

Former Halcombe Post Office, 57 Willoughby Road, Halcombe



The former Halcombe Post Office (23 October 2016; Photo: Val Burr)

Architect: Government Architect

Construction date: 1914

Visible materials: Painted timber weatherboards and joinery, corrugated steel roofing

Architectural style: Edwardian English Domestic Revival

Use/building type: Residential (previously commercial)

Date and Compiler: Ian Bowman, 2015, Val Burr 2019

Heritage New Zealand listing: 2

Proposed category: B

PHYSICAL AND SOCIAL HISTORY

At the official opening ceremony for what is now the former Halcombe Post Office on 20 January 1914, a detailed history of postal services in the Halcombe area was published in various local newspapers.¹ This information had been part of the speech of the Hon. R. Heaton Rhodes, the Postmaster-General. In it Rhodes stated that: *“A post office was first opened at Halcombe on the 1st July, 1876. The first postmaster was Mr. W. H. Lash. His successors have been J. A. Tompkins, appointed 1st October, 1877; J. King, 1st November, 1878; J. B. Gould 24th December, 1880; J. W. Bowles 1st February, 1884; E. McKenna 27th April, 1884; C. C. Lambert 12th April, 1885; H. E. Burr 29th May, 1886; G. Ayre 2nd July, 1888; H. Daniell 2nd July, 1892; E. E. Ingpen 1st January, 1898; A. James 24th July, 1902; W P. Morton 31st October, 1905; H. O. Couch, 23rd August, 1910.”*

Rhodes further stated that: *“A telegraph office, a money order office and a savings bank (had been) opened in 1878. A telegraph message boy was appointed in 1902. A telephone exchange was opened in 1911, a number of private wires then connected with the office being converted to exchange connections. There are now twelve subscribers to the exchange.*

He then pointed out that: *“A daily rural mail delivery was established in 1912 to serve the district surrounding Halcombe. During the last ten years there has been a considerable increase in all classes*

¹ For example: *Wanganui Chronicle*, 21 January 1914, p. 6; *Feilding Star*, 21 January 1914, p. 2; and *Rangitikei Advocate & Manawatu Argus*, 22 January 1914, p. 5

of the Department's business at Halcombe. In 1903 the number of articles posted was 52,360 and in 1913, 69,970. Articles delivered in 1903, 63,570, and in 1913, 98,700. Postage revenue £230 and £355. The money orders issued and paid amounted in value in 1903 to £1792, and for the twelve months ended the 30th November last (the latest figures available) to £1893. Savings bank deposits in 1903 amounted to £1553, and for the twelve months ended the 30th November last to £3125, Withdrawals for the same periods were £1261 and £2450. In 1903, 2799 telegrams were forwarded of the value of £100, and for the twelve months ended the 30th November last, 4792 of the value of £115. Telegrams received for delivery to residents numbered 2371 and 4041. ²



Figure 1 The Tender Notice from the *Evening Post*, 16 August 1913 (p. 8)

Construction of the Post Office

Halcombe's new Post Office was designed by the Government Architect and built under contract.³ The tender notices were duly published in various newspapers in August 1913.⁴

In relation to the tender notice, the *Feilding Star* of 16 August 1913 (p. 2) recorded that: "Apparently Mr. Guthrie's enquiry in Parliament regarding the delay in erecting the Post Office at Halcombe has had an effect! In another column of to-day's *Star* the Public Works Department calls for tenders for the erection of the building. Plans and specifications may be seen at the post offices in Halcombe and Feilding."

At the time of the opening ceremony, the *Rangitikei Advocate & Manawatu Argus*, published a very detailed description of the building. This stated that: "The new building is of wood and is a combined office and Postmaster's residence. The office portion comprises a porch 9ft. 6in. by 5ft. 6in, a private box lobby 6ft. 6in. by 5ft., a public office 20ft. 6in. by 9ft. 6in., a telephone bureau room 4ft by 3ft. 6in., a mail room 19ft. by 20ft., a space off the mail room for a telephone room 8ft. 6in. by 8ft. 6in., and a Postmaster's room 12ft. 6in. by 9ft. 6in. The residence comprises a sitting room 15ft. 6in. by 13ft, three bedrooms, one 13ft. by 12ft., and two others 11ft. 6in. by 8ft. 6in., a kitchen 14ft. by 11ft., a scullery 7ft. 6in. by 6ft., a pantry and a bathroom. A washhouse and other office and domestic conveniences are provided in an outbuilding. The building is 30ft. wide and 75ft. 6in deep. The contractor was Mr. G. L Wakelin, of Wellington. The contract amount was £1191." ⁵

