

1877.

NEW ZEALAND.

PURCHASE OF LAND FROM THE NATIVES.

(REPORTS FROM OFFICERS.)

Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly by Command of His Excellency.

No. 1.

The UNDER SECRETARY, Native Department, to LAND PURCHASE OFFICERS.

(Circular letter N.L.P. 155-2.)

SIR,—

Native Office, Wellington, 17th May, 1877.

I have the honor, by direction of the Hon. Mr. Ormond, to request that you will be good enough to furnish for general information a report of your land-purchase transactions since the 1st July last. This report is intended to be printed as a parliamentary paper, and should contain the fullest information. You should state the number of blocks of land purchased by you during the year, the number under negotiation of purchase, the area, whether surveyed or under survey, the price per acre, the amount of money paid or to be paid on the several blocks, and the approximate date upon which you consider the purchases will be completed; whether the land has been individualized by the Native Land Court, or applications made for hearing; the capability of the land, whether suitable for settlement, agricultural or pastoral purposes; together with such other information as you may consider necessary.

The report should be accompanied by a tabular statement containing detailed particulars, and forwarded to this office not later than the 30th June next.

I have, &c.,

HENRY T. CLARKE,
Under Secretary.

No. 2.

Mr. J. W. PREECE, Auckland, to the UNDER SECRETARY, Native Department.

SIR,—

Auckland, 26th June, 1877.

I have the honor to forward, for your information, a return in three parts, showing the progress of the land-purchase operations in my district—namely, that to the North of Auckland—during the past year, stating the number of blocks purchased, the area and cost of the same, the number of blocks the purchase of which is nearly completed, and the number under negotiation, together with such other information as I am able to give, and to report generally on the same. Table I. shows the completed transactions—namely, twenty-nine blocks, containing in the aggregate 50,919 acres, which have been purchased at a cost of £5,302 10s., being at the rate of a fraction over 2s. 0½d. per acre, exclusive of survey and incidental expenses. The area purchased contrasts very unfavourably with that of the land purchased by me last year, which was nine blocks, containing 182,198 acres; but the amount of work which this year's transactions have entailed has been much greater than that of last year, which may be partly accounted for by the fact that the number of blocks exceed the latter by twenty. Very large payments had also been made by way of deposit, which left the balance to pay on closing the transactions very small when compared with the number of persons among whom it had to be divided, many of whom had not participated in the primary payments. Many of the owners also were scattered about in various parts of the North, and had to be sought out at their several settlements. These circumstances, together with the ordinary difficulties which one has invariably to contend against in purchasing land from the Natives, rendered the completion of these transactions far more difficult than they would have been had the negotiations never been initiated.

The twenty-nine deeds relating to these blocks represent the signatures of 263 persons, a large proportion of whom had to be sought out by myself, accompanied by a Resident Magistrate and Licensed Interpreter, in distant and out-of-the-way settlements.

Table II. shows the transactions nearly completed, being three blocks containing in the aggregate 3,689 acres, at a cost of £330 16s., being at the rate of a fraction over 1s. 10d. per acre, of which £305 15s. has been paid, leaving a balance of £25 1s. to pay.

There have been obtained to the three deeds relating to these blocks 119 signatures out of the 125 persons named in the titles. Of the six who have not signed, four are dead, one is an infant, and one I have been unable after fruitless efforts to meet with, but will, I believe, turn up shortly—thus, with those shown in Table No. I., making a total of 382 signatures obtained to deeds relating to thirty-two blocks of land, of which three only are incomplete.

All the blocks in these two first tables have passed the Native Land Court, and were held under titles thereunder prior to the deeds having been prepared.

Table III. shows the incomplete transactions, and represents twenty-three blocks, of which thirteen are surveyed, and contain 43,687 acres, and ten unsurveyed, estimated to contain 79,900 acres, making a total of 123,587 acres by estimation. Of these twenty-three blocks, only five have been adjudicated on by the Native Land Court, one of which is the portion of the Pakiri Block held under Crown grant but not yet subdivided by the Court, but the portion under agreement for sale is estimated to contain 20,000 acres. I have therefore put it down as unsurveyed, as it practically is, unless it should be decided to purchase the interests of all the parties.

It will be observed by referring to the return that this Pakiri Block has had very large sums of money paid on it by way of advances on the purchase money—namely, £1,920, being within £295 of the whole amount of deposits paid now outstanding on land in the whole district, excepting a small sum paid on Kaipatiki and Onekuri by Mr. John Sheehan, through Messrs. Armstrong and Dignan, for the Provincial Government, the particulars of which I have never been able to ascertain, and have therefore no information to enable me to state what payments have been made thereon.

With regard to the Pakiri Block, I have, by instructions, done nothing in the matter; but, as far as I can understand, the purchase cannot be completed until some legislation takes place by which it and land similarly affected can be dealt with.

The interests of two out of three of the nominal owners (who were adults and are now dead) have fallen into the hands of infants, whose trustees have no power by law to sell, although they have received large sums by way of deposit. This matter was referred to Colonel Haultain for inquiry, as Trust Commissioner under the Native Lands Frauds Prevention Act, and he has, I believe, gone fully into the matter and reported thereon.

Kaipatiki Block is similarly affected, by one out of ten persons having died before the transaction was completed; and although the deceased had received a large proportion of his share of the money, the successor had no power to deal with it. Oikura, in Table II., is in the same position. Fifty-eight persons have signed the deed; two died before there was an opportunity for them to sign the deed. Both these men were principal owners, and had received a large proportion of the deposit money. The successor to one has been appointed, and is an infant, and consequently cannot complete for his father, although his family are quite willing for him to do so. No successor has yet been appointed to succeed the other deceased persons, but the probability is the same will occur as in that instance. Although these appear merely matters of detail, I mention them as instances showing the necessity of giving Trustees or the Court, on good cause being shown, power to join with adults in the sale of lands where infants succeed to interests in property originally held by adults.

You will observe that of the incomplete transactions there are surveyed 43,687 acres. The purchase of these would have been complete by this time, and the deeds forwarded to Wellington, had I been able to have got Courts held in Hokianga, the Bay of Islands, and Whangarei during the months of April and May, as I was desirous of having done, and mentioned in my progress report for the month of March. These blocks, and some others which will be ready by that time, can be completed immediately after the Courts are held at the places named; at the same time, I think, as the winter season is not a desirable time for assembling large numbers of Natives together, and as by the spring of the year there is likely to be a new Native Land Act, it would, perhaps be as well to postpone the Hokianga and Bay of Islands Courts until the amended Act comes into force. At Whangarei there are no complications in the titles, so it is not of so much importance.

I see no reason myself why the whole of these incomplete transactions should not be completed in six months, provided there is no delay in having Courts held, and the surveys completed of those yet unsurveyed; but these are matters over which I have no control, consequently I cannot undertake to say how long it may take to complete them.

Of the fifty-one blocks, the negotiations relating to which were initiated by Mr. Brissenden and handed over to me to carry out, thirty have been brought to a successful issue and closed; eight, on which no payments had been made or expense incurred, have been abandoned; leaving thirteen yet on the list and incomplete. Of these, three blocks—Te Mata, Mokau, and Te Whau—£120 has been paid to Natives claiming to be owners. These lands are said to be already the property of the Crown, and they have been from time to time withdrawn from the operation of the Native Land Court by the District Officer, but the Natives still contend that they are the owners.

I have now your instructions to have this question brought before the Court, in order that a proper title may be obtained either in favour of the Crown or the Natives, as the Court may direct.

Three other blocks, Tautoro, Mataki, and Nuhaka, have had advances made on them amounting to £125. I consider the purchase of these impracticable, and I do not think there is much probability of the money being recovered.

Besides these and the Pakiri Block before referred to, there is only one block of Mr. Brissenden's purchases incomplete on which any money has been paid—namely, the Tarairi Block, containing 915 acres, on which £50 has been advanced. This purchase will be completed when the Court sits at Hokianga.

With regard to the capabilities of these Northern lands, taking the purchases as a whole (that is, those concluded during the last three years), there is a very large extent of rich land, particularly in the Hokianga District and on towards Whangape and Victoria Valley, fit for settlement, but being covered with bush, it would not suit the ordinary class of settlers. I am of opinion that these lands may be made a source of great prosperity to the Auckland District were they opened up by main trunk roads and settled on in a systematic manner by emigrants from either Canada or Nova Scotia, for they would get a ready market for the larger timber such as totara and kauri, and would be settled on extremely rich land, adjacent to or within easy reach of a magnificent harbour, abounding with all kinds of fish during every season of the year. The climate is genial, and at the same time capable of producing in the valleys most tropical fruits. No doubt, for the first few years the settlers could not expect to make more than a bare living, but I feel confident that if the land I refer to were settled on by the right class of men, having a little means to begin with, and the land on fair terms, that in the course of five years they would be on a fair way to prosperity of no small degree.

The land I particularly refer to includes the Manganuiowae, Takahue, Uwhiroa, Puhata, Otangaroa, and other blocks, the purchase of which are complete, and contain about 80,000 acres.

In order to make these blocks more valuable, it is desirable to acquire the portion of land between Manganuiowae Block and the Hokianga Harbour; this land is now under negotiation for purchase, and is named in Table III. hereto Motukaraka and Tapuwae. There is some difficulty connected with the purchase of these blocks, but I believe I will be able to overcome them in time, and get the consent of all the parties interested; but I can do little or nothing until the Court sits to determine the ownership of Motukaraka Block, which is the greatest proportion of the whole. After that is once settled, I believe I shall be able to get the survey of the remaining portion completed.

There are other blocks in the valleys adjacent to other tidal streams in Hokianga which are of equal value.

The land extending from the head of the Kaihu Valley, in Kaipara, towards Hokianga Heads, is partly good soil, partly valuable kauri timber, and the remaining portion of inferior quality; the portion near Hokianga Heads, namely Waimamaku, is well adapted for a sheep-run.

To the back of these lands, and at a much greater elevation, are the Waoku Blocks, which, although somewhat difficult to approach, contain the richest of soil, being table-land, and covered with light forest. The blocks on the Mangakahia and Wairoa are partly valuable kauri forest, partly light forest with good soil, and partly open poor land. The lands purchased and under negotiation in Whangarei are chiefly forest, and fit for settlers used to bush-clearing, and partly open land of second quality.

In the Bay of Islands and Mangonui Districts the lands purchased are not of so good a quality as in the other districts. A few small purchases in the Lower or South Kaipara are good soil fit for cultivation and farming purposes.

In conclusion, I would state that there have been completed by the various officers engaged by the Government in the purchase of land to the North of Auckland, during the last three years, about 450,000 acres, the largest quantity of which, it will be noticed by a reference to a plan of the district, is so connected as to form two large compact blocks, one to the North of Hokianga, extending towards Ahipara and Mangonui, the other to the South of Hokianga, extending to the head of the Kaihu Valley, and eastward to Mangakahia, both of which, as I have before stated, contain a considerable area of good and serviceable land, and is, I consider, taken as a whole, a most valuable estate.

I have, &c.,

J. W. PREECE.

The Under Secretary, Native Office,
(Land Purchase Branch,) Wellington.

