

1942.
NEW ZEALAND.

THE POLICE FORCE OF THE DOMINION.

(ANNUAL REPORT ON.)

Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly by Command of His Excellency.

The COMMISSIONER OF POLICE to the Hon. the MINISTER IN CHARGE OF POLICE DEPARTMENT.

Police Department, Wellington, 7th July, 1942.

I HAVE the honour to present the annual report on the Police Force for the year ended 31st March last.

Strength of Force.—On the 31st March last the number of members of the Force of all ranks was 1,599, being an increase of ninety during the year. The total is made up as follows: 5 Superintendents, 17 Inspectors, 7 Sub-Inspectors, 41 senior sergeants, 118 sergeants, 1,030 constables, 276 temporary constables, 6 senior detectives, 36 detective-sergeants, and 63 detectives. There were also 3 district constables, 1 Native constable, 9 police-women, 8 matrons, and 15 police surgeons.

The following are the losses in personnel for the year ended 31st March last: Retired on pension under the Public Service Superannuation Act, 10; retired as medically unfit, 7; died, 11; resigned voluntarily, 18; dismissed, 12; total, 58.

Stations.—New stations were established during the year at St. Helier's Bay, Oneroa, and Mount Maunganui, and the stations at Kohimarama and Surfdales were closed. The name of the station at Rolleston was changed to Burnham.

Criminal Statistics.—The criminal statistics (Appendix A) deal with offences reported to the police during the year ended 31st December last, and show an aggregate net decrease of 6,450 on the figures of 1940. The percentage of offences to the population was 2·35, as against 2·75 the previous year.

The number of offences reported during the year was 38,559, the number of cases in which arrests or summonses resulted was 35,896, leaving 2,663 cases in which no prosecution followed.

The percentage of arrests or summonses resulting from offences reported during the year 1941 was 93·09, the figures of the preceding year being 92·5.

There was a decrease in the number of serious crimes as compared with the previous year, and also in the number of indecent and sexual offences.

Drunkenness.—There has been a decrease of 583 in the number of prosecutions for drunkenness during the year as compared with the previous year.

The number charged with drunkenness in 1941 was 4,887 (4,752 males and 135 females), whereas in 1940 the number was 5,470 (5,317 males and 153 females).

One thousand four hundred and eighteen males (29·84 per cent.) and 37 females (27·4 per cent.) had previous convictions recorded against them, and 4·04 per cent. of the males were not permanent residents of the Dominion.

Prosecutions against Hotelkeepers.—The number of prosecutions against hotelkeepers during the year shows a decrease of 106 as compared with the preceding year. There were 514 prosecutions, resulting in 409 convictions, during 1941, as against 620 prosecutions and 476 convictions in 1940.

Sly-grog Selling.—There were 100 prosecutions during the year for selling liquor without a license, resulting in 86 convictions, and there were also 21 prosecutions and convictions for other offences against the provisions of the Licensing Act in force in no-license districts.

The fines imposed on the sly-grog sellers during the year 1941 amounted to £1,900.

Gaming Offences.—There were 500 prosecutions, resulting in 469 convictions, during the year under the Gaming Act, against 394 prosecutions and 376 convictions in 1940.

Two hundred and forty-five prosecutions in connection with bookmaking during the year ended 31st March, 1942, resulted in 238 convictions, the amount of fines imposed being £9,328.

Growth of Department. The following return shows the growth of the Department, the population, and the total number of offences (irrespective of by-law offences) reported, and in which arrests or summonses resulted, at each tenth year since 1877, prior to which date each province in the Dominion had its own Police Force. The figures for 1939, 1940, and 1941 are also shown :—

Year .	Officers.	Non-commis- sioned Officers.	Detectives.	Constables.	Total.	Police to Population.	Cost per Inhabit- ant.	Population.	Offences reported.	Offences where Arrests or Summonses resulted.	Arrests for Drunkenness (included in "Offences reported").
1878	25	90	14	329	458	1 to 944	*	432,352	14,157	13,959	6,668
1888	13	69	17	388	487	1 to 1,328	3/1 ³ / ₄	646,913	12,897	11,854	5,387
1898	7	56	16	457	536	1 to 1,435	2/8	768,910	16,378	14,730	5,532
1908	15	83	32	604	734	1 to 1,331	3/2 ¹ / ₄	977,215	23,510	22,484	10,343
1918	20	111	38	732†	901	1 to 1,274	4/6 ¹ / ₂	1,147,391	19,067	18,043	7,228
1928	23	127	54	913†	1,117	1 to 1,301	5/9	1,453,517	33,138	30,622	6,601
1938	26	145	93	1,164†	1,428	1 to 1,123	7/6	1,604,479	44,308	41,618	5,446
1939	27	148	91	1,173†	1,439	1 to 1,129	7/5 ³ / ₄	1,624,714	46,378	43,162	5,935
1940	27	149	90	1,191†	1,457	1 to 1,126	7/8 ¹ / ₂	1,640,901	45,009	41,619	5,470
1941	28	155	97	1,229†	1,509	1 to 1,084	7/11 ¹ / ₄	1,636,230	38,559	35,896	4,887
1942	29	159	105	1,306†	1,599	1 to 1,022	8/3 ¹ / ₄	1,634,338			

* Not obtainable. † Includes temporary constables.

