

A Reminiscence of the Macquarie Street Congregation.

By Mrs. Esther Hinda Stone, of 107 Dolphin Street, Coogee.

(Read before the Society, 23rd December, 1942.)

By Miss SADIE STONE.

I am now in my eighty-third year, being born in London on the 9th December, 1859. I arrived in Australia with my parents and one sister and two brothers when I was an infant aged about two years.

My father's name was Simon Solomon, and by trade he was a goldsmith and jeweller. He is identical with Simon Solomon, working jeweller, of 33 Park Street, shown in Sands' *Directories for Sydney* for the years 1875 and 1876.

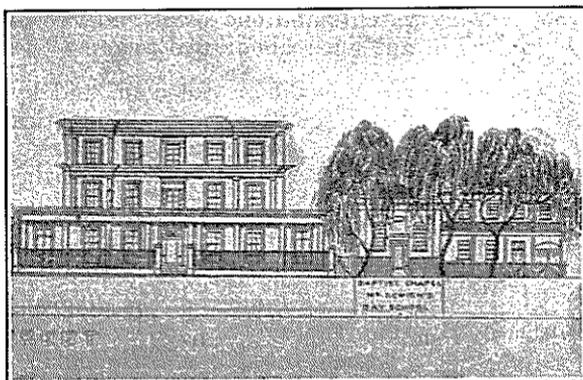
I remember clearly the Macquarie Street Synagogue building. It was next door to the well-known Burdekin House. I recognise the position from the diagram showing Burdekin House and the next door building (the Synagogue), which, I am informed, is included in a book of views of Sydney in 1848.

My parents resided in one of the streets parallel with York Street, and my father and my mother and all the members of my family were regular attenders at the York Street Synagogue.

As a child, I received education at the Jewish Denominational School in Sussex Street. My teachers were Mr. A. M. Woodhill, the headmaster, a non-Jew; Mr. Meyers, the Hebrew master; and Mrs. Solomon, Hebrew mistress. I recognise the photographs of these three teachers as included in Part II. of this Society's *Journal*. I was then about twelve to fourteen years old.

I became first acquainted with the Macquarie Street building when I was about seventeen years of age. Although a regular associate with the York Street Synagogue, I attended on at least half a dozen occasions with some other young ladies of about my own age at the

services held in the Macquarie Street building. These occasions were ordinary Sabbaths, and not festivals. On the festivals, I attended with my people at the York Street Synagogue. The occasions when I attended the Macquarie Street building would be in about the year 1876. I remember the ministers of the congregation, who were a Rev. Harris and a Rev. Levy.* I cannot remember hearing either of them deliver a sermon. The President was Mr. L. W. Levy.



MACQUARIE STREET BUILDINGS, 1848.

(Taken from Fowles' "Sydney in 1848.")

I remember when the Macquarie Street congregation went out of existence, and also when the congregation of the York Street Synagogue transferred to the Great Synagogue facing Hyde Park.

I remember the Bazaar which was held in what is now Martin Place prior to the opening of the Great Synagogue, also the ceremony at the final dedication of the Great Synagogue in the year 1878.

For many years I had in my possession one of the bookmarks which were one of the features at the Bazaar.

*Each of these gentlemen occupied temporarily the position of Reader.

They were one of the methods employed for the raising of a very large sum of money.

The entrance into the Macquarie Street building was by way of a passage on the side next to Burdekin House. This passageway was in the grounds of the Synagogue. The entrance to the ladies' gallery was by way of a staircase commencing from the floor of the building. The gallery extended across the end of the building farthest away from Macquarie Street. It was a small enclosure. It did not extend along the sides of the building. The Ark was set at the Macquarie Street end of the building, and the Reading Desk in the middle. The men's seats were arranged along the two sides of it. At the time of my visits to the Synagogue there was no choir.

The edifice was a small one in comparison with the York Street Synagogue. The space within the building was much more limited than the space within the York Street building.

On the Sabbaths I attended, the number of the worshippers was small. We regularly sat on the front row of seats in the ladies' gallery. The York Street building was filled by a numerous congregation even for an ordinary Sabbath service. In comparison, the Macquarie Street building was sparsely attended.

The Macquarie Street congregation included, however, some of the wealthiest and more influential members of the community. It was regarded as the aristocratic congregation. The building itself was situated in a locality very much superior to that in which the York Street building stood. Burdekin House next door was an elegant and beautiful mansion, very well maintained. The Synagogue building itself was very well cared for by its supporters. The dwellings in the area were the residences of people of considerable substance. The street was as wide as it is at present, and there were no professional chambers in the street as there are at present. Most of the buildings nearby were two-storey residences and homes of the gentry of the city.

The York Street building, on the other hand, was in a business area and among buildings which were used for commercial purposes.

The Macquarie Street building was set back a little from the street. However, the willow trees appearing in the 1848 sketch, as remembered by the late Mr. Victor Cohen, were not there at the time of my visits, nor was there any garden plot in front of the building. So far as I can remember, there was not outside the building any sign showing the date of its erection.

Jews of Goulburn.

By SYDNEY B. GLASS.

CHAPTER THREE.

(Period 1840 to 1845.)

The new town of Goulburn, as approved by Governor Sir Richard Bourke, and gazetted in 1833, comprised what may be termed the core of the present city. It was a comparatively small area spaced between a half-dozen streets running north and south and a similar number running east and west. On the east, the proclaimed area was flanked by a reserve for public recreation which also allowed access to the water supply of the Mulwarrie. This reserve is now almost entirely taken up by the railway station, workshops and yards.* Save in regard to the reserve, little thought was given to the possibility of future expansion. The development of the town was later retarded on account of its being surrounded by large holdings.†

At the beginning of the 'forties, the area of the official township was on the way to being transformed from open fields, over which the sheep of the first settlers had grazed at will, into a partly built-up area. A little bark-roofed frontier town, it was "a tablelander's outpost."‡ For

*W. Baker's map of Goulburn, 1843.

†*History of Goulburn*, p. 72.

‡MacAlister, p. 97.