

To-day the block comprises eleven units, and the Uruahi Station—an area of some 1,789 acres—which is efficiently managed by a European. As far as this latter property is concerned there is little further development work required, and the farm is fully stocked. Exceptionally heavy rains occasioned damage to fences and tracks on the station necessitating protection-works in the creek below the residence, and the planting of trees on the portion showing a tendency to slip. The area in permanent grass is 2,337 acres, in temporary pasture 244 acres, and in other cultivation 23 acres.

During the past season the following works were undertaken: 151 chains of new fences, 38 chains of drains, 30 acres of ploughing and cultivation, 89 acres of clearing, and the erection of three residences and three cow-sheds. The tallies of live-stock at 31st March last were recorded as 4,000 sheep, 650 run and 200 dairying cattle. The receipts for the season were as follows: 89 bales of wool, £928; the Department's share of butterfat returns from 23,434 lb., £216; and stock sales, £2,393. The carrying-capacity of the land is estimated at 4,000 sheep and 650 head of cattle. Although reasonable progress and results have been obtained this last year, the loan liabilities are not being reduced, but it is hoped to effect savings that will ensure a gradual reduction of these charges.

Mohaka.

Mohaka has the distinction of being the first scheme to be launched in the Tairāwhiti district under the development legislation of 1929. Prior to 1930, the people—members of the Ngāti-Pāhauwera hapu of Kahungunu—were grazing sheep and dairying in a small way on their lands, which comprise parts of the Mohaka, Putere, Waihua, and Waipapa Blocks located on the East Coast adjacent to the Mohaka River.

Developmental operations commenced in January, 1930, with the granting of financial assistance for fencing, clearing, cultivating, and stocking, the policy being the same as that adopted on Ranana, Ruatoki, and other unit schemes where the settlers were already established. The scheme now comprises an area of 19,709 acres on which forty-nine units with 269 dependants are engaged, principally in dairying. The Native farmers for the most part show great industry, and promise to make successful settlers, and it is intended to establish nine new units in the course of the ensuing year.

In order to assist in clearing the land of blackberry, goats and sheep are also run on the scheme. On account of the light nature of the country, and the distance from bases of supply, progress is necessarily slow, but the prospects of successful settlement are reasonably good. Incidentally it may be mentioned that with the completion of the East Coast railway line as far as Mohaka, the transport costs of both live and dead stock should be greatly reduced. It is necessary to erect many more cow-sheds, and the most urgent ones are being built each year, four having been erected during the period under review.

Lack of water is a handicap on the whole of the Mohaka Block, but there are good springs on sidlings which can be boxed in and the water pumped to higher levels, and there are also some good creeks running in deep ravines where rams can be operated.

The housing problem is still a big factor, and much remains to be done in this connection. It is proposed to build during the coming season several small cottages as designed by the Public Works Department, and this should partly alleviate the acute shortage of decent housing accommodation.

The year's farming activities embraced the sowing of 1,000 acres in grass, 230 acres of cultivation, 868 chains of new fencing, together with repairs to 539 chains of fences, 1,420 acres of clearing, and 219 acres of ploughing.

The dairy herds are in good condition, and the tallies as at the 31st March last were 1,410 dairy cattle, 3,744 sheep, 750 goats, and 57 horses. The wool clip of 42 bales realized £444, the Department's share of butterfat returns amounted to £1,752, and sales of live-stock were £725.

As far as the general outlook of the Natives is concerned, consequent upon their participation under the Native land settlement scheme, it is apparent that they have benefited both in health and spirits, the improvement being most marked in the children.

Included in the scheme is a base farm containing an area of 428 acres, which is now in the process of being subdivided for settlement into four farms, two of which will be available for allotment as unit holdings this coming year. The other two sections will be run conjointly for another year, until the necessary improvements can be made to warrant units being settled.

Waihua.

Formerly designated Ngamahanga, this area of Crown land was handed over for development in 1933, and comprises some 4,300 acres of sheep and cattle country situated between Mohaka and Wairoa. The block consists of pumice and fern country at the north, and good clay country in the middle and south. In January, 1933, when the area was taken over, it was carrying bush and scrub which had been cut but not burnt. To-day the station has 3,900 acres in grass, and was carrying as at the 31st March last 6,113 sheep, 397 cattle, and 8 horses. It is anticipated that the block will be carrying about 8,000 sheep and 400 cattle this coming winter, but this number is the estimated maximum capacity, and numbers will probably decrease as the pastures get older and native grasses predominate.

The roads to this block are bad, vehicular traffic being possible only for a few months of the year. A wool-shed is under construction, and it is hoped to have it completed for the next shearing season. In the past sheep have had to be driven seven miles for shearing. As a flock of ewes (1,000 five-year-olds) is now being carried, a shearing-shed is essential to the property.