Criminal Registration Branch.—At Headquarters during the year the finger impressions of 3,336 persons were received, classified, indexed, and filed ; 196 persons were identified as previous offenders who, had it not been for the finger-print system, would have passed as first offenders ; 1,399 photographs were taken by the photographers attached to the Branch ; the photographs of 2,518 prisoners (4,340 photographs) were received and dealt with ; 416 photographs were reproduced in the *Police Gazette* ; 14 wanted persons located ; and 1 unknown deceased person identified by finger-prints.

Finger-prints left by offenders when committing 19 crimes were identified as belonging to 17 persons, who were prosecuted —11 pleaded guilty, 1 pleaded guilty to two charges of breaking entering and theft after hearing the evidence at the Lower Court, 1 committed suicide while awaiting trial, and the remaining 4 were found guilty at the Supreme Courts.

Finger-prints of 237 persons were received for inquiry from other countries, of which 23 were identified as those of persons previously convicted in New Zealand ; the finger impressions of 42 New Zealand offenders were sent overseas for inquiry, 22 being identified as having been previously convicted outside this Dominion.

It is interesting to note that in New Zealand the finger-print system has been responsible for the identification of 7,887 persons since it was introduced in 1903.

Auckland Criminal Registration Branch.—During the year, 1,072 prisoners' finger-prints were received and duly classified, searched, and filed.

The photographs of 136 prisoners were taken and 680 prints were taken from the negatives ; also a number of photographs of scenes of crimes and motor accidents were taken. The total number of photographs produced by the Branch during the year was 1,100.

The remanded prisoner forms, together with the results of the cases inserted, for 457 prisoners were dealt with.

In eight 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.

Arms Bureau. The Arms Bureau has been fully occupied during the year with the usual work connected with accidents with firearms, the campaign for safer shooting, and investigation in regard to offences of various kinds in which metal objects are involved. Apart from this work the Department, at the request of the Director of National Service, has arranged that the Officer in Charge of the Arms Bureau assist as honorary armourer in relation to firearms for the Home Guard. Although this has involved long hours of extra work, it has been cheerfully undertaken.

Some hundreds of various kinds of weapons suitable for use by the armed forces were also examined and classified by the Arms Bureau, which was consulted by members of the forces in regard to technical matters relating to these and other small arms.

The accident rate with firearms has fallen to a lower point than has been recorded in the seven years that the Arms Bureau has collected statistics on this subject. There were 37 accidents reported, of which 17 were fatal. These were chiefly accounted for by the three commonest arms in circulation—the 12-gauge shotgun, the .22 rifle, and the .303 service rifle. Only one revolver case was reported, and this was not fatal.

Police Buildings, &c.—The following works in connection with police-stations were carried out during the year by the Public Works Department :—

New stations were erected at Glenavy, Mount Maunganui, Wanaka, and Oneroa (Waiheke Island), and stations at Norsewood and Havelock are nearing completion. New offices were built at Kaitaia, Te Awamutu, and South Dunedin ; offices and constable's residence at Temuka ; and a new lock-up

at Naseby. Motor-garages were provided at North-east Valley, Nelson, Lower Riccarton, Paeroa, Phillipstown, Hawera, and Northcote, and at Superintendent's and Inspector's residences at Wellington. Sites for police-stations were acquired at Karamea, Kerepehi, Ngongotaha, Petone, Riversdale, Millerton, and Dobson, and a Sub-Inspector's residence was purchased at Hataitai (Wellington).

Repairs, renovations, and improvements were also effected at many stations throughout the Dominion.

GENERAL.

Recruiting.—Owing to war conditions it became necessary to strengthen the Force in order to cope with the increased demand on the services of the police. As time goes on it becomes increasingly difficult to secure the right type of recruit, as every endeavour is made to avoid interference with recruiting for the armed services. I have found it necessary to modify considerably the requirements relating to the qualifications of candidates. Nevertheless, men of a fairly good type have been obtained, but not in the number required. The Force is at present about 25 men below strength, and at least a further 47 are required for duties in connection with shipping. Those taken on during the past year have had no special course of training. They are, however, given lectures regularly and are coached by a sergeant who is constantly in touch with them.

Many of the permanent members of the Force applied for permission to join the armed forces, but the applications had to be refused on account of the necessity of retaining all trained personnel.

