

Heritage Buildings Report

Site ID

Building/Site Name

Inglewood Railway Hotel (Former)

Address

23 Rata Street, Inglewood



Statement of Significance

This building has considerable historic significance for having been occupied by the Inglewood Railway Hotel for 137 years from 1877 until 2014. The original portion of the former Railway Hotel was constructed within the first two years of the establishment of the township of Inglewood and is now one of the oldest surviving buildings in Inglewood; second only to the Inglewood Railway Station constructed earlier the same year. Many current and former Inglewood residents were regular patrons of the Railway Hotel during its latter years of operation, and still recall stories of the long-standing rivalry between the Railway and Inglewood Hotels. The building is a representative example of the wooden hotel buildings constructed in New Zealand towns during the 1860s-70s period, of which few now survive. Although subject to numerous extensive alterations and additions, the original hotel still largely retains its original exterior form and is one of a number of older buildings which give Inglewood a distinctive historical character.



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Legal Information and Heritage Status

Legal Description PT Section 260 Town of Inglewood

District Plan Item/ Map No.

Heritage New Zealand List Not listed

Construction Information

Date of Construction Initial construction 1876; additions in 1891, 1893 & 1899-1900

Principal Materials Wooden framing, weatherboard, corrugated steel

Construction Professionals William Carter (architect and builder for original building); James Sanderson (architect for 1899-1900 additions)

History

In January 1875, a party of Taranaki Provincial Council Members officially named a clearing in the Moa Block 'Inglewood'.¹ The first sale of town sections took place at New Plymouth on 20 March 1875, although only six of the 66 sections offered were initially sold.² One of the sections sold was number 260, a corner property opposite the soon to be constructed New Plymouth-Wellington railway line, which was purchased by Mr P. Peterson at its reserve of £20.³ Peterson only retained ownership of section 260 for a short period before it was purchased by Mr William Carter, who intended to build a general store on the site. William Carter had recently, on 6 June 1876, married Anne Broadmore.⁴

In October 1876, it was reported that a number of buildings were being constructed in the infant township, including "a large general store" by Mr Carter.⁵ It is likely that Carter's store was the most substantial building in the town at this time, and indeed he found the building too large, relocating to smaller premises next door after just a few months.⁶ In May 1877 it was reported that the building recently vacated by Carter had been let to Mr John Scott Dobbin for a hotel.⁷ Dobbin had first opened his commercial private hotel in a small building on Richmond Street in October 1876, and had the license transferred to the present building in 1877, at the same time he renamed his establishment the Railway Hotel.⁸

In March 1878, the Railway Hotel was advertised for sale for £1200, with Carter wanting to release capital to invest in his business.⁹ The hotel was described as yielding large returns, and the future importance of the site at the crossroads of the Junction and Mountain Roads.¹⁰ The hotel was purchased by proprietor John Dobbin, however, a few months later, he advertised for sale by tender the unexpired lease and goodwill of the Railway Hotel.¹¹ The lease wasn't sold, and Dobbin remained owner and proprietor.

¹ *Taranaki Herald*, 19 December 1911, page 6

² *Taranaki Herald*, 17 February 1875, page 3

³ *Taranaki Herald*, 24 March 1875, page 3

⁴ *Taranaki Herald*, 10 June 1876, page 2

⁵ *Taranaki Budget and Weekly Herald*, 26 October 1876

⁶ *Taranaki Herald*, 30 July 1877, page 3

⁷ *Taranaki Budget and Weekly Herald*, 19 May 1877

⁸ *Taranaki Budget and Weekly Herald*, 12 October 1876

⁹ *Taranaki Herald*, 25 March 1878, page 3

¹⁰ *Taranaki Herald*, 25 March 1878, page 3

¹¹ *Taranaki Herald*, 30 May 1878, page 3

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Intersection of Moa and Rata Streets circa 1899, with Railway Hotel at right prior to Sanderson additions. Supplement to the Auckland Weekly News, 12 May 1899, Sir George Grey Special Collections, Auckland Libraries, AWNS-19020814-5-3

Dobbin was declared bankrupt in May 1879, and the lease was again advertised for sale by tender.¹² Following Dobbin's bankruptcy, the licence was transferred to James Butterworth in June 1879.¹³ R. M. Nicoll then took over the hotel for a short period before he too was declared bankrupt, James Paul, as a Trustee of Nicoll's Estate, held the licence for a short period, before it was temporarily transferred to R. Grey in March 1880.¹⁴ Bauchope and King advertised the hotel for sale by auction in April 1880, and it was purchased by Charles Callaghan.¹⁵

