

House – 120 Liverpool Street, Whanganui



Location: 120 Liverpool Street, College Estate, Whanganui
Heritage NZ Pouhere Taonga List Number: Nil

Physical Description: This two storey, timber framed house is an excellent example of the neo-Georgian style. The house has the characteristic rectangular symmetrical plan form with a low-pitched hipped roof with chimneys at either side. The central entry is emphasised by a two storey faceted bay with bellcast cladding above the entry with Classically inspired panelled entry doors. The house has leaded casement windows and evenly spaced modillions to the eaves.

The original block plan is described as “Block Plan of house for Mrs C Reginald Ford” with the architect being C Reginald Ford, the partner of William Gummer. The partnership was arguably the most significant private architectural form in New Zealand for the middle of the twentieth century. It is presumed that this was Reginald Ford’s own house.

The development of Neo-Georgian from the 1890s, particularly for domestic buildings, was popular in England but was also used in Australia and New Zealand from the First World War to the 1940s. Use of the style paralleled the

Register Item Number:

457

Building Type:

- Residential
- Commercial
- Industrial
- Recreation
- Institutional
- Agriculture
- Other

Significance:

- Archaeological
- Architectural
- Historic
- Scientific
- Technological
- Cultural

Thematic Context

- Early Settlement
- Residential
- Industry
- Agricultural
- Commerce
- Transport
- Civic/Admin
- Health
- Education
- Religion
- Recreation
- Community
- Memorials
- Military

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Baroque of large public buildings, such as that used for Parliament Buildings. The desire for an architecture of a truly English character from an analysis of the works of Wren led architects such as English architect Norman Shaw to design English Renaissance houses in the 1880s. Ernest Newton and Mervyn Macartney, however are recognised as the architects who firmly established the Neo-Georgian style in England and influenced use of the style in Empire. Earnest George's design for Holwell House, Hertfordshire was a significant design in the Neo-Georgian manner.

William Gray Young is credited with reviving the style in New Zealand in Elliott House at 43 Kent Terrace. This house was built in 1913 and won an architectural award from the Institute of Architects.

"This Georgian Revival house with its sharp rectangular form and simple but carefully selected details was received with surprise and dislike when erected in 1913. It is a house of scholarly distinction, but the materials used for construction, brick, was alien to the traditional construction material, timber"¹

Archive plans show the ground floor plan having a central entry hall with stair leading to the first floor, off which is the living room to the south and a family room to the north. Off the family room is the kitchen. A dining room was added in the centre of the western elevation in 1981.

Other known names:

Current Use: Dwelling house

Former Uses: Dwelling house

Heritage Status:

District Plan Class: BR

Architectural Style: Neo-Georgian

Date of Construction: c1923

Materials: Painted timber shiplap weatherboards, timber and leaded joinery, English plain tile roofing

Registered owner:

Legal Description: Lot 3 DP 31095

History: Certificate of Title WN 343/90, issued to the Whanganui College Board of Trustees in 1927, shows the subdivision of the block bounded by Liverpool Street, Victoria Avenue, and the Wanganui-Aramoho railway line. The CT

¹ Peter Shaw, New Zealand Architecture, 1991

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carries forward the existing leases on the various properties on this block, the earliest of which dates to 1902. Lot J, upon which this house is built, was leased in two parts, with one part leased to Eric Robert Forlong from 1st October 1918, and the other, also from 1st October 1918, to Marjorie Fraser². Both were for 60-year terms.

