

Register Assessment ReportSouth Australian Heritage Act 1978

Kapunda Survey Item No.: 77

National Bank

Main St

KAPUNDA

Statement of Cultural Significance

The National bank first opened a branch at Kapunda in 1859 with the multi-talented William Oldham as manager. In March 1862, tenders were called for the construction of the bank building in Main St—the building opened for business in December. It is one of South Australia's earliest surviving bank buildings in a rural area and is of Georgian design.

Relevant Criteria

A building important to the understanding of the evolution and pattern of South Australia's environmental, social or cultural heritage.

Significant Interest

1. Architectural: Represents the use of local stone on a plain, almost Georgian, design. One of the best preserved, earliest remaining buildings in Kapunda that relate to the growth years of the town.
2. Historical: When the railway arrived at Kapunda in 1860, it provided the basis for enormous growth in the town's business and commercial sector. The National Bank first established a branch at Kapunda in 1859 and built this bank in 1862. It has survived virtually intact. Its first manager, William Oldham was at other times an educator, surveyor, banker, preacher, mine manager and town leader.

Recommendation

It is recommended that this item be included on the Register of State Heritage Items

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ANALYSIS OF SIGNIFICANT INTEREST

Architectural

Built in 1862 by the Kapunda builders Nicholson and McLaren. Yet, the building might incorporate an earlier structure on the site. Part of the south-eastern section of the building, at the rear, is of an entirely different construction. It incorporates a skillion roofed section, built of random stone walling, with masonry arches and casement windows. This portion is of a character akin to a more vernacular building.

The main bank building and living quarters are two storey and face Main St. This building is constructed of stone walling with squared and blocked quoins and surrounds to openings. Doors tend to be arched with a central keystone—this is an indicative feature of the earliest surviving Kapunda buildings. Windows are rectangular sashes in wooden frames.

The Main St facade is symmetrically designed and has elements of Georgian style. Central to this facade is a porch, with arched doorway and topped with a squared parapet. The roof is gabled on this section and clad with corrugated galvanised iron. Gables are masonry at verges and eaves are also masonry. A type of masonry dentalling is featured at this level.

The banking chamber on the interior had undergone much alteration. Walls have been removed to provide greater space and modern equipment installed. Likewise, the upper storey and living quarters have had some modernisation, although not as drastic as the chamber. Woodwork, staircase, archways etc. are largely original.

Historical

Even though Kapunda was the first paying mine in Australia and Burra's monster mine the second stupendous find in South Australia, it was the latter mine's outstanding success that contributed most to Kapunda's growth. As the Kapunda mines became more expensive to work the through traffic and service industries spawned to supply materials to Burra created new town buildings and dwellings. So the 1860s was a time of unexampled expansion. The coming of the railway in 1860 was an essential factor in this dilation.

It was probably news of the railway and increase in trade with Burra that led the National Bank to open the first branch bank at Kapunda in 1859 with William Oldham as manager. This branch obviously met with success, for in March 1862 tenders for the erection of a new bank building were called. The Kapunda builders Nicholson & McLaren commenced erection of the structure in April and the bank was open for business in late December 1862.

Rob Charlton, noted that 'the bank has continued to operate from this building ever since, and it is now one of the finest and best presented buildings in Kapunda.

References

Rob Charlton, *The history of Kapunda*, Adelaide, Austaprint reprint, 1971.

Lands Titles Office searches.

Greg Drew and Joyce Jones, (comp.), *Discovering Historic Kapunda, South Australia: Australia's first mining town*, Adelaide, Dept of Mines & Energy, 1988.