The license was transferred to the new Railway Hotel proprietor Thomas Giles in June 1881.¹⁶ Giles was fined £1 in April 1882 for selling liquor on a Sunday.¹⁷ At the June meeting of the Moa Licensing Committee, Giles sought to obtain an extension to his license until midnight, however the committee refused to grant this.¹⁸ In July 1885, Giles, like his predecessors, was also declared bankrupt, owing to the "dullness of trade".¹⁹ His book debts were offered for sale by auction in October, and were purchased by James Tarry and H. W. Marsh.²⁰

¹² *Taranaki Herald*, 5 May 1879, page 2; *Taranaki Herald*, 10 May 1879, page 3

¹³ *Taranaki Herald*, 6 June 1879, page 2

¹⁴ *Taranaki Herald*, 2 March 1881, page 2

¹⁵ *Taranaki Herald*, 16 April 1880, page 3; CT TN25/98, Land Information New Zealand

¹⁶ *Taranaki Herald*, 8 June 1881, page 2

¹⁷ *Taranaki Herald*, 14 April 1882, page 2

¹⁸ *Taranaki Herald*, 10 June 1882, page 2

¹⁹ *Taranaki Herald*, 31 July 1885, page 2

²⁰ *Taranaki Herald*, 5 November 1885, page 3

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During Giles bankruptcy, the license for the Railway Hotel was held by the Deputy Official Assignee, Francis Peacock Corkill, and was transferred to the hotel's owner, Charles Callaghan, in December 1885.²¹ However, Callaghan did not intend to reside on the premises, and was to have Giles remain as manager; the licensing committee strongly objected to this arrangement (which was unusual at the time), but granted the license on the grounds that a suitable person be put in charge.²² Soon after the licensing meeting, Callaghan briefly advertised the Railway Hotel for sale or let.²³ The lease was obtained by Ralph Collins, who subsequently applied for a transfer of license to himself.²⁴ In June 1887, tenders were called by Callaghan for repairs to the Railway Hotel.²⁵

Collins remained proprietor until December 1890, when the license was transferred to Henry John Julian.²⁶ The following August, tenders were invited for additions and alterations to the Inglewood Railway Hotel for owner Mr Callaghan; it seems the original owner and architect William Carter was responsible for the work.²⁷ It is unclear what these additions included, but were required as a condition of Julian's license being renewed, and were complete by the Inglewood Licensing Board's June 1892 meeting.²⁸ In May 1893, a daring burglary occurred at the hotel, where a window was forced open, a safe from the bar removed and broken open outside, with about £40 stolen.²⁹ In July 1893, it was reported that Julian had commenced the work of adding a further "five bedrooms, an upstairs parlour, a large dining room, and kitchen" to his hotel; it is unclear who the architect and builder was for this work.³⁰

In October 1899, Mr James Hawkins purchased the hotel from Julian.³¹ Soon after, well-known New Plymouth architect James Sanderson called for tenders for alterations and painting the Railway Hotel at Inglewood.³² It is thought that part of this work involved the erection of a balcony which has since been removed. A number of Taranaki hotels erected balconies at this time, and aside from being a fashion statement, also served as a fire escape. In the following decades the balcony would become a favoured site for announcing general election results; such occasions were attended by many town and country residents and saw much campaigning by members of the temperance and prohibition movements.³³ At the 1918 election, "a big crowd gathered at the band rotunda... to watch the election results which were screened from the balcony".³⁴ It was reported that the earlier part of the evening was reasonably quiet, but "gradually got a little noisier until in the end a tin-can band, horns etc. enlivened the proceedings".³⁵

Soon after completion of the 1899-1900 alterations, it was reported that Richard Grylls had purchased the lease and goodwill of the Railway Hotel.³⁶ Grylls only had only held the lease for a couple of years before it was purchased by Henry Shotlander in June 1902.³⁷ Shotlander had for a short period held the lease of the Imperial Hotel in New Plymouth, but relinquished it owing to the Imperial needing to

²¹ *Taranaki Herald*, 5 December 1885, page 2

²² Ibid.

