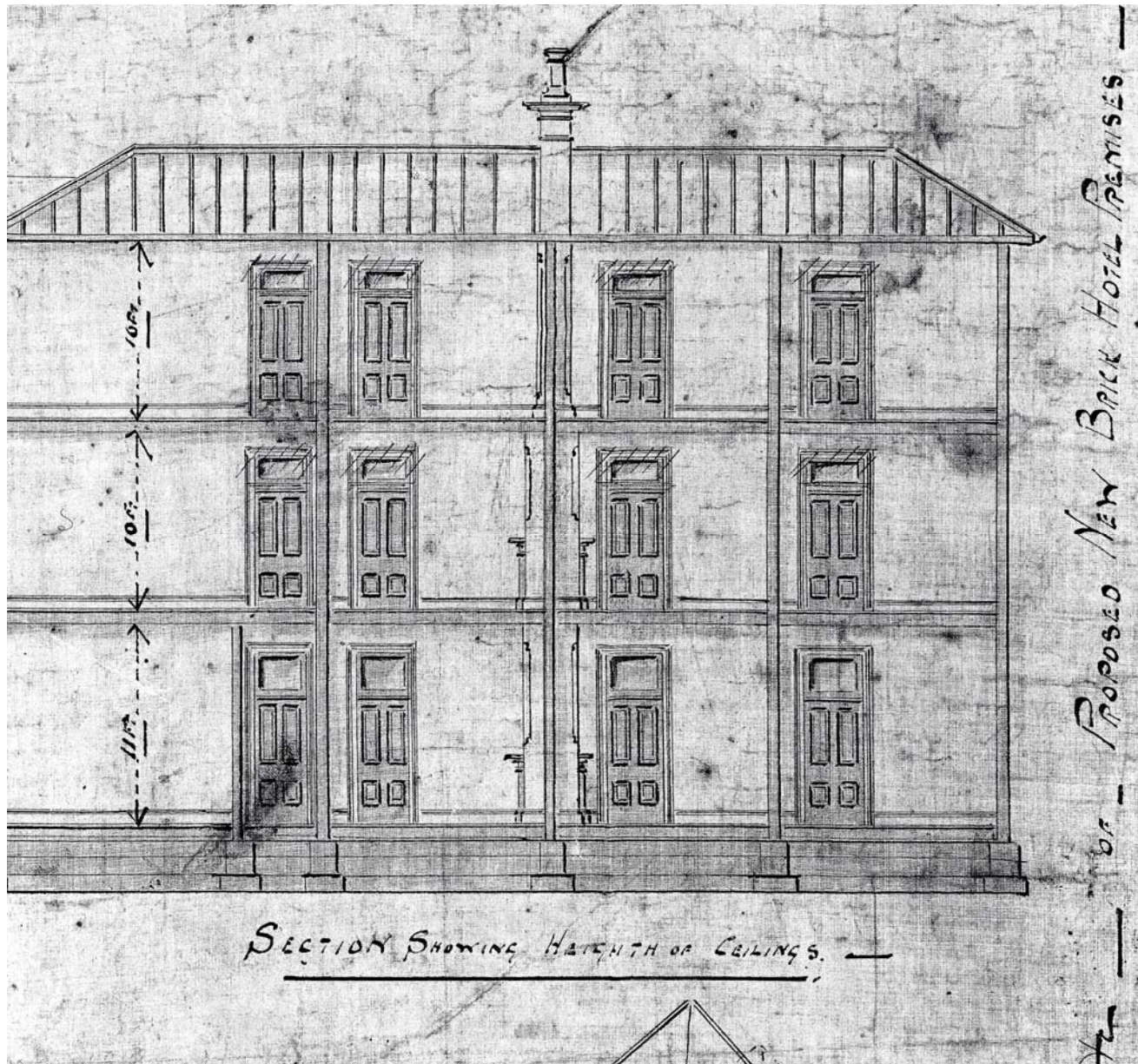
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|-------------|---|-------------|--|
| 1797 | Coal found – Coal Harbour | 1857 | Newcastle to Maitland railway |
| 1801 | First Settlement – abandoned | 1863 | Extension of rail to Singleton |
| 1804 | Vinegar Hill rebellion – Castle Hill
Second Settlement – permanent | 1863 | J. W. Pender, architect , sets up practice in West Maitland |
| 1814-22 | Macquarie buildings in Sydney by architect Francis Greenway | 1860s | Newcastle, population 8000, bigger than Maitland |
| 1822 | Commissioner Bigge's report to British Parliament
Martial Law repealed | 1879 | Extension of rail to Tamworth |
| 1824 | Australian Agricultural Company arrives – land granted – Port Stephens for Agriculture, Newcastle for coal. | 1882 | F. B. Menkens, architect , opens office in Newcastle. |
| 1824 | Scott brothers, Robert & Helenus, architects , arrive at Singleton | 1880s | Mass concrete for footings/foundations |
| 1831 | Surveyor General Major Mitchell's Great North Road completed to Singleton via Wiseman's Ferry. | 1885 | Cavity construction appears in brickwork |
| 1831 | Steam boat 'Sophie Jane' makes Morpeth to Sydney journey | 1889 | Rail link to Sydney over Hawkesbury River |
| 1832 | Decline of Great North Road as preferred means of travel to Hunter | 1890s | Economic depression – second major |
| 1830s | Maitland, population 3500, bigger than Newcastle | 1900s | Ferro-concrete comes to Newcastle – steel reinforcement in suspended floors. |
| 1837 | Queen Victoria crowned – prelude to Victorian architectural style. Reign lasted to 1901. | 1901 | Federation – prelude to Federation architectural style |
| 1840s | Economic Depression – first major. | 1914-18 | The Great War. Steel production BHP Newcastle, 1916. |
| 1845 | A. A. Co. loses coal monopoly | 1921 | Architects Registration Act NSW |
| | | 1929 | Asbestos products liberally advertised – cheap material (Hardies, Wunderlichs) |
| | | 1929 | The Great Depression began |
| | | 1930s | The Art Deco Period |
| | | 1938 | Brick veneer construction allowed |
| | | 1941-45 | Pacific War – buildings still built to late 1940. |

DRAWING INDEX

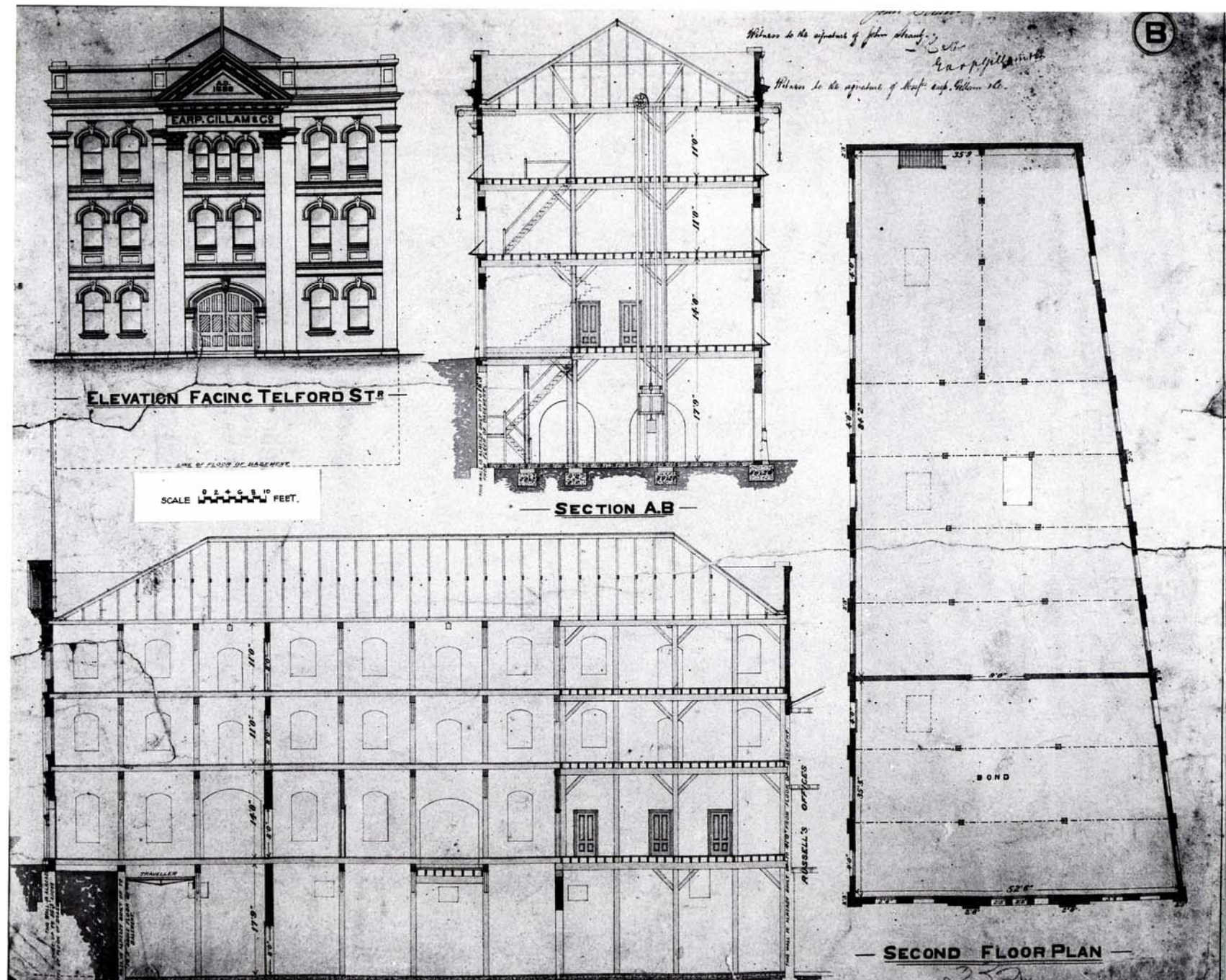
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|-----------|---|-----------|--|
| 227 – 229 | JAMES HENDERSON
New brick Hotel, 1891, Newcastle Pasture Reserve,
near Broadmeadow Station. | 249 – 250 | Business Premises for A. A. Dangar, corner Hunter
& Thorn Streets, Newcastle, 1906. |
| 230 – 232 | FREDERICK MENKENS
Earp Gillam Bond Store, 1888, Telford Street,
Newcastle | 251 | House for Mrs Bode, (one of a group of four)
Church Street, Newcastle, 1904 |
| 233 – 234 | David Cohen & Co Warehouse, 1901, Bolton Street,
Newcastle | 252 | E. C. SARA
Kostakes House, Anzac Parade, Newcastle, 1940 |
| 235 | David Cohen & Co Warehouse & Hotel, 1897,
Market & Scott Streets, Newcastle | 253 | F. G. CASTLEDEN & A. C. CASTLEDEN
Flats, Watt Street, Newcastle, 1924 - 25 |
| 236 | R. Hall & Son Warehouse, 1905, Scott Street,
Newcastle | | |
| 237 | J. Burke & Sons Warehouse, King Street, Newcastle | | |
| 238 – 239 | Baptist Tabernacle, 1889, Laman Street, Newcastle | | |
| 240 – 241 | St Andrews Presbyterian Church, 1889,
Laman Street, Newcastle | | |
| 242 – 246 | Newcastle Town Hall Competition Drawings, 1890,
(not built) | | |
| 247 | Bell House, Pickering, 1897 | | |
| 248 | Hall House, Barker Street, Newcastle, 1906 | | |

