

1927.
NEW ZEALAND.

LAND FOR SETTLEMENTS ACT, 1925

(REPORT ON THE).

Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly pursuant to Section 109 of the Land for Settlements Act, 1925.

The LAND PURCHASE CONTROLLER to the Hon. the MINISTER OF LANDS.

SIR,—

Department of Lands and Survey, Wellington, 21st July, 1927.

I have the honour to submit a report on land-purchase operations for the year ended 31st March, 1927.

Some fifty-one properties were considered during the year; but the only purchases of any moment that were effected were those of the Tangowahine Estate in the Dargaville district, and the Te Wera Estate in the Motu district. These two estates accounted for some 12,780 acres out of a total area of 13,152 acres purchased. The Crown has so far taken title to some 2,858 acres of the Tangowahine Estate, possession of the remaining 1,500 acres having not yet been taken. This latter area, therefore, is not included in the returns of land purchased for the year.

The Te Wera Estate was subdivided into eleven holdings, ranging in area from 510 to 1,300 acres; but no applications were received when the sections were offered for ballot in February last. Steps have now been taken to stock the property, and it will be farmed by the Crown until such time as it is deemed advisable to again offer it for selection.

The Tangowahine Settlement will be offered as soon as possible, it being expected that the Crown will obtain possession of the whole area at an early date. Works are now in progress, and it is anticipated that the railway-line from Auckland to Dargaville will traverse the settlement.

Clifton Settlement at date of writing has all been disposed of, and a satisfactory clearing sale held of the Crown stock, &c. Seven sections in this settlement were offered for ballot in January, but the demand was disappointing. The subdivisions were then recast, and additional areas added to some of the settlers' holdings, while three farms were offered for sale by public auction. These farms met with a ready demand, and were all purchased on deferred payments at prices in excess of the upsets. The settlement is now generally in good heart, and the prospects of settlers are very favourable.

Although it cannot yet be said that land-values generally are on a thoroughly satisfactory basis, indications are not wanting that a more reasonable view is being taken by private owners of the value of their estates. The action taken by the Crown in the revaluation of properties held by discharged soldiers has undoubtedly had a good effect, but a wider realization is yet needed on the part of many owners and mortgagees of the necessity of writing down land and mortgage values in conformity with the productive capacity of the land. The prices asked for properties offered to the Crown during the year were in many cases too high to permit of favourable consideration, while some properties quite unsuitable for subdivision were placed under offer. Successful subdivision presents many difficulties under prevailing conditions, and can only be accomplished when suitable land can be acquired at prices that will permit of a fair return on the capital outlay plus the additional charges that are inseparable from the cutting-up of estates. There are, however, a fair number of estates in the Dominion that possess attractive qualities from a cutting-up point of view, and the Land Purchase Board is always willing to give the most careful consideration to the purchase of suitable properties.

As was to be expected, the late feeling of uncertainty regarding stability of products and values has made the Board conservative in its purchases.

The Land for Settlements Department has now been merged with the Lands and Survey Department, the Under-Secretary for Lands becoming Land Purchase Controller and Chairman of the Dominion Land Purchase Board.

Mr. R. A. Rodger has been appointed as Land Purchase Inspector, and his varied experience and sound knowledge of farming economics should prove of great value in future operations.

It is with regret that the retirement of Mr. J. D. Ritchie as Land Purchase Controller has to be chronicled, after many arduous years of official life. Mr. Ritchie joined the Government service in April, 1891, as Chief Inspector of Stock, and a year later was appointed as the first Secretary of the Department of Agriculture. In 1909 Mr. Ritchie was appointed Permanent Head of the Land for Settlements Department, which he controlled with conspicuous ability. Mr. Ritchie's labours on behalf of his country have the appreciation of all those who came in contact with him, and did much to advance the settlement of the Dominion.

Proposals regarding legislation now under consideration will, if brought down, be of very considerable assistance in promoting land-settlement and improving the position of the settlers who come under the provisions of the Land for Settlements Act.

