

Creswick Town Hall

Corner Albert and Water Street

Creswick

Victoria

Conservation Analysis

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Revised September 1983

THE TOWN HALL

How the Chords of memory vibrate when the Town Hall is mentioned. The foundation stone was laid in February 1876, on the site formerly occupied by the National School and the Hall, which is an imposing structure, has been the scene of many political, municipal, religious, theatrical and patriotic gatherings, of horticultural society shows, dances and social entertainments. The walls of the Council Chambers are adorned by the photos of Mayors and others associated with the development of Creswick, which should be of perennial interest.

When the Borough and the Shire amalgamated in 1934 the Town Hall lost its pre-eminence, the official home of the new Shire being transferred to Kingston.

In 1912, thirty years ago, the writer suggested that enlarged photographs might be obtained of a few of the very early settlers in the district and preserved in the Council Chamber. Whether the Town Hall, Creswick, with its wealth of associations extending back through a vista of over sixty years, is to be restored to its dignity of the Civic Centre, or not, it is devoutly to be hoped that it will not be allowed to fall into inglorious desuetude, but will, at least, be maintained as a glorious home for historic records of our enchanting district of Creswick.

John A. Graham, *Early Creswick, The First Century*,
Facsimile Edition, 1987, Creswick Historical Museum.
Originally published 1942 (p.120)

INDEX

	Page
Introduction	1
Documentary Evidence	2
The Site	2
Early Council Chambers	2
The Existing Building	2
The Architect	5
The Builder	5
Description of Building	6
Statement of Significance	8
Changes to the Building	9
Use	9
Hall	9
Council Chamber	9
Library	10
Commercial Offices	12
Gentlemen's retiring Room and Yard	12
Passage	12
Conversion to Creswick Museum	12
Physical Changes	13
External	
Roofs	13
The Hall and Caretaker's Cottage	13
Tower Roof	13
The Offices	14
Chimneys	14
Spouting and gutters and flashings	14
Downpipes	14
Facades	15
Vandalism	21
Painting	21
Internal	22
Future Use of Public Hall	22
Conclusion	28
User requirements	29
Appendices	30

Introduction

The building is situated in Albert Street, the main street of Creswick, on the corner of Water Street.

The Creswick Town Hall was erected in 1876 to the design of W.A.H. Creber as the offices and hall for the Borough of Creswick. The building is presently used as the Public Hall for the Shire of Creswick and as the Creswick Historical Museum.

New Shire Offices, designed by Ballarat Architect Ewan Jones, were constructed to the north of this building in 1967.

The building is owned by the Shire of Creswick.

The building is Building No. 576 on the Historic Buildings Register and is recorded by the National Trust of Australia (Victoria). The building has been nominated for inclusion on the Register of the National Estate.

The building is substantially intact, externally and internally with few major alterations having been undertaken over the years. The building is in need of maintenance and some upgrading to ensure its usefulness into the next century.

The Town Hall building is a major element in the streetscape and urban fabric of Creswick. It is a major landmark and has been and continues to be a focus for community life in the area. Despite not accommodating the Shire Offices for 23 years, the building is still within the main local government and community precinct being adjacent to the new Council Offices and the Senior Citizens Club.

The new use of the Council Offices as a museum is compatible with the building.

With maintenance and upgrading the building can continue to be a community focus accommodating the Museum and a community facility for use by performing arts and other community groups.

Acknowledgements

Members of the Creswick Museum
Mr. Bruce Crago
Cr. Pearl Millane
Ashley Greenwood
Jean Baker - especially for her detailed review of the draft report.

Documentary Evidence

The Site

The site is Lot 11 Section 10 and was gazetted as a State School Permanent Reserve No. 3225. Granted on 14.11.63.

The first building on this site was the National School, established in 1854 in a large tent with a timber framework. In 1863 this became known as Common School No. 122 under the Common School Act of 1862. The tent school can be seen in the 1865 panoramic photograph of Creswick which hangs in the Museum Office. In 1873 the Creswick Borough Council agreed to swap the Market reserve at the corner of Raglan and Napier Streets as the site for a larger school, for this site. (1)

Early Council Chambers

Creswick became a Municipality in 1858 and a Borough in 1863. The first meeting of the Municipal Council was held on 16 December 1858 at the Court House, Then in the Market Square opposite the American Hotel. It was resolved that a deputation call on Mr. G. A. Amos, Government Warden and Magistrate, "requesting the use of a room in the Government Buildings".

In May 1859, the Chairman proposed to Council that, as it "only occupied the present room on sufferance, and as it is claimed by the Postmaster, he considered it would be less expense for the Council to erect premises of their own rather than hire rooms".

There was considerable debate, as to site, and the National School site was among those suggested, but it was understood "that the school trustees would let the building, but could not sell the property". In July 1859 Council finally carried the motion "that the Chambers be placed in the centre of Victoria Street, in a line with and on the east side of Albert Street."

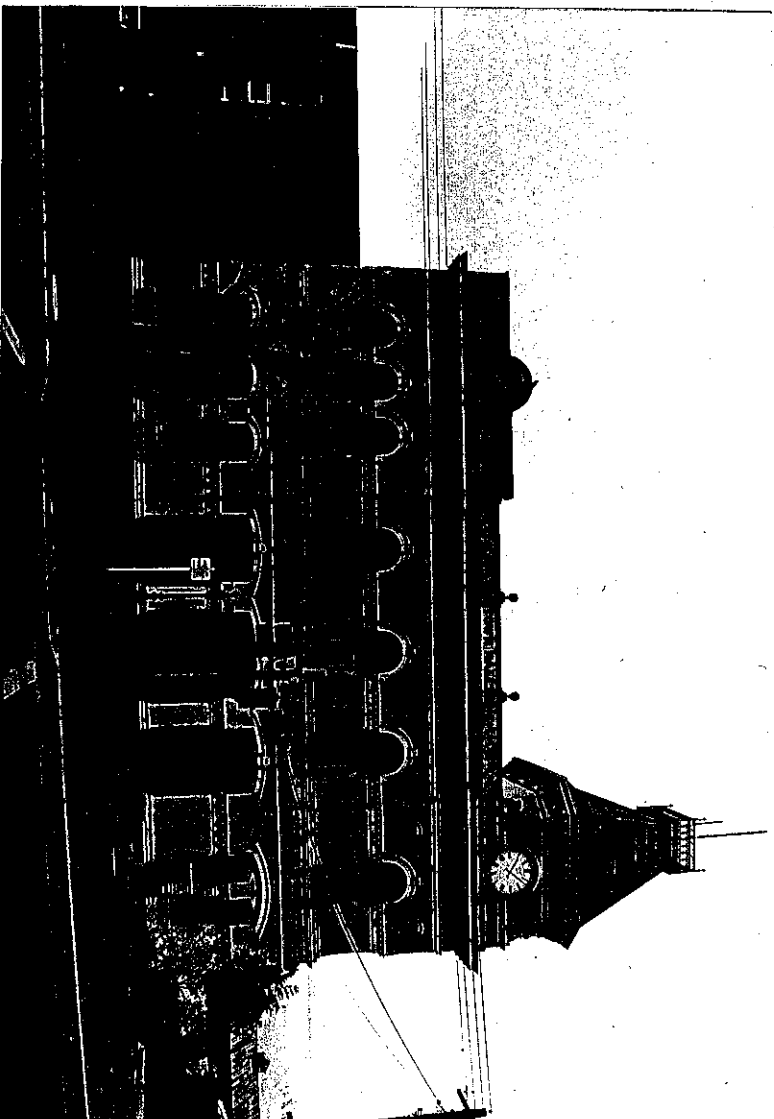
Building proceeded promptly and on 6 September 1859 Council met for the first time in their new Council Chambers. this modest building can be easily identified in the 1865 panoramic photograph of Creswick which hangs in the Museum Office.

The Existing Building

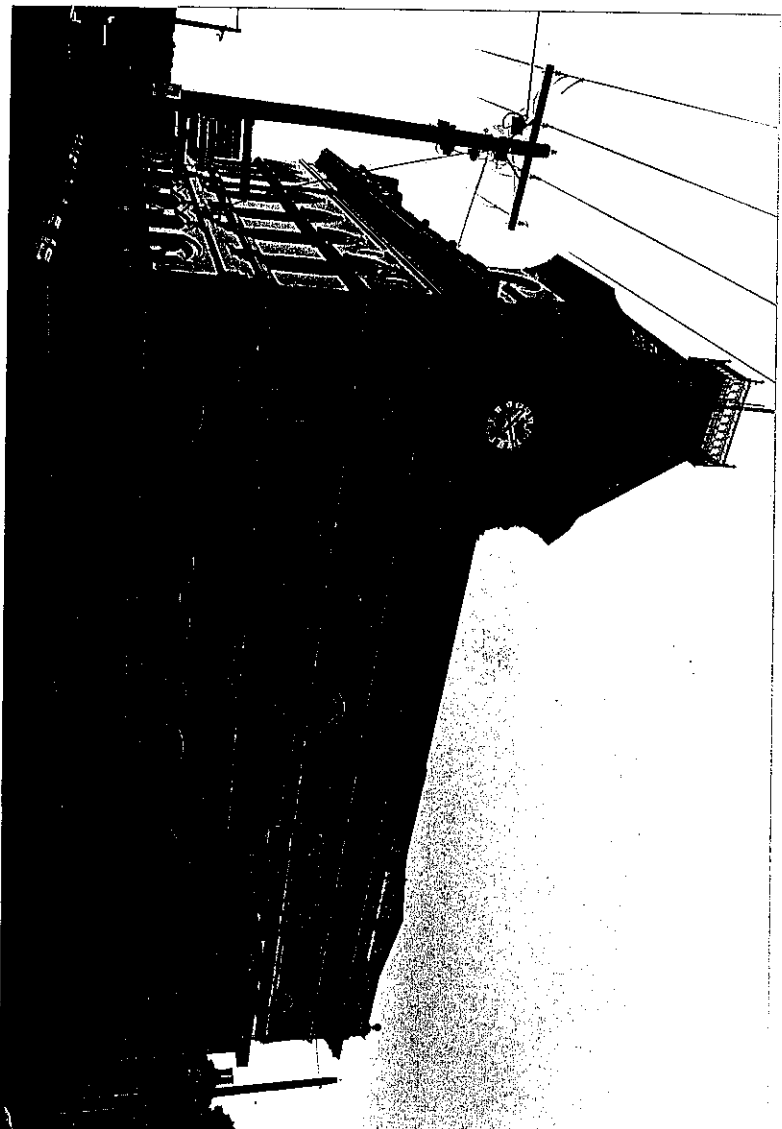
Council minutes of 11 May 1875 state that " £50 offered for the best design for a Town Hall. Cannot exceed £3,500 that the said sum shall be awarded with design that combines the best arrangement with external appearance."

Two weeks later the Council agreed that " An advertisement be inserted twice with the local paper, *Ballaarat Star* and *Argus* inviting competitive designs in accordance with conditions."

1. John A. Graham, *Early Creswick*, Creswick, 1987 p.99
and *Centenary: Railways and School Buildings 1874 -1974*,
Creswick Apex Club, 1974



Creswick Town Hall
West Elevation - Albert Street



Creswick Town Hall
South Elevation - Water Street

On the 22 September 1875, the Council held a special meeting to discuss the designs and "The Mayor and Town Clerk be desired to open the letter of 'Fidus' (the name to be kept secret), and ask him to take out the quantities and submit proof that his design can be carried out for the amount stated by the Council, viz £3,500; and if a tender be sent and accepted on the plans and specifications of 'Fidus' his design be accepted, and the prize awarded to him; that in dealing with the tender the margin allowed by the society of architects be admitted." The minutes of Council's next meeting disclose 'Fidus' as Mr. W.R.H. Creber. (2).

The original plans for the building are held in the Vernon Collection of architectural drawings located at the offices of L.H. Vernon & Associates, Sturt Street, Ballarat. They consist of Ground Floor Plan, Water Street and Albert Street Elevations and three Sections- two transverse and one longitudinal. The plans were signed as part of the building agreement on January 12 1875.

The original plans allowed for a Public Library on the front east elevation, a downstairs office for the Council, Large Hall with Dressings Rooms and Ladies and Gentlemen's Retiring Rooms, a two bedroom caretaker's cottage and three offices for commercial use with separate entry from Water Street. The upper floor is reached by a circular bluestone staircase. The upper floor of the building shows in the sections as containing offices but as there is no floor plan the proposed uses are not noted. The inclusion of areas for commercial rental was usual in many town halls of this era. They were included to provide income for the Council. Tenders were called on 7 December 1875 with the successful tenderer being Mr. A.J. Bolton. (3)

The foundation stone was laid on 25 February 1876 and was reported on in the Creswick Advertiser of 28 February 1876.

"The want of a commodious Town Hall has been long felt and long discussed, but only during the last twelve months has anything been done of a practical nature.... Our readers are already aware that £50 was offered as a premium for the best design, and that Mr. Creber was the successful competitor, his design having been selected from amongst a host of very handsome and elaborate ones. It is also well-known that Mr. Bolton is the successful tenderer, and, from the way in which the work is being carried on, we believe it will be satisfactorily completed. So far the foundations are in, and Friday last was selected for laying the corner stone. Of course the honour of performing this interesting ceremony devolved upon the Mayor (Mr. W. Gardiner)..."

2. Ashley W. Greenwood, Creswick Town Hall, Creswick, Conservation Analysis Report, Deakin University 1991
- 3 Loc. cit.
A.J. Boulton is described in the 1875 Ballarat Directory as a carpenter of Grenville Street, Ballarat

In March 1877 A.J. Boulton was awarded the contract for the furniture and fittings for the sum of £287.

The Town Hall opening was reported in the *Creswick Advertiser* on 19 April 1877 as

"the new Town Hall received its last finishing touch yesterday, and in the afternoon, the several members of the Council, with the Town Clerk, met Mr. Creber the architect and the builder and inspected the building throughout. The result of the inspection was very satisfactory, the architectural arrangements being very complete, and all that could be desired, and the whole works finished by Mr. Boulton and the sub-contractors in a style that reflects the great credit upon the architect, Mr. Jory, the Clerk of Works and themselves."

Apparently Mr. Creber the architect, acquired the old Council Chambers, although for what purpose has not yet been established. On 16 December 1878 Council received a letter from W.H. Creber asking the Town Clerk "for the keys of the old Council Chambers, purchase by him some time ago".

The Architect

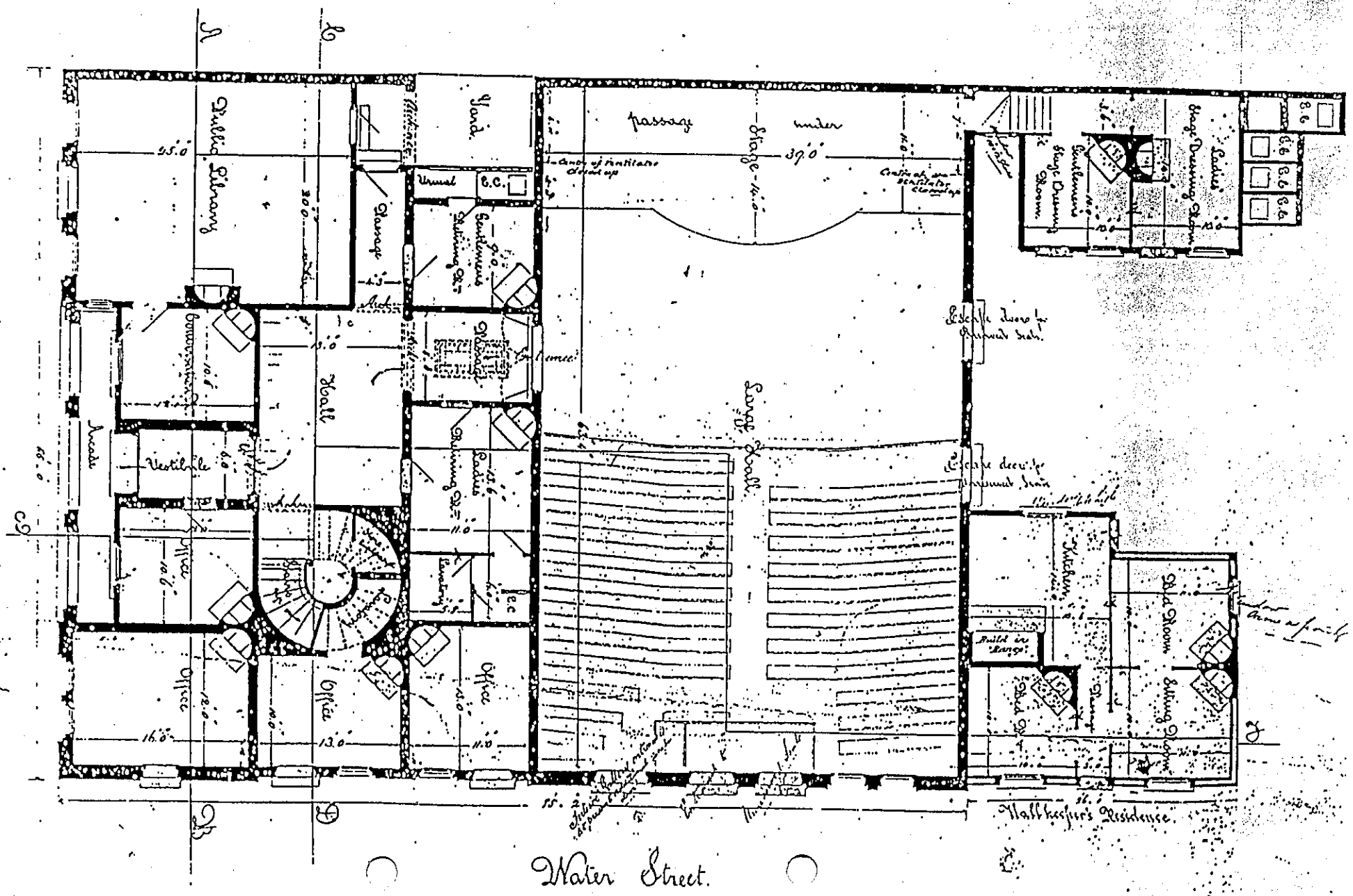
William R.H. Creber was a carpenter by trade. In 1869, in the Ballarat Directory, he is listed as living at 12 Drummond Street, Ballarat. In the early 1870s, Creber was the architect for a number of buildings in Bendigo. In 1871 he designed the West Methodist Sunday School in Eaglehawk, the houses - Rosemount, Mount Pleasant and View Hill House in 1972, and the Bible Christian Church in 1874. The Trustees of the latter were so pleased with the result that they gave the architect Mr. Creber, a gift of two guineas as a small acknowledgement of his excellent and satisfactory services. (4)

The Vernon collection of drawings holds a plan signed by him for alterations to a residence at Wendouree, near Ballarat dated 22 December 1873. He later joined Edward James as a partner in his architectural practice in Ballarat. Edward James had arrived in Victoria in 1852 but it was not until 1865 that he is listed in the Business Directory as an Architect. He was in Partnership with Creber under the style of James and Creber from the 1870s until 1884. James died in 1888. In 1887 Creber was advertising for tenders for a shop and dwelling in Oxford Street Sydney. No further information about his work in Victoria after 1884 is known. (5)

The Builder

Little is known of A.J. Boulton. He is listed in the 1875 Ballarat Directory as a carpenter and lived in Grenville Street, Ballarat.

