

LANDS DEPARTMENT BUILDING
MOVABLE HERITAGE REVIEW UPDATE
VOLUME 1



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2017, following the relocation of the NSW Planning and Environment Offices from the Lands Department Building in 2016, Betteridge Consulting was engaged to conduct a physical inspection of the property to stock-take the movable heritage items remaining in the building against the 2013 inventory. An updated inventory was produced as an outcome of this survey (See Volume 2). In addition, each item was identified with a label, indicating the ownership of the items and numbered to correlate to the inventory.

In the course of physical inspections of the Lands Department undertaken between December 2016 and March 2017, inventory sheets were checked and items numbered with a paper label identifying the original recorded room location number and the inventory item number. A number of items were in different locations from those recorded in 2013 and the 2017 updated review has documented those altered locations. A number of items which had not previously been sighted were also recorded. A summary of the 2017 review is provided in this volume.

The Ground Level and Levels 2, 3, 4 and the roof spaces above Level 4 (Level 5) were inspected for movable heritage items. No items of movable heritage were located on Levels 3, 4 or in the dome and roof rooms on Level 5.

3 items and the base of a butler's tray table were not located. None of these items had been recorded as having significant heritage value. 2 items were unable to be inspected as access could not be gained to the room in which they had been located (G19).

The books and publications stored on the Ground Floor in Room G19 have been removed. The maps and survey records previously located on Level 3 in Room 316 have been removed and relocated to State Records NSW where they have been digitized. Consequently, they have not been included in the updated inventory.

The timber ballot boxes previously recorded as being retained by NSW Public Works in the McKell Building in Haymarket have been relocated with the public works archives at Alexandria.

In some locations within the building, lack of air circulation and damp conditions has resulted in mould growth on timber and leather upholstered items. There is currently no dust protection on items and no program of regular inspection.

The 2013 report contained a set of policies and management recommendations for the movable heritage in the Lands Department Building. At that time, the future of the building was uncertain, necessitating general recommendations for general scenarios.

It is a recommendation of this report that a Movable Heritage Strategy be prepared for Property NSW to manage the movable heritage in the short, middle and longer term; ensure its conservation and its safe storage.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background

The Lands Department building, located on a block bounded by Bridge, Loftus, Gresham and Bent Streets, Sydney, was designed in the Italian Renaissance style by colonial architect James Barnett (1827-1904) and constructed in two stages, (John Young, contractor, 1876-1881) and (Wayne and Baldwin, contractor, 1888-1891) and completed in 1894. The building is tangible evidence of the importance of the positions of the occupants in the administration in NSW. Built on the site formerly occupied by the Surveyor-General's Office, the Lands Department building housed the Minister for Lands, the colony's Surveyor-General, their under-secretaries, technical, administrative staff and support services – and successors, for over a century. Their work was associated with the administration and management of Crown lands, allocation of land and stock by ballot, the exploration, surveying and of NSW, the management of natural environment and mineral resources, archives and associated preparation, printing and photography of topographic and aerial mapping, distribution of reports, maps and publications. Other responsibilities at various times included managing regulations in respect of animal industry, mining, fisheries, forestry, coal mining, agricultural pests, unemployment relief schemes and place naming. The Department then maintained 81 offices in 5 metropolitan and 43 regional locations across NSW.

These offices were continuously occupied by their successors until the 1990s when departmental reorganisations, relocations of offices in other locations including regional NSW and the consolidation of Ministerial offices in the government precinct in the Governor Phillip and Macquarie Tower development. Following the negotiations by the NSW Government to lease the building to an overseas hotel developer, the most recent occupant, the NSW Government Planning and Environment offices, moved out of the building in 2016.

Many of the items of movable heritage in the Lands Department building are of exceptional heritage significance as examples of colonial furniture made specifically for work practices associated with the administrative function of the Lands Department. Their significance is enhanced because they have remained in situ in the building and been used by generations of Lands Department employees. Some of the furniture is associated with the occupation of offices by the Minister for lands and the State's Surveyors-Generals since the late 19th century. Some furniture items retain their trade labels identifying the cabinetmakers who produced the furniture and the predominant furniture timber, Australian red cedar (*Toona australis*) is well represented across most furniture styles.

1.2 Scope of Report

This report updates an earlier report prepared by Margaret Betteridge in August 2013 for the Heritage Group, Government Architect's Office, NSW Public Works which was undertaken for NSW Property Services to inform a possible divestment of this significant government asset. That brief was to undertake a survey by physical inspection of extant movable heritage in the Lands Department, to identify the significance of those items and to make recommendations in the event that current circumstances (ie occupation by a government department as offices) might change. Part of the research included an overview survey of historical records, a comparative analysis and a review of documentation which recorded the state of the building in 1985.

The movable heritage in the Lands Department in 2013 included furniture, a noticeboard, plaques and wall-mounted items including photographs and a large relief map, items associated with the

administration and surveying Crown lands, including baseline and measuring equipment, ballot boxes and land allocation ballots and volumes of statutes relating to land matters. Items currently in use and in storage were also surveyed.

1.3 Limitations

The only inventory of contents that could be located was the schedule of rooms prepared by H O Woodhouse and Danks in *The Lands Department Building Historical Report and Conservation Plan* in January 1985. Images in this report confirm that by 1985, the interior of the Lands Department had been upgraded for modern office use (with the introduction of workstations), but that historical furniture remained in 3 principal offices – namely the Minister for Lands, the Under Secretary for Lands and the Surveyor-General. That report also identified significant items attached to the building fabric including plaques, a large relief map and a large timber notice board.

The physical survey for the 2013 report identified a number of movable items associated with work practices of the Department of Lands over the course of its 105-year's occupation of the building, but did not address the paper-based archives (other than to record their location then) which were in the process of being transferred to State Records NSW.

