



#### POSTMASTER-GENERAL'S DEPARTMENT.

Postmaster-General's Department—Hon. J. Hall. Secretary—  
George Elliott Elliott. Inspector of Post Offices—W. Gray.  
Chief Clerk—Pu Macalister. Clerks—T. Bodley, **and** J. B. Beale  
Printer of Postage Stamps—J. Davis.

George Eliot Elliott born 18 December 1817 was the illegitimate son of George Gordon, the 5th Earl of Aboyne and the 9th Marquess of Huntly. When he and his siblings were cast off as too costly in view of his father's debts, he left medical school in England and made his way to New South Wales. From thence he caught a ship to the Bay of Islands with Captain Hobbs in 1840.

He was the records clerk at the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi, which ceded Maori lands to Queen Victoria. He then had a career developing the Post Office, working in Auckland, Wellington and then retiring to Dunedin where he died on 18 September, 1901, aged 83 years

In 1841 he entered the office of the Colonial Secretary at Auckland, as Secretary in the Postmaster General's Department, and remained in the government service until 1872, when he retired.

In 1841 the Treaty documents narrowly escaped destruction by fire when the Government offices at Auckland were burned down. George Elliott, the record clerk, arrived just in time to rescue the

Treaty and the Seal of the Colony. Elliot afterwards deposited the Treaty in the Colonial Secretary's Office, where it remained until at least 1865.

In 1841 George married Catherine Lavinia Morne in New Zealand and over the next 19 years they had 10 children together. Lavinia died in 1885 aged 60 and it seems that George married again.

Poor storage between 1877 and 1908 led to the Treaty being damaged by both water and rodents. However, facsimiles of the Treaty had been created in 1877, before any damage occurred and all signatures have survived. After a series of different conservation treatments, and different homes, the Treaty was finally brought to National Archives in 1989, where the documents are now on permanent display in the secure, stable environment of the Constitution Room, Archives New Zealand.

In 1876 he settled in Dunedin, where he took a great interest in church affairs. He represented Leith Ward for a short time in the Dunedin City Council. He was twice married, and by his first wife he left a family of four sons and three daughters, three sons having died in Auckland.

George died on 17 September 1901 and is buried with his wife in Dunedin's Northern Cemetery.

Prepared by the Historic Cemeteries Conservation Trust of New Zealand ([www.cemeteries.org.nz](http://www.cemeteries.org.nz))  
from Cyclopaedia of New Zealand Otago Southland, and ArchivesNZ website  
[archives.govt.nz/exhibitions/treaty](http://archives.govt.nz/exhibitions/treaty)