

25 Myers Street, Bendigo
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Incorporating historical notes by Robyn Ballinger

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(Final)

Summary

Historical research and inspection of the property at 25 Myers Street shows that substantial structures survive in relation to the Sandhurst Rolling Stock works, and that these date to around 1890 although altered in the early 20th century.

The significant components of the site can be summarised as follows:

Feature	Date (s)	Significance	Management
Chimney	c1886, altered c1900?	Primary – reflects major visible feature associated with Sandhurst Rolling Stock Co Works.	Should be retained and conserved
West wall	c1886 or earlier, minor changes in 1920s-30s	Primary – oldest surviving fabric relating to Sandhurst Rolling Stock Co Works.	Should be retained and conserved
Roof structure & remains of timber wall frames	Possibly 1890s, reclad in 1940s,	Contributory – may be of late date, but provides main context for other features and retains industrial character of the site.	Could be altered or replaced, but new structure to remain within current building envelope and respect original finishes, forms and designs.
Facade	1960s	No significance apart for providing structural integrity to rest of building	New development should ensure facade design to historic character.
Archaeological remains	1876 on	Primary – relates to origin of the works on this site, and potential structural remains of former buildings and structures.	protection under heritage inventory listing with appropriate conditions for monitoring/excavation in any future planning approvals

Description

The site of the former Sandhurst rolling stock works at 25 Myers Bendigo comprises a single story factory of two low pitched gable roofed sections and with a brick chimney in the north east corner..

The building has a king-post, timber truss roof (Oregon?) with flat iron bar stirrups bracing some joints. The low pitched roof has corrugated asbestos cement cladding with curved ridge vents.

The west wall is of machine made brick in double thickness in Colonial bond. It has two arched openings (now bricked up), one pedestrian with segmental arch, the other for carts with three center arch, both with curved edge brick voussoirs. Possible earlier hand made bricks incorporated into structure.

The east wall is constructed of bush pole posts with sawn timber framing and corrugated iron cladding (The north wall was originally in this style also).

The north wall has been recently (last 5 years) reconstructed with steel universal beam posts supporting the sawn timber 8x10 inch beam. The precast concrete slab of the adjoining building forms the wall panels.

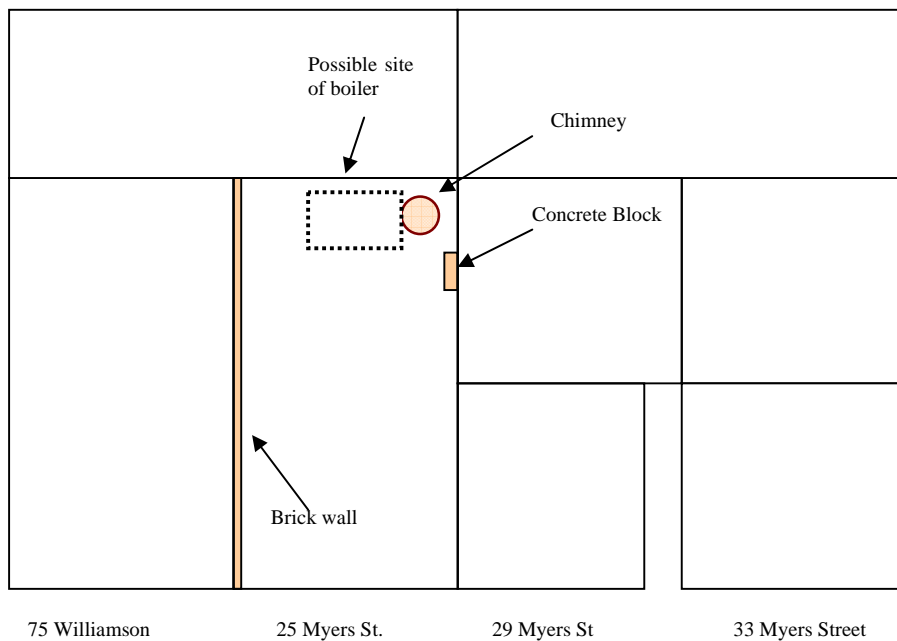
The south wall to Myers Street is of cream brick piers and panels with large aluminum shop windows and sliding glazed pedestrian doors. A roller door is at eastern entrance.