Kapunda Survey Item No.: 77

Site Record

National Bank

Main St

KAPUNDA

Location

Main St, Kapunda

Mapsheet

6629-35

AMG Reference

308120 6197855

Description

Stone building

Land Description

Section 1400

Hd Kapunda

CT 4328/843

LGA

DC Kapunda

Owner

National Australia Bank

22-28 King William St

ADELAIDE SA 5000

Other Assessments

1977 Case study of Kapunda,

Dept of Environment

Heritage Status

National Trust

Photographs

Film 1647, 15.2.90; Film 1658, 7.6.90

HERITAGE OF EIGHT LOWER NORTH TOWNS

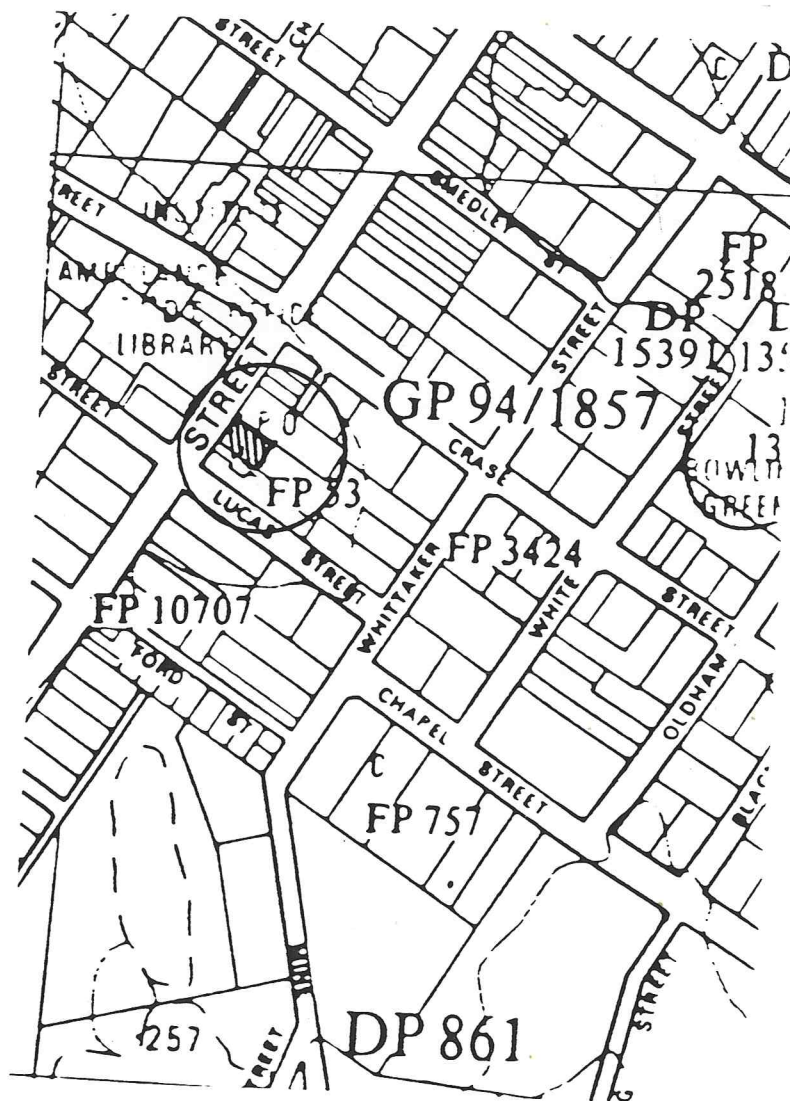
Kapunda Survey Item No.: 77

Site Plan

National Bank

Main St

KAPUNDA

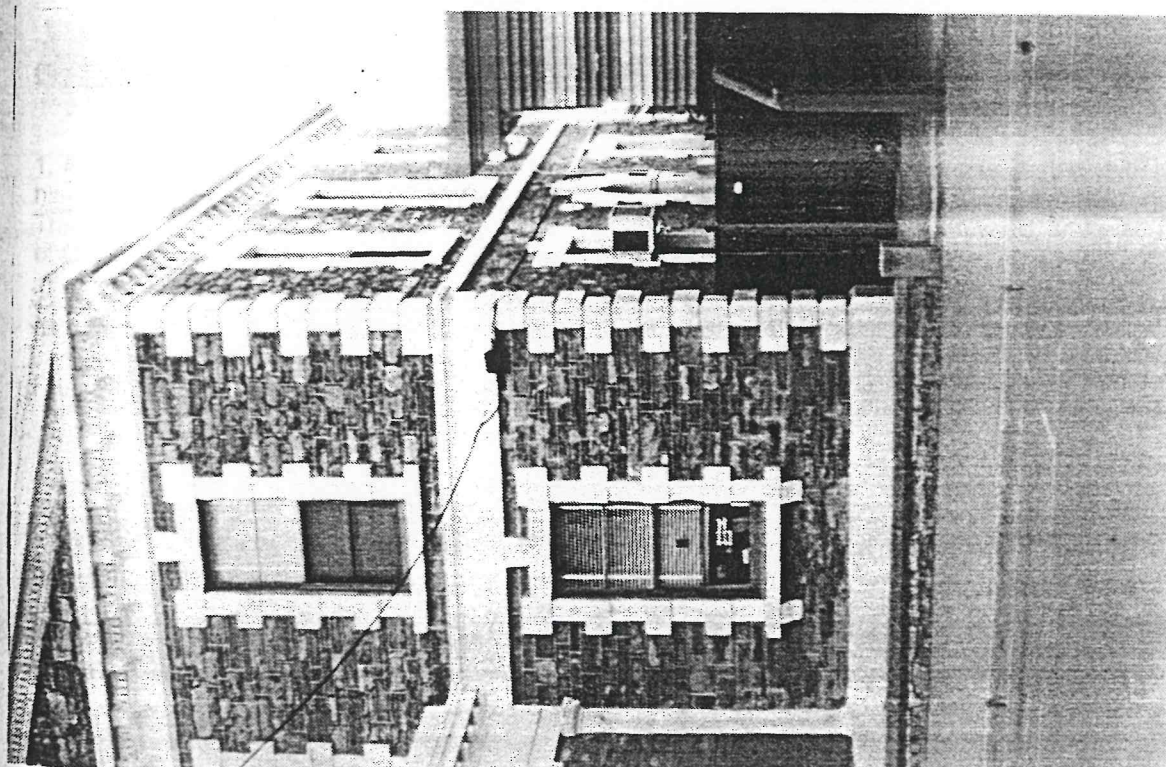
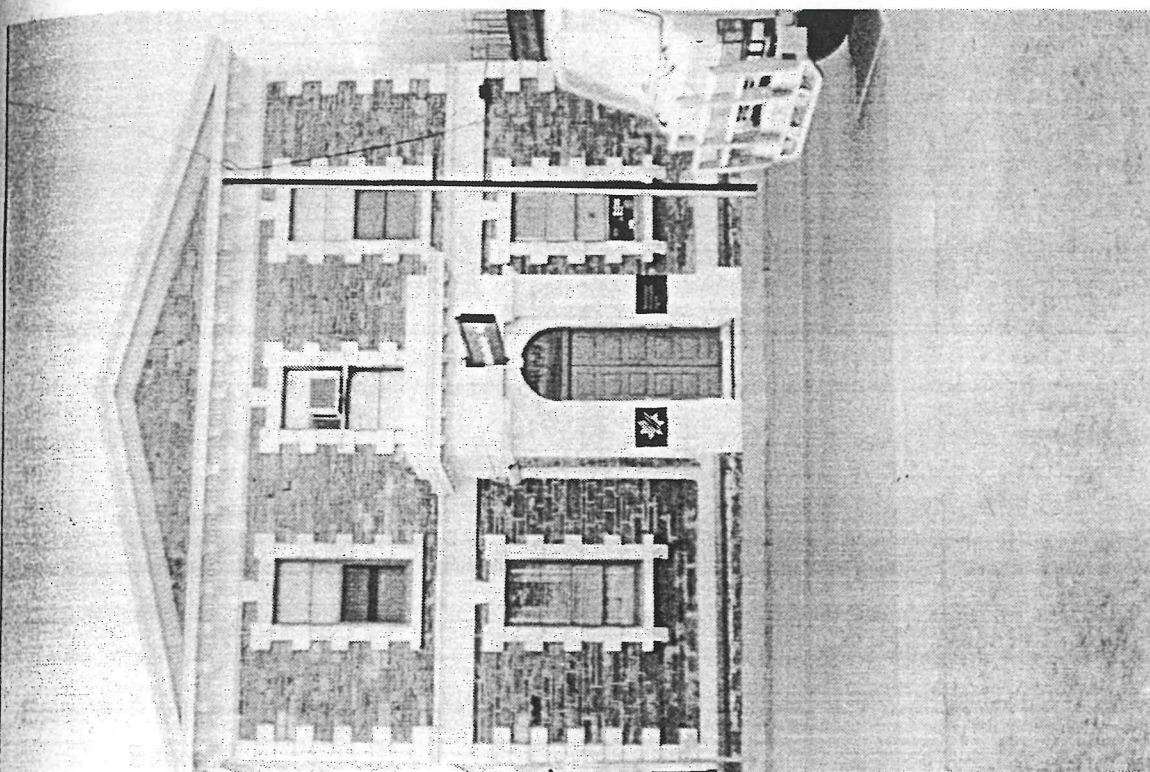