Despite leasing land for a house site in 1918, Eric Robert Forlong was at the time aged approximately 17 years old. He had been born in 1901 to Percival Gordon ('Percy') Forlong, a Wanganui land agent, and his wife Helen Graham Fawers Forlong (nee Hair).³ This is perhaps a sign of speculation in relation to the Wanganui College leasehold land. In February 1918, Eric Forlong was elected secretary and treasurer of the Wanganui Swimming Club.⁴ Percy Forlong died on 22 October 1920, aged 46, leaving a wife and two young sons.⁵

In 1923, Eric Forlong married Alexa Hatrick (born 1895), the youngest daughter of Alexander Hatrick - owner of A. Hatrick & Co. Ltd., the firm that ran Wanganui's riverboats. Hatrick, who was also Mayor of Wanganui for six years from 1897, had died on 30 July 1918.⁶

Alexa's roles in the Hatrick & Co. firm included launching the riverboat *Waione* in 1902, when she was aged about seven.⁷ She was also the source of the name of the barquentine *Alexa* that Hatrick purchased in 1904.⁸

It seems likely that this house was built around the time the couple married in 1923. Recent (2012) advertisements by a Wanganui real estate firm stated that the house was designed by architect Charles Reginald Ford.⁹ He worked in Wanganui between 1914 and 1923.¹⁰

² Marjorie Fraser was possibly the unmarried woman of that name who was the daughter of Donald Fraser of Rangitikei: *Wanganui Chronicle*, 6 August 1917, p. 6 (Donald Fraser's obituary)

³ Birth Registration 1901/4302: <https://www.bdmonline.dia.govt.nz/>

⁴ *Wanganui Chronicle*, 1 March 1918, p. 4

⁵ Death Registration: 1920/5801: <https://www.bdmonline.dia.govt.nz/> ; 'Percival Gordon Furlong': <http://awtc.ancestry.com/cgi-bin/igm.cgi?op=GET&db=:2516992&id=I526132868&ti=5538>

⁶ *Wanganui Chronicle*, 1 August 1918, p. 5

⁷ *Wanganui Chronicle*, 27 January 1902, p. 2

⁸ *Wanganui Herald*, 8 March 1905, p. 7; *Wanganui Chronicle*, 10 July 1916, p. 6

⁹ Former Bayleys' advert: see <http://www.sella.co.nz/property/residential/for-sale/934ztk/>

¹⁰ Peter Lowe. 'Ford, Charles Reginald', *The Dictionary of New Zealand Biography*, Vol. 4 (Auckland, 1998), pp. 180-181

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In 1927, Eric Furlong's lease, then with 54 years and 6 months left to run (as at 1st April 1924), was surrendered and replaced with a 21-year lease that started on 1 October 1925. The lease held by Marjorie Fraser, occupant of the neighbouring property, did not alter until 1948, by which time Furlong had sold his house and moved elsewhere.¹¹

It is not clear when the Forlongs sold this house; however, the *Evening Post* of 9 March 1938 (p. 16) reported that Mrs Eric Forlong of Auckland, was staying with her mother, Mrs A. Hatrick, at Wanganui. By the *Evening Post* of 28 March 1940 (p.14), she was described as Mrs Eric Furlong of Wanganui. Alexa Forlong died in 1945, and Eric Forlong married Mary Sanderson Henderson later in 1945. Eric Forlong died in 1955.¹²

The certificates of title of this property are complex, with two sets running in unison, and with part of the land they cover in due course involving a motel site that is separate from this house (presumably on Marjorie Fraser's former leasehold land).

Certificate of Title WN 465/154, issued to the Wanganui College Board of Trustees in 1938, records the renewal of the lease on this property commencing 1st October 1946, with the lessee then being Edith Henrietta Carey. In 1956, the lease was transferred to Walter Max Willis (a 7/9th share) and his wife Agnes Willis (a 2/9th share). Max Willis was a solicitor who went on to become a District Court Judge, including with the Waitangi Tribunal.¹³ In 1963, the property was transferred to Edward Edwin Gardiner, a photographer, and his wife Lois Nola Esther Gardiner. Then in 1966, it was transferred to Sydney George William Chelley. Chelley then renewed the lease for a further 21 years from 1 October 1967.

