

A plan index based on a card system has been completed, resulting in a considerable saving of time. It also provides a sectional index, which will be of considerable assistance when the allotment books are rewritten.

The result of the departmental examinations indicates a commendable zeal on the part of the office staff, which, as indicated by the number of entries, will be upheld during the coming year.

I have to express my appreciation of the work carried out by the survey and draughting staff, and their loyal co-operation during the past season.

SOUTHLAND LAND DISTRICT.

(T. S. McMILLAN, Chief Surveyor.)

FIELD-WORK.

Triangulation.—The only work carried out under this heading consisted of placing a reference tube adjacent to a trig. station in the Borough of Riverton which was being endangered by road-construction work.

Standard.—City: Owing to the reconstruction of the footpaths in the City of Invercargill, it was necessary to alter the levels of nine standard stones.

Rural: Permanent marks were placed adjacent to five standard stones on the Invercargill-Gore Main Highway which were liable to be disturbed by road construction. The cost of carrying out these alterations has been recovered from the Invercargill City Council and Main Highways Board respectively.

Rural.—Four rural surveys, containing a total area of 375 acres 26 perches, comprised in six sections, were made during the year. The average cost per acre was 4-30s.

Village and Suburban.—The total area surveyed under this heading was 24 acres 1 rood 21 perches, contained in twelve subdivisions, at an average cost of £2 0s. 6d. per acre.

Towns.—Seven town surveys were completed, containing a total area of 28 acres 3 roods 15 perches, comprised in 133 sections. The average cost per section was £1.

Roads.—Some 4.43 miles of road were traversed, exclusive of roads on surveys under other headings. These consisted mainly of road-deviation surveys for the Main Highways Board. The average cost of the work was £34 18s. per mile.

Housing.—Of the seven town surveys referred to under the heading of "Towns," four were made for the Housing Department, having a total area of 24 acres 3 roods 31 perches, contained in 115 subdivisions, at an average cost of 15s. 6d. per section.

Other Work.—The principal items under this heading are work done for the Police Department in connection with motor accidents, &c., opening up boundaries on Lora Settlement, and levelling for the Housing Department.

Traverse Closures.—The mean traverse closure of surveys carried out by the staff surveyor amounts to 0.20 links per mile on the meridian and 0.23 links per mile on the perpendicular over traverses totalling 9.6 miles controlled by ninety-eight stations.

Proposed Operations.—The surveys in hand are as follows: State housing subdivision, Invercargill; location of boundary, Wyndham Survey District; proposed scenic reserve, Wyndham Survey District; resurvey of sections, Oteramika Hundred; road-deviation survey, Invercargill-Kingston State Highway; school-site, Nightcaps; and location of tracks, Sounds National Park.

OFFICE-WORK.

Land Transfer Branch.—Seventy-two plans were examined and approved containing a total area of 40,848 acres 2 roods 18-29 perches, comprised in 215 lots. Also, 1,046 diagrams were placed on certificates of title and 609 dealings were examined and passed.

Computing.—Ten Crown plans, 25 statutory plans, and 6 housing subdivision plans, containing a total area of 2,285 acres 3 roods 2-31 perches, were examined and approved. Fifty-five tracings, 44 traverse sheets, and 75 schedules accompanying the various plans were also examined. Four scheme plans containing 12 acres 2 roods 8-7 perches, comprised in fifty-three lots, were approved.

Draughting.—One hundred and sixty-seven diagrams were placed on various Crown and education-reserve leases, and 56 diagrams comprised in five Governor's Warrants were placed on certificates of title. Ten plans were compiled and 1 plan redrawn. Seventy-six lithographs were coloured, 6 plans, 2 tracings, and 185 lithographs mounted, 135 plans recorded, 52 sun-prints made, 130 lease descriptions checked, and 389 searches made in the Land Transfer Office. The total number of tracings prepared was 478, made up as follows: 226 working data, 167 miscellaneous, and 85 for the Valuation Department.

Lithographic Draughting.—The redrawing of the New River Hundred map, which was commenced during the year, is progressing satisfactorily. One original drawing was revised and reprinted. Owing to the urgency of other work and the dearth of trained draughtsmen it has not been possible to devote a great deal of time to this work.

General.—Two hundred and sixty-one applications for subsidy under Scheme No. 4B and thirty-five applications for relief under Scheme No. 4A were received and dealt with. At the close of the year there were ten in receipt of relief under the latter scheme. The recording of land transactions on the office records has been attended to.

Staff.—Mr. C. W. J. Pierson was successful in passing the Computer's Examination (Second Grade). The vacancy caused through Mr. J. M. Gilbert's transfer to the field staff was filled by the appointment of Mr. C. A. George as a draughting cadet. The numerical strength of the office is eight, of which three are cadets and one has just completed his cadetship. Such a preponderance of cadets does not make for maximum efficiency. Nevertheless, I wish to record my appreciation of loyalty and enthusiasm displayed by all members of the staff in the efficient discharge of their duties.