

= Linwood House =

Linwood House was built as the homestead for Joseph Brittan , who as surgeon , newspaper editor , and provincial councillor , was one of the dominant figures in early Christchurch , New Zealand . The suburb of Linwood was named after Brittan 's farm and homestead . Brittan 's daughter Mary married William Rolleston , and they lived at Linwood House following Joseph Brittan 's death . During that time , Rolleston was the 4th ( and last ) Superintendent of the Canterbury Province , and Linwood House served for many important political and public functions .

The property went through many changes in ownership . Land was successively subdivided ; at its peak , 110 acres ( 450 @, @ 000 m<sup>2</sup> ) of land belonged to Linwood House , of which only 2 @, @ 013 square metres ( 21 @, @ 670 sq ft ) remain . For some years , Linwood House was used as a private day and boarding school for girls . The house declined during the mid 20ths century , was used for flats for several decades , and was in 1985 described by an historian as the " city 's worst example of a house which should be preserved being left to decay " . The house 's fortunes improved when it was purchased in 1988 by people sympathetic to heritage . Gradually being restored , Linwood House suffered significant damage in the 2010 Canterbury earthquake and partially collapsed in the 2011 Christchurch earthquake . Civil Defence ordered the building 's demolition , which was carried out in the second half of 2011 .

Architecturally , Linwood House was a rare example of a late Georgian / Regency style house in Canterbury . It had historical importance as one of the oldest surviving houses in Christchurch . The building 's association with Joseph Brittan and especially William Rolleston made it socially important .

= = Geography = =

Linwood House was located at 30 Linwood Avenue in Linwood , Christchurch . Originally located on 50 acres ( 20 ha ) of rural section ( RS ) 300 , and after the adjacent RS 301 was added , the total size of the land holding was 110 acres ( 45 ha ) . After numerous subdivisions , the size of the section was 2 @, @ 013 square metres ( 21 @, @ 670 sq ft ) . The Christchurch suburb of Linwood was named after Brittan 's farm and homestead .

= = History and ownership = =

= = = Joseph Brittan ( 1857 ? 1867 ) = = =

Brothers Guise and Joseph Brittan , and their friend Charles Fooks had in common that they all married one of the four Chandler daughters . The Brittans were surgeons , whilst Fooks was an architect . Guise Brittan held a role of responsibility for the Canterbury Association , and he came to Christchurch on the Sir George Seymour in December 1850 , and his wife and four children travelled with him . Fooks went with them , but left his family behind in England .

Joseph Brittan 's wife Elizabeth Mary had died in 1849 . He remarried in a manner that was illegal at the time , socially unacceptable and causing a scandal ? he took Elizabeth 's sister Sophia , the fourth Chandler daughter , as his second wife . The newly @-@ weds reacted to the scandal in a way that was not unusual at the time ; they left their problems behind and emigrated , which they did a month after the ceremony . They sailed for Christchurch on the William Hyde , which left Deal , Kent on 21 October 1851 and arrived in Lyttelton on 5 February 1852 . Mrs Fooks and her two daughters came to New Zealand with Joseph Brittan 's family . By mid @-@ 1852 , Joseph Brittan purchased RS 300 , comprising rural land about 2 kilometres ( 1 @. @ 2 mi ) east of Cathedral Square .

In 1855 / 56 , Guise Brittan had Englefield Lodge built on land alongside the Avon River just outside the initial town area ( these days the area to the east of Fitzgerald Avenue ) . Joseph Brittan chose land a short distance downstream along the Avon River and had his homestead , Linwood House ,

built in 1857 . Fooks was the architect for Linwood House , and , based on an assessment by art historian Dr Ian Lochhead , it is likely that he also designed Englefield Lodge . Joseph Brittan called his property and farm Linwood after his home in Linwood , Hampshire .

