Above: (Old) Downshire Street, west end to the back entrance of No 14 Ferry Lane. The road was paved with a large gauge ‘blue metal’. There were sandstone gutter stones along the south and west sides.

Below: (Old) Downshire Street, looking toward the east from the back entrance of No 14 Ferry Lane.
Above: (Old) Downshire Street, west end at the back entrance of No 14 Ferry Lane. Showing the curbing, gutter stones, steel gully pit and firehydrant.

Below: (Old) Downshire Street, south side along the retaining wall. The deposit just above the gutter stones consisted of fine demolition material and roofing slates. It appears that the roofing slates were one of the first materials to be removed during demolition, hence the common appearance at the old ground level, below the bulkier materials such as stone, brick, mortar and plaster.
(Old) Downshire Street. South side retaining wall. The wall was photographed starting at the Bond 6 (east) end, progressing toward the west.
(Old) Downshire Street. South side retaining wall. The wall was photographed starting at the Bond 6 (east) end, progressing toward the west. Note the steel gully pit in line with the gutter stones.
(Old) Downshire Street. South side retaining wall. The wall was photographed starting at the Bond 6 (east) end. Above, top, shows the back entrance into 14 Ferry Lane.
(Old) Downshire Street. South side retaining wall. Steel gully pit and series of brick inspection pits extending into the middle of the street.
(Old) Downshire Street. North side of the road leading into Terrace Building 2. Continuation of the series of brick inspection pits into the very large terracotta drain pipes which led into the pipes underneath Terrace Building 2. The scheme was modified after the demolition of the buildings with the makeshift arrangement as seen (above) where the water was funneled into terracotta pipes across demolished Terrace Buildings 1 and 2 through the back of 12 Ferry Lane. The cone and smaller pipe were made of galvanized sheet metal.
Left: Terrace Buildings 1-4 (Old) Downshire Street, from No 4 to No 1 (east to west direction). Showing the surviving natural surface of the bedrock and the north edge of (Old) Downshire Street.

Below: Terrace Buildings 1-4 (Old) Downshire Street, from No 1 to No 4 (west to east direction). The back yards of the terraces extended down the slope of the bedrock (left).
4.13 (OLD) DOWNSHIRE STREET, TERRACE BUILDINGS 1-4

The ‘Old’ in (Old) Downshire Street was added in this report to differentiate the pre-demolition (1915-1918) street from the present Downshire Street. The old street, located directly to the east of No 14 Ferry Lane, was buried under demolition material and soil fill around 1915-1918. The present Downshire Street was established over the backyards and outbuildings of the houses along Lower Fort Street.

Documents available at the time of excavation did not give a clear indication how the four terrace houses along the north side of Old Downshire Street were numbered, so for recording purposes the houses were numbered 1 to 4, No 1 being the west terrace, No 4 being the east terrace.

The terrace buildings date after 1851, the year the land was subdivided to create Downshire Street. The building materials, particularly the mortar, indicate a date after the mid 1850s. The terrace buildings are shown in the 1865 map as four houses with four yards and two sets of two privy structures attached between Nos 1 and 2 and Nos 3 and 4. The plan was confirmed by the archaeology but the privies appear to have been destroyed during the 1915-1918 demolitions.

The 1880 map numbers No 1 as 68, No 2 as 67, No 3 as 66 and No 4 as 65, the numbers not relating to (Old) Downshire Street but to the area in general.

The Holtermann panoramic photograph (1875-1885) shows the terrace buildings as a substantial two storey structure with raised party walls (above the roofline) and shared chimneys between Nos 1 and 2, and Nos 3 and 4. Each terrace unit has two windows on the upper floor.

The terrace buildings were owned by one owner, as far as can be established, and rented out to tenants. Any major improvements made to the structure occurred throughout all the four terrace units.

In summary, the archaeology revealed that the exterior walls (partly of rubble coursed stone for the basement at least) were cement rendered and scribed in imitation of ashlar stone coursing. Interior walls were of various types and sizes of brick (‘seconds’, pavers, fire bricks) and rendered with stone lime plaster. The plaster and the mortar used in the construction had a distinct yellow hue due to the sand used. The Holterman view does not show a balcony but the archaeology showed that there was some sort of verandah/balcony at the basement/ground floor levels because the basement walls extended beyond the back wall as indicated in the basement.

On the (Old) Downshire Street side, Nos 1 and 2, there were remains of two distinct basement light wells in what was once the footpath area of (Old) Downshire Street. The light wells at Nos 3 and 4 appear to have been less substantial, possibly because of the extent of the bedrock there. The cuts in the rocks mirror the positions of the light wells of Nos 1 and 2, and so do not seem to indicate the positions of the front doors. By default, the front doorways of Nos 3 and 4 would have flanked the line of the dividing wall.
between Nos 3 and 4; the front doorways of Nos 1 and 4 would have been at the west and east ends of the terrace buildings.

