

Taking the Local Option - inner Sydney pub closures, 1908



John W. Ross

Cover photograph:

Early closing referendum sign, 1916 (City of Sydney Archives)

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Foreword

Alcohol consumption was widespread in the early Australian colonies and the pub played a central role in everyday life, reflecting British society at the time. The 1830s was the decade of peak alcohol consumption, when Australian colonists were consuming four times as much spirits as the British. Early temperance groups were established to grapple with widespread public drunkenness, initially using persuasion and example to guide individuals towards sobriety.

After declining during the economic depression of the 1840s, the temperance movement revived after the prosperity of gold discoveries in the 1850s led to increased alcohol consumption. By the 1870s there were several thousand hotels operating in the colonies, and the temperance groups began to advocate for a reduction in the number of licensed premises. The *Licensing Act 1882* began the regulation of the alcohol trade and introduced a limited form of a Local Option poll in which voters could opt to veto any new licences in an electorate.

But the temperance movement really wanted hotels closed, not kept at the same number. Eventually the New South Wales Government was persuaded to set a statutory limit of liquor licences in each electorate based on population. Then the *Liquor (Amendment) Act 1905* provided for a stronger form of Local Option that could force licences in an electorate to be reduced to the statutory limit or removed altogether. The first Local Option poll at the 1907 State election was a success for the temperance movement when 64 of the 90 electorates voted to reduce the number of licences.

But temperance advocates were disappointed that the electorates with the highest concentration of disreputable pubs doggedly voted to maintain all of them, especially Surry Hills, central Sydney, Woolloomooloo and The Rocks. However, other nearby electorates did opt for reduction of licences, including those of Redfern and Alexandria (encompassing the modern suburbs of Redfern, Alexandria and Waterloo). These two electorates are the subject of this history, and the eleven closed pubs are examined in detail.

The second and third Local Option polls during the 1910 and 1913 elections were much less successful for the temperance movement, as only fourteen and sixteen electorates respectively voted to reduce their liquor licences. No electorate voted to abolish all licences in any of the three polls. But the anti-drink movement achieved a win in the early 1920s when the New South Wales Government established the Licences Reduction Board with powers to take an axe to the pub scene in the stubbornly pro-drink electorates, such as Surry Hills (where 25 pubs were closed by 1923).

Temperance achieved a further victory in 1916 when six o'clock closing was favoured in a referendum, lasting until 1955 in New South Wales. But this did not reduce the consumption of alcohol, instead concentrating it into a frenzied hour of speed drinking before closing time each night, and heralding the rise of organised crime in the bootleg alcohol trade. The temperance movement finally ran out of steam by 1928 when a prohibition referendum failed badly.

By the time early closing was finally repealed in New South Wales in 1955, Australia was a very different country from the one that implemented in during World War I. Mass migration from Mediterranean countries after World War II brought with it a more civilised view of alcohol, food and life in general. While alcohol is still seen as a social problem, it does not attract a large temperance movement like the one that campaigned so enthusiastically in the nineteenth century.

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Pubs in early Sydney

Acknowledgement of country

The author acknowledges the Gadigal people of the Eora nation upon whose ancestral lands inner Sydney is now located. He would also like to pay respect to the Elders both past, present and emerging, acknowledging them as the traditional custodians of knowledge for these lands.

Sydney expands through booms and busts

In 1792, Governor Arthur Phillip marked out the boundaries of the town of Sydney. All the area outside the town was designated for farming. In 1793, the next Governor Major Francis Grose allotted land grants to officers and other interested settlers of around 100 acres each. Surges in house-building coincided with periods of economic boom in New South Wales, starting with the gold rush in the early 1850s. Gold discoveries near Bathurst in 1851 caused a flood of new arrivals.

By the mid-1850s, a great increase of Government funds meant that road works and water schemes proceeded steadily, but a depression from the late 1850s deflated the optimism of the gold-driven early 1850s. The 1860s and 1870s were the decades of the middle classes: a growing number of skilled artisans, mechanics and shopkeepers dominated local life, and started displacing the gentry as local worthies. Much of the local economy was driven by the building trades, providing well-paid work for a wide variety of occupations.

During the 1870s, small subdivisions continued to fill out the remaining open spaces in inner Sydney. Developers still had almost a free hand, and put in very narrow streets to maximise the number of lots in a given space. The developers were not much concerned with good drainage, and largely ignored this in laying out the estates. In the 1870s, most of the area had no sewers, and drainage was usually on the surface, not underground.

Sydney's population exploded from just under 40,000 in 1851 to about 150,000 in 1871 and then to nearly 500,000 in 1901. Wool, meat and minerals joined gold as the major exports in the latter part of the nineteenth century. A drought from the mid-1880s, followed by a banking collapse in 1893 and the subsequent Great Depression, caused a downturn in the manufacturing and construction industries by the late 1880s¹.

This rapid economic expansion followed by stagnation was reflected in the rise and fall of hotel construction during this period. The result is that the nineteenth century pubs that survive to the present day were mostly constructed in the 1870s, with very few built from the 1880s onwards.

The Australian pub

In medieval England, inns evolved when people brewing their own beer produced an excess, which they then sold to invited guests in their home. In the eighteenth century, men, women and children all drank, either at the premises or by filling a jug to take home or onto the street.

Different terms denoted different establishments in England: inns provided accommodation, food and liquor to wealthier travellers, taverns provided only liquor (wine and spirits) to the local neighbourhood, and alehouses sold only beer to a poorer clientele. The various terms public house, hotel, alehouse, tavern, porterhouse and inn were all used in Australia but without the formal distinction used in England.

The development of gin shops in England in the nineteenth century changed the traditional relationship between the owner and the guest. Previously, customers were served by staff as if they were guests in the owner's home. But the gin shops brought in the bar, a counter over which bottles of gin were sold. Soon this bar was being built in public houses as well.

In Australia, the large single tap room of England was soon split into different rooms for different clientele, and the single service counter, or bar, separated the staff from the customers. The bars were the saloon bar, the lounge, the private bar and the public bar (which was always the bar closest to the street). Further regulations in the nineteenth century, introduced at various times in the different colonies, stipulated that licensed houses had to provide accommodation, and that retailing of other household items was separated from alcohol.



Figure 1 Lord Nelson Hotel, The Rocks (Wikipedia)

The United Licensed Victuallers Association was the forerunner of the Australian Hotels Association. Its name was chosen to emphasise the respectable food and accommodation aspects of hotelkeeping in the face of accusations by temperance organisations of unsavoury liquor retailing. There is a strong link between the pub, beer drinking and national identity in Australia. Statistically, we are more of a nation of tea drinkers, but it's hard to imagine Slim Dusty singing about A Cafe with No Tea, rather than A Pub with no Beer.

From the earliest colonial days, pubs have been at the heart of Australian social history. They have provided social activity, sporting events, entertainment and venues for political meetings, clubs and organisations. Historians writing social histories of Australia have found how involved the pub has been in every aspect of Australian life: politics, religion, arts, transport, work, trade, roads, and education².

In colonial Australia, the pub served a number of purposes that are not required now: they had to provide accommodation and meals for travellers (and usually stabling for their horses). They were required to maintain a lamp over the front door at a time when streets were not well lit. Before morgues were established in the 1880s, inquests were commonly held in hotels. The body was stored in the cool cellar or outhouse of a nearby pub while the Coroner would assemble a jury of

twelve eligible men to determine the cause of death, identify the person and determine if a crime had been committed.

Sports and pubs grow together

In 1851, the British army established a cricket ground to the south of present-day Victoria Barracks, known from 1854 as the Garrison Ground. When the British military withdrew from Victoria Barracks in 1870, the ground became known as the Military and Civil Ground. Club rugby union was first played there the same year.

With the closure of the Albert Ground in Redfern in the 1870s, the New South Wales Cricket Association began regular use of the Military and Civil Ground. The Association took over the ground's administration and renamed it to the Association Ground in 1876³. The ground was given its present name of the Sydney Cricket Ground in 1894. The Cricketers' Arms Hotel in Fitzroy Street Surry Hills and the Bat and Ball Hotel in Cleveland Street Redfern (formerly the Duke of Cleveland Hotel) were named with an eye to attracting custom from cricket players and spectators.

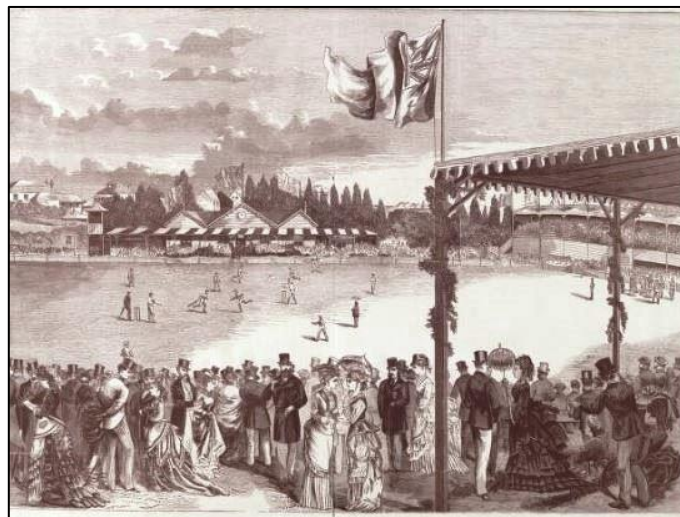


Figure 2 Albert Cricket Ground 1876 (National Library of Australia)

Cricket was played regularly in the Cleveland Paddock (now Prince Alfred Park) from 1850 with the formation of the Royal Victoria Club⁴. The competition expanded through the 1850s to include teams from industry groups⁵. A visit to New South Wales by the All-England cricket eleven in 1862 resulted in an increasing interest in the sport⁶.

Despite its regular use as a cricket ground for almost fifteen years, the Cleveland Paddock was not popular with players because of its unevenness, and in October 1864 the Albert Cricket Ground was opened in Redfern by the Governor Sir John Young⁷. The new ground featured good facilities for both spectators and players, and was located to the east of present-day Redfern Oval.

The Albert Ground was home to the Albert Cricket Club, which could boast three teams of eleven players, including the greatest bowler of the day, Fred "The Demon" Spofforth. The ground closed in the late 1870s when the Military and Civil Ground at Moore Park came into use.

The Carrington Hotel in Bourke Street Surry Hills was previously named the Carrington Grounds Hotel in 1888. The name was taken from the Carrington Athletic Grounds across the road. This

sports field was established in 1886 and named after its patron, Lord Carrington, Governor of New South Wales from 1885 to 1890. A nearby hotel, the Pembroke Castle Hotel, a stone's throw from the Carrington on the corner of Arthur and Alexander Streets, was renamed the Athletic Club Hotel in 1886, no doubt to attract thirsty runners and spectators from the athletic grounds (those not already in the Carrington Grounds Hotel).

Pubs in the nineteenth century were closely associated with sports. They often had their own cricket teams that played industry-based teams and other pub teams, held meetings at their local pub and celebrated wins and commiserated losses over a beer or two.

