

COURTHOUSE/THE OFFICES/THE SECRETARIAT

There has been a building on this site for many years.

On 15 September 1848 described as:

"New Barracks, new Courthouse, Surveyor Office, Lockup & Constable's House &c.

This is a building situated midway between Government House and the surrounding buildings, and the Town.

It is a wooden building consisting of a centre and two wings connected by two narrow passages. In the right wing is a large room containing a grate, and a large bin but no other fixtures; this room measures 20 feet by 15 feet. A small room without any fixtures 10' 8" x 7' 2". And a room 15 feet x 15 used as the Surveyor General's office containing a register stove, slate mantelpiece, fender and fireirons; a drugget covers the room, there is a peat box in it and a small cupboard also a frame for a screen, it is also furnished with a coal hod.

The centre contains two rooms divided by a stone wall. The smallest contains only a grate – it measures 16' x 10' 6". The larger room is used as the Courthouse. It is fitted up with a jury box, bar across the room, prisoners dock and criers' desk. The Royal Arms (in tiles) are fixed in a wooden frame over the slate mantelpiece there is a register stove, fender and fireirons, and the floor inside the bar is covered with oil cloth. This room is 28 feet by 16 feet.

Courthouse, Survey Office &c &c

The left wing contains four rooms of which the first is used as the Magistrate's office, the second as the police station, the third as the residence of the Head Constable and the fourth as an additional office for the Surveyor General for drawing plans.

The Magistrate's office is fitted up with a bar across it. It contains a Register stove, a slate mantelpiece, two corner shelves, a wire window blind and a linen window blind. It is covered with drugget inside the rail and furnished with fender and fireirons, and a coal hod. This room is 15' 6" x 11' 6".

The Station room is fitted with a grate there are no fixtures – it is 16' 9" x 15' 6".

The Head Constable's room has also a grate and a pair of steps leading to the loft. This room is also 16' 9" x 15' 6".

The Surveyor General's drawing office is furnished with a grate and a fender. There is also a flight of steps leading to the loft. This room measures 16' x 15' 6".

By October 1852 "a jury room for the convenience of the jury in trials by jury. Also a small outbuilding fitted with privies" had been added to the left wing.

In May 1855 they were described as "Courthouse buildings. *These buildings are situate on the East side of the Reservoir, and consist of three one storied wooden buildings forming a centre 14 feet wide and 40 feet long, and two wings each 16 feet wide and placed right angles to the centre building. The wings are connected to the centre by two narrow passages.*

The centre building comprises the courthouse 28 x 16 ft, fitted with enclosed bar for the Justices, jury box, clerks table, table for parties, witness box, prisoners box &c, a clock, Shield of the Royal arms in encaustic tiles, register stove fender & fireirons. Also a small room unoccupied with a fireplace 16 feet x 10 feet.

The left or west wing extends back 63 feet and is 16 feet wide. The first or north room in the Magistrate's office with fireplace &c, carpet and blinds, also a portrait of the Queen.

The second room divided by a stone wall from the former is 16 feet square appropriated for the night watch house having a strong lock up cell inside it.

Adjoining this last is the quarter occupied by the Head Constable consisting of a room the same size and a loft over it.

Next to the Constable's room is another of the same size at present occupied permissively by Mrs Montagu rent free who has a small girls' school.

The east or right wing contains the survey office 16 feet square fitted with blinds, carpets, fireplace fender and fireirons, clock and Press. A small room for the use of the Surveyors instruments is attached – without any fittings except a large flat case.

The other room is 20 feet x 16 and is at present unoccupied.

Behind the centre building is a yard partly enclosed by the two wings in which has been built a room for juries to retire to.

There are also attached for the persons resident or occupied in these buildings two privies”
[E1]

In Despatch 174 dated 4 December 1891 Governor Goldsworthy advised that he was moving the offices next to Government House to a more central spot by utilising the block of buildings formerly used as quarters by the Colonial Secretary and the portion set apart as the Courthouse for new offices, saving a distance of 1/3 of a mile. That the old Government offices, formerly Government House, with some slight additions would make good quarters for the Colonial Secretary and Treasurer. [B23; 42]



Colonial Secretary's Offices – Biggs Collection, JCNA

The Colonial Annual Report of 1891 stated that “The transference of the Government Offices from the extreme west of the settlement, to what used formerly to be the courthouse buildings and Colonial Secretary's quarters, brought about what is acknowledged by all to be an immense improvement. In one building are now to be found the Courthouse, the Judge's Chambers, the

