

The 103 blocks which were completed during the year comprise 612,863 acres, which is very nearly double the area surveyed in any previous year.

The staff surveyors completed three blocks, containing 6,932 acres, at a cost of £118 9s. 6d.

The authorised surveyors, under private arrangements as to cost with the Native owners, surveyed sixty-nine blocks, containing 96,467 acres, and, in cases where the costs have been advanced by the Government, they surveyed thirty-eight blocks, comprising 516,396 acres, at a cost of £5,088 1s., for which liens have been lodged against the land.

In addition to the above completed work, there are in progress in the King-country surveys of 963,224 acres, on which Government has advanced £1,541 9s. 2d. These surveys are nearly complete, and District Surveyor Cussen is now engaged on their inspection.

Then, there are 30,776 acres in hand in the Taupouiatea, Piako, and other blocks, the cost of which will be paid by Government, owing to the land being principally portions awarded to the Crown out of Native blocks.

A further area of 82,000 acres, in 147 blocks, is in the hands of authorised surveyors for Native Land Court purposes, and the cost of this is to be defrayed by the Natives themselves.

Gold-mining Surveys.—Under this heading the office has been fully employed in recording and examining the claims received. These (though not nearly so many as in the previous year) amount to seventy-three claims, equalling 1,828 acres, and costing £917 10s. Of this number some twenty claims, equalling 490 acres, have been received for examination and approval within the new Puhipuhi Mining District. Generally speaking, the surveys under this heading have been very well done, and the errors of closure and connection with trig. very small—a fact which speaks well for the carefulness of the authorised surveyors employed.

Roads and Water-races.—The staff have surveyed some 40½ miles of road and goldfield boundary surveys, at a cost of £428, or £10 6s. per mile. This mileage includes roads surveyed by Mr. Philips for opening up Crown lands selected in Raglan County, and roads surveyed by Mr. F. Simpson to open up Puhipuhi. It also includes 12 miles of goldfield boundaries run by Mr. T. K. Thomson at Kuaotunu at a cost of £137, which sum should be refunded by the Goldfields Department. Surveys of some twelve miles of road, executed by authorised surveyors for counties in exercise of road rights, and 1½ miles of water-race, have also been received.

Other Work.—The £1,085 3s. 8d. set down in the summary statement to “other work” is, in the main, the cost of inspecting the surveys of Native blocks, as £706 7s. was expended in this work. This amount, spread over the large area inspected and thoroughly checked in the field, represents about ¼d. an acre. The balance of £378 16s. 8d. is the cost of the inspection of road-works, obtaining information for the Land Board and Kaihu Royal Commission, and for other minor matters.

Town Standard Surveys.—District Surveyor Edgecumbe, who obtained an extended leave of absence on account of ill-health, has, at his own request, been engaged for some months during the year on the standard survey of the City of Auckland, and the alignment of its streets. I am pleased to say that his health has permitted him to do a considerable amount of valuable and efficient work, and this has been done in a very creditable manner.

There still remains a large area to cover, as only the most densely-populated portions of the city have been operated upon up to the present time.

Land Transfer Work.—Doubtless owing to the prevailing depression, the transfer of landed property has been very limited. Mr. Foster has examined and passed sixty-nine plans, comprising 235 lots, of a total area of 3,373 acres, and he has also from time to time checked small surveys of this class in the neighbourhood of Auckland. Mr. Sturtevant, the draughtsman in the Land Transfer Office, reports that fifty-five applications to bring land under the Act have been received, examined, and searched, and plans prepared for the Examiner of Titles, and 420 certificates of title, with marginal plans, have been prepared in duplicate, representing an area of 99,277 acres.

Summarising the field-work in the foregoing, we have as follows:—

	Completed during the Year.	In Hands of Surveyors, 30th June, 1890.
Triangulation	553,195 acres	452,000 acres
Rural sections	103,672 "	90,000 "
Town surveys	147 sections	250 sections
Native Land Court	619,795 acres	1,081,951 acres
Gold-mining	1,828 "	...
Roads, &c.	40½ miles	51½ miles

Work for Ensuing Season.—The coming year promises to be even more heavily burdened with work than the past one has been, for, in addition to the above in the hands of the surveyors, there is a further unallotted area of 54,549 acres of surveys ordered by the Land Board on applications from intending settlers, and these are scattered all over the district: this list is being added to at every meeting of the Board. During the year there have been 251 individual applications to the Land Board for specially-selected areas, averaging 165 acres each, to be surveyed and thrown open for selection.

Although we have executed sectional surveys to the extent of 103,000, &c., acres, we have not kept pace with the amounts deposited by the Land Department, as some surveys were for issue of long-delayed Crown grants. It is the intention in the summer to prosecute surveys of the swamp-land near Matata, and some of the Crown land abutting on the Opotiki-Gisborne Road leading to Motu. There will for certain be a considerable amount needed in the Waingaroa District, and several blocks north of Auckland will also be taken in hand. In every instance the Land Board has been led to believe that their occupation will certainly follow.

The survey for the Native Land Court will be very heavy also, as for a certainty almost numberless subdivisions of the King-country blocks will be made by the Court, and a large number has been already applied for.