Joseph Brittan had varied interests and immediately upon arrival in Christchurch , joined others in various activities . He played cricket in Hagley Park within a fortnight of reaching Christchurch , and later helped improve the grounds and raised money for fencing the area . He was into horse racing , later bred horses , and Canterbury 's first steeplechase was held on his Linwood farm . The Brittans were into music and his wife Sophia Brittan brought her piano from England . Joseph Brittan had a portable harmonium and as in the early years , Lyttelton was culturally more important than Christchurch , he joined a musical group in the port town . For performances , he walked over the Bridle Path with the instrument strapped to his back . Musical evenings were also held at the Brittan home .

About half way between Englefield and Linwood was Holy Trinity Avonside , at the time a cob church . Guise Brittan was its churchwarden . The whole Brittan family had a close connection to the church , with Joseph Brittan helping to raise money for its construction , and his daughter Mary singing in the church choir . They faithfully attended church on Sundays .

Tragedy struck on 1 January 1862 , when his son Arthur drowned in the Avon River while learning to swim . He got entangled in watercress , which the Brittans themselves had introduced to the Avon , and his body was only found after a good half @-@ hour . Arthur had left school by then and was helping his father on the farm . Joseph Brittan was heartbroken and signs were that he had a period of depression . Soon after the drowning , he advertised for both a dairyman and a farmworker . He even put Linwood House up for sale , but no property transaction was recorded .

William Rolleston , at the time Provincial Secretary , proposed to Mary Brittan in early 1865 . He was 34 at the time , and she was 19 . Both Joseph and Sophia Brittan were opposed to a marriage , which is surprising , given that Rolleston was intelligent , well educated , successful , and if anything , of higher social standing . They thought him too old for their daughter , her too young to marry . Maybe Sophia Brittan did not want to lose her daughter , who was in effect running the household and entertained guests , as she was often too ill to look after these tasks herself . But Rolleston was offered and accepted the role of Under Secretary for Native Affairs , which required moving to Wellington . Hence , the wedding went ahead on 24 May 1865 at Avonside Trinity Church , before the newly @-@ weds moved to the capital .

Joseph Brittan 's health declined during 1867 . Of distress for the family were the financial affairs , with various debts that only Joseph knew about . Rolleston tried to give financial advice to both Sophia and her son Frank , but he was ignored . Joseph Brittan died on 27 October 1867 at Linwood House .

Brittan Street in Linwood , named after Joseph Brittan , first appeared in street directories in 1892 . Today , the Linwood House section fronts onto both Linwood Avenue and Brittan Street .

= = = Sophia Brittan ( 1867 ? 1877 ) = = =

Sophia Brittan inherited the house and land from her late husband . Initially , it was left to her son Frank to run the farm . In 1868 , there were rumours that William Sefton Moorhouse would resign as Canterbury Superintendent , and Rolleston was encouraged to make himself available . He returned to Christchurch , whilst his wife Mary and their two children remained in Wellington . Rolleston was elected unopposed on 22 May 1868 . And on 8 June , he was elected to Parliament in the 1868 by @-@ election in the Avon electorate . Late in 1868 , the Rollestons moved back to Christchurch to live at Linwood House . This was a delicate affair , as this made conditions cramped ( Sophia , her sons Joe and Frank , the Rollestons with their two children , plus servants made for cramped living in the eight rooms ) , and there has always been tension between William Rolleston and Frank Brittan . Mary Rolleston arranged for her oldest brother Joe , who had some disability , to live with his aunt , Mrs Fooks . Charles Fooks was imprisoned at that time , and it was good for Mrs Fooks to have a male live with her . The Rollestons paid rent , which helped Sophia Brittan service the mortgage . With Rolleston Superintendent until the abolition of Provincial Government at the end of

1876 , Linwood House hosted many important social and political functions .

Linwood farm was used for sporting events . In July 1876 , the Christchurch rugby team met their South Canterbury counterparts from Timaru ( Christchurch won the game ) , and in May 1877 , the Canterbury Hunt Club met for a steeplechase in the sand hills of the farm .

