1937. NEW ZEALAND.

THIRTY-NINTH ANNUAL REPORT OF THE

PENSIONS DEPARTMENT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st MARCH, 1937.

Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly pursuant to Section 90 of the Pensions Act, 1926.

The Commissioner of Pensions to the Hon. the Minister of Pensions.

SIR,-

Pensions Department, Wellington, 30th August, 1937.

I have the honour to furnish herewith, for the information of Parliament, the report of the Department relating to war, old-age, widows', Maori War, miners', epidemic, invalidity, and sundry pensions, family allowances, and war veterans' allowances for the year ended 31st March, 1937.

The following comparative statement relates to the annual value and gross payments of all pensions administered by the Department for the past two years:—

PENSIONS IN FORCE: ANNUAL VALUE AND TOTAL PAYMENTS.

	As	at 31st March,	1936.	As at 31st March, 1937.				
Class of Pension.	Number.	Annual Value.	Total Payments, 1935–36.	Number.	Annual Value.	Total Payments, 1936-37.		
		£	£		£	£		
War	22,631	1,384,340	1,349,447	23,711	1,532,424	1,483,345		
Old-age	. + 43,309	1,828,150	1,718,601	54,134	3,068,293	2,413,103		
Widows'	. + 4,369	321,605	311,864	4,753	464,879	412,280		
Maori War	. 43	2,107	2,577	36	2,106	1,972		
Miners'	. 851	73,331	67,834	1,040	87,838	83,253		
Epidemic	. 10	501	907	3	76	253		
* Invalidity	. 507	23,961	22,991	7,491	478,165	284,760		
Boer War	. 55	2,086	2,127	57	2,131	2,067		
Sundry pensions and annuitie	s 151	15,065	13,053	144	13,161	13,892		
Civil Service Act, 1908 .	1.0	4,460	4,676	11	3,933	4,106		
Family allowances	. 11,691	144,856	149,043	9,515	125,702	130,730		
War veterans' allowances .	. 1,043	58,358	16,544	2,079	151,713	110,667		
Totals	. 84,673	3,858,820	3,659,664	102,974	5,930,421	4,940,428		

Cost per head of European population: 1935–36, £2 9s. 1d.; 1936–37, £3 5s. 9d.

^{*} Blind pensions formerly payable have been merged with invalidity pensions.

PAYMENTS ON BEHALF OF OTHER GOVERNMENTS.

The following figures relate to the war and other pensions paid by the Department during the year on behalf of other Governments:—

	31st March, 1937.	Value.	Average Pension.	Payments, 1936–37.
War	1,377 760 515 59 4 31 38 1	£ 72,324 52,199 24,167 14,949 372 4,076 9,861 216	£ s. d. 53 0 0 69 0 0 46 18 6 253 0 0 93 0 0 131 0 0 260 0 0 216 6 8	$ \begin{cases} £ \\ 158,153 \\ 26,518 \\ 20,339 \\ 5,789 \\ 11,963 \\ 566 \end{cases} $ $ 223,328 $
	Army and civil War Army and civil War Civil War	Army and civil	Army and civil	War 1,377 72,324 53 0 0 Army and civil . 760 52,199 69 0 0 War 515 24,167 46 18 6 Army and civil . 59 14,949 253 0 0 War 4 372 93 0 0 Civil 31 4,076 131 0 0 ,, 38 9,861 260 0 0 War 1 216 216 6 8

WAR PENSIONS.
SUMMARY OF WAR PENSION PAYMENTS.

							3
			Paymen	ts made in			
	London.	Australia.	Canada.	South Africa.	Foreign Countries.	New Zealand.	Total.
W / 1	£	£	£ 700	£	£	£	£
Total payments to 31st March, 1936	1,064,912	623,076	36,782	6,617	10,882	23,084,950	24,827,219
Payments in 1936-37	50,739	30,582	2,267	590	801	1,398,366	1,483,345
Total payments to 31st March, 1937	1,115,651	653,658	39,049	7,207	11,683	24,483,316	26,310,564

The amount paid for the year ended 31st March, 1937, shows an increase over the preceding year of £133,898.

