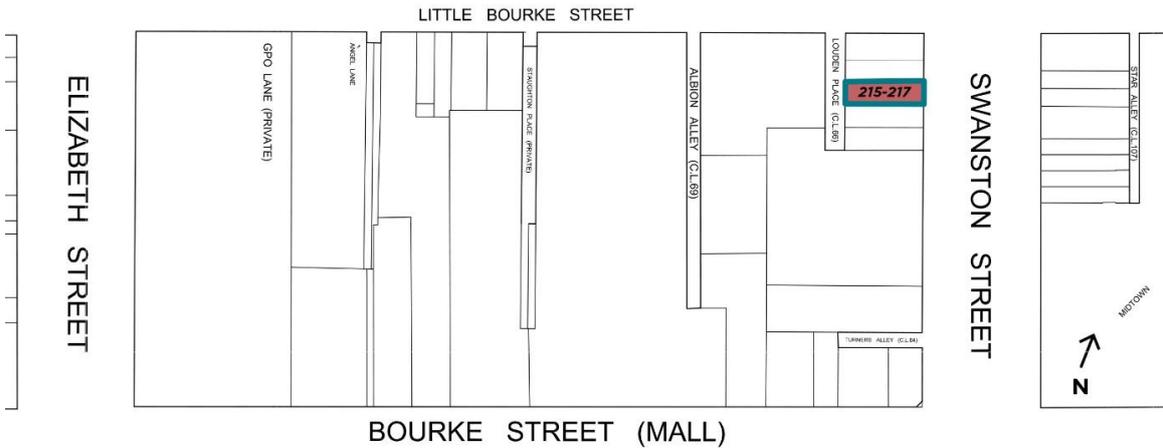


SITE NAME	Shop and residence
STREET ADDRESS	215-217 Swanston Street Melbourne
PROPERTY ID	109287



SURVEY DATE: January 2018

SURVEY BY: Context

HERITAGE INVENTORY	H7822-1488	EXISTING HERITAGE OVERLAY	No
PLACE TYPE	Individual Heritage Place	PROPOSED CATEGORY	Significant
DESIGNER / ARCHITECT / ARTIST:	Not known	FORMER GRADE	D
DEVELOPMENT PERIOD:	Victorian Period (1851-1901)	BUILDER:	Not known
		DATE OF CREATION / MAJOR CONSTRUCTION:	1856

THEMES

ABORIGINAL THEMES	SUB-THEMES
Research undertaken in preparing this citation did not indicate any associations with Aboriginal people or organisations.	Aboriginal Themes (Hoddle Grid Heritage Review, Stage 2 Volume 3 Aboriginal Heritage, March 2019) have therefore not been identified here
HISTORIC THEMES	DOMINANT SUB-THEMES
8 Living in the city	8.1 Housing the population
	OTHER SUB-THEMES
5 Building a Commercial City	5.4 Developing a retail centre

LAND USE

HISTORIC LAND USE	
Archaeological block no: 29	Inventory no: 488
Character of Occupation: Commercial	
Extant building (shop) built 1856, occupants W Davis & Co. Owner 1859-1889 George Swanston.	
1866 Cox	
1880 Panorama	Two-storey building.
1888 Mahlstedt	Two-storey building.
1905/6 Mahlstedt	
THEMATIC MAPPING AND LAND USE	
1890s	Residential, Commercial
1920s	Commercial
1960s	Commercial

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommended for inclusion in the Schedule to the Heritage Overlay of the Melbourne Planning Scheme as an Individual Heritage Place.

Extent of overlay: Refer to map

SUMMARY

215-217 Swanston Street is a rare surviving shop/residence from pre-1860. Once part of a terrace of four identical buildings it is the sole survivor of the row. It is a significant place in the Swanston Street South Precinct as a result of its early date of construction.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Living in the city

Housing the population

While many of Melbourne's poor were accommodated within the city proper, wealthier citizens established more salubrious places of residence away from the city centre. Within the City of Melbourne there were pockets of better-quality housing in East Melbourne, in St Kilda Road, and in parts of South Carlton. Outside the central city grid, in the surrounding suburbs of Carlton, West Melbourne, North Melbourne and East Melbourne, more early housing has survived than in the central city (Context 2012:65).