= = = Frank Brittan ( 1877 ? 1889 ) = = =

Sophia Brittan died in August 1877 . Whilst the Rollestons had carried the Brittan family financially over the last decade , their contributions went practically unrecognised . Mary Rolleston inherited £ 400 and the piano , her oldest brother received an annual annuity of £ 20 , and Frank Brittan was given the farm , the house and all its contents . William Rolleston was " shocked , hurt and astonished " by the unfairness of this distribution . Contact between the Rollestons and Frank Brittan all but ceased . Much later in life , Mary Rolleston would see her brother briefly once a year on New Year 's Day at his home , and that was all the contact that they had .

In May 1878 , Frank Brittan sold 58 acres ( 23 ha ) of land subdivided into 231 sections for a total of £ 18 @, @ 489 . He made a handsome profit , as much of the land was purchased three years earlier for £ 49 per hectare , and he sold the land for some £ 318 per acre ( £ 127 per ha ) . Linwood Estate was located east of Stanmore Road , and comprised the extensions of Cashel , Hereford , and Worcester Streets . At the same auction , Brittan sold all his stock and farming implements , as he had bought Kelsie Estate in Selwyn County . Further subdivision followed in 1886 .

= = = Edward Hiorns ( 1889 ? 1912 ) = = =

Edward Hiorns ( 1838 ? 7 July 1912 ) emigrated in 1862 from England . Originally a plumber and tinsmith , he became a hotelier . From 1881 to 1883 , he was a member of Christchurch City Council , and later stood for office on the Linwood Borough Council . Hiorns was Masonic Grand Master of New Zealand , and attended the 1897 Queen Victoria Golden Jubilee in England in that capacity .

Frank Brittan sold Linwood House to Hiorns in 1889 , who commissioned architect John Whitelaw to design an extension . This resulted in a drawing room , a billiard room and a study to be added to the house . In 1898 , Hiorns leased Linwood House to Sir John Denniston for five years . Hiorns had retired from business and spent some of his time in Sydney . Denniston , the oldest son of Thomas Denniston and married to the daughter of John Bathgate , was a judge at the Supreme Court in Christchurch .

After Denniston had moved out , Hiorns carried out further subdivisions in 1903 and 1905 . For a time , Linwood House was reputedly leased to Alexander Boyle . He was one of the founders of Pyne and Co , which later became Pyne Gould Guinness , of which Boyle was chairman of the board .

In September 1903 , Helen McKee and her mother relocated their boarding and day school for girls , Avonside College , from Inveresk ( the former dwelling of John Anderson ) to Linwood House . Helen McKee was a daughter of the highly esteemed Rev. David McKee , who came to New Zealand in January 1880 as the first vicar of North Belt Church ( later known as Knox Church ) . The Reverend died after only ten months in New Zealand , though . The congregation provided generously for his widow and her children , and at some point , his wife started a school . Helen McKee became a pupil teacher at Riccarton School in 1887 . Avonside College remained at Linwood House until 1911 , when it relocated to Rhodes Street and was renamed Meriden College .

The Hiorns returned from Sydney in 1911 and lived at Linwood House . Amelia Hiorns died in December of that year , and Edward Hiorns died on 7 July 1912 .

= = = Various owners ( 1913 ? 1988 ) = = =

Although the Hiorns had descendants , the estate was managed by the Public Trustee , who put Linwood House up for sale as four sections , with one of those holding the house itself . Three of the sections were purchased by Thomas Marker on 4 June 1913 in an auction , including the one

containing the building . Marker paid ? 200 each for the building sections , and ? 1 @, @ 250 for the section containing the house . The furniture of Linwood House was sold in a separate auction . The house was rented to lawyer Francis Ion Cowlshaw , son of prominent provincial councillor William Patten Cowlshaw ( 1839 ? 1903 ) . Cowlshaw senior had lived nearby in a house named ' Chaddesden ' , and Cowlshaw Street and Chaddesden Lane are named after the family .