SUMMARY OF ANNUAL LIABILITY AS AT 31ST MARCH, 1937.

Class of Pension.	Number of Pensioners.	Number of Children.	Annual Value.	Average Pension		
					£	£
Soldiers (permanent)			10,647	33	621 ,630	58
Soldiers (temporary)			4,444	35	318,423	72
Dependants of disabled soldiers			3,252	5,809	262,477	81
Widows (without children)			1,332	·	128,256	96
Widows (with children)			385	740	63,314	164
Other dependants of deceased s	oldiers-	-				
Parents			3,441		129,399	38
Other adult dependants			75		2,516	34
Guardians of children	• •	••	135	231	6,409	47
Totals, &c			23,711	6,848	1,532,424	65

WAR PENSIONS PAYABLE OUTSIDE NEW ZEALAND AS AT 31ST MARCH, 1937.

		Solo	Soldiers.		Depe	endants.	Annual Liability
		Permanent.	Temporary.	Temporary.	Widows.	Other Dependants.	
Great Britain Australia Other countries		296 333 56	66 167 19	44 54 4	149 65 6	364 119 23	£ 52,366 43,706 4,897
Totals	• •	685	252	102	220	506	100,969

ECONOMIC PENSIONS PAYABLE AT 31ST MARCH, 1937.

Class.				Number.	Annual Value.	Average Annual Grant.
					£	£
ensions				1.883	115,851	62
				1,474	90,834	62
				85	2,685	32
				331	12,818	39
				163	7 , 482	46
				3,936	229,670	58
	pensions ensions 	pensions ensions	pensions	pensions	pensions	pensions

WAR PENSION APPEALS.				
Appeals outstanding on 31st March, 1936				328
Appeals lodged during 1936–37	• •	• •	• •	1 900
Appeals dismissed during 1936–37				$\frac{1,299}{465}$
Appeals upheld during 1936–37				424
Appeals withdrawn and struck out, 1936–37		• •	• •	27
				 916
Appeals outstanding on 31st March, 1937 Percentage upheld, 46·3.	• •	• •	••	383

The total number of appeals dealt with to the 31st March, 1937, was 8,415, the percentage upheld being 48 per cent.

Of the 916 cases dealt with during the past year, 502 were heard at Auckland, 48-6 per cent. being upheld; 169 at Wellington, 34-3 per cent. being upheld; 113 at Christchurch, 48-7 per cent. being upheld; and 132 at Dunedin, 50-8 per cent. being upheld.

Medical treatment of war pensioners during 1936–37 cost $\pounds 66,871$.

Railway concessions to war pensioners on maximum permanent disablement pension and those with locomotive disabilities on permanent pension in excess of 50 per cent. cost £1,869 during the year.

The loading paid on life-insurance policies of war pensioners due to war-service disability amounted to £173 for the year.

Temporary war pensions to soldiers increased by 181 and permanent pensions to soldiers increased by 346 during the year.

The 484 deaths among war pensioners are made up as follows: Soldiers, 197; widows of soldiers, 20; other dependants, 267.

WAR VETERANS' ALLOWANCES.

Since the passing of the War Veterans' Allowances Act in October, 1935, 2,529 cases have been granted, of which 2,079, with an annual value of £151,713, were in force as at 31st March, 1937. These comprised 854 single and 1,191 married veterans, with 1,994 dependent children, and 34 widows.

WAR VETERANS' ALLOWANCES APPEALS.

Appeals outstanding on 31st March, Appeals lodged during 1936–37	1936					36
	• •	• •		• •		96 — 132
Appeals dismissed during 1936–37 Appeals upheld during 1936–37	• •	• •				67
Appeals withdrawn and struck out, 1	936–37		• •		• •	$\frac{42}{5}$
						— 114
Appeals outstanding on 31st Percentage upheld, 36·8	March,	1937	* *	ø 4	. ,	18

FAMILY ALLOWANCES.

The claims lodged during the year totalled 1,417, which, with the 225 outstanding from the previous year, made a total of 1,642 to be dealt with. Of these, 1,131 were accepted and 308 rejected. Of the rejected claims 100 represent cases where the income of the family was in excess of the limit allowed. Three hundred and seventy-nine new claims from Maoris were finally dealt with during the year, 241 being granted and 138 rejected.

