

The what, when, who, how and why of the  
**KENT TOWN HOTEL**  
A SOCIAL HISTORY, 1854-



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Craig Hill

[www.liquidhistory.com.au](http://www.liquidhistory.com.au)

Liquid  History

Tom and Lara Hannah and  
the rest of the staff of the Kent Town Hotel

[www.kenttownhotel.com.au](http://www.kenttownhotel.com.au)



# The what, when, who, how and why of the Kent Town

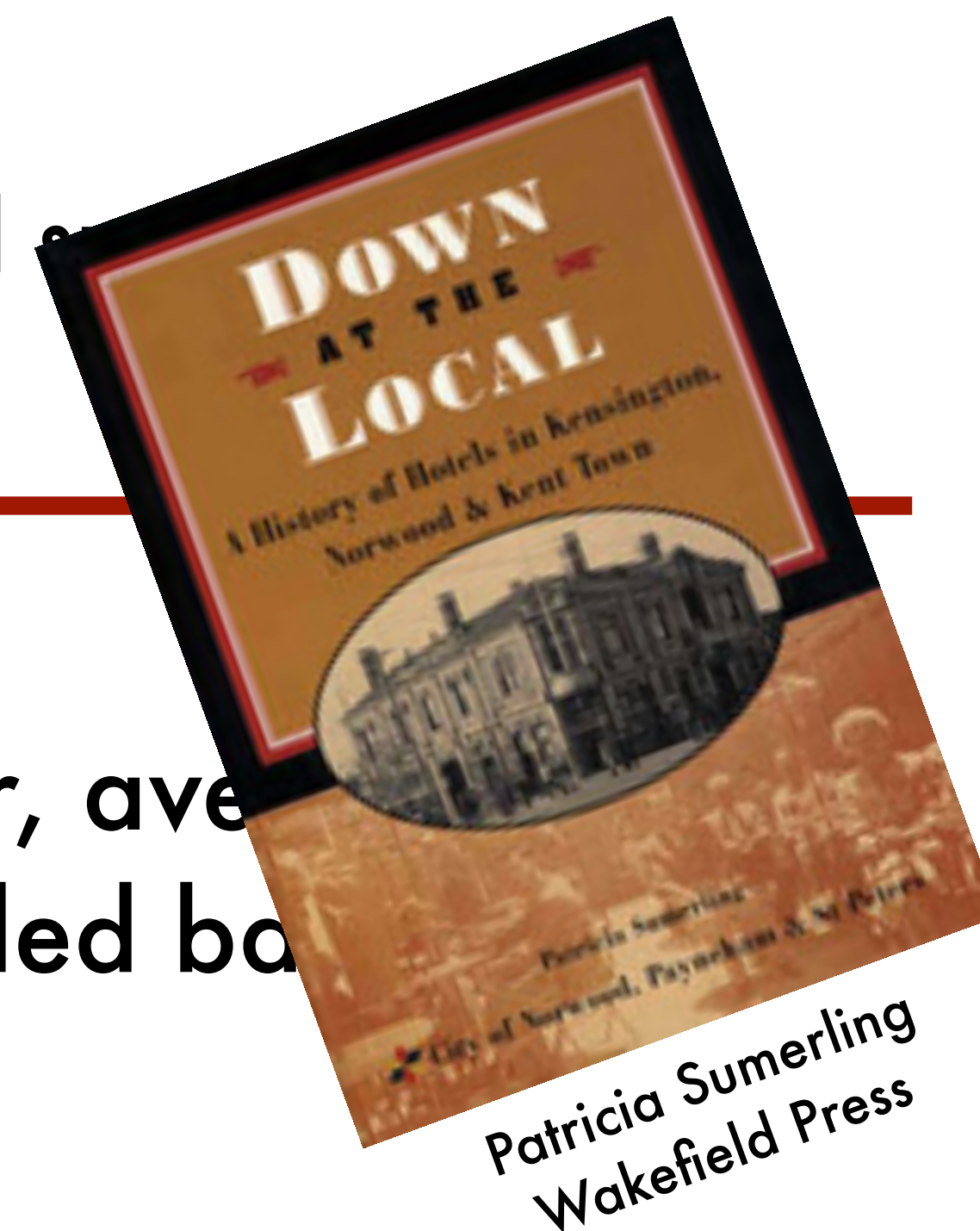
- A social history of the Kent Town Hotel from the perspective of (inferred) **decisions** made by publicans, patrons and many others over the 169 year history of the pub
    - Kent Town and its development: the pub's location, the pub's patrons
    - The foundation and early years of the Kent Town Hotel
    - The pub's owners, leasees, licensees and staff
    - The Kent Town pub in the community: social events, civics, politics and sports
    - The architecture of the pub, its public and private spaces
- 
- Not **the** simple **story** of the pub; not chronological
  - No ghosts, no secret tunnels, just one known attempted murder, average eccentrics, usual publicans' misdemeanours, a reputedly bearded barmaid...
  - Challenge stereotypes

# The what, when, who, how and why of the Kent Town

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- Not **the** simple **story** of the pub; not chronological
- No ghosts, no secret tunnels, just one known attempted murder, a few eccentrics, usual publicans' misdemeanours, a reputedly bearded barman
- Challenge stereotypes



# The Kent Town Hotel: executive summary

- In May-June 1854 William Henry Sims purchased 4 allotments in the new subdivision of Kent Town and 'built' the Kent Town Hotel on Lot 155 in mid-to late-1855
  - The Kent Town Hotel was 'licensed' and opened in March 1856
  - ...and has remained **continuously licensed**...
  - ...and **open for business** more or less since (pandemics and wars excepted)
- The Kent Town Hotel is the **oldest surviving business** in Kent Town
  - ... and probably **the oldest building**
- Over its 169 years, the pub has been at the centre of a Kent Town that has changed from a semi-rural village to one of the most densely populated townships
- The pub has survived...



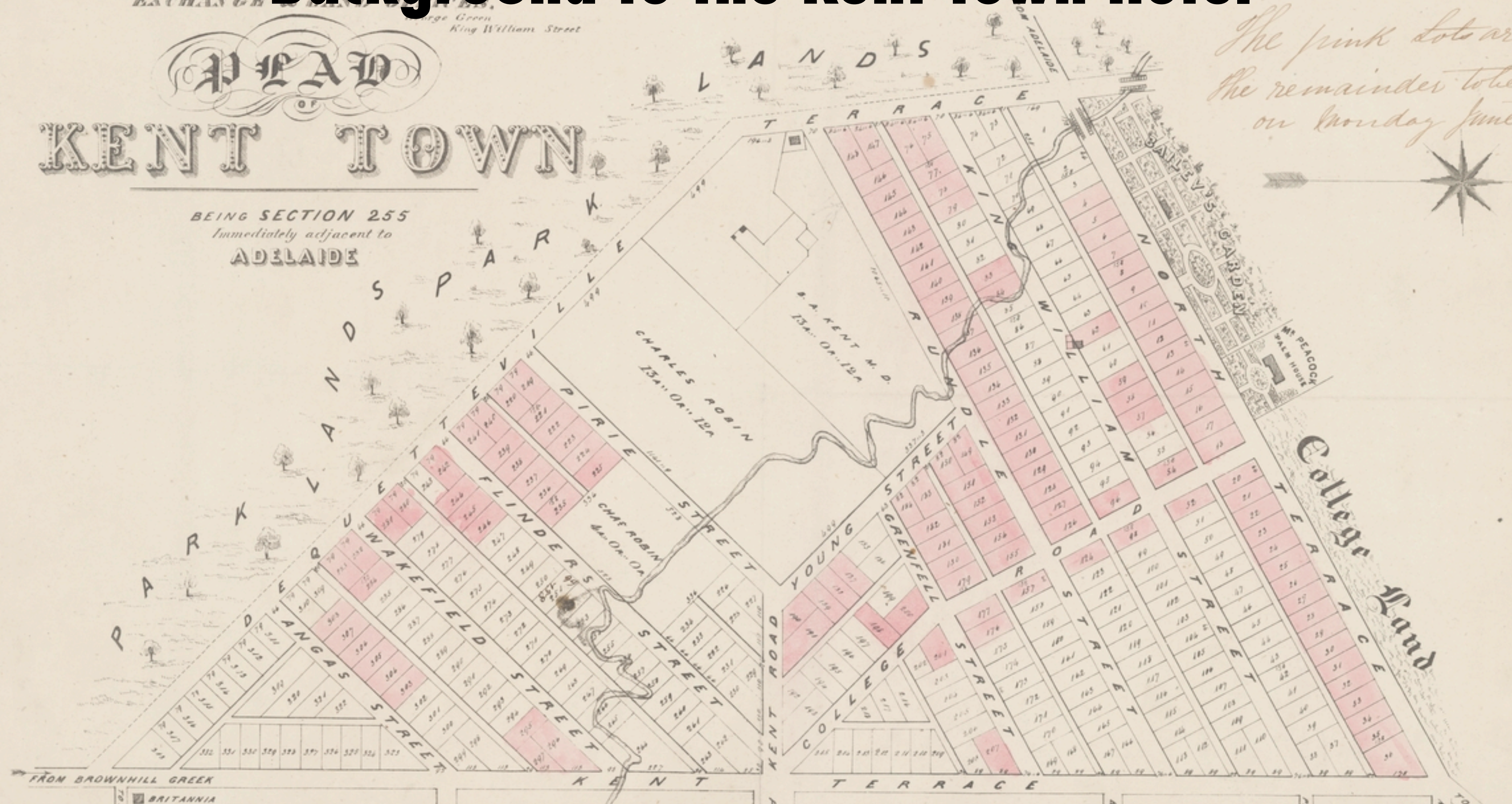
EXCHANGE  
George Green  
King William Street

