

1898.
NEW ZEALAND.

DEPARTMENT OF LANDS AND SURVEY: VILLAGE-HOMESTEAD SETTLEMENTS

(REPORT ON).

Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly by Command of His Excellency.

THESE settlements now number 165.

The original selectors number 2,284, and of these 1,185 remain in occupation. Some of the original selectors have taken up land on other conditions, and cease to be village settlers.

The number who have taken up land during the past year is 101, the area taken up being 1,485 acres 3 roods 20 perches, an average to each selector of 14 acres 2 roods 33 perches, and the average rental is 2s. 4½d. per acre.

The forfeitures and surrenders number 62, with an area of 1,216 acres. The rent and interest of the forfeited sections was £158.

The number of present settlers is 1,567, and of these 1,097 are residing on their sections. The total area held is 35,454 acres, an average to each settler of 22½ acres; the average rent, including interest on advances, is 2s. 9d. per acre.

The capital value of the land is £97,646, and the yearly rent, including interest, £4,904.

The actual sum received for rent and interest during the year ending the 31st March last was £4,877 14s. 1d., equivalent to nearly 5 per cent. on the capital value of the land.

The total payments made by village settlers from the commencement of the system to the 31st March last was £31,873 5s. 5d.—namely, rent, £24,961 16s., and interest, £6,911 9s. 5d.

The total amount advanced for cottages, bushfelling, and grassing has been £25,932, and of this £2,462 has been repaid, leaving £23,470 outstanding.

The settlers in arrear number 265, and the rent and interest due by them is £2,045. The arrears are chiefly in the Auckland District, where the number in arrear is 146, and the amount owing £1,751. I fear many of the settlements in this district are not likely to prove successful, as they were formed on wrong lines, several being on poor soil in isolated localities, where there is very little outside employment, and, as only a small area is allotted to each villager, it follows that he is heavily handicapped, and finds himself unable to keep up his payments. I propose at an early date making full inquiries into the position of the settlers who are owing the above amount, with the view of seeing what is best to be done, and making recommendations accordingly.

It is satisfactory to note that wherever village settlements have been formed in suitable localities, and on fair to good soil, they are an undoubted success; the figures in this report clearly prove it.

At Cheviot the village settlers number seventy-nine, and with their wives and families 284 souls. The area they hold is 2,480 acres, an average of 31½ acres to each settler. The capital value of the land is £17,455, and the annual rent and interest £874, being an average of 7s. per acre. The amount paid for rent and interest during the year was £885, or slightly over 5 per cent. on capital. The total payments for rent and interest amount to £3,500. The arrears are £37, and the value of improvements £5,643, which is equivalent to £2 5s. 6d. per acre, or £71 8s. 6d. for each holding.

The total number of souls on village-homestead settlements throughout the colony is 4,894, and the improvements made by the settlers are valued at £115,834, or equivalent to an average improvement of £3 5s. 4d. per acre, or £73 18s. to each holding.

The position of these settlements on the 31st March last was therefore briefly as follows:—

Number of settlements	...	...	...	...	165
Number of settlers	...	...	...	...	1,567
Number of souls on the land	...	...	...	...	4,894
Area held (acres)	...	...	...	...	35,454
Capital value of land	...	...	...	...	£97,646
Amount advanced for cottages, &c.	...	...	...	...	£25,932
Amount repaid	...	...	...	...	£2,462
Present annual rent and interest	...	...	...	...	£4,904
Rent and interest paid during year	...	...	...	...	£4,877
Total payments made for rent and interest	...	...	...	...	£31,873
Arrears of rent and interest	...	...	...	...	£2,045
Value of improvements on the land	...	...	...	...	£115,834

In Wellington and Hawke's Bay Districts a few of the village settlers suffered great loss through the disastrous bush-fires which occurred in the early part of the year; and in the Middle Island the settlers suffered greatly on account of the exceptionally dry weather. Generally speaking, however, their engagements have been well met, and, with the exception of the District of Auckland, the arrears are not heavy, and are less than last year.

J. E. MARCH,
Superintendent of Village Settlements.

SUMMARY OF VILLAGE HOMESTEAD SETTLEMENTS.

Name of Settlement.	Number of Original Settlers.	Original Settlers now remaining.	Number of Present Settlers.		Total Acreage.			Taken up during the Year.			
			Resident.	Non-Resident	Originally taken up.	Now remaining.	Laid down in pasture or cultivated.	No.	Area allotted.	Average Area to each Settler.	Average Rental per Acre.
					Acres.	Acres.	Acres.		A. R. P.	A. R. P.	£ s. d.
Auckland	461	154	156	57	21,229	8,911	3,608	..	..	..	..
Hawke's Bay	77	43	52	22	454	412	279	5	74 3 18	14 3 35	0 3 0
Wellington	536	240	295	77*	8,966	6,376	4,161	26	471 2 17	18 0 22	0 2 1
Nelson	21	9	9	11	106	100	88	..	..	..	..
Marlborough	22	9	10	4	342	234	170	..	..	..	..
Canterbury	472	257	285	64	15,023	11,727	7,731	8	39 2 29	4 3 33	0 11 4
Otago	371	228	169	85	5,968	4,002	1,828	30	537 1 1	17 3 25	0 2 1
Southland	324	245	121	124	4,716	3,692	1,454	32	362 1 35	11 1 12	0 2 0
Totals	2,284	1,185	1,097	444*	56,804	35,454	19,319	101	1,485 3 20	14 2 33	0 2 4†

