



# Heritage Buildings Report

**Site ID**

**Building/Site Name**

Langman's Cottage

**Address**

105 Molesworth Street/11 Eliot Street, New Plymouth



## Statement of Significance

A survivor from the early period of European Settlement in New Plymouth, this board and batten cottage was constructed about 1860 by/for Thomas Langman following the outbreak of the First Taranaki War. The cottage has particular historic significance as a dwelling constructed during the First Taranaki War to house a country family seeking refuge in the relative safety of New Plymouth. The Langman family were well-known early New Plymouth settlers, with Thomas later becoming one of the first permanent European settlers in the Huirangi District, inland from Waitara. During the 1880s the house was the residence of well-respected Police Sergeant John Duffin. Although subject to modifications, Langman's Cottage still retains a high degree of external integrity and stands-out amongst its largely modern commercial neighbours.



# Heritage Buildings Report

## Legal Information and Heritage Status

<b>Legal Description</b>	Southern Moiety Section 1339 Town of New Plymouth
<b>District Plan Item/ Map No.</b>	
<b>Heritage New Zealand List</b>	Not listed

## Construction Information

<b>Date of Construction</b>	Circa 1860
<b>Principal Materials</b>	Timber vertical board and battens, corrugated steel
<b>Construction Professionals</b>	Unknown

## History

This board and batten cottage was constructed about 1860 by/for Thomas Langman. The second son of Richard Snr and Mary Langman, Thomas was born on 27 April 1839 at Illogan, Cornwall, England. He emigrated to New Plymouth with his parents and two brothers, Richard and John, aboard the *Blenheim* in 1842.<sup>1</sup> The Langman family settled in the upper Westtown/Omata Road area where they established a farm. It is unclear how long Thomas remained living with his parents, but he was probably living at Omata upon the outbreak of the First Taranaki War in March 1860. At this time it appears the Langman family relocated to the relative safety of central New Plymouth, with the Langman homestead on Omata Road destroyed during August 1860.<sup>2</sup>

Thomas married Sarah Andrews at New Plymouth on the 20<sup>th</sup> of October 1860, and it seems likely the present cottage was constructed at this time as the couple's first home. It is unclear when exactly Thomas Langman entered into ownership of Town Section 1339, as the Land Deeds Register is incomplete, and the first transaction isn't recorded until 1875.<sup>3</sup> However, Thomas seems to have acquired Town Section 1339 in exchange for Town Section 1704; a section originally recorded as being in the ownership of his father.<sup>4</sup> Whilst this exchange isn't reported until 1870 (and not recorded in the Land Deeds Register until 1887), this was probably initiated during 1860, possibly in response to the relatively isolated and vulnerable position of Town Section 1704, being located near the present site of Boys High School.<sup>5</sup>

During the conflicts of the 1860s, Langman became a member of the Taranaki Volunteers no. 2 Company. In September 1863, Langman was attacked by a party of Māori in the upper Westtown area, after he and two others "had very foolishly gone unarmed to a distance of three miles or more from town".<sup>6</sup> Langman's left arm was broken after he was hit by a bullet, but he managed to outrun his attackers through dense native forest; receiving assistance from William Henry Rowe, who supplied him with water from streams when he felt faint.<sup>7</sup> Following the end of the major conflict in the mid-1860s, and probably during 1866, Thomas, Sarah, and their children relocated to rural Huirangi, inland from Waitara, where they acquired land and took up farming. Thomas and Sarah would have five children before Sarah's untimely death in 1869, aged just 28 years. Thomas re-married Sarah Perrot in 1872, and the couple went on to have fifteen children. Sarah died in 1909, and Thomas in 1911;

<sup>1</sup> Passenger Lists, 1839-1973, Archives New Zealand

<sup>2</sup> *Taranaki Herald*, 25 August 1860, page 2

<sup>3</sup> Taranaki Land Deed Indexes (23516), c.1858 - c.1928, Archives New Zealand

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid; *Taranaki Herald*, 14 September 1870, p.4

<sup>6</sup> *Taranaki Herald*, 19 September 1863, page 2

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.



# Heritage Buildings Report

both are buried in Huirangi Cemetery.