The chimney in north east corner of the allotment is only about 2 m clear of north wall and 0.5 m from south wall. It is constructed of red semi-plastic machine-pressed bricks with unmarked frogs. The bricks are of a type and form that was available between the 1880s and 1950s, but are most likely to be from 1890s to 1920s. The square base measures 2 metres square with a dog tooth corbel to top of plinth and stands 1.8 m high. The tapered chimney shaft is about 1.6 metre diameter at the top of the plinth, and probably about 1.4 m just below the cap. The shaft bricks are tapered and curved in English bond (alternating headers and stretchers).

The cap has decorative elements with wide three-brick deep string-course and raised ribs below. There are two openings with small arched lintels on south and west sides of base, the south opening probably from the flue to the boiler, and the west opening a cleaning access and for a damper. A metal (copper?) conduit runs up the east side of the chimney, probably originally serving a lightening rod, but now cut off 300mm above ground. Wrought iron pipe hooks are located on south and east side of plinth.

Along the east wall are the remains of a concrete and brick base, possible the former steam engine foundations. This is now little more than a plinth to the adjacent later brick wall, but may have originally been the structure identified in the National Trust report as “ restrained by bull head rail presumably obtained from the Bendigo rail line since it was used rarely elsewhere and was out of vogue by 1873”. The Trust report also refers to an early timber lined office and brick toilets, but these appear to have been lost as a result of damage to the building caused by the adjacent new structure which undermined the foundations on the north wall (pers com. Peter Wade current owner).

