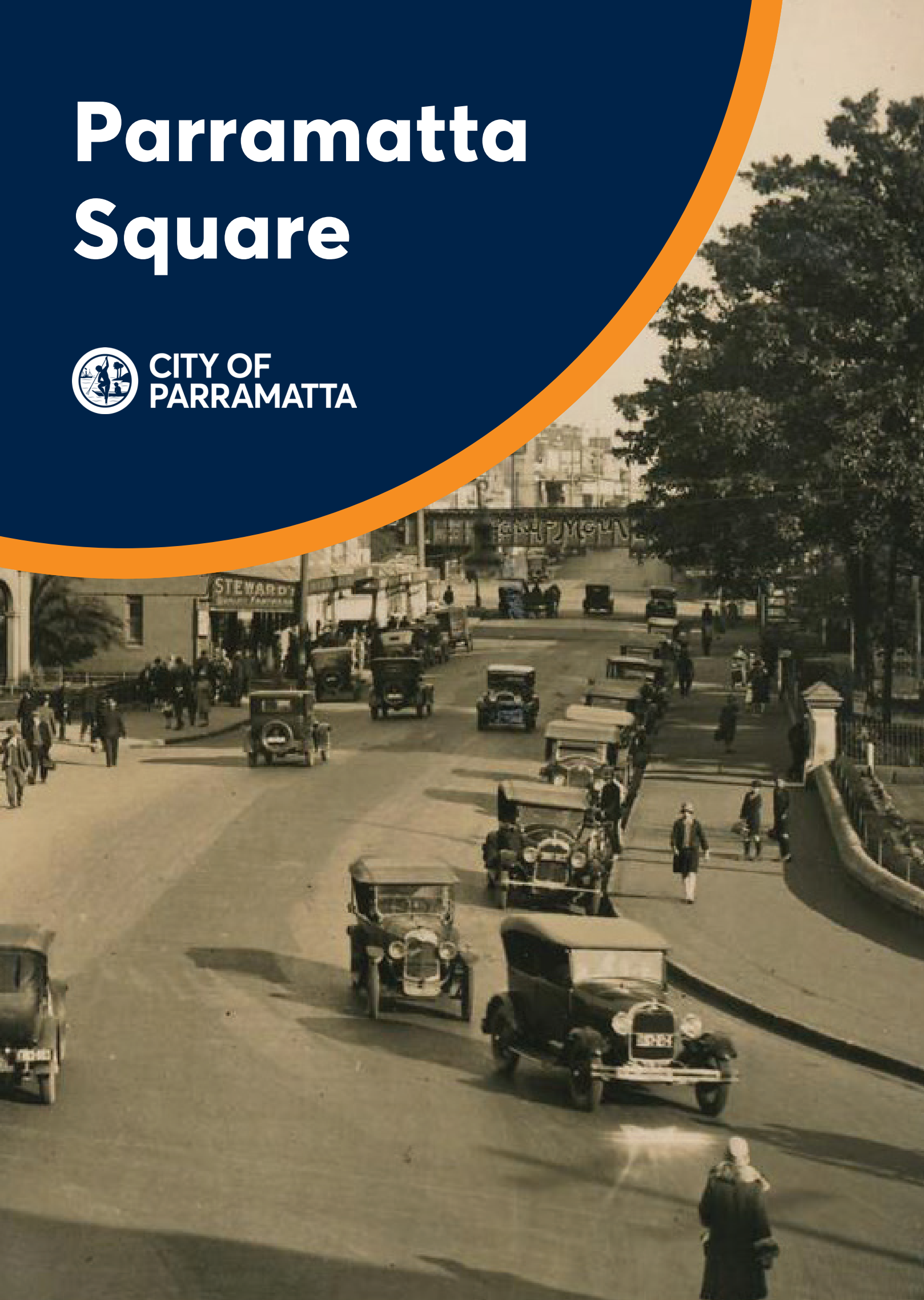


Parramatta Square



**CITY OF
PARRAMATTA**



Front cover image: *Photograph at the intersection of Church and Macquarie Streets, Parramatta featuring the Centennial Memorial Foundation, Parramatta Town Hall, cars, pedestrians, Murray Brothers and a bus in background, circa 1920. (Source: City of Parramatta, ACC198/039)*

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This book has been compiled from the articles written by the Research and Collections team at the City of Parramatta.

More information and stories on Parramatta's history can be found on our website <https://historyandheritage.cityofparramatta.nsw.gov.au/>

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We thank everyone who has helped in any way to bring about this book.

INTRODUCTION

Neera Sahni

Situated adjacent to St John's Cathedral is the area now referred to as Parramatta Square. But don't be fooled by the modern facade for this area has been a community hub at the centre of Parramatta for over 200 years. Over its long a chequered history it has been a marketplace, an Aboriginal and European meeting place, a city centre, and a Civic hub.

Historically the area has been defined as the large block of land bounded by Church Street, The Railway Line (and later Darcy Street), Smith Street and Macquarie Street. It is hard to imagine now, but once this land was part of a natural valley that fed three separate ponds, with tall stands of trees growing in the rich volcanic soil. All of which was managed for tens of thousands of years by the local Burrumattagal clan of the Darug Peoples.

George Suttor an early European settler gave a vivid description of the area about 1800:

... near parsonage house in Church street was a grove of mimosa or acacia trees which crossed the road from the parsonage to the opposite house. The season was wet and the frogs were very much in voice and numerous near the church where there was a large pond full of them ..but they would mount the roofs and keep up a grand chorus whilst it continued to pour with rain....



Aerial view of what is now Parramatta Square, about 1924. The spires of St John's are visible to the lower right.

After settlement this landscape slowly gave way to houses and businesses. Drains were dug to channel to water away from the site and houses were built along the street frontages forming the square. This led to the development of an open space at the centre which at different times were open paddocks; stock yards; a storage area for impounded animals and part of a lumber yard.

The area remained Crown Lands for many years afterwards and other parts were divided up as a part of the early land grants. But it was the establishment of railway station on the southern side of this precinct in 1860, that saw the centre of Parramatta move from river-borne traffic in the north to the trains and carriages next to the square. From this time on Parramatta Square was the undisputed business and cultural hub of the city.

Considering the long and complex history of this site Parramatta City Council's, Research and Collection Services team, have compiled below a comprehensive history of the people, buildings and events which played a such a significant role in European settlement of this area.

Parramatta in 1856 by T.A.G.

Neera Sahni

Parramatta from 1856.

(By T.A.G.)

Our family, leaving Sydney in above year, came to reside in Parramatta. I was then eight years of age. There were no public schools at that time, all being under the heads of the various denominations.

Within a short time I spent my early school days, with Mr. Hole, Mr. McPherson, and Mr. Lough.

Let me try and describe the township. Parramatta station was then down near the old Dog-trap-road, near the Vauxhall Inn, and near the Liverpool-road, beyond the old broken back-bridge toll-bar.

On the rise, as you came into the town, was Elliott's Globe Hotel, on the fringe of what is now called Rosehill.

The we came to the Western-road, where, at the hotel there, the horses would be changed for their journey to Penrith.

A. and W. Ritchie. How these men worked into the night, with artificial light, to perfect the mouldboards for which their ploughs were famous! R. A. would go out to Baulkham Hills, and follow the plough, when worked by the Blacks and Strangers. There was no "eight hours" for these men; it was toll to perfect an end. And the end came when Robert Adam Ritchie launched out into the contracting of railway trucks and carriages for the Government, and from this small beginning has risen the large works of Ritchie Bros., of Auburn. It was the country's loss when R.A.R. was "called home."

The first cricket match I saw played in Parramatta was on the police station ground up near the present railway station, at the back of the public school. They were the days when they played without boots or socks, and trousers tucked up. Jimmy Folkes and Jack Weekes were amongst the players, and the Sydney team gave them a hiding.

It was a common sight to see a string of Chinamen, with their big hats, all in single file, each carrying two baskets,

Source: <http://trove.nla.gov.au/>

"Our family, leaving Sydney in above year, came to reside in Parramatta. I was then eight years of age. There were no public schools at that time, all being under the heads of the various denominations. Within a short time I spent my early school days, with Mr Hole, Mr McPherson, and Mr Lough.

Let me try and describe the township ... Parramatta station was then down near the old dog-trap-road, near the Vauxhall Inn, and near the Liverpool-road, beyond the old broken back-bridge toll bar. On the rise, as you came into the town, was Elliott's Globe Hotel, on the fringe of what is now called Rosehill.

Then we came to the Western-road, where, at the hotel there, the horses would be changed for their journey to Penrith. Then, as we came to the brow of the hill, there was the residence, on the right. of old Dr. Gwynne, very near where Creasey's Hotel now stands. On the left, going down the hill was Harper's butchery on the corner of Argyle-street. On the Macquarie-street corner was the old red brick residence of Dr. Rutter. St. John's school was in the angle corner, and a little lower down was Urquhart's coach factory, where the A.B.C. Bank is now. Then the Presbyterian Church, and then the Courthouse. The lock-up keeper there was named Wade. I have reason to know this be cause I had several fights with his son whom we used to call "Bucketty."

Round into George street, on the left, was a small lane and residence next door. This was the then post office where folk would dribble up this lane for their letters. Almost opposite was Nash's Woolpack Hotel. This was in off the road, and only frequented by the upper ten, where many a good old yarn was spun, and many a pound won and lost.

We then came to Dr. Brown's residence, and next to King's timber yard; and then the Domain gates.

Opposite the Courthouse was Fulton's Hotel (George-street corner), then several small shops, one occupied by Joe Scheggin, otherwise "Bandy Joe," the tailor. Next door was the notable hair dressing establishment of Mr Thomas Clarke, known from end to end of the town as "Tommy the Barber." He was the only one there, and the first out of my own family to cut my hair. (Our mothers used to do it then.) His wife, good old soul used to make brandy snaps, butter cakes, etc., as well as toffee, to keep things going, and I can see the glass case now, in the window, filled with boat laces, thread, cotton, etc. She kept particular care of this, and on one occasion she was called to attend, to the shop (when he was cutting my hair). Said Mr Clarke, "Someone's been interfering with the haberdashery department" Golegde's draper's shop was the next of any importance, and lower down, was Pass's ironmongery.

Down that end of George street was Byrnes' tweed mill and the Emu Inn. The steamers used then to ply from the wharf at the foot of George street.

Lough's school was opposite Vallack's brewery, and he prided himself in belonging to the old blue coat school. He would place one boy on a stool, and the class would then stand round and give the boy a word to spell. Each lad had a turn, and failing to spell a word correctly, he had to stand down, and so on to the end of the class. During my visits to the

brewery for yeast (mother did all the baking) it was a pleasure to see a dainty pair of hands, under a pretty face, attending to a lovely garden. At that time a stone wall ran from Macquarie street to the Domain gates, and all the boys would go along this and gather the date fruit from the trees when in season.

Two places in George street, near Church-street, were the Red Cow Inn, off the road, and back of present Commercial Bank, and Mason's stationer's shop, on the opposite side. This was the news emporium, to which all town. and country folk would assemble for the latest. It was Mr Mason, I think, started the first Parramatta paper, called, the "Chronicle," and from this small beginning has risen 'The Argus' of today. The "Chronicle" was a sheet about 12 x 20 inches.

In Phillip street was Mr Philips' ladies seminary, and at the corner of Smith street was the day-school of Mr Mills. At the foot of Smith-street was a flour mill, owned by Mr A. E. Dare. His chief man was Mr Henderson, father of the late Mr D. D. Henderson.

Over the bridge, the first place of note was the saddlery establishment of Mr S. Burge (one of the best). A couple of his sons were school mates of mine. His place was opposite the old gaol green, now, I think, called Prince Alfred Square. Corner of Pennant street, was the 'all sorts' store of Jim Simmons, and almost next door was the shop of James Ferris. There was. keen rivalry between those two. H. Burgin, a wheelwright in Pennant street, afterwards opened a watch making depot, opposite these two, and he could tell some queer stories respecting the callers at Simmons and Ferris's.

Down Pennant street was Jesse Hack's Crown Hotel, and opposite this was a small "residential township," of several humpies, and known by the name . of "Kilcock 'Alley." Then came All Saints' Church, and a little further on the notable smithy of Mr A. Forsythe.

We go along Church street to Ashby the butcher, and almost opposite was the depot for oranges. This was kept by J. McRoberts, and the fruit, of all kinds was taken here and sorted out, consigned, and sent to Sydney by carts. Then the old centenary school: (Mr Bell, teacher), where, in growing up, I met, as school fellows, H. Coates, C. M. Innes, A. Johnstone, T. Forsythe, Cyrus and W. C. Burge, J; Bush, Jordan Sparks, Billy Anderson (uncle of Senator Cox), and many others.

We pass along to J. Good's Hotel, and then to Stowe's, and then' the little "tea shop" kept by Burns, and afterwards by James Kelly. Two other old rivals. . must-not forget were

McDeed and Faux, in the coach driving trade; How they would lash their steeds to gather the passengers in was a sight not to be forgotten" After passing here. we leave on the right the Church, of England day school, kept .by Mr Breathour, and. I fancy I can hear him now reciting. the' responses in All Saints' 'Church. Various nondescript places meet our gaze~as we go to the old. toll bar and mill, above which was Pye's Druggery. , . I am not' quite clear who.. kept the hotel, at the toll bar,' but. this I know, that two. chaps, growing. into manhood, who were passing by after a shooting expedition at Baulkham Hills, had' ,6nly threepence between them. One went In and called for a pint: when he had his swlig his mate popped-in dR the verandah, and finished it, leaving boniface in a state of excitement and wonder. I omitted to mention that, between Church-street and the hospital, was the smithy and plough-making works of IR.

A. and W. Ritchle. How these men worked into the night, with artificial light, to perfect the mouldboards for which their ploughs were famous R. A. would go out to Baulkham Hills, and fol. low the plough, when worked by the Blacks and Strangers. There was no "eight hours" for these men; it was toll to perfect an end. And the end came when Robert Adam Ritchie launched out into the contracting of railway tracks and carriages for the Government, and from this small beginning has risen the large works of Pitchie Bros., of Auburn. It was the country's loss when R.A.R. was "called- home." The first cricket match I saw played in Parramatta was on the police station ground up near the present railway station, at the back of the public school. They were the days when they played without boots or socks, and trousers tucked up. Jimmy Folkes and Jack Weekes were amongst the players, and the Sydney team gave them a hiding. It was a common sight to see a string of Chinamen with their big hats, all in single file, each carrying two baskets, walking up the Western-road for Lambing Flat Diggings. . These were the days when bullock and horse teams did all the haulage, when about 12 or 13 years of age, I would go every Saturday (when firing was on) to the rifle butts, Parramatta North, and score for them. Amongst the shooters were Dr. Brown, R. IcDonald, R. A. and W. Rltchic, Sandy Houlson, C. Cawood, J. Maling, and many others. An old identity of the town was Mr James Galloway. He had a store in hurch-street, In the early days, and amassed a fortune. In relating his losses, he said the entry was squared by writing 'ipaid by dying," "paid by running away," as the case might be with a creditor.

Parramatta had its share of curious characters. These were "Foggy DI," "Polly the Dwarf," "Long Bob," "Pine-apple" Davis. Can old townsmen forget these? And can anyone of the 60's and 70's say that Pat Hayes did not stand at the Courthouse corner every day except

Sunday? When about 12 or 13 I am standing at the Church and Macquarie-street corner for my mother. Who are these two upright figures, with flowing beards, coming down Macquarie-street, with their families going to the Wesleyan Church. They are the late Hen. WiVm. aft James Byrnes-upright they were in stature, and in all their dealings, whose children rise up and call them blessed. Then who is this approaching with a number of lads? * It is the late Rev. V. Woolls, a man whose piety and gentleness endeared' him to all who came in contact with him. I can safely say that any old schoolboy of his should bare and bow his head in reverence at the mention of his name. Ttwo others I notice, Mr and Mrs. Rd. Harper, parents of the late Chief Commissioner of Railways. They were some of the chief pillars of the up keeping of St. John's Church: and this reminds me that, in connection with the church, there was what was called a "Dorcas" Soeety. I think Mrs. Haper must have been present, secretary, and treasurer of it, and all rolled into one. This lady would vist it all the shops, buy up all the remnants. etc. (some were given), and have them sent to St. John's schoolroom. Here the various mothers of the parish would meet and have their parcel given them to make up into children's garments and returned the next week or so. Mrs. Harper was left to distribute them. She knew every poor person in the place, who wanted assistance. She was forever looking after someone, always doing good. I hope that others, who see this imperfect article, and who lived In Parramatta about the sixties will contribute to your columns' anything that I have forgotten. The lads and lasses of to-day know nothing of what we had to do in our young days. No straw hats and cigarettes, .no Saturday half holiday, and no pictures or dancing halls.

~2~

The Parramatta Soldiers' Hut

Cathy McHardy



"The Hut" by Nell Gawthorne, held in the City of Parramatta Cultural Collections Artwork Collection (Acc no. 2006.175)

During World War Two, community organizations and local councils across Australia were instrumental in providing recreational opportunities in support of the physical and mental wellbeing of the transient population of service personnel who were stationed in or passing through their area.

For five years the building known as The Parramatta Soldiers' Hut provided a welcoming and homely 'drop in' centre providing meals, activities and camaraderie for members of the allied forces.



The interior of an Australian WW2 soldiers' hut, similar to the one that opened in Parramatta in 1940. Image: Australian War Memorial, Acc no. 002120

The Parramatta Hut was located adjacent to St John's Anglican Church in Church Street in close proximity to both the Lancer Barracks and the railway station. After the idea of the Hut had been mooted by the Parramatta Mayoral Patriotic Committee, there was a great deal of enthusiasm and offers of support for the project. In July 1940, the Mayor, Ald Jeffery reported to the committee that Bishop Hilliard of St John's Church had stated that there would be no difficulty in having a portion of the property made available for the construction of the Hut



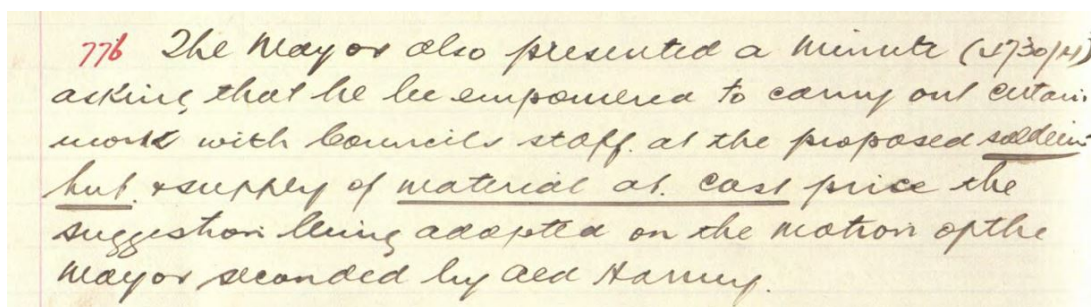
The Soldiers' Hut close to St John's Cathedral (grey roof under trees). Image: GIS Maps, 1943

Bishop Hilliard outlined a series of conditions under which the church would agree to the erection of the Hut. The church was to be represented on the controlling committee, intoxicating liquor was banned, and the building was to be removed after the war and a representative committee of ladies was to be appointed to operate facilities at the Hut.

Planning for the operation of the Hut did not always run smoothly. There was some consternation expressed by Mrs C G Berge, secretary of the Ladies Auxiliary of the Mayoral Patriotic Society (LAMPS) when the Parramatta Mayoral Patriotic Committee selected the women who were to run the Hut rather than consulting a cross-section of women's organisations in Parramatta.

Designer of the building, Mrs L J Buckland estimated the costs to be about £850 for materials and £150 for labour. Ald Jeffery considered that the main concern was the cost of materials as labour for the project could be easily provided.

At the meeting of Parramatta City Council on 8 October 1940 the Mayor asked that building materials be supplied for the Hut through Council at cost price. This motion was passed by the meeting [5]. At a subsequent meeting on 21 October 1940, the Mayor reported that the sum of £370 had already been raised.

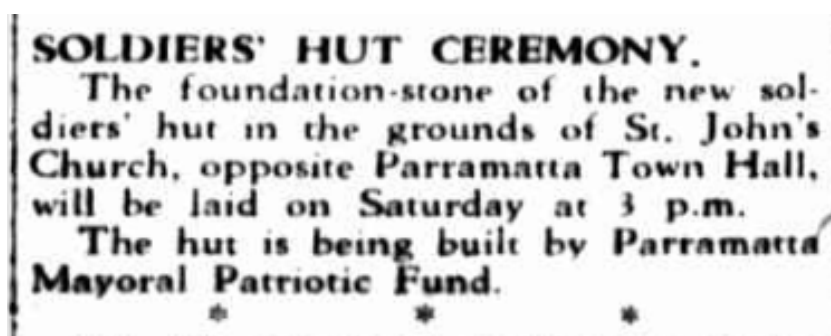


776 The Mayor also presented a minute (2730/40) asking that he be empowered to carry out certain work with Council's staff at the proposed Solder's Hut & supply of material at cost price the suggestion being adopted on the motion of the Mayor seconded by Ald Hannay.

Parramatta City Council supported the proposed Solder's Hut and pledged staff time and materials at cost for the construction. Image: Minute of the Council of the Parramatta City Council, 8 October 1940

The local community had rallied behind the cause. In October 1940 students from Stott's Parramatta Business College decided to collect 'a mile of pennies' in aid of the Hut. Girls from the college collected donations at various locations around the city and Keith Houison had made a 'barometer' to display a record of their takings.

