

*Waikawa-Otara Block, Graham's Road.*—This road is to give access to Sections 40 to 45, Block VI., Otara. £114 5s. 3d. was spent in falling and logging up on this road. It will need about £250 to stump and form it, but, as this road is the only outlet for this portion of the block, it will be necessary to complete it. The work was carried out by settlers who were in arrears with their rents; but they have paid up the arrears, and will be able to work their farms to advantage if the formation is done.

*Spark's Road.*—Fronting Sections 23, 24, 30, 34, Block VI., and Sections 10 and 12, Block IV., Otara. It gives an outlet to most of the land taken up in that portion of the blocks, but will have to be extended when the back sections are taken up. Average, 5s. 11d. per day.

*Block XXIII., Invercargill Hundred.*—The expenditure on this block has been used in falling and logging up road-line. The average wage has been 3s. 1½d. per day. It is proposed to spend all the vote in falling and logging up.

*Campbelltown Point Road and Campbelltown.*—Contracts have been laid off, and work is being carried on by the Campbelltown Borough Council.

*Hokonui and Forest Hill Block.*—£78 15s. was spent mostly for purchase of land for road and fencing.

*Clifden Ferry.*—This vote was expended by Wallace County Council in formation and gravel.

*Riverton and Colac Bay.*—This work was carried out by the Wallace County Council in a satisfactory manner.

*Track to McLaren's Run (40).*—This sum was expended the previous year.

*Lillburn Roads.*—£27 11s. 3d. was expended on working the Lower Waiau Ferry, £127 6s. 4d. on approach to Lower Waiau Ferry, and the balance in connection with Clifden Ferry, and roads in that locality.

*Half-moon Bay Wharf, and Half-moon Bay Tramway.*—Plans and specifications for this work were prepared by the Southland County Engineer, and the work was carried out by the Stewart Island County Council; contract price, £269. The work specified and carried out was as follows: To widen the present jetty 10 ft. and lengthen it 40 ft. Twelve piles 35 ft. long, and twenty-one piles 40 ft. long, have been driven, and securely fastened with waling-braces, sills, floor-beams, and decking complete, bolted and spiked in a proper manner. The tramway is 17 chains long, formed of timber, and is a substantial structure.

*Village Settlements, Orion Road, Makarewa Village.*—20 chains of ditching on Orion Road were completed during the year. £20 16s. 9d. was spent for year ending 31st March, 1897, together with an outstanding account of £65 14s. 1d. from previous year, making a total of £86 10s. 10d.

*Waiau Bridge.*—The only expenditure was £111 0s. 4d., under the Public Works Department, for survey and preliminary expenses.

*Makarewa Bridge.*—This work has been carried on under the Public Works Department, and the expenditure for the year was £291 19s. 1d.

*Forest Hill, McDonald Road.*—This work was also constructed by the Public Works Department, but no report done has been furnished.

Wages on Lower Ferry Road, Longwood roads, and roads in Invercargill Hundred are calculated from the time handed in by the men, and have been proved to be wrong in some cases. The prices are about equal to those given in other districts.

Mr. Willams reports:—

*Track to Preservation Inlet.*—A 10 ft. walking-track is to be made from the Blue Cliff to Preservation Inlet. The work will be commenced shortly. Mr. Clark, of the Mines Department, has laid off about nine miles of this track, and graded it. The country is very rough, and I understand there are several large rivers to cross. When the track is completed it will be of great service to prospectors. It will be necessary to build about three shelter-huts along the line.

*Merrivale.*—The main road through the block, starting from the junction of the Eastern Bush Road and terminating at the Main Otautau Road, has been completed, thus giving access to the respective sections. The length of this line is about 6 miles 15 chains. During the year several portions of this road were so bad, owing principally to the settlers carting their building material in the winter, that it was necessary to expend money in gravelling and fascining portions of the road. The creeks have been bridged, and a good strong traffic-bridge has been built over Orawia River; its length is 150 ft., with a width of 18 ft. over all, giving 17 ft. clear working measurement—sufficiently wide to allow two drays to pass.

The branch road leading to the lower ford of Orawia River is completed. This line gives access to sections at the lower end of the block. Several portions on this line of road have also been fascined, the ground being soft and not at all suited to stand the heavy traffic during wet weather.

Formation has also been completed on two branch roads giving access to the various sections. The formation in many parts of the block has been very heavy. Bridge approaches were also heavy work. The settlement has been well provided with roads and bridges. During the erection of the bridge across Orawia River we had two very large floods—the largest known for many years. Considerable damage was done to banks of river where the bridge was being erected, so much so that it necessitated an additional expenditure, which brought the cost to a greater sum than was originally anticipated; and to further protect the banks of the river it was absolutely necessary to build five groins, which it was found had the desired effect, and prevented further damage being done to banks of river. Owing to the large flood having taken place prior to the completion of the bridge, it was necessary to make a new road along the banks of the river to keep the traffic going. All this additional expenditure was due to the damage done to roads by the floods.

Road from Waiau Ferry to join road through Merrivale Block to Otautau: This is known as the bush road, and when constructed it will shorten the distance to Otautau from Clifden by three miles. If constructed, it will practically divert the greater portion of the through traffic.