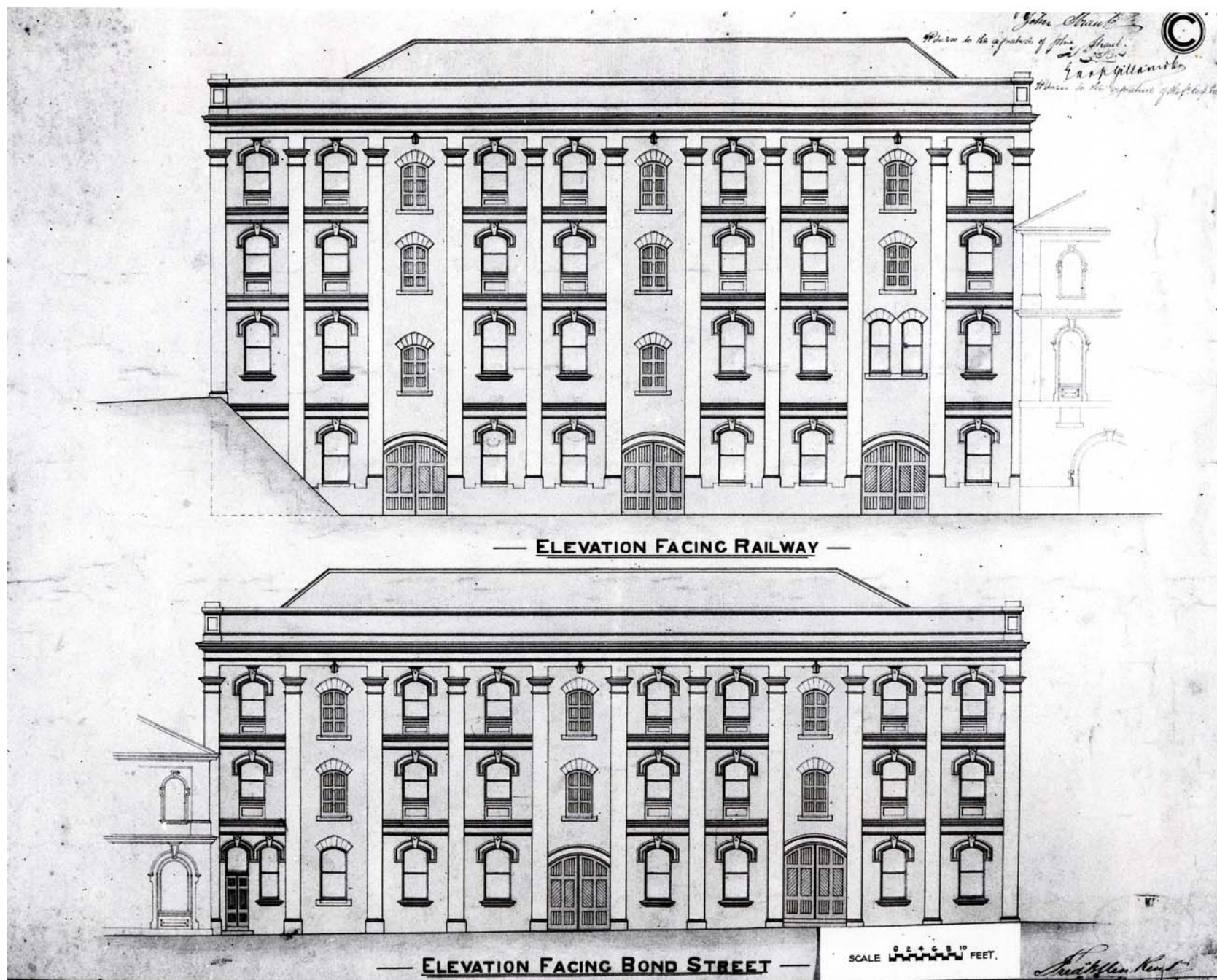


*New brick hotel, Newcastle Pasture Reserve, near Broadmeadow Station, 1891
Part of elevation drawing by James Henderson, architect.*



New brick hotel, Newcastle Pasture Reserve, near Broadmeadow Station, 1891. Part of section drawing by James Henderson, architect.



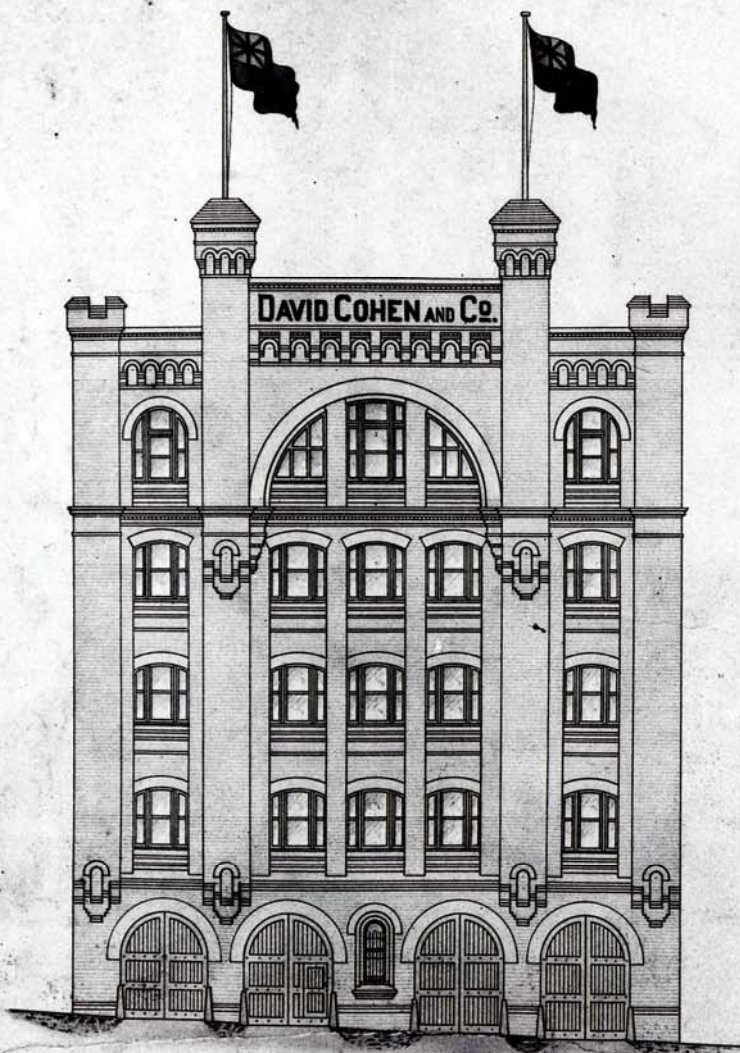


James
Hans & Son

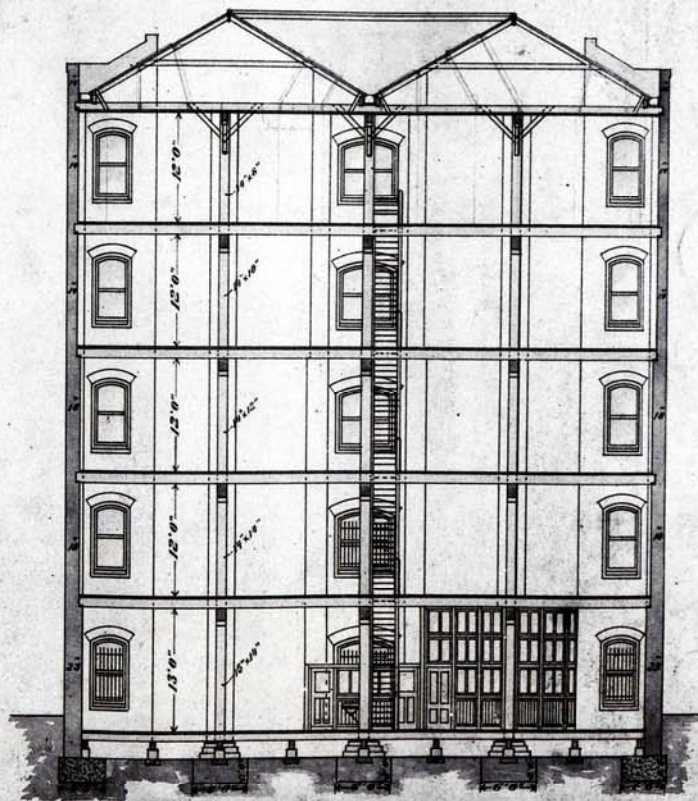
Messrs D. Cohen & Co.

Scale 8 feet to an Inch.

This is the Plan E referred to in the agreement made between Frederick James Horley of the one part and David Cohen and Co. of the other part dated this 7th day of May 1901.
Signed by the said Frederick James Horley
in the presence of
And by the said David Cohen & Co.
in the presence of

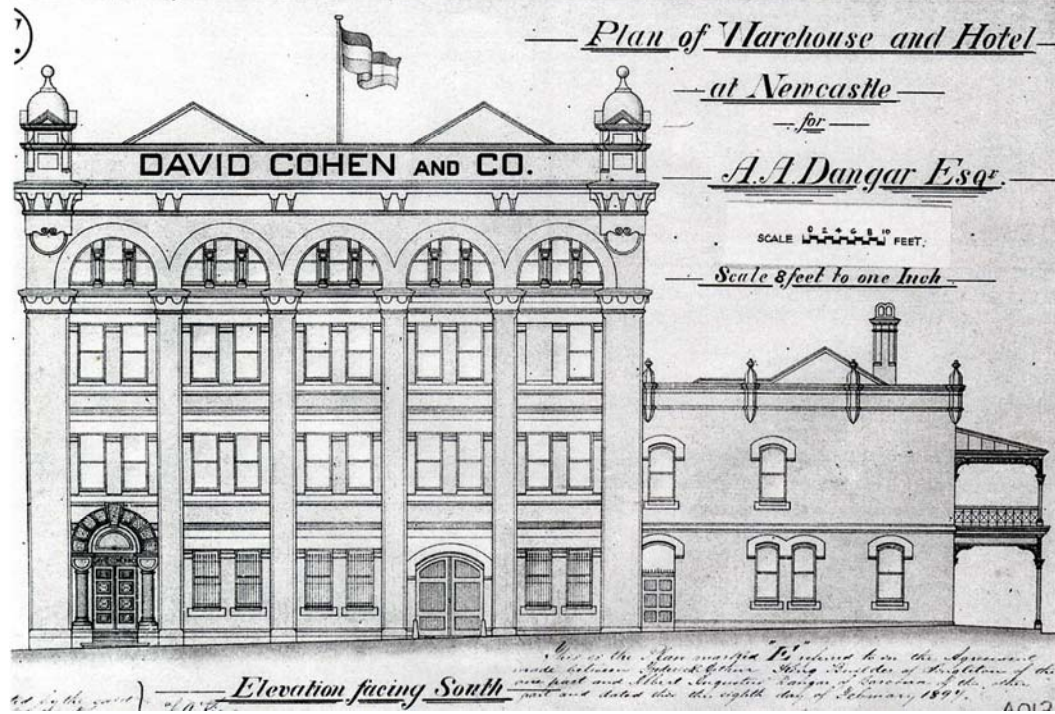
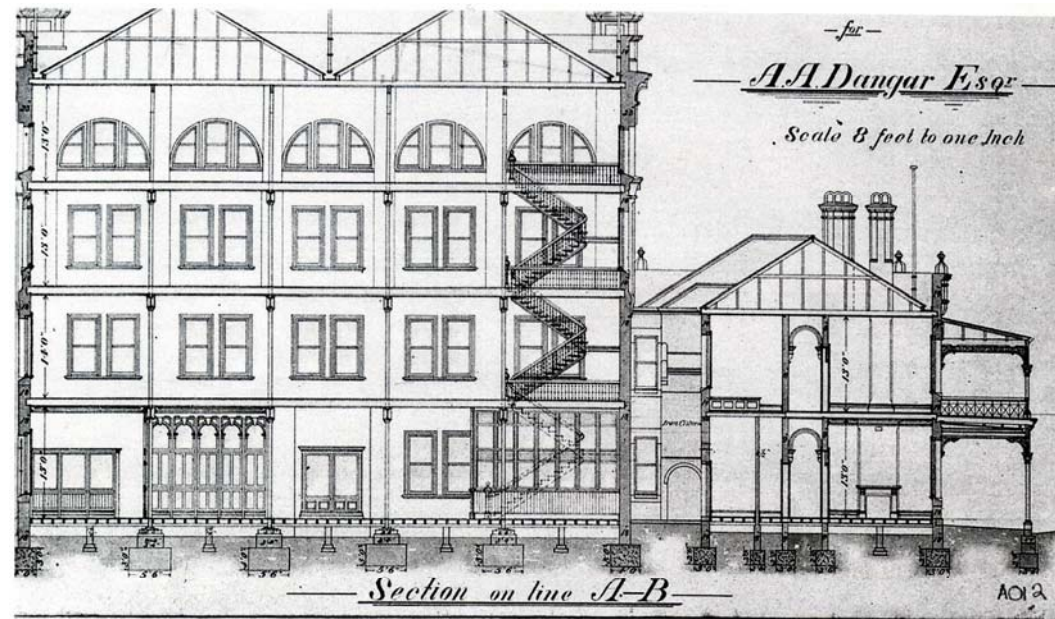