The temperance movement in New South Wales

Peak alcohol and voluntary temperance

Maximum alcohol consumption in the Australian colonies occurred in the late 1830s, when liquor was widely available and pubs opened to midnight⁸. Until the 1860s, Australians drank considerably more alcohol than the British, particularly spirits. Spirit drinking in the 1830s was four times as high as Britain, mostly 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)⁹.

80% 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 one reason for the enormous drinking levels¹⁰. Governor Arthur Phillip was forced to issue the first liquor licences by the end of his time in New South Wales in 1792, in a vain effort to reduce the booming trade in smuggled rum. 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.

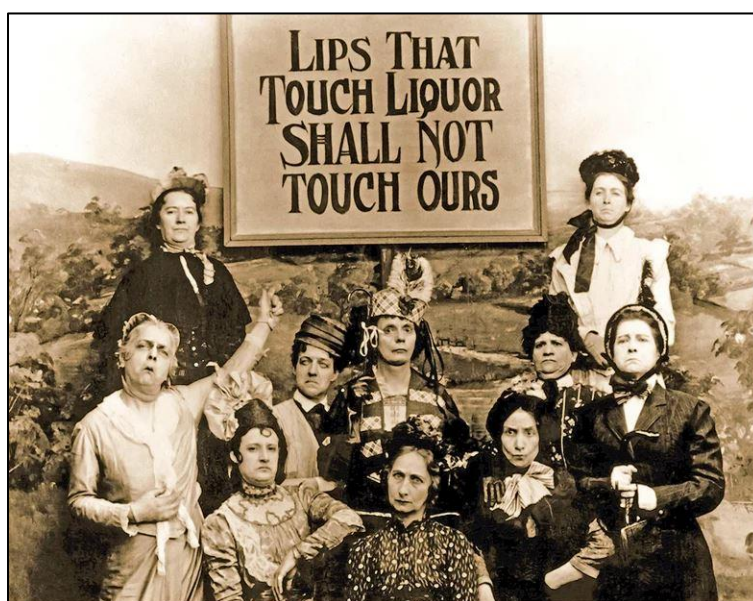


Figure 3 Prohibition poster 1901 (Etsy.com)

The temperance movement was an international, organised and popular campaign against alcohol, which was widely seen as the root cause of social ills, and was the largest social movement of the nineteenth century. In the early days of the movement, alcohol problems were assumed to be 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 abstinence¹¹.

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 Sir 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 Governor¹².

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 ever lecture in Melbourne) and issued their own magazines to publicise the cause¹³. 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 a decline in the movement were already present in the early 1840s. As the abstinence societies grew, support for the Temperance Society dropped. 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 faded 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 time¹⁴.

Temperance looks to government for action

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 societies¹⁵, which began to form alliances to strengthen the movement, such as the New South Wales Alliance for the Suppression of Intemperance in 1857¹⁶.



Figure 4 Melbourne Total Abstinence Society c1880 (Downies.com)

During this period, there was a change of emphasis towards lobbying governments to ban or at least better regulate the sale and consumption of alcohol. Resorting to legislation was justified by claims that the voluntary abstinence principle had failed, and the hotels were creating twenty new drunks for every one saved by the temperance societies¹⁷. To mark the temperance resurgence in New South Wales, an imposing Temperance Hall was constructed in Pitt Street in 1858¹⁸.

Evangelical missionaries, such as Matthew Burnett (1839-1896) from Yorkshire, forged a close link between the temperance movement and the non-conformist Protestant churches. In particular, the Wesleyan Methodists, Baptists and Presbyterians came to dominate the Australian temperance campaigns by the late 1880s. 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 abstinence¹⁹.

The temperance groups had good reason to be concerned: 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. 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 (ULVA) was established that year by hotel owners to form a united front in order to combat the threat to their livelihood from temperance advocates²⁰. Another impact of the temperance movement was that in the 1880s a significant number of hotels around the country were either purpose-built coffee palaces or converted to them, 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.

Local Option polls, 1907-1913

Nineteenth century Local Option

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 voters in an electorate could vote to increase or decrease its number of licensed premises²¹. The push for a Local Option vote 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. Legislation in Victoria in 1870 allowed a municipality to object to new liquor licences based on the number of existing licences²².

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 system was considered inefficient and unwieldy after 168 polls produced only 217 hotel closures in the twenty years to 1906, costing the State's taxpayers £212,771 in compensation. By comparison, 513 hotels died a natural death during this time. The number of hotels closed by Local Option was constrained by the extravagant compensation paid out of a fund that was very limited. The Victorian Government had to refuse a number of petitions for closure due to the compensation fund running out.

In New South Wales, Premier Henry Parkes' *Licensing Act 1882* was a success for the temperance movement. As well as creating Licensing Districts, Special Licensing Courts and Licensing Inspectors, it included a limited form of Local Option, in which each electorate could opt 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 campaigns²³.

The Report of the Intoxicating Drink Inquiry Commission in 1888 recommended extending the franchise for Local Option voting to Parliamentary electors, with licensing districts rearranged to correspond with electoral districts. A statutory number of liquor licences was to be set in the ratio of one per 80 electors in Sydney and one per 100 electors in the rest of New South Wales. The *Liquor Act 1898* consolidated former Acts, and provided that a local option vote should be taken every three years in every municipality, at the election of the aldermen in which ratepayers voted for or against two questions:

- Whether any new publicans' licences should be granted in the following three years.
 - Whether any removals of publicans' licences should be allowed during the same period.
- Over 55% vote was required to carry the negative vote.

Only a small number of electors voted, and it was evident there was very little interest taken in the matter, except by dedicated temperance advocates on the one hand and those interested in the alcohol trade on the other, while the general public was apathetic on the subject. The legal drinking age under this Act was 16²⁴.

The Victorian experience

In 1904, a Local Option poll was held in North Melbourne²⁵. The result was not deemed a success, as a very large amount of compensation was paid: £50,000 for 37 closed hotels²⁶, and was vigorously contested in the courts, dragging the process out²⁷. One area of complaint was that the remaining 57 hotels in North Melbourne would simply inherit the customers of the closed hotels, greatly benefiting those 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 the intention of the whole exercise)²⁸.

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.



Figure 5 Local Option parade c1908 (Art Gallery of South Australia)

This led the Victorian Government to legislate a better way of getting rid of unwanted hotels²⁹. 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 were 2,451 over the statutory limit³⁰. This was at a time when the Victorian population (after the 1881 census) was just over 862,000³¹, 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 just about be squeezed into all of them at once! But since 1885, only 217 hotels 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)³², 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 magistrates³³.

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 £1,100,000³⁴. A statewide Victorian opinion poll in 1920 created two dry zones (which remain in place in a residual form today), and closed around 200 hotels³⁵.

The New South Wales Liquor (Amendment) Act 1905

By the beginning of the twentieth century, the debate on liquor reform in New South Wales had continued vigorously for three decades, but twenty years had passed since the anti-drink movement had won substantial legislation. Despite this, crusaders had not been discouraged from their commitment to full Local Option together with a range of additional restrictions on the trade, which says a great deal about their idealism. The movement was centred on the Local Option League, which worked to direct public and political support for the movement's policies.

In 1905, the efforts of the campaigners were rewarded with the passage of the *Liquor (Amendment) Act 1905*, sponsored by the Liberal Reform Government of Joseph Carruthers. This measure was the most comprehensive effort yet to apply the policies of the anti-drink movement to the control of the drink trade. The legal drinking age was raised from 16 to 18 and the issuing of any new liquor licences was frozen.

The Act also introduced full Local Option by enabling parliamentary electors to vote to terminate all public house licences without financial compensation to their owners. The legislation also implemented a range of harsh penalties on publicans and drinkers which were intended to curb drinking by pushing it further into the realm of anti-social or deviant behaviour. The political context at the time saw the "social morality" movement and the enfranchisement of women create a climate favouring liquor reform.

The *Liquor (Amendment) Act 1905* represented a determined assault on existing patterns of drinking. Long-serving temperance campaigners certainly believed that a great victory had been won. Reverend Francis Boyce optimistically told the *Daily Telegraph* that the legislation should pave the way for the prohibition of the sale of liquor in every electorate in the country³⁶. Obviously, publicans did not welcome the measure³⁷.

The Act specified that a vote of electors shall be taken in every electorate on the day of the poll at each New South Wales general election, and the vote in any electorate shall take effect within that electorate. The electors shall decide either:

- A: That the number of licences in an electorate continue (continuance).
- B: That the number of licences existing in the electorate be reduced (reduction).
- C: That no licences be granted in the electorate (abolition).

Resolution A or B is carried if a majority of votes are in favour of any resolution. Resolution C is carried if 60% of votes are in favour. If less than such a number is cast in resolution C, the votes in favour of resolution C shall be added to the votes given for resolution B. If resolution B is carried, the number of licences shall be reduced, and may be reduced to 75% of the existing number of licences. The Local Option vote was optional, and the votes of at least 30% of electors were required for any resolution to be carried.

A special court would be constituted for the purpose of effecting a reduction under the Act. A district court judge would be appointed by the Governor and would be the president of the court, as well as a minimum of one other member. If there were a large number of reductions (more than twelve), the number was reduced by two, or more for larger numbers of reductions.

No financial compensation of hotel owners and licensees was specified in the Act. Instead, a time compensation method was used, where the date of closure was to be within a range of three years (for freehold hotels) up to eight years (or to the expiry of leases longer than three years) from the date of notification in the *Government Gazette*³⁸.

1907 Local Option vote

The 1907 Local Option vote was the occasion of a sustained battle between pro- and anti-drink forces. The temperance movement threw all its effort into a highly organised and energetic campaign for the no-licence (prohibition) option. The New South Wales Alliance was well supported by hundreds of temperance societies and lodges scattered throughout the State³⁹, and the Protestant churches also gave active support to the campaign.



Figure 6 Victorian Prohibition League poster 1930 (RMIT museum)

Publicans, on the other hand, regarded the local option campaign as a serious challenge to their livelihoods, and in the year leading up to the referendum steps were taken to develop a unified organisation. The various liquor bodies, including the Brewers' Association, the Aerated Water and Cordial Manufacturers' Association, the ULVA, the Sydney Bonded Stores Association, and the Sydney Bottle Manufacturers Association came together to form the Liquor Trade Defence Union.

The Union tried to press upon the public its views on the importance of the liquor trade. It stressed the large number of employees who earned their living by the trade (some 31,000) and the revenue government derived from it, amounting in 1904-05 to a staggering £4,000,000⁴⁰.

The 1907 New South Wales general election was held on 10 September, and the results of the Local Option vote held at the same time were:

- Total votes for continuance 206,844, reduction 74,868, no licences 175,984⁴¹.
- The “no licence” resolution was not carried in any electorate.
- Reduction of licences was carried in 64 of the 90 electorates.
- The special Reduction Court subsequently terminated 293 hotels and 46 wine licences.

