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Name: Grant Staples
Status: Provisionally Registered
Tier: State

THR ID Number: 12089
Municipality: Launceston City
Council
Boundary: CPR11442

Location Addresses

194-196 CIMITIERE ST, LAUNCESTON 7250 TAS

Title References
63383/2

Property Id
6673492



Grant Staples, northern elevation
Heritage Tasmania, 2011



Interior transom light
Heritage Tasmania, 2011



Grant Staples complex, 1960s
Private collection



Grant Staples, 1960s
Libraries Tasmania



Grant Staples, c1970s
Libraries Tasmania

Statement of Significance: (non-statutory summary)

Grant Staples at 194-196 Cimitiere Street, Launceston is of historic cultural heritage significance as a demonstration of early European residential and commercial life in the colony of Van Diemen's Land, now known as Tasmania. It is also a rare early building in an urban setting that evolved in concert with the development of Launceston as a major port. Grant Staples has the potential to reveal information that will contribute to an understanding of Tasmania's early European history via remnant interior decorative schemes, building footprints and occupational deposits. The core former residence is demonstrative of the Colonial Georgian period, expressed via its symmetrical layout, central hallway, interior transom lights and multi-pane windows. It also has a special association with the Henty family who were involved in the early European settlement of Tasmania, Western Australia and Victoria with trading routes to Mauritius, the Cape of Good Hope, England, New Zealand and the Americas.

Why is it significant?:

The Heritage Council may enter a place in the Heritage Register if it meets one or more of the following criteria from the Historic Cultural Heritage Act 1995:

a) The place is important to the course or pattern of Tasmania's history.

Grant Staples at 194-196 Cimitiere Street, Launceston demonstrates an early phase of Launceston's European settlement, and is a manifestation of the emerging prominence of local builders and artisans in the northern Tasmanian community. The site developed to include stores and offices, in concert with the economic growth and development of Launceston as a major industrial port. The site is also symbolic of the integration of work and domestic life, whereby warehousing and industry shared the same land with housing, domestic and recreational activities.

b) The place possesses uncommon or rare aspects of Tasmania's history.

Built optimistically facing the growing Market Green and wharf area, the c.1830 Grant Staples residence that forms the nucleus of the address known as 194-196 Cimitiere Street, Launceston, is an uncommon demonstration of a substantial Colonial Georgian former urban residence in Tasmania. Launceston is well-known for its collection of early European residential and commercial buildings in an urban context, of which Grant Staples is a rare surviving example both internally and externally.

c) The place has the potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of Tasmania's history.

Parts of Grant Staples at 194-196 Cimitiere Street, Launceston, have archaeological potential derived from documentary evidence and physical remnants of the buildings, presenting a rare opportunity for detailed investigation of structures and/or deposits associated with early mercantile trade and domestic life within Launceston. This includes the potential to yield unique, original information on location, layout and function/s of the buildings associated with these uses, and the lives of the people who lived and worked in the early European settlement of northern Tasmania.

d) The place is important in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of place in Tasmania's history.

The surviving c.1830 residence that forms the nucleus of 194-196 Cimitiere Street, Launceston, has the ability to demonstrate the principal characteristics of a Colonial Georgian residence via the symmetrical façade, central hallway, interior transom lights, multi-pane windows and pitched roof with capped chimneys, all of which are indicative of the Colonial Georgian style.

e) The place is important in demonstrating a high degree of creative or technical achievement.

No Data Recorded

- f) **The place has a strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group for social or spiritual reasons.**

No Data Recorded

- g) **The place has a special association with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in Tasmania's history.**

Grant Staples at 194-196 Cimitiere Street, Launceston has an association of almost two decades with the Henty family who used the site for both residential and commercial purposes. Their collective trading enterprises made a significant contribution to the early European settlements in Tasmania, Western Australia and Victoria with trading routes to Mauritius, the Cape of Good Hope, England, New Zealand and the Americas.

- h) **The place is important in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics.**

No Data Recorded

Heritage approval is required for work that will result in changes to the nature or appearance of the fabric of a Heritage place, both internal and external.

Please refer to the Heritage Council's Works Guidelines (www.heritage.tas.gov.au) for information about the level of approval required and appropriate outcomes.

Heritage Advisors are also available to answer questions and provide guidance on enquiries@heritage.tas.gov.au or Tel 1300850332

This data sheet is intended to provide sufficient information and justification for listing the place on the Heritage Register. Under the legislation, only one of the criteria needs to be met. The data sheet is not intended to be a comprehensive inventory of the heritage values of the place, there may be other heritage values of interest to the Heritage Council not currently acknowledged.