Site Plan

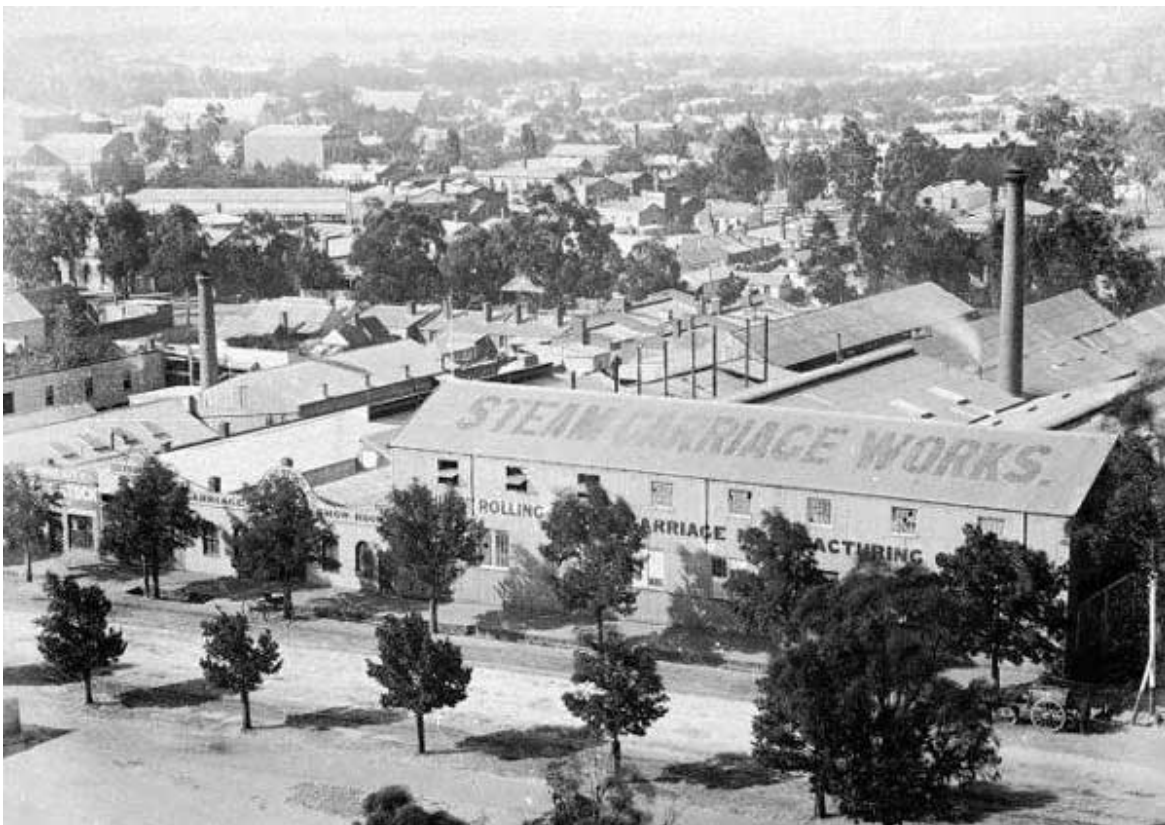


Assessment

The present building at 25 Myers Street appears to be an amalgam of several periods. The main structure is of early 20th century date (1920s-40s, but incorporates earlier elements such as the west wall with its arched openings, and the push pole structure along the east wall. This is probably of late nineteenth century date and may be the external wall of the former adjoining structure originally on the petrol station site. An 1886 painted birds-eye-view (Meadows 1886) shows a long, two storey, gable roofed building running along the north side of Williamson Street frontage to the corner of Myers Street. This building also appears in a photo in the Bendigo Library and Museum Victoria collections, (probably from around 1890), which also shows “STEAM CARRIAGE WORKS” painted on the roof. It is likely that the dividing wall between this and the structure to the north east was brick, at least for the ground floor. Some hand made bricks in this wall may also relate to an even earlier structure. The existing low pitched gable roofs are similar in form to those shown in the c1890 photograph. The asbestos cement is of c1940s date, probably involving the recladding of an earlier corrugated iron roof.

Other single storey buildings further west along Williamson Street, include signage on the parapet identifying the carriage works showrooms. It is unclear if these survive, although the extant buildings at 61-65 Williamson Street are of a suitable age for such an association.

Bendigo Rolling Stock Co, c1890, W H Robinson Studio, Bendigo” Image – Museum Victoria, Biggest Family Album



A chimney is shown (in about the location of the existing chimney) in the 1886 painting and the c1890 Bendigo Library / Museum of Victoria photograph. However, this appears to be of a slightly different form to the existing chimney and somewhat taller. It is possible that this taller chimney was subsequently reduced in height and remodelled. Another shorter chimney is located to the north at the rear of 61-65 Williamson Street.

The Bendigo Water Board Sewerage connection plan for 1924 shows a boiler located at the rear of 25 Myers Street, oriented across the block near the eastern boundary. This would conform to a location immediately south-west of the present chimney

The chimney is therefore most likely of late nineteenth century date (c1886) but having been altered in the early twentieth century but no later than 1940. There is therefore a period of at least a decade of association between the operation of Sandhurst Rolling Stock Works operation and the construction of the chimney and substantial parts of the present building.

The main elements of the building and chimney would accord with a date of c1886 or possibly c1900 (when the rate books show a substantial increase in value from an average NAV of £10 to £45). However, several elements are clearly later, such as the 1940s roofing and 1960s facade.

There is almost certainly archaeological evidence association with the former boilers and engine foundations to the south and/or west of the chimney. Other sub-floor evidence across the site may also survive, particularly on to the north of the block where leveling the natural slope has probably resulted in former floor levels and the waste products of manufacture) being buried (the original factory floor was probably packed earth). Listing of the whole site on the Heritage Inventory would therefore be appropriate.

Significance

Historically the site of Pickles Carriage Works and the Sandhurst Rolling Stock Works, is significant as a major part of Bendigo's manufacturing industry which grew in response to the needs and revenue generation of the gold rush period, and went on to establish Bendigo as a major regional industrial city.