John Shorter of Parramatta donated a billiard table for the Hut and calls were put out in local newspapers for a set of balls to go with the table. Industries in the Parramatta area donated construction materials. Malleys Limited provided the gutters and downpipes, Fowlers Limited the sanitary ware, Wesco Kalsomine Co the Cemco sheeting for the walls and roof and Australian Gas Light Company loaned a hot water system.



From Cumberland Argus and Fruitgrowers' Advocate, 16 October 1940, p. 1. Retrieved 18/04/2018

The foundation stone for the Soldiers' Hut was laid on Saturday 18 October 1940 and by the end of November 1940 the building was completed and ready for use.

The official opening ceremony was held on 29 November at 3pm and was preceded by public inspection of the facilities on the previous Tuesday and Wednesday. Admission was by donation of commodities such as tea, flour, sugar, matches, jam, tinned fruit, tomato sauce, coffee, table salt, pepper and mustard [10]. The Hut was opened by Lieut-General G N Miles, C M G, D S PO, General Officer Commanding Eastern Command.



From Cumberland Argus and Fruitgrowers' Advocate, 27 November 1940, p. 1. Retrieved

18/04/2018

Members of the Parramatta Branch of the Women's Australian National Service (WANS) which was formed to provide community service and employment roles traditionally filled by men, regularly staffed the Hut as did members of the Country Women's Association.



From Cumberland Argus and Fruitgrowers' Advocate, 8 January 1941, p. 5. Retrieved 18/04/2018

On Christmas Day 1940 the Hut was home for fifteen servicemen from country NSW who were unable to return to their families for Christmas. The soldiers were treated to an 'old fashioned' Christmas dinner including chicken, ham, plum pudding, ice cream, nuts, cigarettes, and cordial.

For the duration of the operation of the Hut the community continued to raise funds and donate resources. Proceeds from the annual ball of the company Howard Cultivators Ltd held in September 1942 was donated to the running costs of the Hut.

CLOSING OF SOLDIERS' HUT AT PARRAMATTA

END OF FIVE YEARS' SPLENDID WORK.

The Parramatta Soldiers' Hut, for five years the happy rendezvous of servicemen passing through the city, closed down on Friday night.

To-day, stripped of everything movable, following an auction sale on Saturday, the hut now awaits sale for demolition and removal.

In five years, voluntary women workers served 250,000 meals to hungry servicemen belonging to all sections of the allied forces.

Surplus funds will go to the Parramatta Mayoral Patriotic Fund, and later £10 will be given to each of the city's 50 ex-POW's.

Hundreds attended Saturday's auction sale, conducted by A. R. C. Thomas.

Crockery, floor coverings, kitchen utensils, job lots of oddments, all fetched good prices.

Two ceiling fans fetched £11/5/- and £10, and a table fan went for £9/10/-.

Keen competition ended in the sale of the refrigerator for £175.

Biggest bargain of the sale, at 12/-, was a stretcher bed, used by the hut manager, Bill Barber, veteran of World War 1, for "rehabilitation of servicemen temporarily under the weather."

It is expected that the foundation stone will be preserved, probably in the Town Hall.

From Cumberland Argus and Fruitgrowers' Advocate, 5 December 1945, p. 1. Retrieved

18/04/2018

The welcome news of the surrender of Japan in September 1945 signifying the end of the war also meant the closure of the Soldiers' Hut. Over the past five years the voluntary women workers staffing the Hut had provided over 250,000 meals to all sections of the allied forces. An auction sale of the contents including crockery, floor coverings, kitchen utensils and refrigerator was conducted by A R C Thomas. The sum of 12 shillings was fetched for a stretcher bed which had been used for the 'rehabilitation of servicemen temporarily under the weather'.

In February 1946, workmen commenced preparing the building for transportation to Westmead to fulfil the new function of church hall for St Barnabas' Anglican Church, Westmead.

SHIFTING SOLDIERS' HUT TO WESTMEAD

Workmen have been employed over the last week jacking up the old soldiers' hut in Church Street, and placing wheels under it in preparation for its removal to Westmead.

The building, which is being moved by W. Diggelman, has been lifted by wallaby jacks and placed on four iron wheels.

It measures 60 x 25 feet, and is 17 feet high, with a weight of about 25 tons.

It is expected that it will take three hours to haul the building to Westmead with a 90 h.p. Ford truck.

The hut will be placed next to the Church of England at Westmead, where it will serve as a church hall.

Mr. Diggelman, who is a heavy haulage contractor, said that before the war he moved similar buildings with a team of 16 horses.

From Cumberland Argus and Fruitgrowers' Advocate, 13 March 1946, p. 11. Retrieved 18/04/2018

The structure weighing about 25 tons was lifted by wallaby jacks and placed on four iron wheels before being hauled by a 90hp Ford truck. The contractor, W Diggelman had previously used a team of 16 horses to pull heavy loads.

In March 1946, early morning crowds on their way to work witnessed an unusual phenomenon as the 25-ton Hut was moved through the streets on its way to Westmead. At one stage the building completely blocked Macquarie Street in the centre of Parramatta. The building safely reached its destination about 11.30am that morning.

The former Soldiers' Hut from Parramatta still stands in the church grounds at Westmead, serving as the church office, continuing its long history of service to the local community.



The Old Soldiers' Hut, prior to renovations, standing in the Grounds of St Barnabas Anglican Church, Westmead, c. 1990s. Image: City of Parramatta Archives Photographs Collection

Keeping Good Time: Clocks of Parramatta

Michelle Goodman



The Centennial Memorial Fountain in Centenary Square, Parramatta, 2017 (Source: Anna Namuren)

Devices have been used to measure the concept of time for thousands of years – from the tracking of the sun by obelisks and dials, to the use of hourglasses and waterclocks, through to the development of mechanical and, later, digital time-pieces.

Glancing at public clocks as we pass through the Parramatta area connects us to a collective sense of time, and we use our watches and mobile phones to measure out the hours of our everyday lives.

For the traditional owners of the Parramatta area, the Darug people, time is considered less as a chronological resource and more as an eternal quality, moving across past, present and future, drawn from the cosmology of 'the Dreaming'.

We've been thinking about the measurement of time across Parramatta, and have compiled a list of our five favorite local clocks below:

The Centennial Memorial Fountain

One of the most well-known clock towers in Parramatta is not really a clock tower at all, it is The Centennial Memorial Fountain.

The fountain itself is the last surviving legacy of Parramatta's expansive Centennial Celebrations of 1888 – although the clock on the top was not installed until 1909.

The memorial stood in the middle of a small park within the Church and Macquarie Street intersection until the site was absorbed into the pedestrianized Church Street Mall in 1986. The memorial remains a major focal point of the public space, now known as Centenary Square.



The Centennial Memorial Fountain, c.1970s (Source: City of Parramatta Council Cultural Collections, ACC002/74/21)

The A.R.C Thomas Clock

Another well-known public timekeeper in Parramatta was the A.R.C Thomas "square clock" that formerly stood in Civic Place.

The unifying quality of a Civic clock was first raised by the Parramatta Town Clerk 1984. In April 1985 Council received a letter from A.R.C Thomas, a well-known local businessman, former Alderman and Mayor of Parramatta, generously enclosing a cheque being full payment for the clock as a gift to the people of Parramatta.

The clock installed consisted of four faces and was housed in a square casing supported by a single column, with an octagonal base of sandstone to compliment the Council Administrative Building which at that time stood beside the Parramatta Town Hall.

Initially the clock was powered by two batteries that had to be changed every 100 days. In 1994 the clock was connected to the electricity supply.

Due to the extensive redevelopment work being undertaken in the area, now known as Parramatta Square, the clock has been placed in storage for possible future relocation.



The ARC Thomas Clock, which formerly stood in Civic Place. (Source: Peter Arfanis, 2015)

Gollan Memorial Clock Tower

Clocks, with their obvious connections to the passing of time, are often selected as appropriate public structures for the memorialisation of admired public figures.

One such memorial, the Gollan Clock Tower, stands in Parramatta's Prince Alfred Square, close to the corner of Church Street and Victoria Road. Erected in 1954,

the clock tower commemorates the services of the Honorable G C Gollan, Member of the Legislative Assembly, who represented Parramatta for 21 years.

As a reminder that clocks have animate qualities, in need of attention to remain operational and relevant, it is interesting to note that the Gollan Memorial Clock Tower caused confusion and consternation for locals over many years, by showing conflicting times on its multiple faces. Finally, in 2003, technology was installed that enabled the time displays to be controlled by a master clock.

The 'Babes in the Wood' clock

Many clocks are not public timekeepers or Civic memorials but personal, household items. Small, historic clocks often speak hauntingly of long-lost domestic settings, and departed individuals.

So it is with a collection of rusty, broken clock fragments, discovered in 1989 during an archaeological dig at the corner of Smith and George Streets, Parramatta, that are now held in Council's Cultural Collections. The site is known to have been the location of two convict huts from 1790, and then the famous Babes in the Wood hotel from about 1810, until it was demolished in the 1880s.

It is fascinating to consider – to whom did the clock, when it was in working order, belong? When, why and how did it become entombed in the earth of a site that now stands in the centre of Parramatta's frenetic central business district?



Rusty clock fragments from an archaeological dig site, c. mid-1800s (Source: City of Parramatta Council Cultural Collections, 2004.672)

The sibling clocks of 1821

Parramatta lays claim to historic “sibling clocks” that were among the earliest public clocks in Australia. The two turret clocks, made to the same specifications by the famous British clockmakers Thwaites and Reed, were gifted to the Parramatta by King George in 1821. One of the clocks was installed in the tower of the newly completed Female Factory and the other in St John’s Cathedral.

For almost 200 years, the clock in St John’s Cathedral has been keeping time. It is possible, though not confirmed, that the original Female Factory clock was modified and installed in the clock tower of the Parramatta Lunatic Asylum Male Ward, which was constructed on the same site in 1885, following the demolition of the original Female Factory building.

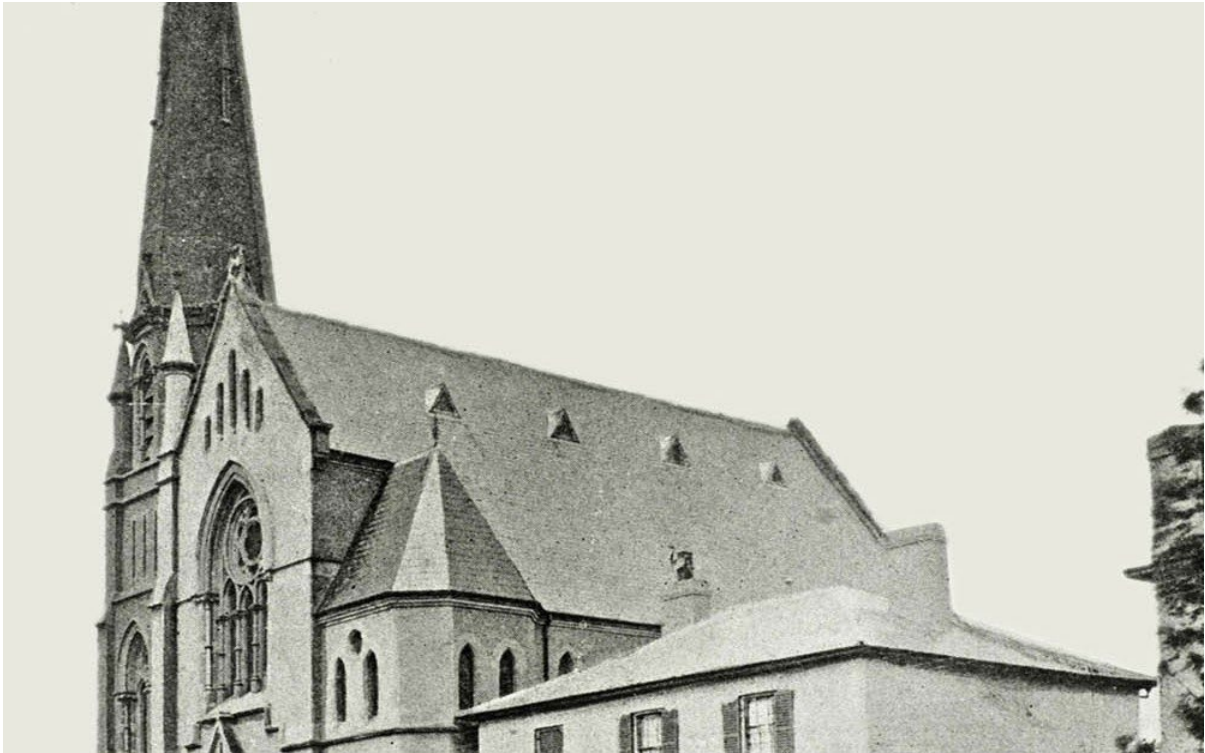


Postcard featuring the turret clock of St John's Cathedral, c.1906 (Source: City of Parramatta Council Research Library Photograph Collection, LSP00234)

There are many other interesting keepers of time across our area, including the clocks at Old King’s School and Dundas Town Hall, and the sun dials in Parramatta Park and Sydney Olympic Park. Do you have a favorite example of timekeeping in Parramatta that doesn’t appear on our list?

Leigh Memorial Church, Parramatta

Research and Collections Team



The Leigh Memorial Church, like other buildings in Parramatta is built on the land of the Barramattagul people of the Darug nation. When it opened its doors on the 21 June 1885 it was a relative latecomer to a town whose church spires were closely dotted across the skyline. Perhaps more significantly for this story it was also at this time the tallest spire in Parramatta, at 43 metres, and was the latest in a number of Wesleyan churches which ran in a row westwards along Macquarie Street.

The first of these was Lawry Chapel (1821) followed by the Parramatta Wesleyan Church, or 'Macquarie Hall' as it was better known (1839) and later Jubilee Hall (1871) which was used for Sunday school. Between these and the Memorial Church was the parsonage which was initially built next to the chapel in 1821 and which underwent a series modifications over the following forty years. In 1841 it was renamed Mission House and in 1860 Leigh House.

However, work on the Leigh Memorial Church really began around 1880 when the expansion of the congregation forced the church to consider bigger premises. Initially they planned to use the parsonage garden and some accompanying Crown Land (granted to them on 10 May 1880) but after backing out of a contract with Mr Mansfield (the architect of the Parramatta Town Hall) they settled on putting it out to community competition. Advertising started in June 1883 and the winner was the 'Hart and Lavors', both of whom had strong local Wesleyan connections.

Work commenced in 1884 with the foundation stone being laid on 6 February in the presence of around two to three hundred people. In all four foundation stones were laid: the first by Mrs Ellen Schofield widow of Rev. Schofield who had conducted a mission in Tonga and served at Parramatta 1832-1833 and 1845-1847; the second was laid by Mrs. Elizabeth (Betsy) Hunt an active member of the Parramatta church; a third was laid by Sir Wigram Allen who had supported the Methodist movement in Australia for many years; lastly a stone was laid by The Hon. James Byrnes, a past mayor of the township and perhaps the church's most senior member. Byrnes, who passed away in 1886, is remembered through the large rose window on the gallery level of the church.

An article in Australian Town and Country Journal dated, 10 January 1885, described the later stages of the project;

"The spires or towers of several other churches and chapels are to be seen scattered about, the latest addition to which is a Wesleyan Church, beautifully proportioned in the florid Gothic style, by the side of which a scaffold, " fearfully and wonderfully made," has been run up for the purpose of building a spire, which, it is to be hoped, will be appropriate to the rest of the building, and not be of the candle-extinguisher order of architecture."

The final building was acknowledged as a good example of Neo-Gothic architecture and still stands on Macquarie Street, behind the new Parramatta Square development. There were however some critics who felt the structure was not up to 'scratch'. Around 1888, Dr Carruthers, who was a minister for the Ryde circuit, felt the building had:

"tied a millstone around the neck of Parramatta Methodism that well-nigh drowned it. And, even with huge debt, they did not provide a church that was suitable or satisfactory."

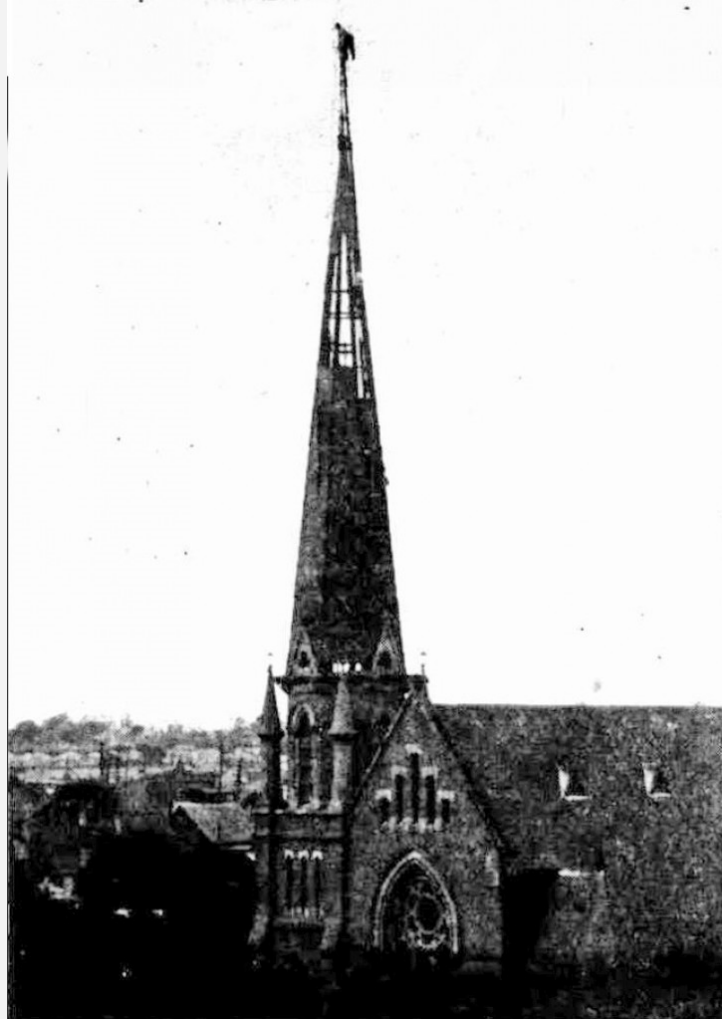
High walls, high roof, high galleries, high pulpit and high steps – with a corresponding high debt – these things were there. But there was no comfort either for the people in the high pitched, ill-proportioned building."

But the major problem highlighted by Dr Carruthers was that the predicted cost of 6000 pounds sterling had 'blown out' and the church was burdened with this debt for many years afterwards. The many fairs run out of Macquarie Hall were mainly held to help pay of this debt.

Around 1908 the building's gallery was lowered by four feet opening up the windows to full view, a false ceiling was put in and the rostrum lowered to suit the congregation of the bottom floor and the galleries. All expenses for this were borne by Ebenezer Vickery. The next major alteration to the building was one often described by insurance assessors as an 'act of God". In 1919 a bolt of lightning struck the church spire and making it a risk for passers-by and church-goers alike and this eventually forced its removal.

The incident occurred on 25 January 1919, when a bolt of lightning appears to have forced the spire onto an awkward angle. Fearing the worst the Parramatta Council appraised the situation and informed the Church they thought it would cost around 200 pounds to make it safe again. In May they employed the Norwegian 'steeplejack' Louis Vinge to remove the Muntz metal off the outside of the steeple and take down the heavy finial which extended some 12 feet above the rest of the spire.

