

Special Meeting - March 10<sup>th</sup> 1904

A Special Meeting of the County Council, was held in the Council Chamber, Courthouse, Wexford, on March 10<sup>th</sup> for the purpose of considering the reply of the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction, as to the resolution of the County Council with reference to improvements to be carried out at Poulduff Pier, and to consider the report of the Kilmore Breakwater Committee.

Present: Mr. E. Hore (Vice Chairman) presiding.

Other Councillors: Messrs M. A. Ennis, C. H. Peacocke, James Donohoe, W. Murphy, John J. Kehoe, W. Browne, J. F. Walsh, J. E. Mayler, James Sinnott, J. Bolger, J. Bolger, John Cummins, D. Dempsey, W. J. Furlong.

Mr. R. W. Elger, Solicitor to the Council, Mr. Webster, County Surveyor, and the Assistant Secretary, were in attendance.

Illness of the Secretary

The Secretary forwarded a certificate from Dr. Douse that he was suffering from Neuralgia.

Mr. Peacocke proposed and Mr. Kehoe, seconded and it was passed: "That Mr. Frizelle, be appointed locum tenens, for the Secretary during the latter's illness."

Solicitor's Costs

The following resolution was adopted on the motion of Mr. Peacocke, seconded by Mr. Ennis: - "That the costs of Mr. R. W. Elger, Solicitor for the Council, for the past nine months be referred for taxation; - that a Requisition to tax them be sealed, and that Mr. Thomas J. Healy Solicitor, be appointed to attend on behalf of the Council on the taxation."

Wexford Bar.

Mr. Ennis proposed, Mr. Browne seconded and it was passed: - "That we regard the commercial and manuf."



actuating activity of Wexford, the capital town of our county with deep satisfaction and would regard anything tending to hamper the further development of her industries with grave apprehension, especially in view of the increased importance which the port of Wexford will attain on the near completion of the Fishguard Rosslare project and the establishment of the Motor transit service referred to by the Chief Secretary in his statement in the House of Commons.

We therefore desire to commend to the earnest and favorable consideration of the Irish Government and the Board of Trade, the resolutions passed by the Wexford Harbour Board and the Wexford Corporation on the subject of the siltage of the approaches to Wexford Harbour; and that copies be sent to our Parliamentary Representatives the Secretary of the Treasury, and the Chief Secretary for Ireland."

#### Poulduff Pier.

The Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction wrote under date March 2<sup>nd</sup> (letter No. 690-04) in reference to the proposed improvement of Poulduff Pier, that the County Council, should advertise for a contractor for the work. Detailed plans upon which tenders can be invited, are being prepared by the Department and will be submitted to the County Surveyor for approval in a few days. The Department's Engineer will consult with the County Surveyor so as to arrange a scheme for the joint supervision of the work."

The Secretary was directed to advertise the work for tenders by the May Meeting of the Council.

#### Kilmore Breakwater.

The following report of the Kilmore Breakwater Committee, was read:-

#### Kilmore Breakwater Committee.

Meeting - March 10<sup>th</sup> 1904.

Present:- Mr. B. Hore, (Vice Chairman), Presiding.

Messrs G. H. Keacocke, M. Browne, M. A. Ennis, M. Murphy



and John J. Kehoe.

Other County Councillors present: Messrs J. Donohoe, J. F. Walsh, James E. Maylor.

Mr. R. W. Elgee, Solicitor for the Council, the County Surveyor, and the Assistant Secretary, were in attendance.

Mr. F. J. Walsh, Contractor was also present.

Owing to the illness of the Secretary, Mr. Peacocke proposed, Mr. Kehoe, seconded and it was passed:—"That Mr. Frizelle, Assistant Secretary act as Secretary to the meeting." Passed.

Mr. B. J. O'Flaherty Solicitor (on behalf of Mr. O'Connor Solicitor for the Contractor, Mr. F. J. Walsh) laid before the meeting the following Memorial from Ratepayers of the locality:-

To the Members of the Co. Council of the County of Wexford.