Setting:

Grant Staples at 194-196 Cimitiere Street is located on the north-eastern corner of Cimitiere and Charles Streets in the northern Tasmanian city of Launceston. It is situated on the edge of the central city, set back from the street and enclosed by commercial properties in the vicinity.

Description:

The main building and former residence, Grant Staples at 194-196 Cimitiere Street is a painted brick building with corrugated iron roof, comprising a symmetrical c.1830 cottage at its centre that originally faced north. Two later extensions were made to the south, the current entrance to the premises the most recent, and likely from the Federation period given the muranese glass employed in the windows. A basement space is said to exist in the first extension to the south of the original residence, now the centre of the building.

The interior of the main building Grant Staples contains rare examples of timber fittings, including six-panelled doors with lock mechanisms, door surrounds, skirtings, fireplace surrounds and an early original timber staircase to the attic. A central hallway contains a transom light above a timber panelled doorway. Several rooms contain late 19th century ceiling roses. The original front entrance faces north and includes an original doorbell on the exterior of the building. The windows of the premises are a mixture of double-hung fixed multi-pane timber windows, some with metal bars to prevent entry. The chimneys of the original cottage include metal capping. The attic space of the c.1830s cottage is the most original part of the premises, containing samples of 19th and 20th wallpapers, linoleum and timber floorboards, paint schemes and lathe and plaster treatments. The attic windows facing south have been blocked up.

History:

The traditional owners of the land in the Launceston region were the North Midlands nation, comprising the Leterremairrener (or Port Dalrymple people), the Panninher (or Norfolk Plains people), the Tyerrernotepanner (or Stoney Creek people) and possibly others (Ryan 2012, p.29). They traversed and cared for country around *kanamaluka*/River Tamar for thousands of years. By the time the building known as Grant Staples was erected c.1830, the First Tasmanians were actively defending the lands they had nurtured for generations.

Grant Staples at 194-196 Cimitiere Street is the surviving remnant of a large complex of buildings - most since demolished - that included a warehouse, offices and ancillary buildings on land initially granted to the Henty family of

merchants. Scott's 1832 survey of Launceston has a small rectangular building on the site (Scott 1832 map, Heritage Tasmania collection).

Henty family of merchants

The Henty family acquisition of the land may have included part of the original grant to the north for the Market Green, as Lands Survey Department records suggest there were questions being asked about the process. Clearly the Henty family's rapid acquisition of land and property had not gone unnoticed by colonial officials. The matter was escalated to the office of Lieutenant-Governor who determined that the grant was legitimate and there was 'no reason for dispossessing Mr Henty of the Ground in question, His Excellency has approved of his retaining it and has confirmed the approval of the location' (TAHO: LSD 364 Vol 69, pp.219-220).

The Henty family business had opened by the autumn of 1833; brothers James & Charles Henty advertising a four wheel carriage and turning lathe for sale from their new premises in Cimitiere Street (*The Independent* 27 April 1833, p.1). A history of the Henty family suggests James built the house remaining at 194-196 Cimitiere Street and named it 'Grant Staples', although the origins of the name are unclear (*Examiner* 9 August 1933, p.3).

The seven Henty brothers and their father Thomas gradually established substantial trading routes in the growing colonies of Western Australia, Van Diemen's Land, and Victoria. James Henty appears to have been the manager of the Launceston arm of the business. The success of their enterprises was largely due to their capacity to diversify the business (Edquist 2022, p. 11), including supplying GA Robinson's so called 'Friendly Missions' across Van Diemen's Land (Plomley [ed.] 2008, p.869). Within a short period of time the Henty family owned a multi-faceted venture that stretched along the southern colonies of Australia to Mauritius, the Cape of Good Hope, England, New Zealand and the Americas (Edquist 2022, p.9).

Smythe's 1835 survey has a large rectangular building on site in a different configuration to the 1832 footprint, suggesting a new building may have been erected or additions made to the earlier premises (1835 Smythe map, Heritage Tasmanian collection). Columnist Samuel Fuller later recalled the northern side of Cimitiere Street contained a 'Large store and private residence (which) was Mr James Henty's, thence to St John Street was open land' (Fuller in Salzay 2003, p.24). James Henty was clearly a risk taker, in 1843 local surveyor James Scott indiscreetly advised a family member that although 'there is a very little business going on at present... Mr J Henty is still purchasing and speculating in land and it is said he is mortgaged very deep' (Archer 2009, p.153). By 1846 James Henty had vacated the buildings, as his 'superior' family residence in Cimitiere St with 'well-stocked garden and pleasure grounds' was listed for sale (*Launceston Examiner* 12 August 1846, p.5).