4. Mike Butcher and Gill Flanders, *Bendigo Historic Buildings*, National Trust of Australia (Victoria) Central Victorian Branch 1987
5. Urban Conservation Projects, Survey of Architectural Drawings, held School of Architecture, University of Melbourne and Peter J. Vernon, Notes to Exhibition Catalogue, "The Vernon Collection" Ballarat Fine Art Gallery 21 February - 26 April 1992.

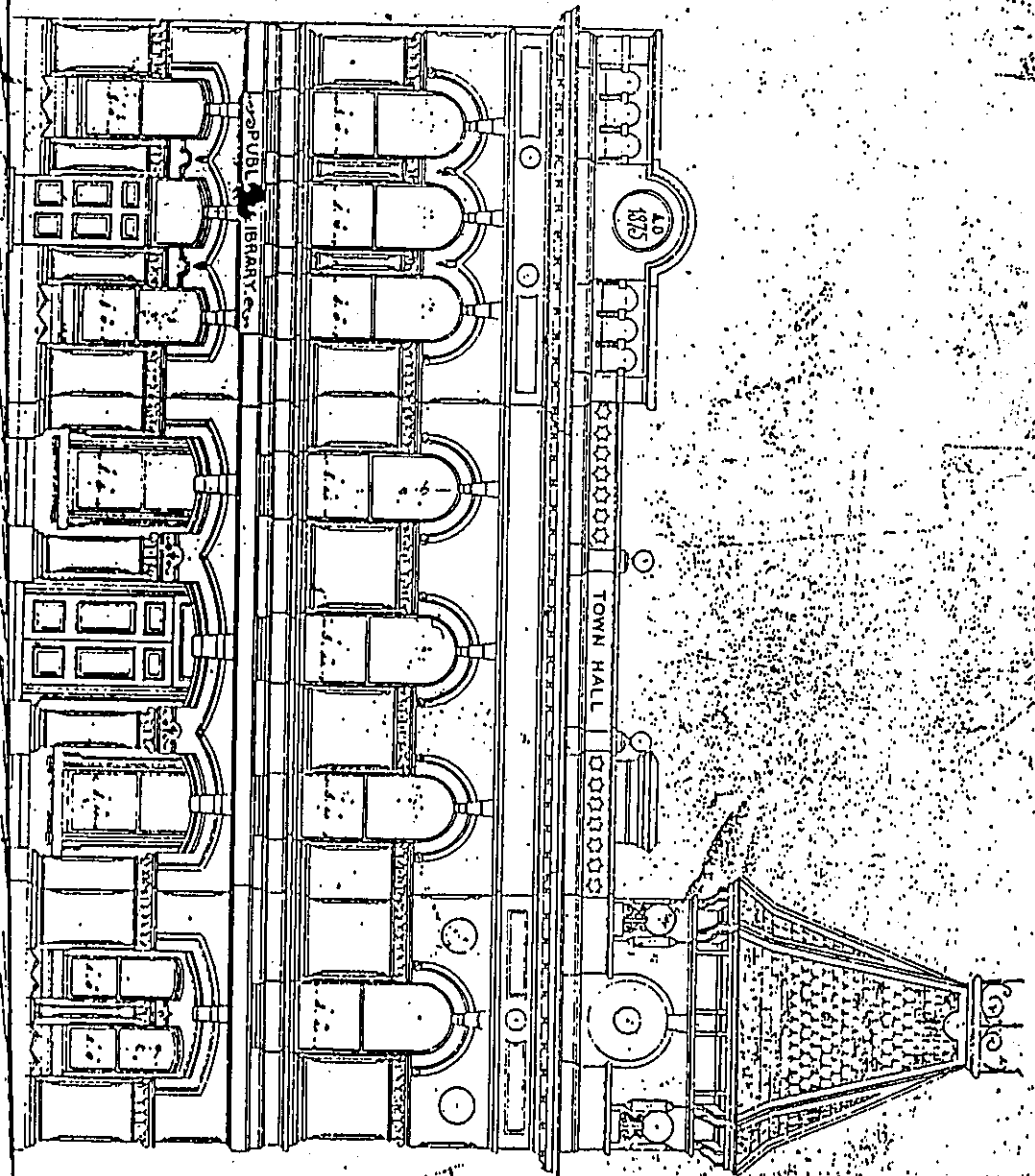


Street
Ground Plan
Scale
ORIGINAL DRAWING 45.

Town Hall

Public Buildings

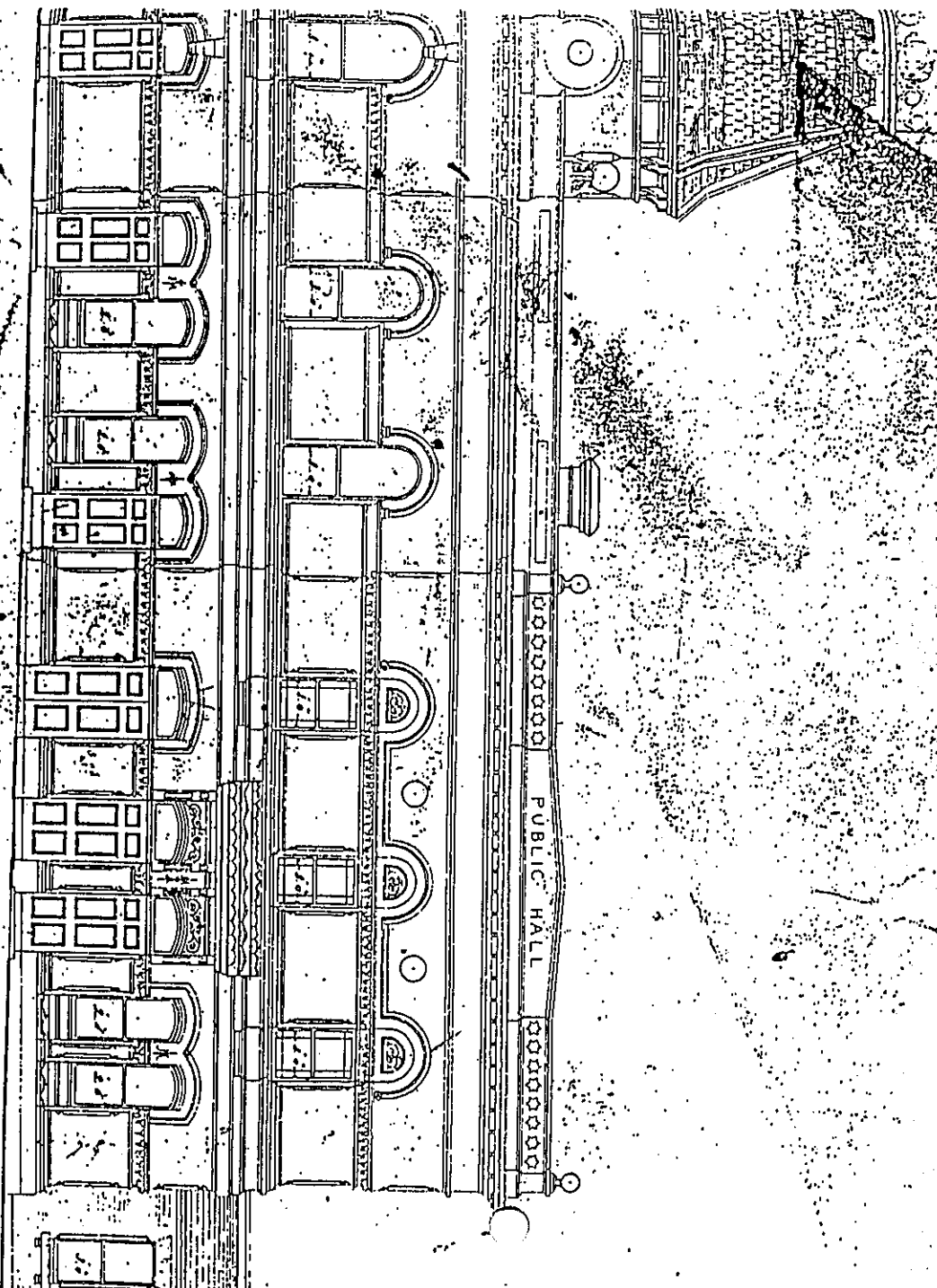
Brewick



Elevation to Street 8'

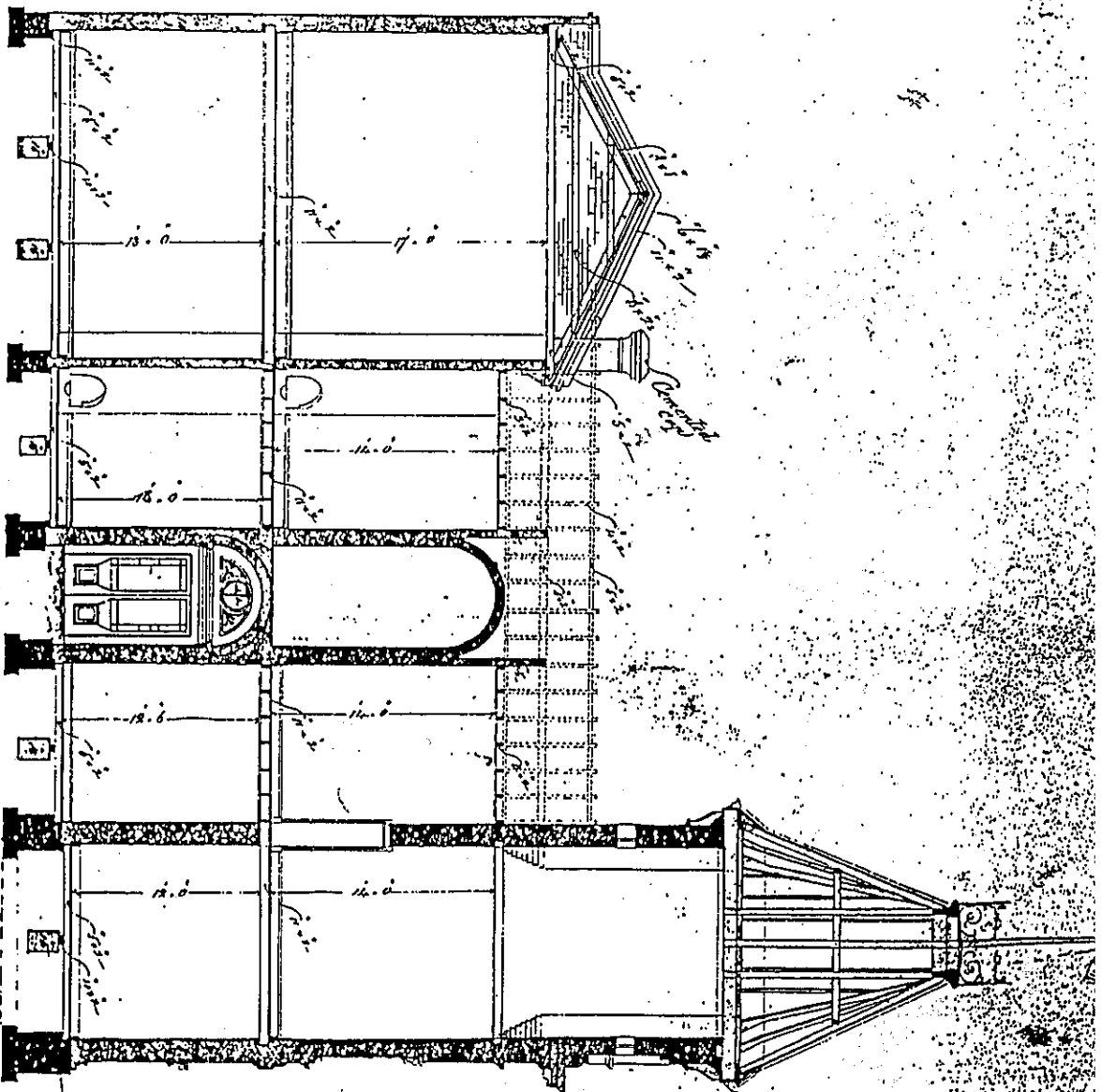
ORIGINAL DRAWINGS.

Elevation to Street 8'

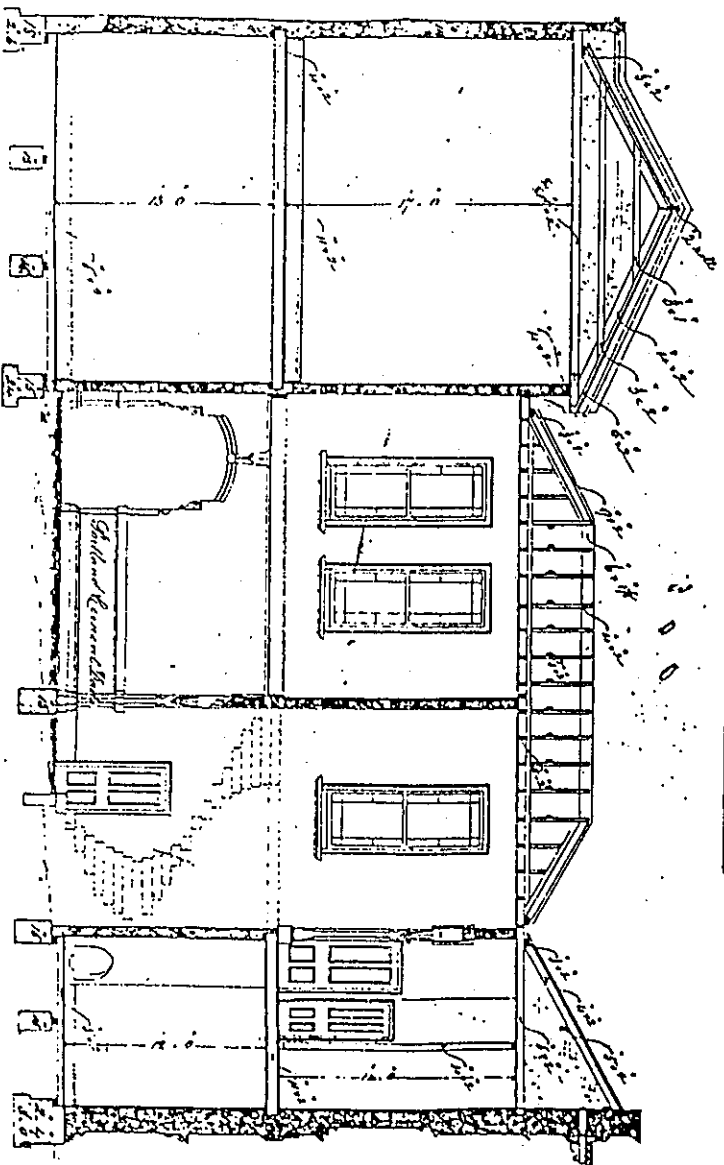


Elevation to Water 8'

Scale
Eight Feet to One Inch



Section through A-B.



Section through C-D.

Description of Building

The Creswick Town Hall is a two storied rendered brick building on a bluestone base. The design addresses the corner site with a corner squat tower balanced by corner pavilions, surmounted by pediments which emphasise the separate functions of the Library and Public Hall.

The building is designed with classical style with the lower openings of colonnade, doors and windows with segmental arches separated by walls treated as pilasters with a moulding at capital height of acanthus leaves. This is repeated in the upper storey with round headed openings being used and the frieze of smaller acanthus motifs. The lower storey windows are outlined with mouldings and have unusual incised chevron mouldings on the steeply raked window sills. The upper storey mouldings terminate in round bosses. The colonnade arches and upper windows on the tower and Albert Street facades have decorated moulded render keystones. On the water Street facade is embellished with incised decorations in the render. The upper windows of the public hall have square headed windows with recessed, incised plaster decorated arched heads above the windows.

The walls are capped with a heavy rendered cornice supported on rendered modillions. Above this rises a solid parapet. The parapet is embellished above the library pavilion with blank arcading of round headed arches supported on truncated engaged pilasters with a stylized Doric capital. The centre of the parapet rises to an arched pediment enclosing a circular date plate which reflects the round clock face in the tower.

The parapet runs into the tower as a frieze and is only decorated by incised rectangular panels above the commercial offices in Water Street. Above the Town Hall and Public Hall, the parapet is decorated with unusual incised stellar patterns.(6) Above the public hall a triangular pediment marks the main entrance to the hall.

The irregular octagonal tower rises from the square corner pavilion. The four short sides of the octagon are embellished with decorative scrolls surmounted by spheres which team with the spheres which decorated the parapet. The tower is capped by eaves supported on paired brackets and a decorative patterned and coloured slate roof of an unusual bell shape. The roof is capped by a decorative cast iron balcony surrounding the look-out and flagpole.

The interior is notable for the bluestone spiral staircase and the cantilevered walkway with cast iron balustrade which leads to the upper floor council chamber. The Chamber is notable for the retention of much of the original fittings and furniture.

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- 6 Similar treatment of the parapet with star patterned incisions occur on a shop building at 415 Sturt Street Ballarat.

The building is of a similar size to other town halls erected in the 1870s such as those constructed for the Borough of Stawell, the original section of the City of Fitzroy Town Hall and the Clunes Town Hall. Most drew on the classical vocabulary of the era, such as arched windows, frieze and cornice lines and decorative parapets. The Creswick Town Hall is notable in this group for the squat proportions of the corner tower, its unusual tower roof design, and the stellar pattern in the parapet.