Local newspapers published employment notices seeking staff to work on the building. For example, the *Feilding Star*, of 18 October 1913 (p. 3) records: "WANTED - Carpenter, Is 6d an hour to good hand. Apply WAKELIN, Contractor, Halcombe Post Office." Then the *Wanganui Chronicle*, of 11 November 1913 (p. 1[5]) records: "WANTED - A good carpenter for Halcombe Post Office. Is 6d an hour and ten hours a day. Apply Wakelin, contractor Halcombe P.O."

By December 9th, 1913, work was well underway, with the *Rangitikei Advocate & Manawatu Argus* recording that: "Our post office is rapidly nearing completion. During the past week, the weather being favourable, the band of workers which includes carpenters, plumbers, bricklayers, painters and paperhangers, have been busily employed, and the contractor hopes to finish well within the specified time. Notable in the construction of this useful building, apart from the faithful workmanship, is the

² *Rangitikei Advocate & Manawatu Argus*, 22 January 1914, p. 5

³ *Appendices to the Journals of the House of Representatives (AJHR)*, 1914, D-1: p. 90

⁴ *Feilding Star*, 16 August 1913, p. 3 (2); also *Evening Post*, 16 August 1913, p. 8

⁵ *Rangitikei Advocate & Manawatu Argus*, 22 January 1914, p. 5

high class quality of the timber used, the like of which has not been seen here since Halcombe was a timber milling centre.”⁶

Of interest, attempts were being made to demolish and replace the old Halcombe Hotel at this same time, and the work on that project does not seem to have gained any real traction until after the post office was completed in January 1914.⁷

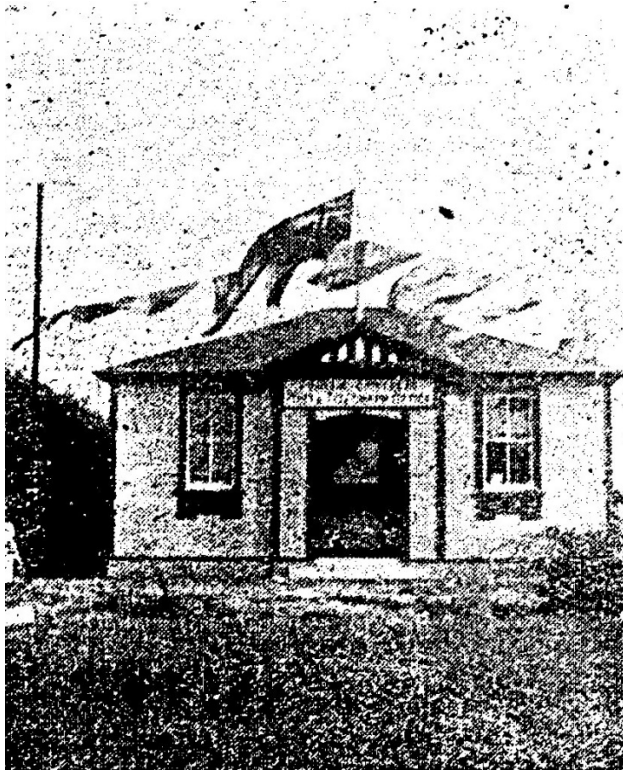


Figure 2 This photo's original caption reads: "Front elevation of Halcombe's new Post Office, opened on Tuesday, Jan. 20th, by the Hon. R. Heaton Rhodes, Postmaster-General." The hitching rail was yet to arrive at this time. Note the hedge on the left in this photo. It is gone by the time of other two photos that show the building with the same colour scheme. (Source: *Wanganui Chronicle*, 22 January 1914, p. 6(2))

call at Marton, arrived in Halcombe by the New Plymouth mail train, and was received by the member for the district (Mr. D. H. Guthrie, M.P.) and a representative group of farmers and other residents of the district, and escorted to the new post office, which has been erected on the railway reserve adjoining the sports ground. On this convenient corner Halcombe folks gathered in force, the scene was enlivened by a display of flags, and the presence of the new band, under the baton of Mr. West, further tended to make the place en fete.”⁸

