

LAND SCANDALS UNDER THE BORDEN ADMINISTRATION.

HERE are four examples of gross breaches in honest and efficient dealing with the public funds and the public domain which seriously reflect upon the character of the present administration. The cases are open and flagrant, the facts are indisputable. They are a matter of official record. In these instances, party friends, either through the connivance, negligence, or assistance of a Minister of the Crown, have reaped a profit of over half a million dollars at the public expense. The transactions, unfortunately have not been confined to any one department.

The Prince Albert Homestead

[In which the Minister of Public Works appears]

Under the Laurier Government 73 acres of land within the city limits of Prince Albert, Sask. had been, along with other lands, reserved from homesteading.

During January, 1912, Hon. Robt. Rogers, the present Minister of Public Works, the then Minister of the Interior, stated these lands were not open for homesteading.

No public notice was later given that the lands had been opened for homestead entry.

On April 16, 1912, Arthur Donaldson, son of the Conservative Whip, in the Saskatchewan legislature, received a patent for the land and for homestead entry on payment of \$10.

A few days later Donaldson took advantage of the homestead regulations by applying half-breed scrip on his entry, thus evading the performance of the homestead requirements for actual settlers.

Forthwith the land was sub-divided and offered to the public at prices aggregating \$374,000.

Donaldson got for \$10, land belonging to the public domain valued at \$374,000.

The Dorval Military Manoeuvres

[In which the Minister of Militia appears]

On May 23, 1912, at the instance of Colonel Hughes, the Minister of Militia an Order-in-Council was passed authorizing the Minister of Militia to pay \$180,000 for a military camp site near Montreal.

On June 8, 1912, Major Rodden of Montreal purchased a property known as the McIntyre farm for \$36,496, adjoining the Bel-Air race track, a property he had purchased on May 27, 1911, for \$48,500.

His total purchase price for both properties was \$84,996.

On June 17, 1912, the Minister of Militia issued a cheque in payment for these properties to Messrs. Rodden, Fair and Cameron for \$180,000.

On June 24, 1912, Messrs. Rodden, Fair and Cameron issued a certificate to the Justice Department stating that the land was clear. The government's cheque was cashed on the same date.

Major Rodden's total outlay, supposing all payments on his purchases to have been made by him, before receiving the Government's check was \$84,996; his net profit on the transaction was \$95,004.

Why did the Militia Department not forestall Major Rodden in the purchase, at least, of the McIntyre property? The Order-in-Council authorizing its purchase was passed May 23, 1912, Major Rodden did not make his purchase till June 8, and the Militia Department repurchased from him on June 17 at the above prices?

The Gimli Land Grab

[In which the Minister of the Interior appears]

On the Government plans and maps of the town of Gimli, on Lake Winnipeg, certain lands fronting on the lake had been shown for 37 years as public domain.

Some years ago the Town Council of Gimli sought titles to the land, but the Department of Interior held this was unnecessary. The streets and public park were on the same status.

Eight or nine years ago two persons applied to the Laurier Government for the land, but were refused.

During October, 1913, Peter Tergeson, Mayor of Gimli, by paying \$752 was given a patent for the land, by the Interior Department of which Hon. Dr. Roche is Minister. Tergeson had been a Liberal, but became an active Conservative worker in 1911.

The land obtained by Tergeson, through the Minister of the Interior should belong to his town. It is valued at \$15,000.

The transfer deprives the town of Gimli of the best bathing beach on Lake Winnipeg and it gives Mr. Tergeson a return of nearly 2,000 per cent. on his money.

Profit-Sharing at Levis

[In which the Minister of Agriculture appears]

During July, 1912, a man named Buteau bought a piece of land at Levis, Quebec, for \$5,500.

On June 26, 1913, Buteau sold the land to Dussault, a Conservative, for \$12,220—a profit of \$6,700 in 12 months.

On July 26, 1913, Dussault resold the land to W. R. Dohen, another Conservative, for \$25,400—a profit of \$13,180 for Dessault in 30 days.

On July 30, 1913, Dohen resold the land to the Department of Agriculture of which Hon. Martin Burrell is Minister, as a site for a quarantine station for \$32,750—a profit of \$7,350 for Dohen in four days.

Thus within a year, the price of this property increased from \$5,500 to \$32,750 or an increase of \$27,230, nearly 500 per cent.

The question naturally suggests itself. Was it foresight that guided Messrs. Dussault and Dohen in their purchases? Or did an interested friend in the Government who knew the property was to be purchased help along this transaction for ends that can readily be surmised?

The purchase of this quarantine site came up for discussion in the House on February 24th, 1914, and the Hon. Mr. Burrell admitted that for a year and a half he had been endeavouring to formulate a plan to secure the necessary land at Levis.

Has all the land in and around Levis increased 500 per cent. in one year?