

#### 2.4.1.4. New Foyer and Gallery

The foyer and gallery located on the east side of the building at ground and first floor are within the former Manning Building. Public access to the foyer and gallery is via Campbell Street, which leads directly into the box office area on the ground floor. The box office area has been recently redesigned and features charcoal marble floor tiles, timber veneer wall cladding, dropped plaster ceilings with suspended, can and down lighting.

The box office area flows through to the 1990s stalls foyer, a long narrow space featuring blue carpet, timber veneer wall cladding, plasterboard ceilings and down lighting. On the east side of the space is a bar area. To the south is female and male toilet toilets. On the east wall is a contemporary grand staircase with marble treads and rises, and a metal and timber balustrade. A sweeping curved opening is cut into the ceiling of the stalls foyer and leads through to the 1990s dress circle gallery above.

The dress circle gallery continues the materiality of the stall gallery below, with blue carpet and timber veneer wall cladding with metal accents. The dress circle gallery is a double height space and features two arched openings double hung timber-framed windows along the north wall, looking out to Campbell Street. The ceiling draws cues from the atmospheric theatre of the original foyer, gallery and auditorium. The ceiling is painted in the same colour blue, representing the night sky. However, instead of lights being set into the ceiling, a curved mesh metal ceiling with small lights scattered behind, representing the night sky. Large curved metal light fittings also project from the east and west walls, curving up toward the ceiling. Another curved bar is located on the east wall. Further public toilets are located in the south portion of the space. The box office, stalls foyer and dress circle gallery are linked to the original foyer, gallery and auditorium via four doorways located along the east wall.

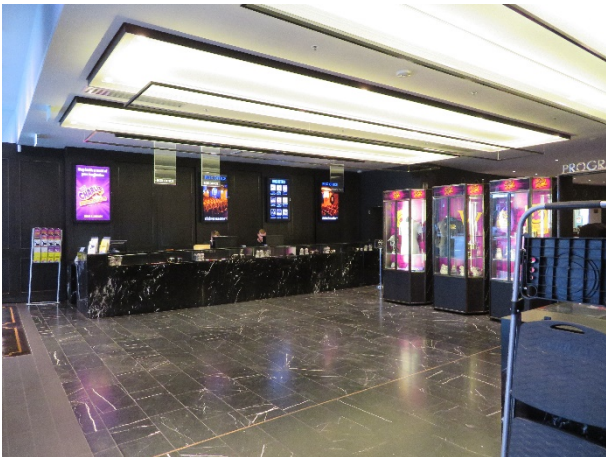


Figure 83 – Box office



Figure 84 – Box office



Figure 85 – Box office



Figure 86 – Box office and new foyer area





Figure 87 – Doorway from box office through to the original stall gallery



Figure 88 – New foyer, ground floor



Figure 89 – New foyer, ground floor



Figure 90 – New foyer bar area, ground floor

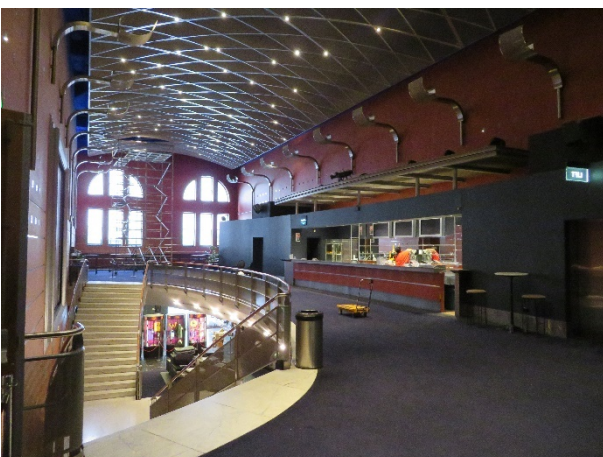


Figure 91 – New gallery, first floor



Figure 92 – New gallery, first floor





Figure 93 – New gallery and staircase



Figure 94 – New gallery



Figure 95 – Bar in new gallery

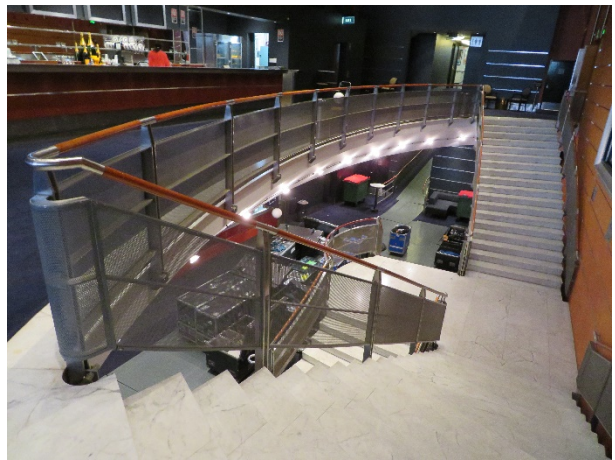


Figure 96 – Stairs in new gallery



Figure 97 – Door from new Gallery to auditorium



Figure 98 – Door from new gallery through to the original dress circle gallery



## 2.4.2. Back of House

The Back of House spaces of the Capitol Theatre are located within the east and south portions of the building from the sub-stage to third floor. The Back of House areas include spaces for performers, technicians and staff. The spaces include the stage, fly tower, orchestra pit, change rooms, green room, rehearsal spaces, offices, workrooms, storerooms, and utilities. All the Back of House spaces were constructed during the 1990s redevelopment of the site and do not contain any internal materials and finishes, apart from some structural elements, of earlier iterations of the building.

The stage, fly tower and orchestra pit are located within the south-west portion of the building, with the remaining spaces of the Back of House being located in the south-east portion.

### 2.4.2.1. Stage, Fly Tower, Orchestra Pit, Workshops and Catwalks

The existing fly tower, which contains the stage, orchestra pit and workshops, among other smaller rooms, was constructed during the 1990s. The new fly tower directly connects with the original south wall of the auditorium. The exposed brickwork of this wall can be seen from within the fly tower at the rear of the proscenium wall. The walls of the remaining fly tower are constructed of concrete blockwork and are painted. The Capitol Theatre utilises a counterweight system that was installed during the 1990s works. Fly floors and cross overs are accessed via the backstage foyers at the second and third floors.

The stage deck is constructed of timber joists with supported on steel beams within the substage area and is overlaid with timber boards and sheeting and a theatre floor surfacing. The stage floor has been modified over times to accommodate different productions, for installations such as trap doors. Directly in front of the apron of the stage is the orchestra pit which is accessed via the sub-stage level. The size of the orchestra pit can be modified to three different sizes, depending on the size of orchestra required for a performance. This is achieved through the temporary removal of seating within the first few rows of the stalls seating and the erection of temporary partition walls.

Directly below the stage is the sub-stage areas which include technical workshops and trap room. These areas are constructed from the same concrete blocks as the other 1990s portions of the building and have concrete slab floors. A steel mezzanine floor is built into the sub-stage area for storage.

Catwalks over the auditorium ceiling are accessed via the third floor fly floors. The catwalks extend over the auditorium ceiling to allow access to the lighting bridges and through to the follow spot booth at the rear of the auditorium. The earlier structure of the 1920s auditorium ceiling is still in place and was modified during the 1990s works. The earlier roof structure over the auditorium ceiling has been retained under the new roof structure, and is reinforced with contemporary materials. At the rear of the dress circle seating area is the follow spot booth.

