

GORE DISTRICT COUNCIL
HISTORIC HERITAGE ITEM RECORD FORM

HERITAGE ITEM NAME former Dalgety & Co. store / *The Ensign* building

ADDRESS 47 Mersey Street, Gore

PHOTOGRAPH



(GDC, October 2021)

DISTRICT PLAN ITEM NO. H25 **HNZ LIST NO. & CATEGORY** n / a
(at time of assessment)

LEGAL DESCRIPTION Section 4 Block XI Town of Gore

GDC FILE NUMBER 3222413

DATE OF CONSTRUCTION 1930

**ARCHITECT/DESIGNER/
BUILDER** Mason & Wales, architects

STYLE Commercial classicism

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

Single-storey building with rectangular footprint and gabled and hipped roof forms. Principal, north-facing elevation is symmetrical about a recessed entry with panelled doors and multi-pane fanlight. 'Chicago style' tripartite windows have multi-pane casement uppers. Stepped parapet conceals roof and bears date of building in central panel. Pilasters frame central section of facade. Windows set into northern section of west elevation.

MATERIALS/STRUCTURE

Brick, cement plaster, corrugated metal.

ADDITIONS/ALTERATIONS

Removal of chimneys (c.2010?). Extension to rear (date unknown).

SETTING

The former Dalgety & Co. store / *The Ensign* building stands on the south side of Mersey Street, in that portion of the street bordered by Tamworth Lane in the east and Gorton Street in the west. The building is built to the road boundary and the scheduled setting is the land parcel on which the building is located.

HISTORY

Despite its name the *Mataura Ensign* has been based in Gore since its establishment in May 1878. The *Ensign* moved from Main Street into new premises in Gorton Street in 1895 and then added to these and erected new printing and publishing offices in 1900. Meanwhile Dalgety & Co. had opened an agency of their Dunedin office in Gore in 1897; the office of their representative William Turnbull was in Mersey Street. Dalgety & Co. Ltd (est. 1884) were auctioneers, general merchants and land, stock and station agents with offices in New Zealand, Australia and London, England. The company had been founded in Australia in 1846 and was later taken over by London owners. Its chief office in New Zealand was in Christchurch. In 1930 Dunedin architects Mason & Wales called tenders on behalf of Dalgety & Co. for a store in Mersey Street; this resulted in the subject building. Dalgety's shared the premises with the agents of two insurance companies in the early 1950s. The building was sold to Mataura Ensign Holdings Ltd in 1972 and was immediately leased to the Gore Publishing Company, which purchased the property in 1982. The newspaper changed its name to *The Ensign* in 1973 and has been a daily publication since 1906.

HISTORIC AND SOCIAL SIGNIFICANCE

The former Dalgety & Co. store / *The Ensign* building has historic significance for its association with both the Dalgety Company, and its contribution to the development of agriculture in the district, and *The Ensign* newspaper, which was founded in 1878.

CULTURAL AND SPIRITUAL SIGNIFICANCE

The former Dalgety & Co. store / *The Ensign* building has cultural value as a place of community identity and historic continuity, especially as the home of the *Ensign* for almost 50 years.

ARCHITECTURAL AND AESTHETIC SIGNIFICANCE

The former Dalgety & Co. store / *The Ensign* building has architectural significance as an interwar commercial classical style building designed by Mason & Wales of Dunedin. Mason & Wales is the oldest architectural practice in New Zealand, having been established by William Mason and Nathaniel Wales in 1863. The firm was in the hands of Wales' son Patrick (1864-1938) by the time that the Dalgety store in Gore was built. The building conforms to the styling of other Dalgety buildings erected around the country in the early 20th century.

TECHNOLOGICAL AND CRAFTSMANSHIP SIGNIFICANCE

The former Dalgety & Co. store / *The Ensign* building has technological and craftsmanship value for its brick masonry construction and detailing. The contractors of the building are currently unknown.

CONTEXTUAL SIGNIFICANCE

The former Dalgety & Co. store / *The Ensign* building has contextual significance for the contribution it makes to the historic character of Gore's town centre. The former Stevenson's Princess Theatre and former Creamoata factory are also scheduled heritage items in Mersey Street West.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND SCIENTIFIC SIGNIFICANCE

As the building post-dates 1900, any potential archaeological significance of the site would likely relate to its earlier use and development.

SUMMARY OF HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

The former Dalgety & Co. store / *The Ensign* building has overall heritage significance to Gore and to the district of Gore as a whole. The building has historical significance for its association with the Dalgety Company and *The Ensign* and cultural value as a place of community identity and historic continuity. The former Dalgety & Co. store / *The Ensign* building has architectural significance as an interwar commercial classical style building by leading Dunedin architects Mason & Wales and technological and craftsmanship value for its brick masonry construction and classical detailing. The former Dalgety & Co. store / *The Ensign* building has contextual significance as a historic feature on the periphery of the town centre.

REFERENCES

- *Mataura Ensign* 18 December 1894, p. 5; 8 February 1895, p. 6; 29 March 1895, p. 3; 19 August 1897, p. 3; 9 October 1900, p. 2; 10 November 1900, p. 4; 13 August 1901, p. 4.
- *Southland Times* 23 February 1901, p. 2.
- *Evening Star* 19 August 1930, p. 2.
- <https://archipro.co.nz/professional/mason-and-wales-architects/info>
- H Knight & N Wales *Buildings of Dunedin – An Illustrated Guide to New Zealand's Victorian City* Dunedin, 1988.
- <https://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz/newspapers/mataura-ensign>

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AUTHOR	Dr Ann McEwan / Heritage Consultancy Services
REPORT UPDATED	xx
AUTHOR	xx
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Extent of scheduling, former Dalgety & Co. store, 47 Mersey Street, Gore.