Tables are appended summarizing the properties considered and acquired during the year, and showing the moneys received into and paid out of the Land for Settlements Account.

I have, &c.,

J. B. THOMPSON,

The Hon. the Minister of Lands.

Land Purchase Controller.

TABLE A.—NUMBER OF PROPERTIES CONSIDERED DURING THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH, 1927.

Land District.	Number.	Area of Estates offered.	Land District.	Number.	Area of Estates offered.
		Acres.			Acres.
Auckland*	20	22,043	Westland .. ..	..	..
Hawke's Bay† .. .	9	15,873	Canterbury .. .	5	17,170
Taranaki	2	2,752	Otago	1	635
Wellington	8	18,040	Southland	3	2,419
Marlborough	2	1,653			
Nelson	1	80	Totals	51	80,665

* Includes North Auckland.

† Includes Gisborne.

TABLE B.—SUMMARY OF ESTATES ACQUIRED UP TO THE 31ST MARCH, 1927.

Land District.	Number.	Area.	Purchase-money.
		Acres.	£
Auckland*	99	390,733	1,529,768
Hawke's Bay† .. .	63	311,426	2,356,804
Taranaki	25	27,628	369,818
Wellington	146	158,626	2,249,043
Marlborough	22	224,090	755,482
Nelson	14	48,821	150,473
Westland	2	5,125	8,343
Canterbury	173	447,596	3,444,747
Otago	73	293,188	1,779,317
Southland	25	90,637	457,786
Totals	642	1,997,870	13,101,581

* Includes North Auckland.

† Includes Gisborne.

TABLE C.—STATEMENT OF THE MONEYS RECEIVED INTO AND PAID OUT OF THE LAND FOR SETTLEMENTS
ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH, 1927.

<i>Land for Settlements Account.</i>							
<i>Receipts.</i>		£	s. d.	<i>Payments.</i>		£	s. d.
Balance at beginning of year		133,167	16 7	Purchase-money		88,030	11 9
Receipts under Land Act, 1924, sec. 208 ..		212	9 0	Incidental expenses		76,692	11 5
Rents, &c.		357,322	2 2	Land-for-settlement expenses, including "Un-			
Sales of—				authorized" (£45)		3,172	17 4
Crown lands	£ s. d.	46,503	8 1	Debentures redeemed		19,500	0 0
Settlement lands		53,506	4 7	Expenditure under sec. 20 (4), Discharged			
				Soldiers Act, 1923 (payment to Discharged			
				Soldiers Settlement Account in respect of			
				amount added to the capital value of land) ..		370	0 0
Interest on sales of—				Interest under sec. 208, Land Act, 1924 ..		203	18 4
Crown lands		657	6 8	Expenditure under sec. 20 (3), Land Act, 1924			
Settlement lands		24,032	17 1	(payment in respect of land obtained for Go-			
				vernment works, now deemed to be settlement			
				land)		40	0 0
Recoveries on account of settlements		2,042	19 0	Land for Settlements Act, 1925, sec. 45 (1) (b)			
Recoveries on account of expenses incidental to				and (3)—Recoupment to Ordinary Revenue			
estates		11,250	0 1	Account of amount charged thereto for reduc-			
Interest on securities held by Investment Account		5,096	0 10	tion of funded debt		465	16 8
Debentures issued—New Loans Act, 1908, Land				Charges and expenses of raising loans		258	2 6
for Settlements Act, 1925, sec. 44		100,000	0 0	Land Act, 1924, sec. 139—"Thirds" and			
Amounts received under Land for Settlements				"fourths" paid to Local Bodies' Deposit Ac-			
Act, 1925, in respect of settlement land con-				counts		97	18 1
verted into ordinary Crown land or national-				Expenditure, sec. 83 (3), Land Act, 1924 (payment			
endowment land		1,353	12 0	in respect of improvements)		38	0 0
				Recoupment of management charges of consoli-			
				dated stock		322	19 10
				Recoupment of stamp duty on transfers of con-			
				solidated stock		6	8 3
				Amount appropriated from sale and in payment			
				for settlement land converted into ordinary			
				Crown land		250	0 0
				Amount paid in respect of Crown lands proclaimed			
				land-for-settlement lands		307	15 0
				Expenses in connection with the acquirement of			
				land under Reserves and other Lands Disposal			
				and Public Bodies Empowering Act, 1925,			
				sec. 18 (1) (b)		2,304	10 1
				Interest recouped to Consolidated Fund		357,630	11 6
				Interest on sales of Crown land under Land Laws			
				Amendment Act, 1926		22,000	0 0
				Balance at end of year—			
				Cash in Public Account	£ s. d.	21,515	2 4
				Imprests outstanding in the			
				Dominion		837	13 0
				Investment Account		141,100	0 0
						163,452	15 4
						£735,144	16 1