Speeches included that of John Morrison, who was chairing the event. He referred to the many years that the town had needed to 'put up' with the railway station serving as its post office, while at the same time paying tribute to the courtesy of the successive railway officers. The locals were, however, going to appreciate having a post office in the centre of town. Morrison also mentioned other needs of the district, such as an extension of its telephone hours from the present 7pm, to 8pm, as farmers

The Official Opening of the Halcombe Post Office

The building's official opening on 20 January 1914 was a very big event for Halcombe which, as at the 1911 Census, had had a population of 260. Reporters from at least three local newspapers were apparently present. The *Feilding Star* of January 21st (p. 2) published a lengthy and fairly light-hearted article. The detailed, straight to the point report of the *Wanganui Chronicle's* 'travelling reporter' was also published on January 21st (p. 6). Then the 'own correspondent' of Marton's *Rangitikei Advocate & Manawatu Argus* of January 22nd (p. 5) also published a cheerful and 'locally focussed' story.

The *Feilding Star* recorded that: "Despite the great and general desire for rain all over the district, not one resident in and about Halcombe wanted wet yesterday - and they didn't get it. Every prospect was pleasing for the red-lettered event in Halcombe's history—the opening of its first post office and, with the exception of Premier Seddon, meeting the first Minister of the Crown to pay an official call and make a speech. The Hon. R. Heaton Rhodes, Postmaster-General, who had been inspecting a site for a post office at Turakina and paying a

⁶ *Rangitikei Advocate & Manawatu Argus*, 9 December 1913, p. 3

⁷ For example: *Feilding Star*, 4 December 1913, p. 2 See also the file: RB3 Halcombe Tavern

⁸ *Feilding Star*, 21 January 1914 (p. 2)

tended to only be able to conduct their business in the evening. He also wanted the railway station to be connected to the telephone system.⁹



Figure 3 This undated photo from the Mandahl Collection at the Manawatu District Library, shows the building in its original colour scheme. The hedge that was present in January 1914 has now gone. Meanwhile the height of the trees in the distance on the right, suggests that this photo was very early in the building's existence. Similarly, the facades on the two buildings shown at the left of this photo differ from the ones on the same sites in the oldest Archives NZ photo. (Source: <http://feilding.recollect.co.nz/nodes/view/17871>) Various local personalities participated in the event, including: *Mr. Burcham, who was introduced as "the Father of Halcombe," (who) smiled benignantly upon his large family, and on their behalf assured Mr. Rhodes that the post office would suit their purposes admirably.*¹⁰

The local 'pony express' of days gone by also received attention, with Cr. John McDonald saying that: *"this was a red-lettered day in Halcombe's history. It was a puzzle how they got the building, with no general election at hand. (Laughter) The speaker recalled the old days, when the mailman made his deliveries to Stanway on a 200-year-old pony. Now there were rural deliveries and a post office."*¹¹ The Marton newspaper's 'own reporter' recorded this slightly differently, referring to *"the postal troubles of the early settlers and how the rural delivery of the mails was often delayed by the rural mail man and his century old 'moke.'"*¹²

The Rev. H. Daniel, was introduced to the dignitaries as *"the minister for Halcombe;"* while the stationmaster, Mr. H. C. Couch, said *"his release from the dual capacity brought a feeling of pleasure mixed with regret."* This was because as postmaster he had been brought into closer touch with the local people than he would be now at the station alone.¹³

After an interlude with music from the Halcombe Brass Band in the course of its first official performance: *"The Minister (Rhodes) rose to speak, he expressed regret that things had to be rushed.*

⁹ *Wanganui Chronicle*, 21 January 1914, p. 6

¹⁰ *Feilding Star*, 21 January 1914 (p. 2)

¹¹ *Feilding Star*, 21 January 1914 (p. 2)

¹² *Rangitikei Advocate & Manawatu Argus*, 22 January 1914, p. 5

¹³ *Feilding Star*, 21 January 1914 (p. 2)

