

TIMARU DISTRICT COUNCIL
HISTORIC HERITAGE ITEM RECORD FORM

HERITAGE ITEM NAME Orari Estate homestead
ADDRESS 211 Orari-Rangitata Highway, Orari
PHOTOGRAPH



(TDC)

FORMER DISTRICT PLAN ITEM No. No. 65 **HNZ LIST No. & CATEGORY** 1987 / 2
(at time of assessment)

LEGAL DESCRIPTION Lot 1 DP 399867

VALUATION NUMBER 2471018100

DATE OF CONSTRUCTION 1911-12 +

**ARCHITECT/DESIGNER/
BUILDER** SH Seager, architect & JH Maynard, builder

STYLE English Domestic Revival

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

Two-and-a-half storey dwelling with irregular rectangular footprint and multiple gabled roof forms. Casement windows, some with leadlights. Grouped corbelled chimneys. Half-timbering with patterned brick insets paired veranda posts. Shingled gable ends.

MATERIALS/STRUCTURE

Brick walls, timber and terracotta tile detailing and slate roof.

ADDITIONS/ALTERATIONS

Demolition of surviving portion of earlier homestead and erection of brick addition (1970-71).

SETTING

The homestead is accessed via a drive off the west side of Orari-Rangitata Highway (SH1), directly opposite its intersection with Farm Road. The house can be seen from the roadway, set against a backdrop of mature trees with farm buildings located to the south. The extent of setting encompasses the garden setting of the homestead rather than the land parcel as a whole, notwithstanding the potential archaeological values of the entire property.

HISTORY

The Macdonald brothers, William, Angus and Allan, took up land between the Orari and Rangitata Rivers in the early-1850s. The Macdonalds subsequently ran upwards of 25,000 sheep on the station. After William's death in 1879 his estate was run by trustees on behalf of his widow Annie until her death in 1901. The property was then divided amongst their four sons, the youngest Guyon (c.1873-1932) acquiring the homestead property. Following his marriage in England to Florence Hodge (c.1878-1963) in 1910, Guyon built a new house at Orari in 1911-12, initially retaining a section of the original homestead on site. The couple had four children. The onset of World War I delayed completion of the house and it was not until 1970-71 that it was completed by Guyon's son Ronald. The property remains in family ownership today and the garden is open to visitors by arrangement.

HISTORICAL AND SOCIAL SIGNIFICANCE

The Orari Estate homestead has historical significance for its association with Guyon and Florence Macdonald, their family and descendants. The homestead also illustrates the second generation development of South Canterbury sheep farms.

CULTURAL AND SPIRITUAL SIGNIFICANCE

The Orari Estate homestead has cultural value as a demonstration of the way of life of three generations of the Macdonald family in New Zealand.

ARCHITECTURAL AND AESTHETIC SIGNIFICANCE

The Orari Estate homestead has architectural significance as the work of Samuel Hurst Seager (1855-1933), one of New Zealand's leading architects in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Seager was the son of a master builder who arrived in New Zealand from England in 1870. He initially worked as a contractor before training as an architect in Christchurch and London. He established his practice in Christchurch in 1885, launching his highly successful career with the winning design for the Christchurch Municipal Buildings. He was known for his residential work, advocacy for town planning and his views on the development of New Zealand architecture. Seager developed the craftsman bungalow settlement at the Spur in Sumner (1902-14), designed rest houses on the Summit Road, served as the government's battlefield memorial architect after World War I and was awarded a CBE in 1926. Somewhat unusually at Orari the service rooms are housed in the basement, rather than as separate structures as, for example, at Otahuna homestead (1894-95) near Tai Tapu. Seager also designed the Orari Coronation Hall (1912), to which Guyon Macdonald had contributed about 20% of the final cost.

TECHNOLOGICAL AND CRAFTSMANSHIP SIGNIFICANCE

The Orari Estate homestead has technological and craftsmanship significance for its brick construction and timber detailing. The bricks were made by Crums of Ashburton and the slate was imported from Wales. Ashburton contractor JH Maynard was the builder and his grandson is reported to have erected the 1970-71 addition to the house.

CONTEXTUAL SIGNIFICANCE

The Orari Estate homestead has contextual value as the principal historic feature of Orari Estate. There are a number of farm buildings to the south of the homestead.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND SCIENTIFIC SIGNIFICANCE

Although the homestead post-dates 1900 its site has potential archaeological significance relating to the earlier colonial development of the property, including the original homestead that dated to the 1850s.

SUMMARY OF HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

The Orari Estate homestead has overall heritage significance to Orari and Timaru district as a whole. The homestead has historical significance for its association with the Macdonald family and cultural value as a demonstration of the way of life of three generations of the family. The Orari Estate homestead has architectural significance as the work of leading Canterbury architect Samuel Hurst Seager and technical and craftsmanship significance for its brick construction and timber detailing. The Orari Estate homestead has contextual value as a historic feature within its mature garden setting and its site has potential archaeological significance in view of the property's mid-19th century establishment date.

HERITAGE CATEGORY

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REFERENCES

- *Timaru Herald* 2 February 1912, p. 7; 16 October 1917, p. 5; 8 December 2017 (available online).
- *Temuka Leader* 13 March 1928, p. 3.
- *New Zealand Times* 4 January 1910, p. 7.
- *Ashburton Guardian* 21 December 1911, p. 2; 19 November 1921, p. 5.
- *Press* 10 March 1882, p. 2; 3 March 1911, p. 9; 24 October 1932, p. 11.
- *Lyttelton Times* 16 August 1854, p. 3; 21 April 1858, p. 5; 18 September 1911, p. 11; 11 June 1914, p. 6.
- <http://www.heritage.org.nz/the-list/details/1987>
- *Cyclopedia of New Zealand – Canterbury Provincial District* Christchurch, 1903; available online.
- <https://teara.govt.nz/en/biographies/2s49/strouts-frederick>
- LGD Acland *The Early Canterbury Runs* Christchurch, 1946.
- <http://geraldine.nz/business/orari-estate-5/>



Extent of setting, limited to immediate garden environs, 211 Orari-Rangitata Highway, Orari.



Land parcel as a whole with homestead marked by star.