

GAWLER HERITAGE STUDY: STAGE 1
ITEM IDENTIFICATION SHEET

- 71 -

Hignett & Company

ITEM NAME

Current: NATIONAL TRUST MUSEUM

Historical: TELEGRAPH STATION

ITEM NUMBER

42

DATE

HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE:

Built 1860 under the Colonial Architects Office, "a handsome two-storey edifice". First telegraph master in the new building was David G. Sands (first telegraph operator was W.R. Lewis, later a prominent local solicitor). Post Office activities carried out in the building from 1863 until new post office building completed in 1867. Telegraph operations transferred to new post office building from September 1867 and premises used thereafter as letter carrier's residence until property transferred to use of Gawler School of Mines in August 1898. Used as Commonwealth Electoral Office 1915-1953, then for Technical School classes until 1966, then purchased by Gawler branch of the National Trust (January 1967) and opened as a museum in October 1968.

Telegraph communication from Adelaide to Gawler commenced 1857 and operated initially from the Kingsford (Globe) Hotel and later from the offices of James Martin in Murray Street.

Original building, with stone walls and slate roof, externally unchanged, except for verandah added 1866. Underpinned and renovated by National Trust.

Random coursed stone with stone quoins. Openings are segmental and semi-circular arch with keystone.

LOCATION

Street No:
 Allotment: Pt.202
 Section:
 Hundred:
 Street: Murray
 Town:
 LGA:
 Postcode:
 State Hist.Pres.
 Region:

HISTORICAL THEME

Theme: Transport and
 Communication
 Subtheme: Telegraph

HISTORICAL PERIOD

State:
 Study Area: 1849-70

TYPE OF ITEM

LAND Natural Feature ☐
 Historical Site ☐
 Garden ☐

BUILDING Individual ☒
 Group ☒

STRUCTURE Complete ☐
 Relic ☐

REFERENCES:

Written: Bunyip 14 January 1981, p.15; Loyau 19; Coombe 163; Berry and Gilbert 68-70.

Vocal:

Archival Photographs:

RECOMMENDATION:

PHOTOGRAPH

Film No:

Negative No:

Direction of view:



STATUS

Register of State
 Heritage Items

On Register ☐

Interim List ☒

Nominated ☐

National Estate
 National Trust 129

R.A.I.A.

Civic Trust

N.P. & W.L.S.

Council

Australian Heritage

Engin. Record

Other

MAP

Scale:

Source:

PREPARED BY:

DATE:

49/13/02

Collected & Finch - 1973

OLD TELEGRAPH STATION, Gawler

Gawler, twenty-five miles north of Adelaide, once described as "a northern village," became a welcome overnight stopping place during the settlement of the northern areas of South Australia.

Miners on their way to Yorke Peninsula, Burra, and Kapunda, itinerant workers, bullock drivers, teamsters, and coach passengers, passed through the town in their hundreds.

When Gawler was connected to Adelaide by rail in 1857, it became an important agricultural and industrial centre. Wheat and wool were hauled into the town for transport to Port Adelaide. Flour mills, foundries, breweries, brickworks, and allied industries gave employment to hundreds of workers.

Its prosperity was marked by the construction of many solid two-storeyed buildings, of which the Old Telegraph Station, erected in 1860, is a fine example.

Now under the control of the National Trust, it is used as the headquarters of the Gawler branch, and some rooms have been furnished in contemporary style to depict life in the area in bygone days.

Below Right: The chiffonier, standing against the wall of dining room setting in the Telegraph Station, Gawler, typical of those used in homes in the last century.



