

enough room on the boat. For instance the spacing of Mr. Scotchmer's twenty-six head of cattle was forty-six feet, three inches.

Mr. Scotchmer and the other attendants had considerable trouble with cattle getting down and being trampled, until finally four of his cattle were moved to the centre of the ship where there was no protection against the sun or rain. With all the failure of feed and accommodation the cattle were badly shrunk on arrival, were in very poor condition and realized third grade instead of top prices. The ordinary experience in shipping cattle is that on ship they increase on an average, with good accommodation and good feed, about sixty pounds per head.

From what investigation it has been possible to make it is suspected that the vessel should never have been permitted to leave Montreal not being in seaworthy condition on the one hand and the accommodation for cattle being badly arranged and much overcrowded on the other hand.

In the final result instead of the cost of freight, transportation, feed, commissions and so forth being \$27 per head, they have averaged more than \$32 per head.

It seems that the Richelieu Corporation has secured shipments from a great number of farmers, particularly in this district, and that the general experience farmers have had with this corporation, is very unsatisfactory, and quite similar to the treatment accorded Mr. Scotchmer. The obligations of the corporation to the shippers are not definitely understood as there has been no contract in writing in any case. Complaints to the corporation have brought no redress.

On this first shipment Mr. Scotchmer should have realized from his cattle at least \$750 more than he did, but his complaints to the corporation have been treated with scant courtesy. It is very important that this matter be investigated fully. Huron county has a great surplus of exportable cattle and many farmers anxious to ship to Great Britain. But, if the export of cattle is to be fostered and made worth while to Canadian farmers, some protection must be given them against shipping corporations transacting business in the manner of the Richelieu Corporation.

That is the statement I had prepared, and this is the letter that accompanied that statement:

Hon. H. H. Stevens,
Minister of Trade and Commerce,
Ottawa, Ontario.

Dear Mr. Stevens:

I am writing you regarding the operation of the shipping company named the Richelieu Corporation of Montreal.

I have had the facts summarized in the enclosed statement.

The gentlemen who have shipped cattle through this company have stated their complaints to me, and I requested that they give me the facts, and I would then bring the whole question to your attention.

I assured them that I was satisfied that the department was anxious to promote this trade, and that I felt that any action taken by any company in this shipping business, which would deprive the shipper from receiving proper treatment, thereby causing him a loss, would certainly be frowned on by the government.

I am, therefore, bringing this matter to your attention, not in any critical way, but rather in a way that may be helpful, and that may prevent a recurrence if this man's experience.

I may say that Mr. Scotchmer is not the only one who had complaints against this particular company.

I believe Mr. Scotchmer when taking this matter up with this company, received a letter threatening him with libel—

That is a fact; he did receive such a letter.—which would appear to be a pretty high handed piece of work. If you desire, I will obtain a copy of this letter for you.

As far as I can learn Mr. Scotchmer estimates his loss on this shipment at around \$800 or \$900.

There have been some splendid cattle shipped from this district, a load of seven cars went from this district. These cattle weighed around 1,500 to 1,700 pounds. I think, therefore, that we should do our best to see that the shipper receives proper treatment, as the farmer is certainly having a difficult time in making things go.

I will appreciate it very much if you could, through your department, make an investigation into this matter and advise me what action is being taken to protect the shipper in matters of this kind.

Thanking you for any information on this point, I remain,

Sincerely yours,

That is the letter and statement that were forwarded to the Department of Trade and Commerce, to which the minister replied very promptly. My letter was dated October 12 and this reply is dated October 13. The minister did not read the last paragraph, which is as follows:

In indicating the position of the department as I have done it is not my intention to consider the matter as closed, but on the contrary I intend bringing it to the attention of the minister on his return to Ottawa.

That paragraph led me to believe that some action would be taken by the department which, as I said in my letter, would prevent a recurrence of this man's experience. I may say very frankly that I was very much disappointed that the department did not take some definite action. I believe if they had done so the loss that was incurred in November need not have come about. It is all very well to say that we are not responsible for this or that, but I think hon. members of this house feel as at least I feel, that there is a responsibility on me as a member to do my utmost to see that the farmers are protected. I need hardly point out that under present conditions the farmers are absolutely unable to protect themselves. They are unable to enter into any litigation, and if we have men such as those described by the hon. member for North Huron going around the country swindling and defrauding the people I think it is the duty of the Min-