

along the Karetu and Huia Roads and the widening of part of the Mangamahoe Road are being commenced.

*Pohonui-a-tane Block.*—Out of this vote 41 chains of bridle-track on the Okaka Road has been formed, and 207 chains bushfelling done on road-lines by settlers adjacent to their own fellings.

*Sommerville.*—No expenditure under this item, but a length of two miles of engineering survey for widening into dray-road is in progress.

*Te Kapua.*—All the sections in this block have now got bridle-track access. During the year 362 chains of engineering survey has been done. On Murray's Track 72·5 chains of dray-road has been formed, with 220 lineal feet culverts, on the Paengaroa end, and 105 chains bridle-track, with 92 lineal feet culverts, on the Patukete clearing; on the Bongoiti Road, 37·8 chains bridle-track, with 74 lineal feet culverts, thus completing this track. On the Paengaroa-Mataroa Road, 132·6 chains of bridle-track, with 80 lineal feet culverts, has been formed. Three contracts are still in hand near Mataroa Trig., and one contract is still unlet. When these are completed this road will be open for horse traffic from Paengaroa to Mangaweka. Thirty chains bushfelling on road-lines has been done opposite settlers' clearings on Mataroa and Quarry Roads. A contract for ditching and culverting the wet flats on the Wairepu West Road is also in hand.

*Awarua.*—Under this heading work has been done in many scattered localities. On the Taihape-Paengaroa Road, 34 chains dray-road formed, with 188 lineal feet culverts, was done. On the Torere-Pukeokahu Road, 119·4 chains bridle-track has been formed, with 40 lineal feet culverts, taking this road up to junction with Matawhero Road. On the Mangaio Road, 129·3 chains bridle-track has been formed, with 20 lineal feet culverts, thus taking this road up to edge of Otuarei Stream. On the Mangapapa Road, near Utiku, 51·2 chains of bridle-track has been opened up, and 17·8 chains of this has been ditched and converted into a dray-road. On the Puhirua-Puke Road 59·3 chains has been formed into a bridle-track. On the Mangaweka-Te Kapua Road, 9·70 chains of track has been widened into a dray-road at Tansey's Creek, including the filling-in the creek itself. Some other sections of this Mangaweka-Te Kapua Road were widened into dray-road size, as described under "Upper Makohine Block," and several miles of widening are being prepared for contract.

*Watershed Road.*—On this road, inside the Te Kapua Block, the work done comprises 42·4 chains dray-road with 160 lineal feet of culverts. This widening has been done at the worst, shady bends, between Pukemapou and Mangaone.

*Makohine Valley.*—This is the road joining the Mataroa with the Mangaweka-Te Kapua Road, and continuing on towards Ohingaiti, and is now completed throughout as a bridle-track. The work done consists of 287 chains of bridle-track formation, much of it along steep papa sidelings, entailing considerable maintenance. At the southern end, on a flat portion, 50 chains of the road-line was felled and burnt, along with the bush felled by settlers adjoining.

*Murray's Track.*—The engineering survey of 283 chains from Te Kumu Saddle to Mangaone has been completed, and contracts are being drawn up for widening this portion, for which there is a strong agitation among the Te Kapua settlers.

*Waitotara River Suspension-bridge.*—Drawings and specifications for this bridge, with a clear span of 204 ft., were despatched to the Patea County Council on the 23rd August, 1899. The cables have been procured, and are at present stored in Wanganui. The contract for the preparation of the timber required was let by the county in September, but has progressed so badly that the bridge will not now be available for traffic till about next spring.

*Upper Wangaehu Bridge (Mangamahu).*—The site was laid off on the 26th October, and drawings for a clear span of 160 ft. have been prepared. The cables have been procured, and are stored in Wanganui. A start is being made to order the necessary timber, but the present authority is not sufficient for the erection of the bridge.

*Wangaehu River Bridge (£1 for £1), on Main Road.*—The contract for this bridge was let on the 31st July, 1898, to J. A. Leydon, for £2,691, and was completed on the 21st October, 1899. It consists of one 37 ft., two 111 ft., one 80 ft., and one 14 ft. span, the total length being 353 ft.

*Mangawhero Bridge, Aberfeldie (£1 for £1).*—The site of this bridge for high-level purposes was laid off on the 24th October, and the designs are now under consideration. It will probably consist of two 120 spans resting on one central double pier of ironbark piles 58 ft. high, in three tiers, and two low abutments on solid papa each side.

*Mangawhero Bridge, at Confluence with Wangaehu River (£1 for £1), to Account.*—The contract for this bridge was let on the 5th August, 1898, to R. Lyon and Son for £1,774 14s., and was completed on the 5th September, 1899. It consists of one 111 ft., one 40 ft., one 22 ft., and four 14 ft. spans, the total length being 229 ft., the height above low water being 37 ft.

*Hautapu Suspension-bridge (Ohutu).*—Instead of building this bridge the vote for the Torere Road was overdrawn to the same extent, and the vote for the bridge allowed to lapse. A length of 60 chains was metalled from the Ohingaiti-Tokaanu Junction to the Wairano Road. The site and approaches for the bridge have been laid out.

*Rangitikei Bridge (Mangaweka).*—The low-level bridge was completed on the 28th April, 1899. The total length is 260 ft., of which 192 ft. was included in last year's returns, leaving 68 ft. for the present return. The water has been over the bridge several times during the year, but has done no damage to the structure except leaving a certain amount of logs and rubbish jammed against the bridge, which has, after each fresh, to be cleared away. As the timber in the bridge is only of white-pine, and it has already stood for a year, and will be unsafe in eighteen months more, provided it is not destroyed in the meantime, it is highly desirable that the permanent structure should be started, as the traffic over this bridge is now heavy and constant. The drawings for the permanent design are now prepared.