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**Kings Building, 36-42 Devon Street West**

**1925**

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**Themes in development:** transport and trade, cultural and social.

**Cultural heritage values:** historical, architectural, technical, townscape and group values.

**Registered:** Category II under the Historic Places Act, 1993.  
Category III on the New Plymouth District Planning Scheme.

<b>Owner</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Use</b>
William Still PO Box 8018 New Plymouth	Lot 1 DP 2572, Lot 1 DP 4390 ID: 013573	Retail

### **Description**

King's Building is the centre of retailing in the traditional core of the city at the intersection of Devon Street West and Brougham Street. It is a three-storied reinforced concrete building with a lively facade, characterised by recessed planes, decorated spandrel panels and friezes, and small shuttered windows with a faintly Spanish Mission character to them. Nevertheless the style is original and not readily characterised. Coloured cement render in a chequerboard pattern which contributed to the graphic interest of the facades has now been painted over.

Because of the large plan area of the building, light wells were incorporated in the form.

### **History**

In the late 1840s New Plymouth's first hospital building was moved from its site in Gill Street to become a general store on the Devon Street / Brougham Street corner. In 1874 this was replaced by a two storeyed wooden building of retail shops and offices for the draper W R King; this survived until the construction of the present building in 1926 for the businessman Newton King. It survives in reasonably authentic form, although the windows were replaced in 1979, and other alterations were carried out in 1986; improvements to the Huatoki Stream channel under the building were effected in 1985.

Newton King, son of Thomas King who arrived in New Plymouth in 1841, set up in business in 1879 as an auctioneer and commission agent. His name became closely associated with the development of the city and in promoting co-operation between town and country. He was a director of the New Plymouth Sash and Door Company and chairman of the Harbour Board from 1917 to 1922 (where the Newton King Wharf is named after him); his own company became registered as a public company in 1926. The Brooklands estate, now part of Pukekura Park, was bequeathed to the city in 1933, six years after King's death.

### **Architects**

The architects were Gummer and Ford, architects and engineers of Auckland, and the builders were Messrs Jones and Sandford Ltd, New Plymouth.

### **Statement of Significance**

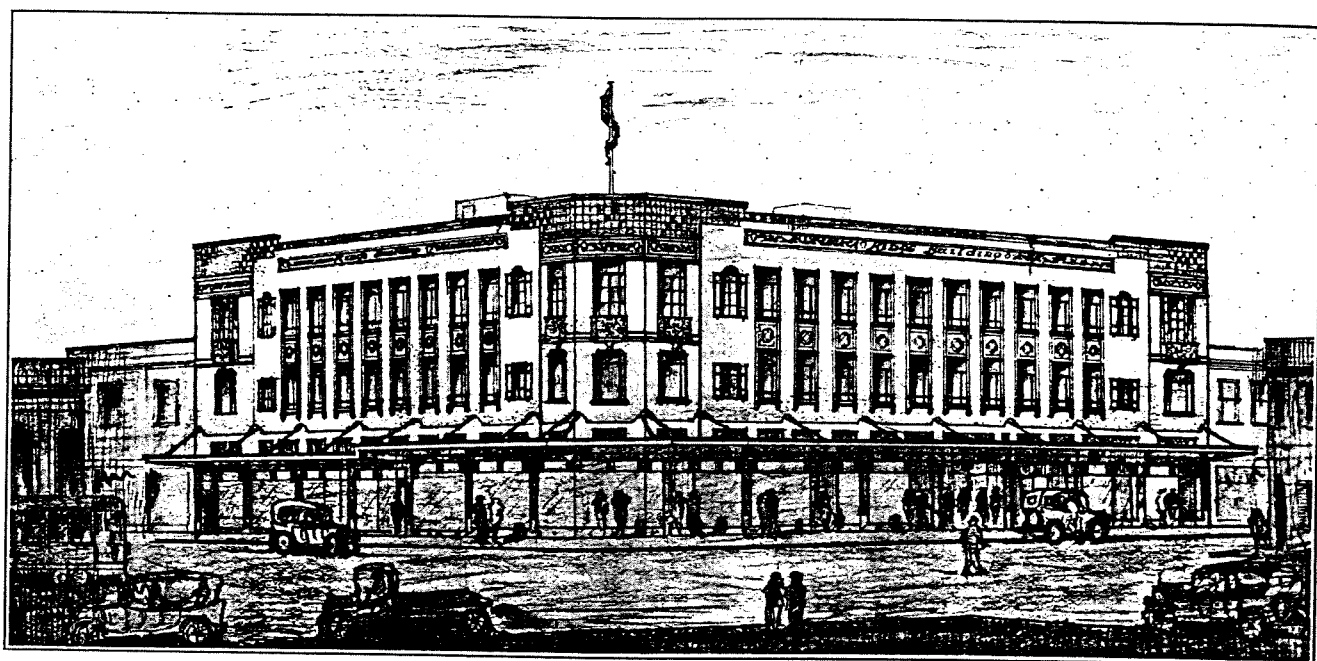
King's Building is important historically in continuing a tradition since the late 1840s of retailing from this site. It also commemorates an important local businessman and benefactor of the city, Newton King. It has architectural importance as an example of the commercial architecture of Gummer and Ford, the pre-eminent architectural practice in New Zealand during the inter-war years, and very high townscape value as a well proportioned and strong building on the important Devon Street West / Brougham Street corner.

**Sources**

New Plymouth District Council building file 152/36.

Taranaki Museum, photos.

NZHPT Record Form no 896.



**"New Building in Course of Erection for Newton King Esq"**

From *The Wonder Book of Taranaki*, Thomas Avery and Sons Ltd, 1926.