Enclosure 1 in No. 2.

TABLE I.—COMPLETED TRANSACTIONS.

RETURN of LANDS Purchased to the North of Auckland, from 1st July, 1876, to 30th June, 1877, the Deeds of Conveyance relating to which have been Fully Executed, certified to by the Trust Commissioner under the Native Lands Frauds Prevention Act, registered and forwarded to Wellington.

District.	Name of Block.	Area.	Purchase Money paid.		Date of Conveyance.	Date when Deed was forwarded to Wellington.	Nature of Title.	Number of Signatures to Deed.	General Remarks, Capabilities, &c.
Kaipara	Taungako ...	2,115	£	s. d.	18 May and 26 July, 1876	13 April, 1877	Memorial of Ownership ...	25	Good agricultural land, open on Kaipara River.
Mangakahia	Opuhete ...	348	35	0 0	18 Sept., 1876	3 Feb., "	"	1	Good land, light bush, suitable for settlement if country was more opened by roads.
Whangarei	Kioreroa ...	3,891	507	0 0	21 "	3 "	"	2	Suitable for grazing purposes, soil second-class, near town of Whangarei.
"	Te Tihitahi ...	4,138	517	0 0	22 "	3 "	"	4	Bush land, partly volcanic, partly kauri, suitable for small settlers.
Whangaroa	Unuhia ...	3,936	295	0 0	9 Oct., "	3 "	"	8	Poor land, only fit for rough run, adjoining other Government land of similar nature.
"	Opuhiiti No. 1	186	23	5 0	9 "	3 "	"	3	Good soil but hilly, valuable, being near the township.
Bay of Islands	Tukuwhenua ...	2,743	300	0 0	21 "	13 April, "	"	52	Poor soil, only fit for rough run, adjoining other Government land of similar nature.
"	Waihoanga No. 2	481	65	0 0	23 "	13 "	"	2	Very fair land, suitable for settlement.
Whangaroa	Tokakopuru No. 2	90	13	10 0	23 "	13 "	"	18	Kauri forest.
Bay of Islands	Pukewhariki	2,552	185	0 0	24 "	13 "	"	6	Poor land, only fit for rough run, adjoining considerable area of Government land.
Hokianga	Waimatanui	*3,728	465	0 0	24 "	13 "	"	7	Good land, all light bush, excepting about 500 acres kauri.
Bay of Islands	Rakauwahi ...	1,422	93	0 0	24 "	6 "	"	8	Poor land, only fit for rough run, adjoining Pukewhariki.
Hokianga	Te Horo ...	132	20	0 0	1 Nov., "	13 "	"	2	Good land, on one of the Hokianga tidal rivers.
"	Oue ...	1,348	332	10 0	7 "	6 "	"	8	Rich land, fronting Hokianga Harbour.
"	Taihoa ...	223	50	0 0	10 "	13 "	Crown Grant ...	7	Bush land of fair quality.
"	Oue No. 2 ...	260	32	10 0	9 "	13 "	Memorial of Ownership	22	Bush land of good quality, adjoining Oue.
"	Aratihatotara No. 2	2,097	368	0 0	17 "	13 "	"	40	Good rich land, partly light bush, fit for settlement.
"	Ngatuka ...	1,762	170	0 0	17 "	13 "	Crown Grant ...	15	Good land, fronting Hokianga Harbour.
Bay of Islands	Awawaroa ...	49	12	5 0	28 "	6 "	"	2	Fair average land, situate within a block formerly purchased.
"	Mangaparuparu	27	6	15 0	28 "	6 "	"	1	"
"	Pukakakaka	26	6	10 0	28 "	6 "	"	1	"
Mangonui	Epakauri ...	1,600	27	0 0	8 Mar., "	13 "	Memorial of Ownership	4	"
"	Te Tauroa ...	10,510	175	0 0	8 "	13 "	"	4	Good land, bush, adjoining other Government land of similar nature.
"	Orowhina ...	6,562	984	0 0	8 "	13 "	"	4	Courthouse Reserve, good land.
"	Mapere No. 2	4	10	15 0	8 "	13 "	"	1	School Reserve, good land.
"	Mapere No. 2	29	4	0 0	8 "	13 "	"	1	Rich soil, adjoining Ohia-avai Township.
Bay of Islands	Puketapu No. 5	82	82	10 0	10 April, "	23 May, "	Crown Grant ...	1	Rich soil cultivated by Natives.
"	Te Karu ...	417	52	0 0	2 May, "	27 June, "	Memorial of Ownership	11	Rich land, light bush.
"	Waimahutuhuta	161	20	0 0	2 "	27 "	"	3	"
		50,919	5,302	10 0				263	

* The area of the Waimatanui Block is 4,260 acres, but one of the eight grantees refuses to join in the sale, so I have agreed to cut him off 532 acres, which will leave the above area as the size of the block. At the same time the deed of conveyance from the seven disposes of their right, title, and interest over the whole block.

Enclosure 2 in No. 2.

TABLE II.—TRANSACTIONS NEARLY COMPLETED.

RETURN of LANDS Purchased to the North of Auckland, from 1st July, 1876, to 30th June, 1877, the Conveyances relating to which are only Partially Executed.

District.	Name of Block.	Area.	Purchase Money.	Amount paid to Date.	Balance of Purchase Money to pay.	Nature of Title.	No. of Signatures obtained to date.	No. of Signatures to obtain.	Cause of Delay in completing Title.	Capabilities.
Hokianga ...	Wairau (part of)	A cres. 1,239	£ s. d. 92 0 0	£ s. d. 91 3 0	£ s. d. 0 17 0	Memorial of Ownership	55	1	Awaiting Succession Order ...	Rough open land, only suitable for run, adjoining a large tract of Government land of similar nature.
"	Waitaba ...	344	68 16 0	45 12 0	23 4 0	Crown Grant ...	6	3	Two awaiting Succession Orders, one absent	Good land, fit for cultivation.
Bay of Islands	Oikura ...	2,106	170 0 0	169 0 0	1 0 0	Memorial of Ownership	58	2	One infant, and one awaiting Succession Order	Poor land, fit for rough run, adjoining a considerable area of Government land of same nature.
		3,689	330 16 0	305 15 0	25 1 0		119	6		

Enclosure 3 in No. 2.

TABLE III.—INCOMPLETE TRANSACTIONS.

RETURN of LANDS under Negotiation for Purchase to the North of Auckland the Conveyances relating to which have not been prepared, to 30th June, 1877.

District.	Name of Block.	Area estimated marked thus.*	Amount of Purchase Money agreed on or estimated.*	Amount of Payments to date.	Nature of Title. Whether adjudicated on or not.	When Purchase is likely to be completed, and cause of present delay.	Capabilities of Land and General Remarks.
Hokianga	Tairārei ...	Acres. 915	£ 106 15 0	£ s. d. 50 0 0	Not yet adjudicated on; claim in.	As soon as Court sits at Hokianga.	Soil good, undulating; light forest.
	Tautehere ...	693	104 0 0	...	Memorial ordered; awaiting consent of some of the parties, and survey of adjoining lands.	When Motu Karaka and Tapuwae are settled for.	"
	Motu Karaka and Tapuwae; portion surveyed, 8,374 acres; unsurveyed, estimated at 5,000 acres	13,374	Not fixed, but about 3s. per acre.	...	Not yet adjudicated on; claims sent in for hearing.	The surveyed portion soon after Court at Hokianga; the other first Court after.	"
Bay of Islands	Otaruru, 6,860 acres; Hue Hue, 5,277 acres	12,157	Not fixed, about 1s. 6d. per acre.	...	Not yet adjudicated on; Crown Grant; awaiting Succession Order.	...	Good soil, light forest, but broken.
	Te Kowhai ...	73	18 5 0	...	Not adjudicated on; claim in for hearing.	"	Good soil.
	Puketutu ...	6,050	756 5 0	...	Not adjudicated on; claim in for hearing.	As soon as Court sits at Whangarei.	Fair quality; partly bush.
Whangarei	Te Taheke, 3,810 acres;	6,553	819 2 6	...	Not adjudicated on; claim in for hearing.	"	Soil most indifferent; good along river; coal; ordinary forest; some valuable kauri.
	Waipareira, 2,743 acres	...	...	...	Not adjudicated on; no claim in for hearing.	It is uncertain whether these blocks will be purchased; price not agreed to by Natives.	Soil indifferent; broken, but contains coal and kauri forest; adjoining above.
	Waitomotomo ...	*25,000	*At 2s. 6d per acre.	...	Not adjudicated on; no claim in for hearing.	When Court sits at Whangarei.	Open, second quality land; good along river banks. Kauri forest.
Kaipara	Papakauri ...	...	...	...	Not adjudicated on; claim in for hearing.	...	Kauri forest and other bush; fair average soil.
	Omaikao ...	*10,000	At 3s. per acre; agreed on.	...	...	Uncertain; purchase suspended at present by instruction.	Kauri and totara forest.
	Kaipatiki ...	3,777	450 0 0	...	...	...	Rich lands, suitable for farms; South Kaipara.
Bay of Islands	Onekara ...	*20,000	2,000 0 0	1,920 0 0	Title Grant held by Trustees for	...	Broken land, chiefly forest. The whole block contains 31,408 acres, but one out of three owners has not agreed to sell. The other two owners are infants. Their Trustees have signed an agreement to sell, but they have no power by law at present to carry it out.
	Pakiri ...	...	...	...	...	...	Poor land.
	Mokau ...	451	...	20 0 0	Claim dismissed on hearing	{ These lands are said to be the property of the Crown already. Surplus lands. }	"
Mangakahia	Te Mata ...	4,644	...	40 0 0	"	{ Owners will not sell; I consider these purchases impracticable. }	Unsurveyed, position indefinite.
	Kotake and Te Whau	*15,000	...	60 0 0	"	...	"
	Mataki ...	*500	...	30 0 0	Not adjudicated on.	...	"
Mangakahia	Tautoro and Patutumu	*3,600	...	65 0 0	"	...	"
	Nuhaka ...	*800	...	30 0 0	"	...	"
	...	123,587	...	2,215 0 0	...	...	"

* Where price or acreage is estimated it is marked thus*. NOTE.—The amounts advanced on these purchases were all paid prior to the transactions having been handed over to me for completion.—J. W. P.

No. 3.

Mr. JAMES MACKAY to the Hon. the MINISTER for PUBLIC WORKS.

SIR,—

Thames, 31st July, 1877.

In accordance with your request, I have the honor to report on the state of land purchases in this district; and I regret that my attendance at the Native Land Court at Ohinemuri prevented my doing so at an earlier date.

In a recent communication you pointed out that several blocks of land under negotiation had been shown in my returns for two years as being "nearly completed," and no further progress had been made in acquiring them; and you further assumed that this arose from my having more work in hand than I could accomplish, and suggested that Mr. J. W. Preece should assist me in completing the purchase of those blocks.

In reply to that statement, I have the honor to inform you that the non-completion of the purchase of the blocks indicated arose from circumstances over which I had no control.

In the case of the Omaha West No. 1 Block the land was granted to twenty-five persons, twenty-four of whom executed a deed of conveyance to the Crown, the remaining grantee (Hohepa te Rauhihi) refused to sell, through Hauhau scruples.