1.4 2017 Update and methodology

The 2013 inventory was used as the baseline for the 2017 review of contents of the Lands Department building. The 2017 review included a review of the historical survey, a physical inspection of the building and its contents and the numbering for identification purposes of all inventory items.

1.5 Abbreviations

Images in this report have been reproduced for the purposes of research and historical analysis and have not been cleared for copyright or reproduction purposes for publication. Images have been reproduced from the following organisations:

slnsw State Library of New South Wales
GPO Government Printing Office
nla National library of Australia
srnsw State Records NSW

1.6 Acknowledgements

The 2013 report was undertaken with the assistance of Caitlin Allen, Desmond Corby, Mary Knaggs and Amelia Parkins, Heritage Group, Government Architect's office, NSW Public Works and Tony Sauchella, Building Manager, NSW Planning and Infrastructure. Paul Harcombe and staff from land and Property Information Services assisted in the identification of technical equipment.

The 2017 review was conducted with the assistance of Yasemin Acka, Project Manager, Major Projects and Justin Hewitt, Project Manager, Major Projects, Property NSW; Brandan Lee, Development Assistant, Sagent Pty Ltd; and curatorial assistant, Ashleigh Giffney.

2. MOVABLE HERITAGE IN THE LANDS DEPARTMENT

The first Ministry in Responsible Government in 1856 comprised 5 ministerial positions, including the Auditor-General and Minister for Lands and Works (then held by G R Nichols). The work associated with the administration of land significantly increased with the passing of the Crown Lands Act (NSW) which was introduced in 1861 to reform land holdings and to break the squatter's domination of land tenure.



Figure 1: First Ministry under Responsible Government, May 22nd, 1856. Left to right: Thos. Holt, Colonial Treasurer; WM Manning, Attorney General; Stuart A Donaldson, Colonial Secretary and Premier; JB Darvall, Solicitor General; GR Nichols, Auditor General and Minister for Lands and Works. (Photo sl.nsw.gov.au:8935)

2.1 Construction and fit-out

The construction of the Lands Department commenced during the third ministry of Sir Henry Parkes MLA (1878-1883) during a time of great expansion and prosperity in NSW. This is reflected in James Barnet's imposing sandstone buildings constructed as public offices including the Lands Department and the Colonial Secretary's Office and his grand additions to existing buildings including the General Post Office and King Street Courts. They set the tone for subsequent buildings to house the Treasury and the Department of Education which created a significant government precinct in Bridge Street Sydney.



Figure 2: The Colonial Secretary's building, completed in 1894 (Photo slnsw)



Figure 3: The office occupied by the Colonial Secretary, Sir Henry Parkes was sumptuously decorated with an eclectic selection of furniture and artworks, some acquired from the 1879 Sydney International Exhibition, some of the furniture manufactured locally by significant colonial cabinetmakers; other pieces of European origin and manufacture. (Photo nla 136672687)



Figure 4: The Lands Department, like the Colonial Secretary's building, was an imposing Italian Renaissance style edifice, commanding views to the harbour. (Photo srnsw)

To demonstrate the political and administrative significance of the building, architectural ornament expressed its function. From the roof dome to the niches for statuary to carved sandstone decoration, the building expressed power and prestige.



Figure 5: Externally James Barnett adorned the Loftus Street façade with the heraldic insignia which would subsequently be adopted by the NSW government as its heraldic symbol on its coat of arms. Inside, sovereignty to Queen Victoria was expressed in the Royal coat of arms in painted decoration. (Photos C Betteridge 2013)

2.2 Furniture

Like the Colonial Secretary's Building, the construction used the finest materials available in the colony and no expense was spared in sourcing fine honey-coloured Pyrmont 'yellow block' sandstone and cedar from the northern rivers region of NSW.



Figure 6: Carved timber surmount, cedar noticeboard, Bridge Street foyer (Photo C Betteridge 2013)

The same attention to quality and detail was given to the furnishing of the offices inside the building. Suites of furniture reflecting the hierarchy of the offices and occupants were supplied from leading colonial cabinet makers for the new fit out. The work of Andrew Lenehan, well-known for his work at Government House and Parliament House, is represented. A large proportion of the furniture was manufactured to a government contract by colonial cabinetmaker, Alexander William Norton (c1827-1907). Norton operated his business in Hunter Street, Sydney, first at number 54, then expanding into the premises next door 52-54, between 1879-1899.

Henry Tucker Jones (C1831-1904) of Parramatta also supplied furniture for the Lands Department. His business at the Old Race Course was listed as operating around 1867 until 1885 when he relocated to Prospect and Sherwood.



Figure 7: Trade labels on furniture in the Lands Department building Alex W Norton (left) and H T Jones (right). (Photo C Betteridge 2013)

Several pieces of furniture in the building are stamped with government inventory registration, including a crown symbol and a date...



Figure 8: Government inventory marks used on furniture included an Imperial (Tudor) styled crown stamp on vice-regal and some Ministerial items (left) and the St Edwards crown stamp, the initials V R (Victoria Regina), date May 1885 (right). (Photo C Betteridge 2013)

Several pieces which pre-date the construction of the Lands Department building may have been made for, and used by, staff in the old Survey Building or other government premises. While the transfer of furniture between government offices cannot be discounted, it is much more likely that some furniture styles were repeated across government contracts and that certain styles of furniture were specified to reflected common functions and the hierarchical positions of staff. Alexander Norton's business supplied numerous government clients, tendering for work in the Sydney metropolitan area and regional NSW and his work is extant in the remaining heritage buildings which retain their original furniture.