Land for Settlements Account (Discharged Soldiers Settlement Account).

<i>Receipts.</i>		£	s. d.	<i>Payments.</i>		£	s. d.
Balance at beginning of year		71,273	2 6	<i>Expenditure under Land for Settlements Act, 1925, Sec. 45.</i>			
Receipts from settlements—				Acquirement of estates		600	0 0
Rents	£ s. d.	70,899	5 0	Expenses incidental to estates		7,532	18 9
Sales		3,567	10 3	Expenditure under sec. 20 (4), Discharged Soldiers'			
Interest on sales		430	9 11	Settlement Amendment Act, 1923, in respect of			
				advances from Discharged Soldiers Settlement			
Receipts incidental to settlements		895	17 8	Account		54	0 0
Interest on securities held by Investment Account		1,797	12 11	Temporary transfers to other accounts		20,000	0 0
Interest received on temporary transfers to other				Annual appropriation: Vote—Land for Settlement			
accounts under Public Revenues Act, 1926 ..		87	13 4	of Discharged Soldiers Expenses		2,658	1 1
Amounts received for settlement land converted to				Balance at end of year—			
ordinary Crown lands or national-endowment				Cash in Public Account	£ s. d.	23,273	11 6
land		54	0 0	Investment account		95,000	0 0
Acquirement of estates (credits in reduction) ..		112	19 9			118,273	11 6
						£149,118	11 4

Land for Settlements Account (Opening up Crown Lands Account).

<i>Receipts.</i>		£	s. d.	<i>Payments.</i>		£	s. d.
Balance at beginning of year		6,602	11 0	Annual appropriation (sec. 4)		13,968	19 7
Recoveries		3	5 4	Balance—Cash in the Public Account		9,060	3 11
Receipts under sec. 47, Land for Settlements Act,							
1925		15,168	11 7				
Credits in aid of opening up land for settlement ..		1,254	15 7				
						£23,029	3 6

I hereby certify that the Statement of Receipts and Payments have been duly examined and compared with the relative books and documents submitted for audit, and correctly state the position as disclosed thereby.—
J. H. FOWLER, Deputy Controller and Auditor-General.

TABLE D.—RETURN OF LAND PURCHASED AND PAID FOR FROM 1ST APRIL, 1926, TO 31ST MARCH, 1927.

Name of Owner.	Locality.	Price per Acre.	Mode of Acquisition.	Settlement.	Area.	Amount paid.
		£ s. d.			Acres.	£
General Trust Board, Church of England Diocese of Auckland	Orakei ..	..	By agreement	Orakei	4	1,000
Coleman, B.	Dargaville ..	7 10 0	By agreement	Tangowahine ..	2,858	21,439
Ruangarehu Co., Ltd. ..	Mata Survey District	15 0 0	By agreement	..	6	91
Field, J. C., and Chapple, W. A.	Te Wera ..	..	By agreement	Te Wera ..	9,922	64,630
McBeth, J. D. W., Sloane, D., Harris, W., and Bodmin, J.	Lower Hutt	..	By agreement	Hutt Valley ..	1	430
R. Hole's Trust	Castlepoint	..	By agreement	Mataikona (add) ..	115	600
McIntosh, J.	Burke's Pass	..	By agreement	Burke's Pass Home- stead	247	495
				Totals ..	13,152	£88,685

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