

The Enquiry Conducted By T. Hollis Walker, K.C.

(Continued from 5th page.)

period of 1920 and 1921, that Miss Miller was in charge there?

A.—I have a vivid impression of what they are like now by the evidence before this Commission. I knew there was a general mess over there, and I secured the services of an expert, Mr. Fraser.

COMMISSIONER—That was Mr. Curtis' doing.

A.—He consulted me, I authorized the message to him, and arranged his salary.

COMMISSIONER—Mr. Curtis would hardly take it on himself to do it without consulting his senior partner. Did he discuss the matter with you before he did so?

A.—Yes. He came to me and I authorized the message. The question of salary and everything like that was arranged between us.

Sir Richard Squires—(Cross-examined by Mr. Warren.)

MR. WARREN—Sir Richard, I take it that generally your evidence amounts to this—correct me if I am wrong—that payments may have been made to you at your office, but that you had no knowledge of them at all?

COMMISSIONER—As to their source.

A.—I am not denying that she brought the whole or any portion of this money.

COMMISSIONER—Neither denying or affirming?

A.—No.

MR. WARREN—At no time, I take it, did Miss Miller hand you any money and say where it came from?

A.—At no time did she hand me any money and suggest that it came from Mealey, the Liquor Controller.

Q.—Did she at any time hand you any money and tell you where it came from?

A.—I said in my evidence I think that I had recollection of Miss Miller on several occasions handing me money, which came to a total of \$2,000.00, and I understand the money came from Mr. Miller, her brother, who offered me his services as Treasurer of my campaign.

He was a strong political supporter of mine. I understand the money came from her brother. I also understand that some of it came from other sources.

Q.—Now when Mr. J. T. Miller offered his services as your campaign treasurer, you declined?

A.—Yes.

Q.—When did he offer to be your campaign treasurer?

A.—I think the first suggestion of assistance from Mr. Miller was in the autumn of 1919. Mr. Miller is a very active, capable man.

Q.—But when did Mr. Miller offer to be your campaign man?

A.—He made that offer on several occasions. I could not identify the first.

COMMISSIONER—You think it was 1919?

A.—Yes.

MR. WARREN—You declined his services?

A.—I did not accept his services. I did not make him campaign treasurer.

Q.—I understand you to say just now that you declined his services?

A.—I did not decline in the sense of saying I would have nothing to do with him. I did not accept them. There is a difference in telling a man you won't have his services.

COMMISSIONER—You would never tell a man that in politics, would you?

MR. WARREN—You could not accept his services.

A.—I was myself campaign treasurer.

Q.—Did you have any particular reason?

A.—I handled the campaign funds myself.

Q.—You say that you checked the books yourself up to the summer or autumn of 1919?

A.—Yes; the office books show my checks up to August 1919.

Q.—You then ceased to check the books?

A.—Yes.

Q.—And I gather from that date on you did not take very much interest in your books?

A.—During the summer of 1918, autumn of 1918 and spring of 1919, before I became absolutely engrossed with politics—with a party of which you have derived considerable benefit—up to that period, I was looking after my books. From the spring of 1919, I devoted my time to the interests of my entire party, looking after every member of it.

Q.—Very nice of you. But my question was did you absolutely give up your interest in your books after 1919?

A.—No. But from the summer of 1919—Miss Miller was away on vacation for three months in the summer of 1919. From the time she came back up to the time of my resignation, I had abandoned by business, abandoned by actual law practice. It was absolutely impossible to be Prime Minister, Colonial Secretary, helping in the Department of Marine & Fisheries during the occasional absences of Mr. Coaker, and help generally, and at the same time give attention to the House of Assembly, etc. I was working in the interests of the country, and sacrificing myself for it, and this is the thanks I am getting for it—this commission.

Q.—Unfortunately, we have to stick to facts. Others here suffered too, I guess. Now then, do you swear that from 1919 on you took little or no interest in the question of your accounts—your office or private accounts?

A.—From 1918, I did not check the books. That was due to the fact that I had found Miss Miller very accurate, and felt that as she was given power of attorney, there was no need for my personal cheque. When I went into political organization, I abandoned my office, was rarely seen inside my office for months. My own accountant saw me in the office only twice in the course of several years.

Q.—Did you take any interest in your own personal account, amounts outstanding, for which you were responsible?

A.—A client might come to me, and report that there was some transaction with my office, and I would send for Mr. Fraser, and tell him to be sure to open up the account for that man.

COMMISSIONER—You wanted to know how you stood?

A.—Yes, and Mr. Fraser—I understood from Mr. Fraser that he had taken over the whole of the mess and was cleaning it up satisfactorily.

COMMISSIONER—But, before Mr. Fraser came, if you wished to find out anything you would apply to Miss Miller?

A.—Yes.

MR. WARREN—You know nothing whatever of what was going on in your office?

A.—Nothing.

COMMISSIONER—You did not know that your firm was heading for bankruptcy?