But the Premier had called a Cabinet meeting in Wellington, which meant that he (the speaker) had to catch the 5 o'clock train at Palmerston. He was glad Halcombe had a band. The young fellows would find it a good way to use their winter evenings—and the people would have the pleasure of their playing in the summer. It had also been a great pleasure to meet here the oldest postal official of the Dominion, Mr. Franklin. Mr. Rhodes said he would bring under the notice of the Minister of Railways Mr. Morrison's request; and for his own part, he might be able to grant half-an-hour's extension of the telephone hour.¹⁴ The Marton newspaper added to this by saying that Mr. Franklin, who Rhodes believed was the oldest postmaster in the service, had been appointed to the role in 1857.¹⁵

At the conclusion of the speeches, "Mr. Rhodes was...handed the key of the office, and with this he opened the front door, and formally declared the building open for the transaction of public business. After cheers had been given, afternoon tea, provided by the ladies of Halcombe, was dispensed, and greatly appreciated."¹⁶

The *Feilding Star* added that at the conclusion of the event, the party of visitors were "entertained at afternoon tea, provided by a bevy of ladies, and the Minister drove off by motor-car to catch his train at Palmerston."¹⁷

References to future staffing consisted of a Mr. Kelly coming "up from the Wellington Post Office to make the final arrangements for opening the post office, and Mr. Brooks, of the Palmerston staff, is in charge until a permanent officer has been appointed."¹⁸ In describing the building, the *Feilding Star's* reporter also noted that the limitations of the building's bathroom had placed a height restriction on future staff there as not being able to be taller than 5ft. 6ins in height!

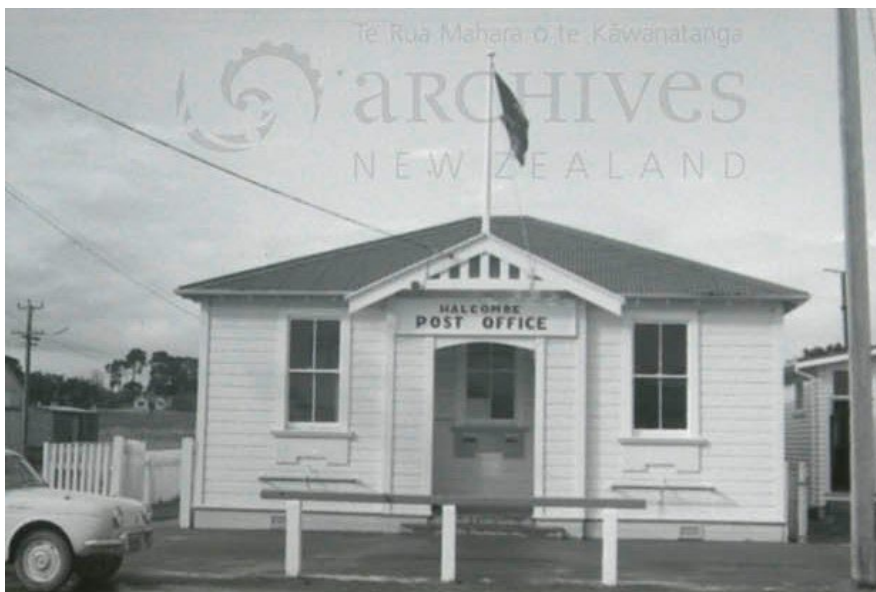


Figure 4 This photo shows the Post Office in about 1967. By this time the building has the bike stands beneath each of the two front windows. Note that the black bike racks are now present beneath the two windows. (Source: Archives NZ, Wellington. Ref: R24136464 AAME 8106 W5603 276/1/H/18)

¹⁴ *Feilding Star*, 21 January 1914 (p. 2)

¹⁵ *Rangitikei Advocate & Manawatu Argus*, 22 January 1914, p. 5

¹⁶ *Wanganui Chronicle*, 21 January 1914, p. 6

¹⁷ *Feilding Star*, 21 January 1914 (p. 2)

¹⁸ *Feilding Star*, 21 January 1914 (p. 2)



UNVEILING OF HALCOMBE WAR MEMORIAL, 1921.

