

ing the finances, which in the frequent cases of deficits were supplemented by the British Government on requisition from the Governors or administrators. The conjoined rents of the St. Maurice Forges and of the King's Wharf did not exceed £20 a year on Sir Robert's arrival, but he was able to report in one of his early letters, that instead of that trifling sum, he had succeeded in raising the amount to upwards of £1,400 sterling, and that he hoped to increase the rental of the King's Posts from £400 to between £2,000 and £3,000. In regard to the King's Wharf it was determined to retain part of it for military purposes, and for the erection of a Custom-house, which the increase of trade appeared to render necessary, and instead of letting either the Wharf or the Forges by private arrangement, these and all other properties should be disposed of by public competition. The possession of the St. Maurice Forges was an object of keen rivalry between the then lessees (Messrs Monro and Bell) and the Batiscan Iron Co., each offering to give a higher rent than any that might be offered by the other company. The lessees offered an annual rent of £550 and the expenditure of £1,500 on improvements; the Bastiscan Iron Co. offered £800, without an obligation to expend any sum for improvements. This offer was communicated to Monro and Bell, with the notice that a fixed rent must be named, without any proposal for ameliorations, the final offer to be submitted not later than the 22nd of May, that is ten days after the date of the letter, with sufficient security. The Batiscan Company declined to make any advance on their offer of £800 and Monro & Bell, having offered £50 more than the highest rent proposed to be paid by their competitors, were adjudged the lease at £850 annual rent for five years. When the lease was about to expire, Thomas Dunn, the acting Governor, Sir Robert Milnes being absent on leave, found himself in an awkward position, as he had purchased for his sons shares in the Bastiscan Company, and fearing that whatever course he took, either to guard the revenue or to sign a lease for an insufficient amount, he would be censured, tried to throw the onus on the Executive Council, but recommended the postponement of the sale until after the arrival of the Governor or Lieutenant-Governor. In the report of the Committee of Council, reference was made to a previous report made on the 1st of May, 1805, in which two points were mentioned likely to affect the disposal of the lease, the principal being the apprehended scarcity of ore and of wood for smelting, the other being the condition that the new lessees should pay their predecessors for the moveable property on hand, to the amount of £4,000, or such other sum as might be determined by arbitration. On the other hand, the value of the property was to be largely augmented by additions to the lands included in the lease. It was further recommended that the term of the existing lease should be extended to the 1st of April, the rent (£850) remaining the same, an extension at once agreed to by Messrs Monro & Bell, who, it is stated, were willing, even anxious, to continue lessees indefinitely on the same terms. The Council further reported that the term should be extended to twenty years and that the lease should be publicly disposed of in June, 1806, (the 11th of that month being subsequently fixed upon). The recommendation by Dunn for an indefinite postponement was not agreed to, but a short delay took place on the ground that the surveys were not in such a state of readiness as to admit of the sale on the date first fixed on. On the 1st of October the sale actually took place, the lease being adjudged, after three previous bids, for £60 instead of the then existing rent of £850, Monro & Bell being the successful bidders. In communicating the result to the Colonial