

THE LAND FRAUDS. SQUATTERS' COMMISSION. FACTS OF THE CASE.

TO OGLE R. GOWAN, ESQ.,

Sir,

It is with feelings of the deepest reluctance that I enter on a subject which from its nature must compel me to rake up the ashes of the recently deceased; but your letter addressed to me in the Toronto Leader of the 25th December, leaves me no choice but either to discharge this disagreeable duty or suffer my character to be clothed with such infamy as your pen and influence are capable of doing to it. And, without further preamble or apology, I submit the following facts to your serious consideration:—

I never purchased a lot, or an acre, of land in any other of the Crown Townships of this County than the Township of Grey. I never used a fictitious name nor any name save those of myself and my own children, in connection with the purchase of lands, and I never purchased or held the full complement which the laws and regulations of the Crown Lands Department would authorise me to hold. I never in one instance, acted as a Clerk in Mr Clark's employ or made a single mark with either pen or pencil in any book belonging to the Crown Lands office. I never asked or received a favor from the late Agent in his official capacity, never purchased or attempted to purchase a lot of land from him in a secret or clandestine manner, or at any other time or place than on the first three days of the public sale, and at the same table where all lots were purchased—and now, for the particulars.

Some days previous to the commencement of the public sale of land, which took place on the 31st August 1854, the Agent desired I would spare a few days to assist him in looking over and regularly in the proceedings, as he knew there would be a great rush at the beginning, and a great many disputes to settle, and he felt he was able to encounter such difficulties as he had never been. I went with I was glad to give him my help, because I

wished to purchase lands for my family I would be present a day or two at the beginning of the sale, and if I could be of any service to him, I would willingly assist him. The day of August in 1854, was on Thursday, and I was present all that day and the following, and till a little past noon on Saturday, when I left for home, and had never anything further to do with the sale. Indeed, I was never back to Mr. Clark while the sale continued except once in passing, and that only a few minutes merely to see how things were getting on. Thus, all my knowledge of the sale and the manner in which it was conducted, is confined to those two and a half days. Beyond this time I know nothing of the proceedings save from hearsay. The only services I rendered during these two and a half days, were turning over the leaves of the "Squatters' Book" to find if the party applying for the lot were the right party, and occasionally to offer my opinion on conflicting claims.

On the second day of the sale, while talking with some of the crowd out of doors, I asked Donald Lindsay, whom I knew merely as a settler in the township of Grey, if he could tell me of any good, unoccupied lots in the locality where he resided, as I was anxious to secure a few for each of my family as now required homes for themselves. He, without any hesitation, mentioned lot 7 on the 8th Con., and lot 13 on the 7th Con., told me they had been "taken up" by two boys, nephews of his own, but that they were unable to pay for them, and as they would evidently be sold to somebody I might just as well have them as another. In reply to my inquiry he said, he doubted they were not small improvements on either of the lots. This, then, was the first time I had ever heard of these lots or of the parties who claimed them. Either on the Saturday or on the following day, I met Mr. Lindsay (who I learned was one of the sons of John Lindsay the Commissioner)