The Memorial of the undersigned humbly sheweth:-

- 1.- That we are Ratepayers, Residents, and Boat Owners, in the District of Kilmore, in this County.
- 2.- That we have seen in the public Press a report of what occurred at the last Meeting of the County Council, with reference to Kilmore Pier.
- 3.- That we desire to place before the County Council, our views on this very important matter.
- 4.- If the Pier or Breakwater is properly constructed, it would, in our opinion, be a great advantage to the shipping, and fishing boats at Kilmore, and besides this, it would be a great protection to the Quay walls which have to be kept in repair by the County Council.

We are strongly of opinion that if a proper topping of cement bags and concrete were put upon this breakwater, it would be a permanent work and we think the additional sum required would be well expended in having this done, even though that sum would amount to £400 or £500.

- 5.- We are of opinion that the work as originally specified would not be a permanent work, owing to the action of the tide in removing the cement before



it has time to set, and we think that the Breakwater if so constructed would not be able to stand the heavy seas at Kilmore, and if it did not do so, the stones of which the breakwater would be constructed would be scattered around the little Harbour, and would be a great source of danger to the fishing boats, and a big expense to the Council in removing same.

6.- The scheme of building the Breakwater has proved quite correct, because we find that since the work was commenced, that the sand considerably increased on the sea side, the Harbour has deepened, and we think that if the Breakwater be made a permanent job in the way we suggest it will not only deepen the Harbour further, but it will also make it a safe refuge for the fishing boats, and it will be a protection for the Quay walls, and will therefore lessen the expense which the County Council will have to incur in repairing the Quay walls.

7.- we think it would be useless to go on with the work as originally specified, as we find that the cement cannot properly set before the tide washes it away.

8.- The foundation of the Pier is right and the top only needs to be secured in order to make it a permanent work. We believe that it would be impossible for anyone to build the Breakwater as specified, because it has now been found from experience that the tide removes the cement before it has time to set. That being so, Your Memorialists amongst whom are the largest ratepayers of the District are assured that the required sum of £400 or £500 ought to be spent in making the new and much required breakwater a good and permanent work.

Your Memorialists, therefore, respectfully request the County Council to have the specifications altered in such a way as to provide for a topping of cement bags and concrete on the new breakwater at Kilmore, and to expend, out of the rates such a



sum as may be necessary for this most desirable work which all the Ratepayers in the District are most anxious to see carried out and made secure at once.

And your memorialists as in duty bound will ever pray.

Dated this 7<sup>th</sup> day of March 1904.

E. A. Gibbon, J.P. Sleedagh.  
 John Stafford, Killag Bridgetown  
 John Barry, Rackardstown Kilmore  
 Nicholas Keating Sarshill "  
 John Earle, Blongaddy "  
 Samuel W. Boswell Sarshill "  
 James Stafford, Chapel "  
 John Rossiter, Libgate "  
 Walter P. Furlong Beak Kilmore Quay  
 William Rossiter, Newtown Kilmore  
 Bridget Norton, Grange, "  
 John Rochford, Ballyhealy "  
 John Keating " "  
 Francis Rossiter Libgate "  
 William Rossiter " "  
 W. Canon O'Gorman P.P. "  
 Patrick Kelly Newtown "  
 Wm Staples " "  
 John Keating Grange "  
 Wm Moore " "  
 James Power Sarshill "  
 Stephen Whelan Grange "  
 John Beates " "  
 Thomas Borish " "  
 Walter Cahill Rackardstown "  
 James Murphy, Chapel "  
 Thomas Power, Libgate "  
 John Power, Rackardstown "  
 Catherine Moran " "  
 Johanna Browne, " "  
 Harinah Batterton, Farm Bridgetown



James W. Grant, Kilmore Quay  
 John Alexander, Dean of Forns, Mulbrankin Rectory  
 Paul F. Kehoe, C. C. Mulbrankin  
 William Rochford Bellgrove  
 Nicholas Stafford Baldwinstown Bridgetown  
 William Stafford " "  
 James Rochford, Newtown  
 Nicholas Codd, Kilcovan Mills.  
 Nicholas Keating Rackardstown Kilmore.

