

he left the service last December; Mr. J. R. H. Thorp, draughting cadet, joined us on the 3rd June, 1914, but two months later was lent to the Defence Department, and has only recently returned to his duties here. The above being the position regarding the staff, I must further remark that there has been a diminution of the work in this branch, especially during the earlier months of the war, and so far as I can foresee the present staff can cope with what there is likely to be during the next twelve months.

I have to report my satisfaction with the efficient manner in which the Chief Draughtsman and other officers have performed their duties.

T. N. BRODRICK,
Chief Surveyor.

NELSON.

Triangulation.—Under this heading 90,000 acres were completed during the year, including 50,000 acres of revision survey in Oparara district; the major part of the balance—namely, 36,000 acres—was in the Rotoroa district. The average cost is 1'9d. per acre, including that of the revision.

Topographical Survey for Selection.—34,000 acres, at an average cost of 4'3d., was completed, the main portion, 29,000 acres, being in the Waitakere district.

Rural.—113,445 acres, mostly heavy-bush country, were completed during the year under this heading, the low average cost, 1'6s., considering the weather experienced, being accounted for by several very large areas being included. Eleven staff surveyors, with two unlicensed assistants, were employed in the early part of the year (April to August), but only six surveyors from September to March. One contract surveyor was employed intermittently during the year.

Town Surveys.—Only two areas were dealt with under this heading.

Native Land Court Surveys.—159 acres were subdivided under this heading into eight lots, at a cost of 7'01s. per acre, by a contract surveyor.

Road Surveys.—Twenty-eight miles were surveyed, at an average cost of about £26 per mile, which is reasonable considering the rough nature of the ground and the very wet season experienced in the locality of these surveys.

Office-work.—Computing Branch: 176 plans were examined and approved, in connection with which there were 849 traverse sheets. These plans comprise 117 sectional plans, dealing with an area of 165,056 acres; 39 road plans; 10 mining plans; and balance miscellaneous.

Land Transfer Branch: In this branch 77 plans and 105 traverse sheets were checked and approved, covering an area of 5,432 acres; 364 diagrams were placed on certificates of title, and 149 deeds and other instruments were approved. The Valuation Department was supplied with 27 tracings of deposited plans and 176 tracings from certificates of title. Fees collected for the sale of lithographs, protractor sheets, &c., amounted to £25 6s.

Proposed Operations for 1915-16.—Next year the present staff will be fully employed in settlement survey on the Okari Block, Waitakere Survey District; Rotoroa Block, Rotoroa Survey District; Tutaki Survey District; Oparara, Oparara Survey District; Block at Little Wanganui; Kongahu Survey District; and in surveying numerous applications for unsurveyed land in various parts of the land district.

Office-work.—The office staff, which remains at a minimum strength, has been further depleted at times owing to the illness of several officers, two of them for a lengthy period.

Changes of Staff.—During the year Mr. F. E. Greenfield, Chief Draughtsman, was transferred to Christchurch in a similar capacity, and was succeeded by Mr. A. D. Burns. Mr. W. A. Curtis, Land Transfer Draughtsman, retired on superannuation after forty years' service in the district, and was succeeded by Mr. J. R. Strachan, District Surveyor, from the Wellington District. During the interval of six months between the time of Mr. Curtis leaving and Mr. Strachan's appointment the position of Land Transfer Draughtsman was held by Mr. P. A. Dalziel, of this office. Mr. J. D. Thomson, District Surveyor, was appointed Chief Draughtsman in Blenheim. Mr. Seddon, Assistant Surveyor, and Mr. Whiting, draughting cadet, joined the Expeditionary Force. Messrs. Armit and Waters, Assistant Surveyors, and Messrs. Hemphill and Sutton, unlicensed assistants, were transferred to Otago.

I desire to place on record my appreciation of the long and faithful service rendered by Mr. W. S. Curtis, who during the year retired from the position of Land Transfer Draughtsman to take up that of censor. During a period of forty years Mr. Curtis showed a diligent, accurate, and exemplary discharge of his duties.

I desire also to thank the officers, both of the office and field staffs, for their services, and in a special degree the late Chief Draughtsman, Mr. Greenfield, and the present Chief Draughtsman, Mr. Burns.

F. A. THOMPSON,
Chief Surveyor.

MARLBOROUGH.

Triangulation.—A small amount only of subsidiary triangulation necessary in connection with rural surveys was done.

Topographical Survey for Selection.—An area of 51,000 acres, known as "Stronvar Run," adjoining Hillersden Settlement, has been returned under this heading. The land is described generally as high, rough, barren country.