

(4.) *Area held by the Gorrings.*

With regard to the discrepancy between the statement of Mr. Lundius—that the Gorrings “now hold between 6,000 and 7,000 acres of freehold land”—and Mr. Broderick’s statement—that the Gorrings hold only 3,932 acres of freehold—I have to state that, upon inquiry, it appears that Mr. Lundius was merely using rough figures, and overestimated the actual area held. I understand from Mr. Broderick that the smaller area (viz., 3,932 acres) is the actual area held by the Gorrings as freehold, as revealed by a careful search of the Land Registry Office.

(5.) *Legal position.*

In regard to the last point raised in your note, I have to say that the statement in the reports of the Commissioner of Crown Lands, Wellington, regarding the law are, to the best of my knowledge, correct.

E. F. HAWTHORNE.

Rangitikei Aggregation.

Department of Lands.

From Commissioner of Lands Office, Wellington, 7th April, 1913.

The Under-Secretary for Lands, Wellington.

HEREWITH I forward you a copy of Mr. Lundius’ report on the alleged aggregation of land in the vicinity of Mangaweka, from which, coupled with my remarks herein, you will learn that if any undue aggregation has taken place it has been achieved by the purchase of freeholds or converted occupation-with-right-of-purchase sections, over which the Land Board had no control at the time the aggregation took place. I say *if* any undue aggregation has taken place, because a careful search of the titles disclosed that there are many individual owners in each of the blocks that are said to be aggregated—for instance, in the Wilson aggregation of 6,658 acres there are eight separate owners named Wilson, viz. :—

	A.	R.	P.
T. B. Wilson	370	0	0
Amy L. Wilson	200	0	0
C. G. Wilson	1,480	0	0
Q. and J. Wilson	1,605	0	0
George H. Wilson	482	3	16
Robert A. Wilson	450	0	0
Niel D. Wilson	623	0	0
H. C. Wilson, jun.	1,111	0	0
	6,321	3	16
G. H. and N. D. Wilson (education lease)	336	0	0
	6,657	3	16
Gorrings, Mrs. H.	315	0	0
Gorrings, Mrs. M.	177	0	0
Gorrings, F. H. R.	1,943	0	0
Gorrings, H. E.	1,497	0	0
	3,932	0	0
Mason, J. L. } Probably the same person	593	3	38
Mason, John }	622	0	0
	1,215	3	38
Mason, J. L. (education lease)	517	0	0
	1,732	3	38
Stuckey, J. W. (lease in perpetuity)	600	0	0
Stuckey	511	3	29
	1,111	3	29

I am sending you schedules giving full particulars of the search-notes, from which you will be able to follow every detail of the various purchases and transfers, and so verify what I have said about them.

In my letter of the 6th ultimo I confined myself to refuting the charge that lease-in-perpetuity sections made freehold under the provisions of the Land Laws Amendment Act, 1912, had been aggregated near Mangaweka, but since I received your last communication I have examined every phase of aggregation in that locality, so that I think you may rely on it that the cases quoted are the only ones of any importance.

This agitation against aggregation partakes of the nature of “crying over spilt milk.” It is a recrudescence of a similar one that led to the restrictions of Part XIII of the Land Act being placed on all titles to land sold after November, 1907; but, as all the land near Mangaweka was alienated prior to 1900, there is no power in the law to check the aggregation of it.

Large areas held on the occupation-with-right-of-purchase tenure near Mangaweka can be made freehold and aggregated at any time the owners choose to sell, without the Land Board being able to prevent it, but the Land Board always exercises the greatest care to prevent aggregation wherever it has jurisdiction.