

In all, four new properties were added during the season, as follows :—

C. H. Smith's property at Ardgowan (672 acres). Possession, December, 1945. Known as Brock Hill.

Gow Bros.' property near Mosgiel (approximately 1,250 acres). Possession, February, 1946. Known as Invermay.

Wm. Welsh's property near Balclutha (732 acres). Possession, July, 1945. Known as Rippleburn.

Morrison's Estate, Inch-Clutha (120 acres). Possession, May, 1945. Known as Mayfield.

All these blocks have been farmed by the Department since their acquisition and are in course of development for the settlement of ex-servicemen.

During the season preparations were made to settle Papanui, Brookstead, and Mayfield. These settlements were allotted to soldiers, and in all cases the men are now working on the properties. It is hoped to dispose of Brookstead in April, Papanui in May, and Mayfield prior to the commencement of the dairy season.

The housing question is still a difficult one and little progress is being made with the erection of new buildings. A major job in housing was completed when four cottages not required on Papanui Settlement at Cape Saunders were removed and reconstructed with enlargements on blocks in South Otago.

Taking everything into consideration, the season's operations on the whole have been very good and satisfactory returns have been received. Surplus fat stock from the various blocks have been sent to Burnside for disposal regularly throughout the year.

*Arclif* (4,807 Acres), (Locality : Clinton).—Although a good winter was experienced, this was followed by a cold spring and the growth of grass was consequently not as good as usual. The stock, however, have done well. It has been difficult to obtain suitable farm labour and it was necessary to employ contractors to do a large proportion of the cultivation work. It is anticipated that wheat will yield at least 50 bushels to the acre. Generally speaking, the other crops did well and the stock will be well provided for during the winter months. One of the houses at Clifton has recently been repaired, and the one at Taumata is in the course of renovation. A cottage removed from Papanui has been re-erected at Arthurlton, where a married ex-serviceman has been employed to assist the Manager.

*Avamangu* (2,945 Acres), (Locality : Balclutha).—The parent block of 1,541 acres was added to during the year by the purchase of an adjoining property of 1,404 acres. Unfortunately, the original property did not come up to expectations that it would be possible to settle it immediately. It was found that a considerable area would require to be regressed, but it is hoped to have the whole block ready for settlement in the fall of 1947. Houses have been provided on each subdivision. The tractor on the block was under repairs for several months and it was necessary to have a large area worked by contract. Three houses have been moved from Papanui Block at Cape Saunders and re-erected on this property and each of the five subdivisions is provided with a house. In anticipation of another tractor being available in the near future, a large programme of cultivation is now being mapped out.

*Island Cliff* (2,504 Acres), (Locality : Ngapara).—A favourable season has been experienced and stock have done well. Over 100 per cent. lambing was obtained, which is considered good when the condition of the property and the rabbits are taken into consideration. The wheat averaged 50 bushels per acre and the other crops are good. The rabbit pest, although closely pursued all the year, has not decreased to any extent. The shelter provided by the limestone rocks and cliffs makes operations difficult. The enclosure of part of the cliff areas by temporary rabbit-proof fences has had the effect of confining the rabbits and increasing the grazing area for stock. However, in spite of poisoning, trapping, and rabbit drives, this pest still remains a serious problem, but where they have been confined to a limited area by means of the netting it is hoped that continuous efforts will have their effect. Investigations into the water-supply are being made with a view to subdividing the block into five sections.