To get to the top of the steeple the skilled professional climber had to cut a way out of the metal 'skln' of the steeple at about 16 foot from the top and then 'shin' up the rest of the way to the top carrying a line with him. The heads of nails and bolts protruding from the outside sheathing of the steeple, a good deal disjointed by the vibration of years of wind-storms, made his passage a perilous and difficult one. The difficulties he seemed to think more of than the perils. *'Don't you got afraid up there?' he was asked. 'I'm afraid of nothing,' he replied.*



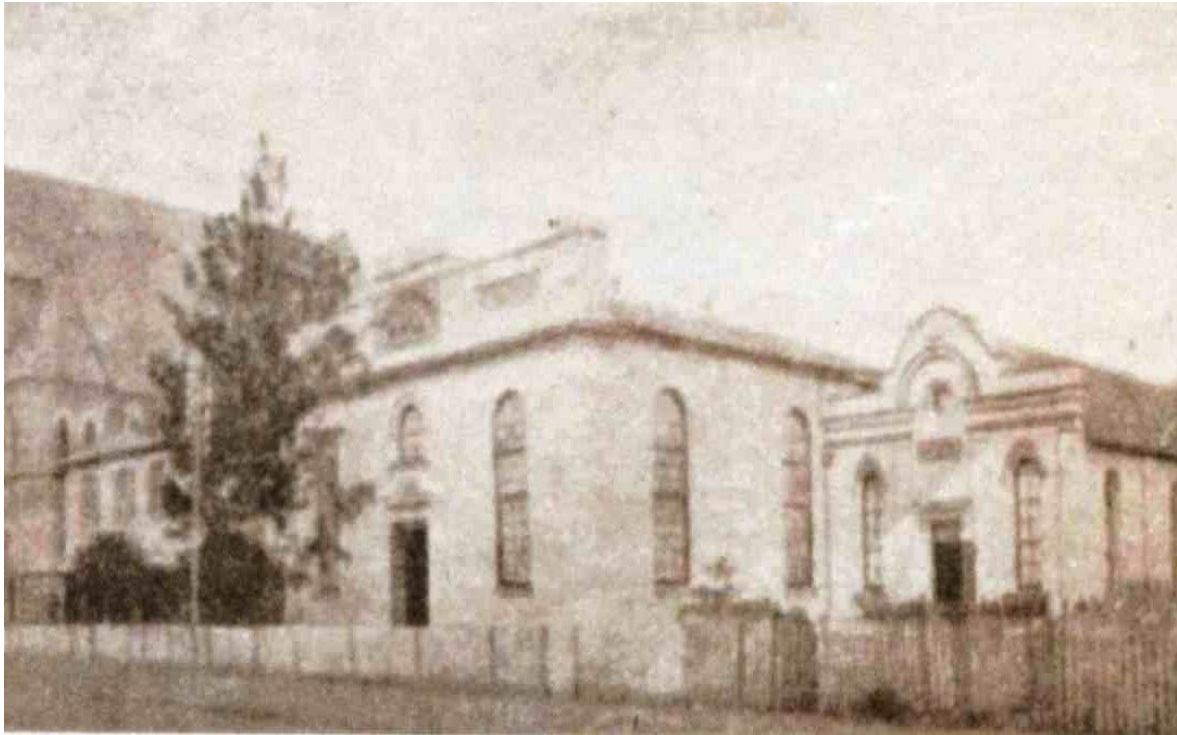
Leigh Memorial Church spire, Parramatta, 1919

Once up on the top he could not get down without the aid of the line. *'That he made fast, and then he lowered himself into the interior of the steeple again at the 16 ft. below point of entrance. He could not have come down the way he had got up, so everything depended, so far as his safety was concerned, upon the soundness of what his line was made fast to and just then no one knew exactly what was the nature of the damage up there at the top. Still, the matter of safety — though ever all important — seems to the outsider to be the last thing in the steeplejack's mind as ho talks about his work.*

Vinge's interview, and portrait of himself at the top of the spire, appeared in the the Cumberland Argus on the 10 May 1919. The photograph above was taken by George Weeks. Eventually the spire was removed completely, and this accounts for the slightly odd look of the Leigh memorial Church which is still missing its beautiful spire.

Macquarie Hall and Jubilee Hall

Research & Collections Team



Erected in 1838, the 'Macquarie Hall' building stood for many years near Leigh Memorial Church on Macquarie Street. For thirty-five years it was the principal place of worship for the Methodist Church in Parramatta and in this period, it was not called a church but was referred to as the Wesleyan Chapel.

The two towering figures in the early Methodist movement in Australia were Samuel Leigh and Walter Lawry, they arrived in the Parramatta in 1815 and 1818 respectively. With no place of worship in the colony Lawry at first preached from private homes. But on 20 January 1821, he laid the foundation stone of a small chapel on land behind the Parramatta Markets and near where Macquarie Hall would later stand. It was opened for worship in April of the same year, but the increasing number of worshippers made building a new church a pressing necessity and by 1939 only a small portion of this original chapel would still remain.



Old Lawry Chapel building, rear of Macquarie Hall, Macquarie Street, Parramatta City Council, Heritage Centre, LSP00185

In the 15 or so years since it opened the growing congregation put pressure on the little building and a new minister, Rev. D. J. Draper, set about initiating a project to build a larger chapel in Macquarie Street. In 1836 he outlined how:

"we have determined to erect a good new chapel 60 feet by 40 feet. We shall then be able to convert the old one into a vestry and school room, which are very much needed."

The foundation stone was laid in 1838 and the chapel was opened in September 1839, the whole having cost some 1450 pounds-sterling. The building saw a great deal of use with many of Parramatta's best known citizens attending sermons there and its links with the Wesleyan Missionaries ensured it had strong ties to the Pacific Islands as well. On one occasion in the late 1800s, King George of Tonga, spoke from the pulpit, on another Rev. S. Rabone interpreted for two famous Tongan ministers David a Kata and Barnabas Ahongalu.



Macquarie Hall, Macquarie Street, Parramatta, about 1885

In 1841 a single story parsonage, 'Leigh House', was erected next to Macquarie Hall and in 1860, James Houison supervised the conversion of this building into a more substantial two-story house. In 1950 the church bought a house on the corner of Marion and Harris Streets, Parramatta, to be used as a new parsonage and by 1951 Leigh House was being used as offices. It was demolished in August 1957.

But Macquarie Hall opened its doors in 1839 and continued to be the primary place of worship until the middle of the 18880s. In 1869 under even more pressure from the growing population a further thirty feet were added to the length of the building and a wing on each side with sliding doors constructed to improve access for the parishioners.

Finally when the new Leigh Memorial Church was opened in 1885, this building ceased to be the main place of worship and from this time on was referred to as Macquarie Hall.

A fourth Methodist building occupying this Macquarie Street frontage was built next door to Macquarie Hall. This opened in 1865 and was called "Jubilee Hall", in commemoration the Jubilee of Australian Methodism which occurred in that year. In This building was added to provide additional accommodation for the Sunday School programs initiated by the Methodists. It was sold to M/L.C. in 1953 and was subsequently converted into shops.

One of the more popular uses for the buildings was for the delivery of Sunday school services, among the first in Australia, to the children of Parramatta. On Thursday 12 October 1871 James Byrnes, an ex-mayor and committed Methodist opened a new 'Sabbath Schoolroom' on Macquarie Street. Some 200 people were there to witness Byrnes place a bottle under the foundation stone with a copy of the day's Sydney Morning Herald and a document written by the church.



Methodist churches, Macquarie Streets, about 1930

In 1925 Macquarie Hall and Jubilee Hall underwent some major repairs which for Macquarie Hall included:

"new fibrous ceiling, a new jarrah floor with brick piers and renewals throughout. The hall has been transformed in appearance and when the seating has been installed and the exterior finished will be a decided improvement to the town."

In 1926 the repairs were complete, and the building was reopened. During these ceremonies the speakers reiterated the importance of the hall and surrounding buildings to the story of Australian Methodism and the significance of Parramatta to the beginnings of Methodism in New South Wales:

"This Hall," said Rev R. J. Murray when introducing the chairman, "carries the most sacred memories and hallowed associations." In addition, he said that the:

"premises at the back of the hall constituted the oldest remaining edifice of Australian Methodism. It would have been a sad calamity had these buildings been allowed to fall into decay."

The Reverend Stephen went even further claiming Parramatta was the font of Australian Methodism and that the Hall and the adjacent buildings had seen sermons by some of their finest ministers including Samuel Leigh; Walter Lawry; A. J. Manton; and Daniel Draper.

In 1933, at the height of the depression, the church sold some of the lands at the rear of the Leigh Memorial Church (LMC), and by the middle of the 1950s was thinking of redeveloping its properties in light of the Parramatta City Council plans to build a new administration block at the rear of the church's buildings. In 1957 the remains of the original chapel were demolished, along with the parsonage, and a year later they had negotiated a deal with City Council. This saw the exchange of land on the eastern side of the church for property owned the rear of the old parsonage and Macquarie Hall. In 1961 they purchased Dr. Johnson's old house, next to the LMC, from Miss Dalton.

Three years later, in March 1964, the Leigh Fellowship Worship Centre was opened on this site by Sir Garfield Barwick.

Henry Garlick and the Public Pound

Research & Collections Team

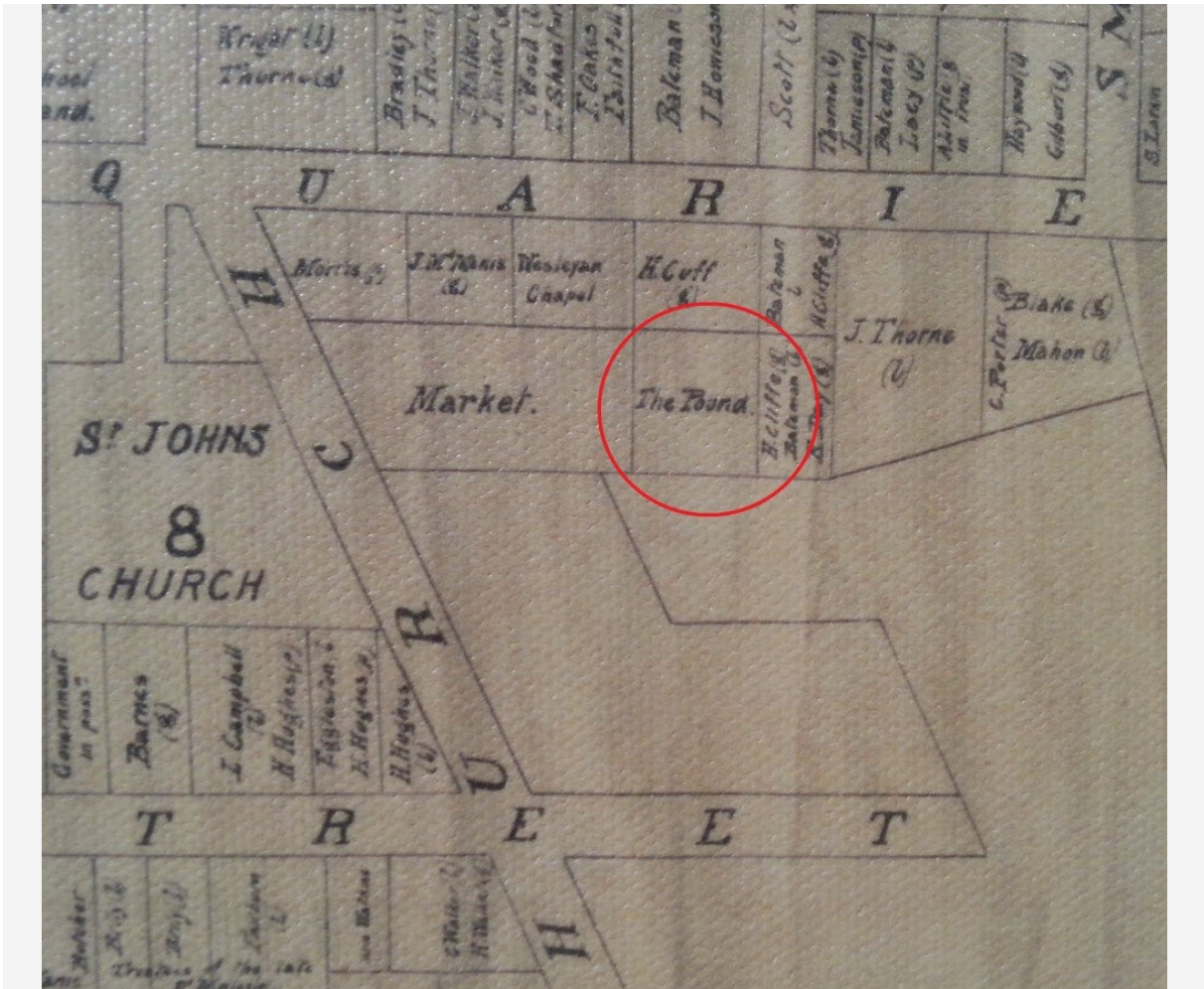


According to Sam Crouch's early recollections the Town Hall site:

"was once a hay market, with a pound at the rear. There was a stand with a bell, which was rung every morning and evening at six o'clock to indicate the collection of toll dues and hawking frees. The bell was afterwards shifted to a paddock at the rear of the baths."

By May 1862 the newly incorporated Parramatta Borough Council decided to move the pound. According to the mayor

"much sickness having prevailed in two families in the immediate vicinity of the public pound in the town of Parramatta and medical men having given as their opinion that it arises in a great measure from the collection of filth, and a pool of stagnant water in the pound, immediately in the rear of the two premises, in which low fever develops itself, it is desirable that the attention of this council should be immediately directed to the removal of the pound to some locality in which it will be less likely to become a nuisance."



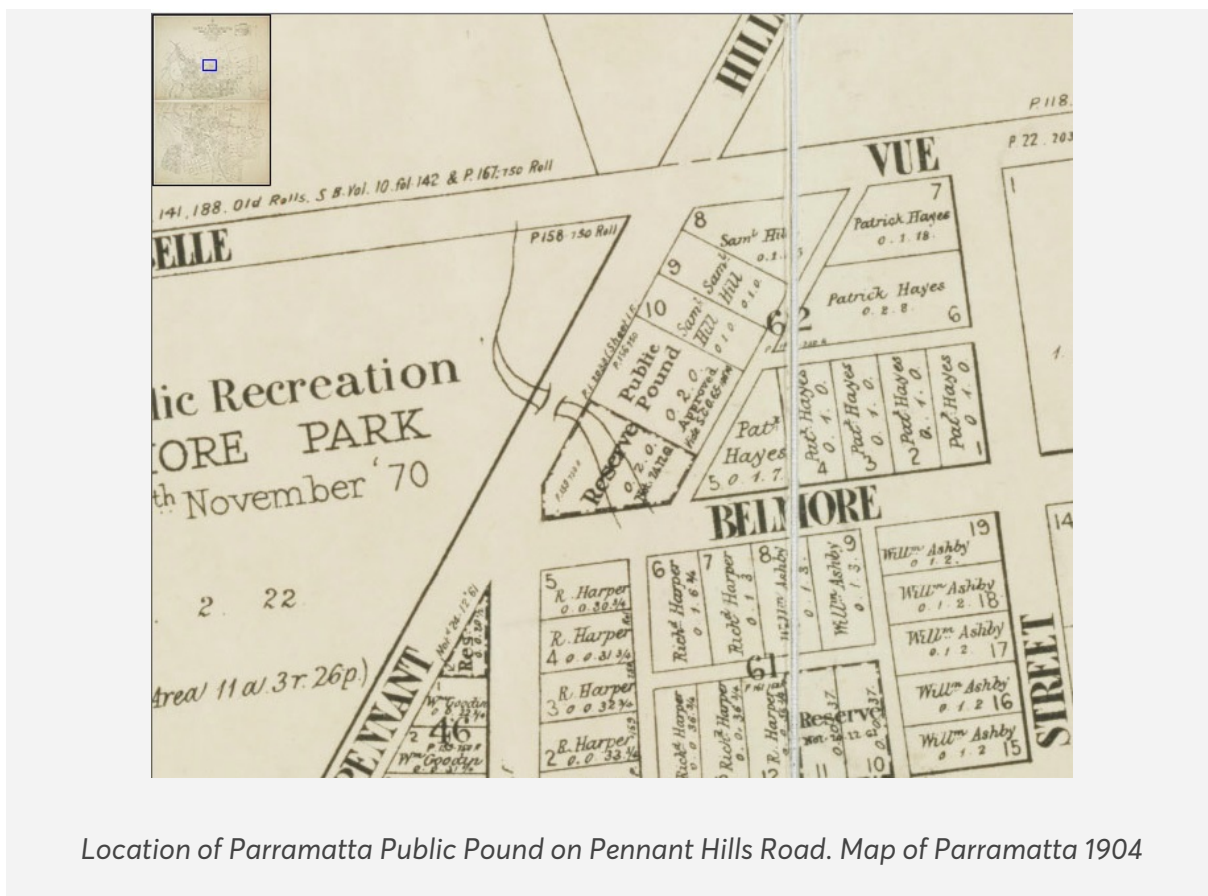
1844 Brownrigg map of the town of Parramatta showing the location of the pound behind the market

The pound land was granted to the Wesleyan Church in 1870 despite Council's attempt to secure ownership. However, in about 1958 a land swap between Council and the Church saw this land return to Council.

The old pound might have been relocated to south Parramatta until 1869 when Council made moves to have the pound relocated to Pennant Hills Road. This location ended up being inconvenient for Council and the pound-keeper and by 1872, the pound was moved again, this time to the western end of Market Reserve on Market Street.

Henry Garlick appears to have been appointed pound-keeper in 1873 and at this time apparently lived in a cottage next to the pound. With the opening of the Baths Building next to the Market Reserve in 1888 the public pound had to relocate once again, returning to Pennant Hills Road at the junction of Belmore and Sorrell

Streets. Garlick resigned as pound-keeper in 1889 and the exact position of the cottage remains unclear.



Location of Parramatta Public Pound on Pennant Hills Road. Map of Parramatta 1904

The following year, 1890, Garlick was a witness at the inquest investigating the tragic death of Emily Chant's three-and-a-half-year-old daughter who was run over by a cart on Church Street. In the coverage Garlick was referred to as the 'Nightman' for Parramatta. Later he appears developed health problems and on 13 November 1899, he made an application for two months leave on full pay.

When he died 2 March 1900 the Order of Odd-fellows gave him ... *the solemn and impressive service for the dead authorised in the ritual of the Odd-fellows Order.*

Parramatta Square in the 1870's Sam Crouch Reminisces

Research & Collections Team



Sam Crouch was for many years' caretaker of Auburn Town Hall and in 1933 published the following memories of the shops and personalities in the vicinity of what is now Parramatta and Centenary Square.

Coming under the railway bridge at Church Street, there was no Darcy Street. There was a creek running through Hilt's paddock to the back of the Methodist Church. During heavy rain this creek became flooded, and Church Street was impassable except by wading through. This caused people going to and from trains a good deal of inconvenience.

At the corner was a stone masons yard kept by a man named Craig, and a sculptor called Jones worked for him. Jones did a great job of representing a sheep being torn by a dog which was much admired, and, I believe, was afterwards presented to the park.

Next was a blacksmith's shop kept by a man named Byrne, who was the grandfather of Joe Byrne, the late member for Parramatta. Then came a wheelwright's shop, conducted by a man named Butcher, and then followed the Star Hotel, run by Mr Holland, assisted by Darby, his right hand man, and next a boarding house kept by Bolton.

The Town Hall site was once a hay market, with a pound at the rear. There was a stand with a bell, which was rung every morning and evening at six o'clock to indicate the collection of toll dues and hawking frees. The bell was afterwards shifted to a paddock at the rear of the baths. A cottage was built there and Mr Garlick, father of the late Civic Commissioner lived there.

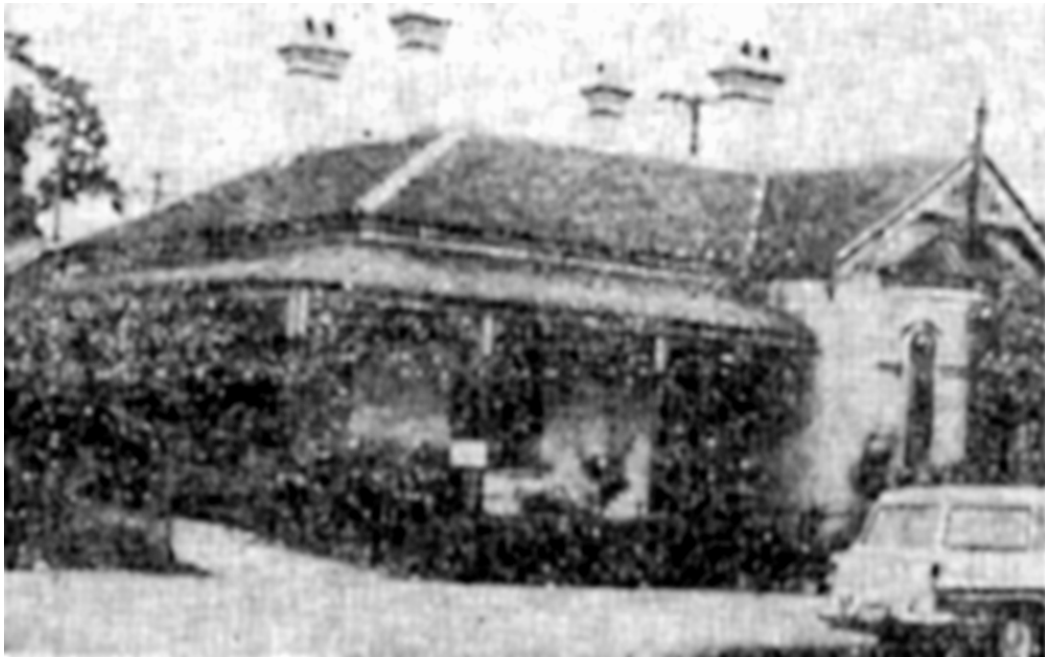
Next to the Town Hall was an old fashioned two story building, and, and Mr Peters, father of the Auburn timber merchant, had a stonemason's yard there. On the corner was a watchmakers shop, kept by Mr Haig, who also made fireworks.

Turning down Macquarie Street in an easterly direction, we came to Parsons, 'Carriers'. Parsons was the drummer in the regimental band, and also filled that position in the Town Volunteer band for many years. Next to the Church was Dr. Johnson's and Dr. Smith's, who afterwards moved across the street to a place once occupied by Dr. Rutter [NOTE: this also appears to have once been the house owned by Miss Houison's and the move was made by the 1882 according to the account of Joe Button in the CA, 30 January, 1933.

Nearby was the residence of Mr Little, father of Tom Little, of Argus fame. Further on lived Mr Hilt, owner of the paddock which ran right back to Darcy Street. At the corner lived Mr Neale, and across the road, where the school now stands, the School of Arts was built. The next house was occupied by James Byrnes, late member for Parramatta and Minister for the Crown for many years.

Dr. Woolnough's Residence, 153 Macquarie Street

Research & Collections Team



A later occupant of Harriet Holland's house 'Cranbrook' was Dr. Sydney James Woolnough who purchased Cranbrook around 1926. Born in 1889, he was the son of well-known Wesleyan clergyman, Rev. James Woolnough while his brother was the prominent geologist Walter George Woolnough.