The Onetai No. 1 Block was granted to nineteen Natives, seventeen of whom executed the deed of conveyance. Hohepa te Rauhihi was a grantee, and again declined to sell. The other grantee (Marara Hauata) died, and a succession order for her interest has not been made by the Native Land Court.

The Omaha West No. 2 Block was granted to forty-one persons, thirty-four of whom executed the deed of conveyance; seven refused to sign. At the last sitting of the Native Land Court the shares of three of the dissentients were apportioned to them in land, and the other four have since agreed to sell their interests.

Omaha West No. 3 Block was granted to ten persons; nine have executed the deed of conveyance, and one (Hone Mahia) is in the King country.

Onetai No. 2 Block was granted to ten persons, six of whom have executed the deed of conveyance; four declined to do so in consequence of some of their relations being buried on a part of the block. After lengthened negotiations they have agreed to make a reserve of the burial-ground, and their claims can be arranged for.

Mangakirikiri No. 1 and No. 3 Blocks were granted to sixteen persons (eight in each); nine signatures have been obtained to the deed of conveyance; the other grantees died. It was only at the last sitting of the Native Land Court that succession orders were made in favour of the heirs of the deceased persons.

Ruaapekapeka Block was granted to six persons; five have executed the deed of conveyance, the sixth is at Taranaki with the Hauhaus, residing in the interior of that district.

Whitipirorua Block was granted to nine persons; five have executed the deed, one objects to do so, and three are absent from this district.

Te Weiti Block was originally granted to nine persons. The principal of these died, and his son Te Tarapa, who was already a grantee, succeeded to his interest. The eight shareholders then agreed to sell 5,000 acres of the block to the Crown in order to defray the expenses of the *tangi* for Maka Puhata's death. Before the deed could be completed another grantee (Eparamia te Wheoro) died. The seven remaining duly executed the deed of conveyance for the eight interests held by them (Te Tarapa having his own and that of his deceased father, Maka Puhata). It only then remained to arrange for the claim of Eparamia te Wheoro being conveyed (he had joined in the first agreement and received the money). I applied to the Native Land Court, through Mr. J. W. Preece, to award to the Crown Eparamia te Wheoro's share in the 5,000 acres sold to the Government, and to grant a succession order for his interest in the remainder of the block to his heir, an infant. The Court would not entertain the claim of the Crown, but decided in favour of the infant over the whole. This has effectually prevented the completion of the deed of conveyance, and there appears to be no remedy but to make a reserve for the infant's interest.

Having mislaid your letter, I am unable to remember exactly the remainder of the blocks which you requested me to allow Mr. J. W. Preece to assist in the purchase of; but they are all, I believe, delayed for similar reasons. I would also draw your attention to the fact that the largest proportion of the work has been accomplished, and it is to my direct interest to complete the conveyances as soon as possible in order to receive my commission on the purchases alluded to, which cover a considerable area, and, as seen in a pecuniary sense, is of importance to myself. I will next proceed to allude to other blocks under negotiation, and which you desired me to complete personally.

The Moehau or Cape Colville Block has for generations been a fertile source of dispute between the Ngatitamatera, Ngatinaunau, Ngatiwhanaunga, and Ngatimaru tribes. I have held numerous meetings to settle the disputes and arrange the subdivisions of the block. This has at last been accomplished to the satisfaction of all concerned. Ample reserves have been made for the requirements of the Ngatitamatera tribe, which have been marked off on the plan and deed of conveyance, but requiring survey to indicate the exact position on the ground.

The Waikawau and Ohinemuri cases are so closely intermingled, in consequence of both blocks being owned by the Ngatitamatera tribe, that it has been found impossible to deal with them separately. It happens that some of these people are very obstructive Hauhaus, which has retarded the final arrangement of both questions. I am happy to report that the objectors are gradually giving way; and that on my recommendation they recently requested the Native Land Court to adjourn all the cases in which they were interested from Shortland to Ohinemuri. The Court was adjourned there accordingly, and resulted in the opposing faction becoming thoroughly disunited; and they are now more inclined to come to terms. When it is remembered that on a former occasion, when the Native Land Court attempted to hold a sitting at Ohinemuri, it was compelled to desist through the obstinacy and violent conduct of the Hauhau party, it will perhaps be allowed that considerable progress has been made in the right direction.

The purchase of the Aroha Block was progressing most favourably, and a very large majority of the owners had executed the deed of conveyance to the Crown, when unfortunately Mr. Broomhall arrived at Ohinemuri, to inspect the lands in that neighbourhood. I very foolishly gave him every facility to visit Te Aroha Block, and, to prevent him having to ask questions from Natives there about the land, despatched my own Interpreter (Mr. Guilding) with him. On his return, he expressed himself pleased with the country, and said he would like to acquire it for his special settlement. I then drew his attention to a few points: Firstly, that the Native title was not extinguished, but believed it soon would be. Secondly, that the Natives who were living there would require some reserves. Thirdly, that the public would not be satisfied at the hill lands being granted to him, unless the right to mine for gold was reserved by the Crown. Fourthly, that there were several persons at the Thames who had been promised land for settlement there. Fifthly, if he wished to apply for the block he had better not make his application public or it might very materially interfere with the cession of the block. Mr. Broomhall thanked me for the information, and promised to be very careful not to make his application public. He proceeded to Auckland, and forthwith made an application to the Waste Lands Board for 47,000 acres of Te Aroha Block. The Waste Lands Board illegally dealt with him, and agreed to his proposals; overlooking the fact that they had no right to deal with lands over which the Native title had not been extinguished, and which were not under their control until declared by the Governor, by *Gazette* notice, to be waste lands of the Crown. Reports of the proceedings of the Waste Lands Board were duly published in the Auckland newspapers. The Maoris were informed by interested Europeans that the Government had sold 47,000 acres to Mr. Broomhall at 20s. per acre, and I was not paying them 5s. for it. Some twenty-five Natives of Ngatirahiri refused to sign the deed, and the purchase remains incomplete to this day. A very serious quarrel then took place between the Natives who had sold and conveyed their interest in the block, and the obstructive party; the latter returned to Te Aroha, and erected a fighting pa; and the Ngatitamatera portion of the former placing booms across the Waihou at Ohinemuri, to prevent the return of Ngatirahiri to Hauraki, and building a pa to protect the booms. The Ngatipaoa and Ngatiwhanaunga tribes wished me to allow them to proceed to Te Aroha and drive off or kill this handful of Ngatirahiri, in consequence of curses they had uttered against them. Had I encouraged this step, it would have been taken. I visited the Aroha on three occasions, and was threatened with violence, and had several bullets fired over my head. After a considerable time had elapsed, a better state of feeling was brought about between the contending parties; and I must here mention the valuable aid given to me by Mr. Puckey, the Agent for Native Affairs in this district, and Wirote Hoterene Taipari, Native Assessor, which principally enabled me to renew negotiations for the outstanding claims.

Considerable progress has been made with the Waihou West, Waitoa, and Piako Blocks, which are adjacent, and cannot well be separately dealt with. The Waihou West Nos. 1, 3, and 4 Blocks have passed the Native Land Court, and the deeds of conveyance are in course of execution by the grantees. The Waihou West No. 2 Block, was withdrawn from the Court on account of a very serious dispute as to a boundary, which arose between the Ngatihako (aided by Ngatipaoa) on the one side, and Ngatitamatera on the other. The survey was stopped by an armed party of Ngatihako. It has been arranged for certain men, who have been specially selected by both sides, to investigate and settle this question. This has for a time delayed the survey of the portion of the large Piako Block which here marches with the lands of Ngatihako and Ngatitamatera. There is also a dispute between the Ngatipaoa and Ngatimaru, as to the position of the north-west boundary of the Orua block, owned by the Ngatimaru. This has been left to arbitration by men specially selected by both tribes. The non-fulfilment of the arrangement for the exchange of the lands comprised in Webster's old land claim at Maukoro on the western side of the Piako (now owned by Mr. Whitaker) for lands elsewhere, as arranged between the Government, the chief Tarapipipi te Kopara, and Mr. Whitaker, has been a fruitful source of discontent, and has caused much interference with the surveyors. I am, however, happy to say this obstruction is now removed, and the surveys are progressing as fast as the season of the year will permit in low-lying country.

The friendly Ngatiraukawa claiming the Patatere Blocks are very anxious to arrive at a final arrangement about their country; in several instances they are willing to dispose of the freehold, instead of leasing the lands as formerly arranged. The Haubau portion of the owners have so far been able to delay the negotiations; but the firm stand taken by the loyal portion of the tribe, and the pressure they are bringing to bear on them, is beginning to be felt, and will probably in a short time induce the withdrawal of the opposition.

The other blocks under negotiation require but little comment from me. The surveys and preliminary agreements have been made, and on the title being investigated by the Court there will be but little difficulty in procuring the conveyances, as the lands are situated where there is no European competition, and no Natives with Haubau proclivities.

The blocks which present the greatest obstacles to their acquisition are those situated at Ohinemuri, Waihou East and West, Te Aroha, Waitoa, and Piako. This partly arises from the peculiar state of the title in that portion of the district, owing to the claims of the conquering Marutahu tribes being intermixed with those of the semi-conquered remnant of the original owners of the land. So troublesome are these to determine, that Judge Munro, at the recent sitting of the Court at Ohinemuri, in a case of this character, about a block of four acres, observed from the bench that "There was more trouble in deciding the title to it than there would be in the case of a block of ten thousand acres to the north of Auckland, where vassal tribes are unknown."

Another matter which in that portion of the district tends to retard the completion of Government purchases is that very high prices have been paid during the last two years to the European holders of land at Waikato, Upper Piako, and Waitoa, by purchasers from the South Island and elsewhere, which is well known to the Natives. Land agents and interpreters now find it greatly to their interest to outbid the Government purchaser, and thus induce the Natives to repudiate agreements which have previously been undisputed. As a rule, the private purchaser offers at least twice the sum agreed to between the Native and the Government Agent, and in cases of very eligible blocks sometimes five or ten times the amount.

Under the Native Lands Act now in operation, the Crown is utterly powerless to protect itself, as agents are not allowed to act in Court. Natives who are well known to be principal owners and occupiers of lands which have been sold to the Crown, and who have signed agreements to sell, have occasionally withdrawn from their claim, or have not pressed it in the Court as against outside claimants or counter-claimants, or have secretly plotted to agree to the claims of non-owners, for the purpose of securing additional payments, or to upset previous arrangements made with the Government. These proceedings could in a great measure be checked if the Crown Agent had power to appear in Court on behalf of the Government, cross-examine such false claimants, and call witnesses to rebut their evidence.