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Continuing Mr O'Flaherty said that the scheme proposed originally was a good one, if the season had not been exceptionally severe and, if the storm which carried away the coping was not also exceptional, a change of plan such as was proposed by the memorial was desirable, and would tend to make a permanent and useful work. The change in plan referred to could be executed for about £500.

Mr Walsh proposed that if the County Council would give the £500 necessary he would finish the contract in bag work in accordance with Mr Webster's plan and specification and would be prepared to allow the £500 from the Government to remain outstanding for six months after the completion of the contract. The County Council, he proposed should pay him £550. the amount outstanding on his present contract.

Mr Walsh had tendered at a very low price, and had made no profit. Neither had he made any provision for contingencies, and he (Mr O'Flaherty) had been informed that in works of this description contractors usually put on 100 per cent to cover contingencies.

Mr Walsh had received no remuneration for his own time and in the interests of everybody he urged that the proposal made by Mr Walsh should be carried.

Mr Ennis said if Mr. Walsh was not going to allow the County Council something for the portion of the contract not done it would manifestly not be to the interests of the Council to agree to his proposal.



Mr. O'Flaherty said that in the estimate for the new work, Mr. Walsh was not making any claim for his own time, and for the risk in doing the work.

Mr. Webster said he had gone very carefully into the figures and his estimate to have the work as proposed by Mr. Walsh, carried out, was £450.

This would provide for a capping of cement in bags rising to a height of 3 feet 6 inches, and then crowned with concrete in situ, and stones could be used as displacers. The total length to be repaired was 510 feet, leaving 179 feet still standing on the land side, and in this latter portion it was not necessary to make any alteration except to point it wherever required.

Continuing Mr. Webster said - If you want my candid opinion, in a thing like this where you set a contract to a contractor; although my sympathies are with Mr. Walsh, it is my duty to put before you the fact, that the contractor has taken a contract to do certain work, and no matter what the loss is he should make it right.

The only reasonable grounds that Mr. Walsh could go on and ask you to change these plans is the fact that owing to the very bad weather of the last year the plan has been a very difficult one to carry out. The work except for a certain portion was done in accordance with the plans. It was pointed out that the work was not done in accordance with the plan in several portions.

Mr. Murphy - Was that reported to the County Council.

Mr. Webster - It was not, because the work was not taken over.

Mr. Murphy - It was too big a job to have going on like that.

Mr. Webster (in reply to Mr. Donohoe) said that in one case the cement had been washed out of the joints, but the case he specially referred to was the finishing up of the job. On one occasion when he went there he found that the men were finishing the job with dry



work and then grouting it. That was only a short stretch, but it was very important. It was about three-quarters out from the land.

Mr. Walsh - That would be one of the places where the cement would not stop in.

Mr. Webster:- They were building it in the dry and filling in the concrete and the result was they could not get the concrete in as far as it could go if the specification were followed - That was a capping of about 20 feet.

Mr. Donohoe:- Were you there when the rest of the coping was done.

Mr. Webster. No, I am only pointing out to you what was done before my own eyes. That shows that the plans have not got a fair trial, but I don't say it is Mr. Walsh's fault.

In reply to Mr. Browne, Mr. Webster said the cost of finishing the work according to the contract would be £255, and the difference between this and the new proposal was £195.

Mr. Browne proposed:- "That the specification for the part of the new Kilmore Breakwater which had been injured by the storm, be altered so that a topping of bags of concrete be substituted for the previous topping of cemented stones, and that an extra sum be allowed to the contractor equal to the estimated additional cost of what the building of the bag topping would be, over the building of the topping on the original plan and that this extra sum be allowed on condition that the breakwater be finished before June 5<sup>th</sup> 1904, Mr. Webster's estimate of the additional cost being £200, and that the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction be requested to contribute half the extra cost."

