

Item details

Name of item: Terrace house with mural

Other name/s:

Type of item: Built

Group/Collection: Residential buildings (private)

Category: Attached dwelling

Primary address: 36 Terminus Street, Petersham, NSW 2049

Local govt. area: Marrickville

Property description

Lot/Volume Code	Lot/Volume Number	Section Number	Plan/Folio Code	Plan/Folio Number
	1			743501

All addresses

Street Address	Suburb/town	LGA	Parish	County	Type
36 Terminus Street	Petersham	Marrickville			Primary Address

Statement of significance:

36 Terminus Street, Petersham is significant for the large mural located on the north and east interior walls of the ground floor front room.

The mural, drawn of Indian ink/and or pencil between 1885 & 1894, has historic significance for its depiction of people and events associated with Australia's involvement in the Sudan War during 1885.

It is a relatively intact and rare example of an interior mural depicting historical events. The mural has aesthetic significance for depicting the style and subjects of drawings believed to be copied from cartoons appearing in newspapers and the Bulletin Magazine at that time.

The mural is socially significant as a personal statement about an early colonial military venture which received substantial public attention at the time.

The mural provides a rare insight into the social values and concerns of the time (circa 1885) specifically those relating to the involvement of a NSW contingent in the Sudan Campaign.

Date significance updated: May 15

Note: There are incomplete details for a number of items listed in NSW. The Heritage Branch intends to develop or upgrade statements of significance and other information for these items as resources become available.

Description

Designer/Maker: Unconfirmed. Signature "E C Press, Decorator, March 88" appears on the northern

wall.

Physical description: 36 Terminus Street, Petersham is a two storey modified, Victorian terrace. The building is flush to the footpath. Alterations have occurred to the front of the building including the removal of a verandah and alterations to windows and doors. The mural is located on at least two walls of the ground floor front room once occupied by a shop. The mural is drawn onto the wall using either Indian ink and/or pencil and appears in monochrome.

Description of images (uncovered August to December 1999):

"Soldier" (north wall) - The image appears to be that of a soldier, whose uniform has shoulder epaulettes. He has a large, "luxuriant" moustache and mutton chop whiskers. Around the image of the soldier is a large oval garland of leaves (a wreath?). The soldier may represent Colonel John Richardson, or possibly, General Sir Edward Strickland.

"General Charles Gordon" (east wall) - identified as General Charles Gordon. Behind the General is a tree with a prominent branch.

"Black slave" (east wall) - The image appears to be a black slave, smoking a pipe and carrying a large sack. The facial expression is very much like the cartoon image of the slave shown at p. 68 of Inglis' book.

"Lord Augustus Loftus, Governor of NSW" (east wall) - This image is located next to General Gordon. It is the profile of a balding man, with thick lips and a prominent hook nose. He has an older style wing collars. In his extended right hand there are the talons of a bird resting on his fingers. The bird is a chicken and this alludes to the story that Loftus used to sell eggs from his Government House chooks to supplement his income. Lord Augustus Loftus (1817-1904) as commander in chief had a part in sending the Sudan contingent but spent most of his time at Moss Vale (his country house).

"The Prelate" (east wall) - This character is wearing a type of beret, with a rope-type coil right around the top section and an emblem in the middle of the beret. In the part of the beret directly over his eyebrows there are numerous half treble clefs shown around the frame.

"The Businessman" (east wall) - This figure is wearing a suit, reading a magazine and smoking a cigar/cigarillo. He has a small moustache and is wearing what is similar to pince-nez spectacles, the style where the wings are connected to the metal circles that hold the lenses halfway down the circles. This was a common style of spectacle during the early part of this century. The spectacles have a chain connected to the right side lens and the chain disappears beneath his suit collar. On top of the cigar are three stick figures, which may be a motif on the holder.

"The Little Boy from Manly" (east wall) - This is an indistinct image. No face has yet emerged but the image appears to be a direct copy of a cartoon by Livingston Hopkins, which first appeared in The Bulletin on 26 September 1885. The boy is holding a slate which features the "Sudan goat".

The *"Gote"* (east wall) - In the mural, next to the Little Boy is a boxed picture of a goat carrying a sign. The sign is hanging around the goat's neck. The word 'Sudan' appears on the sign. There is a caption underneath the goat which reads 'This Gote Only Cost 113.000 pounds'. The figures shown above the goat in Inglis's book are likely to be also present in the mural but this area of wall has not yet been uncovered.

Other images have been uncovered since this time.