When the Government Agent has negotiated for the purchase of a block of land, and agreements have been duly signed, in my opinion it would be advisable that he should be empowered by law to make an application to the Native Lands Court to investigate the title of the Crown to the lands in question. After due notice had been given, and the Court investigating the claim, the Court should be empowered to award to the Crown the whole or such portion of the lands forming the subject of the agreement as should appear to have been fairly purchased. A certificate of title or memorial of ownership could then be issued to any owners who were proved not to have joined in the agreement to sell. At present the Native seller or claimant is the only person who can make an application to the Court to investigate the title to a block of land; and as a practical illustration of how this provision works, I will mention a case in which I purchased a large block of land for the Government. Four of the Native owners (also vendors) put in an application for the investigation of their claim. Everything required by law was done, but to my astonishment, on the day of hearing, the principal man of the four claimants rose in Court and withdrew the claim. The Court assented to the application. I objected on behalf of the Government. The Court, after some deliberation, said the Governor must appear personally, and that I had no *locus standi*, as the law enacted that agents could not appear.

In cases where lands are held by Natives under Crown grant, and the Crown acquires by purchase the fee-simple of a portion of the block only, the Crown ought to be entitled to have its claim to a subdivison heard; and the land should be apportioned between the Crown and the grantees who declined to dispose of their interest.

It frequently happens that where the Crown makes purchases of granted lands, all or some of the owners require certain pieces to be reserved from sale. The case of all the owners asking for a reserve is not so difficult to deal with, as the alienated portion would belong to the Crown and the unalienated part to the whole of the grantees, but the Crown's title would be clogged with a covenant to produce title-deeds, a very undesirable state of affairs with Crown lands. In the case where only a portion of the owners required a reserve, the matter becomes more complicated. It is my opinion that reserves should be dealt with in somewhat the following manner: The reserves should, if possible, be marked off on the ground before the final completion of the deed; failing this, a memorandum should be attached to the deed setting forth the area of the reserves and the situation as nearly as possible, the names of the proposed owners, and all necessary information. The original grant should then be cancelled, the conveyed portions be declared to be waste lands of the Crown, and fresh grants be issued to the persons entitled to the reserves as soon as correct survey plans were lodged with the Inspector of Surveys.

I have the honor to transmit herewith a tabular statement showing the position of land purchases undertaken through my agency.

I have, &c.,

The Hon. the Minister for Public Works, Wellington.

JAMES MACKAY.

Enclosure in No. 3.

RETURN OF PURCHASES COMPLETED during Year 1876-77.

District.	Name of Block.	Area.	Purchase Money.
		Acres.	£ s. d.
Hauraki	Tawhitirahi	1,464	219 6 10
"	Omahu West	1,157	300 0 0
"	Papatai	460	69 0 0

RETURN OF PURCHASES in course of COMPLETION for which DEEDS are partly executed.

Hauraki District.

Name of Block.	Area.	Payments to Date.	REMARKS.
	Acres.	£ s. d.	
Te Aroha	62,552	12,859 13 0	204 signatures to deed.
Omahu West No. 1	212½	50 0 0	24 " " 1 required.
" No. 2	992	230 0 0	34 " " 7 "
" No. 3	390	90 0 0	9 " " 1 "
Onetai No. 1	1,137½	82 10 0	17 " " 2 "
" No. 2	359½	31 0 0	6 " " 4 "
Mangakirikiri No. 1	1,683	179 5 6	6 " " 2 "
" No. 3	1,673	120 15 6	3 " " 5 "
Ruaapekapeka	1,260	305 17 0	5 " " 1 "
Te Horeti No. 1	1,240	140 17 0	8 " " 12 "
Owhao	311	49 10 0	7 " " 1 "
Witipirorua	1,245	148 10 0	5 " " 4 "
Moehau	72,000	8,556 18 9	51 " " "
Waikawau	44,161	8,300 0 0	41 " " "
Te Weiti	5,000	681 6 0	7 " " 1 "
Coromandel Foreshore	848	130 0 0	3 " " "

Blocks for which Agreements are signed.

Name of Block.				Area.	Payments to Date.			REMARKS.
				Acres.	£	s.	d.	
Haratanga	...	...	...	8,891	196	0	0	
Waiau	...	...	...	400	20	0	0	
Ohinemuri	...	...	...	132,175	787	17	0	Deed of grant executed, 3d. per acre. Commissioner paid 1d. per acre, to be paid when purchase completed.
Waitotara	...	...	...	707	20	0	0	
Wharekawa East No. 1	...	...	...	10,754	678	0	0	
Puriri Block	...	...	...	2,500	175	0	0	
Kerita	...	...	...	1,098	74	0	0	
Ahirau	...	...	...	3,000	205	0	0	
Pukerangiora	...	...	...	400	70	0	0	
Waihou East and West	...	...	...	50,000	3,469	6	0	Deeds of a portion at Ohinemuri now in course of signature.
Waiharakeke Block	...	...	...	8,230	385	0	0	
Te Tipi	...	...	...	3,881	290	0	0	
Waimoko and Petone	...	...	...	4,000	52	10	0	
Ipuki o Mochau	...	...	...	1,769	6	0	0	
Manginahae	...	...	...	147	15	10	0	
Karaka South	...	...	...	175	55	0	0	
Ounouru	...	...	...	5,095	120	0	0	
Oteao	...	...	...	2,500	101	0	0	
Piako	...	...	...	200,000	16,510	14	5	
Patatere	...	...	...	249,000	3,843	0	0	Originally to lease, now in greater part altered to purchase.

No. 4.

Mr. HENRY MITCHELL, Rotorua, to the UNDER SECRETARY, Native Department.

SIR,—

Rotorua, 30th June, 1877.

In accordance with your instructions of the 12th instant, I have the honor to furnish herewith a report showing the progress made with the land-purchase business in the Taupo, Rotorua, and Bay of Plenty Districts during the past year.

On the 30th June, 1876, the Government land negotiations within these districts were suspended by direction of the late Sir Donald McLean, then Native Minister; and the operations, when resumed, were, and have since been, confined chiefly to preparing the several unfinished transactions for survey and investigation of title by the Native Land Court, the Government having directed that all the lands under negotiation not previously clothed with a legal title be passed by that tribunal. In February last, accordingly, the district was opened to the Court's jurisdiction by Proclamation issued under the hand of His Excellency the Governor, revoking that of August, 1873, whereby this country had been withdrawn from the operation of the Native Land Act. The necessary steps were then forthwith taken, and claims for all unadjudicated blocks of land under negotiation on behalf of the Crown were made by the Natives, and forwarded through the District Officer to the Chief Judge of the Court.

Meetings were also held at Taupo with the grantees of Runanga No. 2, Tauhara Middle, Tauhara North, and Oruanui Blocks, with the view of settling the difficulty hitherto delaying the completion thereof, which I may here state in detail for your information.

Runanga No. 2: 45,400 acres; lease for thirty years, at £100 per annum for the whole term.—Title, Crown grant in favour of ten individuals, nine, only of whom agreed to and signed the deed of lease; the tenth, Maihi Maniopoto, still holding out, a claim was made by him for excision of his interest in the block, and forwarded to the Court. Two reserves of timber made by the nine grantees and the Land Purchase Agents cannot be defined until the excision of this interest is made; but immediately afterwards I have arranged to have this done, and the deed of lease will then be complete, with plans of the reserves indorsed thereon, and forwarded to the Government.

Tauhara Middle: Lease, 93,871 acres.—Title, Crown grant, in favour of six individuals, two of whom have since died. The lease to the Crown was agreed to and signed by the four original grantees and by the two persons who were declared by the Natives to be the successors to the two deceased grantees. It was afterwards discovered that one of these successors was only one of ten persons who were duly recorded by Judge Rogan as the successors to one of the deceased grantees; and, further, with the exception of one (the individual who had signed the Government lease), these successors were minors at the time of appointment. The other grantees and the Natives generally repudiated the idea of allowing these minors to delay a settlement of the purchase and lease of Tauhara Middle; and Judge Rogan himself, on being spoken to on the subject, counselled our ignoring the question in so far as it affected Government transactions; but the Chief Judge held that the minors appointed by the Court could not be safely ignored: and this obstacle to the completion of the purchase and lease of these blocks has continued to exist up till now. As far as regards the leased portion, the remedy appeared to be the appointment of a guardian who would act for the minors; and the Native Minister, when at Taupo in the month of March last, advised the Natives to adopt this course; but on our meeting them they failed to fix unanimously upon one or two persons as guardians. We accordingly obtained applications from the parties to the lease, praying the Government to appoint a guardian for the minors, and also, as an alternative remedy, an application to the Court, asking that the minors' interests be defined and excised from the block, in order that the remainder may be dealt with by purchase and lease, according as the adult grantees may decide.

Since the publication of the draft of the proposed Native Lands Act, 1877, whereby provision is about to be made for the removal of these "minors in succession difficulties," it would appear that it might be well to delay bringing this case before the Court now, so that a final remedy be provided under the new law, and this course will probably be adopted if no better solution of the difficulty be possible.

Oruanui Block: Purchase, 10,000 acres; and lease, 20,000 acres.—Title, Crown grant, in favour of ten grantees. A successor had to be appointed to a deceased grantee, and we obtained a unanimous application in favour of one individual as this successor, who signed the deeds, together with one of the grantees (Wi Warena) who had hitherto refused to sign unless at an increased rate of rental to what all the others had agreed upon. Having obtained this form and signatures, and forwarded same to the Court, it was considered advisable to fix the date of commencement of the Government lease. As already reported the date of Oruanui lease was fixed by Captain Mair and self from the 10th July, 1875; and a sum of £50, representing one year's rent, was paid to the ten grantees for the year 1875-76. The deeds of Oruanui will be forwarded to Wellington as soon as the Court actually appoints the successor referred to, and when his signature is attested before a Resident Magistrate, or the Judge of the Court. I also arranged the reserve which the grantees stipulated for at Oruanui pa, and made a preliminary survey of same on the ground.

Tauhara North: Purchase, 7,829 acres.—Title, Crown grant, in favour of two individuals. After duly agreeing to this sale, and the deeds completed and forwarded to Wellington, an objection was raised by the grantees to the direction of the Northern boundary, and they refused to satisfy the questions asked by Major Roberts, who was acting for Colonel Haultain, the Native Lands Trust Commissioner. Since then the chief grantee (Hare Rewiti te Kume) has expressed himself satisfied, and wishes to accompany me on to the ground to fix the direction of the line as laid down on the deed. The line of purchase was a due North one, running from Hipaua to the Waikato River; but was not surveyed on the ground, it not being considered necessary to incur the expense. I intend shortly accompanying both grantees on to the ground, so as to finally arrange this matter. Arrangements were then made by self and the District Officer with the Native owners for the survey of two extensive blocks at Mohaka under negotiation for purchase, and proposed now to be taken before the Court at its first sitting at Taupo. Under approval of the Surveyor-General's Department, I employed Mr. Thomas Hallet as my assistant for these Mohaka surveys, he being a competent surveyor and also a resident runholder in the locality, and who would be able to take advantage of the weather when suitable for surveying in that bleak and rugged region. After traversing the Mohaka boundary of both blocks the winter set in, and operations had to be suspended until the spring. Sufficient data is now obtained, however, to enable me to compile sufficiently accurate maps for the investigation of title by the Court.