HERITAGE OF EIGHT LOWER NORTH TOWNS

Kapunda Survey Item No.: 77

National Bank, Main St, KAPUNDA

Photographs Upper: Exterior looking east Lower: Exterior looking east



AUSTRALIAN HERITAGE PLACES INVENTORY

[[New Search](#)]

National Bank

Identifier: 7237

Location: 66 Main St, Kapunda

Local Government: Kapunda - Light District

State: SA

--- **Statement of Significance:** The National Bank building, completed in 1862, is an important element of Main Street. It is a rubble stone and stucco trim two-storeyed building in good condition, unchanged form and impressive externally because of its precise detailing and squat pediment. ---

Description: Foundation stone laid May 1862, opened 29 December 1862. The first Manager was W Oldham who was also the Mine Manager. It is a two storeyed stone structure in Georgian style. Nicholson and McLaren builders.

Source: Register of the National Estate

Report produced : 23/10/2002

AHPI URL : <http://www.heritage.gov.au/ahpi/search.html>

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THE HISTORY OF KAPUNDA

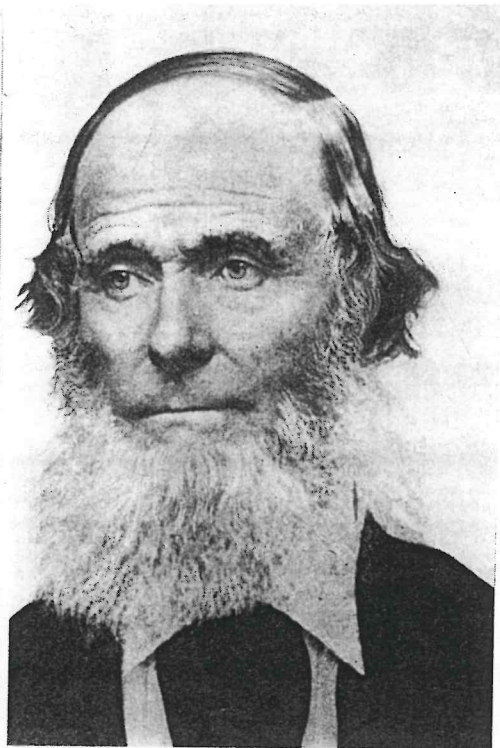
BY
ROB CHARLTON



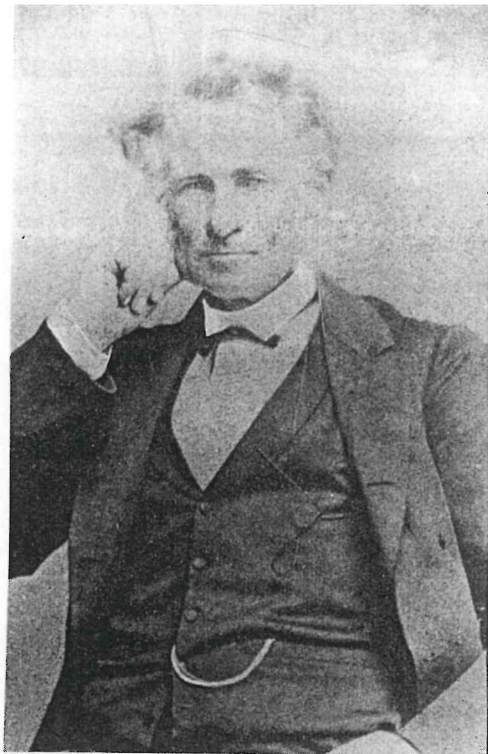
MELBOURNE
THE HAWTHORN PRESS
1971

441235

481



Dr M. H. S. Blood, mine and town doctor and first mayor



William Oldham, mine manager

*Frederick Hansborough Dutton,
first owner of 'Anlaby'*



ORIGINS (1836-1859)

closed after the murder there of an aboriginal and subsequent death of its proprietor, but a new Miners' Arms was being built in the Main Street by W. Tremaine, and the Commercial Hotel a few yards away was shortly to be opened by W. Supple.