Figure 9: Oak swivel chair, stamped VR, crown and the date, DEC 1878 (Photo C Betteridge 2013)

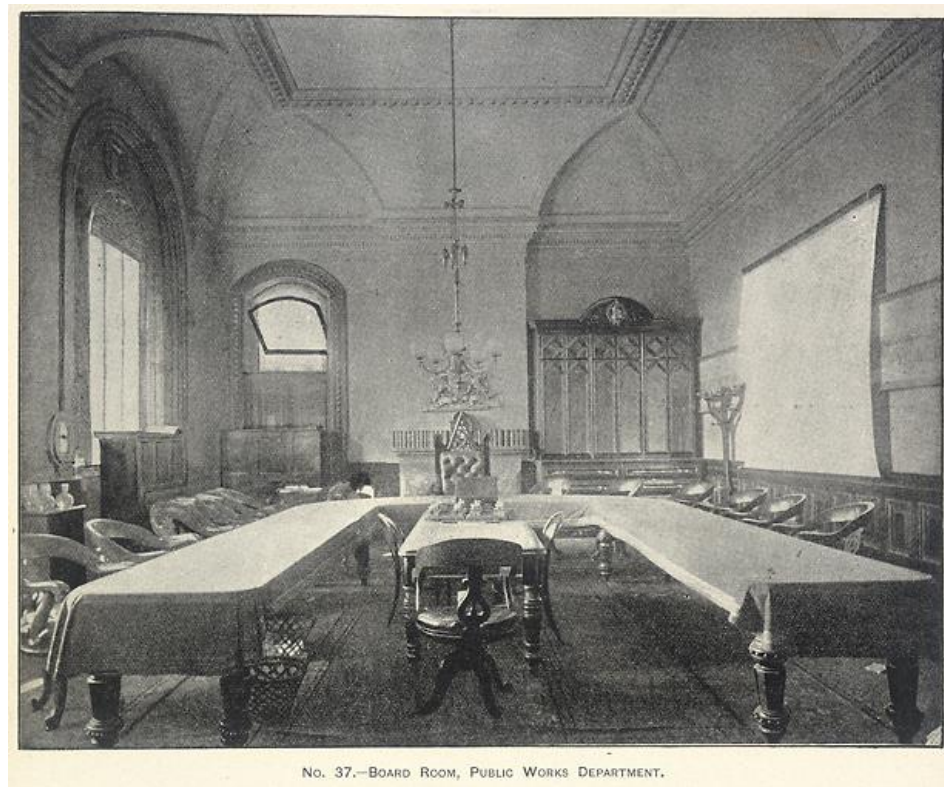


Figure 10: A similar chair can be seen in the Board Room, Public Works Department, then located in the Colonial Secretary's Building, circa 1880 (Photo slnsw)



Figure 11: Another extant example of comparable furniture is the upholstered chair, currently in storage in the Lands Department which would most likely have been used in the Minister's office (left). The upholstered chair (right) is in King Street Courts and was part of the Chief Justice's suite of furniture. (Photos M Betteridge 2013)



Figure 12: Some of the most significant furniture in the NSW Government's collection is the work of Andrew Lenehan (one of whose apprentices was Alexander Norton). This upholstered chair, currently in storage, is similar to the work of leading colonial cabinetmaker, Andrew Lenehan, found in Government House and Parliament House, Sydney and the King Street Courts. Further research may confirm that this chair is consistent with that furniture and an example of his work. (Photo C Betteridge 2013)

2.3 Function

The principal offices in the Lands Department occupied the north-west and north-east corners of the building, commanding views over Bridge Street, to the harbour. The grandest office was that of the Minister for Lands whose office was in the NW corner (Room 107).

The earliest image to be located of that office show some key items of furniture still extant, including the desk, a low table by Alexander Norton and the cedar and leather upholstered chair (an example can be found in the Surveyor-General's Office). The large ornamental clock by Joseph Becker was transferred to the Chief Secretary's Building in the mid1990s at the request of Sir Laurence Street who was then the occupant of Sir Henry Parkes's suite in that building. The built-in large bookcase was also in place on the opposing wall.



*Figure 13: Office of the Minister for Lands, Lands Department Building, circa 1905),
(Photo Town and Country Journal, 27 April 1910)*

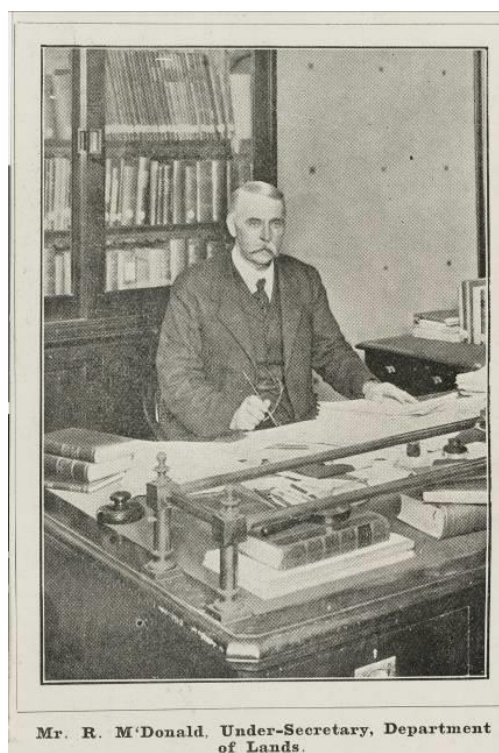
Small items of a decorative nature were acquired to embellish the offices, including ceramic jardinières, marble plant stands and fashionable French Empire clocks. This was consistent with the décor of the period. In the Minister's office, the black marble clock and matching vases on the mantelpiece in the Minister's office remains today.