Following the poll, both the temperance movement and the liquor trade expressed satisfaction with the result. Mr J. J. Power, President of the ULVA, was gratified the no-licence option had not been carried in any electorate, and especially pleased with the outcome in working class districts. He pointed out that in every district where there was a congestion of hotels, continuation had been carried. He also noted that in the electorates of the working man, where he made the public house his club and used the hotel all the time, the vote was for continuation of licences, even where there was an excess of hotels.

Mr. Power also noted that in the wealthier electorates, such as Gordon, Petersham and Ashfield, where the rich man had his club and home cellar, the hotel was no convenience to him, so he and his wife voted for reduction. This showed that the workers in the cities were in favour of the hotels, and the men and women who never used the hotels supported reduction or abolition.

Reverend Boyce also expressed delight with the result. He pointed to a large majority of electorates that had favoured reduction and expressed some satisfaction with the support registered for the no-licence option. This approached 70,000 votes in Sydney, but was predominantly in the wealthier suburban electorates. However, Boyce was disappointed that the “slum areas overrode the votes in the better parts”⁴².

The most obvious failure of the 1905 Act was in its inability to greatly reduce hotel numbers and in particular to weed out the more disreputable establishments, which was the goal that Local Option hoped to achieve. Although the first ballot held in 1907 did pave the way for a small reduction in hotel numbers, the returns indicated that the temperance vote failed to secure a majority in the inner city areas where the least reputable establishments were located⁴³. In particular, the electorates of Darling Harbour, Pyrmont, Surry Hills, King (central Sydney), Belmore (inner Sydney), and Phillip (central Sydney) voted in favour of continuation of licences⁴⁴.

In the decade following the enactment of the 1905 *Liquor (Amendment) Act*, the New South Wales Alliance (which had taken over from the Local Option League now that its objective had been won) as the central body of the temperance movement, concentrated on winning support for the no-licence campaign at future local option polls⁴⁵.

1910 Local Option vote

The 1910 New South Wales general election was held on 14 October. The results of the Local Option poll taken at the same time were:

- Continuance 324,861, reduction 37,825, no licence 216,523.
- Only 14 of the 90 electorates favoured reduction of licences, and no electorate favoured “no licences”.
- The Reduction Court subsequently terminated 28 hotels and 5 wine licences⁴⁶.

Once again, the campaign for prohibition had failed as no electorate favoured abolition of licences. In addition, support for reduction of licences had greatly declined, which was seen as a win for the pubs and brewers. Following this disappointing result, temperance advocates questioned the wisdom of the no-licence campaign, and said that attention should be transferred to the aim of closing hotels earlier⁴⁷.

The electorate of Redfern, which had voted for reduction of licences in 1907, voted strongly for continuance of their licences in 1910: continuance 4,230 votes, reduction 486 votes, no licences 1,615 votes⁴⁸. Surry Hills voted even more strongly for continuation of licences (4242/587/1374), but the wealthier electorate of Petersham voted narrowly for reduction⁴⁹.

1913 Local Option vote

The 1913 New South Wales general election was held on 6 December. The last Local Option vote was held on the same day. The results were:

- Continuance 382,223, reduction 44,805 no licence 246,435.
- 16 electorates favoured reduction of licences and 74 favoured continuance.
- The special Reduction Court subsequently terminated 23 hotels and 7 wine licences.

This result was much the same as in the 1910, and was seen as another win for the pubs, despite a combined campaign by the temperance groups. The movement thought that better co-ordination would bring better results than in 1910⁵⁰.

Prohibitionists acknowledged that almost everything that could be done by Local Option polls had been achieved by the time of the 1913 vote. The temperance movement then decided to push for early closing hours as the next campaign (at the time, most hotels closed at 11pm or 11:30pm)⁵¹.

Early closing, 1916

The referendum

Early closing of hotels had been policy of the Temperance Union since at least 1911, which sought to bring public houses in line with the closing time of shops. But the reform to limit opening hours fell into abeyance until World War I⁵².

Support for 6pm closing was galvanised at the Australasian Temperance Conference in Adelaide in March 1914. At that conference, the ineffectiveness of Local Option in removing public houses was discussed⁵³. Delegates realised that prohibition could not be secured under the 60% majority required to carry no-licence in each electorate. The three polls confirmed that support for reduction and no-licence was strongest in the wealthier suburban districts where there were already fewer pubs.

Delegates at the 1914 conference voted to adopt 6pm closing as official policy, and the New South Wales Alliance strengthened this commitment at their annual convention in May 1914. The Alliance saw early closing not as a temporary wartime measure, but as a permanent social reform. The temperance campaigners knew that the climate of World War I would aid their efforts by bringing to prominence the role of the liquor problem in the struggle for national efficiency⁵⁴. On the other hand, publicans pointed to the importance of the night-time trade for their survival⁵⁵.

In the event, a serious riot among soldiers at the Liverpool military training camp in February 1916 was the catalyst that persuaded the Labor government to hold a referendum on closing hours. The riot involved soldiers on a daytime spree of nearby hotels which caused considerable damage to property. The incident fuelled public outrage and increased the call for some curtailment of the availability of liquor. The Liverpool riot came in the wake of similar disturbances in Melbourne, and formed part of a concern that liquor was affecting recruiting and sapping the health and discipline of the Australian forces.

The results of the early closing referendum were a triumph for the temperance movement. 79 of the 90 electorates in New South Wales favoured 6pm closing. There was no doubt the wartime conditions favoured the 6pm option, as campaigners could exploit patriotism and sacrifice to bolster their call for early closing. Most of the 6pm rhetoric blended the need for wartime sacrifice with the ideals of social reform, and was very effective. The Protestant churches took an active part in the referendum, marking a return by many clergy to active participation in a temperance movement which had waned during the disappointment of the Local Option polls.

The results of the referendum suggested that the wealthy suburban areas voted solidly for 6pm, while the inner city working class areas voted mainly for 9pm (the hour advocated by publicans). The alcohol trade campaigned widely for 9pm, thinking this would have a greater chance than would 11pm. In the electorate of Alexandria, fewer than 500 votes separated 9pm from 6pm and a similarly small margin favoured 9pm in Redfern.

The referendum required an overall majority in favour of 6pm and not necessarily majorities in every electorate as demanded for local option polls. To achieve this, the New South Wales Alliance covered the entire State with a network of organisations to mobilise voters. 250 committees were

functioning by May 1916. Each one had the responsibility of overseeing smaller sub-committees which were to supervise each polling booth⁵⁶.

Leaflets, posters and house-to-house canvassing were used. Such a far-reaching campaign was expensive to conduct, so committees were also responsible for fund-raising. Members of the Alliance relied principally on donations, and considerable funding was raised. On the other hand, publicans had difficulty conducting an effective campaign. The liquor trade could not easily show that their business served the best interests of the people. The publicans relied on the argument of liberty, where workers were encouraged to view later closing as entertainment with moderate drinking for a few hours after they were freed from the tasks of work.

The drink trade also made the argument that unemployment would follow early closing, and estimated that between 3,000 and 5,000 hotel workers would lose their jobs⁵⁷. But the Alliance maintained that this was outweighed by the number of men continually thrown out of work or crippled in industrial accidents brought on by excessive night-time drinking⁵⁸.

The impact of early closing

The publicans claimed that early closing would increase home drinking and sly grog selling. In the event, the persistence of early closing after World War I had important effects on the character of the drink trade. These changes were cumulative and not much noticed at the time, but it is clear that the decade after early closing commenced saw no abandonment of traditional drinking customs as the temperance movement had hoped.



Figure 7 The six o'clock swill (*The Daily Telegraph*, 13 February 1947)

Indeed, the Act simply encouraged a greater diversity of drinking venues. It also intensified the criminal character of the alcohol traffic. Once these facts were more fully appreciated by the late 1920s, public support for more restrictive legislation fell sharply, as the results of the 1928 prohibition referendum showed.

Perhaps the most renowned effect of early closing was the creation of the notorious six o'clock swill, and there is strong evidence to suggest drinking habits became less refined in response to the shorter drinking time available before closing. But a previous eleven o'clock swill existed, although it

attracted less notice than the hurried six o'clock swill when people were on the streets going home from work.

The main point here is that the peak hour of frantic speed drinking was not conducive to diminishing the incidence of drunkenness. 6pm closing not only ensured the continuation of the sly grog trade but was responsible for encouraging an undesirable criminal element. Newspapers alleged that the illegal trade flourished in response to early closing⁵⁹. Ironically, many of the operators of the sly grog trade did not differ greatly from their customers in the inner city, where small shopkeepers tried to supplement their meagre income from groceries and the like by selling beer illegally to friends and customers.

The historian Alfred McCoy wrote that organised crime in Australia emerged in Sydney during the early 1920s. The city had all the elements for the formation of a professional criminal world: a colonial legacy of strong anti-police sentiment, a weak port economy with insufficient employment, impoverished slum dwellers who saw crime as an economic necessity, and a police force incapable or unwilling to stop the growth of organised crime⁶⁰.

Geographically this underworld was located in inner city slum districts, particularly Surry Hills. The narrow lanes and alleyways offered a comparatively safe field for the nefarious activities of the underworld. The laws that made liquor, opium, gambling and prostitution illegal gave rise to organised criminal activities. Liquor was an obvious field for criminals, as the demand from after-hours drinking was such that large profits could be made.

Smith's Weekly estimated that an average sly grog seller in the early 1920s could reap at least £600 profit each year⁶¹. Well-organised sly grog sellers developed sophisticated techniques to avoid detention, and paid associates ensured that an illegal publican had ample warning of approaching customers and police⁶².

Usually, police raiding a venue selling alcohol after hours would confiscate what they found but not disturb the patrons. The police were brought into even further disrepute administering the early closing law. It was obviously difficult to eliminate a trade that was widely accepted, whose operations could be cleverly disguised and which became organised and profitable.

Despite its long-term problems, early closing was undoubtedly an outstanding victory for the temperance movement. Its introduction was greatly aided by the climate of war, but it owed much to the zeal and organisation of members of the New South Wales Alliance. However, the evidence suggests that restricted drinking hours intensified the criminal character of the drink trade. The temperance campaign remained active for another decade, during which time crusaders made a final attempt to secure legislative prohibition for the retail sale of alcohol⁶³.

Licences Reduction Board, 1920-23

Setting up the 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 hotels⁶⁴. 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, initially 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) electorates⁶⁵. 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 489⁶⁶. The statutory number in the Sydney electorate was 103, and 78 of the 314 hotels could be closed (that is, about 25% of them)⁶⁷. Compensation would be paid to owners and licensees, from a levy on alcohol sales by hotels.

The Board was to operate for 3 years from January 1920. 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 months⁶⁸. 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 hotels⁶⁹. 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 equivalent⁷⁰.

The Board gets to work

In August 1920, the Licences Reduction Board began to inspect the 314 hotels in the Sydney electorate⁷¹. By November, all of the hotels in the electorate had been inspected and sixteen hotels had been deprived of their licences, nine of them in Surry Hills⁷². The compensation for these hotels was announced in the *Government Gazette* the following April⁷³ and the delicensed hotels were ordered to close by 30 June 1921⁷⁴. However, the New South Wales State Records files for the closed hotels showed that the hotels usually closed a few months after this⁷⁵.