# Background to the Kent Town Hotel

HEAD  
OF

## KENT TOWN

BEING SECTION 255  
Immediately adjacent to  
ADELAIDE



*The pink lots are sold  
the remainder to be sold  
on Monday June 5th*

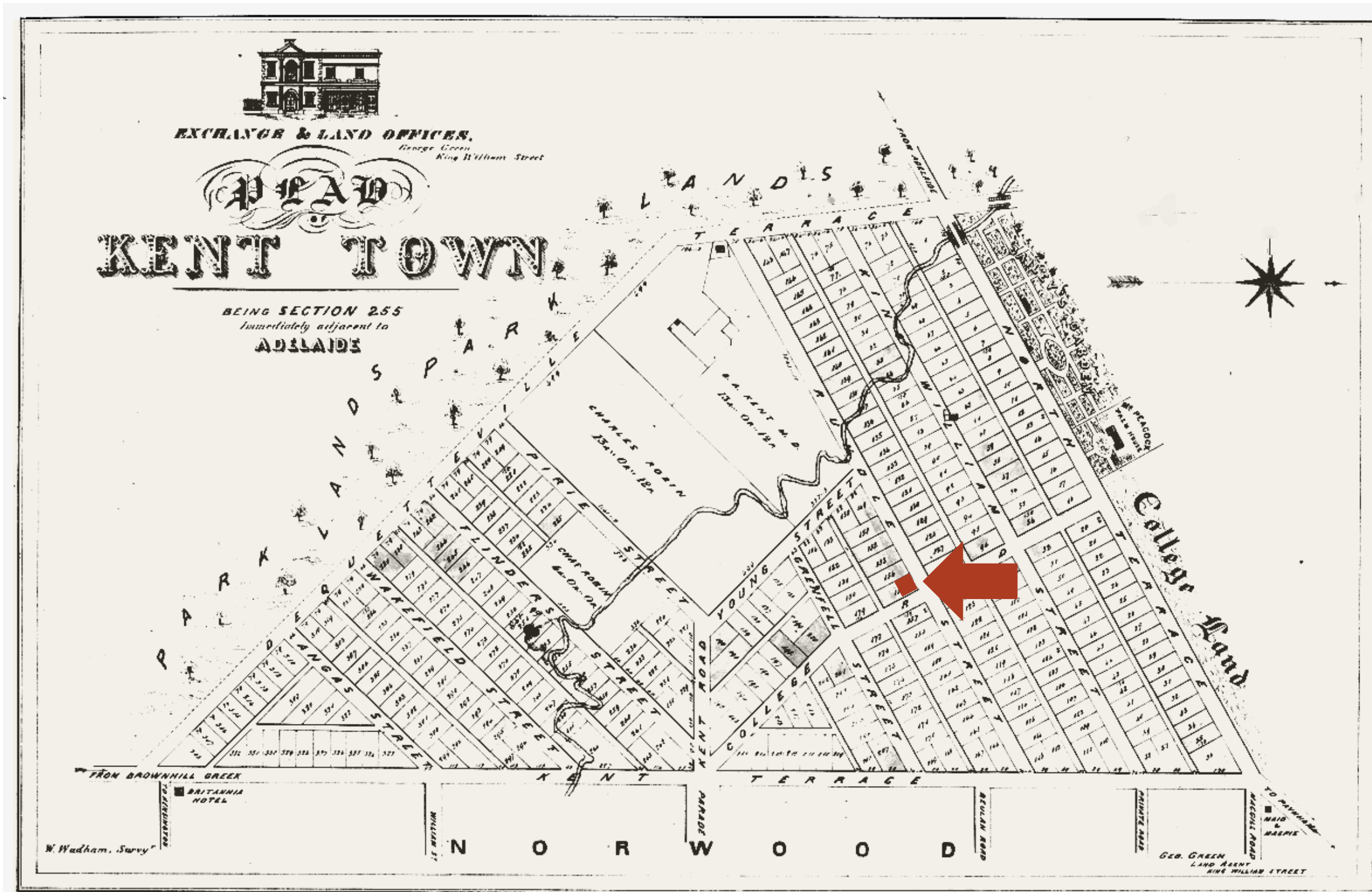


FROM BROWN HILL CREEK

BRITANNIA  
HOTEL

College Road

# Development of Kent Town

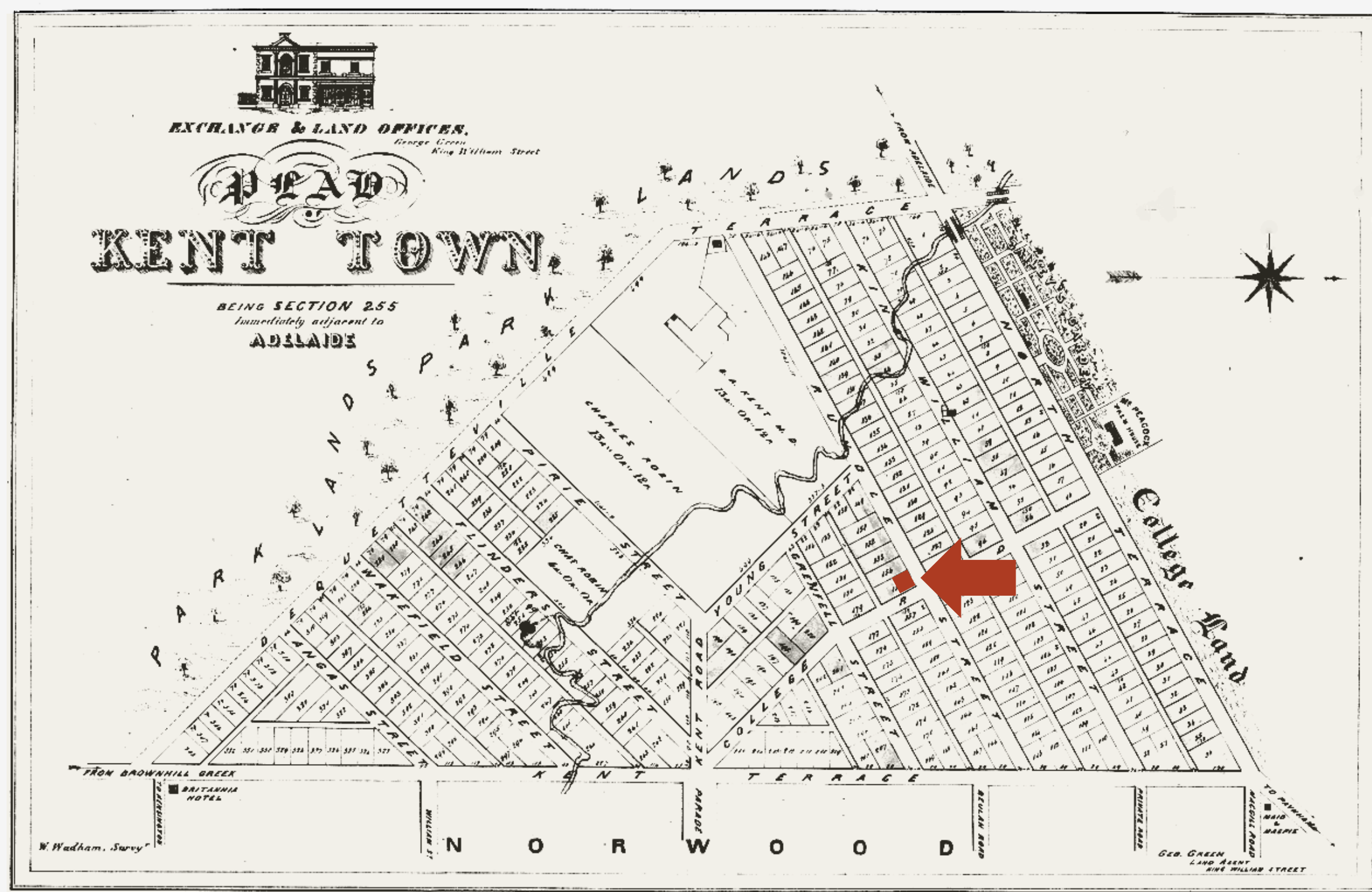


**KENT TOWN,  
IMMEDIATELY ADJACENT TO  
ADELAIDE.  
IMPORTANT NOTICE.**

**LAND AUCTION SALE.**—  
On an early day in May next, the above important Property, so well known as  
**DR. KENT'S SECTION,**  
will be in the market. **PLANS of  
KENT TOWN**  
are now open for inspection: For further particulars, see  
future advertisements.

**GEORGE GREEN, Land Agent.**  
Exchange Land Offices, King William-street. 105rmhs

# Development of Kent Town



**QUEEN'S  
KENT TOWN LAND SALE**  
1848 Day THURSDAY, May 21st.  
QUEEN'S BIRTHDAY.  
Twelve O'clock, TWELVE O'CLOCK, O'clock Twelve.  
EXCHANGE ROOM.

**COLLINGWOOD and MELBOURNE**  
Are almost identical, and the value of many portions of the former make equally high with that of the latter, and they are equally well adapted for BUSINESS or RESIDENCE.

What Collingwood is at Melbourne, KENT TOWN will be to ADELAIDE—the extension of the CITY and the centre of its inhabitants.