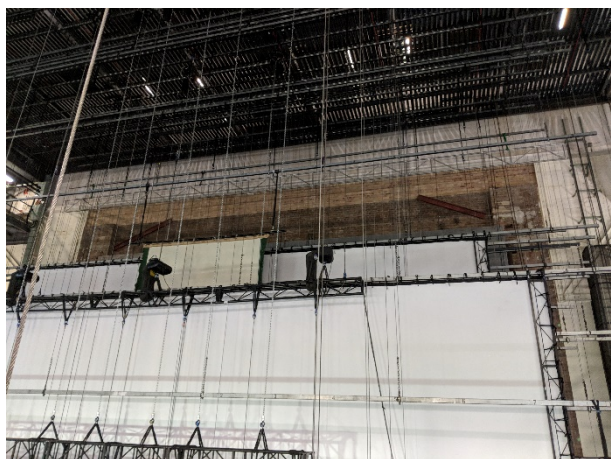


Figure 99 – South wall of auditorium within the fly loft

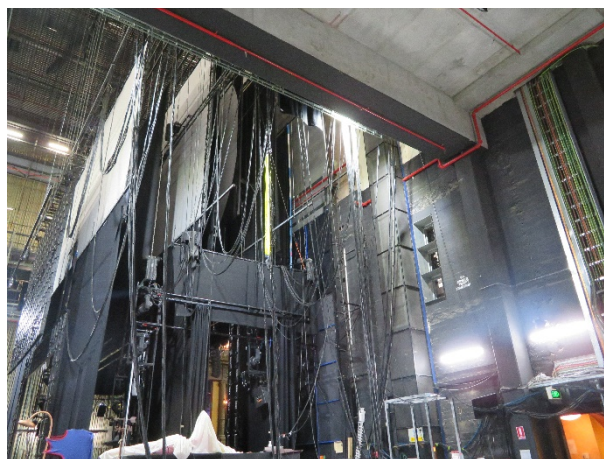


Figure 100 – Opposite prompt side stage





Figure 101 – Fly loft, looking west

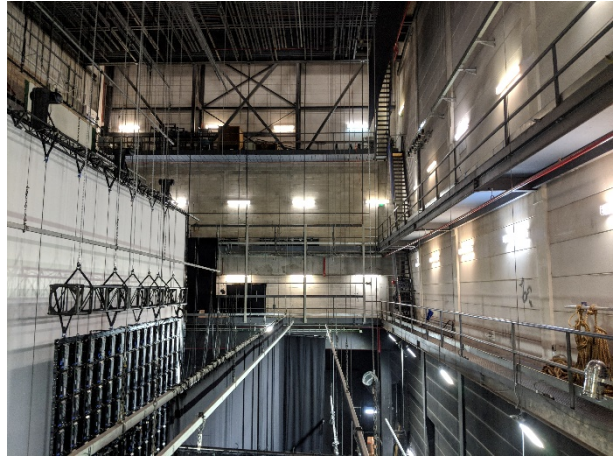


Figure 102 – Fly loft, looking east

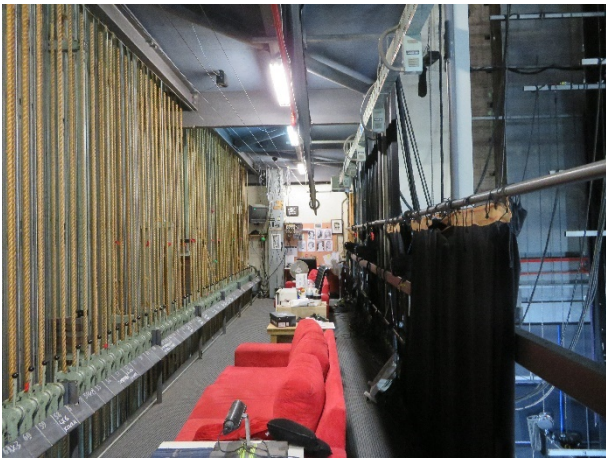


Figure 103 – Catwalk on west wall of fly tower

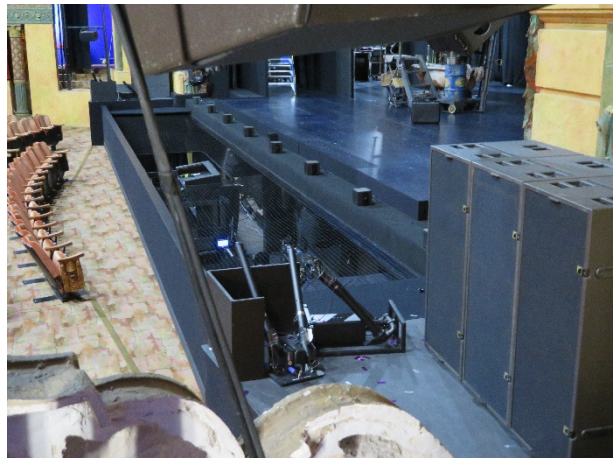


Figure 104 – Stage viewed from west side of stalls



Figure 105 – Orchestra pit, looking west

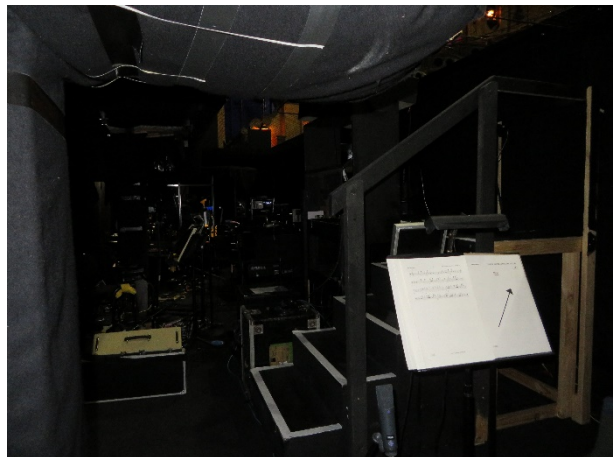


Figure 106 – Orchestra pit, looking east





Figure 107 – Technical workshops, sub-stage level

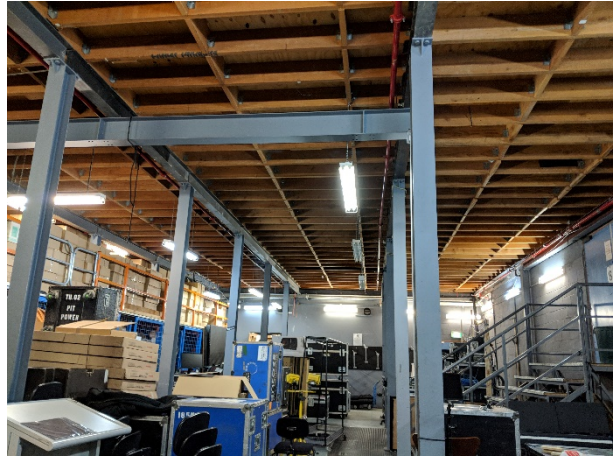


Figure 108 – Technical workshops, sub-stage level, directly underneath the stage



Figure 109 – View from within roof space of auditorium, with proscenium wall visible

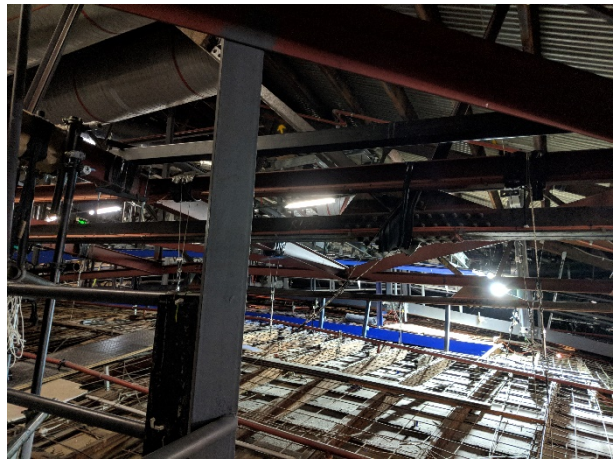


Figure 110 – View from within roof space of auditorium



Figure 111 – Mezzanine of follow spot booth



Figure 112 – View from follow spot booth to rear of dress circle seating



#### 2.4.2.2. Foyers and Lobbies

Each level in the Back of House Area is centred around the service core with foyers and lobbies adjoining. The majority of each of the foyers and lobbies from the sub-stage to third floor are distinguished by a checkerboard pattern of orange and green vinyl tiles. The walls of these spaces are primarily feature painted concrete block construction, with services, either exposed or concealed behind suspended plasterboard ceilings. Where the concrete structure of the ceiling is exposed, it is painted either the same shade of blue as featured in the original foyer, gallery and auditorium or a cream colour. At the sub-stage floor, the foyer runs east to west underneath the stalls level and through to the west side of the building. Within this corridor is the former seal tank.



Figure 113 – Stage door foyer, ground floor



Figure 114 – Service lobby, ground floor



Figure 115 – Lobby, third floor



Figure 116 – Lobby, second floor



Figure 117 – Lobby, first floor



Figure 118 – Lobby, first floor





Figure 119 – Lobby, stage floor



Figure 120 – Lobby, first floor



Figure 121 – Lobby, stage floor

#### 2.4.2.3. Dressing Rooms, Change Rooms and Bathrooms

Dressing rooms and change rooms are located across the sub-stage, stage, first and second floors. The dressing rooms and change rooms vary in size across each of the floors, and each are adjoined by bathrooms with toilet, showers and basins. The floors of the dressing rooms are mostly covered with blue carpet, featuring painted concrete block walls, or plasterboard stud walls, and ceilings with exposed services and suspended plasterboard ceiling, or solid plasterboard ceilings. The same blue is used for the sky in the original gallery, foyer and auditorium is used on exposed concrete ceilings and some services, such as air-conditioning ducts. The fixtures and fittings within the dressing rooms, change rooms and bathrooms date from the 1990s to the present. At the sub-stage floor, the seal tank from Wirths Hippodrome has been adaptively reused for orchestra room, change rooms and bathrooms. The original walls remain, however have been refinished as part of the reconstruction works and divided into smaller spaces by painted concrete block walls.





Figure 122 – Dressing Room L1-27, first floor



Figure 123 – Dressing Room LS-04, stage floor



Figure 124 – Orchestra Room, sub-stage floor



Figure 125 – Ceiling in kitchenette with remnants of pressed metal.



Figure 126 – Bathrooms off Female Chorus Change Room SS-16, sub-stage floor



Figure 127 – Female Chorus Change Room SS-16, sub-stage floor.





Figure 128 – Ushers change room, in north portion of second floor.

#### 2.4.2.4. Greenroom, Rehearsal Rooms, Wardrobe Workshop and Offices

The greenroom, rehearsal rooms and offices are located on the first, second and third floors. The two rehearsal rooms are located on the third floor. The largest of the two rehearsal rooms feature timber floating floor boards, painted concrete block walls (concealed by black curtains) and dropped plaster board ceilings with suspended acoustic tiles. The rehearsal room leads onto an outdoor terrace, which has views down Hay Street and to Belmore Park. The small rehearsal room features vinyl floors, painted concrete block walls and suspended acoustic tile ceilings.

At the second floor is the greenroom, wardrobe workshop and theatre management offices. The greenroom extends around a portion of the south elevation of the Manning Building. This portion of the elevation is exposed on the north wall of the greenroom. The remainder of the space has concrete floors with blue carpet floor covering, painted concrete block walls and a suspended plasterboard ceiling. The room has four small Juliet balconies which extend out to Hay Street and above the ground floor stage entrance. A kitchen is located in the north portion of the room. The wardrobe workshop is located directly next to the greenroom and features vinyl floors, painted brickwork and concrete blockwork walls and suspended plasterboard ceilings. The wardrobe workshop includes a wig storeroom and wardrobe office.

The theatre management offices are located on the same floor. The same blue carpet runs through this space and is divided by glazed and solid partition walls with suspended plasterboard ceilings. An office for the front of house manager is located on the first floor and the Capitol Suite, which is occasionally used for functions. A VIP room is located at stage level, styled the same as the new foyer and gallery.