Francis Cowlshaw purchased Linwood House in 1916 for ? 1 @, @ 592 . In 1920 , a dance of Christchurch 's social elite was held at Linwood House . Cowlshaw sold the house later that year to Mrs Ethel Pyne , the widow of Frederick Pyne ( d . 1915 ) , who was a business partner of former Linwood House lessee Alexander Boyle . Immediately after the purchase , Ethel Pyne engaged Sidney and Alfred Luttrell to design a ? 700 extension to the house , and it is assumed that this was the addition of a second storey to an earlier service wing . Further subdivisions were carried out in 1927 and 1932 , after which Linwood House was sold to Florence Simpson in the latter year . Simpson in turn undertook subdivision in 1935 , before selling the remainder to Gordon Branthwaite , a solicitor , in 1945 . Records reveal that by 1948 , there were six residents living at Linwood House , indicating that the house had been set up for flatting in the meantime . Branthwaite subdivided the land behind Linwood House in 1958 . He died in 1972 , and his widow sold the property in the same year to Advance Buildings ( Nelson ) Ltd ; her daughter was a partner in that company . Local historian John Wilson , who in 1984 wrote the book *Lost Christchurch* , that year called Linwood House the " city 's worst example of a house which should be preserved being left to decay " .

= = = Paddy and Jacky Snowdon ( 1988 ? present ) = = =

Paddy and Jacky Snowdon bought the property in 1988 . They increased occupancy to seven flats , carried out alterations and achieved compliance with fire regulations . The Snowdons undertook renovations that were long overdue , and that were sympathetic to the historic significance of the building . By 2002 , a conservation report had been completed .

Linwood House suffered significant damage in the 2010 Canterbury earthquake . The upstairs and the roof got braced after the event , and this was beneficial when the 2011 Christchurch earthquake struck , but internal walls and fireplaces just " crumbled " . Civil Defence ordered the building 's demolition in March 2011 . It was demolished during the second half of 2011 .

A symposium was held on 7 December 2012 in Wellington on New Zealand architecture in the 1850s . One of the papers given was " Gentlemen 's residences in 1850s Christchurch : An examination of the homes of William Rolleston and John Cracroft Wilson " .

= = Heritage listing = =

Linwood House was registered as a heritage building by the New Zealand Historic Places Trust on 17 August 1982 with registration number 3119 classified as D. With the change of the classification system , the building later became a Category II listing .

= = Architectural and building history = =

The 1857 house is in Regency architectural style . It was oriented so that its long side , facing north @-@ east , was roughly parallel to Linwood Avenue . Rectangular in floor plan , the Linwood Avenue frontage had five bays , with the central bay pedimented , which gave the house a symmetrical look . An 1871 photo by Alfred Charles Barker , held by the Canterbury Museum , shows a verandah on the north @-@ west side of the building only . This verandah was later extended to cover the front as well , and it mirrors the pedimented central bay . A hipped roof was hidden behind a balustrade .

The house was constructed in double brick , and it is this unreinforced masonry construction that was unable to cope with the earthquake forces . Upstairs , windows were round @-@ headed . Downstairs , many of the openings were French doors .

The New Zealand Historic Places Trust ( NZHPT ) was for a time uncertain who the architect was . In about 1995 , the last owner 's daughter , when undertaking research for a school assignment , came across the architect 's sketch of Linwood House in the Anglican Church archives , and this proved that Charles Fooks , the brother @-@ in @-@ law of Joseph Brittan , designed the house .

A significant extension was designed in 1889 by John Whitelaw . The south @-@ west wing , ' behind ' the original house , used the different architectural style of a Victorian villa for the two @-@ storey addition . The NZHPT assumes that at the same time , a single storey extension was built onto the south @-@ east side .

The last significant extension was added in 1920 , which was designed by the Luttrell Brothers . The south @-@ east wing was much more in keeping with the original design . It is possible that the architects designed a second storey for the service wing that had been built in 1889 . This extension connected the original house with the original washhouse .

In 1972 , a kitchen and small toilet were added as a lean @-@ to . These were removed again in ca 1990 .