COUNTY COUNCIL WILL ASK THE TOWNSHIPS TO CONFER

For a General Discussion of the Government's Offer of Aid for Making Roads.

Cowan's Bridge Gets No Help From the County—Peterboro Council will be Asked to Make a Grant to the Kinmount Bridge—The County Road System is Strongly Endorsed and a Special Meeting will be Called to Discuss the Whole Matter with Members of the Township Councils.

When council resumed on Thursday morning two deputations were on hand. One consisting of Wm. Lownsborough Senator McHugh, William Jordan and W. P. Graham presented the claims of the Plowmen's Association and asked for the usual grant. The other comprised of Messrs. Scully, Graham and Reeve Boats of Emily who asked for $400 to help to pay for the new iron bridge known as Cowan's bridge. Senator McHugh also spoke in that behalf. These requests were referred to their committees.

In the afternoon the committees on Roads and Bridges and Education deliberated.

A grant of $50 was made to the boundry between Carden and Mara to meet a similar expenditure by the county of Ontario. Coun. Staback will oversee its outlay.

The Emily men were present to follow up their request for aid at Cowan's bridge. They re-stated their contention of the forenoon; the engineer had estimated the cost of the steel had advanced and whereas it was expected the bridge would cost $3000 it had cost more than $5000. A bridge of such length and a swing had been made necessary by the government when the water was dammed back at Buckhorn to make a wide marsh and a navigable stream. It shoulh be a gavernment bridge but is not. A grant of $1500 had been got from the Dominion government and $300 from that of Ontario. Last year when it was supposed that the cost would be $3000 the county council had voted $400; now that it was costing $5000 the deputation would ask for another $400.

Coun. Shaver—The bridge is not in our jurisdiction and we could be restrained from making any grant. Moreover I have the report showing the amounts paid for roads and bridges by the different townships in the last ten years. These sums include statute labor. Mariposa has spent $59000, Ops $62000, Verulam 432,000, Emily $38553, Eldon $38,538 and Fenelon 932,000. Now Fenelon is assessed for $981,000 and Emily for $1,479,000. Mariposa should have about 25 per cent. added to theirs to be compared with Emily because they allow two days for a man and team, whereas Emily allows three; so do the rest of the townships allow three except Verulam.

But what I want to show you is that Emily has not been burdened with taxes for roads and bridges. Would it be fair to tax Ops which paid $62000 for roads in the last 10 years, to pay for a bridge in Emily that paid only $38,553? Ops has paid $9.43 per head and Emily only $4.43. and Ops makes roads for all the other townships to use in coming to Lindsay. Every other township has done more than Emily for roads, so there seems to be no reason why the rest should be taxed to help Emily now. We gave $400 last year and it was not legal then. I shall oppose doing the same thing this year.

Coun. Adams—How much Emily spends on roads is a matter for its own municipal council.

Coun. Shaver—It is a reason, though, why she can pay more now for this bridge,.

Coun. Adams—We are not so wealthy as some others.

Coun. Shaver—You are rated at $1,479,000, and Fenelon only $981,000.

Coun. Adams —That is only the finding of the valuators. If the equalization puts us higher—

Coun.Shaver—You were rated higher, before the equalization was made.

At Coun. Shaver's request the clerk read the opinion of Mr. F. D. Moore solicitor for the county in 1895 as to the legality of granting money to municipalities for works within their jurisdiction. On decisions in the case of Conger vs. Peterboro and Strong vs. Pontiac he based his opinion that it was illegal.

Coun. Fairbairn—That may be the law but you have not been keeping it. Year after year you have been making grants to townships and now you make a dead set against one.

Coun. Shaver—That is the one that got the largest grant made last year.

Moved by Coun. Shaver, seconded by the warden that no action be taken.

Moved by Coun. Fairbairn, seconded by Coun Robertson that a grant of $400 be made.

Moved by Coun. Bryans, no seconder that $100 be granted.