Accommodation was also provided for single men and women, and others in non-traditional living arrangements. Gordon House in Little Bourke Street was a notable early attempt at subsidised housing. Built in 1883, this innovative development was designed to provide accommodation for low-income families. Some large city residences were divided up into apartments in the 1880s, but it wasn't until the early twentieth century that self-contained flats became popular. They provided a cheaper and more desirable housing option for many and were popular with single men and 'bohemian' types (Context 2012:65).

Building a commercial city

Developing a retail centre

Even before the early 1850s, Melbourne had established the foundational infrastructure for international trade and commerce, including retail markets, shipping agents, and industry and finance houses - the beginnings of an entrepreneurial global city (Context 2012:2).

Retailing in Melbourne gained official recognition when eight market commissioners were elected in 1841 from a roll of local voters. The commissioners established the Western Market, which became the principal place for selling fresh food, with many goods transported from Melbourne to pastoral settlements. At this time Melbourne's population was 4479, and the colony's was 20,416 (Young and Spearritt 2008). The growth of retailing was accompanied by the construction of warehouses to store goods.

By the early 1840s, Elizabeth and Swanston streets, from the Town Hall in the east and the General Post Office to the west, had become the focus of retail activity, influenced also by the location of the Western Market in the west of the city. The Eastern Market opened in 1847 as a fruit and vegetable market on the corner of Stephen Street (later Exhibition Street) and Bourke Street and drew retail further east. The department store Buckley and Nunn opened in 1854, establishing Bourke Street as the preferred retail strip.

Retail premises in the nineteenth century and the early twentieth century generally included upper-level accommodation for families involved in the business. Multi-storey shop and dwelling type buildings housing ground-level shop with rooms above were constructed across the retail strips of Melbourne, and three- or more storied commercial and retail buildings began to proliferate between Bourke and Lonsdale streets from the late 1880s (Lovell Chen 2017:220).

SITE HISTORY

The subject place is located on Crown Allotments 9, Section 21, City of Melbourne. In 1866, allotment 9 was owned by Charles Driver (*Plan of Melbourne* 1866).

The two-storey building at 215-217 Swanston Street is an early Victorian building constructed in 1856, likely as part of a row of four shop and dwellings (Figure 1). It was occupied by W Davis and Co, coopers, in that year (Fels, Lavelle and Mider 1993, Inventory no 488).

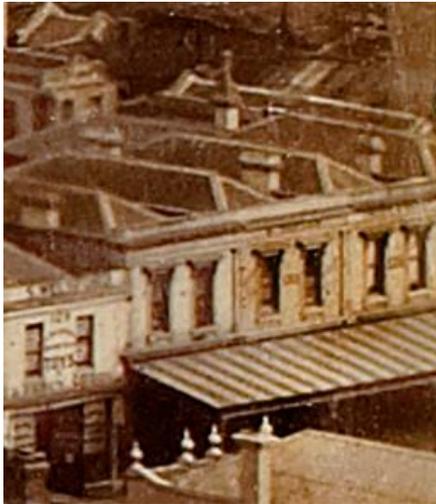


Figure 1. A group of two-storey brick shops and residences in Swanston Street, c1860. 215-217 Swanston Street is the third building from the left. (Source: Melbourne Heritage Action 2015)

The building continued to be occupied by merchants throughout the nineteenth century. In 1867, C Dyer, boot and shoe maker, was the tenant (S&Mc). In 1870, J F Mullarky advertised that he had 'enlarged and fitted up' premises at 133 (today's 215-217) Swanston Street. Called 'Commercial House' by Mullarky, he used the building to house his millinery, drapery and outfitting business (*Advocate* 24 December 1870:2). George Swanston was the owner of the building until 1889 (Fels, Lavelle and Mider 1993, Inventory no 488). In 1888, the building accommodated M J Scully's bootery and hosiery business (Mahlstedt Map section 1, no 21, 1888).

