

Ormondville-Waikopiro.—From grants made to the Ormondville Town Board and Road Board, these bodies have constructed a 72 ft. truss bridge and formed 25 chains of a 14 ft. and 20 ft. dray-road, with four culverts, of a total length of 126 ft., the plans, &c., for bridge and works being furnished by the department. This road is a deviation of the Ormondville-Waikopiro Road, and is a great improvement on the old road, where the grades were very bad.

Ruahine Block.—One truss bridge of 58 ft. span has been erected, and four culverts of a total length of 98 ft. This completes the approach to the Ruahine Settlement.

Takapau-Kopua (£1 for £1).—With the assistance of the balance of a grant the Takapau Road Board has erected five bridges, 14 ft. wide, of a total length of 145 ft.; constructed 2 miles 25 chains of an 18 ft. and 20 ft. dray-road, of which 1 mile 40 chains is metalled, 60 chains of forest-clearing, 66 ft. wide, being included. This completes the construction of the road, which is now open for traffic.

Waikopiro.—4 miles 33½ chains of a road from 4 ft. to 14 ft. wide has been constructed; 3 miles 14 chains of forest felled 66 ft., stumped and cleared 30 ft.; twenty-two bridges, of a total length of 388 ft., and forty-seven culverts, of a total length of 744 ft., built; and the roads throughout the settlement maintained; the work being carried out by settlers working on co-operative contracts. Before satisfactory roads can be maintained it will be necessary to metal them, and I hope to be able to metal the main road to Whetukura Village during the coming year.

Elsthorpe Roads.—The Oero Road Board, with a grant, has constructed 17 chains of road 15 ft. wide, one stone crossing, and 64 ft. of culverting, the work being carried out on plans approved by the department.

Opoiti Bridge.—Assisted by a grant of £1,500, the Wairoa County Council has built a bridge at Opoiti, in place of the one carried away by a flood some years ago. It is situated on the main Gisborne-Wairoa Road, and is a truss bridge of a total length of 280 ft., built on concrete piers, in four spans—one of 100 ft., two of 80 ft., and one of 20 ft. The work was carried out on plans approved by the department.

Mohaka Bridge.—Messrs. McGrath and Burke's tender of £6,240 was accepted to build this bridge, which replaces the one washed away in the Easter flood of 1897. It is a truss bridge of 363 ft. span, built on iron cylinders and concrete abutments. Materials have been carted on to the ground, and work on the foundations started.

Manawatu Bridge, Waikopiro.—This is a truss bridge of 188 ft. span, in four spans, built on concrete piers. Messrs. Milne and Robertson are the contractors, the price of bridge being £1,149 19s. 6d. The piers are completed, and the truss-work in progress.

Ngapaeruru.—Twenty miles of road have been formed 6 ft. to 10 ft. wide, and 2 miles 50 chains of pack-track, including forest felled 1 chain wide on line of road, and the erection of twenty-two temporary bridges to give access to the block. All the work has been done by co-operatives.

Waimarie.—The Ormond Town Board, out of a grant, has constructed 1 mile 18 chains of dray-road, with necessary culverts, in the Waimarie Settlement, the work being done by contract, on plans approved by the department.

GENERAL.

The total length of roads constructed in the district during the year is 124 miles. In addition, 109 miles of dray-road and seventy miles of bridle-road have been maintained, and 52 chains of dray-road and 3 miles 14 chains of bridle-road improved. Two bridges, of 72 ft. and 58 ft. span, have been built, and fifty-five bridges under 30 ft. span, of a total length of 1,817 ft., and 280 culverts of a total length of 5,082 ft. Thirty-six miles of engineering survey have been made. The total cost of the above is £31,804.

Of the 124 miles constructed, twenty miles have been made by local bodies, on plans and specifications approved by the department; the balance of 104 miles being constructed principally by co-operatives, working under the supervision of officers of the department. Of the total constructed, 39½ miles are dray-roads constructed of an average width of 15 ft., and 84½ miles of bridle-roads of an average width of 8 ft. All the bridle- and a portion of the dray-roads are in forest country, which is felled 1 chain wide in the line of road. Two hundred and twenty contracts have been prepared and executed, and 1,399 vouchers have passed through, covering an expenditure of £31,804.

One Road Surveyor, Mr. Marshall, and seven overseers have been permanently employed, and the staff officers have generally inspected any works in progress in the neighbourhood of their surveys.

ERIC C. GOLD SMITH, Chief Surveyor.

TARANAKI.

Junction Road, Purangi (£1 for £1).—This vote is for subsidising Clifton County Council in extending the metalling of Junction Road to Purangi, a distance of twenty-five miles from railway-line at Inglewood. About twenty miles of this has been metalled, and the settlers around Purangi have voted for a loan under Loans to Local Bodies Act, to be assisted by Government subsidy, for completing the metalling to Purangi. About 20 chains of metal has been laid since my last report, and the work will recommence next season as soon as weather permits.

Junction Road, Widening.—In continuation of the widening of this road from 8 ft. bridle-road to dray-road width, and which last year had been completed to Purangi, a distance of twenty-five miles from railway-line at Inglewood, a further length of two miles and a half has been widened between Purangi and Matau, and 742 lineal feet of culverts built. The work had to be discontinued through want of funds; but, in order to give the Milsom and Tanner settlers fair means of getting to Purangi and Inglewood, the widening should be continued for a further three miles at least, and eventually on to Ohura Road.