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Number 11

MR. R. P. READE DISCUSSES THE BOND ISSUE

Dear Mr. Editor:

The friends of Person county now living in other Counties and enjoying the benefits of good roads await with interest the result of the contest for good roads in Person county. One familiar with the conditions in the county realizes that it is lacking in two things that mean much to the life of the county; good roads and better school facilities. Much has been done in the past year or two in Roxboro township in the matter of road building, but in the other townships the roads are little if any better than they were twenty five years ago, this I know is true of Mt. Tirzah and Flat River. I am not unamindful of what has been done to improve the schools in some of the country districts, notably, Bethel Hill Bushy Fork, Allensville and the voting of a recent special school tax in part of Mt. Tirzah and Flat River township. There may be other special school tax districts in the county that I do not know of, still, I know much remains to be done to place Person county in the forefront with other progressive counties in the state. Every resident of the county has a just right to feel proud of what the progressive people of Allensville township are doing for public education in that part of the county. If I am correctly informed about what they have done I am sure that it is almost without parallel in the history of public education in few if any of the counties in the state. It speaks well for the citizens of any community who are willing to become jointly liable on a note for \$2300.00 to secure funds with which to build a public school in their neighborhood. It will not be long before an act of this kind will bear good fruit, and men who are looking for homes in which to rear their children will do well to seek men of this type as neighbors and buy land in their midst. Flat River and Mt. Tirzah have caught the spirit and I hope that we will soon have a school house in this new local tax district that will be a source of pride to the residents of this district and a credit to the county. But when we get the house the roads are almost so bad in winter that the little boys and girls cannot get to school. After all, we come to the question of roads; nothing is so essential to the life of the community as good roads. The life of the school and the church is almost entirely dependent upon the roads; there is no other thing that so affects the life of the whole county. All admit the desirability of having good roads. I know of no one who is entirely satisfied with the roads as they are now; so about the only thing we differ in is the method to be adopted by which we are to get them. It is useless to talk of working the roads by free labor as we did twenty-five years ago, and all agree that we are not getting results from our present system. It is absolutely impossible to work them by the present system. The county road force would attract almost as much attention in some sections of the county as a circus parade, because they are seen there so seldom. It is not the fault of the county commissioners, it is the fault of the system. You cannot expect the impossible of any set of county officials. The only other method is by a bond issue. A number of people say they would favor a proper bond issue but that they are not satisfied with the present bill. I have read the bill carefully and I am convinced that it is eminently fair to the entire county. Under the provision each township will receive not less than \$25,000.00 for immediate use to be spent in grading and improving its roads. The bill says it shall receive it, not that it may do so. The road commissioners can be compelled by the court to spend the amount of money in any given township.

The three principal objections to the bill, I have heard, are as follows:

First. That Roxboro township will get \$100,000.00 of the money.