By July 1923, after about three years of operation, the *Sydney Morning Herald* reported "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' time⁷⁶. 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. 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 work of 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 1920⁷⁷.

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%⁷⁸. This was by a combination of Local Option reductions, the Licences Reduction Board, natural attrition, and hotels voluntarily closing.

Prohibition referendum, 1928

The temperance campaign remained active for another decade after early closing was achieved in 1916, during which time crusaders made a final attempt to secure legislative prohibition for the retail sale of alcohol. In practice, calling for a referendum on prohibition was the only avenue of protest left to the New South Wales Alliance and its supporters. As the earlier achievements of Local Option and early closing were satisfactory enough, few possibilities remained to them by democratic means to abolish the drink trade.

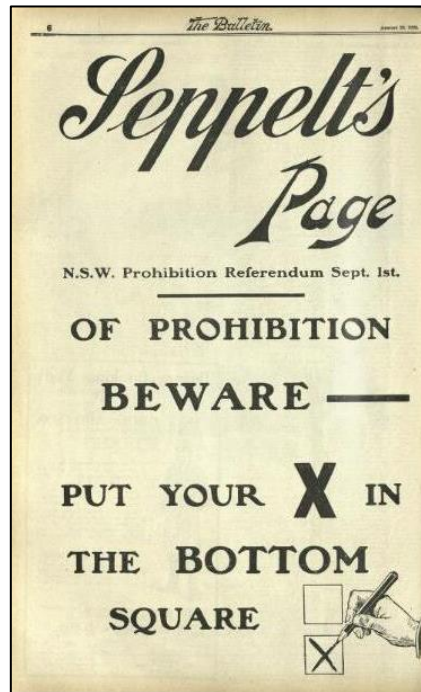


Figure 8 Prohibition referendum advert, 1928 (*Bulletin*, 29 August 1928)

The Alliance campaigned from 1917 for a referendum on prohibition, which was granted when the William Holman government passed their *Liquor (Amendment) Act 1919*. This provided, among other things, for a poll to be held no later than eighteen months hence. In addition to a referendum, the Government intended to create a Licences Reduction Board similar to one that operated in Victoria from 1905.

The temperance movement in New South Wales derived enormous encouragement from the enactment of nationwide prohibition in the United States of America in 1920. But after enthusiastically campaigning for the referendum, the Alliance was left stunned when the new Labor Government of John Storey announced a postponement of the referendum, citing the grave financial situation⁷⁹. Very large Government loans were to fall due in 1923 and 1924, and if prohibition was favoured, the extra financial burden would cripple the country, according to Storey⁸⁰.

The Alliance was deeply angered by the government's betrayal, and started to get organised to influence the 1922 election. The new Nationalist ministry of Sir George Fuller committed to a referendum in 1928, supposedly to allow the temperance movement sufficient time to maximise

public support for prohibition. But events showed that the passage of time fatally diminished any chance the Alliance might have had in the early 1920s.

By the mid-1920s, the temperance movement was on the decline, and by the time the vote was taken in September 1928, the crusade against alcohol was all but a dead issue. Attendance at Alliance meetings had dropped from 114,334 at 1,409 meetings in 1922 to 39,000 at 616 meetings in 1926⁸¹. In the lead-up to the referendum, the press mainly gave coverage to the financial burden of compensation for the State if prohibition was carried, estimated at £20 million⁸². The results of the poll represented a massive rejection of prohibition. About 336,000 people voted for prohibition and about 833,000 voted against it. Not a single electorate carried prohibition.

There are many indications of the changing character of Australian society in the 1920s. After the tremendous shaking up experienced during the war, most of the changes involved a desire for personal liberation and enjoyment. New things were the increasing use of cocaine and the growing popularity of night clubs offering jazz music and dancing. There was also the new phenomenon of liberated women, symbolised by an increase in cigarette smoking, stylish fashions⁸³ and greater entry into professional careers⁸⁴.

Public drinking among women was becoming more commonplace. The reliance by temperance groups on women to help win anti-liquor legislation was no longer there in the modern post-war age compared to a decade earlier⁸⁵. The demise of the Protestant churches also affected the temperance movement, and the *Sydney Morning Herald* commented in 1925 that churches and pulpits alike were difficult to fill – the flock had dwindled⁸⁶.

The end of early closing

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 restoration⁸⁷.

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 city⁸⁸.

But public opinion was that extending closing time by such a short amount would not adequately deal with the six o'clock swill⁸⁹. 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 restoration⁹⁰.

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 | 15,183 ⁹¹ . |

This was a conclusive vote to maintain the early closing 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 closing⁹². Newspapers frequently railed against the barbarism of the "six o'clock swill" in a civilised society.

The New South Wales Government established a Royal Commission on Liquor Licensing in July 1951, headed 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 company⁹³.



Figure 9 Ten o'clock closing returns, 1955 (timegents.com)

A referendum in November 1954 voted narrowly to restore 10pm closing in New South Wales⁹⁴. 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 since⁹⁵.

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 hour⁹⁶.

The temperance movement moves on

The influence of the temperance movement declined during the 1950s 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 Women's Christian Temperance Union continued 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 banning alcohol advertising at sporting events. The New South Wales Licences Reduction Board was eventually replaced by the Liquor Administration Board in 1982⁹⁷.

The Redfern and Alexandria electorates

The two electorates that are the subject of this study cover the modern suburbs of Redfern, Alexandria and Waterloo. While all three share a history of early working class residential and industrial development during the early era of European settlement, each has a distinctive enough character to warrant separate description.

Redfern

The suburb is named after the surgeon and emancipated convict William Redfern, who was granted 100 acres in the area by Governor Lachlan Macquarie in 1817 as a reward for his outstanding contribution to public health in the early colony. His most notable neighbours were Daniel Cooper, who built Cleveland House in 1822 and John Baptist, who ran a nursery and seed business south of Cleveland Street from the 1830s.

Redfern became a Municipality in 1859, and eventually merged with the City of Sydney in 1949. The suburb has many fine examples of Victorian terraced housing, similar to Surry Hills and Paddington and shares a large public housing commission estate with Waterloo.

In the 1960s and 1970s, Redfern became a flourishing urban Aboriginal community, and was the birthplace of the Aboriginal civil rights movement in Australia. The establishment of Aboriginal-founded and controlled services in the 1970s, such as the Aboriginal Medical Service, the Aboriginal Legal Service and the Aboriginal Housing Company, have provided inspiration for self-determination in many Aboriginal communities nationwide⁹⁸.

Alexandria

The Parish of Alexandria was first recorded in the *Government Gazette* in 1834⁹⁹, and was named after the Battle of Alexandria in Egypt, fought between Napoleon's army and the British Expeditionary Force in 1801. It is often reported that the suburb was named after Princess Alexandra, wife of King Edward VII, but she was not born until 1844, well after the parish was named (and was not notable until she became Queen in 1901). The Municipality of Alexandria was formed in 1868 after separating from the Municipality of Waterloo.

Alexandria was once an area of wetlands, dunes and thick scrub, with forest in places. The area later became an industrial district of factories and polluting industries. But one of the first uses by settlers was as market gardens, mostly by Chinese immigrants. Another area was a 30-acre grant in 1822 to J. King in 1822 for the purposes of growing wheat, known as the King's Clear Estate. Vegetables were later grown beside Shea's Creek and sent to the Sydney market in George Street.

The suburb originally consisted mostly of terraced housing that was demolished for light industrial use and warehousing, uses that continue today. At various times, Alexandria was the location of four boot factories, two tallow refineries, one smelting works, one vinegar works, the Federal Match Factory and Hadfield's Steel Works (which operated into the 1970s). In the early colony, most of Alexandria was owned by the emancipated convict William Hutchinson, who was granted 1,400 acres of land south of Sydney in 1823. He sold his Waterloo Estate to Daniel Cooper and Solomon Levy (successful merchants who were also former convicts) in 1825.

Metters and Company, makers of the famous Early Kooka stove, relocated from Newtown to Alexandria in 1908, and by the 1930s occupied ten hectares and employed thousands of people. The first hotel in Alexandria was Thomas Rostron's Waterloo Retreat Hotel in 1855, and by 1886 there were 22 hotels within a two-kilometre radius. As a working-class suburb, pubs were an important part of the social life of Alexandria¹⁰⁰.



Figure 10 Metters Early Kooka stove (Powerhouse Museum)

By 1943, Alexandria was the largest industrial district in Australia, and was known as the Birmingham of Australia, with everything from bricks to aeroplanes being manufactured in 550 factories in an area of only 1,000 acres. The Green Square district in the north-east of the suburb, now undergoing gentrification. A large urban renewal project is constructing modern retail, business and medium-high density residential developments.

Waterloo

The suburb is to the south of Redfern and was named after the Battle of Waterloo, Napoleon's final defeat by a coalition of forces led by the Duke of Wellington in 1815. From the 1820s, Waterloo was the location of a growing number of industrial operations, including the Waterloo Flour Mills owned by William Hutchinson and Daniel Cooper. The Dunkerley Hat Hills, maker of the famous Akubra brand, operated from a large factory in Bourke Street Waterloo from 1918 until moving to Kempsey in 1973.



Figure 11 Dunkerley Hat Mills Waterloo (Akubra website)

Historically, Waterloo is a working-class district, but since the early 2000s the area has undergone some gentrification with technology-oriented firms being established there. The suburb also maintains a large housing commission estate shared with Redfern that houses some 4,000 tenants. The Waterloo estate has been earmarked for a facelift, with the older flats and tower blocks being replaced by large luxury apartment blocks mixing social housing with affordable housing next to a new Metro railway station being constructed nearby.

Closed Pubs in the Redfern electorate

At the time of the 1907 election, there were 23 hotels in the Redfern electorate¹⁰¹. The *Government Gazette* in February 1908 announced that six of the hotels in the electorate had recent licence violations and would be examined by the Reduction Court for possible closure¹⁰².

Of those examined, five hotel licences were cancelled. The Cleveland Inn (now known as Bar Cleveland) on the corner of Bourke and Cleveland Streets and the Courthouse Hotel on Redfern and George Streets both gave evidence¹⁰³ and were not closed. So the announced list of six licences was not final (this also happened in the electorate of Alexandria, where the announced list of hotels to be examined in April 1908 proved to be incomplete).

Unlike the Licence Reduction Board hearings in the early 1920s, transcripts of the Local Option court hearings in 1908 are not available, as the New South Wales State Archives does not retain any of these records before 1920. So it is not clear why one pub was closed while others were not. Factors taken into consideration were a hotel's record of licence violations, its location (fronting a main street rated better than a back street), the amount of accommodation provided (the more the better), passing trade from nearby industries (also the more the better) and the number of other hotels in close proximity (the fewer the better).

The general test that was often mentioned was whether the hotel in question was a "convenience to the locality", and while lawyers argued in the early hearings about the meaning of this, it seemed to be an overall rating based on the above factors, with some factors given greater weight than others.