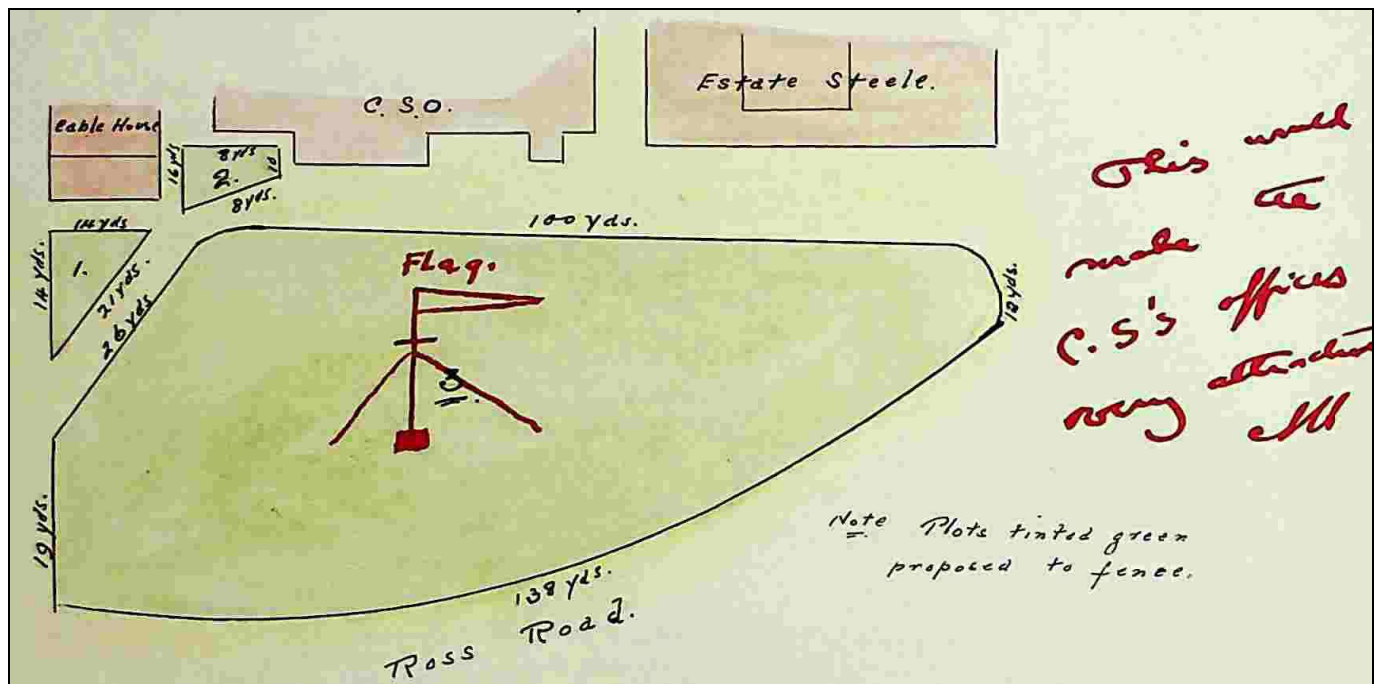
Colonial Secretary's Office, the Colonial Treasurer and Postmaster's Offices, and the residential quarters of the Treasury Clerk.

It is contemplated to convert the old offices which lie about one mile from the centre of the town of Stanley into residential quarters for the Colonial Secretary and Colonial Treasurer”.

In August 1891 the east end was part of the Colonial Secretary's quarters as was the Post Office and the Treasurer's room. The large central room was the Court. The room adjoining was the robing room and library. Next was the Magistrate's office then the next room was Police Constable's quarters.

