

Otaranoho.—The track has now been opened up as far as the small grazing-run, 102 chains bridle-track being formed during the year, and 17 chains bridle-track widened into dray-road.

Hautapu Main Road.—Direct communication between the improved farm and the Ohingaiti-Tokaanu Road has been established, 67 chains of dray-road having been formed and 100 lineal feet of culverts constructed during the year.

Moawhango-Te Horo.—Only maintenance has been done on this road. The suspension sheep-bridge is in need of repairs, and the approaches to the ford require remetalling. Arrangements have been made for both these works.

Huikumu.—A length of 57 chains of 4 ft. bridle-track has been completed, taking the road on to the open flats comprised in the small grazing-run. This road is being explored ahead as far as the Wanganui River Trust Block by an officer belonging to the Wellington District Office.

Turakina Valley.—This road has now been completed as a dray-road to Mr. W. Lilburn's homestead, and as a bridle-track to Okaka Junction, and two contracts are now in progress on ahead, while four contracts, of a total length of 139 chains, still remain to take the track up to the Ruauui boundary. Another contract, ditching and banking about 40 chains of the wet flats between Karetu and Okaka Junctions, is being done. The work comprises 344 chains engineering surveys, 235 chains bridle-track partly along steep papa bluffs; 29 chains of dray-road has been done by the Rangitikei County, the department allowing the county the use of timber previously prepared for the culverts on this section.

Ruanui 2a and 3a.—Work has only lately been started on this block. During the year 445 chains engineering survey has been done, and one contract for 37 chains bridle-track is now in hand.

Ohingaiti-Tokaanu (Main Road).—This road has been in good order all the summer, but on the Mangaonoho-Te Horo portion, where the traffic is very heavy, it was badly cut up last winter. A large portion between Mangaweka and Taihape requires remetalling, and from Taihape upwards for about two miles is much in need of a good coat of metal. The only good metal available from Utiku upwards is from the Hautapu River boulders, and this is so expensive that the soft metal found along the river-flats below Taihape has to be used. Last autumn the part immediately above Ohingaiti got so very bad that it had to be metalled in May, 1,242 cubic yards being used on 101 chains. This season a considerable amount of remetalling has been done. On the Ohingaiti-Pouwhakarua section 760 cubic yards was put on 140 chains. On the Mangaweka-Utiku section a considerable amount has also been placed, but a great part of it consists of patching. Metalling operations, from Utiku upwards, will be continued until the wet weather sets in. One culvert 30 ft. long was put in at the top of Dean's siding, Makohine. The bridge (60 ft. span) across the Hautapu at Turangarewa was completed at the end of March, 1898, and included in last year's returns, though the final payment was made during the present year. From Waiouru to Tokaanu is in good order, with the exception of several places where the sand is very deep. At the Rangipo Desert the drift of sand is encroaching on the road, and measures are being taken to keep it clear. There are three bridges required on the northern section of this road, and the formation of about a mile and a half near Tokaanu is desirable.

Turakina Valley Extension.—The work done consists of 44 chains bridle-track formation and 40 lineal feet culverts. The engineering survey has been done to the open country, but is included under "Ruanui 2a and 3a" and "Rangiwaea."

Taihape Township Roads.—On Kaka Street $8\frac{1}{2}$ chains dray-road has been formed from side ditches. On Huia Street 5 chains has been cleared, 2 chains dray-road formed, and 24 lineal feet culverts constructed. Kiwi Street has been completed by the formation of 38 chains dray-road, with 130 ft. culverts. On Ruru Road a length of 27 chains of dray-road has been made. A further length of 29 chains still remains to be done, but cannot well be completed till the railway formation is done at the intersection. There have been many requests that other streets should be formed, but these will probably have to be done by local loans.

Taihape-Paengaroa.—This is an important settlement road. A considerable amount of work has been done during the year on it. The road has been open for wheel traffic since the 20th February last, although two pieces of light formation near Taihape still remain before the formation is completed throughout to proper grades. The work done comprises 176 chains dray-road formation, 515 lineal feet culverts, 24 lineal feet bridge, besides 200 chains engineering survey. The North Island Trunk Railway is now being cleared and formed above Taihape, so the traffic along this road, already heavy, will soon become so heavy as to necessitate metalling, which will be very expensive.

Weston Road.—The engineering survey of the 188 chains on this road has been done, and two contracts are now in hand for opening out the whole as a bridle-track.

Gorge-Ohaitu Improved-farm Settlement.—The Gorge Road is now available for dray traffic to the Puhirua Junction, a length of 74.80 chains having been widened during the year.

Hunterville, 1, 2, 3.—A considerable amount of work has again been done on these blocks, but much is still required to open out the roads still untouched. A deviation has been made on the Panemango Road, saving a length of 72.6 chains in 260 chains, and going along easier slopes and better exposure. The work done comprises the following: Engineering surveys at various places over the blocks, 1,159 chains; bridle-track clearing and formation, 193 chains on the Karetu Road, 255 chains with 120 lineal feet culverts on the Mangamahoe Road, thus completing the opening-out of this road; 135 chains on the Okaka Road (which has been completed under item "Pohonui-a-tane"); 86.3 chains on the Panemango Road, with 98 lineal feet culverts; the remainder of this road—six contracts covering 277.4 chains—being now in hand. On various places throughout the blocks a total length of 275 chains of road-lines has been felled by the settlers alongside their own fellings, but paid for out of Government vote. The opening-out of bridle-track