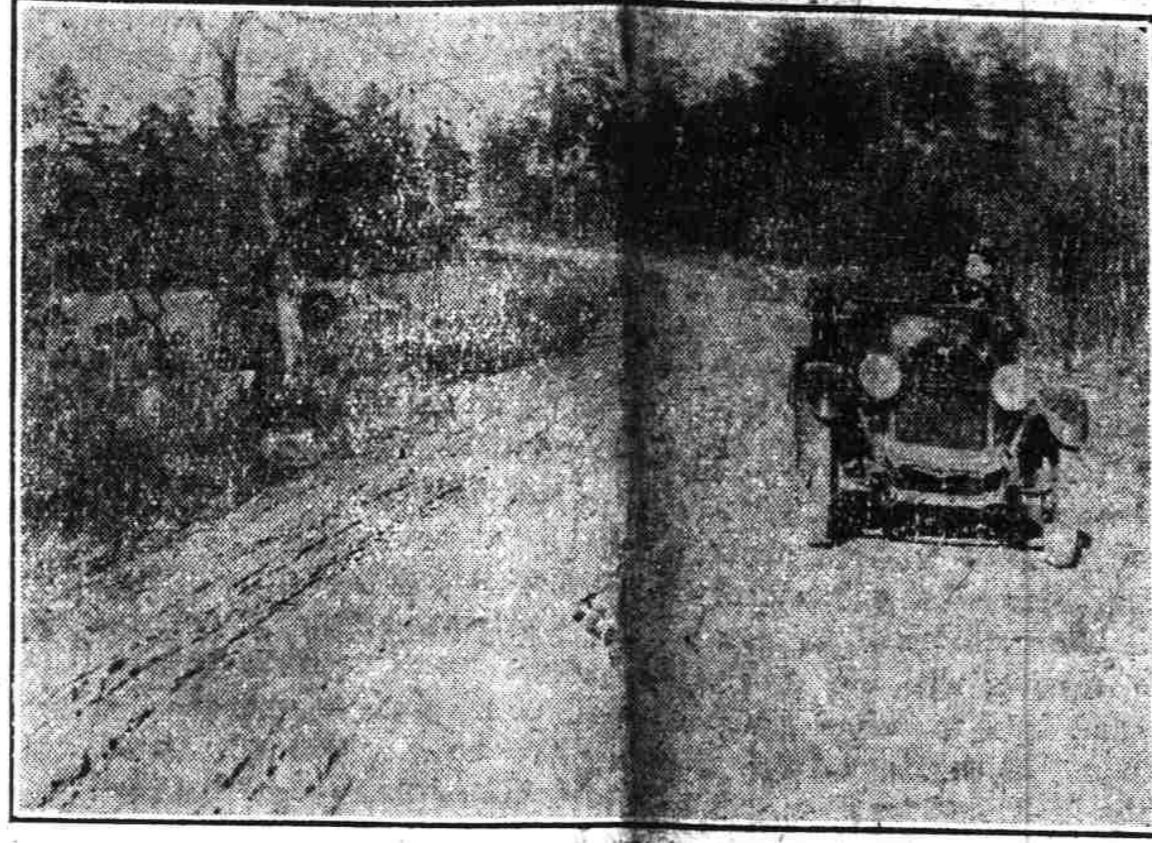
Second. That the chairman of the road commission must come from Roxboro in Roxboro township.

Third. The statement, that Roxboro townships will pay fifty cents on the one hundred dollars valuation and all other townships will pay seventy-five cents.

I shall discuss these objections in the order named. I assume that in approaching the consideration of a matter so vitally important as this is to the entire county that a majority of the people in the county are

willing to do so in a spirit of absolute frankness. I cannot be accused of being partial to Roxboro or Roxboro township for all the members of my immediate family who now live in Person county are in Mt. Tirzah or Flat River townships and all the property I own in the county is in Flat River and Mt. Tirzah townships. Now as to the amount Roxboro is to receive out of the bond issue. I am told Roxboro pays 45 per cent of the entire taxes paid in the county; within 5 per cent of one-half of the total taxes paid and one would think that in order that Roxboro township might have an equitable division of the money arising from the sale of the bonds it would get \$135,000.00 which would be 45 per cent of the total bond issue. But it receives only \$100,000.00, exactly one-third of the bond issue; when it is paying nearly one-half of the taxes of the county and will of course pay nearly one-half of this \$300,000.00 back upon the maturity of the bonds. Then, too, it must be borne in mind that at present the tax rate in Roxboro township for road purposes is forty cents and that if the proposed bond issue is adopted it will be fifty cents. So to my mind, Mr. Editor, the man who says that Roxboro township is in a hole and wants the rest of the county to pull it out will have to revise his figures. I might also say in this connection that while the town of Roxboro pays one-half the taxes paid in the township not one dollar of this road money can be spent in the corporate limits of the town. To my mind the country has all of the advantage. In addition to the fact that Roxboro township pays nearly one half of the taxes of the county, it has roads running into it from all directions, it has need for more money because the cost for construction and maintenance will be so much heavier in this township. The roads are also traveled more, because the people of the entire county have to go to Roxboro at sometime, either to court, witnesses, jurors or litigants, to pay taxes, or to transact business with some county officer or market their crops, and I am satisfied that they will get as much or more benefit from the money spent for good roads in Roxboro township as the Roxboro township people will for the money spent in the other townships of the county. Now my friends think this matter over, if you are open to conviction, but if you are not and have just made up your mind to vote against good roads anyway, do so, but do not assign as your excuse for opposing a measure which means so much to your community a reason which does not now and never has existed. If you believe the statement about the amount of taxes paid by Roxboro township don't you really think that Roxboro township which pays 45 per cent of the taxes is really right liberal after all with the other townships in the county?, and that the town of Roxboro which pays more taxes than any one township and possibly more than any two and does not get a dollar of the road money back for street purposes is really liberal? The majority of the voters in Roxboro will on Tuesday March 20th, vote to tax themselves to help build roads in your township. Some of the roads will be ten to fifteen miles away from Roxboro, will you let them help you? I urge you not only to accept the offer to help you build roads in your township, but do your part to carry this bond issue. It is not true that Roxboro township is trying to get the balance of the townships to help them pay their bond issue for they are increasing their tax ten cents and getting less in proportion to taxes paid than any other township in the county. And when you are told that Roxboro township is in a hole and wants to get the other townships to help pay their debt, the one who tells you is either not informed or is trying to mislead you, and he is not a safe man to follow, for if he is not informed he certainly cannot safely advise others and if he is seeking to mislead by prejudice and misrepresentation he, of course, does not deserve to lead. I urge the voters of the county to investigate this first criticism of the bill and decide for themselves whether or not there is any merit to it, and when you have done so I am certain that you will arrive at the same conclusion I have; that this criticism is wholly without foundation.

