

Portion of a building which was no longer required at Whenuakura was dismantled and re-erected at Kohi. This structure was originally part of the old post-office building at Patea.

As the retention of the post-office building at Parkvale was no longer warranted, the structure was moved to Koputaroa to accommodate the post-office at that place.

At Brightwater the Courthouse building was moved to a new site and converted to the purposes of the Post Office.

A departmental building was provided at Moa Flat by removing to that place the old post-office building at Poolburn.

At Kopaki, the post-office site being subject to floods, the building was moved to a more suitable position.

At Omakau, Oturehua, and Outram, where the post and telegraph work was performed by the Railway Department, the business outgrew the capacity of the accommodation provided on the railway premises and the erection of post-office buildings became necessary.

To provide accommodation for the Postmaster, a residence was purchased at Rangataua.

Combined garages and stores were erected at Helensville, Kaeo, Kaitaia, Motueka, Te Aroha, Wairoa, and Whangarei. Garages were provided at Huntly, Oamaru, and Timaru. The erection of an addition to the Public Service garage at Wellington was completed.

A property at Feilding, consisting of a section of land, with a building thereon, adjoining the post-office, was purchased. The building was converted into a workshop, garage, and store.

Substantial additions and alterations to departmental buildings were made at the following places :—

Broadwood (additions).

Bull's (additions).

Caversham (alterations consequent upon road-widening).

Christchurch Chief Post-office (alterations).

Frankton Junction (additions).

Gisborne (additions).

Khandallah (automatic-telephone-exchange additions).

Kopaki (additions).

Leeston (additions).

Mangaweka (additions).

Mount Eden (automatic-telephone-exchange additions).

Murchison (additions).

Nuhaka (additions).

Otaki (additions and alterations).

Otautau (additions).

Remuera (automatic-telephone-exchange additions).

Sanson (additions).

Taihape (alterations).

Extensive additions to the Palmerston North Chief Post-office building are proceeding. It is anticipated that the added accommodation will be available in July, 1927.

Notwithstanding the largely increased accommodation provided, the general need for increased floor-space on which to conduct the Department's steadily increasing business remains undiminished. The policy of utilizing the funds available strictly in the order of urgency of the Department's requirements has been firmly adhered to. Despite this, at the close of the year, several departmental units remained accommodated in rented premises. In most of these cases, however, accommodation within the Department's own buildings is in sight.

Practically all of the Department's buildings were inspected during the year and a report furnished upon the condition of each. Notwithstanding that the funds available for maintenance were carefully administered, in a number of cases it was not possible to arrange for renovations to buildings deemed essential in the interests of proper upkeep.

It is hoped that it will be possible next year to provide additional accommodation at Hastings and Hawera; also to proceed with the erection of new post-office buildings at Dunedin, Napier, and Waverley.

The many wooden buildings owned by the Department constitute an ever-present danger of loss of mail-matter and other property by fire. Fortunately there were no losses from this cause during the year.

Hitherto the cost of various items of office equipment has been debited to capital expenditure. Under a new arrangement adopted during the year the cost will in future be charged to Post and Telegraph working-expenses.

OVERSEAS MAI LS.

The San Francisco contract was carried out by the R.M.S. "Tabiti" and "Makura," and the Vancouver contract by the R.M.S. "Aorangi" and the R.M.S. "Niagara." The San Francisco contract voyage commenced from Wellington on the 20th July, 1926, was performed by the "Maunganui," which released the "Makura" for overhaul. On the 1st February, 1927, the "Maunganui" released the "Tahiti," which in turn replaced the "Aorangi" in the Vancouver service. After being overhauled the last-named vessel resumed her running on the 15th March, 1927.

The average times occupied during the year in the transmission of the mails were as follow: Auckland to London (via Vancouver), thirty-one days; London to Auckland (via Vancouver), thirty-two days; Wellington to London (via San Francisco), twenty-nine days; London to Wellington (via San Francisco), thirty-one days.