From the early 1910s up until 1927, 215-217 Swanston Street was occupied by New South Wales Monte Piete Co, loan and deposit company (S&Mc 1912-27). Around the same time of the Monte Piete's departure, adjoining shops to the north (217-221 and 223-225 Swanston Street) were demolished to make way for a new building for the English, Scottish & Australian Bank; and by the 1930s, the remaining shops at 211-213 Swanston Street had been demolished and replaced with a two-storey reinforced concrete building for PH McElroy, electricians and radio dealers. Consequently, the subject shops at 215-217 Swanston Street remained the only surviving building in the row of four shop and dwellings (Figure 2).

During the postwar years, the premises had been extended to the western allotment boundary (Figure 3).

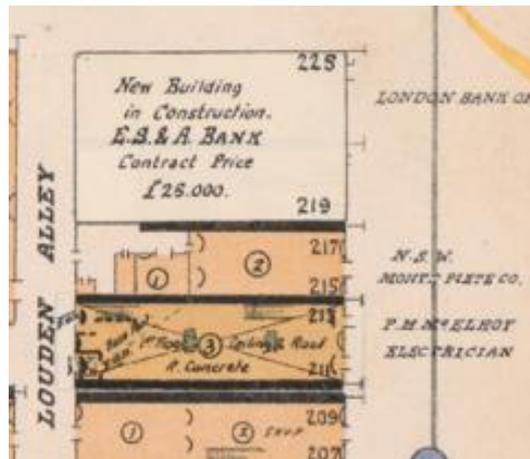


Figure 2. The 1925 Mahlstedt fire survey plan (amended in a later date), showing the shops at 215-217 Swanston Street retaining its original building footprints. (Source: Mahlstedt Map section 1, no 10, 1925)

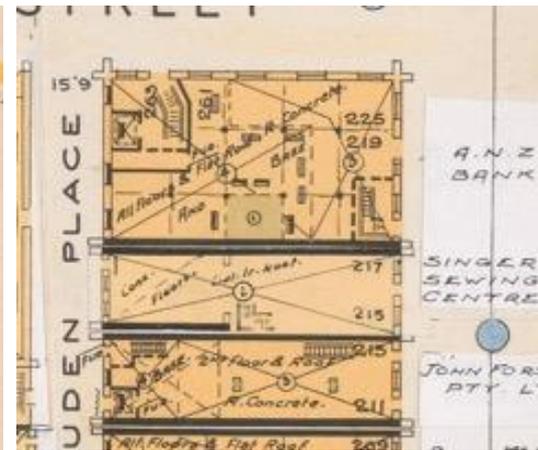


Figure 3. The 1948 Mahlstedt fire survey plan (amended in a later date), showing the shops at 215-217 Swanston Street extended to the western allotment boundary (Source: Mahlstedt Map section 1, no 10, 1948)

SITE DESCRIPTION

215 -217 Swanston Street is a rendered masonry building located between an interwar bank and a building of similar scale but later construction. It retains its small two-storey scale, commensurate with its early date of construction, and is recognisable from the c1860 photograph (Figure 1). The simple façade with a plain parapet, overhanging cornice and the pair of windows with classically derived mouldings predates the more elaborate Italianate detail of later buildings. The upper floor is relatively unchanged with its pair of windows with aedicules and corbelled brackets flanked by a pair of stuccoed pilasters in simple classical style. The rear of the building abuts Louden Place and is one of several adjacent buildings of small footprint in the Swanston Street South Precinct enlarged to the rear boundary. The ground floor has large glazed shopfront windows.

INTEGRITY

215-217 Swanston Street is legible as an early building of the 1850s at the upper floor. The windows to the ground floor have been changed, the verandah has been removed and a modern canvas awning added.

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

Pre-1860s buildings in the central city

The small number of 1850s houses in the city are representative of the first permanent post settlement dwellings. Prior to this time, residences were rudimentary timber framed cottages mostly clad with weatherboards. None of these remain, however during the 1850s masonry residences were built. Most have been converted to retail or other commercial use. A number of substantial stone warehouses remain from this early period but these were often very substantial buildings. For the purposes of comparison, the examples below are taken from the housing typology.