The next criticism deserves but a few words. They say that the bill provides that the chairman of the road commissioners shall come from



Sand Clay Road in Roxboro Township

Roxboro township; and suppose it does, is this sufficient reason to defeat the good roads bill for your county? I can assure you that the man who is selected as chairman of the commission will not do so for the money he will get out of it, but rather from a desire to render some service to his county. His compensation is fixed I think at \$3.00 per day. In order for him to render the best service to the entire county he ought to be centrally located where he may be accessible to people from all parts of the county. And for the convenience of all the people I think the bill wisely provides that the chairman of the commission should come from Roxboro township, not because any more capable man can be found there but for the convenience of the people who have to transact business with him. If this provision of the bill should prove unwise I take it that it might be changed by some subsequent Legislature, but if it is I think that whoever is elected chairman of the commission ought to be required to maintain an office in the county seat so that people will not be required to drive over the entire county to find him.

The last of the three objections is the statement that Roxboro township will pay fifty cents on the hundred and all other townships will pay seventy five cents on the hundred dollars of value, this absolutely untrue and any opponent of the bill who is informed will tell you that it is not true. The law is perfectly clear on this question and clearly repeals the old road tax if the bond issue is carried.

There are those who honestly oppose all bond issues because they say we should adhere to the maxim "Pay as you go", this, of course, is safe financing if we have the money, but in the matter of road building if we try this in Person county we would not only "not go far" we could not get started, and if we do not issue bonds we can never have any better roads. If none of us had ever borrowed any money fewer people would own their own homes today and there would be precious few investments made as compared with those made. If the great railroad builders had adhered to this policy, instead of having several lines of railway stretching from coast to coast, making it possible for one to go across the continent in a few hours, in perfect comfort, and even luxury, we would be crossing the prairies in one of Buffalo Bill's stage coaches; and instead of crossing the ocean in floating palaces, we would probably be crossing in the same kind of vessels that the Puritians came over in when they settled the Plymouth Colony. Practically all the railroad companies are bonded and I suppose it is true of the steamship companies, certainly it is true of many big industrial corporations like the American Tobacco Company and the Standard Oil Company and many others too numerous to mention. Person county cannot build its roads by paying for them out of the general taxes and no other county in the state that has a system of good roads is doing so. Durham county is not doing it although it has a tax assessment of thirty million dollars, many times the tax assessment of Person county. In less than ten years Durham county has borrowed for roads and bridges \$275,000.00 and for its magnificent new court house it has borrowed about \$300,000.00 and although we have recently gone through a political campaign not one word of criticism did I hear of the party in power for these expenditures. The truth is there is no tax so popular in our county as the road tax. Our people are glad to pay it because

