

THE ALEXANDRA



COAT OF ARMS



HERITAGE
SERIES

THE ALEXANDRA COAT OF ARMS

THE CURRENT VERSION OF THE AUSTRALIAN COAT OF ARMS
WAS ESTABLISHED 19TH SEPTEMBER 1912
THE ALEXANDRA COAT OF ARMS WAS ESTABLISHED 17 JULY 1882

CONTRIBUTORS

Commonwealth Government of Australia
National Library Australia
State Library Victoria

Con Boekel
Ted & Val Hall
Lawrence Hood
Allan Layton
Leisa Lees
Kathie Maynes
Kelly Petersen
David & Debbie Hibbert

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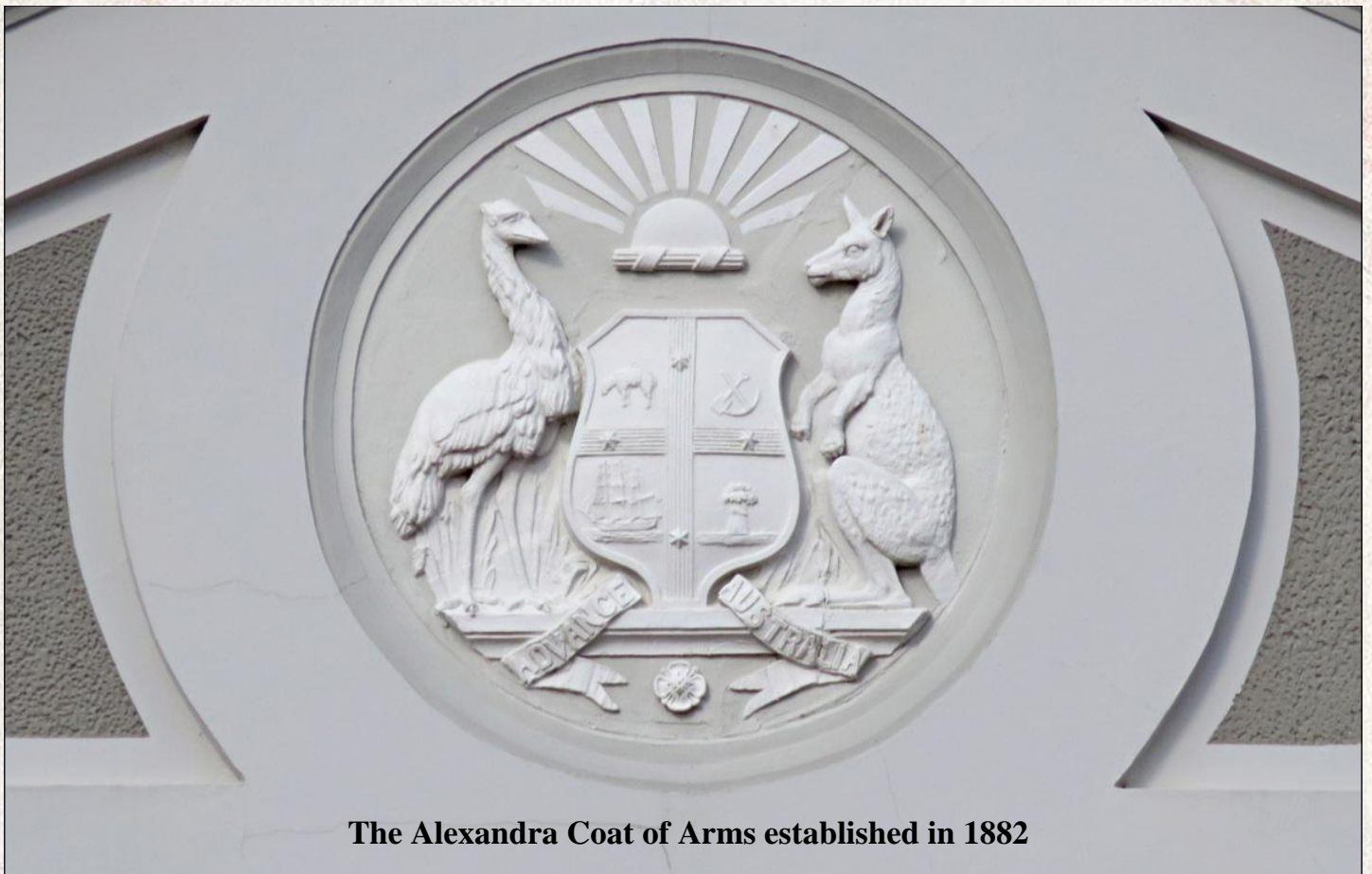
BAKER'S ARMS