The surveys of Tatua West Block and Te Hukui next occupied attention, and a general consent was obtained to the latter work as soon as the services of a surveyor could be given by the District Surveyor, Captain Turner, of Tauranga. The survey of Tatua is very anxiously looked for by the section who were decided by the Court in 1869 as the owners (Hitiri Paerata, Te Papanui, and party), and who, in 1874, leased the land to the Government. But there is also a considerable opposition to the survey from sections ignored by the Court and by us, the Government Land Purchase Agents. This opposition consists of a Hauhau section, who are supposed to uphold the King's policy of anti-leasing or selling land, and of a Queenite section, headed by old Poihipi Tukairangi, who professes to ignore the judgment of the Court, because no survey was permitted by the Natives within the twelve months allowed by the Court on issuing its interlocutory order. Claims have now been sent in to the Chief Judge, so that the interlocutory order of 1869 may be sustained, or else a fresh investigation take place. But before either of these courses can be taken the survey must be made. I intend meeting all the sections interested in the Tatua, with the District Officer, and hope to clear away the opposition which has so long existed to a settlement of the disputes regarding the ownership of this tract of country.

The sitting of the first Court in the Arawa country is now fixed to take place at Taupo, on the 20th August next; and the business mentioned in the foregoing is all duly set down for hearing on that occasion.

After concluding these arrangements in the Taupo District, attention was directed to the incomplete negotiations at Maketu, in the Bay of Plenty. The survey of Te Puke Block was recommenced by Mr. Edgcombe, of the Surveyor-General's Department, and completed without any very serious interruption, thanks to the amicable understanding established by the Hon. Dr. Pollen with the Ngati-whakaue tribe at Tauranga in January last, and due also to the tact, energy, and discretion displayed by Captain Mair, the District Officer, who conducted throughout the whole of the delicate and troublesome negotiations connected with this important work. The surveys of the other Maketu Blocks will be proceeded with as soon as the surveyor can overtake the work; and, having held a consultation recently in Auckland with the Chief Surveyor and the District Surveyor, it has been decided to adopt the original Native Land Court surveys for the Government transactions, and only to survey any new boundaries which may be required to define same. This will greatly simplify and lessen the work for the surveyor, and no delay need take place in bringing all the Maketu negotiations before the Native Land Court immediately after the Taupo sitting. At the same time it may be remarked that it would seem wise to delay the hearing of these cases until the proposed provisions for protecting the interests of the Crown over lands under negotiation have been secured under the new Act, otherwise the action of private speculators may prove troublesome.

The following is a list of the blocks of land which have been prepared or are now under survey for the Native Lands Court, showing areas:—

LANDS, TAUPU DISTRICT.

Hilly Pastoral.

	Acres.
1 and 2. Mohaka, 2 blocks, purchases, under survey	60,000
3. Taharua, purchases under survey	14,000
4. Runanga No. 1, lease; claim for hearing sent; surveyed	43,000

[*Inspected and found to be worthless soil and limited area.*]

Opakau, advances to be placed against Ngatirangitahi lease.

[*Ngatihineuru, the owners desire this.*]

Opureke, advances to be placed against Runanga No. 1. lease.

Kahakaharoa should remain as it is, pending further arrangements which may be made with Te Heu Heu and *hapu* for completion of this transaction. This block is the only timbered land abutting on the shores of Taupo Lake, and its possessions must at some time become of importance to the public. The area will probably be found to contain several thousand acres. An investigation into the title took place in 1875 before Major Scannell and Captain Mair, when all the leading men of Taupo gave evidence, and the result was held to be distinctly favourable to the claims of Te Heu Heu, who made this agreement of purchase with Mr. Locke and myself on behalf of the Government in 1873. I would recommend, therefore, that this negotiation be followed up when a favourable opportunity occurs.

I have, &c.,

The Under Secretary Native Department.

HENRY MITCHELL,

Land Purchase Officer.

No. 5.

Captain PORTER, Gisborne, to the UNDER SECRETARY, Native Department.

SIR,—

Native Office, Gisborne, 29th June, 1877.

I have the honor to furnish the following report of my land-purchase transactions since the 1st July last:—

In the accompanying tabular statement, details of areas, prices, &c., are given.

Completed purchases to date are—

									Acres.
Waitahaia	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	50,067
Aorangi-wai	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	7,268
Total	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	57,335

the deeds of which are now in Wellington.

2. In course of completion, thirteen blocks containing a total of 45,360 acres.

3. Unsurveyed, not yet adjudicated by Native Land Court, but for which applications are gazetted, three blocks, estimated to contain 25,000 acres.

Several of the deeds of conveyance of the blocks shown as in course of completion are actually completed, but, owing to the land having passed the Court on a plan approved as a sketch one only, I am unable to forward deeds till a certified map is submitted to the Court by the District Surveyor. No judgment has yet been given on the Papatipu Block (but investigation of title is complete), owing to one of the survey lines not being closed. The same is the case with the Taitai Block, but, as surveyors are now making corrections, I shall at the earliest opportunity request the District Officer to move for a judgment of the Court.

In reference to two of the unsurveyed blocks, Tututohora and Pukeamaru, I would mention that, owing to a spirit of opposition on the part of a factious *hapu* at Waipuu, tutored by Henare Tomoana and other representatives of the Napier Natives, I have not been able to get the lands surveyed without possibly causing a difficulty. This obstacle, however, no longer exists, and the surveys are to be proceeded with at the end of July next. The Maungawaru Block it is contemplated to survey about October.

In describing the capabilities of the land, I may do so connectedly so far as regards the following blocks, which are contiguous—namely, Aorangi-wai, Aorangi-wai No. 1, Waitahaia, Te Ngaere (two blocks), and Maungawaru. The front portions of these lands along the Mata River are well adapted for special settlement, as the low-lying portions are fitted for agriculture and the hills for grazing. The back portions of Waitahaia and Te Papatipu are principally forest, and will not be used for settlement until lands in the other portion of the district become occupied; the land itself is of a good quality, as is remarkable with all other lands throughout this East Coast District—much superior to other parts of New Zealand, which may be principally attributable to the mildness of the climate, laying so far eastward.

The Tututohora and Pukeamaru Blocks do not come under the foregoing description, being situated at the other end of the district round East Cape; both are close to the coast but are principally forest. Tututohora is quite level, and contains a good deal of totara timber.

Taitai is situated near Aorangi-wai, and is easy of access, and well adapted for pastoral purposes.

In former reports from myself and S. Locke, Esq., recommendations have been made to open up this country by a main line of road from the head of the Poverty Bay Valley to Waipuu, which, by the natural features of the country, will, I feel assured, in course of time become a necessity as the population increases; and I do not doubt that so soon as the lands negotiated by Mr. J. A. Wilson are completed the Government will see the advantage of opening up a road, and thus greatly enhance the value of the public purchases.

Relative to the probable time by which all transactions may be completed, I would point out the peculiar exceptional difficulties I have to contend with in my district. In the first place, the ownership of the land is very numerous, attributable to Ngatiporou being a large tribe occupying comparatively but a small area of country. One of my purchases will illustrate this—viz., Korakonui: 605 acres, 103 owners; proportion of purchase money to each, 12s. This is a fair sample of my purchases. The next difficulty is the manner in which grantees are scattered all over the district, entailing a great deal of travelling to obtain signatures, which duty has to be performed in the presence of a Licensed Interpreter and Resident Magistrate—a very irksome and unnecessary provision in the Land Act, as I often lose opportunities of obtaining signatures of grantees presenting

themselves. I also labour under the disadvantage of not having a centre of population, such as Gisborne, to induce grantees to attend and receive their money, which, as pointed out, is generally so small an amount that it would be unreasonable to expect them to travel any distance to obtain it. I can, however, safely say the thirteen blocks shown as in course of completion will be completed within six months. I cannot state any date for the unsurveyed lands, as I am entirely dependent upon the Survey Department and Native Land Court. I shall, however, urge completion of surveys and investigation of titles.

In concluding this report, I may mention that the service has worked smoothly, and I have received valuable assistance from the several departments of Native Land Court, District Officer, and District Surveyor; and further that I have not created any feeling of dissatisfaction among the Natives, nor given grounds for cause of complaint against the working of the policy.

I have, &c.,

T. W. PORTER,

Land Purchase Officer.

The Under Secretary, Native Office, Wellington.

STATEMENT referred to in foregoing.

1. *Purchases Completed.*

Blocks.	Area.	Rate per Acre.	Purchase Money.
		s. d.	£ s. d.
Waitahaia	50,067	2 6	6,258 7 6
Aorangi-wai	7,268	2 7	936 14 0
	57,335		£7,195 1 6

2. *Purchases in course of Completion.*

Blocks.	Area.	Rate per Acre.	Purchase Money	Payments to date.	Remarks.
		s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	
Te Papatipu	21,591	2 9	2,968 15 0	3,127 15 5	Known collectively as "Te Ngaere."
Aniwaniwa	3,650	2 6 $\frac{3}{4}$	467 13 2		
Te Ngaere	1,046	...	134 0 4		
Ouemahanga	1,375	...	176 3 6		
Opouwhetu	1,678	...	215 0 0		
Whakaironui	2,822	...	361 11 5		
Te Angaanga	1,162	...	148 17 8		
Te Roto	1,137	...	145 13 6		
Korakonui	605	2 2 $\frac{1}{4}$	66 3 6		
Horehore	1,125	2 6 $\frac{3}{4}$	144 3 0		
Arawhahati-Hikurangi	3,882	2 6	485 5 0	310 0 0	Payments are incorporated with Aorangi-wai, completed under No. 1 section.
Aorangi-wai No. 1	1,917	2 7	247 12 3		
Taitai	3,370	2 6	421 5 0	310 0 0	
	45,360		£5,982 3 4	£3,437 15 5	

3. *Land unsurveyed, not adjudicated by Native Land Court.*

Blocks.	Estimated Area.	Rate per Acre.	Purchase Money.	Payments to date.	Remarks.
		s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	
Tututohora	5,000	1 6	375 0 0	200 0 0	Less cost of survey.
Pukeamaru	5,000	1 3	312 10 0	150 0 0	"
Maungawaru	15,000	not	arranged	400 0 0	Lighthouse site.
East Cape Island ... ..	...	...	...	...
	25,000		687 10 0	750 0 0	

Totals—No. 1 ... ..	...	...	...	...	Acres.
No. 2 ... ..	...	...	...	...	57,335
No. 3 ... ..	...	...	...	...	45,360
					25,000

127,695

No. 6.

Mr. S. LOCKE, R.M., Napier, to the UNDER SECRETARY, Native Department.

SIR,—

Napier, 18th May, 1877.