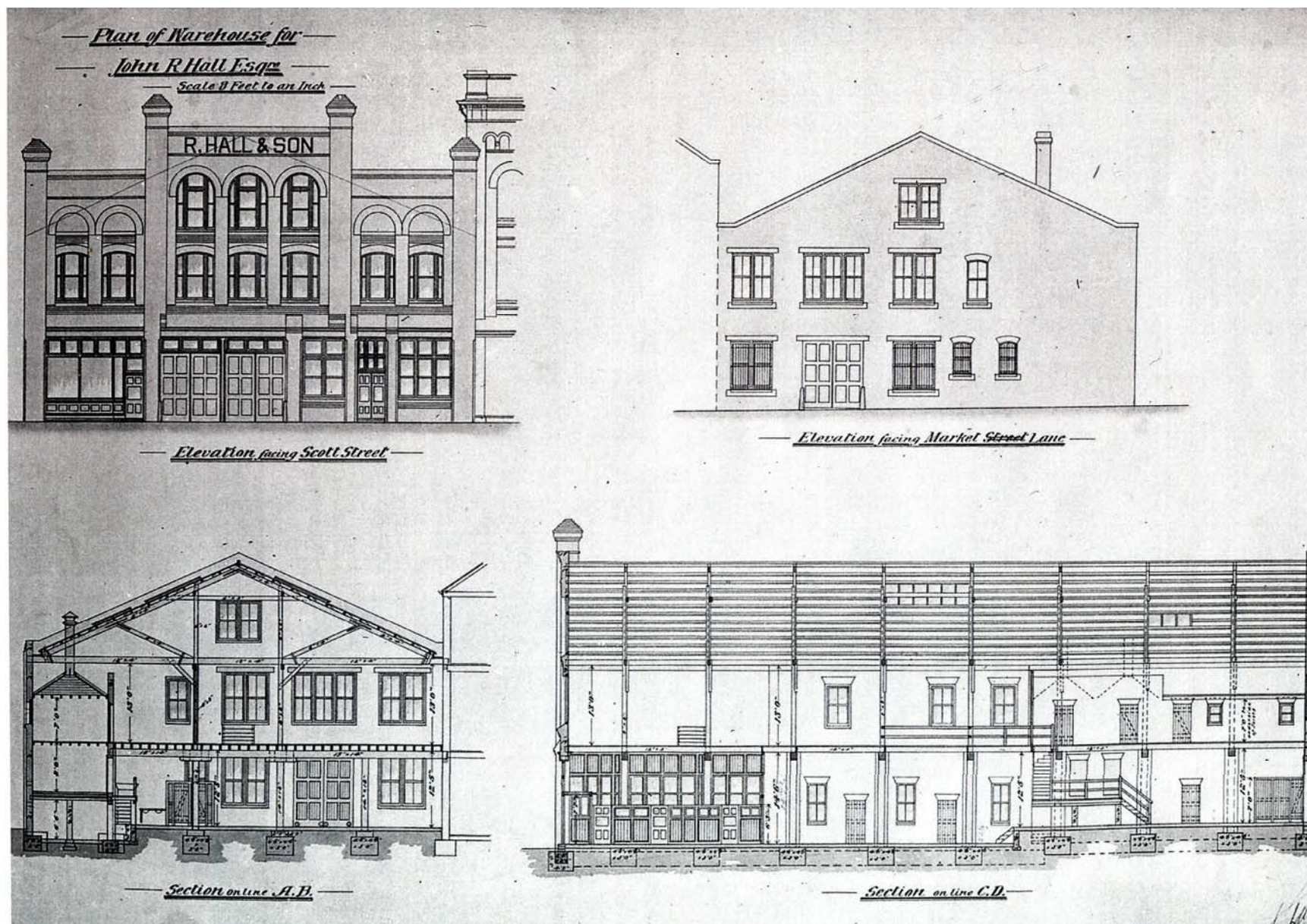
Front Elevation.



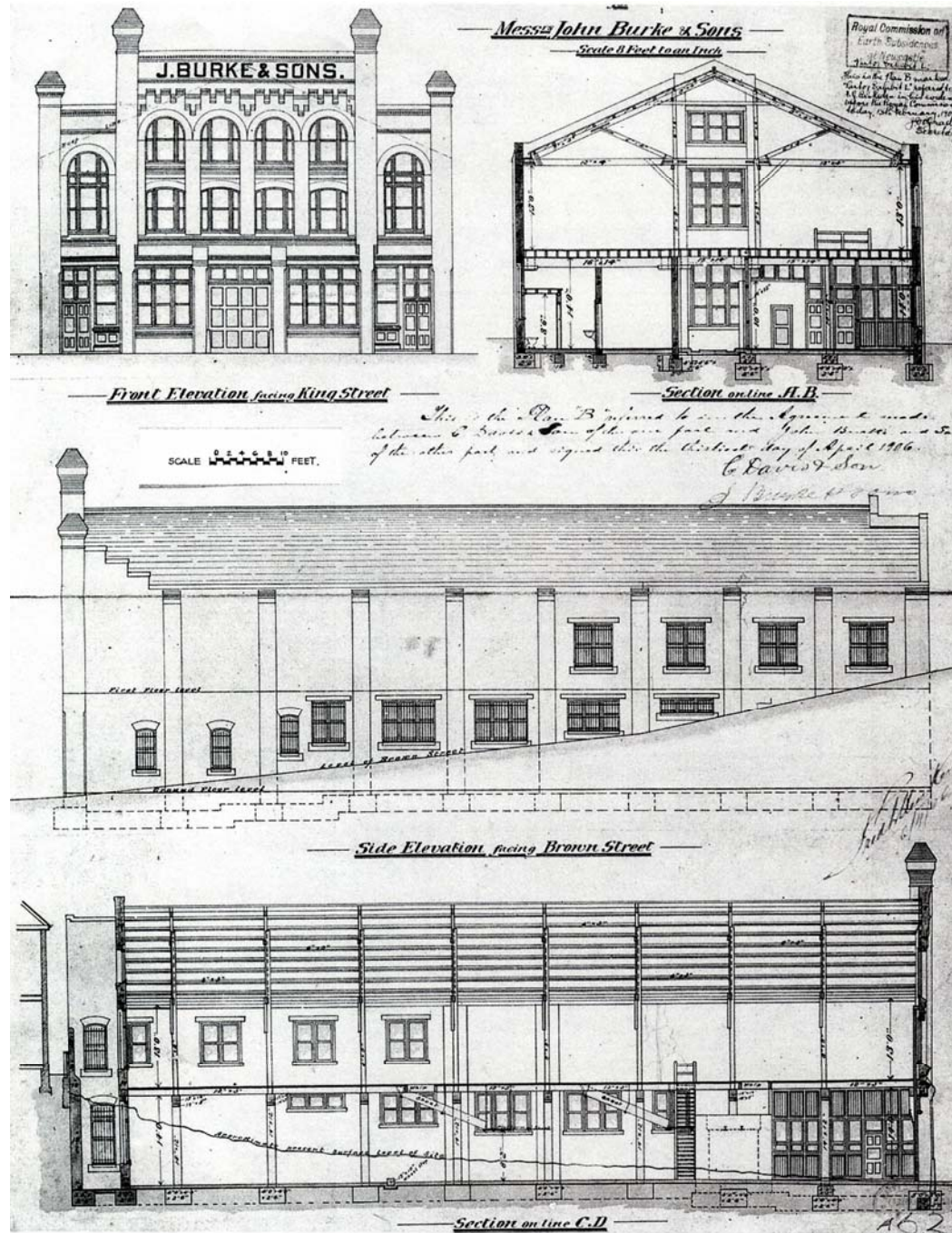
Section on line A-B-C-D.

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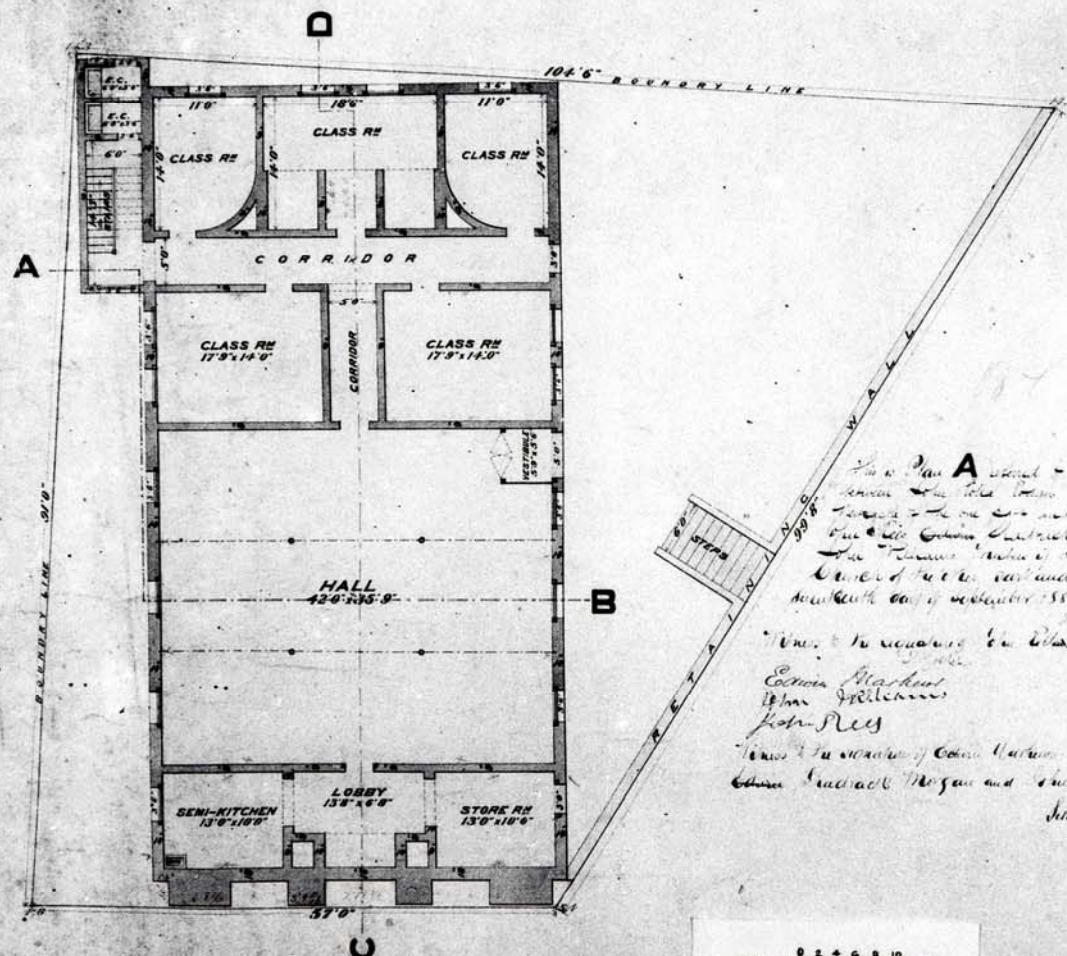




