

Then, as now, there were only two sources from which the Crown lands could be replenished—by the acquisition on the one hand of Native lands, and on the other of private (European) estates. To acquire the former, legislation was introduced, and the following Acts passed: Native Land Purchase Act, 1892; Maori Land Settlement Act, 1905; Native Land Act, 1909, Part XIX. To achieve the latter the Land for Settlements Acts were passed.

NATIVE LAND PURCHASES, 1891–1911.

Period.	Return.	Area finally acquired. Acres.	Amount paid. £
1891–92	G.-4, 1892	179,618	42,830
1892–93	G.-4, 1893	132,357	16,670
1893–94	G.-3, 1894	345,850	123,569
1894–95	G.-2, 1895	124,751	32,627
1895–96	G.-3, 1896	467,689	70,131
1896–97	G.-3, 1897	315,490	100,432
1897–98	G.-3, 1898	360,238	83,994
1898–99	G.-3, 1899	402,578	92,005
1899–1900	G.-3, 1900	78,295	17,966
1900–01	G.-3, 1901	206,954	35,561
1901–02	G.-3, 1902	84,882	27,456
1902–03	G.-3, 1903	65,486	27,262
1903–04	G.-3, 1904	18,765	5,658
1904–05	G.-3, 1905	13,515	2,587
1905–06	G.-3, 1906	3,855	20,410
1906–07	G.-3, 1907	5,069	5,024
1907–08	{ G.-3, 1908 G.-3A, 1908 }	267,256	154,534
1908–09	{ Survey liens G.-3, 1909 }	21,791 6,935	5,974
1909–10	G.-3A, 1910	15,588	21,953
1910–11	...	75,437	123,437
		3,192,399	£1,010,080

During the same period (for the greater part of which the sale of Native land to private individuals was prohibited) the area sold to private persons amounted to 499,882 acres. So that during the period under review the Maori owners parted with the freehold of 3,692,281 acres, and all this is in the North Island.

PAPATUPU LANDS.

In 1891 the area of these, lying virgin not only to the axe of the settlers but to the law, held by the aboriginal owners under their customs and usages, not according to any title recognized by the District Land Registration Offices, amounted to 2,777,209 acres.

In 1909 this had been reduced to 490,752 acres, distributed as follows:—

Auckland Land District—	Acres.	Acres.
Opotiki County	140,000	
Rotorua County	6,716	
Kawhia County	45,170	
North Auckland	127,581	
Miscellaneous	22,000	
		341,467
Hawke's Bay Land District—		
Waiapu County		149,285
		490,752

At the 31st March, 1911, this area had been further reduced to 190,792 acres, of which the bulk is in the Auckland Land District.

The bare figures to those unacquainted with Native land matters may not be eloquent. But to those who know and understand the process of converting customary into freehold lands, held by registrable titles, the figures are exceedingly interesting. To illustrate:—

(a.) In 1891 the King-country, or Aotea-Rohe Potae, containing 1,844,780 acres, was closed to settlement, and was just being touched by the Native Land Court. The whole of what is now Waitomo County was then Native land. The area of that county is roughly 658,560 acres. The County Council recently make the statement: "The total area of rateable Native lands in Waitomo County on the roll is 262,553 acres, of which 195,000 acres have been leased or sold to Europeans, and the balance of 67,553 acres is in the name of nominated Native owners."

(b.) The Urewera County, containing approximately 650,000 acres, was until 1896 deliberately closed by the tribal policy against surveys, Land Courts, and even the Queen's writ. There the old régime made its last stand. In that year legislation was passed to enable the title to this large area to be ascertained. In 1907 the preliminary work of investigation was, with the exception of one block of 1,000 acres, completed, subject to adjustments of minor errors, and the next step, that of the settlement of the country, undertaken. The Crown is in treaty for the purchase of 100,000 acres, of which it has completed 37,000.