**KENT TOWN**  
the  
**COLLINGWOOD of ADELAIDE**,  
it will have as Dr. Kent's Station, immediately adjacent to, and represent the eastern end of Bussell Street, and is bounded respectively by the SOUTH-EASTERN ROAD, the PARK LANDS, and the INCORPORATED TOWNS of KENNINGTON and NORWOOD.

The bulk of its frontage, between Adelaide and the principal suburbs, Township always in the center, and presents the value—(Collingwood is similarly situated.) The

**FRONTAGES of KENT TOWN**  
are admirably adapted for suburban residences, more especially those of the Park Lands.

In the quality of the SOIL,  
In the beauty of the POSITION,  
In the purity of the WATER,  
they are immeasurably superior to the adjacent CITY FRONTAGES facing East-ward, and are consequently of much greater value. In soil, and in position, these Frontages of KENT TOWN equal the very best parts of North Adelaide, and in the extent of pure water, there is no comparison. Many very many parts of

**KENT TOWN**  
present choice spots upon which to erect the suburban villa.

It will be in the selection of these spots, as distinguished from the future business positions, location, and thoroughfare, that the talent and foresight of the purchaser will now be tested. That there will be no loss.

**KENT TOWN**  
business position, Kent Town business location, and Kent Town business thoroughfare, no man of common capacity pretends to doubt; from its position, the result is inevitable. COLLINGWOOD has achieved greatness, presenting similar advantages.

**KENT TOWN**  
will do likewise. To leave Adelaide for the Township to the Eastward.

**KENT TOWN**  
must be gained and its streets must be improved.

Each frontage of Kent Town has a fine view, and a consequent peculiar value. Owing to this circumstance, purchasers at the coming sale of the Township will have a wider field for the exercise of their judgment than has yet been offered in

**SOUTH AUSTRALIA.**  
**KENT TOWN**  
is laid out on the principle of

**QUARTER-ACRE BLOCKS.**  
Having frontages either on to the Park Lands, the North-Eastern road, the Township of Norwood, or on to the main streets (which are sixty feet in width), whilst every quarter-acre block has also the advantage of a back yard twenty feet in width.

By the division into quarter-acre blocks a certainty of future affordability is ensured, and the annoyances arising from future subdivisions and vacant sales, which are thereby avoided, whilst to the purchaser the chance of a larger quantity, the privilege will be accorded of taking one or more. For those reserves the

**QUARTER-ACRE BLOCK**  
system is a positive advantage, and adapts itself to the wants of all classes of buyers.

**COLLINGWOOD**  
is subdivided into infinitely smaller lots.

**LITHOGRAPHED PLANS of KENT TOWN**,  
the Collingwood of Adelaide, will be ready for circulation on and after Friday, the 12th instant, and can be obtained on application at the Auctioneer's office.

The SALE of  
**KENT TOWN**  
will be held in the  
**EXCHANGE ROOM**,  
adjacent to the Auctioneer's office, on  
**14th May, THURSDAY, May 21,**  
**QUEEN'S BIRTHDAY.**  
Twelve O'clock, TWELVE O'CLOCK, O'clock Twelve,  
and a  
**LUNCHEON**  
is invited of both sexes will be provided.

**LUNCHEON at Twelve, SALE at One.**

R.R.—Terms of sale Cash, or one-third cash and the balance by bills at three and six months, bearing interest at 5 per cent.

# Development of Kent Town

## GREEN'S KENT TOWN LAND SALE.

24th May. THURSDAY. May 24th.  
QUEEN'S BIRTHDAY.  
Twelve O'clock. GUNFIRE. O'clock Twelve.  
EXCHANGE ROOM.

### COLLINGWOOD and MELBOURNE

Are almost identical, and the value of many portions of the former ranks equally high with that of the latter, and they are equally well adapted for BUSINESS or RESIDENCE.

What Collingwood is to Melbourne,  
KENT TOWN  
will be to ADELAIDE—the extension  
of the CITY and the resort of its inhabitants.  
KENT TOWN  
the

COLLINGWOOD of ADELAIDE,  
is well known as Dr. Kent's Section, immediately adjacent to, and opposite the eastern end of Rundle-street, and is bounded respectively by  
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PARK LANDS,  
and the INCORPORATED TOWNS of  
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The fact of its being intervening between Adelaide and the principal suburban Townships always in its center, and proximity to water—(Collingwood is similarly situated.) The FRONTS of KENT TOWN are admirably adapted for suburban residences, more especially those of the Park Lands. In the quality of the SOIL, in the beauty of the POSITION, in the purity of the WATER, they are immeasurably superior to the adjacent CITY FRONTS facing East-terrace, and are consequently of much greater value. In soil, and in position, these Fronts of KENT TOWN equal the very best parts of North Adelaide, and in the extent of pure water, there is no comparison. Many very many parts of KENT TOWN present advantages upon which to erect the suburban villa. It will be in the selection of these spots, as distinguished from the future business portions, location, and therefore, that the talent and foresight of the purchaser will now be tested. That there will be no loss.

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KENT TOWN  
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KENT TOWN  
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R.R.—Terms of sale Cash, or one-third cash and the balance by bills at three and six months, bearing interest at 5 per cent.

# Development of Kent Town

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What Collingwood is to Melbourne,  
**KENT TOWN**

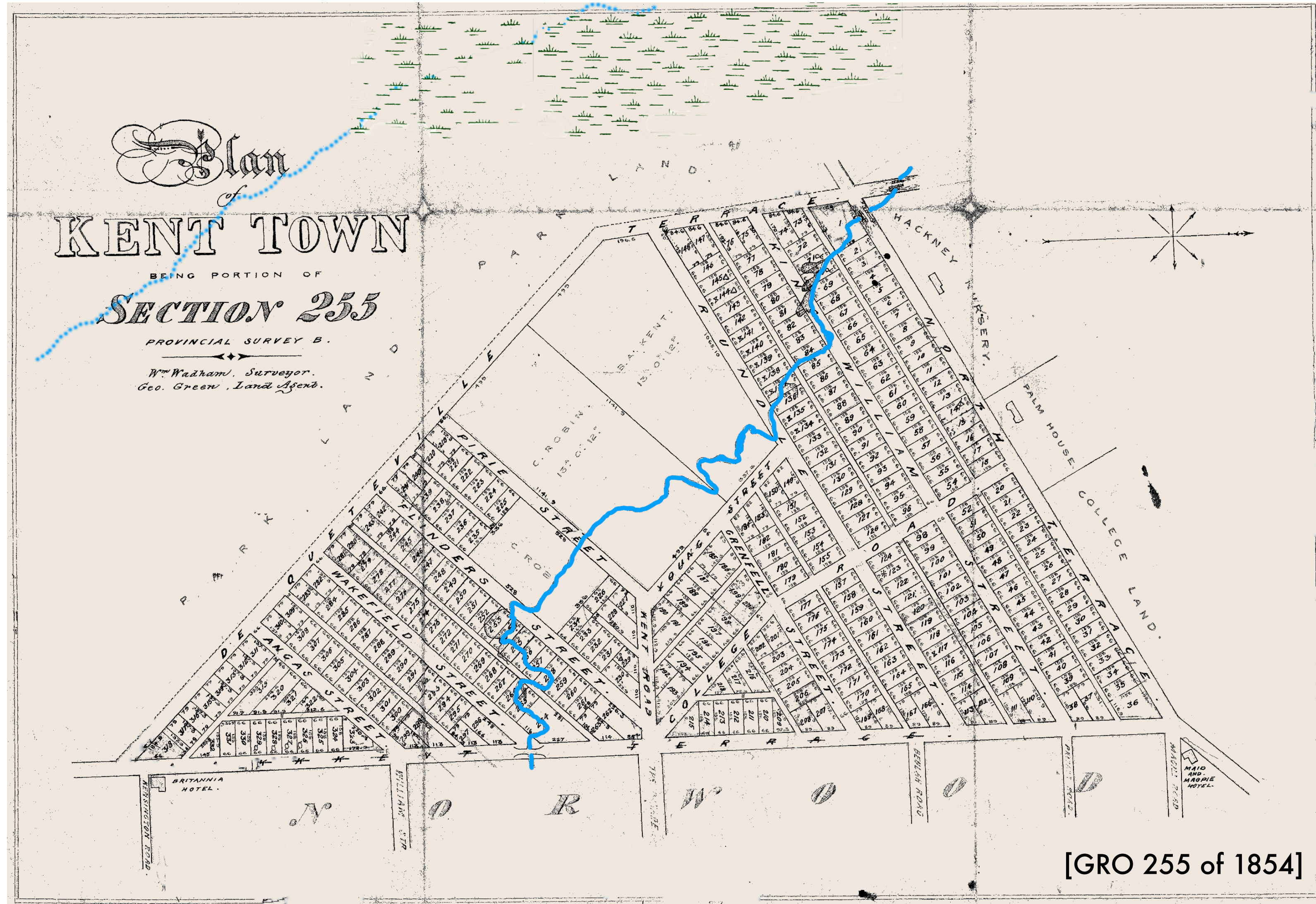
*will be to ADELAIDE*—the extension of the CITY and the resort of its inhabitants.

