

A building was erected on Mount Crawford (Wellington) for the accommodation of the New Zealand receiving station of the trans-Tasman radio-telephone service.

Increased or improved accommodation for departmental purposes has been provided at the following places: Christchurch, Gore, Greymouth, Hokitika, Huntly (garage), Kaikohe, Kaitaia, Nelson, Newton (Auckland), Papatoetoe, Wairoa (garage), Wellington (workshops), Whangarei.

The following works were in progress at the end of the year: Courtenay Place (Wellington East), new post-office building; High Street (Christchurch), new post-office building; Lower Hutt, automatic telephone-exchange building; Masterton, addition and alterations; Palmerston (Otago), new post-office building; Ruatoria, new post-office building and residence for Postmaster; Upper Symonds Street (Auckland), new post-office building; Urenui, new post-office building; Waitara, new post-office building; Westport, new chief post-office building.

The erection of a new chief post-office building at Dunedin has been authorized, and tenders for the work are soon to be invited.

The erection of new buildings at the following places has also been authorized, but, owing to the financial position, action has been deferred meantime: Greymouth (garage and store), Petone, Thames, Thornbury.

The following buildings were disposed of: Awa, old post-office building; Ohakune Junction, lineman's cottage; Slope Point, old telephone-office building; Takahue, old post-office building; West Plains, old post-office building; Worser Bay (Wellington), old boat-shed.

On the 22nd April a fire which broke out in nearby premises threatened to destroy the Ahaura Post-office building. The danger was averted, however, by the voluntary services of a number of residents. As it was, the building suffered some damage.

On the 23rd April the post-office building at Collingwood was slightly damaged by a fire which caused extensive damage in the township. The building was saved from destruction through the combined efforts of the local fire brigade and two members of the post-office staff.

LAND.

Areas of land were acquired for departmental purposes as follow: Clydevale, new site for post-office building; Colville, site for post-office building; Grey Lynn, site in Surrey Crescent for post-office building; Hamilton, site for chief post-office building; Mahanga Bay (Wellington), site for storage of submarine cable, &c.; Milton, site for residence for Postmaster; Mount Crawford (Wellington), site for radio-receiving station; Ngawha, new site for post-office building; Ruatoria, new site for post-office building and residence for Postmaster; Te Anga, site for post-office building; Urenui, site for post-office building; Waterloo (Lower Hutt), site for post-office building; Wellington, site for line depot.

Areas of departmental land were disposed of as follow: Clydevale, old post-office site; Howick, portion of post-office site; Longford, old telegraph reserve; Naumai, old post-office site; Ngawha, old post-office site; Ohakune Junction, site of lineman's cottage; Ruatoria, old post-office site; Te Kopuru, old post-office site; Tokoroa, old post-office site; Waiuku, portion of old post-office site; Worser Bay (Wellington), site for storage of submarine cable, &c.

DEPARTMENTAL MOTOR-VEHICLES.

Owing to the reduction in the demand for transport, it has been possible to withdraw from commission and sell a number of worn-out vehicles without replacing them. Fifty-seven new vehicles were purchased during the year, and seventy-five old ones were sold.

At the 31st March, 1931, the departmental motor-vehicle fleet comprised 111 cars; 473 lorries, trucks, and vans; and 14 motor-cycles: a total of 598 vehicles, against 616 as at the 31st March, 1930.

The total mileage travelled by the fleet for the year was 4,479,391—22,648 in excess of the mileage for the previous year.

SUGGESTIONS BOARD.

The number of suggestions made by officers for improving the working of the Department was 426. The number of awards was fifteen, the total sum awarded being £34.

The Gray Memorial Prize for the best original suggestion for 1928 was awarded to Mr. R. L. R. Apperley, Senior Mechanician, Wellington, for a suggestion concerning a multiple toll-line dialling circuit. The 1929 prize was awarded to Mr. W. Gazley, Supervisor, Stores Division, General Post Office, for a suggestion that, when practicable, solo giant solid tires instead of twin solid tires be fitted to the rear wheels of departmental motor-lorries.

In each case the prize took the form of a gold medal.