HISTORIC FACTSHEET

THE ALEXANDRA COAT OF ARMS

Name: Coat of Arms of Australia
Approved: 7th May 1908 by
King Edward VII
Updated: 19th September 1912 by
King George V

The Coat of Arms of Australia was formerly known as the Commonwealth Coat of Arms and is the official symbol of the country of Australia.



The Alexandra Coat of Arms established in 1882

The Australian Coat of Arms is an official formalised symbol that represents the Commonwealth of Australia. It is used under certain circumstances and with strict guidelines, to represent the country of Australia. The Federation of Australia and the establishment of a National flag for Australia occurred in 1901, yet there was no formal Coat of Arms for Australia at this time. Australia's first official Coat of Arms (above) was rudimentary, though managed to capture something special about our country and its relationship with mother England. The use of the Kangaroo and Emu, two animals native to Australia, could only represent Australia, as this is the only country where these two animals are found together. This Coat of Arms was ratified by King Edward VII on 7 May 1908. Though this was not the first Coat of Arms seen in Australia.

HISTORIC FACTSHEET

COAT OF ARMS 1912 - PRESENT

Our first Australian Coat of Arms, approved by King Edward VII on 7 May 1908.



While the design of the Coat of Arms was new, similar designs had been seen before, as unofficial Coat of Arms were already appearing across Australia. These unofficial Coats of Arms appear to represent what the districts were built upon, as well as showcasing their part of the colony of Australia.

One striking architectural use of a Coat of Arms that predates the official Coat of Arms can be seen on the Town Hall at Alexandra in Central Victoria. This Coat of Arms predates the first officially proclaimed Coat of Arms by 36 years and the current Coat of Arms by 40 years.

See our Factsheet on the Australian Coat of Arms for more on the official Coat of Arms.

DESIGNER

James Scurry - the creator

ARTIST SERIES

AUSTRALIAN ARTISTS FROM OUR PAST



JAMES SCURRY

Born: circa 1827

Died: 4 May 1894

Style: Sketcher, sculptor, draughtsman, Architectural figure moulder



James was born in 1827 in London to parent William Scurry (London architect) and Mary (née) Rodd. He married c1847, but his wife died childless prior to migrating to Australia c1853 with some of his brothers. In Australia he sketched scenes and worked as a sculptor. He displayed five busts at the Royal Academy in the early 1850s, was one of the founding members of the 'Victorian Society of Fine Arts' in 1856. Around this time established the firm 'Mackennal & Scurry'

with John Simpson Mackennal, working from Scurry's studio located at 94 Russell Street. The firm submitted numerous works in numerous exhibitions, including two fountain designs and a chimney design in the 1862 Victorian Great Exhibition. His busts included: J Rodgers, Lord Brassey, William Gray, William Essex, his father, Sir Redmond Barry and friend Charles Summers in 1880 (who was commissioned in 1872 to sculpture Princess Alexandra). Scurry had previously worked under Summers.. In 1870 James was a founding member of the 'Victorian Academy of Arts'. He retired to England, later returning to Australia where he died on 4 May 1894 at his 57 William Street, North Carlton home after a long battle with illness. He was buried at the Melbourne General Cemetery in Parkville.



The Alexandra Coat of Arms designed by James Scurry in 1881 and unveiled 17 July 1882

