

Evidence of Hon. W. F. Coaker.

Taken by Commission of Enquiry on Salt and Fish Transactions.

Feb. 10, 1922.
WILLIAM F. COAKER—Sworn and
Examined by Summers, K.C.
Q.—You are Minister of Marine and
Fisheries?

A.—Yes.
Q.—How long have you been Minister
of Marine and Fisheries?
A.—Since November 1919.
Q.—Did you receive any instructions
from the Government respecting the
purchase of salt for the year 1920?
A.—With regard to salt 1920. This
matter was up before Council on several
occasions for the spring of that
year 1920 and Council decided to
leave the matter of salt arrangement
with the Department of Marine and
Fisheries and I have a letter here
from the Deputy Colonial Secretary
dated 30 April 1920, which I now
read:

"Dear Mr. Coaker.—At the last
meeting of the Executive Council, it
was decided to authorize you to meet
the Salt Importers, and to consider
the question of providing a similar
guarantee with regard to the import-
ation of salt as has been given in pre-
vious years. This is simply to bring
the matter to your mind.

Yours Sincerely,
ARTHUR MEWS,
Deputy Colonial Secretary."

Hon. W. F. Coaker,
Minister of Marine and Fisheries.
(Letter put in marked W.F.C.1.)
Q.—Did you get any other communi-
cation from the Government in con-
nection with the purchase of salt?
A.—I don't think we had any other.
There were no other instructions ex-
cept those given at Council meetings
and contained in this letter.

Q.—What did you do?
A.—The Department arranged with
the usual Salt Importers about the
supply and price of salt for that
spring. I have some correspondence
here dealing with that.

The situation in June was no salt
supply for July or August; none had
been ordered by importers. If the
fishery had turned out fair no salt
would have been available for July
and August. Consulted importers; no
thing definite was arranged outside
of the fact that all agreed that there
was a necessity for the importation
of a cargo of salt for the summer
supply. No one agreed to undertake
to bring in salt for summer supply. The
salt importers thought a part cargo
would be wanted at St. John's. At
that time it was impossible to obtain
salt in the world anywhere; there was
no salt available except at Cadiz and
in Portugal. At Cadiz there was a
strike on and steamers were hung up.
We were told that no salt could be ob-
tained from there until late in sum-
mer. In Portugal we eventually secured
a load for the steamer "Everest."

That came here to the salt importers.
Other salt ports were tried, but there
was no salt available to purchase any-
where.

Mr. Barr was in London. We got in
touch with Mr. Barr asking him if he
could find out in London if there was
any salt available that we might se-
cure at any price. Mr. Barr eventually
obtained the offer of a steamer load
of salt from Hamburg, and arrange-
ments were made by the Fisheries
Department to purchase this steamer
load of salt from Hamburg. At that
time I was north, and I received a
telegram from Mr. Hutchings which
I now read:

June 14th, 1920.
Hon. W. F. Coaker,

passenger on train

"Telegrams received this morning.
"From Haws, London salt, nothing
"available Spain before about begin-
"ning of August subject to fine was-
"ther continuing. From Barr care
"Cecil Haws London can secure from
"Hamburg prompt shipment four to
"five thousand tons rough fishery salt
"same quality as shipped Norwegian
"fisheries apparently equal Cadiz 68
"shillings 6 pence CIF, St. John's NF.
"subject to immediate reply by wire
"think I shall be able to obtain fur-
"ther quantities if required. Hutch-
"ings."

(Message put in marked W.F.C.2.)
Apparently I replied to that en-
route from the north. There is a mes-
sage here from Whitbourne. I might
have been coming in on the train.

"Whitbourne NF. June 14th, 1920.
"To Barr care Cecil Haws London.
"Close for cargo Hamburg salt
"about four to five thousand tons at
"sixty eight and six CIF Port Union
"government account steamer to draw
"not over twenty three feet rush load-
"ing confirm giving particulars. Coak-
"er." (Message put in marked W.F.C.3.)

Message from Barr:
"London, June 21, Coaker, St. John's
"Quality represented suitable for
"fish and described as rough fishery
"But we cannot undertake responsi-
"bility. Will endeavour obtain smaller
"steamer as only steamer now in view
"cannot load before end of month and
"may carry 6000 tons on draft 23 ft.
"Barr." (Put in marked W.F.C.4.)
I must have sent him a message
and asked him to undertake the res-
ponsibility of guaranteeing the salt
suitable. "Before end of month" would
be end of June.

Barr replied:
"London, June 22, 1920. Coaker St.
"John's.
"Arranged steamer Jacksonville to
"load 4000 tons salt 25th June avail-
"able Port Union. Please confirm and
"please open a credit in our favour
"for £13700 London. Cannot go on with
"loading until have opened a credit."
—(W.F.C.5.)

We were discussing having part
discharged at Port Union and part
discharged at St. John's.
Message from me:
"To Barr, care Battelole, London,
"June 25th, 1920.
"Arranged credit Bank of Montreal
"there yesterday thirteen thousand
"seven hundred pounds presume you
"notified arrange steamer load im-
"mediately Port Union. Coaker."—(W.
"F.C.6.)

As regards the credit here; I would
make arrangements with the Depart-
ment of Finance to have the money
transferred through the Bank of Mon-
treal.

Q.—What connection had the trade
with the transaction here?
A.—The trade had no definite ar-
rangement. They would say they would
take the salt if it was desirable when
it would arrive, but there was no sort
of arrangement between us. The salt
when it came, a portion of it would
be landed at St. John's and a portion
would be landed at Port Union. They
refused absolutely to order the salt,
and there was no other salt importers.
They thought if the fishery was bad
that the salt they had coming from
London by the "Digby" and by the
"Sachem" would be enough to get over
the difficulty, but they made no de-
finite arrangement to take the salt.

