Opening the Archive

The New South Wales Forensic Photography Archive as Evidence of Architectural History

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There is a rich and extensive archive of images that exists in the loft of Sydney's Justice and Police Museum. The collection, an estimated 130,000 images, date from between 1912 and 1964 and provide a record of building exteriors, streetscapes and commercial and domestic interiors of Sydney from this period.[1] The archive contains a wealth of architectural and interior detail. Images that were taken with the purpose of evidencing a crime can be used to provide us with evidence of our architectural history, a history of the ordinary at the moment of the extraordinary.

Drawing on the work of the crime novelist and curator Peter Doyle and curator Caleb Williams who have written for exhibitions based on this collection,[2] the work of the writer, filmmaker and academic, Ross Gibson who has developed a variety of works, art installations, an illustrated novel and a poetic blog from the archive,[3] and the information provided by the Justice and Police Museum's Nerida Campbell and Holly Schulte, this essay explores some of the architectural history that is reflected in a very small but diverse sample of the images of accidental or criminal happenings contained within the archive. By opening the archive of the New South Wales Forensic Photography collection, and viewing it from the perspective of architectural history, details of the city's architectural past can be uncovered.

Many authors have warned against the "truth" portrayed by the photograph; Walter Benjamin, Susan Sontag, Roland Barthes, John Tagg and Geoffrey Batchen to name a few and so I will not examine this issue in detail here.[4] Yet whilst theorists, academics and Architectural Historians know the photograph does not tell the whole story, at best only a selected "truth," we still, even in this age of easy digital manipulation see the photograph as evidence.

1. "Pictures Catalogue", Historic Houses Trust, http://www.hht.net.au/collections/research/picture_collection accessed August 23, 2012.

2. Peter Doyle with Caleb Williams, *City of Shadows; Sydney Police Photographs 1912-1948,* (Sydney: Historic Houses Trust of New South Wales, 2005).

3. "From the Loft", Historic Houses Trust, http://blogs.hht.net.au/justice/ accessed August 30, 2012.

4. Susan Sontag, *On Photography,* (London: Penguin Books Limited, 1979); Roland Barthes, *Camera Lucida: Reflections on Photography,* trans., Richard Howard (London: Jonathan Cape Ltd, 1982).

The photograph as evidence is the *raison d'etre* for the New South Wales Forensic Photography Archive, a collection of glass plates and cellulose negatives of criminals, crime scenes, artifacts, accidents and events. Once this evidence had been presented in court and the case closed the images were no longer required and were stored and forgotten in a warehouse in Lidcombe where they were found when the warehouse flooded in 1987.[5] The Police donated them to the Sydney Police and Justice Museum, which was being established at about the same time that the negatives were discovered.

There are an estimated 130,000 images in the collection dating from between 1912 and 1964.[6] Of these about 7,000 have currently been digitised and many of these are available via the Justice and Police Museum website.[7] The majority of the images have no associated documentation; no court or police records, no witness statements or suspects records of interview. The earlier images in the collection to around 1940 are on glass plates, from when cellulose film began to be used. A large proportion of the early photographs are mug shots which stopped appearing in the collection in the 1930s.[8] The collection also contains images of finger prints, forged cheques, handwriting analysis and police social and public relations activities.

Whilst all the images are in some way intriguing, what will interest the architectural historian the most are the photographs of scenes of crimes and accidents. This is where the abundance of architectural detail can be seen. The filmmaker, academic and writer Ross Gibson has observed that crime scene photography began to be treated methodically in England in the 1920s and by the end of the Second World War had spread to police departments around the world.[9] In post war Sydney cameras, whilst still cumbersome, were more portable than they had been before the war and crime scene photographs were taken by the detectives themselves. They also undertook their own printing to ensure the integrity of the chain of evidence.[10] The crime scene photograph is an object with its own history and this collection forms part of a genre of police photography that includes collections such as those of the New York City Police Department, brought into the public domain by Luc Sante in his book *Evidence,* in 1992.[11]

Whilst these images were intended as evidence of crimes and accidents, for the architectural historian they provide evidence of our architectural history with an extensive and detailed record of domestic interiors, commercial buildings, public spaces,

5. Steve Meacham, "Flashbacks to a Dark Side of Postwar Sydney," *Sydney Morning Herald*, December 22, 2008,

6. "Pictures Catalogue," Historic Houses Trust, http://www.hht.net.au/collections/research/picture_collection (accessed August 23, 2012).

