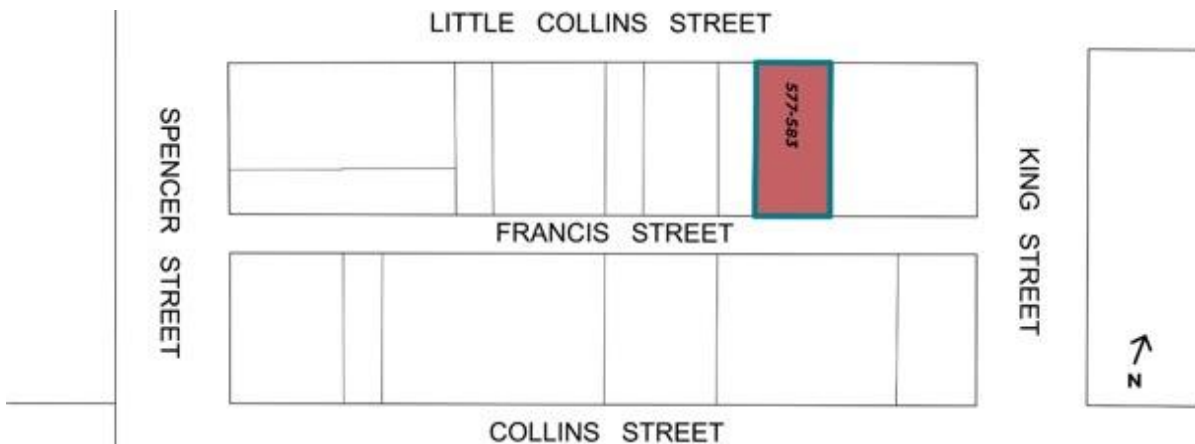


SITE NAME	Warehouses
STREET ADDRESS	577-583 Little Collins Street Melbourne
PROPERTY ID	105941



SURVEY DATE: May 2017

SURVEY BY: Context Pty Ltd

HERITAGE INVENTORY
 H7822-2189 (no 577)
 H7822-1689 (577-583)

EXISTING HERITAGE OVERLAY No

PROPOSED GRADE Significant

PLACE TYPE Building

FORMER GRADE C

DESIGNER / ARCHITECT / ARTIST: Not known

BUILDER: Corkram & Co (577-579)

DEVELOPMENT PERIOD: Victorian Period (1851-1901)

DATE OF CREATION / MAJOR CONSTRUCTION:
 1875 (577-579)
 1887 (581-583)

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
5 Building a commercial city	5.5 Building a manufacturing capacity

LAND USE

HISTORIC LAND USE	
Archaeological block no: 41	Inventory no: 689
Character of Occupation: Governmental, Commercial	
Land sale details not provided	
1855 Kearney	Part of Immigration Depot (but no buildings shown in this area).
1866 Cox	
1877 Dove	Small shed & vacant allotment (577); 583 Russell Gillespie Flour Mills.
1880 Panorama	
1888 Mahlstedt	Three three-storey buildings.
1905/6 Mahlstedt	Two three-storey buildings; commercial Bulk Store & Leatherworks.
THEMATIC MAPPING AND LAND USE	
1890s	Warehouses
1920s	Warehouses
1960s	Warehouses

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommended for inclusion in the Schedule to the Heritage Overlay of the Melbourne Planning Scheme as an individually significant place.

Extent of overlay: Refer to map

SUMMARY

These former warehouse buildings were built separately to accommodate part of a flour mill complex for Russell and Gillespie in 1875. The buildings are complementary in scale, form and materiality, although façade details vary. Number 577-579 retains much of the detail typical of a warehouse building for this period (at the upper level), while the façade of number 581-583 was altered in the 1920s.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Building a commercial city

Building a manufacturing capacity

The *Encyclopaedia of Melbourne* writes that the manufacturing industry was significant in Melbourne.

For much of its history Melbourne has been Australia's largest single centre of manufacturing. Its early manufacturing took two forms. Some of it involved the processing of primary products that had been produced in rural Victoria, often for export. Fellmongering, wool-washing, tallow manufacture and later flour milling and other food processing, as well as agricultural machinery production, fell into this category. It was dependent on the nature and volume of rural production. Other manufacturing was based on local consumer demand for products such as clothing, boots and shoes, beer and biscuits, as well as bricks and timber and other building materials. The growth of such industries was dependent on the size of Melbourne's population, its spending power and the extent to which local manufacturers could produce what was demanded more cheaply than imports... As the Victorian railway network was built with Melbourne at its centre, cheaper, faster travel favoured large Melbourne manufacturers at the expense of smaller producers in regional centres who had previously been protected from the big metropolitan producers by high transport costs. New technologies in industries such as brewing and flour milling had a similar impact. Larger more efficient machinery involved costly investment that was only worthwhile where the large Melbourne market made large-scale production feasible (Dingle 2008).