**KENT TOWN**  
the

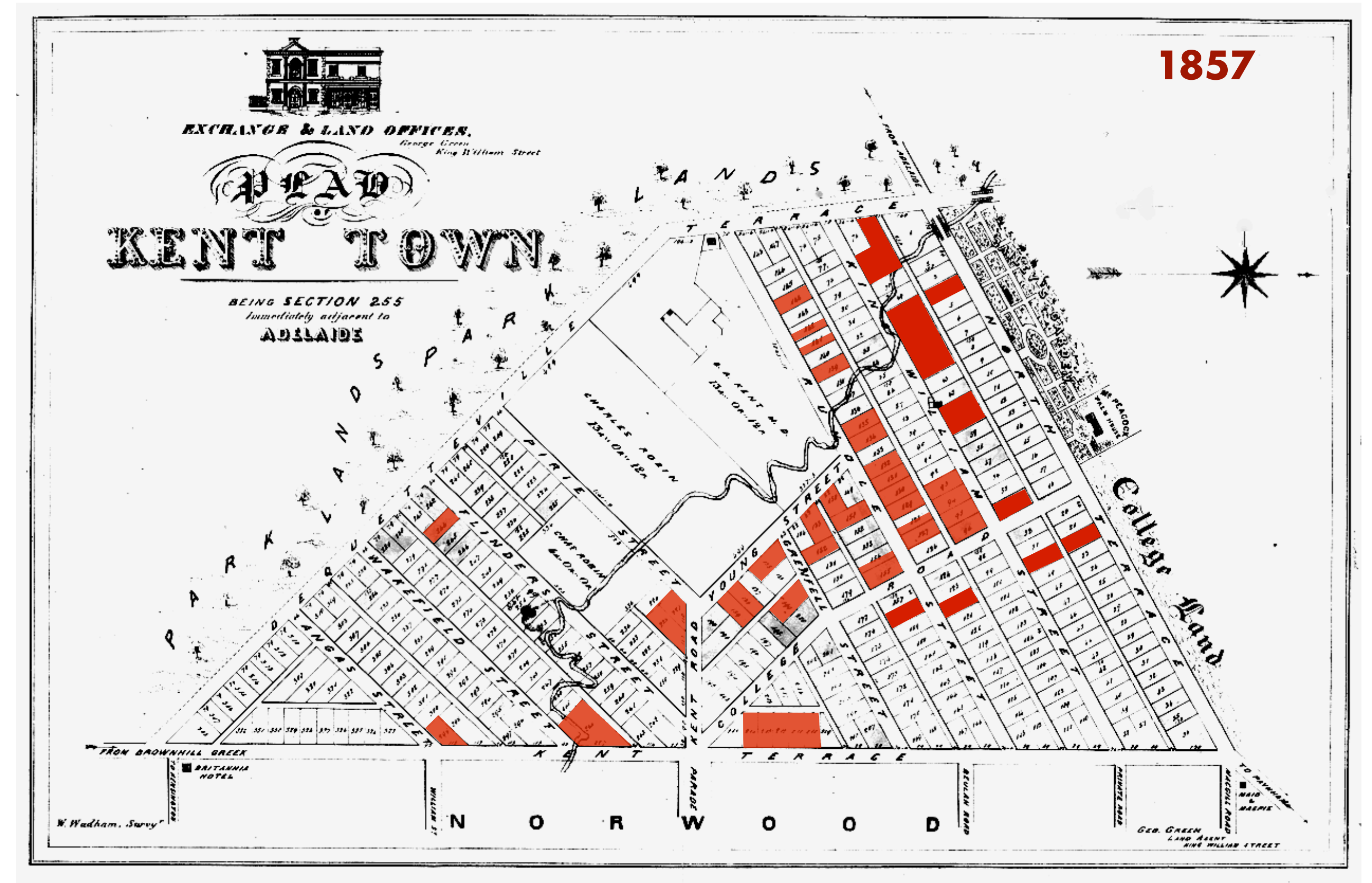
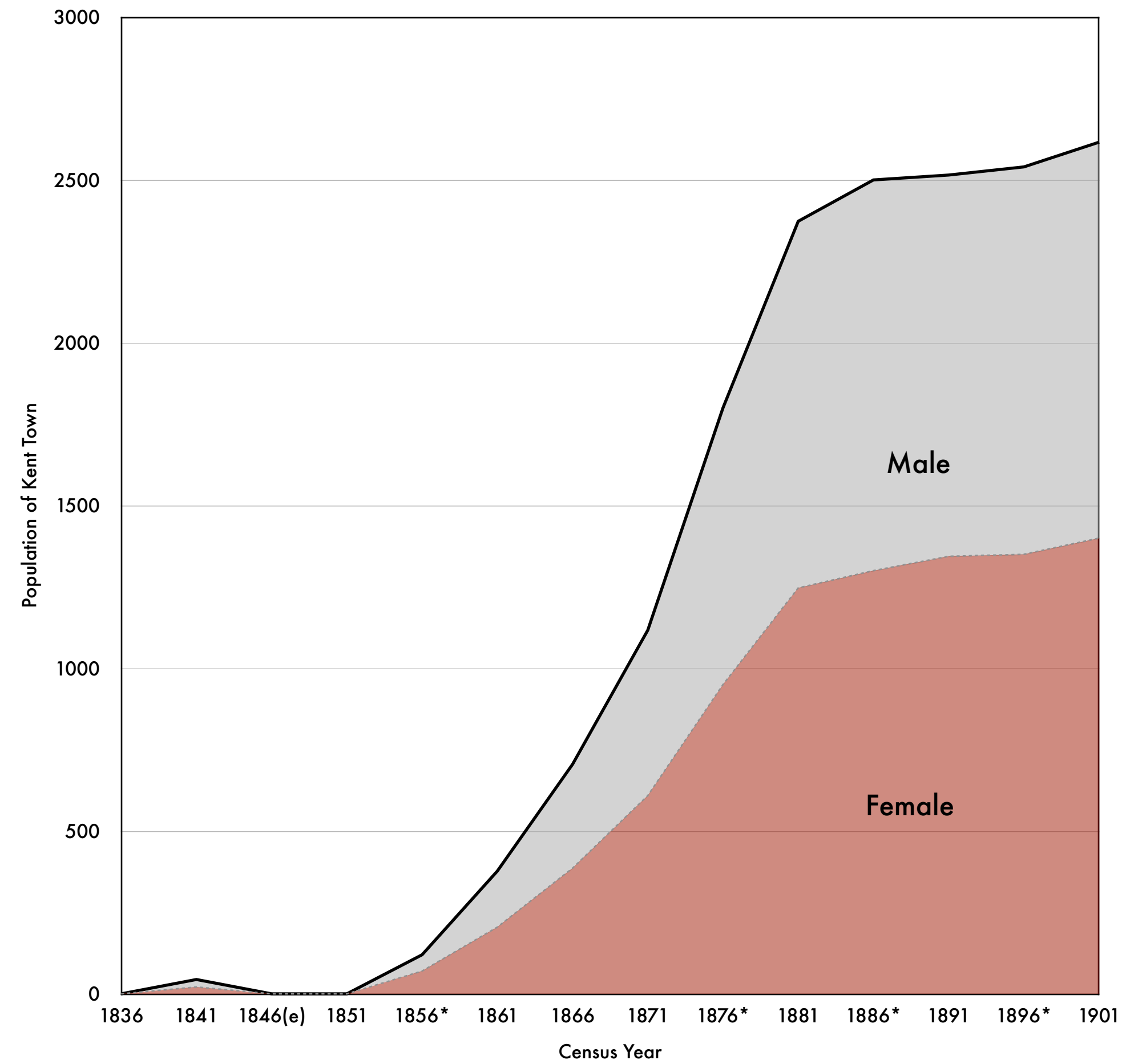
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**PARK LANDS,**  
and the **INCORPORATED TOWNS** of  
**KENSINGTON and NORWOOD.**

- "the Collingwood of Adelaide"
- "the extension of the city and the resort of its inhabitants...adjacent to the eastern end of Rundle Street...intervening between Adelaide and the Townships of Kensington and Norwood"
- 332 allotments (eventually 398?)
- Mostly quarter acre blocks
  - Major roads and corner blocks excepted
  - High density (high profit?)
  - "adapts itself well to the wants of all classes...Business or Residence"
  - Modest houses, small business, *not* farms
- Location, location, location, soil and water