Warden Graham—I do not stick at the legal decisions. I have always stretched a point in cases of need. I did not oppose the grant last year but was not greatly in favor of it. Coun. Shaver has taken an unanswerable position on this grant. Ops has practically the same assessment as Emily and yet has spent nearly 50 per cent. more on roads in the last 10 years. It is not a fair thing to ask Ops to help Emily now.

Coun. Fairbairn—I admire the man who differs from me ; but I do also admire my own opinion. Appeal and sophistry are used in behalf of Ops and Emily; but men who represent these townships are in favor of the grant hence the contention of its opponents falls to the ground, as far as it is based on pity for Ops and Verulam.

Coun.Staback—Take every case on its merits. I would not be bound to a cast iron rule even by the law. If it can be shown that a township is burdened, help it (Mr. Scully—Hear, hear). But it has not been shown in this case. When I fovored the grant last year I did not imagine we should be asked to duplicate it this year. Emily is not burdened. She has no railway debt and the report of expenditures shows her taxes for roads to be very low. Eldon pays $2000 a year on a railway debt. When that has been all paid, we shall continue to raise the same amount of taxes and apply the $2000 to our roads and we will not come here to ask for money.

Coun. Adams—Emily is burdened by a bridge that she never should have been required to build. If the water had not been dammed back a $700 bridge would have done. The government raised the water and compelled us to make a $5000 bridge If we want to spend less on our roads than some others, that is our business.

Coun. Robertson—When a grant of $400 was made the cost was set at $3000. Now it is $5000; we should make another grant in proportion to the increase. It may not be legal but it is customary.

Mr. Bryans—Ops spends more than any other township on roads according to her assessment; but this is a heavy burden on Emily. I opposed the $700 asked last year but favored $400; now I favor giving $100 more.

Reeve Boats — If Emily chose to make her roads do with little money that is her own affair.

Mr. Scully—We have not asked many grants. We came back again this year because we do not think we got what we should have last year. We deserve it. Don't vote us $100. The bridge is paid for but we are in debt. You have a right to give us 25 per cent. of the cost outside of other grants.

Coun. Shaver—Mariposa puts nearly twice as much on the roads and has not asked help in nine years.

Mr. Scully—Till last year we had not asked in 21 years.

Coun. Shaver—You got a grant nine years ago and more than Mariposa did.

Mr. Scully—No.

Coun. Adams—Yes, we got $200.

Warden Graham—Mr. Scully, put your rate up to what the Ops rate is and you will pay for the bridge in a year.

Mr. Scully—Oh yes, but I don't see where that comes in.

Coun. Johnston—It is an argument why Ops should not be taxed for Emily.

Mr. Shaver's motion that no grant be made was carried by a vote of 5 —4.

THE KINMOUNT BRIDGE

Peterboro will be again asked to Help in its Construction.

Our readers will remember that a year ago a herd of cattle went through the bridge over Burnt river at Kinmount. The structure was temporarily repaired but a new bridge must be built. Who shall build it is the question. It is on a road that was made by the Ontario government years ago. No proclamation releasing it from that control has ever been issued but government claims that the same thing is true of many roads that are to-day leading highways under control of municipalities through which they pass. Hence government disclaims responsibility for this bridge. It is on a road that is in lieu of a boundary between Peterboro and Victoria but since this road is not on the actual boundary at this point nor returns to it north of the bridge, Peterboro disclaims any share of responsibility. Victoria county holds that since no proclamation was made making it a county road she has not control. Somerville, the township in which the bridge is located holds that it is a bridge on a road between counties and is hence not in her charge. That township lost a suit against Victoria and Peterboro to compel them to maintain it some years ago. From the foregoing our readers will see the tangle.

Mr. Justice Meredith gave a decision that the provincial government is responsible since no proclamation releasing it has ever been made. This decision the government calls "absurd." It, however, made a grant of $1000 or half the estimated price of the new bridge.

Coun. Johnston—The law stands against the government notwithstanding its disclaimer.

The clerk—Other judges have concurred with Justice Meredith.