Further information: Draft

Historical notes:

The land on which 36 Terminus Street stands previously formed part of the Sydenham Estate of North Petersham. This estate located between Palace and Crystal Streets from Parramatta Road to New Canterbury Road was divided into 205 building blocks and 127 villa sites which were sold on 9 and 16 October 1854. In 1885/86 Bartlett and Cameron owned two houses and what was to become 36 Terminus Street was in the process of being built along with three other houses. By 1888 Thomas Bartlett owned 8 houses, which included number 36. In 1892/93 the law firm Stephen Jaques and Stephen (now Mallesons Stephen Jaques) is listed as the owner of No 36, (plus five other properties formerly owned by Thomas Bartlett). The AMP Society bought all the houses in 1894/95 and the building was unoccupied at this time. In 1902-03 numbers 30-40 were sold to J. Halliday.

The building was used as a shop/residence (including a general store and newsagency) until 1961. The building was then converted to residential use. The building is currently a private residence. The mural was uncovered during renovation work in 1999, underneath three layers of paint and two layers of wallpaper on two walls, the North wall and the East wall each 6m wide.

The mural is believed to have been painted between 1885-1894. Detail shown in the features indicates that the mural was the work of a skilled artist, although possibly an amateur. George Milner Stephen stayed in his firm's house during his visits to Sydney from Melbourne from time to time however following inspection of his sketches held in the Mitchell Library it is believed that the mural is not his work. One other suggestion is the possibility that John Field is the artist. John Field lived in Terminus Street in 1886 and 1887, and is listed as a painter and decorator.

In Australia in the nineteenth century, a rich political cartooning tradition was beginning to evolve. In 1880 *The Bulletin* was founded and was the first news magazine to use political cartoons, and it did so from its very first issue. The turbulence of the early twentieth century – the Boer War, women's suffrage, Federation, restrictive immigration policies, the Great War, the Great Depression - all provided rich material for social commentators, satirists and cartoonists. It was a golden age for Australian cartoonists – some of the legendary names of the black-and-white art rose to prominence at that time. The Lindsay brothers, Norman, Percy and Lionel, worked at *The Bulletin*; a rival magazine, *Smith's Weekly*, was established in 1919; Will Dyson and New Zealand-born David Low made their names in Australia before venturing to greater, lasting fame in England. Dyson virtually revived the English tradition of satirical cartooning single-handedly. Low's style was much more spare and modern than Dyson's, and he went on to become one of the twentieth century's most influential cartoonists, creating the immortal Colonel Blimp along the way.¹

The sources of the mural drawings at 36 Terminus Street, Petersham, are believed to be cartoons from the illustrated newspapers of the time and 'The Bulletin' magazine. The mural of the "Little Boy" for instance is a direct copy of the cartoon by Hopkins published in *The Bulletin* on 26 September 1885. Livingston Hopkins (1846-1927) was a popular cartoonist, the best known of his cartoons were the Sudan War and Federation series in *The Bulletin*.

From the heights of Manly, Ernest Lawrence, 8 years old, watched the troopships, the Australasian and Iberia, depart for the Sudan. He wrote a letter to Mr Dalley; and his father and he jointly contributed 25 pounds to the Sudan campaign. This contribution appeared in a public list of contributions as "From a Little Boy at Manly (E.Laurence)". On 7 March the letter was published in the Sydney Morning Herald along with a reply from Dalley. The Little Boy at Manly was the subject of numerous cartoons published by Hopkins for years afterwards. The Goat was the subject of cartoons.²

THE SUDAN WAR

The mural depicts events and personalities concerned with the Sudan campaign in 1885 and the NSW contingent's role in the conflict including the depiction of military and civilian personalities as well as drawings of the "Little Boy from Manly" and the

¹ <http://www.australia.gov.au/about-australia/australian-story/austn-political-cartooning>

² http://www.environment.gov.au/cgi-bin/heritage/photodb/imagesearch.pl?proc=detail;barcode_no=rp05265g

mascot goat of the NSW contingent.

Sudan had been progressively occupied by Egyptian soldiers and administrators during the nineteenth century. In 1881 the Egyptian Regime was threatened by an indigenous rebellion led by Muhammed Ahmad known as "Mahdi". In 1883 the government in Cairo, with British acquiescence sent an army south to crush the revolt - the Egyptian forces were devastated. General Charles Gordon (1833-1885) a British soldier was installed as Governor-General to Sudan in Khartoum on 18 February 1884, a post he had previously held in 1877. Gordon was dispatched to rescue Egyptian garrisons in the Sudan. The Mahdi forces captured Khartoum and killed General Gordon.