Figure 5 This photo shows the unveiling the Halcombe War Memorial on 27 July 1921, with the Halcombe Post Office in the background. (Source: Manawatu District Library: <http://feildingphotos.mdc.govt.nz/assets/display/17749-max>)

Some Subsequent Activities involving the Post Office

The following seventy-three years doubtless saw many significant activities in and around the post office. Some of these included, in July 1914, *"The piece of road in front of the Halcombe Post Office has been graded, and will be gravelled as soon as opportunity offers."*¹⁹ Then in October 1914, the present hitching rail was erected in front of the post office - the *Rangitikei Advocate & Manawatu Argus* of 13 October 1914 (p. 2) recorded that: *"The only new public work done here during the past week that I have noticed is the erection of "hitching posts" in front of the Post Office. These must be intended for motor cars, as the horses we see about in these degenerate days are mostly tied up."*

On 30th May 1914, a Halcombe Railway Station clerk stole one of the postal bags from the post office that was bound for Palmerston North. The culprit was caught at Stratford in June 1915 and admitted to what he had done with the stolen property a year earlier.²⁰

The *Manawatu Times* of 5 April 1923 (p. 2) notified its readers that *"The Halcombe Post Office is now receiving a coat of paint."* Then in March 1927, the *Manawatu Times* recorded that *"Mr. Len Wildbore, late of Feilding, who has been a junior official in the Halcombe Post Office, has been granted six months' sick leave, having been in indifferent health for some time. Mr. V. H. Bennett, of the Feilding office, is relieving at Halcombe."*²¹

Early photos of the building show its nameplate to read 'Halcombe Post & Telegraph Office.' Later it merely reads 'Halcombe Post Office'. Most photos sighted for this study show different lettering styles and sizes to the others.

¹⁹ *Feilding Star*, 11 July 1914, p. 1

²⁰ *Wanganui Chronicle*, 12 June 1915, p. 7; *Wanganui Herald*, 12 June 1915, p. 8

²¹ *Manawatu Times*, 22 March 1927, p. 3

The book *Halcombe School: 1877-1977* lists a number of former postmasters employed at the Halcombe Post Office. Those named are "Saywell, Hutton, Martin, O'Sullivan, Archer, Wilson, Anderson, Stanbury, Judson, Ireland, and Messrs. Dunaveyney and Emerson."²²

The NZ Historic Places Trust granted the building a Category 2 heritage status on 2 July 1982.²³



OCTOBER 16 . . . Halcombe post manager Kath Harris just hours after hearing her post office was one of the 432 to get the chop. Pictures by Phil Crawford and Mark Munro.

Figure 6 This photo of Kath Harris was published in the *Manawatu Standard* of 5 February 1988 (p. 10), at the time of the closure of the Post Office.

Closure of the Post Office

The *Manawatu Standard* of 16 October 1987 (p. 1) announced the closure of 432 post offices around New Zealand as a cost-saving measure, and one of them was Halcombe's. The article recorded that that Halcombe's post mistress, Kath Harris, had been "absolutely devastated" by the news. At that time, the post office served the town's 600 residents and hundreds more in outlying areas. Mrs. Harris added that while the post office had its quiet times, it was flat out all day on superannuation day. She had then been the post office's only employee for the previous five years, and with the pending closure she expected to "really get it" from the locals wanting to know how they would collect their benefits and mail. The locals had even presented a petition seeking to have their post office excluded from the list of post offices that were anticipated to close. The closure had local residents threatening to close their Postbank accounts, and also anticipating the extra trips into town that they would have to make as a result of the closure.²⁴

The Halcombe Post Office duly closed on Friday, February 5th 1988, being one of 28 post offices to close on that date from the *Manawatu Standard's* circulation area. The protests around the country against the closures had included marches on Parliament, solo runs, public meetings, and flags flown at half-mast. Kimbolton's flagpole flew a skull and crossbones that day (despite the protests of NZ Post), and a horse was ridden inside the Rongotea Post Office to collect the last bag of mail. Many people cancelled their Postbank accounts, with Halcombe's customers described as cancelling their Postbank accounts in droves.²⁵ Following the closure, Halcombe's Postal Delivery Centre was transferred to Hooper Bros. store.²⁶

In the 1990s, and while the building was owned by Telecom (see below), the old post office was leased to Jill Darragh, who ran a craft shop from it. The story of the craft shop was not further researched.²⁷

²² Halcombe School Centennial Committee, *Halcombe School: 1877-1977* (Halcombe, 1977), p. 5

