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MARIE WALCAMP

TONIGHT

LAST TIMES TO WITNESS

"FIELDS OF HONOR"

With MAE MARSH



THE NEW HIGHWAY ACT FURTHER CONSIDERED

(Continued from page 6.)

against encroachments of the St. John river was amended so as to permit similar action to be taken in any other road division in which similar conditions might arise.

HON. MR. VENIOT moved an amendment to the section relating to the width of roads to the effect that roads two rods or more in width, and less than four rods in width, might be laid out if deemed necessary.

MR. BAXTER said that one difficulty frequently encountered in connection with the highways was the absence of early records with regard to their width. However, records had been kept since the enactment of the Consolidated Statutes of 1876 and probably for some years before that. He believed it would be better if the minister would let this matter lie over for a year, until it could be learned if there were a necessity for disturbing this system, which had been in effect for many years.

HON. MR. TWEEDDALE said this amendment had been brought in on account of the resolution of a municipal council, to the effect that too much land was being taken in the laying out of roads four rods in width.

MR. SMITH (Carleton) asked if the amendment were to apply to roads already existing.

HON. MR. VENIOT said it was not. MR. SMITH (Carleton) said that even then he would hesitate about taking this action. Uniformity in the width of roads was very desirable. He did not think there was any tendency on the part of the department of public works to cripple or interfere with agricultural communities in the matter of the width of the roads. As a general thing the farmers cultivated right up to the highways, in fact too close to them. There was also the feature that narrow roads would be more difficult to keep clear of snow in the winter time.

HON. MR. TWEEDDALE said it was a mistaken idea that there was a uniformity in width in the highways of the province. The four rod width had been established some years ago by the legislature, but previous to that time by-roads had been laid out much narrower. There was no intention to make an application of the amendment generally, but only to roads in districts in which the inhabitants believed it inadvisable to have roads four rods in width. In his own constituency (Victoria County) it was deemed necessary to have this provision made in the act.

MR. POTTS said that as this was a new highway act it should contain something that was new. Practically everything of any value in it was taken out of the old act. And anything that was not produced contention. In his opinion uniformity in the width of the roads was necessary. He hoped that the minister of public works would have backbone enough to stand up for his original proposal for four-rod roads. The minister had spoken at great length of his tour through the United States and the boulevards he had seen there. Had he seen any two rod roads down there?

HON. MR. VENIOT—"Yes, many of them."

HON. MR. TWEEDDALE—"There are thousands of miles of two-rod roads in the province of New Brunswick."

MR. POTTS continuing, said that a uniform width for highways should be insisted upon. Weight should not be attached to every protest which came in, on account of its possible political effect.

HON. MR. VENIOT said he was pleased to have three bouquets passed across the House by the hon. member from St. John, concerning the backbone and ability of the minister of public works. This was the second or third occasion this week on which he had done so. If he were a little thinner skinned, he might think there was something in them, but he did not. He believed the hon. member had an ulterior motive in handing them out. The hon. member from St. John had entertained the House with long discourses on what he knew of roads. Had he said streets, it might have passed, for he probably had had some connection with streets in the city of St. John. As far as the roads of the province were concerned, the hon. member knew very little, or he would not have made the remarks that he had. Apart from the main highways of New Brunswick, there were few roads 66 feet wide. Such a width was not necessary. In many places the travelled width was not more than 24 feet. The width of 66 feet, or four rods, had been named because the figure looked better. A 40 foot road would suit all requirements. In laying out new highways through private lands, it would be a hardship on the people to insist upon a width of 66 feet. He was not backing down before the hon. minister of agriculture in bringing in this amendment, but had taken this action because he believed that the opinion of a body as important as a municipal council should be heeded. This matter had not been dealt with by the bill as originally prepared, because he had overlooked it.

MR. YOUNG said he wished to give his endorsement to the amendment. It was true everyone wished to see a broad highway, but it often was impossible to open a wide road. He knew of one case in York county which had been placed before the minister of public works. It was a request for a road 17 miles in length to be opened across private property to the tungsten mines. In that case objection had been made to a width of four rods and it would be unfair to compel the opening of a road of that width. He believed that the matter of fixing the width of a road such as this could safely be left in the hands of those who would be called upon to act under this amendment.