On 11 February 1885, news reached Sydney of General Gordon's death at Khartoum. The next day, partly at the instigation of Major General Edward Strickland, W. B. Dalley, (1831-1888) at this time acting Colonial Secretary and Attorney General, offered a New South Wales contingent to Britain for the Sudan campaign. Strickland (1821-1889), wrote a letter which appeared in the Sydney Morning Herald on 12 February 1885 suggesting that a contingent be sent to Sudan. He was an intimate of W. B. Dalley. General Gordon had been held in high regard by the Australian people.

Colonel John Richardson (1836-1896), later Major General, was appointed to command Australia's contingent of approximately 750 men. They left Sydney on 3 March in the troopships, Australasian and Iberia, amid great enthusiasm and reached Suakin on the 29 March. The contingent participated in a few military actions including taking part in the advance on Tamai. The contingent was affected by fever and 9 men died as a result of illness contracted. The contingent returned to Sydney on the American troopship Arab on 23 June and received a welcoming home parade. Richardson received the Sudan Medal.

The NSW Contingent in Sudan captured a young goat. The goat was a well known mascot and presented as a figure of fun, used by some to demonstrate the folly of the NSW involvement. Inglis in his book "The Rehearsal: Australians at war in the Sudan, 1885" notes that a cartoon by Livingston Hopkins in The Bulletin on 26 September 1885 accuses the government of not telling the truth about the cost of the campaign. A white Sudanese donkey, bought in Suakin was transported back to Sydney with the contingent.

Most colonists approved of and were supportive of the dispatch of the contingent to the Sudan. Critics however believed it was an expensive mission which brought back a donkey. Sir Henry Parkes was one of the first, most prominent and influential critics of the government's military involvement in the Sudan.³


Historic themes

Australian theme (abbrev)	New South Wales theme	Local theme
Historic Themes: 7.1 Governing Australia as a province of the British Empire; 8.9 Commemorating significant events; 8.10 Pursuing excellence in the arts		

³ http://www.environment.gov.au/cgi-bin/heritage/photodb/imagesearch.pl?proc=detail;barcode_no=rp05265g

and sciences: Creating visual arts; 8.11 Making Australian folklore: Myth making and story-telling).		
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Assessment of significance

SHR Criteria a) [Historical significance]	The mural, drawn of Indian ink/and or pencil between 1885-1894, has historic significance for its depiction of people and events associated with Australia's involvement in the Sudan War during 1885. It is an early and rare example of an internal mural depicting historical events believed to be sourced directly from cartoons appearing in newspapers and the Bulletin Magazine at that time.
SHR Criteria c) [Aesthetic significance]	The mural has aesthetic significance as a rare surviving example of politically motivated cartoon imagery from the latter half of the 19 th C. The images clearly have a stylistic relationship with political cartoons of the time, as evidenced through the mural of the "Little Boy" which is a direct copy of the cartoon by Hopkins published in The Bulletin on 26 September 1885.
SHR Criteria d) [Social significance]	The mural is socially significant as it provides a rare insight into the social values and concerns of the time (circa 1885), specifically those relating to the involvement of a NSW contingent in the Sudan Campaign. The mural is socially significant as a personal public patriotic statement about an early colonial military venture which received substantial public attention at the time. It also highlights the emergence in the nineteenth century of political cartooning within Australian society.
SHR Criteria f) [Rarity]	The mural is a rare surviving interior image from the late nineteenth century depicting the social concerns of the day. A small number of nineteenth century murals (painted directly onto the wall or ceiling) have been identified in Australia. The former Macaroni Factory, Hepburn Springs, Victoria (Register of the National Estate #3966) has wall and ceiling murals painted by Giacomo Lucini in 1862-64 illustrating the social and political philosophy of the original Italian migrants. These murals are amongst the earliest examples of painted decorations in Victoria. Purrumbete Homestead in Victoria has historical murals painted in 1901 by Walter Withers.
Integrity/Intactness:	The original extent of the mural is unknown. Photographic evidence from 1997 indicates that sections of wall plaster had become separated from the eastern wall. It is unknown whether additional murals were located on this section of the wall. Restoration of the remnant mural was undertaken commencing in 1999.
Assessment criteria:	Items are assessed against the  State Heritage Register (SHR) Criteria to determine the level of significance. Refer to the Listings below for the level of statutory protection.

Recommended management:

Mural is to be retained in situ. Specialist conservator's advice must be sought prior to any works or cleaning being undertaken to the mural. The mural is not to be painted over or covered by any applied surface treatments.

Listings

Heritage Listing	Listing Title	Listing Number	Gazette Date	Gazette Number	Gazette Page

Study details

Title	Year	Number	Author	Inspected by	Guidelines used

List	Register of the National Estate (Non-statutory archive)
Class	Historic
Legal Status	Registered (27/03/2001)
Place ID	101873
Place File No	1/12/025/0036