

contract, bears the same date.

THE PORT ELGIN BRIDGE A FOUR PRICE CONTRACT.

The Port Elgin bridge is an 83 foot span. It was built in 1895 and 1896. The tenders were called for as in the case of the Pettitcodiac bridge and the scheme was worked in the same way. The call for tenders was for the sub-structure only. All the other contractors, except Mr. Willard Kitchen, put in their tenders in accordance with the requirements of the commissioner's advertisement. Mr. Kitchen alone tendered for sub-structure and superstructure together. No doubt this was the result of a private understanding, in accord with which Mr. Kitchen got the contract at his own price without competition. Following tenders were received: (See return brought down in 1897).

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| J. B. McManus..... | \$2,950 |
| Smith & Steeves..... | 2,992 |
| W. Brewer, | 1,970 |
| E. A. Bleakney..... | 2,000 |
| Willard Kitchen, for sub and superstructure,.. | 5,497 |

Deducting the amount of the lowest tender, \$1,970, for the sub-structure, Mr. Kitchen's price for the steel bridge was \$3,527. This bridge was measured by Mr. McCarthy, who computes the weight at 25,440 pounds, without the side-walk, which seems to have been part of the excuse for an enormous bill of extras. Mr. Kitchen's contract, after allowing the tender price for the substructure, gave him the remarkable rate of 13 4-5c. per pound.

This is more than three prices, but it is not nearly all that was paid.

The following amounts are charged in the public accounts to this bridge:

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| In 1895..... | \$1,150.51 |
| In 1896..... | 6,572.48 |
| In 1897..... | 204.80 |

Total..... \$7,927.79

This is \$2,430.79 over the tender price, and the only extra work was the construction of the side-walk and a dry wall to carry it. Mr. McCarthy

measured the foundation work for this bridge as well as the superstructure, and gives the following measurements, including the side walk and sub-structure to carry it. The prices are ordinary contractors' rates:

Substructure.

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| Masonry in cement, 92 yards at \$8.00 | \$736.00 |
| Masonry, dry stone, hand laid, 235 yards at \$3.50..... | 825.50 |
| Earth and stone filling in approaches, 560 yds, at 30 cents | 168.00 |
| Square timber in foundations, 6,330 feet B. M., \$15.00..... | 94.95 |
| 54 piles under cement masonry, each 25 ft long, 1350 lineal feet, 6 cents..... | 81.00 |

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| Total estimate cost of sub-structure | \$1,905.45 |
| 26,579 pound, say at 3 3-4 cents per pound, complete, erected, floored, painted one coat— | |
| 26,579 pounds..... | 996.71 |
| Total estimate cost of sub. and superstructure complete, .. | 2,912.16 |
| To this amount it might be fair to add 10 per cent. to cover engineering and inspection. | 291.21 |

\$3,203.37

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| Total cost of structure as given in the Chief Commissioner's reports..... | 7,927.59 |
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| Excess price over what it should have cost..... | \$4,724.22 |
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It will be seen that Mr. Kitchen got two and a half prices for the whole structure. The value of the sub-structure, as made up from the engineer, at \$1,905.45 agrees very closely with the lowest tender of \$1,970. But if we increase it by 46 per cent. to \$2,927, we have still left \$5,000 as the price received by Mr. Kitchen for the 83 foot span with the side walk added. Now the total weight, including the sidewalk is 26,579 pounds, so that the price paid was 19 cents per pound, or more than four prices.

COMPARED WITH HON. MR. RYAN'S CONTRACTS.

Allowing the tender price for the substructure, Mr. Emmerson paid Mr. Kitchen for the Port Elgin super-