

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issued under the hand of His Excellency the Governor, revoking that of August, 1873, whereby this country had been withdrawn from the operation of the Native Land Act.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.