

Last drinks in Surry Hills: the Licences Reduction Board, 1920-23



John W. Ross

Cover photograph:

Clockwise from top left:

- Former Rosebery Arms Hotel
- Former Farnham Arms Hotel (Google maps)
- Former Princess of Wales Hotel (Google maps)
- Former Mount View Hotel (realestate.com website)



Four of the closed hotels as the Licences Reduction Board members would have seen them during their inspections in 1920-1922. Clockwise from top left:

- Queen's Arms Hotel
- Golden Lion Hotel
- Rifleman's Arms Hotel
- McNamara's Family Hotel

(Source: Licences Reduction Board files, State Records of NSW)

REDUCTIONS IN FOURTEEN ELECTORATES.

WORK OF THE BOARD.

The number of hotels in New South Wales may possibly be reduced by 489, as a result of the investigations of the Licenses Reduction Board.

In this State there are 24 electorates, and in 10 of these the statutory number of hotels, on the basis of the electoral rolls as at last election, is not exceeded. Thus there remain 14 electorates in which reductions are to be made.

Source: *Sydney Morning Herald*, 12 May 1920.

Contents

Foreword.....	1
Alcohol and temperance to the 1830s.....	3
The magnificent thirst.....	3
The rise and decline of the early temperance movement.....	3
The resurgence of temperance in the 1850s.....	5
A change of direction.....	5
Temperance movements go international.....	6
Alcohol regulation from the 1870s.....	9
The first Local Option – inefficient and expensive.....	9
Stricter Local Option in New South Wales.....	9
Local Option and the Victorian Licences Reduction Board.....	11
Early closing in 1916.....	12
The American experience.....	13
The quest for prohibition here.....	14
The New South Wales Licences Reduction Board.....	15
Setting up the Licences Reduction Board.....	15
The Board gets to work.....	16
Temperance campaigns after the Licences Reduction Board.....	17
The hotel closures in Surry Hills.....	19
Athletic Club Hotel.....	22
Austral Hotel.....	24
Club Hotel.....	26
Farnham Arms Hotel.....	28
Federal Hotel.....	30
Golden Fleece Hotel.....	32
Golden Lion Hotel.....	35
Gulgong Hotel.....	37
Lloyd’s Hotel.....	39
Madeira Inn.....	41
McNamara’s Family Hotel.....	43
Mount View Hotel.....	45
Princess of Wales Hotel.....	47
Queen’s Arms Hotel.....	49

Reservoir Hotel	51
Rifleman's Arms Hotel	53
Rosebery Arms Hotel	56
Royal George Hotel	58
Senatorial Hotel	60
Standard Hotel	62
Surry Hills Hotel.....	64
Te Aro Hotel	66
Thames Hotel	68
True Briton Hotel	70
White Lion Hotel	72
The post-World War II era	75
Wartime restrictions	75
Local Option is finally repealed.....	75
Ten o'clock closing ends the swill	75
Women's access to bars	77
Raising the bar – women assert their rights	78
The temperance movement marches on.....	79
Notes.....	81
Table of Figures.....	89
References	91
Index.....	93

Foreword

The Australian colonies were modelled to a large extent on British society, in which alcohol consumption was universal and the pub played a central role in everyday life. Rum was smuggled in or distilled locally, and was used as a currency for some time. Early Governors tried but failed to stem the trade in illegal spirits. The 1830s was the time of peak alcohol, when Australian colonists were consuming four times as much spirits as the British. Early temperance groups formed to grapple with widespread public drunkenness, initially using persuasion and example to guide individuals towards sobriety. But the movement declined when drinking decreased in the economic depression of the 1840s.

The temperance movement revived in the 1850s, after gold discoveries led to increased prosperity and a resurgence of alcohol consumption. Temperance societies became stronger by forming alliances, women gradually took leading roles, and the focus changed from promoting voluntary abstinence to lobbying governments for better regulation of access to alcohol. The nonconformist Protestant churches and visiting evangelical missionaries came to dominate temperance campaigns by the late 1880s.

In the 1870s there were several thousand hotels operating in the Australian colonies, and the temperance alliances began to advocate for a reduction in the number of licensed premises. A process called Local Option was tried, in which polls were taken during general elections to potentially reduce, or even eliminate altogether, the number of liquor licences in an electorate. But numerous Local Option polls over a long period resulted in only a small reduction in licences, at great expense to the taxpayers, and usually not in the inner-city areas with the highest concentration of hotels (whose voters/drinkers invariably frustrated temperance advocates by voting to keep all of their pubs).

A more efficient and less expensive method of closing hotels was needed. In 1907 the Victorian Government, after setting a statutory limit of hotels in each electorate, established a Licences Reduction Board to close down badly-run pubs in electorates where there were too many. Compensation would be paid from a fund established from fees paid by all hotels based on liquor sales. This way, the Government could get rid of hundreds of hotels, especially in the reluctant inner-city districts, at no cost to the taxpayer, and it could be achieved in a few years.

The Victorian Board closed 311 hotels by 1910, and its success prompted the New South Wales Government to set up its own Board in 1920, based closely on the Victorian model. All hotels with licence violations during the previous three years were inspected, and the owners and licensees called before the Board to defend their licences. The inner-city suburb of Surry Hills is examined in detail in this history to illustrate the process. Of the 62 hotels operating in the suburb in 1920, 25 (that is, 40%) were closed by early 1924. Most of the former hotel buildings are still standing, but none ever regained a liquor licence. The majority accepted their fate and soon became boarding houses, or a combination of retail and residential use.

The other success of the Australian temperance movement was the introduction of six o'clock closing in 1916. But this led to frenzied drinking in the last hour before closing each night, a rise in illegal alcohol sales, and no long-term reduction in alcohol consumption. After World War II, the

influence of large numbers of European migrants who had grown up in a more relaxed and civilised drinking culture led to calls to modernise the State liquor laws. The wartime restriction (and with it the previously unwritten custom) that banned women from drinking in public bars was lifted. Early closing was abolished in 1955 in New South Wales, and a decade later in other States. While alcohol is still a major cause of social problems, the temperance movement is no longer the force it once was, and now concentrates its efforts on restricting hotel trading hours and alcohol advertising.

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Alcohol and temperance to the 1830s

The magnificent thirst

The convicts, military and officials who started the colony of New South Wales in 1788 came from a society in which drinking was almost universal and the pub was central to everyday life. In 1792, Governor Arthur Phillip (1788-1792) issued the first liquor licences in a vain attempt to curb the booming trade in smuggled rum. During the early years, coins were scarce, and in a growing economy, rum was used as a substitute currency. Officers often paid their workers in rum¹.

Maximum alcohol consumption was in the late 1830s, when liquor was widely available and pubs opened to midnight². Until the 1860s, Australians drank considerably more alcohol than the British, particularly spirits. In the 1830s, spirit drinking was four times as high as Britain, mostly as rum, brandy or gin, when the annual consumption was an estimated 13.6 litres per head (compared with an all-time low of 2 litres per head during the Great Depression of the 1890s)³. Eighty percent of the 80,000-odd convicts who arrived in New South Wales between 1788 and 1840 were men, and this high proportion of single men was probably one reason for the enormous drinking levels⁴.

Successive Governors tried and failed to control this trade. The Tasmanian Lieutenant Governor Sir John Franklin (1837-1843) banned the distillation of spirits in 1838, and the New South Wales Governor Sir George Gipps (1837-1846) stopped issuing rum to the imperial troops while also imposing an increased excise on spirits.

The rise and decline of the early temperance movement

The temperance movement was an international, organised and popular campaign against alcohol, which was widely seen as the root cause of social ills. It was the largest social movement of the nineteenth century. In the early days of the movement, alcohol problems were seen as an individual's choice, and the approach was to persuade problem drinkers to improve themselves. The early advocates promoted moderation rather than abstinence, although drinkers were encouraged to pledge abstinence⁵.



Figure 1 Temperance campaigners (wallsvies.com website)

A preliminary meeting of the New South Wales Temperance Society was held in October 1833, chaired by William Pascoe Crook, a Congregationalist minister. By the end of the year, the Society had secured Chief Justice Francis Forbes as President. The society's initial rules required members to pledge to relinquish spirits and avoid an excess of other alcoholic beverages. The annual meeting in 1838 was chaired by the new Governor Sir George Gipps, who signed the pledge before delivering a speech arguing that a great portion of the crimes and vices in the colony could be traced to the excessive use of ardent spirits. This was the first public meeting of any kind chaired by a Governor⁶.



Figure 2 Melbourne Total Abstinence Society (Museums Victoria)

Within a few years, large numbers of men and women were joining temperance groups in Sydney, Melbourne and Launceston. As in the United States and Britain, temperance societies of the 1830s often confined their efforts to eliminating the drinking of spirits. Temperance societies organised public lectures (thought to be the first lecture of any kind in Melbourne) and issued their own magazines to publicise the cause⁷. The first teetotal society, the Australian Total Abstinence Society was founded in September 1838. It grew rapidly with a membership drawn from a broader cross section of society than the existing temperance groups. The teetotal pledge demanded complete abstinence from all alcohol.

But signs of the divisions that would lead to decline in the movement were already present in the early 1840s. As the abstinence societies grew, support for the Temperance Society declined. In New South Wales, personal animosities led to a fracturing of the movement, and by 1843 there were four separate teetotal societies competing for support, and divided in approach. The early temperance movement declined in the mid-1840s following internal dissent, lack of funds during the severe economic depression, and by Governor Gipps' departure in 1846. Almost all of Sydney's temperance societies ceased to operate in the decade after 1845. *The Herald* in 1853 contrasted the thriving temperance movement in Melbourne with that of Sydney at the time⁸.

The resurgence of temperance in the 1850s

A change of direction

The end of the 1840s depression and the gold discoveries of the early 1850s led to greater prosperity, increased alcohol consumption, and a moral panic about the newly-rich working classes. This was fertile ground for temperance societies. Equally important was the passage in the United States of the *Maine Liquor Law* in 1851, an early version of prohibition. This legislation gave encouragement to temperance advocates in Britain and New South Wales⁹.

Temperance societies began to form alliances to strengthen the movement, such as the Tasmanian Temperance Alliance in 1856 and the New South Wales Alliance for the Suppression of Intemperance in 1857¹⁰. Band of Hope societies began in 1855 to indoctrinate children to the temperance cause, spreading rapidly around the colony to play an important role in the movement in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. A further development was the formation of dedicated women's societies, such as the Ladies' Total Abstinence Society in 1856.



Figure 3 Band of Hope certificate (Museums Victoria)

During this period, there was a change of emphasis towards lobbying for government action to ban or at least better regulate the sale and consumption of alcohol. The resort to legislation was justified by claims that the voluntary abstinence principle had failed, and the hotels had created twenty new drunks for every one saved by the temperance societies¹¹. To mark the temperance resurgence in New South Wales, an imposing Temperance Hall was constructed in Pitt Street in 1858¹².

The *Australian Home Companion and Band of Hope Journal* was published in Sydney from 1856 to 1861 to promote temperance. In 1857, the *Journal* reported on a three-day conference in Melbourne of delegates from the various temperance societies, who met to form an alliance of their societies. They also proposed sending petitions to Parliament, with accompanying statistics, advocating the supervision of public houses and opposing the appointment of persons in the alcohol trade as magistrates. The conference also discussed the formation of Bands of Hope in Victoria¹³.

Temperance movements go international

Major international temperance organisations established Australian branches during this time. The Independent Order of Rechabites arrived in 1847, followed by the Sons of Temperance. The Order of Good Templars set up their first branch in Queensland in 1872. Between them, these bodies had 63,000 Australian members by 1890.



Figure 4 Temperance Hall Sydney, 1870 (State Records of NSW)

Evangelical missionaries boosted the temperance cause, such as Matthew Burnett (1839-1896) from Yorkshire, who travelled the country for over twenty years from 1863 conducting loud, flamboyant religious revival meetings, stressing that total abstinence was essential to a good Christian life. These evangelists forged a close link between the temperance movement and the non-conformist Protestant churches, such as Wesleyan Methodists, Baptists and Presbyterians, which by the late 1880s came to dominate the Australian temperance campaigns. Roman Catholics and Anglicans had their own temperance societies, but they were not very visible in the agitation for anti-liquor laws. In fact, the Church of England tended towards moderation rather than total abstinence¹⁴.

In 1882, the Sydney Women's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU) was formed by Eli Johnson, a visiting American temperance lecturer. Other local Temperance Union branches were formed in Sydney and country areas from 1884. Then in 1890, the Women's Christian Temperance Union of New South Wales was established to embrace the whole colony¹⁵. While temperance meetings were initially chaired by men, and frequently addressed by invited male speakers, they heralded the female dominance of the temperance movement that continued well into the twentieth century. By pushing women to the forefront of temperance, the WCTU played a critical role in securing a political voice for women in Australia society¹⁶.

There was good cause for the concerns of these groups: by 1873, there were 2,400 licensed hotels in New South Wales in a population of 540,000 (that is, one pub per 225 of population). The 1870s was also the great decade of pub building in the inner suburbs of Sydney, when most of the buildings

documented in this history were constructed. The temperance societies were stepping up their campaigns to ban the sale of alcohol, and hotel keepers were starting to feel the heat. The United Licensed Victuallers' Association was established that year by hotel owners to form a united front in order to combat the threat to their livelihood from temperance advocates¹⁷.

Another impact of the temperance movement was that in the 1880s a significant number of hotels around the country were either purpose-built as or converted to coffee palaces, where no alcohol was served. When the influence of the temperance movement faded, most of these hotels either applied for liquor licences or were demolished.

Alcohol regulation from the 1870s

The first Local Option – inefficient and expensive

Temperance alliances were among the most successful lobby groups in colonial politics. They eventually won the right to the Local Option, a policy in which each electorate could vote to increase or decrease its number of licensed premises¹⁸. The push for a Local Option began in the 1860s, but it was not until the 1880 Temperance Convention that Local Option Alliances were formed to petition State Governments in a more organised way. Queensland introduced local veto in 1885. The proposed national capital in Canberra was founded in 1913 as a prohibition city, but this was overturned by popular vote in 1928. 1870 legislation in Victoria allowed a municipality to object to new liquor licences based on the number of existing licences¹⁹.

1886 liquor legislation in Victoria introduced a statutory limit of hotels in each district and no licences would be granted above the limit. The number of licences could be reduced or increased to the limit if a local opinion poll supported this. But this was considered inefficient and unwieldy after 168 polls produced only 217 hotel closures over the twenty years to 1906, costing the State's taxpayers £212,771 in compensation. By comparison, during this time 513 hotels died a natural death in Victoria. The number of hotels closed by Local Option was constrained by the extravagant compensation paid out of a fund that was very limited. The Government had to refuse a number of petitions for closure under the Local Option due to the fund running out.

In New South Wales, Henry Parkes' *Licensing Act 1882* was a success for the temperance movement. It included a limited form of Local Option, in which each electorate could vote to veto any new licences. The Local Option would be exercised during general elections, which further politicised the issue of alcohol consumption by mobilising temperance forces during election campaigns²⁰.

Stricter Local Option in New South Wales

In June 1934, during efforts to restore the Local Option in New South Wales, Mr. W. S. Arnott, a former chairman of the Licences Reduction Board, outlined the history of the Local Option in the *Sydney Morning Herald*. The following information is largely taken from this article. The New South Wales *Liquor (Amendment) Act 1905* stipulated that a vote of electors on the question of Local Option was to be taken in every electorate at each general election, starting at the next one, and with no end date specified. The choices were:

- (a) That the number of existing licences be continued.
- (b) That the number of existing licences be reduced.
- (c) That no licences be granted in the electorate.

Resolutions (a) and (b) required a simple majority to be effective, but (c) required a 60% majority. The Act also required that at least 30% of the electors voted for the resolution. If (b) was carried, the number of licences in the electorate could be reduced to 75% of the existing number. If (c) was carried, all licences of every type were to be cancelled after three years. The statewide voting for the three polls was:

- 1907: continuance 206,844, reduction 74,868, no licences 175, 984.
- 1910: continuance 324,861, reduction 37,825, no licences 216,523.
- 1913: continuance 382,223, reduction 44,805, no licences 246,435.



Figure 5 Sydney WCTU banner (Museum of Applied Arts & Sciences)

If “no licences” was not carried (as was the case in all three elections), the votes for no licences were added to those of reduction and treated as reduction votes. While the overall voting in the State was always for continuance of existing licences, some electorates voted in favour of reduction of licences. In the 1907 election, reduction was carried in 64 of the 90 electorates then existing. In 1910, only 14 electorates carried reduction, and in 1913 the position was similar when 15 electorates carried reduction. As a result, the Reduction Courts closed many licensed houses:

- In 1907, 293 hotels and 46 wine licences.
- In 1910, 28 hotels and 5 wine licences.
- In 1913, 23 hotels and 7 wine licences.

But a major problem was how to compensate closed hotels. The State governments would have to foot the bill, which Victorian Premier Thomas Bent estimated in 1905 to be “a couple of million pounds” if his Government closed all the hotels they were entitled to²¹. In New South Wales, no financial compensation was paid to owners or licensees of closed hotels and wine licences: the Act

provided for time compensation only, which varied according to circumstances from one year to eight years. Hotels with two licence convictions were allowed to remain open for one more year, and those with one conviction were allowed two years. Longer periods were set for hotels in which owners were also licensees (eight years), and where hotels with no licensing convictions were closed to make up the desired reduction of 25% (three to eight years).

Another awkward problem with Local Option was that in nearly all the congested and industrial areas around Sydney, such as Darling Harbour, Surry Hills and Woolloomooloo, the electors always voted to continue the existing number of licences. However, the Government, church leaders and temperance advocates all thought to a man and woman that these were the very suburbs that should have the axe taken to their hotel network, but Local Option failed to achieve this. As a result, Local Option was not exercised in New South Wales after the 1913 election²².

Local Option and the Victorian Licences Reduction Board

In 1904, a Local Option poll was held in North Melbourne²³. The result was not deemed a success, as a very large amount of compensation was paid: £50,000 for 37 closed hotels²⁴, and was vigorously contested in the courts, dragging the process out²⁵. One area of complaint was that the remaining 57 hotels in North Melbourne would inherit almost all of the customers of the closed hotels, greatly benefiting their businesses, even though the payouts to closed hotels had not cost them a penny. Even worse, the reduction in pubs had not resulted in any discernible reduction in drinking (which was meant to be the point of the exercise)²⁶.

Discussion followed on whether a system without any financial compensation would be better, for example a time compensation in which hotels were given up to ten years to close. The liquor trade (represented by the Liquor Trades Defence Union) favoured financial compensation, but the temperance alliance favoured the time compensation method, probably because this much cheaper method would be easier to get through Parliament and would not have to wait for sufficient funds to be accumulated before hotels could be closed.

This led the Victorian Government to legislate a better way of getting rid of unwanted hotels²⁷. While making the case in Parliament for a more effective system, the Victorian Attorney-General pointed out that when the first *Licensing Act* was passed in 1885, there were 4,256 hotels in the State, which was 2,451 over the statutory limit of 1,814²⁸. This was at a time when the Victorian population (after the 1881 census) was just over 862,000²⁹, meaning there was one hotel for every 202 Victorians, or one for every 106 males – so many that the entire male population of the State could almost be squeezed into all of them at once! But since 1885, only 217 had been closed under Local Option, at a cost of £212,771.

The resultant *Licensing Act 1906* in August 1906 postponed Local Option polls for ten years to 1916 (later delayed to 1920)³⁰, and established a Licences Reduction Board to close hotels more effectively and award compensation using fees collected from all hotels. The Board would operate for ten years, after which the Local Option was expected to return, running polls on general election dates. The Board would deal with all matters pertaining to liquor licences, including licence transfers. The three Board members were all licensing magistrates³¹.

Most of the early years were concentrated in the inner city areas of Collingwood, Richmond, Fitzroy and South Melbourne. By January 1910, some 311 hotels had been closed in Victoria and over

£140,000 paid in compensation. The suburbs further out, such as Prahran, South Yarra, Windsor and St Kilda had fewer hotels and were not examined until the 1920s. The Victorian Board effectively wound up around 1930, after some 477 hotels had been closed in the metropolitan area, and 1,149 in the country, with a total compensation payout of just under £1,100,000³². A statewide Victorian opinion poll in 1920 created two dry zones (which remain in place in a residual form today), and closed around 200 hotels³³.