Figure 14: Land ballot in the Minister's office, circa 1940s showing part of the garniture on the mantelpiece. The Becker clock has moved further to the east. A framed image of the first Ministry of Responsible Government (refer Figure 1) hangs over the fireplace. This was a standard item in offices of this status. (slnsw GPO 2 – 05004)



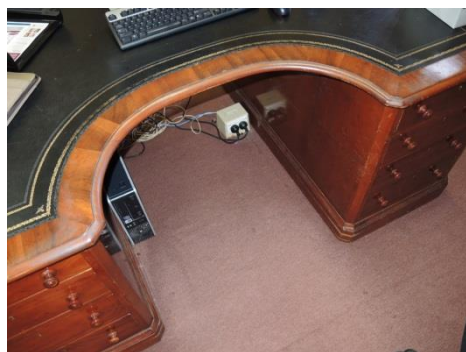
Figure 15: Minister for Lands office in 1985 following refurbishment. Subsequent restoration of this room ten years later significantly enhanced the presentation of the room with the return of many of the original items of furniture. However, after this refurbishment, the large clock was relocated to the Chief Secretary's Building. (Photo Woodhouse and Danks report)



*Figure 16: The Under Secretary of Lands occupied the office at the NE corner on the first floor (Room 201). His desk remained in situ in that office (2013), identified by the brass mounted recessed handles although the bookcase could not be identified and the brass gallery on the desk was not located. The furniture was secondary in scale to ministerial furniture, reflecting the hierarchy of the position.
(Photo Town and Country Journal, 27 April 1910)*

Despite the significant removal of heritage furniture circa 1970-1980s following a modern refurbishment of the building, three suites of furniture appear to have remained in the building. In addition to the importance of retaining furniture in its setting and context, this continuity of tradition adds to the significance of the furniture.

The desk in the Surveyor General's Office is particularly interesting and unusual. It is a bespoke item, made to fulfil the functional attributes of the job. The cut-out curve profile to the top accommodated a chair facilitating close work on maps.



*Figure 17: Surveyor-General's desk, Room 201, with curved profile.
(Photo C Betteridge 2013)*

2.4 War memorials

War memorial plaques commemorating the sacrifices and commitment of officers of the Lands Department are prominently located in the foyers of the Bridge Street and Loftus Street entrances.

In 1915, the Lands Department was at the centre of huge outrage when it was discovered that an employee, German-born Von Stach, was discovered to have been given the task of inscribing names onto the Department's Roll of Honour. (This would have been an illuminated paper document similar to the one which survives in the Chief Secretary's Building). The Minister for Lands and his Under-Secretary claimed that knew nothing of this insensitivity and Von Stach was dismissed. The task was entrusted to other officers in the Lands Department and perhaps in an effort to disquiet the public anger, a new version was publicly displayed in the window of Challis House in Martin Place. The bronze memorial which is the permanent record was placed in the foyer circa 1920.



Figure 18: Roll of Honour commemorating officers of the Department of Lands who served in the Great War 1914-1919 (Photo C Betteridge 2013)



Figure 19: Memorial plaque to the officers of the Lands Department who served and lost their lives in South Africa 1899-1901 Photo C Betteridge 2013

2.5 Relief map

The large relief map in the Gresham Street stairwell was made by Charles Orwin and the cartographic staff in the Lands Department and sent by sea to San Francisco for exhibition in the Panama-Pacific International Exposition in 1915. The exhibition, which celebrated the completion of the Panama Canal, gave San Francisco an opportunity to showcase its recovery from the devastating earthquake in 1906.



Figure 20: Relief map of NSW, 1915 showing key towns, roads and topographic features, made by the Department of Lands staff (left) silver medal presented to Lands Department employee, Charles Orwin (right) (Photos M Betteridge 2013)



Figure 21: The exhibition halls constructed for the Panama Pacific Exhibition, San Francisco, 1915 (Chronicle Archive, image sourced on Trove)

The NSW government sent exhibits which reflected scientific, technological and cultural achievements. The Powerhouse Museum holds material relating to this exhibition, including a gold medal and certificate awarded to the NSW Technological Museum for a display of economic botanical specimens including eucalyptus oils & tannin barks and a selection of ceramics decorated with Australian flora.

2.6 Objects

With the transfer of the paper-based records to digital records by State Records NSW, there remain several items which have significant associations to the Lands Department building and relate to former work practices in the building. While not movable heritage, these items have a strong relationship to aspects of the Lands Department work.

The Macquarie era sandstone obelisk, located opposite in Macquarie Place was the original marker from which all distances in New South Wales were measured. The large clock in the tower above the building



Figure 22: The Obelisk, Macquarie Place, Sydney, 1926 (Mitchell Library, slnsw a1528411)

Although plans to install a clock in the clocktower were proposed in 1893, it was not until 1938 that they were realised. The clock, contracted to Prouds Ltd, has four cast iron and glass dials, each 10 feet in diameter with heavy-gauge aluminium hands, and is electrically operated, without a chiming mechanism. It functioned as a slave clock, the master pendulum setting the time for clocks throughout the building.



Figure 23: Clock, Lands Department tower (Photo Wikimedia)

The baseline (fixture in the marble floor and the associated steel bands and surveying equipment, located on the Ground Floor (eastern corridor) is considered to be of unique and exceptional significance. This feature and the equipment, including telescopes used in conjunction with the baseline to establish the national standard land measurement issued by the Surveyor-General and issued on land titles. This method has been superseded by Global Positioning Survey methods.