I have the honor to forward the following report on the present position of land purchases on the East Coast:—

This district up to the end of last year was divided into three—viz., Hawke's Bay, under charge of Mr. J. P. Hamlin; Poverty Bay, under charge of Mr. J. A. Wilson; and Waiapu, under charge of Captain Porter. On the 31st December last Mr. J. A. Wilson ceased his connection with Government, and a short time after I was requested to take the general supervision of all the Government land-purchase negotiations on the East Coast. Before entering into the present state of the lands under negotiation, I would, in a few words, state how the question stood on the 1st of January. In Hawke's Bay, negotiations were in a forward state for the purchase of about 20,000 acres on the banks of the Mohaka, the Rotokakarangu Block, and 100,000 acres of land situated between Wairoa and Poverty Bay, on the inland road, known as the Hangaroa Block; also considerable advances had been made on the Mangatainoko Block, at the Wairarapa end of the Seventy-Mile Bush. At Waiapu, the Waitahaia Block, of 50,000 acres, had been acquired by Captain Porter, besides several blocks of smaller extent. In Poverty Bay, by the return furnished me, there were stated to be fifty blocks of land under negotiation, thirty-eight of which were stated as for purchase; this includes the Waikohu-Matawai, and Motu, 111,461 acres (these two blocks also appear under head of leases); and twelve for lease, the aggregate acreage under head of purchase, including the two above blocks, amounted to 438,000 acres. Of these, the title for one block only, containing 248 acres, the Tologa Bay township site, acquired by Mr. Wilson from Captain Read, was actually complete; another block, containing 180 acres, Karamumono, returned as complete, required the signatures as consenting parties of some of the husbands of the grantees, as did also some of the other deeds partly signed. Fifty thousand acres in that return are situated in the Bay of Plenty District. About 50,000 acres Mr. Robert Cooper sets a claim to, although caveats have been filed in this case, those lands having been proclaimed under the 42nd clause of "The Public Works Act, 1871." Seven thousand four hundred acres had been acquired by a private speculator, leaving only about 47,000 acres in a position to proceed with negotiations, barring the Motu and Waikohu-Matawai Blocks; there remaining some twenty-five blocks, containing about 182,000 acres, still to pass the Court, and consequently to be negotiated for. The majority of these blocks had not been gazetted, and many not applied for hearing by the Land Court. Advances had been made as instalments on the above blocks of lands, varying from 1s. 4d. to £2000. Of the twelve blocks stated as for lease, estimated at 237,000 acres, the title to one block, the Motu only was completed, the signatures of Arapera and Wi Pere having to be obtained to complete the title of the Waikohu-Matawai. None of the remaining blocks had passed the Court, and 100,000 acres in two blocks, on which an instalment of £142 had been paid, had not been surveyed. There are now 175,700 acres, including the above, yet to pass the Land Court. It may be argued that, as a number of signatures had been obtained to some of the above blocks under the head of purchased lands which had passed the Court, an acreage in proportion to the number of signatures obtained had been acquired, therefore that things were so far completed. Were the memorials of ownership or grants under joint tenancy such would be the case, but "The Native Lands Act, 1873," clauses 59 and 62, is very explicit on the point that all parties must sign before a purchase or lease can be considered complete. The few last signatures to a deed are found in practice the most difficult to obtain, and if not obtained, the expense, delay, and trouble of a sub-division is necessary. During the month of February I was principally employed in the Poverty Bay District obtaining information in regard to the lands under negotiation, this being necessary, as very few records of what had been done were left in the offices there; and also in seeing to the passing through the Land Court of the four blocks situated between Wairoa and Poverty Bay, known as the Hangaroa Blocks, containing 100,000 acres; and subsequently in arranging the price of those lands with the owners. During March I attended the Land Court at Waiapu, and in company with Mr. Baker, District Inspector of Surveys, and others, inspected the lands under negotiation to the North of Poverty Bay, towards Waiapu. During this trip signatures were obtained sufficient to nearly complete the few blocks in that part of the country in a position to treat with through having passed the Court; signatures of the husbands of grantees who had previously signed deeds were also after much trouble obtained. During the late sitting of the Land Court at Waiapu all the lands being negotiated for by Captain Porter for Government passed the Court, and are now on a fair way of being concluded. All the lands in the Hawke's Bay District under negotiation by Government have also passed the Court, and are being pushed on towards completion, the Poverty Bay District alone being left in such a backward state in regard to these important points. This backwardness is to be attributed to a considerable extent to not having had applications sent in for publication by the Land Court as soon as negotiations for the purchase or lease of any block of land had commenced. Had this been done at the time, all the cases for hearing would have been gazetted and heard by the Court as opportunity offered. I would now beg to urge on the Government the necessity of having these lands gazetted, and that a Court be held in the district without delay. I would state, in regard to the quality and means of opening up of these lands, that a great portion of the country is fully up to the average grazing country on the East Coast, and could be opened up by roads at no great outlay; to accomplish this end careful exploration would be necessary. I have stated in previous reports on this district that a dray road could be made by way of the oil springs, from Poverty Bay to Waiapu, which, with branch roads to the coast, would be the means of opening up these lands for settlement. A bridle road has been made from Poverty Bay to Wairoa through the lands being purchased, of such a grade that at not a great expense it could be turned into a passable dray road. I would point out one great difficulty, besides the important question of minority, to be met in dealing with lands passed under "The Native Lands Act, 1873,"—namely, the number of persons to be dealt with in the memorial of ownership in some cases amounting to over 300, of all ages and sex, and without proportionate shares having been allotted. This is also most unfair

to the real chiefs and principal owners, as no distinction is made between them and the person who by the Maori custom had only a right to use land required for his maintenance, with the tacit understanding that a portion of the crops should go to the chief or lord of the manor in way of royalty. As the question now goes, it is found that the smallest owners, having once got their names inserted in the memorial of ownership, expect as much payment as the others, and the difficulties surrounding a subdivision are much increased. Such a state of things is not in accordance with Maori custom, whatever it may be else.

The Under Secretary, Native Department.

I have, &c.,
S. LOCKE.

No. 7.

Mr. J. P. HAMLIN, Napier, to the UNDER SECRETARY, Native Department.

SIR,—

Napier, 4th July, 1877.

In accordance with the instructions contained in your letter of the 17th May, 1877 (N.L.P. 155-2), I have now the honor to furnish the following report of all my land-purchase transactions on behalf of the Government since the 1st July last:—

I have held my report over till the last moment, in hopes that I should have been able to complete the purchase of the Tauwharetoi and Rotokakarangu Blocks; but owing to disappointments on the part of the Natives this has not been accomplished. I regret that, for various reasons, I have only been able to complete the purchase of one small block of land during the past year—namely, Makahei, containing 500 acres, for £100, or, say, 4s. per acre. The great length of time occupied in the survey and passing of the land through the Court, coupled with the fact of there being in each block a very large number of grantees to deal with, have been the chief causes of delay.

There are under negotiations of purchase six blocks, namely,—

No. 1. Tauwharetoi, containing 56,680 acres, surveyed and passed through the Court; price agreed to be paid £6,000, equal to a little over 2s. 1½d. per acre. Twenty-eight signatures are still required to complete this purchase, on which there is a balance unpaid of £842.

No. 2. Rotokakarangu Block, in Upper Mohaka, containing 19,640 acres, surveyed and passed through the Court; price agreed to be paid, £2,000, equal to about 2s. 0½d. per acre. To complete the purchase of this block seven signatures are required, on which there is a balance to be paid of about £290 14s. 8d. This block is suitable for a cattle or sheep run. It also contains a great deal of valuable totara timber.

No. 3. Whakaongaonga Block contains 18,640 acres, and part of Hangaroa-Matawai, 4,200 acres, in all 22,840 acres, surveyed and passed through the Court; price agreed upon, £5,000, equal to about 4s. 3½d. per acre. I intend proceeding to Gisborne, as soon as time will permit of my doing so, to settle about the division of money amongst the different *hapus*.

No. 4. Tuahu Block, containing 10,852 acres. There has been no price fixed for this block. This I hope to do on my next visit to Wairoa.

No. 5. The Waihu Block, 13,800 acres, leased to the Crown for twenty-one years, at a rental of £200 per annum. In this block I have purchased four interests out of twelve, for the sum of £840. On my next visit to Gisborne I expect to purchase more interests. The block is a very valuable one, and quite suitable for a special settlement.

No. 6. Mangatainoko Block, in the Seventy-Mile Bush, contains 70,000 acres; no price fixed; amount paid on account, £1,325 1s. I am sorry to say the completion of the purchase of this block has been delayed through a long-standing dispute among the different *hapus* of Rangitane tribe.

Tauwharetoi, Whakaongaonga, Tuahu, and part of Hangaroa-Matawai Blocks contain a large quantity of clean land suitable for pastoral purposes. About three-quarters of the total area is open fern land, about 5 per cent. of which is fit for agricultural purposes.

None of the blocks under negotiation of purchase by me have been subdivided, but they have all been surveyed and passed through the Native Land Court. The unusually large number of grantees that have been put into the different blocks has greatly retarded the completion of my purchases. It is difficult to fix precisely the time on which these several purchases are likely to be completed. Should nothing stand in the way, I hope to complete Rotokakarangu early next week; Tauwharetoi on my next visit to Gisborne, within a month or six weeks; Whakaongaonga and part of Hangaroa-Matawai—in fact all the inland Wairoa Blocks—on my next visit to the Wairoa, say within the next three months.

I have, &c.,
J. P. HAMLIN,
Land Purchase Agent.

The Under Secretary, Native Department,
Wellington.

TABULAR STATEMENT OF LAND PURCHASE NEGOTIATIONS.

Blocks Purchased.	Blocks under Negotiation of Purchase.	Area.	Price per Acre.	Amount of Money to be Paid.	Amount Paid.	Pastoral, Agricultural, or otherwise.	Surveyed or under Survey.	Date on which Purchase likely to be Completed.
		Acres.	s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.			
Makahei	...	500	4 0	Nil.	100 0 0	Pastoral and agricultural	Surveyed	Completed.
	Tauwharetoi	56,680	2 1½	842 0 0	5,158 0 0	Pastoral and partly timbered	"	Incomplete.
	Rotokakarangu	19,640	2 0½	290 14 8	1,709 5 4	" "	"	"
	Whakaongaonga and Hangaroa	22,840	4 3½					
	Tuahu	10,852	Not fixed					
	Waihu	13,800	"	...	840 0 0	Good for settlement	"	"
	Mangatainoko	70,000	"	...	1,325 1 0			

J. P. HAMLIN,
Land Purchase Agent.

Napier, 4th July, 1877.

No. 8.

Mr. CHARLES BROWN, C.C., to the UNDER SECRETARY, Native Department.

SIR,—

New Plymouth, 30th June, 1877.

In reference to your letter of the 17th May last (N.L.P. 155-2), requesting a report of my land-purchase transactions since the 1st July last, I have the honor to transmit the enclosed tabulated statement, in which I have included the confiscated land on which compensation has been given to the former owners of it. I am not aware of any matter deserving of notice outside of the enclosed tabulated return.

I have, &c.,

CHARLES BROWN,
Civil Commissioner.

The Under Secretary, Native Office, Wellington.