Traffic through Kapunda continued to increase, so a bridge was built over the River Light on the Adelaide Road. This bridge must have been a very pretty structure as the *Register* of 2 August 1856 described it as being 'three wooden semi-circular arches resting on iron work embedded in piers'. A flood in later years was to completely destroy it but during its existence another hotel was built near it (which the licensee named, with a singular lack of originality, The Miners' Arms).

During 1856 and 1857, the last of the distinctive national groups arrived in the district when Pastor Schöndorf and members of the Moravian Brethren, who had originally migrated from East Germany, settled at a spot the Pastor named Bethel. The Brethren had purchased 1912 acres, mostly in 80 acre lots, for £3214, and were under the impression that 80 acres was all any farmer could be expected to handle. As was their pattern elsewhere the Germans immediately set about the erection of a church at Bethel. Kapunda however did not have a Lutheran Church for another 50 years.

Kapunda by 1857 was starting to be less dependent on the mine for its existence. This was the year that H. B. Hawke arrived; early records indicate that he may have bought the foundry of John Adamson, an implement maker and blacksmith. These two men with Joseph Mellor and Robert Cameron were the forerunners of a number of their kind who set up industrial and implement-making complexes which helped to avert immediate disaster for the town in later years when the mine closed. The foundation stone of the Congregational Church was laid in 1858; the Wesleyans had opened a new church, after outgrowing their old one. True to the pattern, another two hotels opened: the Prince of Wales and the Clare Castle. In the following year another implement works was established by Robert Cameron in partnership with David Brown. 1859 also saw the arrival of the first bank when the newly-created National Bank of Australasia opened a branch at Kapunda. The branch

a list of your visitors, and so sure as God made little apples, we shall publish their names weekly. We don't care who they are . . . we shall describe them fully.

Allen, whose spelling and punctuation appeared to deteriorate in proportion to the intensity of his feelings, was further shocked to hear that three apprentices had joined Mrs Moses. She, on the other hand, objected to the finger of scorn being pointed at her, stating that she couldn't help it if she had lots of men friends who just happened to choose late hours to visit.

Nonetheless, life went on and there were now five schools in the town. J. Rounsevell had started a coach service to Burra and the good people must have triumphed, as a Cricket Club had been formed. Even the *Northern Star* ran out of infamy to report and causes to plead for. Discussing a possible paternity case in the town, Allen reflected that he had not heard 'which of the gentlemen of the long bow in Kapunda' was responsible. He hoped that the rumour was true as 'Kapunda is extremely dull at present and frightfully moral'. At the end of the year the *Star* triumphantly announced that the infamous Mrs Moses was to be a guest at Her Majesty's Prison for six months.

By 1863, Kapunda was acquiring some neighbours. Marrabel, named after John Marrabel, had been laid out by Thomas Penny in that year and by 1867 it could boast forty substantial buildings. The Allendale Store and Post Office had been opened in 1860 and at Kapunda, James Crase, now the licensee of the North Kapunda Hotel, had come to an arrangement with the Trustees of the Whittaker Estate and was building a block of four shops on their land between the corner of Franklin Street and the recently completed Post Office; the National Bank was building an office and residence a little further down the Main street and the foundation stone of the Catholic Church of St Rose of Lima had been laid.

Meanwhile, the town's various temperance groups were showing concern at the fact that Kapunda now had nine hotels. If it was not possible to curtail their growing numbers, something at least could be done to prevent the illegal practice of Sunday

trading. The groups organised to have 'look-out men' stationed at each hotel to record the names of transgressors, but the scheme lost impetus after the first trial run when one of the lookouts was discovered to be asleep at his post in a decidedly intoxicated condition. It was that kind of era; a Burra miner was reported to have sold his wife for a gallon of beer and five shillings, the wife thoroughly approving of the transaction.