As Melbourne's manufacturing developed through the nineteenth century, so did the construction of warehouses and stores for the storage of goods until they were transported to retail markets.

SITE HISTORY

577-583 Little Collins Street comprises two conjoined three-storey former warehouses, at 577-579 Little Collins Street and 581-583 Little Collins Street.

In 1855, the subject site was part of the Immigration Depot, but no buildings were in existence at this time. By 1877, a small shed stood at 577 Little Collins Street, and the Russell and Gillespie Flour Mills had been built at 583 Little Collins Street (Fels, Lavelle & Mider 1993).

A flour mill was erected at 577-579 Little Collins Street (Crown allotment 29, section 16a) for Russell and Gillespie in 1875 by builders Corkram and Co of 8 O'Connell Street, North Melbourne (MCC registration no 6581, as cited in AAI, record no 76828). The building at 577-579 Little Collins Street and a two-storey brick store at 16-18 Francis Street (at the rear of 577-579 Little Collins Street) were built as part of the flour mill complex (MCC registration no 9346, as cited in AAI, record no 76863) (Figure 1, Figure 2). The flour mill was named the City Flour Mills.

The Gillespie family were well known flour millers in Melbourne and Sydney. Scotsman George Gillespie established himself as a produce and grain merchant in Melbourne, and in the 1870s expanded into flour milling. Sons Robert, John and George Gillespie formed Gillespie Bros and Co (later Gillespie Bros Ltd), and became proprietors of the Anchor Flour Mills, extending their business into New South Wales and Queensland (Amos 1983).

Shipping agents Anderson and Marshall occupied 577-579 Little Collins Street until the early 1880s (Age 1 December 1882:3). The building was vacant for some time after the City Flour Mills company moved from the premises in c1887 (S&Mc 1888). Fawcett and Co Federal Free Stores briefly occupied the building in 1888 (S&Mc 1889). The building was again left vacant for twelve years between 1898 and 1910 (S&Mc 1898-1911), until occupied by the Wholesale and Agency Co Pty Ltd in the latter year, who continued to use the building until 1920 (S&Mc 1912-1920).

The Detailed Fire Survey plan shows that by 1910 577-579 Little Collins and 16-18 Francis Street were interconnected (Mahlstedt Map no 23, 1910).

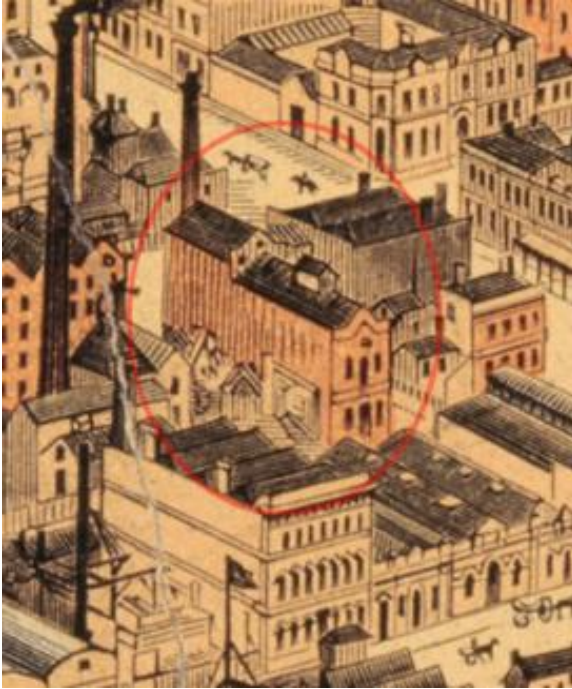


Figure 1. Russell & Gillespie's flour mill chimney and back building facing Francis Street shown in a section of Melbourne, 1882, by A C Cooke (Source: SLV).



Figure 2. Same building at 16-18 Francis Street in c1972 (Source: Halla c1972, SLV H36133/594 copyright).

A three-storey warehouse was erected at 581-583 Little Collins Street in c1887, with the Eureka Free Store of Dummett and Co occupying the building (S&Mc 1888, Mahlstedt Map no 16, 1888). It was sold by auction in 1889, and described as a 'three storey brick warehouse, newly and most substantially built...right through to Francis Street, also with cellarage accommodation the full depth' (Age 9 March 1889:2).

After the sale, 581-583 Little Collins Street was occupied in 1889-1901 by various tenants, including Virgoe and Sons, John Barwise, and the Fidelity Free Storage Co (S&Mc 1889-1901). From 1902 until the 1960s, James Hardie and Co, merchants and importers, occupied the building (S&Mc 1903-1942; Age 8 February 1961:37).

