

*Topographical Survey.*—For the past year two surveyors' assistants have been engaged on this class of survey; one of them has been employed for part of his time in the Rotorua County, and the other has been six months in that county, whilst for the remainder of the year he has been employed at Ngaruawahia carrying out a topographical survey of approximately 54 square miles for the Defence Department. The field-work in the Rotorua County completed during the year comprises 72 square miles, costing £690 17s. 6d.; an average of £9 12s. per square mile. The total area surveyed in the Rotorua County is now 560 square miles, costing £3,720 3s.

*Rural Surveys.*—An area of 14,556 acres was completed by staff surveyors at a cost of £567, an average of 9·3d. per acre.

*Village and Suburban Surveys.*—An area of 161 acres was subdivided during the year, comprising 15 sections scattered in all parts of the District, at a cost of £211 15s. 4d.; the average being £14 2s. 8d. per section.

*Town-section Surveys.*—There were 234 town sections surveyed during the year, situated mostly in Te Aroha, costing £636 11s. 10d., an average of £2 14s. 5d. per section.

*Native-land Surveys.*—An area of 43,391 acres was surveyed, comprising 285 sections, this work being carried out by private surveyors at schedule rates, the total cost being £4,557 10s. 2d.; averaging 2·1s. per acre.

*Roads, Canals, and Railways.*—A total length of 41 miles was surveyed during the year, scattered in various parts of the District, and costing £1,340, an average of £32 13s. 6d. per mile.

*Other Work.*—The Arapuni Lake survey was completed during the year, with plans, comprising 31 miles of road and levels around the water-level of the proposed lake; also surveys necessary of lands taken. Most of the plans, which were of an intricate nature, were completed by office draughtsmen. The total cost of this work is £1,250 6s. 11d. A considerable amount of levelling and miscellaneous work was carried out on the Hauraki Plains for the Land Drainage Branch, at a cost of £450. The balance of other work comprised survey inspections, timber-measurements, various reports and valuations, and collecting soil samples, costing £789 4s. 8d.

*Lake Taupo Fisheries Reserves Surveys.*—A start has been made with this survey. One staff surveyor has been employed in the meantime, and another surveyor will be put on as soon as possible. This work has cost £381 14s. 3d. to date.

*Traverse Closures.*—The mean traverse closures for the past year as supplied by staff surveyors shows an error of 0·65 links per mile on the meridian and 0·17 links per mile on the perpendicular.

*Office and General Work.*—Land Transfer Branch: A total of 243 plans were received for examination; 230 were examined and approved; 1,080 deeds and other instruments were prepared; 2,549 diagrams from plans were placed on certificates of title. A considerable number of unchecked plans have accumulated, principally from the North Auckland District, but an endeavour is being made by the additional staff to have this congestion overtaken.

Native Branch: A total of 110 plans were received for examination, and 115 plans examined and approved; plans compiled, 105; and 290 survey accounts checked, 790 Court orders endorsed, 7 Courts attended; 123 tracings made, and 76 authorities issued for survey. The compilations included the Crown's title to the portion of the Urewera Block purchased, containing an area of 486,104 acres; the plans were drawn on a scale of 20 chains to 1 inch, and involved considerable work.

Crown Lands Branch: In this branch 198 plans were received for examination, and 206 examined and approved; plans compiled total 63, 27 sale plans were prepared, 786 tracings made, 113 Proclamations entered, 305 plans recorded, 710 diagrams placed on titles, 318 chain lengths tested, and 17 town-scheme plans were dealt with. Very little photo-litho draughting-work was carried out during the year, on account of the quantity of other work. A map of the Town of Taupo was completed and published, maps of Rotorua and Hamilton are nearing completion. A considerable amount of work was done in connection with the preparation of 20-chain maps for the topographical surveys; a certain amount of this work will be utilized for the 20-chain record maps, four of the latter being completed during the year. An atlas of county lithos was prepared showing the formed and metalled roads in the land district, this information being obtained from the Public Works and County Councils. A series of maps was prepared showing all Crown lands in the land district for ready reference. Seven county maps, in duplicate, were renewed and brought up to date as far as possible, one set showing tenures and the other local-body boundaries.

*Proposed Operations, 1927–28.*—One surveyor and one assistant will be employed on topographical surveys in the Rotorua County, and the area for the Defence Department at Ngaruawahia, Waikato County; the latter will be completed during the year. Four surveyors will be employed on miscellaneous surveys all over the district. One surveyor will be employed on the Taupo fisheries, and, if possible, one of the above-mentioned four will be put on to expedite the completion of this latter work. One surveyor will be employed almost exclusively by the Land Drainage Branch on the Hauraki Plains.

Contract surveyors have in hand the survey of 47,304 acres of Native lands.

During the year several changes eventuated, Mr. J. H. W. Parsons, draughtsman, died on the 16th December, 1926. He was a capable officer, and his death was greatly regretted. Mr. F. R. Burnley was promoted to the position of Chief Draughtsman, North Auckland, the position of Land Transfer Draughtsman being taken by Mr. L. J. Poff, surveyor, of Wellington. Mr. H. W. Rickard, draughtsman, was transferred to New Plymouth, his place being exchanged by Mr. G. H. Ennis of that office.

It is noted that expenditure is recoverable for the major portion of the work done by the field surveyors and a portion of the work done by the office staff for other departments, local bodies, &c.

In conclusion, I wish to place on record my appreciation of the manner in which the officers of this Department carried out their duties during the past year.