

**WAIMAKARIRI DISTRICT COUNCIL**  
**HISTORIC HERITAGE ITEM RECORD FORM**

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**2021 District Plan Item No.** HH076  
**HERITAGE ITEM NAME** Eyreton Anglican Church / St Thomas's Anglican Church  
**ADDRESS** 590 South Eyre Road, Eyreton  
**PHOTOGRAPH**



(www)

**DISTRICT PLAN ITEM NO.** H095      **HNZ LIST NO. & CATEGORY** n / a  
(at time of assessment)

**LEGAL DESCRIPTION** Pt RS 8992

**VALUATION NUMBER** 2175042800

**DATE OF CONSTRUCTION** 1873-74

**ARCHITECT/DESIGNER/  
BUILDER** William Marley, architect; Messrs Price, builders

**STYLE** Colonial Gothic Revival

**PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION**

Single-storey building with rectangular footprint, apsidal east end and gabled roof forms. Church has gabled vestry on north elevation and an arcaded, gabled entrance porch on the southern elevation. Multi-pane lancet arched windows, with triangular window at west end; louvred vent in same.

**MATERIALS/STRUCTURE**

Timber framing and weatherboard cladding with stucco covering, corrugated metal roofing.

**ADDITIONS/ALTERATIONS**

Stuccoed (date unknown).

**SETTING**

The church is set back from the road boundary on the north side of South Eyre Road, its churchyard being located at 596 and 598 South Eyre Road. The road boundary is fenced and entry to the site is provided via a timber post and rail gate with acorn finials. Mature trees partly screen the church from view. The extent of setting is the land parcel on which the church is located.

## **HISTORY**

Anglican services were held in the local schoolroom until a church was built in Eyreton in 1873-74. The church was consecrated by Bishop Harper on Shrove Tuesday (17 February) 1874. A luncheon afterwards was held in a large tent pitched beside the church. The site had been gifted by Marmaduke and Eliza Dixon of 'Eyrewell', the former (1828-95) having chaired the church building committee since November 1872. The Dixons' son James was the first burial (1880) in the churchyard. The first vicar was the Rev CJ Merton (1849-1916); the church became known as St Thomas's in 1890. Diamond jubilee celebrations held in 1934 included a service conducted by Bishop West-Watson and the Rev CL Sparrow before a packed church. St Thomas's is now part of the Kaiapoi Anglican Parish and services are held on the fourth Sunday of the month.

## **HISTORICAL AND SOCIAL SIGNIFICANCE**

St Thomas's Anglican Church has historical and social significance for its association with the Anglican congregation of Eyreton since 1874 and the early supporters of the church, including the Dixons of 'Eyrewell'.

## **CULTURAL AND SPIRITUAL SIGNIFICANCE**

St Thomas's Anglican Church has cultural and spiritual significance as a place of Anglican worship and fellowship. The building also has commemorative purpose in the memorial furnishings gifted by the grandchildren of Marmaduke and Eliza Dixon in 1966.

## **ARCHITECTURAL AND AESTHETIC SIGNIFICANCE**

St Thomas's Anglican Church has architectural significance as the work of Christchurch architect William Marley. Marley (1816-96) was a pioneer Canterbury builder and architect; he also designed the second stage of Riccarton House for Jane Deans in 1874, Homebush Station's woolshed (1878-79) and St Stephen's Anglican Church in Peel Forest (1885). He is credited as being the co-designer of All Saints' Anglican Church at Burnham (1864) and also designed the first St John's Anglican Church at Hororata (1875).

## **TECHNOLOGICAL AND CRAFTSMANSHIP SIGNIFICANCE**

St Thomas's Anglican Church has technological and craftsmanship value for the evidence it provides of mid-Victorian construction methods and materials. Messrs Price were Kaiapoi builders.

## **CONTEXTUAL SIGNIFICANCE**

St Thomas's Anglican Church has contextual significance as a historic landmark in Eyreton and for its relationship with the adjacent churchyard. The only other church in Eyreton (Methodist, 1875) was relocated to Leigh Camp (Rangiora Leigh Holiday Park) at Loburn in 1961.

## **ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND SCIENTIFIC SIGNIFICANCE**

As the church pre-dates 1900 its site has potential archaeological significance relating to the colonial development of the property by the Anglican church.

## **SUMMARY OF HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE**

St Thomas's Anglican Church has overall heritage significance to Eyreton and Waimakariri district as a whole. The church has historic and social significance for its association with the Anglican community of Eyreton since 1874 and cultural and spiritual significance for its religious use and commemorative function. St Thomas's Anglican Church has architectural significance as a Colonial Gothic Revival style building designed by pioneer architect William

Marley and technological and craftsmanship value for its mid-Victorian construction and detailing. St Thomas's Anglican Church has contextual significance as a local historic feature and for its relationship with the neighbouring churchyard. The church property has potential archaeological significance in view of its 19<sup>th</sup> century development and use.

## HERITAGE CATEGORY

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## REFERENCES

- *Press* 18 February 1874, p. 2.
- *Lyttelton Times* 17 November 1873, p. 1; 3 November 1909, p. 6.
- *North Canterbury Gazette* 6 March 1934, p. 3; 5 June 1936, p. 2.
- <http://www.kaiapoianglican.nz/about-us/history/>
- <https://libraries.waimakariri.govt.nz/heritage/local-history/places-of-the-waimakariri/surrounding-areas/history-of-the-churches-of-clarkville,-eyreton,-flaxton,-ohoka-and-swannanoa>
- *Cyclopedia of New Zealand - Canterbury Provincial Council District* Christchurch, 1903; available online.
- Blain Biographical Directory of Anglican clergy on the South Pacific, 2019; available online.
- DN Hawkins *Beyond the Waimakariri* Christchurch, 2001; available online.
- <https://www.waimakariri.govt.nz/services/cemeteries/cemetery-locations>
- CWD Hodgson *The Parish of Kaiapoi, 1853-1982* Kaiapoi, 1982.

REPORT COMPLETED

8 March 2019

AUTHOR

Dr Ann McEwan / Heritage Consultancy Services



Extent of setting, with churchyard on adjacent properties to the west, St Thomas's Anglican Church, 590 South Eyre Road, Eyreton.