

## Paddington, Sydney NSW 2021

On a path used by local Aboriginal people, a road of some form was built by Governor Hunter to South Head as early as 1803. Governor Macquarie upgraded the road in 1811 for strategic purposes to accommodate wheeled vehicles. The road was improved by Major Druitt in 1820 to give faster access to the signal station at South Head. It was also to give access to the salubrious villas built by the colony's emerging plutocracy. The road was renamed the Old South Head Road after construction of New South Head Road along the Harbour foreshore was begun in 1831.

The first land grant in the Paddington area, of 100 acres, was made to Robert Cooper, James Underwood, and Francis Ewen Forbes by Governor Brisbane in 1823, allowing them to commence work on the Sydney distillery at the eastern end of Glenmore Road. A mill was located at the end of Gordon Street and run by the Gordon family grinding wheat from the early 1830s. It remained a prominent feature of the local landscape as houses were built, and as wind power was replaced by steam. After the commencement in 1841 of Victoria Barracks the village of Paddington soon emerged, much of it around the cottages of the many artisans –stonemasons, quarrymen, carpenters and labourers – who were working on the construction of the Barracks.



Juniper Hall was built by Robert Cooper, an ex-convict, in 1824 and is the oldest (Georgian style) house in Paddington and Australia. It is a large, dominating structure located diagonally opposite the Paddington Town Hall. It was restored when owned by the National Trust of Australia. In 2013 the building was sold to the Moran Arts Foundation for exhibitions and events.



*Paddington late 1940's.*



*I was unable to sight the water meter at Juniper Hall as the site is locked. But on a walk mainly along Oxford Street, I was able to locate some interesting sites with installed **Water Meters**.  
ATM early Nov.2025.*

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## Sydney's early water supply

Settlement in 1788 was focused around a stream of fresh water that drained into Sydney Cove. This had long been a source of fresh water for the local Gadigal people. Several small dams or tanks were cut into this stream to increase water retention, and hence it became known as the Tank Stream. It was abandoned as a source of potable water in the late 1820s due to polluting European practises.

The Lachlan Swamps and Busby's Bore provided the second source of water supply for Sydney. The scheme required the construction of a series of reservoirs on the Lachlan Swamps, now part of Centennial Park's lakes. These supplied the city with water via an underground tunnel, later known as Busby's Bore, to an outlet at Hyde Park.

The Botany Swamps provided the third source of water supply for Sydney. Edward Bell, the City Engineer, prepared the design that included Paddington Reservoir on the South Head Road, (later renamed Oxford Street), and Crown Street Reservoir in Surry Hills with capacities of 723,270 gallons and 3,500,000 gallons respectively. The dams and pumping station at Botany and the Crown Street Reservoir were completed by 1860. The Crown Street Reservoir is still operational today.

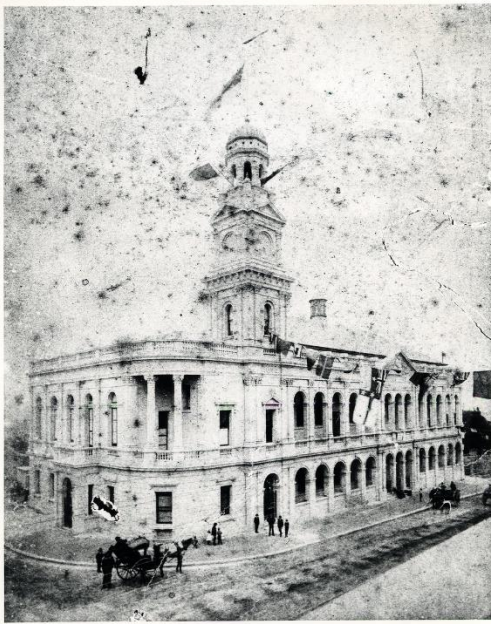


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**Paddington Reservoir** - The Paddington Reservoir in Oxford Street provided water to parts of Sydney between 1866 and 1899. In 2006 the remnants of the reservoir's vaulted construction were preserved with a sunken garden known as the Paddington Reservoir Gardens or Walter Read Reserve.

*Paddington Reservoir Gardens*





Pictured to the left is Paddington Town Hall and on the right the old Bank of New South Wales building which is now a Post office. Both structures were built in the 1880's.

The water meter pictured below services the Post office Building (Old Bank). It is an original **Davies Shephard model PSM type 40mm bore type with oval flanged connections**. The serial number ED000350 indicates it is from a very early production run from the 1990's. So far 11,671,130 litres have passed through this water meter as at late 2025.



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Having walked one of the back streets of Paddington I noticed there were a mixed bag of **20mm water meters installed** on Terraces. Split between **Elster in-line PSM** rotary piston “grenade” type meters and **Actaris TD8** rotary piston upright water meters