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## CONNECT

THE CYCLOPEDIA OF NEW ZEALAND  
[CANTERBURY PROVINCIAL DISTRICT]

[CUST]

**CUST** is on the northern railway line, between Rangiora and Oxford, and thirty-two miles from Christchurch. It has a fortnightly market, which is conducted by the North Canterbury Co-operative Association, and has yards with accommodation for all kinds of stock. The township has a railway station, which stands 419 feet above the level of the sea; also a post and telegraph office, a public library, a town hall, an Oddfellows' hall, Anglican and Presbyterian churches, two general stores, a hotel, and a public school, and there are schools also at Stoke and Summerhill. Amongst the local tradesmen there are two bakers, two blacksmiths, two carpenters and undertakers, a butcher, a clothier, and a saddler; and two flour mills do a good trade in gristing for the neighbourhood. The district originally belonged to the Fernside run, owned by Messrs Cunningham and Mannering, but the purely pastoral interests had in time to give way to closer settlement. Cust derives its name from one of the original promoters of the Canterbury Association, namely, Sir Edward Cust, of Leasowe Castle, England, who presented the local church with a bell, Mrs. R. Chapman giving the bell-tower. The land of the district is undulating, and the original settlers had much difficulty in getting their produce to market in the early days. To mend matters in that connection, the road boards applied themselves with great earnestness to form the roads and erect temporary bridges. Amongst the members who helped in this way were Messrs R. N. Higgins, J. Tipping, J. Collier, D. McVicar, W. Anderson, Thomas Conway, T. B. Howson, and J. B. Dickenson. Cust district now has a population of about 750 persons, and its valuation under the road board is close upon £150,000. Originally the district extended from the Ashley to the Waimakariri, but about the year 1870 it was reduced in size by the creation of what is now known as the West Eyreton district. Visitors to Cust are charmed with the scenery of the district; indeed, the low downs covered with well-kept farms and homesteads, with the beautiful background of Mount Thomas and the dense bush of Birch Hill, make up one of the finest landscapes in Canterbury.

**THE CUST ROAD DISTRICT** lies between the Oxford, Rangiora, and Mandeville road district, and the West Eyreton and Ashley districts. It embraces about fifty square miles of agricultural and pastoral country. The capital ratable value of the district is £179,559, on which a rate of 3-8ths of

a penny in the £ is levied, and the revenue for the year 1901–2 was £726 19s 7d. Mr. R. Kingsbury is chairman, and Mr. Thomas O'Farrell, clerk of the Board, which has an office in the township of Cust, where it holds monthly meetings.

**THE POST OFFICE** at Cust was established in 1864. It is situated on the premises of Mr. Stephen Early, and is in a central position, in the main street. Daily mails are received and despatched at the office.

**MR. STEPHEN EARLY**, who has held the position of Postmaster at Cust since 1866, was born in 1840, at Ringwood, Hampshire, England, and educated and brought up as a builder by his father. He arrived in Lyttelton on St. Patrick's Day, 1860, by the ship "Clontarf," and was for about three years in business with his father in Christchurch. On settling in Cust in 1864, he began business as a general storekeeper, and as a baker and undertaker. He carried on the store for about eighteen years, and has since confined his operations to the building and undertaking lines. Mr. Early's commodious premises include a fine workshop with the necessary plant. In the early days he served as a member of the Cust Road Board, and was a member of the first school committee, on which he served for a number of years, and was one of the founders of the local literary institute. He is still a member of the cemetery board. Mr. Early is a member at the Order of Oddfellows, in which he has passed all the chairs, and was one of the founders of the local lodge, and also of that at Oxford. He was married, in 1862, to a daughter of Mr. J. Wayland, of Stoke-by-Nayland, Suffolk, England, and has four sons and five daughters.

**THE CUST RAILWAY STATION AND TELEGRAPH OFFICE** is on the Rangiora-Oxford branch railway line. The building, which is of wood and iron, contains a public ticket lobby, ladies' waiting room, and stationmaster's office, and there is a large goods shed. Two passenger trains pass the station three days in the week, and four on the other three days.

**MR. H. A. WRIGHT**, Stationmaster, who also acts as Telegraphist, and Registrar of Births, Deaths, and Marriages, was appointed to his present position in 1896.