A month later, the family business in Cimitiere Street was up for sale. The site consisted of:

'a substantial built brick store, 70 feet long by 34 feet wide, with cellarage and three floors over, erected with the greatest care, and with the very best materials. There is also an excellent weatherboarded store of two floors, together with a shed and a men's house. The offices are brick built, and consist of four good sized rooms. The dwelling contains eight good rooms and two attics, cellar, & c, back kitchen and other out-offices, fronted by a garden and the whole premises substantially enclosed. The particular attention of capitalists is invited to this most desirable lot' (*Launceston Examiner* 30 September 1846, p.5).

Surveyor James Scott noted in another later letter to his brother that James Henty was still in deep financial trouble. Although the public knew very little, Henty's creditors had a: 'most unruly discussion and separated in ignorance of the matters, except allowing him to go on in trust for one year' (Archer 2009, p.256). By 1848 James and his family had departed for England (*Launceston Examiner* 5 January 1848, p.6). The wider Henty family appear to have retained the Cimitiere Street premises, leasing them initially to prominent local merchant, Richard Green. The 1848 census records Richard Green in a dwelling house in Cimitiere Street built of brick, complete and inhabited, housing fourteen people, one of whom held a ticket-of-leave (TAHO: CEN 1/1/100, p.450).

Green takes the reins

Richard Green was similarly not immune from financial problems. Surveyor James Scott noted he owed £12,000 to Launceston merchant and philanthropist Henry Reed due to the fall in wool prices (Archer 2009, p.281). Green purchased the Cimitiere Street premises around this time, an 1849 auction notice promoting: 'Those very desirable and substantially built store and dwelling house situate in Cimitiere Street, at present in the occupation of Mr R Green' (*Launceston Examiner* 28 February 1849, p.7). By the time of the 1851 census, Richard Green was recorded as living in Cimitiere Street in a house built of brick, complete and inhabited, housing twelve people, all of them free (TAHO: CEN 1/1/112, p.578).

A year later Green had gone into partnership with fellow businessman William Cleveland (*Launceston Examiner*, 1 September 1879), although their joint ownership of the house and stores had dissolved by 1858 (*Hobart Town Gazette*, Launceston Assessment Roll, 1858). Green's obituary noted his partnership with Cleveland but importantly

his start with Henty & Co: 'For a considerable time Mr Green was engaged in the counting-house of Messrs Henty and Co, merchants. When that firm closed he carried on business as a merchant in his own name. Subsequently Mr William Cleveland was admitted as a partner, and the firm became Green, Cleveland & Co. After some years Mr Cleveland left for Melbourne...' (*Launceston Examiner* 2 October 1878).

Despite Green's death in 1878, site ownership continued in his wife's name, and later the trustees of his wife's estate. The company Richard Green & Co. continued to occupy the premises (*Hobart Town Gazette*, Launceston Assessment Rolls – 1878-1907), in 1883 Mrs Richard Green Jnr of Cimitiere Street advertising for a 'good general servant, references required' (*Launceston Examiner* 9 October 1883, p.1). She was living at 194 Cimitiere Street at the time of her death in 1904 (*Examiner*, 8 August 1904, p.1). By 1907 the trustees of Mrs Green's estate had sold the Cimitiere Street property to local merchant firm Law, Duncan & Co, continuing a tradition of trade on the site that had operated since the 1830s (*Tasmanian Government Gazette*, Launceston Assessment Roll 1907).

A new era: Law, Duncan & Co.

At the beginning of 1908, Law, Duncan & Co had taken over the site (*Examiner* 26 December 1907, p.1). Comprising three partners, brothers Charles & Frederick Law, & John Duncan; Law Duncan & Co played a considerable role in the economy of northern Tasmania. Partner Charles Richard Law died in 1926. His obituary noted after a period living overseas, he returned to Tasmania in 1883 engaging 'in mercantile work for 15 years, when he joined his brother, Mr Frederick Law and John Duncan, in founding the firm of Law, Duncan and Co, merchants, of this city, of which he was a partner til his death' (*Examiner* 1 November 1926, p.4).

John Duncan died in 1936. He was manager of the Launceston Bank for Savings at the time of his death and began his working career with Launceston firm Edginton & Co., and was afterwards made a partner in Law, Duncan and Co. Duncan had a passion for architecture, successfully entering the competitions to design both the Albert Hall and Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery at Royal Park (*Mercury* 9 May 1936, p.4). Frederick Law, the remaining partner in the business, died in 1944. His obituary noted he also had interests in orcharding, particularly in the Hillwood area (*Examiner* 19 September 1944).

