

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE IN REFERENCE TO THE "DAWSON ROAD."  
AS TAKEN BY THE SUB-COMMITTEE OF THE SELECT STANDING  
COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC ACCOUNTS.

OTTAWA, 28th April, 1874.

Sub-Committee met.

*Mr. Buchanan examined:—*

I was connected with the "Dawson Road" as accountant and paymaster. I was employed at Thunder Bay one season, and after that at Fort Garry, and on the route thereto for a short time. I went to Fort Garry for a short time in May, 1871, and returned in August permanently. I found accounts existing between the Hudson's Bay Company and the Public Works Department. The accounts amounted to about eighteen thousand pounds (£18,000) sterling of transactions. I am aware how they were incurred. They were incurred under the superintendence of Messrs. McKay and Lonsdale. I understand that they were first employed by the Hudson's Bay Company; but their engagement was ratified by Mr. Dawson when he took charge. I found *road books*, but no properly kept ledger, giving a correct statement of expenditure. The Hudson's Bay Company were paymasters, and kept the accounts up to the first of August, 1871, when the accounts were made up to, about eighteen thousand pounds (£18,000) sterling and the books and accounts were handed over to me. This amount of eighteen thousand pounds (£18,000) sterling was arrived at from the road books and orders for payments on the Hudson's Bay Company. My attention was first called to these accounts by Mr. Dawson in July, 1871. Mr. Dawson instructed me to put the accounts in order for the Department, and the men's names on the pay lists in a regular form, for previous expenditure under the Hudson's Bay Company, and for the future.

*By Mr. Scatcherd.*—How was the Fort Garry road commenced to be constructed?—It was commenced by the Hudson's Bay Company, under Colonel Wolseley's proclamation in July, 1870. Messrs. McKay and Lonsdale were engaged by the Hudson's Bay Company to superintend the works on the road, and they continued to act up to August, 1870, under the same engagement. When Mr. Dawson came into the country he ratified their engagement by the Hudson's Bay Company; and afterwards gave them their instructions himself. The Hudson's Bay Company simply acted as paymasters. I arrived at Fort Garry in August, 1871. This account of eighteen thousand pounds (£18,000) sterling, was held against the Public Works Department by the Hudson's Bay Company.

*By Hon. Mr. Mitchell.*—How was the amount of eighteen thousand pounds (£18,000) sterling ascertained to be due the Hudson's Bay Company?—It was checked from the superintendent's *road books*, and orders on the Hudson's Bay Company. The orders on the Hudson's Bay Company were given by Mr. Lonsdale principally, and sometimes mentioned quantities of work done, and sometimes were given for amounts on account. Mr. Lonsdale kept books, and these were handed to Mr. Spence, accountant, when making out accounts.

*By Mr. Scatcherd.*—Did the Hudson's Bay Company give detailed accounts of expenditure?—They (the Hudson's Bay Company) sent down here a statement of account during the winter of 1870 and 1871. It was sent back by Mr. Dawson because it was not made out in proper form; and in July, 1871, Mr. Dawson, instructed me to have the accounts made out according to the rules of the Department. Vouchers were made out; the details being got from *road books* and orders for money in possession of the Hudson's Bay Company, and the vouchers were signed by the persons who had received the money, (to the best of my knowledge and belief.) Vouchers being sought for and obtained from the persons whom the *road books* and orders on the Hudson's Bay Company indicated had been paid the amounts charged by the latter in their accounts. I found no persons who said they had not received the amounts charged to them in the Hudson's Bay Company's accounts. The time occupied in obtaining vouchers was up to November, 1871. The vouchers were dated at the time the parties had received the money paid them, although they were made out subsequently.