

Mr. King, the Engineer for the Wairarapa East County, furnishes the following statement showing work done towards opening up Crown land in the County of Wairarapa East:—

Name of Road and Contract.	Length of Formation.	Bridges.	Remarks.
Hawera—	Ch. lks.		
1. Road Contract No. 2	112 00	1 40-ft.-span truss bridge	Completed.
2. " No. 3	83 00	...	"
3. " No. 4	80 00	1 26-ft.-span bridge ...	"
4. " No. 5	14 00	...	"
5. " No. 6	57 00	...	"
6. Dreyer's Rock Road Contract No. 1 ...	74 00	...	"
7. " " No. 2 ...	54 00	...	"
8. Makakahi " No. 1 ...	56 61	1 30-ft.-span truss bridge	"
9. Central Mangaone " No. 1 ...	80 00	...	"
Totals	610 61	3 bridges	"

Contracts Nos. 1 to 3, 6, 8, 9, were returned last year as "in progress," but nearly the whole of the payments were made during the year ended 30th June, 1884. The country through which these roads lie is all dense forest, and very broken in nature, necessitating heavy cuttings and deep embankments, the subsoil in many instances being of a rocky nature. The bush has been felled one chain in width, cleared 33ft., and the formation varies from 13ft. to 15ft. The extent of Crown land opened is not very materially increased beyond that mentioned in last return. The cost of the work done has been £ , and the county has £583 11s. cash in hand for other projected works.

Mr. H. C. Field, the Engineer to Wanganui County, reports "that the sum of £1,000 was placed at the Council's disposal by the Government for the purpose of improving the portion of the Wanganui-Taupo Road north of Mr. Mason's land. The work done consisted of widening the narrow formations along steep faces, further clearing of timber where wanted, the erection of two rough bridges over streams previously crossed by fords, the renewing of two other bridges erected some years ago, and the construction of drains and culverts. The approaches to several fords were also improved, and the line throughout kept clear of slips and fallen trees. The road in question intersects the Paratieke Block, and debouches on the Karioi Plain close to the Rangatana and Tawhitoariki Blocks, all belonging to the Crown. It also affords direct access to the Murimotu Block, in which the Government is interested, and will ultimately do so to the Kirikau and Retaruke Blocks by a branch line through the level country lying to the westward of Ruapehu and Tongariro."

Mr. F. P. Fookes, Clerk to the Wairoa Highway Board, reports that "the road commencing from the boundary of Sections 1 and 2, Block VIII., and 378 and 387, Block IX., Wairoa Survey District, has been felled a chain wide as far as about the centre of Section 2, Block IV., Wairoa Survey District, and a bridle-track formed passable for horsemen, but not available for carts, there not being sufficient funds available for the completion of the road for cart traffic. A bridge has been also erected over the Motuwhero Stream. The total expenditure on the bridge and road as above has been £393 14s. 10d., or £93 14s. 10d. in excess of amount agreed to be expended by the Board on the road, which was made up as follows: Government grant, £200; subscription from settlers on the block, £35; deferred-payment moneys, £37 7s. 8d.; general rates, £121 7s. 2d.: total, £393 14s. 10d. Several sections on Block IV. were taken up through the opening of this road."

MARLBOROUGH.

Awatere Valley Road (6 miles 57 chains).—On reference to my report for last year, ending the 30th June, 1883, it will be seen that four contracts for the construction of a further section of the road $9\frac{1}{4}$ miles in length had been accepted, 6 miles 32 chains of which had been completed to date. This year three contracts for 3 miles 69 chains, the last section of the road required to complete the communication up the Awatere Valley, have been let, for the sum of £1,785, at an average cost of £460 3s. per mile. The road-works covered by these contracts and the uncompleted portions of last year's contracts above referred to, amounting to 6 miles 57 chains, from 18ft. to 20ft. in width, have been completed during this year, with the exception of about 30 chains at the Hodder River still in the hands of the contractors and requiring repairs owing to some heavy slips having taken place before the final passing of the work. The contracts let during the year extend from the Hodder to the Grey River, and connect with the road already made to Saxton's Pass. The physical features of the country traversed are much of the same character as that of other sections previously reported upon. The road has for some time been used for carriage traffic, and opens up for settlement some seven thousand acres of Crown lands, well suited for grazing purposes, and contributing to the successful working of about 142,000 acres of Crown lands at present held under pastoral leases. All the works in connection with this line of road have been carried out by the Awatere Road Board, on surveys and specifications approved of, and under the general supervision of the Survey Department.

Wakamarina Road (2 miles 23 chains).—In accordance with instructions, an engineering survey of a continuation of the present line of road up the Wakamarina Valley has been made. The estimates and specifications are in hand, and its construction can be gone on with when required. Good grades have been obtained, the steepest grade being 1 in 15, and the mean 1 in 80.