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2 Stores:
Duckworth Street & Queen's Road

The salt was ordered by the Govern-
ment in order to make sure that salt
supply would be available. It was or-
dered and paid for by the Government.
Q.—What arrangement was made
with the F.P.U. Trading Company?

A.—There was no arrangement ex-
cept that they would have to store
as much as would be required to be
taken out. As President of the
F.P.U. I knew there was no supply of
salt north, and I knew there was
some in St. John's. When we ar-
ranged for the steamer to go to Port
Union we arranged for part of the
cargo to be taken out at Port Union
and the balance to be taken out at
St. John's. There was no fish in
June and very little fish was caught
in July and the whole cargo of salt
had to be stored because no one
wanted it. That cargo arrived in
July but I cannot give you the date.
The amount of the cargo was 4,000
tons. It has all been disposed of
long ago. The salt that remained
there this spring was taken charge
of by the Shipping Department and
the F.P.U. Trading Co. purchased
what they required from the Ship-
ping Department.

Mr. Winter: Q.—And the salt was
stored for on account of the Govern-
ment?

A.—Yes, and if there had been a
good fishery in June, July and Au-
gust all that salt would have been
consumed and paid for and the Govern-
ment would not have lost any
money, because they would have got
back what it cost them. The F.P.U.
Trading Co. made no charge for stor-
ing the salt at Port Union and was
credited nothing on account for
storage.

Q.—Was the price of the salt
credited up to the Government as you
took it each month?

A.—What we took in 1920 as we
took it we credited it up to the Gov-
ernment account and paid for it. I
think at \$4.00. The salt cost a little
over \$4.00. I don't think we charged
anything for landing the salt. Of
course landing it over the ship's side
is paid for by the ship, but we car-
ried and stored it—I think there were
1100 hds. sold during 1920 which we
paid for. The balance of the salt
then went over to the Department of
Shipping, and whatever was done Mr.
Russell arranged with the Minister
of Shipping regarding it.

Q.—Did this cargo turn out as in-
voiced?

A.—There was a shortage in the
landing. There were 14,000 hds.
landed at Port Union. That is what
the whole cargo turned out. She had
4,000 tons. It was heavy salt and
would average 24 hds. to the ton.
There were 14,000 hds. taken out of
store less 170 hds. which was the
less. The salt was remarkably solid.
That quality was never used in this
country before. It was rock salt
ground, and when we were taking it
out we were amazed to find that it
was solid, and we had to dynamite it.
The fact that it was in and became
so hard and the dynamite breaking
it up I think accounted for its turn-
ing out so well. I think the name of
the steamer that brought out the
cargo of salt was the Tuckahoe, and
it was the steamer that was char-
tered by Barr. There is some corres-
pondence from Jobs to show that the
trade knew this cargo has been ar-
ranged for. (Reads letter of June
10th.)

The salt importers knew all about
this importation of salt and knew all
about Barr's message. There would
not have been any salt available in
Newfoundland for July and August
had this cargo not been ordered, be-
cause there had been none ordered
by the large firms who import salt.
Q.—Have you furnished account
sales to the Government?

A.—To the Shipping Department.
All that we have had has been paid
for long ago. As far as I can gather
there was a loss of about \$2.00 a hd.
on that salt, about 26 to 28 thousand
dollars. Mr. Hutchings can furnish
that information.

Q.—Did you try when the salt came
out to dispose of the surplus over and
above what you thought you would
want for your requirements?

A.—Every effort was made. We
tried to get the trade here to take a
portion of the cargo before it was
discharged. Our correspondence was
with Mr. Job.
Q.—If you used the salt you credit-
ed it up at the market price?

A.—Yes.

NICKEL

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(Cadman).

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Vast Ecclesiastical Treasure Disappears.

JEWELS AND SACRED VESSELS
REPLACED BY FAKES.
Sergiyev, Russia. (By Associated
Press).—The \$300,000,000 treasury
of the Cathedral of the Trinity Monastery
of St. Sergius has disappeared. Red
soldiers now use as a barracks the
buildings of what was once regarded
as the richest and most famous con-
vent of all the Russians, save possi-
bly that at Kiev. There are but five
monks left in the monastery. Fifteen
others have removed a mile and a
half distant to the Church of Geth-
semane, at Chernigovskaya (Mother
of God), where they have founded an
humble commune and till the soil.
The other monks who lived at this
service is held within the celebrated

came 100,000 pilgrims, have been scattered.

POSSSESSED MIRACULOUS POWERS
There are but few pilgrims now to
pray before the ikon of St. Sergius,
the miraculous powers of which was
supposed by Russians to have saved
the monastery from destruction by
the French army of invasion in 1812.
The very jewels of the open silver
sarcophagus of St. Sergius have been
removed or replaced with false ones,
it is claimed. Many of the vest men-
tures of church vessels, mitres and
crosiers, made of solid gold and in-
laid with precious stones of immen-
se value, are missing. It is claimed that
the loot from the monastery equalled
in value the treasures of gold and
silver and stones of St. Peter's in
Rome. The monks remaining at the
monastery show the churches to the
few visitors. The monastery is class-
ed as a national Soviet museum. No

churches. This city, which in pre-
days permitted neither Jews nor
Christians to camp or dwell here, is
full of both. Many of the mon-
astic stores were burned in 1920,
as in other cities of Russia, the
Middle Ages to defend the monas-
tery were damaged.

For Spanish Influenza

The Liniment that Relieves
Allments.

**MINARD'S
"KING OF PAIN"
LINIMENT**

By Gene Byrnes

"REG'AR FELLERS"

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