

A very considerable amount of damage was caused by a disastrous flood in the Mangakaiwherangi, Mangakotukutuku, and Maraetaha Streams on 19th February.

A small camp consisting of nine cottages and several single huts, situated on the river terrace at 13 m. 20 ch., was washed away with the loss of one life.

The Mangakotuku Stream changed its course immediately above the bridge-site at 13 m. 17 ch., washing out the railway embankment and endangering two workmen's cottages nearby. Further damage was done to railway formation at 13 m. 57 ch. to 13 m. 65 ch. It is proposed to make a minor deviation of the railway at this locality in order to improve the bridge-site.

Further serious floods occurred over the whole section on 25th April, and again on 4th May, causing much damage, particularly to bridge-works between 5 m. and 6 m.

Owing to these floods the works were somewhat disorganized for a short period. The loss of two highway bridges and numerous slips threatened the food-supplies of the camps, and work on the railways was abandoned until road communication was restored, including the construction of two temporary highway bridges.

The following major plant items are in operation on this section: One Diesel drag-line, one mechanical loader, one Diesel tractor and carry-all scraper, one Diesel pile-driving winch, two Diesel tractors with winch attached, two Diesel locomotives, two portable air compressors, and one sleeper adzing machine.

TURAKINA-OKOIA RAILWAY DEVIATION.

The survey of the deviation was completed and plans prepared.

Very little clearing was necessary owing to the deviation running through open country.

Two small diversions of the Matarawa Stream were carried out, otherwise no other waterways were affected.

Progress over the year has been satisfactory, 340 ch. of formation, cutting, and banks having been completed. Very little difficulty has been experienced, favourable weather conditions having prevailed.

At the northern end of the Fordell Tunnel 16 ch. of excavation has been carried out and 15 ch. has been lined. The southern end has been driven 11 ch. and lined for 10 ch. The driving of the southern heading was delayed by a slip of approximately 2,000 cubic yards. The total length of this tunnel is 72 ch.

At the northern end of the Turakina Tunnel 9½ ch. of excavation has been completed, 9 ch. of this having been lined. The southern end had been driven for 9 ch., 8 ch. of this having been lined. A run of sand delayed progress in this tunnel for a short time, but this trouble was speedily overcome. The total length of this tunnel is 104 ch.

Work has not yet been undertaken on the Wangaehu and Turakina River Bridges, but the sites were surveyed, plans have been prepared and test piles cast preparatory to driving.

During the period 1,533 lineal feet of culverts were laid on concrete foundations.

A water-tunnel at 8 m. 40 ch., of a total length of 280 ft., was driven and lined.

A total length of 846 ch. of standard fence has been erected, thus completing all fencing except for a few isolated sections which have been left open for service purposes.

The formation of the station-yards at Fordell and Wangaehu is well in hand.

Formation and metalling has been carried out on 140 ch. of the Matarawa Road, and the Fordell Station access road has been formed and metalled for 60 ch.

Both these roads are being utilized as service access for the completion of the adjoining sections of the line.

For the transport of material and stores, service roads were formed and metalled for a distance of 175 ch. between the main camp at Reynolds and the north and south entrances to the Turakina Tunnel.

The local workshop has experienced a busy period, four electric locomotives having been assembled, electric compressor installed, and a Mucker scraper installed at one of the tunnels.

Metal bins and concrete-mixers have also been installed at the tunnels.

General repair work has been carried out, including a general overhaul of main-highway graders.

All necessary buildings at each end of the tunnels have been erected. At Denlair Camp fourteen married quarters were built and a Y.M.C.A. building fitted with a post-office. At the Reynolds Camp twenty-six married quarters were erected, three standard houses for staff accommodation, and a Y.M.C.A. building fitted with a post-office. This brought the total accommodation up to ninety married quarters and fifty single quarters.

Bathhouses, complete with drying-rooms and showers, were also erected at the single-men's camps and at both ends of both tunnels.

Temporary telephone-lines were erected from 5 m. to 10 m.

The number of men employed at the 30th June, 1938, was 302.

RAILWAY DUPLICATION.

Plimmerton to Paekakariki.—Good progress during the past year has been made on this work, the fine summer experienced being a contributing factor. The widening for duplication of the track has been completed over a length of 2 m. 42 ch., and a total of 81,100 cubic yards has been excavated during the year.

From 19 m. 25 ch. to 20 m., and 20 m. 31 ch. to 22 m. 60 ch., the widening is in progress.

Existing culverts have been extended as the work proceeds, and a total length of 760 ft. has been laid.