

SOUTHLAND.

Mr. N. L. Falkner, Road Surveyor, reports:—

Waikawa District.—*Scrubby Hill Bridge*: A timber bridge, 28 ft. span, has been built across the east branch of the Waikawa River, which gives an outlet to the settlers during floods. The approaches are not yet finished, but will be in the course of a week or so.

Coster's Road through Sections 12, 13, and 14, Block IV., Waikawa: This road is now completed, and gives an outlet to all the back sections in this block.

Mainland's Road, to give access to Section 6, Block V., Waikawa: This road is completed, but it will be necessary to construct a foot-bridge across the Waikawa River, to give access during flood time.

Ward's Ford: A ford has been put in at Section 6, Block XIV., Mokoreta, to give access to the back sections on Scrubby Hill.

Waikawa-Wyndham Valley Road (to give access from Waikawa Valley to Wyndham Valley).—About 100 chains of this road are now completed through the bush, which still leaves 60 chains to be done before the road reaches the clear where the road survey stops. From that point to Mokoreta, about four miles, it will be necessary to locate and grade the road. It will take about £250 to complete the road through the bush, and about £800 to make it passable for wheel traffic to Mokoreta. This road will be of great benefit to Waikawa, as it will shorten the distance between Wyndham and Waikawa by about thirteen miles. As it is altogether through unsurveyed Crown lands it should be opened up as soon as possible.

Kingswell's Creek.—This work is in hand, but very little is done so far, owing to the wet season. When completed it will drain a large area of swamp, and prevent the creek flooding the adjoining country, as it does at present.

Invercargill Hundred (Blocks XVII. and XX.).—£199 has been spent on road works during the year in opening up bush sections.

Invercargill Hundred (Block XXIII.).—£330 8s. 10d. has been spent on this work. This road is a very necessary one, as it is a direct line from the Waimatua Railway-station, on the Seaward Bush Railway, to One-tree Point, on the Main North Trunk Railway. It will be necessary to put in several culverts and do some formation before the road is open for dray traffic.

Haberfields to Beach.—This road is completed; it gives access from the Beach to Green Hills Station, on the Bluff Railway. Total cost, £79 8s. 8d.

Waikawa-Otara Road.—There is a good summer road between Fortrose and the Haldane Settlement, but the formation is only 12 ft. wide, so that it cuts up badly in the winter. It would cost from £1 to £1 10s. per chain to widen this road to 16 ft., the distance being about six miles. There is a petition from the Otara settlers to get about two miles of this road metalled, but I think it would be a mistake to put on metal before the road is widened. I think it would be more advisable to complete the formation of the Waikawa-Otara Road from the end of the present formation to the Waikawa Beach, as the Haldane settlers would then be within easy distance of the Waikawa Harbour and Gillies's sawmill. The distance to be formed is about two miles and a half, and the probable cost £800. At Wallace rock-slips were removed, repairs executed, and a pipe-culvert put in.

Acker's Village.—£120 10s. was spent on these roads, mostly in draining. This is a very swampy piece of land, and it will require a good deal of money spent on drains.

Waikawa, Block VII. (Road to give access to Sections 17 to 20).—This work was carried out under co-operative contracts, and is now completed. Road at Sections 36 and 39: 17 chains of fascining and draining were done on this road. It will be necessary to complete this work, as it is the outlet for the south end of the Waikawa Settlement.

Seaward Bush.—£199 7s. has been spent on these roads during the year. The work is in detached pieces, and gives access to different bush sections. It consists of falling, fascining, formation, ditching, and culverts.

Block XIV., Mokoreta.—This road will be made passable immediately. The work will be done by the settlers on co-operative contract.

Outfall Drainage, Otara.—No work has been done yet, but is now about to be undertaken.

Longwood (Blocks XVI. and I.).—This road is being opened up for dray traffic, and the contractor is doing good work, and making fair progress. It will take another £300 to open this road through to meet the formation at the Orepuki end.

Mararoa Bridge.—This money was spent in making cuttings into the Mararoa River, and forming portions of the road between the Mararoa River and Manapouri, on the Clifden-Manapouri track. It will be necessary to make a crossing at the Excelsior Creek, and ease some grades below Redcliff, before through coach traffic can be undertaken with any degree of pleasure. In the meantime there is no difficulty in driving through from Otautau to Manapouri Lake.

Orepuki-Wairaurahiri.—Contracts for formation and gravel have been let on this road, and are being carried on, but the continual wet weather keeps the work back. A 20 ft. span bridge has been erected across Boundary Creek, but will not show on this year's returns. It will need £400 to complete this road up to the lower bridge site.

Longwood (Blocks XV., XVI., and XVII.).—Contracts have been let for road-formation, felling, gravelling, culverts, &c., on these blocks, but none of the contracts are completed yet.

Lower Waiau Ferry.—This ferry is worked by a small boat, and is sufficient for the present requirements of the place.

Orepuki-Waiau.—Contracts for formation and gravel have been let on this road, but no work has been done yet.

Manapouri-Te Anau.—A contract was let to form and culvert the worst portions of this road, and the work is now completed in a satisfactory manner.