

and the work of forming commenced. This will connect with a forked branch to be formed in the direction of Sections Nos. 29 and 30, on the west side of Otenarua Bay, and each branch will connect at the saddle with a bridle-road graded, and in course of construction, from this point to Okukari Bay, Wekenui Bay, and Te Awaitei, in Tory Channel. A short branch is to be graded and formed to put Okukari in full connection, ultimately to be extended to Onopopiti Bay.

*Whatamonga-Port Underwood.*—This bridle-road has been extended an additional three miles during the past year, and 27 chains of repairs has been effected. The abnormal rains of June and July, 1896, caused heavy slips between Waikawa and Whatamonga, and put the creek in high flood. The trees floating down from the bush, coming in contact with the long foot-bridge, severely strained and canted it before the flooded state of the creek permitted of their removal. The slips were all cleared and the repairs to the road effected to an extent sufficient for safety. The bridge was temporarily repaired until such time as the bed of the creek might be dry. This has recently occurred, and the permanent repairs commenced. Twisted wires, securely stayed, have been thrown across the creek a few chains up stream from the foot-bridge, to hold back floating logs until they can be anchored or brought to bank. These works have been carried on by a working overseer and eight men—residents of Whatamonga and Port Underwood.

*Arapawa-Te Awaitei.*—The laying-off and grading of this bridle-road between Wekenui and Okukari Saddle has been completed, and the work of bushfelling and cutting the line commenced. This work has been mentioned under the heading of "Tracks, Queen Charlotte Sound." It forms a connecting-link between Otenarua Bay, in that sound, and Tory Channel. This work is much appreciated in the district, and will, when completed to Te Awaitei Post-office, be of great service to the settlers. Further grants will be required to complete this road to Te Awaitei, and also its extension to Onopopiti. These have been recommended.

*Manaroa-Hopai.*—This bridle-road forms a section which will, when completed, give, almost without a break, land-communication with Havelock, connecting a long series of bays and settled districts with the main roads of Marlborough. During the past year it has been extended 3 miles 10 chains in the direction of Manaroa, and work ceased only because funds were exhausted. The heavy rainfall of June-July, 1896, caused serious landslips. Remedying these absorbed an undue proportion of the working funds, but was unavoidable. Had the season remained normal the line would have been completed as far as Manaroa. It is intended that it should stop there. The work has been carried on by a working overseer and four resident settlers.

*White's Bay-Port Underwood.*—During the past year this section of bridle-road has been extended 3 miles 33 chains, 42 chains of which were through bush-land requiring felling, stumping, and clearing. The section from White's Bay to Robin Hood Bay has received attention in the matter of removal of heavy slips, drainage, and general repairs. This line of bridle-road is now open from Cloudy Bay to Ocean Bay, Port Underwood; rather more than four miles remain to complete and connect it with the Whatamonga-Port Underwood Road, where it terminates in Kakahaka Bay. A balance in hand of £128 19s. 3d. will during the current year be expended in this direction, but it will require to be supplemented to complete the work.

*Manaroa-Okoha.*—Only a short length of this line—about half a mile—has been executed during the past year, and that in continuation of the preceding year's work. Authorities for further expenditure on this road, as also on Anakoa-Manaroa line, having recently been received, the works are to be resumed, and carried on on co-operative lines.

*Crail Bay.*—2 miles 73 chains of bridle-road has been executed in this district, connecting Crail Bay with Kenepuru Sound at Te Mautau-a-Mahi Bay. This road crosses a saddle about 600 ft. above high-water sea-level, and is chiefly through heavy bush-country. The bush on the flats has been felled and cleared 1 chain wide, and that on the sidelings 33 ft. The saddle on this line, being nearly 400 ft. less in height than the pass between Kenepuru and Manaroa, will, it is expected, as soon as the Hopai-Manaroa and Hopai-Crail Bay lines are completed, make it the favourite route for stock.

*Kenepuru-Anakoa Track.*—Work on this line of road has temporarily ceased, pending completion of agreements with resident settlers for diverting the old road from the flat to low down on the north-west sidelings, in the valley. This diversion is recommended to avoid at least eight bridges, irrespective of culverts, within a distance of two miles, which would be required were the old line of road adhered to, and also to avoid the effect of recent floods which, from the Kenepuru River, overspread the road-line and surrounding flat. During the rain season floods are frequent, rapidly overflowing the valley, owing to the high elevation and the large area enclosed by the watershed, including a part of Mount Stokes and neighbouring peaks.

*Kenepuru-Manaroa.*—This bridle-road, connecting Clove and Waitaria Bays, had for several years past become almost impassable, partly by reason that it lies through heavy bush-country, unusually wet, and partly owing to increased traffic. Attempts were made to repair it, but they met with scant success. Recutting, forming, and metalling was then decided on, the line of road being an important one. These works have been completed, and accomplished all that was desired. The absence of wheel-traffic necessitated that special measures be taken to consolidate the metalling. For this purpose a combined truck and roller was constructed, and the specifications provided that it should be loaded with road-metal and hauled over the blinded metalling on the down grade, returning up empty. The wide wheels of the roller overlapping each other made a continuous bearing of 3 ft. This made good work of consolidating, and the road now is the best of its class in the Sounds, considered apart from the height of the saddle, which is 985 ft. above high-water mark. The length of bridle-road recut, formed, and metalled is 2 miles 73 chains.

*Anakoa-Manaroa.*—No work has been executed on this line during the past year, the authority for expenditure not arriving in time. This being now to hand, the extension of this bridle-road will be resumed at an early date, under co-operative contracts.

*Torea Neck.*—A small co-operative party has been engaged to put this cart-road in repair as far as the amount voted will permit, and data collected for framing the specification. As the amount voted and at command will not complete the repairs and metalling, a further sum has been