

## NEW POST OFFICE OPENED

## CEREMONY HELD AT WAITARA

MINISTER OF LABOUR OFFICIATES.

UP-TO-DATE BRICK CONSTRUCTION.

The new post office at Waitara, which has recently been completed at a cost of £585, was officially opened by the Hon. S. G. Smith, Minister of Labour and member for Taranaki, on Saturday afternoon. The building is a two-storeyed structure in the main street, built of brick and concrete, and includes residential accommodation for the postmaster on the first floor. The street and post office were decorated for the occasion, at which there was a good number present, including Mr. F. E. Beamish, chief postmaster at New Plymouth. Apologies were received from the Mayors of New Plymouth (Mr. H. V. S. Griffiths) and Inglewood (Mr. J. Gibbs), the chairman of the Taranaki County Council (Mr. J. S. Connett) and the officers of the Salvation Army.

Introducing the speakers, Mr. J. Hine, Mayor of Waitara, thanked those of other districts who were present for their attendance, showing the interest they took in the progress of Waitara. The town felt a great sense of satisfaction that one of its ambitions was attained. The many calls on the public purse had no doubt been responsible for the delay in the erection of the post office, but they agreed that, though the site was purchased some years ago, it was due to the efforts of Mr. Smith that the town possessed the handsome and commodious building now ready for public use, and it was fitting that Mr. Smith should officiate on the occasion.

## OPENED 50 YEARS AGO.

The old post office, Mr. Hine said, was opened 50 years ago and had served its purpose, but the time arrived when it was inadequate for the needs of the district, and by reason of the many additional duties imposed on the department the staff was working under conditions which were not the best. The department, which might be termed the Cinderella of the public service, performed many duties on behalf of other departments, and at Waitara everything was done in an efficient manner. The unflinching courtesy extended by the postmaster, Mr. F. W. Barnard, and his staff was appreciated. In the new building the staff would work under much more pleasant conditions. Mr. Hine congratulated the supervisors, Messrs. Davis and Seddon, and the contractors, Boon Bros. Ltd., on the conscientious way they had fulfilled their responsibilities.

Mr. I. Prichard, member of the executive of the Waitara Chamber of Commerce, apologised for the unavoidable absence of Mr. H. J. Wells, president. The chamber, he said, had been called the chamber of many complaints, but that was mostly its function, as it had no funds to spend and could only make representations. The chamber had pressed for many years for the erection of a new post office, and it expressed its appreciation of Mr. Smith, who had done everything he could. It was highly creditable to him that he had been able to secure the post office for Waitara might easily have been passed over at present. It was fitting the building should be in the main street instead of in the obscure position it had occupied previously.

## GOOD SERVICE BY STAFF.

The chamber had on certain occasions complained of minor faults in the postal service but had always found the postmaster very willing, and for some time there had been no complaints whatever. The exchange officials rendered very courteous service and the chamber congratulated Mr. Barnard on the very efficient way the work was being done at present.

Mr. Smith thanked the speakers for their references to him and acknowledged the work done by his predecessors in Parliament, who had "only ploughed the field for him to enter at the psychological moment." It was difficult, he said, to break down the opposition to any change in the order in which Waitara was placed on the list of contemplated works, but he had looked into that matter himself and had been able to show that the claims of Waitara were greater than those of other centres. After the grant was made they struck a period in which it would have been very difficult to secure grants except for work in Hawke's Bay reconstruction.

After a resume of the history of Waitara and of the Post and Telegraph Department activities there Mr. Smith concluded by congratulating Waitara on the advance it had made in postal facilities and upon the happy position of the town as far as unemployment was concerned. He wished every town could be so fortunate as Waitara, which had scarcely any unemployed, while there were thousands in other parts of New Zealand. With its opportunities for providing work Waitara must be one of the happiest towns in the Dominion.

After the post office had been declared open by Mr. Smith it was thrown open for inspection.

## COUNCIL ENTERTAINS GUESTS.

## SHORT TOAST LIST HONOURED.

After the official ceremony of opening the new post office at Waitara a number of guests were entertained at afternoon tea by the Borough Council. A short toast list was honoured, the Mayor, Mr. J. Hine, presiding.

Proposing the toast of Parliament, following the loyal toast, Mr. E. A. George, former Mayor, expressed to Mr. Smith on behalf of the borough their deep appreciation of the consideration shown by him. He had been most enthusiastic for the good of the people and it was due to his efforts that the citizens were then gathered. They owed a great debt to Mr. Smith for the interest he had taken. Everyone might not always agree with the measures passed by Parliament, but they knew that on the whole Parliament was doing its best for the country. Mr. Smith had a very difficult task in the administration of the Unemployment Act and had the sympathy of all. The Act in many quarters was looked on as

unworkable, but it was due to the Minister and to Parliament to say that they had tried to put something on the Statute Book to help the working man.

