

## Cameron Street on the Map.

Cameron Street is first shown on a plan drawn by Thomas Scott in 1821[DPIPWE L34]. It extends past what is now Tamar Street to the Government Gardens, about half-way through City Park. For some years settlement was largely confined to an area between Cameron Street and the North Esk. Allotments on Scott's plan are only shown on the northern, river-facing side. Just two other streets, Paterson and Charles, are marked, making Cameron Street one of the first three streets in Launceston to be charted.

Governor Arthur arrived in Tasmania in 1824 and before the year was out he formalised the names of 14 streets in Launceston, including Cameron Street [*Tasmanian and Port Dalrymple Advertiser*, 26/1/1825, p.2]. It is thought the street was named in honour of Lt Colonel Charles Cameron (1779 – 1827) who was Commandant in charge when the headquarters of the northern settlement was taken back from George Town to Launceston in 1824. A just and humane administrator, Cameron has been called the second father of Launceston. Charles Street is also thought to be named after him.

By the time Sharland drew his 1826 plan of Launceston, Cameron Street, now commencing at Tamar Street, had assumed its present form [W S Sharland, *Plan of Launceston and vicinity*, August 5<sup>th</sup> 1826].

## Further reading

James Boyce, *1835: the founding of Melbourne and the conquest of Australia*, Black, Inc, Collingwood, Vic, 2011.

Helen Davies, *For the record : James Bennell's buildings in early Launceston*, Terrace Press, Launceston, 2006.

Friends of the Library, Launceston, *The Tasmanian Exhibition, Launceston 1891-92*, FOLL, 2013.

Jenny Gill, *Holy Trinity Church, Launceston : a history from 1838*, Holy Trinity Church, Launceston, 2010.

Anne Green, *The cheerful noise of foundries : places of industry and transport in Launceston*, LCC, 2010

Anne Green, *The home of sports and manly exercise : places of leisure in Launceston*, LCC, 2006.

Anne Green, *A model municipality : places of management, mentoring & medicine in Launceston*, LCC, 2007.

J B Hirst, 'The Cornwall Hotel, Launceston' *Building a free Australia: places of democracy*, ch. 2, p. 11-17, AHC, 2009.

Stefan Petrow, *Going to the mechanics : a history of the Launceston Mechanics' Institute 1842-1914*, Historical Survey of Northern Tasmania, Launceston 1998.

John Reynolds, *Launceston : history of an Australian city*, Macmillan, Melbourne, 1969.



## LAUNCESTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

This walk was developed by the Launceston Historical Society for National Trust Heritage Month in May 2013.

A virtual tour with photographs can be seen on Historypin:  
<http://www.historypin.com/channels/view/22806038/>

The Society holds regular meetings on the third Sunday of the month in February and from April to November. New members are always welcome. Please see our website for further details: [www.launcestonhistory.org.au](http://www.launcestonhistory.org.au)

For guided tours please contact Launceston Historic Walks ph 03 6331 2213  
[http://www.1842.com.au/launceston\\_historic\\_walks.html](http://www.1842.com.au/launceston_historic_walks.html)

[Images courtesy of the Launceston Local Studies Collection, Tasmanian Archive and Heritage Office, LPIC22.]

# From Albert to Victoria: a walk along historic Cameron Street, Launceston

**Launceston** is Australia's third oldest European settlement, established in 1806 after Sydney (1788) and Hobart (1803). The city is renowned for its well preserved historic buildings. Cameron Street in particular is overflowing with fine examples. A stroll down Cameron Street, from the Albert Hall in the east to the Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery in the west, is a delightful introduction to Launceston's unique architectural and social heritage.

Until the 1880s the Launceston streetscape was dominated by Georgian buildings. Then the city experienced a period of great prosperity, arising largely from the success of mines on Tasmania's west coast. New buildings were erected and old structures given new fronts to such an extent that the city took on a Victorian flavour. Inspired by Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee in 1887, the patriotic citizens of Launceston named the city's two most imposing buildings, both completed in 1891, after their revered monarch and her beloved consort Prince Albert.