The motion fell through for want of a seconder.

Mr. Peacocke submitted the following report:-

Kilmore Breakwater

Report of Committee of Inspection



In accordance with the resolution of the last meeting of the County Council, the committee appointed to inspect Kilmore Breakwater visited Kilmore on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Inst.

The members of the committee attending were: Messrs E. Hore (Vice Chairman County Council) C. H. Peacocke, W. Browne, J. Bolger, W. Murphy, and W. A. Ennis.

The other members of the County Council attending the inspection were - Messrs J. Donohoe, J. J. Walsh, and J. E. Mayler.

Mr. Webster, County Surveyor and the contractor for the works (Mr J. J. Walsh) were in attendance.

The committee found that the work had been carried out to a junction with the existing Breakwater.

At the sea-end two large breaks have been made by the sea, but the portion adjoining the mainland appears to be fairly intact.

It was evident from the inspection that the cement had been washed out of the joints of the whole backed coping, with the result that the coping was unable to resist the action of the sea, a large portion having been completely swept away.

As regards the sand in the Harbour it was observed that rocks had been stripped, demonstrating that, even with the incomplete structure the sand has been scoured from the upper or land side of the Harbour.

The committee obtained the views of some local people and elicited the opinion that a considerable improvement as regards the depth of the Harbour by the erection of the new work had taken place.

The committee recommend the following for the adoption of the Council:

'That the letter from the contractor (Mr J. J. Walsh) to the County Surveyor, as appearing on the Minutes of February 23<sup>rd</sup> 1904, and also the Memorial from the



Ratepayers be furnished the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction and that the Department be informed, the contractor finds it most difficult to carry out his contract so far as the completion of the whale-backed coping is concerned. The difficulty seems to us to have arisen not alone from the exceptional severity of the weather during the past summer and winter, but from the fact that as the coping was so near high water level, when cement was placed in the joints it was washed away by the waves before it had time to set.

The contractor, as will be seen by his letter to Mr. Webster, made a proposal to the County Council that instead of building the coping two feet thick, with stones cemented in the joints it should be constructed to a large extent of concrete in bags.

The cost of carrying out the contractor's suggestion would be £195 in excess of the amount of the contract accepted by the County Council and in addition, that the contractor be allowed a sum of £50 for surplus stones to be used as a protection to the Breakwater.

That the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction be requested to state with as little delay as possible if they are prepared to contribute one-half of the above sum of £245 should the County Council agree to the suggested alterations in the plans.

Mr. Ennis said the disaster was due to the fact - of course the bad weather was to some extent responsible - that the work was not pushed on more expeditiously. If the work had been pushed on more expeditiously this would never have happened. The change in plan if adopted should commence by the first April.

Mr. Murphy said he would propose that as a Breakwater was necessary they should appeal to the public and put a Breakwater in the place that would stay in it. Was not the Breakwater an absolute failure, they should all admit that.



Mr. Webster said he felt when preparing the plans they were too elaborate for the amount allowed.

Mr. Donohoe argued that Mr. Webster's specification was not sufficient, and submitted the following for the Committee:-

To the Chairman and members of the Co. Council Gentlemen,

In accordance with your resolution of the last meeting we beg to report that we visited Kilmore on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Inst to view the new Breakwater at present in course of construction and some repairs to the existing Breakwater and regret to say that we found both unsatisfactory.

1.- As regards the new Breakwater, about half of it has been destroyed, and we have no confidence whatever in the stability of the portion still standing.

2.- The specification does not define the class of "rubble stone" to be used, and, in consequence is that about half the stones are not large enough to breast an ordinary road ditch, and a very large proportion only fit for rough road metalling, and consequently quite unfit for a breakwater which requires size and solidity.