TIMELINE OF EVENTS

A basic chronological listing of related events

TIMELINE OF EVENTS

- c1827** James Scurry was born. He later modelled one of Victoria's earlier Coat of Arms three decades before the current Coat of Arms was ratified.
- 9 November 1841** Prince Edwards (later King Edward VII) was born. (He reigned 22 January 1901 - 6 May 1910).
- 1 December 1844** Princess Alexandra (Queen Consort to King Edward VII) was born.
- 10 March 1863** Prince Edward and Princess Alexandra were married.
- 3 June 1865** Prince George (later King George V) was born. (He Reigned 6 May 1910 - 20 January 1936).
- Circa 1868** William Baker of the Freemasons Hotel (later Freemason's Café) established the first Coat of Arms at Alexandra on the front of his business.
- 17 June 1882** The Alexandra Shire Hall was officially opened. It included an unofficial Coat of Arms on the front that predated all official Coat of Arms (1908 and 1912). On its opening, it was described as being on a circular moulded panel, modelled by Mr James Scurry of Melbourne. ([Alexandra & Yea Standard, 7 July 1882](#)). James was around 55 years of age when he modelled Alexandra's Coat of Arms.
- 7 May 1908** King Edward VII approved the first Coat of Arms of Australia.
- 19 September 1912** King George V approved the Australian Coat of Arms as it appears today.
- 1 May 1894** Mr James Scurry died aged 67.



HISTORIC FACTSHEET

TIMELINE OF EVENTS

13 September 2013

Artworkz commenced work on this factsheet.

ARTIST

ELEMENTS

COLOURS

ANIMALS

RISING SUN

FASCES

ALEXANDRA COAT OF ARMS

Alexandra's unofficial Coat or Arms

MOTTO

SHEEP

MINING

WHEAT

SHIP

FLOWER

HISTORIC FACTSHEET

EXPLORING THE COAT OF ARMS



The Alexandra Shire Hall Coat of Arms is an unofficial Coat of Arms that pre-dates Federation (1901) and predates both of the official versions of the Australian Coat of Arms approved in 1908 (by King Edward VII) and 1912 (by King George V).



The Alexandra Coat of Arms was designed by James Scurry, a well known and respected Melbourne artists, sketcher, sculptor and architectural figure moulder (more next page).

Interestingly, the 'Bowman Flag' (inset image) created in 1806 in New South Wales by John and Honor Bowman, very closely resembles the Alexandra Town Hall Coat of Arms. AS can be seen later in this factsheet, the unofficial Adelaide Arcade Coat of Arms is strikingly similar in design with the Alexandra Coat of Arms as well.

HISTORIC FACTSHEET

ELEMENTS



Rising Sun



Fasces



Sheep



Mining



Ship



Wheat



Possible Rosette



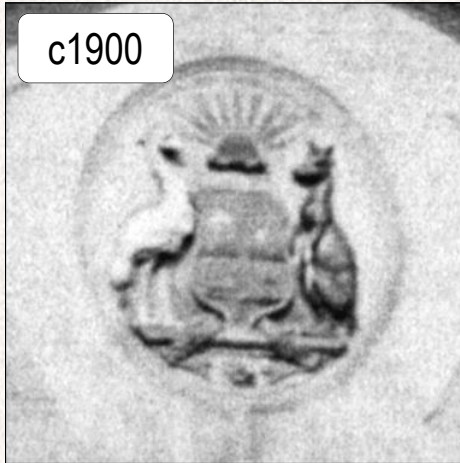
Advance Australia

HISTORIC FACTSHEET

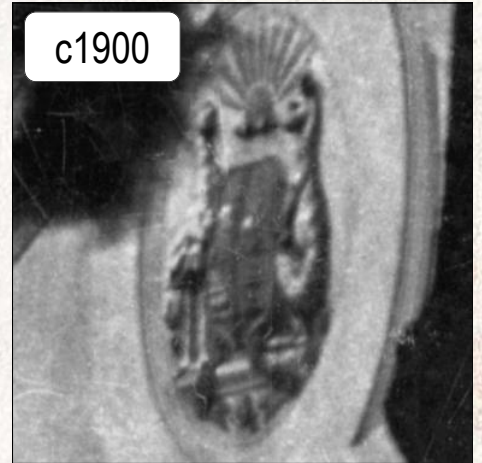
ALEXANDRA COLOURS

The Alexandra
Town Hall was
officially
opened on
17 July 1882

c1900



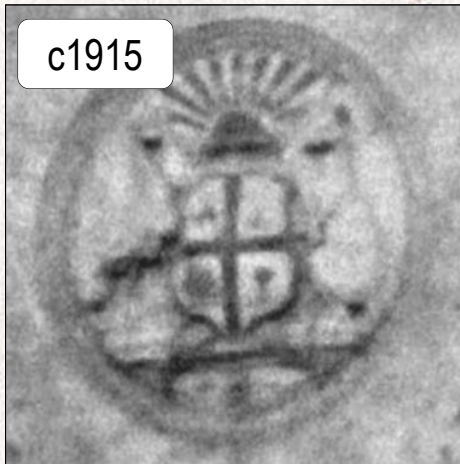
c1900



c1912



c1915



c1980



c1987



2002



2009-16



In 2013 Alexandra local Rex Tate raised recolouring the Coat of Arms on the Alexandra Town Hall to match the original colours. We do not know what the original colours were (or if it even had colour in its original form). Any help would be greatly appreciated.