7. Holly Schulte, Curator of Digital Assets, Police and Justice Museum, conversation with the author, January, 22 2013.

8. Schulte, conversation with the author, January 22, 2013.

9. Ross Gibson quoted in Meacham, "Flashbacks to a Dark Side of Postwar Sydney."

10. Gibson quoted in Meacham, "Flashbacks to a Dark Side of Postwar Sydney."

11. Luc Sante, *Evidence* (New York: Farrar Straus Giroux, 1992.)

streetscapes and the urban environment of Sydney from this period. Images taken with the purpose of evidencing a crime provide us with evidence of our architectural past and it is a part of our architectural history that has not often been visually recorded. Most of the images are of scenes and subjects that a pictorial photographer, particularly in the first half of the twentieth century, would not have considered as a suitable subject; a tram shelter, a public stairway or a domestic lounge room of an inner city terrace house. Images of more prestigious architectural subjects do exist within the collection, buildings like the first arcade in the city, Sydney Arcade, opened in 1890 or the Metropole Hotel, the first of Sydney's "grand" hotels opened in 1881, but these are not the usual architectural images of these buildings, they are not shots of the grand façade or the ballroom, they are images of fire damaged shopfronts or staircases where a death has occurred, intimate details. It is not only the poor, rundown parts of the city where crime and accidents happen.

The lack of written records attached to these images could be seen as a significant defect of this collection, particularly for the historian, but the very absence of the records has left the collection open to a variety of different uses. A wide public audience has now seen selections of images from the collection through a range of exhibitions, often with associated books held at the Justice and Police Museum. Exhibitions that have included topics such as car crashes, the female criminal, crime scenes, and the work of Walter Tuchin, one of the few police photographers who can be identified in the archive. Perhaps most notable for architectural historians was an exhibition *City of Shadows: Inner City Crime & Mayhem 1912-1948* curated by the crime novelist Peter Doyle for which he researched the details of the crimes primarily through newspaper archives. A Book from the exhibition written with the curator Caleb Williams reproduces the images from the exhibition often at a large scale, with several accompanying essays. This is the exhibition at which I first realised that amongst the dead bodies, motor vehicle accidents and damaged property was a wealth of architectural detail.

The archive has also been used in other ways. Ross Gibson in conjunction with the artist and producer Kate Richards have curated two exhibitions utilising the collection: *Crime Scene: Scientific Investigation Bureau Archives 1945-1960* in 1999 and *Bystander* in 2008. Both these exhibitions were more speculative in nature, presenting the images as a starting point from which to imagine, rather than as a collection of facts. They gave space for those interested in architecture and many others to wonder.

In 2009, Ross Gibson published the novel *The Summer Exercises* based around images from the archive writing in the voice of an anonymous chaplain, attached to a city police station in the summer of 1946.[12] Gibson also produces a regular blog "Accident Music" for which he selects an image from the collection and composes a few lines of accompanying poetry. This work illustrates the possibility of a wider audience for this archive yet I believe it can be extended still further in the work of the architectural historian.

Fashion designers and textile students have already seen its potential. Both Karl Largerfeld and Ralph Lauren have been inspired by images from the archive with Lauren utilizing enlarged images from the collection in his Los Angles and New York Stores. The exhibition *Femme Fatale: The Female Criminal*, curated by Nerrida Campbell was visited by textile students interested in the fashion and fabrics of the era.[13]

The Justice and Police Museum is open to and encouraging of a wider use for the collection and the potential for the architectural history of Sydney is significant, yet to date the archive has not been extensively used in this way.[14] The riches that the archive contains in terms of the photographic recording of architectural detail are extensive. The public domain is represented by images as diverse as tram shelters, public stairways, pedestrian tunnels as well as many images of streets and street corners. The images of buildings contained within the collection range from squalid gambling dens to one of the city's grandest hotels. It includes houses, shops, apartment blocks, pubs and hotels, some still existing and some long ago demolished. There is also an abundance of interior detail; wall paper patterns, tile patterns, flooring materials, light fittings, wall treatments and interior joinery including staircases, public bars and retail displays. Images taken with the purpose of evidencing a crime can be used to provide us with evidence of our architectural history, a history of the ordinary at the moment of the extraordinary.

Image research is vital to architectural historians, particularly those interested in the use of architecture rather than just its initial design and creation. Text-based information on the way people use architecture is often limited and so images are necessary if we are to discover much of the detail of the overlaying of architectural development and use. Doyle sees the everyday spaces depicted by the archive as one of its strengths.