3.- The breast work or facing stones, are not nearly large enough; and no attempt has been made to effect close joints with the result that the part still standing exhibits numerous apertures, and these stones being horizontal instead of upright simply invite destruction; as affording flat leverage for the action of the sea.

4.- Considerable repairs are required on South East side of the breakwater, which have not yet been commenced.

5.- As the inspection in question was the result of an application on the part of the contractor for a variation of the specification, and a further sum of money for the purpose, we unhesitatingly advise that the application be refused and that the County



Surveyor be held strictly responsible for the completion of the work, and, for its stability for a reasonable number of years afterwards.

6.- We further advise the County Council in view of our complete want of confidence in the sufficiency of the specification, and of the work performed under it, that the Department of Agriculture etc, which is responsible for £500 - half the contract money - be requested to send down an expert to view the work in its present state, and so divide the responsibility with the County Council of approving or rejecting the work.

7.- This is all the more necessary in view of the notoriety the work has already acquired, and the possibility of future public action, which the Co. Council should be prepared to meet.

8.- We think it but right to add in conclusion that if trouble should come to the Contractor in this matter it will be, in our opinion, largely owing to the indefiniteness of the specification, and to the absence in it of sufficient working directions as to the construction, material, or otherwise.

9.- We understand a considerable payment has been made to the Contractor on the certificate of the Surveyor, and if that is so, the Council and the Ratepayers generally may well feel serious misgivings as to the past and future expenditure of the County, and this requires in our opinion careful and prompt consideration.

The names of the councillors present at the inspection are - Messrs E. Hore, C. A. Peacocke, M. A. Ennis, J. Bolger, M. Murphy, M. Browne, J. Donohoe, J. F. Walsh, and J. E. Mayler.

Mr Peacocke proposed that the County Council be recommended to adopt the report which he presented, and be requested to agree to expend the sum of £195 for the change in plan as regards the coping. Also to allow the Contractor a sum of £50 for surplus stones.



Mr. Ennis seconded the resolution which passed.  
Mr. Murphy dissenting

Mr. Peacocke moved the adoption of the recommendations of the committee's report. Mr. Browne seconded.

Mr. Murphy said the first storm that came would take the proposed breakwater away.

Mr. J. Bolger said he agreed with the report submitted by Mr. Donohoe.

Mr. O'Flaherty then addressed the council, reiterating the statements made at the meeting of the committee, and asking that a sum of £330, should be allowed Mr. Walsh for carrying out the work.

Mr. Donohoe, argued that it was a gross injustice for South Wexford men to make the poor men up in the North of the county pay for this work.

The county council had made themselves a laughing stock by throwing £1,000 into the sea as against the distinct advice of Mr. Bindon-Stoney. The plan was absurd - a ginger-bread thing, that could be kicked down. He for one held Mr. Webster absolutely responsible for the whole thing. Mr. Webster in order to save his reputation should have declined to lend himself to the scheme. There seemed to be a rooted objection on the part of certain members of the council to have the Engineer of the Department of Agriculture, see the present state of the work and report to the council. An expert should report to them on the condition of the Breakwater or they would excite ridicule. Why did not Mr. Webster have a clerk of works?

He considered the stones which had been generally utilized were too small - there were only 50 per cent of large stones and there was no direction in the specification as to how the stones should be laid.

If an expert said that a certain sum was required, the Wexford Rural District should contribute to the cost and it should not be imposed on the people of the North.



Mr. O'Flaherty, (Harbour Master) said that if the new breakwater had been coped with cement in bags it would have stood the action of the sea.

Mr. J. Bolger disagreed with the proposal of the committee. They were going to put the cement bags on a bad foundation and the inner portion which it was proposed to allow to stand showed bulges and cracks. He considered the original plan etc. should be carried out and if the Council wished to give something to Mr. Walsh for the abnormal storm he (Mr. Bolger) would be in favour of it. It was a great responsibility for the Council to expend any further money on this proposal.