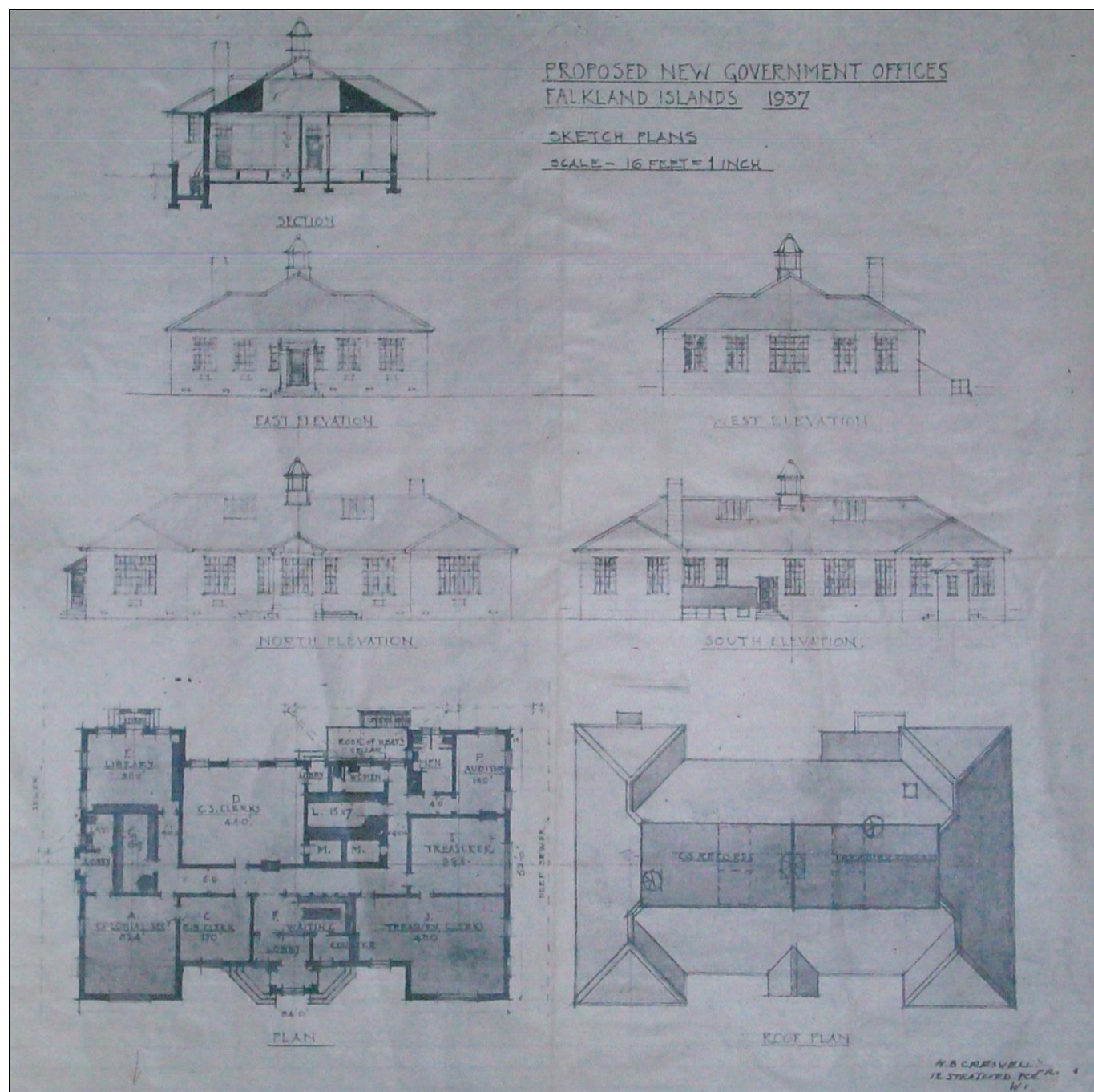
In June 1898 the east end was occupied by Coulson, the large central room was the general office; the room adjoining was the library. Next was the Colonial Secretary's office and the next room was the Surveyor's room. The Post Office and Treasurer's room were also in the building.

Around World War I the Courtroom was transferred to the newly built Town Hall and the Colonial Secretary's Office, which was next to Government House, took over the old Courthouse.



In December 1929 the Governor suggested paths and fencing in the green in front of the Secretariat. Due to cost it was decided to only fence part of the area. [BUS/SEC/1#3]

In 1936 a request for plans was made for a building as free as possible of architectural embellishments as it was desired that the work be carried out by unskilled labour and that the plan for the foundations be forwarded as early as possible so that work could commence early 1937. The majority of the Secretariat staff were temporarily housed in the Town Hall and demolition on the east end of the old building commenced in November 1937.



Secretariat plans 1937

The building of the new concrete building was completed in 1938 at a cost of £5,524 and ready for use in March 1939. It housed the Secretariat, the Treasury and various other Government offices, such as Customs. [BUS/SEC/1#4]

The building was originally constructed with one floor and an attic, the attic later being converted into offices. The outer and main inside walls were built of concrete blocks with inner walls lined with boarding. The attic office walls were constructed of a wooden framework and lined with wood boards. The roof was a wood frame supporting asbestos tiles with a skylight over the general office.

