

given the Court in its exchange jurisdiction and other appropriate authorities, and this enables interim arrangements to be given effect to without awaiting completion of the wider scheme.

Maori Land Board Activities

The usual transactions involving renewals of leases of vested lands and the collection and distribution of rents and royalties therefrom have received attention. Consideration has been given during the year to proposals for the better utilization of substantial areas of vested land in the Maniapoto area which are now lying idle. Reports have been obtained, and future proposals are now under consideration. The Board is faced with a difficulty in dealing with these vested lands. They are due for revesting under present statutory authority in 1957, and this limits the term of any leases which may be granted by the Board where leasing is considered to be the best method of disposal. The opencast mining operations on vested lands in the King-country have still continued, but have not proved as successful as was anticipated by the licensees.

There has been a keen demand for new township leases in the Maori townships administered by the Board, and routine renewals have also been taking place.

There has also been a keen demand for any timber available on vested lands.

The finances of the Waikato-Maniapoto Board are buoyant; the Tokerau Board's finances are becoming stronger and recent arrangements have greatly strengthened the Board's position.

During the year the Department suffered the loss of one of its oldest and most respected Maori officers in the person of Mr. Tukere te Anga, whose death occurred suddenly at Ngaruawahia on 27th June, 1946.

WAIARIKI (ROTORUA DISTRICT)

Native Land Court

There were twenty-six sittings of the Court during 1946-47, as compared with twenty-one in the previous year, and over 3,000 cases were notified for hearing, an increase of over 1,000. Fees collected showed an increase of £540. The business of the Court with regard to succession, partition, and orders, other than confirmations of alienations was more than doubled.

Apart from sittings at the five main centres of Rotorua, Tauranga, Whakatane, Opotiki, and Taupo, the Court adjourned to Te Puke and to Te Poi, where it was fully occupied in dealing with Maori housing matters. The Native Appellate Court held one sitting in this district. It heard an application for the Europeanization of Maori land. The application was granted.

Numerous applications in respect of deceased servicemen's gratuities were brought before the Court for the presiding Judge's recommendation to the Hon. Minister of Defence as to final payment. Approximately 250 cases were dealt with.

Rates on Maori Lands

The question of rates on Maori lands has been one of some concern to the Court; but considerable progress with regard to their collection has been made in the Whakatane County. About eight years ago, on account of the unsatisfactory position, a conference was held at Whakatane of representatives of owners of Maori lands in the Whakatane County, officers of the Whakatane County Council, the Land Drainage Branch of the Lands and Survey Department, and the Court. A compromise on a constructive scheme was formulated whereby it was agreed if any Maori owner paid the current rates and one year's rates (two years in all), two years of unpaid rates would be remitted. To put this into effect a trial collection was made. In 1940 two officers, one from the Lands and Survey Department and one from the Native Land Court, were detailed to interview and explain the compromise to Maori ratepayers. The result was most