²³ Heritage NZ: <http://www.heritage.org.nz/the-list/details/1197>

²⁴ *Manawatu Standard*, 16 October 1987, p. 1

²⁵ *Manawatu Standard*, 5 February 1988, p. 10; 6 February 1988, p. 1

²⁶ *Manawatu Standard*, 5 February 1988, p. 10

²⁷ Historic Places Manawatu-Horowhenua Inc. File No. 30-028 (held at Te Manawa, Palmerston North)

Changes to Ownership

On 30 March 1990, Certificate of Title 37C/132 was issued to “*Her Majesty the Queen as public buildings of the General Government.*” This covered land totalling 814 square metres more or less, being Section 1 of Survey Office Plan 19667. Telecom Central Ltd. was then registered from the same date as the proprietor of the land. The property was then transmitted to Telecom New Zealand Ltd., the entry being dated 9 December 1996. The CT was then cancelled on 20 December 1996 and was replaced by the CTs WN48B/757 for Lot 1, and WN48B/758 for Lot 2.

Certificate of Title WN48B/757 was then issued to Telecom New Zealand Ltd. on 20 December 1996 – this being Lot 1, DP 81868, totalling approximately 180 square metres. It was duly transferred to its present owner Chorus NZ Ltd. in 2011.

Certificate of Title WN48B/758, being the larger Lot 2 of DP 81868 (the actual former Post Office building), was also issued on 20 December 1996 to Telecom NZ Ltd. Then in 1998, it was transferred into private ownership.

Architect – John Campbell (1857–1942)

John Campbell was born in Glasgow in 1857. He served his articles under John Gordon (c1835–1912) also in Glasgow. He arrived in Dunedin in 1882 and after a brief period as a draughtsman with Mason and Wales joined the Dunedin branch of the Public Works Department in 1883. His first known work, an unbuilt design for the Dunedin Railway Station, reveals an early interest in Baroque architecture.

In November 1888 Campbell was transferred to Wellington where in 1889 he took up the position of draughtsman in charge of the Public Buildings Division of the Public Works Department. He remained in charge of the design of government buildings throughout New Zealand until his retirement in 1922, becoming in 1909 the first person to hold the position of Government Architect. Government architecture designed under his aegis evidences a change in style from Queen Anne to Edwardian Baroque.

His best known Queen Anne design is the Dunedin Police Station (1895–6), modelled on Richard Norman Shaw's New Scotland Yard (1887–90). Arguably his best Edwardian Baroque building is the Public Trust Office, Wellington (1905–9). Although Campbell designed the Dunedin Law Courts (1899–1902) in the Gothic style with Scottish Baronial inflection, he established Edwardian Baroque as the government style for police stations, courthouses and post offices throughout New Zealand by 1903. In 1907 he designed the North Wing Extension of the Government Buildings in Wellington. The Italianate style of the extension was out of character for Campbell who worked in a range of style from Queen Anne to Edwardian Baroque. In 1911 Campbell won the nation-wide architectural competition for the design of Parliament Buildings, Wellington. Although only partially completed, Parliament House is the crowning achievement of Campbell's career. Through his post as Government Architect, he also designed numerous other police stations, post offices and courthouses nationwide.