The total children of the 9,515 allowances in force as at 31st March, 1937, and those in excess of two in a family numbered 43,454 and 24,424, the average per family being 4.56 and 2.56 respectively.

The total amount paid during the year was £130,730, while the total annual value of all allowances in force at the close of the year was £125,702.

Weekly Rates at which Allowances granted.

Weekly Rate.	ls.	2s.	3s.	4s.	5s.	6s.	7s.	8s.	9s.	10s.	12s.	14s.	16s.	18s.
Number granted	4	625	5	279	4	109	1	66	1	22	10	3	1	1

Numbers according to Size of Family.

Number of Children in Excess of Two.	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.
Number of families	606	281	115	77	30	14	6		1	1

Weekly Incomes of Families.

The experience of the contract						
Weekly Income.		£1 and under.	Over £1 and up to £2.	Over £2 and up to £3.	Over £3 and up to £4	Over £4
Number of families	• •	29	196	5 2 5	171	210

COST OF ADMINISTRATION.

The-cost of administration for the year amounted to £88,039, the principal items of expenditure being £45,385 for salaries of officers of the Department, who numbered 265 as at 31st March, 1937; £15,745 and £4,601 paid to the Postal Department for payment of pensions and postage and telegrams respectively; £5,230 for salaries and other expenses of the War Pensions Appeal Board; and £2,427 for salaries of the War Pensions Board.

The percentage of cost of administration to the total pension payments made of £5,163,756 (including £223,328 paid on behalf of other Governments) was $1\cdot70$, or $4\cdot1d$. in the pound.

LEGISLATION.

CIVIL PENSIONS.

The Pensions Amendment Act, 1936, and the Finance Act, 1936 (No. 2), widened the scope of the civil-pensions legislation, and the following brief summary shows the principal benefits to the pensioners coming within the various categories:—

Old-age Pensions.

The maximum pension has been increased from £45 10s. to £58 10s. per annum. Any income which has ceased may now be exempted.

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Receipts during any income-year not exceeding £500 by way of legacy, life insurance, or compensation for accidental injury or death, where such receipts are expended on a home property or for any other purpose deemed reasonable, may also be exempted.

5

Additional property exemptions include any interest in land, including any interest in any mortgage

of any estate or interest in land.

The general exemption for other property has been increased from £50 to £500.

The period of residence in New Zealand to qualify for pension has been reduced from twenty-five

The deduction in respect of age from the pension of a female applicant under sixty-five years has been eliminated, and a woman of sixty years of age now receives the full pension.

Widows' Pensions.

Every pension has been increased by 10s. a week, and the maximum pension has been increased from £4 to £4 10s. a week.

The old provision charging 5 per cent. of all property other than home and furniture as constructive income has been eliminated.

A new provision provides pension for deserted wives with children on the same basis as widows pensions, subject to maintenance proceedings having failed, or a maintenance order not being complied with and the whereabouts of the husband being unknown.

Miners' Pensions.

Provision was made extending the qualifying diseases for miners' pensions, which now include miners' phthisis (pneumoconiosis) or tuberculosis of the lungs or any other disease of the respiratory organs commonly associated with or a sequel to pneumoconiosis, or any other occupational disease or heart-disease contracted while working as a miner in New Zealand.

A definite right to pension at the rate of 17s. 6d. a week during widowhood has been given to the widow of a miner dying while in receipt of pension. (Right to pension irrespective of circumstances previously was for two years only.)

Military Pensions (Maori War).

The pension payable to a Maori War veteran has been increased from £49 per annum to £58 10s. per annum.

Blind Pensions.

The pensions formerly payable to blind persons under Part III of the Pensions Act, 1926, are now included in the new invalidity pension provisions, with new benefits in respect of wife and children (10s. weekly for the wife and 10s. a week for each child) and an increase in the basic pension from 17s. 6d. to £1 a week.

Invalidity Pensions.

The Pensions Amendment Act, 1936, made provision for the first time for the payment in New Zealand of invalidity pensions to persons of the age of sixteen years or upwards.

