

FIRST 5 PRE-FABS READY

C.T. May 11, 1946

The first five temporary pre-fabricated bungalows to be completed in Melbourne Road, Christchurch, have been handed over to the Town Council by the Ministry of Works and tenants can now move in.

On inquiry at the Town Hall early this week, Christchurch Times was told that the first five tenants—they were selected on a points system some time ago—were being notified at once that their new homes were ready for occupation.

Although much criticised, mainly because of their external appearance these pre-fabs. in their finished state are remarkably well appointed inside and will undoubtedly provide very convenient homes for those at present living under the most cramped conditions.

LABOUR SAVING KITCHENS.

Perhaps the greatest appeal to the housewife will be the kitchen, for in this respect the pre-fab. excels. On one side there are kitchen cupboards, electric cooker, copper sink and draining board, all built in the form of a continuous unit and all constructed of heavily enamelled metal. Provision is also made for a refrigerator. Labour saving is undoubtedly the keynote of these kitchens.

Built-in wardrobes in the bedrooms help to compensate for the fact that these rooms are not as large as most people would like to see, but the main living room is considerably larger than one would imagine from an external view of a pre-fab.

No exterior painting has yet been done, and as ordinary paint is of no use for asbestos, it is understood that the outer walls will eventually be treated in some way. Until that time they must remain their silver grey colour.

Thirty-four more pre-fabs. are now nearing the handing over stage.

The first five tenants to move in will be: Mr. R. W. Crocket, of Sea Corner Stores, Highcliffe; Mr. S. C. Diffey, 3a, Elizabeth Avenue, Christchurch; Mr. P. G. O'Donoghue, 6, Avon Road East; Mr. H. A. Whitelock, 109, Barrack Road; Mr. A. Stevens, "St. Mary's," Clarendon Road.

HOW TENANTS FEEL ABOUT IT.

Christchurch Times reporter talked to Mrs. O'Donoghue this week about moving in to a pre-fab. At the time she had not heard that any of them had been handed over for occupation. "My husband will be very pleased when I tell him," she said. "We have only two rooms and the use of a kitchen at present, and as we have three young children you can guess we shall be pleased to have a place of our own."

Her husband, who works at Fairmile House, was a prisoner of war in Germany for five years. He was reported missing early in the war and Mrs. O'Donoghue heard nothing of him for about a year. Their family consists of a girl, aged 5, a boy, nine months, and an adopted two months' old baby.

Another family selected as tenants, Mr. and Mrs. R. A. W. Crockett, when visited by one of our reporters, said they had heard nothing of the selection, although Mr. Crockett had been to the Town Hall the previous day to make enquiries.

Mr. Crockett, who has been in the R.A.F. for eighteen years, met his wife in Canada, where he was posted as instructor. He was released on medical grounds, and is now 100 per cent, disabled

NO PROPER BATH FOR A YEAR.

For over a year now they have been living over the Sea Corner Stores, Highcliffe, which has a kitchen and two bedrooms. Apart from the place being, in the words of Mr. Crockett, as "damp as a tomb," and as a result of which, he contended, one child had pneumonia, there is only one bathroom. This has to be shared between 23 persons. "We have been here a year," said Mr. Crockett, "and we haven't had a proper bath. All we have is a small galvanised iron bath, which we use to the best of our ability."

“We know we shall be happy in the pre-fabs.," said Mr. Crockett, “it seems an ideal place.” Mrs. Crockett added that the kitchen in this house was the best she had seen in this country.

Mr. and Mrs. Crockett have two children, both girls, one aged five, and one aged eight months.