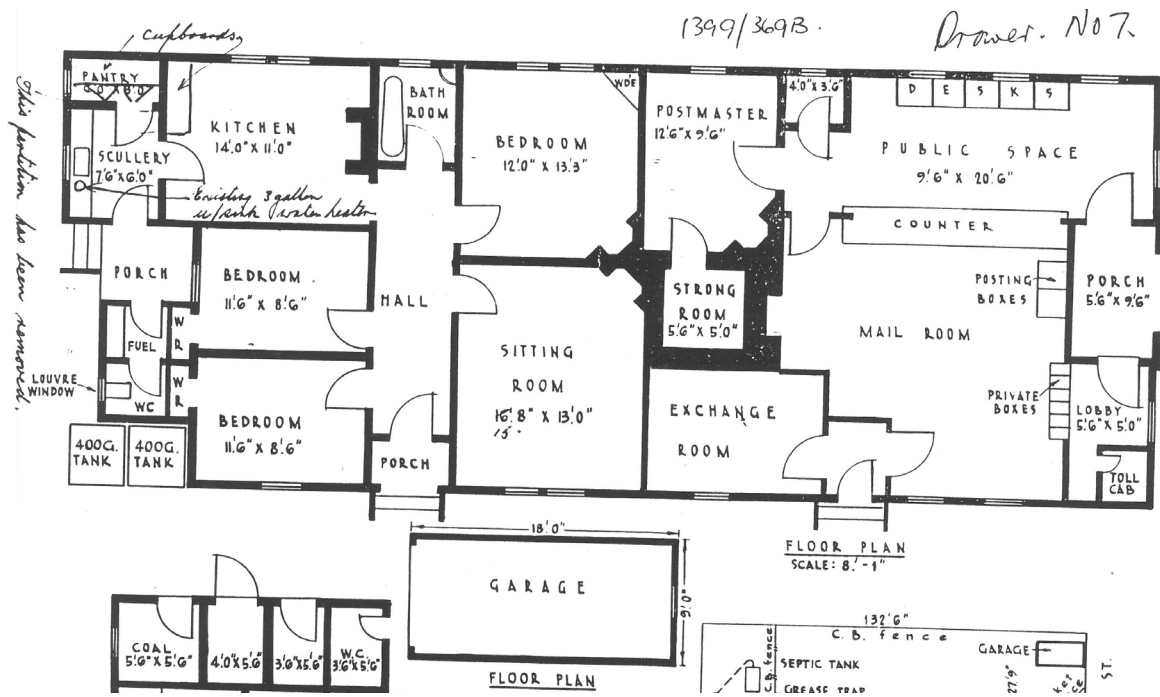


Figure 7 This plan, which is dated 4 February 1966, shows the Halcombe Post Office and staff living quarters, including the layout of the post office itself. It was originally prepared in relation to the application to build a UAX Building on the site. (Source: Manawatu District Council Building Permit records for 57 Willoughby Street, Halcombe - Plan PM 824F, T.D. 3-8-60)

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

Planning, style, construction

The single storey, timber framed and clad, rectangular planned building is located on the south west corner of Stanway Road and Willoughby Street, Halcombe. The 1996 plan in Figure 7 shows the building divided equally between the Post Office functions to the north and living accommodation to the south. The recessed, main entry to the former Post Office faces northwest to Stanway Road and had a door to the east to the telephone booth and a door to the west to access the main public space. At the time of the drawing, the space had a long counter separating the public from the mail room. To the south of the public space was the Postmaster's office, a strong room at the centre and the exchange room to the east. The north eastern side of the building has a porch and entries to the exchange room and mail room.

The living accommodation is accessed from the east side of the building with a recessed porch leading to a central hall off which are bedrooms and the living room. To the west is the bathroom and to the south west are the kitchen and scullery. The toilet and fuel room are at the south east.

The Stanway Road elevation is symmetrical around a shallow projecting gabled porch with arched opening and half-timber framing to the gable. Single double-hung sash windows with sill aprons are located either side of the porch. The elevation facing Stanway Road is the narrower of the two elevations, with the longer side elevation facing Willoughby Street. This elevation is more prosaic with single and pairs of double-hung sash windows and two doors along the length of the elevation. The windows to the public spaces in the building are higher than the rear section of the building. The windows on the west elevation appear to be similar.

The roof to the building is hipped with the ridge running the length of the building. The roof over the public spaces of the building is subtler higher than the roof over the living accommodation. Rafter ends are exposed.

The style of the building is a combination of styles with the collective title of Edwardian English Domestic Revival. The characteristics of the style seen in the former Post Office include symmetry, a prominent roof, gabled entry porch with gable screen, timber coverboards imitating half-timber framing, prominent chimneys with decorative corbels, sill aprons and exposed rafter ends.

Government Architect John Campbell designed many post offices in a similar style. Larger examples include the former Post Offices in Collingwood, Golden Bay and that in St Bathans while a smaller example is the building at Tikokino. A substantial example of the combination of English Domestic Revival by Campbell is Wellington Government House.

Cladding is rusticated weatherboards and the building is roofed with corrugated steel. There are two brick chimneys in the centre of the building which have stepped corbels to the flaunching.

The interior was not able to be inspected.