By 1863, Stuart had passed through twice more and everyone seemed to be getting quite used to him as his visits usually brought forth a few speeches of loyalty and godspeed, possibly because a member of his party named Ewart was a former Kapunda resident.

The *Northern Star* was in trouble, though, with its editor desperately appealing for the payment of accounts on one hand, fighting off legal proceedings for defamation on the other, and conducting an auctioneering business in a futile effort to make ends meet.

Having survived a case resulting from his accusation that the Treasurer, the Hon Thomas Reynolds, was using his position for corruption and personal gain, Allen finally collapsed under the load of debt and court actions and the *Northern Star* disappeared after the Christmas issue of 1863. With it went possibly the most colourful character and period in the long life of Kapunda. (Allen rose again however, and it is believed that he started at least two more publications elsewhere, each of which ended in the same dismal way.)

In April 1864, a meeting was held at Crases Room to consider the advisability of forming a Town Corporation. Local resident and Member for Light, James Pearce, moved that a Corporation be formed and almost immediately G. M. Allen (who had apparently had a change of heart) countered with an amendment against it. The *Adelaide Register* of 2 May 1864 records that a publican 'bawled his opinion with stentorian lungs' and attempted to mount the platform. Former Member for Light, John Rowe, shoved him off whereupon the crowd picked him up and threw him out. Allen's amendment won the day and it was left for a disappointed townsman months later to insert an advertisement in a newspaper that read:

highwayman just out of the town—at least one person had found a way of countering the unemployment problem. Over the years, there was some suggestion of bushrangers although they were usually referred to by the less romantic title of highwaymen or road agents.

The marble quarries were employing either directly or indirectly about 50 men. The stone (carbonate of lime) was being used extensively as a flux for smelting, a process devised by H. B. Hawke. B.H.P. utilised it almost immediately, ordering 300 tons a week. The actual quarrying operation was not without its dangers. Three men were killed and six seriously injured in two separate accidents in 1888.

Day to day Kapunda had a number of setbacks during the year. In April, six inches of rain fell in 24 hours, followed by another five in three days later in the month. The town was marooned temporarily as every bridge affording entry was washed away. The versatile Hawkes later won the contract to replace at least one of them.

Typhoid fever, which had made frequent appearances over the years, became a cause for concern in 1889, particularly amongst children. One family lost all six children in one of the periodic occurrences. Kapunda still managed to create controversies over comparatively minor issues—dancing being the principal concern of 1889. The *Herald* reprinted an Adelaide paper's article by the Rev A. Sims which stated, 'the tendency of dancing is lasciviously immoral. Particularly are the round dances calculated to stimulate impure passions'. He also warned that 'a dancing church member lightly esteems his own religion'.

Meanwhile, the flux industry was generating considerable local optimism as shipments had grown to 500 tons a week. Robert Cameron, quick to seize an opportunity, started making wagons for the carters and had to endure Corporation criticism when the wagons deeply rutted the Main Street.

Certainly the main issue of 1891 was education. In this year the Kapunda School of Mines was opened in the basement of the Institute, a weatherboard school was erected at Taylor's Gap and a start was made on building a convent and school at the Catholic Church site. The census for that year showed that

Kapunda's population had slipped to 1947, women outnumbering men by 190.

There is little doubt that the 1890s began Kapunda's decline from rural town leadership to its present standing as an historic but medium-sized country town. The first signs appeared when vandalism and factional squabbling replaced building projects and civic patriotism in items in the *Herald*. Local trades people were advertising extensively to combat people's tendency to buy their requirements in Adelaide. Manufacturer Robert Cameron complained that sales of his products showed that they enjoyed better support out of the town than in it. The townspeople's complaint however that the water from Taylor's Gap Reservoir was undrinkable was certainly justified.