Early closing in 1916

The temperance movement's greatest success in Australia came in 1916 with the introduction of six o'clock closing. At a time when there were calls for wartime austerity, campaigners seized on a drunken riot among soldiers training for the front and persuaded the New South Wales Government to hold a referendum on closing hours in June 1916, which invited electors to select a closing time of either six, seven, eight or nine o'clock. A majority voted for the earliest given hour (nine o'clock was second with around half as many votes). Six o'clock closing began with the passing of the *Early Closing Act 1916*. South Australia, Victoria and Tasmania also adopted six o'clock closing, Western Australia nine o'clock and Queensland changed to eight o'clock closing in 1923.



Figure 6 Early closing referendum, 1916 (City of Sydney Archives)

The real impact of early closing became clear after the end of World War 1, when the troops returned and went back to work. Most workers finished work at five o'clock, giving them one hour to consume as much alcohol as possible before six o'clock closing. The frenzied nature of this one-hour binge each day became known as the six o'clock swill. Sly grog shops proliferated and crime flourished during the 1920s. Respectable women avoided the public bar and all women were increasingly excluded from it. The front bar became a male space, although until World War II this was more by custom than by law. Women were finally forced into dedicated Ladies' Lounges³⁴.



Figure 7 The six o'clock swill in Melbourne (*Herald Sun*)

The American experience

From 1906, the Anti-Saloon League ran a determined campaign in the United States to ban the sale of alcohol at a State level. League members led speeches, advertisements and public demonstrations, claiming that banning alcohol would eliminate poverty and social issues such as immoral behaviour and violence. They proclaimed that families would be happier and the world would be a better place. Other influential groups, such as the WCTU, also began to lobby for a ban on the sale, manufacture and distribution of all alcoholic beverages.

Many State legislatures bowed to this pressure by enacting statewide prohibition. In December 1917, the 18th Amendment of the United States Constitution established the prohibition of "intoxicating liquors" in the United States. Specifically, the Amendment declared the production, transport and sale of intoxicating liquors illegal, although it did not outlaw the actual consumption of alcohol. National prohibition began on 17 January 1920, one year after ratification by Congress.



Figure 8 Liquor raid in New York City, 1922

Although the 18th Amendment initially heralded a decline in alcohol consumption, nationwide enforcement of prohibition proved to be difficult, particularly in cities. Organised crime and other groups engaged in large-scale bootlegging, and illegal speakeasies became popular in many areas. Supporters of prohibition wondered what they had unleashed when faced with levels of civil disobedience unheard-of among respectable citizens who resented their perfectly responsible consumption of liquor being denied them by a bunch of wild-eyed temperance zealots.

People who could afford the highly-priced smuggled liquor flocked to speakeasies and gin joints. These places could be quite glamorous, with women being welcomed for the first time, to drink cocktails, smoke and dance to jazz. Working class consumption largely moved from the saloons to the home. "Bathtub gin" and moonshine took the place of mass-produced liquor. Americans found ways to distil alcohol from perfume, paint and carpentry supplies. This continued even after it became known that many of these products contained poisons intended to deter such misuse.

Very few illegal liquor distillers were ever successfully prosecuted, or even arrested. When a liquor seller ended up on trial, juries filled with sympathetic drinkers were reluctant to find defendants guilty. Public sentiment began to turn against prohibition through the 1920s, and in 1932 the Democratic presidential nominee Franklin D. Roosevelt called for the repeal of the 18th Amendment in his election platform. The 21st Amendment repealed the 18th Amendment in 1933, making it the only Amendment to the Constitution to be repealed in its entirety.

The quest for prohibition here

In 1916, various State temperance alliances formed a national body, the Australian Alliance Prohibition Council. By then, the temperance movement was frustrated by the lack of success of the Local Option (suspended after 1913 in New South Wales), and was setting its sights on nationwide prohibition. The passage of the *Volstead Act* in the United States, which implemented the 18th Amendment to the Constitution, inspired hope that a similar prohibition act might be introduced in Australia³⁵.

From the 1920s, temperance advocates persuaded governments to hold referendums into prohibition in Australia and New Zealand. None passed, although some votes came close³⁶. The WCTU declared at its 1921 national convention that its aim was a dry Australia by 1925, but the failure of State referendums throughout the decade made this unrealistic. The Victorian referendum of 1930 recorded the highest "yes" vote at 42%. One poll in Tasmania suffered such a low voter turnout that there were even doubts about its validity.

No Australian State ever turned dry, and Local Option polls rarely even produced a dry suburb. However, one small but temporary success for prohibition advocates was in creating the new national capital in Canberra as a dry zone in 1913. But when Parliament House was completed in 1928 and the Federal Government moved there, another referendum overturned the earlier result and the ban was repealed³⁷. One of the greatest practical arguments against prohibition was the economic one: in 1923 it was estimated that prohibition would cost the New South Wales Government more than £12.5 million to buy out the liquor industry³⁸.

The New South Wales Licences Reduction Board

Setting up the Licences Reduction Board

In New South Wales, there was dissatisfaction with the Local Option, partly because of its cost to the taxpayer but also because the districts with the highest concentration of pubs were those with least interest in the temperance cause. In 1916, the Attorney-General (David Hall) said that the benefit to the temperance movement of the Local Option was not worth the effort involved, and that Parliament should be able to find an improved method of closing unwanted hotels³⁹. Encouraged by the success of the Victorian Licences Reduction Board in 1907, the New South Wales *Liquor (Amendment) Act 1919* constituted a similar three-member Board, to operate from 1920 to 1923.

For each electorate in New South Wales, a statutory limit of hotels was calculated, based on population, and whether city or country. The Board could reduce the number of hotels to this limit, up to a 25% reduction. The statutory limit was four for each 1000 enrolled electors and 3 for each succeeding 2,000 electors in a five-member electorate, or one hotel for each 500 enrolled electors in three-member (country) electorates⁴⁰. New South Wales had 24 electorates in 1920, and the statutory number was exceeded in 14 of them. There were 2,538 hotels in the State, and this could be reduced by 489⁴¹. The statutory number in the Sydney electorate was 103, and 78 of the 314 hotels could be closed (that is, about 25% of them)⁴². Compensation would be paid to owners and licensees, from a levy on alcohol sales by hotels.

The Board was to operate from 1 January 1920 for 3 years. Sydney Gunn, a stipendiary magistrate from Newcastle, was appointed chairman. The other appointees were Mr R. Shelton, chairman of the Forbes Land Board, and Mr. R. P. Sellors of the Public Service Board. A Compensation Board was also appointed, with Judge Hamilton as chairman, and members Mr H.M. Hawkins, principal of the firm H. W. Horning Ltd and a well-known social reformer and member of several boards, and Edwin Stooke, Secretary of the Liquor Trades Defence Association⁴³.



Figure 9 Sydney Gunn (*Sydney Morning Herald*, 30 October 1922)

A public notice was issued by Mr R. Ovington, Secretary to the Board, requiring all licensees in New South Wales to furnish details of the liquor delivered to or purchased by their businesses over the

previous twelve months⁴⁴. A Licensed Victuallers Compensation Fund was established to receive 3% of all liquor sales over the last twelve months, and later pay compensation to closed hotels⁴⁵. The existing Licensing Court was retained, causing conflict with the Licences Reduction Board for some time. In January 1920, the members of the Board travelled to Melbourne to learn about the operation of its Victorian equivalent⁴⁶.

The Board gets to work

Much preparation work was required before the Board could begin to hold licence deprivation hearings. Firstly, police throughout the State compiled lists of all hotels in their local area with licence violations during the last three years to the end of 1919, then conducted inspections on all those properties, looking at whether they were well kept, were an annoyance to neighbours, were well supplied with sanitary features, and were judged to be a “convenience to the public” (a rather vague requirement that usually translated to whether there were already too many pubs nearby)⁴⁷. All hotels were classified by the number of licence violations: “A” class were those with two or more violations (which would be examined by the Board first), and “B” class - those with only one violation (to be examined at a later date if the statutory limit was still exceeded by closing a number of those in the “A” class)⁴⁸.

In August 1920, the Licences Reduction Board began to inspect the 314 hotels in the Sydney electorate⁴⁹. By November, all of the hotels in the Sydney electorate had been inspected and sixteen hotels had been deprived of their licences, nine of them in Surry Hills⁵⁰. The compensation for these hotels was announced in the *Government Gazette* the following April⁵¹ and the delicensed hotels were ordered to close by 30 June 1921⁵². However, the New South Wales State Records files for the closed hotels showed that the hotels usually closed a few months after this⁵³.

In January 1921, the Board moved its operations to Newcastle to hold deprivation hearings there. Then the members travelled around other country electorates⁵⁴. In September 1922, the deprivation hearings resumed for more hotels in the Sydney electorate, commencing with Woolloomooloo⁵⁵, followed by Surry Hills⁵⁶. In October 1922, Sydney Gunn died at age 51⁵⁷, and was replaced soon afterwards as chairman by the magistrate Mr F. G. Adrian⁵⁸.

In November 1922, the New South Wales Government presented a *Liquor Amendment Act* to extend the term of the Board for three years from 1 July 1924. There was no mention of a prohibition referendum or changing the restriction on trading hours⁵⁹. Also, the local option was suspended for a further three years. A further stipulation of the Amendment Act was that wine licences would be added to the licence reduction operations of the Board⁶⁰. In December 1922, the Board announced that a further twelve Surry Hills hotels would be deprived of their licences⁶¹. Compensation hearings for this group of hotels were held in May 1923⁶².

By July 1923, after about three years of operation, the *Sydney Morning Herald* was reporting “good progress on the road to reform”. £430,000 had been accumulated in the compensation fund (after paying out compensation for hotels closed so far), and it was expected that at this rate it would be in credit to the extent of two to three million pounds in five years’ time⁶³. By the middle of 1923, 25 of Surry Hills’s 62 hotels had been closed by the Board, a reduction of 40%. This was presumably the kind of result the Government and temperance advocates had been hoping for after the failure of the Local Option in the inner city, and was met with widespread approval in the press.

In July 1927, the Board handed down the last of its licence deprivation determinations in the State, and it only remained to determine compensation for the sixteen hotels closed in the Northern Tableland electorate⁶⁴. In 1928, Dr. H. V. Evatt, then the State MP for Balmain, challenged the number of electors counted in 1920 in the old Balmain electorate, and claimed that the number of hotels was in fact over the statutory limit⁶⁵. The Licences Reduction Board duly considered this, and subsequently closed three more hotels⁶⁶.

By 1933, the work of the Licences Reduction Board had effectively finished, and at the end of that year it had closed 278 hotels statewide out of an original 2,539 in 1920 (or 11%). In total, there was a decrease in licences by 478 (nearly 19%), either by the Board, by natural attrition or by means other than the Licences Reduction Board. By then, there was one hotel for every 1241 persons, compared with one for every 803 persons in 1920⁶⁷.

The upshot of all this effort was that the 3,063 licensed premises existing in New South Wales when Local Option was first legislated in 1905 had been reduced to 2,037 in 1940. That is, a reduction of 33%⁶⁸. This was by a combination of Local Option reductions, the Licences Reduction Board, natural attrition, and hotels voluntarily closing.

Temperance campaigns after the Licences Reduction Board

In September 1924, Archdeacon Francis Boyce and the solicitor William Clegg, both members of the New South Wales Temperance Alliance, said that the prohibition movement had gone backwards in recent years, but that steady progress (towards prohibition) was assured under the Local Option. Boyce was thankful for the work of the Licences reduction Board, but was always a believer in the value of the Local Option, and would like to see its suspension removed⁶⁹. However Thomas Ley, the Minister for Justice, pointed out in Parliament that the Board had reduced licences by 224 in its first two years, whereas the Local Option had only reduced them by 158 in ten years⁷⁰.

In September 1928, a referendum on prohibition in New South Wales was easily rejected by 825,965 to 333,400 after three days of counting. At the same time, a similar poll in the Australian Capital Territory voted by an absolute majority (2,218 in favour, 57 more than the total of the three other questions) to introduce licensed houses⁷¹. The *Liquor Amendment (Continuance) Act 1928* removed the suspension of the Local Option clauses and provided that they should come into operation on a date to be appointed by the Governor⁷². This was effectively the end of the Local Option for the foreseeable future.

Through the 1930s, the New South Wales Temperance Alliance continued to campaign for the restoration of the Local Option⁷³ and against the extension of opening hours⁷⁴. The repeal of the 18th Amendment in the United States to end prohibition was still being discussed in the Australian press throughout the 1930s. The *Sydney Morning Herald* reported in April 1936 on the effects of the repeal. It was thought that more people, particularly the middle class, were drinking, but it was no longer the feverish business it was when it was a forbidden pastime, so there was less drunkenness. There was less bootlegging and smuggling from abroad, the price of liquor had fallen and the quality had improved⁷⁵.

One news item related to the theme of drinking and drunkenness in an era before random breath testing: in 1937 a Police Magistrate in Melbourne suggested the use of the phrase "the Leith police dismisseth us" to determine sobriety. Mr Roberts of the Victorian Local Option League was asked

what he thought of the new test. Mr Roberts (who we must assume was perfectly sober) negotiated the tongue twister carefully and successfully the first time, but when asked to say it faster, could not get it right. The versatile Roberts (who we must also assume was Welsh) then demonstrated his tongue-twisting dexterity with by smoothly rattling off the name of the Welsh railway station Llanfairpwllgwyngyllgogerychwyrndrobwlllantysiliogogoch! However, Dr. Robertson of the Health Commission was not impressed by linguistic accuracy in determining sobriety, and said that the only reliable test was a blood test, but the police headquarters did not have facilities for taking it⁷⁶.

The hotel closures in Surry Hills



Figure 10 Surry Hills hotels in 1920 - see tables below for details

Surry Hills hotels closed by the Licences Reduction Board:

	Hotel name	Hotel address	Date closed
1	Athletic Club	46-48 Arthur Street	15/12/1923
2	Austral Hotel	477 Bourke Street, corner Fitzroy St	1/12/1923
3	Club Hotel	47 Albion St, corner Commonwealth St	21/12/1923
4	Farnham Arms	91 Albion St, corner Bellevue Street	25/02/1924
5	Federal Arms	285 Crown Street, corner Campbell Street	4/08/1921
6	Golden Fleece Hotel	538 Crown Street, corner Davies Street	8/12/1923
7	Golden Lion Hotel	99 Devonshire St, corner Buckingham St	5/12/1923
8	Gulgong Hotel	411 Bourke Street, near Campbell Street	28/03/1924
9	Lloyd's Hotel	21-23 Brumby Street, corner Clisdell St	30/06/1920
10	Madeira Inn	116 Devonshire Street, corner Holt St	11/02/1924
11	Macnamara's Family Hotel	89 Foveaux Street, corner Waterloo Street	5/12/1923
12	Mount View Hotel	381 Riley Street, corner Foveaux Street	13/12/1923
13	Princess of Wales hotel	33 Cooper Street, corner Holt Street	30/06/1921
14	Queen's Arms	389 Bourke Street, corner Campbell St	14/11/1923
15	Reservoir Hotel	263-5 Riley Street, corner Reservoir Street	30/06/1921
16	Rifleman's Arms	75 Fitzroy Street, corner Marshall Street	20/12/1923
17	Rosebery Arms	259-261 Crown Street, corner Goulburn St	12/04/1923
18	Royal George Hotel	480 Bourke Street, corner Phelps St	30/06/1921
19	Senatorial Hotel	31 Foveaux St, opp. Commonwealth St	30/06/1921
20	Standard Hotel	90 Cooper Street, corner Lacey Street	25/10/1923
21	Surry Hills Hotel	33 Smith Street, corner Reservoir Street	8/08/1921
22	Te Aro Hotel	25 Albion Street, corner Mary Street	9/01/1924
23	Thames Hotel	50 Buckingham Street, corner Bedford St	30/06/1921
24	True Briton Hotel	466 Elizabeth Street, corner Brumby St	29/11/1923
25	White Lion Hotel	199 Riley Street, corner Goulburn St	29/02/1924

Hotels examined and passed by the Licences Reduction Board:

26	Beresford Hotel	354 Bourke Street, corner Hill Street
27	Carrington Hotel	563 Bourke Street, corner Arthur Street
28	Cleveland Hotel	59 Buckingham Street, corner Belvoir St
29	Commonwealth Hotel	461-3 Elizabeth Street, corner Rutland St
30	Cricketers Arms	106 Fitzroy St, corner Hutchinson St
31	Dolphin Hotel	412 Crown Street, corner Fitzroy Street
32	Evening Star Hotel	370 Elizabeth Street, corner Cooper St
33	Forrester's Hotel	338 Riley Street, corner Foveaux Street
34	Hopetoun Hotel	416 Bourke Street, corner Fitzroy Street
35	Limerick Castle Hotel	65 Smith Street, corner Ann Street
36	London Tavern	256-260 Elizabeth St, corner Albion St
37	Nevada Hotel	2 Foster Street, corner Hunt Street
38	Pottery Hotel	523 Riley Street, corner Lansdowne St
39	Royal Albert Hotel	140 Commonwealth St, cnr Reservoir St
40	Royal Arms hotel	227 Devonshire Street, corner Riley St
41	Shakespeare Hotel	200 Devonshire Street
42	Southern Cross Hotel	103 Devonshire St, corner Elizabeth St
43	Standard Hotel	234 Commonwealth Street, cnr Foveaux St
44	Surry Hills Hotel	320 Crown Street, corner Campbell Street
45	Victoria Hotel	505 Crown Street, corner Devonshire St
46	White Horse Hotel	381 Crown Street

Hotels not examined by the Licences Reduction Board:

47	Aurora Hotel	324 Elizabeth Street, corner Kippax Street
48	Belmore Park Hotel	47 Reservoir Street, corner Mary Street
49	Brighton Hotel	77 Oxford Street, corner Riley Street
50	Clarendon Hotel	156 Devonshire Street, corner Waterloo St
51	Crown Hotel	436 Cleveland Street, corner Crown Street
52	Excelsior Hotel	64 Foveaux Street, corner Bellevue Street
53	Exchange Hotel	468 Crown Street
54	Flinders Hotel	71 Flinders Street
55	Grand Central Railway Hotel	407 Elizabeth Street, corner Randle Street
56	Hampden Hotel	53 Oxford Street, corner Pelican Street
57	Macquarie Hotel	34 Commonwealth Street
58	Newmarket Hotel	198 Elizabeth Street, corner Campbell Street
59	Royal Exhibition Hotel	85 Devonshire Street, corner Chalmers St
60	Subway Hotel	52 Devonshire Street, corner Randle Street
61	Sunbeam Hotel	317 Riley Street, corner Albion Street
62	Warwick Arms	233 Riley Street, corner Campbell Street

Athletic Club Hotel

Address: 46-48 Arthur Street, on the corner of Alexander Street.

Building status: The rebuilt 1922 hotel building still exists.



Figure 11 Former Athletic Club Hotel (timegents.com website)

History: This hotel was built in 1863-65 by Thomas Phelps, who named it the Pembroke Castle Hotel after the most famous castle in his home county of Pembrokeshire in Wales. In 1886, it was renamed the Athletic Club Hotel, presumably to attract patrons from the Carrington Grounds Athletic Field which opened that year on Arthur Street between Bourke and South Dowling Streets⁷⁷.

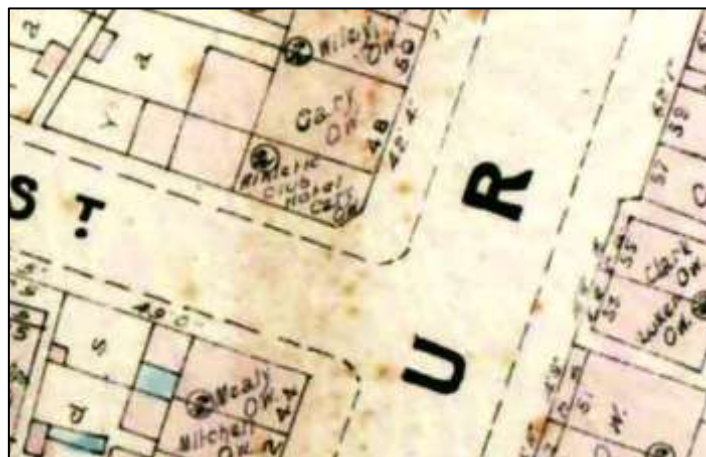


Figure 12 Athletic Club Hotel, 1888 (Rygate and West map)

In 1921, the Licensing Court told the licensee that because of the old and dilapidated state of the building, his licence would only be renewed if the hotel was completely rebuilt. But before the rebuilding project commenced, Licensing Inspector George Mitchell warned the licensee that if he was called before the Licences Reduction Board, the Inspector would testify that the hotel was not wanted, due to the number of other nearby licences and its back street location. He advised the licensee to get some advice before embarking on a rebuilding project.