it yields large returns on the investment, and it will do so in Person county. I have a farm three miles from the Durham macadam road, just over in the edge of Person county and I had rather drive my mules today with a loaded wagon a distance of nineteen miles to Durham, than to drive them from my farm to the Durham county line. No amount of argument can make me believe it would not be good business and sound financing for me to invest a little money in some good road bonds. The increase in my tax would be insignificant but the benefit to all of us would be immense. Almost every year some good farmer leaves Person county for Durham or some other county because he is seeking a more progressive community in which to rear and educate his family. They will continue to leave too unless something is done to prevent it. I know houses in Person county that are today occupied by negroes and half breeds that were at one time the very centers of culture and refinement, and I think I know what has brought this thing to pass. And what is true of some sections of the county will be true of some of the others pretty soon unless the people in the county who have their best interest at heart are aroused to the seriousness of the situation. To the careless and indifferent it is probably a matter of small concern, but to the serious and thoughtful men of the county it is a matter of grave concern. The churches and schools of the county are today suffering because some of the leaders in various communities have moved to more favored sections, and when the churches and schools begin to go down men with families to raise and educate soon leave too unless in doing so they have to make too great sacrifice.

I have not written, Mr. Editor, in a spirit of unfriendly criticism. I love Person county and the people of the county. My people for more than one hundred years have lived in Mt. Tirzah township, and I long to see the day come when Person county will be classed with the progressive counties in the state, but before it can ever hope for this, it must do something to improve the terrible condition of the roads. I sincerely hope the people will pass the good road bill, if they do, Person county will take on new life, if they do not, despair will be written in the faces of the hopeful and progressive citizens of the county who are ambitious for its future. I urge the friends of good roads in the county to quit their farms and stores and other places of business on election day and do one good day's work for the roads of the county. If you do and carry the bond issue the good roads will be a monument to your wisdom and you will have the thanks of those who are living and of generations yet unborn.

Yours truly,
R. P. READE.

Presbyterian Announcements
Prayer-meeting tonight at 7:30 o'clock.

Next Sunday—Sunday school 9:45 A. M. Preaching at 11 A. M. and 7:30 P. M. The evening service will be evangelistic. A short song service will precede sermon. The public is cordially invited to all these services.

Wrenn School House.—Rev Carleton E. White will preach at Wrenn school house at 3:30 o'clock in the afternoon.

Mr. H. G. Clayton, Jr., returned to Roxboro last week from Greenville, Tenn. He left the first of the week for Winston-Salem.

THE LATEST

The Bond Issue Will Carry in County By a Safe Majority.

We have just received a message over our own specially leased grape vine that there is no question as to the result of the election on next Tuesday, it being only a question of the size of the majority which the issue is to receive. From the information coming over this specially leased grape vine it leads us to believe that every township in the County will cast a majority for the measure save one, that being Woodside. While it would too much to hope for a majority for the bonds from this township we are assured that there will be a gain at Woodside—the town, not the township, will make a gain of more than 100 per cent over the vote cast two years ago, and there will be a gain as a whole from the township.

In Cunningham township the gain will be of a decided nature. We can predict this with certainty, as on the first vote for bonds, the bond bill did not receive a single vote, while on next Tuesday many of the live, wide-awake citizens are enthusiastic for the bill. In all of the townships, save one, it is conceded that the bond bill will receive a flattering vote, even the opponents only claiming and hoping to keep the majorities as small as possible, every one admitting the adoption of the bill. Only in Bushy Fork do we hear of much opposition. From some cause there is some opposition to the bill, and the friends of the measure are not making enthusiastic claim as to the making big gains there, though there is hardly any doubt but what the bill will receive a small majority.

It is going to be nip and tuck with Olive Hill, Allensville, Mt. Tirzah and Holloway as to which will show the greatest gain since the former election, and regardless of which wins they are all going to come up with a showing which will make Person county proud of these townships.

If you want to be with the winning side, you must vote for the bonds. At least that is the way we have it over our own specially leased grape vine.

TO THE VOTERS OF PERSON COUNTY

Please read carefully before voting against good roads bond for \$300,000. Suppose a man in the lumber business has 250,000 feet of lumber to haul to market. It will cost him 3.00 per thousand to haul it over such roads as we have now, and with the bonds and good roads it will cost him \$2.00 per thousand. So you see he will have saved \$1.00 on the thousand, which will be a saving of \$250.00. The same profit for forty years will be \$10,000.00. Take out the \$1,600.00 that Mr. E. R. Bradsher says you will pay and you will have a net profit of \$8,400.00. LET'S VOTE FOR THE BONDS AND SAVE MONEY.—W. T. Buchanan, Mill Creek, N. C.

