

COMMISSIONER CHANDLER HEARS EVIDENCE OF MEMBERS

(Continued from page 4)

Robichaud made it up. I don't know how he made it 3000 ft. I never made any promise to Peter F. Boudreau after he got his cheque from the Dominion Government that I would get what was short from the Local Government. I met him the day he was going up to the bank with the cheque for \$422.20, and he asked if all the logs were included and Lead no. The Dominion Gov't. had taken 201, and the Local Gov't. had taken 14 for the Caribou Creek Bridge for which cheque would come later, and I said there must be five pieces left. He seemed satisfied. He never said the cheque was short. There are five pieces there yet. I saw them on the shore near the dog fish factory last Monday. Peter Boudreau also supplied logs in 1914, 121 pcs. for Shippegan wharf.

It was about the beginning of July 1913 that I met Mr. Stead at the McNally Hotel in Shippegan. I asked if the work on the Ferry Landing would go on this summer. He said yes. I asked him if he had any idea what kind of round lumber would be required. He said his engineers were not through making the plans, but he could give a rough estimate. It would take 80 pcs. 16 ft. long and 126 pcs. 26 ft. long and 10 ins. at top. I enquired the price. I acted on my own responsibility in telling Boudreau to get out the lumber and told him that he would have to take the risk.

On being asked if Peter F. Boudreau got the Local Gov't. cheque for \$420.00, Mr. Robichaud said, "It was left at my office by Val Robichaud, and I sent it by registered letter to Peter F. Boudreau at Invermay."

Continuing, Mr. Robichaud said, "There was an insinuation that Edmond E. Robichaud had sold cedar to the Caribou Creek bridge that he had taken from the Jean Marie bridge. He never did that, because there was no cedar left over from the Jean Marie bridge. I am certain of this because I was on the Jean Marie bridge when it was nearly done—there being about 25 or 30 ft. of flooring yet to do, and the foreman asked me if I could see Val Robichaud to tell him to send more cedar to finish. I told him that Val had told me that he had no more cedar, and more than that he had said to tell him to try to finish the bridge by picking out the old cedar. After the bridge was completed I was there with the foreman of the Duguay bridge to see if the old cedar had not some good among it. There was a little and it was taken to the Duguay bridge. The rest was taken to the Rousseau bridge.

I understand that some of the witnesses at Fredericton said that I fixed prices. All prices were fixed by Val Robichaud, and when I arranged for material, I told people that.

Mr. Veniot recalled that Dosithe Chiasson had testified that the witness fixed the prices for cedar. The witness said that this was not true. Three men from Lameque had come to him regarding cutting cedar, and he had told them to go ahead, but the price would have to be set by the superintendent. These men would testify to this.

The witness was then cross-examined as follows by P. J. Veniot:

Regarding cheque of \$52.00 to Antime Chiasson, Dosithe Chiasson swore that he told you he wanted to pay some one else. Is it true that you knew of this?

No it is not true.

Dosithe Chiasson swore in regard to the item on Caribou Creek pay list for Cyrano Glonet, 8 days, total \$16.00 for horse and cart as follows: "I don't remember that he worked. I did not put it in time book. If it is there, Martin Robichaud must have put it there." What have you to say to that?

I only put down the names and amounts as instructed by the foreman. He told me to put that down.

Dosithe Robichaud said that he counted the pieces and sizes of lumber, and Martin Robichaud made the calculations. Is that right?

No, I made no calculations. Val Robichaud did that.

Who gave the figures to the superintendent?

I did, as Dosithe left them with me. Regarding the work on the Lameque road, foreman John J. Robichaud was asked if Clement Lenteigne worked there and he said no, but he had worked on that road the year before so Martin said to put his name down. Is that right?

Yes. Road Commissioner John A. Duguay had told me that he had forgotten to put in Clement Lenteigne's name for work done on the Lameque road the previous year. I knew that the amount was due this man and took this way of paying him what was owed him.