The owner, Victoria Allen, decided to ignore the warning from the Licensing Inspector and to undertake the great expense of demolishing and rebuilding the hotel. The project was approved and work began in early 1922⁷⁸. Construction experienced a number of delays and was finished in July 1922⁷⁹. In Oct 1922, due to a licensing violation against them in 1921, the Licences Reduction Board called the parties from the hotel to show cause why they should not lose their licence.

Despite the brand new building and furniture, the Board's decision in December 1922 was to delicense the hotel. A petition of residents in February 1923 asked for a rehearing, as their opinions were not sought, and they would have supported the retention of the licence. Even the Reverend John Chapple, Rector of St. David's Church, wrote a letter in support of the hotel. The hotel's owner must have been very disappointed that the hotel was delicensed after the trouble and expense of rebuilding it⁸⁰.

The closure of a newly constructed hotel can be seen as unfortunate, as the owner thought she did everything necessary to retain the licence. It was mentioned during the deprivation hearing that the Cricketers Arms in Fitzroy Street was in a similar situation, but Tooth & Co renovated the hotel extensively in early 1922 and managed to save it from deregistration. The Cricketer's Arms was on a main thoroughfare to the sports grounds in Moore Park, and its competition was reduced by the delicensing of two nearby hotels (the Austral Hotel and the Rifleman's Arms). The Athletic Club Hotel became known locally as "the pub that never opened". Today the building is a set of apartments. The front apartment (which includes the former public bar) contains the stairway down to the cellar.

Austral Hotel

Address: 477 Bourke Street, on the corner of Fitzroy and Foveaux Streets.

Building status: The hotel was demolished and is now a small park.



Figure 13 Austral and Hopetoun hotels, 1930s (City of Sydney Archives)

History: A building on this site was first recorded by *Sands' Sydney Directory* in 1880 as Rowe's Family Hotel⁸¹, an imposing three-storey structure with fifteen rooms, owned and occupied by Richard Rowe⁸². From 1882, William C. Freeman became the licensee, and it was known as Freeman's Family Hotel⁸³.

The hotel was put up for sale in May 1886⁸⁴, and was purchased by Patrick Coyle in July 1887. He died in October 1891, and his son William Thomas inherited it⁸⁵. William was a barrister who was made King's Counsel in 1920⁸⁶, and became the first Senior Prosecutor in NSW.

When the Licences Reduction Board held a deprivation hearing into the hotel in May 1922, William Coyle was still the owner, with Ernest Maitland Armstrong the licensee. The Board decided in December 1922 to deprive the hotel of its licence, effective 30 June 1923. The transcript of the hearing is not available, so the reasons for the decision are not known. But the hotel was in the midst of a high concentration of hotels, and this must have weighed against it⁸⁷.

Surprisingly, the hotel's licence changed hands twice during the period of the deprivation hearings (when there was a risk that the licence would become worthless) - from Ernest Armstrong to Robert William Lloyd in June 1922⁸⁸, then to Arthur Sinclair in December 1922⁸⁹. In 1923, £330 compensation was awarded to Arthur Sinclair for loss of the licence, being an estimated one year's profit. Sinclair appealed in September 1924, arguing that he had three years left on his licence, so three years' profit was more applicable. The compensation was subsequently tripled to £990⁹⁰.

The building remained empty for some years, and was eventually purchased by the New South Wales Government. It was demolished to make way for the realignment of Foveaux Street to allow

east-bound traffic to drive directly into Fitzroy Street on the eastern side of Bourke Street. The western side of Fitzroy Street became a cul-de-sac and the remaining area between Fitzroy and Foveaux Streets was converted into a small park called the Foveaux Street Reserve.

Club Hotel

Location: 47 Albion St, on the corner of Commonwealth Street.

Building status: The building still exists.



Figure 14 Club Hotel, c1920 (State Records of NSW)

History: In April 1874, Henry Lee purchased land in Albion Street on the corner of Commonwealth Street (then called Macquarie Street South)⁹¹ and by September he had constructed a public house which he called the Comet Hotel⁹². The building was of two storeys (plus cellar), and initially contained nine rooms⁹³. In October 1892, the licence was transferred to Laura Creamer⁹⁴, who in December was granted permission by the Licensing Court to change the name to the Club Hotel⁹⁵.

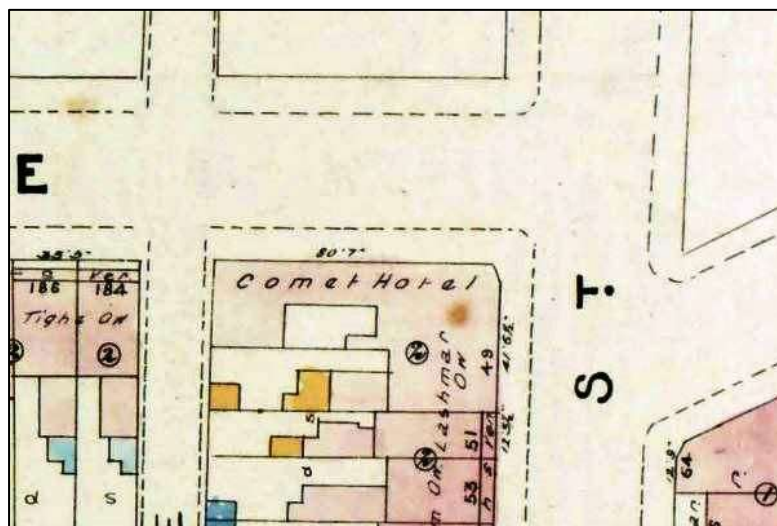


Figure 15 Club Hotel, 1888 (Rygate and West map)

In May 1922, the owner (Ada Garnett Griffiths) and the licensee (William Tully) were called to a licence deprivation hearing. Metropolitan District Licensing Inspector John Fullerton produced

certificates of three convictions against the hotel in the previous three years. Inspector Thomas Sherwood said that the hotel was in good order externally and in good repair. It contained seven bedrooms, accommodating five elderly male lodgers when he was there. There were three hotels within 150 yards: the Te Aro, the Senatorial and the Farnham Arms. He thought there were too many hotels in the district.

The Children's Court across the road was discussed in relation to the hotel. The licensee provided midday meals and refreshments for attendees at the Court, and for about half a dozen Court officials who took lunch there each day. Sergeant William Davies told the Board that the previous licensee, Mr. Clune, ran the hotel very badly. But despite one conviction nine months ago, the present licensee ran the place much better.

The Board decided to deprive the Club Hotel of its licence in December 1922, effective 1 July 1923. Its proximity to a number of other hotels and the poor record of the previous licensee seemed to be the reasons it was closed down. After the hotel's closure, Ada Griffiths opened a smallgoods shop in the former public bar, and operated this until about 1933⁹⁶, after which she handed the business over to others, such as Harry Zimlin in 1936⁹⁷ and Douglas Fortington in 1948⁹⁸. She was still the owner in 1948. The building is currently occupied by the Gordon Frost Organisation Pty Ltd, theatrical producers.



Figure 16 Former Club Hotel today (house.speakingsame.com website)

Farnham Arms Hotel

Location: 91 Albion Street, on the corner of Bellevue Street.

Building status: The building still exists, and is heritage-listed.



Figure 17 Former Farnham Arms Hotel today (Google maps)

History: The hotel was constructed in 1876-77 by James McMahon and was originally known as the Albion Hotel. The NSW State Heritage Register calls it a “good representative and intact example of a Victorian Italianate hotel building. A significant and well-proportioned building of quality, displaying a high parapet with decorative cornices and Juliette balconies”⁹⁹. From 1886¹⁰⁰ to 1889, it was known as Mulvey’s Family Hotel when the licensee was Peter Mulvey¹⁰¹. From 1890, the new licensee William McDowell changed the name to the Farnham Arms¹⁰². James McMahon was still the owner¹⁰³.

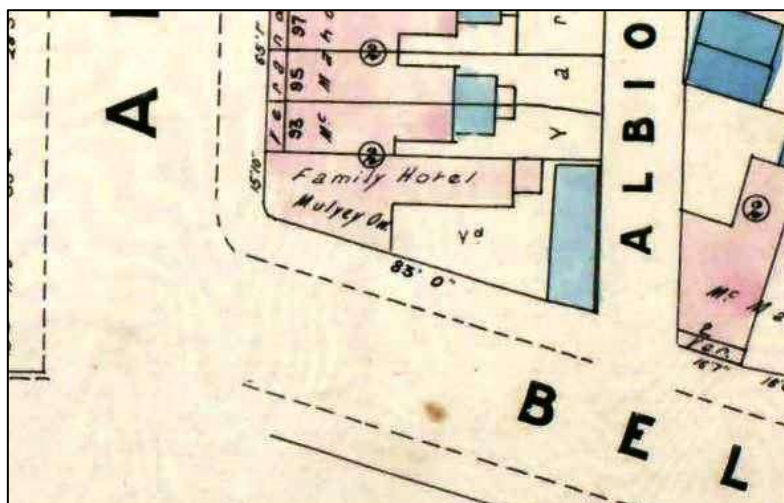


Figure 18 Farnham Arms Hotel, 1888 (Rygate and West map)

The licence deprivation hearing for the hotel was scheduled to be held in October 1922, but an application was (optimistically) made at the same time to the City Council to remodel the building. The deprivation hearing was then held in December 1922¹⁰⁴, and on the 23rd, it was announced that the hotel would lose its licence¹⁰⁵. Compensation for the owner and licensee was announced in July 1923¹⁰⁶.

By 1927, the building, then numbered 89-91 Albion Street, was recorded as being residential and owned by J McMahon & Co Ltd. The same company also owned the adjacent two-storey houses to 101 Albion Street¹⁰⁷. Rooms for rent were advertised from September 1928¹⁰⁸. In 1945, the building was known as Bellevue House with the same owners¹⁰⁹. The building is still used for residences.

Federal Hotel

Location: 285 Crown Street, on the corner of Campbell Street. It was also known as the Federal Arms Hotel.

Building status: The building was demolished in 1939.



Figure 19 Former Federal Hotel site (domain.com.au website)

History: The hotel was constructed of sandstone in 1856 by Thomas Mooney, and called Mooney's Family Hotel, with John Mooney as the first licensee¹¹⁰. It consisted of two storeys and ten rooms¹¹¹. The name was changed in 1863 to Sheridan's Family Hotel when John Sheridan became the licensee¹¹². Robert Evesson then became the licensee in 1866 and the name was changed to Evesson's Family Hotel¹¹³.

Patrick Erwin, who married Evesson's daughter Sarah, became the licensee in 1868¹¹⁴. Patrick died in 1869 or 1870, and Sarah became the licensee in 1870¹¹⁵. In September 1871, she married Daniel O'Hehir¹¹⁶, who became the licensee that year¹¹⁷. He died in 1875¹¹⁸, and the licence was transferred back to Sarah the same year¹¹⁹.

By 1880, the hotel was called McNamee's Hotel by the new licensee Thomas McNamee¹²⁰. Robert Scraggs became the licensee in June 1882¹²¹, and in September he applied to change the name to the Zig Zag Hotel¹²². The hotel was still held by the Mooney family, and the owner in 1882 was recorded as Bridget Mooney¹²³. At about this time, a third storey of brick was added, increasing the capacity to thirteen rooms¹²⁴.

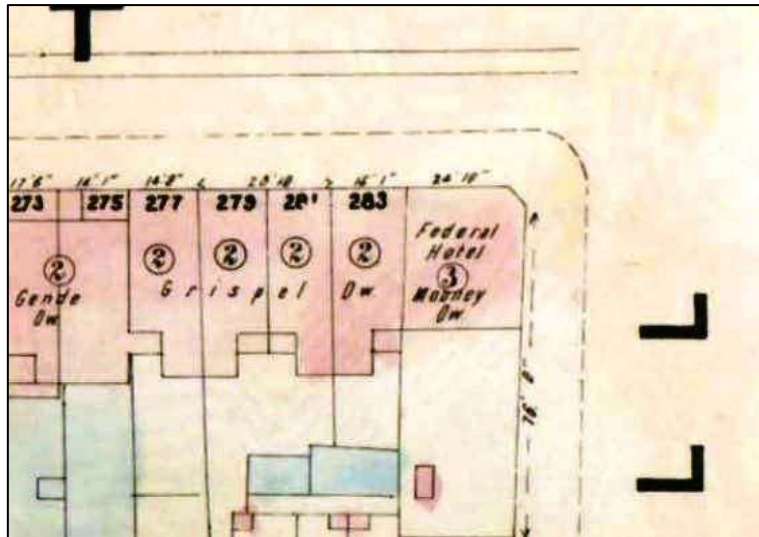


Figure 20 Federal Hotel, 1888 (Rygate and West map)

In 1886, the new licensee Patrick Knowles renamed the hotel Knowles' Family Hotel¹²⁵, and the next year the licensee Charles Webb gave the hotel its final name of the Federal Hotel¹²⁶.

The licence deprivation hearing for the hotel was held in September 1920. Inspector George Mitchell testified that the clientele were decent working class people and that the place was well run. But he did say there were too many hotels in the area. In November 1920, the Board announced that its licence would cease on 30 June 1921¹²⁷. After this, the hotel became a shop and residence that was owned in 1924 by S. H. Cary¹²⁸.

The building was demolished at the end of 1939¹²⁹ and a three-storey factory was erected by Beckers Pty Ltd¹³⁰, manufacturing chemists who had started operations in Adelaide in the 1920s. Their most famous product was Bex, a strong compound analgesic containing 42% aspirin, 42% phenacetin and caffeine¹³¹. All of these components were found to be addictive, and phenacetin was removed in 1975 after it was also shown to cause kidney disease¹³².



Figure 21 Bex advertisement (Powerhouse Museum)

From 1999, the site has been occupied by the residential block of 31 apartments and retail stores called Valentino's Apartments¹³³.

Golden Fleece Hotel

Location: 538 Crown Street, on the corner of Davies Street (formerly Victoria Street).

Building Status: The building still exists.



Figure 22 Former Golden Fleece Hotel today

History: The builder John Bluck erected a large sandstone villa in 1840 on the present site of 538 Crown Street and named it Victoria House. The solicitor William Henry Moore arrived in Sydney in 1815 as the first free (that is, not an ex-convict) lawyer in the colony. He built up a lucrative private law practice and by 1840 was affluent enough to purchase Victoria House. However, the severe economic depression of the 1840s ruined his business, as it did many others, and he was bankrupted in 1843. He sold the house back to John Bluck for a fraction of the amount he paid in 1840.

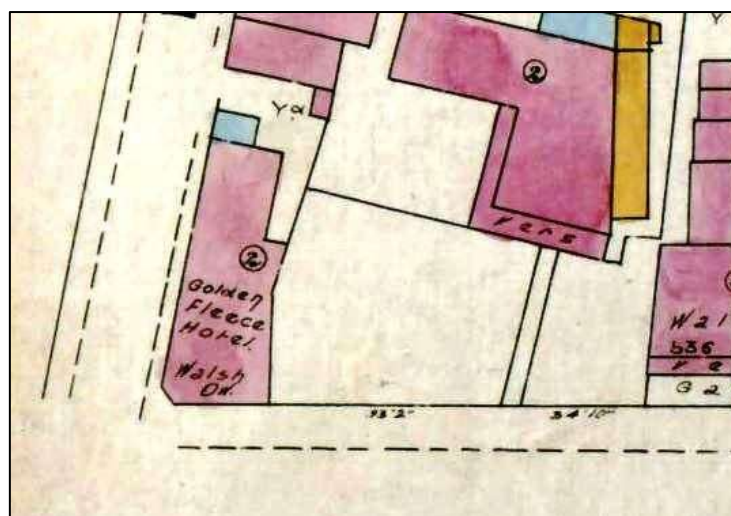


Figure 23 Golden Fleece Hotel, 1888 (Rygate and West map)

John Bluck and his brother James decided to turn Victoria House into a family-oriented hotel, and in 1848 James was granted a publican's licence for Bluck's Family Hotel. Frederick Somers came into the family in 1869 when he married James' daughter Annie Maria. In a few years Somers was managing the hotel, and on James' death in 1876 he became the owner. But in 1878 he sold the hotel to John Walsh in order to take over a newly-constructed hotel on the corner of Devonshire Street (now called the Trinity Bar). Walsh decided to demolish the sandstone villa and erect a brick building in 1880, which he named the Golden Fleece Hotel. Larger stables were constructed, and were frequently rented out, often to racehorse owners attending Randwick Racecourse. John Walsh died in 1894, and his widow Charlotte became the owner. The brewer Tooth & Co. leased the hotel from about 1907 as an outlet for their products¹³⁴.

The first licence deprivation hearing was on 23 August 1920, when the owner Charlotte Walsh and the licensee Luther Fears were summoned to the Water Police Court to show cause why the hotel should not be deprived of its licence. The barrister Mr A. R. J. Watt represented the owner, the licensee and Tooth & Coy (who leased the hotel), while the Licensing Inspector John Fullerton represented the police.

Inspector Fullerton presented a list of convictions against the hotel, but conceded that they were all against previous licensees. The local police Inspector George Mitchell gave evidence based on his knowledge of the hotel. He said the hotel was in a poor structural condition. One of the bedrooms he inspected was "damp and almost unfurnished, with an apology for a bed". This room was one of three outside bedrooms, built to make the minimum accommodation required. Inside the hotel were five bedrooms, two of which were used by the licensee and staff. There was no bathroom or toilet on the upper level. There were few lodgers, as far as he could see, and the business seemed to depend solely on the sale of alcohol.

Inspector Mitchell thought that the neighbourhood consisted of decent working class people, but that the hotel was frequented by "a fair percentage of the undesirable class". For many years, it had been systematically trading during prohibited hours, and as a result had received close supervision from the licensing sergeant. There were five hotels within 225 yards, the nearest being the Hotel Victoria (now the Trinity Bar) at 60 yards away. He thought there were too many hotels for the reasonable requirements of the district. He also noted that one parlour had a number of elderly men sitting around playing dominoes for the best part of the day (but it wasn't clear if he thought this reflected well or badly on the place).

James Moon, who ran a licensed dealers' yard nearby, stabled two of his horses at the hotel's yard. He also thought the hotel was "roughly carried" before the present licensee, but it was all right now. He did admit, however, that he and his fellow dealers often drank enthusiastically in the yard after work, and were the cause of complaints from local residents. "Dealers will be dealers" was all he offered by way of explanation.

Charlotte Walsh and the new licensee (William Garlick) were called to a second deprivation hearing on 2 May 1922. There are no details of the second hearing available, but the Board's decision on 22 December 1922 was to cancel the hotel's licence. The Golden Fleece Hotel finally closed its doors a year later on 8 December 1923, when the licensee was John T. Little. Compensation of £1,440 was paid to the owner, and £1,100 to the licensee¹³⁵.

After the hotel closed, the building was used for a variety of commercial and residential uses. From October 1924, the Chinese herbalist, Mr. Lee Shohen, confidently advertised that he could treat all classes of disease in males and females, both internal and external. From 1950, Sister Mew advertised her services as a massage therapist, utilising the latest in “red ray, short wave” radiation (now known as infrared radiation)¹³⁶. Then from 1951, the Reverend Frank Abbott began to advertise spiritual meetings, with “definite spiritual and uplifting lectures” at these meetings¹³⁷. Both the radiating Sister Mew and the uplifting Reverend Abbott were still advertising their respective services in 1954.