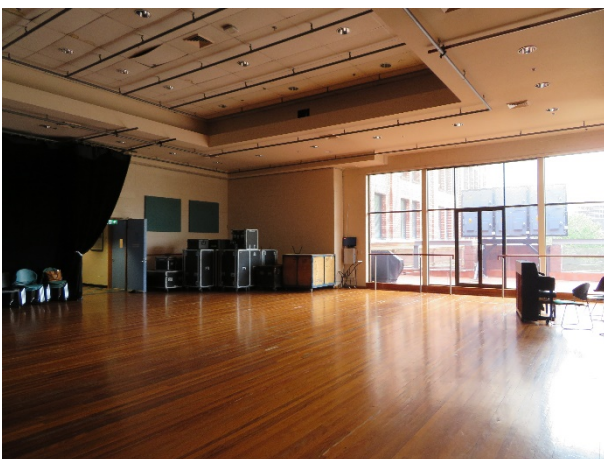


Figure 129 – Rehearsal room, third floor

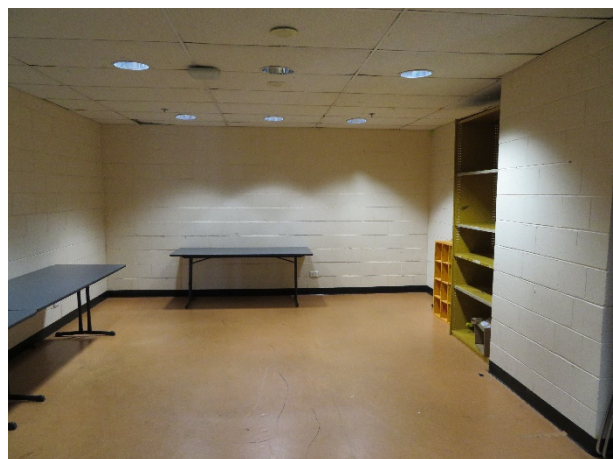


Figure 130 – Small rehearsal room, third floor





Figure 131 – Terrace off the rehearsal room, third floor, looking west



Figure 132 – Terrace off the rehearsal room, third floor, looking south-east



Figure 133 – Greenroom, second floor



Figure 134 – Greenroom, second floor



Figure 135 – Wardrobe workshop, second floor



Figure 136 – Wardrobe storeroom, second floor



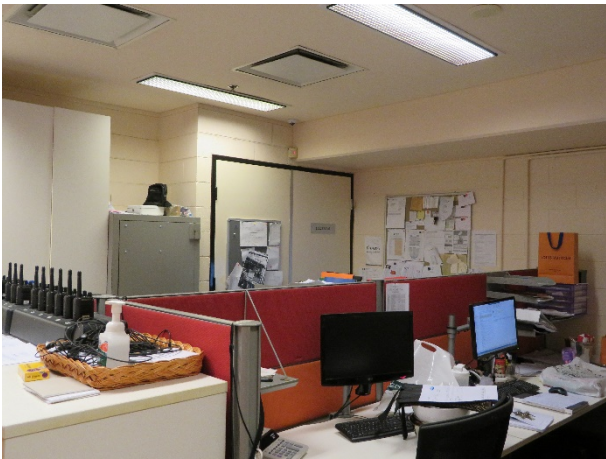


Figure 137 – Theatre management offices, second floor

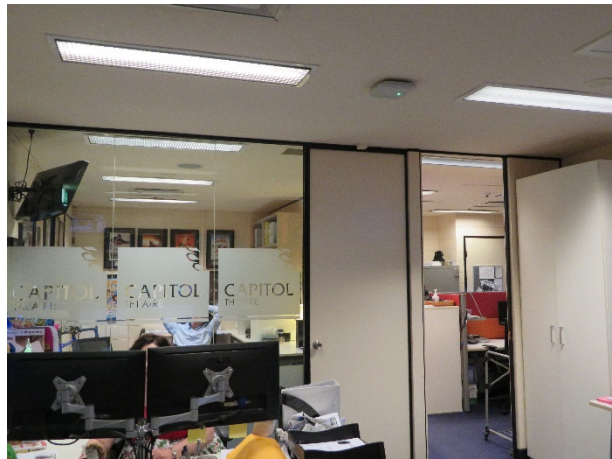


Figure 138 – Theatre management offices, second floor



Figure 139 – Capitol Suite, second floor



Figure 140 – VIP room, stage level

### 2.4.3. Service Areas

The service areas of the Capitol Theatre consists of the lift cores, plant rooms, mechanical and hydraulic cupboards and ductwork. Two passenger lifts are located within the theatre, the first in the Front of House area and a second, goods lift located within the Back of House area. The fire stairs for the Back of House is located directly to the south of the lift. The main plant room for the theatre is located on the third floor directly above the new dress circle gallery. Access to the plant room was not provided.



Figure 141 – Goods lift in Back of House area.

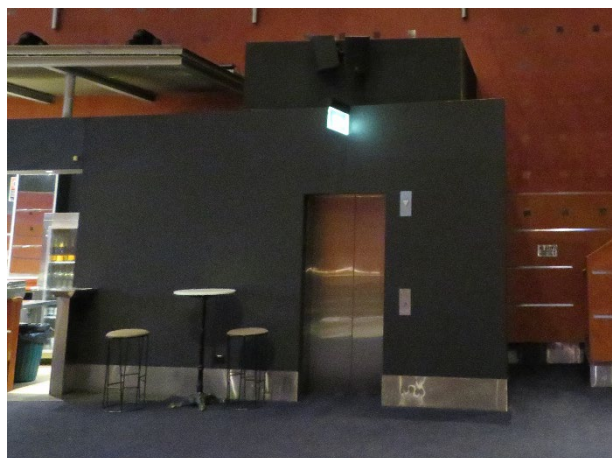


Figure 142 – Lift in Front of House area.



## 3. HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

### 3.1. HISTORICAL SOURCES

This section of the report is based upon the thematic and chronological format devised by James Semple Kerr in *The Haymarket and the Capitol: a conservation plan for the area bounded by George, Campbell, Pitt and Hay Streets, Sydney* (1990). This report also draws heavily upon Lisa Murray's *The Capitol Theatre Restoration* (2003) and a 1998 thesis by Lynne Dent *The Capitol: its producer, director, auteurs and given circumstances: an epic of a "lucky" theatre*.

All three named reports utilise published material supplied by Ross Thorne and theatre historical societies, also primary source material held in the City of Sydney Archives, State Library and other documentary repositories. This material is identified in the bibliography at Section 7.

Copies of all plans used were made available by both Ross Thorne and Peddle Thorp and Walker from material held by the Sydney City Council. The Council also supplied photographs.

### 3.2. HISTORY OF THE PLACE

#### 3.2.1. Indigenous History

There has been no research on the Aboriginal use of the vicinity. One of the few explicit historic references is provided by David Collins. In November 1796, he noted that "Bennillong" had complained to the Governor that the Aboriginals were assembling "in a considerable body near the Brickfields to lie in wait for him [Bennillong] and where, if possible, they intended to kill him".<sup>4</sup> According to Collins, this eventuality was averted by the governor's provision of an armed escort for "Bennillong" while he warned those assembled that they would be driven from the area if his life was taken.

Those assembled would have been the Guringai people who no doubt used the creek area for subsistence. However, because of its swampy character, it is unlikely that they camped there. Andrew Wilson suggests that, judging by the results of other archaeological excavations in Sydney, occupational remains are unlikely on the site.<sup>5</sup>

#### 3.2.2. Brickfield Hill and The Haymarket, 1788-1888

The Haymarket site occupied the low swampy land at the southern foot of Brickfield Hill about a mile south of Sydney Cove. It was drained, somewhat inadequately, by a creek which rose in the Surry Hills to the south-east and crossed what is now Belmore Park to the alignment of Hay Street near the Capitol Theatre.

According to Assistant Surveyor Meehan's map of 1807, the creek passed under a small bridge on the track which connected the Sydney High (George) Street to Parramatta (Figure 143). This bridge was approximately on the present intersection of George and Hay Streets and, at the time, the sand and mud flats of Cockle Bay (Darling Harbour) extended right up to its west side. If this seems hard to credit, it must be remembered that the vicinity of the creek has been extensively filled and levelled.

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<sup>4</sup> Collins, *Historical Records of Australia Series II*, p5

<sup>5</sup> Blackmore and Wilson, *What is an Atmospheric Theatre? Capitol Historical Report*, Appendix 3



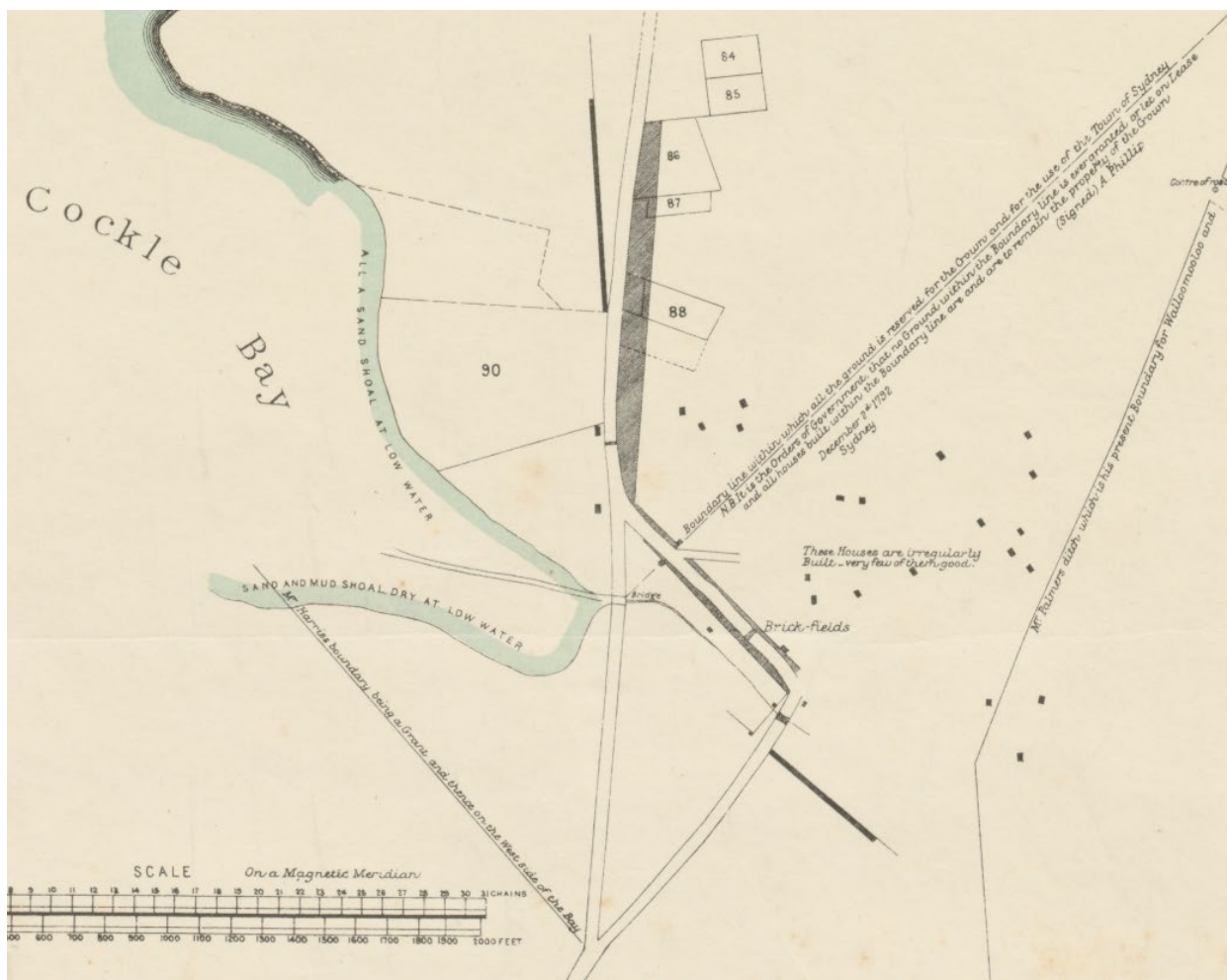


Figure 143 – Plan of the Town of Sydney in New South Wales by James Meehan Assistant Surveyor of Lands by Order of His Excellency Governor Bligh 31<sup>st</sup> October 1807. Photolithographed at the Government Printing Office Sydney, New South Wales. [1850-1899?]