Sydney practised in Parramatta from 1929 and commenced studying medicine while he was a clergyman with the Church of England. He held a close association with Leigh Memorial Church and during his time in Parramatta was a: Bible class leader; preacher and trustee. In 1946 his health deteriorated and he retired to Hazelbrook while his son Dr. Arthur Ronald Woolnough took ownership of the property and continued the practice from Cranbrook house.

In 1949 Arthur wrote a letter to the Council complaining about the creation of a new street as a part of the Civic Place development. He had been living there for many years and said:

"the plan would result in a complete loss of his privacy, much added noise, and a number of minor discomforts following upon the loss of amenities such as garden and out-door storage space."



View of Macquarie Street from the top of Parramatta Council Chambers Building circa 1965. In the centre of the picture is the site where the post office was erected and site of Cranbrook, home of Dr. Woolnough. Parramatta Heritage Centre ACC002

Being near the new road into the Civic Place development must have been a bitter pill for the doctor to swallow but worse was to follow. Thirteen years later, in 1962, the Commonwealth Government took out an option on the purchase of Woolnough's property to construct a new Post Office. This option was taken up and a new Post Office was erected on the site of the doctor's house. This in turn was demolished in 2015 as a part of the Parramatta Square development.

30-38 Darcy Street, Parramatta. Former Council Building

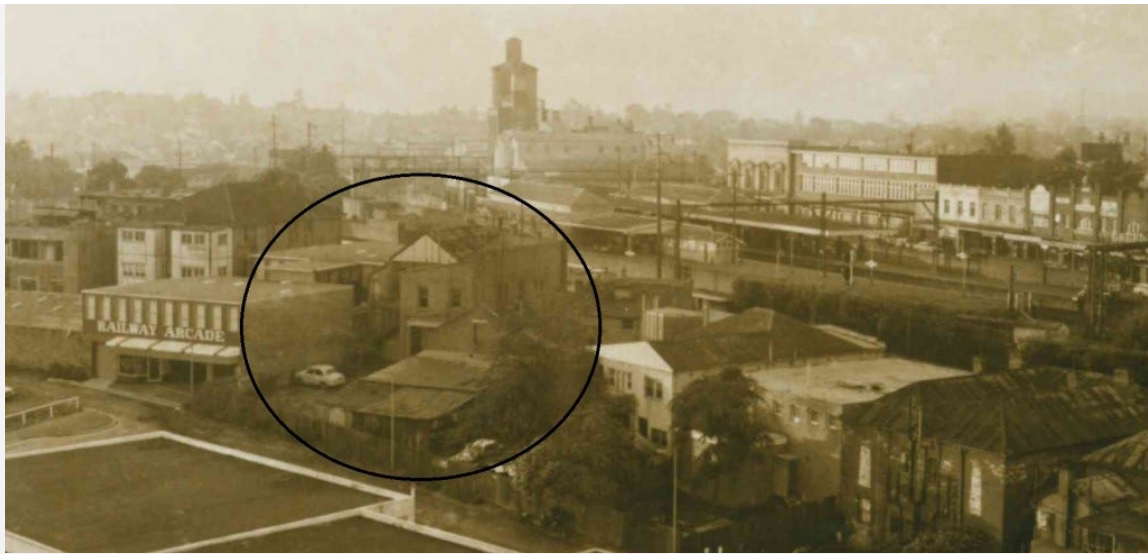
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In December 2015 preparations were under way to begin the demolition of the multi-storey building located at 30-38 Darcy Street Parramatta. For almost 20 years this building served as the administrative headquarters of Parramatta City Council. The building was vacated in October 2015 by Council when it relocated to temporary offices in Church Street to make way for the construction of stages 5 and 6 of Parramatta Square.

The original building application for the 30-38 Darcy Street building was submitted in 1969 and called for a 20-story building to be constructed. The application was instead approved in principle for a 12 story and 1 plaza level building in 1970. Construction was completed in 1972-73 and the building was named the I.A.C. (Industrial Acceptance Corporation) Building. Tenants included the Postmaster General's Department, Parramatta District Employment Office, Customs, Norman Halpin, I.A.C., Field Education International. In 1976 Citicorp took over I.A.C. and the building was renamed the Citicorp Building. In 1991 Council

began proceedings to purchase the building and moved its operations there in 1993.

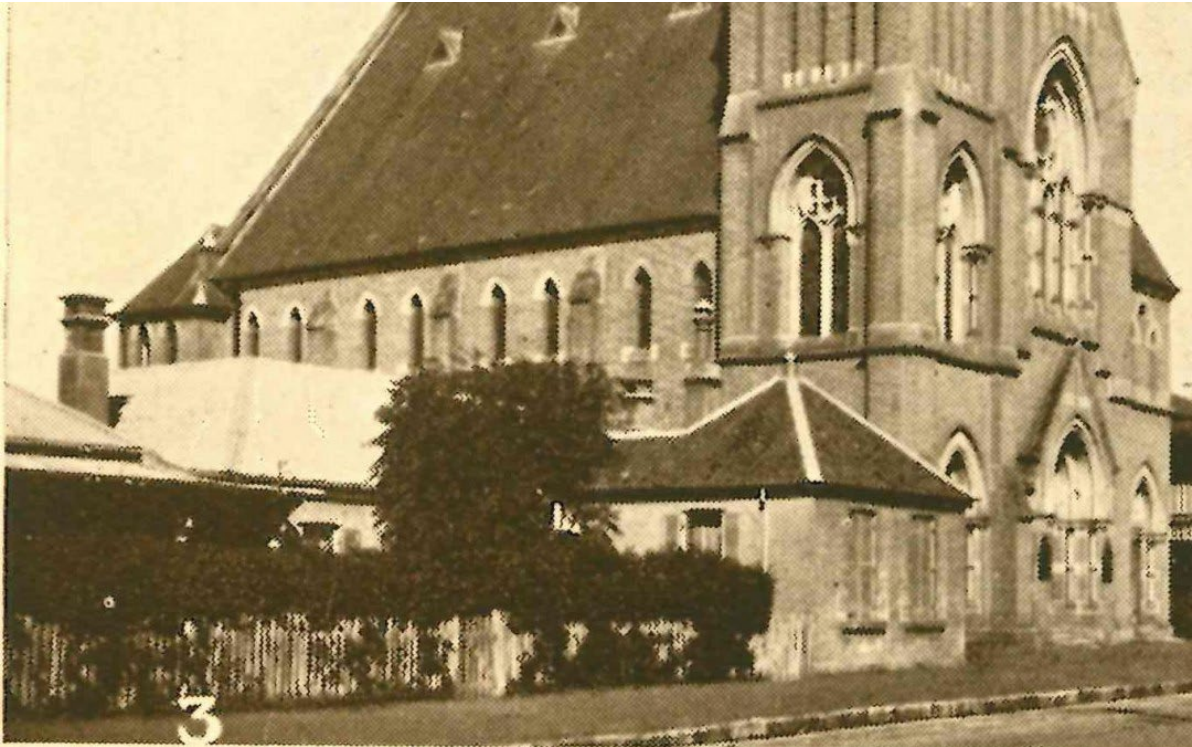


1968 photograph showing the site of the Darcy Street building circled. On the right of the Railway Arcade.

Prior to the construction of the multi-story building the site was occupied by shops and residences including a disposal store, funeral directors, milk bar and delicatessen. The land was once owned by members of the Hart family, including the famous aviator William Ewart Hart, from 1877 until the 1960s. To the west of the site was the Railway Arcade on which the Sydney Water building is now located.

Dr Johnson's Residence: Macquarie Street

Research & Collections Team



Dr. Johnson's house next to Leigh Memorial Church, from Parramatta's 145th Anniversary publication, 1933

Dr Charles Johnson, born in Dublin and educated at Trinity College, Dublin, began practicing medicine in Goulbourn in 1870. In around 1882 Johnson (sometimes spelt Johnstone) purchased the brick home on the east side of Leigh Memorial Church from Thomas Flynn. A well-respected member of the community Charles was also a warden for St John's Church and lived in this house up until his death on 10 April 1902.

His next-door-neighbour was another doctor, Dr. Smith. However, Smith moved across the street around 1882, to live in Dr. Rutter's old House (also once Mrs. Houison's old residence) and Smith's property appears to have been purchased by Harriet Holland, wife of the publican of the 'Star Hotel', John Holland.

In 1917 Johnson's property was offered up for auction by W. F. Jago who described the house as a commodious family home with a 132-foot frontage onto Macquarie Street and around 240 feet back to the lane at the rear.

In 1961 the property was taken over by Methodists who owned Leigh Memorial Church next door. Three years later, in March 1964, the Leigh Fellowship Worship Centre was opened on this site by Sir Garfield Barwick.

The Old Parramatta Market Place Building

Research & Collections Team



This photo, taken around 1870, is of the old Parramatta market-place building which once occupied the space where the Town Hall now stands. In this image we can see the Moody family standing in front of the market building and Mrs. Poulton (as a young girl) standing between two women.

Although market days in Parramatta were limited to Wednesdays and Saturday the 'Old Parramatta Market' building (on the site of the current Town Hall) was one of the more impressive in the township. It was built in 1851 by the lessee at the time, Standish Drew, until it was removed to make way for the new Town Hall around 1879.

The building itself had an interior fitted with stalls for produce, and at the rear was the public pound and the horse and cattle sale yards. The building was eventually moved to a new site on Western Road where in a slightly modified state it served as the produce store of Messrs. Webb and Co. The pound was moved to the north side of the Parramatta River in 1872.

The Old Markets in Parramatta Square

1813-1880

Research & Collections Team



One evening in June 1825, members of the newly formed Agricultural Society crowded into the upstairs room of Walkers inn, Parramatta, to set down guidelines for promoting the Colony's fledgling farming industry. Edward Wollstonecraft moved that papers from members be assembled in Sydney, Hannibal McArthur moved that all essays and letters relating to agricultural improvements were gathered for publication by the society, and William Cox moved that:

"that the Society do support and encourage fairs at Parramatta on the first Thursday in May, and the first Thursday in October, in each year and that His Excellency the Patron be applied to sanction the same. That the shows of cattle, etc. be divided; vis the rewards for the entire horses and sheep also for servants and stock-keepers, be adjudged at the

October Fair; and the rewards for shepherds and grooms and horned cuttle, at the May Fair. "

A year earlier, on 7 October, 1824, a fair had been held in Parramatta to promote the sale and exchange of livestock and to exhibit the best livestock the Colony had to offer. Unfortunately the showing on the day was apparently 'very poor' even though the Governor and a great many of the principal agriculturalists in the colony attended. This combination may have been one of the inspiration for trying to formalise the process the next year at the Walker Inn.

The site for this activity was the open space to the east of St John's Cathedral which had been set aside by Governor Phillip and had also been the site of Parramatta's first fair/market organised by Governor Macquarie and held on 13 January 1813. This area was surrounded by leases which had been issued as early as 1809 but at the core was an area of public land which would be used for many years to come. On Thursday, 6 October 1825, Parramatta held the first of the newly scheduled fairs. Unfortunately, it appears it was not quite the event the Agricultural Society had hoped for. One contemporary account describes:

"few gingerbread nut stalls, orange baskets, and sundry lasses with their sweethearts, buying 'bonny blue ribbons' and other fairings. Neither cattle nor sheep, nor horses were there."

By way of explanation the correspondent suggests:

"the most weighty reason given is the want of rustworthiness in the herdsmen and servants in whose care stock must be; and who, generally speaking, are so apt to get intoxicated after the fair and on their return home, whether in charge of purchased or unsold cattle."

On Thursday, 5 October one year later another fair was held in Parramatta. Again, the farmers seemed reluctant to bring produce to the site as:

"there were neither buyers nor sellers, nor barterers, for there was absolutely nothing to buy, nothing to be sold, nothing to barter with – if we except the supply which is usual on such occasions, of gin and gingerbread, and ginger beer."

Things continued to go badly for the fairs and the October fair in 1827 proved to be as lack lustre as its predecessor. Indeed The Monitor's correspondent said : "*there was little worth attention done at the fair.*"

However, there may have been another reason for the poor take-up. These early markets although condoned by the governor were not managed as a proper English town-market. For this to occur there had to legislation enacted to ensure they were run properly, livestock securely fenced in, fees set, revenue the generated taxed according to the law.

On 31 March 1832, an Act was passed by the Governor and the Legislative Council of the Colony to institute an 'Act for regulating the Rates and Tolls or Dues, to be Levied at the Markets of Sydney and Parramatta'. One of the central tenets of this act was to make sure certain tolls, *..and no higher...*, be demanded, paid and taken at markets. It also stated that the Governor had a free hand to appoint certain places in the towns and Sydney and Parramatta, *... where market-houses might be erected, or markets held*. Of course, the other side of the coin was that this meant others were no longer able to set up unofficial markets without facing a hefty fine. The Act which was finally issued by Governor Bourke on the 28 October, 1834, also empowered the city and district councils to make changes some parts of the act.

The contrast between the Parramatta Market/Pound and the Sydney Market/Pound was starkly laid out in the Australian in 1833. When the market dues for the ensuing six months and the public pound for two months were auctioned off by Mr Pritchett, Bernard McLaughlin paid 420 pounds sterling for the Sydney dues while Mr Bardsley paid only 2 pound 10 shillings for the Parramatta dues.

But there were other problems. By 1839 the market had become a meeting place for rogues and vagabonds, who insulted the passengers who passed through. This eventually forced the Clerk of the Market to close a section of the markets permanently while not in use. In early January 1841 the Governor approved the establishment of system to formally manage the market in Parramatta and directed that the number of commissioners to be elected was fixed at five.

Just over a month later the Governor announced the appointment of John Betts as one of the scrutineers at the election of the Commissioners. On the 1 June, 1844,

amendments made by Sydney Council came into force and set out very clearly the rules and regulations for the Sydney Markets. This included that markets would be open every day of the year (except Sundays, Christmas day and Good Friday), the time they started (5.00 am), when the gates were to shut, and where goods were to be sold.

No doubt feeling this was a sensible approach and with the ending of the 21 year lease taken out by William Batman in 1823, the District Council met later in June 1844, to discuss the issue in their new chambers at the Lumber Yards next door to the market and pound. Among their concerns were the impact of the end of transportation, the costs of the growing infrastructure of the township, and perhaps more importantly how to generate more revenue from all this activity. Mr Nichols, presented a motion that an address be made to the Governor to take measures to invest in the District Council:

"in trust for the uses of the inhabitants of this district, the public market places and pound in the town of Parramatta, and the revenue arising there from, together with the management and control of the markets."

Just a few months later, on the 3 August, Governor Gipps replied in the negative, explaining that it seemed to him that a market was a matter for the inhabitants of the town only and not the inhabitants of the district, which the Council represented.

This would mean the Markets remained under the direction of the appointed Commissioners, and Parramatta had to wait until 1862 before the newly formed Town Council took over management and 1866, for the Crown land with multiple leases to be transferred to the Council with the passing of the Parramatta Market Act.

Revitalisation of the Market Space in Parramatta Square 1880-1930

Research & Collections Team



The opening of the new town hall in 1883 led to the central part of the old pound and market area falling into a period of disuse. The lumber yards were still in operation, although no longer needed as chambers for the District Council, and by 1894 these were owned by Coates and Harper. During the economic downturn in the late 1890s ownership then passed to L. Harper and Co. and they erected a sawmill on the site.

But the old pound and surrounding paddocks appears to have fallen into disuse and the old drains running under the site were blamed for illness and fevers due to the noxious odours that rose from them, particularly during the hot summer months.

In an 1891 interview with Mayor Beames the drain at the rear of the Town Hall was described as passing:

"through the Wesleyan Church property and Dr. Johnson's, and under Macquarie Street to the river. The Mayor was also keen to point out that an outbreak of fever ascribed to the effects of the drain some two or three years previously were not necessarily the case. He also pointed out that the drain actually passed closer to the residence of the Council Clerk, Mr Wickham and Dr. Johnsons' than the parsonage and neither of these family's blamed the drain for illness."

In the end it appears that it was the building of the Leigh Memorial Methodist Church in front of the grounds which prompted a brief revival of the market. This church was linked to the strong Wesleyan Church presence on Macquarie street which included an early church built in the 1820s and 'Macquarie Hall' which all occupied continuous frontage on Macquarie Street. But these new church events had more in common with the traditional 'fete' and the fairs and informal markets which first appeared on the site then the formal Parramatta Market.

However the cost of the Leigh Memorial Church forced the parishioners to look to for new fund-raising opportunities. Initially the fund-raiser was held in Macquarie Hall which, in 1896, was transformed by a bevy of volunteers for a four day event titled "Our Market Days":

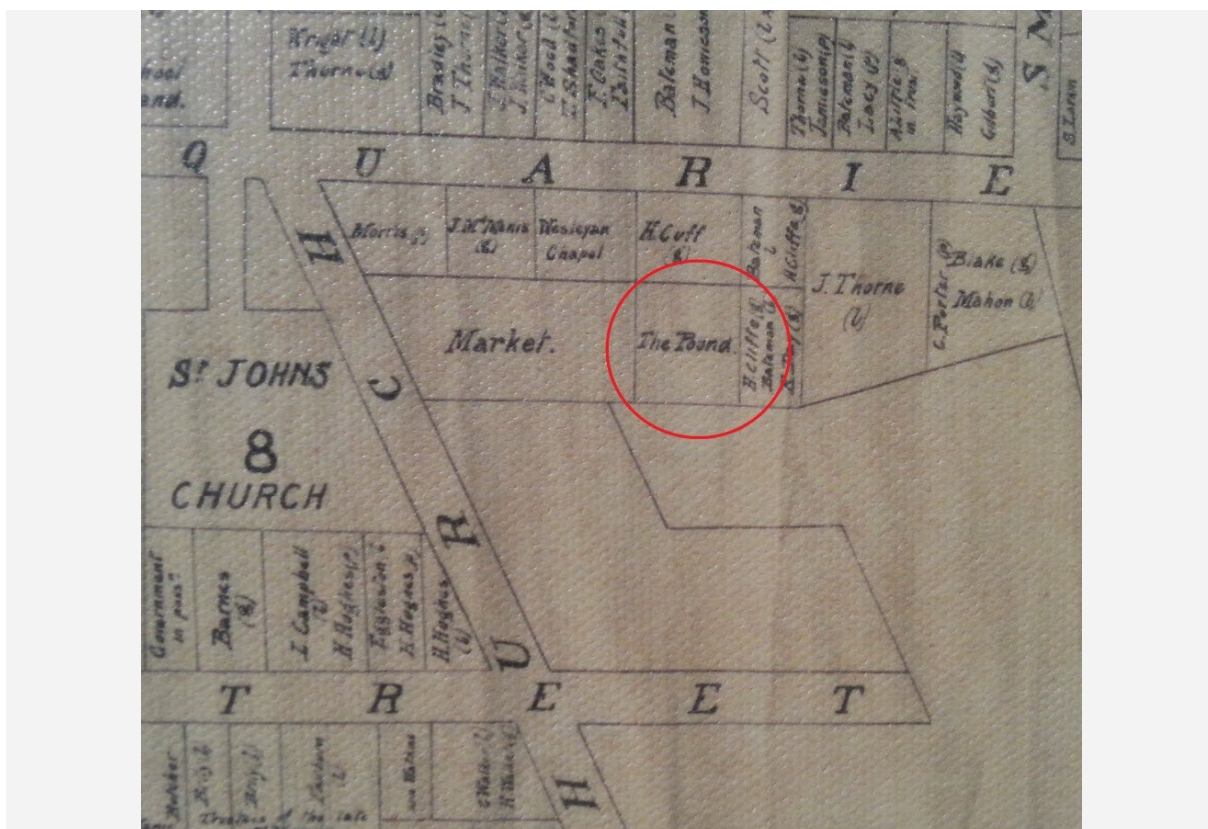
"the front gallery was adorned with boughs and greenery, in the centre being an emblem wrought in palms and national flags. Across the hall streamed attractive bunting ... immediately within, between the doors was a flower stall at the head of whom was Mrs. Barry ... lilies set in greenery adorned the walls and hanging baskets and pot-plants and other 'attractiveness' was visible everywhere ... the chief attraction, however, was not visible till nightfall. Then did the electric light shine out from the inner alcoves or flower clusters. And then did the real steamboats ply on miniature lakes fed by waterfalls casting themselves over mini cliffs; while real if miniature engines worked and panted only a few inches away from other 'mechanical effects' had a place."

The Council however fully supported the initiative and by 1904, the Lady Mayoress opened the September festivities which would last from 3.00 pm Wednesday through to 10.00 pm on Saturday night. The event now included stalls and stands in the Crown land behind the churches. The list of produce on offer included:

"a dozen eggs, a tin of beef, a pound of butter ... then there are things for the home like axes and clothes to suit figures of all sizes ... and if you don't want to buy and only go for

the amusement, look at all the side-shows, the high class concerts, and the other great 'three-penny shouelers'."

The plague outbreak in Sydney in 1900 renewed interest in improving sanitary conditions in Parramatta. In April 1900 the Inspector of Nuisances tabled a report which highlighted continuing problems in the district and Alderman Toohey took the opportunity to, "call attention to a nuisance on the market lands, where a tip was being made." The land was clearly seen by some as a dumping ground for waste and the council periodically cleaned this up and had it shipped out of town.