The clerk then read his letter to the government in which he cited the decisions that held the government to be responsible in such cases and explained that to the deputation of the warden and councillors who obtained the grant, Hon. Mr. Stratton had said it would be as well to say the road from Port Hope to Peterboro was a government road because it had never been proclaimed otherwise as to say that this road is.

Coun. Shaver—Likely it would be called a government road if there was a lawsuit over it. The government makes a law saying that roads made by it pass under other jurisdiction by proclamation and then says a judge is absurd because he holds, that a road which has never been proclaimed is still theirs.

Coun. Austin—We had better not throw the matter over for it might not be easy to get the $1000 revoted. Somerville will pay what it costs over $2000. We have an offer of the bridge itself for $1250 that is $10 per foot for 125 feet. The masonry etc., could be done for the balance, I think.

Coun. Bryans—Perhaps we had better defer action for a year. Peterboro may yet help.

It was decided to send the clerk to Peterboro to explain the whole matter again and ask for help since people of Galway, Peterboro county get the same advantage from the bridge as Victorians do. Coun. Austin will also go.

Minor Bridges

Repairs on Brown's bridge, Emily, will be completed by Coun. Adams.

Coun. Johnston's account of the county's share of the repairs on the Seagrave bridge was received with approval.

Necessary repairs will be made on the Omemee bridge.

Fenelon Falls bridge will be repaired and cleaned.

The short space in which those little items can be recorded gives little idea of the labor they put up on council. Considered at a night session and high temperature with the different requirements given in minute detail by the representatives of their locality—a loose bolt or a hollow cedar log has to be described—these matters which appear in two or three lines of type occupied as many hours of perspiring time. It is by such duties that councillors earn their pay and newspaper reporters are driven to lemonade.

THE COUNTY ROADS SYSTEM

County and Townships Will Try and Arrive at a Scheme

The most important matter before council at this session was the offer of the provincial government to assist the county to build and maintain roads. The clerk read the act. It provides :

That $100,000 be set apart by the legislature every year for 10 years, to supplement amounts raised by counties or townships for building and maintaining good roads.

That the amount given to each municipality shall be one half the amount raised by it.

If a county does not take up the scheme, any township may before 1904.

That if the county adopts it each township must be apportioned a share of the total mileage on the basis of its area.

That the work must be done to the satisfaction of the government inspector.

Coun. Shaver—I have noticed that the leading township councils have decided against having anything to do with the scheme.

Warden Graham—That is true of more counties than this. In the west there is a jealousy in township councils of the county council. Mariposa was the first to condemn the scheme in this county, but the hostility to it did not originate in Mariposa. A man in Blenheim township who was defeated for the county set out to do all he could against this scheme and declared he would spend all he had to defeat the roads scheme. He got a resolution through his township council and it has been sent to all other townships. Councils did not know the origin of this thing and some of them have fallen in with it before giving it consideration. I cannot see how, otherwise, townships should refuse government and county aid on their roads. They alone cannot buy the expensive machinery necessary to make roads but can get the benefit of it if this scheme is adopted. They will also have a government engineer to inspect the work.

It has been found in the States that a county or larger scheme is advisable for economy. I hope we shall, in some way get into consultation with the men of the township councils and arrange some plan to take advantage of the money within our reach. I believe that if the offer is taken hold of, that the million dollars now offered is only the first step toward helping the municipalities to build roads.

Coun. Shaver—The townships think that if they go into it alone, each will have the whole amount to spend within its boundaries whereas in a county scheme some might get more road made and others less than their contribution would warrant.

Warden Graham—That objection might be heard in some townships that are not in sympathy with the necessities of other townships but when Ops rejects the scheme it is a surprise.

Com. Shaver—We had better have an extra session and talk it all over with members of the township councils.

Coun. Graham—If the government's offer is not accepted by a considerable number of counties the money will be distributed among those that do.

The clerk—The act provides that in any county system the mileage to be built shall be apportioned among the townships according to their area.

Several Councillors—Ops should be given a bigger share than others.

The clerk—That would be a matter to be settled outside of this act.