HON. MR. VENIOT speaking to the section prohibiting the passage of por-

table mills or of vehicles carrying loads of 2,000 pounds or more over highways between March 15th and May 15th in any year said that he had framed the section with no desire to interfere with commerce, but solely for the purpose of protecting the highway. He had an amendment to propose which would provide for an increase in the weight of the load to 3,000 pounds and the giving of a bond to the supervisor that no damage would be done the road by the passage of the vehicle.

MR. YOUNG said he believed the weight should be still further increased.

HON. MR. VENIOT pointed out that under the amendment permission to increase the load could be secured from the supervisors, if the bond were given.

MR. TILLEY asked what was the provision with regard to portable mills.

HON. MR. VENIOT replied that all portable mills were barred, except under certain conditions set forth in the amendment.

MR. TILLEY expressed the opinion that some portable mills weighed less than 3,000 pounds.

HON. MR. VENIOT answered that all portable mills were much above that weight.

MR. SUTTON said that the weight of the loads should be increased. He knew of a sawmill at Grafton which transported its manufactured lumber by teams to Woodstock. For profitable handling the loads must weigh much more than the figure mentioned in the amendment. He thought it would be a hardship to require that mill to reduce its loads.

HON. MR. VENIOT said he recognized the force of the fact set out by the hon. member from Carleton, but he must take his stand for the protection of the roads. If people, such as those referred to by the hon. member could not make a little sacrifice for the improvement of the highways of the province, they must be compelled to do so. During the last spring he had visited various sections of the province and had found innumerable cases in which heavy loads of lumber had practically destroyed roads. There was no reason why this practice should be kept up while the roads were soft in the spring. The hon. member from St. John city had frequently referred to the pluck of the minister of public works and his admiration of the same. He hoped that he would take this opportunity to back the minister up.

MR. POTTS—"You're right; you're right."

MR. PINDER asked how the weight of the loads was to be ascertained. Was it the intention to furnish scales for the supervisors?

HON. MR. VENIOT replied that he might furnish a few sets of scales for the district represented by the senior member from York. He believed, however, that that member could judge as well as any other man the weight of a load, without having any scales. The hon. member the day previously had celebrated a birthday, but in spite of his age no scales could be found on his eyes.

The section forbidding motor vehicles to run on the highways in the spring, while the frost is coming out of the ground, was amended by the Minister so as to make an exception in the case of a physician or an ambulance.

MR. GUPTILL suggested that similar provision should apply to the autumn season. He had seen cars do serious damage to the roads at that time of year.

MR. TILLEY wanted to know what was meant by spring. There was no definition of the season.

HON. MR. VENIOT replied that the provision would apply during the time that the frost was coming out of the ground. Speaking to the section relating to breaking of winter roads, he said that he had had numerous applications made to him for the breaking of roads in districts where no young men were at home to do the work, but he had no authority to make an expenditure for that purpose. He had given much thought to the matter and had believed that he had prepared a satisfactory section, but since he had been told that it would not work. His attention had been directed to the fact that in sections of Westmorland county practically all the young men were away from home, except during the week-ends, being engaged in munitions work, or with the Canadian Government Railways. The people of those districts desired that special provision be made. He proposed an amendment empowering supervisors to pay for breaking winter roads under circumstances such as he had mentioned.

MR. YOUNG asked where would the money come from?

HON. MR. VENIOT replied, out of the road tax of the particular parish and not out of the consolidated road fund.

MR. MAGEE said he had been approached in connection with this matter by residents of Westmorland county, the constituency which he represented, and had been told that the inhabitants of districts in which it was desired that winter roads be broken would not object to the extra taxation to meet the cost. He suggested that it might be practicable for the supervisor or road-master to break the roads in winter and keep an account of his work, making an assessment to meet the cost in their respective districts in the following spring. The cost would vary largely, according to the severity of the winters. Some districts might require heavy expenditures and others none.

MR. BAXTER asked why the suggestion of the member from Westmorland could not be incorporated in the (Continued on page 7.)

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