**TABULAR RETURN showing LAND-PURCHASE TRANSACTIONS of CHARLES BROWN, Civil Commissioner
New Plymouth, from 1st June, 1876, to 31st May, 1877.**

Name of Block.	District.	Surveyed or under survey.	Estimated Area.	Price per acre.	Total amount paid to 31st May, 1877.	When Purchase may be completed.	Whether individualized or hearing of Native Land Court applied for.	Capabilities: whether suited for settlement, agricultural, or pastoral purposes.
			Acres.		£ s. d.			
Ngarauru ...	Wairoa	Not surveyed	40,000	Not fixed	20 0 0	Uncertain	Confiscated land	Agricultural.
Okahutiria ...	Patea	Surveyed	15,592	2/6	1,917 12 0	Completed	"	Agricultural (small portion clear, rest forest).
Opaku ...	"	"	24,160	2/6	3,110 6 0	"	"	Agricultural (forest).
Waingongoro to Opaku (Patea)	"	Now being surveyed	60,000	2/4	2,417 2 1	In about two months	"	Small portion clear, rest forest (agricultural).
Waimate ...	Ngatiruanui	Not surveyed	Not known	Not fixed	*100 0 0	Uncertain	"	Agricultural (greater part open land).
Taumatamahoe	Ngatimaru	"	"	"	100 0 0	"	Hearing not yet applied for	Agricultural (principally forest).
Witinui	"	"	50,000	"	100 0 0	"	Hearing applied for	"
Mangaere ...	"	"	100,000	"	100 0 0	"	"	"
Mangimingi ...	Patea	"	20,000	"	"	"	"	"
Te Rahui ...	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"

* The £100 advanced on this block has since been refunded to the Public Account.

New Plymouth, 30th June, 1877.

CHARLES BROWN,
Civil Commissioner.

No. 9.

Mr. JAMES BOOTH to the UNDER SECRETARY, Native Department, Wellington.

SIR,—

Wanganui, 28th June, 1877.

I have the honor herewith to forward a detailed report of land-purchase operations in my district for year ending 30th June, 1877.

The total amount of land purchased is not so great as that of previous years. This result has been owing to several causes; amongst others, I may state that in my capacity of officer in charge of a very large Native district, I have had a number of duties to perform, which have interfered very materially with purely land-purchase operations, some of those duties detaining me for several weeks at a time in various and distant parts of the district. Another reason I may state is the difficulty I find in dealing with some of the claimants. Since the last session of Parliament some of these men have adopted the repudiation principles of a section of Natives on the East Coast, and although they refrain from active open opposition, yet by persistently absenting themselves from all meetings called for the purpose of completing purchases, they have been able very seriously to interrupt our operations.

One of the officers of the department (Mr. R. Booth) has during the year visited Natives residing in distant parts of the country—Taupo, Tauranga, Waikato, and other places—for the purpose of obtaining signatures of the absentees from this district for final completion of purchases.

Owing to difficulties peculiar to all dealings with Natives in land-purchase operations, it is impossible to state positively when the whole of the purchases will be completed. In the detailed report I have ventured in some cases to give an approximate date of completion.

I may state, in conclusion, that during the year every possible effort has been made to close up the work. During the ensuing year no effort will be spared towards the attainment of the object in view. I need hardly add that a persistent determination to close purchases at once would certainly have the effect of raising the price of land, and would also possibly cause still further delay.

I have, &c.,

JAMES BOOTH,
Land Purchase Officer.H. T. Clarke, Esq.,
Under Secretary, Native Department, Wellington.

LIST OF COMPLETED PURCHASES IN THE MANAWATU-KUKUTAUAKI DISTRICT, with remarks thereon.

No.	District.	Name of Block.	Area.	Purchase Money.	Date of Purchase.	Title.	Remarks.
1	Waikanae	Maunganui	19,600	£ 800 0 0	Jan. 14, 1874	Certificate	The blocks here bracketed form one continuous block, containing 55,000 acres, more or less, extending from Waikanae to north of the Otaki River. It is composed of about one-third undulating light bush land, with considerable patches of forest timber—totara, rimu, matai, &c. The rest of the land is hilly; will be available for pastoral purposes when cleared. The eastern portion contains part of the Tararua range; the western portion of the block is easy of access by a proposed line of road laid off by late Provincial Government, and there are easy grades thence to beyond the first range of hills to the eastward. The soil on the flat and undulating ground is of good quality, and the whole block would seem to be suitable for special settlement. The distance by proposed line of road, from the Otaki River to the railway junction at the Upper Hut, is about 25 or 30 miles. I would strongly advise construction of proposed line of road before this land is put into the market. The General Government surveyor is now engaged cutting the boundary lines of the blocks above-mentioned on the westward side, and I would propose that, as the boundaries to the south, east, and north, can be accurately fixed by trigonometrical survey from stations already erected, when survey is completed one certificate should be obtained for the whole, as above described.
2	"	Muaupoko	1,000	0 0 0	June 3, 1875	"	
3	"	Ngawhakangutu No. 2	4,335	700 0 0	Feb. 9, 1876	N. L. C.	
4	"	Ngakaroro No. 2A	1,933	257 10 0	April 18, 1876	Interlocutory	
5	"	" No. 2B	1,933	257 10 0	Jan. 7, 1876	"	
6	"	" No. 2C	1,933	257 10 0	Feb. 4, 1876	"	
7	"	" No. 2D	1,933	257 10 0	May 27, 1875	"	
8	"	" No. 2E	1,933	257 10 0	Dec. 15, 1874	"	
9	"	" No. 1B	6,075	630 0 0	Feb. 8, 1876	"	
10	Otaki	Wararapa	3,788	516 10 0	Dec. 3, 1874	"	
11	"	"	1,050	262 10 0	Feb. 6, 1877	"	
12	"	Waihoanga No. 4	9,370	1,457 10 0	Dec. 3, 1874	"	
13	"	" No. 4	200	50 0 0	Feb. 7, 1877	"	
14	"	" No. 2A	880	220 0 0	Jan. 31, 1875	"	This block of 2,290 acres is a long strip, embracing level land on western boundary, and extending to the Tararua range on the east; there is a narrow strip dividing this block from the one above described. I hope to be able very shortly to complete the purchase, and also of another strip to the northward, which now separates us from other completed purchases. The description of country corresponds with the block above already described.
15	"	" No. 2B	1,410	105 15 0	Nov. 22, 1875	"	
16	"	" No. 3D	1,503	128 0 0	Feb. 11, 1876	"	
17	"	Pukehou No. 5E	1,000	90 0 0	June 12, 1875	"	
18	"	" No. 5D	1,000	87 10 0	May 28, 1875	"	
19	"	" No. 5C	2,422	200 0 0	Feb. 11, 1876	"	
20	"	" No. 5B	2,422	220 0 0	Feb. 16, 1876	"	
21	"	" No. 3	1,685	200 0 0	Feb. 4, 1875	"	
22	"	" No. 2	1,685	200 0 0	Feb. 4, 1875	"	
23	"	" No. 1	1,685	200 0 0	Feb. 4, 1875	"	
24	"	Manawatu-Kukutaauaki No. 4A	4,420	550 0 0	Feb. 3, 1875	"	
25	"	" No. 4G	2,355	421 17 6	Feb. 3, 1875	"	
26	"	" No. 4B	561	400 0 0	June 2, 1875	"	The western portion of this block of 21,000 acres, more or less, contains some of the finest land in the district; it is easy of access, and well adapted for settlement; it is lightly timbered, and will grow anything. The eastern portion corresponds with the block above described. There are two blocks between this and the Muhunua purchased land, on one of which Government has a lien. Some of claimants are absent at Waikato and Tauranga, consequently we have not been able to complete purchase. The other block cannot be bought just now, but will come in by-and-by, if required.
27	"	" No. 4C	2,800	398 17 6	Feb. 8, 1875	"	
28	"	" No. 4D	2,813	420 0 0	June 8, 1875	"	
29	"	" No. 4E	2,900	420 0 0	June 8, 1875	"	
30	"	Muhunua No. 3	460	140 0 0	Aug. 4, 1875	"	
31	"	" No. 4	3,500	472 10 0	Feb. 9, 1875	"	
32	Manawatu	Manawatu-Kukutaauaki No. 7C	742	278 0 0	May 13, 1876	"	
33	"	" No. 7B	742	278 0 0	May 12, 1876	"	
34	"	" No. 7A	742	278 0 0	May 12, 1876	"	
35	"	" No. 3	7,550	876 17 6	Nov. 19, 1875	"	
36	"	" No. 2F	1,200	300 0 0	May 2, 1876	"	
37	"	Takapu No. 2	276	103 10 0	Feb. 9, 1876	"	
38	"	Totara No. 3	355	355 0 0	Aug. 2, 1876	"	

This block of 4,000 acres, or thereabouts, extends from the Muhunua Native settlement to the Tararua range. The western portion—say, one third, of the land is very good, and covered with useful timber—totara, &c.; the rest is mountainous, but when cleared will make sheep country. This block of 9,700 acres is all of good quality; western portion easy of access, and well adapted for settlement; the rest is hilly, well adapted for pastoral purposes when cleared. It adjoins the Manawatu-Kukutaauaki Nos. 2E, &c., purchases of which we hope to complete in September next.

Level land; part covered with bush, part swamp, drainable; has a frontage to Manawatu River. Level land; contains some good timber; situated near Manawatu River.

This land is of good quality, mostly under grass; of easy access.

DESCRIPTION OF LANDS under NEGOTIATION, and of which it is proposed to complete purchases.

No.	District.	Name of Block.	Area.	Payments to Date.		Probable amount required to complete.		Total.		Title.	Capability.
				£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.		
1	Manawatu	Manawatu-Kukutaauaki No. 2A	Acres. 12,808	200	11	9	1,299	8	3	Interlocutory order, N. L. C.	{ Covered with light bush, position partly hilly, part undulating; will be available for grazing purposes when cleared. Easy of access from Palmerston, and Fitzherbert Town, suitable for special settlement. ⁽¹⁾ Level land, part of it swampy, but drainable; adjoins purchased block Manawatu-Kukutaauaki No. 7½; easy of access. ⁽²⁾ Bush hilly land, suitable after clearing for sheep or cattle. ⁽³⁾ Level land of very excellent quality; considerable quantity of bush on it—totara, matai, and rimu; easy of access by proposed line of road <i>vid</i> Waikanae. ⁽⁴⁾ Hilly, of good quality. ⁽⁵⁾ Undulating timber, light, fit for grazing after clearing. ⁽⁶⁾ Hill and bush country, fit only for grazing when cleared. ⁽⁷⁾ Hilly bush, fit only for grazing when cleared. ⁽⁸⁾ Undulating light bush, very good soil. ⁽⁹⁾ Hilly bush. ⁽¹⁰⁾ Good open land, mostly in grass. ⁽¹¹⁾ Heavy flat bush, quality good; contains some swampy land. ⁽¹²⁾ Corresponds with above-named block. ⁽¹³⁾ Flat bush and drainable swamp. ⁽¹⁴⁾ 10,000 acres excellent level land; 20,000 acres hilly; all covered with bush. ⁽¹⁵⁾ Represented as fair bush land. ⁽¹⁶⁾
2	"	" No. 2B	12,808	204	0	0	1,296	0	0		
3	"	" No. 2C	12,808	175	0	0	1,395	0	0		
4	"	" No. 2D	12,808	192	11	9	1,307	8	3		
5	"	" No. 2E	12,183	199	0	0	1,301	0	0		
6	"	" No. 2G	800	67	4	6	100	0	0		
7	"	Ohau No. 2	6,360	39	0	0	800	0	0	Not yet passed N. L. C. Certificate of title, N. L. C.	
8	Otagi	Ngakaroro No. 1A	4,400	848	8	0	120	0	0		
9	"	" No. 1C	300	15	0	0	45	0	0		
10	"	Waihoanga No. 1A	460	25	0	0	90	0	0		
11	"	" No. 1C	1,353	45	0	0	90	0	0		
12	"	" No. 3C	1,446	82	0	0	98	15	0		
13	"	Pukehou No. 4	1,000	83	0	0	167	0	0		
14	"	" No. 5A	5,600	30	12	9	300	0	0		
15	"	Rahui	500	48	3	6	...	...	...
16	Manawatu	Middle Aorangi	7,256	505	0	0	1,309	0	0		
17	"	Lower Aorangi	5,250	243	8	7	1,069	1	5	Not passed N. L. C.	
18	"	Tuwahakapua	6,231	529	0	0	1,028	0	0		
19	Rangitikei	Mangoira	30,000	1,660	0	0	2,340	0	0		
20	"	Otamakapua	147,000	3,220	0	0	...	...	...