Source: NLA, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-229911438>

Meehan's map suggests that, before the bridge was built, the track turned south-east and followed the bank of the creek until a convenient crossing place was reached. The present frontage of buildings at corner of George and Campbell Streets, derives its splayed alignment from the 45 degree turn of the original track.

Europeans used the north bank of the creek right from the beginnings of settlement. In March 1788, Collins reported that "a gang of convicts was employed ... making bricks at a spot about a mile from the settlement, at the head of Long Cove" (Cockle Bay, later Darling Harbour). In addition, two acres of ground were marked off for "such officers as were willing to cultivate them". The agricultural result, if any, is unknown, but the industrial activity came to identify the place.<sup>6</sup>

The clay pits, kilns and convict huts were scattered over the area immediately north-east of the creek and on the lower slopes of what became known as Brickfield Hill. In July 1790, the unskilled convicts were employed in "forming a road from the town to the brick-kilns, for the greater ease and expedition in bringing bricks to the different buildings".<sup>7</sup> By 1793, the bricks were conveyed by three brick carts, each drawn by twelve men under the direction of an overseer.<sup>8</sup>

In 1811, following the arrival of that orderly and entrepreneurial Scot, His Excellency Governor Lachlan Macquarie, Sydney was divided into five districts each with a watch-house and police-force:

<sup>6</sup> Collins, *Historical Records of New South Wales (HRNSW)*, Series I, p17

<sup>7</sup> *loc. cit.*, p103

<sup>8</sup> *loc. cit.*, pp 277-8



*for the protection of the inhabitants from night robberies, and for the more effectually securing the peace and tranquillity of the town, and apprehending all disorderly and ill-disposed persons committing nightly depredations ...*

*As a necessary preparatory step to the proposed arrangements, His Excellency deems it expedient to give regular and permanent names to all the streets and ways ...*

*The principal street in the town, and leading through the middle of it from Dawes' Point to the place near the Brickfields, where it is intended to erect the first toll bar, being upwards of a mile in length, and hitherto known alternately by the names of High-street, Spring-row and Serjeant-Major's-row, is now named "George-street", in honour of our revered and gracious Sovereign.<sup>9</sup>*

The boundaries of the 5th District, served by George Street, extended:

*from Park-street and the burying-ground on the north to the southern extremity of the Brickfields on the south, and extending from Hyde Park and Surry Hills Farm on the east to Cockle Bay on the west.<sup>10</sup>*

Thus, the future site of the Haymarket became the southernmost part of the 5th District.

His Excellency was not one to miss the opportunity of raising funds for "the ornament and regularity" of the town of Sydney and lost no time in commanding and directing:

*that all bricks, pottery and other articles of whatever nature which may be sent from the Brickfields to Sydney, or from Sydney to the Brickfields, shall be passed through the turn-pike-gate, and pay the same toll as if going to or coming from Parramatta, and any article which may be sent to or from the Brickfields by any circuitous or different road from the public turnpike is to be seized, the cattle drawing or carrying them impounded for trespass, and the person so endeavouring to evade the regular toll to be severely fined and punished.<sup>11</sup>*

The turnpike gate can be seen across George Street as a later addition to Meehan's 1807 map. It was not a popular measure and probably resulted in a variety of evasions including the transacting of business outside the town whenever possible. Such activities may have contributed in some measure to Macquarie's ultimate removal of the gate to its 1820 location further south to what is now Railway Square. In any case, with the establishment of large barracks for convict carters with their bullocks, horses and carts where Eddy Avenue now joins Pitt Street, much of the traffic up Brickfield Hill involved government public works.

By June 1829, the area at the foot of Brickfield Hill was officially operating as a "New Cattle Market."<sup>12</sup> Such use was probably little more than the legitimisation of a de facto situation. The terrain was swampy and unsuitable for other development and, as Michael Christie points out, it was the usual halting place before the steep ascent into the town. Moreover, on the northern side of the George Street Bridge lay the Peacock Inn, a watering hole for wagoners, while close by lay semi-permanent fresh water for stock. Cattle landed at the Market Wharf in Cockle Bay, formerly destined for the town market, were now driven down the alignment of Sussex Street round Brickfield Hill to "the flat area south of Campbell St".<sup>13</sup>

According to James Macleahose, the ascent of Brickfield Hill in 1837 was still steep, difficult and even dangerous. The following year, in a major undertaking, over a million cubic feet of material, much of its rock, was cut by convict labour from the upper parts of the hill and removed to the lower to create a gradually inclined plane, thus making it safe "for all kinds of drays, waggons and carriages".<sup>14</sup>

When Samuel Mossman and Thomas Banister climbed Brickfield Hill in 1852, they described it as "a wide and airy street with rows of two and three storeyed houses".<sup>15</sup> Earlier, as they approached Sydney Town along the Parramatta Road, Mossman and Banister noted:

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<sup>9</sup> Collins, *HRNSW, Volume VII*, pp427-8

<sup>10</sup> *ibid.*, p479

<sup>11</sup> Collins, *HRNSW, Volume VII*, p594

<sup>12</sup> *Sydney Gazette*, 16 June 1829

<sup>13</sup> Michael Christie, *The Sydney Markets 1788-1988*, p51

<sup>14</sup> James Macleahose, *Picture of Sydney and strangers' guide in NSW for 1839*, p69

<sup>15</sup> Mossman and Bannister, *Australia visited and revisited: a narrative of recent travels and old experiences in Victoria and New South Wales*, p205



*Proceeding onward in this direction for about half a mile, you come to the Hay-market, passing on your way Christ Church and the Benevolent Asylum. All along the road through this suburb looks like the approach to an English market-town: the small green-grocers, with bundles of hay and straw at their doors; the dealers in odds and ends for country customers; the blacksmith's forge, with the horses waiting to be shod; and the snug roadside inns, where carriers and small settlers with dairy and farm produce put up, whom you may see sitting on side benches outside the doors, smoking their pipes and quaffing their tankards of ale; while the more noisy customers may be heard dancing inside to the sound of a fiddler. The most uproarious and extravagant frequenters of these tap-rooms, it will be readily supposed, are now the successful returned gold diggers ...*

*The Hay-market [itself] is a large open space at the foot of Brickfield Hill, with a substantial market-house in the middle of it, surmounted by a turret-clock.<sup>16</sup>*

Woolcott & Clarke's 1854 map of the City of Sydney shows the general layout of the area (Figure 144). The "substantial market-house" mentioned by Mossman and Banister was situated on the George Street frontage of the Haymarket and the cattle market was confined to the block bounded by Campbell, Castlereagh, Hay and Pitt Streets. The "market-house" with its shingle roof was demolished by William Watkins early in 1876 to make way for a new commercial terrace on George Street.



Figure 144 – Woolcott & Clarke's Map of the City of Sydney with the environs of Balmain and Glebe, Chippendale, Redfern, Paddington etc., 1854. The location of the subject site is shown outlined in red.

Source: City of Sydney Archives, [http://cdn.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/history/maps/1174/1174\\_001.pdf](http://cdn.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/history/maps/1174/1174_001.pdf)

*The Handbook to the City of Sydney*, published in 1879, furnished the following description of the locality of the eastern frontage of George Street, Haymarket:

*Crossing Liverpool and Goulburn Streets we arrive at the HAYMARKET SQUARE the property of the Corporation of Sydney. The hideous structure which formerly occupied this valuable frontage has been superseded by an elegant block of buildings, on a plot of land leased from the Council by the later Mr Watkins, for a term of twenty years, at a gross rental of £30,000. At the corner of Campbell Street is a branch of the Australian Joint Stock Bank, adjoining which is a branch Post, Telegraph and Money Order Office, and the corresponding corner of Hay-street, the 'Palace' Hotel, which several commodious business places intervening. At the next corner of the southern branch of the Commercial Bank, also built on leased Corporation ground. From thence to Christ Church are a*

<sup>16</sup> *ibid.*, p204-5



*number of elegant shops, including the premises of Hordern and Sons, with their palace show rooms, and the branch Savings' Bank, and the ever memorable Christ Church which has long held the name of the aristocratic Anglican place of workshop, and is amongst the oldest display of architecture we have...*<sup>17</sup>

Three years later, *Gibbs Shallard & Co* noted that "Campbell and Hay Streets bound the Haymarket block [of George Street] north and south. The former is a short public way, presenting few architectural beauties, and is peopled principally by produce merchants, general dealers, and publicans, who depend greatly upon the market trade. Hay Street extends to Pyrmont, over a region reclaimed at great expense from the waters of Darling Harbour."<sup>18</sup>

### 3.2.3. The Hay-Market

On 8 June 1829, Governor Darling set aside a new market site at the bottom of Brickfield Hill to be used for the trading of livestock. The "Cattle Market" is shown on the undated Parish of St Lawrence map

Five years later, Governor Bourke established Sydney's second market, a hay and corn market, on a site bounded by George, Hay, Castlereagh and Campbell Streets. Soon after, a small red brick building for the storage of hay and for market offices, surmounted by a turret clock, was built on the George Street frontage of the site as shown on the maps drawn in 1836, c.1840s and 1851 (Figure 146 to Figure 148).