By 1955 the offices, stores and land at Cimitiere Street owned by Frederick Law's estate and Isabella S Duncan were sold to AC Ferrall Pty Ltd, and the long term tenant of the house on site, Walter R Maynard, moved from the premises (*Tasmanian Government Gazette*, Launceston Assessment Rolls 1954 & 1955). Like previous owners, AC Ferrall used the buildings for storing goods.

Fire and restoration

In 1966 the main warehouse to the east and north of Grant Staples was destroyed by fire having started on the first floor of the three-storey building. The warehouse was said to have been 60 years old (*Examiner* 3 December 1965, p.1), constructed of brick, with pine floors, beams and lining. Stock losses totaled more than £100,000 in value (*Mercury* 3 December 1965, p.3). Without the use of the Launceston Fire Brigade's newly acquired truck with extension ladder and basket, it was likely the rest of the site would have been destroyed.

Photographs from the period suggest the fire-damaged warehouse buildings were demolished in early 1966. A cottage in the front yard of Grant Staples survived the fire, but was also demolished. The substantial cast iron gate that faced onto Cimitiere Street with the property name 'Grant Staples' was later removed to 15 Brisbane Street (THR #3880), where it remains today. In the 1970s a National Estate heritage study of Launceston did not identify 194-196 Cimitiere Street of heritage value, although by the 1980s it had been recognised by the National Trust as an early surviving inner-city residence. At the time of writing Grant Staples is used as commercial premises, and remains a rare example of an early European building in Launceston.

References:

- Archer, D 2009, *The Scott Letters: VDL & Scotland*, Regal Press, Launceston.
- Australian Heritage Commission 1977, *Launceston: National Estate Conservation Study*.
- Bassett, M 1966, 'Henty Family' in *Australian Dictionary of Biography* ANU, Canberra.
- Edquist, H 2022, 'Henty & Co' in *Globalisation, entrepreneurship and the South Pacific: Reframing Australian Colonial Architecture 1800-1850*.
- Examiner* (8 August 1904, 26 December 1907, 1 November 1926, 9 August 1933, 19 September 1944, 3 December 1965).
- Hobart Town Gazette*, Launceston Assessment Rolls.
- Independent* 27 April 1833.
- Launceston Examiner* (12 August 1846, 30 September 1846, 5 January 1848, 28 February 1849, 2 October 1878, 1 September 1879, 13 January 1882, 9 October 1883).
- Mercury* (9 May 1936, 3 December 1965).
- Plomley, NJB (ed.) 2008, *Friendly Mission: The Tasmanian Journals and Papers of George Augustus Robinson 1829-1834*, QVMAG, Launceston.

Ryan, L 2012, *Tasmanian Aborigines: A History Since 1803*, Allen & Unwin, Sydney.
Salzay, M (ed.) 2003, *Recollections of Launceston 1836-1847 by George Fuller*, self published.
Scott survey of Launceston (1832).
Smythe survey of Launceston (1835).
TAHO, CEN1/1/100, p.450.
TAHO, CEN1/1/112, p.578.
TAHO, LSD:364 Vol. 69.
Tasmanian Government Gazette, Launceston Assessment Rolls.

Note

1. Lot 1 represents the registered boundary for 'Grant Staples', #12089 on the Tasmanian Heritage Register.
2. Lot 1 is the whole of parcel of FR 63383/2, the boundaries of which is marked by a heavy black line.
3. All boundaries are parcel boundaries unless otherwise stated, details of individual land parcel boundaries may be accessed through the Land Information System Tasmania (LIST).
4. For the purpose of S15 (4)(b) of the Historic Cultural Heritage Act 1995, this plan replaces the previous boundary in CPR6037 Ref#3608.

FR 139252/2

FR 139252/4

FR 45073/1

FR 140543/5

Lot 1
1075 m²

FR 63383/2

FR 145951/1

CHARLES STREET

CIMITIERE STREET

SCALE 1:500

0 5 10 20
m



TASMAP: LAUNCESTON - 5041

GRID: MGA94 / ZONE 55

DATUM: AHD

CONTOUR INTERVAL: N/A

No.	PRODUCTION / AMENDMENT	AUTHORITY	REFERENCE	DRAWN	APPROVED	DATE
1	Production	THC	12089	AW	A.ROBERTS	21.12.23




Grant Staples

194-196 Cimitiere St, Launceston

PREPARED BY
HERITAGE TASMANIA



CENTRAL PLAN REGISTER

p.p. Surveyor General: 

Date Registered: 22.12.23

CPR
11442