

Right Hon. G. W. Forbes, M.P., on the 1st September, 1936, and the 17th May, 1937, respectively); at Thornbury (by the Hon. Adam Hamilton, M.P., on the 7th January, 1937); at Omakau (by Mr. W. A. Bodkin, M.P., on the 26th May, 1937); and at Maungaturoto (by Mr. J. G. Barclay, M.P., on the 19th July, 1937).

The citizens of Dunedin, who had waited long and patiently for a post-office that would be worthy of their city, attended the opening ceremony there in large numbers. In marked contrast to the inconvenience of having the post and telegraph offices in separate buildings some distance apart is the convenience the citizens now enjoy of being able to transact in one building not only their postal and telegraph business, but also their business with other Government Departments, most of which are accommodated in the new building.

Other buildings completed were residences for the Postmaster at Pahiatua and the caretaker at Wellington Radio; a large garage at Auckland; an automatic-telephone-exchange building at Napier; garage, store, and line buildings at Dargaville, Hawera, Kaikoura, New Plymouth, Takapuna, and Wakefield; and a repeater-station building at Lyall Bay, Wellington.

Minor additions and alterations were effected at a number of offices. Eleven buildings and eleven sites at various places were found to be no longer required and were disposed of, while seventeen sites (in two cases with buildings thereon) were acquired.

Post-office buildings are in course of erection at Belfast, Christchurch (No. 1 Block, Hereford Street), Kamo, Kerekeri Central, Kumeu, Mayfield, Thames (chief post-office), and Waimana. Large additions are being made to the Hamilton automatic-telephone-exchange building and the Te Awamutu post-office building, and smaller additions to the Epsom, Mount Eden, Ohai, Kilbirnie, Kingsland, Remuera, Waimate, and Walton post-office buildings. Line, store, and garage buildings are in course of erection at Gisborne, Levin, Rotorua, and Te Awamutu.

The first block of the new chief post-office building for Christchurch, which is to be completed in 1939, will comprise a five-story building at the rear of the present chief post-office, and will provide accommodation for that office while the present building is being demolished and replaced. The new chief post-office building proper, which will be a seven-story structure, will probably be commenced in 1939 and completed in 1940.

Tenders have been accepted for a large addition to the Oamaru chief post-office building and also for a new post-office building and a Postmaster's residence at Queenstown. Plans are in preparation for new chief post-office buildings at Hamilton, Invercargill, New Plymouth, and Wanganui; for post-office buildings at Avondale, Devonport, Grey Lynn, Linwood, Milton, Otorohanga, St. Albans, Sumner, Taupo, Tauranga, Te Kuiti, and a number of other places; for major additions to the chief post-office buildings at Auckland and Palmerston North, and for a large line-depot and office building at Wellington.

On account of pressure of work on the Public Works Department, my Department has been authorized to employ private architects for building work that the Public Works Department is unable to handle expeditiously, and also to undertake the maintenance of post-office buildings. Private architects were accordingly engaged to prepare plans and specifications for a number of new buildings, notably the Christchurch, Hamilton, and Wanganui chief post-office buildings, the Avondale, Devonport, Grey Lynn, Kumeu, Linwood, Milton, Queenstown, St. Albans, Sumner, and Tauranga post-office buildings, the Wellington line-depot and office building, and the addition to the Hamilton automatic-telephone-exchange building (in progress).

In connection with the Coronation of Their Majesties King George VI and Queen Elizabeth, arrangements were made for selected Government Buildings to be flood-lit and decorated for the occasion, and a number of post-office buildings were included.

POSTAL BUSINESS.

In the Postal Branch the increase in revenue which was noticeable in the figures for the last financial year (£162,664 in 1937, as compared with £94,889 for the previous year) is continuing, the increase for the first four months of this financial year as compared with the same months last year amounting to £115,146.