Statement of Significance

The Creswick goldfields revived in the early 1870s with the discovery of the rich Madame Berry leads. This lead to a twenty year period of prosperity in the town. The Creswick Town Hall is a substantial reminder to the aspirations of the town at this time. The building is significant for its unusual stellar decorations in the parapet, the squat corner tower with bell shaped decorative slate roof, and the internal spiral bluestone staircase. The Town Hall is a substantially intact notable example of a medium sized town hall of this period. The building is a landmark in the streetscape and central to the character of Creswick.

Changes to the Building

Use

The building was used for Council purposes from 1877 until 1968 when the offices were relocated to the neighbouring building. The two storey office area and Council Chambers have been used since May 1970 as the Creswick Museum. The Public Hall space continues to be used for performances, film showings and public meetings.

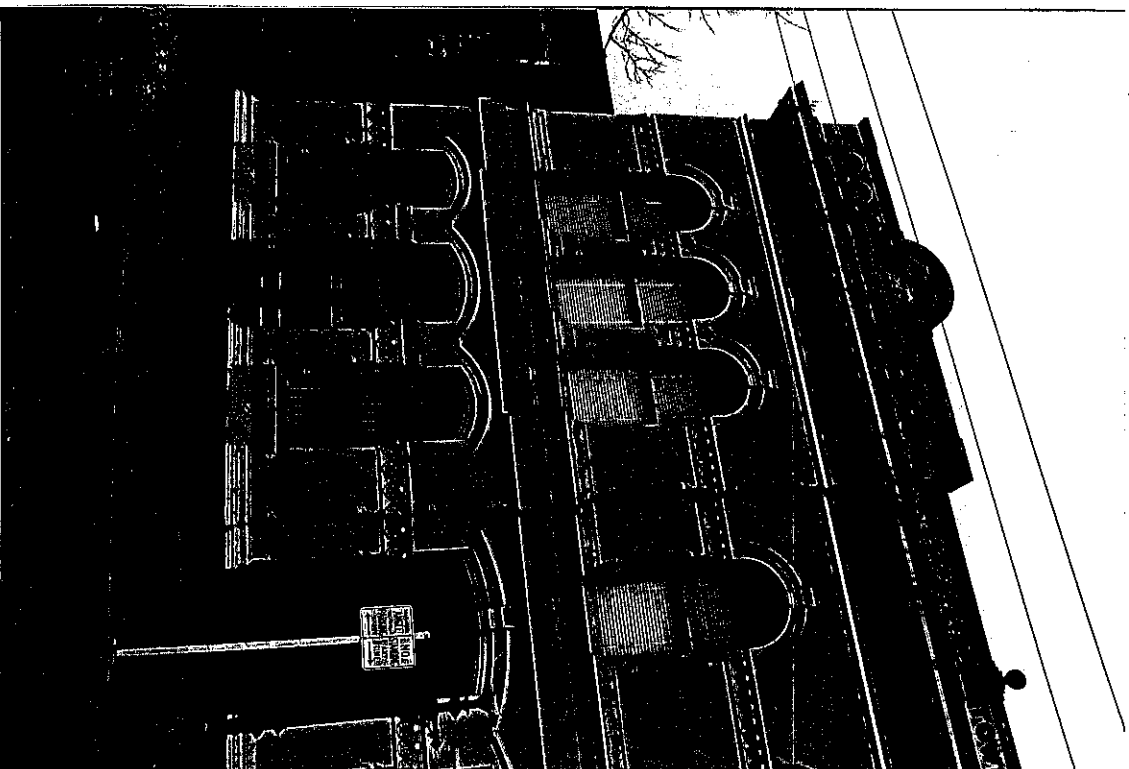
Hall

The Hall has continuously been used for its original purpose as a venue for concerts, meetings and social events since construction. In the 1930s it was equipped with a projection box on the north wall and movies were shown onto the south wall where the original entry doors are located. The external projector cabin was added on the south wall in 1941/42, and the orientation of the screen changed. (7)

Council Chamber

The Council Chamber was used for its original purpose from 1877 until 1934. The Shire of Creswick and Borough of Creswick amalgamated in 1934, and the Shire officially met at the Shire Hall in Kingston. The last meeting of the Borough was held in the Town Hall on 12 June 1934. (8) The Shire officers still worked from the Borough Offices and would travel to Kingston for meetings. During the war, due to petrol rationing, the meetings were moved to Creswick temporarily. Apparently they did not move back to Kingston after this time. (9) The Council moved its meeting to the new Council Offices next door in 1968. The Chamber is, with the original furniture and a collection of photographs of early Borough and Shire Presidents, now part of the Creswick Museum.

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- 7 Plans held by Council signed by Shire Engineer, dated 18.10.41.
 - 8 Graham, p. 136
 - 9 Information from Ms. Pat Nolan, long time Council employee.



Creswick Town Hall
Library Pavilion
West Elevation - Albert Street

Library

The Mechanics Institute was inaugurated in July 1859 and operated as a reading room and library in 'Rogers' Building' next up from the British Hotel. In August 1862 it purchased the old telegraph station, erected in 1859 but no longer required as the telegraphic services were transferred to the new Post Office in July 1862.

On the completion of the present building, in August 1878, the Mechanics Institute occupied the "comfortable rooms designed for that purpose in the new Town Hall". At the same time it was reconstituted the Mechanics Institute and Free Library. It provided a big range of newspapers and English and American reviews, and a bookstock of "over 1000 standard works" all for the free use on the premises; those that wished to borrow paid a subscription of 10/- per annum.

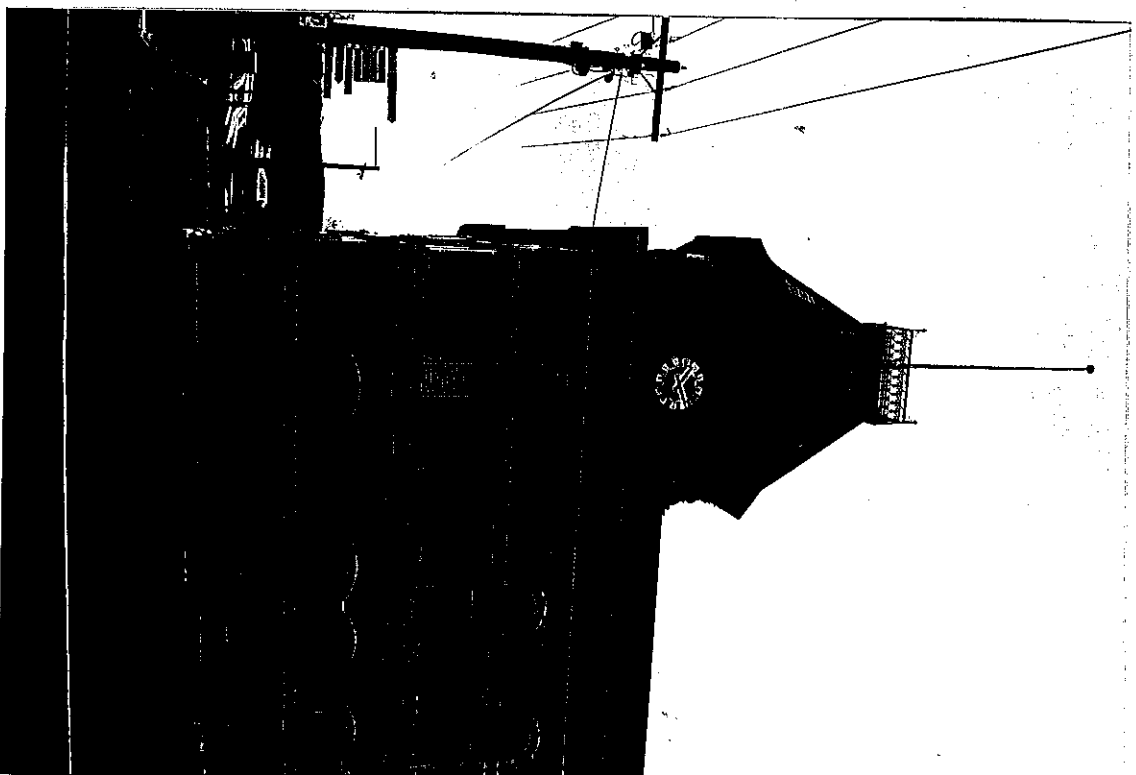
In 1879, the first normal year of operation, the Council voted £50 towards the library's running costs. In 1880 the grant was reduced to £20 and the secretary observed somewhat bitterly in his annual report that the committee "had reason to expect a more generous support from the Borough Council seeing that the latter received the sum of £670 as a grant towards the building fund..." (10)

By 1888 the Gold Office on the opposite side of Albert Street, next door to the Post Office had fallen into disuse and the Borough of Creswick sought the land as the site for a free library. In 1889 the land was temporarily reserved by the Borough as the site of the free library. The Town Clerk reported in May 1892 that the new building had been erected and housed a Free Reading Room, Library and Band Room. (11)

Council dealt with the City of Melbourne Bank, which occupied one of the commercial offices in the Town Hall building. In November 1889, L.D. Gibson, the Manager, asked Council for "painting and repairs to the Bank premises". In December, a Mr. Ziele's quote to "effect the repairs in the bank premises of the Town Hall for £6.10.0" was accepted. Once the Free Library moved to its new location, it appears that the City of Melbourne Bank occupied the old library area.

After the closing of the City of Melbourne Bank, on 7th August 1894, one of its best customers, Alexander Peacock, influential mining man and later Premier of Victoria, induced the National Bank to take over the City of Melbourne Bank's mining business. Accordingly three branches were opened at Creswick, Allendale and Rokewood - mining towns in the Ballarat district. The Creswick branch was opened at the town hall in the former library in August 1895 at a rental of one

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- 10 Henderson, D. Centenary Year of Creswick's Mechanics Institute and Free Library building, 1992. Creswick and District Historical Society Newsletter V.1 No. 3/4, Sept/Dec. 1992, p.3-9.
 11. Nigel Lewis & Associates, Creswick Gold Office, Historic Buildings Council



Creswick Town Hall
Former Commercial Offices
South Elevation - Water Street

pound per week. On 30 January 1902 the branch closed and the business was transferred to Ballarat. (12)

The library area continued to be known as the "Bank Chamber".

The Creswick Branch of the returned Sailors, Soldiers and Airmens Imperial League of Australia was formed in 1919 and immediately after its formation, recreation rooms were established in the Town Hall. (13) This would most likely be in the area of the Library. (14)

Other bodies which were given free use of the Bank Chamber in the 1930s and during World War 2 included the RSSAILA's Women's Auxilliary and Dad's Association, Red Cross Society, the Hospital Committee, Creswick Patriotic Younger Set, War Service Fund Committee, Ladies benevolent Society, and the Blind Auxilliary. The Creswick Comforts Fund held enure parties to raise funds for aid to POW's. The Creswick District Brass Band held weekly practice nights. The Council minutes record that some of these groups were provided with a fire.

When the Creswick Progress Association sought free use of the bank Chamber, it was informed that "free use... cannot be granted except for Patriotic and Charitable bodies".

In June 1940, Mrs. Ashmore, the "Hall Keeper", sought recompense for looking after the bank Chamber, and was granted £10 p.a. for the duration of the war, from Borough Riding Funds.

Suppers had formerly been served in the upstairs area of the Fire station, adjoining the Town Hall in Water Street, but this burned down after a lightening strike in 1935. Borough Councillors were empowered to reduce charges to lessees of the Town Hall, but there was agitation from ratepayers for a new supper room. In 1936 the minutes refer to alterations being made to the Bank Chamber and this could relate to its use as a Supper Room. In the 1940s Pat Nolan, a long time Council employee, remembers that the Library was used as a Supper Room for balls and later was the Baby Health Centre under the supervision of Sister Semper.

The Former Library area is now a display area for the Creswick Museum.

- 12 Blainey, G and Hutton, G, *Gold and Paper 1858-1982, A History of the National Bank of Australasia Ltd*, 1983.

p.115

Information regarding closure from Mr. Bernard McGrath, archivist, National Australian Bank.

- 13 Graham, p.146

- 14 Back to Creswick November 5 -12 1921, Souvenir Programme. "For the convenience of the visitor rooms at the Town Hall will be converted into a General waiting Room... the returned Soldiers Club which is also in these buildings, has placed its Billiard Table at the disposal of the Visitors..."

Commercial Offices

These were leased out to businesses including that of mine managers but appear to have been amalgamated into the Council use of the building over the years.

By the 1940s the office on the corner of Water and Albert Streets was used as part of the General office for the Council and this was extended into the centre office. The Office adjacent to the hall has been used as an entry to the Hall after the alterations to the building for use as the Creswick Museum in 1970.

Gentlemen's retiring Room and Yard

These were still used as a cloak room in 1943. Conversion to kitchen occurred between then and 1957 when Kitchen repairs were undertaken.

Passage

Part of this was blocked off and converted to the area for the boiler for the heating system in 1969.

Conversion to Creswick Museum

Works were carried out in 1969 to convert the former Borough Offices and Library to the Creswick Museum. These were undertaken by Ewan Jones, Architect, Ballarat. They consisted of some alterations to separate the functions of the Public Hall from the former Council Offices and use of the former Council Offices as display and storage space. The major spaces have been retained with minor alterations to doorways and passages as set out below.

At this time the first clock was installed in the tower. The design of the tower had been for the installation of a clock but this had not occurred due to lack of finances. William Tunnell-Jones, a Melbourne engineer whose hobby was the repair of clocks and watches, heard of the need for a clock and offered an English-made movement for nothing. His wife was a Creswick woman. (15) It is believed that the clock and movement came from Christ Church, South Yarra.

15 Etruscan. Vol.24 No.2 Sept. 1975. Full article included in appendices.

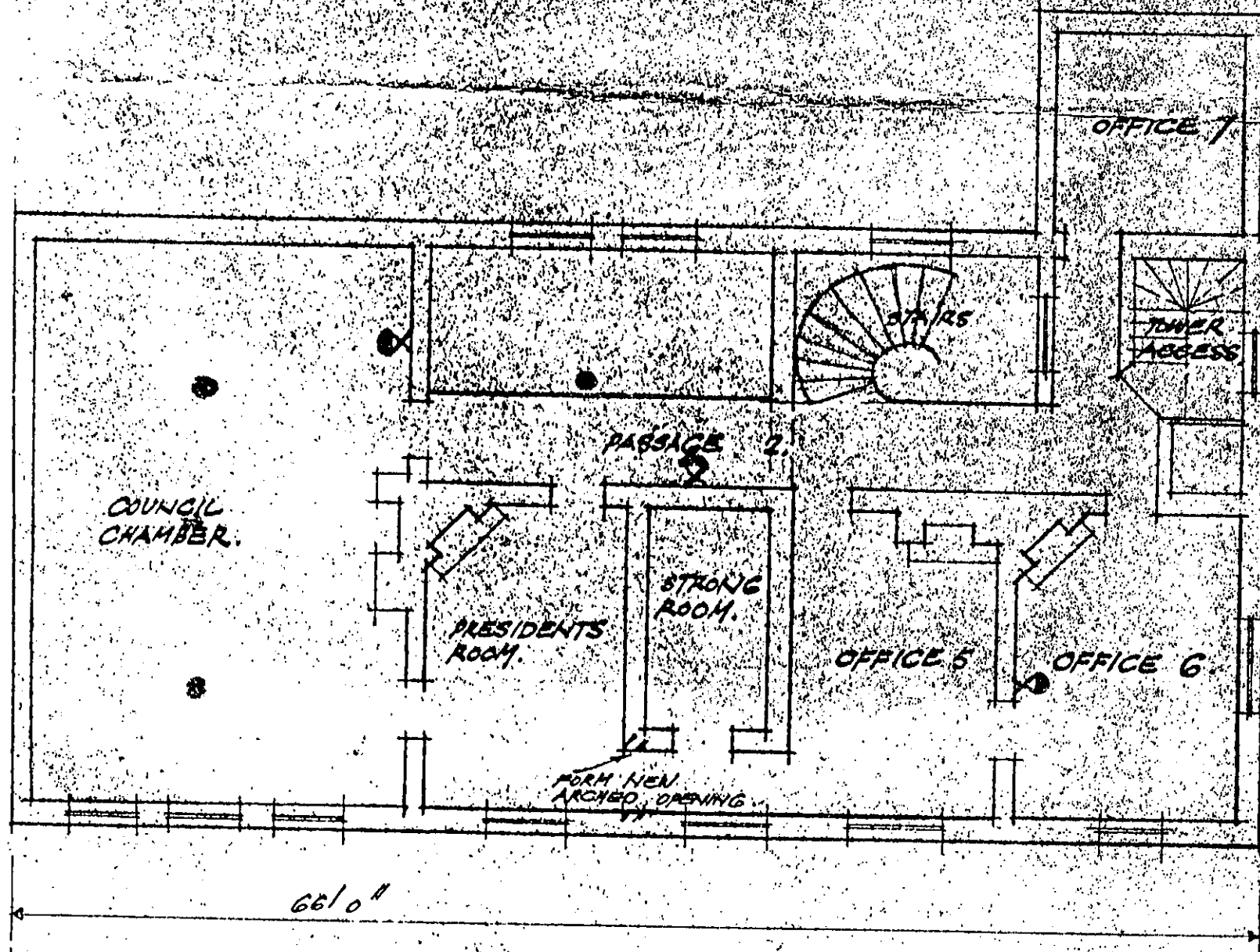
A hand-drawn floor plan of a building, likely a school or institutional structure, showing various rooms and proposed modifications. The plan includes the following labeled areas and features:

- KITCHEN**: Located in the upper left corner.
- MECHANICAL EQUIPMENT**: A rectangular area adjacent to the kitchen.
- FOYER**: A central area labeled $18' \times 12'6"$.
- STAIRS**: A curved staircase located within the foyer area.
- OFFICE 1**: Labeled $10'6" \times 12'0"$, located in the lower right.
- OFFICE 2**: Located to the right of Office 1.
- OFFICE 3**: Located in the upper right area.
- OFFICE 4**: Labeled $10'6" \times 12'0"$, located in the lower left.
- SUPPER ROOM**: Labeled $25' \times 20'$, located on the far left.
- LOBBY 1**: Labeled $6'6" \times 12'0"$, located between Office 4 and Office 1.
- CL. (Closets)**: Includes **JOES CLOAKS**, **HEN'S CLOAKS**, and **NEW D2. CLOAKS**.
- Entrances**: **NEW DOOR** (top center), **NEW DOORS** (top right), and **MAIN ENTRANCE** (bottom center).
- Other Features**: **NEW TIMBER STUD WALL**, **BACK UP EXISTING DOORWAY** (two locations), **CURB. UNDER**, **REMOVE CURB.**, **NEW NEW OPENING**, **NEW DOORS** (bottom center), and **DI.** (bottom center).