R. Hall & Son Warehouse, Scott Street, Newcastle, 1905. Drawing by Frederick Menkens, architect.



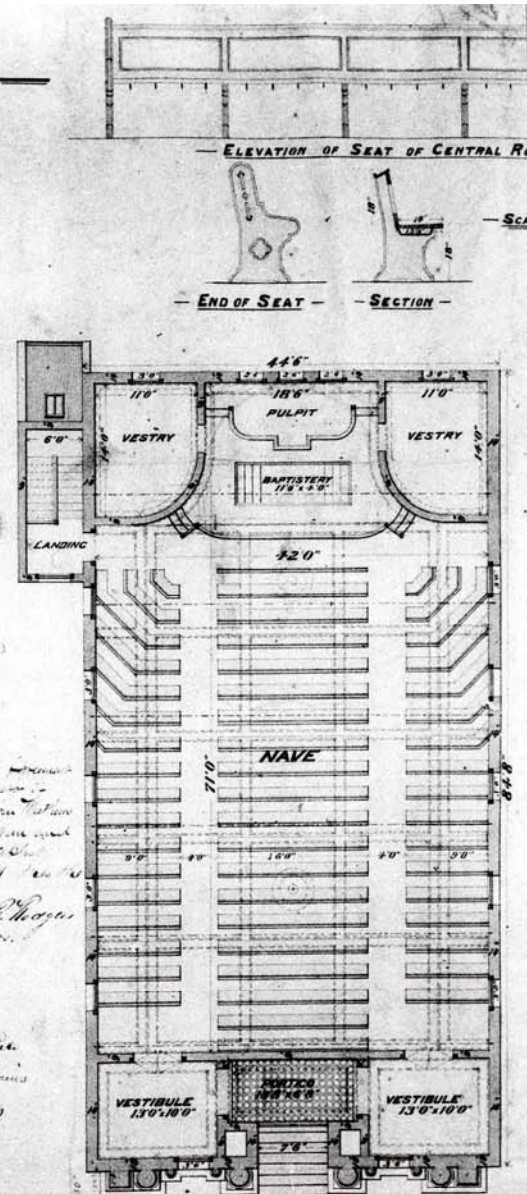
— NEWCASTLE —



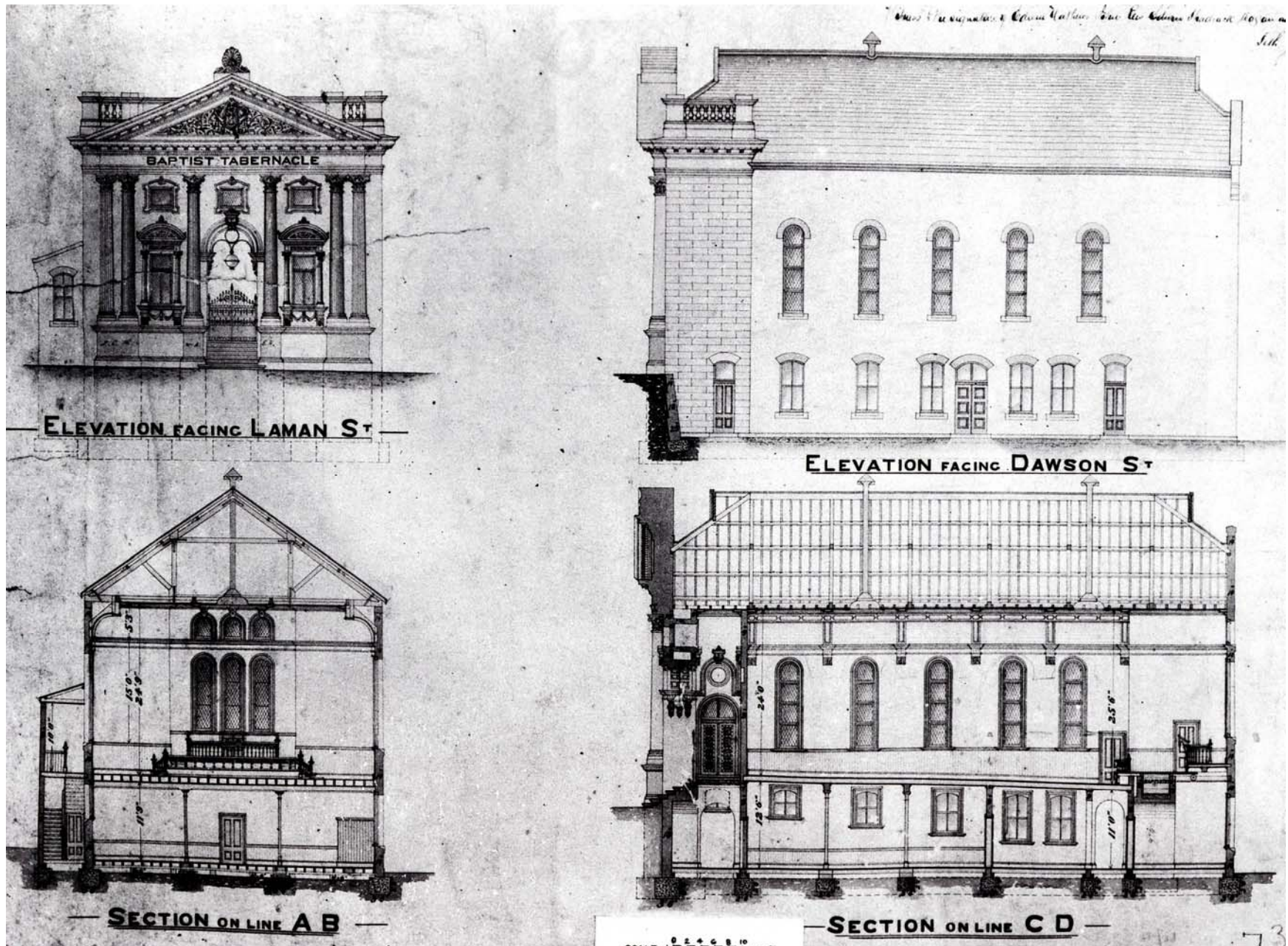
SCALE  FEET

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FIGURES MARKED WITH RED INK DENOTE LEVELS OF GROUND



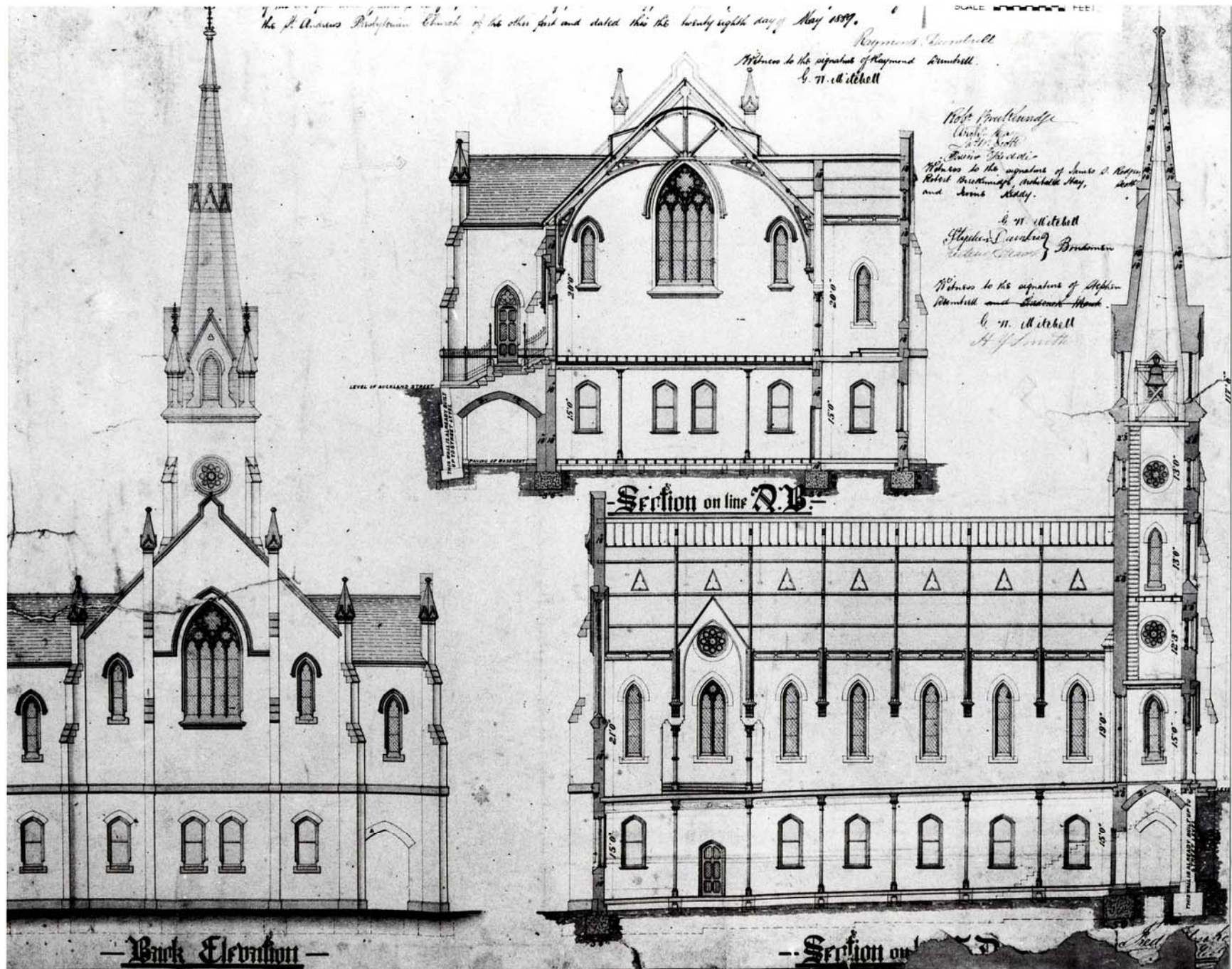
GROUND PLAN

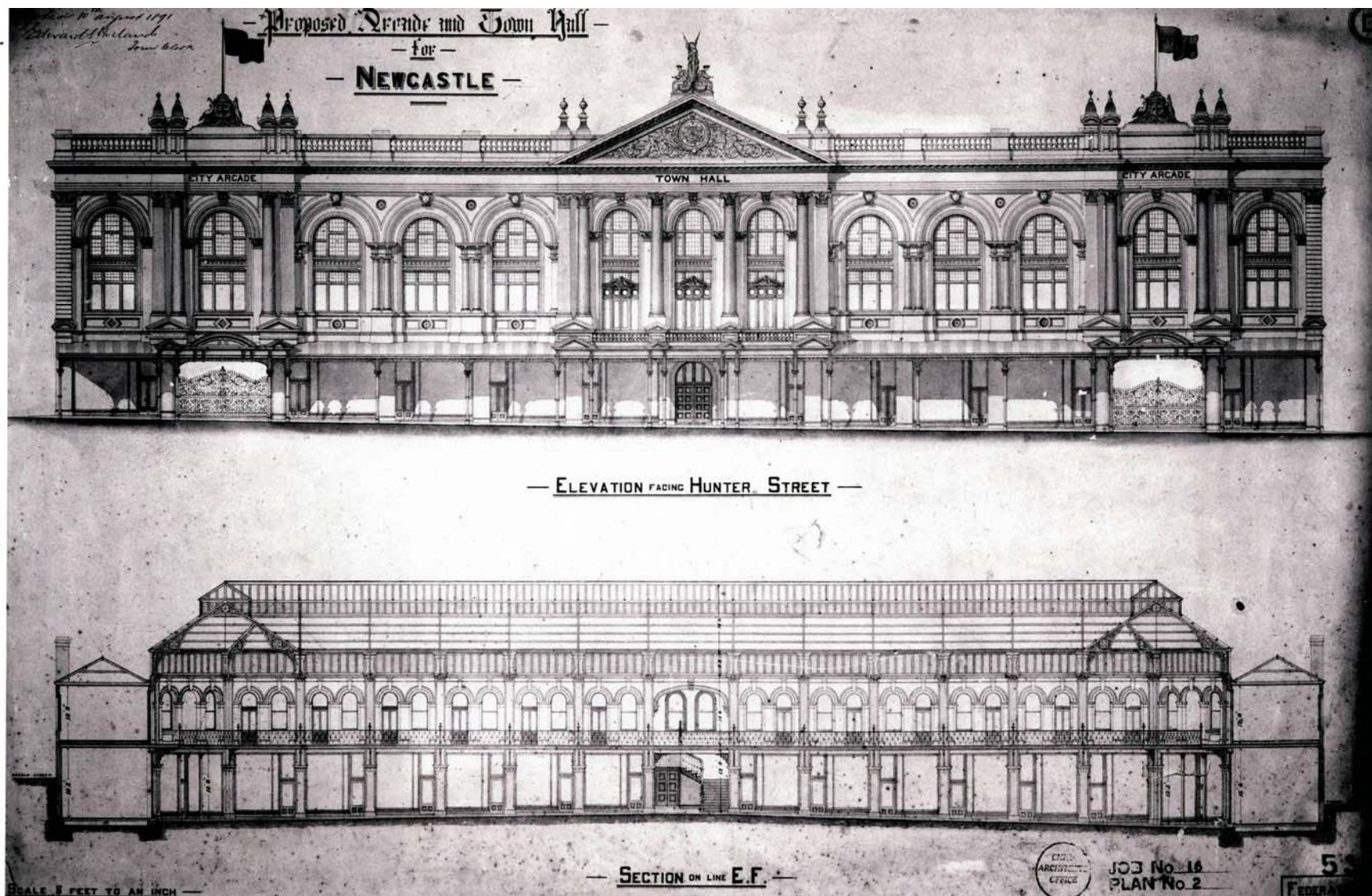


Baptist Tabernacle , Laman Street, Newcastle, 1889. Elevation drawing by Frederick Menkens, architect.