1844 Brownrigg map of the town of Parramatta showing the location of the market area behind Town Hall

But the Crown land behind the Town Hall continued to remain largely undeveloped, and making the best use of the land around the site of the old pond, and the ongoing drainage problems, were still being discussed in June 1936. This was when a petition was put forward by the Methodist Church to build a tennis court on vacant land at the rear of the building. However according to the Minister Rev J. Somerville:

a drain over which the proposed court would pass was in a very bad state of repair. At the present time it is unsafe to jump on parts of the drain as there is a great danger of the whole section falling in.

A major modification to the site was started in 1949, when Council realised the current premises in the Town Hall would no longer be adequate to house the growing staff. As a result, plans were developed for a new Council Chambers to be erected on the site of the old pound behind the Town Hall.

This opened in 1958 and was soon followed by the Council library, the opening of an internal loop road and a complete re-branding of the area as 'Civic Place'. In 2013 another phase of development began as the old buildings were removed and a new town centre, 'Parramatta Square', was erected in its stead.

Hart, Hitchcock and Co. Timber Merchants, Darcy Street, Parramatta

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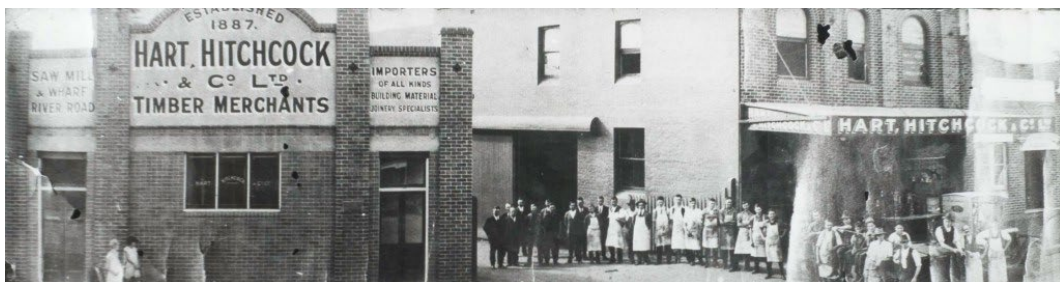


One of the most well-known timber merchants in the Parramatta area during its time was the firm of Hart, Hitchcock and Co. The company originally began as Hart and Sons in 1887. The founder of the company, William Hart, arrived in Australia aged 24 and settled in Parramatta where he became a well-respected builder. He formed a successful business partnership with Jabez Lator and has been credited with constructing a number of well know buildings such as the Leigh Memorial Methodist Church, Parramatta. Hart had four sons and two daughters. The sons were Dr. Hart once attached to the Parramatta Medical Institute, Joseph, and George and William who worked in the "Hart and Sons" firm.

In 1894, during the height of the depression, the firm of Hart and Sons ceased trading but was quickly reborn as Hart, Hitchcock and Co. William Hart, the son, had joined with William Williams Hitchcock who came to Parramatta to join Hart in forming the new company. The company's main competitor at this time was the

firm of Harper Timber located almost alongside the Hart and Hitchcock building in Darcy Street, Parramatta. As well as carrying selection of timber Hart and Hitchcock also traded in glass, sashes, oils, white lead. A 1902 newspaper article describes the operations of the firm:

"The business of Messrs. Hart, Hitchcock, and Company, whose large timber yards and steam saw and joinery works are situated right opposite the Parramatta Railway Station, in Darcy-street, was established about fifteen years ago. Since that time, it has been steadily increasing. At the present time the firm supply all the surrounding districts which lie along the many roads branching out of the old town, with building material, their trade in galvanised iron being very considerable. Further than this, the proximity of the yards and mills to the railway line enables Messrs. Hart, Hitchcock and Company to carry on an important trade with the inland towns, as they can supply country clients with great promptitude, and at a saving in train freights, as compared with the carriage from Sydney. All their oregon pine, kauri pine, redwood, baltic, etc., they import direct, and it is landed directly from the ships' slings on to their punts and towed to the firm's wharf at Parramatta., They claim to be able to land material on their wharf at a less cost for carriage, and handling than it can be done at any wharf in Sydney Harbor. Thus, they have a distinct advantage in competing for the trade of the district. On their wharf at present is stacked, assorted according to their different sizes, nearly a million feet of rough and dressed timber. The sawmill and joinery shops in Darcy street are fitted up with the best and newest up-to-date steam plant for the manufacture of all kinds of joinery, turned work, mouldings, etc., and in this department a large staff is constantly employed. The manufacture of framing for weatherboard houses is made a specialty, and this the firm prepares, to any design, properly marked and ready for erection."



Photograph montage showing the Hart, Hitchcock and Co., building, River Road, on the left and the Darcy Street buildings on the right dated, 1928. Photograph held by Parramatta Heritage Centre LSP00298.

In 1910, William Hart the founder of Hart and Sons, died aged 80 years old. In 1911 Hitchcock sold his share of the business to his son William Hitchcock and George Folkard. George Folkard had joined Hart and Sons as an office boy and worked his way up through the company to become General Manager and eventually part owner. Folkard was also a Parramatta Council Alderman between 1924 and 1928. Four years later, in August 1915, William Hitchcock Senior died.

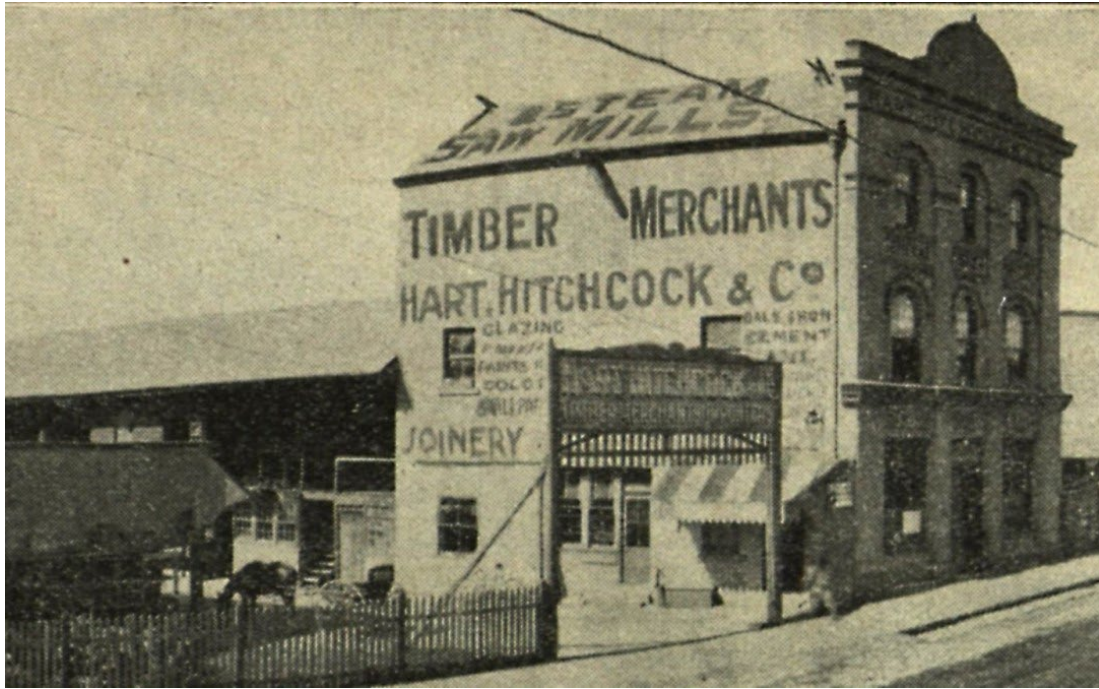
In 1927 the firm moved its administration to new premises constructed right next to their existing building in Darcy Street. Unfortunately, soon after they were informed that part of the land the buildings were constructed on were targeted to be resumed from the firm for the widening of Darcy Street.

In 1930, after occupying the site at Darcy Street opposite the station for at least 43 years they moved their offices to Rosehill at the corner of Hassall and Alfred Streets with the main timber works at River Road. By 1934 the company changed its name to Parramatta Properties Property Ltd. and went into liquidation. A new company Folkard, Hitchcock Ltd. was formed which appears to have operated until at least 1940.

William Hart, partner of the firm, died in 5 May 1937 aged 82. It is worth noting that he was the father of William Ewart Hart the famous local aviator.

History of Darcy Street, Parramatta

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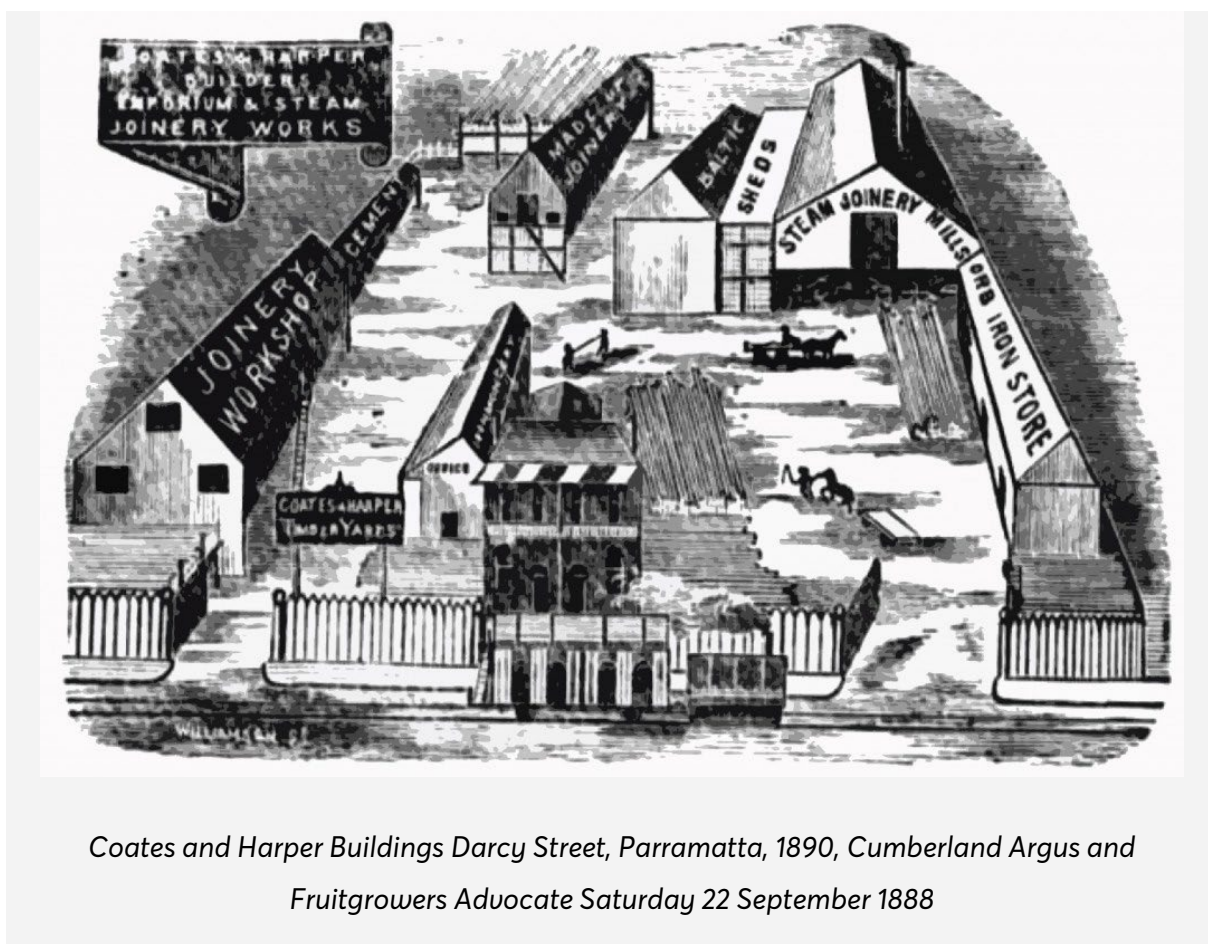
In the 1860s the centre of Parramatta moved from the river wharves to the railway in the south near to St John's Cathedral. The arrival of passengers and goods by rail at the new Parramatta Station saw the importance and value of businesses on the surrounding network of streets increase.

One of the more significant of these was Darcy Street, which ran perpendicular to Church street along the north-side of the station. Darcy Street was a relatively new street as it was not in the original Parramatta town plans but by the 1880s. The street appeared in rate books as early as 1874 and has been spelt three different ways D'arcy, Darcey and Darcy and a street were made to follow the railway line to connect the station and the main thoroughfare of Church Street. By 1879 there were 7 brick homes and a workshop on the street. According to the 1879 Rate Book Anderson Ward, the workshop and one home was owned by William Hart. William Fullager owned the remaining 6 houses at that time.

We should not imagine visitors were welcomed to Parramatta by the wide sweeping road that is there today. In fact, Darcy Street was, in the early 1900s, only 40 feet

wide and likened to a dog's hind-leg. As a result, many years were spent in lobbying for improvements and widening of the street. A process made all the more difficult as Council tried to accommodate the interests of the local businesses along the street and the hesitancy of the New South Wales railways in granting the adjacent land to the project.

One of the more persistent problems was McIlrath's Grocery Store, on the corner of Church and Darcy Streets. This business had a wall which had encroached around two feet into public land and also created a bottleneck at the entry at Church Street. Council meetings from the 1920s make it clear there was a will to move the obstruction but not so great a will to compensate McIlrath's for the large sums they claimed would be lost as a result.



Coates and Harper Buildings Darcy Street, Parramatta, 1890, Cumberland Argus and Fruitgrowers Advocate Saturday 22 September 1888

The other major companies which had historically conducted their timber and galvanised iron businesses on Darcy Street were L. Harper and Co, and Hart Hitchcock and Co. Both businesses had voluntarily offered to hand over 15 feet of frontage for the street widening project.

In late 1923 Council gave up its attempts to widen Darcy Street citing the resumption of the premises of McIlrath and Company as the primary obstacle.^[4] Unfortunately a number of other property owners on Darcy Street had been developing plans in the hope the project would get off the ground and these were now no longer possible.

Remarkably the issue was back on the table in 1925 after the Parramatta Council sealed a deal to resume the McIlrath site after arranging for McIlrath's to move to the old premises of Saunders and Young.

By the beginning of 1926 these arrangements seem to have borne fruit and as a new arcade connecting Church and Darcy streets was opened on 19 March 1926. The Cumberland Argus gave the following description of this new addition to Parramatta:

"The building, which has been erected by Mr George Ralph; connects Church-st. and Darcy-st. and is certain to give a big impetus. to business in that quarter. The shops, totaling seventeen, are both ornamental and commodious. Upon the Church-street frontage are three very large upstairs rooms suitable for any purpose. Already the arcade is fully tenanted, and a condition has been laid down that no two businesses of similar class are to compete against each other. A reference to our advertising columns will give an indication of the diversified nature of the business conducted there. That the arcade is destined to be a popular promenade was demonstrated last Friday evening when it was almost an impossibility to walk through; owing to the great crowds which had been attracted."

By June the Council was discussing the demolition of the house on the corner of Darcy and Taylor street which they had purchased from Mrs. Murray. By December more new shops had been erected along the street front and some of those owned by Mrs. G H Mobbs. They appear to have been only just complete as this was when she sent a letter to the Council to complain about the street works undertaken by Council. Mr Bert Tweedie's Tourism Bureau on Darcy Street also made the news in 1927 as Council decided to force him out of the building, they had constructed on the site of the shops previously owned Mr A. Little. Although only a year old they were now concerned about him not being able fulfil his side of the contract.

In late January or early February 1927, the Governor approved a Council loan of £30,000 for the purchase of land around Darcy Street and the metalling of roads around Parramatta. In March the Local Parramatta Land board set the value of the Hart, Hitchcock Co's property at £2161 for the purchase of the property by the Parramatta Council to enable it to widen the street.

As we can see from the image at the top of this post Hart and Hitchcock occupied not only a large part of the street frontage but also the land to the north which later formed Civic Place and later Parramatta Square. The site of the old Council Chambers and the old Parramatta library were probably once part of this area.

By 1953, after over half a decade of discussions the project was finally complete, and a new set of shops were erected opposite the entrance to the station entrance.^[15]

John Hilt: A Great Whip - Macquarie Street

Research & Collections Team



On Macquarie Street close to the corner of Smith Street previously stood a public house belonging to the coachman John Hilt. John and his father, James, were both considered great whips. The site is now taken up by the new Western Sydney University building forming part of Parramatta Square.

Previous to John Hilt purchasing the property in 1851 it was the site of the first White Horse Inn in Parramatta, this later moved to the corner of George and Church Street. John Hilt ran his Parramatta to Sydney coach business and hostelry from here. There was also an area known locally as 'Hilt's Paddock' which apparently ran all the way back to the southern side, near Darcy Street. While this area was used to graze the horses the reminiscences of a local resident noted that some of the original stagecoaches remained under the old sheds in Hilt's yard for many years after the coach service was abandoned.

Some 30 years ago the coaches and other old lumber on the property were said to have been sold to Mr W. Ward, who then had a coach factory where The Mercury Building now stands. He then burnt the framework, and took away the ironwork,

and the writer recollects seeing a well-known stagecoach called the 'Hero' being eaten away by the flames. This was in 1896.

John passed away in November 1866 aged 64. Catherine Hilt, his wife, who lived in Rosehill Street, continued to operate the hostelry from the old White horse Inn, which appears to have been torn down around 1882 and it was replaced with a new dual occupancy, two story brick house. Catherine passed away in 1908. The property remained in the hands of the Hilt family until circa 1925 when it was purchased by Thomas Lucas Stoney. He named the house Macquarie Flats.



View from the top of Council Chambers Building. At the centre of the image bordering the vacant building site is the former home of Hilt Family

In 1848, John Hilt accepts tender for the conveyance of mail items Sydney, Parramatta, St Marys and Penrith daily, by four horse coaches with guards and from and to Parramatta and Windsor by two or more horse coaches for 400 pounds

The Town Clerk's Cottage and Mr Wickham

Research & Collections Team



Sydney Wickham was Parramatta Council's Town Clerk for 33 years from 1872 to 1905 and died in June 1919 aged 87 years.

He was a long-term resident, having been born on-board the ship that brought him to Australia and later christened in St. Philips Church, Sydney. In a recorded chat with Mr Wickham he stated:

"I am not a native of Parramatta...My parents came from England about 73 years ago, and I was christened in St. Philip's Church, Sydney."

His father, George Wickham, was a painter, chemist and druggist and he came to Parramatta soon after arriving in the colony. Sydney himself ended up living in Parramatta for 73 years and went to school at Mr J. Mills School when it stood on the site later occupied by the Wesleyan's Macquarie Hall.

He was apprenticed to the saddle-maker Samuel Burge in George Street but left to seek his fortune on the Turon goldfields. Like many others he had no success and after he returned, he became an assistant to his mother who was at the time

post-mistress, and in 1872 applied for the position of town clerk. The Town Clerks Cottage was built at the same time as the Town Hall. Wickham occupied the cottage and was probably this house which is mentioned in the Cumberland Argus article about the drain problems on the site of the old market, pound and stockyards.



Town Clerk's Cottage. Located behind the Town Hall. 1956. Screen grab from PRS77/032

At that time he says 'Experiment Cottage' stood practically alone in Harris Park, and the Globe Hotel was situated at the top of a hill between Parramatta and Granville:

"that hill has since been cut down. It really was a hill in those days. You went through the entrance of the hotel to the race-course, which was a 1.5 mile course, taking in part of Boundary Street and extending all the way to Clay Cliff Creek."

A keen bowler and angler he also had a passion for horticulture and was a prominent supporter of the horticultural societies. By 1905 he was living in a house in Church Street South, where he spent much of his time tending his gardens.

The cottage served as residence for the Town Clerk until the 1930s when it became the residence of the Town Hall caretaker. The cottage was pulled down in 1956 to build the Council Administrative building.

Craig's Stone Masonry Yard - Church Street

Research & Collections Team



In the photo above you can see the tombstones and sign at the front of J. Craig's stone-masonry yard on Church Street. Anne Craig, wife to Joseph Craig, was a well-known personality in the district and was closely associated with the area around today's Parramatta Square where she both lived and ran her businesses. She was the daughter of Mr Stone who in the mid-1850s was the toll keeper on the Great Western Road. The gate was eventually removed to the bridge near the railway crossing of Duck Creek and Mr Stone became landlord of the Vauxhall Hotel in Granville.



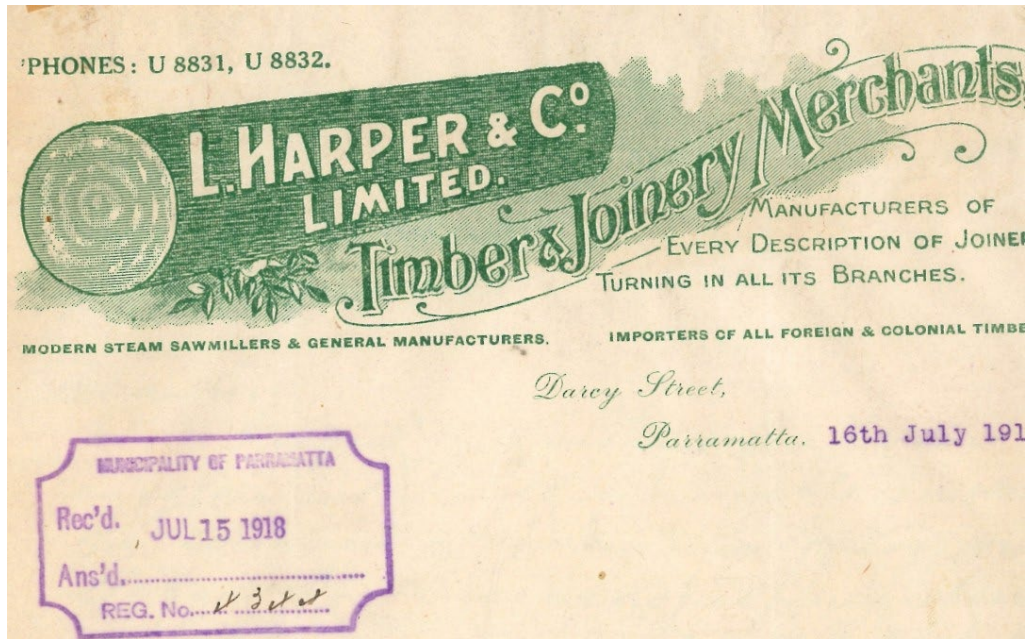
Craig's Stone Mason Yard (on right), Church Street, Parramatta, about 1870, detail from an image of the Star Hotel.

