

Native Trust stations with the exception of Tawhiti, Hikuwai, and Mokonui have improved considerably, and are now in a position to show fairly substantial profits. Marangairoa, Opapa, and Pohutu Stations have been more heavily stocked with cattle, with a consequent reduction in the numbers of sheep. It has been found that there is a considerable benefit to pastures, while sheep profits are maintained and there is only a small reduction in the wool return. The transfer of surplus stock from the northern end of the district to the Waiariki district has been continued and a substantial sum saved on commission. During the year the control of Hurakia Station (584 acres) has been vested in the Native Trustee. This is a small block near the East Cape which has been allowed to deteriorate, and it will be some considerable time before the farm is put on a sound footing.

Maori housing under the control of this Department was commenced in April, 1944. A great deal of organizing was necessary and it was not until June that actual operations started. Since then, however, good progress has been made and the scheme is now well established. The construction gang comprises seven key men and twenty-two Maoris, with varied experience, and includes five returned Maori servicemen. The purchase and utilization of an oil company's buildings at Waikokopu filled a gap caused by the short supply of materials, providing ten dwellings with accommodation for over sixty people. The building programme for the Huramua Training Farm was undertaken by the Housing Branch, and the following buildings were erected: manager's residence (new), cookhouse and dining-room, ten single-man huts, two eight-men huts, ablutions and drying room and conveniences, store-shed (30 ft. by 20 ft.), and implement-shed (80 ft. by 18 ft.). In addition, repairs to existing dwellings were made. Building operations in the northern end of the district have been delayed pending the supplies of seasoned timber from the mill, which is financed by the Maori Land Board, becoming available. A yard has been established for the stocking and seasoning of timber, and it is hoped to install a dressing plant almost immediately for the supply of flooring, lining, &c. When this is completed the whole of the timber required can be obtained from this source. The housing activities for the year are illustrated by the following:—

New houses erected	..	..	..	..	..	5
New houses under construction	..	..	..	..	..	7
Huts re-erected for ex-servicemen	..	..	..	..	..	8
Alterations and additions	..	..	..	..	..	10
Bulk stores erected	..	..	..	..	..	2
Station buildings erected	..	..	..	..	..	1

### *Aotea Maori Land Board District*

The more favourable climatic conditions experienced during the year have resulted in a new high record for butterfat, the production aggregating approximately 380,000 lb. This an increase of 16 per cent. on the highest production figure previously recorded (1942-43) and has been achieved in spite of the inadequate supplies of top-dressing during the past few years and the consequent deterioration of pastures. The increased wage and farm cost allowances being paid for the current year's dairy-produce will materially assist the units in meeting the higher material and labour costs prevailing, but these will not be fully reflected in the accounts for the year ended 31st March. Full advantage has been taken of the increased fertilizer allowance for dairy-farmers.

Nine units are now dairying in the Tokaanu district and the results have been most encouraging, while the foundations have been laid for a new dairying centre in the district south of Lake Taupo. On these sections further development work is necessary, particularly internal fencing and the planting of shelter belts, but the present high cost of fencing materials restricts activities in these directions to the barest essentials.

The further clearing of pumice lands in the Tokaanu district has been postponed until the position regarding future supplies of fertilizer is clarified. It is proposed to utilize any labour thus displaced by embarking on a programme of tree-planting in this area. Fencing timber of good quality is now available for the Tuwharetoa lands and from a subdivision of the Pukawa Block which was recently brought under development. These will provide a convenient supply of posts and battens for the adjacent areas.

Certain areas of development lands on the shores of Lake Taupo have been adversely affected through the raising of the level of the lake for hydro-electrical power. A survey of the extent of the damage is now being carried out, and the question of compensation will in due course be considered by a tribunal which has been appointed for that purpose.

The work on the Manunui Scheme has been largely restricted to the utilization of available labour in bushfelling, clearing, and control of rabbits and noxious weeds, and the splitting of firewood. On the general area at Ranana, little but maintenance work has been possible owing to prevailing shortage of labour. The live-stock on the general areas have wintered well and good prices were realized for fat sheep and cattle. Continued wet weather during the early summer delayed shearing operations, and consequently the full returns from the wool clip did not come to credit before the close of the financial year.

An area of 999 acres in the Whangaipeke Blocks was brought under the provisions of Part I of the Native Land Amendment Act, 1936, and, in addition, 2,552 acres in the Pukawa Blocks, which were purchased by the Crown in June, 1943, are now available for development. Recent exchanges of land interests between the Maoris and the Crown should provide a further area of approximately 20,000 acres of land which, as soon as the titles are finalized, the owners desire to be incorporated in the Korohe and Tauranga-Taupo Schemes. The large areas of land in the Tuwharetoa district which are at present or will in the future be available for development should furnish an opportunity to undertake the rehabilitation of Maori ex-servicemen on a large scale, in addition to making provision for the settlement of local owners. Preparations in this direction could be accelerated by the use of modern mechanical methods of clearing lands and sowing them in pasture as soon as adequate supplies of fertilizer are assured and the necessary field staff is obtainable for the efficient supervision and control of the operations.