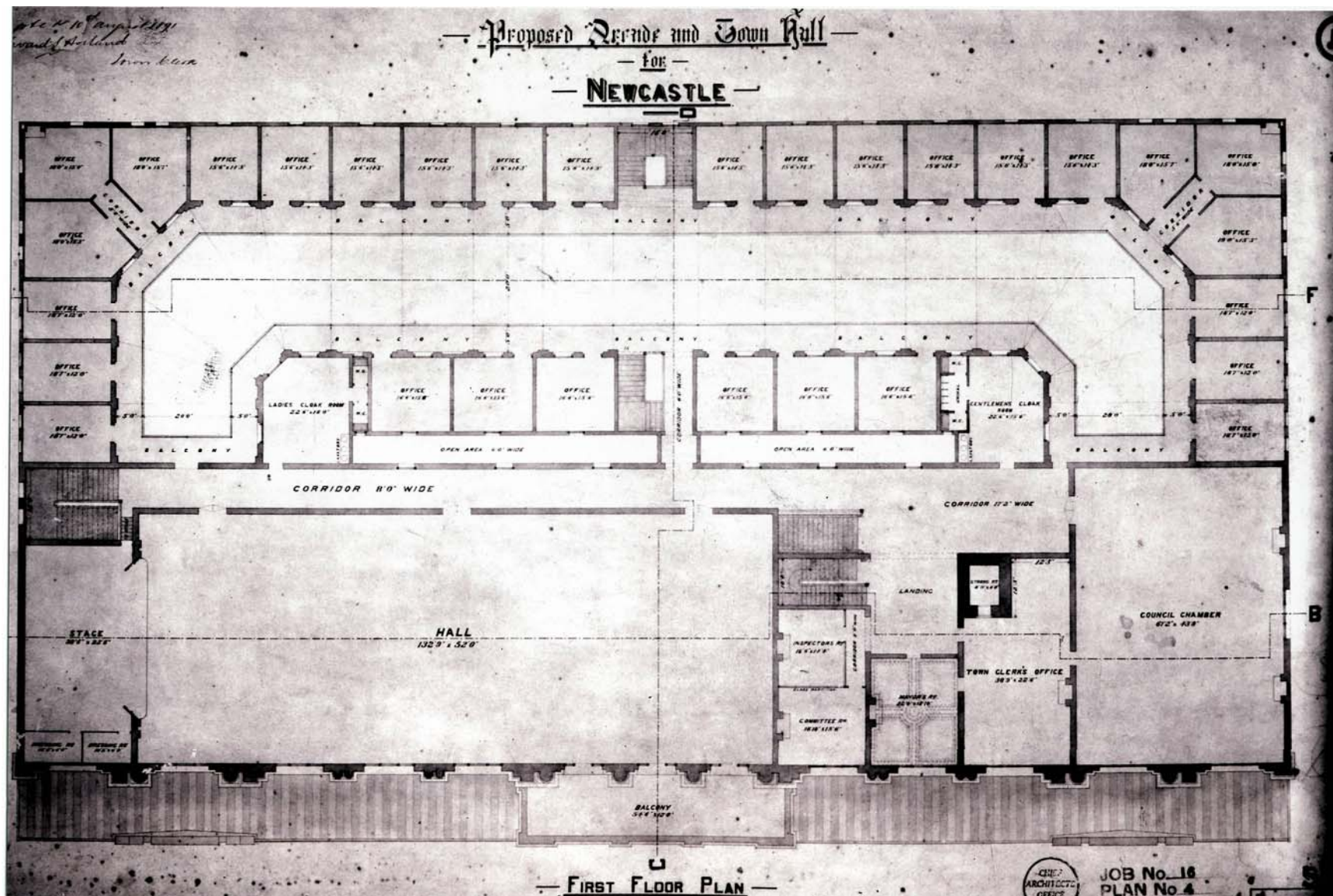


St Andrews Presbyterian Church, Laman Street, Newcastle, 1889. Elevation drawing by Frederick Menkens, architect.

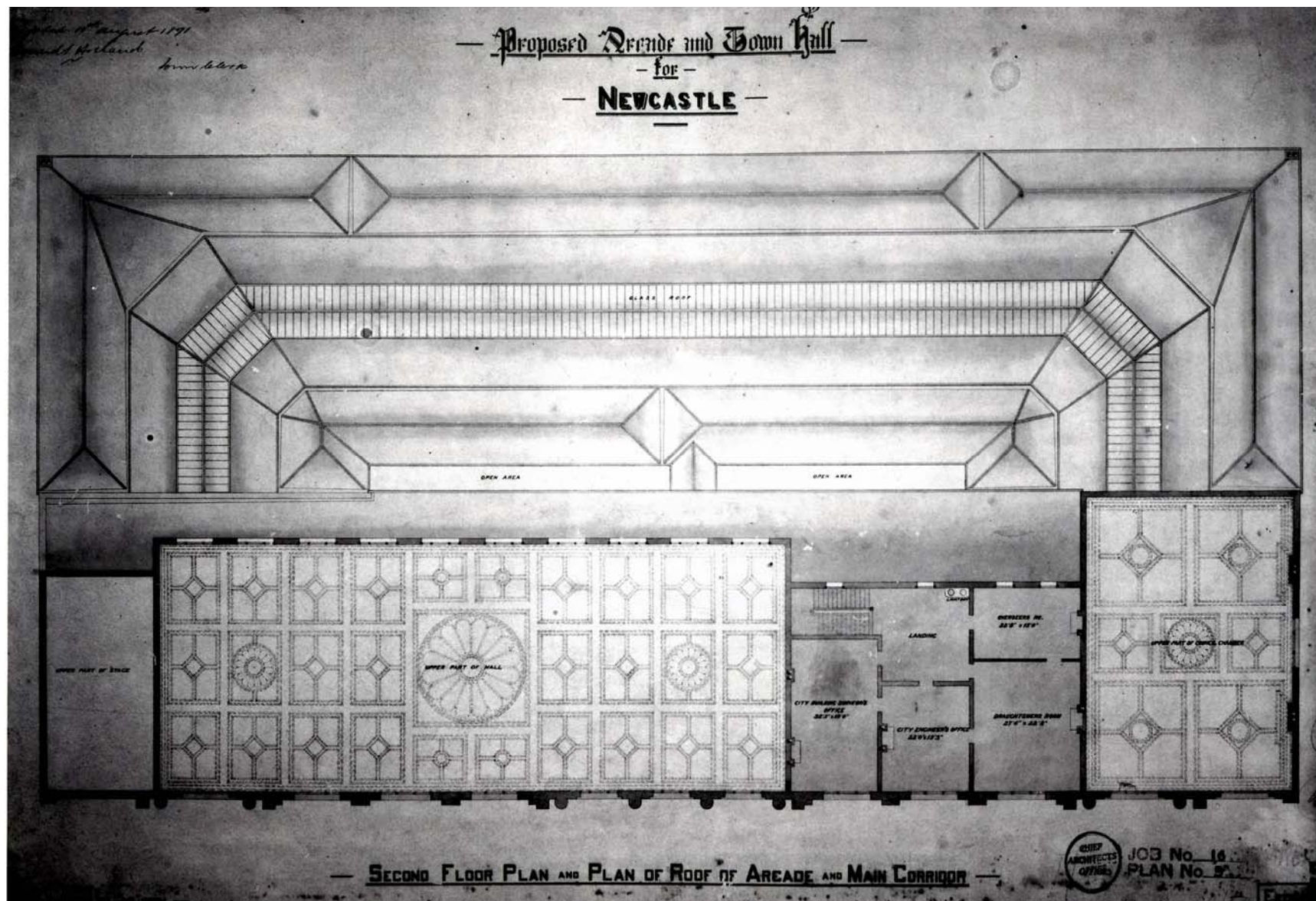




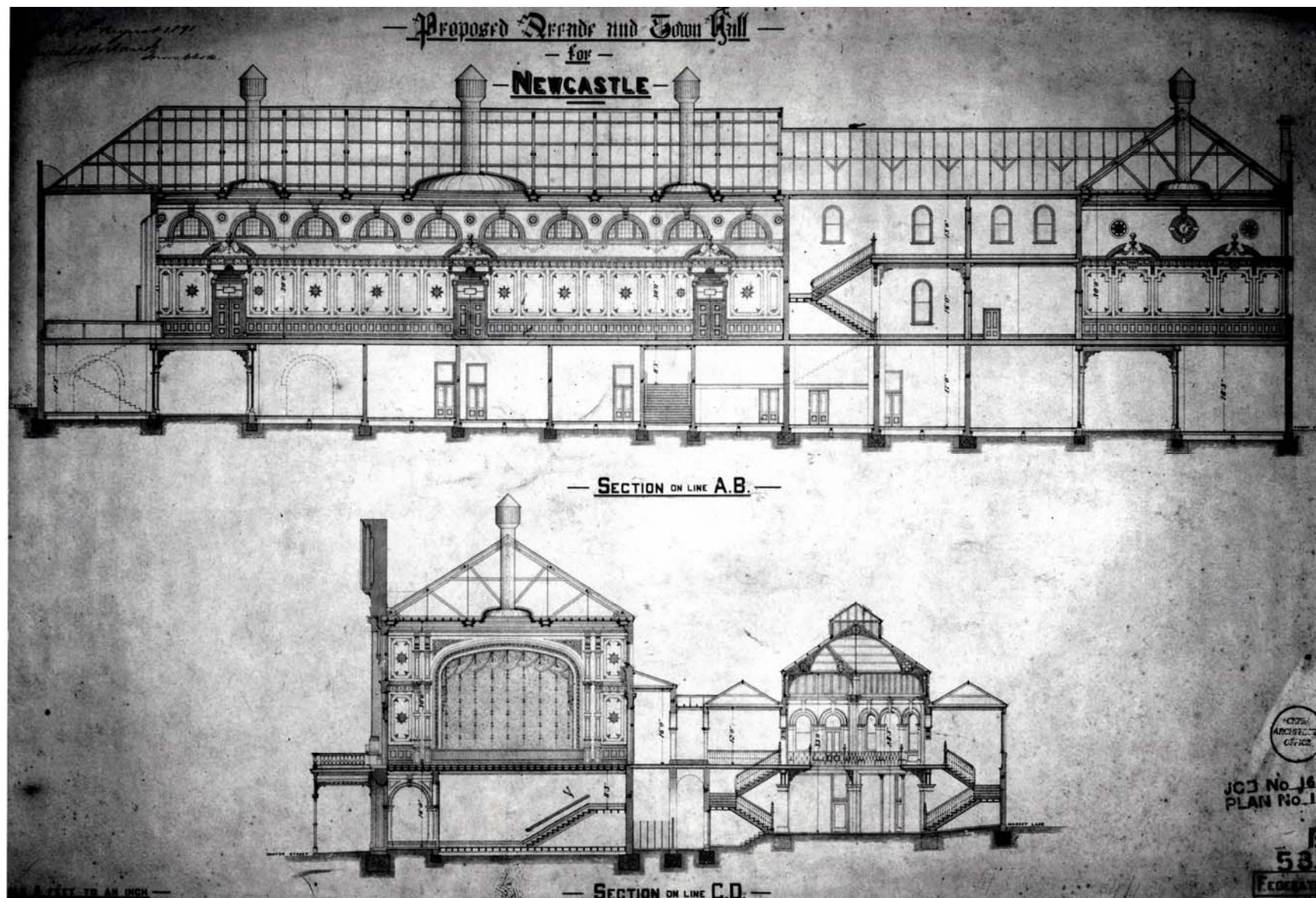
Newcastle Town Hall Competition Drawing 1 of 5, 1890, (not built). Frederick Menkens, architect.