# Development of Kent Town

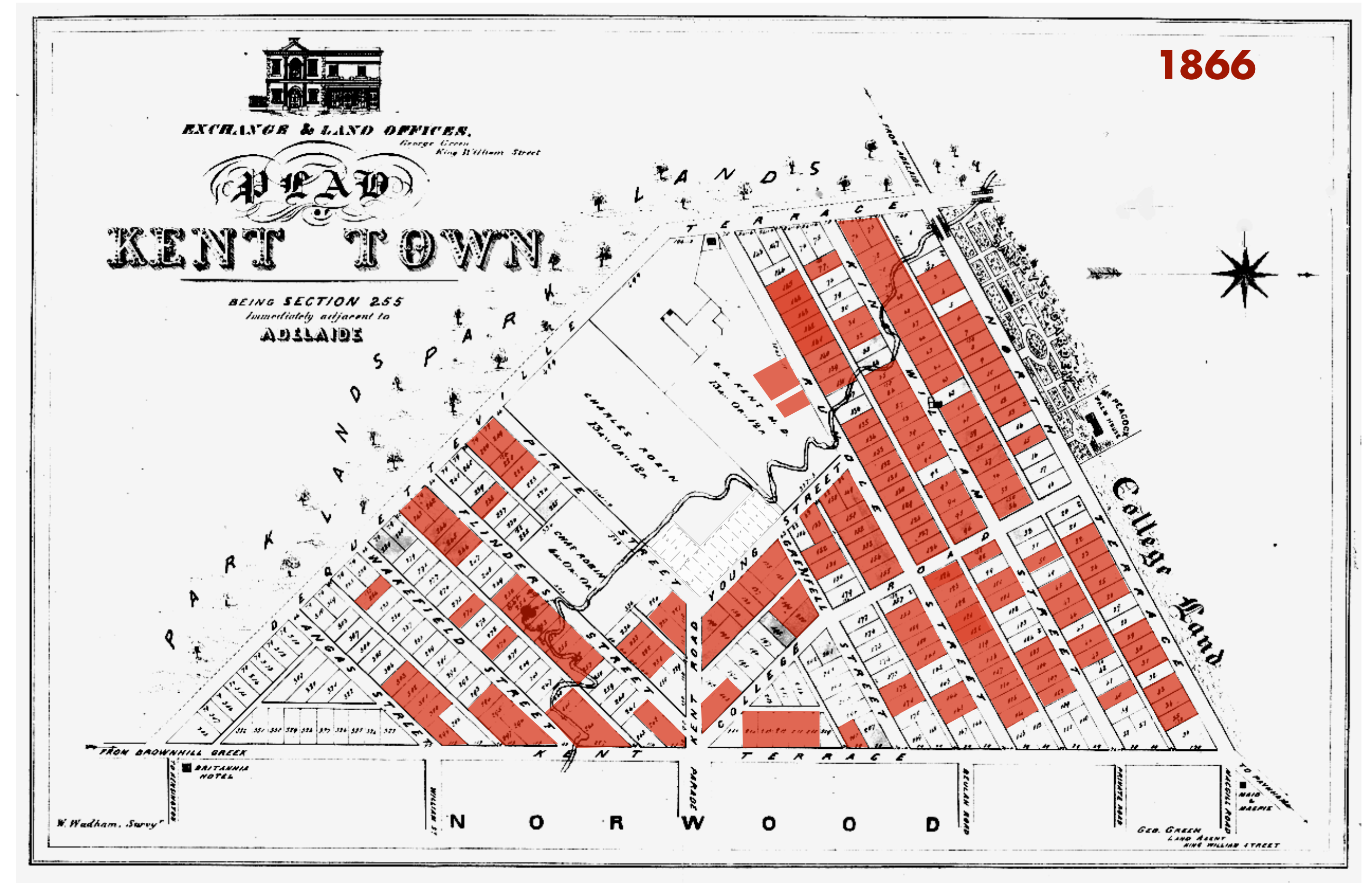
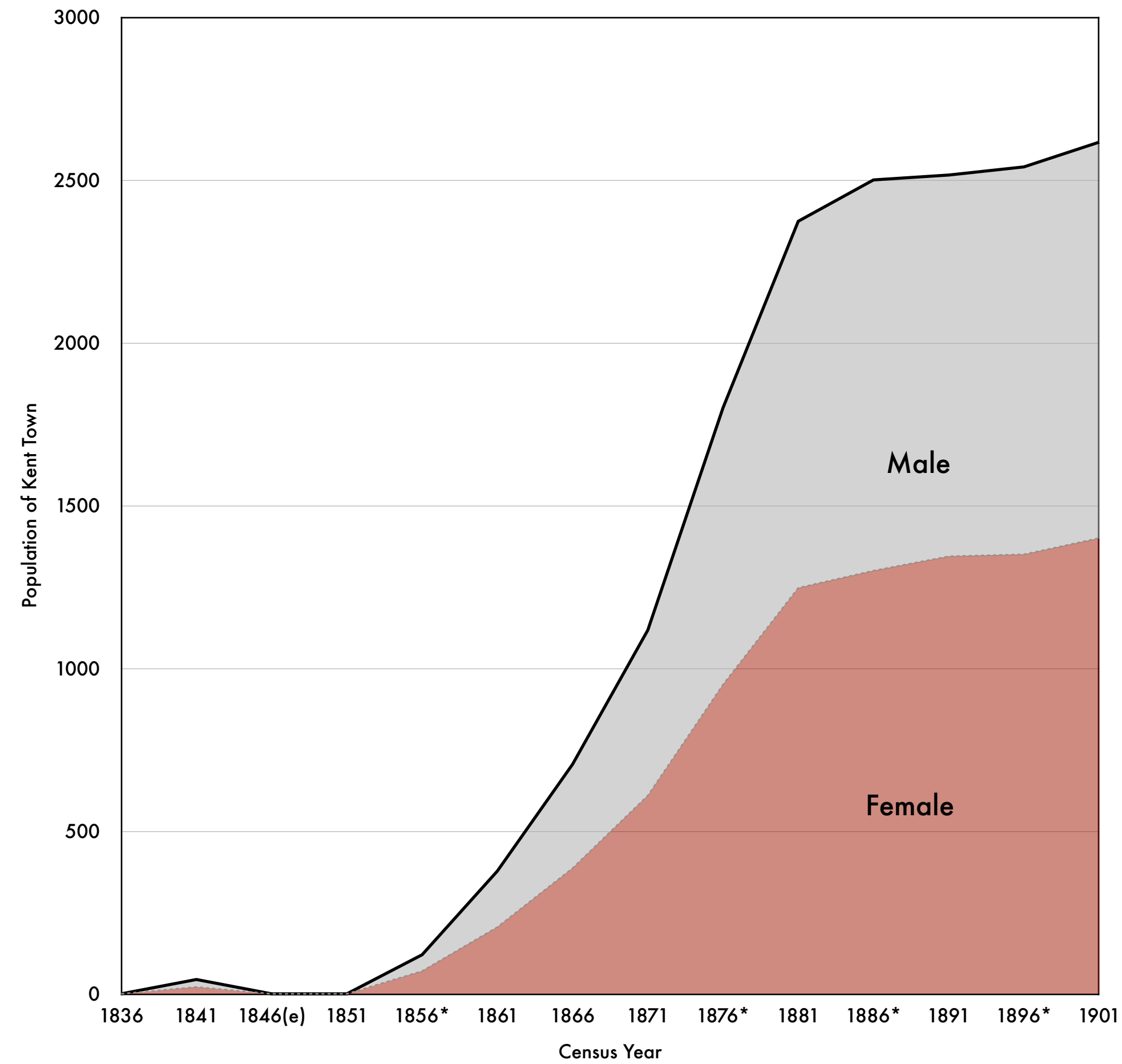