²³ *Taranaki Herald*, 8 December 1885, page 3

²⁴ *Taranaki Herald*, 19 May 1886, page 3

²⁵ *Taranaki Herald*, 9 June 1887, page 3

²⁶ *Taranaki Herald*, 15 November 1890, page 3

²⁷ *Taranaki Herald*, 4 August 1891, page 3

²⁸ *Taranaki Herald*, 13 June 1892, page 2

²⁹ *Taranaki Herald*, 6 May 1893, page 2

³⁰ *Taranaki Herald*, 14 July 1893, page 2

³¹ *Taranaki Herald*, 18 October 1899, page 2

³² *Taranaki Herald*, 19 December 1899, page 3

³³ *Taranaki Herald*, 12 December 1914, page 2

³⁴ *Taranaki Herald*, 12 October 1918, page 7

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ *Taranaki Herald*, 31 March 1900, page 3

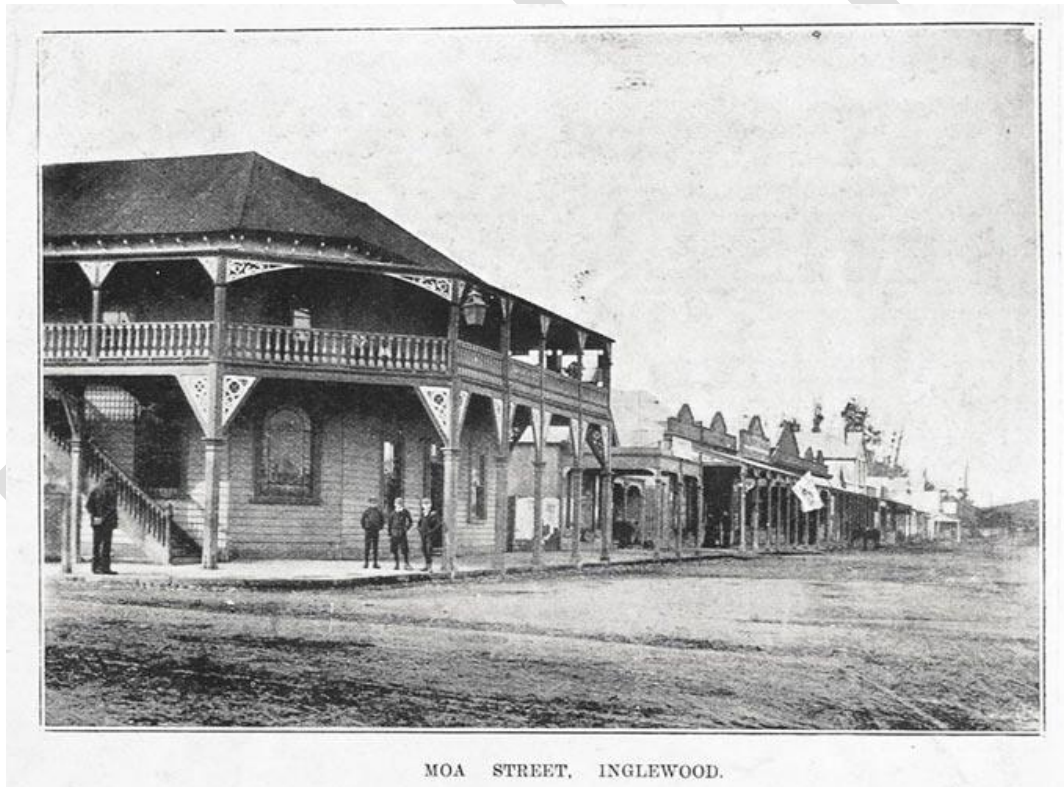
³⁷ *Taranaki Herald*, 7 June 1902, page 2



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be rebuilt.³⁸ During late-June 1905 a chimney fire was reported at the Railway Hotel; it seems 'a few buckets of water' was all that was needed to extinguish the flames.³⁹ In September 1905, the license was transferred from Shotlander to Frederick Calger.⁴⁰ Fred, as he was known, remained proprietor of the Railway Hotel until the expiration of the lease in March 1910, at which time he and his wife took over the lease of the Terminus Hotel in New Plymouth.⁴¹

Mr B. Ford was the next proprietor of the Railway Hotel, and soon after taking over had the building 'painted and renovated both outside and in', with the license transferred in his name a short time later.⁴² A further change in proprietorship occurred in January 1911, when Mr Ford disposed of his interest to Mrs Bridget O'Neill.⁴³ Mrs O'Neill remained proprietress until March 1914, when the license was transferred to Campbell Wilson Merrylees.⁴⁴ However, Merrylees tenure as proprietor was short-lived, and he relinquished his interests to Edward McGinty of Napier during September 1914; a temporary license was granted to McGinty at this time.⁴⁵



The Railway Hotel in 1902 following the addition of its veranda. Supplement to the Auckland Weekly News, 14 August 1902, Sir George Grey Special Collections, Auckland Libraries, AWNS-19020814-