In replying Mr. Smith congratulated Mr. Hine on his elevation to the Mayoralty and thanked Mr. George for his references. He was conscious of the many difficulties facing him and the weight of the task of handling the unemployment position. The Government was realising the conditions of the London money market. Whatever happened the people could rest assured their condition would not be allowed to be interfered with and they would never come to privation.

New Zealand had reason to be proud of her Parliament. They had never seen in it any of the disgraceful scenes witnessed in the Parliaments of some other countries. It was true members fought and said things they were sorry for afterward but they disagreed in a gentlemanly way. The life of a Parliamentarian was hard and nerve-wracking and there was no financial gain in it to anyone, but it had its compensations in the interest there was in it.

Dr. G. P. Adamson proposed the toast of the Post and Telegraph Department. From the point of view of one who had seen the postal facilities of other countries, he was struck by the good system in New Zealand and the courtesy shown. The only thing that remained to be done in Waitara was to try to raise everything else to the standard set by the department.

Mr. F. E. Beamish, chief postmaster at New Plymouth, responded. The department, he said, had been called the nerve of the nation and it certainly entered into the life of the community more than any other department. It was also called the general utility department, and he quoted figures to show how little of the money handled was purely from the department's own business. The department was able to conduct so much of the business of so many other departments by reason of its deep ramifications throughout New Zealand. No complaints had reached the head office about the service of the Waitara office.

The Waitara postmaster, Mr. F. W. Barnard, also responded, thanking the speakers for their references to himself and the staff.

"The Old Identities" were pledged by Mr. H. J. Wells, who said there were no more welcome guests. During his 23 years in Waitara he had seen wonderful progress in every direction. Though times were hard to-day the early pioneers had a still harder time and the advantages of the present day should be looked on with appreciation.

When he came to Waitara there were only two houses, said Mr. G. V. Tate, replying. The survey took place soon afterwards and Waitara grew rapidly. At first it was hard work from morning to night but no one begrudged that. It was the pioneers who made the country what it was to-day.

Archdeacon G. H. Gavin proposed the toast of the Waitara Borough Council, saying the town was fortunate in having Mr. Hine as Mayor. Mr. Hine in reply acknowledged the debt he owed Mr. Tate, for whom he had worked two years and learnt much after leaving home "with half-a-crown in his pocket."

## MILITARY TRAINING

## NEW SCHEME EXPLAINED.

## APPEAL TO BUSINESS MEN.

A plea to business men to use their influence to assist the new territorial scheme of military training was made by Colonel J. E. Duigan on Thursday to the Auckland Chamber of Commerce.

"Our object in New Zealand," said Colonel Duigan, "is to raise a territorial army first for defence and second to go to the aid of the Empire in the event of a national emergency." He explained that the new force was not a volunteer army but a territorial army raised on a basis of voluntary enlistment.

The units of the new army were all represented during the war and they had gained glorious traditions which would be of great assistance in raising the troops they wanted. He thought they required about one in 10 of the available young men of the country between the ages of 18 and 25. The main object of the force was to provide officers and non-commissioned officers when required.

If the territorial army was necessary, surely it deserved the support of the citizens. Employers could do a very great deal to help. The military authorities would do all in their power to hold the camps at a time most suitable to the employers, and if employers could assist by giving their employees leave it would be very much appreciated, not only by the men who were giving their time to the State, but also by the country as a whole.

Possibly business men might also be able to assist the social side of the territorial movement, which must not be forgotten. He was optimistic that the force would be raised, but how could it be done without the support of the citizens? The officers were keen and the men were coming forward to join up already.

If a man came to an employer for work Colonel Duigan suggested that, other things being equal, he should give preference to the one who brought commendation from his commanding officer.

"We are not going to take every individual who presents himself," he said. "We want young men of character and calibre and with latent powers of leadership. If we get that type of lad into this territorial force he will become a better citizen and a far better employee of yours."

When a lad between 18 and 25 joined the force he would serve for a period of three years and become subject to certain powers which would be given to the commanding officer. The course of instruction would include a minimum of six drills, two half-day parades and six days' camp, but men could not be made efficient in that time, and if a boy was keen enough to join it was expected that he would come to many voluntary parades. It was not expected that they would stop at the minimum.

Colonel Duigan said they would make an even greater success of the scheme if they had the assistance of members of the chamber.

In answer to a question Colonel Duigan said the territorials would receive the same pay as they did under the old compulsory scheme.

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