The building was purchased by Mr. Said Moussa in the early 1970s, and in 1977 he applied to use the ground and first floor as a continental delicatessen¹³⁸. In 1981, the Moussa family applied for Council permission to sell second-hand amusement machines from part of the premises¹³⁹. The next year, M. Zaiee applied to use the ground floor as an art gallery¹⁴⁰. In about 1990, the building was divided up into strata title units, and the rooms were sold as studios or one-bedroom apartments. Unit 3, entered by the corner door, has been a shop that housed the gift shop Pure Magik (from 1996 to 2011), then the shoe shop The Cook his Wife and Her Shoes. From March 2018, this unit has housed Eyes and Look, an optometrist’s practice operated by Con Georgelos.

Golden Lion Hotel

Location: 99 Devonshire Street, on the corner of Buckingham Street.

Building status: The building exists, but the façade has been extensively modified.



Figure 24 Golden Lion Hotel, c1920 (State Records of NSW)

History: In 1877, a two-storey brick hotel was constructed on the corner of Devonshire and Buckingham Streets, and was called the Golden Lion Hotel. Francis Belfield was the first licensee. The pub seemed to have an uneventful life, apart from a few licence violations, until being caught up in the second wave of inner city licence deprivation hearings in May 1922. The details of the hearing are not available, but the pub was located in a high concentration of licensed houses, and that must have counted against its chances of survival¹⁴¹.



Figure 25 Golden Lion Hotel, 1888 (Rygate and West map)



Figure 26 Former Golden Lion Hotel today (Google maps)

After the pub finally closed in December 1923, the building became residential for some years¹⁴².

Today there are four strata properties in the building:

- Unit 1: Wow Malaysia Restaurant (or Bollywood Mirch Masala)
- Unit 2: Devonshire Convenience Store.
- Unit 3: Elephant Jump Thai Restaurant.
- Unit 4: Thana Thai Massage.

Gulgong Hotel

Location: 409-411 Bourke Street, near Campbell Street.

Building status: The building still exists and is heritage-listed.



Figure 27 Former Gulgong Hotel, 2011

History: The market gardener John Thomas Baptist constructed the Emerald Isle Hotel in 1853, in the Mid-Victorian Georgian style¹⁴³. The first licensee was John O’Hehir. Furnished rooms were advertised with “board, lodging and washing on moderate terms”¹⁴⁴. The name was changed to the Pelican Hotel in 1861¹⁴⁵.

John Baptist died in 1873¹⁴⁶. In April 1876, the licensee Charles C. Manser became insolvent and advertised the sale of all the fittings and furniture from the hotel¹⁴⁷. The next month, the licence was transferred to Edwin Gee¹⁴⁸, who changed the name to the Gulgong Hotel¹⁴⁹.

In May 1922, the owner George L. Fagan and licensee Edward John Reilly were summoned to appear before the Licences Reduction Board. In December, the Board decided to cancel the hotel’s licence, to take effect on 30 June 1923¹⁵⁰. The building was used as residential apartments and a shop until at least 1948¹⁵¹.

From 1991, the building housed a series of restaurants, beginning with Riberries – Taste Australia, an initiative of the French-Australian chef Jean-Paul Bruneteau, who promoted the use of indigenous food. He experimented with native ingredients such as riberry, Dorrigo pepper, Warrigal greens, lemon myrtle, wattle seed and Illawarra plum. The author recalls that Riberries allowed the diner to sample the Australian coat of arms: cured emu for entrée and kangaroo for the main course. Bruneteau and his business partner Jennifer Dowling operated the restaurant until 1996, when he moved to Paris¹⁵².

In April that year, Le Pelican French Restaurant opened, paying tribute to the earlier name of the hotel, and operated until 2016¹⁵³. In early, 2017 Loluk Bistro was opened by two French brothers Loic and Luc La Joye, and continues the recent tradition of presenting quality French food in Surry Hills¹⁵⁴.

Lloyd's Hotel

Location: 21-23 Brumby Street, on the corner of Clisdell Street.

Building status: The building still exists, but has been modified.



Figure 28 Former Lloyd's Hotel today

History: By 1858, John Dawson had built Brumby House on Elizabeth Street between Belvoir and Devonshire Streets. The grounds extended to Clisdell Street (called Wilton Place at that time). In January 1879, the land was subdivided and sold in lots¹⁵⁵, and Brumby Street was created as an unformed road between Elizabeth and Clisdell Streets¹⁵⁶.

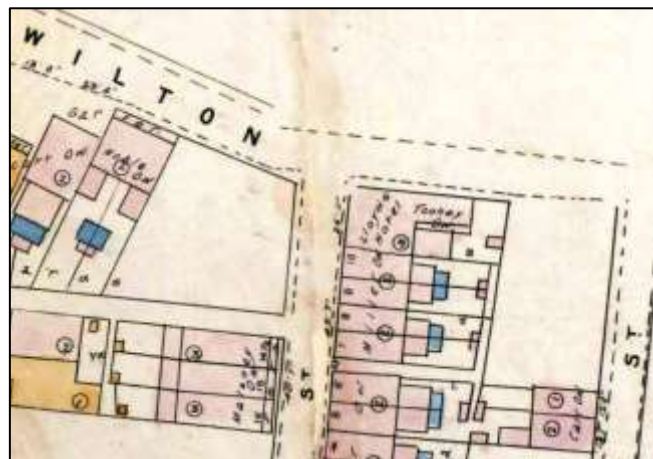


Figure 29 Lloyd's Hotel, 1888 (Rygate and West map)

In March 1880, Lot 11 was advertised for sale, comprising Lloyd's Hotel and five houses in Brumby Street¹⁵⁷. The hotel was called Malone's Hotel in an advertisement the next month, on the corner of Brumby Street and Wilton Place, and consisted of six rooms, kitchen, bathroom and cellar¹⁵⁸. The licensee was Edward Malone, who transferred the licence to Eugene Dorney in May 1883¹⁵⁹. It was

always called Lloyd's Hotel after this. By 1891, the licensee was Louis Labias, and Tooheys Pty Ltd was the owner¹⁶⁰.

In November 1920, the Licences Reduction Board decided to delicense the hotel, which finally closed in Jul 1921¹⁶¹. Today, the building is used as a boarding house with eleven single-occupancy residential units¹⁶².

Madeira Inn.

Address: 116 Devonshire Street, on the corner of Holt Street.

Building status: The building has been demolished.



Figure 30 Madeira Inn, c1920 (State Records of NSW)

History: The Madeira Inn was a two-storey brick building of eleven rooms, constructed in 1853, and first licensed by Emanuel Martin¹⁶³. From 1869, it was owned by David Moon, and was subsequently held by his family until the 1920s¹⁶⁴.

The first licence deprivation hearing took place in September 1920. When giving evidence, the police all said there were too many hotels in the neighbourhood. But both the police and customers thought the Madeira was well run and that there was heavy foot and vehicular traffic in Devonshire Street to supply it with customers. John Dibbs Moon, trustee of the late owner David Moon, said that there had only been one licence violation (which was recently) since the family held the hotel from about 1870.

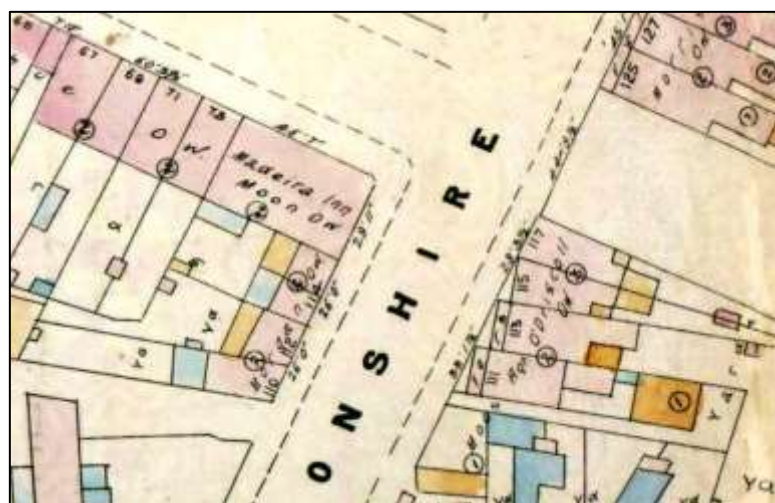


Figure 31 Madeira Inn, 1888 (Rygate and West map)

The hotel was called to a second hearing in May 1922, and in December, the Board made the decision to close the hotel, effective June 1923¹⁶⁵. The main problem with the hotel seemed to be the high concentration of licensed premises nearby, and despite the reports of its good management, it may have been closed for this reason alone. From 1925, the building was recorded in the Rate Assessment Books as residential¹⁶⁶. From 1945, the building was advertising in regional newspapers as the Madeira Private Hotel¹⁶⁷.

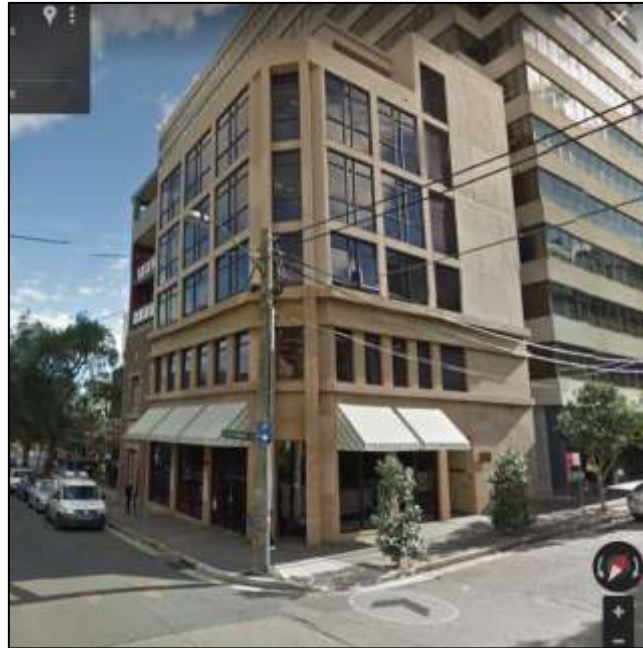


Figure 32 Former Madeira Inn site today (Google maps)

The hotel was demolished sometime after this, and in 2011 a Council Development Application was approved to construct a six-storey commercial building, with a restaurant on the ground floor¹⁶⁸.

McNamara's Family Hotel

Address: 89 Foveaux Street, on the corner of Waterloo Street.

Building status: The hotel has been demolished.



Figure 33 McNamara's Family Hotel, c1920 (State Records of NSW)

History: In March 1874, Daniel Macnamara purchased land on the corner of Foveaux and Waterloo Streets with a frontage of 66 feet to Foveaux Street¹⁶⁹. He constructed a public house and was granted a publican's licence in June 1875 for the Fermanagh Hotel¹⁷⁰. The hotel appears in *Sands' Sydney Directory* from 1876¹⁷¹. The building is initially recorded as a three-storey brick building with eight rooms¹⁷², but by 1891 was extended along Waterloo Street to become an imposing edifice with thirteen rooms¹⁷³.

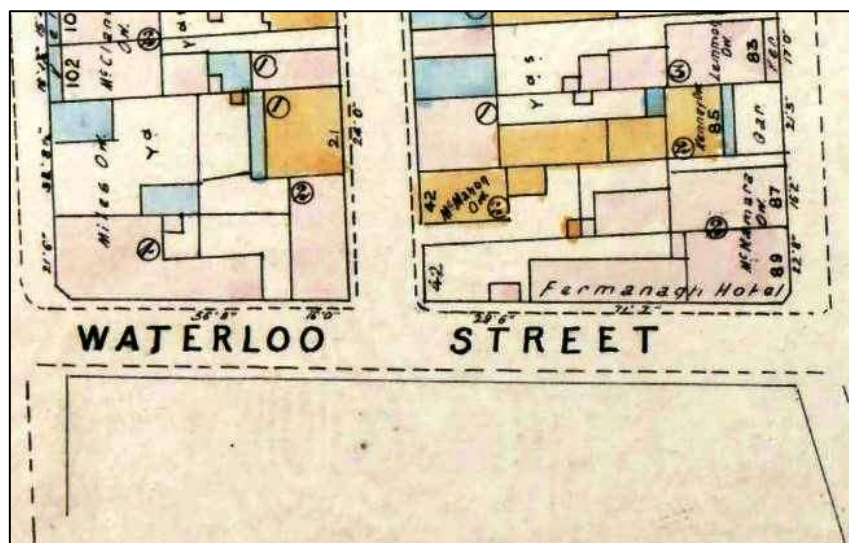


Figure 34 McNamara's Family Hotel, 1888 (Rygate and West map)

In December 1877, Macnamara advertised for tenders for the construction of a six-room house next door (at number 87)¹⁷⁴. By April 1878, he was advertising rooms for rent in the house, which he named Kumara Villa¹⁷⁵. In January 1884, he transferred the hotel licence to Robert Rein¹⁷⁶, although he retained ownership of the building. The name of the hotel was changed to Macnamara's Family Hotel in 1891¹⁷⁷. Macnamara died in 1908, and his daughter Mary Rose (born in 1875) became the licensee and owner of the hotel¹⁷⁸.

In March 1922, the licensee (Henry Ryan) and the owner Mary Rose Macnamara were called before the Licences Reduction Board to defend their licence. The details of the hearing are not known, but the Board decided in December 1922 to cancel the licence, effective 23 July 1923¹⁷⁹.

After the hotel closed, a variety of small businesses operated in the building, including Mrs. E. Watman, a flower maker in 1925¹⁸⁰, and Mr. H. Langtry, ham and beef vendor in 1933¹⁸¹. In 1930, Schweppes Ltd purchased the building¹⁸², presumably to use part of it as office space for their large soft drink factory nearby, which had operated since 1877¹⁸³. By 1936, Schweppes owned the entire group of building from 41 to 89 Foveaux Street: 53-55 was a storehouse, 55-79 was the factory and offices, 81 was a paint shop, and the hotel building at 89 was a shop, house and three flats¹⁸⁴.



Figure 35 Former Macnamara's Family Hotel site today (Google maps)

By 1963, all Schweppes properties in Foveaux Street had been purchased by commercial enterprises¹⁸⁵, and today a five-storey building stands at 87-89 Foveaux Street.

Mount View Hotel

Location: 381 Riley Street, on the corner of Foveaux Street.

Building status: the hotel building exists, and is heritage-listed.



Figure 36 Former Mount View Hotel today (realestate.com website)

History: Vacant land on the corner of Riley and Foveaux Streets was subdivided c1874, and Michael Connelly constructed a public house and an attached terrace. The first newspaper mention of the Mount View Hotel was in March 1875¹⁸⁶, and it was listed in *Sands' Sydney Directory* that year¹⁸⁷. The NSW State Heritage Register listing for the building notes that it is a good and intact example of a Victorian hotel, well-proportioned and balanced, retaining much of its original material, including a high parapet, label moulding and sandstone base¹⁸⁸. The Connelly family retained ownership of the hotel after its closure in the 1920s¹⁸⁹.

In August 1920, the owner (Josephine Connelly) and licensee (Mr. Clare) were summoned to a deprivation hearing, following a licence violation within the last three years. The transcript of the hearing was remarkable for the great contrast between the current and previous management of the place. The police witnesses testified that the hotel was badly run under the two previous licensees (Messrs. Martin and Wood), during which time the billiard room was kept open during the evening and caused trouble for the police.

On the other hand, by the time of the hearing, the police admitted that the place was well conducted, was strikingly clean and well furnished. The hotel had "an air of refinement that was not general in Surry Hills, and was a very nice place". The billiard room was always shut at six o'clock, as was the hotel, and there was no evidence of after-hours drinking.

One policeman made the point that while some of the hotels in Campbell Street had no licence violations, he was not satisfied with their conduct, but it was very hard to get convictions as "they run a perfect system of touting" (meaning that scouts were posted on street corners to tip off hotel staff when the police were approaching).

The owner and licensee (then Harold John O'Keefe) were again summonsed to appear in May 1922, although the details of this second hearing or the reason for it are not available. Despite the glowing assessment of the hotel's new-found model conduct, the earlier bad management counted against it, as did the high concentration of hotels nearby, and the Board decided to delicense the hotel, effective 13 December 1923¹⁹⁰.

After the hotel's closure, the building was used for residences for some years. By 1930, a shop had opened on the ground floor¹⁹¹. Josephine Connelly was still the owner (and occupant) in 1948¹⁹². In 1993, the building was subdivided into two lots, including six strata units¹⁹³. Nowadays, the Grand Royal Barbers operate in the ground floor shop.

Princess of Wales Hotel

Location: 33 Cooper Street, on the corner of Holt Street.

Building status: The building still exists, and is heritage-listed.



Figure 37 Former Princess of Wales Hotel today (Google maps)

History: John Edgeley constructed the Princess of Wales Hotel on the corner of Cooper and Holt Streets at the end of 1877¹⁹⁴. It was built of brick, with two storeys plus attic and cellar, and contained ten rooms. Henry Fisk was the first licensee¹⁹⁵. In 1881, the building was sold to the confectioner James Austin¹⁹⁶. The Heritage Register entry for the building states that in 1907 the adjacent three-storey building on Holt Street was built by Austin from a design by Archibald Fenton Spencer¹⁹⁷. James Austin held the two buildings until his death in July 1920, when they were inherited by his wife Martha Austin and his sons James Taylor Austin and Sydney Walter Austin¹⁹⁸.

The hotel had a fairly uneventful life until August 1920, when the Licences Reduction Board summonsed the owner and licensee to a deprivation hearing, following two licence violations in the previous three years. The police testified that the hotel was very clean at that time, but was not well run in the past. They expressed their usual opinion that there were too many hotels in the district. A number of local patrons testified that the place was doing well and served a convenience to the public, but admitted that that “quite a bad lot frequented it” under the previous licensee, Mr Nimmo.

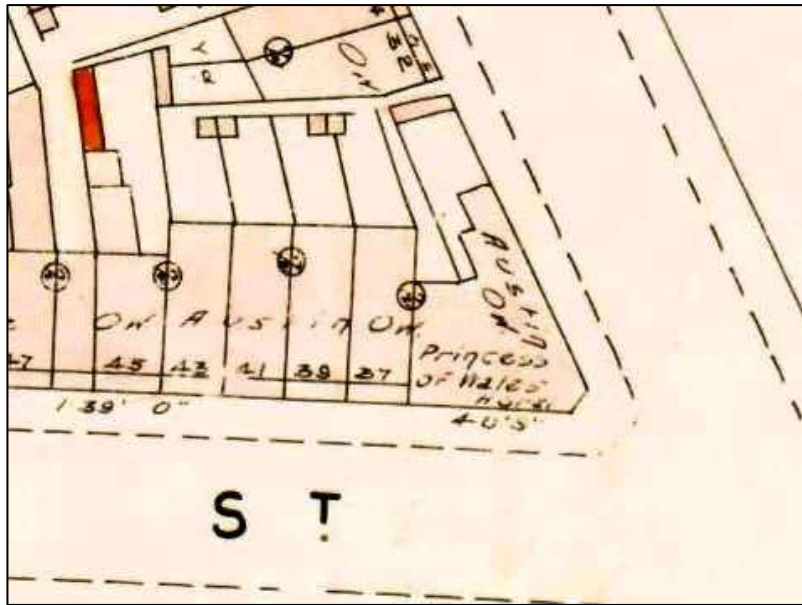


Figure 38 Princess of Wales Hotel, 1888 (Rygate and West map)

The previous bad management must have counted against the hotel, because in November 1920 the Board decided to revoke its licence, effective 30 June 1921. In April 1921, compensation of £1,380 was awarded to the owner and £800 to the licensee¹⁹⁹. After the hotel's closure, the public bar was converted to a fruit and confectionary shop by Giuseppe Goarufa in 1927²⁰⁰, and the first floor was used as residences. By 1948, the building operated as a boarding house owned by Walter Keith Austin²⁰¹. Today it is an apartment building.

Queen's Arms Hotel

Location: 389 Bourke Street, on the corner of Campbell Street

Building status: The hotel has been demolished.