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³⁸ *Taranaki Herald*, 10 May 1902, page 2

³⁹ *Taranaki Herald*, 1 July 1905, page 8

⁴⁰ *Taranaki Herald*, 7 September 1905, page 5

⁴¹ *Taranaki Daily News*, 19 March 1910, page 4

⁴² *Taranaki Daily News*, 11 May 1910, page 8; *Taranaki Daily News*, 3 June 1910, page 5

⁴³ *Taranaki Herald*, 14 January 1911, page 2

⁴⁴ *Taranaki Herald*, 6 March 1914, page 2

⁴⁵ *Taranaki Herald*, 4 September 1914, page 2



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In September 1915 McGinty was fine £1 plus costs for employing an unregistered barmaid at the hotel; the reason given was that Edward was away on urgent business, and his wife was ill at the time.⁴⁶ At the 1916 annual meeting of the licensing committee a report into the state of the Railway Hotel stated that it was 'in very bad repair'. Various improvements including re-painting, re-papering, new linoleum and replacement of rotten veranda posts was required, with the report concluding that 'it is very questionable whether this hotel is worth putting in repair. Probably the simplest matter would be to build a new house.'⁴⁷ Thankfully, the hotel was retained, and by late-June 'repairs on a much wider scale than suggested' and costing £132, had been carried out; this was to the satisfaction of the Licensing Committee, and a new licence was granted to McGinty.⁴⁸ In June 1917, McGinty took over the license for the Grosvner in New Plymouth, and the Railway Hotel license was transferred to owner James Hawkins.⁴⁹

Ernest Charles Heel took over the hotel lease for seven years from the 7th of January 1918, with the licence transferred from Hawkins to Heel during March 1918.⁵⁰ When the licence was up for renewal in June later that year, it was granted to Heel on the condition that certain repairs were made to the premises.⁵¹ During January 1920 Heel invited tenders for painting the Railway Hotel.⁵² Around this time it seems Heel struggled to attract and retain staff, with frequent advertisements placed for barmaids, cooks and porters.⁵³ James Hawkins passed away at New Plymouth on the 22nd of April 1920, with the Railway Hotel property passing to the Public Trustee, before being purchased by Ernest Heel during September 1921.⁵⁴

Heel leased the property to Robert and Margaret Fairweather from December 23rd, 1921.⁵⁵ The Fairweather's remained proprietors until April 1923, when the lease was transferred to William Henry Parker.⁵⁶ On June 11th, 1924 the lease was transferred to Alfred James Emeny, who remained proprietor for just a few months before the lease was transferred to Bridget O'Neill.⁵⁷ The lease to Bridget O'Neill was renewed for four-year terms in December 1925 and January 1930.⁵⁸ On the 14th of August 1931 the lease was first transferred to Leo Patrick O'Neill and Cyril James Stafford O'Neill as executors, and then from Leo and Cyril to just Leo.⁵⁹ The hotel was later purchased from Heel by Ernest Henry Gray on November 2nd, 1936.⁶⁰

From November 26th, 1936 the hotel was leased to New Zealand Breweries Ltd, with part of the property then leased back to Gray.⁶¹ The hotel property was purchased by Frederick Edward Hamley of Auckland on the 22nd of November 1943, with both leases also extended on this date.⁶² A new lease (seemingly for the entire property) was granted to Horace Kenneth Skilton for five years from

⁴⁶ *Taranaki Herald*, 18 September 191, and a new five5, page 4

⁴⁷ *Taranaki Daily News*, 10 June 1916, page 7

⁴⁸ *Taranaki Herald*, 28 June 1916, page 7

⁴⁹ *Taranaki Herald*, 1 June 1917, page 7

⁵⁰ *Taranaki Daily News*, 9 March 1918, page 4

⁵¹ *Taranaki Daily News*, 22 June 1918. Page 4

⁵² *Taranaki Herald*, 28 January 1920, page 7

⁵³ *Taranaki Herald*, 11 June 1920, page 1; *Taranaki Herald*, 3 September 1920, page 1; *Taranaki Herald*, 14 December 1920, page 1

⁵⁴ *Taranaki Daily News*, 23 April 1920, page 4; CT TN88/109, Land Information New Zealand