The site represents the once prolific, but now almost obliterated industrial character of the areas south and east of the commercial centre of Bendigo. From an historical viewpoint the chimney is also highly significant as an example of the contribution of this local industry to the development of Bendigo and perhaps the State.

The surviving elements of the site are associated with one of the few private railway locomotive or rolling stock manufacturers in Victoria (in comparison with Wright and Edwards and P Bevan in Melbourne and Phoenix Foundry in Ballarat). It is the only surviving evidence relating to a private rolling stock works in Victoria, which was one of largest individual employers in Bendigo in the late nineteenth century with up to 300 employed in 1891 (McKay 1868) and was described as "the largest carriage factory on the Australian continent" in 1890 (Bendigo Advertiser 2.1.1890). The works was responsible for significant number of rail carriages including passenger carriages, brake vans, open wagons, explosives wagons, horse boxes, guard vans, goods vans, providing an important part of the Victorian railways rolling stock at a time when Bendigo was the second most important terminus on the railway system.

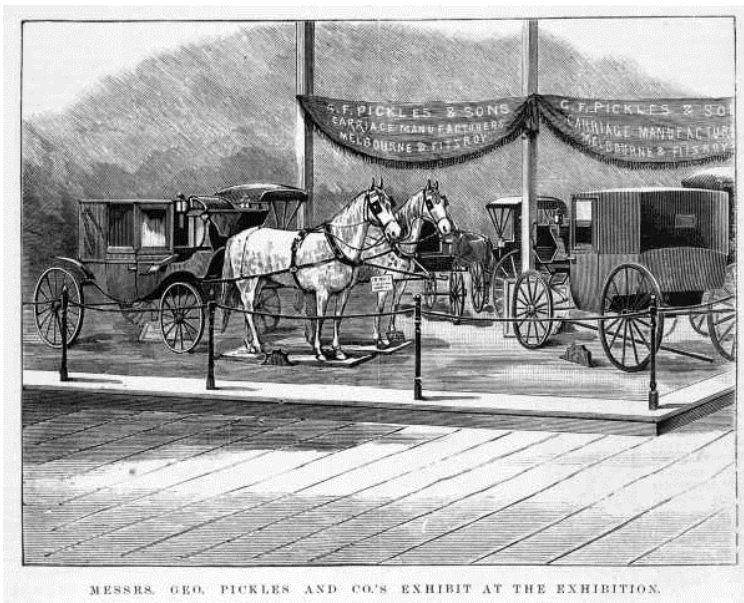
The brick chimney is a rare surviving factory chimney, architecturally notable for its specialized construction using shaped (tapered and curved bricks) and the simple decorated cap employing string

course and vertical ribs. As such it reflects a time when tall smoking factory chimneys dotted the skyline of Bendigo as symbols of prosperity and growth. It is a notable landmark in the commercial centre of Bendigo providing a visual reference to the former manufacturing district.

Only a handful of brick chimneys survive in Bendigo, other examples being found at the Webb flour Mill, Bendigo Gas Works, North Deborah Mine, T & S Scott's steam powered roller mill of 1887 and the School of Mines, although none of these were related to manufacturing in the sense of the Rolling Stock Works. A search of comparable brick factory chimneys (including mines) reveals about 40 relatively intact chimneys and perhaps 100 remains of fallen or demolished chimneys throughout Victoria. Of these fewer than 20 are comparable either in function or form.

The gable roofed building is of interest in that it reflects the later evolution of the site, while retaining the industrial character. The bricked up archways demonstrate the former connections between this and other buildings associated with the works, and hint at the much greater former extent of the factory.

Pickles & Co display at 1888 Melbourne Exhibition



History

The property at 25 Myers Street, Bendigo is currently occupied by A-1 Newwade Sales. The building has obviously been adapted for a number of uses over the years. At the rear of the property stands a tall, red brick chimney.

