

*Tautoro Bush.*

Comprising 1,607 acres, this farm is situated about ten miles from Kaikohe on the Kaikohe-Pipiwai Road. The country is more suited for grazing than closer settlement, being sparsely watered and liable to revert to second growth if not carefully stocked.

Climate conditions were severe, and pastures suffered from the exceptionally dry season. The spring months were dry, and from December to March there was almost a complete absence of rain. There is an extensive area of country to be logged and burnt at Tautoro, and full advantage was taken of the season in facilitating this work. Losses from facial eczema were heavy and lambing percentages were low.

An average of eighteen men was employed during the year. The stock carried comprised 439 run cattle, 985 breeding-ewes, and 1,238 dry sheep.

*Waima.*

Under this project are the properties known as Waima Bush, Waima South G 2, and Wharerimu, which are situated on the main Kaikohe-Rawene highway equidistant about fourteen miles from Kaikohe and the nearest port—Rawene. In all, the total area is just on 2,000 acres, which is being worked in a face as one block preparatory to closer settlement.

The development of the Waima South G 2 and Wharerimu Blocks is progressing satisfactorily, 400 acres having been cleared and burnt prior to being sown. Fencing and draining requirements are being concentrated on, and there is much work remaining to be done. The programme for the ensuing year will comprise 370 chains of boundary and subdivisional fencing, a further 80 chains of main drains and 150 chains of small drains, the clearing of a further 150 acres, and the cultivation of 100 acres for grass. Up to the present no stock has been grazed, but it is anticipated that the natural increase of stock from the Waima Bush property will supply all the requirements when the pastures are ready. The 150 acres of flats will ultimately provide good fattening country for cattle, while the easy lying hills will be ideal for sheep. Forty men have been given employment in the development work in the latter months of the year.

On the Waima Bush property an area of 550 acres which had been logged was burnt off, sown, and top-dressed. During the year, which has been a dry one, drains have been dug and the rushes cleared along the flat fronting the main road, and this portion of the farm is now clean and in good order. This flat has a hard clay subsoil, and the new drains should prove invaluable in combating the growth of the rushes and moss, which have been fairly prevalent in the past. Second-growth tea-tree has been cleared, and further logging up was undertaken on the original burn, which was a poor one. Nine men have been given continuous employment over the year.

Following the dry period in the autumn of 1938 there was a slight outbreak of facial eczema, and stock losses were high. The live-stock wintered well, and the wool-clip was satisfactory. The stock tally at 31st March, 1939, was 458 run cattle and 2,394 sheep.

A number of settlers' properties adjoining the Bush farm have been neglected, and the Department has taken them over and is working them in with the main block. The properties concerned are being fenced, logged, cleaned, and burnt, and as soon as the pasture is restored they will be stocked with sheep.

Two new houses have been built, a new wool-shed erected, a sheep-dip completed, and shearing-machines installed.

*Waiomio.*

Situated about two miles from the Kawakawa Post-office and Railway-station, this block contains an area of 1,826 acres. The land varies considerably, containing good raupo swamp, a portion of limestone country, and a large area of good to poor gum land, but it is well watered. At the present time two Native farmers are milking on the block, but they will dispose of their herds this season.

Active developmental work has only just recently started. A Native contractor commenced ploughing in the standing tea-tree, but this work had to be discontinued owing to the dry conditions existing.

There is no resident foreman stationed on the property as yet. Two men employed on standard rates of payment have attended to the repairing of fences and the removal of the big stumps on previously cleared areas. A four-roomed cottage was erected. The block is not yet stocked.