12. Delia Falconer, "Darkness Harbours Within the Light," *Australian,* February 07, 2009.

13. Nerida Campbell and Holly Schulte, Historic Houses Trust, conversation with the author.

14. Campbell, conversation with the author January 22, 2013.

In the 1920s police photographers began attending accident and crime scenes, and they have bequeathed to us, nearly a century later, a wholly unique view of inner Sydney, their Sydney—dark streets, back alleys, grimy corner shops, factories, stables, kitchens, living rooms, bedrooms, sheds, backyards, dockland areas—the sort of "anti-picturesque" scenes from which more pictorially-inclined commercial photographers of the day averted their gaze.[15]

15. Peter Doyle, "City of Shadows Everyday Mayhem in Sydney," *Insites* (Spring 2005).

It is true that there is much of the commonplace in this collection but there are also photographs of some sophisticated pieces of historic Sydney architecture such as the Sydney Arcade and the Hotel Metropole that have entered the collection as the result of crime or accident.

The photography of architecture had a slow start in Australia. The beginnings of photography in this country occurred in 1842 with the arrival of George Barron Goodman and his daguerreotype apparatus in December of that year. Goodman, established a studio in George Street producing portraits.[16] It was not until the end of the 1850s that selected photographers in Sydney such as O.W. Blackwood and William Hetzer began to offer photographic views of the city.[17] The work of photographic studios such as Messrs Richards & Co., the official photographers to the International Exhibition 1879–1880, Henry King Photographic Studio (1880–1900), Charles Kerry & Co. (1885–1917), Sam Hood Studio (1899–1955), the New South Wales Government Printing Office photographer in the late 1800s, as well as individual photographers such as Harold Cazneaux and many anonymous amateurs have provided both evocative and precise historic images of Sydney's architecture, but this record is largely of the grand public buildings or wealthy commercial enterprises.

16. Jack Cato, *The Story of the Camera in Australia* (Melbourne: Institute of Australian Photography, 1977); Alan Davies and Peter Stanbury. *The Mechanical Eye in Australia.* (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1986), 8; Anne-Marie Willis, *Picturing Australia: a History of Photography* (Sydney: Angus & Robertson, 1988) 7.

17. Willis, *Picturing Australia* , 49-51.

Opening the Forensic Photography Archive from a different perspective, this paper will now look at six images from the collection and explore them as a source for evidence of architectural history. The potential for architectural research utilising this archive seems almost boundless, a wealth of images for the historian of architecture, urban form and interiors. So in this paper I want to move the focus from the *crime* scene that the photograph evidences to the *architecture* that the photograph evidences, so that the crime that was once the central purpose of the photograph becomes just one small fragment in the history of the architecture it depicts. This deliberate reframing is, I acknowledge, open to the criticism that the images are being

taken out of context, but these images are already out of their original intended context. The crime scene photograph's original context is short-lived and purely functional. Once the image has had its 'day in court' its original purpose is at an end. This ending is further emphasised by the separation of the images from the written records. Salvaging and re-presenting these images, often elevating only one of a series for use in museums, galleries, books, multi-media artworks and illustrated novels removes them many steps further whereas Williams observes " the newly visible image becomes layered, wrapped and disguised in a variety of re-shaping emotions, suppositions and discourses."[18] Selecting and presenting photographs whose architectural component is seemingly greater than its criminal component, is another way of encouraging in the words of Williams, "critical discussion, creative speculation and historical learning; opportunities such images, used for a pragmatic, short-term purpose in a police bureaucracy were never intended to promote at the time of creation."[19]

So I acknowledge my intent to deliberately select images that please my personal architectural eye and my research interests and move on, but with caution. There are decendants of both victims and criminals, past and present owners of property and present day victims of crime who need to be considered when using these images.

The moving on is a challenge in itself. The first dilemma is what image, or selection of images to focus on, what piece of architecture, or architectural typology to investigate. The images in the archive do not portray the ideal designs and products depicted in architecture and design journals of the time. They depict real everyday spaces, the ordinary and sometimes extraordinary architecture of the city.