The land was first owned by T. Gould in 1856 and through the 1870s and 80s, by Joseph Rowan and then Mrs. Rowan. By 1885, buildings had been erected on the property and it was being leased by the George F. Pickles for his carriage works. The company went variously by the names British and Aamerican Carriage Works, G. F. Pickles & Sons Carriage Manufacturing Company Ltd., the American Steam Carriage Works, and the Sandhurst Rolling Stock Company.

George Frederick Pickles, an American, started building coaches in Sandhurst in 1855 and opened branches in Creswick and Melbourne. The Sandhurst factory produced horse-drawn vehicles from a landau to a chariot, from a farm-wagon at £34 to a Stanhope phaeton at £170. In 1883, Pickles formed the Sandhurst Rolling Stock Company. The Company continued to manufacture buggies and carriages, but also carried out large orders for the government's railway programme which at that stage was branching from Bendigo into Victoria's north. It secured a contract for the supply of £75,000 worth of stock. The factory, connected to the railway line by a tramway, claimed to manufacture everything for its railway carriages except for wheels and springs (Mackay 1914).

Peter Milner's research of Victorian Engineers was used as the basis for historical documentation of the site in the Eaglehawk and Bendigo Heritage Study (Butler 1993:Appendix 1-10). This suggests (citing Mackay's history, Sands & McDougall and Post Office directories and *The Bendigo Advertiser*) that the Sandhurst Rolling Stock works was located in Williamson Street between at least 1876 and 1897, and Myers Street from at least 1888 to 1892. The whole north part of the block between Williamson Street and Bull (now St. Andrews) Street on the south side of Myers Street was also identified as the works location in the 1891-2 Victorian Post Office directory).

In 1893 the company was purchased by Morrison and Sanneman, and was still in operation in 1915 at its Williamson Street Address. The Melbourne Factories closed in 1908 (Butler 1993).

The property may also have links with Webb's flour mill on the corner of Williamson and Queen Streets, which, by 1902, had 'commodious storage buildings' in Williamson Street. Rate books also indicate that 25 Myers Street was owned by Naphthalia Ingham in 1900, and the Singer Sewing Machine Co. were tenants from 1902 for a few years (Ballinger rate search).

Other occupants were Wallis and Wallace auctioneers in 1908, Miller's produce merchants Walter between 1921 1930, manufactures Jones Miller & Co in 1935, mechanic F W Schoder in 1941 and Alfred Hamilton, manager in 1945. (see Ballinger's history and Rate Book Search 1).

Increases in the rate value occurred in 1900, when it changed from a average of about £10 over the preceding 40 years, to £45, subsequently falling to £30 and then rising to £60 in 1921.

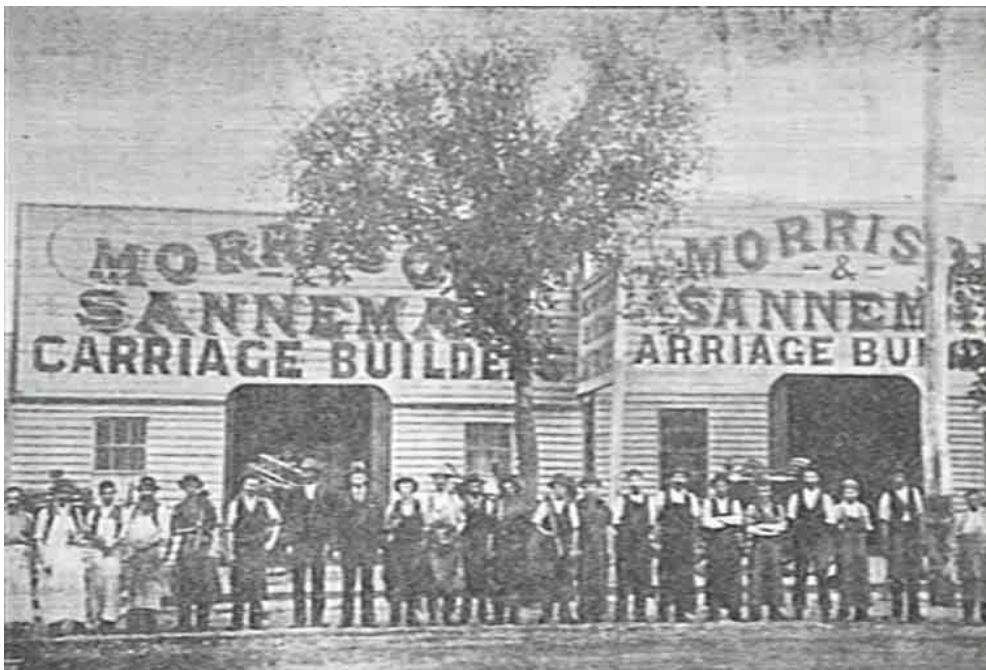
There are direct references connecting 25 Myers Street to The Sandhurst Rolling Stock Company in the rate books between 1885 and 1891, although the owner, Mrs Rowan remains a constant from 1875 to 1896. The search conducted of the manufacturing business managed by Pickles highlights the significant size and proximity of his industry to the Myers Street address (see Ratebook Search 2).

