

## BELMONT

71-75 Brougham Place

### *NORTH ADELAIDE MASONIC AND PUBLIC HALL ASSOCIATION.*

*The members of the Association are hereby informed that the FOUNDATION STONE of the HALL will be LAID by HIS EXCELLENCY the GOVERNOR-IN-CHIEF and Principal Grand Lodge Officers on Wednesday the 25th inst. at 2 o'clock precisely, the Members of the Craft meeting at the Lodge Room Kermode Street at 1 on the same day . . . from whence they will proceed to the ground, situate within the stone wall in Brougham Place a little west of O'Connell Street.*

This was the notice placed in the *South Australian Register*, 25 August 1858.

In 1856 a design, won in competition, was prepared by Edmund Wright for the North Adelaide Masonic and Public Hall Association. Although it was ' . . . confidently expected that the scheme would be carried out', and foundations were laid out in June 1856, the foundation stone was not laid until 25 August 1858.

The ceremony was performed in accordance with masonic rites by Sir R.G. MacDonnell, governor, and John Lazar, mayor of Adelaide and the Deputy Provincial Grand Master of the Craft of Freemasons, and by members of the Provincial Grand Lodge. The hall was erected by a company of shareholders called the North Adelaide Masonic and Public Hall Association. Trustees were John Bentham Neales, MP, John Tuthill Bagot, MP, and Samuel Wright.



(CD Ref 1345/66)

The building was described as 'Roman Doric surmounted by a handsome cornice which rises over a pediment in the centre . . . a handsome addition to North Adelaide, where the want of a public hall has long been felt'. It was opened on 27 December 1858. The association's secretary William A. Hughes claimed in his opening address that the Brethren of the Lodge of Truth desired to promote the honour and best interests of the institution and had at great pains and expense erected this masonic temple.

The building was designed to take the addition of a large hall to the rear, but this was never executed.

The completed building comprised an ' . . . entrance hall 27 x 8 feet with the supper room 27 x 14 feet on the right hand and on the left hand, the tyler's room 14 x 9 feet with cellar of the same size under, and the waiting room 14 x 13 feet'. Upstairs was a small hall. The supper

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room was used for the library of the newly formed North Adelaide Institute. ' . . . the elevation of the building is handsome, and will, when completed, form a great ornament to that part of the city.' These dimensions are consistent with the present main section of Belmont.

The use of this building as masonic/institute headquarters was short-lived, for in 1863 two of the trustees Neales and Bagot sold the property to Dr John Woodforde for £650. The additions at the rear probably date from this period and presumably occupy part of the site for the intended masonic hall.

Dr Woodforde occupied this building from 1863 until his death on 11 April 1866. Woodforde arrived in South Australia on 20 August 1836 on the brig *Rapid* commanded by Colonel William Light. In September the ship's company crossed from Kangaroo Island to Rapid Bay from where Light made his preliminary explorations, most notably for the site of the capital. Woodforde remained one of Light's closest friends, supporting him through the difficulties of the Hindmarsh administration. Woodforde commented in his diary on Light's selection of the Adelaide site: ' . . . Colonel Light has shown, in my opinion, great judgement and firmness. There are many discontented who are impelled by envy to find fault with his choice. It appears to me that there is nothing to wish for in the selection.'

Woodforde had been appointed surgeon to the *Rapid* and became surgeon to the Survey Department and later a member of the Medical Board to administer the Medical Ordinance Act. In 1856 when George Stevenson died Woodforde took his place as coroner.

Woodforde's widow continued to live at the Brougham Place address until the early 1870s when the house was taken over by Albion J. Tolley who founded the wine and spirit firm of A.E. & F. Tolley.

Belmont's important historical associations are reinforced by its architectural significance. Edmund Wright, architect, and English and Brown, builders, were of great importance to the 1870s to 1880s boom period and South Australian development in general. The building designed in 1856 was an early commission for Wright and may be the earliest of his designs to survive. Wright arrived in South Australia in 1849 but his practice did not immediately flourish. Weir and Lambeth were perhaps the pre-eminent architects of that early period. Wright advertised extensively and put forward numerous designs for projects including the city bridge and St Francis Xavier's Roman Catholic Cathedral. In the early 1850s he was employed by the Corporation of the City of Adelaide as city



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surveyor and also held other positions to supplement his small salary. In 1854 commissions included the erection of an exchange, offices in King William Street and possibly a mill at

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Goolwa. The few tender notices by Wright in the first half of the 1850s indicate little increase in his practice until late 1854 when he invited tenders for the erection of the Methodist church in Archer Street. The design of the Brougham Place Masonic Hall is therefore of great importance to an understanding of Wright's development as an architect and public figure of some standing.

The design of the principal elevation is symbolic, made obvious by the masonic association where orders of architecture are accorded special significance. Stylised 'Roman Doric' was used here in giant order form, the pilasters carrying through both storeys. This elevation is disciplined and well proportioned, the originally symmetrical composition emphasised by the central pediment. The paned double-hung windows and blind cases give the upper floor a distinctly Georgian appearance which is distinctive and unusual in Adelaide. The original section of the house is well constructed of limestone rubble, the whole being quite a sophisticated building for its period. The western section of the house with the bay window probably dates from the occupation of Tolley in the 1870s, the similarly detailed porch suggesting that this too dates from the later period.

This building with its three obvious stages of construction following conversion from public building to private residence, still maintains the internal plan form in the original section, although the hall on the first floor has been subdivided. Finishes have been altered and the building has suffered from termite attack and water entry yet it is one of the most important to survive in North Adelaide.