Dimensions for the overall building footprint are noted as $66'0"$ (width) and $85'0"$ (depth).

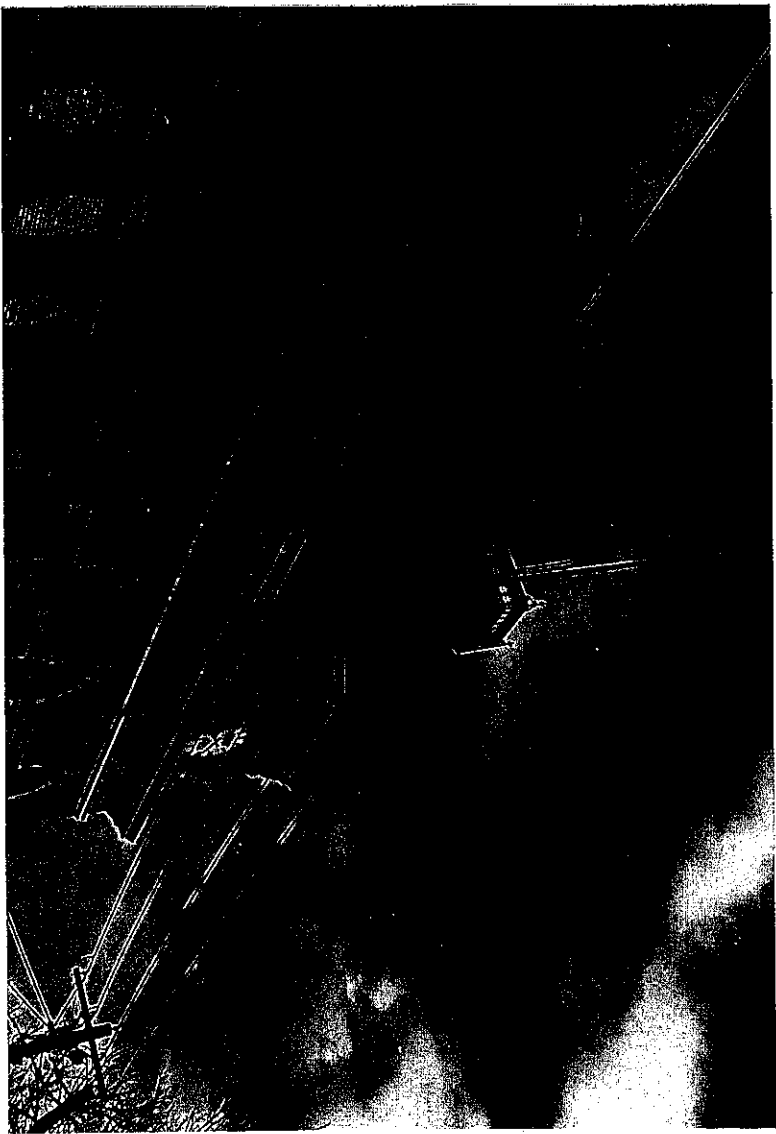
85/58

1969/70 ALTERATIONS.

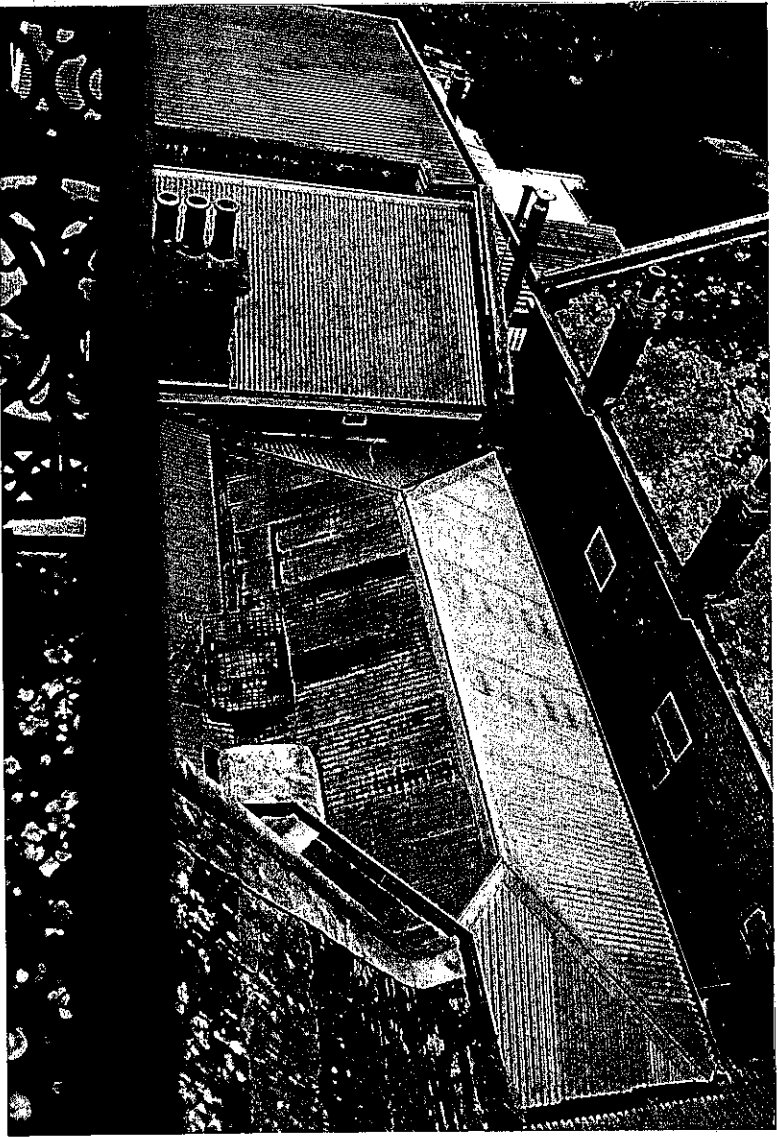


FIRST FLOOR PLAN.

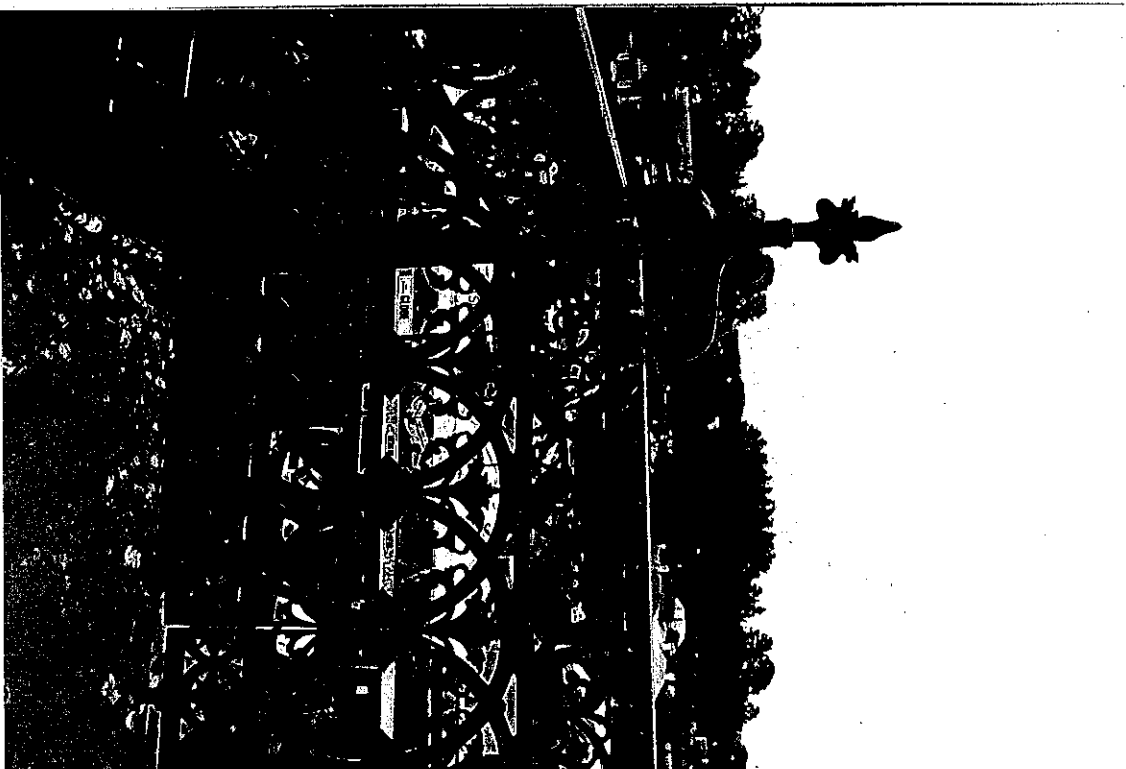
OFF



Creswick Town Hall
Slate Roof of Tower
West Elevation - Albert Street



Creswick Town Hall
Roof Over Areas No. 10, 11 and 12



Creswick Town Hall
Cast Iron Balustrade on Tower Roof

Physical Changes

External

Roofs:

Three parts of the building retain slate roofs. They are the gable roof of the main hall, the hipped roof of the caretaker's cottage and the bell shaped octagonal roof of the tower.

The Hall and Caretaker's cottage

The present condition of the main hall roof and the caretaker's cottage shows some slipping and cracked tiles and if this is not rectified in the short term it will lead to water damage of the roof framing and further damage to the building structure due to water penetration.

The gable ends terminate in brick parapets which appear to have been rendered as a waterproofing measure. This appears to have weathered in areas.

The galvanised steel ridges show signs of rusting and lifting at overlaps.

Recommendation: That the roofs be stripped, battens checked and replaced as needed and the existing slate be re-hung with replacement slates used as required. The replacement slates to be of similar colour and size to the existing slates. That the gable parapets be checked for loss of mortar joints, be re-pointed as required and have the render capping replaced. The render used to be similar to samples of the original render mix. Check all galvanised steel ridge cappings and replaced as necessary.

Tower Roof

The tower is an octagonal bell shape clad with scalloped slates.

The tower roof is in a similar condition to the main roof with slipped and cracked slates. The tower slating is a major feature of the Town Hall and rehangng, replacement and repair at this time will save on greater expense in the future. The roof also should be made water and vermin proof to prevent damage to the clock mechanism and deterioration of the structure.

Recommendation: That the roofs be stripped, battens checked and replaced as needed and the existing slate be re-hung with replacement slates used as required. The replacement slates to be of similar colour and size to the existing slates.

The Offices

The front section of the building is a mixture of skillion and hipped roofs, currently clad in corrugated galvanised iron. The roofs appear to be in generally good condition with the exception of the hip over the hallway which shows rust stains and would appear to require replacement in one to two years. There is a possum trap on the roof and this may cause corrosion to the roof surface and block the valley gutter in this area.

Recommendation: Remove possum trap, check rusted section of roof and allow for replacement in one to two years.

Chimneys

These appear to be generally in good condition. All retain their chimney pots. The chimney on the Caretaker's Cottage has some damage to the render.

Recommendation: Retain all Chimney pots. repair damaged render on Caretaker's Cottage chimney. Inspect all chimneys regularly for render damage and loss of mortar in face brick chimneys.

Spouting and gutters and flashings.

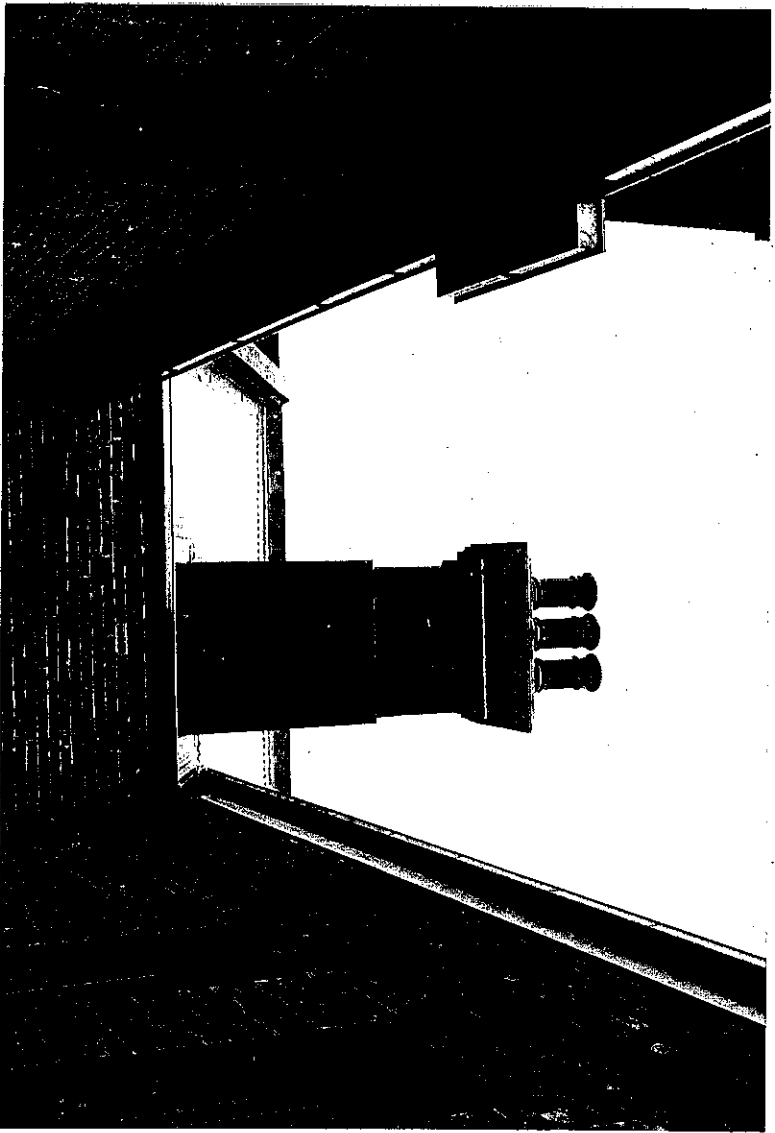
Much of the spouting flashings and downpipes appears to have been replaced in the last five to seven years and appears in good condition. The exceptions being the Water Street and east elevations of the caretaker's cottage which requires immediate replacement to prevent further damage to the walls and windows, and the cleaning of spouting on the tower, which is full of grass and some spouting above the two storey section which requires cleaning and inspection. The spouting on the east side of the Public Hall and the south side of the Dressing Rooms has been replaced with quad profile galvanised steel spouting. This is showing signs of failure.

The flashing behind the parapet, especially on the Albert Street facade is failing at the joins and water is penetrating the structure.

The caretaker's cottage and tower retain the original cast iron profile of the spouting and this profile should be used for replacement.

Recommendation: Replace spouting on caretaker's cottage with spouting of matching profile and material. If the replacement is in another material it should be made to match the existing profile. Clean spouting on Tower and inspect for any necessary repair or replacement. Repair or replace areas of flashing behind the parapets that show evidence of failing. Repair or replace section of galvanised steel quad spouting on the Public Hall and dressing Rooms that show signs of failure. If replacing quad profile guttering for entire sections, the replacement should match the profile of the cast iron spouts.

Regularly inspect all spouting and gutters for debris and signs of failure. Prepare a regular maintenance and replacement plan and budget.



Creswick Town Hall
Chimney to Commercial Offices - Areas No. 8 and 13



Creswick Town Hall
Chimney of Caretaker's Cottage

Downpipes

These appear to have been renewed in the past 5 to 10 years and appear to be generally in good condition.

Recommendation: Regularly inspect all downpipes for debris and signs of failure. Prepare a regular maintenance and replacement plan and budget. Retain the round profile gutters in any replacement programme.

Facades

West Elevation - Albert Street

Render

The render work is substantially intact. The only missing items are:

- Spheres missing from the parapet on either side of the Library pavilion.
- Sphere on one bracket of the tower.

Render repair

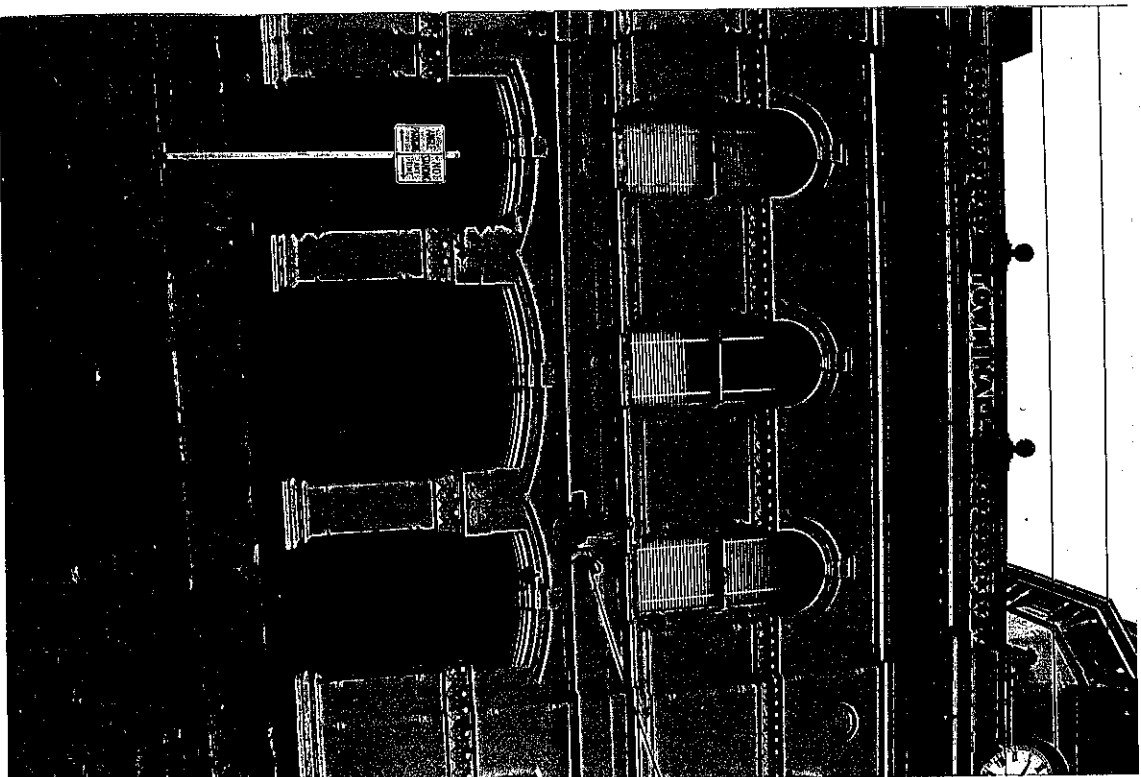
Cornice of main facades: This is not shedding water adequately which has led to the growth of moss and lichen on the upper surface which again retains water and retards shedding of water. This is leading to further degradation of the adjacent materials. The cornice is built out on cantilevered slate and the water is running back along the slate and causing spalling of the inner brickwork. This can be noted inside the tower. Degradation of the render in other parts of the cornice can be noted from inspection from the ground.