Victoria and Albert were one of history's most devoted couples. Their blissfully happy marriage produced nine children. When Albert died in 1861 Victoria plunged into deep mourning, withdrew from society and wore black for the remainder of her life. Surviving him by four decades, she had statues erected across Britain in his memory. In Launceston a walk from the Albert Hall along Cameron Street to the Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery is a fitting reminder of a great era in the city's past, a great monarch, and a great romance.



Albert Hall c.1898



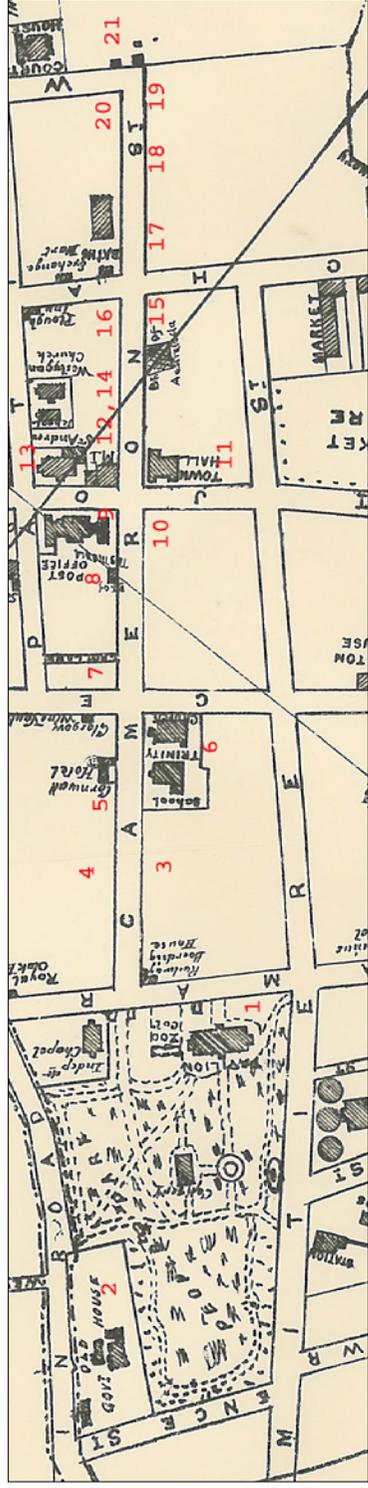
A&V



Victoria Museum c.1898

# Cameron Street, Launceston

[From *Plan of Launceston in Tasmania 1881*, Aikenhead and Buttom, Lithos., facsimile edition, QVMAG, Launceston 1981, Launceston Local Studies Collection, TAHO.]



