

A letter containing a cheque was misappropriated by a railway employee at Paekakariki on the 14th December, 1909. The offender was dismissed.

The Papatoetoe Post-office was broken into on the 28th December, 1909, and 2s. stolen.

A deposit of £100 by forged cheque was made at Oamaru in January, 1910, and £90 withdrawn before the forgery was discovered. The deficiency was made good to the Department, and the offender sentenced to three months' imprisonment.

On a charge of obtaining payment of a savings-bank withdrawal by false pretences on the 15th February, 1910, a Native at Tuparoa was fined.

On a charge of fraud by ante-timing telegrams for betting purposes, a despatch clerk at Napier was admitted to three years' probation on the 26th February, 1910.

BUILDINGS.

The following new post-offices were formally opened by the Postmaster-General: Foxton (7/8/09), Ohakune (9/8/09), Te Aro (11/8/09), Richmond (16/8/09), Huntly (17/9/09), Pukekohe (18/9/09), Wyndham (6/5/10).

The following offices were transferred to departmental new buildings: Maungaturoto (5/8/09), Otorohanga (6/10/09), Mount Eden (21/10/09), Rangataua (11/11/09), St. Bathans (24/11/09), Epsom (24/11/09), Ngaruawahia (4/12/09), Nuhaka (12/12/09), Wyndham (7/4/10).

A contract has been let for the restoration of the building at Bull's damaged by fire.

Sites have been purchased at Balclutha, Castlecliff (cable hut), Ellerslie, Hikurangi, Karori, Lincoln, Owaka, Takapau, and Upper Riccarton.

During the year buildings were erected at Epsom, Hastings, Maungaturoto, Mount Eden, Ngaruawahia, Nuhaka, Ongaonga, Otira Tunnel, Rangataua, St. Bathans, Waipiro Bay (quarters), Wakefield, Weraroa, Whangarei, Whitianga (quarters), and Wyndham.

General repairs, additions, &c., were carried out during the year at the following offices: Alfredton, Ashhurst, Bluff, Carterton, Christchurch, Dunedin, Feilding, Grey Lynn, Hanmer Springs, Hikurangi, Hokitika, Kilbirnie, Mangaweka, Marton, Paeroa, Palmerston North, Pembroke, Petone, Picton, Pirongia, Queenstown, Stratford, Te Puke, The Port, Timaru, Taratahi, Wakapuaka, Wanganui, Waverley, Wellington (old drillshed), and Whakapara.

Plans have been prepared for buildings at Green Island, Kaitangata, Rakaia, St. Kilda, and Westport.

Properties were purchased at Kawhia and Okato.

A public clock was erected in the post-office building at Geraldine, and a contract has been entered into for a clock with chimes for the Hastings Post-office.

The post-office at Strand Arcade (Auckland) was destroyed by fire on the 16th August, 1909. Temporary premises were secured in Wellesley Street, Auckland.

A contract was let to Messrs. J. and A. Wilson (Limited), Wellington, for the General Post Office building at Wellington, the price being £96,523. The erection of the building is proceeding satisfactorily. The foundations were laid by the Public Works Department.

The contractors for the new Chief Post-office at Auckland have completed the foundations, and steady progress is being made with the work.

The following post-offices, not in departmental buildings, were destroyed by fire: Ashley Bank, Hamilton East, Te Houhi.

MONEY-ORDERS.

During the year there were 34 money-order offices opened and 7 closed, the number remaining open at the end of the year being 637.

538,740 money-orders were issued, for £2,307,592 18s. 1d., as compared with 488,084, for £2,050,684 6s. 10d., for the previous year—an increase of 50,656 in number and £256,908 11s. 3d. in amount.

418,764 money-orders, amounting to £1,984,978 0s. 11d., were paid, as against 371,424, for £1,747,670 19s. 1d., during 1908—an increase of 47,340 orders and £237,307 1s. 10d. in amount.

155,457 orders, for £466,562 10s. 6d., were drawn for payment in places beyond New Zealand.

35,375 orders, for £143,699 10s. 4d., were issued at offices abroad for payment in New Zealand.

The commission received for money-orders amounted to £13,782 14s., as against £12,555 10s. 3d. for 1908, an increase of £1,227 3s. 9d.

An arrangement has been made with the Postal authorities in the United Kingdom and the Australian Commonwealth whereby the advices of money-orders for payment in those countries, after being listed in this Dominion, are posted direct to the paying offices, thereby enabling payment to be effected promptly on arrival of the mail by which the orders may be transmitted.

POSTAL NOTES.

Forty-eight offices were opened and ten closed, leaving 792 postal-note offices at the end of the year.

1,414,752 notes, representing a value of £454,138 4s. 8d., were sold, as against 1,222,280 notes, for £389,143, sold during the previous year—an increase of 15.75 per cent. in number and 16.7 per cent. in value.

The postal notes paid numbered 1,404,946, of the value of £445,376 19s. 6d. as compared with 1,214,548, of the value of £386,944 8s. 6d., paid during 1908-9.

The postal-note commission amounted to £6,519 10s. 8d., as against £5,670 18s. 2d.—an increase of £848 12s. 6d., or 14.96 per cent.