# Population of Kent Town



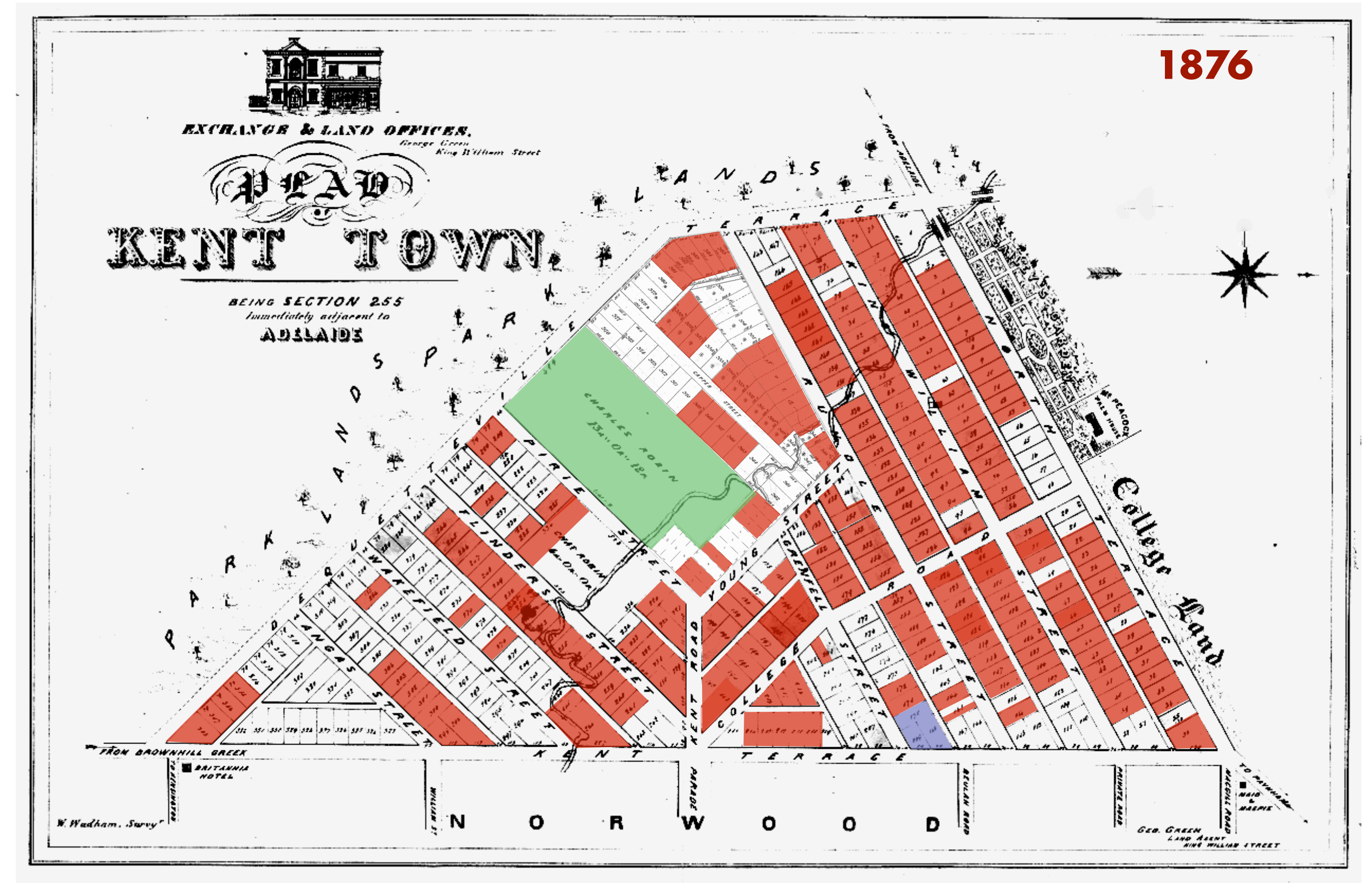
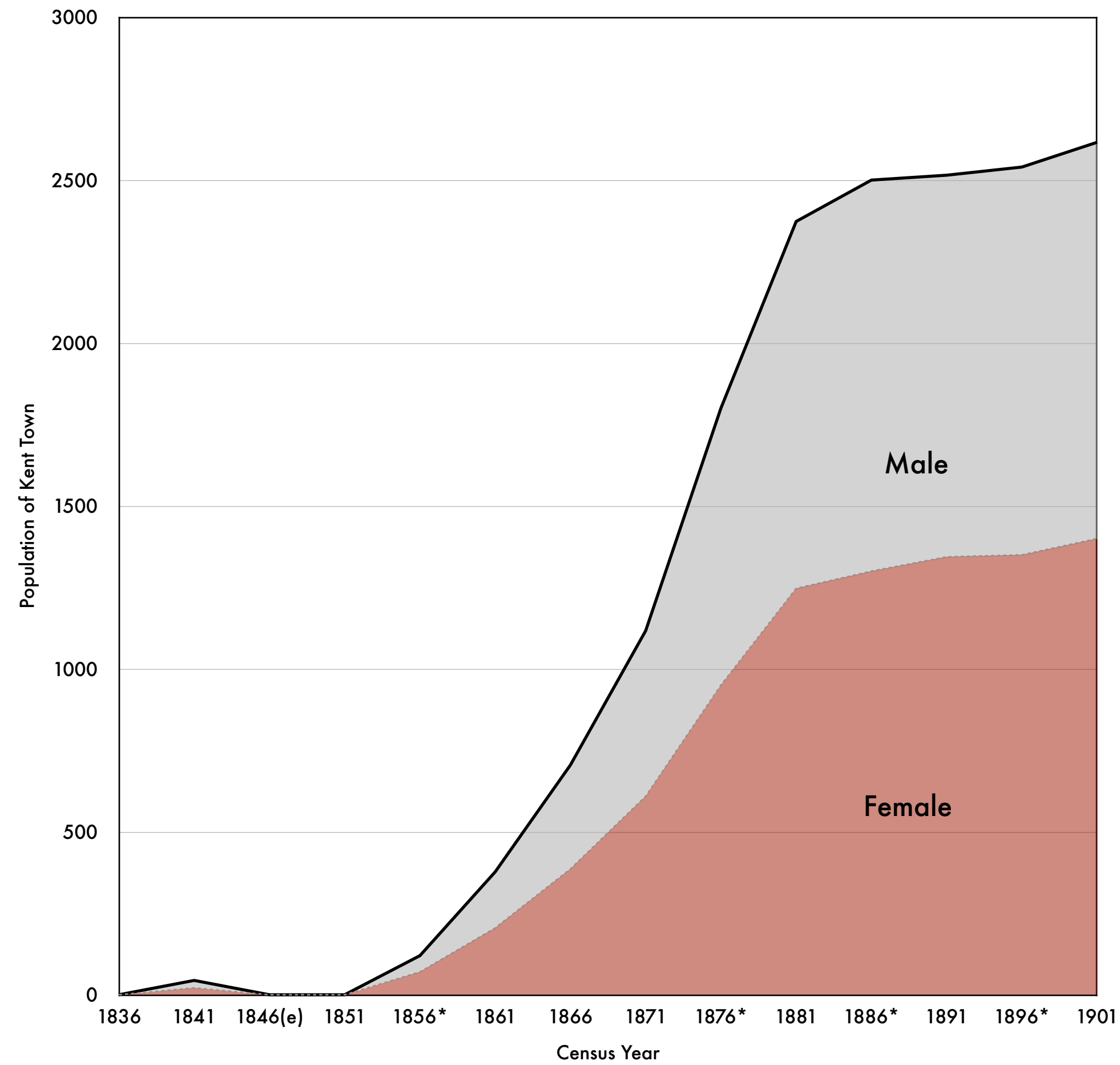
NSPP Rates assessment books, 1857, 1866, 1876

# Population of Kent Town



NSPP Rates assessment books, 1857, 1866, 1876

# Population of Kent Town



NSPP Rates assessment books, 1857, 1866, 1876

# The people of Kent Town (Census 1871)

## • Population

- Females 609 (54.5%)
- Married 379 (33.9%)
- Over 12yo 728 (65.2%)

## • Houses/households 225

## • Religion:

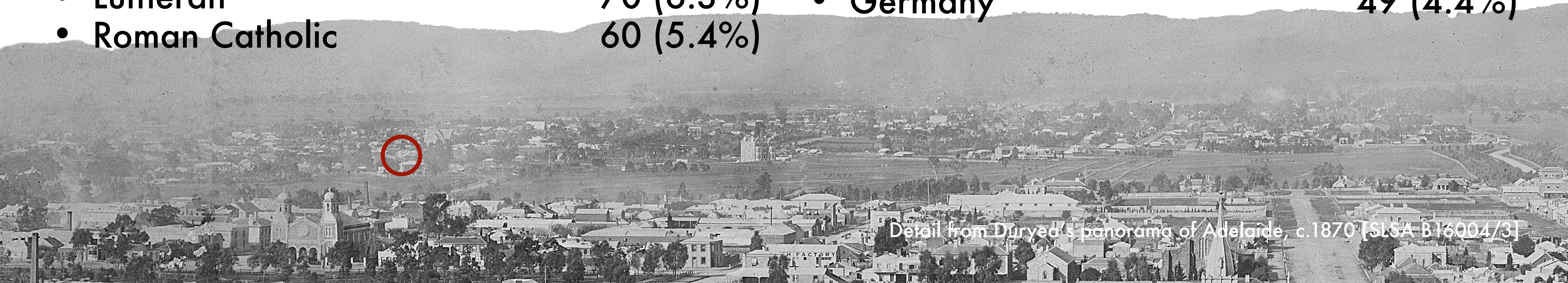
- Anglican 383 (34.3%)
- Wesleyan 244 (21.9%)
- Lutheran 70 (6.3%)
- Roman Catholic 60 (5.4%)

## Education

- Read & Write 859 (76.9%)
- Females 468 (54.5%)
- Read only 51 (4.6%)
- Cannot read 203 (18.2%)
- Unspecified 2 (0.2%)

## Birthplace:

- South Australia 578 (51.7%)
- Britain 244 (43.2%)
- Germany 49 (4.4%)



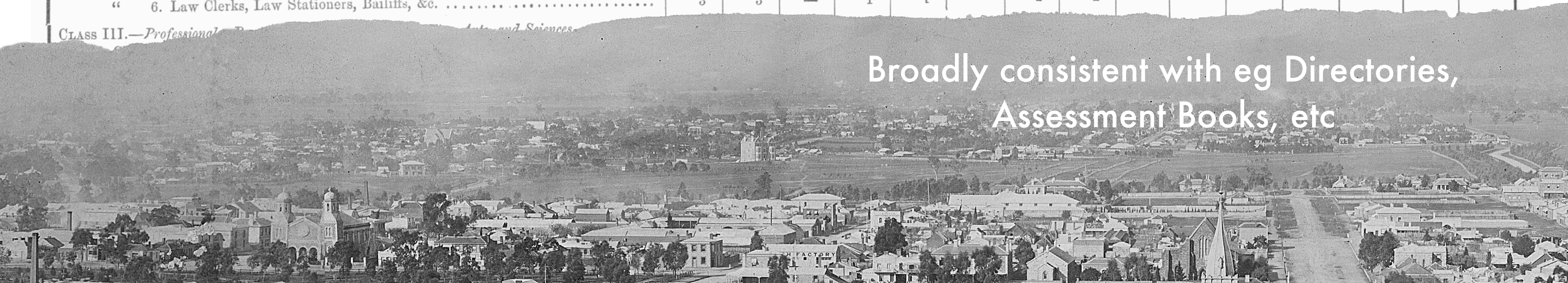
Detail from Duryed's panorama of Adelaide, c.1870 [SLSA B16004/3]

# Occupations of the people of Kent Town (Census 1871)

TABLE VI.—SUMMARY by MUNICIPALITIES: Showing the OCCUPATIONS of the PERSONS in each MUNICIPALITY and DISTRICT COUNCIL (continued).