Reading the evidence given by the various parties could be a bit surreal because the owner, the licensee and every customer invariably swore that the pub in question was the finest the world had ever seen and an ornament to the neighbourhood, while the police Licensing Inspector would frequently say the exact opposite, rattling off a litany of complaints such as out-of-hours trading, prostitution, gambling, drunkenness, watered-down drinks, general shabbiness and the disreputable character of the both licensee and the customers!

Boundary Stone Hotel

Address: 648 Bourke Street, Redfern (on the south-east corner of Cleveland Street).

In June 1837, George Segerson was granted a new licence for the Boundary Stone Hotel, on the south side of Cleveland Street just east of Bourke Street¹⁰⁴. The 1854 City of Sydney map shows the building located near present-day Stanley Street¹⁰⁵. The building was in a block of 3.5 acres of well-cultivated garden¹⁰⁶. This is probably the area bounded by Cleveland Street, Stanley Street, Chelsea Street and Bourke Street, which is about 40 by 110 metres (roughly 3.5 acres).

The hotel was named after one of the boundary stones located nearby at the time. Governor Sir Richard Bourke declared Sydney a town in 1832 and had eight engraved stones installed at the corners of the town boundaries. This stone, which is now in poor condition, has reportedly been moved several times and is currently situated in Moore Park, on the south-east corner of Cleveland and South Dowling Streets¹⁰⁷.

The licence was transferred to James Morland in January 1838¹⁰⁸, and then to John Robinson in 1840¹⁰⁹. The new landlord soon instigated sporting activities at the pub, starting with a grand pigeon match where the shooters competed for the prize of a “splendid air gun”¹¹⁰.

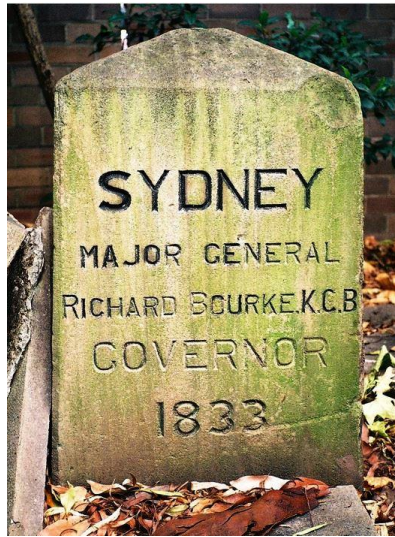


Figure 12 Sydney Town boundary stone (Dictionary of Sydney)

In November 1845, John Robinson announced the opening of a new bowling green “for the amusement of lovers of the delightful and healthy game of bowls”. A club was formed and met for play every Saturday afternoon, while the green was open to the public at other times¹¹¹. Thomas Shaw’s Woolpack Inn on Parramatta Road Petersham had opened the first bowling green three months earlier, but the Boundary Stone Inn was the first to establish a bowling club in New South Wales¹¹².

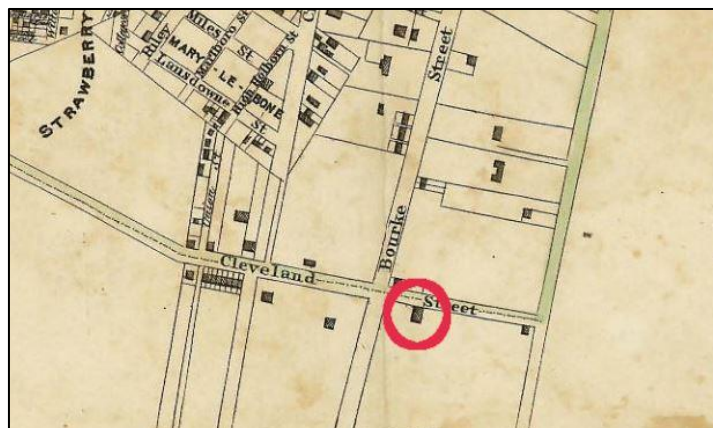


Figure 13 Original Boundary Stone Inn (1854 City of Sydney map)

John Robinson advertised another pigeon match at the Boundary Stone Inn in December 1848. 150 to 200 birds were provided, and it was expected that most of the crack shots of Sydney would participate. The lovers of this sport were given ample opportunity of trying their skill, with birds being released from three traps¹¹³. A nostalgic news article in 1935 reported that in the 1840s Robinson catered for a wide variety of sports at the pub, and it was the scene of many a cock fight and quoits game¹¹⁴. He died in December 1857 at age 56¹¹⁵ and his wife Anne took over the licence¹¹⁶.

It was very common for the widows of licensees to be granted a publican's licence, as they would know the business well and would need a livelihood after he died. The Tooth's Yellow Cards listing the details of hotel operations often paint a picture of the publican's wife as the brains of the family who handled the accounts and other paperwork, while the publican stayed in the bar, pulled pints all day and looked after customer relations and occasional crowd control.

George Segerson died in 1846¹¹⁷ but ownership passed to his brother William, who advertised the sale of the hotel and nearby building sites in July 1863¹¹⁸. It was sold at auction for £205¹¹⁹. It was sold again three months later for £300¹²⁰. Then in April 1873, it was advertised for sale yet again as brick-built and containing a bar, five rooms, kitchen and a good yard at the rear¹²¹. It was purchased the following month by Owen Carroll for £825¹²².

Annie Robinson remained the licensee until her death in May 1877¹²³. An example of the frequent use of pubs as meeting places occurred in May 1878, when a group of carriers from the tanning trade met at the Boundary Stone to discuss the advisability of forming a Carriers' Protective Society¹²⁴. Patrick Ward had been the licensee from the early 1880s¹²⁵ and his widow Ellen Ward took over the licence in June 1894 after his death¹²⁶.

By 1904, the hotel had been rebuilt in its present position on the Bourke and Cleveland Street corner, with a splayed corner front door and a long frontage to Cleveland Street. A news article that year mentioned that the original building stood off the road and had a garden in front like an old-fashioned English inn¹²⁷. The front garden featured a maypole and the bowling green was at the rear of the building¹²⁸.

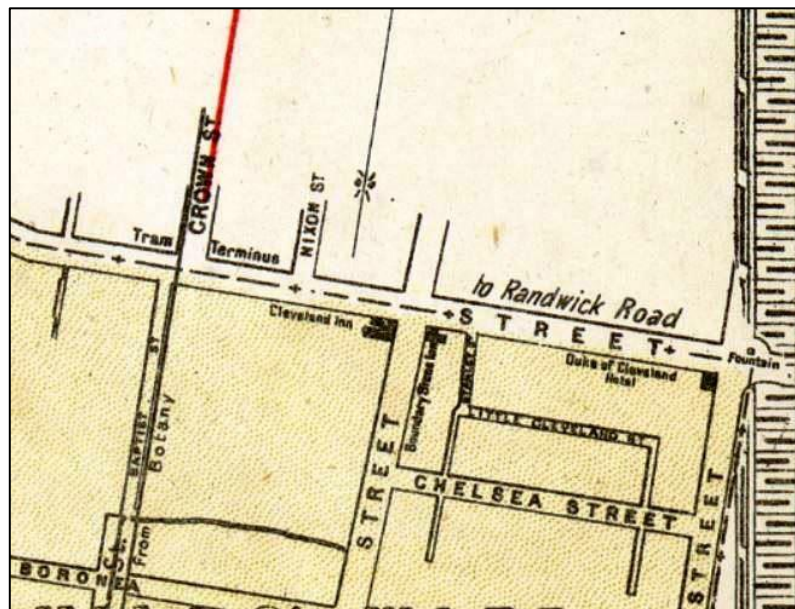


Figure 14 Rebuilt Boundary Stone Hotel (Higinbotham & Robinson map, 1888)

In January 1905, the licence was transferred from Ellen Ward to Patrick Fagan¹²⁹. The new licensee was a keen veteran runner and promoter of athletic events. In August 1906 he organised a handicap "go-as-you-please" road running race. The course was from the Boundary Stone Hotel to the Halfway House Hotel in Botany and back. This race was about 8 kilometres in all, and "go-as-you-

please” meant that competitors were free to walk or run (or possibly crawl at the end), and was the forerunner of today’s ultra-marathon events¹³⁰.

Fagan started off scratch and the rest of the field started off handicaps of up to ten minutes. Fagan himself won the Veterans’ Race, with only three starters finishing the race¹³¹, which may have caused a few grumblings about the licensee manipulating the handicap. Fagan organised another handicap race in June 1907 over the same testing course. The field was closer this time, with handicaps ranging from scratch to 31 seconds. Unusually, several runners registered with only nicknames, such as “Doctor”, “Fruiterer”, Uncle”, “Chicken”, “Bricks” and “Old Pat”¹³².

Two months later, the indefatigable Fagan was trying to encourage the youth of the day to improve their athletic ability by organising a three mile road race. Presenting the trophies that night at the Boundary Stone, he said he hoped a new Harriers’ Club would be formed in the locality and become affiliated with the Amateur Athletics Association¹³³.

In March 1908, the previous licensee (Ellen Ward) and the hotel’s owner gave evidence in the Local Option court in defence of their licence. Mrs Ward said she had been the licensee prior to Patrick Fagan and had not had a conviction in her time. John Leitch, the Mayor of Redfern, gave evidence that he had known the hotel for a score or more years, and had never seen anything there to which he could take exception. He and other witnesses were of the opinion that there were not too many hotels in the locality¹³⁴. Despite Patrick Fagan’s efforts to improve the local community’s fitness and the glowing reference from the Mayor, the Boundary Stone was one of the hotels in the electorate to lose its licence, effective in two years’ time¹³⁵.



Figure 15 Former Boundary Stone Hotel, 1989 (City of Sydney Archives)

Patrick Fagan and his wife were guests of honour at a large gathering at Redfern Town Hall in October 1908, to show the popular esteem for the couple. The Mayor, Alderman Leitch, presided and presented an illuminated address¹³⁶. The Boundary Stone Hotel was advertised for sale in August, 1909, the month before it was due to lose its licence. The advertisement promoted it as an emporium to grocers, drapers and general storekeepers¹³⁷. It was sold for £1,150¹³⁸.

Sands' Directory records that the butcher George Blanch occupied the building from 1911¹³⁹ until 1919¹⁴⁰. In May 1914, the building was advertised for sale as a boarding house¹⁴¹. George Blanch must have purchased it, as the building today bears the letters "G B" above the front door, which must be him. In 1920, the butcher C. Walker Junior occupied the building¹⁴², followed by the butcher W. M. Hannon in 1933¹⁴³. George Blanch was still the owner in 1946 when the land was brought under the *Real Property Act*¹⁴⁴.

The building was occupied by butchers until at least 1989, when a Halal butcher's shop operated there¹⁴⁵. From the early 2000s, a series of restaurants and bars have operated from the building: Tandoori Rasoi Restaurant in 2006¹⁴⁶, Tahmina's Indian Restaurant in 2009¹⁴⁷, the Black Penny Bar in 2013¹⁴⁸, Sugar Ray's Bar in 2018¹⁴⁹ and the Arm's Length wine bar in 2021¹⁵⁰. The building is currently unoccupied.