The Market Commission Act was passed in 1839, giving responsibility of Sydney's markets to the Market Commissioners. They in turn conveyed control of the markets in 1842 to the newly formed City of Sydney Corporation. Four years later, the Crown formally granted the land bounded by George, Hay, Castlereagh and Campbell Streets as a hay and corn market to "promote the public convenience of Our Loyal Subjects the Inhabitants of the City of Sydney in Our Colony of New South Wales". Under Council control Haymarket House underwent alterations and additions in the 1850s to expand facilities for fruit and vegetable sales. Part of the building was later conveyed to a theatre before it became a general store run by W Terry. Haymarket House (otherwise called Market House) is depicted in G Verdan's 1858 painting of the Haymarket, reproduced in the *Sydney Morning Herald* in January 1929 (Figure 145).



Figure 145 - Historic painting of the Haymarket in 1858 by G Verdan. The Peacock Inn is at far left at the intersection of George and Campbell Streets. The Hay and Corn Market building is shown at centre right.

Source: *Sydney Morning Herald*, 19 January 1929, p20

<sup>17</sup> *Handbook to the City of Sydney*, 1879, p9

<sup>18</sup> *Gibbs, Shallard & Co.'s illustrated guide to Sydney and its suburbs, and to favourite places of resort*, p33



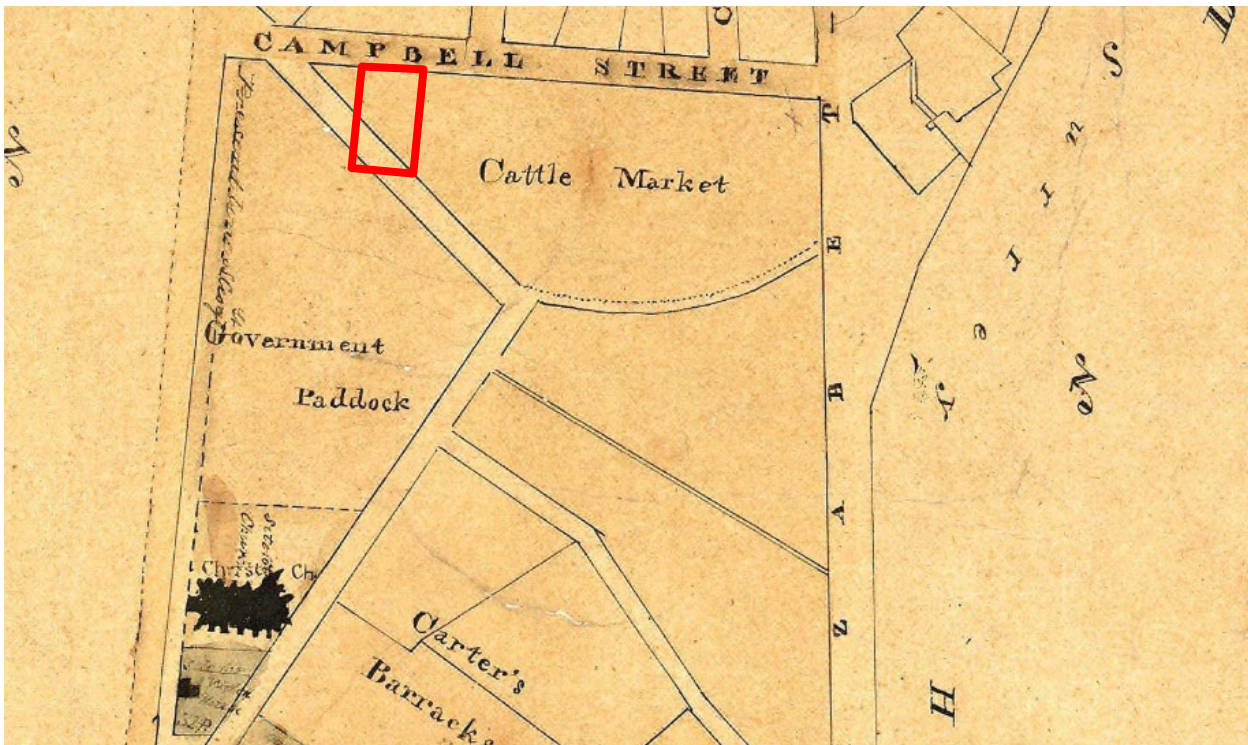


Figure 146 – Detail from Parish of Saint Lawrence County of Cumberland, undated but pre-1834 with annotations to c.1840 showing Christ's Church south of Government Paddock.

Source: NSW LRS, PMapMN05, 14074001.jp2

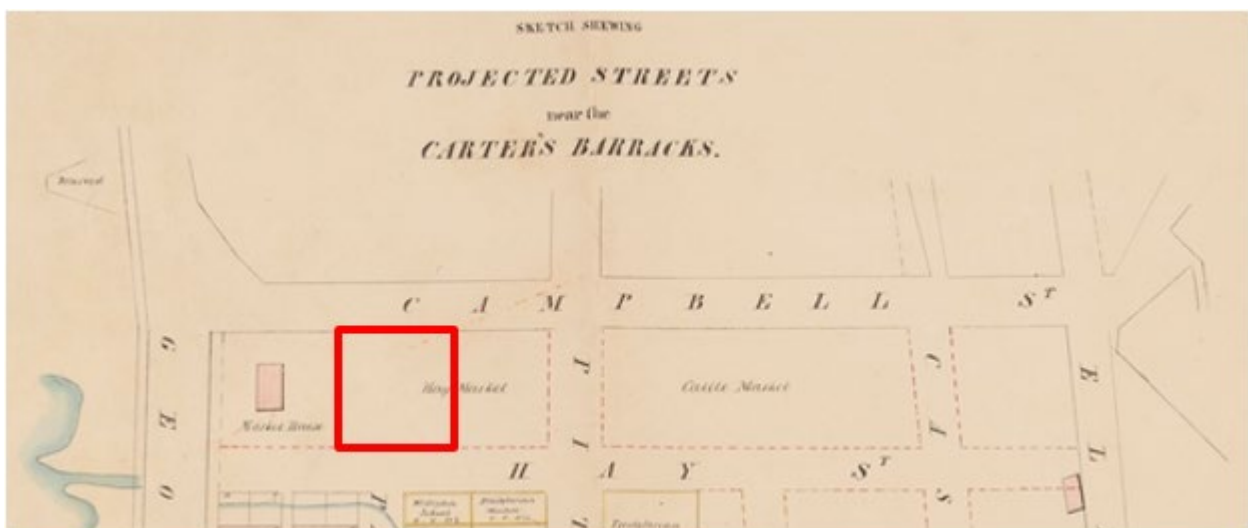


Figure 147 - Detail from "Sketch shewing projected streets near the Carter's Barracks", 1846 showing respective sites of Market House, Hay Market and Cattle Market.

Source: SLNSW, Digital order number a8293001.



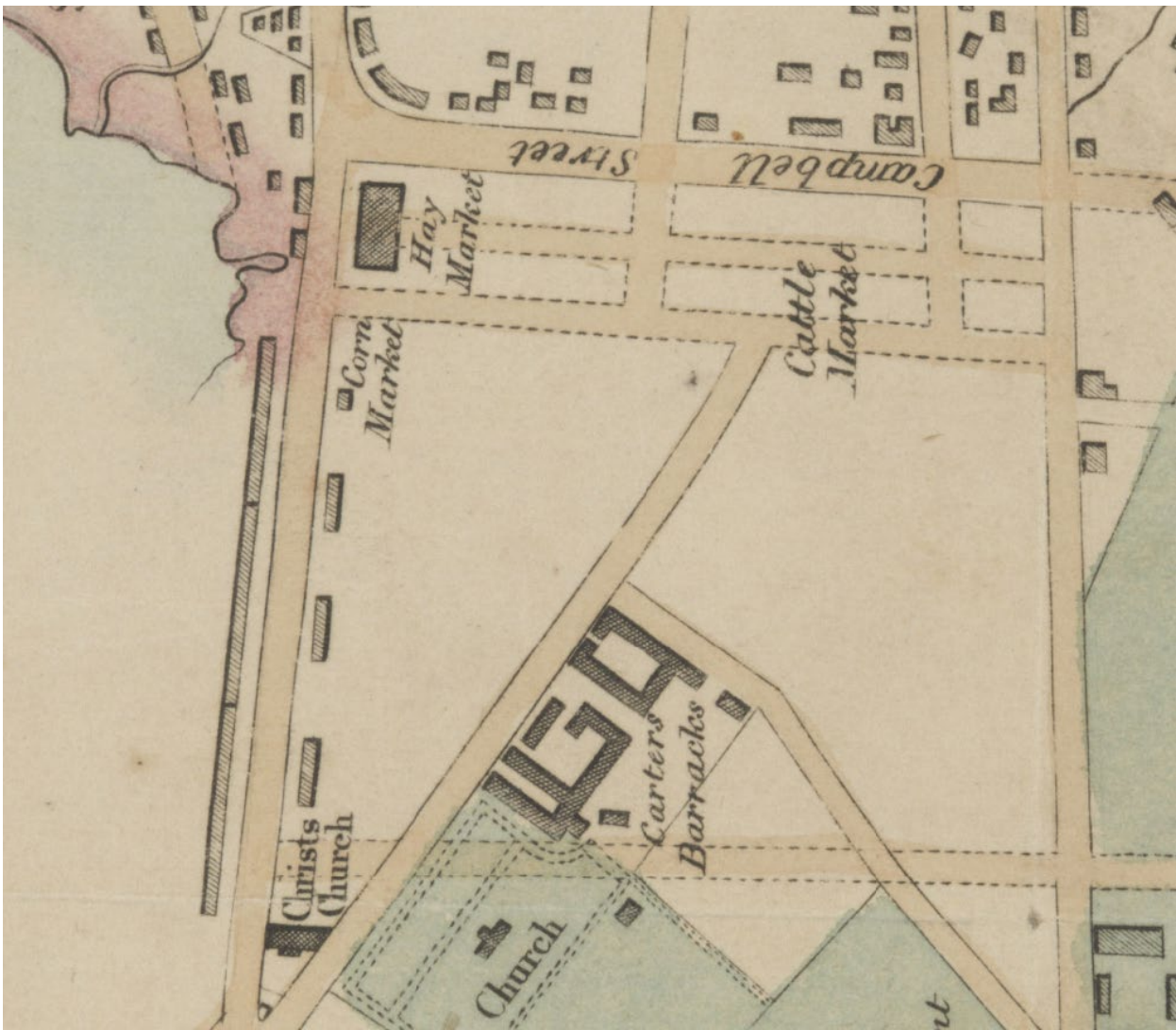


Figure 148 - Detail from "New Plan of the town of Sydney", 1851. Shows location of Hay and Cattle Markets.