**PUBLIC SCHOOL, CUST**. This school dates from about 1872. It contains three class rooms and three large porches, and stands on part of a

section of three acres of land. There is accommodation for 180 pupils; in 1902 the number on the roll was seventy-two, with an average attendance of sixty. There is a large playground surrounded with well-grown shelter trees; also a two-storey school residence, with five good rooms. The headmaster, Mr Henry Henderson, is helped by an assistant mistress.

***ST. JAMES' ANGLICAN CHURCH***, Cust, is a wood and iron building, which has accommodation for 150 worshippers. It stands on a narrow strip of land between the railway line and the main road. A Sunday school connected with the church is conducted in a separate building, and is attended by forty children, who are in charge of five teachers. The vicarage is a comfortable six-roomed residence, situated not far from the church. Services are conducted twice every Sunday, and the vicar also holds services periodically at West Eyreton and Mount Thomas. The vicar, the Rev. A. S. Fox, has been in charge of the district since 1897.

***THE CUST LITERARY INSTITUTE*** was founded in 1873, and the hall which it occupies was built two years later. The hall has seating accommodation for 400 people, and the library, which contains 700 volumes, is kept in a separate room. There are about thirty subscribers. The affairs of the institution are managed by the president, Mr. E. W. Cooper, and a committee of eight, with Mr. A. D. Hassall, J.P., as secretary.

***MR. ALFRED DANIEL HASSALL***, Secretary to the Cust Literary Institute, was born in Kaiapoi, in 1858, and established his present business in 1879. He was a member of the local licensing committees for several years, and was made a Justice of the Peace in 1898. Mr. Hassall was married, in 1882, to a daughter of the late Mr. J. Willis, of Christchurch, and has three daughters.

***CUST HOTEL*** (J. Brosnahan, Proprietor), This comfortable hotel was established in 1863, and became known as the half-way house between Rangiora and Oxford. It contains twenty-five rooms, of which twelve are well-furnished bedrooms and four sittingrooms. There is a billiard-room, also stabling and secure well-watered paddocks for horses and travelling stock. The hotel is a favourite resting-place for tourists, commercial travellers, and other visitors, whose comforts are well looked after by Mr. and Mrs. Brosnahan.

**MR. BROSNAHAN**, the Proprietor of the Cust Hotel, was born in Ireland in 1871, and received his education at Temuka. In his early years he followed farming. He has taken an active part in local athletic sports, and has been a prize-winner on several occasions. Mr. Brosnahan was married in 1895 to Miss Hoare, and has one daughter.



MR. AND MRS J. BROSNAHAN.

**Mr. and Mrs J. Brosnahan.**

**MCCULLOUGH, DAVID THOMAS**, Butcher and Farmer, Cust. This business was established by Mr. T. B. Houston, conducted by Mr. McLaren for eighteen years, and acquired by the present proprietor in 1901. Mr. McCullough farms 120 acres of land in the district. He was born in Belfast, Ireland, and came to Lyttelton by the ship "Mystery" with his parents. For about twelve months he found employment in the North Island, and was in the Cust district at the time of the great flood in 1868. Mr. McCullough began farming on his own account in 1880. For six years he served as a director of the North Canterbury Co-operative Society. He was married, in 1888, to a daughter of the late Mr A. Ramsay, of Cust, and has two sons.

**COOPER, EDMUND WATTS**, Storekeeper, Cust. This business was established in 1879 by the proprietor, in conjunction with Mr C. Thompson, of Carleton. The premises which are freehold, consist of a wood and iron building, of one storey, containing two shops and a residence behind. The departments include clothing, boots, and hardware. Mr. Cooper was born in South Australia in 1858, and came to New Zealand when six years of age.

He was educated at the local school, under Mr. J. Dobson, and was brought up to mercantile life. Mr. Cooper has taken considerable interest in the welfare of the Cust district, and has been president of the local literary institute since 1891. He has been associated with the Cust Lodge of Oddfellows for many years, and has passed all the chairs. Two of Mr. Cooper's sons went to South Africa as members of New Zealand Contingents. Mr. Cooper was married, in 1881, to a daughter of Mr. D. Garrett, of Cust, and has three sons and two daughters.



MR. AND MRS E. W. COOPER.

**Mr. and Mrs E. W. Cooper.**



*Tolputt and Clarke, photo.*  
MR. AND MRS E. ALLISON.

***Tolputt and Clarke, photo.***  
**Mr. and Mrs E. Allison.**

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