Post Office Hotel

Address: 124 George Street, Redfern (later called 152 Regent Street).

In March 1869, Eli Dickens was granted a publican's licence for the Belmore Hotel on the north-west corner of George and Redfern Streets¹⁵¹. The hotel was named in honour of Somerset Lowry-Corry (1835-1913), the fourth Earl Belmore, Governor of New South Wales from January 1868 to February 1872. The Governor had only been in office two months when he was confronted with a major crisis. Prince Alfred, Queen Victoria's second son, was attending a picnic at Clontarf as part of the first ever Royal visit to the colony when the Irishman Henry James O'Farrell shot the Prince in the back and claimed he intended to shoot Belmore as well.



Figure 16 Former Post Office Hotel, 2021 (Google maps)

Belmore arranged for Alfred's transfer to hospital and passed on to the British government the Prince's request for clemency for O'Farrell, which was ignored. Belmore worked effectively to calm sectarian tensions unleashed by the incident. He found Sydney's summers oppressive and rented Throsby Park near Moss Vale as his country house. He resigned and left Sydney to resume his parliamentary career in 1872.

In August 1878, the Redfern Council submitted a petition to the government for the erection of a post office building. A block of land was secured on the south-east corner of Redfern and George Streets and a two-storey Victorian Italianate building with a dominant 4.5 storey clock tower was constructed. The building was completed in January 1883.

In June 1889, the Belmore Hotel was renamed to the Post Office Hotel by the licensee Jane Saurbier/Sourbier/Saubier (her name was spelt a number of different ways in the press)¹⁵², who had taken over the hotel earlier that year¹⁵³.



Figure 17 Redfern Post Office (Kiddle.co website)

In March 1908, the Local Option court heard evidence from Helen Devir, wife of the licensee of the Post Office Hotel, who argued that her establishment met the requirements of the public¹⁵⁴. But the court's decision next month was to close the hotel three years from the date notified in the *Government Gazette*¹⁵⁵. Nora McInerney, the licensee of the Courthouse Hotel on the same intersection, also gave evidence to the court¹⁵⁶. This hotel retained its licence and still operates today.

By 1920, the building was a grocery store operated by Edward Charles Allison¹⁵⁷. French polishers were using the building in 1953¹⁵⁸, and by 1959 the Princess Bread and Cake Supply Pty Ltd had a shop there, selling all kinds of Australian and Continental cakes, tea biscuits and sixty different types of bread¹⁵⁹. The building now on the same corner, which may be the original pub, is currently divided into five properties, with commercial usage on the ground floor and residential on the first floor. If this is the pub building, it is much smaller than the Courthouse Hotel across the road.

Foresters' Arms Hotel

Address: South-west corner of Turner and Bullanaming (now Renwick) Streets, Redfern.

The Ancient Order of Foresters was formed in Rochdale, Lancashire in 1834, combining over 300 branches of the Royal Foresters' Society. The Order is a friendly society, which is a mutual association for the purposes of providing insurance, pensions, savings or banking. It comprises a body of people who join together for a common financial or social purpose.

Before modern insurance and the welfare state, friendly societies provided financial and social support to individuals, often according to trade affiliations. Mediaeval foresters were similar to forest rangers, who patrolled the woodlands of British noblemen and whose duties included stopping poachers and arranging the sale of timber. In March 1844, a newspaper advertisement invited Officers and Brothers of the Order to form a Court of the Ancient Order of Foresters in Sydney¹⁶⁰. The Court is the Foresters' equivalent of the Lodge that the Freemasons and Oddfellows form in a local area.

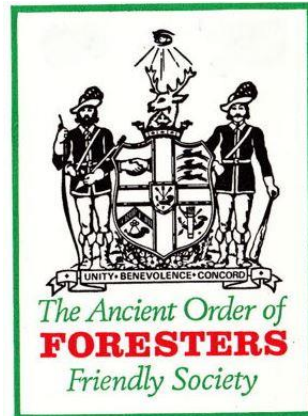


Figure 18 Ancient Order of Foresters' coat of arms (Wikitree)

A Court called Old England was formed in the Crown and Anchor Hotel in Newtown in November 1844¹⁶¹. In April 1857, William Callaghan applied for a publican's licence for the Foresters' Hall, Turner and Bullanaming Streets, Redfern¹⁶². Bullanaming Street was renamed to Renwick Street in about 1920¹⁶³. Bullanaming is an indigenous word that was the name of the district in the nineteenth century.

The licence was granted to the Foresters' Hall the following month, despite residents' objections that intoxicated persons were frequently served and that gambling was allowed. Cross examination of the objectors at the Licensing Court revealed that only one person was alluded to, and was a notorious drunkard. As for gambling, only one occasion was referred to when cards were seen in the house, and the landlord testified that he and some friends were playing whist with borrowed cards¹⁶⁴.



Figure 19 Foresters' Arms Hotel (Higinbotham & Robinson map, 1888)

In August the same year, members of the Foresters' Court of Little John celebrated their first anniversary with dinner and a ball at the Foresters' Hall¹⁶⁵. By 1860, Callaghan was advertising a quadrille party every Monday at the pub¹⁶⁶. By 1864, it was known as the Foresters' Hall Hotel¹⁶⁷. Then in 1877, the pub was called the Foresters' Arms Hotel for the first time when members of the Iron Duke Lodge No. 1, Australian Order of Oddfellows, met at the hotel¹⁶⁸.

The Iron Duke Cricket Club from the same Lodge celebrated the end of the season at the hotel in July 1879¹⁶⁹. Continuing its welcome to different Ancient Orders, the quarterly meeting of the United Ancient Order of Druids was held at the Foresters' Arms in January 1887¹⁷⁰.

In March 1908, John Davis, licensee of the Foresters' Arms Hotel, gave evidence of the pub's operations at the Local Option Court¹⁷¹. The following month, the court decided to terminate the licence three years after the notification of the court's decision in the *Government Gazette*¹⁷². This meant that the licence expired on 15 April 1911¹⁷³.

By 1915, the building (by then called 80 Renwick Street) was a grocery shop operated by William Doyle¹⁷⁴. It remained a grocery while changing hands until at least 1933¹⁷⁵. In 2003, the building was converted into one-bedroom townhouses over four floors. The group of five townhouses at 80 Renwick Street won the 2003 Royal Architects' Institute of Australia's New South Wales Architecture Award for Multiple Housing¹⁷⁶.

Man of Kent Hotel

Address: North-east corner of Redfern and Morehead Streets, Redfern.

The Man of Kent Hotel was first mentioned in the newspapers in January 1879 in an advertisement for stonemasons¹⁷⁷. Frederick Harris was the first publican¹⁷⁸. He died in February 1894 aged 53¹⁷⁹ and his widow Jane Harris took over the licence in April¹⁸⁰. In February 1908, the hotel received a notification of classification by the Special Court under the *Liquor Act 1906* because there had been a licensing conviction in the three years preceding September 1907¹⁸¹. This meant that the licensee and other witnesses were called before the Local Option Court in March to give details of the pub's operation¹⁸².

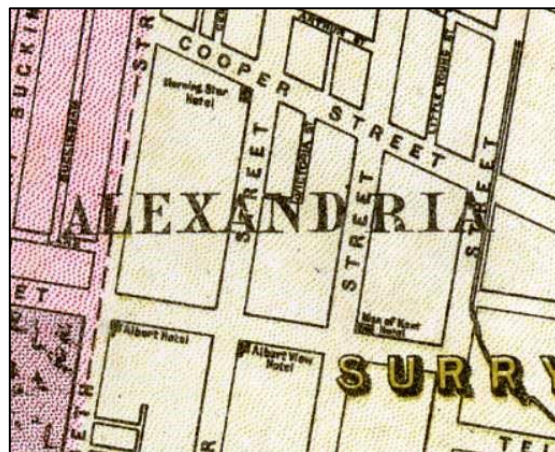


Figure 20 Man of Kent Hotel (Higinbotham and Robinson map, 1888)

The Mayor of Redfern (Alderman John Leitch), ever a supporter of the pubs on his patch, testified that it took eight minutes to walk to the Man of Kent from his residence, but if it was closed it would

take ten or eleven minutes to walk to the nearest hotel. Apart from this inconvenience to himself, the Mayor contended that when the Crown Street tramway extension was completed, the Man of Kent would be the nearest to the new line for the residents of Redfern¹⁸³.

His Worship evidently had less influence than he might have expected, because the Local Option Court decided to terminate the pub's licence, effective two years after the September 1907 poll¹⁸⁴. The building was advertised for sale in August 1909 by the Trustees of the late George Frederick Harris¹⁸⁵.

By 1911, the building was a grocery store operated by Harris Skinner Davis¹⁸⁶. He died in May 1914¹⁸⁷ and the store was taken over by his widow Margaret Ellen Davis¹⁸⁸. It was still a grocery in 1933, operated by W. A. Ellis¹⁸⁹. By 1950, the pub building had been demolished and the site was part of the large public housing estate called Willawa Flats and Kyeema Flats.

Tradesmen's Arms Hotel

Address: Wells and Bullanaming Streets, Redfern.

The Tradesman's Arms Hotel in Wells and Bullanaming Streets first appeared in the press in a sales advertisement in August 1870 when the licensee was Henry Kirby. The building was brick-built on a stone foundation with a shingle roof, containing a cellar, bar, parlour, sitting room, kitchen and four rooms upstairs. It was promoted as a "snug freehold property"¹⁹⁰. The number of bedrooms and its description as snug means that the hotel was fairly small. It was sold in October for £435¹⁹¹.

The hotel's name was obviously chosen to appeal to the wide range of working men in the area. It was a very popular name at the time, and a scan of *Sands' Directories* in the 1870s reveals several others with that name:

- Campbell Street near Riley Street, Surry Hills (1870),
- Moncur Street, Woollahra (1870),
- Norton Street, Glebe (1870),
- William Street, Balmain (in 1873),
- Palmer and William Streets, Woolloomooloo (1876),
- Clarence and Druitt Streets (1877),
- Palmer and Liverpool Streets (1877)¹⁹².

The small pub on a fairly quiet corner in Redfern had an uneventful life, apart from the usual trickle of Sunday trading convictions that permeated the pub scene at the time, until March 1908, when the licensee Patrick McDermott was called before the Local Option Court to give evidence about its operations. The court's decision was to terminate the pub's licence in September 1909, two years after the date of the 1907 poll¹⁹³.

The last licensee, Mr J. T. Jones, advertised the sale of the furniture and other contents of the pub in July 1909 before pulling the last pint and closing the pub for good¹⁹⁴. The building's use after the pub closed is not known, but Mrs E. Cottrell lived there from 1912 until at least 1933¹⁹⁵.

The hotel building and adjacent houses were still shown on the City Building Surveyor's map in 1972¹⁹⁶, but by 1988 the block had been cleared of buildings and was used as a car park¹⁹⁷. The vacant block was then sold in 1991 for \$2,430,000¹⁹⁸. A commercial building now includes the former

pub site at 83-91 Renwick Street. An office of the Rail, Tram and Bus Union of New South Wales is located in the building¹⁹⁹.