HISTORIC FACTSHEET

MAMMALS REVERSED



**Official
Australian
Coat of Arms
in the approved
line art form**



**Unofficial
Alexandra
Coat of Arms**

The Coat of Arms on the Alexandra Shire Hall predates both official version of the Coat of Arms (1908 and 1912). There are significant differences between the two as a result. The most obvious difference is that the Emu and the Kangaroo are reversed.

RISING SUN



- The Coat of Arms includes a Rising Sun -

The rising sun became less popular in Australia iconography after World War II due to its links with Japan and the Japanese 'Rising Sun' symbol. However, today that has mostly been forgotten. The Australian Defence Force now has a Rising Sun Badge that was introduced in 1991 (seventh pattern) that is displayed on Army personnel's hats. While this badge is officially called the 'Australian Army Badge', it is referred to as the 'Rising Sun Badge'.

FASCES



- The Coat of Arms includes a fasces -

The fasces were carried by Roman Lictors (officials) and the basic notion was that a state was strong if all the small sticks (the citizens) were closely bound together but that each citizen was weak when on his own. Hitler and Mussolini took this up with gusto, hence 'Fascists'. One result is that fasces as an icon is not all that popular anymore! It may have been that the fasces icon was being used as a symbol that the colonies bound together (federated) would be stronger than they were individually.

HISTORIC FACTSHEET

MOTTO



- The Coat of Arms includes a motto -

The motto is 'Advance Australia'. Advance Australia Fair, the song, was first sung in 1878 and there was rising patriotism and nationalism in Australia. The building of the Alexandra Shire Hall would have fitted nicely with the timing for this.

SHEEP



- The Coat of Arms includes a Sheep -

It is believed this is symbolic of the livestock industry and trade. The harness and hook located around the animal suggests it may represent the loading and unloading of stock.

MINING



- The Coat of Arms includes a pick and spade -

It is believed that this is symbolic of mining and construction. The Colony of Victoria was quickly established due to the gold rush and the construction industry followed.

WHEAT



- The Coat of Arms includes a stook of Wheat -

It is believed that this is symbolic of the agricultural industry and trade. Wheat became an established export back to England as well as being used as the Colony grew.

SHIP



- The Coat of Arms includes a ship -

It is believed that this is symbolic of trade and immigration. Trade for Australia was vital for the establishment of our country, but so too was the early need of immigrants as laborers. Local pioneer John Cotton himself bemoaned the lack of immigrant laborers in 1843. The pictured ship is a three masted barque, a type of early sailing vessel that was able to carry a large cargo while being a safe, reasonably quick and universal ship. The *Bark Endeavour* captained by James Cook on his was a three masted barque (similar to the one show) capable of reaching speeds of up to 8 knots (15 km/h).

FLOWER



- The Coat of Arms includes a Flower -

The rose-like symbol may simply be a decorative element with no symbolic meaning. It was not uncommon for rosette's (round decorative flower design element used in sculptural objects from antiquity) to be used on architectural designs. Other possibilities include that it was related to the 'White Rose of York' or the 'Red Rose of Lancaster'. Is it possible that the use of an Australian species of Acacia Wattle on the current Australian Coat of Arms, was inspired by the use of a flower on some earlier versions. For more information on wattle and the official Australian Wattle Day, visit [here](#).

FLOWER



- Chimney Flowers -

The Alexandra Shire Hall is also adorned with two flowers on each of the four remaining chimney. Originally the Shire Hall had six chimneys and 12 roses. Today there are eight roses.

ROYAL
CONNECTION

Connection with the Royals

PRINCESS ALEXANDRA



Alexandra of Denmark married Prince Edward and was Queen Consort to King Edward.