It is likely that the chimney that stands at the rear of the property is one of the few, perhaps only, structures that evidences the existence of The American Steam Carriage Works, and later The Sandhurst Rolling Stock Company which operated from a site bounded by Williamson, Bull and Myers Streets.

National Trust statement

“The former Sandhurst Rolling Stock Works consist generally of a timber framed gable roofed structure with a c.25 metre frontage to Myers Street and formerly extending across the site of the petrol filling station at the Williamstown Street corner. Perimeter walls are part brick of an early date and part bush pole with sawn timber girts and corrugated iron cladding. The Myers Street frontage has been rebuilt. The roof is double gabled with continuous lanterns and is carried on timber king post trusses with metal connectors. The early south wall has two arches (single point and three centred segmental) now bricked up but formerly linking the present buildings with the demolished buildings on the petrol filling station site and circular tapering shaft and decorated cap at the north-west corner of the site. Inside, workmen's original sewerred toilets and wash basin are in situ with "Bendigo" on the glazed earthenware pans. The base of a substantially removed brick structure, possibly an engine housing, is restrained by bull head rail presumably obtained from the Bendigo rail line since it was used rarely elsewhere and was out of vogue by 1873. An early timber lined office is in situ. The Sandhurst Rolling Stock Co. formerly G F Pickles and Sons, was Bendigo's largest builder of railway rolling stock and in Ellis' estimation by 1890, Australia's "largest carriage factory". It compares with other Victoria rolling stock manufacturers, including Wright and Edwards (Sunshine) and P Bevan. They may be the mostly substantial remains of a privately owned country based rolling stock works. In Bendigo, they are important as a surviving nineteenth century industrial site and for their prominent chimney stack situated within the main commercial area of the City and recalling other similar structures formerly located in the vicinity and visible in the 1886 " Birdseye View of Sandhurst".

Morrisin & Sanneman in Williamson Street (Goldfields Library)



References:

Mackay and Co., 1891 *Annals of Bendigo. 1868-1891*, vols. 1, 2, 4

Ballinger, R. 2003, Research notes of rate searches for site.

Bendigo and District in 1902. Melbourne, Periodical Publishing Company, p. 57

Bendigo and Vicinity. Melbourne, Niven, 1895, pp. 204-5

Bendigo Council Rate Books

Graeme Butler + Assoc. (1993) Eaglehawk + Bendigo Heritage Study: Recommendations & Guidelines Vol 1-9.

Frank Cusack, *Bendigo: A History*. Lerk & McClure, Bendigo, 2002 (rev.ed.), pp. 195-6

Meadows, James Edwin 1886 *View of Sandhurst* - painting in Bendigo Art Gallery. ('Steam carriage works' written on the roof).

Photograph of Bendigo Rolling Stock Company Works, (Bendigo Library – From an advertising feature, also print copied by Museum Victoria “the Biggest Family Album” and dated 1890.