Evidence was found that the lower halves of the light wells were filled with building rubble from a renovation and also with refuse. At about the same time all the basement floors were converted from timber to concrete. The concrete and the fill contained renovation and other rubble and a considerable amount of refuse. The refuse dated to the late nineteenth century to about 1900, the bulk of it may have originated from a privy pit or privy pits (perhaps relating to the privies on site). It should be noted that the terrace buildings changed ownership in 1897.

At the base of the concrete floor fill layer was fragments of building material relating to the construction of the terrace building.

Although the terrace buildings may have looked modestly attractive on the outside, the building materials as evidenced by the bricks were very inferior. The bricks were from several different sources and used in all combinations in the walls though because the bricks varied so much in size, each course had to be completed using the same size of brick. Among the bricks were:

-- Cream white Scottish firebricks, no frog, very hard body, impressed on one side 'GLENBOIG WARRANTED' and the other side, 'PATENT', 230mm by 112mm by 68mm.

-- Salmon-red pavers, no frog, medium soft body; 280mm by 109mm by 55mm.

-- Dull tan bricks, reddish interior, medium to large fire spots, stamped 'IBW' in a rectangular grog; several very warped (during moulding and drying process), 243mm by 108mm by 65mm, 240mm by 94mm by 86mm etc. Bricks like these would normally have been rejected at the kiln.

The manufacturers of the bricks have not been traced as operating in Sydney and may have come as ballast from nearby ships.

The owner and/or builder of the buildings would have saved a lot of money by obtaining bricks for minimal prices.
4.14 (OLD) DOWNSHIRE STREET, TERRACE BUILDING No 1

This is the west-most of the terrace houses. It adjoins the back gardens of Nos 12 and 14 Ferry Lane.

The basement floor was sealed by the installation of a concrete slab, as were the basements of the other terrace houses of the group. The concrete floor was made to slope northwards to allow any seepage or water originating from the light well and bedrock to flow out of the building. The date of the concrete floor appears to have been around 1900 as indicated by the inclusions in the concrete, for example, the most recent cultural material found dumped under the slab, plus the knowledge that many houses in this area and any area affected by the Plague of 1900 were overhauled and/or sanitized to discourage rodent activity. There was also an ownership change in 1897 which could account for renovations.

The cultural material under the slab appears to originate from privy pits and/or ash pits. The material has a broad date range extending from the 1850s to about the 1890s - roughly from the time the terrace houses were constructed. Privy pits were located to the back of these houses but nearly all of the evidence of them was destroyed during the 1915-1918 demolitions. It is possible that the pits were emptied and the contents used as fill during the renovation period, not an unusual thing to do at the time because it was then argued that such ‘hard’ refuse was good for drainage.

No direct link was found between, for example, the ceramics of any of the under slab deposits or relating to the infill of the bay (light well) features. This can indicate that the material from each privy or ash pit was used strictly only for the under-slab fill of their respective houses. However, direct links may have gone unnoticed because the variety and number of the ceramics was not extensive.
UNEVEN BEDROCK, SOUTH + WEST BASEMENT WALLS

NB. THE FLOOR WAS ORIGINALLY OF TIMBER, LATER REPLACED WITH CONCRETE (c.1900). THE SAME APPLIES TO BUILDINGS 2-4.

BRICK NORTH WALL

SANDSTONE FOOTING OF BRICK NORTH WALL

CONCRETE SLABS, PART OF VERANDAH FLOOR?

GAPS MARKING ROTTED TIMBER FLOORING

EARTH PLATEAU AT SAME LEVEL AS CONCRETE SLABS

SCALE 1:20
RVJ
JAN 2000
Above: Terrace Building 1(Old) Downshire Street. View northwards, showing the north basement wall footing and the series of concrete slabs (top left) part of what appears to have been a basement verandah area.

Below: Typical of the deposits found under the concrete basement slabs in all four of the buildings. The deposits were late nineteenth century in character but were deposited around the first decade of the twentieth century as fill. The deposits may have originated from the privy pits relating to these buildings or may have been brought in from elsewhere to fill the underfloor gap after the former timber floor was removed. The work may have been the result of the general clean up after the Sydney Plague of 1900.
WALSH BAY TERRACE BUILDING 1 BASEMENT
SOUTH ELEVATION

STREET/FOOTPATH LIGHT WELL
Cement + Plaster Render
Side Wall of Street Footpath Light Well
Scar from Post Scar

Plaster Remnants
Post Demolition Terracotta Pipeline
Bedrock + Stone Wall

Back (South) Elevation of Disintegrating Bedrock

Late Period Concrete Floor
Largely Late 19th Refuse + Fill

Brick Partition Wall on a Sandstone Footing

SCALE 1:20
RVJV
JAN 2000
Above: Terrace Building 1(Old) Downshire Street. View southwards, showing the remains of the basement. The pipeline was dug into the demolition material after the terrace was demolished. The single brick north wall only survives to three courses here.