The benefits of the Act are payable to persons of good character and who have been resident in New Zealand for ten years and who are permanently incapacitated for work, provided the condition of invalidity arose in New Zealand.

The following scale of pensions is provided for :-

Married Man: £1 a week plus 10s. a week for wife and 10s. a week for each child under sixteen years, with maximum pension of £4 a week.

Widower with Child or Children: £1 a week plus 10s. a week for each child under sixteen, maximum pension £4 a week.

Other Applicants: £1 a week.

Apart from pension, an income of £2 a week is allowed in the case of a married applicant or widower with children, and £1 a week in the case of other applicants.

The qualifications in respect of property are the same as for old-age pensions.

Family Allowances Amendment Act, 1936.

The income exemption permitting maximum allowance in respect of children has been increased from £3 5s. to £4 a week.

WAR PENSIONS AMENDMENT ACT, 1936.

The benefits brought about by this Act are-

A time-limit of seven years from date of discharge within which marriage was required to take place before the wife or widow of a disabled or deceased ex-member of the N.Z.E.F. could qualify for pension has been removed, and the pensions become payable where marriage took place prior to 1st August, 1936 (this also applies to allowances under the War Veterans' Allowance Act, 1935).

The maximum economic pension payable to certain classes of ex-soldiers has been increased from £1 2s. 7d. a week to £1 5s. a week.

The reductions made by the National Expenditure Adjustment Act, 1932, in certain classes of statutory pensions and all ecomonic pensions payable to dependants of deceased soldiers have been fully restored.

ORGANIZATION.

The increased number of pensioners consequent upon the widening of the scope of the pensions legislation necessitated a review of the number of pension districts into which the Dominion is divided. As a result, new branch offices at Whangarei and New Plymouth are being opened, bringing the total number of branches to fourteen.

The extended activities of the Department made necessary an increase of staff, and this has rendered the accommodation of the Department's offices, particularly the branch offices, inadequate. Several branch offices have already been moved to more commodious and convenient premises,

Several branch offices have already been moved to more commodious and convenient premises, and arrangements are being made, where necessary, to suitably accommodate the staffs of the remaining branches.

Better provision is being made also for the convenience of the public, and, where possible, special rooms are provided to ensure privacy when applicants are being interviewed.

STATISTICS IN REGARD TO CIVIL PENSIONS.

	Old-age.	Widows'.	Maori War.	Miners'.	*Invalidity.	Epidemic.
Pensions in force at 31st March, 1936	43,309	4,369	43	<i>∫</i> 717†	} 507	10
1 ensions in force at 51st match, 1950	15,505	± ,505	10	134‡	\{ 301	11
New pensions granted, 1936-37	14,388	1,117		$\left\{ egin{array}{c} 199 \dagger \ 68 \sharp \end{array} ight.$	\rightarrow 7,292	
Deaths during 1936–37	2,974	7	7	58	201	
Cancellations during 1936-37	589	726		20	107	1
Net increase or decrease	+10,825	+384	- 7	+.189	+6,984	7
Pensions in force at 31st March, 1937	54,134	4,753	36	861†	7,491	:
Total children in receipt of pension, 31st March, 1937	• •	9,666	, .	179‡ 415	2,123	
Total European pensioners, males sixty-five years and over, and females sixty years and over	51,779					
Total Maori pensioners	2,318	458	12		277	
Total Asiatic pensioners	37				2	
§ Pensioners under section 7 (b), Pensions Act, 1926	71	• •		• •	••	
Percentage of European pensioners to total European population	3.4				••	• •
New claims lodged	17,191	1,676		375	11,337	
New claims rejected Number of children on whose account pension	2,008	$\frac{494}{2,416}$		107	2,956	
granted		2,410			• •	
Annual liability at 31st March, 1937	£3,068,293	£464,879	£2,106	£87,838	£478,165	£7
Average pension per annum	£56 13 7	£97 16 2	£58 10 0			£25 6
Gross expenditure for year 1936–37	£2,413,103	£412,280	£1,972		£284,760	£25
Increase or decrease on figures of previous year	+£694,502	+£100,416	-£605	+£15,419	+£261,769	-£65
	£1 12s. 1d.	5s. 6d.	0.3d.	ls. 1·3d.	3s. 9·5d.	0.04d
Credit from national endowment	£40,940					
Refunds paid to Public Account	£711	£151		£14	£132	
Number of pensioners in homes and hospitals	1,596		4	15	829	
Amount paid to controlling authorities of these	£67,324		£186	£1,114	£33,440	
Number of pensioners in mental hospitals	177	3		j i		
Amount paid to Mental Hospitals Depart-	£8,731	£70		£65		
ment on account of these						
Unpaid instalments as at 31st March, 1937	£9,340	£2,057	£33		£3,659	
Instalments forfeited and subsequently paid.	£3,157	£574 2·03	£8	£66	£3,442	
Average of family under fifteen years Total claims lodged to date	166,163	21,588	1.893	3,451	12,303	
Total claims established	132,198	18,137	1,698		7,998	97
Total claims rejected	32,392	3,333	195		3,206	"
Total number of children benefited		43,545				
Total deaths	63,480	151	1,656	1,030	340	1
Total guardians appointed	14 704	12 022				
Total cancellations	14,584 £27,508,721	13,233 £5,263,666	£609,409		167 £458,617	95
Grand total paid to date Total amount paid on account funeral expenses	221,000,121	205,000	2009,409	£9,662	£498,017	£474,08
Total credit from national endowment	£860,389			20,002		
Invalidity appeals—						
Appeals lodged during 1936–37					657	
Appeals dismissed during 1936–37					308	
Appeals upheld during 1936–37					165	, ,
Appeals withdrawn and struck out 1936–37 Appeals outstanding on 31st March, 1937				• •	18 166	
Percentage upheld	1			::	33.6	
Torogramso abana					55.0	