Was it right for you to swear John J. Robichaud to the correctness of this account, when you both knew that this had been done?

No, it was not right.

In the matter of the Caribou Creek Bridge, Dosithe swears that while his son's name was on the pay list, another man did the work. Did Dosithe Chiasson ever tell you that?

No, he gave this name the same as the other men who worked.

Dosithe Chiasson says that you employed him as foreman on the Lameque road. Had you any authority to do that?

No, the road needed the work and I took it on myself. The same applies to the other foreman, John J. Robichaud.

Dosithe Chiasson says that he took travel from several different people and that you fixed the price. Is that true?

Yes, I made the arrangements for the gravel. It was taken off the property of three different men, and they claimed a great deal more than I was afterwards able to settle with them for. I agreed to allow them \$15.00 each.

Before fixing the price, did you visit these places?

Yes, several times.

Is that a fair price?

Yes, I consider it reasonable.

In the Lameque road accounts there is an item for Dosithe F. Chiasson, 6 pcs. of Cedar. Chiasson said this was for picks. Do you remember anything about it?

No, I do not remember.

How about the wages of the two men on the Lameque road? John J. Robichaud is down for 10% of his expenditures, which brings his wages to over \$200, while Dosithe Chiasson, who spent twice as much and made more road, is only down for \$2.50 per day or a total of about \$160.

Those were the wages they wanted. I could not get John J. Robichaud for less, and Chiasson was satisfied with his wages.

Mr. A. J. H. Stewart asked that the following question be asked the witness.—Do you know of anyone in connection with the Public Works of the Province who was paid money he did not earn?

No, I do not, was the answer.

This completed the evidence of Mr. Robichaud, and the last witness to be heard in the investigation, Mr. A. J. H. Stewart, M.L.A., was then called.

Mr. Stewart began his evidence with the statement that he admitted the irregularity of many of the transactions in which dishonesty was charged, but that in no case was anybody paid anything to which he was not justly entitled for work or material supplied.

In regard to the item of stone for the Nepisiguit bridge for which Frank Robinson had been paid \$25.00, Frank Robinson hauled no stone to the Nepisiguit bridge. When building the Dempsey bridge, the foreman took a stone from a field owned by Frank Robinson, and spoiled some hay. I did not know of this until the following spring when Robinson came to see me and asked \$100 for the damage done. I went down to his place and saw the damage and agreed to settle the matter for \$25.00, which I paid him out of my own pocket. I told him I would have to get this back from the Government in some way, and cheque would come in his name so he would have to endorse it. It often

happens that amounts are omitted from one bridge and the custom has been to charge this to the next bridge on which work is done. The Nepisiguit bridge happened to be the next bridge, and that is the way this occurred.

A letter from Val Robichaud in reference to this matter was offered in evidence, but was not allowed. Continuing, Mr. Stewart said that when the cheque for \$25.00 came, he endorsed it with Frank Robinson's name, using his mark witnessed by himself, as he had received permission from Robinson to do.

The Commissioner asked,—"Did you administer the oath to Val Robichaud certifying to the correctness of this bridge account, knowing that Frank Robinson had supplied no stone for this bridge?" The answer was, "I did."

"Is it true that you told Val Robichaud that Robinson had worked for the Government?"

"I do not remember the words used, but I did not say that he worked."

In reference to the cedar along the Carquet Railway, he had, in the course of a conversation with the Chief Commissioner, pointed out to him that it would be economical to buy all cedar needed for the years work on bridges in the winter time when it was easy to have the lumber hauled, and the Commissioner had agreed that it would be a good idea. He therefore had Val Robichaud make an estimate of the cedar that would be required for bridge work in 1914, and had then closed contracts with different people along the Carquet Ry. to have the required quantity got out in the winter of 1913-1914. 7629 pcs. was the quantity bought and paid for. It was not all used in the following season, as some of the work which Robichaud had figured on was not undertaken. Some of the lumber is still along the railway line. Some was used in 1915 on the Whitty and other bridges.

