

There is also marked improvement in the general condition of the various pas and maraes in the district. The Maori people are visited at their homes and settlements and their economic and domestic problems are surveyed and reported on. Efforts are still being maintained to encourage the best use of moneys derived from social security benefits.

A great measure of co-operation has been experienced from those Government Departments, local bodies, and other institutions concerned with Maori welfare work.

Maori Land Board

An important function of the Board in the eyes of the Maori population of the district is the collection of rents, royalties, and purchase-money on their behalf and its distribution to the persons entitled. The amounts received and distributed compare favourably with previous years. Lessees have, in general, met their rents promptly, and suitable action has been taken in other cases.

The Board is carrying on farming operations on three stations on behalf of the Maori owners—namely, Anaura (5,865 acres), Opiki (885 acres), and Waiorongomai (13,845 acres)—and good returns have come in during the season just closing. Anaura Station regularly pays a dividend to the owners; and the Waiorongomai owners made a donation of £300 from station profits to the Whakarua Park Board at Ruatoria and £25 towards Kapohanga Meeting-house costs.

The Board also administers thirteen stations on behalf of the Native Trustee, comprising an area of 28,025 acres.

Advances by the Board on mortgage security, mainly to assist Maoris in their farming activities, total £48,186.

The Native Trustee, as a measure of decentralization, has transferred to the Board during the year all his Common Fund mortgages of lands in this district for administration. The advances outstanding at 31st March last totalled £104,078.

To assist in the drive for increased maize-production, the Board advanced £592 to eleven Maori farmers under section 523 to finance their crops. Further amounts have been advanced under ordinary mortgage accounts for the same purpose.

A D7 tractor has been purchased by the Board during the year and hired to a saw-miller to stimulate the production of timber for Maori housing purposes. Unfortunately, the miller's output of timber for this purpose has not been up to expectations.

Donations made by the Board out of its own funds during the year totalled £325 and are as follows:—

	£
H. R. H. Balneavis Memorial	100
Kapohanga Meeting-house	100
Hinemaurea Marae	50
Tokararangi War Memorial	50
Towards cost of painting portrait of Bishop Bennett	25

AOTEA (WANGANUI) DISTRICT

Native Land Court

During the year twelve sittings of the Court were held at Wanganui, New Plymouth, Hawera, Tokaanu, and Taumarunui. Many cases were dealt with, and 76 partitions, including several for the purpose of providing house-sites for the owners of the respective blocks, 796 succession orders, and 566 other orders were made. Of the miscellaneous cases, rating applications are predominant and claim a considerable amount of the Court's time.

In the year 1944–45 the owners of the Puketapu 3A Block were incorporated following meetings of assembled owners, mainly for the purpose of enabling the owners to enter into milling and logging operations. The project appears to have been successfully launched, and this has inspired the owners of other blocks to contemplate ventures