^{*}Blind pensions formerly payable have been merged with Invalidity Pensions. † Miners. ‡ Widows of miners. § Pensions may be granted to males sixty years and over and to females fifty-five years and over in cases where two or more children under fifteen are being maintained. The seventy-one cases above comprise: European — Males, 60 and under 65, 61; females, 55 and under 60, 4; Maori—Males, 60 and under 65, 5; females, 55 and under 60, 1.

Total European population at 31st March, 1937, 1,502,737.

Pensions granted, Deaths, and Cancellations in each Year, with Number in Force.

Year end 31st Mar	lea	Number of Pensions granted.	Deaths.	Cancella- tions.	In Force at End of Period.	Year er 31st Ma		Number of Pensions granted.	Deaths.	Cancella- tions.	In Force at End of Period.
			Old-age.					Family	Allowar	ces.	
1899 –19 0	n n	12,186	824	77	11,285	1928		3,154	25	12 3	3,006
		17,848	10,237	3,576	15,320	1929		1,437	39	641	3,763
1901–19.				3,338	19,993	1930		1,004	4 1	858	3,868
1911-199	20	24,028	16,017				• •			604	4,617
1921		2,152	1,880	428	19,837	1931	• •	1,399	46		
1922		2,553	1,578	321	20,491	1932		3,040	56	$\frac{269}{500}$	7,332
1923		2,781	1,763	328	21,181	1933		3,841	68	785	10,320
1924		2,549	1,870	392	21,468	1934		3,022	68	1,129	12,145
1925		2,654	1,635	425	22,062	1935		2,166	63	1,927	12,321
1926		3,100	1,839	418	22,905	1936		1,730	55	2,305	11,691
1927		3,302	2,049	407	23,751	1937		1,131	25	3,282	9,515
	• •		$\frac{2,013}{2,093}$	421	24,875	1001	٠.	1,101			
1928	• •	3,638			26,110	m	1	21,924	486	11,923	-
1929	• •	3,614	1,968	411		Total	ıs	21,924	400	11,920	• •
1930		3,506	2,242	465	26,909			ì			
1931		4,640	2,202	352	28,995						
1932		5,806	2,188	296	32,317						
1933		5,534	2,262	657	34,932	ļ		M	ori War.		
1934		5,509	2,369	565	37,507	ļ					
	• •	5,934	2,744	556	40,141	1913-1	920	1,691	75 0	2	939
1935	٠.			562	43,309	1921		1	130	ļ	811
1936		$\begin{array}{ c c c c c c c c c c c c c c c c c c c$	2,746			1922		1	72	! ! ••	740
1937		14,388	2,974	589	54,134	1923		î	$7\overline{1}$	1	669
		· .			-		• •	4	80	$\hat{1}$	589
Total	s	132,198	63,480	14,584		1924		1		1	i
			i			1925		1	$\frac{71}{2}$	٠	519
			Widows'.			1926			74	1	444
				0.000	0.444	1927			70		374
1912 - 19	2 0	5,817	47	2,326	3,444	1928			66		308
1921		627	8	642	3,421	1929			49	!	259
1922		523	3	598	3,343	1930			50		209
1923		616	12	536	3,411		• •	1	40	ï	170
1924		730	8	607	3,526	1931		1			143