Source: SLNSW, Digital Order number c01383

### 3.2.4. Belmore Markets

In June 1829, Governor Darling proclaimed part of the area at the foot of Brickfield Hill as a "New Cattle Market"<sup>19</sup> and moved the livestock markets to a flat area at the end of Brickfield Hill south of Campbell Street.<sup>20</sup> This was a response to the overcrowding of the market square site and also as stock were often driven along the Parramatta Road, a livestock market in the Haymarket area was a logical place to site it. The Sydney City Corporation assumed control of the cattle market in 1845 by deed of grant.<sup>21</sup> By this date, the cattle market had both outgrown its site and been hemmed in by urban development. In the 1860s, the cattle market was relocated south to the Redfern Railway terminus.

In 1868, the Council commenced construction of a general wholesale market on the site of the former cattle yard. The three long sheds of the new market were officially opened on 14 May 1869 by the Mayor, Alderman Walter Renny and named "Belmore Market" after the Governor of NSW, Sir Somerset Richard Lowry-Corry, the Earl of Belmore.<sup>22</sup> The following description of the Belmore Market was furnished in the *Sydney Mail*:

*the Belmore market has a western frontage of 175 feet to Pitt Street south; - another of 390 feet to Hay street; another of 117 feet to Castlereagh street; and a fourth (of 373 feet) to Campbell street. It consists of three separate rows of lofty sheds, running east and west, for the whole of their several lengths...the three long roofs are of corrugated iron, of a high pitch, and running the entire length of the building. The materials used are of the best quality, and the erection generally such as will long be a just source of satisfaction to the citizens, and of pride to the numerous friends of Mr Bell, the City Engineer.*<sup>23</sup>

Coinciding with the opening of the Belmore Market, the Council approved new Corporation By-laws for the regulation of the Sydney markets. The three markets at the Haymarket were given the following designations:

- the market sheds and vacant spaces situated between Campbell, Hay, Pitt and Castlereagh streets is to be called the Belmore Market;
- the market shed between Campbell and Hay streets is to be called the Campbell Street Market; and
- the vacant space of ground between George Street, Campbell street, Pitt street and Hay Street is to be called the Hay, Corn and Cattle Market "[which is] to be reserved as a wholesale stock and produced market but no vegetables or fruit shall be sold therein."<sup>24</sup>

By 1872, the Belmore Markets had become the main Sydney outlet for fruit and vegetables.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> *Sydney Gazette*, 16 June 1829

<sup>20</sup> *ibid*, p49

<sup>21</sup> Christie, *Sydney Markets*, p70-1

<sup>22</sup> *Tod & Cork, Dream Palaces*, I, p1

<sup>23</sup> "The Belmore Market", *Sydney Mail*, 6 February 1869, p6

<sup>24</sup> "Sydney Markets", *Empire*, 12 June 1969, p2

<sup>25</sup> Christie, *Sydney Markets*, p71



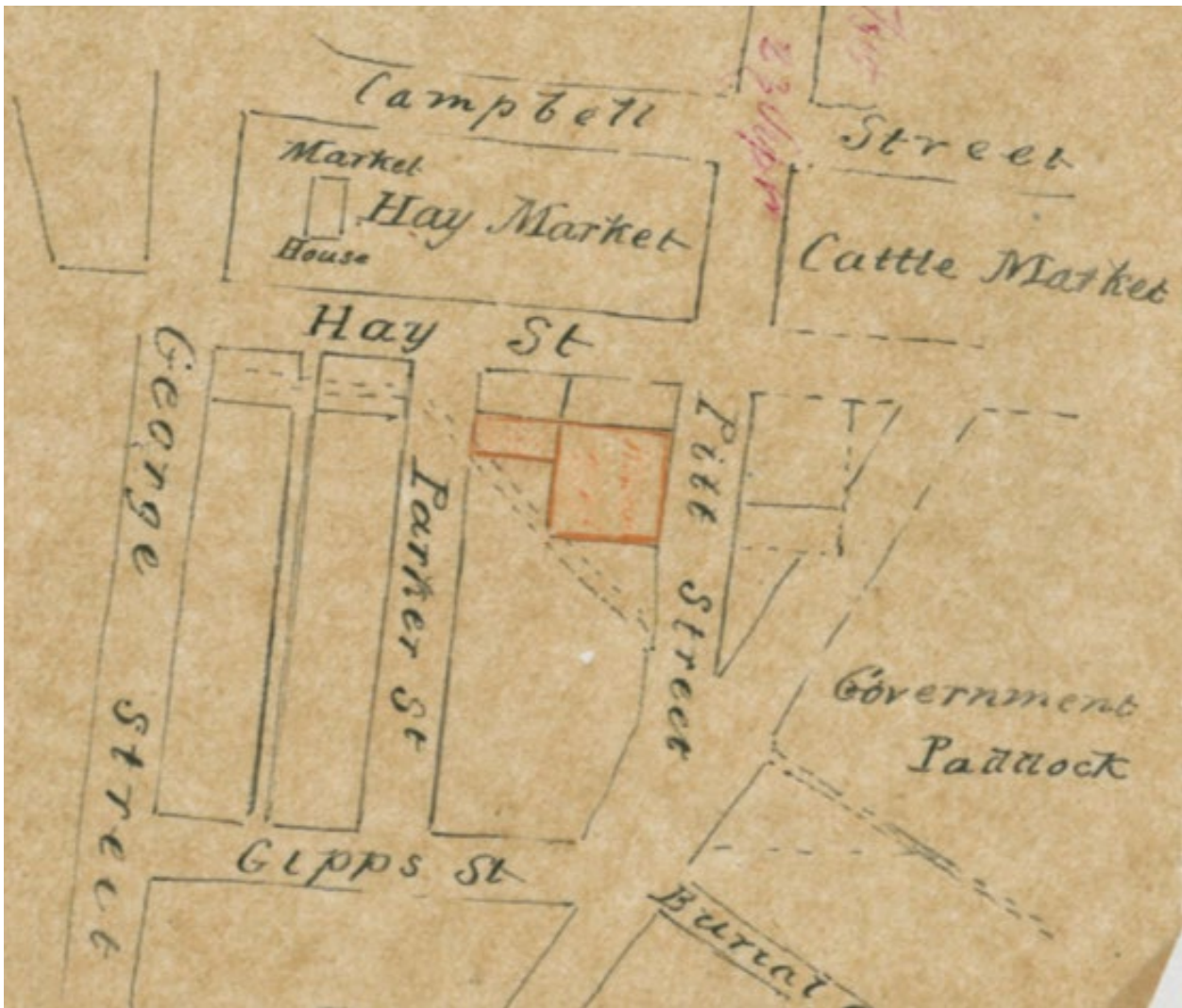


Figure 149 - Detail from Sketch Shewing proposed sites of Wesleyan Chapel & dwelling, 23 September 1845. Note location of Market House, Hay Market and Cattle Market.

Source: State Archives & Records, Sketch book 4 folio 202

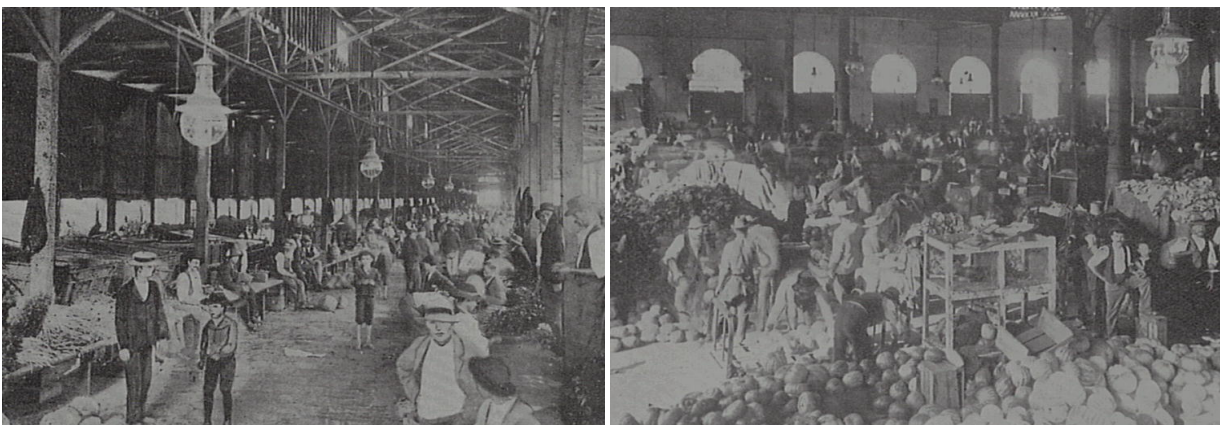


Figure 150 – Two views inside Old Belmore Market, 1904.

Source: City of Sydney Archives, NSCA CRS 274/9 (left) and NSCA CRS 274/10 (right)



Figure 151 – Old Belmore Markets, 1904.

Source: City of Sydney Archives, NSCA CRS 43 Vade Mecum 1903 p107



Figure 152 – Old Belmore Market, c.1909.

Source: City of Sydney Archives, NSCA CRS 51/2511



### 3.2.5. New Belmore Market

Between the 1860s and 1880s, the flat ground opposite the old Hay, Corn and Cattle Markets (later New Belmore Market) was the site of open-air markets or 'poor man's fair' - Paddy's Market - which operated from temporary stalls, tents and soapboxes every Saturday night.

The colourful Paddy's Market featured theatre, circus and sideshow entertainment, and patrons could buy hot food and all manner of market goods. The market scene on a Saturday night inspired numerous literary depictions.

Commentator John Laing noted that

*on the open and extensive space of ground that intervenes between the market [old Belmore Market] and George Street, are a number of shows and stalls of different kinds, each with its attendant-lights and crowd of patronizers [sic], whose shadowy forms moving hither and thither add greatly to the picturesqueness of the scene. Animation, bustle, and noise are in combination everywhere. In one direction lies the market, flaming with light and distinct with life and activity, like an immense hive - full of busy inmates; in another George Street opens widely to the view, teeming with thousands of people, and with its brilliantly-lighted shops blazing forth all their innumerable and varied attractions.*<sup>26</sup>

Yet, like so many other moralistic Victorian observers of working class life, Laing found the market at best "an extensive field for the observation of the lower forms of our city life" and at worst a place which attracted "a promiscuous assemblage of hard-working men with their families, servant girls let loose till ten o'clock, factory girls freed from their week's labor [sic], slatterns from the lanes and alleys, and, above all, a large admixture of the larrikin tribe."<sup>27</sup>

In 1875, the Council awarded the tender for the purchase and removal of the old Hay, Corn and Cattle Market building in George Street to William Watkins for the sum of £150.<sup>28</sup> They simultaneously accepted his tender to lease the George Street frontage of the Haymarket and construct a terrace building of three storeys and basement (Watkins Terrace).