The wall surface is generally in good condition only needing minor patching of small cracks.

Minor repairs to mechanical damage is required to the impost mould at first floor level and the window sills.

Recommendation: The upper surface of the cornice should be cleaned immediately and treated to retard the growth of lichen and mosses to aid the shedding of water in these areas. This may be able to be undertaken by Council Staff.

The areas to be repaired are the cornice, minor repairs to the parapet, repairs to the impost mould at first floor window level and the sills. Replace the missing decorative spheres on the parapet. The external re-painting should not be undertaken until all repair work to the render is complete and in condition to take paint.



Creswick Town Hall
Cast Iron Balustrade and Lampstands
West Elevation - Albert Street

Joinery

The window joinery is substantially intact with only some minor sections requiring repair or replacement. The windows all require sanding back, filling of minor wear, replacing of window putty, priming and painting with undercoat and two top coats of paint. The ground floor window second from the south corner has cracked glass which should be replaced. The end window on the south corner requires replacement of the north edge weatherstrip.

Library Doors - require replacement of two sections of bolection moulding at the base. The bottom rail and mid rails of the north door has been removed and replaced with metal. The metal sheet needs to be removed and the door repaired with a new timber rails. The south door has a cracked mid panel. this should be repaired or replaced.

The original door furniture is missing and has been replaced with inappropriate modern fittings. These should be replaced with appropriate door furniture.

Main Doors - The mid and Lower panels of both door leaves are split and require repair or replacement. The centre door knobs require replacing and the lock is of modern design.

Recommendation: that the repairs outlined above be undertaken and all timber be cleaned and prepared for painting with an undercoat and two coats of full gloss paint. All windows to be re-puttied and the cracked glass replaced. Door furniture to be replaced with appropriate fittings.

Cast Iron - All windows have been fitted with cast iron security bars. These all require cleaning, rust proofing and painting. The bars on the window to the north of the main doors have rusted at the top causing loss of render in this area.

The bars and the cast iron fence and gate to the colonnade were not installed when the building was first built but appear to have been installed soon after. (16)

Recommendation : The iron work requires cleaning, rustproofing and painting and the render over the window repaired.

Cast Iron Lampstands - The lampstands stand today minus their light fittings which would appear to have been the object of vandalism. The attractive cast iron posts, cross arms and lamp bases are intact. The reconstruction of the light fittings based on the excellent photographic evidence can be undertaken locally and the reinstatement of these lamps to working condition would certainly enhance the appearance of the building and the streetscape.

Recommendation: That the light fittings be reconstructed and the lamps returned to working order. The cast iron posts, cross arms and lamp base to be cleaned, rustproofed and painted.

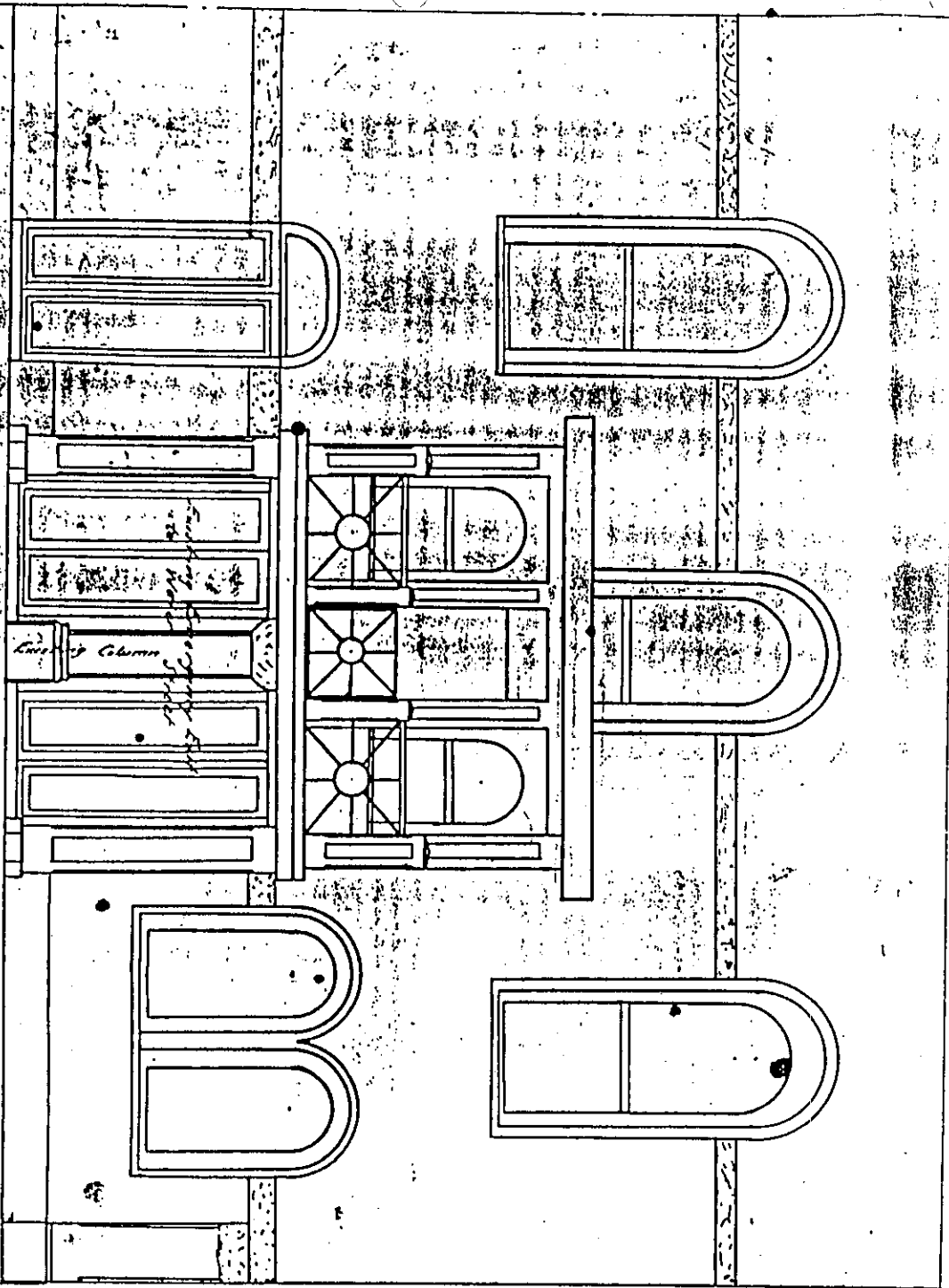
Bluestone door sills - both the library and main entry door sills are worn. This shows evidence of the activity through the doors. The gap worn by the passage of feet allows the passage of dust and draughts into the building.

Recommendation: I suggest that flexible draught strips be attached to the inside of the doors to minimise this problem.

South Elevation - Water Street

The Projection Cabin (or Bio Box) - constructed in 1941, this is the major external alteration to the building over its life span. The construction of this addition was to provide an elevated projection cabin which would allow film to be projected onto the stage area so that seating would not require to be shifted for live shows and films. The structure also provided a covered entry through the main doors to the public hall. The Projection cabin obscures the design of the facade by cutting across the main doors to the Public Hall and the windows of the upper floor. Although an attempt has been made to blend in with the materials and design of the building, the placement and proportions of the addition detract from the building. The Projection cabin can only be reached by ladder from the outside and is not required for modern sound and lighting equipment.

Recommendation: That the Projection Cabin be removed and the original appearance of this facade be reinstated.



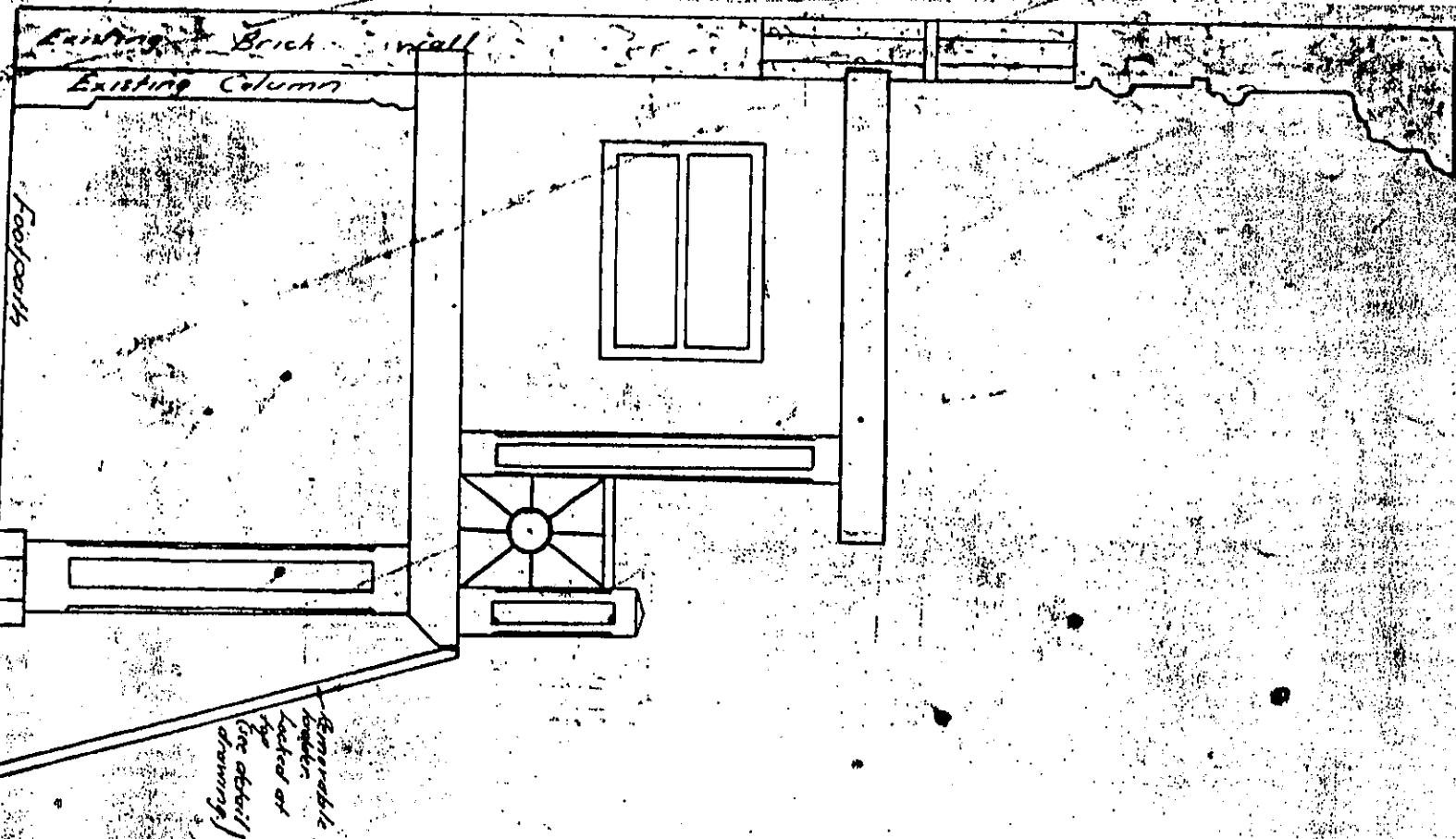
FRONT ELEVATION

1" = 4'

1941 ADDITION OF PROJECTOR
CABIN

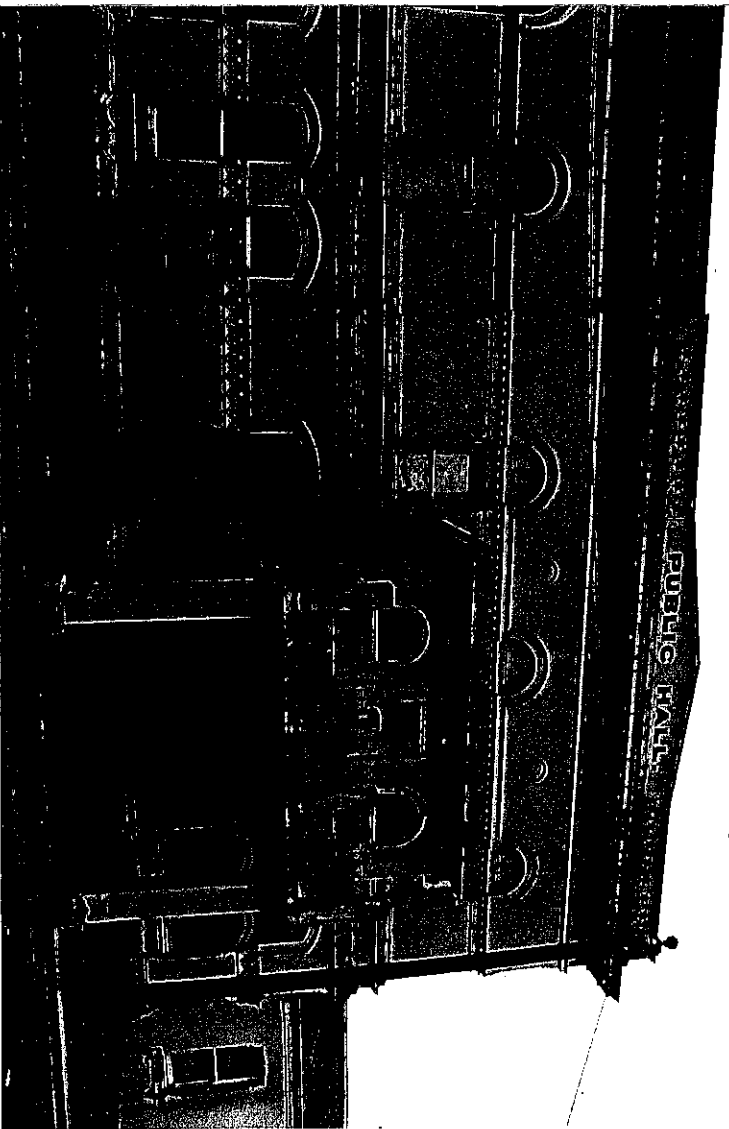
SIDE ELEVATION

1" = 4'

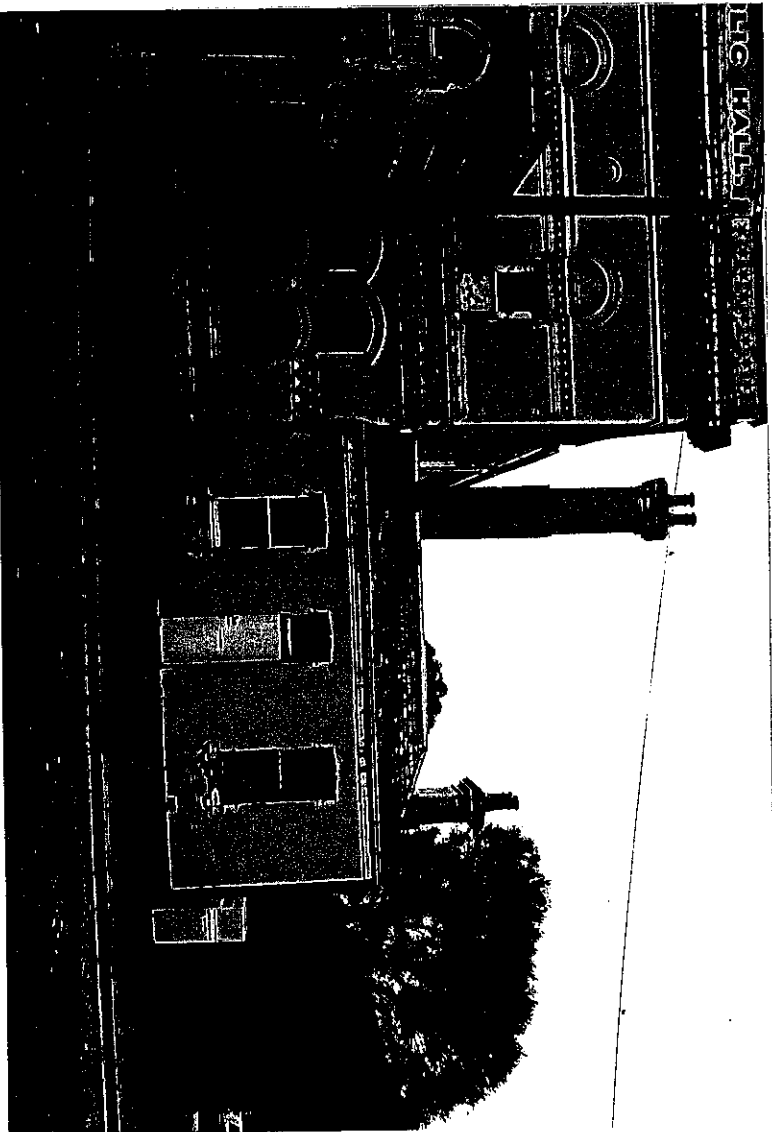


Kell

1941 ADDITION OF PROJECTOR CABIN



Creswick Town Hall
Projection Cabin - Added 1941
South Elevation - Water Street



Creswick Town Hall
Caretaker's Cottage
South Elevation - Water Street

Render

The render work is substantially intact. The only missing items are:

One sphere missing from the parapet on the west side of the Public Hall pavillion.

