
HENRY WALTERS BOOT FACTORIES (PARAGON SHOES)



Henry Walters Boot Factories
35 to 49 Lt Hoddle Street



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Henry Walters Boot Factories
38 to 50 Regent St



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Location

38-50 REGENT STREET, and 35-49 LITTLE HODDLE STREET, RICHMOND, YARRA CITY

Municipality

YARRA CITY

Level of significance

Recommended for Heritage Overlay

Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO450

Heritage Listing

Yarra City

Statement of Significance

Last updated on -

What is significant?

The complex of former boot factories at 38-50 Regent Street and 35-47 Lt Hoddle Street, Richmond. The earliest building on the site, 46-50 Regent Street, was erected in 1883 as a boot factory for Prussian immigrant Henry Walters. It is a long, plain two-storey brick building with flat brick arches to the domestic-scaled windows. After Walters' occupancy, it became the Ludlow Brothers' Boot Factory, and in 1912, the Matear Brothers' Leathersgoods Factory.

In 1905 Walters moved from these premises, which continued to serve as a boot and then leather-good factory, and erected two gable-fronted factories next door at 38-44 Regent Street. That same year, Walters trademarked the 'Paragon' shoe brand. These two red-brick buildings have very similar detailing, including flat brick arches above the windows, and a distinctive gabled parapet with a round louvered vent. The building at Nos. 38-40 is two-storey, and that at 42-44 is three-storey.

Walters expanded his factories to the rear with matching two-storey gabled factories to Little Hoddle Street. They differ in the use of concrete window and door lintels, typical of the interwar era. His original factory was also expanded in this period with a new wing at 41-47 Lt Hoddle Street. After Walters' death in 1930, the factories and the 'Paragon' name were acquired by the Davison family, who manufactured shoes until the 1970s.

How it is significant?

The factory complex is of local historical and architectural significance to the City of Yarra.

Why it is significant?

The factory complex is of historical significance generally as a tangible illustration of the evolution and expansion of the boot (and shoe) manufacturing industry in Richmond, which was the best known and documented industry in nineteenth-century Yarra. Specifically it illustrates the evolution of Henry Walters' boot manufacturing business over a period of 50 years, and the birth of the 'Paragon' shoe brand. After Walters' death in 1930, Alec Davison and his family continued to use the factory, making Paragon one of the most significant twentieth century Australian shoe retailers, and at one time the largest manufacturer of high quality of women's shoes in the country. (Criteria A & H)

The complex is of architectural significance as a good representation of the evolution of medium-scale industrial design from the 1880s to the interwar period. This includes the very plain 1883 factory at 46-50 Regent Street, with domestic-scaled details. The c1905-10 gable-fronted factories beside it are a more striking pair that adopt a decorative gable front, which was popular for medium-scale factories during the Edwardian period. The three factories at the rear, fronting Lt Hoddle Street, mimic the forms of the Regent Street factories for consistency, but with updated construction details (concrete lintels) in keeping with their later built date. (Criterion D)

Heritage Study/Consultant	Yarra - Heritage Gaps Study: Review of remaining 17 heritage precincts from the 2009 Gaps report, Context Pty Ltd, 2013;
Construction dates	1883,

Other Names	Factory,
Hermes Number	197536
Property Number	

Physical Description 1

The c1883 boot factory at 46-50 Regent Street is a very plain, two-storey brick building which is nine bays long. It has a transverse gable roof, hidden behind a very simple parapet. First floor windows are domestic-scaled double-hung sashes with brick flat arches and bluestone sills. The ground floor has three modern metal roller doors and four entries to flats, all of which openings are modern. The face brick has been overpainted. The parapet may have been simplified during the interwar period.

Next door, at 42-44 Regent Street, is a three-storey building of c1910s. It has a gable-front with a flattened apex and round louvered vent - a form seen on all of the gable-fronted buildings in the complex. The building is five bays wide, with wider central openings (a door at the ground floor and possibly loading bays above). The building retains some early windows at ground and second floor levels. All openings have brick flat arches above and cement-render lintels below, which are continuous with a render band. There are also cement-render beltcourses above each floor, which are continuous with those of 38-40 Regent Street. The brick has been sandblasted, the front door replaced, and a faux-Edwardian hood installed above it.

To the north is 38-40 Regent Street, a two-storey building of c1905. Its detailing is identical to that of Nos. 42-44, but it is less intact. The round louvered has been replaced with plywood, all windows appear to have been replaced, and most of the ground floor has been opened up with two large garage doors.

Behind it, 35-37 and 39 Lt Hoddle Street, are both two-storey gable-fronted buildings with the same distinctive gable details as those on Regent Street. They differ in that the windows have concrete lintels, in contrast to the earlier brick flat arches. Nos. 35-37 has been quite altered in its conversion to flats, with part of the parapet removed and large openings created at the ground and first-floor levels. In contrast, No. 39 is quite intact.

At 41-47 Lt Hoddle Street is a long, plain building, which mirrors 46-50 Regent Street behind it. Both are two-storeys with a plain parapet. The Lt Hoddle Street building is of the interwar era, with red brick and concrete lintels and sills, continuous with render beltcourses. While a few new openings have been created, and a window filled in, this elevation is largely intact.

This place/object may be included in the Victorian Heritage Register pursuant to the Heritage Act 2017. Check the Victorian Heritage Database, selecting 'Heritage Victoria' as the place source.

For further details about Heritage Overlay places, contact the relevant local council or go to Planning Schemes Online <http://planningschemes.dpcd.vic.gov.au/>