Joseph was her second husband and when her first husband, Mr Watters, died about 1875 she had opened a 'fancy-goods' shop opposite the old courthouse in Church Street. After marrying Joseph, she continued with this business while her husband ran the stone mason's business from a yard next to the Star Hotel, run at that time by Mr Holland, and near to where Darcy Street would eventually be built.

Mr Craig had died in 1880 and his wife carried on running her business for most of her remaining 46 years. She died aged 98. Her last shop near Lennox Bridge apparently did very well.

Harper Timber: A 160-year-old Parramatta Business

Research & Collections Team



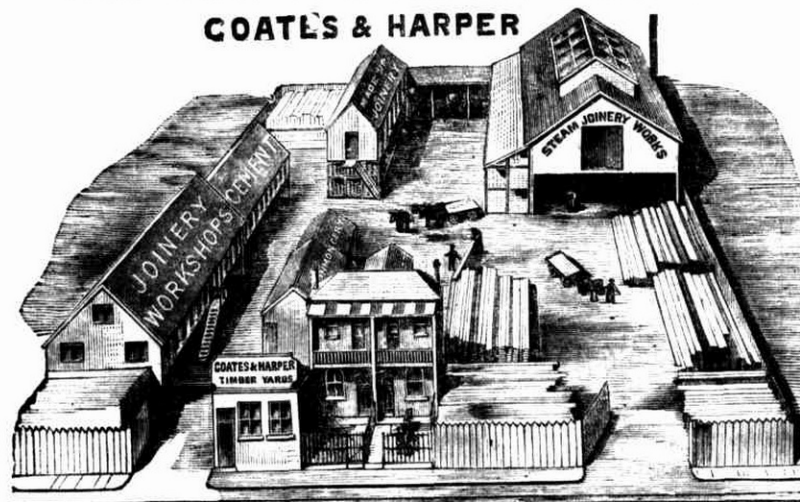
Few businesses can claim to have operated in the Parramatta area for over 160 years but 'Harper Timber' is one that can make that claim. This long time timber business is thought to have been established in 1854 at George Street Parramatta on the site of the Roxy Theatre with a branch sawmill in Granville.

It isn't clear who started the business but it was taken over in 1880 by business partners George Coates, son of Master Builder and Parramatta Alderman George Coates Senior, and Richard William Harper, son of Parramatta Mayor, and brick works owner, Richard Harper. A 1894 Coates and Harper advertisement showed the business operating from two locations on George Street, one on Darcy Street, and another opposite Granville railway station.

The company traded until 1897 when it was hit hard by the economic depression of the 1890s and the company suffered a financial collapse. The partnership was dissolved, and a new trading entity L. Harper and Co. was formed. L. Harper was most probably Louisa Harper, nee Coates (daughter of George Coates senior), who

married Richard. W. Harper in 1881. The company's major competitor at this time was William Hart and Sons Timber Merchants which also went through financial difficulties and was dissolved in 1894. A new company started by W.W. Hitchcock took over trading as Hart and Hitchcock and Company.

COATES AND HARPER,
 GEORGE STREET, PARRAMATTA, DARCY STREET, PARRAMATTA
 OPPOSITE RAILWAY STATION, GRANVILLE,
 and
 NEXT VICTORIA THEATRE, GEORGE STREET, PARRAMATTA.
 All Communications to be addressed George street, Parramatta



MAIN YARDS, GEORGE STREET, PARRAMATTA.

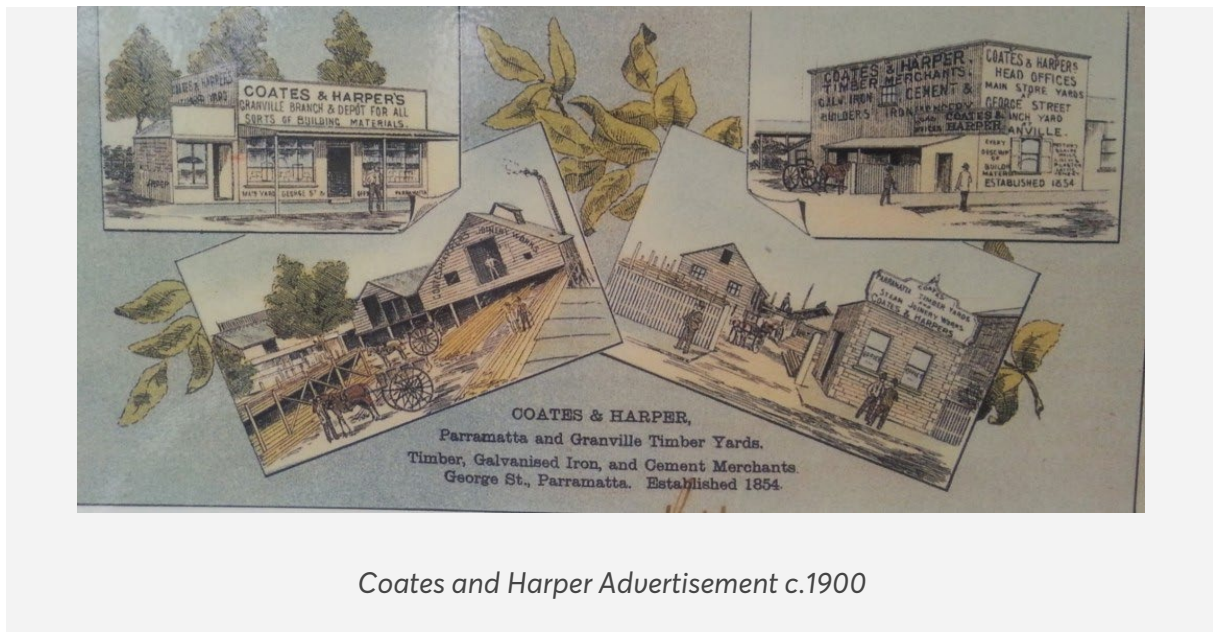
The Famous Sun Galvanised Iron. The Noted Coast Hardwood.
 The Very Best Fencing Stuff. Joinery Cheaper than Sydney.
 Lime, Cement, Slates, Pickets, Drain Pipes, Tiles.
 Every Sort of Pine, Redwood, Cedar, Baltic, Kauri.
 Sawing, Planing, and Morticing by Steam done for Customers Cheaply.
 The CHEAPEST YARDS IN CUMBERLAND for everything required in
 Building. Note the Address, and before going elsewhere, give
Coates and Harper a Trial.

Advertisement showing sawmill of Coates and Harper. Cumberland Argus, 11 August 1894

In 1911 the L. Harper and Co. successfully applied to Parramatta Council to set up a sawmill at Darcy Street, near the current Parramatta train station. Following its incorporation in 1912 it began to experience considerable growth. It was during this time, in February 1916, R. W. Harper died. His death was followed two years later by that of one of his sons Ernest W. Harper, manager of the business.

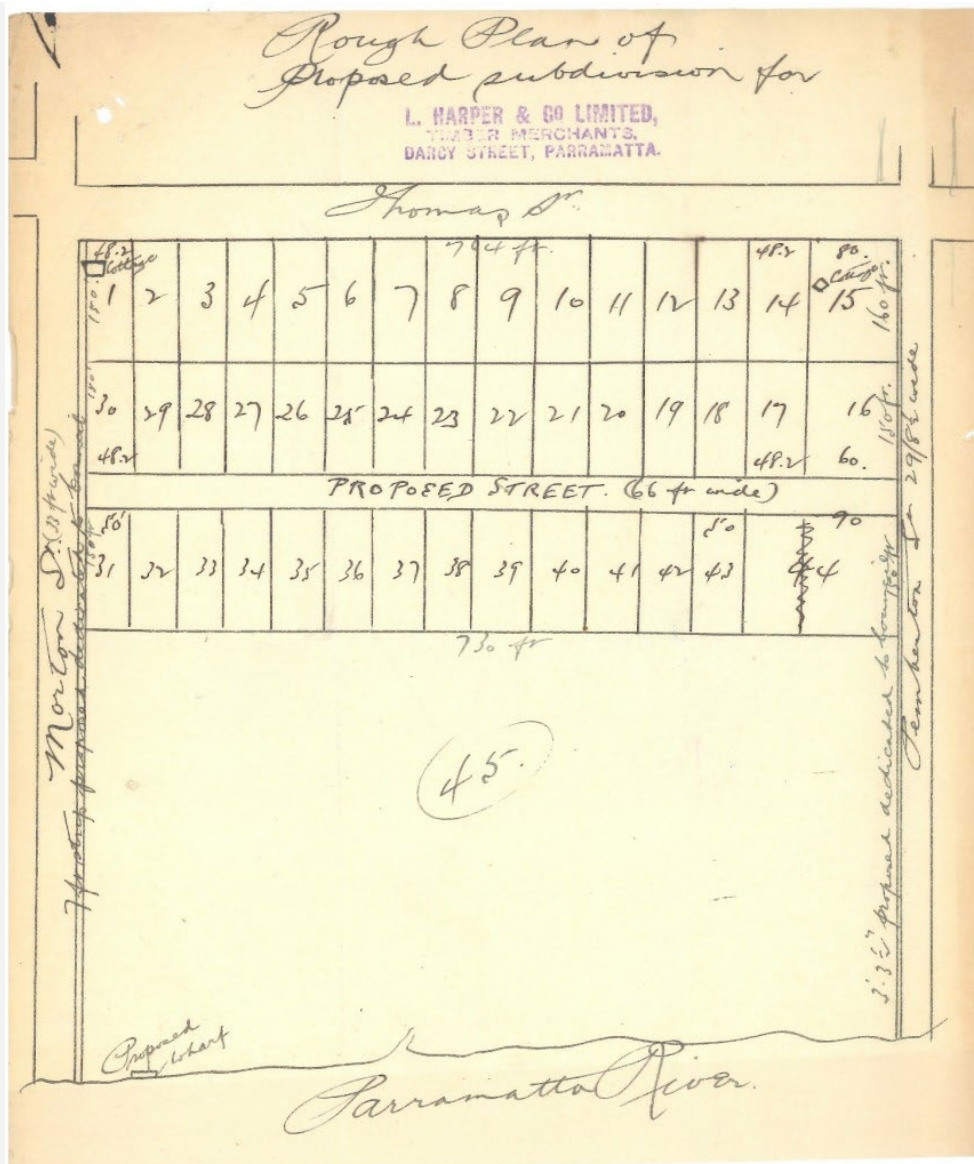
However, this did not seem to slow down the company's success and in June 1918 L. Harper & Co. relocated it's mill to 18 acres of land with water frontage on the north bank of the Parramatta River near Morton Street. This was formerly the site of the Pemberton Orange Estate. The company erected a new wharf at the site

that would receive hardwood from the Northern Rivers of New South Wales, white pine from New Zealand, Oregon and redwood from North America, and possibly Baltic timber from Scandinavia. The main office of the firm remained at Darcy Street under the control of Director Mr R. L. Harper, and, at the river-side mills, his brother, Mr R. G. Harper, was in charge. The Darcy Street yard was kept as a holding area and a new electric motor, panel-planing machine and circular saws installed for the treatment of timber on the 'while-you-wait' system.



Coates and Harper Advertisement c.1900

L. Harper and Co. also had ideas to capitalise on their land acquisition. Soon after purchasing the land by the river they applied to Council with plans to subdivide the northern end of the property into 44 lots of land with a new road to be constructed from Morton Street. The land was advertised in 1919, however despite these plans the subdivision did not eventuate.



Subdivision Plan for L Harper and Co. 1918. Parramatta Council Archives

The company continued to grow and, unlike in the 1890s depression, was strong enough to get through the Great Depression. The company built new premises on Darcy Street, opposite the railway station in 1934, on land originally owned by George Coates senior. Also, as part of these new premises Neil Harper, a district tennis champion, opened a sports store alongside the timber merchants store. The opening of the new store appears to be the precursor to the company closing down its operation on the banks of the Parramatta River.

Valuation records show that around 1936 the land was transferred from L. Harper and Co. to Louisa Harper. By 1939 sawmill operations had ceased and land use was described as "Dairy and Boiler House". Louisa Harper passed away in

November 1940. R. L. Harper and G. H. Brennan were appointed executors of her estate which included the riverside land. The land was later sold to Fredrick Rose Ltd. At this time the trading name of L. Harper and Co. was changed to Harper Timber Co. Pty. Ltd. as it again strove to become a leading Sydney timber supplier.

HARPER'S MILL ESTATE PARRAMATTA

For Auction Sale Beautiful elevated Building Sites overlooking Parramatta River on the Ground

SATURDAY, 26th APRIL 1919
at 3 o'clock.

THOMAS ST.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
30	29	28	27	26	25	24	23	22	21	20	19	18	17	16

BROUGHTON ST.

31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44
----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----

MORTON ST. **PEMBERTON ST.**

SLACK & CO. PARRAMATTA

HARDY & BUSBY.
Licensed Surveyors under R.F.A.
Penderin's Chambers
375 GEORGE ST SYDNEY

TERMS
£2 per Lot Deposit.
Balance 10% per month - Interest
at 5% per annum payable quarterly.

TORRENS TITLE

LOCAL SKETCH

All dimensions subject to Deposited Plan.

© Comptons & Co. Ltd. Litho. Sydney.

Harper's Mill Estate Land Sale Poster. SLNSW c035480094

With Parramatta Council's development of Civic Place and the planned construction of a new Central Library near the site of the mill, Harper Timber Co. made the decision in 1962 to move its premises to Wentworth Avenue, Pendle Hill

where it remains to this day. Neil Harper, who managed the business from 1945 retired from the business in 1988, selling the business to Timber Corporation Pty. Ltd, which continued to trade as Harper Timber.

Parramatta's Convict Drains and Sewer System

Research & Collections Team



The area between the Parramatta River foreshore and the railway line next to Parramatta Square was originally a shallow valley of numerous low mounds and depressions all of which were imperfectly drained into swampy land to the north-east. To complicate matters there was a low ridge next to the railway station running north-east from the station which created a block to the natural drainage of the area leaving the place a swampy quagmire in heavy rains. In addition the accumulation of water in hollows around the rear of where the Town Hall created a series of ponds one of which was directly under the site of the old public library. The early drainage for this area can be seen marked as a series of dots in the diagram below. The area west of Church Street appears to have been drained by a channel between Marsden and O'Connell Streets into the Parramatta River.

After European settlement in 1788 the rapid expansion of Parramatta township led to an increase in the associate problems caused by water accumulating where new homes, and roads were being built. While water (and waste) was initially washed by rainwater along the natural contours of the landscape into the creeks into the

river or swamps the new layout of the buildings and streets started to alter the flow of rainwater.

The first drains obviously sought to make use of the systems created by nature and open ditches were dug to channel the flow. But as new streets were built for efficient movement of carts, horses and people new bridges were built, hollows were filled in, and hills cut into and removed. As a result, covered drains were needed to flow beneath roads and new drains were dug to follow the contours of the township rather than nature.

Over time the natural drainage system of other areas around the township were progressively covered up. One example of this was Clay Cliff Creek, which was once a freshwater stream which, started in the Merrylands district and flowed by Experiment and Elizabeth farms. It's meandering course near these heritage sites is now a concrete lined stormwater drain while its course east of James Ruse Drive was straightened in the early 1900s to allow for road work extensions.

These changes were not unique to Parramatta as they were reflected more broadly across Sydney. In fact, the control of Sydney's water system since European settlement can be broken down into four distinct approaches. The first phase from 1788-1840 was the development pipes and drains to manage the town's water supply and sanitation needs. This work was done under direction from the Governor of the Colony.

The second phase from 1840 -1880 saw responsibility move to local government and then the Legislative Assembly of New South Wales. The third phase started in 1888 when a statutory board was created to oversee the management of the water and sewage systems and up until 1924 major capital works were the responsibility of the Department of Public Works. And the final era, still in place today, began in the 1970s with the major reforms to the statutory authority.

In Parramatta the early open cut drains were replaced with "brick barrel" drains common throughout much of the British Empire. These large underground drains were made from bricks and cement and carried excess water to the Parramatta River or areas which would more readily dry out after a heavy downpour. A portion of one of these made between 1822 and 1827 was uncovered in 1980 and can be seen on display on Philip Street at the rear of 126-138 George

Street. This cylindrical brickwork drain has two courses of 200 millimetre brick and an internal diameter of 1200 to 1300 millimetres.

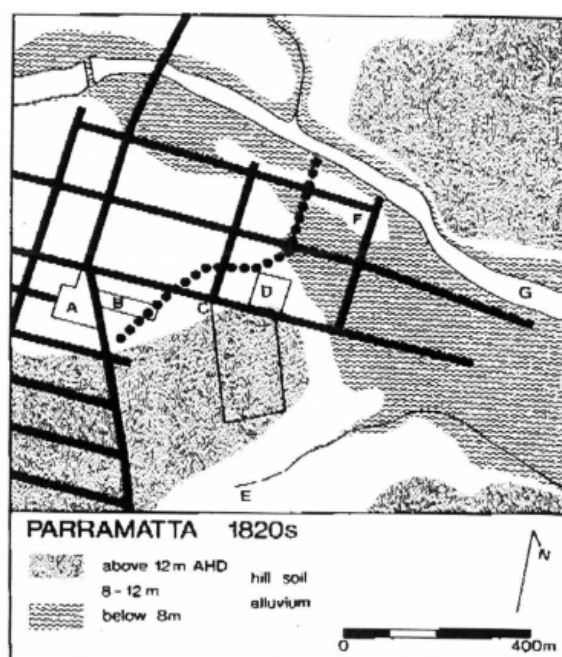


Fig. 1: Plan of Parramatta in the 1820s showing street layout and other topographic details. The course of the brick barrel-drain is shown (dotted). The E-W streets from the top are Phillip, George, Macquarie, Hunter, Argyle and other streets. The main cross-streets from left to right are Marsden, Church, Smith and Charles. Other features are as follows: A-Church; B-Market and Pound; C-Lancer Barracks; D-Convict Barracks; E-Clay Cliff Creek; F-Terrace along south bank surviving above 8m AHD; G-Parramatta River.

Location of the Brick Barrel-Drain within Parramatta CBD, shown dotted (Sourced from E Higginbotham [1983], op. cit.)

Parramatta Square, convict drain, Office of Environment and Heritage, 2000

Once a major drainage system for early Parramatta it joined up with a number of smaller drains, including the sandstone box drain uncovered during the 1989 excavation of the stables of a house at 79 George Street. Originally built by Nathaniel Payten the sandstone box drain started close to Argyle Street and Church Street and ran past the old market and pound, and old Council Chambers in Parramatta Square. it then ran across the property once owned by Harriet Holland and Dr. Woolnough before crossing Macquarie Street.

The New South Wales Heritage Office archaeological assessment of this site also notes on the site that the northern end of this drain reverts into a brick and cement rendered drain near the rear of the Parramatta Town Hall.

In 1852 the British 'General Board of Health' advocated the use of smaller pipes instead of the large brick and stone drains then in use. This in turn seems to have led to the adoption of smaller earthenware pipes in public drains and sewers across the colonies as well. It was also around this time that an outbreak of cholera connected to a well on Broad Street, London, formed the basis for a remarkable investigation which finally linked disease to the polluting of water. This in turn led to a complete reappraisal of water and sewage systems and in particular the leaching of pollutants from mortar joints in the old "brick barrel" drains.

This led to the next phase of development which was the introduction of smaller locally made earthenware pipes and the identification of the need to stop polluting the Parramatta River. By 1889 there were many concerns about public health as the rock and stones trapped all manner of putrid matter which refused to be flushed out even at low tide. At a special meeting of the Council in April 1889 it was decided to clean up the riverbed, which locals felt was the cause of all manner of diseases including typhoid fever.

While some of this was caused by the disposal of waste from the Hospital, Asylum and Gaol located upriver from the weir, there was enough of a problem downstream to warrant a call for a complete overhaul of the sewerage system. In 1892, after the Hunt's Creek Dam water supply was assured, Parramatta Council set about installing its own sewerage scheme in conjunction with the Public Works Committee. Initial proposals focussed on draining directly into the swampy land at the end of Grand Avenue but finally in 1897 it was decided to erect a treatment station at the junction of Clay Cliff Creek and the Parramatta River. The costs for this project also included the 14,864 pounds already spent on constructing storm-water channels to relieve the nuisance of slop water being discharged into creeks. The project also saw the length of sewers increased from 15 miles 20 chains to 20 miles and 20 chains.