| Occupations.  | Corporations (continued)— |        |          |                    |        |          |                  |        |          |            |        |          | TOTAL KENSINGTON AND NORWOOD. |        |          |
|---|---------------------------|--------|----------|--------------------|--------|----------|------------------|--------|----------|------------|--------|----------|-------------------------------|--------|----------|
|   | Kensington and Norwood.   |        |          |                    |        |          |                  |        |          | Kent Ward. |        |          |                               |        |          |
|   | Norwood Ward West.        |        |          | Norwood Ward East. |        |          | Kensington Ward. |        |          |            |        |          | Kent Ward.                    |        |          |
|   | Persons.                  | Males. | Females. | Persons.           | Males. | Females. | Persons.         | Males. | Females. | Persons.   | Males. | Females. | Persons.                      | Males. | Females. |
| <b>CLASS I.—Government: Persons engaged in the General and Local Government of the Province—</b>                                  |                           |        |          |                    |        |          |                  |        |          |            |        |          |                               |        |          |
| Sub-Class 1. Officers of General Government—Judges, Heads of Departments, Clerks, &c.   | 15                        | 14     | 1        | 9                  | 9      | —        | 3                | 3      | —        | 5          | 5      | —        | 32                            | 31     | 1        |
| “ 2. Officers of Local Government—Corporations, District Councils, &c. ....   | 1                         | 1      | —        | —                  | —      | —        | 2                | 2      | —        | —          | —      | —        | 3                             | 3      | —        |
| “ 3. Police—Officers, Constables, Warders, Turnkeys, &c. ....   | —                         | —      | —        | 1                  | 1      | —        | —                | —      | —        | —          | —      | —        | 1                             | 1      | —        |
| “ 4. Workmen in Government Employment—Messengers, Officekeepers, Survey Parties, Telegraph Constructors, &c. ....                 | 1                         | 1      | —        | 3                  | 3      | —        | —                | —      | —        | —          | —      | —        | 4                             | 4      | —        |
| <b>CLASS II.—Professional: Persons in the Learned Professions (with their immediate subordinates) not in Government Service—</b>  |                           |        |          |                    |        |          |                  |        |          |            |        |          |                               |        |          |
| Sub-Class 1. Clergy—Ministers of all Denominations .....  | 2                         | 2      | —        | 6                  | 6      | —        | 1                | 1      | —        | —          | —      | —        | 9                             | 9      | —        |
| “ 2. Church Officers—Vergers, Sextons, &c. ....   | —                         | —      | —        | —                  | —      | —        | —                | —      | —        | 1          | 1      | —        | 1                             | 1      | —        |
| “ 3. Physicians, Surgeons, Oculists, Dentists, &c. ....   | —                         | —      | —        | 2                  | 2      | —        | 1                | 1      | —        | —          | —      | —        | 3                             | 3      | —        |
| “ 4. Dispensing Chemists, &c., Sick Nurses, and other subordinates, &c. ....  | —                         | —      | —        | —                  | —      | —        | 3                | 3      | —        | —          | —      | —        | 3                             | 3      | —        |
| “ 5. Lawyers—Barristers, Attorneys, Conveyancers, &c. ....  | 3                         | 3      | —        | 1                  | 1      | —        | 1                | 1      | —        | —          | —      | —        | 5                             | 5      | —        |
| “ 6. Law Clerks, Law Stationers, Bailiffs, &c. ....   | 3                         | 3      | —        | 1                  | 1      | —        | 2                | 2      | —        | 3          | 3      | —        | 9                             | 9      | —        |
| <b>CLASS III.—Professional: Persons in the Learned Professions (with their immediate subordinates) not in Government Service—</b> |                           |        |          |                    |        |          |                  |        |          |            |        |          |                               |        |          |

Broadly consistent with eg Directories, Assessment Books, etc



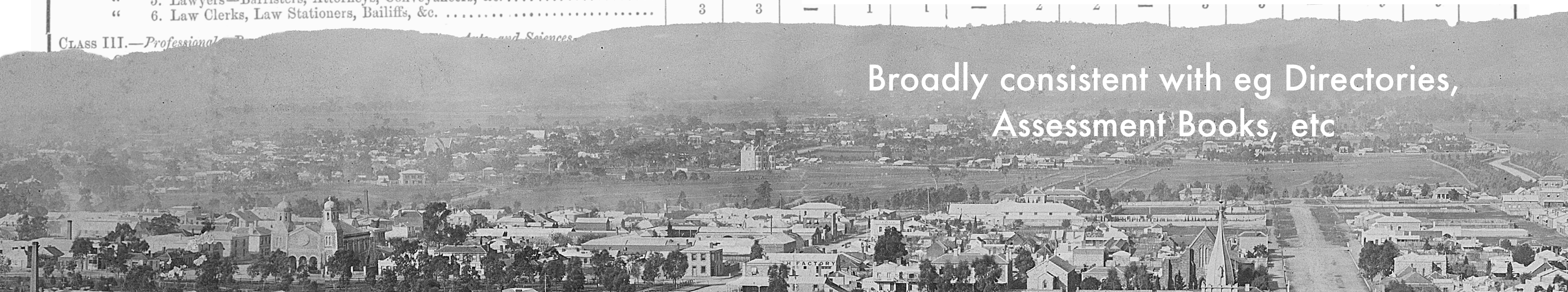
# Occupations of the people of Kent Town (Census 1871)

TABLE VI.—SUMMARY by MUNICIPALITIES: Showing the OCCUPATIONS of the PERSONS in each MUNICIPALITY and DISTRICT COUNCIL. (continued).

| Occupations.  | Norwood Ward West |        |
|---|-------------------|--------|
|   | Persons.          | Males. |
| <b>CLASS I.—Government: Persons engaged in the General and Local Government of the Province—</b>                                  |                   |        |
| Sub-Class 1. Officers of General Government—Judges, Heads of Departments, Clerks, &c. ....  | 15                | 14     |
| “ 2. Officers of Local Government—Corporations, District Councils, &c. ....   | 1                 | 1      |
| “ 3. Police—Officers, Constables, Warders, Turnkeys, &c. ....   | —                 | —      |
| “ 4. Workmen in Government Employment—Messengers, Officekeepers, Survey Parties, Telegraph Constructors, &c. ....                 | 1                 | 1      |
| <b>CLASS II.—Professional: Persons in the Learned Professions (with their immediate subordinates) not in Government Service—</b>  |                   |        |
| Sub-Class 1. Clergy—Ministers of all Denominations .....  | 2                 | 2      |
| “ 2. Church Officers—Vergers, Sextons, &c. ....   | —                 | —      |
| “ 3. Physicians, Surgeons, Oculists, Dentists, &c. ....   | —                 | —      |
| “ 4. Dispensing Chemists, &c., Sick Nurses, and other subordinates, &c. ....  | —                 | —      |
| “ 5. Lawyers—Barristers, Attorneys, Conveyancers, &c. ....  | 3                 | 3      |
| “ 6. Law Clerks, Law Stationers, Bailiffs, &c. ....   | 3                 | 3      |
| <b>CLASS III.—Professional: Persons in the Learned Professions (with their immediate subordinates) not in Government Service—</b> |                   |        |

|                                   |        |
|-----------------------------------|--------|
| Domestic servants, labourers etc  | 22.69% |
| Clerks, shop assistants, storemen | 7.84   |
| Misc professions                  | 7.56   |
| Retail shop- and store-keepers    | 7.00   |
| Misc artisans and mechanics       | 6.44   |
| Tailors, shoemakers etc           | 4.76   |
| Masons, bricklayers etc           | 4.48   |
| Blacksmiths, whitesmiths etc      | 4.20   |

Broadly consistent with eg Directories, Assessment Books, etc



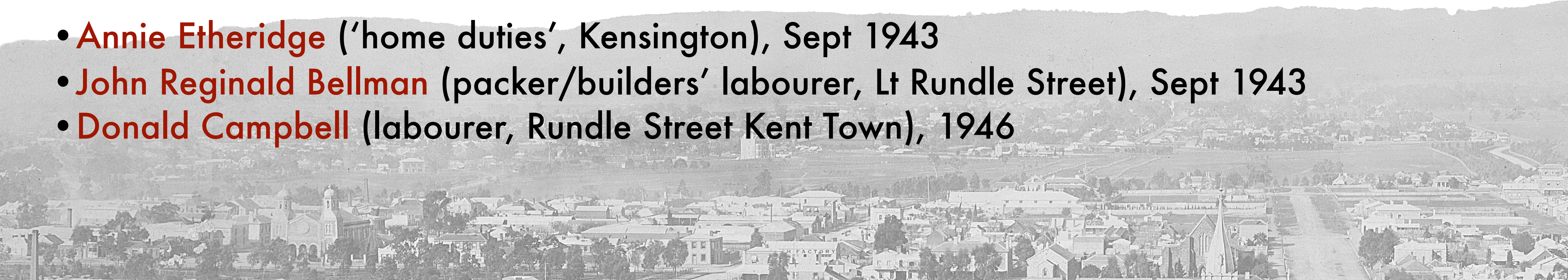
# The patrons of the Kent Town Hotel



Detail of Samuel Sweet's Panoramic view of Kent Town from the Brewery , c.1881 [SLSA B 26501]

# The patrons of Kent Town Hotel

- Difficult to characterising real patrons
  - Can only identify a low number
  - Sources suffer from an inherent bias
- **Charlotte Fell**, (domestic servant?, Kent Town Hotel), c.1865
- **Frederick Hales** (wood turner/land broker/councillor, College Road), May 1875
- **Frederick Reid** (accountant/embezzler?, Kent Town), May 1875
- **John Onsworthy** (coachbuilder, Kent Town), May 1875
- **Henry Dew** (baker/councillor, Rundle Street Kent Town), 1878
- **Annie Etheridge** ('home duties', Kensington), Sept 1943
- **John Reginald Bellman** (packer/builders' labourer, Lt Rundle Street), Sept 1943
- **Donald Campbell** (labourer, Rundle Street Kent Town), 1946



# The patrons of Kent Town Hotel

Thomas Born, landlord of the Kent Town Hotel, was charged, on the information of Inspector Bee with allowing gaming to be carried on in his house. Mr. Wadey for the defendant. Frederick Hales, turner, deposed that he went to defendant's hotel on the evening of the 30th ultimo for some beer. He stayed there about ten minutes. While in the bar he saw the defendant and another person throwing dice for money. For the defence Frederick Reid, of Kent Town, accountant, said on the evening in question he was in the bar between a little after 8 and a quarter-past 10 o'clock. When he arrived Mr. Hales was in the bar, and was there when witness left. No dice throwing was carried on while witness was in the bar. By Inspector Bee—Knew the time by looking at my watch. John Onsworthy, coachbuilder, of Kent Town, who stated that he was in the house from half-past 5 till nearly 11 on the evening in question, corroborated the evidence of the previous witness, and swore positively that no dice-throwing was carried on in the bar during the time he was there. Witness had several glasses, but was sober enough to go home safely. Declined to say how many glasses he had; it was an unreasonable question. There were so many people in the Court. (Laughter.) Anyhow, was able to get home. (Laughter.) The date was fixed in witness's mind by remembering that it was the night of the Mayor's election.