	• •	602	6	524	3,598	1932			27		
1925	• •			447	3,833	1933			36	1	106
1926	• •	684	2			1934			20		86
1927		705	6	562	3,970	1935			21		65
1928		761	4	6 2 9	4,098	1936			22		43
1929		823	5	584	4,332	1937			7		36
1930		702	6	655	4,373	1301	• •		` .		-:
1931		815	9	613	4,566	m .	,	1 (00	ese	6	
1932		798	8	647	4,709	Tota	us	1,698	, 656	U	• •
	٠.	731	3	750	4,687					1	
1933	• •			1							
1934	• •	703	5	766	4,619	ļį					
1935		687	2	799	4,505	1			T37		
1936		696	10	822		1			War.		
1937		1,117	7	726	4,753	1916-1	920	49,254	953	+13,730	34,571
						1921		2,207	358	4,656	31,764
Total	s	18,137	151	13,233	,	1922		945	369	3,249	29,091
			<u> </u>			1923		625	358	2,898	26,460
			r 1: 1:4								
			Invalidity	•		1924	٠.	551	361	3,484	23,166
1925		114	• •		114	1925	٠.	432	334	1,946	21,318
1926		92	9	1	196	1926		353	369	586	20,716
1927		46	6	4		1927		350	353	88	20,625
1928		39	11	ī		1928		330	401	6	20,560
	• •		14	6		1929		398	360	88	20,686
1929	٠.	43					٠.	347	405	111	20,739
1930		47	10	8		1930	• •				
1931		43	18	6		1931		431	387	-242	21,025
1932		45	13	2		1932		348	432	100	21,041
1933		52	9	8		1933		352	400	111	21,104
1934		60	12	5		1934		365	419	264	21,314
	٠.	70	24	10		1935		463	445	346	
1935	• •					1936		740	451	-664	
1936	• •	55	13					1,136	484	†428	$\frac{22,031}{23,711}$
1937		7,292	201	107	7,491	1937	٠.	1,100	1.04	11:40	ωυ, (11
Tota!	ls	7,998	340	167		Tota	als	59,627	7,639	28,277	

 $[\]ast$ Blind pensions formerly payable have been merged with Invalidity Pensions. ments less 394 actual cancellations.

[†]This represents 822 reinstate-

PENSIONS GRANTED, DEATHS, AND CANCELLATIONS IN EACH YEAR, WITH NUMBER IN FORCE—continued.

In Force at End of Period.	Cancella- tions.	Deaths.	Number of Pensions granted.	Year ended 31st March,		In Force at End of Period.	Cancella- tions.	Deaths.	Number of Pensions granted.	ended March,	
		demic.	$E_{\mathcal{I}}$		1			liners'.	M		
	١		939		19	415	135	133	683	1920	916-
849	113	4	27		19	474	5	43	107		921
683	172		6		19	506	8	38	78		922
569	112	2			19	544	6	52	96		923
457	111	ī i			19	580	4	48	88		924
365	92		. ,		19	607	14	70	111	• •	925
313	51	1			19	640	13	50	96		926
259	52	$\overline{2}$			19	668	5	51	84		927
$\frac{200}{209}$	47	$\bar{3}$.			19	721	4	47	104		928
188	21				19	760	2	5 3	94		929
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H. DIGBY SMITH, Commissioner of Pensions.

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