

During the year, despite retarded activity, some progress has been made with items on the Department's building programme, notably some large and urgently needed post-office buildings and buildings for telephone-exchange purposes. The new post-office erected at Feilding, a particularly fine acquisition to the town, was completed during the year, the one at Balclutha has advanced to the final stages, and a commencement has been made with new post-office buildings at Hokitika and Otahuhu.

Eight buildings for telephone-exchange purposes, including four of the small rural automatic type, were completed during the year and five more were under construction at the end of the year.

Surplus war purposes buildings have been utilized for the temporary relief of departmental accommodation in a number of urgent cases where the erection of permanent buildings at the moment is impracticable. This applies also on a small scale to accommodation for the relief of the housing difficulties of departmental officers.

Good progress was also made in providing residences for postmasters, a total of fifteen having been completed during the year.

Details of the Department's building and land transactions during the year are as follows :—

New buildings completed: a post-office at Feilding; automatic exchanges at Kilbirnie, Naenae, and Ravensbourne; a temporary exchange at Matamata; rural automatic exchanges at Harihari, Orini, Te Pahu, and Waipahi; a carrier-telephone-equipment building at Cheviot; line store and garage buildings at Fairlie, Opotiki, and Te Aroha (the latter is being used temporarily to accommodate the money-order and savings-bank branch and telephone exchange); residences at Auckland (6), Forbury, Greytown, Huntly, Karamea, Opunake, Otahuhu, South Dunedin, Wanganui East, and Whangarei; staff residences at Awarua Radio (6); and garages for departmental residences at Auckland, Huntly, Kimbolton, Levin, Mamaku, Onehunga, and Whangarei.

Additions and/or alterations were made to the chief post-office buildings at Palmerston North and Timaru and to the post-office buildings at Karori, Okaihau, St. Andrews, Tirau, Tokoroa, and Tuakau. In Wellington additional office accommodation was provided at the Main Store, the Customs Parcel Branch (Whitmore Street), and the Herd Street office building.

Existing buildings were converted as follows: Wharepoa, post-office (for rural automatic exchange at Awhitu); Christchurch, portion of existing premises on new workshops site (for temporary electrical workshops); and Wellington, portion of a wartime store in Aotea Quay (for a temporary parcels branch).

Surplus war purposes buildings were utilized to provide temporary post-offices at Greenwood's Corner, Maketu, Milford Sound, Pukeatua, Stokes Valley, and Te Anau (with quarters); a base station at Christchurch for the V.H.F. mobile radio service; a line store and garage building at Cheviot; an arm-boring depot at Dunedin; additional workshops accommodation at Greymouth; a post-office and quarters at Ward; transit flats for departmental employees at Musick Radio, Auckland (four additional flats); and Wilton Road, Wellington (two flats).

Land was acquired at Auckland (with buildings, for Parcels Branch, Albert Street); Blenheim (for residence); Brighton (for rural automatic exchange); Christchurch (for radio station); Glen Murray (for rural automatic exchange); Johnsonville (for extension of hostel site); Kohukohu (for post-office); Linden (for post-office); Mamaku (for extension of post-office site); Mangere East (for post-office); Morrinsville (for post-office); Mt. Albert (for residence); Mt. Roskill (for automatic exchange); Muriwai (for cable terminal); Naenae (for automatic exchange); Newton (for residence); Newton (for post-office); Ngakawau (with building, for post-office); Oneroa (for post-office); Orewa (for post-office); Opotiki (for residence); Paihia (for post-office); Papatoetoe