"PENGUIN"

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NEW GOVERNMENT OFFICES.

A link with the past is being rapidly destroyed by the demolition of the old building which has served for many years as Offices for the Colonial Secretarial Staff of the Colony. The older parts of the building were constructed almost a century ago and have an interesting and varied history. Gradually the space available has become insufficient and the structure unsound and so, almost in a moment, this monument to the pioneers is being swept away.

The new building which will rise on the old site will be dignified and modern; and in every way in keeping with the important business of the Colony which will be conducted there.

Provision is being made for Offices for the Colonial Secretary and Colonial Treasurer and their

Staffs and also for the Auditor. In addition, there will be a Committee Room and Library and a Waiting Room for the Public. All Offices are to be on the ground floor; the first floor being used as Record Rooms.

The new building will be eighty-four feet long and fifty feet wide. It will be constructed of locally-made concrete blocks and will be roofed with red slates. Central heating is to be employed throughout thus minimising the risk of fire and keeping the offices cleaner. Two strong rooms are to be constructed to give adequate security to the Colony's currency.

The work of erection has already commenced as the foundations are almost completed and the first blocks were set on the 9th of this month. Within three or four months the outer shell of the building will have taken decided form and will give a good idea of the finished appearance which the Offices are to present.

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APPLY

"PENGUIN" OFFICE.



An extension was built circa 1948 with a final cost in September 1948 of £1,085. [GOV/GHO/2#9, 89]



On Monday 9 March 1959 at about 5.40 pm Sydney LYSE saw smoke from his house at 1 St Mary's Walk and informed his neighbour Stephen ALDRIDGE who telephoned the Exchange and the fire siren was started by them at 5.48 pm. Henry SEDGWICK was working in the Printing Office to the rear of the Secretariat and saw smoke coming from the skylight on the south east end of the Secretariat. He was unable to go upstairs due to the dense smoke. He and Douglas MORRISON, the Chief Clerk, started to carry out files. Stanley TREES, the Colonial Treasurer, on hearing the fire siren went to the Secretariat and broke his office window and entered and commenced removing files from his office and that of the Colonial Secretary. At 5.54 pm the fire brigade arrived with two pumps and the fire was eventually extinguished at 8.35 pm.



The first floor of the Secretariat was completely gutted as were the Colonial Secretary's office and the Assistant Colonial Secretary's office on the ground floor. The remainder of the ground floor was badly scorched. The majority of the records were saved.

The damage was provisionally estimated at £6,000 for the building and £1,500 for the contents. After a thorough examination of the building it was decided that the fire originated in the stores loft at the rear of the general office on the first floor and the cause was inconclusive. The damage was extensive and to all intents and purposes the building was gutted and only the shell remained. The Secretariat was temporarily established at 1 Ross Road West and the Treasury at 4 Police Cottages.

London Assurance paid out £7,841-9-11 in May 1959. [BUS/SEC/1#8]

SECRETARIAT DAMAGED BY FIRE

The Secretariat and Treasury building was gutted by fire on Monday evening, the 9th March. Most of the roof has gone, the top floor was completely swept by fire and destroyed and the ground floor offices were extensively damaged. The Treasury has, perhaps, come off best of all.

The alarm was raised at about 5.47 p.m. and members of the Fire Service were quickly on the scene. By the time the fire was first spotted and reported, however, it had already got a firm hold on the roof timbers and the upper floor. It took half a dozen hoses, many thousands of gallons of water and some two hours or more of fire fighting to bring it completely under control.

Fortunately some quick thinking and action by the Fire Service, Secretariat and Treasury staff and members of other Government Departments and the general public, for there was no shortage of willing helpers, resulted in most of the files and records and much of the equipment being saved.

The inside of the building is now little more than a blackened and sorry looking ruin. The inside of the Treasury vault, where most of the money and stamps are kept, was quite untouched and rumour even has it *that most of the Income Tax records were preserved*. The cause of the fire has not been determined although it seems almost certain that it started upstairs and in the centre of the building.

A temporary Secretariat has been established at No. 1 Senior Officers' Quarters. The Treasury is for the time being working at No. 4 Police Cottages.