Newcastle Town Hall Competition Drawing 3 of 5, 1890, (not built). Frederick Menkens, architect.



Newcastle Town Hall Competition Drawing 4 of 5, 1890, (not built). Frederick Menkens, architect.



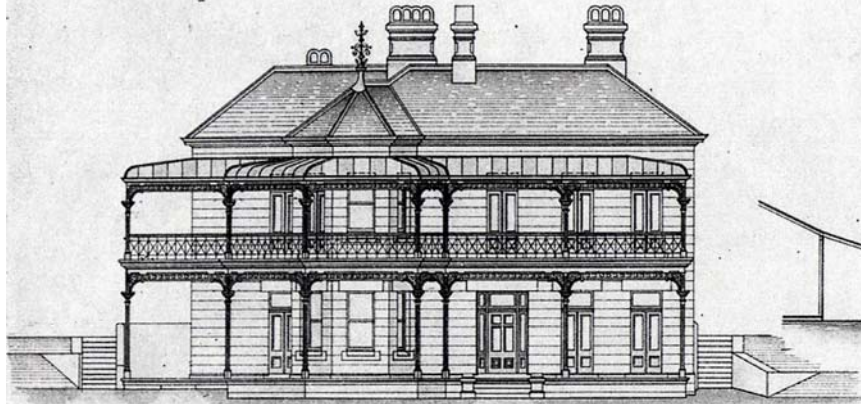
Newcastle Town Hall Competition Drawing 5 of 5, 1890, (not built). Frederick Menkens, architect.

Plan of Residence

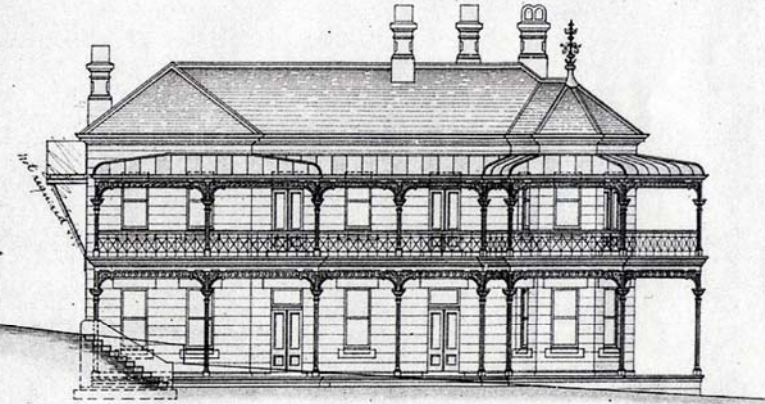
Messrs F. S. & H. W. Bell

Pickering

This is the Plan executed by the Architect, Frederick Menkens, between the said Messrs F. S. & H. W. Bell and the said Frederick Menkens, of the one part, and the said Frederick Menkens, of the other part, and dated the 15th day of October 1897. Executed by the said Frederick Menkens in the presence of J. A. Day. And by the said Messrs F. S. & H. W. Bell in the presence of the said J. A. Day.

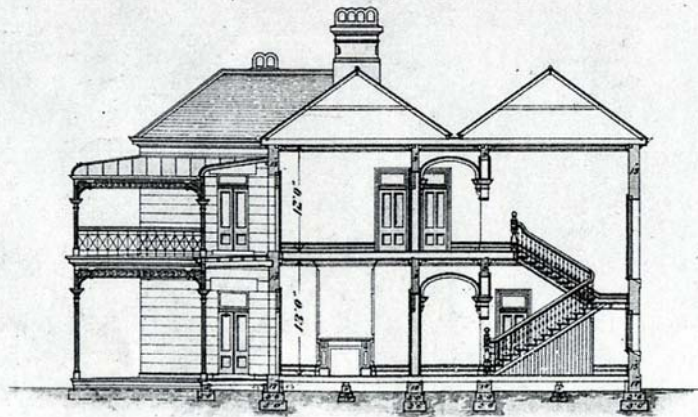


Front Elevation



Side Elevation

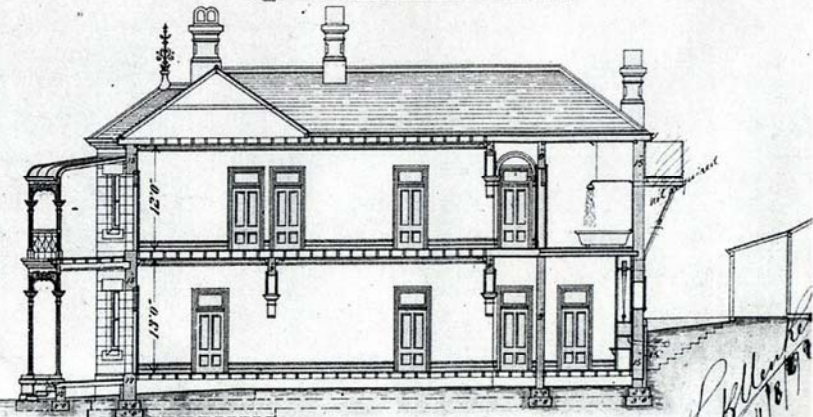
"Red" line shows original level of ground



Section on line A-B.

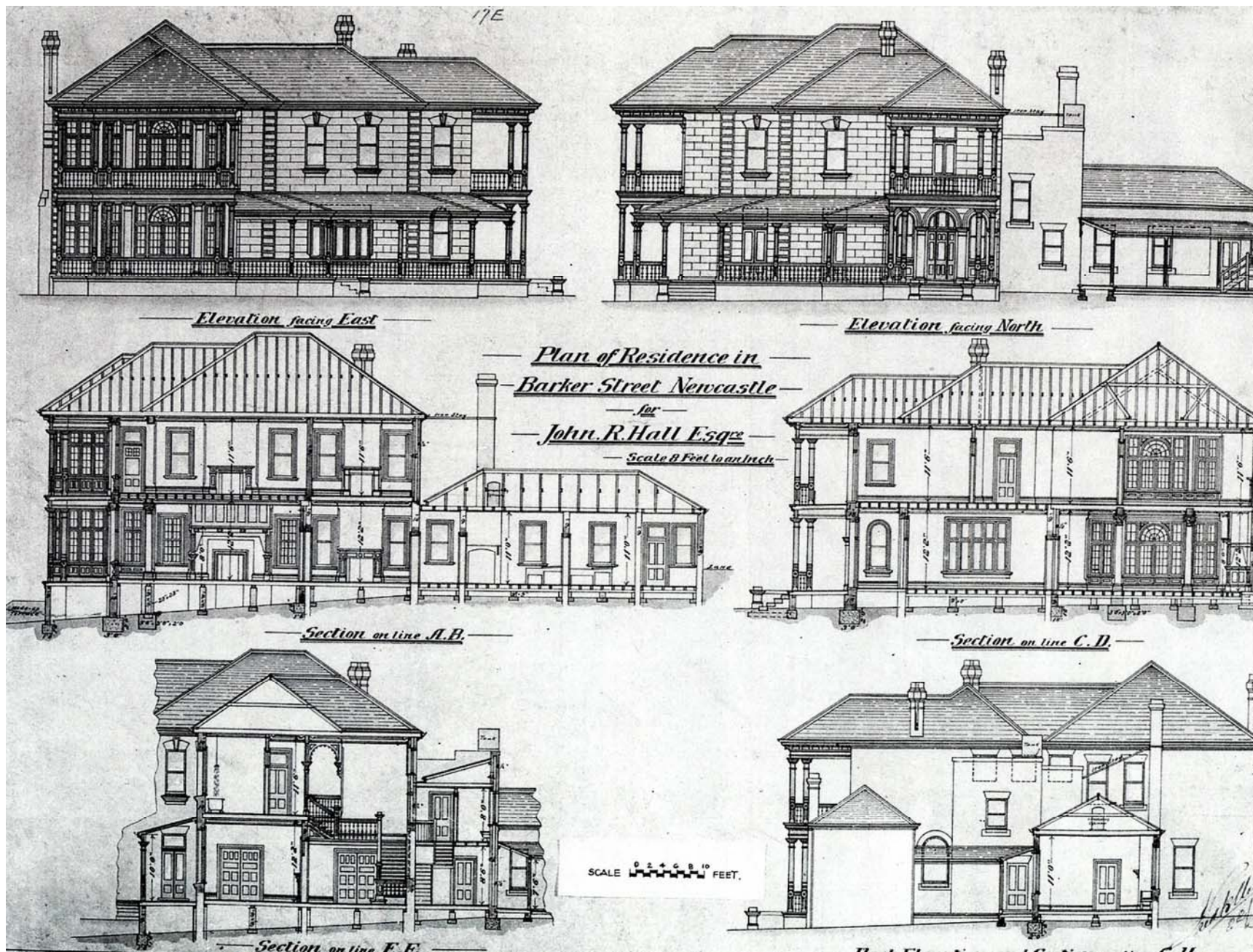
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Scale 8 feet to 1 Inch.

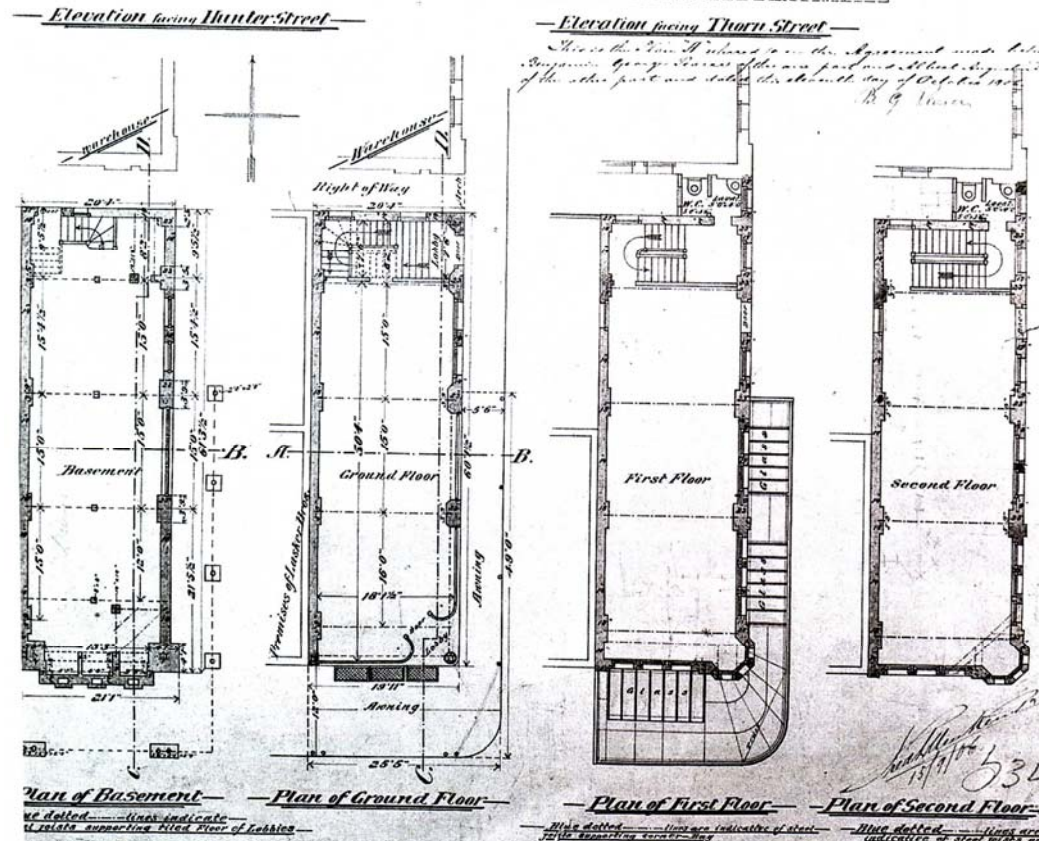
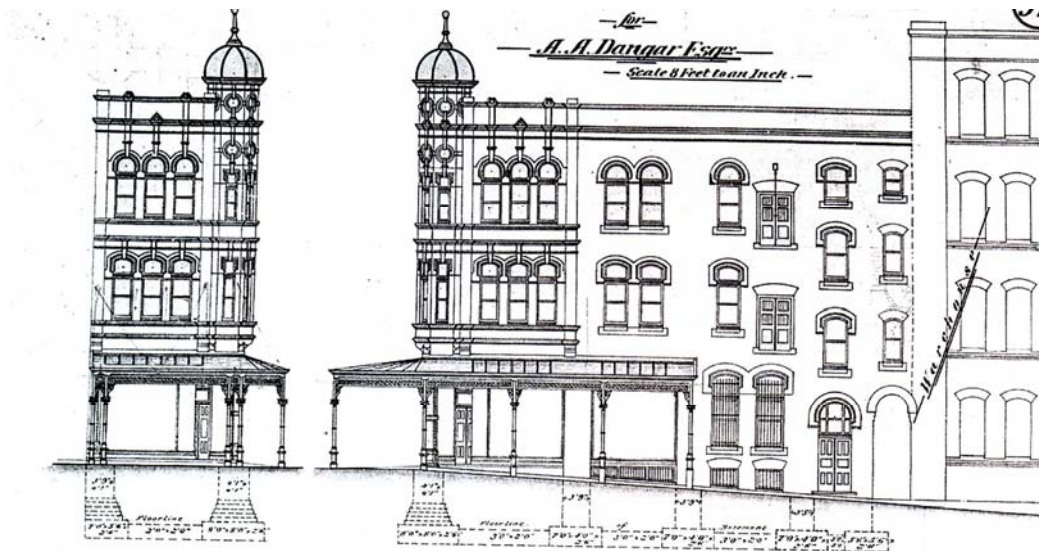


