

maps have been compiled, the last one—Taupo East—having just been completed. The complete amalgamation of the Lands and Survey Office has not been effected without entailing a considerable amount of extra and over-time work on the part of some of the clerks, and I cannot refrain from mentioning that great credit is due to Mr. Johnston for his energetic efforts in this direction. I am glad to state that our certificates of titles, Crown grants, and leases are well up to date, and the Chief Draughtsman has brought under my notice the able way in which Mr. Kallender has performed his duties of Crown-grant Draughtsman under his direction. The number of certificates of title, perpetual leases, and deferred-payment plans have been 2,181 marginal plans, of an area of 158,708 acres; and of Native titles, including land purchase deeds and partition orders, 293 marginal plans, of an area of 327,330 acres.

The lithographs drawn and printed during the past year have been 24, equalling 3,900 copies, and costing for drawing and printing £163 10s. 6d., whilst the fees received for sale of lithographs, &c., have been £87 1s. 6d.

GERHARD MUELLER, Chief Surveyor.

TARANAKI.

Topographical and Trigonometrical Survey.—Nothing has been done under this heading during the year.

Topographical Survey for Selection under "The Land Act, 1887," including grading roads.—At the beginning of last year Mr. Finnerty, contract surveyor, commenced the survey of roads through the Mangaere and Mangaotuku Blocks, with a view to bring about 9,000 acres into the market, but after the roads were completed it was decided to have the blocks subdivided into sections, ranging in area from 100 to 500 acres, prior to selection. Up to the present nothing further has been done on the ground. In February last Mr. John Annabell was employed on contract to prepare about 10,000 acres in the Upper Waitotara district. He has up to the present graded and surveyed 11 miles of roads, and expects to have his present contract completed about September.

Rural and Suburban.—Mr. Skeet has subdivided 12,500 acres in the Mimi district into twenty-one sections; and Mr. Dalziell 10,084 acres in the Huiroa district into thirty sections at a cost of a fraction over 1s. per acre, which is, I think, an exceedingly low rate for heavy forest country. Some of the sections are, no doubt, large; but, on the other hand, the roughness of the country in places necessitates the expenditure of more time in the exploration for and location of road lines than was necessary formerly in the more level portions of the district. Sixteen hundred and fifty-two acres at Ngatimaru, on the Otaraoa road were subdivided into five sections by Mr. Davies, on contract, at a cost of 2.24s. per acre. The large number of short lines on the roads, which were pegged on both sides at every angle, added considerably to the cost of the work.

Town Section Survey.—No surveys have been made under this heading, although sites for future towns have been reserved on the Pukearuhe-Mangaroa and on the Stratford-Mangaroa Roads, which at no distant day will have to be sectionised.

Native Land Court Surveys.—The resurvey and subdivision of old Native reserves have been completed by Mr. T. K. Skinner in a most satisfactory manner; and as soon as the plans have been approved by the Judge they will be endorsed on the orders preparatory to the issue of certificates to the grantees. In addition to the above, authorities have been issued to Messrs. H. W. Climie, C. Finnerty, E. F. Tole, G. Sole, and R. H. Davies for an aggregate of 64,933 acres; the cost of survey to be paid by the owners. Of this area only 300 acres—by Mr. Climie—has been completed.

Native Land Purchase Surveys.—Mr. John Skinner is still engaged surveying the Whitianga, Taumatamahoe, and Maraekowhai Blocks, in the Upper Wanganui district; which, with some reserves to be cut out of the Opatu and Retaruke Blocks, amount in area to 180,530 acres. They should be completed in the course of three or four months.

Roads, Railways, &c.—Mr. Buckeridge has explored 32 miles of road, sixteen of which have been graded—being an extension of the Rotokare Road to the Pohokura Block, and the extension of the Wingrove Road, through the Pukengahu Block, to the Mangamingi—at a cost of £3 18s. per mile. A copy of Mr. Buckeridge's report on the former line was forwarded to you at the time. Mr. Davies graded, and made a compass survey of 11 miles of the junction road from Purangi to the Stratford route, at a cost of £10 per mile.

West Coast Commission Surveys.—Three reserves—Te Nau, Manutangihia, and Ngakorako—have been surveyed in two sections at the Upper Waitara by Mr. Davies, containing 600 acres in all; he also surveyed 3½ miles of road to and through them.

Other Work.—This includes harbour soundings and scattered surveys by Mr. W. H. Skinner of the office staff, and observations for variation by him and me; also the construction of fifteen tripod signals—of approved hard wood, sawn, and painted white—at trig. stations around New Plymouth.

Land Transfer Surveys.—Fifty-eight plans, comprising 4,911 acres, in eighty-two sections, have been examined, all of which have been passed, and the work of this branch is up to date.

Field Inspection.—I have during the year visited all the staff surveyors at their camps, and inspected the country under survey by them. I also, in company with Mr. Skeet, crossed over the watershed, from the Mimi to the Waitara River—which we came down in a canoe—and from the Moki Stream to Purangi, Mr. Skeet making a compass sketch of the river as far as Te Nau, as this portion had not before, as far as is known, been navigated by white men. I have also inspected the contract and Land Transfer surveys scattered throughout the district, as mentioned in my monthly reports. With regard to the latter class of surveys, while in the majority of cases they have been conscientiously performed in one or two, I regret to say, there was not the care exercised in proving the position of old and doubtful points, and in ground-marking, which there should be in such cases.

Office-work.—The office staff has checked 26 surveyors' plans, compiled 32 plans, including