Figure 24: Baseline (top) right) on the Ground Floor, which is accompanied by a channel carved in marble which is the standard for calibrating a chain length measurement (Photo M Betteridge 2013)

Sometime between 1887 and 1894 the Lands Department Datum Bench Mark Plug was set into position on the front of the building and provided the origin of all levels in NSW under the Survey Co-ordination Act. In 1965, the Geodetic Survey of Australia was completed and provided a homogeneous network of horizontal positions. However, height in a national context had also to be determined and this was achieved through a separate process. As height was generally referenced to mean sea level which varied across the continent, the necessary national mean sea level datum had to be established after the national establishment of a Mean Sea Level datum, called the Australian Height Datum (AHD). This information was then disseminated through the Lands Department to surveyors for mapping and all town planning and land subdivision purposes.



Figure 25: Australian Datum Bench Mark plug, located outside the Lands Department building (Photo sourced on the internet)



Figure 26: Chain, steel bands and surveying telescopes stored in the Lands Department Building (Photo M Betteridge 2013)



Figure 27: Map tubes (left) and part of an old printing press (right) demonstrate former work practices in the building (Photo M Betteridge 2013)



*Figure 28: Cedar ballot box (left); staff operating the ballot box in the Lands Department (right)
(slnsw GPO 2 – 03563)*

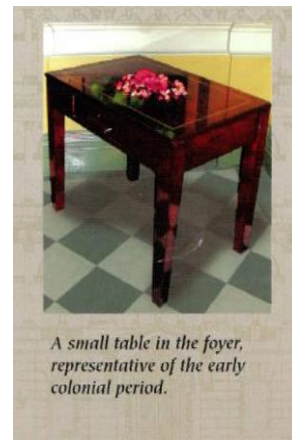


*Figure 29: Wooden tray and Numbered balls (left) in the process of allocation (right)
(slnsw GPO 2 – 03564)*

It should be noted that research for this survey identified several items which could not be located and have been verified by the present Building Manager as having removed from the building many years ago. These include the large portrait of Sir William McKell by Joshua Smith formerly in the Minister's office and landscapes by Charles Conder, historical theodolites and survey equipment which was displayed in showcases on the second floor (Room 234.B).



Figure 30: Portrait of Sir William McKell by Joshua Smith, formerly hung in the Minister's office, 1954 (slnsw GPO 2-05009)



A small table in the foyer, representative of the early colonial period.

Figure 31: Historical survey equipment formerly displayed in the Lands Department building in 1985 (left,) (Woodhouse and Danks report); small colonial cedar table (right) (Lands Department publication, 2002)

3. COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

3.1 Context

The movable heritage in the Lands Department is a significant assemblage of items which have been used continuously in the administration of the portfolio administered by the Minister for Lands (and associated responsibilities) within the Lands Department building. This context, along with the continuity of tradition and the hierarchical relationship of individual items in their groupings, makes this an important collection of items. With so much change to interiors of working spaces in heritage buildings, these items are important evidence of 19th century work practices.

While attention has long been lavished on the preservation of historic buildings and structures and on the collections within museums and galleries, collections of contents of government buildings and offices have languished and in many cases, been dispersed at the behest of work safety measures, fashion and changing tenancy arrangements. Those that do survive do so because the organizations with they are associated continue to function much as they have since their inception. Therefore, the movable heritage survives in those environments it was created for, and the items continue to be used/adapted meet the same functional requirements as they were originally designed to meet. This has largely ensured their preservation.

3.2 Parliament House, Sydney

The collection of cedar furniture in Parliament House, Sydney includes ceremonial items including the Gothic Revival Speaker's Chair in the Legislative Assembly Chamber; the Louis Quatorze style Governor's Chair made by John Hill and Son in 1856; a large bookcase formerly from the Public Works Committee Room in the Colonial Secretary's Building; and a quantity of furniture for the Speaker's Room, Assembly Chamber, the Library, the Refreshment Room, lobbies and passages, manufactured by Andrew Lenehan ordered in 1856. Andrew Lenehan (c1815-1886) operated as a cabinetmaker in Sydney from 1839, managing his own business from 1841. His letterhead described him as a designer and manufacturer of superior furniture and he provided furniture for some of the finest houses in Sydney, as well as intercolonial exhibitions and commissions for the Government Architect.

Much of the collection of movable heritage in Parliament House continues to be used as 'working' furniture, and furnishes the chambers and public rooms and the offices used by the members and their staff in the historic core of the building.

In 1984, the 'Jubilee Room' (built 1905) which formerly housed the Parliamentary Library was converted into a Parliamentary museum displaying historical items associated with the constitutional history of New South Wales. In addition to the museum function, this room successfully serves as a teaching space, and is used for committee meetings and small functions.

The Royal Arms displayed in the Legislative Assembly Chamber and the Legislative Council Chamber as symbols of the authority of Crown and State were replaced by the NSW Coat of Arms, subsequent to the passing of the NSW State Arms, Symbols and Emblems Act 2004). The originals have been retained and are now displayed in Jubilee Room to interpret the origins of the NSW parliamentary system.



Figure 32: Cedar furniture is used extensively in the chambers and officers of Parliament House, Sydney (Photo Legislative Chamber, Parliament House, Sydney)

3.3 Government House, Sydney

The task of furnishing Government House fell to the Colonial Architect who commissioned furniture from Andrew Lenahan, Alexander Norton and H T Jones, all of whom are represented in the furniture collection in the Lands Department.

Although Government House contains a large number of domestic items appropriate to the residence, the collection is comparable to for the items of 'working' furniture, including desks, meeting tables, chairs and groupings of furniture which reflect the hierarchical structure of the vice-regal office.