To the Voters of Person County:

Mr. E. R. Bradsher's article in last week's Courier is very impractical, to say the least, because there is not one man in the county that is going to contribute \$600 to a road fund of \$300,000. He evidently forgets the interest value of his \$600 which at simple interest would amount to \$36 per year at 6 per cent and would amount to 1440 in forty years. Now add the \$600 to that and you would have \$2040 that it will have cost him. If the interest had been compounded as it should have been, it will amount to much more. Nevertheless, I dare say that the \$36 a year interest would pay his road taxes and no doubt he would have enough left to buy himself a plug of tobacco once in a while to chew on as he rides contentedly on the good roads that the bonds have built, thanking his lucky stars that the people thought enough of him to pass the bond issue and let him keep his \$600.—J. I. Hawkins, Hurdle Mills, N. C.

MILLINERY OPENING—Mrs. Pallie Yancey Pass will on Friday and Saturday, March 23rd and 24th, 1917 display her Gage Hats, Samuel Ach, Sterne hats and other exhibits.

I have spent some time in New York and other cities and I feel that I have all that can be offered, so call and see my display.—Mrs. Pallie Yancey Pass.

Dr. E. J. Tucker spent Sunday in Yanceville.

A STATEMENT

From Our County Commissioners

After being in office as County Commissioners for three months, and having had the experience of directing the road work of Person County, it is our opinion that the amount of money available from the present tax levy is absolutely insufficient to maintain our present roads or do any permanent work under our present system of working roads.

We make this statement in justice to ourselves, as the responsibility for maintaining the roads of Person County, outside of Roxboro Township, rests with us.

H. J. WHITE,
R. D. BAILEY,
DANIEL LONG,
Commissioners.

You see the statement above made by your County Commissioners. It should be very gravely considered by every voter in the County. These men have the management of your County. They were elected by the people and deserve your highest trust and confidence.

In justice to themselves as the responsible heads, they tell you that they cannot hope to maintain the present roads, much less build permanent ones, with the small amount of money received by direct taxation under the present system.

Suppose your taxes should be doubled and the road work continued under the present system. How would you like that? Not at all, of course, for you can never, never, get any permanent benefit from roads until the roads are permanently built. Your county commissioners tell you that you cannot hope for this under the present system. They are doing the best that is possible for you in trying to work the roads and you can't expect them to do more. It is the system that is wrong and it should be corrected.

There is a remedy and it comes before you for consideration March 20th. It is the intelligent way of financing road building and the only practical way. It is the only way to finance anything that would be burdensome under direct taxation. The United States Government issued bonds to build the Panama Canal. The State of North Carolina, in the past legislative session, was authorized to issue bonds to help the road work of the counties. Shall we say our government and state are wrong and we are right?

Let us get out of the rut we have been in for so long and by an overwhelming vote for the bond issue, March 20th, show the people of the state that we are to be reckoned with and have one of the most progressive and prosperous counties to be found.

KILLED WHEN WALL COLLAPSED

Jesse Copley Killed and Several Others Injured When Wall of Old Post-Office Building Collapsed last Wednesday.

Jesse Copley, a brickmason of Durham, was instantly killed, and Tom Garrett and Yancey Carver seriously injured last Wednesday afternoon about 4 o'clock when part of the side-wall of the old post-office building unexpectedly collapsed.

Several of the heavy steel girders which supported the building had been removed a short while previously, leaving the rear corner of the old wall, on Depot Street, in a weakened condition. Copley, Garrett and Carver, together with Bob Thorpe, were at work on the girders, inside the wall, when the heavy pillars, crashed down upon them. Copley and Carver were completely buried under the debris, and were unconscious when found. Garrett was struck on the right shoulder and arm and suffered a dislocation of the shoulder. His injuries are more painful than serious. Thorpe succeeded in jumping to safety and escaped unhurt.

The body of Copley was carried to Durham on the night train and interred in the cemetery there Friday. He leaves a father, three brothers and three sisters, all of whom reside in South Boston.

Coming to Roxboro

Mrs. Jack Elliot of South Boston will be in Roxboro on the 20th of this month and will remain here for the balance of the week, demonstrating and fitting the famous Spirella corsets. She will be at the home of Mrs. S. B. Davis.