

*Motuweka Station.*

This station comprises five blocks of Native land, mortgaged to the Native Trustee and farmed conjointly—three under section 25 of the Native Trustee Act, 1930, and two under lease. The total area represented by these properties is 4,789 acres, and the lands are situated near Porangahau. A further block, known as Whawhakanga F 4, which had been held as a grazing-run, was vacated at the end of the year in pursuance of the terms of the agreement.

The extensive amount of ploughing which is required on this class of country necessitated the purchase of a caterpillar tractor and other implements, and the work of preparing the land for permanent pasture has been greatly facilitated by the use of this machinery. It is proposed to plough up to 200 acres each year for sowing down in good grasses.

The stock on Motuweka has done well, and the result of the year's working should bring appreciably nearer the full restoration of these securities, which in the past have unfortunately been allowed to deteriorate and revert to second-growth. A new 3-ton truck, which replaced an old vehicle worn out, enables all cartage, including wool, to be undertaken on the station.

At the 31st March the station was carrying 7,922 sheep and 671 head of cattle, and the wool-clip for the season amounted to 248 bales.

*Tawanui Station.*

This property, which is a Crown leasehold (L.L.P.) of 916 acres, was acquired by the Native Trustee in 1931 as mortgagee, and represents a Common Fund asset. It is situated near Ngapaenga, thirty miles from Te Kuiti.

For years the area was "sheep sick" and it was impossible to raise fat lambs. During the past two autumns, however, heavy manuring has been resorted to, and a large fencing programme has been carried out for the better control of stock. By this means it is expected to salvage a doubtful security and eventually to create a productive asset. Experiments are now being made for the beneficial treatment of the young sheep, and carefully recorded cobalt tests are giving indications of successful methods, as the station can now breed its own stock.

Two new huts have been erected during the year for housing workmen, and other buildings have been renovated. The property is carrying 1,098 sheep and 214 cattle, and the wool-clip totalled 21 bales.

*Tiratu Station.*

This is a well-developed block of 733 acres of rolling downs, situated about four miles from Dannevirke, and carrying 2,231 sheep and 204 head of cattle.

By use of ample top-dressing and liming, the pastures are rapidly becoming well established and are very healthy in appearance. Before the Motuweka tractor was despatched to its destination, use was made of it on Tiratu to sow 56 acres of grass in ground which had previously been ploughed, but which, owing to wet weather, could not be worked in time with the horse team. A further 12 acres was ploughed and sown in swedes, and, although a good strike resulted, the ultimate value was halved by the ravages of white butterfly.

While the financial position of the farm is sound, it is deemed necessary to conserve the funds and reduce liabilities, rather than extend further allowances to the Native owner, and thus eventually leave a debt-free property.

*Hikuwai Station.*

This property, comprising 810 acres of fairly easy hills with a small proportion of flat country, situated on the main highway between Tokomaru and Waipiro Bays, was vested in the Native Trustee under section 25 of the Act in May, 1937. Over twenty Natives are beneficially interested in the land.

Previously, this area was used for mixed dairying and sheep-farming by the owners, but the property was in a deteriorated state when taken over by the Trustee, and the pastures were mostly in Native grass. A comprehensive programme of clearing of second-growth, repairing fences, sowing, crushing, and stocking lies ahead, and will be carried out as labour becomes available. One of the owners has been retained as working-manager under the supervision of departmental field officers.

When improved and developed, this block should be a good asset, and with careful farming and management should return sufficient to pay current and arrears of interest, and gradually reduce other liabilities, thus restoring it to its original sound financial position.