Mr. Webster - (in reply to Mr. Furlong) If the work had been carried out in accordance with the specification and plan he had prepared it would have stood, and he had no reason to alter his opinion. Unless he had a block of works, he or his assistant should be on the ground every day, and it was better to have a block of works. It was possible for the cement to be inserted without casing.

Mr. Browne. - Isn't it your opinion that it would be better to have it finished with cement in bags, and not have any further delay.

Mr. Webster. - It is possible to carry out the plan for the cement in bags quickly, and the original plans, from my experience of the weather last year, it is impossible to carry out expeditiously.

Mr. Ennis said that even with the top off; the breakwater was worth the money which the Council had spent. With regard to the resolution from the Wexford Rural District Council, which had been sent the Co. Council, it was not true to say that £1,000 had been expended on the new breakwater. This amount was to cover the repairs to the old breakwater, and the dredging of the Harbour, works which in 1899 had been estimated by the Board of Works to cost £700 as well as the construction of the new breakwater.

The following was the resolution referred to by Mr. Ennis as having been received from the Wexford Rural



District Council - Resolved - "That, we, the Wexford Rural District Council protest against the extravagant manner in which the County Council are spending the rates, and we call attention particularly to the £1000 they have spent at the breakwater at Kilmore, said expenditure being of no use to any portion of the community; such extravagance we consider in the present year unreasonable, as it is the worst we have had since '79, and that if the County Council consult the Ratepayers they will find 95% opposed to spending money on the Piers of the County. That copies of this Resolution be sent to the Co. Council, and to the Councils of Enniscorthy, New Ross, and Gorey Districts."

Mr Donohoe proposed - "That a copy of the Committee's report be sent to the Department of Agriculture, with a request that a Expert be sent down at once to inspect the Breakwaters, and to report as to the sufficiency of work already done on them, and as to the advisability or otherwise of continuing the work of the new breakwater under the present specification."

Mr Murphy seconded.

Mr Peacocke said that his impression was that there was a very small percentage of small stones used in the work.

The Chairman said that Mr Donohoe had stated that the stones used in the construction of the Wexford Breakwater were considerably larger than those which had been used at Kilmore. He (Mr Hore) disagreed with this view. The stones used at Kilmore were longer and more suitable for the purpose.

The motion for the adoption of the report of the Committee was then put and declared carried by the Chairman.

A Poll was taken with the following result.

For the motion: - Messrs Browne, Walsh, Mayler, Peacocke, Cummins, Ennis, Kehoe, and the Chairman - 8.

Against: - Messrs Furlong, J. Bolger, Donohoe, Dempsey, Murphy, L. Bolger and Sinnott - 7.



The Chairman declared the motion for the adoption of the Committee's report carried.

Mr. Donohoe then made his motion read: - "That a copy of the Committee's report be sent to the Department of Agriculture, with a request that an Expert be sent down at once to inspect the Breakwaters, and to report as to the sufficiency of the work already done.

A vote was taken on Mr. Donohoe's motion with the following result: -

For the motion: - Messrs Furlong, J. Bolger, Donohoe, Dempsey, Sinnott, Murphy, and J. Bolger - 7.

Against: - Messrs Browne, Maylor, Walsh, Peacocke, Ennis, Cummins, Kehoe, and the Chairman - 8.

The Chairman declared the resolution lost.

On the motion of Mr. Ennis, seconded by Mr. Dempsey the following resolution was adopted: -

"That Messrs Ennis, Peacocke, Browne, J. Bolger, Donohoe, the Chairman, and Vice-Chairman of the Council, be appointed a Committee to deal with the reply of the Department, and if considered necessary that they should arrange for a deputation to wait on the Vice President of the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction to lay before him the views of the Council in connection with the improvements at Kilmore Harbour. That Mr. Webster County Surveyor be requested to attend with the deputation should one be appointed.

Edmund A. O'Connell