

RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS' MEETING HOUSE

(rear) 41 Pennington Terrace



(CD Ref 1721/78)

This modest structure is extremely important to an understanding of the types of buildings imported during the earliest years of South Australia and the part played by prefabrication as a tool of colonisation. Manufactured by the noted prefabricator of 'portable colonial

cottages', Henry Manning of London, the Meeting House arrived at Port Adelaide on 6 February 1840. It is one of the most sophisticated examples of prefabrication from this period and is of international significance in the development of this most important building technique.

The one practical way in which the English body of Quakers could help 'Friends' in outposts of the British Empire was to raise subscriptions for meeting houses. As early as 1825 the Quakers in London resolved to ship a prefabricated dwelling to Sierra Leone. During the 1839 London yearly meeting of Quakers, concern was expressed that a building should also be despatched to South Australia as a meeting house and that it should be prefabricated in nature. The choice of Henry Manning as the manufacturer was due to the fervent testimonials of the prominent South Australian pioneer and Quaker, John Barton Hack, who had imported two of Manning's portable colonial cottages to South Australia. Before the shipment of the Meeting House from London it stood on show at the West India Dock.

In October 1839 Hack was advised that ' . . . a wooden framework Meeting House with verandah and iron pillars complete, packed and numbered . . .' had been shipped aboard the *Rajasthan*. These packages, together with 3300 slates which had also been shipped out, were transported by 27 April 1840 to a site on Pennington Terrace. Progress in the erection of the building was slow. Henry Watson, a Quaker and Hack's brother-in-law who lived immediately adjacent to the west in another Manning house (see Walkley Cottage, St Mark's College) recorded at this time, 'We have not done anything yet about putting up the Meeting House - the Friends have all gone up to Mount Barker - I have little expectation of seeing a second Pennsylvania here.'

The building was erected by 14 June 1840 and Hack commented happily, 'The Meeting House is finished except painting and a very handsome building it is. Manning has done full justice to it.'

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At first the Meeting House was little used, not all the Friends showing Hack's enthusiasm for it, and in 1863 there were moves to drastically alter or replace the building. Fortunately such action did not take place, and the building remains testimony to Manning's high quality workmanship and his remarkable perception of climatic control (especially the use of verandas tied down by the iron 'pillars'). The interior is remarkable for its originality; the pews are also by Manning, and are the only pieces of furniture made by him known to have survived.

The integrity of this building and its proximity to another Manning-based construction are probably unique in the world, and as such, attribute great architectural and historical significance to this area of special character.

ACA, *Digest of Proceedings*, 1 October 1883; Adelaide Regional Meetings of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers), February 1976, 'The Friends Meeting House, its story and message'; MLSA, RN 49, *Society of Friends in South Australia*, Morgan, E.J.R., & Gilbert, S.H., *Early Adelaide architecture 1836 to 1886*, 1969, pp. 100-01.

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The property described in this Information Sheet is included in the Register of State Heritage places. 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.



CITY OF ADELAIDE HERITAGE STUDY

The City Heritage Register - Definition of Items

Prepared by the Dept. of Planning and Development

Item	FRIENDS (QUAKER) MEETING HOUSE	Building No	35/2212-2
Address	off 41 Pennington Terrace, North Adelaide (at rear 38-40 Pennington Terrace)	CT	1683/116

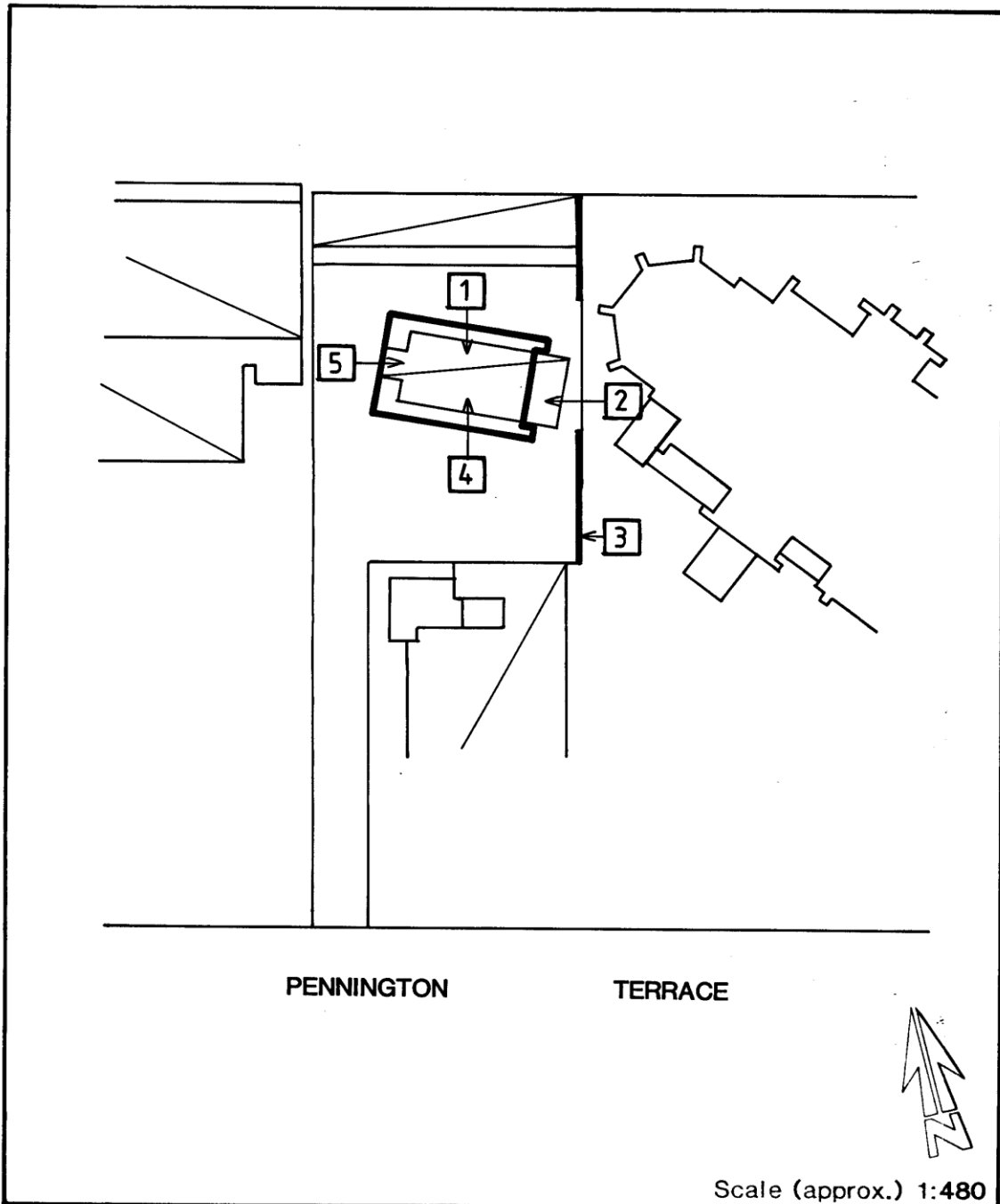


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NOTES:

1. Slate shingle roof.
2. Iron lean-to addition.
3. Bluestone and brick wall.
4. Timber construction.
5. Sympathetic rebuilt porch.