1893 shook Kapunda to its foundations. Depression had hit the State and Kapunda could not avoid it. The first shattering news was that the marble quarries had closed down and sold their plant. The unemployed held meetings but there was nothing they could do. The ES&A Bank suspended payments temporarily, as did the *National Bank*, while William Hillier and James Wheatley closed their implement factories for financial reasons. Church congregations prayed for recovery and several hotels closed.

This was an election year and the depression created an unprecedented interest in the candidates; political meetings in the Institute were crowded to the extent that people had to stand on the stage. Coles, White and Glynn vied for the two seats for County Light and when the results showed that Glynn had been defeated, his supporters started a riot in the Main Street. Only one chink of light appeared in the overall gloom but the *Herald* did not admit it. Kapunda football team beat Adelaide 2-7 to 1-3. The *Herald* now averaged three inches a week on football and three columns a week on cricket.

Slowly things improved. Two new businesses, the Pioneer Kapunda Creamery and the Hillside Creamery, opened plants in the town. Jenkin Coles was knighted and, perhaps even more deserving of merit to the Australian way of thinking, David James' horse Auraria won the 1895 Melbourne Cup at 33 to 1. Another reassuring reminder of happier years was a further attempt to evict the squatters of Baker's Flat.

ill-fated James Whittaker. In the *Adelaide Observer* of 5 July 1851, Whittaker mentioned to the *Observer's* reporter that he had found it necessary to keep firearms continually in plain view to prevent violence in the hotel. Whittaker explained a novel method he had evolved to keep the miners from crowding out the more 'aristocratic' members of his *clientèle*. He simply doubled the price of everything at one end of the bar, leading to its comparative desertion, and thus giving more room to his favoured clients, a system that has a marked similarity to the present Australian 'Bar' and 'Saloon Bar' arrangement.

The most notable of the Sir John Franklin's guests over the years were probably the explorers McKinlay and Sturt.

The North Kapunda Hotel is one of the perhaps two or three hotels in the State that can claim Royal patronage; Prince Alfred, the Duke of Edinburgh, registered and lunched there as a guest in 1867 although he did not stay overnight. The front section was demolished and rebuilt in 1866 although the wing of rooms at the rear is probably part of the original structure. It was in these rooms that James White, Kapunda's first auctioneer, had his offices and they were the original offices of Jenkin Coles who conducted the Kidman horse sales. Another room was used as a District Council office for a number of years. It was from the balcony of the North Kapunda Hotel that the Riot Act was read in the elections of 1893, Patrick Glynn, the defeated candidate being a guest there at the time. Glynn was unimpressed with the place, referring to it thus:

Crise's getting to be a perfect hell—no sleeping at night with the noises. All sorts and conditions of blackguards at all hours admitted to Crise's—it is all beer, dirt, indigestion, noise, Salvation Army and general vulgarity.

The hotel featured in the early life of Kapunda because of the large room the proprietor, James Crase, built behind it in 1859. Kapunda had no Institute hall and this room catered for all the functions that would nowadays normally be held in an Institute.

James Crase also built another, even bigger, room that was to

be extended through to the Main Street and used as a theatre. It was never properly completed but was used for many years as a skating rink, gymnasium and a billiard room. Both rooms have been demolished, although the front section of the theatre/skating rink still remains.

Of the other hotels, the Prince of Wales can claim that Sidney Kidman spent one night there as a boy when he was on his way north to make his fortune, and the Wheatsheaf Hotel had a remarkable record in that it remained in the hands of one family (the Robertsons) for a hundred years.

It seems likely that the Cross Keys was nicknamed the 'Blood and Thunder' and that its star attraction was stockwhip fights amongst the patrons to relieve the boredom.

Kapunda (with Allendale) now has six hotels, the youngest being 110 years old at the time of writing.

