

Appendix 7. Brian Haynes Supplementary Report 2014

Re; "Cox Family, Barkly Arms, Oriental Hotel- Nelson Place, Williamstown

Brian Haynes

- life member of the Williamstown Historical Society,
- researching Williamstown's history with emphasis on structures and the development of Williamstown's streetscapes.
- provide historical advice to local council, Hobsons Bay and professional historians

I will leave the titles and memorials investigations to other members

As a result of new (and continuing) historical research it is without doubt the second oldest building in Williamstown, but it also needs to be reassessed from a Victorian heritage aspect due to its earlier heritage. With the exception of the Timeball Tower, the above property has substantially more heritage significance than a great number of Williamstowns other buildings that are already on the Victorian Heritage database.

In recent times it had been determined that the structure was present by 1854 operating initially as the Cox Family Hotel. The year 1854 was within the second stage of the Gold Rush where Melbourne and its suburbs, after the euphoria of the initial gold discoveries, was consolidating into a more permanent settlement utilizing the riches attained from the continuing gold rush to build new extravagant and embellished style of buildings.

The Heritage panel had indicated that there already existed several sites in Geelong of more complete three storey hotels and, as such, the Oriental structure could not be considered. The three triple storeyed hotels still remain from the 1853/4 period- door at the curved corner and extensive classical features. **Each of these hotels are on the Heritage Victoria listing, each being similar to each other. None exist in Melbourne. (Eastern Hill hotel, was two storeys initially)**

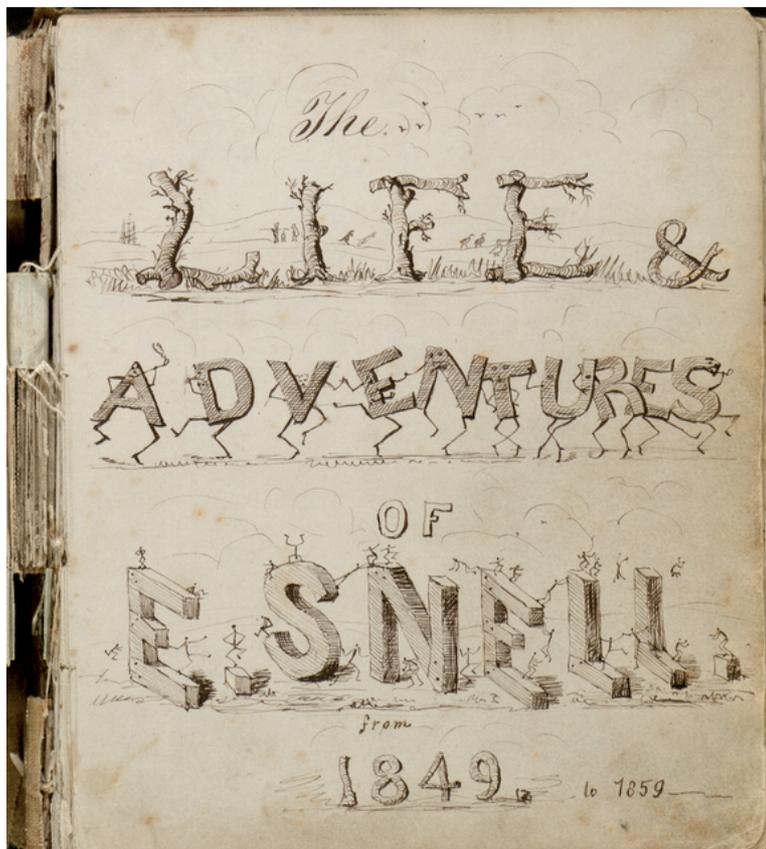
At the time, in the 1854 Quarrill lithograph, the subject structure was by far the largest building, both in height and rooms, in Williamstown.

As a result of further research carried out I believe that **is is now inappropriate to make the direct comparison with the three storey 1853-4 hotel buildings in Geelong** as the Oriental hotel building is from an earlier era where structures were of a more basic and austere, architecture, and more typical of pre gold rush era.

Few structures remain in Victoria from this era and none are of three storeys.

It is now beyond any doubt the structure dates earlier than 1854 and that the lithograph, whilst printed in 1854 was actually sketched at a prior date.