Closed pubs in the Alexandria electorate

There were 27 hotels in the Alexandria electorate in 1907²⁰⁰. In March 1908, the *Government Gazette* announced that five hotels were classified to appear before the Local Option Court due to a licence violation in the previous three years. These were the Camelia Grove Hotel (Henderson Road Alexandria), Cheerful Home Hotel (George Street, Waterloo), Fitzroy Hotel (Cooper Street, Waterloo), Federal Hotel (George Street, Waterloo), and the Prince of Wales Hotel (Raglan Street, Waterloo)²⁰¹.

While the *Government Gazette* did not announce any changes to this list, other hotels must have been added to it, because the New Waterloo Retreat Hotel and the Rose of Alexandria Hotel were also terminated in April, along with the others in the list except the Camelia Grove Hotel.

Cheerful Home Hotel

Address: North-west corner of George and John Streets, Waterloo.

A publican's licence for the Cheerful Home Hotel was issued to David Hammond in January 1878²⁰². At the end of the year, the hotel was sold for £1,150. The building contained ten rooms and a cellar²⁰³. Peter Braun was the licensee from 1880²⁰⁴. The hotel was advertised for sale again in June 1882. It was brick-built on a stone foundation with twelve rooms, an iron and shingled roof with a 30' frontage to George Street and 100' depth to John Street²⁰⁵. It was purchased by Mr. Hammond for £1,165²⁰⁶.

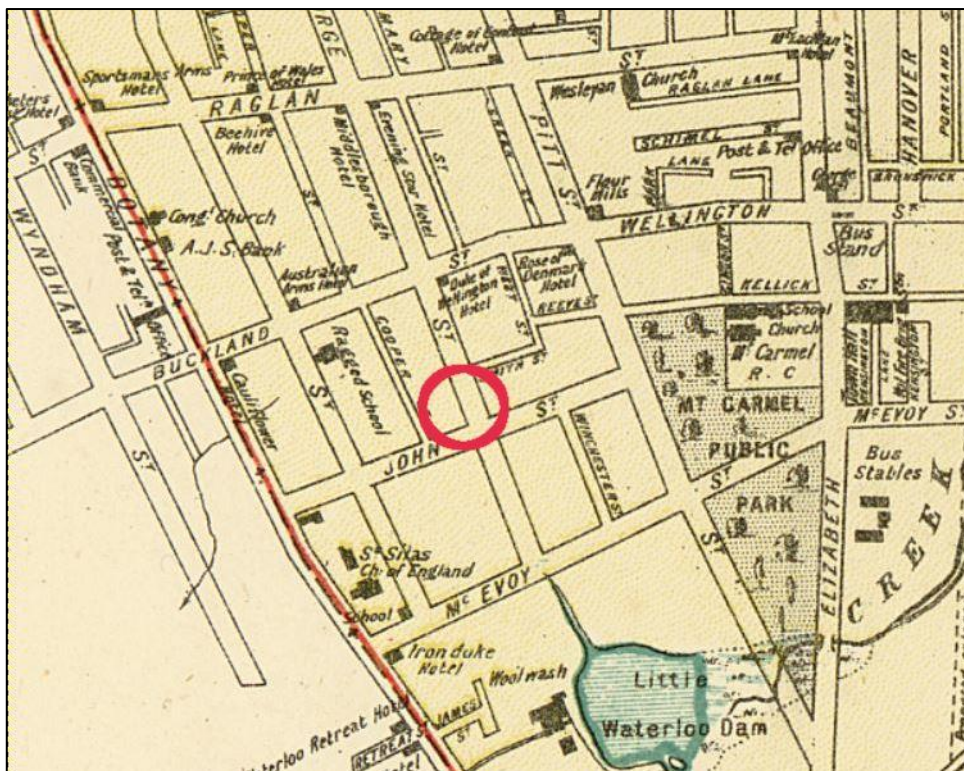


Figure 21 Waterloo hotels, 1888 (Higinbotham & Robinson map, 1888)

The Cheerful Home was one of the pubs classified to appear before the Local Option Court in March 1908²⁰⁷. In April the court decided to terminate its licence²⁰⁸, which was effective from September

1909, two years after the 1907 poll²⁰⁹. In February 1909, the current licensee Thomas Byrnes decided to leave the hotel and look for work, prompting the Metropolitan Licensing Court to cancel the hotel's licence ahead of the declared date of September that year²¹⁰.

The Higinbotham and Robinson 1888 Waterloo map shows that there were ten other hotels within two or three blocks of the Cheerful Home Hotel (those that survived the Local Option court, in any case): the Cauliflower Hotel, Duke of Wellington Hotel, Rose of Denmark Hotel, Australian Arms Hotel, Beehive Hotel, Cricketers' Rest Hotel, Sportsman's Hotel, Cottage of Content Hotel, Iron Duke Hotel and the Salutation Hotel²¹¹. In the face of such stiff competition (all on busy roads), the Cheerful Home Hotel's back street location must have counted against it.

After the hotel closed, the greengrocer Christian Benecke operated from the building in 1910²¹². The building was still used as a grocery shop in 1930²¹³. The original building is shown on the City Building Surveyor's map in 1972 when it was called 310 George Street/8 John Street²¹⁴. Nowadays, the site is part of an apartment block at 254 George Street (also called 8 John Street) known as the Henrietta Greville Court.

Fitzroy Hotel

Address: 3 Cooper Street, Waterloo.

The Fitzroy Hotel was opened in 1877 with licensee William Elston²¹⁵. It was located on the north-west corner of Cooper Street (the southern extension of Bullanaming/Renwick Street across the western extension of Phillip Street and the former Byrne Lane. John McFarlane was the licensee when it was first sold in May 1881²¹⁶. When the hotel was sold again in 1889 by J. V. Hanrahan, it was described as having ten rooms, and a large yard with stabling accommodation for twelve horses²¹⁷.

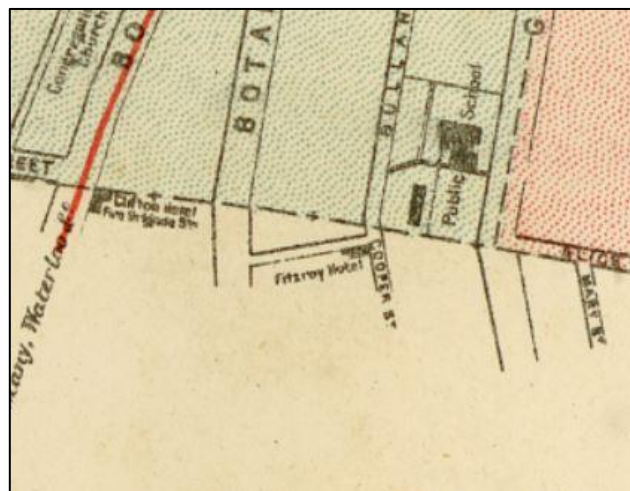


Figure 22 Fitzroy Hotel (Higinbotham & Robinson map, 1888)

Lucy McFarlane, the licensee after her husband John McFarlane died in 1898, was called before the Local Option court in April 1908 to give details of its operation. The court's decision was to close it in September 1909²¹⁸. Lucy McFarlane remained in the hotel after its closure and operated a grocery store²¹⁹ until her death in May 1922²²⁰. The building was sold in November 1924, when it was

described as a corner shop with mixed business, four rooms, opposite a school²²¹. It was sold again in 1929 when the school trade was its main feature²²².

The building was again sold in December 1932 when it was described as a “run-down mixed school shop, must sell owing to illness. Take £20 (sic) or near offer”²²³. Mrs A. Butler operated the grocery until at least 1933²²⁴. The former Fitzroy Hotel was demolished when the large Waterloo Housing complex of four 17-storey public housing buildings was constructed between 1971 and 1974. The pub was on the site now occupied by the Marton building at 149 Cope Street, constructed in 1973. The complex is owned by the New South Wales Department of Housing²²⁵.

Rose of Alexandria Hotel

Address: North-east corner of Buckland and Wyndham Streets, Alexandria.

The Wheelwright’s Arms Hotel was constructed in Banks Street (now Meagher Street) Chippendale in 1863²²⁶. Michael Parker became the licensee in 1865²²⁷. After his death soon afterwards in September 1865²²⁸, his widow Jane Parker took over the licence²²⁹. In July 1879, she was given permission to move her licence from Chippendale to a newly-constructed hotel on the corner of Buckland and Wyndham Streets in Alexandria²³⁰. She named it the Gardeners’ Arms Hotel²³¹ in honour of the market gardens nearby.



Figure 23 Alexandria Park, 1954 (City of Sydney Archives)

The area that is Alexandria Park today was occupied by Chinese market gardeners in the nineteenth century, encouraged by a fresh water supply. In 1882, an area of ten acres south of Buckland Street was resumed for a public park. The park was proclaimed in 1889, and in 1897 two hundred trees were sent to the park by the Sydney Botanic Gardens²³².

With the resumption and redevelopment of the market gardens as a park, Jane Parker renamed the hotel the Rose of Alexandria in 1883²³³. By 1900, the licensee was Jonathan Pearce²³⁴. The hotel was one of those classified to appear before the Local Option court in April 1908, and the licensee (Jonathan Pearce’s widow Jane Pearce) gave details of its operation. The court decided to close the hotel three years after the date of the *Government Gazette* notification the following week²³⁵.

In May 1911, the household effects of the hotel were sold, just before it was due to close²³⁶. In September 1915, the building (with address 23 Buckland Street, on the corner of Wyndham Street) was advertised for sale as a mixed grocery selling pastry, ham and beef, soft drinks, cigarettes, with four rooms, at £45²³⁷. The grocery changed hands until being offered for sale again in October 1938 as a mixed confectionery selling fancy goods, ice cream and small goods at £55-65²³⁸.



Figure 24 Former Rose of Alexandria Hotel, 1977 (City of Sydney Archives)

The ground floor was occupied by a sandwich bar in 1977²³⁹. In 2021, the building had been converted into a showroom and office for Moa Pty Ltd, purveyor of window coverings²⁴⁰. The building, which is still the original 1879 pub, is currently vacant.

Federal Hotel

Address: 96 Raglan Street Waterloo, on the south-east corner of George Street.

The Captain Campbell Hotel was constructed in April 1878 on the corner of George and Raglan Streets Waterloo, with licensee William St Clare Hayes, and was soon advertised for sale. It was described as having a frontage of 30' to George Street and 64' to Raglan Street, of brick and stone foundation, with bar, six rooms (one large and suitable for a billiard room) and kitchen²⁴¹. Accommodation for single gentlemen was advertised soon afterwards²⁴².

The licence and furniture were advertised for sale in April 1880, describing it as a "capital little snuggerly with room for a billiard table"²⁴³. The last mention of the Captain Campbell Hotel was in November 1880²⁴⁴, and it was known as the Middlesborough (or Middlesbrough) Hotel from 1882²⁴⁵. It was advertised for sale in April 1883, when it was described as containing a bar, three parlours, sitting room, kitchen, and six other rooms. The frontage to George Street was then advertised as 40' and the licensee was R. McSweeney²⁴⁶.

