

Albury Public Buildings 1878

Joe Wooding

Forming part of St. Matthew's southern boundary are two small brick buildings. The first is a pair of holding cells, the second a quaint two storey cottage.

The plan above gives an 1878 view of the site. The 1860 Court House of today remains largely unchanged. *Albury Banner* February 25, 1881 reports a second storey added to the Court Keeper's Room, but he lost his yard for the two new holding cells. These were needed for court appearances of prisoners on remand.

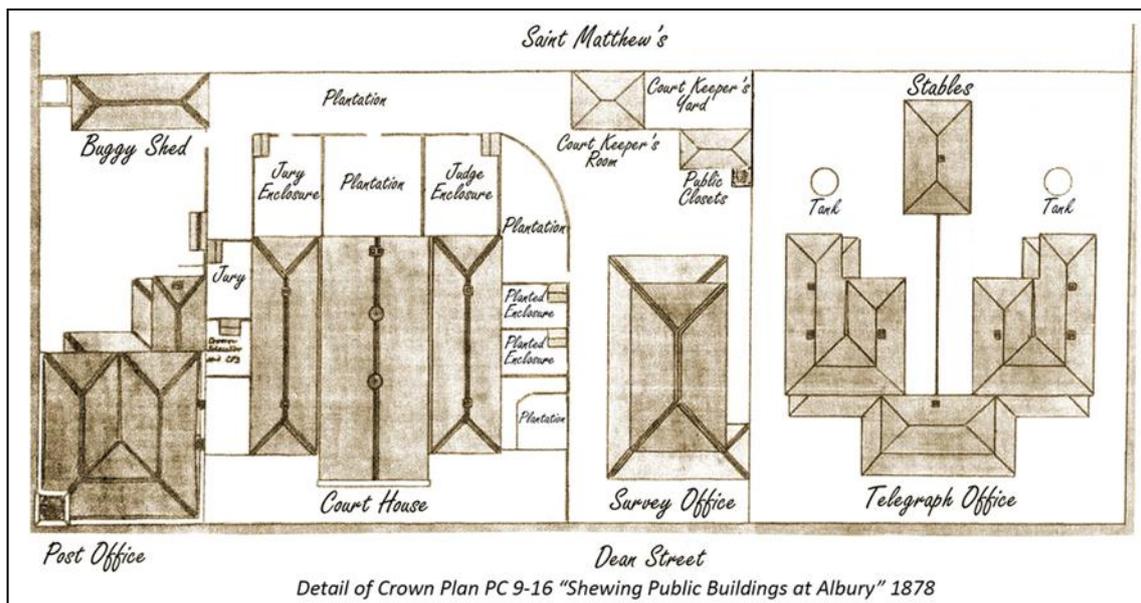
As Albury grew, land above the 'inundations' was urgently needed. T S Townsend, in 1848, surveyed thirty-six sections of building allotments, all of ten acres adding to the five he originally laid out ten years earlier.

He extended Kiewa, Townsend and Wodonga Place northwards, adding Smollett, Dean, Swift, Wilson, Olive and David Streets etc.

One section, that bound by Dean, Olive, Swift and Kiewa Streets had the northern half divided into ten half acre building lots, all fronting Swift Street. The southern portion of five acres facing Dean Street, was designated a Reserve.

Magistrate John Roper, in 1849 selected one acre of this reserve, taking the corner of Dean and Kiewa Streets as the site for a Court House. The Committee for the Church of England selected 1½ acres beside it to the north, leaving 2½ acres which became the Market Reserve. Government ceded this reserve to the Borough Council in 1864.

Details of initial structures on the Court House acre are sketchy. There was a two-room brick Court House on today's Post Office site, a diabolical lockup, a police office, barracks and stables.



A map providing an 1878 view of the site which contained several of Albury's public buildings including a pair of holding cells.

Albury's first purpose built telegraph station, complete with time ball, opened in 1861. It became the Post Office in 1870. A second telegraph station with stables was built in 1868. The two storey Lands and Survey Office opened in 1880. MAMA occupies these sites today. In 1874, the Police relocated to Olive Street.

In 1882, yet another telegraph station was needed. In a clean swap, the Government exchanged with the Borough Council, their second telegraph station for portion of Market Reserve on Olive and Dean Street corner.

On December 8, 1886, Council first met in their new premises, but issues arose with planning a Town Hall in 1897 when it was discovered their premises were still on Crown Land. The outcome? A right-of-way was demanded by government to service both the rear of the Court House and Lands Office for a night soil service. That right-of-way exists to this day as do the cells and the tiny two storey house.