## KENSINGTON AND NORWOOD.

The nominations for this municipality took place on Friday, November 29, at the Town Hall, Norwood. His Worship the Mayor (Mr. W. C. Buik) presided, and the Town Clerk read the following nominations which he had received, viz. :—

### FOR MAYOR.

Mr. EDWARD THOMAS SMITH, proposed by Messrs. W. Cavenagh, M.P., D. Fisher, M.P., and H. Charnock; seconded by Messrs. A. Gers, W. S. Mayfield, and J. Jewell.

### FOR COUNCILLORS.

#### KENSINGTON WARD.

Mr. DAVID PACKHAM—Proposed by Mr. Chas. Dalton; seconded by Mr. Alex. Jackson.

#### EAST NORWOOD WARD.

Mr. GEORGE BIRRELL—Proposed by Messrs. J. Hambidge, D. Lithgow, and A. Cornthwaite; seconded by A. Dowie, R. Nurse, and W. Newbury.

#### WEST NORWOOD WARD.

Mr. CARL AUGUST NIENASSER—Proposed by Messrs. A. Meyer, and S. Lower; seconded by F. W. Lindrum, and G. Leopold.

Mr. JAMES THOMAS—Proposed by Charles Gooch, W. G. Buik, and W. Goddard; seconded by Messrs. F. W. White, and A. Dowie.

#### KENT TOWN WARD.

Mr. FREDERICK HALES—Proposed by Mr. Chas. Simms; seconded Mr. Chas. Pearce.

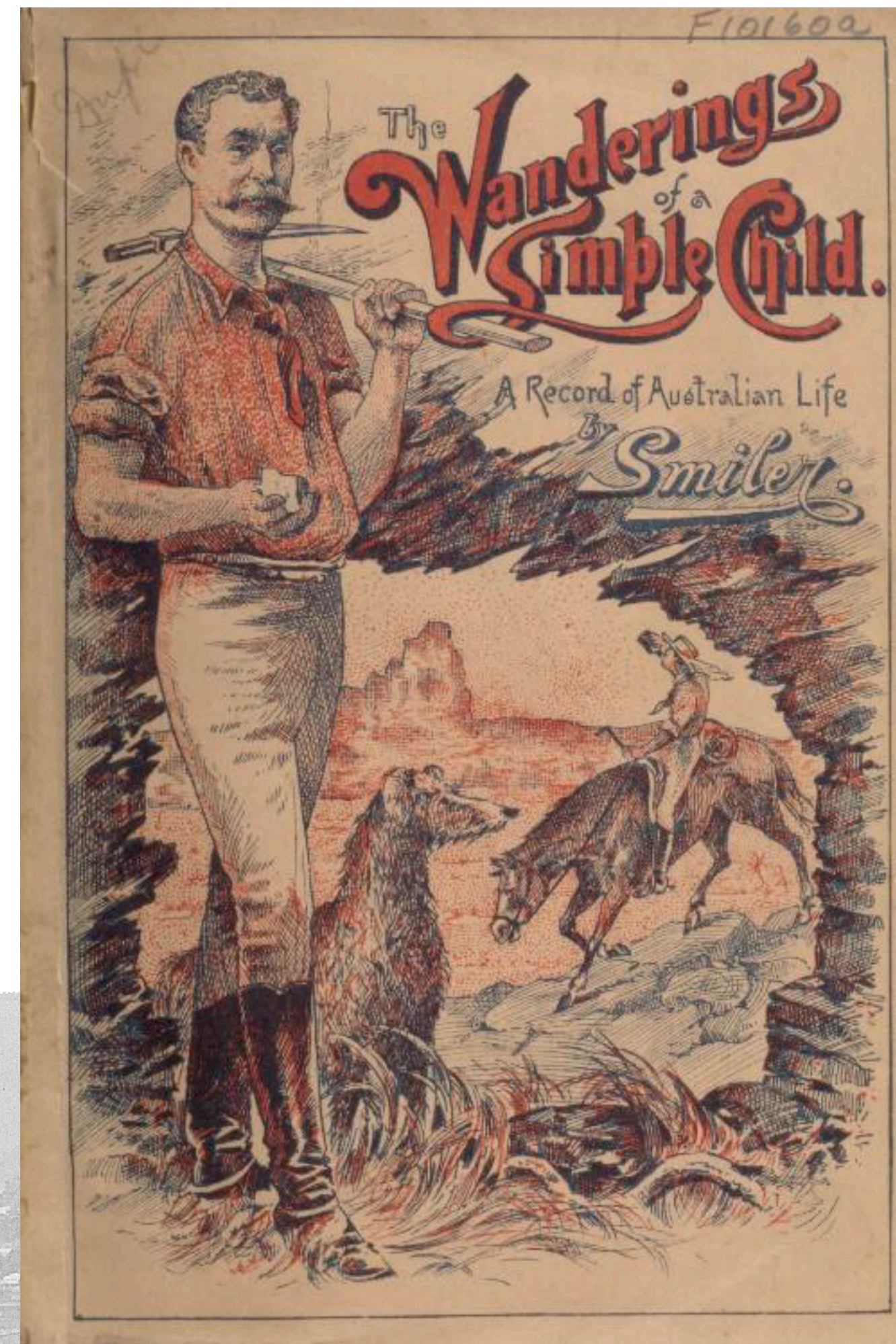
### AUDITORS.

Mr. ARTHUR LLOYD—Proposed by Messrs. W. Cavenagh, M.P., F. A. Meyer, M. Kingsborough, and R. Dodson; seconded by Messrs. W. H. Little, A. Dowie, and John Benson.

Mr. JAMES WILLIAM LOCK—Proposed by Messrs. W. D. Claxton and D. Lithgow; seconded by Messrs. W. H. Little and G. Booth.

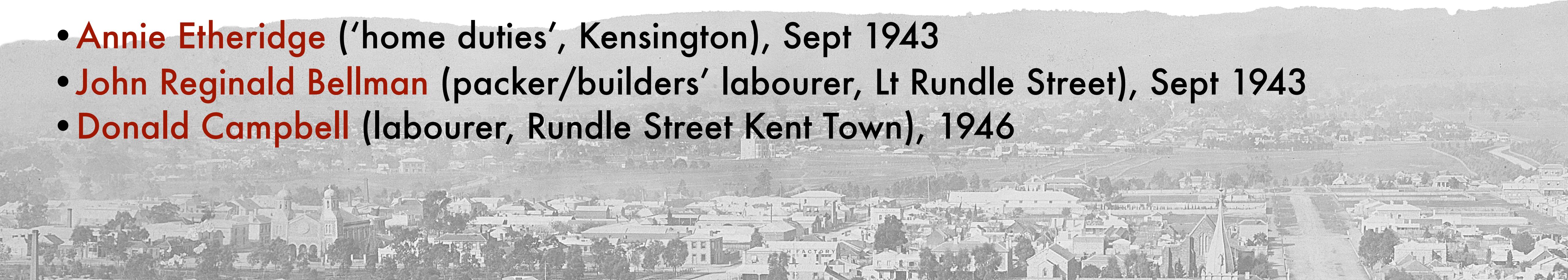
Mr. WILLIAM DENTON CLAXTON—Proposed by Messrs. H. Willis and D. Lithgow; seconded by Messrs. W. H. Little and G. Booth.

Mr. E. T. Smith being the only candidate in the field he was declared duly elected. In Kensington, East Norwood, and Kent Wards there was only one candidate for each proposed, consequently Messrs. Packham, G. Birrell, and F. G. Hales were declared duly elected.



# The patrons of Kent Town Hotel

- Difficult to characterising real patrons
  - Can only identify a low number
  - Sources suffer from an inherent bias
- **Charlotte Fell**, (domestic servant?, Kent Town Hotel), c.1865
- **Frederick Hales** (wood turner/land broker/councillor, College Road), May 1875
- **Frederick Reid** (accountant/embezzler?, Kent Town), May 1875
- **John Onsworthy** (coachbuilder, Kent Town), May 1875
- **Henry Dew** (baker/councillor, Rundle Street Kent Town), 1878
- **Annie Etheridge** ('home duties', Kensington), Sept 1943
- **John Reginald Bellman** (packer/builders' labourer, Lt Rundle Street), Sept 1943
- **Donald Campbell** (labourer, Rundle Street Kent Town), 1946



# The patrons of Kent Town Hotel

- Professionals, skilled wage-earners, shop-keepers
  - Not (semi-)industrial “working class”
  - Upper/aspirational ‘working class’/lower-middle class
  - Consistent with occupational profile of Kent Town population...
  - ...except few domestic or general servants
  - Mostly local residents, not transients
- Consistent with other lists of “Kent Town residents” eg sports clubs, lodges etc
- Comparison with nearby pubs: the Kentish Arms and the Royal Hotel