View of chimney from across Myers Street



View of flue entrance on south side of chimney



Segmental arched opening in south wall



Rate Book Search 1 (Robyn Ballinger) Address : 25 Myers Street, Bendigo Date: 3rd July 2003

Year	Page no.	No. of assessment	Ratepayer's name/s & occupation	Owner's name & occupation	Property description	Address	Net annual value
1856	31	630	T. Gould	-	Land	Myers Street	£12
1875	98	3909	Joseph Rowan	Mrs Joseph Rowan	Land	Myers Street	£10
1880	91	3639	Mrs Joseph Rowan	Mrs Joseph Rowan	Land	Myers Street	£8
1883	91	3616	Mrs Joseph Rowan	Selves	Land	Myers Street	£7
1884	91	3617	-	-	-	-	-
1885	91	3622	G. F. Pickles & Sons Carriage Manuafacurer Co. Ltd.	Gabriel [?]	Land and Buildings	Myers Street	£9
1887	90	3582	G. F. Pickles & Sons Carriage Manufacturer Company Limited	Mrs J. Rowan	Land and Building	Myers Street	£9
1891	91	3620	Sandhurst Rolling Stock Co.	Mrs Rowan	Buildings & ?	Myers Street	£10
1896	98	3898	John Gabriel	Mrs Rowan	Land & buildings	Myers Street	£8
1900	-	4199	-	Napthalia Ingham	Land & building	Myers Street	£45
1902	106	4230	The Singer Manufacturing Co.	Napthalia Ingham	Land & building	Myers Street	£40
1908	103	4275	Alfred Wallis & William Wallace Auctioneers	Napthalia Ingham	Land & buildings	Myers Street	£30
1921	11	4228	Walter Miller, Ernest Jones & Charles Miller Produce Merchants	Albion Miller Produce Merchant	Land & buildings	Myers Street	£60
1925	11	3909	Walter & Ernest Miller Produce Merchants	Albion T. Miller	Land & buildings	Myers Street	£60
1930	-	3956	Walter J., Ernest A. & Gilbert T. Miller Produce Merchants	Albion T. Miller Produce Merchant	Land & buildings	Myers Street	£60
1935	12	4064	Jones Miller & Co. Manufacturers	Exs. Albion T. Miller	Land & buildings	Myers Street	£60
1941	13	4584	Frederick W. Schoder Mechanic	Margaret Watts Home Duties	Land & building	Myers Street	£50
1945	12	4263	Alfred G. Hamilton Manager	-	Land & building	Myers Street	£75

Rate Book Search 2 Property: George F. Pickles and The Sandhurst Rolling Stock Company Date: 3rd July 2003

Year	Page no.	No. of assessment	Ratepayer's name/s & occupation	Owner's name & occupation	Property description	Address	Net annual value
1875	99	3946	George F. Pickles Coach Maker	Henry Backhaus	Land & Factory	Williamson Street	£120
1876	97	3875	George Frederick Pickles Coach Maker	Henry Backhaus	Land & Coach Factory	Williamson Street	£120
1880	92	3676	George Frederick Pickles Coachmaker	Henry Backhaus Priest	Land and Factory	Williamson Street	£140
1881	92	3655	George Frederick & George Mackay Pickles Coachmakers	Henry Backhaus Priest	Land and Factory	Williamson Street	£140
1882	91	3626	George F., George Mackay & Thomas Pickles Coachmakers	Henry Backhaus	Land and Buildings	Bull Street	£140
1887	91	3615	G. Pickles & Co.	Selves	Land & Buildings	Williamson & Myers Streets	£300
1891	91	3619	Sandhurst Rolling Stock Co.	Selves	Buildings & ?	Williamson, Myers & Bull Streets	£600
1896	98	3896	The Sandhurst Rolling Stock Company	Commercial Bank of Australasia	Land & buildings	Williamson & Bull Streets	£375
1896	98	3897	The Sandhurst Rolling Stock Company	Commercial Bank of Australasia	Land & buildings	Williamson & Myers Streets	£125