The work was completed in February 1910 at a cost of £66,000. However the scheme was absorbed by a new plan where all sewage from the district was pumped directly to an ocean outfall system at Manly. The redundant septic tanks were abandoned and eventually used for mushroom growing by the Parramatta Mushroom Company. A boat builder was located nearby whose gas turbine motor was powered by methane gas from the sewerage works.

Macquarie House - 169 Macquarie Street

Research & Collections Team



Macquarie House, located at the north west corner of Macquarie and Smith Streets, was recently demolished to make way for One Parramatta Square, a 14 level A-Grade space that will be tenanted by the University of Western Sydney.

Macquarie House was built in 1981 and used primarily as retail and commercial office space. It was situated on land that was first leased to Lieutenant John Piper, NSW Corps, in 1799. The land was later purchased in 1803, by D'Arcy Wentworth. When D'Arcy Wentworth died in July 1827, he left several properties, to his son William Charles Wentworth.

Edward Lakeman ran the White Horse Inn (different to the White Horse Cellar from part of this site from 1833 until 1842. In 1851 the White Horse Inn was sold to John Hilt, Coach Proprietor. In 1894 the Inn building was demolished, and two semidetached cottages were built. More detailed information regarding the site can be obtained from the Archival Recording of 169 Macquarie Street, available at the Heritage Centre.



Rear of Macquarie House Corner of Macquarie and Smith Streets. Source: Macquarie House Archival Recording 2014



Macquarie House Commemorative Plaque. Source: Macquarie House Archival Recording 2014

The Strand: Macquarie Street, Parramatta

Research & Collections Team



Another interesting building facade backing on to Civic Square which I noticed recently is the art deco styled "The Strand" building on Macquarie Street. The building, now showing its age, was at the time a symbol of the rapidly changing face of Parramatta commercial centre.

Built in 1939 adjacent to the Murray's Ltd building, it consisted of 5 shops. In an article in the Cumberland Argus and Fruitgrowers Advocate, the building was described as follows:

"Finished in cream stucco, the shops will be the last word in modernity. Brightness is probably the outstanding feature. Distinctive glass bricks in front, skylights in the ceiling and windows in the rear, provide so much natural light that, according to the architects, artificial means of light may be entirely unnecessary. Modern shop fronts, with steel awnings and metal (Wunderlich) ceilings, will add to the smart appearance of the block. Four of the shops are 44 feet by 13.9; the other is slightly smaller. They are so constructed that they may be converted into two big shops."



The Strand art deco Building. Built in 1939. Photograph Peter Arfanis

For many years prior to its construction, it was the site of wood and coke fuel supplier.

A.R.C. Thomas Clock: Civic Place, Parramatta

Research & Collections Team



Regular visitors to Civic Place and Parramatta Library may have noticed that the clock tower that once stood at the entrance of the car park has been removed. Because of the extensive redevelopment of Civic Place, the clock was placed in storage by Council for possible future relocation.

The idea to place a clock in Civic Place was first recommended by the Town Clerk and City Engineer in 1984. Council approved of their recommendations and requested quotations for the construction of the clock. In April 1985, after quotations for the construction of the clock were submitted Council received a letter from A.R.C. Thomas. Alfred (Robin) Thomas was a well know businessman, long-term alderman and former Mayor of Parramatta. In his letter to Council he wrote:

"It has become apparent to the average citizen that it would be an added embellishment to the furnishings and dignity of the Civic Centre to have a four sided clock situated and built upon the flower bed at the T intersection between the Post Office and the Leigh Memorial Hall."

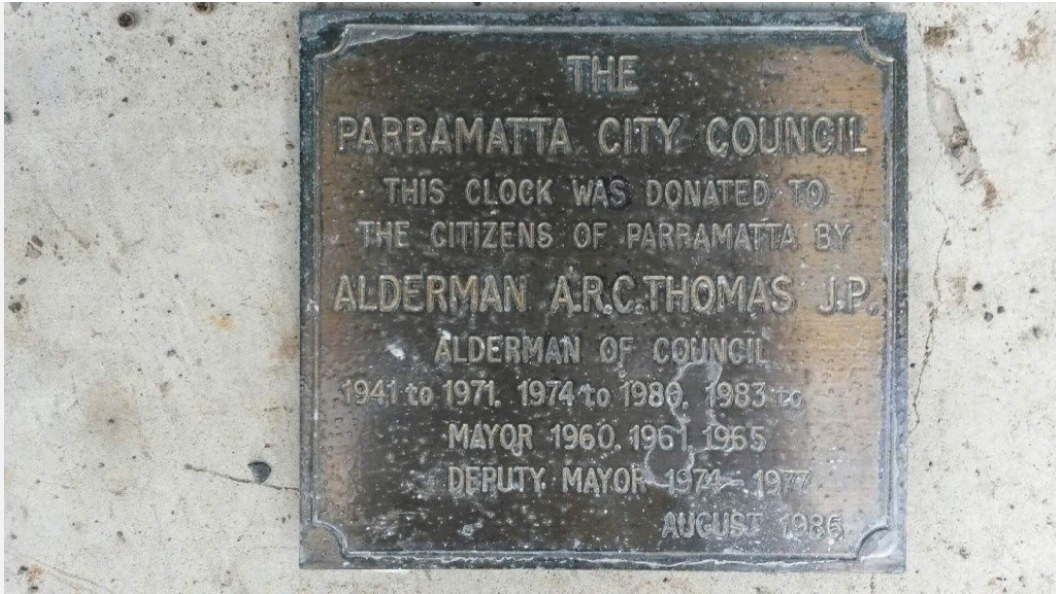
In a remarkable gesture of generosity Thomas enclosed a cheque for \$28,501 being full payment for the clock as a gift to the people of Parramatta.

Kevin J. Curtin & Partners (Architects) Pty. Ltd. were contracted to erect the clock which consisted of four faces and housed in a square casing supported by a single column. All the exposed elements are brass with sand blasted finish. The octagonal base was sandstone to compliment the Civic Building. The time piece was supplied by Seiko. Initially the clock was powered by two batteries which had to be changed every 100 days. By 1994 the clock was connected to electricity.



Clock donated to Parramatta by former Mayor A.R.C. Thomas. Previously located in Civic Place.

Photograph by Peter Arfanis

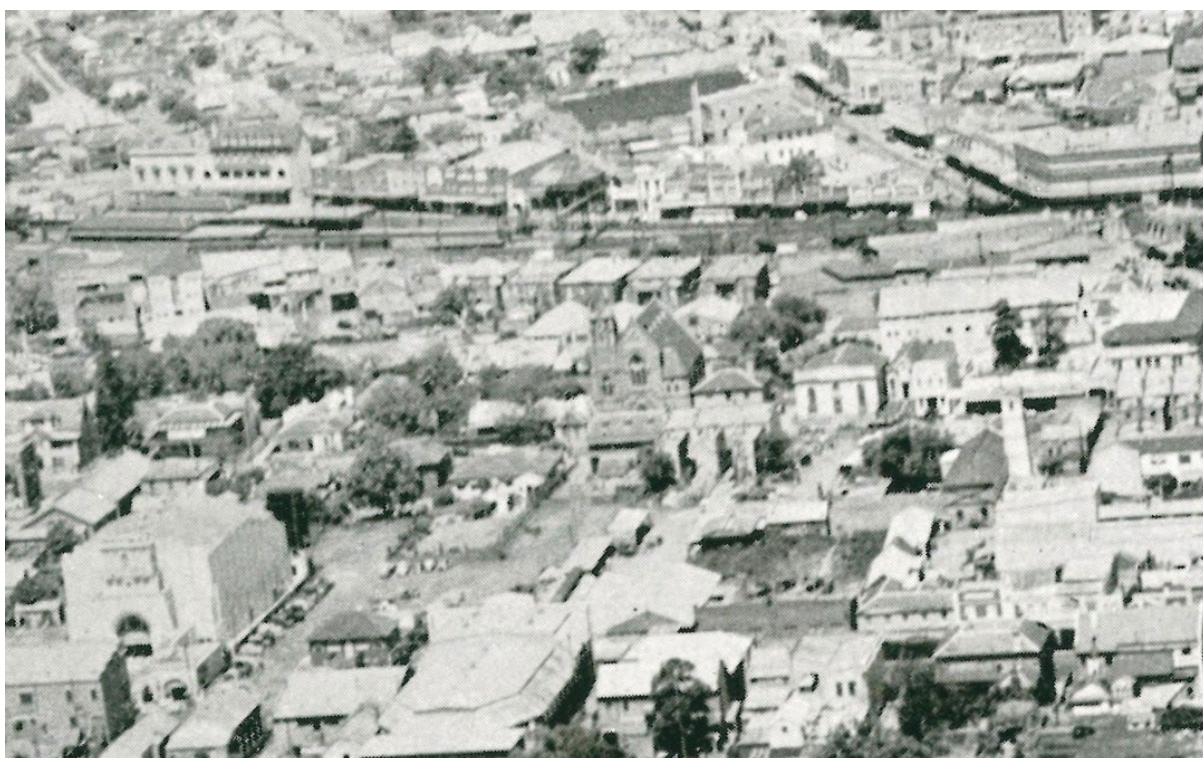


Civic Place Clock Plaque located at the base of the clock

~24~

Harriet Holland, "Cranbrook" House, Macquarie Street

Research & Collections Team



If you look closely at this image, taken about 1933, you can see at the centre, the Leigh Memorial Church, (which is still on Macquarie Street). To the left of the church you can see Dr Johnson's House and next to that 'Cranbrook' house, once owned by Harriett Holland and built around 1888.

Harriet and her husband John managed the Star Hotel around the corner in Church Street from about 1858 to 1888. The Holland's appear to have lived on the Macquarie Street site which at this time had a small wooden cottage on it, and were listed as owners in 1869. John died in 1874, and some ten years later, in 1883, Harriet purchased a vacant property next door owned by Mr Hilt She then built a house on the new property in the same year.

By 1884 it appears she was living in her new house and had demolished the old wooden cottage that was her home. But this move was just the next stage in her

overall strategy. Sometime between 1884 and 1888 [we think about 1887/1888] she built another house, 'Cranbrook' on the land she had lived in with her husband for so long and and moved into the property permanently. Harriet died in 1898 and for a long time after her death the house was often referred to as 'Harriet's House' by locals. After she died probate of her will was granted to Mr C. E. Byrnes who was solicitor for the estate. But the house appears to have been rented out to various occupants after this.

Residents of Cranbrook after Harriet's Death

It seems the first to move into the house after Harriet's death was Joseph Kemp and his family. Joseph was originally a mining engineer and ran a shop in the town of Orange, New South Wales. However, one day burglars broke into his shop while he was working there and assaulted him so severely that he never recovered from the injuries from that day until he died.

He must have moved to Parramatta after the assault but can't have lived at 'Cranbrook' long as he died on the New Year's Day 1900 leaving behind a wife and two daughters. He was buried in Sherwood cemetery on 2 January 1900.

Mrs. Kemp appears to have kept the property after his death and one of his daughters Minnie Florence Kemp married a Mr W. F. Slinn, of the Australian Gas Company, and seems this couple lived in 'Cranbrook with their mother'. Around 1906 Mrs Slinn of 'Cranbrook', was seeking a girl to assist in all duties.

By 1924 Mrs. Withers is listed as the owner of the property and on 18 June 1926, 'Cranbrook' was auctioned off under an order of the Supreme Court of New South Wales. The advertisement described the house as:

a spacious and well-built brick cottage (cement plastered) with slate roof, containing a tiled verandah on three sides, wide through hall, sitting room, dining room, 4 bedrooms (all large rooms with marble mantles), pantry, kitchen, storeroom, breakfast room, bathroom, detached laundry, and brick lumber room. gas and sewer connected. Electric light available. The land has a frontage of 73 feet by a depth of 223 feet on the east side and 242 feet on the west side, and a rear of 76 feet.

It then appears to have been brought by Dr. Woolnough who lived there till 1946. After this date his son Dr. Arthur Ronald Woolnough took ownership and lived there until it was pulled down in 1962.

Bas Relief on the MLC Building of Parramatta

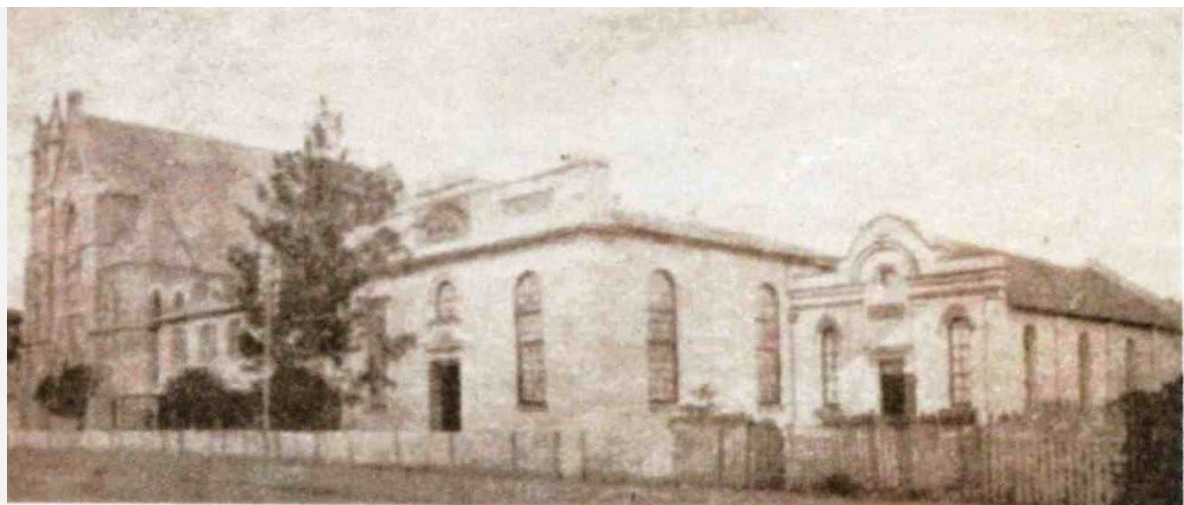
Research & Collections Team



It is interesting what you discover about Parramatta if you stroll around the shopping area looking up rather than down. Many of the facades and parapets of the commercial buildings bear some remnants or hints of this city's commercial past and business personalities.

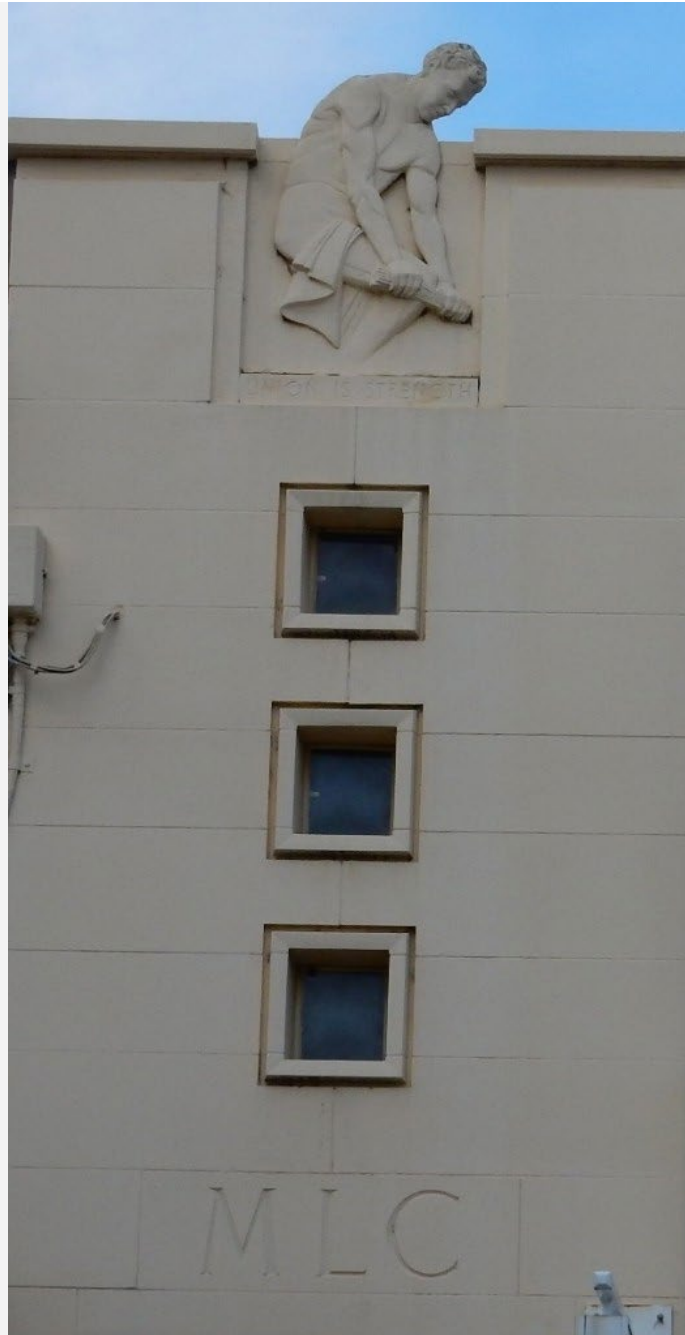
One of these I noticed recently was a building at 97 Macquarie Street, which looked unremarkable until I looked up and noticed a bas relief of a muscular man attempting to break a bundle of sticks over his knee. Under the relief was engraved the motto "Union is Strength". The analogy being that each stick represents an individual. A stick on its own can be broken easily. But as a bundle or group there is strength and the sticks cannot be broken. The motto appears elsewhere in various wordings such as "Strength is Unity" and "Unity Makes Strength" and is used as a motto for a number of Cities and Countries including Bulgaria, Georgia, Haiti, and Brooklyn just to name a few.

This particular motto and figure seemed to have been used in Australia by The Australian Widows Fund. It was founded in 1871 in Melbourne. In 1910 the Mutual Life and Citizens' Assurance Society Limited (MLC) took over the Australian Widows' Fund. The parent company of the Mutual Life and Citizens' Assurance Society Limited (MLC), Citizens' Life Assurance Company Limited, was incorporated in Sydney in 1886.



The building on the far right is Jubilee Hall, then to the left is Macquarie Hall, parsonage, and Leigh Memorial Church. Photograph circa 1930

What is also interesting about this building is located on the site of the Jubilee Hall for the Wesleyan Church, built in 1865 to commemorate the Jubilee of Australian Methodism. MLC purchased the building from the Church in 1953 and extended the front of the building to create additional office space. Three years later in 1956 the Jubilee Hall was removed to create a two story extension to the front of the MLC building.



Union Is Strength. MLC Building 97 Macquarie Street, Parramatta. Photograph by Peter Arfanis

Parramatta City Library- 1 Civic Place

Research and Collections Team



Parramatta Council's first public library opened in 1958 in Jubilee Hall at Parramatta Town Hall. Jubilee Hall was previously used as offices by Council, however following Council's move to a new Administrative Building in 1958 the Hall became available for the library to begin operations. This library service was officially inaugurated on the 29 November 1958, by Alderman D. J. Mahoney with Miss Margaret Miller, the City's first Chief Librarian, leading the library's operations.

In 1961 the Parramatta 'School of Arts and Mechanics Institute' building was transferred to Parramatta Council and Council found itself with resources to provide Parramatta with a first-class library. The 'School of Arts Building' was sold for 75,000 pounds and used to not only build a new central library but also branch libraries at Ermington, Guildford and Telopea.



Parramatta City Library 1979 following its expansion. Parramatta Council Archives

The new Central Public Library was designed, and erection supervised by J. Buckland and Druce of Parramatta, the consulting engineers were Maxwell H. Hadley and Associates also of Parramatta and the builders were A. V. Jennings Industries of Rydalmere. The new library formed a pivotal part of the development of Civic Place. The building was designed to have its entrance as the focal point when entering from Macquarie Street. The long building with its slender columns was built with reinforced concrete frame finished externally with white cement. The building was designed with a view for future expansion with the structure ready for a first-floor addition. The Library was opened by Mayor Alderman R. W. Van Nooten. 28 November 1964. In 1978 the library was extended to include another floor.

Parramatta City Council Administrative Building- 2 Civic Place

Research and Collections Team



The Parramatta City Council Chambers, previously called the 'Administrative Building', served Council for over 57 years. Located behind the Town Hall the Chambers Building was, by 2015, providing services for seniors, and community organisations such as Computer Pals. It was also used to host Council Business meetings which it has done since it opened in 1958.

The building was erected with reinforced concrete frame with brick and Gosford sandstone facing, acoustic ceilings generally throughout, glass used extensively internally and externally; wall colourings are pastel tonings with accent colours on feature walls in selected places and brighter colours in amenity rooms.

Walking through this solid building today one finds the attention to detail quite striking. The use of stone and light wood trimming in the interiors of the building is

typical of the period and even the fire stairs have wooden balustrades and terrazzo stairs

The site of Chambers Building and Town Hall is one of the most historic in Australia. It was originally a market site and was first used for this purpose as early as 1792. Two Acts of Parliament have dealt with the site, one for the establishing of markets and a later one for dedicating it as a Town Hall site. For some time after municipal government was granted to Parramatta in 1861 the Council meetings were held in rented premises but over a period of years proposals for building a Town Hall with municipal offices were discussed.

These proposals were realised with the construction of the Town Hall in 1880 which served as the municipal offices for over seventy-eight years. Over the 1900s the growth of Parramatta Council increased the pressure on the Town Hall accommodations. The amalgamation of the Municipalities of Granville, Dundas and Ermington–Rydalmere in 1949 made it clear that the existing facilities would be entirely inadequate for conducting the affairs of the much-enlarged City of Parramatta.



