

2. POPULATION

The areas and estimated population of the islands of the Group as at 31st March, 1948, are shown in the following table:—

Island.	Area.	Population.				Total.
		Males.		Females.		
		European.	Native.	European.	Native.	
	Acres.					
Rarotonga	16,500	166	2,714	91	2,578	5,549
Mangaia	17,500	7	910	2	952	1,871
Mauke	4,600	6	322	3	442	773
Mitiaro	2,500	..	95	..	125	220
Atiu	6,950	6	687	6	588	1,287
Aitutaki	3,900	7	1,282	3	1,216	2,508
Palmerston	1,000	..	34	..	33	67
Pukapuka	1,250	6	335	1	332	674
Manihiki	1,250	4	214	1	235	454
Rakahanga	1,000	2	168	..	155	325
Penrhyn	4,000	..	369	..	331	700
Manuae	1,524	..	18	..	10	28
Takutea	302	..	..	..	..	..
Nassau	300	..	..	..	..	..
Suvarrow	600	..	..	..	..	..
	..	204	7,148	107	6,997	..
Totals	63,176	7,352		7,104		14,456

Cook Island labourers absent in Makatea on the same date:—

From Rarotonga	202
From Mangaia	65
From Mauke	60
From Mitiaro	25
Total	352

3. HISTORY

Some of the islands of the Lower Group were discovered in 1773 by Captain Cook, who first touched at Manuae. Rarotonga, Mauke, and Mitiaro, however, were not recorded by Europeans until 1823, when the Rev. John Williams, of the London Missionary Society, located them. The Cook Islands became a British Protectorate in 1888, and in 1901 were annexed to the British Empire and proclaimed part of New Zealand.

4. PEOPLE

The Cook Islanders are Polynesians and are referred to as Maoris. Their kinship to the New Zealand Maoris is very close and their language is only slightly different from that spoken by their cousins in New Zealand. Census figures disclose that the people are steadily increasing in number. The total population (including Europeans) rose from 8,518 in 1906 to 10,081 in 1926, and then to 14,519 recorded in the last census in 1945. Of the latter total, only 231 were Europeans.

The Natives are all professed Christians, adhering to the churches conducted by the London Missionary Society, the Roman Catholic Mission, and the Seventh Day Adventist Mission.