⁵⁵ CT TN88/109, Land Information New Zealand

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

⁶¹ CT TN140/162, Land Information New Zealand

⁶² *Ibid.*



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midnight on the 8th of April 1956.⁶³ Following the expiration of Skilton's lease, another five-year lease, expiring at midnight on the 8th of April 1967, was granted to Colin Campbell Dickson; this lease was later transferred to Cecil Edward Leech in October 1963, and then to Mervyn Gordon Wilkin in September 1964.⁶⁴ The hotel property was purchased by Taranaki Brewery Limited during September 1965.⁶⁵ A new five-year lease granted to Wilkin on April 20th, 1967, but was transferred to Athol Thomas Butcher 10 days later on April 30th.⁶⁶ It was during the decades of the mid-twentieth century that the rivalry between the Railway and Inglewood Hotels reached its peak, with residents intensely loyal to one or the other. The hotel was later purchased by Mike Smart and continued to operate until July 2014, when after 137 years the pub closed its doors for the very last time; A bottle store has operated from the ground floor since the hotel's closure.⁶⁷

Reference Sources

See footnotes

Description

The former Railway Hotel is located on a prominent section at the intersection of Moa and Rata Streets in central Inglewood. The Railway Hotel is part of an important group of older buildings which give central Inglewood a special character. In the immediate area there are several mid-late nineteenth century timber buildings including the contemporary Inglewood Railway Station (1876), the shops at 5-9 Moa Street (circa 1880s-90s), and the now much modified former Moa Farmers Union Inglewood Bakery at 11 Moa Street (1897). The New Plymouth-Marton Railway, which reached Inglewood in November 1877, bisects Inglewood just east of the former hotel.

The building has two street facades, one to Rata Street and one to Moa Street, with a chamfered corner facing north-west. When originally constructed, the building followed a form that was traditional for the time; public bar with corner entrance from the street and bedrooms on the first floor with separate entrance. The 1900-01 Sanderson additions saw the door relocated from the corner and an arched window installed in its place; this window was later removed, and the entrance reinstated at the corner. The wooden-framed building was originally clad in horizontal weatherboards but has since been re-clad and now features a textured plaster finish; the roof is sheathed in mild corrugated steel.

The first floor features an irregular row of four-light double-hung sash windows; ten on Rata Street and three on Moa Street, with a pair of later French casements at the chamfered corner. A sloping roof projects from the upper floor and is presumably a remnant of the Sanderson designed balcony, whilst a more modern steel fire escape wraps around the building at first-floor window height. Ground floor openings have been altered and modernised, with the original portion incorporating mostly aluminium windows, whilst the Rata Street extension features circa 1950s style wooden casements presumably added at the time the building was re-clad.

Despite its obvious mid-twentieth century 'modernisation' during the tenure of New Zealand Breweries, the former Railway Hotel's nineteenth century origins are still clearly evident. Given the historic importance of the building and its significance as part of a rare group of nineteenth century timber commercial buildings in New Plymouth District, there would be considerable merit in restoring the exterior of the building to its circa 1900 form.

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ *Taranaki Daily News*, 21 July 2014, page 3



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Assessment:

Historical	The original portion of the former Railway Hotel was constructed within the first two years of the establishment of the township of Inglewood and is now one of the oldest surviving buildings in Inglewood (second only to Inglewood Station). The building is significant for having been occupied by the Inglewood Railway Hotel for 137 years from 1877 until 2014.	✓
Importance to Community	The former Railway Hotel was an important community meeting place for 137 years. Many current and former Inglewood residents were regular patrons of the Railway Hotel and still recall stories of the long-standing rivalry between the Railway and the Inglewood Hotels.	✓
Architecture & Construction	The former Railway Hotel follows a form that was traditional for smaller timber hotels of the time. It was designed and constructed by early Inglewood settler William Carter, and at the time of construction was the most substantial building in Inglewood. Additions in 1900-01 were designed by capable New Plymouth architect James Sanderson.	✓
Setting and Context	The former Railway Hotel is located within a precinct containing a number of 1870s-1900s commercial buildings, including the nearby shops at 5-9 Moa Street (circa 1880s-90s), the former Moa Farmers Union Inglewood Bakery at 11 Moa Street (1897), and the Inglewood Railway Station (1876).	✓
Archaeology	As this building was constructed in 1876, the property likely has archaeological evidence relating to pre-1900 human activity and has the potential to reveal information about the past through archaeological investigation.	✓
Representativeness, rarity and integrity	The former Railway Hotel is a representative example of the wooden hotel buildings constructed in New Zealand towns during the 1870s period, of which few now survive. Although subject to numerous extensive alterations and additions, the original hotel still largely retains its original exterior form.	✓
Meets threshold for listing (three or more ticks, or two ticks in one criterion)		✓