Figure 33: Sir Henry Parkes in the Colonial Secretary's Office 1891, (left) (slnsw), restored during the 1990s (right) (Photo Office of the Governor of NSW)

3.4 Chief Secretary's Building, Sydney

The Chief Secretary's Building has many similarities to the Lands Department. It was completed, albeit earlier, in 1879 for the Colonial Secretary of NSW, at the time the highest paid official in the administration after the Governor and Chief Justice. The first Colonial Secretary to occupy the building was Sir Henry Parkes, a keen collector and connoisseur of fine and decorative arts. Parkes was the instigator for the acquisition of paintings, furniture, mosaics, ceramics, carvings and sculpture from the Sydney 1879 International Exhibition and their placement in his office and the Executive Council Chamber in the Colonial Secretary's Building. Many of these items can be identified in the catalogue and inventory collated in 1885 and have survived in situ, in the rooms in which they were placed in the late 19th century.

While the decorative items acquired from the 1879 Exhibition were of European and Asian manufacture, the 'working' furniture was locally made, almost exclusively in cedar. The large meeting tables in the Executive Council Chamber were made by Alexander Norton and a number of large bookcases supplied by H T Jones.

Like the Lands Department, the arrangement of furniture in the offices throughout the building reflects a hierarchical order matching the status and seniority of the occupants of each room, much as it must have done since the late 19th century. Ministerial offices were furnished with large cedar partner's desks, cedar arm and side chairs and tables, a chaise longue or sofa and bookcases while the Under Secretary's furniture allocation was similar but more restrained and smaller in scale. Chief clerks in the outer office worked at smaller desks and often had a hat stand; while correspondence clerks and accounts staff were allocated writing tables rather than large pedestal desks.

Sir Henry Parkes provided some insight into the notion that furniture allocation reflected status, commenting thus in 1890:

I have found from painful experience that if you create a new office, and give the new officer a round table, and two stools and an errand boy, the next year he will have a clerk, a mahogany table and an easy chair, and however you watch him the third year he will have an under-secretary, a messenger and a sofa.

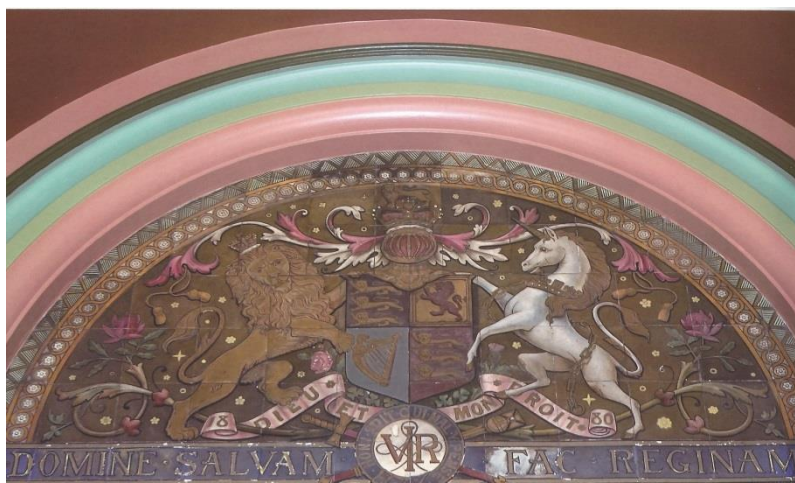


Figure 34: Painted ceramic tile with the Royal coat of arms in the foyer of the Chief Secretary's Building (Photo sourced from A Poem in Stone)



Figure 35: Under-Secretary's office, Chief Secretary's Building. The desk is the same as the one for the equivalent office in the Lands Department. (Photo sourced from A Poem in Stone)

3.5 King Street Courts

As colonial architect, James Barnet designed a major addition to King Street Courts during which time, a considerable quantity of furniture was acquired for the new building. The Chief Justice's chambers retained some earlier furniture made by Andrew Lenehan which was integrated with a new desk, meeting table, chairs, bookcases, easy chairs a sofa. Many of these items were made under contract by Alexander Norton and H T Jones and they illustrate the in furnishing of the judges' chambers, associates and clerk's offices , the hierarchical structure associated with the status of the occupants.

4. ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE OF MOVABLE HERITAGE

4.1 Principles

The concept of 'cultural significance' or 'heritage value' embraces the value of a place or item which cannot be expressed solely in financial terms. Assessment of cultural significance to establish why a place or item is considered important and is valued by the community. Cultural significance is embodied in the fabric of the place (including its setting and relationship to other items), the records associated with the place and the response that the place evokes in the contemporary community.

The *Burra Charter* of Australia ICOMOS and its Guidelines for Assessment of Cultural Significance recommend that significance be assessed in categories such as aesthetic, historic, scientific and social. The *NSW Heritage Manual* outlines the same broad criteria for assessing the nature of significance. These criteria are considered in addition to an item's rarity and / or representative, criteria that relate to comparative significance. In the following section the movable heritage in the Lands Department is assessed in accordance with the six criteria adopted by the Heritage Council of New South Wales.

4.2 Discussion of Significance

4.2.1 Criteria

Revised evaluation criteria for the assessment of cultural significance were developed in 1999 by the NSW Heritage Office in conjunction with amendments to the NSW Heritage Act 1977. They aim to improve the consistency of assessing the significance of heritage items.