Figure 39 Queen's Arms Hotel, c1920 (State Records of NSW)

History: In 1879, John Bourke constructed a two-storey brick hotel on the corner of Bourke and Campbell Street²⁰², which was known as Cotton's Royal Hotel after the licensee William John Cotton²⁰³. The licensee became insolvent in 1881²⁰⁴ and the licence was transferred to Joseph Kelsey²⁰⁵. John Bourke took over the licence in 1888²⁰⁶, and added a third storey that year, creating an imposing landmark in the district. This extra floor may have contained a ballroom or large meeting room, as the Rate Assessment Books from 1891 record an increase in the number of floors from two to three, but the number of rooms only increases by one (to twelve)²⁰⁷. The photograph of the hotel taken in the early 1920s shows the date "1888" on the Bourke Street parapet to commemorate this major renovation²⁰⁸.

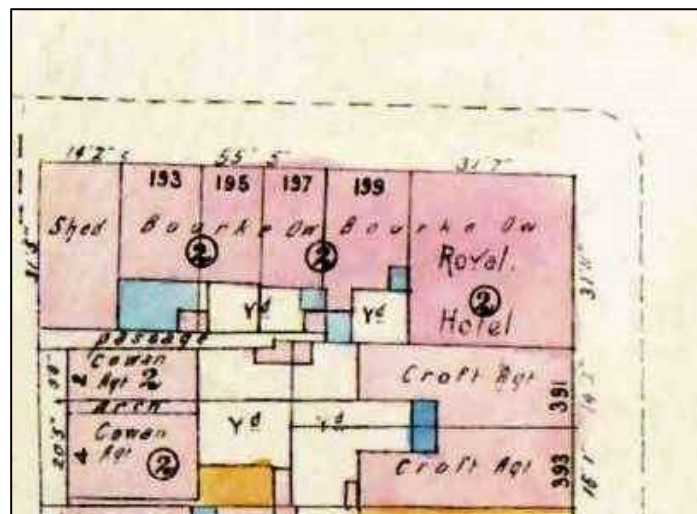


Figure 40 Queen's Arms Hotel, 1888 (Rygate and West map)

John Bourke transferred the licence to Julia Marsh in 1889, and the hotel was renamed the Geebung Hotel²⁰⁹. However, things did not go well under Ms. Marsh's management, as a licence renewal was refused in June 1891²¹⁰, and the transfer of the licence back to John Bourke was also refused "due to strong objections from the public"²¹¹. Eliza Jane Vye became the licensee in October 1895²¹² and renamed the hotel to the Newcastle Family Hotel. In March 1896 she was fined for selling liquor during unlawful hours²¹³, and in May the Licensing Court refused her licence transfer request to Jeremiah Healey²¹⁴.

Robert Walsh became the licensee in 1897²¹⁵ and by January 1898 he had changed the name to the Wicklow Hotel²¹⁶ (it was also called the Wicklow Arms Hotel in the press). The hotel's final name of the Queen's Arms was acquired after Frederick Dollar became the licensee in April 1902²¹⁷. The Rate Assessment Books show that the large brewer Toth's & Co took over the hotel in about 1911²¹⁸.

By the time of the Licences Reduction Board hearing in September 1922, the licensee was Phillip Whitty. The details of the hearing are not known, but the Board decided to close the hotel, which occurred in November 1923²¹⁹. The building then became a shop and dwellings, with Roach and McDermott's café operating in 1930²²⁰. By 1932, Mrs. Valda Hume was the building owner, and Carew's Tyre Service occupied the ground floor²²¹. In about 1937 the group of buildings from 389 to 393 Bourke Street was purchased by Belgenny Pty Ltd, and the hotel and adjacent buildings were demolished to make way for a ten-storey block of 81 apartments. The Belgenny building is on the NSW State Heritage Register as an intact example of Inter-War Art Deco architecture²²².



Figure 41 Belgenny Flats (sydney-city.blogspot.com website)

Reservoir Hotel

Address: 263-5 Riley Street, on the corner of Reservoir Street.

Building status: The building still exists, and is heritage-listed.



Figure 42 Former Reservoir Hotel today (Google maps)

History: The saddler Cornelius Molony purchased a block of land on the southern corner of Riley and Gipps (now Reservoir) Streets in 1871 and constructed a two-storey brick hotel in the Victorian Italianate style, occupying a prominent position opposite the Crown Street reservoir²²³. A publican's licence was granted to Elizabeth Molony for the Reservoir Hotel in July 1872²²⁴. Peter Molony held the hotel until his death in 1909²²⁵. By 1914, James Marsden was the owner, and Tooheys Ltd was the lessee²²⁶. At some point, a third storey was added.

As a result of recent licence violations, the owner and licensee were summoned to appear before the Licences Reduction Board in September 1920 to defend their licence. The hearing for this hotel was notable for the conflict between the police testimony and that of the licensee and owner. Sergeant Duffell said that the hotel had been under police observation for some time, owing to the number of drunken men and women seen nearby on Sundays and after hours. He thought it was one of the worst conducted hotels in Surry Hills. He noted that the hotel used one of the best systems of touting, so that it was almost impossible for the police to get near it.

On the other hand, the licensee Charles Henry Sorlie denied charges of illicit trading, or touting, or employing people to do it. The owner claimed a recent conviction for Sunday trading was a deliberate frame-up by the police. He also asserted that sly grog shops in the area were supplying after-hours and Sunday drinkers, not his hotel – one was three doors away, and another was in the next street. Despite the squeaky-clean claims by the hotel staff, Charles Sorlie was fined only a week after the hearing for two counts of selling liquor on a Sunday during the previous month. On this occasion, the ever-vigilant Sergeant Duffell spotted men entering the premises and leaving with bottles. Despite denying everything, Sorlie was found guilty and fined £15²²⁷.

The Board probably didn't need to deliberate long in this case, as (apart from the testimony of the local drinkers who testified to a man that it was an excellent pub that should be kept open - as they tended to do) the police evidence was fairly damning. In November 1920 the Board announced that the hotel was to lose its licence, effective 30 June 1921²²⁸.



Figure 43 *The Red House*, by Sali Herman, 1965 (Sotheby's Australia)

After the hotel closed, the building was used for some time as a grocer's shop with residences above. It subsequently became a boarding house, a brothel, and in the 1970s a restaurant. A painting of the former hotel by Sali Herman (1898-1993), called the Red House, won the Wynne Prize for landscape art in 1965²²⁹. It is currently home to the advertising agency Bullet Studios.

Rifleman's Arms Hotel

Address: 75 Fitzroy Street, on the corner of Marshall Street.

Building status: The building still exists.



Figure 44 Rifleman's Arms Hotel, c1920 (State Records of NSW)

History: A two-storey brick building with five rooms had existed on the south-west corner of Fitzroy Street and Maiden Lane (now Marshall Street) from about 1858²³⁰, and operated as a grocery shop with a residence on the first floor. John Dimond purchased the shop and the adjoining building in 1870²³¹, and converted them into a hotel. He was able to obtain a publican's licence when Luke Murphy moved his licence from the Sailor's Arms in Lower George Street to the new hotel in March 1872²³², then transferred it to Dimond the next month²³³. The new hotel was first called the Rifleman's Hotel, but was later known as the Rifleman's Arms Hotel.

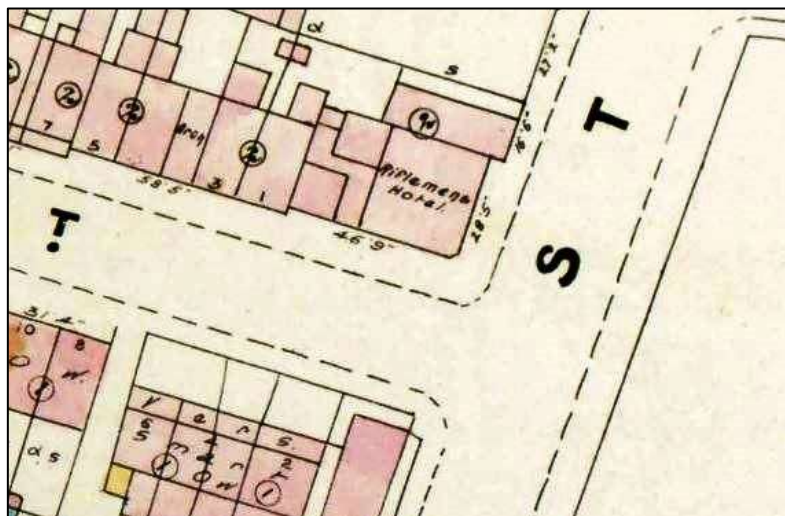


Figure 45 Rifleman's Arms Hotel, 1888 (Rygate and West map)

The hotel's name was inspired by the Paddington Rifle Range (known locally as the Paddington Butts) that was established in 1852 in Moore Park, just south of Moore Park Road. The range was originally intended to provide musket practice for the troops in Victoria Barracks, but a second adjoining range was opened in 1862 to allow recreational marksmen to practise and hold competitions. The New South Wales Rifle Association held annual prize meetings there from 1866 until 1889. Two hotels sprang up in the area to cater for thirsty shooters after a hard day on the range: The Rifleman's Hotel in Fitzroy Street and the Paddington Butts Hotel in Flinders street (now called the Flinders Hotel)²³⁴.

John Shearer purchased the hotel in about 1875 and became the licensee²³⁵. Then in January 1880, he undertook renovations to the building, replacing the balcony²³⁶, and adding the inscription "Rifleman's Hotel 1880" in relief stone or concrete to the top corner of the parapet to commemorate the changes he was making. The Irish publican Peter Meehan purchased the hotel in 1888²³⁷. He died in 1891²³⁸, but it was held by his family until after it was delicensed in 1923²³⁹.

In June 1921, the licensee Phillip Smyth was prosecuted by the redoubtable Inspector Fullerton for a breach of the *Pure Foods Act*. The Inspector said that samples of rum from the hotel were found to contain 26.6% added water. The licensee's counsel claimed that it was accidental, as he broke his thermometer and had to mix the rum by guesswork. After some semantic confusion, the learned gentleman admitted he meant "hydrometer", but whatever the broken instrument was called, the magistrate was not persuaded and fined the licensee £10²⁴⁰.

The new licensee (George Spiegel) was summonsed to appear at a deprivation hearing of the Licences Reduction Board in October 1922. This did not go well: according to the police, the place was "old, obsolete, dilapidated, poorly conducted, and not fit for a hotel at all". The only permanent boarder was the licensee's son. The licensee had been there since February, and had twice been fined for illegal trading. Women frequented the place, and the hotel had received extra police supervision. Spiegel tried to put on a brave face by claiming that it was the cleanest hotel in Surry Hills²⁴¹. The Board's decision was to cancel the licence, effective 30 June 1923²⁴². The owner was awarded compensation of £1,750 and the licensee £470²⁴³.



Figure 46 Former Rifleman's Arms Hotel, 2010

After the pub's closure, the building continued to be held by Peter Meehan's widow Maria²⁴⁴, and after 1927 by her estate until at least 1948²⁴⁵. The building was used as a grocery shop and residence for some years, and then from 1990 it was the home of Paddington Blinds and Shutters. It has been used as office space by various companies since then, and is presently available for lease.

Rosebery Arms Hotel

Address: 259-261 Crown Street, on the corner of Goulburn Street.

Building status: The building still exists.



Figure 47 Former Rosebery Arms Hotel, 2017

History: In 1873, the builder Andrew Scott constructed a hotel on the south-west corner of Crown and Goulburn Street. The building was of brick, with three storeys and eight rooms²⁴⁶. The hotel was named the Oxford hotel, and William Davis was the first licensee²⁴⁷. Michael Walsh took over the licence in April 1878²⁴⁸, and the pub became known as Walsh's Family Hotel²⁴⁹. The licence was subsequently transferred to Henry William Maton in August 1879²⁵⁰, and the place was renamed the Union Hotel²⁵¹. Maton died suddenly the following April at age 47²⁵², and John Hennessey eventually became the licensee²⁵³.

Hennessey transferred the licence to William Lashford in November 1883²⁵⁴, which coincided with a two-month visit to Australia by the 5th Earl of Rosebery (the Scottish peer Archibald Primrose)²⁵⁵, who later became Prime Minister of the United Kingdom in 1894-95. The Earl paid a visit to the Crown Street Public School soon after his arrival²⁵⁶, so the residents of Surry Hills had an opportunity to hobnob with British nobility. Lashford must have been very impressed with the Earl, because he renamed the pub to the Rosebery Arms Hotel soon after taking over²⁵⁷. The suburb of Rosebery in South Sydney was also named after the Earl.

In about 1910, Colin Campbell McDougall took over the licence, on the condition that the adjoining shop at number 261 Crown Street became part of the hotel²⁵⁸. This increased its size to 16 rooms²⁵⁹. He died in 1915 and his widow Emily Sarah took over the licence. Mrs. McDougall was the licensee when she and the co-owner Arthur Scott (descendant of the original owner and a Trustee of his estate) were called before the Licences Reduction Board in August 1920.

At the hearing, Inspector Mitchell said that the building was obsolete. Mr Scott disputed this, claiming that it was sound, and predicted (accurately, as it turned out) that it was good for another hundred years. Mrs. McDougall testified that there were four rooms for lodgers, and they were always full. In fact, she could have done with more accommodation. There was no mention during the hearing of licence violations or other problems with the place. The customers who testified all thought (as they usually did) that the hotel was a clean well-kept place that served the locals very well.

Despite the glowing reports from the local drinkers, and an apparent lack of serious complaints by the testifying police, in November 1920 the Board decided to cancel their licence, effective 30 June 1921²⁶⁰. After the hotel closed, number 259 became a pawn shop operated by Lionel Symonds, with a residence on the first floor²⁶¹. By 1930, the pawn shop had been taken over by John L. Grace²⁶², whose family owned the building from this time until at least 1948²⁶³.

In 1987, the building became the first shop of the Australian clothing brand Wheels & Dollbaby (“Outfitters to the Stars”), founded by Melanie Greensmith. This shop catered for a veritable galaxy of visiting celebrities until the owner decided to close the business in October 2017²⁶⁴. It is currently the home of the Bare Naked Bowls Café.

Royal George Hotel

Address: 480 Bourke Street, on the corner of Phelps Street.

Building status: The building still exists.



Figure 48 Former Royal George Hotel today (L J Hooker website)

History: In November 1868, John Luland purchased land on the corner of Bourke Street and Jamison Place (now Phelps Street)²⁶⁵, and constructed a two-storey brick hotel²⁶⁶ which he named the Moore Park Hotel²⁶⁷. In February 1889, the Licensing Court gave the then-publican George Morris permission to change the name to the Good Luck Hotel²⁶⁸. Then in June 1893, Morris was given permission to change the hotel's name again, to the Royal George Hotel²⁶⁹. Alfred Meadham became the licensee in August 1913²⁷⁰, but found himself in hot water (or at least too much water!) when he was fined in July 1915²⁷¹ and August 1917²⁷² for selling brandy and whisky that had been adulterated with added water.

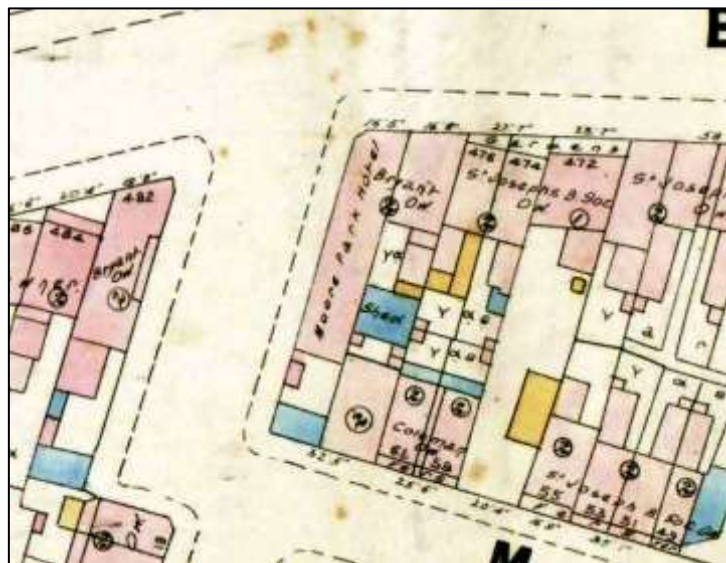


Figure 49 Royal George Hotel, 1888 (Rygate and West map)

John Luland died in January 1882, and his surviving son Francis John, a tanner from Botany, was the owner by 1921. Francis Luland and the overhydrating Alfred Meadham were summoned to a licence deprivation hearing in September 1920. This did not go well for the hotel, as the police were unusually critical of the premises and its management. Inspector George Mitchell testified that the building was very old and very much out of date. He thought the hotel was conducted badly, and didn't think this type of hotel was needed anywhere at any time. He claimed that the hotel was selling liquor out of hours, but they had a "complete system of espionage" to avoid apprehension.

Sergeant Duffell continued in the same vein, saying that he was watching on a recent Sunday when two bottles of beer were passed out of a window, but it was too far away to identify the recipient. The hotel's system of touting prevented the police getting within 200 yards without an alarm being raised, both on Sundays and at night. The embattled licensee gave evidence in which he denied all of the above transgressions. The Licences Reduction Board decided in November 1920 to close the hotel, effective 30 June 1921²⁷³. Compensation of £1,400 was paid to the owner and £1,170 to the licensee²⁷⁴.

After the hotel closed, Gaetano De Fina and his family operated a fruit shop from about 1924²⁷⁵ until after 1948²⁷⁶. The above rooms were used as residences. From 1998, Jim Alauvie and Frank Drouby have operated a mixed-business grocery store on the ground floor since migrating from the same village in Lebanon. Then in August 2018, the building was purchased by the Singaporean investor Harold Gan, who at the time of the auction was not sure if he would turn the building into a café with residences above or make the whole building residential²⁷⁷.

Senatorial Hotel

Address: 31 Foveaux Street, opposite Commonwealth Street.

Building status: The building was demolished in 1926-29.

History: Martin Cannon constructed a two-storey brick hotel in Foveaux Street, opposite Commonwealth Street (then called Macquarie Street South). It opened in January 1876 as the Albion Hotel²⁷⁸. By November 1878, the name was changed to the Braidwood Hotel²⁷⁹. The 1888 Rygate and West map shows the hotel site at number 31 Foveaux Street, at which time it was owned by Frederick Clissold²⁸⁰. In late 1907 or early 1908, the place was given its final name of the Senatorial Hotel²⁸¹.

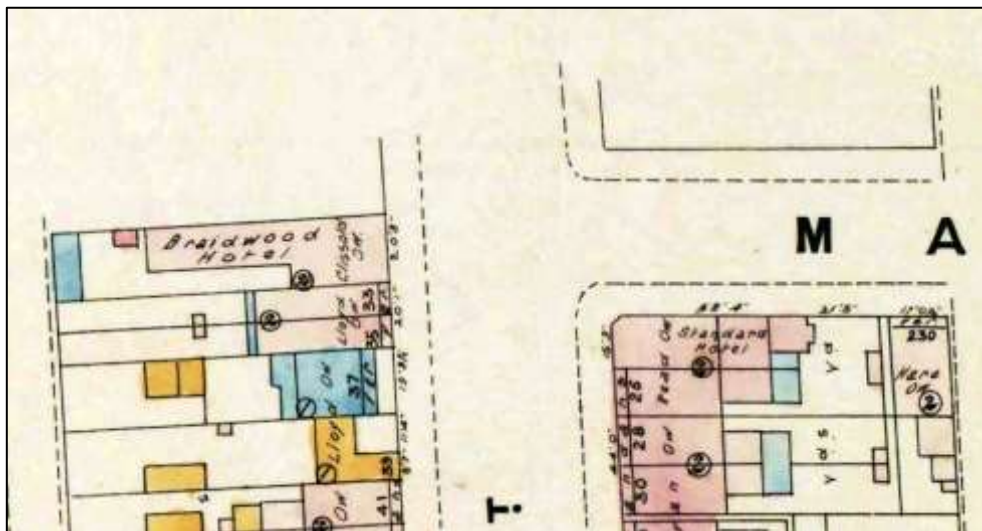


Figure 50 Senatorial Hotel, 1888 (Rygate and West map)

In August 1920, the licensee (John Grubb) was summoned to appear before a licence deprivation hearing. Inspector Thomas Sherwood said he did not think the hotel was required in the neighbourhood, although it had been well conducted since their last licence violation. However, Sergeant William Davies thought that it was conducted indifferently, and mentioned that there had been five or six licensees since October 1917. He also thought the hotel was not required there. The Board decided in November 1920 to close the hotel, effective 20 June 1921²⁸².

