

“Land Guide,” but selectors are apt to be somewhat capricious in their choice of locality, and will often rather go without land if they are not able to obtain it in the locality they prefer; besides which, a large number of the lots open are too limited in size to make a living out of when selectors have no extraneous sources of income, or assurance of employment in the neighbourhood.

Office-work.—The arrears of Crown grants, leases, and other instruments of title are assuming large dimensions, and this supplies another reason why the staff should be increased, in addition to the one already given—viz., as a means towards getting in the arrears of revenue outstanding.

The correspondence continues to increase, and I have had the satisfaction of establishing the file system of record since I took charge here.

G. W. WILLIAMS,
Commissioner of Crown Lands.

APPENDIX No. 2.

SPECIAL SETTLEMENTS.

AUCKLAND.

Waimamaku Village-homestead Special Settlement and the Canterbury Association Settlement, Hokiangā.—The number of original selectors there was thirty-four, and the number now remaining is seventeen. Of the original thirty-four selectors, only twenty-seven came to the district, and of these, twenty-two only were in actual occupation. Two of the original selectors took up land on other conditions. One was killed (a married man, whose widow returned to Auckland, and there died), the others obtained employment on the gumfields. The seventeen who are now in occupation are doing well, and will become permanent settlers; many of them have already acquired other lands in addition to their original holdings. Substantial school-buildings have been erected, and thirty children are on the roll. I interviewed nearly all the settlers on their sections, and met a number of them in the schoolroom in the evening; all were contented with their land. The only complaint made was the want of roads, on which subject I will report later. I also inspected the Canterbury Settlement, and saw several of the settlers, who appeared perfectly satisfied with their holdings, and willing to struggle on in the hope of something being done to the roads in the near future, as at present they are precluded from taking any of their produce to a market owing to the bad state the roads are in. School-buildings have also been erected in this settlement, and at the time of my visit thirty-five children were on the roll—namely, seventeen boys and eighteen girls. From what I saw I am convinced that the settlers in both the Auckland and Canterbury Settlements have had a very hard time of it, and have had to rough it in a way quite unknown in the South. They appear to have manfully overcome many difficulties; and it is satisfactory to note that many of them in both settlements are now building more substantial dwellings than at the first, and making other improvements. The land generally is good, and these settlements would, in my opinion, be in a fair and prosperous condition provided good roads were constructed. I learn that inquiries respecting this land are now being made by a large number of intending settlers, principally from the South. The road known as the Pakanae-Waimamaku Road requires to be opened out as cart-road a distance of about six miles from Lett's store (Section 18, Auckland Settlement). This road would be a link to the main line through to the Bay of Islands. A road is also very much needed in the Auckland Village Settlement, commencing from the School Reserve, Section 34, and thence to Section 46.

Punakitere Settlement.—Number of original selectors, 72; number who actually went on the land, 46; now remaining, 22. Of the forty-six settlers who were in occupation, seventeen found employment in the surrounding districts, three were sent back to Auckland as being unsuitable, and four left the district. Of the twenty-two now in occupation twenty at least are likely to be good and permanent settlers.

Motukaraka and Kohukohu Settlements.—Number of original selectors, 63; now in occupation, 39; abandoned their holdings, 24. Of the twenty-four who abandoned their holdings, ten were Natives, who failed to comply with the conditions; eight are unknown altogether, never having occupied the land; six abandoned their sections, but four of these, together with the Natives, are still in the district. Of the thirty-nine in occupation, five have leave of absence for various periods, but they are working in the district. I have every reason to believe that fully thirty-five of the thirty-nine present occupiers will become permanent settlers. A neat and substantial schoolroom has been erected, and also rooms for the teacher. At the time of my visit, twenty-two children were on the roll—namely, eleven boys and eleven girls.

Swanson and Waitakerei Settlements.—Number of original selectors, 23; number who actually went on the land, 20; now in occupation, 16. Of the twenty settlers who took up land and occupied it, three sections have been abandoned, mainly on the ground that the land was very poor; and one has received notice to occupy the section or it will be declared forfeited. As this settlement is near Auckland, the sections now occupied are likely to remain so.

The two Te Aroha Settlements.—Number of original selectors, 39; number who actually went on the land, 29; now in occupation, 20; improved but not occupied, 7; forfeited, 2. The selectors of the seven sections improved but not occupied have had notice sent them that they must comply with the conditions or the land will be forfeited. The rent is paid promptly. In some cases the improvements are considerable, but no advance has been made unless the selector was in occupation. The land selected for this settlement was a partly-drained swamp, and the settlers have laboured under great disadvantage to cultivate and improve their holdings. The outfall-drain still requires further deepening.