Coun. Shaver—A connected system would have the objection that the townships have roads which they consider more important than those that lead to Lindsay and the connected system would include only those roads leading to the country town.

Coun. Johnston—Taking the basis of area, the back townships would profit .

Warden Graham—We do not want any connected system that would make it impossible for any township to get an important road fixed because it does not lead to Lindsay. The roads important to the townships themselves should be included.

Coun. Bryans—Any township would send delegates to confer with the county.

Coun. Shaver—Perhaps some of the councillors might go to the township councils and ask for deputations. When these councils condemned the scheme it was not well understood.

Warden Graham—A county scheme will secure a far larger assessment for the purpose than if the townships take it up independently. The town and incorporated villages will be included in a county assessment only. That will make a difference of over $2,000,000 of assessment. Everyone should remember that. The townships should not lose sight of that. We do not ask them to accept any scheme, but to meet us and see if together we cannot take advantage of the government's offer and on the best terms. Let Mr. Campbell be here and make it so plain that we shall either accept or reject it. He is an outsider and cannot be suspected of having any preference for township or county.

Coun. Staback—We should be able to say what mileage would each township get.

The clerk—Taking the price as $1,000 a mile we should build 70 miles.

Warden Graham—We can do it for less.

Coun. Shaver—No.

Warden Graham — Many of the roads do not need $1000 a mile on them.

Coun. Austin—We do not need $1,000 on any mile in Somerville.

Warden Graham—The province is paying money for railways. The older parts have burdened themselves to build them and will still pay to build them in New Ontario. Now we have a chance to get $1,000,000 of provincial funds. If we do not take it, it will be spent elsewhere and we can find no fault.

It was decided that the county councillors should attend the meeting of their respective township councils with the warden and ask for delegations from them to a special meeting of the county council to be held at the call of the warden.

Mr. Sam. Fox asked council to vote help to Carden on account of smallpox outbreak.

The East Victoria Women's Institute was voted $10.

Several bills came in from the Home for the Aged. Warden Graham remarked that large bills should not be incurred for county payment without authority.

The Hospital Sewer

At the evening session Messrs. J. D. Flavelle and F. C. Taylor addressed the committee.

Mr. Flavelle said—Mr. Ross will spend in all about $50000 on the hospital. It is now an assured fact. He would not go on before there was some endowment to make sure that it would be operated. He also asked about sewer connection. I told him there was none, but so sure was I that it would be made that I would guarantee it. If that had not been done the scheme might have been blocked. It is a long distance from the corner of Cambridge-st. to the site. The town will construct a sewer up to Albert-st. in the usual way although the property owners are agreeing to do it earlier than necessary on account of the hospital needs. When the hospital is done it will be handed over to the county. True it is in the town but will be no benefit to it more than to other parts of the county unless by giving work to men during construction. Hence the county seems to be, legally and on grounds of equity, justified in helping. The town engineer's estimate of the cost of the sewer and cellar drain from Albert-st. up to the site is $1760. This hospital will be for the benefit especially of the poor. The rich can always get to hospitals or get superior care but the poor will be benefitted by this as well as the rich.

Com. Staback — Will county patients stand in the same relation to it as those of the town ?

Mr. Flavelle—Yes.

F. C. Taylor—Some of us have had the hospital scheme on our minds for some years. In reports of other hospitals we find that county councils have at the outset contributed more than we are asking for. Nearly $10,000 has been subscribed, mostly by town people for an endowment. The value of an hospital to the people of the county and perhaps to some of ourselves, can not be estimated.

Com. Bailey—Will poor people from the township be taken in free ?

Mr. Flavelle—If sent by the township they will be given a special low rate that the township will pay. People able to pay will of course feel honor bound to do so.

The Clerk—Berlin and its county gives $1000 each a year to the hospital and get their poor nursed free.

Mr. Flavelle—Mr. Goldie of Guelph was in town to-day. He says the county gives $1500 a year and gets its poor attended free. So many are they, that Mr. Goldie says the hospital would make far more by charging the usual rate.