<p><b>1. The Albert Hall</b> was built by Englishman John Todd Familo. His tender price of £4850 was accepted and by the early Dec 1889 work had commenced. The foundation stone was laid in April 1890 by the Mayor Samuel Sutton. First known as the 'City Park Pavilion', it was named 'The Albert Hall' in January 1891. <i>The Tasmanian Exhibition 1891-92 for which the Albert Hall had been built opened on 25th November 1891.</i> Over the years the Albert Hall has been used for balls, school exams, exhibitions, concerts, as a refuge from the 1929 floods and for many major City events.</p>	<p><b>8. Northern Club.</b> The original brick and stone building (c.1830s) was erected on land granted to Simeon Lord. Archer, Gilles and Company established a bank here in 1840. <i>The short-lived Launceston Club – set up in March 1841 – was disbanded in August 1842 due to a public quarrel between Lewis Gilles and Dr William Pugh.</i> From 1897 the building became the premises of the Northern Club. Extensions were added to the front and back of the building. Now the Northern Club Hotel, it has apartments on the upper levels.</p>	<p><b>15. Macquarie House</b> was constructed by John Sprunt as a warehouse for the merchant Henry Reed in 1830. It is Georgian in style, of brick and stone with an iron roof. Saved from demolition in the 1970s, in more recent times it has been occupied by the QVMAG and various restaurants. It is currently owned by the Launceston City Council. <i>Batman and Faulkner are believed to have provisioned their expeditions to Port Phillip from here.</i></p>
<p><b>2. Government Cottage was erected by Lieutenant Governor William Paterson in 1807.</b> The official residence in the north, it was known as 'Government House' and served as a base for visiting dignitaries including Gov. Macquarie and Count Paul Edmund Strzelecki. Between 1848 and 1885 it was rented to a succession of tenants before being handed over to the Launceston Council. By this time the building was in serious disrepair. It was demolished and the site incorporated into City Park.</p>	<p><b>9. Public Buildings.</b> With the granting of independence in 1856, Launceston colonists requested the erection of suitable public buildings to house government bodies. Original plans submitted were considered very plain, dismal and defective. <i>William Henry Clayton's design for government offices, to be located where the stocks had been sited, was approved.</i> In 1861 elegant ornamental iron fencing was erected. In 1939 the fencing was moved to the Elphin Show Grounds and now surrounds 'Belle Vue' at Epping Forest.</p>	<p><b>16. Henty House.</b> Designed by Peter H. Partridge and built by the Fletcher Watts Group, Henty House was completed in 1982. The architectural style is Brutalist, defined by its predominant use of concrete and a "blockish" form. It was intended for Government use and remains a government building today, though only for State services; the plan to house all three levels of government failed. <i>Once dubbed Launceston's tallest building, Henty House was heritage listed in February 2012 and delisted four months later!</i></p>
<p><b>3. The Crown Mill,</b> built by Thomas Affleck in 1897 was the first electrically powered flour mill in Australia. In 1918 Affleck joined with Mond's' milling firm to form Mond's &amp; Affleck. The mill in Cameron Street was used to produce specialized products such as rolled oats, oatmeal and split peas. Scotsman Affleck was particularly proud of his rolled oats. The mill ceased operation in 1976. <i>The re-developed building has won an award from the Royal Australian Institute of Architects.</i></p>	<p><b>10. The Launceston Post Office,</b> built during 1885-1889, was a two storey Queen Anne design with a turret at one end. On the former site of the London Tavern and the Royal Olympic Theatre, it has been extensively renovated and repaired since construction. The top of the original pepper-pot tower was replaced by the clock tower to commemorate the centenary of Launceston in 1906. <i>The bells weighing 3 1/2 tons and said to be the "sweetest chimes in Australia" tolled to forewarn of the 1929 floods.</i></p>	<p><b>17. Bennell House</b> was constructed by renowned local builder James Bennell in the 1840s as business premises and family home, with stables. Built around a courtyard, the house and stables are two-storeyed and the warehouse single storeyed with attics. The property remained in the Bennell family until the mid-twentieth century. It is currently occupied by a travel agent.</p>
<p><b>4. The Grand Chancellor Hotel</b> site was occupied by a number of businesses in earlier years, including Charles Adams &amp; Sons timber merchants. In 1912 the business was purchased by Messrs J&amp;T Gunn Ltd. Later a car repair business operated there and at the time of its sale to a developer it was the site of the Jackson Ford car yard. The Launceston International Hotel opened on the site in 1988. There have been a number of ownership and name changes since that time.</p>	<p><b>11. Town Hall.</b> Launceston was proclaimed a municipality in 1852. A gala occasion marked the laying of the foundation stone of the Town Hall in April 1864 by Gov. Core Brown. <i>Initially designed by architect Horace Bennett in the Victorian Italianate style, construction was overseen by Peter Mills, the Clerk of Works.</i> Opened for business in 1865, the original four Corinthian columns of the main façade were extended to nine in the 1930s.</p>	<p><b>18. Clairville'</b> 110 Cameron Street (c.1836-1846) is on the site of a timber dwelling from which the first teacher in Launceston ran a pioneer school. Described as Victorian Free Classical in style, it was constructed from brick and timber as a town house for gentleman-farmer John Sinclair Esq. by James Bennell. <i>Sinclair was a member of Batman's Port Phillip Association.</i> Once owned by Jacksons, the Australia's oldest locksmiths, and the National Trust, the house is now an elegant private residence.</p>
