

APPENDIX.

EXTRACTS FROM REPORTS OF COMMISSIONERS OF CROWN LANDS.

NORTH AUCKLAND.

(W. D. ARMIT, Commissioner of Crown Lands.)

In common with the Crown tenants, the soldier settlers experienced a favourable season both in respect to prices and production.

In many cases full charges have been met and careful consideration has been given where necessary to refunds for top-dressing manures, which has enabled the settlers to keep pastures up to standard.

The season throughout the North did not prevent the harvesting of a plentiful supply of hay as well as enabling ensilage to be stacked, and thus providing a good winter supply.

Considerable concessions in the way of remissions and postponements have been granted to several settlers owing to slump conditions, and have assisted them to earn rebates during the past season.

Those mortgagors under budgetary control consisted mostly of settlers who held sheep and grazing propositions, and the results obtained by this method were satisfactory both to the Department and mortgagor.

Most of the settlers realize the importance of pig-raising in order to augment their income, and this side line is not now neglected.

Owing to the demand for houses for letting purposes, no difficulty was experienced in getting suitable tenants for the properties which had reverted to the Crown.

The Department continued to expend money on the renovation of dwellings already bought in, and also made additional advances to mortgagors for further improvements and accommodation.

In terms of an Order in Council issued in accordance with the State Advances Corporation Act, 1936, all discharged-soldier-settlement mortgages and accounts were handed over to the local branch of the Corporation on the 1st February, 1937.

AUCKLAND.

(K. M. GRAHAM, Commissioner of Crown Lands.)

The high returns for wool and the fixed price for butterfat last season have combined to give soldier settlers, in common with other settlers, throughout the district a much better year than for some time past. Dairy-stock and sheep prices have been well maintained, and with improved living conditions the settlers are more confident now of their future success.

Soldier lessees who have been in arrears with rent are making an honest endeavour to meet their arrears in addition to the current charges, though in a few cases it has been necessary for the Board to give some measure of relief.

As from 1st February, 1937, the control and administration of all mortgages under the Discharged Soldiers Settlement Act were transferred to the State Advances Corporation of New Zealand.

GISBORNE.

(H. L. PRIMROSE, Commissioner of Crown Lands.)

The discharged-soldiers-mortgage securities in the Gisborne District were transferred over to the State Advances Corporation as from the 31st October, 1936. Prior to the change-over, and since, many returned-soldier settlers have personally expressed to me their very great appreciation of the very kindly and tactful way their cases have always been dealt with, and of the sympathetic treatment they always received from members of the Department and Land Board.

That, in my opinion, is a genuine statement of the relationship that has always existed here between the Department and its mortgagors. Of course, many of these men will continue to be lessees of the Department, and it can safely be said that once the rehabilitation legislation is finalized they should all be on a satisfactory financial footing.

Most soldier settlers are getting well on in years now, and with decreasing physical vigour, as the result of war services in many instances, they have anxiously considered the future. I am very happy to think that, for that reason alone, their positions are being steadily improved.

HAWKE'S BAY.

(F. R. BURNLEY, Commissioner of Crown Lands.)

The State Advances Corporation took over the Discharged Soldiers Settlement Mortgages on 1st November.

Hunter Soldiers' Assistance Trust Board.—The Board held three meetings during the year, 135 cases being dealt with, assistance to the amount of £1,371 having been given to 286 children.

The total grants to orphan children to date amount to £3,100.

The Board receives applications from all parts of the Dominion, and the number of applicants is increasing rapidly. Particulars of the expenditure of grants are supplied to the Board when applications for further grants are made, and it is gratifying to note that in the majority of cases the moneys have been wisely spent in the purchase of clothing and school-books.