Style background

The development of the English Domestic Revival style was influenced by William Morris's Arts and Crafts movement whose guiding philosophy was to encourage traditional art and craftsmanship. Architects of the period had a desire to use purely English architectural styles that saw a revival of vernacular English domestic architectural styles with a preference for Gothic. These styles were collectively called the English Domestic Revival and included revivals of early English Renaissance styles of Jacobean and Elizabethan, Baroque, and Gothic.

The main architects designing in the Domestic revival styles, to whom New Zealand architects looked for inspiration, were George Devey, Eden Nesfield, CFA Voysey, Philipp Webb and Norman Shaw. Their architecture and interpretation of styles was extremely popular and was used universally within the Empire and the United States; the latter especially with the architecture of Henry Robson Richardson from the 1870's to the early 1900's.

Key elements of the style as seen in New Zealand examples that were derived from the early English Renaissance styles include: asymmetry, prominent roofs, gables with gable screens, sash windows with glazing bars, bay windows, window or door hoods, decorative entry porches, prominent chimneys and exposed eaves and rafter ends. Baroque influences in the style include Classical elements such as symmetry, columns, sill aprons, chimney caps and keystone arches.

The use of Baroque in New Zealand was largely influenced by the works of Government Architect, John Campbell, in Parliament Buildings and many large post offices throughout New Zealand in the early part of the twentieth century. His smaller post offices were typically of the Edwardian English Domestic Revival style.

Single storey versions of the style were typically less decorative.

Setting

The building is constructed on the intersection of Willoughby Street and Stanway Road at the south eastern end of Halcombe Village. Opposite to the north east is a former shop that has been converted to a house. Diagonally opposite is the Halcombe Tavern and opposite to the west is a former dairy and several other residential buildings lining Stanway Road. The Halcombe War Memorial is located in the central, circular traffic island.

Stanway Road leads to the railway line to the west and Halcombe Road, the main road between Feilding and State Highway 1.

The former Post Office is sited close to both streets on a long narrow section with a garage to the south east and sheds and garden to the rear. Further to the rear are tennis courts with a sports field to the west.

Halcombe village is largely flat with gradually rising ground to the east and west, most of which is open farmland with scattered housing.

SUMMARY OF HERITAGE VALUES

The former Halcombe Post Office has **low to high local** significance for **architectural, representivity, rarity, group, authenticity, people, event** and **educational** heritage values.

The building has **moderate architectural** and **high representivity** values as an example of an early 20th century, small, rural Post Office designed in the Edwardian English Domestic Revival style under the auspices of Government Architect, John Campbell. Being one of many such Post Offices, the building has **low rarity** but **high national group** values. The building has **low local group** values as one of three listed buildings, an object (hitching rail located outside the former Post Office), and memorial in Halcombe.

The exterior of the former Post Office appears to have been little modified such that it has **high authenticity**.

The building has **high historic people** values as it is associated with John Campbell, who, as Government Architect, was one of the most significant and influential architects in the first quarter of the 20th century. It also has **high pattern** values having been closed as a result of the 1984 Labour Government reforms that had a major impact on the New Zealand people and services provided by the Government.

Given the range and levels of heritage values, the former Halcombe Post Office has **moderate education** values as it can contribute to an understanding of early settlement, the history of public services and the architecture of the Government Architect in the Manawatu.

SOURCES

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Manawatu District Library: <http://feildingphotos.mdc.govt.nz/assets/display/17749-max> & <http://feilding.recollect.co.nz/nodes/view/17871>

Papers Past: <https://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz/newspapers> (*Evening Post*, *Feilding Star*, *Manawatu Standard*, *Manawatu Times*, *Rangitikei Advocate* and *Manawatu Argus*, *Wanganui Chronicle* [as per footnotes and text])

Te Papa website: February 1988: <http://blog.tepapa.govt.nz/2012/02/29/february-1988-this-month-last-century/>

Other Sources

Archives NZ, Wellington. Ref: R24136464 AAME 8106 W5603 276/1/H/18) and Ref: R24136477 AAME 8106 W5603 276/1/H/24)

Historic Places Manawatu-Horowhenua Inc. File No. 30-028 on the property (held at Te Manawa, Palmerston North)

Manawatu District Council: Building Permit file, Certificates of Title; MDC Heritage file: RB3 Halcombe Tavern

OTHER IMAGES



Figure 8 A Google Street View photo of the former post office in February 2008. The metal bike racks beneath the windows, were not yet back in place at this time.