The images I have selected from the collection contain no dead bodies, no pools of blood or body parts. There are many such photos in the collection and many of them contain fascinating architectural detail but this paper deliberately avoids these photographs. It is almost impossible to concentrate on the architectural details of marble panelling, wrought iron balusters, an ornately carved timber handrail and the curved terrazzo steps of an elegant apartment block staircase when the corpse of a woman in a pool of blood, covered partially by an overcoat with her stockinged feet protruding from under it can be seen sprawled out on the floor with her head on the bottom step.[20]

18. Williams, "A Future Undreamed, 169.

19. Caleb Williams, "A Future Undreamed: The Forensic Photo Beyond the Darkroom, Case File and Courtroom: Memory, Mediation, Museology," *Law Text Culture*, vol 13 (2009), 169.

20. Photograph "Lobby of apartment building, with corpse at base of stairs. Details unknown, around 1938," http://collection.hht.net.au/ images_linked/31232/072.jpg (accessed January 23, 2013).

The first image is of a tram shelter which was located on City Road at the edge of Victoria Park near Sydney University. This could almost be the photograph of an architectural photographer: black and white, dramatic, clearly showing the architectural detail of the timber fretwork, corrugated iron roof and the skilled work of the carpenter's timber seat. Like many architectural photographs there are no people. Only the collection of posters on the rear wall, the handbills pasted on the backrest of the seat and the rubbish accumulated around the floor of the shelter tells us this has been a recently inhabited space. The tram lines in the foreground promise it will be inhabited again, indeed removed from its criminal context as the site of an assault one might think that the photographer had just missed the tram.

This photograph is, I believe, in terms of public space architecture an important one, because while much has been written on the rolling stock of Sydney's tramway system, the various routes, the track infrastructure and the people who operated it there has been almost no attention paid to the built form that it generated.[21] This built form in its day was extensive; tram sheds, carriage works and tram stop shelters, but it was utilitarian and did not attract the fascination of the transport technology it facilitated. There are other photographs that show tram shelters but they are usually in the context of a more general street scene or as a backdrop to another photographic subject. This image is a portrait of the tram shelter itself, the design suggesting it was built in the early days of the electric trams in Sydney, the first decade of the twentieth century.

21. K. McCarthy and N. Chinn, *A Century of New South Wales Tramcars,* vol. 2, *Electric Era: 1903-1908,* (Sydney: South Pacific Electric Railway, 1968); Ian MacCowan, *The Tramways of New South Wales* (Oakleigh, Vict.: I. A. Macgowan, 1990); Caroline Butler-Bowdon, Annie Campbell and Howard Clark, *Shooting Through: Sydney By Tram* (Sydney: Historic Houses Trust, 2009).

Figure 1. Site of Assault. Tram shelter on City Road. Details unknown.

Now we move to another element of utilitarian built form in the public space of the city and another assault. Whilst for a moment in November 1923 this public stairway was the site of an indecent assault on a girl who may have been as young as 10, this is only one tragic incident in the history of this stairway which was also the site of accidental falls some resulting in death.

This stairway has undergone many transformations. The first version was a timber stairway built in 1887 to a design signed off by R. W. Richards the City Surveyor.[22] This first version of the stairway did not last long, and in 1899 a specification was produced by the Sydney City Council "for the Removal and Re Erection of wooden Steps [sic]" in the same location and a drawing again signed by R. W. Richards was produced. The drawing from the City of Sydney archives shows the timber structure of the stairway with a picket style fence on the outside of a cross braced balustrade.[23] In 1903 the stairs were repainted at a cost of twelve pounds and twelve shillings, work that the city building surveyor claimed was "badly needed."[24] In 1914 the timber support trestles and stringers were replaced with iron although the design of the steps and balustrade remained similar. This is the version of the stairway we see in the Forensic Photography archive photograph from 1923.

This refurbished stairway did not please everyone however. In 1917 Robert Saunders the owner of Robert Saunders and Son Pyrmont Quarries and Stone Cutting Works requested that the stairway be dismantled and removed claiming it was "unsightly and dangerous." Perhaps the real motivation was as Saun-

22. Plan E3-195/1 City of Sydney, Richards was City Surveyor from 1887 to 1901.

23. Plan E3-195/2 City of Sydney.

24. Letter from the City Building Surveyor to the Town Clerk November 17, 1903, City of Sydney, 2187/03.

ders stated later in his letter, that the stairway obstructed and prevented free access to the north-east portion of the company's property. Saunders noted that there was "a big record of accidents and several deaths through people falling down the long flights of steps."[25] The irony of Saunders request for removal is that the escarpment that the stairway traversed was created as a result of stone quarrying in the first place.