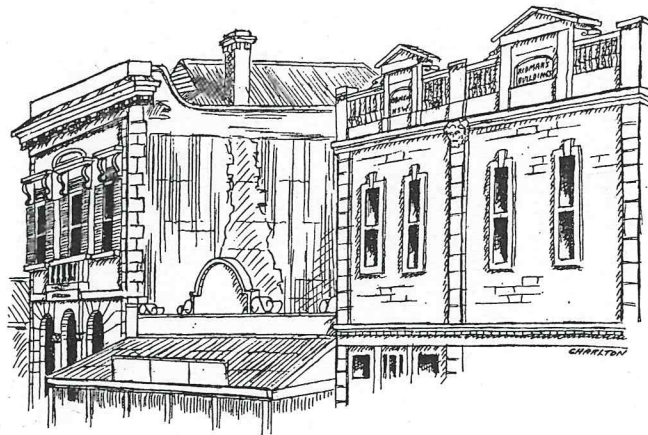
There were two hotels, the Farmers' Home and the Hamilton, at Hamilton in the early days, but both have long since been demolished. Hamilton derived its name from the publican of the latter, George Hamilton.

THE BANKS

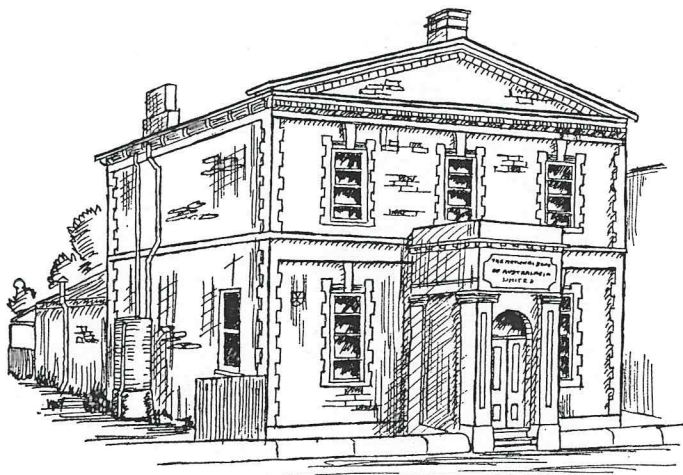
The National Bank

The National Bank was the first of several to conduct business in Kapunda. In April 1859 a branch was opened with William Oldham as first manager at a salary of £150 per annum. Oldham's position appears to have been only nominal, as a teller was sent from Adelaide to conduct the bank's business in a building that stood on the present site of the Congregational Church Hall. The bank later moved to a house almost directly opposite in Chapel Street.

Tenders were called for the construction of a bank and residence in the Main Street in March 1862, the successful tenderers being Nicholson and McLaren of Kapunda, who commenced building in April. The foundation stone was laid in May and the building was completed and opened for business on 29 December 1862.



The Bank of Adelaide, Davidson's newsagency (formerly Greenshield's drapery) and Kidman's Buildings



The National Bank of Australasia

The bank has continued to operate from this building ever since and it is now one of the finest and best preserved buildings in Kapunda.

The Bank of Adelaide

Only two months elapsed between the opening of the head office of the Bank of Adelaide and the opening of that bank's first branch at Kapunda. The first manager, William Garsed, conducted business in temporary premises until a new building was completed in the Main Street in 1866. This new bank was designed by the architects Wright and Wood and built by a Mr Nicholson for a cost of £2200, the land costing a further £800.

The staff members' room used to be directly over the strong-room door and clerks were expected to look through a peephole in the floor several times a night to ensure that someone was not attempting to force the door.

The Bank of Adelaide administration has gone to considerable pains to preserve the front part of the building in its original style and it is now that bank's oldest branch office.

The English, Scottish and Australian Bank

In 1866, the ES&A Bank bought a block of land in the Main Street of the town, paying £700 for its 22-feet frontage. Banking operations were conducted in temporary accommodation until a new bank building was completed in November 1867. This building was designed by James Cumming, the builders were Rowett and Manson and it cost £2000.

The Australia-wide depression of 1893 forced a number of banks to suspend payments, the ES&A being one of them, and, although a recovery was made, the Kapunda branch closed down entirely on 23 January 1895.

The Bank of New South Wales

The Bank of New South Wales opened a branch in temporary premises opposite the *Herald* office in 1909. The bank seems to have enjoyed a degree of patronage from Sir Sidney Kidman, who bought a building in the Main Street and made provision for the bank to occupy rooms in the same building.



FILM 1919

NATIONAL BANK
66 MAIN STREET, KAPUNDA

10092
17.3.95



FILM 1919 NATIONAL BANK
KAPUNDA

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