Render repair

Cornice of main facades: This is not shedding water adequately which has led to the growth of moss and lichen on the upper surface which again retains water and retards shedding of water. This is leading to further degradation of the adjacent materials. The cornice is built out on cantilevered slate and the water is running back along the slate and causing spalling of the inner brickwork. This can be noted inside the tower. Degradation of the render in other parts of the cornice can be noted from inspection from the ground.

Over the east window of the caretaker's cottage cracking of the render has occurred due to water damage from the rusted spouting. This has also caused loss of render on the window sill.

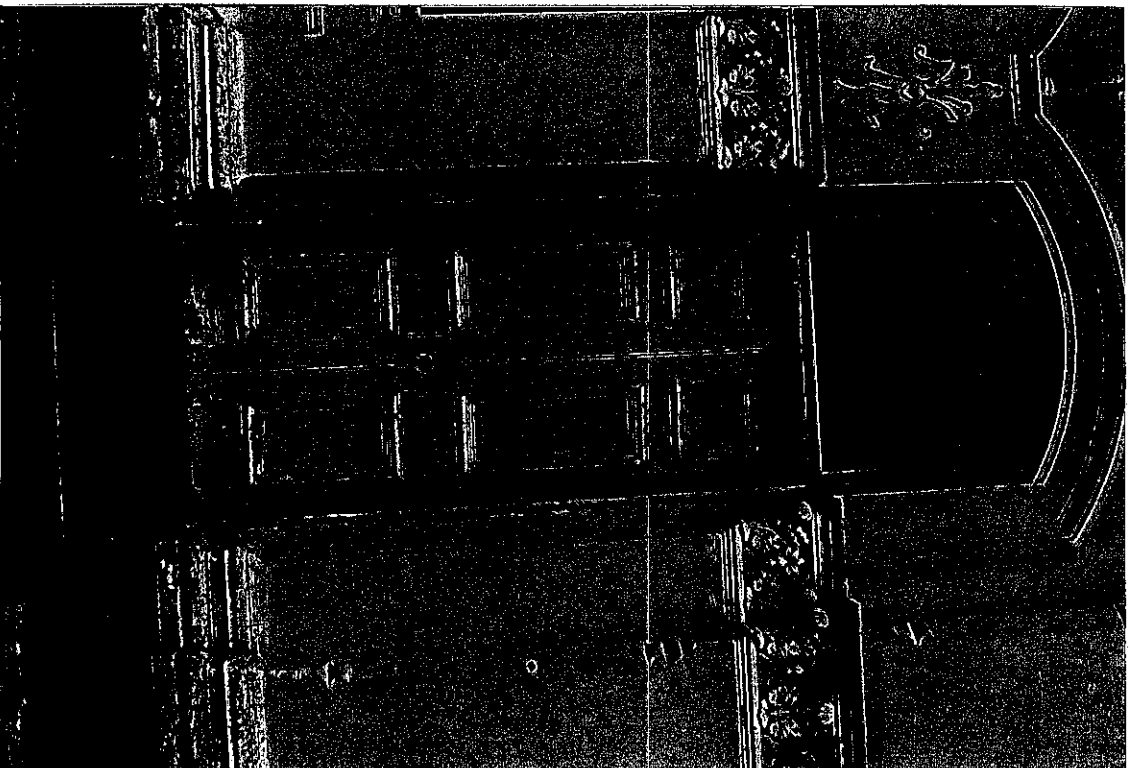
Recommendation: The upper surface of the cornice should be cleaned immediately and treated to retard the growth of lichen and mosses to aid the shedding of water in these areas. This may be able to be undertaken by Council Staff.

The areas to be repaired are the cornice, minor repairs to the parapet, repairs to the impost mould at first floor window level and the sills. The render above the window and the sill of the east window of the caretaker's cottage to be repaired and replaced. Replace the missing decorative sphere on the parapet. The external re-painting should not be undertaken until all repair work to the render is complete and in condition to take paint.

Windows

The window joinery is substantially intact with only some minor sections requiring repair or replacement.

Recommendation: The windows all require sanding back, filling of minor wear, replacing of window putty, priming and painting with undercoat and two top coats of paint. The ground floor window second from the west corner requires refixing of all corners - remove, repair and re-install.



Creswick Town Hall
Typical Door
Entry to Commercial Office - Area No. 13

Doors

The first two opening at the west end of the facade where the original entrance doors to two of the commercial offices. These were blocked up and rendered as recessed panels some time after the building was converted to a Museum 1969/70. They originally matched the other doorways in this facade - 6 panel doors with arched headed fanlights over.

Recommendation : reinstate these two doorways.

The third doorway from the west - moulding above door missing. Centre door knob and escutcheon are missing. Lower bolecion moulding loose.

Recommendation: Replace missing items, refix bolecion moulding. Install internal draught strip.

The forth doorway from the west - The east leaf requires refixing or replacement of the top panel vertical bolecion moulding, mid panel bottom bolecion moulding, bottom panel bottom bolecion moulding and the bottom rail. The west leaf requires refixing or replacement of bottom panel bottom bolecion moulding.

Recommendation: refix or repair listed items. Suggest install internal vertical bolts top and bottom to secure the doors.

The fifth doorway from the west - Bottom corner of east leaf covered with sheet galvanised iron. Hinges of east leaf require checking.

Recommendation: Remove metal sheeting and repair or replace timber bottom rail as required. Check and reset hinges of east leaf.

Sixth doorway from west - Gap on top west corner due to the inseting of Projector Cabin, allows entry of birds which has lead to damage and discolouration of render and the door.

Recommendation: Block up gap with small timber section in the short term. When Projection Cabin is removed this area to be rendered to make vermin proof.

Water Street Door of Caretaker's Cottage - Inappropriate flush panel modern door.

Recommendation: Replace by six panel Victorian style door as shown in original elevation. Fit with appropriate door furniture.

Fascia of Caretaker's Cottage - Small section at the west side missing.

Recommendation: replace missing section, check fascia for damage caused by rusted spouting. Repair and replace as necessary.



Creswick Town Hall
North East Corner of Dressing Rooms
Sowing removal of Wash House - Area No.27

South Elevation - Caretaker's Cottage

This wall is face brickwork in generally good condition. The window has a wide rendered surround and the south corner features rendered quoinwork. Later timber additions have been removed from this wall. Flashing remains showing the roof lines of the additions.

Recommendation: The window requires sanding back, filling of minor wear, replacing of window putty, priming and painting with undercoat and two top coats of paint. Replace spouting on with cast iron spouting of matching profile. If the replacement is in another material it should be made to match the existing profile.

North Elevation of Caretaker's Cottage

This was difficult to inspect in detail due to storage of materials in this area. The wall is of face brick and the building appears to be in generally good condition. Allow for repair and repainting of joinery in this area.

East Elevation of Public Hall

This is a face brick wall with upper level windows and two double doors at ground level. The lower level of the brickwork has been painted at one stage. The doors are in need of repainting. The windows have been painted to aid with black out of the hall for use during performances. This is now patchy and scratched and gives the windows a derelict air.

Recommendation: Repaint doors. Clean down windows and repaint and repair glazing bars and sashes as necessary. Remove paint from face brickwork by chemical steam cleaning. Do not use any abrasive or blasting material on these bricks.

South elevation of dressing Rooms

This is a face brick wall with two double hung windows and two vertical boarded doors. The doors and windows require repainting. There are six bricks loose.

Recommendation: Repaint window and door joinery. Reset loose bricks using a mortar of similar strength and colour to the existing mortar.

East elevation of Dressing Rooms

The former wash house, which housed the earth closets that serviced the dressing rooms, patrons of the Public Hall and Council employees was in this area. They have been demolished leaving the toothed keying of the brick walls and the outline of the roof pitch as reminders of this space. The access door from the dressing rooms remains. This was designed as an internal door and is now exposed to the weather.

Recommendations: Ensure that door is painted and kept maintained or replace with an external four panelled door of similar design.

North elevation

This is a face brick wall in generally good condition. The area to the west, the wall of the offices, has been painted white. There is some evidence of rusting of the galvanised steel parapet capping which has left staining on the wall. The evidence of the first Projector Cabin in the form of patched brickwork and remaining fixings still exists. A large oil tank is adjacent to the entry to the Courtyard. This has lead to unsightly staining of the concrete below.

Recommendation: Replace failing parapet cappings with galvanised steel. Remove paint from face brickwork by chemical steam cleaning. Do not use any abrasive or blasting material on these bricks. If no longer in use, remove the large oil tank.

Vandalism

Access from the rear stairway of the New Council Offices allows easy access to the roof over the existing kitchen area. From here access to other areas of the roof and building can be made. This has lead to attempted entry to the windows above the staircase and damage in this area. Erection of barriers in this area should be explored for the long term safety of the building and prevention of damage to the building and to trespassers.

Painting

The only reference located to re-painting was in December 1957 when the walls were painted Tudor Grey with the mouldings in white, Doors in Royal red and the eaves in Dafodil.

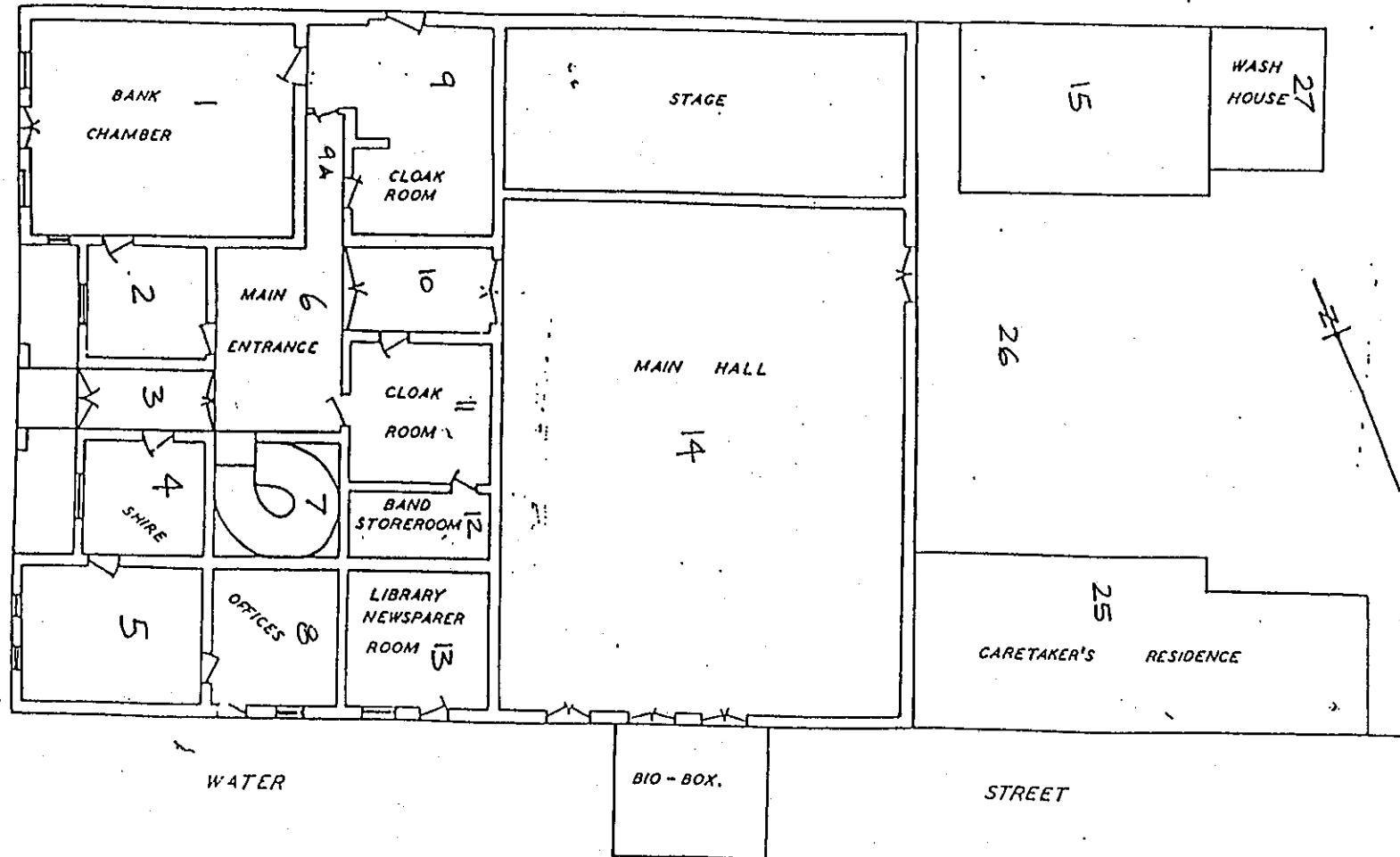
The re-painting includes cement rendered walls and parapet, window and door joinery and cast iron fence and tower decoration.

All surfaces will require proper preparation prior to painting including rust proofing of metal sections.

A full investigation of the paint colour scheme has not been undertaken but the preliminary paint scrapes reveal:

Rendered Walls - equivalent to Bristol MacArthur
Rendered Architraves -
Outer moulding - equivalent to Haymes Light Buff
Inner Moulding - equivalent to Haymes Biscuit
Window joinery - Dark Varnish or equivalent to Haymes Dark and Doors Brown
Iron Work - equivalent to Haymes Dark Brown

SCALE: 8 FEET TO 1 INCH



Internal

See Plans for Area Numbers

Interior Generally.

The Museum area of the building displays the effect that day to day care can have on the building. With the major works undertaken in 1969/70 and the constant "housekeeping" of the users this part of the building is in better condition than the Public Hall area. The Public Hall area displays many areas of damage that result from lack of maintenance and this part of the building was not part of the major works in 1969/70. The works of 1969/70 in most cases did not effect the appreciation of the original layout and function of the building and have increased the usefulness of the building.

The major areas of render repair are outlined below but many wall surfaces show some damage and require minor repairs.

Some of the timber floors in the former library and ground floor office area have damage due to insect or rot and require repair. The ground level flooring also suffers from lack of sufficient sub-floor ventilation. See remarks and recommendations about flooring under No. 14 - Public Hall.

The lack of sub-floor ventilation has also lead to rising damp in some areas.

The interior is not painted in an original or compatible colour scheme. The original scheme was not investigated for this report.

1. Former Library

This area is basically as built. It has a timber floor, fireplace rendered walls and a boarded ceiling. It is used as a major display space for the Creswick Museum.

2. Former Conversation Room.

This was designed as an adjunct to the Library and originally could only be entered from the Library. Subsequently a door in the east wall was constructed to link this room with the hall (No.6). This door was blocked up and a door to the vestibule (No. 3) was constructed during the alterations in 1969/70. This is now used as a display space for the Creswick Museum.

3. Vestibule

The entry has concrete floor. This is shown as such on the original sectional drawings. The only change is the addition of the door to Conversation Room (No.2). This retains it original use as the main entry to this area.

4. Office

This appears to be substantially as built. The counter has been in this room since the 1940s and although not shown on the drawings could be original or installed at an early date. The door to the former Commercial Office (No.5) was constructed prior to the 1940s. The two linked offices are at different floor heights. This area is used as reception, office and information desk by the Creswick Museum.

5. Commercial Office

This was constructed for rental by the Borough and originally was entered by a door opening onto Water Street. This doorway was not in use when this space was linked to space No. 4 and was subsequently bricked up and rendered as a recessed panel. There was also no connecting door, originally to the adjacent Commercial Office but this was opened through by the 1940s. This is used as a research and storage area by the Creswick Museum.

6. Hall

This was the main circulation space opening onto the stairway to the first floor which contained the Council Chambers. The side entry via the yard to the north and the formal Council entry to the Public Hall. The arched entry to the passage (No. 10) was blocked off by a recessed timber stud wall during the 1969/70 works to convert the former Offices to the Creswick Museum. This work separated the function of the Public Hall and the Creswick Museum.

7. Stairwell and staircase.

The bluestone, spiral staircase is one of the main features of the Town Hall design and remains in substantially intact condition.

8. Commercial Office

This was constructed for rental by the Borough and originally was entered by a door opening onto Water Street. This doorway was not in use when this space was linked to space No. 5 and was subsequently bricked up and rendered as a recessed panel. There was also no connecting door, originally to the adjacent Commercial Office but this was opened through by the 1940s. This is used as a research and storage area by the Creswick Museum.

9. Yard and Gentlemen's Retiring Room and Urinal

This area has undergone major changes, structurally and in use. Originally the Gentlemen's Retiring Room was reached by a door from the Passage (No. 9A) and included a corner chimney. The Cloak Room had access to an earth closet and Urinal. The earth closet and urinal were subsequently removed, part of the wall to the Retiring room was removed and this entire area was used as a Cloak Room. A door was constructed in the external wall. Prior to 1957 this area was converted to a kitchen. Probably as part of the 1969/70 conversion to Creswick Museum (although not shown on the documentation) the door to the Passage (No. 9A) was blocked up and the wall to the Passage (No. 10) was broken through. The area had a new ceiling installed but the original arch between the former yard and the porch at the rear of the Library is still intact and the boarded ceiling is still intact the present ceiling.

9A. Passage

This provided access to the North porch at the rear of the Library and to the Former Yard and the Gentlemen's retiring Room. During the 1969/70 alterations the passage was blocked off at the end leading to Main Hall (No. 6) and the space used to house the new heating system.

10. Passage

This was the entry to the Public Hall from the Council Offices. The plans show that it was lit by a glazed skylight in the ceiling. The ceiling has been replaced and the roof re-covered with galvanised iron so that no inspection of this area was possible without disturbing the ceiling or roof. I suggest that the framing of the skylight exists and this would provide good evidence to guide reconstruction if required.

11. Ladies Retiring Room.

This retains its original use. The door connecting this room to the Main Hall was blocked off as part of the Creswick Museum alterations in 1969/70. The room was originally lit by a roof light. This has since been sheeted over. The original ceiling of Tongue and Groove lining boards is in good condition. The original coat hooks on their timber backing remain although painted - originally they were stained. This area displays many of the problems common to the interior of the building. There is evidence of earlier water damage from the roof which appears to have been stopped. There is evidence of rising damp causing spalling of the render. There is minor mechanical damage to the render requiring repair. The walls require repair and repainting. The door has been rehung and trimmed on the locking style.