(1) The negotiations for the purchase of these blocks, known locally as the Kaihinu Blocks, have not been satisfactory during the year. The majority of the claimants have identified themselves with the Reputation party on the East Coast. Several of the claimants, however, in each block who have signed preliminary deeds of sale are quite willing to complete sale, but the other claimants have thwarted all attempts at settlement by absenting themselves from the several meetings which I have called. It is now, however, agreed that a meeting of all the claimants shall be held on 7th of September next. I propose, when the meeting takes place, to make reserves amounting to 4,000 acres in each block, or 20,000 in the whole; and I estimate, if this proposal be agreed to by the grantees, that the rest of the land within the five blocks can be purchased at an average of about 3s. 6d. an acre, which will give the probable required amount as shown in the tabular form.

(2) Several small reserves have to be made out of this block on bank of Manawatu River, amounting probably to 300 acres in all.

(3) Most of claimants to this block are now living at Waikato; hope to be able to complete purchase in spring after Kaihinu meeting.

(4) It is proposed to make a reserve out of this block of 1,220 acres for claimants who do not wish to sell. If the non-sellers will sign the deed sanctioning the sale, subject to reserve before mentioned, the whole will be completed in a month or less; if any of them refuse to sign, we shall obtain a subdivision order, which will cause further delay.

(5) This is a favourite place, known by name of Wai-o-tauru, near Otaki River, but difficult of access; there is 1s. an acre difference between self and owners as to price.

(6) Two of claimants at Waikato; shall not be able to complete purchase until I can further communicate with them.

(7) Some of the claimants are living at Waikato; hope to get it through in a short time; it is desirable to get this and other small blocks to connect completed purchases.

(8) There is great difficulty in getting claimants together; they are scattered about all over the country.

(9) This being a portion of a larger block am unable to complete purchase until Subdivision Order has been obtained through Native Land Court.

(10) There is 6d. an acre difference between claimants and self, which I do not feel justified in advancing; the claimants also wish to reserve 2,000 acres.

(11) All necessary steps have been taken towards putting it through Native Land Court.

(12) Have been unable to complete this purchase, as I understand a promise has been made by Government that there shall be a rehearing of the whole of the Aorangi claims.

(13) Have been unable to complete this purchase, as I understand a promise has been made by Government that there shall be a rehearing of the whole of the Aorangi claims.

(14) This is a desirable block to purchase; it adjoins Fitzherbert Town.

(15) Survey of this land is completed, and it is down for hearing at Native Land Court, Wanganui, 18th July next. Easy of access from Rangitikei settled district; suitable for settlements; adjoins Otamakapua Block.

(16) The late Sir Donald McLean was in treaty, on behalf of the Government, with Renata Kawepo for this land. I am not aware whether an acreage price was fixed.

DESCRIPTION OF LANDS under NEGOTIATION—continued.

No.	District.	Name of Block.	Area.	Payments to Date.	Probable amount required to complete.	Total.	Title.	Capability.
21	Waitotara	Kai Iwi-Waitotara ...	Acres. 8,500	£ s. d. 60 15 0	£ s. d. 2,064 5 0	£ s. d. 2,625 0 0	Surveyed but not passed N. L. C. ; down for hearing July 18, 1877	Hilly bush country ; soil good.
22	Wanganui	Maungaporau ...	16,000	300 0 0	1,700 0 0	2,000 0 0	Survey not passed N. L. C. ; down for hearing July 18, 1877	Hilly light bush ; fit for grazing purposes when cleared.
23	"	Kauautahi ...	Survey not compld.	127 14 2	...	...	...	This land is in the Tuhua country ; it adjoins the Retaruke and Kirikau Blocks ; it is mostly open country, with light soil.

Murimotu Lease : Estimated area, 300,000 acres ; not surveyed. Meetings re survey of a portion of this block have been held during the year at Turangarewa and other places in the Murimotu District. An application for survey of about 100,000 acres was sent to the Survey Department by Topia Iruoa and other residents on the block, with the object of obtaining a title through the Native Land Court. The survey has, however, been stopped by a few Natives, representing three hapas, Ngatirangi, Ngatiwhiti, and Ngaitiana. Ngatirangi were instigated to their course of action by Melia Keepa, Mete Kingi, and other Wanganui Natives. Topia intends to be at Wanganui for the Native Land Court, on the 18th July next, and then possibly some arrangement may be come to.

BLOCKS OF LAND on which ADVANCES have been made, but difficulties exist in the way of completing the Purchases.

No.	District.	Name of Block.	Area.	Payment to date.	Title.	General Remarks.
1	Manawatu...	Manawatu-Kukutauaki No. 7F	Acres. 83	£ s. d. 19 0 0	Interlocutory Order, N. L. C.	A small isolated block on left bank Manawatu River ; ten claimants ; majority absent at Tauranga and Waikato.
2	"	" No. 4F	260	37 2 0	"	Claimants to this block are half-castes by name of Ransfield ; they are anxious to refund the amount of advance, as they are leasing an adjoining block for sheep run.
3	"	Whirokino ...	5,410	97 4 0	"	This is not a very good block ; includes sand-hills near mouth of Manawatu River ; at present under lease by Natives to Mr. J. Davis. I do not think there will be any difficulty in obtaining a refund through the lessee.
4	Otaki	Paruaaku No. 1 ...	200	20 0 0	"	I propose to accept refund in this case. Block being under cultivation and a kainga, a higher price is expected than Government would be inclined to give.
5	"	Wahia o te Marangai ...	1,113	143 2 0	"	This was a totara bush, but Native owners have been cutting the timber extensively, and the supply now is almost exhausted. I propose therefore to accept a refund of advances made.
6	"	Pukelhou No. 5L ...	4,356	55 0 0	"	Some of claimants are anxious to retain this block ; if, therefore, they will promise to make a refund of money advanced within a reasonable time, I would propose to accept, but at same time stipulate for right of road through it.
7	Manawatu...	Olinekakeao or Porokaiaea ...	3,880	138 10 0	Crown Grant, subject to old N.Z. land claims.	I propose to accept a refund from the present lessee, Mr. John Davis.

BLOCKS OF LAND ON WHICH ADVANCES HAVE BEEN MADE—*continued.*

No.	District.	Name of Block.	Area.	Payment to date.	Title.	General Remarks.
8	"	Horowhenua	Acres. 52,000	£ s. d. 64 16 0	Interlocutory Order, N. L. C.	£20 of this money was advanced by me to Rangitirupuni, the principal claimant, with consent of Meihia Keepa and others. Majority of claimants now wish to retain the property in their own hands. I propose obtaining refund through Mr. H. McDonald, lessee of a portion of block.
9	"	Kutukitiran	50	15 0 0	Not surveyed. Application sent in.	There will be considerable delay before this block can be further dealt with. I propose, therefore, to accept refund.
10	"	Parikawan	79	33 0 0	Interlocutory Order	Isolated from rest of Government-purchased land; propose to accept refund.
11	"	Ngawhakarua	50	10 0 0	Certificate	The advance was made at request of late Superintendent of Wellington, Sir W. Fitzherbert; it was then the intention of Provincial Government to bridge Manawatu River at that point; the scheme has now been abandoned. I propose to accept a refund.
12	Otaki	Huritini	1,077	6 0 0	Certificate 17th sec.	Block is now leased by Natives as a sheep run; propose to accept refund through lessee.
13	"	Ringawhati	400 doubtful	125 0 0	"	A considerable block of land north of the Otaki River; was formerly known by name of Ringawhati, and advances made thereon. This land, on passing through Native Land Court, was awarded under other names, and in some instances to other Natives of the same <i>hapu</i> than those to whom the advances had been made. Some of the Natives to whom the advances were so made have promised to refund.
14	"	Tararua No. 2	...	35 0 0	"	This money was advanced by order of late Sir D. McLean, and by his order placed against Tararua. If any money is paid to Ngatiraukawa on account of their claims on this block already purchased by Government, this amount must be stopped.
15	"	Rotowhakahokiriri	16	7 5 6	Crown Grant	One grantee is dead, and delay has been caused by non-sitting of Native Land Court wherein to obtain Succession Order; propose to accept a refund; ground, although good, is isolated from other purchases; price, £2 an acre.
16	"	Muhunua No. 1	1,110	31 9 2	Interlocutory Order, N. L. C.	Committee of House of Representatives on Native affairs last session promised a rehearing in this case; propose to accept refund.
17	Wanganui	Pikopiko No. 3	2,700	101 0 0	Not passed Court	I propose to accept refund.
18	"	Okaka	15,000	175 0 0	Not surveyed	Stoppage of Murimotu survey will hang this block up for some time. I propose if possible to get refund of money advanced.
19	"	Otairi	...	50 0 0	Not surveyed; application made	This block is also connected with Murimotu, and, it will be so long before it can be dealt with, I propose to accept refund of advances.
20	"	Arapakina	10,000	91 0 0	Not surveyed	The above remarks have equal reference to this block.
21	"	Te Kopanga	50,000	50 0 0	"	This block is in the Tuhua country. Natives are now anxious to occupy the country themselves, and stock it with sheep. I think Tioia Turoa might be induced to refund this amount, which was advanced to his uncle, the late Tahana Turoa.
22	"	Hauhungatahi	30,000	50 0 0	"	Have already received instructions from Government not to proceed with this purchase, application to that effect having been made to Government by Native owners through Major Cooper.
23	"	Maketu Murimotu	5,000	25 0 0	"	This block is now tied up by action of Meihia Keepa and other Wanganui Natives <i>re</i> Murimotu lands; propose therefore a refund of money advanced.
24	"	Parae-a-pina	No acreage	25 0 0	"	This block is part of Murimotu, and subject to same difficulties as Maketu.
25	"	Ohineiti	5,000	25 0 0	"	Owing to opposition on part of some of claimants to this block, it has not been possible to have it surveyed. I propose a refund.
26	"	Oteka	7,000	20 0 0	"	This block is North of Waitotara River, and was represented as being inland of confiscated boundary line; it is doubtful, however, if a portion thereof is not within the line; under these circumstances, I propose a refund.
27	Otaki	Ngakaroro No. 6	142	5 0 0	Interlocutory Order	I propose to accept refund in this case.

Wanganui, 27th June, 1877.

JAMES BOOTH, Land Purchase Officer.