

Te Puke Roads.—Vote 107, item 17. The portion of this vote expended by the Survey Department has been spent under the direction of District Surveyor Goldsmith in forming a cart-road 18 feet wide from the Kaikokopu Stream, for a distance of $5\frac{1}{2}$ miles, to open up Te Pukeroa Block. It is a portion of the main line from Tauranga to Opotiki. Mr. Goldsmith started the work in March, with a gang of men under a foreman. The cost per mile for the completed portion (including a bridge not yet on the ground) is £132, a price which is exceedingly low, and shows that Mr. Goldsmith has exercised great care in directing it. There are $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles at present under construction, and a contract is in progress for bridging the Kaikokopu Stream. The plan has been adopted of building the small bridges at Tauranga, and then carting them out. This has proved to be very much more economical, there being no timber near the works.

Tauranga County.—The Engineer to the County Council of Tauranga reports that “the section between the Hairini Bridge and Grant’s Hotel, on the Te Puke Block, has been constructed by your department, except those portions formed by the Armed Constabulary, the total length being 13 miles and 8 chains; 2 miles and 23 chains of which was made by the Armed Constabulary, with the exception of bridges and culverts, the material for which was obtained out of the money granted by the Minister for Lands, but the labour furnished by the above force. The road throughout is formed 18 feet in width, and completed, with the exception of the long swamp at Kopuaroa, but is open for traffic, and will shortly be completed. These works consist of heavy face and side cuttings, formation of extensive embankments across deep swamps, and the erection of eight bridges, as follows: One plain bridge 17 feet long, five 8 feet in length, and two truss-bridges of one span each, viz., the Kopuaroa, 27 feet, and the Atuaroa, 42 feet; in addition to the above, 44 culverts have been constructed, varying from 9-inch to 2-feet-6-inch openings. This line is formed with easy gradients throughout, and will, when the embankments are raised over the several swamps to make good the subsidence, be a good summer road, and, if metalled, fit for any traffic throughout the year. The following have also been executed: (1.) The several embankments over the swamps have been raised 2 feet to make up for subsidence (some of which require again raising) over that portion of the road between Grant’s Hotel and the Waiari River. (2.) That portion of the line between the Waiari River and the Canaan Landing, on the Kaituna River, a distance of 1 mile and 10 chains. This section was surveyed by Mr. Turner and also constructed under his supervision. The road is formed 18 feet in width, including the erection of two bridges: one plain, 27 feet long, over the Parawhenuamea Stream, and a truss-bridge, of one span of 42 feet, across the Waiari River. (3.) A truss-bridge is now under construction over the Kaituna River, 124 feet in length, consisting of three spans of 40 feet each.”

Ormond to Opotiki.—Vote 107, item 19. Mr. Barnard reports that 21 miles of this road have been completed, the work consisting in opening out some $10\frac{1}{2}$ miles to the south of Motu River to 1 chain wide, the track formerly made being only cleared 12 feet through the bush, and the clearing of $10\frac{1}{2}$ miles on the north side of Motu. In addition, 22 miles of the old road have been repaired, slips removed, bridges built (part corduroyed) and made fit for traffic. During the stormy weather for the last three months, however, the road has become impassable, and additional expense will have to be incurred to put it in order. $15\frac{1}{2}$ acres of bush have been cleared for a resting place, and $11\frac{1}{2}$ miles of old road sown with grass. The difficulties of getting provisions into this country, a distance of over sixty miles, in the winter, has obliged us to defer the construction of the road until spring. The termination of the present year’s work is at the point where the Public Works deviation comes into the old road from Omarumutu. Under the direction of Mr. Crapp, of the Public Works Department, a contract for 10 miles on the Opotiki side is now under progress, and this will carry the formation of a 4-foot track to a junction with the works near the Motu River.

Huihuitaha Patetere.—Vote 107, Item 21. This road is a portion of the main line from Cambridge to Taupo. Work was commenced on the 4th February, and $8\frac{1}{2}$ miles, including two bridges of 14 and 18 feet, were completed on the 21st June, at a cost of £631 0s. Od. The country is very easy, with the exception of some heavy cuttings at the commencement. The work done (under the supervision of Mr. A. B. Wright) has opened up 11,000 acres of Crown land very effectually, whilst it at the same time renders a considerable portion of the Patetere district accessible by wheeled traffic. A comparatively-speaking small expenditure on the extension of this road, would open a communication for coaches with the Tauranga-Taupo Road, and thus complete the coach road from Auckland to Wellington *via* Napier. In connection with the above work, Mr. Wright has superintended the construction of the Alexandra Bridge, over the Waipa River, to give access to Tawhiao’s new settlement, Whatawhatahoe, and which will at the same time eventually be on the main line leading into the King country. The bridge will be open now in a fortnights’ time, it consists of 6-24 feet spans, and 3-40 feet trusses, a total length of 264 feet, the height being 42 feet above ordinary river level. The approaches and about a mile of road, and a large culvert have been made by Mr. Wright, with Maori labor. The whole will have been completed at a cost of about £1,800.

Roads through Ruakituri Block.—Vote 107, Item 22. Although in my district, these works are directed by Mr. Baker, Chief Surveyor, Napier, I learn that a road through Taramarama, from Ohuka towards Erepeti, for 11 miles 5 feet in width, has been completed; and that another from Marumaru on the Wairoa, into the Ruakituri, is partly under contract at the present time; and that a further extension of the latter is being carried out by Maori labor. Mr. Baker speaks in high terms of the manner in which Mr. Assistant Surveyor Lambert has carried out the supervision and arrangement of these works, and of the great advantage that has arisen through the employment of the natives in the more distant works.

Ormond to Waiapu.—Vote 107, Item 23.—Under Mr. Barnard’s direction Mr. Haig has $25\frac{1}{2}$ miles of this road surveyed, 17 miles of which are ready for contract so soon as finer weather sets in, at a cost of about £12 per mile. A good deal of obstruction was experienced from the natives to the survey of a part of the line, demanding great patience and forbearance on Mr. Haig’s part; this, however, has been happily overcome, and no trouble is now expected, if ordinary care is used in carrying on the works.