A.—Oh, no. I had Mr. Curtis there.

Q.—Mr. Winter in the first instance and then Mr. Curtis?

A.—Mr. Winter had no responsibility in financial matters or in office management. He handled legal matters that came to the firm very capably.

Q.—During Mr. Winter's time, did you know that the financial aspect of the business might have been disastrous?

A.—No. To my knowledge there was a substantial business there. Large amounts due the firm, and Mr. Winter was earning money. While I did not make any money out of it myself, I did not regard it as bankrupt.

MR. WARREN—Sir Richard, you say that your cancelled all these powers of attorney in March, 1921?

A.—Yes.

Q.—After that you signed the cheques?

A.—Yes, I wrote a letter—

Q.—I don't want the letter. Did you ever inquire when you signed a cheque as to whether there were funds to pay it?

A.—The cheques I signed were made out by Miss Miller, and left on my desk the night before, or given to me by Miss Miller. The fact that she drew the cheque—it being in her handwriting—was sufficient to me. I trusted her absolutely.

A.—After June, 1921, she ceased?

A.—I think in June, 1921, Mr. Fraser issued cheques on his own account. My own account was in the Canadian Bank of Commerce.

Q.—Did anyone keep that for you?

A.—I kept that myself.

Q.—You knew the state of that account from time to time?

A.—Yes, I inquired at the bank, and they would tell me how it stood.

Q.—You never heard of \$30,000.00 being put to that account?

A.—I heard of various amounts, \$1,000.00, \$2,000.00 and \$4,000.00 monies that came in from various people for my political account. That was largely a political account.

Q.—Were amounts ever placed to the credit of that account without your knowing about it?

A.—Amounts going to that account would be known by me as to the amount. They would often be known by me as to the source, but not always as to the source.

Q.—You regarded that account as purely a political account?

A.—I so used it.

Q.—Now in 1920, before you went away, you say there were two notes outstanding one account Daily Star, and one personal account.

Q.—Was this not payable to you? How did this \$14,000.00 note arise?

A.—It was a Daily Star accommodation note.

Q.—Have you the note?

A.—I looked up the records at the Bank as to whether I was promisor or endorser.

Q.—Have you the note now?

A.—I have never seen the note since. It would be in the custody of the bank, or sent up to my office.

COMMISSIONER—If it was paid?

A.—Then it would probably be in the possession of Mr. Fraser at his law office.

Q.—Then is it in the papers now?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Could you get it from your office?

A.—Yes.

MR. WARREN—And the other note too.

Q.—Sir Richard, what was the other note?

A.—A political accommodation note between a personal friend and myself.

Q.—Did you know what this note was for—this \$14,000.00?

A.—The Daily Star was a political party organ. During 1919, the individual members of the party had not found themselves in a financial position to help out with the paper. I consequently got accommodation from time to time, and found assistance from friends who could subscribe to the paper, and myself advanced \$14,000.00 and probably more than that to the paper which elected the party, of which you were attorney general in 1919.

Q.—You were keeping the Daily Star alive as a political organ?

A.—Yes.

COMMISSIONER—That is, the greatest interest he could take in that account. (To witness.) You made yourself responsible for the account to a large amount. In fact, you were taking a deep interest?

A.—Yes.

MR. WARREN—You advanced certain money from time to time, raising money by notes, etc. I understand from Mr. Fraser's evidence, that there is \$124,000.00 debt on your books?

A.—I heard him say so.

Q.—You did not see the accounts yourself?

A.—I saw the sheets, but they were not totted up.

COMMISSIONER—He only totted them up here in Court.

MR. WARREN—That, as far as the Daily Star was concerned, was your deepest interest in the account?

A.—Yes. Keeping it alive as a party organ.

Q.—I take it that means you were deeply interested in it?

A.—I did not see the books. You were keeping the paper alive, and taking an interest in the account?

A.—Yes.

Q.—How were the wages paid in the Daily Star?

A.—The wages would be paid by the Daily Star Publishing Company in cash.

Q.—To their hands?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Do you know whether they ever

came to you personally for their wages at any time?

A.—I would not like to say definitely that they came to me specifically for wages at any time. If that was on a Friday or Saturday, it would probably be for wages.

Q.—Would one of the men who came to you be Mr. Goodland?

A.—Mr. Thistle would be one of the men, and Mr. Goodland would be another.

Q.—And if he came on Friday or Saturday, it would be for wages?

A.—Yes.

Q.—And if he came to you for money, you would give it to him?

A.—I have given him no money within recent years. Up to the time I left my office, I would be giving him the money personally. I may have personally given him money afterwards. During 1920 my transactions would not be direct with him.

COMMISSIONER—If you were away in 1920, and Mr. Goodland came to the office for wages, what would happen. Did you give those who were left power and authority to lend them money?

A.—Yes.

Q.—So that if while you were away

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DUSTIN FARNUM in THREE WHO PAID

by George Owen Ballinger Directed by Colin Campbell

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