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# Bridge Opening Provides Gala Day At Tarata

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## 1889 structure is replaced.

District farmers left their work and school children their desks to attend, with a large party of official visitors. including the Minister of Works, Mr. W. S. Goosman, the opening of the new Waitara River bridge at Tarata yester day. The gala gathering, refreshed following the opening by a true countrystyle home-made afternoon tea, was continued into the evening with a dance.

The chairman of the Inglewood County Council, Mr. F. Laurence, welcomed the official visitors to the opening ceremony and introduced speakers.

Mr. Goosman officially opened bridge and the ribbon was cut by Mrs. Laurence. Pieces of the ribbon were alter distributed to Tarata and Pukeho school children who attended the ceremony.

Speakers at the gathering stressed the value to the district of the new, £39,000, reinforced concrete bridge, which re-places the old wooden truss bridge opened in 1889, which is said to have cost between £2500 and £3000.

#### "Life-line,"

Speaking on behalf of the people of the district, Mr. A. J. Webb, a member of the Inglewood County Council, said the highway the bridge served was the life-line of Tarata and when the Purangi bridge, now under construction was completed and some improvements were carried out on the Pohakura Saddle, the district would be linked with the high-way east of Stratford. This through-road would carry a vast volume of traffic.

The district had progressed rapidly over recent years, with aerial top-dressing and bulldozers to assist with cultivating and making better access to farms This was revealed both in the dairy herds and the large yardings of good-quality stock bred and raised in the district. Prices at stock sales compare favourably with those in other parts of

the province.

The member of Parliament for New Plymouth, Mr. E. P. Aderman, indicated the old bridge, the structure of which is still standing and commented that it used to be interesting to see it swerve when cattle passed over it. He just did not know where the growing demands due to changing conditions would end, he said, asking how long the new bridge would fulfill the requirements. Two-way bridges, on main highways in particular, of a far greater strength than the present ones, would soon be looked for.

There were a great many financial problems thrown on the minister and he congratulated Mr. Goosman on the way he had been facing up to his task. Mr. W. G. Belton, speaking on behalf

of the Counties Association and as a member of the Main Highways Board. thought production in the Tarata area would progress "beyond the more sale-guine hopes of any of us," with modern prestance to familia

"Great Day."

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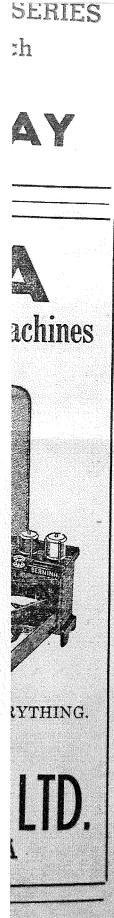
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#### "Great Day."

It was a great day not only for Tarata but for Inglewood as well, said the mayor of Inglewood, Mr. R. W. Brown. Without access to the country, the towns were lost. Not everyone realised the part the Inglewood county played in New Zealand's economy.

The most interesting feature of the bridge was the central pier, said the county engineer. Mr. E. H. M. Adams, who supervised the construction. The pier was 70 feet high, 40 feet of which was above the water. It was bedded seven feet in the bed of the river by compressed air. There was more than 500 cubic yards of cement, 150 tons of cement, 50 tons of steel and enough timber of build five houses, and 30,000 man-hours had been spent on its construction.

The chairman of the Taranaki County Council, Mr. L. D. Hickford, congratulated the Inglewood County Council on its sense of responsibility in contributing towards the major cost of the bridge. He spoke on behalf of the adjoining counties of Stratford, Taranaki and Clifton.

The chairman of the Automobile Association (Taranaki), Mr. N. F. Little, spoke for the association.

The old identities of the district, Messrs G. R. Smith and F. Clare, were introduced to the gathering. Mr. Clare's father was one of the contractors, with Mr. S. Rundle, on the original bridge. As a boy, Mr. Clare dragged timber from the Durham Road to the bridge by bullock team.

Mr. Smith, 81 years old, was the first man to ride on horseback across the old bridge 65 years ago. After the opening ceremony, he joined Mr. Goosman, Mr. Laurence and Mrs. Laurence in the first car officially to cross the new bridge.

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