It is clear that whilst the stairway provided pedestrian access it was also problematic. The next year a Mr Albert Sampson put in a claim for fifteen pounds to the council as compensation for his pony that had bolted and jumped over the stairway handrail crashing to the footpath sixty feet below and breaking its neck.[26]

Apparently neither Robert Saunders nor Albert Sampson were successful with their requests. In 1931 the stair was reconstructed yet again but this time with a structure in mild steel with galvanised iron pipe handrail and a wire mesh balustrade. The steps themselves had hardwood treads and open risers and were fixed to the stringers with steel angles.[27]

A stairway still exists in this location today, it still has timber treads and open risers with a metal mesh balustrade but today there is a change in direction at the landing so that a hapless pedestrian cannot fall in a straight line all the way from the top. A stair is not a benign component of architectural form. Stairways have been described by the American architect John Templer as "one of the world's most dangerous products."[28] Whilst Templer was referring to the stairway as a site of trip hazards and accidental falls, the Forensic Photography Collection illustrates flights of stairs as places not only of accidents but that also have a criminal past as the sites of assault, indecent exposure and murder.

Not all the architecture that appears in images contained in the archive is as ordinary as the tram shelter and the public stairway. The Sydney Arcade was the first arcade to be built in Sydney in 1881. It was designed by the architect Thomas Rowe (1829-1899). [29] Sydney Arcade occupied a space that ran in a right angle from George Street to King Street for a total length of three hundred and thirty six feet. It contained thirty three shops on the ground floor with thirty three offices on the first floor plus eight rooms and two photographic galleries.[30] The arcade was designed to maximise the shopfront presentation to the passing pedestrians in a city where, in the boom of the late 1800s, business space was becoming limited.

25. Letter from Robert Saunders to The Lord Mayor and Alderman, Town Hall Sydney, City of Sydney, 1738/17.

26. Inspectors Report, City Surveyor's Department, Sydney, May 16, 1918. City of Sydney 1670/18.

27. City of Sydney, Plan E3-193.

28. Lauran Neergaard, "Hunt for Safe Staircases Gives Career a Lift: Architect: John Templer calls stairs one of the world's most dangerous products," *Los Angeles Times*, January 23, 1994.

29. Rowe was also one of the founders of the Institute of Architects in 1871 and its president twice, 1876-89 and 1895-97. http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/rowe-thomas-4517, (accessed 27/01/2013).

30. "The Sydney Arcade," *Australian Town and Country Journal,* Saturday April 9, 1881, 27.

The roof structure of the building was wrought iron, with clearstory windows for the full length of both sides of the arcade. These were mechanically openable for ventilation. The floor was finished in encaustic tiles and the arcade was lit with electric lamps.[31] The electric lighting was such a new phenomenon that it was considered an attraction at the promenade concerts held in the arcade by the proprietors.[32] The Gibbs, Shallard & Co. *Illustrated Guide to Sydney* for 1882 described the arcade as "an elegant bazzar" and "a popular promenade."[33]

The fire that resulted in the photograph from the Forensic Archive is possibly that from January, 1939 which reportedly took fifty firemen from six brigades to extinguish and caused fifteen thousand pounds worth of damage.[34]

Another prestigious Sydney building that appears in the Forensic Photography Archive is the Metropole Hotel which had frontages on Young, Bent and Phillip streets and was built by the Australian Coffee Palace Company at a cost of one hundred and fifty thousand pounds. When it opened on the fourteenth of January 1890 the Sydney Morning Herald claimed that "No more magnificent structure of design or appointment of its type can be found in the colonies, and certainly not in Sydney."[35]

The three frontages not only gave the hotel a good street position but allowed the architects Hennessy and Sheerin to provide "a direct outside light, and thorough ventilation for every bedroom in the place."[36] Many images of the Hotel Metropole exist in photographs by well know photographic companies such as the Star Photo Company, Kerry & Co, and later in the 1950s by Jack

31. "The Sydney Arcade," 27.

32. "Sydney Arcade," *Sydney Morning Herald,* December 14, 1881.

33. Gibbs, Shallard & Co., *An Illustrated Guide to Sydney, 1882,* (Sydney: Facsimile Edition, Angus & Robertson Publishers, 1981), f.p. Gibbs, Shallard & Co. 1882.

34. "£15,000 Damage By Fire," *Sydney Morning Herald,* 9 January 1939, 13; "Huge Fire in Sydney Arcade," *The Northern Star,* Lismore, January 10, 1939, 8.