The residue of the market site, between Pitt and Parker Streets lay vacant and was known as Haymarket Reserve or Haymarket Square. This ground was leased to a succession of international and Australian circuses including Chiarine's Royal Italian Circus (1873), Wilson's San Francisco Palace Circus (1876) and Cooper, Bailey and Company's International Circus Allied Shows (1877). Figure 153 comprises a bird's eye view of Sydney with a circus tent visible on Haymarket Reserve.

Wirths family circus was one of the Australian companies that performed on the reserve. In 1882, the four Wirth brothers opened a sideshow on the reserve where they gave seven or eight performances each Saturday for six months, from 1 pm until 11 pm, in a small tent about 12 metres in diameter. The brothers performed every act in the "Wirths All Star Varieties" including playing in the band. Philip Wirth recalls that:

*After our season in Bourke, we turned our cavalcade towards Sydney, and after playing all the towns on the way, opened in paddy's markets. The late Mr George Hudson, senior, had our pitch railed for us and we played there for eight weeks. As soon as it became known that Wirth's show was having a splendid season at the market, the place was invaded by side shows of every description, and later by other circus companies so that rivalry then began in earnest.*<sup>29</sup>

His brother, George, had a similar recollection:

*Others, however, came on the scene and soon Paddy's market on a Saturday looked like a regular fair, with merry-go-rounds, swingboats, shooting galleries, pea and pie stalls, and all kinds of side-shows from the snake charmer to the armless women, black art, and sword swallowing shows, and eventually even full circuses made their appearance.*<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> Laing, *op cit*.

<sup>27</sup> *ibid*.

<sup>28</sup> "Sydney Municipal Council", *Sydney Morning Herald*, 22 December 1875, p7

<sup>29</sup> Philip Wirth, *Life of Philip Wirth: a lifetime with an Australian circus*, 1937, p30

<sup>30</sup> George Wirth, *Round the world with a circus: memories of trials, triumphs and tribulations*, 1925, p25

With the decision to build a new Belmore Market, some of the activities of the Paddys Market moved indoors to the old Belmore Market. As late as June 1888, Wirth Family Circus were still utilising ground at Haymarket Square. However, other circus troupes were setting up in Belmore Park or on the city's outskirts.

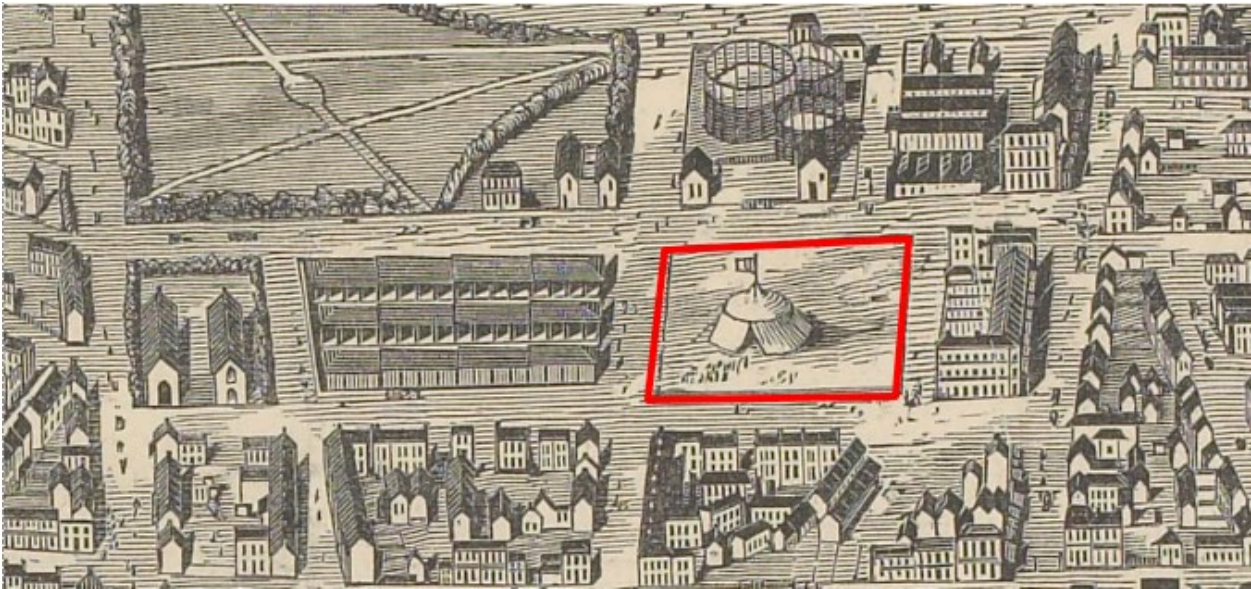


Figure 153 – Detail from “Bird’s Eye View of Sydney”. Market reserve occupied by a circus tent (circled red). South to top of page.

Source: *Illustrated Sydney News*, 2 October 1879 held in SLVIC

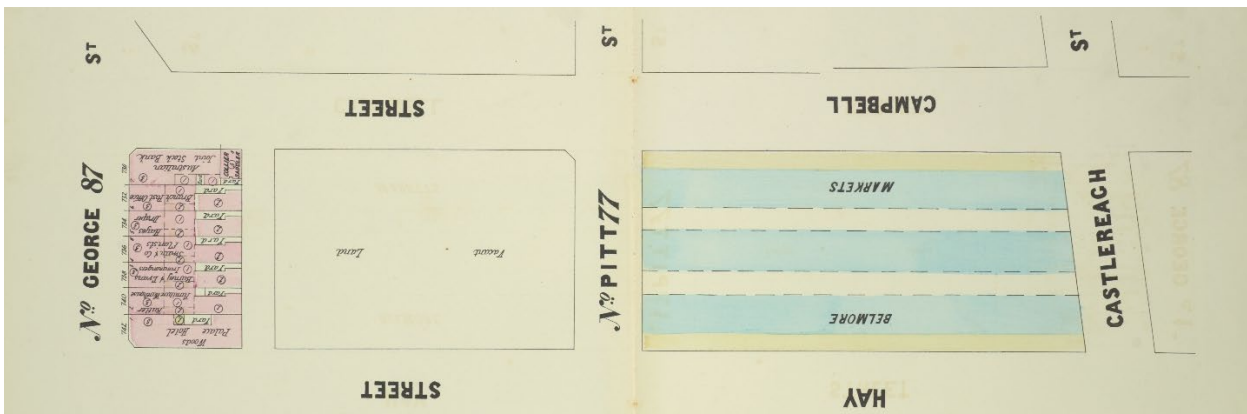


Figure 154 - H Percy Dove's Plans of Sydney Plates 77 & 87, c.1879 showing “vacant land” sandwiched between Belmore Markets (Pitt Street) and Watkins Terrace. North to top of page.

Source: NLA, [nla.obj-231030527](https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-231030527)



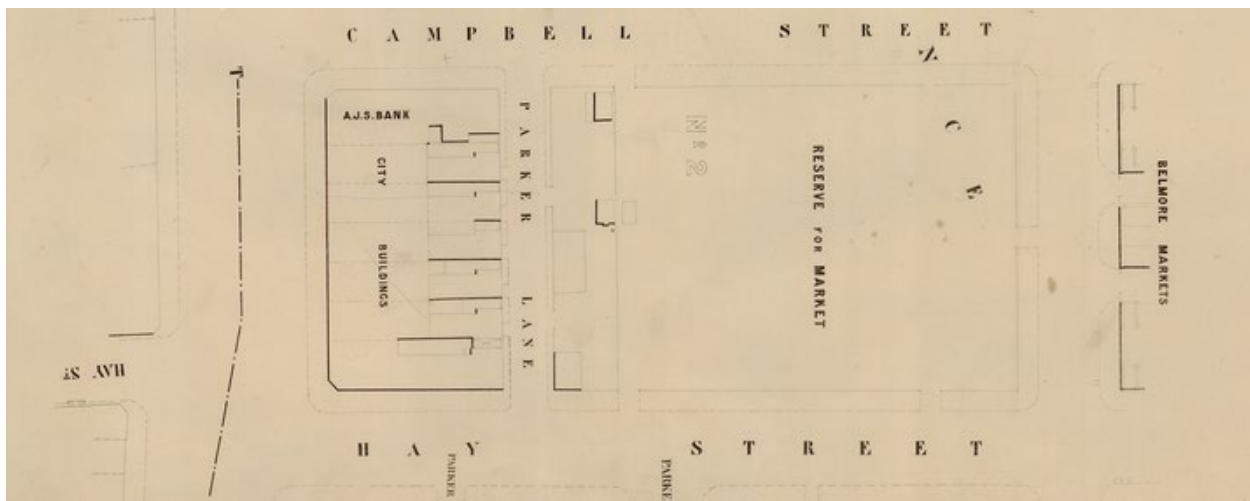


Figure 155 - Extract from Detail Survey City of Sydney Sections Nos 2 and 8, 1887 showing “reserve for market” between Parker Lane and Belmore Markets to east. North to top of page.

