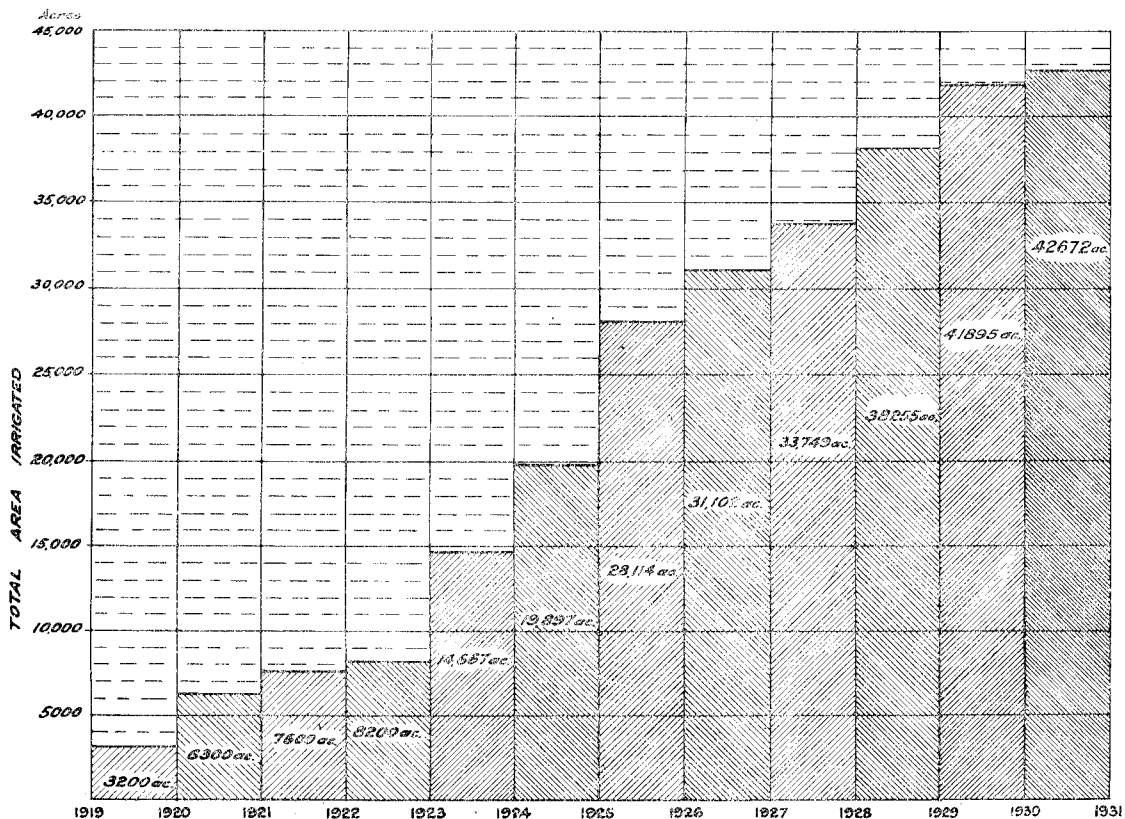


The total area irrigated under all Government schemes was 42,672 acres, as against 41,895 acres last year, the number of irrigators being 408.

The Poolburn Dam has been completed and has commenced storing water for next season's supply, and thus will supplement the Manorburn Dam supply for the Ida Valley Scheme and obviate the necessity for pumping from the Manuherikia River.

The following graph shows the growth of irrigation under Government schemes for the last ten years.



ROAD-CONSTRUCTION.

During the past financial year construction and improvement of roads throughout the Dominion were actively prosecuted, and many settlers who previously had little or no access to their properties have had their position in this respect considerably improved.

The opening-up of new lands for settlement has also been responsible for increased roading activity, and several large areas are now being opened up.

A total sum of £2,233,428 has been expended on the construction of roads and main highways, as against £2,158,056 for the preceding year. Roads other than main highways accounted for £1,475,522 of this sum, and main highways £757,906, compared with £1,060,908 and £1,097,148 for 1929-30.

The actual increase in expenditure on roads other than main highways during the year is, therefore, £414,614, the increase being principally due to the necessity of providing work for the unemployed.

As a result of the duration of the present depression and the need for providing relief for unemployed, roads throughout the Dominion which under normal conditions would be looked upon as of sufficiently high standard to meet present-day requirements have been further improved in width, grade, and alignment. Many roads have been trimmed up in preparation for metalling, and in some instances in isolated districts, owing to special circumstances, metalling has actually been done by the Government. It is essential, however, that the hitherto-followed principle, in accordance with which local bodies finance a portion of the cost of metalling, should continue to be followed, and only those localities which warrant exceptional treatment will receive special Government assistance.