Le Louvre, 74 Collins Street, original building 1855 & altered 1927 (HO569)

The only early residential building remaining from this period at the top end of Collins Street, which once contained a number of doctor's surgeries and their attached houses.



Figure 4. 74 Collins Street constructed 1855 and converted to a shop in 1927.

330 King Street, 1850 (HO680)

A two-storey rendered brick shop and dwelling. Built by James Heffernan in the Colonial Georgian style in 1850. The two-storey rear section was added in the 1880's.



Figure 5. 330 King Street constructed 1850.

261 William Street, 1856 (HO1088)

Two-storey brick former warehouse/store. Built in 1856 as part of the old Metropolitan Hotel and converted to a shop in the 1920's.



Figure 6. 261 William Street constructed 1856.

120-122 Little Lonsdale Street, 1872 (Interim HO1296, Significant in interim HO1297 Little Lonsdale Street Precinct – recommended as significant in the Hoddle Grid Heritage Review)

The pair of row houses at 120-122 Little Lonsdale Street were built in 1872, and have rendered brick facades and simple classical detailing.



Figure 7. 120 Little Lonsdale Street constructed 1872. (Source: Context 2018)

Housing conforming to the typology but constructed after 1860

20 Ridgway Place, 1898 (Interim HO1259 – recommended as significant in the Hoddle Grid Heritage Review)

The two-storey brick dwelling is located in Ridgway Place on the property boundary. Its simple design and detailing is reflective of working-class residential buildings in the city.



Figure 8. 20 Ridgway Place constructed 1898. (Source: Context 2017)

474 Little Lonsdale Street, c1870s (Interim HO1282 – recommended as significant in the Hoddle Grid Heritage Review)

A two-storey, brick building was built as one of a pair of houses facing Park Street. The small corner building can still be read as an early residential building. At street level the building has been altered to accommodate two shop fronts.



Figure 9. 474 Little Lonsdale Street constructed 1870s. (Source: Context 2017)

215-217 Swanston Street is a fine example of the type of residence and commercial premises that was once common across the city. It is the sole survivor of a terrace row comprising at least four identical buildings with verandahs at ground level. As a building dated to pre-1860, it is one of very few shop/residences remaining from this period in the central city. 215-217 Swanston Street is significant for its early date of construction and integrity of its upper floor when compared with other like places.

ASSESSMENT AGAINST CRITERIA

✓ **CRITERION A**
Importance to the course or pattern of our cultural or natural history (historical significance).

✓ **CRITERION B**
Possession of uncommon rare or endangered aspects of our cultural or natural history (rarity).

CRITERION C
Potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of our cultural or natural history (research potential).

✓ **CRITERION D**
Importance in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of cultural or natural places or environments (representativeness).

✓ **CRITERION E**
Importance of exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics (aesthetic significance).

CRITERION F
Importance in demonstrating a high degree of creative or technical achievement at a particular period (technical significance)

CRITERION G
Strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group for social, cultural or spiritual reasons. This includes the significance of a place to Indigenous peoples as part of their continuing and developing cultural traditions (social significance).

CRITERION H
Special association with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in our history (associative significance).

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommended for inclusion in the Schedule to the Heritage Overlay of the Melbourne Planning Scheme as an Individual Heritage Place.

Recommendations for the Schedule to the Heritage Overlay (Clause 43.01) in the Melbourne Planning Scheme:

MELBOURNE PLANNING SCHEME

EXTERNAL PAINT CONTROLS	No
INTERNAL ALTERATION CONTROLS	No
TREE CONTROLS	No
OUTBUILDINGS OR FENCES (Which are not exempt under Clause 43.01-3)	No
TO BE INCLUDED ON THE VICTORIAN HERITAGE REGISTER	No
PROHIBITED USES MAY BE PERMITTED	No
ABORIGINAL HERITAGE PLACE	No

OTHER

215-217 Swanston Street is also contributory to the Swanston Street North Precinct.

REFERENCES

Advocate, as cited.

Context Pty Ltd 2012, *Thematic History: A History of the City of Melbourne's Urban Environment*, prepared for the City of Melbourne.