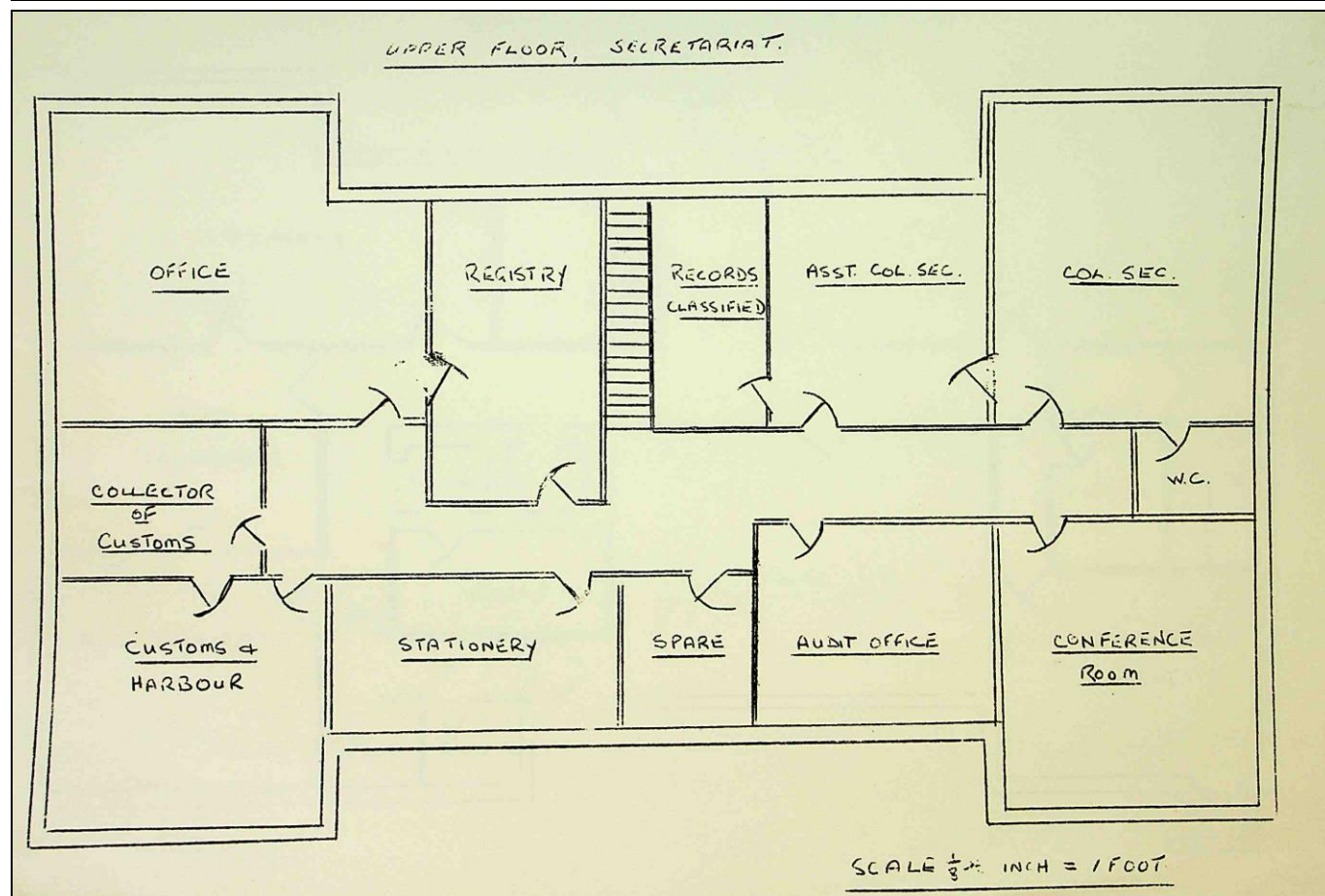
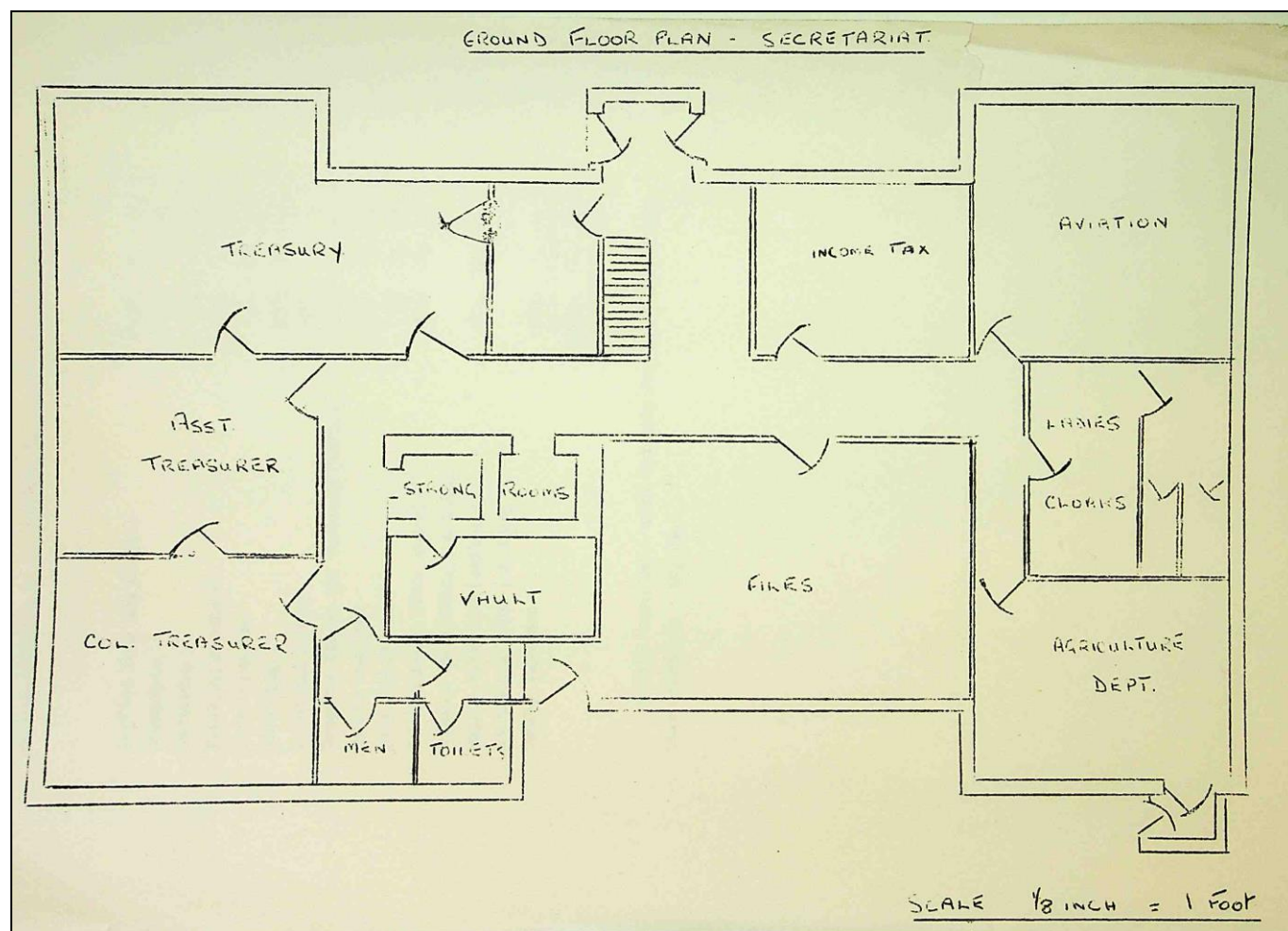
The two most frequently heard comments at the scene of the fire seem to have been, "I paid my income tax yesterday" and "Now perhaps they will fill that flipping back page".

FI Monthly Review April 1959

The Falkland Islands Company Ltd agreed a contract to rebuild the Secretariat and demolition work on the inside was commenced by eight men in July 1959.

The building was extended to include a second storey with the existing walls taken up 9' with the face blocks set back $\frac{3}{4}$ " to take plaster.

The Falkland Islands Company Ltd completed rebuilding the Secretariat on Tuesday 22 September 1959. The painter commenced painting 24 September 1959 and the Secretariat staff moved back in Monday 21 March 1960. [BUS/SEC/1#9]



In 1968 two of the old cannon partially buried by soil to the north of the Town Hall were rescued, complete with carriages and mounted at the front of the Secretariat when the concreting of the road was finished. The cannon were cleaned and painted battleship grey in September 1969. [BUS/RRE/2#8]

On 14th June 1982 the commander of the invading Argentine forces, General Menendez, signed the document of surrender to the British in what is now known as the Liberation Room.



Secretariat July 2012

In 2016 the cannon at the front of the Secretariat were refurbished by the Public Works Department.



**September 2016 -
photographs PWD**