The historical and architectural significance of the building is complemented by its important location near the conjunction of Brougham and Palmer places where it stands as a strong visual element and acts as a 'buffer' to the commercial development which has taken place immediately to the east.

ACA, Assessments, Smith Survey 1880; Glover, C.R.J., *A history of the first fifty years of Freemasonry in South Australia, 1834-1884*, 1916; MLSA, A.A. Lendon, *Biography of Dr. J. Woodforde*, G.C., Morphett, *A synopsis of the diary of Dr John Woodforde*, 1950, Historical photographs (Town Acre 740); Morrison, W.E, *The Aldine history of South Australia*, Vol. 2, 1890; *South Australian Register*, 25 August 1858, 27 December 1858, 28 December 1858.

The text in this Information Sheet was copied from the **Heritage of the City of Adelaide: An Illustrated Guide**, (1996). The photographs contained in this Information Sheet are a selection of those held by Heritage Services, in digital format.

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*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.*

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*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.*

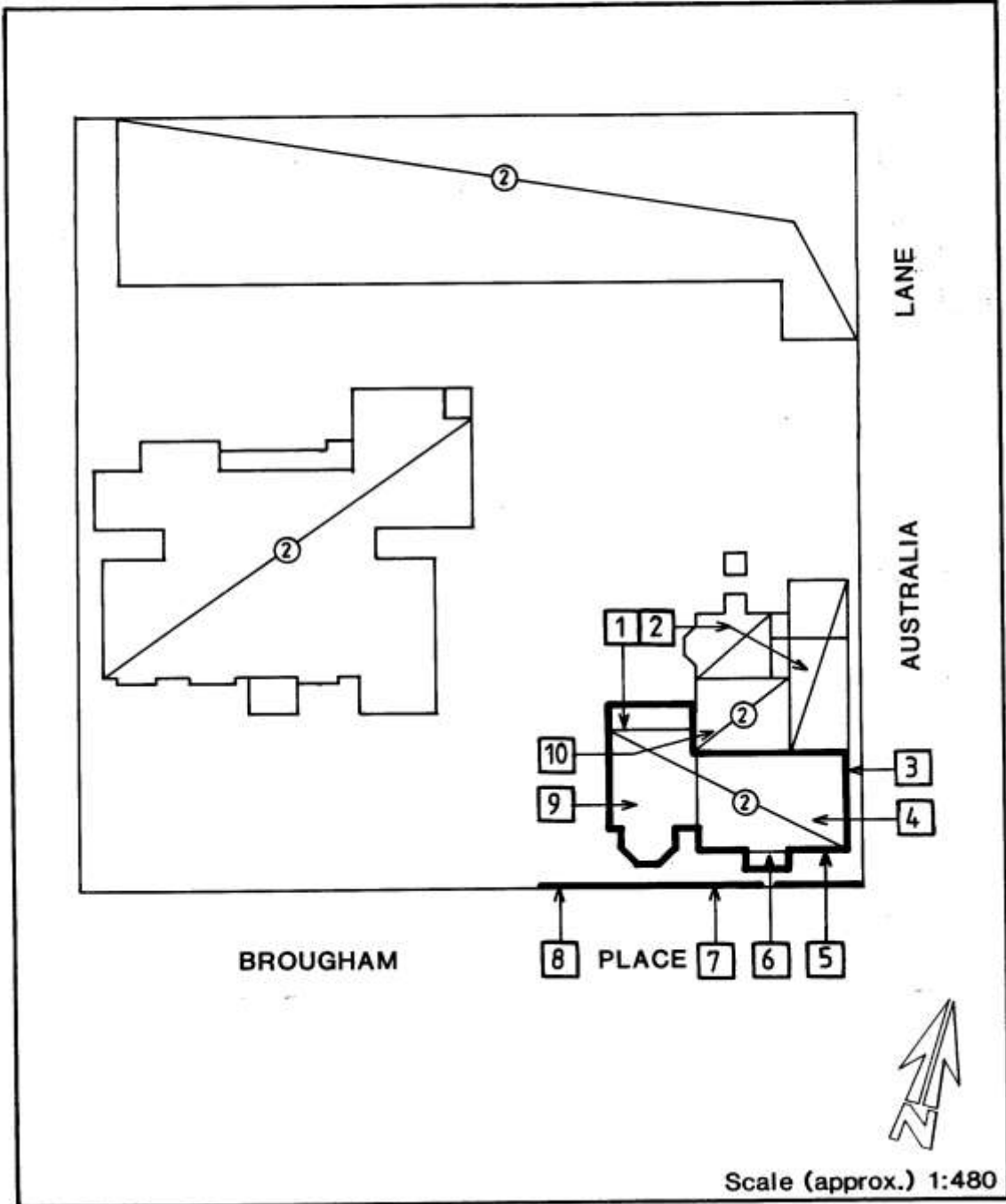


# CITY OF ADELAIDE HERITAGE STUDY

## The City Heritage Register-Definition of Items

Prepared by the Dept. of Planning and Development

Item	BELMONT	Building No	31/0401-2
Address	On land 71-75 Brougham Place, North Adelaide; and 141-149 Ward Street	CT	2637/42



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#### NOTES:

1. Verandah with substantial timber joinery.
2. Brick additions.
3. Limestone rubble with stucco enrichment.
4. Original Masonic hall.
5. Rendered facade.
6. Portico.
7. Cast iron fence with rendered pillars.
8. Rendered fence.
9. Bluestone extension ("Tolley" addition).
10. Early extension in limestone rubble.