After closure, the hotel was operated as a shop and house for a few years²⁸³. Then in July 1926 the group of buildings owned by the estate of the late Frederick Clissold (numbers 17 to 31 Foveaux Street) were advertised for sale, as a potential factory site²⁸⁴. The properties were purchased by the Nestle & Anglo Swiss Condensed Milk (Australasia) Ltd, and by 1929 the Senatorial Hotel and nearby buildings had been demolished and a new factory opened, covering 17 to 37 Foveaux Street²⁸⁵. This operated until at least 1948²⁸⁶. Today it is a commercial building known as 17-51 Foveaux Street and at the time of writing is being extensively renovated.



Figure 51 Former Senatorial Hotel site today (realcommercial.com.au)

Standard Hotel

Address: 90 Cooper St, on the corner of Lacey Street.

Status: The building has been demolished.

History: In 1875, the block of land at 82 Cooper Street on the western corner of Little Elizabeth Street (now Lacey Street) was purchased by William Hunter²⁸⁷, who constructed a large brick hotel of three stories and 13 rooms, opening in 1877. Michael Kain was the first licensee and the pub was known as Kain's Family Hotel²⁸⁸. In 1882 the name was changed to the Standard Hotel²⁸⁹, despite another hotel of the same name operating on the corner of Foveaux and Commonwealth Streets (now rebuilt and called the Kay Bee Hotel).

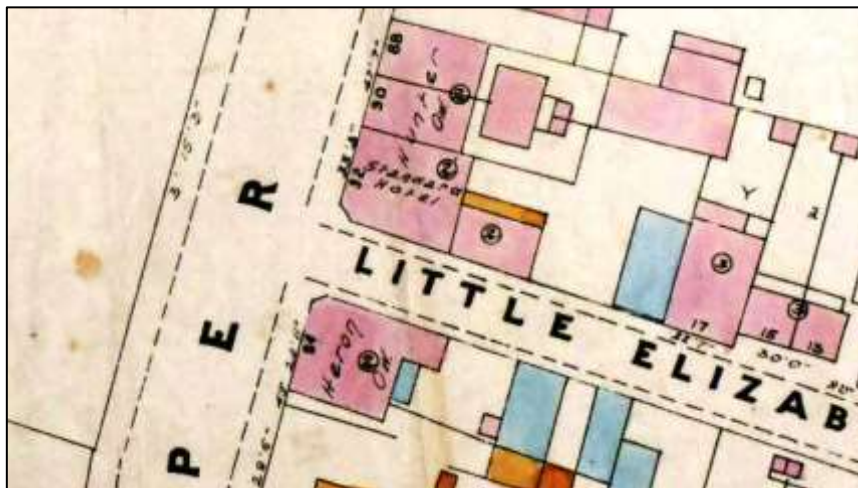


Figure 52 Standard Hotel, 1888 (Rygate and West map)

In May 1922, the owner John Baxter and licensee William Wood were summoned to appear before a licence deprivation hearing. The details of the hearing are not available, but the Licences Reduction Board's decision in December 1922 was to close the hotel, effective 30 June 1923. The pub finally closed in October that year²⁹⁰, and the licensee put the bar fittings and furniture up for sale²⁹¹.



Figure 53 Former Standard Hotel site today (traversgay.com.au website)

The building became residential following the hotel closure²⁹², and from about 1948 was known as Belgrave Flats, and still owned by John Baxter²⁹³. The former hotel was eventually demolished along with its neighbours, to be replaced in 1997 by a seven-storey 102-apartment residential block constructed by Platino Properties and known as Lacey on Cooper²⁹⁴.

Surry Hills Hotel

Address: 31-33 Smith Street, on the corner of Reservoir Street.

Building status: The building has been demolished, and is now a park.



Figure 54 Former Surry Hills Hotel, 1930s (City of Sydney Archives)

History: In late 1877²⁹⁵, Gerald Heavey constructed a two-storey brick hotel on two blocks of land at the north-west corner of Smith Street and Reservoir Street (then called Gipps Street). It was a large building with thirteen rooms²⁹⁶. Confusingly, there was already a Surry (or Surrey) Hills Hotel not too far away on the south-east corner of Campbell and Crown Streets. The building remained in the Heavey family until the late 1930s²⁹⁷.

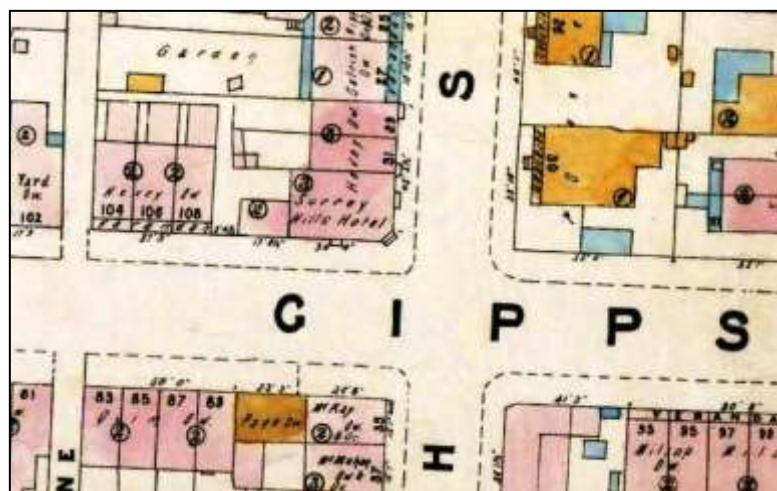


Figure 55 Surry Hills Hotel, 1888 (Rygate and West map)

The pub's life seemed to be uneventful until the Licences Reduction Board summonsed the licensee Walter Reginald Webb and co-owner Andrew Patrick Heavey to show cause why the number of eponymous Surry Hills pubs should not be reduced from two to one. Inspector Thomas Sherwood testified that the hotel was in fair condition, but that there were too many hotels in the locality. He

mentioned that the licensee was a teetotaler, who conducted the place much better in the three months he had been there than his predecessor Mr Wynne.

Sergeant William Davies testified that Mr Wynne had run the place very badly for the last three years. In fact, following police objections, he was summoned by the Licensing Court to show cause why his licence should not be cancelled. Soon afterwards, he transferred the licence to Mr. Heavey. The Sergeant said there were eight hotels within a quarter of a mile of the Surry Hills Hotel. In November 1920, the Board cancelled the hotel's licence, effective 30 June 1921²⁹⁸.

After delicensing, the building was used as two shops and dwellings upstairs. Mr V. H. Chee operated a greengrocer's shop in 1924²⁹⁹ and Mr S. L. Morris a butcher's shop in 1930³⁰⁰. By 1948, the hat manufacturers Jones Brothers Pty Ltd (who had a large factory and showroom to the north in Campbell Street) had purchased 31-33 Smith Street and the nearby cottages³⁰¹. In 1951, the Brisby Furnishing Co Pty Ltd occupied the former hotel, as shown in a photo in the early 1950s³⁰². Then in 1954, the Jones Brothers extended their operation to form a complete block to Reservoir Street, for which the hotel and adjacent buildings were demolished. Jones Brothers was established in 1912³⁰³, and the four Welsh siblings became pioneers in making hats from felt and knitted materials in Australia.

The New South Wales Police opened the Criminal Investigation Branch in the Campbell Street building in the mid-1960s. Then in 1999, this building was converted to a block of 139 New York-style apartments, known as The Carlisle. The site of the former hotel on the Reservoir Street side is now a public park, called the Reservoir Street Reserve, which is managed by the City of Sydney Council.



Figure 56 Former Surry Hills Hotel site today (Google maps)

Te Aro Hotel

Address: 25 Albion Street, on the corner of Mary Street.

Building status: The building has been demolished.

History: In 1876, the builder and publican William Shine (c1837-1859) built a terrace of five sandstone houses on Albion Street between the former Richmond Street and Mary Street, and a brick hotel on the Mary Street corner. The hotel was a large building of three stories and ten rooms³⁰⁴, and was first called the Albion Hotel³⁰⁵. By 1878, Mr Shine, a native of Athlone in Ireland, changed the name to the Hibernia Hotel in honour of his homeland³⁰⁶. Shine died in February 1879 at the age of 42³⁰⁷, and his widow Julia took over the licence³⁰⁸. But she did not keep the hotel long, putting it up for sale in February 1880³⁰⁹.

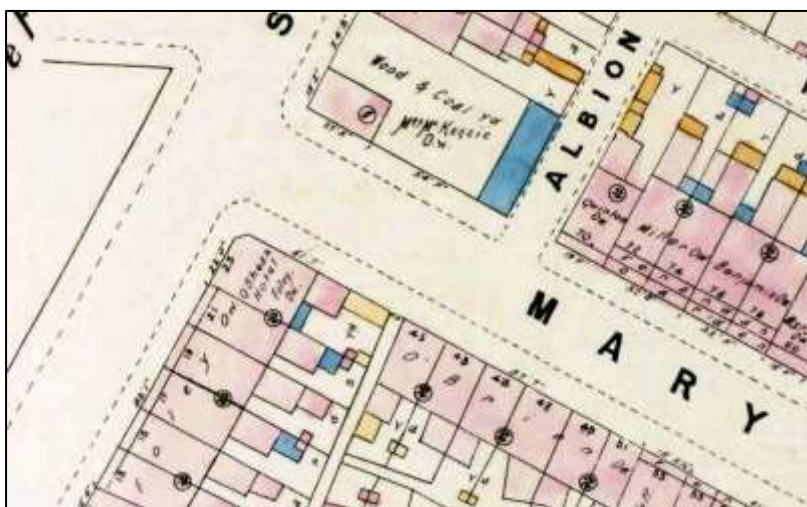


Figure 57 Te Aro Hotel, 1888 (Rygate and West map)

James Brown became the new owner and publican, and by 1881 the place was known as Brown's Family Hotel³¹⁰. Brown transferred the licence to John O'Shea in September 1884³¹¹, and the name was changed again to O'Shea's Family Hotel³¹². O'Shea moved to the Victoria Hotel in Shepherd Street Darlington in January 1890³¹³, and in March the new licensee W. A. Court was granted permission to change the name to the Manchester Arms³¹⁴. However, Mr. Court did not stay long, and in September 1891 the licence was transferred back to James Brown³¹⁵.

In 1914, May Walshe took over the licence, and changed the name yet again to the Te Aro Hotel³¹⁶. Ms. Walshe transferred the licence to Archibald Hill in February 1916³¹⁷, who eventually transferred it to Florence Mary Hole in August 1921³¹⁸. Ms. Hole and the owner Annie Stella Lester were summoned to appear at a licence deprivation hearing in 1922. The Board decided to delicense the hotel in December that year, effective on 30 June 1923. The details of the hearing are not available, but the pub may have been unlucky, as Inspector Fullerton suggested when giving evidence in 1920 (for the Club Hotel in Albion Street) that the Te Aro was one that might have been spared³¹⁹.



Figure 58 Former Te Aro Hotel site today (Google maps)

The furniture and lease for the hotel were advertised for sale in August 1923³²⁰, and by March 1924, the building was being used as a boarding house known as Tearo Residential, managed by Mrs. Malvina Anderson³²¹. Visitors to Sydney were solicited with advertisements in country newspapers, emphasising the proximity to Central Station. The former hotel was held by the heirs of Mrs. Lester until the early 1930s³²², when it was purchased by the hotelier Charles James Beaton³²³, who in 1937 sold it to the brewers Tooheys Limited. Tooheys promptly demolished the building to expand their Standard Brewery to Mary Street³²⁴.



Figure 59 Ad for Tearo residential (*Mudgee Guardian*, 20 March 1924)

Today the former Te Aro Hotel site is a corner park in the large commercial building complex at 289-299 Elizabeth Street.

Thames Hotel

Address: 50 Buckingham Street, on the corner of Bedford Street

Status: The building still exists.



Figure 60 Former Thames Hotel today (Google maps)

History: in 1875, William McNamara constructed a substantial three-storey brick hotel on the north-east corner of Buckingham and Bedford Streets³²⁵. The hotel opened as the Czarina Arms Hotel, with Gore W. Loney as the first licensee³²⁶. The licence changed hands a number of times until Belinda Peterson acquired the licence in 1887 and changed the hotel's name to the Foreigners' Home Hotel³²⁷. By October 1895, the hotel was called the Redfern Hotel³²⁸.

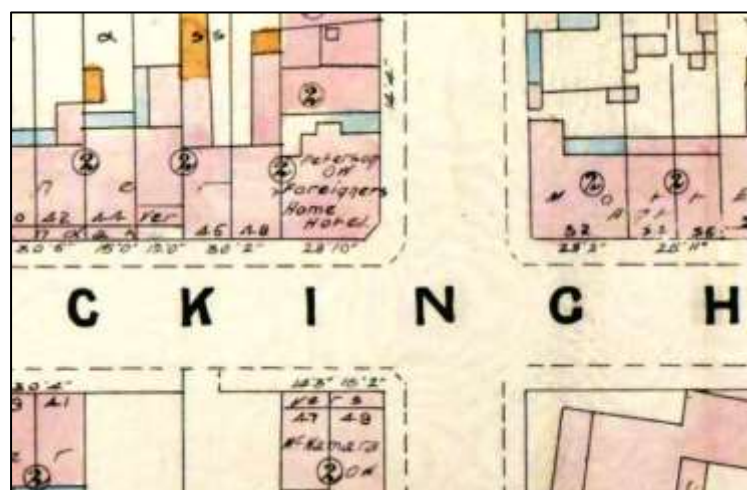


Figure 61 Thames Hotel, 1888 (Rygate and West map)

The licensee in July 1896, Jane Bell, applied to transfer the licence to Jeremiah Healey, but this was refused after opposition from the Police Licensing Inspector on the grounds that Healey had twice been fined for trading out of hours at the Brewery Hotel and lost his licence in 1894³²⁹. Jane Bell

managed to transfer the licence soon afterwards to Annie McNamara³³⁰, presumably a relative of the owner (who still held the hotel). Two months later, Annie herself was fined a nominal sum of £1 for a first offence of trading during prohibited hours³³¹, and promptly transferred the licence to Patrick Phelan³³². The hotel's name was changed for the last time to the Thames Hotel in 1906³³³. The building remained in the hands of the McNamara family until at least 1930³³⁴.

The licensee George Walter Ernest Hill was summonsed to a licence deprivation hearing in August 1920. Inspector Thomas Sherwood gave evidence and, after saying there were too many hotels in the area, said that this hotel was run very badly. He had put a constable nearby to try and catch any after-hours trading, but their efficient system of touting prevented anyone being caught. Sergeant William Davies also testified that the hotel had been badly conducted for eighteen months under the present licensee. In fact, the police had opposed the renewal of the licence, but were overruled by the Licensing Court.

Inspector Fullerton, while cross-examining Sergeant Davies, summed up the bad vibe coming from the police by remarking "I recognise that you have got your knife into the Thames". The licensee then gave evidence, claiming that all the intoxicated people who the police had seen hanging around the Thames Hotel had in fact been drinking at the nearby Cleveland Hotel and for some inexplicable reason had wandered down Buckingham Street to congregate outside his establishment. He denied serving them liquor, or even knowing who they were. The police also mentioned that Hill employed his brother-in-law in the bar, despite objections from the police because he had recently been running a two-up school in Redfern.

A number of customers and local residents gave evidence, and said to a man that the hotel was well run, provided a service to the local area, and they were quite happy with it. Despite this not-unexpected positive testimony from the drinking public, the Board was influenced by the much more negative testimony from the constabulary, and delicensed the place, effective 30 June 1921³³⁵.

After the pub closed, the building was put up for sale in February 1926³³⁶, but apparently did not sell, because in 1940 it was again put up for auction by the trustee of the estate of the late William McNamara³³⁷. In the meantime, the building was being used as a boarding house until at least 1948, at which time Mrs. Rosie Johnson was the owner³³⁸. At present, 50 Buckingham Street is a hairdressing salon operated by Sterling on Buckingham, with residences on the upper two floors.



Figure 62 Sterling on Buckingham Hairdressers

True Briton Hotel

Address: 466 Elizabeth Street, on the corner of Dawson Street.

Building status: The building has been demolished.

History: In 1865, James Murphy constructed a two-storey brick hotel of eight rooms on the corner of Elizabeth and Sarah Ann (now Dawson) Streets³³⁹. He also owned the two adjacent houses. The hotel was called the Welcome Home Inn, with Timothy Troy the licensee³⁴⁰. In 1877, the name was changed to the True Briton Hotel (often called the True Britain Hotel in the press)³⁴¹.

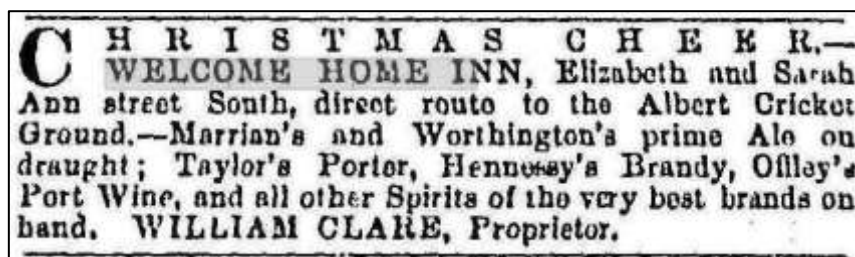


Figure 63 Welcome Home Inn ad (*Sydney Morning Herald*, 24 December 1867)

In May 1922, the licensee Rachael Coen was summonsed to a deprivation hearing by the Licences Reduction Board. The details of the hearing are not known, but the Board's decision in December 1922 was to close the hotel, effective 30 June 1923³⁴². The building became a boarding house, managed by Marion May O'Keefe from about 1930³⁴³. By 1944, it was known as Dawson Residential³⁴⁴ or the Dawson Private Hotel³⁴⁵.

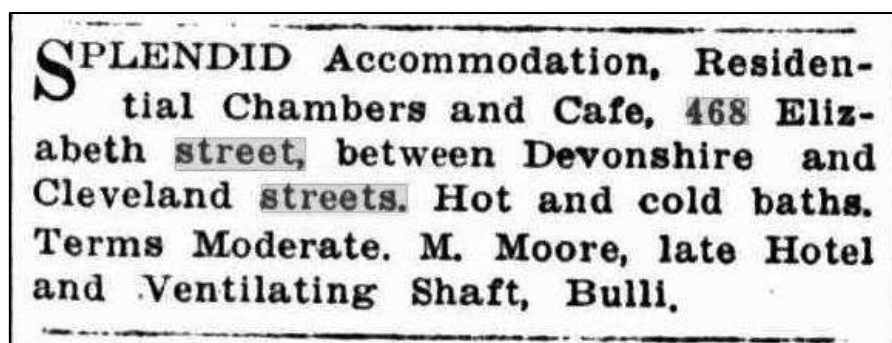


Figure 64 Ad for Accommodation (*South Coast Times*, 22 February 1924)

In the early 1940s, the NSW Government passed the *Disorderly Houses Act 1943* as part of the wartime National Security Regulations, in an effort to tackle the high rate of criminal activity during that time. A disorderly house was one where prostitution or drug dealing (or both in many cases) was taking place. Tilly Devine's brothel in Palmer Street was the first establishment to be declared a disorderly house in June 1943, and as a consequence the colourful Tilly was sentenced to twelve months' jail for allowing reputed criminals to frequent the place³⁴⁶.

