

of the engine in the Public Works Department workshops at Whakatane. During the year this machine excavated 50,202 cubic yards of spoil in completing 111½ chains of bank.

The total output for the four excavators for the year was 140,870 cubic yards.

On the left bank of the Rangitaiki River south of Edgecumbe serious erosion has occurred on 14 chains of bank near Factory Road. At this point, and also at other places in this locality, improvements to the stop-bank and to the river-bank to prevent erosion are badly handicapped by the close proximity of the road and the Matahina Tramway Co.'s line. Until the road and tram-line are removed from the edge of the river, any work done here must be regarded as only of a temporary nature. On this occasion the road and tram-line were moved back a small distance, the stop-bank rebuilt and 3,108 cubic yards of rock carted from the quarry at Awakaponga was used to form a stone breastwork, in an attempt to arrest the erosion. As a further safeguard, the convex bends on the opposite side of the river were cut back with a drag-line excavator.

During the year frequent attention was paid to the west bank of the Tarawera River, where there has always been general overflow along several miles of the bank, and the river-level requires to be closely watched to prevent a large-scale break-through.

Other works carried out during the year included the cleaning of 116 miles 58 chains of drains by manual labour, 8 miles 75 chains by weed-cutting launch, and the widening and deepening of 5 miles 45 chains by hand labour, involving the removal of 3,692 cubic yards of spoil, cutting of willows and bank-protection work on the Rangitaiki River between Thornton and Edgecumbe, and the control of noxious weeds on river-bank and drain reserve. A new 5-ft.-diameter flood-gate was constructed in the north end of the Eastern Drain to prevent back-flow from the Orini Canal, and a spillway constructed around it, to take charge of excessive flood-water. A new bridge was constructed over the Awaitei Drain to give access to Johnston's Block, Otakiri. A new three-roomed cottage was erected at Thornton for the accommodation of a married workman, and two other cottages were extensively repaired and renovated.

The workshop at Thornton carried out all running repairs to the excavators, tractors, cars, trucks, launch, &c.

The accommodation problem at Thornton, as elsewhere, is acute, and this has greatly increased the difficulty of obtaining replacements of key workmen. As soon as building materials become available it will be necessary to consider the erection of further accommodation to attract good men to this type of work.

EXPENDITURE AND RATES

Expenditure on maintenance for the year amounted to £14,441.

Rates struck: Special, £10,578; general, £9,255.

Rates collected, including arrears: Special, £11,011; general, £9,161.

MAORI RATING

The total Maori rates paid, including arrears, during the year under review was £1,809. Maori rates levied for the year 1945-46 amounted to £2,123.

The amount shown as expenditure on maintenance may be subject to slight variation on completion of accounts.

I have, &c.,

E. TAYLOR,

Chief Drainage Engineer.

The Under-Secretary for Lands, Wellington.

STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS

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