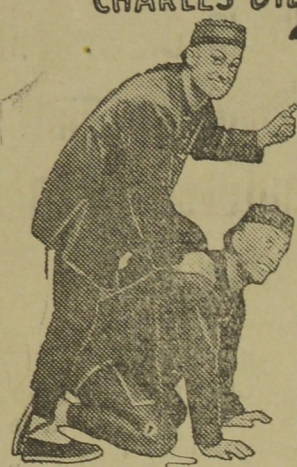


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## MR. W.B. TENNANT ON STAND IN THE POTATO ENQUIRY

Valley Railway Magnate Swore He Put  
 Up \$61,500 to Make Good the Short-  
 age on the Potato Transaction--Money  
 Was Paid Over to Mr. George B. Jones  
 M. P. P.

St. John, Oct. 9.—W. B. Tennant  
 this morning gave evidence before  
 Commissioner McQueen in the potato  
 inquiry that he had contributed the  
 money to cover the deficit which the  
 old government had decided to co-  
 ceal rather than admit to the public.  
 The money he so used was part of  
 the advance profits which he had  
 drawn on account of the Valley Rail-  
 way contract.

This evidence traces to its source  
 the mysterious fund which was used  
 to cover up the transaction but other  
 evidence given by Mr. Tennant opens  
 up another phase of the matter which  
 undoubtedly will be investigated and  
 which gives promise of adding an-  
 other sensation to the list of those  
 furnished by this interesting inquiry.

Mr. Tennant testified that he had  
 been approached by the late Premier  
 Clarke, who had asked if he with  
 others would contribute to make good  
 the deficit. He had refused, but when  
 he interviewed the premier regarding  
 the pending contract for the Valley  
 Railway he held Hon. Mr. Clarke that  
 if he got the contract he would con-  
 tribute from his profits enough to  
 cover the potato loss. The premier  
 finally agreed to this and informed Mr.  
 Tennant that George B. Jones, M. P.  
 P., of Apohaqui, would let him know  
 the amount needed.

Previous evidence has shown that  
 the amount needed to retire the note  
 was \$33,271, but Mr. Tennant swore  
 this morning that Mr. Jones had in-  
 structed him that the amount he was  
 to pay was \$61,500, and he handed  
 over this sum to Mr. Jones. He did not  
 know what happened to the balance;  
 he thought he was paying for nothing  
 but the potato loss.

Mr. Daggett continued his story of  
 the potato transactions this morning,  
 his evidence disclosing additional ap-  
 parent irregularities which he was  
 unable to explain. He was to go on  
 again this afternoon.

Mr. Tennant

W. B. Tennant was the first witness  
 when the session opened. He said he  
 was friendly to the late administra-  
 tion but not connected with it.

Q.—When did you first hear of this  
 potato transaction?

A.—In the fall of 1915.

Q.—From whom?

A.—Premier Clarke.

Q.—What was the nature of the in-  
 terview?

A.—The late premier told me they  
 had purchased more potatoes than  
 were needed, many had rotted and  
 they faced a great loss. He asked if  
 I and a few friends would help make  
 up the loss.

Q.—Did he mention the potatoes?

A.—Not at that time. I turned the  
 proposition down.

Q.—What was the next interview?

A.—I told him at that time that I  
 was connected with the construction  
 company that was seeking the Valley  
 Railway contract. I told him that if I  
 got the contract I might be able to  
 turn back part of my profits to cover  
 the potato loss.

A.—My impression is at that time  
 Mr. Clarke wanted to tell the whole  
 truth to the country, but there were  
 other influences which held him back.  
 I advised him to tell the truth about  
 it and throw the potatoes back on B.  
 F. Smith's hands.

Q.—Did he blame Mr. Smith for the  
 loss?

A.—He seemed to think that he was  
 in some way responsible.

Q.—There was a call for tenders for  
 the Valley Railway and your company  
 got the contract?

A.—Yes.

Q.—The contract was signed on May  
 19, 1916?

A.—About that date.

Q.—And you drew \$100,000 advance  
 profits at that time?

A.—Yes.

Q.—And you deposited the check on  
 May 29?

A.—Whatever the evidence says.

Q.—You got a certain amount of  
 money in cash that day; Mr. Blanchet  
 says \$40,000.

A.—It was about that. I got all the  
 bank would give me. It was difficult  
 to get it. The manager had to send  
 around to other banks for it.

Q.—Did you have any other conver-  
 sation with Premier Clarke about the  
 potato loss?

Q.—But you made arrangements to  
 carry out your promise; you inquired  
 the amount of the loss?

A.—I did not know the amount un-  
 til I saw it in the evidence. Premier  
 Clarke had told me that Geo. B. Jones  
 would advise me.

Q.—How much did you pay Mr.  
 Jones?

A.—Enough to care for the potato  
 loss.

Q.—How much?

A.—\$61,500.

Q.—In one payment?

A.—I paid him all I could lay my  
 hands on. I got all I could from the  
 bank.

Q.—Who told you that the amount  
 needed was \$61,500?

A.—Mr. Jones, I presume.

Commissioner—Who is Mr. Jones?

A.—George B. Jones, of Apohaqui.

Q.—A member of the legislature  
 then and now?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Were you paying for something  
 else than the potato loss?

A.—Not that I know of.

Q.—But Mr. Jones told you that the  
 potato loss was \$61,500?

A.—I don't know that he told me  
 that. He told me the amount required  
 was \$61,000. It was in my mind that  
 I was paying only the potato loss.

Q.—And Mr. Jones took the money  
 to Fredericton?

A.—I paid it to him and I think Pre-  
 mier Clarke said it would be sent to  
 Fredericton to cover the loss.

Q.—Did you know anything else of  
 this transaction?

A.—I never knew the real inwards  
 of the story. I know nothing further.  
 Q.—Did you make any further con-  
 tributions to anyone else?

A.—No.

Q.—Or in no other way?

A.—No.

Q.—Did you ever speak to any mem-  
 ber of the Valley Railway board?

A.—No.

Q.—Do you know if they agreed to  
 this contribution?

A.—Not to me.

Q.—In any other way?

A.—Not that I know of.

Q.—Have you any intimation that  
 they knew of it?

A.—So far as I personally know, I  
 have no reason to believe that any of  
 them were apprised of the fact.

Q.—You never discussed it with  
 Mr. Sumner?

This concluded Mr. Tennant's evi-  
 dence.

The boys who married in order to  
 escape the draft now have two wars on  
 their hands.

## Proclamation

It is ordered by the Department of Health of New Bruns-  
 wick that all Schools, Theatres and Churches in New Bruns-  
 wick be CLOSED ON AND AFTER FRIDAY, OCTOBER 11th,  
 UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE, and that all public meetings be  
 prohibited, in view of the danger of an epidemic of severe (so  
 called Spanish) influenza.

(Sgd.) GEORGE G. MELVIN,

Chief Medical Officer, Province of New Brunswick.

St. John, October 9th, 1918.

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 just arrived  
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