Com. Shaver—I move that $1600 be voted. Mariposa will get benefits worth her share of that sum.

Com. Bryans—I was going to say $1700.

Com. Shaver—The whole cost is $1660.

Com. Bryans—$1760.

Com. Shaver—Oh I thought it was $1660. I'll make it $1700 then.

Com. Fairbairn—I think it had better be left at $1600. I would as gladly vote for $2000 but if they want more they can come again.

The $1600 was voted to be placed in the hands of the provisional board of directors for hospital purposes. That Board is : Messrs. J. D. Flavelle, F. C. Taylor, T. Stewart, Jas. Graham and J. R. McNeillie.

Mr. Austin's Bridge Motion.

Coun. Austin's motion about bridges :

(1) That the county assume all bridges in the county, not on township boundaries, and of 10 feet and over.

(2) That the county assume only such boundary bridges as are 50 feet long or over.

That motion was laid over from the January session. Mr. Austin declared that many bridges that have been always kept up by townships are, under the present by-law, relieved charges on the county and are gradually being put upon it. Councillors feared the proposed change would increase the county's burden, and no action was taken.

Mr. Nevison County Constable.

Inspector Short and Chief Nevison were proposed to fill the position of High County Constable lately occupied by Thos. Bell. Chief Nevison was appointed.

The Finance Committee.

The Board of Management of the Home for the Aged asked for a loan of $7000 without interest for 5 years to buy land and put up a new building. Com. Bailey feared that would block the way of an House of Refuge which would soon be a necessity.

Coun. Bryans—That is true.

No action was taken.

The Plowman's Association got for $100.

Coun. Bailey—Some of our people think these matches do not do much good.

Coun. Fairbairn—I won 5 prizes when a young man and one of the best in Michigan. A farmer that does not delight in good plowing is not a good farmer. I will give you my farm if you can find a thistle when plowed on my farm last fall.

Coun. Shaver—Our best farmers are interested in this.

Coun. Austin — Move the matches back north sometimes.

The vote was made.

The N. and S. Victoria Agricultural Societies got $200 each.

The Soldiers Grant.

Trooper McGillvary of Woodville and Trooper Charlie Graham of Lindsay were accredited as entitled to the county grant of $25. Trooper Stafford applied but it was found that he received a grant at Toronto.

Regiment Grant Refused

On Friday morning a letter from Col. Hughes was read. It asked for $100 or $150 to buy comforts for the men going to camp at Kingston. Council went into committee to discuss it.

Com. Bryans—The men leave their work and go away for small pay. We should recognize their sacrifice. Our volunteers have done fine work in South Africa and we cannot do less than grant them $100. I move it be given.

Com. Adams—I second it.

Com. Austin—There is no relation to what comforts are needed. They may be frogs legs and champagne.

Com. Johnston—This is a good chance to throw money away. It will come back to us every year. No one has a greater appreciation of the gallantry of our soldiers than I have, but if their are real needs they could have been stated more definitely. There is good reason to believe these comforts are unsuitable things. The money would likely go for things that are no credit to the soldiers. There is a danger that because of the valor of our soldiers the people will encourage militarism as they do in Europe where it reduces the people to slavery as abject as African. It would be fatal to courage that spirit. We see it doing in pensions to our irregulars without consent of the people who would likely object to it. If things are needed let it be so and what they are and remove our suspicions

Coun. Austin—Last year we gave $235 for helmets and it is doubtful if we did our volunteers any good.

The motion was lost, 6-4.

Council resumed, read and adopted reports, and adjourned.

TOWNSHIPS INVITED TO CONFER

Regarding the provincial act to help municipalities to build roads the county council said.—

Your committee are of opinion and recommend that the county should take advantage of the provisions of the act. Your committee beg to recommend, however, that further consideration be deferred until a special session of the council, to be called by the warden. Your committee beg to recommend also that in the interim the warden and the members of the respective county council divisions meet with the councils of the townships, for the purpose of discussing the question, with a view to the project being fully understood, and that the councils be requested to send representatives to confer with the county council during the special session.