The criteria for determining levels of significance for listing on the State Heritage Register are as follows:

CRITERIA	EXPLANATION
HISTORIC	<i>(a) Significant because an item is important in the course, or pattern, of NSW's cultural or natural history;</i> <i>(b) Significant because an item has strong or special association with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in NSW's cultural or natural history.</i>
AESTHETIC	<i>Significant because an item is important in demonstrating aesthetic characteristics and/or a high degree of creative or technical achievement in NSW.</i>

CRITERIA	EXPLANATION
SOCIAL	<i>Significant because an item has strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group in NSW for social, cultural or spiritual reasons.</i>
SCIENTIFIC	<i>Significant because an item has potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of NSW's cultural or natural history.</i>
RARE	<i>Significant because an item possesses uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of NSW's cultural or natural history.</i>
REPRESENTATIVE	<i>Significant because an item is important in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of NSW's cultural or natural places; or cultural or natural environments.</i>

4.3 Levels of Significance

The individual components of the movable heritage collection have been graded according to their levels of significance. This process is useful in identifying items and /or groupings of items according to their importance to the Lands Department and is an important factor in helping to determine management policies.

The following table explains the grading of significance and the implications on the heritage status of the items.

GRADING	JUSTIFICATION	STATUS
A EXCEPTIONAL	Rare or outstanding place, area or item of State significance, exhibiting a high degree of intactness or other such quality and a high degree of interpretability, though alterations or degradation may be evident.	<i>Fulfills State Heritage Register Criteria for listing</i>

GRADING	JUSTIFICATION	STATUS
B CONSIDERABLE/HIGH	Featuring a high degree of original or early fabric or demonstrative of a key part of the place's significance, with a degree of alteration that does not duly detract from that significance.	Fulfills <i>State Heritage Inventory Criteria</i> or <i>Local Environment Plan</i> requirement for Listing.
C SOME/MODERATE	Altered or modified elements, or elements with little historic value that contribute to the overall significance of the working place.	Fulfills <i>State Heritage Inventory Criteria</i> or <i>Local Environment Plan</i> requirement for Listing.
D LITTLE	Difficult or unable to be interpreted, not an important function, often subject to alteration, detracting from significance and/or significant fabric.	
E INTRUSIVE	Damaging to overall significance, an aspect of the site's significance and/or significant fabric.	

This report also identifies items which have Neutral Significance which do not detract from the rankings but which assist in the operation of the room.

4.3.1 Historical Significance (Criterion a)

Significant because an item is important in the course, or pattern, of NSW's cultural or natural history.

Having regard to the "Assessing Heritage Significance" inclusion guidelines in the *NSW Heritage Manual*, the movable heritage in the Lands Department is "associated with a significant activity or historical phase" at a State level.

The movable heritage in the Lands Department is historically significant for its associations with work practices relevant to the expansion and governance of NSW.

The furniture and furnishings demonstrate the prevailing style and taste appropriate to the hierarchy, function and status of its occupants, including the Minister for Lands, the Surveyor-General and their staff. They, and the working tools associated with their work practices, provide evidence of the working nature of the activities conducted within the building. This work was significant in the alienation of Crown land, the accurate surveying of

land and cartographic documentation, the pastoral expansion of the State, the resettlement of ex-servicemen after the wars and the management of natural resources.

The prominent display of the Royal Coats of Arms in the foyer denotes the historic role of the British sovereign and the Westminster parliamentary system in the administration of NSW. It has been a reminder to successive occupants that they are there to act in the service of the government.

4.3.2 Historical Associational Significance (Criterion b)

Significant because an item has strong or special association with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in NSW's cultural or natural history.

Having regard to the Assessing Significance Inclusion guidelines, the movable heritage in the Lands Department is considered to be "associated with a significant event, person or group of persons" at a State level.

The movable heritage in the Lands Department has been associated with NSW Government Ministers for Lands, the Surveyors-General of NSW and the Lands Department's Under-Secretaries for over a century. During their administration, they and their successors have used these items in the course of their work.

The retention of furniture in each of the three principal rooms reflects the strong sense of succession, pride and tradition in these positions, evidenced by the historical photographic chronology on the first floor.

The large relief map is significant as an item of the Department's work, including that of Charles Orwin, which achieved international recognition on public exhibition in San Francisco in 1915.

Some of the movable heritage was supplied from the workshops of important colonial cabinetmakers, including Andrew Lenahan, H T Jones and Alexander Norton.

The Rolls of Honor commemorate the services of employees of the Lands Department in the defense of Australia and acknowledge the loss of significant members of the Department's workforce.

4.3.3 Aesthetic Significance (Criterion c)

Significant because an item is important in demonstrating aesthetic characteristics and/or a high degree of creative or technical achievement in NSW.

Having regard to the Assessing Significance guidelines, the movable heritage in the Lands Department is considered to meet the following inclusion guidelines: "shows or is associated with, creative or technical innovation or achievement" and "is the inspiration for a creative or technological achievement which "exemplifies a particular taste, style or technology" at a State level.

Furniture supplied to the Lands Department was of high quality Australian cedar, produced under government contract and made by leading cabinetmakers of the day. The furniture suits the utilitarian function required of it to fulfill the working functions of a government office.

The baseline measuring facility is unique and was used to standardise surveyor's steel bands and includes the fixed brass plugs and marble groove on the ground floor of the building, the steel bands and telescopes have State significance. Their function was to ensure that the measuring bands used by surveyors to make land surveys could be traced to a national standard for length and that certificates issued by the Surveyor General (as a verifying authority under the national measurement act) for each band were standardised against this baseline.

4.3.4 Social Significance (Criterion d)

Significant because an item has strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group in NSW for social, cultural or spiritual reasons.

Having regard to the Assessing Significance inclusion guidelines, the movable heritage in Lands Department is considered to be "important to the community's sense of place and identity" at State level. While the community holds the Lands Department in high esteem for its contribution to the heritage values of the city, individuals and professional organisations associated with surveying and mapping consider these items to be unique and important tangible evidence.

The ballot boxes, trays and numbered balls are significant to ex-servicemen and their families and to people in NSW who have secured land through the NSW government's ballot system administered by the Minister for Lands in his office.

