

surveys be allotted as under: Mr. Dalziel to survey Kaitieke Block, 46,550 acres; Mr. McKay to survey Rangiwaea Block, 11,236 acres; Mr. Lewis to survey Tauakira Block, 26,650 acres; Mr. Thompson to survey Ruahine Range Block, 9,000 acres; Messrs. Mountfort, Biggs, Morice, and Maitland to survey portions of the Awarua Block, 29,685 acres; Mr. Littlejohn (mapping), to survey Mount Cerberus, 5,300 acres; Mr. Earle to survey Awhea and Makara Blocks, 22,500 acres; and Mr. J. R. Annabell (by contract) to survey Mangapapa No. 1c, 2A, 5,781 acres.

Mapping.—Should opportunity offer it is proposed to construct survey district maps on the 40-chains-to-the-inch scale, and standard county maps on the mile-to-the-inch scale; to complete the whole of the Crown grant record-maps, to show every freehold and other title.

During the preparation of the plans for the revaluation contemplated by the Valuer-General the urgent need of the aforesaid maps has been demonstrated. The publication of maps of the whole of the Wellington District on the mile-to-the-inch scale is still very backward. There are altogether eighty-eight survey districts, and of these only fourteen—viz., Puketoi, Mount Cerberus, Tararua, Wairoa, Omahine, Kopuaranga, Mangaone, Momahaki, Nokumaru, Waipakura, Westmere, Ikitara, Makuri, and Mangahao—have been published or are in your hands for publication. I know of no more useful, popular, or creditable work that could be undertaken. It would probably employ six draughtsmen a year to make the necessary reductions and compilations to complete this much-desired task. The cost would be about £1,080.

J. W. A. MARCHANT, Chief Surveyor.

NELSON.

Permit me, at the outset, to refer to the difficulty I have experienced in making a report on matters that, owing to my recent arrival in the district, I have had no personal acquaintance with. Added to this, I have been deprived of the valuable assistance through illness of the Chief Draughtsman, in whom all the knowledge appears to have centred; consequently, I trust you will excuse what may possibly be considered a somewhat meagre report.

Triangulation.—Only 11,000 acres was executed, and this was done for the purpose of connecting a number of mining surveys in the Reefton District.

Settlement.—28,161 acres, in eighty sections, was surveyed by the staff, at an average rate of slightly under 1s. an acre. About half of it was in open country; the remainder isolated sections scattered about the district. The surveys were principally at Waiau and the northern part of the district, and for obvious reasons none were needed on the coast south of Westport, as there is no land available for settlement in that locality.

Mining.—Forty-eight claims have been surveyed by the staff, and 229 by contract surveyors, the bulk of them being at the new finds at Mount Arthur, Mokihinui, and the Victoria and Paparoa Ranges, in the Reefton District.

The office work in connection with these surveys has thrown much work on the staff, and, owing to the mining boom in the vicinity of Reefton, the District Surveyor was required to be in close attendance at the office there, preventing him following his usual field duties. The surveys of a large number of claims are now in progress, mainly by contract surveyors; but there appears to be a falling-off in the applications, which will afford an opportunity of working off the arrears in this class of work.

Roads.—Thirty-eight miles of road have been surveyed, at an average cost of £11 16s. per mile; about eight miles was in rough forest-country, the remainder in open, or partly so.

Office Work.—The time of two draughtsmen has been almost entirely taken up in compiling and drawing district maps for photo-lithography, and it is hoped that by the end of this year the settled part of the district on the mile-to-the-inch scale will be lithographed. Seventeen deposited maps under the Land Transfer Act have been examined and passed, eighty-nine other instruments passed, and 2,350 diagrams drawn on Crown grants, certificates of title, leases, &c., by the office staff. It is almost needless to say that the large undertaking of the preparation of maps and schedules for the Tax Department for valuation purposes has seriously retarded the regular work of the office, and thrown it very much into arrear.

Future Operations.—The amount of work actually in the hands of the staff surveyors is fifty miles of triangulation, 5,510 acres of rural settlement, 28 acres town, twenty-four miles of road, and four mining claims, of 215 acres. The contract surveyors have on hand the survey of sixty-two mining claims, covering 5,420 acres. In addition to the above there requires to be done about seventy square miles of triangulation, covering the country between Mount Arthur and the Aorere River, and an extension of the triangulation from Reefton to Maruia. This will be taken in hand should the opportunity arise, as the topography of these portions of the district is much needed, for prospecting is going on over parts of it with varying success, and the department may be called upon, at short notice, to provide fixed points for mining surveys.

There will be the settlement selections during the year to survey, for the applications will be for "unsurveyed lands," and also the usual amount of mining claims. A certain amount of road survey will be required for taking roads under Public Works Act, or resumption, as holdings without legal roads are numerous in this district, and applications for proper access are many.

During the first six months of the year the time of the District Surveyor at Westport was chiefly taken up in superintending the repairs to the Belgrove-Reefton-Westport Road, as almost constant attention to it was imperative, in consequence of the extensive damage done by the floods during the early part of the year. I am glad to say that he has been relieved of this duty, and able to resume his usual fieldwork, which had in the meantime fallen greatly into arrear.

THOMAS HUMPHRIES, Chief Surveyor.