The facade of 581-583 Little Collins Street was altered in the mid-1920s and in 1975, the two warehouses were integrated and converted to an office building. They were refurbished and converted to a night club in 1994 (CoMMaps).

SITE DESCRIPTION

These two Victorian warehouse buildings are located on the southern side of Little Collins Street, between King Street and Spencer Street. Although they were built several years apart and for different owners, the two buildings are complementary in form, scale and materiality. Façade detailing varies between the buildings. At the upper levels, 577-579 Little Collins Street retains much of its Victorian detailing, while number 581-583 has characteristics of the interwar period following alterations to the façade in the 1920s.

577-579 is a three-storey overpainted brick building. The upper façade remains relatively intact, with simple detailing reflective of the pre-1880s construction date. A set of three identical rounded arched window openings with timber sash windows is located across the facade at both the second and third levels. Each window has a stone sill (now painted). A string course marks the transition between the levels. A simple cornice runs across the parapet and a simple arched pediment is centred over the building. At ground level, there have been significant alterations to the shop front, with a section of bluestone plinth being the only early fabric remaining.

The upper façade of 581-583 Little Collins Street reflects the proportions and scale of the adjacent Victorian building, though detailing is more consistent with the interwar period. The flat rendered façade is reasonably intact, with window openings grouped and consistent across the two levels. Rectangular window openings remain, with a double opening in the centre and single openings at each end. Original windows and window detailing have been removed. Flat engaged pilasters separate the openings, and the parapet is gently curved with no pediment details. The upper cornice matches the cornice on the adjacent building, suggesting it may be an original detail. As with the adjacent building, there have been significant alterations made at street level, with a consistent façade running across both buildings.

The rear elevation to Francis Street remains relatively intact.

INTEGRITY

At street level, both buildings have undergone substantial alterations. The Victorian detailing to the upper façade of number 577-579 is largely intact, although the brick work has been painted. On number 581-583, the cornice remains at the roof level of the building. The façade of this building was altered in the 1920s. The flatness of the rendered finish and pattern of openings from this period are still evident, however windows have been replaced and no other decorative details are evident.

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

Warehouses and industrial buildings are an important building type of the nineteenth and early twentieth century urban landscape of Melbourne. Many of these early storage or manufacturing facilities are no longer operational, often adapted for businesses or offices. The buildings at 577-583 Little Collins Street comprise two three-storey warehouses dating to the 1870s and 1880s. The subject building compares well with the following examples, being of a similar use, scale, location and creation date. The below images and descriptions are provided by CoM Maps unless stated otherwise, with images dating from c2000 or later.

Examples of late Victorian warehouse in the CBD include:

Former McCracken Brewery Malt Warehouse, 538-542 Little Collins Street, 1878 & 1879 (HO1057)

The former McCracken's City Brewery malt store is a four-storey rendered brick building with a basement and ground level retail. Designed by William Elliot in the Renaissance Revival style and built in two stages in 1878 and 1879. In the 1950s it was converted to an office building and became known as Merino House. Refurbished and subdivided into residential units in 1996.



Figure 3. 538-542 Little Collins Street constructed 1878-79.

Former Penman & Dalziel warehouse, 55-57 Hardware Lane, 1887 (HO665)

Three-storey brick former warehouse with basement. Designed by Alfred Dunn and built by William Thomas Hosking & Sons in 1887. Refurbished in 1989.



Figure 4. 55-57 Hardware Lane constructed 1887-88 (Source: Lovell Chen 2017).

Former Bank of Australasia, 382-384 Elizabeth Street, 1883 (HO1021)

Two linked rendered brick buildings on Elizabeth Street, the former Bank of Australasia is a two-storey rendered brick building. Designed by Reed & Barnes in the Renaissance Revival style and built by Stephen Armstrong in 1883. The rear part of the building along Little La Trobe Street and attached to the former bank is a late Victorian rendered brick former warehouse refurbished in 1989. It is this part of the building that is most like the 577-583 Little Collins Street.



Figure 5. 382-384 Elizabeth Street constructed 1883.

Porta and Sons, Steam Bellows Works, 25 Little Lonsdale Street, 1883 (HO1058)

This warehouse was constructed for Joseph Porta, then of Porta & Sons bellows makers, to the design of William Elliott in 1883. The elevation resembles a simplified version of the McCracken Brewery malt store also designed by Elliott in Little Collins Street in the late 1870s and his warehouse designs in Corrs Lane and for the Currie & Richards' warehouse (1875).