In September 1866, a “corner allotment in Molesworth and Eliot Streets, New Plymouth, with substantial 4 roomed house, belonging to Mr. Thos Langman”, was advertised for sale by solicitor William Halse for £200.<sup>8</sup> The property didn’t sell, and was again advertised for sale in April the following year with “a four-roomed house thereon, and a two-stalled stable, now in the occupation of the owner, Mr T. Langman”.<sup>9</sup> Once again the property again didn’t sell, and was retained by Langman until purchased by Esau Marsh in June 1875.<sup>10</sup> The 1875-76 New Plymouth Town Board rates book notes Marsh as the ratepayer for Town Section 1339, with the rateable value being £25, and the property being liable for a fire rate indicates a dwelling was present on the section.<sup>11</sup>

Little is known about Marsh, but during the 1870s he appeared in the Police Court for several minor offences, such as not paying the Education Rate, and for letting his horses wander.<sup>12</sup> It seems Marsh may have encountered some financial difficulties during 1876, as the property was advertised for sale by T. E. Hammerton during November 1876 on behalf of the mortgagee (the Taranaki Land, Building, and Investment Society).<sup>13</sup> at this time the property was described as having a “substantially built four-roomed house and first-rate four-stalled stable thereon”.<sup>14</sup> The property didn’t sell in 1876, and was again advertised for sale, this time by land agent William Courtney, between November 1878 and July 1879; again the property didn’t sell.<sup>15</sup> Finally, on Saturday 20 March 1880, Messrs Bauchope and King reported selling Town Section 1339, with four-roomed and house and buildings thereon, for £140.<sup>16</sup>

The purchaser of the property was New Plymouth’s Police Sergeant John Duffin. Born at Kilkenny, Ireland, in 1832, Duffin enlisted in the 57<sup>th</sup> Regiment in 1852, and departed from Cork for the Mediterranean later that year.<sup>17</sup> He was stationed at Corfu for a time, but following the outbreak of the Crimean war in 1854, the 57<sup>th</sup> was ordered east, arriving the morning after the battle of Alma.<sup>18</sup> Duffin was involved in the Siege of Sevastopol, and the battles of Balaclava, Inkerman, Sevastopol, and Kinburn.<sup>19</sup> Whilst stationed in the trenches, Duffin was one of a group of volunteers from the 57<sup>th</sup> who successfully entered a cave and cleared it of Russian sharpshooters.<sup>20</sup> Following a short period in Malta, the 57<sup>th</sup> was ordered to India to suppress the Indian Mutiny, and although the 57<sup>th</sup> took no active part, Duffin was stationed on the Taptree River for some time.<sup>21</sup> In 1861 the Regiment travelled to New Zealand, where Duffin saw active service during the Taranaki Wars.<sup>22</sup> During his military service Duffin received four medals, and three clasps (Balaclava, Inkerman & Sevastopol).<sup>23</sup> Following the conclusion of the Taranaki Wars he left the 57<sup>th</sup> Regiment when they returned home, remaining in Taranaki where he joined the Armed Constabulary.<sup>24</sup> He was a constable for some years before being appointed to the position of Sergeant of Police in October 1874.<sup>25</sup> Duffin also fulfilled the roles of both Poundkeeper & Inspector of Weights & Measures for a time, before retiring from his position as Police

<sup>8</sup> *Taranaki Herald*, 22 September 1866, p.2

<sup>9</sup> *Taranaki Herald*, 6 April 1867, p.2

<sup>10</sup> Taranaki Land Deed Indexes (23516), c.1858 - c.1928, Archives New Zealand

<sup>11</sup> New Plymouth Town Board Rating Book 1875-76, NPDC Archives

<sup>12</sup> *Taranaki Herald*, 2 December 1876, page 3; *Taranaki Herald*, 13 August 1879, page 2

<sup>13</sup> *Taranaki Herald*, 25 November 1876, p.3

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>15</sup> *Taranaki Herald*, 23 November 1878, p.3

<sup>16</sup> *Taranaki Herald*, 27 March 1880, p.2

<sup>17</sup> *Taranaki Daily News*, 13 December 1911, page 4

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>23</sup> *Taranaki Herald*, 15 January 1909, page 5

<sup>24</sup> *Taranaki Daily News*, 13 December 1911, page 4

<sup>25</sup> *Taranaki Herald*, 24 October 1874, page 2



# Heritage Buildings Report

Sergeant in December 1896.<sup>26</sup>

Ownership of the property was transferred to John's wife Julia through a deed of gift in January 1895.<sup>27</sup> The whole of Mrs Duffin's town properties in Eliot, Molesworth and Buller Streets were advertised for sale in March 1899 by Callaghan & Co.<sup>28</sup> However, they didn't sell, and were again advertised for sale by Callaghan & Co in October 1901.<sup>29</sup> This time the properties sold, being purchased by J. Richardson, who only retained ownership for a short period before selling them to William John Vaughn Hasluck in May 1902.<sup>30</sup> Hasluck was a property investor who resided in the villa at present 95 Belt Road, and owned a number of houses across New Plymouth which he rented-out. William died in April 1907, and ownership of this property, along with many others, passed to his wife Victoria.<sup>31</sup> In May 1917, Victoria sold the cottage to Mrs Adelina Jensen, who retained ownership for only a few years, until the property was purchased by Jane Johnston in May 1920.<sup>32</sup> Johnston remained living in the cottage until her death on 13<sup>th</sup> April 1943, she was listed as a spinster, and is buried in Te Henui Cemetery.

