

The finger-print system of identification was introduced in March, 1903, and the following table shows the increase in the finger-print collection in five-year periods from 1905 and for the years 1940 and 1941

Year.	Number of Prints in Collection.	Increase on Previous Period.	Prisoners Traced as Previous Offenders.	Year.	Number of Prints in Collection.	Increase on Previous Period.	Prisoners Traced as Previous Offenders.
1909 ..	8,718	5,218	525	1934 ..	48,545	7,693	1,107
1914 ..	15,302	6,584	879	1939 ..	55,801	7,256	1,115
1919 ..	22,332	7,030	939	1940 ..	57,749	1,948	248
1924 ..	31,929	9,597	1,244	1941 ..	59,342	1,593	219
1929 ..	40,852	8,923	1,298				

Auckland Criminal Registration Branch.—On 31st March, 1941, the finger-print collection in Auckland totalled 7,964 sets, being made up as follows: Males, 7,502; females, 421; and foreign, 41 sets.

During the year 953 sets of finger-prints were received from the Mount Eden Prison or taken at the Criminal Registration Branch, and were duly classified, searched, and filed.

The photographs of 216 prisoners were taken and 1,080 prints were taken from the negatives; also a number of photographs of scenes of crimes and motor accidents, &c., were taken, the total number of photographs produced by the Branch during the year being 1,804. Three volumes—(*i.e.*, 900 photographs)—of New South Wales prisoners' photographs were received, card indexed, and the cards filled in order of finger-print classification.

The remanded prisoner forms with the results of the cases inserted for 433 prisoners were dealt with and returned to the Criminal Registration Branch at Wellington.

In eleven cases offenders who would not otherwise have been known as having been previously convicted were traced by their finger-prints, and in ten other cases finger-prints left by offenders when committing crimes were identified, and the offenders duly arrested and dealt with by the Courts. Most of these pleaded guilty, and in some cases admitted numerous other offences; only in one case was it necessary to call finger-print evidence in Court.

The "*modus operandi*" or "classification of crime" bureau is rapidly increasing in usefulness and is assuming large proportions; approximately fifteen thousand cards, forms, photographs, &c., are already filed.

ARMS BUREAU.

The Arms Bureau has been fully occupied during the year carrying out the following duties:—

Identification of firearms and bullets submitted in connection with cases being investigated by the police in which firearms had been used.

Identification of metal objects from which owners' marks or serial numbers had been erased by filing or other method.

Collection and classification of data relating to shooting fatalities and injuries. Preparation of evidence and giving evidence in Courts of justice and Coroners' Courts.

Collection and classification of many types of firearms and ammunition; and the recording and tabulation of ballistic information for future use of police.

Lectures and instruction to police in relation to firearms.

Lectures and demonstration to auxiliary police *re* accidents with firearms.

Repair and overhaul of pistols for police use.

Investigations in connection with accidents with firearms still constitute the main work of this Bureau. In nearly every fatal case a full report upon the condition of the firearm concerned was prepared for the Coroner. These reports sometimes assisted the Coroner to decide the cause of death. In many more instances he was able to decide whether the firearm was safe and to make an order for its proper repair or destruction if it was beyond repair.

The total number of firearm accidents for 1940-41 is the lowest since the Arms Bureau was established. The figures run: 1935-36, 40; 1936-37, 56; 1937-38, 51; 1938-39, 47; 1939-40, 49; 1940-41, 39. Of the 1940-41 accidents 19 were fatal.

There were 19 accidents with shotguns, and 12 of these were fatal. The hammer gun, as usual, was the heaviest contributor with 12 accidents (7 fatal). The hammerless provided 3 accidents (1 fatal). There were 3 accidents with bolt-action shot-guns, all fatal, and 1 with an auto-loading gun was also fatal.

Rifles of .22 calibre are always prominent in accident reports, and have the following record for this year: 17 accidents, of which 6 were fatal. There were 3 pistol accidents, 1 fatal, and 2 non-fatal.

One feature of the accidents was that many were due to the ease with which children obtained possession of firearms: seven boys under seventeen were killed through this cause and two others were injured. Of the total number accidentally shot during the year 17 were under twenty years of age. The average of injured persons was slightly under twenty-three years.

Accidents occurred in the months of the year as follows: April, 7; May, 4; June, 3; July, 3; August, 2; September, 8; October, 2; November, 1; December, 2; January, 6; February, 1; March, Nil; Total, 39.

Reports regarding shooting accidents were received from the following police districts: Whangarei, 3; Auckland, 9; Hamilton, 5; Gisborne, 2; New Plymouth, 2; Wanganui, 2; Palmerston North, 1; Wellington, 6; Greymouth, 1; Christchurch, 1; Timaru, 2; Dunedin, 3; and Invercargill, 2.