

mately reported to the Superintendent on the 7th April (vide the Canterbury Gazette of 1st May, 1854).

The report recommends four possible means of communication, viz.:

- (1) A harbour on the estuary of the Avon and Heathcote rivers.
- (2) A road over the hills.
- (3) A tunnel road, and
- (4) A tunnel railway.

It also recommended the further development of the already existent rough Sumner-Lyttelton Road.

Following on this report, the Sumner Road Ordinance of Session IV., No. 7, which was passed on the 10th July, 1855, ran as follows:—

"WHEREAS it is desirable that a public highway should be made from Lyttelton through the Sumner Valley to the Ferry, over the River Heathcote, and that the owners and occupiers of private lands through which such highway shall pass, should obtain compensation for any damage which they may suffer thereby.

"Be it therefore enacted by the Superintendent of the Province of Canterbury, with the advice and consent of the Provincial Council thereof as follows:—

"(1) From and after the passing of the Ordinance, there shall be a public road lying within the distance of one chain on either side of the line drawn on the plan to this Ordinance annexed and marked thereon as the line of the Sumner Road. Provided that such road shall nowhere exceed one chain in width."

Provision was also made in respect of claims for compensation, and the settling of disputes by arbitration, etc.

In the appropriation Ordinance of 1857, appears an item of £2000 for Sumner Road, and £937 was also set aside to provide for amounts which had been expended on the road without the authority of a Bill of Appropriation.

In the Appropriation Bill of 1858 a further sum amounting to £150 was placed on the estimates for the partial metalling and forming of the road.

ROAD OVER THE HILL

Commencing at the junction of Oxford and London Streets, Lyttelton, the original road was set out on a gradient of 1 in 20 to Evan's Pass, a distance of two miles, thence around the head of the Sumner Valley on the western side (Captain Thomas' Road), on the same grade to the point where it ended on a cliff 40 feet in height. A fairly wide track was cut over the whole length, but very little was done in connection with the removal of rock. Many of the travellers between Lyttelton and Sumner therefore, preferred to take the Spur over Mount Pleasant,

and go down through the property now familiar as the golf links.

The distance from Lyttelton to Heathcote Ferry was stated to be eight miles.

Although labour was cheap (the 120 Maoris employed on the work being paid 2/6 a day each with 1/- stand-by time for wet weather), Mr J. R. Godley found on his arrival in Christchurch that the estimated cost of the work had been exceeded, and the bank account overdrawn to the extent of £4,000. He further considered that the road, as laid out, would be of little real value, so the work was stopped, and Captain Thomas was relieved of his position and paid the sum of £500 as compensation.

However, owing to the delay caused through shipping being unable to cross the Sumner bar in bad weather, constant representations were made to the Provincial Council for the completion of a road over the hill.

Finally, as previously mentioned, an Ordinance authorizing the construction of the road was passed in July, 1855. In August, 1857, the road which had cost up to that date, £13,000, and was nowhere less than seven feet in width, was declared available for light traffic.

An opening ceremony was decided upon, the then Superintendent of the Province (the late Mr J. E. Fitzgerald) being the central figure. A procession was formed, with Mr Fitzgerald leading, driving tandem in a dog-cart, followed by vehicles of every description—riders on horseback, pedestrians, and a "band." The "band" consisted of a violin, two triangles, and a drum, made from an oil-barrel. The procession, on passing under the triumphal arch, which had been erected near Day's Hotel, halted for lunch and other refreshment, those who could not go into the hotel, picnicking on the road-side. The procession was later reformed and retraced its steps. On reaching the top of Evans' Pass, it was met by another procession from Lyttelton; the two units combined, and after passing through yet another triumphal arch, halted at Heaphy's Hotel, where a big dinner was held.

What an event to celebrate! And knowing much of the spirit and enthusiasm of the pioneers of the early days, I can realise what a happy celebration it must have been.

Many changes in respect of the road, the control of which was taken over from the Heathcote Road Board in 1890 by the Town Board, have taken place since the day described. The advent of the motor-car brought in its train the necessity for laying down better highways, consequently the "Main Highways Act of 1922) was passed, and on the 26th September, 1923, a Gazette notice was published, constituting certain Highway Districts, Sumner being included in District No. 14, and as local bodies received subsidies in respect of maintenance, and construction costs of all work done on main highways, the road between Lyttelton and Sumner benefited much in this respect. Tar-sealing was commenced; the old zig-zag approach was cut out, and the road widened. Later, and as from 1st April, 1938, the road from the Heathcote Bridge to the Lyttelton Post Office was classified as a State Highway (No. 67); the Government through its Highways Department thus becoming responsible for all maintenance and reconstruction costs.