DeGruchy, H G 1873, 'City property, plan of subdivision of Crown allotments, 10,11,12 & 13, section 21', Melbourne, State Library of Victoria (SLV) Land subdivisions of Melbourne and suburbs 1837-1876; Vale Collection, accessed 20 March 2018.

Fels, M, Lavelle S, and Mider D 1993, 'Archaeological Management Plan', prepared for the City of Melbourne.

Lovell Chen 2017, 'Melbourne Planning Scheme Amendments C271 and C301 – Guildford and Hardware Laneways Heritage', prepared for the City of Melbourne.

Mahlstedt and Gee 1888, *Standard plans of the city of Melbourne*, Mahlstedt and Gee, Melbourne.

Plan of Melbourne 1866, Department of Lands and Survey, Melbourne.

Royal Historical Society of Victoria (RHSV), 'Melbourne's Streets and Lanes', http://www.historyvictoria.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2012/10/Melbournes-Streets-and-Lanes_Discovery-Series-No.-2.pdf, accessed 12 February 2018.

Young and Spearritt 2008, 'Department Stores' in *eMelbourne*, School of Historical and Philosophical Studies, The University of Melbourne, <http://www.emelbourne.net.au/>, accessed 16 June 2017.

PREVIOUS STUDIES

**Central Activities District
Conservation Study 1985** D

**Central City Heritage
Study 1993** C

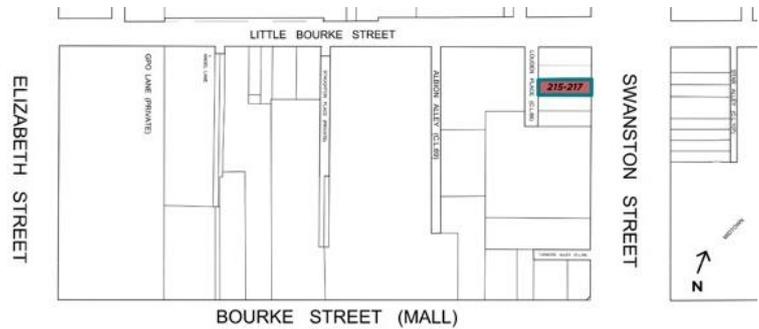
**Review of Heritage
overlay listings in the
CBD 2002** Ungraded

**Central City Heritage
Review 2011** Ungraded

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Heritage Place: Shop and residence

PS ref no: Interim HO1291

**What is significant?**

215-217 Swanston Street, Melbourne, a two-storey shop and residence from 1856.

Elements that contribute to the significance of the place include (but are not limited to):

- The building's original external form, materials and detailing;
- The building's high level of integrity to its original design;
- Pattern and size of original fenestration;
- Windows with aedicules and corbelled brackets;
- A pair of stuccoed pilasters with simple moulded architraves; and
- Parapet with simple moulded cornice.

More recent alterations including the large glazed shopfront windows in the ground floor and modern canvas awning are not significant.

How it is significant?

215-217 Swanston Street, Melbourne is of local historic, rarity, representative and aesthetic significance.

Why it is significant?

215-217 Swanston Street is historically significant for its demonstration of a combined retail premises and residence in the central city. Together with several other examples (all with individual HOs) including 74 Collins Street, 330 King Street and 261 William Street, it demonstrates the type of residential properties built during the early years of Melbourne's development. (Criterion A)

With a construction date of 1856, 215-217 Swanston Street is a rare pre-1860s shop/residence to survive within the Hoddle Grid study area. Although once part of a terrace row of four identical buildings,

it is now the sole survivor of this group since the demolition of 211-213 and 223-225 Swanston Street. (Criterion B)

215-217 Swanston Street is a fine example of a Victorian-era building typology where retail premises in the nineteenth and early twentieth century included upper-level accommodation for families involved in the business. (Criterion D)

215-217 Swanston Street is aesthetically significant for its two-storey form and scale within Swanston Street and its restrained classical revival facade. Characteristics include the rendered masonry exterior, parapet, cornice and a pair of windows with classically derived corbels, window mouldings (aedicules) and moulded pilasters in stucco. (Criterion E)

Primary source

Hoddle Grid Heritage Review (Context & GJM Heritage, 2020)