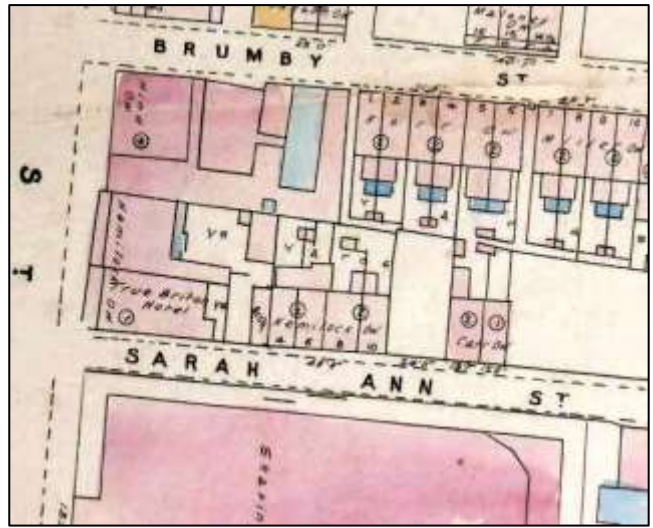


Figure 65 True Briton Hotel, 1888 (Rygate and West map)

In September 1944, the former True Briton Hotel was itself declared a disorderly house, while still under Marion O’Keefe’s management³⁴⁷. As a consequence, in April 1945 the notable criminal John Frederick “Chow” Hayes was arrested there on a charge of being found in a disorderly house³⁴⁸. Chow’s almost endless criminal record (including murder) showed that he was a nasty piece of work by any measure. He had the distinction of being named Australia’s first gangster by police in 1930³⁴⁹.

The old buildings on Elizabeth Street between Brumby and Dawson Streets were demolished at some point, and today the block includes the Surry Hills campus building of the North Shore Coaching College.



Figure 66 Former True Briton Hotel site today (Google maps)

White Lion Hotel

Address: 199 Riley Street, on the corner of Goulburn Street.

Building status: The building was demolished in 1929 during the Brisbane Street resumption.



Figure 67 White Lion Hotel, c1920 (State Records of NSW)

History: In 1870, John Cope Apted purchased land on the corner of Riley and Goulburn Streets and constructed a two-storey brick hotel with nine rooms³⁵⁰, which he called the White Lion Hotel. Palmer Butts was the first licensee in September 1870³⁵¹. John Apted took over the licence in 1874³⁵². He died in 1901 and the hotel and its licence were transferred to Emily Apted³⁵³.

The hotel's licensee and owner were called before the Licences reduction Board in 1922, and in December the Board cancelled the licence³⁵⁴. Compensation of £1,840 was paid to the owner, £330 to the licensee, and £50 to the lessee³⁵⁵. The building did not survive more than a few years, because it was included in the massive Brisbane Street resumption project, in which all the properties in the large block of land encompassed by Goulburn, Riley, Campbell and Brisbane Streets were purchased by the Municipal Council of Sydney and demolished. The Council's plan was to then lease all the land to become factories, but the Great Depression of the 1930s intervened, and that the land remained unused and unwanted for decades. Earlier such slum clearances in Surry Hills had resulted in a transformation of poor residential areas to industrial enterprises.

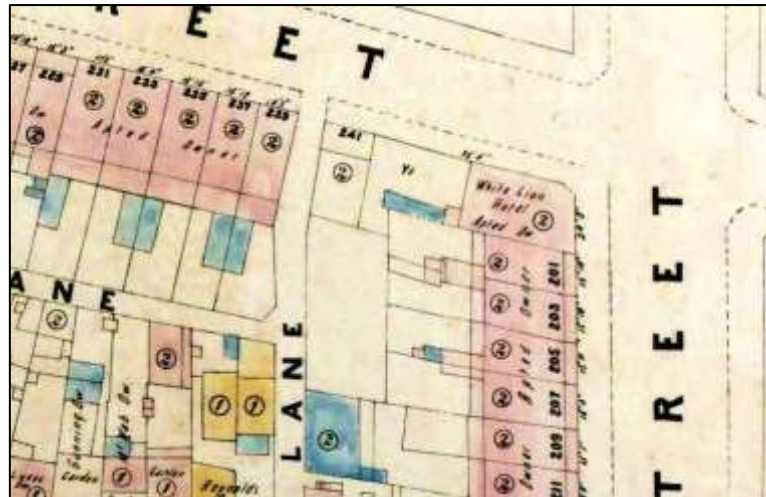


Figure 68 White Lion Hotel, 1888 (Rygate and West map)

After closure, the former White Lion Hotel was purchased by the Municipal Council by 1927³⁵⁶. In March 1929, the Council advertised the building for demolition and removal³⁵⁷. Today the site is part of the Sydney Police Centre, which was opened in 1986³⁵⁸.



Figure 69 White Lion Hotel demolition (*Sydney Morning Herald*, 9 March 1929)



Figure 70 Former White Lion Hotel site today

The post-World War II era

Wartime restrictions

In August 1942, a Conference of the State Premiers and the Prime Minister agreed on a number of measures designed to control drinking in wartime. Among other restrictions, women would be prohibited from drinking in public bars³⁵⁹. The New South Wales Government duly issued an order under the National Security Act to bring this into effect. The restriction covered Sydney city and all suburbs³⁶⁰. The other State Governments also issued orders under the Act³⁶¹.

Another measure was to restrict trading hours by one hour. In New South Wales, this meant opening at 11am instead of 10am³⁶².

Local Option is finally repealed

In March 1945, Reverend Charles Tomlinson, President of the New South Wales Temperance Alliance, said that the *Liquor Amendment (Continuance) Act 1928* implied that a reasonably early date was intended for the restoration of Local Option, but since then people have been denied what he called their democratic rights because of Cabinet inaction. He claimed that the restoration of Local Option was effectively passed by Parliament in 1928 but never proclaimed by Cabinet, and he demanded its immediate restoration³⁶³.

In November 1945, a special Government committee reporting on amendments to the *Liquor Act* recommended Local Option polls on liquor trading in country districts (that is, outside the Sydney metropolitan area and Newcastle). The hours of trading recommended for the metropolitan area were from 9am to 6:30pm or 7pm. The committee also recommended that if residents of a municipal council thought those hours were unsatisfactory, electors at local government elections could decide whether trading hours should be extended to 8pm or 9pm. Closing time should not be extended beyond 9pm, but if they were, opening hours should be adjusted to make total trading hours the same as in the city³⁶⁴.

But public opinion was that extending closing time by such a short amount would not adequately deal with the six o'clock swill³⁶⁵. The Local Option was finally repealed by the McKell government in 1946, leading the New South Wales Temperance Alliance to declare in early 1947 their intention to fight for its restoration³⁶⁶.

Ten o'clock closing ends the swill

A referendum on closing hours was held in February 1947, where electors were asked to choose 6pm, 9pm or 10pm. The final figures were:

6pm - 1,051,240,
9pm - 26,954,
10pm - 604,833,
Informal - 15,183³⁶⁷.

This was clearly a conclusive vote to maintain the status quo, and some papers suggested (fairly accurately, as it turned out) that it could be another ten years before the question of closing hours was put to the people again.

Despite this setback, there were increased calls to restore late closing after mass tourism and post-war immigration exposed Australians to other drinking cultures and highlighted the problems associated with early closing³⁶⁸. Newspapers frequently railed against the barbarism of the “six o’clock swill” in a civilised society.



Figure 71 Victorian referendum ad (*Herald*, 21 March 1956)

The New South Wales Government established a Royal Commission on Liquor Reform in July 1951, run by Justice Allan Maxwell. It was commissioned to look at the ownership and control of hotels and in particular the tied-house system operated by the big breweries. Also of interest was the desirability of reintroducing the Local Option, which had been repealed in 1946. The Commissioner sent police overseas to investigate drinking laws and customs in other countries.

The Royal Commission’s report was finally released in February 1954. It found that the early closing law encouraged widespread illicit consumption, most evident in the thriving nightclub industry and other illegal retail sources, and police corruption. The Commission found that reduced trading hours had not reduced the overall consumption, and that home drinking had increased. Studies in other States confirmed this.

The Royal Commission recommended that later opening hours should be considered, in order to remove the evils of the infamous six o’clock swill. It also recommended that the hours when restaurants and clubs served liquor with meals should be extended, but that the reintroduction of the Local Option was not desirable. Maxwell’s main idea in civilising the national drinking culture by ending sex-segregated drinking was that much more drunkenness resulted when men drank with each other than when they were in mixed company³⁶⁹.

A referendum in November 1954 voted narrowly to restore 10pm closing in NSW³⁷⁰. Sunday trading was still banned, which derived from a still-powerful churches lobby. But clubs had the great

advantage of being exempt from the ban on Sunday trading. Opening hours have steadily expanded since³⁷¹.

The New South Wales Government passed the *Liquor Amendment Act* in December 1954, implementing 10pm closing for hotels and club bars. The Act came into effect from February 1955 to give publicans time to prepare for the altered trading hours and to give police time to reorganise for the new conditions. The Act included a controversial requirement that hotels had to close for an hour at 6:30pm to encourage people (mostly men) to go home to dinner. But it was feared that this simply extended the swill by half an hour³⁷².



Figure 72 Ten O'clock closing in Sydney, 1955 (Fairfax Archives)

Women's access to bars

An issue addressed in the Maxwell Royal Commission was women's access to the various drinking spaces in hotels. After the 1954 referendum, it was pointed out in the press that as female voters outnumbered male voters (by 1,019,411 to 986,610), and the majority of women were in favour of ten o'clock closing³⁷³, it was unfair to keep them out of the bars they had helped to keep open.

Before World War II, women were effectively prevented from drinking in bars, not by the Liquor Act, but by widespread practice, enforced and policed by licensees. Then, during the war, many restrictions were placed on normal activities, including business and social behaviour, under the National Security Act. A conference of State Premiers and the Federal Government in August 1942 resulted in an order barring women from drinking in public bars in city and metropolitan areas³⁷⁴.

Wartime controls on liquor were lifted in December 1945 in Victoria³⁷⁵. Moves to end sex-segregated drinking started to gather momentum soon after this. In May 1946, the United Associations of Women in Sydney demanded that women be allowed to drink in bars by repealing the 1942 National Security order³⁷⁶. In September 1946, the New South Wales Government repealed the wartime controls on drinking and opening hours with a new *Liquor Act*³⁷⁷.

On the news that women were no longer prohibited from drinking in bars, a number of Sydney hotel keepers admitted that the practice of barring women (as in the pre-war period when it was legal for them to do so) was unlikely to change with the repeal of the wartime order. A number of women interviewed at this time said that women should be allowed to drink in the same bars as men, but that the continuance of the six o'clock swill meant that they would not want to do so³⁷⁸.

Raising the bar – women assert their rights

A few days after the repeal of the wartime restrictions in Sydney, the *Daily Telegraph* journalist Philippa Day, accompanied by her colleague Adrian Deamer, decided to test the new legal freedom in the hotels of the inner city. While she admitted that the pungency of front bars had made them unenticing in the past, she was determined to assert her right to drink there. The pair was refused service in four hotels before arriving at the Hero of Waterloo Hotel in The Rocks during the wharfies' lunch hour. Mr. Deamer asked for two beers, but the barman was reluctant, and said he would have to go out and ask the licensee.

At that point, a crane driver offered the opinion that if barmaids could stand on one side of the bar, he couldn't see why other women couldn't stand on the other side. The other drinkers then took up a chant which echoed down the long narrow bar: "Give her a beer, boss, give her a beer!". The licensee, Claude Parker, who had come out to see what all the noise was about, responded by pouring out two middies, to the applause of the men along the length of the bar. Philippa lifted her drink, pleased to have finally won her way against the cold prejudice of the past, and feeling something like Mrs. Pankhurst when she lodged her first vote. Mr. Parker then declared: "You've made history, as you're the first woman to drink in this bar". On examining her surroundings, she discovered that in the front bar there was a pleasant unrestrained atmosphere which was not found in a lounge. She thought that an outside beer garden would be even better.

The other hotel where she was served a beer was the Cosmopolitan in Clarence Street. The barmaid refused at first, spoke to the cashier, and then changed her mind. But the intrepid Philippa was flatly refused service in the bars at the Exchange Hotel (corner of Pitt and Bridge Streets), the Ship Inn, Aaron's Exchange Hotel, and the Australia Hotel. Her drinking companion also recorded his impressions of the day in an article. He admitted that while he felt very uncomfortable accompanying a woman into the bars, once inside he noticed that the male drinkers did not seem to mind her being there³⁷⁹.

The Queensland Government did not lift the wartime drinking controls for many years. In March 1965, Merle Thornton (mother of actress Sigrid Thornton) and Rosalie Bognor took action by striding into the bar of the bar of the Regatta Hotel in Brisbane and chaining themselves to the foot rail before ordering beers. The publican refused to serve them and called the police to remove them. While waiting for the boys in blue to arrive, the women were supplied with drinks by sympathetic male drinkers. The police arrived, and after assessing the situation, smashed the chain with a hammer. They did not arrest the pair, only saying as they left "have a good night, ladies, and don't drink too much!".

The stunt brought widespread media attention to their cause, but it was not until 1970 that the infamous Section 59A of the *Liquor Act* was repealed to finally allow women to drink in bars in the Sunshine State³⁸⁰.



Figure 73 Raising the bar at the Regatta Hotel, 1965 (*Courier Mail*)

The temperance movement marches on

During the 1950s, the influence of the temperance movement declined and attitudes towards alcohol became more relaxed. Change was accelerated in the large cities by a surge in European migrants who opened new styles of cafes and bars. Drinking was allowed with meals at later hours. State Governments were still interested in restricting the sale of alcohol, but generally concentrated their efforts on civilising the drinking habits of the citizens. Licensed premises were improved to modern standards of sanitation, hygiene, ventilation and fire prevention.

Meanwhile, the Rechabites and the WCTU continue to promote temperance, but focused mainly on preventing the extension of hotel opening hours and increased licences. Newer groups, such as the Foundation for Alcohol Research & Education (founded in 2001) have arisen and launched campaigns such as the one to ban alcohol advertising at sporting events. The New South Wales Licences Reduction Board was eventually replaced by the Liquor Administration Board in 1982³⁸¹.

Notes

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- ¹ Blocker et al, *Alcohol and Temperance in Modern History*.
 - ² Allen, Curfews and lockouts, *The Conversation*, 2016.
 - ³ *Alcohol in Australia*, Commonwealth of Australia.
 - ⁴ Blocker et al, *Alcohol and Temperance in Modern History*.
 - ⁵ Allen, Curfews and lockouts, *The Conversation*, 2016.
 - ⁶ Allen, *The Temperance Shift*.
 - ⁷ Blocker et al, *Alcohol and Temperance in Modern History*.
 - ⁸ Allen, *The Temperance Shift*.
 - ⁹ Allen, *The Temperance Shift*.
 - ¹⁰ Temperance Organisations Around the World.
 - ¹¹ Allen, *The Temperance Shift*.
 - ¹² *Sydney Morning Herald*, 6 August 1858.
 - ¹³ *Australian Band of Hope Journal (Sydney)*, 12 September 1857.
 - ¹⁴ Blocker et al, *Alcohol and Temperance in Modern History*.
 - ¹⁵ WCTU of New South Wales, Australian Women's Register.
 - ¹⁶ Allen, *The Temperance Shift*.
 - ¹⁷ Australian Hotels Association of New South Wales website.
 - ¹⁸ Allen, Curfews and lockouts, *The Conversation*, 2016.
 - ¹⁹ Taylor, *Dry Zones*.
 - ²⁰ Allen, *The Temperance Shift*.
 - ²¹ *Ballarat Star*, 2 January 1905.
 - ²² *Sydney Morning Herald*, 21 June 1934.
 - ²³ *The Herald (Melbourne)*, 19 January 1905.
 - ²⁴ *Bendigo Independent*, 13 April 1905.
 - ²⁵ *The Age*, 19 May 1905.
 - ²⁶ *Kilmore Free Press*, 20 April 1905.
 - ²⁷ *The Age*, 19 May 1905.
 - ²⁸ *Ballarat Star*, 19 December 1906.
 - ²⁹ 1886 Statistical Register of the Colony of Victoria, Parliament of Victoria.
 - ³⁰ Liquor, temperance and legislation, Parliament of Victoria.
 - ³¹ *Newcastle Sun*, 14 January, 1920.
 - ³² Oz Sports History website, www.ozsportshistory.com.
 - ³³ Taylor, *Dry Zones*.
 - ³⁴ Allen, Curfews and lockouts, *The Conversation*, 2016.
 - ³⁵ Blocker et al, *Alcohol and Temperance*.
 - ³⁶ Symons, *One Continuous Picnic*.
 - ³⁷ Blocker et al, *Alcohol and Temperance*.
 - ³⁸ *Sydney Morning Herald*, 30 July 1923.
 - ³⁹ *Sydney Morning Herald*, 6 September 1916.
 - ⁴⁰ *Young Witness*, 6 February 1920.
 - ⁴¹ *The Bathurst Times*, 12 May 1920.
 - ⁴² *Evening News*, 5 November 1920.
 - ⁴³ *The Daily Telegraph*, 1 January 1920.
 - ⁴⁴ *The Daily Telegraph*, 1 January 1920.
 - ⁴⁵ *Sydney Morning Herald*, 30 July 1923.
 - ⁴⁶ *Newcastle Sun*, 14 January, 1920.
 - ⁴⁷ *Daily Advertiser (Wagga Wagga)*, 12 February 1920.
 - ⁴⁸ *Young Witness*, 6 February 1920.
 - ⁴⁹ *The Daily Telegraph*, 28 July 1920.
 - ⁵⁰ *The Sun*, 5 November 1920.
 - ⁵¹ *Sydney Morning Herald*, 15 April 1921.
 - ⁵² *Corowa Free Press*, 3 June 1921.
 - ⁵³ Licences Reduction Board, SRNSW.
 - ⁵⁴ *Newcastle Morning Herald and Miners' Advocate*, 10 December 1920.