Source: SLNSW, a1367410h (1).jpg

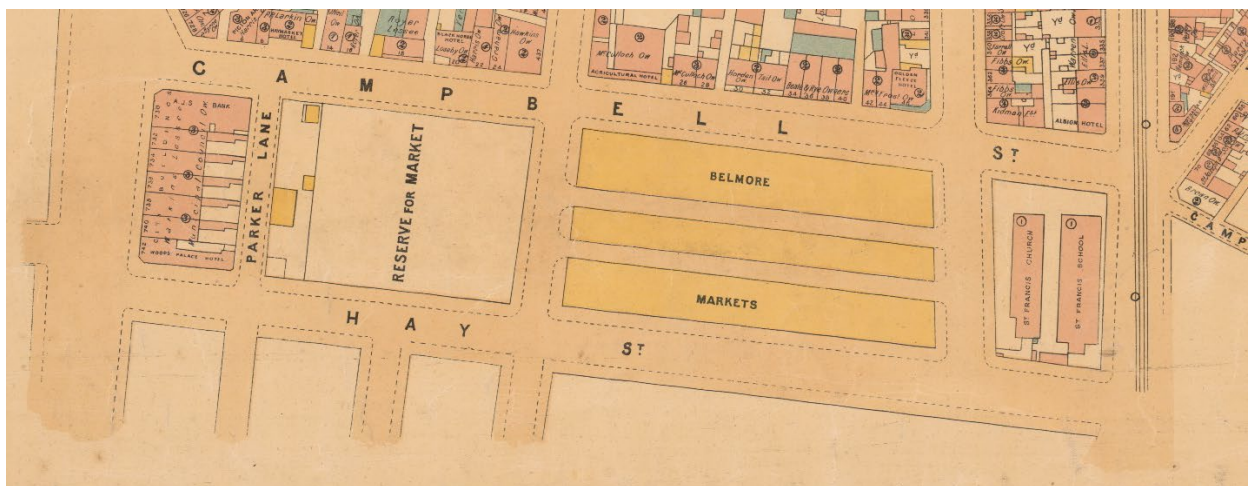


Figure 156 - Detail from Sydney and Suburban Plan Publishing Co., City of Sydney 1888 showing “reserve for market” sandwiched between Belmore Markets and Watkins Terrace. North to top of page.

Source: NLA, nla.obj-231303413.tif

By the mid-1880s, the old Belmore Markets was congested and wholesale traders were expressing dissatisfaction with the prevailing conditions. Consequently, Council gave instructions to the City Architect, Thomas Sapsford, to prepare plans for a fruit market building to be erected on the Haymarket Reserve which he submitted in January 1885.<sup>31</sup> He designed an impressive three-storey building for this site, however this plan was never realised as the following year, the Council instead decided to build a market in Sussex Street. Only one year later, the Council reprised plans to build a new market following calls from representatives of the fruit trade urging Council to provide new and enlarged markets at Haymarket. However, with the advent of the 1890s Depression, the Council abandoned Sapsford's market plans. In 1891, the Council instructed Sapsford's successor, George McRae to prepare “sketch plans of proposed building to cover in vacant space at Haymarket Square”.

*This building would be constructed with brick walls 26 feet high with arched gateways and piers, the gateways to be fitted with iron grills made to slide up with balance weights, so that they would not be in the way of vehicles.*

*The roof I propose to construct in as light as manner as possible with iron principals and purlins, and louvre ventilators in ridges and to be carried on cast iron columns. The columns will be placed as far*

<sup>31</sup> CRS 16/51: Royal Commissions: Fruit Industry New South Wales. Evidence Roy Hendy, Town Clerk of City of Sydney, Sydney, 12 Oct. 1938 p. 1.

*apart as possible consistent with property construction, so that full advantage can be taken of the floor space.*

*The dome shown in the centre would present a very handsome appearance, and materially assist in lighting and ventilating the building.*<sup>32</sup>

McRae's design comprised a less elaborate, single storey building. His assistant and draughtsman, RH Brodrick, prepared extensive drawings and tracings for the New Belmore Market and his work earned McRae's praise. The Council approved the plans and specifications on 28 July 1891, and four months later accepted the tender of A M Allan to erect the building for the sum of £24,902.

Before work could commence on the new Belmore Market, the builder was required to fill and level the site and build a culvert in Hay Street. Extensive footings were sunk to a depth of twenty-five feet (7.6 metres). The foundations were laid on 22 September, and the superstructure was commenced on 21 December the same year.

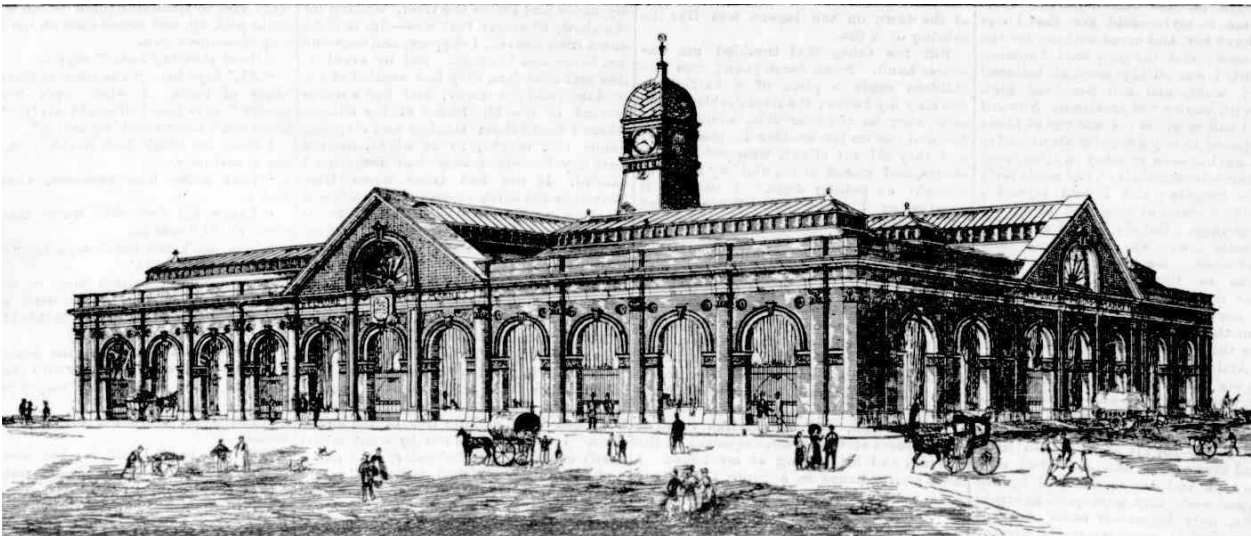


Figure 157 - "The Belmore Market, Sydney, now in course of erection – as the building will appear when completed".

Source: *Australian Town and Country Journal*, 24 December 1892, p31

Tensions soon developed between the contractor and City Architect, resulting in numerous delays and a protracted building process extending well beyond the expiry date of the contract. Consequently, the opening date was pushed back to February 1893. Meanwhile further delays by Allan resulted in the building cost rising to £30,079, with the budget shortfall part funded by a special loan. The building was eventually completed and opened on 14 July 1893 as reported in the *Daily Telegraph*:

*Naturally, the old market still retains its hold upon the public, but when the new one is in full swing it is bound to take the foremost position. That the desire of the City Council to keep pace with the times met with general approval was evident from the number of complimentary references to the new building made.*<sup>33</sup>

The New Belmore Market comprised a brick and terracotta version of an Italian Renaissance elevation facing the street and an economical iron and steel structure covering the entire market. The facade presented thirty-six arched bays to the streets: eleven to Campbell and Hay and seven to Parker and Pitt Streets. The central three bays of each elevation were embellished with fruit in foliage; carried out in terracotta in the spandrels of the arches and stained glass in the semi-circular windows of the pediments.

The walls were constructed of red double-pressed face bricks - those in the arches having complex ornamental mouldings. All the capitals, keystones, diaper work, swags in the frieze, and roundels or foliage in the spandrels were executed in red terracotta, a material in fashion at the time. The terracotta ornament

<sup>32</sup> CRS 19 March 1891, City Architects Office, 26\_248\_508.pdf

<sup>33</sup> *Daily Telegraph*, 17 July 1893, p4



was designed in McRae's office but produced under a separate contract by James Campbell and Sons of Brisbane. String courses, cornices and coping to parapets and pediments were carried out in Pyrmont freestone.<sup>34</sup> It was, and (where undamaged and unpainted) still is, a most effective assemblage. According to Tod and Cork, the massive Bowral trachyte base courses rested on exceptionally deep footings on account of proximity to the old creek.<sup>35</sup>

Before completion, the entire area was paved by Flowers and Lane with a thick, ten-inch (25 cm) concrete foundation covered with asphalt. In addition, gas lamps were erected at the following locations:

- Hay and George, south-eastern corner Hay and Pitt, north-western corner
- Campbell and George, south-eastern corner Campbell and Pitt, south-western corner<sup>36</sup>

During the work of building the New Belmore Market, Parker Lane, which had been extended to service the rear of Watkins' Terrace in the 1870s, was widened from 30 feet to the standard 66 feet.<sup>37</sup>

The new building provided the largest unbroken space in Australia at 237 feet (72.32 metres) by 176 feet (53.64 metres). It featured set areas marked out on the paving for the stall holders. Natural light came from the partially glazed lantern ranges and the thirty-six large arches. The *Building and Engineering Journal Illustrated* described the roof structure as follows:

*the roofs are of iron and consist of two main spans of 60 foot running at right angles to each other and meeting in the centre of the Markets. The smaller side spans are 28 feet. The large diagonal rafters at the intersection of the main span are about 85 feet span and are constructed in the form of an elliptical bow made of mild steel on the lattice principle. On these diagonals is carried the centre tower...The girders which carry the various roofs are lattice in form, and are supported by 16 heavy cast iron columns 22 inches in diameter, with ornamental foliated caps, and richly moulded vases. The columns average 30 feet in length and are being cast in one length by the Mort's Dock and Engineering Company. The roof lanterns are all constructed of iron with galvanized iron louvres and glazed with Bush 's Patent glazing.*<sup>38</sup>

Following the opening of the New Belmore Market, the paddys market continued to operate on Saturdays in the new building. Shooting galleries, second hand dealers, food vendors, confectionary and soft drink sellers, plied their trade alongside music and theatrical performances, side shows, early film exhibitions, circuses and novelty acts.

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<sup>34</sup> *Building and Engineering Journal*, 21 May 1892, p85 and 28 August 1892, p208

<sup>35</sup> Tod & Cork, *Dream Palace*, p1

<sup>36</sup> Sydney Council Minutes 1892, p67

<sup>37</sup> *Building and Engineering Journal*, 27 August 1892, p85

<sup>38</sup> *ibid.*



Figure 158 - New Belmore Markets, 1904.

Source: City of Sydney Archives, NSCA CRS 43 1904 p106



Figure 159 – New Belmore Market entrance, 1904.

Source: City of Sydney Archives, NSCA CRS 43 p104





Figure 160 – Inside New Belmore Market, 1904.

Source: City of Sydney Archives, NSCA CRS 43 1904 p107



Figure 161 – New Belmore Market, 25 June 1913.

Source: City of Sydney Archives, NSCA CRS 51/3421