



Post Office, 45 Bridge Street

1904

Use	Residential	Historic Value	3 out of 5
Materials	Bricks, stucco, corrugated iron roof	Architectural Value	3 out of 4
		Technical Value	1 out of 2
NZHPT Registered	Category II	Symbolic Value	2 out of 3
	Register Number 830	Rarity	- out of 2
Valuation No	12200-444-00	Townscape Value	1 out of 2
Legal Description	Lot 1 DP 1945, Lot 2 DP 4548	Group Value	2 out of 2
		Overall Cultural Heritage Value	12 out of 20
Reference	Br4		

Description

The Eltham Post Office is a two storey building with a corrugated iron roof. The bricks were supplied by H Graves of the Steam Brick Works in Patea.

History

The Post Office on Bridge Street was built in July 1904 on land gifted to the department by Mr John Searle, the licensee of the Central Hotel. Mr Fred Barnard was the first postmaster when the office opened for business on 12 September 1904. The official opening was conducted by Sir Joseph Ward on 25 May 1905.

The history of the postal service in Eltham is a long one. Mr John Instone was the unofficial postmaster for the Eltham district until the first postmaster, Mr John McDonald, was appointed on 15 October 1884. Mr Instone ran a hostelry called the "Sawyers Arms" on Mountain Road, on the south bank of the Mangawhero Stream. Mr Aldridge was Eltham's second postmaster, followed by Mr C A Wilkinson who was only 16 years old at the time. He held the position for about 5 years. The first post offices were operated from the business premises run by these men.

When the Railway Station opened in 1890, the Post Office was incorporated into the building and run by Mr Charles Martin. Mr Martin was responsible for naming some of Eltham's streets, choosing street names from towns where he had previously lived.

The first telephone link from Eltham was to Hawera in February 1886. The first telephone exchange was opened at the Railway Station in December 1899 with nine subscribers. The existing automatic telephone exchange commenced operation in October 1954.

Architect

John Campbell, Government Architect

Builder

Mr E Hooker, New Plymouth

Sources

Roma Jenkins, Eltham Historical Society

Letter confirming appointment of Eltham's first Postmaster (annual salary \$5.00), Taranaki Museum Standish R (1984), *Eltham 100 Years*, Rosen Argus Printing Co Ltd, Eltham

Andrews H (1959), *The History of Eltham*
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Date

January 2000