35. "The Hotel Metropole," *Sydney Morning Herald*, January 14, 1890, 5.

36. "The Hotel Metropole," *Sydney Morning Herald*, January 14, 1890, 5.

Figure 3. The aftermath of a shopfront fire in the Sydney Arcade around 1937. Details unknown.

Figure 4: Scene of Death, Hotel Metropole, Sydney City, August 15, 1955.

37. *The Hotel Metropole Visitors' Guide to Sydney and New South Wales* (Sydney: Edward Lee & Co., 53 Market Street. 1896).

38. Kathy Hackett, "The Hotel Metropole", March 19, 2010, http://www.powerhousemuseum.com/imageservices/2010/03/the-hotel-metropole/ (accessed January 26, 2013).

39. *Hotel Metropole Ltd., Bent Street, Sydney, N.S.W., on behalf of Parkes Developments Pty., Limited Stocks and Holdings Limited, auction sale of furnishings & equipment on Monday, May 18th to Friday, May 22nd at 9.30 a.m. each day* (Sydney: F.R. Strange).

Hickson of the Australia Photographic Agency. It was the first of Sydney's "grand" hotels and appears in illustrations and postcards. The Hotel produced a guide book for visitors from 1890 which contained advertisements for local Sydney businesses and hotels outside Sydney as well as illustrations of Sydney's major landmarks and the interior of the Hotel itself.[37]

However this image of its stairway is from the Forensic Photography Archive. The stairway was twenty eight feet by twenty seven feet with the "newels, balusters and handrail … handsomely carved in blackwood" and with the soffit of the stair "panelled and moulded with selected cedar." I have found no record in newspapers of the death in 1955 for which the photograph was taken but the Hotel Metropole could be a dangerous place. In one week in 1954 three men died in separate incidents there by falling, two by falling down a lift shaft, both on separate occasions and one by falling out a window.

The hotel closed in 1969 and was demolished soon afterwards[38] with the furnishings and equipment auctioned in May 1970.[39]

All the images examined in this paper so far have been of publicly accessible spaces, but the archive also contains many private domestic spaces; many flights of internal stairs, both with and without corpses, dining rooms with blood spatter and signs of a struggle or clean and well presented, lounge rooms that may be dishevelled with a body on the floor or neat and tidy with a piano in the corner and bedrooms some of which are soaked in blood and some which appear serene and untouched.

Nerrida Campbell, a curator with the Historic Houses Trust, is currently researching the stories behind a series of images of a house in Great Buckingham Street Surry Hills connected with the Thallium poisoner Mrs. Caroline Grills. Mrs Grills was charged in 1953 with four murders and three attempted murders by poisoning with Thallium, an ingredient used in rat poison at the time.[40] Mrs Grills was finally sentenced only for one of the attempted murders and the use of thallium was subsequently banned.

The series of photographs relating to the Mrs Grills case show a domestic space of the 1950s. Not the idealised, modern, clean spaces an issue of Australian House and Garden Magazine at the time but everyday domestic spaces where newer styles of furniture and appliances sit side by side with older pieces in an overlaying of domestic technology from different times within a terrace house from the late 1800s. There are details of the outside of the terrace, of the tessellated tiles on the verandah, the cast ironwork, the twisted engaged columns of the three part window, a timber bench with storage space below, that possibly houses the gas meter, the worn paintwork of the rendered and coursed façade and a metal ventilation grille.

When the photographer moves inside we are shown a range of the domestic spaces, the lounge, dining room, kitchen and laundry. The dining room contains a Victorian fireplace dating from the time of the buildings construction, but the wallpaper, furniture and Bakelite radio are from a sequence of more recent times.

40. "Mrs Grills to Stand Trial," *Sydney Morning Herald*, August 21, 1953, 5.

Figure 5. Exterior detail of house in Great Buckingham Street.

Figure 6. Interior of dining room at a house in Great Buckingham Street.

The images discussed in this essay only scratch the surface of what is available to the architectural historian within this archive. To date the archive has been used primarily in relation to the crimes that the photographs depict or the imagined crime scenarios that they foster. This is understandable, it is after all, a forensic police archive, but as has been evidenced by some of the explorations in art and fashion that this archive has facilitated there are wider fields that this archive can be opened to. One of these fields is undoubtedly architectural history, enabling the examination of both previously hidden and neglected spaces as well as investigating previously well documented buildings from a new perspective.