

Timber requirements of the box-factory increased to 9,593,000 board feet (7,468,000), with the result that timber available for sale to merchants and wood-users decreased to 6,341,000 board feet (7,814,000). Sales comprised: green timber, 4,010,000 board feet (5,398,000); kiln-dried timber, 2,053,000 board feet (2,208,000); and air-dried timber, 278,000 board feet (208,000). Most of this timber was sold in the Auckland Province, but increasing quantities are now being distributed to other parts of the North Island in order to demonstrate the quality of timber which can be supplied by careful adherence to good sawing, grading, and seasoning practices.

With increased shipping-space becoming available it was possible to export 1,535,000 board feet (911,000) of timber to Australia. Supply was confined to New South Wales and Victoria, as shipping could not be secured to other states.

Timber stocks held at the 31st March, 1948, amounted to 3,372,000 board feet (2,987,000). In common with other sawmills in the Rotorua area, great difficulty continues to be experienced in obtaining sufficient rail trucks to transport current increased production to the markets. In the early part of 1948 the position deteriorated to such an extent that it was again necessary to resort to the use of motor transport to relieve the congestion in the mill yard, 197,000 board feet being despatched to Auckland; and at times special trains were loaded during the week-ends. The State Forest Service fully appreciates, however, the endeavours made by the Railways Department to provide an adequate supply of trucks.

Timber filleted for kiln-drying totalled 9,577,000 board feet (7,126,000) and for air-drying 2,670,000 board feet (3,167,000); the balance of the year's cut, 4,534,000 board feet (5,846,000), was sold or used in a green condition. The kilns dried 9,773,000 board feet (8,246,000), of which 8,611,000 board feet (7,525,000) consisted of green timber and 1,162,000 board feet (721,000) was partly air-seasoned stock. It was possible to dry this increased quantity because of the installation of a new kiln during the year. Based on the assumption that the plant is capable of drying for 335 days of twenty-four hours, the kiln operating factor for the year was 92.6 per cent. (91). The quantity of timber dried per kiln-hour was 292 (263) board feet.

The profit from the sawmill and dry kilns amounted to £22,770 (£14,000).

*Kaingaroa Sawmill:* The Kaingaroa Mill was partly completed, and commenced operating in November, 1947, on a forty-eight-hour-week basis, using a light twin circular breakdown rig and two breast benches for the sawing of the logs from the shelter-belts around Kaingaroa Headquarters. To permit the efficient utilization of small-diameter thinnings, two Bolinder gang-saw frames and an edger will be installed as soon as possible. A green-sorting chain for handling timber out of the sawmill and a steam power plant for the sawmill and for the supply of electric power to the adjacent village are also to be erected.

This mill was producing at the rate of 16,000 board feet per day by the end of the year, and production for the period amounted to 1,094,000 board feet of insignis pine, of which 776,000 board feet were sold in green condition, leaving stocks at 31st March of 318,000 board feet.

67. *Waipa Box-factory and Planing-mill.*—The demand for box-shooks continued to be very heavy throughout the year, and it was found necessary to operate the box-factory on a forty-eight-hour-week basis in an endeavour to satisfy essential case-users whose needs could not be met from other sources. Extra overtime also was found necessary in some sections of the factory. Fruit-cases and cheese-crates again figured largely in the output.

An exceptionally heavy demand for box-shooks still exists from Australia, but there was no possibility of exporting any shooks during the year owing to the overall unsatisfactory supply position in New Zealand.