On the 12 June 1944 a permit was granted to J. E. Dickey for 'alterations and renovations' to the cottage, with the work having an estimated cost of £200.<sup>33</sup> NPDC holds a copy of the original plans for this work, and it appears that this involved relocating the bathroom and splitting the building into two flats.<sup>34</sup> Further alterations were undertaken for Mr R. Marsh in 1950 and Mrs S. Sones in 1983.

**Reference Sources** See footnotes.

## Description

Langman's Cottage is located just north of New Plymouth's CBD, on the corner of busy Molesworth and Eliot Streets (State Highway 44). Although this area was settled early in New Plymouth's history, most older dwellings have now been demolished and replaced with commercial or light industrial premises; a notable group of 1900s-1920s villas and bungalows does however still exist on nearby Buller Street. The New Plymouth-Marton railway deviation (completed in 1907) runs through a deep cutting to the immediate north of the cottage, with Eliot Street carried over the original reinforced concrete and steel beam bridge (one of four constructed, of which all survive).

The main form of the building is a single-storey saltbox style cottage with projecting gable and lean-to extensions. The cottage is wooden-framed and principally clad in vertical board and battens characteristic of early New Plymouth dwellings; parts of the cottage have been re-clad in cement-board. The roof is sheathed in corrugated steel, although this was likely originally timber shingles. The original brick/stone chimney has long since been removed.

The main front (SW) elevation faces into Eliot Street, and is constructed right up to the street boundary. A veranda is incorporated into the main structure of the cottage and runs the length of the original frontage; this is a somewhat uncommon feature for a New Plymouth cottage of this age and style. The centrally positioned main front entrance door was originally located beneath the veranda, but is now boarded-over. Two pairs of three-light hinged wooden casements flank the former entrance door, and it's thought these replace the original windows; likely twelve-light double-hung sashes characteristic of early board and batten cottages.

<sup>26</sup> *Taranaki Herald*, 23 December 1896, page 2

<sup>27</sup> Taranaki Land Deed Indexes (23516), c.1858 - c.1928, Archives New Zealand

<sup>28</sup> *Taranaki Herald*, 17 March 1899, p.3

<sup>29</sup> *Taranaki Daily News*, 22 October 1901, page 2

<sup>30</sup> Taranaki Land Deed Indexes (23516), c.1858 - c.1928, Archives New Zealand

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>33</sup> NPBC Building Register Book 1938-46, Puke Ariki Archives (ARC2011-204)

<sup>34</sup>



# Heritage Buildings Report

At the northern end of the cottage, a gabled addition of unknown age extends slightly forward of the original cottage footprint. The gable end incorporates a large aluminium window with divided panes, and the upper portion is sheathed in timber shingles; giving this section a distinctive bungalow appearance.

A lean-to extends from the northern elevation, with a small pair of divided leaded casements in the front elevation, and a pair of aluminium entrance doors and windows projecting from the NW elevation. A single wooden casement, and a pair of hinged wooden casements are located on the south-eastern elevation. The rear (north-eastern) elevation, incorporates two small lean-tos', with windows in a variety of styles.

## Assessment:

<b>Historical</b>	This building has historic significance as a cottage constructed by country settlers who evacuated to the relative safety of central New Plymouth during the turbulent First Taranaki War. The first owner, Thomas Langman, was a member of a well-known local family, and would later become one of the first settlers in the Huirangi District. During the 1880s the cottage was occupied by New Plymouth's well-respected Police Sergeant John Duffin.	✓
<b>Importance to Community</b>	-	
<b>Architecture &amp; Construction</b>	This building has technical interest as a cottage in the regionally significant board and batten style common during the early period of organised European settlement in New Plymouth. The incorporation of a veranda under the main structure is somewhat unique for a New Plymouth cottage of this age.	✓
<b>Setting and Context</b>	Located on a prominent corner section, Langman's Cottage stands out from its predominantly modern commercial neighbours and is a reminder that this was formerly a residential neighbourhood within Frederick Carrington's original Town of New Plymouth laid out in 1841.	✓
<b>Archaeology</b>	As the cottage was constructed circa 1860, the property likely has archaeological evidence relating to pre-1900 human activity and has the potential to reveal information about the past through archaeological investigation.	✓
<b>Representativeness, rarity and integrity</b>	Langman's Cottage is a relatively rare, and representative example of the types of dwellings constructed by settlers during the early period of organised European Settlement in New Plymouth. Although subject to alterations and extensions, the original cottage largely retains its original structure and form.	✓
<b>Meets threshold for listing</b> (three or more ticks, or two ticks in one criterion)		✓