Section on line C-D.

Bell House, Pickering, 1897. Drawing by Frederick Menkens, architect.



Hall House, Barker Street, Newcastle, 1906. Drawing by Frederick Menkens, architect.



Plan of Business Premises

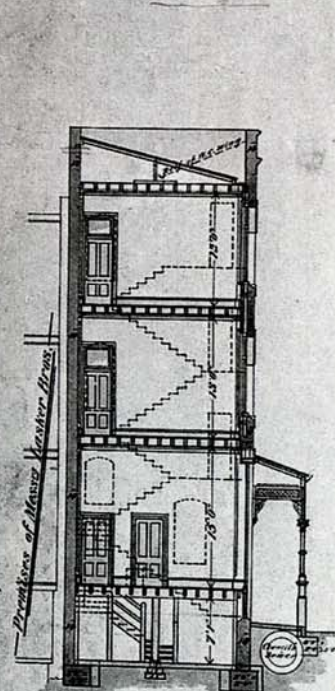
in Hunter Street, Newcastle.

for

A. A. Dangar Esq.

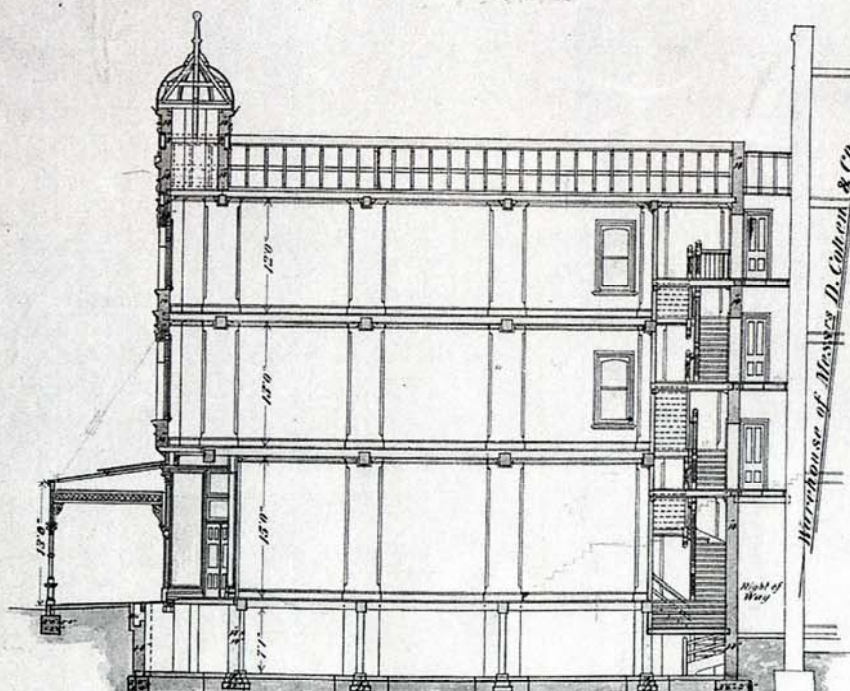
Scale 8 Feet to an Inch.

made between Benjamin George Seares of the one
part and Albert Dickinson Dangar of the other part
dated this the eleventh day of October 1886
B. G. Seares



Section on line A.B.

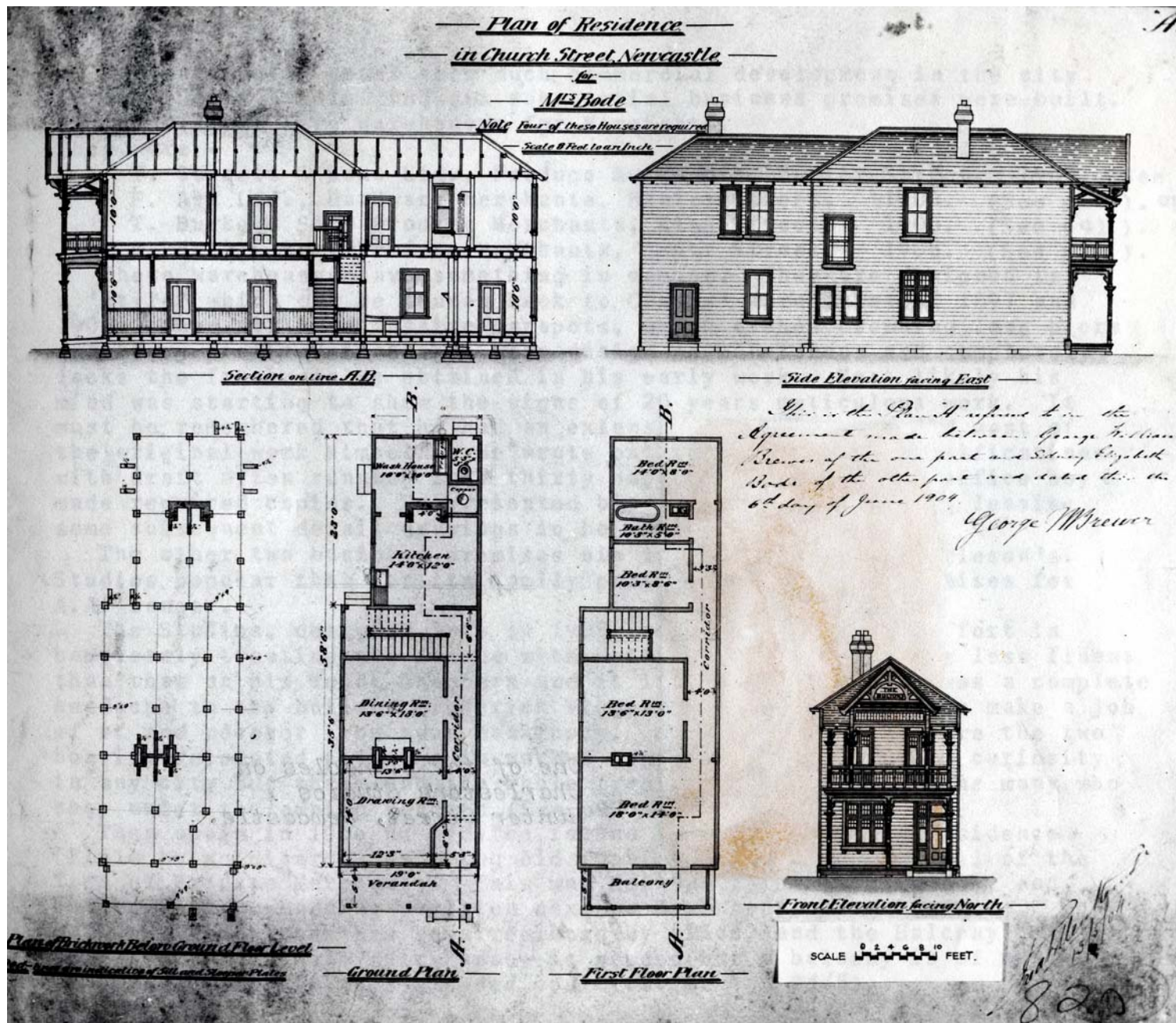
Dotted lining is indicative of Staircase and
Windows and doors of Main end wall.



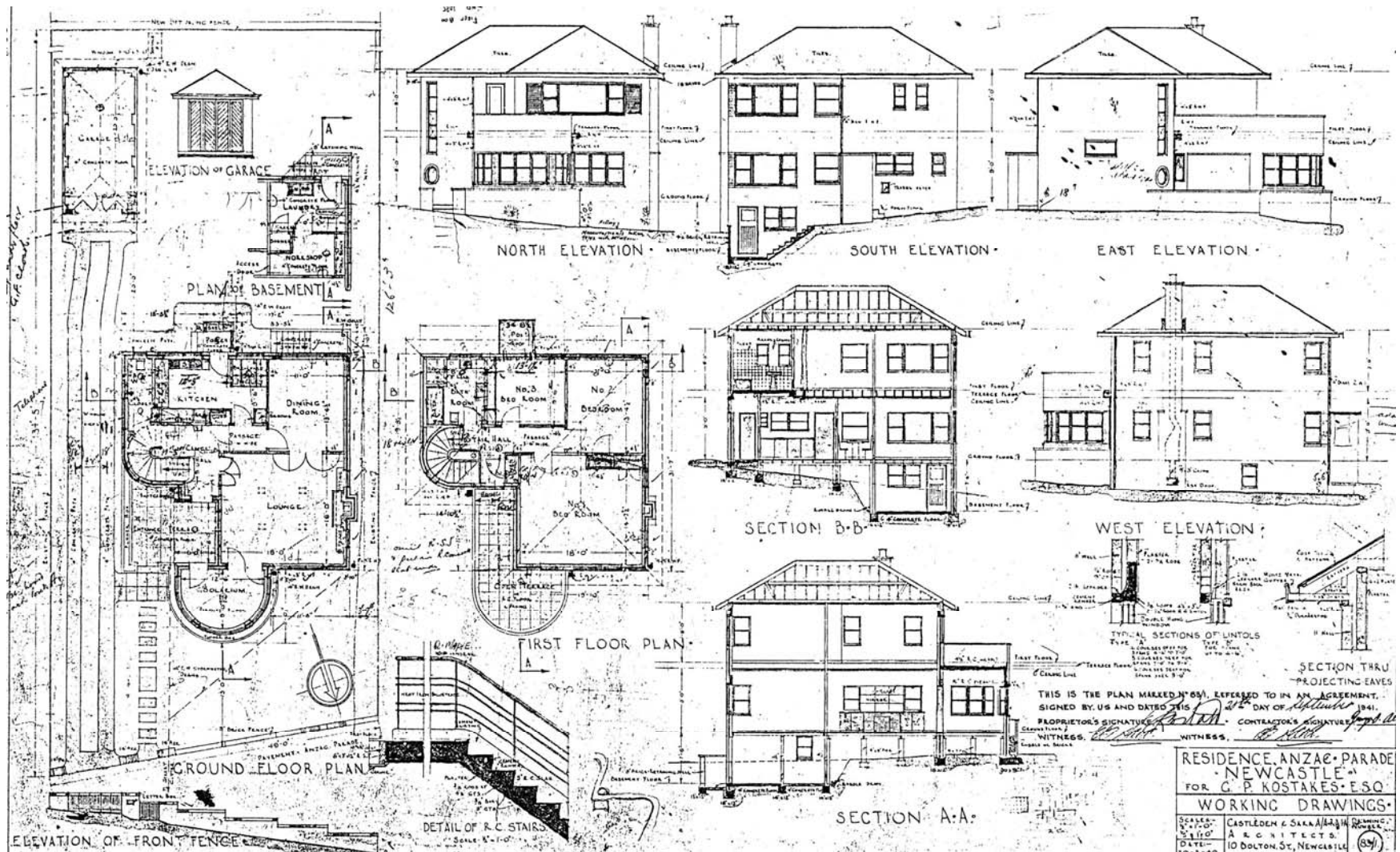
Section on line C.D.



