

## Last days of much-photographed tiny bank

Urenui is shortly to lose one of its distinctive landmarks—a wooden bank which has never been robbed, but has been photographed far more frequently than any other building in the township.

Reason for these distinctions is that the Bank of New Zealand's Urenui agency, about to be demolished, has never to the knowledge of the inhabitants of the town held money at night, and it is reputed to be the smallest bank building in New Zealand.

Urenui residents, discussing the bank today, considered that the township would be losing a landmark of note, but they were quite unanimous that the new bank would be a pleasing addition to the architecture of the town.

The Bank of New Zealand opened an agency in Urenui nearly 50 years ago, ahead of all other banks. At first the agency was operated from one of a group of four shops in Ngatoki Street which were later destroyed by fire just after World War One.

The tiny Bank of New Zealand catered for the needs of the farming and business community of the district from its high perch on the corner of Ngatoki and Nikorima Streets where it has been a landmark for most of the life of the oldest inhabitants. However, residents give the Urenui Hotel credit for being the oldest building in Urenui.

What has struck Urenui residents most about the bank building is its unusual attraction for passing motorists. Scores of people stop their cars, take photographs and invariably laugh at the small building, which has a 10-foot frontage.

Twice weekly members of the Bank



of New Zealand staff at Waitara visit the little building which has always remained an agency, and will continue to do so.

The Bank of New Zealand decided to demolish the building when the Clifton County Council decided on kerbing and channelling in preparation for the construction of a new footpath. Already high up off the street, the building would have stood up still further if it had not been decided that it should be replaced.

Now tenders have been called for the removal of the building to another part of the fairly large section, so that it can be temporarily used

while the new building is constructed.

The new building will have a frontage of 18ft. 9in. to Ngatoki Street, and a similar depth to Nikorima Street.

It will be constructed in reinforced concrete, with tiled front and splayed corner and will contain a large public space, as well as tellers' and interviewing rooms. The interior finish will be on the most modern lines. The construction will be such that extensions can be made in the future. In addition, it will be built level with the footpath after excavations have been made.