

were combined in one scheme. The Poroporo Block was known to be one of the most fertile in the district, capable of carrying a great number of sheep and cattle, if well broken in. Mr. Harvey, of the Gisborne office, undertook the supervision of the development of the sheep-country, with the assistance of Mr. Goldsmith. In the second year of development a European foreman, Mr. Morice, was placed in charge.

The Poroporo bush was felled, grassed, ring-fenced, and subdivided and fully stocked in two seasons, in the second of which unemployment subsidies were made available for all development-work. A large number of men found welcome employment on this scheme during the winters of 1930 and 1931, as well as during the sowing season.

The expenditure, which came to charge up to the 31st March, 1931, was £2,308, of which bushfelling accounted for £1,565 and seed and fencing material for the rest. By the 31st March, 1932, the expenditure had reached £11,381, reduced to £10,291 by unemployment subsidy £200, and proceeds of wool and mutton £603.

The expenditure included the cost of sheep and cattle purchased, £2,691, and the discharge of the liabilities of one of the owners who had commenced dairying, £225, leaving the cost of bush-felling, grassing, building, and draining at £7,375. For this cost nearly 2,100 acres of bush and fern had been cleared, grassed, ring-fenced, and subdivided into many paddocks, a station homestead had been provided with cottage and outhouse and sheep-yards.

The area comprised in this scheme should be capable of providing twelve dairy farms carrying 250 cows and two sheep farms carrying 4,000 sheep and 300 head of cattle.

#### (d) TUPAROA.

The scheme takes its name from a village on the coast, east of Ruatoria, a place of great importance before the cult of the petrol-driven vehicle compelled the construction of metalled highways, and the erection of freezing-works at Tokomaru Bay forced communications inland. The name had been adopted for the consolidation scheme, which comprised lands formerly leased to Mr. T. S. Williams and known as Tuparoa Station.

It is a "blanket" scheme covering twenty-four separate blocks, although all but seven of these are grouped between the Tuparoa Village and the northern boundary of the Akuaku Block, and between Whareponga Village on the sea side and the main highway. The group is separated by other lands from the highway, but road access is being provided. This group within the Tuparoa scheme may be called the Whareponga group, and comprises 6,764 acres. The lands were valued at over £50,000 for consolidation purposes, but the valuation was made in 1919 and is subject to very material reduction.

The scheme was launched towards the end of the 1930-31 financial year, but no expenditure was incurred until the following winter. It was decided to clear the scrub on the whole of the blocks in the Whareponga group in one operation, with the exception of seaside slopes at Kaimoho. The work was planned as unemployment relief work by contract, carrying a subsidy from unemployment funds up to one-third of the labour cost. As part of an old sheep station all these lands carried fair sheep pasture, and being of papa formation were eminently suitable for sheep and cattle. The fencing problem was, however, a very costly one, for the boundaries followed high ridges to which material had to be packed from dumps established at places accessible by lorries. Packing and laying material cost on some lines £15 a mile, and on other lines £20 a mile. Half of the battens were split on the block, but half had to be brought from the Poroporo Bush, many miles away. Totara posts were transported by rail from Putaruru to Tauranga and shipped thence to Tokomaru Bay, whence they were taken by lorry and pack-horses to the fence-lines. Over sixty men were employed in splitting battens, packing, and fencing.

Fencing on the East Coast has become a very expensive item in the farm budget, owing to the depletion of supplies of suitable timber, necessitating the purchase of posts outside the district. In the case of the Whareponga group of blocks the cost of ring-fencing the whole area, then of subdividing so as to ring-fence every subdivision, was faced in one season because of the compensating advantage in the fact that the fences would enclose existing pastures covered with scattered scrub, which would be cleared at a cheap rate owing to the unemployment subsidy. Further reasons were the need for finding employment for the Maoris of the district and the advantage of speedy development in view of the low prices for sheep and cattle.

The area of scrub cleared was 6,676 acres at contract prices totalling £1,629, on which unemployment subsidies amounting to £501 were collected. The number of men employed on these contracts was 139. Extensive purchases of sheep were made, but the blocks were not fully stocked until the early part of the succeeding financial year. Much of the development work was still in progress when the end of the 1931-32 financial year was reached.

The details of expenditure set forth in the schedules are easier to follow after the foregoing explanation. Scrub-cutting is shown as costing £1,613, but this does not allow for the subsidy. The cost of fencing-material and labour is shown as £5,166, of which posts alone would account for nearly one-third. On the other hand, grass-seed is shown as costing £138, and it is understood that where it was estimated that three hundred acres of the scrub-land cleared would have to be sown, the actual area sown was less. The sum of £2,643 was paid for the discharge of liabilities on two blocks (Totaranui A 1 and Waipiro A 23B) taken over by the scheme.

It was estimated that when fully stocked the Whareponga group of blocks would carry 8,500 sheep and 750 head of cattle.

The ultimate subdivision of these blocks will depend on road access. There is ample water and sufficient easy and ploughable land to justify the expectation that between sheep farms and dairy farms twenty families will be provided for.