Below: Closer view of the above
Above: Terrace Building 1 (Old) Downshire Street. Remains of the east wall. Note the natural profile of the bedrock (left). The wall originally had a very thin layer of plaster and was whitewashed several times.

Below: As above, remains of the north end (verandah area) of the east wall. The dark loamy soil indicates that this part of the ruin was near the 1999 ground surface.
No 1 basement light well in footpath

The light well feature is part of a scheme that allowed light to enter the basement from the footpath area of the street. Similar arrangements may be seen along Windmill Street, particularly along the houses backing Ferry Lane. The cement rendered shaft originally extended lower than the sill into the basement area. At a later time the lower half of the shaft was back-filled to sill, or threshold, level (as seen in the basement wall). The shaft may have been intended originally to stop or delay water to flow directly into the basement but the result must have been a slow release of water seeping onto the cellar floor.

During excavation and later analysis, it had to be established whether the deposit represented a gradual build up of soil, rubble and cultural material or whether the filling was the result of a single event. Several pieces of ceramics belonging to the same vessel were found throughout the deposit. The presence of the same type of cement render, cement and plaster throughout the deposit suggested that the fill was the result of a single event. It is fairly certain that the alterations to the light well and the basement floor took place at the same time the exterior was re-rendered (from a brown stained cement render to a light coloured one - as revealed in the concrete floor deposit also).

Apart from seepage from the light well, seepage from the bedrock was an on-going event. Before the concrete floor was installed the floor must have been constantly smelly and damp. The basement would have been uncomfortable even after the installation of the concrete floor: the area would have been of little value except as a workshop or a storage place for timber, charcoal, coal and coke (for which evidence of the latter was found in several of the basements).
WALSH BAY TERRACE BUILDING 2 + 1
PLAN OF EDGE OF OLD DOWNSHIRE STREET + SKYLIGHTS ALONG FORMER FOOTPATH

SCALE 1:20
RVJY
JAN 2000
Above: Terrace Building 1(Old) Downshire Street. Remains of the light well in the pavement area of (Old) Downshire Street. This allowed light to enter into the basement of the building. Existing examples of this arrangement are still to be seen in nearby streets.

Below: As above, after partial excavation. The excavation revealed that the light wells were filled with building materials from an overhaul of the building and with domestic refuse, possibly during the first decade of the twentieth century. There was evidence that the materials were well compacted during deposition.
4.15 (OLD) DOWNSHIRE STREET, TERRACE BUILDING No 2

This terrace house is adjacent to the west-most of the four terrace houses. The history and physical changes over time are almost identical to No 1.

A large stormwater pipeline was located behind the south wall of the basement and under the basement floor, originating from (Old) Downshire Street, and traveled northwards. This large scale pipeline may predate the structure. The pipeline as found under Downshire Street was crudely modified after the demolitions of 1915-1918 and diverted into a terracotta pipeline that was excavated into the demolition remains of No 1 and No 2 (see plans and elevations).

A standard terracotta pipeline was cut through No 2 (see plan and elevations) after the 1915-1918 demolitions. The pipeline originated from the (Old) Downshire Street section of the large stormwater drain. The pipeline extended across No 1 into No 12 and then northwards.

No 2 basement light well in footpath

This was similar to that in No 1 except for the exact sequence of the fill and artefact layers, and the smaller dimensions of the pit. The modifications to the light wells occurred during the same period and appeared to relate to the overall renovation of the terrace buildings.
WALSH BAY TERRACE BUILDING 2 BASEMENT
SOUTH ELEVATION

STORM WATER DRAIN IS VERTICAL BEHIND STONE WALL

STREET PAVEMENT LIGHT WELL

SIDE WALL OF STREET PAVEMENT LIGHT WELL

BRICK PARTITION WALL

POST DEMOLITION DRAIN PIPES

ILLUSTRATING THE DEMOLITION RUBBLE FOUND IN ALL BASEMENT ROOMS

BEDROCK WITH PICK MARKS

ROOFING SLATE DEMOLITION LAYER

PRE-DEMOLITION COAL + CHARCOAL SURFACE OF LATE CONCRETE FLOOR CHARCOAL LAYER

SOIL + LATE 19TH REFUSE BUILDING RUBBLE CONSTRUCTION ER SANDSTONE FOOTING

SCALE 1:20
RVJTV
JAN 2000