

(2) *Boroughs.*

The question of effecting the union of the New Brighton Borough with the City of Christchurch has been before the Department for many years. The outstanding difficulties were successfully settled during the year, and a poll taken in New Brighton on the proposal resulted in favour of the union. The Proclamation effecting the union and making other necessary arrangements was duly executed so as to come into effect on 1st April, 1941.

The annual Municipal Conference was held in Auckland. The Conference was opened by the Minister of Internal Affairs (Hon. W. E. Parry), and this Department was represented throughout the proceedings. An event of singular importance was a confidential address delivered to the delegates by the Prime Minister (Right Hon. P. Fraser) on New Zealand's part in the war effort.

The last annual report contained reference to the case of an adjustment of assets and liabilities arising out of an alteration of boundaries between the Ashburton County and Ashburton Borough. Following on the recommendations of the Commission to inquire into the matter, an award was made by His Excellency the Governor-General, pursuant to the Municipal Corporations Act, 1933, making certain adjustments on outstanding matters between the two local authorities.

The boundaries of the City of Christchurch were altered on three occasions, once by the inclusion of certain lands in respect of which there were no electors, and on two occasions by the inclusion of land previously under control of the Heathcote and Waimairi County Councils. The boundaries of three boroughs and two town districts were altered by the inclusion of lands previously under County Council control, and the boundaries of the Boroughs of Featherston and Foxton were altered by the exclusion of certain land. The boundaries of five boroughs were redefined in accordance with law. The New Plymouth and Te Aroha Borough Councils were authorized to use portion of a closed street for the purposes connected with their electrical undertakings. The Christchurch City Council was authorized to purchase certain land on the instalment system.

Certain matters affecting Lower Hutt were prominently before the Department. Upon attaining the necessary population qualification the borough was declared to be a city. At the same time the question of changing the name of the new city was raised, and the Department was consulted frequently in regard to procedure and suggested new names. Eventually the Council decided not to proceed with the proposal in the meantime. A Commission of inquiry was also set up to consider a petition of the Council for the inclusion of further lands in the borough. The Commission heard considerable evidence from all parties concerned, and recommended the inclusion of certain areas in the borough totalling approximately 1,800 acres. These areas were accordingly added to the borough by Order in Council.

(3) *Land Drainage and River Districts.*

The Orakiri Drainage District was abolished. The boundaries of the Christchurch Drainage District were altered on three occasions by the inclusion of certain areas of land, and the boundaries of the Mangapu Drainage District were similarly altered on one occasion. The results of the elections of the trustees of five drainage districts were gazetted. The Kaipara and Makarewa-Hedgehope River Districts were abolished.

(4) *Local Elections and Polls.*

The Christchurch Tramway Board election, which was due to be held on the 23rd November, 1940, was postponed to coincide with the municipal elections. Application was made for the postponement of several elections to fill extraordinary vacancies, but these were not agreed to.

(5) *Rating Act.*

The Ellesmere and Rangitikei County Councils were authorized to levy rates on a uniform scale.

(6) *Urban Farm Land Rating.*

The resignation of a member of two Assessment Courts and appointment of a member of four Assessment Courts were gazetted in accordance with law.

(7) *By-laws of Local Bodies.*

The by-laws of one local authority were confirmed under the By-laws Act, 1910.

(8) *Designation of Districts.*

The name of the Township of "Pembroke" was changed to "Wanaka." The name of "Linden" was assigned to the northern portion of Tawa Flat.

B. LEGISLATION.

(1) *Statutes Amendment Act, 1940.*

Section 3 has reference to by-laws of local authorities. Under this section a local authority that is empowered to make by-laws relating to the issue of licenses may provide therein for the licenses to expire on a specified day and for a proportionate part of the appropriate fee to be charged where the period is less than twelve months. The purpose of the section is to make provision for the licenses to be made to expire on the 31st day of March in any year and thus suit the administrative convenience of the local authority. Under recent Court decisions this would not have been possible without section 3.