Mr. Veniot asked the following questions through the Commissioner, which Mr. Stewart answered as noted:—"Why did not Dennis Lorton use some of this lumber?"

"It was bought under the superintendence of Robichaud and the transportation rates would be excessive."

"Why did not Dennis Lorton use it on the Burnville bridge?"

"No cedar was used there as far as I know."

"Did you make any effort to get cedar in Carquet for the Brideau bridge?"

"Yes, but could not get it."

"Did you try to get cedar from the Eureka Lumber Co. for the Brideau bridge?"

"No."

"How far is the Eureka Lumber Co. from the McIntosh bridge?"

"About eight miles. I supplied lumber to different bridges myself, also."

In regard to the item of 13000 ft. of plank for the Pokemouche bridge in 1909, which was done in the accounts as supplied by Edward Jennings, Mr. Stewart said that this was supplied by himself. Some items in other bridge accounts under the name of Oliver Theriault was also his lumber for which he received the money.

"I want to say," went on Mr. Stewart, "that every time Val Robichaud signed for lumber used in bridges supplied by me, he knew all about it. In the Dempsey bridge I admit the irregularity of \$181.00 for Edward Jennings. I used his name with his consent. This money was not spent on this bridge, and Jennings did not get a cent of it. In the year 1909 the roads were very bad and there was little money to spend on them, as the Commissioner had told me when I mentioned the matter, that all the available money was going into the bridge work. I told the men to fix the roads and leave the culverts, and I would find a way to attend to them. I sent a carload of my hemlock lumber, some 9000 ft. at \$14 for this work, and put the charge in on the Dempsey bridge as stone \$131. Jennings endorsed the cheque and handed it to me. Part of the charge was put in under other heads as well. In reference to charges restampage, I held some licenses, and cut some sleepers and lum-

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ber on these lands. I did not pay any stumpage, as I did not consider it my duty to look up the scaler any more than other lumbermen do. In my position as representative I had no communication with Scaler Hayden."

The Commissioner asked, "How many ties were cut off your license?" "I do not know from memory. I have it in my books."

"Would you say that there were 7000?"

"I could not say."

"Did you sell the sleepers to the I. C. R.?"

"Yes."

"Who was your partner when you were cutting off this land?"

"I do not consider that question material to this investigation."

A number of questions were then asked in reference to Freeman Goodwin's operations on these licenses, and his exchange of his license on Nepisiguit river for cutting rights on Bass river. Also in regard to the sale of one of these licensed blocks by the Department to Azade Laundry. The witness answered that Goodwin was to pay the stumpage on all logs cut, but he knew he was liable if Goodwin did not pay. He did not consider that the Department exceeded its authority in selling the land to Azade Laundry.

Re the Farm Settlement Board charge, Mr. Stewart said that Mr. W. R. Knowles came into his office one day and talked about getting the Board to buy his property from the Royal Bank for his sons, and shortly thereafter sent him a letter, which Mr. Stewart showed the Commissioner. The four boys were willing to buy from the Board for \$500 each. He took the matter up with Mr. Eaton, the manager of the Bank and asked the lowest price they would take for the property. He said \$1500, which Stewart said was too high. He had no recollection of offering \$1000, but did offer \$1200. He called up Mr. Knowles and told him he could get him the property for \$1500, and he said he was

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satisfied. If he made \$300 on the transaction, he considered it was nobody's business. He did not tell Mr. Knowles that he could not do better than \$1500.

He may have asked the Farm Settlement Board to make cheque payable to the Royal Bank of Canada. He could not explain the answer of Hon. Murray in the House to a question regarding this matter, but supposed that a mistake had been made. He had received nothing for lumber, etc., since he became a member.

This concluded the evidence before the Commissioner, who therefore closed the Court.

It is estimated that the war has cost the life insurance offices in the British Empire \$25,580,000 so far. The number of claims of the British re-insurance companies has not been great, but the claims of the industrial offices now number 46,000 which is 4,000 more than a month ago.

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