

ARAB STEED HOTEL AND TERRACE HOUSES

241 Hutt Street and 309-315 Gilles Street

An hotel with the name of the Arab Steed has existed on this site (part Town Acre 654) since September 1849. A sketch in 1859 records that the hotel was at that stage a single storeyed, simple and early building, no doubt the same building that had been constructed in C 1849. In 1877-78, the hotel was entirely rebuilt at a time when C.J. Farrow was the landlord and at a time when many other hotels in the City were being rebuilt. It was constructed by a builder by the name of Tidswell, for the cost of £1200 and when completed, contained 16 rooms.

The terrace houses, attached to the Arab Steed Hotel, were built by December 1877 at the direction of William Baillie Holmesby. Holmesby had previously been the publican of the Arab Steed Hotel. He sold the hotel to James Farrow in October 1876 but retained the adjacent land for the construction of the terrace.

The *South Australian Register* reported that:

At the corner of Gilles Street and Hutt Street Mr. J.C. Farrow has entirely rebuilt the old Arab Steed Hotel, which is now a fine two-storied house of 16 rooms. The exterior is Mitcham stone roughly tooled, with cement dressings. The contract was carried out by Mr. Tidswell at a cost of £1,200.

Next to the hotel in Gilles Street is a row of five (sic) two-storied houses of six rooms each, with balconies. They were built in keeping with the hotel at the corner by Mr. Tidswell, and when completed were sold for £2,700.



(CD Ref 1347/56)

The terrace houses could have been built by either Thomas or Horatio Tidswell, both builders were in partnership at one time. Thomas Tidswell was the foreman to well known builder Mr Trugden, and at the time of his death in 1913, was the Overseer of Works for the architects, English and Soward.

The terrace was in the ownership of the Sprod family for more than 80 years and in 1972, the terraces were given separate titles.

The hotel and attached terrace are significant in illustrating the patterns of development in this part of the City in the nineteenth century. The terrace reveals the housing provided by

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moderately wealthy businessmen as investments and the hotel reflects the provision of a service for the local residents.

The buildings also reveal an infrequent architectural combination of a hotel and attached terrace. A more florid example, dating from approximately the same period is the Botanic Hotel and Chambers. The Arab Steed example, although not constructed by the same owner, reveals a simpler version of this obviously successful juxtaposition.

The hotel after rebuilding was similar in appearance to the many rebuilt during this period. It was perhaps a little more simple than most. The building featured a typical chamfered corner and a small balcony projecting from its first floor doorway. The hotel appears to have never had an elaborate verandah and balcony otherwise typical of hotels of this period. Nevertheless its basic architectural form was typical.

In the late 1930s, the hotel was 'modernised' and achieved its current appearance. The facades of the building are rendered and lined to simulate blockwork. The decorated parapet of the building hides a hipped, CGI clad roof. The building has recently been 'updated' and painted pink. A continuous steel, colorbond verandah has recently been added to the facades of the building.

The group of four terrace houses, on the other hand, are in largely original condition and are a good example of terrace housing in the City. They are typical in plan and form of the type built during the mid Victorian period in Adelaide. They are simple and of a good quality. The houses are two storeyed, with a verandah and balcony decorated with cast iron lacework. They are constructed of squared stone of good quality with rendered dressings of restrained Classically derived form, i.e. to the window and door surrounds.



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Both groups of buildings contribute to a notable physical environment. The hotel is a prominent feature of Hutt Street. The terraces are less dominant but still prominent in Gilles Street, a mainly residential area.

Land Title Office, Certificate of Title 241/210; Rate Assessment Books for the period 1875 to 1878; Smith Survey 1880; *South Australian Register*, 23 March 1878; *Observer*, 19 July 1913; Statton, J. Entry for W.B. Holmesby, *Biographical Index of South Australians*, 1986, Vol 2, p. 767; Hoad, J.L. *Hotels and Publicans*, 1986, part 3, p. 16; Mortlock Library of South Australiana, Photographic Index for City Town Acres, number 654.

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The text in this Information Sheet was copied from the **City of Adelaide Heritage Study**, October 1990, Volume One, part of a review of the City of Adelaide Plan 1986-1991. The photographs contained in this Information Sheet are a selection of those held by Heritage Services, in digital format.

The property at 309-315 Gilles Street, as described in this Information Sheet, is a place of Local Heritage (City Significance). The Arab Steed Hotel is **not** Heritage listed. A heritage listing does not mean or imply right of access by the public to such properties.

The heritage related Principles of Development Control as well as the Precinct specific objectives and Principles of Development Control are contained in the Adelaide (City) Development Plan. These should be referred to in whole when contemplating any development.

Further information on the Heritage Incentives Scheme, an initiative of Council to sponsor timely and appropriate conservation action is available upon request of the Customer Service Centre.