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- ⁵⁵ *Sydney Morning Herald*, 18 September 1922.
- ⁵⁶ *The Daily Telegraph*, 28 September 1922.
- ⁵⁷ *Newcastle Morning Herald and Miners' Advocate*, 28 October 1922.
- ⁵⁸ *Maitland Daily Mercury*, 31 October 1922.
- ⁵⁹ *Evening News*, 17 November 1922.
- ⁶⁰ *Bathurst Times*, 17 November 1922.
- ⁶¹ *The Sun*, 22 December 1922.
- ⁶² *Sydney Morning Herald*, 14 May 1923.
- ⁶³ *Sydney Morning Herald*, 30 July 1923.
- ⁶⁴ *Sydney Morning Herald*, 12 July 1927.
- ⁶⁵ *Sydney Morning Herald*, 8 March 1928.
- ⁶⁶ *Sydney Morning Herald*, 3 April 1928.
- ⁶⁷ *Sydney Morning Herald*, 14 April 1934.
- ⁶⁸ Symons, *One Continuous Picnic*.
- ⁶⁹ *Sydney Morning Herald*, 12 September 1924.
- ⁷⁰ *Sydney Morning Herald*, 10 October 1924.
- ⁷¹ *Sydney Morning Herald*, 4 September 1928.
- ⁷² *Sydney Morning Herald*, 23 March 1945.
- ⁷³ *Sydney Morning Herald*, 12 June 1934.
- ⁷⁴ *Sydney Morning Herald*, 8 May 1935.
- ⁷⁵ *Sydney Morning Herald*, 15 April 1936.
- ⁷⁶ *The Sun*, 11 April 1937.
- ⁷⁷ Ross, *The History of Collins Street Surry Hills*.
- ⁷⁸ *Sydney Morning Herald*, 1 February 1922.
- ⁷⁹ *Sydney Morning Herald*, 26 July 1922.
- ⁸⁰ Licences Reduction Board, NSW State Archives and Records.
- ⁸¹ *Sands' Sydney Directory*, 1880.
- ⁸² Rate Assessment Book, Cook ward, 1880.
- ⁸³ *Sands' Sydney Directory*, 1882.
- ⁸⁴ *Sydney Morning Herald*, 29 May 1886.
- ⁸⁵ Licences Reduction Board, SRNSW.
- ⁸⁶ State Records of NSW.
- ⁸⁷ Licences Reduction Board, SRNSW.
- ⁸⁸ *Sydney Morning Herald*, 2 June 1922.
- ⁸⁹ *The Daily Telegraph*, 15 December 1922.
- ⁹⁰ *The Daily Telegraph*, 6 September 1924.
- ⁹¹ Licences Reduction Board, SRNSW.
- ⁹² *Sydney Morning Herald*, 26 September 1874.
- ⁹³ Rate Assessment Book, Cook ward, 1877.
- ⁹⁴ *Sydney Morning Herald*, 5 October 1892.
- ⁹⁵ *The Australian Star*, 7 December 1892.
- ⁹⁶ *Sands' Sydney Directories*, 1926-1933.
- ⁹⁷ Rate Assessment Book, Flinders ward, 1936.
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Table of Figures

Figure 1	Temperance campaigners (wallsviews.com website).....	3
Figure 2	Melbourne Total Abstinence Society (Museums Victoria)	4
Figure 3	Band of Hope certificate (Museums Victoria).....	5
Figure 4	Temperance Hall Sydney, 1870 (State Records of NSW)	6
Figure 5	Sydney WCTU banner (Museum of Applied Arts & Sciences).....	10
Figure 6	Early closing referendum, 1916 (City of Sydney Archives).....	12
Figure 7	The six o'clock swill in Melbourne (<i>Herald Sun</i>).....	13
Figure 8	Liquor raid in New York City, 1922.....	13
Figure 9	Sydney Gunn (<i>Sydney Morning Herald</i> , 30 October 1922)	15
Figure 10	Surry Hills hotels in 1920 - see tables below for details	19
Figure 11	Former Athletic Club Hotel (timegents.com website)	22
Figure 12	Athletic Club Hotel, 1888 (Rygate and West map).....	22
Figure 13	Austral and Hopetoun hotels, 1930s (City of Sydney Archives).....	24
Figure 14	Club Hotel, c1920 (State Records of NSW)	26
Figure 15	Club Hotel, 1888 (Rygate and West map).....	26
Figure 16	Former Club Hotel today (house.speakingsame.com website)	27
Figure 17	Former Farnham Arms Hotel today (Google maps).....	28
Figure 18	Farnham Arms Hotel, 1888 (Rygate and West map)	28
Figure 19	Former Federal Hotel site (domain.com.au website)	30
Figure 20	Federal Hotel, 1888 (Rygate and West map)	31
Figure 21	Bex advertisement (Powerhouse Museum).....	31
Figure 22	Former Golden Fleece Hotel today	32
Figure 23	Golden Fleece Hotel, 1888 (Rygate and West map)	32
Figure 24	Golden Lion Hotel, c1920 (State Records of NSW)	35
Figure 25	Golden Lion Hotel, 1888 (Rygate and West map).....	35
Figure 26	Former Golden Lion Hotel today (Google maps)	36
Figure 27	Former Gulgong Hotel, 2011.....	37
Figure 28	Former Lloyd's Hotel today	39
Figure 29	Lloyd's Hotel, 1888 (Rygate and West map)	39
Figure 30	Madeira Inn, c1920 (State Records of NSW).....	41
Figure 31	Madeira Inn, 1888 (Rygate and West map)	41
Figure 32	Former Madeira Inn site today (Google maps).....	42
Figure 33	McNamara's Family Hotel, c1920 (State Records of NSW).....	43
Figure 34	McNamara's Family Hotel, 1888 (Rygate and West map)	43
Figure 35	Former McNamara's Family Hotel site today (Google maps)	44
Figure 36	Former Mount View Hotel today (realestate.com website).....	45
Figure 37	Former Princess of Wales Hotel today (Google maps)	47
Figure 38	Princess of Wales Hotel, 1888 (Rygate and West map).....	48
Figure 39	Queen's Arms Hotel, c1920 (State Records of NSW)	49
Figure 40	Queen's Arms Hotel, 1888 (Rygate and West map).....	49
Figure 41	Belgenny Flats (sydney-city.blogspot.com website)	50
Figure 42	Former Reservoir Hotel today (Google maps)	51

Figure 43	<i>The Red House</i> , by Sali Herman, 1965 (Sotheby's Australia)	52
Figure 44	Rifleman's Arms Hotel, c1920 (State Records of NSW)	53
Figure 45	Rifleman's Arms Hotel, 1888 (Rygate and West map)	53
Figure 46	Former Rifleman's Arms Hotel, 2010	55
Figure 47	Former Rosebery Arms Hotel, 2017	56
Figure 48	Former Royal George Hotel today (L J Hooker website)	58
Figure 49	Royal George Hotel, 1888 (Rygate and West map)	58
Figure 50	Senatorial Hotel, 1888 (Rygate and West map)	60
Figure 51	Former Senatorial Hotel site today (realcommercial.com.au)	61
Figure 52	Standard Hotel, 1888 (Rygate and West map)	62
Figure 53	Former Standard Hotel site today (traversgay.com.au website)	62
Figure 54	Former Surry Hills Hotel, 1930s (City of Sydney Archives)	64
Figure 55	Surry Hills Hotel, 1888 (Rygate and West map)	64
Figure 56	Former Surry Hills Hotel site today (Google maps)	65
Figure 57	Te Aro Hotel, 1888 (Rygate and West map)	66
Figure 58	Former Te Aro Hotel site today (Google maps)	67
Figure 59	Ad for Tearo residential (<i>Mudgee Guardian</i> , 20 March 1924)	67
Figure 60	Former Thames Hotel today (Google maps)	68
Figure 61	Thames Hotel, 1888 (Rygate and West map)	68
Figure 62	Sterling on Buckingham Hairdressers	69
Figure 63	Welcome Home Inn ad (<i>Sydney Morning Herald</i> , 24 December 1867)	70
Figure 64	Ad for Accommodation (<i>South Coast Times</i> , 22 February 1924)	70
Figure 65	True Briton Hotel, 1888 (Rygate and West map)	71
Figure 66	Former True Briton Hotel site today (Google maps)	71
Figure 67	White Lion Hotel, c1920 (State Records of NSW)	72
Figure 68	White Lion Hotel, 1888 (Rygate and West map)	73
Figure 69	White Lion Hotel demolition (<i>Sydney Morning Herald</i> , 9 March 1929)	73
Figure 70	Former White Lion Hotel site today	74
Figure 71	Victorian referendum ad (<i>Herald</i> , 21 March 1956)	76
Figure 72	Ten O'clock closing in Sydney, 1955 (Fairfax Archives)	77
Figure 73	Raising the bar at the Regatta Hotel, 1965 (<i>Courier Mail</i>)	79

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Index

- 18th Amendment, US Constitution, 13
5th Earl of Rosebery, 56
Aaron's Exchange Hotel, 78
Abbott, Reverend Frank, 34
Alauvie, Jim, 59
Albion Hotel, 25 Albion Street, 66
Albion Hotel, 31 Foveaux Street, 60
Albion Hotel, 91 Albion Street, 28
Allen, Victoria, 23
Anderson, Malvina, 67
Anti-Saloon League, United States, 13
Apted, Emily, 72
Apted, John Cope, 72
Armstrong, Ernest Maitland, 24
Arnott, W. S., 9
Athletic Club Hotel, 22
Austin, James, 47
Austin, James Taylor, 47
Austin, Martha, 47
Austin, Sydney Walter, 47
Austin, Walter Keith, 48
Austral Hotel, 24
Australia Hotel, 78
Australian Alliance Prohibition Council, 14
Australian Home Companion and Band of Hope Journal, 5
Australian Total Abstinence Society, 4
Band of Hope, 5
Baptist, John Thomas, 37
Bare Naked Bowls Café, 57
Baxter, John, 62
Beaton, Charles James, 67
Beckers Pty Ltd, 31
Belfield, Francis, 35
Belgenny Pty Ltd, 50
Belgrave Flats, 63
Bell, Jane, 68
Bellevue House, 29
Bent, Thomas, Victorian Premier, 10
Bex, 31
Bluck, James, 33
Bluck, John, 32
Bluck's Family Hotel, 33
Bognor, Rosalie, 78
Bourke, John, 49
Boyce, Archdeacon Francis, 17
Braidwood Hotel, 60
Brewery Hotel, 68
Brisbane Street resumption, 72
Brisby Furnishing Co Pty Ltd, 65
Brown, James, 66
Brown's Family Hotel, 66
Brumby House, 39
Bruneteau, Jean-Paul, 37
Bullet Studios, 52
Burnett, Matthew, 6
Butts, Palmer, 72
Cannon, Martin, 60
Carew's Tyre Service, 50
Carrington Grounds Athletic Field, 22
Cary, S. H., 31
Chapple, Reverend John, 23
Chee, V. H., 65
Children's Court, 27
Clegg, William, solicitor, 17
Cleveland Hotel, 69
Clissold, Frederick, 60
Club Hotel, 26, 66
Coen, Rachael, 70
coffee palace, 7
Comet Hotel, 26
Connelly, Josephine, 45
Connelly, Michael, 45
Cosmopolitan Hotel, 78
Cotton, William John, 49
Cotton's Royal Hotel, 49
Court, W. A., 66
Coyle, Patrick, 24
Coyle, William Thomas, KC, 24
Creamer, Laura, 26
Cricketers Arms, 23
Criminal Investigation Branch, 65
Crook, Reverend William Pascoe, 4
Crown Street Public School, 56
Crown Street reservoir, 51
Czarina Arms Hotel, 68
Davies, Sergeant William, 27, 60, 65, 69
Davis, William, licensee, 56
Dawson Private Hotel, 70
Dawson Residential, 70
Dawson, John, 39
Day, Philippa, 78
De Fina, Gaetano, 59
Deamer, Adrian, 78
Devine, Tilly, 70
Devonshire Convenience Store, 36

Dimond, John, 53
Disorderly Houses Act 1943, 70
 Dollar, Frederick, 50
 Dorney, Eugene, 39
 Dowling, Jennifer, 37
 Drouby, Frank, 59
 Duffell, Sergeant, 51, 59
Early Closing Act 1916, 12
 Edgeley, John, 47
 Elephant Jump Thai Restaurant, 36
 Emerald Isle Hotel, 37
 Erwin, Patrick, 30
 Evatt, Dr. H. V., 17
 Evesson, Robert, 30
 Evesson, Sarah, 30
 Evesson's Family Hotel, 30
 Exchange Hotel, 78
 Eyes and Look, optometrist, 34
 Fagan, George L., 37
 Farnham Arms Hotel, 27, 28
 Fears, Luther, 33
 Federal Arms Hotel, 30
 Federal Hotel, 30
 Fermanagh Hotel, 43
 Fisk, Henry, 47
 Forbes, Chief Justice Francis, 4
 Foreigners' Home Hotel, 68
 Fortington, Douglas, 27
 Foundation for Alcohol Research & Education,
 79
 Foveaux Street Reserve, 25
 Franklin, Lieutenant Governor Sir John, 3
 Freeman, William C, 24
 Freeman's Family Hotel, 24
 Fullerton, Inspector John, 26, 33, 54, 66
 Gan, Harold, 59
 Garlick, William, 33
 Gee, Edwin, 37
 Geebung Hotel, 50
 Georgelos, Con, 34
 Gipps, Governor Sir George, 3, 4
 Goarufa, Giuseppe, 48
 Golden Fleece Hotel, 32
 Golden Lion Hotel, 35
 Good Luck Hotel, 58
 Gordon Frost Organisation Pty Ltd, 27
 Grace, John L., 57
 Grand Royal Barbers, 46
 Greensmith, Melanie, 57
 Griffiths, Ada Garnett, 26
 Grubb, John, 60
 Gulgong Hotel, 37
 Gunn, Sydney, LRB Chairman, 15
 H. W. Horning Ltd, 15
 Hall, David, Attorney-General, 15
 Hamilton, Judge, 15
 Hawkins, H. M., 15
 Hayes, John Frederick "Chow", 71
 Healey, Jeremiah, 50, 68
 Health Commission, 18
 Heavey, Andrew Patrick, 64
 Heavey, Gerald, 64
 Hennessy, John, 56
 Herman, Sali, 52
 Hero of Waterloo Hotel, 78
 Hibernia Hotel, 66
 Hill, Archibald, 66
 Hill, George Walter Ernest, 69
 Hole, Florence Mary, 66
 Hume, Valda, 50
 Hunter, William, 62
 J McMahon & Co Ltd, 29
 Johnson, Eli, 6
 Johnson, Rosie, 69
 Jones Brothers Pty Ltd, 65
 Kain, Michael, 62
 Kain's Family Hotel, 62
 Kay Bee Hotel, 62
 Kelsey, Joseph, 49
 Knowles, Patrick, 31
 Knowles' Family Hotel, 31
 Kumara Villa, 44
 La Joye, Loic, 38
 La Joye, Luc, 38
 Labias, Louis, 40
 Lacey on Cooper, apartments, 63
 Ladies' Total Abstinence Society, 5
 Langtry, H., 44
 Lashford, William, 56
 Le Pelican French Restaurant, 38
 Lee, Henry, 26
 Lester, Annie Stella, 66
 Licences Reduction Board, Victorian, 11
 Licensed Victuallers Compensation Fund, 16
Licensing Act 1882, 9
Licensing Act 1906 (Victoria), 11
 Licensing Court, 16, 22, 26, 50, 58, 65
Liquor (Amendment) Act 1905, 9
Liquor (Amendment) Act 1919, NSW, 15
Liquor Act 1946, 77
 Liquor Administration Board, 79

Liquor Amendment (Continuance) Act 1928, 17, 75
Liquor Amendment Act 1922 (NSW), 16
Liquor Amendment Act, 1954, 77
 Liquor Trades Defence Association, 15
 Liquor Trades Defence Union, 11
 Little, John T., 33
 Lloyd, Robert William, 24
 Lloyd's Hotel, 39
 Local Option Alliance, 9
 Local Option poll, Melbourne, 11
 Local Option polls, NSW, 10
 Loluk Bistro, 38
 Loney, Gore W., 68
 Luland, Francis John, 59
 Luland, John, 58
 Macnamara, Daniel, 43
 Macnamara, Mary Rose, 44
 Madeira Inn, 41
 Madeira Private Hotel, 42
Maine Law, 1851, 5
 Malone, Edward, 39
 Malone's Hotel, 39
 Manchester Arms, 66
 Manser, Charles C, 37
 Marsden, James, 51
 Marsh, Julia, 50
 Martin, Emanuel, 41
 Maton, Henry William, 56
 Maxwell, Justice Allan, 76
 McDougall, Colin Campbell, 56
 McDougall, Emily Sarah, 56
 McDowell, William, 28
 McMahan, James, 28
 McNamara, Annie, 69
 McNamara, William, 68, 69
 McNamara's Family Hotel, 43
 McNamee, Thomas, 30
 McNamee's Hotel, 30
 Meadham, Alfred, 58
 Meehan, Maria, 55
 Meehan, Peter, 54
 Mew, Sister, 34
 Mitchell, Inspector George, 22, 31, 33, 57
 Molony, Cornelius, 51
 Molony, Peter, 51
 Moon David, 41
 Moon, James, 33
 Moon, John Dibbs, 41
 Mooney, Bridget, 30
 Mooney, John, 30
 Mooney, Thomas, 30
 Mooney's Family Hotel, 30
 Moore Park Hotel, 58
 Moore, William Henry, solicitor, 32
 Morris, George, 58
 Morris, S. L., 65
 Mount View Hotel, 45
 Moussa, Said, 34
 Mulvey, Peter, 28
 Mulvey's Family Hotel, 28
 Murphy, James, 70
 Murphy, Luke, 53
National Security Act, 70, 75, 77
 Nestle & Anglo Swiss Condensed Milk (Australasia) Ltd, 60
 New South Wales Alliance for the Suppression of Intemperance, 5
 New South Wales Rifle Association, 54
 New South Wales Temperance Alliance, 17, 75
 New South Wales Temperance Society, 4
 Newcastle Family Hotel, 50
 North Shore Coaching College, 71
 O'Hehir, Daniel, 30
 O'Hehir, John, 37
 O'Shea, John, 66
 O'Shea's Family Hotel, 66
 O'Keefe, Harold John, 46
 O'Keefe, Marion May, 70
 Order of Good Templars, 6
 Ovington, R., LRB Secretary, 15
 Oxford hotel, 56
 Paddington Blinds and Shutters, 55
 Paddington Butts, 54
 Paddington Butts Hotel, 54
 Paddington Rifle Range, 54
 Pankhurst, Emmeline, 78
 Parker, Claude, 78
 Parkes, Henry, NSW Premier, 9
 Pelican Hotel, 37
 Pembroke Castle Hotel, 22
 Peterson, Belinda, 68
 Phelan, Patrick, 69
 Phelps, Thomas, 22
 Phillip, Governor Arthur, 3
 Platino Properties, 63
 Primrose, Archibald, 56
 Princess of Wales hotel, 47
 Prohibition (US), 1920-1933, 13
 prohibition, 1928 referendum (NSW), 17
Pure Foods Act, 54
 Pure Magik, gift shop, 34

Queen's Arms Hotel, 49
 Rechabites, Independent Order of, 6, 79
 Redfern Hotel, 68
 Regatta Hotel, Brisbane, 78
 Reilly, Edward John, 37
 Reservoir Hotel, 51
 Reservoir Street Reserve, 65
 Ribberries – Taste Australia, 37
 Rifleman's Arms Hotel, 23, 53
 Rifleman's Hotel, 53
 Roach and McDermott's café, 50
 Roosevelt, Franklin D, 14
 Rosebery (suburb), 56
 Rosebery Arms hotel, 56
 Rowe, Richard, 24
 Rowe's Family Hotel, 24
 Royal Commission on Liquor Reform, 1951, 76
 Royal George Hotel, 58
 Ryan, Henry, 44
 Sailor's Arms, 53
 Schweppes Ltd, 44
 Scott, Andrew, 56
 Scott, Arthur, 56
 Scraggs, Robert, 30
 Sellors, R. P., 15
 Senatorial Hotel, 27, 60
 Shearer, John, 54
 Shelton, R., 15
 Sheridan, John, 30
 Sheridan's Family Hotel, 30
 Sherwood, Inspector Thomas, 27, 60, 64, 69
 Shine, Julia, 66
 Shine, William, 66
 Shipp Inn, 78
 Shohen, Lee, 34
 Sinclair, Arthur, 24
 six o'clock closing, 12
 six o'clock swill, 12
 Smyth, Phillip, 54
 sobriety test, 17
 Somers, Annie Maria, 33
 Somers, Frederick, 33
 Sons of Temperance, 6
 Sorlie, Charles Henry, 51
 Spencer, Archibald Fenton, 47
 Spiegel, George, 54
 St. David's Church, 23
 Standard Brewery, 67
 Standard Hotel, 62
 Sterling on Buckingham, hairdressers, 69
 Stooke, Edwin, 15
 Surry Hills Hotel, 64
 Sydney Police Centre, 73
 Symonds, Lionel, 57
 Tasmanian Temperance Alliance, 5
 Te Aro Hotel, 27, 66
 Tearo Residential, 67
 Temperance Convention, 1880, 9
 Temperance Hall, Sydney, 5
 Temperance Union, 6
 Templars, Order of Good, 6
 Thames Hotel, 68, 69
 Thana Thai Massage, 36
 The Carlisle, 65
 The Cook his Wife and Her Shoes, shoe shop,
 34
 The Rocks, 78
 Thornton, Merle, 78
 Thornton, Sigrid, 78
 Tomlinson, Reverend Charles, 75
 Tooheys Ltd, brewers, 40, 51, 67
 Tooth & Co, brewers, 23, 33, 50
 Trinity Bar, 33
 Troy, Timothy, 70
 True Britain Hotel, 70
 True Briton Hotel, 70
 Tully, William, 26
 Union Hotel, 56
 United Associations of Women in Sydney, 77
 United Licensed Victuallers' Association, 7
 Valentino's Apartments, 31
 Victoria Barracks, 54
 Victoria Hotel, Darlington, 66
 Victoria House, 32
 Victoria, Hotel, 33
 Victorian Local Option League, 17
Volstead Act (USA), 14
 Vye, Eliza Jane, 50
 Walsh, Charlotte, 33
 Walsh, John, 33
 Walsh, Michael, 56
 Walsh, Robert, 50
 Walsh's Family Hotel, 56
 Walshe, May, 66
 Watman, Mrs. E., 44
 Watt, Mr. A. R. J., KC, 33
 Webb, Charles, 31
 Webb, Walter Reginald, 64
 Welcome Home Inn, 70
 Wheels & Dollbaby, 57
 White Lion Hotel, 72
 Whitty, Phillip, 50

Wicklow Arms Hotel, 50
Wicklow Hotel, 50
Women's Christian Temperance Union, 6, 14,
79
Women's Christian Temperance Union of New
South Wales, 6

Wood, William, 62
Wow Malaysia Restaurant, 36
Wynne Prize, 52
Zaiee, M., 34
Zig Zag Hotel, 30
Zimlin, Harry, 27