

Q. Did you make any inquiries when you were in Paris, or anywhere else, as to the length of time that property had been on the market?—A. Yes. I heard in a general way, Sir Henry (Drayton)—May I explain to you that in connection with the transfer, under instructions, Mr. Archibald handled it, or, at least, his office checked the price and saw the notarial deeds, seeing they were registered, and everything of that kind. That was not work which concerned me.

Q. I was not asking you about what Mr. Archibald did?—A. I was explaining why I did not touch it. I passed that on.

Q. I was just asking you the fact. You said, if I got it rightly, you did make some inquiries or secured some information as to the length of time the property had been on the market. How long had it been on the market?—A. I understood three or four years.

Q. For how long a time had it not been used as an active hotel, or was it still used as an active hotel?—A. The building was not all used as an active hotel. If you will permit me, Sir Henry (Drayton), I will explain that and show you what it was used for. (Witness exhibits and refers to photograph). This (indicating is the building, and from here (indicating) around the corner, it goes in to about there (indicating). On the first floor there was a cafe right in the corner, extending down on this street (indicating)—

Q. It looks as if it was in the oval—the circle?—A. Yes. It ran from here (indicating) to right around the full length of this street (indicating). From here to here (indicating) were about six or seven other shops. That included the whole of the ground floor—

Q. Which is the north and which is the south, because “from here to here,” does not tell the reporter anything?—A. That (indicating) would be north (indicating to the right of the photo as faced to the Committee).

Q. Well let us get instead of “from here to here,” the notes so they will be intelligible. You have a cafe in the curve?—A. Yes.

Q. Then you point out what you say is to the north—A. I can identify it this way, perhaps. On the Rue Scribe are about seven shops.

Q. That is the street between these two buildings?—A. Yes. On the Boulevard de Capachene, the whole of the ground floor and a little around the corner on to the Rue Scribe was the Grand Cafe. That is the Grand Cafe (indicating). Then on the next floor, on both streets, was the Jockey Club of Paris.

Q. That is the first floor up?—A. That is the first floor up. The whole of it was occupied by the Jockey Club, and was still occupied while I was there. In fact, when I first went there the cafe, and all the shops, were all tenanted. What was known as the Hotel Scribe was the next three floors and the attic. That was unoccupied and I understand had not been occupied for two or three years.

Q. Then we purchased this in May of 1923. What was the amount of rental actually received at that time?—A. I have not got that exactly, but the rents would not correspond to the rents of to-day in that all those who were in the building had made their leases prior to the war when the franc was at par—

Q. We had all that explained—

Mr. KYTE: Is it not well to permit Major Bell to give his answers, and not throw him off the track. The Committee are here to get all the facts.

Sir HENRY DRAYTON: I did not want to waste time. (To Major Bell) go ahead.

Mr. KYTE: Don't talk about wasting time.

Sir HENRY DRAYTON: Go ahead, Major, and make all the explanations you want.