CT WN 465/153 (not sighted) involves the actual house site, and was issued in 1938, at the same time as WN 465/154 (sighted, and referred to above). WN 465/153 was replaced by WN D2/1096 in 1965, by which time the 21-year lease

¹¹ This date appears on both CT WN343/90 & WN465/154

¹² Eric Robert Forlong: <http://awtc.ancestry.com/cgi-bin/igm.cgi?op=GET&db=:2516992&id=I526132900&ti=5538>

¹³ Jack Riddet Tripe Lawyers: <http://www.jrtlawyers.co.nz/about-us/our-heritage.html> ; Motunui - Waitara Report Waitangi Tribunal 1983: <http://www.waitangi-tribunal.govt.nz/reports/viewchapter.asp?reportID=0ff26c03-f956-40fa-adb0-61ea0843f885&chapter=1>

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that had started on 1 October 1946, was held by the aforementioned Edward Ewen Gardiner and his wife Lois Nola Esther Gardiner. In 1966, it was taken over by Sydney George William Chelley. Chelley then renewed the lease for a further 21 years from 1 October 1967. That lease was then taken over by Allan Ray Tong and his wife Jean Merle Tong in 1974 – as referred to in more detail below.

Certificate of Title WN 5D/600 was issued to the Whanganui College Board of Trustees in 1968 (to replace the aforementioned WN 465/154). It records the lease's transfer in 1974, to Allan Ray Tong (born Auckland, 1931) and his wife Jean Merle Tong (nee Robertson, born 1934). Allan Tong was a painting contractor and they had married in Wanganui in 1955.¹⁴

Thus the known transfers of the leasehold land this house stands on went from Forlong to Carey, Willis, Gardiner, Chelley and then to Tong.

Certificate of Title WN 29D/55 was issued to the Whanganui College Board of Trustees in 1986 for what is now Lot 3 on DP 31095. This CT combined the parts of CTs D2/1096 and 5D/600 applicable to this house and its section. It records that in 1986, the previously leasehold property was transferred into the ownership of Mr and Mrs Tong, and the lease was also merged. In 1989, the property was transferred to Alfred James Hansen, retired, and his wife Rosealin Mary Hansen. It was then transferred to the present owner, Gabriel Anne Bullock, a beauty therapist in 1990.

Bibliography

Campbell, Robert D., *Rapids and Riverboats on the Wanganui River* (Wanganui, 1990)

Lowe, Peter, 'Ford, Charles Reginald', in *The Dictionary of New Zealand Biography*, Vol. 4 (Auckland, 1998)

Archival sources, newspapers and online articles as referred to in the footnotes.

¹⁴ Swinton Family Tree:

http://www.swintonfamilysociety.org/web%20charts%20Jan%202005/Swint%20Ch.08-10/SWINTON_Ch10-2_Sh3.pdf

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Architect/Designer: Charles Reginald Ford

History of changes:

Date Period: ca 1923

Rarity / Special Features: The house is a good example of the neo-Georgian style.

Integrity: The condition of the house was not inspected.

Representativeness: The house was designed using the characteristic forms, materials and planning of the neo-Georgian style.

Context/Group Value:

Diversity (Form and Features):

Fragility / Vulnerability: Being a timber house, it may be vulnerable to fire.

Summary of Significance:

Architectural Qualities

The house is an excellent example of the neo-Georgian style and has the characteristic rectangular symmetrical plan form, a low-pitched hipped roof with chimneys at either side and with a central entry emphasised by a two storey faceted bay with bellcast cladding above the entry with Classically inspired panelled entry doors. Other typical elements include leaded casement windows and evenly spaced modillions to the eaves.

Historic Qualities

The house is associated with Eric Forlong, and of a local land agent and husband of Alexa Hatrick, daughter of businessman A Hatrick, owner of Wanganui's riverboats. The house is also associated with Charles Reginald Ford who designed the house prior to becoming partner of Auckland firm Gummer and Ford, New Zealand's most highly regarded architectural firm of the inter-war and immediate post war years.

Technical Qualities

The house is constructed using typical materials and techniques for the period.

Cultural Qualities

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The house has educational values as a good example of the neo-Georgian style.

Reference Source:

Associated Pictures:

Date of Survey: 2012

Prepared by: Ian Bowman and Val Burr