Born: 1 December 1844
Married: Prince Edward (10 March 1901)
Reign: 22 January 1901 - to her husband's death
Died: 20 November 1925
Parents: Christian IX of Denmark (Inherited the Throne of Denmark Nov. 1863)
Louise of Hesse-Kassel

The small rural township of Alexandra in Central Victoria was named after Princess Alexandra. A statue of the Princess created by early sculptor Charles Summers is located in the Jack Shiel Garden opposite the Shire Offices.



BAKER'S ARMS

The Earliest Coat of Arms in Alexandra (circa 1886)

Around four years after the 1882 Coat of Arms was established on the Town Hall, staunch monarchist William Baker established one on his business

HISTORIC SIGNAGE

Grant Street, Alexandra circa 1900

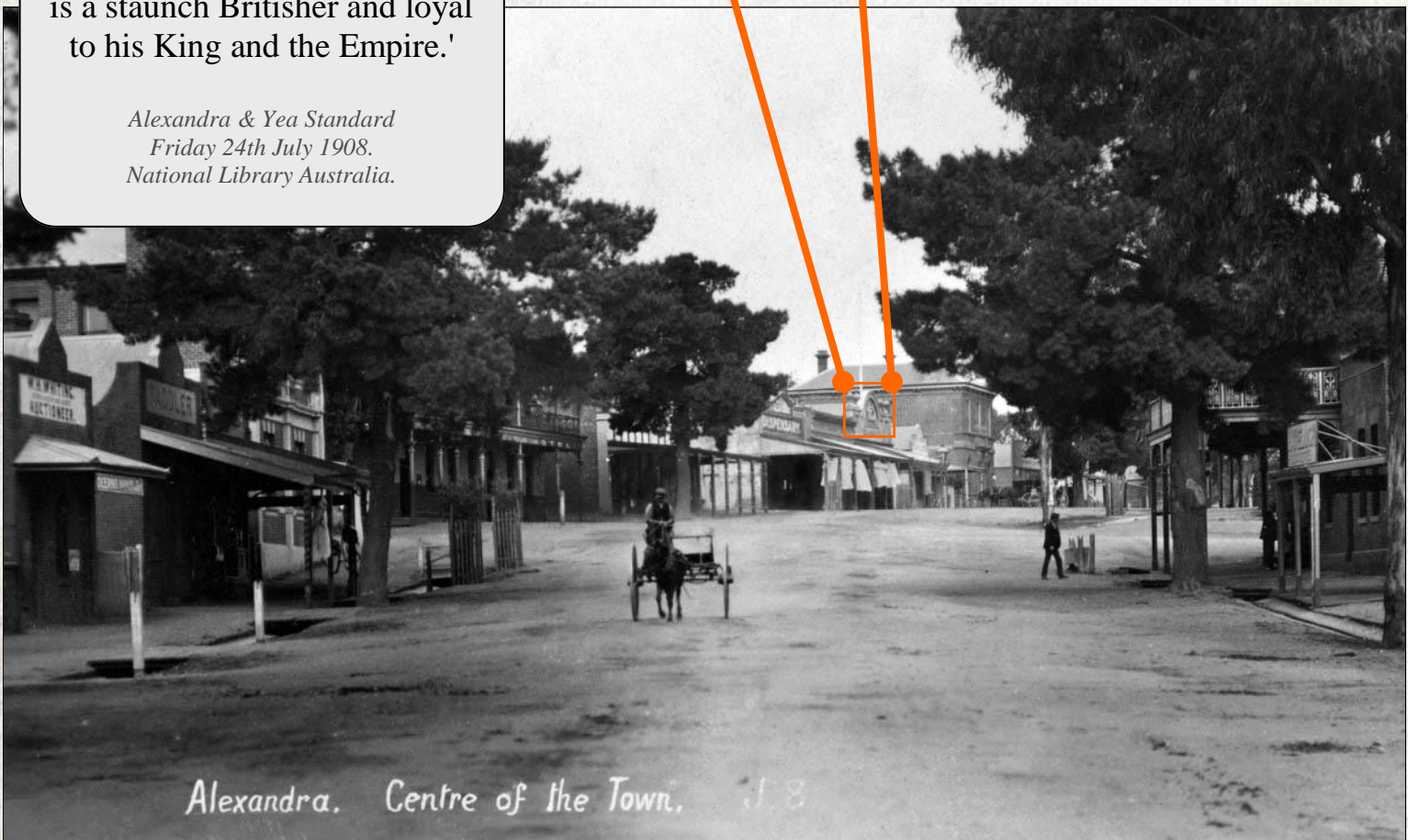
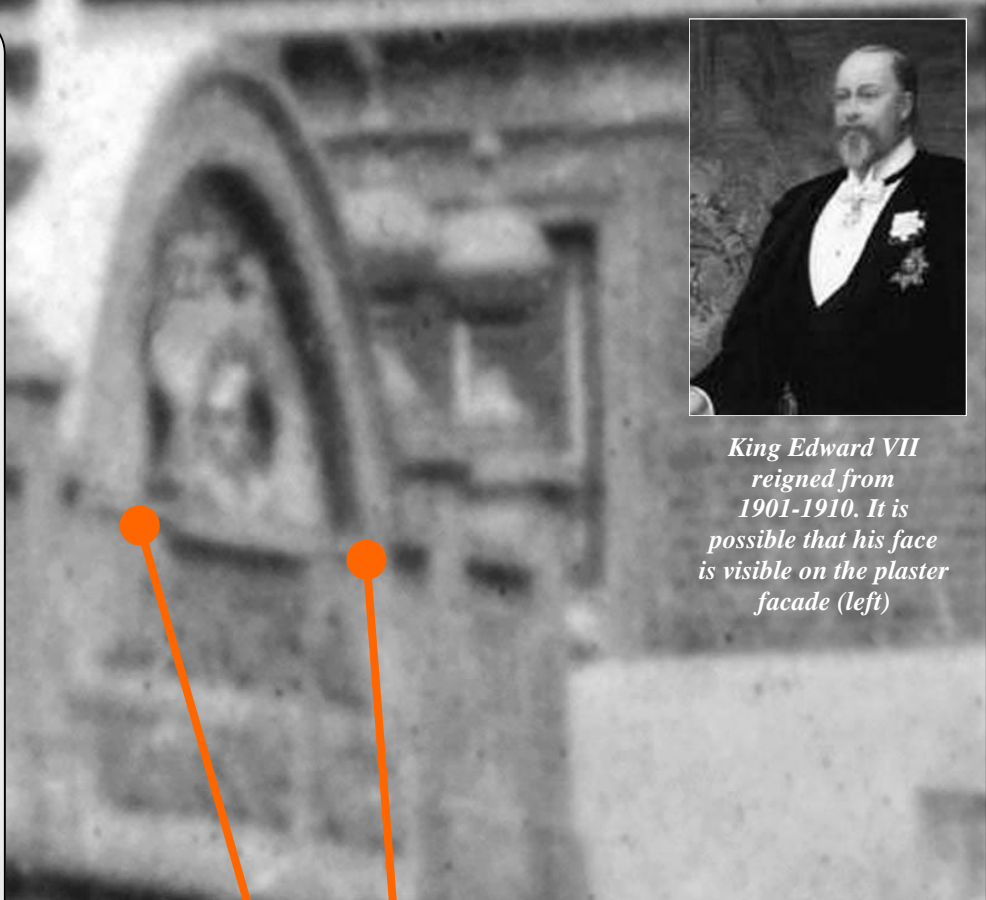
A newspaper article discussing the first Coat of Arms displayed in Alexandra by businessman William Baker

'On the decline of the goldfields at Gobur he removed to Alexandra again and built the Freemason's Hotel, which has been replaced with substantial brick premises **on the front of which is the British coat of arms, artistically designed in plaster.** A prominent flagstaff surmounts the ornamental work and on special occasions a large Union Jack is unfurled with great gusto by Mr. Baker, who is a staunch Britisher and loyal to his King and the Empire.'

*Alexandra & Yea Standard
Friday 24th July 1908.
National Library Australia.*



King Edward VII reigned from 1901-1910. It is possible that his face is visible on the plaster facade (left)



HISTORIC SIGNAGE

Freemasons Cafe, Alexandra circa 1905



Courtesy Kelly Petersen & David Hibbert

HISTORIC SIGNAGE

Freemasons Café building, Alexandra circa 1928





Artworkz

Serving the Community