

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 20, 1936 - TARANAKI DAILY NEWS

"Informal discussion of the preservation of the home of the Late Miss Lydia Shaw in Currie Street, New Plymouth, took place at the meeting of the New Plymouth library committee on Tuesday night. It was pointed out that this residence must shortly be demolished to clear the section for the new post office, and it was suggested that either it might be transported and re-erected on the same section as "the Gables" and used as a "period" house, or that at least it should be carefully dismantled and the structure stored, following a plan adopted by the City of Hull - explained by Mr John Barr when he visited New Plymouth last November.

The building has great historical interest, being one of the first erected at New Plymouth. It was brought from England in sections and presumably could easily be taken to pieces.

In consonance with the policy of the Carnegie Institute to preserve all material of interest to the early colonist collection, the committee agreed that every effort should be made to keep intact and preserve the interesting old house. Mr W.H. Skinner was asked to bring down a report on the matter."

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 18, 1936 - TARANAKI DAILY NEWS

From an account of a meeting of the Library & Museum Committee:

"Reporting on the proposal to acquire the late Miss Lydia Shaw's house in Currie Street with the object of making it a "Period House", Mr Skinner said he and Mr C. Clarke, Borough Engineer, had the matter in hand. Mr Skinner added that he hoped to report to the next meeting".

From the Minutes of a Meeting of the Library & Museum Committee, held on 21st April, 1936 at 7.30 p.m.

Mr Grayling ) "That after consideration of the report by the Borough Engineer  
Mrs Reid ) on the building of Miss Shaw, Currie Street, this committee  
recommend that no further action be taken."

Carried

N.B. Dr S.C. Allan was present at this meeting but it is not recorded in these Minutes that he spoke to the motion quoted.

The Report prepared by the Borough Engineer was made after an inspection of the dwelling with W.H. Skinner (see attached copy of Report). The Library & Museum Committee at their meeting on February 20th, 1936, had had an informal discussion on the possible preservation of the home of Miss Lydia Shaw. It was suggested that it might be re-erected on the same section as the "Gables" and used as a period house, or at least that it should be carefully dismantled and the structure stored. (Ref. Taranaki Daily News 20 February, 1936). A report on this matter was requested and when presented to the Committee the decision quoted above was made.

SHAW COTTAGE - RELIC FOR MUSEUM  
PART SHOULD BE SAVED - BUILT OF BALTIC PINE

A suggestion that some portion of the Shaw Cottage which is to be demolished to make way for the new Post Office in New Plymouth should be saved. Has met with enthusiastic approval on the part of persons who have close association with the early settlements of the town. It is not proposed that any attempt should be made to save the cottage it self which at the present time be as little resemblance to the original because of alterations and additions that have been made since it was brought here in sections on the ship "Regina" in 1841 and erected upon the commanding site of its original situation. It is thought however that some portion of the original timbers which were Baltic Pine might be secured and some article made from it which could be housed in the Museum as a relic of the Building, and a memento of the achievements in those faraway days in bringing a house from England for erection in a new country on the opposite side of the earth.

When the matter was referred to Mr W.H. Skinner, he expressed enthusiastic approval. It will, of course, be a question of negotiation with the person who secures the contract for the removal of the buildings on the Post Office site, but Mr Skinner said he did not think there would be any difficulty in obtaining the small quantity of the original timber sufficient for the purpose of making a memento.

OLD LANDMARK  
HOUSE TO BE DEMOLISHED  
POST OFFICE SITE  
BROUGHT FROM ENGLAND  
LINK WITH EARLY DAYS

Preparations for the erection of the new Post Office in New Plymouth will involve the demolition of one of the oldest buildings in the town, and one which has an intimate association with the early settlement of the district.

It is the house originally erected by the late Mr J. Shaw on the property near the corner of Gill and Currie Streets, and is on the site which has been purchased for the erection of the new Post Office. Until her death a few years ago, it was occupied by Miss Lydia Shaw who came to New Plymouth with her parents in the ship "Amelia Thompson". The Cottage was brought from England in sections by the "Regina", which arrived at New Plymouth a month after the "Amelia Thompson". The building which originally occupied a commanding position in the town, has since been obscured by other buildings in Currie St, and it has undergone alterations during the 97 years it has stood in New Plymouth. It originally consisted of three rooms. In its early days the buildings had a thatched roof and there was a porch in front, which has since given place to a verandah.

At present tenders are being invited for the purchase for removal of the buildings on the site upon which the Post Office is to be erected. These include the large two storey warehouse buildings which stands right on the corner of Gill and Currie Streets, and the old house and out buildings. The conditions of the contract provide that the contractor shall remove the buildings and foundations to ground level and shall complete the work within five weeks of the date of the contract.

It appears from this that tenders may be called for the erection of the new Post Office at an early date. The plans of the building which have been prepared by Messrs Messenger, Taylor, and Wolfe, Architects, of New Plymouth, have been completed and sent to the Post and Telegraph Department at Wellington. A statement was made by the Minister through the M.P. Mr S.G. Smith, recently, that tenders for the new building would be called on as soon as the plans and specifications were ready and at that time it was expected they would be completed in a few weeks. A longer time has passed since that announcement was made and it should not, therefore, be long before tenders are invited for the work which will be probably the largest building contract ever undertaken in New Plymouth.

DIARY OF MR W.H. SKINNER 1938, FRIDAY, JULY 15.

Received <sup>telegram</sup> ~~letter~~ from Under-Secretary of Internal Affairs, Wellington, enquiring if it were possible to preserve the Shaw Cottage in Currie St, by shifting it intact on to another Site. Wired back to say that I regretted to say Cottage has been broken up following its sale for removal by Postal Dept & that the Authorities were not sympathetic. By the letter it sounded that there might have been some offer to assist by Internal Affairs.

.....