<p><b>5. The Batman Faulkner Inn,</b> formerly known as the Cornwall Hotel was built by 1824 by John Pascoe Faulkner. The original hotel had a hipped roof, narrow eaves and was the only two-storey building in town. From here Faulkner planned his famous expedition which led to the founding of Melbourne. The Anti-Transportation League was formed here in 1849. The old hotel was largely demolished and rebuilt with a new Edwardian façade by J&amp;T Gunn in 1905. <i>In 1981 it was renamed the Batman Faulkner Inn – an irony as the two men were rivals.</i></p>	<p><b>12. Launceston Mechanics' Institute.</b> The foundation stone of this freestone classic-style building designed by William Henry Clayton was laid in 1857 before a crowd of 3,000. Opened in 1860, the Institute was an important facility designed to improve the lot of the working man, or the mechanic. It included a library, a reading room, class rooms and a lecture hall. Leslie Corrie designed an 1885 extension that included a museum. The Institute later became a public library. <i>Sadly, after 111 years, it was closed in June 1971 and demolished.</i></p>	<p><b>19. Struan House (1870)</b> was designed by Peter Mills and built by Edward Ford for James Robertson. A grand residence, it faced the Tamar River rather than Cameron Street, and had a beautiful parterre garden. It was used by his Excellency the Governor Sir Robert Hamilton during the 1891-92 Tasmanian Exhibition. <i>By 1921 it had been converted into a private hospital.</i> When the hospital closed in 1927 Struan was purchased by the Government and became piece of a new police building. It is now part of the Supreme Court building.</p>
<p><b>6. Holy Trinity Anglican Church</b> was designed by Launceston master architect Alexander North. Of Gothic-Revival style, it replaced an earlier church, the work of noted convict architect James Blackburn. In 1902 the body of the church, built by J&amp;T Gunn, was consecrated but the west end was covered in iron sheeting for 80+ years until Hinman, Wright and Manser completed the narthex in 1986. <i>A grand tower envisioned by North was never built.</i></p>	<p><b>13. St Andrews Presbyterian Church.</b> The foundation stone was laid in 1849 by the Governor, Sir William Denison, and built by William Tyson, the first minister was the popular but fiery character Rev. Robert Ewing who <i>inspired the novel idea of standing to sing hymns!</i> When demolition of the Mechanics' Institute left an unsightly back section exposed to view, the City Council helped to finance a 1973/74 extension.</p>	<p><b>20. Middlesex Terrace and Esk View Terrace.</b> The first Bank of Australasia, owned by C S Henty, was located on this corner until 1856. One bank manager, Charles Thomson, is remembered for accidentally locking himself in the strong room. In 1905 the bank was replaced by these terraces, designed by Edward Laidlaw and built by H T Russell for John Hart. <i>Favoured as a respectable address for single women, they featured such rare luxuries as electric light, gas stoves and cold running water.</i></p>
<p><b>7. Mills Building.</b> This corner-located Victorian-Italianate building of brick and stucco was constructed by the architect Peter Mills for his own use in 1882. Originally a residence, furniture factory and shop, today the Steel family operates serviced offices on the lower floors and apartments on the top floor overlooking Holy Trinity Church. <i>The façade is decorated with beautiful statues of the famous Roman-Greek goddesses Diana, Venus and Fortuna.</i></p>	<p><b>14. Civic Square.</b> In 1968 the Launceston Council commissioned a feasibility study to form a civic administration centre, comprising the whole of the Town Hall block, bounded by Cameron, St John, Charles and Cmithere streets. The plan was to combine the offices of all three levels of Government. <i>The Tasmanian Tiger statue was presented to the City of Launceston by the Examiner Newspaper to mark its 150th anniversary in 1992.</i> The work, entitled 'Tasmanian Tableau', was sculpted by Stephen Walker.</p>	<p><b>21. The Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery (QVMAG)</b> can trace its origins back to the Launceston Mechanics' Institute. Designed by amateur architect John Duncan and built by J&amp;T Gunn at a cost of £5,000, it has two storeys, a Victorian façade and a steep pitched roof. The foundation stone was laid in 1887 to mark Queen Victoria's golden jubilee and the building completed four years later in 1891. Extensions have been constructed to the north, south and west. <i>QVMAG is Australia's largest regional Museum with sites at Royal Park (Art Gallery) and Innersk (Museum).</i></p>