Name of Settlement.	Exchanges to Lease in Perpetuity from Village-homestead Special-settlement Tenure.			Forfeitures and Surrenders during the Year.			Total Area held on 31st March, 1898.				
	No.	Area.	Present Annual Rent.	No.	Area.	Rental, including Interest.	No.	Area.	Yearly Rental, including Interest on Advances.	Capital Value of Land.	
		A. R. P.	£ s. d.		A. R. P.	£ s. d.		A. R. P.	£ s. d.	£	
Auckland	7	348 3 38	20 7 2	5	213 3 24	9 18 9	213	8,910 2 24	659 11 5	7,402	
Hawke's Bay .. ..	..	..	..	2	6 2 34	3 3 10	74	411 1 38	136 7 6	2,492
Wellington	9	125 3 34	14 10 10	23	270 1 25	39 7 11	398	6,375 2 28	883 7 5	20,672	
Nelson .. ..	..	..	..	1	5 3 25	1 8 0	20	100 3 37	17 18 0	1,279
Marlborough .. ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	14	234 0 24	22 13 6	266
Canterbury	4	155 0 0	11 18 0	7	232 0 0	34 19 8	349	11,726 3 18	2,086 13 4	42,151	
Otago	1	21 3 28	0 17 8	17	318 2 27	51 18 4	254	4,001 1 19	658 11 8	14,238	
Southland .. ..	..	..	..	7	169 2 19	17 10 4	245	3,693 0 35	439 6 2	9,146
Totals	21	651 3 20	47 13 8	62	1,216 0 34	158 6 10	1,567†	35,454 1 23	4,904 9 0	97,646	

Name of Settlement.	Amount advanced to Settlers during the Year.			Total Amount advanced to Settlers, Past and Current Transactions.			Payments made by Settlers during the Year.		
	For Houses.	For Bushfelling, Grassing, &c.	Total Advances.	For Houses.	For Bushfelling, Grassing, &c.	Total Advances.	Rent.	Interest.	Total.
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Auckland .. ..	..	..	..	5,644 8 1	7,385 12 6	13,030 0 7	186 13 7	129 8 2	316 1 9
Hawke's Bay .. ..	..	..	..	580 0 0	296 15 9	876 15 9	86 5 4	26 18 4	113 3 8
Wellington	54 0 0	..	54 0 0	2,944 0 0	3,670 19 11	6,614 19 11	1,029 11 5	311 2 4	1,340 13 9
Nelson .. ..	..	..	..	70 0 0	..	70 0 0	30 13 9	0 10 0	31 3 9
Marlborough .. ..	..	..	..	85 0 0	18 15 0	103 15 0	20 5 9	4 19 0	25 4 9
Canterbury .. ..	..	..	..	2,590 0 0	..	2,590 0 0	1,898 11 11	109 0 0	2,007 11 11
Otago .. ..	..	..	..	1,100 5 0	441 0 0	1,541 5 0	581 6 9	68 1 2	649 7 11
Southland .. ..	..	..	..	756 0 0	350 2 2	1,106 2 2	341 17 4	52 9 3	394 6 7
Totals	54 0 0	..	54 0 0	13,769 13 1	12,163 5 4	25,932 18 5	4,175 5 10	702 8 3	4,877 14 1

Name of Settlement.	Total Payments made by Settlers from Commencement of System.			Settlers in Arrear on 31st March, 1898.					Advances Repaid.	Value of Improvements now on the Land.	Number of Souls on the Land.
	Rent.	Interest.	Total.	No.	Area.	Rent.	Interest.	Total.			
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.		A. R. P.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£	£	
Auckland	3,023 2 11	1,884 17 9	4,908 0 8	146	6,066 2 35	670 3 8	1,081 4 0	1,751 7 8	245	16,976	881
Hawke's Bay	577 5 11	400 4 10	977 10 9	4	9 2 24	2 8 11	3 7 4	5 16 3	329	7,158	161
Wellington	5,279 10 0	2,420 12 9	7,700 2 9	48	737 0 26	61 16 10	44 14 1	106 10 11	1,431	36,850	1,421
Nelson	83 1 3	3 10 0	86 11 3	4	22 3 4	..	7 5 0	7 5 0	10	1,279	74
Marlborough	199 3 3	46 9 4	245 12 7	..	..	..	..	..	15	1,224	53
Canterbury	11,359 19 3	1,112 10 0	12,472 9 3	14	403 3 33	58 1 1	2 0 0	60 1 1	370	26,115	1,222
Otago	2,519 0 10	572 18 9	3,091 19 7	19	354 0 25	66 10 7	7 11 0	74 1 7	25	11,302	624
Southland	1,920 12 7	470 6 0	2,390 18 7	30	478 3 10	35 2 6	5 2 0	40 4 6	37	14,930	508
Totals	24,961 16 0	6,911 9 5	31,873 5 5	265	8,073 0 37	894 3 7	1,151 3 5	2,045 7 0	2,462	115,834	4,894

* Twenty-six sections not yet reported on. † Includes village-settlement land under lease in perpetuity, lands for settlement, and endowment lands.

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