

Heritage Buildings Report

Site ID

Building/Site Name

Arnold's Cottage no.2

Address

31 Lemon Street, New Plymouth



Statement of Significance

Along with neighbouring 129 Lemon Street, this bay cottage was likely erected during 1876 or 1877 by Alfred Hughes Arnold, later a partner in the once prominent New Plymouth ironmongery and hardware firm Okey, Arnold & Earp. For much of their early lives these cottages were occupied by members of the working class, and as such, this building offers insights into the dwellings lived in by an under-studied, yet important societal group during the late-nineteenth century. This cottage has significant rarity value as part of the only known pair of 1870s workers cottages to survive in New Plymouth city. Although alterations have been made to the cottage, the primary structure and cladding of the original cottage remains largely intact.



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Legal Information and Heritage Status

Legal Description	Eastern Moiety Section 1589 Town of New Plymouth
District Plan Item/ Map No.	
Heritage New Zealand List	Not listed

Construction Information

Date of Construction	Circa 1876-77
Principal Materials	Wooden framing, weatherboard, corrugated steel
Construction Professionals	Alfred Hughes Arnold (presumed builder)

History

The exact construction date of this cottage is unclear, although it was likely erected during 1876 or 1877, and certainly before 1880. It seems the original recipient of the Crown Grant for Town Section 1589 was James Marsh; although this grant was not authorised until 1884, long after Marsh had disposed of his interest in the property to J. L. Stanners in 1875.¹ The earliest known surviving rates book for the property covers the 1875-76 rating year, and at this time the section was valued at £15.² Although not certain, given the absence of a fire rate for the 1875-76 rating year (introduced in 1871, and generally levied if a building is present on a section), the present cottages were probably not constructed at this time.

Stanners sold the property to Alfred Hughes Arnold in July 1876, and it seems probable that the present cottages were constructed during his period of ownership.³ Alfred was born at West Bromwich, near Birmingham, in 1854, and emigrated to New Plymouth aboard the *Howrah* in 1874.⁴ Having mastered the joinery and carpentry business at home, he was employed in this trade for about ten years from his arrival, before becoming a partner in Messrs Okey, Arnold & Earp's Ironmongery Warehouse in 1889.⁵ The first reference to Arnold residing at Lemon Street is the 1878-79 edition of *Wises Street Directory*, and as he didn't own any other land in the area, it seems likely the present cottages were constructed prior to 1878, and likely during 1876 or 1877.⁶ The present cottages at 129 and 131 Lemon Street were certainly constructed by 1880, as they are clearly indicated on a map of New Plymouth drawn by Thomas Kingwell Skinner that year.⁷

Arnold had the property subdivided in 1879, and the eastern portion was purchased by Walter Henry Atkinson.⁸ In May 1883, Atkinson sold the property to A. Chivers, who also only owned the property for a couple of years, before selling it to W. H. Free in September 1885.⁹ The 1887-88 rates book notes that a house is on the section, and the property has a rateable value of £10 10s.¹⁰ In May 1888, the property was conveyed to the Taranaki Loan and Building Society, who retained ownership until

¹ Taranaki Land Deed Indexes (23516), c.1858 - c.1928, Archives New Zealand

² New Plymouth Town Board Rating Book 1875-76, NPDC Archives

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

⁴ *Taranaki Herald*, 4 January 1895, page 2

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ *Wises Street Directory*, 1878-79

⁷ Plan of New Plymouth, New Zealand, Thomas Kingwell Skinner, 1880, ARC2010-220, Puke Ariki

⁸ Taranaki Land Deed Indexes (23516), c.1858 - c.1928, Archives New Zealand

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ New Plymouth Borough Council Rating Book, 1887-88, NPDC Archives



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December 1896, when it was purchased by E. P. Lister.¹¹ Lister remained the owner until the property title was issued under the Land Transfer Act in 1928. The cottage was repaired, and additions and alterations carried out in 1989.

Reference Sources

See footnotes.

Description

This single-storey cottage is located in a principally residential street on the eastern side of New Plymouth City. This area was settled early in New Plymouth's history, and whilst development pressures since the 1970s have resulted in an eclectic mix of architectural styles, the area still retains a number of pre-1900 dwellings which contribute to a sense of historical character now uncommon in New Plymouth.

This cottage has a slightly more substantial appearance than neighbouring 129 Lemon Street, which is of a similar age, style and scale. The main form of this cottage is a narrow north-west gable, intersected by a wide east-west half-hipped gable. The presence of a projecting flat-faced gable on an 1870s New Plymouth cottage is somewhat unusual, as they did not become locally common until later in the Nineteenth Century.

The cottage is principally clad in horizontal rough-sawn weatherboard, and the roof is sheathed in corrugated steel. The window joinery includes wooden casements in a variety of styles; although none appear to be original. A brick chimney finished with decorative corbelling rises from the western end of the roof.

Assessment:

Historical	This building principally has heritage significance as an 1870s workers cottage. The working class has until recently been largely silenced in the historical record, and this building offers insights into the dwellings lived in by an under-studied, yet important societal group during the nineteenth century. This cottage also has some historic significance for its association with Alfred Hughes Arnold, a partner in the once prominent New Plymouth ironmongery and hardware firm Okey, Arnold & Earp.	✓
Importance to Community	-	
Architecture & Construction	This building is a good example of a locally uncommon 1870s bay cottage.	✓
Setting and Context	Together with neighbouring 131 Lemon Street, this cottage is one of a pair of workers cottages of a similar style and scale that were constructed during the mid-late 1870s by the same builder.	✓
Archaeology	As the cottage was constructed prior to 1880, 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.	✓

¹¹ Taranaki Land Deed Indexes (23516), c.1858 - c.1928, Archives New Zealand



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Representativeness, rarity and integrity	This is the only known pair of 1870s workers cottages to survive in New Plymouth City. Although alterations have been made to the cottage, the primary structure and cladding of the original cottage remains largely intact.	✓
Meets threshold for listing (three or more ticks, or two ticks in one criterion)		✓

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