

Otawa Swamp.—The Otau River and part of the drains were cleaned out by the Waipipi Road Board, which has had the effect of discharging the water more rapidly off the swamp.

Maioro Swamp.—About half a mile of drains were constructed to improve the road to the Maioro Settlement.

Mercer Punt.—On completion of the Waipa Bridge the old punt was purchased, and, after being repaired and altered, was taken to Mercer, and is now in use.

Churchill Punt.—The Raglan County Council have expended this grant in general repairs to the punt, and in painting same.

Takahue Block.—The line connecting this block with the Victoria Valley to the Main Road has been improved and widened. No works have been done in the block itself.

Takahue-Whangape Block.—The road passing through the middle of this block, and which has been constructed into a bridle-track 8 ft. wide, connects Herekino Village Settlement with the Takahue Village Settlement.

Ruapekapeka Block.—A portion of the unexpended balance of this grant was spent during last year in constructing one mile of road and improving two miles and a half of bridle-track.

Pakiri District Road.—The only work done to this road was the removal of slips and improvements to 25 chains.

Motatau.—The unexpended balance of this vote was spent in improvements to the Ramarama Valley Road, which passes through the block.

Mangakahia.—The road through a portion of this block, one mile and a half in length, connecting the Wairua and the Mangakahia bridges was constructed. The tender for erecting the Mangakahia Bridge was accepted, and works are in progress.

Opuawhanga-Whangarei No. 1 Block.—Three miles of engineering survey were made to open up this block, the line being connected to a road already made through the Ngunguru Block and carried on to the Ngunguru Harbour. The formation is being carried out by co-operative contracts, 13 chains having been formed.

Waipu VI. and VII. Blocks.—Co-operative contracts are now in progress for the construction of two roads through this block, the one branching off from the Great North Road at the commencement of the Waipu Gorge and going in a south-easterly direction, and the other from the Coast Road going in a south-westerly direction. The country through which the lines pass is very broken, but is well adapted to sheep-grazing.

Auckland Special Settlement Block.—During the year one mile and a quarter of the road through the block connecting the Waimamaku Punakitere Road with the north end of the Opanake-Hokianga Road has been widened, and in places metalled. Owing to the nature of the soil this road becomes very boggy in winter, and it is absolutely necessary that more metalling be done if the road is to be made available for traffic throughout the whole year.

Mangaru Block.—Nearly two miles of deviations of the road through the Avoca Settlement has been done, the road giving access to the Mangaru Block. Six miles of engineering survey in the block itself have been made, and a rough survey of a proposed new line through the Mangakirikiri Block (which would also give access to the Mangaru Block) has been done.

Opanake Block.—The roads through this block, and connecting it with the Dargaville Line, are now in course of construction. Half a mile of bridle-road has been constructed.

Ahuroa-Awaroa Block.—This is a portion of Block VI., Awaroa Survey District. The main line through this block is a part of the Opuatia-Lawson Hill to West Coast Road. During the year about one mile of bridle-road was constructed.

Opuatia Nos. 1 and 3 Blocks.—Twenty-three miles and a half of engineering survey have been made through these two blocks and the adjacent Native land, which had to be traversed so as to give these blocks access to the Tuakau-Raglan Road. Fifteen miles of pack-track have been made, principally through the Native land, and two contracts are now in progress for forming portions of the road in Block I., where a track would be unsafe for horse traffic. I estimate the cost of constructing a bridle-track along the graded line at about £2,500.

Opuatia No. 2 Block.—About four miles of engineering survey of the road through this block has been made.

Taupiri Block.—Thirty-three bridges and culverts and three miles and a quarter of bridle-track have been constructed during the year, making a total length of five miles of bridle-road formed in the block. There are yet two miles of road to construct to complete the line as now laid out through a portion of the block.

GENERAL.

One hundred and seventy-one plans and specifications of works undertaken by the County Councils, Road Boards, or Drainage Boards have been examined and approved of.

Before final payments for the various works they have in nearly all cases been examined by some officer of the department.

Three hundred and fifty-four co-operative contracts were let; four contracts for large bridges of from 60 ft. to 200 ft. clear span, and three contracts for wharves.

Five inspectors and four road overseers are permanently employed, and others were employed as occasion required in superintending and laying out works. The whole has been carried out under the supervision of Mr. Wright and myself, assisted by Mr. Burd and Mr. G. G. Menzies.

GERHARD MUELLER, Chief Surveyor.

AUCKLAND CENTRAL.

Aotea Wharf Road.—No steps have as yet been taken towards laying out the £100 voted for this work, and it will probably be wise to keep it in hand until more can be added to the sum.