The artist of the Hobson Bay sketch was **Edward Snell** who, coincidentally, was also the architect of one of the Geelong Hotels mentioned above- the Terminus Hotel.- 1853/4



Edward Snell arrived in Australia in 1849 and kept a diary that is of significant importance to the history of the Victoria and the gold rush era
“The Life and Adventures of E Snell 1849- 1859” (available State Library Victoria)

1 The life and adventures of Edward Snell: the illustrated diary of an artist, engineer and adventurer in the Australian colonies 1849 to 1859 / edited and introduced by Tom Griffiths with assistance from Alan Platt. North Ryde, N.S.W. : Angus & Robertson and The Library Council of Victoria, 1988.

2 Contents/Summary: Snell writes about his voyages to and from the colonies and tells of his experiences in South Australia, Tasmania, and Victoria.

The diary is illustrated with black and white sketches and detailed studies of insects and animals, many in colour.

3 Biographical/Historical note: Edward Snell was an engineer, surveyor, artist and adventurer. He spent some months on the goldfields near Bendigo and won the contract to build the Geelong - Melbourne railway, Australia's first country railway.

As the artist of the Quarrill & Co lithograph, his diary is extremely important in identifying the date of the original sketch which shows the Oriental Hotel and other structures. He could only have created the sketch by being in Williamstown to view the streetscape.

Not only does the diary mention WHEN Snell visited Williamstown but it also provides other important data.

On the 23rd September 1852 (two years earlier than the printed lithograph)

Edward Snell arrived in Williamstown.

23/9/1852“ Sailed for Williams Town in the Falcon Steamer , rambled around the country.

put up at the **Ship Inn**. Returned to Melbourne in the evening.

The Ship Inn is shown in the sketch - It dates from 1844.

Snell then returned to Williams Town (Williamstown) later in the year
16/11/1852 to 18/11/1852 P321

16th Returned to survey and leveled to within a mile of Williams Town. *Slept at the Steam packet Hotel there*- sacked the boy who was useless and employed a run away sailor in his stead.

17th - sailor worked for me for about an hour and then bolted- so did without him. finished then came into Williams Town and did about 2 1/2 miles ? on the road to Geelong- returned to Williams Town *and slept at a private boarding house- only 27 in one room, queerest and lodgings I've been in yet- floor covered with beds and hammocks slung to the rafters.*

18th - resumed the survey & got as far as Mr Langhorne's station. Left our traps there and returned to Williamstown having a desperate job to cross a creek at a place called the stepping stones. *Slept at the same place as last night.*



light house 1849
(timeball tower)

Oriental
hotel 1854

Gem pier and
orig 1839 pier

unfinished
Pier hotel
1854

Ship Inn 1844,
Victoria house 1849 &
Albion hotel 1840

convict
working
party

convict
stockade

The first important aspect of this diary is that we can now **date the sketch as being created between the 23rd September 1852 and 18th November 1852**. Snell did not visit Williamstown again after these dates. At this time the Oriental structure was already in a completed state unlike the Pier Hotel that was still in course of erection. The Pier hotel was licensed in 1853.

1852- how did the various buildings compare?

Steampacket- 8 rooms,c(ditto in 1858) Cole street , dating back to 1838.

Ship Inn -10 rooms *149 Nelson Place

Albion -12 rooms 155 Nelson Place

and the Cox Family/ Barkly Arms/Oriental 15 rooms 1858, same as in 1852 sketch.

Aspects that need to be considered-

1. the gold rush did not commence until after July 1851 but the rush had to gain momentum and would have taken time to filter through to the population. By late 1851/ early 1852 **labour was near non existent** as the majority of the male population made their way to the infant gold fields. The structure could only have been built sometime in 1851 OR EARLIER.