12. Former Ladies Lavatory and Earth Closet

The earth closet has been removed and the partitions removed. The area was used as a Band storeroom and is now used as a store and additional dressing room. A doorway was constructed to the Public Hall (No.14) during or after the alterations in 1969/70. A door similar to other internal doors has been re-used here.

13. Commercial Office

This was still rented out by the Council long after the conversion of the other two Commercial Office (nos.5 and 8) to Council purposes. The area was converted to a the street entry to the Public Hall (No. 14) during the alterations in 1969/70. The present glass doors and doorway were constructed at this time.

14. Public Hall

The hall is still used for its original purpose as a Public Hall. The Ceiling has been replaced. From the Art Deco design this would appear to date from the 1930s or 1940s. The proscenium arch would appear, by its design, to be a later addition, probably from the same period.

The original plans show that the stage had a bowed section in the centre. The line of this can still be traced in the sub-floor area. The stage was extended to a rectangular shape in the last decade by users of the Hall. The stage front was adapted so that the under stage area could be used for storage. In an effort to effect a complete blackout, material has been attached to the upper windows and most external doorways and the glass doors to the present entry from Water Street. This is unsightly. The present entry via area No.13 was constructed. The doorway proportions and placement are not in keeping with the other openings in the hall. The Doorway to area No. 12 has similar problems.

The Hall is heated by wall mounted radiant gas heaters. These are unsightly and not very effective.

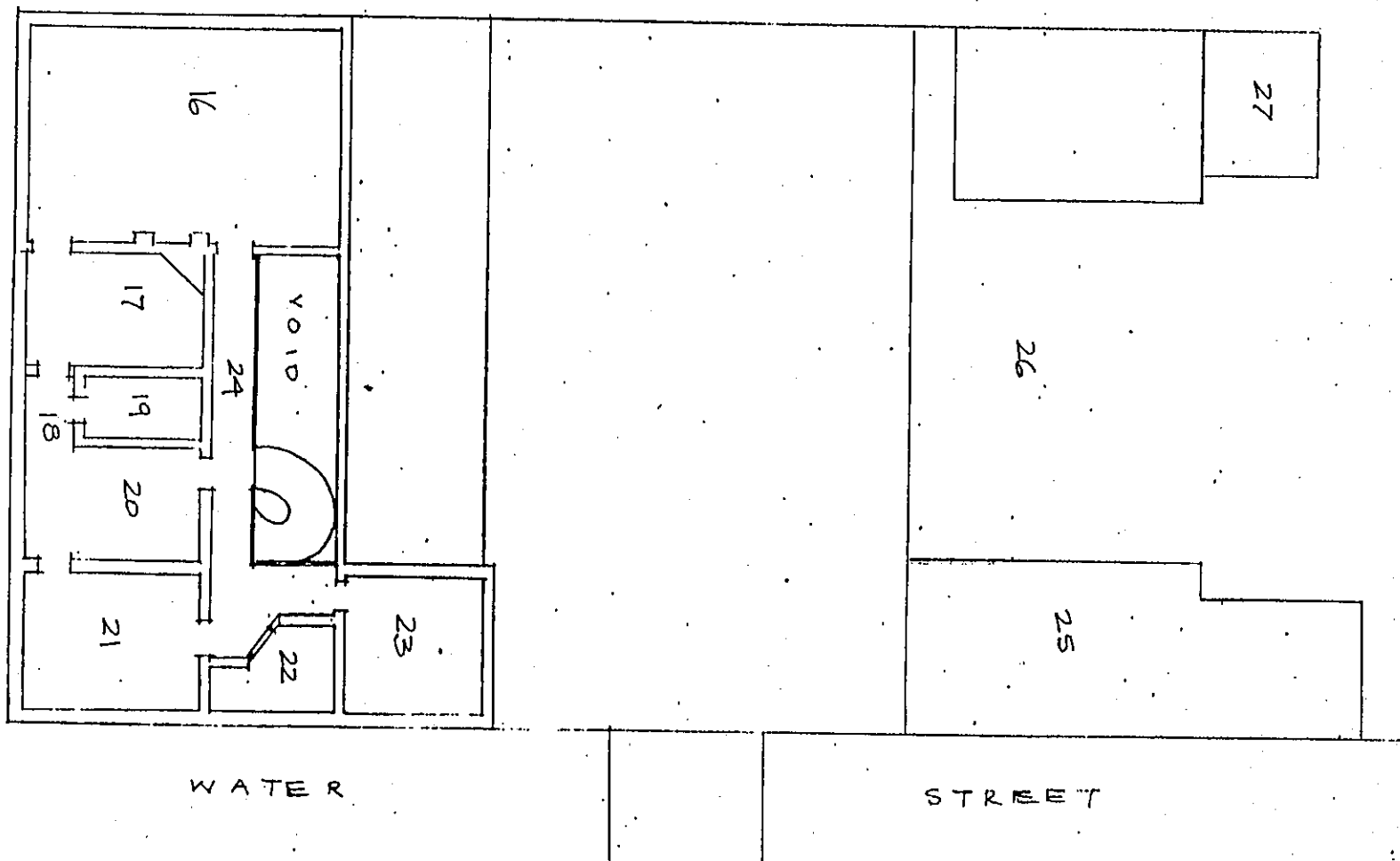
The original hall floor consisted of 150 by 25 Baltic pine boards. Some remnants remain under the present stage area. The original floor has been replaced and this replacement has been patched and repaired many times in most areas of the floor. The floor is not in a safe or sound condition.

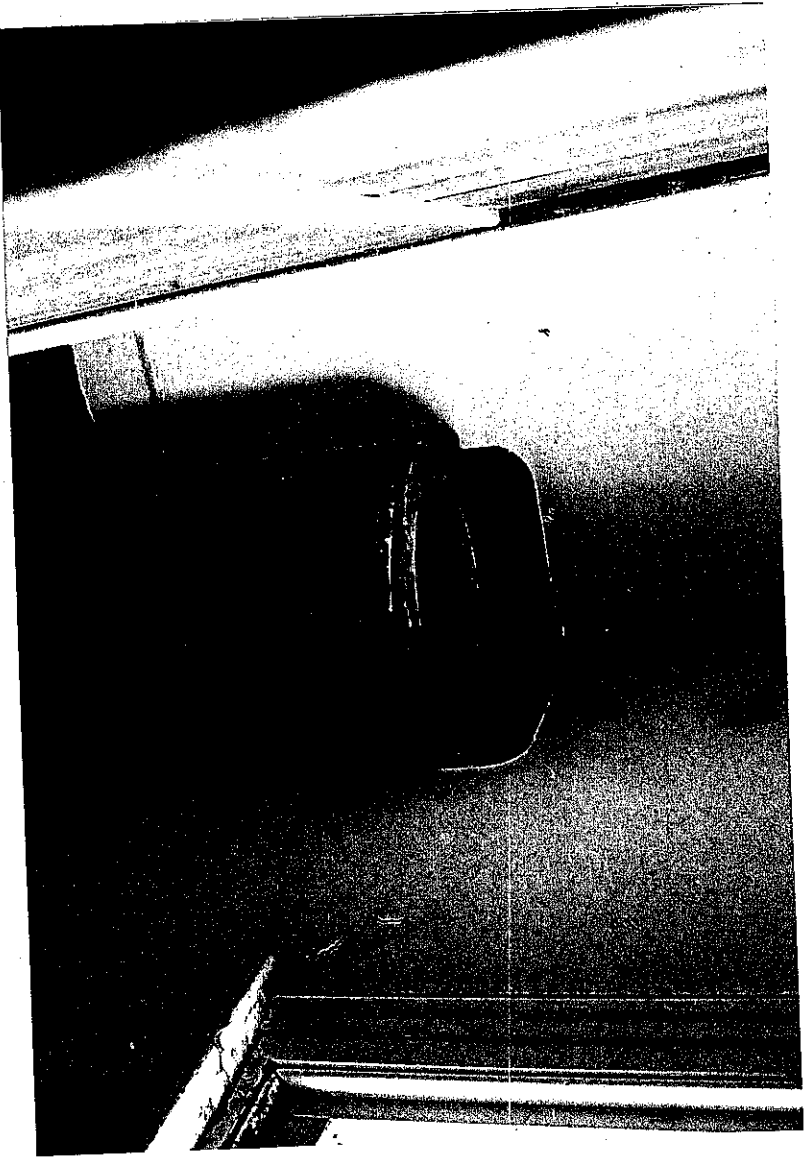
The deterioration of the floor is due, in my opinion, to inadequate subfloor ventilation. The building is on basalalt footings and the only sub-floor ventilation is supplied by four vents on the south (Water Street) side and some air circulation below the stage(north). There are no vents visible on the east elevation and the Museum building is on the west side. There also appears, from restricted inspection to be dwarf walls supporting the bearers which may also restrict air circulation.

I advise that additional sub-floor ventilation be provided to allow for vent area of 7300mm²/m and that the entire floor be replaced. The external footings are noted as 2'4" thick on the original plans.

The original flooring of 150 by 25 Baltic Pine would be preferable from a authenticity point of view, but it is my opinion that a more durable species should be selected even though additional ventilation is provided given the susceptibility to decay and insect attack in the past. I suggest the floor be replaced with white cypress pine 100 by 25 T & G, secret nailed. Using a softwood gives a softer wearing surface which is more susceptible to wear and mechanical damage but has higher resistance to fungal attack and is immune to lyctus attack. A hardwood such as jarrah of would give a better wearing surface and is rarely attacked by lyctus and has good durability against termites but at a greater cost.

During the replacement of the floor the bearers and joists to be inspected and replaced where necessary. If required, the earth below the bearers be removed to provide at least 150 clearance and to ensure more air movement.





Creswick Town Hall
Basin, Corner of Tower Access - Area No.22

The original plans showed provision for a gallery over the Water Street entry doors. It is unfortunate that this option was not used as a position for a Projection Cabin.

15. Dressing Rooms

These are what can only be described as original condition. The dressing rooms appear to have suffered from undermaintenance since their construction.

16. Council Chamber

The Council Chamber retains much of the original furniture and is presently used as a display of the Creswick Museum.

17. President's Room

It would appear from the Section AB that the door to the Passage (No.24) is not original. The area is used for display by the Creswick Museum

18. Passage

The arch that connects this area to area No.20 was constructed in 1869/70.

19. Safe

This small room has an arched brick or concrete roof to be fire proof. It is used for safe storage by the Creswick Shire Council.

20. Office

This area was used as a drafting room in the 1940s. It would appear to be substantially as designed. The area is used as display space by the Creswick Museum.

21. Engineers Office.

It would appear to be substantially as designed. The area is used as display space by the Creswick Museum.

22. Access to Tower and Tower Room

The space contains steep timber stairs to the tower room containing the clock mechanism. There is a small round handbasin set into a timber cabinet in the corner with an early design tap. The tower room contains the clock mechanism and due to lack of maintenance of the roof in the past has suffered damage due to water penetration. There are some floorboards which require replacement. There is evidence of bird infestation. The stair continues to a trap door which gives access to the roof area. Some repair and maintenance is required to keep their stairs in a safe condition.

23. Office

this was used for storage of plans in the 1940s. The room is used for storage by the Creswick museum.

24. Cantilevered Passage

This area is cantilevered from the west wall and has a swag belled cast iron balustrade on the east side. The flooring has sprung loose and required renailing. The west wall of this area displays some cracking of the render. This has not reached to the other side of the wall although the plaster is drummy on the other side of the wall from the cracking. There is some evidence of past water penetration which could be the cause of the cracking. The render should be repaired and the cracking monitored closely to see if it reappears despite no further water damage.

25. Caretakers House

A photograph in the Creswick Museum collection, showing construction of Bio Box (No.26) c1941 shows vertical timber capped corrugated iron fence along east side of caretakers building and timber addition to east of caretakers cottage still extant. The timber addition has been removed. The interior of the Caretaker's cottage was not inspected.

26. Yard between dressing rooms and caretaker's cottage.

This was roofed over before 1900.(17) The early roof, a shallow gable, clad in corrugated galvanised steel, unlined, was replaced in the 1980s by the existing low pitched skillion. The shadow of the roof form can be seen on the east wall of the Hall.

27. Former Wash House

This has been demolished.

Recommendations: The Museum Area - This area appears to be well set out and utilises the spaces well. The area requires roofing repairs, especially flashing, render repairs where failure is occurring, repair of flooring where required. Attention to the sub-floor ventilation of the building and is coming due for internal redecoration. The Museum requires a maintenance plan and budget, so that regular maintenance can be carried out and provision can be made for longer replacement and repair of items.

The Public Hall Area - This includes spaces No. 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 15, 25 and 26. I have not given specific recommendations on these spaces as much of the direction the work should take relies on the final use of these spaces. To maintain the spaces in the short term, the works on the roof and floor should be undertaken. In the longer term, the use of these spaces needs to be addressed. These areas display a great opportunity to provide a community facility for meetings, plays, recitals and other activities for up to 150 people.

17 Early photograph of the "Non descript's Orchestra" c1898.

Percy Lindsay is a member of the orchestra. They are pictured standing in the yard area, which is roofed.

Future Use of the Public Hall.

If the Council decides to retain the Hall as a viable Community performance and meeting space it will need to address the following perceived problems: the general dilapidated appearance of the Public Hall, lack of heating, patched and unsound floor, lack of toilet facilities, lack of good blackout facilities, unattractive change rooms, out dated kitchen, difficulties in the flyspace backstage, inadequate power supply, inaccessible projection cabin, very constricted entry into the hall.

Although this appears to be a daunting set of difficulties, the hall presents many opportunities of retaining the main layout of the rooms while upgrading the facilities. I suggest that one approach would be to undertake the following works:

Repair Roof

Repair Floor

Remove Projector Cabin, repair render of facade.

Paint facade in compatible colour scheme.

Construct Gallery over front doors to provide space for Projection equipment and lighting spots and other technical use. Use space below as foyer.

Upgrade electrical wiring completely to the Hall, providing for the possibility of sound desks on the hall floor. Upgrade Hall lighting and fit to dimmer switch. Provide illuminated exit signs.

Review the access from Water Street. Based on user knowledge explore the possibility of re-opening front doors and using present entry as a ticket box.

Provide blackout to the upper windows that can be operated from floor level so that the hall can be used in daytime with natural light. Provide stripping to doors to prevent draughts and spilled light.

Provide adequate and reasonably priced heating.

Review use of the Cloak Rooms and Kitchen and use these area for toilet facilities.

Remove door to Room 12 and repair wall.

Paint interior of hall.

Explore the possibility of providing an extension to the hall on the north wall to provide backstage access to the stage.

Upgrade dressing rooms or relocate.

Conclusion

The Creswick Town Hall is a major landmark and community asset for the community in Creswick. The building is a tangible link with the days of Creswick's golden past and, with the will and support of the Council, can be returned to its deserving glory and once again be the hub for community activities.

The building is a public asset and should be restored and revitalised as a public building that can be used by the entire community and will want to be used by the community.

The major challenges faced by the building have resulted from lack of maintenance and a clear vision of the buildings use for the future.

The Council should set out its vision for the future for this building and then begin the process of realizing that vision.

I believe that the hall can be restored for viable use by the community.

User Requirements

Currently the building is used in three parts:

The former Borough Offices - Creswick Museum

The Town Hall - occasional live performance, public meetings and movie shows.

The Caretakers Cottage - Recently used as an Opportunity Shop.

The Town Hall

The Town Hall seats approximately 150 people for theatre type seating and only 80 to 100 for a dinner or similar seating. The heating is limited and inadequate and there are problems of limited lighting and sound equipment and the generally undermaintained appearance of the hall.

The current users of the Hall include the Shire of Creswick for a few public meetings.

The adjacent Senior Citizens Hall seats more people and is modern, warm and comfortable and is preferred for many user groups for meetings.

The hall does not have adequate seating capacity or appeal for whole school groups for such activities as concerts or formal occasions. It is sometimes used by the schools for visiting artists.

The Creswick Amateur Theatre Group use the hall for larger productions and have noted the following problems and suggestions:

Water enters the Bio Box where there is electricity causing a dangerous situation
The power supply is inadequate. Three phase electricity and greater capacity is required for modern sound and light installations.
Instability of the floor in the hall and dressing rooms
Lack and expense of present heating arrangements
Lack of backstage access from dressing rooms to off-prompt stage area. (18)

Vertex Children's Theatre is the main regular user of the hall. Two to three performances a year are staged here and regular rehearsals and workshops are undertaken. There major concerns are:

Toilets inside the hall
New floor in auditorium
Tiered seating
Replastering of dressing rooms
Illuminated exit signs
Bio box is unnecessary and ugly and could be removed.
Ticket box adjacent to entry
Improve the acoustics
Dimmer switch for house lights
Re-arrangement of above stage roof to allow to fly more backdrops and cloths
Better arrangement of backstage facilities and access.

APPENDICES

Appendices

Extracts from *The Creswick Advertiser*

Friday February 4 1876

Workman were busy removing the old National School yesterday, to make room for the new Town-hall.

Monday February 7 1876

We are to have a demonstration upon the occasion of laying the foundation-stone of the new Town Hall, the honour of which has been conferred upon the Mayor (Mr. W. Gardiner). A select committee was appointed to procure a silver towel with suitable inscription.

Wednesday February 16 1876

It has been decided to lay the foundation stone of the new Town Hall next Friday week. A silver trowel, for presentation to the Mayor on the occasion, has already been selected, and is on view at Mr. Thorne's jeweller.

Monday February 28 1876

LAYING THE FOUNDATION STONE OF THE NEW TOWN HALL

The want of a commodious Town Hall has been long felt and long discussed, but only during the last twelve months has anything been done of a practical nature. During the year, however, Cr. Cooper moved in the matter, and mainly to his action are the burgresses indebted for the steps which have been taken in connection with it. Our readers are already aware that £50 was offered as a premium for the best design, and that Mr. Creber was the successful competitor, his design having been selected from amongst a host of very handsome and elaborate ones. It is also well-known that Mr. Bolton is the successful tenderer, and, from the way in which the work is being carried on, we believe it will be satisfactorily completed. So far the foundations are in, and Friday last was selected for laying the corner stone. Of course the honour of performing this interesting ceremony devolved upon the Mayor (Mr. W. Gardiner)...

