
Former Mercantile Bank



B4338 Former Mercantile Bank

Location

345 - 349 Collins Street,, MELBOURNE VIC 3000 - Property No B4338

Municipality

MELBOURNE CITY

Level of significance

State

Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) Number

H0467

Heritage Listing

National Trust

Statement of Significance

Last updated on - April 7, 2008

The Mercantile Bank's headquarters were constructed in 1888 to a design by William Salway in association with Right and Lucas. This opulent and flamboyant building epitomises the short-lived incandescence of the "land banks" in the boom of the 1880s. Formed in 1885, the Mercantile Bank had crashed and been liquidated by 1892. Statement of Significance: The Mercantile Bank was established in 1885 and the Australian headquarters were constructed in 1888, as a 5 storey brick and concrete building with cement rendered facade derived from Baroque and Mannerist architecture and executed in a characteristic 'boom style classicism' manner of 1880's Melbourne. The architects were William Salway, a noted Melbourne practitioner, in association with Wright and

Lucas. The design featured prominent glazed roof domes and pavilions and circular motifs. The crash of the Mercantile Bank in 1892, under the chairmanship of Sir Matthew Davies, speaker of the Victorian Legislative Assembly, plunged the colony into economic chaos. Legal action against directors of this bank ensued for many years. The Mercantile Bank building is the last remaining "land bank" building in Collins Street and epitomises this opulent and flamboyant cultural phase of the 1880's and the 'land boom', with which it is indelibly associated. The architecture typifies the grandiose attitudes of this era and is an important example of 'boom style classicism'. The former Mercantile Bank was acquired by the Bank of New Zealand in 1910, and progressively the interior has been substantially modified to suit changing banking operation. The roof domes have also been removed.

Classified: 07/09/1994

Other Names Former Bank Of New Zealand, R.E.S.I. Building Society, Bank of Melbourne,

Hermes Number 64699

Property Number

This place/object may be included in the Victorian Heritage Register pursuant to the Heritage Act 2017. Check the Victorian Heritage Database, selecting 'Heritage Victoria' as the place source.

For further details about Heritage Overlay places, contact the relevant local council or go to Planning Schemes Online <http://planningschemes.dpcd.vic.gov.au/>