Efficiency. Notwithstanding the fact that there are a large number of men in the Force with short service the standard of efficiency has been well maintained. Although there has been a decrease compared with the previous year, there has still been a good deal of serious crime, including 12 murders—6 of which occurred at Kōiterangi, West Coast, 4 of the victims being members of the Force and 2 being members of the Home Guard. In all the murder cases the offenders were arrested.

Conduct of Police. The general conduct of the police has been very satisfactory. All branches of the Service have worked harmoniously, with the result that excellent work has been accomplished. All have had extra work to perform, which has been undertaken cheerfully. The hours worked far exceed the average day of eight hours.

Transport.—The efficiency in this Department has been well maintained during the year. A great deal of extra travelling has had to be undertaken to see that vital points are being given the supervision their importance demands. Great difficulty is being experienced in getting tires to keep the cars of our country constables in efficient order. Tires capable of being retreaded are being so treated, the Department meeting portion of the cost in all cases where an annual motor-car allowance is granted. At present the tire position is acute.

Buildings.—So far as was practicable with the skilled tradesmen available further progress was made in improving and modernizing old buildings that were of sound structure. The erection of new buildings already authorized has to stand over in the meantime.

Liquor at Dances.—The legislation in respect of this class of offence is working very well. I cannot say that the practice is on the wane. In some districts it certainly is, as the Magistrates in those districts have made it too expensive for the offenders by imposing salutary fines, while in a few other districts where only nominal fines have been inflicted there is no reduction in the number of the offences reported. It is a good piece of legislation, and while the police are particularly vigilant in respect of the enforcement of it it is very regrettable that there is not any noticeable decline in the number of prosecutions.

Aliens.—Much time is taken up in connection with aliens, but it is time well spent. A lot of wild rumours and stupid reports are circulated about aliens from time to time. All these have to be investigated and probed. Nothing is left to chance.

War Activities.—In addition to the supervision of wharves, shipping, and the many vital points such as cables, oil installations, freezing-works, fertilizer-works, power-stations, and numerous other places, considerable time is given to the three Services and the National Service Department in assisting them wherever and whenever required. This work is growing rapidly. Military defaulters and national service defaulters take up a great deal of our time in inquiries. The relationship with all these Departments is most harmonious.

Inquiries into breaches of the Censorship Regulations, Lighting Restrictions Regulations, and Oil Fuel Regulations also take up much of our time. Many prosecutions have been taken on behalf of other Departments for breaches of these and other war regulations.

Water Patrol Police.—During the year a Police Water Patrol was instituted at Auckland, Wellington, and Lyttelton, and suitable launches were obtained and manned by constables. Excellent work is being done in each place. A number of persons have been saved from drowning by our launch in Wellington. Were it not for the presence of the launch certainly some lives would have been lost through the capsizing of dinghys, yachts, and rowing-boats.

Women Police.—Since my last report the trainees have completed their training and have been posted to the four centres. They are attached to the Detective Branch of the Service, where they are doing excellent work. They investigate offences where women and children are concerned, and give special attention to young girls out late at night and apparently not under parental control.

Additional Staff required.—In order to cope with the additional work, due to war activities principally, I beg to ask for authority for three additional sergeants and eighteen constables at an annual cost of £7,840, the amount required for this financial year being £5,880.

D. J. CUMMINGS, Commissioner of Police.

APPENDIX A.

RETURN SHOWING THE NUMBER OF OFFENCES REPORTED, THE NUMBER OF OFFENCES FOR WHICH PERSONS WERE APPREHENDED OR SUMMONED, AND COMPARISON OF CRIME DURING THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER, 1940, AND YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER, 1941.

