

MARLBOROUGH LAND DISTRICT (J. STEVENSON, Chief Surveyor).

Rural Surveys.—One survey of 862 acres returned under this heading.

Roads and Railway.—Two small road surveys, aggregating $\frac{3}{4}$ mile, returned under this heading.

Native Land Court Surveys.—4 surveys, comprising 9 subdivisions of 405 acres, returned under this heading. Two were executed by the staff, and two by private surveyors.

Other Work.—Several small surveys in various parts of the district returned under this heading. Expenses incurred by Staff Surveyor Clapperton in proceeding to Wellington on official business are also included.

Contract Surveys.—The only surveys under this heading are the two small Native-land surveys enumerated above.

Standard Surveys.—During the year Mr. Staff Surveyor Clapperton completed 27 miles of the Blenheim Borough standard survey, the total cost of the field-work, including the levels of each block, working out at £56 per mile. The field-work of this survey is now completed.

Inspection Surveys.—During the year inspections of three surveys at the southern end of the district were made. The work, especially in regard to the ground-marking, was not found to be satisfactory. The surveyors concerned have been requested to bring their work up to standard requirements.

Proposed Operations for 1926-27.—Proceed with the rural standard work of the district when Staff Surveyor Clapperton returns to the district. Subdivisions for seaside residences in the Marlborough Sounds also contemplated. About 20 miles of road surveys for the Public Works Department are to be executed as circumstances permit; also Crown and Native-land surveys as required.

Office-work.—The total number of plans received by the Survey Branch was 51, of which 19 were Crown-land plans, 8 Native Land Court, and 24 road and other departmental plans. 62 diagrams were placed on leases and other documents, and 18 on Native Land Court orders. 39 original plans were prepared by the office staff, and 322 tracings made. One officer's time was engaged on the preparation of the Blenheim Borough standard plans, which have not been returned under any of the above headings. These consist of 20 sheets, and the completion of these is well in sight.

Land Transfer Branch.—59 plans were received for checking, 1,045 plans placed on certificates of title, and 475 deeds and other instruments examined and passed.

Staff and General.—Towards the end of the present year Draughting Cadet McLeod resigned to take up work outside the Department, and his place has not yet been filled. The past year has been an exceedingly busy one for myself and staff, due principally to the absence of the Chief Surveyor (Mr. Stevenson) since August on Deteriorated Land Commission work, and to the increase in the Land Transfer work, the operation of the Borough standard survey, and the increase in work performed for other Departments and local bodies.

In conclusion, I have to thank my staff for their cordial co-operation and strict attention to business during the period under review.

NELSON LAND DISTRICT (A. F. WATERS, Chief Surveyor).

Field Operations.—Surveys completed in this district for the year ending 31st March last have been confined almost wholly to rural work. They have been of comparatively small areas, and have been scattered about the district, so that the cost of the work has been somewhat increased through heavy travelling-expenses charges. Taking this fact into consideration, the rate per acre works out at quite a reasonable figure, and considerably less than the schedule rates laid down. A few small road-deviation surveys for the Public Works Department have been made and five town lots pegged off in various parts of the district. In the case of two surveys of quarter-acre sections as post-office site and Courthouse site, advantage was taken of the presence of a licensed surveyor in the district to get the work done by contract, and this proved quite satisfactory and economical for the Department. A hush block of 12,000 acres to the south of Westport is in hand, but owing to the rough nature of the country the work of the subdivisional survey is slow and it is unlikely that the field-work will be completed before the end of next year. The close shown on new field-work averages a link to the mile, which is very satisfactory considering that there are rises of over 3,000 ft. in many of the sections traversed, and shows that the surveyors are careful in the performance of their work.

Draughting and General Office-work.—The report from this branch indicates that there were rather fewer plans examined and approved than the previous year, the figures being 184 and 214 respectively. Similarly, fewer diagrams were endorsed on instruments of title, the number being 538 for this year as against 589 for last year. Good progress has been made with the district litho work, and seven standard publications were completed during the year. This brings the lithographic maps of the district well up to date, and, judging from the maintained sale to the public, the productions are duly appreciated by the community. I have not had the staff available to do much on the road record maps during the past year, as it was considered more advisable to concentrate on the district maps, most of which required redrawing. It is hoped to be able to pay more attention to the road records in the current year.

Staff.—Mr. J. L. D'Arcy Irvine, Land Transfer draughtsman, retired on superannuation as from the 31st December, 1926, and the numerical strength of the office was maintained by the appointment of a new Cadet.

In conclusion, I have also to express my appreciation of the manner in which the officers of the staff have completed their varied duties and of their general interest in the work undertaken.