

A good gravitation water-supply has been installed on this scheme providing for twenty separate farms, four houses, and a meeting-house. A committee, acting in conjunction with the departmental Supervisor, exercises a check on the water drawn in order to ensure that there is no undue wastage. The Maungaroa and Pahaoa sections of the scheme are poorly watered, and the question of providing an adequate supply system is being investigated.

The building programme for the period under review provided for the erection of three dwellings and four cow-sheds for settlers. It has not been possible to complete this work owing to a shortage of timber and to transport difficulties. As soon as the necessary materials are available the work will be undertaken and pushed to completion. During the coming year it is hoped to carry out a programme which will provide the majority of the settlers on the scheme with comfortable housing and adequate dairying facilities.

Ragwort is still prevalent on the river and creek beds, from whence it tends to spread further afield. As these areas are within the scheme boundaries it is necessary to continue treatment with sodium chlorate. Comparatively small patches of the weed are present on individual holdings, but settlers are exercising control. Blackberry is still noticed in scattered areas, and settlers are frequently employed grubbing and burning the weed on their holdings.

The following work has been carried out during the past year: 517 chains of new fencing have been erected; approximately 120 chains of general repairs and renovations have been undertaken; in addition, 3,895 posts, 17,200 battens, and 40 strainers have been split and packed on to unit holdings; 34 chains of new drains have been opened up, and approximately 70 chains of drains cleaned and deepened; 175 acres of clearing have been undertaken, of which the majority has comprised scrubbing and stumping; the balance has been confined to clearing and grubbing rushes and blackberry. During the year 84½ acres were ploughed, of which the greater part had previously been cropped. Sixty-two acres of this are now sown in permanent pasture and the balance has been reserved for green feed and cropping next year.

Maraenui.

The lands comprising the Maraenui scheme are located at the mouth of the Motu River on the Bay of Plenty. The total area of the scheme lands is approximately 1,500 acres, of which it is proposed to develop 800 acres. An average total of sixty persons have benefited by the operation of this scheme, this number being made up by fourteen workmen, eleven adult dependants, and thirty-five minor dependants.

There are, as yet, no established settlers on this scheme, which is still in the course of development.

The period under review has been exceptionally favourable for pasture growth and there was abundant feed for stock. All the permanent pasture on the flats has been top-dressed with 3 cwt. of superphosphate. An area of 100 acres is in permanent pasture and a further 250 acres in rough feed. The only crop sown during the year was 10 acres of sweeds. This produced quite a fair average yield, but some 2 acres were destroyed by floods in the early stages.

Stock on the scheme as at the 31st March, 1937, was 7 rams and 266 ewes. During the month of March all stock was sold and replaced, this practice being necessary at least every second year on land where ragwort is prevalent. One hundred and thirty-eight ewes, 135 lambs, and 1,161 lb. of wool were sold.

Ragwort control proves a heavy item of expenditure. The method adopted is grazing by sheep and spraying and cutting. From November to March all available labour is employed on this work.

The work carried out during the year mainly comprised ragwort control, manuka clearing, and repairs to fences.

Matata.

Situated on the coast seven miles on the Te Puke side of Matata, this block, which is locally known as Hauani scheme, comprises an area of 2,366 acres, which were gazetted under the provisions of Part I of the Native Land Amendment Act, 1936, at the close of 1936. Running along the front of the block is the railway and the main Whakatane-Tauranga Road. The block is surveyed and partitioned into thirteen sections, exclusive of 2 acres comprised in the Papakainga Reserve.

At present there is neither fencing erected nor a system of water-supply, and it will be necessary to install a ram and pump from the Pikowai River to a point from whence it can be reticulated over the whole area.

Although the country is somewhat cattle and sheep sick, the Field Supervisor considers that the greater part can be brought into good pasture suitable for dairying and that it should then carry one cow to 2 acres. There are already five units established.

Ngatiawa.

This scheme takes its name from that of the tribe which occupies the territory around Whakatane.

Ngatiawa comprises an area of 5,315 acres, of which 4,300 are suitable for development. An area of 1,640 acres is in permanent pasture, 100 acres in temporary pasture, 82 acres in new grass, 700 acres in rough feed, and 38 acres in turnips.

There are now two established settlers within this scheme, and work carried out during the year made it possible to absorb all available unemployed Maoris in Whakatane. However, Maoris from Ruatoki had again to be employed for ploughing and top-dressing. The area occupied by the two settlers is 150 acres, of which 65 acres are in pasture, 35 acres in new grass, 12 acres in crops, and 38 acres unimproved.