Figure 6. Porta and Sons, Steam Bellows Works, 25 Little Lonsdale Street constructed 1883. (Source: Butler 2011:445).

Union Bond Melbourne Storage Company Ltd, 115-129 King Street, 1882 (HO1047)

A three-storey rendered brick former warehouse and bonded store on a bluestone foundation. It includes parking to the rear. Designed by Crouch & Wilson in 1882, it was leased to the Melbourne Storage Company. Refurbished and converted to offices in 1980 and 1998.



Figure 7. Rear of Union Bond Melbourne Storage Company Ltd, 115-129 King Street constructed 1882.

577-583 Little Collins Street comprises nineteenth century building typology like the examples shown. Their origin and use are still legible despite alterations that have affected the Collins Street façade. Like 382-384 Elizabeth Street and 55-57 Hardware Lane, alterations have occurred to windows. 25 Lonsdale Street provides a good comparison with its utilitarian but legible form and plain façade. The two buildings comprising 577-583 Little Collins Street together form a representative example of nineteenth century warehouse typology.

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 individually significant 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

N/A

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Age, as cited.

Keith Amos 1983, 'Gillespie, Sir Robert Winton (1865–1945)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, National Centre of Biography, Australian National University, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/gillespie-sir-robert-winton-6385/text10911>, published first in hardcopy 1983, accessed online 21 June 2017.

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Halla, K J c.1972, 'Francis Street, Melbourne, Vic.', State Library of Victoria (SLV) Halla collection of negatives: views of East Melbourne, Fitzroy, Melbourne & North Melbourne, accessed online 23 June 2017.

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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

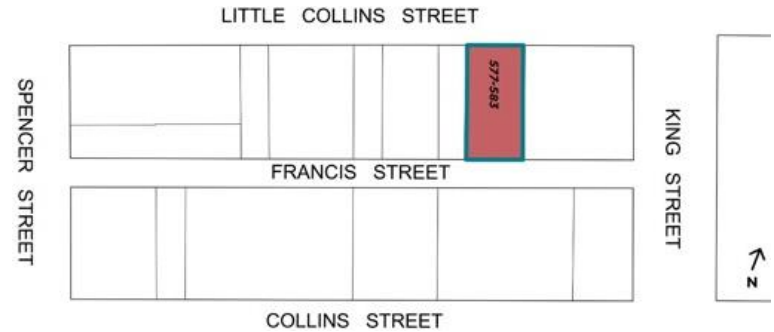
**Central City Heritage
Review 2011** Ungraded

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Heritage Place: Warehouses



PS ref no: Interim HO1278



What is significant?

The buildings at 577-579 Little Collins Street, Melbourne, built in 1875, and 581-583 Little Collins Street, built in 1887 and altered in the mid-1920s.

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

At 577-579 Little Collins Street:

- The building's original external form, materials and detailing;
- The building's high level of integrity to its original design;
- Simple corniced parapet with arched pediment; and
- Moulded string course; and
- Round arched window openings with timber sash windows and stone sills (overpainted).

More recent alterations made to the street level façade are not significant.

At 581-583 Little Collins Street:

- The building's original external form and materials;
- The building's high level of integrity to its mid-1920s design;
- Curved parapet with cornice below;
- Original pattern and size of fenestrations; and
- Flat engaged pilasters.

More recent alterations made to the street level façade are not significant.

How it is significant?

The two buildings at 577-579 Little Collins Street and 581-583 Little Collins Street, Melbourne are of local historic and representative significance to the City of Melbourne.

Why it is significant?

The three-storey buildings at 577-583 Little Collins Street are historically significant for their association with manufacturing and warehousing in the City of Melbourne. 577-579 Little Collins Street, together with the interconnected building at 16 -18 Francis Street at the rear, are historically significant as a flour

mill complex known as City Flour Mills constructed for Russell and Gillespie in 1875. The firm of Russell and Gillespie, founded by Scotsman George Gillespie were well known for their flour milling operations throughout NSW, Victoria and Queensland, eventually as proprietors of the Anchor Flour Mills. 581-583 Little Collins Street and its extension through to Francis Street is historically significant as a related warehouse occupied by a variety of merchants and importers. (Criterion A)

The buildings at 577-583 Little Collins Street and extending through to 16-18 Francis Street are representative examples of brick and render warehouse buildings constructed in the Victorian period in the City of Melbourne. Both constructed in 1875, with the façade of 581-583 altered in the 1920s, the pair of warehouses demonstrate the warehouse typology that was an important part of the urban landscape of nineteenth century Melbourne. Despite some changes to their exterior windows, particularly to those of 581-583 Little Collins Street, both buildings remain legible, including the view of them from Francis Street. (Criterion D)

Primary source

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