

At 31st March the estates under administration were—

Minors	36
Deceased persons	19
Convicts	9
Mental patients	59
Miscellaneous	6
Total	129

New estates accepted for administration since decentralization to 31st March were—

Minors	13
Deceased persons	8
Convicts	5
Mental patients	7
Miscellaneous	6
Total	39

The amount outstanding at the end of the financial year in respect of advances made by the Maori Trustee on the security of lands in this district was £95,265. The repayment of principal sums during the year amounted to a total of £8,813.

One hundred and two war-service-gratuity accounts were vested in the Maori Trustee for administration, and approximately half of these have not been drawn upon by the beneficiaries, whilst the remainder, for the most part, have been drawn upon to provide school clothing, books, and requisites for children.

Every assistance is given to the widows and orphans of deceased servicemen. The District Judge and Registrar are both members of the local "Heritage" committee, and their specialized local knowledge is of advantage to the Committee in its operations. The services of the District Welfare Officers are also available to "Heritage" Committees.

AOTEA (WANGANUI DISTRICT)

While the usual activities of the Department have been continued during the year under review, emphasis has been laid on improving the value of the land in the district. With this object a programme of roading improvements has been carried out which will give better access to many properties and result in their general efficiency being increased. Extensive tree-planting has also been attempted and action taken to prevent further erosion by the Tongariro and Rangitikei Rivers.

There has been considerable activity in the Tangariro timber areas in the direction of opening up timber lands by and on behalf of the owners who have been incorporated under the provisions of Part XVII of the Maori Land Act, 1931. Committees of management have been set up in fourteen instances, and representatives from each body have voluntarily formed an Advisory Committee (with the assistance of a representative of the Maori Land Board and the State Forest Service) to arrange for a regulated sales plan and for the zoning of areas for output purposes. The methods of exploitation provide for the milling of limited areas by existing established sawmillers, the felling and sale of logs by and on behalf of the incorporated owners, and the establishment of sawmills ultimately to be acquired and operated by the owners should they so elect.

The operations of the Puketapu 3A Incorporation have been satisfactorily maintained, and the initial logging operations have been extended to cover active sawmilling by the purchase of an established mill. This will ensure a source of supply for Maori housing purposes generally and will enable the Maoris associated with the venture to demonstrate their ability in the business world.