Offences.	1940.	1941.		Offences.	1940.	1941.	
	Number of Offences reported.	Number of Offences reported.	Number of Offences in which Arrests or Summons resulted.		Number of Offences reported.	Number of Offences reported.	Number of Offences in which Arrests or Summons resulted.
CRIMES AND JUSTICES OF THE PEACE ACTS, ETC.				CRIMES AND JUSTICES OF THE PEACE ACTS, ETC.—continued.			
Subversive statements, making, publishing, &c.	60	6	6	<i>Offences against Rights of Property—ctd.</i>			
<i>Misleading Justice.</i>				Theft of animals (specified)	24	27	19
Perjury and false oaths	2	2	2	Theft of animals, attempted	..	2	1
False statements and declarations ..	71	37	37	False pretences	714	600	554
<i>Escapes and Rescues.</i>				False pretences, attempted	17	13	13
Breaking prison	..	7	7	Obtaining credit by fraud	150	132	123
Escaping from prison or lawful custody ..	33	23	22	False accounting by officials or clerks ..	8	26	26
Assisting or aiding escape from prison ..	..	2	2	False statements by officials or public officers ..	..	1	1
<i>Offences against Religion.</i>				Conspiracy to defraud	3	..	..
Disturbing public worship	1	..	..	Fortune-telling or practising witchcraft ..	2	7	7
<i>Offences against Morality.</i>				Robbery and aggravated robbery	28	18	11
Unnatural offence	10	20	20	Assault with intent to rob	2	2	1
Unnatural offence, attempted	3	..	..	Demanding with intent to steal	1	..	..
Indecently assaulting a male	105	104	104	Extortion by threats	1	2	2
Incest	13	31	31	Burglary	91	45	24
Indecent acts	37	24	24	Burglary, attempted	9	..	..
<i>Offences against the Person, &c.</i>				House or shop breaking, &c.	1,546	1,152	916
Murder	4	9	9	House or shop breaking, &c., attempted ..	87	68	49
Murder, attempted	1	2	2	Being found in dwellinghouse by night ..	5	10	8
Manslaughter	6	7	7	Being armed with intent to break or enter ..	1	..	..
Suicide, attempted	74	59	59	Being disguised or in possession of house-breaking implements ..	10	1	1
Suicide, aiding and abetting	..	2	2	Receiving property dishonestly obtained ..	139	128	128
Concealment of birth	4	2	2	Forgery	61	86	85
Disabling or stupefying with intent to commit a crime	..	5	5	Uttering forged documents or false certificates ..	22	17	17
Wounding with intent to do grievous bodily harm	3	1	1	Sending false telegram	1	2	2
Endangering safety of persons on railways or tramways	2	..	..	Coinage offences	..	2	2
Administering poison or other noxious things with intent to injure or annoy ..	2	..	..	Personation	2	..	..
Assault causing actual bodily harm	20	15	13	Arson	56	20	20
Causing actual bodily harm under circumstances that, if death had been caused, would be manslaughter	2	2	2	Arson, attempted	10	6	5
Assault, indecent	175	131	113	Wilfully placing obstruction on railways ..	12	9	5
Assault with intent to commit a crime ..	3	11	10	Mischief	1,082	992	939
Assault	781	759	739	Mischief on railways and tramways ..	17	9	7
Rape	7	5	4	Sending threatening letters	1	..	..
Rape, attempted	6	2	2	Threatening acts with intent to intimidate ..	4	2	2
Carnally knowing girls under sixteen years ..	105	41	41	Unlawfully altering brands	..	1	1
Carnally know girls under sixteen years, attempts to	15	6	6	POLICE OFFENCES ACT.			
Carnally knowing idiots or imbecile women ..	1	2	2	Breach of the peace or behaviour with intent	698	655	653
Killing unborn child	..	1	1	Cruelty to animals	47	57	57
Abortion, procuring	15	4	4	Drunkenness	5,243	4,695	4,695
Abortion, supplying means of procuring ..	1	2	2	Drunk while in charge of horses, &c., or loaded firearms	27	19	19
Bigamy	4	14	13	Drunk and disorderly	200	173	173
Abduction	1	..	..	Soliciting prostitution	..	1	1
Stealing children under fourteen years ..	4	1	1	Exposure of person and grossly indecent acts	193	177	143
<i>Offences against Rights of Property.</i>				Using profane, indecent, or obscene language	554	500	499
Theft (undescribed)	7,560	7,104	5,664	Vagrancy (idle and disorderly persons, rogues and vagabonds, and incorrigible rogues)	302	240	240
Theft, attempted	57	54	40	Assaulting, obstructing, or resisting constables, &c.	160	174	174
Theft from the person	16	24	10	Inciting violence, disorder, or lawlessness ..	9	2	2
Theft from the person, attempted	2	8	3	Unlawfully using horses, motor-cars, &c. ..	1,287	1,160	790
Theft from dwellings	292	211	114	Unlawfully on premises at night without criminal intent	245	177	170
Theft from dwellings, attempted	7	2	2	Sunday trading	81	52	52
Theft by clerks or servants	30	53	53	False allegation re commission of offences ..	7	3	3
				Falsely assuming designation of a constable	..	3	3

APPENDIX B.

RETURN SHOWING THE PROPORTION OF POLICE TO POPULATION AND COST OF POLICE PER INHABITANT
IN EACH OF THE UNDERMENTIONED PLACES.

Place.	Number of Police.	Estimated Population.	Proportion of Police to Population.	Cost of Police per Inhabitant.
				s. d.
New Zealand	1,599	1,634,338	1 to 1,022	8 3 ¹ / ₄
Victoria	2,294	1,952,152	1 to 851	8 8
New South Wales	3,679	2,812,321	1 to 764	10 2 ¹ / ₂
Queensland	1,541	1,036,830	1 to 672	13 2
South Australia	875	605,689	1 to 692	12 1 ³ / ₄
Western Australia	595	467,082	1 to 785	11 7
Tasmania	295	241,171	1 to 817	11 9 ¹ / ₂

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