In June 1892, the licensee Simon Conroy applied for a renewal of the licence for the Middlesborough Hotel, but Sub-Inspector Lawless objected on the grounds that the applicant was carrying on a systematic Sunday trade, a number of police objections having been recorded to that effect. The police said the house was well run except for Sunday trading, and the licence was granted by the majority of the Licensing Court bench²⁴⁷.

From 1899, the hotel was named the Federal Hotel²⁴⁸. At a Local Option court hearing in November 1907, Richard Olds, the solicitor for Tooths Ltd, said the firm he represented was interested in several hotels in the electorate of Alexandria, including the Federal Hotel in George Street, Waterloo²⁴⁹. The licensee of the Federal Hotel was classified to appear before the Local Option court in April 1908 to give evidence. The court decided to terminate the license²⁵⁰, effective September 1909²⁵¹.

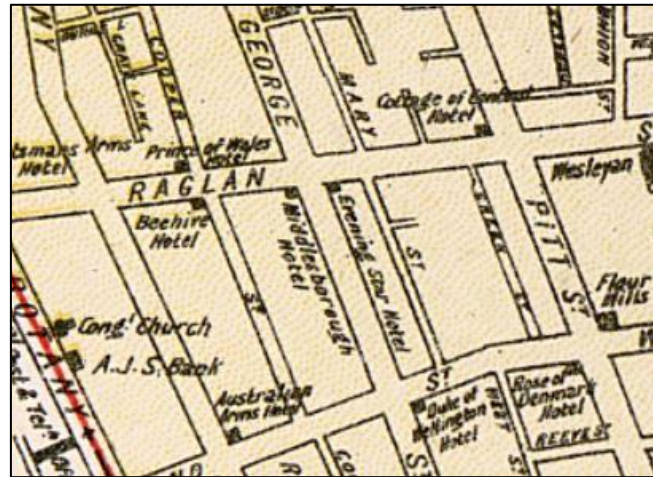


Figure 25 Middlesborough Hotel (Higinbotham & Robinson map, 1888)

The owner wasted no time in looking to the future, as the pub was advertised for sale in June 1908, when it was described as large premises of twelve rooms and offices, suitable for laundry or small factory²⁵². The former pub followed the common practice of being turned into a grocery by 1920 when George Allen was operating there, with address 96 Raglan Street²⁵³. In 1933, A. Clarke was the grocer occupying the building²⁵⁴. Nowadays, the site of the former pub is part of the three-storey apartment block at 238 George Street.

New Waterloo Retreat Hotel

Address: North-west corner of Retreat Street and Botany Road, Alexandria.



Figure 26 New Waterloo Retreat Hotel (Higinbotham & Robinson map, 1888)

The Waterloo Retreat Hotel opened in Botany Road on the corner of Retreat Street in September 1855. The owner and licensee was Thomas Rostron (1817-1885)²⁵⁵. He was born in Bolton and was

imprisoned for three months from August 1837 for rioting in Lancashire. He was probably involved in one of the many political and economic protests being conducted in Britain at the time, and was lucky (or unlucky) not to receive a free trip to Australia as a convict.

Thomas Rostron sailed with his family from Liverpool, arriving in March 1841. As well as being a brick maker, he became the licensee of the Shipwrights' Arms in Balmain from 1849 to 1853 then the Crooked Billet on George Street Sydney from 1853 to 1854. In 1860, he was elected as one of the nine inaugural aldermen on Waterloo Municipal Council, serving until 1862²⁵⁶.

He regularly conducted a program of old English sports on Boxing Day and New Years' Day at the Waterloo Retreat, followed by a ball and supper²⁵⁷. In August 1864, he advertised the sale or lease of the hotel with the attached gardens and ground²⁵⁸. He died at Wellington, New South Wales, in August 1885²⁵⁹.

CHRISTMAS! CHRISTMAS!!

THE OLD ENGLISH SPORTS ON BOXING DAY.

MR. THOMAS ROSTRON, of the Waterloo Retreat, Botany Road, begs to apprise his friends and holiday-makers in general, that he has provided an ample bill of fun for Wednesday next—BOXING DAY—of which the following is the programme:—(The sports will commence at 11 a.m.)

- 1st.—A Pony Race for a new Saddle and Bridle.
- 2nd. A Foot Race for a silver watch.
- 3rd. Catching a Pig with a greasy tail.
- 4th. Climbing the greasy pole for a new hat.
- 5th. The Blind-folded catching the bellman.
- 6th. The Wheelbarrow Race, (blindfold).
- 7th. Jumping in Sacks.

☞ Omnibusses will run hourly during the day, and will be available for the return of those ladies and gentlemen who may honor Mr. Rostron with their attendance at the

SELECT BALL AND SUPPER

with which he proposes to terminate the merry season.
"A MERRY CHRISTMAS TO ALL." 1471

Figure 27 Christmas sports, 1860 (*Bell's Life in Sydney*, 22 December 1860)

Chinese immigration to New South Wales increased dramatically after the discovery of gold in the Bathurst area in 1851. In the following years, Chinese market gardeners settled in the area south of Retreat Street extending to Shea's Creek and grew vegetables for their community and for the Sydney Market. The lane on the northern edge of this area was used as accommodation and social centre for the market gardeners, and by the time the Waterloo Retreat Hotel was built in 1855, Retreat Street had probably been named to commemorate its use as a haven for the market gardening community.

A timber shrine surrounded by timber huts existed on the street from the 1870s, according to the earliest records. By 1890, it was estimated that about a hundred members of the Chinese community lived in Retreat Street and the shrine was overcrowded. In 1908, the Yiu Ming Hung Fook

Tong Society purchased a rectangular block of land at the western end of the street and constructed the present Yiu Ming Temple²⁶⁰.

After Thomas Rostron left the hotel, Isabella McElhinney/McElhiney/McAlhiney became the licensee in 1865²⁶¹. By 1876, it was called the New Waterloo Retreat Hotel in the *Government Gazette*²⁶². In May 1883, Isabella McElhinney transferred the licence to David Hammond²⁶³.



Figure 28 Yiu Ming Temple (Sydney's Historic Suburbs website)

In April 1908, the hotel was classified to appear before the Local Option court²⁶⁴, and the court's decision was to terminate the license in December 1913²⁶⁵. However, in March 1910 a special meeting of the Licensing Court decided to cancel the licence that month²⁶⁶. From 1911 until 1925, Kwong Sang Loong and Coy operated a grocery shop in the building at 236 (later 244) Botany Road²⁶⁷. The shop then changed hands and was still a grocery in 1933²⁶⁸.

In January 1939, the large block comprising 222–244 Botany Road, 1–17 Retreat Street and 1, 3 and 6 Gowrie Lane was advertised as a factory site with frontage of 116 feet to Botany Road and a depth of 162 feet²⁶⁹. It was purchased by the real estate investor Emanuel Myerson in June, who advertised for tenderers for the demolition of the buildings at 222-244 Botany Road, 1-5 Retreat Street and 1-3 Gowrie Lane²⁷⁰.

In March 1941, Myerson sold the empty block²⁷¹ to Wilmers and Gladwin Pty Ltd, printers and carton manufacturers, who erected a large factory that is recorded in the 1974 City Building Surveyor's map of Alexandria²⁷². At about this time, the Iron Duke Hotel moved from the eastern side of Botany Road to the western side, on the corner of McEvoy Street. Today, the site of the former New Waterloo Retreat Hotel is occupied by a commercial and residential building called 222 Botany Road.

Despite its main street location, the hotel was a very old pub (and possibly run down by then) that was competing for business with a large number of newer pubs nearby, including the Salutation Hotel (now the Glenroy Hotel) across Retreat Street, and the Iron Duke Hotel across Botany Road.

Prince of Wales Hotel

Address: 109 Raglan Street, Waterloo.

The Prince of Wales Hotel opened on the north-west corner of Raglan and Cooper Streets, Waterloo in 1877²⁷³. In May, the licensee Eugene Downey was fined five shillings for neglecting to keep a light

in front of his hotel from sunset to sunrise at a time before public street lighting²⁷⁴. Electric lighting did not come to Sydney until the early twentieth century, and until then pubs were required to provide some illumination for the dark streets.



Figure 29 Prince of Wales Hotel (Higinbotham & Robinson map, 1888)

In February 1880, the lack of services that we take for granted today was highlighted when the hotel hosted a meeting to establish a volunteer fire brigade in the Waterloo area. At a recent fire in the suburb, it reportedly took three-quarters of an hour for any assistance to arrive, by which time the building was completely destroyed. The local residents thought that, as most of the houses were built of the most inflammable material, a well-conducted and efficient fire brigade was urgently needed. The late Superintendent of the Glebe Fire Brigade convened the meeting²⁷⁵.

In April 1908, when the licensee was Martin Gibbons, the Local Option court decided to terminate the hotel's licence in September 1909, two years after the Local Option poll²⁷⁶. In 1910, the fruiterer and master baker Ernest Mancer opened a grocery shop²⁷⁷.

The *Bread Act 1901* regulated the making and selling of bread. In particular, the minimum weights of ordinary loaves were set at one pound, two pounds or four pounds (called a "one pound loaf", etc.). The range of ingredients (including a variety of grains, pulses and potatoes) were also defined. French or any fancy bread or rolls were exempt from the weight requirement. However, any bread made only of wheat flour was called "standard wheaten bread" and bread made of the other specified grains or pulses was called "mixed bread"²⁷⁸.

In July 1915, Mr. Mancer was fined 5/- per underweight ounce, making a total of £9/15/0 for selling nine loaves of bread under the minimum weight of two pounds. The bread in question was called Twist Roll or French Roll. Mr Mancer claimed it was "fancy bread" and that consequently the Act did not apply. Extensive technical evidence was given in court, after which the magistrate convicted the baker, but remarked that the question of what constitutes fancy bread should be defined because the *Bread Act* did not do so²⁷⁹.

The disgruntled Mr Mancer appealed the underweight bread conviction in September 1915. After further evidence revealed that the loaves in question were made from the standard range of ingredients defined in the *Bread Act*, the original conviction was upheld. The appeal judge concluded

that the bread was not made from superior ingredients, but was just standard bread twisted into fanciful shapes, so was not exempt from the minimum weight requirement²⁸⁰.

By 1920, the former Prince of Wales Hotel was known as 109 Raglan Street and was occupied by Charles Radford until at least 1933²⁸¹. The building was demolished when the large Waterloo Housing complex of four 17-storey public housing buildings was constructed between 1971 and 1974²⁸². The former hotel site is located next to the Raglan Street basketball courts.

It is not known why the Prince of Wales Hotel lost its licence, but there were probably too many other hotels in close proximity, such as the Beehive Hotel, The Evening Star Hotel and the Australian Arms Hotel, and a block further away the Duke of Wellington Hotel and the Cottage of Content Hotel.

Notes

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