Plan of Roofing



House for Mrs Bode (1 of 4), Church Street, Newcastle, 1904. Drawing by Frederick Menkens, architect.



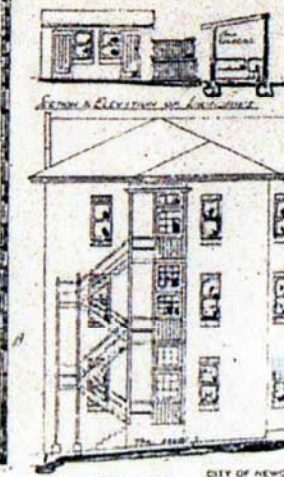
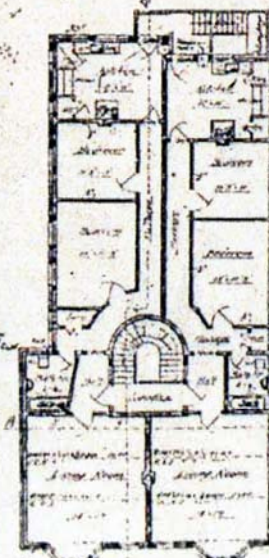
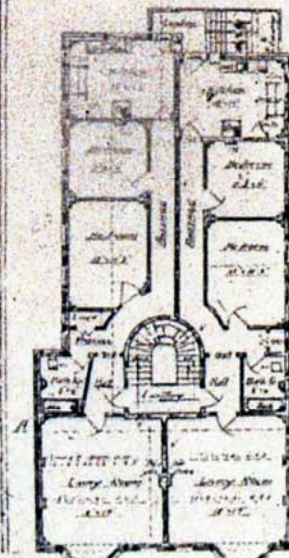
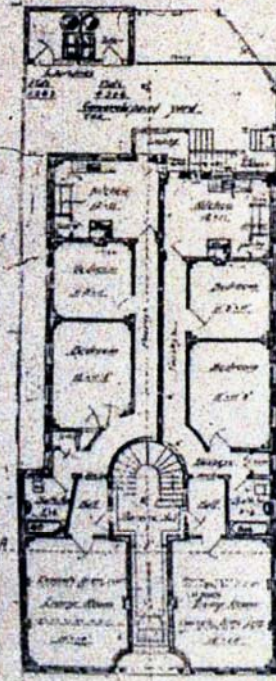
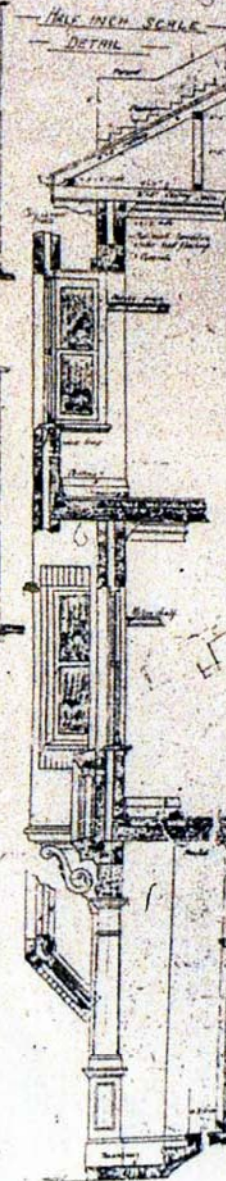
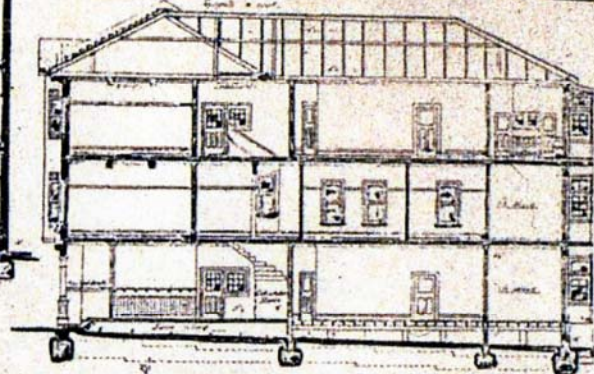
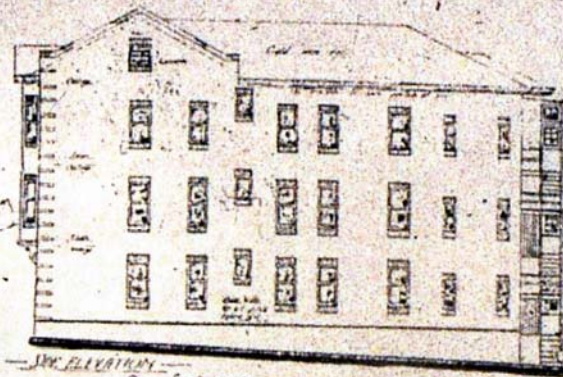
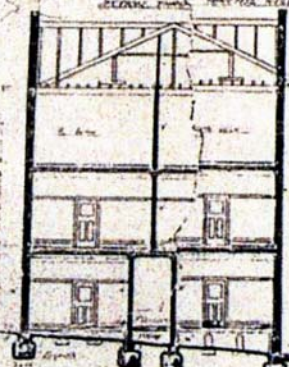
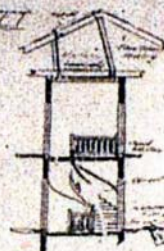
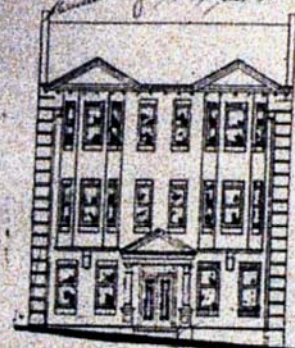
Kostakes House, Anzac Parade, Newcastle, 1940. Drawing by E. C. Sara, architect.

IDENTIAL FLATS WATT STREET
NEWCASTLE

Line - L2 WATER - END

June, 8th to 1 noon

This is the plan referred to in an agreement
Signed by us, the 28th day of September 1918.
Witness my hand and seal this 28th day of September 1918.
James Richard Porter, Agent



CITY OF NEWCASTLE

Passed by Resolution of the Council

21 SEP. 1975

Heinrich

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Author's Explanation.

My interest in the Hunter Region's architectural history started in the 1950s when I was a student articulated to E. C. Sara of Castleden and Sara, Architects, Newcastle.

His drawing office had high benches and stools and, for footrests, there were bricks holding back large old paper rolls tucked under each bench. Occasionally a corner of paper would be torn by the cleaner and discarded. I noticed that the pieces were parts of drawings, many dating from the 1880s, by architect Frederick Menkens.

I was excited by my discovery and was told a few stories about the character and antics of this historical Newcastle figure. When it came to preparing an undergraduate thesis in 1956 I asked my boss if I could use the drawings in my project. Thankfully he agreed. Up to that time the visiting lecturer of the Newcastle School of Architecture, Morton Herman, only required history projects of local towns by students in year 4. This resulted in studies of Paterson, Raymond Terrace, Stroud, Maitland and Wallsend. Undergraduate theses in architecture were not normally about history, more about technical and design subjects. Professor Freeland of the University of NSW, Sydney, approved my writing a biography of Frederick Menkens in preference to my alternative topics of acoustics, building terminology or building recycling.

With only the drawings as a clue, the collection of information and references was very slow at that time, in 1956, in the study of local history but with the encouragement of Morton Herman I persisted. Much research time was spent after work and college in the seldom used Newcastle Morning Herald library which I was allowed to visit freely. When the newspaper's press started at midnight for the next day's paper, the building gently rocked and it was time to go home.

In 1996, 40 years later and in retirement, I was asked by the Newcastle Division of the Royal Australian Institute of Architects to write a book on the history of the early architectural profession of the Hunter. The book was to be the last in a trilogy for the year 2000. The Guide 'Newcastle Buildings' by Maitland and Stafford and the 'History of the School of Architecture' by Donaldson and Morris, were published. Unfortunately for this third book, funds and interest had lapsed in 1999 and the finished manuscript and many collected images and photographs, after three years work, were left unpublished.

With the encouragement of colleagues this work is self published using available resources as a 'desk top' document. The University of Newcastle has agreed to place it on-line on the University's website where it can be freely downloaded for study purposes.



*The War Memorial Cultural Centre, Laman Street, Newcastle, 1952-56.
 A worthy contribution to Newcastle's buildings by a consortium team of local architects:
 Max Hoskings, Max Pilgrim, Clarrie Sara, Bob Lees, Norm Valentine, Nigel Pitt and Rowan Pitt.
 Two sculptured figures in the Foyer by Lyndon Dadswell, the side panels in relief by Paul Beadle.
 See pages 215 and 258.*



*Northern terra-cotta façade of the War Memorial Cultural Centre,
Laman Street, Newcastle, 1952-56.*

*Consortium 'NEWMEC', architects - Hoskings & Pilgrim, Castleden & Sara,
Lees & Valentine and Pitt & Pitt. See pages 215 and 257.*

Epilogue

This work has comprehensively but only briefly researched the efforts of the architectural profession of an earlier period. The Hunter region developed as a microcosm of a complex mix of primary and heavy secondary industries important to Australia's economy.

Architects made their contribution with design skills and knowledge as best they knew, enriching the local life whilst satisfying community expectations, and they deserve appreciation.

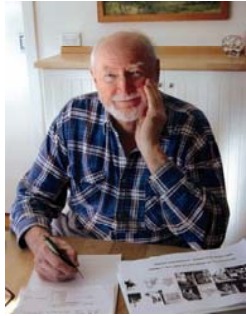
This study may provoke and assist more detailed research before the architects are forgotten and their buildings replaced in the relentless pursuit of the new.

Early buildings were built by manual means with trade skills, blood and sweat and with no assistance from power tools. Perhaps this is one factor for consideration before sealing the fate of an interesting or significant building.

Horbury Hunt 'wrote' in the stained glass main stair window in the White family's 'Booloominbah', now the University of New England, Armidale:

'Honest labour bears a lovely face'.

About the Author



Les Reedman was born in 1934 and educated in Newcastle, qualifying for Bachelor of Architecture in the part-time course at the Newcastle College of the University of NSW in 1960.

He was articled to Mr E. C. Sara, architect, of Castleden & Sara, Newcastle and, after further experience with local architectural firm Hoskings & Pilgrim, joined the Newcastle District Office of the Public Works Department in 1959.

He travelled and worked overseas in 1961 on a Byera-Hadley architectural travelling scholarship, studying English school design. After his return he was transferred, in 1963, to the Design Office of the Government Architects Branch of the Public Works Department in Sydney, NSW.

As well as various principal roles in the Government's architectural office for the State's buildings he served terms as a member of the Heritage Council of NSW and as a statutory member of the Height of Buildings Advisory Committee NSW.

His interest in historic buildings, particularly in Newcastle, started with his undergraduate thesis in 1956 researching the life and work of prominent architect Frederick Menkens (1854-1910) who practiced in Newcastle from 1882 to 1908.

In 1989, after 30 years with the Department, he retired from the position of Assistant Government Architect.