Parramatta Council Chambers Building. Photograph by Peter Arfanis

Sketches for a new building were submitted by Architects Messrs Buckland and Druce in November 1954. Final plans were approved in January 1955 and working drawings issued and tenders called in August 1955. Due to delays in arranging a loan for the building tenders were not finalised until February 1956 with Max Cooper and Sons Pty Ltd awarded the contract. The contract price was £175,907, and with furniture and necessary equipment the total cost was approximately £230,000.

The building was officially opened by Acting Premier R. J. Heffron on 17 May 1958. It was a building which the people of Parramatta had every reason to be proud of. It provided accommodation not only for the Council's staff but also for the holding of Council meetings. For some years previously, the meetings of the Council had been held at Granville Town Hall because of lack of accommodation at Parramatta.

The building comprises six storeys with a basement for car parking. At that time the offices of the various departments of the Council were on the ground floor, first floor, second floor and third floor. The Council Chamber was on the fourth floor, together with reception rooms of the Mayor and the Mayoress. On the roof was the caretaker's residence, as well as a roof area from which could be obtained a magnificent vista of Parramatta and surrounding areas. The erection of this building resulted in opening of a new street off Macquarie Street leading to the front of the new building, the creation of Civic Place and the provision of off-street parking.

Parramatta Town Hall Site- Centenary Square

Caroline Finlay



Plan of Parramatta – showing urban settlement with allotments in 1822. Parramatta Heritage Centre Local Studies library map collection

Parramatta's Town Hall site was established when Governor Phillip set aside the land in his plan for Parramatta, thus making it the oldest town hall site in Australia. Foundations were laid for a Town Hall in 1792, presumably at the original site next to the Parramatta River and Church Street] but other building projects received priority. Construction for the Parramatta Town Hall was initiated over two stages, from 1879 to 1883.

Governor Macquarie used the site as a Market Place by 1812. The market sold all the produce of the district, and animals for sale were penned up there. The list of public works undertaken during administration of Governor Macquarie includes "A public Market Place, with store for Grain and Pens for Cattle, enclosed with a high Paling in the centre of the Town, consisting of three acres of ground" (1). This site

was used consistently as a marketplace until 1878 when the site began to be prepared for the construction of the Town Hall.

This site was also where the Annual Meeting of the Aboriginal Tribes at Parramatta was held, which Governor Macquarie began in 1816 and continued to 1833.

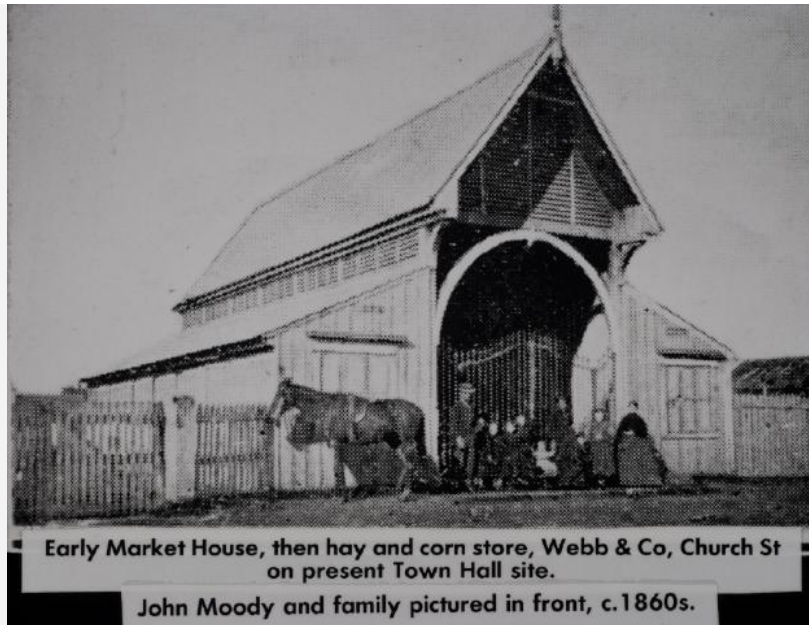
The Parramatta Town Hall site has never been in private hands. The site was Crown land with multiple leases until it was transferred to the Council of the Municipality of Parramatta on the 6 December 1866 with the passing of the Parramatta Market Act. The act cites that:

"all land estate and all personal property of whatsoever kind belonging thereto or usually held and enjoyed therewith or held in trust therefor or for the purposes thereof are hereby transferred to and vested in the Council of the Municipality of Parramatta in trust for and subject to the several purposes and provisions of the Municipalities Act of 1858."

In 1809, two of the earliest lessees were Phillip Schaffer and Bryan Riley, who were granted part leases on this site.

It is noted in the *NSW Government Gazette*, that the Market Place allotment was leased by Sir Thomas Brisbane for 21 years from the 30 June 1823 to William Batman, the father of John Batman the founder of Melbourne. On the 8 March 1839, with William Batman now deceased, it is noted that this lease had been sold to a William Howard Bennett of Parramatta, with William Batman's widow requesting the "Deed in favour of claimant, who will have to pay 21 years Quit Rent"

In 1850, in a survey by Burrows, the buildings on the Market Place site are shown including the public pound, which was there until 1872, when it was moved to the north side of the Parramatta River. The survey also includes the names of the Market Commissioners David Forbes, Hugh Taylor, James McRoberts, Charles Blakefield, James Urquhart and James Edrop. These six Commissioners had been elected in July 1849 by the local population to manage and organize the markets. Commissioners managed the markets from 1841 to 1862. From 1862 – once Parramatta had become incorporated as a Municipal Council – until 1879, the council managed the Market Place site.



Early Market House on the Parramatta Town Hall Site, 1851. Local Studies Collection LSP00566

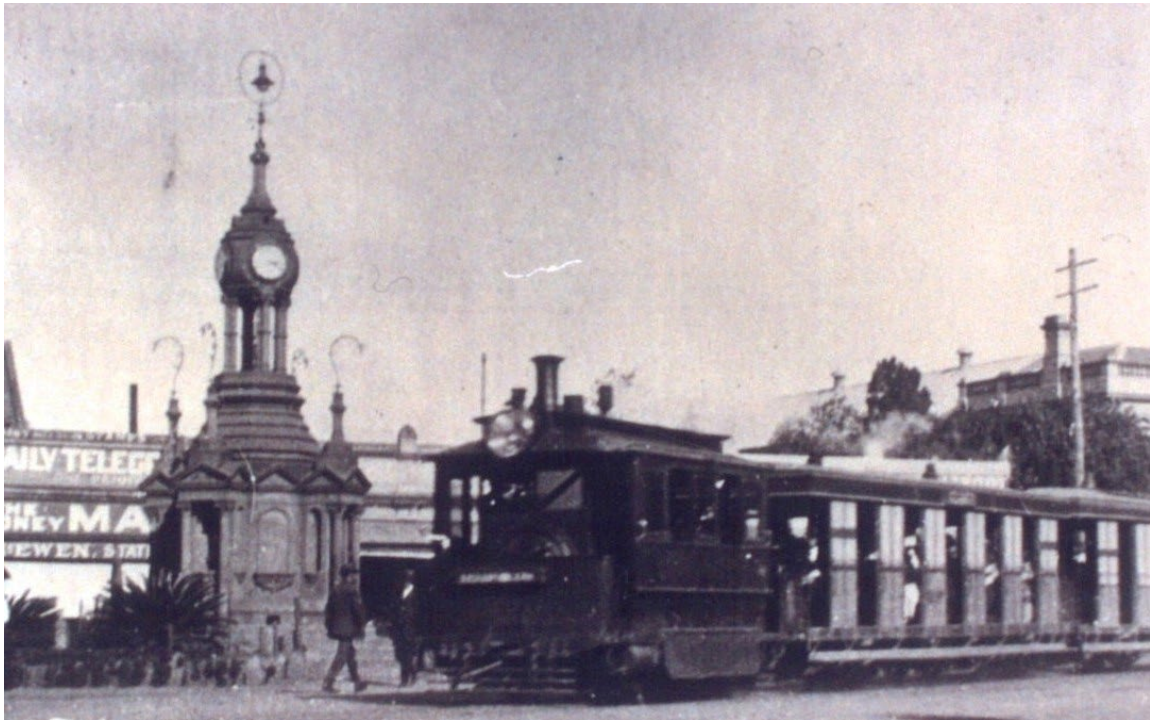
In this photograph, we can see John Moody and his family in front of the market gates of the early Market House building erected in 1851 by the lessee at that time, Standish Drew. John Moody's responsibilities included managing the cattle on the Market Place site and the proceeds of any sales. Behind this building there were fenced paddocks used for frequent livestock sales that included horses. The building itself was fitted with stalls. This market building was later sold and moved to Western Road as a produce store for the local company Webb and Co.

In 1879 the Market Place site was transferred to the Municipal Council of Parramatta for a Town Hall. The Parramatta Town Hall Act, which was passed on the 4 February 1879, authorized the erection of a Town Hall on the site, and the authority to pull down any buildings erected on the site.

In minutes of evidence given before a select committee from October 1878, it was mentioned that the market site had buildings worth about £3000, and the land was valued at approximately £1500-£2000.

Early Film Footage of Church Street, Parramatta

Research & Collections Team



The film footage below is an excerpt from the 1964 film, "Parramatta: Cradle of a Nation". It was sponsored by the Parramatta Chamber of Commerce, filmed with the support of Esso and directed by Cyril Cox. This footage shows Church Street in 1963 and then switches to older footage of a parade in Church Street, around 1913, at what is now Centenary Square.

From the Parramatta Council Archives, PRS078/098:

<https://youtu.be/hOKTLUK6-sl>

The Parramatta Town Hall- Centenary Square

Research & Collections Team



Parramatta Borough Council was incorporated in 1861 with John Williams appointed the first Mayor. One of the first tasks of the newly formed Council was to find premises for weekly meetings. There did not exist in the town a building suitable for holding public meetings and even to stage performances.

The newly formed council decided to use the Court House temporarily until more suitable premises could be found. In April 1862 Elder's House, located on the south east corner of George and Marsden Streets, where the Woolpack Hotel stands, was rented as Council offices for ten years.



Council members standing outside Elder's House, September 1870

By 1878 Council was occupying a rented room in Church Street. Pressure was mounting on Council to build Council Chambers and a Town Hall. The population of Parramatta was over 7000 and there was still no building suitable for holding performances or meetings. Mayor C. J. Byrnes reported to New South Wales Parliament that Parramatta needed Council offices and town hall for Parramatta. The preferred location was a site for the originally marked out by Governor Phillip in his 1792 plan for Parramatta. This location was also land Macquarie reserved in 1812 for the town market. The market opened in 1813 and because of its central location was used for other public activities such as cattle sales and agricultural shows.

The site is also well known for the annual feast for Aboriginals, started by Governor Macquarie in December 1816. These feasts were held in December or January until 1833 when it was moved to May and combined with the distribution of blankets. The event seemed to have ended sometime in the mid-1830s.

The Parramatta Town Hall Act of 1879 was passed which allowed the council to take over the market site to build a Town Hall.[3] Council at this point could not afford to build both the Town Hall and Chambers and chose to proceed with the Chambers building first. Tenders were called for the building in 1879. The Sydney

architectural firm of Mansfield Brothers were chosen for the project. The builders were the local business Hart and Lavors. Mayor C. J. Byrnes had the honour of laying the foundation stone on 19th November 1879. The building was formally declared open on 19 August 1881.



Internal Perspective of the Town Hall. Cultural Collection 2002_211

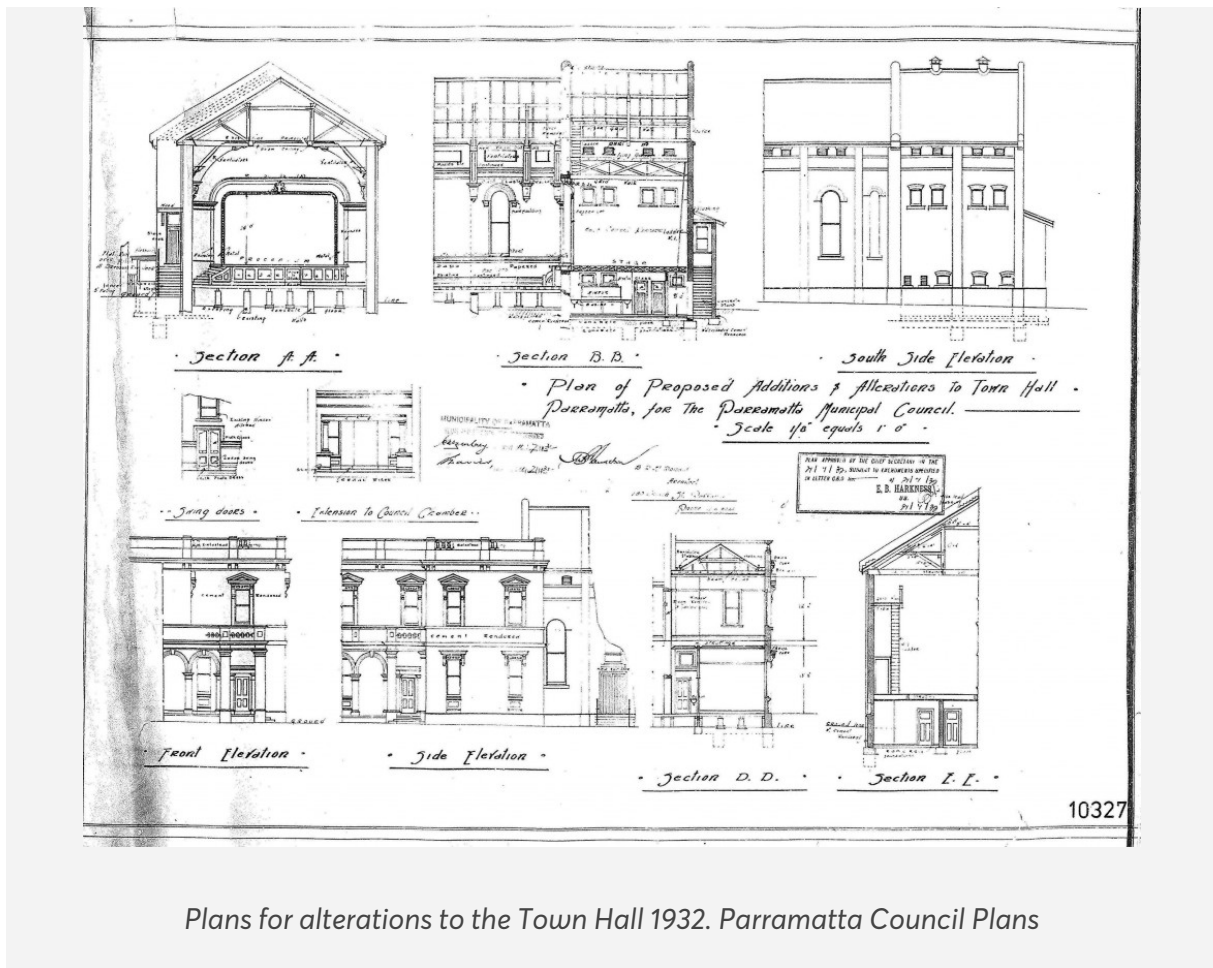
Fuller's County of Cumberland Yearbook of 1882 provides a description of the Council Chambers:

"They were designed by Messrs. Mansfield architects, and built by Messrs. Hart and Lavors. The style is a kind of Palladian. The building consists of two stories. On the bottom storey are the Council Clerk's office, strong-room, free public library office of Inspector of nuisances and Overseer's office. Upstairs there are the Council room, committee room Mayor's office, and refreshment room. Each story is very lofty, and the Council room is

ornamented with a marble mantelpiece, a splendid chandelier, near pillars, etc. A verandah surrounds the building and in the left wing is the office of the Inspector of Nuisances. At the rear is the Council Clerk's residence, a commodious building well fitted up. it is intended to enclose the Council Chambers in about half an acre of land, on which will be planted trees, shrubs, flowering plants, etc. The arms of the Council are blazoned on a shield in high relief over the porch."

One year later, on the 13 September 1882, Mayor Joseph Booth laid the foundation stone for the Town Hall. "After the stone had been laid, the company adjourned to the Council Chambers, where the health of the mayor and aldermen was drunk with enthusiasm." The builders for the Town Hall were Herbert Coates of Parramatta and it was officially opened on 29 August 1883 with the first performance organised by the Parramatta Glee Club. The programme consisted, appropriately, of Haydn's oratorio, 'The Creation'.

The approach of Parramatta Municipal Council's 50th Anniversary in 1911, Alderman Hill suggested a museum be built to commemorate the Council's Jubilee. The idea of some sort of commemorative hall was well received by the Jubilee Organising Committee and plans were made to build a museum next to the Town Hall. The foundation stone for what was to become known as the Jubilee Hall was laid on 27 November 1911 by a voiceless Mayor Jago, who signaled with three taps of the trowel on the foundation stone that the stone was well and truly set.



Plans for alterations to the Town Hall 1932. Parramatta Council Plans

However, what was yet to be set was the intended use of the hall and its exact position. Considerable debate raged among Alderman with letters to the Cumberland Argus debating whether the ratepayers of Parramatta should bear the cost of a museum or if there was in fact enough material to place in museum. Eventually, instead of a museum a "supper hall" was completed in July 1913 on the northern side of Parramatta Town Hall, which Council felt would best serve the interests of the Council and residents.

In 1932 plans were submitted by architect Mr McDonald to extend the Town Hall by about 25 feet by removing the stage and reconstructing it about 25 feet from its original position. The proscenium wall was extended through the main roof. A new opening between the Town Hall and the Jubilee Hall was made and changes made to the office areas of the council building.



Town Hall with the Jubilee Hall at the left of the photograph. Local Studies Photograph Collection LSP00741

With the rapid growth of Parramatta post World War Two and its amalgamation of the Councils Granville, Dundas, Ermington and Rydalmere in 1948 the Parramatta Council found itself in need of more offices. The Jubilee Hall had to be adapted for offices while plans were made for a new Council building to be erected.

A new four story building was built on the site of the Town Clerk's home located directly behind the Town Hall. The building was designed by Buckland and Druce and opened in 1958 and is still used for Council Meetings.

The Star Hotel: Church Street, Parramatta Centenary Square

Research & Collections Team



The Star Hotel, not one of Parramatta's earliest or oldest hotels, but certainly one of its longest trading, had been through a number of changes when it began trading sometime around 1843 at what is now 146 Church Street Parramatta. Early proprietors of the hotel were John Horgan, James Watsford and John Holland.



Star Hotel 1860s. A Jubilee History of Parramatta 1911.

A 1902 newspaper article claims that the Star Hotel was constructed around 1820

"by Mr Start (bother of the late Mrs. Houison) who opened it as a baker's shop. Later on Mr Blake ran it as a pub and bakery, and dispensed the rival staffs of life (bread and rum). Old Jack Holland got into it about 1858, and Mrs. Harriet Holland kept it going until 1888, when Mr Waddell, State Treasurer, bought it through Mr John Taylor."

The first building was a simple two storey building. Located on its southern side, at what was the Connection Arcade, was J. Craig Monument and headstone maker, as can be seen in the photograph above. Standing in this same photograph could be 'Jack' Holland. A reporter from the Cumberland Argus was right on the money when he described Holland as a 'bit of a character' a how on most days Jack could be found sitting at the watering trough in front of the Hotel wearing, ... his cabbage-tree hat, doeskin pants, frill shirt and velvet vest.

It appears Mr Holland was also a keen horticulturist who often visited the nursery run by Silas Sheather in Camellia and this in turn created his long running war with the local cats. This was because Jack insisted, they dug up the pot plants he grew on his property. In one vivid account the Argus describes how Jack at one time spied a guilty-looking feline from the back of his property. Grabbing his shotgun, he fired down the hall dispatching the cat and leaving a bullet hole in the Hotel's signage.

In 1902 the original Star Hotel was demolished to make way for the construction of new three-story building owned by Tooth's Brewery Co.



The second version of the Star Hotel 1911. A Jubilee History of Parramatta 1911.

In 1938 Tooth's announced that the Star Hotel building would be demolished after only 36 years to make way for a new art deco style hotel. It will be "a Palace compared to the Star that provided for man and beast in the very early days."

In the publication "Historic Buildings and Sites of Parramatta" the building is described in the following terms,

"Three storeys. Carefully detailed yellow brickwork. A strong and unashamedly vulgar combination of the pseudo-futurist curves and striations. A brashly symmetrical composition; recessed balconies, projecting parapets and balustrades, thrusting central tower. Interior is rather dingy. "Star Hotel" lettering on parapet is a good example of Jazz Style."



Star Hotel Church Street. 1980s. This building was built in 1938, Local Studies. LSP0933



Church Street 1967. The large star in the skyline shows the location of the Star Hotel. Heritage Centre Cultural Collections ACC002_032

By 1987 the Star Hotel was considered by many as an "eyesore" especially as Parramatta Council was in the process of putting the finishing touches to the new Church Street Mall on which the hotel was located. Council eventually decided to convert the hotel into a retail store.

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Back cover image: *Photograph at the intersection of Church and Macquarie Streets, Parramatta featuring the Centennial Memorial Foundation, Parramatta Town Hall, cars, pedestrians, Murray Brothers and a bus in background, circa 1920. (Source: City of Parramatta, ACC198/039)*



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