Newspaper articles in October 1851 right into 1852 made numerous remarks to labour shortages “ Oct 1851 “ *Shepherds, stockmen, farm servants absconding*”

September 1851 “the different buildings and other works are at a standstill”

21/10/1851- Simultaneous rushes by all but a small minority. It has stayed public works and stopped private buildings. It has rendered all useful labour scarce”

2. Snell stayed at the Ship Inn (10 rooms) and then the Steam packet (8 rooms), both hotels were significantly smaller than the Oriental building. But he stayed the last 2 nights at a boarding house that must have been of a considerable size to have 27 to one room. Was the “boarding house” the Oriental building? Based on my comprehensive data of Williamstown in 1851 there were no boarding houses in Williamstown (electoral roll and the directory 1851) and the Oriental building was the largest structure in Williams Town right up to the 1860's. Prior to the gold rush there was no demand for boarding houses in Williamstown. The small number of hotels catered for the limited number of visitors. Benjamin Skelton was a man with some foresight as to the potential of Williamstown in the very early 1850's who, through his employment as a customs boatman, saw first hand the increasing shipping arrivals.

In Geelong January 1852 “Geelong lodging houses of the commoner sort and public houses are crowded, charge 1/6d per meal , 1/- a night to be allowed to sleep on the floor and find their own bed and many are sleeping in the passage ways.

Shipping to arrive in Port Phillip/Melbourne

1845 -	240 vessels
1846-	275
1847-	303
1848-	390
1849-	468
1850-	521
1851-	629
1852-	1,456
1853-	2,296- (The peak)
1854-	2,143
1855-	1,726

Shipping to Port Phillip per month.

1851-	July-54 - the very start of the gold rush- majority coastal vessels
1851-	Aug-58
1851-	Sept- 54
1851-	Oct- 52
1851-	Nov-46
1851-	Dec- 81- news had reached England but were months old.
1852-	Jan- 87
1852-	Feb- 165- significant increase in ship size.
1852-	Mar- 101
1852-	Aprl- 114
1852	Sept- 138 ships much larger sized vessels
1852-	Nov- 166 (triple the vessels of July 1851)

Between July 1851 and November 1852 inward shipping increased by 300%.

By September 1852 some 6,000 people were arriving per month. The vast majority of arriving vessels called at Williamstown. All vessels had to connect with Williamstown because Station Pier and Railway Pier would not be constructed at Sandridge (Port Melbourne) until 1854- two years away.

3. the actual sketch. with the exception of the foreground buildings the detail of the the middle buildings are indistinct SAVE for the Oriental building where the facade, windows and pediment/ parapet can be seen more clearly. Considering the distance from the Oriental building it would not be possible to view the Oriental so clearly so there must have been some connection with the Oriental building to sketch it - ie he may have stayed at the Oriental premises- "the boarding house"

In 1853 William Kelly arrived in Port Phillip and his writings in "Life In Victoria" introduces the reader to a Williamstown of 1853 and then makes the comparison 4 years later

William Kelly's account of the town in 1853:

Yet in the two succeeding years it made but very slow and rude progress, for when I stepped on its rickety pier, which rocked enough to make an inlander sea-sick, the only symptoms of a town I could discover were some large weatherboard arks anchored in the mud; one or two

occupied as butchers' shops to supply the shipping, one or two licensed to stupefy their customers with adulterated alcohol, **a leviathan eating-house, superscribed with the notification "Dinners always ready from morning till night," and the postscript, "Hot soups always on hand.****"** There was a large grey calico smithy alongside, emitting showers of sparks which, curiously enough, flew upwards without igniting the inflammable roof, and close by a shipwright's yard, with an office and dry workshop, covered in by a long-boat inverted and elevated on piles. There was a straggling suburb of ships' galleys and hurricane houses, with here and there a few buoys, as if to indicate the line of safe thoroughfares, while the shore, up to the high-water mark, was covered with a debris of drift spars, broken oars, ship-blocks, dead-eyes, used up passengers' beds and pillows, dilapidated hen-coops, empty brandy cases, broken bottles, and kegs with a ballast of salt water.

** the mention of a leviathan eating-house. the only substantial building that could match this in 1853 - the Oriental building.

In Summary.

The structure was built before September/ November 1852.

the structure was most likely used as a boarding house to cater for substantial influx of immigrants to Port Phillip. And only in mid 1854 was the premises used as a hotel.

The structure is a remnant from the pre gold rush era. It is noteworthy because it is from an era where few buildings remain and, if correct as to its use, the sole survivor of gold rush boarding houses.

The structure is rare for being pre gold rush and for being 3 storeys.