Interview with Mrs. Pat Nolan, who began work at the Shire Office in May 1943. She recollected that at that time the rooms were used in the following way.

- | Room No. | |
|----------|---|
| 1. | Supper Room for Balls, It was not fitted up as a kitchen but used to set out the cakes/etc. ready for carrying out for supper. Coppers for boiling water were at the back of the hall area. |
| 2 | Later Baby Health Centre, Sister Semper |
| 4 | Pantry/ Kitchen for Supper Room |
| 5 | Counter for Shire Office - as it is now |
| 6 | Administration Office - Junior Clerk |
| 8 | Had a ticket box in the corner |
| | Shire Secretary's Office. At that time the job of Shire Secretary and Engineer were combined. Store in corner was a wood box. |
| 9. | Cloak room in 1943. Kitchen not there, constructed later |
| 10 | Entry Hall |
| 11 | Cloak Room |
| 12 | Storeroom |
| 13 | Vacant Room leased to Doeppel, Lily and Taylor, Ballarat Real Estate Agents and also to Nevett, Nevett & Glen, Ballarat Solicitors. |
| 14 | Hall was used as Picture Theatre. Before the Bio Box screened on South wall, projector behind stage up on wall. |
| 15 | Dressing Rooms, used for concerts |
| 16 | Council Chamber |
| 17 | Preparing Afternoon teas |
| 19 | Safe |
| 20 | Drafting Room |
| 21 | Engineer's Room |
| 23 | Store Room, blueprints, weights and measures and other things. |

CRESWICK:

The town that would not die

By John Hetherington

FOR NEARLY A century the Victorian township of Creswick had a clock-tower but no clock. The two 54-inch circular holes left for the dials peered down on Albert Street like empty eye-sockets. Pigeons roosted in the sturdy square tower crowning the town hall and seemed likely to remain in undisputed possession.

When the town hall was built in 1876 the council decided that a clock was a needless frill—it would have to wait for better times. Better times came but the council still dithered. There was always something else to do with any money in hand.

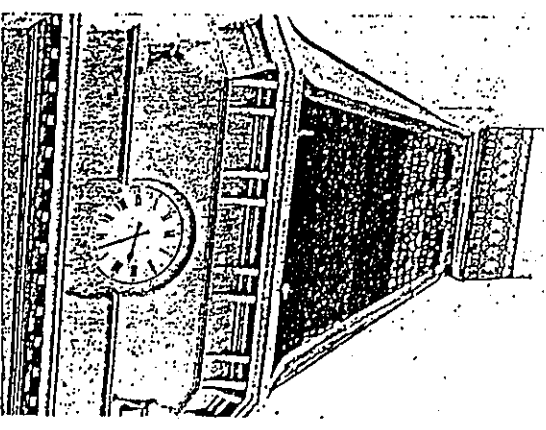
The population, which had touched 30,000 for an incredible year or so at the height of the gold rush in the 1850s and then plummeted to level off near 4000, shrank to 3000. It sagged well below 2000 in the First World War, and late in the 1920s the township area held only about 1000 people; a hard-dying legend puts the figure as low as 700 but this is not borne out by records.

Like many another Australian small town spawned by the great gold discoveries in

the second half of last century and nourished by gold until the earth's riches petered out after forty, fifty or sixty years, Creswick was shabby and tired and full of ghosts. Half the shops along Albert Street were shuttered and empty. Anybody could see the place was headed for extinction.

But Creswick did not die. A blend of civic pride, inherent vitality, and the vision and determination of a few men saved it. Luck also played a part. Ballarat, Victoria's third city, lay, only ten miles away and some of its prosperity rubbed off on Creswick. The rise of the motor car also helped; by cutting travel time and ending Creswick's dependence on the horse and buggy, it changed the outlying township into—almost—an inner suburb. The population began to rise. It has now passed 2000 and opinionists say it will go on growing.

And the clock-tower is no longer eyeless. A dial looks out from each of the circular holes, and an English-made movement housed in the tower drives the hands. The clock was installed in 1970 and, if merely a public timepiece to the eyes of strangers speeding on their way to Ballarat or Clunes



Above—The old town hall clock-tower—photo by courtesy of The Courier, Ballarat; below—Government Camp, from across the Creek Creswick (1855), by S. T. Gill—from the original in the Mitchell Library, Sydney, by permission of the Trustees

or Daylesford, it is a symbol to Creswickians of the township's rebirth. Only the pigeons dislike it; they have had to leave the tower and find other quarters.

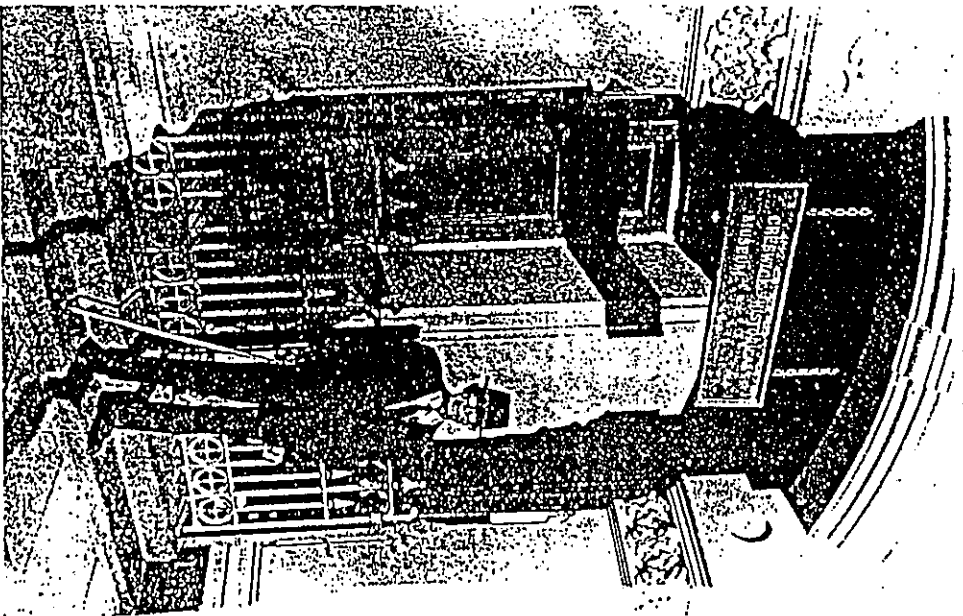
Creswick has Edwin James Semmens, historian, scientist, botanist, geologist and scholar in general, mainly to thank for the clock as well as for much else of value. A member of the council for the last twenty-four years, Ted Semmens is a spare and active 89-year-old with an encyclopedic knowledge of district history and a profound belief in Creswick's capacity to survive and flourish.

Australians at large have never shown much enthusiasm for small towns. As a result, the overgrown cities have gone on growing while the small towns have tended to stand still or wither. Well over half of Australia's population is crammed into five coastal cities—Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane, Adelaide and Perth.

Ted Semmens holds that Australia would lose something of incalculable worth if the small towns were to be obliterated and their people swallowed up in the urban masses. He considers that city life does little to compensate for the human qualities it enfleebles or destroys.

He has known Creswick, which clings to a flank of the Great Dividing Range 1438 ft. above sea level and seventy-three miles west of Melbourne, since his parents





Left—Mr. E. J. Semmens —historian, scientist, botanist, geologist and scholar in general—at the entrance to the Creswick Historical Museum which he established—photo by I. D. Gunn.

Below—The Victorian School of Forestry at Creswick (established in 1909), where Mr. Semmens was Principal for twenty-four years until his retirement in 1951—photo by courtesy of The Courier, Ballarat

he stood for the first time in the school's, twenty-two acres on Eastern Hill and looked down on the little township he knew he had come home at last.

The Victorian government had founded the school in 1909 to train young men as forestry officers. Its record was mixed until Ted Semmens took control and quietly revolutionized the system. About 250 resident students did the three-year course and won diplomas in his twenty-four years as Principal. The school's reputation has continued to grow ever since.

Creswick's population and prospects were at their lowest ebb when he arrived there, and only the councillors and a few townspeople shared his hopes and aspirations then and in the economically depressed 1930s. Even in the 1940s and 1950s there were still many doubters, but when Ted Semmens retired from the Forestry School chair in 1951 and, surrounded by his books, settled into a two-level house on Eastern Hill which he had designed for himself and his wife, he at last had time to fling himself into his crusade. He was elected to the Creswick Shire Council and, with a strongpoint from which to fight, went into action.

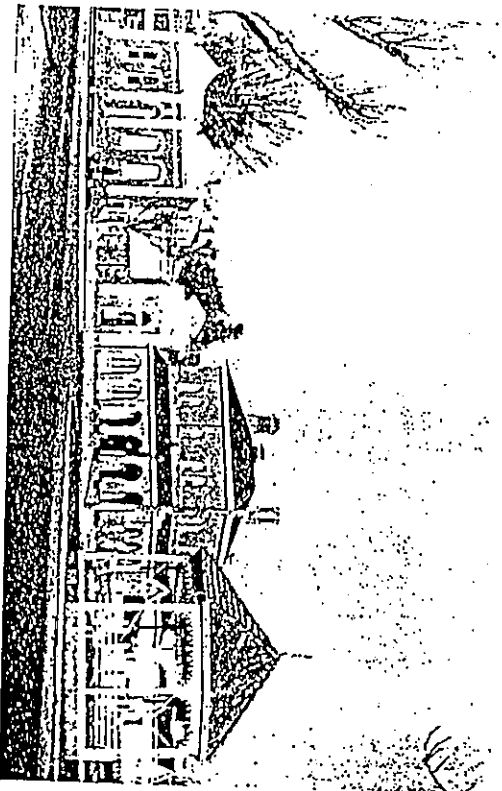
One thing puzzled many of his fellow-citizens. Although his eyes were trained on Creswick's present and future, his curiosity about Creswick's past was insatiable. This was no paradox, for he understands the simple truth that any community is better equipped to manage its affairs if, being familiar with its history, it can evaluate today in the light of yesterday's experience.

took him there to live when he was five. The town was set in typical Australian bushland. Hard-bitten native trees—mess-mate, stringybark, swamp gum, wattle, candlebark, blackwood, lightwood—whispered in the long hot summer afternoons. In the season, sassa-parilla, pink bells, orchids, trigger plant, buttercups, heath, milkmaid, candleflower, scarlet runner splashed the earth with colour.

The Semmens family moved away after four years but young Ted did not forget. After finishing his education he settled down to teach, chiefly in Victorian country high schools, but managed to slip back to Creswick every now and then to spend a few hours or a few days browsing around.

He sat and drank the strong black tea which rheumy-eyed old men living in bark shanties hidden away in forgotten corners of the abandoned diggings served him in chipped enamel mugs. He also drank in their stories of the boom times. To him, these tales—tragic, comic, exhilarating, hair-raising, absorbing—were the flesh on the dry bones of history.





chanced to meet an old friend, Bill Ritchie, and mentioned the clock. Ritchie, a wealthy Ballarat patron of the arts who had been born in Creswick, at once said he'd give the \$500 still needed.

So Tunnell-Jones moved into the tower, the pigeons moved out with indignant squawking, and presently Creswick had its clock.

Today Creswick wears the air of a township confident of its future and worthy of its past. The people's one-time obsession with gold has persisted. It died hard, which is no surprise. Between 1852 and 1912 Creswick Creek and the deep-level mines in the immediate vicinity of the township yielded gold worth an estimated \$38 million, at today's official price; on the free world price, the figure would be around \$75 million. Now the only obvious relics of those days are the reef dumps dotting the sunburnt paddocks.

Yet it is not the lure of gold that is causing more people to settle in Creswick and more homes to go up there all the time. One compelling reason is that many men who work in Ballarat like to live in quiet Creswick and are able to do so now that the road journey takes only twelve or fourteen minutes. Another is that local industries are growing.

The government pine plantations, covering 3500 acres, are a special asset. Flourishing in the ranges, they have aesthetic as well as economic value; their tall green splendour hides deep scars which the miners cut into the earth and left behind them. Farming and grazing thrive on the areas of rich volcanic soil, and a textile mill, a precision tool factory, and a sawmill and case factory employ, between them, a good force of men.

cost of restoration and adaptation, and the work went ahead. But there was still one fly in the ointment; the clockless clock-tower continued to be a monument to the reactionaries and a reproach to the progressives.

Then Bill Tunnell-Jones, a Melbourne clockmaker, heard of the need and offered an English-made movement for nothing. All he asked was \$900 to cut and paint the dials and install the clock. His wife was a Creswick woman. Her grandfather, Edward Rough, an English miner, had moved from Ballarat to Creswick in 1873 to marry and settle down, and the family association had stayed unbroken. Tunnell-Jones felt the clock would be a kind of memorial to the Roughs.

Ted Semmens went about soliciting donations from clock-minded Creswickians. Just when promises totalled \$400 and seemed to have reached a dead-end he

One of his fondest dreams centred on a local historical museum. He had assembled a multitude of relics ranging from cooking pots to muzzle-loading guns and vintage rifles, mining implements and records, rare maps, original early paintings and drawings, books, period photographs. Some of these went back in time almost to 1842 when the brothers Creswick, three pioneering young Englishmen, pastured their herds and flocks on the land where the town now stands and gave the place its name.

You could not put money value on the collection because many of the items were unique. The problem was to find a fitting home for it. In 1965 the council decided to build a modern block of municipal offices and vacate the old town hall. The hall, a noteworthy specimen of colonial goldfields architecture, was obsolete as an administrative headquarters but perfect for a museum. Seated on solid basalt foundations, it looked ready to last for centuries. The cement-faced brick walls were as stout and weather-proof as those of a fortress. The bluestone staircase, curving up from the entrance to the floor above, was a museum piece in itself.

It was hard to imagine that anybody would object, but the building stood on the corner of Albert Street and Water Street and some councillors wished to sell the land as a site for a petrol filling station. Just think, they exulted, what Creswick could do with all that money!

The battle was stern but when the sound and the fury subsided the pro-museum faction had won. The council voted to let the hall become a museum, the Victorian Government subscribed \$20,500 toward the

Above—On the corner beyond the band rotunda is the post office, with other historic buildings.—photo by I. D. Gunn; below—The museum entrance is through the centre archway of the old town hall (right). The building on the left is the new Shine office.—photo by The Courier, Ballarat



The township is also building a tourist industry. This is small at present but promises well. Many other Australian towns can offer a restful atmosphere and picturesque surroundings but none can rival Creswick as a producer of remarkable men, some of whom helped to shape the history of their times. This gives it a magical aura, a unique relationship with Australia's history.

The wife of an Irish-born constable of police stationed at Creswick was delivered of a son on 8 January 1885. The baby was baptised on 1 February in St Augustine's Roman Catholic Church, a fine example of ecclesiastical bluestone set on a commanding hill. His name was John Curtin. He became Prime Minister and led Australia through the Pacific war until, worn out, he died in July 1945, less than two months before Japan surrendered. The small timber cottage in which young John spent his infancy disappeared long ago and nobody now living in the township lays claim to any personal recollection of him.

Although another Australian Prime Minister, Robert Gordon Menzies, does not qualify as a Creswickian, his mother Kate Sampson, a working miner's daughter, was born and raised there. Her father, John Sampson, was the first president of the Creswick branch of the Amalgamated Miner's Association, the earliest Australian trade union of size and influence.

William Guthrie Spence was another pillar of the union. An Orkney Islander whose parents brought him to Australia as a child, his photograph hangs on a wall of the Creswick Historical Museum along with the portraits of many other local celebrities. It depicts a heavily bearded and heavily moustached man with a lofty brow and thoughtful intelligent eyes.

Spence, a goldminer at Creswick, was secretary of the Amalgamated Miner's Association, and did more than any other man to build it into an effective industrial force, not only in Victoria but throughout Australia and in New Zealand. Then, in the 1880s, he combined with David Temple, a young Creswick shearer and part-time miner, to form the Amalgamated Shearers' Union; this grew into the Australian Workers' Union—one of the two largest Australian trade unions.

After serving as the AWU's first president, Spence entered the New South Wales parliament. In 1901 he was elected to the Federal parliament and remained a member for nearly twenty years.

Knights are commonplace. Sir Alexander Peacock, three times Premier of Victoria, and Sir Hayden Stakes, who was appointed a Justice of the High Court of Australia in 1920 and gave thirty years' service on the Bench, were Creswick boys. The town's claim to another eminent knight, Sir John Northcott, is technically unchallengeable but otherwise flimsy. Northcott was born in the hospital in 1890 but grew up at Dean, five miles away, sometimes helping to wait on customers in his father's general store.

A career officer in the Australian Army, he served in both world wars and was Chief of the General Staff during 1942-45, then Commander-in-Chief of the British Commonwealth Occupation Force in Japan. He became Governor of New South Wales in 1946 and, having twice acted as Administrator of the Commonwealth in the absence of the Governor-General, retired after eleven years as a doubly-knighted full General.

For most Australians, however, the Lindsay family heads Creswick's roll of honour. Five of Dr. and Mrs. Robert Charles Lindsay's ten children—Percy, Lionel, Norman, Ruby and Daryl—became artists of national reputation; Lionel (who died in Sydney in 1961, aged 86) and Daryl (who lives near Melbourne, aged 85) were each knighted for services to art. 'Lisnacrieve', the rambling old timber house in Victoria Street in which Dr. Lindsay practised medicine and his children grew up, was, regrettably, pulled down some years ago and a modern dwelling has taken its place.

The young Lindsays had an easier start than the only other Creswickian to make a creative name. This was James William Gordon, who became a mate of Henry Lawson and a prolific bush-balladist under the pen-name of Jim Graham. He published three books of verse and a large body of uncollected writings.

Gordon was born in a tilted cart in 1874, a mile or so outside the township. The place in which he first saw the light was Bloody Gully then; now it is Red Gully. According to Gordon, the name was changed 'when a wave of gentility passed over the district'. Most of the other evocative and homely place-names—Lumberbug Hill, Sulky Gully, Frying Pan Jack, Petticoat Gully, and their like—have, happily, survived the march of both sophistication and misguided respectability. Nobody is likely to monkey with them while Ted Semmens stands guard.