The groupings of furniture and their placement in the building adhere to a hierarchical grouping within the suites of offices and reflects the status and administrative functions of its occupants.

The Surveyor-General's desk and the surveying equipment are significant to contemporary surveyors as evidence of former work practices.

4.3.5 Technical Significance and Research Potential (Criterion e)

Significant because an item has potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of NSW's cultural or natural history.

Having regard to the Assessing Significance inclusion guidelines, the movable heritage in the Lands Department is considered to be "important to the community's sense of place and identity" at State level.

The movable heritage in the Lands Department include intact examples of the craftsmanship appropriate to a significant public building and documents the evolution of changing administrative functions through changes in form, function and materials.

The items have potential for a detailed future study which will contribute to a greater understanding of the original acquisition process, the method of manufacture, their physical integrity, and their provenance. The collection offers an important reference for a wider understanding of the context of similar groupings of items in situ.

4.3.6 Rarity (Criterion f)

Significant because an item possesses uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of NSW's cultural or natural history;

Having regard to the Assessing Heritage Significance inclusion guidelines, the movable heritage demonstrates the origins of the land assessment and ballot allocation administered by the Lands Department on behalf of the government of NSW.

The collection is also regarded as 'rare', being one of the few surviving assemblages of 19th century office furniture suites, and specifically in continuous use as a Minister's Office and associated offices.

The baseline measuring facility is unique and was the principal tool for land measurement in NSW before the introduction of digital mapping and surveying technology.

4.3.7 Representativeness (Criterion g)

Significant because an item is important in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of NSW's cultural or natural places; or cultural or natural environments.

Having regard to the Assessing Heritage Significance inclusion guidelines, the movable heritage in the Lands Department "has principal characteristics of an important class of items", "includes a significant variation and hierarchy to a class of items", "is outstanding because of its style, condition and intactness", and "its integrity and context in situ", and "has attributes typical of a particular way of life, philosophy, custom, significant process, design, technique or activity" at State level.

The movable heritage in the Lands Department is consistent with furnishing in principal government offices with ministerial functionality, including Parliament House and Chief Secretary's Building.

5. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The movable heritage in the Lands Department is among the few surviving examples in Sydney of a collection of building contents which have been retained in situ and which, for over a century, have been used for their original purpose without the detracting of alteration or modification.

The items are historically significant because they demonstrate the manner of furnishing a government building over several periods of architectural development. They depict the functions and status of the occupants of the Lands Department, including the Minister for Lands, the NSW Surveyor-General and the Under Secretary for Lands. They have been cared for, and retained in situ for the benefit of a succession of occupants, each of whom has upheld the dignity and respect for the authority of the office.

Items of furniture arranged in their groupings in chambers and offices reflect a hierarchical order derived from seniority and the position of office. Among the items of furniture are important examples of local cabinetwork using Australian red cedar, by significant colonial craftsmen, including Alexander Norton and H T Jones.

The items associated with land survey and measurement have importance as evidence of the technology used to accurately measure land for the purpose of conferring title of land to third parties.

The items associated with land ballots and issues of stock demonstrate the democratic manner in which land and stock were allocated for the expansion and settlement of NSW. The relief map is significant as evidence of the topography and extent of settlement of NSW land in 1915 and the associated documentation of its international recognition at the Panama-Pacific Exposition in San Francisco in 1915.

6. 2017 REVIEW OF MOVABLE HERITAGE IN THE LANDS DEPARTMENT BUILDING

6.1 Purpose

In 2017, following the relocation of the NSW Planning and Environment Offices from the Lands Department Building, Betteridge Consulting was engaged to conduct a physical inspection of the property to stock-take the movable heritage items remaining in the building against the 2013 inventory. An updated inventory was produced as an outcome of this survey (See Volume 2). In addition, each item was identified with a label, indicating the ownership of the items and numbered to correlate to the inventory.

6.2 Findings

Physical inspections of the Lands Department were undertaken between December 2016 and March 2017 and included the numbering of each item, as well as the recording of additional items not previously seen or recorded.

Contents in situ

The Ground Level and Levels 2, 3, 4 and the roof spaces above Level 4 were inspected for movable heritage items.

No items of movable heritage were located on Levels 3, 4 or in the dome and roof rooms on Level 5.

Additional items located

A number of additional items were located that had not been seen in 2013. These have been added to the revised inventory.

Items not located

Three items were not located. They do not represent items of major significance.

Items relocated to other locations

Historical items associated with the ballot system used by the Lands Department were transferred to NSW Public Works in 1986. These items have recently been moved to Alexandria in the care of the Heritage and Archives staff of that department. They should continue to be tracked and considered for a future interpretation display.

Items in stored areas

Items are currently stored in rooms on the Ground Floor and Ground Floor Mezzanine rooms. They appear to be secure.

Items which could not be accessed

Items in the Mezzanine Room above G38 could not be accessed.

Inspection of Levels 3, 4 and roof spaces (5)

An inspection of Levels 3, 4 and the roof spaces Level 5 and dome rooms was conducted in April 2017. No items of movable heritage were located.

Physical condition

Some items of movable heritage have been adversely affected by mould. This has arisen from the lack of air circulation in office spaces and in storage areas where damp conditions are evident.

6.3 Recommendation arising from the 2017 review

The 2013 report contained a set of policies and management recommendations for the movable heritage in the Lands Department Building. At that time, the future of the building was uncertain, necessitating general recommendations for general scenarios.

It is recommended that a Movable Heritage Strategy now be prepared to establish guidelines for the short term, medium term and long term management of the movable heritage (including by a third party in the future) and which addresses protocols for conservation, storage, routine inspection and a regular stocktake/audit.

7. REFERENCES

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